



Congleton Town Council

Historic market town

Chief Officer: **David McGifford**

11th June 2026

Dear Councillor,

Community Committee – Thursday 18th June 2026

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the Communities Committee to be held at Congleton Town Hall on **Thursday 18th June at 7.00 pm.**

- **The Public and Press are welcome to attend the meeting. Please note** - There will be 15 minutes at each meeting to receive any questions from Members of the Public, either verbally or at the meeting, including those which have been received in writing 7 days prior to the meeting.
- There may be confidential items towards the end of the meeting in which the law requires the Council to make a resolution to exclude the public and press in accordance with Section 100 (B) (2) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Yours sincerely,

David McGifford
CHIEF OFFICER

Congleton
beartown
where friends are made

Congleton Town Council, Town Hall, High Street, Congleton, Cheshire CW12 1BN

Tel: 01260 270350

Email: info@congleton-tc.gov.uk www.congleton-tc.gov.uk

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

Members are reminded of the necessity to give apologies in advance of the meeting and to give reasons for absence.

2. Minutes of Previous Meetings (enclosed)

To approve and [sign the minutes of the Community Committee held on 16th April 2026 as a correct record.](#)

3. Declarations of Interest

Members are requested to declare both “pecuniary” and “non-pecuniary” interests as early in the meeting as they become known.

4. Questions from Members of the Public

There will be 15 minutes at each meeting to receive any questions from Members of the Public, either verbally at the meeting, including those which have been received in writing 7 days before the meeting.

5. Urgent Items

Members may raise urgent items related to this Committee, but no discussion or decisions may be taken at the meeting.

6. Cheshire Police (Verbal update)

To receive and consider a verbal report from Cheshire Police on Policing matters affecting Congleton.

7. Community Safety Working Group

To receive the [minutes of the Community Safety Working Group meeting held on the 28th May 2026 and receive a short update from the Chair.](#)

8. Star Wars Celebration Day 2027 (Enclosed)

To receive a short presentation on holding a Star Wars Celebration Day around 4th May in 2027.

9. Congleton Gymnastics Club (Enclosed)

To discuss a dedicated Gymnastics club for Congleton.

10. Communications Update (Enclosed)

To receive and note a report from the Town Council's Communications and Marketing Officer, Debbie Coxon, highlighting the Town Council's Communications activities from 9th April 2026 to 10th June 2026.

11. Food and Drink Festival 2026 Report (Enclosed)

To note a report from Events Manager Rachel McCarthy on the Food and Drink Festival 2026, which took place on Sunday, 7th June.

12. Free Bus Days (Enclosed)

To receive and note the report for 4 free bus days for Congleton subsidised by Cheshire East Council.

13. Mayor's Civic Awards Results for 2026 (Enclosed)

To note the award recipients for the Mayor's Civic Awards 2026.

To: Members of the Community Committee

Cllrs: Kay Wesley (Chair), Robert Brittain (Vice Chair)
David Brown, Mark Edwardson, Sally Ann Holland, Amanda Martin, Susan Mead, Shaun Radcliffe, Richard Walton, Glen Williams.

Ex Officio: Cllr Suzy Firkin (Mayor), Cllr Robert Douglas (Deputy Mayor)

Other members of the Council for Information, Police, Honorary Burgess (5), Press (3), Congleton Library, Congleton Information Centre.



Congleton Town Council

Title	Community Committee
Date of Meeting Time	16 th April 2026 7 pm
Status	Draft Minutes – to be ratified at the next Committee meeting
Reference Documents	Agenda Papers for the Community Committee – 16th April 2026

Attendance

Committee Members	Clr Kay Wesley (Chair) Clr Sally Ann Holland (Vice Chair) Clr Dave Brown Clr Amanda Martin Clr Susan Mead Clr Shaun Radcliffe Clr Richard Walton Clr Glen Williams
Ex Officio	Clr Robert Brittain (Mayor) Clr Suzy Firkin (Deputy Mayor)
Non-Committee Members	Clr Robert Douglas
Officers	Cathy Dean (Communities Manager) Debbie Coxon (Marketing & Communications Manager)
Members of the Press	0
Members of the Public	Police Officer Vicky Welch – (Congleton Neighbourhood Sergeant)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Clr Mark Edwardson.

2. Minutes of Previous Meetings

CO/39/2526 resolved to approve and sign the Community Committee minutes held on 29th January 2026 as a correct record.

3. Declaration of Interest

Declarations of non-pecuniary interest were received from Cllrs Sally Holland and David Brown in relation to matters concerning Cheshire East, and from Cllr Glen Williams in respect of items 7, 13 and 14 regarding Congleton Partnership.

4. Questions from Members of the Public

There were no questions from members of the public

5. Urgent Items

No urgent items.

6. Cheshire Police

Police Sargent Vick Welch attended the meeting; crime statistics are attached in Appendix 1.

Members commented on the increased visibility of Officers in part due to initiatives like 'Bobby's on Bridge Street'. Please direct any questions to Vicky via email (vicky.welch@cheshire.police.uk). Increase in shoplifting reporting due to the ongoing work with local stores and shopkeepers, which is positive.

Action – Nuisance Parking causing a problem in certain hotspots around town; bring it to the Community Safety working group to compile a list of areas and a plan of action to tackle them.

It was agreed to change the order in which items were considered at the meeting; item 11 was brought forward.

11. Youth Council Update

Received a verbal update from the chair of the Youth Council.

7. Committee Updates

CO/40/2526 resolved to note the update report on actions from items discussed at the previous Community meeting.

8. Equal Access Advisory Group

CO/41/2526 resolved to receive the minutes of the Equal Access Advisory Group meeting held on 27th January 2026.

8.1 Equal Access Updates

CO/42/2526 resolved to:

1. Receive and note the report about the ongoing work of the Equal Access Group.
2. Agree that CTC should sign up as a Disability Confident (Committed) Employer.
3. Councillors volunteer for 'wheelchair day' later in 2026.
4. Councillors consider adding the Disability Confident Committed logo to email signatures.

9. Community Safety Working Group

CO/43/2526 resolved to receive the minutes of the Community Safety Working Group meeting held on the 19th March 2026 and receive a short update from the Chair.

10. Communications Update

CO/44/2526 resolved to receive and note a report from the Town Council's Communications and Marketing Officer, Debbie Coxon, highlighting the Town Council's Communications activities from 23rd January 2026 to 8th April 2026.

12. Food and Drink Festival 2026

CO/45/2526 resolved to note a report from Events Manager Rachel McCarthy on the Food and Drink Festival 2026, planned for 7th June 2026.

13. UK Town of Culture 2028

CO/46/2526 resolved to receive a report on Congleton's Bid to be the UK Town of Culture 2028.

14. Civic Awards 2026

CO/47/2526 resolved to approve the edition of the Team category for Congleton Town Council's Civic Awards and an amendment to the eligibility criteria.

15. Resolution to Exclude the Public and Press from Item 16

To consider passing a resolution in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that public and press be excluded from the meeting due to Commercial sensitivities.

16. Service Level Agreement Community Projects 26-27

CO/48/2526 resolved to agree to delegate authority to the Community Committee Chair, Vice Chair and Chief Officer to agree on the funding to support the 2026-27 SLA for Congleton Community Projects, which will be no greater than the 2025-26 sum of £10,000. This may require Council approval, dependent upon the proposed amount. The next council meeting is on the 7th May 2026. In addition, resolved to approve an interim payment of £1660 to Community Projects while discussions take place.

Congleton stats:

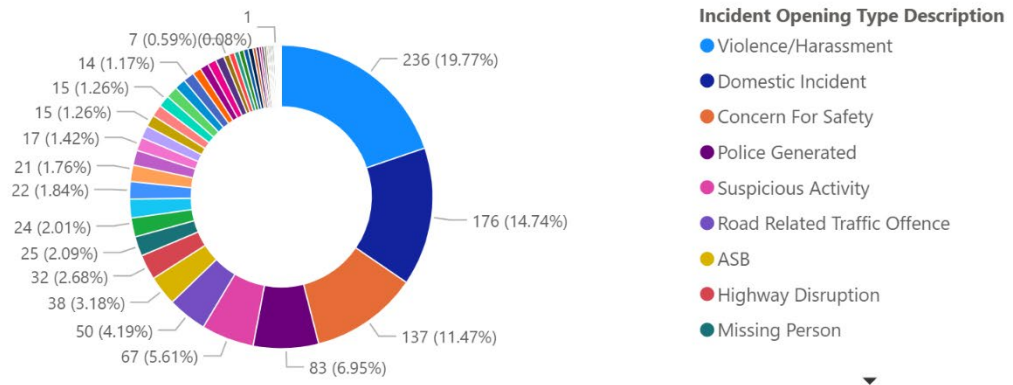
January – March

Total number of incidents:

Opening Type	Total	%
Violence/Harassment	236	19.8%
Domestic Incident	176	14.8%
Concern For Safety	137	11.5%
Police Generated	83	7.0%
Suspicious Activity	67	5.6%
Road Related Traffic Offence	50	4.2%
ASB	38	3.2%
Highway Disruption	32	2.7%
Missing Person	25	2.1%
Shoplifting	24	2.0%
Theft Other	24	2.0%
Complaints Against Police	22	1.8%
Sexual Offences	21	1.8%
Abandoned Police Call	10	1.0%
Total	1,193	100.0%

Visual | [Chart Icons] | Sort | Drill | New visual calculation

Count of Incident Reference Number and %GT Count of Incident Reference Number by Incident Opening Type Description

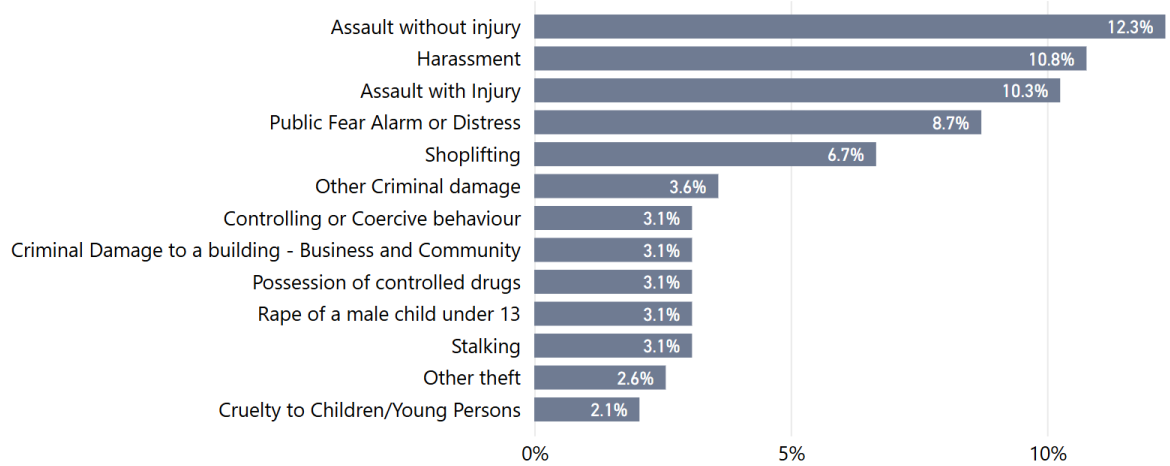


Breakdown per month:

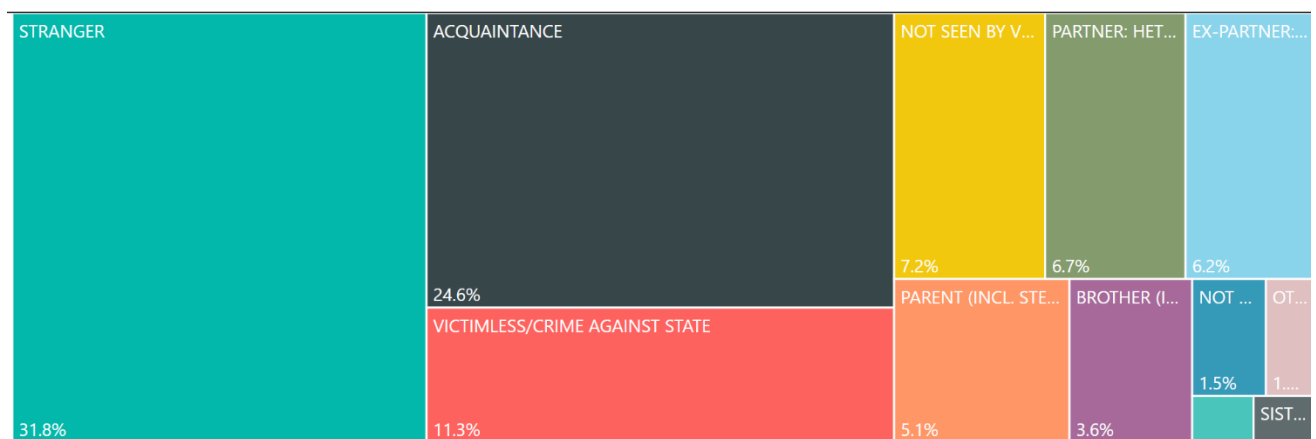
Month Year	Total
March 2026	417
February 2026	358
January 2026	418
Total	1,193

Number of incidents crimed:

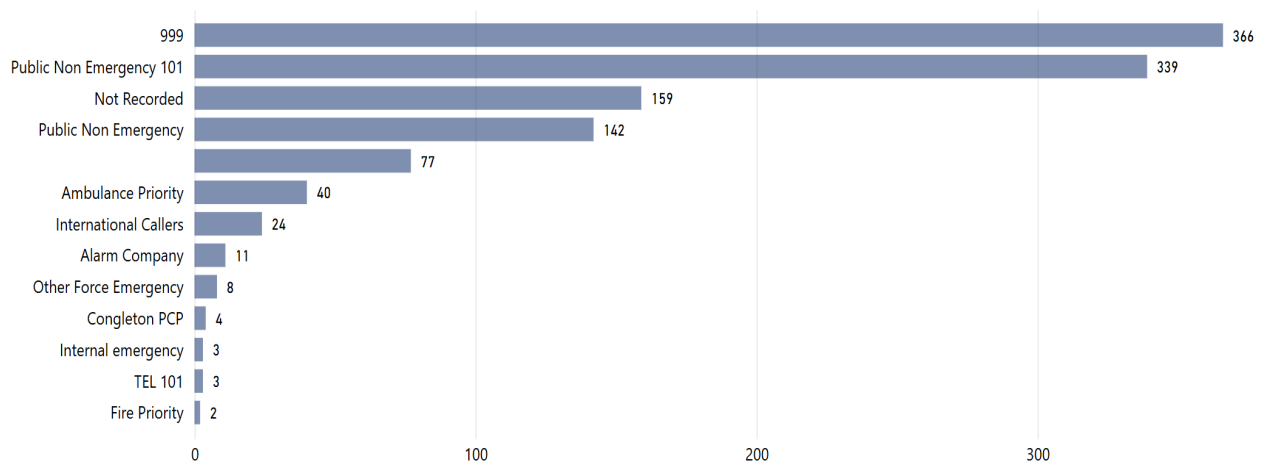
Month Year	Recorded Crime
Feb 2026	157
Jan 2026	181
Mar 2026	190
Total	528



Relationship between reporting person and suspect



How these incidents were reported



Sandbach for comparison

Opening Type	Total	%
Highway Disruption	147	13.5%
Domestic Incident	124	11.4%
Violence/Harassment	119	11.0%
Road Related Traffic Offence	100	9.2%
Police Generated	88	8.1%
Concern For Safety	82	7.6%
Suspicious Activity	46	4.2%
PNC Markers	39	3.6%
ASB	38	3.5%
RTC	27	2.5%
Message to Pass/OOF Enquiries	24	2.2%
Missing Person	23	2.1%
RTC - Damage Only	20	1.8%
Control Offences	10	1.0%
Total	1,085	100.0%

Month Year	Recorded Crime
⊕ Jan 2026	93
⊕ Mar 2026	97
⊕ Feb 2026	98
Total	288

Minutes of Meeting
Community Safety Working Group
Thursday 28th May 2026 3 pm – 4.30 pm

Present: Cllr Kay Wesley (Chair), Rachel McCarthy, Cllr Suzy Firkin, Cllr Robert Brittain, Cllr Glen Williams, Julia Pestell-Hassall, Cllr Shaun Radcliffe, Louise Mitchell

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Cathy Dean, Linda Webber, Claire Dougherty, Emma Sneyd, Susan Mead
2. **Notes of the meeting** of 19th March 2026 were accepted as correct.
3. **Action Log**
 - **Stuart CCTV report** – report not received
 - **Cheshire East Visit - Train Station/Canal Street/Pedestrian Area**

Looked at the station entrance with Aki, Simon Wallace didn't attend at the last minute, and agreed that this is very dangerous. Wharf plumbing objected previously to a gate, but they are now vacant on the premises and this is for sale, objections for the gate won't happen. Follow up with Simon Wallace - **Action KW** Aki has now left CE. Canal Street issues Aki mentioned the budget is available for a rubber pavement at the pinch point and to make this 20mph, STOP signage renewed, and lines repainted. Gates needed on Bridge Street, Louise commented that they could have an initiative with the police at each entrance onto the pedestrian area and issue tickets to drive throughs and parking, £70 penalty. DPD and taxi drivers are the worst offenders. We can't install cameras the same as schools, the vehicles don't move outside schools, so a different type of camera/offence. Liaise with Louise and the police to tackle the pedestrian area **Action - Vicky Welch/Louise Mitchell** socials on this topic to highlight the repercussions of using this area.
 - **Nuisance Parking Google Doc**

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1iZAJCw6Notdr9AZU2hgPzzqg5iLHVFE32RmApYlu750/edit?usp=sharing>

Parking issues shared with Vicky Welch and Louise Mitchell, Congleton market area. There are many problems with parking between stalls. We only have 1 PCSO covering Alsager and Congleton. They meet around the park run area every 3 weeks, targeting parking offences. Add columns onto the Google doc for police, enforcement, and councillor comments. Follow up on the parking between stalls, and installing bollards **Action RMc**
 - **Review of road safety hotspots** – as above .
 - **Discuss police action RSH** – as above
 - **Bridge Street action plan**

Speak to businesses about parking on the pedestrian area as a starting point
4. **Police update on Crime - Sgt Vicky Welch**

Report to follow from Vicky, **18th June – 7pm, Community Committee required to attend and report**
5. **Police Priorities for Congleton Beat Team**

Bridge Street and parking. A full closure order was issued at a resident's home, great result, closed down anti-social behaviour, the surrounding residents were very happy with the outcome.

6. CEC ASB Team

Letters have been issued regarding teenage antisocial behaviour. Julia will catch up with Vicky for Congleton park issues. **Action Julia & Vicky**

7. Street Pastors Update

No report received, Linda on holiday

8. AOB .

Market stalls, children hanging around, causing issues. Shaun to email Vicky with the issues concerned. **Action SR**

Tom Lomas – issue a community protection Notice/warning. We need more 101 reports about him.

8 steps to homicide. There is a workshop on controlling coercive behaviour. Most victims report at stage 6 - 7. The workshop trains people to spot earlier at stages 2-3. Great workshop and everyone encouraged to attend. **Action KW** to pass on workshop details

Date of Next Meeting - Thursday 23rd July - 3pm

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL
COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

COMMITTEE:	Community Committee		
MEETING DATE AND TIME	18th June 2026 7 pm	LOCATION	Congleton Town Hall
REPORT FROM	Cathy Dean, Communities Manager		
AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE	8 Star Wars Celebration Day 2027		
BACKGROUND	<p>Star Wars Day / "May the Fourth" event is a recognised international fan celebration. It appeals to families, collectors, sci-fi fans, cosplay groups, film enthusiasts and younger audiences through newer Disney+ series such as <i>The Mandalorian</i>. The event has the potential to be highly visual, making it ideal for social media promotion and town-centre activity.</p> <p>Benjamin Borg-Heffernan approached the Youth Council with the idea of holding a Star Wars Day/Event around May the 4th in 2027.</p> <p>Benjamin will attend the Community committee and give a short presentation outlining his ideas.</p>		
Further Considerations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Event Permission - Permission to hold an event would need to be obtained from Cheshire East Council. 2. Road Closures - Any road closures would need to be factored into the costs, which would be upward of £1000. A temporary rolling road closure for a parade would still need qualified staff. 3. Public Liability insurance would be required for the event. 		
FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS	There is no budget from the Town Council for this event. The event team may need support in exploring income generation through grants and sponsorship.		
EQUALITY CONSIDERATIONS	Recommend that the event organisers contact the Equal Access group to make the event as inclusive as possible.		
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS	Organisers will need to minimise waste, mileage and plastic use.		
Decision	To agree to support, in principle, a Star Wars Celebration Day to be held in the Town Centre. Officers would need to support the event team with the necessary permissions, risk assessments and event insurance.		

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL
COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

COMMITTEE:	Community Committee		
MEETING DATE AND TIME	18th June 2026 7 pm	LOCATION	Congleton Town Hall
REPORT FROM	Cathy Dean, Communities Committee		
AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE	9 Congleton Gymnastics Club		
BACKGROUND	<p>Congleton does not have a standalone gymnastics club; most gymnasts have to travel to Sandbach, Macclesfield or Crewe for training. The main ones are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sandbach Gymnastics – one of the largest and longest-established clubs in Cheshire, operating since the mid-1980s from a purpose-built 20,000 sq. ft facility. • Silk Gymnastics Club Ltd – a well-established club based in Macclesfield offering recreational, advanced and competition classes. • Macclesfield Gymnastics, Gymnastics Club, Gymnastics Classes – based at Macclesfield Leisure Centre and offering gymnastics sessions locally. • Crewe & Nantwich Gymnastics – another sizeable Cheshire club with a dedicated gymnastics centre. • LS Gymnastics Crewe Academy – a newer gymnastics academy in Crewe. 		
	<p>Erica Roebuck, a previous Team GB gymnast, has contacted the council with a vision for a new inclusive community gymnastics club based in Congleton.</p> <p>“We aim to create a safe, positive, and accessible environment where children and young people of all abilities can participate in gymnastics, develop confidence, improve physical and mental well-being, and become part of a supportive local community. We are passionate about providing opportunities for both recreational participation and competitive development, while ensuring inclusivity remains at the heart of everything we do.</p> <p>As a new club, we are currently exploring opportunities for support that could help bring this project to life and create a long-term community asset for Congleton and the surrounding areas.</p> <p>We would be extremely grateful for any guidance, introductions, or assistance regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential local authority or community funding opportunities • Sports development grants and grassroots funding schemes • Assistance in identifying suitable premises or facilities • Planning and community use support • Introductions to local businesses or organisations interested in sponsorship • Opportunities to approach new housing developments and developers for community grants or Section 106/community investment funding • Equipment sponsorship and partnership opportunities 		

	<p>Our long-term vision is to build a sustainable gymnastics academy that supports children’s health, confidence, inclusion, and aspirations while contributing positively to the local community.</p> <p>As the club develops, there is significant potential to create local employment opportunities through coaching, administration and facility management roles. We would also aim to establish pathways for young people interested in careers within sport by offering volunteering opportunities, mentoring and apprenticeships in sports coaching and community development. This would allow local young people to gain recognised qualifications and valuable work experience without needing to leave the area.”</p> <p>Erica initially got a positive response from Everybody Leisure at Congleton Leisure Centre, as that seems to be the ideal location (As a gym club is run in Macclesfield Leisure Centre), but that was turned down due to a lack of storage space.</p>
FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS	None to the council. An application could be made for a CTC grant through the Finance and Policy Committee, if desired.
EQUALITY CONSIDERATIONS	<p>Local gymnastics provision would help ensure that children and young people in Congleton have the same opportunities as those in neighbouring towns. Requiring families to travel to Sandbach, Macclesfield or Crewe can create barriers due to the cost of travel, time commitments and limited access to transport.</p> <p>Providing activities locally would improve access for all families, particularly those on lower incomes, and support greater participation in sport, physical activity and wellbeing. It would help ensure that children are not disadvantaged by where they live or their family's circumstances.</p> <p>A dedicated facility would enable us to provide daytime provision for SEND schools, specialist groups and the growing home-educated community. Many of these children currently have limited access to structured physical activity programmes that are specifically designed to support their individual needs.</p>
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS	Providing gymnastics sessions within Congleton would reduce the need for families to travel to neighbouring towns for training. This could help lower vehicle journeys, reduce carbon emissions and support the council's commitment to encouraging sustainable local services. Delivering activities closer to where people live also promotes more efficient use of local facilities and resources.
DECISION	To discuss and note the report.

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL
COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

COMMITTEE:	Community Committee		
MEETING DATE AND TIME	18 June 2026 7.00 pm	LOCATION	Congleton Town Hall
REPORT FROM	Debbie Coxon, Marketing and Communications Manager		
AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE	10 Communications Update		
Background	This paper has been prepared to give committee members an update on the communications activities that took place since the last committee.		

Details	<p>Social Media Overview</p> <p>Facebook Followers: 7.3K. New Followers: 334</p> <p>Instagram Followers: 1.4K</p>
	<div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap;"> <div style="width: 50%;"> <p>Views Export</p> <p>759.2K ↑ 24.6%</p> <p style="text-align: center;">— Views</p> </div> <div style="width: 50%;"> <p>Viewers Export</p> <p>157.0K ↑ 91.7%</p> <p style="text-align: center;">— Viewers</p> </div> <div style="width: 50%;"> <p>Content interactions Export</p> <p>3.3K ↓ 1.5%</p> <p style="text-align: center;">— Content interactions</p> </div> <div style="width: 50%;"> <p>Link clicks Export</p> <p>872 ↓ 3.3%</p> <p style="text-align: center;">— Facebook link clicks</p> </div> <div style="width: 50%;"> <p>Visits Export</p> <p>8.7K ↑ 55%</p> <p style="text-align: center;">— Facebook visits</p> </div> <div style="width: 50%;"> <p>Follows Export</p> <p>385 ↑ 98.5%</p> <p style="text-align: center;">— Facebook follows</p> </div> </div>

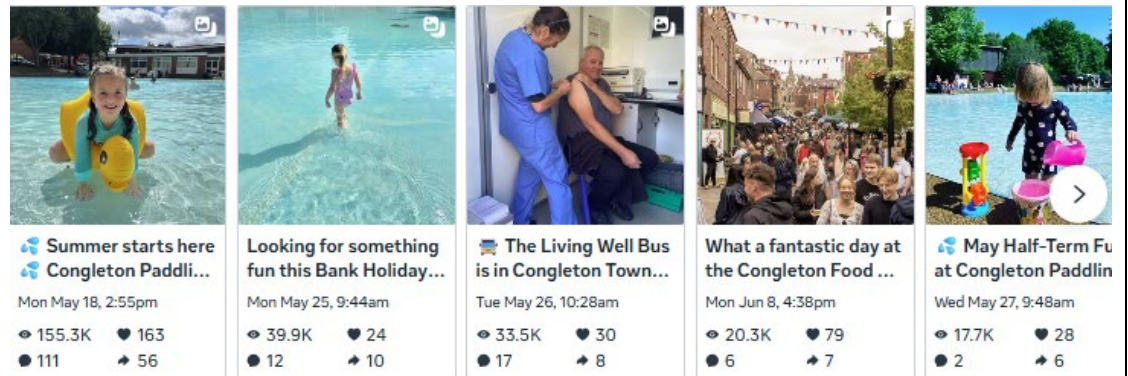
Facebook Performance Overview

Views	Viewers	Interactions	Clicks	Visits	Follows
759K	157K	3K	872	9K	385

Social media posts issued: 90 (excluding shared posts). Avg 1 per day

Top 5 FB Posts:

Paddling Pool: 155K views, 352 interactions, 163 likes, 111 comments, 56 shares



CTC social posts are usually shared to:

Congleton Chat's Back 34K members
 Congleton News & Views 24K members

Noticeboards

The six town noticeboards and the CIC What's on Window are updated weekly to promote town council events and activities by local organisations and community groups.

Key CTC Events

- 17.4 Town Mayor's Charity Ball
- 14.5 Annual Town Meeting (incl. Civic Awards Presentation)
- 28.5 Town Hall Tour (6th Congleton)
- 21.5 Mayor Making
- 23.5 Paddling Pool Open
- 7.6 Food & Drink Festival

Stakeholder Events Supported

- 21.5 CEC Election (Congleton North Ward)
- 23.5 Congleton Police Knife Sweep
- 6.6 Town Tidy

Publications: Bear Necessities Spring 26, Annual Report, F&D Leaflet

Press Releases: 11

Radio Interviews: 1


Other Editorial: Effective Directories- DPS in x2 editions (each circl. 51,700k)

Proposal	For Councillors to note the report and for the officer team to take on board suggestions and recommendations from Councillors.
Financial Implications	Work is delivered within the annual budgets set by the Town Council
Environmental Implications	Considered as part of each piece of work. Carbon-neutral certificates are obtained for Bear Necessities and paper from sustainably managed sources used for other work.
Inclusivity Diversity Impact	The team uses different channels and communication tools to meet different audiences.
Decision Required	That Councillors note this report.

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL
COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

COMMITTEE:	Community Committee		
MEETING DATE AND TIME	18th June 2026 7 pm	LOCATION	Congleton Town Hall
REPORT FROM	Rachel McCarthy, Town Centre and Events Manager		
AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE	11 Food & Drink Festival 2026		
BACKGROUND	<p>The annual Food & Drink Festival attracted thousands of visitors to the town centre, making it one of the most successful festivals to date. A total of 90 stalls participated, an increase from 72 in 2025, with many traders reporting strong sales and several selling out before the end of the event.</p> <p>Town centre businesses benefited from increased footfall, with shops, cafés, pubs and hospitality venues experiencing high levels of trade throughout the day. The festival programme included street entertainment, family activities and a free Kids Zone in the Town Hall.</p> <p>The free Beartown Bus service, funded by the Town Council, recorded 550 passenger journeys and helped support sustainable travel to and from the event. This represented a significant increase in passenger numbers compared with a typical operating day.</p> <p>Feedback from traders, visitors and partners was overwhelmingly positive. The event was supported by a dedicated team of volunteers, sponsors and partner organisations, whose contributions were instrumental to its success.</p> <p>Planning for the 2027 Food & Drink Festival is now underway, date reserved 6th June 2027.</p> <p>Security - The only negative on the day was 3 troublemakers, clearly intoxicated, who were verbally abusive to staff, volunteers and some stall holders. The individuals in question had to be watched and the police were called out twice, once at 8am and again around lunch time. The Police Officers did move them on, but they soon circled back to the event.</p>		
FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS	<p>£10,000 budget</p> <p>Sponsorship letters sent out, £2000 received from local business sponsors.</p>		
EQUALITY CONSIDERATIONS	<p>The event was designed to be inclusive and accessible to all members of the community. It featured diverse performers and participants, accessible facilities, sensory-friendly activities, free transport and free entertainment to reduce barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Staff and volunteers promoted a welcoming environment, with feedback gathered to help improve accessibility and inclusion at future events.</p>		
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS	<p>All vendors were asked to take rubbish home and use eco-friendly packaging. We will aim to provide separate bins for recycling and general waste.</p>		
DECISION	<p>To note the report and confirm support for the 2027 event.</p>		

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL
COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

COMMITTEE:	Community Committee		
MEETING DATE AND TIME	18th June 2026 7 pm	LOCATION	Congleton Town Hall
REPORT FROM	Cathy Dean, Communities Manager		
AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE	12 Free Bus Days – Cheshire East Bus Partnership		
BACKGROUND	<p>Cllr Kay Wesley (Community Chair), Cllr Holland, Cllr Chadwick and the Chief Officer attended the Bus Partnership Forum on the 3rd of June. Key takeaways were:</p> <p>Cheshire and Warrington Combined Authority - The new Combined Authority was established on 22 April and is expected to improve access to transport funding, particularly for bus services. The streamlined model reduces the number of authorities competing directly for government funding, helping to simplify funding allocation and strengthen the area's ability to secure investment.</p> <p>Current Cheshire East Projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus stop improvements in Congleton, including cleaning, better information and accessibility enhancements, are due to be completed over the next two years. • A new Cheshire East transport app, expected in September 2026, will provide journey planning, bus tracking and real-time information via QR codes at bus stops. • Real-time information displays will be installed at bus stations. • An on-demand rural transport service is scheduled to launch in August 2026, offering flexible journeys for £4, free travel for concessionary pass holders, and door-to-door transport for disabled users. 		
Proposal	<div style="border: 2px solid blue; padding: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">New Initiative: Free Bus Travel Days</p>  <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid white; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; width: 15%;"> <p>Town Councils will be offered up to 4 free bus travel days per year.</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid white; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; width: 15%;"> <p>This will be to promote local events and encourage residents and visitors to travel by bus.</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid white; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; width: 15%;"> <p>Town Councils will choose the dates, to align with key local events and priorities.</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid white; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; width: 15%;"> <p>Bus operators will be reimbursed for lost fare revenue, based on average revenue from a similar non-event day.</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid white; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; width: 15%;"> <p>The events will need to be open to all and accessible from existing bus routes.</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid white; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; width: 15%;"> <p>Free travel will only apply to existing timetabled services in a pre-defined zone around each event.</p> </div> </div> <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">Borough-wide ticketing incentives are being explored with potential alignment to DfT summer travel initiative.</p> </div> <p>Free Bus Travel Days</p>		

	<p>Congleton Town Council can select 4 free bus travel days. The Food and Drink Festival's free bus services demonstrated the success of providing free travel to major events.</p> <p>The events which run on scheduled bus timetables include:</p> <p>4 x Summer Play Days (Tuesday's - 28th July and 4th, 11th and 18th August)</p> <p>Green Fayre - Saturday, 26th September</p> <p>Christmas Light Switch On – Friday 27th November (Note: the event finishes after the last scheduled bus pick up from around 5:30 pm, so this would incur additional cost to the council to continue the buses until 8 pm).</p> <p>Another suggestion was to provide free Saturday shopping during December to support local businesses on the 5th, 12th and 19th December.</p>
FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS	Cheshire East Council is funding the free travel days. Potential cost for the Christmas Light Switch On from 5.30-8pm if this is desired.
EQUALITY CONSIDERATIONS	The free bus service helps remove financial barriers to travel, enabling more residents to access events, services and activities within the town. It particularly benefits older people, young people, lower-income households and those without access to a car, helping to promote inclusion and equal access to community opportunities.
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS	The free bus days encourage the use of public transport and may help reduce the number of individual car journeys into the town. This can contribute to lower traffic congestion, reduced emissions and support the council's environmental objectives.
DECISION	To note the report and decide which days to request free bus travel.

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL
COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

COMMITTEE:	Community Committee		
MEETING DATE AND TIME	18 June 2026 7 pm	LOCATION	Town Hall
REPORT FROM	Debbie Coxon, Marketing and Communications Manager		
AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE	13 Mayor's Civic Awards Results for 2026		
BACKGROUND	<p>The second annual Civic Awards presentation took place on Thursday, 14 May, as part of the Annual Town Meeting. The initiative celebrates the extraordinary individuals who make a lasting difference across Congleton.</p> <p>The awards were presented by the then Town Mayor, Cllr Robert Brittain and Deputy Town Mayor, Cllr Suzy Firkin, alongside Chair of the Community Committee, Cllr Kay Wesley.</p> <p>The Town Hall was filled with so many people who give their time selflessly to support others and improve our community. The standard of nominations this year was exceptional, with 27 entries submitted.</p> <p>Award Categories</p> <p>Arts and Culture Award (x2 finalists)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sergey Kamenskiy – Congleton Museum <p>Community Involvement Award (x7 finalists)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ian Carter – No Tier Snooker • Highly Commended: Anthony Bolding – Beartown Rickshaw <p>Environment Award (x4 finalists)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alyssa Baines – Big Clothes Movement • Highly Commended: Jo Lancaster – Rotary Congleton <p>Good Neighbour Award</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moira Hagon <p>Wellbeing Award (x4 finalists)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diane Ritherdon – Dementia Friendly Congleton <p>Young Volunteer Award (x2 finalists)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dan Smith <p>Team Award (x7 finalists)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congleton Live <p>Unsung Hero Award</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alec and Val Scaresbrook <p>Award winners received a certificate and a commemorative pin badge. All finalists were presented with a certificate.</p>		

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS	This report does not incur any costs.
EQUALITY CONSIDERATIONS	Nominations are invited from people of all ages, backgrounds, abilities, cultures, and circumstances, and the award categories are designed to recognise a broad range of achievements and contributions. To ensure fairness and transparency, nominations are assessed against a structured criteria and scoring system, with identifying details removed so that awards are judged solely on merit and community impact.
Environmental Consideration	Nominees must conduct their voluntary work in a sustainable and inclusive manner (where applicable). Incorporated within the judging criteria.
Recommendation	To note the report.