Battle Town Council Newsletter



Battletowncouncil.gov.uk

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September 2020

Exciting New Arrival for Battle



Battle Health Pathway Project

The construction of the Battle Health Pathway is making tremendous progress, with many visitors to the recreation ground now able to see the pathway's development. A tarmac surface forms a base layer that sits about 30mm from the surface, to help ensure the durability of the path. The gravel asphalt forms the final layer, which appears black when first laid **See page 3**.

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Discover Battle

Have you tried the Battle
Through Time Secret Spy
Trail, or beautifully
illustrated Battle Activity
Book yet? Now really is the
time to discover your town!
See page 16.

Contact Us
01424 772210
enquiries@battletowncounciil.gov.uk

A Message from the Chairman

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted Battle's strong community spirit.

More than a hundred residents registered with the Town Council as volunteers offering their time to support others. They delivered information leaflets to homes throughout the parish and/or helped our shielded and vulnerable residents by collecting their prescriptions and delivering their shopping. My heartfelt thanks to the volunteers and the many other people in the parish who gave their time to help neighbours in need.

The Council's office staff worked from home for many weeks. Our Town Clerk not only kept the Council functioning in the unexpected and difficult circumstances that the pandemic presented, but she also manned the Council helpline, taking down residents' requests for help. These were passed to her Assistant, who organised the volunteers and allocated the numerous requests for assistance. The Marketing & Town Development Officer



Cllr. Glenna Favell, Chairman

produced information leaflets and news items to keep residents informed. Members of the grounds staff continued to keep the town's estate looking splendid for us all to enjoy.

The town is fortunate to have such dedicated people working on its behalf.

The colourful flower displays planted by the Beautiful Battle volunteers are not only uplifting, but have also brought a welcome sense of normality to the town. The volunteers' hard work and dedication are very much appreciated.

In June, our MP, County and District Councillors and the President of the Chamber of Commerce met up virtually with some Town Councillors and the Town Clerk to explore the impact of the pandemic on Battle. We discussed the negative and positive effects of COVID-19 on our residents, services and businesses and considered ways to address the negative effects. We also discussed how we could build on the positive

"It is delightful to see and hear the various groups practicing in the bandstand." effects, such as the reduction in pollution and the increase in cycling and walking. On a recent Monday afternoon, I was very pleased to see a remarkable number of people in the High Street and on Abbey Green.

COVID-19 has not gone away of course, but we are learning how to cope with its existence and the threat it poses, particularly to our vulnerable residents and visitors. By continuing to wash our

hands frequently, keeping our distance and wearing our masks, we can help to protect our loved ones and our wonderful community.

We can still smile at each other - we just have to smile with our eyes!

Glenna

Battle Health Pathway Project

Continued from page 1 For those who are slightly concerned by the dark colour, please rest assured it will change colour with use to become a beautiful golden pathway over time, this could possibly be a year.

Please keep posted for more updates on the works as we all eagerly await the completion of this fantastic new asset to the town by signing up to email alerts from the Battle Town Council website at www.battletowncouncil.gov.uk.



Battle Health Pathway Works

Almonry Development Project Update

As has been published recently, one of Battle's oldest heritage buildings, The Almonry, is in desperate need of repair.



The Almonry Interior Staircase

Battle Town Council presented a vision for The Almonry, setting out four different options for the future of this wonderful building. Further details of this vision had been identified in the draft Strategic Plan, which can be found on the Battle Town Council website. The public consultation, conducted in the form of a questionnaire posted to all residents, closed on the 19th June. Data were analysed, considered and presented in June. A small number of residents took part in the consultation, and Council would like to thank all individuals who took the time to respond and have their say on the future of

The Almonry. Taking into consideration the post COVID-19 economic climate, which will inevitably affect the availability of grant funding and income from Community Infrastructure Levy payments, it was felt inappropriate to continue with the full project to include the rebuild of the south wing. Following lengthy discussions by the Almonry Development Working Group, Finance & General Purposes Committee and finally Full Council, the recommendations for works that ensures the building is made safe and accessible

It was clear from the results that public opinion was largely against the sale of The Almonry, with the majority of responses in favour of keeping the building in public ownership. However, responses to Options 1 and 2 which offered varying levels of development of the building, did not offer a decisive result.



The Almonry Gardens and Exterior

for all and to support the town's post - COVID-19 recovery through tourism were agreed:

To undertake selected agreed repairs, maintenance improvement and services to be initiated as soon as possible, for the efficient and safe working in a heritage building in order to fulfill statutory and moral obligations to include making the ground floor accessible for those with disabilities; A low cost conversion of floor space to include a Tourist Information Point; To put in hand an application for a loan of up to £600,000 from the Public Works Loan

Board, previously agreed and budgeted for, on the understanding that only the amount needed to undertake the works as above is drawn down. Council is excited to move on to the next stage of the project.

Whilst the detail is still to be agreed and a start date for any works remains undecided, the future of this incredible asset to the town is now a bright one.

Help For Local Businesses post Covid-19

In July, Battle Town Council released information on the availability of recovery grants to local businesses and organisation that have suffered from the economic aftermath of the pandemic. £10,000 has been set aside to provide grants of up to £500. It is not too late to apply! The grant is open to applicants from across the town and is intended to assist with additional expenditure incurred as a direct result of the rather unexpected COVID-19 pandemic. Grants can also be used to provide



Grants of Up To £500 Are Available Now

special services designed to benefit the residents of our Civil Parish during the recovery period of this pandemic. For the guidance document and information on the criteria required to receive this grant, please see the Support for Businesses page of the Council website. If you feel your business or organisation could benefit from this grant, please complete the application form which can be found online and return by email enquiries@battletowncouncil.gov.uk or hard copy to The Almonry, High Street, Battle, TN33 0EA.

Battle is 'Good to Go'



The arrival of Covid-19 has unfortunately hit many parts of society including our wonderful local businesses and services which, over the years, had made such an incredibly positive impact on the town. To support the reopening of businesses and encourage customers back to the High Street, a Covid-19 industry standard perfectly titled the 'We're Good to Go' mark is now available, providing a much needed 'ring of confidence' for businesses, attractions and destinations nationwide. The 'We're Good to Go' mark is an exciting new initiative that could really help to regain confidence in Battle High Street, and hopefully play a crucial role in encouraging more people to enjoy our beautiful town.



We Want to Hear From You

Taking part in the 'We're Good to Go' initiative couldn't be easier. If your business has implemented the Government's COVID-19 reopening guidance, understand the guidance from Public Health England and have a COVID-19 Risk Assessment in place, you can apply for the industry standard mark by simply completing a self-assessment through the Visit England online platform. You'll then be able to proudly display the 'We're Good to Go' certification in any way you wish, whether that be in your shop window or website.

Maybe you are a local business that is thinking of registering for the 'We're Good to Go' approach, have already proudly registered, please let us know and we can help publicise. In an incredibly challenging year for our fantastic local businesses, this is an exciting time for Battle High Street. mark For more information on the 'We're Good to Go' please see the Visit Britain Website www.visitbritain.org/.

Calling All Creative Writers

As many residents will already be aware, each year Battle Town Council holds the very successful 1066 writing **competition** which highlights the wealth of creativity we have here in our town. This year we have decided to extend the student deadline in line with the adult entries to 31st October 2020. This should give entrants of all ages, abilities and styles the opportunity to engage in creative writing, even if it is for the first time.

The title for the 2020 1066 Writing



Get Your Creative Juices Flowing This Year

Competition is 'If only....' in the hope that this will help to spark imaginations of all ages into creating some exciting pieces.

The competition is open to adults living in the Battle Civil Parish and students living or educated in the Parish in 2 categories; Junior (years 1 to 6) and Senior (years 7 to 13). Adults are invited to write exactly 1066 words whilst students can write up to 1066 words - Fiction or Non-Fiction - prose or poetry. For more information on the rules of entry and how to submit your work, please visit the Battle Town Council website, or email enquires@battletowncouncil.gov.uk.

Changes To Volunteer Services

In collaboration with Battle Town Council, our wonderful team of volunteers have been working hard to deliver supplies to those members of our community who have needed it the most, at a time that continues to be incredibly difficult for everyone. However, **Government has now paused shielding unless the transmission of COVID-19 in the community starts to rise significantly.**

This means the Government is no longer advising you to shield; the support from the National Shielding Service of free food parcels, medicine deliveries and care will stop; NHS Volunteer Responders will carry on delivering the food you buy, prescriptions and essential items to you if you are registered for this. You will still be eligible for priority supermarket slots (if you registered by 17 July)

As a result of this updated guidance, from the 1st August 2020 we will only be able to take requests from those who are considered 'extremely clinically vulnerable'.

For more information please contact enquiries@battletowncouncil.gov.uk.

Lockdown Photo Exhibition Will Spotlight Battle Residents



A photographic exhibition recording the lockdown experiences of the people of Battle, East Sussex, is set to launch on Saturday, September 12.

The display of over 50 pictures *This is Our Battle* by local photographer Darren Buss, will take place in the open air, using the town itself as a gallery. Darren's stunning pictures and the words of local people describing their lockdown experiences will take pride of place at various outdoor locations in the town centre, including shop windows and special displays on Abbey Green. Darren says: "I wanted to do something positive at the start of lockdown and began taking doorstep photographs free of charge to raise money for NHS charities.

"It quickly became clear that there was an extraordinary community spirit in Battle"

I was very keen for local people to tell their lockdown stories in their own words. The exhibition title *This is Our Battle* sums up how proud we all are of the town and the resilience we've shown in coping with the pandemic, even though it has been very tough." The exhibition features many of the key workers, volunteers and local businesses that have kept the East Sussex town going as well as people from all walks



of life who have kept up morale and helped to strengthen the community during a testing time. The exhibition runs from September 12 to October 3, and has been supported by Battle Town Council and English Heritage. It is a free event. The exhibition website is at this isour battle.com.

Battle Civil Parish Neighbourhood Plan

Battle Neighbourhood Plan

Your Neighbourhood Plan has progressed significantly since the article in the previous Newsletter. The six week public Consultation (Regulation 14) was held from 20th January until 1st March, and since then the team has been analysing the results from the feedback received.

Changes resulting from the comments, both from the Statutory Bodies and residents have

meant a considerable edit of the Plan and we are now completing the revised Plan. It will be presented to Battle Town Council for adoption and submission to Rother District Council under Regulation 15, for them to carry out their own public consultation. After that, there will be an examination by an independent Planning Inspector.

The final step will be a referendum carried out by Rother District Council

This will not be the end of the Neighbourhood Plan, as it has to be reviewed regularly by Battle Town Council via an Implementation, Monitoring and Review Working Group, until the end of the Plan in 2028. In the meantime please continue to look at www.battleneighbourhoodplan.co.uk" which will soon be redesigned, for the latest updates .

Thank You To Battle Shopkeepers

Tribute is to be paid to all our shops in Battle who kept us safe and cheerful in the early, often bleak, days. Our fishmongers, bakers and butchers offered delivery slots almost every day, Jempson's, too, offered our shielding residents opportunities to ring through orders and some were even able to pay on delivery! Town Clerk also took orders from residents, arranging for volunteers to collect and deliver. Boots and Day Lewis took phone calls and arranged collections and deliveries and when restaurants open we were all able to order a vast range of meals delivered to our doors. Even some of our smaller shops organised collection days for crafts, cards and gifts.

Please continue to support your local shops as they have supported us.

In addition a very big thank you to Jempson's, and the Co op for their generosity to the Food bank and the Summer Holiday Food Project, their discounts and donations enabled us to provide treats as well as basics for families to offer their children lunches during the school holidays. What a fabulous community we live in.



The Abbey Green and Highstreet

Your Community Updates

Wild About Battle

Lockdown may have seen us all confined to quarters but, thankfully, Mother Nature has been carrying on with her work. This year has seen fantastic progress on our Caldbec Hill patch. The Yellow Rattle has been amazing and this will give a great boost to the progress of the meadow. Before lockdown we were hard at work preparing for Spring. Some back-breaking effort went into clearing some small areas and putting down some annual seeds. We are awaiting for East Sussex Highways to carry out a final cut which will enable us to clear the ground



enough for some Autumn seeds to be put down. So the circle of life continues as we await the start of Spring and look forward with hope to a better year ahead.

Battle Yarn Bombers



Lockdown may have put a stop to many things, but for the ladies of Battle Yarn Bombers it was an opportunity to knit and crochet more than ever! As restrictions eased we managed some socially distanced, and appropriately sized, meetings in each other's gardens and we all agreed that, as far as we are concerned, the show must go on. We had planned to support the town's effort to scoop the prize in the Britain in Bloom competition, but this became another casualty of Coronavirus. We looked at all the beautiful things we had created and decided that we just had to share them with the town. We hope that you enjoy our display and that it brings a bit of much needed cheer. Don't forget to say hello to Elmer the Elephant as you pass by and keep your eyes peeled as we have plans for more to come ...

Battle Photographic Society

For the Battle Photographic Society, business is getting back to (a very new) normal. Whilst we are unable to meet in the Memorial Hall at the moment, all September—December meetings will take place via Zoom. We will be reviewing the start of 2021 later in the autumn, in case there is a second wave, but we fear we are again expecting to have to meet on-line in the early months.

Your Community Updates

Battle Festival

It is with a heavy heart that the trustees and committee had to cancel the month-long Festival in October. The good news is that our Patrons, BAFTA nominated and Shakespearian actor Anton Lesser and Ivor Novello Winner Tim Rice- Oxley have agreed to do all they can in October to keep the Festival in the lime light. Anton Lesser has agreed to read up to 10 poems that have been nominated by lovers of the Festival. In order to get your favourite poem read and posted on our website and social media all you have to do is to nominate your favourite poem and the reasons why this is so special to you. Nomina-



tions can be made via email to info@battlefestival.co.uk or popping your suggestions into the Almonry. Tim Rice-Oxley will also do something very special showcasing Keane's long-term support of the Festival.

Battle Memorial Hall



Like all other businesses and activities in the town the Memorial Hall was forced to close its doors on 23rd March. The loss of income, as well as community involvement, was a great disappointment so it was with huge relief that the Hall was able to re-open on 1st September. During the 5 months of closure the Hall Management Committee took the opportunity to organise a programme of repairs and the redecoration of all rooms which would not normally be possible when the building is in constant use. The Hall Manager, Lisa Keenan, will be pleased to welcome back

previous hirers and to discuss with any particular group requirements or concerns about future bookings. She can be contacted by phone 01424 772044 or email battlememoriahall@outlook.com.

Battle Museum

Due to Covid-19 the Society's talks, usually in the Memorial Hall, will instead until further notice, be held for members only by Zoom. It's easy and cheap to join the Society and see the talks: just go to the BDHS website and download the membership form. The Museum hopes to reopen from 29 September to 29 October three days a week. Please see www.battlelocalhistory.com/battle-museum.



Your Community Updates

Battle Floral and Horticultural Society



With the pandemic bringing our normally very active programme to a rather abrupt halt, our 150 plus members are certainly missing this companionship, but we will endeavour to return to normal as soon as it is safe to do so. Our programme in a normal year consists of monthly meetings at the Memorial Hall with a speaker on a very wide selection of topics. We hold two shows a year on a Saturday again at the hall as well as coach trips. A member each month will open their own garden for the other members to visit plus a garden party at a members house

during the summer. Covid-19 may have meant that our members have been unable to meet as a group but lockdown has meant that not only our members but gardeners everywhere have perhaps had more time to put some of those plans into action now that the garden centres are re-opening. For more information please phone Colin on 01424774666.

Battle Town Football Club

Our Town's football club has recently gone through a number of significant changes. Reforming as a 'Community Interest Company', installing a new board of directors and changing its name to 'Battle Town Football Club'. The club has just been approved for "Community Amateur Sports Club Status" and has three driving ambitions 1) To inspire people to get involved in football, including those from under represented communities.



2) To connect at all levels with the local community, for health, social and well being reasons. 3) To build a legacy of active lifestyle, increasing participation of physical activity in our community. As Battle Town FC prepares for the new season ahead, it's a perfect time to join with us, support our club, engage with us on social media and take part in our non-football activities, which includes couch to 5K running. Together, let's get fit for Battle. Sign up to our newsletter at: www.battletownfc.com.

A Message From Your MP

It has been great to spend part of my August out of Parliament visiting our local businesses and organisations. Doing so on my bike has allowed me to also view our stunning countryside (and its range of hills). The Covid-19 pandemic has been an enormous challenge for the entire community. For those whose livelihood depends on trade and custom, this has not just been a health concern but a risk to economic survival. Most who I visited were optimistic that they would see this challenge through. Many have had to adapt in order to reopen. English Heritage are a good example of change. Moving to timed bookings has had the welcome knock-on effect of waiting time being spent by visitors on the High Street. During the pandemic we have relied on our local shops and businesses to keep us going. I hope, as we return to normality, that we will remember



MP Huw Merriman

it's only if we shop local at all times that we will be able to rely on local in the emergency times.

A huge thanks to everyone in the community, as led by our Town Council, for showing spirit and kindness throughout this challenging period.

A Message From Your East Sussex County Councillor



Battle Fire Station: once again East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service is reviewing its operations. The suggested plan for Battle is to remove one of the pumps because statistics show it is not used often enough. Of course if it's required it's vital for that call out and in my view the nearer it is to the incident the better it is for residents. The other change which is going to be proposed is to leave the Fire Station without full time fire crew at weekends. As yet the details have not been disclosed but there is agreement that this is likely to lead to lead to longer call out times.

Covid19: any case of this horrible and not fully understood virus is too many but here in East Sussex we have had fewer problems than some other areas. **The latest figures show that in Rother we have had 191 cases which is a rate of 198.8 per 100,000 population.** This contrasts with a rate of 294 per 100,000 county wide and 472.3 per 100,000 population nationally.

Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE): is due to be introduced on 29 September, providing the scheme gets final approval from government. This will mean that there will be wardens to enforce the yellow lines and other on street restrictions in the town. It will also mean the end of free parking on the High Street, the charge will be small. More information is available on the County Council's website www.eastsussex.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/parking/.

A Message From Your District Councillors



Planning, Parking and Promotion

Meetings, trainings, and webinars have been happening virtually every weekday during the last 6 months and your ward councillors have been busy leading, attending and listening in to many of them.

Planning committee changes to allow Ward Councillors to speak for 5 minutes as representatives of residents, either in opposition or in agreement to officers recommendations, have been used at each of the planning meetings. With Councillors speaking on matters ranging from the proposed car park at Whatlington church, the unauthorised development at Netherfield and the proposed development behind Watch Oak house and Chain Lane.

Parking changes in Battle, as Councillor Field has reported, will commence on 29th September and your ward councillors will be pleased to listen to any comments (especially the positive ones) and use them when the review takes place in a years' time.

Promotion—your ward councillors have been proactive in working with groups to **Promote** the cycling and walking strategy and are fighting for funding to improve cycleways and footpaths around the district. We have also been proactive in supporting local businesses to get grants to support them through the pandemic and **Promoting** a "Return to the High Street" with measures to **Protect** you, our residents. Working alongside the Chamber of Commerce we have **Promoted** and encouraged local businesses to obtain the "Good to Go" and "Covid safe" marks to **Protect** our residents. We are also (at every opportunity) **Promoting** accessibility to the down platform at Battle Railway station east of the Marley Lane Level crossing.

Battle Library Is Open

We are excited to share with all residents that Battle Library has been reopened! East Sussex County Council have reopened five libraries in East Sussex, which is great news for book lovers across the region. However this will not be a full service and individuals are still encouraged to use the e-library where they can to help manage numbers safely. Please note that anyone visiting libraries will be

		required to wear
Mon	Closed	a face covering
		If you have any
Tues	10am -	questions
	12.30pm	regarding the
Weds	10am -	reopening of li-
	12.30pm	braries or availa-
Thurs	11am—5pm	ble services
		please contact
Fri	10am—4pm	via the online
Sat	10am—4pm	form or on the
Sun	Closed	enquiries line
		0345 60 80 196



Upcoming Council Meetings

September

Tues 15th Full Council

Tues 22nd Finance & General Purposes

October

Tues 6th Environment

Tues 13th Planning & Transport

Tues 20th Full Council

November

Tues 3rd External Relations and Town

Development

Tues 10th Planning & Transport

Tues 17th Full Council

Tues 24th Finance & General Purposes

December

Tues 1st Environment

Tues 8th Planning & Transport

Tues 15th Full Council

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, meetings are currently being held online via zoom and start at 7.30pm. Members of the public are welcome to attend and should contact the Town Clerk, Carol Harris by noon on the day of the meeting for the access code: enquiries@battletowncouncil.gov.uk.

Minutes of all Battle Town Council meetings are posted on the website, together with information about the Council and its Standing Committees.

Outdoor Gym Equipment:

Your Thoughts Count

The Battle recreation ground has seen some fantastic developments. Most recently the Health Pathway project, which is well underway. Once this exciting new arrival has become fully established, Council will be looking to provide outdoor gym equipment aimed at encouraging residents of all ages to get more active. There are a number of options available, so it is important to get the right equipment to suit as many people as possible.

Have your say and complete the online survey at:

battletowncouncil.gov.uk

Or pick up a hard copy from: The Almonry, High Street, Battle, TN33 0EA.

Christmas Trees sponsorship

We are now looking to secure sponsors for the this year's Christmas trees.

Four trees will be located in prominent parts of the town, each welcoming sponsorship which will include an A4 sign. Sponsorship will be set at £100 per tree.

For more information please contact the Town Clerk, Carol Harris on enquiries@battletowcouncil.gov.uk or call 01424 772210.

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Explore Battle





Battle Town Council