

Annual Town Meeting Address 2024

I would like to start by thanking the members of the council, the officers of the council and the community for their support since the last election. Since that election where 9 councillors were appointed, the council has been joined by three new councillors, one councillor stood down and has been replaced, so I am glad to report that we are now back to full strength.

The Council has a wide range of mixed professional, business and community skills making it truly representative of Salcombe.

Our office has been joined by Peter Robinson who has returned offering his experience particularly with the cemetery and by Romi Pierce to aid Sara Jones our Clerk with the administration.

The council has been extremely busy, it has formed working groups who meet regularly to discuss aspects of... community, asset transfer, park and ride, finance, planning, a welcome sign, IT website and media, Salcombe in bloom, summer bunting and trees. Committees have also been formed to cover HR and D-Day.

An example of the level of commitment shown by the council members is is the statistics from the planning working group they had reviewed 126 applications 15 of which were objected to and refused by SHDC, 12 were objected to and withdrawn, 19 were objected to and approved, 74 were not commented on and were approved, four were not commented on and refused, one was supported and one not commented on was withdrawn. 8 appeals have been made, four were dismissed and four were upheld. This level of commitment and input has also been put in by all the other working groups and committees. The council through its Asset working group has been in discussion with SHDC with reference the future of the Berry and the possibility of a future project in Whitestrand, along with the transfer of other assets to Salcombe held by SHDC.

A full 20mph speed limit to cover all of Salcombe has been applied for and supported by Rufus Gilbert.

The council has made building a relationship with SHDC one of its priorities and I would like to report that there is now an open dialogue with SHDC. We have managed to repair the rift that was between the two councils, a rift left behind by the previous administration.

There have been discussions with Devon County Council reference the parking metre proposal, one which Salcombe Town Council supported but alas Devon County Council decided not to progress, I would like to thank the residents who participated in the meetings that we had with Devon.

Our community working group is in ongoing discussions with Devon and Cornwall police regarding the anti social behaviour occurring in Cliff house gardens during the summer months, this problem has been occurring later in the evenings, the council is well aware that there is little to entertain the 14 to 18 year old group who's numbers swell up considerably at that time of year but have no sympathy with unruly behaviour.

New contracts with SHDC have been negotiated for the upkeep of the towns open spaces and support is to be given too Salcombe's newly founded and independent Green Team who will endeavour to make the town appear to be better loved and kept.

The neighbourhood plan has been reviewed and digested; it is helping our planning group greatly in its efforts to stop unsympathetic design projects progressing.

STC is working with SHDC and the local business community to deliver a community economic plan that will help our business community continue to flourish. A survey will be available shortly for all to participate in.

We know as a council the towns expectations are extremely high as one would expect in a town so beautiful as this and the first year has been spent unpicking the considerable mess that was found when we were appointed as councillors particular effort has been put in by the Clerk and the finance team to put together an accurate budget, something that hadn't been done for many years, it has resulted in an increase in the precept, we feel that this increase was essential to allow the council and its officers to continue working in the future whilst being properly funded. We found that the council was not registered and had not in the past paid VAT! Considerable time has been spent by Sara our clerk to rectify this situation and provision was made in the budget to allow payment to be brought up to date.

The council had reviewed our park and ride option and have extended the auxiliary bus service to cover all of the school holidays excluding Christmas. We have been able to work with The Tally Ho bus company to provide another bus stop next to the park and ride field, the field can now be used for park and ride for the entire year not just the summer school holidays.

As a council we know that Salcombe has a real parking issue. This issue it's one of our priorities, it is a situation that we hoped to be able to find a solution too quickly, this I'm afraid is proving to be a situation without a quick solution but I assure you all it is one that the council sees as a priority.

As a council with huge ambitions, we are finding that bureaucracy and that the wheels of government turn very slowly not always reaching our expectations. This

is something that we are having it to learn to live with and manage, but as a council we will not allow this to dampen enthusiasm.

This year we look forward to the D Day commemorations to be held in early June. A programme has been put together by the D-Day committee on the 6th of June to pay a fitting tribute to all those who left from here to help liberate Europe.

There is also the huge event to celebrate 200 years of The RNLI. Starting on October the 5th and last thing through until early January 25, Bruce Munro a world famous artist has donated the most magnificent light display to be situated in the fields at East Portlemouth and viewed from the town, this is expected to give the town a huge economic boost at the time that is usually extremely slow for the businesses and a great spectacle for our residents and visitors, it is expected to be an internationally acclaimed event and it also expected to raise the profile of the town on a global scale.

Again, I would like to thank the officers and members of the council for their huge input during the past year, I would also like to thank our community for the support that they are giving to their council.

When we were appointed as a council, we pledged to make this council inclusive and involve all those in the town who have a personal stake whether they be businesses, second homes, residents or visitors. I would like to assure the town that this is still out pledge and look forward to working with all in the future.

Thank you all.

Mark Goodey

Mayor