

# MAKE IT MAIDSTONE

FIGHT THE CREDIT CRUNCH

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Maidstone Borough Council is working to fight the effects of the credit crunch. In this issue of Make it Maidstone we highlight some of the things we are doing to help residents weather the storm.

## Maidstone media village welcomes UCA

Maidstone Studios has been chosen by the University for the Creative Arts to deliver its Broadcast Media Foundation Degree and BA (Hons) courses from February.

Both courses will cover a range of topics including documentary making, television adaptations, online broadcasting and popular culture.

Screen writer and director Simon Welsford, who will head up the course, said: "Our students get to use the industry kit and will

be totally immersed in the professional broadcast environment of the Media Village at the Maidstone TV Studios."

Maidstone Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Malcolm Greer, says: "This is great news for the county town. The Maidstone Studios is a magnificent facility and the media hub for the county. There is nowhere better to run this course. I welcome this start to the UCA's increasing involvement with our town."

## Useful numbers

Citizens Advice Bureau – 01622 752420 or 01622 757882

Council tax – 01622 602003

Housing benefit and general housing advice – 01622 602557

National debtline – freephone 0800 808 4000

Heating and insulation grants – 01622 602470

First time buyers' grants – 01622 602470

Energy Saving Trust – 0800 512 012

Concessionary Travel – 01622 602334

Jobcentre Plus – 01622 702700

## See the High Street plans



Exciting plans to transform Maidstone's High Street will be on display in the Mall Chequers, Maidstone on Thursday January 28 and at the Gateway, King Street, Maidstone from Monday February 8 to Saturday February 13.

The exhibition will include the latest images and plans. The public will be invited to make comments and leave feedback which will help to shape the final design.

The council's planning committee is due to consider some aspects of the design in May.

## New affordable homes

Every year Maidstone council helps hundreds of people into social housing – more than 500 in 2008 alone.

In the last five years the council invested more than £10 million in affordable housing, providing more than 1,000 new homes.

This year we will fund another 400

homes and we plan to fund 750 across the borough by 2012.

Recent successes include - 47 new affordable homes at Milton Street and Hartnup Street, provided by Places for People; and 67 new affordable homes at Oxford Gardens, Oxford Road, Shepway, provided by Downland

Housing Association and Circle Anglia. Nearing completion are a further 68 new affordable homes at Beaconsfield Road, Tovil, provided by Town and Country.

The council also works hard to bring empty homes back into use, this year we provided 63 homes for rent in this way.

## New depot is green

Maidstone council's new depot in Park Wood is much more sustainable than the old depot at Armstrong Road. It has been awarded a 'Very Good' BREEAM rating, for sustainable design. BREEAM is the leading and most widely used environmental assessment method for buildings. Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Cllr Malcolm Greer, explains: "Working with Gallaghers, we have installed solar hot water panels, rainwater harvesting and water saving devices, natural ventilation, intelligent lighting and low energy fittings, and cycle facilities for staff."

The new depot has been funded by the sale of the old depot, at Armstrong Road.



Malcolm Greer and Pat Gallagher display the very good BREEAM certificate.

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