



Parish Newsletter April 2026

Parish Conference 2026 - Save The Date




Maidstone Borough Council is pleased to announce the Parish Conference 2026 will take place on **16 September 2026**.

This year's event will be held at the Exchange Studio (Hazlitt Theatre) and will include updates on current issues, workshops and a chance to interact with key MBC services.

Please save the date in your diary and we will be in touch with further details.

Volunteer Day

Maidstone Borough Council is hosting a Volunteer Day and we are inviting all those interested in recruiting volunteers to take part, and those looking for volunteer opportunities to come along.

-  Monday 1 June
-  10am–2pm
-  Market Hall, Maidstone

This event will bring together residents — particularly those facing barriers to employment or social isolation — with a wide range of volunteering opportunities that support confidence, wellbeing, skills development and pathways into work.

Why get involved?

- Promote your organisation and volunteering roles
- Recruit volunteers with diverse lived experience
- Strengthen relationships with other VCS organisations and the council
- Share learning around volunteer recruitment and retention

On the day, organisations are encouraged to have informal conversations with attendees, promote volunteering opportunities, and offer interactive or hands-on

taster activities where possible. There will also be short spotlight talks from selected organisations.

What's happening on the day?

- Volunteer Passport prize draw
- Real-life volunteer stories displayed around the venue
- Selfie board sharing volunteering ambitions
- Café open throughout the event

How to book:

To reserve a stall, please contact VCSliaison@maidstone.gov.uk The venue is large, but spaces will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

Step Inside Maidstone Combined Court Centre

Open Day – Saturday 9 May 2026

Ever wondered what happens behind the scenes at a court? Join a fascinating Open Day at Maidstone Combined Court Centre, with free entry and a warm welcome for all.

Doors open: 10:00am

Last entry: 2:30pm

Cost: Free

What's on?

There will be plenty to see and do throughout the day, including:

- Guided tours of the court cells
- A chance to see a prison van up close
- Take part in a mock trial
- Act as a juror and learn how decisions are made
- Café facilities available on site

Meet the people behind the justice system

On the day, you'll have opportunities to meet and learn about the work of:

- Barristers and solicitors
- The Crown Prosecution Service
- Judges and magistrates
- Police officers
- Prison and probation officers

Location

Maidstone Combined Court Centre
The Law Courts, Barker Road
Maidstone, ME16 8EQ

Important accessibility note:

Unfortunately, the cells are inaccessible to those who are unable to climb stairs unaided.



Simpler Recycling

You may have heard about 'Simpler Recycling' on the news, on the radio or even on social media.

This national initiative standardises recycling collections, trying to reduce confusion over dry mix recycling.

As a Maidstone resident, you will notice little difference. The only major change is that you can now put Tetra Pak cartons in with your other dry clean recycling.

All other aspects of the recycling and food waste service will continue without change.

Like all recycling, please make sure the cartons are empty and placed loose in the recycling bin.

[Take a look at what you can recycle in Maidstone here](#)

If you are unclear on what or how to recycle using your household recycling bin, please contact recycling@maidstone.gov.uk

Garden Waste

Garden waste collections are chargeable and this is the first year of a new permit system. Most subscribers have now received their year-one permit.

If you have paid for the year ending **30 June 2026** and **NOT** received your permit, please let us know by calling 01622 602600.



The Renters' Rights Act – What's Changing?

Maidstone Borough Council is encouraging local renters and private landlords to familiarise themselves with major upcoming changes to renting laws as the Renters' Rights Act comes into force on 1 May 2026.

The Act represents the biggest shift in renting rules for more than 30 years and is designed to give renters greater security, reduce stress, and ensure a fairer, more stable private rented sector.

As April is Stress Awareness Month, the council is highlighting these changes early so that renters and landlords are confident and secure with their rights and responsibilities ahead of the implementation. Housing insecurity is a major contributor to stress nationwide, and the Act aims to reduce this by placing clarity, safety, and fairness at the heart of the private rented sector.

The key changes that renters and landlords need to know are as follows:

End of 'no-fault' evictions

From 1 May 2026, Section 21 notices will be abolished. All evictions must follow updated Section 8 grounds, which require a clear, lawful reason.

This gives renters greater stability while ensuring landlords retain legitimate routes to regain possession when necessary.

All tenancies will become periodic (rolling)

Fixed-term assured shorthold tenancies are being replaced with open-ended periodic tenancies. Renters can give two months' notice at any time, while landlords must use Section 8 grounds if they are seeking possession. Existing fixed-term tenancies will automatically convert on 1 May 2026.

Rent increases

Landlords may only raise rent once per year, with renters having strengthened rights to challenge increases if they believe they are unfair.

Fairer rules on listings and rent offers

Landlords must stick to the advertised rent and bidding wars and offers above the listed price will no longer be allowed.

Greater access to pet ownership

Tenants will have the right to request a pet, and landlords must consider the request reasonably. Maidstone already leads the way in supporting pet owners through the John Chadwick Pet Policy, which protects homeless households with pets in emergency accommodation. These new national rules extend fairness and compassion into the wider private rented sector.

New support systems for renters and landlords

From late 2026, there will be two major services introduced as part of the Act: the Private Rented Sector Database, a national register of landlords and rental properties to increase transparency and the Private Landlord Ombudsman, a free, independent service which will be available to resolve disputes quickly and fairly without going to court.

Private landlords also need to be aware of the requirement to provide [The Renters' Rights Act Information Sheet 2026](#) to their tenants, or that tenants have been given [certain written information](#) by 31 May 2026. Landlords are advised to obtain confirmation about which documents have been received by the tenant(s) and to keep a copy of this information for their records.

More information about the Act and what will be changing can be found on the [GOV.UK website](#).

MBC is committed to providing Quality Homes For All and ensuring that everyone has access to a secure, high-quality and affordable home. The council's Housing Teams are fully briefed on the changes and are available to support residents and landlords.

Contact the team on the [MBC website](#) or by calling 01622 602440.

Kent Charity Awards 2026

Maidstone Borough Council are proud to be supporting the Kent Charity Awards 2026! We know how much local charities do to support communities across Kent, often with limited resources but huge dedication.

The Kent Charity Awards provides the platform to shine a spotlight on incredible work, celebrate success, and say a public thank you to the volunteers and staff who make a real difference every day.

Whether it's a small grassroots group or a larger established charity, these awards help to boost the profile, recognise the impact, and celebrate everything that is achieved.

Entries are now open – but not for long, you have until 8 May.

If you know a Kent-based charity or community organisation, we'd strongly encourage you to apply or nominate someone! As well as entering a charity, you can also nominate someone into the volunteer and trustee of the year category!

👉 Find out more and enter online [here](#)

Connect 55+ Service Available

Involve Kent are now accepting referrals for our new Connect 55+ service.

Connect 55+ is a free service for people aged 55 and over who would benefit from additional support to remain active, socially connected and confident, offering personalised help to engage with community groups and activities, build social connections, and access information about local services, wellbeing resources and practical matters such as benefits.

This service is available to people living in Maidstone, Tunbridge Wells, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge & Malling, Dartford, Gravesham & Swanley.

Contact them on 03000 810005 or email hello@involvekent.org.uk

Your Voice Matters

We are currently seeking your views on a number of topics that impact the people of Maidstone. Including the Street Trading Policy 2026 and Dog Control Public Spaces Protection.

Please visit [Lets Talk Maidstone](#) to view the current consultations running and to give your views.

Please do pass on any information on to relevant communities.

If you have news or information to share via our monthly newsletter, please let us know at Parishliaison@maidstone.gov.uk
