



What has the Town Council been up to over the last 12 months?

Find out how we are serving you, in the Arundel Town Council's first ever Annual Report to Residents.

In May 2020, for the Council, as for every other organisation in the country, our thinking is dominated by the Coronavirus pandemic, besides which everything else pales into insignificance. Helping Arundel residents get safely through this pandemic and helping Arundel businesses and attractions recover when we reach the far side are the priorities.

So inevitably many of the projects in this report on the Council's activity in 2019/20 are now 'on ice', waiting for normal life to resume.

This is the Council's Annual Report to Residents. Hopefully in a year's time we will be reporting under very different circumstances.

You Arundel Folk are Truly Brilliant! **– Councillor Mark Phillips**

Throughout history, residents of the town, regardless of religion and politics, have worked together and stepped forward during times of crisis; and this is exactly what happened since my social media call on 17th March for volunteers to help those in need during the pandemic. Fr David at St Nicholas Church agreed to add new volunteers to the small group the church had already formed to provide phone support, basic shopping and collection of medication.

Arundel Town Council organised the design and printing of a leaflet to circulate details to all households and after very little persuading, I managed to get a reliable national service to deliver the leaflets. The coordination of the volunteers has been managed by Fiona, the Parish Clerk. Around 175 local residents of all ages signed up to volunteer and as of 21st April, over 100 local residents have received assistance both direct and by phone

More recently a food parcel service has been initiated by Arundel Community Aid, Arundel retailers have set up ways to carry out home deliveries, and there is a strong sense of our community rallying together.

No-one in Arundel need feel unsupported.



Angela Standing, Mayor – We began the Council Year in May 2019 with 5 existing councillors, with 60+ years' experience between us, and 7 new councillors of whom 3 were co-opted. A councillor is a voluntary holder of public office and with enthusiasm aplenty all have got stuck in with projects to help Arundel residents and businesses continue to enjoy the benefits of living and working in Arundel.

Carolyn Baynes who has been with us for the past 4 years, is now our CILCA qualified Town Clerk and has the sometimes unenviable task of keeping 12 lively councillors in order, which is not the easiest of jobs!

Mission & Objectives

Councillor Tony Hunt – Last year we asked ourselves "What role should the Town Council play in the life of Arundel?" We decided that the council's mission was:

“ to work closely and creatively with the community to make Arundel a thriving town in which to live and work, and a great place to visit. ”

The recent 'Love Arundel' conversations, provided fresh insight into residents' aspirations. From this and previous input from our Neighbourhood Plan consultations, we identified the things that mattered to our community and 23 specific objectives (as shown in the Spring edition of The Bell). Some will be completed this year, some will take years and we'll leave them to be completed by our successors. We will report on them regularly so that Arundel residents know what the council is up to.

Community

To nurture the events and voluntary groups that make Arundel a special place to live

- 790 (80.29%) YES Votes for our Neighbourhood Plan Referendum with a 35% turn out
- £29,000+ of grants given to volunteer and community groups
- Town Meeting that was very well-attended
- Community fair with 45 voluntary groups taking part
- 11 Council “surgeries” at the Farmers Market
- Resident support programme during the Coronavirus pandemic established with St. Nicholas Parish Church.



Town Clerk Carolyn Baynes – Our original 2014 Neighbourhood Plan was the first completed in Sussex but since then Arun District Council's new Local Plan has doubled the number of homes that needed to be provided within the district. Our job is to protect Arundel from inappropriate development, which is why we commenced the review of the Neighbourhood Plan in 2018. One particular development on the old Swallow Brewery site, was targeted for 46 retirement flats compared with 26 dwelling of mixed type (including affordable homes). The success of our referendum in November, expressing the wishes of Arundel residents, was an important factor in this developer's Planning Inspectorate Appeal being dismissed.

Aby Dingle, Administrative Assistant – In 2019/20 the council awarded grants of over £29,000 to local groups and organisations for the purposes of bringing a direct benefit to the town or its residents.

Environment

Maintain and improve Arundel's beautiful natural environment

- £6.7 million pounds invested in Tidal Flood Defences (£2m additional funding approved this year) – around £3,600 for each Arundel household
- Responsibility for the Causeway roundabout (the entrance to Arundel) taken over from West Sussex County Council, for wild flower planting as part of our “Bee Friendly Town”.

Councillor Carol Jones – This year we are working to take back responsibility for some of the green open spaces around our town. The ambition for this project is to make these areas visually beautiful and allow us to plant wildflowers for pollinators like butterflies and bees. It will also help to address the complaints we receive about the length of grass and visibility on our roundabouts. We will be working with local specialists, like Bob Tanner our Tree Warden, to ensure this work preserves existing habitats. This project will help Arundel attain “Bee Friendly Town” status, which will be a fantastic achievement.



Councillor Michelle Scott – Did you know that each of us works as a “Link Councillor” with a key Arundel based community group? Every month we attend meetings and events to provide support for these organisations by helping them to access information and grants. I am Link Councillor to the Chamber of Commerce, which has recently relaunched under an energetic new committee. This organisation provides a voice for our business community and together we are facilitating ways to breathe new life into our town's economy with events and a revitalised farmers market that will benefit the whole community.

£6.7M
INVESTED IN TIDAL
FLOOD DEFENCES



Council Advisor Derek Waller – The lower parts of the town are at high risk of flooding and the Tidal Flood Defences will reduce the risk to some 150 houses in River Road and Fitzalan Road. The scheme is being funded by Government, with significant contributions from West Sussex County Council, Arun District Council, Arundel Town Council's earmarked flood defence reserve and Southern Water, as well as the insurance policies of the six cottages at the lower end of River Road. The Town Council has been involved at every stage of the scheme, as have both our past and present Members of Parliament. It has been a real team effort.

Economy

Support the development of a thriving economy for the benefit of visitors and residents

- Highly successful events programme, including Arundel Festival and Arundel by Candlelight
- £20,000 allocated to support new events in 2020/21
- Town Council assumes responsibility for the Farmers Market
- Decision taken to appoint a Town Manager.



**TOWN COUNCIL
TAKES OVER**

Councillor Les Wood – I am delighted to announce that as part of the economic regeneration programme, Arundel Town Council and Arun District Council have both donated £10,000 each to create a £20,000 grant fund, to support the staging of new and innovative events in Arundel over the next 12 months. These events will complement the already very successful Arundel Festival and Arundel By Candlelight, as well as the various events staged at Arundel Castle. This is a great opportunity and we will be consulting with organisations in Arundel to enable us to provide a balanced and exciting calendar of events for all ages.

Councillor Michael Tu, Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee

– In the Spring 2019 edition of the Bell the Mayor, Lucy Ashworth, wrote about the challenges the town faced in face of changing consumer habits. “The Town will require more people to discover Arundel through leisure pursuits, great shops, experiences and eateries”.

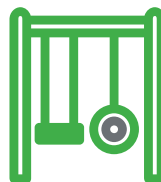
Arundel may not be unique, but it is certainly unusual. Very few small communities of 3300 residents welcome the several hundred thousand visitors every year that sustains the restaurants, shops and pubs we all enjoy. Last year saw a number of businesses close, including Sparks Yard and the Town House Restaurant and it became clear that if the town is to thrive it would need significantly more support and leadership from the Town Council. We therefore decided to recruit an experienced Town Manager who can work with organisations and businesses to help re-vitalise the town. Arundel is renowned for its community spirit and volunteer led events. This new Town Manager role will help co-ordinate a programme of events that will encourage people to visit Arundel throughout the year, assist event organisers with navigating health and safety regulations and licenses; forge stronger partnerships with other organisations like the South Downs National Park and work with Arun District Council on an economic regeneration program as well as secure investment and grants for Town Projects. Within 2 years we expect this role to become self-funding and be delivering great benefit for Arundel.

Councillor Joe Riley – Our monthly Farmers Market should attract hundreds of locals and visitors, but it has seen a decline in recent years. The Town Council assumed responsibility for the market on March 31st with a view to revitalizing it. To find out how we could improve things we consulted the market traders and carried out a survey to get the shoppers' perspective. From these learnings we're making improvements which include: new weatherproof stalls and a wider variety of choice. The three market areas were also seen as a challenge, so we are bringing all the stalls together in one location in the High Street.

Health and wellbeing

Improve the health and wellbeing of Arundel residents

- Mill Road play park: refurbished and new equipment
- Canada Road play park: work under way
- Skate park regeneration funding secured.



**CANADA ROAD
WORK UNDER WAY**



**TOWN CLEAN-UP
DAYS INTRODUCED**

State of the town

Make Arundel a town to be proud of

- Biannual 'Town Clean-up' days introduced
- 89 Planning applications reviewed
- 3 new solar powered lights for Station Path installed
- 2 new lights installed at A27 pedestrian underpass
- Planning appeal won against the inappropriate development of the old Swallow Brewery site.



**PLANNING APPLICATIONS
REVIEWED**

Councillor Karin Moorhouse, Chair of the Planning and Environment Committee – Our committee meets regularly with the objective of examining the details of all local planning applications. We also keep in mind the bigger picture of how our Neighbourhood Plan, which has been adopted by Arundel District Council, can be applied as per the objectives agreed within it. We approve the vast majority of applications, but we do challenge, often successfully, those we deem to not be entirely sympathetic to our town. This can be for a number of reasons e.g. a change of use that might not be the best for Arundel's High Street. At the Town Council we are much more aware and sensitive to any proposed change in the micro landscape than others who live and work from a distance.

Traffic and Transport

Make it easier for Arundel residents to get around

- Town-wide campaign to raise awareness about the proposed A27 bypass options via leaflets and social media
- New footpath from Mill Road Bridge to the Black Rabbit in 2021.



**RAISING AWARENESS
OF CONSULTATION**

Councillor Jeremy Johnston, Chair of the Traffic and Access Committee

– This year, the biggest environmental issue facing Arundel has been the Arundel Bypass consultation. After detailed examination of all the information available from Highways England, councillors voted by a large majority (11-1) to support and campaign for the Magenta option. This route is a genuine bypass, with limited impact on the South Downs National Park, which will safeguard the unique quality of our heritage town. This would be seriously damaged by other options enlarging the existing route through Arundel. We are awaiting Highway England's decision. We also continually review residents' concerns about rat running, speeding and parking. There are still problem areas, despite the introduction of the 20mph speed limits, so we are taking steps to trial vehicle activated signs in the near future.

The Town Hall

Ensure the Town Hall works effectively for the Arundel community

- 38 council meetings
- 45 public body meetings hosted
- 40 community meetings supported
- 73 wedding ceremonies
- 10 well-attended film shows (plus our first school holiday children's film)
- £73,500 income generated.



Thank you to Iain Stirling our Mace Bearer and Angela Standing our Town Crier



38

COUNCIL MEETINGS



73

WEDDINGS



10

FILM SHOWS

Town Hall Event Manager Sue Roderick –

73 couples celebrated their marriages in the Town Hall in 2019. As well as these we hosted birthday celebrations, christenings, wakes, 10 cinema evenings, 3 seminars, and 123 meetings. A revamped website and weekly postings on social media, along with 3 Open Mornings, and 2 Wedding Fayres and the wonderful testimonials we regularly receive, all contributed to 100% increase in wedding enquiries in the first two months of this year.

Do remember the Town Hall with its beautiful terrace is available to hire with your 15% Arundel Residents discount.

Councillor Robin Lovell –

Arundel Town Hall was built in 1836 by the 12th Duke of Norfolk. The main roof above the Atherley Chamber used extensively for meetings and weddings has been leaking for some time. A survey commissioned from a professional firm of surveyors has revealed extensive damage to the lead covering and probable damage to the structure beneath. Based on their recommendations the Town Council have resolved to replace the roof structure completely. We anticipate that work will start later in the year.

Thank you, Wendy

It is rare that councillors cannot reach a consensus on what should be done in the interests of our town. But it happened in March when with great regret the Town Clerk accepted the resignation, as both Mayor and Councillor, of Wendy Eve, who was unhappy with some Council decisions. Nothing in this detracts from the very great service that Wendy Eve has given to this town. Her record of 36 years as a councillor and serving five times as Mayor is unlikely to be matched in the future. This represents an incalculable amount of public service. The Council would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the whole town, to once again express its appreciation for Wendy's outstanding contribution to our community.