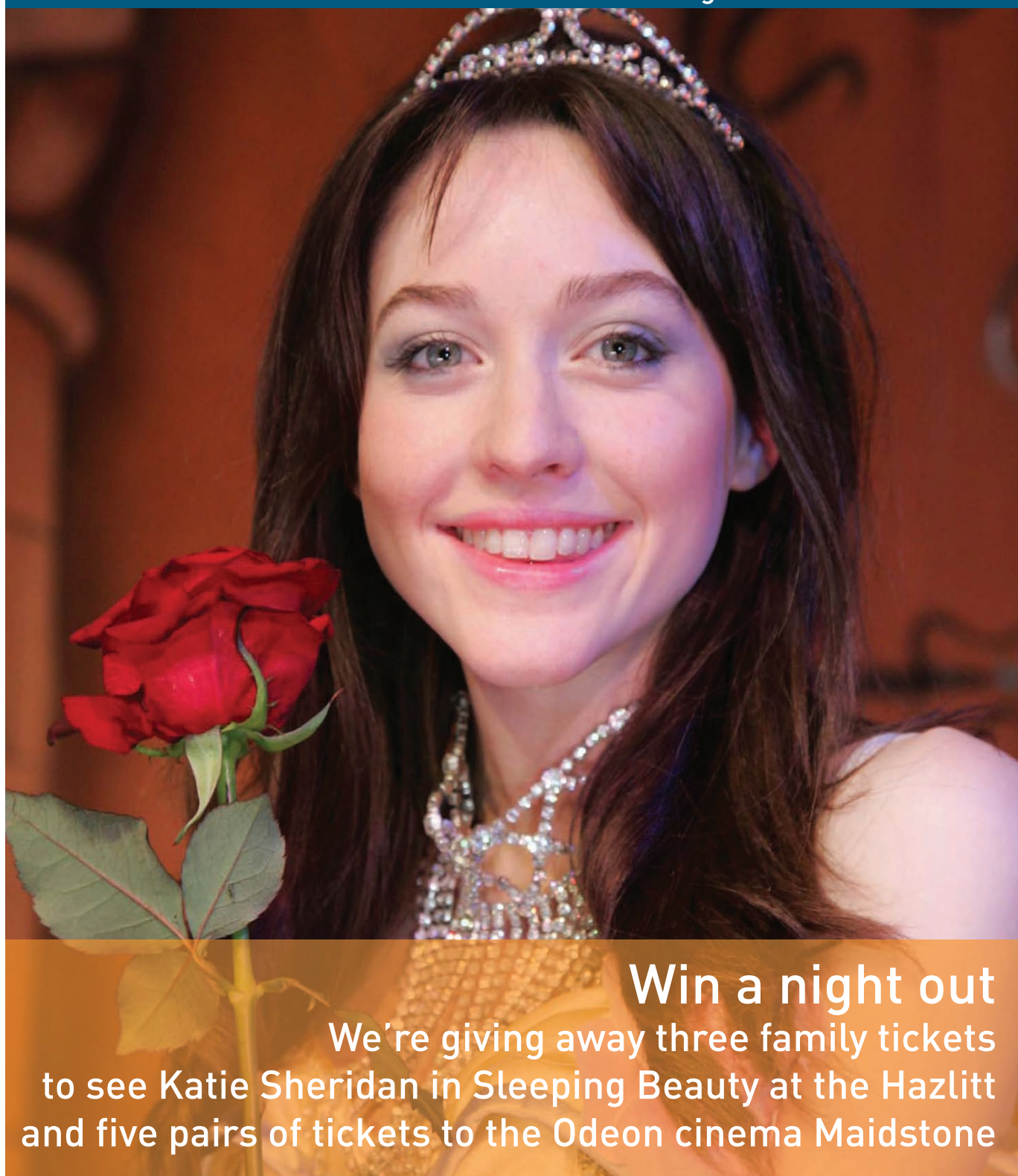


Town December 07



# Borough Update

Your Maidstone Borough Council Newsletter



**Win a night out**  
We're giving away three family tickets  
to see Katie Sheridan in *Sleeping Beauty* at the Hazlitt  
and five pairs of tickets to the Odeon cinema Maidstone

### 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:

#### Saturday 8th December

1100 - 1200 Mangravet. Grove Road  
1215 - 1315 Mangravet. Woodside Road  
0915 - 1015 Park Avenue

#### Sunday 9th December

1000 - 1145 Allington. Newbury Avenue

#### Saturday 15th December

1015 - 1015 Park Wood. Park Wood Parade  
1045 - 1115 Park Wood. Bicknor Road

#### Sunday 16th December

1500 - 1600 Shepway. Westmorland Road  
1615 - 1715 Barming. Abingdon Road

#### Saturday 22nd December

0745 - 0830 Town Centre. County Road  
0845 - 0930 Shepway. Northumberland Road  
1100 - 1200 Shepway. Nottingham Avenue  
0745 - 0845 Barming. North Street  
0900 - 1100 Buckland Road.  
1115 - 1215 Queens Road.  
1300 - 1515 Fant. Junction Unicomes Lane

#### Sunday 6th January

1000 - 1100 Lower Road. Foster Clark Estate  
1115 - 1230 Loose. Lancet Lane  
1315 - 1415 Loose. Broadoak Avenue  
1430 - 1545 Barming. Green Way  
1545 - 1715 Bower Mount Road

#### Sunday 13th January

1145 - 1245 Penenden Heath. Woodcut  
1330 - 1500 Penenden Heath. Heathfield Road  
1515 - 1715 Barming. Terminus Road

#### Saturday 19th January

0745 - 0845 Allington. Trevor Drive  
1015 - 1115 Ringlestone. Moncktons Avenue  
1200 - 1400 Ringlestone. Calder Road - by the green  
1415 - 1515 Victoria Street

#### Saturday 26th January

1000 - 1130 Allington. Newbury Avenue  
0915 - 1015 Park Wood. Lockham Farm Avenue  
1030 - 1115 Park Wood. Wallis Avenue  
1130 - 1230 Senacre. Betsham Road  
1315 - 1415 Shepway. Highland Road  
1430 - 1515 Park Wood. Queen Elizabeth Square

#### Sunday 27th January

1545 - 1715 South Park Road - junction York Road

#### Saturday 2nd February

1300 - 1515 Allington. Newbury Avenue  
0745 - 0845 Tovil. Brenchley Road  
0900 - 1030 Tovil. Forest Hill  
1045 - 1215 Loose. Linton Road  
1300 - 1400 Loose. Anglesey Avenue  
1415 - 1515 Loose. Broadfield Road

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. It is closed Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day

**For more information about our bulky rubbish services, including paid for doorstep collections, visit [digitalmaidstone.co.uk](http://digitalmaidstone.co.uk) or call the cleansing hotline on**

**01622 602162.**



## Scores on the doors



Whether it's a quick bite for lunch, a dinner with friends or a full blown romantic meal, you can dine in confidence with Scores on the Doors.

In January Maidstone Borough Council will launch a new scheme which gives consumers the chance to make informed choices about where they eat or buy their food.

Local food businesses will be given a star rating based on food hygiene criteria, building structure and overall attitude towards complying with the law. The stars range from 5 stars, excellent, to no stars, poor.

As well as restaurants, pubs and cafes you can find out how clean your child's school canteen is, which are the best rated butchers, caterers and farm shops and even the food hygiene standards of mobile sandwich vans. Just look for the sticker in their window or door, or visit the council's website - [digitalmaidstone.co.uk](http://digitalmaidstone.co.uk) - to find out how your favourite place to eat rates.

The Scores on the Doors scheme is supported by the Food Standards Agency as part of a nationwide pilot scheme and is seen as an important tool for local councils committed to improving food safety.

### Borough Update

This is your council newsletter, produced up to 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](mailto: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.



## Love Food Hate Waste

Maidstone is at the forefront of the national campaign, 'Love Food Hate Waste'. The simple message is to enjoy the food we buy and do easy things to cut how much is wasted.

The Love Food Hate Waste campaign was launched by celebrity chef and TV presenter Ainsley Harriott who says "This campaign is aimed at everyone. You don't have to be a chef to know how to cut down on food waste, you just need to care about your food and your pocket and the rest follows. We all need to take action and start changing our behaviour".

All 14 Kent councils are actively pushing the campaign message. Buses, billboards, bus stops, and posters are all being used in Kent to raise awareness of 'Love Food Hate Waste'. Children in over 50 Kent schools will enjoy shows to raise awareness of what can be done in the home to cut food waste.

The campaign is sorely needed. Research by Wrap (Waste Resources Action Programme) shows that on average we waste a third of the food we buy, costing each household up to £400 per year on food which isn't eaten. This is a big hit on our pockets, as well as on our environment. Many people are surprised that food waste is one of the biggest causes of harmful climate change gases that households make. If we reduced food waste by half, it would be the equivalent of taking 20% of the nation's cars off the road.

For hints and tips on minimising food waste, recipes, portioning, preparation and storage ideas visit [www.lovefoodhatewaste.com](http://www.lovefoodhatewaste.com)

Cutting food waste is a great way to help the environment. But some food waste, such as vegetable peelings, is unavoidable. There's good news to help with this. Kent residents can buy subsidised home compost bins from just £8 including delivery. By home composting, the food doesn't end up in landfill but produces compost for the garden at home. It's a win:win service for your pocket and for the environment. Visit [www.recyclenow.com/compost](http://www.recyclenow.com/compost) for details.

## Walk Maidstone

Discover Maidstone and get fit at the same time.

We've just published a beautifully presented pack of eight fascinating and invigorating circular walks around Maidstone and some of our surrounding villages. Each walk is between 3 and 6 miles distance.



The guide includes route descriptions, maps and photo-guides, so you shouldn't get lost along the way!

To get a pack, please collect one from any of our council reception points, Mote Park café, Maidstone Museum, Cobtree Manor Park Golf Course or Maidstone Leisure Centre. Or call Eva Girling on 01622 602735 for a copy of the **Walk Maidstone** pack.



## Christmas Holiday Refuse Collections - don't miss yours!

### Normal Collection

Monday 24 December  
 Tuesday 25 December  
 Wednesday 26 December  
 Thursday 27 December  
 Friday 28 December

### Actual collection

Monday 24 December  
 NO COLLECTION  
 NO COLLECTION  
 Thursday 27 December  
 Friday 28 December

Please put your refuse and recycling out by 6am over Christmas and New Year and put any extra rubbish, suitably contained, next to the bin.

**Extra side waste will be collected between 24 December and 5 January only.**

For more information, call 01622 602162 or visit [www.digitalmaidstone.co.uk](http://www.digitalmaidstone.co.uk)

# Shopping in Maidstone this Christmas



## Great choice

Present yourself with an easier time this year by doing all your Christmas shopping in Maidstone. With its amazing balance of top names and family specialists it's sure to have all you need.

Kent's county town has all the names you would expect, with House of Fraser, Primark, WHSmith, Woolworths, Boots, Wilkinsons, and Laura Ashley amongst the old favourites for Christmas gifts, but it also has much more.

With big towns looking increasingly like clones of each other, Maidstone is privileged to have a 50-50 split between household names and independent retailers.

Places like Gabriel's Hill, Market Buildings and Union Street offer an immense range of hidden gems, from photography stores to china and glass specialists and from musical instrument retailers to jewellers.

Alongside this immense choice the town boasts the kind of modern retail experience offered by the exciting new Fremlin Walk Shopping Centre, with House of Fraser, USC and Zara to name but a few, and the bright and welcoming Mall, Chequers which

includes BHS, Boots and TJ Hughes. Week Street offers not just one but two Marks & Spencer stores and the Royal Star Arcade has a number of independent shops including Karen Millen.

For those looking for something new to wear at a time when funds are already tight, the town offers Matalan and TK Maxx on the riverfront.

Gabriel's Hill, where new lights will brighten up this year's festive shopping trip, specialises in jewellery, while Union Street has more than 50 specialist shops that add to the fantastic mix that makes Maidstone the only place to buy your presents this Christmas.

## And hassle free...

Parking is never easy at Christmas, but in Maidstone the alternatives are not just convenient but can also be fun.

The park and sail service from the Museum of Kent Life at Allington will operate on Saturdays from 17 November until 22 December and

on Sundays 16 and 23 December. Hourly sailings from Allington start at 9am and the last boat back leaves town at 5.30pm.

The council's park and ride services from London Road, Willington Street and Sittingbourne Road run on weekdays from 7am and on Saturdays from 8am. The last bus returns to the car parks at 6.30pm each day. Extra buses on **Saturdays only** through until 29 December will allow the service to run every 10 minutes.

## Late nights

Relax – there's more time to do your Christmas shopping when you choose Maidstone.

Shops will open until 9pm on Thursday evenings right through to 20 December – and again on Thursday 27 – and there are other late nights planned.

From Monday to Wednesday, 17 to 19 December, and on Friday 21, shops will open until 8pm.

They will open until 7pm on Saturday 15 and 22 December and from 10.30am until 4.30pm on Sunday 16, 23 and 30.

There's normal trading on Monday 24 December (Christmas Eve) and from Friday 28 through to Monday 31 December. On Boxing Day and New Years' Day shops will be open from 10.30am to 4.30pm.



## – when, where and how!

### Bags for life



Think about the planet as well as your friends when you are out buying Christmas presents this festive season.

Instead of collecting armfuls of plastic bags as you tour the shops in search of gifts, use a stylish recyclable bag bought from

Maidstone's up-and-coming artists' quarter.

Local artist Michael Kennedy designed the bag for the Art at the Centre project that is aiming to establish part of Maidstone as a focus for the county town's artists and craftspeople.

The bag sells for £2 in shops in Market Buildings, Bank Street, Pudding Lane, part of Earl Street, Rose Yard and the Royal Star Arcade.

"The bag is unique to the Art at the Centre zone, it's environmentally friendly and it's a piece of art in its own right," explained arts

development officer Laura Knight from Maidstone Borough Council.

Shops stocking the bags include Charmain Beaton, Kymera, Salamander, Black Dog and Eden. They will also be on sale at the two Christmas **Bizarre Bazaars**.

"Plastic bags are on their way out because of the harmful effect they have on the environment. Our unique reusable bags support art in the town as well as looking great," said Laura.

### Bizarre Bazaars

Affordable local arts and crafts will be on offer at two Christmas Bizarre Bazaars this December.

Shoppers looking for original, quality Christmas presents should visit the Corn Exchange from 10.30am until 4.30pm on Saturday 8 December or the Royal Star arcade from 10.30am until 3.30pm on Sunday 16 December.

The Bizarre Bazaars are the brainchild of Art at the Centre, an Arts Council-supported Maidstone Borough Council project that is aiming to create an artists' quarter in the centre of Maidstone.

Jewellery, ceramics and photography will be among the inspirational presents on offer, with an emphasis on affordable and hand made gifts.

As well as the artwork, created by 23 local craftsmen and women, Bizarre Bizarre visitors will be entertained by Jack Frost and an Ice Queen on stilts and music from Premier Brass.

For more information log on to [www.maidstonearts.com](http://www.maidstonearts.com)



### Maidstone's green lights

It's cool to cut energy consumption – and Maidstone will prove it this Christmas!

The borough council has changed all 2,500 bulbs in the canopy of Christmas lights in the centre of town from normal bulbs to the low energy kind.

"The old bulbs put out so much energy that people walking underneath the display could feel the heat," explained Council Leader Fran Wilson.

"That clearly wasn't good for Maidstone's carbon footprint, so the council decided to change the bulbs. The result is that instead of putting out 37,500 watts, the display will produce just 2,500."

Another advantage is that the new bulbs will last much longer, saving costs in the longer term as well as cutting electricity costs immediately.

### Recycle this Christmas

Most households will produce 20% more rubbish during the festive season. Here are our tips to reduce, reuse and recycle:

**Wrapping paper and cardboards packaging** can be recycled at cardboard recycling banks at 'bring' sites around the borough. Please remember not to put wrapping paper in the paper recycling banks or your kerbside boxes.

**Glass bottles and jars** can be recycled at 'bring' sites around the borough but if you have a kerbside collection, put out as much as you want in your yellow box along with any extras in old carrier bags.

**Mobile phones** – if you get a new mobile phone for Christmas, then why not recycle your old one by taking it to your local Oxfam shop.

**Real Christmas Trees** can be recycled at the Household Waste Recycling Centre at Burial Ground Lane, Tovil, Maidstone or you can put it out with your garden bin or green garden sacks.

**Christmas Cards** can be recycled at cardboard 'bring' sites and at special Woodland Trust banks at TK Maxx, WH Smith, M&S and Tesco stores.

### Turkey markets

Maidstone Market will be selling fresh turkeys this Christmas, every day from 17-22 December.



## Choosing courses is made easier for young people

A new website has been launched to help 14 to 19 year olds in Kent search for courses and other learning opportunities offered by local schools, colleges and training providers.

For the first time all the information is available on one website, giving young people easy

access to thousands of options.

www.kentcourses4u.com has been developed by Connexions Kent & Medway in partnership with Kent County Council and the Learning and Skills Council for Kent and Medway.

It provides a comprehensive listing

of what and where young people can choose to study and has been developed in close consultation with young people.

For more details contact Diane Beeching on 01622 607573 or

DianeBeeching@connexionskentandmedway.co.uk

## Council slams Post Office closures

Maidstone Borough Council has maintained its objections to the latest proposals for Post Office closures in the borough. The council has consistently fought closures throughout the Maidstone borough.

In the latest round Maidstone Cabinet Member for Community Services, Mike FitzGerald, has written to the Post Office setting out the case to retain the branches at Hardy Street and South Park, Maidstone and at Station Road, Staplehurst. He has asked that, even at this late stage, the valuable three branches be kept open.

## Crime figures falling

Reported crime is falling in Maidstone. Figures for the six months April to September 2007 show a dramatic fall compared to the same time last year.

Criminal damage has dropped by almost 6%, thefts from motor vehicles 7%, vehicle interference 22.5% and theft from person 2%.

## Olympic effort

Maidstone's preparations for the 2012 Games is continuing with work to establish a development trust.

The aim is to raise funds for community sport to improving social inclusion and residents' health. The trust will work to provide improved sports facilities and community sports programmes, particularly for young people. As part of the link to

the London 2012 Games, the trust will also support young athletes, for example through the provision of grants to help them attend national and international competitions.

With Maidstone being in such close proximity to the Games, Maidstone councillors are keen to ensure that the borough is left with a lasting legacy of the Games far beyond 2012.

## Gas works stop for Christmas

Nothing is going to stop Christmas shoppers enjoying Maidstone this year. Essential gas mains replacement works in the town centre have been stopped for Christmas and New Year.

## Remembering loved ones at Christmas

Vinters Park Crematorium grounds and halls and book of remembrance will be open every day from 9am to 4.30pm throughout Christmas and New Year.

The Maidstone Cemetery main gate will be open every day throughout Christmas and New from 10am to 4.30pm. The pedestrian gates at Mangravet Avenue and Pheasant Lane will be open from 10am to 4pm.

## Selling Kent for conferences

The Maidstone council based Kent Conference Bureau has just produced a new Conference Venues Directory for 2007-9, with more than 60 venues listed throughout the county.

The brochure features historical, unusual, modern and academic venues and has a useful contact list for reference when organising travel, teambuilding activities and audiovisual equipment.

For more information call 01622 602485, email [info@conferencekent.co.uk](mailto:info@conferencekent.co.uk) or visit [www.conferencekent.co.uk](http://www.conferencekent.co.uk)

## Kent International Gateway

There's still time to comment on the KIG planning application. Maidstone Borough Council will consider comments right up until it decides the application

Maidstone's Planning Committee will determine, by 13 February 2008, the application for outline planning permission for a rail/road freight interchange including warehousing, offices and light industrial units on a 112 hectares site close to junction 8 of the M20 at Bearsted.

The council has carried out a massive consultation exercise including - 3,000 letters to people who live near to the site, 40+ public notices, adverts in the local press, and consultations with the South East England Regional Assembly, South East England Development Agency, Network South East and the Government Office for the South East. It has also met with representatives of parish councils.

The borough council has allocated more than £100,000 for external consultants to consider and advise on the application. The total costs, including the in-house team, could amount to £350,000. The in-house team of planning, environmental health, landscape, transport and legal experts is headed by Principal Planning Officer Rob

Jarman. Expert advice is also on hand from KCC and Kent Highways, the Environment Agency, The Highways Agency, English Heritage, Natural England and external consultants employed by the council. Leading Counsel has been instructed to advise on the legal issues.

Director of Operations, Alison Broom, says: "This is a huge application because of the size of the proposal, the volume of information submitted, extent of public interest and the resources that we are putting into it. We've brought together a powerful team of internal and external experts to deal with it including Nathaniel Litchfield and Partners one of the UK's leading town planning consultancies and Jacobs one of the world's largest technical services consultancy companies. At any one time we could have up to 50 people working on the application and some of them will be working near full time on the application until we make our recommendation on the proposal."

All the application documents are on [www.digitalmaidstone.co.uk](http://www.digitalmaidstone.co.uk). Look for the KIG link on the home page. The application is also available at the Town Hall, at the council's London Road and Tonbridge Road offices, and at libraries. Comments should be made in writing to Rob Jarman, 13 Tonbridge Road, Maidstone, Kent ME16 8HG or by email to [KIGcomments@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:KIGcomments@maidstone.gov.uk).



## Win a night out for two



The Hazlitt theatre and the Odeon cinema are offering our readers the chance of a free night out. We've got three family tickets to this year's pantomime and five pairs of tickets to a film of your choice at the Odeon, Lockmeadow, Maidstone.

To win one of these great prizes, all you have to do is to tell us what you think about Borough Update magazine. Please complete and return the form below by Friday 15 December.

Do you like the overall look of Borough Update magazine? - **YES/NO**

Is it easy to read? - **YES/NO**

Is it interesting? - **YES/NO**

Is there anything you would change? - **YES/NO**

If yes please tell us your ideas

Other comments, including what you'd like to see in future issues:

On a scale of 1-5, with 1 Not Satisfied and 5 Very Satisfied, how satisfied are you with Borough Update? **1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5**

On a scale of 1-5, with 1 Not Satisfied and 5 Very Satisfied, how satisfied are you with Maidstone Borough Council overall? **1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5**

Please send your entry to Communications, Maidstone Borough Council, London House, 5-11 London Road, Maidstone ME16 8HR. Or email the above details and the words Borough Update in the subject line to [pr@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:pr@maidstone.gov.uk)

One entry per Maidstone Borough resident - Not open to Maidstone councillors or council employees.

Name .....

Address .....

..... Telephone .....

Maidstone Borough Council publishes Borough Update in Downs Mail to keep Maidstone residents up to date with information about council services and general public information.

## 8 Maidstone Borough Council



### Freedom for Ann

The Rt. Hon. Ann Widdecombe MP, who has been a Member of Parliament for 20 years, first for Maidstone and latterly for Maidstone and the Weald, has been honoured at a special meeting at Maidstone Town Hall.

Maidstone Borough Council granted her the Freedom of Maidstone Borough in recognition of the eminent service she has given the Borough and her long and distinguished service as one of our Members of Parliament.

This is the highest award the Borough can bestow. It has only been granted to 32 individuals and 5 military units since 1897.

### It's Crazy Frog panto time at the Hazlitt

We've got a fantastic line-up for you this year in Sleeping Beauty- the beautiful Katie Sheridan from 'Genie in the House', Beau Brady from 'Home and Away' and Craig Roberts from CBBC's 'Young Dracula'. And to top it all we have the Crazy Frog!

Playing from 1 December until 6 January, tickets start from £6.95.



### A Kent Christmas at Maidstone Museum

**TALK:** Dr Mick Lynn, musician and Dr Geoff Doel, co-author of the best-selling 'A Kent Christmas' and 'Folklore of Kent' will present a seasonal talk on Kent lore and customs with explanations, readings, live traditional Christmas songs, mince pies and mulled wine. Tuesday 11 December, 6.30pm. Call 01622 602838 to reserve tickets - £2/4.

**ACTIVITIES:** Making and decorating Christmas Cards on Thursday 20 December, Christmas Decorations on Friday 21 December and Calendars with Medieval Initials on Monday 31 December. All 10.30am to 12.30pm and 1.30 to 3.30pm - just drop-in. There is a small charge.



### Holly at Christmas

If you want to rock Christmas away with the best of Buddy Holly come along to the Hazlitt Theatre on Friday 21 December at 7.30pm. Tickets £14, concessions £13.

Book online at [www.hazlitttheatre.co.uk](http://www.hazlitttheatre.co.uk) or ring the Box Office on 01622 758611.

### Next Council Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Full Council will be at 6.30pm on Wednesday 12 December in the Council Chamber at Maidstone Town Hall.

Members of the public can present petitions and ask questions, if they give prior notice.

The Leader of the Council, Cllr Fran Wilson, will report on current issues and the leaders of the other groups will

respond. The leader, cabinet members and committee chairmen will also answer questions from councillors and the full council will debate and decide on the important business of the day.

For information about petitions and questions contact democratic services on 01622 602030.

**Most council meetings are now web-cast and can be viewed online at [digitalmaidstone.co.uk](http://digitalmaidstone.co.uk).**

## What's On!

Youth of Generation Christmas Gig  
7 December

Mote Hall  
08451 552277

Light up a Life Procession  
9 December

Meet at Lockmeadow  
01622 790195

Salvation Army Concert  
9 December

Fremlin Walk, Maidstone  
01622 356580

SNAP Dance Night  
14 December

Maidstone Leisure Centre  
08451 552277

Maidstone Choral Union - Music for Christmas

15 December  
Mote Hall

08451 552277

That'll be the Day - Christmas Party  
16 December

Mote Hall  
08451 552277

Salvation Army Concert  
16 December

Fremlin Walk  
01622 356580

County Town Farmer's Market  
22 December

Outside County Hall  
07956 344722

Salvation Army Concert  
23 December

Fremlin Walk  
01622 356580

New Year's Day Concert  
1 January

Mote Hall  
01622 358402

Maidstone Choral Union - Twelfth Night Concert

6 January

United Reformed Church  
01622 726193

Youth of Generation Gig  
18 January

Mote Hall  
08451 552277

University Open Day  
29 January

University College for the Creative Arts, Maidstone

01622 620000