

inshape

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Council plucks green apple

Sevenoaks District Council has won a top award in an international campaign which recognises the environmental work of local authorities, companies and communities.

The prestigious Green Apple Award has been given to the Council for its 'Community Action Project' which aims to encourage local people to improve their environment.

Two of the Council's most popular initiatives were, 'Go Wild in the Garden' which encouraged residents to make their garden wildlife friendly, and the 'Walk This Way to School' scheme which helped primary school children understand the health and environmental benefits of walking.

Cllr Felicity Broomby, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Healthy Living, says: "It is a great honour to receive this award as it demonstrates the Council's commitment to working with local people to make a real difference to the environment. This award is a recognition of our residents' work, so I would like to say a big thank you to everyone involved for their determination and commitment."

The Council was presented with its award at a ceremony at the House of Commons on 8 November, hosted by The Rt Hon Patricia Hewitt MP, Secretary of State for Health.

Organised and run by The Green Organisation, the Green Apple Awards are now in their eleventh year and are an internationally recognised environmental awards scheme.

Cllr Felicity Broomby and Hayley Brooks, the Council's Community Development Officer.



"The prestigious Green Apple Award has been given to the Council for its 'Community Action Project' which aims to encourage local people to improve their environment."



Can you smell a rat?



Every year, Sevenoaks District Council investigates and takes action against residents for allowing rats and mice infestations on their land.

Rats and mice can potentially cause health risks by eating and contaminating food. They damage and destroy property and cause fires by gnawing electrical cables. They even spread disease through parasites, bites, urine, droppings and skin contact.

Residents are obliged by law to take steps to control any vermin on their property. If the Council becomes aware of a problem, it can issue an enforcement notice against the landowner or take legal action.

The best way to deal with rats and mice is to take preventative action, which often involves cutting off their food supply.

- **If you feed wild birds, make sure that you put out only the amount that will be eaten quickly by the birds that day**
- **Do not leave piles of rubbish sacks in areas that are easily accessible by vermin. Put them into dustbins or wheelie bins until the day of collection**
- **Keep food in sealable containers,**

both in the house and in the garden, and clear up any spilt food

You can also prevent them from entering your property. You can:

- **Stop them from entering through the drainage system. Contact a professional drainage contractor to carry out a survey of your drains to see if you have any broken or damaged drainpipes**
- **Ensure holes surrounding pipes are sealed. Airbricks and ventilators should be covered with fine mesh with holes no larger than 6mm in diameter**

The best way to deal with vermin is to call in the experts. Sevenoaks District Council provides a pest control service and they can give you advice and an estimate for dealing with any pest related problems.

For details of the service, call **01732 227200** or e-mail direct.services@sevenoaks.gov.uk

Don't move without telling us!

Although no major elections are scheduled for 2006, a by-election or referendum could be called at any time. But if you've moved without telling us, you could lose your right to vote.

The new register of electors will be published on 1 December. It has the names of everyone who is entitled to vote at elections for the forthcoming year.

These days it is much simpler to keep your registration up to date. If you have moved since 15 October 2005 – the reference date for the newly published register – you can tell us and we can help you to re-register at your new address quickly and easily.

We do our best in Electoral Services to 'catch' people who have moved in to the area and offer them the chance to re-register to vote at their new address but we know we could be missing some of you.

The safest thing to do is to contact Electoral Services when you move and ask how you can be re-registered. Additions, deletions and amendments are made to the register of electors on or around the first of every month, so it's never too late.

Don't miss the vote! Contact Electoral Services by phoning **01732 227188** or printing off an application form from the website www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/elections



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One of England's most efficient councils

Figures released by the Government earlier this year showed that Sevenoaks is one of the most efficient district councils in England.

According to returns to Government as part of new national efficiency targets, the Council achieved the sixth highest level of savings out of all 238 district councils.

Overall the Council saved 10% of its budget in the current financial year. Most of the savings came from changes to the Council's back office functions and through new ways of working and did not affect its major front line services.

These savings exceed Government efficiency targets set

out in its Gershon review that said that all councils should make year-on-year savings of 2.5% over the coming three years. The review set a national target of 6.45 billion pounds that will need to be achieved by all local authorities combined.

"To be named by Government as one of the country's top efficiency savers is a real achievement in itself and this was carried out without having a significant affect on our front line services," says Cllr Peter Fleming, Leader of the Council. "Despite meeting the Government's targets two years early, we continue to see how we can provide our services more efficiently for the benefit of local Council Tax payers."

Christmas show set to sparkle!

Sevenoaks Playhouse's star studded Christmas show has a distinctly local feel about it as it celebrates 100 years of *The Railway Children*, the classic children's book influenced by the author's experience of living in the Sevenoaks District.



Following last year's record breaking smash-hit production of the *Wind in the Willows*, this year's show stars Paul Henry, best known as Frank in ITV's *Bad Girls* and as the legendary Benny in *Crossroads*, as the loveable Perks.

The *Kindly Old Gentleman* will be played by Nicholas Smith, the much loved Mr Rumbold in *Are You Being Served?* and Mother will be played by Susannah Fellows, star of the West End's *Mamma Mia* and *Chicago*.

The *Railway Children*, written by Edith Nesbit and published in 1906, charts the adventures of three children who discover a railway at the end of their garden, having left London after the mysterious disappearance of their father.

Edith Nesbit lived in various houses in South East London and Kent throughout her life, but her happiest days were the three years spent at Halstead Hall in Halstead. This is the place where Edith started to concentrate on her poetry, and the place that was the inspiration for her most famous novel. The *Railway Children* is based on the nearby railway line that ran at the bottom of the hill at Knockholt.

The book celebrates its centenary in the Sevenoaks District in this sparkling and faithful new musical by Sevenoaks Playhouse Artistic Director, Julian Woolford, and Composer in Residence, Richard John.

The Show runs from Saturday 3 to Saturday 31 December and details of performance times and prices are available from the Sevenoaks Playhouse Box Office on **01732 450175** or online at www.sevenoaksplayhouse.co.uk

Christmas office opening times

Sevenoaks Office

- Open as usual Monday 19 to Thursday 22 December from 8.45am to 5pm and Friday 23 December from 8.45am to 4.45pm
- Closed Monday 26 to Wednesday 28 December
- Open Thursday 29 from 8.45am to 5pm and Friday 30 December from 8.45am to 4.45pm
- Closed Monday 2 January
- Open as usual from Tuesday 3 January

Edenbridge Local Office

- Open Thursdays for planning and benefits advice
- Open on Thursday 22 December for benefits advice only from 1.30pm to 4pm
 - Closed on Thursday 29 December
 - Open as usual weekly from Thursday 5 January

Swanley Local Office & Information Centre

- Open Saturday 24 December from 9am to 4pm
 - Closed Monday 26 to Tuesday 27 December
 - Open Wednesday 28 from 9.30am to 3.30pm, Thursday 29 from 9.30am to 5.30pm, Friday 30 from 9.30am to 6pm and Saturday 31 December from 9am to 4pm
 - Closed Monday 2 January
 - Open from Tuesday 3 January
- Please note that there will be no planning surgery at the Swanley Local Office on Tuesday 20 December and Tuesday 3 January.

To contact the Council in the event of a serious emergency when its offices are closed, please call **01732 227309**.

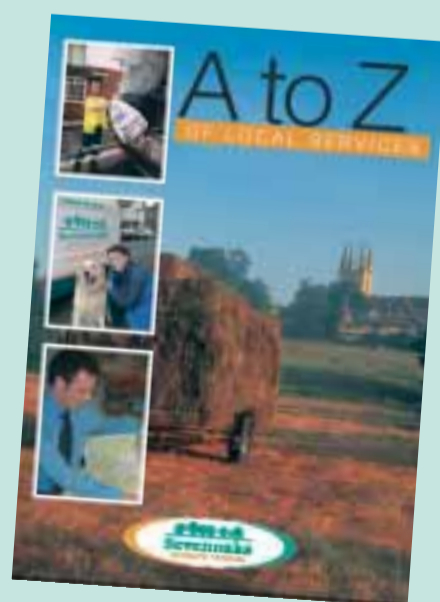
New A to Z spells out local services

Residents of Sevenoaks District can now take advantage of the latest A to Z that lists local services provided by a whole range of organisations.

The brochure includes contacts and information covering District, County, town and parish councils, the police, housing associations, primary care trusts, local voluntary groups and local leisure facilities.

Copies of the A to Z are available from Sevenoaks District Council's offices in Sevenoaks and from most town and parish councils.

To order a copy call Sevenoaks District Council on **01732 227000** or e-mail information@sevenoaks.gov.uk



Help shape your District

Local people can help shape the development of Sevenoaks District for at least the next ten years by contributing to a new plan that is being drawn up by the Council.

The Local Development Framework, or LDF, is the Council's new approach to local planning and development. It sets out a vision for land use in the District with a strong value placed on community involvement.

Over the coming years local people will be encouraged to take ownership of the document by being actively involved in its preparation. Involvement will include residents' surveys, workshops, focus groups and exhibitions.

Already a number of focus groups have been held and over 5,000 questionnaires have been sent out to homes across the District asking for people's views on local issues. The initial round of research found that:

- **Accessibility, convenience and the countryside are the greatest benefits of living in the area and residents are generally very positive about the District as a place to live**
- **The shortage of affordable housing was a concern to young people and parents who felt that new housing should be targeted at young people and first time buyers**
- **The shortage of local**



- **employment opportunities was a concern for many**
- **Residents regard the District as a relatively safe place to live**
- **Protecting the Green Belt and the rural nature of their surroundings was important.**

These results will be fed into the development of the LDF and will help the Council determine what is important to local people, the District's strengths and weaknesses that need to be addressed.

By listening to residents a set of

plans and policies on particular subjects and areas, such as housing and employment, will be drawn up that will form the LDF. These policies will then be monitored year by year and adjusted if necessary to ensure they continue to meet the needs of people in the District.

The first stage of preparation was the development of the statement of community involvement, 'Planning for People'. This includes details of how the Council will in future inform and consult local people about the LDF and planning, allowing them to engage better in the planning process

and make known their views.

The LDF will gradually replace the current Sevenoaks District Local Plan. It will be implemented in phases with the first phase of the framework, consisting of a core strategy and set of general policies, likely to be completed at the start of 2008.

Anyone interested in finding out more about the LDF can visit the Council's website, www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/ldf. To be added to a mailing list to receive regular updates e-mail ldf@sevenoaks.gov.uk

Council considers Hextable split

Work is well under way into an extensive review by Sevenoaks District Council to see if Hextable should have its own parish council. Following the review a recommendation could be put to central Government, which would take the final decision, to form a new parish council for the village.

Last May, the Hextable Residents' Association requested that Sevenoaks District Council investigate the possibility of forming a new parish council for Hextable village, which is currently part of the Swanley Town Council area. The application included a petition in support of the proposal by more than half the village's residents and

a number of local businesses.

Hextable Residents' Association suggested that any new parish council area should mirror the existing Swanley Town Council ward of Hextable.

Whilst Sevenoaks District Council cannot set up a new parish council, it can make a recommendation to the Central Government department, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, as the final decision would rest with them.

Early in the New Year, consultants acting on behalf of Sevenoaks District Council will ask local people in Hextable and Swanley for their views and by next April the Council will decide if it is going to recommend that a new parish council be formed.

Should it recommend a new council, a proposal would be put to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister by next May. A final decision could be reached by

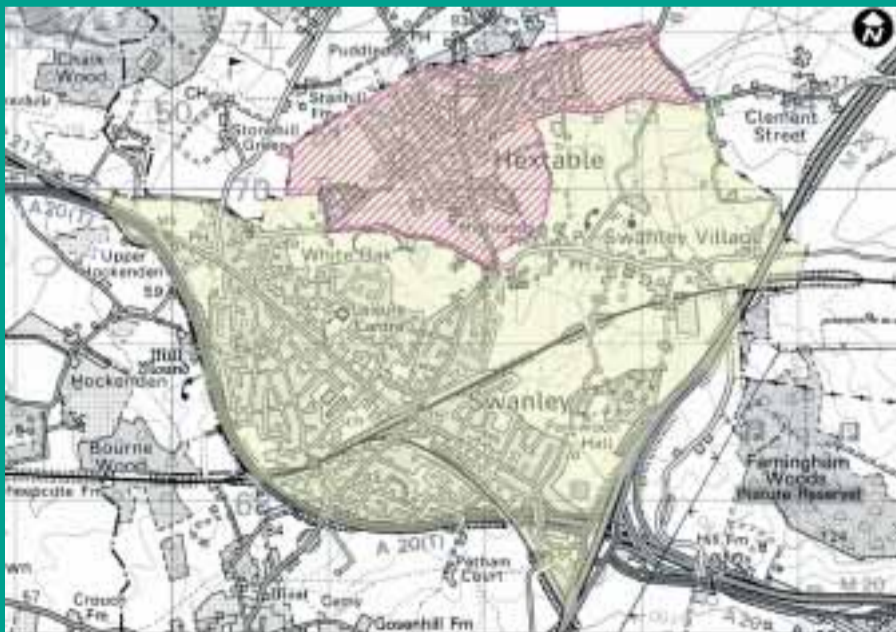
February 2007 in time for the next parish council elections in May of that year.

What are town and parish councils?

Town and parish councils are the level of administration closest to the residents they serve.

A typical town or parish council provides or maintains a range of community assets including allotments, common land, woodland, burial grounds, play areas, tennis courts and other sports facilities, litter bins, seats, car parks and ponds. They are also consulted by the District Council about all planning applications affecting their areas.

Sevenoaks District includes three town and 26 parish councils. They have a varying number of councillors and elections take place every four years on the same day District Council elections are held.



The present Swanley Town Council area is shaded in yellow with the Hextable ward hatched out in red.

New measures for licensing

A major shake up in the licensing laws that came into effect earlier in the year mean that Sevenoaks District Council, and not the Magistrates' Court, is now responsible for all licensing applications.

But how does the licensing process work? And how does the Council decide whether to grant a licence or not?

All pubs, clubs, shops, supermarkets or other facilities that regularly sell alcohol, provide entertainment, music or late night refreshments must have a premises licence, which is only available from the Council.

Once an application has been lodged for a new licence or changes to an existing one, the Council seeks the views of local people and its 'statutory consultees', who include the police, fire service, Kent County Council Trading Standards and Social Services and the Council's own environmental health and planning departments. Local town or parish councils are also informed.

Residents and others have 28 days to lodge any objections, known as representations.

Blue notices with details of the application are put up at the premises that lodged the licence application and a public notice is taken out in a local newspaper or parish magazine by the applicant.

Details are also available on the Council's website.

After the 28 day period has expired, and depending on the response from the public and statutory consultees, there are three possible outcomes:

- **Negotiation** – If one or two residents lodge representations, or a statutory consultee lodges a representation, the Council will try and negotiate between the applicant and those who made a representations to reach a compromise
- **Hearing** – If one or more representations are lodged or a compromise cannot be reached, the decision goes to a hearing of the Licensing Sub-Committee
- **Granted** – If no representations are received, or a compromise is reached, then the licence is granted.

Licensing hearings are held at the Council's Sevenoaks Offices and anyone can attend, but only those who have lodged a representation can speak. A decision is made on the day of the hearing.

Applications put before the Licensing Sub-Committee are

evaluated against the Council's Licensing Policy that was drawn up last year. The policy's objectives are to prevent crime, disorder and public nuisance, to promote public safety and to protect children from harm.

Applicants who do not agree with the decision of the Licensing Sub-Committee can appeal to the Magistrates' Court. The Licensing Sub-Committee

continually monitors all licensed premises to ensure they are adhering to their licence, and a review of a premises licence can be carried out at anytime if there is evidence of a problem.

For more information about licensing visit the Council's website, www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/licensing or e-mail licensing@sevenoaks.gov.uk



Treading a difficult line

Some people dislike them whilst others think they are an essential safety measure. But what could cause such a heated debate? The answer is of course double yellow lines.

Over the last three months, Sevenoaks District Council, in partnership with Kent County Council, has put in place new yellow lines restrictions on more than 52 local roads to make them safer for both road users and pedestrians.

The lines were put in following calls from residents, resident groups and local parish councils to improve road safety in their communities.

The vast majority of the new restrictions have been put on corners, known as corner protection, so not to compromise visibility lines at junctions. Others have been introduced near schools and other busy roads where parking compromises safety, particularly where many people have to cross the road.

Cllr Gary Williamson, Portfolio holder for transportation issues, says: "We have listened carefully to the concerns of our residents when considering these safety proposals. We hope the new restrictions will help improve local road safety for road users and pedestrians."



Yellow lines outside St Mary's School, Swanley

In addition, the Council has stepped up its Parking Attendant patrols on Sundays. Again this followed requests and complaints from local people who had reported near misses due to inconsiderate parking on double yellow lines.

Licensing on-line

Residents can now find out about all licensed premises on-line via the 'Public Access for Licensing' facility on the Council's website.

Using the state-of-the-art website residents can:

- **Find out about all licensed premises in the District or those close to their home or community. This can be carried out by typing in an address, postcode or by using an interactive map**
- **View the type of licences granted and the operating times of licensed premises**
- **Comment on-line about licensing applications that are under consideration**

For more information visit www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/licensing

Tapping into the developing world's needs

Have you ever wondered what happens to the Council's computer equipment after it has come to the end of its life? You may be surprised to learn that it is donated to a charity that is helping the developing world enter the information age, which also saves tax payers' money.

The Council gives redundant but working equipment to Computer Aid International who refurbish them. The equipment is then sent to Latin America and Eastern Europe, but the vast majority, some 80%, is sent to Africa.

In many parts of Africa, a new computer could cost more than a year's wages and it is often simply too expensive for most schools to buy.

As with all large organisations, the Council has to upgrade its IT equipment from time-to-time as more efficient systems become available. If the redundant equipment was not reused, the Council would have to pay for it to be disposed of, which can potentially be expensive and can take up valuable landfill space.

Cllr Peter Fleming, Leader of the Council, says: "Giving our outdated

IT equipment to Computer Aid International is a win win situation. Developing countries get working machines that are used in schools and in commerce. We in turn save tax payers' money by not having to dispose of the old equipment."

Tony Roberts, Chief Executive of Computer Aid International, adds: "Our achievement to date is due to the generosity of private and public sector IT users in the UK like Sevenoaks District Council. Our PC donors have the satisfaction of knowing that their PCs are making a real difference, helping to bridge the digital divide in the world's poorest countries."

Since Computer Aid International started, more than 50,000 second-hand computers have been sent to Africa. For more information visit the Computer Aid International website www.computeraid.org.



Cllr Peter Fleming, Leader of the Council, with soon to be donated equipment

District bags tough recycling target

Sevenoaks District residents proved they are amongst the most green thinking people in the country by meeting a challenging recycling target set by Government a full 10 months ahead of schedule.

May's recycling figures showed that residents recycled nearly 31% of their household waste, achieving for the first time the Central Government target of 30%, which had to be met by March 2006.

It was May's garden waste recycling rate, which hit an all-time high of more than seven percent, that helped to meet this important target. In just 14 months the Council's fortnightly garden waste collection service grew by a staggering 300%.

The Council has now set itself an even more ambitious local target of recycling 35% of the District's household waste by next March.

Cllr Felicity Broomby, the Council's Cabinet member with responsibility for recycling, says: "To meet the Government's challenging recycling target is a real achievement. This would not have been possible without the enthusiasm and help of our residents who are choosing to recycle more and more of their household waste. We intend to build on this good work by encouraging more residents to recycle and by providing the facilities for them to do so."

To find out more about recycling programmes, please call one of the recycling co-ordinators on **01732 227000** or e-mail recycling@sevenoaks.gov.uk.

Swanley gets a taste for healthy eating

Children at a Swanley primary school were rewarded with free swims and a year's family membership at White Oak Leisure Centre for improving their diet during a pilot scheme to encourage healthy eating.

The Council launched its two-week pilot in early October to encourage local school children to learn about healthy eating in a fun and interactive way.

Years one and five pupils from St Mary's Primary School had lessons about healthy eating and saw first hand healthy food options as part of a tour of their local supermarket.

Rewards were given to pupils who brought in one or more pieces of fruit to school everyday during

the project. Pupils were also invited to enter a competition to design a healthy lunchbox with leisure activities as the prizes. The Council's Chairman Cllr Ian Bosley presented the prizes at the end of the project.

Cllr Ian Bosley says of the pilot scheme: "Healthy eating is known to have many benefits such as reducing obesity, heart related problems and some cancers. It can also improve overall mental and physical performance. If we can encourage our residents to eat healthily at an early age, there is a good chance they will continue to do so in later life and avoid many preventable health problems associated with a poor diet."

The project was supported by the Swanley and Northern Parish Health Action Team, whose aim is to provide opportunities for Swanley residents to improve their health and well being.

For further details on the project please contact Sevenoaks District Council's Healthy Lifestyles Co-ordinator, Rebecca Perkins, on **01732 227000**.



Cone sweet cone

Ten Sevenoaks District residents are taking part in a year long trial that could help reduce the amount of rubbish sent to landfill every week.

Each member of the group has been given a special 'Green Cone' kitchen waste digester that featured in the BBC2 series 'No Waste Like Home'.

The Green Cone takes food waste that is unsuitable for composting and usually ends up in the dustbin. Kitchen waste that is put into the Green Cone, which sits in the garden, breaks down into its natural components of water, carbon dioxide, and a small residue that only needs to be removed every few years. The process produces nutrient-rich water that enters the ground and improves the surrounding soil.

The Green Cone garden unit, which uses the sun's heat to encourage the growth of micro-organisms that break down the waste, takes all cooked and uncooked food waste, including

meat, fish, bones, dairy products, vegetables and fruit. Use of the Green Cone could save as much as 20% of household waste from being collected and taken to increasingly expensive landfill space.

Kent County Council is running the local trial in partnership with Sevenoaks District Council. Further trials will be conducted across the whole of Kent for one year. If a success, the Green Cone could be made available to local residents at a discounted price from early 2007.



Warm to our heating and insulation deals

Local landlords are being encouraged to take advantage of energy conservation grants that could help improve their properties, save their tenants money and reduce harmful carbon emissions that contribute to global warming.

Energy saving grants are available for loft and cavity wall insulation, high efficiency condensing boilers and solar hot water and electricity systems, together with professional installation, all at discounted prices.

Typical cavity wall insulation starts at £125 and loft insulation begins at around £100.

There are approximately 8,900 privately rented properties in Sevenoaks District, equal to 20% of the area's total housing stock. Council led research suggests

that privately rented accommodation is less well

insulated and energy efficient than both privately owned homes and social housing.

Cllr Carol Clark, the Council's Cabinet member with responsibility for housing, says: "A warmer, more comfortable property should not only improve its condition but also make it more attractive to prospective and existing tenants. And what's more, homes with energy efficient heating systems and good insulation benefit our environment as well. Homes that use less energy mean that less polluting fossil fuels that contribute to global warming have been used to heat them."

Insulation and heating grants are also available for private home owners and tenants on income-based benefit.

For more information or a quotation call the Kent Energy Centre on **0800 3586669** or visit www.cen.org.uk/landlords



Gardening project is a blooming success

Residents who encouraged local wildlife to thrive in their gardens were honoured at the packed 'Gardening for Wildlife' presentation awards in late September, hosted by the Council's Vice-Chairman Cllr Alison Cook.

More than 40 residents from across the Sevenoaks District were presented with gold, silver, bronze or highly commended awards for their important work to improve the environment.

The scheme was launched on the first day of spring during March and aimed to make local gardens more wildlife friendly. It was open to individuals, community groups and schools and in all the Council sent out some 250 'Go Wild in the Garden' information packs, crammed with wildlife gardening advice and ideas, to those interested in taking part in the competition.

Judging was carried out by the Kent Wildlife Trust and the Council during the summer. Entrants' gardens were judged on how plants and shrubs were used to help wildlife such as birds, hedgehogs and butterflies as well as other factors including composting, saving water, avoiding peat products, nest boxes and feeding areas.

The evening featured guest speakers from Kent Wildlife Trust and a presentation by teachers and pupils from Hever Primary School who were chosen as the overall winner of all the schools that entered the scheme. As the overall winner, the School was given a wildlife garden planter donated by Coolings Nursery in Knockholt.



Cllr Alison Cook, the Council's Vice-Chairman with pupils from Hever Primary School

Cookie takes the biscuit

SNAP, West Kent's premier club night for 11 to 16 year olds, will be celebrating Christmas at the Sevenoaks Community Centre on Saturday 10 December, when all girl group Cookie will be taking to the stage.

The fun packed night will also feature SNAP regular DJ Ignition who will be playing all the latest dance, chart and RnB tunes.

Cookie - Montana, Aimee, Marianne and Tahnee - are fast becoming known for their killer tunes and feisty

performances and they have already supported some well known acts including Miss Dynamite and Liberty X.

Tickets will be available on the door for £4. The last event in Sevenoaks town sold out in record time so

clubbers are advised to arrive early to avoid disappointment.

Sophie Lord, the Council's Youth Development Co-ordinator, says of the event:

"SNAP club nights have developed and proved themselves as a wicked night out for young people and this time will be no exception. Cookie will be sure to keep the clubbers entertained! All tickets will be sold on the night, so clubbers should arrive early to avoid disappointment."

SNAP is a cigarette, alcohol and drugs free night for 11 to 16 year olds where clubbers will be searched on entry. The event starts at 7pm and ends at 10.30pm and the Community Centre is on Cramptons Road in Sevenoaks.

SNAP

Club Nights for 11-16 Year Olds

To get the latest news on SNAP in the Sevenoaks District including special offers and discounts, text polls and competitions, just send a text message saying JOIN SNAP to **07799 732 732**. Texts cost your normal network rate to join or unsubscribe, it is free to receive text alerts.

For more information go to **www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/youngpeople** and go to the SNAP pages. Alternatively contact Sophie Lord, Youth Development Co-ordinator on **01732 227492** or e-mail **youthmail@sevenoaks.gov.uk**.



New life for historic paper mill

One of the crown jewels of Sevenoaks District's industrial heritage could have new life breathed into it if plans are granted for its redevelopment in the New Year.

Horton Kirby Paper Mill, in the heart of South Darenth, has lain derelict since manufacturing ended at the site in 2003. Plans have been submitted to the Council to redevelop the 19th century site with a mix of 240 homes, commercial units and parking spaces.

The near seven acre site was first established in the 1820s and further extended during the 1870s and 1880s. It includes two listed buildings: a large two storey structure used for checking finished paper and its 270 feet high chimney, which has become a local landmark.

During its heyday in the 1950s the mill employed some 450 people and produced 230 tons of paper every week. However, in the late 1960s decline set in. In 1978 the mill was converted to produce high grade woodchip wallpaper for export, but it was finally closed in 2003.

The mill was credited in the 1920s with being the first in the world to use imported esparto grass as the raw material for paper. Previously rags were used. It also produced a special paper for the Government in the Second World War to stop internees

from sending sensitive information to the enemy. The paper was made so that ordinary writing ink could not be washed off and so that any writing with a ballpoint pen lightly done in colourless solution could be detected.

Over the course of the last two years, the Council has been working with the site owner, Fairview Homes, Horton Kirby and South Darenth Parish Council and local people to establish the best way forward for the development of the site.

The Council's aim was to preserve the old fashioned character of the mill, with its narrow cobbled streets and alleys, whilst taking advantage of the size and location of the site.

Extensive consultation with residents by the developer and the District and Parish Councils has already been carried out, which included public exhibitions and questionnaires sent to local villagers.

Sevenoaks District Council has encouraged the developer to look at crime reduction measures and ways of making the final development environmentally friendly.

Horton Kirby Paper Mill seen from Horton Road during the 1920s.



“The mill employed some 450 people and produced 230 tons of paper every week”

A planning application was submitted to Sevenoaks District Council by the developer during early October.

Although many Sevenoaks District Council departments have worked

closely with the developer, the application is being assessed on its own merits by the Council's planners and no decision has yet been reached. The final decision is expected early in the New Year.

Anyone interested in viewing the proposal can do so at the Council's main office in Sevenoaks or the Swanley local office.

Further information can also be found on the developer's website, **www.thehortonkirbypapermill.com**



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: Gravesend Police Station on 01474 331055 or Tonbridge Police Station 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 Cara Sillett on 01732 227000 or e-mail 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 1685

Reporting graffiti

To report graffiti call 01732 227000, complete the on-line form on the Council's website www.sevenoaks.gov.uk or text details to 07799 732732 starting with the word GRAF

Driving down vehicle crime

Sevenoaks District Council is taking a new approach in the fight against vehicle crime.

The Council's Parking Attendants, who patrol Council owned car parks and areas with restricted parking, will be taking note of any vehicles that have valuables left on display, passing on the details to the DVLA.

A letter will then be sent to car owners by the DVLA advising them how they can keep their valuables safe.

Philip Aldis, the Council's Community Safety Co-ordinator, says: "Often taking a simple commonsense approach actions, such as keeping valuables out-of-sight in cars, can help to reduce crime. This new scheme acts as a reminder to drivers who are putting their vehicles and valuables at risk."



Building a safer community

The Community Safety Partnership has allocated £17,500 towards making security improvements to a number of areas.

Projects to be completed by March 2006 include:

- Improved site security at St Katherine's School, Knockholt
- Improved lighting at Birchwood School, Swanley
- Fencing at Lady Boswells School
- Fencing at South Darenth Village Hall
- Gating land in Lynden Way to prevent fly-tipping and nuisance motorbikes
- Gating land in Swanley to prevent nuisance vehicles
- Security fencing at Sundridge recreation ground
- Fencing in an alleyway in Northview to deter anti-social behaviour

The projects are being carried out by a number of agencies including Kent County Council, West Kent Housing Association, Swanley Town Council, and Sundridge with Ide Hill and Horton Kirby and South Darenth Parish Councils and local land owners.

Think twice before buying a mini-motor bike

Residents who are thinking of buying a mini-motor bike for themselves or as a Christmas present for some one else are being reminded about restrictions on their use.

Temporary West Kent Police Chief Inspector, Simon Wilshaw, explains: "Buyers should be aware that finding a place to ride mini bikes can be difficult. They cannot be ridden in public places and can only be used on private land with the landowner's permission. In most cases, private landowners are extremely reluctant to give their permission. If we see a mini motorbike being ridden on a public road we can confiscate it, as we have already done in Sevenoaks District."



More information about mini-motor bikes is available from the Council offices and on its website www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/communitysafety

Taking a stand

The Community Safety Partnership is looking for residents who have stood up against anti-social behaviour in their communities to take part in next year's national 'Taking a stand' award.

Last year the Partnership scooped four of the ten prizes in the south east region with local people each

winning £1,000 for their communities.

The deadline for entries for next year's awards is 13 January 2005.

If you know of someone who you think could be nominated please contact Cara Sillett at the Council on **01732 227000** or e-mail community.safety@sevenoaks.gov.uk

Payback time

Local people are being asked to nominate areas that they would like to be cleaned up under the new 'Community Payback' scheme.

The innovative scheme, run by the Kent Probation Service in partnership with Clean Kent, involves offenders carrying out compulsory unpaid work as part of their rehabilitation or punishment orders.

Nationally some five million hours of unpaid work is carried out by offenders every year, and now for the first time, residents can have a say in how and where this work is carried out.

Sites can be suggested by completing a simple online form on the Community Payback section of the Kent Probation website www.kentprobation.org

Investment puts District's leisure facilities ahead of the game

Less than two years after its launch, Sencio Community Leisure has every reason to be satisfied with business. Centre and fitness membership levels have increased by a staggering 30 to 40 per cent and customer satisfaction levels are up to an impressive 73 per cent.

With a recent investment of £400,000 by Sevenoaks District Council to improve facilities, the new business has firmly established itself at the heart of the District's leisure provision.

"We exist solely to provide leisure to the people of the Sevenoaks District," says Mark Whyman, Sencio's Managing Director. "We

can no longer expect customers to simply roll up and commit to a facility because it's on their doorstep. The difference with Sencio is that we are here for the community, run by the community and are for the betterment of the community."

It is at Edenbridge Leisure Centre that Sencio is stamping its

community leisure operator status. When the local branch of Age Concern needed a new home for its weekly day care and activity initiative, Sencio was able to step-in and provide space released as a result of centre refurbishment.

"The Sencio team has been quick to move onto the next stage by linking with West Kent College to develop a

sports academy, using its facilities as a key component of vocational education for those seeking a career in leisure," says Mark Whyman.

"The challenge is to do things differently and to find new, innovative and creative ways to engage people in the experience and the benefits of a healthier lifestyle."

On your bike to a healthier lifestyle

White Oak and Sevenoaks leisure centres are telling people to get on their bikes as part of an on-going mission to make fitness fun.

Since it was formed in 2004, Sencio Community Leisure has been promoting the concept of *Wellness* – and is keen to stress that the term goes far beyond the next fitness fad.

"*Wellness* is about redefining exercise and saying to our customers that you don't have to spend hours slogging away in the gym for results. It's about finding an activity that suits you, suits your lifestyle and that you will actually look forward to," says Adam Perry, Health and Wellbeing Director.

White Oak Leisure Centre has become the first public facility in the local area to offer spinning within its fitness programme. Although it uses bikes to deliver the

complete all-round workout, it differs from the conventional spinning classes by incorporating strict adherence to music to create a training system designed to aid weight loss, tone muscle and assist in stress management.

Sevenoaks Leisure Centre has become a certified and licensed facility for the teaching and running of spinning classes.

Taking its format from the original indoor cycling programme developed for competitive cyclists and triathletes, spinning uses special stationary bikes to provide a complete training session under the supervision of internationally certified and qualified instructors.

For full details of Sencio Wellness classes call your nearest centre or visit www.sencio.org.uk



Swim 4 fitness



Childhood obesity is a problem with long-term implications into adulthood. The eventual cost is not only borne by the individual but also by the health service and society as a whole.

Many believe the answer lies in re-education and introducing people to the benefits of a healthy lifestyle from an early age. Sencio Community leisure centres in Sevenoaks and Swanley have been aiming to play their part in recent months with the *Swim4Fitness* campaign.

Recognising the pool is one of the most effective environments for all-round wellness, *Swim4Fitness* works on the assumption that all swimmers – competitive or recreational, expert or novice – can benefit from clear and expert guidance and provides advice and easy to follow programmes.

Since its launch in June, swimmers of all ages have benefited from this support and encouragement and have also been able to take advantage of reduced price swimming packages introduced by Sencio to make participation affordable for all.

Looking out for crime

Sevenoaks District Council's CCTV system continues to demonstrate how effective it is in the fight against crime. From January to November it contributed to 163 arrests and on one day alone last summer it assisted the police with three arrests in separate incidents.

On 6 July, the Council's CCTV control room took a report from a local trader in Swanley via the 'shop safe' scheme about an alleged shoplifter. The CCTV system monitored the situation until police arrived and arrested the individual.

In another incident later that day the CCTV control room staff were asked to look out for a Westerham resident who had a warrant out for his arrest. He was later tracked down in Sevenoaks by the CCTV system. The police were informed and he was then arrested.

Finally the police asked for help to monitor a stolen car, which was located in Sevenoaks town by CCTV staff. It was monitored until the police arrived on the scene to make an arrest.

Cllr Keith Loney, the Council's Cabinet Member with responsibility for Community Safety, says: "These three arrests in just one day demonstrate how effective our system can be in the fight against crime and how it compliments the work of our other community safety partners such as the police."



Cllr Keith Loney and CCTV Manager Sharon Wright

Sevenoaks District Council's CCTV system has 97 cameras covering priority areas in Westerham, Edenbridge, Swanley, New Ash Green and Sevenoaks.

The system operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year by trained and highly skilled staff. It is run and paid for by Sevenoaks District Council together with some funding from Kent Police.

Planning pages set to be a hit

The Council's popular 'Public Access for Planning' area of its website has been upgraded to provide an even better service to our residents.

Public Access for Planning has been live for three years and is an interactive service that provides residents and planning professionals alike with up-to-date details of all planning applications in Sevenoaks District.

Since it went live, the Council has listened to user's feedback and together with its developer has made a series of improvements, which include:

Interactive on-line maps

Users can now identify properties and planning applications by using the on-line maps

Related records function

This option allows users to view details of all related planning applications in relation to a chosen site

What's nearby

A tool that allows users to find out about planning applications within a specified area. For example a resident could find out about all planning applications within 300 metres of their home

Advanced search features

Three new search options have been included for parish area, appeal status and Planning Portal Reference

Improved browser support

Planning Public Access now supports multiple browsers. Together with Internet Explorer it also supports Netscape, Mozilla, Mozilla Firefox and Opera, although at present, the map display only works with Internet Explorer.

To view 'Planning Public Access' log on to www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/publicaccess

We'll take it, but don't leave it

Sevenoaks District Council's free Saturday refuse collection service is as popular as ever. However, in a small number of cases, residents are leaving their refuse for collection at the side of the road unattended posing a danger to road users and pedestrians.

The free Saturday service gives residents the chance to dispose of large bulky items that would otherwise not fit onto the normal vehicles and services. The collection vehicles are stationed at specific locations around the District for between half and one-and-a-half hours depending on the site.

Increasingly some residents are leaving items on the roadside unattended in advance of the collection vehicle arriving. This is dangerous and leaves the sites looking untidy and this has led to complaints to the Council.

This practice is treated as fly tipping and those responsible may face a fine or prosecution. The crews are happy to help residents with their items as long as the resident stays with the item until it can be loaded.

If you would like further information about the service, please call the Council on 01732 227000 or e-mail information@sevenoaks.gov.uk

Don't give us an unwanted surprise!

The Council is reminding residents not to put sharp objects in their domestic waste as they pose a serious danger to our refuse collectors.

There have been a number of incidents where sharp objects have been found in domestic waste, which has resulted in some of our refuse crews being injured. In the most serious cases, members of the crew have had to take time off work to recover costing all our tax payers money.

Any sharp items such as knives, hooks, bars, coat hangers, broken crockery, glass and household tools can put our staff at risk.

If you have to dispose of any sharp item you should:

- Put the item in a tube or wrap in cardboard marked clearly that a dangerous item is inside and leave it to one side of your refuse sacks
- Take sharp items to your local household waste recycling centres (also known as the dump or the tip) for disposal. Place it in either a metal recycling skip or in a skip dedicated to non-recyclable waste if it is plastic.

Christmas and New Year refuse collection arrangements

Over the holiday period there will be some changes to your refuse and recycling and garden waste collection days.

Normal collection day	Rescheduled collection day
Monday 26 December	Wednesday 28 December
Tuesday 27 December	Thursday 29 December
Wednesday 28 December	Friday 30 December
Thursday 29 December	Saturday 31 December
Friday 30 December	No collection next pick up Saturday 7 January
Monday 4 January	Tuesday 3 January
Tuesday 3 January	Wednesday 4 January
Wednesday 4 January	Thursday 5 January
Thursday 5 January	Friday 6 January
Friday 6 January	Saturday 7 January

Please ensure that your black and clear sacks and green waste is put out by 7am on your rescheduled day of collection. For more information please call **01732 227000** or the Council's refuse hotline on **01732 227103**.

Tree-cycle with the Council this Christmas

Worried that you will not be able to dispose of your Christmas tree after this year's festivities have ended? Please worry no more. The Council will collect your tree for free throughout January and it will be shredded into environmentally friendly compost.

Put your tree at the kerbside during January and our Garden Waste Collection crew will collect it during their usual fortnightly round. Trees should be placed where you normally put your refuse and recycling sacks the night before your collection day. Trees with a 50mm (2" in diameter) or smaller trunk will be collected until the end of January. Your tree should not be decorated or be in a pot or stand of any kind.

If your tree's trunk is more than 50mm (2" in diameter), it can be taken to Kent County Council's Dunbrik Household



Recycling site at Sundridge, or to its Pedham Place site at

“ Put your tree at the kerbside during January and our Garden Waste Collection crew will collect it during their usual fortnightly round ”

Swanley (both open 8am to 4.30pm, seven days a week) and placed in a garden waste container.

If you want to know the day on which your road is scheduled for the Christmas tree collection or you are still unsure about how to dispose of your tree, call the Council on 01732 227000. Happy Christmas!

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,
Christine Webb **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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