

NOVEMBER 2024 | #DISTRICTNEWS

DN

MAGAZINE

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Work begins on Health and Wellbeing Hub
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NEWS FROM ACROSS
THE LEWES DISTRICT



Lewes District Council

Hello

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

I am delighted that building work is underway at Newhaven Square, a groundbreaking scheme that will bring together two NHS medical practices, alongside leisure facilities to keep people active, and a pharmacy, all under one roof in a Health and Wellbeing Hub. This comprehensive approach to healthcare will undoubtedly have a positive impact on the lives of many people in the community for years to come.

It's great news too for business growth as a creative hub is also being built, providing commercial space for start-ups and offering co-working opportunities. Our plans to improve Newhaven for all who live, work and visit there are really taking shape.

In fact, our projects are making a difference to

people in towns and villages across Lewes district. Among these are many local initiatives that have benefitted from our community infrastructure levy – in the most recent round nearly £4 million was shared among 24 schemes ranging from village hall refurbishments to building play areas. On that theme, our own district-wide £400,000 improvement scheme across 19 playgrounds is now complete and it's a joy to see children playing on the new and upgraded equipment.

With the festive season approaching, many of us are looking forward to spending time with friends and family. It can be a particularly difficult time though for people who are struggling to make ends meet and if this applies to you or someone you know, please see our cost of living pages for how to reach out for support.



Councillor Zoe Nicholson
Leader of Lewes District Council

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Construction of 'life-changing' Health and Wellbeing Hub begins



Work has started on the multi-million pound Newhaven Square redevelopment which will transform primary healthcare in the town.

The project will create a new Health and Wellbeing Hub including a new home for the Chapel Street Surgery and Quayside Medical Practice and the development of a Primary Care Network, a new pharmacy, the expansion of Wave Active at Seahaven Swim & Fitness and its integration with healthcare to support the rehabilitation of patients.

A creative hub will also be developed to provide space for co-working and start-up businesses.

Located in the centre of Newhaven, the redevelopment will create jobs, encourage footfall to retailers and other services, provide new commercial space, enhance access and make the town centre a more attractive place to live, work and visit.

New lighting has been fitted at Dacre Road Car Park where level four has been re-opened, making a further 51 spaces available. The north side of the car park will have a living wall, to boost biodiversity and reduce air pollution, and this will be extended to one side of the redevelopment.

The building firm Buxton is the main contractor.

Duncan Kerr, Chief Executive of Wave Active, said: "The Health Hub will bring together traditional general practice and primary healthcare within an activity focused, leisure centre environment, offering connected healthcare provision in the heart of the local community under one roof. The potential impact is huge and incredibly exciting for all those involved."



"It is fantastic to see work starting on our life-changing project in Newhaven which will improve people's lives for generations to come.

"This will also create jobs, bring more people into the town to local shops, encourage new business growth and increase the overall appeal of the place to visit."

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

Redeveloping old garages to create high quality homes

Councillor Mark Slater with artist's impression in Prince Charles Road where 20 old garages will become four one-bedroom houses.



Lewes District Council is moving ahead with plans to redevelop up to 11 old garage sites into as many as 46 affordable homes for residents on the housing register.

The council is fast becoming a trailblazer amongst local authorities for the pipeline of housing projects it continues to deliver.

The underutilised garages currently occupy locations in Lewes, Cooksbridge and Newhaven and will include a mix of one, two and three-bedroom homes, and one four-bedroom property.

The council is encouraging feedback from residents on the proposals. To view and comment on the planning applications, visit: lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/LDCGarageSites

More homes replacing former garages.

In a separate scheme, three homes are being built on a site formerly occupied by garages in Ringmer.

Work is due to start soon on the brownfield land owned by Lewes District Council in Broyle Close and is expected to be completed in winter 2025.

The three-bedroom homes will be constructed to exacting energy performance specifications, including solar PV systems and air source heat pumps to keep running costs low for residents.

The council has also reaffirmed its commitment to building high quality social housing in the right locations by developing New Homes Principles in partnership with the Tenants of Lewes District. Visit lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/LDCNewHomesPrinciples

“We have a strong track record for breathing new life into redundant brownfield sites by developing high quality homes and that is exactly what we are looking to do across these 11 garage sites subject to consultation.

“It has been really encouraging to have received so many positive comments so far and I look forward to hearing the views of more residents about our proposals to build these new, high quality council homes.”



Councillor Mark Slater, Cabinet Member for Social Housing and Tenants

Partnership progress with nature recovery

Left to right: Cllr Mark Slater, Cllr Emily O'Brien, Lydia Baxter, Sussex Wildlife Trust, Rachel Paget, Ouse & Adur Rivers Trust, and Tim Bartlett, Lewes District Council, at Double Barn Farm.

The council and its partners are championing nature recovery with 'excellent achievements' made so far in tackling the decline.

With one in six UK species at risk of extinction, the council is committed to protecting and enhancing nature in ways that help tackle climate change and improve biodiversity.

The council's nature recovery activities have included:

- Delivering natural flood management projects with Sussex Wildlife Trust and the Ouse & Adur Rivers Trust (OART) since 2017.
- Creating a new 6.8 hectare wetland in Lewes through the Cockshut chalk stream restoration (see opposite page).
- Enabling nature recovery of chalk downland through the Changing Chalk project.
- Supporting community nature, wildflower and tree planting projects through Ouse Valley Climate Action and Climate Hubs
- Reducing the frequency of grass cutting at Lewes Cemetery which has improved biodiversity and led to the discovery of rare bees.
- Using beneficial pollinator and biodiversity practices on council land.

- Supporting the Wilder Ouse partnership project which has seen 4,512 trees and 700 metres of hedging planted and 23 ponds either created or restored in the Ouse catchment.
- Buying land at Landport Brooks and working with partners to realise benefits including biodiversity enhancements and natural flood alleviation.

Local groups and organisations are encouraged to add their nature improvement activities to an online map at sussexnaturerecovery.org.uk/news/new-tool-launched-to-help-you-map-your-actions-for-nature

The council is committed to building upon the nature recovery work that is already underway, and this is being enshrined in the new Local Plan with policies to preserve and enhance the natural environment of Lewes district.

Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) are a new initiative being rolled out across the country to address the national decline in species, creating a network of 48 regions in the UK. East Sussex County Council is leading on our county's LNRS with Lewes District Council a supporting authority. A public consultation on the draft LNRS will take place in early 2025.

Wetland is double award-winner



The Cockshut Stream Restoration in Lewes has scooped two prestigious awards.

Located within Lewes Brooks, to the east of the Stanley Turner Ground, the restoration saw the realignment of the Cockshut chalk stream and the creation of six hectares of wetland. The area has quickly become an oasis for wildlife and hugely popular with local residents.

Nominated in two categories in the South Downs National Park 2024 Design Awards, the Cockshut Stream Restoration was first in the Landscape Category and also received the coveted People's Choice Award, which was voted for by members of the public.

The partners behind the new wetland include Lewes District Council, Ouse & Adur Rivers Trust and Lewes Railway Land Wildlife Trust. Funding for the project was provided by South Downs National Park Authority, Veolia Environmental Trust and Lewes District Council.

Herons, kingfishers, egret, snipe and marsh harriers are among the many birds seen visiting the wetland, while toads, sticklebacks, eels and frogs can

be spotted in the ponds. Grass snakes use the reedy ditches and many species of dragonfly have been seen in the meadow and riverbanks.

The wetland is open to visitors who can enjoy all its natural beauty thanks to raised walkways and bridges giving access around the entire site.

Dog walkers are reminded to keep dogs on a lead.



"I am thrilled that the vision, hard work and dedication of all those behind this stunning restoration project has been recognised in this way.

"We all know that the levels of nature depletion in the UK are stark, so to see this wetland already attracting such a wide range of wildlife and native plants, is incredibly exciting for anyone with an interest in improving biodiversity."

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

Newhaven recreation ground plans move ahead

The whole site will be landscaped to improve biodiversity.

Plans for the major transformation of Fort Road Recreation Ground are progressing well with extra funding secured for more amenities.

A grant of just over £268,000 from the community infrastructure levy (CIL) will provide a new play area, outdoor gym equipment and artificial cricket wicket, alongside a host of other improvements already planned including the refurbishment of existing buildings, landscaping the whole site to increase biodiversity, the opening of a new café and terrace area, the creation of a community orchard, and enhanced public toilet facilities.

Meanwhile, footpaths linking the recreation ground with nearby Castle Hill Nature Reserve have been opened up to improve connections between the sites.

The £3.4 million contract to carry out the transformation has gone out to tender and a contractor is due to be appointed soon, with work scheduled to start in spring next year.

Funded by UK Government, the project is part of the Re-imagining Newhaven programme.

Community groups are already involved in the plans and now local people are being invited to become members of a new Friends of Fort Road Recreation Ground group – anyone interested should contact helen.blanche@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk. Residents have been sending in competition entries to design two new benches in the community orchard and winners will be announced in December.

Local artists will also be taking part in a project to paint a shipping container that will become a new storage area on the site.

For more information visit fortroadnewhaven.org

Following the success of Newhaven's pump track in Fort Road, the council has secured £95,000 from the South Downs National Park Authority's CIL fund and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) to deliver a similar facility at Landport Recreation Ground in Lewes next year.

Children enjoy 19 playground upgrades

Councillor Wendy Maples (left), Councillor Zoe Nicholson (centre) and Councillor Johnny Denis (right) with children playing on new equipment at Malling Rec in Lewes.

The council's £400,000 programme to improve playgrounds across Lewes district for local families has been completed.

In just over two years, new play equipment has been installed and upgrades made at 19 playgrounds.

These are: The Peverells, Downs Rec, Valley Dip, Chalvington Field and Aquila Park in Seaford; Cinquefoil in Peacehaven; Longpark Corner in Ditchling; The Martlets in South Chailey; The Forges in Ringmer; Hillcrest Court in Newhaven; and Landport Recreation Ground, Bell Lane, Kingfisher Court, De La Warr Green, Malling Rec, Stanley Turner Rec, Convent Field, Neville Crescent and The Paddock in Lewes.

The new play equipment has been designed to appeal to children with different interests and needs and across a range of age groups. In some playgrounds, benches and picnic tables have been added to make the spaces more family friendly.



"It is an absolute joy to see our young people having more outdoor fun as a result of our significant investment in local play areas."

"Outdoor play is crucial for young people's wellbeing and development, and I am delighted we are helping to create healthier, happier communities."

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



Supporting young people's activities



Lewes District Council has awarded £8,000 to support the delivery of youth activities across the district.

The grants will fund 1,500 places at more than 60 activity, sports and group sessions over the coming months, including:

- Beach clean and craft activities
- Free places at local Boxercise classes and boxing gym sessions
- Drama-based therapy sessions at existing youth groups
- Free football coaching sessions at Newhaven Football Club

The activities are set to make a real difference to the lives of the young people involved, helping to boost their confidence, wellbeing and self-esteem.

The schemes are being delivered in partnership with East Sussex County Council Youth Outreach teams and the help of local organisations.

Community projects benefit from £1 million injection



Eight impactful projects awarded a share of £1 million from Lewes District Council's successful bid to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund are making positive differences across the district.

Community and public organisations are leading on the schemes which launched in April 2023 and will be completed in March 2025.

These include a project engaging with local businesses to provide them with the support they need to reach net zero and helping firms develop decarbonisation plans.

Another scheme provides support for unemployed people including help with job searches, direct assistance to gain employment, engaging with the benefits system and developing basic skills.

Upon completion, the projects will have directly created 25 jobs, supported hundreds of unemployed people and local businesses, and leveraged additional investment of £640,000.

Council funding for array of community projects

Lewes District Council's community infrastructure levy funding is bringing huge benefits to towns and villages across the district.

Known as CIL, community infrastructure levy is a charge that local authorities must apply to developments to fund local infrastructure projects – since 2015, Lewes District Council has allocated nearly £12 million to a wide range of community projects.

Thanks to the latest round of CIL funding, a new skate park has been built at Fingerpost Field Recreation Ground in Ringmer by the parish council using its £75,000 award, and £50,000 financed a new playground too. Newick Parish Council received £200,000 to renovate the village sports pavilion. £175,000 went to the Peacehaven sports hub for building improvements and £150,000 was allocated for the Chatsworth Park Café and community space in Telscombe. Seaford Mercread Youth Club was granted £107,000 for renovations and £50,000 was presented to Lewes Rowing Club.



“We supported 24 projects in the most recent CIL funding round. Some of these have already been completed and have made great improvements to the lives of many residents.”

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

Pensioners: are you eligible for income lifeline?



The council is encouraging Lewes district residents to check if they are eligible for pension credit.

Hundreds of eligible, pension age households in East Sussex are missing out on pension credit. Pension credit gives people extra money to help with living costs if they are over state pension age and on a low income.

Pension credit is available even if you have other income, savings or own your own home. It is also separate from the state pension.

Claiming pension credit doesn't just top up your income – it could also help you get other benefits, including help with health and housing costs.

To check eligibility and find out more, visit: gov.uk/pension-credit or call **0800 99 1234**.

If you'd like support to complete the application form, please contact your local Citizens Advice. Visit citizensadviceeastsussex.org.uk for more information.

Welcome Spaces

Welcome Spaces are safe, warm, non-judgemental spaces where local people can sit and be warm, have a hot drink and be with company.

For a full list of Welcome Spaces operating this winter, visit lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/cost-of-living and click on Welcome Spaces.

“It’s never been more important for our residents who are struggling with the cost of living crisis to access the benefits they are entitled to.

“Anyone who thinks they are eligible should complete an application as soon as possible.”

Councillor Christine Robinson, Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing



Support 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

If you are having difficulty paying your rent and you receive Housing Benefit or Universal Credit, you can apply for a discretionary housing payment. Visit: lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/DHP

For details about the government's Household Support Fund and to check whether you can apply, visit: 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 information, visit ehu.org.uk or contact your Citizens Advice office.

If you are unable to afford food, local community food projects might be able to help (visit lewesdistrictfoodpartnership.org and click on Emergency Food Network).

Making Sussex a fairer place



A charity that exists to make Sussex a fairer and more equal place needs support from residents across Lewes district.

Sussex Community Foundation enables local people to support local causes, making grants to small charities and voluntary groups working in communities across Sussex. In the past year alone, it gave £2.6 million to more than 400 local charities and organisations.

The charity has four key funding priorities: Tackling Poverty, Improving Health, Reaching Potential and Acting on Climate.

Through these, the charity addresses a range of causes including homelessness and debt advice services and food banks, community education and support for vulnerable children and young people, outreach services for those who need health and wellbeing support, and connecting people across all age groups to live better lives.

Sussex Community Foundation is asking residents for support by either becoming a Friend of the Foundation, contributing to its funding priorities or establishing a Donor Advised Fund.

Visit sussexcommunityfoundation.org or email: info@sussexcommunityfoundation.org

Coastal biosphere set to expand

The only urban biosphere in the UK, The Living Coast is hoping to increase in size to include half a million residents, including the whole of Lewes district for the first time.

The Living Coast has been a designated UNESCO Biosphere since 2014, stretching from Shoreham to Newhaven, and from the South Downs to the sea. The biospheres are places of international best

practice, promoting sustainable development in nature conservation, cultural diversity and economic development.

Now, as part of a bid to renew the area's status for the next 10 years, the partnership is looking to expand the biosphere from over 330,000 residents to nearly 550,000, embracing all of Adur & Worthing, the entire Lewes district, and Brighton & Hove, bringing in Seaford in the east and Goring in the west.

“Our area is a hub of innovation for environmentally sustainable practice. We are proactively working with partners and communities to positively respond to the climate and nature crisis we face. Now is the right time to extend The Living Coast’s geography to the whole of Lewes district, to increase the impact of our partnership over the next decade and take on the challenges ahead together.”



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

Martin Harris, chair of The Living Coast partnership, which is led by Brighton & Hove City Council, said: “We have created an inspiring and shared vision that will connect and balance the needs of humanity and nature over the next 10 years and beyond.”

Priorities for the future include promoting sustainability education and using the designation to promote a sense of local pride.

The Living Coast is involving more young people, recently recruiting two youth volunteers to ensure diverse youth voices are represented in the biosphere.



**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 – in-house money advice 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, excluding Peacehaven, which is a drop-in service, no appointment necessary.

Monday	Seaford 37 Church Street BN25 1HG	10am - 3.30pm
Tuesday Wednesday Thursday	Newhaven 15-19 Chapel Street BN9 9PN	10am - 3.30pm
Every Wednesday	Peacehaven Meridian Centre BN10 8BL	10am - 12pm 1pm - 3pm
Friday	Lewes 6 High Street	10am - 3.30pm

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)

A rural outreach drop-in service operates at venues across Lewes district including Ringmer, Chailey, Bishopstone and Newick, no appointment is necessary. Visit

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

Lewes District Citizens Advice work in partnership with Lewes District Council | Charity registration number: 1068146

How to recycle real Christmas trees

If you receive the council's garden waste collection service, you can recycle your real Christmas tree by cutting it up and putting it in your garden waste bin, or placing it beside the bin.

Garden waste collections pick up again after the Christmas break on Monday, 20 January, 2025.

Alternatively, take your tree to a collection point by Sunday 26 January, 2025.

These are located at: Brook Street Car Park in Lewes, Bay Vue Car Park in Newhaven, Piddinghoe Avenue Car Park in Peacehaven, Richmond Road Car Park and The Buckle Car Park in Seaford.

Reducing festive food waste

Please consider freezing leftovers or donating surplus food to your local food bank.

Please remember to make good use of your food waste recycling bin: egg shells, peelings and cooked food – including bones – can all go inside. This will be recycled into soil conditioner for use by local farmers and gardeners.

To join the thousands of households who recycle their food waste or find out where to pick up a free roll of caddy liners, visit lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/foodwaste

Good news for green fingers

The council's garden waste service opens for renewals on 7 January, 2025.

Next year's service runs from April 2025 to March 2026. Please renew by 31 March 2025 to avoid a break in your collections. To find out more visit lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/GardenWaste

We are no longer able to accept payment by cheque or invoice for our garden waste service.

