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SMOKERS FINED £150 BY PRIVATE COMPANY PATROLS IN TOWN CENTRE
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EDITOR'S WELCOME



This month in *Bexhill News*, we're investigating the patrols who have taken to our streets with the aim of clearing them up.

A number of readers contacted us within a few weeks about being fined for dropping cigarette butts, so we had to look into it.

I need to make this clear, we do not advocate the dropping of any litter in the street and fully support the fact we need to clear up our pavements.

What we don't feel is right, are the reports we've heard of residents apparently being filmed and followed down the street by someone waiting for them to commit the apparent crime.

We all know there's a lack of bins in the town centre — I've never been to a town with refuse sacks cable tied to posts to act as bins. I don't think people even know they're bins, hence the streets being covered in litter.

I've personally spoken to residents who felt scared, intimidated and shocked that someone has followed them down the street and been fined £150, without being given the option to dispose of it responsibly. It's obvious this scheme is a money-making exercise for both the private company issuing the fines and for the council which gets a cut of each one.

Also, we focus yet again on the disgusting sewage spills on our beautiful beaches.

I get an email alert every time there's a sewage release in Bexhill and it makes me feel incredibly sick every time I see the email come in — which is almost daily!

Despite all this bad news, we've covered some great local stories yet again in this month's edition.

Paul Gibson, Editor



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TOWN HALL RENAISSANCE PROJECT THROWN OUT FOR NOW

BY FEATURES EDITOR KIM MAYO

The much-anticipated “renaissance project” to revamp Bexhill Town Hall and the surrounding area has hit the buffers... for the time being at least.

A spokesman for Rother District Council said: “The Planning Committee considered the council’s application to redevelop the District Council offices at the town hall in Bexhill.

“The application was refused by seven votes to six with one abstention. The council is reviewing options following this decision.”

The planning committee met on October 13 and after a lengthy debate, which lasted more than three hours, the decision was made to reject it on the grounds of its design which was deemed not to be acceptable.

Among the objections raised were the height of the proposed structure, plus the materials being considered and a reduction in the number of parking spaces which would be available.

To make matters worse, the Town Hall was also subjected to a suspected arson attack last month although fortunately, the damage was not extensive.

Sussex Police said in a statement: “Officers are investigating a report of arson in Amherst Road at about 1.15am on October 12.

“Anyone with relevant footage in the area, witnesses or anyone with information is asked to contact Sussex Police online or call 101 and quote serial 61 of 12/10.”

The decision to abort the Renaissance project in the short term at least has been welcomed by Howard Martin, President of the Bexhill Chamber of Commerce and Tourism.



Artists impression of the proposed development

Mr Martin said: “For now Bexhill Chamber of Commerce has taken a neutral stance on the proposed development.

“We did voice our concerns but they were not addressed, so on that basis, no submission was made by us to the planning committee.

“However, we do support the need for new council offices because the current ones are not fit for purpose.

“Obviously conditions need to be improved for council workers at the town hall or alternative arrangements should be made to accommodate them.

“But with regard to this particular project, Rother District Council did not secure a full partnership with East Sussex County Council, which it should have done.

“Rother District Council did not present a fully sustainable project and make a strong enough business case for it.

“In terms of paying for a project would conceivably have cost up to £20 million based on a publicly funded loan, but the calculations may as well have been written on the back of a fag packet.

“They have underestimated the cost. There

has been no proper consultation or business case research. The plans are wrong for the building and in the wrong place.

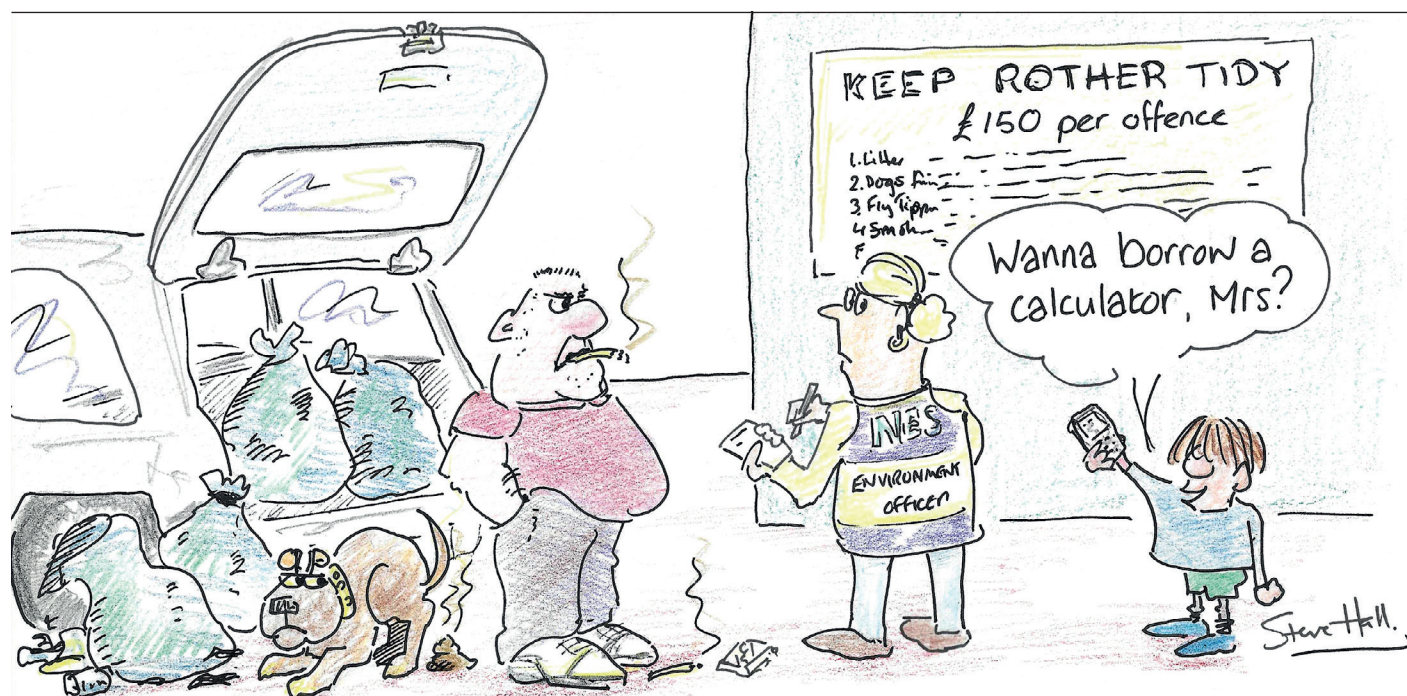
“We were extremely concerned by the design which was submitted for the building and particularly by the lack of architectural sympathy for the surrounding area. That would not protect the heritage of the town hall.

“The model Rother District Council has proposed is for the wrong building at the wrong time and in the wrong place.

“What Bexhill Chamber would like to see is the current council-owned Beeching Road site sold off commercially for hotel and conference centre development and a brand new fit for purpose 21st-century building for council and mixed business and leisure use on the council-owned Beeching Road site.

“That alternative plot could clearly incorporate the council’s needs, plus a hotel and a large commercial centre.

“What we need in these challenging economic times is a collective approach to secure the future of our town and that is what we will continue to push for.”



Steve Hall is a local cartoonist drawing inspiration from Bexhill and the sea. His cards, books and other items can be found in local independents and the Bexhill museum shop. He can be contacted at steve54.hall@gmail.com.

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Litter strewn near to a permanent bin in Western Road



Rother warning sign

RESIDENTS CLAIM PRIVATE LITTER POLICE ARE TARGETING SMOKERS

**EXCLUSIVE REPORT
BY FEATURES EDITOR KIM MAYO**

Rother District Council has denied accusations its contracted litter enforcement officers are deliberately targeting smokers in the town to boost coffers when cigarette butts are disposed of on the street.

One smoker who was caught, but didn't want to be named, told *Bexhill News*: "I was hit with a £150 fine and was told if I paid within seven days, it would be reduced to £100.

"I was smoking a roll-up which disintegrates very quickly, and the reason I dropped it is because there is a distinct lack of bins in the area around One Stop in Sea Road.

"There are no warning signs nearby and I wasn't given the opportunity to pick it up and dispose of it. Surely, you should be given a warning first to say next time you will be fined? It just seems to be an opportunity to cash in and boost the council's coffers by specifically targeting smokers.

"Meanwhile, dog owners seem to get away with murder by not clearing up the mess when their pet has to answer the call of nature, while litter is everywhere on our streets and by that, I mean crisp packets, drinks cartons and packaging from takeaways.

"After being fined I then spotted the same operative following me while I was having a cigarette in Western Road.

"But I wasn't going to make the same mistake again so I bent down, stubbed it out



and put it in my pocket before blowing him a kiss. He didn't seem very impressed but it gave me a laugh."

Bexhill News has been contacted by at least five other residents who have been fined for dropping cigarette butts over the past two months.

The council denies there are not enough warning signs in the town warning of enforcement – we found none! We only found signs emphasising drinking alcohol and begging are prohibited – both of which are

extremely prominent in town. The Council emphasises it embraces zero tolerance to littering in Bexhill. It also denies it is a new initiative, adding that littering is an offence which has always been and will continue to be cracked down upon.

It also says it is not a money making enterprise, but instead is designed to protect the environment and make the town as attractive as possible for both residents and visitors.

A Rother District Council spokesman told

us: "We know that residents and businesses do not want their communities blighted by litter, dog fouling or fly tipping.

"The environment enforcement officers are patrolling the district investigating environmental offences and taking enforcement action when necessary.

"In order to issue a fixed penalty notice for littering, officers must have caught the individual in the act.

"The cost of employing the enforcement officers, the administration of fixed penalty notices and any prosecutions are borne solely by our contractor NES Ltd, who have a one year concessionary agreement with the council, awarded following a procurement process.

"There is therefore no financial risk or cost to the council. A percentage of the income from fixed penalty notices, is paid to the council, which will be used for environmental works, such as graffiti removal.

"Littering is unacceptable, unsightly and antisocial behaviour.

"It is not surprising that the majority of the offences are for cigarette butts as they account for a large percentage of the litter dropped and which the council's waste contractor has to sweep up.

"It has been an offence to drop litter since 1958 and there are signs around the towns across the district.

"The majority of our residents and visitors respect their environment by using the litter bins provided or by taking their litter home with them."

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SWIMMING CLUB IN CHOPPY WATERS DUE TO SEWAGE IN SEA



Sewage protesters on Bexhill beach



closed it is bad enough that we cannot swim, but there is also a huge negative economic impact on the town. If this was happening in Eastbourne, Hastings or Brighton much more fuss would be made.

“The Beachboy app which is available online, is far too vague with regards to the state of the sea. What we want is daily testing paid for by Southern Water.”

Juliette joined Bexhill Seagals in October last year having moved to the town after previously living in Brighton and Peterborough.

Sea swimming is hugely important to her as she suffers from spinal arthritis and taking a dip regularly acts as vital therapy.

She added: “Swimming in the sea as opposed to a pool gives me mental clarity. It helps to combat my anxiety and helps enormously with my spinal arthritis and nerve pain. Without a swim, I feel lethargic, my pain is worse and my mood drops.”

Juliette is a freelance writer and pet sitter whose business bexhillpetsitting.com is proving very successful, but without the benefit of sea swimming, her life would be adversely affected.

She said: “Not being able to swim every day — or even most days since the sewage spills are so frequent — is like taking away my medicine.

“Many women in the group swim for the same reasons. It’s so good for improving



Member of Bexhill Seagals, Juliette Wills

mental health and it’s something we shouldn’t have to question whether it is safe to do so, as far as pollution goes.

“I now only swim when the sea is very calm, as I don’t want to risk getting hit by a wave and swallowing any water, not to mention getting it in my eyes and picking up an eye infection. I wear goggles all the time now but hadn’t bothered before the spill in August.

“I’m concerned not just as a swimmer, but as a Bexhill resident. Businesses are suffering as tourists avoid Bexhill beach in favour of Eastbourne or Hastings’.

“House prices may well be affected by those who want to move to the coast to swim and decide to opt for Hastings or Eastbourne over Bexhill.

“Paying a fine is the easy option for Southern Water but how can the government say fines work? They’re not a deterrent at all, and that money goes to the Treasury, not into infrastructure.

“Rother District Council have housing developments on the go which clearly the current sewage system can’t support. Why are they developing when this is the case?

“The bottom line is Southern Water must be held accountable for their actions. There are no excuses. We just want to enjoy our sea swims secure in the knowledge that the water has not been contaminated. Surely that is not too much to ask?”

BY FEATURES EDITOR KIM MAYO

A member of a popular Bexhill sea swimming group has blasted Southern Water for its “irresponsible” dumping of waste into the sea.

The company has been subject to a spate of criticism in recent months for dumping sewage in the sea and Bexhill Seagals organised a protest on the beach in September which was also attended by concerned and angry residents.

Bexhill Conservative MP Huw Merriman has voiced his concerns and demanded action be taken sooner rather than later.

The dumping of sewage has been exacerbated due to the recent spells of heavy rainfall, but many believe the company needs to improve its infrastructure rather than continue with its current policy, especially as it has been a regular occurrence since the August bank holiday.

Juliette Wills of the Bexhill Seagals said: “What Southern Water is doing is an environmental crime and clearly the fines it has been hit with are not acting as a deterrent. “Instead of the fines going into the

Treasury’s coffers, it should be handed over to support the Environment Agency and Ofwat with their work.

“Better still, make Southern Water responsible for upgrading the infrastructure as of right now — if they can pay a £90 million fine, they can invest that into improving the sewage system in Bexhill.

“What is happening is totally unacceptable and Southern Water should be ashamed of themselves. That is why as a group we have been protesting and the Government needs to take direct action.

“It is absolutely bonkers. When the beach is



LITTLE COMMON PANTO IS BACK... OH, YES IT IS!



First there was Panto on the Prairie, then, the Bright Lights Theatre Company presented Panto between the Pyramids.

Now, the group is staging the world premiere of Panto on The Prom, also written by Rich Lock.

Panto on the Prom is set in a once thriving seaside resort but evil Hurricane has stolen the summer and now the town is almost deserted.

Can Coral, Barney, Annette and Winkle rescue Lord Low-tide and overthrow Hurricane to restore the sunshine? With a fairy and a dame fighting for the spotlight who knows?

This is a fun family show that has everything you would expect from a pantomime... and a few things you might not!

Directed by Liam Rowley the show will run from Wednesday 23rd November to Saturday 26th November 2022 at Little Common Methodist Church Hall.

Evening performances begin at 7.45pm with an additional matinee performance on Saturday afternoon at 2.45pm. Tickets, which are available from Wickham Bistro in Bexhill and Little Gem in Little Common, cost £8 each (including interval refreshments and a programme) and there's a special concession price of £5 for children under 12 attending the matinee performance.

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THOUSANDS GIVEN TO LOCAL CAUSES



Money raised from the incredible Bexhill 100 car show in August has resulted in £5,000 being awarded to local charities and causes.

In an awarding ceremony recently, the cash was donated to a number of recipients including the Eastbourne RNLI, Bexhill Heritage, The Golden Marigold Club and Children with Cancer.

The money received by Bexhill Heritage will go towards the iron works on top of the Old Bathing Station on the promenade. Eastbourne RNLI told attendees at the event that it costs more than £2,000 to kit out a new member of their team, and any donation goes a long way towards this cost.

Children with Cancer, based in Polegate supports families

with children under 18 cope with cancer with support and experiences to fulfil children's dreams. The registered charity recently opened a new office and received the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in 2015.

The Golden Marigold Club is a day centre for the elderly and transports them to and from home enabling them to enjoy entertainment and meet friends, as well as have tea, coffee and lunch together. The money will go to repairing and keeping the buses on the road.

Since 2005 the Bexhill 100 motoring club has been holding the classic and custom car show at the Polegrove - to date, the total raised is £135,000 which is all donated to local charities and good causes in their annual ceremony.



Bexhill Heritage receives its cheque



Peter Thomas & Bruce Campbell from Children with Cancer



Rita Crane and Fred Pellett clients at the Golden Marigold, Carol Towning and Claire Baldry Deputy Mayor



Representatives from RNLI receive its donation

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POPULAR GIFT SHOP TACKLES TOWN'S PARKING CHARGES

Customers shopping at one of Bexhill's newest shops will be able to reclaim their parking charges in an initiative to encourage more shoppers to spend more time in town.

From 1st November, Maybugs, on Devonshire Road, is offering to pay customers' parking charges if they spend more than £50 in-store.

Co-owners, John Dale and Greg Rose say residents should be encouraged to shop locally this Christmas rather than worrying about how much they're spending on parking. They hope all shops will benefit from the initiative with more people wanting to experience the wide range of outlets in Bexhill.

Greg Rose Managing Director of Maybugs said: "Parking charges around the country have increased massively this year, in Eastbourne and Bexhill the price of parking is just obscene. With the current cost of living crisis, we recognise that so many families haven't got a spare £8.40 to pay just for the privilege of going to the shops once, let alone several times. We know this money is something that they would much rather spend on their loved ones' presents."

Customers wishing to take up the offer will need to show either their parking ticket, a photo of it or on their online parking app. The company will pay at least £5 for every



Co-Owners of Maybugs John Dale and Greg Rose

customer's parking and up to £8.40 which covers seven hours in the most expensive of car parks.

The promotion will run from 1st November until 24th December. All products are included, even those that are reduced already, however, you can't use any other discount code or till voucher at the same time.

John Dale, Sales Director at Maybugs said "Councils and large corporations that own shopping centres are ripping off people for parking, and destroying small businesses at the same time. We all know customers can order online and get something delivered very easily, they are even less likely to go to a town and shop if they have to pay a fortune just to park."



He added: "We agree that during the summer tourist season it makes sense to charge an increased amount for parking, but during Christmas when locals want to come and support small independent businesses, and when it is such a critical moment for so many small retailers like us, why on earth are they putting barriers like this in customers' way."

Greg continued to say, "We know this is the case, if you look at Hailsham where Wealden

District Council offer free parking, the town has one of the lowest vacant shop rates in the UK, the High Street is full of independent shops, and we are happy to say Maybugs continues to thrive there! We hope that this promotion in both Eastbourne and Bexhill will help drive footfall, not just for us but for all the independent shops in these towns, as Christmas trade should be all of our most profitable time of the year, and that profit keeps them going for the rest of the year."

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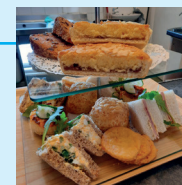
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READER'S LETTER

Email your letters to the Editor to: letters@bexhill-news.co.uk

THREE-HOUR WAIT FOLLOWING TRAUMATIC FALL

I write in response to your article 'Bexhill's Crazy Paving' featured in your October 2022/Issue 04. I had an accident on Friday, 13 May 2022 and I am rather superstitious, especially since then!

Shortly before 6pm, having collected some fish and chips, I promptly turned left out of the Athena Fish Shop on Western Road and almost immediately tripped up on uneven paving flags, landing flat on my face and blood pouring from my forehead.

From the fear of bleeding to death, I very slowly turned myself on my back and laid there for a couple of minutes, feeling absolutely ridiculous, until a lovely girl called Hannah, who apparently worked in the Athena, stayed to help me. A very kind local young man rang 999 and also took my fish and chips to a friend's house and then came back to see how I was, but unfortunately, I cannot remember his name.

Another lady called Ruth came to help. She used to be a police officer and a nurse, so she was accustomed to this sort of thing. She rang 999 again and was told yet again not to move me. Both Hannah and Ruth cleaned me up, kept me talking and tried to make me comfortable, but I was getting colder and colder, as laying on the hard flags for over three hours was no joke.

People kept covering me up with more and more covers and even towards the end, silver foil. The security men at Wetherspoons were helpful, along with the traffic wardens, as I was scared my car was illegally parked and no doubt would be by the following morning.

Eventually, the ambulance arrived and checked me over before taking me to hospital. They were great, but again, I can't remember their names. I told the young lady that my feet were cold and she covered them up saying that 'no wonder, you've only got sandals on'. Of course, when I set off from home it was only 5.45pm in



bright sunshine. It was then about 9.30 in the evening in May.

They took me to A&E about 10pm on a Friday night, yes, rather busy. I was put in my own chair at the edge of the crowds and after about five minutes I threw up. That was a good thing after all, as I was promptly put into my own good-sized cubicle room, where I had loads of tests and attention and a CT Scan. Apparently, that was to see if I had a bleed on the brain, which thankfully came out clear.

At about 6am, I was allowed to be collected and taken home, rather tired, dazed and confused, but very thankful for how well I

was looked after at the hospital.

I couldn't open my eye for three days, all the time praying that it hadn't affected my eyesight. My face took six weeks to heal externally and it was bruised down the whole of the left side of my face. It didn't do my knee and hip any favours either, as both have been painful since especially my already vulnerable knee.

I am over 70 years of age and live in Bexhill. I was amazed at how kind so many people were on that day and if you decide to print this letter, it will hopefully thank all concerned.

Pauline Wicking, Bexhill.

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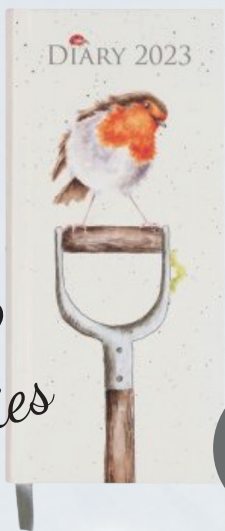
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BEXHILL - EASTBOURNE - HAILSHAM

NEW COUNCILLORS ENCOURAGED TO REPRESENT TOWN

Rother residents are being encouraged to make a difference by standing for election for the district council. Voters will go to the polls in May next year and residents are being encouraged by Rother District Council to find out the difference they could make by becoming a local councillor.

A pre-election event is being held at the Town Hall this month for those who want to find out about standing for election in Bexhill.

Prospective candidates will have the opportunity to hear from and meet current serving councillors and senior council officers and to learn more about what being a local councillor involves, as well as details of the support and development opportunities available to help councillors in their role as community leaders.

Cllr Susan Prochak, Chair of the Member Development Task Group at Rother District Council said: "Councillors play a key role in improving the quality of life for all those who live or work in the Rother District.

"Serving on the local council can be a very rewarding experience, and becoming a district councillor is one of the best ways of influencing decisions about your community.

"If you are passionate about your local area and want to make a difference, do come along



Cllr Susan Prochak

to the information event next month to find out more."

The councillor information event will take place at the Town Hall, Bexhill from 6:30pm to 8:30pm on Monday, November 14. People can also join the event remotely if they are unable to attend in person.

To book a place at the event, or to submit any questions, please email democraticservices@rother.gov.uk by Wednesday, November 9.

BEXHILL READY TO LIGHT UP FOR CHRISTMAS



A magical evening is said to be planned for Bexhill as the town is lit up ahead of the Christmas celebrations.

In a difficult year for fundraising, the Community Interest Company (CIC), Light Up Bexhill, promises to impress once again as the Christmas lights are officially switched on during a special event on Friday 2nd December.

Light Up Bexhill CIC was formed in 2019 as an urgent response to a gap in the provision of a provider of Christmas Lights and seasonal activities for Bexhill. It was appointed subsequently by Rother District Council and scrambled to deliver them the same year.

Since then, the CIC has organised the lights, market and entertainment and managed to do so with the support of some business contributions and the Chamber of Commerce, since the costs invariably outweigh the council contribution. A Justgiving page has been set up

in the hope of raising some extra funds to keep the Christmas lights shining every year. A link to the page can be found at bexhill-news.co.uk.

Hazel Timpe told Bexhill News: "The volunteers that work tirelessly to organise this event are rewarded for their efforts by the overwhelming family community attendance and especially the smiling faces of the children as they meet Santa and his Elves."

She added: "This has been a difficult year with rising costs all round and we hope people will understand if we cannot light every single street in the town. Some of the infrastructure is old, and although owned by ESCC, we have had to upgrade the timers in the lampposts to make sure the lights stay on for the time programmed. This extra cost has been nearly £3,000!"

The event will take place in Devonshire Road from 5pm with the Christmas tree lighting at 6pm.



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POLITICAL CHAOS IS ALWAYS AN EXTREMELY BAD JOKE



OPINION BY
FEATURES EDITOR, KIM MAYO

After one of the most tumultuous periods in British political history we finally know where we stand, despite Boris Johnson's last-minute intervention in an attempt to upset the apple cart.

Having flown back from the Caribbean to try and wrest back the keys to Number 10 Downing Street in the wake of Liz Truss's ill-fated 44-day spell as Prime Minister, he conceded defeat despite portraying his withdrawal from the battle to lead the Conservative party as being "for the good of the country". What utter rot.

All Boris cares about is Boris. Simple as that. Therefore, Rishi Sunak's coronation as Britain's new PM should at least calm troubled waters.

Politics is a dirty game and a ruthless one at that and now we can only wait with bated breath to see how the latest political landscape pans out.

I am old enough to remember the winter of discontent in 1978 when Great Britain largely grounded to a standstill.

The dead could not be buried and uncollected rubbish piled high in London's streets due to industrial action.

The then Labour government was in its death throes and mere months later the Conservatives regained power with the previously unheralded Margaret Thatcher becoming Prime Minister.

As is invariably the case, economic turmoil led to a change of government. Mrs Thatcher held a firm grip on power for more than a decade until her own party members forced her out and she was replaced by John Major.

Ultimately, his premiership culminated in Labour's Tony Blair becoming Prime Minister on a sunny day in 1997, signalling a new wave of optimism which, of course, was never going to last.

That is the nature of politics. At first, you are the best thing since sliced bread before the rot sets in and it culminates in the Night of the Long Knives.

Since 2016 and the Brexit vote in favour of leaving the EU, there has been a revolving door policy when it comes to Prime Ministers.

David Cameron fell on his sword after the electorate voted to depart the EU, and he was replaced by Theresa May.

But as the mood of Tory MPs became increasingly febrile, it was clear her time was running out, ultimately ushering the arrival of Mr Johnson in Number 10 Downing Street.

However, nobody had factored in Covid which basically plunged Britain into turmoil for two years with lockdown and working from home becoming the norm.

And therein lies the problem we face now

as a nation. Johnson was forced out following Partygate and after a deeply divisive and prolonged leadership campaign, Liz Truss was chosen as successor to Boris, who was previously spotted sunning himself somewhere in the Caribbean before rushing back to London when it became clear Ms Truss's tenure was going to end after just 44 days in power.

So, what has all this reason political chaos got to do with Bexhill, I hear you ask.

Well, in fact, plenty. The beauty of a small town like ours is the plethora of small businesses which have largely survived Covid and the current economic turmoil due to the unswerving support of the local community, but they could face economic Armageddon if national politics continues in its current vein.

Watching the recent exchanges across the dispatch box between Miss Truss and Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer involved plenty of finger jabbing and not much else other than empty rhetoric.

If you have a choice between tuning in to Prime Minister's Questions or watching paint dry, then check out the emulsion after painting your lounge magnolia.

In the space of four weeks, the Government dispensed with a Chancellor and a Home Secretary during a period when the economy went into meltdown due to an ill-advised mini-budget.

We had former Health Secretary and Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt installed as Chancellor in Downing Street. Despite once getting confused as to whether his wife was Chinese or Japanese and being widely condemned for his running of the NHS, Mr Hunt has thus far made a pretty good fist of calming the financial markets.

In fact, many saw him currently as the *de facto* Prime Minister prior to Mr Sunak's victory over Mr Johnson and Penny Mordaunt.

We are still more than two years away from a General Election and I have no intention of voting in it for the first time in my life.

Placing your faith in politicians, whether of red, yellow or blue hue on the national stage these days is a futile exercise because ultimately, they will let you down.

In closing, it is important to stress that I have no political affiliations whatsoever, but I do believe firmly in the power of local government whether at county council or town council level.

They have a vital role to play in supporting places like Bexhill if, as exemplified in the lyrics of that brilliant number one hit by Ska band, The Specials, it is not to become a Ghost Town in future.

For now, Mr Sunak, it is over to you. Good luck. You are going to need it.

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ROYAL BRITISH LEGION WOMEN'S SECTION

Saturday 5th November 10am- 12noon, Meads Avenue Little Common, between 10am-12noon.

We are holding our Autumn Fair (at the Poppy Club), entrance 50p. Stalls including Grand Raffle, Tombola, Books, Clothes and many more including our popular auction. Tea and coffee also available. Royal British Legion Women's Section Little Common meet on the 2nd Wednesday each month 7-9pm at the Poppy Club. We have speakers, social evenings, twice-yearly fairs, outings and much more, why not come along and join us, new members are always welcome.

BEXHILL GARDENS & ALLOTMENTS SOCIETY

Friday, 25th November at the Cooden Beach Golf Club.

We look forward to seeing you at our Annual Dinner, meeting up with friends, whilst enjoying good food, a merry tippie and entertainment. The evening begins at 6pm so plenty of time to chat. This is a very popular evening so don't delay - ring 01424 218711 to book your place.

TABLE TOP SALE

Saturday 26 November 2022, St Barnabas Church, 10 am until noon.

The next Coffee Morning and Table Top Sale at St Barnabas Church, on the corner of Sea Road and Cantelupe Road in Bexhill. Coffee, Tea and Cake, with a Book Stall and Bric-a-brac.

BEXHILL TUESDAY CLUB FOR THE BLIND AND PARTIALLY SIGHTED

Every Tuesday afternoon, St. Marks Church, Little Common.

Are you feeling isolated and want to make new friends? Then come and join in with lunches, cream teas, quizzes and entertainment. We can even pick you up and take you home. Call Jane on 01424 729323.

SATURDAY CRAFT FAIRS AT ST BARNABAS

Saturday 12th November and Saturday 3rd of December 10am-2.30pm. St Barnabas Church Sea Road Bexhill, TN40 1JG.

Fabulous selection of arts gifts and crafts, pop-up café serving home-made cakes scones and soup. free entrance. disabled facilities and visitor parking email Saturdaycraftfairs@gmail.com find us on Facebook.

BEXHILL HEALTH WALKS

Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. 11am, free to attend.

Free, friendly, regular walks, just an hour, no need to book, just turn up. Monday: Sidley, meet outside the New Inn. Wednesdays: Bexhill Freedom Leisure Centre, 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month from outside Bexhill Leisure Pool, Ravenside. Fridays: Bexhill Seafront, meet outside De La Warr Pavilion.

CHRISTMAS CAROLS CONCERT BY ROTHER COMMUNITY CHOIR

3rd December 2022, 7pm, St Marks' Church, Little Common

This is a free event of an hour of Festive songs by the choir including the chance for the audience to join in at the end, followed by refreshments in the Church Hall. Doors open at 6:30pm.

BOXING CLUB HOME SHOW

Saturday 19th November, Pebsham Community Centre, 7pm.

A night of high-quality boxing under England Boxing rule. Support #TEAMBEXHILL as they take on boxers from clubs across the region. Bexhill's boxers put their skills to the test as they take on others from clubs across the region. The England Boxing circuit plays host to high-quality boxers on their amateur boxing journey. Providing a route to represent your region and country. The circuit is the starting point for the vast majority of England's top professionals. Come along and show your support for those that train hard, push themselves and are willing to showcase their skills.

NHS HEARING AID MAINTENANCE

Wednesday 9th November, Little Common Community Centre, Shepherds Close, Bexhill, 11:15am-11:45

Free drop-in service for NHS Audiology patients plus hearing-related information & advice. No need to book. For further info call: 01323 722505 or email: mail@eshrc.org or text: 07950 855580.

MESSY CHURCH

Saturday 19th November, Freedom Church, Claremont Road, Bexhill, 15:30-17:30

All Age creative service with craft, activities and sensory play. Imagine a Saturday afternoon where you don't have to get dinner ready! Instead, everyone gets to enjoy making crafts, learning about Jesus, who loves us, and enjoying a meal together, and what's more, it's free! You don't need to believe to belong, come and join us where everyone is welcome. There will be refreshments, discussions, a variety of activities and a hot meal together. Please let us know if you are interested in coming to help us estimate numbers for the food.

ADULTS ONLY BINGO NIGHT

Friday 18th November, Sidley Working Mens Club, 19:00

We are thrilled to announce our very popular bingo night. Hosted by Chris 'Bumble' Brown at the Sidley Mens Working Club. £10 for a book to take part in the main game session. Drinks available to order at the bar. Cash on the door. All funds raised will go towards funding new reading resources for each year group at All Saints CE Primary, so please spread the word and support this event.

GIRLGUIDING CHRISTMAS FAIR

Saturday 26th November, Guide headquarters, London Road, Bexhill, 10am-12noon.

Admission £1 to include tea and coffee. Children free.

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READERS' LETTERS

Email your letters to the Editor to: letters@bexhill-news.co.uk

NEWSPAPER HEADLINE HIT HOME

I am glad you highlighted the hazards faced by pedestrians in this area, not only posed by the ghastly e-scooters but also by uneven paving slabs. My wife and I live in Sidley and a walk to the local shops is a real challenge due to these twin menaces.

Many a time we have tripped due to crumbling pavements. It often seems that road repairs are the absolute priority leaving pedestrians at great risk as local resident Jan Meek pointed out in your article.

As for the lead story in your paper, regarding the awful collision elderly resident Myra Wood suffered when she was hit by an e-scooter, I have long warned of the dangers posed by these death-trap machines. As you point out, they are illegal to ride in public outside of a trial area. And we are not in one of those areas here but that does not stop these idiot riders from brazenly flouting the law.

In your editorial, you described such serious accidents as a "rare occurrence." I would like to point out that e-scooter casualties nationally are on the rise. There were 1352 collisions involving e-scooters in Great Britain last year compared to 460 in 2020. And there were ten deaths, all e-scooter riders.

Mrs Wood is not alone in suffering serious injuries. She says she is a shadow of her former self following the accident and I fully understand her feelings. My wife was almost knocked down by an e-scooter while walking down the ramp to the platform at Bexhill Station recently. The machine came around a corner at high speed and missed her by inches. The rider simply smirked and rode off.

Similar incidents have happened to me. One is simply not safe walking on pavements, whether it's the poor state of them or the threats posed by skateboards, bicycles and now these abominable e-scooters. You can't even escape the latter on station concourses and platforms as my wife can testify.

Whoever in Government made the decision to allow these scooters really needs to have a serious rethink. The cost in terms of casualties, and risk to life, is simply not worth it whatever the so-called environmental benefits. If ever a decision needs an urgent U-turn this is it.

Ivor Jones

INVITATION TO GAMES AND SOCIAL EVENTS

I wonder if you could find a little space to give a bit of publicity to our games group which is held in Little Community Centre, Shepherd's Close, Little Common.

It is next door to the primary school and we meet every Thursday (except the third in each month) at 2.00pm to 4.00pm. We have several games available including Scrabble, Cards, Dominos, Uno, Yahtzee and Rummikub, although most of our members prefer to play a card game called Shanghai.

We are a friendly group with ages ranging from their 60's to their 90's and are not competitive, although of course winning is always a bonus!

The cost at the moment is less than £2 a session and includes tea and biscuits. We do not make a profit but the cost pays for the hire of the hall and refreshments. As a group, we go out for meals in local pubs and restaurants. The first visit will be free, so if anyone would like to come along to give us a try, or would like to know more, please ring 01424 601883 between 9.00am and 6.00pm.

PS, I think the local free paper is great for the community. Well done to all concerned.

Shirley Nash (Organiser)



WHICH WAY NOW?

A reader sent us this image during the recent diversion that was set up around the town centre whilst works we carried out on Station Road. Harry Morgan simply said: "These signs at the bottom of Clifford Road made me smile."

FIVE YEARS TOO LONG

Last night's RDC's Cabinet Agenda (October 2022) proposed allowing Southern Water "no later than 2027 for all sewage discharges into the sea to cease in the Rother District area."

Are we expected to continue bathing in excreta for the next five years?

G.A. Duly

ROSIE DUFFIELD COMMENTS ARTICLE

Having seen your paper for the first time, I was impressed by the clear and attractive presentation but disappointed by the slanted manner in which an otherwise unremarkable news item was reported.

Rosie Duffield has voiced her opposition to the much-loved... But, it appears her rhetoric... Although Ms Duffield's comments are at best viewed as a storm in a teacup...

I know very little about either Eddie Izzard or Rosie Duffield but can well imagine that the former is indeed 'much-loved', not least by the beneficiaries of his charitable work. The question is, why was this descriptor necessary? Does it make Ms. Duffield's intervention more heinous than it would otherwise have been?

Rhetoric is a perfectly legitimate word but, as a journalist, you will be aware that it is now generally used in the pejorative sense. Your article doesn't actually name those who view Ms. Duffield's comments as 'at best a storm in a teacup' but it could be any one of the number of people who now subscribe to the 'gender-fluid' ideology.

Ms. Duffield appears to be a relatively young person, but old enough to recognise that biological sex is an immutable fact, and has been brave enough to stand up and say so.

Through this, she has already faced abuse and threats from people within her own party, so perhaps she would be less bothered by your report than I was by having read it.

B.A. MacPhee

CAN YOU HELP?

Little Common Community Centre is a small local charity providing a warm and welcoming venue for group activities and social clubs in the Bexhill and Little Common area.

Recently the metal barrier in the car park, which protects the building, was damaged by a motorist. We have been unable to find someone to repair it.

If you or someone you know with the right skills and tools could help us at little or no cost, please telephone the office manager on 01424 842371 weekday mornings for more information.

Thanking you for your attention.

S.Lazarus. CommitteeMinutes Secretary.

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION COLLECTIONS HELP WANTED



I am contacting you on behalf of the Royal British Legion Bexhill branch in the hope that you may be able to help us.

As the Poppy Appeal is fast approaching we are in need of recruiting some willing people to collect for the appeal. We feel it may help if people knew that most supermarkets in Bexhill now allow us to put a table and chair just inside their premises so it is no longer necessary to stand out in all weathers with a tin.

Anyone interested can call 01424 212215 for further information, if the office is closed please leave a message and we will get back to you.

If possible we would also appreciate it if you could mention our Annual General Meeting which is on Sunday 20th November 2022 at 3pm. It will be held at the Town Square Social Club, 4-6, London Road, TN39 3JU, all branch members very welcome.

Sue Dale. Branch secretary

AGREED — BOY RACERS MUST SLOW DOWN

I can't thank you enough for raising the issue of speeding along the seafront. (September 2022, Issue 3).

I live at the bottom of Bolebrooke Road and have definitely noticed an increase in noise this year! Motorbikes using the road to Galley Hill as a chance to rev and race as well as the boy or no longer 'boy' racers spoil many a late evening TV as well as late night sleep.

What they also don't realise is the way sound distorts with all the high buildings enabling the noise to be carried much further and sound much louder — especially at night!

Unfortunately, there is nothing in place to deter this behaviour in the summer months. I do hope your raising awareness will prompt similar support and get changes in motion before any accidents happen and before next summer.

There is a definite relief when the seasons change.

Christa

I'm so pleased that someone has highlighted this problem. It seems to have gotten worse during the summer. I live at the bottom of Galley Hill and the road in the evenings is usually empty and quiet. Recently it's like Brands Hatch, especially at night. Worse is the motorbikes endlessly hammering up and down, up and down.

I'm not a killjoy. I've had sports cars in the past and we all put our foot down occasionally, but it's become quite dangerous on our roads as you so rightly said, apart from the pollution and noise.

I think a campaign for speed humps may be needed. Or a concerted effort by the police to catch the culprits and issue fines. None of which will happen!

Lesley Smith

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY TO BE MARKED IN BEXHILL

Every year, Bexhill marks Remembrance Sunday with processions and services to the town's war memorials. There are two Royal British Legion Branches in Bexhill, Little Common and Bexhill (Central). The branches work with the town council to organise the ceremonial activities on the day. The branches are made up of volunteers who work hard in the community to raise funds to care for our veterans.

In Little Common, on Remembrance Sunday, dignitaries, veterans and uniformed groups parade from the Poppy Club, on Meads Avenue to St Marks Church for a religious service and then parade down to the war memorial on the roundabout to lay wreaths. During the day, the service at the Cenotaph in London is streamed through a loudspeaker on the roundabout for everyone to experience.

In the town centre, the parade leaves off from Devonshire Square, along Devonshire Road to the war memorial at the junction of Sea Road. A short service takes place, with Rev David Lockwood and the Town Mayor's chosen celebrant Nuala Geary reading, followed by wreath laying. The parade then re-assembles and processes onto the Promenade, to salute the Mayor and dignitaries at the Colonnade, finishing up at the De La Warr Lawns.

Mais House in Bexhill is one of the Royal British Legions residential care homes for veterans. We welcome our local veterans to the parades each year. Mais House is seeking volunteers to sit with our vets for a cuppa and a chat. If you have some time to spare please contact them on 01424 215871.

WHERE IT ALL STARTED

Bexhill Branch British Legion started as The Old Comrades Club in 1919 by Brigadier General O'Donnell, who realised that veterans of WW1 needed somewhere to meet. It became the British Legion in 1921 & the branch celebrated its centenary last year in 2021. The branch continues to have an office in the Town Hall Social Club formerly the Old Comrades Club. The Bexhill Army Cadet Force, Air Cadets, Sea Cadets, 8th Bexhill Scouts and Ninfield Scouts are affiliated to the Bexhill Branch. You will see many of these groups helping with the Poppy Appeal around Bexhill.

Last year the Bexhill branch Standard Bearer Sam Fisher, represented the Bexhill branch at the Albert Hall's Festival of Remembrance & this year had the honour of parading our standard at the Cenotaph for the funeral of her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

The Little Common Branch of the Royal British Legion can trace its roots to a meeting held at the Wheatsheaf Hotel on 10 November 1919. At this meeting it was agreed to form a 'Post' of the Comrades of the Great War in the village, owing to the long distance for members to travel to a meeting of the Bexhill Branch (two miles on modern roads).

The landlord of the Wheatsheaf offered a room for three evenings a week and meetings were held there until 1923. The first social and fundraising event was a whist drive and dance at the Village Institute on Boxing Day 1919, which raised £3 5s 0d. On 5 January 1920, it was agreed that a Club Committee should be formed to manage the Club Room. This arrangement continues to this day.

On 11 July 1921, the Committee agreed that the "Post of Comrades" should be wound up and members agreed to accept the Constitution of the British Legion, thereby forming the Little Common Branch.

In March 1922, discussions began about the possibility of obtaining Club premises. A piece of land was acquired in Kennel Lane and a wooden hut was bought from Cooden Camp for £180 with cartage and fitting out bringing the total cost to £300. The Branch held its first meeting in the new premises on 14 January 1923. The present Club occupies the same site.

MEET MR LEGION

Ernie Eldridge joined the Little Common Branch of the Royal British Legion in 1984 just after he moved into the branch's catchment area. Ernie took a keen interest in the running of the Clubhouse and Branch (together as they were in those days) and often sat in and listened to the Committee meetings. Whenever anything of a practical nature was required, Ernie would volunteer either to do it or get it done. This included the Remembrance Parades, Poppy Appeals and Welfare duties.

Ernie's enthusiasm and passion were recognised by the Branch Committee during 2008 when he was made President. However, several years later when the Branch and the Club split into separate entities, Ernie discovered that he was not eligible to be President of both the Branch and the Club. He chose to continue with the Branch and is president to this day.

Unfortunately, the Branch went through a very difficult period and effectively collapsed. It was due to Ernie's efforts that the Branch continued to function as he carried out all the practical duties required; for example, erecting road closure signs and organising the road marshals for Remembrance Parades.

It is solely due to Ernie's dedication and enthusiasm that the Branch stayed alive for long enough to allow a Special General Meeting to form a new Committee, which Ernie has supported with his usual cheerful enthusiasm and can-do attitude.

All this, despite now being well into his eighties and having endured considerable pain requiring hip replacements; his immaculate appearance, upright bearing, infectious cheerfulness and enthusiasm have made Ernie a widely recognised figure in the community. He is, in effect, a living 'logo' for The Legion and the Little Common Branch.



Ernie Eldridge is Mr Legion

ROYAL AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION CLUB 'THE ALBATROSS'

The RAFA branch was formed in 2016 by merging Bexhill & Battle with Hastings and St Leonards. The Albatross Club situated in the Marina Arcade on the seafront of Bexhill on Sea is the hub of the branch activities, where they endeavour to provide representation of the RAFA throughout the 1066 country of East Sussex.



Dorothy Ashwood - a jewel in RBL's Remembrance crown

Although the Albatross Club is a members club, you do not need to have served to become a member. The Albatross provides essential social activities, music, and entertainment to Bexhill. If you are recently retired, moved to the area or just looking for companionship, the club welcomes residents to join and become part of the RAFA Club. When you are at the Albatross you will also see our wonderful Bexhill resident, Dorothy Ashwood. Dorothy is the Little Common Legion Branch Honorary Treasurer, the RAFA Club Chairman and caters for the Marigold Club near Bexhill Hospital. Dorothy is a jewel in our Remembrance Crown!

JOIN US FOR THE ACT OF REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 13TH NOVEMBER 2022

CENTRAL BEXHILL

- 10:30am: Parade leaves Devonshire Square
- 10:40am: Service and wreath laying at Bexhill War Memorial
- 11:15am: Parade from War Memorial along prom to the De La Warr Lawns

LITTLE COMMON, BEXHILL

- 10:30am: Parade leaves the Poppy Club, Little Common
- 10:45am: Cenotaph service live streamed on Little Common Roundabout
- 10:50am: Service at St. Marks Church
- 12:00-noon: Parade from St. Marks to Little Common Roundabout for wreath laying

We would like to thank motorists for their patience whilst we close the roads for the parades to run safely, your assistance is appreciated.



Globally renowned hotelier, Grace Leo



This building is nearly 100 years old. So, what attracted you to this particular venue?

During the COVID lockdowns, I was looking around for one or two hotels to acquire and our brief is really to be near the waterside each time. We had just bought six months earlier, a hotel in Henley on Thames, which is in front of the Thames River. This hotel in Cooden Beach caught my attention. I remembered coming here for the first time and having James Kimber, the previous owner, show me around. I just thought how exceptional it is to have a hotel directly on the beach – no postcard shops, no fish and chip shops, nothing!

You discovered it during the COVID pandemic. So, what was the state of play with the hotel at that point?

It was very much at a point where I think the previous owners had intended to sell it, and it was already kind of dormant but everything was in fairly good condition. But in need of refurbishment. So, it was definitely the right time to do it. When we took it over, we hit the ground running. We literally bought it in April, and then by May, we reopened the Hotel.

It's obvious there's been a complete refit of this hotel. So, what would you describe as the biggest challenge you've had in the refit of this premises?

I think the biggest challenge had to do with the sourcing of products and supplies on the back of the problems caused by COVID. We used to be able to buy tiles from Italy, or from Spain, or from anywhere, but then, for us to bring anything from the continent had become a real challenge. There were pages and pages of forms to fill out. So we had to buy everything from Britain, even though they're not British made, it had to go through an entity that's trading in the UK. So, that was a huge lesson learned. Another big challenge was actually getting quality builders.

When you're fully open here and Cooden beach and it's launched and people are enjoying the resort. How do you think you will change? How would you think the hotel will help the local economy?

I certainly hope so. I think everywhere I have redeveloped a hotel, it has made that town or district prosper without a doubt. Because it brings a new audience, it brings the consumer in and those who are on the lookout for things to do. They would want to go around and explore Bexhill or Hastings or Eastbourne. With the presence of the hotel, we want to be a place where people want to come to, find those little boutiques or cafés that are a bit more local.

The previous owners were very embedded in the community, do you feel you will continue that?

Definitely. We're very much embedded in the community. We do not exclude anyone. We're investing in the town and hopefully, residents will feel the same way and they will come to use the facilities, the restaurants, the bars, and feel at home.

Unfortunately, the South Coast has had some recent bad press. In particular over the water quality. Do you think that will affect your plans?

I think it's up to the community leaders here to actually make an improvement in the quality of the water and the quality of the environment. I think that's perhaps a wake-up call for everyone because we have to preserve our nature and preserve what is important to us every day when we look out to that amazing sea. So I think it's everybody's responsibility to take care of that.

See the full video interview by visiting www.bexhill-news.co.uk

NEW LEASE OF LIFE FOR COODEN BEACH HOTEL

BY PAUL GIBSON
PHOTOS: JTP53 PHOTOGRAPHY

The Cooden Beach Hotel dates back to the 1920's and has been a massive part of the history of Bexhill and Cooden Beach. The hotel was purchased in 2021 from popular owners James and Lesley Kimber by hotel chain giant, The Relais, boasts resorts in New York, Paris, London, Jakarta, Portugal, Bali and now, Bexhill!

Globally renowned hotelier, Grace Leo, who's headed up the complete renovation of the Cooden Beach Hotel, has more than 40 years' experience in creating five-star resorts in cities across the world.

Grace took some time, just hours ahead of the official opening night late last month, to talk to editor, Paul Gibson, about how she intends to make the Cooden Beach Hotel an experience to remember.



Bexhill News editor, Paul Gibson, chats with Grace

INSURANCE FIRM SUPPORTS STAFF WITH 5% PAY INCREASE



A few members of the Hastings Direct team beach cleaning on a recent community day

Hastings Direct has announced a package of support to help colleagues through the cost of living crisis. Colleagues earning up to and including £45,000 will benefit from an immediate minimum 5% pay rise and a £500 bonus in October pay.

These awards equate to approximately £1,000 for each colleague between now and next March. Pay reviews will also be brought forward for those earning over £45,000. Directors and Executive team members have not been included.

This is one part of a package of measures that Hastings Direct is providing to support colleagues in the long term, including those on extended absence such as maternity or sick leave, as well as colleagues who have

joined the company in the last few weeks.

Throughout October colleagues will also be able to take advantage of free meals in the company's Bexhill and Leicester offices, as well as access to a £200,000 hardship fund. Hastings' hardship fund supports colleagues experiencing the most acute financial difficulties with confidential, financial help.

Toby van der Meer, Hastings CEO said, "The rise in the cost of living is affecting everyone and the recently proposed tax reforms have created even more uncertainty. In line with our '4Cs' cultural approach, our colleagues are our priority and therefore we're pleased to announce these measures.

We applaud other organisations that have taken similar measures and would encourage remaining companies to do the same".

NEW CONTRACTOR ANNOUNCED TO MAINTAIN ROAD NETWORK

A new contractor will be responsible for the maintenance of the county's roads and pavements from next year. East Sussex County Council has appointed Balfour Beatty Living Places Ltd in a seven-year contract worth £297million, with an option to extend to a maximum of 14 years — worth up to £730 million.

Balfour Beatty Living Places will be responsible for maintaining the county's highway network and infrastructure, including roads, pavements, drainage, streetlights, traffic lights and bridges. They will also provide winter gritting across the county and deliver highway improvement schemes.

During an extensive procurement process, bidders were asked to demonstrate how they would support the county council's efforts to reduce its carbon footprint, ensure quality of work, provide value for money and how they can improve social wellbeing across the county.

Cllr Claire Dowling, the county council's lead member for transport and environment said: "It is vital for our residents and our economy that our road network is well-maintained, and work carried out is of the right quality.

"This new contract has undergone extensive scrutiny to ensure it reflects the feedback we receive on our highways work and that it builds on the successes of the current contract and is fit for purpose for our residents and communities.

She added: "As well as demonstrating that this could be achieved, Balfour Beatty Living Places also showed how its activities would align



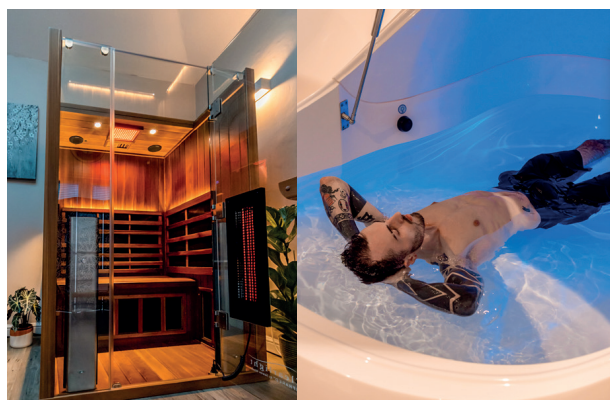
with our ongoing efforts to reduce our carbon emissions and how its actions would benefit the communities of East Sussex through its social value plan, including training, apprenticeships and community projects and events.

"Balfour Beatty Living Places has a lot of experience with highways maintenance and major infrastructure projects, delivering services with a number of councils across the country and we look forward to working with them in East Sussex."

Steve Helliwell, Managing Director of Balfour Beatty Living Places said: "This latest award builds on our longstanding expertise and commitment to providing best-in-class highways and infrastructure maintenance services across the UK.

"Our dedicated team of professionals will seek to introduce new technologies and innovative solutions wherever we can, helping us to create great places to work, live and play, whilst also leaving behind a lasting positive legacy for the communities in East Sussex."

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EVERY FRIDAY IS MARKET DAY IN BEXHILL



Friday means only one thing in Bexhill – market day! *Viktoria Cowley* takes time to visit the range of stalls at the regular market in Devonshire Place.

As I walk to work early in the morning, I see the market traders setting up their stalls. It converts the usually empty pedestrianised area into the bustling hub of the town just for one day a week.

The market traders take up the pedestrianised square in Devonshire Road just outside the Post Office where a handful of local independent traders set up for the day. I simply have to pay a visit during my lunch break and peruse the produce and purchase some on offer.

We're so lucky in Bexhill that our market is populated with traders such as a butcher, baker, florist, jams, preserves and eco-friendly products, plus many more. These signify the

mainstay of our local buying needs and it's important these traders remain trading there. The only way we can ensure this is if we buy from them.

I love visiting the local markets, the traders will always treat us as their friends, whether they've met us before or not. They are always available to chat, engage in conversation and answer any queries about their produce and where or how they've been made or sourced.

I've often bought produce from them and been more than delighted with it all. This week I bought the most beautiful loaf of bread. I know it sounds quite bizarre as one of our main staple foods is the humble loaf of bread, however, there's bread and there's this bread! The softness was second to none and the taste was sublime. Buying a similar product from a supermarket would not be nearly as fresh and wouldn't stay soft for nearly half the time. I also bought a few venison shanks and some wild boar, beer and hop sausages.

The venison shanks made our Sunday roast a real treat and so tasty. We're yet to try the sausages but very much look forward to them.

Another reason for buying from local market traders is that their produce is totally traceable, sustainable and farmed responsibly, a set of qualities that cannot be provided or promised from the big supermarket giants since their only goal is generating as much money as possible.

There is a difference in price. Comparing the supermarkets to the farmers and growers shows a real price difference, but with all the advantages mentioned above, if you can afford the prices then I will guarantee you will not be disappointed.

If you really care about the sustainability of where and how your food is grown and sourced, the only genuine way to do that is to support them at their source.

The Bexhill Farmers Market is open from 9am-1pm every Friday.



ECHOING AROUND THE CHAMBER NOVEMBER 2022

BEXHILL CHAMBER FIGHTING BACK ON BEHALF OF BUSINESSES

BY HOWARD MARTIN, PRESIDENT OF BEXHILL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND TOURISM

It is not an infringement of Bexhill Chamber's constitutional commitment to political neutrality when we say that Bexhill is facing incredibly hard times in the current political turmoil.

Businesses face massive rises in energy bills, corporation tax rises, staff shortages and the impact of rapid inflation on general business costs. However, our members are incredibly resilient and our Chamber is standing with them as they fight back on behalf of our community.

Last week, our Chamber was contacted by a member who is a local online and retail entrepreneur in genuine fear of losing their business due to a 300% rise in their per unit energy costs. The owner was incredibly distressed as their online orders were also in decline when they would normally be rising in the run up to Christmas.

Our Chamber is not institutionally qualified to offer legal or financial advice, however, we can act as a friendly ear to our members and help them talk through their situation and possibly bring in other highly qualified Chamber members if needed to help.

In this situation, we worked through a quite simple solution. After an initial chat, we realised that our member had not yet contacted her energy supplier as they thought it would be useless as they were tied into a long-term contract.

However, when they did contact them the supplier almost immediately released our member from their contract and they have now been able to shop around for a better if not



BCCT: Helping to support members with business-owner worries

perfect deal. Sometimes it can be a simple chat that solves a serious problem.

Another member who employs ten people in a community lead training business recently found themselves at loggerheads with local authorities over their land lease expiring and them being threatened with eviction. The lease deal was confused by the internal machinations of two local authorities so once we had assessed the situation Bexhill Chamber brought in legal support from a member law firm who had specialist knowledge in lease negotiations.

We are currently supporting the member to seek out new



Bexhill Chamber of Commerce and Tourism

BUSINESS • PROSPERITY • COMMUNITY

premises while also negotiating a more satisfactory exit from their current leases.

Planning issues are often a big problem for members wishing to invest in improvements or expansion. Bexhill Chamber continues to work closely with other stakeholders on sorting out the mess of planning consents required for improving window insulation in the town centre conservation area.

But, we are also helping and supporting several other businesses with their planning appeals. We are very pleased to be able to work on some matters by acting as a liaison between the planning authorities and the applicants by bringing an external perspective to some issues that can then hopefully be resolved by a re-application rather than an expensive planning appeal.

Bexhill Chamber will continue to be an essential part of our business landscape offering help and support wherever we can as things get tougher, as they undoubtedly will. Bexhill Chamber stands shoulder to shoulder with our members and the local community.

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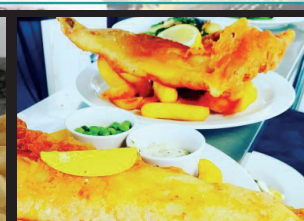
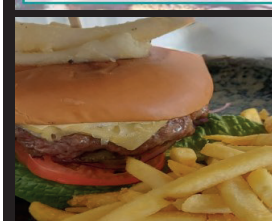
Pre-Christmas-Menu
2 Courses £24 3 Courses £29

Amuse Bouche

Tiger Prawn & Cod Tempura Sweet & Sour Chilli Dip (GF)
Gravadlax of Salmon Mustard Mayonnaise, Pink Pickled Onions & Rocket (GF)
Crispy Duck Bon Bon Apple & Plum Chutney, Wild Rocket (GF)
The Smoke Shed Mackerel Rillette Charred Cucumber, Baby Leaf, Roasted Chickpeas & Toast (GF)
Leek, Potato & Sage Terrine Salsa Verde & Sour Cream (GF) (VE)

Traditional Roast Turkey All the Trimmings & Parsnip Crisps (GFO)
Seared Rye Bay Scallops Bacon Crumb, Onion Confit, Kale, Mash & Sage Butter Sauce (GF)
Slow Cooked Beef Celery Fondant, Roast Winter Vegetables, Wild Mushrooms & Herby Mash (GF)
Roast Fillet of Hake Mussel, Watercress & Potato Chowder (GF)
Roasted Parsnip Gnocchi Walnut & Sage Crumble, Kale & Caramelised Apple (VE)(GF)

Christmas Pudding Brandy Custard
Pebbles Ice Cream Sundae Candied Orange & Dark Chocolate Sauce (GF)
Salted Caramel Cheesecake Raspberry Coulis (GF) (VE)
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STAR NATALIE GETS PLENTY OF SUPPORT AS SHE WOWS PAVILION

INTERVIEW BY KIM MAYO

Supporting an established music artist can be a tough gig but also a terrific opportunity. When former Australian soap star turned highly successful solo singer Natalie Imbruglia played in front of an enthusiastic crowd at the De La Warr Pavilion last month, her support act Marcus McCoan, a hugely talented Cornish singer-songwriter, was relishing his role as the support act.

Ahead of the launch of his first single *Phase Me*, Marcus spoke exclusively to *Bexhill News* about his hopes and ambitions which will hopefully culminate in him proving to be a major hit.

"I've always loved music," he said. "But my first real passion was playing rugby union."

That leads to an unusual back story.

He said: "I played rugby union to a pretty high standard for St Austell in Cornwall as a scrum-half, but at the age of 19, I got badly injured and suffered a brain aneurysm.

"It was full-on and I was in a coma and in hospital for a month. Clearly, after that, I wasn't going to be able to play rugby again.

"I had first fallen in love with music when I heard *Nevermind* by Nirvana when I was just nine years old and that inspired me to first pick up a guitar.

"Music was always in the background and I first started performing when the captain of St. Austell and I started gigging and doing duets. It went down pretty well and it went from there really, although now I do my own stuff with a backing band.

"So far the response has been great and prior to this tour, I have performed at Glastonbury as well as supporting the likes of Rudimental and Rag 'N' Bone Man.

"It is amazing how supportive established artists are to the support acts. For instance, on



Marcus McCoan

this tour, Natalie has been absolutely great. I was so proud she chose me to come on this tour.

"I had never really thought of myself as a singer, more a guitarist, but as my confidence grew, I decided to go for it and it has worked out pretty well so far."

When asked how he would describe his music, he replies with a wry smile: "Machine pop. I guess that sums it up best"

Despite a relatively short set, Marcus's music went down extremely well with a bumper crowd at the De La Warr with the aforementioned first single from his forthcoming album proving a particular highlight. He is certainly a name to look out for.

Natalie Imbruglia on the other hand has



Marcus McCoan with Bexhill News editor, Paul Gibson

been there, done it and got the T-shirt.

The Australian, who first shot to fame on the soap opera *Neighbours*, became an overnight sensation as a singer back in 1997 with her worldwide hit single *Torn*, but anyone who thought she would be a one-hit wonder was very much mistaken.

Unlike her former *Neighbours* star Kylie Minogue, whose early pop career was guided by hit machine trio Stock, Aitken and Waterman, Natalie was determined to follow her own musical route which has been fully vindicated.

Songs from her debut album, *Left of the Middle*, understandably dominated her set at the De La Warr and certainly had the large crowd rocking with many standing and

dancing throughout the show.

Backed by her black-clad backing band, she is an energetic presence on stage. Clad in a sparkly top, pale blue skirt and Dr Martens boots, she bounced around the stage like the Duracell Bunny while remaining in fine voice throughout.

She sang songs from across the spectrum of her now 25-year career with considerable panache but of course, the one everyone wanted to hear was *Torn*. She made them wait until towards the end of the gig.

But the wait was worth it. What a song it is and naturally everyone sang along.

A couple more songs and then she was gone, as her extremely satisfied fans, including me, filtered out into the night.

BEXHILL-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL UPDATE

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN — WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Town Councils usually work with a committee structure.

It helps to share the workload. The Climate, Nature and Environment Committee's role is to monitor the implications of highways, transport and environmental issues within our area and to manage the allotments.

The Climate, Nature and Environment Committee meet bi-monthly and you can attend our meetings in person to hear about our strategies and initiatives for the local environment.

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN PROJECT

The Committee's biggest project is preparing a Climate Action Plan for Bexhill.

You can read the draft plan on our website, we are seeking comments from the public prior to the committee reviewing it again at its meeting on 16th November.

Members of the public are welcome to come along to this meeting and share thoughts about our plan or share personal climate concerns with us. This committee is a passionate team of councillors who are committed to addressing the climate and nature emergency.

Cllr Wray, Chair of the committee said "We see our role as bringing the community together for the sake of our children, to reduce Bexhill's carbon footprint and protect our wildlife and nature. Until recently, these ideas have seemed distant and not to affect us, but now we are all aware of increasing storms, floods, heatwaves, and rapidly rising energy bills, plus the need for self-sufficiency, clean seas and inland waters, and planning for the future. That is what this climate action plan is about. Because we are in an emergency, we need to identify what needs to be done, and the practical action that will make a difference.

We are aiming to achieve a lot by 2030. Some measures may take a few years to attain, and for some we will need to seek external funding. We do not have the powers of the big local authorities, but we can lobby and influence local matters, and be sure that every decision we make will aim to be well-informed and benefit our lovely town and its residents. This plan is an ever-evolving document, a vision of possibilities which will guide us through the coming years, based on research and data and — most importantly — your involvement. Join us in being a force for good and share your ideas with us as we embark upon our journey to carbon neutrality."

It's not just our environment that benefits from our plan... take a look at the knock-on effects of taking action:

The ideas and suggestions within our plan were captured at our successful Climate and Nature Emergency Event in May 2022. We heard from local experts and facilitated discussions with residents about what we can practical measures we can take as a town council.



Comments close on 4th November, but we would like to hear from you all year round so send your thoughts to town.clerk@bexhilltowncouncil.gov.uk

POLICE ENGAGEMENT FOR OUR COMMUNITY



The town council is now working more closely with the local police to represent the views of our local residents and achieve better accountability in Bexhill. The first set of focus groups took place on 18th October, organised with the Sussex Police Crime Commissioners Office. Senior Police officials, town councillors, district members and representatives of local community groups were there to voice their concerns. The town council has collated this information and will be meeting with Sussex Police on a regular basis to review progress. We all agreed that Bexhill is a safe place to live and doesn't suffer with the issues that neighbouring towns do. The main issues that we discussed were:



ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN EGERTON PARK

This is mainly youngsters and more foot patrols and youth engagement are planned.

SPEEDING TRAFFIC: The partnership of Police and Speedwatch groups is working — 60 vehicles were stopped by police on Cooden Drive last month and more operations are planned across Bexhill.

DRUG USE: including cannabis and nitrous oxide: The laws are still catching up with nitrous oxide, and the police have had success stopping 'county lines' dealing in Bexhill. Local cannabis use is difficult to stop.

VANDALISM: We looked at the effectiveness of CCTV and how we can improve capturing offenders.

GRAFFITI: Wave Arts were keen to help us tackle this, and we are having some further meetings about how we can address this in Bexhill.

COMMUNITY PROJECTS



The next round of grant funding has been approved by the Finance and General Purposes Committee, with a diverse list of projects that we are able to support.

Bexhill Senior Citizens Club £1000 towards restoring the old and dilapidated parquet floor.

£473 towards new litter picking hoops and hi-vis vests for The Little Commoners

£500 for a new Gazebo that the Jesus Loves Bexhill litter pickers can use at events

£1000 towards the Little Common Christmas lights

£1000 to fund the Bexhill In Bloom project for next season.

£436 for Bexhill Caring Community to take its members to the Brighton i360

£1000 to Sidley Cricket Club to fund indoor training sessions and equipment

£1000 for Community Supporters to train its young pollinators to educate older residents on eco friendly initiatives



£500 to the Concert Band of the Royal British Legion to purchase five new musical arrangements to entertain us all!

NOVEMBER MEETINGS

Wednesday 9th November: Planning Committee and Full Council.

Wednesday 16th November: Asset Transfer Committee and Climate, Nature and Environment Committee

Wednesday 23rd November: Planning Committee and Finance and General Purposes Committee

Please check our website for start times and locations of meetings. We are resuming audio streaming during November. More details will be available on our website.

BEACH AND SEA DAMAGE

The town council is horrified at the actions of the water companies in discharging pollution into our waters. Our Climate, Nature and Environment Committee is set to arrange a community stakeholder meeting with those affected by the sewage release. We will be asking our local beach and sea groups, swimmers and local businesses to provide evidence to the town council of the effects of sewage release. We will publish the findings from our inquiry and then we will call a meeting to share our concerns with our MP Huw Merriman, Rother District Councillor Councillors, East Sussex County Councillors and Southern Water.

SUPPORT DURING COST OF LIVING CRISIS

BY CLLR DOUG OLIVER,
LEADER OF ROTHER
DISTRICT COUNCIL

We are very fortunate in Rother to have residents who take their responsibility to recycle so seriously and, as a result, we have good recycling rates across the district.

It's a real shame, therefore, that a very small minority have forced the closure of Ravenside recycling point. A combination of high levels of contamination caused by people mixing household waste and recycling, and the site being used for fly-tipping has left us with little choice.

I encourage residents to continue to recycle as much as possible using their kerbside collection or by visiting the nearest household waste recycling site. The Salvation Army banks will remain available at Ravenside for clothing and book donations.

We continue to fight back against fly-tipping with the help of our enforcement team, but we rely on residents' help. If you see environmental offences being committed, such as fly-tipping, littering or dog fouling, please report it via our website – www.rother.gov.uk/reportit

The cost-of-living remains of great concern



to us and many Rother residents.

Major intervention is necessary to deal with the fallout, but I want to assure residents that Rother District Council will do as much as we can to help those struggling at this time.

Although our finances are limited, we are continuing to look for other ways we can help.

Our discretionary energy rebate scheme is still available for residents who were not eligible for the Government's Council Tax

Energy Rebate, handed out to households earlier this year. We want to encourage any households who could benefit from this to get in touch as it could go some way towards easing the burden.

For those finding things tough in the current climate, we have a list of funds and organisations that may be able to offer help on our website: www.rother.gov.uk/benefits-grants-and-funding/financial-support-for-residents/

In such turbulent times it can be difficult to see the positives, but it is so important that we recognise all the good around us – and there is plenty.

I continue to be astounded and heartened by the number of people in Rother doing so much good to improve their communities and the lives of those in them.

I was delighted this week to hear the news that Bexhill has been awarded Gold in the RHS South & South East In Bloom competition.

A big congratulations to all members of the Bexhill in Bloom Committee, officers from Rother District Council and its contractors and others who put so much work into making Bexhill and the wider district such a beautiful place to live.

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Bexhill News



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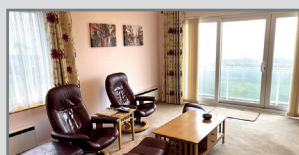
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WEST PARADE, BEXHILL-ON-SEA - £450,000

Let us take you through the blue door into one of our popular Seafront properties. Welcome to St. Kitts one of the six West Indies named purpose-built blocks of flats brilliantly positioned on our beautiful seafront in Bexhill on sea. Forming part of the second floor we have a spacious and bright two double bed roomed apartment for you. A contemporary home with an attractive kitchen, bathroom/ shower room, two WC's, two sun Balconies with fantastic views across the English Channel and beach.



LIONEL ROAD, BEXHILL-ON-SEA - £410,000

This is a charming 2/3-bedroom ground floor flat which has a garage and off-road parking with a lovely theme running throughout that boasts its homeliness. It has a large kitchen day room which is a wonderful place for family to socialise. For homeworkers there's a study (or 3rd bedroom if needed) and you will also find a useful hobby/storeroom downstairs in the basement. The flat has a large sitting room at the front, and you can enjoy the glimpses of the sea as well as the huge character this room enjoys.



DEANS CLOSE, BEXHILL-ON-SEA - £379,950

A delightful two bedroomed, well presented, detached bungalow with attractive gardens and a garage is now for sale. This welcoming home has just had new carpets laid throughout and is well positioned in a peaceful residential area of Bexhill.



THE BRIARY, BEXHILL-ON-SEA - £335,000

This is an attractive two bedroom Semi Detached bungalow with garage and off-road parking which is situated in a peaceful residential cul-de-sac. This home is centrally heated and has double glazing, has a lounge, kitchen, shower room and a sunroom which provides extra accommodation.



TUDOR COURT, BEXHILL-ON-SEA - £235,000

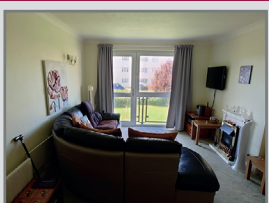
The property consists of 2 double bedrooms, a good-sized living room with a sun terrace, a modern fitted kitchen. The modern stylish bathroom has a 'P' bath and shower above along with a sink/vanity unit and tiled flooring and a Separate WC.

FREE VALUATIONS FOR SELLING & RENTING



BELMAINE COURT, BEXHILL-ON-SEA - £235,000

This is a good size home with a lovely bright lounge and balcony which enjoys a southerly aspect, two double bedrooms, with the bigger bedroom also having access to a balcony at the front. Features include double glazing and one allocated parking space.



HOMELAWN HOUSE, BEXHILL-ON-SEA - £120,000

An ideal home for your retirement years: this well presented, one bedroom flat located on the first floor of this over 60's building. Situated just off the seafront, this home comes with a shower room, kitchen, and a good size lounge with door to balcony.

PROPERTIES WANTED

THESE BUYERS ARE ALL LOOKING FOR BUNGALOWS:

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BEDFORD ROAD, BEXHILL-ON-SEA - £925.00 PCM

This good sized first floor flat is now available, conveniently positioned just a short distance from the seafront, and the town centre. The flat comes double glazed, has gas central heating, 2 double bedrooms, a good-sized lounge, kitchen and bathroom.



SCHOOL PLACE, BEXHILL-ON-SEA, £1,400.00 PCM

A newly decorated 3-bedroom end of terrace house, in this popular cul-de-sac to the eastern edges of Bexhill-on-Sea. Inside you will not only find a newly decorated home, but one that has new floor coverings throughout, and a new kitchen.

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LOCAL INDEPENDENT RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL AGENT



JFS Properties are a established property lettings and management company driven with a passion for property and is known for offering a personal and friendly service.



Joy Hazell is the Sole Director of JFS Properties and will be celebrating her 5th anniversary next year.

Joy has been in the property industry for the past 18 years and has many years of experience in Residential lettings and management and grew her knowledge and experience for Commercial property while being Office Manager for a Chartered Surveyors prior to setting up JFS Properties.

JFS Properties has now split their business and has JFS Commercial, as many properties JFS manage are Commercial with the upper being Residential.

As Joy has been established for nearly 5 years, she now feels comfortable and confident to grow her business but being able to keep the personal service to which she is known for.

Many people ask what 'JFS' stands for..... J - Joy, F - Fleur and S- Shelby, these are Joy's two daughter's.

Fleur has recently joined JFS and is working each Saturday 10am to 2pm as Property Administrator and will be working additional hours during the holidays while she continues her education. Shelby is already keen to join the workforce but at 11 years old, she has a while to wait!

JFS Properties sponsored their first local event earlier this year which was 'Bexfest', Joy and Connor both enjoyed attending this and are hoping to sponsor more local events in the near future. If you are holding an event and looking for a sponsor, please get in touch with Joy.

JFS Properties and JFS Commercial let and manage properties throughout Sussex, Kent and London. If you have a Residential or Commercial property you need any assistance with please feel free to contact their office at any time.

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AGENTS HOST FIRST LANDLORDS EVENING



A highly successful and well-attended event was held for existing and potential Landlords in Bexhill recently. Guest speaker, Paul McMath from Prosper Home Loans Ltd, delivered an informative talk on 'Buy to Let finance', followed by a questions and answers session, which was hosted by Abbott and Abbott in Devonshire Road.

Coffee & Co, also based in Devonshire Road, provided an impressive spread of food for the evening.

Michael Green from Abbott and Abbott said: "It was fantastic to bring together our valued landlords and to hear from Paul about Buy to Let lending criteria - which can vary enormously."

He added: "We are dedicated to giving our clients our best service and our event was an excellent opportunity to open up our office and bring people together to share ideas and information. The feedback from attendees was very encouraging and we look forward to arranging further events for other aspects of property ownership over the coming year."



ALL CHANGE AT DRAYS

Longstanding Bexhill retailer, Drays, has undergone a quiet transformation.

Shoppers on Western Road may have noticed a new shopfront, signage at the shop which is now owned by Smythe & Barrie, a fellow independent with over 70 years' track record in Eastbourne and Hailsham.

Whilst some things remain, such as Paul from the Drays team, it now offers a wider range of products and services.

According to owner Angela Garner, "As well as being a Euronics retailer, we have strong links with all the leading brand names and a huge stockholding of TVs and home appliances at Hailsham. With our own delivery and installation team, this means we offer next-day deliveries, if not same-day, subject to availability. It's a huge help to customers if you have a busy home and your oven or washing machine suddenly packs up.

"We continuously price-track and offer the latest promotions and offers. Customers don't even need to set foot in-store as we can do everything over the phone, by email, or online. But we're also here on Western Road in person. And there's nothing like being able to see a familiar face and ask for product recommendations or speak with someone if you have a query or problem."

The Smythe & Barrie store (formerly Drays) is at 21 Western Road. Call 01424 212652 or visit www.smytheandbarrie.co.uk



MAYBUGS

BEXHILL - EASTBOURNE - HAILSHAM
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SPORTING STEPS FOR SENIORS



Last month marked International Older People's Day, a day created by the United Nations over 30 years ago to celebrate life as you age, encourage people to socialise and, most importantly, have fun!

Rother marked the day with celebrations and activities throughout the whole month, during the Ageing Well Festival, with a range of events planned by the East Sussex Seniors Forums.

Active Rother works with partners across the district to host a plethora of activities for older people.

According to the NHS, adults over 65 should aim to be physically active every day, even if it's just light activity. Activities that improve strength, balance and flexibility should be done at least twice a week, and you should aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity a week or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity if you are able to (or a combination of both!).

Physical activity can help to improve your health and reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke. Attending classes and clubs is also a great way to meet other like-minded people in your area, be social, and make new friends!

Speak to a GP first if you have not exercised for some time, or if you have medical conditions or concerns. Make sure your activity and its intensity are appropriate for

your fitness.

Here's a breakdown of what's going on locally to help you get more active.

WALKING FOOTBALL

A slow paced, non-contact version of the game, aimed at over 50s, designed to help keep an active lifestyle. Tuesdays at 9.30am, and Thursdays at 7pm. Bexhill Leisure Centre. £3. Contact mickdavies48@gmail.com for more information.

FIRST STEPS INTO WALKING FOOTBALL

Enjoy football at a slower pace. This is especially suitable for those who put their boots away a while ago and aren't particularly active but want to come along & give it a go, or want to come and help out. Including tea/coffee.

Wednesdays at 9.30am at Bexhill Leisure Centre. £3.50. Contact 01424 731171 or email bexhillcentreenquiries@freedom-leisure.co.uk.

WALKING NETBALL

A slower version of the traditional game. It's netball but at a walking pace, so anyone can play regardless of age or fitness level. Come along and have fun! Mondays at 11.15am at Bexhill Leisure Centre. £2.50. Email: bexhillcentreenquiries@freedom-leisure.co.uk. Phone: 01424 731171.

BEXHILL WALKING CRICKET CLUB

An opportunity to partake in a more sedate form of exercise to Walking Football. Also, for people who have had health problems to continue their rehabilitation at a gentle pace. Fridays at 9.30am at Bexhill Leisure Centre. £2. For more info, call 07956 667531 or email: walcrlinsol@gmail.com.

SIDLEY WALKING CRICKET CLUB

Wednesdays at 2pm at Bexhill Leisure Centre. £2. For more info, call 07956 667531 or email: walcrlinsol@gmail.com.

ACTIVE FRIENDS - MEET AND MOVE

Improve balance and coordination, increase stamina and overall fitness, and meet friends in a welcoming environment. Exercises include chair and standing Pilates and Yoga, Tai Chi/ Qi Gong and Mindfulness Meditation.

Tuesdays at 10.30am at All Saints Church Hall, Sidley. Wednesdays at 2pm at Pebsham Community Hub. £2.50. For more info, contact Sally Taylor on sal_r_tay@yahoo.co.uk or 07739 082538.

EXERCISE TO MUSIC - LOW LEVEL

Improve your fitness through exercising to music. Classes are adapted for age and ability. Mondays at 5pm at Freedom Church, Sidley. £2. Contact Dance-Ability on 07942 493177 or email abilityaccess@hotmail.com.

EXERCISE TO MUSIC - MEDIUM

Mondays at 6pm at Freedom Church, Sidley. £2. Contact Dance-Ability, or 07942 493177 or email abilityaccess@hotmail.com.

PICKLEBALL

All equipment is provided and all are welcome, from newbies upwards. Comfortable clothes and good footwear are recommended, and no

pre-booking is required. Visit the Facebook page for Bexhill Pickleball. Sundays at 1.30pm and Wednesdays at 11am at Bexhill Leisure Centre. £3.95. Call 01424 731171 or email: bexhillcentreenquiries@freedom-leisure.co.uk

NINFIELD HEALTH WALK

A great way to meet people and make new friends, whilst enjoying a gentle walk (1 to 1.5 miles in length), taken at your own pace. Suitable for all ages and abilities, including those who are recovering from illness or injury. Thursdays at 11am from Sparke Pavilion, Ninfield. Free. Contact The Conservation Volunteers by calling 07740 899559 or email lorna.neville@tcv.org.uk. <https://eastsussexhealthwalks@tcv.org.uk>.

RAVENSIDE HEALTH WALK

Wednesdays at 11am from Bexhill Leisure Pool. Free. Contact The Conservation Volunteers lorna.neville@tcv.org.uk or call 07740899559. <https://eastsussexhealthwalks@tcv.org.uk>.

BEXHILL SEAFRONT HEALTH WALK

Fridays at 11am from De La Warr Pavilion. Free. Contact The Conservation Volunteers lorna.neville@tcv.org.uk or call 07740 899559. <https://eastsussexhealthwalks@tcv.org.uk>.

SIDLEY HEALTH WALK

Mondays at 11am from The New Inn, Sidley. Free. Contact The Conservation Volunteers lorna.neville@tcv.org.uk or call 07740 899559. <https://eastsussexhealthwalks@tcv.org.uk>.

TABLE TENNIS

Friendly play and a great way to meet others. No need to book in advance, just show up! Monday from 12.30-3pm and Thursday from 9.30am-1pm at The Pelham in Sidley. £1. **Keep up to speed on all activities near you by regularly checking our activities listings page here, and don't forget to subscribe to our newsletter!**

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SPORT

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SPORTING STEPS FOR SENIORS PAGE 30



CROSSFIT 1066 CAMPAIGN TO HIGHLIGHT IMPORTANCE OF MENTAL HEALTH

Launching on World Mental Health Day last month a Hastings-based CrossFit gym ran a social media campaign to highlight the importance of speaking out about mental struggles.

CrossFit 1066, based in Gotham Alley in Trinity Triangle, has asked its members to open up about their experience with the functional fitness sport and share how it has helped them with their mental health and body positivity. The purpose of the campaign is to highlight the importance of physical activity, community and a sense of belonging when it comes to combatting mental health struggles.

CrossFit 1066 has posted stories from a variety of members, alongside photos which were taken during a dedicated shoot by photographer Holly Paterson.

Liz Greenfield, one of the members behind the campaign, said "We are so proud to be showcasing the stories of members at CrossFit 1066, and we have seen what amazing things can happen when you step out of your comfort zone and open up. The feedback we have received on the back of the campaign has been incredible, with people telling us how much it has helped to read others' stories."

Abi Clarke, one of the gym's members who participated in the campaign by sharing her story, said "Training at CrossFit for me is an outlet. I was diagnosed with anxiety before I turned 16, and CrossFit really helps me keep my mind in check."

A recurring theme in the stories shared was the importance of community. Emily Hobson, another member, spoke about the community by saying "There's no judgement in a CrossFit gym. The only expectation is that you do your best. Your best is always enough. It is a safe space where you can be yourself, surrounded with love, support, and encouragement."



CrossFit is a sport that combines a variety of functional fitness movements performed at relatively high intensity. All CrossFit workouts are based on functional movements which reflect movements performed in day-to-day life, such as squatting, lifting, pulling and pushing. CrossFit is hugely beneficial to all ages and abilities, no matter what your fitness goal.

CLUB PRIDES ON SUPPORTING LOCAL CHARITIES



As well as the events, friendlies and league matches organised by the Old Bexhillians Walking Football Club, they take great pleasure in their work promoting and assisting local charities.

The club was formed from an Age UK East Sussex initiative in 2014 and since 2015 has regularly held events, quiz nights and members collections for local charities and organisations.

The feeling is that as a local club they can put a little something back into the community as club members appreciate just what local charities achieve and strive for as many have had personal dealings with a variety of associated issues over the years.

During the past five months, the club have entertained representatives of The Bexhill Foodbank (Cllr Langlands), Warming up the Homeless (Trudie Hampton) and held a MacMillan coffee morning at their summer base, the clubhouse of Little Common Football Club.

In the past, it has also endeavoured in a small way to support the families of local footballer Jason Callow, local fireman Chris Mephram, the Bexhill Gateway Club, 1066 Specials Football Club and Age UK itself.

The Old Bexhillians is a club comprising some 50 plus players, male and female, and hold regular sessions at Bexhill locations and can be contacted for information through club chairman Mike Davies on 07961998743 and email mickdavies48@gmail.com.



The presentation to Warming up the Homeless with Trudie Hampton.

BOWLS CLUB REFLECT ON SUCCESSFUL SEASON

Polegrove bowls club season finished with a very successful finals weekend with Rachel Mackriell and Vic Stevens crowned as club champions.

Polegrove ladies had a fantastic year winning the County top club and double rink competitions and Rachel Mackriell winning the county singles championship. The Polegrove men showed improvement and raised their position in the league this year.

The club held a charity afternoon at the end of the season that was enjoyed by all and raised £300 for St Michael's Hospice.

The club is going from strength-to-strength and has welcomed around 15 more new members to the club during the season. It encourages any new interested members to get in touch.

DO YOU RUN A LOCAL SPORTS CLUB?

Send us your news, reports and photos and we'll include them in our sports pages in Bexhill News. Just email: editor@bexhill-news.co.uk