

South February 08



Borough Update

Your Maidstone Borough Council Newsletter



NOW rolling out -
Fortnightly recycling collections of
paper, cardboard, plastics, tins and cans
And weekly rubbish collection here to stay

Free bulky rubbish service

Maidstone council refuse lorries are out most weekends collecting bulky household rubbish from locations in your area. Take your refuse to the Weekend Freighter Service at the times shown:

Sunday 24th February

1000 - 1045 East Sutton. Court Brooms/East Sutton Road
1100 - 1130 Sutton Valence. South Lane
1130 - 1200 Sutton Valence. Captains Close
1200 - 1230 Sutton Valence. The Harbour

Sunday 2nd March

1130 - 1230 Teston. Livesey Street
1330 - 1515 West Farleigh. By the green

Saturday 8th March

0745 - 0845 Laddingford. Cleavesland
0900 - 1000 Collier Street. Church Farm
1030 - 1130 Marden. Stanley Road
1230 - 1330 Staplehurst. Poyntell Road
1400 - 1515 Headcorn. Thatch Barn Road

Saturday 15th March

0915 - 1015 Chart Sutton. Amber Lane
1030 - 1100 Sutton Valence. South Lane
1200 - 1230 Sutton Valence. Captains Close
1230 - 1300 Sutton Valence. The Harbour
1315 - 1345 Linton. Wheelers Lane
1415 - 1515 Headcorn. Oak Lane
0745 - 0845 Hunton. Village Hall

Sunday 16th March

1515 - 1615 Boughton Monchelsea. Gandy's Lane
1630 - 1715 Boughton Monchelsea. Hubbards Lane

Saturday 22nd March

0915 - 1030 Marden. Chantry Road
1130 - 1245 Marden. Maynards
1300 - 1400 Marden. Stilebridge
1415 - 1515 Staplehurst. Northdown

Sunday 23rd March

1115 - 1230 Langley. Shepherds Drive
1330 - 1430 Langley. Grasslands
1445 - 1545 Kingswood. Village hall

Saturday 29th March

0745 - 0845 Yalding. Village green
0900 - 1030 Yalding. Lyngs Close
1430 - 1515 Nettlestead. Bishops Close
0745 - 0845 East Farleigh. Dean Street

Saturday 5th April

0745 - 0845 Coxheath. Huntingdon Road
0900 - 1000 Coxheath. Village hall
1245 - 1345 Staplehurst. Church Green
1415 - 1515 East Farleigh. Gallants Lane

Sunday 6th April

1000 - 1100 Headcorn. Orchard Glade

Saturday 12th April

1300 - 1345 East Sutton. Court Broomes
1400 - 1430 Sutton Valence. South Lane
1430 - 1450 Sutton Valence. Captains Close
1450 - 1515 Sutton Valence. The Harbour

The household waste recycling centre at Burial Ground Lane, Tovil, Maidstone is open Monday to Saturday, 8am to 4.30pm, and Sunday and Bank Holidays, 9am to 4pm.

For more information about our bulky rubbish services, including paid for doorstep collections, visit digitalmaidstone.co.uk or call the cleansing hotline on 01622 602162.



What you said

Last time in Borough Update we asked you to tell us what you thought about the magazine with the chance of winning a night out at the pantomime, courtesy of the Hazlitt Theatre, or a pair of tickets for the Odeon Cinema.

Your comments were very positive – everyone liked the look of the magazine and found it interesting and easy to read. Suggestions for improvement included more articles on Maidstone events and information about recycling. Thank you to all who responded.



Sophie budgets for indulgent Christmas

Invicta Grammar School student Sophie Stratton (15) and her family from Downswood enjoyed a 'Gourmet Indulgence'

Christmas and New Year. Sophie won our budget consultation competition and picked up a Marks and Spencer Christmas hamper, worth £250, courtesy of the Mall Chequers, Maidstone.

Council Leader, Fran Wilson, chose Sophie at random from the 750 people who commented on the cabinet's plans for next year's budget.

Residents used an online budget planner to find out about 15 areas of Maidstone council spending and decide how much to spend in each area and for the council's overall budget. They were asked to make savings of at least £200,000 in the overall budget to keep the council's increase in its council tax to no more than 5% (about £10 a year for a band D taxpayer). Few people managed it - the average increase was 6.4%.

Borough Update

This is your council newsletter, produced six times a year in the Downs Mail newspaper. It is written, edited and designed by the council's communications team, London House, 5-11 London Road, Maidstone, Kent, ME16 8HR. Email: pr@maidstone.gov.uk. Your comments and suggestions are always welcome. It is typeset by DesignZero6 and printed by Uckfield Press.

If you are visually impaired and would like the newsletter text in large print, please call us on 01622 602807, and we will be happy to send you a copy.

New paper, cardboard, plastics, tins and cans recycling service

Maidstone's new fortnightly recycling service is now being rolled out across the borough and everyone is keeping a weekly rubbish collection.

The first 20,000 homes will have the new service by the end of February. Another 20,000 will receive it in October and everyone will have an improved fortnightly recycling collection of - paper, cardboard, plastics, tins and cans - by February 2009.

Cabinet Member, Tony Harwood, explains: "The new service gives residents the recycling services that they demand and maintains the weekly refuse collection they have told me they want."

Most households will be getting a new 190 litre grey bin for their weekly rubbish collection. Residents will be asked to use their existing green bins for their fortnightly recycling collections. Special arrangements will be made for people who don't have wheelie bins or space for a second bin.

Separate kerbside glass collections will continue, for the time being, for the 14,000 or so households that currently receive the service. But the service won't make sense environmentally or economically when the Allington waste to energy plant is back up and running because then any glass put in household rubbish will be burnt and collected for use as aggregate in road construction - and that's exactly the same end product that we get from the mixed kerbside glass collection.

Garden waste will continue to be collected fortnightly in the same containers as usual.

Council Leader, Fran Wilson, is urging everyone to use the new services: "We have listened to residents and we are keeping a weekly collection for rubbish and kitchen waste. I am asking everyone to enthusiastically back the service they said they wanted and really start recycling and do their bit for the environment."

Maidstone council is writing to households and delivering new bins, to those which have room for them, a few weeks before the new service starts.



Market Trader John Elliott has been a stall holder at Maidstone for a record breaking 50 years and has no intention of stopping yet! We found out what it is that keeps him coming back week after week...

Specialising in foam and vinyl coverings, you may think there's little market for John's products, but on a freezing cold Tuesday morning you'll see a steady stream of customers

Trader makes market history

purchasing cushion fillings to plastic vinyl for tent windows!

During John's 50 years he has seen many changes to the market. Once a farmer's haven for - sheep, chickens, dogs and rabbits; the market is now popular for fresh fruit and veg, clothing, toys, DVDs, CDs and electrical goods. The market might have changed but there's still a lively camaraderie between stall holders.

John's success at Maidstone has led to a comfortable lifestyle, and in his own words he'll be there for a few years yet!

You can pick up a bargain at Maidstone Market, Lockmeadow every Tuesday and Saturday from 7am - 1.30pm.

Next Council Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Full Council will be at 6.30pm on Wednesday 27 February at Maidstone Town Hall.

Residents can present petitions and ask questions, if they give prior notice.

For more information call democratic services on 01622 602030.

Most council meetings are now web-cast and can be viewed online at digitalmaidstone.co.uk.

New recycling calendars

LOOK OUT for new Maidstone Borough Council recycling calendars being delivered to every Maidstone home - updated and with information on garden waste collections.

Your council working to make Maidstone safer

Maidstone is safe

Maidstone continues to be a very safe place to live – with a continued reduction in crime levels in what is already a low crime borough.

The Police, Maidstone council, the Primary Care Trust, Kent Fire and Rescue Service, KCC, local communities, businesses and the voluntary sector have all contributed to this reduction.

The latest figures* show an overall reduction in measured crime of 13.7%.

Some types of crime were down by more than 20 or even 30%:

- Criminal Damage down 11.5%
- Theft from Motor Vehicle down 24.9%
- KCVS Violent Crime down 13.2%
- Vehicle Interference down 4.1%
- Other Theft down 8.7%

***April - December 2006 compared to April - December 2007**

Keeping in touch

Shops and businesses in Maidstone can keep in touch with each other and the CCTV team about any community safety issues, with the Storennet and Nitenet radio systems.

Safer car parks

12 of Maidstone council's car parks are recognised with the Park Mark Safer Parking Award.

Park Mark car parks have been thoroughly vetted by a Police accredited assessor.

Best practice

Maidstone has been recognised as a best practice case study by the national governing body for local authority regulatory services for: "... its ongoing work to make the town centre a safe and enjoyable place to be, both day and night."

CCTV saves lives and catches criminals

Maidstone's closed circuit television cameras make a real difference to the quality of life for residents, visitors, shoppers and town centre store owners. The Maidstone council operating centre is at the heart of the effort to keep Maidstone safe. Last December, for example, the centre contributed to no less than 174 arrests or interventions to prevent crimes or anti social behaviour. Here are a few recent examples:



- **Just before Christmas a Parking Patroller radioed into the CCTV control centre to report that a young man, who might have had too much to drink, had climbed over the railings and was in danger of falling off Maidstone Bridge into the river. CCTV sent images to Police Force Control which sent officers to rescue the man.**
- When a 13 years old girl went missing from a special school, there were real fears for her safety and CCTV operators were asked to help find her. Two hours later they spotted her in the town centre. They directed officers to her, who took her to safety.
- **CCTV operators received a radio call from Police Force Control stating that a shop in the High Street was transmitting a personal attack alarm. A purse had been stolen. CCTV cameras found and tracked the likely offenders, who were fleeing the scene, until Police officers arrested them.**
- When an elderly man collapsed with chest pains in a town centre department store our CCTV operators kept the store up to date with the progress of the ambulance which took him to Maidstone hospital. They then located his car and made sure that he didn't get a parking ticket!

CCTV operators develop a sense for the things they need to watch. One of the operators explains: "I just know when something isn't right; like when I saw someone standing beside a continental lorry; I knew he was up to no good. And sure enough after a few minutes he jumped into the cab and made off with a sat nav. Bu he didn't get far; I called in the Police and they made the arrest."

CCTV facts and figures

- Maidstone's CCTV Centre has 119 fixed cameras
- The centre monitors 20 mobile cameras
- It is operational 24/7 365 days a year
- It deals with more than 2,000 incidents every year
- It costs £400,000 a year to run
- A recent best value review concluded it was good value for money
- Maidstone council is investing £750,000 to improve cameras, monitoring and recording equipment in 2008-09.



Improving quality of life

Large-scale crimes grab newspaper headlines but it is petty crime, vandalism, graffiti and bad behaviour that concerns most of us far more than the bank raids and murders that make the headlines – and that’s where Maidstone Borough Council is making an impact on improving our quality of life.

The council and its partners have put together a range of measures – from working with youngsters who might otherwise get into trouble to a no-nonsense policy on litter – to tackle the antisocial issues that affect us all.

Many towns employ the same initiatives but the difference in Maidstone is that they are coordinated by a special Environmental Crime Working Group. Maidstone council’s community safety team, Police Community Support Officers, KCC Community Wardens, and a Primary Care Trust community development worker share resources and information and work together to solve problems in a ‘joined-up’ way.

Partnership is making Maidstone safer

Maidstone’s Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership will be ten years old this year and according to cabinet member Mike FitzGerald it is in very good health.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 placed a duty on local councils and the Police to develop strategies to tackle crime and disorder. “The Act recognised that the Police can’t fight crime on their own;” says Mike FitzGerald. “Our Safer Maidstone Partnership has brought together all community leaders to agree priorities, share knowledge and coordinate work. The partnership has a good record of reducing crime and the latest figures show an overall reduction in measured crime of more than 13% compared to the previous year.”



Safer Maidstone Priorities 2008-9

1. **Reduce Crime** - with an emphasis on domestic abuse, criminal damage and alcohol related disorder in the night time economy.
2. **Reduce the Fear of Crime** - By engaging with communities and promoting public confidence through publicity of the true picture of Maidstone as a safe place.
3. **Anti-Social Behaviour** - To reduce all aspects of anti-social behaviour: Each statutory agency having ownership of one category of anti-social behaviour.
4. **Reduce Harm done by Alcohol and Drugs** - By education, intervention and enforcement, particularly in relation to binge drinking and the night time economy.
5. **Young People** - To reduce the number of young people victimised or involved in criminal behaviour, diverting vulnerable young people away from crime and disorder.

To comment on the work and priorities of the Safer Maidstone Partnership contact David Hewetson, the Community Safety Co-ordinator on 01622 602475 or email davidhewetson@maidstone.gov.uk. For more information visit digitalmaidstone.co.uk/communitysafety .

Safer Business

Maidstone was the first town in the country to receive the Safer Business Award. The award recognises the successful management of the day and night time economy through CCTV, the Storennet and Nitenet radio communication systems, and a range of other local community safety initiatives.

Partners

The Safer Maidstone Partnership is funded by Government, Maidstone Borough Council and Kent Police. It is – Maidstone Borough Council, Kent County Council, Kent Drug and Alcohol Action Team, Kent Fire and Rescue, Kent Police, Kent Youth Offending Service, Kenward Trust, Maidstone Housing Trust, Maidstone Mediation Scheme, Maidstone Town Centre Management, Maidstone Weald Primary Care Trust, National Neighbourhood Watch Association, National Probation Service and Victim Support

Street Pastor Scheme

Representatives from Maidstone’s churches will soon be out and about on the streets of Maidstone, meeting people to care, listen and offer advice.

The scheme, the first of its kind in Kent, has been trialed in other

major towns and cities in the UK, and has a proven record of reducing levels of crime.

The volunteer street pastors will initially focus on Maidstone’s night life and offer support for those who need it.

We're moving to give you better services

This year Maidstone Borough Council will be moving to new offices in King Street, Maidstone to provide all of its services and many more – for the first time at a single location.

Sustainability has been built into the new offices with high environmental standards for construction and management. Bills for heating, lighting, water and waste collection will be lower as a result. Eco-features will include heating and cooling from a bio-boiler fuelled with waste wood from local woodlands, low energy and intelligent lighting that switches off automatically when rooms aren't in use, energy efficient computers and electrical fittings, low flush toilets

and low flow taps. Electricity will come from renewable sources. Cleaning and waste contracts will minimise environmental impact. Even the roof will be green - literally – covered with plants that soak up heavy rainfall and reduce run-off that can cause flash flooding. Located close to the bus station to encourage staff, visitors and residents to use public transport, the building symbolises Maidstone council's commitment to tackling climate change.

The council will rent the new offices from the Mall Chequers, Maidstone - surrendering leases on some of its existing offices and selling others in order to afford the move. Currently the council has offices in London

Road and Tonbridge Road offering different services at each location.

But the new offices will provide easy access to all the council's services at a single town centre location. And a new Gateway, provided in partnership with KCC, will provide access to county council services and many other public and community services.

The council will be moving in June with a temporary reception in the Mall Chequers before the new Gateway opens in September. The temporary reception will be paid for by the contractor because of a delay in completing the Gateway building. See the next issue of Borough Update for full details, including a location plan for our new offices.

What do you think of Maidstone?

Maidstone's image will be the next topic considered by Maidstone Borough Council's Environment and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee and it wants to hear the views of people who live and work in the town.

The Committee wants to know what people think are the best and worst things about the town, and what they would change or add if they could.

Anyone who wants to have their say can write to Louise Smith, Senior Overview and Scrutiny Officer at louisesmith@maidstone.gov.uk or London House, 5-11 London Road, Maidstone, Kent, ME16 8HR.

Try home composting

Composting is nature's way of recycling. Whether you're a keen gardener or novice, have a large garden or small urban space, you can home compost.

It reduces the amount of rubbish you put in your bin and provides a fantastic supply of nutrient-rich homemade soil for flower and shrub borders.

To help you get started, Maidstone Borough Council is promoting a Kent-wide scheme offering reduced price compost bins.

Call 0845 077 0757

or visit www.recyclenow.com/compost.



Still smoking? Stub it out!

An estimated 3,428 people in Maidstone are currently trying to give up smoking.

More people try to kick the habit between January and March than at any other time of the year and those who seek NHS support are up to four times more likely to succeed.

West Kent Primary Care Trust advises:

- Set yourself a quit date so you can plan ahead for how you are going to cope with the craving during the difficult times - e.g. those

occasions when you always have a cigarette.

- Avoid situations where you will be tempted such as clubbing with friends or a meal with friends who smoke.
- Double your chances of success by using Nicotine Replacement Therapy - gum, patches, microtabs, nasal sprays, or - if you're hooked on the "hand to mouth" aspect of smoking - inhalators.



- Be determined. Giving up an addiction isn't easy - believe that with support you can do it. Last year in the South East, 59% of supported quitters were still smoke free after four weeks.

For expert advice ring the NHS Smoking Helpline on 0800 169 0 169, open daily from 7am to 11 pm.



Picture courtesy of Denise Tate

Maidstone's favourite trees

Is there a tree in Maidstone that you think is really special?

We're launching a competition to promote trees and the benefits they provide for our health, wellbeing and the appearance of our towns, villages and countryside. They may have personal meaning too, perhaps a family or historic connection, or just special because of their location, size or appearance.

If you have a favourite tree in the borough, we want to hear from you. You can nominate your chosen tree by sending us a photograph and description. We're also keen to find trees that are very old, very big, unusual or interesting in shape, historically significant or associated with someone famous.

For every entry received a tree will be planted in the borough. A further dedicated tree will be planted in one of Maidstone's parks or open spaces for every winner.

The 50 best images will be available to view online and we'll print some in Borough Update.

Schools will also have the chance to get involved, and artists are encouraged to send in their drawings or paintings, to form part of a special exhibition at the Hazlitt Art Gallery.

The deadline for entries is 31 October.

Visit www.maidstonearts.com or contact the arts development team on 01622 602828 or email arts@maidstone.gov.uk for more information.

Memories of Mote Park

Mote Park has a wealth of history, and park users are being asked to send in old photographs and accounts of how it has been used in the past. The research will help to compile a detailed history in preparation for future management plans, funded by a Heritage Lottery Fund grant.

Anyone who can help should contact Eva Girling on 01622 602735 or email evagirling@maidstone.gov.uk.

Five year vision for town centre

Maidstone council and Town Centre Management have drawn up a plan of major changes to the town over the next five years, with the aim of becoming one of the most vibrant and desirable in the South-East. The plans propose ten areas for high quality development including Maidstone East Station, King Street, Maidstone Library and St Peter's Wharf.

As well as environmental commitments such as tree planting, there will be a focus on encouraging businesses to the town and promoting the market and independent traders. There are also plans to improve traffic management, public transport and car parking. Cultural aspirations, such as broadening the night time offer and supporting the new Hazlitt Arts Centre, are included.

Comments on the proposals are welcomed and should be sent to Maidstone Town Centre Management, Chequers Centre Management Suite, Pads Hill, Maidstone, ME15 6AT or info@mtcmti.co.uk by Friday 7 March. The full plan can be viewed on the council's website, digitalmaidstone.co.uk/yoursay.

Hotfoot to Easter play scheme

Children won't be lost for something to do this Easter. Maidstone council will be running Easter play schemes for 5 to 11 year olds at Brunswick House School from Monday 7 April – Friday 11 April and at Shepway Youth and Community Centre and East Borough Primary School from Monday 14 April – Friday 18 April. Play schemes run from 10am – 2pm.

Activities will include sports and games, arts and crafts, performing arts, story telling, karate and fire safety team demonstrations. For more information call the sports and play team on 01622 602222 or email sportsandplay@maidstone.gov.uk.

Freefall into Easter

Youngsters can develop exciting new skills this Easter holiday with Freefall sports trips.

On Thursday 10 April why not have a go at popular Olympic sport, Curling, at Fenton's Ice Rink in Tunbridge Wells? Or visit the Chatham Ski and Snowboard Centre on Wednesday 16 April and learn how to ski or snowboard on the largest artificial slope in the South East!

Both trips include return coach travel from Maidstone Leisure centre, and are for children 10 years and over.

For more information contact the sports and play team on 01622 602222 or sportsandplay@maidstone.gov.uk.

Goodwin's Visionary Landscapes

Albert Goodwin's 'Visionary Landscapes' is now on show at Maidstone Museum. The Maidstone born artist (1845-1932) travelled extensively in his quest for varied and exotic landscapes. Maidstone Museum has the largest collection of his works in public ownership. The exhibition is open until Sunday 23 March. Admission FREE.

Battle of Maidstone

This year marks the 360th anniversary of the Battle of Maidstone, one of the bloodiest battles of the Civil War. Join author and historian Andrew Hopper at

Maidstone Museum on Tuesday 25 March, for a talk about Lord Fairfax and the Civil War. Suitable for 16 years and over, cost £3. Call 01622 602838 to reserve a place.

Springtime at the Hazlitt

'The Musicals' with stars from Les Miserables

Sunday 24 February 7.30pm
£15, £13 concs

The Real Diamond – John Hylton

tribute to Neil Diamond
Saturday 1 March 7.30pm
£15, £13 concs

Rainbow Live! Zippy Superstar DJ

Sunday 2 March 2.30pm
£8.50, £7.50 concs, £30 family

Kikki Dee & Carmelo Luggeri in Concert

Tuesday 4 March 8pm
£15

The Picture of Dorian Gray

Wednesday 5 March 7.30pm
£12, £10 concs

Moths Ate My Dr Who Scarf

Friday 7 March 8pm
£12, £10 concs

Swing 'n' Sinatra tribute show

Saturday 8 March 8pm
£13, £12 concs



The Knicker Lady: the history of the humble knicker!

Thursday 3 April 7.30pm
£12, £10 concs

The Secret Garden

Friday 4 April 2.30pm
£8.50, £6.50 concs, £25 family

Are You Experienced?

Tribute to Jimi Hendrix
Saturday 5 April 7.30pm
£15, £13 concs

www.hazlitttheatre.co.uk
Box Office 01622 758611.

Free tickets for Big Day Out

More than 15,000 free tickets will be given away to local residents to visit the county's top tourist attractions as part of Kent's Big Day Out on Saturday 29 March.

You can apply for tickets for Kent attractions, including - castles, cathedrals, boat trips, Maidstone museums, and churches from www.visitkent.co.uk or Maidstone TIC from 29 February.

What's On!

Leap Year Youth of Generation Gig
29 February
Maidstone Leisure Centre
08451 552277

Mother's Day
2 March
Museum of Kent Life, Cobtree
01622 763936

An audience with Colin Fry
7 March
Maidstone Leisure Centre
08451 552277

Maidstone Choral Union
8 March
Maidstone Leisure Centre
08451 552277

Dream Wedding Show
9 March
Leeds Castle 01622 765400

Maidstone Symphony Orchestra
15 March
Maidstone Leisure Centre
08451 552277

The Fremlin Walk Easter Farm
15-17 March
Fremlin Walk 01622 356580

Wedding Fayre
16 March
Museum of Kent Life,
Cobtree 01622 763936

Up, Up and Away at Easter
21-24 March
Leeds Castle 01622 765400

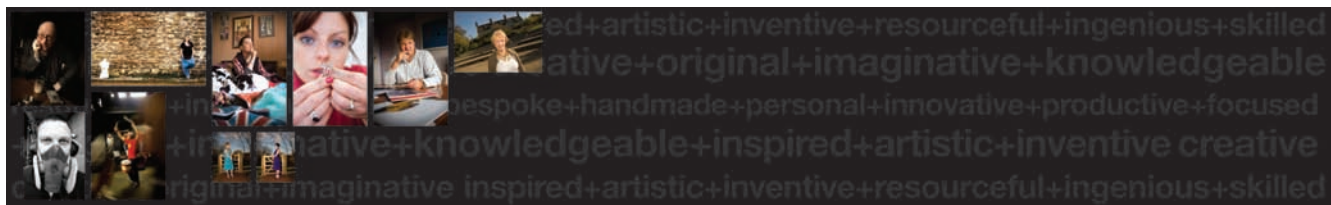
Easter Bunny Hunt
21-24 March
Museum of Kent Life,
Cobtree 01622 763936

Billboard project

A major billboard project will showcase 30 photographic portraits of creatives who live or work in Maidstone. Actors, writers, visual artists, musicians and more will be shown on a temporary billboard erected in Market Buildings, Maidstone.

Maidstone has a wealth of hidden talent who make up a lively arts scene and Crea+ive Maids+one celebrates this. You think you know Maidstone, look again.

Art at the Centre and Maidstone Borough Council aim to develop an Artists' Quarter in the heart of Maidstone. Art at the Centre is funded by Arts Council England, South East and Channel Corridor Partnership.



crea+ive maids+one: **what does a crea+ive person look like?**

