

TOWN CRIER



Spring Edition No 78

Newsletter of Swanley Town Council

The Town Council is certainly set for a busy year in 2017 as the new CEO Mr Steve Nash has already introduced a number of new initiatives with support of Town Councillors.



Swanley Park activities have been taken over by the Town Council to ensure local residents get the services they have been paying for. The park has also been getting a bit of a makeover and some new activities are being introduced: there are new children's paddle boats; Survival Camps for the more adventurous and better signage around the town to bring people into the park. There will be increased activities at the weekends with rides and entertainers and a plan to introduce a new kiosk to help reduce queues into the café. The staff have been attending First Aid Courses and Safeguarding Courses and we will have a new event later in the year which local residents should watch out for.

Swanley ranked as the top London Commuter town



Swanley has been named London's top commuter hotspot, other towns in Kent, Ebbsfleet and Sevenoaks, have also made the top ten, coming fifth and seventh respectively. The towns have been ranked on factors including travel time to London by train, the cost of a season ticket, life satisfaction and house prices.

Final calculations found Swanley to be London's best commuter town, closely followed by Bushey in Hertfordshire.

Other areas in the top ten list include Watford, Maidenhead and Slough.

Cllr Ray Morris commented *"I am delighted that Swanley is ranked the Best London Commuter Town and this confirms what we already know about our town"*

COMMUNITY NEWS

Swanley Wildlife & Nature Group (SWAN) Programme for 2017

(Group normally works at Environment Area, Swanley Park,
From 10am - 12 noon - Meet in Top Car park at 10am)

Saturday 29 April	8-10am Bird Walk 10-12 noon – Litterpick and show round to visitors
Saturday 27 May	Habitat Creation
Saturday 24 June	Open Day (Swanley Rec.Grnd)
Saturday 29 July	Wildflower ID
Saturday 19 August	Awayday for Group
Saturday 23 September	Cutting Wildflower Areas
Saturday 7 October	Raking Wildflower Areas with 2 nd Swanley Brownies
Saturday 28 October	Bulb Planting
Saturday 25 November	Tree Planting/Tree Recycling
Saturday 27 January 2018	Annual General Meeting

**NEW VOLUNTEERS WELCOME – phone Russ (01689 833152 for details)
see www.freewebs.com/swanleyenvirogroup &**



Swanley Wildlife & Nature Group – SWAN



DISCOVER FRANCE WITH US

Swanley & District Twinning Association

Established 1985

In recent years Swanley's "Twinners" have explored
Chateaux, Cathedrals, Gardens,

Breweries, Markets and Museums, all from the
comfortable base of our "twin town" of
Verrieres-le-Buisson nearby Paris.

We have feasted on fine food, excellent wine,
wonderful cheeses and plenty of Gateaux in
restaurants, bars and the homes of our French
family hosts.

On this side of the Channel we enjoy a number of
varied social events each year and regular monthly
rambles, all detailed in our quarterly newsletter.



To get a copy of our latest Newsletter and our
Spring programme, call Chrissy Hudson on
01322 662271.

MENTAL HEALTH EVENT

Patient Voice in partnership with The Oaks Surgery, Swanley is organising another informative health event on **Tuesday 11th July, 2017** from 2-5pm in the Alexandra Suite, St Mary's Road, Swanley. We will be looking at some aspects of MENTAL HEALTH (including Depression, Stress and Anxiety Attacks). ALL are welcome to this FREE event to gain useful advice and information on problems in mental health, an illness that can affect anybody. Hear medical experts and see where help is available. Full details will be available on The Oaks website. <http://www.oakssurgery-swanley.nhs.uk>

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

1st April 2017 Swanley Park

With effect from the 1st April Swanley Town Council will take back the running of Swanley Park. This will include the running of the boats and the bouncy castle. The car parks will be staffed by STC.

28th April 2017 School Cluster Council

Swanley Town Council has written to the local primary schools (St Mary's, Horizon, St Bartholomew's, Downsview, St Pauls and High Firs) inviting 2 members of their School Council to the Civic Centre to attend a meeting with the Deputy Mayor Lesley Dyball, where they will be provided with refreshments and be given an agenda to follow. Students are invited to be participate in a short question and answer session. During the meeting minutes will be taken and distributed to the schools once typed. The School Cluster Council meeting gives the students a glimpse into council life and how a council meeting is conducted as well as learning more about Swanley Town Council.

- 6th May 2017 Craft Market
- 12th May 2017 Italian Market
- 24th June 2017 Armed Forces Day
- 19th and 20th July 2017 Luna Cinema
- 25th August 2017 1812
- September 2017 Mayor at Home—TBC
- 6th November 2017 Bonfire Night

Kent Police are holding a Special Constables & Volunteers recruitment event for the Swanley and Tonbridge areas at

The Alexandra Suite, St Mary's Road, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7BU,

on Monday 8th May 2017 between 18:00 – 20:00 hours.



You may already have seen the Italian Market and the French Market which was better described as 'Flavours from around the World'. These ideas are designed to promote Swanley and to draw more people into the town which will support local business. We have begun recruiting stall holders to start our own Saturday Market in the town centre and are working with the shopping centre to build this for the future. But there are far more changes going on to generate not only greater footfall into the town but also to create additional income.

The Olympic thrives under new management

Since changes took place at The Olympic just before Christmas the venue has enjoyed some success with new events, new business and upgraded facilities.

The council is introducing Psychic Nights, Drag Nights, has an Open Mic Night and has re-introduced bar opening during the day along with a new range of bar snacks.

The local Boxing Club will be taking up residence in the garage area and this will be converted through grants obtained by the club and through the work of club volunteers. Not only will it increase revenue for the Olympic but it will also allow the boxing club to expand and to provide many more sessions than they are currently able to do at White Oaks.

New signs and signage will be used to promote the facility very shortly and new 'interactive screens' have been installed to improve the conferencing facilities we currently offer.

The Olympic

**SUNDAY
CARVERY**

GRAND OPENING

SUNDAY 14th MAY 2017

FROM £9.95

BOUNCY CASTLE

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

SPORTS FACILITY DISCOUNTS

FULL MENU AVAILABLE

FOOD SERVED 12 — 5PM

BOOKINGS ARE ADVISED

01322 669201



Kent County Council Elections are taking place on the 4th May 2017

For the majority of Swanley Residents, particularly those in the Christchurch Ward, you come under the new and enlarged Swanley & Hextable ward due to boundary changes. For those who live in Swanley Village, you are now under the Sevenoaks North & Darent Valley ward.

Locations of Swanley Voting Stations:-

- Swanley Youth Centre, St. Marys Road, Swanley
- Swanley AcF Hall, Swanley Lane, Swanley
- White Oaks Bowls Centre (Captains Room) Garrolds Close, Swanley
- Christchurch Centre, Kingswood Avenue, Swanley
- High Firs Primary School, Court Crescent, Swanley
- The Lamb Inn, Swanley Village Road, Swanley



What is it? A door-to-door car service provided by our team of volunteers for residents of North West Kent who find it difficult to use public transport because of age, frailty, illness, disability or location.

Is there a charge? Passengers pay a yearly Registration Fee, and then a per-journey Administration Fee and the volunteer-driver mileage cost. Full details are available when you call 01322 294 600

If you enjoy driving, your keys can unlock lives. Drivers take clients to and from medical appointments in Kent. Local drivers regularly take clients to and from Parkinson's exercise classes and Falls Prevention classes. If you can spare just a small amount of your time, have use of your own car we would like to see you. Mileage expenses are paid direct to you



Call 01322 290 600

Volunteer Drivers and Gardeners needed

What is it? A service where our volunteer

VOLUNTEER GARDEN SERVICE
01322 272 476

gardeners bring life back into your neglected garden and make it a thing of beauty and a joy to sit in once again.



Is there a charge?

You pay £6 per hour for a maximum of 2 hours per visit. Any travel expenses are also reimbursed to the volunteer. General maintenance and up-keep are our priorities; we cannot handle large, heavy duties. But we can offer a one day blitz to get the volunteers started.



S.M.I.L.E.S.

Services Maintaining Independent Living and Elderly
Call 01322 272 476 or email volunteer@nwkvolunteers.org.uk

Upcoming Events 2017

<p>Fri 26th May</p>	<p>Friday 26th May The Alexandra Suite 8pm-10pm</p>	<p>£10 pp</p>
<p>Fri 21st July</p>	<p>FROM 11.30am - 1pm THE ALEXANDRA SUITE 21st July 2017 01322 272 476</p>	<p>£10 pp</p>
<p>Fri 27th Oct</p>	<p>27th October 2017 The Alexandra Suite 8pm-1am £10 per person *tickets are non-refundable</p>	<p>£10 pp</p>

Call 01322 613900 to purchase your tickets!

Garden Village Rejected

When the news came from Sevenoaks that a Garden Village for up to 3,000 new homes was being presented to the residents of Swanley and Hextable as part of their "Vision" plans, there were serious concerns raised about how the local infrastructure would cope.

An action group of local residents was formed to oppose these plans that could have nearly doubled the population of Swanley. The land being considered was not only Green Belt but also prime agricultural land. Sevenoaks District Council arranged a series of "Drop in" events inviting residents to voice their opinions. At that time the action group organised a petition which clearly spelt out local opposition. Two thousand signatures, including Swanley and Hextable town councillors was raised and submitted to and accepted by our MP Sir Michael Fallon. Unfortunately, Sevenoaks District Council initially declined to accept this petition stating that it did not meet their criteria for a petition. A number of District Councillors worked incredibly hard to oppose the Garden Village proposals and one specifically spoke at significant length and with considerable passion to ensure this aspect was not taken forward. He also put forward a number of amendments to ensure the petition was recognised and there was no hope of resurrecting such a damaging proposal in the future. These were eventually all supported by the committee, however the votes were significantly close and thankfully narrowly rejected. There was also considerable media support to oppose the ill-conceived Garden Village including BBC Radio Kent, Sevenoaks Chronicle and the KM group



A questionnaire was also sent to all Swanley and some Hextable households that contained many very misleading questions and did not state where the proposed housing would be. These were intended to strengthen the case for substantial local development. Fortunately, many people recognised that it was impossible to complete this survey as the questions were very vague. The response to this questionnaire was understandably low.

On the 8th February we were visited by Anna Firth, a Sevenoaks Cabinet member who took the time to view the proposed location for the Garden Village. She fully appreciated local concerns. The following evening, there was a Sevenoaks Cabinet meeting and Swanley & Hextable councillors, from all parties, together with members from the action group, put forward a very strong case in opposition to the Sevenoaks plans. The Cabinet then accepted the wishes of residents and the Garden Village was rejected. While there will almost certainly be additional housing needs in our area, they will never be on such a monumental scale as originally proposed by the consultants retained by Sevenoaks District council. Our precious Green Belt and prime agricultural land is now protected for the enjoyment of future generations.

In February, shortly after the decision to reject plans for a Garden Village, Sevenoaks District Council sent to all Swanley and Hextable residents the belated results of their survey. This quoted that 63% of people surveyed wanted a "New Garden Village with family homes". This could not happen as 93% of residents in the same survey wanted to maintain separate identities for Swanley and Hextable. It would have been impossible to achieve this status with a development on the scale of a Garden Village and retain the essential Green belt barrier.

A NEW TYPE *OF* MARKET

Are you a local craft producer?
Do you make Bunting or Candles?
Do you Shabby Chic Furniture or make Cards?
Do you make Cakes, Jams or Sausages?

Would you like to sell your items and potentially grow your hobby into a business?

Please contact Toni Roast on 01322 665855
or e mail toast@swanleytowncouncil.gov.uk

A still life photograph of various items on a wooden surface. On the left is a chocolate cake with white frosting and a sprig of mint. Next to it is a glass jar of red jam with a piece of bread on top. To the right is a gold-colored picture frame, a small blue candle, and a link of sausage.

YOUR LOCAL COUNCILLORS



Welcome to Paul Darrington - newly elected Conservative Councillor for **White Oak**

Christchurch—Laurence Ball, Conservative

Christchurch —John Barnes, Conservative

Christchurch—Shanker Gaire, Independent

Christchurch—Ray Morris, Conservative

Christchurch—Victor Southern, Conservative

St Mary's— Clare Barnes, Conservative

St Mary's—Lesley Dyball, Conservative

St Mary's—Michael Hogg, Labour

St Mary's—Elizabeth Komolafe, Labour

Swanley Village—Tony Searles, Conservative

White Oak—Michael Horwood, Conservative

White Oak—Laxmi Gaire, Independent

White Oak—Jim Halford, UKIP

White Oak—Nina Scott, Conservative

White Oak— Harry Willingale, Conservative

Forthcoming Council Meetings

19th April 2017	Development Control, Policy & Finance, Estates & Facilities
10th May 2017	Mayor Making
17th May 2017	Development Control, Policy & Finance
7th June 2017	Full Council, Development Control
21st June 2017	Development Control, Policy & Finance, Personnel
5th July 2017	Full Council, Development Control
19th July 2017	Development Control, Policy & Finance, Estates & Facilities
6th September 2017	Full Council, Development Control

Further information on dates, councillors, committee members, agendas and minutes can be found on Swanley Town Council website www.swanleytowncouncil.gov.uk



From Saturday 1st April 2017
Miniature Railway **Calé** **Pedalo's / Boats** **Mini Golf** **Kids Parties** (ring for details)
Play Area **Entertainment**
For more information call **01322 668 415**
Some activities may only be available at weekends until July Please call to confirm