

# InShape

THE NEWSLETTER OF SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COUNCIL NO.121 SPRING 2022



**DR HILARY JONES RECOGNISES OUR LOCAL HEROES**

Voluntary and community sector gets a clean bill of health at bumper awards nights

Page 7

**BUGGY FITNESS FOR NEW MUMS**

Free classes in Edenbridge for mums with babies in buggies



Page 6

**RUN, WALK OR PUSH IS BACK**

Book your place for this year's fundraising event in Knole Park



Page 8

**SPORTING STARS OPEN SWANLEY LEISURE CENTRE**

Olympians join residents at the new White Oak Leisure Centre



Page 9



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# Bank holiday waste and recycling collections

Following the Easter, May and Jubilee bank holidays, there may be one or two changes to your rubbish, recycling and garden waste collection days.

## Easter

- **Good Friday, 15 April**  
– collections scheduled for this day will take place the next day, Saturday 16 April
- **Easter Monday, 18 April**  
– all collections this week will be one day later than usual until Saturday 23 April

## Early May Bank Holiday

- **Monday 2 May** – all collections this week will be one day later than usual until Saturday 7 May

## Spring Bank Holiday and the Platinum Jubilee Bank Holiday

- **Thursday 2 and Friday 3 June**  
Please visit our website [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/refuse](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/refuse) for details nearer the time.



# Sculpture set to take pride of place in Blighs

A new piece of public art that celebrates the history of Sevenoaks will go on display this summer.

The 2.5 metre tall bronze sculpture, titled 'Three and Four', will be situated outside Marks and Spencer in Blighs.

Oliver Barratt, an artist who works internationally and lives locally, designed the work.

'Three and Four' references the coppice trees and hop vines that once grew locally, while the base is a reference to the painted green buses that came through Blighs when it was a bus station.

Oliver's sculpture was selected following a competition with artists putting forward their proposals for the well-used site.

The £17,000 work will be made in part with recycled bronze and is being paid for by developers from a fund specifically for public art.

On Saturday 15 January, Oliver brought a scale model of the sculpture to Blighs to answer residents' questions about the work.

Following suggestions from the public, we are working to put the scale model on display in Sevenoaks.

Oliver Barratt says: "As a local resident, it will be an honour to have my work on display in Sevenoaks.

"The sculpture is a type of narrative born of place, of the coppiced wood and open meadow, of growing things and the coming and going of the bus. Yet the sculpture looks



Oliver Barratt, to the left, with our Councillors and a scale model of the 'Three and Four' sculpture.

forward in its contemporary visual language, it opens up the horizons to consider the rhythm and change of time."

Cllr Roddy Hogarth, Commissioner for the Public Realm, adds: "We are so excited to be progressing this piece of public art.

"Oliver Barratt has drawn on his extensive knowledge of the local area to produce a beautiful and thoughtful work that celebrates the history of Blighs and Sevenoaks.

"We cannot wait to unveil the sculpture in the summer."

For further information, and to view a video about the sculpture, visit [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/publicrealm](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/publicrealm).

# Review team delivers its findings

## We have received a glowing report following an independent review into the running of the Council.

Late last year, we invited a team from the Local Government Association (LGA) to carry out a Corporate Peer Challenge, a detailed review of how we are led, managed and what we achieve.

The team was made up of leaders, a chief executive and senior staff from other councils and the LGA. The team was asked to recommend where we could do more to support the community, including the provision of more affordable homes.

The LGA said the Council is well led and managed with a longstanding track record of effective delivery.

When it came to finances, we had consistently demonstrated good management and was an example to the whole of local government.

The team praised us for being open and transparent with a commitment to continuous improvement and innovation and for being a valued and respected partner locally.

Council Leader, Cllr Peter Fleming, says: "We are extremely grateful to the LGA team who spent time looking over our plans, finances and performance as well as spending several days with staff, councillors and partners and

visiting sites across the District to get a rounded view of our performance.

"The team were extremely positive about how we are led and managed, the calibre of staff and councillors and what we achieve for our residents and businesses.

"However, we are never complacent. The team has given us a number of recommendations, in particular around how to provide new affordable housing and further ideas to regenerate our towns post-pandemic. We will look at how best to take these ideas forward."

To view the LGA report, visit [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/peerchallenge](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/peerchallenge).

# Show off your green fingered gardening skills with In Bloom

## Once again, we're supporting the annual 'Sevenoaks District In Bloom' gardening competition.

Run by Coolings garden centre in Knockholt, the competition is open to novice and expert gardeners alike, giving you the chance to show off your blossoming gardening skills.

Best of all, you don't need to fork out any money as entry is completely free! In fact, everyone who enters will be given a discount voucher to spend at Coolings in Knockholt.

There's lots of categories available, including front gardens, allotments, ornamental gardens, pub, restaurant, B&B and hotel gardens as well as a Jubilee themed category.

Whether you have a large or small garden, an allotment, a window box or a hanging basket, there's a category for you!

The deadline for entries is Friday 1 July with judging taking place later that month.

The winners will be announced at an awards ceremony at the end of July.

For details of this year's In Bloom categories and how to enter, visit [www.coolings.co.uk](http://www.coolings.co.uk).



## Nominate a fabulous front garden

We're encouraging residents to tell us about fantastic front gardens so we can invite the owners to enter this year's competition.



Cllr Roddy Hogarth, our Public Realm Commissioner, says: "Front gardens really brighten up an area so if you've seen a front garden that stood out, please let us know. We'll send the owner a postcard inviting them to enter the In Bloom competition."

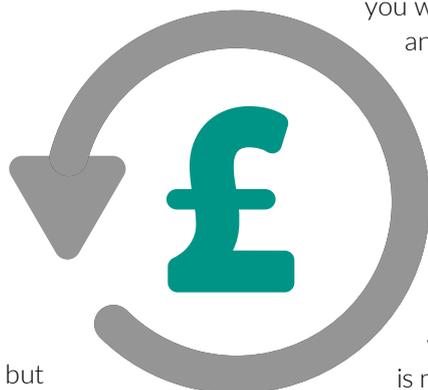
Please send your front garden nominations to [public.realm@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:public.realm@sevenoaks.gov.uk).

# Help with the cost of living

Earlier this year, the Government announced that many households would receive a one-off £150 payment to help with the rising cost of living.

On behalf of the Government, we will pay the money to households who live in Council Tax Bands A to D properties.

If you pay your Council Tax by Direct Debit, you do not need to do anything. We hold your bank details so we can transfer the money straight into your bank account from May, but you may have to wait until September as we are required to take at least one Direct Debit Council Tax payment from your bank prior to the £150 payment.



If you pay by other means, or you have a Council Tax exemption, you can still claim the payment. However, you will need to complete an application form. We will write to you soon if this applies to you.

If you are liable for Council Tax but do not pay by Direct Debit, you may want to sign up, as this will ensure your £150 payment is made quickly without having to fill in an extra form.

Find out more and set up a Direct Debit at [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/rebate](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/rebate).

## Protect yourself from fraud

There's a possibility some criminals may use the Council Tax Rebate Scheme as cover to get their hands on your bank details so they can steal money from your accounts.

Remember – we will never call you asking for your bank details in relation to the Council Tax Rebate Scheme or any other Council business.



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# Your say on social housing

**Residents have an opportunity to have a say on how social housing should be allocated in the future.**

Social housing (sometimes referred to as 'council housing') is owned and managed by housing associations. Locally these include West Kent, Moat and others.

The demand for social housing is always higher than the number of homes available.

To ensure social housing is allocated fairly, our 'Housing Allocations Policy' sets out who is eligible to join our register for social housing while ensuring social housing goes to those in the greatest need.



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We are proposing a number of changes to our existing policy to give local people the best chance of securing social housing, as well as making the best use of available homes. These include giving priority to:

- People who have lived or worked in the District for three years
- Social housing tenants who want to downsize
- Carers who receive Carer's Allowance or an equivalent benefit

We are keen to hear what you think of our revised policy.

As a small thank you for your time, everyone who completes our survey can enter into a free prize draw to win one of four £50 Marks and Spencer vouchers. Terms and conditions apply, which can be viewed on our website.

To find out more and have your say, complete our survey at [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/social housingsurvey](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/social housingsurvey) by 5pm on Friday 18 April 2022.

If you require a paper version of the survey, please call us on **01732 227000**.

# Buggy fitness for new mums

**Throughout 2022, we will be running outdoor exercise classes for new mums with their babies in buggies.**

The classes are taking place in Edenbridge, in Stangrove Park and on the Recreation Ground.

There will be an opportunity to go for refreshments and a chat with other mums at the Bridges Centre after each session.

The six-week courses would usually cost more than £40, but we are making them available for free! However, places are limited and must be booked in advance.

You will need to have had your six to eight week postnatal check and complete a pre-activity form to make sure the classes are suitable for you.

The sessions are being delivered by women's exercise experts 'SHE ACTIVE' with funding from Sport England's 'This Girl Can' project and with the support of Edenbridge Town Council.

FREE



For details of the latest taster sessions and classes and to book, visit [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/buggybuddy](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/buggybuddy) or call **01732 227000**.

# Dr Hilary Jones recognises our community heroes

## Our thriving community and voluntary sector got a clean bill of health at this year's awards.

Last month, TV's Dr Hilary Jones joined us as we honoured the community organisations and volunteers of the District who spend their time helping others.

The 'Making it Happen' Community and Voluntary Awards took place at St Nicholas' Church in Sevenoaks on 9 March 2022 and, after a break, was just what the doctor ordered.

All eleven categories boasted some amazing people and organisations whose selfless actions are the perfect medicine to help the most vulnerable in our District.

This year we prescribed a few new categories including the Healthy Living Award, presented by Dr Hilary Jones, and scooped by Every Step Counts for their volunteer led walks that help people get gentle exercise and socialise.

The Lifetime Achievement Award honoured Angela Painter, who is involved in various volunteer projects throughout the District and chairs the Sevenoaks District Voluntary Sector Forum.

Leader of the Council, Cllr Peter Fleming was this year's Master of Ceremonies, and says: "It was great to be back hosting these awards. Every person who attended deserves recognition for their hard work and it was wonderful to have a night dedicated to our most selfless residents."

For more information about the awards, visit [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/communityawards](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/communityawards).



← Angela Painter collected the 'Lifetime achievement' award from Dr Hilary Jones

→ Anthony Shipwright winner of 'Youth group of the year' with Sir Peter Wanless from the NSPCC



← Tom Hart Dyke presented the 'Contribution to the Environment' Highly Commended Award to the Edenbridge Community Warden & Volunteer Bulb Planting/Litter Picking Groups



→ Ishwar Sharmar took the Highly Commended 'Community Arts / Sports Group' Award presented by Sean Daly, Millwall Community Trust CEO



## And the winners are...

**Charity Project of the Year** – Friends of Holcot

**Community Arts/Sports Group of the Year** – Ros Barker & Sue Evans

**Youth Group of the Year** – Anthony Shipwright

**Best Business in the Community** – Life on High

**Local Hero** – Ray Edun

**Carer of the Year** – Paige Simmons

**Healthy Living Award** – Every Step Counts

**Lifetime Achievement** – Angela Painter

**Contribution to the Environment Award** – Peter Woodruff

**Volunteer Group of the Year** – Joint winners – Edenbridge Community / Care for Our Community / Sevenoaks Community Larder / West Kingsdown Community Cupboard

**Older Person's Group of the Year** – Sue Larkin – Pop Up Café

# Time to lace up your running shoes and raise money for dementia

**After a break, the popular 'Run, walk or push against dementia' returns to the fabulous Knole Park in Sevenoaks on Sunday 22 May 2022.**

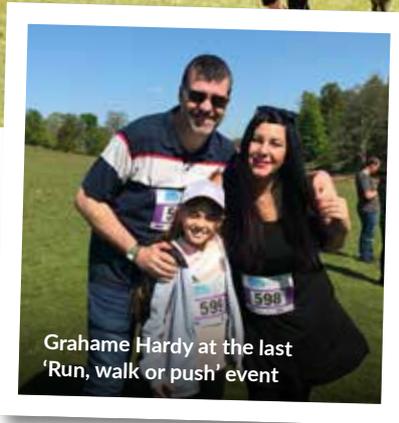
The event is suitable for people of all ages and you can sign up to run, walk or push a pram at your own pace on the 3k and 5k courses, or run the 10k course – it's up to you! Five hundred places will be available.

The event is being organised by the Sevenoaks Area Dementia Friendly Community (SADFC), which includes ourselves.

Money raised by this charity event will go a long way funding the five local Forget-me-not cafés and dementia-friendly singing sessions, wellbeing days, a dementia-friendly allotment and supporting local groups who help people with memory issues.

Grahame Hardy, a Specialist Dementia Nurse, who took part in the last event, spoke with In Shape: "My family were privileged and honoured to participate in 'Run, walk or push against dementia' in 2019. We decided to do it in memory of our grandma who lived with us for seven years, during which time she had dementia.

"As a Dementia Specialist for the NHS and a nurse of 37 years, I was one of the 500 participants who wanted to raise awareness of the disease and valuable funds to support local people living with dementia.



Grahame Hardy at the last 'Run, walk or push' event

"What a fantastic day. We successfully completed the course, making new friends and supporters along the way. Although, as I was rather tired afterwards I renamed it 'Run, walk or carry' against dementia!"

## Book your place on the race

Previous 'Run, walk or push' events have sold out in advance so we would urge you to be quick off the mark to secure your place.

To book your place in this year's event on Sunday 22 May 2022, visit [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/runwalkpush](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/runwalkpush)

## New dementia-friendly café opens in Otford

The latest monthly 'Forget-me-not Café' opened its doors in February.

Local Forget-me-not Cafés are a lifeline for people living with dementia or memory issues and their carers.

They are places where carers can chat with other carers over a cuppa with everyone invited to enjoy a bite to eat and fun activities.

Running in Sevenoaks, Westerham, Edenbridge, nearby Hildenborough and now in Otford, the cafés are free to attend and funded in large part by 'Run, walk or push'.

The new Otford café takes place on the last Thursday of the month from 11am to 12.30pm in the Otford Village Memorial Hall.

For more information, visit [www.forgetmenotcafe.org.uk](http://www.forgetmenotcafe.org.uk) or call Elaine on 07946 534476 or Amelia on 07580 601182.

# Sporting stars shine at Swanley's new leisure centre

**Olympic and Commonwealth medallists joined the community at the opening of the new White Oak Leisure Centre.**

Managed by Everyone Active, our new Swanley leisure centre welcomed the public for the first time on Saturday 12 February. To celebrate, an open weekend event was held with families treated to a host of free activities.

More than 10,000 residents joined former Olympic athlete, Colin Jackson, Commonwealth medallist and synchronised swimmer, Adele Carlsen, London 2012 Olympian and synchronised swimmer, Kate Skelton, and British record holder and former Olympian in freestyle swimming, Grant Turner for the opening extravaganza.

At the new facility, residents can enjoy a 25m six lane main pool, learner pool, state of the art 100-station fitness suite, two exercise studios, virtual group cycling studio, and a sports hall.

For those who want to try something new, the centre boasts a brand new interactive gaming activity, TAGactive. This is a game for all ages and takes place in an obstacle course arena split into zones, each of which contain a large number of illuminated TAGs. Players collect points by 'tagging' these with a sensor on their wristband, the points value of each TAG being determined by the degree of difficulty in reaching it. Players' scores appear on an electronic scoreboard, which adds the extra dimension of competition with rivals.

Cllr Lesley Dyball, our Cabinet Member for People and Places,



says: "The new White Oak Leisure Centre is our biggest investment in a generation and an important milestone in Swanley's regeneration. The town now has a fantastic, modern, energy-efficient leisure centre the whole community can be proud of with exciting new activities."

Hasan Romel, Area Contract Manager at Everyone Active, adds: "We're

delighted to be welcomed into the community to manage the new White Oak Leisure Centre and officially begin our partnership with the Council.

"The centre will play a pivotal part in helping the community to improve their health and wellbeing. It's great to see the local community already benefiting from all the fantastic facilities we have on offer."

# The Chairman's busy year

**When Cllr Diana Esler took on the role of our Chairman, she was determined to highlight and promote our District and celebrate our residents' achievements.**

While the pandemic has made things challenging, since taking the hot seat in May, Diana has attended more than 200 events.

To invite Diana to an event, visit [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/charman](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/charman) or call **01732 227165**. You can follow Diana on Twitter at [@sdc\\_chairman](https://twitter.com/sdc_chairman).



**Taking on a new challenge** – Diana was elected as our Chairman in May 2021



**Growing into the role** – judging the annual In Bloom competition



**On target** – Diana helped out at many of our free summer Family Fun Days



**Recognising volunteers** – thanking the District's dedicated unpaid carers



**Putting her best foot forward** – joining an Every Step Counts walk



**Celebrating women's suffrage** – attending a suffragette exhibition at the Stag



**Backing our businesses** – promoting Coblands Garden Centre's Christmas market



**In the festive spirit** – attending St Michael's nativity play



**Having a 'tree-mendous' time** – planting a tree for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee

# Recycle right!

Recycling is a topic very close to our hearts and forms part of our plans to become a Net Zero carbon council by 2030.

But from time to time, our collectors see materials in the clear sacks that cannot be recycled. When this happens, the clear sack and its contents go in with the black sack waste so not to contaminate the rest of the recycling.

To help us recycle as much as possible, please make sure only the following materials go in your clear sacks:

- Newspapers, magazines and other paper
- Cardboard boxes and packaging
- Cans, including empty aerosols, metal bottle tops, jar lids, biscuit and sweet tins
- Tetra Pak® and other food, drink and long-life cartons
- Aluminium take-away and ready meal trays and clean kitchen foil
- Plastic bottles and tops
- Plastic yoghurt pots, margarine and ice cream tubs, fruit baskets and trays.

Visit [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/recycle](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/recycle) for more information.

Please always put your rubbish and recycling out at 7am on your collection day.



## I beg your garden?

Spring is in the air, which means it's a great time to get your garden ready for summer! However, if you find you're always going to the tip with cuttings or leaves, it may be time for a new solution.

Our fortnightly Garden Waste service is quick, reliable and good for the environment. You can apply for an annual permit or buy Garden waste collection sacks as and when you need them.

We collect your garden waste every two weeks, usually on the same day as your rubbish is collected.

Apply for a permit and view our garden waste sacks outlets at [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/gardenwaste](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/gardenwaste).

## Bin food waste!

A great way to do your bit for the environment is to start home composting and we've made it easier than ever to get started.

We've teamed up with [getcomposting.com](http://getcomposting.com) to offer you discounted bins from as little as £22.50!

Around a third of household waste is food that you can compost at home, including uncooked vegetable and fruit kitchen peelings, tea bags, coffee grounds and filters.

For more information, visit [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/compost](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/compost).



# Chuffed to bits with new railway posters

**Striking artwork depicting the stunning Darent Valley will form the basis of new campaign to visit the area by rail.**

For decades, railway companies produced colourful, iconic posters to encourage the public to travel by train. Inspired by these campaigns, the Darent Valley Community Rail Partnership, (which includes us) commissioned artist Kit Boyd to produce posters representing each of the six station areas between Sevenoaks and Swanley.

An established British romantic artist, Kit's work reflects his love of nature and place. A lifelong fan of Shoreham artist Samuel Palmer, Kit had the chance to record his own responses to our beautiful part of Kent.

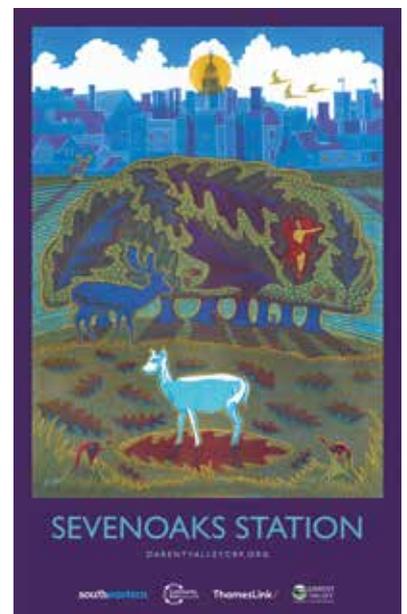
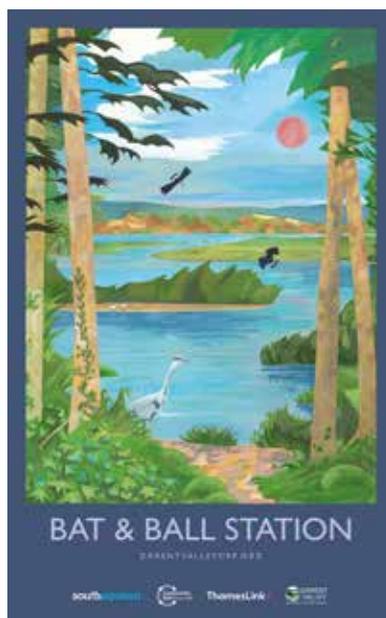
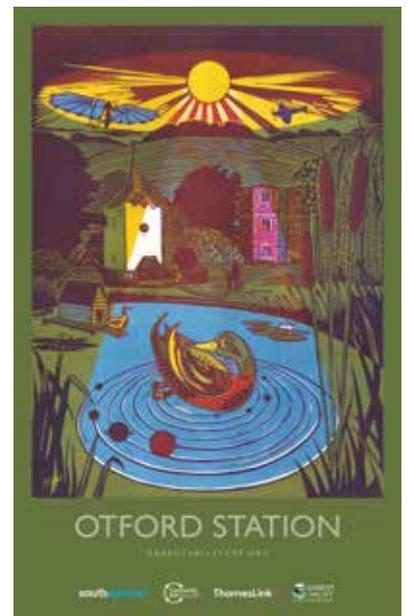
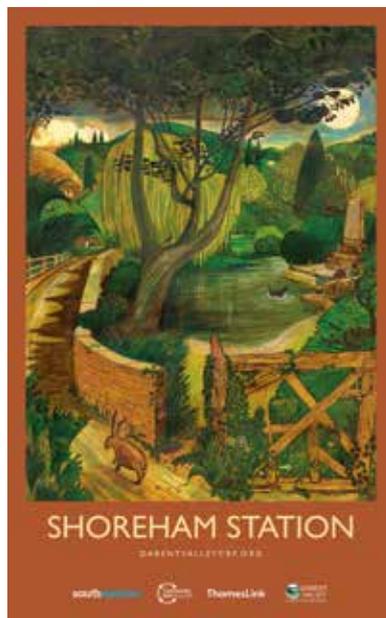
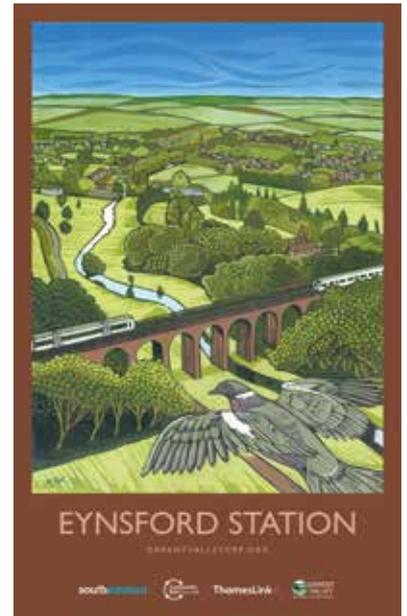
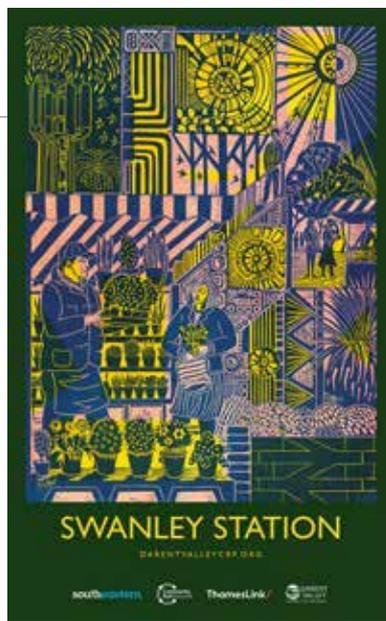
Kit travelled to each station several times, talking to locals, visiting landmarks and exploring local museums. The final artworks then came together, with several vibrant linocuts, one ink drawing and a watercolour.

In each image there are small details reflecting the history or special features of each area – search for a subtle solar system in the Otford pond, a towering cumulus cloud in the Shoreham poster (very Samuel Palmer), Virginia Woolf's character Orlando sitting under a tree in Knole Park, or the markets and horticultural history captured in Swanley's poster.

The Darent Valley Community Rail Partnership posters reference the beautiful 1920s and 30s travel posters, which captured people's hearts and remain well loved today.

Likewise, these posters will be used as part of a big campaign on station platforms throughout the south east, on social media and beyond, all designed to encourage sustainable visits to and within the Darent Valley.

Visit [www.darentvalleycrp.org](http://www.darentvalleycrp.org) for more information and to order exclusive prints!



# Kickstarting young people's careers

A Sevenoaks-based recruitment agency made a top appointment through the Kickstart scheme, which is helping young people into work.



When the pandemic struck in early 2020, Marcus Rose, now 24-years old, lost his job as an assistant chef.

“Being made redundant wasn’t in my plans,” says Marcus. “But, when COVID hit, that’s what happened.

“I didn’t want to be out of work for long, however, there were very few job opportunities during the lockdowns. Then the job centre referred me to the Kickstart scheme. I had limited opportunities for career progression during my three years in the catering industry and thought this could be the break I was looking for.”

The Kickstart scheme was introduced by the Government to support 16 to 24 year olds whose long-term career prospects might otherwise have been blighted by the pandemic.

Under the scheme, employees’ wages were covered for a 25-hour week, together with some other costs, for newly created jobs.

Marcus applied for a Kickstart post at the Sevenoaks-based company Centum Recruitment International.

Jan Glover, Centum’s managing director, explained why his company joined the scheme.

“I wasn’t familiar with Kickstart until it was recommended to me and was apprehensive to begin with, but it’s turned out well for everyone concerned.

“I saw Kickstart as a good opportunity to develop some local, homegrown talent. We are a global IT recruitment agency and the scheme gave us the chance to train someone in our specialised field of work.

“So we interviewed Marcus and despite not having any experience of the recruitment industry, I could see straight away he was talented and motivated so he was offered the job.

“It was a steep learning curve and Marcus needed support to begin with, but he is quick to learn. During his time

here, Marcus has added a lot of value to the business and at the beginning of this year, we took him on as a permanent member of the team.

Marcus adds: “I just needed to be given the opportunity to show what I was capable of achieving and now, thanks to Kickstart, I have a career in front of me. The best part of the job is making the deal and all that comes with it, and that motivates me to do more.”

Sevenoaks District Council is the gateway for Kickstart West Kent and we have helped nearly 100 local young people into work through the scheme, including seven positions here at the Council.

The scheme is running until 30 September, with the last young people joining by 31 March, and it’s leaving a lasting legacy.

To date, more than 80% of the participants have completed their Kickstart positions and the vast majority of these have secured or will be moving into permanent employment.

# Supporting young people through the pandemic

## We have launched a new scheme to help young people affected by the Coronavirus lockdowns.

It is widely acknowledged that 11 to 18 year olds were amongst the hardest hit by the COVID-19 restrictions.

Some remain anxious about the future and are no longer taking part in activities they enjoyed before the pandemic. Many have missed out on valuable learning as well as socialising.

Any young person can join the scheme and will have the opportunity to connect with other young people, engage with a mentor and either try a new activity or go back to something they enjoyed before the pandemic.

Planned activities include skatepark and music days, art therapy, a mural project, a youth café and farm visits for getting in touch with nature. Funding is also available to try other activities.

Where needed, access to mental health support will be available, including group therapy and one-to-one counselling.

The scheme is running until the end of June 2022.

To put a young person forward for the scheme, visit [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/covidsupport](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/covidsupport).



## Can you help young people?

We are looking to recruit a number of adult volunteers who could mentor and support young people as part of our scheme.

You would be working in the Edenbridge and Swanley areas. Full training and support will be provided.

To find out more, email [communities@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:communities@sevenoaks.gov.uk) and we will send you further details.

## Change your eating habits for good!



**If diets never work for you, perhaps it's time to try something new. One You's Why Weight courses are run by friendly advisors like Natalia who help educate you to think about food in a different way.**

Natalia says: "Why Weight is not a diet and it never says a particular food is off limits. Instead, it gets you to look at your own relationship with food and portion sizes and helps you change the way you plan, cook and eat.

"We give you help and support throughout the 12 weeks and after if you need it. We'll also provide you with handy tools and apps to make it as easy as possible for you to lose weight."

If you're ready to take the first step, visit [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/oneyou](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/oneyou) today.



# Local singers set to shine in Sevenoaks

**Postponed because of the pandemic, the Big Community Sing has been rescheduled for the summer and forms part of our Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations.**

Local choirs, quartets, schools and singing groups were due to showcase their musical talents at the Big Community Sing in May 2020. But, with the nation in lockdown, the event had to be postponed leaving the local singers disappointed.

The Big Community Sing for the Queen's Jubilee will now take place on Tuesday 7 June from 7pm at the District's iconic Stag Theatre.

Tickets to attend the event cost £5 with all the funds supporting local mental health services for young people.

You can book tickets from the Stag box office online at [www.stagsevenoaks.co.uk](http://www.stagsevenoaks.co.uk) or by calling **01732 450175**.



Cllr Lesley Dyball, our Cabinet Member for People and Places, says: "The Big Community Sing is a fantastic event giving local singers the chance to perform before a packed-out theatre while raising money for local mental health support groups.

"When we suspended the event in 2020, with just weeks to go, we knew the singers would be sorely disappointed.

"So I am pleased we have been able to reschedule this event. Taking place in the Queen's Platinum Jubilee year, it promises to be extra special. We look forward to seeing you there."

## Look out for the new Local Plan

**Later this year, you'll have an opportunity to comment on our draft Local Plan.**

In recent months, we have been updating our Local Plan, so that it will continue to protect the rural character of the District while providing new homes and facilities and supporting the economy.

As part of the updated plan, we carried out a 'Call for sites' during the winter inviting landowners to come forward with sites that could be suitable for development. More than 350 sites were put forward.

Our planning team are now evaluating each site in detail

and only suitable sites will be included in the updated Local Plan.

We intend to consult on the new Local Plan later in the year, giving residents six weeks to comment.

The consultation will be publicised on our social media accounts, on our website and in the local press as well as the summer issue of In Shape.

Cllr Julia Thornton, our Cabinet member for Development and Conservation, says: "Once again, I want to reassure residents that protecting the rural nature of

the District will be at the heart of our proposals.

"Everyone will have an opportunity to have their say on our revised proposals, so look out for our Local Plan consultation in the coming months."

To be notified of the progress of the Local Plan, including future consultations, or to find out more about the Local Plan in general, visit [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/emerginglocalplan](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/emerginglocalplan).



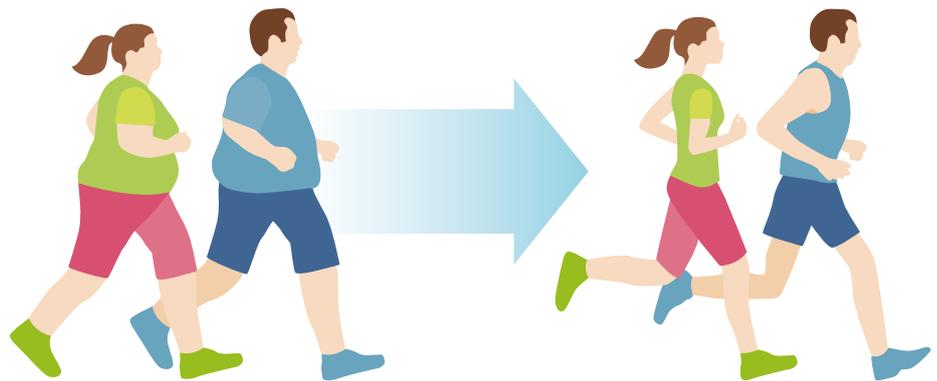
# Transforming yourself ...in 12 weeks

**“Believe it or not, people do sometimes think personal trainers are miracle workers. And, yes, it’s not unknown for someone to ask us for a six-pack or a bikini body three weeks before hitting the beach!” And, as James Arnold, Wellness Manager at Sencio Community Leisure, adds “all that leads to is disappointment”.**

There is, though, a way forward and – like most things in life – it requires a plan. We asked James for his 12-week blueprint for summer.

“First-off, diets and quick fixes don’t work so let’s put those aside. What does work is consistency, and with that, 12 weeks is enough to see and feel a difference,” says James. Here’s his check list:

- Start a food diary. You don’t have to be obsessive, but it can really help. And fitness trackers can be an asset.
- Take photos! Scales aren’t always an accurate indicator of weight, which can be impacted by more than what you ate last night. Record your weight every two weeks. And remember muscle weighs more than fat...another reason not to get fixated on the scales.
- In the first four weeks, don’t overdo it. Go for a mixed programme of



- weights (no, we don’t mean body building, unless that’s your thing). One of our team will be happy to help you with a whole-body workout you can do twice a week.
- Weeks four to eight is the time to up the intensity by increasing weights, adding in an extra gym session and, again, ask one of the team which exercises to do on each visit. You should also increase your cardio to HIIT (High Intensity Interval Training) – something like a ‘Sencio Cycle’ is perfect.

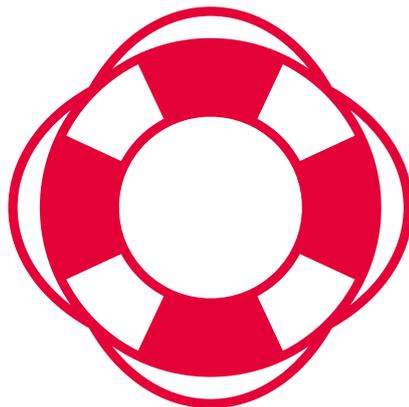
- In the final four weeks, just keep up the great work and – if you’ve followed these tips – you should start to see and feel a real change, physically and mentally. It’ll also give you a great platform from which to progress. This is the start of a lifestyle change, not a quick fix.

“Please ask our team for help as that’s what we love doing. And, as always, if you’ve any health concerns, consult your GP first.”

Read more at [www.sencio.org.uk](http://www.sencio.org.uk).

## In the swim – but safety first

**With around 44% of accidental drownings happening between May and August, almost one in four children unable to swim the statutory 25m when leaving primary school and more than half of parents (55%) saying they wouldn’t be confident their child would know what to do if they fell into open water, now is the time to take stock of how safe your family will be on the beach this summer.**



“There’s still a really worrying complacency among beachgoers to treat the sea like a big pool. Yet on average, a British beachgoer drowns every two weeks. We’re asking holidaymakers to take action before they or their children plunge into uncharted waters,” says Katherine Atkinson, CEO of the Safer Tourism Foundation.

For details of swimming lessons go to [www.sencio.org.uk](http://www.sencio.org.uk).

## Down to a tee

The longer days are here so, if golf's your thing, here's Terry Burgess, head greenkeeper at Lullingstone Park Golf Course, to tell you what to expect this season.



### Q. What's been the biggest challenge keeping Lullingstone in the best condition over the past two years?

Returning after the first lockdown meant there was a real blitz needed to get up to scratch, especially given lockdown meant the greens had been used by dog walkers, footballers and even those who felt our beautiful course was perfect for setting up the BBQ. Having said that, the fact we're an outdoor sport meant we could welcome many new people.

### Q. Have you had to do anything special to get things ready ahead of this spring and summer?

Routine and seasonal maintenance

is on-going for us, but the thinning of trees was carried out last winter and, as a Site of Specific Scientific Interest, we need to ensure all works are done in line with restrictions. We always try and undertake maintenance while causing the least disruption.

### Q. The leisure sector has been hard hit by the pandemic with impacts on staffing and reduced revenue. Have you noticed a reluctance amongst some people to get back playing?

Although much of our sector was shutdown, it's been a boom time for golf. It's certainly not been easy, but we've continued to present the course at its best. In fact, we've

more members now than at any other time which is testament to our pricing and the playing conditions.

### Q. What can players returning to Lullingstone this season expect?

Value for money, with competitively priced fees and memberships. Lullingstone takes in beautiful natural features whilst testing ability around an undulating course of consistently puttable greens and wide fairways that can both reward and punish the player. The nine-hole has also proved popular with those returning after a long break.

For more information, visit [lullingstone-park-golf-course.co.uk](http://lullingstone-park-golf-course.co.uk).

## Can you contribute to public confidence in the Council?

### We are looking for a new Independent Member to join our Audit Committee and/or the Audit Board at Dartford Borough Council.

These committees review the effectiveness of the councils' governance and risk management arrangements.

As an independent, non-voting Member, you will serve an important purpose in bringing independent scrutiny to the Committees' work.

Applicants need to show they have the skills and experience in one or more of the following: local government, governance, audit, finance, risk

management, internal control together with a connection to the Sevenoaks District or Dartford Borough.

You will be expected to attend four committee meetings each year if serving in either Sevenoaks or Dartford, or about eight if serving in both.

Candidates should have a high level of integrity, the ability to work as part of a team, be objective, independent and impartial, and have good analytical, communication and interpersonal skills.

To ensure independence, the posts are not open to anyone who is, or has within the last five years, been a Sevenoaks District or Dartford Borough Councillor or member of staff and their close relatives or friends.

This non-salaried post pays an annual allowance of £800 per council in addition to expenses. The appointment will be for a fixed term of one year initially with the possibility of being extended to four-year terms thereafter.

For an informal discussion, please contact:

- **Sevenoaks:** Adrian Rowbotham, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer for Finance and Trading, on **01732 227153**.
- **Dartford:** Tim Sams, Head of Finance, on **01322 343148**

The closing date is midnight on Sunday 1 May 2022.

To apply, visit [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/jobs](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/jobs).

# Farley Common Easter egg hunt

**Test your knowledge of local bird life for your chance to win a whole host of Easter goodies!**

The Sevenoaks Greensand Commons educational egg hunt will be taking place at Farley Common from Friday 15 to Sunday 17 April. Designed to help families to identify bird eggs from west Kent's most common species, this interactive trail will take you through the Common on foot.

Free educational packs, featuring bird fact files, a questionnaire and a 'Design Your Own Egg' competition, are available from Westerham Town Council from Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 1pm.

Complete your questionnaire and submit your creation to **amee.howe@kentwildlife.org.uk** by Sunday 24 April to be in with the chance to win an adorable cuddly bird toy, a guide to British birds and a chocolate Easter egg! First, second and third place winners will be announced on Monday 2 May.



You can take part in this free event at any time during the Easter bank holiday weekend. Free parking is available but limited.

This educational event is taking place as part of Kent Wildlife Trust and Sevenoaks District Council's Sevenoaks Greensand Commons

Project. The Sevenoaks Greensand Commons Project aims to restore the landscape, social and natural heritage of the Greensand Commons.

To find out more about this project, please visit **www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk** and search for 'Sevenoaks Greensand Commons'.

## Save money and the planet!

Many of us want to do our bit for the environment, but it can seem daunting and it's difficult to know where to begin.

The trick is to start small. Tiny changes to your daily routine can add up to a big difference – and could save you money too.

Try cutting your shower time by one minute per wash or putting your dishwasher and washing machine on one less cycle a week.

Turning your appliances and lights off when you aren't using them and turning down your thermostat by just one degree also saves energy and money.



If it's possible, replacing your lightbulbs with LEDs and draught-proofing your home will also help you cut down on your electricity bills.

If we all make these small changes, there will be a big pay out, and not just for the planet, you could save £100s a year!

To find out more about our Net Zero ambitions, visit **www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/netzero**.



## Sevenoaks District Community Safety Unit

To report or receive advice on: anti-social behaviour, fly-tipping, graffiti, licensed premises, abandoned vehicles, environmental and noise nuisance, crime reduction, neighbourhood watch and other community safety issues, call **01732 227000** or e-mail [community.safety@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:community.safety@sevenoaks.gov.uk)

### Reporting crime

To report a crime that is taking place, always call 999. If the incident has passed, call Kent Police on 101 or Crimestoppers on **0800 555111**

### Social media

For the latest community safety news follow us on Twitter visit [@sdc\\_csp](https://twitter.com/sdc_csp)

### Tackling domestic abuse

For support and advice for all victims of Domestic Abuse call the Domestic Abuse Volunteer Support Service on **01892 570538**

For the Community Domestic Abuse Programme for men call **07933 359210** or visit [www.kentcdap.org](http://www.kentcdap.org)

# New plan to keep the District safe

**The Sevenoaks District is one of the safest areas in the country and a new Action Plan from the Community Safety Partnership aims to keep it that way.**

The Community Safety Partnership works to reduce and detect crime, reduce anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime and strengthen community involvement. The team has assessed the biggest issues facing the District and has created an action plan for the next year.

The 2022/23 action plan will focus on six priorities, which are:

- Theft, burglary, fraud, robbery and other serious crimes
- Drug misuse and county lines
- Anti-social behaviour, including environmental crime and rogue trading
- Domestic abuse
- Violence against women and girls, including stalking and harassment
- Safeguarding vulnerable adults and protecting children.

Although the Partnership's focus will be these six priorities, it will continue to monitor and plan for trends in crime and other community safety issues and address them.

Sergeant Pete Ballard of Sevenoaks Police says: "The Action Plan is a really important document that sets out the overall targets for the Community Safety Partnership.



"The plan highlights activities that the Partnership will undertake throughout the forthcoming year. All priorities include actions to address residents' fear of crime and reducing repeat offenders and victims.

"We work hard with Sevenoaks District Council and other partners to keep the District one of the safest places in Kent and to make sure residents feel happy and secure where they live."

Visit [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/communitysafety](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/communitysafety) for more information.

## Keep updated with all your community news

Kent Police has launched a secure and personal messaging system that allows residents, businesses, and community groups to keep in touch with their local policing teams. The service sends updates about your local area directly from the police officers themselves.

My Community Voice is more than just a messaging service; it allows you to reply to the alerts sent to you, share information and tells the police about the issues affecting you. You will be able to play an active part in police appeals as well as keeping updated in what is happening in your local area.

For further information, visit [www.mycommunityvoicekent.co.uk](http://www.mycommunityvoicekent.co.uk).

# Your Councillors

Sevenoaks District Council's priorities and policies are decided by 54 Councillors who were elected by local people. The Sevenoaks District is divided into 26 smaller areas, known as wards and each ward is represented by one or more District Councillors. You are very welcome to contact the District Councillors to express your views and to ask for their help on local issues.

Conservative (C)
Independent (I)
Labour (L)
Liberal Democrat (LD)
Sevenoaks Independent (SI)



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## How to contact your District Councillors

We have provided your District Councillors' phone numbers and e-mail addresses. If you would like to write to them, their postal addresses are available on our

website [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/councillors](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/councillors) or by calling us on **01732 227000**. If you are unsure which ward you live in, please call us on **01732 227000**.

# A new market day for Swanley

**Swanley's Wednesday market has always been popular so we were very excited to launch a new Sunday market earlier in the year.**

Bray Associates are running the market on our behalf for a trial period of six-months. The company, who also run our Wednesday market in the town, are keeping a close eye on the Sunday market to ensure it operates smoothly during the trial.

The new Sunday market boasts a broad mix of market traders, including those selling local food and drink, farmers' market produce and traditional market goods.

Cabinet Member for Cleaner and Greener, Cllr Margot McArthur, says:



"This new Sunday market will help to bring new business into the town, benefitting many other shops and traders. As the market becomes more established, we hope to include more

local craft producers and opportunities for young entrepreneurial traders too."

As In Shape went to print the new market was due to begin on Sunday 3 April.

## Sprucing up online tree applications

**In January, we secured £150,000 of external funding to improve our online planning services.**

The funding is being used to make root and branch changes to web applications for customers wishing to carry out works to trees.

Each year we receive around 700 applications for works to protected trees and trees in conservations areas.



Currently applicants have to decide if a tree is protected using an online map. Then they have to contact us for a copy of the Tree Preservation Order, which is sent by email. Finally, the customer can submit

the online application. Most councils have a similar process.

We're axing this long-winded procedure by putting in place a 'one-stop' shop so customers can log in just once to complete their application.

Once live on our website in the coming weeks, the service will be available to other councils. We hope they'll will take a leaf out of our book and implement similar improvements for their customers.

## Laying the foundations for a new housing strategy

**We want to hear your views on all things housing as we draft a new housing strategy for the Sevenoaks District.**

Win a  
£50 M&S  
voucher

The strategy will set out our vision and ambitions for housing for the next five years. It will cover a wide range of priorities, including:

- Increasing the supply of affordable homes
- Preventing homelessness and helping those who are homeless
- Funding home adaptations (such as stair lifts, walk in showers and baths and ramps) to help older and

disabled people live in their own homes for as long as possible

- Promoting home energy efficiency to help tackle climate change and reduce residents' energy bills.

We are keen to hear what you think of these priorities and if there is anything else we should be doing?

As a small thank you for your time, residents who complete our survey can enter a free prize draw to win

one of four £50 Marks and Spencer vouchers. As you'd expect, some terms and conditions apply, which can be viewed on our website.

To find out more and have your say, visit [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/housingstrategy](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/housingstrategy) by 5pm on Friday 18 April 2022.

Paper versions of the survey are available by calling us on **01732 227000**.



# Lights, camera, action!

**Pupils from Milestone Academy have produced a series of short films about public spaces for a Council run challenge.**

Some 40 children from years 7 to 11 from the school in New Ash Green worked in teams to produce three minute videos. The short films convey the experience of public places through the lens of young people.

After a tightly run race, the judges, including Cllr Roddy Hogarth and local entrepreneur and former 'Apprentice' candidate JD O'Brien, named the Viking Class the winners for their 'Bee Project' film.

The challenge aimed to develop the storytelling, filming and video editing skills of young people while helping us to improve the public realm - spaces that are free and open to all.

Cllr Roddy Hogarth, the Council's Public Realm Champion, says: "Public spaces are



The Viking Class from Milestone Academy show off their Film Maker of the Year Trophy.

the most important places outside the home that shape our lives. We really want to hear the views of young people to help us make the best use of these places."

"The quality of the films was outstanding and gives us a much better understanding of the concerns and

aspirations of young people when it comes to our open spaces. I want to thank the pupils and staff at Milestone Academy for supporting the project."

To find out more about taking part in a Public Realm challenge, please email [public.realm@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:public.realm@sevenoaks.gov.uk).

## Sevenoaks District Council at your fingertips

### Main Office

Argyle Road, Sevenoaks,  
Kent TN13 1HG

Open Monday to Thursday 8.45am to 5pm and Friday 8.45am to 4.45pm.

Telephone **01732 227000**, 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday.

Emergencies (outside our usual hours) **01732 227000**

then listen to the options.

### Leisure centres

Ash Green Sports Centre\*  
**01474 707164**

Edenbridge Leisure Centre\*\*  
**01732 865665**

Lullingstone Park Golf Course\*\*  
**01959 533793**

The Olympic, Swanley\*  
**01322 669201**

Sevenoaks Indoor Bowls Club\*\*\*  
**01732 451889**

Sevenoaks Leisure Centre\*\*  
**01732 470700**

White Oak Indoor Bowls Club, Swanley\*\*\*  
**01322 665571**

White Oak Leisure Centre, Swanley\*\*\*\*  
**01322 662188**

\* Operated by the local town or parish Council

\*\* Operated by Sencio Community Leisure

\*\*\* Operated by independent limited companies

\*\*\*\* Operated by Everyone Active



**In Shape** is published and distributed by Sevenoaks District Council to inform local residents and businesses about the work of the Council.

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Printed on environmentally friendly paper. Published April 2022.

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