

THE WEALDEN PARISH BULLETIN

*News and updates from Wealden District Council
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Crowborough Christmas Nutcracker Trail



Trevor Scott, Councillor Matthew Street, Councillor Angela Snell, Nusrat Ghani & Jeremy Woolger among the giant nutcrackers

Crowborough Nutcracker Trail sees ten giant statues positioned at locations around the town.

We are delighted to support this local initiative that encourages visiting Crowborough and shopping locally.

Be sure to come along and see if you can complete the whole trail.

[Read more](#) to find out how to take part and join in the fun.

Diplocks businesses are encouraged to lead the way in energy-saving technology

The Unlock Diplocks' Energy Future project will see businesses on the Diplocks Industrial Estate (Hailsham) offered advice and guidance on how to unlock renewable and energy efficient technologies.

Once a project is deemed eligible, the council and partners can help create bespoke specifications and a business case as well as access grant funding.

[Full story.](#)



READ ONLINE

- [PLANS TO DECARBONISE HOUSING STOCK PROGRESSES](#)
- [HUNDREDS OF WEALDEN FAMILIES TO BENEFIT FROM WARMER HOMES](#)
- [WDC STATEMENT: MILLBROOK GARDEN CENTRE CROWBOROUGH](#)
- [WDC STATEMENT FOLLOWING PERSONAL DATA BREACH](#)



Wealden wins high court battle with developer

A ruling by High Court judge The Hon Mrs Justice Thornton vetoed plans for the new houses and flats in Ersham Road to be 100% affordable housing. Affordable housing is accommodation for those people whose needs are not met by the market and who are on the council housing register.

We argued that if all homes on the site were made affordable, the developers would qualify for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) relief. This would mean funds paid by developers to contribute towards much needed facilities in the area – like schools, medical facilities and transport infrastructure – would not have to be paid.

Going forward, any developer who wishes to provide more than the policy requirement affordable housing must declare this in order that planning applications are transparent.

[Full story](#)

Zero campaign helping local businesses reduce their carbon emissions

Net Zero has become increasingly important to businesses, and with COP26 still fresh in everybody's minds, now is the perfect time to get involved.

Business East Sussex launched their campaign during COP26, providing helpful tools, resources and free support.

[Find out more about their campaign](#)



Cabinet Round-Up

Achievements in our performance management report for Quarter 2 have been welcomed by Cabinet committee members.

Analysis of our £65m roll out of Covid-19 Business Support Grants showed that nearly £1 million of fraudulent claims were avoided by the finance and audit teams.

We have exceeded a 2021/22 customer target for the garden waste service with 35,400 subscribers and 5.6% of customers now have two or more bins.

On the climate change front, LED lighting has been installed in the council's Vicarage Lane offices. A significant procurement exercise is currently underway to provide electric vehicle charging in our car parks. Levels of recycling have improved and the district's overall carbon emissions have dropped. The number of missed bin collections is down to around 50 each week, with a successful collection rate of 99.9%.



Wealden District Council Office Refurbishment, 2021

A public survey on proposals for a Community Sports Hub has received more than 500 responses and we will soon begin consulting on a plan to increase the share of Council Tax by £5 - 2.53% - for the year 2022/23.

We welcome news of a funding package to rebuild the Exceat Bridge, between East Dean and Seaford, with two lanes. Wealden has supported funding bids to upgrade the present structure with its one-way operation, which frequently causes traffic bottlenecks. A planning application for the new two-lane bridge is currently with the South Downs National Park.



Exceat Bridge (Photo by Jon Rigby, 2021)

In planning news, we have recently successfully defended three judicial review actions. The positive outcomes confirming sound practice in dealing with the planning applications concerned.

Work has begun with partners to deliver the Safer Streets initiative to introduce initiatives to help reduce anti-social behaviour within Hailsham Town Centre.

Cabinet Round-Up (cont.)

And finally, following on from previous success, we will be benefiting from £2.5 m funding for Sussex from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities under the UK Community Renewal Fund.



Supported projects include innovation for improvements in small businesses, employment-related support for those furthest from the labour market. Our local wine industry and cultural tourism development as well as sustainable transport have also benefitted.

Extra help for those most in need this winter

£3.9 million is available through the Household Support Fund for residents most in need this winter. This funding will be awarded to those East Sussex residents struggling to keep warm, get enough food or pay their bills.

[Full story](#)

Remembrance services take place across Wealden

Residents across the district were able to remember those who have lost their lives in wartime conflict at many highly attended services of remembrance.

Our chairman Ron Reed said, "It is a time to remember the service and sacrifice of so many and that we must strive for a better, more peaceful future."

[Full story](#)



Hailsham Town Centre War Memorial, 2021

Wealden's High Streets flourish as people shop locally

With larger towns and cities continuing to struggle with reduced footfall, Wealden's market towns and villages have benefited from the strong support of their residents, and their free car parking.

[Full story.](#)



Hailsham High Street, 2021



Millions of pounds given to Wealden businesses during pandemic

More than £65 million in support grants was distributed to Wealden businesses during the pandemic and lockdowns. In addition, our officers also prevented more than £1 million in attempted fraud and duplicate payments.

[Full story.](#)

Tributes paid following death of Wealden councillor

Warm tributes have been paid to Wealden District Council councillor and former chairman Chris Hardy who passed away following a brave battle with cancer in September.

Throughout his life, he has touched the hearts of many and will be sorely missed. Our thoughts are with his wife Sue and all his family and friends at this difficult time.

[Full story.](#)



Councillor Chris Hardy



Plans progress for state-of-the-art employment park in Wealden

Our Cabinet committee agreed to move forward with plans to develop the Knights Farm West Employment Park on the A22 at Lower Dicker, on the fringes of Hailsham.

[Full story](#)



New crowdfunding campaign plans

A new Wealden Lottery and Crowdfunding campaign is being planned to raise money for community groups and charities within the district.

The schemes would replace the Community Grant programme, which sees small grants and capital funding awarded to local organisations to help promote a better quality of life for Wealden residents.

[Full story](#)



Great crested newt district level licencing is now live in Wealden

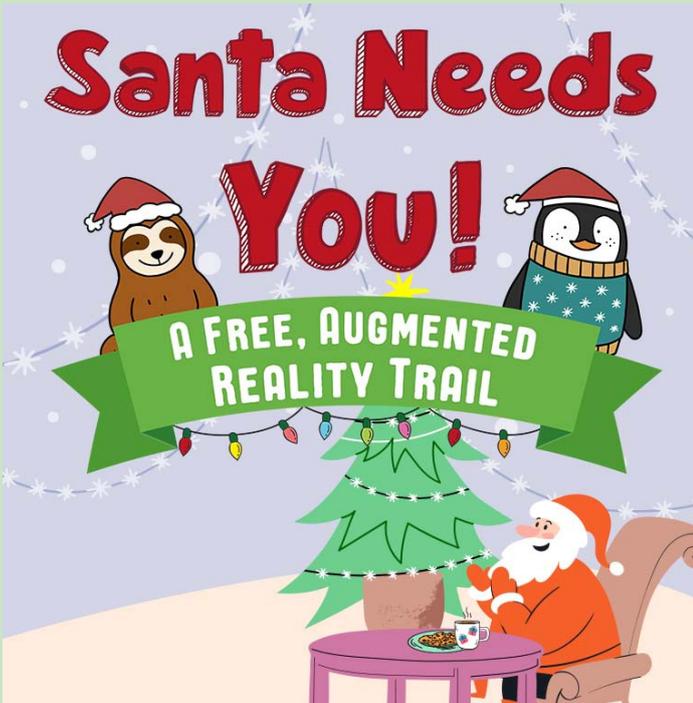
The scheme provides a straightforward and low risk option for great crested newt licencing in the district with improved conservation outcomes, such as newt-friendly pond creation.

Great crested newts are a widespread but declining species across the UK. The scheme speeds up development by providing license applications year-round.

[Full story](#)

Christmas Reality Trails come to Wealden

This Christmas, families in Heathfield, Polegate and Wadhurst can track down Christmas themed characters in an augmented reality trail, as part of our 'Shop & Dine Well in Wealden' campaign. We have teamed up with Heathfield and Waldron Parish Council, Polegate Town Council and Wadhurst Parish to encourage families to take part in this free, engaging and socially distanced event throughout December.



Running until 31st December 2021, the trail features 10 cute Christmas characters for children to find on stickers located in town centre shop windows. These stickers have QR codes that can be scanned to learn the character's names, stories and interact with them through augmented reality (AR) technology.

The animal characters have been specially commissioned for the trail and the use of AR technology means that children can see the characters come to life in front of their eyes, taking photos and videos with them.

The trail takes roughly 45 minutes to complete, is totally free and after locating all 10 animals, players will be rewarded with a free e-book that concludes the story.

[Full story](#)

Support Wealden markets this Christmas and beyond

We are pro-actively working with local market co-ordinators to help share best practise across the district and have launched a YouTube video showing how markets create a community hub and support small businesses.

Markets have been popular in the UK before, but with the ubiquity of supermarkets, most people tend to shop online nowadays. We hope to help individuals re-discover their local markets as places to spend time and a good way to connect with their neighbourhood.

[Full story](#)



Electric vehicle charge points to roll out across Wealden car parks



The EV charging initiative was revealed at a Full Council meeting, when we backed a motion endorsing the government's Net Zero Strategy.

The motion also called on us to welcome progress made at the conference in Glasgow on methane emissions, deforestation and reducing the use of coal. The authority backed the motion after Councillor Galley highlighted some of the initiatives which have already been introduced throughout Wealden. These included our pledge to become carbon neutral by 2050 or sooner.

We have identified an initial tranche of 11 car parks for delivery in the first phase of works. These will be subject to successful feasibility studies undertaken by the chosen supplier in the new year. Further details on the roll-out will be released Spring 2022.

[Full story.](#)

Historic tree in Hailsham town centre to be saved

The 200 year old mature horse chestnut tree in Hailsham town centre has been suffering from various fungal diseases. However, with the help of advanced decay detection systems, we have found it is structurally sound.

Experts say that after taking all the information into account, it is prudent to reduce the overall size of the tree in order to ensure it can be retained for future generations.

The tree crown will be sensitively reduced using best practise methods to save it.

Councillor Bob Standley has said "This is a well-loved tree among the people of Hailsham and a valuable part of the town's heritage."

[Full story.](#)

