

SANDWICH TOWN COUNCIL

MISSION STATEMENT AND BUSINESS PLAN

2019 to 2023

Sandwich is an historic town on the River Stour within Dover District, Kent, considered one of the best-preserved medieval towns in England. It was once a major port but, due to the silting up of the Wantsum Channel it now lies two miles from the sea. Sandwich is one of the ancient Cinque Ports and still retains many original historic buildings, including several listed houses and gates in the old town walls, churches, almshouses, public houses and the 18th century White Mill. The Town is also home to the Delf stream, being the first fresh-water system in the country. With a population of 5,000, Sandwich is a regional centre for services including weekly markets, doctors' surgery, dentist, opticians, supermarket and a variety of shops, three leisure centres/gyms and a local educational hub consisting of a Grammar School, an Academy, Junior and Infant Schools.

The annual calendar of cultural and social events has grown substantially over the past decade alongside the evolving hospitality and tourism sector. With Gaze Salt Pans and Monks Walk Nature Reserve within the town nearby Sandwich Bay is home to the Bird Observatory nature reserve and two world-class golf courses - Royal St George's and Prince's. Sandwich also gave its name to the bread snack by way of John Montagu, 4th Earl of Sandwich. The word 'sandwich' is now understood across the globe.

STC KEY FACTS

Sandwich Town Council, one of the oldest authorities in the UK, deals with community infrastructure, grants and community services, and comments on planning matters. The everyday management of the Council is undertaken by the Town Clerk and a small team of officers and support staff. Its annual running costs are in the region of £540,000 drawn from a £190,000 precept (Dover District Council Tax), a management agreement with Sandwich Toll Bridge Fund for running the Guildhall, income from Quay conveniences, hire charges for the Guildhall (incl. markets on the Forecourt), the Visitor Information Centre and others.

Sandwich Town Council is also the managing Trustee of Sandwich Toll Bridge Fund, which was set up in 1973 when Sandwich lost its Borough status. This Fund operates separately from the Town Council. The Fund is a registered charity with the specific purpose of utilising investment surplus for the promotion of public and charitable works within the town.

The Council is currently undertaking a major project 'A New Vision for Sandwich', focusing on upgrading the 16th century Guildhall and Forecourt which aims to assist with the regeneration of the town centre, supported by outside funding.

The Council has several assets including two allotment sites, Cow Leas Meadow (used for events parking), the Drill Hall, two sites of public conveniences, the Fisher Gate, and Monks Wall Nature Reserve.

The Town Council, in conjunction with Sandwich Toll Bridge Fund, is also responsible for the newly refurbished Museum and the Town's Archives which hold a collection of international significance including its own Magna Carta and Charter of the Forrester dating from 1300, housed within the Town Council's Guildhall. The heritage assets of Sandwich Town Council are professionally managed and volunteer-run. Sandwich Town is adjacent to one of the UK's most successful Business Parks, Discovery Park, which is one of the town's major partners.

MISSION STATEMENT

Strategic Objectives for 2019 to 2023:

- SO1.** Support the delivery of the regeneration of Sandwich by working in partnership with other public, private and voluntary sector bodies;
- SO2.** Improve the Council's communication, openness and transparency;
- SO3.** Utilize the Council's income, manage expenditure and safeguard the Council's assets for maximum benefit;
- SO4.** Use the Town Council's influence to affect the decisions of public and private sector bodies for the benefit of Sandwich
- SO5.** Protect the Town's Heritage and Safeguarding its Traditions;
- SO6.** Promote Sandwich as a place to live, visit and do business.
- SO7.** Maximize opportunities for the town as they arise.

ANNUAL OBJECTIVES for 2019/20

Deliverables over the coming year

SO1. Regeneration of the Town

- 1.1 Chair and direct the 'New Vision for Sandwich' Project Board to deliver refurbished Guildhall building and forecourt including added Museum space, new Archives Library, Visitor Information Centre, adjacent public realm and surrounding roads and traffic/shared space improvements through seeking public funding streams e.g. HLF Bids;
- 1.2 Ensure completion of the new Coach Park at the former KCC Depot and introduce interim measures for coach parking;
- 1.3 Support and work with DDC to improve the Open Parks provision in Sandwich.

SO2. Communication, openness and transparency

- 2.1 Develop the Council's web and social media presence with the aim of improving access to information and active communication;
- 2.2 Issue timely press releases after Council Meetings;
- 2.3 Maximise Sandwich Town Council's impact through modernising the Council's working practices including response times for letters, emails and phone calls;
- 2.4 Complete the renegotiation of the 'Sandwich Agreement' with DDC to transfer ownership of the Guildhall to the Town Council and simplify the relationship between Town and District Council;
- 2.5 Introduce a more efficient and transparent STC/Toll Bridge operating framework; create new and sharper Council and Committee structures, meeting schedules and procedures to increase public engagement and accessibility; review Council's Standing Orders and policies;

2.6 Simplify the presentation of financial accounts leading to more user-friendly management information;

2.7 Update the Guildhall Emergency Plan and maintain an updated Emergency Plan for Sandwich Town which is fit for purpose and easily understood.

SO3. Safeguarding and Managing Assets

3.1 Support and oversee the development and diversification of the Drill Hall at the quayside as per the lease;

3.2 Introduce and hold regular Asset Management Committee meetings, undertake a condition audit of all the Council's assets and set out a maintenance schedule for implementation;

3.3 Bring Fishergate back into Council control and develop plans to maximise its potential;

3.4 Maximise the use and revenue generating potential of the Guildhall and Forecourt;

3.5 As Trustee of Sandwich Toll Bridge Fund to review the charities financial investments and consider returns & risks to maximise income;

3.6 Ensure that the Guildhall and Public conveniences are well maintained, kept clean and in condition to welcome visitors.

SO4. Using the Councils Influence

4.1 Police and DDC Enforcement: Push for increased visibility throughout the Town and reinstatement of a police presence ensuring resources are enough for Sandwich environs and work constructively with the KCC funded community wardens;

4.2 Work with DDC's Project to turn the Town Walls into new District Strategic Park (part of DDC's Open Parks Project), ensuring links and synergy with 'A New Vision for Sandwich';

4.3 Scrutinise and respond vigorously to planning applications made to DDC for developments in Sandwich;

4.4 Seek to influence the use of any Section 106 funding made available to DDC as the result of any successful planning applications for developments within Sandwich;

4.5 Respond to any planning application made to DDC outside the environs of Sandwich which may impact upon the Town;

4.6 Respond to DDC's consultation on the Local Plan development ensuring the Plan creates a beneficial environment for development in Sandwich.

4.7 Work with the Town Team to progress the Traffic Management Initiative (HIP) with a view to identifying 5 priorities for action by KCC in the coming year.

SO5. Heritage and Traditions

5.1 Introduce and maintain a protocol manual for all Mayoral and Civic Functions.

5.2 Support re-accreditation of the Guildhall Museum & Archives by the Arts Council England.

(NB. Please note that the Museum and Archives have a separate mission statement with objectives which was recently updated within the process of creating the 2019-2022 Forward Plan. This was then agreed by M&A and then Sandwich Toll Bridge Fund as Trustee of the Museum. The independence is required to protect its charitable status which is important for accessing grants.)

5.3 Continue & develop collaborative working with other organisations and community groups such as the Town Team.

SO6. Promoting Sandwich

6.1 Increase promotion of tourism to the Town by working in partnership with the appropriate bodies;

6.2 Improve development and distribution of promotional material marketing the Town;

6.3 The VIC is the welcoming face of STC for residents and visitors and will:
Signpost residents to appropriate DDC/KCC officers to help resolve any issues they might have;
Encourage visitors to Sandwich to visit the Museum and other attractions;
Keep accurate records of sales, visitors and residents using the VIC;
Take on administrative tasks as directed by the Town Clerk.

6.4 In partnership with DDC and other stakeholders ensure operational working of Gazen Salts and Monks Wall Nature Reserves and support the ongoing work on the Delf stream thereby developing the tourism potential of these sites;

6.5 Work with local business leaders to develop an effective Chamber of Commerce for Sandwich;

6.6 Support the efforts of Sandwich in Bloom to improve the appearance of the Town;

6.7 Promote Sandwich and Council assets to film location services with the aim of generating income.

SO7. Maximising Opportunities

7.1 2020 Open Golf: maximising realistic benefits for Town, ensuring 2011 lessons learned and early engagement with Royal & Ancient, Royal St George's and other stakeholders;

7.2 Support the efforts of the Cattle Market Surgery to develop "The Sandwich Medical Practice" to mitigate the national recruitment and work force problems in Primary Care within the Town;

7.3 Support the voluntary sector in Sandwich and encourage volunteering by holding a Volunteering Fair;

7.4 Coordinate localised Brexit preparation and information sharing where possible;

7.5 Creative and useful repurposing of the two telephone kiosks "adopted" from British Telecom.

Progress reports on each objective will be made to bi-annual full Council meeting in a simple table format so progress can be monitored, and work prioritised as required.

Future staff appraisal will include Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) for each member of staff that directly links to the above annual objectives, the management of which will be the responsibility of each member of staff's line manager (see staff organogram).