

Sevenoaks Town Council is grateful to everyone who is stepping up to help the community.



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From Sevenoaks Town Council for the community of Sevenoaks

Winter 2021

Happy new year from Councillor Nick Busvine OBE, Mayor of Sevenoaks

As I write this winter contribution to the *Town Crier*, like all of you I am coming to terms with the return of full lockdown. I have written so much about the pandemic over the past year that I hardly know what more to say. The sudden emergence - in our own county - of a new, highly infectious strain of Covid in recent weeks has been alarming. My sense is that there is a broad national consensus that tough measures are required to check the spread of the virus. It feels as though we have all run a marathon together and have hit the infamous 'wall' at the 20-mile mark. But the good news is that there does now seem to be a finish line in sight, and that should help to bolster our collective morale sufficiently to get through the toughest final phase of this extraordinary crisis.

I take pride in the fact that, for all the trials and tribulations since March, the UK is emerging as a global leader on Covid-19 vaccine development. I am sure that Sevenoaks residents wish the government, PHE and the NHS every success in managing a highly effective vaccine delivery programme. Spring is my favourite time of the year, and I do hope that this spring will be extra special, as we emerge from the worst of the crisis. Let us pray that Easter 2021 will be more than usually joyful.

Your Town Council continues to do its work, along with partner strands of local government. Where we can, we continue to make donations to community charities which are playing such an important role in supporting those members of our community who are in difficulty. We received the following feedback from Sevenoaks Larder in early January, which I thought was lovely and worth sharing: *"Well, all I can say is 'WOW'!!! Thank you so, so much for the huge & incredibly generous donation which we received from the Council yesterday - we couldn't quite believe our eyes!! Such a fantastic contribution, and we are hugely grateful, thank you."* Of course, all our donations come ultimately from our residents, so these are thanks not just to the Town Council, but to you, too.



In my last message to you, I said how much I was looking forward to opening the new Bat & Ball Centre. The Sevenoaks Chamber of Commerce was due to host a networking event there on 6 January. All this has - of course - been delayed, but, I have just learnt that the Centre's very first role will be to act as a test site for any asymptomatic person in Sevenoaks who wishes to check whether or not they have Covid. I am so proud that our new facility will be able to serve the local community in this way. It is obvious why the Centre has been chosen. The building and facilities are absolutely fabulous, and the landscaping outside is shaping up beautifully. For those who have not seen it, there is a virtual tour on the Town Council website (look for Bat & Ball Centre in the 'Services' section of the website). Or you can see our own Town Clerk, Linda Later MBE - who has driven through this amazing project - showing off the building in an excellent short video which can be found at: <https://vimeo.com/497240958>.

Despite Covid, we continue to press ahead with our work on the Neighbourhood Development Plan for Sevenoaks. The plan sets out a vision of how development in the Town should be guided over a 15-20 year period. The Consultation Draft is now available to view online here: <https://sevenoaksndp.wordpress.com/>. I urge you to read the Plan and to send us comments and feedback. We want to encourage as much community engagement

as possible to ensure that the Plan really does reflect the long-term desires of Sevenoaks Town residents. The Plan is likely to feature at the Annual Town Meeting, currently scheduled for 16 March, which we hope to hold virtually on Zoom.

The pandemic forced the postponement of the Stag Panto, except for two excellent online performances over the Christmas period. This was terribly disappointing for the actors, ticket holders and the Stag Theatre team. But I have heard rumours that - Covid-permitting - we may yet see the Panto later this year. Fingers crossed. Meanwhile, provided all the government grant monies come through, the Stag should remain financially viable, despite the present lockdown. A big thank you again to all of you who have so generously contributed to the Save our

Stag campaign. We would almost certainly have lost our theatre without your support.

I am also happy to report that the Council-funded restoration of the Vine cricket ground has been a success, and is well on track for the summer. It was great to be able to invest in what has become the green heart of Sevenoaks; a special place that has acquired even more community significance during the course of the pandemic.

May I take this opportunity to wish all of you well. I know I have said this before, but the darkest hour is before dawn, and I very much hope that when I complete my extended service as your Mayor in the spring, it will be on an optimistic and celebratory note.



Sevenoaks Neighbourhood Development Plan Revised Programme

The progress of the Sevenoaks Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) has been delayed due to awaiting a decision on the Sevenoaks Local Plan, which is needed to establish which version the NDP would need to comply with.

It has been agreed that the NDP is amended to accord with the existing Core Strategy rather than with emerging policy.

There have also been restrictions on referendums due to the current pandemic, which are currently not permitted to take place before 6th May 2021.

At the Sevenoaks Town Council's Planning Committee held on 30th November 2020 the following timetable for progressing the Sevenoaks Neighbourhood Development Plan was approved.

1.	Meeting with SDC to understand current planning position / agree SEA screening	19.11.2020
2.	NDP Steering Cttee - consider and agree changes following 2020 public consultation	12.1.2021
3.	STC Planning Cttee - consider and agree changes following 2020 public consultation	25.1.2021
4.	Prepare submission draft NDP, Basic Condition Statement, Consultation Statement	February 2021
5.	NDP Steering Cttee STC Planning Committee official sign off by both.	22.3.2021
6.	Submit NDP & supporting documents to SDC	April 2021
7.	Referendum	June 2021

For further information and to view the Plan, please see the website at <https://sevenoaksndp.wordpress.com/> or contact us at planning@sevenoakstown.gov.uk.

Darent Valley Community Rail Partnership – it's happening!

Community rail partnerships have been springing up all over the UK in recent years, with the aim of bringing train operators, councils and communities together to breathe life back into railway stations and as a way of inspiring people, both local and visitors, to travel by train. The Darent Valley Community Rail Partnership (DVCRP), set up just over a year ago, is supported by local councils from Sevenoaks to Swanley (Parish, Town and District) and by the two main train operators in the area - Southeastern and Thameslink. Sarah Newman was recently appointed as the new railway officer for the Darent Valley line and is working with the Chairman, Linda Larter (known already to many of you as Sevenoaks Town Council's Chief Executive/Town Clerk) and members of the Steering Group to realise the aims and ambitions of the Partnership.

As the 'community' part of our title suggests, we are very keen to hear your ideas and enlist people (known as Station Adopters) to help with all the projects. The plan is to revive stations in the valley and think of ways to encourage more use of the railway in general. This includes, for example, thinking of how to get locals to and from the stations, and improving ways for visitors to get to their final destinations (e-bikes? buses? better signage?).

Of course the pandemic presents many challenges, but we can come together online and, as restrictions ease, small groups will once again be able to meet and coordinate projects at each of the stations. There are plenty of community initiatives to consider: working with local schools to increase knowledge of - and confidence in - travelling by train; thinking of campaigns to reduce litter or graffiti; linking up walking and cycling routes better to



stations; art projects - murals, posters - linked to each area; and how to make stations the community hubs of the future.

Do have a look at the website Community Rail Network www.communityrail.org.uk to see some of the amazing work carried out by communities across the UK in very creative ways. The Darent Valley CRP has access to small pockets of funding and we can always raise more money together to, for example, create big planters for the platforms, bring groups together to build bee

hotels and set areas aside for vegetable patches or wildflowers.

Please get in touch if you have any suggestions - community involvement is at the heart of the Community Rail movement and welcomed at all times. Anything we can do together to support sustainable travel helps.



In the meantime, if you do need to travel by train, be assured that the rail operators are going to tremendous lengths to make sure trains and ticket machines are regularly cleaned, using sprays that kill viruses for up to 20 days, policing the use of masks on trains (with 98% compliance), providing 10,000 litres (!) of hand-sanitiser fluid at Southeastern stations and even launching an app that tells you how full/empty each train is.

The Rail Officer can be contacted at: sarah.newman@sevenoaks.gov.uk. We are very much looking forward to hearing from you.

	<p style="text-align: center;">Sevenoaks Virtual Annual Town Meeting</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Online meeting, viewable via YouTube at: Sevenoaks Town Council</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Monday 15th March 2021</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Meeting starts at 7:00PM</p> <p style="text-align: center;">An opportunity to have your say on matters relating to Sevenoaks.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Please submit any questions you would like to ask the Town Council by Monday 8th March 2021 to: council@sevenoakstown.gov.uk</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Sevenoaks Town Council to present its Annual Report 2020/21</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Grants to Local Organisations</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Sevenoaks Neighbourhood Development Plan</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">With: Stag Theatre Annual Report Presentation </p>	
<p>For more details of the Annual Town Public Meeting please contact Sevenoaks Town Council:</p> <p>By telephone: 01732 459953</p> <p>By email: council@sevenoakstown.gov.uk</p> <p>To view Agenda go to: www.sevenoakstown.gov.uk</p>	



Best Dressed Christmas Window

Winners Announced!



The Mayor of Sevenoaks, Councillor Nicholas Busvine and the Chair of the Sevenoaks Chamber of Commerce, Julie Philips, were delighted to visit the winners of the Sevenoaks Town Best Dressed Windows and present them with a certificate and a bottle of well-deserved bubbly.

The Mayor said: "It was very hard to choose the winners as there were so many superb window displays in the Town. The shops are all looking very festive and the window displays are a visual feast and well worth a visit."

Winner - Horncastles

2nd - The Chocolate Shop

3rd - Sevenoaks Haberdashery



Sevenoaks In Bloom Encourages Town Residents to Get Seed Swapping!

The Town Council has installed a seed swapping box in the Vine Gardens, behind the cricket pavilion, for everyone in the Town to use.

The idea is that if you have some seeds you no longer need, pop them in the drawer and take a packet that someone else has left. Easy!

Even if you don't have anything to swap or have something to swap but don't need to take something away, this community project is for YOU.

Why not grow something in your garden, on your balcony or allotment plot and send us some pictures of your free plants!

There are two more boxes - one at each of our allotment sites in Bradbourne Vale Road and Quaker's Hall Lane - for use by our allotment tenants.

We are hoping that Sevenoaks In Bloom will be back with a vengeance this year after last year's 'table-top judging' due to the pandemic. Watch this space for further details of our theme or contact dtc@sevenoakstown.gov.uk if you want to get involved.



The Bat & Ball Centre



Main entrance with ramp and steps leads into a ...

... welcoming foyer: an adaptable space, which includes moveable furniture, a large screen and a hatch through to the catering-standard kitchen



The Harry Garrett Hall with a wall of windows onto a landscaped garden, includes a small moveable stage, piano, hatch through to the kitchen, full technical equipment and lighting for presentations.

Sliding doors lead through into the ...



... John London Hall: a smaller room with kitchenette, children's toilets, screen and secure outside space



The Meeting Room has a window aspect and screen

The Centre is available to hire now, subject to Covid restrictions. For an information pack and enquiry form, please contact: hallhire@sevenoakstown.gov.uk

For a short tour of the new Centre with our Town Clerk, please visit <https://vimeo.com/497240958>.

CENSUS 2021



How do I **take part**
in the census?

it's about us
census 2021

The census is coming. By taking part, you can help inform decisions on services that shape your community, such as healthcare, education and transport.

The census is a unique survey that happens every 10 years. It gives us a snapshot of all the people and households in England and Wales - the most detailed information we have about our society.

It's important that you fill in your census questionnaire. Without the information you share, it'd be more difficult to understand your community's needs and to plan and fund public services.

In one way or another, your information touches the lives of every single person living in England and Wales, whether it's through using census information to plan new schools, doctors' surgeries or bike lanes.

Because these things matter to us all, everyone needs to complete the census. Do not worry, government officials

dealing with applications you've made or payments or services you receive cannot see it.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) runs the census in England and Wales and is independent from the government. Your details are protected by law and information published is always anonymous.

Census Day is **Sunday 21 March 2021**. You can fill yours in online as soon as you get your access code in the post. If your household circumstances change on Census Day, you can let the ONS know.

Everyone should have the support they need to fill in the census. If you, or anyone you know, needs help, there's a wide range of support services available.

These include a contact centre that can give you help over the phone and guidance in a range of languages and

census
2021

Be a part of Census 2021

Census day is 21 March 2021.

By taking part and encouraging others to do the same, you'll help make sure your community gets the services it needs.



Find out more at www.census.gov.uk

 Follow @Census2021

 Office for National Statistics

www.census.gov.uk

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accessible formats, including paper questionnaires and large print.

If you need help or have any questions, visit www.census.gov.uk

There are now temporary employment positions available. People make the census. Be part of the team. www.censusjobs.co.uk

Or get in touch with me directly on: Harjit.Goraya63@field.census.gov.uk

Harj Goraya - Census Engagement Manager - North West Kent

Grants awarded since the last edition of *Town Crier*

Sevenoaks Town Council continues to financially assist local community groups and, through its Finance and General Purposes Committee, has awarded the following grants:

West Kent Mind: Towards the continuing provision of a free Skiffle Music Group face-to-face, maintaining social distancing guidelines, through this uncertain period. **Grant approved for £900**

The Council has also awarded the following from its **Resilience Fund** (established to support those putting in place arrangements to assist those in need during the pandemic):

Sevenoaks Larder: Towards the purchase of food items for the foodbank. **Grant approved for £930**



West Kent Works

**Have you been made redundant?
Wanting to retrain?
Furlough coming to an end?**

Redundancy

If you're worried about redundancy, or were made redundant last year, our team of specialist advisers can guide you to identify your next steps.

Training

If you're interested in retraining to help you find a new job or to progress in your current workplace, we have a variety of training opportunities available.

Contact us for more information

westkentworks@wkha.org.uk
Pauline on 07715 993293
or Dawn on 07850 506383

visit westkent.org

 @west_kent  WestKentHA
 @westkenthousingassociation

Functions & Facilities provided by Sevenoaks Town Council

Precept

Sevenoaks Town Council's total revenue budget for the 2020/21 financial year is £1,740,923 per annum. The average Band D house would pay £125.41 per annum equating to £2.41 per week.

OPEN SPACES & LEISURE

ALLOTMENTS:

*Bradbourne Vale Road
Quaker's Hall Lane*

- BETHEL ROAD BURIAL GROUND
- BRITTAINS COMMON
- BRITTAINS LANE WOOD
- THE GREEN, HILLINGDON RISE
- HANGING BASKETS
- HORSE TROUGHS (*Old Police Station, Rheinbach Gardens, St Botolph's Road*)
- JUDD'S PIECE
- LAND AT:
 - Letterbox Lane*
 - Littlewood*
 - Tonbridge Road*
- MIDDLEINGS WOOD
- MILLPOND WOOD
- PLANTERS (*The Shambles, Dorset Street, Pembroke Road, London Road, Buckhurst Lane*)
- THE POUND, POUND LANE
- RALEY'S FIELD & KNOLE PADDOCK
- RHEINBACH GARDENS
- SEVENOAKS COMMON
- SPORTS PITCHES
- UPPER HIGH STREET GARDENS
- VINE CRICKET GROUND & PAVILION
- VINE GARDENS
 - Public toilet, telephone kiosk with defibrillator*
- WAR MEMORIAL
- WHITE HART BEECHES

WOODSIDE ROAD OPEN SPACE

CAR PARKS

- RALEYS CAR PARK

PLAY AREAS

- BUCKHURST LANE PLAY AREA
- GREATNESS RECREATION GROUND & PLAYGROUND
- HILLINGDON RISE PLAY AREA
- JULIANS MEADOW & PLAYGROUND
- KIPPINGTON MEADOW
- MOUNT CLOSE OPEN SPACE & PLAYGROUND
- PONTOISE CLOSE OPEN SPACE & PLAYGROUND

SERVICES

- BAT & BALL CENTRE
(formerly Sevenoaks Community Centre)
Available for hire: meetings, conferences etc.
- BAT & BALL STATION BUILDING (*including Café and rooms available to hire*)
batandballstation.com
- CAFÉ ON THE VINE cafeonthevine.com
- CONSULTEES (*Planning, Highways, etc.*)
- GRANTS TO LOCAL ORGANISATIONS
- GREATNESS PARK CEMETERY
- HOUSE IN THE BASEMENT (HITB) YOUTH CAFÉ (*available for hire*)
- INFO-PODS & DIGITAL DISPLAY SCREENS
- LITTER BINS AND GRIT BINS
- MARKETS (*Wednesday and Saturday*)
- MASTERPLAN FOR NORTHERN SEVENOAKS

NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- ORBITAL NO 8 BUS
- PUBLIC SEATS IN VARIOUS LOCATIONS
- PUBLIC TOILETS (*The Stag, The Vine, Lower St Johns, Greatness Recreation Ground*)
- SEVENOAKS TOWN PARTNERSHIP
sevenoakstownpartnership.wordpress.com
- STAG COMMUNITY ARTS CENTRE
Defibrillator in foyer
stagsevenoaks.co.uk
- STREET LIGHTS IN SOME UNADOPTED ROADS
- TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES/CHAMBER
Available for hire: meetings, conferences etc.
- TWINNING WITH PONTOISE AND RHEINBACH
- VINTAGE BUS
- YOUTH COUNCIL sevenoaksyouthcouncil.com

EVENTS

- ARMED FORCES DAY TOWN SUPPORTERS
- CHRISTMAS ILLUMINATIONS IN TOWN
- CIVIC FUNCTIONS
- VINE BANDSTAND/FREE SUMMER CONCERTS

PROPERTY

- BUSINESS HUB (*former Red Cross Building*)
- BUS SHELTERS (*Dartford Road x2, St John's Hill x3, Bradbourne Vale Road x1, London Road x4, Seal Road x1, Tonbridge Road x1*)
- JUBILEE CLOCK (*Old Market House*)
- WARREN CLOCK (*above Brewers*)

Town Councillors 2019-2023

NAME	PARTY	NAME	PARTY
EASTERN WARD		ST JOHNS WARD	
Cllr A S Clayton	Liberal Democrat	Cllr S Camp	Liberal Democrat
Cllr T Morris Brown	Liberal Democrat	Cllr R M C Hogarth	Conservative
Cllr E T Waite	Liberal Democrat	Cllr S G Raikes	Conservative
KIPPINGTON WARD		TOWN WARD	
Cllr A Eyre	Conservative	Cllr K Bonin	Conservative
Cllr R J Parry	Conservative	Cllr N J L Busvine OBE	Conservative
Cllr R L Piper	Conservative	Cllr Lise Michaelides	Liberal Democrat
NORTHERN WARD		WILDERNESSE WARD	
Cllr M Canet	Liberal Democrat	Cllr Mrs R E Parry	Conservative
Cllr V Granville-Baxter	Liberal Democrat	To contact a Sevenoaks Town Councillor, please use the following email format: Cllr.surname@sevenoakstown.gov.uk eg. to contact Councillor Piper, the email address would be: Cllr.piper@sevenoakstown.gov.uk	
Cllr C Shea	Liberal Democrat		

Town Clerk/Chief Executive:

Linda Larter MBE:

townclerk@sevenoakstown.gov.uk

Deputy Town Clerk:

Ann White:

dtc@sevenoakstown.gov.uk

The Town Council or its Committees meet on most Monday evenings at 7pm and members of the public are welcome to attend. For further details of the meetings please contact the Town Council Offices on 01732 459953.

council@sevenoakstown.gov.uk

