

# InShape

The newsletter of Sevenoaks District Council

## Your plan, your say

We want to hear your thoughts on the new Local Plan, which will guide what can be built and where in the coming years.

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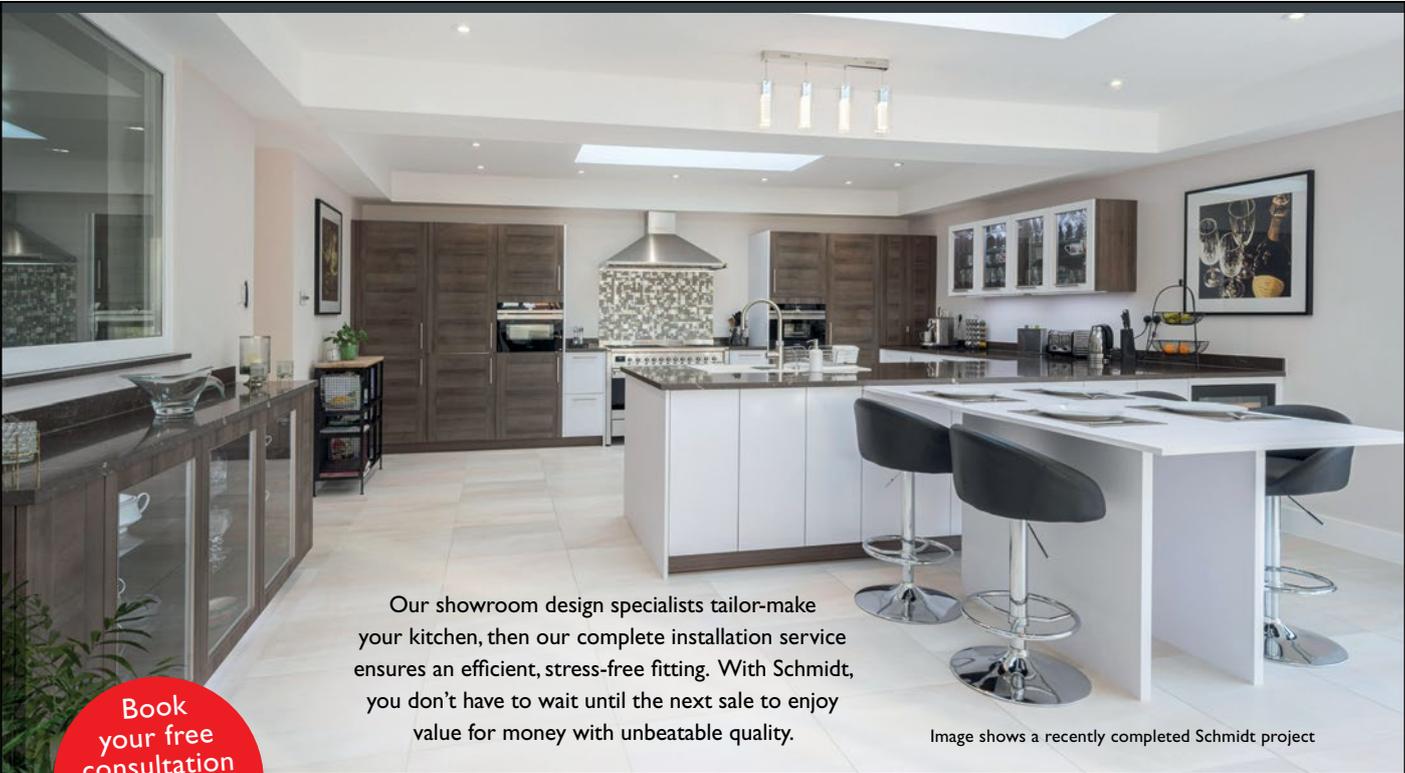
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# Your festive waste and recycling collections

You won't miss a collection over Christmas and into the New Year, but there will be changes to your usual days.



Our collection crews will be working on a bank holiday and Saturdays over Christmas and into the New Year so you don't miss a collection.

There will be no changes to your collection days before Christmas day. However, collections will be one day later than usual from Monday 26 December for the next two weeks.

If you receive a garden waste collection, the same changes will apply to this service.

Please put your black and clear sacks, and your garden waste out at 7am on your collection day.

If you're not sure when your waste collection day takes place, visit [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/refuse](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/refuse).

Normal collection day	Revised collection day
Monday 26 December (Bank Holiday)	Tuesday 27 December
Tuesday 27 December (Bank Holiday)	Wednesday 28 December
Wednesday 28 December	Thursday 29 December
Thursday 29 December	Friday 30 December
Friday 30 December	Saturday 31 December
Monday 2 January (Bank Holiday)	Tuesday 3 January
Tuesday 3 January	Wednesday 4 January
Wednesday 4 January	Thursday 5 January
Thursday 5 January	Friday 6 January
Friday 6 January	Saturday 7 January
Monday 9 January	Collections return to normal from this date



Cllr Peter Fleming, Council Leader, Cllr Margot McArthur and Street Cleaner Ben Preston remove chewing gum in Blighs, Sevenoaks.

## Gum busters!

New chewing gum removal unit gets the Council out of a sticky situation.

We have a new, environmentally-friendly tool to help with the war on chewing gum that's become stuck to the pavement.

Chewing gum is not only unsightly, it's notoriously difficult and time consuming to remove.

But, we've invested in a new 'Ecogum' machine - an electronic, rechargeable chewing gum removal unit that allows gum and stickers to be removed from any surface in seconds.

The lightweight unit is worn like a backpack and only uses hot water, a biodegradable sugar-based solution and a little bit of elbow grease.

The Ecogum machine eliminates the need for high pressure hoses and unfriendly chemicals so gum can be removed without disrupting the public or damaging paving slabs, cobbles, and joints.

The machine was paid for by a grant funded by chewing gum manufacturers.

Cllr Margot McArthur, the Council's Cabinet Member for Cleaner and Greener, says: "We would encourage residents to put their gum in the bin, but there's always a minority of people who are prepared to litter.

"However we have a new tool in our arsenal to help keep our high streets clean. Not only is the 'Ecogum' machine quick and efficient, it's kind to the environment and, as it's powered by a green, rechargeable battery, it's another step towards our Net Zero ambitions."

# Three ways to dispose of your real Christmas tree

This year we've changed the way you can recycle your real Christmas tree for free after this year's festivities have ended.

**1 Option 1 – Use our Garden Waste collection service (for permit holders only)**  
If you hold a Garden Waste collection permit, simply place the tree in your green bin and we'll pick it up on your usual collection days throughout January. We can take trees with a trunk of up to 90mm (3.5") in diameter.

**2 Option 2 – Take your tree to a local collection point**  
Take your tree to one of the collection points, at the dates and times listed below, and we'll take it off your hands. We can take trees with a trunk of up to 90mm (3.5") in diameter.

Location	Date and time
<b>Hartley</b> By the allotments, Woodland Avenue, DA3 7DB	Mondays 9 and 16 January 8am to 9am
<b>New Ash Green</b> Centre Road Car Park, DA3 8HJ	Mondays 9 and 16 January 9.15am to 10.15am
<b>West Kingsdown</b> Library Car Park, London Road, TN15 6BZ	Mondays 9 and 16 January 10.30am to 11.30am
<b>Eynsford</b> Recycling site, Shoreham Road	Mondays 9 and 16 January 12.15pm to 1.15pm
<b>Shoreham</b> Village Car Park, Filston Lane, TN14 7SX	Mondays 9 and 16 January 1.30pm to 2.30pm
<b>Hextable</b> Heritage Centre Car Park, Crawfords, BR8 7LU	Tuesdays 10 and 17 January 8am to 9am
<b>Swanley</b> Bevan Place Car Park, BR8 8BH	Tuesdays 10 and 17 January 9.15am to 10.15am
<b>Crockenhill</b> Village Hall Car Park, Stones Cross Road, BR8 8LT	Tuesdays 10 and 17 January 10.30am to 11.30am
<b>Otford</b> Opposite 2 Bubblestone Road, TN14 5PW	Tuesdays 10 and 17 January 12.15pm to 1.15pm
<b>Sevenoaks</b> Suffolk Way recycling site, TN13 1LX	Tuesdays 10 and 17 January 1.30pm to 2.30pm
<b>Badgers Mount</b> Near to Crest Close, Old London Road, TN14 7AE	Wednesdays 11 and 18 January 8am to 9am
<b>Halstead</b> Village Hall, Knockholt Road, TN14 7EU	Wednesdays 11 and 18 January 9.15am to 10.15am
<b>Knockholt</b> The Three Horseshoes car park, Main Road, TN14 7LD	Wednesdays 11 and 18 January 10.30am to 11.30am

Location	Date and time
<b>Westerham</b> Recycling site, Brasted Road, TN16 1TD	Wednesdays 11 and 18 January 12.15pm to 1.15pm
<b>Sundridge</b> Main Road layby, TN14 6EP	Wednesdays 11 and 18 January 1.30pm to 2.30pm
<b>Crockham Hill</b> Deanery Road, TN8 6RE	Thursdays 12 and 19 January 8am to 9am
<b>Edenbridge</b> Leisure Centre Car Park, Wellingtonia Way, TN8 5RE	Thursdays 12 and 19 January 9.15am to 10.15am
<b>Four Elms</b> Layby by St Paul's Church, Bough Beech Road, TN8 6NE	Thursdays 12 and 19 January 10.30am to 11.30am
<b>Marsh Green</b> Marsh Green Road Layby TN8 5QR	Thursdays 12 and 19 January 12.15pm to 1.15pm
<b>Cowden</b> Memorial Hall, Chantlers Mead, TN8 7HU	Thursdays 12 and 19 January 1.30pm to 2.30pm
<b>Hever</b> Recycling site, Hever Castle Car Park, Hever Road, TN8 7NH	Fridays 13 and 20 January 7am to 8am
<b>Chiddingstone</b> Richards Close, TN11 8LF	Fridays 13 and 20 January 8.15am to 9.15am
<b>Leigh</b> Recycling site, Crandalls, TN11 8RF	Fridays 13 and 20 January 9.30am to 10.30am
<b>Penshurst</b> Penshurst Road layby, TN11 8DB	Fridays 13 and 20 January 10.45am to 11.45am
<b>Fordcombe</b> Village Hall, The Green, TN3 0RT	Fridays 13 and 20 January 12.30pm to 1.30pm
<b>Weald</b> Memorial Hall, Long Barn Road, TN14 6PT	Fridays 13 and 20 January 2pm to 3pm

**3 Option 3 – Take your tree to a Household Waste Recycling Site**  
Take your tree to one of Kent County Council's Household Waste Recycling Sites. They will take larger trees that are too big for us to collect.

Visit [www.kent.gov.uk/recycling](http://www.kent.gov.uk/recycling) or call 03000 41 73 73 to book a slot.

# New Ash Green couple's rewarding experience



Earlier this year, New Ash Green husband and wife, Ian and Jill Houston, opened up their home to the Kitovs family from Ukraine.



Not only did the Houstons help a young family find safety, they opened themselves up to a new and rewarding experience.

Ian (81), who trained as a marine engineer in the Glasgow boatyards before changing ship to work in communications and running his own public relations agency, spoke with In Shape about his experiences of hosting a Ukraine family.

Ian says: "We desperately wanted to help people fleeing the war soon after the invasion began, but we found it impossible with the bureaucracy. Then the Government launched the 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme. While there was the inevitable paperwork, followed by background checks and a home inspection, things moved quickly.

"After everything was cleared, Dmytro and Iryna Kitov and their six year old daughter Marta moved in with us in May.

"Overall, the support we have received has been very good. The literature and communications, including Ukrainian translations, have been well-produced, meeting our needs and those of our guests.

"There have been challenges along the way, but as the various authorities and ourselves became more pragmatic about what was needed, and our guests adjusted to a very different system and culture, it has become more and more rewarding.

Jill (79), a retired infant school teacher adds: "We were so lucky to have a six-year old girl in our family.

She has responded well to school and watching her development has been a joy.

"We're now helping Dmytro and Iryna to look for a local rental property as it's not safe for them to return home. While we will be sad to see them move on, we've made firm friends and we intend to stay in touch.

"With six months' experience of hosting a Ukrainian family under our belt, we would certainly recommend it to others. We've loved learning about a new culture.

"It's not a one-way experience and mixing with refugees has brought many unexpected pleasures, not least having a young child in our home."

## Extra support for Ukrainian hosts



Hosts who join the Homes for Ukraine scheme receive a monthly 'thank you' payment of £350 from the Government.

And, in recognition of the rising cost of living, Kent County Council has introduced additional support payments worth up to £650 a

month depending on the number of Ukrainian guests.

In recent weeks we've also employed a Refugee Resettlement Co-ordinator to offer greater help and support to host families and Ukrainian refugees.

For an informal chat about joining the Homes for Ukraine scheme, please call

Jane Armstrong on 01732 227000 or email [homesforukraine@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:homesforukraine@sevenoaks.gov.uk)

To register for the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, visit [www.gov.uk/register-interest-homes-ukraine](http://www.gov.uk/register-interest-homes-ukraine).

# Nominate your unsung hero in our Community and Voluntary Awards!

Our 'Making it Happen' Community and Voluntary Awards are back, giving you the chance to nominate your local unsung heroes.

The awards will see more inspirational community stalwarts and dedicated volunteers being recognised for their amazing work. As ever, you can expect one or two celebrity guests of honour handing out the certificates at the awards ceremony in March.

Cllr Lesley Dyball, our Cabinet Member for People and Places, says: "Our volunteers and community heroes are the backbone of our District, and even more so over the past three years. We are thrilled to be able to host these awards to recognise their incredible work which is really important to us.

"Maybe there's a volunteer who coaches your child's sports team, a local business that works hard within your community or a charity raising thousands for a worthy cause. If so, please make sure you get involved



and submit a nomination so your local heroes can get the recognition they deserve."

To nominate a person, voluntary organisation or group, visit [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/communityawards](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/communityawards). You can also request a nomination form by e-mailing [communities@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:communities@sevenoaks.gov.uk) or by calling us on 01732 227000.

Nominations can be made in more than one category and can be submitted up until 4pm on Friday 30 December 2022.

## FREE parking before Christmas

You can make the most of the District's town centres when many of our car parks will be FREE on Saturday 17 December 2022.

You can park for FREE in these Sevenoaks town centre car parks:

- Sevenoaks Town
- Stag Theatre (South Park)
- Buckhurst 1
- Suffolk Way

You can also park for free in our Council office car park, off Gordon Road, at weekends.

Charges will continue to apply in Blighs car park in Sevenoaks.

Parking will also be free in our Westerham car parks on this day. Parking is already free in our Swanley car parks and in Edenbridge at weekends.

There will be no need to show a pay and display ticket or log your stay with MiPermit for this festive offer.

We will continue to patrol our car parks as normal on Saturday 17 December to ensure they operate as smoothly as possible.

To view our car park locations, visit [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/carparks](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/carparks).

## Our Christmas opening times

You can visit our Sevenoaks office during these days and times over the festive period...

**OPEN** as usual up to Friday 23 December

**CLOSED** on Monday 26 December

**CLOSED** on Tuesday 27 December

**CLOSED** on Wednesday 28 December

**OPEN** on Thursday 29 December – 8.45am to 5pm

**OPEN** on Friday 30 December – 8.45am to 4.45pm

**CLOSED** on Monday 2 January

**OPEN** as usual from Tuesday 3 January – 8.45am.

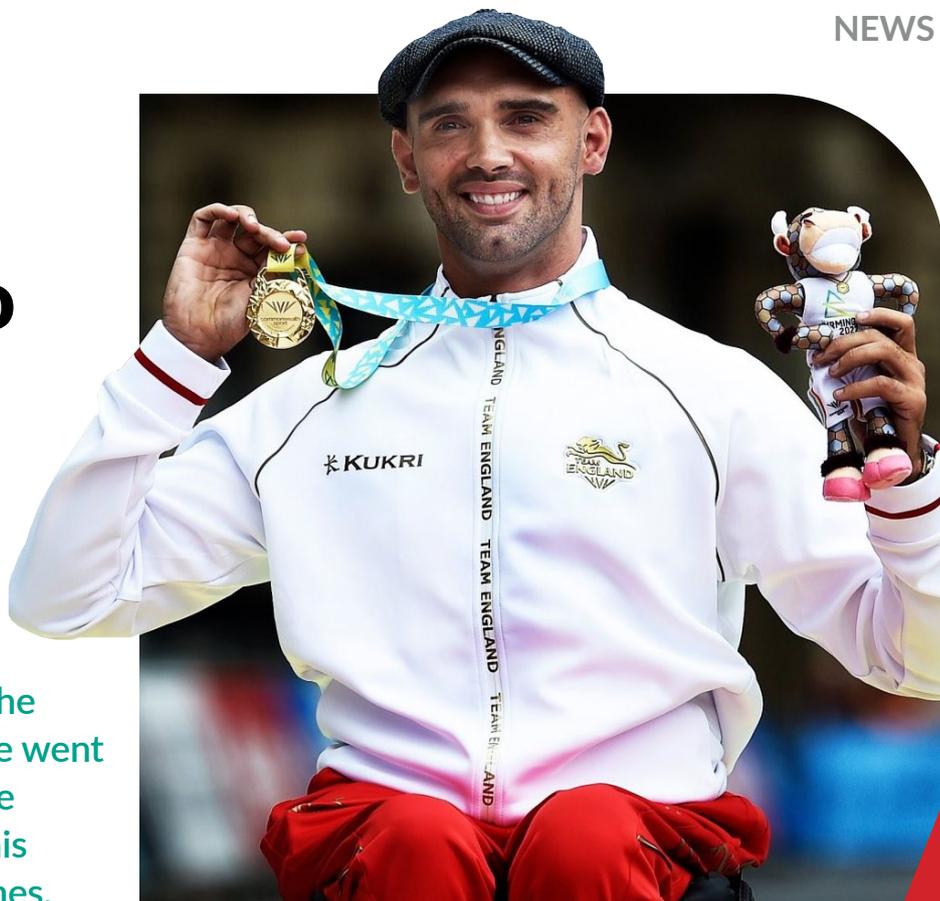
You can also call us from 8am to 6pm on the days our office is open.

In an emergency, even when our office is closed, you can still call us on 01732 227000.

Many of our services are available 24/7 on our website [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk).

# JohnBoy overcomes adversity to strike gold

Thirty-three year old West Kingsdown resident, JohnBoy Smith, suffered life-changing injuries as a teenager. But, inspired by the 2012 Paralympic Games, he went on to become a para athlete clinching a gold medal at this year's Commonwealth Games.



From a young age, JohnBoy was a keen boxer and fitness fanatic. Tragically, at the age of just 16, he was shot and suffered spinal injuries leading to partial paralysis.

After he was discharged from Stoke Mandeville hospital in 2006, JohnBoy returned to the gym determined to regain his fitness.

And, after watching the London 2012 Paralympic Games (with Brands Hatch in West Kingsdown as one of the venues) he set his sights on becoming a para athlete.

JohnBoy started out as a powerlifter before switching to javelin, shotput, discus and finally settling on wheelchair racing.

JohnBoy says: "When I started out on my sporting journey, I was confident that one day, with hard work and determination, I'd be one of the best in the world. I was sure I'd get a gold."

Within three years, JohnBoy claimed a silver medal in the wheelchair racing marathon at the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games in Australia. Then, just four years later, he realised his dream and took gold in the same event at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham in July.

JohnBoy adds: "After I won gold in Birmingham, I was both relieved and exhausted. The course was by far the toughest marathon I've ever completed.

I just remember being very grateful and emotional and proud, not just for myself, but also for my coach and all the people who have supported me along the way.

"When I became an athlete, my life changed forever. Wheelchair racing has taken me around the world to countries I never dreamed of visiting and I've met so many people and made friends.

"And after I won a gold medal, things shifted up a gear. I have been on game shows, live radio and people of all ages come up to me in the streets telling me I inspire them to do better! I was really proud when a local primary school named a class after me.

"After Birmingham, I didn't have much time to celebrate or rest, I was back in training the next day, preparing for a series of six marathons in four different countries.

"What I love most about wheelchair racing is the opportunities it has given me and my family. It has opened our eyes to many different cultures and countries. I love the people I meet, but above all else, I love the competitive level of wheelchair racing.



# Panto time at the Stag!

Silly Billy will be taking you down the rabbit hole to Wonderland for this year's Sevenoaks Panto, and he's joined by a cast of West End stars!

Thousands of people already have their tickets to Alice In Wonderland this Christmas, the fourteenth panto staged at the Stag Theatre since it reopened in 2009.

Ant Payne, better known to Stag panto audiences as Silly Billy, will play the Mad Hatter, alongside panto dame and director Jamie Alexander Wilson as the Duchess.

Melissa Jacques (Everybody's Talking About Jamie and Mamma Mia) who played the Pirate Queen in last year's panto, will be returning to play the Queen Of Hearts.

Nikki Bentley, best known for playing Elphaba in the West End hit musical Wicked, will join the cast as the White Rabbit, with Billie Hardy (Chicago and Saturday Night Fever) in the title role.

Rosie Glossop (Kinky Boots and Identical) and Jacob McIntosh (Jersey Boys and Book Of Mormon), both last



seen in Sevenoaks for the Stag's 2020 live broadcast lockdown panto, play the Caterpillar and Cheshire Cat.

Featuring a live band, the latest animation technology and all the traditions and laughs of a family panto, the hilarious and spectacular Alice In Wonderland plays at the Stag Sevenoaks from 9 to 31 December with tickets from £16.

To book visit [www.sevenoakspanto.com](http://www.sevenoakspanto.com) or call 01732 450175.

# Help and support for young people

Over the last year, we've been offering free activities and support to children aged between 11 and 18 via the Sevenoaks District Mentoring Scheme.



Tweens and teens were able to take part in activities such as kayaking, cake decorating, art classes and football. They were also given the opportunity to match with an adult mentor to discuss any issues they may have.



The initiative has been so successful we have extended it until March 2023 to allow more young people to reconnect with activities they love, socialise and receive help and guidance if they need it. Participants can also take part in training courses and access 1-2-1 counselling via the scheme.

For more information on how to get a young person involved, visit [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/youngpeople](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/youngpeople) or email [communities@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:communities@sevenoaks.gov.uk).

This service is run and managed by us with support from The Millwall Community Trust, The Layberry Foundation, House in the Basement, RightMind and The Bridges Centre.

# Discounted broadband for residents on low incomes

Good quality, reliable broadband is essential as more and more services and retailers are available online.

Take advantage of cheaper broadband deals 

But with the recent rises in the cost of living, broadband prices have increased too making it unaffordable for some.

To assist people on low incomes to access cheaper deals, many broadband suppliers now provide social tariffs - discounted broadband packages for people who claim certain benefits.

Ofcom, the UK's communication regulator, recently found that only 55,000 out of 4.2 million homes in

receipt of Universal Credit are using discounted rates. This means that households on benefits are missing out on an average yearly broadband saving of £144 each.

These deals are available to households claiming various state benefits dependent on the broadband provider. You may be eligible for certain deals if you are in receipt of any of the

following benefits: Universal Credit, Employment and Support Allowance, Pension Credit, Income Support and Jobseeker's Allowance.

Kent County Council has compiled details of the social broadband packages available and their eligibility criteria.

To see if you can save money on your broadband, visit [www.kent.gov.uk/socialtariffs](http://www.kent.gov.uk/socialtariffs).

## Help finding a warm space

A new directory listing local 'Warm Spaces' is now available for residents.

Warm Spaces are existing community or business places that provide a safe and friendly public space where people of all ages can go and spend time reading, studying, chatting with others and meeting new people.

Generally they provide free Wi-Fi, tables and chairs, tea and coffee making facilities and toilets. Most Warm Spaces are accessible for people with disabilities.

Warm Spaces are usually free and some offer support, services and advice. Full details can be found in our directory.

To find out more, visit [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/warmspaces](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/warmspaces).



## Help with the cost of living

The price of energy, food and other bills continues to increase and we know that some people are struggling to keep up with the cost of living. However, help may be available.

Our 'Help with the cost of living' web hub includes details of the latest support schemes available.

The hub includes information about paying your bills, increasing your income, debt advice, help with food and more.

The hub is updated regularly as more and more support becomes available.

Visit the hub at [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/costofliving](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/costofliving).

# Manage your energy bills and your carbon footprint.



**Sustainable Warmth** is a new Government grant scheme designed to fund energy-efficiency upgrades and **YOU** could be eligible.

- Designed to support households most likely to be impacted by rising fuel bills.
- Energy-saving tech and upgrades installed by TrustMark-approved installers.
- Creating warmer, healthier homes.
- Helping to cut carbon emissions.
- Funding available for homes on and off the gas grid.

Want to find out if you're eligible for a **Sustainable Warmth Grant**? Use the details below to find out more.

Visit: [www.eonenergy.com/green-homes-grant](http://www.eonenergy.com/green-homes-grant)

or Call Eon on: 0333 202 4859

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## #MANAGEYOURENERGYBILLS



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DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Swanley's shared work space gets ready to open

The Meeting Point, a new shared work hub in Swanley, is getting ready to open its doors in the New Year.



Based at 27 to 37 High Street, the Meeting Point will provide space for the next generation of Swanley businesses. Facilities include offices, shared hot desks and onsite support for small and start-up businesses all available on an affordable membership basis.

The work space, just a short walk from Swanley station, will support new jobs, new ways of working and business collaboration.

To support our Net Zero 2030 commitment, the Meeting Point has energy efficient air source heating, electric charging points, cycle parking and access to a communal, wildlife-friendly garden.

If you'd like to know more about taking space in the Meeting Point, please email [business@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:business@sevenoaks.gov.uk).

The Meeting Point is being funded and built by Sevenoaks District Council with support from the Getting Building Fund (South East Local Enterprise Partnership and Kent County Council).

## Getting Swanley talking!

We are piloting an exciting new project to encourage Swanley residents to share their thoughts and feelings about their town and to find out more about where they live.

With help from 'Hello Lamp Post', we are inviting the community to look at Swanley with a fresh perspective.

To take part, look out for one of the 'Hello Swanley' signs in the town. To start the conversation simply scan the QR code on the sign or send a message via SMS, Facebook Messenger or WhatsApp using the details provided.

You'll soon get a friendly reply! You can then chat, provide opinions and feedback and learn about the area.

These two-way 'chats' will provide important feedback about where you live to help community initiatives.

As In Shape went to print, the interactive Hello Swanley signs were scheduled to be installed during December at St Mary's Recreation Ground (by the Skate Park), in Swanley Park (by the paddling pool and inside the café) and on one of the platforms at Swanley rail station.

If the trial is a success, the Hello Lamp Post project will be rolled out to other towns and villages across the District.

Hello Lamp Post is supported by Swanley Town Council, Southeastern and the Swanley History Group and is part of our 'Better Together Community Hub' project.

To find out more about the project, please email [information@bettertogethercommunity.org.uk](mailto:information@bettertogethercommunity.org.uk).



## Please help us to help you with your waste

We would like to thank all our residents for their help and understanding after the introduction of new waste collection rounds in October.

The change involves over 80,000 waste collections every week and, despite some issues, the vast majority have taken place as scheduled.

However, we understand it can be frustrating for residents whose collections have been missed or delayed and we are doing all we can to solve any remaining issues. We would like to apologise to anyone affected.

The changes were made to make the routes more efficient, reduce emissions and build in resilience so we can retain our weekly collections.

Most households had a new collection day. However, whether your waste day changed or remained the same, we would ask you to make sure your waste is out at 7am on your collection day as our crews could arrive anytime between 7am and 4pm.

Unfortunately waste that is put out after our crews have been through your road can not be collected until your next scheduled collection.

Cllr Margot McArthur, our Cabinet Member for Cleaner & Greener says: "Our crews pride themselves on delivering the best possible service. To help them do a great job and make sure we pick up your rubbish, we are asking everyone to put their waste out at 7am on their collection day."

# Have your say on the Local Plan

We've drafted a new Local Plan, which proposes new developments are focused on existing built up areas and we want to hear your views.

As we're committed to protecting the Green Belt, covering 93% of the District, we believe much of our future development needs, up to 2040, could be met by building in town, on previously developed land and optimising densities.

Our new plan includes proposals for new homes, protecting business space and supporting our high streets. It also proposes new facilities such as schools, health centres and transport. Crucially it aims to protect the District's character and natural and historic environment.

However, by focusing on already built up land, new developments could be built at higher densities than at present.

## What's in the Local Plan?

### Housing choice for all

House prices in the Sevenoaks District are more than 12 times annual earnings, so many first time buyers and young families are struggling to find an affordable home that meets their needs. We also have an ageing population.

We will boost the delivery of housing to address these issues, ensuring a large proportion of new homes are affordable, offer choice and meet the needs of current and future residents, both young and old.

### Employment and economy

The pandemic has accelerated online shopping and home working. We are keen to support our high streets and deliver the right type of flexible workspaces to meet current and future needs so our economy remains strong. We want to maintain a vibrant rural economy and support the tourist sector.

### Climate change

Tackling climate change is very important. We want to help communities to save energy, and make low carbon travel choices. We will make sure new developments include energy efficiency measures like insulation, renewable energy and water saving as well as making it easier to cycle, walk and charge electric vehicles.

New developments should also include lots of green space and places where wildlife can live such as trees, hedges and bird boxes.

### Design

Design is much more than what a place looks like, it is how it functions and how we experience it.

We will make sure all our new spaces are well designed and have a positive impact on people's lives, including their health and wellbeing and feeling of belonging.

### Health and wellbeing

Planning plays a key role in reducing some of the District's most pressing health challenges. The Local Plan ensures that all residents have the opportunity to improve their wellbeing, reduce isolation, stay physically active and live healthier lives. The Plan also supports good quality housing in sustainable locations, with access to green open space and opportunities for healthier travel options, such as walking and cycling.

### Historic environment

Sevenoaks District is home to a wealth of old buildings, structures and landscapes that reflect our rich history.

It is vital to our local economy, in particular the leisure, hospitality and tourist sectors. We want to protect our valuable historic environment and make sure that future generations can enjoy it too.

## What is a local plan?

The Local Plan is a series of planning policies that will guide what can be built and where in the District over the next 15 years.

Planners refer to the Local Plan when they consider planning applications.

## Have your say

Your views are important and we want to hear your thoughts on our new Local Plan. Our consultation is open until 11.59pm on Wednesday 11 January 2023.

To have your say, complete our survey at [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/plan2040](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/plan2040).

Paper surveys are available by calling us on **01732 227000** and from the following locations:

- Sevenoaks District Council Offices, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks, TN13 1HG
- Your local town or parish council office
- Libraries within Sevenoaks District.



### Natural environment

Sevenoaks District is a beautiful place to live with attractive hills, woods and rivers. We want to protect and enhance the natural environment and help everyone to be able to enjoy the beautiful landscape. We also want to make sure that the District is a place where wildlife can thrive by protecting existing habitats and creating new ones.

### Infrastructure and transport

Working with partners in health, education, water, utilities and other sectors, the Local Plan will enable the delivery of new infrastructure. The Plan encourages journeys on foot, by bike and the use of public transport, to promote active, healthy and low carbon travel, which will help progress our Net Zero ambitions.

## Online drop in events

During November, we ran drop in events across the District. If you missed these, we have another taking place online on Wednesday 4 January 2023 between 2.30pm and 5pm and between 5.30pm to 8pm. For more information and to register, please visit [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/plan2040](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/plan2040).

## What happens next?

When this consultation ends, we will review your comments and will consult on a revised Plan in autumn 2023, which will cover the whole District, including the Green Belt.

A final draft plan will be published in spring 2024 for further comments before it is examined by a Government appointed Planning Inspector later in 2024.

# Check out your District this Christmas

Budgets may be tight, but a great deal of joy can be had from a festive walk taking in our brightly lit, sparkly high street and dropping into welcoming cafés or pubs along the way. Or try a local museum after a healthy wander in the hills.

Here are some tips for fun and sometimes free things to do over the holiday season.

Try the fabulous **Sevenoaks Christmas Artisan Crafts and Gift Fair** on Saturday 17 December at The Stag from 10am to 3pm with dozens of stalls to browse. Make it part of a rewarding day out in this lively market town.

To stimulate the mind explore the fascinating local stories on show at the **Eden Valley Museum**, (open Weds to Sat), where a cabinet of curiosity awaits, full of awesome facts, or exhibitions about the young people who had fun hop-picking at New House Farm every summer.

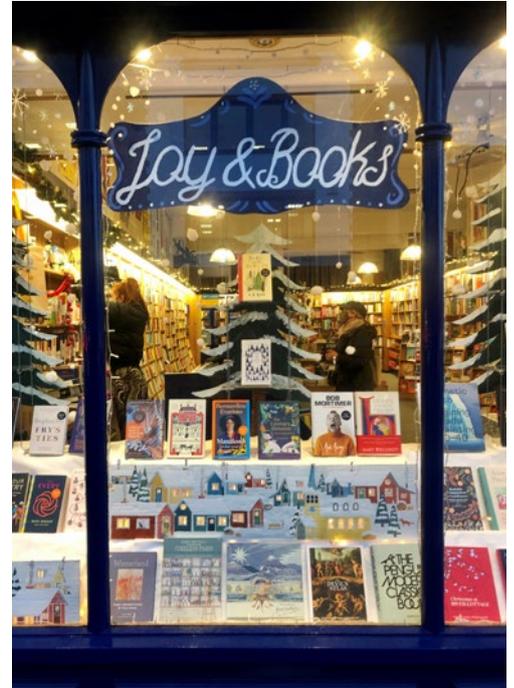
**Sevenoaks Museum** (at the public library) is home to an amazing 4,000 artefacts collected from surrounding neighbourhoods. The museum has regularly changing exhibitions and events. On 22 December professor and author John Mullan will visit to talk about his new book, *The Artful Dickens: Tricks and Ploys of the Great Novelist*. A £4 ticket includes a glass of mulled wine. Or perhaps a still life drawing afternoon is more your taste. On 12 January, you can sketch and glimpse behind the scenes with the curator.

If enjoying local products in the comfort of your own home is more your style, how about enjoying the fruitful efforts of our local business **Westerham Brewery**. Their Fortnum's Christmas Ale is worth a taste. Made with six Kent-grown hops, this 'rich and malty' Christmas ale delivers 'sleighfuls of sweet caramel and roasted nut notes'!

For the full-on festive experience, you may want to head to **Hever Castle**, where, until 2 January, there is a magical wonderland of bright lights to explore in the grounds. Festooned with an array of colours, the walk takes you through the grounds around the castle, into the gardens and past a twinkly lake. There's a Christmas Trail too, with a Festive Forest and Red the Squirrel. Don't forget there's a nearby rail station at Hever, only a 20-minute walk along footpaths.

And a more tranquil option for the New Year might be to join local coach Tansy in the Wild on a soul-setting journey in early January. Join a small group to reflect and explore, disappearing into the outdoors, returning motivated and inspired. The hills near Toy's and Ide Hill will offer a workout too!

Check [www.visitsevenoaksdistrict.co.uk](http://www.visitsevenoaksdistrict.co.uk) for even more ideas.



# Community projects secure £1.3m in funding

In September, we allocated £1,320,500 of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding to support exciting community and infrastructure improvements across the District.

Projects in Edenbridge, Westerham, Swanley, Weald, Eynsford and Sevenoaks all received funding to deliver health, social and Net Zero benefits to their communities.

We collect CIL from liable developments. Organisations and service providers are then invited to submit CIL funding bids to help fund projects that will benefit residents and support new developments across the District.

Since we introduced CIL in 2014, we have secured nearly £13 million in developer contributions towards infrastructure improvements across the District.

In the latest round of funding, the new Edenbridge Integrated Health and Wellbeing Centre will receive £600,000. Due to open in October 2023, the new state-of-the-art centre will provide many medical and community health services under one roof to deliver much needed and vastly improved health services to the town.

Westerham Town Council is set to receive £15,000 towards the refurbishment of the Playground on King George's Field. The money will part fund replacement play equipment plus additional accessible equipment and resurfacing the play area.

Swanley Town Council will receive £60,000 towards a new rugby pitch with a training area, changing rooms and toilets at the Olympic site.

Weald Parish Council will benefit from £91,000 in funding towards improvements to their much used recreation ground. The project includes a new parking area, tarmac the access track and replacing an inefficient diesel generator with a mains electricity supply.

Eynsford Parish Council will receive £260,000 to help pay for a new village hall and improvements to the village football pitch. The Parish Council is proposing to build the new village hall with car parking in Harrow Meadow, replacing the current hall dating back to 1905. The proposal includes an improved football pitch, replacing the existing pitch, which has a notorious slope.

Bradbourne Lakes in Sevenoaks, a popular, green leisure space to the south of the town, will receive £251,900 towards landscaping, footpath and environmental improvements. The project also received £252,400 in CIL funding in December 2019.

The Stag Community Arts Centre in Sevenoaks is to receive £42,600 towards solar panels to help it move towards net zero. The panels would generate enough power to help run the centre with any excess electricity sold back to the National Grid. Up to 23,821 kilos of CO2 emissions could be saved by the scheme every year.

Cllr Julia Thornton, Sevenoaks District Council's Cabinet Member for Development and Conservation, says: "We are delighted to be able to support so many deserving community infrastructure projects across the District with this latest round of CIL funding.

"The money will help pay towards projects that improve our health, wellbeing and the environment, helping the District move towards Net Zero."



The Stag Community Arts Centre is to receive £42,600 for solar panels, helping to reduce its carbon emissions.

# Baby boom

**“Exercising during and after pregnancy offers many benefits to mother and baby and is supported by evidence showing it can play a role in safe childbirth,”**

says Georgia Bedford, Wellness Supervisor at Sencio Community Leisure.

“The positives for a mum-to-be include improved posture, reduced back pain and better sleep while, following a birth, exercise can relieve stress, help rebuild strength and restore the functional fitness our body requires to perform daily tasks.”

As with any concerns medically around exercise, pregnant women should talk to a GP or midwife.

“If you’ve been a fit and active person this can be continued with, of course, necessary adaptations as the pregnancy progresses. If, however, you’re new to exercise either pre- or post-natal you must always seek medical advice,” says Georgia.

“Once clearance has been given then starting with no more than 15 minutes of continuous exercise three times a week is advised. This can then be increased to 30 minutes.

“Including pelvic floor exercises in a pre-and post-natal programme and even a daily routine will help because of the increased pressure under which it is placed. And adapting certain exercises can help as they mimic real life tasks such as carrying, bathing and pushing a pram.”

Georgia also offers advice on exercises to avoid – such as high impact and certain forms of weight lifting – to keep mother and baby safe. And after the birth?

“Before returning to exercise, a six week postnatal check-up should be performed. If there are any complications during delivery then this may, of course, be longer.

“Many people worry about exercising during pregnancy but there are no known risks associated with it as long it’s performed safely, with the help of a fitness professional and – if appropriate – the advice of a medical practitioner.”



## New Year, new you

**With the New Year fast approaching, now is a great time to think about your health and make changes for the future.**

Whether it’s losing weight, quitting smoking, cutting down on alcohol or improving your mental wellbeing, our One You team is on hand to help you all the way.

Our next free courses begin in January.

To find out more and to book onto a course, call us on **0300 020 0636** or visit [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/oneyou](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/oneyou).

# Confidence leads to safety (and fun) around water

Summer may feel like a way off, but now is a great time to improve young people's safety in and around water ready for the warmer weather.

Jane Parish, Chief Executive of Sencio Community Leisure, says:

"Every child should have at least a basic level of confidence in the water to ensure safety. Guidance states by the end of Key Stage 2 every child should be able to swim competently and confidently over a distance of at least 25 metres. Sadly, this doesn't always happen."

Olivia Lidbury's five-year-old daughter Evie lacked confidence. She says:



"The lessons at Sencio, together with the personalised attention, has made a huge difference and Evie's come on leaps and bounds. She's now happy to jump into the pool and go underwater and, aside from seeing her have fun, the building of her confidence has been vital in ensuring she can be safe. We're so happy with her progress."

"The swimming programme offered by Sencio Community Leisure is excellent," says Wayne, father of four-year-old Isabella Leggatt. "Her confidence has really grown in the pool and we're so grateful for the help and support she's been given."

Further details of the swimming coaching programme can be found at [www.sencio.org.uk](http://www.sencio.org.uk).

## How **NOT** to get fit this new year

As sure a New Year dawns, comes all the messages about losing weight and getting in shape. Taking that as a starting point, we asked Sencio Community Leisure's Wellness Manager James Arnold for reasons not to get the exercise bug this January.

"The age-old problem with all the fitness and exercise messages flying around at this time of year is that they're obsessed with quick, unsustainable wins and unrealistic expectations," says James. "If you'd like to make some changes, here are my tips on things not to do."

- **DON'T go in all guns blazing.** You don't need the latest clothing and the snazziest trainers, and you certainly don't need to be in the gym seven days a week.
- **DON'T sign-up for the toughest class or workout you can find** (unless you're experienced). Find something you'll enjoy.
- **DON'T compare yourself to anyone.** This is your body – all you need to do is take small steps and do your best.
- **DON'T set wild goals.** Okay, you might be lucky enough to get a six-pack by summer but that really shouldn't be your motivation.
- **DON'T go it alone.** Exercising with a friend is proven to help both results and consistency.
- **DON'T ignore what your body tells you.** If concerned, always speak to your GP.
- **DON'T obsess about diet.** A little of what we fancy does us all good (especially in the dark days of winter). Aim for a varied and well-balanced diet that's high in vegetables, fruit and oily fish. And remember plenty of water.

The Sencio Wellness teams at Edenbridge and Sevenoaks Leisure Centres will be delighted to help you get started.

# Feeling good at White Oak

White Oak Leisure Centre's 'Feel good Suite' is perfect if you want to exercise but feel you may struggle to do so.

The suite features special power assisted equipment to help boost your movement and strength. It's also a great place to meet others and is proving popular with local residents.

In Shape spoke with two 'Feel Good Suite' regulars about their experiences.

## Ken Neil, 65

**How long have you been using the Feel Good Suite for?**  
Three years. I used the Feel Good Suite at the old centre before the new centre opened.

### Why did you start using the Suite?

I lost my wife suddenly and with the shock and everything else, I was worried about getting depressed and being on my own. I saw the Feel Good Suite advertised in my GP surgery, so I decided to go along. It also gave me a reason to get out of the house. It wasn't just the activity, I was going to socialise.

### How does the Feel Good Suite benefit you?

About six months ago I had a hip replacement. After the operation, the physio was amazed at how quickly I was recovering. I mentioned the Feel Good Suite and explained that's probably why I was doing so well. After the operation I was back in the Suite as soon as I was able to and that helped speed up my recovery.

### Would you recommend the Feel Good Suite to your friends and family?

Yes and I've done so already. I take part in a crib league and some of the players have started using the Feel Good Suite and their friends have signed up too!



## Avril Heasman, 87

**How long have you been using the Feel Good Suite for?**  
Since 2016. I started in the old centre

### Why did you start using the Suite?

I had a knee replacement and was seeing a physiotherapist. My sister in law was aware of the Feel Good Suite because she regularly attended classes at the centre, and she introduced me to it. I had my other knee operated on the following year.

Using my phone, I showed the consultant my Feel Good Suite exercises. He said this type of exercise was marvellous and ideal for my recovery and I would be able to return in as little as three weeks. I haven't looked back since then.

### How does the Feel Good Suite benefit you?

It's fantastic. I have fibromyalgia and it really helps to keep me strong and fit. I'm 87 so I'm not doing too bad. Using the machines really helped me before and after both my operations as well.

### Would you recommend the Feel Good Suite to your friends and family?

Absolutely I would, 100%.



For more information about the Feel Good Suite, visit [www.everyoneactive.com/whiteoak](http://www.everyoneactive.com/whiteoak).



## 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 victims of Domestic Abuse, call the Domestic Abuse Volunteer Support Service on **01892 570538** or visit [www.davss.org.uk](http://www.davss.org.uk)  
For the Community Domestic Abuse Programme for men call **07933 359210** or visit [www.kentcdap.org](http://www.kentcdap.org)

# Don't fall victim to scams!

Anyone can be a victim of a scam. It is important to stay alert and follow our guidance.

Reputable traders and contractors do not cold-call for business and they will NEVER ask you to go to the bank or cash point.

If you receive a scam phone call, hang up and don't return the calls. NEVER disclose any personal information such as bank details, no matter who the person claims to be.

There are two scams which we'd like to make you aware of that are being reported regularly to us:

## Keep safe this winter!

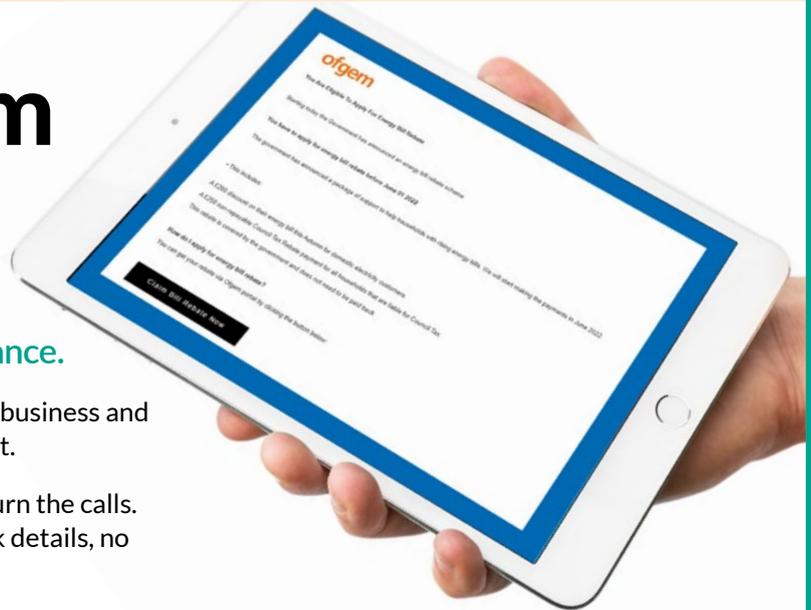
We're all looking for ways to save money this winter but it's important to keep ourselves safe while we do it.

This may mean changing your routine or doing things differently at home, for example lighting candles or fires. However, these may come with hazards.

One thing you can do to help reduce these risks is to fit a working smoke alarm on every floor of your property so you're alerted quickly if there were a fire.

Other ways of keeping warm include wearing warmer clothes or using a blanket, putting your heating on for short periods and only heating one room at a time.

For more information on fire safety, visit [www.kent.fire-uk.org](http://www.kent.fire-uk.org).



## OFFGEM Energy Rebate scam

There has been a rise in scam emails pretending to be from OFFGEM offering a rebate payment on your gas and electricity bills. The email is titled "Claim your bill rebate now" and tells you to click on a link. This takes you to a malicious website, designed to steal your personal and financial information. This is not genuine, rebates will be applied automatically - you do not need to register.

## Family emergency WhatsApp scam

Residents are being targeted by a WhatsApp scam. People are being contacted by someone impersonating a family member who claims their phone has broken and they require urgent help. The scammer then asks that a sum of money is transferred to a bank account.

To get one-step ahead of the criminals, sign up to local scam alerts at [www.kent.gov.uk/consumeralerts](http://www.kent.gov.uk/consumeralerts).

# 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**.

# Help us to tackle homelessness

WIN  
a £50 M&S  
voucher

We want to hear your views on our draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy with ideas to support homeless people and those at risk of losing their home.

In these challenging times, more people are struggling to keep a roof over their heads.

But we've been working hard to provide extra help for residents who find themselves homeless or who are threatened with homelessness.

- We provide a comprehensive support package at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Quercus Housing, a Council-owned company, provides local affordable homes for residents in temporary accommodation or on the Housing Register. The company has already acquired 24 homes.
- Recently we agreed to lease six homes in Edenbridge for mums with young children.
- We are providing rented homes through our 'Help to let' scheme. The scheme offers local landlords financial incentives and tenancy support, providing their property is made available to people on our lists.

Over the last three years, these initiatives have led to fewer people needing temporary housing.

Our new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy will build on this work with new ideas, including working with partners to deliver supported housing for residents facing homelessness.

We are also proposing additional support for people facing domestic abuse and advice and assistance to help keep people in their homes.

You can have your say on the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy by taking part in a short survey that is open until 5pm on Thursday 5 January 2023.

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.

Complete the survey online at [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/homelessnesssurvey](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/homelessnesssurvey) or call us on 01732 227000 for a paper copy of the survey.

## Seek help NOW if your home is at risk

If you're faced with the prospect of losing your home, contact our Housing Team on 01732 227000 or email [housing@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:housing@sevenoaks.gov.uk) as soon as possible.

The earlier you contact us, the more we can do to help.

# Supporting disabled people to 'Access all areas'

Save  
the  
DATE

A FREE event to support disabled people and their families and carers will take place in Swanley in February.

'Access all areas' is running at the new, fully accessible White Oak Leisure Centre (BR8 7BT) from 11am to 4pm on Sunday 19 February 2023.

Local groups and organisations will be on hand to showcase the help, advice and information available for anyone who has a physical or learning disability, including memory problems.

The event will also support those who care for someone with a disability.

No booking is required.

For further details including the groups and organisations taking part, visit [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/accessallareas](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/accessallareas).

The event has been organised by us with West Kent Housing Association.

Originally scheduled for last October, the event was postponed as the new Leisure Centre car park would not have been available in time for the event.



# Basket of happiness!

Sevenoaks resident, Megan Thomas, won a hamper packed with local produce when she entered our competition to help promote the District.

Over the summer, we launched the Sevenoaks 'So Much More' campaign to encourage more tourists and businesses to visit and locate here and for local residents to discover and enjoy the stunning attractions on their doorstep.

Megan was one of many who entered our free prize draw to win a hamper filled with fabulous produce from the Sevenoaks District. As part of the competition, Megan provided a stunning photo of her daughter exploring Andrew's Wood in Shoreham.

Megan says of the District: "We have loved exploring Sevenoaks and the surrounding area since moving here three years ago. This was our first time to Andrew's Wood, and it really is a special place to visit. The perfect place for a toddler (or adult!) to have an adventure. A hidden gem for all to enjoy!"

For more information about Sevenoaks 'So Much More', visit [www.moresevenoaks.co.uk](http://www.moresevenoaks.co.uk) and to find out more about Andrew's Wood visit [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/shorehamwoods](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/shorehamwoods).



Megan's photo of Andrew's Wood, Shoreham



## Sevenoaks District Council at your fingertips

### Main Office

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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



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