

Newsletter

March 2023



Themes This Month

- International Women's Day
- Your latest NALC updates
- Health and Wellbeing News
- Partner Updates
- Our latest events
- Election News



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Our Social Calendar



- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| · 8 March | International Women's Day |
| · 6 to 8 May | Coronation of King Charles III Bank Holiday Weekend |
| · All through May | No Mow May |
| · 15th – 21st May | Mental Health Awareness Week |
| · 19 May | Kent Dementia Showcase Event |
| · 15 June | National Clean Air Day |
| · 10–18 June | Great Big Green Week |
| · All through July | Plastic Free July |
| · 21 Sept | World Alzheimer's Day |
| · 10 Oct | World Mental Health Day |
| · 4 –21 Nov | UK Parliament Week |
| · 19 – 26 Nov | Road Safety Week |
| · 13 Nov | World Kindness Day |
| · 25 Nov | White Ribbon Day |
| · 27 Nov – 5 Dec | National Tree Week |
| · 3 Dec | International Day of Persons with Disabilities |
| · 4 Dec | Wildlife conservation Day |
| · 5 Dec | International Volunteers Day |



Join KALC for our March 2023 Events!
Booking now open – reserve your place by
visiting this link:

Training & Events – KALC (kentalc.gov.uk)

Our Conferences:

- Climate Change Conference – Online event. 17 March 2023 from 10am. Pricing from £50 plus VAT
- Annual Planning Conference – Venue based event at Lenham Community Centre 30 March 2023 from 9:30am. Pricing from £60 plus VAT

AND DON'T FORGET...

If you have someone who has expressed an interest in being a Councillor – enrol them on this free event:

- **Becoming a Local Councillor.** Online event 21 March at 7pm for one hour. Free!

Our Workshops and Webinars

- Implementing Effective Community Engagement at Your Council. Online event 2 March 2023 from 6pm
- Embracing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at Your Council. Online event. 9 March 2023 at 2pm

These events are in association with Breakthrough Communications. Pricing from £37 plus VAT

- Achieving the CiLCA 2nd Session Venue based event 23 March 2023 at Ditton Community Centre from 9:30am. Pricing from £60 plus VAT
- The Dynamic Councillor. Online event. 23 March 2023 from 6pm. KALC event – Pricing from £50 plus VAT



SCAN ME TO BOOK!

Newsletter

What's Happening at KALC



Our Climate Change Conference 17 March -online event

****DRAFT PROGRAMME - subject to change****



How we harness the power and voice of that most ancient of English government institutions (the Town/Parish Council) to really ratchet up action and awareness.

We are extremely excited to announce that we have secured Rachel Coxcoon, Founder and Director of ClimateChange as the keynote speaker of the KALC Climate Change Conference 2023. We are grateful for the effort that Rachel has put into choosing the speakers for the Conference and also the themes.

Speakers:

Rachel Coxcoon

Outlines predictions (re global temperatures) following on from COP27 focusing on what the likely impacts will be for Kent and the wider SE of England. Suggestion of broad areas for highest-impact actions for local communities and how to communicate with residents.

John Whitelegg

Topic: For rural areas – the highest impact areas will be transport and buildings. John Whitelegg from the Foundation for Integrated Transport will speak on moving away from car dependency and looking at on-demand public transport. He will also discuss how to campaign for better active transport.

James Hood

Practical retrofit. James from Bruton Town Council in Somerset will talk about their town-based retrofit advisory service, which launched in autumn 2021, for more information see <https://retrofit.brutontown.com/>

Rachel Coxcoon / Exeter University

A new climate change adaptation tool that aims to give simple advice to local government on the sorts of measures that could be taken in any given area. This practical advice will be on the sorts of adaptations that will work to make the area more resilient to the impacts of climate change.

Robin Webster

Robin from Climate Outreach, will talk in some depth about their approach to having 'Climate Conversations' – something that could give parish councillors more confidence to just talk about climate change in their daily work and in their interactions with the community.

Final programme to follow. Not to be missed if you want to explore the role of your Council in the Climate Change Agenda.

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What's Happening at KALC



Our Planning Conference 30 March –
Venue Event

Our Annual Planning Conference, at a venue, is back!

Our annual Planning Conference is at a venue this year! Join KALC for this event at Lenham Community Centre. We are lucky to have an excellent array of speakers for the day.

The Conference this year is one where we will have speakers for the entirety and there is no training as this will be covered at a later date after elections have taken place. Plenty of opportunities to network during lunch, which is provided mid way and is included in the price of your ticket.

Here's our provisional programme for the day –

- National Planning Policy and the Future of Planning in Kent
- Local Travel
- Planning for Biodiversity
- Preparing for a Community-scale Energy Scheme
- A case study tour of Conserving Heritage Assets at the Local Level

There will be a Manifesto for Kent board too, which will encourage delegates to put their thoughts on paper, and discuss with others. We have a good range of speakers lined up, and will confirm the final programme as soon as possible.



Notice of election - Not later than **27th March**

Delivery of nomination papers - From the date stated on the notice of the election up to 4pm on **4th April**

Publication of statement of persons nominated - Not later than 4pm on **5th April**

Deadline for registration of electors - **17th April**

Deadline for applications to vote by post - **18th April at 5pm**

Deadline for applications to vote by proxy - **25th April at 5pm**

Election Day - **4th May**

Coronation of King Charles III - **6 May**

Bank holiday - The Big Help Out - **8th May**

Newly elected Councillor take office - **9th May**

First Annual Meeting can be held between **10th and 24th May** (14 days after the election)

You now need
photo ID to vote at
a polling station

Elections Act 2022

The Elections Act 2022 received Royal Assent on 28th April 2022. This ensures that UK elections remain secure, fair, modern, inclusive and transparent. The UK Government is making changes to the UK Electoral system. The Act contains measures that affect the elections and the way we vote, campaigning and the rules on campaign spending and funding, parliamentary oversight of the Electoral Commission.

From 4th May 2023, all voters will need to show photo ID at all polling stations. Accepted forms of Photo ID are:

- Passport
- Driving (this includes a provisional) Licence
- A Blue Badge
- Bus Passes

If your ID is out of date, you can still use it as long as it looks like you. The name on your ID should be the same you registered to vote.

If you don't have the correct form of ID then you can apply for a free Voter ID document called a "Voter Authority Certificate". You will need to register to vote before applying for this. The deadline to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate is 5pm Tuesday 25th April 2023.

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CODE OF RECOMMENDED PRACTICE ON LOCAL AUTHORITY PUBLICITY (ENGLAND) / PUBLICITY DURING THE PRE-ELECTION PERIOD (purdah)

A code of recommended practice on local authority publicity ('The Code') was issued on 31 March 2011. By virtue of s.6 of the Local Government Act 1986, the Code applies to parish councils.

It is recommended that parish councils follow the Code, which is available via the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/recommendedcode-of-practice-for-local-authority-publicity>.

Paragraph 28 of the Code says:

"Local authorities should not publish or incur expenditure in commissioning in hard copy or on any website, newsletters, newssheets, or similar communications which seek to emulate commercial newspapers in style or content. Where local authorities do commission or publish newsletters, newssheets or similar communications, they should not issue them more frequently than quarterly, apart from parish councils which should not issue them more frequently than monthly. Such communications should not include material other than information for the public about the business, services and amenities of the council or other local service providers".

Paragraphs 34 and 35 of the Code are set out below:

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“During the period between the notice of an election and the election itself, local authorities should not publish any publicity on controversial issues or report views or proposals in such a way that identifies them with any individual members or groups of members. Publicity relating to individuals involved directly in the election should not be published by local authorities during this period unless expressly authorised by or under statute. It is permissible for local authorities to publish factual information which identifies the names, wards and parties of candidates at elections.

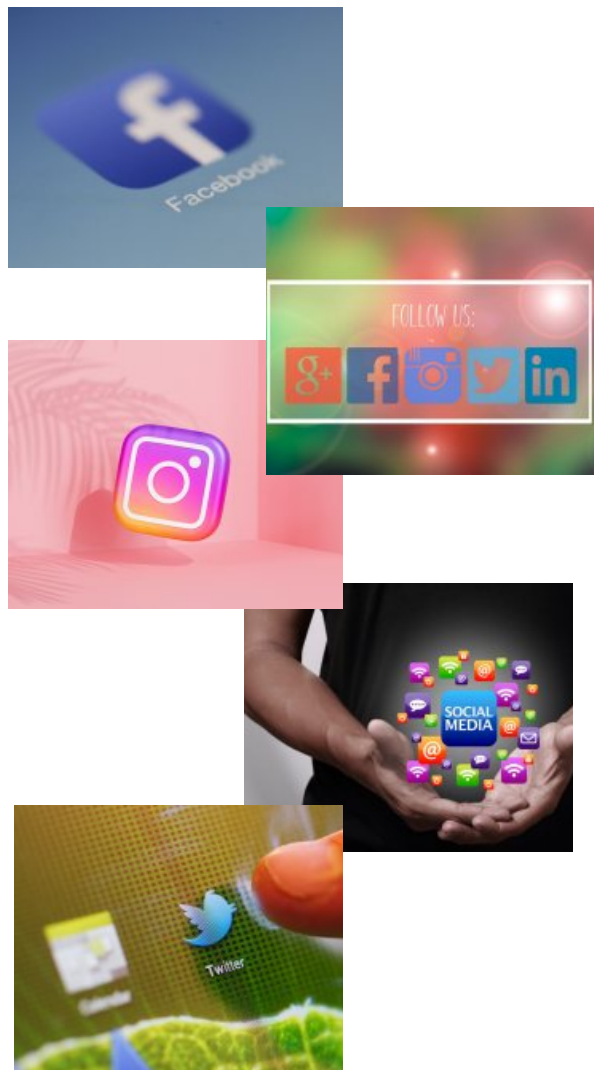
In general, local authorities should not issue any publicity which seeks to influence voters. However, this general principle is subject to any statutory provision which authorises expenditure being incurred on the publication of material designed to influence the public as to whether to support or oppose a question put at a referendum. It is acceptable to publish material relating to the subject matter of a referendum, for example, to correct any factual inaccuracies which have appeared in publicity produced by third parties, so long as this is even-handed and objective and does not support or oppose any of the options which are the subject of the vote”.

Its clear that Local Councils should look to postpone any expenditure around big ticket items or delay any major new decisions until after the May elections where possible. However, not at the expense of any significant additional expenditure (e.g., contractual) or reputational damage that may result. Purdah was never designed to derail your regular business. Therefore, anything that is a regular item or usual business that is underway will be acceptable. In terms of individuals: the chairman will set a good example by ensuring that they do not grandstand or take advantage; particularly around projects and members should be wary of promoting themselves as individuals and at all points the approach should be neutral and toned down during this sensitive period.

In addition, member councils should also consult their local Electoral Registration Officer (Democratic Services) at their district council (or unitary authority) to ascertain any local guidance and advice. Please see your district council website.

The Local Government Association has published a short guide to publicity during the pre-election period. The guide is available via the following link:
<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/guidance-and-resources/pre-electionperiod>.

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Let's Get Social...

KALC now has a wide presence on the main social media sites.... it's time to follow us!

Our Social Media sites have been refreshed and we are really keen for our member councils to follow us across all our platforms. We know that social media is the way forward in spreading information instantly with our audience, but we will need you to engage with us. Here's how:

- Follow KALC on Facebook here: [Kent Alc | Facebook](#)
- Follow KALC on Instagram here: [Kent Assoc of Local Councils \(@kentalc\)](#) • Instagram photos and videos
- Follow us on Twitter here: [Kent Association of Local Councils \(@KentLocCouncil\)](#) / Twitter

Don't Forget Your Feedback!

We really do value what feedback we get from our events. It allows us to see what we are doing well, and what may need to be altered or changed for the future. KALC sends a feedback survey to all delegates after an event has finished and we ask you to take a few moments to consider your opinion of the time you spent at a face to face session, workshop or online webinar. This really does help us to tailor our learning events and we are always appreciative of any feedback we receive from you.

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International Women's Day

8 March 2023

"The aim of the IWD 2023 #EmbraceEquity campaign theme is to get the world talking about Why equal opportunities aren't enough. People start from different places, so true inclusion and belonging require equitable action." IWD: International Women's Day 2023 campaign theme: #EmbraceEquity (internationalwomensday.com)



International Women's Day is important to us all. This year, the theme is #EmbraceEquity. KALC has been supporting the Day for some years now. We asked our members to nominate women in their communities who have inspired others with work and engagement that has gone above and beyond. Your replies were brilliant and we are pleased to announce our winners here...



- Wendy Gregory, Parish Clerk at Selling Parish Council, who helped her parish navigate the difficult times we all had during the COVID 19 crisis, even though she had only just taken on her role in that community. She also gained her qualifications during that time, and was instrumental in the Council's LCA Foundation Award
- Gaye Thomas MBE, Parish Clerk at Sandgate Parish Council. Her nomination mentions her enthusiasm for breathing new life into the very well used library in the village. Her residents say she is inspiring and always willing to help in the community
- Alexandra Fullwood, Councillor to East Farleigh Parish Council. Her clerk, Desiree Home, nominated her for her enthusiastic approach to her role and mentions her passion for the village that she represents.

We will be sending all of our winners a £20 Amazon Voucher in recognition of their achievements

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Important Updates for Clerks

Please see the following link regarding current Audit Procedures for Local Councils:

Procurement Policy Note – update to legal and policy requirements to publish procurement information on Contracts Finder (publishing.service.gov.uk)

PAY SCALE NEWS FOR LOCAL COUNCILS

Council Staff have been offered a £1925 pay rise. Please follow the attached link for further news on this here:

Council staff offered £1,925 pay rise | Local Government Chronicle (LGC) (lgcplus.com)



CONSULTATION!

"We are proposing changes to the way we use our buildings to deliver some of our community services. We invite your feedback on our proposals as part of this consultation.

Why are we proposing changes?

The Council has experienced big increases in costs and has less money to spend. So, we need to look ahead and do things differently to make sure we can still help residents in the years to come."



This is a really important consultation and we encourage Councils to take part. You can do so until 26 March, and the consultation can be found by following this link:

Community Services Consultation | Let's talk Kent

Newsletter

News from NALC



NALC Updates

1,000 local councils sign the Civility and Respect Pledge

1,000 local (parish and town) councils have now signed up for the Civility and Respect Pledge. Launched just six months ago as part of our Civility and Respect Project, the Pledge demonstrates that councils are committed to standing up to poor behaviour and driving through positive changes that support civil and respectful conduct. And the more councils that sign the Pledge, the more impact it will have in lobbying the government to re-visit its response to the Committee on Standards in Public Life report on local government ethical standards. Can I urge all councils yet to sign the Pledge to do so.

New suite of e-learning on civility and respect

The Civility and Respect Project has also launched a new suite of e-learning courses for local councils. We recognise that webinars and training courses only sometimes suit the busy schedules of local councils. Yet e-learning allows councils to respond quickly to learners' needs, with flexibility and without having to organise physical training with fixed dates and times. The new courses are on standards in public life, respectful and positive social media for councils and councillors, leadership in challenging situations, and personal resilience.

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News from NALC



The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) has urged the House of Lords to make essential changes to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill to ensure local (parish and town) councils play their part in levelling up and improving local communities.

NALC president, Baroness Scott of Needham Market, has put forward a package of amendments for peers to consider, which seek to address many of the most pressing issues the sector faces that are within the remit of the Bill. They include

- For councils to be able to hold remote meetings
- Suspension of councillors who breach the code of conduct
- Access to direct government funding and grants
- A timetable for the neighbourhood governance review to make it easier to set up new local councils
- Payment of dependent carers allowance to councillors
- The extension of the General Power of Competence

NALC has sent a briefing in support of the amendments to one hundred critical contacts in the House of Lords, urging them to support Baroness Scott during the Committee Stage of the Bill over the next few weeks.

Cllr Keith Stevens, NALC chair, said: "We are extremely grateful for Baroness Scott's work to promote these changes to this important levelling up Bill. If adopted, they will make a significant difference to the ability of NALC's 10,000 local councils and 100,000 councillors. I urge the House of Lords and government members to consider them seriously."

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News from NALC



NALC EVENTS

TACKLING THE HOUSING CRISIS THE LOCAL WAY,
WITH CUSTOM AND SELF-BUILD HOMES
15 MARCH 2023 - ONLINE EVENT

WHAT LOCAL COUNCILS CAN DO ABOUT
EMERGENCY PLANNING
29 MARCH 2023 - ONLINE EVENT

STUDY TOUR 2023: NEWPORT PAGNELL TOWN
COUNCIL
27 -28 JUNE 2023 - FIELD TRIP



AVAILABLE FOR BOOKING HERE
Events (nalc.gov.uk)

Newsletter

News from our Partners



Everyday Active Small Grant Scheme

Aimed at local sports clubs and community groups that are in need of some funding? Applications are still open for Active Kent and Medway's - Everyday Active small grant scheme until the end of March 2023!

Funding is available for projects that deliver things like new activity programmes or community events designed to re-engage with their previous audience and/or encourage those new to activity to be active. Funding can be used for things like the cost of equipment, venue hire, coaching and the promotion of sessions.

The scheme has supported a significant number of Kent and Medway based organisations to increase physical activity participation within their local community. Click on the link below to find out more and how you can apply and to discover how successful recipients have benefitted from receiving a grant and what it meant for their organisation.

[Everyday Active Small Grant - ActiveKent](#)

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News from our Partners



From 20 March - residents can apply for next phase of SolarTogether. This is the scheme that uses collective buying to bring down the cost of solar panels for households. Those who register should get a quote in June with a 4 week decision period. More information can be found here:

Solar Together Kent - Kent County Council and see the article on the next page as well!

Keep encouraging your community to recycle their food waste! Kent recycles more food waste than any other part of the country, according to this new report :

The Food Waste Report - Blog | AEG

Food waste from kerbsides is taken to Blaise Farm in Maidstone, where it is converted to biogas and fertiliser.



Green Initiatives

Adapting to Climate Change and Flooding -The Flood and Water Management Team has secured £115,000 of funding from the Environment Agency Flood Defence Grant in Aid and Local Levy, to deliver a culvert replacement scheme at Catts Place near Paddock Wood. The scheme will deliver approximately £250,000 of benefits by protecting 11 properties from flooding.

Book reuse at the Household Waste Recycling Centres - Book donation banks are being rolled-out across the network of HWRCs. Customers will now be able to leave their books for reuse in a dedicated container, rather than sending them for recycling or energy recovery. The books are sent to the Precycle Group to be checked and if they can still be read, they will be sold to retail and wholesale customers

Newsletter

News from our Partners



SolarTogether

From 20 March, residents will be able to register for the third round of Solar Together, the scheme which uses collective-buying power to bring down the price of solar PV (photovoltaic) panels. Vetted solar installers compete in a reverse auction (lowest price wins) to win the contract to supply and install solar panels. The scheme is open to residents, small to medium sized enterprises and commonhold associations. Registrants can expect to receive a quote in June and have a 4-week period to decide if they want to proceed.

All 12 district councils, KCC and Medway are supporting the scheme and sending letters to over 50,000 households in March, to encourage the uptake of this renewable energy and reduce the carbon emissions from homes across Kent and Medway.

The second phase of the scheme, which launched in March 2022, is almost complete, with over 1,350 homes installed and another 150 booked for installation. This is over six times the number of installations completed in Phase 1. As demand is expected to remain high this year, the third phase, running this year, will be split into 2 auctions, in spring and autumn. This will spread installations more evenly across multiple installers throughout the year and reduce the wait time for some residents.

The scheme will be promoted via the councils' newsletters and social media platforms and there will be e-posters and other promotional materials available for you to share with your communities. You can contact KES@kent.gov.uk for these resources.



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News from our Partners



Kent Fire and Rescue Service's Volunteer recruitment is now open, and they are looking to welcome more people to their team. Volunteers play an important part of the Service, providing their time, skills and knowledge to help create a safer future for Kent and Medway.

There are three different roles that they are recruiting for; Events Volunteer, Resource Volunteer and Volunteer Response Team (VRT) member.

If you want to make a difference and become a volunteer, learn more about these roles and apply on their website. Applications close on 30 January.

<https://www.kent.fire-uk.org/our-volunteers>



Kent Fire & Rescue Service



**Make a difference.
Become a KFRS Volunteer.**

Learn more about the various volunteering opportunities available now.

Applications close on Monday 30 January.



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Applications close on Monday 30 January.

Newsletter

News from our Partners



Connecting people who care with
local causes that matter

Kent Community Foundation

Funding Advice and Information Clinic
for Charities and Community Groups

Come and join us to find out what Kent Community Foundation has to offer at a free advice and information session for voluntary organisations and community groups in Kent and Medway from 12.30pm to 4pm on Tuesday 21st March 2023 at Mencap Hall, 71 Hitchen Hatch Lane, Sevenoaks, TN13 3AY.

The afternoon will give you an overview of the range of funding options that are available for projects or core costs and you will have the opportunity to network, share best practices and make valuable contacts with other groups and organisations. There will also be an opportunity for you to discuss your individual funding needs with a member of the grants team.

**Please email
paul@kentcf.org.uk to book your place.**

Newsletter

Mental Health Awareness Week



On the theme of 'anxiety', this year's Mental Health Awareness Week is from 15 to 21 May

This is an important part of the Social Calendar in the UK. Mental Health issues are now prevalent in our society. On a local level, we can do much to raise awareness of help available in our communities and via online resources.

Do make sure you do your best to promote the Week, especially in the coming months beforehand. Here are some useful links:

Mental Health UK - Forward Together (mentalhealth-uk.org)

Mental Health Awareness Week 2023 (rethink.org)

Mental Health Awareness Week - Mind



Newsletter

Health and Wellbeing



National No Smoking Day 8 March 2023

In preparation for No Smoking Day on Wednesday 8 March 2023, ASH (Action on Smoking and Health) has created a new [communications toolkit](#) to support your local quit smoking marketing activity.



The theme for No Smoking Day this year is brain health and the link between smoking and dementia. ASH has been working with Alzheimer's Research UK in development of the toolkit whose research demonstrates low awareness amongst smokers of the increased risk of dementia caused by smoking. The campaign will encourage smokers to 'never give up giving up' and signpost them to the [NHS Better Health Quit Smoking](#) website which includes a wealth of information and support to help smokers on their quitting journey.

ASH will launch their PR and social media activity on 22 February, running through to No Smoking Day on 8 March. Additional materials will be added to the toolkit in the next few weeks including the national press release (with regionalised versions which you can use locally) along with a video featuring a dementia expert.

There's also a range of free quit smoking resources available on the DHSC Campaign Resource Centre to support ongoing quit smoking activity.

Please send any queries or examples of No Smoking Day activity directly to ASH: enquiries@ash.org.uk

Contact Us...



Email: kalc@kentalc.gov.uk
Web: www.kentalc.gov.uk



Kent Association of Local
Councils
Dover District Council Offices
White Cliffs Business Park
Whitfield
Dover
CT16 3PJ

Call: 01304 820173

- Dial 1 – to speak to the Chief Executive (Charmaine Keatley)
- Dial 2 – to speak to the Local Councils Adviser (Clive Powell)
- Dial 3 – to speak to the Finance and Administration Manager (Laura Dyer)
- Dial 4 – to speak to the Communications Officer (Tricia Casey-Green)
- Dial 5 – to speak to the Training and Partnerships Officer (Veronica Lawrence)