

MAY 2024 | #DISTRICTNEWS

**DN**

MAGAZINE

**In this issue:**

**Major arts festival comes to Newhaven**

**Multi-million pound plan for warmer homes**

NEWS FROM ACROSS  
THE LEWES DISTRICT



Lewes District Council

# Hello

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

As the summer approaches, there is so much to look forward to in Lewes district. We are starting to see wildflowers bring welcome splashes of colour to areas of council-owned land and, importantly, they are increasing biodiversity by attracting pollinators and creating vital habitats for wildlife. Adjusting our mowing regimes to encourage carefully selected areas to flourish is just one of many ways we are giving our environment a helping hand; and on a similar theme, see inside these pages for details of our multi-million pound project to decarbonise homes.

Another reason to eagerly look ahead to summer is the launch of a new festival in Newhaven. Look Again Supergraphics Festival will see blank walls and pavements transformed into eye-catching designs, 12 specially commissioned artworks installed across the town and a packed, month-long programme of events in June. In preparation, we have our new Gladiator machine to deep clean pavements – again, read this DN for further news on how it will spruce up our town centres.

And why not enjoy a trip to the cultural centre in Southover Road, Lewes, to see Charleston's second season of exhibitions? Tens of thousands of people visited the first exhibition and there has been some great collaborative work with East Sussex College Group and schools to provide inspirational learning opportunities. The introduction of Pay What You Can days, on the last Sunday of the month, are a great addition and mean visitors can choose how much they wish to pay for their tickets.

With the arrival of sunnier days, families will be able to make the most of our newly refurbished playgrounds. This £400,000 programme is almost complete and it's a joy to see children across Lewes district getting the most out of the new equipment, being active and having fun.

However you like to spend your summer, I hope you enjoy the many benefits of living in this beautiful part of the world.



**Councillor Zoe Nicholson**  
Leader of Lewes District Council

## In this issue

- 04** Park transformation
- 05** Creating warmer homes
- 08** Council's gum-busting machine
- 11** Supergraphics festival
- 12-13** Cost of living assistance
- 15** Health and wellbeing pilot

## Get in touch

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# 'Exciting' designs unveiled for Newhaven park



**The council is driving forward plans for a £3.1 million transformation of Fort Road Recreation Ground in Newhaven.**

Architects' designs show how existing buildings will be refurbished and repurposed to improve the facilities on offer. The whole site will be re-landscaped to increase biodiversity, including the planting of native trees and shrubs.

The underused Shakespeare Hall will be opened up to incorporate a café and new terraced area. Beside it, a new play area will be built using the slopes and other natural features of the park.

The Cricket Pavilion will also benefit from improved accessibility and layout.

A circular path route is planned, along with new

seating and exercise equipment, while access to the nature reserve will also be enhanced.

Additionally, public toilets at the park are being modernised.

Further technical work on the designs is scheduled over the coming months, ahead of a contractor appointment in the winter.

Construction will begin in spring 2025 and be completed by early 2026.

The works at Fort Road Recreation Ground are funded by the UK government and are part of the Re-imagining Newhaven programme.

For more details about the plans visit [fortroadnewhaven.org](http://fortroadnewhaven.org)



**"It's really exciting to see these new designs which show the huge improvements on the way for the recreation ground.**

**"I am looking forward to seeing this transformation take place and residents of all ages and abilities being able to enjoy the new facilities and enhanced environment there."**

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

# Multi-million pound project for warmer, greener homes



**Lewes District Council has announced it will invest nearly £2.7 million in making 267 council homes more energy efficient and cheaper to run, supported by a £2 million grant from the government.**

The government grant was part of a consortium bid with Eastbourne Borough Council.

The Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund invited applications for grant funding to help the council meet its target of net zero carbon by 2030.

The announcement follows an in-depth study by council officers that looked at the most realistic decarbonisation solutions, such as retrofitting eligible homes to improve their energy performance.

This project will help accelerate the progress already being made to reduce carbon emissions.

In November 2023, the council reported a 16.8% reduction in carbon emissions from 2018/19 and a 13.8% reduction in fleet emissions.

With the help of this grant funding, the council will reduce the carbon footprint of local council homes by implementing affordable retrofits, subject to their eligibility.

By simply upgrading windows, doors and draughtproofing to the highest standards, a 20% reduction in energy use is possible.



**"Decarbonising our housing stock has so many benefits for everyone. It reduces our impact on the planet and brings down energy bills. At a time when so many people are struggling with the cost of living crisis, this is a win-win.**

**"I'm hugely grateful to all the officers who worked so hard to prepare the bid. Their research has revealed the most efficient and cost-effective ways in which we can reduce the carbon footprint of our homes."**

**Councillor Mark Slater, Cabinet Member for Housing**



# New homes in Lewes district



The specially adapted bungalow in Ringmer

## New home gives family 'fresh lease of life'

A family has moved into a new and specially adapted home after waiting patiently for many years to find a suitable property.

The father and grown-up son and daughter all have multiple and highly complex disabilities, so much so, the layout of their old home meant father and son hadn't been able to see each other for a number of years, even though they lived in the same house.

Lewes District Council stepped in with partners to build the family a new home in Ringmer that includes all the necessary adaptations to allow the husband, wife and their two children to lead a full life together.

A specialist occupational therapy team has helped design the new home – ramps, hoists and a room for a 24-hour carer are amongst the many features being incorporated into the property.

In addition to funding from Lewes District Council and Homes England, a disabilities facilities grant of £180,000 was secured for the project.

## Homes completed at former police station site

A development of 21 new affordable council homes at Stowe Place, on the site of the former police station in Newhaven, has been completed.

The Lewes District Council development comprises 15 two-bedroom and four one-bedroom apartments and two three-bedroom houses. A ground floor flat has been purpose built for wheelchair users and 11 other flats will have added accessibility and increased scope for adaptations.

The properties are 100% electric and benefit from other sustainability features including high insulation specifications, a green living roof and solar photovoltaic panels.

## Extra parking in Newhaven

Visitors to Newhaven town centre can look forward to additional parking on offer with the reopening of the two upper levels in the Dacre Road car park.

The council hopes to secure planning permission for the new lighting designs in the car park soon, with installation quickly following and visitors being welcomed again in the summer.

# New wheelie bins rolled out across Lewes district



The staged delivery of new wheelie bins to homes in Lewes district is progressing well, with phase three soon to get underway.

New refuse bins are free to district residents and people have a choice of different bin options, including an easier-to-move 140-litre slimline bin.

Phase three covers Bishopstone, Bishopstone Village, Denton, Norton, Seaford and South Heighton. People living in these areas can let the council know what size bin they prefer by 20 May. Council crews will deliver these bins at the end of May and throughout June.

Phase four covers Beddingham, Falmer, Firle, Glynde, Iford, Itford, Kingston, Lewes, Newhaven (C7), Northease, Piddinghoe, the final few homes in Ringmer (most deliveries to Ringmer have already been made), Rodmell, Southease, Southerham, Swanborough, Tarring Neville and Telscombe Village. These residents need to let the council know their preferred bin size by 1 July, ahead of bin deliveries during July and August.

To request your bin size, or for more information about wheelie bins, visit:

[lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/wheeliebins](https://lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/wheeliebins)

# New playgrounds get thumbs up



Councillor Wendy Maples and Luke Burley, specialist advisor at Lewes District Council, enjoying new equipment at Aquila Park in Seaford.

Playgrounds in Seaford, South Chailey, Ditchling, Peacehaven and Lewes are the latest to be upgraded in a £400,000 improvement programme.

Aquila Park and The Peverells in Seaford, The Martletts in South Chailey, Longpark Corner in Ditchling, Cinquefoil in Peacehaven and Landport Rec, De la Warr Rd and Kingfisher Court in Lewes, have all been transformed.

Lewes District Council is on track to refurbish and install new equipment at 18 playgrounds by this summer, with Valley Dip in Seaford, Hillcrest Court in Newhaven and the Stanley Turner Ground and Malling Rec in Lewes due for improvements in July.

The new play equipment has been designed to appeal to different age groups and to children with different interests, needs and abilities.

Picnic tables have been added in some playgrounds to make the spaces more family friendly.

Thanks to everyone who took part in public consultations that helped shape the revamped playgrounds.



# Council's new gum-busting machine hits the streets



Chris Ketley (second from left), Cllr Maples (centre), and Guy McQueen, the council's regeneration project manager, with street cleansing staff

**Lewes District Council now has its own Gladiator, ready to polish up pavements in town centres across the district.**

The new purpose-built Gladiator machine has been jointly funded by the Chewing Gum

“Our teams have previously had to manually scrape gum away, which is time consuming and not always effective.

“This great bit of kit will go a long way to helping our teams smarten up our town centres.

“Of course, the most effective way of dealing with litter, whether it's gum or anything else, is not to have it in the first place. So our message on litter remains the same — please throw it in the bin!”

**Councillor Wendy Maples, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Wellbeing**



Task Force, run by Keep Britain Tidy, and Newhaven's Wayfinding and Public Realm Improvement Scheme.

Developed in Switzerland, the machine uses low pressure steam and bio-degradable detergents to deep-clean pavement surfaces, lifting gum and grime and then vacuuming it up. The kit also includes a steam wand that can be used for removing graffiti on some surfaces.

The council's street cleansing teams will use it first in Newhaven town centre, preparing the way for murals to be installed as part of the Look Again Supergraphics Festival this June (see page 11), before moving on to Lewes town centre and other parts of the district.

Chris Ketley, Chair of the Re-imagining Newhaven Board, said: “This is one of the fundamental parts of the improvement to the high street, being delivered by the Re-imagining Newhaven Board, as part of the c.£1 million Wayfinding and Public Realm Improvements project.”

# Wildflowers are blooming marvellous!



**Wildflowers are starting to bloom on council-owned land across Lewes district as part of work to improve diversity.**

The council has been encouraging wildflowers to flourish for several years by introducing wild areas which are particularly attractive to pollinators and provide ideal habitat for creatures such as beetles and lizards.

In the autumn, council contractor idverde cuts and collects the grasses which are then sent for green waste recycling at a local facility.

By leaving this cut and collect until later in the year, the seeds from the flowers fall naturally onto the ground and germinate the following year, providing new natural habitat.

“Lewes District Council is committed to doing all it can for nature, including creating nature-friendly areas of our parks and recreation grounds.

“Wildlife surveys of the areas we manage are showing really encouraging results and are greatly appreciated by local people including many children, who love the bugs and butterflies.”

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

# Swimmers welcome pools progress



**Seahaven Swim and Fitness Centre in Newhaven has been given a boost after Lewes District Council successfully secured £149,650 from the Swimming Pool Support Fund.**

It has been awarded £109,650 towards Photo Voltaic (PV) panels for heating the water and £40,000 for pool covers.

Meanwhile, work is underway to re-open Ringmer Swimming Pool. Threatened with permanent closure in 2022, Lewes District Council (LDC) stepped in with a rescue plan and has been working with East Sussex County Council (ESCC) and Wave Active to bring the facility back into use in the autumn.

Like any older swimming pool, the years of pumping and filtering millions of litres of water and chemicals have taken its toll on the original plant machinery and needs replacing. Funding from LDC and ESCC is making the replacement of this essential equipment possible.





# Community initiatives at Charleston in Lewes



Quentin Bell's 'Levitating Lady' sculpture (c.1973) from the gardens at Charleston in Fittle, on display at Charleston in Lewes © Phoebe Wingrove

Charleston's second season of exhibitions has now opened at its new cultural centre on Southover Road, a partnership with Lewes District Council that in its first season welcomed over 40,000 visitors.

A series of new initiatives has been introduced to further welcome members of the local community as well as visitors to the town. There are British Sign Language tours for people who are deaf or have hearing loss, and Quiet Mornings that will give visitors

"I'm delighted that our partnership with Charleston and East Sussex College Group at the cultural centre is proving so successful. The numbers visiting the venue since the opening are hugely encouraging and good news for businesses in the area."



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

with additional needs the opportunity to enjoy the exhibitions at less busy times.

Additionally, monthly Pay What You Can days, taking place on the last Sunday of the month, have been introduced to make sure the new exhibitions are affordable to all. The next one takes place on 26 May.

Charleston's partnership with Tenants of Lewes District continues, delivering free artist-led workshops for families during the holidays. Charleston is also providing further learning opportunities for local children and young people from schools and colleges including the East Sussex College Group.

Since September the charity has been working with staff and pupils at Priory School's Oak Centre on a co-produced project – pupils' work created in workshops led by artist educator Tanvi Kant is on display in the first schools' exhibition at Charleston in Lewes, taking place in Project Space and free to view.

Following the success of the first season, the two new ticketed exhibitions – Dorothy Hepworth and Patricia Preece: An Untold Story and Duos: The Art of Collaboration – celebrate the creative force of partnerships and both run until 8 September.

# New festival set to wow Newhaven



Posters from the Look Again Supergraphics Festival in Newhaven

Newhaven is preparing to host a new month-long festival of events, workshops, walks and community gatherings to accompany 12 specially commissioned artworks installed across the town.

Some of the biggest names in graphic art, illustration and street art will be creating murals for the Look Again Supergraphics Festival in June.

Artists include Anthony Burrill, Annie Frost Nicholson, Amber Elise, Supermundane, Eelus, See Creatures and Ellie Fryer.

Artworks have been designed to represent the community, local landscape and history of Newhaven, and the festival will see blank walls and neglected streets converted into spaces of colour and creativity with murals and supergraphics. These are large-scale graphics, typography or imagery used to enhance big surfaces such as walls or ceilings.

In preparation, organisers held a public meeting for residents to understand the kind of art they would like to be featured.

Alongside brightening up the town, the festival

includes a programme of events for residents and visitors and free workshops for Newhaven's primary schools and Seahaven Academy.

Look Again is funded by generous sponsors, charitable grants, investment from government and support from Lewes District Council.

For full festival details visit [lookagainnewhaven.co.uk](http://lookagainnewhaven.co.uk)



"This promises to be a great, new month-long event for people to enjoy this summer and represents yet more good news for Newhaven. There are many exciting projects either underway or in the pipeline for the town that are making a positive difference for residents."

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



# Council provides extra £20,000 to alleviate food poverty



**Lewes District Council began 2024 by awarding £20,000 to a network of community organisations that support people in poverty to access food, as part of its continued support for residents in need through the cost of living crisis.**

The money was provided to members of Lewes District Emergency Food Network, a coalition of food banks and community food cooperatives.

Last year the council committed £750,000 to a Cost of Living Crisis Fund that has been giving

ongoing support to people who are hardest hit through a raft of schemes and measures.

Out of this, over £50,000 has so far been provided directly to local food banks and projects.

The array of council schemes to help people through the cost of living crisis have included 'Safety Net' payments for people on low incomes, a voluntary sector grants programme, welcome spaces for people to gather in a warm place over winter months, financial support for Lewes District Citizens Advice and much more.

**“We have prioritised the wellbeing of local people ever since the start of this cost of living crisis and I am proud of the help we have been able to provide so far.**

**We will continue to do all we can to support Lewes district residents.”**

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



## Financial help for people on low incomes

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://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](https://lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/DHP)

The government has announced an extension of the Household Support Fund. For more details and to check whether you can apply, visit:

[lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/HSF](https://lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/HSF)

If there is a risk your power will be cut off, 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. For more information, visit [ehu.org.uk](https://ehu.org.uk) or contact your local Citizens Advice office (see back page).

## Support 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 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 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.

For a full list of food banks and community food hubs in Lewes district visit:

[lewesdistrictfoodpartnership.org](https://lewesdistrictfoodpartnership.org) and click on Emergency Food Network.

Visit [lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/cost-of-living](https://lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/cost-of-living) for full details of support available including help with bills, energy-saving tips and debt advice.



# Thanks to residents over local plan consultation



**Councillors from Lewes District Council have thanked residents who took part in the latest round of consultation on the local plan.**

Over 2,000 individuals, groups and organisations commented between November and February, following 42,000 representations in response to the 'call for sites' and issues and options documentation.

The plan 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 council ensured residents had multiple ways of sharing their views, whether in person, online or in writing. The next round of consultation will include early engagement with all town and parish councils and will include a focus on getting more young people involved in the process.

To join the local plan mailing list visit [lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/keep-me-posted](https://www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/keep-me-posted)



# Want to be a trustee for Citizens Advice?



**The charity Lewes District Citizens Advice is seeking to appoint forward-thinking individuals to join as trustees.**

Trustees are part of a team responsible for overall management, governance and strategic direction.

Applications are welcome from people who represent the diversity of Lewes district and those with experience of working in the third sector, fundraising, campaigning and dealing with local issues, as well as those with skills in areas such as marketing and social policy advocacy.

Being a trustee offers a rewarding opportunity to make a tangible impact in the local community. For more information visit [lewesdistrictca.org.uk/volunteering](https://www.lewesdistrictca.org.uk/volunteering) or email [recruitment@lewesdistrictca.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@lewesdistrictca.org.uk)

**“Thank you to all residents who shared their views. Your contributions are so important, both in the preparation of the plan and when it comes to showing the planning inspector how rigorously we have undertaken this work.”**

**Councillor Laurence O'Connor,  
Cabinet Member for Planning**

# Health and wellbeing pilot in Seaford



**A group of people in Seaford with early signs of hypertension have completed an innovative pilot scheme to reduce their risks of developing associated health conditions.**

The programme of education and supervised physical activity is a collaboration between two GP surgeries – Old School Surgery and Seaford Medical Practice – and Wave Active, the operator of local sports and leisure centres on behalf of Lewes District Council.

All 17 patients who took part were given individual assessments before participating in weekly sessions over 12 weeks at Downs Leisure Centre, supervised and delivered by Wave Active's team of health practitioners.

The innovative pilot scheme was designed to keep people healthier for longer and give residents the right care, in the right place and at the right time, in accordance with aspirations of the Sussex Health and Care Plan.

Duncan Kerr, Chief Executive of Wave Active, said: “The pilot was a great success with patients, who were monitored throughout, reporting positive improvements to their health and wellbeing.

“Wave Active and the Seaford Primary Care Network are using our collective expertise and resources to deliver interventions that encourage healthier living and address the health inequalities that lead to conditions such as coronary heart disease.

“Our GPs are brilliant and do an incredible job in Seaford, but there is undoubtedly great scope to improve and develop the way residents manage their own health and wellbeing, by employing a more integrated approach to healthcare in communities.”

All the patients who took part in the pilot attended weekly 60-minute supervised sessions at Downs Leisure Centre incorporating educational and practical elements, both of which focused on managing hypertension, and underwent a range of tests, including cholesterol and blood pressure, at the start of the programme and at the end of the 12 weeks.

Dr Joe Ljevar, from Old School Surgery in Seaford, said: “The benefits of people leading more active lifestyles is well documented and, as a primary care network, in partnership with Wave Active, we hope, through interventions like this hypertensive pilot we can impact on short and long-term health gains for the Seaford community.”





**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 information and to contact Citizens Advice visit [lewesdistrictca.org.uk](http://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

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

Out-of-hours advice options:

Website: [lewesdistrictca.org.uk](http://lewesdistrictca.org.uk)

Telephone: **0808 278 7892**

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

For details about a new community outreach programme please visit:

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