

Sawbridgeworth Town Council

Sayesbury Manor, Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth
Hertfordshire CM21 9AN
Tel: 01279 724537



e-mail: info@sawbridgeworth-tc.gov.uk
web: www.sawbridgeworth-tc.gov.uk
BSc.(Hons) MILCM

Mayor
Cllr Ruth Buckmaster
TOWN CLERK
Richard Bowran

To: Cllrs Adamopoulos, Alder, Beeching, Burmicz, Coysten and Riches

AMENITIES COMMITTEE

You are invited to attend a meeting of this committee which will take place on **Monday 16 October 2017** at about 8.00pm following the meeting of the Planning Committee at Sayesbury Manor, Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth for the transaction of the following business.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Bowran', written over a horizontal line.

Town Clerk
10 October 2017

AGENDA

- | | | | |
|---------------|---|--|-----------|
| A17/12 | APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE | | |
| | To receive any apologies for absence | | 2 |
| A17/13 | PUBLIC FORUM | | |
| | To receive representations from members of the public on matters within the remit of the Amenities Committee. | | 10 |
| A17/14 | DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST | | |
| | To receive any Declarations of Pecuniary Interest by Members | | 1 |
| A17/15 | MINUTES | | |
| | To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 17 July 2017 (A01)
<i>[Appendix A]</i> | | 5 |
| | | | |
| | To attend to any matters arising from these Minutes and not dealt with elsewhere on this Agenda. | | |
| A17/16 | REPORTS | | |
| | To accept and deal with matters arising on written reports: | | |
| | • Allotments <i>[Appendix B]</i> | | 5 |
| | • Cemetery <i>[Appendix C]</i> | | 5 |
| | • Civic Amenities <i>[Appendix D]</i> | | 5 |
| | • Footpaths and Open Spaces <i>[Appendix E]</i> | | 5 |
| | • Operations <i>[Appendix F]</i> | | 5 |

A17/17 ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION

To discuss and decide on current projects

- Citizens Awards *[Appendix G]* **10**
- Floral Displays *[Appendix H]* **10**
- Future Markets *[Appendix J]* **20**
- Christmas Lights *[Appendix K]* **10**

A17/18 BUDGET 2018/19

To recommend items for inclusion in the Budget for 2018/19
[Appendix L]

20

- Allotments
- Cemetery
- Civic Amenities
- Footpaths and Open Spaces
- Operations

A17/19 NEXT MEETING

To note that the date for the next meeting of the Committee has been scheduled for Monday 12 February 2018.

Members of the Public and the Press are cordially invited to attend all meetings of the Council and its Committees.

Sawbridgeworth Town Council

Paper from the Town Clerk

To: Amenities Committee
From: Laura Carter
Subject: **Allotment Report October 2017**
Date: 09 October 2017

Introduction

Allotment plots per section are as follows:

Bellmead – 10
Bullfields – 48
Southbrook – 45
Vantorts – 10

	Budgeted Income	Budgeted Expenditure
Bellmead	180	340
Bullfields	1,000	600 (includes annual skip)
Southbrook	2,000	600 (includes annual skip)
Vantorts	150	400

Present Situation

In summary there are 113 allotment plots across the four sites. These plots vary in size from 3.5 rods to 10 rods (approx.).

In addition the two larger sites have an on-site toilet and a chicken house, which are maintained by the Allotment Association. Southbrook also has a beehive.

The current charge for an allotment is £4 per rod, plus £5 water charge for a full plot (8 rods and over) with a concessionary discount of £1 per rod. Allotment holders have been notified in their 2017/18 renewal of a rent increase of £1 per rod for 2018/19. There is no planned increase for water.

The waiting list is currently at 11, with some wanting to go on specific plots if/when they become available.

All sites are fully utilised, with the exception of Bullfields, due to outstanding work required before plots can be re-let to new tenants. There are currently 11 plots which need various levels of attention. The Town Ranger has only had the capacity to carry out essential repairs at the allotments during the Spring/Summer months. It is anticipated that during the Autumn/Winter months the Ranger can begin to devote some time to allotment maintenance, after which these plots can be re-let to new tenants.

Future work

The boundaries at Bellmead and Southbrook are currently maintainable by the Town Ranger and this will be scheduled for early 2018.

There is significant boundary work required at both Vantorts and Bullfields sites. It is estimated that it has been in excess of 15 years since any such work has taken place. A tree surgeon has already visited the site of Vantorts and a quote is pending, but it is estimated that the work will cost approximately £2,000. This work will need to be completed early 2018.

The amount of work required along the boundary of the Bullfields site is much more significant and will likely require ground clearance on a couple of plots, as well as tree/hedge work. Due to the amount of work required and the cost being in excess of £3,000, it is expected that this will need to be planned and completed over the next few years.

An extension to the water line at Southbrook allotments will cost approximately £1,000 and will be schedule for Winter 2017/18.

Priorities

1. Vantorts boundary clearance
2. Southbrook Water extension
3. Bullfields boundary & ground clearance (suggested 3yr plan)

Sawbridgeworth Town Council

Paper from the Town Clerk

To: Amenities Committee
From: Joanne Sargant
Subject: **Cemetery Report October 2017**
Date: 03 October 2017

Introduction

25 Burials / interments to date since January 2017. The Three Mile Pond Cemetery opened in 1952.

Grave Spaces per section are as follows:

A section – 123
B section – 144
C section – 285
D section – 105
E section – 156
F section – 171 (note this section is open and there are 12 further available before full)
G section – 119 (note this section is open and there are a further 20 spaces available)
J section – 27 (note this section is open for full Kerb Set burials)

In summary there are 1,130 graves currently at the Three Mile Pond site and a majority of these grave spaces have more than one burial / interment and many have up to four (please note that four is the maximum number of interments into a grave space)

In addition to actual grave spaces in the cemetery in the traditional format of Grave Space + Memorial Headstone, we offer an Exclusive Right of Burial (ERB) option for ashes to be interred at the base of a memorial tree. We have several interments of this nature in addition to some trees that are merely Memorial Trees. Scattering of ashes are non-exclusive rights of burial and although they are now recorded some were not previously recorded and therefore accurate figures are not obtainable.

Present Situation

The open sections in the cemetery (F,G and J) are quickly reaching capacity and therefore it was agreed that routine works to prepare the cemetery and other town council assets would be carried out by sub-contracted labour. A decision to not re-employ after the departure of Terry Wilson in May 2016 would restrict the activities of the current ranger and therefore essential works at the cemetery and the allotments would be undertaken to keep the allotments and cemetery in good working order and provide forward planning for the future of all sites. Sub-Contracted labour is sought on an ad-hoc basis and costs are kept to a minimum to ensure good value for money and continuity of service to the parish of Sawbridgeworth.

With this in mind section J and a new section following the completion of F are being prepared for burial / interment which could be as soon as spring 2018.

Future Projects

The opening of new section will require the road network in the cemetery to be extended. It is planned that the section directly in front of Section F will be used. Preparation work on this section has already begun with the covering of the old spoil bank that will be planted up over winter in preparation for next Spring / Summer. The planting of this bank will be with evergreen, low growing ground cover plants so that maintenance of the area is kept to a minimum, there will be a mix of shrubs that will display all year round interest.

The new road is essential for the growth of the cemetery, funeral vehicles and visitors will require access to the new area. The cost of such a project is high and therefore a detailed proposal for the tender of this work will be prepared in the coming months. The tender will be presented to contractors for quotation. The new section will be available for burial in Spring of 2018 if required, however the work for the new road network must be complete in the year 2017-2018 in order that the new section be fully operational in the next financial year.

Please see below an overview of the land with the new section location shown (note, not to scale)



Sawbridgeworth Town Council

Paper from the Town Clerk

To: Amenities Committee
From: Richard Bowran
Subject: **Civic Amenities Report October 2017**
Date: 09 October 2017

Introduction

- We own and operate one civic amenity site; the play area at West Road.
- We are in protracted discussions with EHDC concerning the Bell Street conveniences.
- We are mid project in respect of the refurbishment of the War Memoria

West Road Present Situation

The West Road Park was left with the town council after the asset dispositions in 1974. There existed a rudimentary set of equipment surrounded by a low fence.

Following the sale of the allotment land at Millfields in 2011/12 it was decided to set aside £30,000 to create a new play experience.

This coincided with persistent lobbying from a member of the public to improve the facility. The town council consulted with the parents and children of the surrounding area as to what they would like to see.

There was, and still is to an extent, a difference of opinion about the rights and safeguards surrounding the co-existence of families and dog owners who use the footpath through the area.

After going out to tender the current configuration was built and commissioned in 2013.

The play equipment is inspected and reported on every week and a record kept of the inspection. The grass is cut on average once a week by the Town Ranger. The rubbish bins are emptied once a week as a minimum.

West Road Future Situation

Apart from routine maintenance it is not envisaged that there needs to any significant additional expenditure on this facility.

Bell Street conveniences Present Situation

The town council has been in discussion with EHDC since September 2013 concerning the future of these facilities which it has been acknowledged are in need of updating.

Bell Street conveniences Future Situation

There are currently no further proposals from EHDC on the table. STC's policy is not to accept any financial responsibility for this facility but to encourage EHDC to carry out improvement works with the balance of the capital sum they are holding in favour of this asset.

War Memorial Present Situation

Extensive research into the repair and refurbishment of the War Memorial have been carried out. There are sums in specific reserve for the project. There is currently a difference of opinion between the preferred monumental mason and the Diocesan Advisory Committee as to the nature of the work to be carried out.

War Memorial Future Situation

Clerk and a representative of the church top meet with the DAC to negotiate a way forward

Sawbridgeworth Town Council

Paper from the Town Clerk

To: Amenities Committee
From: Richard Bowran
Subject: **Footpaths and Open Spaces Report October 2017**
Date: 09 October 2017

Introduction

We co-operate with East Herts District Council and Hertfordshire County Council over the reporting and maintenance of footpaths and open spaces.

Present Situation

We give regular and frequent advice and assistance to members of the public about footpaths, overgrown hedges and shortly no doubt fallen leaves.

The current major issues we are dealing with at the moment are:

- Permissive footpath from Elmwood to River. If it is established that this is the inherited responsibility of the town council a realistic estimate of the restitution of the path is around £10,000
- Footpath 6 at Kecksys. Following concerns about its location from residents, we have established that the moving of the footpath is legitimate in that it is being located to the correct alignment.
- Footpath adjacent to Kings Court. Following many complaints and protracted discussions with various parties, Herts CC have accepted responsibility for the maintenance and upkeep of the path.

The other major Open Space we care for is at the Rivers Orchard site. We have undertaken the major cut of the year which will cost around £1,000. This will be paid for out of the discretionary budget we have this year of £2,000.

Future Situation

Conversations with Nicholas Maddex suggest that HCC are going to review the way that they contract for routine maintenance. I have indicated that we are willing to enter into discussions about this.

Sawbridgeworth Town Council

Paper from the Town Clerk

To: Amenities Committee
From: Richard Bowran
Subject: **Operations Report October 2017**
Date: 09 October 2017

Introduction

The main areas of Operations fall under two headings.

- Community Transport
- Events.

Community Transport Present Situation

- Sawbobus – operating since November 2009. Current financial model depends on grant funding and commercial sponsorship, This model is collapsing and new methods of finance are being investigated.
- Rural expansion – no-gong discussions with various parties as how to best meet the community transport agenda.
- Self-drive hire fleet – consists of two minibuses and is currently self-sustaining.

Community Transport Future Situation

- Sawbobus – funding assumed secure for 2018/19 but funding pay of around £10,000 has to be addressed
- Rural expansion – Clerk writing a paper for submission to EHDC relating to future plans
- Self-drive hire fleet – will be adjusted according to need and maintained as self-sufficient.

Events Present Situation

The town council organises and manages several events during the year:

- Fun on the Field. Each July. Attracts over 1,000 attendees as a community event. Budgeted to break even.
- Christmas Lights. Each November. Attracts over 3,000 attendees as a community event. Cost this year is £8,800 for the lights and £2,500 for event costs.
- Remembrance Day. Each November. Council contributes by organising and printing service orders.
- Civic Dinner. At the end of the Civic Year. Objective is to break even on the event but ancillary items contribute to mayor's charity.

Events Future Situation

These events are budget dependant and it is for Members to decide which events should be promoted for the future.

Appendix G

Sawbridgeworth Town Council

Paper from the Town Clerk

To: Amenities Committee
From: Richard Bowran
Subject: **Citizens Awards Report October 2017**
Date: 09 October 2017

Introduction

The annual awards for Citizen of the Year and Young Citizen of the year have been in place in the present format for in excess of 12 years and have been supported by a variety of sponsors in that time.

Present Situation

Some Members of the opinion that it is time the situation was revisited and the scheme revamped.

Future Situation

Members were charged (Minute A17/11) with considering a change of name and format and to present their ideas at this meeting of the committee.

Sawbridgeworth Town Council

Paper from the Town Clerk

To: Amenities Committee
From: Richard Bowran
Subject: **Floral Displays Report October 2017**
Date: 09 October 2017

Introduction

The town council; has provided floral displays for many years in the format of hanging baskets and planters. More recently it has provided a major display in the London Road Planter surrounding the new town sign.

Present Situation

The current floral display dynamic has been in place for some years and we need to refresh and reconsider the offering.

Herts CC have advised that they will be regulating floral displays more strictly in the future, but have yet to reveal the parameters that they will be using.

Future Situation

As a town we are very limited for display space. The new regulation may well make it impractical to carry on with the present style of offering. We will continue to research into an alternative if it is the council's will for us to do so.

Sawbridgeworth Town Council

Paper from the Town Projects Manager

To: Amenities Committee
From: Joanne Sargant
Subject: **Markets Report October 2017 (Research & Findings)**
Date: 10 October 2017

Introduction

The Town Council successfully ran monthly Farmers' Markets until April 2015. A decision to postpone markets was made by council and officers when a decline in trader participation and falling footfall numbers became evident, at this point the budget for running the markets was break even and therefore to mitigate a deficit a postponement was required. This was a natural break point in the year as a new licence from East Herts Council would be required for the 2015-16 year at a cost of £500. This paper includes information about general economic vibrancy of towns as the success or decline of a market works collaboratively with town vibrancy and demographic factors.

Consequences

Following an initial spell of social media comments from a very limited few, there was no overwhelming demand to re-establish the market in its current form. Traders in the town had also raised a petition against the monthly market declaring that trade was down on market days; despite best efforts from officers they were unable to persuade traders to substantiate the petition claim.

Research Focus: What are other towns doing?

- **NABMA Regional Meeting – 30th March 2017:** With a population of just over 20,000 Ely is one of the Britain's smallest cities. NABMA chose to host their regional meeting here as the model adopted is that of a trading company. Ely has a Charter Market every Thursday, Craft and Collectables Market every Saturday, Farmers' Market every 2nd and 4th Saturday and a market every Sunday. The markets were declining before the trading company model was adopted. Markets are now once again the heart of Ely. Success of the markets has attributed to increased vibrancy, choice for the community, stepping stones for new small businesses and an increased profit. The main objective in setting out with the trading company model was to increase income in order to freeze the precept demand. This objective has been met. Key requirements to success are the marketing and promotion of the market and community transport services into Ely from rural villages and towns on market days.
- **Great Dunmow:** Information obtained from Town Clerk Caroline Fuller, population 8,830 (2011). The market here is a success and contributes greatly to the economic vibrancy of the town. Key facts:

- **Market Day** – Weekly on Tuesday
- **Location** – Angel Lane Car Park (rear of the High Street)
- **Organiser** – Independent trader who rents the car park from Uttlesford District Council. (Cost unknown)
- **Town Teams** initiative also runs in the town by business owners and is successful. Reduced parking offers, tokens for shopping in the town, responsible for Christmas Lights. Town Teams was a project set up by the Prime Minister David Cameron who commissioned Mary Portas to conduct an independent review of the High Streets in England. One of the key recommendations was to: “...put in place a Town Team: a visionary, strategic and strong operational management team for high streets”

Great Dunmow continues strongly with the Town Teams model, the only input that it has from the Town Council is a councillor representative present at the meetings.

- **Chamber of Trade:** also runs in addition to Town Teams and is a long serving traditional group of business owners. It is interesting to note that the independent market organiser, Town Teams and Chamber of Trade all work independently in the town and the Town Council have little or no input.
- **East Herts Towns:** Markets are run in towns under a licence issued by East Herts District Council. In a meeting on 19th September 2017 with Town Clerks and CEO of EHDC the following information was obtained.
 - **Buntingford:** Weekly market on a Monday and this is held as a Charter Market on Market Hill. The market runs under the policy – ‘put nothing in, take nothing out’. The Town Clerk reported that this model works well for the town and with the assistance of a lead trader who coordinates the stalls this runs with relative ease and little input from the Town Council in terms of physical resource. Population – 4,820 (Hertfordshire’s smallest town)
 - **Bishops Stortford:** As a historic market town with a population of 37,838 (2011) markets run weekly on Thursdays and Saturdays and every first Saturday of the month there is an additional Farmers’ Market (note, this is the result of Sawbridgeworth not renewing their market licence) The markets continue to thrive and are run by the Town Council under licence from EHDC.
 - **Ware:** Weekly market on a Tuesday. Population of Ware is 18,800. Clerk reported that the market is a popular asset. The market is run by EHDC. The market is held in Tudor Square and the High Street.
 - **Hertford:** Weekly Saturday market held in Salisbury Square, Maidenhead St, Railway St and Bircherley Green. Population of Hertford is approx. 26,000 (2011) EHDC run the markets and also a monthly Farmers’ Market on the second Saturday of the month in the Market Place.

EHDC has made a recommendation to the towns that they wish to hand over the running of all markets directly to the towns; the model derived in Bishop’s Stortford will be shared with Hertford and Ware over the coming months and consultation

with members must take place to resolve to take over the running of their own market.

Present Situation

A key theme that runs in all of the above case studies is location. Most towns have a dedicated 'market place' and the support of market charter status, something we are lacking in Sawbridgeworth. Markets work well when businesses support and endorse a market in the town to increase footfall and enhance vibrancy. Further research must now be sought if members feel that the introduction of a market could benefit the town but more importantly local businesses.

Key Messages from NABMA regional meeting were:

- ❖ Markets are the next generation; they are forward thinking and an excellent entrepreneurial tool for the young generation.
- ❖ They should always be at the heart of the town, not on the outskirts
- ❖ One-off events (food festivals etc.) do not contribute to long term sustainability.
- ❖ Incentives on market days such as free parking are essential.
- ❖ The correct combination of traders is a balancing act for sustainability but when achieved this leads to success
- ❖ Know your local area and supply what it demands, don't have rigid rules!
- ❖ Flexibility with trends needs to be adopted when running a market with the scope to adapt accordingly with change.

Sawbridgeworth Town Council

Paper from the Town Clerk

To: Amenities Committee
From: Richard Bowran
Subject: **Christmas Lights Report October 2017**
Date: 09 October 2017

Introduction

The Christmas Lights Event has grown from strength to strength over the last few years and now attracts in excess of 3,000 people on the evening.

Present Situation

The Event continues to be refined in conjunction with partner organisations. Planning for the 2017 event is well under way. Preliminary light installations have already taken place. HCC licencing requirements continue to be an issue which we will have to resolve. Much effort has been put into co-ordination possible conflicting events. A novel approach to publicity has been arranged.

Future Situation

We remain open to Members suggestions as to the future format of the event.

Sawbridgeworth Town Council

Paper from the Town Clerk

To: Amenities Committee
 From: Richard Bowran
 Subject: **Budget 2018/19 Report October 2017**
 Date: 09 October 2017

Introduction

The Amenities Committee must put forward proposals for inclusion in the Budget for 2018/19

Proposals

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allotments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bullfields – site clearance ○ Southbrook – water pipe ○ Vantorts – border clearance ○ Bellmead – border clearance 	£3,000 £1,000 £1,500 £1,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cemetery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Spoil dump ○ Fence Extension ○ Roadway 	£1,000 £3,000 £10,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civic Amenities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ West Road ○ Bell Street Conveniences ○ War Memorial 	£500 nil £5,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Footpaths and Open Spaces <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Elmwood permissive path ○ Footpaths as a contractor 	£10,000 £10,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operations - Community Transport <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sawbobus - subsidy ○ Rural extension - drivers ○ Hire fleet 	£20,000 £5,000 Nil
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operations – Events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fun on the Field ○ Christmas Lights ○ Remembrance Day ○ Civic Dinner 	£500 £2,500 £500 £500

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizens Awards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New format development 	£500
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Floral Displays <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Replace infrastructure ○ Planting 	£5,000 £1,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future markets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Development 	£1,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christmas Lights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Contract (Year 2 of 3) ○ Enhancements & Replacements 	£8,800 £3,200
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total Proposed 	£94,500