

Council Plan Performance - Environment

Environment Promise 1 - Protect the natural environment

1. During 2020/21, Sevenoaks District Council Local Plan policies successfully protected open and green spaces in the District, ensuring that key developments in the District contributed to future open space provision.
2. Developments across the District have continued to be built in accordance with the adopted policy in the Core Strategy and Allocations and Development Management Plan. Relevant Evidence Base and supporting documents also provide development guidance, and include the Green Belt Assessment, Open Space, Sport and Leisure Study, Biodiversity Analysis of Sevenoaks District, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plans and Kent Biodiversity Strategy.
3. Air pollution is associated with a number of adverse health impacts. It is recognised as a contributing factor in the onset of heart disease and cancer. Additionally, air pollution particularly affects the most vulnerable in society: children, the elderly, and those with existing heart and lung conditions. The primary source of air pollution within the Sevenoaks district is from nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter from road traffic, particularly arising from the three major motorways and these have a considerable flow of continental HGVs using the port at Dover and the Channel Tunnel. Local journeys, school runs, commuting to London or connection with London contribute significantly to a number of hot spots in Sevenoaks, Swanley and in several small towns along the A25 road.
4. Air quality monitoring in 2020 has shown a significant decrease in NO₂ levels at all monitoring locations. None of the diffusion tubes recorded NO₂ levels above the annual mean objective level. This may be due in part due to a reduction in traffic due to Covid-19 restrictions, but it is considered likely that compliance will continue in the future.
5. Whilst air quality has improved significantly in recent decades, and will continue to improve due to national and local policy decisions, there are some areas where additional action is needed to improve air quality further. The 2019 Clean Air Strategy sets out the case for action, with goals even more ambitious than EU requirements to reduce exposure to harmful pollutants. The District Council has implemented a number of initiatives and measures to encourage the adoption of greener vehicles including; providing owners of low emission vehicles discounted rates for on street parking permits, the installation of electrical charging points at District Council owned car parks and the procurement of electric vehicles for town centre parking enforcement. Sevenoaks District Council successfully bid to Kent County Council for funding to provide rapid chargers including some to be used by taxis and private hire vehicles.

6. In 2019 Sevenoaks District Council set out a clear ambition to reach Net Zero in carbon emissions by 2030. A 2021 report to the Cleaner and Greener Advisory Committee outlined achievements on the Net Zero actions and next steps in eight work areas. For example, 'Efficiency in Council buildings' has been progressed through implementation of recommendations from an Energy Management Survey and adoption of ideas from a staff survey. The commissioning of a Carbon Reduction Plan will also support this work, by mapping our path to Net Zero. One action is to report annually on our carbon emissions, so that we can measure our progress and the impact our actions are having on reducing these emissions. The largest source of emissions, 70% is released from petrol and diesel fuel used in Council owned vehicles that are used to deliver services such the collection of refuse and recycling.
7. In 2021, the Council secured almost £1.5 million from the Governments Green Homes Grant. The grant will be used to make residents' homes across the District greener, cheaper to heat and more energy efficient. The funding is being offered to 150 mobile home owners and the upgrades available include external wall insulation and underfloor or loft insulation. The Council estimate that when both phases of the project are complete, over the 25-year life cycle of a mobile home, 2,914 tonnes of CO₂ will have been saved.
8. In terms of keeping the District clean, we are meeting our targets in terms of cleaning to the required frequency level and this has a knock-on effect for a lower than expected level of complaints.
9. The most recent Authority Monitoring Report updates on sustainable development, and green infrastructure, open space and biodiversity. For example, there were 44 domestic Photovoltaic (FIT)/Solar Panel Installations resulting in a total installed capacity of 0.19825MW, and 3 non-domestic Photovoltaic (FIT) Installation with a capacity of 0.06169 across the District.
10. There are a variety of countryside projects on-going across the District, and 63 Local Wildlife Sites are located within, or partially in the area. The Kent Downs and High Weald AONB Management Plans were adopted in 2021, and the Council continue to fund the North West Kent Countryside Partnership to carry out valuable projects across the District including habitat creation, landscape improvements, natural flood management, education, and health and wellbeing. The Council sit on the board for the Heritage Lottery funded Darent Valley Landscape Partnership scheme and work with the officers to shape and deliver the scheme.

Environment Promise 2 - Reduce waste and maintain weekly rubbish and recycling collection

11. The amount of waste being produced by households has increased during the last couple of years, and it increased by approximately 15% between April 2020 and March 2021, due to the pandemic. People have been working from home and not being able to go out, hence creating more household waste.

12. During the pandemic we have crews have worked incredibly hard to maintain our weekly rubbish collection, with very few missed waste collections. The fuel shortages in September 2021 also had a short-term impact on green waste collection services, however most missed collections were and continue to be rectified the next day. Forty percent of all household waste is sent for reuse, recycle or composting and is on track to meet our target for this.
13. The Residents Survey carried out in September 2021 told us that 91% of respondents were satisfied with the council's waste and recycling service.

Environment Promise 3 - Support high standards for new development, including design, safety, connectivity to services and transport and neighbourhood links; open up our countryside so people enjoy our footpaths and bridle paths more. Health will be a major consideration in our Local Plan.

14. Design is an integral part of the Council's planning function, and in 2019 an Urban Design Officer post was created to support this focus in both policy and development management. Examples of this work include: National Design Guide Training for planning officers and Members and the updating of five Conservation Area Appraisals with design guidance. Sevenoaks District Council have also worked with Edenbridge Town Council to adopt the Edenbridge Character Area Assessment.
15. Almost all completed developments of over 10 dwellings scored positively when assessed against the Building for a Healthy Life criteria, to assess the design quality, and larger schemes have been coming forward to Design Review Panels, with four undertaken since 2019, and two more planned in the coming months.
16. The Planning Department are also working with an academic fellow from the University of Birmingham to incorporate well-being into the local plan progress.
17. Sevenoaks District Council's Local Plan also includes policies which encourage development to reflect the distinctive local character of the area and exhibit high quality design. Three new assets have been added to the statutory list by Historic England.
18. A new Transport Strategy for the District has been produced, which facilitates improvements to transport in the District. The Council has produced a Sevenoaks District Transport Assessment (Dec 2018) and the Swanley Transport Study (May 2018) evidence base documents, to support the preparation of the emerging Local Plan. Developments continue to be in accordance with adopted policy.
19. Funding has recently been secured to prepare a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and Kent County Council have included two SDC cycle route schemes in a recent bid for the Government's Active Travel Fund.

20. A Movement Strategy is currently being prepared which will look at how people, goods and services move through and around the district. The Strategy will set out the Council's priorities for movement within the district and how SDC can provide, not only infrastructure, but behavioural change to support sustainable transport.

Council Plan Performance - Economy

Economy Promise 1 - Build on the District's thriving economy through the regeneration of our market towns, and by enhancing both the visitor and rural economies.

21. Sevenoaks District Council's Economic Development Strategy 2018-21 includes a key theme area relating to growth and investment in the district with an ambition to regenerate key market towns.
22. The Submission Version of the Local Plan includes policy EMP1 – Supporting a Vibrant and Balanced Economy. The Local Plan seeks to retain employment sites to support a vibrant and balanced economy. It also supports the development of new allocations and other new employment units for small to medium businesses in suitable locations.
23. The Economic Development (ED) team continue to deliver actions in the current Strategy and at the end of 2019, prior to the Pandemic, 85% of the actions in the current ED Strategy were on target and all actions remain on track to be delivered by the end of the Strategy period.
24. The ED team and Planning Department have recently commissioned a joint Town Centre Strategy, which will provide a strategy for the town and local centres of Sevenoaks, Swanley, Edenbridge, Westerham and New Ash Green. The strategy has multiple purposes, including:
 - To provide up to date town centre and retail evidence for Local Plan policies and sites, to develop a clear vision for town centres, a strategy to achieve the vision and governance structure to ensure the strategy is implemented.
 - To inform an update of the Economic Development Strategy, which sets out the major priorities for economic development in the District over the next three years, with a particular focus on town centre management.
 - To assist with lobbying and securing support and funding for town centre improvements in the District and to assist with regeneration plans for Council-owned sites.
25. Planning Officers continue to work with landowners and developers on any new development proposals, ensuring that they meet the economic requirements set out in the current adopted Core Strategy and Allocations and Development Management Plan.
26. The Council are also currently working on an update to the Settlement Hierarchy. This includes analysing population figures, public transport provision and carrying out an audit of the services and facilities in each settlement across the District, with the help of town and parish councils, in order to help determine the sustainability of each settlement. This will then form part of the emerging Local Plan evidence base and help to inform the plan and site allocations, including policies to support the visitor and rural economies and

town and local centres. We are looking to adopt this document towards the end of 2021 or early 2022.

27. The Council also supports the delivery of the West Kent Priorities for Growth which was updated in October 2021. The West Kent Partnership is an economic partnership between Sevenoaks, Tonbridge & Malling and Tunbridge Wells councils. The Partnership has also commissioned consultants to refresh the original Case for West Kent to review how the economy has changed, to identify future trends and to look at how successful the authorities have been in securing external funding.
28. One area of focus for the Partnership is the development of a network of business hubs to capitalise on the expected demand for hybrid working models for both corporates and start-up businesses. The District is in the process of developing 27-37 High Street, Swanley for a new co-working space which is part-funded by the Getting Building Fund. The aspiration is to create a network of hubs across the West Kent area, including those delivered by the private sector for example the successfully funded Hatchery project which was supported by the Council.
29. Through the West Kent Partnership, a number of business support programmes are delivered across the District in conjunction with the Kent & Medway Growth Hub. This includes regular bespoke 1:1 business support and an earlier access to loan finance scheme.
30. Land based and rural businesses have benefitted from 12 years of LEADER grant funding to help encourage innovation and diversification in the rural economy. Since 2006, £3m of grant funding to 112 projects has generated £8m of investment into West Kent and created over 100 jobs.
31. As an example of a project supported in the District, Westerham Brewery which was founded in 2004, brought back brewing to the historic town after the closure of the Black Eagle Brewery in 1965. The micro-brewery, producing craft beer for the local market, was looking to expand and LEADER funding helped towards increasing fermentation and storage capacity and improved efficiency with a new malt system, elevator and cask racking machine.
32. The West Kent Enterprise Adviser Network works with schools and colleges across the District, linking them to local businesses and supporting the development of their career strategies, world of work experiences, careers information and bringing forward a local pipeline of talent.
33. As an example of their work, Knole Academy students on the International Baccalaureate (IB) Film Studies course, participated in a public realm business challenge facilitated by the Councils Enterprise Coordinators.
34. The Council is a Gateway organisation for Kickstart West Kent which provides employers with grant funding to employ a young person for 25 hours a week for

6 months. As of 31 October 2021, 85 young people had started in post and a further 61 posts had been made available and approved.

35. Community Development officers have also worked closely with a partner IMAGO, to deliver an Employability project to enhance the skills of Young Carers. This is a pilot project with six sessions based on CV writing, interview skills, UCAS applications and a mock interview. The participants at the end of the course will also be given opportunities that will help develop themselves for future employers.
36. The Visitor Economy has been supported in a number of ways by the Economic Development team:
 - Launch of a new Visit Sevenoaks District website with a new focus on both visitor and local interactions. New sections include outdoor activities, walking, cycling, fishing, golfing, and arts and culture. An events section is also included as well as more comprehensive information on accommodation options. There are also plans for integrating the site with new projects around green spaces and sustainable transport including the Kent AONB EXPERIENCE programme.
 - Growth of social media initiatives, including the Instagram account which now has over 400 followers.
 - A new Brand Book for the District is being developed to showcase Sevenoaks to a much wider audience and dedicated campaigns are currently being implemented with an initial focus on the regional tourism market.
37. The development and realisation of the Darent Valley Community Rail Partnership (DVCRP) has been another key focus. Set up and funded by the Council, Sevenoaks and Swanley Town Councils and the local parish councils, the partnership is also supported by Southeastern and Thameslink with further support from the Community Rail Network. The initiative is led by a Rail Officer in the team funded from DVCRP budgets. The key focus for the initiative is to deliver:
 - Attractive, well-used stations which encourage more visits by rail to the area and use by locals.
 - Better connected access to local attractions and the countryside.
 - Artworks to promote each station.
 - A joined up movement strategy for the District including cycle routes.
 - More sustainable tourism.
38. Specific Projects delivered under the DVCRP include:
 - The creation of a dedicated Darent Valley website to improve information about rail travel and access to stations and local activities.
 - Working with local councils on access problems and enhanced cycle routes.

- Producing a Thameslink Guide linking the Darent Valley with other routes using Thameslink services.
 - Creating a food and drink trail with support from Visit Kent.
 - New planters and improved signage.
39. A significant role in the current and future regeneration of Shoreham and Eynsford stations developing partnerships with Thameslink and the Rail Heritage Trust. This combined with the renovations to Swanley and Bat & Ball stations could provide a platform for further investment. The four Victorian stations could be promoted as an attractive destination in their own right. The officer has also helped secure significant funding from Govia Thameslink Railway ('GTR') for future projects.
40. The Economic Development team runs a regular Business Board, Visitor Economy Forum and Rural Landowners Group to ensure the voice of the local business community is heard. Local intelligence generated at the meetings helps to inform strategy.

Economy Promise 2 - Protect the economy of the District by preserving and making better use of existing employment sites and by redeveloping previously used land.

41. We continue to protect our existing employment allocations, as set out in the Allocations and Development Management Plan. Employment sites will be retained in existing use to support a vibrant, flexible and balanced economy of the District.
42. The Council are currently working on developing the emerging Local Plan, including a new Call for Sites that is currently open, in order to identify sustainable sites for employment provision throughout the District.
43. The Council is also progressing a series of regeneration schemes including:
- 27-37 High Street Swanley – development of a disused community facility for a business hub and 17 new residential units. Completion is planned for July 2022.
 - Bevan Place, Swanley – feasibility work is being undertaken on a mixed-use scheme, with active frontages to assist in activating this part of the High Street.
 - Swanley White Oak Leisure Centre – the provision of a new £20m leisure centre to open in early 2022.
 - Farmstead Drive, Edenbridge – proposed development of 33 units (30% affordable with a new convenience store, play area and parking).
 - Stangrove Estate – proposed development of 13 residential units, a community store, much needed parking and amenity improvements.

- 96 High Street, Sevenoaks – feasibility work on repurposing a former art-deco building.
 - Land to East of the High Street, Sevenoaks - the Council is preparing a feasibility study and development plan, for the redevelopment of fragmented land parcels, to deliver a mixed-use scheme with education and other civic services.
44. The Town Centre Strategy currently being developed for Sevenoaks, Swanley, Westerham, Edenbridge and New Ash Green will aim to ensure these centres remain vibrant and take advantage of new trends and the changing nature of the retail and leisure. A draft strategy for internal review is on track for production by the end of December.

Economy Promise 3 - Support new and existing businesses through our “Team Around the Business” approach, excellent customer service and supporting local employers to promote mental and physical wellbeing at work.

45. The “Team Around the Business” approach supported a number of businesses during the Covid pandemic and as the economy has begun to recover by providing advice, guidance and signposting to other business support organisations.
46. More than 6,000 grants totalling £18m were disbursed by the business rates team to provide vital financial support to local businesses during the pandemic.
47. Local authorities were allocated funding from Government under the Re-Opening High Streets Safely and Welcome Back Fund schemes equating to £214,212. The funding has been used to appoint a dedicated part-time Town Centre officer. The fund supported a range of initiatives including 500 business packs with advice on how to re-open safely, signage and safety guidance in the town, three social media campaigns with a focus on shopping locally and a planned Christmas Campaign.

Council Plan Performance – Housing

Promise 1 - Deliver actions in the Sevenoaks District Housing Strategy, “Wellbeing Starts at Home” to provide a good mix of decent and affordable housing.

48. Housing and health are intrinsically linked. The home where we live and the location of that home has a massive impact on our overall health and wellbeing. Good housing policy that is strongly underpinned by planning creates strong and healthy communities. Our Housing Strategy’s overarching aim is to try to meet the District’s housing need. The strategy has three strategic priorities:
 - provide a good mix of decent and affordable housing across tenures;
 - improve the quality and use of the existing housing stock;
 - and meet the needs of vulnerable and low-income households.
49. The number of affordable homes delivered in 2020/21 was 22 homes, with a further 10 units at Quinton Court, Sevenoaks delivered in May 2021. Two "genuinely affordable" homes were delivered. Two major developments have also been granted planning permission - Broom Hill, Swanley and the Tesco's site, Sevenoaks. These will deliver 39 new affordable homes, including 25 "genuinely affordable" homes, in future years.
50. The Council’s company, Quercus Housing, is acquiring a block of 15 flats in Swanley to add to the nine flats it already owns in Westerham. The flats will be available at LHA rates/80% of market rent rates to residents on the housing list. Work is ongoing on a potential purchase to create 17 self-contained housing units.
51. The Council have funded and embarked on a 5 year programme of local needs surveys via Action with Communities in Rural Kent. This is providing needs data at parish level which complements the LHNS place-making area data. The Kent Rural Housing Protocol was updated and launched in February 2021. Research into the need for additional provision will also be informed by the Council’s targeted review of Local Housing Needs, which commenced in Summer 2021.
52. The Council has worked with Action with Rural Communities in Kent, and Tonbridge and Malling, and Tunbridge Wells Borough Councils to develop and launch the Kent Community Housing Hub in 2020. Funded through the Community Housing Fund, its aim is to promote community led housing.
53. In response to legislation and priorities set out in the District Council’s Housing Strategy, a new Tenancy Statement was adopted in 2020.
54. The Housing Team continue to engage new landlords and agents, with customers housed in private sector landlord (PSL) properties throughout the pandemic. In Autumn 2021 a refreshed and rebranded landlord incentive programme will be launched to further support this housing option. The most

recent data reports 11 customers in PSL and nine in Bed and Breakfast accommodation.

55. In 2021, Sevenoaks District Council secured a Green Homes Grants to fund a modern retrofit programme to a number park homes. This has resulted in positive housing and health benefits for residents, including a significant reduction in 'fuel poverty' with a number stating that their fuel bills have significantly reduced. The Council will continue to look at funding streams and new technologies, and also offer top up monies towards energy efficiency measure for private and owner occupiers under the ECO and LA Flex scheme.
56. Improving the quality and use of existing stock is also a priority. For example, 12 Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMO) units have been brought up to an approved standard in the year. With the assistance of the Health and Housing Co-ordinators and the 'One You, Your Home' advisor, more inspections of homes are also being undertaken.
57. In the current financial year, up to September 2021, 72 customers had been housed through the housing register.
58. Between September 2020 and August 2021 the number of people on the Housing Register's Band A 'urgent need to move' list decreased by 59%. The other Band lists showed different levels of increase over the same period (Band B 13%, Band C 51% and Band D 26%).
59. Since 2019, local Essential Workers have been a priority group in the Housing Register Allocations Policy. A number of Local Lettings Plans have also given priority to this group.

Housing Promise 2 – Protect neighbourhood identities and support the development of dementia friendly towns and villages

60. The Council considers cognitive impairment in both its existing housing schemes and new developments. Emily Court, for instance, which is the District's first purpose-built extra care facility, was designed to cater for those with memory issues and to aid navigation. When designing new housing developments, the Council must create housing that encourages public interaction and in easy-to-navigate physical environment that feels safe.
61. The Council is a member of the Sevenoaks Area Dementia Friendly Community Forum and works closely with partners to support those living with dementia. The Forum has been extremely successful over the years in raising awareness of dementia and setting up new local projects and services in towns and villages around the district, some of which include:
 - An annual 'Run, Walk or Push against Dementia' Running events with over 500 participants per year;
 - Forget-Me-Not Dementia services such as cafes, singing groups and cinema screenings;

- Dementia Friendly Business Award at the Council's Community & Voluntary Awards;
- 'Coping with Dementia' events for families and carers.

Housing Promise 3 - Prevent homelessness and support residents to build a future for themselves

62. In March 2020, the Government wrote to all local authorities asking them to urgently accommodate all rough sleepers and focus on the provision of adequate facilities to enable people to adhere to the guidance on hygiene or isolation, including for those who are at risk of sleeping rough.
63. Our Housing Team worked with local accommodation providers to deliver on this request across the District and have been working with the HERO team to create positive outcomes when COVID-19 restrictions were lifted.
64. Our Housing Advice Team have continued to provide positive outcomes to prevent homelessness. For the past year, the team have supported 183 people with a positive outcome where homelessness was prevented or alternative accommodation secured.
65. Many single households returned home or stayed with friends during the pandemic, however, the Council has seen a significant rise in friends and families no longer willing to accommodate them. Whilst this has begun to reduce the Council is seeing an increase in complex cases from households experiencing domestic abuse, mental health, substance misuse or multiple complexities.
66. In December 2021, a digital inclusion project will be launched to support households in temporary/emergency accommodation. This is in partnership with Compaid and supported by KCC Helping Hands. The project will provide 1-2-1 digital support and access to equipment and data.
67. The Council is also working with West Kent Housing Association to deliver Sevenoaks first Housing Led project for single homeless/rough sleepers or those at risk of becoming homeless or rough sleeping. This holistic support and accommodation project will be launched in April 2022.

Council Plan Performance – Health

Health Promise 1 - Provide adaptations to people's homes to prevent hospital admissions from falls and accidents. Prevent delays to hospital discharge by adapting homes quickly so people can be supported to return to independent living as soon as they are clinically ready.

68. Sevenoaks District Council's Private Sector Housing team work to support Sevenoaks residents to live independently. Disabled Facility Grants provide for major adaptations to people's homes such as stair lifts and flush floor showers. During 2020/21 there were 56 grants, totalling £387,692 provided to residents. This has enabled more residents across the District to live more independently. So far this year a further 43 grants have been completed.
69. Safe and Secure Grants are also administered by our Private Sector Housing Team. There have been 29 of these grants in 2020/21 totalling £33,235. There have also been £6,547 worth of Peabody Handyperson Service works for the year that includes 49 key safes, 15 beds and mattresses, 2 grab rails, 1 rubbish clearance and a property deep clean.
70. The West Kent Hospital Discharge Programme supported by the Better Care Fund is a partnership project between Sevenoaks District Council, Peabody Home Improvement Agency and the Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust. During 2020/21, 18 Hospital Discharge Grants were awarded, totalling £14,817 worth of work that enabled people to return safely to their own homes.
71. During 2020/21, nine clients have been supported with goals surrounding "adequate housing" or to "be safe in your environment". These would have been supported with home adaptations to maintain safe and independent living.

Health Promise 2 - Provide support to tackle the non-medical reasons why people visit their GP or hospital, helping them to make and sustain the changes needed to lead healthier lives.

72. So far this year there have been 192 referrals to the One You service. Fifty three per cent of these referrals have decided to get involved in the service and have completed their initial appointment.
73. The One You service delivered by Sevenoaks District Council supports residents to improve their health and wellbeing by making changes to their health behaviour i.e. weight, diet, physical activity, alcohol consumption and subsequently their mental wellbeing. The support provided by the Sevenoaks District Council One You service is completely free of charge and support is available either on a one-to-one or group basis.
74. Following the initial consultation with the One You service, the client is able to select which behaviour(s) they would like to change and how they would like to

be supported to do this. Some statistics from Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 in 2021/22:

- We have delivered our Alcohol Identification and Brief Advice Intervention to 19 clients with an “Increasing Risk” (or higher) Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT) score.
- 97.4% of clients in our one-to-one lifestyle improvement service will receive support to improve their diet i.e. eat more fruit and vegetables, reduce the consumption of high fat/sugar foods and/or increase the consumption of high fibre foods.
- 61.1% of clients in our one-to-one lifestyle improvement service are encouraged to set goals to increase their physical activity.
- 66.7% of clients in our one-to-one lifestyle improvement service are supported to improve their mental wellbeing.
- 66.7% of clients in our group weight management service “complete” our 12-week intervention and 83.3% of those demonstrate weight loss.
- 73.7% of clients who receive one-to-one weight management support lose weight at the end of their engagement with the service.

75. The Better Care Fund (BCF) is one of the most ambitious programmes across the NHS and local government to date. It creates a local budget to encourage the NHS and local government to work more closely together, placing people’s wellbeing as the focus of health and care services.
76. During 2020/21 Better Care continued to provide around £100,000 of funding for a partnership project aimed at supporting older people in Edenbridge and Swanley. The Your Home project is a partnership project between Sevenoaks District Council and Age UK Sevenoaks and Tonbridge. It provides a service for older people who are referred by GPs as needing more general support. The project employs one Your Home Advisor, who aims to remedy health and housing related issues, reduce demand on GPs, promote independence for customers and provide financial assistance in overcoming obstacles within the home environment.
77. Your Home Service continue to support clients across the Sevenoaks District in combating social isolation. Over the last year Your Home Advisors have held appointments with over 274 clients despite lockdown restrictions. Most of these clients set goals centred on adaptations within the home to ensure personal safety.
78. A success from the last year is that the Local GP commissioning of Social Prescription services; Involve & Imago, has presented the opportunity to redeploy our Your Home advisors from the Health Team into the Private Sector Housing team, allowing them to support the home adaptation, hoarding and filthy/verminous property work particularly for residents aged 50+.

Health Promise 3 - Deliver first class wellbeing services, supporting residents to make healthy choices, and linking them to our core services such as leisure and housing.

79. The Council is demonstrating its commitment to leisure in its investment in a new leisure centre in Swanley.
80. The Community Grant Scheme, funded by Sevenoaks District Council, supports projects that help the health and wellbeing of our residents. Charities, community groups and organisations can apply for grants between £100 and £5,000. From those that applied for funding in 2020/21 over 70% of targets were met or exceeded. This is despite the challenges created by the pandemic. The flexible approach by both the Council and the projects resulted in the following successes:
- DAVSS exceeded all targets and supported a record number of residents experiencing domestic violence.
 - Eden Christian Trust Youth Hub supported young people by altering their approach and taking their service out onto the streets. In addition, they introduced the 'Your Space' initiative that provided essential mental health support.
 - West Kent Mediation exceeded their targets by adapting to provide online mediation. This supported the increased numbers of referrals for neighbourhood and other disputes arising as a consequence of lockdown.
 - North West Kent Volunteer switched their befriending system online and created a buddy system.
81. The Health & Wellbeing Action Plan was relaunched in April 2021. 77% of the actions are on target, ranging from reducing smoking in pregnancy, tackling underage alcohol consumption, promoting healthy lifestyles and supporting good physical and mental health.

Council Plan Performance - Community Safety

Community Safety Promise 1- Build strong and connected neighbourhoods where residents feel proud of where they live and have a sense of belonging.

82. The Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership achieved 97% of actions set out in the Community Safety Strategy Action Plan during 2020/21. The 2020/21 Action Plan focused on Domestic Abuse, Serious and Acquisitive Crime (including Organised Crime Groups, Emerging Trends and County Lines, which is a type of criminal exploitation where gangs and organised crime networks groom and exploit children to sell drugs), Anti-Social Behaviour including Environmental Crime, Safeguarding, Substance Misuse, Doorstep Crime and Scams including Cyber Crime.
83. This year the Sevenoaks Community Safety Unit (CSU) carried out 885 daily tasks to address reports over the previous 24-hours, and made follow-up visits and calls to residents who reported issues and concerns.
84. The Community Safety Partnership continues to target repeat locations of concern to local people. The Partnership has over 35 projects in their action plan and schemes to address specific local community safety issues.

Community Safety Promise 2 – Support the District’s voluntary and community organisations to reach vulnerable and isolated residents.

85. Sevenoaks District Council partnered with ‘Care for our Community’, a community initiated group, to create and deliver a new volunteering programme to help those most in need during the pandemic. Working with town and parish volunteer leads and 1,272 local volunteers the scheme helped over 1,674 residents with food shopping, prescription collections, someone to talk to, and dog walking. We have worked with partners West Kent Mind, Age UK and the NHS First Responder Service to deliver certain aspects of these requests as well.
86. Some volunteers have created community groups that have supported lonely residents with extra Christmas meals over the Christmas period and started litter picks, for example the Clean Up Sevenoaks campaign. We are incredibly grateful to our volunteers across the District and hope that the creation of community groups continues.
87. We re-established a Voluntary Sector Forum inviting all members of the voluntary and community sector to meet online, initially weekly from March 2020, progressing to fortnightly and now monthly. These sessions are chaired by a voluntary sector member and have enabled members to engage in a safe and friendly environment, sharing experiences and information and offering much needed support to each other. They also provide an excellent opportunity to have expert speakers on a multitude of topics such as digital inclusion;

funding streams; mentoring; co-production; and Rural Services Network and members have benefited from these.

88. We have received extremely positive feedback from the sector about the benefits of the Forum. The Forum has undertaken one barometer survey and a second is currently underway. The barometer survey measures the health of the voluntary sector, their immediate and longer-term concerns, issues and plans. Identified issues have been shared and actions to address them devised and implemented.
89. SDC run 24 Family Fun Days each year: four Days for Easter and 20 for the summer. Working with Town and Parish Councils, who hold the days on their land, we work with Play Place to deliver the Family Fun Days. They are free for families, run from 10am-2pm, and include everything from crafts and games, to sports and face painting in a friendly, safe environment. This year we ran 20 over the summer holidays and more than 2,000 people attended.
90. The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Wellbeing & Community Fund was introduced in 2021 in response to the pandemic, to help deliver on the four priorities of the LSP. There were two rounds held in May and September and local communities and voluntary groups were able to apply for a small amount of revenue or capital funding to deliver local initiatives to ensure the most vulnerable were supported.

Community Safety Promise 3 - Protect our residents by making sure that all of our policies, partnerships and teams are working together to safeguard people and communities.

91. Coronavirus has had a big impact on crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB). Certain crime types have seen a decrease such as shoplifting, vehicle crime and burglary linked in with lock down measures. ASB saw an increase with people not adhering to COVID-19 guidelines with some large gatherings in towns, villages and beauty spots.
92. During 2020/21, there were 1,651 reports of victim based crime between 1 January 2021 and 31 March 2021. This is a decrease of 238 crimes compared to same period last year. At the end of the financial year, Sevenoaks District had the third lowest number of reported victim based crimes in the County.
93. During 2020/21, Sevenoaks District had the third lowest level of ASB in the county, with 2,690 recorded incidents to Kent Police. During the last three years Sevenoaks District has maintained low numbers of ASB incidents at no higher than the second lowest in the county.
94. Higher risk food inspections are meeting our targets although there has been a slight dip in premises that are broadly compliant with food hygiene law. This is likely to be related to the increase in new food businesses that opened during the pandemic.

95. All safeguarding reports continue to be passed on to the relevant agencies. There is a Safeguarding Group at Sevenoaks District Council, and all members of the group have undergone training and meet regularly. The group has grown over the past year to encompass representation from services.
96. Within the group, there are a number of Designated Safeguarding Officers who are able to respond to concerns around safeguarding, both external and internal. In addition, a number of staff have been trained as Mental Health First Aiders to guide and signpost staff to help and support which is available to them.