

Report to Kingswood Town Council

Meeting date: 14th January 2025

Authors: Alice Twinn - Community Engagement & Events Officer

Subject: Kingswood Town Council events and communications

Purpose:

- a) To reflect on the 2024 events and activities provided by Kingswood Town Council and to provide an overview of events and activities for the 2025 year ahead. To provide an overview of our social media communications, website and printed communications and the reach of our content.
- b) To consider the proposed schedule of events and make other suggestions
- c) To agree to purchase 2 pages each month in the Kingswood Voice

1. 2024

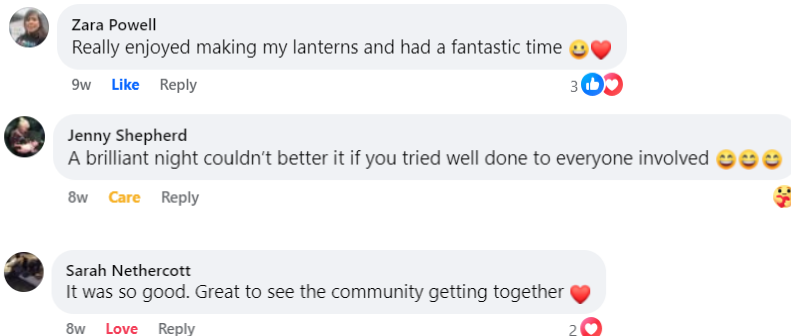
1.1 Kingswood Town Council organised a variety of events and activities in 2024 which were well attended and received largely positive feedback. The activities involved partners from the community and used the ABCD approach. The Community Engagement & Events Officer came into post at the beginning of July and therefore activity began from the end of August onwards once consultation with councillors and the local people could take place. The events and activities gave the council a chance to raise awareness of their existence, to meet with residents and to provide free things for people to do in the local area.

1.2 We organised two craft afternoons in the Kingswood Library in the Summer and Autumn with themes connected to the post box toppers on Regent St. Across both sessions 113 children (60 children in the Summer and 53 children in the Autumn) attended. Following the craft sessions, displays went up in the Skills Hub for the local community to enjoy.



Picture shows Facebook comments from the Facebook post showing the art display at the Skills Hub which say 'Yay! I can see ours. Such a fab time yesterday' and 'Poppy is very happy to see hers'.

1.3 The Kingswood Lantern Parade was Kingswood Town Council's first large scale event. The council worked with Kingswood Park, local community groups, local vendors and volunteers to ensure the event was both by the community and for the community. The Kingswood Lantern Parade was a huge success with over 500 local residents attending the evening.



Picture shows Facebook comments from after the Lantern Parade which say, 'Really enjoyed making my lanterns and had a fantastic time' 'A brilliant night couldn't better it if you tried well done everyone involved' and 'It was so good. Great to see the community getting together'.

1.4 The Remembrance Parade took place the following week which was a collaboration between Kingswood Town Council, Holy Trinity Church and The Royal British Legion (Hanham and Kingswood Branch). 173 people took part in the parade and hundreds more lined the High Street to watch the procession and to attend the service in Holy Trinity churchyard.

1.5 The 'It's almost December festive fun' event was more successful than any of Kingswood Town Council could have hoped for with over 200 people queuing for a free advent calendar and to enjoy some Christmas crafting. This event was a collaboration with Kings Chase shopping centre and Colourful Minds. Although a success, there is plenty to improve on for our next Christmas event programme. The main learning being, to prepared for large numbers of attendees.

1.6 We collaborated with the SGC High Street Regeneration team and Kingswood Library to create an interactive festive trail using art works created by local children being displayed in local businesses' windows. The trail didn't have as much uptake as we had hoped but was still enjoyed by the local community. Prizes for trail winners were also kindly donated by local businesses.

1.7 We ended our 2024 activity with two Christmas wreath making workshops at Kingswood Museum, in collaboration with Southern Brooks. Both sessions sold out very quickly and were thoroughly enjoyed by the 30 people who attended. These events also

gave us the opportunity to speak to residents about being part of a mailing group which the Council can use to ask for resident's feedback outside of using our social media channels or website.



Picture shows Facebook comments from after the wreath making workshop which say, 'Had a great time, thank you!' 'Thank you very much for a great afternoon. Very pleased with the results' and 'It was such a lovely welcoming atmosphere in the workshop, a wonderfully Christmassy way to spend our morning, thank you'.

1.8 After each event the council officers, together with those who provided support or worked in partnership with us, met to discuss lessons learned and how things could be improved at future events. This ensures that future events are not only improved, but also ensures that those attending have been listened to. Each event has been fully risk assessed, and appropriate documentation provide to either SGC or the insurance company, to ensure high standards of public safety.

2. 2025

2.1 This is the current list of events and activities which the Community Engagement & Events Officer would like to deliver considering our previous offer and feedback from the community and local partners.

- Throughout 2025: Postbox toppers on Regent Street in collaboration with Yarn & Yardage
- Throughout 2025: Craft afternoons at Kingswood Library during each of the school holidays, facilitated by Colourful Minds (February, April, August and October)
- End of March: Keep Britain Tidy: Great British Spring Clean. Community litter picks to be arranged alongside SGC & Kingswood Park
- End of April: Easter event at Kingswood Park or Grimsbury farm to include storytelling, facepainting and an Easter egg hunt
- 8th May: VE Day celebrations. An afternoon tea in the Holy Trinity Church hall targeted at older residents in Kingswood with musical entertainment. An evening event in Kingswood Park including fish and chips and music. The evening event will also include the lighting of the Lantern of Peace to commemorate the occasion

- June – August: Wallace and Gromit themed activities if we are successful in having a statue in Kingswood. Ideas: clay model workshops, film screenings, character meet and greets and more
- August: Summer film screenings in Kingswood Park ran by Bristol Film Festival. A day event which will include the screening of 2 films and coinciding workshops e.g. a circus skills workshop before a screening of The Greatest Showman
- November: A Window Wonderland instead of the Kingswood Lantern Parade (due to works in the park). This event will encourage local people to create artworks in their windows. This event would be facilitated with Colourful Minds
- 9th November: Kingswood Remembrance Parade
- December: Christmas wreath workshops
- December: Christmas trail. Theme: Elves and the Shoemaker



Picture shows 10 knitted elves in different coloured outfits sat on a sofa and ready for the 2025 trail!

- January 2026: Kingswood Lantern Parade in Kingswood Park

Other activities: The creation of a ‘free library’ working with a men’s shed group.

3. Social media communications

3.1 Social media has proved an excellent tool in engaging with the local community for publicising Kingswood Town Council’s meetings, activities, opportunities and news. It also provides the chance to engage in local discussion where appropriate and receive feedback on the council’s offer.

3.2 Since the beginning of July 2024, the Community Engagement & Events Officer has been working to grow the council’s Facebook page in terms of followers, likes and reach. The Kingswood Town Council currently has 670 followers, an increase of 617 people in 5 months. The largest increase in followers is seen following a large public event such as the Lantern Parade and Remembrance Parade. Of those 670 followers,

86% are female and 24% are male. 68.1% of the followers have their location set as Kingswood or Bristol.

3.3 An Instagram page was created in December and currently has 68 followers. This is expected to be lower than on Facebook as our content is being shared in retrospect rather than as things have happened (as on the Kingswood Town Council's Facebook page). Going forward with the opportunity to cross post on the platforms, we would hope to see a steady increase in engagement on Instagram.

3.4 Councillors can support this by sharing posts created by Kingswood Town Council and also by liking or commenting.

3.5 To improve our presence online, more resource is needed for our marketing and content creation. During the 2025 events and activities, the staff would like to use a portion of each event's budget to engage a freelancer to take photos and videos which can be shared on Kingswood Town Council's social media pages whilst the events are taking place. This will greatly improve engagement and will also ensure that people are being responded to as events are happening, for example if they are commenting on a post asking what time the event starts. It will also mean that the Community Engagement & Events Officer is able to focus on the overseeing of the event. A proposal will be submitted to the Finance and Administration Committee for consideration.

4. Website communication

4.1 In addition to using social media, the website is used daily as a place to post news, events, council information such as the community grant scheme, vacancies, meeting information and is a platform from which to contact the staff and councillors. It has several news pages full of useful information and photographs. Even if people do not use social media, they can often access the website, which is compliant with public body website regulations, Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 (the 'accessibility regulations').

4.2 Agendas for meetings, with reports, are posted the Thursday before every council and committee meeting, and the draft minutes are published at the end of the week that the meeting has taken place. People are referred to the website to obtain information on the Community Grant Scheme, application forms to become a councillor and to see dates of future meetings.

5. Printed Communications

5.1 In order to not exclude those who do not use social media, we also use the Kingswood Voice every month, to publish items that are topical, as well as promote events and provide our contact details. Not every resident receives a printed copy of the Voice through their letter boxes, but the majority of residents do, and copies are also available to collect in public building, like the Library, the Skills Hub and the Park

Centre. In addition, we have developed a strong relationship with the reporter who works for the Voice and they have attended our events. Furthermore, we publish our contribution to the Voice on the council's website on the first of the month.

5.2 The council has had a single page for most of the year in the Voice but purchased a double page for four months at the end of 2024. There is sufficient news to return to having a double page each month, therefore councillors are requested to consider the request below.

6. Recommendations

6.1 For Councillors to consider the proposed 2025 events and activities and to make any other recommendations at this meeting, that they might like to the Community Engagement & Events Officer to deliver, in addition to, or instead of, anything listed.

6.2 To consider and agree to the purchase of 2 pages every month (the 2 centre pages) in the Kingswood Voice, at a cost of £550 per month for 2 pages (it is £330 for a single page).