



At West Kent we believe we're more than just a landlord, so in February and March we came to speak to you to ask what it's like to live in your area, as well as your top priority (pictured).

We really wanted to understand what you like about living here, what's important to you, what could make a positive difference to you and make your life better.

We spoke to more than 300 people, over the course of a week, about what it's like to live in your area.

And we hosted a community 'chips and chat' event at Cherry Avenue park to speak those of you who weren't in when we called.

This is the first in a series of newsletters to keep you up-to-date, about what are doing in response to what's most important to you.

Anabel Palmer, Interim Communities Director

Thank you! We would like to say a massive thank you to everyone that completed the survey and joined us at the park. Your feedback has been really helpful, and we really appreciate the time you took to talk to us.

What you told us

Your feedback gave us a really clear picture of what you like about where you live, what your top priorities are, where things can be improved and how the pandemic has affected you.

Your views

76% like living in St. Mary's

78% feel like your house is a home

83% are worried for themselves or their community about the rising cost of living

60% said something has changed since the start of the pandemic



- The local facilities
- Peaceful
- Your neighbours



- Anti-social behaviour and crime
- Litter
- Lack of things to do

What's changed since the pandemic:

- Increased loneliness and isolation
- A decrease in physical health
- Increased financial pressures and worries around employment
- A decrease in mental health and wellbeing

Your priorities

What you told us when we knocked on doors, along with our 'chips and chat' event, gave us a really good picture of what you want us to focus on and what's most important to you.

These are your top priorities...



Your priorities - what we're doing

We've been working hard to look through what you told us, turning your views into five key priorities. We've already made progress in some areas and will keep you updated as we continue this work.

1 Cost of living

YOU SAID

You're worried about the rising costs of heating, food and fuel.

WE WILL

Continue to work with partners to offer support to residents who are struggling with rising costs.

Provide energy vouchers for those who need them the most.



WE DID

We made sure that residents who needed urgent help or had specific concerns got the support they needed.

We've teamed up with the Green Doctor to offer you free energy advice, and help save to save you money

- Switching energy deals
- Tips on reducing your energy costs
- How to apply for grants and energy or water debt relief.

Call: 0800 233 5255

Email: GreenDoctorSouth@groundwork.org.uk

2 Feeling safe

YOU SAID

You don't want to see motorbikes or quadbikes speeding around the area and want to see action against drug dealing.

WE DID

We spoke with Kent Police and they will increase their Police and Community Support Officer (PCSO) presence in the area.

WE WILL

We will continue to work with Kent Police, Sevenoaks District Council and the Community Safety Unit (CSU) to tackle this urgent problem.

Helping you to report anti-social behaviour

Get in touch about what information we need - along with the Police and Council - to help catch and tackle those responsible for anti-social behaviour.

Report

- Anti-social behaviour
- Fly-tipping
- Graffiti
- Noise

Email:

community-safety@sevenoaks.gov.uk

3 Your health and wellbeing

YOU SAID

Since the start of the pandemic your mental health has been affected.

WE DID

We identified local and national organisations that can support you with various issues and needs. And we are working with them to tailored services locally.

WE WILL

Make it easier to get the support you need by putting together a directory of services that can help.

4 Your neighbourhood

YOU SAID

You want to be proud of how your neighbourhood looks and don't want to see litter or fly-tipping.

WE DID

We removed fly-tipping in hotspot areas.

WE WILL

We will make it easier to report fly-tip offenders, and warn those who think they can get away with anti-social behaviour that they can't. We will also arrange regular litter picking days.

5 Isolation and loneliness

YOU SAID

There aren't enough activities for the young and the elderly in your community.

WE DID

We met with the early years centre and youth service to make their services more accessible. See next page for events.

WE WILL

We will work with young people, older people and partner organisations to provide more activities in the community, including our older residents at Lilac Gardens to understand what activities they would like to see more of.

What's on - for 8 to 16 year olds

Please make sure you sign up before turning up!



West Kent Young Adventurers

- **What:** Youth group for 8-12 year olds
- **Where:** Swanley Hub, St Mary's Road, BR8 7BU
- **When:** Tuesday, 4 - 5.30pm and Friday, 4 - 6pm

For more information on referrals please contact

ross.brotherwood@wkha.org.uk

Call **03000 421545**

or email **SwanleyYouthHub@kent.gov.uk**

Swanley Youth Hub

- **What:** 1:1 support, family and community support, parent support, support into work or education, drug and alcohol misuse, groups for young men and women aged 11-16.
- **Where:** Swanley Hub

For more information please call **03000 421545**, email **SwanleyYouthHub@kent.gov.uk**, visit their Facebook page **@SwanleyYCC** or their Instagram **@SwanleyYouth**

Children's Centre

- **What:** 1:1 support for family and community support, parenting and child development and support with access to information.
- **Where:** Swanley Children's Centre, Northview, BR8 7BT

For more information please call **03000 413333**, email **sevenoaksdistrictcc@kent.gov.uk**, or visit their Facebook page **@SevenoaksDistrictChildren'sCentres**

Monday

Cooking club
4.30-6.30pm

Wednesday

Landscaping and gardening
project
4-5.30pm

Tuesday

Revolutions youth
club SEND
6.30-8.30pm

Duke of Edinburgh award
4.30-5.30pm

Thursday

Be you project
LGBTQ+
4.30-6.30pm

Sevenoaks District Youth
Assembly
(Last Wednesday of the month)
5-7pm

Friday

Arts and craft club
7-8.30pm

Youth Club
7-8.30pm

Monday

Rhyme time
Swanley Library
10-10.30am & 11-
11.30am

Tuesday

Storysacks
10-11.30am

Thursday

Baby journey
(and massage)
1.30-2.30pm

Pathway play
10-11am

Lets play and learn
1-2pm

Wednesday

Rhyme time
Swanley Library
10-10.30am

Friday

Wellbeing group
1-2pm

In our next newsletter

- Update on your priorities
- Mental health support
- Local gardening project and tips for your garden





JUBILEE EVENT

WestKent

Places to live. Space to grow.

Join us to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee at our community event!

- Food tent - sandwiches, tea & scones
- Face painting
- Cake decorating
- Crafts
- Inflatable darts
- Penalty shoot out
- Smoothie bike
- Music and singing
- Ice cream van
- Blood pressure checks
- Energy saving advice
- FREE fresh fruit.



Monday 30 May, 11am-3pm, Cherry Avenue park

In the event of bad weather we will reschedule the event

Get involved - help shape our services

We're looking for residents to get involved and ensure we focus on what's most important for you.

- What are your top priorities?
- What do you like most about where you live?
- What services can we improve?

How to get involved

If you would like get involved and have your say, or for more information about our plans going forward, speak to our friendly team at the Jubilee event or get in touch

Call: 01732 749420 or

Email: CommunityDevelopment@wkha.org.uk

Please note we will be taking photos and video at the event.

We will be using these images and video in print, on our website and on social media. If you would not like to have your photo taken please let the West Kent team know