

Faversham Town Council Newsletter

Spring 2022 Edition

Faversham Town Council Offices

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Mayor's Update

Cllr Alison Reynolds, Mayor of Faversham

This is my 12th and sadly my last letter to you all. Three years as Mayor sometimes feels as if it has passed in a moment, but one thing that stands out above all throughout all of that time, is my wish to say a "HUGE THANK YOU" to everyone in Faversham.

Time after time I have been overwhelmed by the welcome I have received as your Mayor. I have been astonished with the time, commitment and expertise that so many of you give to the whole of our Community to make it a better place to live in. It has been a humbling experience and I thank, with all my heart the volunteers in Faversham – the leaders, all our local experts and the front line workers who do so much.

We have such a great town with such a great group of Town Councillors, each bringing their own ideas and skills so that together they are a single team, and I thank all of them for their voluntary work as your Council. Together, the Town and the Town Council have made some real improvements to Faversham as a place to live - 20's Plenty for safer walking and cycling for people, improvements in biodiversity round the Town for a better environment and a more attractive Town, our local Faversham Neighbourhood Plan to influence developments locally, support for lots of local groups and individuals, the Town Lottery and many more.

Of course there is more to achieve - the development of 12 Market Place as our Town Hall; housing the Doddington Library; the relocation of the Visitor Information Centre; the Magna Carta and our Charters exhibition; an exhibition space for Community use; a workable town centre pedestrianisation scheme is in sight; better walking and cycling options for active travel are developing, and for the longer term future we must find a balance between ensuring local people can afford a local home while we protect our wider environment.

I have been fortunate to visit all of our junior and senior schools and I have been impressed by both teachers and pupils and the high standards that are being achieved. Memorable events have been rowing the most recently built skiffs "Avocet" and "Findlay MacDonald" down the Creek and coming back up on the steam tugboat "Barking", which was built here in Faversham and launched from our shipyard; unveiling the NHS and Frontline workers bench outside the Bank Street Health Centre and the 2019 Hop Festival which I do hope will return this year. Also seeing some recent progress on securing our new swing bridge.

We have everything in Faversham - museums, a wide cultural offer, natural history, a beautiful built and natural environment, hotels, historic country gardens and houses, B&Bs, restaurants, cafes, independent shops and businesses, and I look forward to continuing to work to bring more visitors to our beautiful town.

Finally, I wish to extend my warm thanks to the Council Staff and Deputy Mayor, Cllr Trevor Martin, for their positive support and advice. What a wonderful privilege it has been to be your Mayor.

Lottery Celebrates its First Birthday

Cllr Julian Saunders

It's almost a year since the Town Council launched the Faversham Community Lottery and the weekend of 2nd April we are going to be celebrating the first anniversary with a special prize draw for good causes and a big promotion at the Town Hall in the Market Place.

Launching the Lottery was a bold step forward for the Town Council as we started to come out of the pandemic this time last year. We are all really excited about how well it has gone over the last 12 months with 55 local good causes signed up, with over £40k raised for those good causes and our first £25,000 winner within three months of the lottery going live.

With funding for charities and community groups set to remain tight over the next few years, the Faversham & District Community Lottery can play a big role in ensuring we have the vibrant and well supported voluntary sector that Faversham needs - for as little as £1 a week, you can be a part of that.

It is quick and easy to sign up, to start playing visit: www.favershamdistrictlottery.co.uk.

Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) Gains Momentum

Cllr Julian Saunders

The Town Council is making good progress in developing a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for Faversham. Swale Borough Council (SBC) awarded us a grant early this year to develop a plan which will help us meet national requirements for getting funding for active travel improvements.

The transport planners we are working with have now done detailed work on the kinds of journeys that are being made on foot and by bike locally, and carried out an audit (with the help of local volunteers) on the problems that pedestrians and cyclists face in getting around town. Obvious challenges are crossing local railway lines and the speed and volume of traffic on busier roads like the A2 and Love Lane.

The next stage of the project will identify physical interventions that will make it easier and safer for people to cycle and walk. Our priorities here are likely to be interventions which encourage compliance with the 20mph scheme, and which make it easier for pedestrians to cross the road. An example is pavement widening on West Street by the Westbrook Stream, which we have already been successful in getting Kent County Council (KCC) to allocate funding for. Other possible interventions have gone into KCC's latest bid to the Government's Active Travel Fund, which we are waiting to hear the result of.

We expect a draft of the plan to be ready for feedback from the public by the end of this year, and will then look for the Town Council, SBC and KCC to adopt the plan so that it can inform development when new housing and highways schemes are brought forward.

At the same time we will start work on a related project, where we will be looking at promoting and improving cycling and walking routes from our neighbouring villages into the town centre.

Pesticide Free Faversham

Cllr Hannah Perkin

Cllrs Hannah Perkin and Chris Williams were invited to speak by the Pesticide Free Action Network's 'pesticide free Kent' event last month where representatives from other Councils in the county, where

volunteer groups, charities and members of the public were invited to discuss what is next in their campaigns to reduce and eliminate pesticide use in their communities.

Hannah and Chris spoke about Faversham Town Council's ambition for Faversham to become a pesticide free town and outlined what action would need to be taken for this to be achieved. This includes getting to know the picture of who is using what chemicals where and for what, reaching out to residents in Faversham and increasing public awareness of the damage that pesticides can cause to the environment and wildlife, and looking at a phased approach to becoming completely pesticide free.

Faversham is officially recognised as working towards becoming pesticide free and the Climate and Biodiversity committee will continue to prioritise chemical reduction as one of its key aims. If you would like to be involved in upcoming events and initiatives please do get in touch.

Mayor of Faversham's Afternoon Tea

To mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee the Mayor of Faversham will be hosting a Celebratory Afternoon tea in the Guildhall on Sunday 5th June at 2.30pm.

Faversham Gunpowder WI have kindly agreed to lay on the tea, and to attend this special event, you will need a Platinum Ticket.

For a chance to win a Platinum Ticket please send your name, your guest's name, email and address to the Deputy Town Clerk, at The Town Hall, 12 Market Place, Faversham, ME13 7AE - or via email to Adrienne.Begent@favershamtowncouncil.gov.uk by 30th April.

All names will be entered into a draw and 25 tickets (each admitting two people) will be drawn randomly. Don't hesitate to enter for a chance to attend this special event.

Public Spaces Update

Cllr Eddie Thomas

The Town Council's Public Spaces Working Group continues to work with partners to improve the public spaces around Faversham.

Benches

Most have now been refurbished, not only within the town centre but on Watling Street, the A2, The Brents, South Road and along the Westbrook working with the Friends of the Westbrook. More recently a bench has been installed on the London Road for passengers of the new X4 service to Faversham town centre and Canterbury.

Cycle Racks

We followed up on requests for cycle racks in the town with the most recent requests being for the Market Place and for some town centre secure cycle storage. New racks have gone in to the side of the Guildhall, and we successfully applied for a grant from Swale Borough council to trial secure cycle storage in Central and Institute Road car parks. These should be in place soon.

Planters

Working with the Climate and Biodiversity Group, four planters have been located, outside the railway station, on Forbes Road, Stone Street and The Market Place. The group also identified that the trees and raised beds in Queens Hall car park were in a poor state and gained funding support from SBC for much needed improvements. Planting is due to happen in the spring.

Dropped Kerbs

Following requests from wheel chair users extra dropped kerbs are due to be installed within the town centre and some of these are to provide better access to the recently added disabled bays in the Partridge Lane car park.

Water Bottle Refilling Stations

We lobbied Swale Borough Council for a water bottle refill station to be installed both in Central Car Park by the cycle racks and on the Recreation ground by the Outdoor Gym. This links to the Town Councils aim to reduce the use of single use plastic.

Faversham's Coat of Arms Signs

These four signs are currently undergoing refurbishment and should be back in place later this year. Faversham is the only town in the United Kingdom permitted to use the Royal Arms of England, unchanged, as its own Coat of Arms. These four heraldic signs are a welcome to all visitors to our historic town of Faversham.

LCWIP Update

Cllr Julian Saunders

Faversham's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) was signed off by Town Councillors in February.

The Plan includes over fifty proposals for making it easier for pedestrians to cross local streets and for slowing traffic so bike users can get around more safely. It has been put together using the feedback the public gave us through the community engagement website Commonplace, when the 20mph scheme launched.

Faversham is only the second town in Kent to have its own town level LCWIP and we are hoping that it will put us near the front of the queue when it comes to funding from central government, Kent County Council and Swale Borough Council.

The plan is designed to be updated regularly and during the next six months we will be asking the public for their views on how it can be improved as well as developing proposals for making it easier to walk and cycle into the town from neighbouring villages.

Holocaust Memorial Day

Cllr Antony Hook

Faversham Town Council marked Holocaust Memorial Day (27nd Jan) with an exhibition in the Town Hall that was open for three days.

The exhibition included 24 panels of information about the horror of the Holocaust as well as subsequent acts of genocide across the world. Video material brought the stories to life. We showed 30 minutes of footage which includes the powerful, personal recollections of survivors of the Holocaust and more recent atrocities. All of the words and pictures were supplied by the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, an international charity.

Among the information panel was the '10 stages of genocide' which set out the pattern of events, in examples across the world, that lead to genocide. As the Trust puts it, 'genocide never just happens'. It starts with division of 'them' and 'us', discrimination and dehumanisation. Persecution, extermination and denial come later. Many visitors commented on what a reminder this is to guard against intolerance or hatred that we encounter sometimes in our society even today.

Thank you to every who attended the exhibition, which received several hundred visitors. As well as Faversham residents, people came from Whitstable, Canterbury, Dartford, among other places to see it, helped by mention on the ITV local news.

A great many of us have a connection through our families to the Holocaust or the terrible events of the 1930s and 1940s. Local people who came to the exhibition took the opportunity to share with councillors their or their relatives' experiences of those dark days.

I must thank the Town Council's Apprentice Abi Rainbow-Williams who gave me essential help to create the exhibition and fellow Town Councillors who manned the exhibition over the three days. You can see the 30 minutes of footage of our exhibition online on our You Tube channel at the following link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2xi5mr3LycY>. For more information visit the HMD Trust's website www.hmd.org.uk.

Faversham Leading the Way with Living Bus Shelters

Cllr Chris Williams

Faversham Town Council have been working hard on improving biodiversity in Faversham and proactively working with other organisations and the community to find new projects to benefit both wildlife and people's lives.

The Climate and Biodiversity Working Group allocated funding to replace two bus shelters in the town centre with new ones to include a living roof. These shelters have been widely used in mainland Europe and is a beneficial way of increasing opportunities for biodiversity, help tackle poor air quality and improve the amenity value of our community.

The two locations, The Mall and Stone Street, are both on busy roads, where bus use is higher. There are plans to look at turning other bus shelters in the town into ones with living roofs in the future. The plants are drought tolerant species which have nectar rich flowers for pollinators. They are low maintenance requiring very little watering and weeding, throughout the year, making it really cost effective.

Green or living roofs on top of structures such as bus shelters, allow us to find ways to help nature and aid biodiversity to flourish in areas that would be difficult to otherwise do. It is increasingly clear that urban areas have a very important part of conservation of species, and Faversham has shown that we can not only can this be achieved but also, we can lead the way. Faversham Town Council have put the Climate and Biodiversity emergency as a priority since 2019 and continue to work to improve both our natural world but people's lives too.

Open Letter to Larissa Read, Chief Executive Officer, Swale Borough Council

Dear Larissa

TS Hazard is a building vital to the history of Faversham. Built in 1429 it has stood on the bank of Faversham Creek for nearly 600 years and been part of the commercial life of the Town ever since. Faversham Town Council asks that Swale Borough Council takes active responsibility for the serious and immediate "at risk" situation of the building. TS Hazard came into the ownership of Swale Borough Council in 1974, almost 50 years ago and was for many years in active use by the local Sea Cadets. In recent years they have been forced to leave entirely due to the seriously poor condition of the building.

Swale Borough Council, as the planning authority, has a clear responsibility for the condition of this 2* listed building as it has for all listed buildings at risk. More to the point it is directly responsible as owner for the building and its condition. As the Town Council understands the crucial and urgent

problem right now is the roof. This is badly damaged, leaking and in danger of collapse if a further storm occurs, or indeed with any bad weather. In the only slightly longer term the timber frame and walls are in poor order and the frequent flooding is certain to be damaging the foundations.

Faversham Town Council formally requests Swale Borough Council:

1. Immediately to have a thorough survey of TS Hazard conducted by a surveyor with expertise in timber framed ancient buildings to ascertain what work is required so that the building is no longer in any way at risk. Thereafter promptly to do all necessary works identified.
2. To consult meaningfully and quickly with local organisations in Faversham, including, but not restricted to the Town Council and the Faversham Society, with a clear objective of finding a secure and financially viable future for TS Hazard. It is clear that in the last 20 years there has been little or no maintenance carried out on the building.

This issue has gone on for too long. It must be solved and the responsibility clearly lies in the hands of Swale Borough Council. We therefore look forward to discussing your plans as a matter of urgency and reaching an agreed and speedy solution.

Yours sincerely
Louise Bareham
Town Clerk

Ukraine Appeal

More than a million people have fled their homes to escape the conflict in Ukraine. Families have been separated and lives have been lost.

One of the best ways that you can help is to donate funds to organisations that are providing aid on the ground. The disaster Emergency Committee charities and their local partners are in Ukraine and in neighbouring countries providing food, water, shelter and medical assistance.

You can donate here: <https://donation.dec.org.uk/ukraine-humanitarian-appeal>

60 Years of Twinning

Cllr Trevor Martin and Cllr Julian Saunders, members of the FTTA Committee

Over the years the twinned towns have enjoyed numerous get togethers and to mark the 60th Anniversary we are planning events in our respective towns. In particular, an exhibition about the history of the town twinning will take place in the Town Hall at 12 Market Place in the week beginning Monday 18 July. More publicity will be available nearer the time, but please put this event in your calendar.

If you have memories of being part of past Town Twinning events which you are happy to share these or if you can lend any souvenirs or photographs for the exhibition please contact Clarissa Hanna (Clarissa.hanna@hotmail.com) the Chair of the FTTA who is working on the development of the exhibition with a small group of residents with memories of the original town twinning ceremonies. Alternatively contact the Deputy Town Clerk - driennebegent@favershamtowncouncil.gov.uk.

The FTTA remains a thriving community association and welcomes new members who want to get involved in developing links between our two towns. In particular we are working hard to forge new relationships between local schools and businesses and their French counterparts. We also organise a range of events that allow residents to enjoy and learn more about French culture and society.

For more information about events or membership check out the FTTA Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/favershamtownwinning/> or email us on favershamtownwinning@gmail.com.

Faversham Town Council Schedule of Meetings

Monday 4th April	6pm	Planning Sub-Committee
Monday 4th April	7pm	Town Council Meeting
Thursday 7th April	7pm	20's Plenty Working Group
Monday 11th April	7pm	Climate & Biodiversity Working Group
Tuesday 19th April	6pm	Planning Sub-Committee
Tuesday 19th April	7pm	Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Monday 25th April	7.30pm	Policy & Resources Committee
Monday 2nd May	7.30pm	Community Committee
Monday 9th May	7pm	Mayor Making
Wednesday 11th May	7.30pm	Environment Committee
Monday 16th May	6pm	Planning Sub-Committee
Monday 16th May	7pm	Annual Council Meeting
Thursday 19th May	7.30pm	Active Travel Committee
Monday 23rd May	7pm	Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Monday 30th May	7.30pm	Policy & Resources Committee
Monday 6th June	7.30pm	Community Committee
Wednesday 8th June	7.30pm	Environment Committee
Monday 13th June	6pm	Planning Sub-Committee
Monday 13th June	7pm	Town Council Meeting
Monday 20th June	7.30pm	Policy & Resources Committee
Thursday 23rd June	7.30pm	Active Travel Committee
Monday 27th June	6pm	Planning Sub-Committee
Monday 27th June	7pm	Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Monday 4th July	7.30pm	Community Committee
Monday 11th July	6pm	Planning Sub-Committee
Monday 11th July	7pm	Town Council Meeting
Wednesday 13th July	7.30pm	Environment Committee
Monday 18th July	7pm	Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Monday 18th July	7.30pm	Policy & Resources
Thursday 21st July	7.30pm	Active Travel Committee
Monday 25th July	6pm	Planning Sub-Committee
Monday 8th August	6pm	Planning Sub-Committee
Monday 8th August	7pm	Town Council Meeting

Please check details of all meetings and how to attend virtually on the Town Council website at www.favershamtowncouncil.gov.uk

Members of the public are welcome to attend all meetings

Faversham Town Council Staff

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The entrance to Faversham Town Council offices is in Back Lane, please ring the call button to be admitted.

Town Council opening hours are Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm.

Your Town Councillors & their Contact Details

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