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Better Together

A Community Plan for Sevenoaks District 2022–2032

Monitoring Report Year 1: Q3 & 4

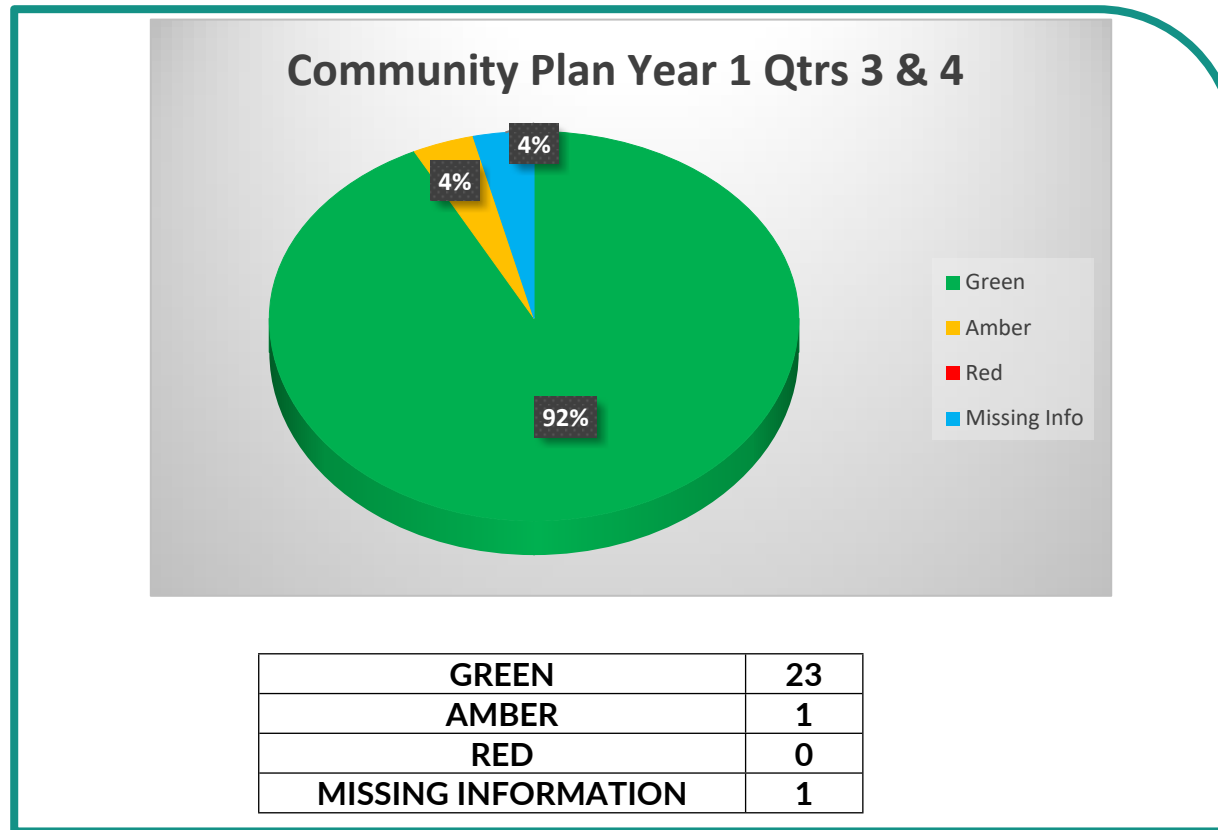


Better Together

A Community Plan for Sevenoaks District 2022–2032

This action plan supports the 'Better Together' Community Plan, a shared, long-term, partnership vision for Sevenoaks District developed by the Sevenoaks District Local Strategic Partnership. The partnership is made up of private, public, voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations who work with communities to identify and tackle key long, medium and short-term local issues to ensure Sevenoaks District remains a great place to live and work.

At the first year of monitoring (1 Oct 22 – 31 March 23), 92% of the actions in the plan were on target to be achieved



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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 250 volunteer hours have been contributed to the project each month • 129ha of nature conservation work achieved including rare lowland heathland habitat restoration at Bitchet, Crockham Hill and Seal Chart Commons • 26km of access improvements • x 2 18-month apprenticeships with related City and Guilds qualifications • 150+ free activities delivered to communities in Sevenoaks, Westerham and Seal, engaging over 3,000 people 	
1.2	Through the review of the local plan, we provide a long term strategic overview of what is needed in our towns and cities within an ever changing environment, putting in place the mechanisms to enable delivery.	Sevenoaks District Council	As mentioned above, there is a long term strategic overview for Towns and Cities. Alongside the Local Plan consultation, engagement sessions will be held with the Town & Parish Council Forum, the Local Strategic Partnership and also public drop-in sessions will be hosted by the Strategic Planning Team throughout the consultation period.	
1.3	Deliver actions in the Sevenoaks District Housing Strategy, working alongside communities and partners to help identify and deliver the supply of new homes which reflects current and future housing needs.	Sevenoaks District Council	<p>26 Affordable Homes delivered in 22/23. 6 homes delivered directly by the Council for mother and babies or single females have been leased from the HFT charity (a charity that specialises in caring for adults with learning difficulties).</p> <p>2 year funding secured from DLUHC to support the prevention of homelessness and rough sleeping in the District.</p> <p>£2.8m capital funding secured from Government’s Local Authority Housing Fund to deliver 18 units of affordable accommodation to support the Homes for Ukraine and Afghan resettlement schemes in the District.</p>	

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1.4	Creating communities that have the infrastructure and accessibility to meet the needs of changing and growth population.	Sevenoaks District Council	<p>Our Better Together Online Community Hub was set up and went live at the end of March. This hub helps residents and communities to help set up community groups and the tools they need to do this. The online hub also provides a directory of services and volunteering opportunities across the District. It also has a Facebook, Insta and Twitter account.</p> <p>Consultation ongoing on the emerging Local Plan (Plan 2040)</p> <p>Sevenoaks Urban Area Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) adopted. Consultation currently open on preferred Sevenoaks Urban Area LCWIP route (East – West).</p> <p>Additional funding secured for an LCWIP in Swanley.</p>	
1.5	Working with key partners to prevent individuals in financial hardship from becoming homeless through early intervention, advice and support, encouraging people into employment where possible.	Sevenoaks District Council	<p>Relaunched the HERO service providing personalised advice and support to Sevenoaks residents and customers in the private rented sector and owner occupiers for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saving money on fuel bills • Support with households costs, including food • Debt, rent or mortgage advice and support • Welfare benefits • Retraining and skills options, getting back to work • Volunteering • Referrals to community support services • Referrals for Housing Advicesupport <p>Housing and Communities monthly hub launched with partners at the Council's offices, with a weekly drop in held in Swanley.</p>	
1.6	Making the most of the benefits of inward investment and economic growth. Promoting the District as an	Sevenoaks District Council	MoreSevenoaks campaign refreshed and updated on a regular basis with new features outlined. Attended two	

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	outstanding place to live and work whilst safeguarding its heritage and natural assets.		tourism trade fairs to promote the brand and the visit element.	
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BETTER TOGETHER - OUR ECONOMY

Ref	Priority action	Lead Agency	Year 1 Qtr 3 & 4 (1 Oct 22 – 31 Apr 23)	Status
2.1	Reduce the number of young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEET).	Kent County Council	Local Children’s Partnership Group (LCPG) strategic event held focusing on local district NEET provision and how partners from The Education People (TEP), Open Access and SDC can collaborate to provide seamless transition and NEET support. TEP tasked to focus on improving access to employment and training opportunities for SEND young people. SDC is working with TEP to develop a Growth Gurus project in Swanley as part of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.	
2.2	Support events and initiatives and assist job seekers.	DWP	<p>Hosted a ‘Mums into Business’ in partnership with WKHA and Better Together, providing an 8 week course for women to start their own business. The course ran at the Swanley Children Centre and gave women the opportunity to use Swanley Market to promote their business set ups.</p> <p>UKSPF & REPF funding has been confirmed. Rural Officer recruitment (to deliver REPF funding) is underway and interviews taking place w/c 24.04.23. Projects under both funding streams are in development to support both Rural and Visitor Economy.</p>	

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2.3	Engage with and support the Visitor Economy and rural sectors, local food producers and the cultural community to ensure Sevenoaks District continues to grow as a leading visitor location with a growing number of jobs and enterprises in the sector.	Sevenoaks District Council	<p>Sevenoaks So Much More campaign continues at pace with increased engagement across a variety of platforms. A Place related competition to win a hamper of goods from local producers was launched during September 2022. The campaign promoted many of the districts local businesses including local food producers.</p> <p>The associated social media accounts for the Place Campaign are proving to be very successful. As at July 2022, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn all had higher than average impressions / engagement rates.</p> <p>The Leader of the Council was interviewed (14/07/22) on BBC Radio Kent following the launch of the Place Campaign, highlighting the district as a place to Live, Work, Invest and Visit.</p> <p>Providing evidence and supporting comments in response to Planning Applications. Particularly those that facilitate jobs within the industry and relate to 'work' and 'invest' elements of the Place Campaign. Most recent example, Millwall Football Club</p>	
2.4	Improve on the public realm to support multiple uses and better facilities.	Sevenoaks District Council	<p>The Public Realm Commission delivered the following initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of the new skate park in Swanley • Public Realm project with schools in partnership with West Kent Partnership • Site walk abouts – understand the public realm and how it can be improved 	
2.5	Work with the private sector to develop and promote business sites in the district.	Locate in Kent/Sevenoaks District Council	Locate in Kent continues to promote business sites and assist businesses to locate and relocate into the district.	

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			The Meeting Point, a new business hub in the heart of Swanley has opened and provides flexible and shared office and meeting space for businesses in the District and has been really successful.	
2.6	Ensure businesses are able to access suitable business support to develop and grow business support to increase the resilience of businesses, including ecommerce and marketing.	Sevenoaks District Council	UKSPF investment programme prepared, approved and commenced with implementation. Smarter Society appointed to provide dedicated business support programme and commenced with business promotion. West Kent Partnership being refreshed to support inward investment. Business Hub set-up and preparing for launch.	
2.7	Continue to work with colleagues at Kent County Council, the private sector and communities to identify areas that need more investment or an upgrade in broadband to future proof and enable economic activity.	Kent County Council	No information received	

BETTER TOGETHER - OUR COMMUNITY

Ref	Priority action	Lead Agency	Year 1 Qtr 3 & 4 (1 Oct 22 – 31 March 23)	Status
3.1	Establish links with local residents, businesses and community organisations to help empower and mobilise communities to address issues important to them through events, training and links to funding	Sevenoaks District Council	<p>Better Together established the following activities:</p> <p>Let's Cook - online Healthy Cooking course. 5 week online course, to support families with school age children in order to improve food related health, tackle obesity and address health inequalities. The course are also aim to save money for families on the food budgets. All participants received a free slow cooker after the course.</p> <p>Silver Sunday. Silver Sunday Spectacular celebratory event took place on Tuesday 4th of October, with support from</p>	

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Swanley Town Council and SDSAF at the Olympic centre, with 35 members of the public attending the event as well as 17 volunteers and partners. There were 6 stallholders at the event including Citizens Advice, Age UK, Reflexologist, One You, Kent Police, SDSAF and SDC. We also had local musicians playing and taster sessions with Swanley Bowls Club, petanque from Stuart Wells, arts and crafts from The Making Room and a Pop-Up Sue's Larken mobility session.

We have had over 15 residents so far take advantage of our Free One-Day Pass at White Oak Leisure Centre. The pass gives residents aged 55+ complete access to explore the centre. Free or subsidised activities were running all throughout October such as walking netball, tai chi, bowls, afternoon tea dances and so much more. We are also still giving a special complimentary Silver Sunday day passes to WOLC for December weekend, for residents over 55s.

Back 2 Swim classes. We have set up a three FREE six-week swimming courses at Edenbridge, Sevenoaks and Swanley White Oaks Leisure Centres for women over 16. Brushed up on swimming skills with a qualified instructor in a small, female only group. 5 courses were delivered.

Community Mobilisation officer is working with steering group in Swanley on 'Grow a Healthy Swanley' initiative, supporting them with setting up as a legal entity, clarifying the objectives for the project and applying for external funding to jump start the project.

Free Postnatal Pilates Classes in Edenbridge.

Volunteer Fair at Stag Theatre. Working with IMAGO

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			Community to organise a Volunteer recruitment event in October to display various opportunities available and encourage more people to volunteer and learn new skills. Warm Spaces are safe and friendly public places where people of all ages can go to comfortably spend time reading, studying, chatting with others and meeting new people in their community. SDC is coordinating a local directory of all warm spaces in the district and encourage local businesses and organisations open their doors and support the most vulnerable residents in the district.	
3.2	Maintain the lower number of ASB incidents (no higher than 3 rd lowest in the county).	Kent Police	<p>Qtr 3 October – December 2022 There were 237 reports of ASB recorded reports for Sevenoaks District to Kent Police from 1 October 2022 – 31 December 2022. This is a decrease of 73 reports (-23.5%) compared to same period previous year. Currently lowest across the County</p> <p>Qtr 4 There were 265 reports of ASB recorded reports for Sevenoaks District to Kent Police from 1 January – 31st March 2023. This is an increase of 28 reports (10.5%) compared to same period previous year. Currently 2nd lowest across the County</p>	
3.3	80% of Health and Wellbeing Action Plan on target, through the delivery of a range of campaigns to tackle unhealthy weights, promote social inclusion and mental wellness.	Sevenoaks District Council	The Health & Wellbeing Action Plan for Qtr 3 was at 90% and for Qtr 4 was at 96%. A new plan has been approved for 2023-24.	
3.4	Outcomes achieved on Sevenoaks District Local Children’s Partnership Action Plan, with at least 75% of core indicators on target.	Kent County Council	Priorities for the district agreed in October 2022 and action plan developed in consultation with LCPG partners. Task and finish groups to be established to support NEETs and ACEs priority areas.	

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3.5	Improve opportunities for vulnerable people through the Community Grant Scheme.	Sevenoaks District Council	<p>All grants have been completed for 22-23 and monitoring has been sent out and collated. The grants for 2023-24 will go out in September 2023.</p> <p>There were a number of new organisations that received funding this year, they received small grants to deliver new initiatives across the District.</p>	
3.6	Support the Sevenoaks District Access Group to deliver an annual event, promoting a range of information, advice and activities for people with a physical, learning or mental disability who may not be aware of the services that are available, or how to access them.	Sevenoaks District Council	<p>The Access Group continues to meet on a quarterly basis and meetings have included speakers to discuss access at Swanley Train Station and KCC representatives.</p> <p>Sevenoaks District Council's website page for Disability services and support was updated by the group.</p> <p>In February 2023, the Group hosted an Access All Areas event, with approximately 20+ stall holders representing organisations that help with families and residents with disabilities to give advice and service. Will Bayley MBE attended and spoke at the event.</p>	
3.7	Increased number of people supported to live independently.	Sevenoaks District Council	<p>The Better Care Fund for 22/23 has been fully committed, providing circa 250 DFG, AFG and S&S Grants to enable residents to live independantly for longer by providing home adaptations and improvements.</p> <p>A joint project between SDC and WKHA at Vine Court Road is providing supported accommodation for residents who have become homeless and need support to transition into permanent accommodation.</p> <p>The Home Straight Service is working with 27 customers who have Hoarding Disorder and struggle to manage their home and possessions.</p>	

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		Age UK Sevenoaks and Tonbridge	Age UK continue to deliver weekly strength, mobility and posture classes. Pop in tea/coffee mornings are held in Edenbridge, Chiddingstone Causeway, Cowden, Dunton Green, Crockenhill and Hextable.	
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BETTER TOGETHER: OUR ENVIRONMENT

Ref	Priority action	Lead Agency	Year 1 Qtr 3 & 4 (1 Oct 22 – 31 March 23)	Status
4.1	Deliver on local and partnership Net Zero Policies and Climate Change Action Plan	Sevenoaks District Council	Progress has continued on the Action and Implementation Plan. Key recent updates include the Swanley AQMA assessment, the Vehicle Idling Campaign, and receipt of the draft Carbon Reduction Plan.	
4.2	Seek opportunities to work with our communities and partners to reduce the amount of household waste produced by increasing recycling and ensuring improved knowledge of our recycling processes.	Sevenoaks District Council	A number of County-wide and local recycling campaigns happened in Q4 in partnership with the Kent Resource Partnership. Also, the Green and garden waste services were again advertised in this quarter via social media, website and Insite magazine.	

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4.3	Ensure the design and location of new development takes account of the need to improve air quality through the Local Plan in line with Sevenoaks District Council's Air Quality Action Plan.	Sevenoaks District Council	The Environmental Health Team are working with the Planning Policy Team to develop new guidance on the implementation of conditions for developments in or adjacent to the air quality management areas.	
4.4	Work with partners and communities for all to become more energy efficient.	Sevenoaks District Council	<p>The first phase of the Home Upgrade Grant funding (HUG1) due to complete end May 2023 with 14 households being assisted with energy efficiency measures such as cavity wall and loft insulation, solar panels and high retention storage heaters. One property is also receiving internal wall insulation. All properties benefiting from the measures are off the main gas grid.</p> <p>Funding for HUG2 has been awarded (£1,249,600) to provide up to 60 homes with energy efficiency improvements such as air source heat pumps, solar panels, external wall insulation, cavity wall and loft insulation over a 2 year period. Over 600 households in Sevenoaks have indicated an interest in Solar Together (Phase 3) (Bulk Buy Scheme managed by KCC).</p>	
4.5	Support Kent County Council's emerging Strategy for Electric Vehicle and Low Emissions, through the provision further public electric vehicle charging points in the district, subject to infrastructure.	Kent County Council	Work continues through KMEG and the Climate Change Network, and locally through our demand and provision study, led by Field Dynamics	
4.6	Weekly refuse collection maintained.	Sevenoaks District Council	Weekly waste and recycling collections have been maintained throughout this quarter.	Green