

inshape

Issue 65 Summer 2006

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Clean sweep for the District's streets

Sevenoaks District is streets ahead of the rest when it comes to having the cleanest roads anywhere in the country.

Recently released figures show that out of 339 local councils across England, Sevenoaks District has the cleanest streets. Along with just two other councils, 0% of the District's streets were assessed as dirty.

The figures, taken from information supplied to the Central Government body, the Audit Commission, revealed that on average, 17.5% of council streets were assessed as dirty.

Local roads are kept clear of litter by Sevenoaks District Council's 34 strong street cleaning team, which is responsible for removing litter from the Highway and from Council owned land but not privately owned land. The team works Monday to Friday and weekends and its sweepers take to the roads from 6am to minimise disturbance to the rush hour traffic.

Last year alone, the team removed over 4,000 tonnes of rubbish – enough to fill more than 700 London buses!



Richard Wilson,
Head of Environmental
and Operational
Services with Cllr
Felicity Broomby
and street cleaners
Alan Roberts and
Richard Chapman

Cllr Felicity Broomby, the Council's Cabinet member with responsibility for clean streets, says: "We pride ourselves on having a clean District, and we know that it is of great importance to our residents. Our dedicated street cleaning team work exceptionally hard to keep the roads

free of litter and this just shows what a fantastic job they do. There is always going to be times when some of our roads have some litter, usually before we have had a chance to clean them. However, we can all help to keep our roads clean by disposing of litter responsibly."

“We pride ourselves on having a clean District”



How are we performing?

Residents who would like to find out about the 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.

The areas where the Council has performed well during the last year include:

- Reducing the time taken to remove fly tipped rubbish on land the Council is responsible for from 4.5 days to 3.3 days
- 100% of all missed refuse collections were put right by the next working day. The previous year's figure was 85%
- Out of nearly 42,000 homes that are delivered black and clear sacks two or three times a year, 339 were missed out, 63 fewer than the year before
- The number of days lost to staff sickness has dropped and overtime payments were markedly reduced
- Along with two other areas, the District had the cleanest roads in the UK
- 99.3% of housing and Council Tax benefit claims were calculated correctly, an improvement on the previous year which was 95.4%
- The number of major planning applications dealt with within the Government's 13 week target has increased for the second year running
- Balanced Communities – tackling the local need for housing
- A sustainable Council budget – providing good value services

Over the coming year the Council will be focusing on its four point vision:

- Delivering the Community Plan – developed in partnership with the community and other local public sector authorities, it sets out how local public services will be delivered over a ten year period
- The Local Development Framework – a plan that sets out how land can be developed in the next 25 years

The Corporate Performance Plan can be viewed on the Council's website by logging on to 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

Would you like to advertise here?

In Shape is produced by the Council and distributed to some 48,000 homes and business throughout Sevenoaks District by Royal Mail three times a year.

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August bank holiday office opening times

Sevenoaks Office

Open as usual on Friday 25 August
Closed Monday 28 August
Open as usual from Tuesday 29 August

Swanley Contact & Information Centre

Open as normal on Saturday 26 August
Closed Monday 28 August
Open as usual from Tuesday 29 August

Edenbridge Local Office

Open on Thursday 24 August from 10am to 12.30pm only

Details of the August Bank Holiday refuse collection arrangements can be found on the back page of this edition of *In Shape*.

To contact the Council in the event of a serious emergency when the offices are closed, please call **01732 462222**.

Your views count

Between August and January, many residents will receive a questionnaire asking for their views on the services provided by Sevenoaks District Council.

The resident satisfaction surveys are carried out every three years by all councils nationally. The questions are set by Central Government so that when complete, accurate comparisons can be made between authorities.

During August and again in January, many people who used the Council's benefit service in June and July and in November and December will be sent a questionnaire. It will include the experience of contacting and visiting the benefits offices, speed at which claims are assessed and the courtesy of Council staff.

From September, 2,400 randomly selected residents aged 18 and over will receive another questionnaire. It will cover a wide range of local issues including anti-social behaviour, refuse and recycling services, recreational facilities, experience of contacting the Council and overall satisfaction with the authority.

A survey will also be sent from October to residents and architects who have used the Council's planning service since April.

For more information about the surveys, call Daniel Whitmarsh on **01732 227414** or e-mail communications@sevenoaks.gov.uk

In the hotseat

Raising the profile of carers will be top of the agenda for the Council's new Chairman Cllr Alison Cook, the former nurse who knows first hand the challenges faced by those who look after others.

Cllr Cook, Member for Leigh and Chiddingstone Causeway, has been a District resident for over 30 years since she moved from Cambridgeshire in 1974.

She trained as a nurse at the Middlesex Hospital in London before moving to Lister Hospital in Hitchin spending eight years in the profession. This interest in health was renewed when Cllr Cook became the Chairman of the Tunbridge Wells Community Health Council, a position she held for several years.

Cllr Cook's interest in politics was kindled during her school days in Bedford. She was elected to Sevenoaks District Council in 1987 and was Leader of the Council from 1999 to 2005, having previously served as Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Environmental Health Committee.

Politics aside, Cllr Cook is involved in many community issues. She is a trustee of several local charities and has been a governor of both Sevenoaks School and Amherst Primary School, and is now governor of Leigh Primary School. She was a board member of

the Moat Housing Association and remains keenly interested in housing matters. Cllr Cook has also been active in her local church having served on the Deanery and Diocesan synods.

During her year in office, Cllr Cook will support and raise the profile of the Carers First and Spring House charities, and lists promoting and encouraging the delivery of the Community Plan as one of her priorities. She would like to visit the District's many parishes to understand more fully local issues and to showcase the work of the Council.

As a supporter of the arts Cllr Cook chairs the Sevenoaks District Arts Council which assists the rich diversity of amateur arts encouraging wider participation, especially amongst young people.

Recently Cllr Cook celebrated her 40th wedding anniversary with her husband James. She has four children and six grandchildren.

The Council's new Vice-Chairman is Cllr James Gaywood, Member for Hartley and Hodsoll Street.

Cllr Alison Cook, the Council's new Chairman, with her husband James



Break dancing project made permanent

Swanley teenagers can keep on break dancing after a pilot dance project proved so successful it was made permanent.

The EZ STEPZ project started a ten week programme of break dancing classes in April to help local people improve their fitness. Following a great response from young people in the area the classes will now go ahead on a regular basis.



The classes, for 12 to 19 year olds, are held every Tuesday at 6pm at Hextable Dance, Egerton Avenue in Hextable. They cost £1 for Swanley and Hextable residents and £4 for others. Vouchers for the classes can be bought from White Oak Leisure Centre.

The classes, which are funded by the Big Lottery Fund, will begin again on 5 September.

The EZ STEPZ project is part of the Council's Healthy Lifestyles Project, an initiative to improve the health and well-being of Swanley residents by encouraging exercise and a healthy lifestyle.

For more information please contact Rebecca Perkins, the Council's Healthy Lifestyles Co-ordinator, on **01732 227121** or e-mail community.development@sevenoaks.gov.uk

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Holding out for a green hero

One of Britain's first ever 'Green Hero' awards was presented to the Council for its wide-ranging work to improve the local environment.

The award was presented by The Green Organisation, an independent international environmental group dedicated to recognising, rewarding and promoting environmental best practice around the world.

The Council was recognised for its 'Go Wild in the Garden' scheme that helps residents better understand and appreciate wildlife, and the 'Walk This Way to School' programme that helps local children to understand the positive impact that walking can have on people and the environment.

Cllr Felicity Broomby, Sevenoaks District Council's Cabinet Member with responsibility for the environment, says: "I am delighted that once again we have been recognised for our work to help improve our local environment. This award may not have been possible without the help of our green thinking residents, who have enthusiastically taken part in a number of our initiatives."



Cllr Felicity Broomby, the Council's Cabinet member with the responsibility for the environment, with Hayley Brooks, the Council's Community Development Officer

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Nominate Those Special Volunteers To Give Them A Big 'Thank You'

There are 8 categories to capture the widest range of volunteering activities:

1. Marlowe Theatre Awards - For the Arts
2. Environment Agency Awards - For the Protection & Enjoyment of the Wild, Semi-Natural & Built Environment
3. Kent County Council Awards - For Welfare & Disability
4. Pfizer Awards - For Community Support & Development
5. Kent County Council Awards - For Voluntary Work in Education & Schools
6. Saga Awards - For Voluntary Committee Support and for Counselling and Advice
7. Kent Sports Development Awards - For Sport & the Support of Sport
8. The Children's Mutual Awards - For Mentoring

Mini nomination form

Your Details as Nominator

Name

Address

Postcode

Tel day

Tel eve

Email

Category

Nominee Details Individual/Group

Name

Address

Postcode

Tel day

Tel eve

Email

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 Brenchley House, 123-135 Week Street, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 2RF. Tel: 01622 694844. Or nominate on line: www.kent.gov.uk/volunteerawards

Don't leave it to chance!

With imminent changes to the way gambling licences are issued, residents are being asked for their views on the Council's draft gambling policy.

From early next year, responsibility for issuing gambling licenses will be split between local councils and the new national gambling regulator, the Gambling Commission.

Local authorities, such as Sevenoaks District Council, will license gambling premises that include betting offices, bingo halls, casinos, adult gaming centres and family entertainment centres. Many of these premises are currently licensed by the Magistrates' Courts.

A premises licence gives permission for a building or part of a building to be used for gambling activities. Certain conditions may be attached, for instance opening hours and security measures.

Councils will also issue permits for gaming machines in pubs, clubs and other alcohol licensed premises.

The Central Government body, the Gambling Commission, will be in charge of issuing and regulating operator's licences, which are concerned with the management and conduct of gambling, and personal licences, for people with

key roles connected with the gambling industry. It will also licence on-line gambling.

The Council has produced a draft Statement of Licensing Policy that sets out how it intends to exercise its new functions. The draft Statement contains details regarding making comments (known as representations) about licence applications, applying for the review of an existing licence and how applicants will be expected to meet the new licensing rules.

The Council is keen to hear local people's views on the draft Statement. Copies are available at the Council's offices and local libraries and can be viewed via the Council's website at www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/licensing

Copies can be sent to residents on request by calling **01732 227325** or by e-mailing licensing@sevenoaks.gov.uk

All comments must be made by 7 September 2006. The policy will be finalised in November.



Local elections alert!

With District and town and parish council elections planned for next May, a new electronic service is now available to remind residents when it's time to register to vote.

Only those whose names are included in the register of electors can vote in elections and therefore influence local issues.

To remind residents when its time to register, the free 'Election Alarm Clock' service has been launched. By simply registering at www.electionalarmclock.com/sevenoaks residents will be sent a reminder by mobile phone text message or by e-mail.

What's more, it will also send out reminders at election time when it's time to vote.

From the 11 September households will be sent a voter registration form which includes details of how to register by post, telephone or online. Even if your details have not changed you are still required by law to register a 'no-change' with us.

The local elections on the 3 May 2007 are particularly important as you will be voting for your local parish or town councillors in addition to your Sevenoaks District Councillors.

All British, Irish, Commonwealth and European Union citizens living in the Sevenoaks District can register to vote for these local elections.

If you move after this annual update to the register you can still re-register at any time by contacting Pat or Christian in Electoral Services by calling **01732 227188** or **01732 227243** or by e-mailing elreg@sevenoaks.gov.uk

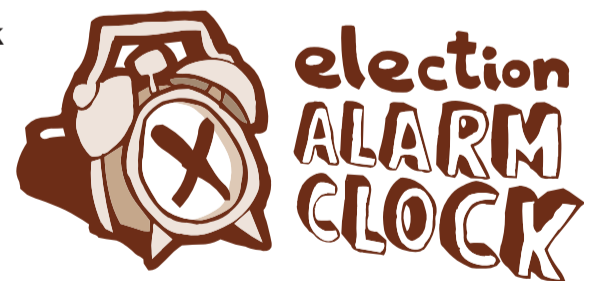
You can also download and print a voter registration form at www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/elections

HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN?

Over three million people across the UK didn't vote in the last election because their names were not on the register of electors or they were away on polling day...

Sign up to the **Election Alarm Clock** reminder service and never forget again!

It's completely free and you can log-on and play the exclusive 'Elejumper' game.



The next elections in the Sevenoaks District are 3rd May 2007!

For details log on to www.electionalarmclock.com/sevenoaks

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Cleaning up Kent



During the summer, a rapid response team took to the District's streets to help tackle fly tipping, litter and graffiti.

The team was deployed across west Kent as part of the Clean Kent Campaign, a joint initiative between Sevenoaks and Kent's 11 other district councils, Kent County Council, Kent Fire & Rescue Service, Kent Police and other key partners.

Commonly referred to as 'the flying squad', the team augments existing Council services by clearing publicly owned land suffering from incidents of fly-tipping and recovering evidence that could lead to a prosecution, as well as removing litter and graffiti. Kent Probation Area, a key partner in the initiative, is providing additional labour to help with graffiti clean ups as part of its Community Payback Scheme.

With landowner's permission, the team will also be available to help clean up areas of private land.

The West Kent team will be shared by Sevenoaks District Council as well as by Gravesham, Dartford and Tunbridge Wells borough councils.

The Clean Kent Campaign was launched last year with the intention of increasing the

percentage of residents who think Kent is a clean county and reducing the impact of fly tipping.

The Campaign is not only focusing on the District Council's responsibilities for cleaning but also those of the Highways Agency, which manages motorways and some 'A' roads, and rail operators as

well as education and awareness raising amongst the public.

The Clean Kent Campaign is keen for local residents to nominate areas that they would like cleaned up. To nominate an area, call **01732 227000**, quoting the 'Clean Kent Campaign' or e-mail **cleankent@sevenoaks.gov.uk**



Shape your District's future

With work progressing on a ground-breaking plan that will convey how land can be used over the next quarter of a century, residents are being invited to comment on the work so far at a series of exhibitions during the autumn.

The plan in question is the 'Local Development Framework' that will set out in detail the areas of the District that can be developed and areas that will be protected over the coming 25 years. It will replace the current Local Plan over the coming months.

In developing the document, the Council has carried out wide-spread consultations with residents and has identified eight key themes that the Local Development Framework will address.

A series of public exhibitions will take place setting out what the Local Development Framework aims to achieve and how it will do it. Residents will be asked to comment on the work. Councillors and staff will also be on hand to discuss the proposals.

The exhibition will be taking place at:

- New Ash Green Village Hall on Monday 23 October 2006
- Swanley Clock Tower on Tuesday 24 October 2006
- Westerham Parish Council Offices on Wednesday 25 October 2006
- Sevenoaks District Council Offices on Thursday 26 October 2006
- Edenbridge, Rickards Hall on Friday 27 October 2006

Details will be publicised nearer the time. For more information, e-mail **ldf.consultation@sevenoaks.gov.uk** or call the LDF team on **01732 227306**

Waste – What do you think?

How should we deal with the growing amount of household waste we produce in Kent? Kent's local authorities have some ideas, but they want to know what you think!

Each person in Kent produces about half a tonne of waste every year – that's about the same weight as the average cow! This means that 800,000 tonnes of household waste was produced in Kent last year, which is enough to fill refuse trucks parked nose to tail around the M25 – with some left over.

It costs tens of millions of pounds to collect and dispose of the household waste produced in Kent. The majority of the waste, 64%, goes into landfill and 29% is recycled or composted.

But every year the amount of waste created grows. At the current rate of growth, Kent's authorities will have to deal with a further 260,000 tonnes of waste by 2020.

The Kent Waste Forum, a partnership between Kent's 12 district councils, which collect the waste, and Kent County Council, which disposes of it, is putting together the Kent Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy. This sets out how Kent's councils intend to manage the household waste produced by residents over the next 20 years.



A draft 'headline strategy', which sets out the main policies, is now available. The next stage in developing the strategy is to draw up action plans that will set out how the strategy will be achieved across the county.

We want your opinions on the headline strategy and your views on what the action plans should contain.

So help shape the future by visiting the public consultation section on **www.kent.gov.uk/kwf** or contact the forum via **kentwasteforum@kent.gov.uk** or **01622 221859** to find out how you can have your say.



Get in the Zone!

With just three weeks left to run, young people from across the District are being urged not to miss out on the fun and games at this year's 'Youth Zone'.

The Youth Zone is now a firm summer favourite with young people aged eight and above with a record breaking 1,300 people taking part last year.

All the activities are provided for free and this year they include sports, dance, music and drama workshops, skating, painting and parties.

The fun begins at 11am and ends at 3.30pm each day, weather permitting, and there is no need to book in advance.



Young people are registered when they arrive and leave the site. Please bring a packed lunch if you are going to stay all day. Young people aged under eight are welcome providing they are accompanied and supervised by an adult at all times.

For more information about the Youth Zone, contact Sophie Lord, the Council's Youth Development Co-ordinator, on **01732 227492** or e-mail sophie.lord@sevenoaks.gov.uk

The dates below are subject to change and parents are advised to check before they come along. The latest dates can be found by viewing the young people's page on the Council's website www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/youngpeople or by calling the Council on **01732 227000**.



young people

Theme	Date	Venue	Workshop or activity
Sports	Monday 14th August	Eynsford Harrow Meadow, Bower Lane	Silly Olympics – join in – you might win a prize!
Sports	Tuesday 15th August	Weald Village Green, Long Barn Road	Sports day – races and team games
Sports	Wednesday 16th August	Westerham Recreation Ground, off Quebec Avenue	Skaterham – skate, inline and BMX coaching – please bring your own equipment
Sports	Thursday 17th August	Horton Kirby Westminster Field, off The Street	Unusual sports, have a go – try it out!
Sports	Friday 18th August	Otford Recreation Ground, Hale Lane Close	Football coaching – bring your kit and improve your skills
Make It	Monday 21st August	Shoreham Recreation Ground, off High Street	Paint a masterpiece workshop
Make It	Tuesday 22nd August	Edenbridge Stangrove Park, High Street	Sculpture workshop
Make It	Wednesday 23rd August	Seal Recreation Ground, High Street	Action Art – Join in with Massive paintings
Make It	Thursday 24th August	Swanley Recreation Ground, off St Mary's Road	Fashion – T-shirt and hat designing and EZ Stepz R 'n' B and Hip Hop workshop and TK Spin – Masters of Movement
Make It	Friday 25th August	Knockholt Recreation Ground, High Street	Make and paint workshop
	Monday 28th August	Bank holiday – No Youth Zone	
Party	Tuesday 29th August	West Kingsdown Gamecock Meadow, London Road	Tropical beach party
Party	Wednesday 30th August	Sevenoaks Greatness Recreation Ground, Mill Lane	Fancy dress competition
Party	Thursday 31st August	Fordcombe Cricket Ground, Fordcombe Road	Teddy bears picnic
Party	Friday 1st September	Dunton Green Recreation Ground, London Road	Party Party Party!



Please wear old clothes for activities where you see this splat – you might get messy or dirty



You need to bring things with you from home for activities where you see this sign

Partners in play

Children and families are being asked for their views about the provision of play facilities by the Sevenoaks District Play Partnership.

The Partnership, made up of representatives from Sevenoaks District Council, Kent County Council, West Kent Extra, Sencio Community Leisure and

other partners, aims to develop a Play Strategy for the District outlining residents' views and gaps in provision.

The strategy will be used to support a funding bid from the Big Lottery Fund's Children's Play Programme next year for new play facilities.

If you would like to add your views, please complete the survey form on our website www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/youngpeople by 15th September.

A draft Play Strategy will be available for comments by the end of the year.



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 1624

Reporting graffiti

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

New policing arrangements benefit the District



Chief Superintendent Mark Salisbury

New policing arrangements in West Kent came into effect in April, which mean for the first time, Sevenoaks District is now covered by just one police command unit.

West Kent Police has taken on responsibility for policing the north of Sevenoaks District, an area that was previously covered by North Kent Police.

The move brings West Kent Police boundaries into line with those of the District which will make policing the area more efficient and effective.

The good news is that as a result of

these changes there has also been an increase in officer numbers in the West Kent area:

- The number of Inspectors will increase by seven to 17
- The number of Sergeants will increase by 12 to 53
- The number of Police Constables will increase by 79 to 296
- By April 2008 it is estimated there will be 53 more local Police Community Support Officers, increasing the total in the West Kent Area to 74

Other changes will also see neighbourhood policing teams working closely with local people and organisations to address local concerns.

Two new faces are already evident in the District. Mark Salisbury is the new Chief Superintendent for West Kent Police and Gill Ellis is the new District Chief Inspector for Sevenoaks District.

For more information visit the Kent Police website www.kent.police.uk

Don't give crooks a window of opportunity

'Don't give thieves an opportunity' is the crime reduction message from police in West Kent during the summer months.

In warmer weather, people often leave doors and windows open, but forget that this sends an open invitation to criminals to come in, or reach in, and help themselves.

Police crime reduction advice is don't leave doors and windows open unless you can watch them. When you go out, always lock the door and close the windows - even if you are just going out for a short time. Even if you are in the garden you should still keep your premises secure.

If you are going away on holiday ask a neighbour or friend to keep an eye on your property. Perhaps they could come in and draw the curtains and collect the post as this will make your house look lived in. Leave lights or a radio on using a timer switch and don't forget to cancel the newspapers and milk.

Follow the advice, be safe and enjoy your summer!

Thieves find their way to sat navs

Satellite navigation systems, the latest innovation to help you get from A to B, are not only proving to be popular with drivers but also with thieves as well.

According to West Kent Police sat navs, as they are known for short, are targeted as they are small, light and of high value.

Not only is sat nav taken, the thieves often damage the vehicle, costing more than just a lost piece of high-tech equipment.

The way to reduce this growing crime is simple – remove the sat nav when you leave your car unattended.

PC Andy Blackmore, West Kent Police's Crime Reduction Officer, says: "When something of high value is left in full view on the dashboard of a vehicle, it can attract the wrong sort of attention. We want to encourage drivers to take the same attitude towards sat navs as they would with an expensive in-car stereo. Take it with you when you leave your car unattended so it cannot be stolen."

For more information visit the Home Office's crime reduction website www.crimereduction.co.uk

The all seeing eye

Sevenoaks District's CCTV system has demonstrated that not only is it effective in the fight against crime, it helps the public enjoy a safe night out, deals with out-of-hours emergencies and even informs residents of local traffic hold ups.

Nearly 100 CCTV cameras cover the District's main towns of Sevenoaks, Swanley, Westerham, Edenbridge and New Ash Green 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year.

During 2005, the system instigated, assisted or monitored 226 arrests. It is also at the hub of the Shopsafe and Pubwatch schemes. Retailers and publicans in Swanley, Sevenoaks and Edenbridge are linked to the control room via two-way radios. Control room staff can be alerted to incidents so they can be monitored and the police can be called if necessary. All the schemes' partners can be informed in an instant if there is trouble.

The CCTV control room also deals with out-of-hours emergencies such



Cllr Keith Loney, the Council's Cabinet member with responsibility for CCTV and CCTV Manger Sharon Wright

as floods, noise complaints, stray dogs, dead animals, homelessness and dangerous structures. Last year it dealt with 440 calls.

Not only is the system keeping the public safe, it also helps to inform drivers of local traffic congestion. The CCTV control room has direct links to motoring organisations that broadcast traffic problems via the TV, radio or the Internet helping to keep motorists up-to-date with the situation on the road.

To find out more, see the CCTV annual report for 2005/6, which can be viewed on the Council's website www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/communitysafety then clicking on the link for CCTV.

Keeping safe

Keeping residents safe and reducing crime and the fear of crime is a key priority for the Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership.

The Partnership, which includes Sevenoaks District Council, the police, Kent County Council, the fire service, housing associations and many other public bodies, launched a three-year action plan last year to make Sevenoaks a safer District.

The following annual report outlines progress of some of the 75 projects in the plan from April 2005 to the end of March 2006.

Last year, Sevenoaks District had the second lowest number of crimes per head of population in Kent with 0.072 crimes. To put this in perspective, the Kent district with the highest number of crimes was 0.13 crimes per head of population and the lowest was 0.070.

The Partnership's Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator dealt with 161 reports of anti-social behaviour. Interventions included arranging contact with local Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), organising physical or environmental changes to affected areas and referring individuals to the Anti-Social Behaviour Task Group.

The Anti-Social Behaviour Task Group dealt with 53 individuals whose actions were causing alarm, harassment or distress to local people and brought about an improvement in 93% of cases.

Using the Partnership's 'Grimebuster', the Probation Service cleaned over 150 areas blighted by graffiti.

Five residents won a prestigious 'Taking A Stand Award' for their work to tackle anti-social behaviour. Each winner received £1,000 for community projects of their choice.

The Council's CCTV control room, linking to schemes such as the Safer Shopping Initiative, Pubwatch and Shopsafe, instigated, assisted and monitored more than 200 arrests.

Eighty-five older people were referred to the Help the Aged Handy Van scheme so that they could benefit from home security improvements.

The Partnership put in place a Substance Misuse Strategy with actions to target alcohol and drugs.



These include test purchasing operations, education in schools, exclusion notices for those whose behaviour is persistently unacceptable when under the influence of alcohol, a referral and support system for those abusing alcohol and raising awareness of sensible drinking.

The Safer Shopping Partnership achieved the prestigious Safer Socialising Award for Sevenoaks town centre in November.

The Partnership published clear information about the use of mini-motorbikes, anti-social behaviour and the work of the Community Safety Partnership.

There are now 16 wardens and PCSOs on patrol in the District. Many PCSOs are part funded by town and parish councils.

A partnership funded drugs and alcohol project has helped to educate and support some 400 young people. The Kenward Trust have also run the Cascade peer mentoring project to train people in schools to help and advise their peers on issues relating to drugs and alcohol.

“Five residents won a prestigious ‘Taking A Stand Award’ for their work to tackle anti-social behaviour. Each winner received £1,000 for community projects of their choice.”



Over 200 young people have received Fire Awareness Training.

Shed alarms, timer switches, safe cans and personal alarms were made available to vulnerable people by all PCSOs and Kent County Council Community Wardens.

External funding from the Home Office has enabled the Partnership to employ dedicated drugs enforcement workers to give support to young people.

The Partnership has worked with key workers, local people, youth workers, health visitors and others through its Task Groups.

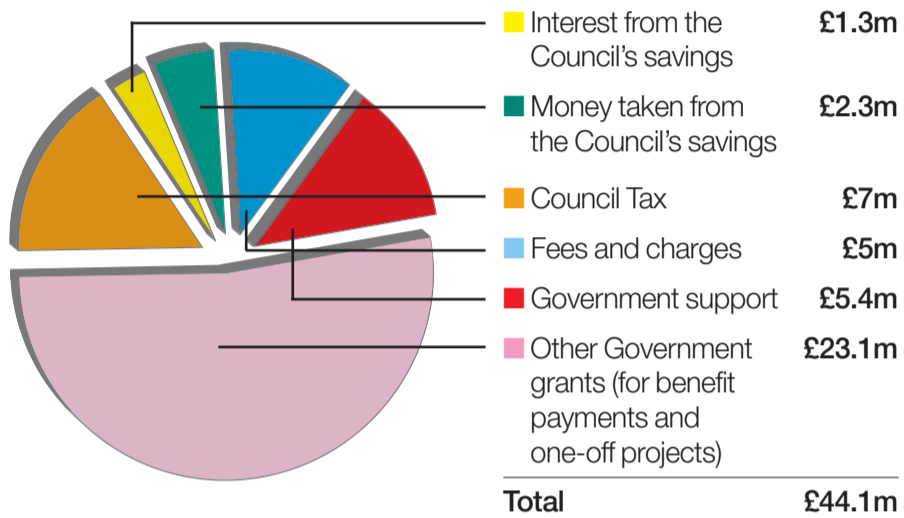
The Power Project, an initiative to reduce the number of young people entering the Youth Justice System, worked with 45 young people in the District who are at risk of offending. During this time, only three people referred to the Project have offended.

The Partnership delivered the Identified Prolific and other Priority Offenders programme. Between 10 and 12 offenders living in the District are identified at any one time and are given close attention by the Partnership.

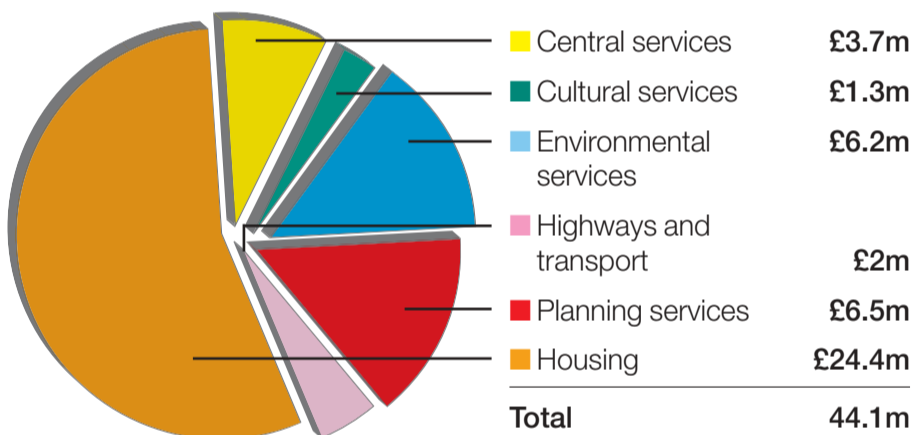
It's your money

Sevenoaks District Council will shortly publish its Annual Statement of Accounts for 2005/06. This summary sets out how the Council raised income and where this money was spent during that period.

Where the money came from



How the money was spent



Please note: These figures are unaudited

Your Council's services

Central services

Council Tax collection, elections, democracy, land charges and overheads

Cultural services

Sports, leisure and open spaces

Environmental services

Refuse collection, street cleaning, recycling, CCTV, dog wardens, licensing, environmental health, fly tipping removal and enforcement and community safety

Planning services

Development control, building control, planning appeals, planning enforcement and local plans

Highways and transport

Parking and parking enforcement, concessionary fares and minibuses for older people

Housing

Housing benefit and Council Tax benefit, housing policy, dealing with homelessness, energy conservation and grants for adaptation to homes for people with disabilities

Further information

Log on to the Council's [website www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/finance](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/finance) to view the audited Annual Statement of Accounts from 29 September.

If you have any questions or comments about the content or style of this summary or if you would like to be sent a copy of the Annual Statement of Accounts after 29th September, e-mail finance@sevenoaks.gov.uk or call **01732 227000**.

Facts about finance

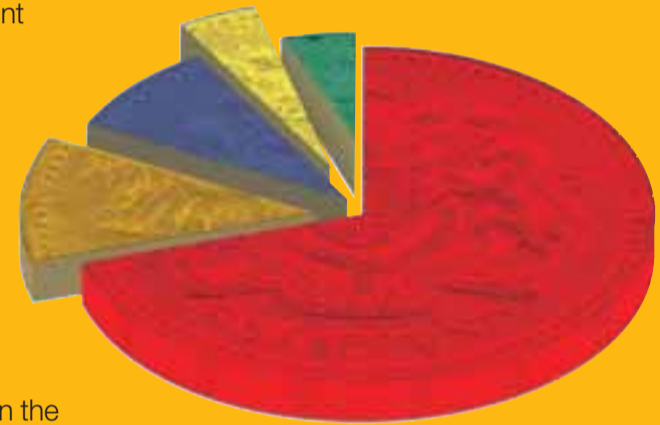
The Council underspent last year's budget by £23,000.

Of all the 12 district councils in Kent, Sevenoaks District Council gets the lowest grant from the Government per head of population at £54.82. The Kent average is £76.26 and the district with the highest grant was £95.93 per head of population.

Sevenoaks District Council's element of the total Council Tax charge, at band D, is currently £153, equivalent to 12% of the total amount collected.

Sevenoaks District Council collects the Council Tax charge not only for itself, but also for Kent County Council, Kent Fire & Rescue Service, Kent Police and all the local town and parish councils. In the current year (2006/07), the total average charge, at band D, for all these authorities is £1,242.

The chart to the right illustrates how the money is split between the five authorities for every £1 collected in 2006/07.



- Kent County Council – 70.5p
- Sevenoaks District Council – 12p
- Kent Police – 9p
- Kent Fire & Rescue Service – 4.5p
- Average town or parish council – 4p

An inspector calls

Following the most stringent review ever, Central Government has given the Council's finances a clean bill of health.

Earlier in the year, the Council's finances were put under the microscope by independent auditors acting on behalf of the Central Government body, the Audit Commission.

The auditors concluded that the Council consistently performs well, scoring three out of a possible four points.

The inspectors found that the Council's financial planning is strong, it has well developed and effective processes for budget management and effectively manages its assets.

It went on to say that the Council performs well in managing its spending against its available resources and has comprehensive arrangements in place to

ensure probity and propriety in its financial conduct.

One of the areas where the Council performed best is value for money. The inspectors found that the Council is clearly well above average performance with planning, waste collection and street cleaning singled out for praise as offering particularly good value.

The Council was also praised for jointly buying goods and services with other local authorities to further achieve value for money.

Cllr Brian Ramsay, the Council's Cabinet Member with responsibility for Value for Money, says: "This independent review has demonstrated that the Council's finances are in good shape and that our residents are getting good value for money. Despite this encouraging news, we continue to look at new, more efficient ways of providing our services for the benefit of our residents."

Time to make a splash

Although we tend to think of fitness and exercise in a more modern setting of the gym or exercise class, experts still agree swimming remains one of the best ways to get and stay in shape.

The benefits of the pool are enormous. It's kinder to the body than many impact sports, it's ideal for weight loss and toning and it can literally be a life saver. On a more serious note, swimming is often recommended by doctors as part of treatment or recuperation from accident or injury.

With the hosepipe ban affecting home based water fun this summer, why not take the plunge at your local pool. Besides the obvious fun, your child can learn how to keep safe near water.

And as family outings increasingly come with a bank-busting price tag, swimming is still one of the best value activities available. Sencio Community Leisure – which operates local facilities in partnership with Sevenoaks District Council – is offering a family swim (two adults and two children) for £5.95 for centre members especially for families to make use of their local pool.

Full details can be downloaded from the Sencio website by visiting www.sencio.org.uk



New half-a-million pound all-weather sports pitch for Sevenoaks

Sevenoaks has got an important new sporting facility with the opening of a half-a-million pound all-weather pitch at Wildernesse Sports Centre.

Designed to provide increased opportunities for participation in a range of sports during all seasons and weather conditions, it is hoped the pitch will encourage existing and new participants in activities such as hockey and football to further their interest at educational, competitive, recreational and social levels.

Mark Whyman, Managing Director of Sencio Community Leisure, the operator that manages Wildernesse Sports Centre on behalf of the district council, says: "Sencio operates at the heart of the communities it serves and a key part of our role is to constantly look at ways of encouraging participation in exercise, delivering new initiatives to engage customers of all ages, and working with all our partners to provide facilities of the highest quality. This is a major new addition to the local sports scene and will, I am sure, prove extremely popular."

The project has been the result of partnership working between stakeholders including Kent Sports Development Unit, Kent County Council, Sevenoaks District Council, Wildernesse School and Sencio Community Leisure.

Full details can be downloaded from the Sencio website by visiting www.sencio.org.uk

Zorro success unleashes fencing interest across the District

The success of a clutch of films such as *The Mark of Zorro* and its recent sequel has resulted in renewed interest in fencing and a growing demand for local coaching opportunities.

Those inspired by the on-screen skills of Antonia Banderas and Catherine Zeta Jones are being given an opportunity to try their hand at one of the most graceful and glamorous of sports thanks to a new coaching scheme organised by Sencio Community Leisure.

Since launching its fencing programme at four of its centres at the end of last year, over 150 people ranging in age from eight to 80 have signed-up for weekly classes run by one of the UK's leading coaches.

Paul Romang, who has taught over 80 Great Britain and England fencers of all ages and across all categories over a 30-year career, is pretty clear about the reasons behind the renewed interest:

"The big movie blockbusters have put fencing back into people's minds, but more importantly it is a sport that adapts excellently to players of every age and all abilities. The fact that we have participants spanning eight

decades enrolled on these new classes at the Sencio Community Leisure centres – and that we have waiting lists at two facilities – is testament to the appeal of the sport."

Fencing coaching is currently being held at Edenbridge and Sevenoaks Leisure Centres, at Wildernesse Sports Centre in Sevenoaks and White Oak Leisure Centre in Swanley.

To enrol, add your name to a waiting list, or for further information contact your nearest Sencio Community Leisure facility or visit www.sencio.org.uk



Fruitful achievement for Dorothy!

An 81-year old Marsh Green resident has proved that age is no barrier when it comes to getting in shape.

Dorothy Wood has seen her healthy efforts bear fruit as she has lost nearly three stone since joining the Shape Up Weight Management Programme in Edenbridge in March of this year.

Shape Up is a part of the Healthy Edenbridge Network, a joint partnership initiative involving Sevenoaks District Council, to improve the health and wellbeing of people who live in the town.

The Shape Up Programme is a free weekly course run by Community Dieticians from the Queen Victoria Hospital in East Grinstead. It is held every Thursday morning at Edenbridge Leisure Centre and provides expert nutritional guidance on how healthier food choices can make lasting changes to both diet and lifestyle.

Mrs Wood admits that the programme has completely changed what she eats: "Before I started the course I was eating lots of bread, cheese, chocolates, biscuits and cakes. But following the advice I was given I now eat lots more salads and fruits, and for dinner it's usually fresh meat and vegetables."

At each weekly meeting there is a private weigh in, a talk from a dietician and a question and answer session, as well as practical written information for each member of the group to take away.

This expert advice has seen Mrs Wood drop from 13 to nearly 10 stone, her target weight. "I've been losing a couple of pounds a week since I started the course, so I am really pleased with my progress. Not only that, but I



have also made some great friends and really enjoy the weekly sessions."

For more information on how to get involved, call Abigail Leigh, Senior Community Dietician at Queen Victoria Hospital, on **01342 414445**.

August Bank Holiday refuse collections

Due to the August Bank Holiday, refuse and clear sack collections during the week starting Monday 28 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**

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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