



#### WESTERHAM TOWN COUNCIL

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Chairman: Helen Ogden

Town Clerk: Angela Howells

Deputy Clerk: Deborah Rogers

Assistant Clerk: Emily Rodgers

Finance Officer: Debbie Marshall

### 'Open for Business'

It has been heartening to see our town coming slowly back to life as we have tiptoed out of lockdown. Shops reopening, restaurants welcoming guests again, people out and about on the streets.

What, we asked, would help, as lockdown eased, to make the centre of our town safer and more welcoming, even if only temporarily. Replies showed an overwhelming support for a speed restriction on the A25 through the town; almost as well supported was one way traffic round The Green. We'll put the full results on our website and Facebook page, together with the action we are taking as a result.

It more important than ever to support our local shops, restaurants and businesses. Yet this is not straightforward. Some of our visitors have not behaved as we would have expected: like other parts of the country we are finding that many of those on whom our businesses rely are reluctant to venture out after 3 months of 'Stay at home' messages. We are a welcoming and hospitable town – and want people to feel safe when they come here. Responses to our survey have given suggestions on how we could improve on this and we will follow up those ideas.

As I write this, parts of northern England are under increased restrictions: this cannot happen in Westerham. If we observe guidelines – however confusing they might be – and use our well-known common sense it won't.

The future may be different – certainly in the short term. But Westerham will come through it and emerge the successful and vibrant town in which we are happy to live.

**Helen Ogden, Chairman**

#### **Headline results from the survey on temporary changes to the Town Centre!**

We were delighted with the response to our survey asking for your views on how we could – even if on a temporary basis – make our town centre more welcoming to for visitors, while maintaining social distance. More than 100 of you replied online or in hard copy. We asked if you supported some of the suggestions made to us and for your views on what could be done. The headline results are below.

It is clear that you want speeds through the town to be reduced and there was strong

support for a one-way system round The Green. We have asked KCC to help us achieve this.

Suggestion	Support	Do not support
Restrict speed of traffic through the town centre	114	2
Make a one-way system around The Green	95	15
Part pedestrianise The Green – access for residents and deliveries only	64	48
Completely pedestrianise The Green	33	79
Expand area for outdoor dining or market type stalls	77	46
'Residents only' parking around The Green	51	59

Views on other changes around The Green were mixed – so we will need to do more work before deciding if we take these forwards. But it is clear that you don't want The Green fully pedestrianised.

#### Temporary changes to the Town Centre survey – July 2020 – headline results

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As well as our comments on traffic and The Green, you highlighted the perennial need for parking, and the need to keep our town clean and tidy. You also thought that on a temporary basis only, the areas for outdoor dining could be expanded.

Delayed by Covid-19, we hope to be able to start construction of the additional parking spaces on Hartley and Madan Roads, at Costell's Meadow and at Crockham Hill playing field. We are also pleased that SDC's street cleaning will be back to normal levels by the end of this month – meantime we have increased litter clearing on King George's Field.

There is much more to do; we will continue to do our best and will keep you informed

#### Virtual Forget-me-not Cafe

As the Forget-me-not Cafes of Westerham and Edenbridge have been unable to



open due to Covid19 the Sevenoaks Area Dementia Forum has been holding a 'Virtual' Café on the last Friday in the month at 11am for about an hour with some singing or entertainment.

If you would like to join in please contact Angela at Westerham Town Council who can email you the link when it becomes available.

## Forthcoming Town Council Meetings

**COVID-19 – All Council meetings will now be held 'virtually' – If members of the public wish to join the virtual meeting please contact the Town Clerk prior to the meeting taking place for joining instructions.**

### October

5<sup>th</sup> Council  
8<sup>th</sup> Planning & Development  
22<sup>nd</sup> Planning & Development

Members of the public are very welcome to join those meetings that take place. **The first ten minutes of every meeting are available for members of the public to raise any issues with Councillors.**