

Spring 2017

# inside Swale

Keeping you informed about your council services

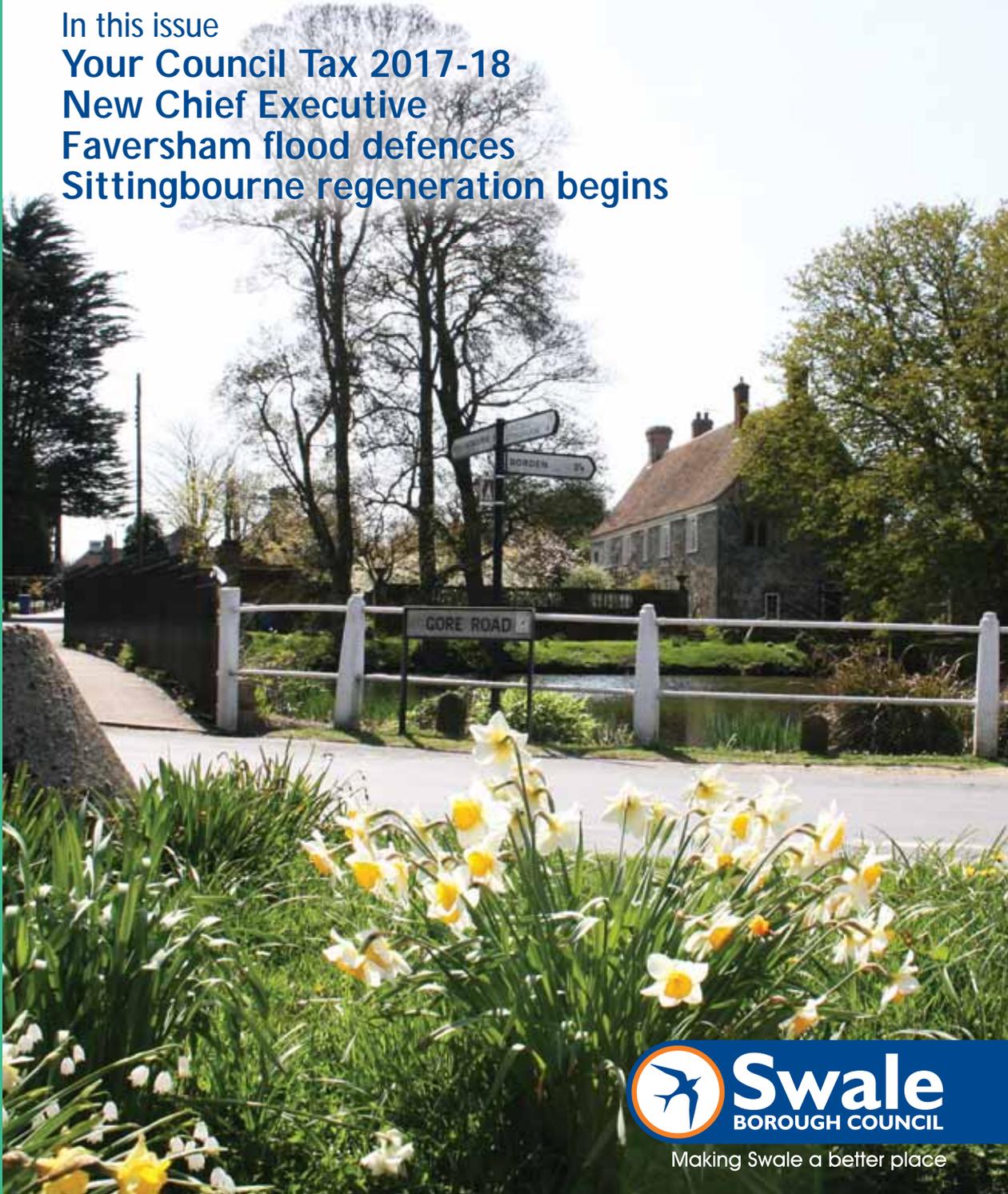
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**Swale**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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### Contact us

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*Andrew Bowles, Leader, Swale Borough Council*

**Welcome** to the spring edition of Inside Swale.

Spring is well and truly on its way, and I'm pleased to be seeing the first shoots of construction work emerging for the Spirit Of Sittingbourne regeneration scheme. Last month the demolition of the old Biffa depot got underway, preparing the site for construction of the new retail units in the next few weeks.

As this is the first physical sign of the scheme taking shape, it's a key milestone in the programme, and there's a lot more to come this year – see page 8 for more information.

There's also great news for the Island on page 13, with the government agreeing to invest in improvements on Lower Road to help ease traffic congestion for locals and visitors.

Despite our best efforts, an unprecedented increase in the charges we have to pay to a statutory body means we have to ask you to pay a little more council tax for the first time in seven years. There are more details on pages 16 and 17.

The new flood defences in Faversham are now finished, and will help avoid a repeat of the floods we saw in 2013. I'd encourage everyone to read the piece on page 7 for advice on how you can prepare for and protect yourselves from the risk of flooding.

This is also a great time to be thinking about getting out and about in the Borough, with lots of events and attractions to visit. See pages 27-29 for ideas, and information on how to promote any events or attractions you think more people should know about.

Enjoy your spring.

# ▶ Contractors have been approved to design and build Sittingbourne's new multi-use skatepark



The skatepark, which is set to be built next to the Mill Way Retail Park, was first suggested for the site in 2011 by a group of young people fed up with having nowhere to go.

Since then, more than £300,000 has been secured to design and build the park, which will be managed and maintained by Brogdale CIC.

The Council carried out a competitive tender for the design and build of the skatepark, and local young people were consulted on the proposed design, with Gravity Engineering Ltd being the contractor chosen.

Cllr Ken Pugh, Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing, said: "This skatepark will be a great addition for the local community, giving young people a purpose-built space to skate.

"It was crucial for us to make sure young people's ideas were taken into consideration when selecting the winning firm. They are the ones who will be using it, so we need to work with them to make sure it will be a well-used and valued facility."

Jordon Rogers, one of the young people involved in setting up the park, said: "The decision to award the contract to Gravity is another massive step forward for The Mill Project, and marks the beginning of what I'm sure is going to be a huge year for us.

"For the project that I helped to start back in 2011 when I was just 15 years old to be this close to completion is an amazing feeling, and I am forever grateful to everyone who has helped us along the way."

Outline planning permission for the skatepark has already been agreed, and detailed plans are expected to come to the Council for planning permission by April.

If approved, work is expected to begin on the site late June, and the skatepark should be opened in Autumn 2017.

# ▶ Play areas get go ahead

Two new play areas will be installed in Thistle Hill, Minster, later this year, along with a trim trail to encourage people to get out and get active.



The play areas, one for 0-6 year olds, and the other for 6-12 year olds, were set out as part of the planning permission for the new Thistle Hill housing development, along with a number of other 'satellite' play areas already installed in the last few years.

They will be installed in the already landscaped and fenced area next to the Thistle Hill Community Centre in Laurel Road.

More than 300 people attended a fun day in October where they gave their thoughts on proposals from eight different play companies.

Cllr David Simmons, Cabinet Member for Environment and Rural Affairs, said: "I'd like to thank everyone who shared their thoughts on the different designs – this had a strong influence on selecting the final scheme.

"These are really exciting designs that I hope will be enjoyed by local children for many years to come."

The play areas will be installed during the summer, and will cost around £170,000, paid for by a contribution made by the developers of the housing site as part of the planning process.

Councillors also approved a new £33,000 trim trail in the community woodland; and £5,300 for new, 'all-inclusive' play equipment for King George's playing field, Sittingbourne, both of which should be completed during Spring.



## ▶ New Chief Exec

Swale Borough Council has a new interim chief executive, following the departure of Abdool Kara.

Mark Radford, previously the Director of Corporate Services at the Council, has been appointed Chief Executive until September 2018.

Cllr Gerry Lewin, Deputy Leader of the Council, said: "These arrangements will help us maintain momentum and stability that could be lost during an external recruitment process. It also gives us the chance to reflect on the wider strategic picture facing district authorities, whilst maintaining progress."

Under the plans, the interim role would include the role of Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer. Line management responsibilities for the Director of Corporate Services will be divided up between the existing senior management team.

## ▶ Pet welfare during an emergency



The Council's Animal Welfare Team has issued new guidelines on looking after your pets during an emergency.

The best course is to arrange with friends or family – as long as they do not live in the immediate area – to take in each others' pets in case of evacuation.

Alternatively, try to place pets in a local cattery or boarding kennels; if evacuated to a rest centre, however, you may be able to bring your pet with you.

You should also prepare emergency kits for each pet, including:

- Carrier
- Litter tray/litter
- Tinned/dried food
- Bowls
- Photograph (for identification purposes)
- Lead, collar and identity disc
- Medication

For further information, and advice regarding larger animals and livestock, visit [www.swale.gov.uk/emergency-planning](http://www.swale.gov.uk/emergency-planning)



# Faversham Front Brents Flood Alleviation Scheme



More than 30 properties at Front Brents in Faversham are significantly less likely to be hit by tidal flooding, thanks to a new scheme.

A flood alleviation scheme came about following the unusually high tides of December 2013. The Environment Agency worked with local residents, Swale Borough Council, Brents Community Association, Faversham Town Council and Kent County Council to deliver a scheme which significantly reduces flood risk to those properties affected by flooding.

The works consist of a landscaped clay embankment between 600 and 800mm high. It includes openings to allow continued public access to the green and the creek itself, which will be sealed by timber flood barriers before and during a flood event.

By working in partnership with local residents and local authorities, a cost-effective scheme has been delivered, which is sympathetic to the surrounding local environment.

Residents are being encouraged to sign up to receive Environment Agency notifications of flood alerts and warnings via telephone, text or email. You can sign up at [www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings](http://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings) or by calling **0345 988 1188**.



## ▶ The Spirit of Sittingbourne - demolition is underway



The Spirit of Sittingbourne, the £57million regeneration project, is beginning to make its mark on the Town.

Demolition of the Princes Street Depot off Eurolink Way began in February, clearing the way for the construction of the new big box retail units that will be home to

popular high street names such as Home Bargains.

Cllr Andrew Bowles, Leader of Swale Borough Council, said: “We know local people have had a long wait to get to this stage, and there is still more to do, but it’s great to see the first stage of works about to get under way in this exciting new chapter for Sittingbourne.

“The regeneration scheme will breathe new life into the Town, making it a vibrant place to visit, helping existing shops to thrive, and attracting new businesses to the area.”

Utility and preparation works to the highway are expected to start soon, with work to start building the retail units on the depot site beginning in April. Work is expected to start on the multi-storey car park in the summer, and the cinema by the end of the year.

Preparation works are also due to start soon for the leisure quarter opposite the mainline station, where Pizza Express, Wildwood, LIGHT Cinemas, and a Travelodge hotel will be operating.

Residents can keep up-to-date on the Spirit of Sittingbourne project at [www.spiritofsittingbourne.com](http://www.spiritofsittingbourne.com)

# ▶ Saturday market success in Sittingbourne

Sittingbourne High Street will be hosting regular Saturday markets this year after the pilot scheme proved a success.

Two pilot markets were held in the high street in November and December 2016 with nearly 20 stalls selling a range of local products and gifts.

The pilot was organised by the Council to test the viability of new specialist markets running in the town on Saturdays.



Cllr Mike Cosgrove, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, said: “This is a new type of market for the Town, and the reaction so far shows there is a real appetite for something new and exciting like this.

“Schemes like this can help the Town attract and retain shoppers, boosting footfall for existing shops and businesses, and encouraging others to invest in the area.”

Following the success of the pilot markets, the Council is currently preparing more specialist markets to run regularly on the second and fourth Saturday of each month from March to December in 2017.



Any traders wanting to register their interest in future markets can contact Jill Read by emailing [jillread@swale.gov.uk](mailto:jillread@swale.gov.uk) or calling **01795 417 592**.



*Pictures of market stalls at the successful December Artisan Market in Sittingbourne.*



## ▶ Local companies optimistic

Swale businesses are optimistic about the future, according to a snapshot poll of how local firms are performing.

More than 60 local businesses provided the Council with an insight into trading conditions, to help identify ways to improve the support offered to the business community.

- Nearly two thirds of businesses reported that they expect to grow, and more than a third expect to increase their workforce during the next 12 months.
- A third of local companies indicated that they already export goods and services. With the changing international picture for business, exports will become increasingly important, and the Council is looking to work with partners to help more local businesses take advantage of emerging opportunities.
- Nearly a third of respondents are offering apprenticeships or work placements – again a figure we are looking to increase. Each year we help companies to access advice and funding to make it easier to provide training opportunities.
- Most companies raised local transport infrastructure as their greatest concern. We are continuing to work with and lobby central government for transport improvements to help businesses and residents alike, and over the coming months expect to see consultation on the planned redesign of Junction 5 of the M2, as well as junction improvements at Lower Road/Barton Hill Drive (see page 13).
- Businesses also asked if the Council could provide financial support. While we don't offer funding directly, we can help firms find and apply for a range of schemes (including loans and grants) available in the Borough.

If you are interested in receiving business support, please contact our Economic Development Team via [edu@swale.gov.uk](mailto:edu@swale.gov.uk) or **01795 417 398**, or visit [www.swalemeansbusiness.co.uk](http://www.swalemeansbusiness.co.uk) for the latest updates.

# ▶ Could your business be crowned the next Swale Business of the Year?

As the Swale Business Awards enters its eleventh year, registration for 2017 was officially opened earlier this month. The awards are widely regarded as the Borough's most prestigious business event, and entries are open until 30 June 2017.



*The winners from the 2016 Awards held at the Barnyard, Gore Farm, Upchurch.*

The awards have grown considerably since they began, attracting a diverse range of entrants across a wide range of sectors from Sittingbourne, Sheppey and Faversham.

Businesses entering the awards are judged on financial performance, entrepreneurial spirit, environmental credentials, marketing skills, community links, staff welfare and a range of other attributes that – when combined – could see you crowned Swale Business of the Year at a black-tie gala evening in the autumn.

***Do you have what it takes?*** If you are interested in applying or finding out more, we invite you to attend one of our networking events taking place on:

## **Wednesday, 26 April, Shepherd Neame, Faversham**

Includes keynote speaker from the Bank of England discussing the micro and macro business environment.

## **Thursday, 8 June, Macknade Fine Foods, Faversham**

A breakfast networking session with the opportunity to meet the judges and hear from the 2016 winners and finalists.

To register for either event, or to enter the awards, visit [www.swalebusinessawards.co.uk](http://www.swalebusinessawards.co.uk)

# ▶ Dumped waste could cost you!



Householders are being reminded to make sure anyone they pay to remove waste has a licence, after a Borden woman was prosecuted by the Council.

The woman paid someone she found on Facebook £50 to remove a large quantity of household waste from her property, which was then fly-tipped near Iwade.

The Council identified where the waste had come from, and, when questioned, she was unable to say who had taken the rubbish away.

As it couldn't be determined who had dumped the waste, she was offered a formal caution for failing to make sure the waste was handled responsibly. She refused, so the Council took the case to court, where she was given a six-month conditional discharge, and was ordered to pay the Council's costs.

Cllr Alan Horton, Cabinet Member for Safer Families and Communities, said: "We would much rather prosecute the person who dumped this waste, but as she did not make any checks about the person who took it – not even a receipt, business card, or copy of the social media conversation – we are unable to trace them.

"Householders have a duty of care to make sure whoever is taking waste away will dispose of it properly. If it is dumped you could be prosecuted for failing to take reasonable steps to prevent this.

To check whether someone has a licence to carry waste visit the Environment Agency website, or call **03708 506 506**.

For more information about fly-tipping, and what the Council is doing to tackle it, visit [www.swale.gov.uk/fly-tipping](http://www.swale.gov.uk/fly-tipping)



## ▶ Lower Road investment welcomed

Plans to ease traffic congestion and boost economic growth on the Isle of Sheppey have taken a significant step forward.

Local Growth Minister, Andrew Percy, last week announced a government cash injection of £1.26 million to deliver junction improvements on the A2500 Lower Road.

The improvements include the construction of a three-arm roundabout to replace the signal controlled junction arrangement at Lower Road/Barton Hill Drive.

A bid for the Government funding was developed jointly by Swale Borough Council and Kent County Council, and submitted to the South East Local Economic Partnership in July 2016. The bid was then sent to the government, with lobbying efforts led by local MP Gordon Henderson.

Cllr Andrew Bowles, Leader of Swale Borough Council, said: "I am delighted that this funding has been announced. Residents, workers and visitors to the Island will all welcome the news that we can now make improvements that will help reduce the traffic disruption people regularly face.

"A lot of hard work went into getting us this far, and now we must press for implementation at the earliest possible date."

Residents and businesses will benefit from improved journey time reliability, and a significant reduction in congestion during the typical weekday periods. This will also help support the delivery of housing, and support the future of the tourism industry focused around the east of the Island.



**Together** we will create **out-standing, inspirational** education in a vibrant, inclusive environment that will **transform** the learning and lives of those we **serve**.

**Together** we will **unlock** and **celebrate** the **unique** and **limitless** potential of every **individual**, to lay the foundations for a successful and fulfilling **future**.

**Together** we will build the school of choice where all feel **pride** in belonging to a happy, caring **family**; the **heart** of our **community**.  
**Our Oasis, our Sheppey.**

*“Sixth Form provision at Oasis Academy Isle of Sheppey is tailored to students’ career aspirations and abilities.” Ofsted.*

We offer:

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- *Wide choice of academic and vocational subjects;*
- *Outstanding pastoral support and mentoring programmes;*
- *Enhanced c.v. opportunities: work experience placements, student leadership; extensive community engagement programme.*

[www.oasisacademyisleofsheppey.org](http://www.oasisacademyisleofsheppey.org)



*“I am part of much more than just a school, I am part of a family”*

Year 7 Student

# ▶ Kent elections

**Kent  
County  
Council**  
kent.gov.uk



Kent County Council (KCC) elections are taking place on Thursday, 4 May.

These will see all 81 seats on Kent County Council contested, to decide who will run services such as education, transport, social services and community safety, so it is important you have your say.

In order to vote in the elections you must be on the electoral register, which was updated last year during our annual canvass.

Your poll card will tell you the name of the division that you are voting in, and where your polling station is. Polling stations will be open from 7am to 10pm.

The key deadlines to be aware of are below, but please try not to leave it to the last minute:

## Boundaries reviewed

A review of the boundaries of KCC seats – known as divisions – which took place between December 2014 and June 2016 which revised the divisions in Swale. These are now:

- Faversham
- Sheppey
- Sittingbourne North
- Sittingbourne South
- Swale East
- Swale West

Each votes for one KCC councillor, except for the Sheppey division which will have two.

**Registering to vote**

**13 April**

**Applying for a postal vote, or changing an existing postal/proxy arrangement**

**5pm on 18 April**

**Applying for a proxy**

**5pm on 25 April**

**Applying for an emergency proxy**

**After 5pm on 25 April, up until 5pm on 4 May.**

We will know who candidates are after 4pm on 4 April, and this information will be published on our website on 5 April. Votes will be counted on Friday, 5 May.

For more updates and information, visit [www.swale.gov.uk/elections](http://www.swale.gov.uk/elections)

# ► Council tax

## Band D council tax payers will be paying an extra 10p a week for Swale Borough Council services from April.

The £4.95 increase in Swale's portion of the annual council tax bill for a band D home is the first in seven years for the Council. The rise is largely due to a £442,000 increase in charges paid to the Lower Medway Internal Drainage Board, which manages some local water courses and flood protection.

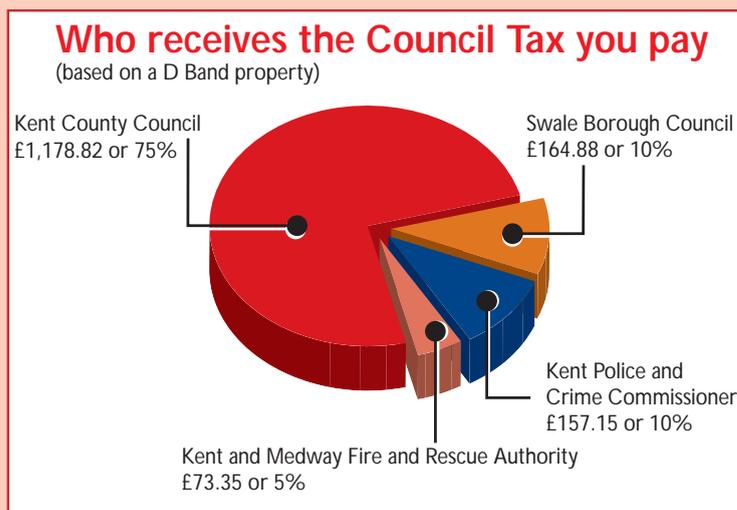
Cllr Duncan Dewar-Whalley, Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance, said: "We had tried to challenge the increase through appeal to the Secretary of State, as the scale of the increase will make a significant impact on our finances, but unfortunately this failed.

"This means that our plans to once again not ask residents to pay any more for our share of the council tax bill won't come to fruition. We are able to absorb some of the increase, but unfortunately we do need to ask residents to contribute a bit more."

The amount of grant received from the government is also being cut from £2.09m in 2016/17 to £1.24m in 2017/18.

To manage this loss of revenue the Council is looking at new ways to increase income. This has led to the agreement – subject to full due diligence – to invest in the Sittingbourne Town Centre regeneration, which could bring up to £2.1m a year in rental income into the Council's budget.

Charges for Swale Borough Council services are only one element of the final council tax bill residents receive. There are also charges for Kent County Council, Kent Police and Crime Commissioner, Kent & Medway Fire and Rescue Service, and parish or town councils (where these exist). These are set by the respective organisations, and are collected on their behalf by Swale.



For more information about council tax, visit [www.swale.gov.uk/council-tax](http://www.swale.gov.uk/council-tax)

# ► How is your council tax spent?

	Gross Expenditure 2017/18 £000	Net Expenditure 2017/18 £000	Gross Expenditure 2016/17 £000	Net Expenditure 2016/17 £000
Corporate & Democratic Services	3,364	2,211	3,389	2,140
Local tax collection, elections, land charges, etc	2,024	1,185	1,907	1,128
Cultural, Environmental, Planning services	15,465	12,556	15,710	12,731
Highways, Roads and Transportation Services	1,486	-898	1,444	-818
Housing Services	61,358	2,176	61,319	2,047
Other Services		-2,020		-3,058
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>15,210</b>		<b>14,170</b>
Contributions to/ (from) funds		3		459
Revenue Support Grant and Business Rates		-7,744		-7,599
Council Tax Requirement		7,469		7,030



Your Services booklet is available to view at:  
[www.swale.gov.uk/your-services](http://www.swale.gov.uk/your-services)

## ► Ways to pay

Direct Debit is the easiest way to pay your council tax. It's simple, easy to set up, and saves you time. You can complete a Direct Debit form online without registering or signing in on our website. The amount due will be payable in ten monthly instalments.

Visit [www.swale.gov.uk/ways-to-pay](http://www.swale.gov.uk/ways-to-pay) to set up a Direct Debit or to find out about other ways to pay.

You can call our 24-hour automated payment phone line **01795 417 766**, or pay online at [www.swale.gov.uk/doitonline](http://www.swale.gov.uk/doitonline)

You can also pay by debit or credit card, PayPoint payment, cheque, or standing order.

Please note that we cannot accept cash as payment at any council office. If you have problems paying your council tax, please get in touch with us.

# ► Council Tax Support review

Changes to the Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme will come into effect from 1 April, following a consultation with residents.

The consultation looked at different options relating to the amount of financial help provided to local residents on low incomes, and the way the government has changed the welfare system.

The level of discount is based on household income: currently the maximum discount is 85 per cent for working age households, and 100% for pensioners.

The consultation ran for a period of 12 weeks, from April to August last year, and the changes below were agreed in November.

## Working age only changes (do not affect pensioners):

- ◆ Reducing the maximum level of support for working age applicants from 85 per cent to 80 per cent
- ◆ Reducing backdating to one month\*
- ◆ Using a set income for self-employed earners after 18 months of self-employment
- ◆ Introducing a standard level of non-dependant deduction of £15 for all claimants who have non-dependants living with them who work more than 16 hours per week
- ◆ Taking any child maintenance paid to a claimant or partner into account in full in the calculation of CTS
- ◆ Taking any child benefit paid to a claimant or partner into account in full in the calculation of CTS
- ◆ Removing second adult reduction from the scheme

## Changes affecting all claims

- ◆ Removing the family premium for all new applicants\*
- ◆ Removing the work-related activity component in the calculation of CTS for employment and support allowance claims\*
- ◆ Limiting the number of dependent children within the calculation for CTS to a maximum of two\* (only affects children born after 31 March 2017)
- ◆ Reducing the time a person can be out of the country and still receive CTS to four weeks\*

\*to match Housing Benefit Regulations

Residents with questions regarding how the changes might affect them can email [benefitenquiries@swale.gov.uk](mailto:benefitenquiries@swale.gov.uk)

# Rural business grants

Are you a rural business, farmer, forester, grower, landowner; a cultural, heritage or community provider, voluntary or charitable organisation?

If your answer is 'yes', are you aware that you can apply for a grant of £2,500 to £50,000 to help you develop projects that will improve agriculture, the environment and rural life in east Kent?

The LEADER scheme is one element of the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE), providing grants up until the end of December 2020 to help increase jobs and growth.

For more information please, visit the East Kent and Kent Downs and Marshes website [www.kentruralnetwork.org.uk/leader](http://www.kentruralnetwork.org.uk/leader). Alternatively, if you have a project idea you would like to discuss, please contact the programme team.

Email [huw.jarvis@kent.gov.uk](mailto:huw.jarvis@kent.gov.uk) or call 03000 417 104.



## AGE UK FAVERSHAM & SITTINGBOURNE Love later life

Did you know that Age UK offers services to anyone over the age of 50 and that we have a wide range of services in your area?

Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne provides a range of services offering good quality, consistent care, impartial or confidential support to help people remain safe and independent in their own homes.

- Friendship and fun
- Befriending
- Information, Advice and Advocacy. Our I + A service is quality assured. Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne successfully completed Age UK's Information and Advice Quality Programme in November 2015
- Freshly cooked lunches delivered to you
- Day care (including transport)
- Specialist dementia support and COGs club
- Carer support for those looking after people living with dementia
- Care Navigator – to help you by talking through any problems/issues you might have and to support you to find solutions and access services if needed
- Personal care in your home – we are CQC registered
- Bathing at home or in our centres
- Chiropody and foot care
- Independent Living Service – help with housework, shopping, trips out etc
- Our Living Well Scheme provides support for health and social needs

Are you are considering a career in care? We are always recruiting. Contact our Domiciliary Team for more information' on 01795 532766

### What our clients say about us:

*"It feels that you have filled a massive void in my life. I have made lots of friends and feel happy and comfortable now with what life has to offer. I don't know what I would have done without their support".*

*"I am so glad that you come to pick me up otherwise I would be sat here on my own all day".*

*"I wouldn't have coped without this service. I don't know what I would have done".*

To find out more or to access our services please call your local office. Open between 9am and 4pm

Faversham  
Tel: 01795 532766  
Charity No. 1152234

Sittingbourne  
Tel: 01795 477520  
[www.ageuk.org.uk/favershamandsittingbourne](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/favershamandsittingbourne)

Teynham  
Tel: 01795 521052



## ▶ Let us pick up your garden waste

Now that spring has arrived, why not give our garden waste collection a try?

It's convenient and easy to use – all you need to do is put garden waste in your brown bin and we'll do the rest.

Your bin will be emptied every two weeks, and the contents are converted into compost which is then returned to the land as top covering for fields to help grow local crops.

The subscription-based service offers great value for money at just £1.35 per collection over the year.

The £35 annual subscription includes both the hire of a 240 litre brown wheeled bin and 26 garden waste collections a year.

To find out more, visit [swale.gov.uk/brown-bin-garden-waste](http://swale.gov.uk/brown-bin-garden-waste)

Kent Community Health **NHS**  
NHS Foundation Trust

## HOW ARE you?

If you want to make some changes in your life, the NHS can help.

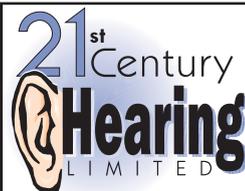
Our local services can help you to feel more confident and motivated to quit smoking, eat healthily or be more active!

We can give you all the advice and support you need to get you on your way to a healthier future.

Call free on 0300 123 1220 or visit [www.kenthealthandwellbeing.nhs.uk](http://www.kenthealthandwellbeing.nhs.uk).

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Call: **01795 511195**

for a no obligation appointment.

[www.21stcenturyhearing.com](http://www.21stcenturyhearing.com)

# Recycling and refuse collection dates

If you are unsure of your collection week, go to [www.swale.gov.uk/my-collection-day](http://www.swale.gov.uk/my-collection-day) and click the link 'Next Bin Collection', or call Customer Services on **01795 417 888**.

 Blue Wheelie Bin Collection week

 Green Wheelie Bin Collection week

**Don't forget, food waste recycling collections are collected weekly with both bins.**

## Week 1 collections

March 2017						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
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April 2017						
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May 2017						
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June 2017						
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July 2017						
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August 2017						
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## Week 2 collections

March 2017						
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April 2017						
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May 2017						
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June 2017						
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July 2017						
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August 2017						
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21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

In the event of inclement weather, please leave your recycling and waste out on your collection day and we will get to you as soon as we can. Daily updates will be on our website: [www.swale.gov.uk](http://www.swale.gov.uk)



# ▶ STOP child sexual exploitation

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is when a child up to the age of 18 is manipulated into having sex, usually in return for something such as drugs, alcohol, clothing, or cigarettes. **This is abuse.** Abusers can be male or female.

## *Warning signs to look out for:*

- ➔ Young people staying out overnight
- ➔ Missing from home/running away
- ➔ Unexplained gifts
- ➔ Having an older boyfriend/girlfriend
- ➔ Missing school
- ➔ Isolated from family and friends
- ➔ Low self-esteem
- ➔ Getting taxis alone to hotels/pubs
- ➔ Chatting to people online they have never met

Young people are being threatened and exploited, and may not even realise it. Often children are made to feel special and looked after at first, and then the person stops being nice. They then become threatening and violent once they have gained a child's trust.

## ***If you are worried about a child, say something.***

Taking risks is a part of growing up, but sometimes young people can get out of their depth.

Call the anonymous helpline on **116 000** or Kent Police on **101** and quote 'Operation Willow' and to help to tackle CSE. If you think a young person is at immediate risk, call **999**.

# ▶ CCTV: the facts

## *What we do*

Our service operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to help keep residents of Swale safe by:

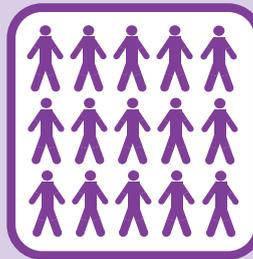
- ➔ monitoring for incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour
- ➔ requesting assistance from the emergency services
- ➔ capturing evidence for prosecution
- ➔ working with shops and pubs to prevent shoplifting and anti-social behaviour
- ➔ helping residents in need, and finding missing children



## *The Service*

- 67** Public space CCTV cameras in Swale
- 365** days a year service operation
- 24** hours a day operator surveillance
- 24** hours a day maintenance available for repairs
- 5** mobile cameras for short term deployments

## *Results*



**1,922**  
incidents in the  
last six months



**89**  
arrests in the  
last six months

## *Protecting your data and privacy*



- ➔ recorded footage is held for 28 days before it is deleted
- ➔ all cameras must be for a specific purpose and be necessary
- ➔ impact on privacy must be considered at all times
- ➔ CCTV use must be regularly reviewed
- ➔ access to CCTV images is restricted

For more information and a list of CCTV cameras, visit [www.swale.gov.uk/cctv](http://www.swale.gov.uk/cctv)

# Swale Clinical Commissioning Group

## ► Stay well in Swale this spring!

NHS Swale Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), made up of local GP practices, is reminding people how to access health services and prepare for bank holidays when services can be busier than usual.

### Health Help Now app

Download the app from [www.healthhelpnow-nhs.net](http://www.healthhelpnow-nhs.net) or your app store: it's your pocket guide to the best services for your symptoms.

### Visit your pharmacy

Your local pharmacist is a medicines expert who can advise on the best way to treat colds, coughs, sore throats, digestive problems and more.

### NHS 111

If you need health help when it's not an emergency, NHS 111 can advise. Simply dial **111** from any phone.

### Mental health support

Free, confidential advice is available from Mental Health Matters on **0800 107 0160** or the Samaritans on **116 123**.

### Minor injury units and GP-led walk-in centres

Trained nurses can assess and treat cuts, sprains, minor burns and minor eye injuries. Check opening times online or by contacting services directly:

- **Sittingbourne Memorial Hospital**  
Bell Road, Sittingbourne, ME10 4DT.  
**01795 418 300**
- **Sheppey Community Hospital**  
Plover Road, Minster, ME12 3LT.  
**01795 879 100**
- **Faversham MIU**  
Access via Bank Street, Faversham, ME13 8QR.  
**01795 562 011 or 01795 562 004**
- **Sheppey Walk-in Centre**  
Sheppey Community Hospital, Plover Road,  
Minster-On-Sea, Sheerness, ME12 3LT.  
T: **01795 879 199**

# ▶ Getting smarter about medicines

Swale CCG, Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley CCG, and Healthwatch Kent have developed the Meducate campaign to help us all make better use of medicines. Its messages are simple, but often overlooked.



Dr Fiona Armstrong, Swale CCG Chair and local GP, explains: “It’s great to order medicines in plenty of time, but repeat prescriptions should only be requested when needed, not stockpiled.

“We can also help by not asking for prescriptions for ‘over-the-counter’ treatments, including remedies for cold symptoms, minor aches and pains, and digestive problems.”

Approximately £2.6 million is spent in north Kent every year on prescription medicines for common ailments, even though items such as paracetamol and ibuprofen are readily available at low cost.

Bal Minhas, lead pharmacist at Swale CCG, continues: “Antibiotics only work on certain bacterial infections, not on viruses like colds and flu. Indeed, they may reduce the effectiveness of the body’s immune system if used too often.”

Visit [www.meducatenhs.org](http://www.meducatenhs.org) or talk to your pharmacist or GP.



**NHS**

## GET SMART ABOUT MEDICINES

Most common ailments don't need prescription medicines...

**60,000**  
GP Appointments

Choosing over-the-counter remedies from a pharmacy or supermarket, could help save your local NHS £2.6 million - around the same cost as 60,000 GP appointments.

### STOCKING UP ON YOUR PRESCRIPTION MEDICINES 'JUST IN CASE' CREATES WASTE

- Only request medicines when they are needed
- If you no longer use a medicine, tell your GP
- Pharmacists can help you to manage your medicines

## BE A SUPERHERO

If we overuse antibiotics they can affect the body's ability to fight off future infections.

Let's defend the power of antibiotics, and use them sparingly.

## Get involved



- **Count me in! Swale Health Network** – to receive health news and influence local healthcare decisions, sign up at [www.swaleccg.nhs.uk](http://www.swaleccg.nhs.uk)
- **Listening Posts** – attend discussion sessions before CCG Governing Body meetings
- **Write to Freepost RTEZ-GUZS-HJYY, NHS Swale CCG, Grovehurst Road, Kemsley, Sittingbourne, ME10 2ST** call **03000 425 100** Twitter: **@NHSSwaleCCG**

# ▶ Zero tolerance of loan sharks



Agencies and community groups across the Borough are coming together to protect vulnerable residents from loan sharks operating in the area.

Swale Borough Council is one of eight partners working with the England Illegal Money Lending Team to increase local awareness of the danger of loan sharks by signing a zero tolerance pledge.

Cllr Alan Horton, Cabinet Member for Safer Families and Communities, said: “This campaign brings together the skills of different agencies across Swale to help reach those who are most at risk, and show them that there is support available.”

The zero-tolerance pledge will see the organisations working to promote awareness of loan sharks, support the work of the Illegal Money Lending Team, and provide budgeting and money management advice to local people.

Tony Quigley, Head of Service for the England Illegal Money Lending Team (IMLT), said: “Illegal money lenders can have a horrific impact on our communities and should never be used under any circumstances. It is important for people to realise that alternatives to borrowing from loan sharks are available if you are in financial difficulty.

Anyone who has been the victim of a loan shark, or knows of someone who has, can contact the Illegal Money Lending Team on **0300 555 2222**. Lines are open 24/7 and callers can remain anonymous if they wish.



*Council staff helped to raise awareness with an event at Sittingbourne Asda.*

# ► Get out and about in Swale

If you're looking for things to do or places to go, the Visit Swale website – [www.visit-swale.co.uk](http://www.visit-swale.co.uk) – can help you find a great day out.

From countryside walks to shows, and national attractions to smaller local gems, Visit Swale helps tourists and residents alike find information on things to do and what's going on across Swale.

This year the site will be getting a refresh, as we work with Visit Kent on a new platform to capture and feature even more things to do and places to visit.

Cllr Mike Cosgrove, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, said: “For event organisers and local attractions – from museums and theatres to restaurants and parks – Visit Swale is a great place to advertise to thousands of people, both locally and from further afield, for free.

“If you know a local event, venue, attraction or restaurant that isn't already taking advantage of Visit Swale, tell them to get in touch.”

Tourism businesses featured on Visit Swale are also automatically included for free on the Faversham, Isle of Sheppey, and Sittingbourne destination pages of the Visit Kent website: [www.visitkent.co.uk](http://www.visitkent.co.uk).

Current listings include guided walks, festivals and shows, and throughout the year feature the colour and flamboyance of carnival parades, art exhibitions and live performances. Loyal foodies will love the range of food and drink events, including summer fairs selling local handmade goods.

To find out more about what's going on across Swale, or to add an entry, go to [www.visit-swale.co.uk](http://www.visit-swale.co.uk) or contact [tourismsupport@swale.gov.uk](mailto:tourismsupport@swale.gov.uk)

**Faversham  
Isle of Sheppey  
Sittingbourne** **Visit  
Swale**

[www.visit-swale.co.uk](http://www.visit-swale.co.uk)

**Swale**  
means business  
[www.swalemeansbusiness.co.uk](http://www.swalemeansbusiness.co.uk)

# ▶ What's On

**Saturday 11 March, 7:30pm**

## **Rotary Club Of Minster 'Pig Race'**

A fund raiser for the Rotary Club's charity Bluetown Remembered organised by The Rotary club of Minster-on-Sea.

A Pig Race with a difference, so expect an evening full of fun and frolics!

The Criterion, 69 High Street, Blue Town, Sheerness **01795 662 981**

**Wednesday, 15 March, 8pm**

## **Comedy Night – Hal Cruttenden**



'Live at the Apollo' and 'Have I Got News For You' star Hal Cruttenden comes to Faversham to play the No5 Club at the Alexander Centre.

£12.50 plus booking fee from [www.wegotickets.com/event/385663](http://www.wegotickets.com/event/385663)

The Alexander Centre, 15-17 Preston Street, Faversham **01795 594 460**

**Saturday, 18 March, 7:30pm**

## **Jess Conrad OBE: 60s Icon Reloaded**



A fun filled evening of anecdotes and film clips as Jess recalls his fabulous life. Plus he will also be singing lots of his iconic 60's hits accompanied by the house band, The Criterion Allstars.

The Criterion, 69 High Street, Blue Town, Sheerness **01795 662 981**

**Friday, 24 March**



## **Muzika Lyra Ensemble**

Muzika Lyra will present a varied programme of music from around the world. The core will be an exploration of 'The Russian Romanza', with

songs and pieces by Glinka, Tchaikovsky (The Seasons), Rachmaninov (Vocalise) and Khatchaturian (Sabre Dance), as well as hidden gems by lesser-known composers.

For ticket information, visit

[www.sittingbournemusicsociety.com](http://www.sittingbournemusicsociety.com)

Highsted Grammar School, Highsted Road, Sittingbourne

**Wednesday 5 April, 10.30am to 3pm**

## **Royal British Legion Industries 2017 Health and Wellbeing Day**

Are you a military veteran or family member aged 65 or over?

Come along and meet other veterans, share experiences and make new friends. Take the opportunity to have health MOTs. So come along and have a fun day and benefit from everything on offer.

Oasis Academy (West Campus), Sheerness, Isle of Sheppey ME12 2BE

**Wednesday, 5 April, 2pm**



## **A Real Alien Adventure**

Ripstop Theatre presents 'A Real Alien Adventure'.

Miss Amelia

Buttersnap, investigator of all things unseen and mysterious, inventor of gadgets both marvellous and improbable, is on a mission to prove that aliens really do exist. With her Translator Device, her Teleporter Machine, and her trusty cat Tibbles, she sets off in her home-made rocket on a rip-roaring intergalactic journey.

Shadow puppetry, projections and aliens all make for a fun-filled show full of wonderment for the whole family (recommended for children over the age of 3 years).

The Avenue Theatre, Central Avenue, Sittingbourne **01795 471 140**

## Saturday, 15 April, 11am - 1pm

### Faversham Hat Festival

Faversham Hat Festival is back for a fourth year, with the Hat Parade starting from The Hat Shop in West Street at 11am. You are urged to join in, with a hat! The essence of the Festival is to encourage community involvement in a fun, creative and interesting way – centred round the theme of hats.

Market Place, Faversham **01795 227 071**

## Sunday, 30 April, 10am

### Colour Me Purple 5k Run



The Friends of the Wisdom Hospice are returning to Milton Creek Country Park in Sittingbourne for the third Colour Me Purple 5k sponsored run/walk.

Open to individuals and teams of all ages and abilities.

Milton Creek Country Park, Green Porch Close, Milton, Sittingbourne

[www.fowh.org.uk](http://www.fowh.org.uk) **01634 831 163**

## Saturday & Sunday, 13-14 May

### Faversham Transport Weekend



Saturday is a celebration of the big and beautiful, showcasing buses with **FREE** vintage bus rides and majestic commercial vehicles

lining the historical streets of Faversham, a vibrant market, independent shops, cafés and entertainment for the children – a great day out not to be missed.

On Sunday the Town plays host to over 350 cars and motorcycles through the ages. The vehicles fill the Town Centre and offer an interesting insight into travel through time. Take a nostalgic stroll around the Town, talk to the proud owners, and share stories while enjoying the sights and buzz of this wonderful event.

Market Place, Faversham **01795 539 339**

## Easter fun at Oare

Oare Gunpowder Works Country Park,  
Off Bysing Wood Road, Faversham

**Booking in advance is essential for all the below events** - so for more information, times and to reserve your child's place, call: **03000 419 956**

There are two sessions for each of these events, from 10am - 12 noon or 1pm - 3pm.

## Monday, 3 April

### Wild craft taster session

Get involved in some wild craft using natural materials to create your own masterpiece. Activity open to children aged 3 and over.

## Wednesday, 5 April

### Bush craft taster session



Join us for one of the two bush craft taster sessions on offer at Oare Gunpowder

Works Country Park, Visitor Centre. Open to children aged 5 - 12 years.

## 7 & 12 April – Easter trail

Children's activity for those aged 3 and over – follow the Easter Bunny's clues along a self-guided trail to find the treasure.



## Monday, 10 April – Pond dipping

Bring your children along to enjoy a session of pond dipping to discover the mysterious watery world of the mini-beast. £3 per child aged 3 and over.

All of these events and more can be found on our website: [www.visit-swale.gov.uk](http://www.visit-swale.gov.uk)

Visit Swale is a great place to advertise. Contact [tourismsupport@swale.gov.uk](mailto:tourismsupport@swale.gov.uk) or follow us at: [@Visit\\_Swale](https://twitter.com/Visit_Swale) on Twitter or [VisitSwale](https://www.facebook.com/VisitSwale) on Facebook

# Your Councillors

▶ Conservative ▶ Independent

▶ Labour ▶ UKIP

## Abbey



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## Borden & Grove Park



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**Nicholas Hampshire**

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## Watling



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## Woodstock



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**George Samuel**

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Swale Community Leisure

**NO  
EXCUSES!**

**TRY US  
FOR FREE**

**7 DAY GYM & CLASS PASS!\***

Make the most of this great opportunity, and take the first step today towards a healthier future! Who knows you might even enjoy it!

[www.swaleleisure.com](http://www.swaleleisure.com)

**Swallows Leisure Centre**

Central Avenue, Sittingbourne,  
Kent, ME10 4NT  
Tel: **01795 420420**

**Sheppey Leisure Complex**

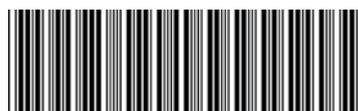
Off the Broadway, Sheerness, Kent, ME12 1HH  
Swimming Pool: **01796 668652**  
Healthy Living Complex: **01795 668061**

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COMMUNITY LEISURE**



\*New customers only. Terms & conditions apply. \*\*Pay & Display system - up to 2 hours car parking is refunded on admission by presenting your parking ticket refund voucher counterpart.

