



## **Parish Newsletter June 2026**

### **Help shape Maidstone's future: Call for Sites launched for new Local Plan**

Maidstone Borough Council is inviting landowners, developers, agents and members of the public to submit sites for consideration as part of the preparation of its new Local Plan.

The 'Call for Sites' is an early stage in shaping how the borough will grow and develop over the coming years. It provides an opportunity for those with an interest in land across Maidstone to put forward sites that may be suitable for a range of uses, including housing, employment, retail, leisure, green space, renewable energy and community infrastructure.

The council is required by national planning legislation to prepare and maintain an up-to-date Local Plan and requires councils to assess and plan to meet their area's housing and development needs, using a standard calculation method set out by Government. This forms part of a wider national approach to ensure enough homes are delivered across the country to meet housing need.

Preparing a Local Plan allows the council to manage growth in a coordinated way by identifying suitable locations, protecting important landscapes and heritage, and ensuring development is supported by infrastructure such as transport, schools, health services and open spaces. Without an up-to-date plan, there is less local control over where development takes place.

Submissions to the Call for Sites are an important first step in gathering information. However, putting forward a site does not mean it will be considered suitable for development or allocated in the Local Plan. All sites will be subject to detailed and transparent assessment, including environmental, infrastructure and sustainability considerations.

There will also be opportunities for residents, businesses and communities to comment as the Local Plan progresses through consultation stages.

The council has prepared guidance and submission forms to support anyone wishing to take part in the Call for Sites. All submissions must be made using the official site submission form and should include supporting information such as site plans and details of potential uses.

Cllr Tony Harwood, Maidstone Borough Council Cabinet Member for Planning Policy and Management, said:

“The Call for Sites is an important next step in preparing our new Local Plan. We encourage anyone with an interest in land to submit sites for consideration and help us shape a truly sustainable approach to future residential development within the borough, that safeguards the natural world and our most cherished landscapes.”

Further information, including guidance notes and submission forms, is available at: <https://maidstone.oc2.uk>

The deadline for submissions is 23 August 2026.

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### **Celebrating Community Connections – Thank You for Joining Us!**

We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone who attended our recent Voluntary and Community Sector volunteer event.

It was fantastic to see such a strong turnout and such enthusiastic engagement throughout the day.



With 35 exhibitors present, visitors had a wonderful opportunity to explore a wide range of volunteering roles and learn more about the inspiring work being carried out across Maidstone. Each organisation brought energy, passion and a genuine commitment to supporting our local community, and it truly shone through.

We were delighted to receive such positive feedback from attendees, many of whom commented on how *interesting, welcoming and friendly* the event felt. It's clear that the dedication and openness of our exhibitors played a huge part in creating such a positive atmosphere.

A special congratulations goes to our prize draw winner from MidKent College, who took home a £100 shopping voucher! They earned their entry by engaging

with several stands and attending one of the talks—an excellent example of making the most of everything on offer.

Once again, thank you to everyone who took part, whether as an exhibitor, visitor or speaker. Your involvement helped make the event a real success, and we look forward to seeing you at future opportunities to connect, collaborate and support our community.



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### **Loneliness Awareness Week at The Mall Maidstone**

The Mall Maidstone and Age UK Maidstone, Sevenoaks and Tonbridge (Age UK MST) are partnering to raise awareness of services available to older people during 2026's Loneliness Awareness Week from 15 to 19 June.

The week will be marked with a special display of messages of positivity and hope created by Age UK MST's dementia daycare and social activity clients, alongside an information stall where representatives from the charity will share information and advice.

**Commented [TF1]:** Suzie - if we're definitely using the tree, I'll add this here! I think a tree would be most visually appealing.

With estimates that over 1.4 million older people in the UK experience loneliness, the organisations hope that the partnership will encourage people who may be feeling isolated to engage with local support services and make new friends.

To further encourage this, The Mall are also exploring creating a 'Chatty Corner' for people wanting to make new connections during the week.

The activation will run from June 15<sup>th</sup> to June 19<sup>th</sup>. Members of Age UK personnel will be available on set days and times to talk to members of the public. When staff are unavailable an information stall with leaflets and printed materials will be accessible.

People interested in finding out more are encouraged to look at Age UK MST's and The Mall's Facebook pages for more details.

Commented [TF2]: We can take this out if you're no longer doing it - just including in our first draft!

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## Maidstone Events

### Maidstone River Park – Celebrating 25 Years

The Silver Anniversary of Maidstone River Park is underway with lots of events and activities to celebrate the jewel of Maidstone, including an outdoor concert on Saturday 18 July 2026. Stretching for around 12 kilometres along the River Medway, Maidstone River Park offers a beautiful route from Teston Country Park through the town centre to Allington. Visitors can enjoy peaceful riverside walks, cycling paths, wildlife, and green spaces, including Whatman Park with its play areas and open-air performance space. With plenty of places to stop for refreshments along the way, it is an ideal setting for a relaxed afternoon outdoors.

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### Brenchley Bandstand Concerts – Summer Music in the Gardens

This summer, Brenchley Gardens will once again host a series of free bandstand concerts, featuring traditional jazz and big band performances. Bring a picnic, settle into the gardens, and enjoy live music in a relaxed outdoor setting. Concerts run across the summer season, offering a welcoming and enjoyable experience for all ages.

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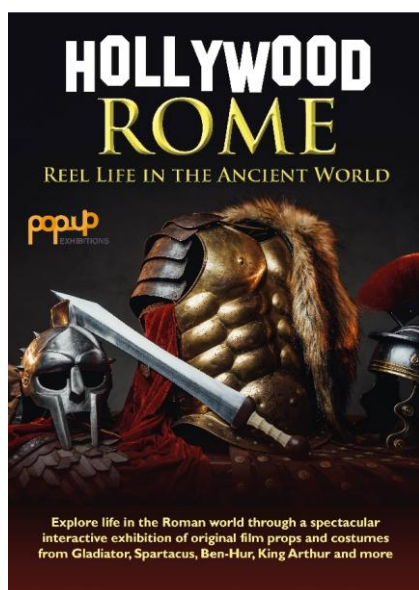
### Find Your Creative Flow: Sketch & Cruise – 18 June

A unique creative workshop will take place on Thursday 18 June (5.30–7.30pm) aboard the Kentish Lady. Led by artist and naturalist Zabby Allen, this session combines a gentle river cruise with guided sketching activities inspired by the surrounding landscape and wildlife. Suitable for all abilities, participants will create their own mini sketch journal to take home. Tickets are £25 and include all materials.

More information and booking for all events can be found at [www.visitmaidstone.com](http://www.visitmaidstone.com)

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## At the Museum



### Hollywood Rome exhibition

This exciting new exhibition revisits one of the most popular periods of history, Ancient Rome, for an entirely new take on one of the world's great civilisations.

This exhibition brings together Pop-Up Exhibition's outstanding collection of screen-used cinema and television props, costumes and armour, from films such as Gladiator (2000), King Arthur (2004), Centurion (2009), The Eagle (2011) Ben-Hur (2016) and Spartacus (2010-13).

From 4<sup>th</sup> July to 31<sup>st</sup> October.

Monday to Saturday during summer holidays (excluding Bank Holidays).

**Admission:** Adults (18+) £4.50, Child £2.25, Under 5's FREE, Family £12 (2 adults and up to three children)

Book now or at reception - <https://museum.maidstone.gov.uk/whats-on/events/hollywood-rome/>

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### Romans in Hollywood with Dr Simon Elliott

Friday 10<sup>th</sup> July

7 to 8:30pm

£15 – booking required - <https://museum.maidstone.gov.uk/whats-on/events/romans-in-hollywood-simon-elliott/>

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### Steampunk Festival 2026

Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> July 10am to 3pm

**Free to enter**

Spend the day with Maidstone Museum at the annual Steampunk Festival

Browse the stalls with splendid wares to find your perfect Steampunk accessory at the Great Kentspectations Muggleton Steampunk Festival!

You can also:

- Follow the Steampunk Trail to claim your badge! £2 per child -payable at main reception (includes a museum pen).
- Come dressed in all your Steampunk finery and take part in our fashion show.
- Marvellous musical storytelling.
- Do you have the nerve for the intense tea duelling?
- Familiar flinging.
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To see details of all museum events visit [here](#)

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### **Wave Community Bank Giveaway**

Wave Community Bank is offering a £500 Community Giveaway to support another amazing local cause across Kent and the South East. Deadline for applications is 30th June 2026. Visit to [Wave Bank](#) to find out more.

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### **Garden Waste Permit Reminder**

If you support Maidstone residents—or are a resident yourself—just a quick heads-up that garden waste renewal invoices are now being sent out to those with a subscription.

New permits will be issued shortly. When yours arrives, please remove your old permit and replace it with the new one.

Just a reminder: subscriptions are per bin, not per property.

If you haven't had your renewal notification yet, you can still renew online here: <https://maidstone.gov.uk/home/primary-services/bins-and-recycling/renew-your-garden-bin>

Thanks for helping keep Maidstone tidy!



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**If you have news or information to share via our monthly newsletter, please let us know at [Parishliaison@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:Parishliaison@maidstone.gov.uk)**

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