

Tuesday, 11th February 2025

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the **Arts & Culture Working Group** to be held in the **Town Council Chamber** on **Monday 17 February 2025 which commences at 14:00 pm**. Town Councillors are reminded that they have a duty to state a Declaration of Interest prior to the appropriate agenda item and to consider the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 s.17 when reaching a decision.

Town Clerk

To assist in the speedy and efficient despatch of business, members wishing to obtain factual information on items included on the agenda are asked to enquire of the Town Clerk prior to the day of the meeting.

Working Group Members:

Quorum minimum of 3 elected members:

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| Cllr Victoria Granville (Chair) | Cllr Lise Michaelides (Vice-Chair) |
| Cllr Libby Ancrum (Mayor) | Cllr Dr Marilyn Canet |
| Cllr Sally Layne | Cllr Claire Shea |

AGENDA

| | |
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| 1 | APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE To receive and note apologies for absence. |
| 2 | REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS To consider written requests from Members which have previously been submitted to the Town Clerk to enable participation in discussion and voting on items for which the Member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest. (s.31 & s.33 of the Localism Act 2011). |
| 3 | DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST To receive any declarations of interest from members in respect of any items of business included in this report. |
| 4 | MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 11 OF DECEMBER 2024 To receive and adopt the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 11th of December as a true record. |
| 5 | SEVENOAKS CULTURAL QUARTER STRATEGY To receive and note the updated Sevenoaks Cultural Quarter Strategy document. |
| 6 | BRITAIN IN BLOOM To note Sevenoaks Town Council is a finalist in Britain in Bloom and has sent requests for people to knit bees or paint rocks in the theme of Lady Birds. Sevenoaks Town Council has also sent requests to schools asking if their Art departments can create a sculpture that would be displayed by the entrance to the town's open spaces. |

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| 7 | PRESS RELEASE & REPORTS: To consider any agenda item, which would be considered appropriate for a press release. |
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Sevenoaks Town Council
Minutes of the Meeting of the Arts & Culture Working Group
Held on 11th December 2024 at the Town Council Offices

Meeting Commenced: 2:02 p.m.

Meeting Concluded: 3:12 p.m.

Present:

| | | | |
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| Cllr Victoria Granville (Chair) | Present | Cllr Lise Michaelides (Vice-Chair) | Present |
| Cllr Libby Ancrum (Mayor, Ex-Officio) | Apologies | Cllr Dr Marilyn Canet | Present |
| Cllr Sally Layne | Present | Cllr Claire Shea | Present |

In attendance: Cllr Nigel Wightman Leader of Sevenoaks Town Council, Cllr Alan Pett (Sevenoaks District Council & Chair of the Sevenoaks District Arts Council (SDAC)), Rodger Lee (SDAC), Linda Larter Town Clerk, Ieuan Chandler-Wilson Youth Committee Clerk,

246. Cllr Granville welcomed Cllr Pett and Rodger Lee and thanked them for attending and their interest.

247. Apologies for Absence: Received and accepted as noted above.

248. Requests for Dispensations: There were no requests for dispensations.

249. Declarations of Interest: There were no declarations of interest.

250. Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 9th October 2024
It was agreed to receive and accept the minutes of the meeting as a true record.

251. STNP Sevenoaks Cultural Quarter Strategy
It was noted that the Sevenoaks District Arts Council was planning to form a group to look at the impact of visual arts in the Sevenoaks District, and focusing on the proposed SDC development of Land East of the High Street. The following matters were commented on in particular:

1.4- Animating the Public Realm

Cllr Alan Pett mentioned that there had been a range of visual arts exhibitions over the summer, such as the Heart of Kent Hospice project in Maidstone with the “Shaun the Sheep” trail around the town and welcome similar projects in Sevenoaks District.

It was noted that the Town Council had placed an item for consideration on planning applications that fall within the Cultural Quarter. “How will the planning proposal enhance the Sevenoaks Cultural Quarter, as defined in the Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan?”

It was agreed that SDAC would review the STC Cultural Strategy Action Plan and Consider Projects for partnership working in the future.

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2.1- Creative Workspace

Cllr Layne noted that there were a number of vacant shops within the Cultural Quarter. It was mentioned that these could be used for displaying artwork by local artists, either by using the shop interior as a display floor or using the exterior/ windows and having rotating exhibitions. It was noted that the landlords of the building would need to be consulted especially with the use of interior spacing due to handover periods.

SDAC noted that the Library, Museum and Gallery being set away from the High Street created a feeling of separation between Art and the High Street. It was noted that within the Master Plan and the STNP, there was consideration to move this closer to the High Street.

It was agreed to add to the STC Cultural Strategy Action Plan 1.4 to encourage partnership between landlords and artists for STC aspiration of unused buildings.

1.3- Connecting Routes

It was noted that wayfinding remains an issue within the town with, for example, many Sennockians not knowing where the art gallery is located. It was mentioned that in past projects had used recognized symbols for venues to help navigate to certain locations within the town.

Sevenoaks Town Council had applied to the District Council for CIL funding for a Wayfinding scheme but had been unsuccessful. However, if the Business Improvement District (BID) proposal was successful, it was thought it may be able to help improve wayfinding.

252. VE Day 8th May 2025

The Working Group received a brochure detailing the national guidance proceedings for VE Day which would be held on the 8th of May 2025. It was noted that a beacon lighting would take place at 21:30hrs and in the guidance it was suggested that fish and chips be made available during the event.

Members suggested items they would like to see to commemorate the event:

- Photo exhibition of Sevenoaks during VE Day in 1945 at the Bat & Ball Station
- Consider placing the green arch at the Vine as has been done in previous years
- Having a dress parade for young people to take part in

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- Arranging talks by Mathew Ball on the History of Sevenoaks during the War

It was noted that many residents' associations and other groups within the town may hold their own events on the day. The Chair noted that the Eynsford Concert Band had expressed an interest in performing at the Bandstand during the event.

253. Sevenoaks in Bloom 2025

It was suggested that during the Sevenoaks in Bloom, artistic flare could be added by asking local artists and/or schools to create displays that match the chosen theme. Potentially Celebrating Bugs! (tbc). These would be displayed in the flower beds around the town.

254. Art In June Project

Cllr Layne reported that it was hoped to hold the Art in June Project again in the new year but noted that to do this they would need a large space for a series of days for artists to display their work (in the past this was done within private residences).

255. Press Release: None

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 3.10 pm.

Signed
Chair

Dated

Sevenoaks

Agenda Item 5

These murals and panels represent
some of the trades present here
during the medieval period.
Juliet Simpson, Tom Cousins, 1999
Sponsored by Sevenoaks District Council

A Thriving Cultural Town

Updated: 23/12/2024

Sevenoaks – Review of Vision for a Thriving Cultural Town (STNP)

Background to the Vision for a Thriving Cultural Town (see STNP document for full details)

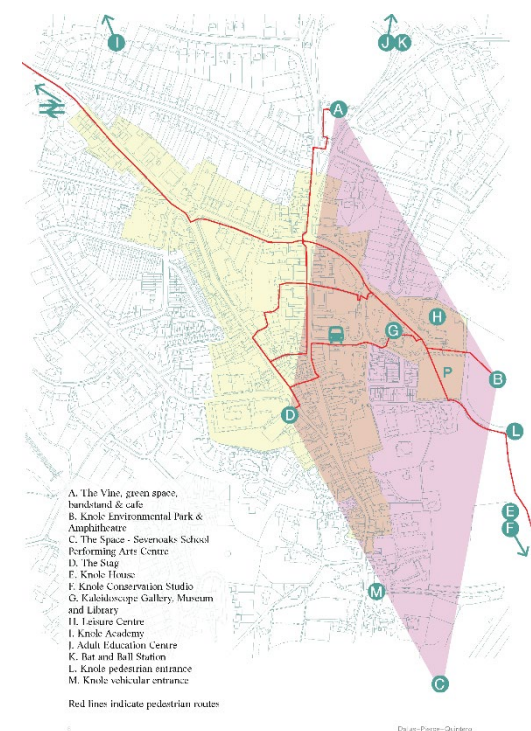
The Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan (STNP) covers many important topics. During the creation of the STNP it was believed that a cultural strategy was needed within the STNP to create a Vision for a thriving cultural town for the future. The STNP and its appendices including the Cultural Vision was successful at a public referendum in May 2023 and is now a statutory planning document providing recommendations and guidelines for the development of Sevenoaks.

Arts, culture and creativity can help a town to feel welcoming, enhance the public realm and support the growth of a creative community. In Sevenoaks Town we are prioritising the following focus areas:

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|------------------------|
| Distinctiveness |
| Animation |
| Growth |
| Community |

The Cultural Quarter Vision focuses on a diamond shape geographical area and incorporates the current cultural facilities – The Vine event space and bandstand, Environmental Park and Amphitheatre, The Space at Sevenoaks School Performing Arts Centre, The Stag, Knole House, Knole Conservation Studio, Kaleidoscope Gallery – Museum, Library and Art Space, Leisure Centre, Knole Academy School, Adult Education Centre, Bat & Ball Station (restored heritage building and event space).

The Cultural Quarter Vision was created in consultation with various cultural groups within the town.



Sevenoaks – Review of Vision for a Thriving Cultural Town (STNP)

Policy Principles

The ambition to strengthen culture focused around a cultural quarter hub in Sevenoaks Town is consistent with local policy within the (SDC) Sevenoaks Local Plan, (STC) STNP and (KCC) The Kent Cultural Strategy Inspirational Creativity Transforming Lives Everyday 2017 - 2027.

STNP Themes

There is exciting potential for culture to support delivery of all seven themes in the STNP, with a particular focus on promoting the following objectives within a Cultural Quarter:

- Welcoming Gateways
- Sustainability & Green Environment
- Creative Enterprise
- Character, Heritage & Identity
- Improved Public Realm
- Health & Wellbeing
- Creative Skills
- Enhanced Community Assets

Review

This review follows the themes and headings provided within the Vision for a Thriving Cultural Town for a Cultural Quarter within the STNP.

Sevenoaks – Review of Vision for a Thriving Cultural Town (STNP)

| Development Aspiration | | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------|---|---|--|
| | Location | Aspirations | Updates | Working Group Comments |
| 1.1 | South Park Area | <p>Development of Post Office site to sit alongside the Stag to include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative workspace with public facing exhibition space • Creative retail on ground floor facing onto the street • Modest outdoor space • Expand on rear and side of Stag to create walkway (potential art gallery) | <p>The Post Office site has not come forward for development to date, although owners are aware of STC's aspirations.</p> | <p>Noted site had been submitted for consideration as part of SDC's Local Plan process.</p> <p>Noted that Stag had been registered as an Asset of Community Value.</p> <p>Suggested improvements to footpath from London Road to Stag Car Park:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mural on wall • additional lighting • use noticeboard at entrance from car park, to mark entry point to town & Sevenoaks Cultural Quarter <p><u>Action</u> Investigate ownership of footpath and buildings backing onto it (Post Office & Telecommunications site).</p> <p>It was felt that the area in front of the Post Office was looking tired. Whilst it had a modern</p> |

Sevenoaks – Review of Vision for a Thriving Cultural Town (STNP)

| Development Aspiration | | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|---|--|---|
| | | | | <p>planter and a new bench – they were visually different styles. It was felt the area needed to be looked at as whole.</p> <p><u>Action</u> Investigate with SDC whether open space in front of Post Office could include designated space for buskers.</p> <p>This area is within STC's premises licence and has been used for entertainers in the past.</p> <p>Sevenoaks District Council have confirmed they do not have a Busking Policy. STC has prepared a draft policy, circulated separately, however this might be helpful to progress if and when a BID is put in place.</p> |
| 1.2 | Bus Station | Location scope for regeneration – incorporating culture. Open up access routes to improve permeability and | This development is within SDC's proposals for 'Land East of High Street'. | Noted SDC had approved £435k to progress the project. |

Sevenoaks – Review of Vision for a Thriving Cultural Town (STNP)

| Development Aspiration | | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| | | improve access around the town centre. | | |
| 1.3 | Connecting Routes | <p>Improved signposting to help people navigate the town and locate cultural facilities and a welcoming environment.</p> <p>Key routes to be identified and promoted.</p> | <p>‘Tesco’ walkway to be enhanced in size in new development and enable cross highway art installations (see attachment).</p> <p>Wayfinding project has identified walking routes to be promoted, awaiting funding opportunity.</p> | <p>Noted that developers, had submitted public realm details to SDC for approval.</p> <p>See separate STC report.</p> |
| 1.4. | Animating the Public Realm | <p>Improve public spaces to help animate the town centre, could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street Arts • Outdoor Arts • Dance & music • Public Art • Share creativity | <p>STC has a Premises Licence for Town Centre (except Blighs) which enables public entertainment to take place – the Summer Festival Fair Day is a good example of this. It would be good subject to funding and resources to extend the opportunities for this.</p> <p>Many towns have introduced Public Art, sometimes using outside enablers. Subject to permissions and finances initial walls for public art in keeping with Sevenoaks could be 1) side wall of Stag, 2) side wall of Up & Running, Pembroke Road, 3) new</p> | <p>Noted that Section 106 attached to Purelake planning permission included a Public Art Contribution of £10,000 for the provision of public art within the development to be installed prior to first occupation.</p> |

Sevenoaks – Review of Vision for a Thriving Cultural Town (STNP)

| Development Aspiration | | | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|---|--|---|
| | | | <p>buildings to be developed by SDC 'Land East of High Street'.</p> <p>Town Trails assist visitors and vibrancy of the town.</p> <p>In addition to Wayfinding Signs, use of different colours, public realm e.g. coloured bollards, flags can be introduced to indicate key walking routes between cultural facilities.</p> <p>Sharing creativity – it is hoped that the new STC Arts & Culture Working Group will assist with this. It would also be helpful if other authorities and organisations considering cultural elements in the town could liaise with STC and or Town Team.</p> | <p><u>Action</u> Officers to investigate whether this was something SDC would be progressing.</p> <p><u>Action</u> Requested numbers of people that had engaged with town trails.</p> <p><u>11th of December 2024 Minute-251:</u> To encourage partnership between landlords and artists for STC aspiration of unused buildings.</p> |
| 1.5 | Young People & Skills | Seek ways to identifying involving young people and their skills. | | <p>Suggested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth Council and House in the Basement be consulted |

Sevenoaks – Review of Vision for a Thriving Cultural Town (STNP)

| Development Aspiration | | | | |
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| | | | | <p>on ideas and creative projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with youth workers to get young people more engaged with projects <p>Recent workshops include Photography, Street Dance, Skate Sessions, Open Mic nights with professional support taking place on the 30th of October 2024.</p> |
| 1.6. | Street Greening | <p>Integrate planting schemes</p> <p>Support pocket parks</p> | Some relevant proposals will be included in the STC Town Centre Masterplan. | <p><u>Action</u></p> <p>Suggested discussions take place with shop owners in The Shambles area regarding ways to improve appearance of refuse storage within the area. Noted that seating, similar to Bligh's and outside the Stag, together with more planting, would help make the space more inviting.</p> <p>To note the Shambles is SDC responsibility.</p> |

Sevenoaks – Review of Vision for a Thriving Cultural Town (STNP)

| Inspiration | | | | |
|-------------|---------------------------|--|---|--|
| 2.1 | Creative Workspace | <p>Affordable artist and maker studios in the heart of the town centre</p> <p>Studios open to the public couple of times per year.</p> <p>Flexible event space</p> | <p>See. 1.1.</p> <p>Continue to promote High Street Studios facilities.</p> | <p>Noted that art studios currently available above Hospice in the Weald shop in town centre.</p> |
| 2.2 | Festivals | <p>Combine local arts and professional culture providers</p> <p>Spaces in town centre to enable performances.</p> | <p>Encourage collaboration.</p> <p>STC has Premises Licence for all of town centre except Blighs.</p> | <p>It was noted that a range of festivals and events are held each year, supported by the Town Council, including this year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sevenoaks Summer Festival • Sevenoaks Literary Festival • Sevenoaks Street Food Festival • Sevenoaks Bike Festival • Vegan Markets <p>Noted also that National Trust - Knole hosts events such as an open-air cinema event.</p> <p>Proposed BID could achieve more.</p> |

Sevenoaks – Review of Vision for a Thriving Cultural Town (STNP)

| Inspiration | | | | |
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| | | | | |
| 2.3 | Architecture & Heritage | <p>Telling local stories about places to help solidify unique locations for example via</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital trails • Text on public realm e.g. plaques • Public art • Live walking tours • Performances | All in place however with more funding and resources could be expanded. | Noted that Town Crier's historical tour is being developed, and that a self-guided tour and a Millennium Trail are available. |
| 2.4. | Creative Promotion | <p>Creative approaches to promoting local cultural and creative activity via</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bespoke signage • Maps • Websites <p>Joint marketing increases footfall.</p> | <p>Events programme for activities on the Vine produced for summer 2024.</p> <p>Wayfinding proposals in place subject to funding and planning permission.</p> | See 2.5 below. |
| 2.5 | Culture Online | Local website and app linked to cultural events and local businesses. | To be pursued when BID created | It was agreed that an online Town Calendar drawing together information on all events provided within the town would be invaluable. QR code linking to calendar could be placed around town. It was felt that this was something |

Sevenoaks – Review of Vision for a Thriving Cultural Town (STNP)

| Inspiration | | | | |
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| | | | | <p>that could be undertaken by the BID.</p> <p>Note that SDC has recently produced a website for this initiative.</p> |
| 2.6 | Co-Producing Co Commissioning | Sharing resources and projects | | <p>Councillors would like to invite Kaleidoscope Gallery/Sevenoaks Visual Arts Forum, Sevenoaks District Arts Council, Sevenoaks Bookshop, Sevenoaks Summer Festival and Sevenoaks Literary Festival to future meetings to talk about their projects/plans.</p> |

| Recommended Actions | | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|--|--|--|
| 3.1 | Planning | Engage with planners and developers to secure long term sustainable opportunities to enhance the cultural offer. | Former Tesco site is a small example of collaboration includes wide open green link to Suffolk Way cultural facilities and opportunity for overhead art. | <p>Noted that stakeholder consultation events being held for Town Centre & St John's Masterplans in November 2024. It was hoped that representatives from arts and cultural organisations could participate.</p> |

Sevenoaks – Review of Vision for a Thriving Cultural Town (STNP)

| Recommended Actions | | | | |
|---------------------|---|---|--|--|
| 3.2 | Community & Stakeholder Engagement | Facilitate community and stakeholder engagement including with young people Creation of a Cultural Forum engaging key stakeholders for progressing cultural plans. | New STC Arts & Culture Working Group will assist with this. | Once Working Group had clearly defined its goals and set an agenda, it would be beneficial to draw together a forum of local arts and cultural organisations and groups. |
| 3.3 | Public Art | Commission public art and procure and programme cultural activity Development of Public Art Commissioning Guide | Subject to funding and resources Subject to funding and resources | Councillors noted this could perhaps be pursued through the BID. |
| 3.4 | Marketing and promotion | Oversee marketing and promotion Development of process for joint marketing of the town's cultural offer. Coordinate communications to maximise engagement | To be pursued when BID created | To consider producing a “What’s Happening in Sevenoaks” leaflet, available for people to pick up in town centre areas. See also 2.5 above. |

Sevenoaks – Review of Vision for a Thriving Cultural Town (STNP)

STC – Background to involvement in Arts & Culture in Sevenoaks

STC does not normally initiate its own and arts and culture projects unless it is connected to its current project and initiatives.

STC aims to act as an enabler where resources are available to enable those experienced in the arts and culture to provide these community activities.

This can be via

- Events
- Grant Funding
- Bands on the Vine – Thursday evenings & Sunday afternoons during summer
- Promotion of cultural events via road banners, leaflets, Town Crier
- Stag – continued investment
- Literary Festival – sponsor, free double page coverage in Town Crier
- Summer Festival – sponsor, free double page coverage in Town Crier
- Public Art – murals, Infinity project
- Exhibitions – various, sponsored and enabled.
- Children’s art competitions
- Providing venues and licensing e.g. Premises Licence for Vine and Bandstand, Premises Licence for Town Centre for Summer Festival.
- Cultural Strategy – planning for the future.
- Input in planning e.g. walkway in new (Tesco) development to enable provision for similar to attached.

Sevenoaks – Review of Vision for a Thriving Cultural Town (STNP)

Cross highway art installations and illuminated trees seating examples

