



ANNUAL REPORT

2008/09



FOLKESTONE TOWN COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 1 APRIL 2008 – 31 MARCH 2009

STRIVING FOR CONTINUING IMPROVEMENTS

May 2009 and the close of the civic and municipal year 2008/09 marks the end of my two terms in office as Town Mayor.

Throughout 2008/09 the Town Council has endeavoured to build upon the improvements started last year as part of our commitment to help improve the environment.

We have continued with our successful tree planting campaign in the Town's public parks and gardens. Over the past five years we have restocked areas with some 300 decorative and specimen trees to the point where we can now switch our attentions to replacing highway trees throughout the Town.

Similarly, our replacement programme for benches in key areas has continued. The Town has also benefitted with the planting of colourful bedding flowers and shrubs through the Town, in the town centre planters and our own new blue and gold planters throughout the Town.

Our programme of refurbishment of litter bins and road bollards continues apace, in partnership with both Kent County and Shepway District Council, painting in the Town's blue and gold.

In addition, a number of the proposed improvements to signage within the Town is beginning to bear fruit with the erection of the large "Welcome to Folkestone" signs at each of the main arterial routes.

We have continued to support a very good programme giving much needed financial assistance to some 35 worthy local organisations and events totaling £33,400.

As Town Mayor I have also been very busy on the Civic engagement side with over 300 events this year.

I have also raised money for Age Concern Folkestone, The Girl Guides Association, The Scout Association, Folkestone Carnival Association, Air Cadets, Marine Cadets, Army Cadets, Sea Cadets, Folkestone Youth Theatre and St Martins Community Centre and the Gurkha Statue Fund. I have also promoted Folkestone at every available opportunity and have met with representatives of the Nepalese Community.

On a personal note, it is always an honour to be Mayor and I have enjoyed meeting many talented individuals in Folkestone and beyond.

Again, I would pay tribute to all those giving a warm welcome whenever I have carried out my civic visits.

Throughout the whole year I have been extremely grateful for the continuing support from our small officer team who continue to work hard in these difficult times of constraint and resource reductions in public services.



Picture courtesy of Vic Seymour

Councillor Peter Gane
Town Mayor of Folkestone 2007-2009

FINANCIAL/MONEY MATTERS
2008/09

Income and Expenditure Account
for the Period ended 31 March 2009

INCOME	2008/09 £	2007/08 £
Precept on District Council	490,500	490,545
Bank and Investment Interest	16,934	25,419
Allotments	2,683	2,493
Other	201	864
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	510,318	519,321
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EXPENDITURE		
Employees/Administration	220,005	214,596
Democratic Costs	1,097	18,658
Civic and Ceremonial	23,410	17,509
Premises	23,150	20,318
Services	156,536	122,702
Fees	8,069	4,410
	-----	-----
	432,267	398,193
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GENERAL FUND		
Balance as at 1 April	53,260	37,504
Add: Total Income	510,318	519,321
Deduct: Total Expenditure	432,267	398,193
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	131,311	158,632
Transfer (to)/from Reserves:		
New Services Reserve	(£15,824)	
Property Reserve	(£18,580)	
Prov for Signs & Notice Boards	(£1,267)	
Ward Grants Reserve	(£10,024)	
Town Grants Reserve	(£1,239)	
FTC Elections Reserve	(£8,500)	
Armed Forces' Day Reserve	(£2,617)	(105,372)
	(58,051)	
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General Reserve Balance at 31 March	73,260	53,260
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Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2009

Fixed Assets	2008 / 09	2007 / 08
	£	£
Freehold Land and Buildings	0	0
Vehicles and Equipment	44,220	33,500
Community Assets	93,232	93,232
	137,452	126,732
Current Assets		
Sundry Debtors	0	5,864
HM Revenue & Customs - VAT	3,511	4,898
Prepayments	0	2,500
Current Bank Account	46,184	(2,816)
Gratuities Bank Account	9,285	6,385
Petty Cash	500	500
Short Term Investments	450,000	410,000
	509,480	427,331
Current Liabilities		
Sundry Creditors	0	0
Accruals	54,331	9,069
	54,331	9,069
Net Current Assets	455,149	418,262
Total Assets Less Current Liabilities	592,601	544,994
Represented by:		
Fixed Asset Restatement Account	137,452	126,732
Gratuities Fund	9,285	6,385
Capital Receipts Reserve	12,000	12,000
Earmarked Reserves:-		
New Services Reserve	127,203	111,379
Property Reserve	154,845	136,265
Twinning Reserve	2,150	4,150
Folkestone Museum Reserve	15,000	15,000
Ward Grants Reserve	22,978	12,954
Town Grants Reserve	1,239	0
Southern Way Reserve	0	9,466
FTC Elections Reserve	8,500	0
Armed Forces' Day Reserve	2,617	0
Provisions:-		
Provision for Signs & Notice Boards	8,957	10,288
Provision for Increased Contingency	17,115	47,115
General Reserve	73,260	53,260
	592,601	544,994

PRECEPT 2008/09

THE 2008/09 TOWN COUNCIL TAX								
Household Band	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£ per annum	21.44	25.02	28.59	32.16	39.30	46.46	53.60	64.32
Pence per week	41.2	48.1	55.0	61.8	75.6	89.3	103.1	123.7

FUTURE EVENTS AND NOTES FOR YOUR DIARY

August

Sat 8th – Donkey Derby

Sat 15th – V J Day

September

Tues 15th - Battle of Britain Wreath Laying

Sun 13th - Battle of Britain Sunday Service

October

Sun 18th - Trafalgar Day

November

Sun 1st - Dedication of Garden of Remembrance

Sun 8th - Remembrance Sunday

Weds 11th - Machine Gun Corp Memorial

January

Weds 27th - Holocaust Day



THE TOWN COUNCIL'S MISSION

THE TOWN COUNCIL'S MISSION.....

The theme for this review and our mission for the future is:

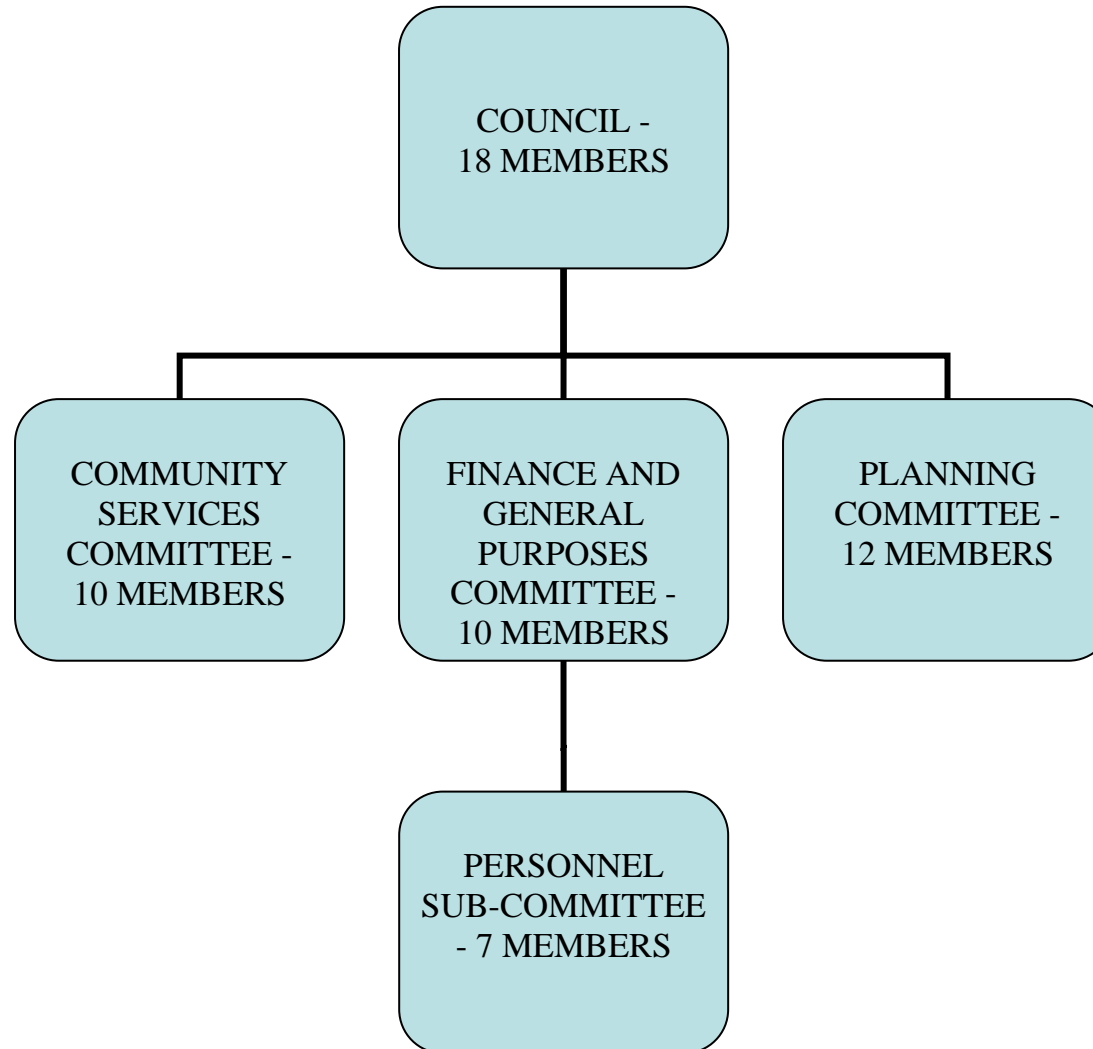
“To revitalise our town of Folkestone, restore civic pride and regenerate a community spirit.”

We aim to do this by:

- *Improving the appearance and quality of the environment in which we live*
- *Encouraging a greater participation in the governance of our town by all sectors of society*
- *Working in partnership with Shepway District Council, Kent County Council and other organisations to improve the public services in the town*
- *Working in partnership with the business and leisure communities to improve the experience of our visitors and thereby encourage the growth of tourism*
- *Supporting the work of community groups and voluntary organisations with grant aid and co-ordinating their activities to improve the social fabric of our community*
- *Working in partnership with Shepway District Council's Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership to reduce the level of crime and anti-social behaviour in the town and encouraging the socially excluded back into the fold*
- *Retaining and improving the Town Council's "Quality Council" status, achieved in December 2006*

COMMITTEE STRUCTURES 2008/09

The Council's decision making process operates through a Committee structure:



In all, some 50 Council/Committee meetings were held during the year, together with a wide range of working group meetings.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2009/10

Committee meetings are open to the public, who are encouraged to attend and raise questions.

	Planning Committee	Community Services Committee (Tuesdays)	Finance and General Purposes Committee	Personnel Sub-Committee (6pm)(Wed)	Full Council
May 2009	14,28				Friday 15 (Annual Council Meeting) Civic Centre 21 May (Town Meeting)
June 2009	11, 25	2	18	17	
July 2009	9, 23				16
August 2009	6, 20	4	13		
September 2009	3, 17			9	10
October 2009	1, 15, 29	6	23		
November 2009	12, 26	24			19
December 2009	10, 23 (Wed)		17 (Budget)	9	
January 2010	7, 21	19			14 (Precept Meeting)
February 2010	4, 18		25		
March 2010	4, 18	23		10	25
April 2010	1, 15, 29		22		
May 2010	13, 27				20 (Provisional Town Meeting) Friday 14 (Annual Council Meeting) Civic Centre

Community Services Committee

Despite ongoing financial restraint and limited budgets the Community Services Committee has continued to build on the improved facilities and financial support as set out in the Town Council's Town Plan.

Throughout the year the Committee has continued apace with the refurbishment of litter bins and bollards around the Town in partnership with the District Council. Similarly, the Town's raised flower beds have been planted up to provide summer and winter decorative displays.

Our tree planting programme has now restocked most parks and gardens, allowing efforts to be switched to the replanting of highway trees in partnership with Kent County Council.

The demand for the allotment sites at Park Farm and Tile Kiln Lane is still very high with a lengthy waiting list for the 126 plots available. 2008/09 has seen further security and drainage improvements at both sites.

In an effort to encourage speed of traffic awareness, the Town Council has purchased the necessary Speed Watch traffic monitoring equipment, trained Councillors and deployed equipment at authorised sites in partnership with Kent Police.

The Council's commitment to continue with improvements in the Town reflect a significant number of schemes which have received financial support from the Town Council including a proposed National Windsurfing Regatta, the Seabrook Canoe Centre, improved youth facilities at Cheriton Recreation Ground, the Harbour Festival, Charivari Day, new litter bins, benches and a number of new cycle racks around the Town.

The Town Crier is still going strong and for the second year running ran a competition in which 20 pupils from Pent Valley School went to Silverstone to see the ING Renault team in practice. The newsletter is distributed to all 25,000 households in the Town keeping electors up to date with news.

Threatened with demolition, the Committee also stepped in to purchase the Red K6 type BT telephone box on the Stade, Folkestone Harbour. This has been refurbished and discussions are underway for possible alternative uses.

The Committee has actively maintained its support to improve the Town's Christmas lighting in partnership with the Town Centre Manager, with new lighting planned for 2009.

The lengthy discussions with both the District and Kent County Councils over improved signage has seen improvement to the information street maps, new Welcome to Folkestone road signs on the main arterial routes and other tourist related signage improvements.

The Commissioning of the Report into the possibility of a museum for Folkestone is continuing, but much will depend on substantial funding from other sources if this project is to proceed.

Against a backdrop of continuing financial restraint we look forward to working with other organisations to make further improvements throughout 2009/10.

Committee membership: Councillors Janet Andrews (Chair), Lynne Beaumont, Gary Fuller, Dhan Gurung (Vice Chair), Paul Marsh, Emily Sanger (Chair), Maggie Sheldrake, Richard Theobald, Richard Wallace and Sue Wallace.

CLlr Janet Andrews/Emily Sanger
Chairs of Community Services



Finance and General Purposes Committee

The Finance and General Purposes Committee consists of 10 members of the Town Council, and meets roughly every eight weeks. The Committee is responsible for all financial, legal and administrative matters within the Council. The Personnel Sub-Committee, which comprises six Councillors, chaired by Cllr Bev Rolfe, oversees staffing matters and reports to the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

The Committee is responsible for both the preparation and regular monitoring of the budget, approved by the Full Council in January each year. In the last financial year we have established reserves at the recommended levels and delivered a less than inflation increase in our element of the Council Tax demand for 2009/10, whilst maintaining services.

During the year, Folkestone Town Council has continued to follow its commitment to reducing its effect on our environment; replacing the Mayor's car with a 'greener' and less expensive vehicle.

The Committee is also responsible for the Town and Ward Grants programme from which funds totalling over £40000 are available. In the past year funds from this source have gone to support various activities and organisations in the town; from children to senior citizens; from sport to culture and the arts.

The full list of all the Town and Ward Grants made in 2008/09 is published in this report and via the Council's website. Grant application forms and grant criteria guidance are also available online and from the Council's offices.

The Committee has also continued to give financial support to the Folkestone Town Centre Management and Discover Folkestone.

Committee Membership: Councillors Brian Copping, Gary Fuller, Paul Marsh, Tom McNeice, Tim Prater, Bev Rolfe, Martin Salmon, Emily Sanger, Richard Theobald, Rodica Wheeler

Cllr Paul Marsh
Chairman
Finance and General Purposes Committee



Personnel Sub-Committee

The membership of the Personnel Sub Committee, which reports to the Finance and General Purposes Committee, was reviewed in 2008 and the membership increased from six to seven Councillors.

Throughout the year the Sub Committee met on six occasions dealing with a variety of staffing, personnel policy, conditions of service and related pay issues.

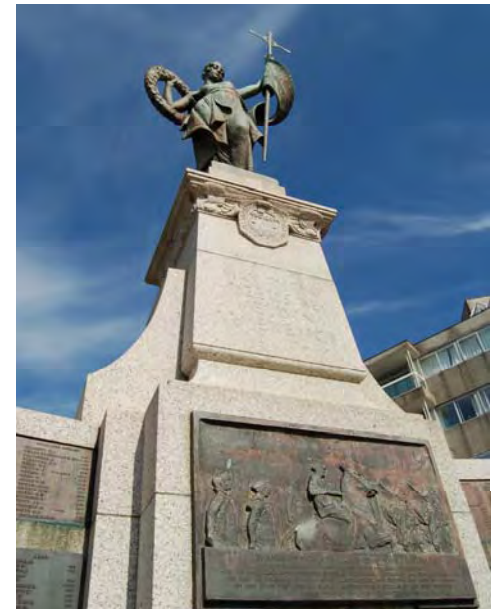
With the many changes in employment law it is essential that the Sub Committee keeps abreast of employee/employer related issues as the Town Council continues to grow. Undoubtedly, this brings with it the need to continue to make appropriate changes to the staffing levels if and when required, and similarly ensure that both Councillors and staff continue to be well trained to fulfil the demands of the Council as service delivery issues change. This brings pressures and tensions to the surface as workloads and policy objectives are redefined to match the changing aspirations of the Town Council as set out in the Town Plan.

Both Councillors' and staff skills continue to be honed to meet changing circumstances – sometimes with the help of appropriate outside specialist assistance – to ensure those skills are in place.

With so many changes in employment laws the Sub Committee will continue to review the Council's HR policies and with budgets in place, looks forward to another challenging year, with the emphasis on working as a team, embracing both staff and members alike.

Sub Committee membership: Councillors Janet Andrews, Lynne Beaumont, George Bunting, Bev Rolfe, Emily Sanger, Maggie Sheldrake and Sue Wallace.

Cllr Bev Rolfe
Chair
Personnel Sub Committee



Planning Committee

The Committee has continued with its fortnightly meetings and despite the economic downturn still has plenty of applications to consider. As in the past, many of these are quite minor matters – conservatories, dormer windows, front porches and these are usually approved but, if the property is in a conservation area more critical consideration is required. It is understood that new regulations are being introduced exempting minor developments from the need for planning applications but the details have not yet filtered down.

Applications are often received for work on trees which continue to grow and in some cases to die or become a danger. Where a tree has to be removed the Committee endeavours to keep to its policy that it should be replaced by a similar or suitable tree.

The Committee generally continues to resist applications to demolish large family houses and replace them with blocks of flats.

In recent months there have been two applications that led to lengthy debate. These were the proposal to build a Tesco store on the site of the Railway Bell in Canterbury Road where strong views are held on either side both among Committee members and among local residents and the proposed block of flats and health club on the Leas Club (formerly Leas Pavilion) site. Both these applications were eventually approved though in each case with a number of provisos. At the time of writing, final decisions from the District Council are awaited.

Ano Planning Committee

ther matter that caused high feelings was the proposed parking scheme. At a meeting at which the Town Centre Manager and the Chairman of the Channel Chamber of Trade joined Councillors, a number of points were made which were included in a letter to the District Council. Among other matters two points of principle were set out:

1. In residential areas, where residents needed to park in the street they should have the parking arrangements they wanted so far as practical and,
2. In commercial areas nothing should be done to discourage shoppers from entering the town.

This letter failed to elicit any reply from the District Council until the kind intervention of Mr Michael Howard drew a somewhat brusque acknowledgment.

The present consensus seems to be that property prices, both residential and commercial may still be heading downwards and may continue to do so for some time but perhaps more slowly. It is hoped this will not lead to a reduction in applications for major developments although once approval has been given construction may be delayed until the outlook is brighter. There is still scope for development and improvement in the town.

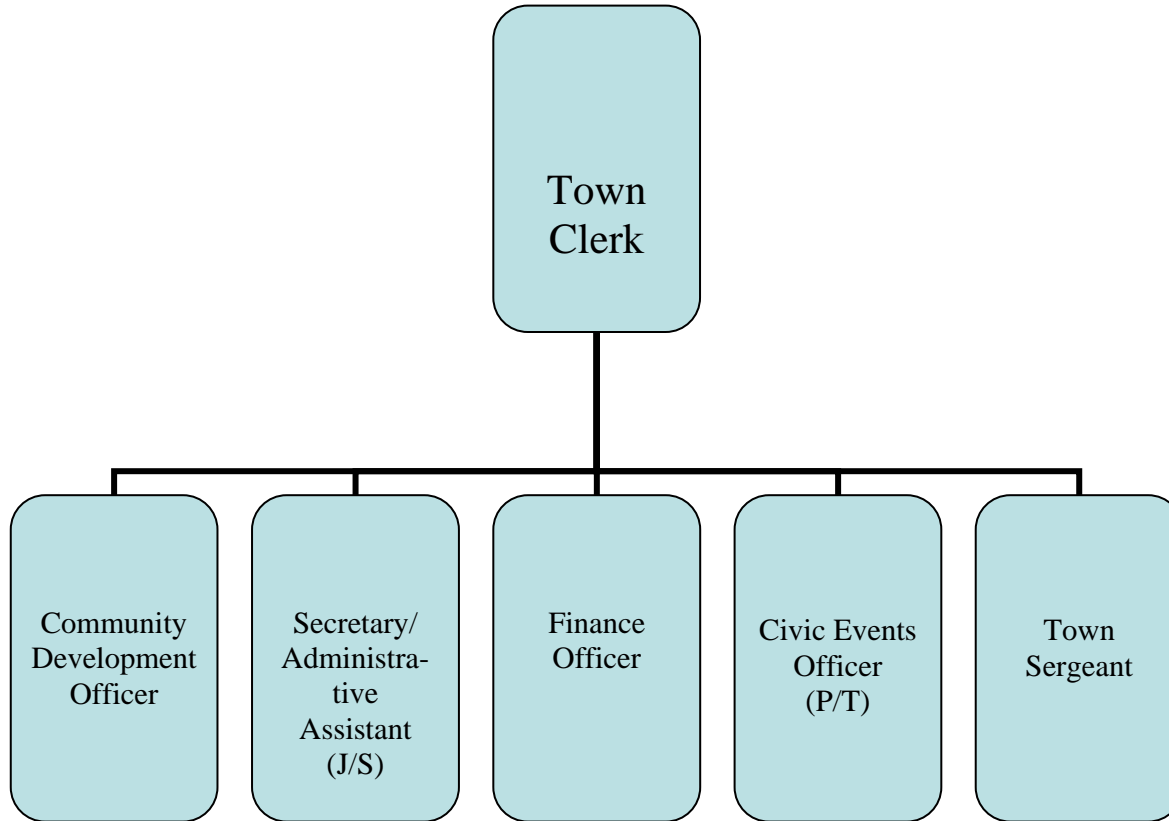
Committee Membership: Councillors Janet Andrews, Gary Fuller (Vice-Chairman), Dhan Gurung, Paul Marsh, Tom McNeice, Bev Rolfe, Martin Salmon, Maggie Sheldrake, Richard Theobald (Chairman), Sue Wallace, Richard Wallace, Rodica Wheeler.

Councillor Richard Theobald
Chairman



STAFFING STRUCTURE

During the year the Council has appointed well qualified staff to match its approved establishment



NEWS IN BRIEF

Looking back on 2008/09 ...

The Town Council continued to build on the environmental improvements around the Town in partnership with both the District and County Councils:

- Tree planting programme
- Ornamental and raised flower bedding at key sites
- Improved town information points
- Town Welcome to Folkestone signs at all arterial routes
- Refurbishment of litterbins and repainting of bollards and bins

The Kwik Cricket Competition was again very successful with over 200 children from 12 Primary Schools participating. All the Children received medals for the day and Sandgate won the cup.

The regeneration of Cheriton Recreation Ground is now well underway.

The six new Welcome to Folkestone signs positioned at each of the arterial road links into Folkestone have been erected in time for events in the coming year.

The Civic programme of events was significant with the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor representing the Council at over 300 events.

New tourism maps have been acquired to be placed on the reverse of the Town's map stands, highlighting main venues and attractions.



GRANTS AWARDED 2008/09 – Totalling £33,437

<i>RECIPIENT</i>	<i>PURPOSE</i>	<i>AWARD</i>
Go Folkestone Action Group	Soundwaves IV Live Music Event	£750.00
Shepway District Council	'Why Don't U' – Health and Well Being Day	£375.00
Shepway District Council	Sponsorship of 'Hatstand Opera' Event	£400.00
8 th Folkestone Holy Trinity Guide Unit	Jenna Bishop – Trip to New Zealand	£250.00
Shepway Film Society	Summer Screenings 2008	£263.00
Mundella Primary School	PE Mats for After School Clubs	£132.00
Miss Lauren Kilgariff	Outfits for Team England	£250.00
Councillor Cup	7-a side Football Tournament	£500.00
Go Folkestone Tourism Group	Folkestone Trail	£1,000.00
CASE Kent	Support to Community Groups	£2,773.00
Creative Foundation	Folkestone Literary Festival	£4,500.00
Grand Oldtimer Rally	Grand Oldtimer Rally	£250.00
Megan MacCormack	Outfits for Team England	£300.00
St Mary's CE Primary School	Residential Camp	£300.00
Broadmead Village Residents Association	Community Christmas Celebration	£1,200.00
Tyson Road Neighbourhood Watch	Street Party	£300.00
Headway	Quiet Room for Clients	£2,500.00
Shepway Volunteer Centre	Replacement vehicle for Task Force	£2,500.00
Folkestone Town Centre Management	Replacement of broken Christmas Lights	£1,500.00
The Tuesday Club	Monthly Social Community Tea	£300.00
Charlton Athletic Community Scheme Solutions Ltd	Football Sessions	£2,400.00
Headway	Art History Project	£800.00
Guildhall North Residents Group	Equipment for Hearing Impaired	£194.00
Friends of Folkestone Sports Centre	Purchase of mini-bus	£3,500.00
St Peter's CEP School	Breakfast/After School Club	£200.00
99 (Folkestone) Squadron Air Training Corps	Purchase of Instruments for Band	£3,000.00
Folkestone Artists' Co-operative	HG Wells Festival	£500.00
Folkestone Art Society	Camcorder	£450.00
Primetime Pensioners Group	Excursions	£500.00
Bayle Residents' Association	Hanging Baskets	£100.00
Sunny Sands Rescue Boat	Life Boat at Sunny Sands	£200.00
Victoria Bates	Working Trip to South Africa	£250.00
Cheriton Bikers and Skaters Collective	Sport and Leisure Group	£450.00
Folkestone Optimist Hockey Club	Hockey Coach and Sponsorship Awards Night	£300.00
North Cheriton Residents' Association	Trees and Plants	£250.00

OFFICER CONTACTS

<p>Lawrence Avory Town Clerk Tel: 01303 257946</p> <p>Email: lawrence.avory@folkestone-tc.gov.uk</p>	<p>Georgina Wilson Secretary/Administrative Assistant Tel: As above</p> <p>Email: georgina.wilson@folkestone-tc.gov.uk</p>
<p>Ian Bishop Town Sergeant Tel: As above</p> <p>Email: ian.bishop@folkestone-tc.gov.uk</p>	<p>Carol Saunders Civic Events Officer Tel: As above</p> <p>Email: carol.saunders@folkestone-tc.gov.uk</p>
<p>Phil Cross Finance Officer Tel: As above</p> <p>Email: phil.cross@folkestone-tc.gov.uk</p>	<p>Liz Timmins Community Development Officer Tel: As above</p> <p>Email: liz.timmins@folkestone-tc.gov.uk</p>
<p>Sandie Folwell Secretary/Administrative Assistant Tel: As above</p> <p>Email: sandra.folwell@folkestone-tc.gov.uk</p>	

KNOW YOUR LOCAL COUNCILLOR

<p>Janet Andrews (People First) 15 Calgary Crescent Folkestone CT19 6JA</p>	<p>Ward: East Telephone: 01303 254479</p>	<p>Peter Gane (Conservative) 142 Shaftsbury Avenue Cheriton Folkestone CT9 4LX</p>	<p>Ward: Cheriton Telephone: 01303 276652 Email: pet200@tesco.net</p>
<p>Maggie Sheldrake (Lib Dem) 8 Old School Court Grimston Gardens Folkestone CT20 2UA</p>	<p>Ward: Park Telephone: 01303 250941 Email: Maggie.sheldrake@talktalk.net</p>	<p>Dhan Bahadur Gurung (Lib Dem) 3 Richmond Street Folkestone CT19 4JE</p>	<p>Ward: Cheriton Telephone: C/o 01303 257946 Email: dhan@shepwaylibdems.org.uk</p>
<p>Lynne Beaumont (Lib Dem) C/o Folkestone Town Council 4/5 Princes Gate Georges Lane Folkestone CT20 1RH</p>	<p>Ward: Park Telephone: 01303 275338 Email:lynne.beaumont@gmail.com</p>	<p>Paul Marsh (People First) 65 Linden Crescent Folkestone CT19 5SB</p>	<p>Ward: Foord Telephone: 01303 250427 Email: boggy2409@hotmail.com</p>
<p>George Bunting (Conservative) 4 Southmead Close Folkestone CT19 2JD</p>	<p>Ward: Harvey West Telephone: C/o 01303 257946 Email: george.bunting@shepway.org.uk</p>	<p>Tom McNeice (Lib Dem) 19 Beachborough Road Folkestone CT19 4AA</p>	<p>Ward: Morehall Telephone: 01303 278791 Email: tommcneice@gmail.com</p>
<p>Brian Copping (People First) 79 Dolphins Road Folkestone CT19 5QD</p>	<p>Ward: Foord Telephone: 01303 253538 Email:brian@coppo65.freeserve.co.uk</p>	<p>Tim Prater (Lib Dem) 98a Sandgate High Street Folkestone CT20 3BY</p>	<p>Ward: Cheriton Telephone: 01303 210300 Email: tim@shepwaylibdems.org.uk</p>
<p>Gary Fuller (Lib Dem) 97a Sandgate High Street Folkestone CT20 3BY</p>	<p>Ward: Harvey Central Telephone: 07776145084 Email: gary@shepwaylibdems.org.uk</p>	<p>Bev Rolfe (Lib Dem) 5 Pentvale Close Folkestone CT19 5LQ</p>	<p>Ward: Park Telephone: 07767880612 Email:bevrolfe@shepwaylibdems.org.uk</p>

KNOW YOUR LOCAL COUNCILLOR

<p>Martin Salmon (Conservative) 43 Links Way Folkestone CT19 5LS</p>	<p>Ward: East Telephone: 01303 270480 Email: martinsalmon@ntlworld.com</p>	<p>Sue Wallace (Conservative) 33 Penfold Road Folkestone CT19 6DG</p>	<p>Ward: Harbour Telephone: 01303 226775 Email: susan.wallace1@ntlworld.com</p>
<p>Emily Sanger (Independent) Kenwyn Cliff Road Hythe CT21 5XW</p>	<p>Ward: Harbour Telephone: 07792397903 Email: Emily.sanger@hotmail.co.uk</p>	<p>Rodica Wheeler (Conservative) Flat 4, 3 Grimston Avenue Folkestone CT20 2QE</p>	<p>Ward: Harvey West Telephone: 01303 220433 Email: rodica.wheeler@btopenworld.com</p>
<p>Richard Theobald (Conservative) Prospect House 7 Cliff Road Folkestone CT20 2JD</p>	<p>Ward: Harvey Central Telephone: 01303 211481</p>		
<p>Richard Wallace (Independent – Improve the Playing Fields) 4 Beachborough Road Folkestone CT19 4AB</p>	<p>Ward: Morehall Telephone: 01303 277567 Email:Richard-wallace-mrics@yahoo.co.uk</p>		