

Newsletter

Welcome to New Councillors

Following the uncontested elections in May, the Town Council now has **nine Councillors** to represent the residents of the Civil Parish of Battle.

In addition to previous Councillors: Andrew Barton; Sue Burton; Vikki Cook; David Russell; Paul Stripp; and Dale Wheeler, I am delighted to welcome Bernard Brown, Darren Buss and David Silk. It is to the benefit of the town that we have **a good mix of experience and fresh perspectives** to take forward schemes already in progress and to consider any future actions.

On a beautiful summer's day, we had a tour of the Council's estate to identify the extensive areas that we are responsible for.

Initial Councillor training has been completed with further training identified and planned. This will be ongoing for all Councillors and staff.



Thank you to previous Councillors

I would like to formally express my gratitude **to those that have served Battle so diligently** and decided now is the time to concentrate on other interests: Claire Davies; Glenna Favell; Jill Gyngell; Margaret Howell; Margaret Kiloh; Hazel Sharman; and Allan Russell. Residents and visitors will have benefitted from their hard work: a refurbished Almonry; the Battle Civil Parish Neighbourhood Plan; and extensive facilities at the recreation ground, to name a few.

We are fortunate that many of these dedicated residents have agreed to remain as advisors or volunteer on Council plans.

Call out to prospective Councillors

If you feel that you would like to join our committed team of Councillors, please see page 4 for information.

Inside this edition

Town Mayor's report	2
Chairman's / Vice-Chairman's reports	3
What does it take to be a Councillor	4
Community report	
Community reports	5-7
South & South East in Bloom	
Beautiful Battle	8-9
Battle in Bloom winners	
1066 Writing Competition winning entry	10-
Memorial safety inspections	11
Community reports	12
Resident engagement	13
Almonry / Marketing Sub-Committee	14
Community report	
Advertisements	15
Your Councillors and Council Meetings	16

Contact Us

01424 772210

enquiries@battletowncouncil.gov.uk

Town Mayor's report - Councillor Vikki Cook

When I was re-elected Chairman of Battle Town Council and Town Mayor at the Annual Council Meeting in May 2023, I expected a quieter year but how wrong I was. Not only am I being invited back to celebrate and support local events, I seem to be attending more.

I am fortunate to be supported by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Doctor Andrew Barton, who has both represented and accompanied me to various events. We are **always happy to attend and support local events** and to help promote good causes that benefit residents in our town.

I recently opened a **community café in Abbey Lodge Care home** for mature adults living with Alzheimer's, learning difficulties and mental health issues. The café is open on Tuesday and Thursday from 1.30pm – 2.30pm, but it would be advisable to ring first in case Susie, the amazing waitress, is not feeling well.



In April I presented the awards for the **children's section of the Battle spring flower show**.

In May I was accompanied by two new Councillors, Bernard Brown and David Silk to the **Polish Memorial Service** held at the Polish War Memorial outside Netherfield—a place of peace on a busy road. The service was beautiful and was supported by many British Legion Groups with their flags.



The **May Medieval Fayre**, held on the Abbey Green culminated on the Bank Holiday Monday watching the May Queen being crowned followed by the maypole dancing of the Battle & Langton pupils.



As a part of the **coronation celebrations**, I was invited to a tea party with the reception class at Battle and Langton School. On the Bank holiday Monday we held a parade from the Abbey Green to the Recreation Ground where there were stalls, the fire engine, a petanque tournament and the children helped plant a crab apple tree for the King which the Brownies have been watering each week.

On Friday 14th July, past Mayor Margaret Kiloh and I hosted a **Charity Quiz evening** in the Memorial Hall. Despite complaints that the questions were too hard everyone appeared to have had a lot of fun.



Margaret's team provided a splendid sandwich supper, whilst Ron Cook ran the bar on our behalf. Some generous gifts from businesses and residents were auctioned off at the end.

By the end of the evening a profit of £1700 had been made. This profit will be shared between our two charities, the **TVS school in Africa** that Margaret supports and **Demelza Hospice at Home for Children**. Our sincere thanks to all who attended the quiz and supported us with donations.

Chairman's Report—Councillor Vikki Cook

As reported by the Clerk, the new Council has already started to consider **important decisions for our wonderful town**. Part of this process is to produce a 4-year Plan for Council to follow. This is in progress and, when finalised, will be published on the Council's website.

I am delighted to report that we have already agreed to **Declare a Climate Emergency**. This follows the Statement to the Environment that had previously been approved.

Further good news — a successful bid to The National Lottery Community Fund of £9912 for **toddler play equipment** will result in a wonderful play tower at the Rec! It is hoped that this will be installed in late September 2023.

It is disappointing to report that there is periodically a great deal of **criminal damage and graffiti** around the town. This causes inconvenience with facilities being out of action, staff time taken away from general tasks and is a **cost to residents**, which may result in a **reduction of facilities** being provided. All incidences are duly reported to Sussex Police and additional CCTV is being considered. If you witness this mindless damage, please report immediately to the Police.



More good news - an **update on the Pavilion re-build**. The Council has been awarded up to £400,000 from Rother District Council's Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds. This will be added to the Council's commitment from its CIL of £200,000. Tenders were invited and a preferred contractor has been selected. A new Task & Finish Group are working on the Pavilion Plan for recommendation to Full Council prior to submission of a bid for final funds and any works commencing.

Whilst Council is elected to make decisions on behalf of residents, it is important that, particularly in significant proposals, **we seek the views of the community**. Please do sign up to the Council's e-bulletin to ensure that you are aware of all consultations and actions being considered.

www.battletowncouncil.gov.uk/e-bulletin

Vice Chairman / Deputy Mayor's Report—Councillor Andrew Barton

In June, as Deputy Mayor, I networked with other **Mayors from across East Sussex**, courtesy of HM Lord-Lieutenant of East Sussex, Andrew Blackman, at the Lord-Lieutenant's (LL) reception. The LL role is mainly ceremonial and unpaid. He is appointed by the monarch and **represents the Sovereign in East Sussex and Brighton and Hove** and is the eyes and ears of the King regarding everything going on in the county. The LL assists in organising Royal visits and presents honours on



behalf of the King. I look forward to working with the LL office and highlighting the work of many of our local groups and organisations that help our community to thrive.

Passionate about your Community?

Make a change and become a Councillor

Do you want to help make a long-lasting change?

Do you have innovative ideas for the council?

Do you have concerns about a specific issue and want to do something about it?

If this is you, then we need you.

We need people from all backgrounds and experiences who reflect their community to put themselves forward for co-option.

Councillors make a huge difference to the quality of life of local people and how local issues are dealt with.

Battle Town Council is non political and Councillors are not aligned to political parties.

Battle Town Council does exciting and rewarding work. An integral part of a councillor's role is engaging with local people, groups and businesses to determine their needs, making decisions on the services and projects the council should take forward, and getting involved to ensure services meet the community's needs.

All Standing Committees and Full Council meet on a Tuesday evening at 7.30pm in the Almonry. We encourage Councillors to select which Committee they wish to work with and we suggest that attendance is generally for 2 of these meetings each month. There is considerable reading (allow a minimum of 2 hours a week, sometimes more) but it is all on-line. Task & Finish Groups and Sub-Committee meetings are held when convenient to their members and are permitted to be held via zoom. Unfortunately, we are not yet operating Hybrid meetings.

Residents are welcome to attend our meetings and it may be that **you could be co opted to help Make Battle Better.**

If you would like an informal conversation to discuss in more detail what's involved, please contact the Town Clerk, on 01424 772210.

Gala Concert on a Summer Evening in aid of St Michael's Hospice and the RNLI



Congratulations to **Battle Community Singers** who, with the Melodians Choir, staged the Concert to raise funds for their chosen charities. Cllr Vikki Cook said of the concert "Listening to the songs of peace whilst gazing at the stained glass window above the altar made the music and words so much more poignant."

We're jolly singers from Battle and are thirty plus members strong,
 We meet at the Emmanuel Centre where we love to sing our songs.
 The Battle Community Singers group was founded in twenty fifteen,
 No audition to sit, you don't have to be fit, so come and be part of the team.
 We're a group of all ages and take to the stages to sing all the musical styles,
 Traditional or pop, or choral or folk, sung with big hearts and big smiles.
 We're happy to sing for anyone, at gatherings both large and small,
 A retirement home, the De La Warr or even a shopping mall.
 So if you fancy a go come along and show the rest of us how it is done,
 One thing we can say if you come out to play you're sure to have plenty of fun.
 On Wednesdays at seven we sing until nine, the happiest group you will find,
 Uplifting songs with lots of good friends to cheer both the heart and the mind!

Twinning event

On a very sunny and warm evening, with the Upper Almonry Garden looking it's best after the South & South East in Bloom judging a few days previously, Councillors and staff prepared to **welcome visitors from St Valery sur Somme** - their first visit in four years.

English, still and sparkling wines, **generously donated by Carr Taylor Vineyard**, were poured and nibbles set out in the cool of the Almonry Hall.



The Mayor, Councillor Vikki Cook, welcomed the guests in French, followed by the Chairman of Battle Twinning Association, Stephen Bradshaw, who responded in French and then English, as did the President of St Valery sur Somme Twinning Association, Marie-Agnès Landié Mireaux.

Following the toast our guests and their local hosts were invited to a **short tour of the restored Almonry** building whilst Councillors and staff offered light refreshments and conversed in both French and English, before they departed to their hosts homes to prepare for a busy few days ahead.

For details of how **you can get involved with the Twinning Association** please telephone: 01424 773039.

Butterfly Café and Forget-me-not woodland walk



Care home Abbey Lodge welcomed Mayor of Battle, Councillor Vikki Cook, to cut the ribbon on their care home 'Butterfly Café' and 'Forget-me-not woodland walk' earlier this year. **Abbey Lodge is a Learning Disabilities/Dementia care home.**

The home developed the 'Forget-me-not' walk on spare ground at the site during the pandemic, when staff and residents could not get out to the local park.

Paddy Turner of the management team said: "Our individuals love this space and used it regularly throughout the pandemic lockdowns and since, during the warmer months. **We are now opening these up to the community too.**"

Battle's traders join forces to increase footfall into the town

There are lots of changes happening in Battle and different ways of discussing how business is evolving. One of the new ways of engaging with fellow business members in the town is to attend a **Chamber of Commerce breakfast meet-up at The Smoking Bull Inn** located on Battle High Street. They take place on the last Friday of every month at 8am and attendance is rising. "It's brilliant that so many business owners in the town from a wide range of companies, come together in this way, and the Chamber are **there to help and offer advice** whilst working together to **make the town exciting to locals as well as visitors** from far and wide." Andy Holter, President Battle Chamber of Commerce.

Email: battlechamberofcommerce@gmail.com for more info.



Battle Foodbank

Our local schools are now on summer break. We're doing all we can to help families on low incomes this holiday, but ultimately, we should all be protected from hunger and poverty no matter the time of year.



Our food bank serves local individuals and families who are experiencing financial crisis.

Open Wednesday 13:00 - 15:00 at Upper Church Hall, St Mary's Church.

Important - Our foodbank works using a voucher referral system. If you need to access the foodbank for the first time please just turn up when we are open and we will help you and put you in touch with a local referral agency, such as Citizens Advice Bureau who can offer you wider help, and a future foodbank voucher should you need to use us again.

Please do call or email our foodbank we can talk through your situation and sign post you to other local services.

We can now give bread, eggs, and fresh fruit and veg every week to help the clients have a more diverse food offering, rather than just long-life items.

Battle Sports Centre and Claverham Community College



Battle Sports Centre



Councillors Sue Burton and Vikki Cook attended the recent meeting of the **Battle Area Sports Centre**.

Attended by other representatives from East Sussex County Council and Rother District Council, as well as the manager Andy Hodder and the Head of Claverham, Mr Paul Swatton, we heard of the restrictions the Centre has been facing due to loss of car parking, tennis courts and the general uncertainty surrounding the building works at the School.

The Centre has made a good recovery after the affects of the Covid Pandemic restrictions, with **membership at the Gym** as well as the welcome return of some groups. There are plenty of free slots in the Dance Studio particularly for any groups that is looking for a regular home for a weekly fitness group or class.

The **popularity of the 3G pitch** is such that the Centre and School would like to extend by 1 hour the evening availability times. This was previously objected to due to excessive noise, and ways to combat this are being considered.

Currently the centre is looking to **appoint another part-time member of staff** and Andy would be pleased to talk with anyone who could work flexibly for 10 or 20 hours a week to support the members of the community who would like to support these facilities. Please contact Andy on 01424 774772.

Battle Axes Women's Football Team

The women's team are affiliates of Battle Town FC, and have returned to **outside training at Battle Recreation Ground**.

This year, given they are now a much larger group, training takes place on the upper football pitch for 1 hour on Wednesday evenings from 6.30 until 7.30pm.



A lot of local women are getting active – **get in touch if you're interested in joining**
melanie.gould@battletownfc.com

Battle Local Action Plan

Did you know that there is a Battle community group, made up of Town Councillors and residents from the town and surrounding area, who can **help you take forward a community led project** to successful completion? Battle Local Action Plan (BLAP) was formed many years ago, and has supported some amazing projects, including the multi-use games area (MUGA) at the Recreation Ground and, more recently, Battle Health Pathway and the Cycle Skills Area. We also assisted “Battle for Ukraine” get their funding for the **fabulous Ukrainian Festival** in early June this year.

How does it work? Any individual or community group can bring an idea to BLAP. The BLAP committee can give you ideas on how to take the project forward. It can find links for publicity, and if agreed, the project becomes a BLAP project. A **BLAP Project is one that has real backing**, in terms of accessing finance and the support and administrative resources of a larger team. The projects can be related to sport, green initiatives, culture, etc. – almost anything can become a BLAP Project, so long as there is support for it within our community. What BLAP doesn't do is take over your project and do it for you: you retain direction and control of your project.

If you have any **ideas that you would like to take forward**, BLAP would like to hear from you to see if they can assist. For further information contact the Chair, Sue Burton, on 07952 166819, or on burtonbananas@hotmail.co.uk.

The BLAP Committee is also looking for **new people to join the group**. No experience needed—just a wish to help committee groups reach their aspirations. It won't take much time only a few meetings a year. Any enquires to Sue Burton or Cllr Dale Wheeler on 01424 773606



Battle Museum of Local History

Bring the children or grandchildren and find **out more about the town in which you live**.

The Museum neighbours the Town Council offices and is located in the beautiful Almonry Garden at the top of the town and adjacent to the recently opened Tourist Information Point.



Starting with the dinosaurs you will be taken on a journey through time when the Romans were here, to the mediaeval period, and the famous Battle of 1066. Did you know that the museum looks after a famous axe, the **only proven artifact from the site of that battle?**

Monday to Friday, 10am to 4.15pm until 31st October. The museum features exhibits ranging from the age of the dinosaurs to the mid-20th Century and, to mark the coronation of King Charles III, the museum features a special exhibition charting Battle's long association with royalty.



Free of charge-although donations will make a big difference in helping to keep our lovely museum open.

Bloom, Beautiful, Battle

South and South East in BLOOM

Didn't Battle look especially attractive and colourful in early July? After all, we had judges from South & South East in Bloom (SSEIB) and our own Battle in Bloom in the town looking at our floral displays, town tidiness and our contribution to nature. **A huge thank you to all individuals, shops and businesses who worked so hard to tidy up the town and who look after the shrubs and flowers.** The end result was amazing. The overall outcome was appreciated by all the residents and visitors and the judges too, we hope! Look out for the results in September.



“The community spirit and enthusiasm came across clearly which goes a long way to making a great entry” Judge Peter Every for SSEIB.

Thank you to the **Beautiful Battle volunteers who planted up around 35 window boxes** for the Council which were placed in front of various shops in the High Street. Efficient shop owners managed to remember to water their boxes to help keep the floral arrangements looking spectacular. Judging for SSEIB was carried out on 6th July 2023. The judge was shown the Almonry front garden, Scout bed, Wellington Court, Abbey Court, Abbey Green, St Mary's Church grounds, and Battle Cemetery.

BEAUTIFUL Battle

The Beautiful Battle Committee welcomed Councillor Darren Buss at its last committee meeting and look forward to working with him over the coming year. It was noted that his presence dropped the average age of the Committee considerably!

Beautiful Battle **volunteer gardeners have concentrated on preparing the Almonry front garden** for the South & South East in Bloom Competition and it was in full bloom on the day of the judging. A halt to the rear garden has been made at this time until repairs to the Almonry chimney has been completed.

All new plants had been labelled and the new rockery, under the Judas tree, has been planted up. A water lily was added to the cast iron cauldron (which was recently in flower). Beautiful Battle also built and erected a notice board near the Museum which shows the flowers of the week. It is worth noting that **many new plants were provided by Beautiful Battle gardeners**, either from their own gardens, or bought from garden centres.

In September 2023, Beautiful Battle's plant committee will meet to choose plants and bulbs for 2024.

Beautiful Battle has around 11 regular gardeners, and 4 part-time, working on Thursday mornings throughout the year. Together with growing on and watering 3000 plug plants, planting out, sourcing plants, weeding and maintaining flower beds and containers, monthly committee meetings and other activities, **Beautiful Battle provides around 1100 hours (approx 150 days) of gardening for Battle town per year.**

For information, please check out the website which is updated each month www.beautifulbattle.org



Battle in BLOOM

Council was delighted to receive an **increased number of entries for gardens** to this year's competition. The judges were impressed by the wonderful variety of displays that had clearly taken much care, attention and pleasure to produce.

Once again blessed with beautiful weather, the Council hosted the **Battle in Bloom Awards Ceremony in the Almonry garden.**

Councillor Sue Burton presented Awards to winners of the residents' garden categories, Councillor Bernard Brown for the best and runner-up allotments and Councillor Vikki Cook for the town's business displays.

Councillor Cook commended the residents, businesses and Beautiful Battle for the parts they play in improving the shops and businesses in our high street.

The Mayor thanked Councillors and Staff for their enthusiasm and for their willingness to give up their time to support Council events.



Our thanks go to all those that entered and Congratulations to our winners!

Award	Winner
Best Family Garden – The Field Trophy	Barbara & David Brooks
Best Container Garden – Civic Association Award	Mrs G Harffey
Best Patio Garden – Battle Floral & Horticultural Society Cup	Barbara Helliker
Best Back Garden – Burstow & Hewitt Trophy	Roy Matthews
Best Wildlife Garden – Marjorie Spratt Cup	Robert Madge & Fiona Siberry
Best Vegetable Patch – Battle Town Council Award	David Furness
Best Front Garden – Battle Flower Club Award	Gary & Anne Dunk
Best Newcomer – Ron Harris Cup	Elizabeth Cox & Alex Gladstone
Community Prize – Chamber of Commerce Cup	Abbey Court
Best Floral display by Public House – Gaynor Gough Trophy	The Abbey Hotel
Best Floral display by a Restaurant – Thorpe Trophy	The Pilgrims Rest
Best Hanging Baskets—Battle Town Council Cup	Claremont
Best Year-Round Display – Rosaline Cup	British Design British Made
Best Floral Display by a Non-Catering Business – 1066 Cup	Batcheller Monkhouse
Best large allotment	Angela Lumb
Runner-up large allotment	Julie & Dane Preston
Best small allotment	Kim Brown
Runner-up small allotment	Pam & Keith Hawkins
Judges Award	Gill Freeman

Writing Competition winner 2022

Beginners luck—by Jessalyn Berry

The tale of the amateur writer who made it big by beginners' luck

Stairs wrapped around the twisting tree trunk, the roots surrounding a swirling pool at the bottom. Bookshelves circled around the room, a landing at the top. Dust collected on the pages and shelves, the spines smooth, the titles blaring clearly in the light streaming through the arched windows. Grass coated the floors in its green embrace, its emerald colour vibrant against the mahogany bookshelves. Branches sprouted off to create separate landings, each with desks on the extended balconies. Lost paper notes lay on the desk, the crisp letters flaking off with time, the ink in the pot dried in the sun. The quills were still perched in them, almost as if the people were in the middle of taking notes. The pages were yellowed in age, stiff to the touch. One wrong move and Hazel knew that they would fall apart in her hands. She observed the world that was around her, watching the butterflies settle down in the tree. The tree whispered a song of welcome, the leaves rustling in the slight breeze coming through the open window.



Her pen froze over the paper. How would she continue writing? It was a natural pause, something that she couldn't quite get over. It was a hitch. Her brain searched for something, anything that would grant her a form of inspiration. She scratched out the last sentence, rubbing her eyes. How long had she been there, staring at a blank piece of paper, just waiting for inspiration to strike? She glanced at the clock and looked away. She took a second glance. It couldn't be right. She couldn't have been there for five hours! The entry for the competition had to be in a week. There was no way that she would get it finished. *Focus. Focus. Panic will not get this submitted.* She sighed sharply, rewriting the last sentence.

The trees whispered their sweet melody in welcome as the breeze coming from the open window brushed past, rustling the leaves of the mahogany tree.

There we go. Almost smooth. The words ran around in her head, a tidal wave waiting to spill on the page in a messy formation of sentences. Her eyes darted around the room, looking for any piece of paper that could serve as a map for her ideas. *Finally.* The blank piece glared at her with its purity. She smiled slightly. The pen was moving before her head even had time to think.

Her eyes drooped down, the piece of paper black with the ink that had spilled all over the page, the mind map completed, unorganised and messy, but rustically beautiful in her eyes. Her writing hand aching in stiffness, cramps running down all her body. She stretched, the dim light of the lamp illuminating the rest of the room. Notes were posted all over the walls, the whiteboard with so many colours on it was a mess of pen inks. She blinked, eyelids heavy, her head lolling slightly to the back of her chair, she closed her eyes, sleep claiming her in its comfortable embrace.

The coffee stung the back of her throat, its bitter taste waking her senses. She rolled her neck to release the tension. Yawning, she hugged the hot cup against her body, savouring the warmth. Sliding back into the chair, she stretched her back, her spine clicking in response. She smiled grimly into the endless void of her mind. She stared at her notes for a minute, reading the scrawled handwriting, before picking up her pen, letting it rest on the paper, before drawing it across, the writing stark against the whiteness. A bolt of lightning lit up the void of imagination in her mind.

That might just work...

Stairs wrapped around the twisting tree trunk, the roots surrounding a swirling pool at the bottom. Bookshelves circled around the room, a landing at the top of the sagging shelves. Dust collected on the pages and shelves, the spines, smooth, the titles blaring clearly in the light streaming through the arched windows. Grass coated the floors in its green embrace, its emerald colour vibrant against the mahogany bookshelves. Branches sprouted off to create separate landings, each with desks on the extended balconies. Lost paper notes lay on the tables, the dried letters flaking off with time, the ink in the pot dried in the sun. The quills were still perched in them, almost as if the people were in the middle of taking notes. The pages were yellowed in ages, stiff to the touch. One wrong move and Hazel knew that they would fall apart in her hands. She observed the world that was around her, watched the butterflies settle down in the tree. The trees whispered their sweet melody in welcome as the breeze coming from the open window brushed past, rustling the leaves of the mahogany tree.

“I have been looking for this part of the library for the last three hundred years.” Delianas voice resonated around the library, her silent steps bringing the queen to Hazel’s side. Her brown eyes scanned the room, the green veins catching in the light. Her arched ears peeked out of her unbound hair. Her canines flashed in the streams of light, her animalistic beauty catching Hazel off guard as it always did. The fae queens gaze finished its sweep of the room to focus on Hazel. The full attention was like a target drawn on her chest, the gaze as piercing as any arrow, but all she did was arch a nut-brown eyebrow. “Yet somehow you find it in a matter of weeks.” She met Hazel’s eyes. “Trouble finds you fascinating.”

It was her first time entering into the competition. Had she done well among the seasoned veterans? Had she done what they wanted? Had she followed the brief correctly?

She stared at the judge as if they had lost their mind. How had she won? She glanced around the room, seeing respect on some faces, open contempt on others, one even going as far to mouth *beginners’ luck*. She just gave them a small smile, even when the inside of her was in turmoil. *Beginners’ luck*? Maybe so, but even if it was, confidence coursed through her mind as she walked up to collect the trophy. Filling that black void inside

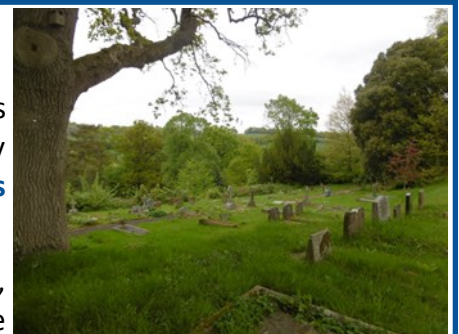
Memorial safety inspections

To ensure visitors and staff tending to the cemetery and St Mary’s Churchyard are safe, the Council carries out an annual memorial safety inspection, usually in August, to **ensure the headstones and memorials are secure.**

The inspection is a visual check to look for subsidence or movement, followed by a hand pressure test. This involves applying pressure to the memorial to check for movement. Where a memorial is found to move significantly under pressure it is carefully laid flat. Where possible the owner of the grave space is notified by letter of the action taken. **Owners are reminded to keep the office updated of contact details.**

Any repairs to memorials must be completed by a registered stonemason. Visitors to the cemetery are requested **not to try and refit any memorial that has been laid down.**

Anyone who has a concern regarding the inspection process or who needs to contact the Council regarding a memorial that has been laid down is invited to contact the office on (01424) 772210 or email enquiries@battletowncouncil.gov.uk



Battle Town Council pledged its support to No Mow May

Nature has really been allowed to thrive when we have not mowed. **THANK YOU to residents** who joined us to help boost biodiversity and provide a feast of wildflower nectar for bees.



We also contacted the neighbouring Parishes and found that Crowhurst and Whatlington were also “No Mow Maying”!

“No Mow May is a great way to show our commitment to the Council’s Statement to the Environment to help make a positive difference to our community. **We are really keen to conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural assets of the Battle Civil Parish** and continually review how we carry out grounds maintenance to see if there are any further opportunities to allow us to meet this objective.”
Carol Harris, Town Clerk.



Following the success of the community litter pick in March, which came about as part of the Great British Spring Clean, No Mow May presented another opportunity for residents to ‘**love where you live**’.

Environmentalists are encouraging everybody to go beyond May but that’s for next year to consider.

Transport improvements



Stagecoach buses have recently **extended some of their bus services** which is good news for residents in the outlying parts of our parish.

The 304/305 service has been **rebranded the 1066 route** and now residents can travel by bus between Hastings, Battle and Hawkhurst on a SUNDAY.

The 95 bus service from Bexhill, that also serves the North of Battle, Coronation Gardens and Telham linking with the Conquest hospital, has now been extended to include SATURDAYS.



In addition East Sussex County Council has introduced a **FLEXI BUS service** to support residents in the Rural Area. Rides can be booked via the phone, or website, or on a phone app. Recently one of our councillors travelled to a meeting in another village on the Flexi Bus, he commented that it was simple to book and ran on time. There is a **flat rate fare of just £2** for all bus journeys. www.eastsussex.gov.uk

Councillors Sue Burton, Vikki Cook and Dale Wheeler recently supported the extended 95 bus route to the Conquest hospital (with connections to Hastings) and spoke with a regular traveller, John who said, "I am so grateful, this has saved me an expensive taxi fare" . A young family boarded at Coronation Gardens and proudly stated, "We are catching two buses to go to Hastings." So that’s £4 there and £4 back if you don’t have a bus pass or you are not exempt.



Buses are an environmentally friendly as well as sociable way to travel so please let's use it or lose it.

Importance of Resident Engagement – we want to hear from you

Parish Assembly

Due to the May elections, this year's Parish Assembly was held earlier than usual, on 4 March, at Battle & Langton School.

This is **not a Council meeting** but facilitated to allow residents of the Civil Parish of Battle to raise anything they consider important. Town, District and County Councillors attended, together with Sargent Booth and the Deputy Chief Executive and the Major Projects Manager of Rother District Council.



Prior to the formal meeting, **community groups were invited** to set up stalls to introduce themselves and raise awareness to residents. This year, a particular emphasis was on the environment. **Eco Youth Awards** were presented to Freya, Lydia, Amelia and Jessica and this was followed by a wonderful presentation by the **Claverham Wombles**.

This year's **Community Awards** went to Members of the Battle Foodbank in recognition of the enormous contribution this group make to our residents, particularly during the recent pandemic and the current economic crises and Tamzin Gray who has been instrumental in the success of many of the Battle events that residents and visitors have enjoyed over her 20 years of dedicated work.



The winner of the **Writing Competition**, Jessalyn Berry, was also presented with her award. You can read her work, *Beginners Luck*, on **pages 10-11**.

A presentation was made by Rother District Council's Deputy Chief Executive on the reasons for the offer of **devolvement of grounds maintenance and the two public toilets** to the Town Council. Residents opinions will again be sought prior to further discussion by the Town Council.



The importance of a **Resilience Plan** was highlighted and volunteers are invited to take this forward.

We are already considering next year's Parish Assembly. We have received a request for information on **Community Led Housing** – is this something you might like to hear about – please let us know. Alternatively, if you have any other **ideas or requests for specific speakers please let us know**. – We hope the Parish Assembly will take place on Thursday 18th April 2024.

Footway Consultation

We recently carried out a consultation on **priorities for suggested footpaths in Battle**, which could be partially funded from Council's Community Infrastructure Levy – Mountjoy to Bowmans Drive, **Steps to Ramp**; Shared **use path** between Park Lane and Saxonwood Road; and **extension of footway** between Harrier Lane and the footpath for the **1066 Country Walk**.

This has been completed and Council are now considering next steps.



Devolution from Rother District Council

Please look out for our consultation on the proposal from the District Council to pass on responsibility for its discretionary services of **grounds maintenance and public toilet facilities** in the Battle area.

The Almonry & Marketing Sub-Committee

A Council Sub-Committee is currently working on a **marketing strategy for all our premises** in Battle that we can hire out to groups and societies for a variety of uses.



The Almonry is open as a **Tourist Information Point** on Mondays to Saturdays from 10.00 – 14.00. In the week it is hosted by our Officers. At the weekends Councillors and volunteers welcome members of the public to the building. Apart from leaflets and books to sell, we also have a **5 minute film to show some of the history of the Almonry** as well as highlighting some interesting and quirky facts. Each room has a self-guiding information sheet.

You don't need to be a historian to volunteer - a friendly smile is often all the welcome people need. Please contact enquiries@battletowncouncil.gov.uk if you would like to join the team, **or pop in on a Saturday and see for yourself.**

We are delighted to report that a **Rother District Council Customer Service Officer** is now at the Almonry on Wednesdays between 9am and 2pm.

Part of the refurbishment project included improvements to the access to the garden, Museum and Almonry. We are also delighted to see **many visitors using the benches in the garden** to enjoy the open space and admire the beautiful garden. We hope that next summer, we will also be able to open the garden behind the Almonry.

The restorations have also enabled us to offer **exhibition space** and we currently have a brilliant display showing the restoration project. It is intended that this may become a venue for **small events and celebrations** such as baby naming, civil weddings, wakes and investitures. It is also available for **small conferences or as a meeting place.**

We look forward to being able to **promote other venues with other opportunities** for local groups societies and small businesses, so please watch this space .

Would you like to see a community garden in Battle?

Wild About Battle has been awarded a **grant from The Chalk Cliff Trust** and **would like to hear from residents** on what they feel about the idea of using the funds to start a community garden in Battle.

We have permission to use a **large area on the recreation ground** to create a space where local people can come together to enjoy the many benefits of gardening and producing fresh vegetables, fruit and herbs. This project would be an evolving idea, **managed and maintained by volunteers.**



Community gardens have numerous benefits depending on the goal and scope of the project. These **benefits include:**

- Providing free produce for the local community
- Promoting health and wellness
- Providing a sense of community
- Educating people about food production and nutrition
- Serving the community through food donation
- Increasing biodiversity

This is a wonderful opportunity to enhance our community but it depends totally on one thing – YOU.

If we are unable to attract enough committed volunteers to ensure the viability of this idea it simple won't happen.

If you are **interested in becoming involved or would like more information**, please contact us at wildaboutbattle@gmail.com or go to our Facebook page and send us a message.

We look forward to hearing from you, so this wonderful initiative can happen.

Leading Estate and Letting Agents in Battle and the surrounding villages

Sales: 01424 775577

battle@batchellermonkhouse.com

Lettings: 01424 236145

battlelettings@batchellermonkhouse.com

Contact us for a free, no-obligation property valuation today.

batchellermonkhouse.com

**Batcheller
Monkhouse**

Why use a cattery when you can use Happy Cats?



We offer 30-45 minute visits full of pampering and play to your cat in the comfort of its own home.

DBS checked, fully insured and have been spoiling cats for 12 years!

www.happycatscatsitting.co.uk



Helen Hyde, Happy Cats Cat Sitting,
24 Battle Gates TN33 0JD
T: 01424 777146 T: 07506 721866
E: hello@happycatscatsitting.co.uk

Paid advertisements in Battle Town Council publications in print, online or in any electronic formats, do not constitute an endorsement by Battle Town Council. Any information supplied in advertisements is based solely on material received from advertisers

If you are interested in securing an advertising space, please email your advertisement to:

enquiries@battletowncouncil.gov.uk for approval.

Haine & Son

Funeral Directors



C.P.J. Field.

More than a funeral director since 1690.

19 Market Square, Battle TN33 0XB
01424 236 000

Eastbourne 01323 727 801 | Polegate 01323 489 127
Hailsham 01323 840 049

www.cpjfield.co.uk

Heringtons

SOLICITORS

We're here to help

Specialising in helping plan for later life

Preparing wills for you and your family

Guiding you following a bereavement

Helping you to move home

Supporting families in their legal affairs

Assisting with civil disputes

Offices at Battle, Bexhill, Hastings, Rye and Eastbourne

Tel: 01424 772401

heringtons.com

BATTLE Locksmiths

CONTACT US

51 MOUNTJOY, BATTLE
EAST SUSSEX, TN33 0EQ

07931 111636
DARREN.WOOD12@GMAIL.COM

You don't need to be a **LORD or LADY** to stay with us in the delightful tranquil village of Crowhurst, near Battle TN33.

Edendale Lodge Carehome

offers

AFFORDABLE

Residential, Respite & Dementia Care with a vibrant outlook and lots of activities for our residents

Enquire for a discreet and informative chat with **Zoe our Manager**
01424 830295
edendale@belmonthealthcare.co.uk



belmonthealthcare.co.uk



Council Meeting Dates

Full Council *3rd Tuesday of month*

15 August
19 September
17 October
21 November
19 December (precept setting)

Estates *Alternate 1st Tuesday of month*

3 October (budget)
5 December

External Relations & Town Development

Alternate 1st Tuesday of month

5 September
7 November (budget)

Finance & General Purposes *Alternate 4th Tuesday of month*

26 September (Almonry/Admin budget)
28 November (budget recommendation)

Planning & Transport *2nd Tuesday of month*

12 September
10 October (budget)
14 November
12 December

These **Meetings take place at The Almonry**, High Street and commence **at 7.30pm**, unless otherwise stated on the Agenda. **Members of the public are welcome.**

Agendas and Minutes of all Battle Town Council meetings are posted on the website at www.battletowncouncil.gov.uk

Photographs courtesy of Batcheller & Monkhouse, DB Photography, Liz Blackwell and Peter Greene, with our grateful thanks.

Contact Your Councillors

Marley Ward	Watch Oak Ward
Cllr Andrew Barton CllrABarton@battletowncouncil.gov.uk	Cllr Sue Burton CllrSBurton@Battletowncouncil.gov.uk
Cllr Darren Buss CllrDBuss@battletowncouncil.gov.uk	Cllr Vikki Cook CllrVCook@battletowncouncil.gov.uk
Cllr David Silk CllrDSilk@battletowncouncil.gov.uk	Cllr David Russell CllrDRussell@battletowncouncil.gov.uk
Cllr Paul Stripp CllrPStripp@battletowncouncil.gov.uk	Cllr Dale Wheeler CllrDWheeler@battletowncouncil.gov.uk
Netherfield Ward	Vacancies:
Cllr Bernard Brown CllrBBrown@battletowncouncil.gov.uk	Netherfield—1; Telham –1; Watch Oak—2