

Chair's report Full Council meeting – 08.12.25

Well what a year this has been...!

The Events Team have delivered a bumper year of great events, that have been thoroughly enjoyed by the people of Holbeach, who, despite some truly shocking weather, continue to support us and turn up in very large numbers, and always give us positive reviews.

Following a very successful Summer program, we have recently been hosting the Autumn season of Events, these being the Halloween, the Remembrance Parade, and most recently the Christmas Fayre.

All of these Events were impacted by the HR issues we have been having to deal with, however, they all came off very successfully nonetheless.

The Halloween Spooky Trail continued to develop on the successful theme we have created, and indeed, we now have a local Amdram Group who participated for the first time, and now have ideas of how we can make this Event even better. We have trialled glowing bracelets for the tiny tots, to limit the scares to make this event even more inclusive, however, there were no issues of any kind anyway, and everybody who came had a really good time, although sadly, the ATC Burger Bar could not attend, which was greatly missed.

The Remembrance Parade went off flawlessly, although sadly we had to make due with recorded music, as our Bugler has now gone to University (apparently), and it was not possible to get a Band to play. Holbeach Town Band were requested to participate, however, they could not take part due to the lack of musicians.

The only issue that detracted from an otherwise perfect event, was that the Bishop chatted during the two minutes silence which some parishioners were rightly offended by. We have brought this to the notice of the Church.

Our Christmas Fayre in the Park went ahead despite the utterly appalling weather. As you all know, it rained and rained, and then rained some more, only stopping well into the afternoon.

However... The People of Holbeach still turned out to support us, in far bigger than expected numbers, and the footfall through the event at times was very substantial. The stand-out attraction of the show was our Santa's Grotto which had literally hundreds queuing for all day long. This was particularly well received by the parishioners (especially the ones under 5), and plaudits go out to Santa Jack for doing such a fabulous job providing such a magical experience.

While we are talking plaudits, I would just like to express my deep respect and appreciation for my team, Becky, Donna, and Adrian, and listening to them on our radios working together and problem solving in real time, I was filled with a deep sense of pride, and felt that if they could cope with this, they can cope with anything. Also thanks go out to Adrian's wife Sarah, for all her hard work in the "EFL and safety department" (see what I did there?), herding kittens to ensure that every child goes to see Santa. Thank you Sarah.

Finally, None of this could have taken place without the excellent co-operation and Support we had from our Parks Team. While Dan himself could not be there, Pete and Aaron really did us proud, going above and beyond on their quest to give the people of Holbeach the best event possible.

Guys, I salute you, and I would just like to take a moment to call for a round of applause for all the hard work put in by the whole team..

Events are fundamental to our service delivery, they are greatly loved and appreciated by the people of Holbeach, and are the one aspect of our service delivery that consistently attracts positive feedback from our Parishioners. We now have a great team to deliver these events going forward, and have fantastic ideas for how we can make them bigger and better.

For those individuals who see Events as unimportant, and “a waste of Public money”, I would like to draw your attention to all the Positive feedback we get by doing them, and invite you to join the rest of us in the 21st Century. Every Council in this day and age, large or small puts on Events for the benefit of the Public, and as one of the biggest Parishes (by area) in the country, we need to be showing how it should be done.

The cost of our Events is minimal in the grand scheme of things, and they are loved by the Public (especially those on very low incomes). We are a Council that should be representing all of our Parishioners, are the Children and young people not parishioners too..?

Despite all the internal conflict on this Council, we on the Events team are currently doing a fabulous job, but of course, it could always be even better. I believe that now we have a younger Events team, with more progressive ideas to contribute and the drive to carry them through, we CAN, and WILL make 2026 into the best year ever.

Watch this space....