



SANDGATE PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of a PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
Held at 7pm on Tuesday 17 September 2019

At Sandgate Parish Council/Library Offices
James Morris Court, Sandgate High Street, Sandgate.

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|-----------------|--------------------|--|
| Present: | Chairman | Councillor Robert Bliss |
| | Councillors | Vannessa Reay, Nabin Siwa, Guy Valentine-Neale, Adrian Watts and Lewis Whitnall |
| | Clerks | P Savage |

There was no report from the PCSO.

There were no members of the public present.

These Minutes will only be deemed to be a correct record of the meeting when approved and signed at the next meeting

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm

1. **Apologies for absence:** Councillors Nina Bliss, Michael Fitch, Gary Fuller, Tim Prater and Tracy Stephens
2. **Declarations of Interest** – there were no declarations of interest.
3. **Minutes of the last meeting** – the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 16 July 2019, having been previously circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed.
Agreed by all who had been present at the meeting.
4. **Chairman's opening remarks**
The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.
5. **Chairman's Correspondence**
 - 1) Email notification of winter advice from KCC
 - 2) Advice in respect of Brexit preparations from KALC
6. **Sandgate in Bloom**
Noted the award to Jackie's Encore for their superb display.
7. **Sandgate Library Committee report**
Noted that a meeting of the Committee was imminent. The Council was thanked for agreeing to meet half the cost of the broken Sandgate Society/local history TV.
8. **Resources Committee**
The minutes had been circulated. The Council noted the position in respect of the toilets in the park and those on Granville Parade. In addition the RFO was asked to check the date of the kiosk lease renewal.
9. **Environment Committee report**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee had been circulated. Councillors continued to be interested in CCTV options which the clerks were asked to pursue.

10. **Planning Committee report** - The minutes of the meetings had been circulated. A further meeting of the Committee had been held immediately before the Council.
11. **2019-20 Finance report**
The RFO reported that expenditure and income continued to be on target. He also reported that the external auditor's report had been received with a small technical correction.
12. **Sandgate Society grant application** – item withdrawn as the grant had been paid in February 2019.
13. **Folkestone and Hythe green infrastructure strategy**
Councillors made observations as to the questions in the survey and authorised the clerks to collate the views which was completed in accordance with the deadline as attached
14. **KALC**
Councillors asked the clerks to see whether KALC could organise more conferences and seminars outside of normal working hours.
15. **Twinning**
Councillors were advised that Sangatte had just held their 14th consecutive sea festival.
It was important to produce some information for inclusion in the Sangatte newsletter/brochures.
16. **Information**
 - 1) The union flag on the village green needed replacing (GT)
 - 2) 2020 calendar: agreed to try to get organisations together to produce a single calendar of events in Sandgate, ideally to be part of an early December newsletter. Clerks to try to organise an early evening, informal get together with partners and stakeholders to discuss and develop the concept.
 - 3) Beach clean: councillors expressed their thanks both to the volunteers and also to the Boat House for providing refreshments for the volunteers.
17. **Date of next meeting** – 15 October 2019 at 7pm.

The meeting ended at 8.02 pm.

Signed by the Chairman.....Date.....

Folkestone and Hythe Green Infrastructure Strategy

Parish and Town Council Questionnaire

Introduction

Folkestone and Hythe District Council is in the process of producing a new green infrastructure strategy. This strategy will set out the opportunities for protecting and enhancing green infrastructure in the district. It will sit alongside the People and Places Local Plan, Core Strategy and other planning documents, and support their delivery.

It is important to gain the views of stakeholders to ensure that the green infrastructure strategy meets local needs.

Folkestone and Hythe district has outstanding green infrastructure - from the internationally important shingle and coastal habitats of Dungeness, to flower-rich chalk downland and ancient woodlands. The Romney Marsh supports important species, such as water voles, and the district is internationally important for its overwintering birds. In the towns and villages, there are green spaces used for leisure, sport, play and community activities.

We are inviting all parish and town councils to tell us about what is important about green infrastructure in their area and how it could be improved.

Please complete this survey and return to sharon.bayne@blackwoodbayne.co.uk by 23rd September 2019.

What is Green Infrastructure?

Many environmental features make up green infrastructure (see on next page), including water environments such as streams, rivers and ponds (often termed 'blue infrastructure').

A key feature of green infrastructure is that it forms networks, which are strategically planned so that spaces and places are connected. This benefits not only wildlife, but people too. Green infrastructure is not just public parks or amenity space, and some green infrastructure is publicly accessible and some is not. It does not need to be accessible to be valuable.

Each component part of green infrastructure has the potential to deliver a wide range of benefits, including recreation, biodiversity, health improvements, climate change mitigation and adaptation and improvement in water quality and managing flooding. When planned, designed and managed as a network, these benefits are maximised.

Folkestone and Hythe's green infrastructure strategy will be considering a range of benefits that green infrastructure can bring to the district and how these can be improved.

Folkestone and Hythe District Council will keep the information you provide as confidential. Access to, retention and disposal of this information will be strictly in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). Blackwood Bayne Ltd are supporting Folkestone and Hythe District Council in producing their green infrastructure strategy and will be acting on behalf of the council to process the information gathered in this survey.

Please be assured that the information you provide here will be used only for the purposes of this consultation, will be kept confidential and will be stored securely in line with data protection laws.

1. Name of parish

Sandgate

2. Contact name

Peter Savage

3. Contact email

clerk@sandgatepc.org.uk

4. Contact telephone

01303 248563

Please look at the map sent with the covering email to this questionnaire and answer the following questions.

5. Tell us about any significant green infrastructure sites or features that are missing from the map. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary, or provide a map or diagram.

The map would appear to be accurate.

6. What do you consider to be the most valuable biodiversity assets of your parish?

Probably the most essential element is the ribbon along the wooded esplanade which is being gradually eroded. Whilst the parish council recognises the need for more housing, it is important that the green spaces be protected within some sort of strategic overview. By that we mean that it is important to understand how flora and fauna rely on being able to move between adjacent open spaces. Planning permission for housing needs to take account of that – for example by agreeing to a housing development on part of “Sandgate Woods” it damages the opportunities for biodiversity to thrive. Just as we are encouraging biodiversity in the adjacent Sandgate Park on Military Road by increasing meadow planting etc, the district council has allowed a significant part of the woodland to be lost for five large houses.

7. Joining up biodiversity sites is important, for example through wildlife corridors or making farmland more ‘friendly’ for wildlife to move across. How could the biodiversity sites in your parish be better connected?

See above. The issue is not about connecting but preventing disconnection.

8. Are there any issues negatively affecting the biodiversity value of the green infrastructure in your parish, for example lack of management?

The parish council is seeking to increase its own role by negotiating with the district council to manage more open space, subject to appropriate budgetary provision. Parish councils understand better their own localities and can therefore encourage biodiversity on behalf of the whole area and adjacent town and parish council areas.

9. Are there any projects underway or planned in your parish to support biodiversity?

Meadow planting in Sandgate Park, Military Road
Community garden in Enbrook Park (Saga grounds) in which along with an semi organic allotment space beehives are being planned.

10. Would your parish or town council be interested in developing projects which involve your community, for example wildlife gardening, community food growing, swift or bat boxes, routeways for hedgehogs etc.? Please give details of your area of interest.

Yes – we are already supporting the community garden in Enbrook Park as above and are planting meadow areas in Sandgate Park. Sandgate Woods (Martello Towers 6 and 7) are ideal for bat boxes – it is believed that bats are struggling in that area. Unfortunately the land was recently purchased by a developer who has little interest in biodiversity and is intent on developing as much of the land as he is allowed to without concern for nature. This is a vital parcel of land as the biggest element of the green ribbon running through Sandgate and into Hythe.

11. Would your parish or town council be interested in managing the land you own to provide more of the green infrastructure benefits previously listed? Would you need more information to help you?

Definitely. Talks are underway to take over small parcels of land subject to financial issues being resolved. The parish council has limited budgets so would need assistance to meet all ambitions.

12. How could access to green spaces and nature in your parish be improved, especially for those who are less mobile or have a disability?

Sandgate is a very hilly area and much of the green spaces are the steepest. Giving access to people with mobility issues is difficult and costly, but the areas would be especially beneficial for people with poor mental health. It is known that open space activity can be beneficial in improving people's mental health, so better access Sandgate Woods, for example, which is a beautiful and quiet location would be extremely advantageous. There are public footpaths through and to these woods and these need to be improved and the land owner needs to be reminded of his obligations to encourage public access – and not discourage it through overdevelopment.

13. What are the main improvements that could be made for green infrastructure in your parish? These might be improvements for:

- **biodiversity**
- **access to green space**
- **improving the health of residents**
- **adapting to climate change**
- **protecting the water environment**

or others that you consider important.

These issues have already been dealt with.

14. Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are a statutory designation made under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 by principal local authorities. Parish and Town Councils can also declare LNRs but they must have the powers to do so delegated to them by a principal local authority.

LNRs are places for both people and wildlife. They are places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally. They offer people opportunities to study or learn about or enjoy nature. They include a wide range of habitats and sites, both rural and urban.

Are there any sites in your parish which could be considered for becoming Local Nature Reserves?

Sandgate Woods. This is a largely undisturbed piece of the ancient escarpment and is thought to house badgers, bats and owls along with a wide range of woodland flora. Better management of the woodland ought to be able to protect those species and encourage further biodiversity. It could also provide an opportunity to demonstrate the ancient escarpment and how it would have related to the former shoreline.

15. Please tell us anything else which could help us produce the green infrastructure strategy.

The primary concerns have already been expressed, but it is worth reiterating that housing development risks damaging the green environment and also the natural geology of the area. See and understanding the ancient escarpment is vital to understanding Sandgate and the district council is urged to respect and help with that

Thank you for your responses. The draft green infrastructure strategy will be published later in 2019. Please check <https://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk> for updates.

**Please return to sharon.bayne@blackwoodbayne.co.uk
by 23rd September 2019.**