

**David Ashlee** Town Clerk and Chief Executive

Date: 22 October 2021

Dear Councillors

A meeting of the Community Services Committee will be held on **Monday 1 November 2021** in the **Council Chambers** at **Grove House, High Street North, Dunstable at 7.00 pm**. Those members of the public and press who wish to attend are invited to do so remotely using Microsoft Teams. Therefore, they are asked to notify their intention to attend by emailing [Ian.Reed@dunstable.gov.uk](mailto:Ian.Reed@dunstable.gov.uk) by 29 October 2021

### **AGENDA**

1. Apologies for Absence.
2. Minutes of the meetings of the Community Services Committee held on 6 September 2021 (previously circulated).
3. Declarations of Interest.
4. Presentation - to receive information on the services provided to the Town of Dunstable by the following organisations;  
  
Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) - Cliff Andrews  
Town Guides - Kay Kempster
5. Dunstable Town Centre Services – information report (see page 3).
6. Older People’s Services – information report (see page 6).
7. Grove Corner and Community Engagement – information report (see page 8).
8. Priory House – information report (see page 11).
9. Events and Marketing – to determine 2022/23 events programme (see page 14).
10. High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) – information report (see page 18).

- 11.. Reports from outside bodies:  
South Beds Dial-a-Ride Management Committee - Cllr Gloria Martin  
Dunstable Town Band - Cllr Gloria Martin  
Men in Sheds - Cllr John Gurney

Yours faithfully



David Ashlee  
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

To: All Members of the Community Services Committee:  
Gloria Martin (Town Mayor), Liz Jones (Deputy Town Mayor), Peter Hollick (Chairman),  
Cameron Restall, (Vice-Chairman), Sid Abbott, Wendy Bater, Alan Corkhill, Gregory George,  
Pam Ghent, John Gurney, Lee Roberts, Gladys Sanders and other Members of the Council for  
information

**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL****COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE****MONDAY 1 NOVEMBER 2021****DUNSTABLE TOWN CENTRE SERVICES**

<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	For information only.
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**1. MARKETS****1.1 Middle Row Markets**

Middle Row Markets have been well attended; full markets are now a regular occurrence. Bookings for all the markets are continuing with the numbers below as pre booked stalls. Twilight Markets will take place on Friday 10 December 4.00 pm to 9.00 pm, Saturday 11 December 12.00 pm to 9.00 pm, Sunday 12 December 10.00 am to 3.00 pm. Middle Row Markets will finish on the 18 December and re open on the 26 March 2022 for a Mother's Day Market. Middle Row Markets will then continue the second and third Saturday of the month starting on the 9 April 2022.

13 November	31 pre booked
20 November	31 pre booked
10 December	25 pre booked
11 December	37 pre booked
12 December	33 pre booked
18 December	25 pre booked

**2. ASHTON SQUARE TOILETS**

2.1 The Town Centre Services Officer entered the toilets for the Loo of the Year Award. Notification of the award will be announced in the next few weeks

**3. TOWN CENTRE VACANCY RATES**

3.1 The vacancy rates to the end of October 2021 are provided below. The count will be undertaken again at the start January 2022.

3.2 The town centre area used for the survey includes properties in High Street North up to Regent Street, High Street South to Friars Walk (excluding Thames Industrial Estate), Church Street up to and including Aldi and West Street up to the Police Station/St Mary's Gate.

3.3 Eleanor's Cross, Ashton Square, Albion Street, The Quadrant and Grove Park (including Asda) have been included, but rates can be calculated with or without these properties.

3.4 These figures have been shared with Central Bedfordshire Council officers.

No. Units	No. Vacant Units	% Vacant Units	Previous %
<b>253</b>	<b>28 vacant</b>	<b>11.07%</b>	13.04% Count end of July 21.

The following figures relate to the High Street (including Grove Park, Albion Street, Eleanor's Cross and Ashton Square but excluding the Quadrant Shopping Centre.

No. Units	No. Vacant Units	% Vacant Units	Previous %
<b>210</b>	<b>25 vacant</b>	<b>11.90%</b>	13.33% Count end of July 21.

The following figures relate to the Quadrant Shopping Centre only.

No. Units	No. Vacant Units	% Vacant Units	Previous %
<b>43</b>	<b>3 vacant</b>	<b>6.97%</b>	11.62% Count end of July 21

#### 4. **TOWN CENTRE**

##### 4.1 **Events on the Square**

Twilight Christmas Market is Friday 10 December, 4.00 pm to 9.00 pm, Saturday 11 December 12.00 pm to 9.00 pm, Sunday 12 December 10.00 am to 3.00 pm. Twilight Christmas Market will build on the success of last year's night market with added Christmas lights, stalls, free children's carousel, selfie areas, naughty and nice detector and Victorian carol singers.

4.2 Middle Row Markets dates are being used to hold small family activities within the market to promote HSHAZ community engagement, through crafts and walk about entertainment; this has been well received by the public and stall holders. This will continue in 2022 with small events during each market.

##### 4.3 **Partnership Working**

Shop Front Scheme has supported a total of 21 shops, the scheme has enough money to support one more shop. Herington Chemist has been targeted by the Town Centre Services Officer to engage and encourage the shop to use the last £500 towards a new sign. The Town Centre Services officer has visited the shop over four times, with still very little engagement from the tenant. The Town Centre Officer will now consider other shops for this final grant. Feedback from The Sign Shop was of gratitude for the local business this scheme provided.

4.5 After the success of Festival of Archaeology Officers continue to work closely with The Quadrant Shopping Centre and Central Bedfordshire Libraries: regular meetings have led to a successful partnership during the Around the World

event. Town Centre Services Officer will continue to look at joint events for next year.

- 4.6 Letters have been sent to street traders by Central Bedfordshire Council due to the overuse of the bins in Ashton Square which Dunstable Town Council provide. Town Centre Services Officer will look at the suitability of storing the bins in the locked compound to reduce any fly tipping.

## **5. WELCOME BACK FUND**

- 5.1 The following festive activities will be delivered as part of the Welcome Back Fund;
- Giant polar bear situated in Ashton Square during the Christmas season.
  - Illuminations during Twilight Market.
  - Free Carousel at the Twilight Market.
  - Extra illuminations during the Light Festival in Grove Gardens.
  - Walk about entertainment on Middle Row Market (18 December).
- 5.2 Welcome Back Wardens are working to support Middle Row Markets up until Christmas.
- 5.3 Artificial flowers at the end of Middle Row and the flower wall will be removed by the end of November. Plant containers will be reused by DTC for other projects within the town, hanging flowers will be left a little longer along Middle Row.
- 5.4 The artificial grass bear will stay next to the Quadrant shopping Centre during the winter, he will be dressed appropriately for the season. The squirrel will stay in Grove Gardens and will also be dressed for the season.

## **6 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS**

- 6.1 Orders have been placed for new Christmas lights in Ashton Square and Church Street. This is part of a longer-term plan to add lights each year to the new lighting scheme along the High Street, West Street and Queensway. Due to some bespoke decorations being made and orders being sent from abroad, some decorations may not arrive until the end of November. All other decorations have now been fitted, including the new tree decorations in Ashton Square and Church Street.
- 6.2 New Christmas tree lights have been ordered for the main tree in The Square and Priory Gardens, Grove House Gardens will have the blue and white lights. The Ashton Square tree will arrive on 17 November and will have new lights dressed ready for the Torchlight event on 26 November.

## **7. AUTHOR**

- 7.1 Annette Clynes - Town Centre Services Officer  
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**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE**  
**MONDAY 1 NOVEMBER 2021**  
**OLDER PEOPLE'S SERVICES**

<b>Purpose of report:</b> For information only.
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**1. GOOD COMPANIONS CLUB**

- 1.1 The Good Companions Club continues to do well with an average of 17 users each week. A new gentleman joined the group on 18 October.
- 1.2 Users of the Good Companions Club enjoyed a day on the canal at the beginning of September. Everyone said how wonderful it was to be able to get out and feel 'normal' after such an isolating 18 months. This group also enjoyed a Seaside Day which included crazy golf, a variety of games, a fish & chip lunch and a visit from a local ice cream van. All very much appreciated and enjoyed. The group have also worked with officers on the HAZ project and have taken part in various games and quizzes. Officers have been busy making plans leading up to Christmas including craft sessions, Christmas lunch at a local restaurant, and entertainment from guest vocalists.
- 1.3 From November until April, Good Companions Club will be running from 10.30 am to 2.00 pm at the request of those who attend. Members have reported back to officers that the club length has been a challenge for some after the last 18 months. Therefore, for the winter months, the club will run 30 minutes shorter each week.

**2. CREASEY PARK COMMUNITY FOOTBALL CENTRE LUNCH CLUB**

- 2.1 Creasey Park Community Football lunch club continues to do well with an average of 24 users attending each week.
- 2.2 Since the last report users have enjoyed a variety of activities and speakers including work with officers surrounding the HAZ project, a visit from Jonquil Floral Design who demonstrated an autumnal table decoration, a music bingo session led by one of the users and a seaside themed day. On 2 September, 28 users enjoyed a day on the canal which included a fish and chip lunch. All have been very well received and enjoyed.
- 2.3 Officers have been very busy with plans leading up to Christmas, these include entertainment bookings, Christmas lunch at a local restaurant, a talk about hedgehog rescue and quizzes. Offers have also been in discussion with a local youth theatre group and the possibility of a tailor-made performance for users of both lunch clubs which would be held at Creasey Park Community Football Centre on 22 December.

**3. COFFEE MORNINGS**

- 3.1 The first of six planned coffee mornings took place on 30 September at Grove Corner, nine people attended. This was very well received. Fifteen people took part in a second coffee morning, that took place at the Chapel at West Street Cemetery on 19 October. This coffee morning was supported by a representative of Health Watch who was on hand to offer help and support.

**4. ROCK & ROLL**

- 4.1 Officers have now been able to secure a date at Creasey Park Community Football Centre for the Rock & Roll event. This will take place on 23 November. 40 tickets were made available and are selling well.

**5. AUTHORS**

- 5.1 Elaine McGarrigle, Older People's Services Officer  
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- 5.2 Gill Peck, Youth and Community Manager  
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**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL****COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE****MONDAY 1 NOVEMBER 2021****GROVE CORNER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

<b>Purpose of Report:</b> For information.
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**1. GROVE CORNER FIGURES**

- 1.1 Grove Corner has received 268 visits from young people between 23 August to 15 October 2021.
- 1.2 Pokémon has received 67 visits from young people between 13 September and 12 October 2021. Pokémon continues to be popular and the 14 to 18 year old group has seen numbers increase.
- 1.3 Grove Corner now has 687 Facebook 'Likes' and Grove Corner's Instagram now has 331 followers.

**2. YOUTH ENGAGEMENT**

- 2.1 The young people who attend Junior Youth Group have received CPR training delivered by Young Healthwatch. All who took part received a certificate which is recognised by British Heart Foundation. This training will be delivered to those who are 16 to 18 in November.
- 2.2 The young people attending Grove Corner have had guest speakers attend some sessions. Kooth, a mental health charity for young people attended and provided young people with information about their service. Link to Change have attended a session to build rapport with the young people and to discuss online safety with them. Young Healthwatch have attended to discuss volunteering opportunities with the young people and Att10tive, an organisation that works across Bedfordshire with the aim of building life skills and employability skills for young people attended a session to tell the group more about the work they do.
- 2.3 Officers have begun to see new young people attend sessions. The young people have heard about Grove Corner through word of mouth, from professionals within Dunstable, through friends inviting them and by seeing the sessions advertised on social media.
- 2.4 Officers have been working with the young people who attend Pokémon to design their own characters. This has been popular amongst those who attend. Officers are currently exploring ways to develop and evolve this work.
- 2.5 Officers have networked with several professionals; including the Participation Manager for Looked After Children and Care Experienced Adults at Central



Bedfordshire Council, the Registered Manager at Walfinch Care, and professionals at Link to Change.

- 2.6 Officers have been using hard data to evaluate the success of the gaming suite.

**2019 stats:**

January 2019 to 11 October 2019

**Total: 848 visits to Grove Corner face to face sessions (this does not include Pokémon)**

**2020 stats:**

10 January 2020 to 20 March 2020 (when face to face work stopped due to covid)

**Total: 272 visits to Grove Corner face to face sessions**

**2021 stats:**

January 2021 to March 2021

**207 young people were engaged with digitally**

From 12 April (when sessions reopened) to 11 October 21

**Total: 595 visits to Grove Corner face to face sessions**

**150 Pokémon visits**

**109 Young people engaged through detached youth work**

**Total number of young people engaged: 1,067** between January 2021 – October 2021 through digital provision, Grove Corner face to face, detached youth work and Pokémon.

- 2.7 It's worth noting that the 2021 statistics that Grove Corner was opened on 12 April 2021 with a reduced service for the first few weeks due to covid guidelines and with limited numbers initially.

**3. SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT**

- 3.1 Officers have been working in partnership with Ringcraft Boxing to deliver a project called Wellbeing Warriors.
- 3.2 15 young people who are in year six are taking part in the project. All who attend have expressed how much they are enjoying the project and officers have noticed confidence increasing in some of the members attending.
- 3.3 Officers are working with Weatherfield Academy on an intergenerational project in partnership with Good Companions Lunch Club. The two groups are looking at past, present and future Dunstable as part of the High Street Heritage Action Zone.
- 3.4 Officers will also be attending Icknield Lower School in January 2022 for three consecutive sessions as part of the intergenerational project.
- 3.5 Officers facilitated a flint knapping workshop in partnership with Central Bedfordshire College. Primitive Technology ran three workshops on Tuesday 28 September 2021 for students who attend the college. Approximately 10 students attended each session with 30 attending in total.

#### **4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

- 4.1 Officers have held two litter picks in both the Beecroft and Downside area. Officers will be facilitating other litter picks in local wards in the upcoming months.
- 4.2 Officers have been working with Friends of Dunstable Cemetery to build the group back up after a long break during the pandemic. The group have been meeting the third Friday of each month since May. Officers will continue to advertise the group and encourage new members to join.
- 4.3 Officers have facilitated sessions with Weatherfield Academy, Good Companions Lunch Club and Creasey Park Community Football Centre on the intergenerational project as part of the High Street Heritage Action Zone project. Further sessions have been planned. The project is looking at the past, present and future of the High Street Heritage Action Zone area, creating a miniature model of all group's suggestions and ideas. Officers will also be attending Icknield Lower School in January for three consecutive sessions.
- 4.4 A free family fun day is taking place on Friday 29 October 2021 at Creasey Park Community Football Centre. This is for families with young children to enjoy Halloween themed arts and craft bags.
- 4.5 Officers have been planning the High Street Heritage Action Zone mapping activity as part of the community engagement plan. The Community Services Assistant will be visiting local businesses and organisations in the local area with a questionnaire to gather hard and soft data on different suggestions and opinions of what local stakeholders would like to see in the area.

#### **5. AUTHORS**

- 5.1 Gill Peck – Youth and Community Manager  
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- 5.2 Jack Adams-Rimmer – Senior Neighbourhood Development Officer  
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**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**MONDAY 1 NOVEMBER 2021**

**PRIORY HOUSE**

<b>Purpose of Report:</b> For Information only.
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**1. OPERATIONAL ISSUES**

- 1.1 In consultation with staff at Priory House it was decided that the screens around the till areas in the Tea Rooms and Gift Shop, be removed as well as the plastic screens between the seating areas. Staff are feeling more positive about moving back to normal.

**2. TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE AND RETAIL OUTLET**

- 2.1 Stock has been ordered for Christmas and will be on sale from early November.
- 2.2 Frenchic paint range is selling really well and is generating good income for the shop, to date the shop has sold £1,919 worth since 8 July, of which the profit is £845. It is also bringing new customers into the shop, which is seeing additional secondary spend.
- 2.3 Showcase shelving is doing well, and officers are currently booking out space for 2022.

**3. THE JACOBAN ROOM/ WEDDINGS**

- 3.1 The October wedding open day was extremely popular with 14 couples coming to view. From this, we booked our first Civil Partnership/Ceremony. The wedding open days will recommence in February 2022 and will take place once a month.
- 3.2 There are currently 12 booked weddings between November 2021 and 23 October 2022.
- 3.3 The Jacobean Room is currently being hired by NOAH on Mondays, who are using it for an adult IT course.
- 3.4 The Halloween Afternoon Teas will all be held in the Jacobean Room, and at time of writing 43 Halloween Afternoon Tea bookings have been made.
- 3.5 The Christmas Afternoon Teas will also be predominantly served in the Jacobean Room, which will be fully decorated, and Christmas music played.

**4. EVENTS**

- 4.1 Shop staff will once again be selling glow products at the Torchlight Procession on Friday 26 November.
- 4.2 There are several new workshop style events taking place for Christmas for both adults, families and children. These workshops are all bookable via the website and so far are

selling well. The wreath workshop is the most popular and there is an option to add a second date if required.

- 4.3 There will be a 'Paws and Prints' pet day outside on the lawn, where the public can bring their pets for a Christmas themed photos shoot and buy the photo if they wish.
- 4.4 There will also be a traditional Santa's Sleigh in the exhibition room as a free photo prop for people to use throughout December. It is hoped this will attract some new customers into the Tea Rooms.

## **5. PRIORY HOUSE TEA ROOMS**

- 5.1 The Team at Priory House will be supporting the Torchlight event and will remain open on the Friday evening to serve hot and cold beverages and festive cakes.
- 5.2 The Tea Rooms and Gift Shop will also be open for all three days/evenings of the Twilight market, serving a festive menu and an outside bar.
- 5.3 Christmas Afternoon Teas will start 22 November and run through until 23 December. Customers are already starting to make their reservations.
- 5.4 Pudding Nights will continue to be taking place once a month on a Friday night to try and increase spend from the customers. These are now for sale via the website at £8 per person. There are 50 tickets on sale per event.

19 November – 0 places left  
 3 December – 30 places left  
 17 December – 36 places left.

## **6. FINANCE**

- 6.1 Priory House Tea Rooms takings comparison ex VAT as at 30 September 2021.

	2019/2020	2021/2022	Variation 2021/2022 to 2019/2020	% Difference	Add Income 2021/22
<b>TOTAL FOR 1ST QUARTER</b>	£32,136.29	£19,440.35	£-12,695.94	-40	£1,022.48
<b>TOTAL FOR 2ND QUARTER</b>	£29,319.98	£39,093.30	£9,773.32	33	£772.48
<b>TOTAL TO DATE</b>	<b>£61,456.27</b>	<b>£58,533.65</b>	<b>£-2,922.62</b>	<b>-6</b>	<b>£1,794.96</b>

- 6.2 Income is only 6% down against the first two quarters of 2019/2020. Additional income is via Tea Rooms stock, via the shop e.g. chutneys and jams, and also catering income from

functions.

6.3 Priory House Shop takings comparison ex VAT as at 30 September 2021.

	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2021/2022</b>	<b>Variation 2021/2022 to 2019/2020</b>	<b>% Difference</b>
<b>TOTAL FOR 1ST QUARTER</b>	£1,769.41	£1,299.98	-£469.43	-27
<b>TOTAL FOR 2ND QUARTER</b>	£2,596.50	£3,806.34	£1,209.84	47
<b>TOTAL TO DATE</b>	<b>£4,365.90</b>	<b>£5,106.31</b>	<b>£740.41</b>	<b>20</b>

6.4 Income for the shop is 20% up against the first two quarters of 2019/2020. This has been achieved by new stock ranges e.g., Frenchic paint range, more regular sales and improved marketing.

7. **AUTHOR**

7.1 Lisa Stephens  
Cultural Services Manager  
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**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE**  
**MONDAY 1 NOVEMBER 2021**  
**EVENTS AND MARKETING**

**Purpose of report:** This report provides information on progress with the remainder of the 2021 events programme and requests the Committee to determine the programme for 2022/23.

**1. ACTION RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1 That the Committee be asked to determine the events programme for 2022/23 as proposed at section 4.7.

**2. EVENTS PROGRAMME 2021 REVIEW**

**2.1 Around the World**

Around the World and the Dunstable Festival of Archaeology event was very well received by both the public and participants. Attendance over the day was estimated at 1,500. It was noted that the combination of HSHAZ themed elements and activities alongside the cultural entertainment worked well together. The event drew in an audience who were interested in exploring Dunstable's past and archaeological findings from the area, then later stayed on to enjoy the cultural performances and entertainment from Around the World.

**2.2 Priory Pictures**

Priory Pictures was attended by an estimated 2,000 people across the weekend. Priory House's Take Out special proved popular and competition winners enjoyed the special VIP area supplied by Event Production Live. Both are new additions to Priory Pictures and will be replicated again.

**2.3 Priory Proms in the Park**

Priory Proms in the Park was very well attended with one of the biggest audiences to date with positive feedback received. A new addition to the event this year was a VIP area managed by Priory House, where table bookings were taken via the DTC website. A total of six tables were booked, Priory House will be looking at offering this again next year.

**3. FUTURE EVENTS - PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

**3.1 Winter Lights Festival**

The launch for the Winter Light Festival in Grove House Gardens will be on Wednesday 24 November at 6.00 pm and is currently being planned by officers. The lights installation will be in place from Wednesday 24 November to Friday 7 January 2022 and will be on every day from dusk until 11.00 pm.

### 3.2 **Christmas Carols and Torchlight Procession**

Planning for the Christmas Carols and Torchlight Procession is going well. To date nine schools have shown interest in attending the event, they have been sent an invitation with the deadline of 20 October to confirm how many children can participate.

The road closure will be in place and businesses and residents affected by this will be written to in advance.

Grove Theatre's Christmas pantomime cast from Aladdin have confirmed they will be attending the event and BBB will be providing the lights show finale.

## 4. **PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT FOR 2022 ONWARDS**

4.1 The table below in section 4.7 shows the proposed dates for 2022. It is proposed that there are changes of times and dates for the following events:

- Around the World
- Classic Motor Rally
- Queen's Jubilee Concert
- Sunday Band Concerts
- Winter Lights Festival

### 4.2 Around the world

It is suggested that the Around the World event takes place on Saturday 30 July. The date proposed falls into the range of the Council for British Archaeology's Festival of Archaeology (Friday 16 July to Sunday 31 July 2022) allowing HSHAZ themed elements and activities to be programmed into Around the World as part of the nationwide festival.

### 4.3 Classic Motor Rally

Due to moving the Around the World event into July, the Classic Motor Rally will take place in May as a replacement. If the Classic Motor Rally was to stay scheduled in June as in previous years, there would be three large events all occurring in June, two of which would be in Priory Gardens, which could cause a lot of damage to the grass.

### 4.4 Queen's Jubilee Concert

As agreed at the September Community Services Committee, the Queen's Jubilee Concert will replace one Priory Pictures on Saturday 4 June with the special concert broadcast from the BBC shown live via a giant screen.

### 4.5 Sunday Band Concerts

This year, four Sunday Band Concerts took place over the summer with two brass bands playing per day. Officers noted that the early session was attended by younger families which was different to previous years. It is suggested that the schedule for 2022 Sunday Band Concerts is trialed with the two sessions per day to

see if a wider audience is reached. There will still be six concerts in total, running in the months of June, July and August.

Charities will be invited to apply to run the tea and concession during the intervals again at the Sunday Band Concerts.

#### 4.6 Winter Lights Festival

The Committee may wish to defer a decision to hold the Winter Lights Festival in 2022 until the January Committee. This will enable officers and members to review and evaluate the success of this year's event. A budget of £18,000 remains allocated towards the winter event next year, and the table below suggestions possible dates should this be agreed at committee in January 2022.

#### 4.7 Table.1 – proposed 2022/23 events programme and dates.

<b>Event and venue</b>	<b>Date 2022</b>
St Georges Day (PG)	Saturday 23 April 11 am to 4 pm
Classic Motor Rally (PG)	Saturday 21 May 10 am to 4 pm
Queen's Jubilee Concert (PG)	Saturday 4 June (Times TBC)
Dunstable Live (GHG)	Saturday 18 June 3 pm to 8 pm
Party in the Park (GHG)	Saturday 9 July 12 noon to 8 pm
Around the World (PG)	Saturday 30 July 10.30 am to 4.30 pm
Sunday Band Concerts (GHG)	Sunday 26 June, 3 July & 7 August 12.00 noon & 2.45 pm
Priory Pictures (PG)	Saturday 13 August From 12 noon
Priory Proms in the Park (PG)	Saturday 10 September (Times TBC)
Winter Lights Festival (GHG) (TBC)	Wednesday 23 November to Friday 6 January Dusk to 11 pm
Christmas Carols and Torchlight Procession (The Square)	Friday 25 November From 7 pm

## 5. **SPONSORSHIP**

- 5.1 The Events Officer is currently engaging with local businesses to seek a sponsor for the Events Programme for 2022/23.

## 6. **MARKETING**

- 6.1 The Facebook and Twitter accounts are progressing well with increased interaction and growing numbers of Followers/Likes. Priory House's new Facebook page has been steadily gaining followers and likes since its launch in July. All page likes are shown below:



**Facebook page likes are:**

Dunstable Town Council Facebook	8,147
Bennett's Splash Park	2,515
Town Ranger Services	1,209
Creasey Park Community Football Centre	744
Grove Corner	687
High Street Heritage Action Zone	394
Priory House	227

**Twitter account followers are:**

Dunstable Town Council	2,384
Dunstable Town Centre	2,137
Dunstable Events	2,016
Creasey Park Community Football Centre	687
Priory House	477

**Instagram:**

Grove Corner	331
High Street Heritage Action Zone	140

6.2 Talk of The Town 2022/23

- 6.3 In the next financial year the Council will continue to produce four editions of Talk of the Town. However, due to increase in paper costs and without increasing the budget, the January 2023 edition will be an online version with 1,000 hard copies printed for local distribution.

January edition, 8 pages - online version - 1,000 copies locally distributed.

May edition, 32 pages - 17,000 copies delivered

July edition, 16 pages - 17,000 copies delivered

November edition, 16 pages - 17,000 copies delivered

- 6.4 Talk of the Town still remains the Council's most important marketing tool and reaches a wide variety of the community. Officers have noticed an increase in enquires, bookings and footfall when Talk of the Town has been distributed.

**7. AUTHOR**

- 7.1 Gina Thanky – Events Officer  
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**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL****COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE****MONDAY 1 NOVEMBER****HIGH STREET HERITAGE ACTION ZONE (HSHAZ)****Purpose of Report:** For information only**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Members are aware that the Historic England (HE) High Streets Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) Programme: *Programme Delivery Guidance* sets out three complimentary strands to the HSHAZ scheme:

- **Physical Interventions**
- **Cultural Programme/ Cultural Consortium**
- **Community engagement**

Updates in respect of these three strands are detailed below.

**2. KEY DEVELOPMENTS**

2.1 Since 18 June 2021 no further grant offers have been issued to private property owners or tenants. However, several applications for physical works have been reviewed during this period as further detailed in Section 3. It was hoped that offers would be progressed in relation to five properties (as approved at Full Council on 4 October 2021) before 29 October 2021, but at present two of the three owners do not want to continue to work with the HSHAZ. Discussions are ongoing with third owner and officers and representatives from Historic England are meeting with him on 20 October 2021.

2.2 Officers are now regularly maintaining the Scheme Plan that HE produced in April 2021. The Scheme Plan must be submitted for comment and approval on a quarterly basis. The Scheme Plan includes the overall HSHAZ funding profile based on HE's requirement of:

- 10% in Year 1
- 40% plus underspend from year 1 in Year 2
- 40% in Year 3
- 10% in Year 4

It also includes a more detailed quarterly breakdown for year 2. Whilst the funding profile for year 2 has currently been approved this will be subject to a Mid-Year Review at the end of Quarter two (period up to the end of September 2021). The review will not commence until a month after the quarter has ended. It is understood Historic England hope to provide feedback following the review in early December 2021.

2.3 Since 6 September 2021 there has been no further feedback regarding the HSHAZ funding profile from Historic England and this will form part of the Mid-Year Review. As previously noted, Historic England are aware that we are liaising with our MP

and other HSHAZ's have reported that they are liaising with their MPs regarding the funding profile.

- 2.5 The Lead Professional (Conservation Accredited Architect) for the High Street South/Middle Row/Church Street projects Conception Architects/Anarchitecture Ltd have continued to have discussions with property owners and tenants who have shown an interest in working with the HSHAZ. Dave Innes has undertaken further site visits to Dunstable since later June 2021 to inform initial studies.

### **3. PHYSICAL INTERVENTIONS**

- 3.1 Whilst HE's requirements in respect of grant funds for private property owners and tenants and the basis on which private property owners and tenants may apply for funding is now better established there continue to be specific queries about eligibility.

- 3.2 To date there have been five grant applications from private property owners for initial work such as survey work and feasibility studies, these are in relation to the following properties:

- High Street South (Pizza Roma/Tillys)
- 12-14 High Street South (Top Cut Barbers)
- 20 and 22 High Street South (Coffee Pod and Celebrations)
- 24 High Street South (StudioJ)
- 26 High Street South (Beards and Barbers)

All of these progressed to grant offers, which were accepted and the initial feasibility work in respect of 12-14, 20, 22, 24 and 26 High Street South has been completed. The initial survey work in respect of 4 High Street South is ongoing.

- 3.3 Following the initial feasibility work there were four grant applications (relating to six properties) for physical works in relation to the following properties:

- 12-14 High Street South (Top Cut Barbers)
- 20 and 22 High Street South (Coffee Pod and Celebrations)
- 24 High Street South (StudioJ)
- 26 High Street South (Beards and Barbers)

These applications were reviewed and discussed in detail with Historic England during September and earlier October 2021. They were also the focus of the third Committee Working Group Decision Making Meeting held on 4 October 2021. Subsequently, a resolution was passed at Full Council on 4 October 2021 to support these applications, pending Historic England's approval. It was hoped that all three of the owners would decide to continue to work with the HSHAZ pending approval from Historic England. At present none of the owners have decided to proceed and none of the applications have progressed to formal offers. As detailed at 2.1 discussions are ongoing with one owner and it is hoped that this may progress to a formal offer.

- 3.4 In addition to the above, to date one grant application (in relation to 6 Church Street/Turkish Barbers) has been withdrawn as the property owner only wished to do work to the rear of the property. One grant application, which progressed to a grant offer (7 High Street South/Herringtons) for a shopfront scheme, has become

void. A further two grant applications are pending further updates from the applicants, and it is possible that these applications will not progress.

**Priory House**

- 3.5 The current work on Priory House represents the “Development Phase” of the project – and issues, repair requirements and possible options are being explored. Since the building familiarisation day in September 2020 the Morton Partnership and project team working under them have been undertaking investigations to inform the Development Phase.
- 3.6 The Priory House project team meetings on 21 June, 19 July, 20 September, and 18 October 2021 focused on discussing the results of the investigations to date, the requirements and possible approaches to the repair works and Delivery Phase. Also, discussion of the forthcoming Planning Application and how this will be approached to allow for flexibility when the physical works are taking place.
- 3.7 Since 6 September 2021 several draft reports have been issued including *Development Phase Report Part 1 Structural Assessment and Condition Survey*, *Development Phase Report Part 2 Technical Proposals to Repair and Conserve Priory House* and *Development Phase Report Part 3 Construction Impact Study and Outline Methodology for Works to Priory House*. Along with several draft specialist reports including a Heating Feasibility and Benchmark Environmental Study and Monitoring. The reports will be revised and finalised in due course.
- 3.8 The Heritage Impact Assessment, which is required to aid and finalise decision-making is still in preparation.

**High Street South/Middle Row and Church Street projects**

***Mid-March 2021 onwards engagement with all property owners/long-term tenants***

- 3.9 Since letters were sent out in the post to all property owners within the HSHAZ and letters were hand delivered in mid-March and mid-April respectively, there have been numerous inquiries from property owners and tenants (as summarised in Appendix 1). Additionally, the property owners officers were engaging with in advance of the two mailshots, have largely confirmed their positions in respect of the HSHAZ (as detailed in Appendix 1).
- 3.10 Conception Architects have completed some general design work to try to encourage private property owners/tenants to sign up to work with the HSHAZ (as further detailed in Appendix 1, Table 3). This work was request by Historic England and was completed during September 2021. Following the recent review and discussions regarding applications for physical works (as detailed at 3.3) officers have been using the 12 *Summary of Work and Artists Impressions* produced by Conception Architects, to try and engage with the relevant property owners.
- 3.11 Appendix 1. comprises four tables summarising engagement and interest to date: **Table 1** Confirmed Approved Costs Actively engaged with the HSHAZ – either signed grant offer or submitted an application or indicated will submit an application.

**Table 2** Possible Costs Actively engaged with the HSHAZ – either submitted an application that has not yet been approved or indicated they will submit an application

**Table 3** Possible Costs Conception Architects Target Properties – Property Owner or Tenant not currently actively engaged but Conception Architects are undertaking some initial design work to try and encourage property owners/tenants to work with the HSHAZ

**Table 4** Have made an inquiry, possibly including various discussions and online meetings, but not yet progressed an application or confirmed will progress an application

**Table 5** Have confirmed non-participation with the HSHAZ

#### **4. CULTURAL PROGRAMME/CULTURAL CONSORTIUM**

4.1 Members are aware that the Cultural Programme/Cultural Consortium is being led by the Dunstable Cultural Consortium hereafter “the Consortium.”

4.2 Since May 2021 the Consortium have been working with Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) <https://bedsrcc.org.uk/>. Kay Kempster (Consortium Secretary), Joanne Bowes (Consortium Communications) and Tracy Cowan (BRCC Chief Executive) have been working together and progressing the arrangement and BRCC have become the lead responsible body for the Consortium and will hold the Consortium’s funds for the main bid.

4.3 The Consortium’s Pilot Activity projects are now fully closed out, and they are in the process of revising and agreeing their main bid with Historic England

4.4 Since September 2021 it is understood that the Consortium and BRCC have completed the recruitment process for the coordinator role.

4.5 Going forward officer’s will not report on the Cultural Programme/Consortium unless there are specific updates.

#### **5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

5.1 Since September 2021 the Council have continued to use the HSHAZ webpages on the Town Centre section of DTC’s website, a Facebook page and Instagram account to promote the programme and engage with the community. The Facebook Page now has 395 likes (previously 335 likes in September 2021) and 464 followers (previously 399 followers in September 2021). The Instagram account has 142 followers (previously 133 followers in September 2021). There are now three Facebook Groups associated with the HSHAZ Facebook Page:

- Carving a Journey Through Dunstable  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/169746391702106>
- HSHAZ Summer Selfies  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/400488761395332>
- Priory House Conservation and Restoration  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/320591406397190>

5.2 Since the last committee the HSHAZ Programme Manager has been involved in the following face to face engagement:

- Rescheduled Festival of Archaeology combined with Around the World on 18 September 2021 in Priory Gardens. Dunstable and District History Society, Historical Dunstable, Friends of Priory House and Gardens and Town Guides all hosted stalls at the Rescheduled Festival of Archaeology. Other participants included Albion Archaeology, the Longthorpe Legion, Rome Now, Primitive Technology UK (Karl Lee – flint knapping workshops and demonstrations), Dr Peter Guest (coin specialist) and Sarah Newsome from Historic England (Acting Manager, Archaeological Survey and Investigation). The HSHAZ programme manager ran a stall with activities and displays including replica artefacts, HSHAZ Selfie frame and sandpit excavations using archaeological artefacts donated by the former Manshead Archaeological Society. All the activities were well received. Photography Passion JT have posted some great photos from Around the World and the Rescheduled Festival of Archaeology on their Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/PhotographyPassionJT>
- HSHAZ worked with Grove Corner for three flint knapping workshops with Karl Lee from Primitive Technology on 28 September 2021. The workshops were held at Grove Corner for three groups of students from Central Bedfordshire College. The students made their own flint scrappers which they got to take home.

5.3 A research and community engagement project related to Priory Church and the Undercroft of Priory House commenced in September 2021. Jackie Hall (Cathedral Archaeologist at Southwark Cathedral) has recently been involved looking at the stone in the Undercroft. Following this the CBC Conservation Officer, Jonathan Prosser suggested of some associated research and investigation of Priory Church. This will comprise a stone study to look at common material and how it was worked and used within the buildings. There are two key aims; Historical Research (connections between Priory Church and the Undercroft) and Conservation Aspect (quality and type of stone etc.), along with seeking opportunities for community engagement. Historic England were keen to see this followed up. Jackie Hall and Jan Summerfield have been appointed to undertake a scoping exercise in respect of this and they visited Dunstable on 23 September 2021.

5.4 The HSHAZ Assistant started in post on 16 September 2021. The key focus of the role will be to assist with the delivery of the Priory House Community Engagement Plan.

#### **Community events programme**

5.5 Since June 2021 the Community Services Team have been working on implementing the Community Engagement Plan for the HSHAZ. This is in keeping with the project plans as detailed and previously summarised.

**6. APPENDICES**

6.1 Appendix 1 - HSHAZ Private Properties

**7. AUTHOR**

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## APPENDIX 1 TO AGENDA ITEM 10

**1 CONFIRMED APPROVED COSTS – Actively engaged with the HSHAZ – either signed grant offer or will be signing a grant offer**

Property Address	Owner or Tenant	Application details	Notes/update
DTC - Clock Tower Project	DTC	N/A -Annex 1 Referral for Public Realm Works	Approved by HE, Annex 1 agreed for costs
Conception Architects Design Work	DTC	N/A	Approved by HE
4 High Street South- <i>Pizza Roma/ Tillys</i>	Owner	First Grant	Initial Grant for Survey Work
20-22 High Street South- <i>Coffee Pod and Celebrations</i>	Owner	First Grant	Initial Grant for feasibility Work
12 and 14 High Street South- <i>Top Cut Barbers</i>	Owner	First Grant	Initial Grant for feasibility Work
24 High Street South- <i>StudioJ</i>	Owner	First Grant	Initial Grant for feasibility Work
26 High Street South- <i>Beards and Barbers</i>	Owner	First Grant	Initial Grant for feasibility Work

**Table 2 POSSIBLE COSTS - Actively engaged with the HSHAZ – either submitted an application that has not yet been approved or indicated they will submit an application**

Property Address	Owner or Tenant	Application Details	Notes/update
4 High Street South- <i>Pizza Roma/ Tillys</i>	Owner	Second Grant- Application not submitted and unlikely to be submitted until later November	Second Grant- Application not submitted and unlikely to be submitted until later November 2021 at earliest. At this stage until survey work completed it is impossible to say what the total spend (other than the surveys) will be in year 2.



		2021 at earliest	
20-22 High Street South-Coffee Pod and Celebrations	Owner	Second Grant Application submitted 9.9.21	Second Grant Application submitted 9.9.21
Number 2 Church Street - Former Magazin/Rvstic, Supermarket on corner of Church Street	Tenant		Revised application submitted on 19.10.21
Number 9 High Street South - Former Co-op Funeral Care	Owner		Owner made initial inquiry on 10.9.21, subsequently awaiting any further response. At 20.10.21 owner submitted application based on Conception Architects designs.

**Table 3 POSSIBLE COSTS - Conception Architects Target Properties -Property Owner or Tenant not currently actively engaged but Conception Architects are undertaking some initial design work to try and encourage property owners/ tenants to work with the HSHAZ**

Property Address	Owner or Tenant	Notes/update
Number 2 High Street South-Taylors	N/A this is for initial design work to try and engage with owners/ tenants	Costs from Conceptions Design Costs. Owner and tenant not currently shown interest in HSHAZ.
Number 16 High Street South- Phone Repairs	N/A this is for initial design work to try and engage with owners/ tenants	Costs from Conceptions Design Costs. Owner and tenant not currently shown interest in HSHAZ.
Number 18 High Street	N/A this is for	Costs from Conceptions Design Costs. Owners representative previously indicated they would not work with

South- Empty – <i>“This Unit is Available to Let” with Image of Dry Cleaners</i>	initial design work to try and engage with owners/tenants	the HSHAZ.
Number 17 High Street South- <i>Dunstable Mini Market</i>	N/A this is for initial design work to try and engage with owners/tenants	Costs from Conceptions Design Costs. Owner and tenant not currently shown interest in HSHAZ.
Number 19 High Street South- <i>Gent’s Barbering</i>	N/A this is for initial design work to try and engage with owners/tenants	Costs from Conceptions Design Costs.  Owner made initial inquiries but not progressed and not replied to more recent emails .
Number 25 High Street South – <i>Penny’s Fashion</i>	N/A this is for initial design work to try and engage with owners/tenants	Costs from Conceptions Design Costs. Owner and tenant not currently shown interest in HSHAZ.
Number 27 High Street South- <i>Straw Hatter Launderette</i>	N/A this is for initial design work to try and engage with owners/tenants	Costs from Conceptions Design Costs. Owner and tenant not currently shown interest in HSHAZ.
Number 29 High Street South – <i>Curry Samrat</i>	N/A this is for initial design work to try and engage with	Costs from Conceptions Design Costs. Owner and tenant not currently shown interest in HSHAZ.

	owners/ tenants	
Number 2 Church Street – Former <i>Magazin/ Rvstic, Supermarket on corner of Church Street</i>	N/A this is for initial design work to try and engage with owners/ tenants	Costs from Conceptions Design Costs.  Owner made initial inquiries but not progressed.  Tenant made more recent enquiries and submitted an application that required revision. Previous emails suggested they would submit a revised application during September 2021 but nothing was submitted during September. At 19.10.21 submitted revised application based on Conception Architects designs.
Number 34 High Street South- <i>Four Seasons Dry Cleaners</i>	N/A this is for initial design work to try and engage with owners/ tenants	Costs from Conceptions Design Costs.  Owner made initial inquiries and submitted application that required revision but not progressed and not replied to more recent emails .
Number 36 High Street South -Nifty's	N/A this is for initial design work to try and engage with owners/ tenants	Costs from Conceptions Design Costs. Owner and tenant not currently shown interest in HSHAZ.
Number 9 High Street South – <i>Former Co-op Funeral Care</i>	N/A this is for initial design work to try and engage with owners/ tenants	Costs from Conceptions Design Costs.  Owner made initial inquiry on 10.9.21, subsequently awaiting any further response. At 20.10.21 owner submitted application based on Conception Architects designs.

*NB: Those buildings highlighted have since the designs were produced have declined all involvement in the HSHAZ.*

**Table 4 Have made an inquiry, possibly including various discussions and online meetings but not yet progressed an application or confirmed will progress an application**

Property Address	Owner or Tenant	Notes/update
Methodist Church		Had a Teams meeting in January 2021. Subsequently, the church did not seem that interested in following up- they suggested in the meeting they had some costs they would send on but never sent these and response following meeting suggests not interested. At 15.9.21 not progressing at present
32 High Street South- <i>Get Stuffed</i>	Owner	Owner passed this on to her surveyor to deal with, awaiting response from him following an email on 7 <sup>th</sup> May. At 15.9.21 still not submitted an application.
48 High Street South- <i>Various, Formerly Alexander and Co Estate Agent</i>	Owner	Owner already done work to the property and was wondering if a retrospective claim could be made. Tenant subsequently also inquired to Historic England. Liaised with tenant but never heard further and not replied to recent emails.
19 and 19A High Street South <i>-Gents Barbering</i>	Owner	A couple of discussions but no response to last email.
16 Church Street- <i>The Beauty Shack</i>	Tenant	Tenant made first inquiry on 7 <sup>th</sup> May. Decided would not proceed but spoke further and then showed renewed interest and sent details. Got in touch again more recently, but not followed up and they have not replied to recent emails.
26 Church Street – <i>Chez Jerome</i>		Limited dialogue sent details and application form. No further communication.
34 High Street South- <i>Four Seasons Dry Cleaners</i>		Various discussions between owner and Town Centre Services Officer, owner and HSHAZ Programme Manager and owner and Vie. The HSHAZ Programme Manger spoke with owner on 7 <sup>th</sup> May and he was going to submit an application. Subsequently, submitted an application but only for work that as a standalone is unlikely to be eligible. They have not responded to recent emails.
7 High Street South- <i>Heringtons Chemist</i>		VOID GRANT OFFER. Application for a full reinstatement of historic timber shopfront including stallrisers, frame, glass, recess tiles, access doors, detailed pilasters, brackets, fascia and cornice submitted. Grant offer issued but subsequently VOID.

**Table 5 -Have confirmed non-participation with the HSHAZ**

<b>Property Address</b>	<b>Owner or Tenant</b>	<b>Reason</b>
21-23 High Street South- <i>Moores</i>	Owner	Not prepared to redesign and seek new planning permission
18 High Street South- Empty – <i>“This Unit is Available to Let” with Image of Dry Cleaners</i>	Owner (relative)	Not prepared to work with grant requirements and did not feel needed an architect involved
17 High Street South- <i>Dunstable Mini Market (Albion Buildings)</i>	Tenant	Tenants not interested (No response from owner)
6 Church Street- <i>Turkish Barber</i>		Application for initial design work received for work to the rear of building only. There is also a planning enforcement issue to be resolved. Subsequently, application withdrawn.
12 and 14 High Street South- <i>Top Cut Barbers</i>	Owner	Second Grant Application submitted 18.8.21. At 11.10.21 decided no longer wishes to progress with grant offer for physical works.
24 High Street South- <i>StudioJ</i>	Owner	Second Grant Application submitted. At 16.10.21 decided no longer wishes to progress with grant offer for physical works.
26 High Street South- <i>Beards and Barbers</i>	Owner	Second Grant Application submitted. At 16.10.21 decided no longer wishes to progress with grant offer for physical works.