



Town Mayor Cllr Roger Cartwright

A Message from the Mayor

As the superb vaccination programme continues, we hope for a Summer without lockdowns. We think of those who have lost loved ones, suffered in their health or whose livelihoods have been damaged. I salute the many local groups and heroes who have worked tirelessly to support the vulnerable during this crisis and remember HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

Throughout the year our team worked quickly to meet the new community needs and adapt ways of working to fit the changing restrictions. Work on the new Burgess Hill Pantry and supporting the local Food Bank has been a real team effort. The Beehive Consultation and its publications communicated the clear and detailed plan to give Burgess Hill the modern community space it needs now and in the future. We thank everyone who took the time to respond. The Council has looked to support local residents and businesses through this difficult time and it has been a joy to see the new Outdoor Market continue and flourish. In place of our usual events for carers and vulnerable elderly residents, door to door deliveries were made bringing cheer to all recipients.

I am grateful to all those who contributed to my Christmas Appeal to support people who were socially isolated due to age, infirmity or COVID-19. The sum of £640 was raised by the Appeal and split between three local befriending schemes, run by West Sussex Age UK, Neighbourly Care and St Peter & St James Hospice.

I have no doubt Burgess Hill will continue to meet the challenges thrown at it with indomitable community spirit.

The Beehive Centre for Community Arts

A public consultation ran from 18 March - 21 April 2021 to gauge residents reaction to the Town Council’s funding proposal for The Beehive. The result was a positive 90% majority vote in favour of the proposed funding plan. Trustee of The Beehive and Leader of the Council, Robert Eggleston, said “This is a huge step forward to seeing The Beehive plans realised. The Beehive will both celebrate and greatly benefit the Burgess Hill community.” The Leader of the Cultural Quarter Committee, Joseph Foster, felt delighted to see such an overwhelming positive response and thanked all voters. To find out more about The Beehive please visit www.beehiveartscentre.com.



Town Centre Redevelopment

NewRiver Retail reconfirmed in a public statement their commitment to the Burgess Hill Town Centre development. In September 2020, Mid Sussex District Council approved plans for a revised redevelopment scheme which included alterations to the library in order to accommodate a changing places toilet facility. COVID-19 has, of course, affected all the retailers and businesses involved in the project but NewRiver assured the residents of Burgess Hill that they will continue “pushing on with what needs to be done.” Residents and NewRiver were delighted when Burgess Hill Library won a Sussex Heritage Trust Award in December 2020.

Pétanque

Burgess Hill will soon boast its very own Pétanque rink at Fairfield Recreation Ground. Planning permission has been granted and construction is scheduled to take place later in the year. Burgess Hill Town Council has secured a £13,000 contribution towards the project from Sport England with £17,000 of developer contributions made available by Mid Sussex District Council.



Co-ordinating the COVID-19 Response

During the first COVID-19 lockdown the Town Council convened and supported a COVID Liaison Group, to co-ordinate the town's response by bringing together statutory and voluntary groups providing support to residents during this time. Information about the support available was promoted via the Town Council's website and social media, as well as its staff who continued to respond to phone calls and email enquiries while working from home. In recognition of the tremendous efforts of staff at the Princess Royal Hospital, a staff bench was jointly donated by the Town Council and Burgess Hill District Lions Club.

Burgess Hill Food Bank

Due to the pandemic, Burgess Hill Food Bank's usual venue was forced to close and a new space was needed. After finding an unused shop unit, the Town Council's Maintenance Team helped to adapt the space to accommodate a combined depot and distribution area which, had previously been in two separate buildings. This involved installing partition walls, cleaning, clearing, painting, installing shelving units and moving produce from the old unit to the new. The Help Point has been working in partnership with the Burgess Hill Food Bank throughout the year to ensure people can access Foodbank vouchers and receive food deliveries when required. The Help Point has taken over 300 referrals since the beginning of the pandemic.



Burgess Hill Pantry and Trading Spaces

The Town Council initiated a new community food project - Burgess Hill Pantry - to help those who are struggling to put food on the table. For a small weekly fee people can select 10 items worth considerably more. The Town Council provided premises in Trading Spaces in the Martlets Shopping Centre, donated start-up funding and members of its Maintenance Team fitted out the Pantry. The Pantry has been registered as a charity and the project is being taken forward by a team of volunteers. We are grateful to supporters The Budding Foundation, Burgess Hill District Lions Club, and Clarion Futures. Trading Spaces is an initiative by the Town Council to help breathe life back to the empty quarter of The Martlets before redevelopment. We leased the former William Hill unit from NewRiver Retail and sub-divided it to provide space at an affordable rent to help fledgling independent businesses get off the ground.

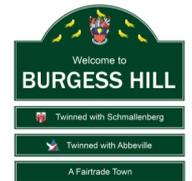


New Monthly Town Market

Burgess Hill Town Council launched the new open market last September. The market is one of the projects under the Town Council's Bridge the Gap initiative to try to regenerate the town centre and was 6 months in the planning in order to bring the great variation of stalls selling local produce and goods as well as crafts to Burgess Hill town centre. The market is on the 2nd Saturday of the month in Church Walk, from 9am to 2pm. Come along and support our local businesses! The market is open for new traders - find out more at www.burgesshill.gov.uk/market.

Welcome to Burgess Hill!

Smart new Welcome to Burgess Hill signs have been installed at the main entrances to the town, replacing the old signs which had become rather battered over the years. The new signs have been funded through The Place and Connectivity programme of improvements to the town, which is led by Mid Sussex District Council and West Sussex County Council.



Deliveries to delight and support

Although the annual programme of Young Carers Fun Days and outings had to be cancelled due to COVID-19, the Town Council and Burgess Hill Youth wanted to make sure the young carers didn't miss out. Each school holiday, gift bags containing Easter Eggs, craft and summer activities, Halloween treats and Christmas gifts were delivered to their homes, much to the excitement of the young carers. As the annual Pamper Day for Carers had to be cancelled, Wellbeing Gift Bags were delivered to 80 adult carers in February. Similarly, Silver Sunday events were unable to take place so gift bags were assembled and delivered to 150 older residents by the Town Council and Burgess Hill Youth. Recipients might have been out of sight but were not forgotten. Local businesses, Burgess Hill Girls and voluntary organisations kindly donated goodies for the bags.

Remembrance Day

The Town Council co-ordinated a scaled-back Remembrance Day commemoration at the War Memorial with COVID safety measures in place. The ceremony was live-streamed so residents could watch it at home.



Allotment Security

Following requests from allotment tenants, a consultation was undertaken with all allotment holders asking for views on various security improvements at each of Burgess Hill Town Council's 6 sites. As a result of the consultation, improvement works have been carried out at 4 of the sites. This involved robust fencing and gates being installed.

Financial Summary

Community Grants Awarded

In total £21,464 in community grants were awarded, detailed below: £

Signposts Mid Sussex	£1,000
Wings Youth Theatre	£500
Windmills Opportunity Playgroup	£1,000
4Sight Vision Support	£500
Mid Sussex Voluntary Action (MSVA)	£1,000
The King's Church	£1,000
Burgess Hill Cricket Club	£1,000
Mid Sussex Older People's Council	£484
Impact Foundation	£500
The Escape Youth Club	£1,000
Worlds End Association	£1,000
Marie Curie	£550
Sussex Chorus	£500
SASBAH	£700
Mid Downs Radio	£403
Burgess Hill Cricket Club	£2,500
Burgess Hill Shed	£2,250
TOTAL	£15,887

COVID GRANTS – co-funded by the Town Council, BH District Lions Club & funds raised by Graham Meeres DJ set

2nd Burgess Hill Brownies	£345
4Sight Vision Support	£632
7th Burgess Hill Scouts	£500
The Monday Group	£250
Music for Memories Mid Sussex	£400
Sussex Search and Rescue	£500
Burgess Hill Heritage & History Society	£150
Air Ambulance Kent Surrey Sussex	£300
Burgess Hill Guide & Brownie Assoc.	£1,000
Kangaroos Mid Sussex	£1,000
Hurstpierpoint Gymnastics Club	£500
Total	£5,577

Public Notice

Under sections 20(2) and 25 of the Local Audit & Accountability Act 2014 Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234), it is reported the accounts for year ending 31 March 2020 for Burgess Hill Town Council have been duly audited by the District Auditor, PKF Littlejohn LLP.

2020/21 Budget Analysis

The Town Council's budgeted revenue expenditure for the year amounted to £1,047,449 with a total of £919,228 being raised from residents of the town. The impact of the COVID-19 virus caused most of the town's special events to be cancelled, however, the majority of services provided directly by the Town Council remained largely unaffected. The Town Council is pleased to announce a modest surplus will be achieved for the year which will be reinvested to provide future services to the community.

For the budget year 2021/22, the Town Council has not raised the cost of its services to residents and the council tax charge remains at £75.32 for a Band D property.

Revenue Budget : Income and Costs £000s

Where the money comes from	2020/21	2021/22
Council tax payers (Precept)	919	923
Partner income (MSDC/WSCC)	33	24
Hire of Council facilities	21	15
Burial Ground income	28	29
Roundabout Contract Income	17	17
About Town magazine	10	5
Other	19	16
Total Income	1,047	1,029

Where the money is spent

Help Point Services	91	87
External Services (Grnds Maint, Burial, Allot')	271	267
Community Engagement & Events	246	210
Provision for Community Facilities	79	109
Civic and Planning	102	101
Total Direct Services	789	774
Support Services	168	159
Insurance, Business Rates, Utilities, etc	90	96
Total Revenue Expenditure	1,047	1,029

Council Tax—Band D rate per annum £75.32 £75.32

Council Reserves at the 1 April 2020 £000s

General Reserve	175
Earmarked Reserves	579
Total Reserves	754

Town Council Employees	20/21	21/22
Full-time equivalents	Bud Act	Bud
	16.1 15.9	16.2

Councillors' Allowances Claimed

Annual Allowances are paid under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) Regulations 2003

Allen, Graham	£1,232	Gibbs, Lee	£1,232
Barrett-Miles, Andrew	£0	Henwood, Janice	£1,232
Cartwright, Roger ^	£1,846	Hicks, Simon	£1,232
Chapman, Peter	£0	Hussain, Tofojjul	£1,232
Coe-Gunnell White, Emma	£1,232	Lawrence, Sarah	£1,232
Cornish, Matthew	£1,232	Neumann, Sylvia	£600
Duggan, Robert	£1,232	Nielsen, Max	£1,232
Eggleston, Robert	£0	Willis, Kathleen	£1,232
Eves, Anne ^^	£1,232		
Foster, Joseph	£1,232		
		Total Allowances Claimed:	£18,462

Travel & Subsistence costs reclaimed for undertaking official Town Council duties

No claims have been received from Members.

^ Town Mayor [an additional payment of £598 was paid to the Mayor relating to an underpayment in the 2019/20 financial year].

^^Deputy Town Mayor

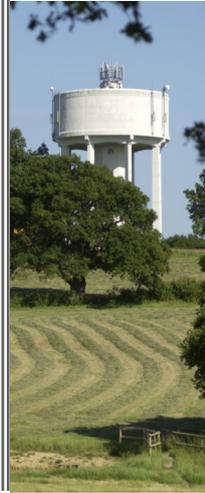
Improvements to Green Circle paths particularly at West Park Reserve

Work has been continuing at pace to improve path, cycle and bridleway routes around Burgess Hill's Green Circle Network, making it easier for residents to travel around the town in a sustainable way. One of which is the Green Link route between Malthouse Lane to Poveys Close, via West Park Reserve. Not only has the path surface been improved to make it accessible all year but it has also been widened for dual use with pedestrians and cyclists. This project is part of the wider Place and Connectivity Programme. To find out more about this and the other Green Circle Network improvements visit <https://bit.ly/3f5Y9I9>.



Management Plans renewed for Batchelors Farm & West Park Reserve

In 2020 the Town Council commissioned a review of progress at Batchelors Farm and West Park Reserve, and a new five-year management plan for each site. The subsequent 2020-2025 management plans include a new action plan, "a summary of progress towards meeting the site management objectives set out in previous plans" and revised management aims, objectives and prescriptions. The primary reason for developing a management plan is to aid the efficient and effective management of the sites.



Friends of Batchelors Farm

A suggestion from the new Management Plan was to involve more residents, and Councillors took the opportunity to set up a 'Friends of Batchelors Farm' group. There has been a lot of interest and members have currently been asked to keep their eyes open and report any issues or findings at the site. Once COVID restrictions are lifted we hope to organise events including identifying wildlife and litter picks etc. A first newsletter has been produced and circulated to all members.

Lockdown Fun

Following cancellation of the June annual Summer Festival a Lockdown Virtual Festival was quickly organised to help residents stay cheerful and connected while remaining at home. During the lockdown period 119 social media posts were made, promoting a variety of activities and virtual events, as well as a fundraising live-streamed DJ set by Graham Meeres. The Town Council and Lions matched the donations from the public and grants were awarded to support local groups. In August the Town Council organised a Crazy Golf Community Day in the town centre. The aim was to offer some free activities and fun for families and to support our local traders by bringing people into the town.



Christmas Hampers

In December, 280 Christmas hampers were delivered to nominated families and individuals who were struggling financially. The Town Council worked with a multi-agency team of volunteers who checked, packed and delivered the boxes. Each hamper contained a range of basic items as well as seasonal foods, donated by the public and local businesses. Additional assistance was provided by The King's Church, Clarion Housing and Burgess Hill District Lions Club. The hampers were gratefully received.

Youth Website Resource

The Town Council's youth website was redesigned in-house and relaunched during the year. The updated version looks fresher, is more contemporary and with direct links to other websites it is now easier to maintain. The website provides information about all activities for young people in the town - find it at www.you-bh.com.

Help Point

HELP POINT

During 2020/21 the Town Council's Help Point received and responded to more than 24,000 enquiries from residents and visitors on a wide range of issues. The Help Point followed Government restrictions and closed its doors to face-to-face enquiries during the national lockdowns, reopening when it could. Through the pandemic the Help Point Team offered a service helping residents over the phone and responding to emails.

Celebrating Burgess Hill's History and Heritage

The Help Point in collaboration with Burgess Hill History and Heritage Association created a beautiful calendar for 2021. The calendar featured historical images of Burgess Hill including The Victoria Pleasure Gardens, The Hydro, St John's Church and many more. Each month was sponsored by a local business and all funds made from the calendar will be donated to the History and Heritage Association.



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