

# Bexhill News

APRIL 2023 | ISSUE 10

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## EDITOR'S WELCOME



**WELCOME to another news-packed edition of *Bexhill News* as our brand continues to expand by covering local events which really matter to the community.**

That is what we are all about; making sure your voices are heard loud and clear.

This month we are focusing primarily on our seafront and the consequences of pollution, although it is fair to say opinions are sharply divided on the subject.

What is patently clear, however, is that we all have to take responsibility for the state of our town and beach. Litter and inappropriate items being disposed of via toilets merely makes the problem considerably worse.

In addition, a walk through the centre of Bexhill proves conclusively that many are not getting the message regarding disposing of litter responsibly.

If you are eating a sandwich, sausage roll or drinking a can of pop then, once finished, put it in the bin. There are more than enough of them around the town centre.

Also this month we have marked the passing of Tommy Lake, who died recently.

Tommy was a well-known figure in Bexhill where he was invariably seen on a daily basis, often sitting on his favourite bench.

The fact that he had issues with his mental health and sometimes alarmed people with his behaviour should not be ignored but as members of his family have pointed out, at heart he was a kind soul.

The tributes left on his favourite bench spoke volumes, so may he finally rest in peace.

Kim Mayo, Editor

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# HOLDING CENTRE FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS WILL BE SITED IN BEXHILL

BY KIM MAYO AND MIKE LEGG

**It has been confirmed that a site in Bexhill is among those chosen to house asylum seekers who have crossed the English Channel in small boats.**

Bexhill Conservative MP, Huw Merriman, has responded to the announcement by the Immigration Minister, Robert Jenrick, that the site has been chosen to house asylum seekers.

It will be located on the site of a former training centre and prison, known as Northeye, in Bexhill, and is expected to house more than a thousand

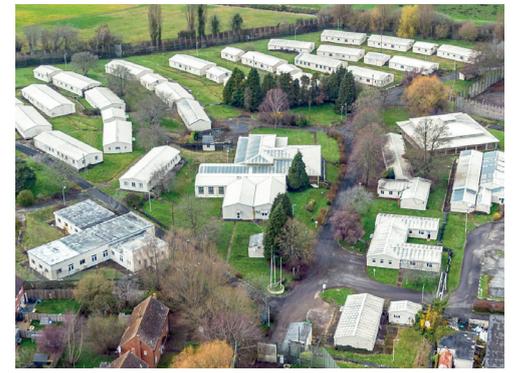
asylum seekers.

This is part of the Government's policy to house asylum seekers in suitable, safe accommodation where they can access appropriate support whilst their asylum cases are considered.

The use of hotels, hostels and other temporary accommodation is not suitable, sustainable, or cost-effective for British taxpayers or local authorities, according to Mr Merriman.

He said: "I know that this decision will have an impact on local authorities and public services. It will also be of great concern to local residents.

"It is important that the community is fully



appraised of the proposals and reassured as to the impact. I will be meeting with the Immigration Minister, and officials, at the Home Office to take forward local concerns along with any proposals and ideas which local stakeholders and I consider would be necessary or helpful.

"I am keen to identify the challenges and issues this will create for the town and its residents. I will work with the Home Office, and other organisations, to deliver the resources and safeguards which will be needed to reassure residents.

I will share further information about the proposals for Northeye as soon as it is made available to me."

## MUCH-LOVED MANOR BARN VENUE WILL OPERATE AGAIN

**It has been confirmed Manor Barn is back in business following a statement issued recently (March 24). The directors of Old Town Occasions Limited wrote: "It is with great pleasure we can announce that the venue known as Manor Barn will commence operating again for the enjoyment Bexhill residents and beyond.**

"The venue, historically, was always available for hire for a modest fee. There will be a return to this ethos.

"As an example, if you wish to have a wedding celebration there, the hall is at your disposal plus the kitchen.

"This means you will be able to hire your own caterers and we should simply run the bar for you.

"We are sensitive to the current cost of living crisis and believe this return to basics will help those people who wish to celebrate in style at a beautiful location but at a budget they can control.

"The Manor Barn staff will be on hand to assist in any way you wish.

"Sincere apologies are due to everyone affected by the recent liquidation but unfortunately we, the new directors, are unable to soften what must have been disastrous news.

"When Manor Barn is ready to show herself off again there will be a celebratory opening to which we shall invite those whose parties were disrupted as a small gesture of goodwill.

"Currently we expect to be up and running by the end of April and we have recruited a new



manager, although not in post yet.

"So, in the meantime, we do hope you are relieved to hear this wonderful asset is not going to waste and will become, once again, a venue for our community. We thank you for your patience."

*Bexhill News* previously reported that Manor Barn had gone into liquidation in February.



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](mailto:steve54.hall@gmail.com).

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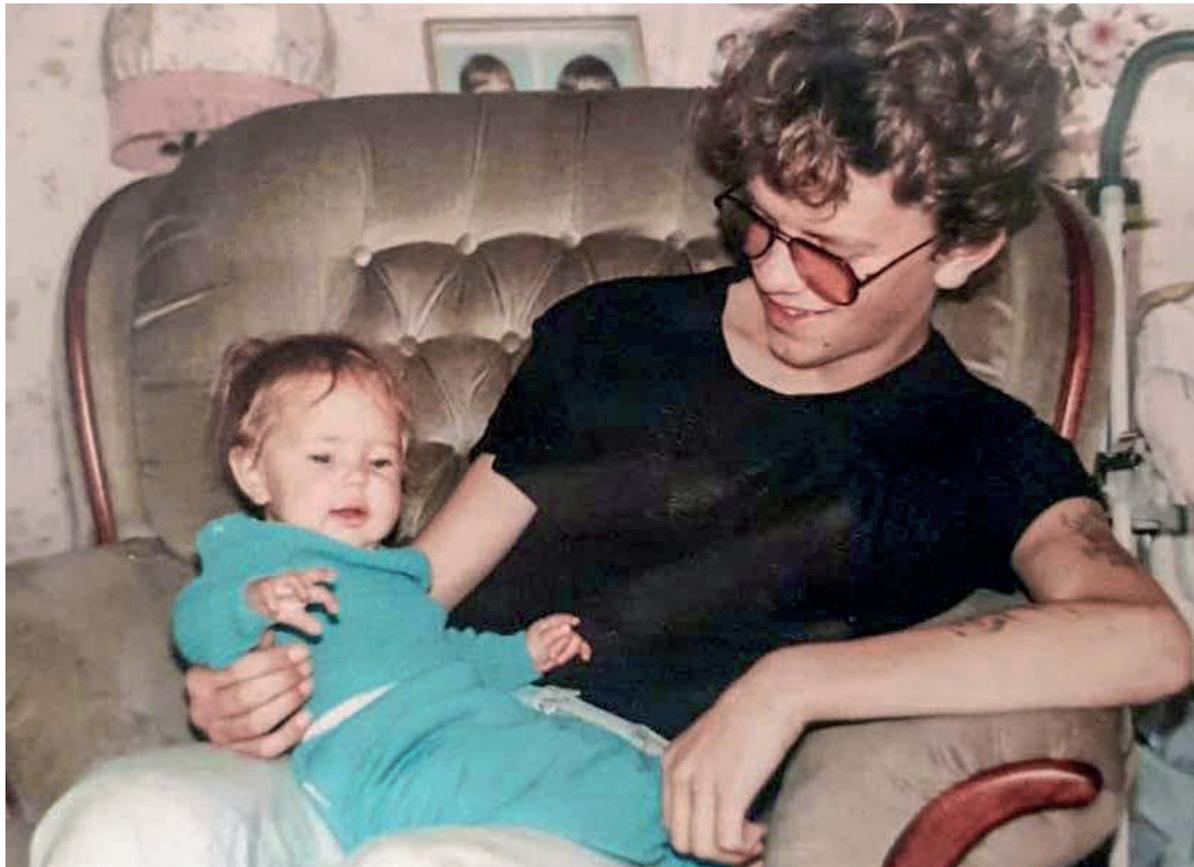
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# HUNDREDS PAY TRIBUTE TO MUCH-LOVED BEXHILL MAN WHO'S DIED AGED 53



**HUNDREDS of touching tributes have been posted online following the sad news that well-known Bexhill resident Tommy Lake has died at the age of 53.**

Tommy was a well-known character around the town and many have expressed their regret and sadness at his passing.

Several floral tributes and cards were left on one of his favourite benches in Bexhill with candles also being lit in his memory.

His daughter Charis spoke movingly to *Bexhill News* about memories of her father.

Charis, who also has brothers Paris and Nikki, said: "My dad was certainly quite a character. When I was young he looked just like a rock star with his leather trousers and his own sense of style. He believed in making a statement by being distinctive, which I thought was great.

"He had his moments, we all know that, but he always tried to be kind and polite to people. At heart, he was a very sweet man.

"I did have a sporadic relationship with him for several years but he was my dad and I loved him.

"We got back in touch about 15 years ago and he was just always so funny."

Charis, who works as a teacher in Ticehurst, added: "In his younger days he was apparently viewed as a bit of a catch because he was extremely good-looking and a bit of a charmer.

"One of his biggest assets is he would always remember people and ask them how things were going. He had a very inquiring mind and liked to discover the good in others.

"No one denies that my dad had some issues in life but I don't want to reflect on that.

"All three of his children were at Conquest

Hospital to see him and of course it was very traumatic and emotionally distressing to see him in those circumstances.

"But now he is finally at peace and we all thankfully had the opportunity to say goodbye. He will be sadly missed by so many and that is why the tributes have been such a comfort."

In recent times, Tommy had lived at Arden House in Cantelupe Road, having spent many years in Bexhill following a spell in Bournemouth.

He first met his ex-wife Dawn in Hastings and she was happy to share her memories of their lives together.

"Oh, he was a right charmer when we first met", Dawn, who lives in St Leonards, recalled.

"He was very good-looking but it wasn't just that. He was very popular and really knew how to connect with people.

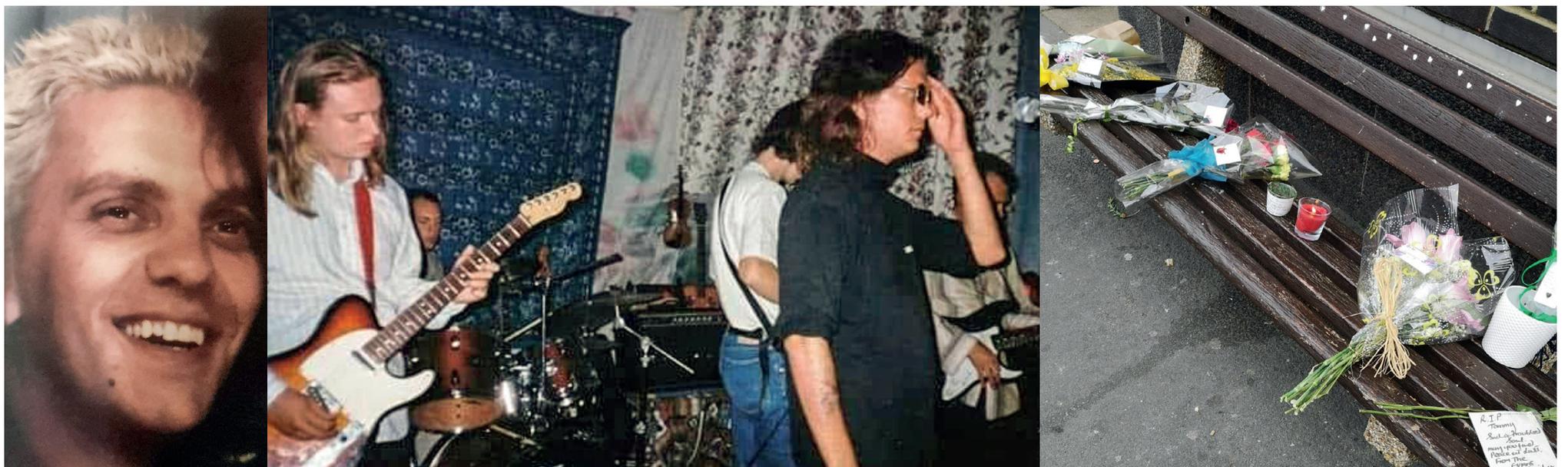
"Of course I have many memories of him and have pictures of our time together in my head.

"His death certainly hit me hard but I have our two boys who are a living testament to him.

"We met in Hastings and lived in Cornwall for a while where our sons were born. We used to go on plenty of country walks together and talk about a whole host of topics.

"He found, for a while, peace in Cornwall and tried to address his mental health issues amongst tranquil days with me. He was able to concentrate on his writing and for a while was happy."

Tommy's funeral will be held at Hastings Crematorium on April 3 with a memorial walk planned along Sea Road in Bexhill, although details are still being finalised by his family. A wake in his memory is also being planned.



# RESCUED SEAL MAKING GOOD RECOVERY AFTER BEING FOUND ON THE BEACH IN POOR CONDITION

BY HSIN-YI LO

**A** POORLY and vulnerable seal rescued from Bexhill seafront is now well on the way to a full recovery after being tended to by experts.

The seal, which has been named Meg, was underweight and dehydrated when she was discovered.

East Sussex Wildlife Rescue and Ambulance Service was called to the scene to rescue the common seal.

In a statement posted on the group's Facebook page, they said: "East Sussex WRAS was called out by the British Divers Marine Life Rescue a 38.5 kg common seal on the eastern end of Bexhill beach in mid-March.

"Local medics were concerned about the seal so operation director for Marine Life Rescue Jo Cable attended and quickly realised she would need extra experienced help to catch the seal.

"WRAS's operations director and medic Trevor Weeks attended and working as a team, the seal was secured.



Volunteers from WRAS rescue the seal from the beach

"Once in a crate the seal was carried on a stretcher an ambulance where it was transported over to and admitted to RSPCA Mallydams Wood so it could be cared for."

Since being admitted, Meg is making a steady recovery and seems to have settled in her new, if unfamiliar surroundings.

Jo Mihr, a vet at Mallydams Wood Wildlife Centre, said: "Meg is a common seal and was admitted into the centre on March 16.

"She was rescued as there were serious concerns for her health.

"After veterinary examinations she was found to be underweight, lethargic and also had a

temperature which needed to be brought back under control.

"She was given antibiotics and anti-inflammatories and her temperature was brought down.

"She already seems brighter and is eating some food.

"We will continue to monitor her while we provide treatment and investigate the reason for her weight loss, but hopefully she will continue to make progress so she can be released back into the wild."

An RSPCA spokesperson said: "The RSPCA recommends that if you see a seal that appears healthy, they should be left alone.

"Seals are strong, powerful wild animals and have a very nasty bite which can cause horrible wounds, which could become infected by the bacteria that live in a seal's mouth.

"We would also ask the public to not get close to seals in order to take pictures or selfies with them.

"Please keep other animals, such as dogs, away from the seal; be vigilant when walking dogs



Seal at rescue Centre

near them and keep them on leads.

"If you see a seal on land, please do not try to encourage them back into the water as seal pups may haul out to rest, or if they're unwell.

Feeding them should also be avoided as this may do more harm than good. If you are concerned about them, observe from a distance for at least 24 hours.

"If the seal is at risk, cannot get back to the sea, is sick or injured, or if it's a pup and the mother has not returned for 24 hours, please contact the RSPCA on 0300 1234 999."

"There's more advice about what to do if you see a seal pup in need of help on the RSPCA's website at [www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/wildlife/orphanedanimals/sealpups](http://www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/wildlife/orphanedanimals/sealpups)."



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# THREE MAJOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS ARE SET TO GO AHEAD



**THREE large homes developments have been given the green light for Bexhill after a recent planning committee meeting.**

Rother District Council's planning committee approved the three applications after plenty of debate the seven-hour meeting.

The applications were submitted by Gladman Developments Limited and could lead to nearly 500 homes being constructed on the northern edge of the seaside town.

The largest of the three proposed developments would be situated at the Kiteye Farm site in Ninfield Road, where up to 250 homes are planned.

In addition, there are likely to be 130 homes at

Mayo Lane plus 80 more in Watermill Lane.

However, the developments have by no means been met with universal approval by local residents, with concerns raised over loss of green space and whether the existing infrastructure will be able to cope.

At present approval was granted on the proviso that further applications will be required or exact details of the plans will be required before actual construction on the homes can commence.

With demand for more homes in Bexhill reaching unprecedented levels, it is patently clear that new homes are required in the town which no doubt led to the decision to give the schemes the go-ahead.

# TRAVELODGE PLANS TO BUILD BUDGET HOTEL

BY HSIN-YI LO

**A LEADING budget chain has confirmed plans to open several new hotels across East Sussex, including in Bexhill, as its rapid expansion plans continue.**

Travelodge, one of the UK's largest hotel brands, which operates nearly 600 hotels, is writing to 220 Local Authorities across Britain, including five local councils in East Sussex, to propose a joint development partnership that can act as a catalyst to stimulate regeneration and facilitate further growth.

Travelodge already operates five hotels across East Sussex and plans to double its hotel portfolio in the county with a further six hotels.

The locations and the councils which have been approached are Bexhill (Rother District Council); Brighton (Brighton and Hove City Council); Hove (Brighton and Hove City Council); Eastbourne (Eastbourne Borough Council); Lewes (Lewes District Council); Hastings (Hastings Borough Council).

A letter sent to the five Local Authorities across East Sussex outlines the pivotal role that Travelodge has been playing for the last ten years in supporting Local Authorities in England, Wales and Scotland by being a key player in their local regeneration & growth programmes; creating jobs within the local community and helping parents return to work while attracting new visitors to the area and boosting the local economy.

At the same time the company would provide a solid long-term income stream for the Local Authority concerned.

Travelodge is planning to expand its UK hotel network with a further 300 target locations for new hotels across the UK, and is offering Local Authorities the opportunity to have one or multiple hotels within their region to support their regeneration programmes.

For more than 120 towns, it will provide an opportunity to have its first branded hotel — which could revolutionise its local economy.

The expansion programme could represent an investment of around £3 billion for third party investors and create more than 9,000 new jobs across the UK.

Steve Bennett, Travelodge chief property and development officer said: "In the current climate, Local Authorities are under extreme pressure to invest in their economy and support regeneration projects.

"This is why we have written to five Local Authorities across East Sussex to offer our support as we have a requirement to double

our East Sussex portfolio with a further six Travelodge hotels across the region.

"Our target locations include Bexhill, Brighton and Eastbourne. This expansion programme could represent a multi-million investment for third party investors and create 150 new jobs.

"In addition, our research shows that, on average, Travelodge customers will spend at least double their room rate with local businesses during their stay; this can be an annual, multi-million pound boost into each local economy."

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Non-members, Campaign For Real Ale (CAMRA) members and guests of members are able to enter the club by signing in at the bar and paying £2.



Galley Hill Water Treatment Plant

# OPINIONS SHARPLY DIVIDED AS ACTION GROUP SLAMS BEACH

BY KIM MAYO AND HSIN-YI LO

**A LEADING East Sussex County councillor has strongly refuted claims that Bexhill seafront could become a “no go” area for residents and tourists over the spring and summer months due to fears over sewage.**

Ian Hollidge, Conservative representative for Bexhill South, said the fears expressed were “unfounded” and amounted to “fake news”.

He said: “Of course companies such as Southern Water still have plenty of work to do to improve the infrastructure, for example, but residents and visitors have to take a significant share of the blame for the state of our beaches.

“The sea on our coastline is not nearly as polluted as some make out. Politicians at town, local, county and national government levels have all been significantly involved in discussions with water companies and real progress has already been made.

“Let’s not just blame companies such as Southern Water. We must all take our share of the blame too. People should be extremely mindful of the waste they are putting into our rivers and seas via sinks and lavatories. It has got to go somewhere, has it not?”

“Littering is a disgrace and anyone tossing away litter out of a car window, dropping on a street or not clearing up their dog mess needs to be stopped as that is causing pollution in our seas and rivers

“It’s not for me to decide on punishment, I can only highlight the effects of antisocial behaviour.

“Southern Water is aware it has to do better and has been open to discussions with politicians as to the best way forward to protect a beautiful town like Bexhill and our coastline, but just pointing the finger achieves precisely nothing.”

Several seaside resorts along the Sussex coastline were condemned by a leading action group over the amount of sewage it believes is being dumped in the sea.

Surfers Against Sewage released its own shock figures and is demanding action to curb the practice, which can have a devastating affect on maritime wildlife, especially with seals and dolphins regularly spotted in the sea off Sussex shores.

The marine conservation charity has warned swimmers to take note of the warnings as Britons approach the spring and summer seasons.

It monitors the water quality across the United Kingdom to keep the public informed of any areas affected by sewage and its report does not make good reading for those living in Sussex or for visitors who tend to make a day at the seaside a priority during the warmer months.

Tourist favourite Brighton is among those being criticised but it is by no means the only popular Sussex destination to be identified. Far from it, in fact.

Sewage discharges have led to the UK being placed at the bottom of the list in Europe in terms of the quality of its bathing water.

In total, 83 beaches have been identified as ones to avoid due to sewage being dumped by various water companies operating across the nation.

Coming in at 35th on the list is St Leonards while following close behind is Bexhill, just one place lower.

And it doesn’t get any better, unfortunately, according to the report. Next up is Normans Bay between Bexhill and Eastbourne in 37th spot, followed by Pevensy Bay in 38th place and Seaford 39th.

Saltdean near Brighton is 40th on the list with Brighton Kemptown 41st. Next up is Brighton Central and then Hove Lawns.

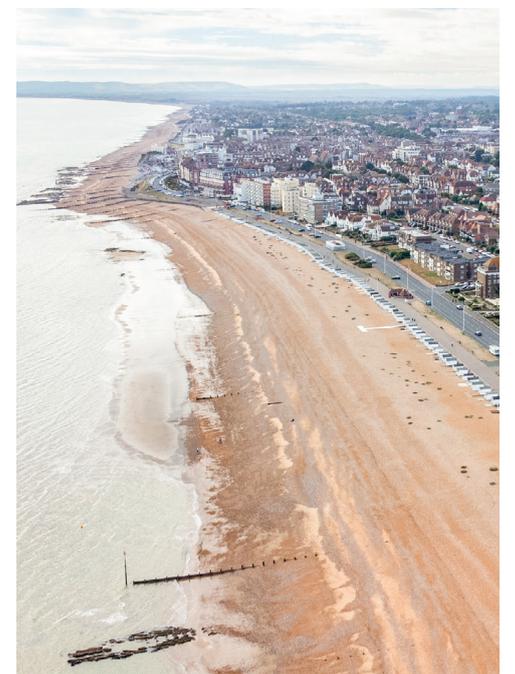
Littlehampton is in 44th place on the list, with Bognor Regis East in 45th place and Bognor Regis (Aldwick), just one spot lower.

Juliette Wills, a regular sea swimmer from Bexhill, is among concerned residents and said: ‘It’s an abhorrent practice. Southern Water talks about protecting our seas, when they’re doing the complete opposite in my opinion.

“They’re single-handedly destroying our marine life, and in turn the fishing industry. They’re making it impossible for swimmers or surfers to do what they love. We shouldn’t have to check an app to see if there is sewage in the sea before we venture out.

“We shouldn’t have to worry that we’ll end up with gastroenteritis, an ear or eye infection or worse, serious e-coli poisoning from being in our seas or rivers. When I swim with friends we often see seals; what is this doing to them, and the other sea life?”

The Government isn’t doing enough. Fines are not a deterrent. Water companies’ dumping of sewage in our seas is nefarious and illegal.



Juliette Wills

They should be made to compensate every town council whose rivers and seas they pollute. “They’re making millions of pounds in profit and we’re not seeing any of that go back into investing in a sewage system that

has been in desperate need of overhaul for decades.

“Sewage pipes in Bexhill are rusty, full of holes and falling to pieces.

“Enough is enough. I believe that it’s time the Government got the message that their lackadaisical attitude to this continued activity will make voters think twice about retaining a party who aren’t doing enough to protect our seas.’

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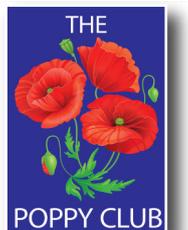


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## EXTRA SUPPORT OFFERED FOR THOSE IN ROTHER WITH ADDICTION ISSUES

**PEOPLE with drug and alcohol problems who may be struggling with housing issues in Rother are set to benefit from additional support.**

Central Government has announced that East Sussex will receive a £1.3 million share from a £53 million national pot of money designed to help people in drug and alcohol treatment.

Rother District Council has welcomed the funding which will see a team placed in each district and borough council across the county to provide a range of support addressing tenancy start-up and sustainment.

The funding will also support people in their homes to improve engagement in treatment services.

Councillor Terry Byrne, lead councillor for Housing and Homes at Rother District Council, said: "I am delighted that people in Rother will benefit from this funding.

"Treatment outcomes for people in drug and alcohol recovery are often improved by addressing their housing needs at the same time, providing additional support and stability.

"This funding will allow us to create housing support schemes tailored to meet local need and enable us to help some of those most in need in our communities."

The Housing Support Grant is dedicated funding to test the impact of targeted housing support interventions on recovery outcomes for people drug and alcohol treatment.

This approach will help to test what types of housing support are most effective to meet different local needs in all regions of England.

Huw Merriman, MP Bexhill and Battle, said: "People experiencing drug and alcohol dependency often have complex problems. All too often this can place them at risk of homelessness when they need stability in their lives.

"I welcome this £1.3 million government funding for East Sussex and Rother which will provide specialist local teams for housing and treatment support, helping to break the cycle of addiction and improve health outcomes."

Sally-Ann Hart, MP for Hastings and Rye, said: "I welcome the news that £1.3 million will be made available for housing support for people in drug and alcohol treatment in East Sussex.

"Alcohol and drug dependency can have a devastating impact on those with the dependency and their families. Those with such problems will benefit hugely with support in addressing their housing needs and stability and help in achieving independent living."

The housing project is one of a number of schemes planned across the UK over the next three years.

Other initiatives include training to help those dealing with trauma, women's-only housing for those who have experienced domestic violence and support for those with cognitive impairments due to acquired brain injury.

## REMEMBERING LOVED ONES AT TOUCHING COVID VIGIL

BY KIM MAYO

**A TOUCHING Covid Remembrance vigil was held at the Tree of Hope next to the Bexhill War Memorial on March 19.**

Hordes of dignitaries and residents, including Bexhill mayor Paul Plim, gathered to pay their respects to those who were lost during the pandemic.

The ceremony started with music provided by the Living World Church Singers followed by a welcome from Councillor Lynn Langlands.

Attendees included Deputy Lieutenant Graham Peters, the chair of Rother District Council Kathy Harmer, the chief executive Malcolm Johnston, the mayor of Battle Vikki Cook, Abdul Azad from the Bexhill Masjid and Islamic Centre and Chris Cole representing Churches Together.

There was a mood of quiet contemplation throughout as many reflected on the loved ones who were lost during the gruelling lockdown which lasted for the best part of two years.

Many were unable to visit their families and loved ones during that time, a period of alienation which proved extremely difficult to bear.

Therefore, the COVID Remembrance service provided the perfect opportunity for reflection, albeit tinged with considerable sadness.

Of course, life goes on as it must but the profound effect COVID and the subsequent



lockdown had on all of us must never be forgotten.

As the town, the county and indeed the country continue to recover from the devastation inflicted on us by the pandemic, it is vital that events such as this one are held on an annual basis.

Those we have lost must never be forgotten. It was a tragic period in our history which one can but hope is now firmly behind us.



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# BexhillEvents

ARE YOU HOLDING A CHARITY OR NON-PROFIT EVENT?

For a **FREE LISTING**, email your details to [Events@Bexhill.News](mailto:Events@Bexhill.News)

## BEXHILL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & TOURISM BI-MONTHLY NETWORKING MEETING

Last Wednesday every other month, 7.00-9.00am

Trattoria Italiana, 68-70 Devonshire Road, Bexhill-on-Sea, TN40 1AX

## BEXHILL DOWN LADIES GROUP

Second Wednesday every month (except August)

St. Augustines Church Hall, Cooden Drive, 2pm

We are a very happy group enjoying talks, outings, eating and drinking (tea & coffee). If you want a very friendly group then come along you will be most welcome. Tel: 01424 216150.

## EASTER SERVICES

St Barnabas Parish Church, Cantelupe Road (corner of Sea Road).

Palm Sunday (2 April) – Parish Eucharist at 10.30am. Holy week Eucharists on Tuesday and Thursday at 10am. Good Friday – Stations of the Cross at 1.30pm, followed at 2pm by the Liturgy of the Day. Easter Day (9 April) First Light of Easter Service 6am, followed by a light breakfast, Parish Eucharist at 10.30 am, Songs of Easter Praise at 3pm. Coffee Morning and Table Top sale. Saturday 29th April at 10am.

## BEXHILL GARDENING CLUB ANNUAL SPRING FAIR

Saturday 13th May. St. Martha's Church Hall, Cooden Sea Road, Little Common TN39 4SL, from 9.00 to 11.30 a.m.

There will be lots of plants to buy as well as bric-a-brac, crafts, cakes, refreshments and a raffle. Entry is free. For more information or if you wish to join our club please visit our website [www.lchs.co.uk](http://www.lchs.co.uk)

## JESUS LOVES BEXHILL LITTER PICKING DAYS

Saturday 8th & 22nd April 10.30-12.30pm

West of the Coronation Bandstand, East Parade

## HASTINGS & BEXHILL ORGAN & KEYBOARD SOCIETY CONCERT

Last Tuesday of every month. Indoor Bowls Club in Egerton Park Road, Bexhill, doors open at 7.00pm for a 7.30 start.

Entrance payable on the door of £10. The Society books the very best professional artists from all over the UK who bring their own keyboards to play for us. Video equipment is used to send the pictures onto a big screen so that the artists skill can be more easily appreciated. Easy access to the hall and free parking is available. Please contact me on 01424 848793 for full details.

## BEXHILL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & TOURISM BI-MONTHLY NETWORKING MEETING

Last Wednesday every other month, 7.00am-9.00am

(Jan,Mar,May,Jul,Sep,Nov). Trattoria Italiana, 68-70 Devonshire Road, Bexhill-on-Sea, TN40 1AX

Tickets £13 (plus Eventbrite Fee). Register and pay at: [www.eventbrite.com/o/bexhill-chamber-of-commerce-and-tourism-55864975473](http://www.eventbrite.com/o/bexhill-chamber-of-commerce-and-tourism-55864975473). Become a member for £90pa per business.

## BEXHILL FARMERS' MARKET

Every Friday, 9am-1pm. Devonshire Square, Bexhill.

Pop by to visit and select local quality traceable produce and crafts, including freshly baked bread and sweet treats, fresh and cured meats and cheeses, fruit and vegetables, plants, honey, chutneys, plus lots more. Stalls offer quality locally produced or sourced foods and goods.

## PEBSHAM INDOOR MARKET

Father's Day Special: Sunday 28 May: 10am-1pm

Pebsham Community Hub, Seabourne Road, TN40 2SW

Gifts, Crafts, Refreshments, Local Causes, Local Businesses

## EAST SUSSEX VISION SUPPORT BEXHILL SOCIAL GROUP

First Friday of the month. St Augustine's Church Hall, Bexhill.

We provide a social atmosphere for blind and partially sighted people including the opportunity to meet and make new friends. We can provide transport to St Augustine's and the afternoon includes refreshments, entertainment and a raffle and we also arrange lunch outings. If you are interested in joining, please contact Christine on 01323 482407 or East Sussex Vision Support Head Office on 01323 832252.

## FREE BEXHILL MEDITATION & WELLNESS CLASSES

Every Thursday, 5.45pm-6.45pm. 11 Windmill Drive, Bexhill

In modern times many of us are so busy trying to get through life we forget to have time for ourselves. We find it difficult to motivate ourselves, to dedicate time to our own personal development, or have no idea where to start. Maybe we feel disconnected from our local community. This impacts both physical and mental well-being. The goal is not only to provide a regular meeting space for the community to dedicate time to their own wellbeing, but also to offer tips and tricks they can take into their everyday lives to manage stress and improve well-being.

## INDOOR CAR BOOT SALE

9th Bexhill Scout Hall, Wainwright Road, Bexhill, TN39 3UR

Every Sunday, 9am-12 noon

All the usual items you would expect to find at an Indoor Car Boot Sale — but maybe find that surprising item — you never know what you may find!

## GOLDEN ACTIVITIES - GENTLE CHAIR EXERCISES

Every Monday Morning, 10.30am-11.30am. The Bagnall Room, 25 Sackville Road, Bexhill, TN39 3JD

We are a friendly group and welcome everyone. £6 each (carers are free) includes refreshments. At The Bagnall Room (next to Bexhill Caring Community). For more information contact Anna 07961 349956

## SIDLEY FRIENDSHIP CLUB

Every third Monday of the month, 2pm-4pm.

Freedom Church, Sidley Street entrance (behind Lidl)

A social club for ladies and gents over 50 years old. Speakers, Games, Bingo, Coach Trips etc. No Annual fees, Just £2 each meeting which includes refreshments. New Members welcomed.

## BEXHILL SEASIDE LADIES' GROUP

Every 4th Wednesday of the month, 7.30pm.

St Michael's Church Small Hall, Glassenbury Drive,

A social club for ladies 50+ years old with speakers, quizzes, etc

## TEA AND TODDLERS

Every Thursday, 9am-10.30am. St Augustine's Church, Cooden Drive, Bexhill-on-Sea TN39 3AZ

Free friendly Toddler group. Come and join us for play, chat and refreshments. Donations are gratefully received. For more information contact Daisy at [st.augustines288@outlook.com](mailto:st.augustines288@outlook.com) or 07544326059

## BEXHILL TUESDAY FOR THE BLIND AND PARTIALLY SIGHTED

Every Tuesday afternoon. St Mark's 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.

## BEXHILL SEAGIRLS WI

Every Third Wednesday of the month, 8pm. St Augustine's Church, Cooden Drive, Bexhill-on-Sea TN39 3AZ

Our aim is to make friends and have fun, activities include outside speakers, games, crafts, baking and dancing. We have a book group, a 'knit & natter' group and a dining club. We hold events to raise funds for local charities. Are you interested in joining? Your first visit is free. Contact our secretary [jill.duckett1@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jill.duckett1@hotmail.co.uk) or call Jo on 07514625749 Or just turn up, we look forward to seeing you!

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# BEXHILL COMEDIAN EDDIE IZZARD PREFERS TO BE KNOWN AS SUZY

**B**EXHILL comedian, writer and Parliamentary hopeful Eddie Izzard says his preferred name from now on is Suzy.

Suzy says that is now preferred as the name of choice and it has been the case since the age of ten. Now that wish has become a reality.

The 61-year old, who also used the pronouns she and her, was interviewed on the Matt Forde Political Party podcast and said: "I am Eddie but there is another name I am going to add in as well.

"That is Suzy which I wanted to be since I was ten.

"From now on I am going to be Suzy Eddie Izzard. That is how I am going to roll. People can choose what they want.

"They cannot make a mistake, they cannot go wrong. I spent 50 years predominantly in boy mode so let's try the next 50 in girl mode.

"It is just a language adjustment and no one



should get het up about it.

"I am still gender fluid and I tell everyone who has supported me... 'he or she, it doesn't really matter.

"The pronoun thing isn't the important thing, the important thing was coming out as "trans" back in 1985. That was tough."

Eddie initially was known as a cross dressing comedian but now identifies as a gender fluid trans woman. However no offence is taken if the name Eddie and he and him pronouns are used.

Eddie/Suzy still harbours political ambitions to become a Labour MP despite having failed to win the nomination to stand as a candidate for the Sheffield Central constituency.

Many are calling for Eddie/Suzy to be selected as the Labour candidate for Bexhill and Battle but thus far there has been no confirmation or denial as the next General Election is at least 18 months away.

At the last election Conservative Huw Merriman had a majority of more than 25,000.

## COUNCIL DETERMINED TO MAKE THE MOST OF NEW BUDGET TO BENEFIT ALL

**INVESTMENT and improvements to efficiency are at the heart of steps being taken to get the most out of Rother's £16.7 million net budget.**

Rother District Council members agreed the authority's 2023/24 budget to fund essential services including waste collection and recycling, licensing and environmental health, planning, community safety and homelessness services.

The budget includes a 2.7 per cent increase in council tax which will see a Band D household paying an additional £5.22 – the equivalent to around 10p extra a week.

To ensure the council can maximise the money available further work will be done to identify investment opportunities, including the use of overnight money markets, and areas where streamlining can make services run more efficiently.

Councillor Ashan Jeeawon, the district council's portfolio holder for finance and performance management, said: "Considerable levels of inflation and soaring energy costs have presented us a real challenge in setting our budget for 2023/24.

"But the decisions we have taken put us in a strong position to deal with the financial challenges we know that local authorities will continue to face this year and beyond.

"Asking our residents to pay more council tax

is not something we do lightly, but not doing so could mean significant cuts to services that people rely upon and would have affect our ability to deliver those services in future years."

To meet the coming year's costs, members agreed to use £2.035 million from reserves to support the revenue, with a plan to reduce this amount by targeting areas of the budget where efficiency savings can be made and where external grants can be secured.

Full Council heard how match-funding from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to buy temporary accommodation for homeless households will have a long-term benefit with the council having to spend less money in future years to support vulnerable residents.

As part of the council's extensive Financial Stability Programme, devolution of certain services to town and parish councils will also result in long-term savings for Rother District Council and protect important local services.

Councillor Jeeawon added: "With almost 80 per cent of council tax income paying for our waste and cleansing contract, it is vital that we make every penny go as far as we can."

As part of their discussions, councillors also agreed the Council Tax Reduction scheme will remain unchanged in the new financial year and will offer support to those struggling to pay.



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## READERS' LETTERS

Write to the editor by emailing: [Letters@Bexhill.News](mailto:Letters@Bexhill.News)

### WEBSITE IS KEY FOR LOCAL INFORMATION



Dear Editor, In the March issue of *Bexhill News*, you were good enough to print my letter regarding the toilets. My last sentence, 'Talk to your Councillors — if you can find them' disappointed some.

I have to say that I did find contact email information on the Bexhill Town Council website following that and wrote to my ward Councillors, one of whom responded promptly and was helpful.

I still have concerns that many may not know there is a BTC website and how to find information on it, also that one Councillor has said that 80% of Bexhill residents may not be on the internet due to the age demographic of the area.

I am not sure it is that many but think that they need other ways of imparting information to the residents if it is the case.

Alan Goss

### PARKING FRUSTRATIONS

Dear Editor, I have heard that parking metres are now in car park at Manor Barn.

A lady was in tears, she had to get change in Bexhill town and was late for doctors appointment. I don't visit Manor Barn with my dog any more, just as I don't visit the seafront due to the parking metres everywhere.

Being a pensioner I would like to shake Charley Casey by the hand as we are watching Bexhill die.

Alice Griffin

### CHARGES GOOD FOR THE ECONOMY?



Dear Editor, We are writing in reaction to Cllr Hollidge's comments in March's article about the proposed car parking changes in Bexhill.

These changes would see a massive reduction in free parking in the area, which we believe will have a major negative impact on local businesses which are already struggling with the effects of covid, inflation and the economy generally.

We have already seen Manor Barn go into administration, and can't help but wonder if the introduction of car parking fees was a contributing factor.

We are particularly annoyed that Cllr Hollidge uses people with disabilities to support the proposals as 'driving is not always an option' for them. This is far from the truth as driving is often the only option. There are countless hidden disabilities which do not qualify for a blue badge but which makes mobility very difficult. It can be too far to walk to a bus stop, there is often nowhere to sit, and standing on buses is not possible; nor is cycling an option in many cases. This also often applies to families with babies or young children.

Cllr Hollidge also cites the 'small appropriate fee'. No fee is small in the current climate and, in any case, this soon tops up. We want to support

our local town and go into Bexhill most days to shop, eat out and/or have coffee.

Due to health issues, driving is our only option. If these plans go ahead, we will have to severely cut back our visits as the cost of parking will make it untenable. We can't be the only ones, so how will this help the local economy?

Whilst having sympathy for residents who need to park, there has to be some balance. However, the proposals only favour the fit, healthy and childless - rather a sizeable section of the community. Nor does the short consultation period, together with the complicated response process, suggest a genuine interest in public opinion.

G Davies and B Grist

### MANOR BARN SADNESS



Dear Editor, It's with great sadness that I read about the demise of the Manor Barn as we know it.

We had a wonderful party there for sixty-plus family and friends in August.

Service, attention, atmosphere, food, in fact, everything was brilliant. We'll have many great memories to store.

I hope its future can be secured. We would all miss it in Bexhill and surrounding area if it were lost.

Kathy Hull

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# CARE HOME MANAGER AWARDED MBE AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE



Susan Barnes awarded by HRH Prince William

**A**fter being awarded an MBE for services to veterans, Susan Barnes, manager of Mais House, the Royal British Legion Veteran Care Home in Hastings Road, Bexhill visited Buckingham Palace where she was presented with her award by HRH Prince William, Duke of Cambridge.

She said: "It's was such an honour to receive recognition for my work.

"I said to Prince William, the award is for all my staff who dedicate each day their love, care, and attention to ensuring our beloved veterans have the best life possible while at Mais House. I have the most incredible team.

"I invited the Prince of Wales to Mais House, and he said he would love to meet everyone face to face."

Susan had the honour last year to be requested to attend the Queens Funeral at Westminster Abbey.

She attended on behalf of her veterans, staff and Bexhill community to pay respects to the late Queen Elizabeth.

Meanwhile, the Little Common Branch of the Royal British Legion hosted the annual Earl Haig Commemoration Service in St Marks Church, Green Lane, Little Common on March 12.

Earl Haig founded the Royal British Legion in 1921, bringing together the many isolated clubs that had formed around the country for returned servicemen.

Since then, the organisation has helped and supported many thousands of past and present members of the Armed Forces Community.



Photo: Earl Haig KT Photography

The service was conducted by the Branch Chaplain, Reverend Jonathan Fraiss, and attended by various dignitaries including the Mayor Councillor Paul Plim and David Slark, Sussex Royal British Legion vice-chairman.

During the service, a wreath was laid on behalf of all veterans by Ms Barnes, of Mais House, the Legion's care home in Bexhill.

Six Standards from various branches were on parade, including the Legion's County Standard.

Following the service, the Standards were inspected by the dignitaries before everyone moved into the Church Hall, where a buffet was provided, with teas and coffees served by Kathy and Sue, members of the Women's Section.

The Little Common Branch is always seeking new members to help organise events, raise



Photo: Earl Haig KT Photography

money or just chip in with some friendly support. If you are interested in joining contact [www.britishlegion.org.uk/branches/little-common](http://www.britishlegion.org.uk/branches/little-common).



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Sunday Karaoke - 16th April 5:30 pm  
Live music with Paul Simmons - Sunday 23rd 5:00pm - 8:00pm  
Monday quiz - 24th April 8:00pm  
Gourmet night (Asian themed) - Wednesday 27th from 6:00pm

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# PERRY TAKES THE LONG ROAD TO RAISE FUNDS FOR CHARITY



Perry on another walking challenge

**PERRY Puddefoot, President of Bexhill Rotary Club, challenged himself to walk 1,000 miles in a 12-month challenge he called 'The Long Road'.**

Perry said: "Having completed the 1,000 miles in February, I am moving on to the plus and now aim to complete at least another 500."

Not only has Perry now put his 1,000 mile target behind him, but in the process, he has raised over £1,000 for the benefit of a range of voluntary

organisations which include Bexhill and Hastings Mencap, Bexhill Foodbank and local youth groups.

He is very keen to raise even more for these needy causes so, to help Perry on his various trips, he is looking for plenty of sponsorship donations.

Any donations, whatever the amount, are very welcome and, in these difficult times, appreciated so thank you for any support you can



give him and the causes he is collecting for.

Meanwhile, Bexhill Rotary Club is now on the hunt for more volunteer readers to go into local schools to help children with their reading skills.

New readers will be joining more than 40 readers in the Reading Partners Scheme which has been running successfully with numerous local schools since 1999, improving children's reading skills.

This can be an extremely rewarding experience for volunteer readers and of course the child.

A good reading ability enables the child to study a wide variety of subjects, to use a computer and to write with imagination and will be an invaluable help for their future wellbeing in life.

As well as giving this valuable help and support to youngsters, teachers are also very appreciative of the help they receive and a Reading Partner always receives a friendly welcome from them, as well of course as the children.



Dave Tollett, who currently heads up this important initiative, said: "There are 168 hours in a week and all you need is one free hour once a week, or even a fortnight.

"The Reading Partner has complete choice as to how often they attend school.

"Do please make contact, I promise you will love the experience and you will be giving much needed help to local children."

If you would like to take part or need more information, then contact Rotarian Dave Tollett either on [david.tollett@sky.com](mailto:david.tollett@sky.com) or call him on 07956 434561.

Bexhill Rotary Club welcomes prospective new members who are keen to take part in our numerous activities and initiatives serving communities and who are looking to join an enthusiastic, busy and fun-loving club.

To find out more go to the website [www.bexhill.rotaryweb.org](http://www.bexhill.rotaryweb.org)

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# THE COST OF A CORONATION?

**Bexhill Chamber of Commerce and Tourism**  
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**T**he coronation of King Charles III and Camilla Queen Consort on May 6th 2023 will be one of the biggest global events for a generation. Hundreds of thousands of people will line the streets of London to cheer on the Royal processions and billions around the world will watch transfixed to their television screens as our new Monarchs are crowned.

It doesn't matter if you are a Royalist, staunch republican or indifferent to the role of the Royal Family in our lives, what is undeniable is that this event will be a shared moment in history that the people of Bexhill should be very welcome to be a part of if they wish.

Bexhill Chamber of Commerce are very proud to be recognised by Buckingham Palace, RDC and Bexhill Town Council as an official event organiser for Coronation celebration on May 6th. We are using our event expertise to bring our giant video screen to the seafront lawns to show live coverage of the coronation ceremonies from London followed by a very special Bexhill Coronation Concert on the De La Warr Pavilion terrace.

Rother Community Choir will perform alongside Lea Goddard, The Sound Syndicate and our headliners the legendary Rockitmen stadium rock party band. Our events will run from nine

in the morning until nine at night and everyone is welcome to come along and bring their picnics to have a great day beside the sea. This will be the biggest coronation day event in our area with thousands of people expected.

Events of this scale are incredibly expensive to put on and we really couldn't do it without the help and support of Bexhill Businesses. While we welcome the grants from RDC and Bexhill Town Council these do not cover all the costs of screen hire, pa systems, artist fees, insurance, first aid cover, security and stewarding etc. While Bexhill Chamber have pledged to underwrite the event from membership reserves we would like to make this an event that really benefits as many local businesses as possible.

We have teamed up with our media partners Bexhill News and More Radio to create a package that makes it attractive for everyone



to participate. Maltbys Property Management have become our key partners in the event while local hospitality businesses are working with us to create a street food fair that reflects the diversity of great restaurants and cafes in Bexhill. There will be Italian from the Trattoria, Desi Bites bring their great fusion offer, Harold will be there with his Hog Roast, alongside burgers

and a bar, no-one will go hungry or thirsty if they decide not to bring their own picnics. But there are still plenty of opportunities for you to get involved as partners, sponsors, supporters or patrons. Feel free to message our chamber [www.bexhillchamber.org](http://www.bexhillchamber.org) for more information and let's make May 6th Bexhill's own very special Coronation day.

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**May 6th 2023**

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# GETTING THE JOB DONE AS EVENT PROVES A HUGE SUCCESS



PHOTOS: PAUL GIBSON

**H**UNDREDS of people descended on the De La Warr Pavilion recently as the venue once again hosted its popular annual jobs fair.

Despite the pressing economic conditions, it is clear there are still plenty of opportunities out there as a host of would-be employers promoted their businesses.

They ranged from the likes of Southern Water, Gatwick Airport and the National Health Service, to much smaller concerns, but the one thing they all had in common was that they needed staff... and sooner rather than later.

For instance, Bexhill News was told, Gatwick Airport currently has plenty of vacancies now that the Covid pandemic is firmly behind us.

Gatwick went through tough times during the pandemic, especially as air travel was severely restricted during that time.

Now, however, business is booming once more and there are numerous vacancies which need to be filled.

A spokesman for the airport said: "The jobs fair is great for us as we look to recruit more staff across a variety of platforms.

"Gatwick is one of the biggest employers in the region and there has certainly been plenty of interest, which is absolutely great.

"It is not just the operational side where there are opportunities. With air travel now back in full swing, the airport also has many retail outlets on site such as Superdry, Lego, Pret A Manger, WH Smith, Nando's and Hamleys. Many of those businesses are also looking to recruit staff."

Organisers of the Bexhill Jobs and Apprenticeships Fair, in association with Southeastern, Bexhill College and Southern Housing, have heralded the latest event as the biggest and best yet. More than 600 people visited the fair to explore job vacancies, apprenticeships, training, courses, skills development opportunities and back to work support.

Held for the seventh year, the not-for-profit community

initiative is an important pillar in the area's employment calendar, providing job-seekers with opportunities in a wide range of sectors and giving recruiters instant access to a large pool of candidates.

Bexhill MP, Huw Merriman, said: "The Bexhill Jobs and Apprenticeships Fair is always brilliant, but this year we saw a bumper range of jobs and opportunities on offer and our largest visitor turnout yet.

"I was particularly pleased to see such a wide mix of attendees from young people looking for their first job or apprenticeship, through to older people interested in career change and return to work opportunities.

By pairing those actively looking for jobs with employers who are actively recruiting, the fair consistently delivers tangible results.

"All the exhibitors I spoke to during the day were hugely positive about the event and its value to the local economy. I'm proud to be part of the organising team for the fair which delivers real and exciting employment and training opportunities for local people."

Stewart Drew, director and chief executive of the De La Warr Pavilion, added: This year's Jobs Fair was absolutely buzzing with people queuing in the foyer before the doors opened and the stream of visitors continued throughout the day.

"At the Pavilion, we pride ourselves on delivering a world-class programme of art, music and culture while remaining at the heart of our local community and being the catalyst for the area's social and economic growth.

"Hosting the Jobs Fair is an important part of this community, creativity and skills approach and we are delighted this year's event was such a great success."

A spokesman for Southern Water added at the end of the day: "Apprentices are the future of our business and we are actively recruiting. Many young people have come up to us to express an interest in finding out more and that is a real bonus."

The Sussex Police stand was also proving to be exceedingly popular with potential recruits.

A spokesman confirmed: "Our presence here is not just about recruiting new officers and PCSOs. There are a number of different roles aimed at improving the Force and the interest so far has been absolutely phenomenal."

The venue was packed to the rafters with people ranging from teenagers looking to take their first step on the career ladder to those perhaps looking to return to work following initial retirement.

Encouraging the older generation to return to the workplace has certainly been one of the key targets of Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Chancellor Jeremy Hunt in recent months and, judging from the turnout it seems the ploy is working.

Several job seekers said they had found the jobs fair a positive experience and were keen to further explore several opportunities which had piqued their interest.

One, who didn't want to be named, said: "I have been thinking of returning to work for a while now so when I saw this was taking place I decided to come along.

"I have spoken to several potential employers and it has been a really positive experience. I spoke to several businesses who were really positive about what I could potentially offer, so I am now going to weigh up my options. I didn't realise quite how many jobs are available."

# BEXHILL-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL UPDATE



## TOWN COUNCIL CELEBRATES LOCAL VOLUNTEERS AND CHARITIES AT SPECIAL AWARDS CEREMONY

Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council presented awards to a range of local volunteers and charities at a special ceremony at St Augustine's church hall on Saturday 18th March.

The civic awards celebrated local individuals and groups who give up their time and energy to make life better for people in Bexhill.

The ceremony opened with music from the Royal British Legion Band, and Bexhill's Ukrainian choir serenaded guests during the interval.

### INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

The individual award winners were:

• **Harriet Chapman:** Harriet has dedicated 42 years of service to the League of Friends and Bexhill Hospital. Her contribution has added much to the finances of the group, which has supported the hospital and patients with gifts totalling millions of pounds.



• **Dave Dickinson-Smith, Chair of the Bexhill Taxi Drivers Association:** Dave is well known around Bexhill for the support he gives to other residents, getting many elderly people in the town to hospital appointments.



• **Trudy Hampton, Warming up the Homeless:** Trudy has single-handedly transformed a group of friends giving out a cup of tea and pot noodles, into one of the largest registered charities in the area which provides food, clothing, advice and mental and physical assistance.



• **Lynn and Jim Langlands, Bexhill food bank:** Each week Lynn and Jim organise for volunteers from the Rotary Club to go to local homes, businesses, schools, and charities to collect food donations for the food bank. This began in the 2020 lockdown and has continued ever since. Most weeks they collect around 200kg of food, making a real difference to local people in need.



• **Graham Oliver:** Graham can often be seen around town making people smile and offering to help others out. He volunteers in charity shops and show his support to local businesses however he can.



• **Keith Rhodes:** Keith was instrumental in resurrecting the Bexhill flag. His research found that Bexhill's town colours committee designed this flag in the 19th century. The committee adopted it on 29 July 1893, and it flew in public later that year.



• **Nim Whitmash, Bexhill Carnival:** For 60 years Nim Whitmash has been involved in the annual Bexhill Carnival. The carnival is the oldest continuous carnival in Sussex thanks to Nim's determination and hard work.



• **Jacqueline Youldon, Running Space:** Jacky is the Founder and Director of RunningSpace. She goes above and beyond to support people that are facing the challenge of poor mental health and/or that are affected by suicide, to help them get active and be connected to people in a safe and welcoming environment.



### GROUP AWARDS

A number of groups were also recognised for their dedication to Bexhill.



• **The Bexhill 100 Motoring Club:** In 2022, The Motoring club raised £20,000 for their four chosen charities. They've now raised more than £130,000 since 2005.

• **The Bexhill Girls U11 Football team:** This group of young girls are inspiring other girls to break convention and compete in what has traditionally always been a male dominated environment.



• **The Bexhill Hub for Ukraine:** The Rev David Lockwood along with Ruth Fraiss, Susan Gedge and Valeria Dvorniyak have worked tirelessly with Ukrainian guests arriving in Bexhill, to make sure they are welcomed, supported and safe.



• **Bexhill Rotary Club:** The Rotary club are known for doing many things in support of local causes such as tree planting, senior tea parties and in-school reading mentors. Every Tuesday volunteers drive around Bexhill collecting donations for the food bank. This year, The Rotary Club has secured over £25,000 worth of food for the food bank.

### Bexhill Skatepark Action Group:

The success of the skate park would not have been possible without this group's contributions, perseverance, and dedication. The group's members now act as role models and ambassadors for other skatepark users to look up to, learn from and seek help from.



### FREEDOM OF BEXHILL AWARD

The final award of the afternoon was the prestigious 'Freedom of Bexhill' award.

The Bexhill 100 Motoring Club chairman **Chris Speck** was presented with this award for his lifetime of service to the town.

**Mayor Paul Plim** said: "It was a pleasure and an honour for me to present awards to so many amazing people and groups who work tirelessly for our town.

"From volunteering at the hospital to collecting food to helping the homeless and supporting others less fortunate than themselves, every award winner was a real inspiration.

"It was very special to celebrate their commitment and dedication together at St Augustine's.

"Bexhill can be proud of its genuine sense of community. Thank you all for your kindness."

Chris Speck said: I am honoured by this award and wish to thank the Town Council for choosing me, I count myself lucky to be the current chairperson of the "Bexhill 100 Motoring Club" a position I have held since 2018. The club has grown considerably since its formation in 1999. Like a lot of other organisations, we have had a tough couple of years with the pandemic, but the club has continued to grow and we were able to put on some fantastic displays and shows since the easing of lockdown.

The 19th May 2022 was the 120th anniversary of the first motor race to be held in Britain, and was in Bexhill on Sea. The club held two special events in the town to mark this.

There has been a succession of people that have been the chair of the club, and a lot of people on both the committee and show committee, who have given their time and effort to keep the club active, along with all the members who volunteer to help at our seafront displays and at our "Classic and Custom Car Show" at the Polegrove each August.

Without all of them we would not be able to do what we have done over the 24 years.

We all have the same goal to keep the history of Bexhill, as the Birthplace of British motor racing alive."

### MEETINGS

You can find the details of our meetings, with agendas and reports, on our website [www.bexhilltowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.bexhilltowncouncil.gov.uk)

#### UPCOMING MEETINGS

<b>Wed. 5th April</b>	7pm Full Council
<b>Wed. 12th April</b>	7pm Community Committee
<b>Wed. 19th April</b>	7pm Finance and General Purposes Committee
<b>Wed. 26th April</b>	7pm Climate, Nature, and Environment Committee

Our Planning Committee meets twice a month at 6pm prior to Full Council and Finance and General Purposes Committee. Please check our website for more details as venues and meetings are subject to change.

Contact us at [town.clerk@bexhilltowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:town.clerk@bexhilltowncouncil.gov.uk)

## BEXHILL-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL

35 Western Road, Bexhill-on-Sea TN40 1DU

Open: Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 10am-12pm, and 12:30pm-2:30pm

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# KNOW YOUR GARDEN

By Emma Reece, Head Gardener at Bates Green Garden

Bates Green Garden, an RHS Partner Garden, is open every Wednesday until 25th October 2023. For details please go to the website [www.batesgreengarden.co.uk](http://www.batesgreengarden.co.uk) and follow the garden on Instagram @batesgreengarden



## JOBS FOR APRIL

Last month we enjoyed the uplifting colour from early flowering shrubs such as Forsythia and Ribes. Forsythia, the Golden Bells, flowers very early in the year, giving us all a vibrant reminder that the days are lengthening, and that spring will come. I like to cut lots of the long, arching flowering stems from the shrub and bring them in for table decorations, this also helps to stimulate growth of new flowering stems for next year. Alternatively, once the flowers are fading, you can cut one-third of the oldest stems at the base each year.

The same pruning principle can be applied to Ribes, the flowering currant. Not everyone appreciates their unique feline-related fragrance, I personally do not detect blackcurrant! Their pendant flowers are valuable as a source of nectar for bees foraging early in the year. We grow Ribes sanguineum 'Pokey's



Ribes Pokeys Pink. Photo: John Glover



Hellebores. Photo: MMGI/Bennet Smith

Pink' here at Bates Green, it has a soft gentle quality and good autumn colour too.

We are still enjoying the chintzy colours of hellebores. I was concerned that they would be less floriferous this year after such a dry summer in 2022. However, they are looking glorious, possibly because we mulch then with our homemade compost at the end of every year, and this improves the water-holding capacity of the soil around the plants which is what hellebores enjoy.

Hellebores are known as 'promiscuous' plants and produce masses of seedlings if allowed to do so. One can never tell whether the resulting hybrid will be a good strong colour until three or four years later. If you have the space and the inclination, letting your plants seed themselves around can be fun but if you want to control this then once the flowers start to fade, carefully deadhead the plants cutting the old flowering stem right back to the base. If you want to increase your collection, visit a specialist nursery or make a diary note to divide



Sweet Peas

your favourite hellebores with a sharp spade in early autumn, this method of propagation will ensure a clone of the mother plant. I will write more about the best places to buy plants from at a later date.

There is absolutely nothing quite like the fragrance of sweet peas. To me, they are the very essence of summer and one of the great pleasures of life is to gather your own posies regularly so that your house is filled with this very special scent. In order to do this, you must plant out your sweet peas this month. If you do not have your own seedlings, then they are available to purchase as young plants. Acclimatise them to the outside world for at least a week before planting to prevent much ongoing sulking.

You will need to provide your plants with some kind of support on which to grow, a wigwam of bamboo stems preferably covered with a 'netting' of rough twine, a beautiful metal archway if you happen to have one or you can create an organic structure made from hazel stems. These 'pea sticks' can often be purchased from farm shops or

similar, they are ideal as, being twiggy, the tendrils of the sweet pea obtain good purchase and quickly scramble up the stems.

Dig in plenty of organic matter, whatever you can get hold of, and put in 2 plants for every upright support stem. These will need to be checked and tied in with soft twine regularly as they will grow like the clappers providing you feed and water them regularly. At Bates Green Garden, the blue tits regularly forage our twine for their nests. We do not mind, we just replace.

You can grow sweet peas in a container, again with a support structure but do remember that they are hungry, thirsty plants and so their maintenance will be more onerous this way. Always worth it though.

My favourite cultivars are always chosen for their knockout scent. Lathyrus 'Matucana' is a modern grandiflora type with deep maroon and violet bicoloured petals. It is not going to give you long, exhibition type stems but has the best sweet pea fragrance of all. If you fancy your chances at your local flower show but still want to fill your rooms with fragrance, then I would recommend L. 'Albutt Blue'. This semi-grandiflora is white with a beautiful blue edge and a truly terrific scent. It also bears long stems which are great for showing.

'April Showers bring May Flowers'

This proverb is one we can all relate to, I interpret it as meaning that adversity is often followed by good fortune, the rain we hopefully receive this month will benefit our gardens and plots for the whole of the growing season ahead.

# CALLING ALL FRUSTRATED DOG OWNERS

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*"I found Harriet very approachable, and she explained things clearly, I feel more confident and in control. The training answered all my concerns. Thank you for providing a fun filled 4 weeks of knowledge and reassurance."* Lisa and River

There's only 4 spaces in every class, so every owner gets the personalised help they need. My classes are very popular, so you need to apply for a space visit: [pawtastic GundogAdventures.co.uk/training-classes](http://pawtastic GundogAdventures.co.uk/training-classes) or scan the QR Code below.



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# UNDERSTANDING WHAT YOU'RE VOTING FOR AT THE LOCAL ELECTIONS

BY GREG ROSE

**W**e're not kidding! For the first time ever, if you want to vote in the Local Elections on 4th May, you will need to have photo ID!

So that's either; a passport, photo driving license, blue badge, Oyster 60+ card, EEA Card, UK biometric residence permit, concessionary travel pass funded by HM Government or local authority or a PASS card.

With both District and Town elections taking place, many of us will vote with long-held and ingrained party allegiances, but have you ever actually thought beyond the colour, what am I actually voting for, will it make a difference, and what do they spend my money on?

Most residents know that Rother District Council is responsible for bins and planning, but what else does that do in that big building?

Are they responsible for roads and potholes? The simple answer is no, that falls under East Sussex County Council, and those next elections aren't until 2024.

However, some of Rother's other responsibilities include; Council housing, benefits, leisure facilities, environmental health, licensing, tourism

and regeneration and off street parking.

Bexhill Town Council is also up for election too, as are many of the neighbouring parishes. But what do they actually do? Do you have a loved one at the Cemetery? Does your area has enough dog waste bins? Should there be more or less town events? Are the community green spaces looked after?

These are some of the responsibilities the Town Council can spend your money on. In addition, representing local views on important topics at District and County levels is a key role of Town Councils, as they have some power in influencing these higher local authorities and generally have direct contacts and regular meetings.

Do councillors get paid? No, many of them have full-time jobs or are retired and effectively volunteer as a Councillor to better their local areas.

However, once elected all district councillors are entitled to an annual allowance to cover their time and expenses of £4703, but Bexhill Town Councillors do not get an allowance, unlike most of our neighbouring Town Councils.

At District level, Committee Chair Persons, Portfolio Holders / Cabinet Members and the Council Leader and or Mayor generally are

entitled to an increased allowance due to the extra responsibilities and workload. These allowances are subject to normal income tax and national insurance payments.

## POLITICAL PARTIES OR INDEPENDENTS?

You're likely to get at least one leaflet through your letterbox from each of the traditional political parties, with statements of what they have done and what they will do for the local area.

These leaflets are funded by the political parties themselves and delivered by their army of voluntary supporters. These political manifestos are designed to appeal to voters and much research goes into what will make you put an 'x' in the box for them.

Some of the time it's what not has been written which can be the most interesting or most influential on the way you might vote, so doing research online can really help decipher and read between the lines.

Independents however generally don't have the available funds themselves to produce leaflets and are unlikely to have the support of enough

people to deliver to all of the wards in which they are standing.

So, searching out the independents on social media and understanding why they want your vote is sometimes the only way to get a balanced view of all the candidates standing. Independent candidates at local level can have a real impact in making a local communities voice heard on particular issues, as they aren't bound by political party rules, manifestos or beliefs.

However, on the flip side of this, actually getting something which is proposed by an independent councillor actioned, is a lot more difficult as they need to get cross-party support and enough votes to get a majority.

There's sure to be a full deck of great candidates standing for all Party colours, and many super Independents too. So whichever way you end up voting be sure to hunt them all out and ask yourselves, why do they want your vote? what will they actually do and stand for? As it really can make a difference to our local area.

If you're interested in standing for election as either a District or Town Councillor on 4th May, you need to get your skates on. The cut of for nomination papers to be received is 4pm on Tuesday 4th April, you can find full details of how to stand as a candidate on the Rother District Council website.

The list of candidates is due to be published on the 5th April, and you'll find the full run down on our website soon after they are made public.

For the first time ever this year, if you want to vote in the Local Elections on 4th May, you will need to have photo ID!

So that's either; a passport, photo driving license, blue badge, Oyster 60+ card, EEA Card, UK biometric residence permit, concessionary travel pass funded by HM Government or local authority or a PASS card.

If you don't have valid photo ID, then you can apply for a Voter Authority Certificate on [gov.uk](http://gov.uk) website, but don't leave it too late as the cut-off is 25th April. If you don't have photo ID or a certificate on the 4th May, then you will not be allowed to cast your vote.

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**Albany Road,  
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**Parkhurst Road,  
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- Commercial unit
- Town Centre location
- High footfall area
- Use: Sui Generis
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**Bexhill Road,  
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- Ground floor garden flat
- 1-2 Bedrooms
- Close to seafront
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**Wickham Ave,  
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JFS is an established property management and letting company who cover all of East Sussex, Kent and now branching out into London. JFS are driven by a passion for property and is known for offering a personal and friendly service.

JFS are a small independent Letting and Management Company who have been established since May 2018 and will soon be celebrating their 5th year anniversary. Joy Hazell the Director believes that having a small team, working closely together offers the best service with everyone being hands on and knowing what each other are doing and this gives a more personal service by not being passed from pillar to post.

JFS have a fantastic reputation for responding to their Clients quickly and also helping new Clients with advice in Letting their properties. JFS Properties decided to set up a side company JFS Commercial as they were becoming more and more busy with Commercial Management and recently Let the former New Look building at 32 Devonshire Road which is now a very popular restaurant and cocktail business known as The Lounge.

If you have not yet been, they highly recommend it, the small

**ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO SPRING AND LONGER DAYS? WE ARE MOST DEFINITELY READY FOR THIS!**



plates are amazing, and the service is always fantastic. JFS has also this month placed 1 Devonshire Road as 'Under Offer' prior to this being marketed which is another great achievement.

Both JFS Properties and JFS Commercial have a vast waiting list of applicants looking for both Residential and Commercial Properties. The highest demand for Residential properties are 3/4 bedroom properties, especially houses which are available on a long-term rental with an initial 6 month tenancy.

For Commercial properties, they have people looking for Town Centre locations, along Devonshire Road, Western Road and St Leonards, with many applicants looking for 2nd or 3rd premises as they are already established. If you are looking for an agent to help you Let your property, please get in touch with their office.

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**UNDER OFFER**

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## APPEAL FOR VOLUNTEERS

Homecall is a home visiting scheme for the visually impaired and severely visually impaired. Established in 1985, Homecall continues to provide its home visiting scheme in Bexhill and surrounding areas.

However, we are in urgent need of new volunteers to join our award winning volunteer visiting team. We have over 10 clients awaiting help from a volunteer visitor.

The role of Homecall volunteers is to help keep our clients independent in their own homes by helping with tasks that have become difficult as a result of sight loss. This might include reading and writing correspondents, looking for lost things or checking for out of date food, to name but a few of the tasks.

However, the impact that volunteer visitors have is so much more than the assistance with practical tasks and weekly visits. Our volunteers are able to provide some relief to the social isolation that may be experienced due to sight loss. We are able to enhance the quality of their lives and offer the much-appreciated support of someone who understands their sight loss. The voluntary visiting is very rewarding, often volunteers develop close friendships with their clients.

The amount and type of visual impairment varies from one Client to another. Some may need help with tasks made difficult by loss of central vision, such as reading and writing whilst others may have problems with loss of wider vision, such as getting out and about. Many find themselves isolated by their loss of sight and for them the priority may be companionship. The opportunities to help are many and varied; the Scheme Manager will discuss the needs of your Client with you and the ways in which you may be able to assist.

The flexibility of home visiting makes it easy to fit around other commitments and you do not need previous experience of sight loss, home visiting or voluntary work. We provide training that covers sighted guiding techniques, visual impairment and the role of the visitor. We also reimburse our volunteers for expenses incurred within their visiting role.

Further information about Homecall is available on our website [www.my-homecall.org](http://www.my-homecall.org) or please contact Claire Prime - Homecall Scheme Manager on 01424 845812 or email [claire.homecall@gmail.com](mailto:claire.homecall@gmail.com) should you want further information about becoming a member of our volunteering team.



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# RUGBY CLUB BRINGS DOWN CURTAIN ON CHALLENGING SEASON



Joe Jenner crosses the line

## REPORT AND PICTURES BY PETER KNIGHT

**H**ASTINGS and Bexhill maintained their record of fulfilling every fixture as they brought down the curtain on a challenging London and South East Counties Kent 2 rugby union season.

Despite a campaign of mismatches in a widely lopsided division, the club battled on to finish a place off bottom spot.

The cup programme was due to begin with a trip to Uckfield RFC in the Sussex Vase (March 25) before Papa Johns Community Cup action against Seaford (April 1).

A 41-24 loss at Gillingham Anchorians (March 11) closed out the league action.

There were several changes from the side which lost 55-15 to Dover the previous week.

Skipper Bruce Steadman and Oliver Coleman were unavailable because of work commitments and Mike Brookman was ruled out with a hand injury.

But Calvin Crosby-Clark was welcomed back onto the bench having recovered from a knee injury.

Coach Steve McManus and Will Hirst completed the bench.

H&B hit the hosts with an excellent try from prop Jacob McDonagh to take the lead.

Hastings dominated the scrummage right from the start and the prop touched down after the pack drove forward from a five-metre scrum. Replacement kicker Sam Surridge slotted the conversion.

Gillingham's strength was in the midfield where they were able to off-load with speed and had a very tall full-back who surged through the Hastings line to set up attack after attack. Anchorians scored three good tries to take command of the game.

Dominic Sewell injured an arm and had to be replaced by Calvin Crosby-Clark but H&B scored two good tries before the interval.

First, McDonagh found himself in space with the ball at his feet and he dribbled forward to touch down on the right wing. Then, Crosby-Clark took advantage of the forwards' domination at the set-piece and broke away from the base of the scrum to score a terrific forwards try.

Unfortunately, H&B were hit by another injury; Chris Pillow, who has played excellently throughout the season, had to leave the field with a leg injury to be replaced by McManus as the visitors turned around trailing narrowly at 19-17.

Gillingham opened the second half with an onslaught of physical play, scoring four tries with one conversion to take a firm grip on the game.

Yellow cards for technical offences led to H&B being down to 13 players for a period.

Joe Whitehill James, who had played well on his return from injury, was replaced by winger Will Hirst with 20 minutes to go.

Joe Jenner scored the bonus point try for H&B after an excellent break from Jake Stinson set up a ruck for the big forward to surge over the line and Surridge converted.

Gillingham extended their lead with a penalty in the final seconds.

H&B's bonus point lifted them one place in the league. There were outstanding performances from Quin McManus, Joe Field, Mike Clifford and stand-in skipper Harry Walker.

The previous weekend, H&B's final home league game saw them suffer a 55-15 defeat to champions Dover.

The club's girls' section provided a guard of honour while the entire squad produced a spirited display to hold the table-toppers at bay for long periods.

The hosts stunned Dover early on with Louis Sealy scoring an excellent try, which was converted by skipper Steadman inside three minutes.

Dover hit back with four tries but H&B got on the board again when flanker Pillow touched down just before the break after the visitors' pack were pushed back over their own tryline following a five-metre scrum.

Five second-half tries meant the Kent side proved worthy winners but Hastings and Bexhill's Steadman nailed a penalty.

Recent colts star Seb Potgieter started on the wing for H&B while Hudson Wales came off the bench.

Andy Saunders impressed as a replacement for Sewell and there were excellent performances from stand-in fly-half Harry Walker, McManus, Pillow and Steadman.



## STORMY START AS NEW SAILING SEASON GETS UNDERWAY

**Bob Palmer claimed the revered Ice Bucket Trophy as Bexhill Sailing Club's season got off to a choppy start.**

Five crews battled it out in force four winds on a triangular course set by Race Officer Dusty Miller.

Surf created a troublesome launch, needing beach party support, and then it was a chunky ride in lumpy waves.

The three Europes, with their shorter design, had more of the roller coaster ride than the Laser and Catamaran.

Palmer in the Laser took the win ahead of Richard Eagleton, Lee Roberts and Richard Bratton, all Europes, with the Dart 16A sailing the quickest in the conditions but handicapped back to final position.

Palmer will collect the Ice Bucket later in the season at the awards. Winds were too strong for the Sunday race.

BSC's second weekend of action saw poor weather rule out Saturday races too but 11 boats took to the water on the Sunday – including honorary treasurer Flo' Wright in his Dart 16A, alone in his class.

The Slow Fleet were active with four Europes headed by Richard Eagleton in his new boat, including his go faster strip. Malcolm Brookes, Cadet Captain, followed in second with his Comet, while Lee Roberts was not far behind with his Europe.

Eve Fifield sailed well, representing the cadets, whilst Bob Palmer took fast fleet honours ahead of the Vortex of Tim Murray.

**Would you like your sports club or team to appear in these pages? If so, simply email: [editor@Bexhill.News](mailto:editor@Bexhill.News)**

# BRT'S SWAP POPS UP WITH A NEW BEST



BRT Senior Cross Country Runners 12th March 2023

## BY JACKIE KNIGHT

**Joanna Swap recorded a new personal best as she and fellow Bexhill Runners and Triathletes runner Cathy Bate took on the Paddock Wood Half Marathon.**

The race provided a mixed route challenge of rural and town.

BRT barefoot runner James Graham, an experienced half-marathon athlete, gave an impressive performance at Eastbourne, while Matt

Smith pulled out a champion finish at the Cambridge Half Marathon despite injuries and finished with a great time of 1hr.52min.55sec.

Incredible duo Geoff Tondeur and Zak Overfield started and finished the off-road Moyleman Marathon, a challenging South Downs run around the beautiful and demanding hills that surround the town of Lewes.

The undulating remote hills didn't stop the partners in crime as they raced through the finishing arches to be greeted with a Moyleman's glass and a token for a free beer and hot pizza.

Cross Country came to a close, but before the season ended senior and junior BRT runners battled through the muddy Pett, East Sussex circuit.



Geoff Tondeur and Zak Overfield

Trophies were awarded to under-13s. Congratulations to winners Ksenia McCrae and Eva Harwood. A huge well done to all the BRT juniors for their running this season.

To complete the month in true running style, BRT were invited to enjoy a Hastings Parkrun takeover. While promoting Parkrun and their own club, runners got to experience volunteering roles, giving the core team a well-earned test.

Bexhill Running and Triathlon Club is pleased to announce its 2023 Couch to 5K group starting on Wednesday, April 19 at 6-7pm for ten weeks. Taking part will take you from not running at all, to being able to run 5K. If you have ever thought about running with a friendly group of like-minded people, please go to the BRT webpage for more information: [www.bexhillrunnerstriathletes.co.uk](http://www.bexhillrunnerstriathletes.co.uk)



Ksenia McCrae



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# SPORT



RUNNING PAGE 30



Bexhill get on the attack in RUR Cup clash

## YOUNG GUNS ARE HELPING FIRE BEXHILL UNITED'S PUSH FOR TOP-FOUR FINISH

BY SPORTS REPORTER, MIKE LEGG

IMAGES BY JOE KNIGHT/SEASIDE PHOTOGRAPHY

**B**oss Ryan Light has hailed the impact of the club's youngsters as Bexhill United chase a top-four finish again. Injuries and suspensions have hit the Pirates but they remain in the mix to repeat last season's fourth spot in the Southern Combination League premier division. And Light admits he has had to rely on the next generation of talent making the step up.

Light told the Bexhill News: "It has been a difficult season. Unlike last year where everything seemed to fall our way, this year has been completely the opposite as we have had so many injuries and suspensions and we don't have the biggest squad anyway.

"The young lads that have come through from the Under-23s have done a job for us and carried us through.

"We know that they are ready now. They have come through our talented under-18 squad that were the 'Invincibles' last season when they won the Champions of Champions trophy.

"We knew this year that without under-18s football we would have to start looking at them, otherwise they would drift off to other clubs.

"That will happen more and more now, until the end of the season and, also, I am sure next season, too.

"Aaron Cook was a regular for the under-18s last season and the first team while Ollie Hull, Joe Skinner, Thomas O'Shaughnessy and Harrison Smith, who is still in this season's under-18s, have all been involved quite a lot this year.

"Those types of lads are coming through, which is really positive for the club."

United were due to close out March with a trip to leaders

Broadbridge Heath (March 25) and then the visit of Loxwood (March 29) before this month's final run-in.

United face Hassocks (home, April 1), bottom side Roffey (home, April 8), Little Common (away, Easter Monday April 10), Horsham YMCA (home, April 15) before finishing the campaign at Crowborough on April 22.

Light said: "I quite fancy our run-in against the teams around us. They all have to play each other, and I think five of the games we have are against teams below us in the table.

"We shall keep going right until the end with the objective to finish as high up the table as we can.

"Fourth is the aim while fifth would be great. If we could get fourth, that would equal our highest league finish for fifty years, which we set last season — so that has got to be the aim to achieve that.

"After Broadbridge Heath, it will be about looking to push on and get that fourth spot."

The Pirates closed out February by putting down a marker with a 1-0 win over title chasers Crawley Down thanks to skipper Tom Vickers' thunderous penalty.

Vickers was also on target, with a 35-yard cracker, in the 6-1 Sussex Senior Cup loss at Isthmian League Bognor (February 28th) and his eventful few days concluded with the winner against AFC Varndeanians, which also saw him sent off for two cautions and pick up a two-match ban.

Cook scored twice in a 4-1 triumph at Lingfield (March 11) in which Connor Robertson and Evan Archibald also netted.

Pirates missed out on a spot in the RUR Cup quarter-finals when they lost 1-0 to a second-half penalty against visitors Midhurst & Easebourne (March 15).

## COMMONERS' BOSS AIMS TO WIN 'LEAGUE WITHIN THE LEAGUE'



BY SPORTS REPORTER, MIKE LEGG

IMAGES BY JOE KNIGHT/SEASIDE PHOTOGRAPHY.

**BOSS** Russell Eldridge is aiming to reel in the teams above Little Common in a "league of two leagues".

Eldridge's Commoners opened a 15-point gap on Lingfield in 12th spot in the Southern Combination premier division during March following a run which saw them pick up four wins on the bounce.

Eldridge told Bexhill News last month that a top-half finish was the first target — and he believes that is now in the bag and he can adjust his sights.

He said: "We did OK, although of course, you always want more. But we picked up some good wins and consolidated ourselves in that 11th spot.

"We're quite clear of the teams below us and we are just trying to catch the teams above us.

"It's quite unusual to see that much of a divide in the division. You might get a few teams at the bottom and a few at the top which are ahead or behind the rest but not often in the middle.

"It does appear to be a league of two leagues now. We're concentrating on getting as many points as we can to see if we can climb that 'top-half table'.

"We're three points behind our total from last year (as of March 24), which we should better in the games that remain.

"We want to gain some extra places in the league — that's the target. The points total should be higher so in terms of position, we want to achieve better than last season's tenth spot."

Common closed out February with back-to-back wins over Lingfield in the space of just four days.

Freddie Warren, Lewis Hole and Sam Ellis got the goals in a 3-2 home win (February 25) before Hole's solitary effort secured the win at Godstone Road (February 28).

March opened with a 5-0 thumping of hosts Saltdean after Lewis Parsons, Freddie Warren, Alvin Scott (two) and Jamie Bunn all netted.

They made it four on the trot with a 2-1 triumph against their former landlords Eastbourne United (March 7) with Ellis and Warren the marksmen.

Common's winning streak ended in cruel fashion with a 2-1 reverse to title chasing Crawley Down at the Rec (March 11).

Ellis put the hosts 1-0 up at the break but the visitors levelled through Sam Clements before sub Rhys White pinched the winner three minutes into stoppage time.

Sussex's FA Vase flagbearers Peacehaven (March 14) were up next with Common losing 1-0 at Piddinghoe Avenue.

Common were due to be in home action against Midhurst and Easebourne (March 25) before a trip to Alfold (March 28).