

SANDWICH TOWN COUNCIL

Objectives for the Long-Term Development of the Town and Cinque Port of Sandwich

In order to effectively progress the Town Council's objectives for the development of the Town and Cinque Port of Sandwich, these objectives should be revised as short-term, medium-term and long-term.

Short-term objectives would be those areas of concern raised at the Annual Town Meeting, held in March of each year, which need to be addressed (or at least have been progressed) prior to March of the following year.

Medium-term objectives should be addressed prior to the end of an electoral term (in this case prior to May 2015).

Long-term objectives should be addressed prior to the end of any following electoral term (in this case May 2019).

Obviously circumstances and opportunities mean that both medium and long term objectives are under constant review and prioritized accordingly. However, it is expected that this system would enable the Town Council to more effectively define its priorities and measure progress against its aspirations.

The Town Council's objectives are listed below by subject, e.g. 'Child / Youth Projects' or 'Economy'.

CHILD / YOUTH PROJECTS

Sandwich Town Council has the following objectives:

- Work in partnership with the Phoenix Centre, Sandwich Leisure Centre and local schools to set up a Youth Council to engage young people in decision making.
- To create opportunities for parents of children to become engaged in the community (bearing in mind the majority of families live in the South Ward). This is very important because there is a very distinct division between the two wards in relation to community engagement with the majority of committee members of community based organisations living in the North Ward. Sandwich Town Council must be wary that the electorate in Sandwich South does not effectively become disenfranchised – lower voter turnout and lack of candidates willing to offer themselves for election can only undermine democracy and increase the perception of a divided town.

- Enhance child and youth project work – providing new management and investment in the Bulwarks Play Area and also management oversight of developments at the Poulders Play Area, and investing in additional resources for the skate park and the monitoring of the Butts' lighting scheme for evening youth activities. In addition a teen shelter is to be considered over the next twelve months.

CRIME / NUISANCES

With the closure of the Sandwich Police Office it becomes important to promote crime prevention locally, although there will no doubt be continuing concerns amongst the electorate – many will feel aggrieved at the 9.4% contribution to Kent Police Authority from the Council Tax payer's bill, yet there being a withdrawal of a visible Police presence.

Crime prevention measures should include : -

- Promotion of Neighbourhood Watch schemes.
- Promotion of 'SmartWater' Technology for safeguarding property.
- Encouraging residents, local businesses and visitors to report all crime and Anti-Social Behaviour.
- Ensuring that the public are made aware of trends in crime.

ECONOMY

The report entitled 'Sandwich Looks Forward - a strategic plan for the 21st century' prepared by URBED (Urban and Economic Development Group) in 1992, the 'Sandwich Tourism Survey' carried out by the Ellis-Bourner Partnership in 1998 and the 'STARR Initiative' in 2005 all recognise the importance of tourism to the local economy. The current economic climate and the downsizing of Pfizer Ltd have dictated that Sandwich Town Council adopt a different approach in promoting tourism. To this end the engagement of non-Councillors on the Tourism Committee is to be applauded.

This must be followed up by embracing the recommendations made in the report entitled 'Healthy High Street?' by the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills which are reiterated by the report entitled 'Town Centre Comeback' by Action for Market Towns. Both reports emphasise the importance of maintaining the retail trade in town centres to stem the flow of consumers shopping at out of town retail parks and on the internet, both trends which have facilitated the decline of the 'High Street'. In addition,

both reports give guidance on various methods to reverse the trend towards town centre decline.

Sandwich Town Council aims to work in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce to:-

- Support businesses looking to relocate to Sandwich.
- Welcome new businesses.
- Promote Sandwich as an enterprise friendly town.
- Support businesses in accessing the Regional Growth Fund – Expansion East Kent.
- Support the Town Team.
- Investigate any considerations for the redevelopment of the Cattle Market and any proposals for a second supermarket in Sandwich. Sandwich Town Council must make its position regarding support or objection to any proposal known to the Chamber of Commerce, as members are concerned about any impact on existing retail trade.
- Strengthen and diversify the local economy – optimize opportunities for trade tourism and local environment; encourage new business through engagement with the Chamber of Commerce and support the projects of the Sandwich Community Events Association; support the market manager in his work with market traders; enhance the appeal of Sandwich in order to maximize its potential as a place to live, visit or do business.
- Sustain and develop Monks' Wall Nature Reserve – improve visitor numbers; encourage greater media coverage / publication / school visits.
- Develop walking, cycling and horseriding networks – maintain progress on the network and continue to support new schemes and developments.

ENVIRONMENT

In order to preserve, positively develop and enhance Sandwich's environment, the Town Council has the following objectives:

- Pursue the requirement for additional mooring posts and a floating pontoon as part of the Quay redevelopment. The Quay has the potential to become an economic, cultural (past maritime heritage) and aesthetic asset.

- Develop a long term solution to the lack of public moorings on The Quay.
- Seek resolution of the long standing issue with 57 New Street.
- Support the Richborough Action Group.
- Liaise with the Environment Agency with regards to desilting of the Stour (including The Quay).
- Ensure that planning for the flow of the Delf Stream is carried out – work closely with the EA and other agencies/local landowners to ensure that the Delf Stream flow problem is eradicated; work towards achieving Scheduled Ancient Monument status.
- Campaign for Bell Lane to be re-instated as a thoroughfare (to include removal of all waste bins and street furniture).

These environmental objectives are not only worth pursuing in their own right, but also support the Council's economic objectives.

MARKETING

Marketing Sandwich will be key to developing the town's tourist offer (which will support the objectives listed under 'Economy' above). To this end, the Town Council's objectives are to:-

- Achieve 'Walkers are Welcome' status, as Sandwich is on two recognised walking routes – Stour Valley Walk and Saxon Shore Way.
- Maintain the Sandwich Visitor Guide.
- Maximise the potential of Sandwich's two Unique Selling Points (or 'USPs') - firstly as the 'completest medieval town in England' and secondly our connections with the snack of the same name and the association with the Earl of Sandwich.
- Support the Living Museum and Medieval Boat projects.

OLDER / VULNERABLE PEOPLE & LOCAL RESIDENTIAL CARE

Sandwich Town Council is committed to the well-being of older and/or vulnerable local people. To this end, the Council has the following objectives:

- Seek a satisfactory outcome for the sole residential home, Wayfarers, in Sandwich – continue to monitor developments and to negotiate on behalf the community with the relevant KCC Cabinet member.
- Continue to provide support to Sandwich Centre for the Retired.

ROADS & TRAVEL

Sandwich Town Council understands that ease of travelling to and from Sandwich, as well as the condition of our roads, are both key factors in improving the town as a place to live, visit and do business. To this end, the Council has the following objectives:-

- Deal with nuisance parking in areas such as Ramsgate Road, which is destroying the grass verges and endangering cyclists.
- Maintain regular meetings of the Traffic Forum.
- Implement pedestrianisation / pedestrian priority in Market Street and King Street.
- Establish a site for a coach park.
- Develop a long term solution to the lack of car parking in Sandwich.
- Address the road and traffic problems in Sandwich and lobby for an enhanced high-speed rail service - producing, in phases, a new traffic scheme for the entire town with public / district / county consultation; maintaining the newly implemented PACE scheme and evaluating it in twelve months; carrying out research on making the roads and pavements more user-friendly, particularly for wheelchair users and for prams/pushchairs.
- Works towards extending the 20mph zone in Sandwich.

In addition to all the objectives listed above, Sandwich Town Council must fully understand the impact of the Localism Bill and prepare for the ensuing delegation of legislative power and responsibilities from District Council to Town Council.

Sandwich Town Council must give priority to leading the Neighbourhood Plan.

January 2013

To be reviewed annually.