

Report Purpose:

To update committee on progress and work associated with local service delivery.

Author:

Town Clerk, Assistant Town Clerk, Town Centre Manager and Events Manager.

6.1 Events update

Footfall

Our Events	Easter	1261
Footfall Week before event	7,985	9,052
Event figures	9,144	18,051
Previous year event	10,993	12,711

Our Events	DSS 22nd July	DSS 29th July	DSS 5th August	DSS 12th August	DSS 19th August	DSS 26th August
Footfall Week before event	7,710	8,294	8,325	7,692	7,918	7849
Event figures	8,294	8,325	7,692	7,918	7849	Figures not currently available
Previous year event	8,363	7,820	8,994	7,914	8,373	7,187

Other Events	Bikeathon	Macc in May	Macc Pow	Macc Pride
Footfall Week before event	8,561	8,349	10,247	11,223
Event figures	8,349	14,037	11,223	14,707
Previous year event	10,656 (this included MTC birthday party)	13,787 (Sat) 7349 (Sun)	10,067	15,467

CEC Temporary Road Closure – New Fees

Cheshire East Council (CEC) has made the decision to enforce a £400 charge for events involving the sale of goods or services within a road closure. This means that a high majority of our internal events, including Step Into Christmas and the Twilight

Market, as well as events we provide grant funding towards, such as Macc Pride, Macc in May and Bikeathon, will now incur this charge.

Although CEC has confirmed that there has been no change to the formally approved fees and charges framework, they have stated that they are now reviewing event applications more closely and applying the existing criteria consistently based on the overall nature of an event and the activities taking place within a road closure.

This means that events which have historically been free under the not-for-profit, community and charity category are now be treated as commercial markets and therefore incur the £400 TTRO charge, even where the Town Council makes no profit, does not charge stallholders and provides the event free to the public. In particular, where there is commercial trading, the sale of goods or services, or an exchange of money within the road closure, CEC considers these activities when determining whether the charge applies. Simply removing stallholder pitch fees or absorbing those costs would not necessarily avoid the charge, as the presence of commercial trading and economic activity remains a determining factor.

This represents a significant change in how our events are being assessed in practice by CEC and means that a large majority of our free community events could now incur a new £400 CEC TTRO administration charge, regardless of whether the Town Council receives any income from them.

We have requested a meeting with the CEC Highways Team to discuss whether this approach can be reconsidered for events organised or supported by Macclesfield Town Council. However, at present, it does not appear likely that an exemption will be made for Town Council events.

As a result, we will now need to absorb this additional cost into our event budgets. This will reduce the level of activity we may be able to afford at our events and could potentially mean that we are no longer able to support local food and drink businesses by inviting them to attend with free stalls. For things like the Twilight Market the stalls are a key focus of activity, so we are reluctant to remove the stalls from the event.

Martyn's Law Update

With the introduction of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 (Martyn's Law) from 1 April 2027, we have made the decision that events with a large outdoor presence and expected footfall of 500+ people will be supported by Duttons Traffic Management. We will also ask event grant applicants to consider traffic management companies when hosting a large event in the Market Place.

The traffic management company will provide additional support with pre-notification road closures, signage, barriers and on-the-day road closure management and observation. While existing road closure barriers will continue to be used, Duttons will provide additional metal barriers, highway signage and vehicles to help secure road closures and protect members of the public.

For Do Something Summer, we have also made the decision to close the road by Church Street to provide an additional level of protection for the public.

This additional safety provision will add approximately £350 per event for static events and around £3,000 for rolling road closures for parades. These costs will need to be absorbed within the existing events budget.

We have also made the decision to continue providing security at our two winter events, where the combination of alcohol, darker evenings and increased footfall creates additional safety considerations. This will cost an additional £1200 per event.

1261 Festival update

1261 was a real success this year, bringing thousands of residents and visitors into Macclesfield town centre and creating a vibrant, welcoming atmosphere across the town. The beautiful weather also helped create a fantastic atmosphere, with people able to enjoy the wide range of activities, performances and events throughout the day.

This year the community funding stream offer was really pushed as an option for local businesses. 27 groups responded and were rewarded with grants of up to £250 to put on a wide and varied range of activities, from handkerchief printing to belt making. Bars offered live music and shops opened up for talks, samples and storytelling. Macclesfield Market Hall took advantage and had three different providers on the day which helped draw in a bigger crowd to the market hall. With input from these local groups and individuals we were able to offer a much broader and richer festival experience.

The 1261 Parade co-ordinated by Macclesfield Community ArtSpace once again saw a space for local groups to get involved in the theme 'Films'. Around 13 groups took part with everything from Greatest Showman, to Rataouille, and even ET flying on a bike.

Around 1500 paper copies of the event programme were handed out and the digital copy hosted by Flipping Books, was visited over 3.4k times in total with 1k views on the festival day itself.

We have booked next years date for 19th June 2027.

Do Something Summer

22nd July- Rocking Climbing with Orbis Rocking Climbing

For the first week of Do Something Summer, Orbis Rock Climbing provided two large climbing walls and five instructors. Following high queue times in previous years with one wall, the additional wall significantly increased capacity. The activity was supported by Granelli's ice cream, street games, colouring and, new for this year, a dedicated Quiet Zone with a gazebo, ear defenders, bean bags and colouring.

The event was very well attended, with queues from around 10am through to 3pm and many children returning for multiple turns. Good weather and sunshine also contributed to the strong turnout.

The Quiet Zone was particularly successful, with positive feedback from families of neurodiverse children who were able to wait in a calmer environment and be called when their turn was ready. We also received excellent feedback from the parents of a blind child, who praised the instructors for supporting their child through touch and vibration.

Dutton's provided traffic management and closed the main town-centre roads to insure safety

Overall, the event was a great success and provided a real treat for children, giving them the opportunity to take part in something exciting and unusual. The activity was also able to accommodate a large number of children, ensuring that many families could benefit from the experience.

29th July- Junk Modelling with Macclesfield Art Space

For the second week of Do Something Summer, we worked with Macclesfield Art Space to deliver a large marketplace-style craft workshop. The activity included three workshops across approximately 12 tables: robot making, Elmer Elephant rainbow lanterns and a large freestyle junk-modelling area.

Macclesfield Art Space provided 2 staff and 12 volunteers, with a further 3 staff and 4 volunteers provided by ourselves, ensuring the activity was well staffed throughout. They also supplied all materials and equipment required, and the kids got to take home their models.

This was our most popular event of the summer, with large numbers attending and many families staying for extended periods. The popularity was such that some parents and guardians needed to extend their parking and visit the town centre to find lunch while their children continued participating.

Overall, the event was extremely successful, with high levels of engagement and positive participation. The strong staffing levels, variety of activities and quality of materials helped create a busy and enjoyable workshop, and we would recommend working with Macclesfield Art Space again for future events.

5th August Comic Art with Marc Jackson

For the third week of Do Something Summer, we worked with Room for Comics, a local comic book business, to deliver a workshop called The Big Draw. The aim was for all the kids to draw a cartoon and these will be incorporated into a big comic by Marc. The supplier was only able to provide one member of staff, which was limited for the size of the event.

Following a review of the planned activity, it was decided to supplement the programme with an additional workshop through the Art Den Collective. Local artist and craft workshop designer Hilda Hemingway delivered additional mask-making and badge-making activities, providing a wider range of creative opportunities for

children to participate in and with a take home element. The additional activities proved very popular, with good levels of engagement and crowds continuing until around 2:30pm. Due to light rain, some activities were moved into the Butter market to ensure the event could continue.

Overall, attendance was lower than the previous two weeks. This may have been due to the more niche nature of the comic-book theme, the frequency of other similar comic book workshops taking place in the town, or the dull weather.

12th August- Mad Science

This week, we hired Mad Science to deliver an array of science workshops alongside four science show performances. The activities included paper plane making, a science-themed assault course, slime making, and two shows focused on space exploration and the science of sport.

It was a very warm day, but the event was well attended, with visitors staying for around 2–3 hours. The heat did make it challenging to cover all of the activities, so we put additional gazebos up to provide more shelter and shade for participants.

The rangers supported with both the set-up and set-down, which was greatly appreciated.

Overall, attendance was comparable with the previous Rock Climbing and Junk Modelling sessions, demonstrating that the science activities were equally popular with visitors.

19th August – Let's Circus by Circus Skills

Let's Circus joined us for a fun-filled day of circus skills and light-hearted competition. Due to the ongoing relationship between MTC and Let's Circus, who regularly visit the town, the event benefited from a very strong footfall and was extremely popular with both adults and children.

The weather was mixed throughout the day, with some short periods of rain, but this did not affect the high level of attendance. The activities were very well received, with some children choosing to stay and participate throughout the full day.

MTC rangers supported with the pack-down of the gazebos, and we were able to keep the event outdoors despite the changeable weather.

As the programme of events has progressed, we have also seen a significant increase in engagement from the BAME community, which continues to improve month on month. This demonstrates that the programme is reaching a broader and more diverse audience as it develops.

26th August – Colour Up!

For the final week, we ran our internal colouring and painting workshop, Colour Up!, celebrating the joy and creativity of art. This has been delivered successfully for a number of years and continues to be a simple but popular activity.

The workshop gives children the opportunity to get creative on a large scale, using oversized sheets of paper and large 3D figures as canvases. This encourages children to experiment with colour and creativity in a fun and accessible way.

This year, we decided to enhance the event by bringing in the Face Painting Queen, adding an extra element of colour and providing an additional treat for the community. The combination of large-scale art and face painting helped create a vibrant and engaging final event for the programme.

As part of planning for 2027, we will review the programme as a whole, including:

- attendance and footfall across individual sessions
- the capacity of providers to safely accommodate demand
- the range and popularity of activities offered
- accessibility and the continued use of the Quiet Zone
- staffing and volunteer requirements
- the take home element for the children
- the implications of Martyn's Law and any associated requirements for event organisers and activity providers

The introduction of the Quiet Zone has been a positive development this year and will be considered as part of the wider review of the programme for 2027.

Upcoming Events

Macclesfield Textile Week

On the 1st July, we met with the organisers of Textile Week at the Silk Museum to review, edit and cross-check the website and calendar of events. MTC is part of the working group for the event, supporting the organisers with the development and coordination of the programme.

Textile Week is a collaboration between the Silk Museum and Macclesfield ArtSpace and will take place during the national Heritage Open Days week in September. The programme will celebrate Macclesfield's rich textile heritage and creative community, with a diverse programme of activity aimed at local residents and visitors.

The week will feature more than 30 events and activities, including craft workshops, talks, fashion shows and family-friendly workshops. A particular highlight will be a collaboration with the British Museum's Bayeux Tapestry exhibition, creating a strong link between Macclesfield's textile heritage and this internationally significant collection.

MTC will support the programme through funding £500 worth of printed promotional materials to help raise awareness of the events and encourage attendance. We will also support the wider promotion of the programme through our networks and channels.

A new website is now live at: <https://www.thesilkmuseum.co.uk/textileweek>

Nature Needs You

Since delivering this event from 2017 onwards, the Council has been reviewing its future delivery model and exploring alternative approaches. One option under consideration has been for the event to no longer be led directly by the Town Council. This would release staff capacity and budget, allowing the Council to support the development of new events, initiatives and opportunities across the town.

Following discussions with the RSPB and the Friends of West Park, it has been agreed that Nature Needs You will return to being an RSPB-led event, delivered on a smaller scale with a stronger focus on nature and ecology. The RSPB has also decided to relocate the event to Tegg's Nose, which is outside the Town Council's district and therefore not eligible for our event funding.

The Friends of West Park have proposed moving their involvement to the spring, reducing the risk of adverse weather affecting the event, and we are supportive of this approach. In addition, the Council will support the Big Tree Hunt on 20 September, with funding provided if required.

As a result, rather than continuing to deliver one large annual Nature Needs You event, the Council will redirect its financial support towards a series of smaller-scale park events in September, October and May. This approach will provide more regular opportunities for community engagement, while supporting local environmental campaigning and initiatives throughout the year.

The revised approach will provide more regular touchpoints with the community and allow the Council to support a wider range of environmental activities, while also releasing staff capacity and resources to develop new events and initiatives.

Macclesfield Coffee Festival

Macclesfield has become renowned for its thriving independent café scene. Rather than shy away from the familiar joke that "all we have is coffee shops," the Macclesfield Coffee Festival will embrace this reputation and transform it into a celebration of one of the town's greatest strengths.

The Great Macclesfield Café Crawl aims to become the UK's largest town-based coffee festival, showcasing Macclesfield's exceptional independent coffee culture while driving footfall, supporting local businesses, celebrating entrepreneurship, and creating a unique cultural experience for residents and visitors alike.

The festival will bring together coffee tasting, education, live entertainment, history, hospitality and community participation across cafés, bakeries, bars, cultural venues and public spaces throughout the town.

To date, 18 businesses have expressed an interest in participating, including Yas Bean, Baked by Bean, Picturedrome, Arighi Bianchi, Flour Water Salt and Kickback

Coffee. This demonstrates strong initial interest from the local business community and provides a positive foundation for developing the festival.

The project has now moved into its next stage, with organisations being invited to propose talks, workshops and other community-focused activities that could form part of the festival programme. The Council is exploring opportunities to provide partial support towards suitable activities, helping to strengthen community engagement and ensure the festival offers more than simply a café crawl.

This next stage will help develop a diverse programme that celebrates Macclesfield's coffee culture while providing opportunities for learning, participation, local talent and community involvement.

Halloween

With the introduction of Martyn's Law, the costs associated with delivering outdoor events in the Market Place are expected to increase, particularly due to the enhanced security and supervision requirements needed to ensure road closures are implemented and managed safely. Weather can however mean sometimes in Oct and March the events are moved indoors anyway.

As a result, the Council is trialling a new approach to the delivery of both the Easter and Halloween events. While the events will remain town centre-based, activities will be distributed across a number of locations throughout the town centre, rather than being concentrated solely in the Market Place. The Market Place will continue to act as the central hub, with the Town Council maintaining its event stall and presence in this location.

For Halloween, we are developing a varied programme of activities aimed at different age groups and audiences, working with local businesses, organisations and creatives to create a town-wide celebration:

- **Junior Herbalist Club** with Cath Curzon.
- **Halloween crafts** with Macclesfield ArtSpace.
- **Wand making and broomstick making** with Emily's Forest School.
- **Cauldron bath bombs** with Bubble Beez.
- **Historical walks** for adults, delivered by Tina and Daisy in the late afternoon and evening.
- **A lunchtime talk at the Silk Museum** by Becca Smith, as part of the Medieval Project, exploring the relationship between witches, forests and Norman feudal laws, with a focus on the 'Witches' Forest'.
- **A themed Harry Potter week** at Button Warehouse.
- We are also exploring a **Dungeons & Dragons and board game-themed competition** in the Market Hall, which would provide an additional activity for families, young people and adult audiences.

The intention is to create a broader Halloween programme that encourages people to move around the town centre and visit different venues, businesses and attractions, while reducing the reliance on a single large-scale outdoor event in the Market Place.

This approach also provides an opportunity to work more closely with local businesses, cultural organisations and community groups, helping to showcase the wider range of activity taking place across the town centre and creating a more varied Halloween experience for residents and visitors.

Remembrance Sunday

As is customary, Macclesfield Town Council will lead the organisation of Remembrance Sunday, coordinating the arrangements and ensuring the event is accessible to the wider community. A large TV screen and audio system will be hired to allow more members of the public to follow the service and increase its reach across the town.

The event will begin with a parade from Macclesfield Town Hall to the Cenotaph. The service will include speeches and readings from local military leaders, the Lieutenant, and religious leaders, alongside performances from local bands.

The service will conclude with the laying of wreaths and a formal salute outside the Town Hall. Following the service, a drinks reception will be held for dignitaries and invited guests.

Armistice

Armistice Day will take place on 11 November. The programme will begin with a drinks reception hosted by MTC, followed by the 11am two-minute silence in the Market Square. A lunchtime reception will then be held for the delegation afterwards.

Step into Christmas

We'll be hosting our Step into Christmas event on Saturday 28th November with Macc Youth Brass Band playing around the Christmas Tree, live music on stage from Choose Macc.

Twilight Market

The Twilight Market will return on Thursday 10th December supported by the Made in Macc Makers Market. There will be live music, mulled wine and a small selection of food stalls to supplement the Made in Macc offer.

We are exploring the idea of having a Silent Disco in the Market Hall or Grosvenor this year to finish the event as a family friendly alcohol free celebration 6pm-8pm to finish the event.

Lunar New Year

Looking to 2027 we'll see a return the Lunar New Year festivities will welcome in the Year of the Fire Sheep on Saturday 6th February.

6.2 Sponsored Events

Macclesfield Town Council has a strong track record of supporting and contributing towards the costs of events within the town and is particularly keen to encourage local individuals and organisations to bring new and innovative events to Macclesfield. As the number of requests for financial support continues to increase, the Council will not be able to fully fund every application and cannot commit to providing ongoing financial support for the same events year after year.

The Council is currently developing a formal Event Funding Application Framework which will provide a consistent process for organisations and individuals seeking financial support for events. The framework will set out the information and documentation that event organisers will be expected to provide and the criteria against which applications will be assessed. Event organisers should be prepared to provide this information when applying for financial support from the Town Council.

Traditionally, event organisers requesting financial support have provided the Council with a request for a specific amount and an indication of what the funding would be used for. The new framework will take a more comprehensive approach, similar to the Council's grant funding process. Organisers will be expected to provide a full event budget, setting out anticipated income and expenditure, including ticket income (if applicable), sponsorship, grants, contributions from other organisations and any other sources of funding. This will allow Officers and Councillors to properly assess whether the proposed budget is realistic, whether the event is financially viable and whether the event is likely to proceed.

Financial support for events is therefore not simply a matter of considering the amount requested and what it will be spent on. The Council must be satisfied that public money is being used appropriately, that the event represents value for money, that the overall event budget is credible and that the level of Council support is proportionate to the benefits delivered to the community.

The framework will also recognise that event organisers should seek to develop a sustainable financial model for their events. Council funding should not be regarded as an automatic or permanent source of funding, and the Council cannot reasonably be expected to continually fund the same events year after year. Organisers will be expected to consider and, where appropriate, develop other sources of income, including sponsorship and other funding opportunities. Where there is sufficient demand, the Council will consider whether training or support could be provided to event organisers to help them develop sponsorship and other income-generation opportunities.

Officers will assess each application against the Council's priorities, the benefits to the community, the financial viability of the event, the level of other funding and income being generated, the realism of the proposed budget and the funding available within the Council's budget. Officers will then make a recommendation to this Committee, or another appropriate Committee of the Council, for decision.

The Council recognises that some information contained within an event budget or supporting documentation may be commercially sensitive. Where requested by the event organiser, commercially sensitive information may be redacted before information is made publicly available, in accordance with the Council's obligations under applicable legislation and transparency requirements.

Any event receiving financial support from the Town Council will be required to comply with all applicable legal and statutory requirements, including, where applicable, the requirements of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 (Martyn's Law). Compliance with all relevant legislation, together with the Council's policies and conditions of funding, will form part of the Service Level Agreement between the Town Council and the event organiser.

As part of the application and monitoring process, the Council may require the event organiser to provide documentation such as risk assessments, equality impact assessments, safeguarding policies and assessments, insurance documentation, traffic management plans, financial information, or any other information the Council considers necessary. The Town Council's review of these documents does not transfer responsibility or liability for the planning, management or delivery of the event. The event organiser remains solely responsible for ensuring that the event is planned and delivered safely and in full compliance with all applicable legal and regulatory requirements. The Committee should be aware that these events carry risk where they rely on fundraising, sponsorship, or other income that is not guaranteed, and organisers remain responsible for managing these risks and ensuring the event remains financially viable.

6.2.1 Macc POW!

Please see attached reports.

The event has been established for 10 years and has grown both in scale and in the level of funding requested from the Council. MTC supported this event with £5000 this year. Footfall increased from 10,247 in the week before the event to 11,223 during the event, an increase of 9.52%.

The event also

- Promotes Macclesfield as a destination – attracting visitors and international creators from the UK, Europe and USA.
- Supports community and culture – providing exhibitions, workshops and free activities for families, young people and residents.
- Supports local businesses and creatives – working with independent businesses, Macclesfield Artspace, schools and cultural organisations.
- Raises Macclesfield's profile – positioning the town as an increasingly recognised centre for comic art and creative activity.

The organiser has requested £5,000 towards the event again. Total expenditure is £11,970, with income of £2,875, resulting in a net cost of £9,095. The requested contribution would therefore fund 55% of the net cost.

Officer recommendation is that the Council instead awards £3,952 (34% of the deficit), restricted to expenditure that provides a clear and tangible local community benefit:

Cost	Amount
Contribution to the Hire of Macclesfield Town Hall	£652
Setting up and take down of the festival	£1000
ArtSpace Workshop	£200
Hire of Button Warehouse	£300
Design and print costs	£500
Workshops	£700
Social Media	£300
Website	£300
Total recommended funding	£3,952

The remaining amount outstanding should be sought through further sponsorship, commercial income and/or other appropriate grant funding.

This approach recognises the event's established contribution to the town and its ability to attract visitors from outside the area, while ensuring that public funding is directed towards identifiable local expenditure and community activities. It also recognises that the event is delivered and marketed by a private business.

6.2.2 Bikeathon

Please see attached reports.

The Bikeathon is a well-established community event organised by Allgood Cycling and charity fundraiser for Just Drop In, a local charity supporting young people 2026, the event generated £11,219 for the charity, with 100% of funds raised by registered riders donated. Event expenditure was £2,631.17 with the £2,000 MTC grant was used entirely towards the essential administration, project management and organisational costs of delivering the event.

Footfall was 8,561 in the week before the event and 8,349 during the event, a decrease of 2.48%. Although footfall was slightly lower, there are several reasons to recommend continued support:

- Significant charitable benefit: £11,219 was raised for a local charity supporting young people.
- Strong return on public funding: The £2,000 grant contributed to an event generating significant charitable fundraising and sponsorship.
- Not-for-profit purpose: The event is specifically designed to raise funds for Just Drop In, with rider fundraising donated directly to the charity.
- Support for local businesses: Riders receive £5 vouchers redeemable with participating independent Macclesfield businesses.

- Active travel: The event encourages cycling and supports the Council's active travel objectives, providing families and young people with an opportunity to participate.
- Community benefits: Free bike locks are provided to under-18s and a free Dr Bike service helps encourage safe and continued cycling.
- Sustainable funding model: The organiser has maintained the £2,000 Council contribution for several years and has sought to grow the event through sponsorship rather than increasing its funding request.

Action: To recommend the proposal in the report for funding of £2,000 for the 2027 Bikeathon

6.2.3 The NOW Festival

Please see attached reports.

The NOW Festival (known as Macc in May this year) is taking place on 9–10 July 2027. Macc in May has demonstrated significant audience growth, with footfall increasing from 8,349 in the week before the event to 14,037 this year – an increase of 68.13%. We supported this with funding of £4,160 this year.

There are therefore strong reasons to continue supporting the event:

- Significant increase in footfall, demonstrating growing interest and the potential to attract visitors into the town.
- Community and economic benefit, bringing activity and visitors into Macclesfield.
- Support for local performers and community participation, including the Community Battle of the Bands.
- Accessible live entertainment, providing free or affordable activities for residents and visitors.
- Support for event infrastructure, including professional sound, safety and security provision.

The organiser has proposed extending the festival to two days, with an additional Friday evening. The rationale provided is primarily operational, relating to the time required to build and dismantle the stage, PA and lighting equipment, rather than demonstrating additional community or economic benefit from a second day.

This is particularly relevant as the event was successfully delivered as a one-day event in 2026, attracting 14,037 footfall, and the organiser has previously operated a two-day format before determining that the second day did not provide sufficient benefit.

The Officers are therefore prepared to support the organiser's decision to deliver a two-day event, but Council funding will be based on the Saturday event only. Any additional costs associated with the Friday should be met through increased sponsorship, trader income, commercial income or other external funding.

This allows the festival to develop if the organiser considers a two-day format sustainable, while ensuring that public funding is directed towards the established event and demonstrable community benefit.

Total expenditure is £17,100, with projected income of £11,200, resulting in a net cost of £5,900, which the organiser has requested from MTC.

It is therefore recommended that the Council provides £3,660 towards the Saturday event, based on the costs associated with delivering the established one-day festival. This equates to 62% of the net cost of the event.

Cost	Amount
Bands and acts	£2,000
Sound engineer and PA – 1 day	£550
First Aid – 1 day	£460
Security – 1 day	£350
Community Battle of the Bands	£300.
Total recommended funding	£3660

Action- Officers recommended that funding of £3660 is awarded towards the delivery of the event.

6.3 Festoons

The festoon lights, funded through the Shared Prosperity Fund, were installed in April by CEC. As of the time of writing, they have not yet been formally handed over to us by CEC and remains the case, as with all of the Macc on Foot equipment.

The lights were removed from the trees outside Gail's ready for the essential work to take place by United Utilities. The work has now taken place and the new trees have been planted. Our contractor is going to conduct a site visit to look at how we can reconnect the existing tree lights.

6.4 Christmas lights

We met with the electrical lighting designer from Ringway Jacobs in March. The electrician from our Christmas lights company joined the meeting to provide an up-to-date account of our lights. CEC street lighting also attended. We visited every feeder pillar so that the designer could map out exactly what we need.

Most feeder pillars will need replacing with bigger pillars to accommodate a socket for our Christmas lights.

There will be no room in the feeder pillar to have a timer so we have two options. The lights can be left on constant as they were after switch on last year and they are such low energy that this option is acceptable. The other option for the future is that they could be solar activated so come on when dark. That would mean that on dull days, the lights still wouldn't come on until nighttime.

This work to replace the feeder pillars will involve drilling into some properties so all building owners affected will need to be informed. We won't know which properties will be affected until the lighting design plan is completed which is expected to be by the end of May. CEC street lighting will then be able to give us an accurate quote for the work that needs to take place. The cost is expected to be around £15,000.

As soon as we know the locations of the affected feeder pillars we will contact the building owners. When we have given them a chance to respond, if there are no issues and if the cost of the work is acceptable to council, we can instruct CEC to go ahead.

We will need to keep pressure on this project to work towards delivery before Christmas as we are reliant on building owners approving the replacement pillars and CEC street lighting carrying out the work in good time.

Update 8th May 2026 – We have now received the electrical infrastructure plans from Ringway Jacobs and have asked CEC for a quote to carry out this work.

Update 16th July 2026 – As per the update provided to Full Council on 20th July 2026, Highways and street lighting are unable to provide a quote for the work to be carried out at this time. They have suggested using an external provider despite previously stating that this was not an option. We have sought advice from our contractor and have decided to wait for highways to provide the quote for the work as using an external provider would bring different issues.

Update 29th July 2026 - Confirmation has been requested on the timescales for obtaining a quotation, progressing the works, and whether the existing lighting design will remain valid when the supply works are eventually completed, to avoid any further costs. Officers have requested that the matter is treated as urgent and that a clear programme for next steps is provided. At the time of writing the report no reply or even acknowledgement to this email.

END OF REPORT