

JANUARY 2024 | #DISTRICTNEWS

DN

MAGAZINE



In this issue:

Children's playground upgrades
Improvements to bin collections

NEWS FROM ACROSS
THE LEWES DISTRICT



Lewes District Council

Hello

Welcome to the January
2024 edition of DN,
brought to you by
Lewes District Council

Entering 2024, there is a lot to be positive about as we make good on our promise to make Lewes district an even better place to live.

For young people, fantastic improvements have been made to play areas across the district as part of a £400,000 programme of investment. As we move into the final six months of the project, most of the new play areas and upgrades are complete, with the final tranche of work on track to be finished by the summer.

Every year an array of community projects receive funding from the council's community infrastructure levy scheme, with people of all ages benefiting. Recently this has ranged from new and improved footpaths for children to use in the Salts Recreation Ground in Seaford to a new clubhouse for Ringmer Bowls Club. Expressions of interest for the latest round of this funding are now being reviewed and we look forward to backing many more schemes in 2024.

We are also making waste collections better this year by introducing wheeled bins which have various advantages, not least preventing wildlife from ripping open black sacks and scattering rubbish on our streets. These bins, which are made of 98% recycled plastic, will be delivered to homes in phases from February onwards.

Amidst all this progress, however, we are acutely aware that the cost of living crisis continues to bring hardship to many people. One of the ways we are helping the most vulnerable in our communities is by again supporting around 20 Welcome Spaces this winter, where people can enjoy a safe, warm place and hot drink. Information about these spaces, alongside help with finances, food and energy bills, are contained within this DN, and I encourage anyone who is struggling to reach out for the support available.

On behalf of everyone at Lewes District Council, I wish you a happy and healthy New Year.



Councillor Zoe Nicholson
Leader of Lewes District Council

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Get in touch

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

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Wetland rapidly becomes haven for birdlife



Photo by Gerry Bennett

A new 6.8-hectare wetland being created in Lewes has already attracted an array of birdlife including migrating storks, egrets, cormorants and flocks of Canada geese.

The Cockshut is a 3km long chalk stream that flows from springs at the foot of the South Downs in Kingston, eventually joining the River Ouse before flowing out to sea. After it became clogged up by a non-native plant, the Cockshut Stream Restoration Project was launched and realignment of the stream began in 2023 to bring biodiversity improvements and alleviate the risk of flooding.

New footbridges and a raised walkway opening this spring will allow greater access for people to enjoy the area.

“When we made a climate emergency declaration in 2019 and put the council on course to net zero carbon by 2030, we were under no illusion about the scale of the challenge required to get there.

“However, when you consider our ambitious target and the significant progress being made, particularly in the reduction of emissions, it shows what can be accomplished and why we will double down on our determination to achieve all our climate change commitments.”

Councillor Emily O’Brien, Cabinet Member for Climate, Nature and Food Systems

Council welcomes emissions reductions



The council is making significant progress in reducing carbon emissions and tackling climate change.

A 16.8% reduction in carbon emissions on the total baseline figure from 2018/19 and a 13.8% reduction in fleet emissions, confirms the council is on track in terms of its emissions commitments. Additionally, the carbon footprint of the district has reduced by 15% since 2018 – based on data from the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero.

Some of the key council actions include the installation of 12 electric vehicle charge points in two council car parks with another 52 planned for other car parks over the coming months, the roll-out of new electric vehicles for food waste

collections, flood management work across the district and the allocation of cost of living crisis funds for green energy and energy-saving initiatives.



Children enjoy playground makeovers



Playgrounds across the district have been upgraded thanks to a two-year £400,000 improvement programme by Lewes District Council.

The council is on track to refurbish and install new equipment at around 20 playgrounds by summer 2024, with most already completed.

Work is soon to begin on: Hillcrest Court in Newhaven, Valley Dip in Seaford, and Malling Rec and Stanley Turner Rec, both in Lewes.

The new play equipment is designed to appeal to different age groups and to children with different interests, needs and abilities. Benches and picnic tables are being added in some playgrounds to make the spaces more family friendly.



“It’s great to see youngsters across a range of ages having fun with the new equipment.

“Of course, outdoor play areas come into their own in spring and summer, but I’ve been seeing children enjoying our newly refurbished play areas in (almost!) all weathers. It really shows how important these spaces are.”

Councillor Wendy Maples, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Wellbeing

Have your say on future development in Lewes district

People are reminded that time is running out to contribute their views to the latest stage of consultation on future development in the district, which ends on February 8.

The spatial strategy and policies document is evidence-led, with the information gathered by council officers informing where development, such as new homes, employment space and community facilities, is appropriate and where it is not.

The government gives every council an annual housing target for new homes built – the target

for Lewes district is 602 homes per year, double the previous target.

However, the evidence gathered so far by the council, including 42,000 representations from residents and organisations that followed the 'call for sites' and issues and options documentation, shows that a maximum of 210 homes a year is possibly deliverable.

The consultation offers a range of opportunities for people to have their say, including drop-in events and exhibitions across the district. For more information visit: [lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/LLP-consultation](https://www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/LLP-consultation)

“The draft local plan is much more than just a road map for where homes and businesses will be developed in the future. Using the vast amount of evidence our officers have so far collected, it informs a raft of policies that are key to deciding planning applications received by the council in the future.”

Councillor Laurence O'Connor, Cabinet Member for Planning and Infrastructure



Garage sites earmarked for new homes

Council officers have identified garage sites across Lewes district that could potentially deliver around 45 new homes including three specialist disability homes.

Surveys are complete and a public consultation involving residents and garage users will soon be announced.

Council funding for landmark community projects

Lewes District Council's community infrastructure levy funding is making a fantastic difference to towns and villages in all parts of the district.

The Community Infrastructure Levy, known as CIL, is a charge that local authorities must apply to developments to fund local infrastructure projects – since 2015, Lewes District Council has allocated over £9 million to a wide range of community improvements.

Village halls, parks, footpaths, cycle paths, bridleways, sporting facilities, community safety and much more have benefited from CIL in Lewes district.

Thanks to £350,000 CIL funding from the council, projects most recently completed include new and improved footpaths in the Salts Recreation Ground in Seaford, Egret's Way – a walking and cycling route from Newhaven to Lewes, Newick Skate Park and a new clubhouse for Ringmer Bowls Club. These schemes are pictured here.

Visit [lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk](https://www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk) for more information about CIL.



'Inspirational' new businesses scoop £3,000 in prizes



Cllr Nicholson and LEAP participants at the awards evening with Hannah (kneeling left) and Janine (kneeling right).

A start-up programme funded by Lewes District Council has seen two businesses win a share of £3,000 after taking part in the Local Enterprise and Apprenticeship Platform (LEAP) awards.

Sussex Lavender, founded by Hannah Dawson, won £2,500 and Janine Booth of Red in The Spectrum received £500 after competing in a Dragons' Den-style competition.

"Congratulations to Hannah and Janine who are deserving winners and their fledgling businesses are an inspiration to all would-be entrepreneurs.

"Starting up a business can be tough, so get in touch to find out about our free support."



**Cllr Zoe Nicholson,
Leader of Lewes District Council**

Sussex Lavender is based on the South Downs and using Hannah's expertise and experience of complementary health, produces 'land to hand' eco-contemporary products, including high-end artisan lavender oil for wellbeing product industries, and runs education workshops.

A diagnosis of autism motivated Janine to create Red in The Spectrum, a new business developing and delivering training in neurodiversity. Janine started training trade unions to enable them to more effectively organise and represent neurodivergent workers and has since expanded to training railway companies, barristers' chambers, non-profit and public sector organisations.

Residents and businesses can contact Edeal at edealgroup.org for free business support funded by Lewes District Council.

New cultural centre in Lewes proves popular

Visitors in the Jonathan Baldock exhibition at Charleston in Lewes © Phoebe Wingrove

Lewes's new cultural centre in Southover Road has welcomed over 30,000 visitors through its doors since opening in September 2023, representing 45% more people than anticipated.

Early research indicates that three-quarters of visitors have gone on to visit shops and other visitor attractions in the town, in turn boosting the local economy.

The new venue – a partnership between Lewes District Council, Charleston and East Sussex College Group – offers cultural opportunities for schools and community groups. East Sussex College Group students were the very first visitors to the space, enjoying a tour of the exhibitions and a careers talk, and returning for a series of creative workshops. Through new partnerships with Tenants of Lewes District and Lewes District Council's tenant involvement team, almost 100 participants from local families have enjoyed free artist-led workshops in the learning studio at Charleston in Lewes and offsite at food banks and community centres.

Nathaniel Hepburn, Director of Charleston, said:

"It's wonderful to see the venue already being utilised as a hub in the community – our community opening day in September was very well attended by local businesses, teachers, artists and makers, and the café and galleries are busy every day with families after school. We are excited to build on the educational and community work we've started."

As a result of the support shown to the project so far, Charleston has announced that the current exhibitions – Bring No Clothes: Bloomsbury and Fashion, and Jonathan Baldock: Through the joy of the senses – will be extended until March 3, 2024.



"It is fantastic that so many people have visited our new cultural centre already, especially students and local families enjoying free workshops. This venue is a real asset for Lewes."

Councillor Johnny Denis, Cabinet Member for Arts, Culture, Tourism and Leisure

Improvements for bin collections in Lewes district



a water butt or perhaps cut down as a planter. The council is happy to collect residents' old bins and either donate them to groups for reuse or get them recycled into new bins.

The council will be rolling out its 98% recycled bins in phases: rural areas – including Barcombe, Ditchling and Chailey – will be first, followed by coastal areas, starting from Newhaven to Saltdean, in the spring. South Highton, Bishopstone and Seaford will come next, followed by central parts of the district and remaining villages in the summer.

Alongside the wheelie bin roll out, the council is reviewing its refuse and recycling rounds and will be providing residents with a paper calendar in early 2024 with all dates for refuse, recycling and food waste collections for the coming year. Keep an eye out for your new collection calendar in early 2024.

For more information on the roll out, and to check the bin options available and the cut-off date to request a new bin, visit: lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/wheeliebins. If you do not have access to the internet and need to request a new bin, contact the council via the details on page 3.

Renew your garden waste collections now

Customers of the garden waste collection service will be able to renew their service from Monday, January 8. People are encouraged to renew before March 31 to avoid a break in their collections.

Customers who are new to this paid service can also sign up during this period and will be sent a 240-litre garden waste bin ahead of their first collection.

To find out more and renew or start a new service visit lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/garden-waste

You can also visit this page to download your collection calendar for the coming year.

Starting in February 2024, Lewes District Council will introduce wheelie bin refuse collections across the district.

Lewes District Council (LDC) wheelie bins will be free, and residents will have a choice of three different bin options, including an easier to manoeuvre 140ltr slim-line bin or a gull-proof sack for residents with limited space or narrow pavements outside their home.

Why is the council doing this? The wheelie bins are a safer option for waste crews, reducing the risk of musculoskeletal and other injuries. They also make refuse less susceptible to attacks from gulls and other animals than black sacks, reducing neighbourhood litter.

Anyone who has a Lewes District Council issued wheelie bin is welcome to keep using it. However, non-LDC bins will need to be replaced with LDC-issued bins. This is because the safety of waste operatives must be guaranteed when the bins are attached, lifted and emptied into waste collection vehicles and this requires a standardised bin design.

What happens to old non-LDC bins? People are encouraged to reuse old bins – as a composter,

The Chailey fixer-uppers

Chailey Repair Café

The expert team at Chailey Repair Café are on hand every month to fix people's broken household items ranging from clothes to ceramics to cycles.

The repair café is at St Peter's Church on the A275 at Chailey Green on the second Saturday of each month between 10am and 1pm, with the next session on January 13.

A café service is on offer including cakes.

Founder Bryan McAlley said: "Bring portable domestic items only please – and sorry but no fridges or microwaves. We will try to repair your item while you wait and watch what we do so you'll be able to fix it yourself next time. We do not charge for the service but invite you to make a donation to support our running costs."

No booking is needed. Bring connecting leads with all electrical items.

To check in advance whether an item can be repaired, email chaileyrc@gmail.com

"As a Chailey councillor I welcome these brilliant initiatives for local people, my thanks to all those involved."



Councillor Mark Slater, Cabinet Member for Tenants and Those in Housing Need



Phonebox to Phonebooks

Chailey Parish Council has transformed an old telephone box into a community library called Chailey Phonebooks.

Located in the car park of Chailey Free Church on the A275 South Common Road, people can borrow a book or take one and replace it with another.

Volunteers cleaned, refurbished, fitted shelves and solar powered lights to the phone box after it was moved to its current site by the parish council.

Council continues its support for the most vulnerable



Landmark achievement for food cooperative

Havens Food Cooperative, the food waste prevention and redistribution project of Havens Community Hub CIC, has celebrated after reaching £1 million in surplus food collected and given out to support the local community on the Havens coastal stretch between Saltdean and Seaford.

For more information on the project or to become a volunteer contact: havensfoodcoop@gmail.com or call **01273 918226**. To donate, visit: crowdfunder.co.uk/p/million

“This is an amazing achievement by Havens Food Cooperative, which is making a huge effort to ensure that surplus food reaches those who need it most in our community while reducing food waste.”



Councillor Chris Collier, Cabinet Member for Innovation, Delivery and People

Help with buying food

If you are unable to afford food, local community food projects might be able to help. Contact Lewes District Citizens Advice (see page 15) 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 they may be able to help with a fuel voucher.

Community hubs, voluntary and community sector organisations and local authorities can also make referrals to food banks. Once your referral has been received by your local food bank, they will be in touch to arrange collection of emergency food parcels.

For a full list of food banks and community food hubs in Lewes district visit: lewesdistrictfoodpartnership.org and click on Emergency Food Network.

Also visit lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/cost-of-living for more information.



Welcome Spaces

The council is supporting Welcome Spaces across Lewes district this winter where local people can go to enjoy a safe, warm place and hot drink.

To view a directory of these, visit: lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/cost-of-living and click on Welcome Spaces.

Financial help for people on low incomes

Lewes District Council is offering funds to residents on a low income who will miss out on the government's £900 cost-of-living payments.

The 'Safety Net' payment is available to eligible residents who are struggling to keep warm, buy enough food or pay for essentials.

To qualify, you must currently receive housing benefit or a council tax reduction, but not one of the means-tested benefits that would qualify you for a cost-of-living payment from the government, unless you also qualify for a disability or carer's benefit. The award is a one-off payment of £400 and will be paid into your bank account. The funding is limited and will be paid

out on a first-come, first-served basis. Apply via the grants portal grantapproval.co.uk

Extra council support

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

If you might get evicted, you could qualify for discretionary housing payments. Visit:

lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/DHP



"We know many people are under great pressure financially due to the cost of living crisis and are providing extra help to make ends meet, so please access the support available to you."

**Councillor Christine Robinson,
Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing**

Support with your energy bills



If there is a risk your power will be cut off

Please seek help as soon as possible. Citizens Advice has set up an Extra Help Unit for people who are vulnerable or at risk of being disconnected by their 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 (see page 15) for advice on your personal situation.

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.

Free energy advice

Free domestic energy bill help and home insulation advice for winter 2023/24 – free, impartial advice for

all those in Lewes district. For more details free phone **0800 458 9045** or visit ovesco.co.uk/new-projects

Energy debts

The British Gas Energy Trust is an independent charity set up to support families and individuals facing financial hardship and energy debt. You do not need to be a British Gas customer to access help. Visit britishgasenergytrust.org.uk

Advice on reducing energy use at home

The Energy Saving Trust offers help to save money on bills whilst also reducing your carbon footprint. Visit energysavingtrust.org.uk/energy-at-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/

Text: **WARM to 80011** / Phone: **0800 464 7307**



**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
- Cost of living crisis – food bank referrals, emergency fuel vouchers, tailored household support grant advice

For details of a new outreach advice programme, visit [lewesdistrictca.org.uk/get-advice](https://www.lewesdistrictca.org.uk/get-advice)

For information and to contact Citizens Advice visit [lewesdistrictca.org.uk](https://www.lewesdistrictca.org.uk)

Local freephone Advice line on **0808 278 7892** (lines are open Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays 10am-3pm).

Opening hours

Prior appointments only – no drop-in service available

Monday	Seaford 37 Church Street BN25 1HG	10am - 3.30pm
Tuesday Wednesday Thursday	Newhaven 15-19 Chapel Street BN9 9PN	10am - 3.30pm
Wednesday	Peacehaven Meridian Centre BN10 8BL	10am - 3.30pm
Friday	Lewes Relocating soon to 6 High Street	10am - 3.30pm
Last Tuesday of the month	Telscombe Civic Centre 360 South Coast Road, BN10 7ES	10.30am - 12.30pm Drop-in information

Out-of-hours advice options:

Website: [lewesdistrictca.org.uk](https://www.lewesdistrictca.org.uk)

Telephone: **0808 278 7892**

Self-help website: [citizensadvice.org.uk](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

For details about a new community outreach programme visit:

[lewesdistrictca.org.uk/community-outreach](https://www.lewesdistrictca.org.uk/community-outreach)

New Year 2024 Refuse and Food Waste Collections

Normal Collection Day

Monday 1st January
Tuesday 2nd January
Wednesday 3rd January
Thursday 4th January
Friday 5th January
Monday 8th January
Tuesday 9th January
Wednesday 10th January
Thursday 11th January
Friday 12th January
Monday 15th January
Tuesday 16th January
Wednesday 17th January
Thursday 18th January
Friday 19th January

Revised Collection Day

Thursday 4th January
Friday 5th January
Saturday 6th January
Monday 8th January
Tuesday 9th January
Wednesday 10th January
Thursday 11th January
Friday 12th January
Saturday 13th January
Monday 15th January
Tuesday 16th January
Wednesday 17th January
Thursday 18th January
Friday 19th January
Saturday 20th January

For recycling collection dates, check your kerbside recycling calendar or visit [environmentfirst.co.uk](https://www.environmentfirst.co.uk)



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