

	<i>Meeting (No)</i>	Market & Town Hall Committee (2)	
	<i>Date</i>	23rd September 2025	
	<i>Document</i>		<i>Ref No</i>
	Market & Town Hall Manager's Report		MTH2/22

Neston Market

Summer Pirate Market was delivered slightly over the agreed budget of £500, with approval from the Chief Officer, for a total spend of £560.42, due to some confusion over attendance from one of the activity providers.

We did not hold a VJ day market but, in keeping with the anniversary of VE day, we were proud to display a flag and hang bunting on the market square. Some traders also decorated their stalls with bunting and observed the minute's silence at midday, which would have been difficult to implement across the market as a whole.

Town Hall Hire

Town Hall continues to be good; we have had several party bookings recently on top of the regular weekly bookings. However, several groups have taken a break over the school summer holidays which will obviously affect the room hire income figures. Now that we are in September these regular bookings are returning.

Town Hall & Market Square maintenance issues

The loose plaster on the hall ceiling, caused by a roof leak some time ago, has now been repaired and repainted. The Caretaker & Market Officer will look to repaint the wall in that area which is now marked.

The Caretaker & Market Officer has jet washed the yard fence, which was showing signs of deterioration, to remove all of the old damaged stain and grime from it and has also started to sand the wood in preparation to apply the stain very soon.

The new fire-retardant stage back curtains have been fitted, and officers have repaired the tatty front curtains. Our caretaker & Market Officer has also touched up the paint on the stage walls and skirting, the overall effect is a much-improved stage area which was ready just in time for the recent Theatre Festival, for which positive feedback was received on the stage upgrades.

You will no doubt have noticed the hazard tape on the wall by the back door; the wall has been hit again by a vehicle. This has happened outside office hours and we have no idea who is responsible, CCTV of the area was not available. Quotes were obtained for the work which were over the Council's £1,500 limit. Therefore, Equans/CWaC have been notified, someone has been out to make an initial assessment and they put up the hazard tape to prevent anyone sitting or climbing on what is now a slightly wobbly wall. We await a further update as to when the repair work will take place.

The water heater/urn in the kitchen was found to be leaking and resulted in us having to call out a plumber. The water heater was disconnected but unfortunately, they were

unable to source the correct part to fix it due to its age. We also discovered that it had a significant build-up of limescale inside which was a H&S concern. We have therefore purchased a smaller and more appropriate water heater which was fitted by our caretaker. He has also fitted a limescale inhibitor, which has a 7-year guarantee, to prevent a reoccurrence of this issue.

Further to the meeting with the CWaC Property team, as reported previously, the following should be noted:

- As our disabled lifts are serviced and maintained by Orona it will be necessary to use Orona for any breakdown issues for consistency.
- The grid at the bottom of the basement ramp has now been jetted and cleared. The company that came out to do this has recommended a 6 monthly clear, this has been suggested several times in the past, however I was never able to arrange for this to be added to the cyclical maintenance programme. Going forwards I will arrange for a 6 monthly clear which will help towards preventing flooding of the basement area.

The urinal in the men's toilet was blocked, a specialised solution was ordered which has appears to have resolved the issue, regular usage should prevent a reoccurrence going forward and has hopefully saved on the cost of a call out to a plumber. The flush on the men's toilet was also broken and on closer inspection the cistern was found to be cracked and leaking. A new cistern and flush unit were ordered and our caretaker has fitted them, again saving the cost of having to use an outside tradesperson.

Market Square Bollards

Contractors came out to do a planned maintenance visit to the bollards and were unaware that one of them was not working. They explained that the issue with the broken bollard was due to the main chamber filling with rain water and causing issues with the hydraulic oil chamber. The engineer showed our Caretaker & Market Officer how to refill with the oil, and which oil to use. We ordered the correct oil, the oil was replaced and the bollard did work again briefly. We have found that the oil chamber is leaking, the contractors have confirmed this and have quoted to Equans/CWaC for a repair at £900+VAT, and for complete replacement of the faulty bollard with a new model which will require alterations to the existing hole £7,852 +VAT. Equans have passed the quote to me to arrange the bollard repair at £900 +VAT as this is within our agreed limit. However, it may transpire that the faulty bollard is beyond repair.

Free room hire (Minute 10b M&TH 27.6.23)

No free room hire has been provided since the last scheduled meeting.

Reduced Pitch Fees (Minute 10a M&TH 27.6.23)

The maximum agreed figure of £200 per quarter for free or reduced pitch fees, to community or charitable organisations where there is community benefit, has not been exceeded.

Equals card expenditure

The total expenditure for the Equals card from 1.6.25 to 31.8.25 was £1,016.53 This includes the purchase of new water heater for the kitchen, prizes etc for the pirate market, an angle grinder and various other items to enable our caretaker to carry out maintenance work instead of us needing to call out a tradesperson.

Exceptions – There are no exceptions to report.

Delegated Authority - To note that there was no increase to the quoted figure for the new stage back curtain once the final measurements were taken. The total cost was £965 +VAT, as approved at the meeting on 17.6.25.

Nicky McMahon
Market & Town Hall Manager