

Bungay News

Local news from Bungay Town Council | Summer 2020



Bungay's Emergency Community Support

Most people living in the town will be familiar with the yellow cards that were posted through letterboxes during lockdown, the period when many people were following government advice by shielding themselves against the virus and staying at home.

Whilst it was recognised that many people would continue to receive help from family, friends and neighbours, it was inevitable that some would find themselves without their regular support networks, making grocery shopping, collecting medications and getting to the post office all but impossible!

Bungay's Emergency Community Support (BECS) was formed as the town's response to an increasing awareness of the difficulties in which some people would find themselves. A group of volunteers, supported by Bungay Town Council, were quickly assembled and deployed to support those most in need, and with remarkable results.

What we couldn't have anticipated was the overwhelming response from so many local people wanting to get involved, eager to help others and do something worthwhile. The gratitude and appreciation of residents was ever present and has been both rewarding and

very humbling - nobody wants to rely on charity, but everyone needs food and essentials, and over 1,000 requests for support were received during a twelve-week period.

Bungay's residents have also received support from our many excellent local services such as the library staff, East Suffolk's 'Home But Not Alone' service, and from our local traders and friends at the food bank, all of whom have adapted their services and worked tirelessly throughout. Some people have been able to access supermarket deliveries, and there was of course the government initiative to deliver



food parcels to those considered to be at greatest risk.

Whilst the period ahead remains uncertain, the people of Bungay can rest assured that support will continue, and our collective experience will help open the way for a more resilient and sustained future for the people of Bungay.

To each and every one of our volunteers we say "Thank You" - you have been truly amazing!

This is also an opportune moment to thank Bungay United Charities, Bungay Medical Centre Charitable Trust, Suffolk Community Foundation and East Suffolk Council for the substantial donations made to support this community scheme – your support is greatly appreciated!



Photo: John Fielding

Cashpoint machine returns to the centre of Bungay

Residents in Bungay will be pleased and relieved to hear that plans for a new ATM in Bungay have been approved!

The new 24-hour cashpoint machine will be installed by Cardtronics UK in the current Town Hall in Broad Street.

With on-street parking available, this location will ensure that the machine is truly accessible whilst still being in the town centre. Although 1a Broad Street is a listed building, any alterations could be reversed to restore the building to its current state, should the ATM not be needed in the future.

Although the installation has been delayed due to the furloughing of staff, it is hoped that the machine will be ready for use before the end of July.

Youth projects

Younger members of the community will be delighted to hear that Bungay Town Council and Access Community Trust have been collaborating on a new initiative focusing purely on youth services.

For those of you unfamiliar with 'Access Community Trust', this body provides a range of services for young people including housing related support, help with learning, development and employment as well as providing support with mental health and wellbeing. As a leader in youth work, the group offers a holistic approach that celebrates building positive and meaningful relationships with young people and the wider communities. The many activities offered are linked with educational and welfare areas to counteract disadvantage and stimulate enthusiasm and aspiration.

The following screenshot gives a brief overview of the link between the Town Council and Access Community Trust. We're currently in the early stages, but more information will be published on the website as things start to develop (check 'Youth Project' under 'Notices and Links').



Commemorating 75 years since VJ Day

At 10.45am on Saturday 15th August, local dignitaries, representatives of the Royal British Legion and families of those who fought or were captured in the Far East, will attend a short ceremony at the War Memorial in Bungay to unveil a memorial plaque and pay tribute to those who sacrificed so much at the end of World War II. This will be a quiet and reflective ceremony with all those attending still being mindful of social-distancing measures. Should you wish to observe the ceremony, please arrive at the War Memorial at the end of St. Mary's Street by 10.45am.



After many months of waiting, Bungay's skatepark is finally due to be re-opened! Following a period of uncertainty about the skatepark's future, a plan is underway to provide temporary refurbishment of the old skatepark whilst, at the same time, fundraising for a brand-new park!

A small group within the community together with representatives from the Town Council have got together to provide the town with a new state-of-the-art concrete skatepark. Following in the footsteps of Beccles and Loddon, Bungay Town Council has put together a community skatepark committee who are currently working hard behind the scenes to modernise the facilities. As with all fundraising initiatives, there is much to be done so please feel free to get involved – you might not be a 'skateboarder', but you might appreciate the fact that this free, outdoor activity provides a wonderful opportunity for young people (and those not so young) to engage in much-needed exercise!!

An official re-opening of the skatepark has been planned for 18th July (although users will have to adhere to new Covid-19 safety rules) so please check the Facebook page for more details www.facebook.com/bungayskatepark. If you think you might like to get involved, the group seeks representation from all ages and from all backgrounds, so don't hesitate to join this wonderful initiative!



Cross Street toilets

Please note that Cross Street toilets have now re-opened and finally have new washer/dryer facilities.

However, once current restrictions are fully eased, East Suffolk Council will carry out a much-needed total refurbishment of this toilet block. This will inevitably bring more disruption, but the newly refurbished facilities will certainly be welcomed by both residents and visitors to the town!

Bungay set to have its own Town Hall

After many months of negotiations with East Suffolk District Council Bungay is just days away from signing on the dotted line to transfer ownership of the offices and Chamber in Broad Street to the people of Bungay.

Observant residents would have already spotted the scaffolding in Broad Street enabling the much overdue repair of the historic windows which will be completed by the autumn at no cost to the Town Council. This work is heralding the start of the refurbishment process to upgrade the building and make it into a Town Hall and civic hub fit for the 21st century. Other refurbishments will include installing a lift so that the whole building is accessible to all, disabled toilets and of course taking direct responsibility for the installation of the much needed 24 hour ATM.

'For too long Bungay, unlike many of our neighbours and other Suffolk historic market

towns, was at a disadvantage by not having its own civic offices accessible to the community it served. Indeed, at one time we even risked losing what little foothold we did have to the building when Waveney DC pulled out of Bungay. Now at last we will have a civic hub, truly fit for purpose, right at the heart of the town and one we can be very proud of.' (Bob Prior)

In addition, Bungay Town Council has also negotiated the transition of other key assets within the town in order to bring them under local control. These include the toilets and various strips of land and play areas within Bungay. Both toilet blocks will be refurbished before we take ownership and we are currently

negotiating with Norse to cut the grass on the newly acquired land which will reflect current practice in ground management.



A table-tennis update

Many in the community will have been shocked to see the mindless destruction of one of the town's all-weather table tennis tables. This was a devastating blow to all those who had worked so hard to secure these wonderful tables for the town and for those who had enjoyed playing on them to date.

However, where there is bad news, good news often follows and, in this instance, we are delighted to advise you that the vandalised table will be replaced. Indeed, the new table is ready and the delay is merely because of the current crisis.

So, for those of you who love playing table tennis (whether a 'pro' or an absolute beginner) let us all enjoy our freedom once it comes and get

out into the fresh air! We still have a few bats and balls but why not pick up a selection and share them with others in your local area?

Whatever you decide to do, enjoy these wonderful tables that have been supplied free of charge to Bungay and are thanks to a wider partnership between Table Tennis England and the 'Most Active County Partnership' led by Suffolk County Council.

Meet the new Mayor

Thursday May 21st was a significant day in the history of Bungay Town Council with the Mayoral Election and Inauguration taking place virtually i.e. via Zoom.

As usual, the meeting was welcome to all (albeit 'online) and a well-attended meeting saw the incoming Mayor, Bob Prior, reflect on the many successes of his predecessor, Sue Collins. Sue's accomplishments are many and she has worked tirelessly behind the scenes to secure the best outcomes for the people of Bungay.

Despite the fact that the Covid-19 pandemic has temporarily stalled the conclusion of some initiatives, Bungay has seen the installation of CCTV in the town centre (soon to be rolled out further); the siting of 4 all-purpose table tennis tables in the town; the acquisition of the Town Hall, pieces of amenity land and toilet blocks (soon to be totally re-furbished); sourcing funding with Access Community Trust to design a youth project for older teenagers; over-seeing plans for a 3-day VE Day celebration; accessing funding to restore the old cemetery as a quiet, green, natural biodiverse environment and, finally, championing Bungay's true heroes at a wonderful Civic Celebration and Awards Evening at the Fisher Theatre.

In addition, no one will forget that Sue led the way in forming 'Bungay's Emergency Community Support' (BECS) and this scheme, supported by many amazing community volunteers, has provided invaluable assistance to many of the town's residents.

As for the new Mayor, well many will be unaware that he has already played a major part in the BECS scheme, not only dedicating many hours to help local residents with their queries, but also co-ordinating volunteer drivers as they deal with the many requests for shopping and medication.

Having been so involved in this project, Mr Prior is keen to see it develop into a permanent 'Good Neighbour Scheme' where residents always have someone they can call upon for help. The new Mayor also intends to progress further with CCTV and move swiftly forwards with the installation of an ATM in the town centre, something that everyone will be relieved to see.

He is also determined to ensure that the Post Office is successfully relocated within the town centre. As for other projects, these are many and include the development and updating of the newly acquired Town Hall; over-seeing the re-development of the skatepark; moving forward with the Youth Project and ensuring that the Riverside Centre is successfully re-developed to meet the needs of the community.



Bob's chosen charities

Each year, the Mayor launches an appeal for whichever charity he or she selects and the following extract explains why this year's Mayor has chosen the 1st Bungay (School) Sea Scout Group and Bungay District of Girl Guiding.

Formed in 1947 at the former Bungay Middle School, Hillside Road East, by the former teacher Walter Brown, 1st Bungay (School) Sea Scouts took over the dilapidated Boathouse on the Staithe in 1951. Since that time, they have carried out a number of refurbishments to bring it up to the standard required. Their latest extensive modernisation of the Boathouse took place last year, but they need a further £8000 for the final stages to provide first class facilities.

Through fun, friendship, challenge and adventure, Bungay District of Girl Guiding empowers girls to find their voice, inspiring them to find the

best in themselves and to make a positive difference in the community. Currently with about 100 members, their current HQ is wholly inadequate for the variety of activities and at the end of its useful life. Urgent funds are needed to help them build a new purpose-built building to allow all activities to be catered for. Their task is enormous, but in true Guiding fashion they are determined to realise their dream."

If anyone wishes to contribute towards these exceptionally good causes, please contact the Town Clerk or Bob Prior.

**STOP
PRESS**

Bungay Town Council welcomes new Assistant Clerk Having played a key role in co-ordinating Bungay's Emergency Community Support, Edwin Rosier has joined Bungay Town Council in a six-month provisional post as the new Assistant Clerk. With a background in management, Eddie brings a wealth of experience to the role and his residency in the town and involvement with many local initiatives will ensure that his appointment is beneficial to Councillors and residents alike!