

This is the third report that I have given as the Chair of the Civic Amenities Committee, in my third year as a town councillor, and it has been an interesting year with many challenges.

I'd like to start by saying thank you to all the office staff, to Andrew, the new Town Clerk, and to Don and David, the outside services team. We wouldn't be able to function and achieve the things that we have done without the support of the Dawlish Town Council staff, so thank you.

It has been a very difficult year for the Civic Amenities Committee in that our meeting frequency was changed last year to meeting bi-monthly; 2 months is a long time in between making a decision at one meeting, and being updated on whether the decision has been actioned at the next meeting. In this council year there have been only 5 Committee meetings.

We have a good working relationship with the Browns Brook Allotment Association and have agreed with them that all allotment plot-holders be signed up to membership of the Association at the same time as signing their annual contract with the Council. This ensures that each allotment plot is covered by the Brown Brook Allotment Association's insurance. When we receive reports of works that need doing at the allotments, we ensure that these are done, including the hedge cutting, and replacing the gate.

We agreed that as the Civic Amenities Committee we would receive update reports at each meeting on the footpaths in the parish, and also reports on the waterfowl. This year has seen the black swans nesting several times and the birth of numerous cygnets.

We learned this year that both the play park at Little Week Close, and the Skate Park on Sandy Lane were declared unsafe in the RoSPA reports that Dawlish Town Council had requested. We are in the process of acquiring quotations for replenishing these play areas to meet safety regulations, and hope that these parks can be revitalised with equipment as soon as possible.

Whether or not to renew the lease of the War Memorial Gardens is an ongoing issue, and was referred for decision back to full town council. We are still awaiting a decision on renewing the lease of the gardens from Teignbridge District Council; this is dependent on the terms of the lease being decided.

My thanks go to Margaret Swift and her team of volunteers for their sterling work, time, and planning for the upkeep of the Dawlish War Memorial Garden, for looking after this cherished place in the centre of our town.

Three Committee members and I conducted a town centre audit last October and agreed a list of needs around the town centre to be actioned.

(I am still learning which areas in Dawlish are managed by Dawlish Town Council, and which assets and functions are the responsibility of Teignbridge.)

This Committee is working to agree a regular garden management plan for the Manor House gardens, and also for the Lea Mount area. We are also working to ensure that the play park at Carhaix Way is soon re-opened, and that the play park on the new Gatehouse estate is maintained to meet current safety legislation.

We will continue to aim to work in partnership with Teignbridge for good management of all our Dawlish civic amenities and public space.

At CAC we are in the process of looking at what section 106 monies are available to be spent on our civic amenities. These are funds which are paid to us by housing developers of large developments to be spent on community and infrastructure projects. We hope to be able to apply for funding for future projects in our communities in Dawlish.

The Dawlish in Bloom floral display competition will be happening again in 2018, after being revitalised last year.

I would like to thank all the councillors who do support the work of the Civic Amenities Committee, and again thank the outside services staff and the office staff for their support this year.

Alison Foden
28 March 2018