

AUTUMN 2022 | #DISTRICTNEWS

DN

MAGAZINE



In this issue: **COST OF LIVING SUPPORT** **COMMUNITY PROJECTS ACROSS THE DISTRICT**

NEWS FROM ACROSS
THE LEWES DISTRICT



Lewes District Council

Hello

Welcome to the autumn
2022 edition of DN,
brought to you by Lewes
District Council

We step into autumn with great concern for the growing number of people who are struggling to make ends meet amid the deepening cost of living crisis.

Soaring bills for energy, food, fuel and much more are putting huge financial strain on residents locally, as well as nationally, especially as we approach the winter months. Therefore, in this edition of DN we have continued our focus on detailing the support that is available.

As a local authority, we are committed to doing everything we can to help and have set up a Cost of Living Crisis Fund as part of a £750,000 package of measures. We have also declared a cost of living emergency and will soon be hosting a summit with many of our partners to develop a local action plan.

Within these pages there is lots of information about where you can turn to for support and advice during this worrying time, which we hope you find useful.

Meanwhile, we are driving ahead with community projects to make Lewes district an even better place to live. In this DN, we give you a taste of some of these projects, ranging from wide-scale play area enhancements to sustainability improvements and natural flood management. More information about our plans and programme of work can be found at: [makingadifferenceinlewesdistrict.com](https://www.makingadifferenceinlewesdistrict.com)

Finally, as the nights draw in, please spare a thought for those who are experiencing the toughest of times and remember that if you are able to help, emergency food providers are urgently in need of donations. Thank you.



Councillor James MacCleary
Leader of Lewes District Council



Councillor Zoe Nicholson
Deputy Leader of Lewes District Council



Councillor Chris Collier
Cabinet Member for Performance & People

In this issue

04	Food Bank Donations
06	Financial Support
08	Your Energy Bills
10	Improved Play Areas
13	UNESCO Ambassador Visit
15	Newhaven
16	Citizens Advice

Get in touch

DN is available in large print, audio or in another language upon request.

To receive DN by email visit [lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/district-news](https://www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/district-news)

📞 01273 471600 🐦 @LewesDC 📘 LewesDistrictCouncil | Design by [studioimeus.co.uk](https://www.studioimeus.co.uk)

Cost of living support – food



Debbie Twitchen, support staff member at Landport Food Bank

Donations needed

Emergency food providers such as food banks and community pantries are facing a huge spike in demand over the autumn and winter.

With increasing numbers of people across Lewes district struggling to afford food due to spiralling bills, dependency on these services is growing and donations are needed.

Debbie Twitchen, of Landport Food Bank, said: “Donations are getting less and less as people tighten their belts while more families are relying on us for food – it’s a perfect storm.”

If you would like to support your local food provider, the best way to help is by contacting them directly to find out their specific needs (see list on page opposite). Many prefer financial donations where possible, which allow them to buy the products most in demand. In addition, there are donation points at supermarkets across Lewes district, including Morrisons in Seaford, Sainsbury’s and Lidl in Newhaven, and Waitrose and Aldi in Lewes.

Food banks often receive lots of pasta, tinned soup and baked beans. Also please consider donating UHT milk, tinned meat and fish, or essential toiletries.

Getting help to access food

If you are finding it difficult to afford food, local community food projects might be able to help.

Contact Lewes District Citizens Advice (see back page) to discuss your situation. They can give benefits, budgeting and debt advice while also offering support including a referral to your local food bank and help with fuel vouchers.

Community hubs, voluntary and community sector organisations and local authorities can also refer people to foodbanks.

Once your referral has been received by your local food bank, they will be in touch to arrange collection of emergency food parcels.

There is extra help available for people of pension age via Lewes District Citizens Advice.

Food banks and community food hubs

There are food banks and affordable food projects across Lewes district. Some of the food banks require a referral and some you can contact directly.

Lewes

Fitzjohns Food Bank

Monday afternoons. Christ Church, Prince Edward's Road, Lewes, BN7 1BL. Referral needed.
Tel: **07395 156873**. @: fitzjohnsfoodbank@gmail.com

Landport Food Bank

Mondays 2 - 3pm. Tenants Resource Centre, 2a Horsfield Road, Lewes, BN7 2TA. Referral needed.
Tel: **07793 953446**. @: debbietwitchen@gmail.com

Malling Food Bank

Mondays 12.30 - 1.30pm. Kings Church, Unit 3, Brooks Road, Lewes, BN7 2BY. Referral needed.
Tel: **07724 5042531**. @: briankcfrench@gmail.com

Newhaven and Denton

Havens Food Cooperative

Open every day, 365 days a year from 9am. 2a Thompson Road, Denton, BN9 0RS. Surplus food, available for anyone to collect.
Tel: **01273 918226**. @: havensfoodcoop@gmail.com

Newhaven Baptist Church Food Bank

Wednesdays and Fridays 9.30am - 12pm. Drop in, no referral needed. Newhaven Baptist Church, Church Hill, Newhaven, BN9 9NA.
Tel: **07825 446711**.
@: jac.parson@newhavenbaptistchurch.co.uk

Newhaven Community Supermarket (SCDA)

Mondays 11am - 3pm. Pay as you feel. Denton Island Community Centre, Newhaven, BN9 9BA. Surplus food, membership required.

Tel: **01273 516032**.

@: enquiries.info@sussexcommunity.org.uk

Peacehaven

Peacehaven Community Supermarket (SCDA)

Thursdays 11am - 3pm. Pay as you feel. Kempton House Day Centre, Cavell Avenue, Peacehaven, BN10 7NJ. Surplus food, membership required.
Tel: **01273 516032**.
@: enquiries.info@sussexcommunity.org.uk

Ringmer

Ringmer Food Bank

Mondays 11am - 12pm. Ringmer Village Hall, Ringmer Library, Lewes, BN8 5QH. Referral needed.
Tel: **01273 812145**. @: gilliansal1947@gmail.com

Seaford

SEA Community Larder

Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays 10am - 1pm. Old NatWest Bank, Clinton Place, Seaford. Surplus food, available for anyone to collect.
Email: hello@seafuture.org

Seahaven Storehouse Food Bank

Thursdays 12 - 2pm. Seaford Community Church, 115 - 117 Vale Road, Seaford, BN25 3HB. Referral needed.
Tel: **07921 844930**.
@: seahavenstorehouse@gmail.com

Please note that many delivery services are ending, so organisations may only be able to offer a delivery if you have a serious health condition or disability. Please check with your local organisation.

Information provided by Lewes District Food Partnership. Online at linktr.ee/lewedistrictfoodpartnership Instagram [@lewedistrictfoodpartnership](https://www.instagram.com/lewedistrictfoodpartnership)

Cost of living support - your finances

Lewes District Council has provided £750,000 this year to help local people through the cost of living crisis.

This includes £500,000 to support residents, with £150,000 of this money ring-fenced for council tenants.

During the summer, when the council declared a cost of living emergency, it announced a new £250,000 Cost of Living Crisis Fund and the first £50,000 tranche of this was awarded to food banks to help meet very high levels of need.

The remaining £200,000 is being distributed through a grants programme over the coming months – visit lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/community/lewes-district-community-grants for more details – and is funding a dedicated officer to coordinate the scheme.

Additionally, the council ensured the council tax energy rebate of £150 per household was paid quickly with more than £4.5million awarded to over 30,000 households.

Locally, the council has been administering a £220,000 fund from East Sussex County Council which forms part of the government's household support fund and has enabled eligible people to apply for vouchers of

£50 per adult, £30 per child and a £100 energy voucher.

Meanwhile, a new Council Tax Reduction Scheme has meant local people of working age and in greatest hardship do not have to pay anything.

This autumn the council will host a Cost of Living Emergency Summit, with stakeholders including Citizens Advice, food banks, chambers of commerce, trade unions and local MPs, all invited to play their part in developing a Food and Fuel Action Plan.



“As living costs spiral, our local food banks are running very short of food at a time when people desperately need their assistance, so it was crucial we gave them financial support quickly.

“We are keenly aware of the real challenges people are facing – especially those with the lowest incomes – and although the council cannot resolve all the problems being experienced, for some time we have been working to help alleviate hardship for those who are worst off.”

Councillor Zoe Nicholson, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets



Extra financial support from Lewes District Council

If you are struggling to pay your Council Tax or need to claim Housing Benefit, find out if you are eligible for help by visiting [lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/council-tax-reduction](https://www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/council-tax-reduction)

Information on exceptional hardship payments for our most vulnerable residents is available at [lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/EHP](https://www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/EHP)

If you might get evicted, you could qualify for discretionary housing payments. Visit [lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/DHP](https://www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/DHP)

Help with food costs and utility bills for any form of fuel that is used for domestic heating, cooking or lighting is available through the household support fund. To check whether you can apply visit [lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/HSF](https://www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/HSF)

Council launch 'safety net' funding scheme

Lewes District Council has launched a new funding scheme that will help residents who are on a low income but will miss out on the government's £650 cost-of-living payment. The way the government calculates who receives £650 means that people whose income is just £1 above certain levels will not qualify.

The council will make a financial award to those residents who do not receive the government payment of £650 and who have less than £6,000 in savings; are in receipt of housing benefit and/or a council tax reduction, but not in receipt of any other means-tested benefit or have a weekly net income below set the levels below or are in receipt of a disability benefit.

The levels are: single person - £320; lone parent - £370; couple - £420; couple with children - £470.

This limited cash scheme will open on October 1 and details of criteria and how to apply are available on the council website, [lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk](https://www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk)



"It's a great concern to us that many residents won't get the £650 payment from the government, when in fact the difference between their circumstances and those who are getting the money is minimal. We must close the gap otherwise even more people will suffer over the coming months and so this new initiative provides the safety net that is needed."

Councillor Chris Collier, Cabinet Member for Performance and People

Cost of living support - energy

Energy bills are set to soar this winter, putting a huge financial strain on families and individuals across Lewes district.

There is support available however, and if you are at risk of either eviction or being cut off by your energy supplier, please access this help as soon as possible.

There are also various agencies offering advice on cutting energy use in the home.

The warm home check service

This free service for East Sussex residents offers telephone advice for anyone struggling to afford to keep warm at home, with money-saving advice and tips on how to stay warm for less. It also provides eligible households with a holistic home energy efficiency assessment.

Visit: [warmeastsussex.org.uk/services-and-support/winter-home-check-service](https://www.warmeastsussex.org.uk/services-and-support/winter-home-check-service)

Text: **WARM to 80011**

Phone: **0800 464 7307**

Fuel vouchers

If you are struggling financially and have a prepayment meter with less than £4 on it, and are not due a payment for a while, you can seek help. You can phone your utility company and ask for a fuel voucher – worth £49 for a family – which you can apply for twice a year.

This does not have to be repaid. A PIN number is sent to your mobile phone. You show this at your top-up shop, along with your gas card or electricity key.



If you are at risk of your power being cut off

Citizens Advice has set up an Extra Help Unit for people who are vulnerable or at risk of being disconnected by their energy provider. They can help raise complaints with your energy provider. Referral is needed through the Citizens Advice consumer helpline on **0808 223 1133**. Visit ehu.org.uk for more information. Alternatively, contact your local Citizens Advice office for advice on your personal situation.

Grants to help pay off your energy debts

If you are in debt to your energy supplier, you might be able to get a grant from the British Gas Energy Trust to help pay it off. This is an independent charity and these grants are available to anyone – you don't have to be a British Gas customer. Visit: britishgasenergytrust.org.uk

Advice on reducing energy use at home

The Energy Saving Trust offers help to save money on bills at the same time as reducing your carbon footprint. Visit: energysavingtrust.org.uk/energy-at-home



“There is no single solution to this crisis, but there is support available through the council and a host of wonderful local groups and good causes that play such an important role in our communities. Together they represent a lifeline that more and more people are having to rely on, which I find totally unacceptable in this day and age.”

Councillor William Meyer, Cabinet Member for Housing

Making a difference where you live



An array of community projects are taking place across Lewes district as part of the council's far-reaching programme of improvements, which can be viewed in more detail at makingadifferenceinlewesdistrict.com

This work includes breathing fresh life into play areas, creating new sports facilities, green initiatives that will increase biodiversity in the district, tackling the impact of climate change and helping the council become carbon net zero by 2030.

Local parks and gardens are also being improved, wildflower meadows created and there will be greater access to the countryside, as well as a new wetland established.

Improved play areas are swinging into action

By investing £400,000 over the next two years, the council is transforming 20 play areas across the district.

Over 100 residents attended the consultation on

the design options for one of these play areas – Bell Lane in Lewes.

Play areas in Ditchling, Newhaven, Lewes, Peacehaven, Seaford, South Chailey and Ringmer are all part of the council's capital programme.

The play areas will be designed to provide a range of play facilities for different age groups and abilities.



“We are improving play areas across the district, putting in new equipment and upgrading play facilities.

“It was great that so many people got involved in the Bell Lane consultation and there will be more opportunities to get involved as designs for other play areas evolve.”

Councillor Julie Carr, Cabinet Member for Recycling, Waste and Open Spaces.



Community projects get the green light

The latest round of funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy includes many projects that bring benefits for people's health and wellbeing.

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a charge that local authorities can make on developments to raise funds for infrastructure projects, as a result of local development and growth. Since 2015 the council has collected more than £13.09 million.

Projects endorsed by the council include CIL contributions of £56,000 for the cycle rack and meander path on the unmade road leading to the seafront beside Cliff Gardens and Pump Field; £40,000 for improvements to the pathway in Centenary Park, Peacehaven; £35,000 for enhancements to Ouse Valley Way; £26,000 for pathway resurfacing at the Iford Estate; £19,000 for a community garden adjacent to Denton Primary School; and £11,196 for Seaford Salts Walkway improvements.

Young people are set to benefit with £50,000 for a skate park in Newick; £58,250 to refurbish a playpark in Malthouse Way, Cooksbridge; £27,000

for a playground replacement in Hamsey; and up to £5,000 to create a shelter for forest school at Chatsworth Park.



“This funding is great news for people of all ages across Lewes district, enabling projects to go ahead that will make a positive difference to their lives.

“I'm delighted too that many of these schemes focus on the environment and improving outdoor spaces, as these are crucial for the health and wellbeing of our residents.”

Councillor Stephen Gauntlett, Cabinet Member for Planning and Infrastructure

Community facilities also in line for CIL funding include £30,364 for final works to Wivelsfield Village Hall; £24,415 for refurbishment of changing facilities at Hillcrest Boxing Club in Newhaven; £5,000 for Newhaven and Seaford Sailing Club's changing and disabled access facilities; and £4,167 for the resurfacing and remarking of the badminton court at Newick Village Hall.



Inspecting a rainscape - staff and children at Wivelsfield Primary School were joined by councillors and officers from Lewes District Council and Ouse & Adur Rivers Trust

Natural flood management is child's play

Councillors from Lewes District Council visited Wivelsfield Primary School to see how the children have been helping to make the district more resilient to climate change and helping to reduce the risk of flooding further downstream in the catchment.

The children have been working alongside the Ouse and Adur Rivers Trust to build rainscapes and install rain planters on the school grounds.

Rainscapes store water and slow its flow during periods of heavy rainfall, while a rain planter receives water from the drainpipes and absorbs it into the soil, storing it for the benefit of plants.

The project has been completed with funding and support from Lewes District Council, as part of the

authority's natural flood management works.

This is part of a wider partnership approach working with Ouse and Adur Rivers Trust and Sussex Flow Initiative, landowners and others that the council has been supporting to promote natural flood management approaches on the River Ouse. This work reduces the risk of flooding, increases biodiversity, assists in improving water quality and helps make our district more climate resilient.

Helen Smith, Headteacher at Wivelsfield Primary School, said: *"This initiative offers a great opportunity to further enhance our grounds as an outdoor classroom, along with enabling hands on learning experiences to teach children about how climate change and water from developments cause flooding and how we can reduce this."*



With photo of Laura Davies, Permanent Ambassador for the UK to UNESCO, centre (sixth from left) with partners in the Living Coast Biosphere.

Councillors meet UNESCO ambassador

Cabinet councillors from Lewes District Council met with Laura Davies, Permanent Ambassador for the UK to UNESCO, as part of her visit to the Living Coast Biosphere.

The Living Coast is a UNESCO World Biosphere Region. It embraces a biodiverse stretch of the chalky South Downs and Sussex coast between the River Adur at Shoreham-by-Sea and the River Ouse at Newhaven.

Councillor Matthew Bird, Cabinet Member for Sustainability and Councillor Julie Carr, Cabinet Member for Recycling, Waste and Open Spaces were part of a delegation that discussed the work

going on across the Brighton & Lewes Downs UNESCO Biosphere.



Councillor Matthew Bird,
Cabinet Member for Sustainability

“Given the climate and ecological emergency that we are all facing, there has never been a more important time to bring together partners and the Living Coast is a great example of that approach.”

The Living Coast Biosphere partnership is made up of a range of more than 40 voluntary, conservation, education, local government and private sector bodies and aims to be a thriving environment for all.



Sam Buckland (left), Sussex Flow Initiative Project Officer at the Sussex Wildlife Trust and Councillor Matthew Bird (right) in East Chiltington where natural flood management has seen a pond desilted, two scrapes created and reconnected to an old stream channel.

Sussex Flow Initiative's 'outstanding' work celebrated

Councillors and working partners gathered to celebrate the launch of a review into the work of the Sussex Flow Initiative.

The Sussex Flow Initiative (SFI) is a natural flood management project that works with the environment, not against it, to reduce flood risk within the catchment area of the River Ouse. It is a partnership project that includes Lewes District Council, Sussex Wildlife Trust, the Woodland Trust and Environment Agency, supported by local groups such as the Ouse and Adur Rivers Trust.

The review report showcases the extensive project work the SFI has delivered and the benefits it is bringing.

Over the last five years the Sussex Flow Initiative has:

- Constructed 568 leaky dams, to hold back approximately 586,000 litres of water per rainfall event

- Created 16.8 million litres of seasonal water storage – providing wetland habitat for wildlife
- Reconnected nearly five hectares of floodplain, which will store roughly 9.9 million litres of water
- Planted 65,000 native trees creating 8.7 hectares of woodland – 1.32 hectares in floodplain
- Planted 10.2km of native hedgerow
- Sequestered 20,474 tonnes of CO₂ annually through created woodlands and hedgerows

The easy-to-read report is full of photographs and infographics and is available at www.sussexflowinitiative.org/news.

The team has also uploaded many interesting videos about natural flood management to YouTube and these can be accessed via the Sussex Wildlife Trust channel.



UTC building in Newhaven

Council purchase of former UTC building

Lewes District Council has confirmed the former UTC building in Newhaven will be in use again in early 2023.

The council quickly identified the harbour-side site as essential to its overarching plans for the regeneration of Newhaven and the establishment of a public

,contact centre in the town, alongside a marine and sustainability technologies hub, commercial services, green initiatives and education and training.

Always recognising the importance of the former UTC building, Lewes District Council committed £1m to the building and secured £1.3m of Getting Building Fund monies.

Plans for a health and wellbeing hub in Newhaven

The council has developed a new business case for a health and wellbeing hub in Newhaven as part of the redevelopment of the old Co-op building.

The new complex would incorporate GP services, expanded and improved leisure facilities, and forms a key part of the council's Reimagining Newhaven programme.

The health and wellbeing hub proposals could see Wave Leisure, the operator of Seahaven Swim and Fitness Centre, working alongside general practice teams.

The provision of space for creative and arts related interests as set out in the original plans, will be accommodated in the vicinity.



"I'm really looking forward to seeing the building brought back to life with a mix of uses from education and training to private businesses and local government services. I want to see it become a real hub of activity for the town alongside

the council's redevelopment of the town centre and investment in the adjacent Sidings.

"We are now seeing our town get the positive investment and energy it needs."

Councillor James MacCleary, Leader of Lewes District Council, and Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Prosperity

Citizens Advice



Lewes District

Citizens Advice provides free, confidential and impartial advice to anyone living, studying or working within Lewes district.

It provides information and advice which will help people resolve problems in areas such as:

- Benefits – help with all benefits, and it has a specialist Universal Credit adviser and benefits caseworkers
- Debt – generalist and specialist in-house money adviser to help with your debts
- Work – help with redundancy, unfair dismissal, grievances, flexible working and more
- Consumer – problems with your fuel bills, disputes with tradespeople
- Relationships – divorce, relationship breakdown, powers of attorney
- Housing – homelessness, eviction and tenancy problems

Citizens Advice now offers face-to-face appointments every day of the week at different locations in Lewes district.

Opening hours

Monday	Seaford 37 Church Street BN25 1HG	10am - 3.30pm
Tuesday Wednesday Thursday	Newhaven 15-19 Chapel Street BN9 9PN	10am - 3.30pm
Thursday	Peacehaven Meridian Centre BN10 8BL	by appointment only
Friday	Lewes Southover House BN7 1AB	10am - 3.30pm

Appointments can be booked by calling:

01273 007557 or emailing
info@lewesca.onmicrosoft.com

Out-of-hours Advice Options:

Email: www.eastsussexcab.co.uk
Website: www.lewesdistrictcab.org.uk
Telephone: **0808 278 7892**

Citizens Advice self-help website:

citizensadvice.org.uk