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ISSUE 3

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Sevenoaks District Council is considering the next steps for its Local Plan after an unsuccessful Judicial Review.

Last year, the Planning Inspector rejected the Council's draft Local Plan for failing on the Duty to Co-operate. In June 2020, Mr Justice Dove gave the Council permission to review the Planning Inspector's decision.

The Planning Inspector's reasons for rejecting the plan only came to light after the first round of the Local Plan hearings in October 2019. This was a full seven months after the Plan and the supporting evidence was submitted to the Inspector. Within the submission, there were more than 800 pages of evidence setting out how the Council had worked with its neighbours.

The judicial review was heard by Mr Justice Dove at the High Court on 2 and 3 September 2020. The Court published its decision on Friday 13 November 2020. Council Leader, Cllr Peter Fleming, says of the judgement: "We're clearly disappointed and somewhat bemused by the ruling from Mr Justice Dove, especially as the 'duty to cooperate', the reason given by the Planning Inspector to reject our plan, is set to be abolished in the Government's own proposed planning reforms.

"In our opinion, the removal of the 'duty to cooperate' is an open admission that it is neither effective nor workable in the local plan making process. Despite this, we believe we both met and exceeded the requirement.

The Government's own Planning Advisory Service and a number of former senior planning inspectors also supported our position.

"Court action is never something we would enter into lightly. But, our plan reflects our communities' priorities of protecting the rural nature of the District and the Green Belt whilst providing much needed new homes and improved infrastructure. We will always stand up for the communities we serve."

"We are reviewing the judgement in detail and considering our options."

Palace Park Wood is a parcel of land owned by Offord Parish Council and is situated along the Sevenoaks Road between Beadles garage and the motorway.

It is adjacent to the Woodland Cemetery and shares the same car park. The management of the area has now been taken over by the Parish Council and we will be working with the North West Kent Countryside Partnership and Natural England to restore and improve the area, making it a very pleasant space in which to walk and relax.

This summer, work was carried out to clear an area around a magnificent ancient oak tree which was showing signs of stress.

Over the next few years, further clearance work will take place to gradually increase the open area around the oak. Work has also taken place to improve the state of the main paths through the area, which have been prone to flooding in the winter. Chipped bark has been laid down, and many walkers have already commented on the improvement they have been enjoying. The meadow areas have also been cut.

More recently, work has been carried out to remove 200 trees which were planted over a main gas pipeline, causing concern for the safety of the pipe. The pond, which had become completely overgrown with willow and had dried out, has been cleared of vegetation, and work is planned to restore it to its natural state. In the future, and in partnership with Natural England, a second pond is being planned as a wildlife pond to benefit the Great Crested Newts which are in the area, as well as other wildlife.

Mary Evans, Chairman of the Recreation and Environment Committee said: "Looking forward, this is an exciting project for the whole village, in which the Parish Council are leading".



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A Sevenoaks business was given national exposure recently after appearing in The Sun newspaper.

Chris McFadden, owner and operator of The Daddy Sleep Consultant, provides bespoke packages to parents with the aim of training children to sleep longer and better in just a few days.

A father to 2 boys himself, the baby sleep consultant was pushed to act after experiencing challenges whilst trying to get his eldest son to sleep.

After retraining as a fully qualified infant sleep coach, Chris is now able to alleviate the exhaustion and fatigue often felt by parents of young children.

Chris shares his top advice with us.

To find out more visit:
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The Daddy Sleep Consultant's Top 5 Sleep Tips

1. Put your baby down content, but awake.
This gives your little one the opportunity to settle themselves to sleep which is critical to them sleeping longer and better at night.
2. A dark room is critical to a child's sleep Helping your little one differentiate between sleep and awake time is one of the first steps to a sleeping child. Sometimes it's a simple case of putting up blackout blinds to help children sleep longer.
3. Routine is so important for your child in more ways than just sleep. A regular and predictable day and night routine makes your little ones feel safe, secure and can help them thrive. It also allows them to feed off these routine triggers, for example bath comes before bed.
4. Focus on day naps. Don't think that a baby that hasn't slept during the day will sleep longer at night. The age-old phrase 'sleep breeds sleep' is true. Babies who have had the right amount of sleep and stimulation in the day will sleep better at night. Sleep-deprived babies often fight sleep and can be more upset and clingy at bedtime.
5. A full baby is a content baby. One thing I always recommend to my clients is to try and make the last feed of the day the biggest. This can sometimes be challenging as your baby becomes more tired but one approach, I love to tell my clients, is to feed your baby before AND after their bedtime bath.



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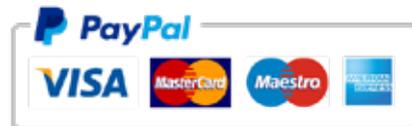
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FESTIVE FILMS YOU'VE (PROBABLY) NEVER HEARD OF

Every year we rely on a handful of our favourite Christmas movie staples. There's nothing like getting cosy with a perfect mug of hot chocolate and immersing ourselves in It's a Wonderful Life, or Elf to set the tone of the season.

Usually Christmas films provide a break from all the frantic festivities, a little welcome downtime. Well in 2020 we've had almost nothing BUT downtime and let's face it we probably watched most of our festive film playlist back when Halloween was cancelled. But I have three wonderful festive film suggestions you may never have seen in your life, or perhaps you've simply forgotten them. Enjoy.

29th Street

This terrific comedy drama from 1991 is actually set in 1976. It involves a lucky Italian American son, his unlucky hard-working father, the Mob, and a lottery ticket. It's an underrated gem. Thank me later.

Meet John Doe

This predates It's a Wonderful Life by a few years but is funnier and equal in its feel-good factor. Introduce your teens to Garry Cooper and watch them swoon.

Brazil

If you like your comedy black and dystopian this is the movie for you. Terry Gilliam's Brazil is not just a Christmas movie, it's a Christmas movie for the little people; those of us trying to get by in a world gone temporarily more insane than usual without actually succumbing to insanity. Perfect for 2020 then!



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Are you dreaming of a white Christmas? Have you ever given any thought to the science behind the snow?

The ice crystals that make up snowflakes are patterned symmetrically because frozen water molecules arrange themselves in predetermined spaces known as crystallization, to form a six-sided snowflake.

The basic shape of the ice crystal is partly due to the temperature at which it forms, and to a lesser extent, partly due to the humidity of the air. Thus, we see long needle-like crystals at -5C and flat plate-like crystals at -15C.

The intricate shape of a single arm of the snowflake is determined by the atmospheric conditions experienced by entire ice crystal as it falls. A crystal might begin to grow arms in one manner, and then seconds later, a slight change in the surrounding temperature or humidity causes the crystal to grow in a different way.

Although a snowflake is always six-sided and the arms may branch off in new directions, because each arm experiences the same atmospheric conditions, the arms look identical.

Individual snowflakes are all unique because they all follow slightly different paths from the sky to the ground and thus encounter slightly different atmospheric conditions along the way. So, they all tend to look different, resembling everything from prisms and needles to tiny lace doilies.



Window Wanderland is a national, family-friendly event, where residents, businesses, groups and schools can create a display for their window, door or garden.

Visit the website www.windowwanderland.com for more information.



Sevenoaks Town Council is promoting Sevenoaks Window Wanderland, asking everyone in Sevenoaks if they would like to make a window display. Anyone can take part and almost anything can count as a display: from a string of fairy lights to a band playing in the living room. No fancy lighting needed, just a normal room light or lamp to illuminate your display will bring your window to life.

These individual windows across the town will transform our streets into a festive gallery.

The launch date for the Wanderland is 27th November 2020. Residents will be encouraged to download a map to wander and admire the displays during the month 27th November to 31st December.

People wishing to take part are invited to sign up to our page on the website:

www.windowwanderland.com/event/sevenoakswindowwanderland-2020



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National Storytelling week 2021 runs from January 30th – February 6th.

When did you last tell a story? Probably more recently than you think because as humans we tend to think in images and narrative.

Think about your favourite anecdote; the one you're called upon to recount at every family gathering and which gets embellished a little more each time it's told. That's story telling in action and it's the oldest art form in the world.

Since man first developed the power of speech, stories have been the traditional medium of communication between generations, used to educate and entertain.

There is evidence of storytelling in languages as diverse as Sanskrit, Old German, Latin, Chinese, Greek, Icelandic and Old Slavonic.

One of the earliest surviving records is from Egyptian culture. The sons of Cheops (the pyramid builder) are pictured in hieroglyphics on ancient papyrus entertaining him with stories.

Specialist storytellers evolved, known as bards. They were also poets and musicians and their job was to entertain by creating and performing poetic oral narrations. These generally chronicled the events of a war or praised the daring deeds and achievements of leaders and their forebears.

Bards were also known as minstrels and jongleurs and often enjoyed a high status within their community.

The bardic community preserved many tales from different cultures which are still enjoyed today, including:

- The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood (English)
- The Iliad and The Odyssey (Greek)
- The Tain (Irish)
- The Ramayana (Indian)

Religious leaders also made use of storytelling to guide and teach their followers. This practice is still used, particularly in Hinduism and Buddhism

Ordinary folk also told stories, particularly at festival time and many such folk tales were collected and recorded by writers such as The Brothers Grimm.

The Society for Storytelling organises the National Storytelling Week each year to promote the art, value and practice of storytelling.

Storytelling events will be taking place in schools and, given the current climate, digitally.

See the SFS website and Facebook page for the latest updates: www.sfs.org.uk



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DIARY LIKE PEPYS

Even in a digital age diaries are surprisingly popular Christmas gifts. Perhaps you found yourself sitting pen-poised on January 1st.

On January 1st, 1660 Samuel Pepys was in the same position. That was the day he began his diary. He could have had no idea what an important document it would become. It is one of the most important documents for historians studying the English Restoration period, which coincidentally also began in 1660.

Pepys' diaries are special because for just under a decade he recorded the minutiae of his everyday life. It helped that he was quite well-connected. His cousin, Edward Montagu, was a high-ranking naval officer who found a position for Pepys at the Navy Office in the City of London. His hard work and talent saw Pepys promoted through the ranks very quickly. His cousin's position also meant that Pepys was present at many important events, all of which he recorded in his meticulous shorthand.

For example, Pepys was aboard one of the ships which sailed to Holland to bring Charles II back to

England. He attended King Charles II's coronation, and he was also President of the Royal Society for a while.

Pepys recorded everything. He gave vivid accounts of the Great Plague and the Great Fire of London. It is from him that we are able to relive the theatre of the period, as well as fashion and popular food and drink. His diary has been of invaluable assistance to historians and has given much pleasure to its many readers.

We are in turbulent times right now, and about to enter an extraordinary year for our country.

Who knows... the historians of the future might be reading your entries on the aftermath of the pandemic.



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PARKING CHARGES FROZEN

During the first lockdown of 2020, Sevenoaks District Council was the first authority in Kent to remove car park charges and the last to reintroduce them. Now, the Council has agreed they will not increase next year.

This means the majority of its parking charges will have remained the same for six consecutive years.

Parking charges are reviewed once a year with any changes introduced in early April. But, in light of the impact of Coronavirus on local businesses, the Council has decided to freeze all its parking charges.

As well as keeping charges unchanged, the Council will continue to offer free parking in its Gordon Road car park in Sevenoaks at weekends.

Cllr Margot McArthur, the Council's Cabinet Member for Cleaner and Greener, says:

"I am proud that Sevenoaks District Council is once again setting itself apart from many other local authorities by freezing parking charges.



"Coronavirus continues to put a strain on our local economy, including our high streets. Freezing our parking charges is one of the many ways we can continue to support local businesses during these difficult times."

Sevenoaks District Council's Cabinet agreed to the parking charge freeze at its meeting on Thursday 15 October 2020.

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KNOCK AND CHECK - MAKE A DIFFERENCE THIS WINTER

This winter, Kent County Council is backing Kent Community Foundation's Surviving Winter Campaign "Knock and Check" and asking residents in Kent to reignite the community spirit seen during the initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic and do something small to help those most vulnerable during the cold winter months.

Knock & Check is simple – just take a look at the small actions which will make a difference in your community as well as the details of services which can offer a lifeline and knock and check on the elderly and most isolated in your local community whilst remembering to follow Government guidelines on social distancing to keep communities safe from COVID-19:

- Keep a 2m distance, staying outdoors at all times
- Wash your hands before and after a visit
- Wear a face mask

Small actions that could make a big difference include:

- Knock on the door to say "hello"
- Offer to pick up some food or add something to your next online order
- Drop off a slice of cake or take a packet of biscuits
- Plate up an extra meal or drop off a frozen dish
- Post a note with your contact number and / or the details of helplines and support available
- Share books and magazines or recommend a good read
- Volunteer for one of our fantastic voluntary organisations in Kent and Medway
- Spread the word to family and friends

Lives can and will be saved this winter by us all working together to recognise and support those most at risk.

Josephine McCartney, Chief Executive, Kent Community Foundation, said: "As part of our annual Surviving Winter initiative, the Knock and Check campaign is asking people to call on their vulnerable neighbours and check they are OK. Perhaps you could offer to do some shopping, share magazines or books, or give them

something you have baked and as we approach Christmas, and many lunch clubs for the elderly will not be able to offer their usual lunches, why not cook enough for an extra plate and take a Christmas lunch to your neighbour. If you can't join us to 'Knock and Check' please consider donating to Kent Community Foundation so that we can ensure the money gets to the local good causes that will support your elderly neighbours this winter.

"We sincerely hope that the amazing community spirit we know exists in the county will lead everyone to get involved, by being neighbourly and carrying out small acts of kindness, together we can reduce the shocking number of avoidable deaths that occur each winter. Even if we save one life our campaign will have been successful.

"The elderly are often not aware of the help that is available and often do not want to ask. If you identify a problem our online 'Knock and Check' resource directory will help match the need with the resource. Your neighbour might need advice on registering as a vulnerable person with energy suppliers, joining befriending services, community projects, or clubs and societies or help booking an appointment with citizens advice or the local authority. So please knock on your neighbour's door and check they are OK and let 'Knock and Check' become as popular as clapping on Thursday nights for the NHS did."

Roger Gough, Leader of Kent County Council said: "We are very pleased to be supporting the Kent Community Foundation 'Knock and Check' campaign this winter. The 2018 KCC Select Committee on Social Isolation set out a number of recommendations and one of these was to raise awareness of social isolation and loneliness.

"We have seen great community spirit during COVID-19 with neighbours stepping up to help each other and this has been vital in keeping important social connections. We know that the winter months may feel very isolating for some, especially given the ongoing challenges of COVID-19 this year. A familiar face or offer of help could make a real difference to someone's day and we encourage people to continue the acts of kindness demonstrated across the county during lockdown, over the months ahead".

Clair Bell, KCC Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health said: "I would like to thank our

communities, charities and voluntary services in Kent for the wonderful and selfless work they do in protecting and helping our elderly and vulnerable residents, particularly in light of the increased difficulties and challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"As the weather gets colder, particularly during this month of lockdown, it is crucial that we check on and support our neighbours and communities to combat loneliness and avoid any unnecessary suffering and deaths.

I am proud to be supporting this vital campaign and would like to encourage everyone to take part, however they can, and help Kent Community Foundation and KCC keep vulnerable people safe this winter."

To find out more about the 'Knock and Check' campaign and to download the resource directory visit www.kentcf.org.uk/knockandcheck

#knockandcheck



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Help has been given to the Archbishop's Palace Conservation Trust in the form of the Government's Culture Recovery Fund. The lifeline means:

- More help for heritage in need with £14 million investment in England's historic sites
- The Archbishop's Palace Conservation Trust is among 162 organisations receiving lifeline grant from the £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund
- Culture across the country benefits as 70 per cent of latest Culture Recovery funding awarded outside London

Lifeline grants from the latest round of the £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund will protect a further 162 heritage sites to ensure that jobs and access to arts, culture and heritage in local communities are protected in the months ahead, the Culture Secretary announced today.

Historic sites including the Archbishop's Palace in Otford will receive help to meet ongoing costs and support to restart activity when it is possible to do so safely.

More than £9 million has been allocated by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Historic England on behalf of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, which builds on £103 million awarded to more significant historic places last month. Grants between £10,000 and £1 million have been awarded to stabilise 77 organisations.

In addition, £5 million will go to construction and maintenance projects that have been paused due to the pandemic.

Historic England has allocated £3,971,513 in awards from the Heritage Stimulus Fund, part of a £120 million capital investment from the Culture Recovery Fund, to restart construction and maintenance projects facing delays or increased costs as a result of the pandemic and save specialist livelihoods in the sector.

The Archbishop's Palace Conservation Trust has been awarded £10,400 which will be used in preparation for the main conservation project, for essential maintenance, and for the educational outreach programme.

Culture Secretary, Oliver Dowden, said:

"These grants will help the places that have shaped our skylines for hundreds of years and that continue to define culture in our towns and cities.

From St Paul's and Ronnie Scott's to The Lowry and Durham Cathedral, we're protecting heritage and culture in every corner of the country to save jobs and ensure it can bounce back strongly."

Nick Rushby for the Trust, said:

"The past nine months have been difficult for the Trust because we have had to put our project to conserve the Palace on hold. The Archbishop's Palace is on the Heritage at Risk Register and this funding is a lifeline that will enable us to move forward with the project to conserve the buildings. It will also enable us to develop our outreach programme for local school and libraries providing resources and speakers to support and improve understanding of the heritage of the Darent Valley. Sections of the Otford Heritage Collection will be curated as stand-alone collections and made available on loan to schools and libraries in the Darent Valley and the neighbouring areas, with particular attention to the London Boroughs that would derive the most benefit for these resources. The materials on the Otford Palace website (particularly the forthcoming museum catalogue) will be a key part of this resource. They will be supported by printed materials and speakers drawn from the Trust's volunteers."

74 organisations are also receiving grants of up to £25,000 from the Covid-19 Emergency Heritage at Risk Response Fund, launched by Historic England and almost quadrupled thanks to the Culture Recovery Fund, to cover maintenance and repairs urgently needed on historic buildings and sites up and down the country.

Duncan Wilson, Historic England Chief Executive said: "Historic places across the country, from Durham Cathedral embodying more than a thousand years of history to the Crystal Palace dinosaurs, much loved by children and grownups alike, are being supported by the Government's latest round of grants awarded under the Culture Recovery Fund. This funding is a lifeline which is kickstarting essential repairs and maintenance at many of our most precious historic sites, so they can begin to recover from the damaging effects of Covid-19. It is also providing employment for skilled craft workers who help to keep historic places alive and the wheels of the heritage sector turning. Our shared heritage is an anchor for us all in these challenging times and this funding will help to ensure it remains part of our collective future."

Ros Kerslake, Chief Executive of the National Lottery Heritage Fund said:

"The Government's £1.57bn package for culture is unprecedented and it's important to acknowledge how valuable this has been for our heritage organisations and visitor attractions. Although we are not able to support everyone facing difficulties, today's funding package helps a diverse range of heritage organisations from across the country survive, adapt and plan for a brighter future through the Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage.

"By the end of this financial year we will have distributed almost £600m of Government and National Lottery Funding to heritage organisations. Investing in heritage remains vitally important, creating jobs and economic prosperity, driving tourism, supporting our wellbeing and making our towns, cities, and rural areas better places to live. There is a lot more work to do to address the ongoing challenges, but this funding has provided a future for much of our heritage and the organisations that care for it, when it might otherwise have been permanently lost."

All four nations are benefiting from the UK Government's £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund, with £188 million bannetted to the Devolved Administrations to run their own process - £97 million for Scotland, £59 million for Wales and £33 million for Northern Ireland. This funding will enable them to increase the support already available to the arts and cultural sectors in each nation.

Over £18 million in funding will go to 8 arts and cultural organisations around the country in the second round of grants between £1 million and £3 million awarded by Arts Council England on behalf of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, it has also been announced today. This funding builds on £75 million in grants over £1 million for iconic venues like Shakespeare's Globe and the Sheffield Crucible last month.

A full list of organisations receiving funding is available from Historic England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

www.historicengland.org.uk

www.heritagefund.org.uk



The Archbishop's Palace
Conservation Trust
A safe pair of hands



Historic England

Tudor Jewell

Otford Palace was built in 1514, by William Warham (who became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1503) on the site of three earlier, medieval palaces. It predated Hampton Court Palace and Cardinal Wolsey took some of the design ideas for his palace from Otford. In 1537, King Henry VIII exerted his authority and took ownership from Archbishop Cranmer, although he subsequently preferred to stay at Knole in Sevenoaks because it was on higher ground. Notable visitors to the Palace included Holbein, Erasmus, and Cardinal Campaggio, as well as the King and his queens. During the reign of Elizabeth I it passed out of Royal ownership and, in the 17th century it started to fall into disrepair and decay. Unfortunately, now only the North-West Tower and part of the Great Gatehouse remain.

The Archbishop's Palace Conservation Trust was formed in 2017 with the aims of working for the benefit of the public on the preservation, restoration, maintenance, repair and improvement of the Archbishop's Palace in Otford, Kent, and of advancing the education of the public in the history of the Archbishop's Palace, the Tudors, the role of the Archbishops and the history of the Darent Valley by the provision of exhibitions and other learning experiences. You can find out more by visiting our website at <https://otfordpalace.org>.



An interview with senior audiologist, Sandra Rodrigues, Hearbase at Sevenoaks Medical Centre, part of KIMS Hospital

What is an audiologist?

An audiologist is a clinical health care professional responsible for helping those who have problems with their hearing and balance disorders. It's a highly qualified role, and each day an audiologist could be assessing and fitting hearing aids, providing ear protection, tinnitus support and advising on balance and wax removal.



How long have you been at Hearbase?

I have been at Hearbase for over 7 years now and I enjoy my work, especially meeting and helping so many people in the local community, old and young, including children, from all walks of life. I am based at the new Hearbase clinic at the wonderful Sevenoaks Medical Centre, Beadle House, London Road, Sevenoaks, TN13 2JD.



What are the first signs of a hearing problem?

Some of the early signs are when you struggle to keep up with conversation in noisy places, when your family tell you the TV is too loud, or when you have difficulty hearing people clearly. If you experience ringing or buzzing in your ears, or head, or a feeling of blockage, these can also be early signs of hearing loss. Also, if you find you can hear better when you look into people's faces that is also a red flag and you should get your hearing tested.



Why should I have my hearing tested?

Not being able to hear, seriously impacts your quality of life, not to mention talking with friends, family and others. I recommend if you show any of these early signs, you should get it checked. If you are concerned about someone close to you who struggles to hear, speak to them about getting a free hearing test and why not join them to offer support if they need a little bit of encouragement?



Why should I go to Hearbase at Sevenoaks Medical Centre?

Well, to start, our hearing tests are completely free. This isn't unique to us, you can get your hearing tested elsewhere, but as we are expert audiologists, if we find anything of concern after your free hearing test, we will point you in the direction of specialist services quickly. We are a really friendly bunch of people and our focus is to listen and help you to manage your hearing.

How should I look after my hearing?

If you notice any change to your hearing, large or small, then always get it checked. Having a hearing test should be done regularly like you do with your teeth and eyes. This is important however old or young you are. If you work in a noisy place or have a history of hearing loss in your family, have a hearing test, it only takes 30 minutes.



Rob White of the Sevenoaks U3A provides an update and some information on this activities organisation with over 900 members.

New year, new branding

After the summer recess Sevenoaks u3a started its new year in September with a great programme of studies and activities and this time with new branding. From Arts & Crafts to Wine Tasting and with nearly 100 specialised Study Groups ranging through sciences, languages, photography and walking, Sevenoaks u3a members find something for everyone.

Open Group meetings are attended by all members plus anyone interested in joining. They include Ambling, Bridge for Pleasure and Table Tennis.

Others such as Computers, Science and the monthly General Meeting invite experts and external speakers.

What is u3a?

u3a is a UK-wide collection of locally run organisations that provide a wide range of opportunities to come together to learn for fun. There are 1,039 u3as in the UK with over 430,000 Members. Membership is open to everyone who's no longer in full-time work, usually retired, part-retired or nearing retirement.

The aim of a u3a is to bring together people to develop their interests and continue their learning in a friendly and informal environment. Despite the COVID-19 lockdown many study groups are continuing to hold virtual meetings using their laptops to link up. Face to face meetings will resume as soon as it is safe to do so. Great ingenuity has been employed to keep going through the lockdowns.

Broad range of study groups

In Sevenoaks u3a it is likely that you will find something to interest you in the wide range of categories of our Study Groups, thirteen categories in all.

Computers covers not just Apple but all aspects of computing technology.

Culture & Society offers Current Affairs, Ethical Dilemmas, European Studies and Film and World Faiths and Philosophy Even Stock Market Discussions.



If you like Games & Physical Activities there's Cycling, 5 types of Walking, Table Tennis, Folk Dancing and, for the expert, there is Tai Chi. Not to mention Chess, Bridge, Scrabble, Snooker, and Crosswords

There are 5 Groups in the Gardens category, while our History section covers History of Art, two groups on Industrial History and its Heritage. Studies on Post Classical to early Modern, Military History and how to Research Family History.

French, German and Italian are spoken at various levels in the Languages category.

Literature & Writing is so popular that there are nine separate groups. They read books, compare novels and literature, study and read poetry and two are dedicated to writing for pleasure

Not surprisingly in Sevenoaks, Music & Theatre are not neglected, not only listening to Classical music but also Jazz & Blues, Opera, Singing and not least, playing, both in a Recorder group and, unusually we have 6 enthusiastic English Concertina players who can sometimes be persuaded to play in public.

Photography has structured learning with two year-groups studying the complexities of Photoshop and three excellent teams of photographers (they provided the outstanding pictures in the pictured calendar.

Science & Technology is an energetic collection and includes Geology, Aviation and Psychology as well. There are two Science Discussion groups investigating a wide range of scientific subjects and then there is 'Our Universe', which concentrates on Cosmology. Our Science Open Meetings are attended by all members and would-be members. Upcoming in our monthly programme are Development of Technology in modern Hearing Aids in December and Big Cat Sanctuary – Conservation of endangered species in January. It was postponed in 2020 but now the scientists are planning to hold their well-known Summer Science Seminar next June when they will invite guests from many Kent u3as. Experts in industry and research will talk about Plastics Pollution

Being near to London provides many opportunities and our Visits Section has 6 groups which study many aspects of the great city, research London Churches and visit the many Art Galleries.

There are four Wine Tasting groups and six in Arts and Crafts.

Further afield

Nationally, the Third Age Trust on its central website (www.u3a.org.uk) offer members a wide range of learning tools, advice about setting up and running a new local u3a and a regular national magazine.

They are planning to work with local u3as to undertake a nationwide survey into the impact of the Covid-19 virus on our shopping habits, now that so many people are making an increasing number of purchases to be delivered at home, rather than on the high street

If you want to get involved but you are not yet a member – why not consider joining?

You can find more on our website:
www.sevenoaksu3a.org.uk/



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Why You Should *make a will*

✓ If you are a single person

You may want your estate to go to friends and charities as well as family.

✓ If you are living as a couple

But officially not married, you may be treated as a single person and surviving partner may get nothing at all.

✓ If you are married

Don't assume 'my other half' will get everything. Brothers, sisters or parents may have a claim. Often children have a right to part of your estate.

✓ If you are a parent

You should consider who would look after your children in the event of your death. This is particularly important in the case of 'one parent families' and unmarried parents living together.

A valid will nominating guardians is invaluable in such cases. If no one knows what you wanted, the court will decide on the future of your children.

✓ If you are retired

Possibly you made a will a long time ago. It probably needs updating to include additional grandchildren.

However, Do Not Worry If You Have Not Made A Will The State Will Decide For You

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Jelf

Insurance Partnership





A brief look at how the Cruise companies will handle the post Covid environment with Kent Travel Counsellor Steve Gostling

Cruising activity before the pandemic

Supported 1.17 million jobs across a wide cross section of industries & sectors, e.g. Ground & Air transportation, Food & Beverage, Entertainment, Accommodation, Manufacturing, Professional Services, etc. Covid has led to a pause in operations of all major cruise lines with an estimated 2,500 lost jobs per day. Trade bodies CLIA & the UK Chamber of Shipping published Framework documents which identify, measure and provide recommendations on the resumption of cruise ship operations from the UK in the context of COVID-19.

The Framework

At the Time of Booking

- Before booking, check the latest Government travel advice; confirm what your travel insurance covers; and check whether you fall into the high risk category (clinically extremely vulnerable) as you may be on the cruise line's exclusion policy.

Before Going to the Cruise Terminal

- You should not travel if you, or you have been in close proximity with somebody who has experienced COVID-19 symptoms in the last 14 days; are self-isolating; have been advised that you must self-isolate.

At Your Departure Terminal

- Enter the port terminal with only those you are travelling with.
- Social distancing & Face Coverings
- All passengers and crew must take a COVID-19 test for voyages on all ships with a capacity to carry 250 or more persons - with a negative test required for any embarkation.
- CLIA ocean-going cruise lines are responsible for operationalising the testing requirement prior to boarding. Testing methods may vary based on emerging technology and availability.
- Depending on the cruise line and country of departure, the test may be required prior to arrival at the terminal or conducted at the terminal, or both. If a screening concludes you have COVID-19 or have been exposed to COVID-19, you will be denied boarding.

Onboard

- Public areas
- Staying with the group you are travelling with
- Wearing face coverings in areas where social distancing cannot be observed
- Crew will also be required to wear face coverings
- Enhanced cleaning and disinfection

Cabins

- Between check out and check in, cabins will be thoroughly cleaned, disinfected and adequately ventilated
- You may have less amenities in your cabin than usual as any disposable items that cannot be disinfected will be removed.

In Port

- When visiting a port of call, you should be aware of any unique or different national/local COVID-19 related requirements.
- Each cruise line may have specific protocols regarding shore excursions.
- You may have your temperature checked when disembarking and re-embarking the ship.
- Depending on the country you may be required to take a COVID-19 test.

Arriving Back in the UK

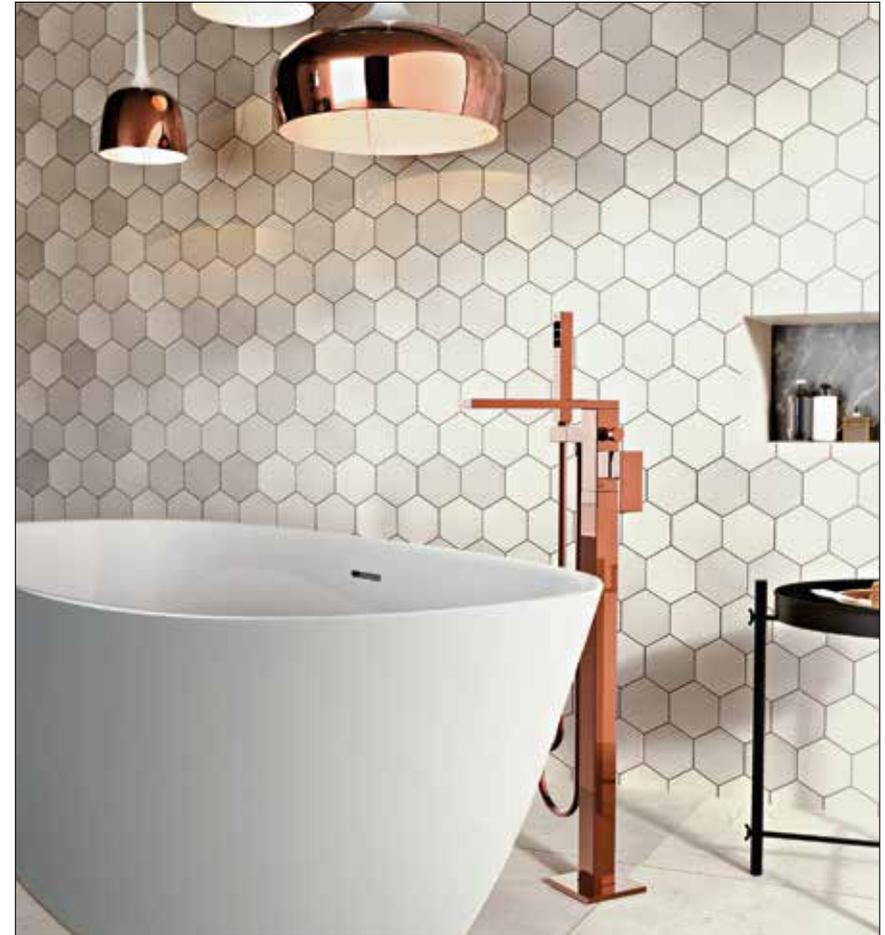
- On arriving to the UK, you must show proof of a completed passenger locator form.
- You may be required to take a COVID-19 test.
- You may need to self-isolate on your arrival in the UK, depending on where you have been in the previous 14 days.
- You should leave the port terminal as quickly as possible.
- Access to the terminal is limited to passengers, crew members and staff.

Will Cruising survive? YES!

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An offer of help

We've plunged into difficult and worrying times. Within just a few weeks our lives have changed and there's no end in sight. We will get through it, but we do need to help each other wherever we can.

As a local firm of financial advisers we, just like everyone else, want to do 'our bit' to help our community.

So, if you're concerned about your finances and need advice, please call us – we may be able to make a difference.

If you need to arrange a mortgage, are worried about your pensions or investments, have questions about employee benefits for furloughed colleagues, want to ensure you're protecting yourself, your family or your business effectively – or simply want to have a chat to reassure yourself, that you're doing everything you can, to make sure your business and personal finances weather the storm, we're here to help.

Although we may not be able to meet, we're happy to answer your questions over the phone at no cost and, of course, any initial consultation we may suggest is also complimentary.

Finally, please beware of scams! If you want to check us out, please visit the Financial Services Register at www.fca.org.uk – we're listed under reference 607130.

Do you need financial advice?



Perhaps you wish to purchase a new property, or are looking to save some money on your existing mortgage?

Are you seeking advice on your pensions or do you have some money that you would like to invest?

I'm Daniel Karim, an Independent Financial Adviser with over 27 years' experience in banking and finance. I pride myself on being truly independent, meaning that I can access the whole of the market to help clients like you find the right solutions, at the right time, for your financial needs.

I love what I do for my clients - discussing their financial aspirations, helping them achieve their dreams of financial freedom and the quality of life they desire. My first experience of the benefits of financial planning was a personal one, as a result of my father's premature passing. Although he had undertaken basic steps towards providing for the family's future, these basic steps went a long way to ensuring that the family were protected from severe financial hardship. This experience enhanced my passion for financial services and this passion for what I do has lasted many years. My clients often remark that I always appear cheerful, with a big smile on my face!

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Daniel Karim BA (Hons) Financial Services, DipPFS, Dip CII, Cert CII (MP)

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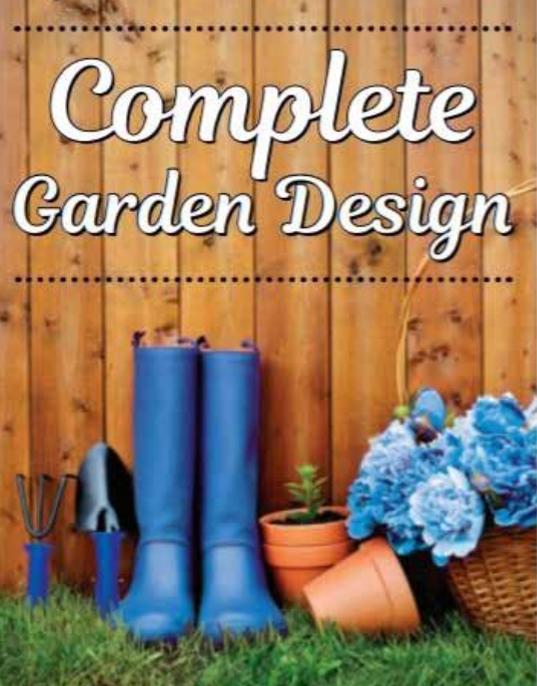
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New Vehicles clean up when it comes to cost, safety & the environment

Sevenoaks District Council has taken receipt of three new, energy efficient waste collection trucks to help with its weekly service.

The British assembled vehicles meet the new 'Euro 6 Standard' with vehicle emissions reduced by 55% compared to the previous Euro 5 Standard. They also have the lowest possible fuel consumption, keeping future running costs to a minimum.

The vehicles include a host of safety features, including radars to prevent or reduce collisions, devices to help protect cyclists, reversing alarms and a four-way CCTV system.

Each has a 'split back', which means they can collect black sacks waste in one side and clear recycling sacks in the other making the rounds as efficient as possible.

Cllr Margot Mc Arthur, the Council's Cabinet Member for Cleaner & Greener, says: "This investment in our waste collection fleet is part of our ongoing commitment to provide a weekly service for our residents. With the lowest possible emissions and fuel consumption, and a host of safety features, the trucks are good news for taxpayers, the environment and other road users."



KENT BREWER WINS INTERNATIONAL ACCLAIM

Shepherd Neame's beers are officially world class.

Britain's oldest brewer picked up eight medals at the 2020 International Beer Challenge (IBC), a global competition that this year attracted entries from more than 40 countries. Winners were announced on Wednesday 10th November and Shepherd Neame was honoured in four different categories.

In the flavoured beer category, a silver medal was awarded to New Dawn Citrus IPA, and in the stout/porter category Double Stout achieved a bronze medal. In the lagers category, Bear Island Triple Hopped Lager was awarded bronze, with Whitstable Bay Blonde Lager receiving a silver medal. In the individual product category, Bear Island East Coast Pale Ale was awarded a bronze medal. In the ales category, Shepherd Neame placed on all three levels, with its India Pale Ale picking up a bronze medal, Bishops Finger receiving silver, and its bottle conditioned ale 1698 winning gold in the ales category. This 6.5% ale was shortlisted against other category winners for the title of overall champion, but didn't secure the trophy.

Among the judges was IBC Chairman and author Jeff Evans, widely recognised as one of the foremost authorities on bottled beer. He said: "As you'd expect from judges with this level of knowledge and experience, the scrutiny is intense. No beer gets an easy pass. Sometimes the decision is straightforward and quickly reached; at other times the debate is more intense as judges highlight technical flaws or sing the praises of a beer's quality and character."

Mike Unsworth, Shepherd Neame Head Brewer, said: "We are delighted to have been recognised with a selection of medals including gold at these prestigious awards, demonstrating our beers are amongst the finest in the world."

Our team is passionate about beer and committed to quality and innovation. After a challenging year, it is particularly special to have our work appreciated in this way."





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**Moreish
festive goodies:
Great for gifts!!**

PREPARATION TIME: 20 MINUTES PLUS RESTING TIME. COOKING TIME: 10-20 MINS. MAKES ABOUT 24+

INGREDIENTS

- 100g cold unsalted butter, cut into chunks
- 100g plain flour, plus extra for flouring
- Pinch of salt
- Pinch of cayenne pepper
- 1 heaped tsp mustard powder
- 50g finely grated mature cheddar
- 50g finely grated parmesan, or similar vegetarian hard cheese, plus a little extra
- 1 egg, beaten

METHOD

Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas 4.
Place the butter and flour into a bowl of a food processor with the salt, cayenne, mustard powder, and cheeses. Rub the fat into the flour mixture then gradually bring the mixture together to form a dough. Don't add egg or water. Wrap the dough in cling film and leave to chill in the fridge for at least 30 minutes.
Lightly flour a work surface and gently roll out the pastry to about 1cm thick. Cut out the biscuits using festive cutters. Lay them out on a greased baking tray about 2cm apart. You might need two trays.
Brush the surface of each biscuit with the beaten egg and sprinkle over a little finely grated parmesan. Bake for 10 minutes, or until they are golden-brown. They smell heavenly!
Remove from the oven and carefully lift the biscuits off the tray using a palette knife, then place on a rack to cool. They make lovely gifts and will keep well in a sealed container for a few days.

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What is a smart home and how to build one.

Local smart home specialists, Sonitus, recently teamed up with Which? trusted trader, Sevenoaks Plans architects, to talk about why including smart technology is an important consideration for any home building project.

Retrofitting new technologies into your home – such as connected TVs and smart speakers – often leads to messy cables, congested WiFi networks, and “systems” of equipment that don’t always work well together. At the same time, you find an increasing number of apps being installed on your tablets and smartphones to control it all.

The beauty of building, renovating, or extending your home is that, with good planning, much of the technology we use today can be hidden away or given its own place to “do its thing”. And with some forethought, many of the technologies which are likely to be developed in the coming years can also be accommodated without regressing to trailing cables around your beautiful new or updated property.

The role of smart home specialists like Sonitus, is to work with homeowners, architects, and interior designers, to incorporate technologies into your project. We then combine control of them into a single system that can be operated through a simple app and/or keypads and touchscreens around the home.

Almost any part of a house can be controlled using smart home technologies. So, when we first speak with potential clients, we do not really focus too much on technology. Instead, our starting point is to find out how you use your current home; what frustrates you most about it, what your interests are, and what your hopes and dreams are for your new home.

This allows us to think more laterally about your needs when we start to consider which tech to incorporate into your project.

Some popular areas for consideration are:

- Home networking and WiFi
- Distributed AV – music and video served from a central location to any TV, projector, or speakers in the property.
- Lighting “scenes” which transform a space from being ideally lit for reading to ideally lit for watching a movie.
- Home security – alarms, CCTV, gate control, door entry, and electric garage doors
- Heating and ventilation

Other possibilities include: electric curtains and blinds, fireplaces, velux windows/rooflights, exterior or feature lighting, swimming pool control, fountain or water feature control... the list is endless.

As with any part of your project, early planning is key. Once choices start to be made about what tech will be incorporated into your project, decisions need to be made about where to house the equipment which will run it. Some equipment can be temperature sensitive, and the amount of equipment necessary will be dictated by the size of the project, so it is important to incorporate a suitably sized, ventilated space (or spaces) into the plans.

Finally, to future-proof your installation as much as possible, we will work with you to consider how your home might be used in the years to come. If a room could benefit from speakers in the future, or if you are planning a home office in the garden at some point, it is far more cost-effective to incorporate as much cabling as possible during the initial building phase.

If you are planning a building project why not get in touch with Stuart at Sonitus (stuart@sonitus.uk) to find more about the kinds of technology you could include, or contact David at Sevenoaks Plans (hello@sevenoaksplans.com) to start the ball rolling with designs and planning support.

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UNUSUAL GIFTS

Perhaps it's a Secret Santa. Perhaps it's the uncle you see only once a year, or your brother who has absolutely everything. Or you may be working to a £10 or less budget. Here are some ideas; unusual, funny and a bit off-the-wall.



Chocolate Covered Bacon on a stick - Yes really. This is a thing and it was hit last year when my teenage son received some from his aunt. We all tried it. So wrong...yet somehow so right! Google for suppliers.



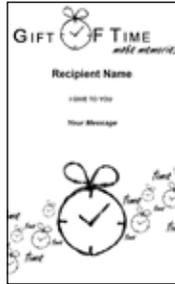
Fiddle Toys - Is your recipient a fiddler? Do they jiggle and fiddle with pens? Are they a nail-biter or finger-picker? A fiddle toy is the perfect gift. Magnetic balls which can be played with and used to sculpt shapes, or fiddle cubes which have a different activity on every face and fit into the average pocket make great gifts.



Crossword Puzzle Mug - Complete the crossword while having a cuppa. Then download a brand-new set of clues from the app and try again.



Unusual clock - Everyone needs to tell the time, right? From projection clocks to light-up colour-change clocks, there's a funky time piece for almost everyone. My son bought my science-geek husband a clock last year in which every number was replaced by a scientific formula whose answer corresponded to the hour! He loved it.



Gift of Time Voucher - Perhaps money is an issue this year. What skills do you have? Can you walk a dog? Clean a car or a kitchen? Put together some flat-pack furniture? Make a cake? Get creative and make a voucher promising to carry out some chore for your recipient. It's not about the money.



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GARDEN VIEW: HARD-WORKING IVY

The Holly and the Ivy,

When they are both full grown,

Of all the trees that are in the wood,

The Holly bears the crown.

Holly is much coveted festive greenery but what about ivy, or Hedera to give it the botanical name? It makes up the trio of festive plants, the other being mistletoe, and frankly it's usually seen as a bit of a poor relation, misunderstood and mostly unloved.

Yet ivy is a great workhorse in the garden. It's evergreen, it attracts wildlife and is excellent on those north-facing walls and fences where nothing else seems to grow. It's not just a dark green cloak either; there are many cultivars with different leaf shapes and variegated foliage. The variegated varieties are great in those areas that catch just a little sunlight during part of the day as they suddenly seem to illuminate a usually dull spot.

Ivy is great for disguising an ugly wall, a bare fence, or an old tree stump. It's a reliable and self-clinging climber if you choose the right variety and remember to prune it correctly. The young climbing stems are slender and flexible with small aerial roots that fix the shoot to a surface. Adult stems are thicker, self-supporting and do not have roots.

Unlike mistletoe ivy isn't parasitic so won't harm trees but be careful about letting it grow on the walls of your house as it will damage weak mortar and pebbledash. If growing on a property it needs to be clipped back in spring and summer, so it doesn't do any damage to structure underneath. Don't let it get into gutters because it will clog them then infiltrate under tiles or slates.

Ivy is excellent ground cover. It will scramble over areas of poor soil and brighten the ground between shrubs during the dark winter months. Persian ivy, Hedera colchica 'Dentata Variegata', is lovely because of its large, yellow-edged leaves. Hedera canariensis 'Gloire de Marengo' is also good. Its red stems and large leaves with splashes of yellow looks rather splendid. If you need an area covered quickly try Hedera Hibernica, which is a vigorous native ivy.

Hedera helix is the other native ivy and this one has numerous cultivars including Goldheart, which has yellow-centred leaves, Green Ripple, with frilly edged leaves and 'Buttercup' which is bright yellow.

If you love to support the wildlife in your garden, then ivy is a terrific plant. During autumn and early winter adult ivies produce small greenish-yellow flowers. These are especially rich in nectar so attract bees, butterflies, hoverflies, and other insects, providing them with a place to overwinter. Birds like thrushes, blackbirds and robins enjoy the purple black berries which ripen from late winter to mid-spring, providing a much-needed winter food source.

I hope I've made a good case for growing ivy in your garden. Holly might bear the crown, but I reckon ivy deserves a tiara at the very least!



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