

## Sevenoaks Town Council

### Minutes of the Open Spaces & Leisure Committee meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at 7.00pm in Council Chamber, Town Council Offices, TN13 3QG

Livestreamed and available to view on YouTube until approved by Council:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJ8vd204XBk>

Meeting commenced: 19:00

Meeting Concluded: 20:00

#### Present:

ClIr Dr Marilyn Canet, <b>Chair</b>	Present	ClIr Lionel O'Hara	Present
ClIr Victoria Granville, <b>Vice-Chair</b>	Present	ClIr Nick Varley	Present
ClIr Peter Dixon	Apologies	ClIr Nigel Wightman	Apologies
ClIr Sally Layne	Apologies	ClIr Gareth Willis	Apologies
ClIr Lise Michaelides	Present		

Substitute		For	
ClIr Claire Shea	Present	ClIr Gareth Willis	

**In attendance:** Town Clerk and Open Spaces & Cemetery Manager

**Representations received from Members of the Public:** None

#### 341. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted and received as noted above.

#### 342. Requests for Dispensations

There were no requests for dispensations.

#### 343. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of Interest.

#### 344. Minutes of the Open Spaces & Leisure Committee on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2023

**RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the Open Spaces & Leisure Committee meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2023 be received and agreed as a true record.

#### 345. Open Spaces & Cemetery Manager's Report

The report of the Open Spaces & Cemetery Manager was received, and the following matters discussed:

##### 345.1 Staff

The Committee welcomed Glenn Blake who had been appointed as Open Spaces Gardener.

##### 345.2 Sevenoaks: Lawn Tennis Club Entry Barrier

The tennis club had submitted a planning application for the entry barrier which will sit in line with the existing bollards and signage which occupy a space of around

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1100mm in width; the proposed barrier would be enclosed by a curb to help prevent damage and would occupy a slightly greater width of 1700mm on the solar panel and barrier mechanism side and 1000mm on the other side. It was noted that this could be accommodated with no loss of parking provision by a slight adjustment of parking bay width.

**RESOLVED:** that the installation of the entry barrier be approved, subject to the width of the adjacent parking spaces not being reduced to less than 2,400mm.

### **345.3 Knole Paddock & Raleys Fields**

The Committee was pleased to note the increased number of cricket matches on site. It was noted that the condition of rugby pitch 1 was good but that pitches 2 and 3 were less than ideal, with pitch 3 likely to be bare of grass by December following its continued use for training by Sevenoaks Rugby Football Club (SRFC). SRFC was aware of this and looking to move mid-week training to another venue in 2024/25.

### **346.4 Sevenoaks Greensands Commons project**

Noted position with the project and that a steering committee had been established with its first meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> September: a Town Council officer would attend.

### **346.5 Greatness Recreation Ground Skatepark**

Following consideration by the Youth Services Committee (28.06.23) and the Finance & General Purposes Committee (24.07.23), it had been agreed that the Skateboard Park be refurbished, and £40,000 CIL funding was allocated for this purpose. It was only possible to obtain one quotation for the work and the company recommended that the specification be increased to ensure greater longevity and reduce maintenance. At the Extra-ordinary meeting of the Community Infrastructure Committee held on 11<sup>th</sup> September, it was agreed that the quotation of £54,509 net from Kings Ramps be accepted, and the additional £14,509 be funded from CIL.

An event to launch the re-opening of the Skatepark would be held on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

### **346.6 Woodside Road Proposed Project**

It was noted that the project was beginning with the planned removal of the five worst affected Ash trees. Contact had been made with an environmental consultant and the District Council Environmental Health team regarding possible contamination of the soil following the exploded war time bombs.

Once we were ready to proceed, a consultation questionnaire would be distributed to local residents.

### **346.7 Drinking Fountains**

Two drinking fountains had been installed at Greatness Recreation Ground (awaiting some parts) and the Vine Café and were already being well used. Signage encouraging the use of lifetime water bottles was to be installed.

**Sevenoaks Town Council****347. Statement of Accounts to July 2023**

The Committee received and noted the statement of accounts for the following budget headings:

- General
- Greatness Cemetery
- Allotments
- Streetlighting & General
- Vine Grounds

It was noted that In Bloom sponsorship income of £1,000 was still to be received.

**RESOLVED:** That the statement of accounts to July 2023 be received and noted.

**348. Allotment Officer's Report**

The Committee received and noted the Allotment Officer's Report. A plot had been offered to Sevenoaks Welcomes Refugees and was being progressed.

**349. Sevenoaks In Bloom**

Noted that the results and awards ceremony for South East In Bloom was to be held on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

**350. Raleys Field – Football Association Grass Pitch Funding**

The Committee noted £12,800 funding obtained from the Football Association to improve and maintain Raleys Field, the funding tapered over a 6-year period.

**351. St John's Hill Public Toilets**

The Town Council had set aside funds of £24,982 towards the refurbishment of the St John's Hill Public Toilets. Previous quotations had been obtained but it was noted that the specification was to be reviewed to provide the facilities now required, which would require additional funding.

The Committee thanked staff for keeping the toilets open and operational.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) To proceed with the refurbishment of St John's Hill Public Toilets to create two unisex accessible toilets;
- 2) To use budget within earmarked reserves; and
- 3) To RECOMMEND to the Finance & General Purposes Committee that an additional £15,000 be allocated from CIL providing an overall budget of £40,000 including contingency.

**352. Planting of Trees**

At the request of Cllr Wightman, the planting of trees in Sevenoaks town had been added to this agenda to enable the planting of a considerable number of trees in the next four years.

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It was noted that the Town Council had planted 1318 trees over the past 4 years. It was also noted that Kent County Council (KCC) had a current project to plant trees on roadside verges in the Bradbourne area.

**RESOLVED** that:

- 1) KCC be contacted to enquire about planting trees on road verges;
- 2) Permission be sought from KCC to plant trees at the bottom of Seal Hollow Road and the whole of Blackhall Lane with 60 - 80 trees;
- 3) Permission be sought from KCC to plant trees at Hillingdon Avenue;
- 4) Councillors be provided with consultation leaflets to consult with local residents where appropriate;
- 5) The Town Council work through the inventory of all Town Council land (excluding the already fully planted woods) to assess the scope for more tree planting; and
- 6) Consideration be given to extra resources to irrigate the trees each summer for the first three years.

### 353. Greatness Recreation Ground Survey

The public survey results to date on current use and future improvements at Greatness Recreation Ground were considered. The diverse usage and optimism for the future was noted, and it was encouraging that historic problems had mainly been addressed.

The timeline was dependant on the progress of the new pavilion and final consultation results.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) To note the Greatness Recreation Survey results received to date; and
- 2) That the Town Council applies for a Premises Licence for Greatness Recreation Ground.

### 354. Greatness Cemetery Chapel

Improvements made at Greatness Cemetery Chapel were noted and consideration given to the proposed installation of screens within the Chapel.

**RESOLVED:** to RECOMMEND to the Finance & General Purposes Committee that £4,000 be allocated from CIL for the installation of two screens to allow the showing of still and video images during a service.

### 355. Current Matters

The updates on current matters were noted as set out below.

**NB: updates in green**

176/5 (vii) 22.07.2019	Tree Planting	Total number of trees planted in 2022/23 by STC is 34 standard trees and 70 whips/saplings. As part of The Queen's Green Canopy Project, the Mayor planted an Avalon Plum tree at the Bat & Ball Centre in March. Two Sakura cherries have also been
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		<p>planted, one in memory of Cllr Waite. Adopt a Tree 2022/23 – 13 trees planted.</p> <p><b>2023/24 Adopt a Tree scheme now open.</b></p>
152 (iv) 05.07.2021	St Nicholas Church – Quinquennial Report	<p>Quotes from qualified stone masons for works mentioned in the Quinquennial report of 12.03.2021 have been obtained and will be reviewed by Officers.</p> <p>Two most competitive have been invited to requote with plan to complete works 2023/24. Work scheduled to commence September 2023.</p>
156 05.07.2021	Greatness Recreation Ground Management and Improvement Plan	<p>Meeting with stakeholders was held on 08.10.2021. It was agreed that a survey would be produced in 2022.</p> <p>The survey will be part of the professional consultant's work required by the Football Foundation to progress the proposed new pavilion. STFC and STC jointly appointed consultant for public consultation in January 2023. Pending update.</p> <p><b>Public Consultation regarding current use and improvements to Greatness Recreation Ground commenced on 8 August and was due to close on 15 September 2023 but extended for one week to enable residents receiving notification via the Town Crier time to respond.</b></p>
353 08.11.2021	Kent Association of Local Councils – Fire Hydrant Initiative	<p>Awaiting information from KALC/KFRS with guidance on progressing scheme. Pending information from KFRS.</p> <p>STC liaising with representative from Sevenoaks Fire Station.</p> <p><b>KFRS advised that an online provision for reporting faulty hydrants is available via KCC website- Report a Fault.</b></p> <p><b>Recommend removing this item from future Current Matters report.</b></p>
522 14.02.2022	Sevenoaks Lawn Tennis Club-parking barrier in Raleys Car Park	<p>Club advised of resolution: <b>RESOLVED:</b> to support the SLTC proposal subject to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SLTC to proceed only if the tennis club meet the full cost, including planning permission;</li> <li>• Should the items become damaged or unused, they be removed from the site completely, including removal of the key pad and kerbed area and the reinstatement of the area to its former condition at SLTC's expense;</li> <li>• That there be no loss of parking spaces to the</li> </ul>

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		<p>Town Council; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That officers seek reassurance that emergency access provision be taken into account during the planning process.</li> </ul> <p>STC is aware that SLTC is ready to submit planning application.</p> <p><b>Installation of barrier approved. (See Minute 345.2 above)</b></p>
194.3 (i) 04.07.2022	Knole Paddock, Sevenoaks Rugby Club (SRFC) <i>Additional ambulance access at pitch 1 access point</i>	<p>(i) <u>Additional ambulance access at pitch 1 access point</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ambulance service to be consulted regarding the need for the access, and whether this proposal was of significant benefit</li> <li>• Robust gate design would be required to address risk of unauthorised access to the site</li> <li>• Application to drop kerb would need to be submitted to Sevenoaks District Council</li> <li>• Discussions required with Rugby Club regarding funding of the works</li> <li>• Consideration to be given to impact on car parking</li> </ul> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the Open Spaces Manager be asked to investigate these issues with the Rugby Club and report back to a future meeting.</p> <p>Awaiting information from SRFC regarding Ambulance Service access requirements and funding options.</p> <p>Gate design to be partly dependent on Ambulance Service requirements.</p> <p>KCC advised vehicle crossover application would be required &amp; SDC to be consulted regarding planning permission for dropped kerb.</p> <p>SRFC to investigate points and report back to us before planning permission applied for.</p> <p><b>No further update or response for 1 year. Recommend removing from Current Matters report.</b></p>
194.3 (ii) 04.07.2022	Knole Paddock, Sevenoaks Rugby Club (SRFC) <i>Club Signs at top of</i>	<p>(ii) <u>Club Signs advertising home games at top of Plymouth Drive and by access point to the field by pitch 1</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More detailed proposal required of what is</li> </ul>

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	<p><i>Plymouth Drive and by access point to the field by pitch 1</i></p>	<p>intended, what is the purpose, has the placement on the side of existing building been considered</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advice from Sevenoaks District Council required on whether planning permission needed</li> <li>• Consideration to be given to the range of uses of the land, implications of clearly branding it as Rugby Club, and to putting something up explaining the variety of uses at Raleys Field</li> <li>• Current Public Realm Wayfinding project looking at signage throughout the Town, including sports clubs, to be taken into account</li> <li>• Noted, that Vine Cricket Club do have a provision and that they lease the land.</li> </ul> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the Open Spaces Manager discuss the options with the Rugby Club and obtain detailed proposal for consideration at a future meeting.</p> <p>SRFC would hope to attract more spectators by advertising upcoming matches on roadside signs</p> <p>KCC responsible for road signs - SRFC was advised to consult KCC about signage at top of Plymouth Drive Suggested to SRFC placement of sign on pavilion – SRFC preference is sign by hatched entrance</p> <p>Awaiting more information from SRFC detailing proposed signage</p> <p><b>No further update or response for 1 year. Recommend removing from Current Matters report.</b></p>
<p>194.3 (iii) 04.07.2022</p>	<p>Knole Paddock, Sevenoaks Rugby Club (SRFC) <i>Pitch 1 Match Day Sponsorship Boards – request to keep up during season</i></p>	<p>(iii) <u>Pitch 1 Match Day Sponsorship Boards, request to keep up on pitch barriers during season (September to April)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning permission implications to be considered regarding advertising</li> <li>• Concern that it would visually appear to be a barrier and impede passage across public open space</li> </ul> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> that, in principle, the installation of sponsorship boards be permitted on match days and at other times the Rugby Club is using the pitches,</p>

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		<p>subject to clarification of any planning permission required. At all other times the sponsorship boards to be removed.</p> <p>SDC advised that planning permission is required for any sponsorship boards - and retrospective planning application can be submitted for existing signage.</p> <p>As Knole Paddock is within the green belt additional factors need to be considered when making planning application.</p> <p>SRFC explained difficulty in finding volunteers /members to place and remove sponsorship boards between match days.</p> <p><b>No further update or response for 1 year. Recommend removing from Current Matters report.</b></p>
<p>194.3 (iv) 04.07.2022</p>	<p>Knole Paddock, Sevenoaks Rugby Club (SRFC) <i>1<sup>st</sup> XV Match Entrance Charge</i></p>	<p><b>(iv) <u>1st XV Match Entrance Charge</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Covenant on the land to be checked to see whether this permissible</li> <li>• Details required of how it can practically be achieved without impeding public access to the open space</li> </ul> <p><b>RESOLVED</b> that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) the covenant on the land be checked to clarify whether this is permissible</li> <li>2) the Rugby Club be asked to provide details of how a charging scheme could be introduced whilst also ensuring that the general public still had free access to the public open space</li> </ol> <p>SRFC advised that it does not intend to impede public access to the open space and proposed setting up a table in the car park asking for a donation from spectators. They explained that supporters of teams at this level are accustomed to paying a small donation/entrance charge.</p> <p>The covenants are not clear either way. As a principle, charging is not made for entry to public open space.</p> <p>It is recommended that sale of programme is used to generate funds from spectators.</p> <p><b>No further update or response for 1 year. Recommend removing from Current Matters report.</b></p>



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<p>194.3 (v) 04.07.2022</p>	<p>Knole Paddock, Sevenoaks Rugby Club (SRFC) <i>Additional Point of Sale: outdoor hot food facility</i></p>	<p><u>(v) Additional Point of Sale – Outdoor Hot Food Facility</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town Council to consider whether it wants a concession on that site</li> <li>• Green belt land, planning permission would be required</li> <li>• Utilities would need to be installed</li> <li>• Costs of building and managing project to be considered</li> </ul> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the Open Spaces Manager look in more detail at the proposal to consider whether it is a practical proposal that would stand up to planning and other scrutiny</p> <p>A meeting has been held with SRFC and discussion about information needed regarding costs associated with building and maintaining any structure, Health and Safety considerations, and Food Hygiene considerations for an outdoor Point of Sale, for STC to consider at a later date.</p> <p><b>No further update or response for 1 year. Recommend removing from Current Matters report.</b></p>
<p>414.2 07.11.2022</p>	<p>Boundary Wall between the Closed Churchyard at St Nicholas Church and The Chantry house</p>	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Officers carry out additional preparatory work required; and</li> <li>2) obtain legal opinion regarding ownership of the boundary wall</li> </ol> <p>Legal opinion has been received and a shared ownership agreement has been sent to the owner.</p> <p><b>Shared ownership agreement being finalised.</b></p>
<p>582.4 13.02.2023</p>	<p>Vine - Condition of Grass</p>	<p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) To rule out the placement of a path down the middle of the grass;</li> <li>2) To seed and temporarily fence off an area of the grass to allow it time to recover; and</li> <li>3) To consider what can be installed in the garden to celebrate the Coronation.</li> </ol> <p><b>King Charles Coronation Roses to be planted in Vine Garden in Autumn. Grass to be renovated again after the Vegan Market taking place on 23.09.2023.</b></p>

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<p>582.5 13.02.2023</p>	<p>Vine - Anti-social behaviour</p>	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> that Officers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Review additional security arrangements to be taken;</li> <li>2) Continue and intensify communication with the Police; and</li> <li>3) Report back at the next Committee meeting.</li> </ol> <p>Item was reported to Youth Service Committee.</p> <p>Enhanced CCTV was installed and existing/damaged toilet doors were replaced with more robust/steel doors.</p> <p>SDC consulting on PSPO, may be complicated due to Premises Licences. <b>Consultation closes Sunday 24 September 2023.</b></p>
<p>582.7 13.02.2023</p>	<p>Vine- Borehole</p>	<p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Officers to explore and consult fully about: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) SVCC plans to fund a borehole installation;</li> <li>b) Location of related infrastructure; and</li> <li>c) The opinion of local and relevant authorities and agencies.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2) Officers to report back at the next Committee meeting.</li> </ol> <p><b>Pending reply from Environmental Agencies.</b></p>
<p>206.2 10.07.2023</p> <p><b>254.2 F&amp;GP 24.07.2023</b></p>	<p>Sevenoaks Greensands Common Project</p>	<p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To recommend to Finance &amp; General Purposes Committee to consider in future budgets to contribute £5,000 p.a. for four years to continue funding the project.</p> <p><b>Finance &amp; General Purposes Committee RESOLVED: that it be agreed in principle that funding of £5,000 per annum for the Sevenoaks Greensands Common Project be considered as part of the 2024/2025 budget setting process.</b></p> <p><b>Steering Committee established (see Minute 346.4 above)</b></p>
<p>206.5 10.07.2023</p> <p><b>255 F&amp;GP 24.07.2023</b></p>	<p>Skateboard Park at Greatness Recreation Ground</p>	<p>It was noted that the skatepark has regular maintenance but needs fundamental repairs.</p> <p><b>Finance &amp; General Purposes Committee RESOLVED that:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Option 1 set out in the report (replace all existing boards and resurface, retaining and strengthening existing frames) as recommended by the Youth Services Committee be approved; and</li> <li>2) £40,000 of CIL funding be allocated to this</li> </ol>

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		<p>project.</p> <p><b>Additional funding approved for increased specification (See Minute 346.5 above. )</b>  <b>Reopening event to be held on 24<sup>th</sup> October.</b></p>
208.1 10.07.2023	Allotment Rents	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) allotment rents for Quakers Hall Allotments be increased by no more than 10% i.e., to 23p per square metre, slightly more than the rate of inflation, with effect from 1st October 2024;</li> <li>2) that allotment rents for Bradbourne Vale Allotments be increased by 0.2p to round up to 22p per square metre, with effect from 1st October 2024.</li> </ol> <p><b>It has been noted that the 23p for QHA should have read 24p as the calculation was 21.8p + 2.2p.</b></p> <p><b>As this error has now been minuted as discussed and reported the increase for QHA 2024-25 will actually be 5.5% and not 10%.</b></p>
210 10.07.2023	Sevenoaks Sports Strategy Review	<p>The timeline for production of the second Sports Strategy is dependent on items raised during the consultation.</p> <p>The first meeting is scheduled to take place 4<sup>th</sup> October 2023.</p>
213 10.07.2023	Woodside Road Open Space	<p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Officers to prepare a consultation leaflet to be circulated to local residents by Ward Councillors.</li> <li>2) To commission an updated Environmental Health report on the land to ensure there is no contamination.</li> <li>3) To begin implementing a plan of action in the Autumn subject to local support and result of Environmental Health report.</li> </ol> <p><b>Meeting on site with EHO and 3<sup>rd</sup> party Environmental Consultancy will be agreed to confirm the extent and location of the trench and to look at access, any other local restrictions so that a quotation may be provided for the proposed works below:</b></p> <p><b><i>To attend site with a small mechanical digger, a skip, some heras fencing and an engineer to turn over the soil in the trench that was dug and adjacent near surface soil. The phosphorus of concern if remaining on site will identify itself by reacting with</i></b></p>

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		<p><i>air and this can then be placed into the skip to finish reacting whilst the soil is replaced. On completion of this exercise we should then be able to confirm by virtue of having turned the soil over that the issue has been dealt with.</i></p> <p><b>Project commenced with planned removal of the five worst affected Ash trees. Contact had been made with an environmental consultant and the District Council Environmental Health team regarding possible contamination of the soil following the exploded war time bombs.</b></p> <p><b>Once ready to proceed, a consultation questionnaire to be distributed to local residents. (see Minute 346.6 above)</b></p>
214 10.07.2023	Mill Pond Wood – steps from Seal Road	<p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) To continue to monitor the use and erosion of the steps.</li> <li>2) To obtain quotes to install handrails to the existing steps.</li> </ol> <p><b>Quotes being obtained for handrails.</b></p>
215 10.07.2023	Raleys Car Park Permit Scheme	<p><b>RESOLVED:</b> to expand the criteria to open applications to independent businesses alongside independent retailers.</p> <p><b>All permits for 2023/24 have now been awarded.</b></p>
216 10.07.2023	Wednesday Market at Buckhurst Lane	<p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) To review the current policy for persuading Sevenoaks District Council to move the Wednesday Market from Buckhurst Lane to the High Street (same location as Saturday market) at the Town Council meeting scheduled for 24th July 2023.</li> <li>2) Officers provide any additional information requested by Councillors for the review at the Town Council.</li> </ol> <p><b>The Town Council had been considering the location of the Wednesday market but had been advised by Sevenoaks District Council today that there was no possibility of relocating to the High Street. It was agreed therefore that opportunities to expand the market in its current location at Buckhurst Lane be pursued. At its Blue-Sky meeting in September the Town Council would be reviewing the town centre, including detailed consideration of the future of the markets.</b></p>
<b>244 Town Council 24.07.2023</b>		

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**356. PRESS RELEASE**

Press releases to be issued regarding the Skateboard Park refurbishment and the event to be held for the re-opening.

There being no further business the Chair closed the Meeting.

**Chair** ..... **Dated** .....