Welcome from Jack

Welcome to the Spring edition of the Parish Newsletter.

This year is flying by already but we have achieved a great deal so far; we have supported work to invest £4.5 million in Malvern Hills Science Park, supported local businesses, worked with others to get superfast broadband coverage to more of the district, and assisted with local events and festivals.

Looking further into the year we will be continuing to drive forward improvements and performance, review our working methods to meet demand whilst still providing the same high quality services.

You will see there are lots of exciting local projects and events coming up which I hope you will enjoy.

Jack Hegarty
Chief Executive
Malvern Hills District Council

Freedom Leisure - New Operator of Malvern Hills District Leisure Centres

Freedom Leisure has taken over the management of Malvern Splash, Sport Dyson Perrins and Sport Martley – operating the centres on behalf of Malvern Hills District Council.

They formally started operations on 1 April 2015 for a period of 15 years. This is in addition to Tenbury Swimming Pool, which Freedom Leisure has managed since 1 February 2015.

The centres are open and running as normal with Freedom Leisure initially maintaining the same staff, opening times, activity timetable and prices. Any disruption to services during the transition will be minimal.

For more information, either go to one of the centres or visit www.freedom-leisure.co.uk.
Nominations sought for the Malvern Hills District Community Sports Awards 2015

The Awards provide an opportunity for coaches, clubs, volunteers and participants from across the Malvern Hills district to be recognised for their outstanding achievements and/or dedication, as well as to celebrate the good practice that continues to grow throughout the sporting community.

This year there are 13 award categories. The top two shortlisted nominees for each award will be invited to join the evening’s celebrations to be held this year at Malvern College on Thursday 9 July, with the winner being announced on the night.

If you know of anyone who deserves to be nominated, please download a form from: www.malvernhills.gov.uk/sports-awards or request one from George Wathen: george.wathen@malvernhills.gov.uk

Please follow us on Twitter @OurMalvernHills to receive Sports Award updates.

Don’t forget to register to vote

Remember you will need to register to vote by 20 April. A new system was introduced last year called Individual Electoral Registration which means people are now responsible for registering themselves to vote, rather than the head of the household as was the case under the old system.

Those already registered under the old system were automatically transferred across but it is possible some, such as those who have moved house recently, may have been missed.

Poll Cards are currently being sent out to all registered electors; If you have not received one by 10 April then you should register online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote or call the registration office on 01684 862200.

The deadline for postal voting is also fast approaching and anyone wanting to vote this way has until Tuesday, 21 April at 5pm to complete and submit their application form.

These postal votes will not be sent out until 27 April, so if you are going away before that date you will need to send someone else to vote on your behalf (known as voting by proxy) and have until 5pm on 28 April to submit your completed application. Forms are available to download by visiting: www.malvernhills.gov.uk/elections.

www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

www.malvernhills.gov.uk
Route to the Hills

The Route to the Hills Partnership is celebrating some excellent news with the recent announcement of a £482,800 grant by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

It is the result of a two stage grant application process that began back in 2011 and reflects the vision of the Route to the Hills Partnership over the last four years and a shared commitment to support and stimulate tourism and the local economy in Malvern.

The project aims to strengthen the links between the town and the Malvern Hills. It will enhance the overall visitor experience of Great Malvern encouraging residents and visitors to want to stay longer, leave satisfied and be eager to return.

The Route to the Hills will involve development of a range of walks, talks, events and activities in collaboration with local people, to help celebrate the town’s heritage.

There will be installation of informative plaques, benches, signs and commissioned artwork to highlight the unique stories, buildings and views which might otherwise be missed. A programme of events and activities will run for three years and will offer excellent opportunities for local people to get involved as participants or volunteers.

The Partnership, with Malvern Civic Society representation, will continue to hold a vital role at the heart of the Route to the Hills project and its wider aspirations. There are exciting times ahead.

If you are interested in finding out more about the project and getting involved please email jo.cross@malvernhills.gov.uk or call Jo on 01684 862188.

Free Wi-Fi at Malvern TIC

We are now offering free Wi-Fi to all customers at Great Malvern Tourist Information Centre (TIC). Getting connected onto its free Wi-Fi will boost visitor experience, and give instant access to a whole range of fascinating and essential local information day and night.

Free Wi-Fi coverage extends outside of the TIC in Great Malvern town centre and onto Belle Vue Island. To get connected select “Malvern TIC Wi-Fi” on your mobile device and log in.

Malvern Hills District Neighbourhood Watch Scheme

Neighbourhood Watch Schemes exist to provide a focal point for residents and businesses to reduce the likelihood of them becoming victims of crime.

By following freely available advice on how to protect yourself and your property you can ensure that thieves are not given an easy ride and ensure that where you live or work is safer for your family and friends. Find out more at www.neighbourhoodwatchmalvernhills.org.uk

www.malvernhills.gov.uk
Ageing Well Small Grants Scheme

The Ageing Well Small Grants Scheme is divided into two grants. One is a start-up community grant to support the local community and its residents to ‘age well’ and live independently for longer, whether this be by setting up a local social group or an exercise class.

There is also individual household grants available for property clean ups and/or energy reducing measures to ensure residents live in a safe and warm environment.

For more information about this project or how to apply for a grant please contact Melanie Whistance (Malvern Hills Health Improvement Co-ordinator) via email: melanie.whistance@malvernhills.gov.uk or telephone 01684 862 283.

Please see our Health and Wellbeing web page for further information: www.malvernhills.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing

LEADing Rural Business Programme

Worcestershire has been awarded £1.96m over six years to run the new LEADER Programme, “LEADing Rural Business”. The key objectives of the programme include growth of the rural economy and job creation in rural areas. The eligible area covers most of the district other than Malvern town.

The Economic Development Team represents MHDC on the programme’s steering and decision-making group.

We as a district did particularly well in the last programme with nearly half of the grant funding allocated to district specific projects, totalling over £600k, being allocated in Malvern Hills.

This worked out as over twice as much per head of population than was allocated in other eligible districts in the county.

The Economic Team will aim to replicate this success by promoting the scheme to local businesses and providing advice and guidance to prospective applicants over the life of the programme. For more information please see www.business-central.co.uk/Leader
New business recycling service launched

Businesses can now recycle the same materials as households as part of a new service.

New UK waste regulations – introduced following an amendment to the EU Waste Framework Directive - now require businesses to separate recyclable material, such as paper, plastic, metal and glass, from other waste.

The move is designed to improve the quality and quantity of recycling across the UK and reduce the amount of waste going to landfill.

To help businesses meet their new obligation the new commercial recycling service was launched on Tuesday, 7 April and collections will be made fortnightly on a Tuesday and Friday, but not necessarily on the same day as general waste which goes to landfill.

Bins vary in size from 240 litres to 1100 litres and prices range from £8.55 for a 240 litre bin per collection to £42.50 for 25 recycling sacks. All recyclable material will be sent to be sorted and processed at the Envirosort plant near Worcester.

We hope this service improvement will encourage businesses to recycle as much as possible so we can all play a part in helping our environment.

Please visit www.malvernhills.gov.uk/commercial-recycling for more information.
Malvern Registry Office

Did you know you could get married at the Council House?

The Council House was built in 1874 by Alfred Speer, it still retains many of its original features from the ornate main entrance with its spires and gargoyle, to the wood panelled lobby and hall.

Weddings are held within the Elgar Room which retains many original features and has views out onto Priory Park; the beautiful grounds contain a Swan pool, quaint bridges and Victorian bandstand, with the stunning backdrop of the famous Malvern Hills.

For more information or to book a room viewing at Malvern Registry office please contact us on: 01684 862412. Email: weddings@malvernhills.gov.uk, where we will be more than happy to talk to you about your special day.

Like our new wedding Facebook page www.facebook.com/malvernsregistryoffice

Online website services

Did you know you can do many tasks online via our website? This includes:

- Report a missed bin collection.
- Request a replacement bin,
- Look up your bin collection day.
- Search planning applications.
- Make a payment.
- Report a problem.
- And much more….

www.malvernhills.gov.uk

Keep up to date with the latest activities via our social media accounts….

Follow us on twitter www.twitter.com/MHDCcomms

Like us on Facebook www.facebook.com/MalvernHillsUK
Malvern Hills named best rural area to live in West Midlands

Residents living in the district of Malvern Hills enjoy the best quality of life in a rural area in the West Midlands, according to a new study.

The Halifax Rural Quality of Life Survey ranks Malvern Hills 25th nationally and first in the region.

Halifax used a range of statistics from 121 rural local authorities to compile a list of the best rural areas to live in the UK.

Malvern Hills scored highly for employment with 78.7 per cent of residents in work while the district also benefits from low population density with 131 people for every square kilometre, compared to the Great Britain average of 264 per sq/km.

Men and women living in the district can also expect to live well into their eighties while almost 95 per cent of residents are reported to be in good health.

And overall Malvern Hills residents are happy with their lives with an average happiness score of 7.9 out of 10.

The district is a wonderful place to live and we’re delighted the Halifax Rural Quality of Life Survey has supported that view.

As with all things in life there’s always room for improvement and we’re committed to working with our partners to do all we can to make this an even better place to live, work and visit.

Malvern munch food walk

The Malvern Munch Food Walk takes place on Sunday 24 May. It is a leisurely 7 mile walk over and around the Malvern Hills starting from Rose Bank Gardens in the centre of Great Malvern.

The walk offers the chance to taste some great local food and drink whilst listening to live music (plus a few surprises) at stops along the way.

Tickets are available from Malvern Tourist Information centre from the beginning of March at a cost of £20 for adults and £12 for children. Last year’s walk was very popular and sold out in a matter of days so early booking is advised.

To make a booking or for more information please contact Malvern Tourist Information Centre on 01684 892289 or visit the website www.visitthemalverns.org/malvern_munch_walk

Events

Farmers market 16 May
Retro market 23 May
Arts and craft market 2 May
24 -25 May Malvern munch walk and Great Malvern food festival