

CIVIC REPORT

Councillor Hugo Mieville 20th February to 25th March 2024

DATE	FUNCTION	COMMENTS
23 rd February	Dinner at new restaurant 'LaVita'	Many thanks to owner Idris for inviting me to eat a delicious Italian lunch on Friday at his brand-new restaurant La Vita! I felt very spoiled by the standard of the cuisine and the high level of service. It was also lovely to meet Idris's wife Alice, little boy Eric and mother-in-law Claire - the family are in the process of moving down to Blandford from Bristol! Good luck in your new venture - and it's so nice to see that 'space' in our town centre being filled!
24 th February	Community Expo	It was an absolute pleasure on Saturday morning to attend the Community Expo in the Corn Exchange. It was extremely well attended by both exhibitors, councillors and an enthusiastic general public, and gave a really good idea of what a wide range of activities are available to Blandford residents. Well done to all those who were involved in organising this impressive event!
24 th February	Event to mark the 2 nd anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine	It was such an honour for me to join Anna Uskova and her fellow Ukrainians in the Marketplace at lunchtime today, and to mark the second anniversary of the disastrous invasion of their country by Russia in 2022. There were short speeches, some candles lit, a silence kept and the Ukrainian national anthem movingly sung. We stand in solidarity with you - 'Slava Ukraini!'
24 th February	Visit to Blandford Repair Cafe	It was an absolute pleasure yesterday afternoon to attend the monthly Repair Cafe session at the Scout Hut, and to see what they get up to! I was given a guided tour of the Cafe by organiser Carol de Saram, and I was very impressed to see the wide range of services - ranging from seamstress skills to electronic wizardry - available to those needing all manner of repairs to household items. And there's all also a lovely cafe too, where one can relax, drink a cup of tea, and have a chat! I had a lovely afternoon, thank you...
28 th February	Sherborne Civic Day	Cllr Colin Stevens & Mrs Chris Stevens - Chris and I attended Sherborne's Civic Day. We met at Sherborne Football club's complex for coffee and a look at their solar panel system complete with storage batteries which supplies the power for the pitch floodlights. They have also fitted 16 air source heat pumps to provide all heating and hot water, a very impressive system. We then moved, by coach, into town and visited the museum for a really enlightening guided tour. Lunch was then provided at Castle Garden Centre with talks by members of the Griffin School about their community initiatives. After lunch we returned to the town and were taken on a guided tour of Sherborne Abbey, returning to the Football Club for afternoon tea and departure. A really interesting day despite the rain.

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1 st March	Roller Disco	It was great fun for my wife and I to watch and help at a fun Roller Disco session at the Corn Exchange on Friday night, almost certainly the last chance for a roll around before the temporary closure of the building before its much- needed modernisation. It's amazing what an adaptable venue this is - and it will be even better when all the work has been done! Thank you for the contributions to my mayoral charities, everyone!
3 rd March	Blandford & District Lions Annual Charter Lunch	Cllr Roger Carter - 'After some difficulties with recruitment earlier last year, the Blandford and District Lions club have now recruited new members - two of which were sworn in during the lunch. We were reminded of the tremendous support and commitment the Lions club give you many local and regional organisations. We were reminded too of the global commitment of the Lions to improve the lives of people Worldwide. I thanked the Lions for the local, national and global work they do and wished them continued success in the future.
5 th March	Portland Civic Day	We really enjoyed Portland Civic Day yesterday, which centred on the island's worldwide reputation for stone-quarrying. We started in the drizzle with a tour of the wonderful Memory Stones and the Tout Quarry Sculpture Park in the company of the inspirational Hannah Sofaer. We then visited the Drill Hall to see an exhibition of, and talks about, the history, ecology and geology of the stones, before eating a delicious lunch. After which, we had a chance to execute some stone carving in the workshop next door. I am too modest to show off my own brilliant efforts, but my wife says they were unique... We then had a few moments to enjoy the stunning views from the very top of Portland before leaving.
5 th March	Dorset Youth Association Celebration Evening	We spent a very interesting evening at the HQ of the Dorset Youth Association in Dorchester last night, learning about the wide-ranging and diverse activities of the DYA, which helps to co-ordinate and advise youth activities and organisations all over the county. I was particularly interested to visit the Will Does bus, which tours the county for a charity set up in memory of Will Paddy, who sadly died in 2019 - what an inspirational charity! All in all, it was a great evening, which was a good reminder of all that the voluntary sector does for Dorset life.
9 th March	Mayoral Charity inner & Dance	There was fun, feasting and frivolity on Saturday night at the Mayoral Charity Dinner Dance at the Sealey Suite, in aid of my mayoral charities and in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the birth of the Town Council in 1974. All proceeds went to my chosen charities: Nourish (formerly Blandford Foodbank); the Blandford Town Museum and the Dorset And Somerset Air Ambulance. A great time was had by all, and I want to thank in particular my wife Yvonne, Mayor's Assistant Sarah Purdy; Linda Scott -

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		<p>Giles the Town Clerk for all their support in helping me to organise the event.</p> <p>Florabunda provided magnificent floral table centrepieces, whilst Late September rocked us all evening with some great 70's vibe. I am also grateful to the amazing magicians of The Art of the Impossible, Jana and Paul, who made the impossible look possible. I am also incredibly grateful to all the stores and restaurants from our generous Town who donated prizes for the Prize Draw. Their generosity reflects so well on our lovely town. Thank you so much!</p> <p>We had a great evening. Thanks to everyone who came and helped us all to enjoy ourselves without forgetting our charitable purpose. Let's do it again soon!</p>
11 th March	Fly a Flag for the Commonwealth	<p>It was a great pleasure yesterday morning to preside over the Commonwealth Day ceremony at the Corn Exchange, and to celebrate this important organisation in the company of lots of children from local schools. Following the playing of the Commonwealth Anthem, we retired indoors and heard readings from Freeman Carol Sharp, and Col. Rebecca Jacques-Grey, Commandant of Blandford Camp. Many thanks to all involved.</p>
13 th March	Visit to Houses of Parliament	<p>What a superbly interesting, cultural, educational and historical day a Town Council team spent in Parliament today! After an early start for some, we were treated to a fascinating tour of Westminster Hall, the Palace of Westminster itself- including the Houses of Commons and Lords - and lots of places in between, including the Central Lobby. Convention dictates that photos are not allowed in most of the Palace, sadly. At the end of our fascinating tour, we were welcomed to a Committee Room by the Minister for Local Government aka Simon Hoare, MP, who gave us a thorough rundown on the intricacies of preparing for National and local elections - one of his responsibilities. Many thanks to him, and to Linda Scott-Giles for organising this tremendous visit.</p>
23 rd March	50 th Anniversary Celebration	<p>What a lovely afternoon we spent in the Corn Exchange this afternoon! The occasion was partly an 'au revoir' to the building itself before it enters a 16-month period of renovation and modernisation; whilst it was also an opportunity to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the foundation of Blandford Forum Town Council in 1974. Splendid music came from our old friends from the Blandford Stour Valley Band, whilst guests enjoyed tea and delicious cakes in the company of old friends, and took the opportunity to admire our splendid Town Silver. We all hope to be back in the Corn Exchange before too long...</p>

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Meetings Attended by the Chairman of Council

DATE	MEETING	COMMENTS