



Town Mayor Cllr Roger Cartwright

A Message from the Mayor

View of Burgess Hill looking towards The Burgess Hill Academy.

I am delighted to present Burgess Hill Town Council's Annual Report for 2019/20. In the midst of the current Covid-19 pandemic the events of the previous year have felt a world away. We look forward to further joyful community events in the future and for the present remain committed to supporting residents and local businesses as we all rebuild the life of the town and the needs of the local community.

The Town Council team work hard to give a great service to all residents and visitors. As budgets continue to tighten, the Council has targeted funds to projects and resources that best serve the community, while retaining reserves to meet contingencies such as the Covid-19 virus. The town-wide events continued to expand, developing into attractions which drew visitors from across Sussex. We continued to support local carers of all ages and delivered community celebrations targeted to appeal to a huge variety of local residents.

Our overall policy has been to support the redevelopment of the town while sustaining its traditional character and lifestyle. New initiatives have come to the fore including the Residents Forum and Saturday Councillor Surgeries as Councillors looked to maintain their direct engagement with residents, both experiments in making your local government more open and supportive. In addition, we have consulted the local traders about ways in which we can help them while the town centre undergoes a radical reconstruction; the resulting programme, named Bridge The Gap aims to support traders and organise events to bring greater footfall into the town centre.

As always we are thankful for the support of local charities and community groups and look forward to another year working in partnership, helping those who work on behalf of the young, the old and the disadvantaged, and who are good examples of the kindness and consideration reflected in our town life.



Bridge The Gap

The Town Council introduced a new initiative entitled Bridge The Gap, which will offer events and resources to improve Burgess Hill's town centre during the regeneration process. We will, of course, be extending this to support the town during and after the Covid-19 pandemic.

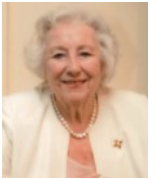
Town Centre Redevelopment

The 2019/20 year saw the demolition of the Martlets Hall and the relocation of Lidl. The brightest point in the year was the opening of Burgess Hill's new library. In December, The Gruffalo opened the new glass fronted building to a crowd of enthusiastic local residents. The building offers a lift, a new modern computer area, upgraded children's library, flexible shelving and a changing places toilet.



The Beehive Centre for Community Arts

In January 2020, planning permission was granted for the new Beehive Centre for Community Arts, a milestone for the Centre which has taken so many years to develop. The project was supported by Dame Vera Lynn CH DBE LLD M.Mus and the main auditorium will be named in her honour. Patrons of the project include Judy Parfitt, The Right Hon Sir Nicholas Soames, Susan Fleet and Tim French MBE. The Centre now faces the challenge of fundraising with the final cost looking to be £5.5 - £6 million.



Northern Arc

Work continues to progress with surveys of ground conditions taking place in February and March 2020. The first phases of construction begin with housing at Freeks Farm and the building of a bridge/link road. The past year has seen some strides forward with the project after it was taken over by Homes England. Homes England is an executive non-departmental public body intended as the government's housing accelerator. To find out more about the plans please visit [burgesshill.net](https://www.burgesshill.net).



The Place and Connectivity Programme

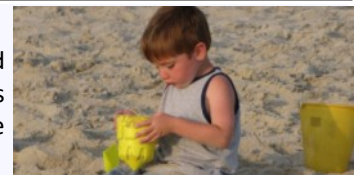


The Place and Connectivity Programme is a £21 million scheme which will deliver significant infrastructure improvements that will help link the new development areas and other key destinations in Burgess Hill. Led by Mid Sussex District Council and West Sussex County Council, the programme will see improvements to Church Road, Church Walk and Queen Elizabeth Avenue. There will also be work to both railway stations and cycle routes to improve connectivity. The Town Council is working in collaboration with Mid Sussex DC and West Sussex CC to deliver some quicker infrastructure projects, such as Phase 2 of the real time passenger information displays and new entrance signs to the town. The project also ensured improvements to widen the path across World's End Recreation ground undertaken by Mid Sussex DC.



Town Centre Urban Beach

During the Summer Holidays, Burgess Hill's free Urban Beach returned offering free extra entertainment to local families. Many residents mentioned what a cheering sight the Sand Pit became and it was a visible draw to the town centre.



Open Air Cinema



A free open-air cinema showing of The Greatest Showman at St John's Park was attended by 1500 people of all ages on a fine, dry evening in September. Picnics were eaten, wine corks popped and a good time was had by all. The event was organised by the Town Council with local groups providing food and refreshments.



Summer Festival

During the Summer Festival in June 2019, 62 events were held over 9 days with something for all ages and pockets. 51 of the 62 events were free or less than £6. The Festival was co-ordinated by the Town Council with 40 local groups, businesses and individuals organising events.



Summer Fayre

Burgess Hill's annual Summer Fayre in St John's Park in June 2019 was held on a gloriously sunny day and residents turned out in large numbers to enjoy all the activities, entertainment and community stalls.



Councillors' Allowances Claimed

Annual Allowances are paid under the Local Authorities

(Members' Allowances) Regulations 2003

Allen, Graham	£1,199	Foster, Joseph	£1,199
Barrett-Miles, Andrew	£0	Gibbs, Lee	£1,199
Cartwright, Roger	£1,199	Henwood, Janice	£1,199
Chapman, Peter	£0	Hicks, Simon	£1,199
Coe-Gunnell White, Emma	£1,199	Hussain, Tofojjul	£1,199
Cornish, Matthew	£1,199	Lawrence, Sarah	£1,199
Duggan, Robert	£1,199	Neumann, Sylvia	£500
Eggleston, Robert	£1,199	Nielsen, Max	£1,199
Eves, Anne	£1,199	Willis, Kathleen	£1,199

Total Allowances Claimed: £18,485

Travel & Subsistence costs reclaimed for undertaking official Town Council duties (received as at 30/04/2020)

- Cllr Robert Duggan £9

Community Grants Awarded

Community Grants totalling £12,586 were awarded to the following organisations:

Friends of the Green Circle Network	£523
Windmills Opportunity Playgroup	£500
Kangaroos	£250
Mid Sussex Voluntary Action	£1,000
Revitalise	£500
Burgess Hill Flower Club	£100
Sheddingdean Baptist Church	£557
Friends of Woodlands Mead	£250
4Sight	£500
Burgess Hill Heritage & History Association	£150
Parkfield Equine Solutions	£750
Mid Sussex Active	£500
Cuckfield Stroke Communication Group	£500
Kangaroos	£250
Speak Up	£500
Dame Vera Lynn Children's Charity	£500
Cruse Bereavement Care	£500
Support 4 Diabetes	£256
Summerhaven	£500
Signposts Mid Sussex	£1,000
SASBAH	£500
Burgess Hill Radio	£2,500

TOTAL £12,586

Financial Summary

2019/20 Budget Analysis

The Town Council's budgeted revenue expenditure for the year amounted to £999,142 with a total of £873,478 being raised from residents of the town. The Town Council is pleased to announce that a modest surplus will be achieved which will be reinvested to provide future services for the community. Due to the Coronavirus pandemic and the social distancing restrictions introduced by the government, the Annual Town Meeting which was planned for 14 April this year, had to be cancelled.

The impact from the Coronavirus on the 2020/21 financial year's budget is still being assessed and although a number of special events planned have been postponed or cancelled, the majority of services provided directly by the Town Council will remain largely unaffected.

Public Notice

Under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234), it is reported the accounts for year ending 31 March 2019 for Burgess Hill Town Council have been duly audited by the District Auditor, Moore UK.

Revenue Budget : Income and Costs £000s

Where the money comes from	2019/20	2020/21	Where the money is spent	2019/20	2020/21
Council tax payers (Precept) (i)	873	919	Help Point Services	90	91
Partner income (MSDC/WSCC)	39	34	External Services (Grnds Maint,Burial, Allot')	270	273
Hire of Council facilities	10	15	Community Partnerships & Events	124	141
Burial Ground income	24	27	Community/Facility Development	143	183
Roundabout Sponsorship/Contract	19	17	Civic and Planning	<u>99</u>	<u>99</u>
About Town magazine	10	10	Total Direct Services	726	787
Other	<u>24</u>	<u>25</u>	Support Services	173	170
Total Income	999	1,047	Insurance, Business Rates, Utilities, etc	100	90
			Total Revenue Expenditure	999	1,047

Council Reserves at the 1 April 2019 £000's

General Reserve	199
Earmarked Reserves	<u>646</u>
Total Reserves	845

Town Council Employees

	Bud	Act	Bud
Full-time equivalents	16.1	15.6	16.1

Band D rate in real terms	£73.30	£75.32
Actual Band D rate - after taking into account a one-off rebate of £72k given to residents in 2019/20	£67.22	£75.32

(i) For comparison purposes only, the one-off £72k refund given to residents in 2019/20 has been removed from this figure.



Pamper Day for Carers

In March 2020, a free pamper day was enjoyed by adult carers who provide unpaid care for a partner or a loved one. The day was hosted by Burgess Hill School for Girls, with support from the Town Council, and offered a range of pamper sessions, musical entertainment, crafts, information and advice for carers as well as a free lunch and refreshments provided by the school.



Young Carers

Over 245 carers aged 6 - 15 years enjoyed 16 Young Carers events during the year including fun days, outings, a visit to a pantomime and a weekend residential trip. The events were led by Burgess Hill Youth and co-ordinated by the Town Council. The events were free for the young carers and free transport was provided when needed.



Rock Up and Ride

Young BMX riders had an opportunity to attend a free session with a professional coach and DJ at the Burgess Hill BMX track in August, with 55 young people turning up on the day. The event was organised by the Town Council with support from Respect Youth Club and funding from Burgess Hill District Lions Club.



Great British Spring Clean

During the Great British Spring Clean in April 2019, the Town Council co-ordinated litter-picks of sites in different parts of the town, with residents invited to nominate 'grot spots' needing a clean up. Town Councillors led some of the events, with litter pickers and other equipment provided by the Town Council.



Climbing Wall in Church Walk

Thanks to funding from Burgess Hill District Lions Club, the Town Council organised a free Climbing Wall and Strike a Light games in Church Walk during the Easter holidays. The activities proved very popular with families and were busy throughout the day.



It's Christmas in Burgess Hill

It was a wet Christmas event in November but nevertheless residents turned out in large numbers to meet star attractions Peppa Pig and George and to enjoy the fairground rides. There was live entertainment on stage throughout the day alongside community stalls, live reindeer, Santa's Grotto, free children's Christmas cards and a photo booth. The day concluded with a countdown to the switch-on of the Christmas lights.





Help Point

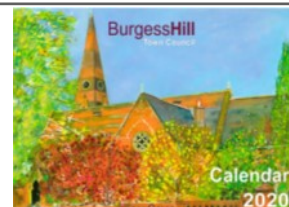
During 2019/20 the Town Council's Help Point received and responded to more than 31,680 enquiries from residents and visitors on a wide range of issues. The opening times for the Help Point are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9-5pm and Wednesday 10-5pm.

Partnership Working

The Town Council has been working in partnership with Citizen's Advice to ensure a service is still available in Burgess Hill. The drop in service is held regularly at the Help Point on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 10am - 4pm. These sessions are often well attended. Citizen's Advice is free, confidential, independent and impartial plus open to everyone in the community. The Town Council has also worked in partnership with SHC Audiology, which has run a hearing clinic at the Town Council for the last year. SHC Audiology is a provider of NHS adult hearing care.

The Burgess Hill Calendar

The Help Point have collaborated with local group Burgess Hill Artists and students of The Burgess Hill Academy to create a vibrant 2020 Calendar celebrating Burgess Hill and its creative community. Kindly sponsored by local independent businesses, the venture was very successful, selling over 200 copies with 10% of proceeds going to Age UK West Sussex - Cherry Tree Centre, based in Fairfield Road.



Room Hire

Our room hire continues to grow in popularity with many repeat bookings including meetings, public drop ins, training sessions, award gatherings and other business related interactions. We have a large Council Chamber which can accommodate up to 50 guests at one time, as well as a smaller Meeting Room. Both the Council Chamber and the smaller Meeting Room are available for hire 5 days a week, during office hours as well as evenings, For further information please phone 01444 247726 or email: bookings@burgesshill.gov.uk.

If you have an enquiry we can help with please contact Burgess Hill Town Council Help Point at 96 Church Walk, Burgess Hill, RH15 9AS, Telephone: 01444 247726, Fax: 01444 233707, email: helppoint@burgesshill.gov.uk, or visit www.burgesshill.gov.uk



View from The Burgess Hill Academy to the South Downs beyond.