

# Sevenoaks Youth Council



## Meeting of Sevenoaks Youth Council 15<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 6.00pm

House in the Basement,  
Basement of the Stag Community Arts Centre,  
London Road,  
Sevenoaks,  
TN13 1ZZ

### Youth Council Members:

Aanya Sidhu- <b>Chair</b>	Bea Hayward
Niki Zhang- <b>Vice-Chair</b>	Cristian Hunter-Garcia
Simba Li- <b>Treasurer</b>	Sharma Ishwar
Aryanna Mahdavi Ardestani	Miko Keen
Catherine Barden De Leon	Harry King
Rosie Blackmore	Madeleine Politzer
Dexter Buhmann	Elena Rozo-Navarro
Elena-Teodora Dragoi	Jospeh Soanes
Ayush Gautam	Aditya Vara
Maya Goodrich	

In attendance: Linda Larter, Town Clerk, Daren Mountain, Manager of House in the Basement Youth Café, Ieuan Chandler-Wilson, Committee Clerk

### AGENDA

1.	<b>Apologies for Absence</b> To receive and note apologies for absence.	
2.	<b>Minutes of Last Meeting</b> To receive and adopt the minutes of the Youth Council meeting held on 20 <sup>th</sup> March 2024.	Attached (pages 03-05)
3.	<b>Finance Report</b> To note the balance of the Youth Council budget 2023/24.	Attached (pages 6)
4.	<b>Vice-Chair</b> To note that Niki Zhang has stood down from the Youth Council.	
5.	<b>Election of a Vice-Chair</b> To elect a Vice-Chair	

6.	<b>Representatives of the charity “Friends for Families”</b> An opportunity to hear from representatives from the charity “Friends for Families”.	
7.	<b>Current Matters</b> To receive and note the Current Matters report, which has backdated actions via the Youth Council since the first meeting of the new Youth Council in November 2023.	Attached (pages 07-08)
8.	<b>House in the Basement [HiTB] Youth Café</b> <a href="https://www.houseinthebasement.co.uk/">House in the Basement - Home (weebly.com)</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To receive and consider HiTB report</li> </ul>	To Follow
9.	<b>Maze wheel</b> To receive the design for a sensory Maze Wheel	Attached (pages 09-10)
10.	<b>Climate Change Youth Forum</b> To receive the meeting notes from the Climate Change Youth Forum held on the 17 <sup>th</sup> of April 2024.	Attached (page 11)
11.	<b>Youth Council Mental Health Survey</b> To receive the draft Mental Health Survey and discuss any changes that you would like to make to the design or would like to add.	Attached (pages 12-14)
12.	<b>Youth Council Mental Health Poster</b> To receive the draft Mental Health Poster and discuss any changes that you would like to make to the design or would like to add.	Attached (pages 15-16)
13.	<b>How to promote the Youth Council</b>	
14.	<b>Date of Next Meetings</b> To note the dates of future meetings: TBC at the next annual Town Council meeting	-

**Minutes of the meeting of the Sevenoaks Youth Council  
Held on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

at Council Chamber, Town Council Offices, Bradbourne Vale Road, Sevenoaks, TN133QG

**Meeting Commenced:** 6.05 p.m.

**Meeting Concluded:** 6.54 p.m.

**Present:**

**Youth Council Members:**

Aanya Sidhu- <b>Chair</b>	Apologies	Maya Goodrich	Apologies
Niki Zhang- <b>Vice-Chair</b>	Apologies	Bea Hayward	Apologies
Simba Li- <b>Treasurer</b>	Apologies	Cristian Hunter-Garcia	Present
Aryanna Mahdavi Ardestani	Present	Sharma Ishwar	Present
Catherine Barden De Leon	Present	Harry King	Apologies
Dexter Buhmann	Absent	Madeleine Politzer	Apologies
Rosie Blackmore	Present	Elena Roza-Navarro	Absent
Elena-Teodora Dragoi	Present	Jospeh Soanes	Present
Ayush Gautam	Present	Aditya Vara	Absent

In attendance: Georgie Jackson, Responsible Finance Officer & Deputy Town Clerk; Daren Mountain, Manager of House in the Basement Youth Café; Ieuan Chandler-Wilson, Committee Clerk, Cllr Chloe Gustard & Cllr Dr Merilyn Canet

- 1. In the absence of the Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer Jospeh Soanes was elected to Chair the meeting.**
- 2. Apologies for Absence**  
Received as shown above.
- 3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Youth Council held on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2024**  
**RESOLVED:** To receive and adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Youth Council held on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2024.
- 4. Finance Report**  
The Youth Council received the Finance Report.  
**RESOLVED:** To note that the current balance was £1720.10
- 5. House in the Basement Youth Café (HiTB), Managers report:**  
Daren reported that House in the basement had started the NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training), and was currently in its fifth week, numbers had been slow to the uptake, but it has been picking up.  
**RESOLVED:** That the report be received and noted.
- 6. Maze Wheel**  
The Youth Council received the design specifications for a sensory maze wheel game from a Youth Councillor and their Brother aimed at helping the community to be more fun and inclusive. Unfortunately, both were unable to attend the meeting and the chair moved to defer this item to the next meeting to allow them the opportunity to explain the project in more detail.  
**RESOLVED:** To defer this item to the next Youth Council meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> of May.

## **7. Climate Change Youth Forum**

The Youth Council heard from Cllr Dr Marilyn Canet that we had an amazing speaker, Michelle Alger who came in at the last minute and spoke about turning hard plastics into furniture. The Youth Council enquired how the project had been advertised and whether schools were aware of the project, it was noted that while the posters had gone out to schools and other youth organisations across the town it may require a driving force from young people either through talking to friends or school extra curriculum groups. It was also noted that school visits may also help get the word out about the meetings.

It was also noted that the next date of the meeting is 17th of April many schools are holding after-school tutoring sessions for exam preparations.

**RESOLVED:** To note the next meeting of Climate Change Youth Forum, takes place on the 17<sup>th</sup> of April at 6pm with Guest Speaker Trevor Kennet, Head of Direct Services at Sevenoaks District Council on *“Recycling in Sevenoaks”*.

## **8. Youth Council Promotion**

The Youth Council mentioned that posting on social media would be ideal to help raise awareness of what they are doing for young people and the town. It was noted that while they have an Instagram account no posts as of yet have been done, though they currently have 40 followers. It was also noted that the current poster for the Youth Council could do with updating, adding the Instagram as well as the website may help to raise awareness and Posters in schools were small which made it hard for young people to see to get the information.

It was also noted that the Youth Council would like a page in the Town Crier to promote Youth Council activities such as their main priorities and any events they may want to hold over their two-year term. The Youth Council noted that perhaps having a magazine similar to the Town Crier may also be useful to help promote youth events in and around the Town as well as in House in the Basement.

## **9. Youth Council Priorities- Environment, Mental Health & Wellbeing, Community.**

The Youth Council highlighted that Mental Health has become a large issue for young people in recent years. They wanted to raise more awareness as to how to help young people suffering with mental health. One way they noted is that in many of the schools they have trained teachers and staff to help but not everyone knows who these teachers are. It was noted that schools could sign post who the teachers are that they can go to.

It was mentioned that perhaps it would be beneficial for the Youth Council to hear from people like Sevenoaks Mind or West Heath school on Mental Health and how it affects young people.

The Youth Council also heard that in the last meeting they mentioned a survey for young people to use for any mental issues and to report incidents like bullying and help sign post young people to where they can get help, it was noted that this would be a large task as it requires engagement from all schools in the Sevenoaks area and safeguarding leads.

It was suggested that a poster could be created for young people to have around schools and the town for them to know who to contact for help with any issues by that at home or at school. The Youth Council outlined that a presentation to schools would also be beneficial

to help outline what other schools are doing to help students to find a person they can talk to, As well as what help is available from other organisations. It was also mentioned that this could also be a way of introducing the Youth Council to schools. It was noted that either the Chair or other members of the Youth Council could give the presentation, with the help and support of the Town Council or another member of the Town Council could give the presentation if the Youth Councillors did not feel comfortable.

It was also mentioned that the Youth Council had proposed support for the charity **Friends for Family**, they mentioned that it might be helpful to invite Friends for Family to a meeting of the Youth Council to see what support they might need.

**6. Date of Next Meeting**

**RESOLVED: Next meeting will take place on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at HiTB Youth Café, TN13 1ZZ.**

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting.

2024/25

[illegible]

2024/25

	Expenditure £	Income £
Starting Balance:	01/04/2024	£ -
Budget allocated:	0.00	£0.00
	£ -	£0.00
Available Funds	£ -	
	£ -	

Current matters Report:

Since the election of the Youth Council November 2023-2025:




Minute Number & Date	Action	Update/ Status
<b><u>Priorities</u></b>		
<b>11)- 1/11/2023</b>	After the Workshop the Youth Councillors discussed some of the ideas that had been suggested, it was noted that Mental Health was one of the key themes. It was also suggested that more can be done for the promotion of local sports clubs and mentoring schemes.	
<b>12)- 17/01/2024</b>	<b>Resolved:</b> It was noted that the Youth Council agreed that the Environment should be their main Priority. <b>Resolved:</b> It was noted that the Youth Council agreed that Mental Health and Well-being should be their Second priority with Community being their third.	
<b>9)- 20/03/2024</b>	During the last meeting the Youth Council mentioned a Survey for young people to use for any mental health issues and to report incidents like bullying and to help sign post young people to where they can get help. It was suggested that a poster could be created for young people to have at school and the Town for them to know who to contact for help any issues be that at home or at school.	A draft Survey and poster have been prepared.
<b><u>Charity</u></b>		
<b>7)- 17/01/2024</b>	<b>Resolved:</b> The Youth Council agreed to support <b>Friends for Families</b> over their two-year term.	Charity representative has been invited to the meeting on 15 <sup>th</sup> of May 2024.
<b><u>Summer Festival</u></b>		
<b>10)- 17/01/2024</b>	<b>Resolved:</b> The Youth Council would like to be involved in conversations regarding events held during the festival for young people.	

Current matters Report:

Since the election of the Youth Council November 2023-2025:

Minute Number & Date	Action	Update/ Status
<p><b><u>Climate Change Youth Forum</u></b> <b>11)- 17/01/2024</b></p> <p><b>7)- 20/03/2024</b></p>	<p><b>Resolved:</b> To note the first meeting of the Climate Change Youth Forum will be taking place on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February 2024 at 6pm.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> To note the next meeting of the Climate Change Youth Forum, takes place on the 17<sup>th</sup> of April at 6pm with Guest speaker Trevor Kennet, Head of Direct Services at Sevenoaks District Council on <i>"Recycling in Sevenoaks"</i>.</p>	<p>Trevor Kennet was unable to attend due to a bereavement. He will be invited to a future meeting.</p>
<p><b><u>Youth Council Promotion</u></b> <b>8)- 20/03/2024</b></p>	<p>It was noted The Youth Council would like a page in the Town Crier to promote Youth Council Activities such as their main priorities and any events they may wish to hold over their two-year term.</p> <p>The Youth Council noted that perhaps having a magazine similar to the Town Crier may also be useful to help promote Youth events in and around the Town as well as House in the Basement.</p>	<p>Youth Councillors have offered to promote via school magazines.</p>



<p><b>ABOUT US</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are <b>Simran</b> Vara and <b>Aditya</b> Vara (sister and brother) aged 17 in Year 12 and 15 in Year 11 respectively. We both go to Sevenoaks School, Kent, United Kingdom.</li> <li>We are bright <b>ambitious</b> students who want to create a difference in the world.</li> </ul>
<p><b>THE IDEA</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This idea started when Aditya was present in the Sevenoaks Youth Council meeting as a member, was discussing the different issues affecting the daily lives of many people, he saw that there was one particular issue that was brought up too often: <b>Mental Health</b>.</li> <li>Then we discussed how we could create something that can help impact people's mental <b>health</b> whilst also being a fun thing that people would be excited to do repeatedly.</li> <li>This is where we came up with the Maze Wheel, where one can play the game, which <b>supports</b> your wellbeing and also <b>connects</b> you to nature in a time where people are disconnected from Earth.</li> </ul> 
<p><b>AIMS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support people to play a game which invokes <b>sensory</b> feelings</li> <li>Help the <b>community</b> to be more fun and inclusive</li> <li>It has significant mental and physical health benefits which aligned with the 3rd United Nations goal.</li> <li>This is the first ever maze game to be designed in this way to provide <b>relief</b> to people of <b>society</b>.</li> <li>we want this to reach a wider scale where many schools, councils, care homes and public areas.</li> </ul>  <p>First maze prototype</p>
<p><b>THE MAZE</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The product is called the maze wheel and is a brand new form of mental relief and fun.</li> <li>Maze Wheel involves the task of getting a miniaturised shaped ball through a labyrinth to the center.</li> <li>The height of the product is approximately 135cm, the circle diameter is 76cm, and it is able to be folded, and is made from wood, which is <b>recyclable</b> and <b>renewable</b>. It will have a thin plastic cover on the front.</li> <li>This is unique as no-one has ever done something like this before, so this is your chance.</li> </ul>  <p>First manufactured<sup>9</sup>prototype</p>

<p><b>HISTORY OF MAZES</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mazes were initially created in the 13th century to create spiritual <b>healing</b> and <b>calming</b> of the mind. They were symbols of redemption in life and <b>positivity</b>. The ball in a maze was invented in 1890 to simulate similar feelings as to those in real life. This then evolved to the games on our devices but bringing back the in-person experience of this game can support our health massively.</li> </ul>
<p><b>MENTAL HEALTH BENEFITS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mental health is really important in the world of today and this maze game can support people of all ages with some of these issues. The game is proven to help <b>improve</b> concentration, <b>memory</b> and problem-solving skills as well as promoting <b>patience</b> and <b>persistence</b>. This also <b>stimulates</b> hand-eye coordination on ways that other games do not.</li> <li>These are all skills that people need nowadays and they can acquire them through our intellectual game. This maze also helps reduce stress as you engage in this task of rolling the ball in the middle and can serve as a form of <b>mindfulness</b> also helping to <b>reduce</b> anxiety.</li> <li>Once finished, this game can provide a sense of accomplishment which is much needed in this society where it is difficult to attain <b>success</b>, this can give you happiness and joy. This game is an effective way of <b>supporting</b> people with mental health and wellbeing, life skills and also cognitive simulation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>PHYSICAL HEALTH BENEFITS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This game also includes <b>physical benefits</b> as the game will be placed outside in and among nature. In a day and age with people only playing games on their phone, this allows people to come out more and be within nature, which also supports <b>wellbeing</b>.</li> <li>Touching the wood itself, has been <b>psychologically</b> proven to help with your health and <b>connection</b> to nature.</li> <li>This game helps the society and community by bringing people together in a <b>creative</b> and <b>innovative</b> way which is also <b>engaging</b> to everyone.</li> </ul>
<p><b>CONTACT DETAILS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You can contact us on our email: varasimran@gmail.com adityavara25@gmail.com</li> <li>Also our phone number: +44 736670 1050</li> </ul>

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Climate Change Youth Forum**  
**Held on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2024 in the Council Chamber, Town Council Offices, TN13 3QG.**  
**Meeting Started:** 6.00 p.m. **Meeting Concluded:** 7.00 p.m.

The Climate Change Youth Forum heard from Georgie Elliston (Sevenoaks Town Council's Planning Officer) about the different local cycling routes that have been proposed in and around the town by Sevenoaks Town Council, Sevenoaks District Council and Kent County Council. It was noted that the East to West route that has been proposed by KCC would link five schools in the Sevenoaks Town boundary and one in Riverhead. These schools are Amhurst, Granville, Sevenoaks Primary School, Knole Academy, Trinity, and Weald.

The Forum also heard that the Town Council is working with to establish a Green Link from Bat and Ball Station to Dunton Green Station feasibility of this would allow people to cycle to and from the stations with out having major interactions with traffic the total distance between them via the propose cycle route would be 1.2 miles. Currently the route that would be taken via two very busy main roads (A25 in Sevenoaks and London Road in Dunton Green) this route is 2.1 miles to get from Bat & Ball Station to Dunton Green Station.

It was noted that while adding these cycle lanes may help to make more young people feel safer on the roads, the forum was concerned that some of the schools may not have the infrastructure for storing a large number of bikes. It was also noted that with out a secure location to place their bike it may deter Young people from using the cycle lanes.

The Climate Change Youth Forum noted that for some families getting a bike may be difficult as bikes have become expensive. It was suggested the Abacus Furniture Project on Greatness Lane may offer secondhand bikes at lower prices to help families. It was also suggested that the Town Council could do a rent-a-bike scheme similar to the e-bike scheme in London that was introduced in 2010 but it was noted that with these there have been issues over the years with the bikes (and later the electric scooters that while trialed in the UK) not being returned to the appropriate storage locations.

It was noted that perhaps during the Climate Fair people would donate bikes that they no longer use or want, and these could be serviced and supplied for families to who may not be able to afford a new bike, similar to the coat collections the Town Council have held in the past. Another suggestion was a bike swap scheme where parents can swap bikes from Young people that they might have grown out of.

It was also suggested that the Town Council could rent bikes to schools for students to use as a way of encouraging young people to cycle. It was noted that some places such as Glasgow have Bike Buses (a group of people in high vis cycling around and to schools) that follow certain routes that close/block roads for a short period of time to allow children to get to school.

A further suggestion was that initially a couple of events be arranged per year for the Town to have predominant bike use.



## Sevenoaks Youth Council Young Peoples Mental Health Survey

Hello! The Sevenoaks Youth Council is reaching out to gather valuable insights on the mental health of young people. If you're between the ages of 11 and 18, your input is incredibly important to us. Please take a moment to complete this brief survey.

1. Age

- ☐ 11-12
- ☐ 13-14
- ☐ 15-16
- ☐ 17-18

2. On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate your mental well-being currently? ( 1 being very poor and 5 being excellent)

1 ☐ 5 ☐

3. What are some things that negatively impact your mental health?

4. How comfortable are you talking about your Mental Health?

- ☐ Not Comfortable
- ☐ Somewhat Comfortable
- ☐ Very Comfortable

5. On a scale of 1 to 5 how stressed are you generally? ( 1 being not stressed at all and 5 being extremely stressed)

1  5 

6. Do you feel you have a good school-life balance?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Do not know

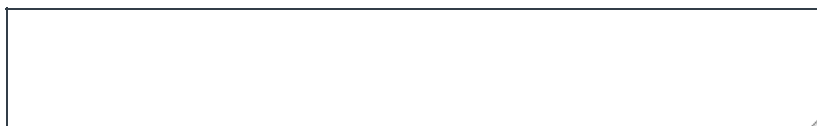
7. Do you practice any of the following to cope with stress/ promote well-being?

- ☐ Hobbies/ Creative outlets
- ☐ Meditation/ Mindfulness
- ☐ Walks in local parks
- ☐ Exercise/ Clubs
- ☐ Other

8. Do you know where to go for help?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

9. What could your school do to support students mental well-being?



10. What Could be done in your community to raise awareness about mental health?



See our Privacy Policy for information on how your data may be treated-  
[https://www.sevenoakstown.gov.uk/General\\_Data\\_Protection\\_Regulation\\_GDPR\\_21380.aspx](https://www.sevenoakstown.gov.uk/General_Data_Protection_Regulation_GDPR_21380.aspx)

# ***YOUR MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS***



**Need Someone to  
talk to?**

**Your Mind  
Matters!**

**Support is available for you using the  
contacts below:**



These posters have been organised by

**Sevenoaks Youth Council**

[www.sevenoaksyouthcouncil.weebly.com/](http://www.sevenoaksyouthcouncil.weebly.com/)

Instagram: sevenoaksyouthcouncil

**Scan the QR Code  
for more information**



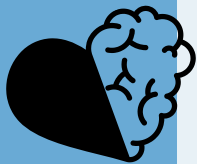
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