

# Strategic Plan 2024-2028



Version 0001/08/2024

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## CONTENTS

Foreword .....	4
Faversham History .....	5
The Council.....	6
Key Achievements to Date 2019-2024.....	7
Strategic Pillars 2024-2029 .....	8
Governance .....	9
Active Travel.....	10
Community .....	11
Environment .....	12
Heritage.....	13
Five Year Financial Forecast 2024/25-2028/2029.....	14
Action Planning .....	15
Residents’ Surveys .....	15
Appendix A: Residents’ Survey Template.....	20



## FOREWORD

As Mayor of Faversham, it is my privilege to introduce our Strategic Plan, a comprehensive roadmap designed to guide our community towards a vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive future. This plan represents the collective aspirations, reflecting a shared vision for a town that honours its rich heritage while embracing innovation and growth. This is a living document, which will be regularly reviewed.

Faversham is a town steeped in history, with a strong sense of community and a dynamic spirit. Our Strategic Plan builds on these strengths, outlining clear objectives and actionable strategies across key areas. Each section of this plan has been developed through extensive consultation and collaboration, ensuring that it is not only ambitious but also rooted in the real needs and desires of our community.

Community engagement lies at the heart of our efforts. We recognise that an engaged and informed community is essential for effective governance and vibrant civic life. This plan includes numerous initiatives to foster greater participation, transparency, and collaboration between the Council and our residents. Heritage preservation is another cornerstone of our strategic vision. By protecting our historic sites and celebrating our cultural heritage, we aim to enrich our community's sense of identity and pride, while also promoting cultural tourism and economic development.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who has contributed to the development of this Strategic Plan. Your insights, ideas, and dedication have been invaluable. As we move forward, I invite all residents of Faversham to join us in bringing this plan to life. Together, we can ensure that Faversham continues to be a wonderful place to live, work, and visit.

Cllr Josh Rowlands  
Mayor of Faversham  
July 2024



## FAVERSHAM HISTORY

Faversham is located 16 kilometres to the west of Canterbury, 27 kilometres east of Rochester and 77 kilometres south-east of London. London Road and Canterbury Road in the Parish are part of the A2 route, but the M2 motorway by-passes the built-up area of Faversham. Rail services link Faversham with London (St. Pancras, Cannon Street and Victoria), the Medway towns, Canterbury, Dover and Ramsgate. Local bus services connect to Maidstone, Sittingbourne, Ashford, Whitstable and Canterbury. The population of the Parish was 20,400 at the 2021 Census, within 8,800 households.

Faversham is a civil parish in the Borough of Swale in North Kent. It is situated at the head of Faversham Creek, south of the Swale, an inlet in the Thames Estuary that separates mainland Kent from the Isle of Sheppey, and north of Watling Street (now the route of the A2), the historic Anglo-Saxon and Roman route between London and Dover. There has been a settlement at Faversham since pre-Roman times. It was inhabited by the Saxons, and is mentioned in the Domesday book of 1086 as Favreshant.

Faversham developed as a market and port town due to its location on Faversham Creek. The town has an extensive Medieval core, with later Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian areas that extended the town. The rich architectural heritage of the town is protected by the large Faversham Conservation Area (first designated in 1971) which includes the town centre, the Creek, Davington and surrounding areas. There are two other Conservation Areas within the Parish, at Preston-next-Faversham and at Ospringe. In addition to the Conservation Areas, there are four Scheduled Monuments and around 350 Listed Buildings within the Parish, of which are three are Grade I and 23 are Grade II\*.

Faversham was the centre of the explosives industry in the UK during the 19th century, but this declined during the early-20th century following a major explosion in 1916. The remaining three gunpowder factories closed in 1934. Another major industry in the town since the 16th century has been brewing, and the Shepherd Neame brewery remains a major employer.

Faversham Town Centre has a wide range of retail and community facilities, including a cinema, theatre and museum. The Royal Cinema opened in 1936 and is a Grade II Listed Building, being one of only two mock-Tudor cinemas to survive in the UK. The Parish has a number of important open spaces, including the Faversham Recreation Ground and the Oare Country Park and nature reserve, partly on the site of a former gunpowder works. The Parish is close to the Kent Downs National Landscape.

## THE COUNCIL

Faversham is served by the three-tier local government structure of Kent. Faversham Town Council (FTC) is the local council and a successor authority to Faversham Borough Council, abolished in 1974 at the time of local government reorganisation. FTC consists of 14 members that are elected by residents everyone four years through the municipal election process. Faversham is made up of four wards – Abbey, Priory, St Ann’s and Watling.

Swale Borough Council (SBC) is the district authority, providing services to Sittingbourne, Faversham, the surrounding rural areas and the Isle of Sheppey. Kent County Council (KCC) is the county authority, operating services such maintenance of highways.

Following the 1974 local government reorganisation virtually all civic functions were moved from Faversham as an authority to SBC. However, the Localism Act of April 2012 strengthened the rights of local councils, as well as community groups, to operate services, own property and act as focal points for their communities. FTC has taken the opportunities offered by the localism agenda, together with the General Power of Competence, as they have arisen.



## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE 2019-2024

Delivered a town-wide 20mph speed limit.

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Declared a Climate and Biodiversity Emergency.

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Developed a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

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Set up the Faversham & District Community Lottery to increase funding for local groups.

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Helped the community to shape Faversham Neighbourhood Plan content and policies through Pre-Vision and Community Survey feedback and topic groups of local volunteers.

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Carried out a transport needs assessment, which led to a successful grant application to purchase a mini-bus and commence the Faversham Hopper Community Bus Service.

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Delivered a permanent exhibition of Faversham's 1300 Magna Carta and provided free educational visits to local schools.

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Worked with local community groups to form the Faversham Community Networking Group and provided funding for various initiatives.

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Committed to projects to enable the reduction of carbon emissions eg thermal imaging visits, free tree giveaway and Open Homes Faversham.

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Undertook a number of pledges to demonstrate our commitment to progressive development, such as Armed Forces Pledge, Disability Confident and Living Wage Employer.

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Partnered with KCC and SBC to obtain a £1m grant from Active Travel England to improve cross town walking route.

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Successfully campaigned against the proposed closure of the Faversham Household Waste Recycling Centre.

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Our strategic pillars are the foundational principles that guide FTC’s approach.

Together, these pillars underpin our mission to improve the quality of life for all residents and preserve Faversham’s unique character.

STRATEGIC PILLAR	PURPOSE	AREAS OF FOCUS
<b>Governance</b>	To be accountable and responsive	Policy; Finance; Budget Control; Resources; Community Grants; Strategic Planning; Community Engagement; Strategic Partnerships; Resilience; Statutory Planning Consultee; Neighbourhood Plan
<b>Active Travel</b>	To promote active travel and public transport	Walkability; Connectivity; Highways; LCWIP; 20mph; Community Transport; Cycling; Footpaths; Public Realm
<b>Community</b>	To encourage a safe, thriving and inclusive community	Youth; Community Lottery; Equality Diversity and Inclusion; Events; Tourism; Economic Viability; Crime Prevention; Community Safety; Health and Wellness; Voluntary Organisations
<b>Environment</b>	To support and enhance the natural environment	Climate Emergency; Allotments; Green Spaces; Biodiversity; Community Gardening; Rewilding; Litter and Graffiti; Decarbonisation
<b>Heritage</b>	To protect and develop Faversham’s heritage	Heritage; Buildings; Faversham Creek; Arts, Culture, Artefacts; Civic Pride



## GOVERNANCE

FTC is committed to upholding principles of transparent, accountable, and inclusive governance, ensuring that the interests and well-being of the local community are at the forefront of its decision-making processes. The Council operates with a clear framework of policies and procedures designed to promote effective administration, financial prudence, and responsive public service. Regular meetings, open to public attendance and participation, foster a culture of transparency and engagement, allowing residents to voice their concerns and contribute to the community's development. By prioritising ethical standards and continuous improvement, FTC strives to enhance the quality of life for all its residents, maintaining a proactive stance on local issues and opportunities for growth. FTC has signed the Civility and Respect Pledge.



Creek bridge campaign - at the Department for Transport



HWRC demonstration



HWRC demonstration

## ACTIVE TRAVEL

FTC is dedicated to promoting active travel as a cornerstone of its commitment to sustainability, health, and community well-being. By encouraging walking, cycling, and other forms of non-motorised transport, the Council aims to reduce traffic congestion, lower carbon emissions, and foster a more vibrant and connected community. Strategic investments in safe and accessible infrastructure, such as secure bike parking, are complemented by initiatives that raise awareness about the benefits of active travel, such as Active Travel Month. Collaborative efforts with local schools, businesses, and residents will further support a cultural shift towards healthier and more environmentally friendly modes of transportation. Through these measures, FTC aspires to create a greener, more liveable town that prioritises the mobility and safety of all its residents.

We will continue to work with KCC and SBC to ensure our Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) is relevant and works alongside the Faversham's Highways Improvement Plan (HIP).

Whilst works for the east to west walking route have commenced, we are committed to working on the north to south walking route in the expectation of securing further funding in the future.

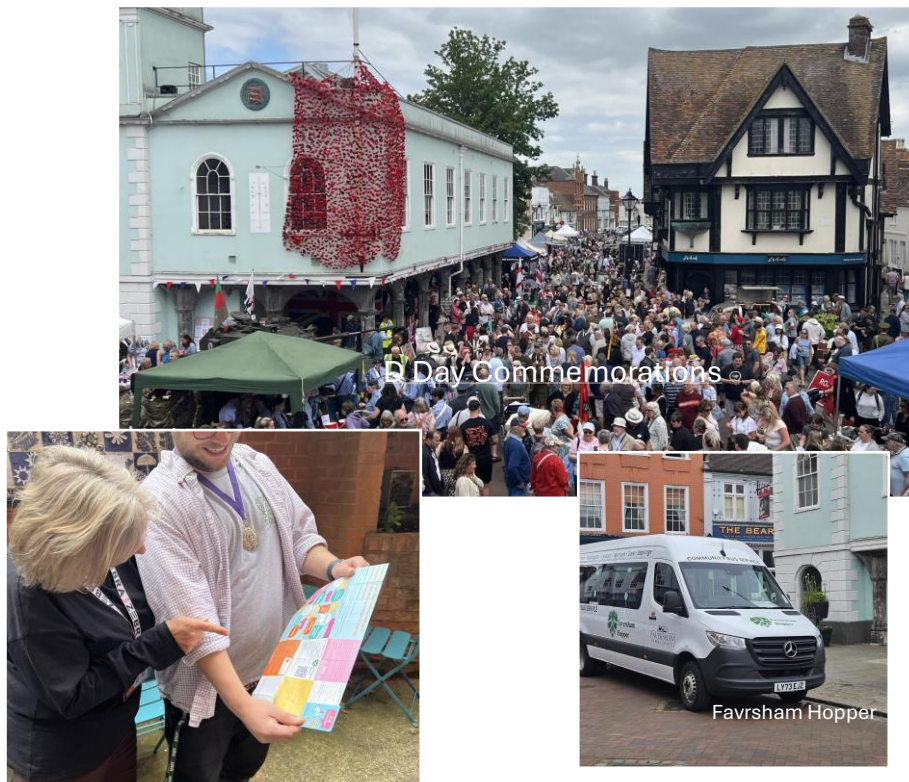
We pledge to make cycling easier by providing such things as secure cycle storage.



## COMMUNITY

FTC places a high priority on community engagement, recognising it as vital to fostering a strong, inclusive, and proactive local community. By actively seeking the input and participation of residents in decision-making processes, the Council ensures that diverse perspectives and needs are considered in the development of policies and initiatives. Regular public meetings, forums, campaigns and surveys provide platforms for open dialogue, allowing residents to voice their opinions and contribute to shaping the town's future. The Council also collaborates with local organisations, youth organisations, and businesses to support community projects and events that enhance social cohesion and civic pride. Through these efforts, FTC aims to build a transparent and responsive governance structure that empowers residents and strengthens the community as a whole.

Youth services remain a priority as they play a critical role in fostering the well-being, development, and empowerment of young people in the community. The Council is committed to providing annual funding to youth organisations to enable them to provide a range of activities and opportunities. Furthermore, we aim to involve young people in the decision-making processes and offering platforms for their voices to be heard, the Council nurtures future leaders and active citizens. In essence, robust youth services are a foundation of creating a vibrant, inclusive, and resilient community in Faversham.



## ENVIRONMENT

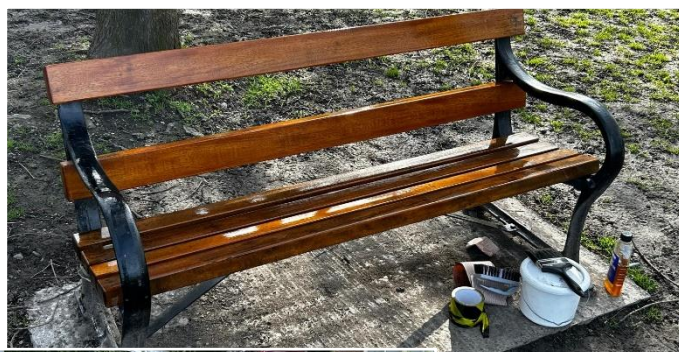
Faversham Town Council is deeply committed to protecting the environment, addressing climate change, and preserving biodiversity as integral components of its strategic vision for a sustainable future. The Council actively implements and supports initiatives that reduce carbon emissions, promote renewable energy, and enhance green spaces within the town. Efforts include advocating for sustainable development practices, conserving local wildlife habitats, and encouraging community participation in environmental projects. Educational campaigns and partnerships with environmental organisations further amplify the Council's mission to foster a culture of sustainability and resilience against climate impacts. By prioritising these environmental goals, Faversham Town Council aims to ensure a healthy, diverse, and thriving ecosystem for current and future generations.

We will continue to partner with other organisations to promote the reduction of carbon emissions with the town through a variety of projects.

We will lead on the reduction of litter and graffiti, including holding regular litter picks.

The Council has a number of objectives in relation to the acquirement of land at Perry Court including additional allotments, community orchard and community woodland.

We will increase the number of volunteer community gardeners, to enable us to continue to improve and enhance the number of planters and wild-gardening in Faversham.



Maintaining planters

2 minute litter picks

## HERITAGE

Faversham Town Council is dedicated to preserving and celebrating the town's rich heritage, recognising it as a vital link to the past and a foundation of community identity. The Council actively supports the conservation of historic buildings, landmarks, and cultural artefacts, ensuring they remain integral parts of Faversham's landscape. Through working with the Faversham Society, educational institutions, and heritage organisations, the Council promotes awareness and appreciation of the town's historical significance. Initiatives such as heritage trails, public lectures, and cultural events engage residents and visitors alike, fostering a deep connection to Faversham's storied past. By safeguarding its heritage, Faversham Town Council aims to enrich the community's understanding of its history while promoting cultural tourism and local pride.

The Council has a number of objectives in relation to the acquirement of Town Quay and the Old Town Warehouse, which will see the revitalisation of an unused building, bringing it into community use.



Old Town Warehouse



Witches Stone



Faversham Creek

## FIVE YEAR FINANCIAL FORECAST 2024/25-2028/2029

Faversham Town Council has prepared this Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for the five-year period from 2024/2025 – 2028/2029 with updates undertaken annually to ensure that it remains valid. Figures are based on current assumptions.

	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029
Precept	669,241	708,220	771,965	810,560	851,088
Other Income	54,200	65,256	70,678	73,961	77,409
General Reserves	36,120				
	759,561	773,476	842,643	884,521	928,497
Civic	6,800	7,004	7,635	8,016	8,417
Staffing & Professional	372,400	350,612	382,168	401,276	421,341
Office and Administration	43,800	41,025	44,716	46,952	49,299
The Guildhall	32,250	64,118	69,890	73,383	77,052
Front Brents Jetty and Mooring	5,500	5,665	6,176	6,485	6,810
Heritage, Buildings & Creek	36,000	41,200	44,908	47,153	49,510
Facilities Management	6,890	7,097	7,736	8,122	8,528
Grants	45,000	45,320	49,400	51,870	54,465
Community	47,500	48,925	53,328	55,995	58,794
Community Bus	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Tourism & Visitor Development	1,500	6,695	7,298	7,663	8,046
Charter Exhibition	28,600	28,943	31,548	33,126	34,782
Events	15,000	15,450	16,841	17,683	18,567
Environment	17,250	17,768	19,367	20,335	21,352
Active Travel	11,200	13,596	14,819	15,559	16,337
Special Provision	21,500	9,785	10,665	11,198	11,758
12 Market Place Premises	63,371	65,273	71,148	74,705	78,439
	759,561	773,476	842,643	884,521	928,497

Producing a balance budget is a priority for FTC. It enables the council to effectively plan and allocate funds to priority areas, ensuring the needs of residents are met responsibly.

## ACTION PLANNING

Faversham Town Council's annual action plans serve as a dynamic framework to translate the strategic goals outlined in our overarching Strategic Plan into concrete, measurable actions. Each year, the Council reviews and updates these action plans to ensure they remain responsive to emerging challenges and opportunities within the community. These plans detail specific projects, initiatives, and timelines, providing a clear roadmap for achieving our strategic objectives. By setting clear priorities and allocating resources effectively, the annual action plans enable the Council to monitor progress, adjust strategies as needed, and ensure accountability. This iterative process of planning, execution, and evaluation ensures that Faversham continues to grow and thrive in alignment with the long-term vision and needs of its residents.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Budget and Precept setting				Agreement of priorities – Annual Action Plan							Final/ Revised Strategic Plan
	Policy & Resources Committee draft Council's priorities						Strategic Plan development (including risk management)		Policy & Resources Committee draft spending plans		
	Committees feed into process							Committee Resources/Budget			Budget Workshop
		Public Consultation						Public Consultation			

## RESIDENTS' SURVEYS

Resident surveys are crucial for FTC as they provide a direct channel for understanding the needs, preferences, and concerns of the community. By systematically gathering feedback from residents, the Council can make informed decisions that truly reflect the interests of the people it serves. These surveys help identify priorities, measure satisfaction with existing services, and uncover areas for improvement, ensuring that policies and initiatives are aligned with public sentiment. Moreover, resident surveys foster a sense of inclusion and transparency, empowering citizens to actively participate in the governance process.

Our first Residents' Survey post-Covid is taking place over the Summer of 2024.

# ANNUAL ACTION PLAN 2024-2025

Ref	Description	Key Actions	Timescale	Budget	Resources	Lead Officer
ACTIVE TRAVEL						
1.1	East to west walking route	Supporting Kent County Council in the successful completion.	December 2024	No budget implication	KCC	LB
1.2	North to south design project	Supporting Swale Borough Council in the successful completion	December 2024	£10,000	Consultants WPS	LB
1.3	Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan	Revision of the LCWIP, including better linkage with the Highways Improvement Plan (HIP).	December 2024	£4,500	Consultant Berendt Consulting	LB
1.4	Active Travel Promotion	Through a number of planned events and exhibitions including Active Travel Month in June.	Ongoing	£700	Internal	LB
1.5	Faversham Hopper	Successful launch of the community bus scheme. Ensuring ongoing financial support.	Ongoing	£5,000	Internal	RG
1.6	Cycle Storage	Additional secure cycle storage, carrying out engagement to find preferred locations.	January 2025	£3,000	Internal	LB



COMMUNITY						
2.1	Community engagement	Update the community engagement plan. Host public events, particularly around future budget spending.	September 2024	No budget implication	Internal	LB
2.2	Events	Organise national events at local level and community events; ensure diversity of events and exhibitions held within council owned assets.	Ongoing	£10,000	Internal	CE
2.3	Physical and mental wellbeing	Continue to work with Faversham Community Networking Group and Faversham Healthy Futures to signpost residents to services.	Ongoing	£5,000	Internal	LB
2.4	Faversham and Community District Lottery	Continue to promote lottery, encouraging more local organisations to join.	Ongoing	£1,000	Lottery Management Company	RG
2.5	Youth	Develop a specification for the delivery of youth services, working with other youth organisations.	December 2024	£15,000	External contract	LB
ENVIRONMENT						
3.1	Climate emergency	Demonstrate environmental leadership in resilience and sustainability in addressing climate change.	Ongoing	£3,000	Internal	LB

3.2	Biodiversity	Lead and support initiatives that encourage biodiversity and rewilding	Ongoing	£2,000	Internal	LB
3.3	Green spaces	Preservation of green spaces	Ongoing	No budget implication	Internal	AB
3.4	Community gardening and allotments	Support community gardening groups, such as Faversham in Bloom	March 2025	£700	Town Ranger	SW
3.5	Litter and Graffiti	Continue to promote a litter and graffiti free town through regular litter picks and the graffiti action plan.	December 2024	£500	Town Ranger	SW
3.6	Pesticide Free Town	Gain pesticide free town status	January 2025	£500	Internal / PAN	SW
<b>HERITAGE, BUILDINGS AND CREEK</b>						
4.1	General maintenance of assets	Including existing buildings in town council ownership, regalia and artefacts			SW/MT	AB
4.2	The Guildhall	Commission a quinquennial report and consider a public works loan to carry out essential maintenance	December 2024	£1,000	SW	AB
4.3	T S Hazard	Facilitate the transfer of T S Hazard into Town Council ownership and carry out an assessment of repairs and initial works.	December 2024	£6,000	Consultants Internal	AB
4.4	Creek Bridge	Support KCC in its efforts to facilitate an opening bridge. Prepare for a possible	December 2024	£30,000	Internal	AB

		public works loan to cover the committed £175,000				
4.5	Sluicing	Consider a judicial review/legal advice on responsibility for sluicing	December 2024	No budget implication	Internal	AB
4.5	Events	Support heritage events such as Open Faversham and Faversham Charters and Magna Carta	Ongoing	No budget	CE/FP/MG	AB
POLICY AND RESOURCES						
5.1	Income	Develop a plan for generation of income and set a target	March 2025	No budget implication	Policy and Resources Committee	LB
5.2	Local Council Award Scheme	Re-apply for Quality Gold Status	September 2024	£500	Town Clerk	LB
5.3	Neighbourhood Plan	Successful at referendum	December 2024	£15,000	Urban Vision	AB
5.4	Grant Funding	Actively pursue opportunities for grants to support activities	Ongoing	No budget implication	AB/RG/FP	LB

## APPENDIX A: RESIDENTS' SURVEY TEMPLATE

Welcome to Faversham Town Council's Residents' Survey. We want to hear your views on living in Faversham; the work of the Town Council and your Councillors, and the services and facilities it provides.

Although the Town Council is not directly responsible for dealing with some of the areas covered in this survey, such as anti-social behaviour, we work closely with other agencies to highlight any issues and to help resolve areas of concern.

1. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with Faversham as a place to live?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

2. What 4 things do you like about living in Faversham?


3. What 4 things do you least like about living in Faversham?


4. What would you like to see improved in Faversham?

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5. How strongly do you feel you belong to the Faversham area?

- Very strongly

- Fairly strongly
- Not very strongly
- Not strongly at all

6. How often do you use local services and amenities in Faversham?

- Every day
- A few times a week
- About once a week
- A few times a month
- Once a month
- Less than once a month

Comment:

7. Are you aware of Faversham Town Council's role?

- I am confident I know what the Town Council does
- I am reasonably confident I know what the Town Council does
- I can name one or two things the Town Council does
- I do not know what the Town Council does

8. Does Faversham Town Council provide value for money?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Strongly disagree

9. How easy is it for you to contact a Faversham Town Councillor?

- Very easy
- Easy
- Neither difficult or easy
- Difficult
- Very difficult
- Have never contacted a Councillor

10. Have you heard of the Faversham & District Community Lottery, set up by Faversham Town Council in 2021?

- Yes and I am a current ticketholder
- Yes and I am a past ticketholder
- I have heard of it, but not participated
- Never heard of it

11. Did you know that Faversham Town Council produces a quarterly newsletter, delivered to every household in Faversham by Royal Mail?

- Yes and I read every edition
- Yes but I never receive it
- I don't receive it at my address but I access an online version
- I don't receive it at my address but pick up a paper version from elsewhere
- I have never seen it

12. How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in Faversham after dark?

- Very safe
- Somewhat safe
- Neither safe nor unsafe
- Somewhat unsafe
- Very unsafe

13. Thinking specifically about the environment, what actions would you like to see Faversham Town Council taking to make a difference to the local area?\*

14. Thinking specifically about youth services, what actions would you like to see Faversham Town Council taking to make a difference to young people?\*

15. Are there any other comments that you would like Faversham Town Council to be aware of?\*

16. What Ward do you live in?

Abbey

St Ann's

Priory

Watling

17. What age group do you fit in?

Under 18

45-54

18-24

55-64

25-34

65-74

35-44

75+

18. What gender do you identify as?

Male

My gender is not listed

Female

Non-binary

Prefer not to say



Town Hall, 12 Market Place, Faversham, Kent, ME13 7AE

01795 503296

[www.favershamtowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.favershamtowncouncil.gov.uk)

@favershamtc