

AUGUST 2024 | #DISTRICTNEWS

DN

MAGAZINE

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Artwave opens across the district
New wetland open to the public

NEWS FROM ACROSS
THE LEWES DISTRICT

Hello

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

The best interests of local people are at the heart of all we do as councillors, so I am proud that we are successfully delivering on our commitment to providing much-needed homes for families, couples and individuals. Despite rocketing costs and straitened times for local authorities, we are progressing well with our new build and acquisitions programme to support local housing need. It is really fantastic to see local people moving into in new sustainable, council homes like Stowe Place in Newhaven and I look forward to other council housing projects in the pipeline opening their doors to future new tenants.

Following last month's General Election, we have three new MPs whose constituencies cover Lewes district - Chris Ward, MP for Brighton Kemptown and Peacehaven, James MacCleary, MP for Lewes and Mims Davies, MP for East Grinstead and Uckfield. I congratulate them on their new positions and look forward to collaborating with them, as well as the new government, for the benefit of Lewes district residents.

This autumn brings the opening of a new Creative Skills Studio for local students at our Lewes cultural centre. This will provide the students with crucial employment experience, allowing them to work with industry professionals on real-world projects. Our partnership with Charleston and East Sussex College Group is really bearing fruit! Impressively, the cultural centre has attracted more than 42,000 visitors since it opened less than a year ago. This figure includes students, local residents and families as well as thousands of people from further afield, which is excellent news for shops and businesses in the town.

Lewes district has a well-deserved reputation for being a hotbed of creative talent, and the striking murals and large-scale public artworks at the recent Look Again Supergraphics Festival in Newhaven were a huge success. Another great way to appreciate the work of local artists and makers is to visit Artwave. The annual festival is in its 31st year and stronger than ever so do drop in at some of the exhibitions next month if you can.



Councillor Zoe Nicholson
Leader of Lewes District Council

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Access for all at newly opened wetland



A newly created wetland in Lewes is now open to visitors who can enjoy its natural beauty thanks to raised walkways and bridges giving access around the entire site.

The Cockshut Stream Restoration Project realigned a 3km-long chalk stream that flowed from springs at the foot of the South Downs in Kingston to eventually join the River Ouse before flowing out to sea. The Cockshut had become clogged by a non-native invasive plant called parrot's feather.

By realigning the stream, the old channel has been filled in, eradicating the problem plant, and

the stream has flowed into a new 6.8 hectare wetland, to the east of the Stanley Turner Ground, bringing biodiversity improvements and reducing the risk of flooding.

Hérons, kingfishers, egret and snipe are among the birds to be found in grasslands there while toads, sticklebacks, eels and newts can be spotted in the ponds. Grass snakes use the reedy ditches and many species of dragonfly can be seen in the meadow and river banks.

The project has been a partnership between Lewes District Council, Ouse and Adur Rivers Trust, Lewes Railway Land Wildlife Trust and South Downs National Park Authority.

“This new wetland is great news for the environment — improving biodiversity, helping with flood management and carbon storage, and enabling the stream to flow alongside native plants.

“It’s fantastic too for local people who can enjoy visiting thanks to the new raised walkways and bridges, making the whole site accessible.”



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



Former police station transformed into council homes

Councillors and council officers at the official opening of Stowe Place

Tenants have moved into an impressive development of council homes in Newhaven.

On the site of a former police station, Stowe Place boasts a host of sustainability features across the entire development.

Each of the 21 properties uses electricity only with no gas services at all, hot water is generated by air source heat pumps for the two houses and air-water heat pumps for the 19 flats, the roof is covered by PV solar panels, mechanical ventilation with heat recovery is

installed and all the lighting is low energy. Bee bricks and a swift box have also been installed.

People who have been waiting for a home on the council's housing register have moved into the 15 two-bed and four one-bed apartments and two three-bed houses. And for those with a car, the council is supporting the scheme with a parking permit system, utilising nearby car parks to minimise the impact on local parking.

The ground floor flat is specifically for wheelchair users with each room expertly designed and adapted.

"I really couldn't be more impressed by Stowe Place and prouder that at a time when costs have spiralled and funding is so stretched, we have managed to get these essential council homes completed.

"The long list of sustainability features also includes a substantial bike store for all the tenants to use and being so central in Newhaven, there is easy access to public transport links, with bus routes on the doorstep and the railway station just a short walk away."



Councillor Mark Slater, Cabinet Member for Housing

New electric vehicle charging points at 11 car parks

Cllr O'Brien and Tom Heagerty, of Connected Kerb, at the new EV charging points in Sutton Road Car Park, Seaford



Lewes District Council has installed 64 public charging points for electric vehicles across 11 of its car parks.

Under a 15-year agreement, Connected Kerb, a leading UK electric vehicle infrastructure contractor, has provided and set up the charging points, as well as replaced existing broken rapid charging units.

In Lewes, the car parks with electric vehicle (EV) charging points are: Mountfield Road, Little East Street, Phoenix Causeway, West Street (Needlemakers) and Friars Walk.

They are also installed in Sutton Road, Saxon Lane and West Street car parks in Seaford; Bay Vue and Lower Place car parks in Newhaven; and Barcombe car park.

These charging points have been set up particularly with local residents in mind and are located in areas where homes lack off-street parking.

Chris Pateman-Jones, CEO of Connected Kerb, said: "We are delighted to be working with Lewes District Council on this vitally important climate change project.

"Ensuring that areas such as Lewes district have long-lasting, future-proofed EV charging infrastructure is essential to the UK's aspirations to move to more sustainable forms of transport and meet its net zero targets."

While the upfront cost of an electric vehicle can be higher than a petrol or diesel car, this is usually offset by lower running costs over the lifetime of the vehicle and reduces your carbon footprint.



"With the need to move away from petrol and diesel vehicles, residents and visitors expect EV provision and we are pleased to announce that the infrastructure is now up and running across a number of our district car parks."

Councillor Wendy Maples, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Wellbeing

Cultural centre opens new studio for local students



A nationally significant development in creative education is set to launch in Lewes this autumn, as the town's new cultural attraction becomes home to a new Creative Skills Studio for East Sussex College students.

The partnership between Charleston and

East Sussex College will nurture the next generation of artists, digital, fashion and interior designers and film directors.

Since Charleston in Lewes opened to the public last autumn, over 42,000 visitors have used the building and more than 700 young people and families have participated in creative workshops in the Learning Studio.

“It is extraordinary to believe that less than a year since the cultural centre in Lewes opened, we are not just seeing thousands of visitors coming to the town and spending money on our High Street, but we are also able to give our young people this opportunity through the creation of a Creative Skills Studio.”



Councillor Zoe Nicholson,
Leader of Lewes District Council

Every year, over 700 students take part in creative courses in Lewes and East Sussex College is committed to ensuring that each graduate leaves the college ready for a career in the creative industries – a sector which brings £125 billion to the national economy and is internationally recognised as one of Britain's most celebrated industries.

The new Creative Skills Studio will equip students for employment by providing direct experience with digital and creative industry professionals, including retail, exhibition and marketing teams at Charleston and their network of creative professionals.

Artwave celebrates artists and makers across Lewes district

Lewes district's annual festival of creativity returns next month with a bumper schedule of 165 exhibitions for art lovers to enjoy.

Now in its 31st year, Artwave continues to be one of the largest visual arts festivals in the South East, connecting hundreds of artists and makers with tens of thousands of appreciative visitors each year.

More than 160 venues are taking part in this year's festival, with free-to-visit exhibitions in private homes, studios, potteries, windmills, railway stations, farms and churches – and for the first time, Artwave is coming to Peacehaven and Telscombe.

When it was launched by Lewes District Council in 1993, Artwave featured the work of 70 artists across 18 events and has steadily grown to become a popular fixture in the region's cultural calendar.

Festival-goers are invited to follow the trails and enjoy the diverse range of work on show including jewellery, paintings, sculptures, printmaking, textiles, ceramics, metalwork and photography.

For more details about Artwave 2024 visit artwavefestival.org

Meanwhile, every weekend this August, Summer at

The Sidings is set to bring more free entertainment to Newhaven.

There will be live performances on Fridays from 6pm and family-friendly activities from noon on Saturdays, including circus and pirate days.

The Sidings is at Railway Approach, BN9 0ER.

For more information visit: bit.ly/4eNopn4



“Artwave supports our brilliant creative community by giving art lovers the chance to discover new work, meet artists and makers, and buy directly from them.

“The festival showcases a wide variety of quality art to suit all tastes created by artists of all ages and disciplines, and it is always a delight to visit.”

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

Action on climate change



Nearly five years on from declaring a climate emergency, Lewes District Council is leading the way on local government climate action.

Work so far has included innovative research into decarbonising social homes, the introduction of an electric vehicle fleet for food waste collection, the nature recovery of chalk downland and natural flood prevention measures.

Latest data shows there has been a 16.8% reduction in carbon emissions on the total baseline figure from 2018/19 and the carbon footprint has reduced by 15% since 2018.

A Nature and Climate Strategy 2024, which builds upon achievements since 2019 and sets out the authority's priority actions towards its 2030 net zero target, has been published on the council's website at: lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/climate-change

Help prevent battery fires



Lewes District Council is asking residents to recycle their electrical goods and batteries responsibly to help prevent fires in waste vehicles.

People should never dispose of batteries and electricals in their household bins and instead take them to a Household Waste Recycling Centre or to one of the many shops that accept them.

New research shows lithium-ion batteries – founds in items such as laptops, mobile phones, vapes and earpods – thrown in household bins have led to over 1,200 fires in the UK waste system in the last 12 months, an increase of 71% on the previous year.

For information on how to reduce, reuse and recycle in the district, visit: lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/wasteAtoZ

Rare bee find in Lewes after mowing changes



Local bee expert and author of the recently published *The Bees of Sussex*, James Power, discovered a male and female Dusky-horned Nomad Bee in the cemetery, which is the first time the bee has been found in Sussex.

James said: "Dusky-horned Nomad Bees are a cuckoo of the White-bellied Mining Bee and their presence is a first for Sussex. The White-bellied Mining Bee is also a rare bee and doing well in the cemetery.

"These aren't the only rare bees I've found there, there are two more notable species, the Broad-faced Mining Bee and its cuckoo, the very scarce Fringeless Nomad Bee – a bee that has only been recorded in Sussex eight times."

Lewes District Council is working with a wide range of partners to nurture the pollinator-

friendly environment at Lewes Cemetery, including Wildflower Lewes, Lewes Urban Arboretum and SDNPA.



"Thank you to the many groups and volunteers who share our determination to encourage pollinators in the district.

"The discovery of these rare bees demonstrates the benefits of mowing for nature, rather than the old approach of cutting grass short in all our green spaces."

Laurence O'Connor,
Cabinet Member for Planning

Financial support for residents on low incomes



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://www.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://www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/DHP)

The government has announced an extension of the Household Support Fund. This fund is available up to 30 September 2024, but may close sooner depending on how many applications for help are received. For more details and to check whether you can apply, visit: [lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/HSF](https://www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/HSF)

“Extra help is available for people who are experiencing tough times through this cost of living crisis so please access this support if you need it.”

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



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 information, visit [ehu.org.uk](https://www.ehu.org.uk) or contact your Citizens Advice office.

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 14) to discuss your situation.

For a full list of food banks and community food hubs in Lewes district visit: [lewesdistrictfoodpartnership.org](https://www.lewesdistrictfoodpartnership.org) and click on Emergency Food Network.

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

Food bank crisis: council's immediate £20,000 donation



In May, food banks in Newhaven, Peacehaven and Telscombe announced they were not accepting new members after the numbers of residents needing emergency support reached 'unsustainable levels'.

As a result, the Leader of Lewes District Council, Councillor Zoe Nicholson, directed officers to immediately distribute £20,000 to the food banks in crisis to boost their food supplies.

This latest funding support from Lewes District Council is in addition to £20,000 the council awarded local food banks in December 2023 to help the most vulnerable residents.

The council has been a lead partner in the

response to the crisis in Lewes district, providing ongoing support to the voluntary sector and people who are hardest hit, through a raft of schemes and measures, having committed £750,000 to a cost of living fund.

So far, more than £50,000 has been provided to local food banks and projects.

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 (see lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/cost-of-living) and financial support for Lewes District Citizens Advice.



"It is unacceptable that there are so many residents in Lewes district seeking food bank support.

"Ever since the start of this cost of living crisis we have supported as many local people as we can who are struggling to make ends meet and we will continue to do this."

Councillor Christine Robinson, Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing



**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](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 available

Out-of-hours advice options:

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

Telephone: **0808 278 7892**

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

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

For details about a new rural outreach programme please visit:

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

Home improvement help for people on lower incomes



Dog owners asked to pick up mess



Parity Trust, a not-for-profit lender, is offering tailored loan packages for home improvement projects. These loans are designed to be more attainable for those who might struggle to secure credit through traditional channels.

The trust, which is regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority, works with borrowers to create a repayment plan that fits their individual circumstances, with flexible options including some loan types that do not require monthly repayments.

The loans can be used for a variety of purposes, such as boiler replacements, installing wheelchair ramps, bathroom and kitchen adaptations or making energy-saving upgrades like insulation. This can not only improve the comfort and safety of a home but also potentially reduce energy bills.

For more information visit paritytrust.org.uk

Signs bearing the message: 'There's no such thing as the Dog Poo Fairy' have been put up across Lewes district to remind dog owners of their responsibilities.

A Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) regarding dog fouling covers the entire district. PSPOs put conditions or restrictions on what people can do within a specific area if there is evidence of an existing problem – such as people not picking up their dog's excrement.

This PSPO means people can be issued with a £75 fixed penalty notice or a fine of up to £1,000 if the case goes to court, for failing to pick up their dog's waste in any parks or other public spaces.

The council also supports the South Downs National Park's Take the Lead campaign which encourages responsible dog walking. Visit southdowns.gov.uk/take-the-lead



About Retirement Housing

Lewes District Council offers retirement housing services which provide accommodation in an independent living community for people aged over 60 years.

Retirement housing is a court of unfurnished flats, studio apartments, or bungalows designed for older people.

The aim is to provide comfortable, convenient, and secure accommodation whilst residents maintain full independence.

Many retirement courts have optional social activities, these are organised by residents and can help to build a strong feeling of community and friendship between neighbours.



Contact Us

If you are interested in finding out more about our properties or arranging a viewing, please check our eligibility criteria online and contact our team of friendly and professional Retirement Housing Advisors.

RetirementHousing@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk

lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/RetirementHousing

01273 085483

HOMES FIRST
Retirement Housing