

# Dartford *Borough News*

SUMMER 2005

The Newspaper of Dartford Borough Council

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Rare chance to  
see Dartford's  
dancing  
virtuoso  
return to  
The Orchard

# Wats-on in Dartford

• CENTRAL PARK MAKES CENTURY • FESTIVAL FEVER • STADIUM APPROVED •

# MY PATCH HEATH



CONTINUING OUR SERIES OF COUNCILLOR PROFILES



**Terry  
Smith**  
Councillor for  
Heath ward

Councillor Terry Smith celebrated the 40th anniversary of his first election to the Council in July and was applauded for his many years of service to the residents of Dartford at a special meeting.

**What made you stand for election as a Councillor**

I have always had a strong interest in debating, and I see the work of a Councillor as an extension of this interest. As a Councillor I support the cause of local people and push forward their interests and views on matters that concern and affect them.

**What is the best thing about being a Councillor?**

The best thing is the satisfaction I get from knowing that I am helping people. I have lived in Dartford my whole life and I feel that being a Councillor enables me to give something back to my local community.

I enjoy my work on the Development Control Board and I believe that my technical background has been valuable in this respect. It is very rewarding to see

how the decisions that we have made help develop homes in the Borough that local residents will enjoy for years to come.

**What is the worst thing about being a Councillor?**

We have a long list of Government guidelines to follow when making decisions and I do not think that they always benefit the community. I often feel frustrated as the guidelines lead us to take certain decisions with which I am not 100% in agreement, but I suppose that's life.

**What is good and bad about your area?**

Heath Ward is in a wonderful location and people can enjoy the benefits of walking and exploring Dartford Heath. The Heath is right on our doorstep and gives local residents the opportunity to take a pleasant stroll through the grassy woodlands.

However the Heath is now being spoilt by people who are deliberately setting fires. This thoughtless behaviour puts residents' lives in danger and seriously damages the area. On top of that, people ride motor bikes and quad bikes across the Heath which also adds to the damage of the heathland.

**What are your pet projects at the moment?**

As Chairman of the Development Control Board, I have had the opportunity to work on the Eastern Quarry development. This is one of the largest planning applications that Dartford is ever likely to see. I thoroughly enjoyed the project which will see the Quarry, opposite Bluewater, turned into a thriving community of five urban villages.

**What law would you introduce if you were Prime Minister?**

Due to my interest and involvement in housing and development, I would prefer to be the Deputy Prime Minister. In this role I would reduce the number of houses planned to be built in the South East over the next 20 years. I would introduce guidelines to ensure that developers had to build houses with a reasonably sized garden, as I believe that space is a very important factor for a good quality of life in any future developments.

I would try to reduce traffic congestion in the Dartford area by increasing the number of lanes in main roads such as the A2 and M25. And of course I would remove the tolls at Dartford Bridge. If only I had the chance!

# Sign Post

## YOUR COUNCILLORS ARE:

- BEAN & DARENTH  
ARMITT Ian (Con) 01322 288396  
BULL Simon (Con) 07764 488390  
HAMMOCK David (Con) 01322 380058
- BRENT  
FICKLING Kenneth (Con) 020 8757 8128  
KARAMUTH Sarah (Con) 07981 1614421  
WIGHTMAN Nancy (Con) 01322 223586  
EAST Sheila (Con) 01322 384677
- CASTLE GREENHITHE  
BROADLEY Conrad (Con) 01474 364088  
FITZPATRICK Brian (RA&I) 07966 310805  
MURPHY Martin (RA&I) 01322 370559
- HEATH  
LEADBEATER Kenneth (Con) 01322 866375  
SMITH Terence (Con) 01322 220342  
THURLOW Mrs Patsy (Con) 01322 862060
- JOYCE GREEN  
MUCKLE Ann (Lab) 01322 403229  
BRYANT Matthew (Lab) 01322 271517
- JOYDENS WOOD  
ALLEN Mrs Ann (Con) 01322 270325  
PETERS Marilyn (Con) 01322 554373  
RICKWOOD Mrs Jennifer (Con) 01322 522361
- LITTLEBROOK  
MUCKLE John (Lab) 01322 403229  
TIBBY Michael (New England) 01322 279889
- LONGFIELD NEW BARN AND SOUTHFLEET  
BASSAM Bertie (Con) 01474 704241  
DUNN Alex (Con) 07941 241893  
KITE Jeremy (Con) 01474 707380  
BAKER Dave (Lab) 01322 271434
- NEWTOWN  
BROOKER Austen (New England) 01322 228943  
STEELE Graham (Lab) 01322 277394
- PRINCES  
MAY David (Lab) 01322 228003  
STOCK Margaret (Lab) 01322 223181  
STOCK Vic (Lab) 01322 223181
- STONE  
JONES Bryan (Lab) 01322 343234  
JONES Ivor (Lab) 01322 383361  
LAWSON Derek (Lab) 01322 276624
- SUTTON-AT-HONE & HAWLEY  
COLEMAN Patrick (Con) 01322 863730  
MARTIN Anthony (Con) 01322 272996  
BOBBY Leslie (RA&I) 01322 384243  
HAYES John (RA&I) 01322 387452  
READ Bryan (RA&I) 01322 383895
- TOWN  
APPADOO Ram (Lab) 01322 408308  
ROGERS Trevor (Lab) 01322 290455
- WEST HILL  
BYRNE Francis (Lab) 01322 401810  
PROUT Geoff (Lab) 01322 275145
- WILMINGTON  
STOATE Mrs Deborah (Lab) 01322 343234  
HUNNISETT Derek (Con) 01322 288397  
LAMPKIN Eddy (Con) 07889 736598  
Conservative 21, Labour 16, RA&I 5, New England 2

## USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

MAIN SWITCHBOARD	(01322) 343434	ARTS DEVELOPMENT	(01322) 343351
BENEFITS	(01322) 343705	MUSEUM	(01322) 224739
COUNCIL TAX	(01322) 343700	HALL BOOKINGS	(01322) 343079
HOUSING	(01322) 343624	SPORTS DEVELOPMENT	(01322) 343524
ENV. HEALTH SERVICES	(01322) 343374	BUILDING CONTROL	(01322) 343238
REFUSE & RECYCLING	(01322) 343290	HIGHWAY REPAIRS	(08458) 247800
PLANNING	(01322) 343203	STREET LIGHTING	(08458) 247800
FLY TIPPING	(01322) 343290	DARTFORD POLICE	(01322) 280055
TRAVELLER SITES	(01322) 343684	CITIZENS ADVICE	(01322) 224686

**Summer Sizzlers activity  
programme will be out soon!**

**VIEW FROM THE CABINET**



**Kenneth Leadbeater**

**The Olympics will benefit Dartford**

The announcement that London will host the 2012 Olympics is perhaps more significant for Dartford than for some areas in west and south London.

For a start we will have one of the easiest and fastest transport routes to the games from Ebbsfleet. A journey of just under ten minutes to Stratford makes Dartford a key destination for tourists visiting the games, and residents will benefit directly from this link before and after the games take place.

We are also very well placed to provide training and residential facilities for competing athletes. The Judo-Club at Stone Lodge has been designed to meet Olympic training standards, and the ancillary facilities at Stone Lodge and Princes Park will include training pitches for hockey, football, netball and more.

The fact that we're already developing these facilities means we're more advanced than similar areas wishing to benefit from having the Games so close. We can promote our facilities, and our services, whilst also improving the quality of life for existing residents. Discussions are underway about the potential for more training venues in Dartford for 2012 athletes.

Of course sport isn't high profile just because of the Olympics. It's also one of our priorities to increase sports and leisure activity to meet the needs of new and existing residents and visitors.

Similarly, the Council is focussing more effort and support into culture and the arts to ensure that new developments in the borough do not become the 'soulless and impersonal' estates that we encounter elsewhere in the country.

In Dartford we're already blessed with high levels of culture and arts, with performances at The Orchard, The Miskin Theatre and the Mick Jagger Centre.

The ballet at The Orchard is one such event that Dartford can really be proud of. Bringing a higher calibre of dance to Dartford means we're broadening the horizons of the borough and promoting Dartford as a venue for a quality night out.

I've mentioned in my previous columns that Dartford's future includes a mixture of opportunities and challenges, especially as some of the major regeneration projects start to get underway.

The active steps we are taking to bring sports, culture and arts to the fore is something I feel will do much to improve the quality of life for our residents.

Perhaps the new facilities we are building now will result in a medal or two in 2012? Let's hope so!

*Councillor Kenneth Leadbeater is Leader of Dartford Borough Council.*

# Central Park is bigger and better



The area outlined in red shows the Central Park extension.



An aerial view of the extended Central Park

**Dartford's Central Park celebrated its 100th anniversary earlier this summer and almost doubled in size at the same time.**

The Park is now nearly 50 acres in size after the Council completed its £4.1m purchase of 23 acres from GlaxoSmithKline at the end of June.

Completing the purchase means that plans to restore the park to Edwardian splendour can now become a reality.

Council Leaders intend to join the two new open spaces with bridges and open up access to the River Darent, a jewel in the town's crown that has, for too long, been hidden from view and a barrier to the old Central Park.

Alongside new river 'promenades' will be

improved leisure facilities, formal gardens and recreation space - all with the aim of inviting Dartford's residents and visitors to spend 'idle-time' relaxing in the heart of the town.

Kenneth Leadbeater, Leader of the Council said, "Our plans for Dartford have always included a range of improvements and enhancements and this wonderful increase in the size of Central Park means we can achieve our aims. Central Park has been the mainstay for Dartford for a century but has seen some decline over the last couple of decades. We will restore the park back to its prime by making it a place for fun, culture and relaxation."

## A long and winding history

Central Park has been evolving ever since it started life as five acres of meadows donated to the people of Dartford by Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Newman Kidd JP. It opened in June 1905, sited in roughly the centre of the current Park.

In 1910 Bank House, on the High Street, was converted into Council Offices and much of its garden was added to what was then called The Central Recreation Ground. In 1915 the Council bought another 16 acres of meadow, bordering the Darent and this larger Park was used as a Military Camp during World War I.

In June 2005 Dartford Borough Council purchased 23 acres of land, to the east of the existing park, from GlaxoSmithKline.



Central Park in the 1930s

## Town Centre Consultation

Dartford town centre's future prospects are the subject of a consultation exercise taking place in the town throughout this summer.

The consultation, being carried out by planning experts. Donaldson's, and funded by the South East England Development Agency, offers visitors to the town and local residents the opportunity to help shape the future for the town centre.

Leaflets are being distributed through local newspapers and in the town's major shopping precincts, The Priory and The Orchard Centres, and data collected will be fed into the town's Regeneration Strategy.

# Bridging the future

One of the country's most innovative developments will get underway this summer on the former Joyce Green Hospital site and land surrounding Littlebrook Lakes. The development, known as The Bridge, promises 1,500 state of the art homes, a primary 'school of the future' at the heart of the development and a science park, including an innovation centre.

The Bridge is planned to set a precedent for new developments across the country, combining a mixture of outstanding design with the latest technology in homes and offices. Interest in the development is already high with a major occupier already signed up.

Kenneth Leadbeater, Leader of Dartford Borough Council, said "The Council's 21st Century vision for the comprehensive rebirth of north Dartford with a development of the highest quality is about to be realised at 'The Bridge'. This innovative project combines new thinking about design and community, effective use of public transport and a wide mix of housing and employment types. I am delighted

that Dartford Borough Council is in the vanguard of leading edge development."

Top husband and wife design team, Gerardine and Wayne Hemingway, are leading on the architecture and plans, alongside Broadway Malyan, for the first 1,100 homes, a community hub which will include an exciting new primary school, sports area and retail area for George Wimpey PLC with Prologis Developments, the world's largest distribution company, at the helm for the office, industrial and distribution development.

A partner has also been identified for managing the innovation centre at the heart of the new science park to be created on the site

The 264 acre project will also be a vital link in the new Fastrack transport system, which will link Dartford and Gravesend town centres via Bluewater, Darent Valley Hospital and Crossways Business Park. A new bridge, providing the link between Dartford Station, Temple Hill and The Bridge to Crossways, is to be built over the A282/M25.



Aerial view of The Bridge site



Gerardine and Wayne Hemingway

## Getting skaters on board

Skateboarders in Dartford are set to see a new skateboard park in the heart of the town after Councillors agreed to locate the facility alongside the Central Park Athletics track. The new skateboard park, which could cost around £70,000, will be sited at the location voted most popular in a recent survey of young people.

Councillor Jeremy Kite, Deputy Leader, believes that Central Park is the perfect location for new sports and leisure facilities. He said, "Central Park is at the heart of the town and is

actively planning to encourage greater use for leisure, sports and recreation. Young people in Dartford have been asking for more facilities that meet their needs and I know that the new park will be successful. Dartford offers such a wide range of sports and activities that young people will be spoilt for choice when thinking about how to spend their free time."

Plans for the skateboard park will be discussed with young people.



Catching air in Central Park

## Discover Dartford this Summer



Stuck for things to do this Summer? Why not Discover Dartford! The Council has launched a set of leaflets jam packed with information and ideas on what to do and where to go, helping residents and visitors get the most out of the borough.

Places to visit range from the Swanscombe Skull Site, where some of the oldest human remains in Europe were unearthed, to Beacon Wood Country Park, an 88 acre park of

woodland ponds and wild flowers, to the borough's many magnificent Domesday churches.

There are currently six leaflets in the 'Discover Dartford' series. Pick one up at Civic Centre, Museum or Library or view them online at [www.dartford.gov.uk](http://www.dartford.gov.uk).

VIEW FROM THE CABINET



Jeremy Kite

## A tip for Dartford's lawbreakers... MOVE

News that yet another fly-tipper has been successfully prosecuted in Dartford underlines the work being done seven days a week by members of Dartford Borough Council's enforcement team. Dermot McKinley was trapped by covert filming and sentenced recently.

The bad news for law-breakers is that the range of work done by Dartford's enforcement professionals is pretty unusual by local authority standards. Most Councils enforce against breaches of planning law, illegal parking and noisy neighbours but our Council goes quite a bit further. When we took control in May 2003, we made a simple, common-sense, decision to take a stand against those who are antisocial or crooked. We knew, as residents of the Borough ourselves, how easily our communities can be spoiled by the activities of a dishonest and immoral few.

To put it bluntly, we wanted to go after them.

As it happens, our 'simple' pledge turned out to be much more complicated to implement but now we have an enforcement team in place that could provide a model for Councils nationwide.

During the election, we promised to make life a little bit tougher for those who decide to break the rules that the rest of us live by. We also promised to overturn the perception among the public (and me) that authorities often seemed to reach out to the lawbreakers. Too often, public bodies seemed to fall over themselves to provide support, schemes and initiatives to the guilty, rather than support the victims. We don't.

So, that's why this Council doesn't send convicted young thugs on white-water rafting weekends, 'bonding' holidays or throw lots of your money at making them feel 'included'. If there are resources and rewards available, I happen to think they should be targeted at the good people, not the bad.

It's flytippers and vandals, not honest citizens, who should be frightened to go out and I have a simple message for them. Dartford doesn't look the other way any more and it's going to get a lot tougher for you – just ask McKinley.

*Councillor Jeremy Kite is Deputy Leader of Dartford Borough Council.*

# Fly Tipper Prosecuted

Dartford is fast becoming a no go zone for fly tippers as the Council takes hard line action against anyone caught tipping in the borough.

Dermot McKinley of Bell Close, Stone is the latest in a long list of fly tipping prosecutions that the Council is steadily racking up. With the help of the BBC, who caught McKinley red handed during filming of an undercover sting operation, Dartford's Enforcement Team were able to successfully prosecute. McKinley pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 100 hours community service and ordered to pay over £1000 in costs by Dartford Magistrates.

The Enforcement Team do not just wait for fly tipping to occur, they are proactive and have put a number of innovative prevention measures in place to stop the disgusting activity.

The Council recently brokered an important deal to help put a stop to the fly tipping menaces that have plagued the Northfleet Industrial Estate. Private companies on the Estate, the Fire Service and CTRL are all contributing to the Council-lead initiative that will see site clearance, local CCTV, perimeter security and improved street lighting.

Councillor Jeremy Kite, Deputy Leader,

wants fly tippers to know that Dartford is a no go zone.

"Fly tipping is a serious crime and we will go to extreme lengths to catch anyone responsible. Fly-tippers are criminals and we treat them as such. The bottom line is that if they try to fly-tip in Dartford they stand a greater chance of being caught and charged." he said.

- Fly tipping is the unlawful and unauthorised disposal of waste.
- Dartford is the county leader for fly tipping arrests and enforcement.
- Dartford is believed to be the first council in the country to work with the Police to secure the arrest of a fly tipper under the new Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005.
- Fly tipping is an arrestable offence, with up to 5 years imprisonment and £50,000 in fines.
- Last year it cost the Dartford taxpayer over £40,000 in clean-up costs.



Flytips cost taxpayers thousands of pounds each year.

## Council-funded cops put the unity back into community

**Crime is a high priority amongst Dartford residents, with many bemoaning the lack of visible policing or beat bobbies. This year has seen the Council funded police community support officers (PCSOs) becoming more noticeable in the borough's towns and villages and the addition of six community wardens has seen the same in Dartford's council estates.**

Despite their high visibility it's not always clear what role PCSOs are playing to help reduce crime and increase security. One such PCSO, Tony Quilter, has been walking the beat in Dartford's villages for more than a year and is now a familiar face.

DBN shadowed Tony as he patrolled his patch on a typical Friday to see how the PCSOs role benefits the local community.

Every morning Tony drives round his five wards in a patrol car, before taking to the streets to meet the residents.

"I absolutely love the job, it's fantastic, I feel a real sense of achievement when I am out on the streets developing strong relationships with the people on my patch. I want to become a familiar face around the area so I try to be out and about, patrolling and getting involved in the local community as much as possible," he said.

"I feel that the role of the PCSO is to put the unity back into community, people like to see a bobby on the beat, it make them feel safe and reassured and that is exactly what PCSOs do."

Tony is extremely passionate about his job, he works hard to ensure that everybody knows who he is and how to get hold of him.

"I put posters up in the local shops and in problem areas I post letters through people's doors to make sure everybody knows who I am and how to hold of me."

Being highly visible and friendly is also a reassurance to local residents and visitors. Karen Gearing of Main Road, Sutton-at-Hone, said "It is a comfort to know that we have someone to contact if we need to."

With seven PCSOs and six community wardens acting as eyes and ears for the Police and Council residents can feel safe and reassured that preventing crime is a top priority.



Tony uses a normal Police car.



Tony getting to know the local residents

VIEW FROM THE CABINET



Ann Allen

Dartford still going strong after 60 years

60 years ago Dartford, a small market town, was celebrating the end of the Second World War and was returning to some kind of normality after six years of air-raids and the threat of invasion. Throughout the war the people of Dartford pulled together and showed great courage and resilience, these characteristics are still evident in Dartford's residents today as we stride into the 21st century.

For many of us this has been an emotional year, the 60th anniversary of the end of WWII has brought back memories to some, and insights of heroism and hardship to others. The commemorative VE events that took place in Dartford not only honoured those who fought and lived through WWII, but also sought to include the younger generation. The remembrance service and street party had a strong community feel and saw Dartford stand together to commemorate the important event.

The VE commemorations brought the older and younger generations together and the Council has strong links with both of these groups. We have an Elder Forum, for residents over the age of 55, which regularly meets to discuss their concerns and issues, and is often consulted on important developments within the community.

Recently we held a joint Youth and Elder Forum. Dartford Youth Council, which was established four years ago and has 47 members, met up with members from the Elder Forum to discuss the issues that were important to them. The forum was a huge success, it was brilliant to see both the younger and older members of the community interacting and getting on so well with each other. We found out that these two very different groups shared many of the same concerns, so now we can tackle and resolve these issues from both perspectives.

We also have strong connections with many voluntary and charitable organisations and we deeply value their contributions to the local community. We provide grants to many community groups and run a yearly funding fair to help these groups and organisations gain funding from external bodies.

Each year we raise money for the Mayor's Charity, and this year is no exception. The Lollipop Appeal is one of the Mayor's chosen charities. We hope that with your help we will be able to raise enough money to make a big difference to the lives of seriously ill children in Dartford.

Councillor Ann Allen is Portfolio Holder for Community and Voluntary issues.

# Lest we forget



The VE commemorations include representatives from the Royal Air Force, Army, Navy and Merchant Navy.



Central Park hosted the Remembrance Service



Every veteran received a commemorative medal.



Dartford High Street had an authentic wartime feel, including gas masks.



Councillor Leadbeater (right) and Councillor Kite offer a high calibre debate.

A series of fantastic events and activities have taken place as part of Dartford's celebrations to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of VE Day.

On 8 May 1945, Victory in Europe was announced and Dartford celebrated, along with the rest of the country, by holding remembrance services and street parties. The borough recreated these traditions in May to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of VE Day.

A remembrance service took place in Central Park to honour Dartford's war heroes and recognised their contribution in securing the country's freedom 60 years ago. Veterans were presented with commemorative scrolls, and at a later ceremony that coincided with the Dartford

Festival, they were awarded with special borough medals.

Council Leader, Councillor Kenneth Leadbeater, believes that it is important to commemorate this historic event as a community.

He said, "We've held an exciting series of events and activities for the whole borough to enjoy, including the traditional remembrance service, street parties and a very moving medal presentation. This gave the community the chance to join together and remember our part in the Second World War and pay tribute to those who made great sacrifices so that we could be here today."



Hannah Treveil and Lucy Jaques test out the hardware.

## Torn apart at D Day reunited 60 years on VE Day



Harry Card and Bill Thorpe last saw each other 60 years ago.

D-Day was the last time two Dartford lads saw each other after their ship, the HMS Swift, was blown apart in one of history's greatest invasion operations.

Bill Thorpe, 81 and Harry Card, 79, both from Dartford, found themselves thrown together in the Royal Navy, where they took part in the Russian convey. They were just off the Isle of Wight when they were commissioned to take part in the Normandy landings.

Although the operation was a success, their ship was severely bombarded and eventually destroyed. Harry was patched up and sent to the Far East, but Bill was so badly injured that he was invalided out of the Navy.

By chance the pair meet up again 60 years later at the Normandy Veterans Association, Dartford. They have since lunched with their old Captain, J R Gower, 93, whose nephew is the cricketer, David Gower OBE, and attended the Dartford VE Day commemorations.

Harry said, "It is amazing to meet up with someone who you have shared so much with after such a long time. It is very fitting that we are here, in Dartford, together to commemorate VE day. This has been an absolutely brilliant event and I have really enjoyed the presentation."

# Tenants make Key Decision to stay with Council

Housing services provided by the Council received the thumbs up from tenants and leaseholders recently when more than 90% voted to stay with the Council rather than see the transfer of housing management to a third party.

The vote, which saw more than 1600 returns from 7400 tenants, leaseholders and waiting list applicants, was the final part of the Council's consultation programme for the Government's 'Decent Homes' project.

Under Decent Homes tenants and leaseholders would have a minimum standard of accommodation laid down by the Government. However plans unveiled by the Council, called

Decent Homes +, met a higher standard than the minimum at a projected cost of £171 million over the next 30 years.

An additional option, costing £221 million, would have delivered an even higher standard of accommodation, called the aspiration standard, but would have had the drawback of housing management services being transferred to an arms length management company.

The final decision, based on reports by independent advisors and the results of the tenants' survey, was made by the Council and signed off by the Government in late July.

## Easy access to Council services

An innovative new on-line service that allows residents to check their details on the Internet has been unveiled by Dartford Borough Council.

The Council's IT Team has integrated new e.Citizen software onto the Council's website, meaning that residents can now access their Council Tax accounts, Benefits records and more, quickly and easily from home or work.

Added benefits of the secure system also allow easier form-filling on-line, so visiting [www.dartford.gov.uk](http://www.dartford.gov.uk) and reporting problems is simpler.

The e.Citizen system also enables contact with the Council to be monitored, and e.Citizens, as they are known, can 'track' issues they report using the inbuilt 'logging process'.

Visit [www.dartford.gov.uk](http://www.dartford.gov.uk)

# PM's Flying Visit



Deputy Leader Councillor Jeremy Kite introduces Dartford Council's Managing Director Graham Harris to Tony Blair.

Prime Minister Tony Blair made a flying visit to Dartford earlier this year to take part in a radio phone-in on BBC Radio Kent. He used the Civic Centre's BBC radio studio to answer the public's questions after meeting the Council's Managing Director, Graham Harris.

## Council fights station staff reductions

Plans by South East Trains to reduce Ticket Office staffing, despite rising numbers of train passengers, have led to the Council setting up an online petition, accessible from [www.dartford.gov.uk](http://www.dartford.gov.uk).

South East Trains' proposals include the closure of the Stone Crossing ticket office and major off-peak ticket office closures at Longfield and Farningham Road. Other stations in the borough could also see reductions in service as the train operator increases the number of automated ticket machines and 'revenue protection officers'.

Cllr Tony Martin, Cabinet Member with responsibility for finance and business, says commuters and leisure passengers deserve better.

"These plans are a slap in the face for Dartford's long-suffering train passengers. South East Trains hand over to a new franchisee in the next year so these proposals are at completely the wrong time - though I think there will never be a right time to cut ticket office times. South East Trains should drop these plans and concentrate on increasing the level of service to their customers."

## Council outraged by violence

Road rage has moved to the streets as Dartford's parking attendants face a torrent of daily abuse from illegally parked drivers. The Council has condemned this aggressive behaviour and are determined to take hard line action against anyone who flouts the law.

Recently, the Council was outraged by the violent behaviour of 29 year old Austin Hicks of Old Highway in Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire. He attacked a parking attendant, in October last year, after being issued with a £60 fine for parking in a restricted zone in Bullace Lane, Dartford. The parking attendant was rescued from his attacker by three members of the public, who later testified against Hicks in court. The Orchard Shopping Centre's security team also provided a helping hand and restrained Hicks while they waited for the Police.

Hicks was found guilty of assault by beating, at Dartford Magistrates' Court. He was sentenced to a conditional discharge of 12 months and fined £450 in crown prosecution costs and £100 in compensation.

Councillor Jeremy Kite, Deputy Leader of the Council, said the Council will always prosecute thugs who attack Council staff whilst they carry out their duties. He said

"We will press for firm action to be taken by the police and courts against anyone who abuses, threatens or attacks a member of our

staff. We work hard to make Dartford a safe place to live and we will not tolerate violence of any kind.

"We don't issue parking tickets to make money, we use them to help keep traffic moving. Parking attendants carry out a vital role within the community and tickets are only issued to motorists who defy the regulations put in place to help us all."



Off road parking causes havoc.



Parking on double yellow lines is an offence.

### New Electoral Registration Service

A new service that allows voters to confirm their electoral details over the telephone and internet will make life easier for residents this summer.

The annual updating of the electoral register takes place during September and October, with every home receiving a list of those entitled to vote at that address.

Any household with no changes to their electoral record can use the telephone or internet to confirm their details.

Those with changes will need to return the form by post as normal.

For more details call the electoral team on 01322 343426 or email [electoral.registration@dartford.gov.uk](mailto:electoral.registration@dartford.gov.uk).

# Festival fever



Face painting fun for Livvy Abbley

Thousands flocked to this year's Dartford Festival to enjoy the summer sun and carnival atmosphere. Just over 25,000 visitors were attracted to the fun of the borough's big free festival weekend.

Some festival goers enjoyed the festivities so much that they came on both days. Helen Kitchener from Temple Hill, brought her daughter, Morgan aged five, on both the Saturday and Sunday.

She said, "This is such a great day out that we've come back for a second day. There is so much going on, we just didn't want to miss anything."

Beach volleyball was a major attraction turning Central Park into a Mediterranean paradise. Teams from across the country, and as far afield as Canada, took part in the two day tournament with 100 tonnes of sand, donated by J Clubb, to create Dartford's spectacular parkland beach (see back page).

The Mayor's tea tent was busy throughout the Festival providing refreshments and shade from the hot summer sun. The Mayor of Dartford, Councillor Ian Armitt, hosted

hundreds of visitors boosting his charity fund, the Lollipop Appeal, by over £1000.

DJ workshop, skateboarding half pipes, 200ft crane lifts, dance troupes, circus acts and many more provided the weekend's entertainment, and gave visitors an opportunity to try out new things.

Councillor Mrs Pasty Thurlow, Portfolio Holder for the Dartford Festival, said that the Festival was a wonderful success.



Mini Michael Owens give it their best shot.



Molly Thomas found a better use for the sand.



Morgan Kitchener and her mum Helen with Bob the Dog and friends



We wished for a sunny weekend, and got one.



High flying Harley Dean



Action on the volleyball court

# Get wired in Swanscombe

A derelict building in Swanscombe is to be transformed into an important new centre for community use after the Council agreed the exciting plans at the latest cabinet meeting. The old library, located on Church Road, will be converted into a top quality computer centre, with community meeting spaces and training facilities.

The historic building, which started out as a Fire Station, has played a significant role within the community and will continue to do so, becoming the hub of local activity. The upstairs will be converted into a computer training

facility, teaching the latest I.T skills in industry based courses, while the downstairs will offer facilities for the whole community to enjoy.

Councillor Kenneth Leadbeater, Leader of the Council, believes that this exciting new project will greatly benefit the people of Swanscombe and Greenhithe.

He said, "The old library is an asset to the community and we will be keeping many of the buildings original features. This project is a real opportunity for Swanscombe residents to achieve certificated qualification in IT and gain employment in this profitable industry. We want

to encourage further learning, and we feel that this is the right way to go about it.

The facility will also provide a valuable space for community use, offering areas for local agencies, the Police and residents to use and enjoy."

The project, funded by Dartford Borough Council and Urban Thames Gateway Kent, should be up and running by next July. Courses will include those certified by CISCO Systems, MicroSoft, Sun Micro Systems and Panduit.



New top floor of the converted fire station

## Wentworth School's Kwik Cricket

Pupils from Wentworth Primary School went head to head with cricket teams from around the County after beating eight Dartford teams and the winner of the Gravesham Kwik Cricket Festival. Team Wentworth represented the Dartford and Gravesham Cricket District in the Kent Final and came a respectable seventh out of sixteen.

The School took advantage of a Council scheme which offered 40% off the cost of five hours cricket training. The team steadily improved throughout the competition and delighted crowds with their hard hitting, fast bowling and athletic fielding.

Councillor Mrs Patsy Thurlow, Portfolio Holder for Sport, was proud that a team from Wentworth School got through to the finals.

She said, "I am thrilled that a Dartford team had the opportunity to represent the district in the Kent Final, it just goes to show that all their hard work paid off. The Kwik Cricket Festival is an excellent event and a great opportunity for children to shine and demonstrate their newly learnt skills."



The winning team with Mayor Ian Armit

## Youth Council scoops citizenship award



DYC members at the award evening

Dartford's young people have the best youth organisation in the region - and that's official! The Dartford Youth Council (DYC) scooped top prize for Citizenship and Environment at the latest Try-Angle awards for young people, held at Gravesham's Woodville Halls.

Since its creation in 2001 the youth Council has come a long way, increasing in membership from 6 to 48 members and taking a lead on representing young people in the borough. Earlier this year the DYC published the results of

a comprehensive survey of young people - with more than 2200 responses.

Michael Horwood, 18, Chairman of the Youth Council, said the result was a reflection of the hard work put in by all Council members over the last two years.

"We've been very proactive over the last two years, especially when highlighting the opinions of the young people in Dartford, and I'm sure that our voice has helped to make positive changes in the borough," he said.

## DartAround is back

DartAround, the popular discount scheme, which makes travel cheaper for young people is back. For the month of August young people aged 16 and 17 can take advantage of the scheme and make the most of their Summer by travelling around the borough for half price.

The scheme, run in partnership with Arriva and the Council, enables young people to travel on Arriva buses in and around the Borough for half the normal fare, all day and every day during August.

To take advantage of the 50% discount, young people must simply show the bus driver either a Citizencard or a Connexions Card. Citizencard is a national proof of age card that is free of charge and easily obtained from the website [www.citizencard.net](http://www.citizencard.net). Application forms for a connexions card can be obtained from the Dartford Connexions Office in Hythe Street or can be downloaded from the internet at [www.connexionscard.com](http://www.connexionscard.com)

Councillor Alex Dunn, Portfolio Holder for Young People, believes that it is important to provide young people with affordable travel.

He said, "The DartAround scheme is extremely successful. It makes travelling around the borough more affordable for young people and gives them the opportunity to really make the most of their summer."



## Brian Conley is Aladdin



Britain's best loved entertainer, Brian Conley, will be dazzling Dartford residents as Aladdin in The Orchard Theatre's spectacular Christmas panto. Fresh from his success in 'Chitty Chitty Bang Bang' at the London Palladium, he will be joining a host of stars to create an Arabian night of magic. To book tickets contact The Orchard Theatre on 01322 220000 or visit [www.orchardtheatre.co.uk](http://www.orchardtheatre.co.uk).

# Ballet to move you

An unique opportunity to see top performers from The Royal Ballet and Kirov Ballet companies, including Russia's top dancer Andrei Merkuriev, performing together for the first time in a programme of exciting choreography comes to The Orchard Theatre in Dartford from Tuesday 2nd to Thursday 4th August.

Kenneth Leadbeater, Leader of Dartford Borough Council, has been instrumental in bringing ballet to Dartford and is keen to encourage borough residents to experience its unique atmosphere.

"This year's shows will be three nights of fantastic entertainment and some of the most exhilarating dance anywhere in Europe, so I would thoroughly recommend it to anyone with an interest in art, culture or dance," he said.

"Bringing the Royal Ballet back to Dartford highlights the success of our thrilling shows last year and is a direct result of the public's response. We had ballet-lovers from across the south east blazing a trail to Dartford, which shows just how popular the performances were.

Cllr Leadbeater continued, "The Orchard Theatre isn't the first place you would think of when you think of international ballet but the atmosphere and intimacy of it as a venue is perfect for this kind of show. I'm really looking forward to it."

The production, BalletMoves, brings emerging choreographer Ernst Meisner to Dartford together with some of the most exciting talents in a new production created especially for Dartford.

The programme is based on 21st Century choreography and will feature some of the most talented dancers in the world, notably Leanne Benjamin, Mara Galeazzi, David Makhateli and Edward Watson from The Royal Ballet, and Irina Golub and Andrei Merkuriev from St Petersburg fresh from their triumph as the Kirov's Juliet and Romeo at the Royal Opera House last week.

In what will be an exhilarating evening of dance the British premiere of Wayne Eagling's Duet, as well as works by Kenneth MacMillan, Patrick Delcroix and Alexei Ratmansky, the Director of the Bolshoi Ballet.



Mara Galeazzi

## Top star jetés in



Edward Watson

Home grown star Edward Watson, who comes from a Dartford Family, danced his way to the top after being made Principal Dancer at the world renowned Royal Ballet.

His career began at the age of three when he started taking ballet lessons with his twin sister. His talent soon shone through, and he began the Royal Ballet School at the age of eight.

Joining the Royal Ballet Company in 1994 he has successfully worked his way up through the ranks. He is now one of just



Watson in action

seven male principal dancers at the Royal Ballet.

Edward said, "I am thrilled to have been made principal dancer and am looking forward to returning to my home town in August to perform at The Orchard Theatre. I would like to thank everybody in Dartford for their continuing support of me."

Edward Watson is appearing in Ballet Moves - A Feast of International Choreography at The Orchard Theatre in August.

# What's on

## CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Orchard Theatre 01322 220000  
Mick Jagger Centre 01322 291100  
Miskin Theatre 01322 629472

## AUGUST

TUES 2 - THURS 4  
The Orchard Theatre

## SEPTEMBER

FRI 2 - SAT 10  
SEVEN BRIDES FOR SEVEN BROTHERS  
The Orchard Theatre

MON 12  
PORGY & BESS  
The Orchard Theatre

WEDS 14  
MAX BOYCE  
The Orchard Theatre

THUR 15  
BBC BIG BAND & MELANIE STACE  
The Orchard Theatre

FRI 16 & SAT 17  
MARTY WILDE & JOE BROWN  
The Orchard Theatre

MON 19 - SAT 24  
ANNIE  
The Orchard Theatre

MON 26  
CARMEN  
The Orchard Theatre

TUES 27  
STEVE HARLEY & COCKNEY REBEL  
The Orchard Theatre

WEDS 28  
THE HOLLIES  
The Orchard Theatre

THUR 29  
RUSSIAN COSSACK DANCERS  
The Orchard Theatre

FRI 30  
SWAN LAKE  
The Orchard Theatre

FRI 30  
THE BLUES BAND  
The Mick Jagger Centre

## OCTOBER

SAT 1  
ARDAL O'HANLON  
The Orchard Theatre

MON 3  
PATSY CLINE - THE CONCERT  
The Orchard Theatre

TUES 4  
KEVIN BLOODY WILSON  
The Orchard Theatre

THUR 6  
MARK THOMAS & ROBERT NEWMAN  
The Orchard Theatre

FRI 7  
LEN PHILLIPS BIG BAND WITH JEFF HOOPER  
The Mick Jagger Centre

SAT 8  
BJORN AGAIN  
The Mick Jagger Centre

SAT 8  
LONDON WELSH MALE VOICE CHOIR  
The Orchard Theatre

MON 10 - SAT 15  
LADY SALSA  
The Orchard Theatre

SAT 15  
DARTFORD SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA  
The Mick Jagger Centre

TUES 18 - SAT 22  
DAODS PRESENT 42ND STREET  
The Orchard Theatre

FRI 21  
OYSTERBAND  
The Mick Jagger Centre

SAT 22  
BARBARA THOMPSON'S PARAPHERNALIA  
The Mick Jagger Centre

SUN 23  
YOUTH TALENT SPECTACULAR  
The Orchard Theatre

TUES 25 - SAT 29  
GEORGE'S MARVELLOUS MEDICINE  
The Orchard Theatre

TUES 25  
WALTER TROUT  
The Mick Jagger Centre

FRI 28  
ELKIE BROOKS  
The Mick Jagger Centre

SAT 29  
THREE MEN AND BLACK  
The Mick Jagger Centre

## Performance Details

TUES 2 AUGUST 7.30PM £8.00 - £36.00  
WEDS 3 AUGUST 7.30PM £10.00 - £40.00  
THUR 4 AUGUST 7.30PM £10.00 - £52.00

**Concessions** - excludes top and bottom price seats and discounts are off the standard price.

Groups 10+: £6 off all performances  
School/Youth Groups: Seats at £6 Tues (Upper Circle only)

Under 17s: HALF PRICE  
Tues & Weds

Over 60s: £6 off Tues

For further information and the only chance to see BalletMoves at The Orchard Theatre please contact the Box Office on 01322 220000 or visit [www.orchardtheatre.co.uk](http://www.orchardtheatre.co.uk)

# DART sports

## Football's coming home

**APPROVED**



New Clubhouse, Princes Park

Jubilant football fans are celebrating after plans for a new stadium in the town were approved by the Council.

After a nomadic 13 years, including spells in Essex, Belvedere and Northfleet, the club will finally return to Dartford to a state of the art new home at Princes Park.

The 5000 capacity stadium, which also includes facilities such as clubhouse, with function rooms and bar, community pitch, public plaza and gardens, should be ready in time for the start of the 2006/07 season.

Councillor Jeremy Kite, Deputy Leader of the Council and Darts fan, has spent more than 18 months working on the plans and says he is ecstatic that football was coming home.

"I'm completely over the moon and I'm really looking forward to seeing the first match at Princes Park. When we set out to bring the Darts home we said we wanted a first class facility that

fans and non-fans alike could be proud of. I'm delighted to say that the new Princes Park will meet these requirements and the stadium will be the perfect place for entertainment, leisure, sports and business," he said.

The stadium will be one of the most ecologically sound ever built, with timber cladding, its own water recycling ecosystem and a grassed roof.

Bill Archer, Chairman of Dartford Football Club, says he is thrilled by the decision

"This is amazing news for the Darts, not just because we are back in Dartford but because we can make a huge contribution to the local community. We can continue to increase our fan base and use these state of the art facilities to help develop sport within the area. We have been waiting to come home for thirteen years and now we can, this is an historic day for the Darts," he said.



Visitors will enjoy top class community facilities.

# International Beach Volleyball hits Dartford

Volleyball stars from around the world were out in force to take part in Kent's largest ever beach volleyball tournament at this year's Dartford Festival.

Teams from across the country and as far afield as Canada took part in the popular sport. More than 100 tonnes of sand, donated by J Clubb Ltd, was shipped in for the Lucozade sponsored competition to create Dartford's very own beach in the heart of the town.

Councillor Mrs Patsy Thurlow, Portfolio Holder for Sports and Leisure, enjoyed watching the volleyball.

She said, "It is wonderful that residents can take part in and watch such a wide variety of sports in the borough. Who would ever have imagined that Dartford would host an international beach volleyball tournament. It just goes to show what we can accomplish when we put our minds to it."

26 teams, and 130 players, battled it out to win one of four trophies. The host team, Dartford Volleyball Club, won the mixed 4 v 4 grass tournament and came runners up in the mixed 6 v 6 grass competition.

Dartford Volleyball Club is an up and coming team who are entering their second season in National League Volleyball. The women's team is also very successful, and they are hoping to enter the National League next year

Dartford's Club trains every Wednesday, from 8pm - 10pm, at Acacia Hall.

For more information contact Chris Dixon on 07990 897 947 or [info@dartfordvolleyballclub.co.uk](mailto:info@dartfordvolleyballclub.co.uk) or visit

[www.dartfordvolleyballclub.co.uk](http://www.dartfordvolleyballclub.co.uk)



Sun, sand and Central Park - the ideal combination

## Sports and Fitness Centres

### FAIRFIELD POOL & LEISURE CENTRE

TELEPHONE: (01322) 224400

DARTFORD Borough's largest sport & leisure centre, Fairfield boasts a 2000 sq. ft. air conditioned fitness gym with state of the art equipment, 25m swimming pool plus teaching pool, spacious air conditioned dance studio, luxurious health suite featuring large sauna and steam rooms, refreshing jacuzzi complete with resident aromatherapist and beautician, squash courts.

### PRINCES PARK

TELEPHONE: (01322) 276565

PRINCES PARK, the proposed new home for Dartford Football Club, is set in thirty acres of parkland, and offers a wide range of first class sporting facilities including a par three, nine hole golf course.

### BECKET SPORTS CENTRE

TELEPHONE: (01322) 280646

Shepherds Lane, Dartford. Please call for opening hours and charges.