

TOWN PLAN 2015-20

Remembrance
trees
participation
plants partnership
grant
voluntary governance
Mayor
regeneration tourism
safety community civic
culture society
quality town
improve
growth
appearance
environment
fairtrade

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1. 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:

- Continuing to improve 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.
- Developing the Town Council's "Quality Council" status, achieved in December 2006.
- The Council will retain its eligibility as a General Power of Competence Council achieved in 2012.

2. CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

- To represent the views and wishes of the residents of **FOLKESTONE**.
 - To promote equality of access to services for all residents.
 - To enhance the quality of life of residents by providing services which reflect their needs.
 - To preserve and enhance the culture and traditions of the town.
 - To ensure that public services are responsive to the needs of citizens, not the convenience of service providers.
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- To work in partnership with others to attract investment from both the public and private sectors, in order to ensure the economic well-being of the residents of **FOLKESTONE**.
 - To comply with both the requirements and the spirit of Quality Council legislation.
 - The Town Council will ensure that the Town Plan is an ongoing and organic document which will be regularly updated following consultations with interested and relevant people and organisations on a section by section basis.
 - To continue being a Fairtrade town.
 - To progress the initiatives which the Council approved via the Nottingham Declaration.

3. CREATING A BETTER ENVIRONMENT FOR FOLKESTONE

A WELL MAINTAINED COMMON IDENTITY

- We will seek to ensure all street furniture (including bins, railings, bollards and benches) across the whole town are well maintained and, where appropriate, painted in the town colours of blue and gold, or bears the Council's Coat of Arms.
- To work with other organisations and bodies to maintain and improve the appearance of the town.
- To request that the Principal Councils ensure all litter and other debris is collected from the Town Centre and the Leas on a regular basis during the day and especially after the markets close on market days.
- To continue to support the Principal Councils in ensuring the town is cleaned during and after any event that takes place, so that the town's main public areas are at all times clean and pleasant.
- To improve upon standards set out in the code of practice on litter and refuse, Section 89 Environmental Protection Act 1990.
- To work in partnership with Shepway District Council to help reduce cigarette litter around the town and for all replacement litter bins to have a stubbing plate so that cigarettes can be fully extinguished before being properly disposed of.

STREET CLEANSING

- In areas where there is a high percentage of take away restaurants to work with the owners to ensure that surrounding streets are regularly patrolled and extraneous litter is collected.

In conjunction with Shepway District Council to use its powers under Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 to make dog control orders and take action against those who create litter, graffiti and fly post.

FLORAL DISPLAYS AND TREE PLANTING

- Each year the Town Council has been building upon its commitment to improving the flowerbeds and has again invested in planting up flowerbeds around the Town and harbour. Where they can, the Town Council is committed to ensuring that they enhance FOLKESTONE'S street scene.
- Planters on railings and lamp columns will also be supported and encouraged, working where possible with local businesses and groups to support their installation and maintenance.
- We will invest each year in a tree planting programme to enhance the open spaces and highways, where permitted, in our area and as a contribution towards carbon capture.

GREEN ISSUES

- The Council currently has an eco friendly civic car and will continue to improve upon this, when appropriate, with a vehicle with even lower emissions and greener technology.
- To consider the environmental impact of all Council decisions, with committee reports to include a brief impact statement.
- To use recycled paper, including the quarterly Town Council newsletter and minimise paper use as a matter of course, in accordance with our commitment to keeping local residents in touch and being an open Council.
- The Council will continue to reduce its paper use and postage, where possible, by sending documents by email and amalgamated mailings.

FAIR TRADE

- Having achieved the 5 goals of the Fairtrade Town campaign, the steering group will continue to develop and gain new support.

4. CRIME AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

- To offer support, through welcoming grant applications where appropriate, to Police and Community meetings, Neighbourhood Watch groups and anti-crime initiatives run by and for FOLKESTONE residents.

CRIME PREVENTION

- The Council will work in partnership with other bodies, including the Police and Community Safety Officers, to improve the safety and well being of the citizens of FOLKESTONE.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

- To provide a public realm CCTV system that is monitored and recorded on a 24 hour basis.
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5. TRANSPORT AND ACCESSIBILITY

CYCLING

- To work with the Shepway Cycling Forum to make **FOLKESTONE** a safer place for all road users and in particular cyclists.
- To encourage cycling as a mode of transport for all short journeys.
- To lobby for an increase in useable and useful cycle lanes.
- To help Police to reduce the incidents of cyclists using the pavement instead of the road.

FACILITIES FOR THE ELDERLY

- To work with others to improve the provision of transport services for elderly or disabled residents of the town.
- To endeavour to ensure that the Town Council's offices are DDA compliant.

ROAD SAFETY

- The Council has acquired Police approved speed monitoring equipment which will continue to be used throughout **FOLKESTONE** to help ensure that speed limits are respected and observed.

CAR PARKING

- To consult with the residents and Shepway District Council to improve the parking services in **FOLKESTONE** to offer more free parking in the centre.

6. HOUSING NEEDS AND PLANNING

REGENERATION

- Partnership working with those seeking to improve the fabric of the town will be pursued as a vital part of the regeneration of **FOLKESTONE**. This is an ongoing situation which is hoped will eventually result in **FOLKESTONE** becoming a desirable location attracting both business and residents.
- Private landlords and owners who allow their properties to fall into disrepair will be contacted with a view to assisting them to improve and maintain their properties.

COASTAL COMMUNITIES TEAM

- To enable the production and delivery of a ten year economic plan for **FOLKESTONE** as part of the Coastal Communities Team.
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- To work in line with Government guidelines so funds can be accessed for revitalising and reusing historic buildings and assets that are significant to a seaside town.

PLANNING APPLICATION/STATUTORY CONSULTATION

- The obligation of acting as a consultee on planning, highway and other matters will be fulfilled within the statutory timescale. As we aim to become a sustainable community we will be asking that concepts such as water capture and micro generation are discussed with all developers who put plans before Shepway District Council.
- Where appropriate the Town Council will seek Section 106 agreements for new developments to encourage planning gain as a method of benefiting the community.

7. LEARNING SKILLS AND DEVELOPMENT

EDUCATION AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- To ensure there are sufficient centres to cater for education and development for all ages and interests in **FOLKESTONE**.
- We strongly support the Further Education provision in **FOLKESTONE**.
- The Council aims to be open and accountable in its actions and welcome the public to attend and ask questions at Council meetings. Agendas, minutes and papers are available at the Town Council Offices and on line at www.folkestonetc.kentparishes.gov.uk

PERSONNEL

- Personnel systems will be produced to allow employees to develop their full potential. Existing training programmes, appraisals, grievance and disciplinary procedures will be further developed and the Council will be an equal opportunities employer.
- Members of the Council will also be offered training opportunities to increase their effectiveness and efficiency in serving the people of **FOLKESTONE**.

8. BUSINESS, RETAIL, TOWN CENTRE AND COMMUNITY

CHRISTMAS LIGHTING AND FESTIVITIES

- The Town Council is committed to supplying quality Christmas lighting for **FOLKESTONE** and its environs. The Town Council has made financial provision for the maintenance, installation and take down of Christmas lighting and will continue to do so in the future.
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GRANT AID

- A policy of Grant Aid to local organisations has been developed and will be enhanced and upgraded so that it continues to be of great help to the organisations that give so much to the town.
- The grant application process will be continually monitored to ensure a fair and simple process, to encourage the widest number of applications. Grant application forms are available on request from the Council offices and are available to download from our website.
- We will offer support to groups in the process of making such applications and promote the grant scheme regularly. As a part of applications, applicants will be asked to consider an environmental impact of their bid and how this will be addressed.

TRANSFER OF ASSETS

- To encourage future discussions with Shepway District Council in respect of the transfer and operation of some of the Towns assets including:
 - Parks and Pleasure Grounds Charity Lands,
 - The Leas Bandstand & Amphitheatre,
 - The Market and Street Trading in the precinct,
 - Sandgate Road & Guildhall Street lighting column banner arms,
 - Town Centre barrier contract,
 - Beach Huts, to include the management, maintenance and letting.
 - Public toilets.

CIVIC FUNCTIONS

- The Town Mayor assisted by the Deputy Town Mayor will endeavour to attend and/or host a wide variety of functions held by local groups, at all times upholding the dignity of the office. The Mayor will represent the town in meetings and civic functions both nationally and internationally should the need arise.
- The Town Council will organise and promote civic functions to commemorate and celebrate the key events and people associated with our town. These include:

William Harvey Sunday
Canada Day
Town Sunday
Remembrance Services
D Day (Normandy)
Armed Forces Day
VJ Day
Battle of Britain Wreath Laying Service
Holocaust Memorial Day

All such events will seek to engage the whole community and highlight **FOLKESTONE'S** unique heritage.

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- Council committee meetings are open to the public, advertised in advance, agendas and all papers available in advance via our website and held in suitable accessible accommodation.

CLOCKS

- The Town Council has a duty to keep the Town Hall clock in good working order. Owners of other existing public clocks will be encouraged to ensure the upkeep of them and the supply of new public clocks will be encouraged.

COMMUNICATIONS

- A quarterly newsletter, the Town Crier, is produced to keep the town's people informed of the activities of the Council. This can be further enhanced by engagement with other organisations and by sponsorship through suitable advertising.
- A Town Council website www.folkestonetc.kentparishes.gov.uk is maintained and used to:

Promote forthcoming Council and Council supported events.

Make available copies of all council agendas, minutes and papers in a timely fashion.

Provide contact details for Officers and Councillors, and show membership for Committees and Working Groups.

Make available council forms for downloading, such as Town and Ward Grant application forms and allotment application forms.

SEATING

- Public seating, provided by the Council, will be of high quality.

TOWN HALL

- The Town Hall provides the people of FOLKESTONE an accessible community hub which promotes heritage, education, art, regeneration and tourism whilst complementing its civic functions and office space.
- The Council is committed to keeping a cinema within the Town Hall.
- To continue to work with the Heritage Lottery Fund to develop the Town Hall into a state of the art heritage hub for the Town which protects the town's heritage collections.

HOMELESS SHELTERS

- The Town Council will support hospitality and shelters that are available to the homeless in **FOLKESTONE** throughout the coldest period of winter.
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9. TOURISM AND VISITORS TO THE TOWN

TOURIST INFORMATION

- Tourism is a major resource in the regeneration of **FOLKESTONE**. The Council in partnership with Visit Kent and Shepway District Council will provide an accessible tourist information point for visitors. The Town Hall will have a dedicated area where visitors can seek and be provided with information on attractions and accommodation across the District through the Information Kiosk and leaflets.
- The Council will work, where possible with other bodies, on the development of local tourist information leaflets, signage in the town and display boards.

The council will provide and update regularly the official tourism website www.visitfolkestone.co.uk with events and attractions.

Volunteers will be trained to man the tourist information area in the Town Hall to provide assistance to visitors.

Information will be accessible on the phone, by mail, in the Town Hall and on the website.

EVENTS

- A programme of financial support for public events will be continued through significant grant aid from the grants budget. Suitable advertising will be used to increase visitors to the town during these events on the Visit FOLKESTONE website.

TWINNING

- To support the twinning link with Etaples-Sur-Mer.

YOUTH FACILITIES

- The establishment of contacts with the youth of **FOLKESTONE** with a view to engaging them in constructive dialogue on their ongoing needs and desires will be undertaken.
- To encourage Shepway District Council to lower the charges it makes for the hire of football pitches and other sporting facilities, so that more youth teams and the retired community can take advantage of them.

10. HEALTHY COMMUNITIES / SPORTS / OPEN SPACES / LEISURE & CULTURE

- The Council will work with other stakeholders to help to make available to the community as many leisure, sport and cultural opportunities as possible.
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ALLOTMENTS

- We will actively promote allotment holding and welcome the current large demand for allotments. We will seek to provide the best possible facilities, consult regularly with allotment holders.

If possible we will seek to find new land that is suitable to be turned into allotments to add to our sites at Tile Kiln Lane and Park Farm Road.

HERITAGE/MUSEUM

- To provide a sustainable means of displaying, curating and conserving the heritage of the town for local and wider audiences.
- The Council supports the creation of an accredited local history museum for **FOLKESTONE** located in the Town Hall that provides an excellent and unique service for local families, schools as well as visitors

For the new museum to be a vibrant and an engaging community resource providing fun and educational opportunities.

Through exhibitions, interpretation and activities local people will have access to their wonderful heritage which will evoke a sense of pride and belonging.

- Following the gifting of the war memorials, the Town Council maintains committed to ensuring they are maintained to a high standard and they continue to be part of the Act of Remembrance.

LEISURE, PARKS AND SPORTING FACILITIES

- The Council will continue to support the many sports facilities in **FOLKESTONE**

ARTS

- Grants will be available for community arts and there will be partnership working with the Creative Foundation to ensure local bodies receive support. We will establish links to other organisations and grant givers to ensure a positive and vibrant arts scene in **FOLKESTONE**.
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