

# Sevenoaks TOWN Council



## Annual Report

2015 / 2016



**INVESTORS  
IN PEOPLE**



**LOCAL COUNCIL  
AWARD SCHEME  
QUALITY GOLD**

Sevenoaks Town Council

Council Offices

Bradbourne Vale Road

Tel: 01732 459953

Web: [www.sevenoakstown.gov.uk](http://www.sevenoakstown.gov.uk)

email: [council@sevenoakstown.gov.uk](mailto:council@sevenoakstown.gov.uk)



celebrated the beginning of 2016 with the information that it had been accredited with a Quality Gold Award. Sevenoaks Town Council is one of eleven local councils (approximately 9,000 in the country) to receive this level of award.

The National Association of Local Council states: "The Quality Gold Award demonstrates that a council is at the forefront of best practice and achieves excellence in governance, community leadership and council development." Town and Parish Councils can apply for three levels of awards – Foundation Level, Quality Award Level and Quality Gold Award.

During 2013 the Town Council was reaccredited by Investors in People reflecting its professional leadership, management and delivery of services.

Councillors continue to be committed to providing the finest services and best value for money for residents in spite of the challenges posed by the current economic climate.

Councillors have active partnerships with the District and County Councils and lobby central government through the National Association of Local Councils for the benefit of local electors and businesses. They also monitor Government legislation being passed which directly affects the third tier of Government and local communities and will adopt any new policies and powers available for the enhancement of Sevenoaks Town.

Councillors hold weekly meetings at the Town Council offices in Bradbourne Vale Road to which the public are warmly invited to attend to ensure the Council is performing to its optimum. These meetings are advertised on the Town Council's website and in the public notices section of the Sevenoaks Chronicle.

## 1. The Mayoral Year

The Mayor, Councillor Stephen L Arnold, represented the Town Council on 121 occasions during the first nine months of his civic year and the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Andrew Eyre, or other Councillors representing the town, attended a further 18 events.

The Kent Police once again performed at the Armed Forces Day concert at the Community Centre in June which was hosted by the Mayor. The event was well attended and raised a sizeable sum for the Help for Heroes Charity.



The annual Cocktail Party in the Green Court and Orangery at Knole House on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2015 was hosted by the Mayor and again was a resounding success raising a substantial amount for his chosen charities namely Rockdale Housing Association. Another annual event was the Wine and Cheese tasting evening, which took on a different format this year and proved very successful. This again raised a substantial amount for the Mayor's chosen charity for the evening, Demelza Hospice Care for Children.

The Service of Remembrance at the Vine War Memorial, when the Town remembered and prayed for the brave men and women of our Armed Forces and supporting Services, was very well attended and the Mayor took the salute with the President of the Royal British Legion during the march past.

The Mayoral Breakfasts have continued on a monthly basis and are held at different venues each month when members of the public are able to meet the Mayor and Town Councillors in an informal atmosphere.

The Mayor's twitter account now has 1,118 followers and he continues to post updates and photographs from the various events he attends.

## 2. Community Investment Plan

In 2014 Sevenoaks Town Council released details of how it intended to invest approximately £4million into community assets and facilities. Plans were set out in the 'Community Investment Plan 2014' available from the Strategic Documents page on the Sevenoaks Town Council website ([sevenoakstown.gov.uk](http://sevenoakstown.gov.uk)).

The larger aspects of the Community Investment Plan can not be delivered until capital receipts are received from the sale of assets; the Town Council is moving towards completion on some of these.

The Town Council can report the following progress to date:

## Bat and Ball Community Centre



During 2015 Sevenoaks Town Council commissioned the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) to hold a Competition to select the most appropriate architectural team for the proposed new Bat & Ball Centre. These competitions are run under strict commercial timeframes and guidelines however for the first time in the competition process the Town Council managed to incorporate provision for the public to be involved in the selection of an architectural team for a community project.

The consultation process took place on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2015. Approximately 300 people visited the public exhibition and there were over 1,800 unique visits to the corresponding website.

Theis and Khan Architects were chosen to continue with production of plans, continuing with public consultation to enable final feasibility of costs and business plan to be signed off by the Community Infrastructure Committee.

More detailed plans will be commissioned once capital receipts are received.

## Replacement provision for both Raleys Gym and the Indoor Cricket School

Within the planning agreement for the redevelopment of the Raleys site provision has been put aside for gymnastics and the Indoor Cricket School. Funds are currently held in an escrow account and options are being investigated for this provision within either the new schools at Wildernesse or in a refurbished Sencio.

## A large children's play area close to the Town Centre



Sevenoaks Town Council has negotiated from Knole Trustees for a lease on an area of the Environmental Park to install the new Buckhurst Lane Play Area which is due to be installed in the spring of 2016.

Six designs were put out for public consultations during 2015 with the most popular design chosen to be installed.



Sevenoaks Town Council committed to paying for 50% of the £100,000 play area. External funding for the other 50% has been received from the Cory Environmental Trust in Britain (CETB) of £36,000, Round Table of £6,000, Community Infrastructure Levy and some fundraising by the Mayor.

### **Additional 'free play' facilities in various locations throughout the Town**

It has been agreed that some of the Community Investment Fund will be used to provide 'free play' facilities in various locations throughout the town. These facilities will include new play equipment, outdoor gyms, and outdoor table tennis / basketball facilities.

Consultation will take place during spring / summer of 2016 for new play equipment and/or outdoor gym equipment to be installed in Kippington Meadow.

### **The conversion of the band practice on the Vine into a community café**

The Café on the Vine was opened in September 2015.

The aspiration to convert the Band Practice Room on the Vine into a café was part of the Town Council's 2012 Blue Skies thinking.

A grant from the Cory Environmental Trust in Britain (CETB) of £50,000 enabled this to become a reality. The project was helped by a2d architects which provided considerable voluntary assistance with architect services. Also with a grant from Awards for All and a contribution from Kent County Councillor Mrs Margaret Crabtree for the provision of crockery and cutlery.



A small play area was installed alongside the café from funding provided by Ibstock Cory Environmental Trust (ICET).

It is difficult to envisage now the sorry state that the building was in during the summer of 2015 when work commenced and the historic building was discovered to be in danger of being condemned. Sevenoaks Town Council had to for the first time use some of its reserves to ensure that the building was restored and refurbished for community use and remain an asset for the town.

The Town Council hopes that the provision of the Vine Café as well as being a public facility will encourage more members of the community to use the Vine Gardens; support community events taking place in this open space, particularly in relation to bands playing Thursday evenings and Sunday afternoons in the summer.

#### **Band Practice Room & History**

“The Sevenoaks Town Band was founded in 1890 after a public meeting held at the Lime Tree Hotel. The brass band aimed to provide a non- alcoholic way of keeping the working men’s community together. Twenty two men enrolled, each paying 15 shillings to the treasurer. Henry Swaffield paid for a bandstand on the Vine in 1894 and an adjoining Band Room on the Vine for practice in 1902. The Town Band unable to attract enough members, disbanded in the 1990s”

*Extract from Sevenoaks: An Historical Dictionary – David Killingray and Elizabeth Purves.*

To complement the increased use of the Vine area, the public toilets have been refurbished and a new disabled toilet and chair store have been converted from disused rooms. This was possible with a grant of approximately £10,000 from Kent County Council Cllr Mrs M Crabtree’s allowance.

#### **Sevenoaks Sports Strategy**



It was agreed that as part of the Neighbourhood Development Plan and due to the disposal of the Raleys Gym site the Town Council would liaise with local sports clubs to provide a Sevenoaks Sports Strategy for the future.

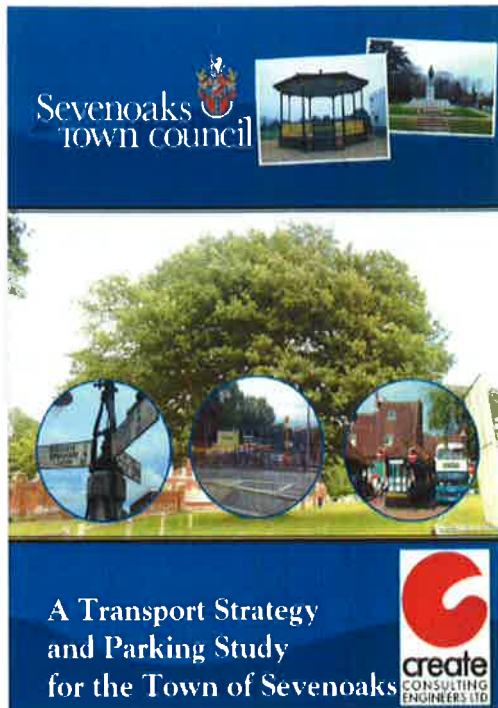
Following many hours of consultative meetings with over forty sports organisations the Sevenoaks Sports Strategy has been published and can

be viewed on the Town Council’s website. The document will also be an appendix within the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

#### **Improvement work at the Stag Community Arts Centre**

Sevenoaks Town Council has continued to provide funding either as grants or loans for the Stag Community Arts Centre to provide improvements to the venue.

## Integrated Transport Strategy



The Town Council has also completed its Integrated Transport Strategy, which will form an appendix of the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

One of the projects identified within the strategy is the provision of a regular orbital bus service.

The Town Council working with Go Coach and obtaining funding from Kent County Council has put in place the provision of the No 8 Bus on a three year trial. The bus service operates six days per week.

The introduction of the No 8 Bus has also enabled the town Council to provide free bus travel within the town for young people aged 11 to 18.





### 3. Finance Committee

In 2015/16 the Council's budget for net expenditure was £803,102 (2014/15 £791,736) with general reserves brought forward of £356,230 (2014/15 £372,175) and earmarked reserves for future expenditure of £359,397 (2014/15 £359,458).

Over the past two years the Council has continued to tightly control its finances, so as to maintain the level of service provision and to fund future plans. The precept for 2014/15 was £803,102.

The Council continued to develop its plans for an exciting future and to find innovative ways of working. During 2015/16 the Council increased the scope of its activities, renovating and opening the Café on the Vine and introducing the new No 8 Bus service.

Approximately £10,000 funding for the year to date has been provided for the Neighbourhood Plan project, which commenced in 2014/15 with an extensive canvassing of residents' views, and continues into 2016/17. The council's capital spending in the 10 months to January 2016 has totalled approximately £407,000 which has been partly funded by grants and capital income of £120,000 and partly by accumulated reserves. Further capital income is expected in the next few months from the disposal of the Raleys properties and Cemetery Lodge.

In 2014/15 a surplus resulted of £149, and results for 2015/16 to date indicate that a small surplus will once again be generated.

At the Council meeting held 11 January 2016 Town Councillors approved a precept of £973,618, for 2016/2017. This reflects a Band D Council Tax equivalent to £105.53, reflecting the Council's ambitious plans for new and improved community facilities.

Prior to setting the 2016/2017 precept, the Town Council distributed public information in a document entitled 'Talking Money'. In additions to leaflets, the information was placed in the Town Crier and a half page advertisement in the Chronicle.



#### 4. Sevenoaks Community Centre

The Community Centre has three varied size rooms, the large hall, small hall and bar room offering hirers the choice of comfortable accommodation to suit their event, large or small, with kitchen facilities if required. All rooms are on the ground floor and are accessible via a ramped entrance to the building. There is a large free car park, which provides ample parking for hirers. The Community Centre continues to host a varied group of regular hirers, including dance classes, tea dance, professional business meetings, family history group, friendship group, exercise classes and children's playgroup.



Week-end events at the Community Centre include private parties, wedding receptions, children's parties, and picture framing once a month. Children's parties are very popular using the Large Hall as this is an excellent size for entertainment and setting up party tables.

User Group Meetings are continuing at the Community Centre and contact with the hirers has been very helpful and informative.

#### 5. Sevenoaks Town Council's Grants to voluntary organisations

Sevenoaks Town Council continues to provide grants to local groups, it is also a major sponsor of the Stag Community Arts Centre and Sevenoaks Summer Festival.

Groups who have benefited from Town Council grants during the year 2015/2016 include:

Sevenoaks Summer Festival, Bradbourne Residents Association, Sevenoaks Counselling Service, Sevenoaks Three Arts Festival, The Sevenoaks Society, West Kent Mediation, Relate West & Mid Kent, Sevenoaks Volunteer Transport Group, Sevenoaks Literary Celebration, Sevenoaks & Swanley Citizens Advice Bureau, Friends of Pontoise, Friends of Rheinbach, Kent Youth Jazz Orchestra, Circle Support, Divine Singers, South East Open Studios and Sevenoaks Home Library Service.

## 6. Events

Sevenoaks Town Council works in conjunction with Sevenoaks Town Partnership to provide an annual calendar of events creating additional vibrancy for encouraging community interaction and economic benefits.

To assist with this, Sevenoaks Town Partnership has created an Events Committee. The aim of the Events Committee is to enable Sevenoaks organisations to consider methods to share resources, experience, and knowledge for the benefit of all who are holding events in the town. The Events Committee is chaired by Cllr Maxine Chakowa.

### **Christmas Lights – Sevenoaks High Street**



As in previous years, during 2015 Sevenoaks Town Council held a successful Christmas Light Switch-On Ceremony attracting thousands of people to the event. The Town Council also purchased and installed new Christmas Lights to the Bat & Ball area and received many compliments from members of the public and retailers for this.

### **Sevenoaks Markets on the Vine Gardens**



2015 saw Sevenoaks Town Council team up with Market Square Group to host two Food Fairs and a Christmas Fair on the Vine Gardens. Public feedback was so positive a further three markets have been booked for 2016.

### Sevenoaks Charity Fair



To help kick start the Sevenoaks Summer Festival the Town Council held a charity fair in Bligh's helping local charities raise money for a variety of worthy causes.

### Sevenoaks Summer Play Provision



Each year Sevenoaks Town Council hosts free summer play dates at a variety of open spaces in the area. In 2015 three events were held at Vine Gardens, Greatness Recreation Ground and Hillingdon Rise Play Area. The events are held in conjunction with Play Place, Sevenoaks District Council and West Kent Extra.

### Sevenoaks Torchlight Parade



**ROUNDTABLE**

The annual Torchlight Parade and Fireworks attracting thousands of visitors took place in November. This event raises thousands of pounds for local charities and is hosted by the Round Table. Sevenoaks Town Council once again assisted by addressing the requirements of the Premises Licence in the High Street to enable a capacity of up to 10,000 people and also assisted with practical support on the day of the event.

Sevenoaks Round Table kindly donated £6,000 worth of funds raised from the 2015 event to help towards the new Buckhurst Lane Play Area installation.

### **Bands on the Bandstand**



During the Summer months local bands gave free concerts during Thursday evenings and Sunday afternoons. These events were a fantastic way to enjoy the outdoors and relax with family and friends.

### **Sevenoaks Pink Party**

2015 saw the Pink Party move to a new venue. With plenty of pink themed stalls and activities this was a fundraising event not to be missed. Helping to raise thousands of pounds for Breast Cancer Care the Vine Gardens is now the new venue for the annual Pink Party.



The Pink Week in Sevenoaks in addition to attracting thousands of people in to the town and providing plenty of activities for all raised approximately £12,000 for Breast Cancer Care.

## **7. Twinning**

Sevenoaks is twinned with Pontoise in France and Rheinbach in Germany. Both twinning Associations continue to be supported by Sevenoaks Town Council. The Friends of Pontoise and the Friends of Rheinbach promote cultural understanding and exchanges, particularly between cultural and supporting organisations and schools.

## **8. Council Chamber**

The Council Chamber is regularly used by Councillors on Monday evenings for Council meetings at which the public are welcome to attend. The meetings are listed on the Town Council website and advertised regularly in the local paper. The venue is also available for hire by community organisations.



## 9. Youth Council

Sevenoaks Youth Council held its AGM in November 2015 and Taraminna Miah was elected Chairman, Olivia Kings was elected Vice Chairman and Tanjinna Miah elected Treasurer.

Youth Council meetings are held approximately every 6 weeks in the Town Council Chamber. Since its conception in 2009 the Youth Council has become increasingly involved in initiating and developing events for young people.

Members of the Youth Council have also been instrumental in the development of the Youth Café.

## 10. House in the Basement Youth Café



The Youth Services Sub Committee chaired by Cllr Nicholas Busvine oversees the management and development of the youth café. The Sevenoaks Youth Council continues to be involved in the development of events, behavioural rules, menus etc.

The Youth Café has now been open for approx. 3 years. The Youth Café receives funding via KCC Commissioning which ends in August 2016. The Town Council is hoping to be able to apply for a further three years of funding.



On Tuesday evenings the youth café is open for children with special needs sponsored by the St James Wealth Foundation and VAWK. This evening not only provides them with somewhere safe and comfortable to go, but also provides them with the confidence in the venue to attend at other times and integrate with the other young people, which has proved to be immensely popular.

**Annual report House in The Basement [HiTB].**  
**March 2016.**

**General.**

The last 12 months have brought several challenges within HiTB. Since Katie Shipton resigned, finding a reliable and permanent staff team has proved difficult. Although we have yet to find a new apprentice to replace Katie, HiTB does have a static staff team consisting of Gail Grieves the Manager, Cali Wilson and Simon Briley, all of whom bring a varied and experienced skill set.

Cali is fantastic in the kitchen, as well as encouraging young people to experience new tastes she has the ability to relate and advise young people in a variety of situations enabling them to make better choices for their own future.

Simon brings his musical talent as well as the empathy and positive attitude towards the young people themselves. He is able to turn negative experience into positive ones and encourage the young people to make more positive choices for their own future.

Gail has completed training in Safeguarding, Food hygiene, COSHH and C-card and the café recently were awarded a level 4 in food hygiene from the EHA.

**Activities/Events**

Throughout the year HiTB has hosted several new initiatives which have gone down well with the young people. The menu has changed and a daily special has been introduced along with some regular staples. This has shown a gradual increase in food sales. Cali has had several "tasting events" including Risotto's, Mexican, Curries and healthy cheese flapjacks. The young people are able to try new healthy foods they usually wouldn't have a chance to. Brownie/cake Friday has continued to be a hit, often selling out within the evening.

Gail visited several primary schools in June/July to chat to year 6 about HiTB. This brought in several new members and this will be arranged again for this year. We have also made contact with Sophie Butler who runs an 8-12 club in Sevenoaks and was looking for somewhere for her leavers to attend.

Dan Simpson (poet/comedian) visited the café in October and carried out some creative writing workshops the young people made up "one liners" and "scary stories", the event went down well and we hope to encourage Dan back again.

Level Up was set up for the exchanging of computer games. This is still going but uptake is slow, the feeling is the games we currently stock are too old and HiTB needs to consider the feasibility of purchasing more up to date versions.

We have had two sessions with Bali and Lennox from Refocus which has highlighted issues behind anti-social behaviour, the young people have always found these to be useful. West Kent Extra continue to support us with a Drug and Alcohol advisor, since JP left we have had a man called Andy, whom has brought fantastic interactive games and quizzes to warn young people about the dangers of Drugs and Alcohol. He is also a reformed addict and often tells

young people about his recovery journey which again the young people find valuable. SAYT also continue to support us on a Wednesday evening, Daren and Stefan are the youth workers currently supporting us.

A job board has been introduced and vacancy for young people are updated regularly, help is also available for applying and CV writing.

In December the young people decorated Christmas baubles and helped deck out the café and tree. Thanks to Sevenoaks Youth Council, HiTB were able to provide a Christmas party and small gifts. With the generous assistance of SAYT's church kitchen a full Christmas meal was provided in the Café for about 25 young people. The evening included fun and games and was appreciated by all who attended. HiTB also helped out with the Mencap Pantomime tea.

The new No 8 bus pass has been introduced and regular user of the Café have enjoyed using the free pass to visit the café. To date we have given out 19 passes.

### **KCC Commissioning**

The proposed procurement timetable was delayed until 15<sup>th</sup> February 2016, it was then further delayed until 10<sup>th</sup> March 2016 at time of writing this report we have yet to establish what is involved. A meeting was held at HiTB for all local Youth provides to discuss what was required in Sevenoaks parish and if and how we could support each other.

## **11.Planning Committee**

The Planning Committee meets every 2 weeks to discuss planning applications submitted within the Sevenoaks Town area, and a wide array of associated planning matters.

The Committee actively seeks to maintain and enhance the positive features of Sevenoaks Town, while promoting sustainable growth to help maintain the long term economic and social stability of the Town.

### **11.1 Planning Applications**

During 2015/2016 the Town Council will have commented on circa 545 planning applications submitted within the Sevenoaks Town Council area, and has supported Sevenoaks District Council in their refusal of applications via a number of written appeals

The Town Council continues to monitor tree work applications in the area despite not being a consultee and will make representation when applications of concern are submitted.

## **11.2 Major Development sites**

### **98 – 116 London Road**

This application for 66 flats on the former J Salmon site on London Road was strongly objected to by Sevenoaks Town Council citing concerns on levels of parking, overdevelopment of the site, and lack of affordable housing provision.

Despite also being refused permission by Sevenoaks District Council, planning permission was granted on appeal by the Planning Inspectorate in February 2016

### **Wilderness House**

Sevenoaks Town Council expressed a number of concerns with the redevelopment of the Wilderness House site as it sits within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Green Belt, it called for the design of the newly developed 'Sylvan Heritage' block to be developed in consultation with local residents in Sevenoaks and Seal to ensure there was no damage to the character of the surrounding area. It also raised concerns about the method of access for construction traffic and for the eventual use of the site.

The application was granted by Sevenoaks District Council in May 2015 subject to extensive conditions to safeguard the character of the area.

### **Tubs Hill House**

Sevenoaks Town Council supported proposals to re clad the Tubs Hill House towers to improve their appearance.

Sevenoaks District Council approved works to the undercroft car park and recladding, but rejected proposals to add an additional 8 duplex units to the top of the towers.

## **11.3 Planning Documents**

Over the course of the year so far the Town Council has participated in the consultation process for several draft Local and National planning documents, carefully tailoring responses to safeguard the interests of local residents.

Some of the key documents have included consultations on:

- DCLG Technical Consultation on Implementation to changes in Planning Policy
- Kent County Council's Minerals and Waste Local Plan
- Kent County Council's Environment Strategy
- DCLG Consultation on changes to planning policy

In addition the Town Council worked with Sevenoaks District Council to identify development sites in the town as part of the review Sevenoaks District Council's Local Plan, as well as participating in a "Place Making" workshop as part of the review.

## **11.4 Development Control Meetings**

The Town Council is frequently represented at Sevenoaks District Council Development Control meetings when there is a contentious planning issue.



### **11.5 Kent County Council Highways and Transportation [H&T]**

The Town Council actively supported local residents and made representations to Kent County Council Highways and Transportation on several road safety issues. The Town Council regularly reports damaged highway surfaces and faulty street lights to KCC H&T.

### **11.6 Licensing**

The Town Council continues to review and comment on licensing applications submitted within the town, in an attempt to safeguard the amenities of local residents.

### **11.7 Public Transport**

The Town Council continue to lobby wherever possible to ensure that an adequate public transport infrastructure is maintained, and has responded to several public transport consultations over the course of the year, including the supporting of proposals seeking to extend Oyster Card zones to both Bat and Ball and Sevenoaks Mainline Station.

## **12. Sevenoaks Neighbourhood Development Plan**

Since the initiation of work on the Sevenoaks Neighbourhood Plan at the 2013 Annual Town Meeting the Town Council has been working with local stakeholders, residents, other Councils, and service providers to shape the plan.

Meetings of the Steering Committee take place every 6 weeks, and have included discussions on a number of high profile development sites within the Town.

In 2015 and 2016 consultation took place on the 'Main Themes' of the plan which were identified following the Town Wide survey, which was distributed to every house within the Town Council's administrative area. Two workshops were held at the Stag and Sevenoaks Station to discuss the themes of the plan with members of the public. All themes received a positive response, with those most highly rated focusing on the protection of green spaces and the Green Belt surrounding the Town.

The Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan website, [STNP.co.uk](http://STNP.co.uk), includes a calendar of meetings, past agendas and minutes, newsletters, consultation and their analysis of responses as and when they are published.

Most recently the Steering Committee resolved to carry out a call for small sites, seeking to identify sites within the Town capable of delivering less than 5 residential units. This was designed to complement Sevenoaks District Council's call for sites capable of delivering 5 or more residential units.

If you wish to be involved in the Sevenoaks Neighbourhood Plan or would like to join the emailing list please contact Hugh D'Alton via [planning@sevenoakstown.gov.uk](mailto:planning@sevenoakstown.gov.uk) or telephone 01732 459953

### 13 Sevenoaks Town Partnership

Established in 2011, the Partnership is a Sevenoaks Town Council initiative bringing together a wide range of people from the local community to establish Sevenoaks as a prosperous, vibrant and attractive place to visit, shop and do business.

Sevenoaks has a variety of magnificent attractions, leisure facilities, unique retail shops and well established community organisations. The Partnership's aims are ambitious but with its existing and planned initiatives, are well positioned to spread the message both to the wider local community and beyond by providing initiatives that increase footfall and the number of visitors to the town centre.

With an Executive Board meeting approximately every six weeks and with a developing partnership of existing and new organisations and individual members, the 'brand' of Sevenoaks is moving forward at pace.

A copy of the Sevenoaks Town Partnership's Annual Report is available separately @ <http://sevenoakspartnership.org/businesses/sevenoaks-town-partnership>

#### Sevenoaks Business Show



2015 saw a year full of annual and new events. Sevenoaks Town Partnership hosted its annual Business Show at the Stag with over 25 stands showcasing some of the best businesses in the area. The event was opened by Sevenoaks Town Partnership patron the Rt Hon Michael Fallon MP. Feedback from exhibitors and the public was so positive that the event will return again for 2016.

#### Sevenoaks Vintage Bus

The Sevenoaks Vintage Bus returned for another year, offering a nostalgic day out for all the family. A full day ticket cost £2.50 with under 10's travelling free. Our fantastic team of volunteer conductors were on hand to sell our new fridge magnets and keyrings which went down a storm with the younger visitors.



## Friends of Bat & Ball Station



In 2014 a Bat & Ball Station Friends Group was created as a Committee of the Sevenoaks Town Partnership. The Friends Group identified the following aims and created a strategy to support these:-

1. Support regeneration of Bat & Ball area, highlighting benefits of the station
2. Promote the station
3. Promote the station building as a venue / facility
4. Encourage integration with other community / business projects e.g. Britain in Bloom, Vintage Bus, Summer Festival / Arts
5. Protect and inform re Historical / Conservation importance
6. Provide information to the public
7. Report to Sevenoaks Town Partnership

Bat & Ball Station Building is a predominantly single storey Victorian property constructed in 1862 and is Grade II listed. At the time it was built the station was a terminus of the branch line from Swanley Junction prior to the line being extended to Sevenoaks Station in 1868. The Station Building has been vacant for a number of years. The majority of the exterior has received a recent redecoration however the interior has been stripped out of all fixtures and fittings and is in places derelict.

Part of the building is understood to be the original station master's two storey house and this part of the building is now in use as a private residential dwelling. Therefore this part of the building is not within the current project but should be earmarked as an aspiration should it come on the market in the future.

The Town Council is currently negotiating with Southeastern Railways for a long term lease of 99 years.

Since 2011 Sevenoaks Town Council has made a public commitment to the regeneration of the Bat & Ball area, this has been endorsed by Sevenoaks District Council and Kent County Council and included as part of the Local Enterprise Partnership submission.

As part of its commitment to the regeneration of the Bat & Ball area Sevenoaks Town Council is investing £3m into the conversion of the current community centre into a Conference / Community centre. During 2014 a RIBA competition was held for the design for the new facility, over 70 national and internal architects provided submissions. The competition also

attracted considerable public interest. The new centre is adjacent to the station and therefore it has always been an aim of the Town Council to link the two buildings. Sevenoaks Town Council intention in taking over the station building is to restore an historic building, provide it with a community use and address anti-social issues surrounding the building.

For further details of Sevenoaks Town Partnership, please contact Bonnie Tarling at Sevenoaks Town Council: [admin.tp@sevenoakstown.gov.uk](mailto:admin.tp@sevenoakstown.gov.uk)

## 14 Open Spaces Committee

### **Vine Area**

Summer Concerts on the bandstand were held regularly through the summer from the Summer Festival on Sundays and Thursdays until August bank holiday. Again proving very popular and will be provided again this year by Sevenoaks Town Council.

During 2013 the Town Council implemented a Premises Licence for the Vine Gardens to enable community events to take place on this site and the area is being used more extensively.

The public toilets on the Vine have been refurbished with financial assistance from Kent County Council Councillor Margaret Crabtree.

### **South East in Bloom**

Hanging baskets were displayed in the town centre and local businesses continued to show support by making donations towards the cost of the baskets and the floral displays were appreciated by residents and visitors to the town. In 2015 Sevenoaks received a Silver Gilt Award from the South East in Bloom Competition and is grateful to all the volunteers and local businesses who support this effort. We are all hoping for a Gold Award for 2016.

### **Greatness Recreation Ground**

The recreation ground is well used with skateboarders and bike riders enjoying the site alongside the active football club and children and parents in the playground.

Sevenoaks Town Junior Football Club secured a grant for new drainage installation on the pitch allowing for the teams to play more games during the winter.

In April 2014 an outdoor gym was installed and has proved very popular. It is the intention to install additional grass matting surrounding the equipment as it is so well used. Plans are being prepared to enable the current pavilion toilet to be turned into a toilet available for public use.



## **Roadside Advertising and Highway Banners**

The Town Council agreed to take over the responsibility for regulating road side advertising within the town, which was previously a Kent County Council function.

It now regulates the installation of posters advertising local events at six sites, three of which are on Town Council land. Local interest groups pay a small fee to help cover the cost of administration of the scheme.

The Town Council enable local organisations to advertise via a highway banner subject to terms and conditions for a maximum period of two weeks, this restriction enables more local community members to advertise their events during the course of the year.

## **Knole Paddock and Raleys Field**

Sevenoaks Rugby Football Club successfully obtained grants from ICET for these projects at Knole fields. The installation of a canopied raised deck alongside the Club House.

The installation of a reinforced grass car park on the fields to cut on overflow and the installation of a piped drainage system on the pitch nearest to the club house, so that this could be improved to be used as the First Team Pitch.

This also involved the partial repositioning of the cricket square to allow a competition width rugby pitch.

## **Greatness Cemetery**

The cemetery continues to provide a popular and peaceful refuge for the bereaved. Work has concentrated on the restoration of hedges and shrub borders with moderate replanting in some borders.

## **15.The Stag Community Arts Centre**

In 2009 Sevenoaks Town Council took over the running of Sevenoaks Community Arts Centre and since then its success has gone from strength to strength. It obtained charitable status in 2010 and now produces its own report and accounts which are available to view on [www.stagsevenoaks.co.uk](http://www.stagsevenoaks.co.uk).

The Trustees, who are Town Councillors, have garnered the support of local people and are grateful to the many local organisations who use the facilities.

## 16. Sevenoaks Markets

In 2013 Sevenoaks Town Council started to manage two markets. 1) Saturdays in the High Street and 2) Wednesdays in Buckhurst Lane behind the bus station. In April 2014 Sevenoaks Town Council took over the management of a third market on Saturdays in Blighs due to it being threatened with closure.



Each year there is a national Love Your Local Market campaign to highlight markets throughout the country. Sevenoaks Town Council took part in this during 2014 arranging events, competitions and prizes and entertainment at the three markets. This will be repeated during 2016 between 18<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> May

New for 2016 will be the introduction of a Farmers Market on the Vine held on the fourth Sunday of the month between April – September



## 17. The Future

Sevenoaks Town Council working with many community organisations and local businesses is setting its sights high for the future with some ambitious plans including rebuilding of the community centre, improved sports facilities, strategic plans for economic growth, and not least putting in place a long term Neighbourhood Development Plan for the future of the town. There are many opportunities for residents to be involved in what the Town Council does. All you need to do is to get in touch with us.

## SEVENOAKS TOWN COUNCILLORS 2015 - 2019

Eastern Ward		Contact	
Cllr E T Waite	Liberal Democrat	<a href="mailto:Cllr.waite@sevenoakstown.gov.uk">Cllr.waite@sevenoakstown.gov.uk</a>	01732 459953
Cllr A S Clayton	Liberal Democrat	<a href="mailto:Cllr.clayton@sevenoakstown.gov.uk">Cllr.clayton@sevenoakstown.gov.uk</a>	01732 451087
Cllr Mrs P C Walshe	Liberal Democrat	<a href="mailto:Cllr.walshe@sevenoakstown.gov.uk">Cllr.walshe@sevenoakstown.gov.uk</a>	01732 454769
Kippington Ward		Contact	
Cllr A Eyre	Conservative	<a href="mailto:Cllr.eyre@sevenoakstown.gov.uk">Cllr.eyre@sevenoakstown.gov.uk</a>	01732 464865
Cllr R J Parry	Conservative	<a href="mailto:Cllr.parry@sevenoakstown.gov.uk">Cllr.parry@sevenoakstown.gov.uk</a>	01732 459953
Cllr R L Piper	Conservative	<a href="mailto:Cllr.piper@sevenoakstown.gov.uk">Cllr.piper@sevenoakstown.gov.uk</a>	01732 455355
Northern Ward		Contact	
Cllr Mrs R E Parry	Conservative	<a href="mailto:Cllr.mrsparry@sevenoakstown.gov.uk">Cllr.mrsparry@sevenoakstown.gov.uk</a>	01732 459953
Cllr P E Towell	Conservative	<a href="mailto:Cllr.towell@sevenoakstown.gov.uk">Cllr.towell@sevenoakstown.gov.uk</a>	01732 459953
Cllr J M Canet	Liberal Democrat	<a href="mailto:Cllr.canet@sevenoakstown.gov.uk">Cllr.canet@sevenoakstown.gov.uk</a>	01732 461397
St Johns Ward		Contact	
Cllr M A Chakowa	Conservative	<a href="mailto:Cllr.chakowa@sevenoakstown.gov.uk">Cllr.chakowa@sevenoakstown.gov.uk</a>	01322 400909
Cllr R M C Hogarth	Conservative	<a href="mailto:Cllr.hogarth@sevenoakstown.gov.uk">Cllr.hogarth@sevenoakstown.gov.uk</a>	01732 760325
Cllr S G Raikes	Conservative	<a href="mailto:Cllr.raikes@sevenoakstown.gov.uk">Cllr.raikes@sevenoakstown.gov.uk</a>	01732 451707
Town Ward		Contact	
Cllr N J Busvine OBE	Conservative	<a href="mailto:Cllr.busvine@sevenoakstown.gov.uk">Cllr.busvine@sevenoakstown.gov.uk</a>	01732 459953
Cllr E Parson	Conservative	<a href="mailto:Cllr.parson@sevenoakstown.gov.uk">Cllr.parson@sevenoakstown.gov.uk</a>	01732 459953
Cllr O Schneider	Conservative	<a href="mailto:Cllr.schneider@sevenoakstown.gov.uk">Cllr.schneider@sevenoakstown.gov.uk</a>	01732 456945
Wilderness		Contact	
Cllr S L Arnold	Conservative	<a href="mailto:Cllr.arnold@sevenoakstown.gov.uk">Cllr.arnold@sevenoakstown.gov.uk</a>	01732 459953

Town Clerk/Chief Executive  
Deputy Town Clerk  
Assistant Town Clerk

Linda Larter MBE,  
Ann White  
Hugh D'Alton

[townclerk@sevenoakstown.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@sevenoakstown.gov.uk)  
[dtc@sevenoakstown.gov.uk](mailto:dtc@sevenoakstown.gov.uk)  
[atc@sevenoakstown.gov.uk](mailto:atc@sevenoakstown.gov.uk)

The Town Council or its Committees meet on most Monday evenings at 7 pm and members of the public are welcome to attend. For further details of the meetings please contact the Town Council Offices - 01732 459953.  
[council@sevenoakstown.gov.uk](mailto:council@sevenoakstown.gov.uk)      [www.sevenoakstown.gov.uk](http://www.sevenoakstown.gov.uk)

