

NEWSLETTER DRAFT- DISTRIBUTED 10th October 2015

DIARY DATES: 6pm unless stated otherwise

Town: 12th November, 10th December

Amenities Committee: 26th November

Remembrance Wreath Laying: 8th November

Amble Christmas Lights Procession: 22nd November

REMEMBRANCE

This year the Remembrance Day Wreath Laying will take place in the Town Square on Sunday 8th November commencing just before 11am. We not only have many groups and individuals placing tributes on the memorials but are fortunate to also have lots of people coming along to pay their respects and remember those who gave their lives for our country. The service afterwards will be held in St Mark's United Reformed Church, Wellwood Street.

In September we were a stop for the 'Walking with the Wounded'- raising money throughout Britain for the re-education and re-training of our service personnel. It was magnificent to see so many there in the Town Square to welcome them and also the next day to see them depart. They were overwhelmed with the reception they received and delighted that, so far, this was the largest crowd of locals who had turned out! One of the group was carrying 25 dog tags of her wounded and fallen comrades and leaving them along the route. We are honoured that our town was chosen to receive one and plans are being discussed about how to mount it with some background information for posterity.

LITTER

There aren't many towns the size of Amble with as many litter bins and yet we still have a litter problem! Maybe we should adopt the European way- no litter bins, everyone must take their litter home with strict enforcement of fines for dropping any litter. It's doubtful how welcome that would be in Britain! Currently NCC are campaigning urging everyone to be more aware of the problem and are working closely with businesses so litter can be reduced. Whilst your Council is responsible for providing the bins, NCC still undertake to empty them. We have now finished relocating bins to the areas where it was felt they would be most useful as NCC do not have the manpower or capacity for the town to have any more. We are now beginning a programme of replacing old bins, some of which are in very poor condition. Starting in the centre of town, this will be a long process as each bin costs in the region of £700 plus delivery and installation costs. The new bins are made from recycled plastic with a wood look effect, so should be more robust and last longer. However please report any vandalism you see as every damaged bin is 1 less replacement elsewhere in the town.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

November 22nd isn't that far away now. Preparations are well under way for the Christmas Lights Parade- although it's going to be quite a task to improve on last year's wonderful turnout. There were so many magnificent floats & groups with fantastic detail which must have taken hours to get ready. So many taking part and so many more who came along to see. The volunteer groups each have a small number of willing people but would really welcome some extra help. The Lights group spend time beforehand checking everything in preparation, then weekends putting the lights in place; the Event organising group need more help on the day- whether manning Santa's grotto, setting things out in the town square or 'rattling the buckets' down Queen Street- it's never too early to offer your services. If you can't give your time then please start saving some change as money raised goes towards the lights and future events.

YOUTH GROUPS

How often do we hear young people say, 'There's nothing to do?' Recently Council decided to get together as many groups and organisations working to provide activities for young people of 18 years and under. Gathering the information on what they offer, when, where and who to contact was the prime aim with the object of putting this on the website in the future for all to access. However, it soon became obvious that even we just weren't aware of how much there was on offer and even of the existence of some groups. We have held 2 quarterly meetings which everyone agreed were very worthwhile and we want to build on these in the future. There will be lots of people in our community providing other activities and sports whose contact details we do not have; please email Cllr. Helen Lewis at helmick72@sky.com if you would like to come to the meetings or even just to give details of what you do. We would like the list to be as comprehensive as possible to show the vast variety of things available for young people in their leisure time. We'd also like to hear from those under 18 of any activities they would like to do which are not currently available to see whether there would be sufficient numbers interested, and volunteers willing, to start up any different activity groups.

WW1 COMMEMORATION

The beautiful banners produced by JCSC as part of the WW1 centenary have now been presented to Acklington, Hauxley and Warkworth. In early July next year, as part of these events, we are planning an exhibition. We hope that all the groups in the town who would have had connections with the Great War will take part. Even if the groups were not actively involved in Amble itself, those such as the Churches and the Emergency services played a vital part in the war efforts in this country. Whether fund raising, knitting, making up parcels, offering tea and sympathy, putting out fires, rescuing those shipwrecked or injured- how much worse would we have been if these people had not been there. Please get in touch if you have any information to share or indeed to offer to come along and take part.

FINANCIAL CHANGES

Audit changes are being made by the Government for all sizes of local town and parish councils in an effort for greater transparency. From April 2017 the Government appointed external auditor will no longer be in place and this Council will need to appoint its own external auditor; however we may be given the opportunity to do this earlier. Smaller councils- those with annual income below £25k- are having to make changes from now. These include having a website with agendas and minutes as well as their financial procedures and policies. This will cause problems for many not only due to the lack of broadband in the more rural areas but also because of the finance involved in setting up and maintaining a website. We have had a website for a number of years but we are looking to refresh and expand it to make navigation easier and so we can upload more information such as the work from 'In Memory of the Fallen.'

From next year we have to comply with government legislation by offering all our employees entry to a pension scheme- as we do not currently do this, there will need to be an increase in our budget to cover the contributions which we, as an employer, are obliged to make.

COUNCILLOR'S CORNER

Councillor Katrina Cassidy