

# CARTERTON TOWN COUNCIL Annual Report 2011/12

## Mayor's Report



The Annual Report provides an opportunity to take stock of the last year.

By far the saddest events that I have attended in my capacity as Mayor are the repatriation of fallen service personnel. This function transferred back to RAF Brize Norton from RAF Lyneham in September 2011. A new Memorial Garden has been created on Monahan Way to provide a focus where family, friends and the wider community can come together to pay respects to those who have given their lives for their country.

I would like to pay tribute to those members of our community who attend the repatriations to provide support and comfort for the bereaved families. The Carterton Lions who greet all our visitors as they arrive at the car park, the RBL family liaison officers who take such good care of family and friends at the pavilion and the ladies from the U3A who cater for everyone. Some life long friendships have already developed.

I would like to quote from one of a number of thank you letters that the community has received:

*"I would like to thank everyone in Carterton who looked after friends and family of Lt David Boyce last November. Everyone was outstanding, sensitive and caring. Their hard work was really appreciated. Every day David is missed but we are so very proud of what he achieved."*

I know that that pride is shared by us all.

Turning to other matters, this year has seen the opening of Aldi in the town centre and confirmation that Morrisons has bought the old market site and that they plan to apply for planning permission shortly. Aldi has already made a big difference to the number of people visiting the town, and for the first time there is a sense that the improvements we have been discussing for many years might soon come to pass.

The Allandale project is another cause for celebration. The withdrawal of OCC funding from the youth service could have left a huge gap in provision for young people within the town. But with vision and enthusiasm, the Town Council has purchased the building and refurbished it and, together with its partners, provided an enhanced and expanded facility offering an exciting range of activities for our youngsters.

There are other areas of activity where the Town Council continues to seek to influence the future of Carterton. These include large scale new housing development, the redevelopment of the MOD housing, the wellbeing of our schools, and the expansion of employment opportunities.

May sees the end of my second term as Mayor. It is a role which I have enjoyed immensely. I have represented the town across the county and also at a wide range of events within Carterton. Carole and I consider ourselves privileged to have met so many caring, community minded people. It is these people that make Carterton such a special place to live.



*Norman MacRae MBE  
Town Mayor*

## Introduction

This Report describes the main achievements of Carterton Town Council during 2011/12. It also gives details about the services provided by the Council.

## About the Town



*Alvescot Road, Carterton*

Carterton, the second largest town in West Oxfordshire, is situated some 7 miles south west of Witney. The town lies on the edge of the Thames Valley and is close to the Cotswold area of outstanding natural beauty. The population of Carterton has more than trebled in size during the last 30 years, to a present total of about 16,000.

Much of this high development rate has been due to the presence of the adjoining RAF Brize Norton air base. Carterton is rightly proud of its close and friendly relationship with the Royal Air Force, which is the largest employer in the area. Other local employment is found on the Carterton South Industrial Estate where there is a wide range of firms of all sizes. For employment further afield, Carterton is conveniently located for Oxford, Swindon, Cheltenham, Witney and Faringdon.

Carterton grew rapidly through the 1960s, 70s and 80s without any compensating provision of public leisure services. However, the current planned growth will be matched by improvements to the town centre and local facilities. The Town Council is working with West Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council to attract new shops and businesses to the town and also to provide much needed sport and leisure facilities.

### Repatriation of Fallen Service Personnel

With the closure of RAF Lyneham, the repatriation of fallen service personnel returned to RAF Brize Norton on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011. In the few short months since then 21 personnel have been repatriated from RAF Brize Norton, past the memorial garden to the John Radcliffe hospital in Oxford. Each repatriation is a desperately sad

occasion and teams of local residents come together to provide help and support to the bereaved families.



*Repatriation*

### Employment

The 1991 Census statistics revealed approximately 5,000 jobs in Carterton, of which a significant proportion were at RAF Brize Norton. About 50% of the town's residents commuted to work outside Carterton. Since then, the number of jobs outside the base has been increased both by the development of the District-owned industrial estate off Black Bourton Road and by the new retail and commercial development in the town centre.

### Retail

2011/12 saw the construction and opening of a new Aldi store in the town centre and also the purchase of the old market site by Morrisons. We understand that Morrisons hope to secure planning permission before the end of 2012 and open the store in late 2013.



*Aldi Store*

### Carterton Town Council

The Town Council Offices are at the Town Hall, Alvescot Road, Carterton, Oxon, OX18 3JL. Tel 01993 842156, Fax 01993 844898. Email: [jeustace@carterton-tc.gov.uk](mailto:jeustace@carterton-tc.gov.uk) or go to the website: [www.carterton-tc.gov.uk](http://www.carterton-tc.gov.uk). The Town Hall is open 9.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m., Monday to Friday.

Carterton Town Council was established in 1985 when the Carterton and Black Bourton Parishes were split.

### **The Council and its Committees**

The full Council oversees all the activities of the Council and approves all financial expenditure. The main areas of the Council's work are covered by a number of Committees. These are Administration, Planning, Policy, Recreation, Traffic and Fire.



*Town Hall Meeting Room*

The Council meets at 7.45 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month (except in December when it meets on the second Tuesday). The Planning Committee meets at 7.30 p.m. on the first and third Tuesday of each month. Meetings of the Recreation, Policy and Administration Committees take place on a Tuesday 4 times a year, and the Traffic and Fire Committees meet twice a year. Other Committees meet by agreement. Members of the public and press are welcome to attend any of the Committee meetings.

### **Town Councillors**

Carterton's sixteen Town Councillors represent the five wards in the town. They are elected every four years. The next elections are in May 2015.

Councillors serving during 2011/12 are listed below:

#### **Gateway Ward:**

Councillor Mrs L. Walcott  
112 Queens Road, Carterton  
Councillor W.O. Walcott MBE  
112 Queens Road, Carterton

#### **Shillbrook Ward:**

Councillor Mrs D.V. Bulley  
53 Swinbrook Road, Carterton  
Councillor Mrs M. Crossland  
111 Burford Road, Carterton  
Councillor Mrs L. Little  
1 Connolly Drive, Carterton

#### **Upavon Ward:**

Councillor N.A. MacRae MBE  
10 Hibiscus Way, Carterton  
Councillor P.L. Scott  
39 Alvescot Road, Carterton  
Councillor A.D. Coomber  
132 York Road, Carterton  
Councillor H. Jobs  
19 Boundary Way, Carterton  
Councillor Mrs C. MacRae  
10 Hibiscus Way, Carterton

#### **Rock Farm Ward:**

Councillor Miss E. L. Liston  
11 Lawton Avenue, Carterton  
Councillor Mrs N. J. Miah  
2 Willow Drive, Carterton  
Councillor L Garfield  
83 Queens Road, Carterton

#### **Milestone Ward:**

Councillor R. Crapper  
13 Corbett Road, Carterton  
Councillor A. Farmer  
29 Corbett Road, Carterton  
Councillor P. Madden  
33 The Crescent, Carterton

All Councillors can be contacted via email. Please see our website for further details.

### **OFFICES**

The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chairmen of the various Council Committees are elected annually in May. During 2011/2012 the following Councillors held office:

#### **Town Mayor**

Councillor N.A. MacRae MBE

#### **Deputy Town Mayor**

Councillor A.D. Coomber

#### **Chairman Administration Committee**

Councillor P. Scott

#### **Chairman Recreation Committee**

Councillor A.D. Coomber

#### **Chairman Policy Committee**

Councillor A Farmer

#### **Chairman Planning Committee**

Councillor Mrs D V Bulley

#### **Chairman Traffic Advisory Committee**

Councillor Mrs D.V. Bulley

#### **Chairman Fire Advisory Committee**

County Councillor J. Couchman

The Councillors do not receive any payment or allowance for attending meetings or for carrying out any Council business.

### **Staff**

#### **Clerk of the Council**

Janet Eustace

#### **Assistant Town Clerk**

Tan Marchant

## Administrative Assistant

Stella Catt

## Council Facilities

The Town Council maintains two recreation grounds, one at Alvescot Road and the other at Swinbrook Road, four children's play parks, squash courts, 23 acres of water meadows for public access at Willow Meadows, The Dell Skateboard Park with a pump track, the Queen Mother's Garden, and numerous open spaces throughout the town.



*Carterton Allotments*

The Council provides allotments in Kilkenny Lane and a burial ground in the village of Black Bourton. The Council also pursues an active policy through direct action or grant aid measures to improve and enhance the general environment and condition of the town.

The Council runs Carterton Market each Thursday, when the top end of Black Bourton Road is closed to provide a site for a street market. Stalls include fruit and vegetables, clothes, plants, meat, fish, cheese, sweets, pet provisions and jewellery.

## Carterton Fast Forward

The Council carried out a Market Town Healthcheck in 2002. The Carterton Check (known as Carterton Fast Forward) was published the following year. The Countryside Agency provided a further package of funding to help the Council employ a Project Manager to take forward the 49 projects. Many organisations and individuals have worked to bring these projects to a successful conclusion. During 2009 progress was reviewed and the original aims of the project revisited. New priorities have been identified and the project continues with the help of a number of dedicated volunteers.

## A Quality Council



In 2008, the Town Council was recredited as a Quality Town. The Council was initially given this status in 2004: the first town or parish council in Oxfordshire to achieve this distinction. The Quality scheme was launched by the Government in 2003 to provide an independent assessment of the effectiveness of local councils. Those Councils awarded Quality status are assessed as being representative, competent, well managed and able to take on an enhanced role. Carterton has also been awarded Beacon Status for its CFF work.

## Carterton Job Club

The Carterton Job Club was set up in May 2011 and provides a fortnightly informal session where people looking for jobs can come to look at vacancies as well as get advice on preparing applications and CVs, training courses and benefits. In late 2011, the Town Council secured a grant which will allow it to offer job search facilities during the hours that the Town Hall is open.



*Carterton Job Club*

## Carterton Community Centre

Carterton Community Centre on Marigold Square was completed in November 2008. It is owned by the Town Council and leased to a company which is limited by guarantee and which is also registered as a charity. The Management Company employ part-time staff. The Centre is proving to be a popular venue for a wide range of social and community events.

## Recreational Facilities

Carterton leisure centre, run by Nexus Leisure on behalf of the District Council, continues to be very popular. The District Council has also recently provided a new adventure playground at the western end of the country park. The Town Council refurbished The Maples play area, a project which involved working with local residents to take account of their views. The result is an attractive community space which includes a number of elements which can be used for play.



*The Maples Play Area*

During 2011 the Council has carried out a major refurbishment of the play area on the Alvescot Road Recreation Ground. This involved consulting groups of children but also other groups and individuals who use the park or who live close to it. The result is an attractive and exciting play area with equipment (including some fitness equipment) that appeals to all age groups.

The Town Council and RAF Brize Norton combine forces each March to hold a 10K road run around the town. This attracts more than 200 runners each year.

### **Planning**

The Town Council is a statutory consultee on all planning applications. As such it is responsible for commenting upon all the applications which fall within the Town. These comments are passed to West Oxfordshire District Council who take them into account when reaching planning decisions. The Town Council has considered more than 100 applications during the year.

### **Promoting Carterton**

Carterton is a town with a great sense of community and is fortunate to have many residents who give willingly of their time and energy. The Council is now looking at ways to promote the town to the outside world. The Town Council website will be redesigned over the coming months to give a fuller view of activities within the town. The production of a quarterly newsletter continues and provides a useful link between the Council and residents.

### **Activities for Young People**

In early 2011, the County Council announced that it would be withdrawing funding from the Youth Service in Carterton and the Allandale Youth House was put up for sale. The Town Council purchased the building at a discounted price on the understanding that it remained in community use. After closing the building while some (grant funded) refurbishment work was carried out, the Allandale reopened in January 2012. During the

day time, the building is occupied by ICE, an organisation providing care for young adults with learning disabilities. In the evening it provides a wide range of activities for youngsters from the age of 8 upwards.

### **The Civic Function**

The Council has continued to play an important Civic role. The Mayor represents the Town at various functions throughout the County and has also undertaken a number of local engagements, including attending many events organised by clubs and organisations based within Carterton.



*Junior Town Crier Competition*

This year, the Mayor and Mayoress arranged an Apprentice Town Criers competition which attracted a large number of entries. The xx finalists 'cried' from the Town Hall balcony to a large gathering of friends and supporters.

### **Highways and Traffic**

Oxfordshire County Council is responsible for Highways matters but the Town Council has a Traffic Committee which takes an active interest in Traffic issues, advising the County Council of matters of local interest. During the year this Committee raised a number of issues with the County including road safety in the centre of town, speed limits, the siting of bus stops, the resurfacing of roads and vandalism to traffic signs and signals. Due to the bad weather in the winter the roads are now in a very poor condition and the Town Council is constantly pressing OCC to carry out the necessary repairs.

### **Grants to Voluntary Groups**

The Council gives financial support to a number of local clubs and organisations. During the year the Town Council awarded the following grants:

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Purpose of grant</b>	<b>Grant</b>
St John's School	ESFA Football Team	£305.00
Good Neighbour Scheme	Laptop & Mouse	£282.16
Gateway School	Festival at Royal Albert Hall	£100.00

Organisation	Purpose of grant	Grant
Life Education Centres	Delivering Life Education to Schools	£500.00
St John Ambulance	Training Cadets	£500.00
WODC	Hi-Vis Waistcoats	£500.00
Heart & Lung Transplant	European Transplant Games	£300.00
Community College	Library Refurbishment	£1,073.00

### **How your money is spent**

The net budget for 2011/12 is £323,400, which is the same as in the current year.

Nearly £200,000 has been allocated to recreation in the forthcoming year. This includes the maintenance of the Council's land and facilities and of many of the verges in the town. All this work is carried out by contractors and is re-tendered every three years. The Recreation budget also funds the Christmas lights and the planned improvements to the planting in the town centre

*For further information about the Town Council, contact the Town Hall on 01993 842156 or visit [www.carterton-tc.gov.uk](http://www.carterton-tc.gov.uk).*