Town Crier







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rom Sevenoaks Town Council for the community of Sevenoaks

December 2022

From the Mayor of Sevenoaks, Councillor Mrs Rachel Parry

The last edition of the Town Crier began with a look back at June's exciting Platinum Jubilee celebrations of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth, followed by a summary of various summer events. In September of course we heard of her unexpected but peaceful death, which was followed by a period of official mourning, showing respect for Queen Elizabeth the Second's very long and successful reign. During the mourning period, while the Town Council's public meetings couldn't be held, the Council continued to work for the Town's residents while showing due respect for our county's sad loss.

The Council opened a Condolence Book; my consort and I visited the town's care homes, taking with us the Condolence Book, so that residents and staff could write a message in the book. The Town Council's Condolence Book will be formally bound, kept by the Town Council and a copy will be lodged with Kent's County Archives at Maidstone.

On Sunday the 11th of September I was privileged, and also proud, to read the proclamation of our new Sovereign, King Charles the Third. I read the proclamation, in the afternoon, in front of hundreds of residents at the Town's War Memorial.

Now life in general is returning to a more normal rhythm and the Town Council is proceeding with all it's meetings and activities as usual with special attention being given to how the Council can help residents during what is likely to be a very difficult winter.



The council is involved in the Warm Spaces initiative and, as a start, is opening the Bat & Ball railway station on Monday mornings.

The Council is also collecting, and will distribute, Warm Coats and also is working towards being recognised as a Town of Sanctuary.

As the Town's Mayor I've continued to attend many local organisations meetings and events; attending these functions is always a great privilege and enjoyable. I am also continuing my efforts to raise funds for my designated charity, Sevenoaks Area Youth Trust, SAYT.

One recent high point was at Chevening House. The board of Trustees of Chevening House very kindly giving me permission to host a luncheon, to raise funds for SAYT. The luncheon was a really special occasion and provided the very rare privilege of enjoying the extra special ambience of Chevening House.



As we are moving from autumn into winter, there have been many of the usual events, especially in November, such as the annual Firework display as well as Armistice Day and Remembrance Sunday's Service and Parade. The weather was not brilliant for the fireworks, but everyone seemed to be enjoying the spectacular display.

On the 11th of November, Armistice Day, at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, many of the Town Councillors, together with members of other organisations, went to the Greatness Cemetery to place British Legion wooden crosses with poppies at the graves of the war dead. If you visit the cemetery you can find them. Some of war graves are close together in a special corner of the cemetery, which is tended by the War Graves Commission, and many others have been laid to rest elsewhere in the cemetery to be close to other members of their families.



Remembrance Sunday over a 1000 people gathered at the Town's War Memorial, at the Vine, to remember those who gave their lives for us so that we can live in our free country. Three local religious leaders lead the service of remembrance and honour for the fallen and the music was played by the Eynsford Concert Band. This solemn occasion included the laying of wreaths by myself, as Mayor, our MP Laura Trott, Lord Colgrain, a Kent Deputy Lieutenant, Mr. Michael Pearsall representing the British

Legion followed by wreaths laid by the representatives of so many local organisations.

Everyone was very moved when we all responded to the Exhortation with a loud "We Will Remember Them".



The end of the service was marked by a march past led by Air Force, Army and Navy Cadets who were followed by Scouts, Guides, Brownies, Cubs, Rainbows and others.



November came to triumphant conclusion with the Annual Christmas Lights Switch On! The weather was fine, many families came to see what was going on, there was music of many kinds, the cast of our Pantomime, Alice in Wonderland, sang and danced.





The Town Council staff had spent many hours organising the lights and were also on duty on the night. I was accompanied by army cadets, there were also air force and police cadets helping others. When I went up on the stage with the pantomime cast and pushed down the plunger all the lights came on, it was quite magical! And the whole of our Town looks quite wonderful.



The Town Council is continuing with its green initiative and early in December Councillors, pupils of Tunbridge Wells Boys Grammar school and residents planted lots of saplings at Littlewood.



For many years one of the duties of the Town's Mayor has been to plant an Oak Tree. There is a "Mayors' circle" of seven of young oaks on Brittains Common, near the Fire Station and for the last six years each Mayor has planted an oak sapling in a special circle on Sevenoaks Common. It was my privilege and honour to plant my oak to

complete this circle of Seven New Oaks.

Now, as we confront the problems facing us, many of which are the result of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the world's economic crisis, we'll all be trying to find our way through difficult times ahead. We should also spare a thought for other people who are in need of assistance. If we are able some of us might be able to help and support the refugees, from several countries, who have found refuge in Sevenoaks and also our neighbours. Even simple tasks would be welcomed, perhaps fetching shopping. Sometimes just a short visit, to have a conversation rather than be totally on their own, day after day, is just the thing to help people get through the day.

While you are preparing for your own Christmas celebration, perhaps with family and friends, helping others get through these difficult times, going to a carol concert or just doing the extra Christmas shopping, may I take this opportunity to wish you, your families and your loved ones a very happy Christmas.

Rachel Parry, Mayor of Sevenoaks, December 2022.

PS: I hope you have already bought your tickets for Alice in Wonderland.







Coronation of King Charles III Celebrations

We are starting to make plans for community events to celebrate the Coronation of the new King and Queen Consort in May 2023. The Coronation will take place on Saturday 6 May at Westminster Abbey and there will be a Bank Holiday on Monday 8 May for celebrations across the nation to take place.

If you are a local organisation or group that would like to put on a community event or have a specific project in mind to mark this special occasion in our history, we would love to hear from you.





Sevenoaks Town Council's Proposal to be a 'Town of Sanctuary'

Following a request from Cllr Libby Ancrum, Sevenoaks Town Council considered at its meeting held on 26th September 2022 to initiate the process for obtaining 'Town of Sanctuary' status. At the beginning of the meeting Mr Chris Hix, from Sevenoaks Welcomes Refugees addressed the Council and stated how much he welcomed the initiative. It was noted that much of the criteria (listed below) was already happening by a variety of organisations, including the Town Council and the process would provide recognition and publicity to all the work that was being done to assist with refugees in Sevenoaks.

It was agreed to form an initial Working Party and invite persons interested in being involved to contact the Town Clerk – <u>town-clerk@sevenoakstown.gov.uk</u>

Please see Town of Sanctuary objective and criteria below:

Objective

The most important test for being a Town of Sanctuary is a positive experience of sanctuary seekers.

Terms of Reference

The local working group develops its own goals and strategy for meeting the criteria outlined below, in a way that is relevant to their situation. The group maintains regular contact with their regional network in order to share reports on progress, ideas, and resources.

When the local group believes it has achieved its initial goals, it submits an application to the City of Sanctuary Recognition Group, detailing how it believes it has met the criteria..

Steering Group will be briefed at each meeting on progress of projects running and take action as appropriate:

Criteria

To be recognised as an official Town or City of Sanctuary, the local City of Sanctuary working group will need to achieve these four essential goals:

Resolutions of support from a significant and representative proportion of local groups and organisations. These should include a commitment to welcoming and including people seeking sanctuary in the groups' activities, and evidence of practical efforts to build relationships between those seeking sanctuary and local people.

The support and involvement of local Refugee communities, and Refugee representation on the local City of Sanctuary working group.

Evidence of sustained engagement with the City Council (or other Local Authority).

A strategy, agreed by the main supporting organisations, for how the city is to continue working towards greater inclusion of Refugees and people seeking sanctuary. Continued progress will be measured by a three-yearly review process.

In addition, the town or city should be able to demonstrate public awareness and involvement in support for people seeking sanctuary, through meeting a range of goals from the following list (or similar):

- Workshops for schools on sanctuary issues
- Other awareness raising events
- Social and cultural events where people seeking sanctuary and local people Interact
- Concerts and drama productions by Refugee artists
- Interfaith events promoting sanctuary and hospitality
- Community conflict resolution services for areas experiencing tension over new arrivals
- Work with local media to publicise positive stories of sanctuary seekers
- Positive programmes for new arrivals in the city
- Refugee community involvement in festivals and cultural events
- Programme of events and activities for Refugee Week
- Programmes for employment training and voluntary work
- Other projects which help Refugees to feel more welcome and included



Green tips for Sevenoaks



This page contains information to help you reduce your waste and carbon footprint! Reducing your energy consumption can help lower your carbon footprint and save you money too.

Assess your current carbon footprint with a carbon footprint calculator, two have been listed below:

<u>carbonfootprint.com - Carbon Footprint Calculator</u>

WWF Footprint Calculator

Lowering your carbon footprint

TRAVEL

If you can, walk or ride your bike in order to avoid carbon emissions from transportation completely. This is also great for your physical and mental health! Electric bikes are a great way to get around and have a much lower carbon footprint than travelling by car.

Try to reduce the number of trips you take using your car. Car sharing reduces CO2 emissions by spreading them out over more passengers. If possible, complete errands on the same journey instead of going separately to do them.

Taking public transport instead of car travel lowers your carbon footprint as the emissions are spread over many more passengers. Travelling by public transport can also be quicker and more convenient!

Make your next car purchase an electric vehicle. If you can afford to, consider swapping your car for an electric one. These have lower carbon emissions than regular cars, and if you charge them with solar or a 100% renewable electricity provider they will not emit any CO2.

Consider how many flights you take, could you travel by train or sea instead? If you fly often consider taking fewer flights, especially long haul journeys.

Fly fewer round trips: if it is possible, for shorter journeys, consider renting a car or taking a train for half of your journey, and only fly the other half.

Fly economy instead of first or business class. This is better as each flyer's share of a flights carbon emissions is relatively less because it's spread out over more people.



INSULATION

If you can afford to, updating your homes insulation is one of the best ways to reduce your carbon footprint and help lower your energy bill, as improved insulation will reduce heat loss.

Loft and wall insulation, as well as double or triple glazing on your windows improves your homes energy efficiency, helping you lower your carbon footprint and save you money. Insulation Services Sevenoaks - Insulation Kent offers these services.

Subsidies and recommendations on improving your homes insulation can be found on Sevenoaks District Council's website below:

Improve your home energy efficiency | Sevenoaks District Council

Draught excluders are a simple and affordable way to reduce heat loss during winter, helping lower your carbon footprint and energy bill.

Sevenoaks District Council loans thermal imaging cameras to residents for free. These show you where energy is escaping from walls, roofs, windows and doors and other places in your home. Contact Sevenoaks District Council's Private Sector Housing team at psh@sevenoaks.gov.uk to enquire about availability.

The following links are good places to start if you are considering improving your insulation:

Improve your home energy efficiency | Sevenoaks District Council

Measures to help reduce home heat loss - Energy Saving Trust

Five areas to add insulation in your home - Energy Saving
Trust

Insulation Services Sevenoaks - Insulation Kent

Insulation - Why Is It Important? | GreenMatch

If you own your home, take the questionnaire on the page below to determine what the most effective actions for your home may be:

Find ways to save energy in your home - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

There are links to other useful schemes such as the <u>boiler</u> <u>upgrade scheme</u> on the right side of the above page – be sure to check them out!

AT HOME

For the time being energy prices are at record highs, and your household may be better off staying with your current energy supplier for the winter. In the future, consider switching to a green energy supplier that uses renewable energy sources.

Turn off lights you're not using and when you leave the room. Replace incandescent light bulbs with LED ones. This can help you save money too!

Switch off standby mode; this can help you lower your carbon footprint and save around £45 on your electricity bill annually.

If possible, buy appliances with the highest energy ratings. More info can be found here:

Guide to choosing home appliances - Energy Saving Trust

Unplug your chargers; when your device is fully charged, get into the habit of unplugging it. This helps improve the devices battery life and lower energy consumption and your carbon footprint, and can save you about £60 a year on your electricity bill.

Don't set your thermostat too high or too low, The World Health Organisation recommends setting it to 18oC. This saves energy, money, and prevents health risks associated with lower temperatures.

Consider installing heat pumps and/or solar panels, if possible. More information on heat pumps and solar panels can be found below:

Heat pumps - Energy Saving Trust

A comprehensive guide to solar panels - Energy Saving Trust

You can find a list of renewable energy installers in your local area here:

Register your interest in the <u>Solar Together scheme</u>.

Registration for the 2022 phase have closed, but you can sign up if you are interested in future schemes.

Wash your clothes at a lower temperature. Doing your washing on a 30oC cycle and reducing your washing machine use by one run a week lowers the amount of energy you use and can save you around £30 a year.

Instead of using the tumble dryer, hang your clothes up to dry.

Be aware of your water consumption; energy is used to clean and pump your water supply and excessive use can put pressure on water resources. Turn the tap off whilst brushing your teeth, try a shower timer and limit these to under 8 minutes if possible.

Grow more trees and plants, these absorb CO2 and help improve air quality.

If possible grow some of your own produce in your garden or allotment. This can reduce your carbon footprint and save you some money at the supermarket!

If you have a garden, leave some areas wild, and think about mowing your lawn less frequently to encourage pollinating insects and wildlife and increase plant biodiversity. There is some great information on how to do this from Kent Wildlife Trust here:

Gardening for a Wilder Kent | Kent Wildlife Trust

Consider planting more hardy / less water intensive plants in your outdoor spaces and only water your plants when they need it.



REDUCING YOUR WASTE

Here are some ways that you can reduce your waste

Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle when you can. Reducing consumption of goods, and in particular, plastic, is a great way of lowering your carbon footprint and environmental impact by cutting back on your waste. Reusing products when you can increases its lifespan, and lowers the amount of goods you need to buy, reducing your waste. Purchasing preowned goods if you can is better than buying new items. Recycling reduces the need for extracting, refining and processing raw materials all of which create substantial air and water pollution.

A great way to reduce your consumption and waste of products is to repair faulty/damaged items instead of buying brand new ones. There is a fantastic monthly Repair Café running in St Luke's Church which you can visit if you need something fixed! Find out more on their Facebook page here: Sevenoaks Repair Cafe - Home | Facebook

Fashion and clothing have a large carbon footprint. You can reduce their impact by buying "pre-loved" clothes through websites as well as the many second-hand clothes shops in Sevenoaks. Some websites for pre-loved clothes are listed below:

Depop - buy, sell, discover unique fashion

Shop all second-hand women's designer fashion - Thrift+

Vinted | Sell and buy clothes, shoes and accessories

If it is an option consider keeping your clothes for a longer time, extending its life cycle, and donate rather than throw out your old clothes wherever possible. More fashion related green tips can be found in the links below:

How to quit fast fashion: making, mending, learning and activism | Greenpeace UK

The fast fashion fix: 20 ways to stop buying new clothes for ever | Fashion | The Guardian



GROCERIES

Try to shop seasonally and locally to reduce the carbon footprint of your food.

If you eat a lot of meat and dairy, consider reducing this to help reduce your carbon footprint. More information can be found below:

10 tips to eat more sustainably | WWF

Compost your non-meat food waste. Sevenoaks District Council offers discounted composting bins, you can find out more here:

Home composting | Sevenoaks District Council

Try to buy products with less packaging, such as loose fruit and veg.

Take your own containers to meat/fish/cheese counters at supermarkets and request no plastic.

Shop at a refill shop with your own containers, such as the



CLEANING AND TOILETRIES

Change to a bar of soap or a bar of shampoo. These last longer and work just as well as liquid types.

Consider using a bamboo toothbrush and toothpaste in a jar or tablet form - this reduces waste plastic!

Consider switching from disposable plastic razors with a stainless steel razor with replaceable blades.

Instead of buying new household cleaners and toiletries, consider refilling your old containers. The Eco-Pantry in Seal stocks cleaning and toiletry products which you can fill your containers with.

OUT AND ABOUT

Take a reusable cup for hot drinks - some companies such as Starbucks offer cheaper drinks to those who bring their own

Use a refillable water bottle to cut back on plastic waste. If you need to refill your bottle when out, there are a number of businesses in Sevenoaks that have signed up for the refill scheme - where you can refill your water bottle free of charge. You can find them here:

Sevenoaks Refill Scheme - Sevenoaks Town Council

Consider buying cans over plastic bottles, or if you are having a hot drink consider having it in the café to save on using a takeaway cup.

Consider taking a packed lunch instead of buying food out. This can help save you money too!

Bring your own shopping bags instead of buying new ones











If you, or someone you know has Long Covid, support is available.

Peta Stockton is the Imago Long Covid Self-Management Coordinator. She supports people with long covid in their recovery and is leading gentle weekly walks and online support groups.

The weekly support groups take place three times a week via Teams.

The weekly walks are each Thursday from 11am-12.30pm at the Sevenoaks Wildlife Reserve.

long covid support@imago.community



IMAGO

Schools and Residents in Sevenoaks joined the Mayor plant trees for The Queen's Green Canopy

On Friday 2 December a fantastic sustainable environment project took place in Sevenoaks. 68 native tree species - silver birch, rowan, hazel, blackthorn and wild cherry were planted by Wild in 7oaks, a small community organisation which encourages Sevenoaks residents to garden in a wildlife friendly way, and young people from the Weald of Kent Grammar School. The Mayor of Sevenoaks, Councillor Rachel Parry, and fellow Town Councillors, joined with the community to plant the saplings, which were obtained by Wild in 7oaks from the Woodland Trust.

The project was also dedicated to Her Late Majesty's Green Canopy project. The Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) is a unique, UK-wide tree planting initiative created to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee 2022, by inviting people to "Plant a Tree for the Jubilee." The Town Council's Open Spaces Manager gave a brief talk to encourage everyone to learn more about the best way to plant trees so that they survive and flourish for years to come.



The impacts of climate change are detrimental on the environment: flying insects in the UK have reduced by 60% over the last 20 years; a third of wild bees are in decline and bird numbers are falling (the starling, bullfinch and skylark have all seen declines of over 50%). Loss of habitat is a major contributory factor behind these worrying trends. This summer we have, of course, also witnessed a severe drought.

We hope through planting these saplings and augmenting the numbers of trees in Littlewood that future wildlife will be encouraged to the area.



Functions & Facilities provided by Sevenoaks Town Council

Precept

Sevenoaks Town Council's total revenue budget for the 2022/23 financial year is £1,864,485 per annum. The average Band D house would pay £132.67 per annum equating to £2.55 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

- MUGA (Multi Use Games Area)
- MIDDLINGS 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 <u>cafeonthevine.com</u>
- 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 fover 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 x1, Bradbourne Vale Road x2, London Road x2, Tonbridge Road
- 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 L Ancrum	Liberal Democrat	Cllr S G Raikes	Conservative
KIPPINGTON WARD		TOWN WARD	
Cllr A Eyre	Conservative	CIIr 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 Dr 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 Eyre, the email address would be: Cllr.eyre@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



