

MAYORS ANNUAL REPORT AND STATEMENT

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING 2017

As we approach the end of our third term as Mayor and Mayoress of Sandwich I am pleased to say I have much to report.

2016/2017 has been a very busy year in the Town's calendar as we continue with our efforts to make Sandwich a better place to live and work as well as a more attractive tourist destination. There have been many very positive developments in and around the town this year and I would like to draw a few of these to your attention now.

For many years Sandwich has been blighted by an increase in HGVs coming into Town adding to the ongoing challenges of the current road layout.

In 2016 a Traffic Consultant, Rummey Design, was commissioned on behalf of the Town to explore ways of improving traffic flows through Sandwich and surrounding areas. Various suggestions were put forward; some of which have already been implemented. A new pedestrian crossing is to be installed in April this year on New Street linking the Ropewalk and Millwall. This will improve pedestrian safety near a very busy junction and will act as a traffic calming measure on what is a main thoroughfare into the town. Further trials are to take place in Market Street and No Name Street soon with a view to closing and pedestrianising the latter. Furthermore, much improved signage on the periphery of the Town is now in place and work has been completed at Breezy Corner to protect buildings which were being damaged by HGVs on a regular basis.

After over 40 years constant use by local restaurants Bell Lane has finally been cleared of unsightly waste bins and is now an attractive feature of the Town once again.

2016 saw the creation of the "A New Vision for Sandwich" project board which aims to ensure that developments within Sandwich are considered holistically and are as positive and successful as possible. This is a unique platform bringing together representatives from organizations within the Town as well as Senior Members of both Dover District Council and Kent County Council. A great spirit of cooperation exists between the various stakeholders and I am confident that many good decisions will be made for the betterment of the Town.

I would like to take this opportunity to offer my thanks to those who keep the wheels of Sandwich turning.

We have an extremely hard working Council who are all fully committed to the well being and success of Sandwich. I thank them all for their considerable efforts over the last year.

The energy and dedication of all those volunteers who give so much back to the Town is also hugely appreciated. Without them the Town would have no heart and soul and no future. I refer of course to such organizations as the Town Team, Community Events Association, Local History Society, Sandwich Society and many more.

We all look forward to the Grand opening of our new Museum in early May. The Museum has been awarded Heritage Lottery funding of £100,000 for a complete refurbishment and will house our own Magna Carta and Charter of the Forest. I would particularly like to congratulate and thank Linda Elliot, our Honorary Curator, who has invested so much of her

time and effort into this exciting project. The Museum will be a jewel in the crown for Sandwich and that is in no small part thanks to Linda's total dedication.

Finally none of this would have been possible without the unstinting support and expertise of our outstanding Town Clerk Laura Fidler and her effective team of Karen, Anna, Kevin, Alan, Phil and Paula who keep the Guildhall (and the Mayor) in good order. Also my thanks go to those who look after our Toilets on the Quay and all who manage the Tourist Information Centre in the summer months.

Sue and I will continue to visit other Cinque Ports and surrounding towns to promote Sandwich and all that it has to offer.