

Keeping you informed about your council services

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Skatepark plan scooting ahead!

Cheers for volunteers

**Swale business
– hear all about it**

**Changes to your
recycling and
waste collections**



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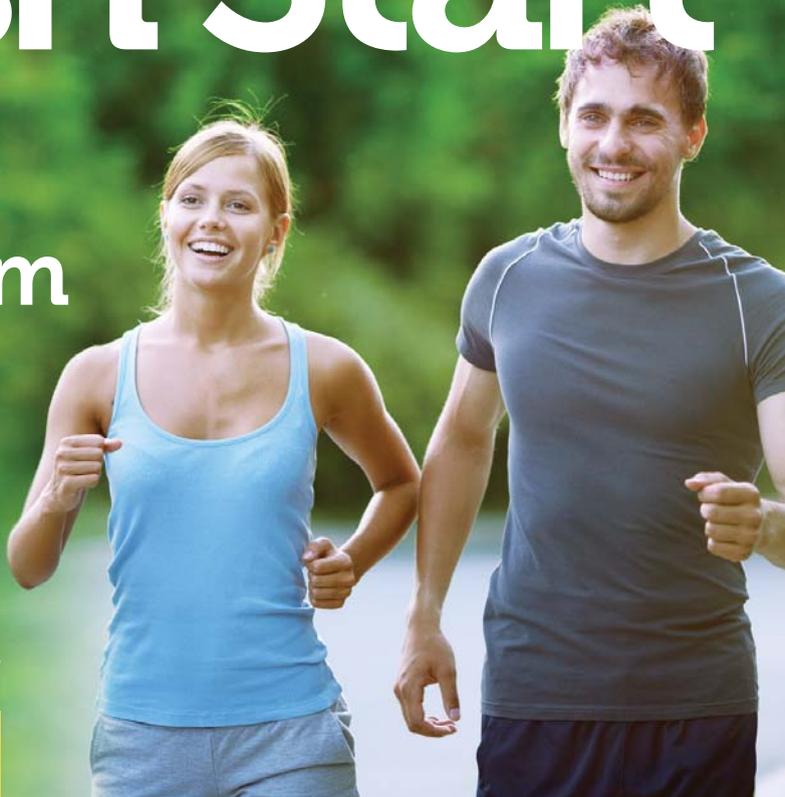
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*The Free Pass includes one free gym session, one free swim visit and one free workout class. One Pass per person, adults only. Pass valid until 30th April 2014 and excludes Easter holiday family activities. ** Price relates to off-peak gym membership at Sheppey Leisure Complex. Membership from £19.95 at Swallows Leisure Centre. Price quoted applies to a 12 month direct debit gym contract. Other membership options are available. Speak to a Customer Advisor today or find out more online.





Cllr Andrew Bowles
Leader

Welcome to the spring edition of Inside Swale

We start this issue with good news that we have frozen Council Tax for the fourth consecutive year, ensuring we are continuing to help the finances of residents across the Borough.

We have also taken a hard look at our budgets and have maintained our priority to ensure no reductions in service while also protecting frontline services.

Fantastic news that we have been selected as a finalist in the Community Involvement category for the Local Government Chronicle Awards. At the time of going to

print, we are still waiting to find out if we have been successful; however, it is a real honour to have our Localism work and all those who have joined us on our Localism journey, acknowledged in this way.

Looking to the summer months, I will be attending our Regeneration Conference in June, which will give us an opportunity to highlight all Swale has to offer to businesses, and of course the progress we have seen across the Borough in recent years with improvements to highways and economic growth.

Let us hope the bad weather is now behind us as we look toward a sunnier future!



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Cover photo: Skate boarding in a purpose built park.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Swale Borough Council neither endorse or accept any liability for representations made by its advertisers.

Local area perception survey

Between July and September last year, we asked 4,000 randomly selected households to respond to a questionnaire asking their views about the Borough.

We asked...

What are the top five things that are most important in making somewhere a good place to live?

You said...

- Level of crime
- Clean streets
- Health services
- Good schools
- Road and pavement repairs.

We asked...

What are the top five things that need improving in Swale?

You said...

- Road and pavement repairs
- Job prospects
- Activities for teenagers
- The level of traffic congestion
- Shopping facilities and clean streets.

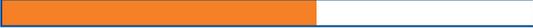
76% of residents are satisfied with the local area as a place to live, which is an increase on both 2012 and 2011.



56% of residents are satisfied with the way the council runs things, which is a steady year on year improvement.



59% of residents felt that the council was making the area a better place to live, which has improved year-on-year.



36% of residents thought that the council gives residents value for money, compared with 27% in 2008.



16% of residents felt that anti-social behaviour was a problem which compares with nearly a quarter in 2008.



When making decisions on the budget for Swale next year the council may have to consider reducing services or increasing Council Tax. These are the preferences expressed by local residents:

34% said, that Council Tax should not go up in any circumstances.



55% said, my decision on whether Council Tax should go up would depend on which services were cut.



11% said, in general I would rather see Council Tax go up, than see major cuts in services.



Congratulations

to the four prize draw winners who won £50 for completing the survey.

Are you registered to



If you have not already registered to vote, it's not too late! Download a form from aboutmyvote.co.uk or call our Customer Service Centre on **01795 471 850** for a form.

Registering to vote will only take a few minutes. It may also help when you apply for credit (for example, a mobile phone contract, a loan or a mortgage) because credit reference agencies can use it for credit checks.

The European Parliamentary Election will be held on 22 May 2014. **Make sure you have your say!** If your name is on the electoral register you will receive a poll card, telling you where to cast your vote, and how to apply for a postal or proxy vote; or to remind you that you already have a postal or proxy vote.



Going to vote?

As a result of the new Borough ward boundaries which take effect in May 2015, we will be reviewing all of the polling stations over the next few months.

The proposed arrangements will be available to view on our website, or at your local council office. The responses will be considered by Council and the details of the revised arrangements will be published in the summer.

You can view the new ward boundaries on www.swale.gov.uk/polling-district-review. Further details of the review will be available nearer to the time.

Parish Review – the next steps



Last year, a review took place of the community governance arrangements in the Borough, mainly looking at those areas which do not have a parish or town council.

After taking into consideration the results of the consultation, a discussion took place at the Council meeting in November to consider what steps should now be taken.

Council Members agreed to progress to a second stage ballot to seek views on establishing a parish council for Halfway on the Isle of Sheppey, and to

consult on some proposed changes to existing parish councils in Iwade, Bobbing, Borden, and Tunstall.

The second stage is now underway. Further details can be found on our website.

The council report has more information about the responses to the community governance review <http://www2.swale.gov.uk/dso/download/FE527006A2FB43C597FB407F4DC58519.pdf>

A promotional graphic for Direct Debit. It features the Direct Debit logo (a stylized 'D' in a circle) on a grey background. Below the logo, there are several white birds in flight and a stack of white papers. The background is a solid red color.

For every customer who switches to Direct Debit before 30 June 2014, we will make a donation to the League of Friends.

UK residents only, exclusions apply. For terms and conditions see www.thebigbreak.co.uk

A donation of 10p will be made to the League of Friends for every new instruction received between 1 March 2014 and 30 June 2014.

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Any questions? Call Suzanne on **0800 158 8272**



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Can we help bring your First World War Centenary project to life?

£10,000 has been allocated in grant funding for small projects commemorating the First World War Centenary in Swale.

The funding, of up to £750 per project, is available to help support projects bringing benefits to the community, including cultural, heritage, or educational benefits, while bringing an abundance of volunteering opportunities to encourage the community to join in with these commemorations.

Anyone interested in applying for a grant should contact Martin Goodhew, Economy and Community Services Project Officer, at Swale Borough Council, Swale House. Alternatively email firstworldwar@swale.gov.uk or call **01795 417 399**.

We will also share your project on our website. For details of projects currently being developed visit www.swale.gov.uk/centenary-ww1.



Community Covenant

of this important record of commitment by Council Leader Andrew Bowles, Mayor of Swale, Cllr Sue Gent, and representatives from the Armed Forces. Cabinet Members, leaders of the opposition groups and Mrs Elizabeth Tullberg MBE, JP, DL, Deputy Lieutenant for Kent, joined the signatories at a signing ceremony at Swale House in March.

The Covenant will help to encourage local communities to support the service community here in Swale, while promoting understanding and awareness of issues that can affect the Armed Forces Community.

A uniform response

An agreement of mutual support between the civilian and Armed Forces communities, called the Swale Community Covenant, has now been secured with the signing

Council Tax Support – act now!

In April last year, all local councils were required to bring in their own localised Council Tax Support scheme to give residents on a low income help towards their Council Tax. As part of the Government's welfare reform measures, the council also faced a cut of £1.2 million a year in the funding it receives from the Government for Council Tax relief. We are required to review the scheme before the start of the new financial year, and so last year we consulted residents on the new scheme for 2014/15. Council Members have now approved the new scheme for 2014/15 at a Council meeting in January.

What now?

The additional central government funding which was received during 2013/14 will not be received again; this means we have had to reduce the amount of Council Tax support that will be awarded. From 1 April 2014 all working age benefit claimants will again have to pay an amount towards their Council Tax. Council Tax Support will be reduced for all working age claimants for the financial year 2014/15 by 15%.

Pensioners who claim Council Tax Support will not be affected by the changes because they are protected from any reductions in the support they receive.

If you think you may struggle to meet your council tax payments call the Council Tax Team on **01795 417 272**. An instalment plan can be set up over 12 months - if you wish to do this, you must call before 30 April 2014.

If you register online, you can make a payment, view your balance, and check your instalments.

Visit www.swale.gov.uk/council-tax

Life saving equipment now at council offices

Defibrillators have now been installed at council offices in Sittingbourne and at the Sheppey Gateway in Sheerness.



The machines that deliver an electric shock to the heart, are now available across the two sites, with over 36 volunteers trained to use them.

Cllr Ken Pugh, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Health said: "When somebody goes into cardiac arrest, every minute without CPR and defibrillation, reduces their chance of survival by 10%. We support the need to make

defibrillators available in public places. It is important we are working together to ensure our communities are safe."

Last year the quick actions of leisure centre staff in Sittingbourne and the use of their defibrillator saved a person's life after he went into cardiac arrest following a gym class.



Get passionate about...

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10 weeks starting 29/04/14 7pm to 8pm £48
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Sewing Bee - Make a 'Vintage Style' Cushion

26/04/14 10am to 1pm £30
Course Code: SIT/07456/B/LC

Mindfulness, Meditation & Movement for Reducing Stress

17/05/14 10:30am to 3:30pm £50
Course Code: SIT/07383/B/LC

Creative Embroidery

5 weeks starting 24/04/14 7pm to 9pm £56
Course Code: SIT/10379/B/LC

For more information visit
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Community Learning and Skills

Bringing learning to life

Skatepark plans scooting ahead!



Plans for Sittingbourne's £400,000 Skatepark remain fully on track. The council secured the site last year as a home for the new skatepark in an agreement with Essential Land, and £70,000 has already been raised to secure the venture. That money will be used to attract matched-funding in a series of bids to funding agencies. A planning application is hoped to be submitted in April, and

everyone, not least the young people in the skateboarding group, continue to work hard to see this exciting project through to a successful conclusion.

If you want to become involved contact the fundraising group on [Facebook/Build Sittingbourne's Skatepark](#).

Helping the homeless

A project that will see the purchase of a house in Sittingbourne to be used as emergency accommodation for the homeless is now underway.

As homeless figures continue to rise, it is anticipated that buying a property to accommodate this growing need will help reduce costs.

Cllr John Wright, Cabinet Member for Housing said: "The Housing Team work hard to prevent homelessness in Swale. However the need for emergency accommodation continues to increase as more households are presenting as homeless. The budget for emergency accommodation has already been increased for the current financial year and during a time of reducing funds; we must look at alternative options that can maintain our priority of helping to keep our residents safe."

The proposal was agreed at a Cabinet meeting in February. If it proves to be successful, the project will be expanded.

Anyone who is concerned about homelessness can contact the Housing Team who can offer help across all agencies and provide advice and support regarding welfare benefits, housing, and tenancy and mortgage sustainment.

Call the team on **01795 417 622**.

More money in the pot for community project funding

More money has been put into the Localism Grant pot for Members to share among community projects. Announced at a Council meeting, Members' now have more than £112k available from April, equivalent to £2,400 per Member.

Previously awards have supported projects which have helped young children to learn to read, getting the elderly active, and improving sustainability by replacing an ailing boiler in a community hall.

The application process couldn't be simpler. Those wanting to apply for a grant should first discuss with their local councillor and get their support. Councillors will assist in completing the form and submit the application for approval.

To find out more about the Members' Localism Grants contact your local ward councillor, or call Christopher Blandford on **01795 417 165**, email: christopherblandford@swale.gov.uk or write to ECS Coordinator at Swale House.

Full details about the scheme are at www.swale.gov.uk/members-localism-grants.



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Kemsley Village Hall in good hands

Kemsley Community Centre Trust will be taking on Kemsley Village Hall on a 125 year lease following approval at Cabinet in February.

Now known as the Kemsley Community Centre, the Trust will be using the remaining S106 funding from residential

Cllr Mike Whiting (right), hands the keys to Trust members Cllr Sue Gent, Mayor of Swale and Mike Dendor.

developments to enable further improvement works to be completed at the centre.

Cllr Mike Whiting, Cabinet Member for Localism said: “The Trust has been very successful in increasing use of the Centre by local groups and have some exciting plans for the future. We hope this will be the first of many asset transfers this year, and we are currently talking with other local community groups across the Borough on how we can help enable them to deliver the services their local communities want.”

New community centre for The Meads



Work on the new Meads Community Centre will now begin following approval at Cabinet for Coombs of Canterbury to be selected as the building contractor. The proposed modular design offers the potential of expansion should further funds become available.

Cllr Mike Whiting, Cabinet Member for Localism said: “The Meads Community Centre Trust has carried out extensive public consultation, using funds from the Big Lottery, to help capture the views and needs of the local residents who will use the Centre. This is fantastic news for the Meads community and a real example of Localism at its best.”

It is anticipated the Community Centre will be open this time next year.

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Cheers for volunteers

Congratulations to the winners of the first Volunteer Swale Awards! With over 100 nominations across the eight categories, it was a tough job for the judging panel to choose the overall winners. All those nominated were celebrated at the awards event at the Coniston Hotel.

For pictures and details of the finalists visit www.swale.gov.uk/volunteer-awards/

those shortlisted are.....

Business

John Copland's Solicitors
AmicusHorizon ICT Team
Swale Business Awards

Environmental

Shazida Hussain
John Stanford
Kerry Briffitt

Fundraising

Malcolm and Brenda Moore (Sittingbourne in Bloom)
Tony Duke
Sittingbourne Christmas Lights

Sport

John Williams (Swale Gloves ABC)
Darren and Debbie Harrison (New Road F.C.)
Andrew Hill (Range Rovers F.C.)

Adult

Joan Tumber (COGS)
Steven Spoor (Sheerness Lifeboat)
Emily Cook

Young

Jamielynn Atkins (Restoration Youth)
Star Ivory (Fulston Manor)
Maddie Springett (KYCC)

Team

Companionship at Christmas
Seashells Volunteer Centre
Santa does Iwade

Outstanding Achievement

John Burden - Faversham Sea Cadets
Dale Howting – Whistling Post man
Joyce Fuller (deceased)
Brian 'Sixer' Boorman – Faversham Creek Trust

The importance of volunteering

The value the council puts on volunteering has been echoed in a new Volunteering Strategy which has been introduced to increase volunteering within Swale over the next three years.

The Strategy sets out to ensure that Swale is a place where people are inspired to volunteer and to get involved in their community; that volunteering opportunities are readily created; volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations are supported; and local organisations encourage their employees to participate in volunteering.

Cllr Mike Whiting, Cabinet Member for Localism said: "Volunteering is an important part of our community. Many of our events and activities would not take place without this vital resource."

Volunteering is an excellent way in which to increase personal self-confidence and skills, which in turn increase employability.

If you would like get involved in volunteering, please contact Sophia Taylor on **01795 417 193**.

For more information visit www.swale.gov.uk/volunteering-strategy.



Photo courtesy of Chris Holloway

Swale business – hear all about it!

In June we will be holding a Regeneration Conference in Swale. We will be talking to companies and investors in Kent, and across the south east to tell them about the good value and great location Swale has to offer. We will also be showcasing our successes so far, work in progress, and a positive look to the future.

Some of Swale's highlights already include the second Sheppey Crossing, the opening of the Rushenden Relief Road, regeneration in Queenborough and Rushenden, the Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road, Phase 5 of the Eurolink Industrial Estate, and the regeneration of Sittingbourne Town Centre. There is much more to follow, and we want to shout about it.

For further updates and announcements, including details on speakers and how to book a place, please check our website at www.swale.gov.uk.

Assisted Areas

A new area named as The Medway – Swale Arc has been successful in becoming part of a draft Government map of Assisted Areas for the UK.

Assisted Area status allows small and large businesses in areas of local economic need to benefit from extra Government and European financial support. This is given to encourage businesses to grow, innovate and thrive, so benefitting the community.

Cllr Mike Cosgrove, Cabinet Member for Regeneration said: "In September a number of local companies wrote in support of our original bid. The second stage is now complete and we are waiting to see if we have been successful. We have had cross-party support for this project as everyone understands the boost that we could receive if we are successful in reaching Assisted Area status."

The finalised map will be submitted to the EU for approval in early Spring.

Business and Buns: A recipe for SUCCESS!



Considering setting up your own business and need advice? Swale Borough Council and the Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce hold **FREE** workshops providing advice and support to help your business stand out from the crowd.

Beverley Adams-Reynolds from Iwade attended a workshop in 2012. Here she shares her experience.

“My original idea was a home-based bakery. However, I quickly realised that I would be entering an already crowded market and needed something extra to stand out. After careful consideration, I launched the concept of afternoon teas served at the client’s home, bringing back the idea of the wonderful afternoon teas served by my grandmother when I was a little girl.

EXQUISITE VINTAGE TEAS

“One day, I saw an advertisement for a free business start-up course. I signed up straight away. In the early stages of setting up a business, any free help or guidance is a blessing!

“My business has continued to grow (with much hard work!) and I was delighted that Exquisite Vintage Teas was Kent Independent Traders’ Runner-Up Start-up Business 2013.

“You can sometimes feel out of your depth, and it’s quite daunting developing your ideas, but the content of the workshop helped bring those ideas to life. I’d thoroughly recommend taking advantage of these excellent resources.”

Exquisite Vintage Teas Ltd specialises in luxurious afternoon teas served on antique fine bone china, at the client’s home, or for corporate settings at the business premises. A sumptuous and indulgent experience for family special occasions or corporate launches. You can find them at www.exquisitevintageateas.co.uk.

For more details on the workshops visit www.swale.gov.uk/support-for-business or call **01795 379 012**.



The new West Faversham Community Centre

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E: manager@westfavershamca.org T: 01795 537321

Recycling and Waste Collections

Your waste and recycling collections are changing. You should now have received your instruction and calendar booklet, as well as your new food waste caddies. Over the next three pages are some reminders of what you should put in each bin. You can also find more information at www.swale.gov.uk/new-collections or call our Waste Enquiries line on **01795 417 888**

Food waste recycling

Collected weekly

Yes please!

- ✓ All cooked and uncooked food waste
- ✓ Meat, fish and bones
- ✓ Eggs, cheese and dairy products
- ✓ Tea bags and coffee grounds
- ✓ Bread, cakes and pastries
- ✓ Fruit and vegetables
- ✓ Rice, pasta and beans
- ✓ Takeaway leftovers

- Keep the silver caddy indoors in your kitchen or utility room.
- Empty your silver caddy contents into your black and orange caddy.
- Secure the lockable lid.
- Keep the black and orange caddy outside with your wheelie bins or in a garage or out-building.
- Put your black and orange caddy out every **week** alongside your blue or green bin.
- Your food waste will be put to good use as agricultural compost.

Around 15 million tonnes of food is wasted every year in the UK and councils collect around 4.7 million tonnes of waste food annually.



You can line your silver caddy if you wish. Please only use compostable bags, kitchen roll or newspaper.

No plastic bags, biodegradable bags or food packaging please.

Your silver caddy is dishwasher safe.

Green wheelie bin collections

General waste

Collected fortnightly

Yes please!

- ✓ Polythene
- ✓ Polystyrene and cling film
- ✓ Nappies and sanitary products (please put in tied up bag)
- ✓ Broken crockery and glass (please wrap in paper and put in a tied up bag)
- ✓ Packaging you can't recycle
- ✓ Cat litter (small amounts only, please put in a tied up bag)



No thanks!

- ✗ Garden recycling
- ✗ Electrical items
- ✗ Builders' waste
- ✗ Paint tins
- ✗ Hazardous materials
- ✗ Clinical waste and needles

Only waste contained inside the green bin with the lid shut will be collected.

We will not collect extra bags of general waste.

and alongside your green bin, you can recycle...

Small electrical items

1. Place items in a tied up carrier bag (one bag per collection)
2. Put alongside your green bin.

We take: Radios, toasters, kettles, hair dryers, food mixers, drills, laptops etc.

Items must fit inside a standard carrier bag.

Batteries

Simply place these in a tied up carrier bag on top of your green bin lid, not inside the bin!

No car batteries.

Blue wheelie bin collections

Mixed recycling

Collected fortnightly

Please place items loose in the bin, not in black sacks!



Yes please!

- ✓ Mixed paper and news print
- ✓ Cardboard
- ✓ Plastic drink, milk, shampoo and household bottles
- ✓ Mixed glass bottles and jars
- ✓ Wine and beer bottles
- ✓ Tin and aluminium food and drink cans
- ✓ Foil food trays and aluminium foil
- ✓ Milk and fruit juice cartons
- ✓ Aerosol spray cans

No thanks!

- ✗ Panes of glass
- ✗ Drinking glasses
- ✗ Pyrex
- ✗ Polystyrene

and alongside your blue bin, you can recycle...



Textiles and clothes

1. Place items in a tied up carrier bag (one bag per collection)
2. Put alongside your blue bin.

We take:

Clothes, shoes, sheets, curtains and towels.

No duvets or pillows.

Any amount of excess recyclables

Place alongside your blue bin in carrier bags, cardboard boxes or your old black insert box.

Please do not use black sacks.



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Milton Creek reaps the fruits of its labour

Milton Creek Country Park has had a successful start to the New Year, despite the weather! The start of a community orchard at the park began in January as volunteers joined representatives from the Milton Creek Trust in planting the beginnings of the orchard. Green Grid provided the funding to purchase the trees from Brogdale Farm, home of the National Fruit Collection. The orchard may take some years to mature before it starts to produce fruit, but it will be well worth waiting for!

Of more immediate impact is the newly laid hedge along the boundary with Holy Trinity Church. This important conservation management task provided free training for volunteers from expert hedge layer Alan Ashby.

In February Milton Creek Country Park was delighted to be awarded the Sittingbourne Society's Rose Bowl. At the presentation event Milton Creek Trust were also given a cheque for approximately £2,500 to fund some new benches.



If you want to volunteer or want details of events being held at the park, follow them on Facebook or www.visit-swale.gov.uk.

Introducing...



Jo Marolia is your new Swale In Bloom co-ordinator. Jo has spent her whole life surrounded by gardens and community projects as her father was a head gardener for Trinity House in South East London. With several recognised qualifications in horticulture, and in excess of 15 years' experience, Jo is looking forward to helping our existing In Bloom volunteers to transform the Borough.

Jo already has some In Bloom experience as she coordinated Rochester In Bloom and the City was awarded a bronze. When we asked Jo what she was looking forward to in her new role, she replied; "I will be coordinating the First World War "Plant A Real Poppy" Campaign, and I am looking forward to working with different groups and organisations to make Swale a more inviting greener and cleaner place for visitors, local businesses and residents."

Contact Jo by email joannamarolia@swale.gov.uk or call **07713 342 218**.

Take a small step to make a

change

4life

Smart Swaps to help reduce fat, sugar and calories from your diet!

All you need to do is to sign up to make one easy swap to things you eat and drink everyday - like swap sugary drinks to sugar free, diet, milk or water. Once you've signed up to the campaign, you'll receive a Smart Swaps pack with a Smart Swapper full of healthier swap and meal ideas, money-off vouchers, fridge magnets, emails, and texts packed with recipes and ideas to help you make healthier changes.

Here are some Smart Swaps to get you started:

- Sugary drinks to diet, sugar free or no added sugar drinks or to lower fat milk or water
- Butter to lower fat butters and spreads
- Sugary cereal to plain cereal e.g. plain whole wheat cereal biscuits, or porridge
- Whole milk to semi-skimmed.

The **FREE** Smart Recipes app also has lots of tasty, quick and easy healthier recipes. It's free, fun and ready to download now at the iTunes store or Google Play.

Visit www.nhs.uk/change4life for more tips and healthier recipes.

Faversham Community Gymnastics & ACTIVITY CENTRE

23a Whitstable Road, Faversham ME13 8BF

- Gymnastics
- Adults fitness room
- Adult classes: Zumba etc.
- Children's play area
- Children's parties
- 'Needs' groups
- Meeting & function rooms



Call 01795 532132



Email: favershamgym1@btconnect.com
www.favershamgym.freeserve.co.uk



Sheppey Healthy Living Centre

Sheppey Matters

Sheppey Matters is the Sheppey community hub based at the Healthy Living Centre in Sheerness. Working across Swale on many elements of health and wellbeing projects, the team can offer advice and information on youth work, healthy weight, mental health, sexual health, drugs and alcohol misuse, and lots more.

Forthcoming developments will see a newly refurbished healthy living café, promoting and selling local arts and crafts. The team will also be opening facilities at 'The House' in Eastchurch Village Hall. Helping you to help others - would you like to start a self-help group? Contact Sheppey Matters to find

out how they can help. Keep in contact on Facebook/ Sheppey Matters, call **01795 585 335** or pay them a visit at the Sheppey Healthy Living Centre.



Get your Green Doctor's prescription!

Green Doctors prescribe Sheppey resident's energy saving ideas amounting to hundreds of pounds!

Residents on the Isle of Sheppey can save up to £240 a year on average on their household energy bills after a visit from a 'Green Doctor'.

As part of the Sustainable Sheppey project, the Green Doctors are offering **FREE** visits to every home on the island to provide energy and money saving gadgets, including:

- water saving flush bags, saving a litre of water per flush for handle-flush toilets
- reflective panels to increase the heat from radiators
- LED lightbulbs which save more money and energy than the popular 'energy saving' lightbulbs.

These small changes alone will save each home more than £40 a year on gas, electricity and water bills combined.

The Green Doctors, from the environmental charity Groundwork, can also provide advice on government grants that are available to some homes and assist in making referrals for home improvements where possible. The visit only takes one hour and can be arranged in advance at a time to suit you. If you're interested in a visit from a Green Doctor please email Jo: jo.ursell@groundwork.org.uk or call **01795 434 222**.

Extra care homes in Sittingbourne



REGIS GATE

Work is underway at AmicusHorizon's Regis Gate development (previously known as Wylie Court) in Sittingbourne, and is due to complete in October 2014. The £7,800,000 project is a huge investment in the area and will provide 51 extra care homes for rent and shared ownership.

The apartments will be fully accessible and equipped with the latest assistive technology, including fall detection sensors.

Regis Gate will provide 24 hour care packages and will benefit from on-site catering, internal scooter storage, and landscaped gardens. Contact the Sales Team for more information on **0800 121 60 60** or visit www.amicushorizon.org.uk/regisgate.

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£343,000 Lottery cash to ‘paint towns green’



Swale is delighted to be part of Kent Wildlife Trusts ‘Painting the Town Green’ project which has secured £343,259 from Big Lottery Fund’s Reaching Communities programme.

Through small scale gardening right up to the creation and improvement of larger outdoor community spaces, the aim of the project is to reconnect communities with nature and each other, and deliver benefits to people by empowering them to ‘re-green’ their communities.

This three-year project, will include the Medway Towns, Swale and Thanet. It will be supported by local ‘Green Ambassador’ volunteers – people who really want to make a difference to their community. For more information visit www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk



FACES of Kent

(Families Affected by Caring Empowerment Services)

**Do you help look after someone who has a disability or is ill?
Or do you help look after someone who misuses drugs or alcohol?
... and are you aged between 5 and 18?**

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www.facesofkent.org.uk

FREEPHONE

0300 7777 247



Medway **NHS**

NHS Foundation Trust

Major redevelopment of Medway's emergency department

Medway Maritime Hospital's emergency department will undergo a major £5m redevelopment following a report by Sir Bruce Keogh last year which made it clear that the department is often full to capacity, and has an unsuitable layout and environment. Plans have been agreed for redevelopment which will see key sections completed in time for winter 2014/15, when the emergency department is under the greatest demand.

The hospital's emergency department was designed when up to 50,000 patients a year came through the doors for accident and emergency treatment. Now it's around 90,000 patients a year and rising.

Chief Nurse Steve Hams said: "As soon as we saw the report's recommendations we set up an expert team to look into how to radically improve the way the hospital works and the care we provide. We used our own clinicians as part of the review, as well as acknowledged experts in the field from outside."

The redevelopment will update every part of the emergency department and has been carefully planned so as to minimise disrupting services as the work is carried out.

Steve Hams continued: "These exciting changes may cause some disruption, so we will be asking people to bear with us while we get the shape of the services right."

Saving lives, improving lives

Lives are saved at Medway Maritime Hospital every day. However, in a recent case, the skills and quick thinking of an expert team resulted in an emergency high-risk patient not only surviving, but going home fit and well just two days after admission.

Brian Cartwright, 64, from Luton, was rushed to the Emergency Department in the early hours of 7 December with a ruptured aneurysm. An aneurysm is the widening of the largest artery in the body, which can be fatal if it ruptures.

Mr Cartwright said: "It all started with tummy pains, and they were getting progressively worse until the point where I collapsed. My wife called an ambulance and in no time I was in A&E being assessed."

Mr Cartwright was deemed to be too ill and too high risk to undergo general anaesthetic and the emergency open surgery usually undertaken in this type of medical situation.

Doctors made the decision to perform a percutaneous EndoVascular Aneurysm Repair (pEVAR), keyhole surgery, under local anaesthesia - the first time this has been done in an emergency situation in Kent.

The operation normally undertaken would result in the patient spending days or weeks in the Intensive Treatment Unit. But after having undergone a less intrusive and much quicker procedure, Mr Cartwright was back at home just two days later to celebrate Christmas with his family.

He said: "It was amazing, I was home in no time. I'm told that only 20 per cent of people survive a ruptured aneurysm so I am very fortunate indeed, someone was looking down on me.

"I'd like to thank the surgeons and the rest of the team. They had to make a decision to go for the alternative surgery that hadn't been done before in an emergency, and I am so glad they did."

Mr Cartwright is now back to full health and is able to go about life as he did before.

Medway is the only hospital in Kent, and one of few in the country, able to offer this procedure involving two tiny incisions in the groin and the insertion of a graft that is mounted on a metal tube (stent). It is then fed through arteries in the groin, up through the aorta to the area of the aneurysm. The graft material bonds with the arterial wall and blood begins to flow through the stent instead of the weakened aneurysm.

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