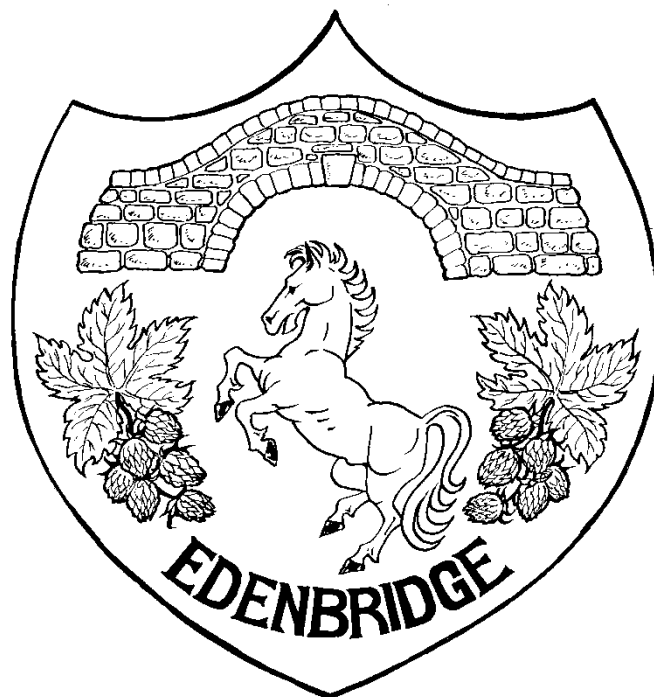
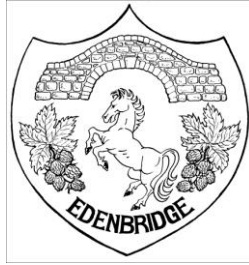


EDENBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Annual Report 2017-18





Edenbridge Town Council

All parishioners are welcomed to the
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING being held in **EDENBRIDGE W.I. HALL**
on **MONDAY 19 March 2018** at 8pm.

AGENDA

Prior to the start of the meeting there will be an exhibition by Edenbridge Youth Forum and the British Legion. During this time coffee & tea will be served.

1. The Chairman will welcome guests and parishioners
2. The minutes of the 2017 meeting will be signed as a correct record
3. Chairman's Annual Report for 2017/2018 – circulated
4. Chief Inspector Tony Dyer, Kent Police, Sevenoaks District
5. Comments by Watch Manager Tamer Ozdemir Edenbridge & Westerham Fire and Rescue Service
6. *Written Comments by Cllr Peter Lake, on behalf of Kent County Council*
7. Comments by Sevenoaks District Council: Chairman Cllr Larry Abrahams, Chief Executive Dr Pav Ramewal and Leader Cllr Peter Fleming
8. The Chairman will invite any other business which electors wish to raise, there being no Special Resolutions for consideration

Town Clerk
26 February 2018

Annual Report 2017-18 EDENBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL



Chairman's Report



It has been a very busy year for your Town Council with some interesting and unusual challenges and proposals.

We dealt with a great number of planning applications, including the start of a major new development of 300 houses in the north of the town, which will be built over the next few years. We faced a challenge from Tandridge District Council with their proposal to build a garden village of 7,000 homes, mostly within Edenbridge, but, with limited local infrastructure and narrow roads, we objected vigorously to the development as inappropriate. Fortunately, common sense prevailed and the proposal was withdrawn. As indeed was a very interesting application to build an 'Ecolation' unit for the disposal of human remains— an unproven alternative to cremation, which raised major questions about public health.

Previously we were disappointed that Sainsbury's decided not to open a new store in the north of Edenbridge, but now have firm proposals from Lidl and Home Bargains to build on the site. Both stores aim to be open in mid-2019.

Concern over the capacity of the Doctors' surgery to cope with the growth of the town has led to important proposals being drawn up by the Doctors, CCG and Health Trust for a new medical facility, combining services of the surgery with those of the hospital. The next twelve months should see a decision on their preferred site, and this development will be complemented by the private provision of an 85-bed care home, on the former Abbeyfield site, for Avery Healthcare, which has recently been approved.

Repeated incursions onto Council land by travellers cost a great deal of time and money to resolve. Following consultation with Marsh Green residents, we are installing better protection to minimise the disruption from these unlawful encampments.

A working group has been set up in conjunction with Edenbridge Business Forum, the Chamber of Commerce and High Street traders to look at ways of improving and rejuvenating our High Street and, to complement, this a group is also reviewing parking throughout the town. You can read more about this in the reports of the various council committees. The Council has also been in tentative discussions with secondary school providers regarding the possibility of additional educational provision in Edenbridge.

The town is blessed with a diverse range of volunteer groups, many of whom go unrecognised but all are greatly valued. The Council was pleased to award two Civic Medallions in 2017 – an honour given for outstanding voluntary service to the Town. David Eade received his for over 20 years of detailed observation of local wildlife. He produces annual reports which are of great importance in recording, tracking and safeguarding our diverse wildlife. Robert McKillop's was in recognition of his long and valuable service and expertise to the communications section of the Council's Emergency Planning Committee, on which he has been a volunteer for over 30 years.

Looking forward, this year has great significance as it marks the centenary of the end of World War One. As a community, we will be joining with the British Legion to remember and celebrate this and are already aware that a number of local organisations plan to get involved.

Cllr Margot McArthur – Chairman, Edenbridge Town Council

About Us



www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk

The Town Council, based in Doggett's Barn, looks after the cemetery, parks, open spaces and many of the local sporting facilities in the parish. It provides allotments, car parks and some street lights and is a collection point for refuse bags. The 15 elected members lobby on behalf of the residents and respond to consultations, to ensure the Town's voice is heard. It is currently inputting to, and monitoring, the developing Local Plan, which will shape the future of the Town over the next 20 years. Help and advice on local tourist attractions, walks, travel timetables are available here.

Edenbridge Emergency Planning Committee

Edenbridge's Emergency Planning Committee continues to meet regularly with local emergency partners, constantly reviewing and improving its ability to respond to all kinds of emergency events.



A Committee member attended a "Flood Warden and Community Volunteer Demonstration Day" organised by Kent Resilience Forum at East Malling research station. This included presentations by Kent Fire and Rescue and Kent Police's management of incidents and highlighted the need for a Multi-Agency approach for such incidents. As in the previous year, we only had a small number of flood alerts and there was no widespread flooding. We continue to work closely with the Environment Agency, and their Medway Catchment Asset Performance Team have agreed to install a new gauge by the Stone Bridge, which will assist in monitoring the river level.

In last year's report we made reference to the improved radio

communication system within the Parish, which extends to Sevenoaks. It is pleasing to note that Robert Mckillop, whose expert knowledge proved invaluable in setting up this system, was awarded a Civic Medallion by Edenbridge Town Council in recognition of his unstinting support to the Emergency Planning Committee. In addition, Committee members have recently successfully completed an Amateur Radio Foundation Licence Course, which is a requirement to use the radios for this system.



The Edenbridge Emergency Plan is under constant review and will be tested later this year when Sevenoaks District Council will be organising a training exercise in Edenbridge. We are always looking for volunteers to assist us, if you think you might be able to help out, please contact the Deputy Town Clerk on 01732 865368, or call in to the Council offices at Doggetts Barn to discuss further.

Cllr Bob Todd
Vice Chairman Emergency Planning Committee

Finance Committee

Finance is the oil which transmits the council tax, which residents pay, into the services which we all enjoy. When it is running smoothly, nobody notices; when there is a piece of grit in the oil, a service will become unsatisfactory and residents will have reason to complain.

I think it is relevant to list the services which the Town Council provides/cares for allotments, Stangrove and Blossoms Parks, four children's playgrounds and skate park, Church House for the museum, Churchyard and cemeteries, Doggetts Barn and the variety of services, hanging baskets in the High Street, Lingfield Road Recreation Ground, Market Yard, Marsh Green, Mill Leat, Millennium Wood, Nomads football ground, public toilets, Stangrove Park, 240 street lights, voluntary organisations' grants, weekly litter pick.

When the Town Council sets its annual budget, it not only provides for the immediate day to day costs of providing services, e.g. staff salaries, fuel, telecommunications, it has to consider the medium term programme for looking after its buildings and other fixed items e.g. car parks, cemeteries, public toilets. Edenbridge Town Council has a scheme to finance the expected costs over a rolling 30 year programme. This enables the costs of expensive repairs to be spread evenly over time, and avoids the grit of a large bill which was not prepared for. All the details of the costs of the various services are laid out in the Town Council Budget and can be found on the Town Council website, but I thought it may be interesting to give a few here.



Total Expenditure £777,000

Repairs and maintenance of buildings £78,750

Repairs and maintenance of open spaces £134,000

Staff costs caring for open spaces £104,000

Grants to support 17 local organisations £21,000

Finance is monitored by internal and external auditors and I am pleased to advise that both have reported the council's finances are well managed. But more important than these are the opinions of you, the residents. When there is any small piece of grit in the oil, you notice and tell us. I am pleased to say such events were rare in the past year.

Cllr John Scholey

Chairman of Finance Committee

Forward Planning Committee

The Town Council addresses the development of the community of Edenbridge through two committees. Firstly, the Forward Planning Committee (FPC) addresses issues arising within the forthcoming two years and which, therefore, are quite well identified. Meeting twice a year, the committee's work is now more focused on overseeing and co-ordinating the Council's proposed expenditure through the activities of the various committees, which have ultimate responsibility for shaping the proposed expenditure within their specific remit. The FPC's role in this process is, therefore, primarily to oversee and co-ordinate such expenditure, and forward its views to the Finance and Town Council Committees for final ratification and approval.



During the recent years of Central Government's 'austerity measures', combined with a desire to limit any rate increases which might be asked of the District and Town Councils, there has been little scope for innovation in the delivery of existing town council services, let alone the adoption of new ones.

The second working group addressing community development matters is called the Community Development Working Group (CDWG) which was established in autumn of 2017. Whilst not having any executive or financial power or responsibility, the purpose of this group is to endeavour to identify and address issues which the community is likely to face in the years beyond the immediate two years and, working with the various agencies and other bodies concerned, to help 'shape' those issues so as to gain maximum benefit for the community, and its corollary, to minimise any possible adverse aspects which could arise. The work of this group falls into the following discrete areas of potential development – economic, health, housing, transport, education, utilities, and community and leisure.

Cllr Clive Pearman

Chairman of the Forward Planning Committee

Tourism and Footpaths Forums



Following discussions at the February 2017 Eden Valley Tourism Forum, the Eden Valley Footpaths Group devoted their monthly waymarking walk programme between July and November 2017 to mapping out routes between the pubs in the Eden Valley area. The following pubs were visited during these walks: **The Rock**, Chiddingstone Hoath, **The Castle Inn**, Chiddingstone, **The Kentish Horse**, Mark Beech, **The Fountain**, Cowden, **Four Elms Inn**, Four Elms, **The Wheatsheaf**, Bough Beech, **Henry VIII**,

Hever, **The Greyhound**, Hever, and **The Bottlehouse**, Penshurst. Where possible, contact was made on these walks with the Manager/Publican to let them know that the group are planning on developing a series of walk cards/posters/maps to publicise the walking routes between the pubs in the Eden Valley – in all cases there was a positive response.

Further waymarking walks were planned for 2018: January – **Little Brown Jug**, Chiddingstone Causeway, and **Castle Inn**, Chiddingstone; March – **The Cock Inn**, Ide Hill, and **Fox & Hounds**, Toys Hill; and June – **Fountain Inn**, Cowden, and **The Queens Arms**, Cowden Pound. Once all these mapping walks have been completed, a small task group will be convened to compile a costed funding proposal for a series of walk cards, and map/posters. If any residents are interested in being involved please contact the Tourism Officer at ETC.



In addition to the pub walks, a small party from the EVFG devised a route between Hurst Green and Edenbridge Town railway stations, which is going to be tested by a larger group on Sunday 20 May 2018. It is hoped that this route too will be developed into a leaflet, which could be made available at both the stations, and in other locations – again, subject to securing some funding to enable graphics and printing etc to be undertaken.

Annette Hards

Chair of the Eden Valley Footpaths Group

Open Spaces Committee

Many challenges face the open spaces team. Not only financially in juggling the monthly expenditure and income, but making sure our open spaces are kept clean, tidy and safe.

We work on a 10-year and 30-year maintenance programme, to ensure all areas are well kept and maintained. We are



professionally advised where required and ensure that, subject to cash flow, these tasks are carried out to a high level, not only by our skilled ground staff, but by our chosen contractors.

We maintain up to date staff training, on health and safety issues, as well as continuing risk assessments.



Councillors undertake quarterly monitoring visits of your land and assets. The purpose of this is to check and report back on any maintenance, repairs, vandalism, litter, upkeep of land, trees, street lighting columns, playground equipment, etc, trying to ensure a safe, pleasant, environment for all residents.

Over the last year, the Town Council has had to deal with many intrusions onto land belonging to the council, and has for the first time had to use enforcement officers to legally move the travellers on. The Town Council takes a very strong, robust, but legal, approach to these sorts of intrusions, but this comes with a high financial cost. We have sought clarifications from our MP, Police Commissioner and other academics, on this topic.

Our ground staff team has worked tremendously hard over the last year, and despite many changes to personnel, we have maintained a very high standard, even though the summer was not kind to us and led to more grass cutting than normal.

The High Street was again in full bloom, and this year we hope to have more displays of colour and array of flowers let's hope for a beautiful hot summer.



For a fourth year, the Town Council supported the Edenbridge in Bloom competition, which is run by Cooling's Nursery, and again category winners locally went on to do well at the District level. A number of Edenbridge winners received their certificates at a presentation evening

The Cemetery is well kept, and the war graves well maintained, we receive many compliments with regard to this area.

The recreation ground is an extremely well-used area, not only by local clubs, but by other teams and clubs from surrounding areas.

Last year saw the rec hold the UK Ultimate Frisbee championships, over two days and subsequent weekends in the summer. A very well attended event and we are very pleased to announce that they are coming back in the summer, with a bigger event.



The council is a member of the Tree Charter. We have an abundance of trees and varieties, which are well maintained and managed through our professional tree surgeons. The charter's main aims are to protect irreplaceable trees and woods, sustain landscapes and wildlife, combat threats to habitats – a book is located within the Town Council offices. The Tree Charter has roots going back to 1215,

We are also involved with the Great Stone Bridge Water Meadows Project with North West Kent Countryside Partnership – Cllr Clive Pearman has made a considerable contribution to this project. The meadows are adjacent to the River Eden, and the recreation ground.

Children's play areas are well maintained and monitored very carefully by our ground staff and playground consultants. The skate park is very well used and, with the Edenbridge Youth Forum, a revised, better skate park is being considered.

Edenbridge Cricket Club has been very proactive in planning for a new pavilion, with much of the funding coming from their own initiatives.

Overall, Edenbridge Open Spaces has had many challenges, but we are very proud of our open spaces and protecting these areas is of great importance.

Cllr Trevor Bryant
Chairman Open Spaces Committee

Planning Committee

The planning for 300 houses west of St. John's Way is now in its final stages and, importantly, the phasing of the project has been granted by Sevenoaks District Council. It confirms that building will commence January 2018, with the final phase commencing in June 2020, works completed June 2021.



Edenbridge Town Council supports Lidl/Home Bargains and a small sandwich shop. Members requested that the applicants look again at the parking, regarding the additional demand at the north end of the town, and other issues of concern are as follows: installing electrical charging points;

possible loss of trade to the High Street; and wayfinder signs directing residents and visitors to the other areas of the town.

Permission has been granted for a nursing care home, located in Manor House Gardens, with access from Mont St Aignan Way. The care home will have a total of 85 rooms, integrated communal and support facilities, landscaped resident gardens and staff areas, refuse storage, parking and associated infrastructure and services. Edenbridge Council is pleased to see the site retained for care home use.



In response to the District Council, Edenbridge Town Council members welcome the proposals to increase the number of parking spaces on Stangrove Estate and believe additional parking is essential and would reverse damage caused by vehicles parking on the greens and verges.

Members accept that improvements have to be self-funding but do not wish to see advantage taken of the residents by squeezing in unnecessary housing to profit from the new home bonus and the sale of new houses and the scheme should be cost neutral. Other issues raised are the impact these additional 47 spaces would make, against identified needs, how construction vehicles will access the narrow section of the one-way system of Cedar Drive, and the need to consult with the Gresham Way residents.

Cllr Alan Layland
Chairman Planning Committee

Transportation Committee



The Council's aviation group continues to respond to various consultations and take a lead with other councils. The Town Council continues to actively oppose any second runway at Gatwick, and will continue to do so. It has responded supporting measures to reduce aircraft noise.

It has been a frustrating year for commuters, with strikes by Southern and the implementation of car parking charges on Station Approach. The Council, supported by Tom Tugendhat MP, has continued to lobby Southern to review the decision to charge 24/7 and hopes that, at very least, they will reduce the evening and overnight charges which impact on the community use of the WI Hall. The Council has kept its car parks in the town free of charge, despite pressures to the contrary.

A feasibility study is being undertaken to see if it would be possible to reopen the entrance to the Market Yard Car Park from the High Street, and a second study with Kent Highways to reduce the speed along the High Street to 20mph. If these proposals are possible, consultation will be undertaken to gauge the views of residents and traders.



Cllr Alan Layland
Chairman Transportation Committee

Business Forum

Business is at the heart of everything we do in this country. Our schools, our hospitals, our pensions, and everything else we enjoy, is ultimately paid for by the wealth generated by our businesses. A healthy economy has to be at the heart of everything we do.

Accordingly, the Town Council Business Forum has been bringing together expertise from the Business Community, Chamber of Commerce, Edenbridge Town Council and the Economic Development Team at Sevenoaks District Council.

This year the Business Forum has commissioned a report on the High Street. The report, delivered to the Council towards the end of last year, has highlighted a number of areas where we can enhance our town to make it a better place to do Business. We are now moving forward with these ideas – such as better high street signage – with the intention of aiding our businesses to grow and add yet more value to our town.

Through the Forum, the council is engaging with the owners of business properties that require refurbishment. Already there is an application to bring a Lidl into the town. We have been discussing the Leathermarket site with the owners. In addition, the Forum has been lobbying for improvements to rail services and better disabled access at our stations.

Although a relatively recent initiative by the council, one that has to take a long term view, it is already showing results and the business future of the town is looking brighter.

Cllr Stuart McGregor
Chairman Business Forum



Annual Update Tom Tugendhat MP

This time last year, I used a lot of this column to explain what I was doing to address some of the many issues happening in our town. Little did I know that just a couple of months after the Town Council AGM, I would have to ask you for your support once again! I am grateful to everyone who backed me to stay as your MP in June and stay committed to getting the best for our town.

While Brexit and securing a Global Britain dominate national politics, it's an exciting time locally too. Just a few weeks ago I met with the developers of the Lidl and Home Bargains scheme near the top station and am excited about the prospect of this. It will bring nearly 100 jobs to the town and regenerate that part of the town. I'm looking forward to construction starting now planning permission has been granted.

While my campaign for quieter skies and better rail connections continue, so does my campaign to keep us better connected online. I recently took the Chief Executive of Openreach on a tour of the town and am awaiting a response of a detailed study into our needs, and how we can get better broadband. The weather we experienced a few weeks ago shows how we need to be prepared for all eventualities, especially when transport issues force us to work from home. I'm pleased Openreach are prepared to invest in our town and hope their investigations will see an improvement for everyone.

Meanwhile, the exciting plans for the new Medical Centre continue to proceed and I am now confident this will happen. This is something I have fought for over a long period of time and even with the planned re-organisation (again) of local health services by NHS England and Kent County Council, I have received assurances the work done to date will not be lost. While this project is exciting, I know how sad it will be for the War Memorial Hospital to move from its current site and as detailed planning continues I want to ensure that its legacy and importance to the community is transferred too.

Finally, a couple of months ago I was part of a very well attended event at the Eden Centre with the Eden Church, organised by the indefatigable Rev Mel Commandeur. We focused mainly on crime issues and, as ever, our local PCSO's impressed. They are operating under extreme pressure and deserve our thanks. It is clear though that not everything is working as we would like so please contact me if you have any further concerns.


As ever, despite being involved in a lot of projects locally the best part of my job remains dealing with the individual concerns or issues you have. I'm lucky to have an excellent team supporting me who are there to help you. You can e-mail me on tom.tugendhat.mp@parliament.uk, call me on 01732 441563 or write to me at 130 Vale Road, Tonbridge, Kent, TN9 1SP. I look forward to hearing from you and hope to continue delivering for our town over the next year.

Best wishes

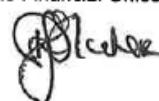
Tom

Consolidated Balance Sheet

31/03/16 £			31/03/17 £
	Long Term assets		
0.00	Investments		0.00
0.00	Long Term Debts		0.00
0.00	TOTAL LONG TERM ASSETS		0.00
	Current assets		
420,251.55	Investments	517,529.55	
0.00	Loans Made	0.00	
0.00	Investments	0.00	
0.00	Stocks	0.00	
4,741.27	VAT Recoverable	10,196.27	
5,211.76	Debtors	1,967.82	
0.00	Payment in Advance	0.00	
81,106.79	Cash in Hand & at Bank	64,792.67	
511,311.37	TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		594,486.31
511,311.37	TOTAL ASSETS		594,486.31
	Current liabilities		
0.00	Loans Received	0.00	
0.00	Temporary Borrowing	0.00	
0.00	VAT Payable	0.00	
33,802.52	Creditors	15,173.00	
123.00	Receipts in Advance	147.20	
33,925.52	TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		15,320.20
477,385.85	TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		579,166.11
0.00	Long Term Borrowing	0.00	
0.00	Deferred Liabilities	0.00	
0.00	Deferred Credits	0.00	
0.00			0.00
477,385.85	NET ASSETS		579,166.11
	Represented by		
7,316.96	General Fund		109,962.86
61,801.64	Unallocated Reserves		61,801.64
1,000.00	Cemetery		1,000.00
4,461.25	Lighting		756.25
187.18	Election		7,504.14
35,718.42	Neighbourhood Plan		33,950.02
127,025.29	Property Fund		127,025.29
130,831.30	Depreciation		130,831.30
5,631.06	Tourism		5,631.06
8,679.50	Legal Expenses		8,679.50
49,945.00	Playgrounds Recreation		49,945.00
33,846.19	Open Spaces Maintenance		33,846.19
31/03/16			31/03/17
10,942.05	Community Warden		8,232.85
477,385.84			579,166.10

Signed
Chairman 
Date 8.5.2017

Responsible Financial Officer



MEMBERS OF EDENBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

JAMES BARNETT	SW	Tel: 07831 112901 Email: jamesnicholasbarnett@googlemail.com
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2 Katharine Villas, Mill Hill, Edenbridge TN8 5BP		
Mrs JILL DAVISON	NE	Tel: 01732 863588 Email: jillpe.davison@tiscali.co.uk
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Lavender Cottage, Hillcrest Road, Edenbridge TN8 6JS		

COUNCILLOR VACANCY – EDENBRIDGE NORTH AND EAST WARD

COUNCILLOR VACANCY – EDENBRIDGE SOUTH AND WEST WARD

Elections to take place on Thursday 5th April

**The Town Council Offices are open 9-5 Monday to Friday at Doggetts Barn 72A High Street Edenbridge TN8 5AR. 01732 865368 townclerk@edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk
Visit our website at www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk**