

Swanley Town Council

Civic Centre, St Marys Road, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7BU

Tel: 01322 665855

www.swanleytowncouncil.gov.uk

ESTATES AND FACILITIES

Date 15th October 2020

A meeting of the above committee will be held at the Council Chamber, Civic Centre on **Wednesday 21st October 2020 from 7:30pm** or at the conclusion of the public participation session.



Mr S Nash
CEO / Town Clerk

Committee Members: (Chair) Cllr S Andrews, (Deputy Chair) Cllr L Ball,
Cllr C Barnes, Cllr J Domigan, Cllr M Foster, Cllr J Griffiths,
Cllr T Searles, Cllr J Tuckfield

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

If required, the meeting will be preceded by a public participation period of up to 15 minutes in total at 7:30pm. Members of the public are also entitled to speak, during the meeting, on agenda items only and with express permission from the Chairman / Mayor. Those wishing to speak on an Agenda item must indicate this during Public Participation.

THIS WILL BE A VIRTUAL ZOOM MEETING

Swanley Town Council is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: STC Council Meetings

Time: Oct 21, 2020 19:30 London

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83715293642?pwd=RTNpbmJvd3pFaG1kZExaTVI5NklzQT09>

Meeting ID: 837 1529 3642

Passcode: 752688

One tap mobile

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Dial by your location

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+44 203 901 7895 United Kingdom

+44 131 460 1196 United Kingdom

+44 203 051 2874 United Kingdom

+44 203 481 5237 United Kingdom

Meeting ID: 837 1529 3642

Passcode: 752688

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kbjAblLSsh>

RECORDING (AUDIO AND / OR VIDEO OF COUNCIL MEETINGS AND USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

During this meeting the public are allowed to record the Committee and Officers from the front of the public seating area only, providing it does not disrupt the meeting. Any items in the exempt Part of an agenda cannot be recorded and no recording device is to be left behind. If another member of the public objects to being recorded, the person(s) recording must stop doing so until that member of the public has finished speaking. The use of social media is permitted, but all members of the public are requested to switch their mobile phone devices to silent for the duration of the meeting.

MOBILE PHONES

Member of the public are reminded that the use of mobile phones (other than on silent) is prohibited at Town Council and Committee meetings.

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

To approve as correct the Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 15th July 2020.

4. PARKS DIRECTOR REPORT

To comment on the report and ask questions of the Director

5. SOUTH & SOUTH EAST IN BLOOM REPORT

To note the South & South East in Bloom Report

6. SANTAS GROTTO

To approve the new location of Santa's Grotto to Swanley Park for 2020, verbal report from the Assistant Town Clerk

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 20th January 2020

If you would like further information on any of the agenda items, please contact Mr Steve Nash, on 01322 665855 or snash@swanleytowncouncil.gov.uk

To: Estates & Facilities Committee

From: Ryan Hayman Park & Open Spaces Director

Date: 21 October 2020

Subject: Estates & Facilities Update

1. Purpose of report

1.1 To inform the committee of any new projects, bookings, or changes to operations.

2. Recommendations

2.1 To accept the update report and note any new bookings/changes to operations.

3. Background and information

Swanley Park and Open Spaces

3.1 Park Performance –

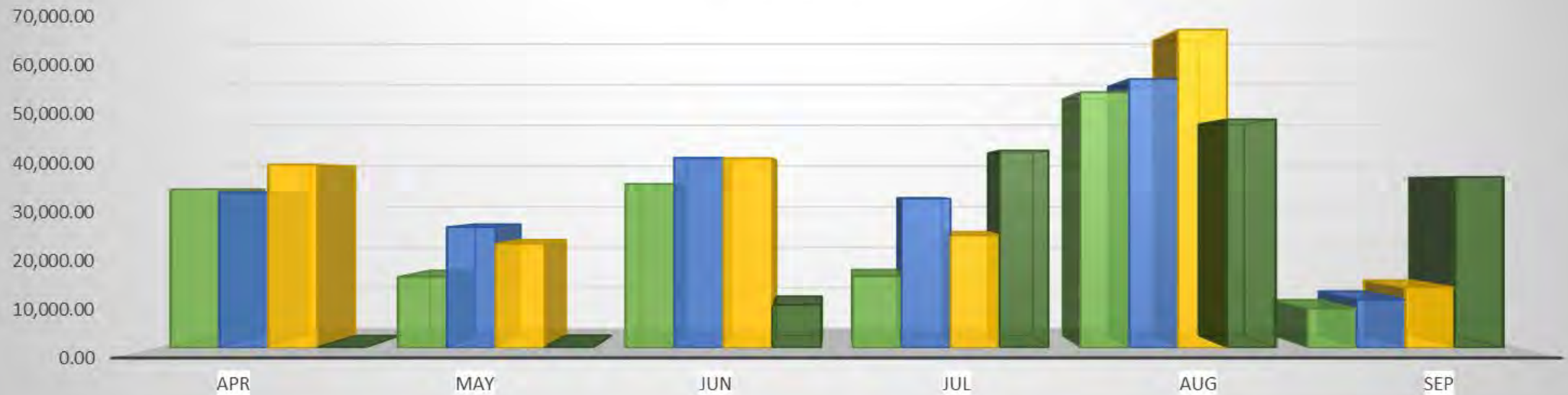
Income figures for 2020 have been dramatically affected by the pandemic and more specifically the lockdown period. This reflects minimal income in April and May. In addition, June was impacted adversely because not all activities could be opened. In July, August, and September a new normal was established with all activities able to open. However, some restrictions still harmed our income potential, such as limiting the pool capacity. This led to overall visitor numbers being down by 60% as people flocked to sites such as beaches, with no set limits on capacity. This adversely affected our car park income and activities potential revenue.

In the pool, a £10 charge was applied for non-residents who could hire a 50-minute pod, residents could book for free. This cost helped cover some of the covid-19 precautions we had to introduce. Each booking could include up to six in a social bubble. This helped revenue increase by £15,105.97 and is a totally new income stream. Income from the Cafeteria has been reduced by two months rent contributions and the Ice Cream truck has been reduced by four months. Income from car parks is collected quarterly, in September revenue is higher than average because it includes the June-August parking permit receipts. September-November will be included in or around the December period income.

Expenditure is abnormally high, but this is predominately because of the costs involved with the splash pool renovation (£121,419), toilet refurbishment (£11,657), soft play (£11,742) and rugby pitch (£5,252.00) which combined total £150,070. The park saved on the costs of hosting the 1812 Night which in 2019 totalled £15,932.98. Additionally, significant savings have been made on salaries.

Social Media has grown by over 15% since the beginning of the year. We have also received over 67 Thousand 'Check In's' to date and our posts have reached more than 1.73 Million Facebook Users this year alone

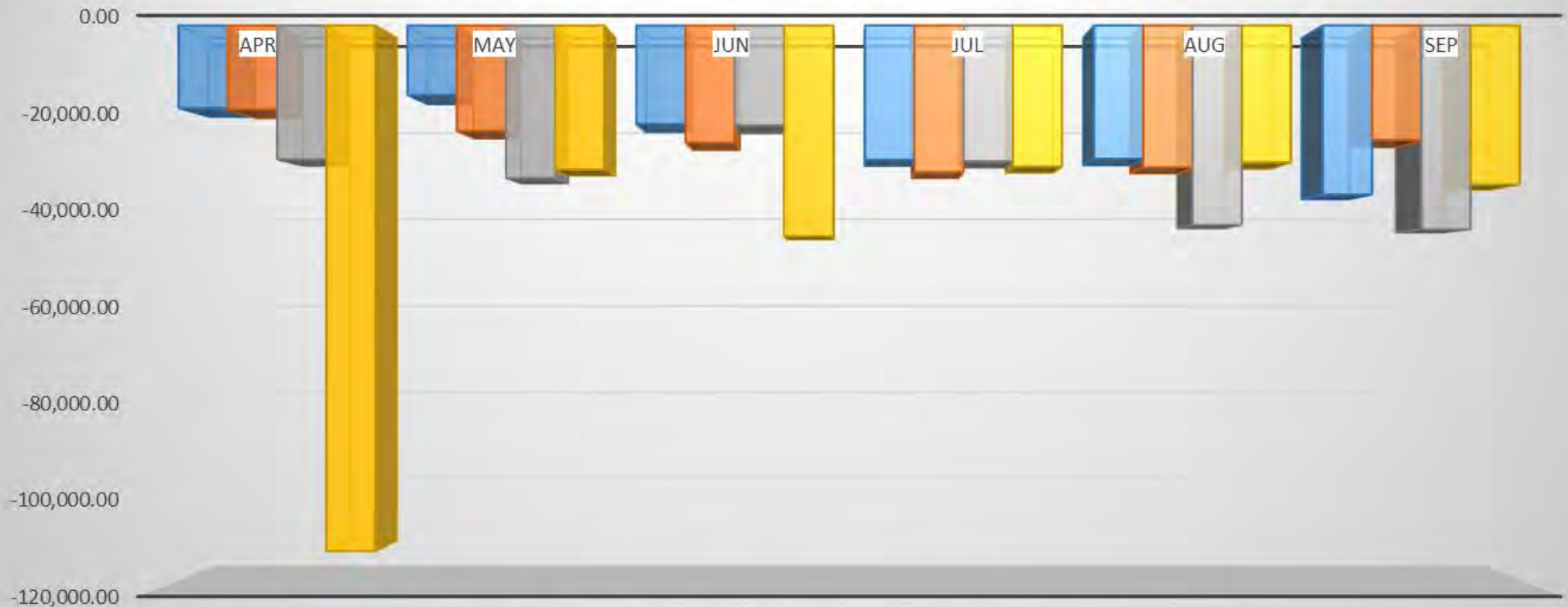
Income



Income 2017 Income 2018 Income 2019 Income 2020

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Income 2017	34,338.87	15,330.47	35,527.39	15,523.91	55,381.11	8,467.24
Income 2018	33,651.35	26,154.94	41,201.02	32,304.01	58,241.72	10,505.28
Income 2019	39,718.34	22,523.44	41,094.78	24,383.53	68,938.36	13,064.68
Income 2020	100.00	210.00	9,285.81	42,744.95	49,512.72	37,024.62

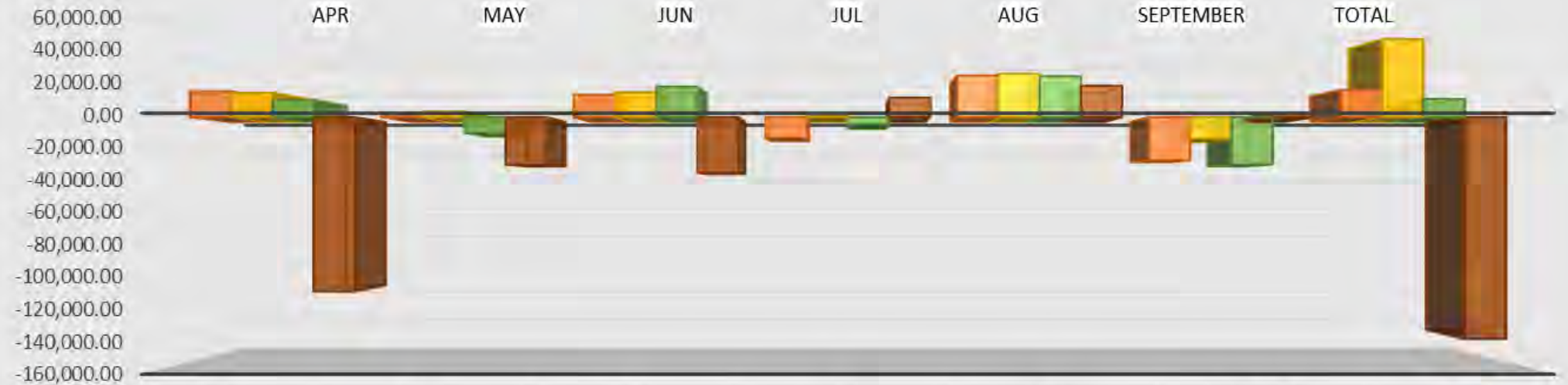
Expenditure



	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Expenditure 2017	-17,670.09	-14,846.39	-21,100.34	-28,693.36	-28,506.39	-36,165.64
Expenditure 2018	-17,940.98	-22,552.07	-25,095.40	-31,394.54	-30,343.76	-24,478.27
Expenditure 2019	-28,652.64	-32,623.81	-21,356.17	-29,061.71	-42,653.97	-43,600.77
Expenditure 2020	-112,460.88	-30,811.05	-45,115.93	-30,186.21	-29,311.40	-34,002.77

■ Expenditure 2017
 ■ Expenditure 2018
 ■ Expenditure 2019
 ■ Expenditure 2020

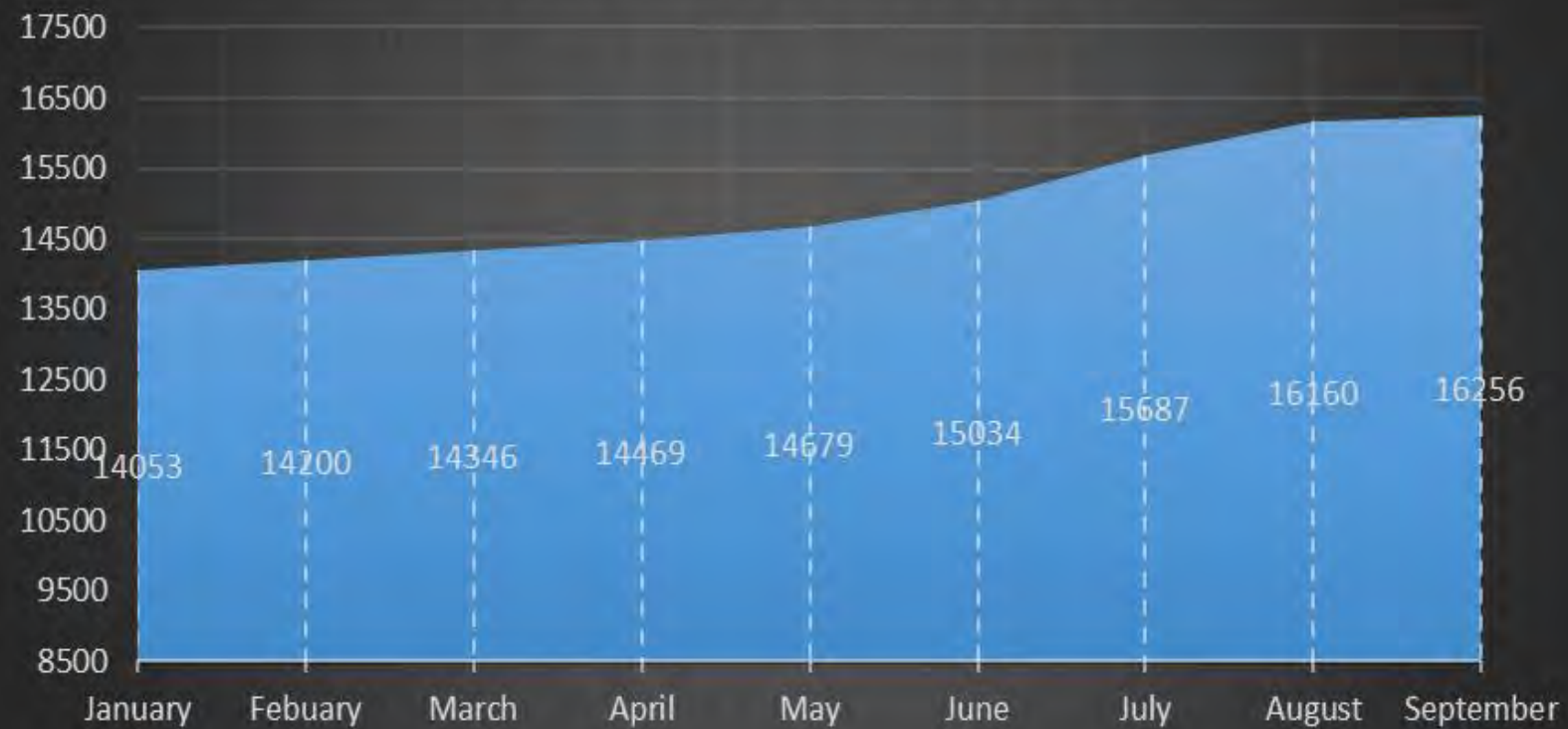
Profit/Loss



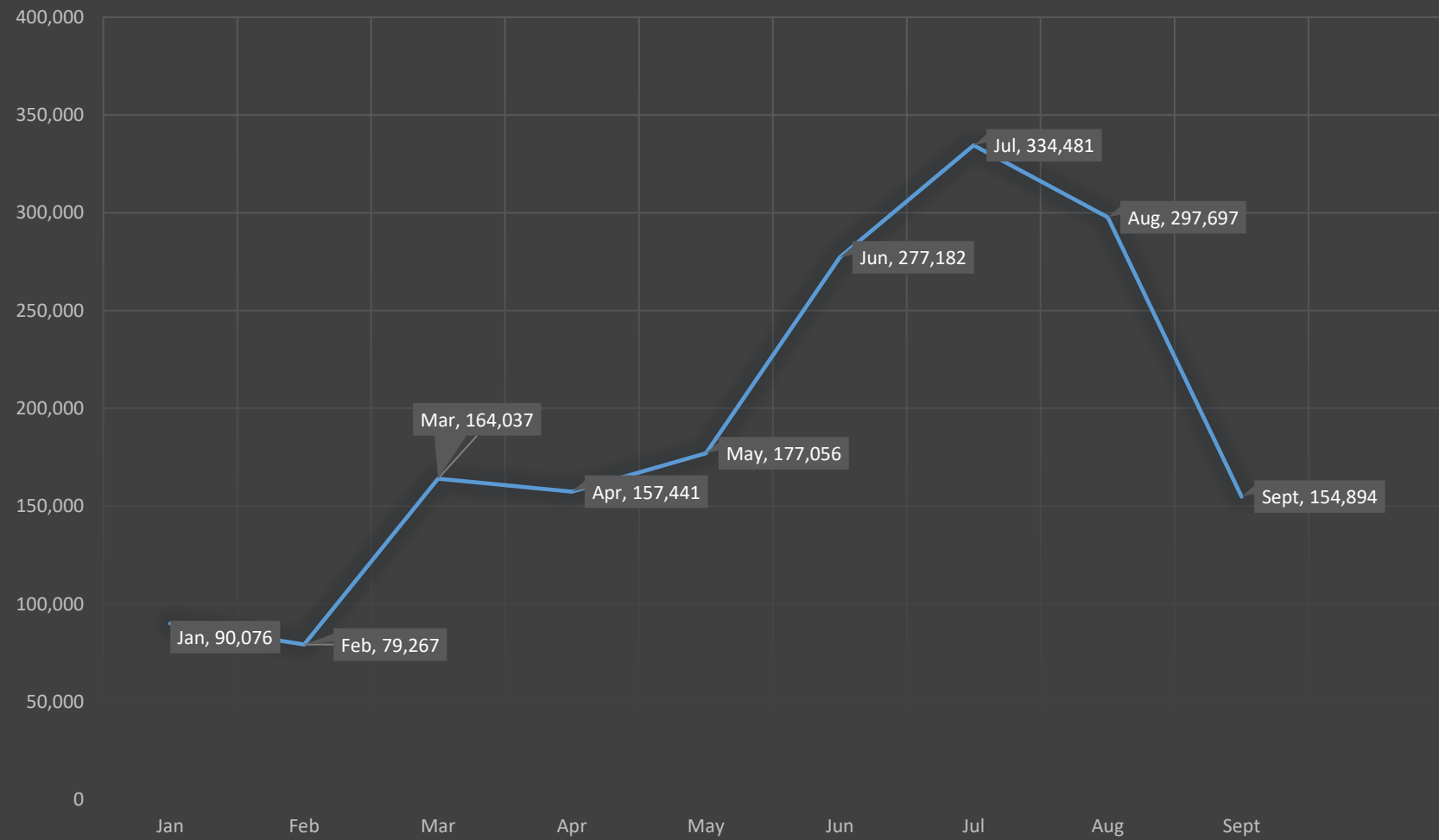
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	September	Total
P/L 2017	16,668.78	484.08	14,427.05	-13,169.45	26,874.72	-27,698.40	17,586.78
P/L 2018	15,710.37	3,602.87	16,105.62	909.47	27,897.96	-13,972.99	50,253.30
P/L 2019	11,065.70	-10,100.37	19,738.61	-4,678.18	26,284.39	-30,536.09	11,774.06
P/L 2020	-112,360.88	-30,601.05	-35,830.12	12,558.74	20,201.32	3,021.85	-143,010.14

P/L 2017 P/L 2018 P/L 2019 P/L 2020

Facebook Growth 2020



Facebook Reach



Visitor satisfaction across the three major review sites has remained stable with no increase or decrease compared to last year. The park has a high satisfaction rate which has been recognised by Trip Advisor. For 2020 we received the Travellers' Choice accolade which officially cements our position in the top 10% of attractions worldwide. Although largely positive we have two trending complaints from park users. The first is related to the charge for the pool this year. The second is associated with the parking charge and more specifically the system failing when users try to pay.



Congratulations Swanley Park on being a Travellers' Choice Winner. Each year, we comb through reviews, ratings, and saves from Travellers everywhere, and use that info to award the very best. You're part of an exclusive group, and we want to help you celebrate (and promote) this major accomplishment.

You're in the top 10% of attractions worldwide.

3.2 Planned Developments –

The autumn and winter time once again provides us with the opportunity to concentrate on important park improvements.

The Soft Play Centre has already been started with the old entrances now fully blocked up and new doorways and windows cut out. The doors, windows and shutters firms have been booked in to do the works and might already be completed by the time the meeting arrives. Outside the new entrance way has been started with the removal of the Hand Boat Pool and Racing Track which is being re-homed. Within the Splash Pool a new activity area is being created at the back of the space. This will house the Tree Trek, Hand Boat Pool and Waterslide that we already have.



The male and original female toilets are due to be refurbished this winter. This will build upon the successful opening of our new female and disabled user-friendly toilets. The update will be in keeping with the newly refurbished toilets. These facilities will provide the much-needed extra capacity, ahead of a hopefully covid-19 unrestricted season.



3.3 Open Spaces –

Swanley is levelling up on its sporting provisions with extra pitches being marked up on previously underutilised Town Council land. A new full-sized youth pitch has been created on the land directly opposite The Olympic. This will home Swanley Rangers and should boost income for The Olympic through extra footfall. In addition, a new mini pitch has been marked out at the Recreation Ground on the land adjacent to the Clocktower Pavilion. This pitch will home Swanley FC and has already proven popular. These extra pitches have reduced the dependency on our two regular full-sized football pitches at the Recreation Ground. This provides us with the opportunity to turn the pitch nearest to the Civic Centre into a full-sized rugby pitch and means Swanley RFU can once again play in Swanley.

Trollies are being collected on an almost daily matter with more than 75 stored in the yard to date. The Assistant Town Clerk has written to the stores and Aldi has accepted responsibility and will pay our charges before arranging pick up of the trollies. We are yet to receive a response from ASDA.



In addition to aiding the above, over the past three months the Estates Team have been busy grass cutting, litter picking, clearing fly tipping, tree works, maintaining hedges and undertaking all contract work required. The team also set-up bookings for tennis, netball and mark out all our sports pitches. A small example of the some of the work carried out over the past few months is evidenced below.

Before – Ellis Close



After - Ellis Close



Before – Swanley Park



After (Since Chipped) – Swanley Park



De weeded Town Steps



Before – Pinks Hill

After – Pinks Hill



3.4 Maintenance –

To date more than 300 individual maintenance jobs have been completed by our staff since April 2020. This is a 100% increase on the previous year. The increase reflects, better working practices, the can-do attitude of our staff and the improved scheduling and logging of maintenance tasks.

Over the past three months a particular focus has been given to our five properties. All houses have now had an electrical inspection and the houses often require our Officer to help repair or fix minor jobs. Common issues include toilets not flushing, faulty showers, water leaks, broken boilers, and lighting malfunctions. The team responds to these issues as quickly as possible, but all tenants have been positive about our service. Among these day-to-day maintenance tasks some larger projects have also been undertaken. Some of which are outlined below.

Due to recent security breaches at the park, double glazed windows have been fitted to both the Park Office and the Grounds Hut. In addition, a security gate has been added to the back door of the Grounds Hut.



The roof above the changing rooms at the Civic Centre recently leaked into the changing rooms which then started to flow into the Alexandra Suite. Thankfully, all staff pulled together to clear the water away quickly. The roof was then urgently repaired and it is expected that the repair will be long-lasting.



A new office has been built at The Olympic. This office is more conveniently located and now employees can monitor the bar more closely and access the bar quicker if and when required. Also upstairs a window was boarded up to increase the dartboard capacity for the popular dart competitions.



UK Power Network have upgraded the power supply to the newly built Plant Room which supplies the Splash Pool at Swanley Park. This upgrade helps ensure the facility is now obtaining the supply it requires.

The Olympic's outside decking area was repaired and painted. Furniture was purchased and built to occupy the freshly updated outside space. Moreover, the fence was repaired by the bowls club.



Following a collision the sensor for the Civic's electric gates was repaired promptly. The guilty party admitted fault and have been invoiced to compensate for the carried out works.



3.5 Park Events –

This year we held our inaugural drive in cinema. This completely complied with the relevant guidelines and was an innovative way of providing an event during the pandemic. The event was a huge success which provided us with a profit of £2150. We are currently planning a Christmas version of the event. Unfortunately, all other events this year were either postponed until 2021 or cancelled.



3.6 Park Winter Closing –

From November 1st, 2020 many activities will be closed until spring 2021. However, The Great Outdoors area will remain open and this season we will trial winter pedalos. It is then hoped we can open the Soft Play Centre at some point in the winter. The top car park will be closed at 4pm until the spring but the bottom car park will remain open 24/7. The Café will open dependant on weather and around any planned breaks they have. When our limited activities are open the onsite toilet facilities will also be open.

3.7 Awards –

3.7.1 – COVID-19 Secure

Swanley Park obtained the 'We're Good To Go' award and was one of the first sites in the UK to achieve this status. This mark helped build confidence with the public and enticed visitors back to the park.



3.7.2 – Green Flag

Green Flag decided at the beginning of the year that it would still physically judge sites as normal, despite Covid-19.

After judgement, the Park received a Green Flag for the third year in a row, after losing the award in 2017. Feedback has yet to be published for the site.

The Recreation Ground entered the scheme in 2019 for the first time and lost out on the award by one mark. This year it has received the award, meaning the Town Council has two Green Flag accredited sites for the first time.



The comments from the judge are below.

'An attractive and well managed site, which is set out to maximise natural surveillance and sightlines into and across it which promotes a strong sense of personal security and wellbeing. The provision and quality of sports and recreational facilities is very good, and the commitment of the council and staff to widen community participation in new sports on site, e.g. rugby and netball, is to be commended.

There is a strong sense that staff are working hard to keep the site looking forward and making small but appropriate improvements was evident on both the day of the visit and in the management plan’.

This year Elephant Park was entered for the first time. We are yet to receive feedback or a result for this site. However, by the date of the meeting the Park and Open Spaces Director should hopefully have an update.

3.7.3 – South & South East in Bloom

This year we received a virtual judgement which resulted in reports on each site being submitted. We received record results. A total of five awards were won across the town. The results are outlined below.



<u>Category</u>	<u>Site</u>	<u>Award</u>
Town/City Centre	Swanley Town	Silver-Gilt
Small Conservation Area	Swanley Park, Swanley	Silver-Gilt
Large Park	Swanley Park, Swanley	Silver-Gilt
Churchyard	St Mary's Church, Swanley	Silver
Commons/Open Space	Swanley Recreation Ground, Swanley	Silver

Swanley Recreation Ground



Swanley Wildlife & Nature Reserve Area



Swanley Park



3.8 Park Borehole –

The water level at Swanley Park's lake, drops between 8 inches to 20 inches of water every summer through natural evaporation.

To counter this the Park & Open Spaces Director secures a licence with Thames Water to pump up to 1.8 million litres of water in the lake from the main road. This ensures the water level does not drop too low. A borehole would be a potential long-term solution to this ever-present issue. A report on the feasibility and proposed quotations of this project can be submitted to council when funds allow, however, it would be advantageous to do this prior to next summer.

3.9 Dog Training –

K9 Training requested a contract to hire the field opposite Alder Way in Swanley Park three months ago. However, the Park and Open Spaces Director wanted to first see the public reaction to these sessions in an open space.

Therefore, the company have now been trialling sessions at Swanley Park for a couple of months. The sessions are proven popular. Specifically, the sessions help train discipline for challenging dogs, who may have otherwise been put down. The trainer also teaches controlled aggression for police and army dogs.



We currently receive £100 a month in rent. The trainer has offered the Town Council £300 a month if a licence to occupy was available. The trial is on-going and to date we have had the following written public comments of support or against the sessions being held at the park.

Support – 6

Against – 2

3.10 Swanley Skate Park –

Mayor Cllr Lesley Dyball, Cllr Andrew Skipper, Cllr Roddy Hogarth of Sevenoaks District Council and Swanley Town Council's Parks and Open Spaces Director, recently met with the skate park community at the Recreation Ground to discuss how the Town Council can support them. The group had ideas which could be implemented in the short-term as well as longer-term aspirations. Staff installed a bin which the skaters said was much needed and various other improvements are planned. The community have been tasked with the objective of coming up with proposed designs which could be potentially used for a future new skate park. However, they are aware we would need to work closely together to obtain the relevant funding.



The skating group are also designing artwork proposals for repainting the current skate park. This will help give a sense of ownership to the community and ensure it looks revitalised for the next few year, while we work towards a new skate park. Sevenoaks District Council have offered their time and connections to help fund the final design and painting of the park.



3.11 Incidents –

The Park and Open Spaces Director produces a report monthly which reflects upon any incidents of note. Some incidents are more serious than others, but in general cases have been higher than previous years. There appears to be an upwards trend in incidents.

July – 9

August – 13

September – 16

Over the past three months the main reoccurring incidents are.

1. Anti-Social Behaviour – 8 Incidents
2. Dangerous Driving – 8 Incidents
3. Aggression/Assault – 6 Incidents

To help deter crimes and improve safety for our staff an upgraded CCTV system is now completely up and running. In addition, a new 24/7 monitored alarm system has been fitted in the Grounds Hut. Furthermore, security guards are now being booked on-site.

4. Conclusions

4.1 As highlighted in this report, we continue to aim to maximise the use of our facilities, whilst also generating additional income for the Council.

Ryan Hayman

Park & Open Spaces Director

South and South East In Bloom 2020 Report

Wednesday 21st October 2020

Swanley Town Council entered five categories for South and South East In Bloom which were:-

- Town Centre and Urban Community – Whole Town
- Conservation Area – Nature Reserve
- Commons/ Green Space - Swanley Recreation Ground
- Large Park – Swanley Park
- Churchyard – St Mary's Churchyard

The Churchyard was a new entry which had been discussed by the judges and myself during the 2019 judging for the Town Centre.



The judging had to be amended this year due to COVID-19 and in place of the judges actually being taken to look at the entry sites in addition to presentation documents being submitted prior to the judging, a more detailed document for each category was submitted for desktop judging.



Each of our five entries achieved an award either equal to or better than last year with the Churchyard achieving a Silver Award for the first time entry.

The Mayor of Swanley Cllr Lesley Dyball said "Given the difficult circumstances that we have all been through this year, the town's flower displays have been an uplifting visual boost for everyone" this has been reiterated by both residents and visitors to Swanley who have called or emailed to say thank you for such wonderful displays.



South and South East in Bloom is about so much more than just the floral displays and community events and community involvement play a huge part in the judging process and scores received. This includes things such as The Great British Spring Clean, Armed Forces Day and 1812 concert. With COVID-19 community involvement has been difficult with planned events having to be cancelled or postponed, however the way in which Swanley's residents together with Swanley Town Council staff and councilors responded to provide help to the elderly and vulnerable during lockdown certainly helped to move our award from Silver to Silver Gilt.



All of the entry reports indicate that this is an area which we can improve on. We hope that plans we had for some of the community involvement for 2020 for such as St Mary's School students looking after the planters on the recreation ground, St Georges Day in the Town Centre and Swanley In Bloom competition for Swanley Residents will be able to go ahead in 2021. This will help to move us towards achieving a Gold award in the future.



It has been challenging to obtain sponsorship during these most difficult of times but a reasonable level of sponsorship has been achieved however with more sponsorship or an increase in the budget an even better display could be provided for 2021.

Toni Roast
Assistant Town Clerk