

Summer 2024

Inside

Swale





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Swale
BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Are you
fly-tipping
and don't
even know it?**

**Know who is taking
your waste away –
you could face an
unlimited fine!**

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Get help with the cost of living

Swale Borough Council
Swale House, East Street
Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 3HT

swale.gov.uk

01795 417850

Phone lines open

Monday to Thursday 9am-5pm,
Friday 9am-1pm

The information in this publication is correct at the time of going to print and every attempt is made to ensure its accuracy.

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I would like to begin my introduction to this edition by offering a sincere apology

to those of you that have suffered a less than acceptable level of service during the commencement of our new waste and refuse contract. Frankly there have been far more issues with it than any of us could have reasonably anticipated and it is our intention to ensure that the contract is the subject of thorough scrutiny to examine why we have experienced the difficulties that we have.

On a personal note I had the sad duty of attending the funeral of former sitting Lib Dem Councillor Mike Henderson who sadly passed away recently having given selfless and unwavering service to the residents of Faversham for many years.

There were echoes of Mike's commitment to public service as Swale's unsung heroes were recognised and celebrated at this year's annual Civic Award ceremony.

Every year Swale Borough Council asks the public to nominate residents who have worked tirelessly to improve their communities, with the mayor and a judging panel having the unenviable task of selecting the winners from so many deserving nominations.

As summer is upon us there are some excellent opportunities for healthy activities in Swale and as we look to enjoy the sunshine and leisure time it is with great pride that I am able to announce that once again we have been awarded blue flag status for beaches on the Isle of Sheppey. We have also teamed up with Peel Ports, HM Coastguard and others to form the Swale Personal Watercraft Partnership to address issues of dangerous use of Jet Ski's.

In closing, however you choose to spend your summer remember that there is plenty to do in our Borough but please do it safely and considerately but most of all enjoyably too.

Tim Gibson

Cllr Tim Gibson,
Leader of Swale Borough Council



To help provide people with multiple and complex disabilities better access to council leisure centres we've made improvements to changing and toilet facilities.

We installed accessible changing places at Swallows Leisure Centre in Sittingbourne, and the Sheppey Leisure Complex in the Swimming Pool building.

The works were funded by over £127,000 from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities and a further £20,000 from the council.

We worked closely with the Changing Places Consortium to make sure the new changing places meet the needs of disabled people within the borough, and the changing places are Muscular Dystrophy UK (MDUK) certified and include:

- height-adjustable, adult-sized changing bench
- ceiling track hoist system
- space for the disabled person and two assistants
- peninsular toilet with space both sides for assistants, with a backrest
- privacy screen
- wide paper roll and large waste disposal bin
- height adjustable washbasin



Swale's unsung heroes were recognised and celebrated at this year's Civic Award ceremony.

Every year we ask you to nominate residents who work tirelessly to better their communities, with the mayor and judging panel honouring them with awards.

Gary Axford, founder of Faversham Strike Force FC,

Stewart Kitching, chairman of the Swale Stroke Group, and couple Brenda and Peter Fathers, chair and fundraising officer of MS Swale, were all awarded the Civic Award which commends their efforts to make Swale a better place.

Whilst Paul Murray MBE, board member of Sheppey Matters, Swale CVS, and Swale Community Leisure, won

the special Mayor's Lifetime Achievement Award which recognises a person's lifelong commitment to helping others.

Rev Dan Corcoran, founder of Gems Awards and Mobile Youth Trailers, and Jason Firmager, founder of Mentalk-health, have also been given the Highly Commended Award, thanking them for their selfless community work.

Awards for Sheppey's beaches



Swale's three beaches have been named amongst the best in the country after winning awards.

Sheerness beach will once again be flying the international Blue Flag Award this year which is widely considered to be the gold standard for beaches.

It is one of only 74 beaches that meets the very highest standards for cleanliness, facilities and water quality and has also been awarded Keep Britain Tidy's Seaside Award.

Leysdown and Minster Leas beaches also received the Seaside Award, which recognises and celebrates the best beaches in the country.

This award went to only 137 beaches this year and measured their safety and services, the environmental information available, water quality and their litter and waste management.

To find out more about local beaches, visit swale.gov.uk/seafont

Help keep our coasts safe this summer

Irresponsible and dangerous jet ski users could face unlimited fines and prison this summer.

We teamed up with Peel Ports, HM Coastguard and others to form the Swale Personal Watercraft Partnership (PWP) to warn people against dangerous jet ski use.

Peel Ports will be having regular enforcement days covering the River Medway and the Swale to help make sure that people are not acting recklessly while on their personal watercraft. This includes enforcing the 8 knots speed limit in Queenborough Harbour and 6 knots limit upriver of Folly Point.

The Coastguard and RNLI Sheerness Lifeboat will be ready to respond in case of an emergency in the water this summer, but that doesn't mean that people should be taking unnecessary risks when on the water.

Following a change in government legislation the council now have the power to issue unlimited fines to anyone riding a jet ski carelessly or causing harm to others, and they could face up to two years in prison.

The legislation puts the responsibility on users, operators and owners of powered watercraft to make sure they protect not just themselves but others in the water from harm.

We have also installed signage to warn against this kind of behaviour which, since covid, has increased significantly resulting in completely avoidable tragedies in the water.

If you are thinking of using a jet ski, please make sure you:

- Ride in company
- Get trained and insured
- Respect marine life and others in the water and keep your distance
- Act responsibly and protect and promote safe riding

Conservation areas expanded across the Borough

Conservation areas in Sittingbourne, Faversham and Sheerness have been expanded to include more areas of local importance.

We reviewed the conservation areas for Milton Regis, Mile Town, Marine Town, Faversham Town and Preston Next-Faversham as part of our commitment to deliver our adopted Heritage Strategy.

After undertaking a public consultation on the conservation areas' character appraisals and the proposed management plan, the council has decided to expand the conservation areas' borders.

We, as the local planning authority, are responsible for reviewing conservation areas from time to time.

These reviews offer the opportunity to see if the areas still possess the special architectural and historic interest and are worthy of continued designation, which made them conservation areas in the first place.

We also assessed how successful the designations had been over the past 50 years and whether they should be expanded or made smaller.

Once an area has been designated a conservation area planning permission is needed to alter or demolish even unlisted buildings, trees within the area are given special protections and, in some cases, development is more restricted.

Milton Regis

Milton Regis Conservation Area is one of Kent's ancient settlements and includes the highest concentrations of listed buildings in the borough.

The town's prosperity, in the medieval period, was due to Milton Creek which offered easy access to London, the east coast and the continent for trade, making Milton one of the biggest ports in Kent at the time.

The border has been amended to include more local areas of importance like the ancient retaining wall fronting Crown Road and removes other areas like parking spaces which have no architectural or historic interest.

Faversham

The Faversham Town Conservation Area contains the majority of the 349 listed, historically important, buildings in the area.

The sizeable expansion to its borders will incorporate Athelstan Road, Ethelbert Road, Canute Road and Kingsnorth Road which includes the Dutch influenced Ethelbert Road Primary School building.

The other additions are Gordon Square, built in the 1920s, which is an example of early public housing construction, and Macknade Avenue, built in 1945, directly after the end of WW2.

Preston Next-Faversham is a small settlement south of the main Faversham conservation area and stretches along Canterbury Road, forming part of the old Roman Watling Street, and has significant historic value.

The conservation area has been expanded to include the terraced properties south of Canterbury Road, including a former blacksmith.

Sheerness

Sheerness began its life as grazing land reclaimed from marsh, while a permanent settlement was established when an artillery fort was developed in 1545 at the tip of the headland. Sheerness is Old English "clear headland".

Marine Town Conservation Area will almost double in size, as the new borders better encapsulate the historically important assets of the area.

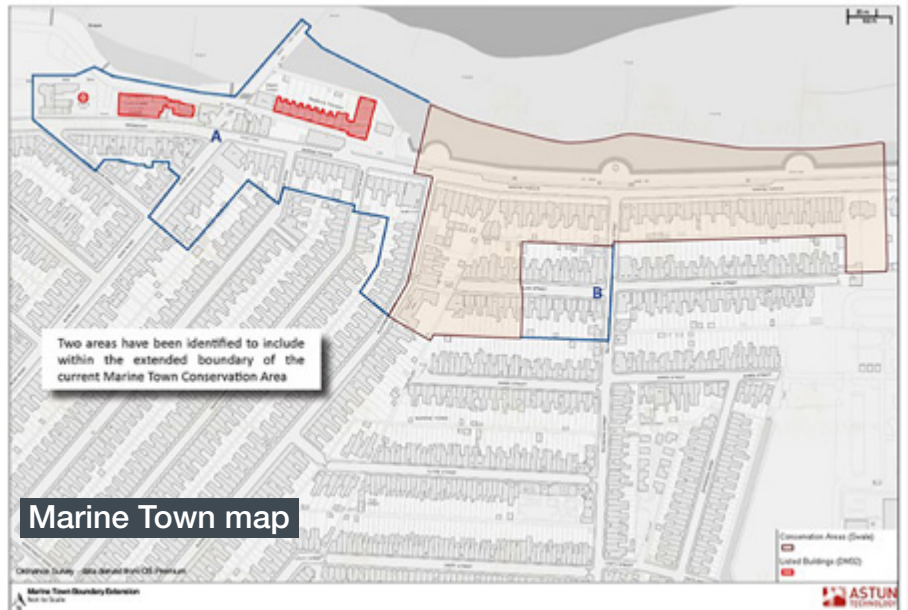
The new boundaries incorporate three listed buildings, which form part of the earliest development of the town: Neptune Terrace, Windmill Court and the Roman Catholic Church of St Henry and St Elizabeth.

In addition, the remainder of Alma Street, with its terraced houses, will also be included within the conservation area.

Mile Town Conservation Area will also be expanding to include the full extent of the early core of historic development in this area, including houses off Hope Street and the former waterworks south of Holy Trinity.



Faversham



Marine Town map



Faversham



Preston



Marine Town



Marine Town



Milton Regis



Mile Town map



Mile Town

WHAT'S ON IN SWALE

2024



WILD BOX ALFRESCO COCKTAIL MAKING CLASS

Belmont House and Gardens

Friday 26 July

A summer evening of cocktail making in the beautiful gardens of Belmont House. Creating three seasonal cocktails with a Wild Box mixologist, you will explore the world of locally produced spirits and seasonal fruits and herbs to create delicious twists on classic cocktails.

To find out more, or to book, visit belmont-house.org/events/wild-box-alfresco-cocktail-making-class or call **01795 890202**



MILTON JONES – WORK IN PROGRESS

The Alexander Centre, Faversham

Tuesday 30 July

Join Milton Jones as he tries out new material at The Alexander Centre, Faversham.

To find out more, or to book, visit thealex.org.uk/event/milton-jones-work-in-progress or call **01795 591691**

QUIZ NIGHT HOSTED BY THE QUIZ PEOPLE

The Light, Sittingbourne

Tuesday 30 July (and every Tuesday night)

Just £2 per person and plenty of prizes to be won. No need to book, just turn up and claim your victory! Starts at 8pm every Tuesday evening.

ACOUSTIC OPEN MIC NIGHT

The Light, Sittingbourne

Wednesday 7 August

Hosted by Josh Hassell, bring your instruments and join the jam or just sit back and enjoy the vibe. All are welcome - musicians, poets, comedians, fortune tellers, mediums. Takes place the first Wednesday each month from 7.30pm until late.



WILD CLASSROOM'S OUTDOOR COOKERY

Brogdale Collections

Wednesday 28 – Thursday 29 August

Why not spend a day exploring our orchards at Brogdale and discovering some new skills? Harvest seasonal fruit and then join an amazing hands-on workshop where you can make a seasonal dish over an open fire.

To find out more, visit brogdalecollections.org/festivals-and-events or call **01795 536250**



FAVERSHAM HOP FESTIVAL

Saturday 31 August – Sunday 1 September

Faversham's Hop Festival is back for another year of music, food and drink.

KENT ROLLER DISCO

Sheppey Leisure Complex

Sunday 1 September

Kent Roller Disco is a traditional Roller Disco and since the return after Covid in May 2021 we now allow the use of recreational inline skates as well as quad skates. If you have your own, that's fine, as long as they are in good working condition. If not then don't worry, there are a great selection of quad skates from a child's size 10 to an adult's size 12.

For more information, visit kentrollerdisco.co.uk/locations/16sheppey or call 01304 619007



WOODFEST & COUNTRY FAIR

Belmont House and Gardens

Saturday 7 –
Sunday 8 September

Lots of exciting woodland demonstrations taking place over the weekend including chainsaw carving, wood turning, furniture making, spoon carving, campfire cooking, horse logging, pole lathe turning as well as vintage tractors and a fantastic display of stationary steam engines.

To find out more, or to book, visit belmont-house.org/events/woodfest-country-fair-2 or call 01795 890202



www.**KENT ROLLER DISCO**.co.uk

2024 DATES 01304 619007

Sheppey Leisure Complex

Jan 7th & 21st	Jul 7th & 21st
Feb 4th & 18th	Aug Summer Break
Mar 3rd & 17th	Sep 1st & 15th
Apr 7th & 21st	Oct 6th & 20th
May 5th & 19th	Nov 3rd & 17th
Jun 2nd & 16th	Dec 1st & 15th

12 - 1.30pm
all abilities welcome

£8.00 EACH

Quad skate hire & safety equipment available free of charge at all venues

KENT ROLLER DISCO

Sheppey Leisure Complex

Sunday 15 September

Kent Roller Disco is a traditional Roller which now allow the use of recreational inline skates as well as quad skates. If you have your own, that's fine, as long as they are in good working condition. If not then don't worry, there are a great selection of quad skates from a child's size 10 to an adult's size 12.

For more information, visit kentrollerdisco.co.uk/locations/16sheppey or call 01304 619007

CLASSIC BOAT FESTIVAL

Queenborough Harbour

Saturday 21 –
Sunday 22 September

Following the return of the annual Classic Boat Festival last September, it is back again this year. Throughout the weekend, Jetstream Tours will be offering trips out to the wreck of HMS Montgomery. These will depart from the All Tide Landing. The weekly harbour market will be making a special appearance on the town quay during the weekend, with a variety of food, drink and locally-made products and services on offer.

To find out more, visit queenborough-harbour.co.uk/events/classic-boat-festival

For the latest information about all these events, and to stay up to date, head to the Visit Swale website visit-swale.co.uk/whats-on

All of these events, and many more things to do can be found on the Visit Swale website visit-swale.co.uk

You can submit events online for listing on Visit Swale and Visit Kent. Simply visit visit-swale.co.uk/whats-on/visit-swale-event-submission-form. Or you can contact us with your listings by emailing tourismsupport@swale.gov.uk

Don't forget to follow us on social media:

@Visit_Swale

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HOLLIS HEATING

Family run business for over 50 years

Sittingbourne

01795 473170

Boiler installations starting from

£1850 inc VAT

**10 years parts and labour
warranty on selected boilers**





Young gardeners bringing Beachfields in bloom

Children on the Isle of Sheppey became budding gardeners at a family event made possible by funding from the Safer Streets project.

We teamed up with Sheppey Matters to help keep Sheerness clean, provide people with access to gardening and engage with youth to tackle anti-social behaviour.

The Community Gardener scheme, run by the local charity and funded by Safer Streets, hosted a family gardening event where children could get their hands dirty whilst learning about sowing and planting.

They also organise regular community litter picking days, collecting multiple bags worth of waste that have been abandoned in the green spaces and on the streets around the healthy living centre in Beachfields.

Community gardening volunteers and Sheppey Matters Garden club have also been sowing flower seeds around Sheerness to add future pops of colour to the Beachfields area and help pollinators.

The scheme is also engaging with Sheppey College students who have begun gardening, planting summer bulbs, weeding and watering the planters at Beachfields whilst discussing the anti-social behaviour they witness.

Through the Community Safety Partnership, we worked with the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner to secure £265,616 from the Government's Safer Streets Fund.

The money is being invested into measures in Sittingbourne and Sheerness Town Centres that help tackle the higher level of crime, antisocial behaviour and violence against women and girls.

Cllr Richard Palmer, chair of the council's community committee, said:

"Gardening is an amazing way to get out in nature, get active and socialize and can have a positive impact on people's mental wellbeing.

"The Safer Streets' gardening club is a safe space for the adults and the youth of the island to get together and enjoy a shared hobby, all while improving their community and helping the environment."

Cllr Elliott Jayes, vice chair of the community committee, said:

"Having accessible youth provision on the island is also incredibly important to us, that is why we are helping fund initiatives like this gardening club.

"Engaging with kids and teens is a proven way of reducing anti-social behaviour and gives them the opportunity to express themselves in a positive way."

Gemma Hunt, Sheppey Matters community gardener, said:

"The goal of the community gardening initiative is to inspire and involve individuals of all ages in the community to work together to enhance their living environment.

"By nurturing these spaces, the aim is to discourage and decrease littering, vandalism, and antisocial behaviour.

"The community Litter Heroes group meet monthly to tidy up the Beachfields area, which is already showing positive results.

"Additional youth gardening events and adult and youth clean-up activities are scheduled for the upcoming summer months."

Sheerness Clock Tower lights up

The Clock Tower will now light up Sheerness High Street in a range of colours to commemorate significant local and national events.

It was lit up red, white and blue to mark the D-Day landings, acting as a reminder of the sacrifices made during the WWII. It also marked the King's birthday in June in the colours of the Union Jack.

The Clock Tower will also honour those lost in naval tragedies like the sinkings of HMS Princess Irene, HMS Bulwark, HMS Truculent and SS Richard Montgomery.

The schedule of illumination includes tributes to historic events like Remembrance Day and the first circular flight by an Englishman in a British-built plane, which took place in Eastchurch.

It will also acknowledge modern-day concerns, marking World Polio Day, International Women's Day, Pride, and showing solidarity with Ukraine by glowing in blue and yellow.

Following the Queen's passing the schedule needed to be updated to celebrate the King Charles' birthday and, during this process, we added more dates of importance to the schedule.


When not commemorating significant occasions, the tower will be lit with white lights from half an hour before dusk until midnight every day.



Full Schedule



- 12 January** Sinking of HMS Truculent: blue
- 4 February** World Cancer Day: purple
- 1 March** St David's Day: green and yellow
- 8 March** International Women's Day: purple
- 17 March** St Patrick's Day: green
- 22 April** Earth Day: green and blue
- 23 April** St George's Day: white and red
- 27 May** Sinking of HMS Princess Irene: blue
- 6 June** WWII D-Day Landings: red, white and blue
- 7 June** British Heart Week: red
- 15 June** King's Birthday: red, white and blue
- 22 June** Day of Reflection: yellow
- 25 June** Armed Forces Day: green
- 29 June** Pride: rainbow
- 17 August** Sheerness Carnival & Fireworks: rainbow
- 20 August** Sinking of SS Richard Montgomery: green and blue
- 24 August** Ukraine Independence Day: blue and yellow
- 25 August** Sinking of SS Richard Montgomery: green and blue
- 9-15 October** Baby Loss Awareness Week: pink and blue
- 10 October** World Mental Health Day: green
- 18 October** Breast Cancer Awareness: pink
- 24 October** World Polio Day: purple
- 30 October** First circular 1 mile flight performed by an Englishman in a British built plane at Eastchurch: red, white and blue
- 31 October** Halloween: orange and blue
- 5 November** Guy Fawkes: multicoloured
- 10 November 2024** Remembrance Sunday: red
- 11 November** Armistice Day: red
- 25 November** White Ribbon Day: white
- 26 November** Sinking of HMS Bulwark: blue
- 30 November** St Andrew's Day: blue and white
- 1 December** World Aids Day: red
- 24-25 December** Christmas: red
- 31 December** New Year's Eve: multicoloured



Bicycle scheme hits next gear

Over 50 refurbished bicycles were sold for just £10 each at Big Green Week events.

The Swale Cycle-re-Cycle scheme teamed up with Sheppey Matters to provide people with an affordable, environmentally friendly transportation method.

The 30 refurbished bicycles available at the Healthy Living Centre in Sheerness on 14 June sold out in under an hour.

HMP Swaleside also helped sell a further 25 bikes at the Faversham Community Bike Day on 15 June.

The Swale Cycle-re-Cycle scheme is a partnership between Swale Borough Council, HMP Swaleside and the Canterbury Bike Project.

The bikes, which were refurbished by HMP Swaleside inmates, have been saved from rotting away in gardens, sheds and garages or from ending up in the tip.

They work towards City & Guilds Cycle Mechanics qualifications giving them the opportunity to upskill themselves and take a positive step towards rehabilitation.

The scheme's aim is to provide Swale residents with affordable, environmentally friendly transportation, that helps them keep active and healthy.

The council funded the initial supply of bike parts and workshop consumables, while Canterbury Bike Project trained an instructor to deliver the City & Guilds qualification.

The bikes are sold for just £10 through local community groups, like Sheppey Matters, which covers the cost of the repairs and makes the scheme self-funding and sustainable.

If you have a roadworthy bike – two wheels and two brakes – you would like to donate, drop it off at the donation point at the Sheerness Household Waste Recycling Centre, along with new or good condition used parts.





Get help for your community projects with Member submitted grants

If your local project in Swale is looking for extra support, you can apply for funding from your local councillor to help them make a difference in the community.

We have reopened the member grant scheme with £47,000 being available to support small-scale, local community projects.

Swale's 47 councillors have £1,000 each available to fund projects that provide benefits in areas such as culture, sport, recreation, health, environment, community safety, crime reduction and education.

Cllr Richard Palmer, chair of the community committee at the council, said:

“The people who really understand what their area needs are those who live there, and member grants enable us to help these local people's work to improve their community.”

“We put aside this money every year so we can support as many important local community projects that we can.”

“A small amount of money can make a huge difference for community groups and projects, so we want to make sure we're doing what we can to support them.”

Cllr Elliott Jayes, vice chair of the community committee, said:

“You can apply for anything that will provide benefit to your community in areas such as culture, sport, recreation, health, environment and community safety, no matter how small it may seem.”

“We as councillors are looking forward to hearing from, and offering support to, the people and organisations who are working incredibly hard to make Swale a better place.”

Last year over 200 grants were made to local groups to support projects, including:

Iwade Parish Council receiving £1,100 to purchase a defibrillator for the village

Child's Vision Charity receiving £150 to purchase storage boxes for their clothes bank

Children and Families charity receiving £2,250 to support their food bank and to run slow cooker cooking courses.

The application process simply needs the person or group to discuss the project with their local councillor to get their support.

They will then complete the relevant form and submit the application for approval to the council.

Interested parties can apply to one or more councillors for funding and could have all, or part, of their project funded.

To find out more about member grants visit [swale.gov.uk/member-grants](https://www.swale.gov.uk/member-grants)

Planning application for Beachfields submitted



Cllr Monique Bonney, chair of the economy and property committee, said:

"The Sheerness Revival programme is all about making a real difference in people's lives.

"We are grateful to everyone who provided feedback to the consultation on the draft plans, and these have helped shape the final proposals.

"These new leisure facilities are a key part of our vision for a healthier, happier Sheerness, and we're excited to see this project move forward."



Alliance Leisure has submitted a planning application for the ambitious redevelopment of the Sheppey Leisure Complex and Healthy Living Centre at Beachfields.

This project, part of the £20 million Sheerness Revival initiative, promises to transform the leisure landscape for the Island and improve the health and wellbeing of the local community.

The proposed plans include a significant expansion of the existing facility, modernizing the GP practice, creating a new café, upgrading the gym, and introducing innovative activities like soft play and tag active.

The redevelopment also aims to enhance outdoor spaces, improving connectivity with the park, town centre, and railway station, while adding adventure golf and expanding the splash pad area.

This project is one of three transformative initiatives under the Sheerness Revival project, funded by the Government's Levelling Up Fund.

In addition to the Beachfields redevelopment, plans for a Sheppey College extension and additional business units at Masters House have also been submitted for planning permission.

The redevelopment plans have been informed by extensive community consultation, helping the project to reflect the needs and desires of local residents.

If approved, the Sheppey Leisure Complex and Healthy Living Centre will become a good quality community asset for years to come.

For further information on the Sheerness Revival project, and to sign up for updates, visit sheernessrevival.swale.gov.uk

EKC

Sheppey Secondary

OPENING SEPT 24

...Where Belonging Meets Brilliance

EKC Sheppey Secondary opens its doors this September, ready to nurture young minds with an ambitious curriculum as unique and vibrant as our Island.

Learning That's Buzzing with Local Inspiration and Anything But Ordinary
Students will explore a wide range of subjects (traditional academics, character development and Engineering and Creative specialisms) that will set them up for success in the real world.

Local Links, Global Ambitions

We're passionate about our community and social action and will ensure students' learning reflects that.

Proud partners:

Kent Masters House

SHEPPEY ART SYNDICATE

Forster's School Outfitters
Serving the community since 1951



Passionate Staff, Bold Impact

We'll nurture every student's unique spark and unlock their potential and pathways to success.

Real-World Connections, Real-World Careers

In partnering with local businesses and community partners, our careers programme connects our students with industry experts.

Years 7 to 9 get the spotlight

In our first year, we're focusing on Years 7-9, creating a supportive learning community where every student thrives. As students progress through the school to Year 11, they'll gain more independence.

We're preparing our young people to make waves in the world and be future changemakers right here in Sheppey and beyond.



TRADITIONAL ACADEMIC SUBJECTS MEET ENGINEERING AND CREATIVE SPECIALISMS



These programmes are designed in partnership with East Kent Colleges Group (which includes our local EKC Sheppey College) and provide a direct route to their outstanding provision for students to progress to A Levels or other Level 3/ post-16 routes and onwards to Higher Education and employment.

ESSENTIAL SKILLS, BOLD IDEAS, AND REAL-WORLD RELEVANCE



DATES FOR THE DIARY

* Join us on the afternoon of 3rd September (Year 7s) and 4th September (Years 8 and 9) for the start of a brand new adventure!

* We look forward to opening our doors on 26th September from 5pm-7pm for our Year 7 (Class of 2025) Open Evening!

* Join us from 12th to 25th October for our first student art exhibition - 'I ♥ Sheppey' - part of East Kent Artists' Open House and hosted by IslandWorks at Dockyard Church, Sheerness.

To learn more about life at EKC Sheppey Secondary visit us online or follow us on Facebook:



EKCSheppeySecondary.org or



#AllRoadsLeadToEKCSheppeySecondary
#YourSchoolOurCommunity
#TheEKCFamily #Community





New waste service – an apology

We would like to apologise for the issues that you have been experiencing with the waste collections in Swale.

We started the new service contract on 25 March with Suez Recycling and Recovery UK who are now responsible for the waste and recycling collections across Swale. We were aware that an element of disruption is usual when introducing a new waste service and we know that the start of this contract has led to many of you experiencing problems with collections, for which we sincerely apologise.

As part of the new contract, new collection routes and vehicles were introduced which will lead to a more resilient service longer term, but we absolutely acknowledge that disruption has been way higher than anyone expected and the level of inconvenience to some residents has been unacceptable.

Councillors and officers have been working hard to ensure service improvement, meeting with Suez daily to update them with the problems you have been experiencing and discussing their recovery plan.

We have required Suez to provide additional vehicles and staff at their own cost for catch up rounds while the new routes bed in and have also redeployed our own staff to provide support in the customer contact centre and additional inspectors monitoring the work of Suez. We are very sorry that despite these measures some of you are still not receiving the level of service we feel is acceptable and we would like to thank you for your patience during what is a very frustrating time.

Our customer service centre phone lines remain busy, and we know it can be incredibly irritating when the lines are engaged, but please be assured that we have increased the resource in the contact centre as we strive to answer as many queries as possible.

We are also aware that there have been frustrations at not receiving responses to emails, but our focus has been passing the details to Suez to try and rectify the issues, please be assured that the council is actioning every email we receive, even if we are unable to respond.

In closing we would like to reiterate that the improvement in the waste service remains our top priority, thank you all for the patience, understanding and forbearance that you have shown and we can assure you that we will continue to work hard to improve the services that we deliver.

Cost of living advice this summer

The One Swale Roadshows are out in force again this summer, bringing together organisations from across the community, voluntary and private sectors.

You can receive support to help with the cost of living, such as food and fuel vouchers and water bill reductions, and advice on issues like home safety, energy use, health and debt.

There will also be a Family Fun session that will run alongside the July roadshow. This will include arts and craft activities, healthy lifestyle themed family games, a healthy picnic and, weather permitting, fun outdoor activities.

The roadshow will run from 9:30 to 11:30 whilst the Family Fun session will run from 9:30 to 11 on 25 July at the at the Seashells Family Hub in Sheerness, ME12 1AW.

Following the success of last year's roadshows, we are hosting an event every month at different locations around the borough until March 2025, to connect residents in need with organisations who can help.

We are working with the Swale CVS and Faversham Community Networking Group to organise these roadshows.

Next month's event will take place on 13 August at Eastern Sheppey Community Hub on Leysdown Road, Leysdown on Sea, ME12 4RD.



Cllr Richard Palmer, chair of the community committee, said:

“Over the last year our roadshows have been bringing together organisations who can offer support with the people in our community who need it most.

“These regular events, being hosted across the borough, have had a positive impact on our residents and have become a safe space for people to get help and support in a judgement free environment.

“We are grateful for all our partners who helped make these events a success and are excited to team up with the Children and Families charity to bring fun family activities to children on the island for this one.

“We would love for no one to need to come to these events, but we have seen a large number of people looking for support and that is why this resource will continue into next year.”



**SIGN UP TO
GET THE
LATEST NEWS**

Want to know more about what is going on around Swale on a more regular basis?

We are launching a new email bulletin where you can keep up to date with the latest news from the council.

We'll let you know what's going on in Swale, where you can sign up for grants and funding, and links to how to access council services online.

You'll be able to sign up for updates on the news and campaigns section of our website.

You can also sign up for email updates on the Sheerness Revival project at sheernessrevival.swale.gov.uk and business bulletins from swalemeansbusiness.co.uk

Want reminders of what bin you need to put out?
We will soon be launching email reminders that let you know what bin you need to put out for the following morning. Keep an eye on our social media for how you can sign up to these alerts.

ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE RECYCLING RIGHT?



Household Items that can currently be recycled in your blue bin are:

Food & drink cans



Mixed paper & cardboard



Plastic bottles, pots & trays



Mixed glass



Aluminum foils & trays



Empty aerosols



Did you know that not everything that can be recycled can be collected in your blue recycling bin at kerbside? This is because the recycling facility can only process certain items. We know it is sometimes confusing to know what can and can't be disposed of in your blue recycling bin. We have a handy online tool to help you understand what we can collect as a household recycling collection. This can be found at swale.gov.uk/what-goes-in-my-bin or by using the QR code below:

Under the new Simpler Recycling regime, by 2026 it will be compulsory for all councils across the country to collect the same items. Do you know what happens to your recycling after its collected?

There are a number of informative videos online that show the whole recycling process, you can watch these videos by using the QR code:





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Lord Lieutenant of Kent
The Lady Colgrain

Letter from Deputy Lord Lieutenant



Good day,

In my last note, published in the winter edition, I asked about volunteer groups within Swale that you feel go the extra mile to deliver to those less fortunate.

So, a big thank you to those of you who took the time and trouble to email or call. I have received a number of responses, and these are being worked through presently. Some of the volunteer led organisations that have been highlighted were not previously known to us.

A few years ago a new initiative started by the Kent Lieutenancy led to the creation of Kent Volunteers. There are now a staggering 1,035 volunteer managers (charities and CIC's registered), over 900 volunteer opportunities across the county and, as of May, over 1,300 volunteers in the pool.

This demonstrates that Kent Volunteers is filling a much-needed gap in linking those who would like to give their time to help with those most in need. Do visit

kentvolunteers.org.uk

As I travel around the county and Swale it is particularly heart-warming to see so many dedicated volunteers all doing their bit with the community. A great example of this was a recent visit to open a D-Day commemoration being held in Eastchurch. The village pulled together to create an event of remembrance and gratitude to those who fought and, in some cases, made the ultimate sacrifice for one cause... Freedom from tyranny.

My efforts are useless without your support. You have risen to the challenge of identifying potential award winners, but I wonder if there is in your town or village someone who is consistently delivering a service to others, not seeking applause or plaudits and by their efforts setting an example to all?

If you know of such a person, then please do let me know. It may be, subject to the usual checks and validation, that we can arrange an invitation for that person/s and a guest to His Majesty's Buckingham Palace Garden Party. All I need to get the ball rolling is a little background on the person you are recommending and why.

I do hope to hear from you and please keep your suggestions coming in respect of those volunteer groups doing great work in Swale and the county as a whole. We at the Kent Lieutenancy really want to know who they are.







With all good wishes for a great summer.

Paul Auston
DL

To find out more call
03000 416531 or email
kavs@kent.gov.uk

Your councillors

For more information about your local councillor visit swale.gov.uk/find-my-councillor

	Conservative		Liberal Democrats
	Green		Swale Independents Alliance
	Labour		Independent

Abbey

Hannah Perkin 
hannahperkin@swale.gov.uk

Charles Gibson 
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Bobbing, Iwade and Lower Halstow

Lloyd Chapman 
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Roger Clark 
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Borden and Grove Park

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Tom Nundy 
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Murston

James Hall 
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Mark Last 
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Priory

A by-election will take place for this seat

Queenborough and Halfway

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Mike Whiting 
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Peter Marchington 
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Roman

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Angela Harrison 
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