

# WINTER 2023 Local



news from your borough council

## Let the festive fun begin!

### also inside...

Christmas wrapped up  
page 10

In the spotlight, is...  
page 18

What you said  
page 20



[tunbridgewells.gov.uk](http://tunbridgewells.gov.uk)



[TWellsCouncil](https://twitter.com/TWellsCouncil)



[TunbridgeWellsBoroughCouncil](https://www.facebook.com/TunbridgeWellsBoroughCouncil)



[TWellsbc](https://www.instagram.com/TWellsbc)

Best roofing and building company - good rep over 30 years,  
Tunbridge Wells, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge, Kent and Sussex



Emergency  
roof repairs 24  
hour support line  
**07555  
798736**

- ✓ Roofing
- ✓ Roof repairs
- ✓ Roofline
- ✓ Chimneys
- ✓ Building work
- ✓ Flat roofs
- ✓ Traditional felt
- ✓ GRP fiberglass
- ✓ EPDM Rubber Roofing
- ✓ Chimney repairs
- ✓ UPVC guttering
- ✓ Fascias and soffits



**Arkiton offer the best Quality and Service - Price Promise Guarantee -**  
*Arkiton Roofing & Building will beat any like-for-like roofing quote in Tunbridge Wells and throughout Kent*



THE GUILD  
of MASTER CRAFTSMEN



CALL  
NOW **01892 884540**

Freephone 0800 933 0247  
Onsite 07555 798736  
Email [info@arkiton.co.uk](mailto:info@arkiton.co.uk)

# Dear resident

As you turn the pages of this edition of Local, one thing will be absolutely clear – that there's no shortage of things to do this festive season to get you into the holiday spirit. In addition to the panto, we also have The Amelia Scott's first family Christmas show – Little Owl and the Christmas Lights; as well as the always-popular ice rink and Father Christmas, we are excited to be offering a Ferris wheel and a virtual sleigh ride as part of the festive experience in Calverley Grounds. Our Christmas section on pages 10-13 has everything you need to know about our services, plus plenty of helpful tips and information.

For Christmas shopping, you'll find big-named brands, boutiques and independent shops across the Borough – everything to make your shopping experience easy – so please 'shop local' where you can and support local businesses. If you're visiting Royal Tunbridge Wells, there's free parking on Sundays throughout December in Royal Victoria Place and Meadow Road car parks.

Speaking of Royal Victoria Place, you might have read that the Council has now acquired the long leasehold ownership of the shopping centre (it has always been the freehold owner). Whilst we won't be managing the day-to-day operations of the centre, by bringing together the freehold and leasehold ownership, it means the Council will be in a stronger position to influence and encourage investment in the area. There's more about this on page 9.

It's not often I reference our audit opinion but, against a backdrop of a number of local authorities that are being subject to central government intervention, I am very proud that for the 14th year running we have received a clean audit and we are one of only five public sector bodies in the country to get our audit opinion issued by the statutory deadline. Read our statement of accounts on page 6.

Finally, don't miss our competitions and all our latest news, features and forthcoming shows at the Assembly Hall Theatre. It's a bumper edition!

Enjoy the festive season and wishing you all the best for 2024.

**William Benson**  
Chief Executive



## Contents

- 4-5** Cabinet updates
- 6** Statement of Accounts
- 7** News in brief
- 9** Royal Victoria Place
- 10-13** Christmas wrapped up
- 14-15** Royal Tunbridge Wells Together at Christmas
- 17** Anti-social behaviour
- 18-19** What we do – Housing team
- 20-21** Residents' survey results
- 22** Paddock Wood Community Centre
- 24** Enriching experiences at The Amelia Scott
- 25** Bloom
- 26-29** Assembly Hall listings
- 30** Beam housing support
- 31** One You weight loss programme



We produce Local to keep you up-to-date about Council services and news. If you have any comments about the magazine, we'd love to hear from you. Contact us by:

Email: [Local@tunbridgewells.gov.uk](mailto:Local@tunbridgewells.gov.uk) Phone: **01892 526121**

Post: **Lizzie Goodwin, Communications Manager,  
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Town Hall, Royal  
Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 1RS**

To advertise, contact Space Marketing Ltd on  
**01892 677741** or email  
[davidh@spacemarketing.co.uk](mailto:davidh@spacemarketing.co.uk)



Advertising helps to keep our costs down. We do not endorse the products and services advertised in Local.

The information in this publication was correct at the time of going to print. Tunbridge Wells Borough Council cannot accept responsibility for any errors, omissions or subsequent changes.

If you require Local magazine in large print or on audio please phone **01892 526121**.

# Cabinet updates

Welcome to a new feature, where each of the eight members of Cabinet share an update from their portfolio area.



**Cllr Ben Chapelard**

Leader of the Council

We are developing the new corporate plan which will answer the question: 'what do we want our borough to look like in five years' time?'

Thank you to over 1,500 residents who took part in our borough-wide survey over the summer. We have married up the feedback from residents and the councillors' own convention. Both sets of feedback point towards identical ambitions for our borough. These centre around carbon reduction, protecting our environment, sustainable housing and economic growth as well as improving community wellbeing.

I look forward to sharing the draft plan with you in the new year and hope you will share your views with me.



**Cllr Christopher Hall**

Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance

The Finance and Property team have recently agreed terms with Town Square to repurpose offices in the Town Hall for co-working. The addition of new office space in the town centre will support our strategy to grow the local economy. We've also been busy working on the budget for 2024 -25 which goes out to public consultation in December. Lastly, the purchase of Royal Victoria Place Shopping Centre has been a huge focus for the team in the last six months or so, bringing about the opportunity for us to engage experts to help us shape the retail and leisure offering to the public.



**Cllr Ellen Neville**

Cabinet Member for Environmental Services

I joined Cabinet in May and I have spent the summer learning about my portfolio. We look after some essential services that enable you to go about your daily lives in the borough and we're here for some of the most challenging times too.

We are responsible for collecting household recycling and waste from your home. The recent re-rounding of our routes has seen a significant improvement in collection rates and the standard of service. I'm delighted we can now boast collection figures of 99.7%.

A shared nuisance is fly-tipping and littering. Albeit a nationwide problem, I am determined to tackle this scourge on our borough's communities and environment. Fly-tipping is a criminal activity that can cause serious pollution, be a risk to human health and can harm wildlife and farm animals. It spoils our neighbourhoods and quality of life. Our dedicated Street Scene team clear, investigate and prosecute on sufficient evidence. If you employ someone to remove rubbish on your behalf, check they hold a Waste Carrier's Licence and ask for a receipt. You could be fined £400 if they fly-tip your items.

Finally, when meeting with the team at the crematorium they held no reservation in describing the privilege they feel delivering the final service to a resident; with the greatest care, attention, and support at a time when they need it most. Cabinet holds this service in the highest regard and have agreed to work on plans to give the buildings and site some attention in the coming years.



**Cllr Hugo Pound**

Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning

Housing and Planning are real challenges for the Council; we need more housing, employment opportunities, school places, surgeries, better roads, and more sustainable forms of transport. These challenges will be addressed in the borough's new draft Local Plan which will be considered by Full Council in December 2023, then go out to public consultation, inspector's examination and modifications next year. The Local Plan, which will have an impact on every resident and business across the borough by setting out our building and infrastructure plans, should be in place by the middle of next year. That is taking up a lot of officers' and my time - but it will be worth it when it all comes together.



**Cllr Justine Rutland**

Cabinet Member for Tunbridge Wells Town and Local Areas

The Culture team is bringing new attractions to Calverley Grounds this December. A Ferris wheel and a magical virtual-reality ride to the North Pole will join the much-loved ice rink and Bavarian curling. Beauty and the Beast at the Assembly Hall Theatre is our pantomime - oh yes it is! and the Amelia Scott is staging its first festive family production, Little Owl and the Christmas Lights, as well as hosting a festive makers' market.

Over at Economic Development, we are sifting through the results of our ED Strategy consultation.

Other recent activity includes a recruitment fair; the launch of our Business Welcome Pack; implementing the Council's three-year tourist information strategy; working with The Amelia Scott team on the provision of tourist information; partnering with RTW's Business Improvement District to explore possible street scene improvements; and reviewing options for a market in RTW town centre. A new responsibility is overseeing the management of Royal Victoria Place Shopping Centre.



**Cllr Jayne Sharratt**

**Cabinet Member for Carbon Reduction and Sustainability**

As the new Cabinet member I'm proud of how much the Borough Council has achieved since declaring a climate emergency in 2019 and committing with cross-party consensus for the Council to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2030. There has been promising action so far. We have installed ground source heat pumps and solar panels at the Weald Leisure Centre and decarbonised the North Farm Depot, as well as doing work on our estate to bring down emissions. So far, we've installed an initial 28 EV charging points in Council-owned car parks. This is an encouraging start. There's still, clearly, lots to do.

Other councils across the country are successfully implementing their own solar farms. These in-house facilities not only enable them to reduce their impact on nature, but also return significant income that can be used to secure council services. I don't want Tunbridge

Wells to be left behind in this income-generating transition to green energy. We have a historical precedent for this - Tunbridge Wells Borough Council owned its own power station near Grosvenor Bridge from 1895 until 1948! It's inspiring to think that the Council could have energy independence again, but this time with clean, green energy that helps safeguard the future of our planet and the quality of life for future generations of Tunbridge Wells residents. We'll be working to see if we can realise such progress over the next few months.



**Cllr Nancy Warne**

**Cabinet Member for Rural Communities (and Deputy Leader)**

Following reports of nuisance youths in Tunbridge Wells recently, I met with the Community Safety team in town at the end of the school day to observe for myself. Whilst any form of anti-social behaviour is not acceptable, it is reassuring that more recently reports of nuisance behaviour in town is dropping and daily reports from CCTV operators have shown a further reduction.

The team collaborates daily with partners to respond to issues, and to put preventative measures in place to support the community through delivering the partnership plan. Work will soon start to develop the annual Community Safety Partnership Plan for 2024/25 so we can continue to provide solutions and ensure the safety of all residents in the borough.

There is an article about community safety on page 17.



**Cllr Pamela Wilkinson**

**Cabinet Member for Sport, Leisure and Health**

New to cabinet, I am keen to build upon relationships with the many volunteer-run sports groups who do an amazing job bringing sport to young people in the borough, as well as improve sports and leisure facilities so that we can encourage greater activity in all age groups. This year, with a government loan and Borough Council funding, we have successfully renovated the Weald Sports Centre which will help significantly to reduce its carbon footprint. I hope this will be the start of similar initiatives to improve sports facilities in the borough. Sport, or any physical activity, be it as a member of a club or a walk in one of our beautiful green spaces, plays an important part in encouraging social connection, good mental health and preventing future ill-health. Indeed, our Parks team and their incredible volunteers have had enormous success at this year's SE in Bloom and Britain in Bloom (more on page 25). Coupled with the retention of Green Flag status for Dunorlan Park, Calverley Grounds, The Grove, St John's Recreation Ground, Grosvenor and Hilbert Park and Woodbury Park Cemetery, Tunbridge Wells parks have had a fabulous year.

# Statement of Accounts for 2022/23



**The Council's year end is 31 March and this year the national deadline for publishing draft accounts returned to 31 May, with the statutory deadline to have the audited accounts signed by the end of September 2023. Deadlines had been extended for the past three years due to complexities arising from the pandemic and additional audit work created by technical accounting changes. We completed on time and were one of only five organisations nationally to achieve both deadlines.**

For the 14th year running we have received a clean audit and Grant Thornton (our auditor), said that they 'did not identify any audit adjustments' and 'have not identified any recommendations for management'.

The audit was completed entirely remotely again this year. This is a testament to the Council's approach to digital investment and the professionalism of Council staff.

You can find the full statement of accounts for 2022/23 on our website at [tunbridgewells.gov.uk](https://tunbridgewells.gov.uk) (under Financial budget, reports and audits - Annual Financial Report 2022/23).

Our Net Cost of Services for the year was £13.41 million, which was £1.11 million under budget. This was mainly due to the Council struggling to fill vacancies, alongside improvements to budget in income for parking and waste collection performance payments. All costs were carefully managed throughout the year despite increased inflation having a considerable impact on the Council's costs. Energy costs

were £684,000 over budget due to the increase in wholesale prices for electricity and gas following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. A number of areas, including planning and the crematorium, showed an improvement in income against budget, returning to pre-pandemic levels. Income for the theatre was £413,000 above last year's outturn with the subsidy for the year being £72,000 under budget. By the year end, all costs of services were fully financed from Council Tax, grants and investment income, and we were able to increase the General Fund by a modest £18,000. This was a significant achievement considering the continued difficult financial circumstances faced.

We spent £4.5 million on capital investments in the year, mainly on The Amelia Scott building, Disabled Facilities Grants and decarbonisation schemes at the Weald Leisure centre and North Farm depot. This took the property, plant and equipment, heritage and software assets that can be utilised, to £139 million. The challenge is to use them to their very best effect in delivering your services. On 31 March 2023, Usable Council Reserves were £24.22 million, however, the already committed capital investment programme is continuing and there are now considerable inflationary pressures, which will all deplete the remaining reserves unless measures are taken to remedy this.

**Net cost of services for the year**

**£13.41m**

**£4.5m**  
**Spent on capital investments**

Whilst the Council has been able to use reserves to balance the budget for 2023/24, action must be taken to reduce costs or raise revenue in the very near future. In particular, the Council's portfolio of buildings must be reviewed as they are a considerable drain on reserves through capital expenditure, ongoing maintenance costs and business rates payable to the Government.

The last budget survey asked where service changes should be made. The results can be found at: [twbc.online/bsr2324](https://twbc.online/bsr2324)

We will continue to consult residents, businesses and all other stakeholders in order to make the right service decisions for the borough. The 2024/25 budget survey will be launched on 8 December 2023, so please go to the Consultations page of our website and have your say. We really need your input!

# News in brief

**Find out what people are talking about in Tunbridge Wells this winter**

For news and events follow us on Facebook and Twitter or find out more at [twbc.online/news](https://www.twbc.online/news)

 **TunbridgeWellsBoroughCouncil**

 **TWellsCouncil**

 **TWellsbc**

## PawPrints award

The Council is now the proud holder of a RSPCA PawPrints Gold Award for its work in animal licensing.



Our Animal Licensing team inspects premises that are required by law to hold a licence - from doggy day care to people selling animals as pets. Meaning you can know you are buying a pet from a reliable source and feel reassured that you are leaving your animals for day care or boarding in a safe place. Check [tunbridgewells.gov.uk](https://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk) for a register of all licensed premises in the borough.

## Saturday 2 December is Small Business Saturday

The campaign encourages consumers to shop local - is there a small business in your community that you could support?



## Blue Badge holders are following the rules in Tunbridge Wells

Our Parking team joined forces with Kent County Council's Counter Fraud team to check on abuse of the Blue Badge scheme. All the people spoken to were using the badge in accordance with the scheme. You can report the suspected misuse of a Blue Badge to Kent County Council through their website [kent.gov.uk/reportfraud](https://kent.gov.uk/reportfraud)

## Honorary Alderman

Former Tunbridge Wells Borough Council member James Scholes has been made Honorary Alderman of Tunbridge Wells, an award which acknowledged his more than 40 years as a councillor. At an event in the Town Hall in September the Mayor presented Mr Scholes with a framed, decorative scroll and a certificate.



## Landlord Incentive Scheme

Like many other councils we have introduced a Landlord Incentive Scheme because the private housing rented sector is very competitive. There are significant financial barriers for those in housing need wanting to move into rented accommodation which the scheme aims to overcome. The scheme gives landlords a financial incentive to rent to households who have sought housing assistance from the Council as well as support from our dedicated team every step of the way. There's more information at [tunbridgewells.gov.uk/housing](https://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/housing)

## Developer funds update

Latest allocations of s106 funds - money developers pay as conditions of planning applications - have seen funds awarded to biodiversity projects and to Cranbrook Rugby Club towards pitch improvements. We'll bring you more in future editions.

**Mobility  
Scooters**

from  
**£799 \***

**Clearwell**  
mobility   
*Making Life  
Easier*

**Tunbridge Wells Showroom**

26 Grosvenor Road  
Tunbridge Wells  
TN1 2AP

**01892 544 933**

Mon-Sat 9<sup>am</sup>-5<sup>pm</sup>

**www.clearwellmobility.co.uk**

\*Prices quoted exclude VAT and are available to customers with a long term medical condition.

**FREE Brochure**

**NEW!**

Name

Address

Postcode

Post to: FREEPOST CLEARWELL MOBILITY

**Riser Recliners**  
from **£689\***

**Stairlifts Installed**  
from **£1,790\***

**Wheelchairs**  
from **£189\***

**RK Jewellery Designs**

WITH

**SYMPATHETIC  
RESTORATION**



**Your story lives on ...**

**Restoration is better than re-creation  
For all that glitters, we offer salvation  
Call Robert today for a free consultation.**

**07496 003 988**

**contact@rkjewellerydesigns.co.uk**

**www.rkjewellerydesigns.co.uk**

**TOWN COURT FARM, BAYHAM RD,  
TN2 5HU**

**Advertise with us**

**Be seen by 50,000 homes**

**Are you a sole trader or small  
business looking for more clients?**

Our new listings page  
could be perfect for you  
at **£150 plus VAT** per ad.

Each box is  
45mm x 65mm (see  
example ad).

Each edition of Local  
goes to all homes in  
the borough, that's  
around 50,000! To kick  
start your new year  
promotions, contact  
Space Marketing Ltd to  
advertise.

**01892 677741** or  
**davidh@spacemarketing.co.uk**

**Electric|Electrical**

**Example**

**Brighten  
Up Your Day**

**Call Now 01892 123456**

Electrical Repairs

Surge Protection

Lighting Upgrades

Lighting Installation

# Royal Victoria Place

## Did you see that the Council has acquired the long leasehold ownership of Royal Victoria Place?

We are committed to ensuring that Royal Victoria Place continues to play a strong role in maintaining the attractiveness of the town for residents, employers and visitors alike.

### What changes can you expect to see?

Change won't take place overnight but we expect to see new uses filling the vacant shops in Royal Victoria Place. This will include a move away from just shopping in the centre towards a greater leisure offer.

The advice we have received is that there are retail and leisure names who want to come to Royal Tunbridge Wells. The centre management will be tasked with bringing new tenants into Royal Victoria Place.

If you would like to share your views about the future look of Royal Victoria Place, email [rvp@tunbridgewells.gov.uk](mailto:rvp@tunbridgewells.gov.uk).



The Council will not be running Royal Victoria Place. We took expert advice from retail market specialists before acquiring the lease and a market-leading team, RivingtonHark, has been appointed to manage the centre for us.

'RTW Together is delighted to hear that TWBC is making this crucial investment in the town by acquiring the leasehold of the Royal Victoria Shopping Centre. Over the years, RVP has helped Royal Tunbridge Wells to build its reputation as a key regional retail destination, benefitting both locals and regular visitors, made up of both local tourists from across Kent, Sussex and London as well as overseas tourists.'

**Alex Green, RTW Together** - Business Improvement District CEO

**Read more here**  
[tunbridgewells.gov.uk/rvp](https://tunbridgewells.gov.uk/rvp)



## What can you recycle this festive season?

### Christmas cards

#### Green box

But no glitter or foil ones please.



### Wrapping paper

#### Green household waste bin

if it's not metallic, doesn't have glitter and you can scrunch it - and it stays scrunched! - you can recycle it.



### Small household batteries

#### Brown recycling bin

In a small bag on top of the bin please.



### Glass bottles and jars

#### Brown bin

Whatever the colour of the glass.



### Food waste

#### Food caddy

Planning your menus and having a shopping list, and making the most of leftovers in new recipes can help reduce food waste.



### Christmas trees

Your real tree will be collected with your garden waste if you subscribe to the service. Please take the tree out of its pot and put it alongside your black bin.



### Food packaging

#### Brown bin

Plastic bottles, trays and tubs but not black ones please; cans, tins and foil.



#### Green box

Cardboard boxes/sleeves.



#### Green household waste bin

Black plastic, juice, and non-dairy milk cartons.



### Presents

Unwanted gifts, donate to your favourite charity shop or re-gift - but be careful not to return it to the one who gave it to you!

## Opening Hours

### Town Hall

#### Closed

from 5pm Friday 22 December until 9am on Tuesday 2 January 2024

### The Amelia Scott

#### Open

Saturday 23 December	9am until 5pm
Sunday 24 December	10am until 4pm
Thursday 28 December	10am until 4pm
Friday 29 December	10am until 4pm
Saturday 30 December	10am until 4pm
Sunday 31 December	10am until 4pm

#### Closed

Monday 25 December, Tuesday 26 December, Wednesday 27 December, Monday 1 January



### Kent and Sussex Crematorium and Tunbridge Wells Cemetery

The crematorium grounds and cemetery are open every day over Christmas and New Year.

The crematorium and offices are closed on Monday 25 December, Wednesday 27 December and Monday 1 January 2024. The office will be open for pre-booked appointments and telephone enquiries from 9am on Thursday 28 December. Please call 01892 523894 to speak with one of our Bereavement Services team or to book an appointment.

The Book of Remembrance will be open as usual. The grounds remain open at all times.

#### Remembering loved ones at Christmas

If families would like to request a marker to be placed in the Garden of Remembrance, please use our online form at [kentandsussexcrematorium.com/our-services/markers](https://kentandsussexcrematorium.com/our-services/markers). Please allow three working days notice to request a marker and submit your request by midday on 22 December to be out for Christmas and the New year. Wreaths and floral tributes can be left in the Christmas Star and wreaths in the Lower Rose Garden.



## Free festive parking

### Park for free every Sunday in December

There's free Sunday car parking for visitors to Royal Victoria Place and Meadow Road car parks, Royal Tunbridge Wells, on each of the five Sundays in December 2023.

Royal Victoria Place and Meadow Road car parks are open every day between 7am and 11pm. On the following dates there will be no payment or ticket required:

Sunday 3 December | Sunday 10 December  
Sunday 17 December | Sunday 24 December (centre opening hours) | Sunday 31 December (centre opening hours)

For your safety staff will continue to monitor the car parks on free parking Sundays.

## Hospice in the Weald

is offering a real Christmas tree recycling service. The Hospice provides care for patients with a terminal illness, and those important to them, completely free of charge.

They welcome a suggested donation of £20 but if you can give more, your generosity and support will be greatly appreciated. In exchange they will collect your tree and recycle it for you. No hassle, no waste and no needles in your car!

Tree registration is open until 12am, 1 January. The recycling service collects from the following postcodes:

TN1, TN2, TN4, TN9, TN10, TN11, TN12, TN13, TN14, TN15, TN16.

hospiceintheweald.org.uk to find out more, or email [fundraising@hospiceintheweald.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@hospiceintheweald.org.uk)

## Changes to bin collection days

If your collection day is...	Your bins will be collected on...
Monday 25 December	Wednesday 27 December
Tuesday 26 December	Thursday 28 December
Wednesday 27 December	Friday 29 December
Thursday 28 December	Saturday 30 December
Friday 29 December	Tuesday 2 January 2024
Monday 1 January	Wednesday 3 January
Tuesday 2 January	Thursday 4 January
Wednesday 3 January	Friday 5 January
Thursday 4 January	Saturday 6 January
Friday 5 January	Monday 8 January
Monday 8 January	Tuesday 9 January
Tuesday 9 January	Wednesday 10 January
Wednesday 10 January	Thursday 11 January
Thursday 11 January	Friday 12 January
Friday 12 January	Saturday 13 January
Please put your bins and/or boxes out for collection by 7am	

## Not one but two competitions!

Tell us about Local and win a £100 shopping voucher

Answer these questions about this edition of Local

On what page(s) would you find

1. A chart named Places and spaces
2. Updates from Cabinet members
3. Information about weight loss programmes
4. What page in the magazine did you like most?

## Do our wordsearch and win one of three great prizes!

A festive hamper or one of two £50 shopping vouchers with our Christmas wordsearch.

Simply tell us what the missing word is in the wordsearch.

```

F F Y J K T D C D P B K A J S Z G L
A S V H H H N T L O A U A M P Q R A
T L F I U D Y Q A U U I L L X W Z E
H L K F J H U A X H T G E Y H B D P
E E E L B U A B H T X S L K F A Z T
R B N L N F L C E A N S W A X O Z V
C E A M Z Z E S C I M N K P S K M W
H L M U N N N S T A H P X L F F I P
R G W H O I H U T G R E E Y H H I J
I N O G O J N R I I Z O I R L B Y R
S I N P W W N E O G V L L N L S M X
T J S T O E L U V P F E Z S O Q A K
M B X Y U S Y L W O E L T T I L D F
A R I A O O A Q C W X N H P X M W E
S V H H M Z G K M U L L E D W I N E
K J Y O E S T B D O I A U O R J V F

```

Father Christmas  
Little Owl  
Merry  
Festive

Bauble  
Tinsel  
Douglas Fir  
Mulled wine

Hamper  
Sleigh  
Carols

Jingle bells  
Snowman  
Poinsettia

## How to enter both competitions

E-mail your answer(s) along with your telephone number and address to: [communications@tunbridgewells.gov.uk](mailto:communications@tunbridgewells.gov.uk)

Alternatively, write to:

Communications team, TWBC, Town Hall, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 1RS.

### Terms & conditions

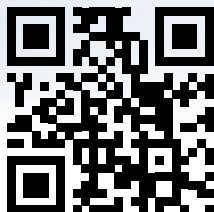
Entries for both competitions should be received by 5pm, Friday 15 December. All completed entries for the £50 shopping voucher will be put into the prize draw and a winner drawn at random. Wordsearch correct entries will be put into the prize draw and winners drawn at random. Prize draw only open to residents of Tunbridge Wells borough. TWBC staff are not eligible to enter. Winners will be required to collect their prize.

# Skate

## TUNBRIDGE WELLS

FROM FRIDAY 1 DECEMBER

BOOK TODAY AT  
[FESTIVETW.COM](http://FESTIVETW.COM)



SAVE £2  
PER TICKET  
BY BOOKING IN ADVANCE!

**This year SKATE TW is making the festive period even more magical with the addition of an amazing Big Wheel! Make sure to book your tickets.**

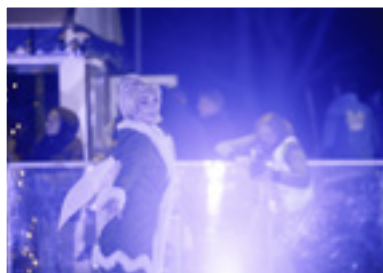
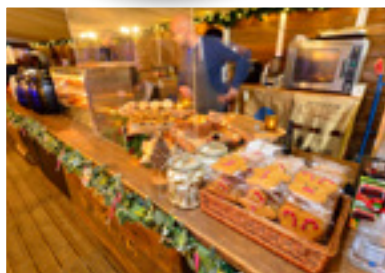
Open to the public from 1 December to 1 January, this fantastic new attraction will offer stunning views across Calverley Grounds. It's the perfect complement to a session on the ice rink or a Magical Flight to Visit Father Christmas.

As always at SKATE, fantastic live music will be part of the weekly entertainment, and the café and bar are the perfect place to enjoy some après-skate time!

Our favourite Seal skating aids are back too giving a helping hand where needed, we suggest pre-booking if you know you'll need one as we cannot guarantee availability for hire on the day.

It's never too early to book your tickets as sessions can sell out quickly and there are savings to be made when you pre-book.

To check opening times for the Big Wheel and to book tickets for this or any of the other attractions at SKATE, or to find out more about special offers, go to [festivaltw.com](http://festivaltw.com)



# A Magical Flight to visit Father Christmas

An enchanting journey  
to the North Pole

Buy Tickets to see Father Christmas and get 50% off a SKATE TW Child Ticket or Parent & Toddler Ticket!

*Skate*  
TUNBRIDGE WELLS

1 – 24 December  
Calverley Grounds  
festivetw.com

Virtual Reality Flight Included!

Can you help Teddy Mayor spread a little magic this Christmas?

The Mayor's Toy Appeal helps to bring joy to children and teenagers in the Borough of Tunbridge Wells who are in need, or whose families find Christmas an especially difficult time of year.

We are looking for appropriate gifts for children aged between 1 and 18. Gifts can be bought locally or see the tags on our 'Giving Trees' at St George's Childcare, Chilston Road and in Royal Victoria Place.

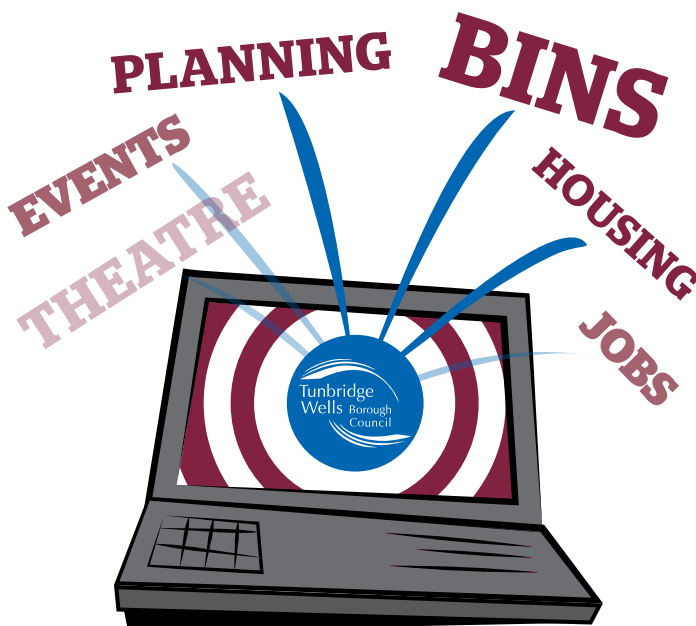
New boys only please, no guns or candles.



Please drop your gifts off at one of these locations:  
Maddisons Residential (The Pantiles); St George's Childcare (Chilston Road); The Amelia Scott (Mount Pleasant Road); Bardsleys (Paddock Wood); Trinity Theatre or Royal Victoria Place.

Thank you for your support and for more information please visit [www.twmta.co.uk](http://www.twmta.co.uk)  
Any queries, please contact [trevor.crawford@mayorstoysappeal.co.uk](mailto:trevor.crawford@mayorstoysappeal.co.uk)

Nearly 18,000 people  
get our weekly e-mail



Get our latest news direct to your inbox, plus local events, regular items such as jobs, planning applications near you and bin updates.

It's so easy to sign up...  
Visit [twbc.online/alerts](http://twbc.online/alerts)



# Royal Tunbridge Wells Together (BID)

invites you to experience the magic of Christmas in Royal Tunbridge Wells from ice skating in Calverley Grounds to Christmas shows, markets and Christmas shopping.



## Your Christmas Calendar Countdown!

**17 Dec**  
Find perfect Christmas gifts at the popular indoor artisan market at One Warwick Park Hotel  
[onewarwickpark.co.uk/artisan-craft-gift-markets/](http://onewarwickpark.co.uk/artisan-craft-gift-markets/)

**1-3, 7-10, 13-17, 20-23 Dec**  
Ride the magical Polar Express at The Spa Valley Railway  
[spavalleythepolarexpressride.com/](http://spavalleythepolarexpressride.com/)

**16, 22 and 31 Dec**  
Great music at The Forum with Back to 80's Christmas Edition, Suncharmer Christmas Show & Back to Forum NYE Celebration  
[twforum.co.uk](http://twforum.co.uk)

**23 Dec**  
Dunorlan Park Christmas Park Run - fancy dress a must!  
[parkrun.org.uk/royaltunbridgewells/](http://parkrun.org.uk/royaltunbridgewells/)

**8-24 Dec**  
Families will enjoy the Little Owl & The Christmas Lights show at The Amelia Scott  
<https://bit.ly/owlchristmaslights>

**14, 16 and 24 Dec**  
Festive Jazz Night & Breakfast with Santa at One Warwick Park  
[onewarwickpark.co.uk/christmas-at-one-warwick-park-hotel/](http://onewarwickpark.co.uk/christmas-at-one-warwick-park-hotel/)

**Closes 13 Dec**  
Donate presents for the Mayor's Annual Toy Appeal  
[twmta.co.uk](http://twmta.co.uk)

**8-9 Dec**  
Wrap up and enjoy a Folkal and Live Winter Music Festival on The Pantiles Bandstand, Sankeys Stage and the Sussex Arms  
<https://bit.ly/wintermusicfestival>

**5-9 Dec**  
Visit the beautifully decorated trees at King Charles the Martyr Church Tree Festival  
[kcmtw.org](http://kcmtw.org)

**1-31 Dec**  
Enjoy the magic of the Skate Ice Rink in Calverley Grounds  
<https://bit.ly/skateRTW>

**9-31 Dec**  
Tale as old as time - Beauty & The Beast Pantomime at The Assembly Hall Theatre  
<https://bit.ly/AHTbeautybeast>

**18 Dec**  
ROH Live - The Royal Ballet Nutcracker at Trinity Theatre is a Christmas classic  
<https://bit.ly/ROHLivenutcracker>

**18 Dec**  
RVP Christmas Late Night Shopping - shop till late  
[royalvictoriaplace.com](http://royalvictoriaplace.com)

**1-24 Dec**  
Visit Santa in his magical grotto at Royal Victoria Place  
[BookFatherChristmas.co.uk/RVP](http://BookFatherChristmas.co.uk/RVP)

**9-31 Dec**  
The classic fairy tale Cinderella is this year's Pantomime at Trinity Theatre  
[trinitytheatre.net/events/cinderella](http://trinitytheatre.net/events/cinderella)

**1-31 Dec**  
A new Christmas addition to the town, soak up the view over the rooftops & trees on the Ferris Wheel in Calverley Grounds  
[assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk/whats-on](http://assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk/whats-on)

**24 Dec**  
King Charles the Martyr Scratch Nativity - all are welcome to this much-loved service, costumes optional  
[kcmtw.org](http://kcmtw.org)

**12-24 Dec**  
The Princess & the Water Dragon is a festive tale of adventure with songs, stunning costumes & a magical, snow-breathing dragon puppet  
[trinitytheatre.net/event-category/children](http://trinitytheatre.net/event-category/children)

**1-24 Dec**  
Take a seat in the sleigh for a magical virtual reality flight before meeting Father Christmas in person in his grotto  
[assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk/whats-on](http://assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk/whats-on)

**2, 3, 9, 10, 16, 17, 23 and 24 Dec**  
Soak up the vibe at The Pantiles Special Christmas Markets with food, drink, jewellery, art, gifts, fashion & vintage  
[thepantiles.com/whats-on/pantiles-market-2023](http://thepantiles.com/whats-on/pantiles-market-2023)

**10-17 Dec**  
The Round Table's infamous sleigh will visit areas of Tunbridge Wells to spread Christmas cheer and collect donations for Nourish Foodbank  
[@RoyalTunbridgeWellsRoundTable](https://www.facebook.com/RoyalTunbridgeWellsRoundTable)

Visit  
tunbridgewells

ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS  
**TOGETHER**  
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

## Merry Markets!

With the town full of festive lights and shop fronts decorated for the season, be sure to browse the independent retailers to find that unique gift. The Pantiles Festive Market takes place every weekend in the lead-up to Christmas with jewellery, art, gifts, fashion and vintage goods - and there will be entertainment on the bandstand for that extra holiday feel! On various dates in December, find the perfect stocking fillers at the popular indoor Artisan Market at One Warwick Park Hotel.



## Meet Father Christmas!

Meeting Father Christmas is a great thing to do if you're looking to create cherished memories and experience the magic of Christmas. Take a seat in the sleigh for a magical virtual reality flight before meeting him in person in his grotto at SKATE in Calverley Grounds. Alternatively join him for Breakfast with Santa at One Warwick Park (**16 and 24 December**) or see him with his elves in his magical grotto at Royal Victoria Place (**1-24 December**).

## Tunbridge Wells is Christmas!

There is so much more to do this holiday season in the borough, from winter walks to cosy pubs with open fires and beautifully decorated stately homes.

With the family gathered and extra-long weekends, it is the perfect time to explore where you live.

We'd love to see your festive photos! Please tag us on social media and #VisitTunbridgeWells. Merry Christmas from the Visit Tunbridge Wells team.



## More things to do this Christmas in Tunbridge Wells...

On **10 December**, St. Mary's Church in Lamberhurst will light up with their annual Concert by Candlelight. Discover Corra Sound, a group of professional and high-level amateur voices, with a passion for music.

The Bedgebury Christmas Lights Trail is a must visit to get into the holiday mood. The National Pinetum is also a wonderful place to take a stroll during the day with a beautiful array of colourful trees, great for a Boxing Day walk.

To complete your Christmas shopping and find that extra special locally-sourced gift be sure to visit the town of Cranbrook and surrounding villages such as Hawkhurst, home to a range of independent shops.

Finally, let's not forget our incredible heritage sites, the National Trust at Scotney Castle decorates the mansion house beautifully with the opportunity for daytime and night-time visits. There is also a Christmas lights trail in the gardens.

*Visit*  
tunbridgewells



Illustrations by Jess Hand Drawn. Commissioned by RTW Together BID

**View our seasonal pages on the Visit Tunbridge Wells website for more inspiration.**

Instagram: @Visit\_TunbridgeWells

Facebook: Visit Tunbridge Wells



HEMSTED  
PARK

BENENDEN SCHOOL

AUTUMN/WINTER 2023

Book now at [hemstedpark.com](http://hemstedpark.com)



© Photograph by Jan Versweyeld

A Little Life 30th September



Oh What A Lovely War

7th October



Kidenza

15th October



The Great Think  
Pink Show

20th October



Kinder

23rd/24th October



Sleeping Beauty

27th October



Gary Delaney in  
Punderland

28th October



A Very Old Man with  
Enormous Wings

3rd November



Trio Bohemo

16th November



Angela Hewitt

19th November



Swinging at the Cotton Club

25th November



The Jazz Sapiens

8th December



Christmas with the Len  
Phillips Swing Orchestra

15th December

# What about anti-social behaviour..

The Community Safety Unit works with other organisations locally, including Kent Police, to devise strategies to tackle community issues. We are fortunate to live in an area where rates of crime and anti-social behaviour are relatively low and Tunbridge Wells is the safest place in Kent. Nevertheless, anti-social behaviour is a community issue that people can feel very strongly about which is why it is a priority in the Community Safety Partnership Plan and for Kent Police.

Anti-social behaviour is not exclusively an issue resulting from young people's behaviour but earlier this year in Royal Tunbridge Wells town centre and some other parts of the borough young people were involved in frequent incidents of anti-social behaviour. As a result, the Community Safety Unit has been working closely with the police who lead on these issues, and arrests have been made and people charged.

The Community Safety Unit is doing all it can within its powers to clamp down on this sort of behaviour and a review of recent incidents of anti-social behaviour is being carried out. Council staff have been working hard with their partners to address the local issues. Action like the **Business Improvement District** and **Safe Town Partnership's** summer campaign which saw security officers in Royal Tunbridge Wells town centre was welcomed by retailers.

Outreach workers from partner organisations like **Kenward Trust** have been engaging with young people in areas of concern to address anti-social behaviour associated with these locations but also to protect the young people who themselves may be vulnerable or victims.

The Community Safety Unit team is looking at what further action they can take around the existing Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) which would reduce anti-social behaviour.

This could mean police passing on any relevant evidence they collect for the Community Safety Unit to use in taking civil action against those involved in anti-social behaviour. The Council may also decide to introduce issuing Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) to under 18s to strengthen enforcement around PSPOs. Issuing a FPN to someone under the age of 18 could mean parents or guardians being responsible for the fine the young person has received.

Please continue to report incidents of anti-social behaviour to Kent Police, you can do this by phone or online at [kent.police.uk](https://kent.police.uk)



**At least 60% from each ticket sold supports good causes, and there's a chance to win the £25,000 jackpot every week!**

Find out more and start supporting today  
[twlotto.co.uk/good-causes](https://twlotto.co.uk/good-causes)  
 f TWLottoUK T TWLottery

Players must be a minimum age of 18.

**Play TW Lotto and support our community**  
**With a fundraising lottery**

# Introducing the Housing Team



## What does the Housing Team do?

Whether you are looking for an affordable home to rent or buy, have concerns about becoming homeless, or are a landlord looking for advice about housing standards, we offer a full range of support. If you have a home which needs to have adaptations made so you can continue to live there, or to make a home you own more energy efficient; we may be able to help. We're sharing a little of what we do here, but look on our website for more information.

### Energy Efficiency

If you live in a cold home there may be funding available to help pay for insulation, heating and hot water provisions and other energy efficiency measures for your home.

#### In-house funding:

- **Energy Efficiency Assistance:** available to help fund energy efficiency measures up to a value of £3,500 in properties with an EPC rating of D, E, F or G. Loft and cavity wall insulation are prioritised, and once these measures have been undertaken (where possible), we then consider further measures such as heating and hot water provision and repairs, and the replacement of windows and doors.
- **Warm Homes Assistance:** for any person with a long-term medical condition, living in a cold home. Up to £7,000 is available to fund provision of central heating and boiler repair or replacement. There is no requirement for a financial assessment however a health professional will need to complete a referral form.

#### Central Government schemes:

- **Great British Insulation Scheme:** if you live in a home with an energy performance certificate (EPC) of D to G, or your home is in Council Tax bands A-D you may be eligible to get free or cheaper insulation to reduce your home's energy bills. To check your eligibility and to apply for the scheme please follow this link to the gov.uk website [gov.uk/apply-great-british-insulation-scheme](https://www.gov.uk/apply-great-british-insulation-scheme)
- **Solar Together Kent:** a solar panel and battery storage group-purchase scheme which allows residents and small businesses to install solar panels on their homes and businesses at an affordable price. If you are considering whether to have solar panels and/or battery storage fitted, you can register your interest for a forthcoming sale at [solartogether.co.uk/tunbridge-wells](https://solartogether.co.uk/tunbridge-wells)

### Did you know?

**Most tenancy related fees are banned if you started your tenancy on or after 1 June 2019.** Landlords and letting agents must not charge for: references, admin fees, check out inspections, credit or immigration checks or renewing a tenancy when a fixed-term contract ends.

**Rented properties cannot be let if they have an EPC rating of F or G** unless a valid exemption has been registered at [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)

According to the 2021 Census, **around one in five households in the borough (19.2%) rented privately**, and **14.6%** of those were in socially rented properties.

## Some recent achievements

**We supported 31 rough sleepers off the streets into accommodation between 1 April and 31 October 2023**

**Since 1 April 2023 we have helped prevent 53 households from being homeless**

## Bringing empty homes back into use

We provide loans to assist owners to return long-term empty properties back into use. All loans are repayable and will be secured through a charge on the property. Loans are interest free and up to £20,000 may be available for the renovation or conversion of long-term empty properties to use as affordable housing. Loans are provided on condition that we receive tenant nomination rights for three years. The rent is set at the Local Housing Allowance rate and the loan is repayable on sale of the property.

We also work in partnership with Kent County Council's No Use Empty initiative which provides a loan scheme to create new, quality, and sustainable accommodation.

Loans are:

- interest free subject to conditions
- available in units of £25,000 up to a maximum of £175,000 per applicant to renovate or convert properties empty for more than six months
- loans for properties to let are repayable within three years
- loans for sale are repayable within two years
- A loan guidance booklet is available at [no-use-empty.org.uk](http://no-use-empty.org.uk)

For further information please contact [privatesectorhousing@tunbridgewells.gov.uk](mailto:privatesectorhousing@tunbridgewells.gov.uk)

## We offer Disabled Facilities Grants to help people to continue to live in their homes independently.



Please contact us if you consider you need an adaptation, and we will advise you of the next step. Often this will be to contact the Kent Occupational Therapy service to assess your needs.

## 10 things (maybe!) you didn't know about the Housing Team:

- 1** We provide grants or financial assistance to make homes warmer, fund aids and adaptations, and improve the energy performance of homes.
- 2** We work to help households at risk of homelessness to retain their accommodation or find suitable alternative accommodation.
- 3** We manage a Housing Register of applicants applying for an allocation of social housing.
- 4** We fund the Home Straight Service to assist people with hoarding and self-neglect issues to arrange essential works such as home clearing and repairs.
- 5** We can advise you on low-cost home ownership options.
- 6** We support homeless households living in temporary accommodation access support and services they may need.
- 7** We help to bring empty homes back into use.
- 8** We work in partnership with Porchlight and Lookahead to support rough sleepers off the streets and into accommodation.
- 9** We do not have our own Council housing stock but help to enable the delivery of affordable housing in the borough by working with housing developers, housing associations and the Council's Planning team.
- 10** We respond to complaints about the conditions of privately rented homes and enforce improvements to unsafe homes and homes in disrepair.

You can find out more about the Housing Team by visiting [tunbridgewells.gov.uk/housing](http://tunbridgewells.gov.uk/housing)

**In 2022-23 we prevented 165 households from becoming homeless**

**In 2022-23 we spent £1million to provide aids, adaptations and make residents' homes warm**

**In 2022-23 we received 1,469 applications to join the Housing Register and allocated almost 350 social rented homes**

# The results are in...

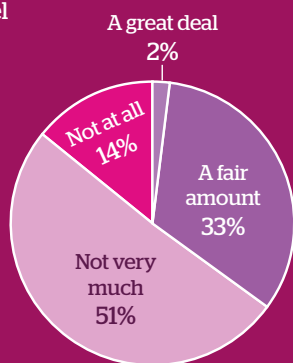
**Thank you to everyone who took part in our Residents' Survey over the summer, we received over 1,500 responses from across the borough.**

The full report is available to download from our website, or request a summary copy by e-mailing [consultations@tunbridgewells.gov.uk](mailto:consultations@tunbridgewells.gov.uk). If you do not have access to the internet, copies are available at The Amelia Scott. We are taking your feedback on board, and putting together our new draft strategic plan which will be shared early in 2024.

## Satisfaction with services

### How much do you feel TWBC acts on the concerns of local residents?

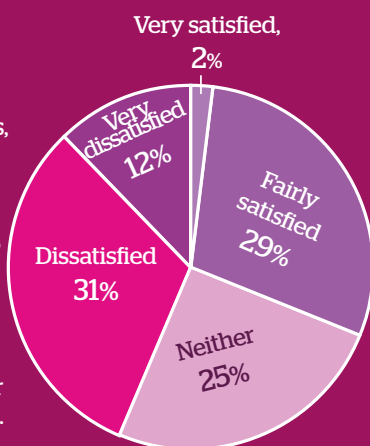
You told us that you didn't feel TWBC acts on your concerns very much, so we're listening and making consultation an essential part of everything we do. We've carried out 15 consultations in the last 12 months and received over 7,000 responses. From balancing our budget to places to parks, we want to put residents' views at the heart of our work.



This is our first residents' survey since 2015, and we plan to do these more frequently.

### How satisfied are you with how TWBC runs things?

While just over 40% of residents were dissatisfied with the way TWBC runs things, younger residents (under 35s) were more positive. 51% of residents aged 26 to 35 described themselves as fairly satisfied. Overall, around two thirds of respondents were either satisfied or didn't have an opinion.



## Balancing our budget

We asked "What information would help you understand how your Council Tax is spent?" And here are some of your comments...



"I'd need to see a financial breakdown of how and where the funds are spent."

"...Generally I'm happy with the services provided but I don't access lots of them so don't feel I have a full picture."

"A more transparent easily accessible breakdown of the services and true remit of TWBC covered by Council Tax and how many third parties are involved/subcontracted to."

We asked: "To help balance our budget, what do you think we should do?"

What you told us



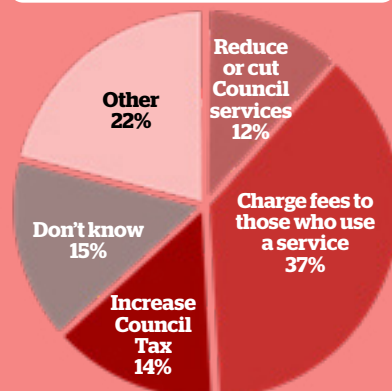
"Initiate and lead, more participation by volunteers to maintain green spaces and public rights of way."

"Better efficiencies within the system and adoption of suitable technology."

"Use smaller offices remote working to avoid the upkeep of old building."

"Encourage more varied businesses to come to Tunbridge Wells..."

"Involve community. Listen to residents..."



See the full report here  
[twbc.online/residentssurvey](https://twbc.online/residentssurvey)



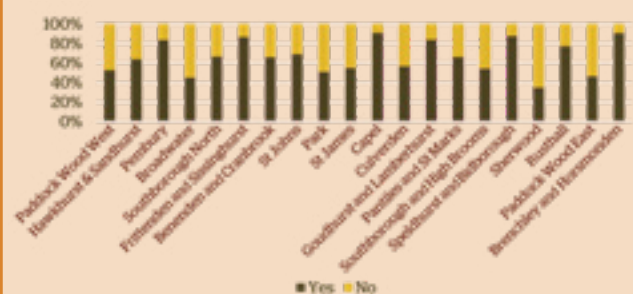
Get involved with future surveys  
[twbc.online/talkingpoint](https://twbc.online/talkingpoint)

## Places and spaces

### Do you consider your local area to be vibrant?



### Is there a sense of community in your local area?



### In a few words, explain what you like most about living in the borough of Tunbridge Wells...

“

Good schools and plenty of green spaces.

It has a fair few green spaces and a mix of beautiful towns/villages with rural areas.

Small businesses, non-profit / charity presence, easy transport links to other areas. Tourism interest. Green spaces and beautiful parks.

Green and leafy, fair range of amenities, character and history.

”

**You told us you valued low crime levels, access to the countryside, clean and litter-free streets and a sense of community.**

### Does the Council keep you up to date on changes and news in the borough?

I don't know, 171

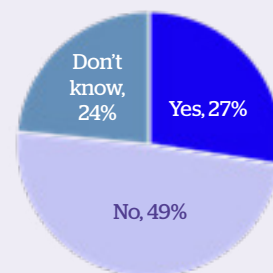
No, 274



Yes, 1,062

## Housing and homes

### Is Tunbridge Wells somewhere you can see young people remaining when they leave home?



### What do you think is the main reason young people would not remain in Tunbridge Wells

“

Young people will move for higher education and job opportunities. They seek modern urban lifestyles when they are single but tend to settle in suburbia when married with children when education is paramount.

They want to spread their wings elsewhere but may come back to TW later.

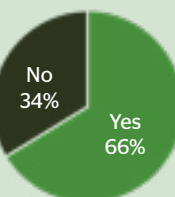
Too expensive, poor public transport, Tunbridge Wells town looks shabby. Not many opportunities for young people.

Job opportunities, plus the draw of London within reach, can see them returning once established in a sector / industry though.

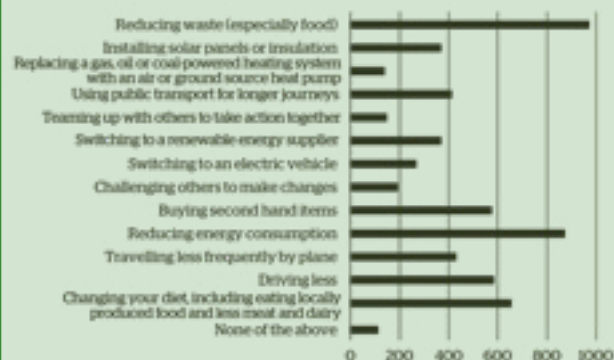
”

## Your environment

### Do you feel well informed about the actions you can take to combat climate change?



### Changes residents would be willing to make to help the environment



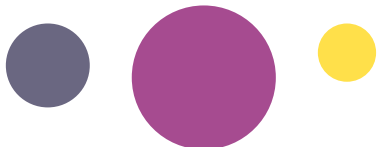
# Paddock Wood Community Centre

The community centre officially opened on 3 September 2023 and looks out over the Memorial Field. It is open seven days a week and provides disabled access throughout, plus boasts parking for 64 cars, including four disabled bays and a coach bay.



## You'll find...

- A coffee shop currently open Monday – Saturday morning
- Groups, clubs, and events for all ages
- A meeting room and large hall which can be divided into three separate smaller halls
- New tennis courts



## For further details:

**Website:** paddockwoodcc.co.uk | **Telephone:** 01892 487757 | **E-mail:** office@paddockwoodcc.com

**Address:** Paddock Wood Community Centre, Maidstone Road, Paddock Wood, Kent, TN12 6EB

## Fun times for our youngest residents!

We mentioned in our last edition how developers' contributions go to local communities, well Horsmonden Parish Council have shared photos of how contributions have reinvigorated their newly refurbished play area. It is now so very bright and cheerful for its young visitors!

Young residents in Brenchley and Matfield are also benefiting from a fabulous play area thanks to section 106 money from a development in the parish. Recycled material was important and equipment from their new play area was built using a minimum of 28,400 plastic bottles, with a lifespan of three times the equivalent of timber products!





**Chelsfield Park  
Hospital**  
Part of Circle Health Group

## Private Orthopaedic Surgery Near You

**At Chelsfield Park Hospital, we offer a wide range of orthopaedic procedures to patients who live in Kent, Tunbridge Wells, Bromley, and Sevenoaks.**

Why wait? Self-funding patients benefit from no waiting lists and fixed price packages, so there are no unexpected bills.

- Short waiting times, fast access to diagnosis and treatment
- Outstanding consultant lead treatment
- Consultation within 48hrs
- Imaging services including X-Ray, MRI, Ultrasound and CT
- Expertly tailored physiotherapy plans

**For more information call 01689 885925**

\*Chrysalis Finance working in partnership with Circle Health Group. Loans are subject to status, terms, and conditions apply. Loans are arranged by Chrysalis Finance Limited of PO Box 404, Alderley Edge, Cheshire SK9 0EA. Both Circle Health Group and Chrysalis Finance Limited are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority to carry out the regulated activity of credit broking. 0% APR is spread over 10 months.

26625 2498 MKT ADV / 04.2023

### Assessment & Service Centre

Unit 1, Bridge Farm, Upper  
Hayden Lane, Tonbridge  
Kent TN11 8AA

**01732 770251**



**KENT MOBILITY**

*Tailored lifestyle solutions*

[www.kentmobility.co.uk](http://www.kentmobility.co.uk)

### Retail Showroom

Unit 6, Sanderson Way,  
Tonbridge, Kent  
TN9 1QQ

**01732 770998**



**We have  
free on-site  
parking at our  
assessment centre  
and retail  
showroom!**

**making life  
less challenging**

power wheelchairs • manual wheelchairs • patient lifters  
rise/recliner armchairs • profiling beds • walking aids  
supportive seating • bathlifts • scooters • overhead hoists • ramps

assessments available from our Occupational Therapist  
short term hire options • repairs & servicing

**Reach out to us for a FREE home demonstration**

## New Year, New Start:

### Embrace Enriching Experiences at The Amelia Scott!

As we welcome a new year, it's the perfect time for making a commitment to enrich your life and inspire learning. The Amelia Scott invites you to join us in an exciting journey of self-discovery, creativity, and community connection in 2024.

**Our Own Exhibition** - Ever wondered how museum exhibitions are curated? Our FREE 12-week course, designed for those over 55 or with long-term health conditions, offers hands-on experience, exclusive behind-the-scenes tours, and expert insights. Learn the art of curating at The Amelia Scott. Next course begins on 7 February. Enrol now!

If you live in Cranbrook or nearby and would be interested in taking part in a group, please get in contact as we are planning a course in Cranbrook later in 2024.

**Take Some Time** - Reignite the joy of connection and creativity with our FREE 10-week programme. Immerse yourself in the art of 'Slow Looking' and connect with like-minded individuals in a serene and inspiring environment. The next course starts on Monday 18 March and runs from 1-2.30pm.

**Curiosity Project** - For those living with dementia and their caregivers, this programme provides a unique opportunity to engage with art, create meaningful connections, and make cherished memories. Join us on the first Thursday of every month from 10am - 12.30pm.

**Naturally Creative** - Connect with the environment and like-minded people as you explore gardening and craft activities. Whether you're a seasoned green thumb or a novice, it's the perfect way to make a positive impact on your surroundings. For more details contact [daniel.huckfield@tunbridgewells.gov.uk](mailto:daniel.huckfield@tunbridgewells.gov.uk). No need to book, just drop in.

The Amelia 

At The Amelia Scott, we believe in the transformative power of culture. Our programmes are designed to ignite curiosity, inspire creativity, and foster a lifelong love for learning. Join us, make lasting connections, and create cherished memories.

Find out more and get involved today! Contact Daniel Huckfield on [daniel.huckfield@tunbridgewells.gov.uk](mailto:daniel.huckfield@tunbridgewells.gov.uk) or 01892 554146.



For more information  
01892 864429

MG Care Homes

Quality nursing care in small family settings

[www.mghomes.co.uk](http://www.mghomes.co.uk)

# Glorious Gold

**It's been a wonderful year for Royal Tunbridge Wells in Bloom who achieved an amazing Gold award at the Britain in Bloom UK Finals 2023.**

They were one of 44 community gardening groups who secured a place in the finals from the 17 Bloom regions and nations which run individual competitions during the year. They were also the only group to achieve a Gold award from all the groups nominated from the South East.

Royal Tunbridge Wells was up against some strong competition in the 'small city' category including from the group who went on to become the overall winner of the competition, so Gold indicates just how good the quality of their entry was.

Success in the national competition is of course only possible because of the strength of the group at the regional and local levels. There were lots of awards for the group at the regional finals and once again this year the local competition drew entries from residents, schools, groups and businesses across the town.

**Congratulations to all the winners and the volunteers who make up Royal Tunbridge Wells in Bloom, it really wouldn't happen without you!**



## Remember to pack a poo bag!

From January dog waste bag dispensers are being removed from the Council's parks.

If you walk your dog in the parks you may already be aware of this change as there have been advance warning notices on the dispensers. You may not be aware that this will save around £60,000 a year.

Please make sure you are ready to take your own bags to clear up after your dog, most owners are very responsible and already do this when walking their pet. The penalty for not picking up after your dog is £100.

You can put dog waste bags in any of the bins in the park.

Thank you for helping to look after your parks.



## New Local Plan makes progress

In November 2022 the Inspector appointed to independently examine the soundness of the draft Local Plan presented his initial findings to the Council.

A detailed report in response to the findings will be presented to a meeting of Full Council on 13 December.

The report sets out the following key changes to the Development Strategy included in the Plan submitted for examination:

- Deletion of the previously proposed housing at Tudeley Village and the Five Oak Green Bypass
- A reduction in growth at Paddock Wood following updated flood modelling, and changes to the way in which employment, education provision and sport and recreation are provided at Paddock Wood
- Additional housing provision at Hawkhurst to enable delivery of a much needed new medical centre

If the report is approved at Full Council we will be carrying out a public consultation on the changes to the Development Strategy later in December for seven weeks.

For further details please see the Examination Latest News and Updates

[twbc.online/localplanexamination](https://twbc.online/localplanexamination)



# ASSEMBLY HALL THEATRE WINTER SEASON

for full details and to book tickets visit our website  
[assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk](http://assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk)  
01892 530613

**tall stories**

THE GRUFFALO'S CHILD

ADAPTED FROM JULIA DONALDSON AND AXEL SCHEFFLER'S AWARD-WINNING PICTURE BOOK

**LIVE ON STAGE**

★★★★★  
'Everything good children's theatre should be'  
The List

★★★★★  
'Warm, witty and beautifully made...  
a fantastic family favourite'  
London Theatre1

for ages **3+**

The Gruffalo's Child © Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler 2004 – Macmillan Children's Books

**FAMILY | 20 - 21 JAN**



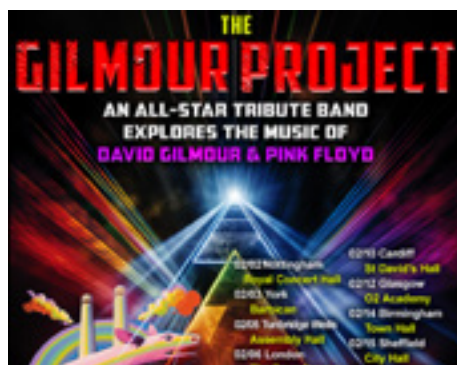
MUSIC | FRI 26 JAN



MUSIC | THU 1 FEB



MUSIC | SAT 3 FEB



MUSIC | MON 5 FEB



OPERA | TUE 6 FEB



SPOKEN WORD | THU 8 FEB



SPOKEN WORD | FRI 9 FEB



MUSIC | WED 21 FEB



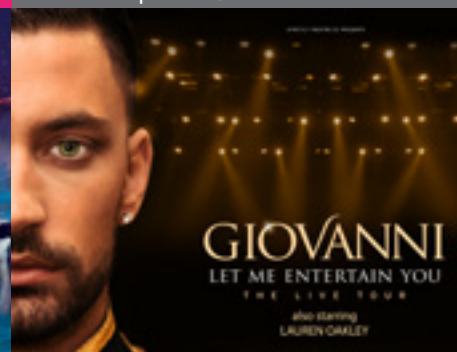
VARIETY | FRI 23 FEB



SPOKEN WORD | WED 28 FEB



MUSIC | THU 29 FEB



DANCE | FRI 1 MAR



SPOKEN WORD | MON 4 MAR



SPOKEN WORD | TUE 5 MAR



COMEDY | WED 6 – SUN 10 MAR



MUSIC | SAT 16 MAR



MUSIC | SUN 17 MAR



FAMILY | WED 27 – THU 28 MAR

AWARD WINNING DAME  
JAMES PEAKE

EASTENDERS'  
RITA SIMONS

CBBC'S  
STEWART  
McCHEYNE

INTRODUCING  
ABIGAIL  
GREEN

# BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

by Morgan Brind

*"A must see show for all the family"*

MY TUNBRIDGE WELLS - PANTO 2022 REVIEW

**Sat 09 – Sun 31 Dec**  
Tunbridge Wells | [assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk](http://assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk)



SCAN ME

**BOOK YOUR  
TICKETS TODAY!**



AssemblyHallTheatre

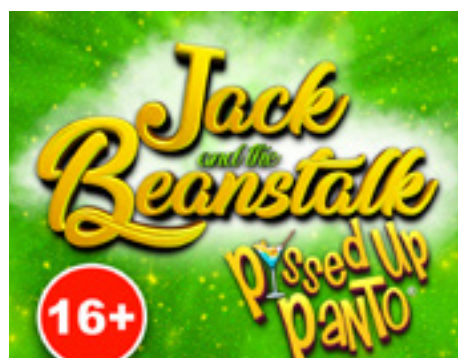


ahttw



AssemblyHallTheatre

Little  
WOLF  
entertainment



VARIETY | FRI 29 MAR



MUSIC | SUN 31 MAR



FAMILY | TUE 2 APR



MUSIC | FRI 5 APR



COMEDY | SAT 13 APR



VARIETY | FRI 26 APR

An enchanting Christmas show  
for all the family

# Little Owl and the Christmas Lights

Take flight this Christmas and join Little Owl and his woodland friends on a magical journey of discovery. With puppetry, original songs and atmospheric animations this is sure to be a festive delight.

THE AMELIA SCOTT | TUNBRIDGE WELLS  
8 – 24 DEC 2023 11AM 1PM AND 3/4PM

**Book tickets at  
[theamelia.co.uk](http://theamelia.co.uk)**

# Have you heard about Beam?

Beam is a social enterprise that delivers wellbeing, employment and housing support to people in housing need and vulnerable people with complex needs. The extra support that Beam gives local people through caseworkers and crowdfunding can be a turning point in helping them move into training or work, and into permanent accommodation.

The Council's partnership with Beam has been running for 12 months. Around 100 residents have been referred to the project, those who then decide they'd like to work with Beam are supported to find housing or employment.

**Jack, one of Beam's current Tunbridge Wells clients said:**

“Over a year and a half ago I became really depressed and unmotivated after losing my last job due to mental health reasons. Things got really bad for a time, no motivation to do anything besides sit in my room and do nothing.

After I started getting help with taking care of myself better, my landlords recommended I reach out to a company called Beam. Beam has given me incredible support on my journey to get back into work.”

People who join the Beam scheme have a fundraising page on Beam's website and can crowdfund the cost of items that can be a financial obstacle to starting work. On their page they can include their story and a budget breakdown of how much they need to raise. Supporters can donate and leave a message for the person they are helping.

If you'd like to help a campaign for someone being supported by Beam visit **beam.org**

Anyone homeless or at risk of losing their home may seek assistance from the Council's Housing Options team by visiting **kenthomechoice.org.uk**



## HENRY PAUL FUNERALS

*Contemporary and Traditional Services*

A traditional family owned funeral directors dedicated to providing distinct levels of service, dignity and care.

Home Visits • Private Chapel of Rest • Full fleet of Modern & Vintage Vehicles • Floral Tributes • Catering • Memorial Masonry • Pre-paid Funeral Plans • Repatriation • 24 hour emergency service

HEAD OFFICE 10 High Steet, Pembury, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 4NY 01892 825505 [pembury@henrypaulfunerals.co.uk](mailto:pembury@henrypaulfunerals.co.uk)

FUNERAL DIRECTORS 50 - 52 Commercial Road, Paddock Wood, Kent TN12 6DP 01892 835955 [paddockwood@henrypaulfunerals.co.uk](mailto:paddockwood@henrypaulfunerals.co.uk)

FUNERAL DIRECTORS AND MEMORIAL SHOWROOM 88a Shipbourne Road, Tonbridge, Kent TN10 3EG 01732 605002 [tonbridge@henrypaulfunerals.co.uk](mailto:tonbridge@henrypaulfunerals.co.uk)

# FREE Weight loss programme starts in January

**One You Kent** offers professional and friendly support to help you achieve your weight loss goals with our FREE 12-week programme. You will be offered weekly support to learn how to manage your weight through healthy eating, physical activity, and behaviour change.

This practical and personal approach enables you to lose weight, but also to keep it off and be a healthy weight for life. If you are interested in finding out more about the group starting in January, visit [oneyoukent.org.uk](https://oneyoukent.org.uk) and complete the online referral form, alternatively you can self-refer by calling **01892 554411**.

BMI and other eligibility criteria apply.

“**Thoroughly enjoyed doing this course. Recommend to anyone who qualifies to take part. Very supportive, caring and engaged with us all. Feel I have gained so much by attending and I've lost weight too! Hopefully, this is the start of my new lifestyle.**”



## Apps to help make a difference

Find free apps and tools to help you improve your health and wellbeing and reach your goals.

From finding food swaps, and cutting down on drinking, to weight loss plans and easy meals - there is an app to support you at [nhs.uk/better-health](https://nhs.uk/better-health)



# HOST FAMILIES REQUIRED

**Make your spare room work for you and earn an income from hosting European pupils on their school trips.**

We welcome schools throughout the year including summer stays. The groups arrive on a Monday and stay 3 or 4 nights. Their busy schedules mean they are out all day from 7.30am-7pm.

Hosting with ISE is a wonderful and enriching way to give young people the opportunity of a lifetime and to create unforgettable memories.

Hosting suits everyone: singles, couples with or without children and retired people. We are seeking friendly and kind people who will provide the students with a warm, clean, safe and welcoming environment.

## TO FIND OUT MORE CONTACT

Stephanie Heymer

07555 548470

[info@isegb.co.uk](mailto:info@isegb.co.uk)

[isegb.co.uk](https://isegb.co.uk)



## Wells Aldo Bespoke Range

**SPECIAL  
INTRODUCTORY  
OFFERS**

ASK IN STORE  
FOR DETAILS

We at Wells love **JOHN GANNETT** and are delighted to be their Premier stockist with the largest display of this gorgeous furniture. We have worked in collaboration to create unique models and fabric recipes from our vast fabric library to show off the beauty and quality of these stunning sofas and chairs in coordinated room sets which will fire the imagination!

Our fabric library includes many of the leading brands including:

Linwood, Sandersons, Romo, Designers Guild, Ralph Lauren, Morris & Co and many more.

The choice is amazing and we can tailor a unique item for you with the help of our in-house interior designer.

**We look forward to welcoming you to our new showrooms.**

44 High Street, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 1XF

T: 01892 535555 E: [sales@wellsinteriors.co.uk](mailto:sales@wellsinteriors.co.uk) [www.wellsinteriors.co.uk](http://www.wellsinteriors.co.uk)

