

A Message from the Mayor

I was delighted to represent the town as Mayor in 2022/23. The Council decided upon a capital program this year where projects such as helping finance the reopening Park Centre as a Youth and Community Hub under a new charity will hopefully become a reality in the next few months. We've financially assisted the creation of many warm hubs, working with churches and community organisations to help residents during the energy crisis. Businesses have been supported with the creation of the Council's own Economic Development team to help attract visitors to the town centre. We've seen a tremendous amount of community events in the last 12 months, including the unique opportunity to celebrate the late Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee, and the Coronation of King Charles III. Despite the challenges that Burgess Hill faces, the Town Council continues to be tenacious. In closing, I'd like to thank all the local organisations and volunteers who give so much to our town to enrich the lives of our residents.

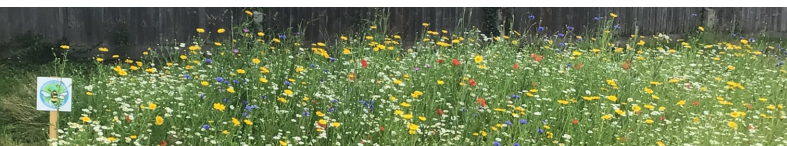


Jubilee Fest

For Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, the Community Engagement Team organised five days of community events for Burgess Hill. Starting on 1 June, there was something for everyone, with inflatables in St John's Park, a live music concert and lighting of the beacon, a Senior Citizen's Tea Party and lots more! The long weekend was also a brilliant example of the partnership working undertaken by the Town Council, as they worked alongside other organisations including: Burnside Day Opportunities Hub, Mid Sussex Voluntary Action and Mid Sussex Older People's Council. The beacon lighting was attended by hundreds of members of the local community, and was part of over 1000 beacons being lit across the UK and the Commonwealth to mark 70 years of the Queen's reign.

Verge Rewilding

Working with West Sussex County Council, the Town Council has created nine community verges around the town with the aim of improving biodiversity. This involved removing the turf, sowing wild flower seeds, and then allowing the area to grow over the summer - only carrying out one grass cut in the Autumn.



Inclusive Town Initiative

Burgess Hill Town Council launched an inclusive town initiative to improve access and inclusivity in the town. A working group, comprising multiple organisations, was created to come up with a programme of actions to make the town more user-friendly for all. In 2023, an Accessibility Survey will be undertaken giving residents a chance to respond to questions about any barriers and accessibility issues they have experienced in Burgess Hill.

Update on the Beehive Project

Following a consultation exercise in 2021, residents gave their support to for The Beehive Project (a new community centre and arts venue) together with backing for a loan of £4.8m to fund the construction of the building. In the summer of 2022, the Town Council made the prudent but very difficult decision to put the project on pause, due to rising inflation with building costs rising from £5.5m to nearly £9m. When we paused the project, our architects closed their London office to focus on international projects. This gave us the opportunity to look for new architects and invited bids for this work with the parameters that the cost must not exceed £5m. Twenty-two firms bid for the design work in the autumn, and following a review exercise the Town Council identified London firm, Unknown Works, to carry the project forward. One of its founding directors comes from Burgess Hill.

Operation London Bridge

Residents came together to pay their respects to The Queen who passed away on 8 September 2022. Wreaths and tributes were laid at the War Memorial in Church Walk, and residents were invited to sign the Book of Condolence at the Town Council's Help Point. St John's Church was floodlit in purple and a bell tolled for each year of her life as per the late Queen's wishes. A Civic Service of Commemoration was held at St John's Church. Mayor, Peter Chapman, read the Proclamation outside the Town Council's Help Point to announce the new King, King Charles III.

Relaunching Burgess Hill Market

The Economic Development department relaunched the Burgess Hill Market, in July 2022. The market was established by the Town Council as one of its Bridge the Gap initiatives supporting Burgess Hill's businesses, attracting footfall into the town centre. Since Covid-19, a rollercoaster of changes in shopping habits has been seen, with many people preferring to do most of their shopping online. Since the relaunch of the Market and the creation of a website, social media and advertising, our permanent traders have established a regular customer base who enjoy purchasing the weekly essentials.

It's Christmas! in Burgess Hill

On Saturday 19 November, Church Walk was filled to the brim with families enjoying the It's Christmas! event. Opened by local performer, Tom Ball, the event was a roaring success, with thousands of locals attending to watch musical performances and visit the Christmas Market. The ever-popular Imperial Outlanders returned, with Marvel and Star Wars characters, as they amazed those in attendance, along with the hilarious puppets Hodman and Sally. The Christmas event injected some life into the town centre, bringing smiles to families, as they enjoyed an affordable day out. The brilliant Same Sky brought free lantern making sessions to the Theatre Club for children to have something to take away and remind them of a fabulous afternoon out.



Park Centre

When West Sussex County Council decided to withdraw from Park Centre, the Town Council teamed up with Sussex Clubs for Young People, Clarion Futures and the Escape Youth Club to see how we could take it over as a community asset. A successful bid was made to take over Park Centre and we are now working with our partners to reopen in 2023 and take forward plans to modernise and extend the building in future years. The main purpose for Park Centre will be as a youth hub.

Allotments

Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) has included the Chanctonbury Road allotments in the sites for potential housing development, as part of the District Plan. The Town Council has been successful in making the allotment land an Asset of Community Value creating a community right to bid - should it come up for sale. We are working with MSDC (a major landowner in Burgess Hill) to try to identify other land for allotments and are actively opposing any development on the site.



Summer Fayre

A staple of the town's events calendar, the Summer Fayre returned to St John's Park on Sunday 19 June, with a range of community groups holding stalls to promote their charity work or social opportunities. Children could enjoy an inflatable dartboard or assault course, test their fears on the climbing wall, or relax on the miniature steam train ride. With performances from local clubs and dance schools, there were many activities for families to enjoy, as part of an affordable event to bring the community together. The Community Engagement Team are already hard at work and the Summer Fayre will return in 2023, bigger and better than ever!

Financial Summary

2022/23 Budget Analysis

The Town Council's budgeted revenue expenditure (including transfers to reserves and projects) for the year amounted to £1,039,437 with a total of £933,618 being funded directly by residents through their council tax. The Council is pleased to announce that a modest surplus will be achieved which will be reinvested to provide future services for the community.

The annual charge for services levied by the Town Council for a Band D property in Burgess Hill for the 2022/23 financial year was £75.32 which was the same as the previous financial year 2021/22. The Town Council can announce the charge for the forthcoming financial year, 2023/24, sees only a small increase of £1.19 per annum (1.6%) to £76.51 for a Band D property.

Revenue Budget: Income and Costs £000s

Where the money comes from:	2023/24	2022/23
Council tax payers (Precept)	966	934
Partner income (MSDC/WSCC)	51	39
Hire of Council facilities	10	14
Burial Ground income	34	30
About Town magazine	3	6
Other	36	17
Total Income	1,100	1,040

Where the money is spent:

Help Point Services	123	113
External Services (Grnds Maint, Burial, Allot')	278	258
Community Engagement & Events	223	203
Provision for Community Facilities	63	109
Civic and Planning	126	100
Total Direct Services	813	783
Support Services	173	162
Insurance, Business Rates, Utilities etc	114	95
Total Revenue Expenditure	1,100	1,040

Council Tax - Band D rate per annum £ 7 6 . 5 1 £ 7 5 . 3 2

Council Reserves at the 1 April 2022 £000s

General Reserve	£332
Earmarked Reserves	£653
Total Reserves	£975

Town Council Employees

	23/24	22/23
Full-time equivalents	Bud Bud Act	
	17.2	16.7 16.8

Public Notice: Under sections 20(2) and 25 of the Local Audit & Accountability Act 2014 Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234), it is reported the accounts for year ending 31 March 2022 for Burgess Hill Town Council have been duly audited by the District Auditor, Moore.

Community Grants Awarded

£20,282 in community grants were awarded:

Befriended	£500
Windmills Opportunity Playgroup	£1000
Sussex Chorus	£500
Maple Drive Community Group	£500
Cricket Club	£750
BH Junior Football Club	£1000
4Sight	£500
Albion in the Community	£500
Mid Sussex Brass Band	£500
BH Heritage and History Association	£600
Burgess Hill Artists	£600
Burgess Hill Theatre Club	£1900
Central Sussex Rotary	£271
Dame Vera Lynn Children's Charity	£400
Kangaroos Mid Sussex	£1000
Mid Downs Hospital Radio	£800
Mid Sussex Amateur Radio Society	£800
Mid Sussex Radio CIC	£350
Royal British Legion Women's Section	£815
Sheddingdean Baptist Church	£696
SASBAH	£300
Weald Classic Vehicle Club	£1000
7th Burgess Hill Scouts	£1500
The King's Church	£3500

Cost of Living Grants

Burgess Hill Community Cupboard CIO	£10,000
Fuel	£3000
Age UK West Sussex	£1200
St Andrew's Church	£2500
The King's Church	£5000
Community Transport	£1000
MSVA	£1945
Mustard Seed Café	£3660

Councillors' Allowances Claimed

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

Allen, Graham	£1,254	Travel & Subsistence costs reclaimed for undertaking official Town Council duties
Barrett-Miles, Andrew	£1,254	
Cartwright, Roger	£0	
Chapman, Peter (Town Mayor)	£0	
Cornish, Matthew	£1,254	
Duggan, Robert	£1,254	
Eggleston, Robert	£0	
Eves, Anne	£1,254	
Foster, Joseph	£1,254	
Gibbs, Lee	£1,254	
Henwood, Janice	£1,254	Cllr Max Nielsen £110
Hicks, Simon	£1,254	
Hussain, Tofojjul	£1,254	Total Allowances Claimed:
Lawrence, Sarah	£0	
Miah, Mustak	£1,254	
Neumann, Sylvia	£0	
Nielsen, Max	£0	
Willis, Kathleen	£1,254	
		£ 15,048

Town Centre Trails

During the Easter and October half terms, the Community Engagement Team organised town centre-based trails for local children. Following clues, the children followed stories, visiting shops throughout the town. Social media promotion for the trails was hugely popular, with many people following Bramble the Bunny and Aloysius the Owl, as they made their ways around Burgess Hill. 30 businesses, and over 250 children participated in the trails in 2022.

Queen's Green Canopy

A tree was planted on 11 March 2022 at Folders Meadow Play Area as part of the National Civic Tribute by local authorities across the country to Elizabeth II. The Acer campestre Field Maple was planted by Deputy Town Mayor Janice Henwood. The day chosen for the planting was the seventieth day of the year in which Elizabeth II marked the seventieth anniversary of her accession. It was a unique tree planting initiative inviting people from across the United Kingdom to 'Plant a Tree for the Jubilee'.

Free Energy Assessments

On 31 January 2023, a free Energy Assessment scheme launched in Burgess Hill, whereby local small businesses were able to apply for a free energy assessment report, funded by the Town Council. The scheme provides small businesses with the opportunity to identify where they could make some financial savings and adjust their environmental impact.

Lions Town Centre Day

The Town Council is always keen to work with local groups, so when Burgess Hill District Lions asked to sponsor a town centre event, the Community Engagement Team rose to the challenge! Market stalls, and community groups lined Church Walk in August, with free games, balloon making and face painting available, as well as free crafts in the Theatre Club. Lions Town Centre Day helped to provide families with a local, affordable day out.

St John's Pavilion

The Pavilion is located in St John's Park and is vacant for around 70% of the year. A plan has been developed by the Cricket Club to convert the building into a Sports and Community Centre so that it can be used all-year-round by the community. The expansion plan would see a renewal of the ground floor community area and the addition of a first floor with a community room and lounge. The Town Council is backing this expansion plan.

Wowzer Wednesdays

Over Summer, the Community Engagement Team organised five 'Wowzer Wednesday' events. Poi Passion ran four circus skill sessions. Everyone, young and old could join in, spinning plates and blowing bubbles! The events ended with a bang, as the inflatables extravaganza hit St John's Park on the last Wednesday of August. Loads of free inflatables were available for children, and the Co-Op provided children with free drinks and snacks!

Virgin Media Boxes

Mayor Peter Chapman met up with amateur artist from the u3a Group, Ian McConachie, to see his design of the Burgess Hill Water Tower painted on the Virgin Media box on the corner of Greenlands Close and Greenlands Drive. Art teacher, Richard Black, painted his design dedicated to J. C. Bee-Mason showing him as he was when he lived in Burgess Hill and images of his days as a film maker on his expeditions to the Arctic and the Bolivian jungle. Bee-Mason lived at Santos, 20 Junction Road, and you will find this artwork opposite the property.



Cost-of-Living Fund

To help alleviate hardship in the community, the Town Council allocated £25,000 to local community groups and charities, to set up 'warm hubs' ensuring residents have access to affordable food - with £10,000 donated to the Pantry. £3000 was made available for grants for people experiencing a fuel emergency. Burgess Hill residents on a prepayment meter could receive a £30 emergency top up voucher.

Graffiti Removal

Burgess Hill Town Council's Maintenance Team are tasked with removal of graffiti throughout Burgess Hill. There was a total of 147 incidents of graffiti removed by BHTC from 1/4/21 to 31/3/22 which totalled 326.20 sq m cleared.