

Southam Town Council Newsletter



APRIL 2015

www.southamcouncil-warks.gov.uk

HOW TO BECOME A TOWN COUNCILLOR

Town councillors are elected by the public and serve a term of four years. Following elections, councils appoint a chair, or a town mayor in town councils. Councillors are unpaid volunteers but travel expenses may be claimed if it is necessary for councillors to attend meetings or training events outside of Southam.



The Election Procedure

Ordinary elections of local councillors take place on the first Thursday in May every four years. **The next election in Southam will be on May 7th 2015.**

Nomination Process

A prospective candidate must deliver to the Returning Officer a valid nomination paper. This form is obtained from the Officer or from the Town Clerk. The candidate's surname, forenames, residence and description (if required) must be entered and his or her prefix letter from the current register of electors. The Returning Officer has a copy of this register, and the Clerk of Southam Council also has one.

The nomination paper must also contain similar particulars of a proposer and a seconder. They must be electors for the area for which the candidate seeks election. i.e. the parish, community or town or the ward if it is divided into wards: they must sign it.

The Returning Officer is the person responsible for the conduct and arrangement of town council elections. If you are considering becoming a candidate for election, contact the Returning Officer to obtain more detailed information. Tel. 01789 260101

The Closing date for nominations for the May 7th election is THURSDAY 9TH APRIL 2015 at 16:00 All nomination papers must be hand delivered to the Returning Officer at Elizabeth House, Church Street, Stratford upon Avon either by the candidate or by their representative.

COUNCIL MEETINGS IN BRIEF

January 2015

Burial Ground Working Party Report

It was resolved that the Burial Ground Working Party should continue its negotiations with land owners regarding two potential sites that have been identified in Southam. The Council was informed that both sites have direct access to roads which could reduce infra structure costs. If agreement can be reached and the environmental survey, planning and costing reports are satisfactory, a Parish Poll would be held for residents to approve the necessary loan.

Street Naming

Council voted not to waive its right to name streets in Southam in favour of Stratford District Council.

February 2015

Planning

The Council considered eight planning applications and objected to three of them. These included a proposal which would reduce the number of parking spaces at the Tesco store and which would be in breach of the conditions imposed when the store was built and a retrospective application which it was felt impacted detrimentally on the neighbour.

March 2015

Publication Scheme

A new publication scheme was approved which is available on the website www.southamcouncil-warks.gov.uk. If you have any questions or queries, or if you wish to see any documents relating to Town Council business, please contact the Town Clerk 01926 814014 or email; clerk@southamcouncil-warks.gov.uk

HIGH SPEED RAIL COMMITTEE

In January, Councillors Bransby Thomas, Linda Tasker and the Town Clerk joined with SAAG at the Palace of Westminster to give evidence to the High Speed Rail Committee.

Numerous hours of Councillor, Officer and Volunteer time was spent preparing and researching the petition in a concerted effort to mitigate the significant effects the proposed construction and operation of the line will have on Southam and the surrounding area.

Representatives from Ufton and Long Itchington also gave evidence.

MINUTES OF TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS

Southam Town Council meetings are minuted in exact accordance with the advice of the Warwickshire Association of Local Councils (WALC).

‘Minutes are formal records of decisions taken and are not required to be a verbatim record of the whole meeting’.

There is no requirement that the debate be recorded. Therefore a brief description of the subject and the decision taken is all that is required in the minutes. An individual Councillor may request that the vote is recorded if the matter under discussion is contentious and he or she wishes their view on the matter to be made public.

At the following meeting, the Council votes that the minutes are a true record of the meeting (errors of accuracy may be corrected at this stage). When Council has voted in favour, the Mayor signs the minutes.

‘It is not permitted to reopen discussion on a decision recorded in the minutes unless that item is again on the agenda’.

RESIDENT & TRADER EMAIL LIST

SOUTHAM TOWN COUNCIL maintains an emailing list to keep residents and traders informed of **PUBLIC MEETINGS** and events of importance to the town.

If you would like to be kept directly informed of such events, please send your email address to:

deputy@southamcouncil-warks.gov.uk

Don't forget to tell us if your email address has recently changed!

SOUTHAM TOWN COUNCIL OFFICE EASTER OPENING HOURS

The office will close on Thursday 2nd April 2015 at 1pm and reopen on Tuesday 7th April 2015 at 9am. Please ring 01926 814004 for a recorded message giving emergency contact details.

SAVE A LIFE—GIVE BLOOD

The next Blood Donor sessions will take place at the Grange Hall in the afternoon and evening of 14th May, 2nd July, 3rd September and 5th November 2015



EMPTY HOMES

Stratford District Council's preferred method of bringing empty homes back into use is through offering advice and guidance, coupled with the use of limited grant money.



Empty properties cause a number of problems which they are keen to tackle such as fly tipping and anti social behaviour. Research shows that an empty property can devalue neighbouring properties by anything up to 18% to 20%. If a property owner fails to take action to bring property back in to use, SDC has a number of legal powers of enforcement which can be deployed, for example:

Enforced Sales Procedures (ESP) The Council can use this procedure when a person has failed to meet the terms of a statutory notice or where there is a Council Tax debt or other debts to them. The Council can force the sale of the property to recover the amount of the debt owed and costs from the proceeds of the sale.

Empty Dwellings Management Order (EDMO) This is a process which allows the Council to take over management of empty residential property but does not obtain ownership. It is used as a last resort when the Council has been unable to persuade the owner to bring the property back into use.

Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) This order allows the Authority to acquire under-used or ineffectively used property for residential purposes if there is a general housing need in the area.

Stratford District Council also works with other authorities across the West Midlands who have successfully carried out these types of enforcement.

The Empty Homes Officer is Sheree Johansen

Tel 01789 2260866

Email psht@stratford-dc.gov.uk

FACT! Did you know that if your property has been empty for two years or more, you will be able to claim a VAT discount. VAT will be charged at 5% instead of 20% while renovation works to properties that have been empty for over 10 years will be zero rated. **FACT!** If your property requires or is undergoing major repair work or renovation, you may qualify for a Class D discount on your Council Tax for a maximum period of 12 months. The property must be substantially unfurnished and unoccupied for the discounted period.

RADAR KEYS

If you have a health condition or disability (particularly if you're a wheelchair-user) finding an accessible toilet that's clean, tidy and available for you to use can be a challenge. Also, they're often kept locked. Under Radar's scheme, special locks are installed on public disabled toilet doors to give disabled people priority access. Local authorities have adopted the scheme and 'Radar toilets' can now be found in shopping centres, pubs, stores, bus/train stations and other locations nationwide.

There are two kissing gates en route to the **Holy Well, Southam** and one at the entrance to **Merestone Park** which need a RADAR key to open them fully for wheelchair access. These keys are available from RADAR under the National Key Scheme For more information, check out their website: **www.radar.org.uk** or telephone **0207250 8181**

SOUTHAM TOWN COUNCIL GRANTS

At it's meeting in February 2015 Southam Town Council awarded the following grants.

Local Government Act 1972 S.137

- Southam Carnival towards the cost of free activities £1000
- Southam First Flower & Produce Show £1250
- Southam First 1940s Retro Revival £2000
- Southam Christmas Lights Association to purchase LED bulbs & cables £2500
- Southam Lions Poetry Competition £1000
- Southam Lions Triathlon £1000
- Southam in Bloom plants & maintenance £2250
- VASA to assist with maintaining service in Southam £ 850
- National Childbirth Trust information leaflet £ 550
- Southam Cricket Club equipment to expand junior section £1000
- 2nd Southam (Open) Scout Group £ 500

Grants will next be considered in September 2015. Application forms may be obtained from the Council offices in the Grange Hall or are available from the notice board of the website at www.southamcouncil-warks.gov.uk and should be returned to the Deputy Clerk, Grange Hall, Coventry Road, Southam CV47 1QA by Monday 7th September 2015.

N.B. GRANTS SUBMITTED AFTER THIS DATE WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED UNTIL THE FEBRUARY 2016 MEETING

VOLUNTEER DRIVERS NEEDED



VASA urgently needs volunteer drivers in Southam and surrounding villages.

Drivers with their own cars are required to transport people with a genuine need to medical appointments. We pay 45p per mile to cover your car expenses. Just drive the hours to suit you.

TELEPHONE 01789 296344

SAVE MONEY ON NHS PRESCRIPTION CHARGES!



If you need more than 13 prescriptions in a year you could save money with a Prescription Prepayment Certificate.

For more information contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau or buy a certificate online at www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/ppc

DOG FOULING

PLEASE do not permit your dog to urinate in shop or residential doorways. Always clean up after it! Failure to pick up after your dog may result in a **£75 fixed penalty fine**. Properly wrapped dog waste can be placed in litter bins.



DOG FOULING ENFORCEMENT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF STRATFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL.

PLEASE CONTACT THE DOG WARDEN ON 01789 260839 OR YOUR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES.

District Councillors Andy Crump 07899904189, Jennie Ellard 07854141794 or Tony Bromwich 07879670599

CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

A grant of £750 (*under the LGA 1972 "power to provide information and advice"*) was made to the Citizens Advice Bureau by Southam Town Council to provide a room to continue the Southam Citizens Advice Service on Tuesday mornings in the library.

To make an appointment to access this service call 01789 200136

For telephone advice call 844 855 2322

HANDY PERSON SERVICE—AGE UK

The Handyperson service provides minor repairs to domestic properties within Warwickshire. All work is undertaken by our own experienced, vetted and DBS checked team. The service operates in the towns and villages throughout Warwickshire including Southam. Examples of work which can be undertaken include:

- Fixing dripping taps
- Easing doors
- Fitting key safes and grab rails (The cost of a key safe which is police approved is £75)
- Moving furniture
- Fixing fences or taking down curtains
- Putting up shelves
- Door locks (wooden only not UPVC)

This is a chargeable service and the current rate is £21.00 per hour for minor jobs and £25.00 per hour for plumbing jobs (minimum charge 1 hour) plus 50p per mile travelling expenses from the Handyperson's home to your home. Any materials used are charged at an extra cost. You can also supply your own parts; no extra charge will be incurred other than the labour charge to fit the parts.

Telephone 01926 458125

Email housing@ageukwarks.org.uk

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Celebrations ,
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01926 813933

carole@thegrangehall.co.uk
www.thegrangehall.co.uk



BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND

**'DANDY'
A BLACK COUNTRY
COMEDY DUO**

Saturday 15th MAY

2015

7.30pm

Tickets £12.50



SOUTHAM TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS

23rd April 2015
21st May 2015 ATM & Mayor Making
28th May 2015
25th June 2015
23rd July 2015
24th September 2015
August Recess (No Meeting)
22th October 2015
26th November 2015
December Recess (No Meeting)



Meetings take place in the Grange Hall, Coventry Road Southam and start at 7.30pm. Members of the public are welcome and may make representation to the Council at the start of the meeting.

Refreshments will be provided following the Mayor Making meeting on 21st May 2015. All welcome!

PARKING ON THE PAVEMENT AND OVER-GROWN SHRUBS AND TREES.

Southam Town Council continues to receive numerous complaints about the obstructions of foot paths. Users of mobility scooters and the blind face severe difficulties in negotiating these obstructions and often it is impossible for them to find an alternative route.

PLEASE PARK CONSIDERATELY AND CUT SHRUBS AND TREES BACK TO YOUR BOUNDARY TO PREVENT OBSTRUCTION OF THE FOOT PATH.

| Contact Your Councillor | Ward | Telephone | E-mail |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ClIr Linda Tasker | Browns Bridge Ward | 01926 817426 | linda@priority-people.co.uk |
| Deputy Mayor ClIr Jason Ward | | 01926 812796 | WAJAS3@AOL.COM |
| ClIr Daphne Smith | | 01926 814430 | |
| ClIr Chris Worsh | | 01926 817122 | cllr.chrisworsh@tiscali.co.uk |
| ClIr Tony Bromwich | Mill Hill Ward | 01926 811965 / 07879670599 | tony.bromwich@gmail.com |
| ClIr Jane Soni | | 01926 812966 | jroni@hotmail.co.uk |
| ClIr Bransby Thomas | | 01926 812607 | bransbythomas@btinternet.com |
| ClIr Mike Gaffney MBE TD | Merestone Ward | 01926 811028 | mike@mandggaffney.plus.com |
| Mayor ClIr Mark Willoughby | | 01926 814257 | markjwillo@yahoo.co.uk |
| ClIr Eddie Thornley | | 01926 259115 | mail@eddiethornley.com |
| ClIr Carol Pratt | | 01926 812533 | carolannpratt@yahoo.co.uk |
| ClIr Victor Shepherd | | 01926 817010 | victor@shepherd3092.fsnet.co.uk |

MAYOR: Councillor Mark Willoughby (01926 814257)

**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 Jane Soni (01926 812966)