

DN

MAGAZINE



In this issue:

Housing inspection shows 'excellent progress'
Step forward for GP services in Seaford

Hello

Welcome to the spring
2026 edition of DN,
brought to you by
Lewes District Council

I want to begin by thanking everyone across the district for playing your part in ensuring the introduction of alternate weekly collections for waste and recycling has been a success. Transitioning to a new system is never without its challenges, but your commitment to recycling more and reducing our carbon footprint is one of the things that makes this district a special place to live.

I am very excited about the Community of Kindness project because it represents something profoundly important for our district. The artwork created by our young people, displayed proudly across our towns, is more than just vibrant and uplifting, it is a reminder of the values that bind us. Kindness, respect and consideration for one another are at the heart

of strong, resilient communities, and this project captures that perfectly.

In this issue, you can read about how we are continuing to deliver on our core priorities. We are accelerating the delivery of new council homes, making use of brownfield sites to provide high-quality, sustainable housing for local people. I am incredibly proud of our record in creating homes for local people, particularly as fewer than a quarter of local authorities nationwide have built any housing at all over the past decade. I'm also delighted to share exciting news of our health partnership in Seaford, as we take a major step forward in exploring long-term improvements in primary care in the town.

I hope you enjoy this edition of DN.



Councillor Zoe Nicholson
Leader of Lewes District Council

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Cover photo by Jonathan Bassett.

Children help design major playground upgrade

(from left to right): Headteacher Amy Clarke, Donna King, of Lewes District Council, Councillor Maples, and Katherine Wardleworth, administration assistant at Chyngton Primary School.

Lewes District Council has opened a newly upgraded and redesigned playground in Walmer Road, Seaford, inspired by the ideas of local schoolchildren.

The project began with a workshop at Chyngton Primary School, where a focus group of children from various year groups created a wish list of play equipment they would like installed.

Contractors used this valuable information in developing their plans and children voted for their favourite design.

New features include a zip wire integrated with new landscaping, monkey bars, more swings – including

an accessible swing for children with disabilities – a landscaped climbing structure and slide, a large trampoline and a new picnic table.

Amy Clarke, headteacher at Chyngton Primary School, said: “We are so proud of our pupils for playing such an important role in shaping this fantastic new playground. Giving children a voice in projects like this not only makes the space more fun and inclusive but also helps them feel valued as part of their local community. It’s wonderful to see their ideas come to life and know that they’ve contributed to something that will bring joy to so many families for years to come.”

“This has been a genuinely collaborative and rewarding project. We didn’t just ask the children what they wanted, we let them steer the final design. While health and safety precluded us from installing a volcano on site, they had wonderfully creative suggestions and the results are fantastic – a vibrant and imaginative space that truly reflects how children want to spend their playtime.

“It is great to see so many families already enjoying the new equipment. Investing in high-quality play facilities is vital for the wellbeing of our young people. A huge thank you to the children and the school for helping us create such a brilliant space.”

Councillor Wendy Maples, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Wellbeing



Council art project tackles division across coastal towns

Children from Cradle Hill Community Primary making posters for A Community of Kindness

Look Again has been running its latest public-realm project across the coastline between Brighton and Eastbourne this spring.

Delivered in collaboration with artist Supermundane and arts educator Dawn East and commissioned by Lewes District Council, the Community of Kindness project has seen bold, joyful artworks appearing in unexpected locations in Seaford, Newhaven, Peacehaven and Telscombe.

The billboard, banner and poster campaign has transformed creativity into collective action, with thousands of young creatives from these coastal towns taking part in the project. The campaign features new work by Supermundane alongside over 100 original designs created by local primary and secondary school pupils. Centred on the universal values of warmth and kindness, the project offers a visible reminder that communities are stronger when they stand

together against hate and division.

Based in Newhaven, Look Again is a socially engaged creative project that has previously delivered a large-scale mural festival, an exhibition of inflatable sculptures by Bruce Asbestos, and a programme of cultural events animating the riverside near Newhaven station. The organisation specialises in delivering high-quality cultural experiences that activate underused public spaces and place creativity at the heart of community life.

“This is our largest participatory art project to date,” says Charlotte Parsons from Look Again. “Showing art in the public realm is about much more than sharing space – it’s an energising mix of place, people and creativity.”

Find out more about the project at lookagainnewhaven.co.uk/community-of-kindness



“Seeing this colourful artwork across our towns has genuinely lifted our spirits. The children’s messages of kindness, respect and thoughtfulness shine through at a time when communities can sometimes feel pulled apart.

“I’m very grateful to everyone who has contributed to bringing this impactful and heartfelt project to life.”

Councillor Zoe Nicholson, Leader of Lewes District Council

More new council homes being created

Lewes District Council is driving forward its ambitious programme to build more high-quality, sustainable council houses for local people.

The current corporate plan (2024-28) has a target of 200 new council homes. 108 have already been completed or advanced, with the current pipeline looking to exceed 250 new homes in contract or complete by 2028.

This comes at a time when fewer than a quarter of UK local authorities have built any council homes in the past decade.

Alongside regeneration schemes, acquisitions, and partnership-led developments, the council's garage infill programme is set to transform redundant brownfield sites into 23 new affordable homes across Newhaven, Cooksbridge, and Lewes.

By focusing on brownfield land, the council is building much-needed housing while also protecting the district's valued green spaces and promoting local regeneration.

In addition to new builds, the council is acquiring 43 affordable homes secured via Section 106 agreements with private developers, at sites in Plumpton Green and Barcombe.

The council is also pressing ahead with its commitment to acquiring more homes through the Local Authority Housing Fund, which has already successfully secured funding to deliver 17 new homes for temporary and resettlement housing.

Meanwhile, a new system is being introduced for allocating council homes to residents on the housing register, to match people more effectively with the properties they need.

The current Choice Based Lettings (CBL) model will be replaced with Property Match from 1 April 2026.

Under the new Property Match approach, the council will take a more proactive role in matching residents with the most suitable homes for their specific needs. This change aims to reduce the time properties remain empty and ensure that households – particularly those in urgent need or temporary accommodation – are housed more quickly.

The move follows a public consultation which saw more than 500 responses from residents, stakeholders and partners. Some 75% of respondents were in favour of the Property Match transition.

Housing inspection shows our 'excellent progress'



Lewes District Council has welcomed a 'positive' inspection result following a visit by the Regulator of Social Housing.

It was awarded a C2 rating for its commitment to delivering quality housing services and for its proactive approach to improvement. Ratings range from C1, the highest award, to a C4 rating when very serious failings are identified.

The Regulator of Social Housing is a government body that focuses on driving improvement and will take appropriate action if expected standards are not being met.

The inspection included meetings with councillors, council officers and residents, and assessed a range of areas including housing stock quality, repairs, health and safety, tenant engagement, and governance.

Lewes District Council and Eastbourne Borough Council share housing services, with inspectors reporting a strong self-awareness, the

presence of clear improvement plans and good collaboration between tenants, councillors and council officers.

Among the areas praised were satisfaction with the strong partnership working on anti-social behaviour, and effective tenancy audits. The inspection acknowledged ongoing improvements in complaint handling and governance structures, with both councils committed to enhancing transparency and accountability.

By demonstrating compliance with consumer standards and a clear commitment to continuous improvement, the inspection outcome puts Lewes in the top third of all local authorities in the UK.



"I'm really proud of these inspection results. They're a testament to the dedication of our housing teams and the excellent progress we've made in recent years.

"We're not just working hard to meet standards, we want to go further. We know there's more to do, and with the help of the regulator, we're determined to continue improving services for our tenants."

Councillor Mark Slater, Cabinet Member for Tenants and those in housing need

Council appoints new grounds maintenance contractor

Councillor Emily O'Brien and Nick Brooks from Glendale Countryside Ltd



Award-winning Glendale Countryside Limited has been selected to deliver the new grounds maintenance contract across Lewes district.

The appointment by Lewes District Council marks the start of a new approach to the care and management of parks, open spaces and community areas across the district.

The new contract will run for five years from April 2026, with the option to extend for a further five years.

Through the council's procurement and evaluation process, Glendale demonstrated a strong and comprehensive offer across all key areas of service delivery. This included high-quality maintenance standards, particularly in priority locations such as playgrounds, sports areas and sheltered housing; robust staffing plans; strong performance monitoring

and digital reporting; and a clear commitment to community collaboration, including working closely with resident groups and local organisations.

Nick Brooks, Regional Director at Glendale Countryside Limited, said: "We are delighted to have been chosen to deliver this new era of grounds maintenance for the district. We understand how important green spaces are to the health and well-being of the community, and we are committed to a service that prioritises biodiversity and environmental resilience. We look forward to working side-by-side with the council and local communities to protect and improve these spaces for the future."

Glendale was named Pro Landscaper's Grounds Maintenance Company of the Year 2025 and also achieved the title of Pro Landscaper Business Awards Supreme Winner 2025.

"Our parks and green spaces are an absolute priority for this council. We are really pleased to be moving forward with Glendale as our new contractor. Through a highly competitive process they gave us confidence that they can meet the standards our residents rightly expect, but also that they share our ambition to enhance biodiversity, improve our green spaces, and support local communities. This new partnership will help us deliver a more resilient, environmentally focused and responsive service for the district."

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



'Transformative' GP services in Seaford take important step forward

NHS Sussex and local GPs have asked Lewes District Council to explore long-term solutions for primary care and wider health services in Seaford. This step builds on the council's long-standing commitment to help tackle the pressures residents experience when trying to access GP services in the town.

NHS Sussex and local GPs, with Lewes District Council's support, are currently focused on a bid for grant funding from the NHS Sussex Integrated Care Board that, if successful, would enable feasibility work and options appraisal for a possible new Seaford Medical Practice. This will include assessing different sites, which might involve using a combination of council-owned land, such as the Richmond Road car park in Seaford, alongside other public sector land and assets.

Councillor Zoe Nicholson, Leader of Lewes District Council, said: "I have been determined for many years that this council would play an integral role in the creation of a new, modern and accessible home for high-quality GP services in Seaford.

"While the NHS leads on commissioning and delivering GP services, the council has the expertise, experience and track record to be a strong strategic delivery partner, bringing

our contacts, ability to convene partners, and potential use of council land to help unlock the transformative solutions needed."

In Newhaven, Lewes District Council is leading the Newhaven Square redevelopment. The project will create a new health & wellbeing hub including a new home for Quayside Medical Practice and the Chapel Street Surgery, and the further development of the Primary Care Network, a new pharmacy, the expansion of Wave Active at Seahaven Swim & Fitness and its partnership with healthcare to support those with health conditions and the rehabilitation of patients.

Amy Galea, Chief Commissioning Officer, Neighbourhood Health and Partnerships, NHS Sussex, said: "We are committed to working closely with Lewes District Council and local GPs to ensure Seaford residents can access the high-quality primary care they deserve. By collaborating on this feasibility work and exploring innovative use of public-sector land, we are taking important steps towards creating a sustainable solution that supports both patients and our workforce for years to come. We look forward to engaging further with the community as these plans develop."

Art project bridges generation gap



Winning students and retirees involved in the project

Vibrant artwork created by local students will soon be brightening up the communal areas of retirement housing across Lewes district thanks to a unique intergenerational art project.

The council's Retirement Housing team partnered with Chailey High School in South Chailey, to commission new art and photography after all previous artwork had to be removed from communal spaces because of fire compliancy rules following the Grenfell Tower tragedy.

The project saw the school's GCSE students create pieces based on a theme of 'Sussex Icons' including landscapes, buildings and seaside scenes. Tenant artists from the retirement homes worked with the students to inspire their artwork, fostering a strong intergenerational connection.

People were invited to attend a public exhibition of the work at Marine Workshops in Newhaven and vote for their favourite piece of art. The top-voted works showcased a diverse range of styles.

"It has been truly inspiring to watch our community rally behind these talented young people. We're delighted that their artwork will soon have a lasting home in our retirement schemes, where residents will be able to enjoy and take pride in it for years to come. The enthusiastic response at the public exhibition showed not only the impressive standard of the students' work, but also how deeply people value the links between generations in our district. What began as a necessary change to meet safety standards has grown into a creative partnership that has strengthened community spirit and showcased exceptional artistic skill."



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

Good news for sport enthusiasts

Refurbished MUGA in Peacehaven

Netballers, basketball players and footballers are celebrating the opening of the newly refurbished Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) at Centenary Park in Peacehaven.

It features a new designated community netball court, used by Peacehaven Netball Club to host league matches and expand its training sessions for players of all ages.

The MUGA also offers two new 3 x 3 basketball courts, and versatile provision for both casual 'kick-around' sessions and five-a-side football.

The transformation includes a specialist anti-slip surface designed for year-round use and new, robust fencing.

Colour coating will be applied to the netball court this spring.

The project is part of the council's ongoing commitment to enhancing local parks and ensuring that community assets are fit for the future.

Access to the Multi-Use Games Area is free and open to all.



"This is great news for people in the Peacehaven area. The upgraded MUGA gives residents of all ages a high-quality, accessible space to stay active, enjoy sport and come together as a community. This facility will make a real and lasting difference.

I'm also pleased that plans are progressing for a new pump track at Centenary Park, which will add another much-needed activity space for local children and teenagers. I'm delighted to see Peacehaven gaining facilities that genuinely support healthier, more active lifestyles for local people."

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



 The logo for Lewes District Local Lottery features the words "LeWES" in blue and yellow, a yellow star, and "DiStriCt" in blue and yellow. Below this is a green banner with the words "LOCAL LOTTERY" in white. The background of the logo is a field of red poppies under a blue sky with clouds.

Supporting local groups and volunteers

Lewes District Community Action Network (LD CAN) is a new programme supporting local groups, charities and volunteer-led initiatives – whether they are long-established or just getting started.

LD CAN supports groups to access funding, build skills, connect with others, and have a stronger voice in local decision-making. LD CAN celebrates the incredible contribution of local volunteering and offers support to help groups recruit, retain and value volunteers.

Through LD CAN, groups can also benefit from one-to-one support (email: ldcan@sussexcommunity.org.uk), training and workshops, networking events, funding support, and online resources (visit: sussexcommunity.org.uk/our-services/lewes-district-can).

It is delivered by Sussex Community Development Association and funded by East Sussex County Council.

Sign up to become a member at :
[//forms.office.com/e/QntANerR8c](https://forms.office.com/e/QntANerR8c)

A win for the local community

The Lewes District Local Lottery helps raise vital funds for a wide range of community organisations operating in the Lewes district – from youth services to environmental charities.

Tickets cost just £1, with 60p going directly to good causes. Players can choose the good cause they wish to support or select the Lottery Community Fund to support multiple causes. Prizes include a £25,000 jackpot. Get your tickets at leweslocallottery.co.uk

Renew garden waste collections

Customers have until Monday, 31 March to renew their garden waste service and ensure there is no gap in collections. The service will run from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027, so any customers who are new to the service are encouraged to sign up soon and benefit from a full year of collections. To renew or join the service, visit lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/gardenwaste

New rehabilitation facility at leisure centre

People using the newly opened rehabilitation suite at Downs Leisure Centre in Seaford



Wave Active has opened a new specialist health and rehabilitation suite at Downs Leisure Centre in Seaford. The facility has been created thanks to a legacy left by Lilian, a former participant in Wave Active Health's outreach sessions.

Lilian's Room has been designed to support older adults and individuals living with long-term health conditions, including Parkinson's and other neurological conditions.

Supported by a physiotherapist, neuro physiotherapist and other health practitioners, users can access advanced neurorehabilitation technology, including large interactive touchscreen tables offering a range of therapeutic applications, and augmented reality glasses that support mobility, balance, cognitive engagement and functional rehabilitation.

Known as Stroll, this is the first time the technology has been made available outside a hospital or other clinical environment.

Duncan Kerr, CEO of Wave Active, said: "Lilian embraced our outreach sessions in her care home with enthusiasm and joy, and it was clear that

staying active meant a great deal to her. It was very sad for us to learn of Lilian's passing and a big surprise to hear of her legacy gift. To honour her warmth and positivity, we have used her legacy to help create a dedicated space that will support active ageing, rehabilitation and those living with long-term health conditions."

Lilian's Room also includes assisted and accessible machines designed to promote controlled movement and inclusive training. This low impact approach is ideal for people recovering from injury, illness or surgery, returning to activity after a period of inactivity, or simply seeking a gentle way to improve overall fitness.

Additionally, the Wave team will deliver group training sessions within Lilian's Room, including Chair-Based Exercise, Falls Prevention and Stroke Rehabilitation. Visit waveactive.org



"This is a remarkable addition to Downs Leisure Centre, giving residents access to innovative rehabilitation support that hasn't been available locally before."

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

Support for people on low incomes



One of the ways Lewes District Council continues to support the most vulnerable residents in the district is through the Council Tax Reduction Scheme, which has given financial assistance to around 3,500 of the most disadvantaged working-age residents. The scheme has allowed about 2,000 of those experiencing the greatest hardship not to pay any council tax at all.

From 1 April 2026, the Household Support Fund (HSF) and Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) will be replaced by the Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF).

East Sussex County Council will have overarching responsibility for the CRF with further details to follow in future DN magazines.

DHPs will be replaced by CRF Housing Payments

and will remain the responsibility of Lewes District Council to administer until April 2028. The criteria and application process will remain unchanged. Websites, forms and publications will be updated closer to the implementation date.

For more details about the Council Tax Reduction Scheme or housing benefits, visit: lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/ctr

If there is a risk your power will be cut off, you are advised to 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 or contact your Citizens Advice office.

“The Council Tax Reduction Scheme has proven vital in assisting residents manage the relentless pressures of the cost of living crisis and I am very pleased we will be continuing to offer this support over the next financial year.

“We recognise that many local families still face significant financial strain and are committed to providing as much help as possible.”



Councillor Christine Robinson, Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing



left to right: Lee Michael and Peter Clarke, of Lewes District Council; Councillor Maples; David Giles, of Iveco; and Andrew Smith, of Northern Commercials.



Council wins award for sustainable waste collections

Lewes District Council scooped the Grounds Maintenance & Waste Management Award at a national vehicle industry awards ceremony, recognising the authority’s pioneering efforts to decarbonise its fleet.

The IVECO (Industry Vehicle Corporation) Mission Awards celebrate the most capable and innovative IVECO vehicles on UK roads. Lewes District Council stood out to the judging panel for its commitment to environmental sustainability – specifically for the introduction of five IVECO eDaily rubbish collectors which maintain high performance without the need for diesel fuel. The vehicles have been deployed to the council’s street cleansing team who empty litter bins and keep public areas clean across the district.

The vehicles were praised by judges for their unique build and striking livery. Designed with safety at their core, the vans are equipped with 360-degree camera systems and safety guards.

Car sharing club expands to district towns

Car sharing club, Co Wheels, is introducing new vehicles in Seaford, Newhaven and Peacehaven this spring thanks to support from Lewes District Council.

Already established in Lewes and Eastbourne, Co Wheels is a pay-as-you-go vehicle rental service, offering flexible access to vehicles without the costs and responsibilities of ownership. From quick errands to weekend trips, the service is for people who don’t need a car every day but still want reliable access when they do.

Members can book cars by the hour or day using the Co Wheels app, with fuel, insurance, maintenance and breakdown cover included. The service is designed to complement public transport, walking and cycling, helping to reduce the number of privately owned cars on the road while still supporting everyday journeys.

For full details, including a driving credit for new members, visit [co-wheels.org.uk](https://www.co-wheels.org.uk)



**citizens
advice**

Lewes District

Citizens Advice is a local charity that provides free, confidential and impartial advice to anyone living, studying or working within Lewes District. They provide information and advice which will help people resolve problems in areas such as:

- **Benefits – help with all benefits and it has a team of specialist benefit caseworkers**
- **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**
- **Specialist advice for autistic adults**

For information and to contact Lewes District 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 following consultation at a drop-in session or by telephone. Call **0808 278 7892** or request a call back [lewesdistrictca.org.uk/contact-us](https://www.lewesdistrictca.org.uk/contact-us)

Monday	Seaford 37 Church Street BN25 1HG	10am - 3.30pm
Tuesday Wednesday Thursday	Newhaven 15-19 Chapel Street BN9 9PN	10am - 3.30pm
Friday	Lewes 6 High Street	10am - 3.30pm

Out-of-hours advice options:

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

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

Drop-in advice sessions

No appointment necessary. Every Wednesday at Peacehaven Meridian Centre BN10 8BL. 10am - 12pm and 1pm - 3pm

Rural outreach

At venues across Lewes district including Ringmer, Chailey, Bishopstone and Newick. Visit [lewesdistrictca.org.uk/community-outreach](https://www.lewesdistrictca.org.uk/community-outreach) for more information and schedule of sessions. is necessary.