



Annual Report

2023-2024



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The Mayor of Faversham

Cllr Trevor Martin



Perhaps the biggest honour bestowed on Faversham Mayors is the title of Baron of the Cinque Port of Faversham and the invite to a coronation. I was privileged to be able to attend his Majesty's Coronation in May and to represent Faversham as a member of the Cinque Ports.

There were of course a number of special events in the Town over that weekend and I was grateful to be able

to support many of them. This occurred immediately after the elections for the Town Council and I welcome the new councillors that have joined over the year. Faversham has a number of treasures that currently are not able to be displayed and giving talks about them and the mayoralty to groups as diverse as Beavers and The Women's Institute have been very fulfilling on a personal level.

The success and support that the people of Faversham give to the regular events in the town from Transport Festival to Howl O Ween has this year been even greater than the last. It has been great to support as many as possible in the role of Mayor.

I was pleased to be at the opening of a number of new businesses and also the new ophthalmic centre in Faversham Health Centre and the opening of a new home for the Salvation Army are all proof that Faversham still attracts investment and though we mourn the closure of three Bank Branches as I write this all three premises appear to have attracted new tenants.

Active Travel Committee

The Committee started the Civic Year with some very positive news, the announcement that Kent County Council (KCC) had been successful with a bid to develop an East West Cross Town Walking Route in Faversham running from Lower Road through to the Recreation Ground. The Committee was active in supporting the development of the bid and since the announcement in May has worked hard to ensure that the final scheme delivers real benefits to local residents in slowing traffic and helping pedestrians.

The Chair and Vice Chair have been involved in a number of meetings aimed at finalising the details of the scheme and the Committee organised an exhibition which ran for three weeks in December publicising the project and giving residents the opportunity to comment on individual designs.

Since the exhibition public feedback has been shared with KCC and led to a number of changes in the final project design which will be implemented from April 2024.

The Committee also agreed to contribute £10,000 to the development of an outline proposal for a North South Walking Route running from Abbey School up to Davington and North Preston, which could be bid for in future Active Travel funding rounds. Work on this project which is being managed by Swale Borough Council, part funded by KCC and



delivered by WSL has gone ahead and a final report is expected early next civic year.

The Committee signed off the final Town to Parishes report in June. This report funded by Swale makes recommendations on Active Travel improvements which can provide better cycling and walking links between Faversham and neighbouring villages like Graveney, Painters Forstal and Teynham and again we want to use it to support future funding bids.

The other significant activity carried out was Cyclefest a week long event aimed at encouraging local people to cycle. There was the opportunity to trial e bikes, go on group rides, learn safe cycle techniques and find out about developments in cycling infrastructure, as well as a Community Cycling Day on Faversham Rec aimed at families.

On a final note it was sad to lose Councillor Eddie Thomas as Chair of the Committee due to ill health. He put a lot of hard work into getting the 20mph town wide scheme established and then made permanent and more recently has played a big part in encouraging KCC to bid for a significant Active Travel scheme in Faversham.

Cllr Julian Saunders (Vice Chair)



Community Committee

This year the Community Committee has taken on a new look and refocus after last year's elections and focused on many different aspects, from youth to tourism.

The Committee continues to oversee the Council's £30,000 commitment to youth funding, pushing for outreach to young people across Faversham, while also looking at new opportunities.

The Committee has set up a new working group called the Discover Faversham working group which brings together councillors and experts from the local area to promote Faversham both to tourists and also to more local communities.

Recommendations from the Crime Research Report, commissioned in 2021, have been actioned with more work to be done on this over the coming months.

The Committee has welcomed Claire Elliott, who has taken on the new role of Events Officer, and has already started to design and implement a new calendar of exciting events for the Council throughout Faversham and the year.



As Chair of the Community Committee I have met and worked with many community groups, including Faversham Healthy Futures, Faversham Community Networking Group, the Salvation Army, Keep Talking Services a mental health charity, among with many many others.

One of the biggest steps of the Committee this year was to incorporate the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group, activities from this incorporation's include running a Black History Month event including a talk from renowned author and actor Tayo Aluko. We are in the final stages of working with local resident and author Marika Sherwood to publish her book "A 2000 Year History of Black People in Faversham and East Kent".

On International Women's Day a stone was laid by The Guildhall in memory of 4 women, accused of witchcraft in 1645, three of whom where executed with the fate of the fourth unknown.

The community lottery continues to be a great successes helping over 55 local good causes and raising over £37,000 for them.

All in all this year has been a busy and successful year while setting up for excellent projects for the coming year.

Cllr Josh Rowlands (Chair)



Environment Committee

This last year the Environment Committee has been working on a variety of local projects to improve biodiversity and to empower the community to reduce all our impacts on climate change.

The thermal imaging scheme that has allowed people to scan their houses to see where heat and energy are leaking has gone from strength to strength. So much so that the town council has ordered a second camera and we continue to be busy with bookings throughout the year.

This year we have also developed our graffiti action plan and a number of policies designed to reduce the amount of graffiti in the town.

Swale Borough Council, who has a duty to deal with graffiti have cut back their role due to cost pressures and the Town council have been working to see how we can help bridge some of the gaps in service. This includes working with external companies to brighten up things like the green electrical boxes.

The committee has continued to work alongside community groups like Swale friends of the earth, plastic free Faversham and Faversham in bloom and other local authorities like Swale and Kent County council who we are working with to host a "Green open homes" event later this year.



We are currently working on a "street tree" policy with the tree and pond wardens and looking to work with bat protection charities to put in a number of bat boxes in key areas across the town. We have also secured a new community orchard at Perry Court and continue to support the allotment committees across the town.

There is so much more that I could write but I look forward to the work that the committee will be doing next year!

Cllr Hannah Perkin (Chair)

47 Thermal
Image Visits
2023-2024





Faversham Hopper Community Bus Service

At the beginning of 2023 Faversham Town Council carried out a Transport Needs Survey to find out how the cuts to local bus services were affecting residents. This information was used as the basis to bid for funding from Kent County Council's Community Transport Grants and set up a community bus service to help plug the gaps left by cuts in the outskirts of Faversham and the nearby villages.

The Town Council was successful in its bid for funding and has been working on developing two routes. This includes a Faversham Loop service on Wednesdays only and a route that serves Faversham and the surrounding villages of Newnham, Doddington, Lynsted, and



Teynham on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. Oare will be served Tuesday to Friday, due to its closer proximity to Faversham.

We have recruited a team of Volunteer Drivers with a diverse background, but all have experience of driving larger vehicles, and all will receive industry standard MiDAS training before taking to the road. We really couldn't provide this service without the help of our Volunteers, and we thank them.

Kent County Council have signed off our proposed routes and these are now with the Traffic Commissioner for agreement, and we hope to be running in early April. Please keep an eye on the FTC website at <https://favershamtowncouncil.gov.uk/active-travel/community-bus-service/> via our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/favershamcommunitybus>

Rob Gibbs, Community Transport and Project Officer



Highlights



Signing of the St Nicholas Allotment Agreement with allotment officers and holders
5th September 2023

Floating pontoons installed at Front Brents Jetty at the request of the Community Boat Build and Cinque Port Rowing Club **June 2023**



The Mayor of Faversham attended the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III
6th May 2023



2023-2024



The Faversham Charter's
Kids' Cabinet officially
opened **31st May**



Alison Reynolds BEM, Ted
Wilcox and Geoff Wade
were made Honorary
Freeman of Faversham in
May 2023

Heritage and Buildings Working Group



This year, the protection of the Elizabethan warehouse, known to many as T S Hazard, in Conduit Street has been a priority and we are in the process of negotiating with Swale Borough Council to have the area of Town Quay, the former pump house and the Warehouse transferred to our ownership.

The Town Council is grateful to the Queenborough Fishery Trust for their support, with promised grant funding to assist in protecting the area and bringing it back into use.

The Town Hall has now got new front doors, which aid the security of both the Visitor Information and Faversham Charters and Magna Carta Exhibition. The Guildhall has seen the interior redecorated and some changes to the position of artworks. In the next year it is hoped to complete works on the outside of the building.

The group has liaised with both the Faversham Society and other interested parties to seek a long term solution to protect and secure the listed engine and carriage sheds that sit within the railway junction.

Cllr Trevor Martin (Chair)



Creek Working Group



In the last year Front Brent's Jetty has been brought back into use. The Town Council agreed to Cinque Port Rowing installing floating pontoons to store three rowing skiffs.

Cinque Port Rowing formally opened them on 5 August in the presence of the Town's Mayor and members of the club are regularly rowing from the jetty.

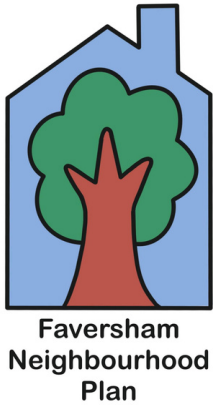
The Creek Working Group have continued to press all parties involved to try and get the right of navigation into the creek basin freed with a suitable opening bridge.

Members of the group handed in a petition on 13th November to the Department of Transport and members continue to meet with our MP, Kent County Council officers and representatives of The Creek Trust, Faversham Society and other Stakeholders to seek a resolution to this longstanding problem.

The lack of working sluices appears now to be affecting a wider area of the town as silt build ups in both the Creek and Stonebridge Pond appears to be effecting drainage systems causing increased frequency of flooding and flooding in more places. Which has been pointed out to all those involved.

Cllr Trevor Martin (Chair)





Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

This year the Town Council formally submitted its Neighbourhood Plan to Swale Borough Council as the planning authority.

The six week consultation took place from 4th September until 16th October and was open to anyone to comment on whether the plan meets the “basic conditions” before being sent to an inspector for examination. The basic conditions are that the plan:

- Must have appropriate regard to National Policy determined by the Government
- Must contribute to achieving sustainable development
- Must be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan of the local area (in our case the Swale Borough Council previous and emerging local plans)
- Must be compatible with the EU obligations
- Must be compatible with human rights requirements.
- Must not breach the requirements of chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

The Inspector sent some feedback to the Borough Council in December and members of the Town Council met with officers from the Borough and we are currently waiting for the Inspector to respond. This is one of the very last stages of the Neighbourhood Plan's construction before it is put to the people of Faversham in a referendum.

It is an exciting stage for the Neighbourhood Plan steering group and the resident volunteers that have worked hard to get the plan to the stage that it is, a community built plan to preserve the character of our special town whilst sustainably planning for it's future.

Cllr Hannah Perkin (Chair)

LCWIP Working Group

The Faversham Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) is a detailed listing of improvements in infrastructure which would help cyclists and walkers.

The Working Group meets on an occasional basis to advise the Active Travel Committee on updates to the LCWIP and associated Active Travel developments.

The majority of members are Kent County Council and Swale Borough Council Officers working on Active Travel related work or community representatives with expert knowledge on Active Travel. This year only one meeting was held with main items being the giving of feedback on adjustments to the LCWIP and the identification of priorities for the North South Cross Town Walking Route project.

Cllr Julian Saunders (Chair)



Faversham Charters and Magna Carta

The number of visitors coming to view the exhibition continues to steadily rise. We have welcomed many coach tours from European countries and other parts of the UK. Numerous people express their wonder at the quality of the charters in our collection. We have also had several return visitors, who have been so impressed they have brought family or friends along to view the exhibition as well.

Over the last year Faversham Charters has developed its provision for education. We have been welcoming children from key stage 2, 7-11 year olds, for half or whole day visits. Our wonderful volunteers have put together a programme to teach them about some of the aspects of medieval life in Faversham. The children have looked closely in the exhibition room to find answers about each artefact or document. They have learnt about illuminated letters, used a quill and ink and even made their own moot horn. For those who like to get their hands stuck in, they have been able to use clay, to make their own version of a wax seal, like those used on documents from the monarch. Lucky groups who are with us for the whole day, are able to dress in medieval clothing and go on a town talk, with one of our knowledgeable guides, to learn more about medieval Faversham. We hope to roll out activities for other age groups in the coming year, so keep checking our website for further details.

We are pleased to announce that Faversham Charters has just become an official member of Kent's Wheels of Time scheme. This scheme encourages children to visit the extensive collection of museums and heritage sites across Kent. Once there the children can complete various activities and earn themselves a badge, which when added to other badges can earn further rewards. Our team of volunteers have created a Kids Cabinet, which has activities for children to complete, costumes to dress up in and a Wheels of Time badge to earn. Bring along the children in your life to learn and have fun at Faversham Charters!

Fiona Palmer, Faversham Charters Officer

Grants Awarded 2023–2024

19

Abbey Physic Gardens	£5,750
Age UK	£250
Christmas Lights	£5,000
Creed Outdoor Learning	£1,000
Carnival Club	£3,000
Faversham Foodbank	£1,250
Hop Festival	£5,000
Faversham Pools	£1,872
Strikeforce	£2,500
Faversham Umbrella	£7,247
Food Friends	£200
Friends of St Mary's	£2,755
West Faversham Community Centre	£7,800

FAVERSHAM & DISTRICT
COMMUNITY
LOTTERY

Raised
£40,000



Budget 2024-2025

BUDGET SUMMARY 2024-2025

	Income	Expenditure
Precept and Other Income	669,241	
Civic	300	6,800
Staffing and Professional		372,400
Office and Administration		43,800
The Guildhall	7,200	32,250
Jetty and Moorings	5,800	5,500
Heritage, Buildings and Creek	6,000	9,880
Facilities Management		6,890
Grants		45,000
Community	12,000	47,500
Community Bus	8,700	5,000
Tourism & Visitor Development	1,000	1,500
Charter Exhibition	4,100	28,600
Events	5,500	15,000
Environment		7,250
Active Travel		11,200
Special Provision		21,500
12 Market Place	3,600	63,371
	723,441	723,441



BUDGET

900

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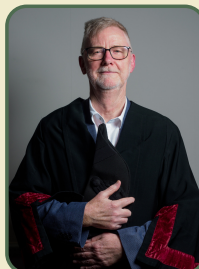
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