Love Parks Week

During the week 14-23 July, Rushden took part in ‘Love Parks Week’ which is run each year by ‘Keep Britain Tidy’: a charity who aims to create a world in which people actively care for the environment. The charity started out aiming to prevent litter, but now works with businesses, the government and communities to protect the natural world around us. Councillors and council staff were out in Hall Park asking users why they loved the park and these are some of the responses:

**Lovely peaceful place to be. Most enjoy the woodland walks and looking out for squirrels**

**It’s a lovely clean and well maintained park**

**The dog park is ideal for training and socialising.**

**I love to see the seasons change.**

**We love the nature trail.**

**We can play games and it is always clean.**

**It brings people together.**

**Hall Park is really well looked after. Play area is fantastic for small children.**

To everyone who got involved this year, thank you for getting out and enjoying your local green space and thank you for sharing why you love your park and how much it means to you.

Green Flag Awarded for 4th Year

Once again, for the 4th year running, Rushden Hall Park has been accredited green flag status which recognises and rewards its many qualities. The flag was presented at an Award Ceremony in Derbyshire which was attended by the Town Clerk Mrs Vivienne Prodger and Contracts Supervisor Paul Wilcox who received the flag on behalf of the Council.
Update on Council Projects
Cllr. Sarah Peacock
Chairman of Policy & Resources Committee

The civic year has once again resumed after the Summer break and the P & R committee have had their first meeting.

Along with the matters of report and the day to day running of things, there was a long discussion regarding Public Spaces Protection Orders. These PSPOs as they are known were introduced in 2014 and sit amongst a range of powers to help tackle anti-social behaviour and are aimed at ensuring public spaces can be enjoyed free from anti-social behaviour. The Councillors decided that an area of concern was the Cenotaph and memorial garden. There have been numerous concerns raised by the community about some of the anti-social behaviour in this area. It has therefore been decided to recommend to the Full Council that Rushden Town Council seek a PSCO for this area. A formal process would then have to be followed along with consultations and evidence gathering to take place over the coming months.

Also on the agenda was an application for a Community Grant for Rushden & Higham Ferrers United FC to help support the youth football within the town. A grant of £2,000 was agreed.

We also reviewed the projects that we have on-going in the town and will be adding new ones as we move forward. For a town of our size we have a very proactive outlook and we are always working to make the town appealing to both residents and visitors alike. Please contact the Clerk if you know of an area that needs attention.

Change of Name for Women’s Aid

Northamptonshire Domestic Abuse Services (NDAS) is a county-wide organisation providing support services and emergency refuge accommodation for victims of domestic abuse and violence. The services also cover a range of other areas, including: services for male victims, change programmes for perpetrators and support for children witnessing abuse. The change from Northampton Women’s Aid to NDAS recognises the wider impact domestic abuse and violence has on all groups of people and their families. It is not just women and girls who suffer it, many men are victims too. NDAS is one of a very limited number of DA support organisations across the UK that provides a male-only refuge.

NDAS's website provides details of its services: www.ndas.co.uk

The 24/7 helpline number is: 0300 012 0154
NDAS is on Facebook: NorthamptonshireDAS and on Twitter: @NorthantsDAS

Nature Trail Update

The Nature trail is proving a great success and was used daily by the different groups of people within the town before the Summer holidays. Various projects took place and there was some great works of art created, by the children of South End School using twigs and leaves, and children from Alfred Street School who created faces on trees using play dough. It has also been used by the community during the Summer holidays and hopefully will help Scout groups to deliver some of their badges where nature is the main topic.

The bug hotels are well inhabited and are regularly serviced and refreshed. The children are looking forward to seeing “Who lives in a hotel like this?” when they return for the Autumn term.

The environment changes daily and all the plants grow and grasses will be cut back so that it can replant and grow for the next season. Cyril the squirrel is proving popular in the wood and will soon have a furry namesake who will be around the town. So look out for him. You never know when he will pop up next.

Bark in the Park

Rushden Town Council would like to thank everyone who helped us at the show and all those who attended and took part, especially all the wonderful dogs that made it a very special day.

We have raised a grand total of £2,046 for our charities and would like to thank everyone for their generosity and support.

Enterprising East Northants

East Northants Council recently launched Enterprising East Northants, the Council’s Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan for the district.

A Charter for business is the first part of the programme to be driven forward. The Business Charter aims to strengthen the working relationship between East Northamptonshire Council and local businesses to improve overall economic performance and prosperity across the district. It reaffirms ENC’s support for local businesses and the crucial role that enterprise has to play in supporting thriving communities.

Find out more at www.east-northamptonshire.gov.uk/enterpriseEN

Council agrees Rushden East master-planning vision

The vision for a new Sustainable Urban Extension that will provide good quality housing and employment within high quality and well-connected environments has been approved by East Northants Council.

Located to the East of Rushden and Higham Ferrers beyond the A6 Liberty Way, the Rushden East Sustainable Urban Extension forms part of the council’s planning strategy that will “enhance the image of Rushden and Higham Ferrers and will be well-connected to and integrated to both towns. It will contain around 2,500 new homes along with new employment, social and community facilities and a high quality landscape setting that enhances bio diversity.”

The purpose of the development is to achieve sustainable development to meet rising population pressure which also helps to protect rural areas from over-development and is likely to be completed in the early 2030’s.

Spencer Park

The refurbishment of the changing rooms at Spencer Park has now been completed. The improvements include a public, disabled friendly toilet, greatly improved showers and parking facilities.

We will be officially opening the changing rooms in October and will be hosting a football match for the contractors who have worked on this project.

These refurbishments have been collectively funded by East Northants Community Facilities Fund, Section 106 monies and Rushden Town Council.
The previous edition of Rushden matters promoted ‘A summer of activity’ – that has certainly been the case for me and I hope that you too have enjoyed all the great events that have happened around the town – the most momentous of these has of course been the eagerly anticipated opening of Rushden Lakes. This new chapter in Rushden’s story has unfolded week by week, and I doubt you have been disappointed.

Since taking office in May, I have had the pleasure of attending a long list of engagements, large and small, and met with many people. The organisation of large events, such as Armed Forces Day, Party Week, Party in the Park, Proms in the Park and Bark in the Park requires a huge amount of commitment. A lot of people continue each year to demonstrate their enthusiasm for the events and Rushden is rewarded with an outstanding programme of fun and activity for all the family.

Proms in the Park provided the first opportunity for me to raise funds for my three main charities, Rushden Branch of the Royal British Legion, TS Diamond Rushden Sea Cadets and Medical Detection Dogs - a charity that pioneers the use of dogs’ powerful sense of smell to detect major illnesses, such as cancer, at a much earlier stage than would be possible by conventional means. They also train medical alert dogs to assist people with life-threatening health conditions.

Other fundraising events are planned and I am particularly thrilled to announce a concert featuring HMS Collingwood Band of the Royal Marines And Corp of Drums. This will be an evening of spectacle and music to be held at Rushden Town Bowling Club on Saturday 3 February 2018.

I do hope you will come along and support my events. Look out for further details on Rushden Town Council website.

Rushden Town Band now have new banners thanks to a grant provided by the Town Council. The band regularly competes in regional and national brass band competitions with consistent success and was promoted to the First Section in January 2017. The new banners for their music stands which feature Rushden Hall as the background will enhance the visual impact of the band and display the pride that Rushden has in its town band.

I am delighted to hear the news that Rushden has the ‘healthiest’ town centre in the north of the county, according to a leading retail advisor’s latest rankings. Harper Dennis Hobbs’ (HDH) vitality report has ranked retail centres based on the proportion of upmarket shops, value-led shops, unit vacancy rates and ‘undesirable’ shops, such as pawnbrokers and money lenders. Of the 1,000 UK centres in the list, Rushden is the highest from the north of the county at 385. The ranking is great news for Rushden and compliments the recent High Street improvement actions that have taken place.

The opening of Rushden Lakes has certainly put Rushden firmly on the map; Rushden has recently featured on the National news, BBC Countryfile and local BBC Radio Northampton, which was broadcast, live from the Lakes. The unique mix of retail and leisure at the Lakes has attracted thousands of visitors in its first few weeks of trading. Rushden Town Council, East Northamptonshire Council and Rushden Town Partnership are working together to encourage the influx of additional visitors to venture further afield to explore the whole of the area. Local people have been consistent with their support of Rushden Lakes from the onset and it is exciting to know a large percentage of local people have now been successfully employed within the complex. There are opportunities to promote local events and activities through the community notice board sited at the Lakes, please let me know if you have an event coming up and you need some help to promote it.

Rushden Town Council have recently supported many local businesses through its Shop Front Grants initiative, the scheme is open to all businesses who need help with the refurbishment of shop fronts up to a maximum of £500. For further details please contact the Town Clerk.

I work closely with Rushden Town Partnership (RTP), a community organisation that was set up to develop a genuine and effective partnership with businesses and community groups in Rushden. Details of how businesses and organisations can join the partnership can be found at www.rushdentown.org.uk. RTP organises regular networking opportunities for local businesses and community groups to get together and hear what the partnership are doing for the stakeholders in the town. The next business networking meeting is scheduled as a breakfast meeting 7 for 7:30am on Tuesday 25 September 2017; the guest speaker for this meeting is Greg Macdonald, Head of Economic and Commercial Development at East Northamptonshire Council. Anyone wishing to attend the meeting please contact Rushden Town Partnership email rushdentownpartnership@gmail.com

Forthcoming events in Rushden include an open air movie night, a 1940’s weekend, Annual Fireworks display and the Christmas Lights Switch On. Check the web site for details.

Best wishes Julie.
Awards for Museum

Rushden Museum won two Awards this year at the Northamptonshire Heritage Awards which took place at Sulgrave Manor on 20th July. The event was compared by BBC Radio Northampton’s John Griff in front of an audience of over 100 members and invited guests.

They won Best Volunteer Project for the new research area created to allow visitors to look at past projects and also an area to study family trees.

They also received Highly Commended for supporting Clive Wood with his new book about Rushden Hall. (Copies of which are still available from the museum on request.)

It was a super evening for the museum which is run by a small committee and group of volunteers who were acknowledged for all the hard work that goes into the museum each year.

They are already busy working toward next year’s exhibition which will see the end of the First World War and will be highlighting Bernard Vann VC and other events of the 1918 War as well as remembering those who lost their lives.

Anyone who would like to help or who has information that could be displayed then please contact the museum on 01933 317261.

First Patron for SERVE

The Trustees of SERVE, a charity based in Rushden who support the independent living of older people and adults with disabilities had been toying with the idea of inviting someone to join the organisation in the role of Patron. A Patron is a person ‘of note’ who is prepared to support the work of the charity, well known because of their position in society and a positive role model encouraging others to support the charity. The position is an Honorary role as opposed to an Executive role.

Sylvia Smith has been a champion for older people in the Rushden area for many years. She started her working career in physiotherapy at St Mary’s Hospital in Kettering in 1974. In 1984 Sylvia joined Serve as its Operations Director and remained in that position until her retirement in 2000. She was the founder of the Stroke Club in Rushden and was Chair of Active Aging in Northamptonshire. She also founded the former Northamptonshire Heartlands Primary Care Trust’s (PCT) Older Persons Health Forums and still chairs Serve’s Older Persons Forum. Sylvia Smith’s name is still synonymous with Serve to this day and was the person who the Board of Trustees selected as fitting the criteria.

Serve held a ‘You and Serve’ event at Vesuvius in Sharnbrook where Sylvia was presented with a certificate to mark her Patronage with Serve. She was joined by her partner, Ron and her two daughters.

Rotary Club of Rushden

Rotary Club of Rushden would like to thank all those who participated in the 2017 schools’ programme to find Rushden’s talented young people. Congratulations to the winners - Young Writer - Ellie Gardner, South End Junior School Young Artist - Patsy Merry-Johnston, Denfield Park Young Achiever - Ashleigh Townsend The popular Schools’ Quiz was won by Denfield Park.

Rotary Club of Rushden also presented 462 Osborne dictionaries to children in year 6 and moving up to secondary education.

During the last Rotary Year to 30 June 2017, Rushden Rotary Club donated £14,825 in support of local and national charities raised through fundraising events /activities such as the Trolley Dash Raffle, Disaster Relief Collections, competing in the annual Dragon Boat festival and various Fund-Raising Evenings. They also planted 5000 crocus bulbs in Hall Park and at the Lightstrung Rotary sign as part of “End Polio Now”, which is Rotary’s campaign aiming to eliminate polio worldwide.

To find out more about The Rotary Club of Rushden please contact the Membership Chair on m.win725@btinternet.com or visit the web site at www.rotary-ribi.org/clubs/homepage.php?ClubID=436 or see the facebook page.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Sep 28 - World’s Biggest Coffee Morning, Rushden Hall 10.30 am - 12.30 pm
Oct 1 - Mayor’s Civic Service 11 am St Mary’s Church.
Nov 4 - Firework Display, Hall Park 12 - Remembrance Day Parade 10.30 am.
25 - Christmas Lights Switch-On 2018
Feb 3 - HM Royal Marines Band Concert