

Highlights in this issue:

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- Skate Park Update
- Faversham's Bats and Bees
- Volunteer Gardening
- Climate FRESK



Faversham's New Mayor

Clr Claire Martin

"I don't think anyone sets out to be Mayor; I think it's just something that as a councillor, you grow into. I was first elected for Priory Ward in 2015 and was inspired by the late Mike Henderson, Brenda Chester and Hilary Whelan. It was their examples which motivated me to stand and do what I could for Faversham.

I have lived here my whole life; I love this town. For me there is no better place. I was schooled in the town and have raised my 4 children here as well as working locally.

Recently my family have been doing our family tree. We can trace it back in

Faversham to the 1600s and were surprised to discover that we are direct descendants of Samuel Shepherd of Shepherd Neame! I am his 6th great granddaughter. He served as mayor 3 times, as did 2 of his grandsons Samuel and James, who also served 3 times each but have no fear, once will be enough for me.



Clr Claire Martin, Mayor of Faversham

But my family is not unique, looking at past census's and wandering around graveyards, you can see the family names of many whose descendants still call this town home, because Faversham is a special place to settle and I think we must be reminded of how special and beautiful Faversham is.

However, we cannot ignore that the town is going through its biggest change since the Railway was built. Our young people are being pushed out, finding it challenging to buy or rent in the town. We must insist that if we take these new developments, as the government want us to, then the developers must provide the maximum of social and affordable housing. We can't just be a town for newcomers, otherwise the things that make Faversham special will be lost.

I am not going to make any grand gestures, but I will say this: I will do the very best I can for this town and for everyone who lives here.

Over the next few years we have to complete work on the Guildhall, begin the restoration and re-purposing of the listed town warehouse, TS Hazard, cope with local government reorganisation, continue to fight for an opening creek bridge and address planning applications at Abbey Fields and Ham Marshes.

My vision for the year is about the fabric of Faversham:

- **Our Heritage:** we must ensure our historic buildings are preserved for future generations.
- **Our Environment:** we must protect our unique countryside, home to some of the countries rarest species of flora and fauna.
- **Our Society:** we must not ignore the needs of those so often left behind many of whom are the natives of Faversham. Inclusion and equity are for all, not just those with money and influence.
- **Our Economy:** supporting and promoting independent shops, brewers, craftspeople and our wonderful markets.

And most importantly:

- **Our Community:** Faversham is not just a collection of beautiful buildings; it is a community that looks out for its own. You are the heartbeat of this town. We shall likely need to find people with time, energy and commitment to stand for election in 2027 – being a town councillor is a vocation, one that should not be undertaken lightly.

I step into this role with humility, a touch of nerves and lots of excitement, so let's make this a year where we celebrate what makes Faversham unique whilst building a future that is inclusive, vibrant and above everything else, kind.

To Sarah our new town clerk welcome and I look forward to getting to know you and building a strong working relationship."



*Cllr Claire Martin, Mayor of Faversham
and Deputy Mayor of Faversham,
Cllr Ben Martin*

Armed Forces Covenant

We welcome Faversham businesses to join us in signing the Covenant.

By pledging and advocating our support to both the defence and armed forces community, Faversham Town Council is very proud to announce that we have received the Employer Recognition Scheme Silver Award!



EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME

SILVER AWARD
Proudly supporting those who serve.

Adopt a Planter or Flower Bed Near You

Stacey Woolf, Facilities Manager, Faversham Town Council

Have you ever walked past a neglected flower bed or empty planter and imagined how beautiful it could be? Now's your chance to make a difference right on your doorstep.

Adopting a local planter or flower bed is a simple, rewarding way to brighten your neighbourhood. Whether you plant colourful flowers, fragrant herbs, or pollinator-friendly plants, your efforts can transform small public spaces into vibrant pockets of greenery for everyone to enjoy.

You don't need to be an expert gardener — just a bit of time, creativity, and care. It's also a great way to meet neighbours, support local wildlife, and take pride in your community.

If you're interested in adopting a planter or a Flower Bed near you, get in touch to find out how you can get started. Let's work together to make our streets bloom!



Hello Faversham

Sarah Muteham, Town Clerk, Faversham Town Council

I'm Sarah Muteham and am delighted to be joining Faversham Town Council as your new Town Clerk.

I follow in the footsteps of Louise, who as the previous Town Clerk, supported Faversham for over 10 years and to which I am very grateful for all the work she has done. Having worked as the Parish Clerk in Boughton-under-Blean for the past 16 years, I'm excited to bring my experience, energy, and commitment to a town with such a rich heritage and strong sense of community.

My years in Boughton have taught me the value of listening closely, working collaboratively, and helping local people create an environment they can be proud of. I see Faversham as a town with ambition and pride and am looking forward to working with the team of council officers to support our councillors, residents and community groups.

Over the coming months, I hope to meet many of you – whether at council meetings, community events, or simply around town. I'm thrilled to begin this new chapter in my career and proud to be part of Faversham's future.



Our Nocturnal Neighbours

Cllr Laura Coniam

Photos courtesy of Liz Vinson

Here in Faversham we are blessed with a tremendous variety of wonderful flora and fauna, but not all of it is always noticed.

When enjoying a warm summer evening, we don't always notice one of our most common mammal species busily hunting above our heads, but we are lucky enough share our lovely town with four species of bat, and others can be found nearby.

Bats are a sadly misunderstood creature, and there are lots of myths surrounding their nature. For example, have you ever worried that if you get too close to a bat that it will fly into your hair? Or maybe you've ever wondered whether bats really do drink blood?

Or perhaps you want to know whether bats

are just mice with wings? If you've ever wanted to learn more about these fascinating little creatures, then Faversham Town Council have just the activity for you this summer!



Faversham residents out bat spotting



Bat spotting at St Mary of Charity Church

Along with a team of enthusiastic bat lovers, I recently attended some training provided by Liz Vinson from the Kent Bat Group for Faversham Town Council all about UK bats and how to identify them. We would now love to spread the word about these beautiful and misunderstood creatures to you!

Our team will be providing a series of bat walks around the town over the coming summer months, during which we'll teach you how to use a special bat detector which measures their ultrasonic calls and helps to identify the

different species, dispel common bat myths, and learn more about the habits of the species we find. Will you find one of the three pipistrelles - the common, the soprano, or the Nathusius's on a walk near St Mary of Charity? Or perhaps spot the amazing

Daubenton's bat catching water insects on Stonebridge Pond? Whatever species you find, it's sure to be a fun and informative evening!

The bat walks will be free, no previous knowledge on bats is necessary, and children are welcome (although please note that they will be taking place in the late evening). Please keep an eye out on the Faversham Town Council social media platforms and our notice boards for more information on times and locations.

Happy bat spotting!



The Soprano Pipistrelle bat

Award Winning Faversham Hopper

Cllr Charles Gibson

Mayor of Swale's Civic Award

Our fantastic team of volunteer drivers have racked up a second award with a presentation at Swale House in Sittingbourne by the Swale Mayor, Cllr Karen Watson of a Mayor's Civic Award. Two of our longest serving volunteers, Graham and Stephen, attended the presentation ceremony on 11th May 2026, joined by our Community Bus Officer, Claire, who was also one of our original volunteers. The service wouldn't be able to operate without our volunteers and they really are heroes.



The Growing Fleet

The Hopper has received an unexpected boost recently with the donation of a spare minibus from Kent County Council made available to Faversham Town Council. This minibus will be liveried in the same way as the existing vehicle and give us greater flexibility and resilience to deliver our much-valued service during periods when the current bus has to be off the road. It also gives the

Town Council the opportunity to explore future options to increase the public availability of the Hopper, look out for more info in future editions and the Town Council social media.

Listening to our Passengers

In recent passenger surveys and consultation with parishes served it has been queried whether we could run a Saturday service on the FH2 route which serves Newnham, Doddington, Lynsted, Teynham, Oare, and Faversham Town. We are currently undergoing a recruitment campaign to seek more volunteers for a Saturday service. It is important that we only start running on Saturdays when we have enough volunteers to cover thus ensuring we can provide our usual reliable standard of service.

Timetables

We've recently updated our timetable and produced some new timetable leaflets – these can be obtained on the bus, at the Visitor Information Centre, the library or various community venues around Faversham and the villages or scan the QR code to download.



Once again, a huge thank you to all the volunteers who make the Faversham Hopper run, you are truly the backbone of this great scheme and to our passengers who support the service. Faversham's Hopper Bus is continuing to go from strength to strength so please do hop on and give it a try. If you haven't already, why not catch the Hopper into town or out to one of the local village pubs for lunch?

Faversham Needs a New Skate Park

Cllr Hannah Perkin

Tucked away in an overgrown and neglected space near the back of Faversham Recreation Ground sits the town's skatepark.

Its rusting metal ramps stand on a cracked and uneven tarmac surface, while the outdated layout offers limited use for skateboarders, BMX riders, scooter users and inline skaters alike.

Faversham deserves better. A modern concrete skatepark would provide a safer, smoother and more durable space that encourages participation and leaves a lasting legacy for the town.

Friends of Faversham Skatepark aims to make that happen. Inspired by successful projects such as the Westgate-on-Sea skatepark refurbishment, local skaters and enthusiasts have launched a petition and enlisted the support of local councillors. Engagement activities are planned throughout the summer to ensure residents can help shape a facility that is both usable from day one and built to last. A Change.org petition has already attracted nearly 300 signatures.

Skateboarding has grown far beyond its old image as a niche hobby. It is now a recognised sport, an inclusive social activity and a valuable outlet for physical and mental wellbeing. Investing in a modern skatepark would create a lasting community asset for people of all ages.

A new skatepark would encourage young people to spend more time outdoors and away from screens while building confidence, resilience and determination. It also supports mental wellbeing, providing a healthy outlet for stress and anxiety and fostering social connection.

Modern skateparks are designed to be inclusive, catering for complete beginners as well as experienced riders. Across the UK, towns that have invested in high-quality facilities have seen greater participation from families, girls and young women, adaptive skateboarders and a wider range of users. Faversham deserves a facility that reflects these standards.

There are economic and social benefits too. A well-designed skatepark can attract visitors from surrounding areas, increasing footfall for local businesses. It gives young people a positive place to spend time and helps foster pride in the town's public spaces.

Faversham has a passionate and growing skate community. What it lacks is a skatepark that matches the town's potential. Replacing the ageing metal ramps with a modern concrete facility would be an investment in health, inclusion and community for years to come.



If you would like to see Faversham Rec Skatepark transformed into a creative, usable space that the town can be proud of, then please use the QR code to sign and share the petition.

Faversham Healthy Futures - Update



Gill Wagstaff and Laurie McMahon, Joint Project Leads - Faversham Healthy Futures

First of all, we would like to thank Faversham Town Council for nominating Faversham Healthy Futures to receive a Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) community award.

The High Sheriff of Kent, Jonathan Neame, hosted the event at Shepherd Neame Brewery and presented the awards. It was a privilege to be amongst so many fantastic people from the county of Kent.

Regarding the Faversham Healthy Futures project, we are making progress. We have been talking with Faversham Town Council with the aim of forming Faversham Citizens Health Assembly (FCHA). A working party has been formed and one councillor from each of the Faversham wards has agreed to work with us. We have the continued support of the Centre for Health Service Studies at Kent University who have experience with health assemblies.

Recently we had a very encouraging meeting with a representative from East Kent Health & Care Partnership and have meetings scheduled with members of Kent Community Health Foundation Trust (KCHFT) and the Integrated Care Board (ICB) who are collectively responsible for developing and implementing the neighbourhood health strategy as defined in the NHS 10 Year Plan. We are also meeting the Managing Partner of Faversham Medical Group.

Our continuing aim is to encourage more and regular engagement between the local NHS providers and the people of Faversham and the communities in the surrounding villages.

The final report on our engagement event we held in October 2025 can be found on our web site hosted by Faversham Town Council. The link is <https://favershamtowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Faversham-Healthy-Futures.-Final-Report.-The-NHS-10-Year-Plan-What-Faversham-Should-Expect.-.pdf>

Hopefully, by the time the September issue of the Faversham Town Council Newsletter is published we will be able to give more details about the Faversham Citizens Health Assembly.

Bees' Needs Week: Small Actions, Big Buzz

Rob Gibbs, Faversham Town Council

Bees' Needs Week runs from 13th to the 19th of July and is a great reminder that even small changes in our gardens, balconies, parks, and green spaces can make a real difference to pollinators.

The Town Council will be holding an exhibition at the Town Hall/Visitor Information Centre in conjunction with Simon Springate from Kent's Plan Bee. This will be packed full of information on the types of bees found in Faversham, how important the area is for some rare species and what we can all do to encourage bees to thrive.

Bees and other pollinating insects play a huge role in our environment. They help pollinate many of the plants we rely on for food, as well as flowers and wild plants that support biodiversity. But pollinators are facing increasing challenges from habitat loss, pesticides, and climate change.

The good news? There are lots of easy ways we can help. Here are a few simple ideas to support bees this Bees' Needs Week:

- Plant pollinator-friendly flowers that bloom across different seasons
- Leave a patch of grass or wildflowers to grow naturally
- Avoid using pesticides where possible
- Add a shallow dish of water with stones for thirsty insects
- Let flowering herbs like lavender, mint, and chives bloom
- Support local honey producers and conservation projects

You don't need a huge garden to get involved — window boxes, pots, and community spaces can all become valuable bee-friendly habitats.

Bees' Needs Week is also a chance to slow down and notice the wildlife around us. Watching bees busily moving from flower to flower is a simple reminder of how connected nature really is.

So, whether you plant a few flowers, share some bee facts, record what you see or simply let part of your garden grow a little wilder this summer, every action helps keep our pollinators buzzing.

For more ideas, download the Community Pollinator Toolkit from Kent's Plan Bee:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/environment-waste-and-planning/nature-and-biodiversity/pollinators/kents-plan-bee-pollinator-action-plan>



Types of Bees in Faversham

Drawings @Hannah Simmons
Photos @ Rosie Bleet/KPB

Honeybees



Bumblebees



Solitary Bees



Faversham Climate Action Weekend

Stacey Woolf, Facilities Manager, Faversham Town Council

Faversham's local community and environmental groups came together on 24th and 25th April to take part in FTC's Climate Action Weekend.

Sam Baker of Business Declares delivered a presentation at Faversham Assembly Rooms on 24th April. The presentation, "Time for Radical Change" by Sam Baker, argued that society faces an accelerating "polycrisis" driven by climate change, biodiversity loss, and inequality. It advised that the dominant global focus on continuous economic growth is a root cause of these interconnected crises, contributing to environmental degradation, social instability, and unsustainable use of fossil fuels.

The presentation argued that governments, corporations, and citizens are structurally incentivized to prioritise expansion over wellbeing and ecological stability. It highlighted evidence including rising emissions, worsening biodiversity decline, increasing inequality, and climate-related health and economic impacts.

As an alternative, the presentation advocated for a transition toward "private sufficiency, public abundance, and planetary stability." Proposed actions include scaling renewable energy, restoring ecosystems, reducing material and energy consumption, shifting toward plant-rich diets, redesigning economic incentives, and prioritising public goods and social wellbeing over profit maximisation. It also called for cultural and systemic change, emphasising fairness, resilience, care, and democratic control over essential systems.

Cllr Hannah Perkin stated: "The launch presentation was a scary wake up call about the damage we continue to do to our planet but also a message of hope for the future. It's not too late to turn the ship around if we make challenging but necessary changes. This will need systemic Government level change but also for all of us as residents of our planet to take on in our own lives, recycling more, cutting down on meat and dairy, buying less and repairing things where necessary. It's up to all of us."

Climate Fresk at Faversham Assembly Rooms



On 25th April, Sam Baker facilitated a Climate Fresk at Faversham Assembly Rooms.

A Climate Fresk is an interactive, science-based workshop designed to help people understand the causes, mechanisms, and consequences of climate change. Using a set of collaborative cards based on reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, participants split into groups to work together to map the relationships between human activities, greenhouse gas emissions, environmental impacts, and social consequences.

The workshop encouraged systems thinking and collective discussion, making complex climate science more accessible and engaging. Beyond education, a Climate Fresk is intended to inspire reflection, dialogue, and action by helping participants connect climate issues to economic systems, biodiversity, health, and everyday decision-making.

Participants made personal pledges to help contribute to the climate by such means as eating less meat and fish, and less use of personal cars.

Cllr Laura Coniam stated: "The climate fresk was an intense but very necessary three hours of training that showed us just how complicated and far-reaching the effects of the climate crisis are. If nothing is done then the consequences for all of us will be utterly devastating, and it would have been easy to leave feeling hopeless and defeated. However, the fresk did show clear solutions to this issue and it is now our responsibility to push for the changes necessary at every level from the personal to the political. It is not too late to mitigate some of the effects of climate breakdown, but we must start now."

Anyone interested in becoming a Clime Fresk Facilitator can find out more by visiting:

<https://climatefresk.org/world/become-facilitator/>



	Start Time	July	August	September
Full Council				
Town Council (2 nd Mon)	7pm	13	10	14
Planning Committee (2 nd and 4 th Mon)	6pm	13 27	10	14 28
Committees				
Active Travel Committee (1 st Wed)	7.30pm	1		2
Community Committee (3 rd Mon)	7.30pm	20		15
Environment Committee (2 nd Wed)	7.30pm	8		9
Heritage, Buildings and Creek Committee (4 th Mon)	7.30pm	27		28
Policy & Resources Committee (1 st Mon)	7.30pm	6		7

ABBEY WARD

Cllr Josh Rowlands
Cllr Laura Coniam
Cllr Charles Gibson*
Cllr Hannah Perkin*

PRIORY WARD

Cllr Alex Eyre*
Cllr Peter Cook

ST ANN'S WARD

Cllr Rob Crayford
Cllr Kieran Golding*
Cllr Robert Newman
Cllr Julian Saunders

WATLING WARD

Cllr Becky Jones
Cllr Ben Martin* (Deputy Mayor)
Cllr Claire Martin* (Mayor of Faversham)
Cllr Trevor Martin

* Swale Borough Council Member

Cllr Carole Jackson*
SBC Member only, for St Ann's Ward
carolejackson@swale.gov.uk

Cllr Antony Hook
KCC Member for Faversham
Antony.hook@kent.gov.uk

Helen Whately MP for Faversham and Mid Kent
helen.whately.mp@parliament.uk

All Town Councillors can be contacted through the office on 01795 503286 or our website has details of their email addresses
www.favershamtowncouncil.gov.uk

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Faversham Town Council

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Public Consultation Works to the Guildhall

Previously we have sought your opinion on taking out a Public Works Loan for £200,000 to carry out works to our beloved Guildhall.

We now find that we need to borrow £250,000 to cover all the required costs, to ensure the Guildhall is adequately maintained for at least the next 15 years, for the future benefit of our residents.

Should you wish to make any comments regarding the town council taking out a loan for £250,000 please address these to Adrienne Begent, Deputy Town Clerk at adrienne.begent@faershamtowncouncil.gov.uk or complete the slip below and return to 12 Market Place. Full details can be found at www.favershamtowncouncil.gov.uk/guildhall-refurbishment-works/

Do you support Faversham Town Council applying for Public Works Loan of £250,000 to carry out the essential repairs to the Guildhall?

Yes, I support the proposal

No, I do not support the proposal

Comment: