

Christchurch • St Mary's • Swanley Village • White Oak Wards







On 9th December at 11:30am, Swanley's Mayor Councillor Lesley Dyball opened the town's new Skate Park at Swanley Recreation Ground, alongside Leader Councillor Michael Horwood, Chief Executive Ryan Hayman and Concrete Wave Founder JD O'Brien.

Swanley's NEW Skate Park contains a wide range of elements including quarterpipes, hips, taco, rollover, ledge and manual pad, a stairset, spine, rail, flatbanks and a miniramp - there's something for everyone, with room for progression whether you skate, scoot or BMX.

The Skate Park is a £250,000 investment which was funded through £220,000 worth of grants and £30,000 of Community Infrastructure Levy. A special thanks goes to our grant funders; National Lottery; Veolia; Kent County Council; Fidelity International. In addition, a big thank you is expressed to Concrete Wave for their assistance in obtaining grants.

On 15th April the official opening will be held with an event supported by Maverick who constructed the new facility. However, the facility remains available to use from today!



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Please note: All events and news carried in this edition of The Town Crier is current at the time of going to press but may be subject to change due to weather conditions.

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Monday to Thursday: 9:00am - 5:30pm Friday: 9:00am - 5:00pm Saturday and Sunday: Closed

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A word from the Mayor Councillor Lesley Dyball

I don't know about you, but Christmas and the New Year seemed to come and go in a flash! All that build-up, all that food, present shopping, "to do" lists, decorations and trees put up, and then before you know it, it's all over, and we're back to normal, thankfully. However you celebrated the festive period, I hope you were able to spend time with friends and family.

Looking back over the past couple of months, there are a few events that are worthy of a mention here. I would like to express my gratitude to everyone who supported my Charity Ball in October. We had a super evening raising much-needed funds for my Charity this year, Home Start North West Kent, and thanks to the generosity of the guests who attended, and those who donated raffle and auction prizes, I am absolutely delighted that a total of £2132 was raised.

The last few weeks of 2022 saw some of our most popular community events in the town. The Remembrance Day Service at St Mary's Church on

13th November, attended by many dignitaries including The Lord Sackville DL and Laura Trott, MP, began with a parade headed up by a pipe and drum band. The route, through the town centre, was lined with crowds of spectators, many of whom then followed the parade to the

church for the wreath-laying ceremony and church service. It was moving to see the Swanley community turning out in their numbers, as they always do, to pay their respects to those who gave their lives for our freedom.

Light Up The Town on December 3rd commenced with a day of activities, craft stalls, food and drink, a variety of entertainment, and of course the everpopular Santa's Grotto. However, although there was a steady stream of visitors to the various attractions I think that the bitterly cold weather kept the crowds away until the lighting up of the town and tree in the town centre as darkness fell. I had some help from my young friend, Teddy, who did a magnificent job leading the crowd with me in the countdown with precision timing, I might add!

The Christmas Carol Service in St Mary's Church on December 18th was very well attended, despite the snow and ice and below freezing temperatures which lingered from the previous week's snowstorm. The carol singing followed by hot mulled wine, coffee and mince pies served after the service was most welcome and got us in the festive mood.

I am delighted that the construction of the new skatepark on the recreation ground was completed on schedule at the beginning of December and is now open for all to use. It is a fantastic facility for our town, and already I have seen a number of skateboarders and BMXers taking full advantage of its well designed and constructed layout, and I look forward to seeing many more at the official opening Skatejam on 15th April.

I hope to see some of you at various events which the town council has planned over the next few months.

With every good wish to you and your loved ones for a happy and peaceful 2023.

Lesley Dyball

Mayor of Swanley Town Council

Our CEO

Let me open by wishing all residents a Happy and Prosperous New Year. This period is always a busy one across the Council, and this time was no exception.

Ready for Christmas, our new Skate Park
was finished and opened, just in time

for the snow to fall! There was some respite from the snow and many users have braved the elements to try out the new facility. The park is set to be a popular attraction for decades to come and I am just delighted we got it done! Across the town at our Olympic facility, two buildings providing new changing rooms and toilet facilities have

been installed. These will be complemented by two new sports pitches and will be part of the 'Sports Hub'

rebranding of the site, which will eventually be home to: Boxing; Bowls; Rugby; Pétanque; Snooker and Darts. The pitches should be finished and playable in 2023. At Swanley Park, work has begun to build a new home for Dawn to Dusk Nurseries. The business was set to close in Spring 2023, but at the last moment the Town Council was approached, and we managed to work with them to provide what I am sure will be a fantastic nursery. Swanley is already one of the worst served areas in the district for nursery places, so this new facility will ensure that families who currently rely on the provision are still catered for, whilst also reducing the growing waiting list.

We have also been busy making some important smaller improvements. At the Olympic, our Venues Manager has been working tirelessly to improve the previously dated carpet. The new carpet was in place just in time for the annual New Year's Eve bash which was once again extremely popular and sold out.

Our CEO - continued

In the car park, Electric Vehicle chargers have been installed and are proving very popular, as the Town Council strides forward with our green strategy. New front doors have also been installed at the facility and there are further upgrades coming soon! At the Alexandra Suite, after months of pushing, NHS Medway's Breast Screen Clinic arrived at our site. It has been operating from the end of November 2022 and is due to move to the next area by the end of February. On the Recreation Ground, a tree was planted as part of the extended Queen's Green Canopy project. We also installed a Jubilee bench, both of which will serve as a tribute to our late Queen Elizabeth II.

In Swanley Park, improvements are being made ahead of the start of the new season. Look out for the new exciting inflatable area and waterslide activities!

At Swanley Link, we have continued our engagement with Bank Hub and OneBanx as we still look for better banking solutions for the town. The Link also was host to our Regulation 14 – Neighbourhood Plan consultation process.

The closing date for responses was the 20th of February as the plan nears its completion. Many of you might not know that we own and lease out the Cotton Mill and Taxi station and we are currently working with the Micro Pub on plans to extend and improve the building which is immensely popular and an important town regeneration project.

Also owned but leased out by the Town Council is the Oaks Doctors Surgery, where a year ago in the winter magazine, I provided an update on our hopes and plans to ensure a new larger facility would one day be built to help provide for an evergrowing population.

Working with partners at NHS Kent and Medway, the surgeries, and town centre owners, we have managed to secure the necessary funding to help drive this project forward. As you can imagine the hurdles to still overcome are copious, but we are driving this forward as fast as the system will allow.

Finally, this year there is an election! Local elections are scheduled to be held in the United Kingdom on 4th of May 2023. Do not forget to register to VOTE!

As always, if you think we can help do not hesitate to contact us. I look forward to providing my next update in three months' time.

Swanley's Shed Launches At Swanley Park

Swanley's Mayor Cllr Lesley Dyball officially opened the Shed with the first users in attendance, and keen to get started. Swanley's Shed is based on the Men's Shed concept. The message is the same, aiming to create a place to pursue practical interests at leisure, to practice skills and enjoy making and mending.

Kent County Council's Community Warden Paul Sharrad helped setup this local Shed, and his determination to see this through has turned a quick conversational idea into a reality. To register your interest in joining please do email towncouncil@swanleytowncouncil.gov.uk and we will pass on your enquiry to the group's Chairperson.

Activities in Sheds vary greatly, but you can usually find woodworking, metalworking, repairing and restoring, electronics, model buildings or even car building in a typical Shed. Sheds tend to attract older men, but many have younger members and women too.

The benefit of using Sheds are proven in the many previous examples launched across the United Kingdom. This is especially the case when it comes to men, remarking on this, the Men's Shed Association stated "Men typically find it more difficult to build social connections than women, and unlike women of a similar age, fewer older men have networks of friends and rarely share personal concerns about health and personal worries. It is not the case for all men, but for some, when retirement comes, it can feel like personal identity and purpose is lost."

After opening the facility, Cllr Lesley Dyball said "This is a great initiative and I could not be happier to open Swanley's Shed today. Those in attendance today have shared their excitement with me and I can see how much of a benefit this Shed will be to the community."



Swanley
Station



This entrance is not step-free

If you require step-free access to the station, the entrance on Station Approach is accessible, however it is α 20-minute walk.

If you are travelling by train and require the assistance of a taxi to take you from one side of this station to the other to access the station, please call our Customer Services team on **0800 783 4524** who will be happy to arrange this for you.



Please note, this taxi arrangement was developed in collaboration with Sevenocks District Council as part of Swanley's Access for All scheme. Therefore, it is unique to this station and is an arrangement that only applies here.

se



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Swanley Town Council is pleased to announce that two town council venues are benefitting from new Electric Vehicle charge points through funding from UK Power Networks' Green Recovery scheme.

The network operator has extended the electricity network at both The Olympic and The Alexandra Suite. Four EV points are already operational at The Olympic and soon an additional four will be active at The Alexandra Suite.

The new charge points were opened by Laura Trott, MP for Sevenoaks and Swanley; Councillor Lesley Dyball, Mayor of Swanley; Ryan Hayman, Chief Executive of Swanley Town Council, and Adam Lakey from UK Power Networks.

Laura Trott MP, said "I am so pleased Swanley has benefitted from UK Power Networks' £66 million Green Recovery scheme, which is supporting Government plans for a green industrial revolution. By fast-tracking low carbon energy projects this grant scheme is supporting the drive to Net Zero carbon emissions and improving local air quality in the town for its residents."

Councillor Lesley Dyball, said "The Olympic and the Alexandra Suite are busy town council facilities, and a number of our customers and visitors now drive electric vehicles. These eight EV charge points are a welcome addition to our car parks, and we are very pleased that this is another big step towards Swanley Town Council's commitment to #NetZero."

Ryan Hayman, said: "We are grateful to UK Power Networks for supporting this project through the Green Recovery scheme, enabling us to install our first new Electric Vehicles charge points, helping visitors to our venues from far and wide.

Swanley has some of the worst air quality in Sevenoaks district, due to the volume of traffic passing through the local area. This project will help more people to use low carbon technologies and marks an important step in improving local air quality in our community."

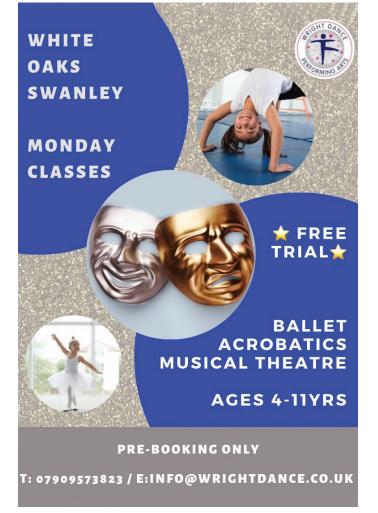
Adam Lakey, leading the projects for UK Power Networks, said: "We are delighted to be working closely with local authorities, community groups, bus and motorway service operators to make it as easy as possible to connect more low carbon technologies to the network, supporting the low carbon transition."

UK Power Networks is delivering £66 million of 'green recovery' investment to support low carbon energy projects to achieve the Government's Ten Point Plan towards Net Zero by 2050. A total of 86 schemes are being fast-tracked by the electricity company across a range of sites including Electric Vehicle charging hubs at motorway service stations, fleets of electric buses, community energy schemes and heat pumps.











Following the wishes of our Patron, His Majesty The King, The Queen's Green Canopy initiative was continued and fewer extended to the end of March 2023 to give people the opportunity to plant trees in memoriam to honour Her Majesty.

On the 11th November the Mayor of Swanley Town Council, Councillor Lesley Dyball officially opened a tribute bench and tree alongside Deputy Mayor and Leader Councillor Michael Horwood and Chief Executive Ryan Hayman.

These additions both mark the Jubilee year, whilst also being a permanent celebration of Queen Elizabeth II's Reign.

Swanley Town Council is proud to be creating a living legacy through the Queen's Green Canopy which has in total already planted a million trees in Her Majesty's name across the nation and Commonwealth.

Mayor, Councillor Lesley Dyball said "I am delighted to unveil these tributes in memory of our late Queen.

The planting of this acer tree and the installation of a Jubilee bench will be a lasting homage to her long and dedicated reign."

Chief Executive Ryan Hayman added "Our late Queen's passion for the environment is demonstrated through this Green Canopy initiative. When we found out about the project we simply had to participate.

The addition of a bench completes the area and is a fitting tribute to our late Queen Elizabeth II."







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On the 4th November, Swanley Town Council once again held a free Bonfire and Firework display on Swanley Recreation Ground.

The weather was kind, when after days of rain, the sun decided to shine. People were able to enjoy the music, bonfire and stalls on site, prior to a brilliant firework display.

Mayor of Swanley Cllr Lesley Dyball said "It was great to see so many people out enjoying Firework Night and the amazing display.

Thank you to everyone who donated towards the Mayor's Charity on the night.

A fantastic amount of £273.44 was raised which I know will be gratefully received by Home Start North West Kent who support a growing number of families in Swanley."

Event organiser Toni Roast, Assistant Town Clerk, said "It was a fantastic evening and I would like to thank all the team for their hard work and commitment in putting this event on."

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To enquire about or to book a place please contact Swanley Youth Hub on the details below:

- **Every 4th Thursday of the month**
- swanleyyouthhub@kent.gov.uk
- 03000 421545
- St Mary's Rd, Swanley BR8 7BU

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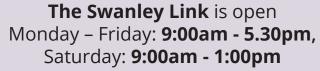
you have immediate safeguarding concerns about your young person please contact: ctoria.Walters@kent.gov.uk or telephone 03000 41 61 61

SWANLEY LINK









The following organisations currently have a and Greet Desk for information and available days

- presence within the building, please ask at the Meet for each organisation. Swanley Town Council; parking permits for Swanley Park, sale of all refuse
- Library and Registration Services, including Rhyme Time, Knit and Natter, Reading Groups, Craft events, Children's knitting group.

for Swanley residents. Allotment

tenancies, court, sport, and pitch

bags and refuse collection information

bookings. Bus timetable information.

- KCC Support with Blue Badge application.
- KCC Community Warden Last Monday of the month - 10:00am - 11:00am.
- KCC, Kent Pathways Service Help Desk Swanley, for people with Disabilities.
- Porchlight Kent's largest charity for homeless and vulnerable people.

- SpecSavers Hearcare appointments booked through SpecSavers Swanley.
- Post Office.
- Photo Me Booth.
- Piccalilly's Café.
- Ellenor Bereavement Café third Saturday each month.
- Dementia Friends Sessions in conjunction with the Alzheimer's Society - please book your session, through the Alzheimer's society or ask at the Meet and Greet desk.
- Sevenoaks District Council One You.
- News Shopper pick up a free copy within the Swanley Link.

Pop in for up to date information on current organisations.



Getting here:- Swanley Link is in Swanley town centre and can be reached easily by car, train or by foot. The address is: London Road, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7AE.

Parking:- There is free, timelimited parking in the neighbouring supermarkets, and free parking in St Mary's Road after 10:00am. There are two disabled parking spaces behind the gateway.



Swanley Link London Road, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7AE.



Swanley Link: 03000 42 12 81 | Post Office general enquiries: 0345 611 2970 West Kent Housing Association: 01732 74 94 00

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Swanley Park achieves GOLD in the Loo Of the Year Awards

Swanley Park was crowned the gold award in the Loo Of The Year Awards. The aim of this award is to encourage the highest possible standards in all 'away from home' washrooms.

This award takes place across the UK and Ireland and is considered as an established benchmark of washroom provision and is compliant with national standards. Each entry is judged by a fully qualified unannounced inspector against judging criteria that covers both male and female facilities as well as any baby changing, accessible, Changing Places, space to change and hygiene room facilities.

Commenting on the recent success George Brooker, Parks & Open Spaces Manager, stated "This is a huge achievement for both Swanley Park and all of our staff who strive to keep our toilet facilities up-to-date, clean and tidy.

We are proud of this achievement and recognition for our toilet and Changing Places facilities. We are hoping to build on this recognition and retain this award in the next coming years."

In 2021 Swanley Park became one of the first parks in the local area to open a Changing Places facility.

This was also inspected and was awarded the platinum award in the accessible facilities category.



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Remembrance Day Parade







On Sunday 13th November a larger than usual crowd gathered in Swanley Town Centre to take part in the Remembrance Day Parade.

The dignitaries, which included The Lord Sackville DL, Cllr Lesley Dyball, Mayor of Swanley, Cllr Avril Hunter, Chairman of Sevenoaks and Laura Trott MP were joined by members of the Royal British Legion, Army and Air Cadets, Brownies, Scouts, Cubs, Guides and members of the public.

Cllr Lesley Dyball, Mayor of Swanley stated "This parade was attended by the largest crowd that I can ever remember.

This is testament to the Swanley community, which always honours and remembers those fallen."

Assistant Town Clerk, Toni Roast, said "It was great to see so many people turn out to take part in the Remembrance Day Parade."

Following the laying of wreaths at the War Memorial a service of Remembrance took place in a packed St Mary's Church.

Pictures on this page were supplied by Kieran Judd Photography

Remembrance Animal Mural

On 11th November, the Mayor of Swanley, Cllr Lesley Dyball, unveiled an animal mural to commemorate all the animals that have lost their lives in war. The mural is on the ASDA wall alongside the silent soldiers and the Royal British Legion lady.

Assistant Town Clerk, Toni Roast, said "After working on this mural for over three years, I am so pleased that this has finally come to fruition. All of the soldiers and the lady have had new poppies this year which was made possible by residents who worked hard knitting and crocheting more than 660 poppies, thank you."

Mayor of Swanley Cllr Lesley Dyball said "I am very pleased that we have been able to finally pay tribute to the animals that served so courageously during conflict. This latest addition to the wall mural is fantastic."





Swanley Town Council thanks ETMS for their support in 2023





Light Up the Town 2022

Each year Swanley Town Council provides illuminations for Christmas, which includes a large Christmas Tree in the town centre, icicle lights and lamp post decorations. For 2022 a further twelve decorations were bought and installed on lamp posts. This extended the area covered by Christmas Lights in London Road in both directions.

The installation of the new lights was made possible

by the generous sponsorship received from local businesses, who for 2022 were, The Door and Window Centre, Evolve, Welham Jones, Sargeant Partnerships and Jones Homes (Southern). We are also grateful to Specsavers who provided sponsorship for Santa's Grotto at our Light Up the Town event on the 3rd of December. Santa was, as always, assisted by his naughty elves who gave out sweets.





It was great to have so many local businesses selling their wares at the Light Up the Town event. These stalls included wax melts, hair accessories, Christmas socks & gloves, cards, and gift bags. The Police, West Kent Youth services, Sevenoaks District Council and the RSPCA offered information on how to keep safe and how to access numerous services and information about services provided. Churches Together, the RSPCA and Swanley Town Council hosted free craft making activities including wreaths and Christmas cards.

A big thank you to, Swanley Churches Together, Erith Operatic Society, The Big Sing Choir, Wright Dance School, Swanley Light Opera Group, Christ Family Assembly Outreach, Blazing Brass, The Rock Choir and Pendragon Circus, who provided entertainment throughout the day.

A big thank you, to the Police Cadets, who did a fantastic job helping at the event and collecting fifteen bags of rubbish from in and around the town centre.

The countdown and light switch on were conducted by The Mayor of Swanley, Councillor Lesley Dyball, assisted by Teddy a local young resident, the Swanley Police Cadets and, of course, Santa.

Specsavers

Swanley

Specsavers Swanley are delighted to be supporting the Christmas festivities for our local community. We offer eye health services, including contact lenses and OCT scans which helps us to view the health of your eyes in greater detail, by allowing us to see what's going on beneath the surface of the eye. You can even bring in your prescription from any other optician and you can take advantage of our great prices and famous deals.

We are proud to say we are more than just an Optician, as this year we have inspired many students by providing work experience in our store, we have visited schools to offer career opportunities and we have supported both family and charity events at Swanley Park. We are proud to be a part of the community and to be working with Swanley Town Council.

Address: Unit 39, Swanley Shopping Centre, Kent BR8 7TQ Phone: 01322 616465 Appointments: www.specsavers.co.uk







Swanley Town Events 2023

Mayor at Home

Tuesday 14th March
Tickets can be booked by contacting Tracey Bayliss
Swanley Town Council 01322 655855
tbayliss@swanleytowncouncil.gov.uk

Skate Park Opening Jam

Saturday 15th April

St George's Day Saturday 22nd April

Armed Forces Day

Saturday 24th June

Fireworks Swanley Park

Friday 25th August

Family Funfest

Saturday 26th August

WHAT'S ON AT THE STAG SEVENOAKS

WHAT'S ON SCREEN

PUSS IN BOOTS: THE LAST WISH

ANT-MAN AND THE WASP QUANTUMANIA

NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE: OTHELLO 23RD FEB

EXHIBITION ON SCREEN - MARY CASSATT 8TH MAR

NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE - LIFE OF PI 30TH MAR

EXHIBITION ON SCREEN - VERMEER 18TH APR

NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE - GOOD 20TH APR

NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE - BEST OF ENEMIES 18TH MAY

EXHIBITION ON SCREEN - TOKYO STORIES 23RD MAY

HALF-PRICE WEDNESDAYS!
GET 50% OFF CINEMA TICKETS WHEN
BOOKED ON THE DAY

WHAT'S ON STAGE

THE WHITNEY HOUSTON STORY 9TH FEB

SOME KINDA WONDERFUL 10TH FEB

THE LITTLE MERMAID 13TH FEB

ONE NIGHT IN DUBLIN 16TH FEB

CHILDRENS SHOWTIME 17TH FEB

WRONG JOVI 18TH FEB

A NIGHT ON BROADWAY 24TH FEB

GUNS 2 ROSES 3RD MAR

GIRLZ WORLD 4TH MAR

LET'S ROCK THIS COUNTRY WITH SHANIA 4TH MAR

SEVENOAKS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA 12TH MAR

BABY BROADWAY 12TH MAR

A TRIBUTE TO AMY WINEHOUSE 25TH MAR

BEAUTIFUL TRAUMA - PINK 31ST MAR

BOX OFFICE: 01732 450175 - WWW.STAGSEVENOAKS.CO.UK THE STAG SEVENOAKS, LONDON ROAD, SEVENOAKS, TN13 1ZZ















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