

# inshape

Issue 68 Summer 2007

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# Excellent news!

**Following an intensive review of its management and services, Sevenoaks District Council was declared an 'Excellent' authority by the Audit Commission on 10 July.**

The Council joins a small number of local authorities that have been given the prestigious accolade by Central Government under its Comprehensive Performance Assessment scheme.

Out of a total of 60 points, Sevenoaks District Council scored an impressive 58 giving it the highest score of any local authority in the country under the more rigorous assesment.

The inspectors said that the Council is well run, achieves excellent value for money, demonstrates excellent community leadership and partnership working and delivers high quality services in almost all areas. They highlighted a number of Council achievements.

Sevenoaks District has the cleanest streets anywhere in the country and levels of recycling and composting have increased significantly. According to the latest national customer satisfaction surveys, residents rate the street cleaning, refuse and recycling services as amongst the best anywhere in England.

Thanks to work by the Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership, which is led by the Council, incidents of crime and

disorder are dropping and Sevenoaks is now the safest district in Kent.

The Council is now one of the most efficient district councils in England and is in the top one per cent in terms of value for money.

The inspectors said the benefits service was an area making significant improvements. The time taken to process benefit claims has been slashed from 49 days to 33 days

and users of the service believe that it has improved markedly in the last three years.

The Council compared well with others in terms of new affordable housing. Completions per 1,000 population are three compared with a national average of 1.4. This was achieved in an area with many planning restrictions including the Green Belt, which covers 93% of Sevenoaks District.

Housing services also showed improvements. Since February, no homeless people have been housed in bed and breakfast accommodation. Several years ago there could have been as many as 30 families at any one time. Thanks to improved advice and schemes to help avoid homelessness, the number of homeless applications reduced last year by more than 65% compared to the previous year.

*Continued on page 3...*



Chief Executive, Robin Holes, with staff and the Leader of the Council



# When a plan comes together...

The District's latest Sustainable Community Action Plan, which sets out over 120 actions to improve residents' quality of life over the next three years, was launched at a fun day in Otford at the end of May.

More than 700 people braved the wet weather to take part in ice skating, face painting, circus skills, football coaching, dance and DJ workshops and health testing. There was a variety of displays including gymnastics and drug sniffer dogs together with advice about energy efficiency and crime prevention.

The activities and displays reflected the main themes of the Action Plan.

We want Sevenoaks District to be recognised by all as a place with:

- Safe and caring communities
- A green and healthy environment
- A dynamic and sustainable economy

The new Action Plan deals with community priorities, such as tackling anti-social behaviour, improving safety on our roads, working with young people, supporting people to live independently in their homes, reducing pollution and damage to the environment, maintaining the character of the District, improving

health and well-being, increasing attainment in local authority schools, improving access to affordable and decent homes and encouraging sustainable travel.

Agencies that are involved in carrying out these actions include the District Council, the police, health, education, social services, youth services, housing associations, the voluntary sector, town and parish councils, business and faith communities.

For more information, please visit the Council's website [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/communityplan](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/communityplan) or call 01732 227000.



Fun at the Plan's launch

## Making Sevenoaks an accessible District

Sevenoaks District Council is set to become more accessible to people with disabilities when a new online guide to local venues is launched next month.

Through the introduction of this guide, the Council aims to promote inclusive and accessible venues and to give people with disabilities the power to access their community independently.

To produce the guide, Sevenoaks District Council has teamed up with DisabledGo, a National

Accessibility Project. During the spring, residents and representatives of disabled groups, took part in a consultation event with DisabledGo who drew up a list of venues open to the general public for inclusion in the guide.

Soon after fully trained DisabledGo researchers visited up to 1,000 venues across the Sevenoaks District including goods and service providers, hotels, tourist attractions, pubs and local libraries to establish how accessible they are to people with disabilities.



DisabledGo visit Sevenoaks Leisure Centre

The information gathered by the researchers is currently being constructed into an online guide which is due go live in the autumn.

You will be able to view the guide, through the Council's website [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk) and at [www.disabledgo.info](http://www.disabledgo.info)

### ADVERTISEMENT

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*The Factor*

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- ★ **Kent County Council Awards** - For Welfare and Disability
- ★ **Pfizer Awards** - For Community Support and Development
- ★ **Kent County Council Awards** - For Voluntary Work in Education and Schools
- ★ **Volunteering England Awards** - For Voluntary Committee Support and for Counselling and Advice
- ★ **Kent Sports Development Awards** - For Sport and the Support of Sport
- ★ **The Children's Mutual Awards** - For Mentoring

**Mini Nomination Form**

Your Details as Nominator	Nominee Details Individual / Group Name
Address .....	Address .....
Postcode .....	Postcode .....
Tel. No. Day / Evening .....	Tel. No. Day / Evening .....
Email Address .....	Email Address .....
Category .....	<b>Last date for entries Friday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2007</b>

Please attach a separate sheet of paper to tell us more about the person or group you are nominating.

Please send your nomination to: **Kent Volunteers**, 3rd Floor Communities, Invicta House, Maidstone, Kent. ME14 1XX  
Tel: 01622 694844

or nominate on line: [www.kent.gov.uk/volunteerawards](http://www.kent.gov.uk/volunteerawards)

**KENT VOLUNTEERS 2007 AWARDS**  
FOR VOLUNTEERING EXCELLENCE

*The Factor*

# Smokefree Sevenoaks District



On 1 July the law changed outlawing smoking in enclosed public spaces, work places, work vehicles and other specified areas.

Over the course of the last few months, Sevenoaks District Council has written to every business in the District to inform them of the new regulations, what they need to do and how the new regulations will be enforced by the Council.

Under the new law, business have a duty to put up appropriate signs in affected enclosed public areas and work places and to ensure people do not smoke within them. Operators of businesses and work places who fail to comply with the new law could be landed with a court appearance and a fine of up to £2,500.

Individuals who are caught smoking in an enclosed public area are

liable to be handed an on-the-spot fine of £50.

For more information on the new regulations you can visit the Smokefree England website [www.smokefreeengland.co.uk](http://www.smokefreeengland.co.uk)

Alternatively you can contact the Council on **01732 227000** or e-mail [smokefree@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:smokefree@sevenoaks.gov.uk) or visit [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/smokefree](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/smokefree)

## Excellent news!

continued from page 1...

Council innovation and partnership working were also described as strengths. Examples included the Edenbridge Older Lifestyles Group, of which 96% of participants felt the group was important and the Swanley Healthy Lifestyles Project which has helped some 3,625 people over four years.

Increasing opportunities for young people was another area where the Council did well. The Young People's Action Plan helps to address the needs of young people and since its implementation last year, 212,000 young people have taken part in activities or programmes organised by the Council and its partners.

The Council was praised for its ability to address new challenges with the Sevenoaks Playhouse used as an example. Shortly after the Playhouse closed, the Council took action to put in place new management to reopen the facility in just a matter of weeks. Nearly 70 members of staff volunteered their time to assist to reopen the theatre and to consult on its future.

The inspectors highlighted two areas for improvement. Although there are many good examples of buying goods and services, the Council could do more to improve its strategic approach to procurement. They also said whilst the Council effectively manages

human resources, it needs to develop a long-term workforce strategy. The Council is addressing both issues.

To view the assessment on-line log on to [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/performance](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/performance). Alternatively call Alison Walker on 01732 227177 or e-mail or [policy@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:policy@sevenoaks.gov.uk) for a copy of the assessment or for more information.

### What is Comprehensive Performance Assessment?

Comprehensive Performance Assessment (or CPA) is a Central Government scheme where all councils are graded as either excellent, good, fair, weak or poor.

The council submits a self-assessment of its strengths and weakness to the Audit Commission which is followed up by an on-site inspection usually lasting a week. The inspectors meet with the Council's partners, residents and staff to establish their views on the authority before reaching a decision. The inspectors' findings are later scrutinised by a group of peers to ensure they are a fair reflection of the authority.

## Top of the table for efficiency and value

Sevenoaks District Council's credentials as an authority that provides cost-effective quality services were further strengthened when it was named as being in the top 2 per cent of district councils for efficiency and in the top 1 per cent for value for money.

Following a wide ranging review, the Audit Commission announced in May that the Council was one of only seven of 238 district authorities nationally to be awarded the highest possible score of four points out of a possible four – performing strongly well above minimum financial requirements – for efficiency.

It was also named as only one of two councils of the 238 to have received the top score for value for money.

Cllr Brian Ramsay, the Council's Cabinet Member with responsibility for finance, says: "To be named in the top two percent for efficiency and the top one per cent for value for money is a fantastic achievement for everyone concerned. In recent years the Council has taken great steps to improve efficiency and

value for money, issues that our residents feel very strongly about. However, we will not be resting on our laurels as we are continuing to look at more effective, efficient and often innovative ways of delivering our services."

The review was judged against five key themes of financial reporting, financial management, financial standing, internal control and crucially value for money. Compared with last year, the Council improved in all these areas.

The inspectors said that the Council has robust arrangements in place for promoting accountability, a strong foundation for strategic financial planning, and performs well in terms of internal control. One of the areas where the Council performed best was value for money with a value for money culture embedded within the whole organisation.

The inspectors went on to say that seven areas of the Council's financial practice will be shared with other local authorities to help them improve their financial dealings.



## Health walks stride into New Ash Green

New Ash Green residents can enjoy those sunny summer mornings with new free weekly health walks which are taking place in the village.

The group meet every Wednesday at 10.30am for a walk lasting no longer than an hour that begins and ends at New Ash Green Library.

There is no need to book and no special equipment is required; just turn up and walk. All ages and abilities are welcome to attend

and everyone is encouraged to walk at their own pace.

The walks are being co-ordinated by Sevenoaks District Council and Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council.

For further information please contact Rebecca Perkins, the Council's Community Officer on **01732 227000** or e-mail [rebecca.perkins@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:rebecca.perkins@sevenoaks.gov.uk)

# A unique service for a unique District

**Sevenoaks District Council's minibus service is making a difference to hundreds of older and younger people alike by helping them to lead independent lives.**

The Council's fleet of 10 fully accessible minibuses covers the 142 square miles of the District and are driven by highly qualified professional staff.

Last year they carried out some 8,500 journeys, transported a staggering 36,500 passengers and made over 240 private hire trips covering in excess of 165,000 miles.



The minibus service is available for residents of pensionable age, and those with a disability, as well as youth groups registered with the Council. They are used predominantly to carry passengers to and from day centres and lunch clubs, as well as shopping and social trips for people who would otherwise find it difficult to get out due to lack of public transport or because of mobility problems.

In the Edenbridge area the minibus team has taken on contract work on behalf of the local hospital to transport clients in and out of the hospital day centre and in Swanley the service works in partnership with Darent Valley Rural Age Concern transporting clients to its day centres and lunch clubs.



In Sevenoaks vehicles are used to collect clients on behalf of Age Concern taking them to Hollybush Day Centre.

John Arnold, Chief Officer from Rural Age Concern Darent Valley, says: "Sevenoaks District Council's minibus service is, as far as I am aware, the only service of its type in the country and is a vital lifeline to literally hundreds of vulnerable people. Age Concern provides many services across a wide rural area, however, without minibuses our clients would simply not be able to access them."

Users can purchase an annual membership pass at a cost of £50 a year or £25 for six months which works out at 96p a week for unlimited use of the service subject to seats being available. Membership passes are further reduced on some less well used routes.

The service is 90% subsidised, predominantly by Sevenoaks District Council along with contributions from Kent County Council.

To find out more or to register with the service call **01732 227000** or e-mail **information@sevenoaks.gov.uk**

## Young people making a difference

The Council's first ever winner of the young volunteer of the year awards was revealed last month at a presentation evening in Sevenoaks.

Sixteen-year old Katie Jones from Sevenoaks was announced as the overall winner of the awards.

Katie Jones receives her certificate and cheques from Council Chairman Cllr James Gaywood



Katie, who was nominated by VSU Youth in Action, was praised for her commitment to voluntary work, accumulating over 500 hours of voluntary service and having been a very active volunteer for three years.

During this period, Katie gave her time to lots of different activities, including volunteering at a weekly after-school children's club and being involved with the summer outings and activities with the children in the school holidays.

She is also a peer mentor at her school, and an active member of the VSU Youth Committee where she is joint editor of the Volunteers' newsletter.

Katie received £100 in high street vouchers for herself, and a £350 cheque went to VSU Youth in Action who nominated her, to help them continue to support young volunteers.

Emily Harper from New Ash Green and Jonathan Undy from Sevenoaks, both 16, were named as the runners-up. Each received £50 in high street vouchers together with a £100 cheque going to the organisation that nominated them.

Residents were invited to nominate young people for the award earlier in the year. The scheme was organised and funded by Sevenoaks District Council to further recognise and celebrate young people's voluntary contributions and achievements.

### ADVERTISEMENT



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# Bowled over to be the Chairman

Sevenoaks District has a cricket loving ambassador after Cllr James Gaywood, Member for Hartley and Hodsoll Street, was elected as the new Chairman of the Council.

Cllr Gaywood has been a resident of the District for the past 25 years since moving to Hartley from greater London. Attracted to the district by its unspoilt nature Cllr Gaywood worked as an industrial chemist and then as a commodity broker in the sugar industry in London.

Cllr Gaywood is a keen sports fan with a special interest in cricket having been a member of the Marylebone Cricket Club for 30 years and having played club cricket for Hartley for 35 years. Other than cricket Cllr Gaywood is also a keen football fan.

Having been married to his wife Paddy for 30 years, Cllr Gaywood's has two children, who both live in the District, and six grandchildren.

During his year in office Cllr Gaywood will be looking to promote and extol the virtues of the District. He will also support and raise the profile of the Brain and Spine Foundation, a charity set up to develop research, education and information programmes aimed at improving the prevention, treatment and care of people affected by disorders of the brain and spine.

This is a charity that is particularly close to Cllr Gaywood's heart, who, after having a number of operations on his spine admits he might not have been here today without the care and support they provide.



Chairman, Cllr James Gaywood with his wife Paddy

The Council's Chairman is the Council's principal ambassador representing over 110,000 residents of the District, as well as the Council, at a wide range of local and regional events and supporting local charities and voluntary organisations.

The previous Chairman, Cllr Alison Cook, Member for Leigh and Chiddingstone Causeway, is the new Vice-Chairman.

## How are we performing?

Residents who would like to find out about Sevenoaks District Council's performance over the course of the last year and the priorities for the future can read its newly published 'Corporate Performance Plan'.

The annual plan reports on the Council's activities, shows how well every department has performed, sets out future priorities and explains how the Council intends to deliver an improved service.

Recent success includes the refuse and recycling service being rated as one of the best in the country by local people.

The Corporate Performance Plan can be viewed on the Council's website by logging on to [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/performanceplan](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/performanceplan). Alternatively CD-ROMs with the plan are available on request by calling **01732 227000** or by e-mailing [policy@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:policy@sevenoaks.gov.uk)

## Good news for small businesses

Small businesses have been benefiting from a new rate relief that was introduced in 2005.

Small Business Rate Relief is targeted at businesses that occupy a property with a rateable value of less than £10,000.

Conditions apply but in general, eligible properties below a rateable value of £5,000 receive a 50% rate relief and this decreases on a sliding

scale of 1% for every £100 up to a rateable value of £9,999.

If your rates bill is already subject to mandatory rate relief, you will not be eligible for Small Business Rate Relief.

For further details and how to apply, contact the Council's Business Rates section by calling **01732 227000** or e-mail [revenues@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:revenues@sevenoaks.gov.uk)

## Money matters!

In the coming weeks, the Council will publish its Annual Statement of Accounts that sets out how it raised income and where this money was spent over the past year.

A summary of the accounts is available now to view by logging on to [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/finance](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/finance)

After 18 September the full version of the accounts will be available on the Council's website. To request a paper copy e-mail [finance@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:finance@sevenoaks.gov.uk) or call **01732 227000**

### ADVERTISEMENT

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# Your District Coun

Following the District Council elections on 3 May 2007, Sevenoaks District Council has 23 new Councillors out of the S4 elected by residents.

There are now 41 Conservative, seven Liberal Democrat Councillors, five Labour, and one Independent Councillor.

The Council is controlled by the majority group of Conservative Councillors.

The policies of the District Council are decided by the 54 Councillors elected by local people.

The Sevenoaks District is divided into 26 areas, known as wards, and each ward is represented by one or more Councillors.

Elections normally take place every four years, although there may be by-elections in between to fill any vacancies that may arise. The next scheduled District Council elections are due to take place in May 2011.

#### Contacting your District Councillor

There may be times when you would like to contact a District Councillor to express your views on local issues.

Local Councillors' contact details are available on the Council's website [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/councillors](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/councillors), by calling the Council on 01732 227000 or by e-mailing [information@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:information@sevenoaks.gov.uk)

You can also contact them by writing to: Sevenoaks District Council, Council Offices, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1HG.

If you are unsure which ward you live in, please contact the Council.



**Clive Bruce (C)**  
Ash



**Carol Clark (C)**  
Ash



**Alan Pett (I)**  
Ash



**Nick Dean (C)**  
Brasted, Chevening  
and Sundridge



**James London (C)**  
Brasted, Chevening  
and Sundridge



**Colin Dibsdall (LD)**  
Crockenhill  
and Well Hill



**Cameron Brown (C)**  
Dunton Green  
and Riverhead



**John Lankester (C)**  
Dunton Green  
and Riverhead



**Jill Davison (C)**  
Edenbridge  
North and East



**John Scholey (C)**  
Edenbridge  
North and East



**Hugh Darrington (LD)**  
Eynsford



**Stephen Arnold (C)**  
Farningham, Horton  
Kirby and South Darenth



**Philip McGarvey (LD)**  
Farningham, Horton  
Kirby and South Darenth



**Ian Bosley (C)**  
Fawkham and West  
Kingsdown



**Pat Bosley (C)**  
Fawkham and West  
Kingsdown



**Dee Morris (C)**  
Hextable



**Emma Moore (C)**  
Kemsing



**Lorraine Stack (C)**  
Kemsing



**Alison Cook (C)**  
Leigh and Chiddingstone  
Causeway



**George Fodor (C)**  
Otford and Shoreham



**Michelle Lowe (C)**  
Otford and Shoreham



**Paddy Cooke (C)**  
Penshurst, Fordcombe  
and Chiddingstone



**John Gilbert (LD)**  
Sevenoaks Northern



**Ann Dawson (C)**  
Sevenoaks Town  
and St John's



**Peter Fleming (C)**  
Sevenoaks Town  
and St John's



**Keith Loney (C)**  
Sevenoaks Town  
and St John's



**Robert Brookbank (C)**  
Swanley Christchurch  
and Swanley Village



**David Cole (C)**  
Swanley Christchurch  
and Swanley Village



**Anthony Waller (C)**  
Swanley Christchurch  
and Swanley Village

# cillors



**Robert Piper (C)**  
Brasted, Chevening and Sundridge



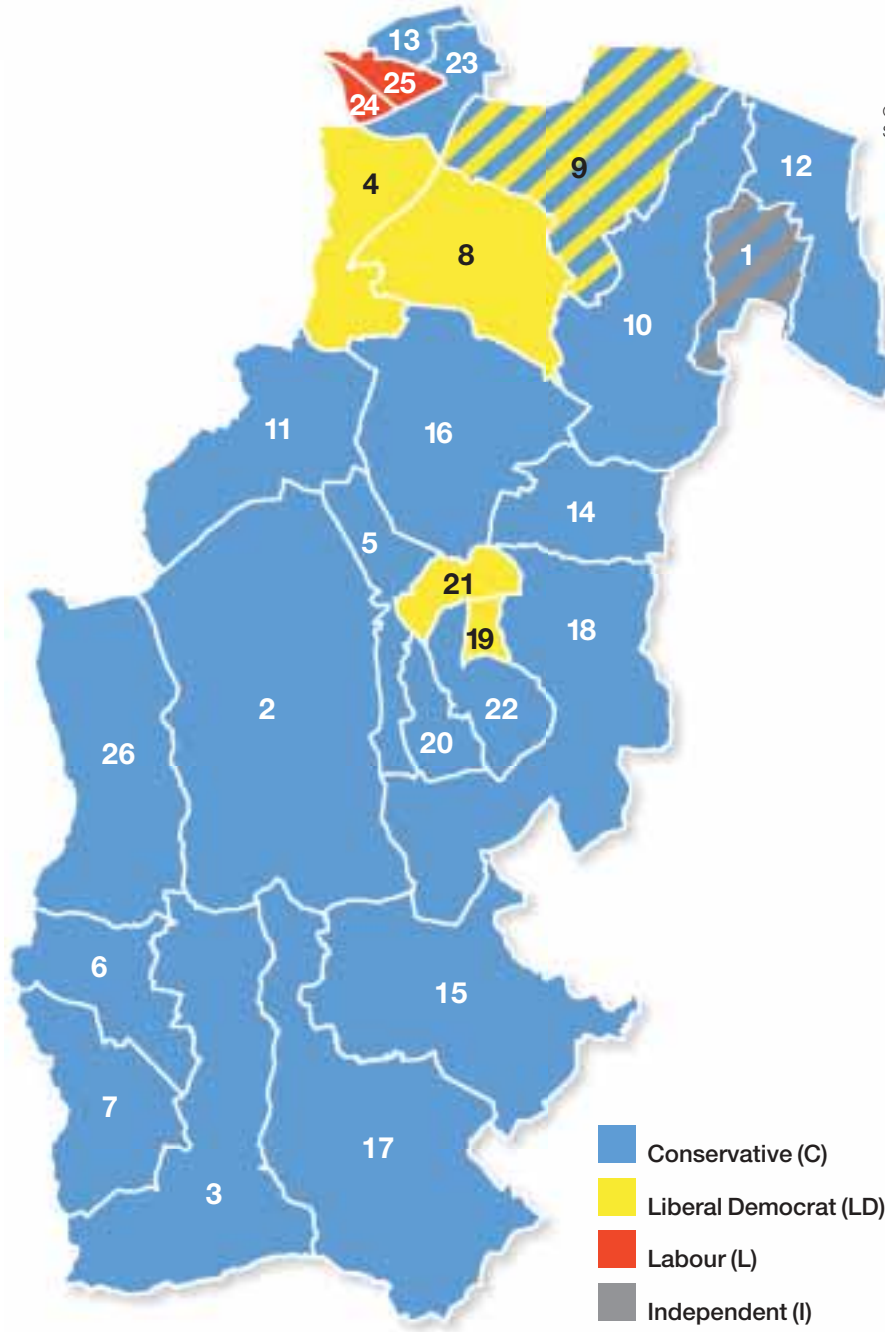
**Gerry Ryan (C)**  
Cowden and Hever



**Richard Davison (C)**  
Edenbridge South and West



**Bob Orridge (C)**  
Edenbridge South and West



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**KEY TO WARD AREAS:**

- 1 Ash
- 2 Brasted, Chevening and Sundridge
- 3 Cowden and Hever
- 4 Crockenhill and Well Hill
- 5 Dunton Green and Riverhead
- 6 Edenbridge North and East
- 7 Edenbridge South and West
- 8 Eynsford
- 9 Farningham, Horton Kirby and South Darent
- 10 Fawkham and West Kingsdown
- 11 Halstead, Knockholt and Badgers Mount
- 12 Hartley and Hodsoll Street
- 13 Hextable
- 14 Kemsing
- 15 Leigh and Chiddingstone Causeway
- 16 Otford and Shoreham
- 17 Penshurst, Fordcombe and Chiddingstone
- 18 Seal and Weald
- 19 Sevenoaks Eastern
- 20 Sevenoaks Kippington
- 21 Sevenoaks Northern
- 22 Sevenoaks Town and St John's
- 23 Swanley Christchurch and Swanley Village
- 24 Swanley St Mary's
- 25 Swanley White Oak
- 26 Westerham and Crockham Hill



**Faye Parkin (C)**  
Fawkham and West Kingsdown



**John Grint (C)**  
Halstead, Knockholt and Badgers Mount



**Gary Williamson (C)**  
Halstead, Knockholt and Badgers Mount



**Larry Abraham (C)**  
Hartley and Hodsoll Street



**James Gaywood (C)**  
Hartley and Hodsoll Street



**Brian Ramsay (C)**  
Hartley and Hodsoll Street



**Roger McInnes (C)**  
Hextable



**Rachel Allen (C)**  
Seal and Weald



**Peter Coates (C)**  
Seal and Weald



**Elizabeth Purves (LD)**  
Sevenoaks Eastern



**Roger Walshe (LD)**  
Sevenoaks Eastern



**Felicity Broomby (C)**  
Sevenoaks Kippington



**Avril Hunter (C)**  
Sevenoaks Kippington



**John Brigden (LD)**  
Sevenoaks Northern



**Lesley Dyball (L)**  
Swanley St Mary's



**John Underwood (L)**  
Swanley St Mary's



**Bryan Harrod (L)**  
Swanley White Oak



**Janet Sargeant (L)**  
Swanley White Oak



**Barrie Wigg (L)**  
Swanley White Oak



**Elaine Bracken (C)**  
Westerham and Crockham Hill



**Kevin Maskell (C)**  
Westerham and Crockham Hill

# Don't ruin it for everyone!

Sevenoaks District residents are amongst the best when it comes to recycling. However, following an investigation by Council staff it was found that a number of people are abusing the clear sack recycling scheme potentially putting people at risk, or resulting in tonnes of material becoming unsuitable for recycling.

Following a recent incident when a large number of medical syringes were put into a clear sack, a member of Council staff visited the recycling sorting facility to observe recycling processes.

He was shocked to see that a pair of ski boots, large amounts of glass, knives, a pair of secateurs, food remains and even used nappies had all been put into recycling sacks.

Putting the wrong materials in the sacks puts the safety of the men and women who collect and sort your recycling at risk and can result in an entire load of recycled material being condemned as contaminated and sent for incineration rather than recycling.

Residents are being reminded that all black and clear sacks now have detailed information printed on them about their usage. Please take a moment to read the information on your sacks. This information can also be found on page two of the recycling newsletter delivered with your clear sacks.

For more information visit the Council's website at [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/refuse](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/refuse), call **01732 227000** or [information@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:information@sevenoaks.gov.uk)

Advice for disposing of hazardous and bulky items:

- **Bulky household items** can be collected by the Council's paid-for bulky collection. Call **01732 227000** for details.
- **Broken glass** should be placed in a sealed container, such as an ice cream tub or plastic milk bottle, and clearly marked as containing glass. It should not be placed in your refuse sacks or recycling sacks. Glass bottles and jars can be recycled at your local Council recycling site or at the Kent County Council (KCC) tip.



Some of the wrong materials put in clear sacks for recycling

- **Paint** should only be disposed of at the KCC tip.
- **Knives or other sharp objects** should be placed alongside your sacks in a clearly marked and sealed container or taken to a KCC tip.
- **Electrical goods** can also be taken to the KCC tip so they can be recycled.
- **Syringes and other medical waste** must be placed in a special 'sharps box' before they can be collected by the Council. Residents should ask their GP to make a written referral to Sevenoaks District Council for a special collection of clinical waste for the duration of their treatment.

## Committed to reducing climate change

Sevenoaks District Council has pledged to play its part in reducing climate change by signing up to the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change (NDCC).

The Declaration compels the Council to develop an action plan within two years which addresses the causes and impacts of climate change.

Cllr Carol Clark, the Council's Cabinet Member with responsibility for the Environment, says: "Signing this declaration is a hugely important decision, not only for residents of the District but also for our children, their children and many generations to come. It shows the Council's commitment to helping tackle the issue of global climate change and reducing the impact it could have."

The Council has already started to proactively tackle climate change by working in partnership with other local authorities in Kent through the Kent Energy Efficiency Partnership, and also employs a dedicated Energy Conservation Officer.

The NDCC is endorsed by Central Government and recommended

by organisations such as the Local Government Association, the Improvement and Development Agency for Local Government and the Energy Savings Trust.

It was originally launched in October 2000, but was relaunched in December 2005.



### Want to reduce your carbon footprint?

- Install cavity wall insulation and save one tonne of CO<sub>2</sub> a year plus £130 to £160.
- Install loft insulation
  - save one-and-a-half tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> a year plus £180 to £220 if you currently have no insulation.
  - save 410 kg of CO<sub>2</sub> a year plus £50 to £60, if you currently have 50mm of insulation and upgrade to 270mm.
- Join 'Kentcarshare' and by sharing your regular journey to work save around one tonne of CO<sub>2</sub> per year. Visit [www.kentcarshare.com](http://www.kentcarshare.com) or call 08458 247 247 for details.
- Switch to a green electricity tariff.
- Install a renewable energy measure in your home to provide either heat or electricity that is CO<sub>2</sub> free.
- Buy locally produced food and reduce the food miles contained in the food that you eat.
- Buy organic food and eat less meat.

If you would like to reduce your carbon footprint please phone the Kent Energy Centre for energy efficiency advice **0800 358 6669** or visit its website [www.kentenergycentre.org.uk](http://www.kentenergycentre.org.uk).

The Kent Energy Centre also provides information on green electricity and sustainable energy discounted schemes. Cavity wall and loft insulation is available at just £249 for a standard size detached property and £199 for a standard sized non-detached property.



## Who to contact in the event of a crime

### Reporting crime

To report a crime that is taking place, always call 999. If the incident has passed, please call West Kent Police on 01732 771055

### Crimestoppers

Crimestoppers is a free, confidential helpline where you can anonymously report information about crime. The number is 0800 555111

### Contacting the Council

If you know of on-going instances of criminal damage or anti-social behaviour, call 01732 227000 or e-mail [community.safety@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:community.safety@sevenoaks.gov.uk)

### Reporting a racial incident

Racial harassment is a crime and if you have any information about an incident, you can leave a recorded message by calling 0800 138 1624

### Reporting graffiti

To report graffiti call 01732 227000, complete the online form on the Council's website [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk) or text details to 07799 732732 starting with the word GRAF

# Partnership approach to making your District safer

The last year was a very busy one for the Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership. Not only did it implement 75 projects, of which 95% were on target, there were big changes to the policing boundaries with West Kent Police taking responsibility for the whole District for the very first time.

From April 2006 to the end of March 2007, the Partnership's successes included:

- Sevenoaks District had the lowest number of recorded crimes in Kent. The District experienced an 8% reduction, or 662 fewer crimes, compared to the previous year.
- The Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator dealt with 153 reports of anti-social behaviour. Interventions included arranging contact with local PCSOs, organising physical or environmental changes, co-ordinating activity with a range of agencies and referring individuals to the Anti-Social Behaviour Task Group.
- Deliberate fires which decreased from 319 to 270, a significant reduction of 15.3%.
- A dispersal order was put in place in Edenbridge from 8 January to 8 May 2007.
- Two Anti-Social Behaviour Orders were granted.
- The Community Safety Partnership made four nominations to the national Respect Awards for Taking A Stand. One nominee collected the main award, whilst two others received highly commended certificates.
- 104 arrests were made in connection with Class A drugs.
- A Domestic Abuse Working Group was set up.
- Nearly 1,700 young people were advised by a Substance Misuse Community Worker.
- More than 100 abandoned vehicles were removed. Ninety-five per cent were investigated within 24 hours of being reported and 74 per cent were removed within 24 hours. A further 156 vehicles were voluntarily surrendered and 71 vehicles removed under Operation Cubit.
- Eight KCC Community Wardens and 16 PCSOs are now on patrol in the District. Many of the PCSOs are funded in partnership with town and parish councils.
- PCSOs & KCC Community Wardens were provided with shed alarms, timer switches, safe cans and personal alarms so they could be made available to vulnerable people in the District.
- The Swanley 8 to 12s project continued to work with children and young people. New 8 to 12s projects have started in New Ash Green and Sevenoaks with over 20 young people attending.
- The Power Project, an initiative to reduce the number of young people entering the Youth Justice System, worked with 50 young people in the District who are at risk of offending. During this time, only four of the young people referred to the project offended.



## Help keep crime down

The North Kent Crime Prevention Panel (NKCPP) is on the look out for volunteers to help give advice to communities on how to reduce crime in their home and surrounding areas.

The NKCPP attends village fetes, road shows and community days in the northern parts of the Sevenoaks District, and is a completely voluntary organisation that relies on volunteers.

If you would like to become a volunteer please contact the Council on **01732 227000** or e-mail [community.safety@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:community.safety@sevenoaks.gov.uk)

## Don't lose your identity

Identity theft is an increasing problem. However by taking some simple steps it can be avoided.

Criminals can find out your personal details and use them to open bank accounts and get credit cards, loans, state benefits and documents such as passports and driving licences in your name. If your identity is stolen, you may have difficulty getting loans, credit cards or a mortgage until the matter is resolved.

### You may have become a victim of identity theft if:

- Items have appeared on your bank or credit-card statements that you do not recognise.
- You applied for a state benefit but are told that you are already claiming.
- You have been refused a financial service, such as a credit card or a loan, despite having a good credit history.
- A mobile-phone contract has been set up in your name without your knowledge.

- You have received letters from solicitors or debt collectors for debts that aren't yours.

### How to avoid becoming a victim:

- Cancel any lost or stolen credit or debit cards immediately. Keep a note of the emergency numbers you should call.
- Keep your personal information secure when using your card over the phone, on the Internet or in shops by making sure that other people cannot overhear you or see your personal information.
- If you move house, tell your bank, credit-card company and all other organisations that you deal with, as soon as possible.
- Destroy unwanted documents, preferably by using a shredder.

If you require further information call your local crime reduction officer on **01892 502012** or visit [www.identitytheft.org.uk](http://www.identitytheft.org.uk)

# In the Zone 2007

**COME AND JOIN THE FUN!**



**Five weeks of free fun and games for children and young people aged eight and above takes place over the summer when the Council's Youth Zone returns for 2007.**

'My highlight of the summer', this was what one girl wrote in our diary from last year and we hope this year's summer programme will be a highlight in your calendar this year.

Activities in more than 20 towns and villages begin on Monday 30 July running every weekday, except on the August bank holiday, until Friday 31 August. The fun begins at 11 am and ends at 3.30pm each day.

All activities are free and there is no need to book in advance – just turn up! All children are registered with the staff team when they arrive, and those aged eight and above can be left with the staff team for the day. Any children aged under eight must be supervised by a parent or carer at all times.

Children staying all day should bring a packed lunch and appropriate clothing for the activity and the weather.

Every day of the programme we will

bring circus skills equipment, sports, games and arts and crafts.

Each week has a different theme and there will be a range of activities and workshops throughout the summer to give children and young people the chance to learn new skills, try new things, have fun and use their imaginations to the full!

The themes this year are sports, make it, challenge, performing arts and party!

The dates and locations of the Youth Zone are subject to change and they could be affected by the weather. Parents are advised to check before they come along.

Full details will be published in the yellow programme leaflets, distributed via primary schools across the District, in local press and on the 'In the Zone' page on the Council's website [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/youngpeople](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/youngpeople).

Alternatively e-mail [youthmail@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:youthmail@sevenoaks.gov.uk) or call **01732 227000** for more information.



## YOUTH ZONE EVENTS 2007

<b>Monday 30 July</b>	Halstead Recreation Ground
<b>Tuesday 31 July</b>	Shoreham Recreation Ground
<b>Wednesday 1 August</b>	New Ash Green, The Minnis
<b>Thursday 2 August</b>	Ide Hill Recreation Ground
<b>Friday 3 August</b>	Leigh Village Green
<b>Monday 6 August</b>	Eynsford Harrow Meadow
<b>Tuesday 7 August</b>	Hartley Woodland Avenue Recreation Ground
<b>Wednesday 8 August</b>	Chiddingstone Sports Field
<b>Thursday 9 August</b>	Hollybush Recreation Ground, Sevenoaks
<b>Friday 10 August</b>	Weald Village Green
<b>Monday 13 August</b>	Fordcombe Cricket Ground
<b>Tuesday 14 August</b>	Seal Recreation Ground
<b>Wednesday 15 August</b>	Otford Hale Lane Recreation Ground
<b>Thursday 16 August</b>	Swanley Recreation Ground
<b>Friday 17 August</b>	New Ash Green, The Minnis
<b>Monday 20 August</b>	Knockholt Recreation Ground
<b>Tuesday 21 August</b>	Crockenhill Cricket Meadow
<b>Wednesday 22 August</b>	West Kingsdown Gamecock Meadow
<b>Thursday 23 August</b>	Dunton Green Recreation Ground
<b>Friday 24 August</b>	Westerham Recreation Ground
<b>Monday 27 August</b>	Bank Holiday – No activities today
<b>Tuesday 28 August</b>	Swanley Recreation Ground
<b>Wednesday 29 August</b>	Hollybush Recreation Ground, Sevenoaks
<b>Thursday 30 August</b>	Horton Kirby Westminster Field
<b>Friday 31 August</b>	Edenbridge Stangrove Park

### ADVERTISEMENT

## Want to get onto the property ladder?



If you are a first time buyer earning between £18,000 and £60,000pa and you live and work in Kent we may be able to help you to buy a home on the open market, through an estate agent.

As long as you can afford 75% of the purchase price of a suitable home yourself (normally with a mortgage) and the legal costs etc, Moat together with a lender will provide the remaining 25% equity loan to top up your purchasing power.

The Homebuy programme is a government led initiative. Eligibility criteria applies.



For further details and to apply visit  
[www.homebuy.co.uk](http://www.homebuy.co.uk)  
 or call **07002 662846**  
 (quoting XOMHB5)

Moat Homes Limited is a charitable housing association. May 2007.



# Shape up for summer with Sencio

There is still plenty of time to tone-up and gain that added confidence for the beach with Shape Up For Summer - a campaign from Sencio Community Leisure that provides a cost-effective, no-commitment introduction to fitness.

Operating at Sencio centres in Edenbridge, Sevenoaks and Swanley, Shape Up For Summer provides 30 days use of the gym and pool for just £25. The usual

induction fee is being waived and participants will also be able to use the opportunity to get advice from Sencio's team of Wellness coaches.

"There is no better time of year to think about a healthier lifestyle," says Julie Foran, Wellness manager at Sevenoaks Leisure Centre.

"We all want to feel a little more toned and relaxed about our bodies during the warmer months and Shape Up

For Summer offers a programme to help people on the road to those short-term goals as well as providing the basis for a long-term enjoyment of the many benefits of regular exercise."

Registration for the Shape Up For Summer offer can be made at your nearest Sencio centre until 31 August 2007.

For further details visit [www.sencio.org.uk](http://www.sencio.org.uk)

## Funtastic summer awaits at District's leisure centres

With everything from swimming, fencing and football to Irish dancing, a creepy-crawly roadshow and cookery, you would be hard pressed to find a youngster whose interests can't be satisfied by this summer's Funtastic programme at the Sevenoaks District leisure centres.



There will also be opportunities for youngsters to don their heeleys (trainers with built-in wheels) and take to sports halls for fun sessions in a safe environment.

Recognising the importance of play to the development of the under fives, there is a full diary of events for pre-schoolers covering music, soft play, movement and sensory stimulation. And to help parents plan childcare,

Sencio centres operate a programme of half and full-day camps bringing together a wide choice of activities in a supervised environment.

Sencio Community Leisure has once again put together six weeks of fun and hundreds of ideas for participants from babies and toddlers through to the pre-teens.

Blending the active and sporting with the artistic and creative, highlights of the programme also include break-dancing, drama, hip hop jazz, musical theatre and trampolining courses.

The full Funtastic programmes can be downloaded by visiting [www.sencio.org.uk/holidayactivities.asp](http://www.sencio.org.uk/holidayactivities.asp). Alternatively, pick up a copy at your nearest Sencio centre.

## Local youngster notches up great Britain fencing success

11-year-old Fenella McLuskie is celebrating after victory in the Under 11s Sabre - IAPS Great Britain fencing competition held in Canterbury on 9 June.

Fenella who lives in Tunbridge Wells and attends Sevenoaks Prep School, has also achieved a number of other successes at local and county level.

She trains every week at Sevenoaks Leisure Centre as part of a full fencing coaching programme that also runs at Sencio Community Leisure centres in Swanley and Edenbridge.



In Shape  
READER  
OFFER

# FREE one-day wellness gym pass

### Trying a new, fun way to get fit and healthy couldn't be easier.

In Shape has teamed up with **Sencio Community Leisure** to give readers a day in the gym absolutely free.

Simply bring this voucher into the centre of your choice, and you can have a full day of access to our state of the art Wellness facilities including gym, exercise classes, swimming pool and health suite (where available). Sencio has a wide range of equipment and programmes available to suit all levels of fitness and fully trained staff will be happy to discuss individual needs. Please call to book a gym induction prior to your visit.

### Shape Up for Summer Special Offer: ONE FREE GYM PASS

First Name:

Last Name:

Address:

Telephone:

E-mail:

The offer is valid until 31 August, 2007. It is subject to availability, limited to one voucher per person and is only redeemable at Sevenoaks, Edenbridge, and White Oak leisure centres at time of use. Terms and conditions apply. Full details available in centre.

Couttryside rangers preparing to coppice Sweet Chestnut



# A sight for 'saw' eyes

Sevenoaks District has some of the most outstanding natural countryside anywhere in Britain. A number of the District's most important and sensitive open sites are managed by the Council and thanks to years of careful work by its dedicated Countryside Rangers they are in better shape than ever.

One of the Council's most important sites is Farningham Woods which is a local nature reserve and a Site of Special Scientific Interest. This means it is one of the most valuable areas of woodland in Kent.

This ancient woodland covers the top of a hill just north of the A20 and Farningham village.

It is home to the Small-Leaved Lime, a rare tree which is only found on one other site in Kent. There are several other unusual plants here including the largest British colony of the nationally rare Deptford Pink.

The woods contain large areas of Sweet Chestnut coppice which is cropped every 20 to 25 years to open up areas for wildlife and to produce fence posts and rails.

There is a signed 1.6 mile walking route taking in most of the site as well as a network of other paths. There are no specific facilities for cyclists or horse riders, however a byway crosses the site between Calfstock Lane and Button Street which can be used by both. The nearest toilet facilities are in Farningham village.

Farningham Woods can be accessed from the A225 south of Horton Kirby, where a car park is located at the end of Calfstock Lane. The nearest station is at Farningham Road, two miles north of Calfstock Lane.

For more information visit the Council's website [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk) or call **01732 227000**.

## August Bank Holiday refuse collections

Due to the August Bank Holiday, refuse and clear sack collections during the week starting Monday 27 August will be one day later than usual.

This will mean that Monday's collection will take place on Tuesday, Tuesday's collection will take place on Wednesday until the end of the week when Friday's collection takes place on the Saturday.

Green waste collections will also be one day later during this week.

To make sure your refuse and green waste is collected, please put your bags out by 7am.

For further information, call the Council's 'Refuse Hotline' on **01732 227103** or visit the Council's website [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/refuse](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/refuse)

## Sevenoaks District Council at your fingertips

### Main office

Argyle Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1HG

Tel: **01732 227000**

Minicom: **01732 227496** (text telephones only)

Mon to Thurs 8.45am to 5pm  
and Fri 8.45am to 4.45pm

Planning Reception Mon to Thurs 9am to 5pm, Fri 9am to 4.45pm and every Tuesday until 7pm

Emergencies (outside office hours)

**01732 462222**

Complaints co-ordinator,  
Julie Heather **01732 227000**

### Swanley Contact & Information Centre

Swanley Library & Information Centre,  
London Road, Swanley BR8 7AE

Tel: **01322 614660**

Council Tax payment facility available

Mon to Thur 9.30am to 5.30pm,  
Fri 9.30am to 6pm and Sat 9am to 4pm

### Edenbridge Local Office

Adjoining Edenbridge Leisure Centre,  
Stangrove Park, Edenbridge, Kent TN8 5LU

Thursdays only

Planning surgery 10am to 12.30pm and  
Benefits surgery 1.30pm to 4pm

### Leisure centres

Ash Green Sports Centre\*

**01474 707164**

Edenbridge Leisure Centre \*\*

**01732 865665**

Lullingstone Park Golf Course \*\*

**01959 533793**

Sevenoaks Indoor Bowls Centre \*\*\*

**01732 451889**

Sevenoaks Leisure Centre \*\*

**01732 470700**

White Oak Indoor Bowls Centre, Swanley \*\*\*

**01322 665571**

White Oak Leisure Centre \*\*

**01322 662188**

\*Operated by Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council

\*\* Operated by Sencio Community Leisure,  
Head Office **01732 746010**

\*\*\*Operated by independent limited companies

### Your Councillors

The policies of the District Council are decided by 54 Councillors elected by local people. These Councillors are not employed by the Council and you cannot normally contact them at the Council Offices. For up-to-date addresses and telephone numbers for any Councillor, please call the Council's main office at Sevenoaks on **01732 227000**.

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