



Saxmundham Town Council Newsletter

Winter 2021

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR OF THE TOWN COUNCIL



May we join you all first in hoping that 2021 will be a better year!

The Town Council will be doing its best to help the town and all its residents.

Our priority is to support those who need help due to COVID-19. Since last March, we have given financial

and practical support to the IP17 Good Neighbour Scheme, which has done a brilliant job for local people.

We are also working hard on the future of Saxmundham: improving the town centre, supporting our local businesses and influencing the controversial plans for the 'South Saxmundham Garden Neighbourhood'.

We also look after the town's community assets. We have recently redecorated and re-equipped the inside of the Market Hall, to make it a better venue for activities and performances. We are also looking at how to make the Memorial Field a more attractive public space, with better recreational choices.

We have done some essential works to our Town Council offices (opposite the station) and planted some new trees. We hope the station building itself will be re-built this year to improve the whole area.

We want to communicate better with everybody in the town. This Newsletter {which is hand-delivered by volunteers} is the first we've done. Let us know if you would like us to do more of them. Our new website, with news and information about the town, will be launched in a few weeks.

We now have a new Town Clerk, Roz Barnett, who joined us in November. She is experienced and enthusiastic, and I am confident she will be a real plus for the town.

Stay safe.

Cllr Jeremy Smith and Cllr Diana Eastman

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WE'RE LOOKING FOR THREE VOLUNTEERS TO JOIN OUR TEAM OF TOWN COUNCILLORS

Do you want to volunteer to help the Council shape our Town's future, and bring about practical improvements? Do you have skills or experience that you could bring to the role of Councillor?

The Town Council hopes to achieve a well-balanced Council membership that properly represents the diversity of Saxmundham including gender, different age groups, a wide range of skills and experiences including

businesses. There are many benefits about being a Councillor – you get to meet and work with great people and organisations, help lots of people, play a part in shaping the town's future - and it can even look good on a CV!

If you would like to put yourself forward, we would ask you to send a short, written statement about yourself, your experience, and interests, to our Town Clerk (details

below).

We are hoping to fill the positions by way of co-option at the Town Council meeting scheduled on 8 March 2021. Closing date for receipt of expressions of interest is Friday 19 February 2021.

If you would like an informal chat with a current Town Councillor about what being a Councillor entails, let the Clerk know and she will arrange this.

JOIN THE SAXMUNDHAM BUSINESS NETWORK

Saxmundham Town Council and East Suffolk District Council are working with businesses to develop a strong local network. The network will enable companies to share expertise, access training and opportunities to promote

Saxmundham businesses. Businesses that register with the network will have a free promotional page on the new Saxmundham website which is currently under development. Once Covid-19 restrictions are lifted there

will be opportunities for in-person meetings to plan events, training and marketing. To register your interest, contact the Town Clerk on 01728 604595 or email townclerk@saxmundham-tc.gov.uk



SAXMUNDHAM TOWN COUNCIL COMMUNITY GRANTS

The Town Council sets aside a sum of money each year to support the work of the many voluntary groups that make Saxmundham a great place to live and work.

This year has been a difficult time for many, as they have been unable to run their normal fund-raising activities while facing increasing

demands.

The Council welcomes applications for small grants from groups providing; support for vulnerable groups, advice and information, recreational facilities, cultural activities, or for other purposes which it considers will bring direct benefit to the town.

The Council is looking forward to receiving applications from all parts of the Saxmundham community especially from new applicants.

For more information and an application form, contact the Town Clerk on 01728 604595 or email townclerk@saxmundham-tc.gov.uk

THE TOWN COUNCIL'S BUDGET FOR 2021/22



Chair of the Resources Committee Cllr
John Findlay

Each year the Town Council sets a budget to pay for its work and for improvements in the Town. Most of the Council's income comes from its share of council tax, which is collected by East Suffolk District Council.

Our budget ensures that there is no increase in the Town Council's element of council tax in 2021-22 during this difficult time.

The budget includes provision for the following projects:

- Covid-19 community cohesion projects

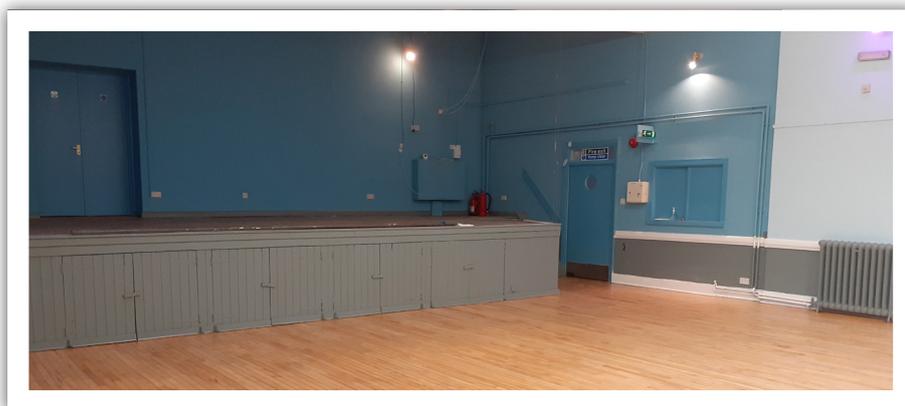
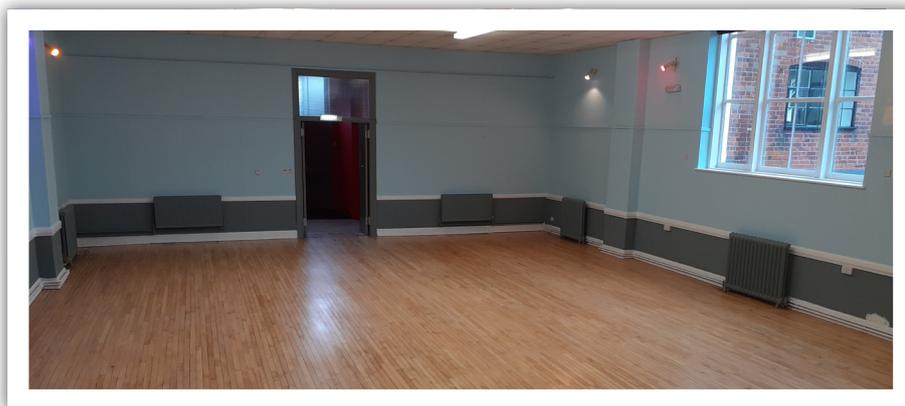
- An events programme to encourage people to visit and enjoy the town
- Increasing the usage of the Market and Market Hall
- Improvements to the Town Centre environment and to the Memorial Field
- Continuing supporting local organisations with the provision of small grants
- Improvements to how the Council communicates and engages positively and effectively with all parts of the local community, including the development of a new website

SAXMUNDHAM MARKET HALL READY FOR 2021!

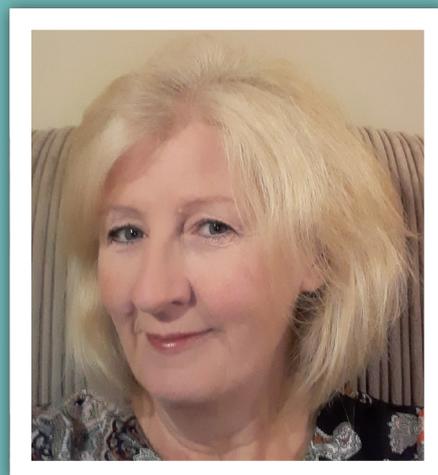
The Market Hall has had an internal makeover with the interior being redecorated, the floor polished and the kitchen facilities improved. With the help of a grant from East Suffolk District Council the hall has also been fitted with a state-of-the-art projector and facilities for hosting virtual events.

As soon as Covid-19 restrictions allow the Hall will be available for hire and there will be an annual programme of community events. The Town Council are keen to hear from local crafters and food producers as there is an intention to restart the popular craft fairs and possibly launch a regular farmers market.

The Market Hall is a Charitable Trust and relies on income generated from hirers to cover its operating costs. To find out how to book the Hall or to get involved in the events programme contact the Council on 01728 604595 or email townclerk@saxmundham-tc.gov.uk



NEW CLERK AT THE TOWN COUNCIL

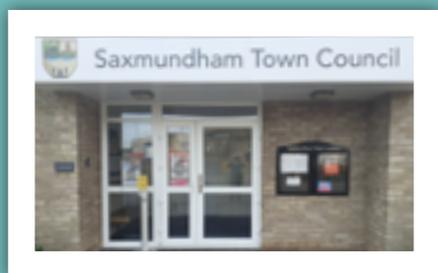


Roz Barnett new Town Clerk

The Town Council has appointed Roz Barnett as the permanent Town Clerk for Saxmundham. Roz has a professional background in youth and community work and has a track record of raising money for community projects.

In recent years she has been the Town Clerk for Eye and the Deputy Town Clerk for Thetford. On being offered the job Roz enthusiastically stated 'I am really looking forward to working with councillors, and residents on how best to take Saxmundham forward during these challenging times'.

She has taken over from Karen Forster who had been undertaking the role as Town Clerk on a temporary basis. Cllr Tim Lock with the support of the Amenities and Market Hall Management Committee worked with Karen to complete the recent improvements at the Council Offices and Market Hall.



SOUTH SAXMUNDHAM GARDEN NEIGHBOURHOOD

The plans for building a new "Garden Neighbourhood" with 800 homes plus new primary school are gathering pace. The developer – Pigeon Investment Management Ltd - is doing an on-line consultation on their proposals, which ends on 31 January.

The Town Council had consistently argued that the size of the new development was excessive, and the location not the right one, but in September 2020 East Suffolk District Council included the new Neighbourhood in its Local Plan, which has legal effect. We have therefore agreed to co-operate with

developers and planners to ensure that the Neighbourhood - as defined in the Local Plan - is as well-designed and planned as can be, and brings real benefits and new facilities to the town.

We are concerned however that Pigeons' current plans fail to achieve this. They fail to show how the new neighbourhood would be connected with the town – risking it becoming an isolated 'dormitory' leading only to the A12. Pigeons propose a far smaller area of green open space than shown in the Local Plan, and excludes The Layers, which should, we believe, become an attractive

public open space linking the new Garden Neighbourhood to the town.

Pigeons' plans also include a new site west of the A12, that is not in the new Local Plan, and was never consulted upon, for a new service station etc. This is wrong in principle and has potentially damaging impacts on the new Neighbourhood.

We want to help make the Garden Neighbourhood a success, but we need the developers to comply with the Local Plan and make some essential changes to their plans. What happens next will affect our town for many decades to come.

SIZEWELL C UPDATE

The Town Council is continuing to raise concerns about the suitability of a new Nuclear Power Station in the centre of an area of outstanding natural beauty. As highlighted by wildlife organisations, the project will potentially cause long term damage to priceless wildlife sites.

The Council continues to raise

concerns about the impact of additional overnight freight trains and additional traffic passing the town during the construction period.

The Council will lobby that, if consent is given to go ahead with the project, then significant funding should be made available for the

future of our expanding town.

The Council disagrees with EDF's assertion that Sizewell C construction will provide long-term benefits for the area as it has seen little evidence of this in respect of the existing Sizewell B power station.



COVID-19 AND THE COUNCIL

The Council Offices are closed to the public during the current lockdown.

Officers can be contacted on tel 01728 604595 Mob 07508677873 or by email townclerk@saxmundham-tc.gov.uk