



**Saffron Walden Town Council
Action Plan and Priorities from May 2023 to May 2027
For consideration at September 2023 Full Council Meeting**

The following action plan seeks to identify and prioritise activities and objectives for Saffron Walden Town Council for the forthcoming term. It is not an exhaustive list and only seeks to recognise those exceptional projects for delivery in 2023 and beyond and does not take account of or consider services and responsibilities delivered on a routine basis by Saffron Walden Town Council.

The projects accord with budgets as set and projected and Council acknowledges the importance of operating within agreed budgets. Council confirms its commitment to maintaining the existing high levels of financial control and reporting.

Key to RAG Table (Red, Amber, Green)	
The examples given below are not an exhaustive list and simply seek to offer some generic examples of the project status. Some or all of the issues identified may apply	
	<p>Issues or queries with the project which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overspend on budget requiring review of budget/funding streams Delays against milestones Quality issues Resourcing concerns are critical
	<p>Highlighting potential issues or queries with the project which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overspend on budget (manageable) Potential delay against milestones Quality issues – advisory but no problems anticipated with final delivery Resourcing concerns
	<p>No issues or queries with the project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expenditure is as per budget Project on plan to complete on time Quality at expected levels. No resource problems
	<p>Project Completed</p>



Ref No	Initiative	Outcomes	Cttee	Situation	Partners	Timeline	Project Cost	Funded by?	Additional financial comments	Resourcing Needs
1	Refurbish, replace and provide new play equipment including the feasibility of a new play area. Locations: Little Walden And ANO	Delivery of new and improved play areas for children and young people	Assets & Services	July 2023 1. Soft consultation commencing at Little Walden Road, to be followed up in due course with formal consultation. Ascertaining retention of equipment and/or any refurb preferences 2. Need to identify land for new play area	Local community UDC EALC Funders	Summer 2024		currently holding: £10,807 LWR (Petlands) play area refurbishment (EMR code 9275) Plus £2,500 from 2023/24 budget = £13,307 for Little Walden		Delivered by existing resources
2	Water Park	Delivery of some form of water park or facility for the town	A & S	Sept 2021 – May 2023 (summary) 1. Public consultation concluded March 2022, support for project 2. Concerns raised by SWTC and/or through consultation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site ideally would have facilities (toilets/refreshments) • Water usage/consumption • Excessive cost of water/electricity Aug 2023: 3. Discussion around whether a smaller scale paddling pool would be more suitable, similar to Cherry Hinton. Agreed to put forward at future A & S committee for a working group to be formed.		Summer 2025, subject to funding			Note the increased utility costs and need for facilities. Working group to report back	Existing resources assuming new Admin post appointed
3	New Office Accommodation and/or storage facility	Obtaining of cost-effective office space for SWTC compliant with current legislation		Sept 2021 – May 2023 (summary) 1. Staff temporarily based in 2 nd floor office of Town Hall, not an ideal location but workable on temporary basis 2. Nos 3 and 5 Market Place purchased 3. May 2023: following formal report to FC April 2023, a revised schedule of works and use of Nos 3 and 5 Market Place were discussed and agreed. Staff to be based on 1 st floor with 2 nd and 3 rd floors converted to residential July 2023				£28k (EMR code 9320)		Existing resources although contractors also required for specialist works

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				<p>4. Refurb works progressing well across all floors with priority to ground floor (to recognise income) and first floor (for office accommodation)</p> <p>Sep 2023 [Update]</p>						
4	Implement better pedestrian use of the Market Square, including considering part or full pedestrianisation	<p>Improved pedestrian access in and around the town centre</p> <p>Removal of vehicles from the town centre, thereby reducing air pollution and the impact on air quality</p> <p>Potential to create a café' style environment in the town centre, thereby encouraging footfall and dwell time</p>	Assets & Services (given tie-in and impact on the Market)	<p>2020 – May 2023 (summary)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SWTC carried out public consultation 2021/22, evidencing support for part-pedestrianisation of scheme 2. Jan 2022 – SWTC makes formal request to ECC for pedestrianisation of Market Square in accordance with reports and the public consultation. 3. May 2022 - LHP requests formalised and sent to ECC, note that UDC's DEFRA funding may fund some of this activity. 4. September 2022 - SWTC's request for pedestrianisation is in the "evaluation" stage with ECC. 5. UDC parking report (unpublished) supports pedestrianisation of Market Square 6. Jan 2023 – Request outstanding with ECC, and was considered as part of their Local Highway Panel process (at its meeting on 16.3.23). Approval was anticipated by end of March 2023. 7. May 2023 - All LHP projects frozen by ECC, and LHP meeting finally held in July 2023 to confirm continuation; still awaiting TRO for pedestrianisation to be confirmed by ECC. <p>July 2023</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Agreed that ECC would prepare an Agreement confirming that SWTC would operate the pedestrianisation each day; SWTC and ECC Cllr Gadd continue to chase ECC for updates and implementation of this project; no specific update or response received from ECC <p>Sept 2023</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Still waiting for ECC to prepare draft Method Statement 	UDC ECC (via the LHP scheme) NEPP Local Community Retailers BID	Delay at ECC		£2,000 set aside under budget 4135	<p>Could utilise the money from UDC clean air grant? This has been confirmed by UDC as being acceptable</p> <p>(£15k from DEFRA, £8k SPF and £10k SWTC)</p>	Poss need to employ p/t officers to manage road closures

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5	Take further positive measures towards implementing the Town Council's goal of being carbon neutral by 2030 and reducing plastic use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced mowing and hedge cutting Prohibition of glyphosate in Town Council managed green spaces Creation of more green spaces Planting of new hedges and trees Improved connectivity for walking and cycling) Purchase of further battery-operated gardening tools and equipment (rather than petrol) Purchase of further electrical vehicles Support allotments and provision of local food produce Adoption of better environmental working practices 	Full Council	<p>2020 – May 2023 (summary)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Number of new green initiatives have been introduced already, ie <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electric Town Council vehicle New battery-operated equip Introduction of new planting regimes, introducing new trees, hedges and bushes in 2019 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tree planting schemes Mowing and hedge cutting regimes reviewed and reduced where appropriate. Climate emergency plan adopted SWTC involved in numerous sustainability and environmental initiatives, including clean air day, eco-markets, public awareness events. Funding applications made to ECC and UDC for climate change work, neither successful SWTC in contact with Community Energy South and Saffron Walden Community Energy to try to identify local energy schemes <p>Aug 2023:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Strong links formed with UDC on climate change works in SW as per the DEFRA funding. On employment of Office Admin, existing officer resourcing and time to be diverted to delivering climate change initiatives. 	Local community SWACC UDC District and County councillors	Ongoing Series of initiatives and projects pursued and completed – ongoing project		Monies from the Action Plan initiative could be utilised to meet requirements = £71,093 under EMR 9325		From existing resources once Office Admin post appointed on permanent basis, Deputy Town Clerk will lead
6	Improve youth facilities, building on the current outreach projects	The creation or improvement of youth facilities offering a safe, comfortable environment for children and young people to access youth services and / or have an informal, social area	Assets & Services	<p>2020 – May 2023 (summary)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Funding agreement/SLA in place with Youth Outreach Partnership (May 2022) for delivery of youth work 2022 – community consultation carried out, asking young people for views on services and ascertaining their priorities Series of half-term and summer activities carried out by SWTC, led by Events & Activities Officer <p>Aug 2023</p>	CAB Foodbank – as agencies which may refer children and yp to services UDC/ECC youth services Faircroft Art and Music Centre	Ongoing		£13,052 in Budget code 4625 with additional £20k from 2023/24		Existing resources, Events & Activities Officer leading



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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Relationship good with YOP, new weekly youth club anticipated at Jubilee Hub from September 2023 5. Fairycroft House continues discussions with ECC regarding use of building in Fairycroft Road 						
7	<p>Highways Parking Public Rights of Way</p> <p>To continue working with Essex Highways to address town highway issues, including residents' parking, pedestrian access and cycling – specifically to include work on Public Rights of Way (PROW)</p>	<p>To improve pedestrian, cycling and vehicular movement in and around Saffron Walden</p> <p>Identification of potholes and drainage issues in town and reporting of same to ECC which will lead to improved road and paving surfaces</p>	Planning & Road Traffic	<p>2020 – May 2023 (summary)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SWTC priority schemes submitted February 2016 and resubmitted to ECC November 2019. 2. 20mph around town centre implemented 3. Linden Homes S106 money (£420k) allocated by ECC for towards demand change schemes and/or funding of Local Cycling, Walking and Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) including 4. ECC has agreed LHP monies can be used to commission Sustrans to undertake a review of the SW draft cycling schemes 5. Improving cycling and pedestrian facilities generally (largely chasing ECC): - ongoing but extremely slow because of the LHP failures – scheme requests for pedestrian facilities submitted in December 2021 are still largely awaiting first stage validation. Agreed through Planning Committee to continue the cycle working group, new membership required. <p>Sept 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6. PROW: SWTC to work with residents and community groups to identify all unregistered footpaths and get them registered ahead of the 2026 deadline. Work needs to be co-ordinated with others, eg Rambling Society, local walking groups, work from NP, UDC, other interested parties 	<p>ECC Highways UDC County Councillor</p> <p>Ramblers Assoc.</p> <p>UDC ECC NP group</p>	Ongoing: Awaiting progressing of LHP requests via ECC		ADD IN HERE DETAILS OF S106 MONIES AND ANY DEFRA MONIES HELD	Existing resources	
8	Close Gardens	The creation of attractive, inviting and welcoming area of public realm – acting as a gateway into town	A & S	<p>2020 – May 2023 (summary)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning permission received to change/upgrade POS (Jan 2023) 2. Works added to contract finder, no interest registered. 	ECC UDC Local residents	A date/timeline was never given to this project, recognising		£18,670 (EMR 9272) plus £10,000 due from 2023/24 budget	Mix of existing resources and contractors	



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				3. Insufficient funding to continue with any works July 2023: 4. Site tidied and cleared of weeds to provide smarter looking area but works are restricted due to concerns on the structure of the wall/road. 5. More funding required to make project financially viable, and contractors interest needed 6. Land still needs to be transferred to SWTC		the complexity and difficulties in ownership and works required. The project is however shown as amber to identify that funds are needed in order to progress further				for specialist works
9	Refurbish Hill Street toilets to make them cleaner and safer to use	Improved public town facilities, addressing complaints regarding the condition of the toilets	Assets & Services	2020 – May 2023 (summary) 1. Cleaning regimes increased to meet demand 2. Council determined no major refurb required but note budget should be retained to allow for future upgrade/repairs as necessary July 2023 3. Review current cisterns and system, some upgrades may be required – work scheduled for 2023/24	Local Community TIC Retailers BID UDC	Ongoing given need for remedial works		£21,258 EMR (EMR code 9190)		Existing resources
10	Establishment of a “Sure Start” type facility to replace (in part) lost services – project renamed: Jubilee Community Hub to reflect a variety of activities, including Sure Start services, which will operate from the Jubilee Hub (aka Garden Rooms)	The provision of essential services, advice and guidance for children, young people and families.	Assets & Services	2020 – May 2023 (summary) 1. SWTC keen to host Sure-Start style services, offering family support packages. 2. March 2023 – SWTC secures 10-year lease from UDC for Jubilee Hub (formerly known as The Garden Rooms). Sure Start services can be offered from this facility 3. Partnership arrangement at Jubilee Hub established between SWTC, UCAN and Enterprise East. 4. Soft launch of programme and activities from April 2023 5. Significant repair/refurbishment works carried out at Jubilee Hub 6. National Lottery Bid in progress as a joint initiative between the 3 named partners	UDC & ECC Children and Youth Services CAB Volunteer Uttlesford Foodbank Churches Community groups working with children and young people			Jubilee Hub budget (240): £16,900 as per 2023/24 budget		Existing resources



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				<p>July 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7. NLF bid outstanding, a/w reply 8. Numerous new initiatives and projects launched with partners including pushchair pitstop aimed at young families. These new initiatives can be built upon with additional services added to represent community needs. 9. Community consultation ongoing, asking residents what services they would like delivered at Jub Hub <p>Sept 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10. National Lottery Fund submitted, Round 1 successful, Round 2 application to be written (by Nov 2023) 11. Other funding sought and outcome awaited. 						
11	Complete the refurbishment of Chaters Hill	To deliver an improved, environmentally friendly landscape	Assets & Services	<p>July 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Works to Chaters Hill scheduled for 2023/24 2. Query SWTC resourcing levels to manage 		2023/24		<p>£7,000 future trash screen works (EMR 9241)</p> <p>£5,362 (EMR 9240) repair works</p>		Existing resources but need to conclude other projects first
12	Improve public safety by continuing to improve our CCTV systems and consideration of other crime prevention measures	Creation of a safe place to live, work and socialise in which people feel safe	Finance & Establishment	<p>2020 – May 2023 (summary)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SWTC maintains an ongoing review and evaluation of its CCTV system; a systemic part of the operations role 2. Town Centre system continues to operate effectively 3. New systems installed at Lime Avenue and Crabtrees to protect assets 4. SW PCSO left post autumn 2022 and no replacement although Town Team continues to operate and good engagement with PC Ryan McNamara 5. New CCTV Code of Conduct adopted October 2022 6. PCSO funding removed from core budget given the increase in the local Neighbourhood Policing Team, with monies set aside for the support and provision of PC Specials 	Essex Police UDC Safer Communities Team Youth services	Ongoing		<p>£10,000 EMR (EMR code 9050)</p> <p>£13,000 (budget) with £9063 spent 2022/23 on upgrade/repair works</p>		Existing resources



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				<p>July 2023:</p> <p>7. Continuous review of cameras ongoing, forming part of consideration for 2023/24 budget. All cameras fully operational</p>						
13	Repair and refurbishment works to the Cemetery	To ensure the chapel is protected and remedial works are completed as and when required and on a scheduled basis. (No repeat of the Town Hall 2015)	A & S	<p>2020 – May 2023 (summary)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Radwinter Road Cemetery Chapel is a Grade II listed building, List Entry Number 1297741. SWTC should protect the historic importance of this building and could look to better promote and use this facility. Access and condition report received, noting building in good structural order although some insignificant masonry works (to gargoyles/features) could be carried out. Project purposefully paused given that works are not essential and the chapel remains in good order <p>Aug 2023</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Path works scheduled 2023/24 Funding bid to be submitted 	English Heritage UDC Planning UDC Conservation Officer	<p>No structural concerns to the building.</p> <p>Project to be completed pending resourcing and financing</p>		£11,053 EMR (LTM, gravestones etc) (EMR Code 9150)	5 year plan £2,000 a year from 2023-24	Existing resources although specialist contractors will be required for some elements
14	Creation of a new community centre in Saffron Walden	Delivery of new and improved community facilities for Saffron Walden	Assets & Services	<p>2020 – May 2023 (summary)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> SWTC proposes new community centre at Lime Avenue, plans drawn up and application paused pending other opportunities <p>July 2023:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Must be considered in the 'round' with funding from developer. Query if centre could be combined with a new nursery facility during the day as at Great Chesterford and other multi-functional uses. 	Local community UDC EALC Funders Prospective builders	Project paused		£50,000 (EMR 9340) Could also be funded via EMR 9325 with balance of £71,093	<p>Monies available:</p> <p>£xxxx Redrow development</p> <p>£200k from Linden Homes, pending change to S106</p>	Officer resourcing required to lead on major build project
15	New footbridge at Lime Avenue			<p>July 2023:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> New project to install footbridge connecting Lime Avenue Playing Fields to footpath heading north from Caton's Lane. <p>Permission to be given by ECC but not needed if no interruption of the stream. Awaiting officer resource to identify a suitable site and pursue</p>	ECC					<p>Technical knowledge required.</p> <p>Design and spec?</p>



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16	New stage for Assembly Hall: - subject to officers' recommendation;			Aug 2023: 1. New project to replace old and heavy stage. A new stage would be easier to manage, better design, lower and open new opportunities for hiring of Town Hall – quotes to be obtained						Existing resources although specialist help may be required
17	Speed Reduction Programme: VAS machine (ie flashing speed indicator) for around town /			Aug 2023: 1. Need police buy-in and support. Police to provide additional information / advice so that an informed decision can be reached 2. Planning and Transport Committee agreed to work more closely with local police and to try to identify solutions to speeding in the town						Existing resources
18	Jubilee Gardens work on West Bank to create a patio and seating area;			July 2023: 1. Need to provision in 2023/24 budget and onwards, capital project						Existing resources although specialist help may be required
19	Literary trail: DE to speak to the BiD;			Aug 2023: 1. Possible arts and culture funding available 2. ECC funding / Giles at Cultural Engine may be able to help/advise 3. Include TIC in discussions too						Existing resources
20	SW to Ashdon railway line path: - agreed to revisit. As a first step to explore whether there had ever been a historic footpath that could be registered;			July 2023: 1. SWTC progressed this circa 2020/21 and there are land ownership issues to be resolved. Principle of support adopted in Ashdon's NP 2. Request made to UDC to include the potential project as a wish in the forthcoming Uttlsford LCWIP						Existing resources
21	Sports hub			July 2023: 1. Known that user groups are speaking with Chase New Homes to progress						Officer resourcing required to lead on major build project
22	Additional weekly market	Provision of additional market and support to those starting up new business ventures	A & S	July 2023: 1. SWTC has secured Shared Prosperity Funding (SPF) from UDC to deliver an additional weekly market in SW	UDC BID Traders	From Sept 2023, 1 year funding	ADD IN SPF HERE	All externally funded by SPF		Additional resourcing of Admin Support and



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					Other T/P Councils					Ops (to erect gazebos etc) included in funding bid
23	Partnership working: To engage much more closely with cultural providers in Saffron Walden including providing support and partnership working.	A stronger, unified community in which partners are able to work on joint projects and initiatives, potentially applying for joint funding.		<p>July 2023: SWTC working (or has worked) closely with variety of partners in SW</p> <p>Summer events held in 2022 with Saffron Hall, further opportunity to work with and support in 2023/24</p>	Fairycroft House, Saffron Screen, Saffron Hall, BID, UDC Enterprise East, UCAN, Sports clubs Uttlesford Community Travel.					



Completed and Significant Capital Expenditure Projects, provided for information only

Ref	Project	Outcome	Conclusion
1	Enhance and create new sports facilities in the town (Lime Avenue)	Delivery of new and improved sporting facilities for residents and visitors to Saffron Walden	Land transferred March 2022 – complete S106 funding of £141k received, allocated as follows: £50k Tudor Park play area replacement/repairs £38k vehicle replacement £53k Lime Ave pavilion and associated works
2	Refurbish, replace and provide new play equipment GOLDEN ACRE	Delivery of new and improved play areas for children and young people	Opened September 2021
3	Refurbish, replace and provide new play equipment AAPF	Delivery of new and improved play areas for children and young people	Completed July 2023
4	Completion of the town's Neighbourhood Plan to create a stronger future for the town	To deliver the town's Neighbourhood Plan, affording greater protection from poor and speculative development. To deliver on the outcomes and priorities of the matters as identified within the Neighbourhood Plan	NP passed Referendum and 'made' by UDC Cabinet in October 2022
5	Improve access and paths in Bridge End Garden, particularly for the disabled	An improvement in pedestrian access for all with a particular focus on improved access for the disabled	Considerable works completed 2022 / 23
6	Complete the refurbishment of Common Hill West	To deliver an improved, environmentally friendly landscape, removing residents' parking from Common Hill West	1. Refurbishment of Common Hill West completed 2. Balance of monies set aside for Chaters Hill works
7	Town Hall Repairs / Refurbishment	Upkeep and maintenance of an historic and well used community facility	July 2023: 1. Lift installed May 2023 2. Minor repair works carried out to roof Works scheduled and budgeted within EMR and annual contract works
8	Purchase and refurbishment of former Nat West Building	Purchase is complete Refurbishment works ongoing – anticipated completion May 2024	