

Bat & Ball Station

Forget - Me - Not Café

A warm welcome to our first newsletter of 2023! In this update we reveal new projects and exciting updates, whilst saying goodbye to Warm Welcome Space mornings in March. We'd like to thank all those volunteers and staff who've been busy working at the Station.

Over the past few months we've had some brilliant speakers come in for our Forget-Me-Not Café, one particularly person to note is Chris our local Town Crier and a Pearly King. In our most recent café, Chris spoke about the role of being a Pearly King and the fascinating history behind this. During his talk we had a surprise visit from the Mayor and Councillor Richard Parry, who enjoyed the café and Chris's talk immensely. We also had another visit from Irene Collins from Every Step Counts, a wellbeing walk group around Sevenoaks; it was quite a hit with the attendees, particularly those who are carers or family members as it's gives them an opportunity to socialize and see some friendly support.



Spring is the perfect time of year to get out of the house and enjoy the beginning of warmer days. Check out our updates below and pop in for a visit to our Heritage Station!

Heritage South Eastern & Chatham style bench update

Since our bench has gone off for restoration after a few vandals damaged it, we've had a few 'hiccups' since. It wasn't quite clear how much damage the bench sustained with vandalism and decay running rife within the wood, almost rending a few elements near impossible to repair. The carpenters David and Brian have been left to improvise a few design elements of the bench and match it as close as possible to other similar South East & Chatham Style benches (Image above: new rear bench legs



awaiting completion of mortices & Image left: five new short 'front to back rails'). The style of bench isn't as common as it once was, which proved tricky when designing it; most railway platform benches bare no resemblance to the heritage benches, being the newer metal South Eastern benches. (see image below of Bat & Ball Station pre-restoration).



We are obtaining a new replica SE & Chatham bench which will sit alongside the original and replace the metal South Eastern benches, funded by the Railway Heritage Trust. We'll hopefully have both the benches back at the Station by summertime!



Over the next couple of months we have a some exciting talks and an art workshop in the future run by Creative Minds;

14th June The History of Train Masters and Sevenoaks Trains by Elliot Waters

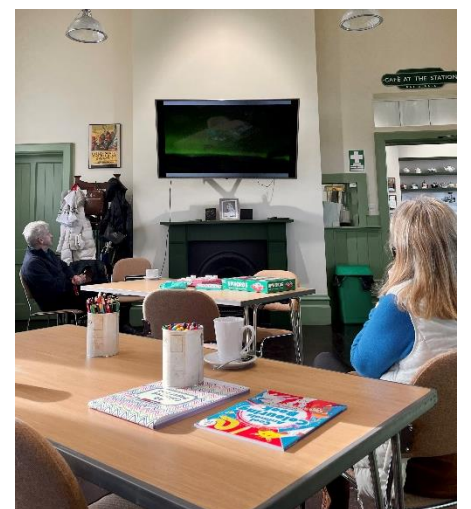
12th July 'Do you remember?' fun quiz (dementia friendly) by Phil Raymond

9th August 19th and 20th Century Kent/Sevenoaks by Bob Ogley

Aside from talks we also have dementia friendly games, delicious cakes and our very friendly volunteers Hazel, Abby, and Nicola! Join us at 10:30am - 12:30pm every 2nd Wednesday of the month!

The end of the Stations Warm Welcome Space

At the end of March we ended our Warm Welcome Space mornings, as did many other locations with Sevenoaks Town. We were amazed at the generosity of the Sevenoaks community with coats, books, and games being donated over the last 4 months. Even though the warmer Spring weather is here, there are still many residents who are struggling with the cost of living, loneliness, and the mental health crises. For those who attended, the mornings were a great help, providing a safe space to chat with our volunteers, listen to a few talks and enjoy refreshments. We would like to thank Julie and Anne, our patient volunteers who attended every Monday morning even on the quieter days.



Darent Valley Rail Trails!

As a special surprise to us, Darent Valley Landscape Partnership scheme have created a selection 17 different rail trails from 2.5 to 9 miles through stunning landscape, heritage towns and villages from train stations in the Darent Valley. Our wonderful Station is featured in Walk 12, starting at Bat & Ball Station through Sevenoaks Quarry, Oxdenhill Shaw and Meadows before finishing up at Otford Station! These maps are available at Bat & Ball Station for free or download the app (Image left: QR code for Rail Trails)



Supper Club with Tom

Delicious Supper Club! Over the course of the year, Tomasz has been busy planning menus for the Vegan Supper Club at the café, as part of the Stations green initiative. The first Supper Club for 2023 went very well, 11 people attended with a few members from Sevenoaks Vegan Club. We also has flowers featured from Sevenoaks Florist on St Johns Hill.



*“Thank you Tomasz and your lovely wife for a fantastic meal tonight. We met new people and ate far too much of your wonderful home-made vegan Polish cooking. You even prepared gluten free alternatives where needed. We now need to starve for a week !! A great initiative. The supper club is born.”
Fiona Blackmore.*

The next supper club will be held on the 10th June 6:30pm - 9pm, with welcome drinks and a delicious three course dinner. If you'd like to join, please contact batandballcafe@sevenoakstown.gov.uk or call 01732 920150.

New Café Produce!

In the Station Café, we try our best to help promote local produce within the Sevenoaks District. At the beginning of this year, the café now sells The Microgreen Company microtins. A brand-new superfood superstar that you can easily grow at home, and cultivate your own microgreen mini veggies that produce 40 times more nutrients than vegetables! We are also selling Fawkhamb Bee Company honey, a family business with hives along the Darent Valley and throughout West Kent. Honey is £5.80 a jar or Microtins are £9.99 each, perfect for gifts!



Crown Making Workshop

On the afternoon on Sunday 7th May the Town Council will be hosting a Big Lunch Celebration in the middle of Sevenoaks High Street from 2pm - 4pm. As a heritage

venue, we ran a free Crown Making workshop at the Station for families and children. The families could make a selection of crowns from templates provided, decorate them with glitter, sequins, pens & pencils, and colour paper. It went down very well, with children getting creative by making more than one crown!

At the Big Lunch celebration in the high street, Sevenoaks Town Council on behalf of Bat & Ball Station will be offering crown making on the day, all free and available for anyone!

Up and Coming Events and projects to note:

- May/June: Youth train animation competition for our Station website project
- 13th & 14th May: Darent Valley Community Rail X Sevenoaks Camera Club exhibition
- 24th May Community Rail Week, walk from Bat & Ball to Otford
- 20th May: Sevenoaks Friends of Pontoise visiting Bat & Ball Station
- Dates not decided yet: ‘All board...’ Heritage talks
- July: Craft workshops
- August/September: Bat & Ball Station bridge mural project
- TBC: DVCRP and Bat & Ball Station educational youth workshops
- 16th September: Heritage Open Day

I hope you join us at the Station over the next few months. As always, we try to fill our calendar with activities, events, and special projects to keep our Station integrated within the community. If you'd like to volunteer or show support for the Station, please contact us below via social media or email.

Thank you,

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Email: heo@sevenoakstown.gov.uk
 Website: www.batandballstation.com/
 Twitter: [@BatandBallTrain](https://twitter.com/BatandBallTrain)
 Facebook: [@batandballstation](https://facebook.com/batandballstation)