Redditch matters

Spring 2016

A great read for Redditch residents

Forge Mill Special: Scour Project

Have your say on 5 May

Register by 18th April

What's on in Redditch

Sports, Arts & Events

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

making a difference

www.redditchbc.gov.uk

A message from the Chief Executive

Welcome to this new-look edition of Redditch Matters. As we start the new financial year I am pleased to share with you, via this publication, information on where your money goes. As our customers and council taxpayers it's important you know that we do more than empty your bin. And the What's On pull-out is a shining example of the services we provide to make sure there are fun and fitness-focussed activities for you to do.

We do have an election taking place in Redditch on May 5 as one third of borough council seats are up for grabs and we are also organising the election for the Police and Crime Commissioner. I do hope to see you at the polling stations and there's plenty of information in Redditch Matters to ensure you are ready to have your say in this election and the forthcoming referendum in June. So please read on and don't forget to follow us on Facebook, Twitter and on www.redditchbc.gov.uk

Thanks

Kevin Dicks, Chief Executive

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GET IN TOUCH

Visit us

Redditch Borough Council, Town Hall,
Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, Worcs, B98 8AH

Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm
Saturday - 9am - 12pm (Cashiers & Town Hall)

Call us

Customer Services: 01527 64252
Out of Hours emergency: 01527 67666

Write to us

Redditch Borough Council, Town Hall,
Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, Worcs, B98 8AH

Click on

www.redditchbc.gov.uk

Redditch Borough Council

@RedditchMatters

If you want this magazine in a different format, e.g. audio CD, or language, call 01527 881296.

The council does not endorse any of the products or services advertised in this magazine by external customers. To advertise in this magazine call 01527 881296.

Where your money goes

Homes in Redditch will have received their Council Tax Bill from us as we are responsible for collecting the money on behalf of the County Council, and fire and police services.

The borough council keeps around 14% of the overall bill which for a band D property is £222.21 a year.

We provide a wide range of services for this which touch people's lives everyday, all year round – we do more than empty your bin!

Here's just some of the things we do each year:

- Mow over one million square metres of grass throughout the borough between April and November
- Maintain over 100 miles of mature hedges from mid May to mid November, to avoid nesting birds
- Work as part of North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration, which awarded £143,077 worth of grants to 65 businesses in the area last year
- Put on Couch 2 5k courses, enjoyed by over 1,000 people last year
- Delivered Sportivate projects to get 11-25 year-olds back into physical activity, 12 last year
- Provided 19 hectares of allotments for you to grow your own!
- Provided sports centres, which saw over 500,000 visits last year
- Ran swimming lessons, which saw 814 children per week last year
- Provide seven major parks for your leisure
- Run an award-winning crematorium which sees more than 1,800 cremations and 140 burials a year
- Process planning applications, 353 last year
- Consider applications from tenants to claim their right to buy, 112 last year
- Monitor 48 CCTV cameras across the borough, recording details of 1241 incidents last year
- Respond to Lifeline alarm activations from Redditch customers, 76,396 last year
- Prevent households from becoming homeless, 248 last year
- Process an average of 350 new Housing Benefit claims

For more details about our services visit www.redditchbc.gov.uk

Your elections 2016

Redditch Borough Council Elections

Redditch Borough Council will be holding its local elections on Thursday May 5th 2016.

Redditch has 29 Members covering 12 wards. Once elected, a councillor usually serves for four years before standing for re-election. In the UK, some councils elect all of their councillors at the same time. Other councils elect half or a third of their councillors at each election. In Redditch, elections are by 'thirds' meaning a third of the seats are contested in an election year.

This year there are 9 seats up for election.

What can councillors do for you?

- Help you if you are dissatisfied with a council service by advising or directing you to someone who can help sort out your problem.
- Be a way to express your ideas to improve the ward and/or borough.
- As community leaders, they can put forward proposals to improve the ward they represent which may include bringing together different community groups to develop a case for change.
- Support local partnerships and organisations.
- Campaign on local issues.
- Represent your community within the council and to other organisations

As long as you are registered, you can vote for who you think will serve your community best by crossing a box on 5th May. It's as simple as that!

Police and Crime Commissioner Elections

41 Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) were elected across England and Wales on the 15th November 2012 and now, four years later, it's time to vote again.

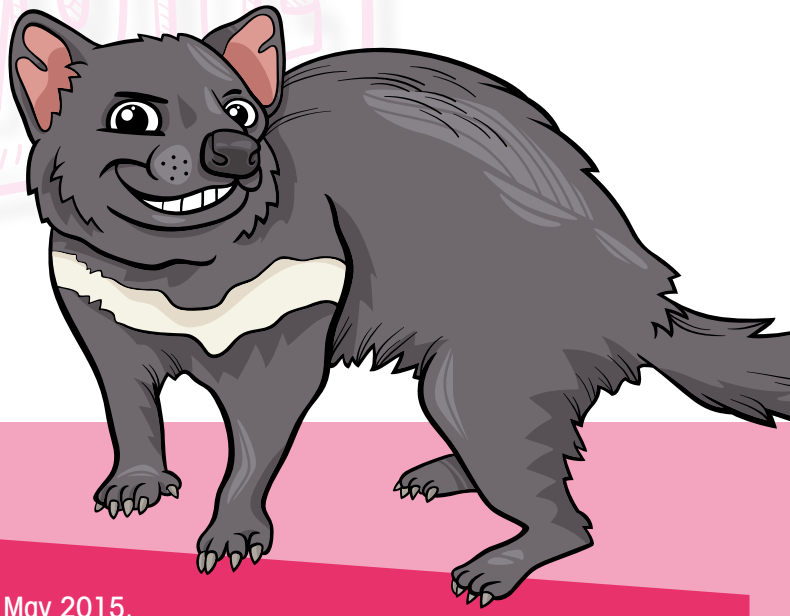
The PCC Elections will be held on the same day as the local election on 5th May and you can vote for both at the same time.

The role of the PCCs is to be the voice of the people and hold the police to account. They are responsible for the totality of policing.

PCCs aim to cut crime and deliver an effective and efficient police service within their force area.

PCCs have been elected by the public to hold Chief Constables and the force to account; effectively making the police answerable to the communities they serve.

You'll need to be registered to vote in these elections.



Did you know?

- 1 in 3 Redditch residents didn't use their vote in May 2015.
- Registering to vote can help when applying for credit such as a mobile phone contract or bank account.
- You need to register every time you move house.
- If there is a tie, the result would be decided by lot. This would mean deciding the winner by drawing straws or picking names out of a hat (or ballot box). Every vote counts to ensure this doesn't happen.
- A full ballot box weighs about the same as a fully grown Tasmanian Devil. Who knew?!
- Ever wondered why elections are held on a Thursday? One theory suggests elections were held on a Thursday - the day before pay do - so people weren't too drunk to vote! The last general election to be held on a different day was Tuesday 27th October 1931.
- In May 2015, 66 count staff counted nearly 80,000 ballot papers.

To vote in local or PCC elections you **must be registered to vote by 18th April.**

The EU Referendum: THE BIG ONE

It's the one that everyone is talking about but what does it actually mean?

The EU Referendum is being held on June 23rd this year and means everyone of voting age can vote to stay in or leave the European Union.

The European Union - often known as the EU - is an economic and political partnership involving 28 European countries. It began after World War Two to foster economic co-operation, with the idea that countries which trade together are more likely to avoid going to war with each other. It has its own parliament which set rules in a wide range of areas - including on the environment, transport, and consumer rights.

The vote itself will be a similar to other elections. Firstly, you need to be registered to vote by the 7th June as it's not automatic. If you're registered, you will be sent a card telling you when voting takes place and where you should go to vote on 23 June. On that day, when you go to the polling station you will be given a piece of paper with the referendum question on it. You then go to a booth, which will have a pencil in it for your use. You then put a X in the box which reflects your choice and put the paper into a ballot box. Alternatively you will also be able to opt to vote by post.

When polling finishes all the votes will be counted and then added up, giving two totals. A straight majority is needed to provide the result. There is no minimum turnout needed so, for the sake of argument, if only three people voted on the day and two of them voted to leave, that would be the result. So it's very important you register to vote and have your say.

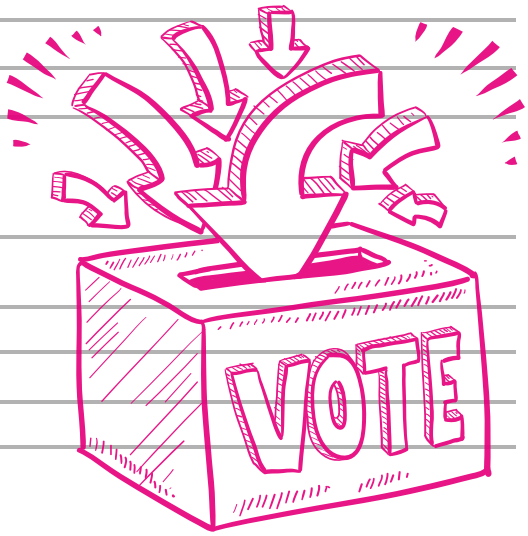
The official campaign period for the referendum is from 15 April to 23 June (although many have already started) so look out for what's happening to help you make up your mind.

To vote in the EU Referendum you **must be registered by 7th June.** To register in just **5 minutes** go to www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

Key dates for your diary:

Local and PCC Elections

18th April - Last chance to register to vote
19th April - Last day to apply to vote by post
5th May - Local and PCC elections
5th/6th May - Vote count and results

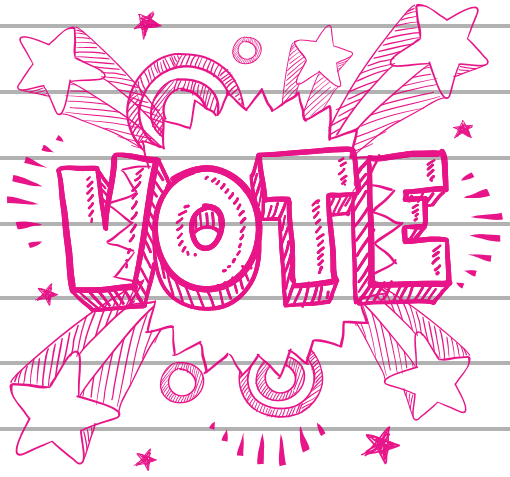


EU Referendum

7th June - Last chance to register to vote
8th June - Last day to apply to vote by post
23rd June - Voting day!
23rd/24th June - Vote count and results

On the day:

- Polling stations are open from **7am until 10pm** on the day of poll
- You do not need to take your poll card with you to vote but you have to be registered
- Help is available at the polling station for electors, including those who have sight and mobility issues



Getting online

Nowadays life seems to revolve around the internet or some form of technology. Having a basic understanding of how to use a computer can be really useful but not everyone is confident in doing this.

Residents needing help with their basic digital skills got the chance to hop on a Computabus on 7th April to get advice and guidance to improve their skills.

The Computabus bus was at Church Hill Centre and Gibbs Road in Abbey Dale on this day for residents to pop in and talk to our online support 'champions' and get help to get online.

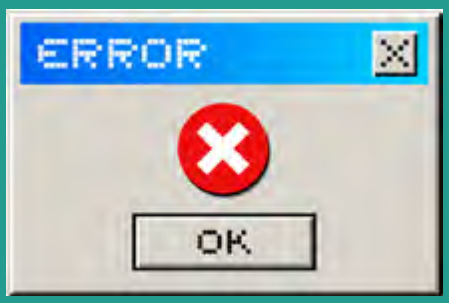
Residents could learn how to:

Get on the internet

Set up an email address

Check emails and Access council services quickly and easily online

....and staying safe online



Once you're on the internet, it can be difficult to know how to use it safely without risking getting a virus or unknowingly giving away information. Here are some useful tips:

- **When in doubt, throw it out:** Links in email, tweets, posts, and online advertising are often the way cybercriminals compromise your computer. If it looks suspicious, even if you know the source, it's best to delete it. It doesn't matter how quickly you close down an email or a link if you accidentally open it, the moment you click you could let a virus in.
- **Think before you act:** Be wary of communications that implore you to act immediately, offers something that sounds too good to be true, or asks for personal information.
- **Make passwords long and strong and for each unique account make a unique password.**
- **Privacy and security settings exist for a reason:** Learn about and use the privacy and security settings on social networks. They are there to help you control who sees what you post and manage your online experience in a positive way.
- **Personal information is like money; value it protect it and keep it personal:** Be cautious about how much personal information you provide on social networking sites or when shopping. The more information you post, the easier it may be for a hacker or someone else to use that information to steal your identity, access your data, or commit other crimes such as stalking. When shopping, remember you only need to fill out required fields at checkout and make sure you think it is necessary for the vendor to request that information.
- **Use safe payment options:** Credit cards are generally the safest option because they allow buyers to seek a credit if something goes wrong.
- **Protect your ££s:** When shopping, check to be sure the site is security enabled. Look for web addresses with https:// (the 's' stands for secure) indicating extra measures to help secure your information.

Going green...

Council buildings harness sun power

We are now harnessing solar power in a bid to reduce our carbon footprint even more...

Two council buildings, Abbey Stadium and Crossgates Depot, had solar panels installed in December and are now equipped to harness energy from the sun to contribute to the electricity used at the sites.

The project, managed by the new publicly owned company Place Partnership on behalf of Redditch Borough Council, saw 120 panels installed at the Abbey Stadium and 112 panels installed at Crossgates Depot. The new source of energy means a potential saving of over £2,000 per site per year on bills.

The panels were installed by local business Eco2Solar, who are based in Kidderminster.

Place Partnership, a new property management company formed by six Worcestershire public sector partners, including Redditch Borough Council, will also be looking at more ways to reduce energy use and carbon emissions across the council in the next few years.

Whizzing about in electric motors

The Crossgates Depot solar panels will also help to charge the councils' new electric van - used by stores staff to travel between sites - and the existing electric litter collection vehicle, reducing the running costs and improving the environmental credentials of those vehicles even further.

More information on Worcestershire County Council's public electric vehicle charging points can be found on the Worcestershire County Council website.

Did you know?

- The project will give us enough energy across both sites to power the equivalent of six houses for an entire year!*
- We now have solar panels in place at the Palace Theatre, Town Hall, Crematorium, Abbey Stadium, Crossgates Depot and fifteen sheltered housing sites.
- We've already improved our carbon footprint by buying electric utility vehicles, getting an A rating for energy efficiency at the Palace Theatre, hosting Worcestershire County Council's electric vehicle charging points at the Abbey Stadium and Greenlands Business Centre and of course the Green Apple Award winning scheme at the Abbey Stadium and Redditch Crematorium.

*As per Energy Saving Trust

Garage demolition scheme to boost area

More Woodrow residents will soon benefit from improved facilities and layout as a further 22 garages are demolished. Bushley Close is the latest location to be developed under Redditch Borough Council's public realm improvements scheme which began in Matchborough in 2009.

The demolition will make way for more car parking and landscaping of the area will be improved. Residents from the close were consulted on the proposals and demolition work started at the end of March. The new and improved facilities are expected to be completed in May.

Guy Revans, Head of Environmental Services, said: "We are pleased that the scheme is continuing to more areas across the borough and hope that the improvements will help alleviate ongoing parking issues. Not only should the removal of the garages create improved parking for the residents, they will also improve the general environmental quality and community safety of the area."

Bushley Close is the ninth location to be visited by the borough council's continuing programme of turning old garages, often used simply for storage as they are too small for most modern vehicles, into useful new parking spaces and other enhancements. Sites are prioritised according to their assessed need.

Early Help: for every stage of parenting

Birth and Beyond

New, FREE sessions for parents to be!

Birth and Beyond Worcestershire: Transition to Parenthood Sessions are ideal for you to attend from 28 weeks.

Four weekly Sessions will be facilitated by Health Visitors and Early Help to provide you with information on:

- Getting to know your unborn baby
- Changes you'll experience
- Giving birth and meeting your baby
- Parents health and well-being
- Caring for your baby
- Who is there for you – people and services

To book a place, please contact your Health Visitor or Early Help Centre or call Woodlands Centre on 01527 517935.

Triple P 2-10-Positive-Parenting Programme

Triple P is a positive parenting programme. It doesn't tell you how to be a parent but provides you with strategies you might need or be able to use.

Get tips and suggestions to fit the needs of your family, watch scenes from the Every Parent's Survival Guide video - which reveal those familiar behaviour problems in children - and find out how the Triple P strategies can work in real life.

Triple P can help parents and carers to:

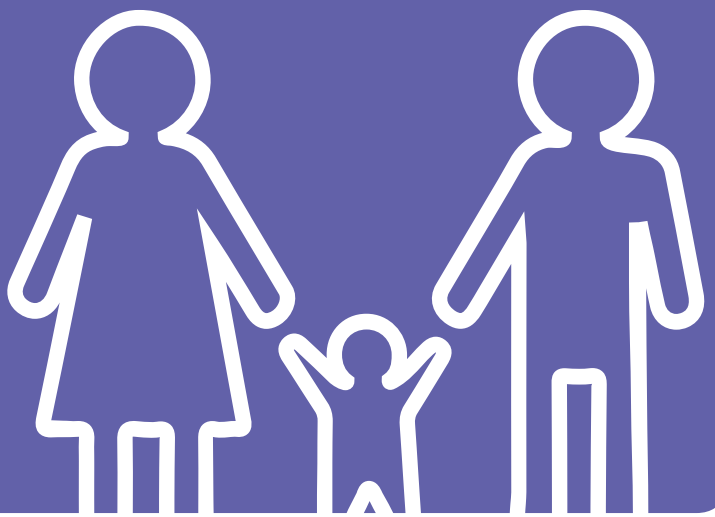
- Raise happy, confident kids
- Manage misbehaviour so everyone in the family enjoys life more
- Set rules and routines that everyone respects and follows
- Encourage behaviour you like
- Take care of yourself as a parent
- Feel confident you're doing the right thing

Talking Teens: Family Links

Duration: Five sessions for two hours

This programme aims to improve the relationship between parents or carers and teenagers by developing parents' understanding of communication, teenage development and the influence of brain development on behaviour. Parents will also consider conflict and positive approaches to boundary setting and problem solving.

Interested? For further Information on either of these courses please contact Laura Palin on 01527 517935 or 07771553944.



Dream Routine gets fantastic response

PYT's Action in Movement (AIM) group were aiming to please with their latest production- Dream Routine- but the response has been even better than expected.

The group performed to an audience in the Room Upstairs at the Palace Theatre on 11th March as well as taking it to the Birmingham Hippodrome as part of the 'Is That All There Is' Conference in front of over 100 other young people with learning disabilities.

As a result of their performance the group have been approached by VAMOS Theatre Company to do some skill share work, as well as Pitcheroak and Chadsgrove schools asking the group to perform and possibly run workshops with their students.

Well done AIM! Watch this space for more details.

Attend the tale of Sweeney Todd

If you're looking for something different to get involved in over the summer then what could be more exciting than staging a show in just two weeks?

Interested? Then sign up for PYT's Summer School who are going to stage two performances of Sweeney Todd with just two weeks of rehearsals and some help from professionals.

And for any concerned parents out there – it's the school edition so don't panic, it will be toned down a lot!

Rehearsals will run from 1st to 5th and 8th to 12th August 10am to 4pm with two shows on Saturday 13th August at 2.30pm and 7.30pm.

Summer School is open to young people aged 8 – 18 and costs £150 per child or £75 sibling discount.

The deadline for registration is Friday 1st July.

Devised piece to raise funds

"Sticks and Stones may break my bones but the internet can never hurt me... or can it?"

Help fifteen PYT students get to Belgium at the end of April, to attend the first ever English speaking drama festival - organised by the founder of PYT!

See the devised performance they'll be taking to Belgium first when 'The Interknot' comes to the Room Upstairs on Saturday 16th April at 7.45pm.

Tickets cost £5 inclusive of a £1 booking fee and all proceeds go towards funding the trip.

The group have been hard at work rehearsing - here's a few shots of them in action.

Palace Youth Theatre

www.redditchpalacetheatre.co.uk/palace-youth-theatre

Keep Active!

KEEP FIT CLASSES

These classes will help you to stay independent living by working all your major muscle groups.

MONDAYS
10.30am - Ladies 50+, Oakenshaw Centre
12pm - Mixed Fitness, Oakenshaw Centre
12pm - Zumba Gold, Webhealth Village Hall

TUESDAYS
10am - 50+ Fitness class, St Lukes Memorial Hall, Headless Cross
2.15pm - Ladies 50+, Windmill Community Centre

THURSDAYS
9am - Pilates, The Space, Winyates
11.15am - 60+ Exercise, Oakenshaw Centre
12.30pm - Pilates, Oakenshaw Centre
2.30pm - Dial-a-ride Swimming, Abbey Stadium

Tai Chi (Qigong) & Yoga

TUESDAYS - 1.30pm - Tai Chi, Oakenshaw Community Centre
TUESDAYS - 2.30pm - Yoga, Oakenshaw Community Centre
THURSDAYS - 2pm - Tai Chi, The Space, Winyates Centre

RUNNING GROUPS

FREE couch to 5k progressive learn to run courses in your area. See FACEBOOK - C25K Redditch for more information, or call the number below.

Run England running sessions are being set up all over Redditch, for more information please contact the number below.

SPRINGS FOR HEALTH at the Abbey Stadium - £2.50 per session

MONDAYS 12pm & 12.30pm - 50+ swimming lessons (please book)
TUESDAYS 12.15pm - Senior Circuits
THURSDAYS 12.15pm - Senior Circuits
FRIDAYS 1pm - Tai Chi

WALKS FOR HEALTH - *free of charge*

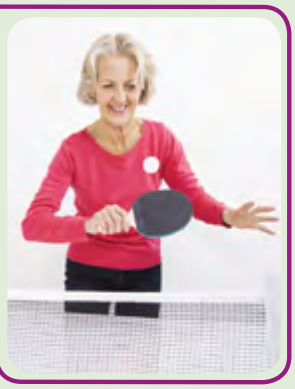
Led and organised by a dedicated group of local volunteers, caters for all abilities, with short, medium walks organised weekly as well as regular long and more strenuous walks.
MONDAYS and **THURSDAYS**
Meet at Arrow Valley Lakes, Countryside Centre @ 11am
Mondays is a gentle 2 to 3 mile walk on a paved surface.
Thursdays walk goes further, up to 5 miles on uneven terrain.

LINE DANCING

TUESDAYS - 2.30pm - 3.30pm - Palace Theatre, Redditch
FRIDAYS - 11.30am - Batchley Community Centre

REGENER8

MONDAYS - 3.30pm to 5pm at Abbey Stadium only £2.10 per session.
Includes Badminton and Table Tennis with coaching, Mobility and Tai Chi in the fitness studio and use of the gym.



PARKRUN

EVERY SATURDAY 9am FREE 5K timed run from Arrow Valley Countryside Centre, Just register for free at www.parkrun.com for your barcode and turn up ready to do your PB!

STRENGTH AND BALANCE exercise classes take place within the community. This scheme is supported by the NHS and specifically designed to help people who have problems with strength and balance and who consider themselves to be at risk of falling. If you feel you could benefit from this type of exercise then please ask your GP for a referral or call the number below to complete a self-referral.

LIVE WELL BE WELL - Our Activity Referral scheme. £15 for A 6 week course run from the Abbey Stadium. If you would like to improve your lifestyle and increase your activity levels please ask your GP for a referral into the scheme.

For more information about existing classes or if you would like some input into our future plans please contact Hayley on 01527 881404 or email Hayley.gwilliam@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

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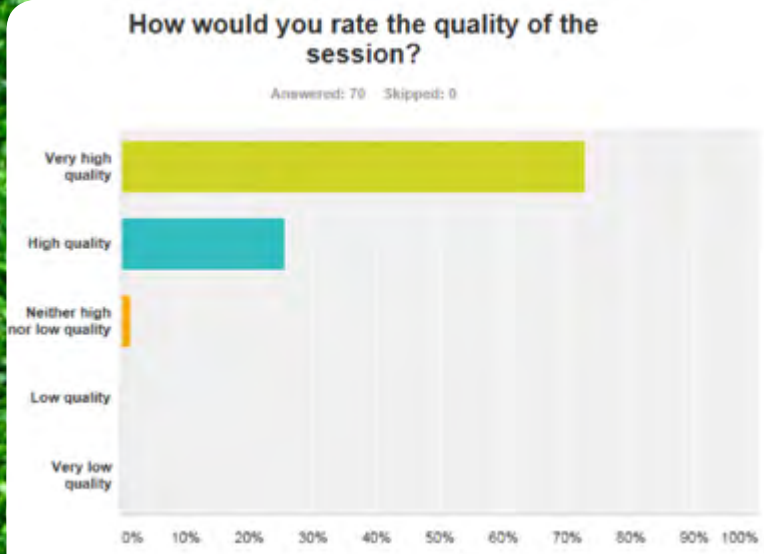
Couch to 5K

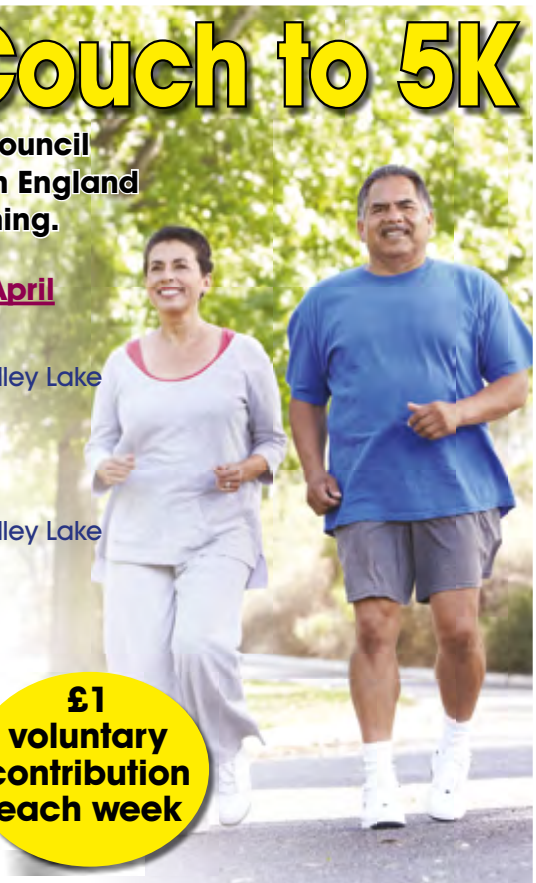


Measuring success

We were really pleased with our recent survey completed by members of the local running community. The results above refer to a mixture of Parkrun, Couch to 5K, and Sports Relief and we're thrilled our courses and services are held in high esteem by the local people using them. Thank you to everyone who responded to the survey and rest assured we will strive to maintain high standards.

NEW Couch to 5K

Redditch Borough Council are working with Run England to get Redditch running.



Sessions from 23rd April

Saturdays 10am
Stitch Meadow, Arrow Valley Lake

Mondays 11am
Morton Stanley Park

Mondays 6.30pm
Stitch Meadow, Arrow Valley Lake

Tuesdays at 6.30pm
Batchley Pond

Wednesdays at 7.30pm
Morton Stanley Park

Thursdays 9.30am
Abbey Studium Track

Fridays 7.30pm
Morton Stanley Park

£1 voluntary contribution each week

Download the programme onto your phone/mp3 at www.nhs.uk/livewell/c25k

C25K Redditch @Redditchmatters #activeredditch

If you would like to make the first steps towards your 5K goal just turn up or please contact Hayley Gwilliam on 01527 881404 email: hayley.gwilliam@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL
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www.redditchbc.gov.uk

Join your local tennis league

A new tennis league is launching on the courts at Kingsley Sports Centre and Sanders Park in Bromsgrove.

The local tennis league is a chance for adults to play friendly, competitive tennis without having to join a club. A great opportunity to get some exercise, enjoy the summer evenings and meet new people.

The first round of matches will be starting on May 12th so if you want to play - you need to be registered by May 9th.

Registration and more information is available at www.localtennisleagues.com

Sports club forums

Do you run a sports club? Or sit on a committee? Want to benefit from networking and training?

Join our next free Forum for all local sports clubs on May 11th from 6pm until 9pm at Redditch Town Hall.

This event will include a Marketing and Club Development workshop delivered by Club Matters. Clubs will also be given a chance to get mentoring support from Club Matters and the Sports Development Team for the Council on top of sharing good practice tips and ideas with each other.

During the forum, clubs will be informed about local and national initiatives and updated on help and support being offered by the Council and other partners.

Spaces are limited so please book your place by contacting Chris Wells on Christopher.wells@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk or calling 01527 534008.

Forge Mill to benefit from Arts Council England funding

Residents visiting Forge Mill over the summer can benefit from a £15,000 project being funded by Arts Council England to produce new artworks inspired by Redditch's needle-making past.

Artists Elizabeth Turner and Keith Ashford, who successfully won the bid, will take inspiration from the mill's industrial history and the surrounding medieval landscape of the nearby Bordesley Abbey.

Together they will explore the contemporary legacy of needle making and the ancient waterways which fed the mill through sculpture, film and sound installations at the mill. The works will interpret the contrasts between the museum's delicate needle displays and the heavy, moving machinery which produced them.

Residents will also get the opportunity to help co-create some of the art through a number of workshops over the course of the summer covering Little Explorers, embossing, sculpting and the opportunity for wet and muddy family fun with the Pond to Power workshop.

The Artwork created will be displayed at Forge Mill for a number of weeks before moving to the Palace Theatre in September.

Talking about why the Arts Council is investing in the residency, Peter Knott, Area Director, explained: "England's rich industrial history shaped the places we live today. It will be great to see Redditch's needle making past – and the memories of local people - brought to life once more through contemporary art."

The project is being supported by a £15,000 investment from the National Lottery through Arts Council England.

Elizabeth said: "We are very excited about this art residency and exhibition at Forge Mill Museum. The Mill is connected to the landscape through different layers of local industrial history, and the museum collection demonstrates the reach of the Redditch needle industry across the world."

Keith added: "The needle collection together with the working machinery of the mill are absolutely fascinating and a rich source for developing creative ideas for new artworks."

Huw Moseley, Arts Development and Events Officer for Redditch Borough Council, said: "We've worked with Elizabeth and Keith in the past to create artwork around Arrow Valley so we are thrilled that they have received funding for this project at Forge Mill. I've seen the plans for their workshops and I think visitors taking part are really going to have fun with them – and learn some new skills too."

For more information and to see updates on the project go to www.forgemill.org.uk or take a look at the project blog https://scourforgemill.wordpress.com

Consumer care

Scam car sales warning issued

A consumer warning has been issued in Worcestershire after a resident lost nearly £7,200 after being duped by a scam internet car seller earlier this year.

It brings the total lost in this way in the county to £27,000 in recent years.

Each victim responded to adverts placed by fake sellers on well-known internet auction and vehicle websites.

In each case a sale was agreed without seeing the vehicle in person, after an exchange of photos and details via email.

The unsuspecting purchasers were then directed to pay by bank transfer or Western Union by 'payment protection service' emails that seemed to come from the sale website, but were in fact fraudulent.

Once the money was transferred out of the consumers' bank accounts, the scammers disappeared and the vehicles were never delivered. Payments by bank transfer or Western Union cannot be reversed.

Worcestershire Regulatory Services officers offer this advice

1. If an offer sounds too good to be true it probably is
2. Never transfer money to someone you don't know for a vehicle you've not seen
3. Always view a vehicle in person and in the light before agreeing to buy
4. Always get a vehicle history check from a reputable source for peace of mind
5. Always check whether a 'payment protection service' is genuine before sending money
6. The Metropolitan Police and Western Union Bank both recommend that consumers use money transfers as a means to purchase goods only when sending money to someone they already know and trust.
7. Do not pay by bank transfer or Western Union as these payments cannot be reversed

Consumers with any complaints of this type should contact Citizens Advice Consumer Services on 03454 040506.
Car buying scams cost consumers around £3 million a year, according to the Citizens Advice Bureau.

Worcestershire Regulatory Services
Supporting and protecting you

Worcestershire Regulatory Services delivers services including Trading Standards, Environmental Health and Licensing services throughout the county, hosted by Bromsgrove District Council.

Protect puppies

People buying puppies are being warned to be vigilant for signs of illegal sales, after a number of complaints about puppies bought online were made to Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS). WRS Trading Standards officers are investigating claims that some puppies were older than described, and that the sellers had omitted information about them to give the impression that they were bred in the UK when they were in fact imported.

Both the age and origin of a puppy are important as they help to ensure the animal has not been farmed or sold illegally. Illegally imported dogs may have been taken away from their mothers too early, transported over long distances in unsuitable transport, and have improper or no vaccinations. In the recently reported cases, some puppies described as around eight weeks turned out to be closer to 15 weeks old and some had non-UK microchips but no pet passport to confirm that they were imported to the UK legally.

Here is some simple advice when buying a puppy:

1. Ensure you see the puppy with its mother. If the seller refuses to allow you to see it with its mother, it may have been imported or the seller may be dealing in farmed puppies.
2. Ask the seller if the dog is micro-chipped and if it is, ask for the number and do some research. If the chip was implanted abroad the owner should be able to show you a pet passport. Be very suspicious if the seller refuses to tell you as the dog may have been imported illegally, or the seller may be trying to hide the true age of the animal.
3. If the seller does show you a pet passport for the puppy, ensure that all the details match the dog and that the vaccinations have taken place at the correct time. Rabies vaccine can only be given when the puppy is 12 weeks of age or over and the puppy should not have travelled to the UK until 21 days have passed since the vaccination. Worming treatment must also have been given 1-5 days prior to travelling to the UK.

If you have suspicions about websites offering puppies for sale or information that puppies are being mis-described or passports falsified, please contact the Citizens Advice consumer helpline on 03454 04 05 06.

Council makes apprentices their business

March saw National Apprenticeship Week which the borough council was proud to take part in as it is committed to creating more opportunities for young residents to learn a trade in their hometown.

To mark the event, we asked our apprentices – and those who are now working full time at the authority following an apprenticeship – how it worked for them.

Network and infrastructure apprentice Ryan Jukes said, "I am part of the team that looks after the network and servers that run the council's IT, and I'm also studying towards recognised qualifications. I want my apprenticeship to take me into this full time, and hopefully this will give me the experience and qualifications that I will need to go further. I feel I learn a lot from my colleagues."

Landscaping apprentice Jack Pearce said, "I'm learning about landscaping, horticulture and amenity so my apprenticeship includes spending time with the teams that look after Redditch town centre. Gardening is something I always enjoyed doing at home, so I thought why not take it further?"

Tweet Sensation

We shared our apprentice's stories with social media - and our tweet about Ryan was picked up by the Cabinet Office, West Midlands!

And here's what two full-time employees that got their jobs via apprenticeships have to say:

Financial services support officer Elise Wesley said, "I started an apprenticeship in business administration placed at the council, and that experience helped me to get a full time job there in financial support services before I'd even finished my studies, which I'm still doing. I hope my apprenticeship will help me to keep on progressing."

Electoral services officer Frankie Collings said, "I had been an apprentice at the council as part of my business administration NVQ level 3, and at the end of that I got a temporary contract in electoral services. Then a permanent job as an electoral services officer came up - and between the apprenticeship and the experience I had gained, I was able to apply and be successful."

If you want to know more about apprenticeships, whether as an apprentice or an employer, visit http://worcsapprenticeships.org.uk/ or contact the apprentice hub on 0300 666 3 666.

North Worcestershire flying the flag for apprenticeships

Redditch businesses joined those from across North Worcestershire to show support for National Apprenticeship Week.

North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration (NWedR) hosted a series of free local events focused on apprenticeships.

They provided an opportunity to find out about apprenticeship scheme, grants and funding, what the responsibilities are with hiring an apprentice and how to recruit the right person.

Andy Bywater, North Worcestershire Skills & Employment Officer organised the events across the area which includes the Southcrest Hotel in Redditch.

He said: "We know our businesses get long lasting and tangible results from apprentices at all levels.

"We are proud to be hosting these events to share these experiences and encourage businesses to get involved in running apprenticeships."

What's on in Redditch

The Queen's 90th Birthday Beacon Celebration

Thursday 21st April 2016

From 6.15pm at the Bandstand, Church Green, Redditch

- Salvation Army Band 6.15pm - 7.15pm
- Bel Canto Choir 7.15pm - 7.30pm
- Lighting of the Official HM Queen Elizabeth II 90th Birthday Beacon at 7.30pm

For more information contact the events team on 01527 534030 or email events@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

In partnership with redditch town centre partnership

Redditch Borough Council making a difference www.redditchbc.gov.uk

Redditch Borough Council
in partnership with Redditch Lions present

Green Fair and Lions Fun Day

Sunday 26th June 11am-5pm Arrow Valley Park

- Cadet Challenge
- Motorbikes
- Classic and new cars
- Music
- Crafts
- Activities
- Demonstrations

Fun for all the family!

Arrow Valley Park, Battens Drive, Redditch, B98 0LJ.
Telephone: 01527 534030 | www.redditchbc.gov.uk
www.redditchlions.org.uk

Redditch Borough Council making a difference www.redditchbc.gov.uk

NEW lifeline
North East Worcestershire Telecare Service

tsa
audited compliance

Give peace of mind

NEW Lifeline is a telecare service available 24 hours, 365 days a year to any vulnerable people living within the Redditch and Bromsgrove Districts as well as surrounding areas.

It allows residents such as the elderly, disabled or those with serious health problems to continue to live independently in their own homes.

A Lifeline unit installed in the resident's home and a portable pendant allows the user to call for help in an emergency at any time of day or night.

Our Monitoring Centre Operators will receive the call and assist the user with their emergency.

Give peace of mind to a loved one and your family by subscribing them to the NEW Lifeline telecare service.

For more information please call 01527 534060 or email: lifeline@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL
making a difference
www.redditchbc.gov.uk

Bromsgrove District Council
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

Active Redditch

Sign up to the Active Redditch newsletter- our fortnightly email packed with the latest sports and fitness news from the Sports Development Team at Redditch Council.

Click here to subscribe

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL
making a difference
www.redditchbc.gov.uk

Have your say

The borough council is proposing some changes to its scheme to help people on low income to pay their Council Tax, which is called the Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme.

The changes seek to bring Redditch's CTS scheme more into line with the new ways that other benefits are now handled, to reduce unnecessary administration, whille also preserving or enhancing work incentives and considering local finances.

Seven potential changes are being put forward for the scheme, and you are invited to share your views on each of them. You can see the proposals and comment on them at www.redditchbc.gov.uk/consultations until May 27. Your views will help councillors to make their decisions, which would come into effect in April 2017.

The proposals do not affect the levels of support that people of pension age receive. These are set nationally by the Government. The borough council currently spends £6.5 million a year on CTS in Redditch.

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Builds Strength and Lean Muscle. Works all major muscles groups. Sends your metabolism into overdrive to burn fat for hours after the workout. Stimulates the production of growth hormone which reduces fat and helps develop lean muscle.

GRIT Cardio

Burns fat and rapidly improves athletic capability. An explosive high-impact body weight based workout. Provides double the whammy of maximising calorie burn within the workout and burning fat for hours afterwards.

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£5.00 NON-MEMBERS

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AS MUCH GRIT AS YOU CAN HANDLE FOR JUST £20 A MONTH, MEMBERS ONLY.

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For more information, or to book your session call 01527 60206

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

making a difference

www.redditchbc.gov.uk

Redditch's green and pleasant land

As we spring into the growing season once again, the over 168 hectares - that's more than 415 acres - of managed woodlands in Redditch is starting to wake up and thrive.

Redditch's woodlands are an almost constant backdrop to the town, and form a truly valued part of its landscape. Most of the local woodlands are formally designated 'ancient' and 'semi-natural' woodland, but there are also lots of newer plantations too, particularly those that were planted in the mid-1960s when Redditch grew quickly as it became a 'new town'. Many of those newer woodlands were designed to help improve air quality, reduce noise, and boost the all-round amenity of Redditch.

To keep on top of all those trees the borough council's Environmental Services run a Woodland Management Programme. This programme, which has been improving Redditch's woodlands since 1995, takes in 30 sites across the borough and it is as varied as you might expect – maintaining a deep ancient woodland demands a very different approach to a roadside coppice or a traffic island plantation!

The practice of controlling the growth, composition and quality of woodlands is called silviculture, and under the programme council officers follow best silvicultural practice under the guidance of a woodland management consultant. Most of the work must also be agreed and licensed by the Forestry Commission, and work is usually carried out on about 20 per cent of the town's total woodlands each year. This work gets done between September and March to help to minimise disturbance both to plants and wildlife.

Thanks to Forestry Commission grants designed to encourage this kind of work, and because the cut wood can be sold to be made into cardboard, construction timber, and even furniture, Redditch's woodland management programme is able to be both environmentally and financially sustainable.

Conserving and improving Redditch's woodlands ensures future generations will also be able to enjoy them as we do now – what's your favourite local woodland?

Did you know?

Tree ages are staggered

Groups of similar trees that are all the same age will all die off at about the same time destroying that area of woodland. To stop that happening one of our woodland management goals is to ensure our woodlands have a range of ages and types of trees - especially because when Redditch became a new town vast numbers of trees were planted all at the same time.

Woodlands are layered from low to high

To create the best habitats and biodiversity, we usually manage woodlands in three layers: first the ground level flora, then a shrub level, and finally the canopy.

Felling trees helps others grow

Most people know that pruning a tree can help it grow, but not so many people know that felling trees can improve woodlands. Good woodland management requires that trees are felled for all sorts of reasons, like overcrowding that limits light and prevents trees from regenerating naturally - as well as stopping the growth of woodland flowers and herbs.

Redditch's major woods

Pitcheroak off Bromsgrove Road
Southcrest off Ashperton Close
Wirehill of Nine Days Lane
Oakenshaw to the rear of Tesco
Foxlydiate off Brockhill Drive

Redditch Market

Roll-Up in Redditch

The new operators of Redditch market paid a visit to the town to meet traders and discuss plans for the future.

Bosses from Stratford-based Sketts, who won the tender to operate the market from last month, hit the town and were caught on camera by the local press.

Sketts will operate a five-day general retail market and will also have the opportunity, in conjunction with Redditch Borough Council and the Town Centre partnership, to organise and operate additional events which can either run alongside or separate from the existing market.

Sketts' senior manager Russell Dean said: "Markets are our speciality and we can see Redditch has the foundations to build on especially as it has a designated space for stalls and all the traders were really positive.

"It's a difficult time for markets to survive but we hope, by working with the Kingfisher Centre, we can complement each other and provide residents and visitors to Redditch alike with the ultimate shopping experience."

A bit about Sketts

Sketts have been organizing markets for over 55 years, developing experience and expertise that is second to none.

Sketts personnel can completely erect a 70 stall market in less than 90 minutes! AND provide a complete market, ready for work within 48 hours notice. Sketts offer a well rehearsed procedure - no messing, no fuss.

Sketts run retail markets in Redditch, Banbury, Cannock, Southam and Great Bridge as well as offering specialist farmer's markets, Fine and Local Food, Food Festivals and Food events.

Find out more: www.sketts.co.uk or www.skettsfoodevents.co.uk

News roundup

New plan to help protect children from sexual abuse

Worcestershire Safeguarding Board has published a new, two year strategy to strengthen measures designed to tackle Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), which involves the sexual abuse of children for money, power or status.

A 42 point action plan has been drawn up which includes ensuring appropriate training is given to staff in schools, pharmacies, GP surgeries, hospitals and even in pubs and to taxi drivers so they are aware of the signs of CSE and how to report it. Work is also taking place to identify vulnerable children who may go on to become potential offenders and to intervene early on. There will also be a wider public awareness campaign early next year.

To find out more or to find out what to do if you have concerns, go to:
www.worcestershiresafeguarding.org.uk

Consultation on Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Penalty Points Scheme

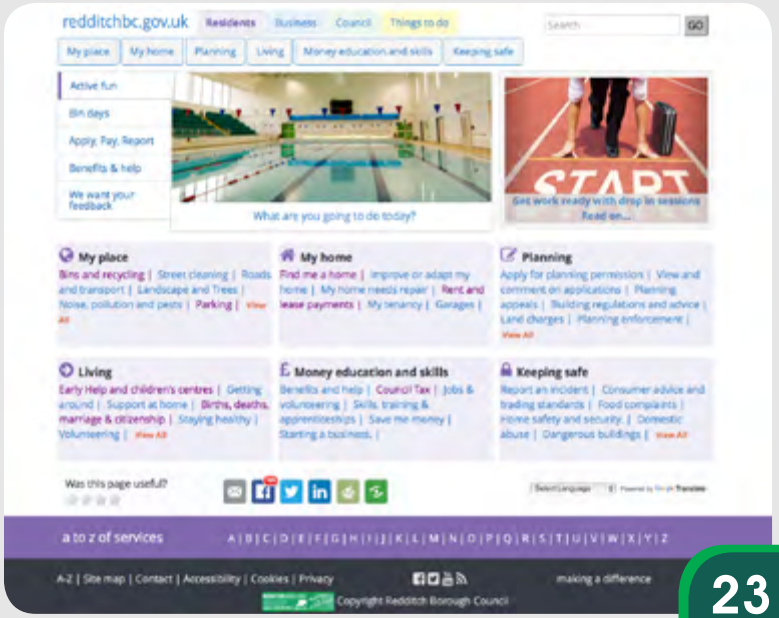
The council is proposing to introduce a Penalty Points Scheme for hackney carriage and private hire drivers. It is designed to help secure compliance with licensing requirements.

The basic idea of a penalty points scheme is to issue an appropriate number of points to those who commit minor offences or acts of non-compliance as an alternative to taking more formal action, with a view to identifying those that persistently commit minor offences or fail to comply with requirements placed upon them as license holders.

The penalty points scheme is not intended to be used to deal with more serious offences or acts of non-compliance. Each case will continue to be considered on its own individual merits.

For more detailed information and consultation documents go to: www.redditchbc.gov.uk/consultations

A year in online services



1.1 million borough council web pages were accessed in 2015-16. Here are some stats:

- 49,705 people looked at our swimming pools
- 19,905 people looked up their Council Tax info
- 9,825 people checked their bin day
- 2,027 people researched how to apply for planning permission
- 1,094 people found out what's on at the Early Help centres
- 726 people requested a change of bin
- 375 people reported a landscaping issue in the town
- 233 people complimented our online services (thanks!)
- 3 out of 5 of all those people used mobile phones or tablets rather than PCs

Sanctuary Care

BRAMBLES RESIDENTIAL CARE HOME

'Keeping kindness at the heart of our care'

Our attractive care home includes all of the comforts you'd expect along with some special touches that make it a true home.

Residents spend their time enjoying the things they love; catching up with friends and family, being pampered in the hair and beauty salon, taking part in activities or relaxing in the landscaped gardens.

Carefully chosen for their kind and compassionate approach, our staff provide residential and dementia care.

WiFi enabled throughout the home

Please feel free to call us or pop into our care home to have a chat with us about your, or your loved one's care needs for now or the future.

BRAMBLES RESIDENTIAL CARE HOME

Birchfield Road, Headless Cross,
Redditch, Worcestershire B97 4LX

Tel: 01527 555 800

Contact us for more information on our upcoming community events including our street party on Thursday 21 April for the Queen's birthday and Care Home Open Day on Friday 17 June.

www.sanctuary-care.co.uk

Sanctuary Care Limited is a subsidiary of Sanctuary Housing Association, an exempt charity