

Southam Town Council Newsletter

APRIL 2017

www.southamcouncil-warks.gov.uk

WELCOME TO SOUTHAM!

The Town Mayor, Councillor Mike Brooks, and the Members of Southam Town Council extend a very warm welcome to all the new residents currently moving into the various estates in the town. We hope that you will be very happy here and that you will take an active part in the community life of the town, help us to improve it and perhaps even join the Council. The website is at

www.southamcouncil-warks.gov.uk

You can also find us on Facebook.

There are numerous groups and societies active in the town and the contact details of most of them can be found at

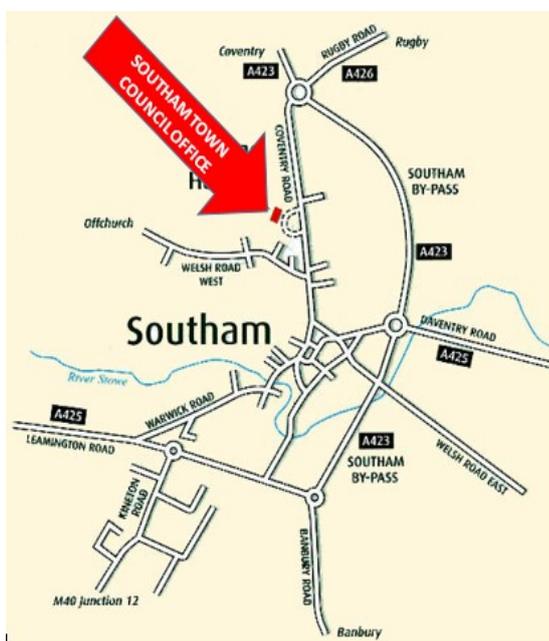
www.southam.co.uk

The Grange Hall, where the Town Council office is situated, hosts many groups and societies including VASA (voluntary drivers for pensioners) Blood Donors, Southam Stompers Line Dancing, Dog Training Club, Bridge Club, The Grange Players, Inspire Dance, Extend Fitness, Fitsteps, Shortmat bowls, Badminton, Clubercise, and the Spiritualist Church. It also has rooms to hire for your family parties and special occasions and includes a licensed bar. If your interests are not catered for in this list, perhaps you would like to hire a room and start your own group. Carole, who runs the hall would be delighted to give you further information on hall hire and contact details for all of these groups. 01926 813933 www.grangehall.co.uk

Anything else you need to know about life in Southam then please ring the Council office which is open from Monday to Friday 9am to 1pm.

We may not know all the answers but we will try to direct you to the right place or person to help you. 01926 814004.

Contact details for all your Town Councillors are on the reverse of this newsletter. If you want to see what they look like, mugshots are on the website!



ANNUAL TOWN MEETING & MAYOR MAKING



The Annual Town Meeting & Mayor Making will take place on Thursday 11th May 2017 at the Grange Hall.

Residents are invited to attend and may speak at the Annual Town Meeting. Local Organisations are also invited to send a representative.

Annual Town Meeting 6.45pm

Mayor Making & Civic Reception 7.30pm

You are invited to attend. Light refreshments will be provided following the Mayor making ceremony.

EDUCATION GRANTS AVAILABLE

Are you a Southam resident and in or just about to start higher education or post school training? Are you struggling to afford all the books and equipment necessary?

Remember that there are grants available from Southam United Charities (SUC). Every year from June until August, SUC will consider applications for grants to at least help with some of the costs.

You can find an application form on the Town Council web site here: <http://www.southamcouncil-warks.gov.uk/pdfs/suc-grant-appform-2014.pdf>

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN SOUTHAM?

Tell us about your event or club and (space permitting) we will try to find room to promote it for you in the newsletter, or, if not there, then on our Facebook page or on our website.

deputy@southamcouncil-warks.gov.uk

SOUTHAM TOWN COUNCIL NATURAL BURIAL GROUND

Anyone walking through our Parish Churchyard can see that the burial ground is full. We need more burial space.

Southam Town Council continues to work for the provision of a natural burial ground in the Southam area. We have investigated several options for land but, despite consuming a lot of time for the Councillors involved, these have until now come to nothing.

There are various reasons for this including well-funded developers securing options on the land in the hope of obtaining building permission or the land turning out to be unsuitable under current regulations. For example, the Environment Agency ruled out the use of any of the land already owned by the Council at Park Lane recreation ground because it is too close to the river. The Coventry Diocese is unable to provide land as its trustees are bound by rules that stop us competing in a purchase and also forbids them to donate. Any land for a new burial ground will also need to have suitable vehicle access to satisfy the district planners and the highways authority.

However, the Council is now engaged in legal negotiations to secure an option to purchase a piece of land to be used as a new burial ground. This is a protracted process and the details need to remain confidential until agreement is reached. Once that is done, the next steps will be to secure permission from the planners, the Environment Agency and, of course, the people of Southam.

A meeting recently took place between Southam Town Council, the Right Honourable Jeremy Wright MP and senior officers from Stratford District Council at which we updated them on the current position. The prospect of another option was raised by the Town Council at this meeting and this is currently being investigated by Stratford District Officers.

We are sorry we cannot say more than this now other than "Watch this space".

SOUTHAM MARKET UPDATE

Residents have been keen to let the Council know of their opinions regarding the re-siting of the market to Market Hill.

A large majority was in favour of the move and believed it was a positive step to put the market in such a prominent position; that it was improving footfall and making the town appear more vibrant and colourful. Several people commented that they were using the market for the first time in years; this is also what is being reported by market traders.

Three residents were in favour of moving the market back to Wood Street saying it was easier for disabled residents to park.

Below are some examples of the comments received.

'It is lovely to see the town nice and busy these mornings and I really hope it continues thriving on Market Hill.'

'The siting and presentation of the Tuesday market on Market Hill is excellent and a massive improvement on the previous Wood Street car park event.'

The market is open every Tuesday. Why not go along and see what it has to offer you. Make a morning of it, meet up with friends and enjoy a coffee and cake, or even lunch, in one of the local cafes.

HS2 CORNER

HS2 is a reality. The so-called hybrid bill that legalises HS2 construction received Royal Assent and so it is now an Act. This means that contracts for construction can be let. So we are in a new phase now. We need to have as much information as possible about the construction plans and as soon as possible so that we can assess the impact on Southam and what we can do about it.

A group representing the local HS2 action groups and local councils met with our MP, Jeremy Wright, to discuss communication strategies with HS2 and the contractors who will be on the ground locally. This means not only understanding what is planned but also how we communicate specific problems and inspect actions taken as a result.

HS2 Limited has announced that it will be making grants available for community projects along the route, especially where community life will be compromised by the works. Southam Town Council has already outlined potential projects with a view to making one or more applications. The total budget is limited so good quality bids are essential to secure finance from this fund.

With the expectation that the machinery will soon start rolling, we will reserve a section of the Council Newsletter for news and issues related to HS2 construction as it affects Southam.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Housing Needs Survey

The Government places increasing importance on Neighbourhood Plans to formulate development strategies tuned to local community needs.

Southam is required to conduct a Housing Needs Survey in order to guide our approach to housing development in the next 15-20 years. The planning team is currently working with Warwickshire Rural Community Council (WRCC) to develop a questionnaire to be delivered to all Southam households in June.

WRCC will collate and analyse the responses which the Neighbourhood Planning team will then use to produce a set of housing vision statements and town-specific policies. Please do take the time to complete the survey; your view is vital; the plan, once adopted, will carry significant legal weight.

www.southam-nspc.uk

SOUTHAM YOUTH CLUB

Each Newsletter we will highlight one of Southam's many community groups. This time we asked Brian Howard to tell us about the Youth Club

Southam Youth Club meets on Tuesday evenings in the Graham Adams Centre and is for young people over 11 years old. We are trying to get a separate 6 - 8 years club running on Thursday evenings too (we already have 12 members registered).

Activities include: sports, team games, challenges, baking competitions, arts and crafts, computing and media, fancy dress and skittles. The children are also given advice on bullying, friendships and personal safety. There is also a continuing programme on healthy living, 5-a-day nutrition and team games around a sugar quiz, food air miles challenge, lunch box challenge and similar subjects. We also had two outings to do bell ringing and to a trampoline park.

We have one paid, qualified leader who has an assistant to help on Tuesdays and we are desperately seeking at least one other volunteer to help on Thursdays. We would like to hear from any qualified youth leaders interested in joining us.

Our finance comes from a weekly membership subscription of £1.00 which funds the healthy snack bar. We have also received help from Southam Town Council and whatever we can gather from sponsoring organisations such as The Baron Davenport Trust.

SUCCESSFUL GRANT APPLICATIONS

At its meeting on 23rd February, the Town Council approved the following grant applications to local organisations.

• Southam College Eco Club Purchase of greenhouse	£1000
• Southam Heritage Collection Start up costs new room	£2900
• Southam Christmas Lights New bulbs and motifs	£3112
• St James PTFA Play equipment	£1000
• Southam First Produce Show	£ 500
• Southam First Retro Revival 1950s	£ 862
• Southam in Bloom Plants & watering	£3000
• Southam & District Lions Club Poetry competition	£ 700
• Southam Carnival Activities for residents	£1140

These payments will be made under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 which enables local councils to spend a limited amount of money for purposes for which they have no other specific statutory expenditure powers.

MAYOR'S BLOG

Back again with a few highlights from my engagement calendar. There was no space to fit anything into the February Newsletter so I've also included some events from late last year.

4th December 2016 – Christmas lights and Rotary Tree of Light switch on: What a brilliant day, commencing with the Victorian street market and culminating in a well-staged evening of music, carol singing, a seemingly endless lantern parade and finally the switch-on itself. Standing on the stage gave me the best possible view of the enormous throng that partied in the icy weather. In fact, there were so many people there that 15 minutes wasn't long enough for me to get from the stage to the Tree of Light that I was to switch on. It's going to be a tough act to follow this year.

7th December 2016 - End of term music concert King Edward VI school Stratford: An orchestral concert by pupils, predominantly wind and strings, that covered a wide range of genres from classical through to carols and a bit of jazz thrown in for good measure. Thoroughly enjoyable and a high standard of musicianship displayed much to the delight (and no doubt relief) of the conductors and some very proud parents.

9th December 2016 – "It's a Cracker" rehearsal St. James CE VA Primary school: I thought this production was very imaginative in the writing and execution. Every pupil had a part to play and the singing was beautiful. Even now I just can't get the theme tune "It's a Cracker" out of my head. It ought to be recorded – I'd buy it! Well done St. James.

30th January 2017 – Rotary Young Chef Competition: Invited to join the team of judges and present the winners' certificates. Held at Southam College, the winners progress to a district heat of this annual national competition. Pupils who qualified for entry were judged on a range of criteria including table presentation, menu and, of course, taste. So, 19 starters, mains and desserts to sample and judge; how hard could it be? The answer is **very**. There were some ambitious menus but the standard was high and presentation professional. When the first dishes emerged from the kitchen it soon became apparent that it was going to be no cake-walk (sorry for the pun). I must admit there were a few desserts I physically had to be dragged away from! Congratulations to the teaching staff, all the entrants and winners.

So, that's it. My term as Mayor finishes in May. This will be my last contribution to this blog and I hope it has given you a brief taste of the public facing aspect of the role. There's a lot more to it than this of course: I chair the council meetings, represent the council on some external organisations and on working parties so there is always plenty to do.

Cllr Mike Brooks

GRANGE HALL HIRE

Contact Carole at The Grange Hall on
01926 813933
carole@thegrangehall.co.uk



CLARIFICATION FROM SOUTHAM TWINNING ASSOCIATION

The trip being planned by Southam Twinning Association is to take place in 2017 and not 'next year' as it stated in its previous article in the Precept Newsletter.

For further information ring Mike Hill 01926 814144

SAVE A LIFE: GIVE BLOOD!

The next Blood Donor sessions will be at the Grange Hall in the afternoon and evening of:

6th April 2017 and 1st June 2017



TOWN & DISTRICT COUNCIL SURGERIES

Council Surgeries are held in the Southam Library on the second Saturday of each month. The next surgeries are on

SATURDAY 8th APRIL 2017 10am to 12noon
SATURDAY 13th MAY 2017 10am to 12 noon

No appointment is necessary. If you have a query or a problem, just call in for a chat with the councillors, who will do their best to help you or to point you in the right direction for help.

SOUTHAM TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

The next Town Council Meeting will take place at the Grange Hall on Thursday 28th April 2017 at 7.30pm.

Members of the public are welcome to attend and may speak at the start of the meeting.

NEW COUNCILLOR CO-OPTED

Mr Wayne Baillie was co-opted to serve on Southam Town Council at its meeting in February. The new Councillor will represent Mill Hill Ward.

Councillor Baillie lives in Model Village Long Itchington with his wife and their small collection of pets. He has volunteered at a number of community events both in Southam and Long Itchington and says 'I feel very lucky to live in the area as we have so many wonderful amenities within our community, such as our selection of independent retailers, library, wonderful schools, great countryside walks and the great community initiatives there are for all ages to enjoy.'

Contact details for Councillor Baillie and all of your Councillors can be found below.

WHEELCHAIR LOAN SERVICE & VOLUNTEER DRIVERS

The VASA wheelchair loan service and volunteer drivers operate from the Grange Hall in Southam. The office is open Monday to Friday 10am to 12 noon.



Telephone 01926 817525

SOUTHAM TOWN COUNCILLORS CONTACT DETAILS

Cllr Jason Ward	Browns Bridge Ward	07887 863257	wajas3@aol.cm
Cllr Andy Crump		01926 815745	andycrump@btinternet.com
Cllr Gareth Oubridge		01926 817505	gareth9dylan@outlook.com
Cllr Stephen Exton		07794 134635	stephenexton@hotmail.co.uk
Cllr Wayne Baillie	Mill Hill Ward	07414 699475	wayn3baillie@outlook.com
Cllr Lee Ellard		01926 814444	atticaballoons@gmail.com
Cllr Gerry Barratt		01926 814106	gerrybarratt@hotmail.com
Cllr Mike Brooks-Mayor		01926 811297	mike.brooks@mypostoffice.co.uk
Cllr Graham Foster		01926 812183	grahamfoster6@btinternet.com
Cllr Mark Connors	Merestone Ward	07711 358040	mark.connors@btinternet.com
Cllr Mike Gaffney MBE TD		01926 811028	mike@mandggaffney.plus.com
Cllr Kieran Toner	Southam Fields Ward	07944196562	kieran.toner1@btinternet.com
Cllr Patrick Jenkins		07852 953211	patrick.jenkins97@gmail.com
Cllr Katherine Geddes		07787 293945	cllrgeddes@gmail.com

MAYOR: Councillor Mike Brooks

**TOWN CLERK: Mrs D Carro, Town Council Offices, Grange Hall, Coventry Road, Southam CV47 1QA
(Tel: 01926 814004) email: clerk@southamcouncil-warks.gov.uk.**

Editor: Councillor Graham Foster 01926 812183