

Inside Swale magazine

Winter 2013

Keeping you informed about your council services

In this issue

FREE Parking this Christmas – Shop Local

Volunteer Swale Awards 2014

Committed to Swale First

Changes to recycling from 16 December



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Tel: 01795 417 850 Email: csc@swale.gov.uk



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*Price relates to off-peak gym membership at Sheppey Leisure Complex. Membership from £19.95 at Swallows Leisure Centre.
**Dependent upon membership type. Other memberships also available, see online for details. Terms and conditions apply.





Cllr Andrew Bowles
Leader

Welcome to the winter edition of Inside Swale

Throughout December, Swale will come to life with Christmas festivities. Please take this opportunity to join us in supporting Swale's local traders and small businesses, and buy

local. If you're looking for a last minute Christmas gift or just want to treat yourself, take advantage of free parking in council car parks after 2pm, and take a look at what is on offer in your town.

Small businesses are important to our local economy, and can offer employment across the Borough. Inside you can read

how a small business has benefited from employing an apprentice. Last year we offered apprenticeships at Swale House. They were such a success, we have employed a further seven young apprentices this year.

The cold weather is beginning to set in and the Met Office has already warned us we are expecting a cold winter. If you are over 65, contact our Staying Put Team to arrange a winter warmth check. Please be prepared and always remember to check on any elderly neighbours or relatives. Let's pull together to help keep our communities safe.

Wishing you a very Merry Christmas.



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FREE Parking this Christmas



Last minute Christmas shopping or just treating yourself – take advantage of ‘free after 2’ parking until 24 December, including free

all day parking on Sundays. ‘On street’ parking restrictions will continue to be enforced.

From Saturday 7 December, parking in all council car parks will be free after 2pm until 24 December. The start of the initiative coincided with the first Small Business Saturday, as local traders joined together to celebrate the event with special offers, Christmas Fairs and free tasty treats to encourage shoppers to buy local. It is anticipated that both initiatives will help boost trading in the preparation for the seasonal period.

Support your local traders, use the free parking facility and shop local



Make sure you can!

If you want a voice in the elections, you need to register to vote. Have you checked your details on the Voter Registration Form? Make sure you can vote in next year’s election by responding to the voter registration form that has been delivered to your home.

If the information is correct – you can confirm either by freephone, internet or text on the contact numbers found on the form. You will need to quote your unique codes that can be found on the form. Any changes need to be made in writing on the voter registration form and returned in the pre-paid envelope supplied.

Have your say in the elections. The next scheduled election is the European Parliament elections on 22 May 2014, but a by-election can be called at any time during the year. Make sure you are registered to have your say.

For more information view www.swale.gov.uk/all-about-voting or www.aboutmyvote.co.uk. Alternatively call customer services on **01795 417 850**.

Council gets top rating from auditor for sound financial approach

An independent auditor has recognised the council’s financial resilience and given us the highest possible assessment. It was noted that the council has ‘continued to exercise a prudent financial strategy despite the financial environment.’

The Council remains committed to making savings while protecting front line services. This was highlighted at December’s Cabinet meeting when Members were advised that for the fifth consecutive year we have a forecasted underspend. For the financial year 2013/14 this is predicted to be £120,000, thanks to the council’s robust financial and strategic approach.

Further details on the projected underspend can be found on www2.swale.gov.uk/dso/viewagenda.asp?uid=1663

World War One Centenary

Ypres

The beginning of events to mark the World War One Centenary started with the Mayor of Swale, Cllr. Sue Gent, being joined by students from the Borough's secondary schools at the annual Armistice service in Ypres, Belgium.



The students joined the Mayor at the international memorial, as she laid a wreath at Menin Gate.

The students were then given a guided tour of the Sittingbourne twinned town ensuring that they all went away with the historic relevance of events 100 years ago that continue to impact us all today.



Left: Mayor of Swale, Cllr. Sue Gent laying a wreath at the Menin Gate. Right: Students with Cllr. Gent and Cllr. Bowles, Leader of the Council.

The World War I Centenary will continue through 2014-2018 with many events to mark the outbreak of the First World War. You can find details of future events on our website and anyone considering plans for a commemorative activity or event can send the details to tourism@swale.gov.uk or call **01795 417 399** to have their details added.

Keep in contact with events and updates on how the council will get involved by visiting www.swale.gov.uk/centenary-ww1. For national events, visit www.1914.org



Above: Inscription on Menin Gate, Ypres.

Merchant Navy Day

September saw the Red Ensign flag flying over Swale House. After being approached by the local Merchant Navy association, we agreed to fly the flag in honour of the day. The flag will be stored at Swale House and will be raised again next year.



Opening hours

At this time of year.....

Our offices will be closed in Faversham, Sheerness and Sittingbourne on:

25, 26, 27 December and 1 January 2014.

Sheppey Gateway will close at midday on 24 December and there will be a limited service between 9am-12 noon on Saturday 28 December.



Housing allocations policy

Cabinet Members have approved the proposed changes to Swale's housing policy at a meeting in November. The changes mean that anyone applying for social housing will need to have lived in the Borough for four out of the past five years. Currently applicants need to have lived in the Borough six out of the last 12 months, or three out of the last five years, or have a close family member who has lived in the Borough for five years. Serving and former members of the armed forces are excluded from this new rule.

Applicants who have a household income, including benefits, of more than £35k a year will not qualify.

Lastly, anyone who refuses three offers of homes that are considered suitable for their needs will be deferred or suspended for one year.

The changes will come into effect next year.



**Community
Covenant**

Local support for Armed Forces

Swale Borough Council has committed to working closer with its partners to provide support to the Armed Forces community in the Borough.

The agreement between the council and the Armed Forces is called the Swale Community Covenant which 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.

The statement of support will be signed by representatives from the Armed Forces, Swale's Mayor Cllr. Sue Gent and Council Leader Cllr. Andrew Bowles in early 2014, coinciding with the First World War Centenary.



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Students get political during Local Democracy Week



Some of the delegates from the Youth Forum who quizzed Gordon Henderson MP

Students quizzed local MP Gordon Henderson at the Swale Youth Forum's first meeting of the new school year.

Coinciding with Local Democracy Week (14-18 October), students took the opportunity to learn more about Local Government and shared ideas on how democracy works within their own schools and day to day lives. Borough and County Councillors didn't escape the grilling and answered a wide range of questions about local issues affecting young people and the councillor's roles in shaping the Borough.

The next meeting included some tough decisions on how to spend £10,000 during the next year, on projects for young people and the community in Swale.

If you have something to contribute to the Forum, get in contact with your school representative or contribute on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter @SwaleYouthForum](#).

Nominations needed for Swale's first Volunteer Awards



Do you know someone who gives up their time to help others and goes that extra mile for their community? This year we are recognising the hard work of those special individuals within the Borough who give their time to put something back in to their community.

March 2014 will play host to the Volunteer Swale Awards where people can be nominated for various categories, recognising the hard work of our invaluable volunteers.

Volunteers are people that give up their time to help others - this could be through the volunteer centre's befriending scheme, coaching at a child's sport club or doing a neighbours gardening. We want to recognise the selfless work happening in our Borough.

For more information on the awards and how to nominate please visit www.swale.gov.uk/volunteer-swale or contact the Community Safety Partnership on **01795 417 193**.

Sheppey Gateway



Sheppey Gateway has celebrated its second anniversary with a bumper day of events including an arts and crafts workshop, face painting run by Seashells Children Centre, and presentations from partner services including Citizens Advice Bureau and the NHS.

Visitors over the age of 40 were also able to get a free health check.

Primary school students across the Island were invited to enter a colouring competition. The winners will have their picture reproduced into a poster which will be distributed around the Island to celebrate Christmas.



For details on how the Gateway can help, visit www.swale.gov.uk/sheppey-gateway

Do you know how the changes to benefits will affect you? Need advice?

As part of the Swale Bridge Partnership (a multiagency commitment to deliver enhanced holistic services in Swale), Sheppey Gateway hosts a Department for Work and Pensions 'Drop in Session' on the last Monday of every month – from 9.30am-12.30pm. Do come along if need any advice or assistance.

Sheppey Gateway is a joint venture between Kent County Council and Swale Borough Council, bringing together a range of public and voluntary organisations to help local people improve their lives. If you provide a community service and would benefit from a central location to deliver that service, contact Sheppey Gateway for more details on meeting rooms and office space available for hire. Call **01795 417 850**.

Spitalfields Trust

Spitalfields Trust held their AGM at the Sheerness Dockyard church, and invited us and local residents to join them in celebrating the start of the work on church.

Those attending also watched as Oliver Leigh Wood removed the remaining bricks that blocked the doorway linking the church to the Commissioner's House through the dockyard's perimeter wall. The doorway has been blocked for generations.

Spitalfields Trust recognise the huge importance of the dockyard and are working to preserve this historic building. Renovations are already underway at the impressive former officers' homes in Regency Terrace.

At the end of August, a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund was made by the council to help fund a project which will help recapture the rich local heritage in the Sheerness Town Centre. If successful, it is hoped some of the funds will go to enhancing the area in front of the church. A decision on the bid will be announced in January 2014.



For a full range of courses or more information visit
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one of your local
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or call
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Ten weeks starting 9 January from 7pm to 9pm – £120

Ballroom & Latin Beginners

Ten weeks starting 28 January from 7pm to 9pm – £48

Drawing & Painting Beginners

Ten weeks starting 26 February 12pm to 2pm – £96

Yoga Beginners

Sixteen weeks starting 28 January 12:45pm to 2:15pm – £123

Creative Embroidery

Five weeks starting 23 January 7pm to 9pm – £56



Kent Adult Education is part of Community Learning and Skills

Bring this voucher to your local centre and receive 10% discount off tuition fees when you enrol on one of the courses above.
Valid until end of January 2013. This voucher can only be used once. Terms and conditions apply and cannot be used in conjunction with any other discount.

Have Your Say and Help Shape Swale

Join your local and county councillors, Kent Police, and Kent Fire Rescue Services to discuss issues that are affecting you and your community.

Local Engagement Forums (LEF) are held throughout the year in Faversham, Isle of Sheppey and Sittingbourne. At the most recent Faversham LEF, the proposed closure of the Minor Injury Unit in Faversham was discussed. At the Sheerness meeting, the new schools at Thistle Hill in Minster was on the agenda; and at the meeting in Sittingbourne the future of Phoenix House was due to be discussed, following the Kent County Council's announcement to extend the lease for a further three years.

Those attending the meetings will try to answer your questions, but if not possible are committed to return with an answer through a 'You Said We Did Report'. This report is circulated to everyone who attends, and put on our website.

If you are interested in finding out more or reading the 'You Said We Did' reports, visit www.swale.gov.uk/LEF. If you would like to receive agendas and dates for future meetings, please email embracinglocalism@swale.gov.uk, put 'LEF mailing list' in the subject.

You can also ask for topics to be added as discussion points at the meeting. Topics are agreed before the meeting takes place. If you wish to add something to the agenda please write to Democratic Services at Swale House, Sittingbourne or email: democraticservices@swale.gov.uk. Please title your email or letter 'LEF Topic' and give clear details of the topic highlighting at which LEF it should be raised - Faversham, Sheppey or Sittingbourne.

Swale Business Awards



Congratulations to all the finalists and winners of the 2013 Swale Business Awards.

The awards ceremony celebrated their achievements, with the Mayor of Swale Councillor Sue Gent awarding finalists with certificates before the winners went on to receive their awards.

Congratulations to

AbBaltis Ltd – Small Business of the Year Award

Blossoms Care Services Ltd – Employer of the Year Award

A2 Tyre Supplies Ltd – Customer Service and Commitment Award

Bird and Pest Solutions Ltd – 2013 Business of the Year Runner-Up

Medichem International (Manufacturing) Ltd – 2013 Business of the Year

Tired of working your Baubles off for someone else?

How about starting your own business? The Business Support Programme may be able to help. The programme, funded by us, aims to help you get your business trading the way you want it to. To book your place please call on **01795 417 194**.

You can find more on our 'support for business' page on our website, for topics including business support, funding, property and regeneration. You can also find details on the support and guidance available, and stay in touch with issues relevant to increasing business turnover.

Visit www.swale.gov.uk/support-for-business

Swale Local First Policy

Cabinet has now approved the Swale Local First Policy. The Policy shows the council's commitment to being local first in our commissioning and procurement activities. With Localism at its heart, the Policy has been developed to support local businesses, encourage greater local employment, while helping to boost the economy.

In order that Swale's residents benefit, we will think and go local first in order to:

- Maximise the proportion of our spend that is retained locally;
- Deliver social value in the borough; and
- Support and enable local businesses, Town and Parish Councils and the Voluntary and Community Sector to bid for contracts and services.

Local First will help make our Vision for the borough a reality - making Swale a better place for its residents.

www.swale.gov.uk/swale-local-first-policy

Discover Swale with Visit Swale

Take a look at the website Visit Swale for your Christmas events and so much more!

Your local carol concerts, lantern parades, Christmas markets and New Year's Eve celebrations are featured through your events and tourism website Visit Swale. Visit the site to find out what events are happening near you.

If you are holding an event in Swale, Visit Swale is also available to you as a useful tool to help promote your local business or event. Get your local community involved and upload your details. Remember to include an image to really bring your entry to life!

Check out www.visit-swale.co.uk you can also follow Visit Swale on [Facebook/VisitSwale](#) and [Twitter @Visit_Swale](#).



Apprentices

Apprenticeships offer incredible opportunities for young people. In Swale, we actively encourage local businesses to offer young people in the Borough this valued start to their working life. Swale Borough Council has first-hand experience at employing apprentices. In 2012, eight young people from the Borough were given apprenticeships within the council, all of which spanned across a wide range of service areas. Earlier this year, a further seven apprentices were appointed.

Angels Hair Salon in Sheerness is a small local business reaping the rewards of an apprentice. Salon owner Angela Croall said: "I am a firm believer in educating our young people and providing them with skills that will set them up for life. I took on an apprentice to bring fresh ideas to the salon. It's a very simple process to recruit someone and my apprentice settled in quickly. I would definitely consider another apprentice in the future and recommend it to other businesses in the borough."



Apprentice Amber Davies with salon owner Angel Croall

Over 80% of employers who have taken on an apprentice would recommend the scheme to other employers.

64% of those were small businesses – employing 50 people or less.

Apprenticeships now include shipbuilding, aviation, the music industry and funeral operations. Higher level apprenticeships are currently being developed which include space engineering and commercial airline piloting!

Employers offering apprenticeships could be eligible for grants and incentives of over £4,000.

The offer for apprenticeships in Swale has never been more appealing, for both employer and apprentice.

Interested in finding out more? Contact our Economic Development Unit on
01795 417 194

A better recycling service from 16 December 2013.

- ⇒ Glass bottles and jars can be placed directly into your blue bin or clear sacks, **no further need for the black insert.**
- ⇒ The box can be kept for excess recyclables on blue bin day.



An increased number of materials that can be recycled

- ⇒ **Plastic containers** such as margarine tubs, plastic meat trays, ice cream tubs and yoghurt pots
- ⇒ **Long life milk and juice cartons** (Tetra-Pack)

New kerbside textile collections from 16 December.

- ⇒ Old clothing (no pillows or duvets)
- ⇒ Collected alongside blue bin/clear sacks
- ⇒ Maximum one carrier bag per collection



Please continue to support Charity Collections.

Textiles will be collected with your recyclables and the already established small electrical items, collected with your normal waste collections. Batteries can also be recycled by placing them in a carrier bag on top of your green bin.



Kerbside Recycling and Refuse Collections

December 2013 - March 2014

Week 1 Calendar

(Isle of Sheppey, West Sittingbourne including Iwade, Newington, Hartlip, Upchurch and Lower Halstow)

December 2013							January 2014						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
						1			1	2	3	4	5
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	29	21	22	23	24	25	26
23	24	25	26	27	28	29							
30	31												

February 2014							March 2014						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
					1	2						1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28			24	25	26	27	28	29	30
							31						

Week 2 Calendar

(Faversham and surrounding villages, Teynham, Lynsted, Doddington, Newnham and East Sittingbourne)

December 2013							January 2014						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
						1			1	2	3	4	5
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	29	21	22	23	24	25	26
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30	31		
30	31												

February 2014							March 2014						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
					1	2						1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28			24	25	26	27	28	29	30
							31						

Christmas and New Year recycling and refuse collections 2013-14

IMPORTANT: Some Christmas and New Year collections will be different to usual so please check your collection days carefully.

If your collection day is...	➔	It will be collected on...
Monday 23 December 2013	➔	Saturday 21 December 2013
Tuesday 24 December 2013	➔	Monday 23 December 2013
Wednesday 25 December 2013	➔	Tuesday 24 December 2013
Thursday 26 December 2013	➔	Friday 27 December 2013
Friday 27 December 2013	➔	Saturday 28 December 2013
Monday 30 December 2013	➔	Monday 30 December 2013
Tuesday 31 December 2013	➔	Tuesday 31 December 2013
Wednesday 1 January 2014	➔	Tuesday 2 January 2014
Thursday 2 January 2014	➔	Friday 3 January 2014
Friday 3 January 2014	➔	Saturday 4 January 2014

Blue Wheelie Bin Collection week

Green Wheelie Bin Collection week

The week 1 and 2 collection calendars are a continuation of current collections. If you are still unsure whether you are a week one or two customer or have any other queries visit our website www.swale.gov.uk or contact the Customer Service Centre on 01795 417 850.

New calendars will be issued in March 2014

COLLECTIONS DISRUPTED BY

WEATHER (e.g. snow and ice): our advice is simple – leave your bins out on collection day and we will get to you as soon as we can. Daily updates will be on our website (www.swale.gov.uk), Facebook, Twitter, Customer Services on 01795 417 850, and supplied to all local media.

Please put your bin, sacks or bags on the boundary of your property by 7am.

Our collection service is for normal day-to-day household waste and not for other materials such as garden waste, rubble, waste from commercial sources etc.

No excess refuse can be taken on green bin day.

Excess recycling can be put out with the blue bin in bags and cardboard boxes, but not in black sacks please.

From 16 December we will be operating an alternate collection of textiles and small electrical items. Textiles can be placed in a carrier bag beside your **blue bin or clear sacks** (no pillows or duvets) and small electric items can be placed in a carrier bag beside your **green bin**. Batteries will also be collected on green bin day if placed on top of the bin in a carrier bag.

DANGER! VERY IMPORTANT
Please do NOT put sharp items such as saws, syringes, tools, etc., in your bins as they can cause serious injury to waste operatives.

Your blue bin or clear sacks collections from 16 December

2013: all recyclables go in the blue bin loose. We will take any amount of excess recyclables – please place alongside your bin in carrier bags or cardboard boxes.

NO black sacks please. If materials that we don't take (such as polystyrene) are present we will **not** be able to empty your bin or take your excess.

Use your blue bin or clear sack for:

Paper and cardboard products:

including newspapers, cereal boxes, magazines, catalogues, phone directories incl. Yellow Pages, junk mail, greeting cards, wrapping paper. Please ensure cardboard boxes do not include polystyrene or other non-paper/cardboard packaging.

Plastic products: all plastic bottles including milk, squash, fizzy drinks, washing up etc. (empty bottles only please), plastic containers such as margarine and ice cream tubs, yoghurt pots, fruit punnets and plastic meat trays.

Glass bottles and jars: clean glass bottles and jars, can now go directly into your blue bin – no need for the black insert (no Pyrex, no light bulbs and no panes of glass please).

Long life milk and fruit juice

cartons: also known as Tetra-paks. Empty cartons only please.

If in doubt put it in the **GREEN** bin.

Any queries please contact the Customer Service Centre on 01795 417 850 or visit our website www.swale.gov.uk

Weekly Food Waste Recycling

From April 2014



- ➔ 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

Compostable bags, kitchen roll or newspaper only should be used to line the caddy

No plastic bags, biodegradable bags or food packaging

Further details from early 2014 on www.swale.gov.uk, in the local press and in Inside Swale



The Cleansing Team
Swale Borough Council
Swale House, East Street
Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 3HT
www.swale.gov.uk/new-collections
email: waste@swale.gov.uk

Living in Safety



Mayor of Swale, Cllr. Sue Gent having her blood pressure checked.

Over 300 people attended the 11th annual Living in Safety event organised by Swale Borough Council's home improvement service Staying Put.

The event is held to provide advice and information on living a safe and healthier life.

Held at Swallows Leisure Centre in Sittingbourne, the event received positive feedback from both visitors and exhibitors. Health services commented that they had spoken to many people and the health checks had been well received. Mayor of Swale, Cllr Sue Gent also attended the event and received her very own health check.

Exhibitors on the day included Citizens Advice Bureau, Age UK, Health and Wellbeing from NHS, Carers Support, Diversity House, Social Services, Neighbourhood Furniture Store, Parkinson's Society, SSAFFA (support for Forces and their families), Swale Borough Council's Environmental Response, Benefits, Housing and Staying Put Teams.

Visitors were able to get health and nutritional advice, blood pressure checks, and information on how to help live a safe and healthy life. There were also demonstrations of local activities that older people can take part in.

Staying Put is the home improvement agency for Swale and its Handyman Service offers practical help to the over 60s and disabled, for a small charge, whether they are owner occupiers or private tenants and need practical assistance with minor jobs or repairs to improve their homes.

For more information contact Staying Put at www.swale.gov.uk/staying-put or call **01795 417 131**.

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Healthy environment

Successful £200,000 bid for a greener Swale.

Swale is going to benefit from greener buses after a successful bid to the Department for Transport for a grant to improve the emissions of some of the Boroughs buses.

The grant will be used to retrofit equipment to the exhausts of some of Swale's buses, helping reduce emissions which may be harmful to the environment. It is hoped the buses will be converted by March 2014.

There have only been a small number of councils in the country awarded money and we are pleased that the work we are doing in Swale has been recognised.

For more details on Swale Borough Council's commitment to a healthier and cleaner Borough visit www.swale.gov.uk/environment



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Brilliantly engineered with a 10 year guarantee (yes even on the controls) our heaters are built to last - 40 years plus! No need for any servicing so no waiting for the plumber. Just think of the time you'll save and the elimination of the yearly cost of servicing or insurance.

Our incredible design saves a tremendous amount of space so you don't have to fill your walls with conventional radiators. With no pipes required, Sunflow heaters offer great flexibility for positioning and they look superb, excellently finished in the colour of your choice. We can alter power ratings and sizing to suit virtually any room.

Take Control

Knowing that each room can be individually time and temperature controlled means peace of mind for those of us managing energy on a budget. In the depths of winter, unused rooms can have radiators turned off or just ticking over at whatever temperature you want. They can be timed to come on or off at the precise times you specify. Remember, every degree less can produce substantial savings on energy bills.

"I have just had my electricity usage statement for the year and it has gone from an average of 18.91 kW a day to 7.02 kW which is pretty spectacular. I'm very pleased."
J.S. - Somerset

Our heaters are excellent replacements for gas, oil and economy 7 heating systems. They will work alongside both economy 7 and economy 10 - see our brochure for more information. Sunflow has fully qualified Gas Safe engineers and electricians with a great deal of experience in replacing old systems. We renew water heating and have a range of options.

Sunflow is a family business and we care about our customers. We understand quality assessments and can provide free quotes for any requirements - whether you require one heater or want to examine options for the whole house.



Reg. No. 528940

For your FREE brochure call our 24hr Brochure Line on: 0800 158 8270 Questions? Call Suzanne on 0800 158 8272

Healthy environment

Is your housing benefit being reduced?

Are you worried about how this will affect you?

We know some people are concerned about how the welfare reforms may affect those who are under occupying (have a spare bedroom) in their social housing property. This means they may move to a smaller property or have their housing benefit reduced. Some people are concerned that the changes mean they may become homeless, face rent arrears or severe hardship.

One of our highest priorities is to help prevent homelessness and hardship. We now have a small team offering help across all agencies and providing customers with advice and support regarding welfare benefits, housing, and tenancy and mortgage sustainment.

One method of help is through a Discretionary Housing Payment. This is money that can be paid towards rent to customers who are entitled to housing benefit, have a rent shortfall, and who need help with housing costs over and above their benefit award. There are various factors and government guidance that will need to be looked at when deciding if an additional payment can be made.

Help is out there. Contact the team on **01795 417 666** as soon as you can to discuss your circumstances.

See page 9 for further details on a Department for Work and Pensions drop in session at Sheppey Gateway.

Be prepared!

Very cold temperatures can raise blood pressure, increasing the risk of heart attack or stroke. It can also make lung conditions worse and reduce the ability to fight infection. Simple solutions such as closing curtains at night and having a warm meal can make all the difference to preventing illness or even deaths.

For further details on keeping warm and safe this winter visit www.swale.gov.uk/get-ready-for-winter



Warm Homes – over 65?

The council's home improvement agency, Staying Put is offering a winter warmth check for some householders in the Borough.

If you are over 65 and have a health issue, Staying Put will visit you in your home, offering advice on how to keep warm this winter. Staying Put can also offer warm blankets and clothing if needed. Your Staying Put representative will be able to advise if you're eligible for help from other agencies, such as the warm home scheme for insulation grants.

For more details on **Staying Put** services, call **01795 417 131**



On 1st January 2014 **Oasis Academy Isle of Sheppey** opens, marking a new beginning in the lives of students, parents, carers and Island residents.

As part of the Oasis family, inclusion is our core belief. We have high aspirations for everyone who enters through our doors and every child will be loved and nurtured enabling them to fulfil their potential.

Our vision is to provide a centre of excellence for lifelong learning with extended school opportunities and adult education.

We invite you to join us on our journey to become outstanding and offer our world-class facilities as a community hub for all to enjoy.

Oasis Academy Isle of Sheppey

East Site: Minster Road, Minster-on-Sea, Kent ME12 3JQ

West Side: Marine Parade, Sheerness, Kent ME12 2BE

t: 01795 873 591

www.oasisacademyisleofsheppey.org



A new beginning...

Healthy environment

Funding the way for SATEDA in Faversham

Faversham will now benefit from a new drop-in service provided by Swale Action to End Domestic Abuse (SATEDA) after successfully securing funding through a You Decide event, set up by Cllr. Andrew Bowles. The event gave groups in the community an opportunity to vote for which organisations should receive the funding. The funding will allow SATEDA to offer a weekly service from January 2014.

Is domestic abuse affecting you or someone you know?

Come and speak to SATEDA face to face to get the right advice and support

SATEDA Drop In

SATEDA 
Swale Action To
End Domestic Abuse

admin@sateda.org 01795 417251
www.sateda.org

Cooking up some action with SATEDA

Swale Action to End Domestic Abuse (SATEDA) was joined by Community Chef Mike Spackman and his employability trainees at its annual conference and AGM in October. Held at the Teynham Community Centre in Sittingbourne, delegates from across the Borough were greeted by Deputy Mayor of Swale, Cllr. George Bobbin before they heard from the Chairman of the Board of Trustees Sonny Butler and Service Director Liza Thompson.

Delegates also heard from SATEDA's resident counsellor Jo Walmsley-Moore on her specialist work with survivors of domestic abuse. An overview of the changes in Legal Aid, a round-up of the year, and plans for the coming year were also discussed, with expert knowledge from guest speaker Karina Chetwynd of John Copland and Sons Solicitors.

Delegates also had the opportunity to hear from Kent Police's Kim White (OBE) who has many years' experience of working closely within the gypsy/traveller community.

Workshops were held in the afternoon allowing delegates an opportunity to learn about the Healthy Relationships programme delivered by the Kent Domestic Abuse Consortium (KDAC), the Freedom Programme, and the invaluable work of the National Centre for Domestic Violence (NCDV).

If you, or anyone you know, is affected by domestic abuse in anyway, please come along to either the One Stop Shop at Phoenix House, Central Avenue, Sittingbourne, Tuesday mornings 9.30-11 - or to the drop in at the Sheppey Gateway, Sheerness High Street, any Wednesday afternoon 1-3pm.

For further details call **01795 417 251**.

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Beautiful Homes

We know how hard it can be to find a dependable and honest cleaner, which is where we can help.

We can offer you professional cleaning and ironing for a fully inclusive rate of only **£9.75 per hour** (minimum of 2 hours per week).

All of our cleaners are specially selected, and insured, and you will receive the same cleaner each week.

So, if you'd like to take the pressure off keeping up with your household chores, then call us today on:

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(01795 533642 outside office hours)

or visit our website:
www.bellecasa.co.uk



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From £9.50 per hour

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Faversham

01795 477766

caroline@diamondhomesupport.com
www.diamondhomesupport.com

AGE UK in SWALE
FAVERSHAM, SHEPPEY & SITTINGBOURNE



Provide services to anyone in the Swale area over the age of 50 and can include:-

- Information Advice and Guidance
- Freshly cooked two course lunch
- Transport to and from centres
- Social activities including outings
- Bathing with trained care workers
- Personal care in your own home
- Help with domestic tasks
- Freshly cooked meals delivered to your home
- Hairdressing
- Chiropody and foot care
- Specialist dementia care services including carer support, day care, dementia café and cognitive stimulation groups.

Please contact your local branch to see what they can offer.

Age UK Faversham 2 Middle Row Faversham Kent ME13 7AJ Tel: 01795 532766	Age UK Sheppey Rosemary House 43 Trinity Road Sheerness Kent ME12 2PF Tel: 01795 662562	Age UK Sittingbourne Heather House Day Centre Avenue of Remembrance Sittingbourne Kent ME10 4NN Tel: 01795 477520
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Healthy environment

Stray dog service is an award winner – again!



For the fourth year in a row, the council's Stray Dog Service has been awarded the Stray Dogs Gold Footprint by the RSPCA, as part of the Community Animal Welfare Footprint 2013.

The footprint awards are split into four levels, Bronze, Silver and Gold.

The scheme rewards and promotes good practice in animal welfare by local authorities, and recognises organisations that have gone above and beyond to ensure higher animal welfare standards.

To report a stray dog during normal office hours, call **01795 417 850**, and arrangements will be made for the dog to be collected.

If a dog is found between 5pm and 9pm on weekday evenings, and between 9am and 9pm at weekends and on bank holidays (excluding Christmas Day, Boxing Day and Easter Sunday), call **07795 237 479**.

'Bag it, bin it, win it' competition

Congratulations to all the winners from the 'Bag it, bin it, win it' competition held across the Borough. The competition was held in conjunction with the Kent Messenger Group as a way of thanking responsible dog owners for cleaning up after their animals, while serving as an important reminder to those who continue to fail to clean up after their dogs.

There is no excuse; dog waste can be put in any public waste bin as long as it is bagged.

Winners took away prizes including a digital camera, a selection of dog products donated by Abbey Vets in Sheppey, £40 of vouchers from Pets at Home in Sittingbourne, and £20 of vouchers from Gladwells Pet and Country Store in Faversham.





Medway **NHS**

NHS Foundation Trust

Medway baby unit emerging as a centre of research

New brain scanning technology at Medway Maritime Hospital is set to further brighten the futures of babies cared for in the Oliver Fisher Neonatal Unit.



The unit is now able to scan the brains of babies born with an array of neurological problems and predict how each individual is likely to progress in the following years. This is all made possible using MRI-DTI (Diffusion Tensor Imaging) and MRS (Magnetic Resonant Spectroscopy) technology.

The scanning is part of a study called MARBLE and was initially only carried out at University College London Hospital (UCLH).

Dr Soe, Consultant Neonatal Paediatrician at Medway, said: "We were invited to join the study by my colleagues in UCLH, but like all neonatal units in Kent, Surrey and Sussex, we did not have MRI-DTI and MRS, which meant babies would have to be transferred to London."

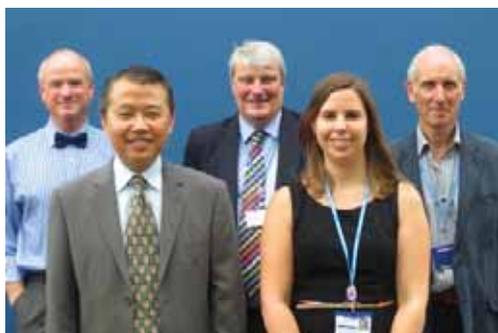
Dr Soe successfully secured funding in June 2013 for the technology as well as for a research nurse and a neonatal research nurse.

He continued: “We have been told that the first baby scan we did here at Medway produced the best pictures in the study so far. We did it and we did it well.”

The new technology now based in the MRI department at Medway Maritime Hospital is available not only to help babies, but also for other clinicians to use for other patient groups.

Medway to host new network set to benefit critically ill patients across Kent, Surrey and Sussex

Medway NHS Foundation Trust is the first to host a new network to get hospitals in Kent, Surrey and Sussex working together and sharing expertise, to improve care for critically ill adults and babies.



David Simpson, Aung Soe, Phil Barnes, Rebecca Siverman and Gray Smith-Laing.

The Trust was successful in its bid to host the South East Coast Adult Critical Care and Neonatal Operational Delivery Network (ODN), due to be launched in October 2013.

ODNs are one of a number of new networks and organisations that form part of the new NHS landscape. They focus on building relationships between hospitals, allowing them to share best practice, improve quality of care and enhance patient experience, for specific hospital services across a geographical area.

With a wide range of skills and services for critically ill adults and babies on offer from hospitals in Kent, Surrey and Sussex, patients are set to benefit from the new network.

The Trust will be the base from which the ODN operates, supported by two dedicated members of staff, funded by NHS England.

Would you like to be a governor?

The Trust will be holding elections for its Council of Governors during the first months of 2014. If you are interested in becoming a governor, please call the membership office before Christmas on **01634 825 292**, email members@medway.nhs.uk or check the Trust's website www.medway.nhs.uk for further details.

Becoming a member

You can become a member of Medway NHS Foundation Trust by signing up online at www.medway.nhs.uk/membership or by calling the membership office on **01634 825 292**.

Your Councillors



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A better recycling
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16 December 2013



Glass bottles and jars
should be placed directly
into the blue bin or clear sacks

No further need for the black insert

We will also take... paper,
cardboard, plastic containers,
margarine tubs, ice cream tubs and
Tetra Pak cartons

More details of our new
improving service and collection
calendars inside

www.swale.gov.uk/new-collections