



SWANSCOMBE & GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL STANDING ORDERS

These Standing Orders were reviewed and adopted by the Town Council at a Meeting held on 18 December 2014 and recorded as Minute No. 333/14-15.

PREFACE

Some of the Standing Orders are compulsory as they are laid down in Acts of Parliament. These are printed in **bold type**. These Standing Orders cannot be altered.

TOWN MAYORS

The Chairman of a Town Council is entitled to use the title "Town Mayor". The title confers no additional powers on the chairman, and in particular, has no implications for his conduct in meetings.

1. MEETINGS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL.

- a) Meetings of the Town Council shall be held at the Council's offices in each year on such dates and times and at such place as the Council may direct. **Meetings shall not take place in premises, which at the time of the meeting, are used for the supply of alcohol unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.**
- b) Smoking is not permitted at any meeting of the Council. All Council properties are No Smoking Areas.
- c) Mobile phones must be switched off, or to silent, during all Meetings of the Council, committees and sub-committees.
- d) Three clear days before a Meeting of the Town Council (not including the day of issue, the meeting day, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas Break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning):
 - i) Notice of the time and place of the Meeting shall be published at the Council's offices, which is signed by the Town Clerk, specifying the business proposed to be transacted thereat (usually in the form of an Agenda);
 - ii) Where a meeting is called by councillors', the Notice will be signed by those members, specifying the business proposed to be transacted thereat;
 - iii) The summons to attend a Meeting specifying the business to be transacted at the meeting and certified by the proper officer of the Council, shall be sent to every member of the council by an appropriate method. ~~shall be left at or sent by post to the usual residency of every member of the council.~~
- e) Except in the case of business required by or under the Local Government Act 1972 or any other Act to be transacted at the Annual

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Department for
Communities and
Local Government

AGENDA ITEM 7
T/C 30/4/LS

Strengthening parish and town council accountability

Consultation on extending the remit of the Local
Government Ombudsman to larger parish and town councils



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March 2015

ISBN: 978-1-4098-4583-6

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1. Summary of proposals

A consultation paper issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government on behalf of the Secretary of State

Topic of this consultation:	This consultation paper sets out the Government's proposals for extending the remit of the Local Government Ombudsman to larger parish and town councils.
Scope of this consultation:	<p>The purpose of the consultation is to set out the Government's proposals for improving the options for redress by the public when they are let down by their local authority. The Department for Communities and Local Government is consulting on whether the jurisdiction of the Local Government Ombudsman, the organisation charged with investigating complaints from individual members of the public that they have suffered injustice arising from maladministration in local authorities, and able to recommend redress to remedy that injustice, should be extended to larger parish and town councils so that individual citizens have an independent route for redress when they have been let down by their parish or town council.</p> <p>The Department is also consulting on how larger parish and town councils should be defined for this purpose.</p> <p>Any change to the jurisdiction of the Local Government Ombudsman requires a change to primary legislation, specifically the Local Government Act 1974.</p>
Geographical scope:	The jurisdiction of the Local Government Ombudsman extends to local authorities in England only.
Impact Assessment:	An Impact Assessment is only needed where proposals impact upon business or voluntary sector bodies, or have significant costs for the public sector. Our assessment is that the proposals in this consultation will not bring about such impacts, although this consultation does seek the views of those likely to be affected by the proposals.

Basic Information

To:	This consultation is open to everyone. We particularly seek the views of individual members of the public, town and parish councils, those bodies that represent the interests of local authorities at all levels and those who have an interest in redress in public institutions.
Body responsible for the consultation:	The Conduct and Council Constitutions Team in the Department for Communities and Local Government is responsible for conducting the consultation.
Duration:	The consultation will begin on 26 March 2015. The consultation will run for 9 weeks and will close on 30 June 2015. All responses should be received by no later than 30 June 2015.
Enquiries:	<p>During the consultation, if you have any enquiries, or wish to receive hard copies of the consultation document, please contact:</p> <p>Vanita Patel e mail: vanita.patel@communities.gsi.gov.uk TEL: 0303 44 42581</p> <p>How to respond: Please respond by email to: parishconsult@communities.gsi.gov.uk</p> <p>Alternatively, please send postal responses to:</p> <p>Vanita Patel Department for Communities and Local Government 2nd Floor, NE, Fry Building 2 Marsham Street London SW1P 4DF</p> <p>Responses should be received by close on 30 June 2015. ← *</p>
Confidentiality and Data Protection:	<p>Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).</p> <p>If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, there is a statutory code of practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals, amongst other things, with obligations of confidence. In view of this it would be</p>

	<p>helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, in itself, be regarded as binding on the department.</p> <p>The Department for Communities and Local Government will process your personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, and in the majority of circumstances this will mean your personal data will not be disclosed to non-government third parties. Individual responses will not be acknowledged unless specifically requested.</p>
After the consultation:	A summary of responses to the consultation will be published on the Department's website within three months of the end of the consultation period.
Compliance with the Consultation Principles guidance:	The consultation complies with the Consultation Principles guidance.

2. Introduction

1. The Department for Communities and Local Government is consulting on proposals to extend the redress available to the public when they are let down by their local authority by extending the jurisdiction of the Local Government Ombudsman to larger parish and town councils responsible for substantial sums of public money and whose decisions affect a large number of people.
2. The Local Government Ombudsman may investigate complaints from individual members of the public who consider they have suffered injustice arising from maladministration in local authorities. If the Local Government Ombudsman finds in favour of the complainant, the Local Government Ombudsman may recommend redress. The jurisdiction of the Local Government Ombudsman currently extends to, among other authorities, district, borough, city and county councils. It does not extend to parish or town councils.
3. The remit of the Local Government Ombudsman is something that the Government keeps under constant review. The Government recognises that when the public are let down by those that provide their services, swift and effective redress is important.
4. There are around 9,000 parish and town councils across England, representing more than 37 per cent of the population. Whilst parish and town councils do not have the same range of powers as principal local authorities – county and district councils and London borough councils - their responsibilities can be diverse and the decisions they take can affect the day to day lives of many citizens. Whilst for the majority of parish and town

councils the local redress mechanisms currently available to the public are sufficient and proportional, it is right that larger parish councils with responsibilities and budgets comparable to those of district councils, should have equivalent accountability and redress mechanisms to those of principal authorities.

5. It is thus proposed to extend the Local Government Ombudsman's jurisdiction to cover these larger parish and town councils. This should not only give a better deal for the citizen but also lead to better quality and value for money in the local public services delivered by the tier of government nearest to the people.

3. Parish and Town Councils and Redress

6. It would be neither practical nor appropriate to extend the jurisdiction of the Local Government Ombudsman to cover all parish and town councils, some of which can have budgets of a few thousand pounds and populations of one or two hundred. In fact parish and town councils vary enormously in size, activities and circumstances. The smallest represent populations of less than 150, the largest has a population of around 71,000 people. Parish and town councils do have a range of statutory functions, which are concurrent with those of district councils and include for instance, allotments, maintenance of footpaths, certain planning matters, maintenance of recreation grounds, traffic calming measures, provision of bus shelters, community centres and the acquisition and sale of land. In addition, principal councils may devolve responsibility for the discharge of certain of their functions to parish and town councils where these have the capacity to undertake these roles.

7. There are, however, important differences between town and parish councils and principal local authorities such as district councils. Legislation regarding executive arrangements and overview and scrutiny does not apply to parish councils. Parish and town councils have limited requirements for audit where income and expenditure is below £6.5m.

8. Local authorities, including parish and town councils, are independent of central government. They are accountable to their electorate, the auditors and ultimately the courts. Legislation provides a framework in which they must operate and they must operate within the law at all times. The Government expects parish and town councils to be open and transparent in the way they conduct their business.

9. The majority of parish and town councils, with the relatively limited functions which they exercise, are well placed to settle complaints at a grass roots level. Redress mechanisms include using the council's formal complaints procedure, or pointing out concerns during the public inspection period of accounts, or by joining with a group of local electors to call for a parish poll on the issue of concern. Furthermore, every elector has the right to raise any matter affecting parish business at the annual parish meeting.

10. Redress routes can also shape and inform the future direction of a parish or town council. For example, parish polls, which allow for a ballot of local government electors in the parish to be called on any question arising from a parish meeting, can provide an indication of support for, or opposition to, specific parish matters which can help to guide the council's decision making.

11. The Government considers that for the majority of parish and town councils the existing system of redress for handling complaints is proportionate, lends itself to achieving swift and effective redress, and is consistent with the principles of localism. However, it considers that for those larger parish councils with responsibility for large amounts of taxpayers' money or which make decisions affecting the lives of many thousands of people, it would be appropriate to have an independent redress mechanism for members of the public.

4. The Local Government Ombudsman

12. The Local Government Ombudsman has responsibility for investigating complaints from individual members of the public who consider they have suffered personal injustice arising from maladministration in local authorities and certain other bodies within the Local Government Ombudsman's jurisdiction. The Local Government Ombudsman can make recommendations for redress and while these recommendations are not binding, there is almost total compliance. Recommendations for redress are intended to right the injustice caused and can include financial remedy, although this tends to be in the hundreds, rather than the hundreds of thousands, of pounds. The Local Government Ombudsman's recommendations are also valuable in preventing a repeat of the injustice and so promoting good practice in local authorities.

13. The Local Government Ombudsman's jurisdiction extends beyond principal local authorities such as district, borough, city and county councils to authorities such as internal drainage boards, National Park authorities and Fire and Rescue authorities. In 2013-2014 the Local Government Ombudsman considered 11,725 complaints and enquiries about, for instance, benefits and tax, planning and development, highways and transport and environmental matters. The Local Government Ombudsman's jurisdiction also covers social care provision, and extends to adult social care provided privately.

14. The Local Government Ombudsman is considered by Government to be a valued and respected part of the democratic process providing redress for individuals and driving up standards in authorities within its jurisdiction. Given the experience of the organisation in investigating complaints not just about principal local authorities but also varied single purpose authorities, the Government considers that it is the appropriate organisation to be given the role of independent redress provider for larger parish councils.

Q1. Should the Local Government Ombudsman's jurisdiction be extended to larger parish and town councils?

5. Defining 'Larger' Parish and Town Councils

The proposal

15. The Government is not proposing extending the jurisdiction of the Local Government Ombudsman to all parish and town councils. The Government understands that this would be impractical, with over 9,000 parish and town councils in England. Furthermore, the Government considers that for the majority of parish and town councils the existing redress mechanisms are proportionate.

16. The Government considers that it is right that the jurisdiction of the Local Government Ombudsman be extended to larger parish and town councils. We are now consulting on how a larger parish and town council is defined.

Defining a larger parish or town council by population

17. Some town councils have populations the same, or larger, than some of the smaller district councils which are within the jurisdiction of the Local Government Ombudsman. The smallest population for a district council is around 35,000 people. The Government considers it reasonable that any parish or town council with a population the same as or greater than a district council may be considered a large parish or town council and, because the actions, decisions and responsibilities of the parish or town council affect so many people, that parish or town council should be within the jurisdiction of the Local Government Ombudsman. Census data would be used to provide the population numbers for the parish and town councils. There are around 21 town councils with a population of 35,000 or more.

18. The Government understands that there may be an argument for extending the jurisdiction of the Local Government Ombudsman to less populous parish and town councils. Respondents are invited to indicate their preferred population threshold. The table below indicates how many parish and town councils would be in the jurisdiction of the Local Government Ombudsman if the threshold were set at various population levels.

Population threshold	Approximate number of parish and town councils within jurisdiction
1,000 and more	2,640
5,000 and more	803
10,000 and more	444
20,000 and more	155
30,000 and more	26
35,000 and more	21
40,000 and more	11

Q2. Should a large parish or town council be defined by having a population the same as or greater than 35,000 people, or should the population threshold be set at a different limit?

Defining a larger parish or town council by budget

19. The Government recognises that a number of parish and town councils have significant budgets, reflecting the size of the area they serve and the services that they provide to their communities.

20. Quantifying a parish or town council's budget is problematic. As well as an annual precept, a parish or town council may raise income in a variety of ways, from allotments to charges for the use of community centres or sports facilities. Moreover there is scope for annual variation to a parish or town council's budget which may be significant arising from, say, the disposal or acquisition of a substantial asset.

21. Where there is significant use of taxpayers' money the Government consider that the authority responsible for spending taxpayers' money should be accountable. That is why, in addition to the transparency rules and audit requirements the authority already has to fulfil, the Government is consulting on whether a parish or town council's annual precept should act as the threshold for determining its status as a large parish or town council and that the threshold for being considered a larger parish or town council should be £1m. There are 23 parish and town councils with a precept of £1m or over.

Q3. Should a large parish or town council be defined by having an annual precept of £1m or more?

Defining a larger parish council by a combination of both population and budget

22. Recognising that defining a larger parish or town council by population alone or by precept alone might include a parish or town council that is large in terms of population or precept raised, but is not a large administrative body in the sense that it should fall within the jurisdiction of the Local Government Ombudsman, a further option is to define only those parish or town councils with both a population of 25,000 or over and an annual precept of £1m as 'large'. There are around five parish and town councils that meet this criteria.

Q4. Should a larger parish or town council be defined by both population and budget?

The permanence of 'larger' parish and town council status

23. The jurisdiction of the Local Government Ombudsman is set in the Local Government Act 1974. It is this legislation that allows the Local Government Ombudsman to investigate complaints about principal local authorities and other bodies within its jurisdiction. Defining a class of local authority, in this case a larger parish or town council, by population, or annual precept, or both, raises the issue of determining whether a body

is subject to the jurisdiction of the Local Government Ombudsman by a criteria that may fluctuate from year to year.

24. It is undesirable for a local authority to be subject to the jurisdiction of the Local Government Ombudsman one year and not the next. This not only causes confusion about whether or not a complaint might be investigated and the Local Government Ombudsman's power to make any recommendation, but also creates confusion rather than reassurance for any member of the public who may wish to make a complaint.

25. Accordingly, we propose that, as one of the possible criteria for defining a large parish or town council is the population of that parish or town council, and that the population data is to be furnished by the Census, any parish or town council judged to be considered 'large' by its population upon publication of Census data shall be considered to be within the jurisdiction of the Local Government Ombudsman for the next decade, or until the publication of the next Census data for that parish or town council, whichever comes first.

Q5. Once subject to the Local Government Ombudsman's jurisdiction, should the parish or town council remain so for a fixed time period?

Annex A

Response Form

Response form for consultation paper issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government on behalf of the Secretary of State on the Government's proposals for extending the remit of the Local Government Ombudsman to larger parish and town councils.

Respondent details	Please submit your response by 30 June 2015 to:
Name:	parishconsult@communities.gsi.gov.uk
Organisation:	
Address:	Alternatively, please send postal responses to:
Town/City:	
County/Postcode:	Vanita Patel
Telephone:	Department for Communities and Local Government
e mail:	2nd Floor, NE, Fry Building
	2 Marsham Street
	London
	SW1P 4DF

Are you requesting non-disclosure of your response: YES/NO

Q1. Should the Local Government Ombudsman's jurisdiction be extended to larger parish and town councils?
COMMENTS
Q2. Should a large parish or town council be defined by having a population the same as or greater than 35,000 people, or should the population threshold be set at a different limit?
Pleas indicate your preferred population threshold Population of 1,000 or more Population of 5,000 or more Population of 10,000 or more Population of 20,000 or more Population of 30,000 or more Population of 40,000 or more COMMENTS
Q3. Should a large parish or town council be defined by having an annual precept of £1m or more?
COMMENTS
Q4. Should a larger parish or town council be defined by both population and budget.
COMMENTS
Q5. Once subject to the Local Government Ombudsman's jurisdiction, should the parish or town council remain so for a fixed time period?
COMMENTS

RESULT OF UNCONTESTED ELECTION

Election of Town Councillors for the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council, Galley Hill Ward

I, the undersigned, being the Returning Officer, do hereby certify that at the election of Town Councillors for the above mentioned Town Council, the following persons stood validly nominated at the latest time for delivery of notices of withdrawal of candidature, namely 4pm on Thursday, 9th April 2015 and have been duly elected Town Councillors for the said Town Council Ward without contest.

SURNAME	OTHER NAMES	HOME ADDRESS	DESCRIPTION (if any)	NAMES OF THE PROPOSER (P), SECONDER (S) AND THE PERSONS WHO SIGNED THE NOMINATION PAPER
Cross	Lorna Marilyn	12-14 Broomfield Road, Swanscombe, Kent, DA10 0LT	Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents Association	Alice E E Small(P), Jacqueline D Mendham(S)
Howes	Lesley Christine	27 The Grove, Swanscombe, Kent, DA10 0AD	Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents Association	Richard J Lees(P), Alan Reach(S)
Lees	Richard John	45 Caspian Way, Swanscombe, Kent, DA10 0LB	Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents Association	Alan Reach(P), Lesley C Howes(S)
Reach	Alan Stephen	32 Lewis Road, Swanscombe, Kent, DA10 0JH	Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents Association	Richard J Lees(P), Lesley C Howes(S)
Read	Ivy Ann	17 Eglinton Road, Swanscombe, Kent, DA10 0HS	Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents Association	Annette R Harvey(P), Jeffrey B Harvey(S)

Dated: Friday, 10th April 2015

Dartford Borough Council
Civic Centre
Home Gardens
Dartford
Kent
DA1 1DR

Graham Harris
Returning Officer

RESULT OF UNCONTESTED ELECTION

Election of Town Councillors for the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council, Swanscombe Ward

I, the undersigned, being the Returning Officer, do hereby certify that at the election of Town Councillors for the above mentioned Town Council, the following persons stood validly nominated at the latest time for delivery of notices of withdrawal of candidature, namely 4pm on Thursday, 9th April 2015 and have been duly elected Town Councillors for the said Town Council Ward without contest.

SURNAME	OTHER NAMES	HOME ADDRESS	DESCRIPTION (if any)	NAMES OF THE PROPOSER (P), SECONDER (S) AND THE PERSONS WHO SIGNED THE NOMINATION PAPER
Hall	Linda Madeline	156 Church Road, Swanscombe, Kent, DA10 0HD	Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents Association	John A Hayes(P), Bryan E Read(S)
Hayes	John Alfred	156 Church Road, Swanscombe, Kent, DA10 0HP	Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents Association	Bryan E Read(P), Ivy A Read(S)
Openshaw	Cheryl Kathleen	23 Alamein Road, Swanscombe, Kent, DA10 0DZ	Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents Association	John A Hayes(P), Linda M Hall(S)
Read	Bryan Ernest	17 Eglinton Road, Swanscombe, Kent, DA10 0HS	Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents Association	John A Hayes(P), Linda M Hall(S)

Dated: Friday, 10th April 2015

Dartford Borough Council
Civic Centre
Home Gardens
Dartford
Kent
DA1 1DR

Graham Harris
Returning Officer

STATEMENT OF PERSONS NOMINATED

Election of Town Councillors for the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council, Greenhithe Ward

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT:

The following persons have been and stand validly nominated:

SURNAME	OTHER NAMES	HOME ADDRESS	DESCRIPTION (if any)	NAMES OF THE PROPOSER (P), SECONDER (S) AND THE PERSONS WHO SIGNED THE NOMINATION PAPER
Butterfill	Susan Patricia	2 Meriel Walk, Ingress Park, Greenhithe, Kent, DA9 9GL	Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents Association	Bryan R Parry(P), Peter C Harris(S)
Harman	Peter Martin	Walmer, Ingress Park, Greenhithe, Kent, DA9 9NP	Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents Association	Gillian B Griggs(P), Rosalie B Heron(S)
Harris	Peter Courtenay	28 Lightermans Way, Greenhithe, Kent, DA9 9FH	Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents Association	Susan P Butterfill(P), Linda Manchester(S)
Kelly	Keith Martin	2 Bere Close, Ingress Park, Greenhithe, Kent, DA9 9XD	Local Conservatives	Maria Kelly(P), Aaron Kelly(S)
Kelly	Maria Barbara	2 Bere Close, Greenhithe, Kent, DA9 9XD	Local Conservatives	Keith Martin Kelly(P), Aaron Kelly(S)
Manchester	Linda	34 Liverymen Walk, Ingress Park, Greenhithe, Kent, DA9 9GZ	Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents Association	Peter C Harris(P), Bryan R Parry(S)
Mote	David James	7 Barnfield Close, Greenhithe, Kent, DA9 9JJ	Local Conservatives	Maria Kelly(P), Keith Martin Kelly(S)
Parry	Bryan Richard	8 High Street, Greenhithe, Kent, DA9 9NN	Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents Association	Linda Manchester(P), Susan P Butterfill(S)

A POLL for the above election will be held on Thursday, 7th May 2015 between the hours of 07:00 and 22:00

The number to be elected is **FIVE**.

This Election is combined with an Election of a Member of Parliament for Dartford Constituency and an Election of Councillors for Greenhithe Borough Ward which are being held on the same day

Dated: Friday, 10 April 2015

Dartford Borough Council
Civic Centre
Home Gardens
Dartford
Kent
DA1 1DR

Graham Harris
Returning Officer

STATEMENT OF PERSONS NOMINATED

Election of Town Councillors for the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council, Knockhall Ward

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT:

The following persons have been and stand validly nominated:

SURNAME	OTHER NAMES	HOME ADDRESS	DESCRIPTION (if any)	NAMES OF THE PROPOSER (P), SECONDER (S) AND THE PERSONS WHO SIGNED THE NOMINATION PAPER
Barham	Anita Evelyn Dorothy	48 Broomfield Road, Swanscombe, Kent, DA10 0LT	Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents Association	Kevin G Basson(P), Kathleen M Chapman(S)
Basson	Kevin Gordon	3 Bevans Close, Greenhithe, Dartford, Kent, DA9 9LN	Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents Association	Clare E Basson(P), Mark Basson(S)
Harman	Josephine Marie	Walmer, Ingress Park, Greenhithe, Kent, DA9 9NP	Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents Association	Kevin G Basson(P), Clare E Basson(S)
Jarnell	Steven Ronald	69 Louvain Road, Greenhithe, Kent, DA9 9DY	Local Conservatives	Iris J Stanford(P), Peter J Stanford(S)
McFadden	Laurie Deborah	34 Liverymen Walk, Ingress Park, Greenhithe, Kent, DA9 9GZ	Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents Association	Kevin G Basson(P), Clare E Basson(S)
Ryan	Simon John	5 Meriel Walk, Greenhithe, Kent, DA9 9GL	Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents Association	Kevin G Basson(P), Clare E Basson(S)
Tindame	Stephane	20 Knockhall Road, Greenhithe, Kent, DA9 9HJ	Local Conservatives	Iris J Stanford(P), Peter J Stanford(S)
Zumbusch	Johannes Theodor	49 Empire Walk, Greenhithe, Kent, DA9 9FU	Local Conservatives	Peter J Stanford(P), Iris J Stanford(S)

A POLL for the above election will be held on Thursday, 7th May 2015 between the hours of 07:00 and 22:00

The number to be elected is **FIVE**.

This Election is combined with an Election of a Member of Parliament for Dartford Constituency and an Election of Councillors for Greenhithe Borough Ward which are being held on the same day

Dated: Friday, 10 April 2015

Dartford Borough Council
Civic Centre
Home Gardens
Dartford
Kent
DA1 1DR

Graham Harris
Returning Officer



(Local Government Act 1972 Section 87 (2))

NOTICE OF CASUAL VACANCY IN THE OFFICE OF TOWN COUNCILLOR FOR THE SWANSCOMBE WARD.

Notice is hereby given that a vacancy exists in the office of Town Councillor for the Swanscombe Ward of the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council by reason of insufficient number of candidates at the ordinary election on 7 May 2015.

The Town Council are able to co-opt on to the Council any person provided that person is qualified to be a councillor pursuant to s.79 Local Government Act 1972 and is not disqualified pursuant to s.80 of the 1972 Act.

Written expressions of interest are now invited from local residents who wish to be considered as a prospective Town Councillor.

- * **Statements should outline the skills, experience, commitment and knowledge that individuals would bring to the council to benefit the community of Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town.**
- ** **Deadline for receipt of submissions is 8 May 2015.**

Dated: 21 April 2015

Signed:

Town Clerk

Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council
Council Offices
The Grove
Swanscombe
Kent
DA10 0GA

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The Parish News

March 2015

<http://www.kentalc.gov.uk>

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March...Is Spring Sprung?!

The month of March is always one of change. The long dark days of Winter start to diminish, and plant life starts to grow. Spring flowers appear in abundance and the world looks much better with a bit of sunshine - we hope! It is also the time when two of our "Home Nations" celebrate their special days: St David on 1 March and St Patrick on 17 March.

Likewise, the month of March is extremely important in terms of local and national fiscal matters. The end of the financial year beckons, along with a new one on the horizon. The Council Tax is officially set, along with any precept, and the whole process begins once more for our local councils.

This year, of course, things are a little different. The Chancellor will give his Budget on 18 March this year and this is swiftly followed on 7 May by General and local elections. So, busy times are ahead of all our Councils and we hope that the immediate future is as easy as it can be for you all.



Take a look at our events that may be of help to you in the run up to this hectic period. Our Election Awareness events are still running with one to go in April, and we sincerely hope that these will yield some interested parties who would like to become Councillors for the new term. Furthermore, we have launched our "New Councillor Induction" sessions from mid May, which are specifically tailored for those who are new to the job. All of our events are available for booking online at our website.

Further information on those dates can be found on our dedicated Election News page in this issue of the Parish News.

Training Matters

MARK
DATE

IN YOUR CALENDAR

Our two major conference events are now available online for you to book your places early! We have our Clerks Conference on Wednesday 17 June 2015 at Lenham Community Centre, with a choice of three options to suit all of our Clerks and their training needs. Likewise, we can now confirm our Councillors' Conference is taking place on 24 July, and we will be running our Dynamic Councillor Workshops there at the same time. These are events not to be missed. We will put up a definitive programme as soon as possible, but in the meantime do book your place. You can do so by following this link www.kentalc.gov.uk/events

What's Going On? Our Conferences and Workshops...

- 30 March 2015 Double Training Module -
- Towards
Greater
Transparency:
An Audit
Workshop.
Dover District
Council
- 17 June 2015 Annual
Clerks Conference
Lenham Community
Centre
- 24 July 2015 Annual
Councillors
Conference
Lenham Community
Centre
- 27 May 2015
GI36 - An
Introduction
to VAT and
Employment
Taxation.

Bespoke Events

If you would like us to devise a bespoke event for your Council on a specific subject that we can cover, do get in touch with our Adviser, Clive Powell. We are quite happy to come to one of your venues and roll out a specialised evening where you can brush up on your skills. Examples of what we can offer are:

- Dynamic Councillor
- Chairmanship
- Governance

Obviously, this is by no means an exhaustive list, and Clive is always happy to discuss a particular subject or venture that might be of use to your Council. This may be particularly useful post Election. We look forward to helping you in the near future.

NALC ANNOUNCE STAR COUNCILS AWARDS 2015

NALC

National Association of Local Councils

An Opportunity To Shine!

The National Association of Local Councils has a long history in running awards and they have announced a new scheme with more categories and a ceremony taking place in October. The NALC Star Awards are a great opportunity for our national body to recognise and celebrate the achievements of member councils and county associations like ours - both within and outside of the sector.

The Awards are being highly publicised and we hope to see lots of nominations submitted by Kent.

It is very easy for the work of local councils, councillors and staff to be underappreciated, so we are pleased that NALC will be

highlighting and publicising the important role that local councils play - and the power and influence that they have on communities across the county.

Please make sure that the work of your council and staff is recognised. Get your nominations in to starcouncils@nalc.gov.uk by 30 June 2015.

If you do submit a nomination, make sure you let KALC know too.

The Awards ceremony will take place in conjunction with the NALC AGM in London at the end of October and details of the event will be publicised at a later date.

If your Council uses Twitter, use the hashtag #starcouncils to promote the awards to your community @NALC

Award Categories

Individual Achievement

- Young Councillor of the Year 18 -30 years
- Clerk of the Year
- Councillor of the Year
- Chair of the Year
- Council Worker of the Year

Specific Achievement

- Digital Communications of the Year
- CALC outstanding project of the Year
- Local Council outstanding project of the Year.
- Council of the Year



Elections 2015

Resources and Information for our Town and
Parish Councils

Dates for Special Election Dynamic

Councillor Events Now Online!

- For the new Councillor in your Parish or Town Council, or for those re-elected that may want a refresher. This event is eminently suitable for all, and is a great starting point for any Councillor
 - 90 Minute Workshop Event at the very reasonable rate of £25.00 inc. VAT
- ASHFORD - 21 MAY
 - SEVENOAKS - 2 JUNE
 - DOVER - 4 JUNE
 - MEDWAY - 9 JUNE
 - DARTFORD - 11 JUNE
 - MAIDSTONE - 23 JUNE
 - SHEPWAY - 30 JULY
 - CANTERBURY - 6 AUGUST
 - TONBRIDGE AND MALLING - 9 SEPTEMBER

A 21st Century Election Campaign needs 21st Century resources. KALC has its own Election Blogsite for the public to access as well as for Council use. There are downloadable resources for everyone's use. It could be an especially useful tool for prospective first time councillors. Have a look at it by following the link here:

www.kentalc.blogspot.co.uk



My Community Rights - Time To Make A Difference in Your Area

My Community – free advice and grants

You have powers to make a difference in your area - saving local pubs, shops and community centres. Support and grants for developing your area through neighbourhood planning and building for your community are available, help with owning and managing local land and buildings, running services and boosting the local economy opens on 1 April.

Visit mycommunity.org.uk

<<http://mycommunity.org.uk/>>

for information, resources, advice

and grants and connect with others on the My Community Network.

Under the Community Ownership and Management of Assets

programme you can save local pubs and shops - new support & grants open 1 April at

<http://mycommunity.org.uk/programme/community-assets/>

<<http://mycommunity.org.uk/programme/community-assets/>> .

Under the Our Place programme

you can have a say over services

making them better for all – new support & grants open 1 April at

<http://mycommunity.org.uk/programme/our-place/>

<<http://mycommunity.org.uk/programme/our-place/>> .

Under the Community Economic Development programme

you can help bring real economic benefits to your area - new support & grants open 1 April at

[http://mycommunity.org.uk/programme/community-economic-](http://mycommunity.org.uk/programme/community-economic-development/)

[development/](http://mycommunity.org.uk/programme/community-economic-development/) .

Oh We Do Like to Be Beside the Seaside...

The New Coastal Revival Fund will help kick start the revival of “at-risk” coastal heritage.

The Department for Communities and Local Government - the DCLG - launched the £3 million fund on 27 February 2015. It is hoped that this particular scheme has the potential to create opportunities for new businesses and jobs in at risk coastal areas.

The Coastal Revival Fund is looking to support communities who wish to unlock the potential of buildings and facilities in their area - such as piers, lidos and promenades.

Grants will be used to get restoration projects underway by funding initial work that will be the catalyst to attract additional financing from private and charitable sectors. The fund will support projects that show the creativity, enterprise and passion needed to help seaside towns become year round destinations. It is hoped that it will have the potential to kick start the revival of the remaining lidos and piers that are not reaching their full potential or that have been neglected.

Our seaside areas will also receive support from the new Coastal Community Teams. More than £1



million will be provided for 110 teams which will create a long term vision and tactics for their area to tackle the specific challenges their coastal towns may face.

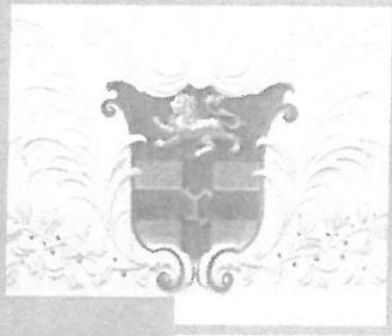
Communities will be able to bid for a share of the new heritage fund to tap into the potential that local heritage has for the area.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Details of how to apply to be a Coastal Community Team and further information regarding the Coastal Revival Fund - Heritage Restoration: Economic Regeneration will be published shortly. If you would like to register your interest in the schemes you can do so by contacting the DCLG directly here: coastalcommunities@communities.gsi.gov.uk

New Town and Parish Councils - Creation is Key!

Creating a Local Council has become an easier process within the last few years. The Coalition Government began consultations back in 2013, and announced in January 2015 that changes were now being launched so that it would be a far less challenging process to form a Council in future. The alterations recently made remove some of the "red tape" element that sometimes dissuade communities from making a Council. It is hoped that these changes will encourage local forums and so on to go further, and to create a new Council for their local neighbourhood communities.



Rochester Has... A Conversation!

The Dickensian Town With Great Expectations

The City Of Rochester in Medway is considered a hidden jewel in Kent's very extensive crown. Of late, there has been a push for the

area to have its own Town Council, and there is more than considerable interest from many parties in the district. As a result, members of the City of Rochester Society and other stakeholders set up an event at the Moat House in Crow Lane, which took place on Monday 3 February 2015.

Our President, John Rivers, played a starring role, giving his considerable knowledge and humour to the event. He explored his recent role in the Ashford Campaign, and shared his positive experience with the communities in that town, where they continue to campaign for five new Community Councils. Terry Martin and Clive Powell from KALC attended, giving their support and know how to everyone there.

John Collins, from the City of Rochester Society, was very pleased with the event and its good attendance. The Mayors of both Faversham and Broadstairs also came to give their support as did Richard Styles, the Town Clerk of Ramsgate Town Council, informing visitors of that town's experience.

All in all, the evening was a very positive experience for all those involved.



Through KALC Kent Fire and Rescue Service is asking parishes to help recruit volunteers in their communities

Kent Fire and Rescue Service's (KFRS) is looking for additional enthusiastic and dedicated recruits to join its community volunteer scheme.

KFRS volunteers do not carry out any operational fire safety duties, but give their time, energy and skills to undertake a range of directed community safety activities, unpaid and of their own free will, on behalf of KFRS. This includes talking with the community to promote safety awareness and the services which KFRS offers.

Sean Bone-Knell, KFRS Director of Operations said: "The KFRS volunteer network is an integral part of our efforts to achieve our goal of saving lives and reducing risk. Volunteers are a rich source of knowledge, skills and abilities and are enormously respected and appreciated throughout the organisation."

If you are interested in applying to become a community volunteer, please contact Karen Garrett at volunteering@kent.fire-uk.org or on 01622 692121 extension 6672.

Applicants have until 16 April to apply.

More information is available at: www.kent.fire-uk.org/volunteers



We have been running our Bulk Buy of defibrillators for quite a little while. It has proved so popular that we have issued another round of orders for mid June 2015. If your Council would like to purchase a defibrillator through our scheme, do contact Laura Dyer at the office for details. We look forward to hearing from you.

Defibrillators - What You Need to Know.

So Why Do We Need One?

Sudden Cardiac Arrest happens around 140000 times a year in the UK. It is one of our country's largest killers, and saving lives does depend on a matter of time. Studies suggest that there is less than five minutes from the event to save the life, and this decreases by up to 23% per minute. It takes time to get to some rural areas so Community Public Access Defibrillators (CPADs) have a very important part to play in life saving.

CPADs are reckoned to be about 10x more effective in saving lives

post hospital than other community schemes alone. Better Safe Than Sorry!

For further information regarding the acquisition of AEDs and CPAD schemes, visit the website of [Community Heartbeat](#) - a charity that promotes the use of life saving defibrillators in the community. Their [Frequently Asked Questions](#) section will give you a good idea as to what you need to know regarding any purchase you make.

What Is A Defibrillator?

A defibrillator delivers an electrical current through the chest which aims to shock the heart back into a normal rhythm - so allowing it to pump again. Rapid response using automated technology can significantly improve the quality of life of a survivor as the longer the brain is starved of oxygen, the more damage that can occur. An AED is a portable defibrillator especially designed for those who have little or no medical training. When applied to the victim, voice and screen commands will guide the user through the process and its intelligent technology will only allow it to shock a "shockable" heart rhythm. It allows a member of the public to play a key role to support emergency services who can sometimes be hindered by the time it takes to reach an emergency.

DID YOU KNOW...



KALC Community Awards

Our awards, supported by the High Sheriff of Kent, Hugo Fenwick, the Chairman of Kent County Council and the Mayor of Medway, are now closed for nomination. This is just as well as 47 Councils have participated in the scheme this year, which goes to prove what an appreciative bunch you all are.

Our nominations are far and wide reaching, from individuals who deserve recognitions from the community, to groups who make a fantastic contribution to local life.

We are aware that many of our nominees will be presented their awards at specially arranged social events so we are keen not to give too much away at this stage in case they do not know the good news!

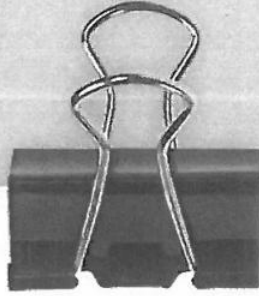
However, once the "cat is out of the bag" in your parish or town, do send us your pictures and stories so that we can cover them here. It is always nice to be able to sing your praises to our membership.

Major Investment in London and Kent means planned changes to trains this Easter.



Passengers planning to travel into London from Kent and the South East this Easter should check before they travel as Network Rail will be carrying out a major improvement work over all four days of the Bank Holiday.

- No Southeastern services will run to London Bridge except Hastings services, which will operate via Tonbridge, Redhill and East Croydon.
- There will be no trains to or from London Charing Cross, Waterloo East, or Cannon Street. Services to and from Kent will be diverted to and from Blackfriars and Victoria, or will start and terminate at New Cross.
- Southeastern services will not run between Deptford and Charlton via Greenwich. Replacement bus services will run between Lewisham and Charlton via Greenwich.
- In addition, major improvement work will also affect other Southeastern services, with no trains running between Swanley and Faversham via Sittingbourne and Maidstone to Gravesend. Replacement bus services will run between Swanley, Maidstone East, Gravesend and Faversham. Journey times will be longer.
- Southern services between London Bridge and Horsham services will start and terminate at East Croydon.
- There will be changes to other rail services across London during the Easter period.
- After Easter, Charing Cross services will continue to not stop at London Bridge until August 2016.



KALC MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

Our membership Survey will be issued in April to all our Councils. It will come as a high tech attachment via Survey Monkey, and shouldn't take too long to complete, thanks to its multiple choice format. Naturally, there will be an opportunity to air your views there too. *As ever, we really do appreciate your feedback.*

The membership Survey allows us to see what we are doing right, what we excel at and what we could do better. It will also help inform our review of the KALC Strategic Plan. We look forward to an enthusiastic response from as many councils as possible!

Your Subscriptions

We will be sending our Subscription Packs to our Councils over the next few days. We are aware that you all have a very busy time ahead of you and will need to be able to get cheques signed and so on. We would welcome payment as soon as possible, but understand if there is some delay. The deadline for payment is 30 June and after this date we will no longer be able to offer formal membership to unsubscribed members Your co-operation is always appreciated, and if you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact us.

Vacancies

Do take a look at the Vacancies page on our website for current employment opportunities within our Town and Parish Councils.

You can access the page by following this link:

[KALC - VACANCY PAGE](#)

BITS AND PIECES...

And Finally... Meet The Team!

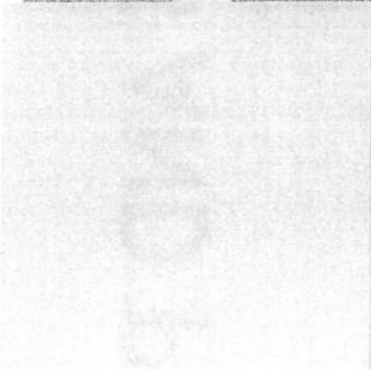
*Laura Dyer,
Administrator*



*Trish
Casey-Green,
Support Officer*



*Clive Powell,
Adviser*



*Terry Martin,
County Secretary*



Serving Parish & Town
Councils in Kent

TO ALL MEMBERS STANDING FOR ELECTION TO THE TOWN COUNCIL ON 7 MAY 2015.

I have been in touch with DBC and am pleased to be able to send you the following invitation to attend Member Training on the Code of Conduct.

I would strongly advise that all Members keep the dates available and, if re-elected to the Town Council, that every effort is made to try to attend one of the available sessions as this will not only ensure you are kept informed but will also be advantageous to you in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Graham Blew
Town Clerk

SWANSCOMBE & GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL
Council Offices | The Grove | Swanscombe | Kent | DA10 0GA.
Tel: 01322 385513 | Fax: 01322 385849
www.swanscombeandgreenhithetc.kentparishes.gov.uk/

From: Neil Murphy [<mailto:Neil.Murphy@dartford.gov.uk>]

Dear Parish Clerk, as part of the induction process for Dartford Borough councillors, training sessions have been arranged to explain the Members Code of Conduct.

It has been pointed out that in the past an invitation to attend these sessions has been extended to Parish councillors, and this practice is to be continued on this occasion.

Accordingly I would be pleased if you could inform your Councillors that training is to be provided on the following dates and times and that they are cordially invited to attend.

Code of Conduct	19 May	10.00 – 13.00	Council Chamber
	20 May	14.00 – 17.00	B12
	27 May	14.00 – 17.00	Board Room
This will provide an overview of the Member Code of Conduct and ethical governance.			

Neil Murphy
Member Services 01322 343251
Neil.murphy@dartford.gov.uk

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