



Swanage Matters

The official newsletter of Swanage Town Council

Summer 2017

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Meeting Dates

All meetings are open to the public and commence with 15 minutes of public participation time.

Agendas are available on-line.

Monthly Council Meetings

7.00 pm, Town Hall
31st July, 21st August
25th September,
7.00 pm, at The Centre

Planning and Consultation

6.30 pm, Town Hall
7th August & 4th
September

General Operations

4.30 pm, Town Hall
9th August

Personnel Committee

9.30 am, Town Hall
20th September

Swanage Information Centre Re-opens

The refurbished Information Centre opened to the public ready for a busy Easter weekend on Tuesday 11th April. Over the winter the building has been extensively refurbished at a cost of £100,000, representing a significant investment to support the local economy.

The bright and airy interior has a completely new layout, providing enhanced display space for information and local products, together with improved office accommodation. The Council's new Visitor Services Manager and Business Development Officer, Culvin Milmer, appointed in November, remarked 'This is an exciting time to have joined the Town Council, and it is fantastic to be able to welcome people into our bright and modern Information Centre'. Culvin has recently been joined by a new Visitor Services Assistant Manager, Sarah Lovett.

The Information Centre not only provides advice and guidance on holiday accommodation, walks, and local events, but also acts as a ticket agent for National Express coaches, boat trips, and local festivals. The Council's seafront beach huts can also be booked throughout the year.

A selection of maps, guides, and local history books are for sale, together with a wide range of local products and high quality cards. The Information Centre also has an educational role, providing material on water quality as part of the Blue Flag programme, and initiatives such as Litter Free Coast and Sea.

Culvin, Sarah, and the team would love to meet you. The Swanage Information Centre is open between 10am and 5pm seven days a week.

Council Tax bills frozen, but investment in Swanage continues

This spring you will have received your Council Tax bill, showing that the Town Council's share of the charge (known as the parish precept) is unchanged from last year.

The parish precept for a Band D property is £145.60, making up a little over 7.5% of the total bill. The largest share of the bill (just under 70%) funds services provided by Dorset County Council.

The parish precept provides approximately 1/3 of the Town Council's total annual income with the rest coming from parking charges, rental and investment income, beach hut hire and the fees charged for Council services (e.g. cemetery, allotments and sports facilities).

The majority of these funds are spent directly delivering Council services, such as maintaining the beach to Blue Flag standards, tending to our parks and gardens, and providing public toilets. The Town Council also provides grant support to many local organisations, which last year included a donation towards the employment of a specialist dementia nurse, a contribution towards the refurbishment of Swanage Pier and small grants to the Blues Festival, Purbeck Film Festival, Purbeck Citizens Advice Bureau, Swanage Regatta & Carnival and Dorset Blind Association.

The Town Council also undertakes wide-ranging projects to ensure that the town's assets are well maintained for future generations. As well as the extensive refurbishment of the Swanage Information Centre, this winter has seen external works to the Town Hall (including repair of the clock), the final phase of improvements to the war memorial, and the installation of new artificial surface tennis courts at Beach Gardens. Next winter a major improvement programme to a number of the Council's public toilets is planned.

All of this at a cost to Band D tax payers of £2.80 per week, little more than the price of some Sunday newspapers.

More information about Town Council budgets and spending over recent years is available online at www.swanage.gov.uk. Follow the 'Publications and Downloads' tab on the left hand side and click on 'Finance'.



Swanage has a new Town Mayor

At the Annual Council Meeting on Monday 22nd May 2017, Councillor Mike Bonfield accepted the official Chain of Office as Town Mayor, with his wife Audrey as the new Mayoress of Swanage.

Councillor Gail Green was elected to the office of Deputy Town Mayor, with her husband Malcolm as her consort. The outgoing Mayor, Councillor Steve Poultney, and his Mayoress Michelle, wished them all a very successful year in their new posts.



Appreciation and thanks were given to Councillor

Poultney for the sterling work undertaken in dealing with some difficult issues during his mayoral term.

The Committee Chairmen for the coming year will be:

Tourism – Councillor Caroline Finch

Transport – Councillor Mike Whitwam

General Operations Committee –
Councillor John Bishop

Personnel Committee – Councillor Tim Morris

Planning and Consultation Committee –
Councillor Avril Harris

Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee – Councillor Mike Bonfield

Beach Gardens News

A very successful 'Open Day' was held at Beach Gardens on 1st April. Councillor Mike Bonfield declared the newly refurbished tennis courts open, and proceedings began with the Tennis Club extending a sincere thank you and farewell to their recent coach, Nathan Fowler, and welcoming new coach Ryan Trickey.

Tennis Court 1 was then transformed into an exhibition court as spectators were treated to a very tight doubles match in which John Paish, a former professional tennis player, and Nathan Fowler, played Ryan Trickey and ex-Swanage Tennis Club Chairperson, Tony Saunders. After a tie-break, John and Nathan claimed victory. This was followed by an excellent juniors match.



The open day attracted lots of interest, with free

putting and tennis coaching on offer. The putting green and tennis courts were full for most of the day, the weather was superb, and a very enjoyable time was had by all.

The open day also saw the launch of 'Tea on the Green', the Council's brand new refreshment stop set amongst a beautiful view of the gardens. Light refreshments are available, so come along and try one of our new coffees whilst you take in the view, and enjoy a game of putting, tennis, or bowls. A variety of hot drinks are available, including mocha, latte, or cappuccino. Please visit the Beach Gardens webpage for further information: www.swanage.gov.uk/BeachGardens.aspx

Big launch at 'The Centre'

This spring has seen the successful launch of The Centre by the Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust. With the support of Swanage Town Council, the Trust successfully bid to take on the freehold of the former Swanage Youth & Community Centre building, following withdrawal of funding by Dorset County Council last autumn.

The Trust's ambition is to create a 'vibrant social hub at the heart of the community'. Since taking over in September 2016, there has been lots of work going on, using volunteers, to fundraise, decorate and generally improve the building. The principal focus has been to seek key lettings that will help deliver community priorities and ensure that The Centre is able to cover its costs.

The first letting was to Purbeck Runners who wanted a permanent base where they could build on their membership, particularly for young people. This has been so successful that they now have two junior sessions as well as their adult session every Wednesday evening.

The Trust is also very pleased to announce that it has secured a letting to the Explorers Childcare Group, and a very successful launch/open day was held at The Centre on 1st April.

High quality 'wraparound' childcare and education will be delivered, in a nurturing, caring, secure and stimulating environment. Supported by highly trained staff, children will be encouraged to reach their highest potential through a varied curriculum. Explorers Childcare offers care to all children aged 0 - 11 years, from 7.30am to 6.00pm five days a week. This will include nursery care, pre and after school care, and holiday provision.

The Explorers organisation will also run two youth sessions a week for 11 - 19 year olds.

In summary, The Centre will host childcare during the day (Monday to Friday), youth club sessions on Tuesday and Friday evenings, Purbeck Runners on Wednesday evenings, and SINC (Swanage Individual Needs Club) on Thursday evenings.

The next step will be to offer community lettings for weekends, and occasional Monday evenings. And it

doesn't stop there... 'Phase 2' is at detailed planning stage, and will include the exploration of funding opportunities to assist with the construction of a new roof, and to substantially upgrade the building's energy efficiency. This will be followed by 'Phase 3' where it is hoped to extend The Centre to deliver a wider range of facilities for the whole community.

Please go online to see what is happening at The Centre, and all the other projects under the Trust's umbrella: www.sandpdt.org.uk and www.facebook.com/swanagecentre/



Dorset Dogs - working in partnership with Swanage Town Council

The Doggy Do Code – 'take only memories...leave only paw prints'

Swanage is a fantastic place for dog owners, whether you are local, or enjoying a holiday with your dog! Dorset Dogs is an organisation that champions positive management for dogs in town, coast, and countryside, whilst promoting responsible ownership. Our motto is 'Love dogs... love nature'. With free membership, a useful website, and a lively Facebook forum, do join Dorset Dogs online and come along to our free and fun events too!

Extraordinarily windy weather didn't deter the Dorset Dogs information 'pit stop' from a bracing seafront visit last autumn following an invitation from the Town Council. We were able to meet lots of local dogs as well as 'dogs on tour', offering doggy advice and giving out free doggy goody bags. This was followed by a highly enjoyable guided walkies in November with Councillor Gail Green and Su Powner from Dorset Dogs – although Storm Angus meant we couldn't quite follow our planned beach route!



Following on from the success of the guided walkies, a superb beach walkies was held on Saturday 8th April. The walk started in Sandpit Field, proceeded along the beach northwards, past Shep's Hollow, followed by a stroll around Days Park, and then back to Sandpit Field. A good time was had by all, the weather was beautiful, and we are pleased to report that the owners behaved themselves! Lots of photographs and a report from the day can be found on the Dorset Dogs Facebook page.

To find out more about Dorset Dogs, including the 'doggy do code', great doggy events, 'out and about' and dog-friendly information, and our 'Wagipawdia' pages – please visit our website www.dorsetdogs.org.uk, or check out www.Facebook.com/dorsetdogs. Alternatively, email dorsetdogs@dorsetcc.gov.uk, or call Su on 07718 159350.

Keeping Swanage Clean – a plea from the Town Council

Although the majority of dog owners are responsible, there is still a small minority who continue not to pick up after their dogs, seriously affecting the appearance of the town and posing a public health hazard.

Disappointingly, the Town Council has recently been advised on numerous occasions of repeated fouling in Northbrook Cemetery, and also local parks and play areas, which is of real concern to local residents and parents of children who regularly use these facilities. This has also become a major problem for the Council's operations staff when strimming the grass.

This has recently led to the Council banning dogs from Northbrook Cemetery, and appropriate signage has now been installed. Working together with the District Council's Dog Warden, greater enforcement activity has also been authorised by the Council.

Red dog waste bins are provided by the Council in all its parks and gardens. Ordinary litter waste bins can be used for this purpose too, and you can also purchase dog waste bags at the Swanage Information Centre in Shore Road.

The Council would therefore again make a plea to all dog owners to utilise these bins accordingly to help to improve this situation and assist the Council in continuing to make Swanage a pleasant place for residents and visitors alike.

The Town Council is committed to working together with Dorset Dogs to advise dog owners about best practice, and would like to pass on appreciation and thanks to Su Powner of Dorset Dogs for organising the worthwhile, educational events and for her invaluable assistance.

The Council would respectfully remind residents that a 'dog free zone' is in place on Swanage Central Beach between 1st May and 30th September each year. For further information, please visit the Council's website: www.swanage.gov.uk/BeachBay.aspx

St Mary's RC First School – attendance at Beach Management Advisory Committee Meeting

Pupils from St Mary's RC First School were invited to attend a meeting of the Town Council's Beach Management Advisory Committee earlier this year. The meeting was held at the new Swanage Lifeboat Station, and the pupils had the opportunity to have a tour around the new premises and lifeboat.

The pupils asked the Committee a variety of questions during Public Participation Time. Questions and comments raised included:

- Whether the south section of Shore Road could be closed all year round.
- Concerns raised regarding instances of dog fouling in the town, and whether the Council would consider a 'dog free zone'.
- The lack of litter bins on the beach.
- A query regarding Lost Children procedures for North Beach, and whether it would be possible to have RNLI Lifeguard cover on that part of the beach.
- Whether the Council would consider installing a water fountain/splash park.
- Problems encountered with rusty locks at Burlington Chine public toilets, and whether Council toilets could be open for longer in the summer season.

Committee Members and Council Officers responded to each question, and advised that some of the matters raised would form part of future discussions of the Town Council.

Committee Chairman Councillor Mike Bonfield, and the Town Council's Management Support Officer, Niki Clark, welcomed the opportunity to visit the school following the meeting to provide feedback and updates to the pupils, and it was confirmed that the rusty locks had been attended to! The pupils presented Councillor Bonfield with various plans and drawings they had put together for a new water splash park, which were excellent

Councillor Bonfield thanked the pupils for their valued input to the meeting, and it is hoped that they will continue to attend meetings in the future. Councillor Bonfield also commented that he had been impressed with the confidence displayed when questioning the Committee, and that the pupils should consider standing as Town Councillors in the future! Well done St Mary's.



Swanage has one of the best beaches in England!

The Town Council is proud to announce that the town's beach has again received the Blue Flag and Seaside Award for 2017. This is the 16th consecutive year that Swanage Central Beach has received these awards, which confirm that the beach meets the highest environmental standards.

To be awarded a Blue Flag, beaches must comply with

a number of criteria covering environmental education and information, water quality, environmental management, safety and services. The Seaside Award recognises beaches in England that achieve the highest standards of beach management and, in the case of bathing beaches such as Swanage, meet guideline water quality.

The Town Council is absolutely thrilled that Swanage's beautiful beach has again been recognised as one of the best and cleanest beaches in England. Many people enjoy a dip in the sea when they visit Swanage, so this will give them the confidence that their visit will be both safe and enjoyable.

The town's tourism and beach teams work extremely hard to deliver a great service and high quality environment for visitors to the town, so they should be very proud of these awards. This year the teams will again be ably assisted by the RNLI Lifeguards, who will be providing lifeguarding services on Swanage Beach, and they are looking forward to continuing to work together to maintain the high standard of beach services, cleanliness and safety. Congratulations and well done to all of those involved.

Keep Britain Tidy administers the award scheme in England. For further information please visit the following links: www.theseasideawards.org/home/1778

Volunteers honoured at the ninth annual Volunteer of the Year Ceremony

Hard-working volunteers from across Purbeck have been thanked at a ceremony hosted by District Council Chairman, Bill Trite. The volunteers, who do exceptional work for their local communities, received recognition and praise at the ceremony which has become an annual fixture in the district. Nine parishes and towns across the District nominated Volunteers of the Year who were congratulated in front of more than 50 guests.

Councillor Trite and guests heard about the dedication, energy and enthusiasm of the volunteers who give so much to their communities. After presenting each volunteer with a scroll as a mark of their achievement, Councillor Trite said:

'Those here this evening represent the vast number of other Purbeck volunteers upon whom so many local people depend. They are truly at the heart of our communities and make a tremendous contribution to town and village life in Purbeck. Many people rely on volunteers and I thank all those here tonight for their dedication, energy and enthusiasm. With ever-decreasing government funding for local councils, volunteers are crucial to our towns and villages. They make a positive difference from which everyone benefits, often working unseen and unsung behind the scenes. We owe them a profound debt of gratitude for everything they do.'

Mr Frank Roberts had been nominated by the Town Council in recognition of his sterling work within the community, in particular the 'Litter Free Purbeck'

project. Mr Roberts, along with four other local litter campaigners, has been working tirelessly to find ways of reducing the amount of litter dropped in Purbeck's towns and villages, on roads and beaches, and in the countryside, and you may have seen the numerous blue plastic rubbish sacks dotted around the district awaiting collection.

The campaigning team, working in conjunction with local councils and Dorset Waste Partnership, has developed regular/programmed litter-picks, and pavement de-weeding and sweeping, and hope that everyone in Purbeck will play a part in combatting littering.

Mr Roberts said 'We are eager to empower others to do their bit, however small, to support our community. Many volunteers have been working diligently to get rid of litter that has been accumulating. We're really keen to work out ways in which we can all keep Purbeck litter free, and change people's mindset about dropping litter in the first place, so that damage to the environment and harm to wildlife can be reduced. This will leave Purbeck's landscapes and streetscapes beautiful for everyone to enjoy now and in the future.'

Supporting the GB Spring Clean Campaign 2017 in March, the Swanage based team picked up 87 bags of litter weighing 479Kg.

Thanks and congratulations are extended to Frank Roberts, seen here with Councillors Poultney and Trite, receiving his scroll.



If you would like more information about the Litter Free Purbeck project, or to get involved, please email: litterfreepurbeck@gmail.com or visit Litter Free Purbeck Twitter: [@LitterfrPurbeck](https://twitter.com/LitterfrPurbeck)

Dates for your Diary

**Swanage Regatta & Carnival Week,
29 Jul - 5 August**

www.swanagecarnival.com

**Purbeck Strings Prom Concert - Mowlem
Community Room,
1 August**

www.purbeckstrings.com

**Penumbral Lunar Eclipse viewable in Swanage,
7 August**

www.timeanddate.com/eclipse/in/uk/swanage

Swanage Volunteer Bureau - want to make a difference?

A new 'Volunteer Bureau' was launched in Swanage on Thursday 11th May 2017. The aim of this new initiative is to promote volunteering opportunities in the town, and increase the number of volunteers in Swanage.

The Bureau has been organised by local groups, led by the Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust, and supported by Volunteering Dorset, and will be held in Swanage Library every Friday from 10.30am to 12.30 pm.

The Bureau is being run by 'Volunteer Champions' who will cheerfully signpost interested people to volunteering 'vacancies' in the town.

If you would like further information, or an application form, please contact Swanage Library on 01929 423485, or email Mrs Kim Gallagher, Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust, via swanagevb@gmail.com Thank you.

Swanage Bandstand – update

A Public Meeting was held on 16th May at the Emmanuel Baptist Church, Victoria Avenue, to consider the future of the Bandstand. The meeting was attended by approximately 200 people who expressed near unanimous support for reinstating the structure, first erected in 1923. Mr Paul Rabbitts, a bandstand expert, made a very informative and entertaining presentation to the meeting, which was welcomed by attendees.

The Council's Bandstand Working Party met on 26th June to give consideration to the points raised, and a further meeting will be held with the Friends of Swanage Bandstand and a representative from the Town Band during July. Matters to be considered include the cost of any project and potential sources of funding, together with the development of a plan to ensure that a refurbished bandstand would be well used in the future.

An update on future plans will be given in the next newsletter.

**Swanage Rotary - Craft Fair & Summer Fete -
Sandpit Field,
10 August**

www.swanagerotary.org

**45th Annual Purbeck Rally,
11 - 13 August**

www.rallytestsite.wordpress.com

**Swanage Lifeboat Week,
11 - 20 August**

www.swanagelifeboatweek.org.uk

**Swanage Triathlon Festival,
13 August**
www.offbeat-events.com/event/swanage-triathlon

**Partial Solar Eclipse viewable in Swanage,
21 August**
www.timeanddate.com/eclipse/in/uk/swanage

**Purbeck Valley Folk Festival,
24 - 27 August**
www.purbeckvalleyfolkfestival.co.uk

**SISATA Open Air Theatre - Prince Albert Gardens,
24 - 28 August**
www.sisata.co.uk

**Harmans Cross Field Day,
28 August**
www.harmanscrosshall.co.uk/fieldday.html

**Dorset Architectural Heritage Week
7 - 14 Sept**
www.edht.org.uk/dahw.html

**Swanage Folk Festival
8 - 10 Sept**
www.swanagefolkfestival.com

**Swanage Railway Classic Transport Rally
8 - 10 Sept**
www.swanagerailway.co.uk/events/detail/classic-transport-rally

Contact your Councillors

You may contact any of your Town Councillors to raise any issue of concern to the local community.

North Ward

Cllr Gail Green (Deputy Town Mayor)
27 Osborne Road
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Cllr Alexandra Lejeune
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alswanage@gmail.com

Cllr Gloria Marsh (D)
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Cllr Steve Poultney
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Cllr Bill Trite (CC) (D)
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Cllr Mike Whitwam (D)
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South Ward

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Cllr Mike Bonfield (Town Mayor)
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Cllr Caroline Finch (D)
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Cllr Avril Harris
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Cllr Tim Morris (D)
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Cllr Gary Suttle (D)
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(D) = District Councillor

(CC) = County Councillor

The Town Council is keen to hear your views on any issue featured in this newsletter. You can email comments to admin@swanage.gov.uk. Alternatively, send a letter, or complete your details below and return this slip to Swanage Town Council, Town Hall, High Street, Swanage, BH19 2NZ.

Name and contact details:

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Comments:

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