



UPDATE

THE NEWSLETTER OF BERKHAMSTED TOWN COUNCIL

October/November 2019

In this issue...

PAGE 2:

Climate Emergency

Join a working group

PAGE 3:

Public Recycling

The Moor car park

Local Plan

Public participation

PAGE 4:

Update on the Youth
Swan Project

PAGE 5:

Dates for your diary

PCSOs

Allotments

Staff changes

PAGE 6:

Contact details for
councillors and staff



TOWN MAYOR'S WELCOME

by Cllr GARRICK STEVENS This is the first Town Council newsletter following the elections in May which resulted in eleven new councillors being elected together with four members of the previous Council. The new Council is settling in well and working hard, united in its commitment to do the best it can for all our residents.

As the first tier of local government, we can address issues raised by residents and also influence many of the matters controlled by Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) or Hertfordshire County Council (HCC). We can be the gateway to finding the right person to respond to your concerns. Councillors can be contacted direct or via the Town Council offices. All contact details are on page 6. This newsletter contains information on work that your councillors are undertaking: if we are successful, some outcomes will be evident soon but really important challenges on climate change will take time to tackle.

Residents will have seen the publicity generated by the Extinction Rebellion demonstrations. The Climate Change Act committed the nation to be carbon neutral by 2050. There is growing realisation that we cannot afford to ignore the threat to life on the planet. Much needs to be done even at the local level to encourage everyone to play their part.

Among the first actions of your new Council in May was to declare a Climate Emergency and to establish the Climate Emergency Steering Group. This decision forms the over-arching framework for the Council with the ambition that Berkhamsted should be carbon neutral by 2030. Other councils, including DBC and HCC, have adopted similar motions.

Not all are persuaded of the long-term, adverse effects of climate change, however, the science is very convincing. Worldwide, communities struggle to adapt to the impact of extreme weather conditions, for example, recurrent "once in a hundred years" flooding. Although Berkhamsted may escape serious flood risk, our infrastructure can be overwhelmed by heavy rain. Also, the data indicates that a Berkhamsted/Dacorum resident averages an annual 4400 kg carbon footprint. [Source:<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbon-dioxide-emissions-national-statistics-2005-to-2017>]. The challenge for all of us is how to minimise or offset this.

Garrick Stevens October 2019

Climate Emergency Steering Group

The Group's work will be a long term project that will engage with all sections of our community, including schools. If we are to avoid the catastrophic effects that a temperature rise of 2°C is likely to mean, we must all make changes to the way we live. We hope that residents with expertise in the subject areas of the three working groups set out below will volunteer to help with our initiatives:

Reducing Carbon from Travel Working Group

The main objective of this group is to develop and implement ideas for reducing carbon emissions and pollution from sources related to travel (cars, motor bikes and others). It is investigating alternative transport options and looking into how we can reduce car journeys in the town. One line of investigation is a project to examine the possibility



of a community bus service.

Please look out for and reply to the survey being conducted to determine the demand for such a service. This can also be accessed via the Town Council's website (see page 6).

The Councillor who is leading this group is Peter White whose contact details are on page 6 of this newsletter.

Options could include driving less, more car sharing and switching to a hybrid car when you change vehicles or even cycling more. Berkhamsted's hills, however, are a challenge so electric bikes could be worth considering.

Habitats Working Group

The key purpose of this group is to identify and engage with local businesses, community groups, public and other bodies so as to develop and implement strategies to reduce/offset greenhouse gas emissions by enhancing the natural habitat, encouraging greater localisation and by minimising waste. The group will focus on bio-diversity and environmental matters. Carbon capture through



tree planting is a simple action so please let us know of patches of land where more trees can be planted. We also want to encourage wild flower planting in verges to support

insect, butterfly and bee populations, so suggestions will be welcome. The Councillor who is leading this group is Maryjane Hardinge whose contact details are on page 6 of this newsletter.

Energy Working Group

The key purpose of this group is to identify and engage with local businesses, community groups, public bodies and other organisations so as to deliver a plan that ensures a reduction in CO2 emissions from domestic and commercial energy use to as close to zero as possible by 2030. The Councillor who is leading this group is Paul de Hoest and his contact details are on page 6 of this newsletter.



Vehicle Ownership Transport and Air Quality

Residents should be aware that the County Council has changed its approach to car ownership, travel and parking as it faces the mounting challenges of congestion, air quality and climate change, all requiring us to reduce our carbon emissions. The Portfolio Holder in the foreword to the 2018 Transport Plan [LPT4] says

"...Our response to growth cannot be to just build more roads and encourage more and more car use. Technology may well help avoid some of the problems with excessive car use, but it isn't a panacea. Our health, local environments and urban centres will be vastly improved if we can get more people to walk, cycle and use passenger transport."



Air quality is rising up the agenda: the County has been instructed to introduce a charging scheme on traffic near Broxbourne – where NOx levels are twice the permitted level.

Public Recycling

Berkhamsted is one of the most beautiful places to live, and we're keen to keep it that way. We want to promote clean, green and sustainable living and set a good example. So we're encouraging the Borough Council to provide more visible recycling bins in our public areas.

But did you know the biggest barrier to recycling is misuse of the recycling bins? If dirty, dangerous or non-recyclable materials are mixed in with the dry recyclables, the entire bag could be deemed to be contaminated, and all its contents will be condemned to landfill.



Recycling bin at Canal Fields

You can find out more about local recycling at:

www.dacorum.gov.uk/home/environment-street-care/recycling-refuse-waste;

Better use of our recycling facilities will encourage more facilities to be provided, so let's all do our bit to help.

Local Plan update

In the autumn of 2017 the Borough consulted on the proposed Structure Plan to 2036. Since then new housing targets for the Borough mean we will need to build around 1025 houses each year – up from 430. The borough has won government funding to prepare jointly with St Albans Council a plan for a Garden Community of around 10,000 houses which will be built on the St Albans/DBC boundary near Redbourn and Junction 8 of the M1. The next round of consultation has been delayed into 2020 while details are drawn up for the overall new structure plan.

The Town Council has invited a number of developers to Planning Committee Meetings to show outline schemes that will be plan-ready if they get the green light.

The Moor – restoration

DBC has advised that the use of The Moor as a temporary car park will cease when the new Multi Storey Car Park (MSCP) is commissioned and open for business. DBC will apply to extend its planning consent to allow continued use as a car park.



The Moor - Photograph by Nigel Taylor

Parking on the Moor has proved to be a hit and miss



affair – being closed for about 1/3rd of the time following bad weather. During the summer further remedial work was undertaken to improve drainage and the surface. At the time of going to print,

however, the car park is closed again. Updates will be published on the Town Council website. In the meantime, the MSCP project manager has advised that completion is planned for January or February followed by reinstatement of The Moor as weather permits.

Public Participation

On page 6 you will find the contact details of your town councillors and the staff employed by the council. The Full Council, Finance & Policy Committee and the Transport and Environment Committee each meet six times a year.

The Town Planning Committee meets every three weeks to consider planning applications in the civil parish of Berkhamsted.

Members of the public are welcome at all meetings which are generally on a Monday starting at 7.30 pm in the council chamber which is on the second floor of the Civic Centre at 161 High Street.

The Swan Youth Project Goes from Strength to Strength

The Town Council sponsors the Swan Youth Project (SYP) and Councillor Nicky Woolner is a Trustee. Following an exciting programme of activities in the summer, including a trip to Brighton and training sessions at the Skate Park, SYP welcomes back all young people and invites them to:

- After School Drop In Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 3 – 6pm (now for 11-18 year olds) with music workshops on Tuesdays and Thursdays;
- Gig Nights or Disco Fridays once per every 2 months;
- Trips to Quasar;
- Youth Council monthly meetings on Wednesdays from 4.30 - 6.00 pm.

Other events coming up include:

- Halloween Disco - 1 November at Swan Youth Centre ;
- Visit to House of Commons – 1 November;
- Noughties Night - Friday 29 November - Green Room, Kings Arms;
- End of Term Disco – Swan Youth Centre (tbc)

The Swan provides an environment in which life skills can be developed to enable young people to achieve their full potential. It improves the take-up of education, reduces substance abuse and helps to cut crime and anti-social behaviour. The group offers creative learning through arts and music, encouraging participation in new experiences such as drama, skate boarding, music and video making.

SYP allows young people to be heard, valued and respected, increasing their self-worth and esteem. Dedicated staff help them make informed choices about issues that concern them including drugs, alcohol, physical and mental health and relationships. Here is what members have to say about the project:

“As an aspiring musician, having The Swan available to me became the key to playing music with others. Jamming in a group helps self-confidence, improves your musical ability and most importantly, sparks new friendships. These friendships were also made stronger by the trips we had with The Swan to Snowdonia. Those are some of my most favourite memories, and the whole group will never forget it.”

“The Swan made a big difference to me in my teenage years, I learned to have the confidence to be myself! I always had somewhere to go, that I felt safe and not judged. There was always someone there to talk to whether it be in general or if I had a problem”

The Member Volunteer Programme provides young people with support in their volunteering. These hours can also count towards the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme volunteering hours. Contact us for more information. See details below.



Above Members of the Swan Youth Project.

With funding from many generous benefactors (including Berkhamsted Town Council), The Swan provides young people with a home from home. Whilst a small amount of income is generated from activities, it remains heavily dependent on grants and donations.

Trustees are building a network of “Supporters of the Swan” as continued funding will be more than ever dependent on local support, through donations, resources or participation in projects. The Group would also welcome the injection of new blood and would love more Trustees to add their expertise. If you think you can help please do get in touch.

The Trust is currently looking for Youth Support Workers, so, if you have what it takes to make a huge difference to the lives of young people in the Town please apply: manager@swanyouthproject.co.uk; <https://swanyouthproject.co.uk>; Tel: 01442 384349

Important Dates for Your Diary

 **Remembrance Sunday** is on 10 November 2019. The parade will muster at 2.30 pm with a service in St Peter's at 3 pm.

 This year's **Festival of Light** is on Sunday 24 November 2019 starting at 3.30 pm in the High Street. There will be stalls, entertainment, Santa, elves and more. Watch the Town Council's website for more details. In the meantime, a big thank you to all the many voluntary groups who work tirelessly behind the scenes to make the event the success it is. Here are two of the Berkhamsted Rotary marshals who work throughout the afternoon and early evening making sure that events run smoothly and safely.

[Thank you so much to Rotary members and all volunteers.](#)



Below three of the indefatigable Berkhamsted Litter Pickers towards the end of their shifts at the 2018 event... and still smiling.



[Thank you Berkhamsted Litter Pickers](#)

 The **Annual Town Meeting**, will be on Thursday 19 March 2020 at 7.30 pm in the Old Town Hall. There will be speakers from community organisations together with the chance for Berkhamsted electors to quiz their Town Councillors on any local issues that are of interest or concern. Refreshments will be provided.

Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)

The Council is negotiating with the Chief Constable about visibility of Police in Berkhamsted. We have allocated a budget and hope we can jointly fund an additional PCSO so that better links can be developed with youngsters and the Community. We want to ensure Berkhamsted remains a safe place, enjoyed by all residents, where children and young people can thrive.

[The Neighbourhood Team on patrol at the Festival of Light](#)



The Town Council is particularly grateful for the hard work and support given by everyone in the Berkhamsted and Tring Safer Neighbourhood Police Team.

Allotments

The Town Council runs four very popular allotment sites at Sunnyside New and Old (off Ivy House Lane); Dellfield (Billet Lane) and Butts Meadow (between Chesham Road and Kings Road).

There are over 400 allotments. Please contact the Council offices if you would like to be added to the waiting list.

[Autumn at Butts Meadow](#)



Staff changes

Our current Town Clerk, Janet Mason, has decided to retire and her last day will be 31 March 2020. We shall be recruiting her replacement in the coming months. We are also currently appointing a new Finance Officer, whose duties include allotment administration.

TOWN COUNCILLOR AND TOWN COUNCIL STAFF CONTACT DETAILS

WARD	COUNCILLOR	CONTACT
Castle	Paul de Hoest	01442 384514 paul.dehoest@berkhamstedtowncouncil.gov.uk
Castle	Wendy Conian	wendy.conian@berkhamstedtowncouncil.gov.uk
Castle	Stephen Claughton	07763043419 stephen.claughton@berkhamstedtowncouncil.gov.uk
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West	Jackie Jones	jackie.jones@berkhamstedtowncouncil.gov.uk
West	Peter White	peter.white@berkhamstedtowncouncil.gov.uk
West	Nicky Woolner	07941224815 nicky.woolner@berkhamstedtowncouncil.gov.uk
West	Maryjane Hardinge	mary.jane@berkhamstedtowncouncil.gov.uk

Committee	Chair	Vice Chair
Town Planning	Cllr Garrick Stevens	Cllr Geraldine Corry
Finance & Policy	Cllr Garrick Stevens	Cllr Rick Freedman
Transport & Environment	Cllr Wendy Conian	Cllr Nigel Taylor

Town Clerk & RFO	Janet Mason	01442 800152	townclerk@berkhamstedtowncouncil.gov.uk
Deputy Town Clerk	Joanna Harley	01442 800146	deputyclerk@berkhamstedtowncouncil.gov.uk
Finance & Allotment Officer	Vacancy		
Town Warden	John Bushby	01442 800178	townwarden@berkhamstedtowncouncil.gov.uk
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