

Members' Update - East Sussex County Council June 2022

Business Services

Bespoke initiative supports healthier workplaces

The East Sussex County Council Wellbeing at Work Programme is a bespoke project which works with employers to share resources and deliver training, as well as providing an accreditation scheme, to help boost the health and wellbeing of employees. Just months after its launch, three of the 24 workplaces who have signed up to the Public Health-funded programme have already been recognised for the efforts they have made in supporting their staff.

To achieve awards, companies must complete a number of criteria that introduce policies and initiatives and embeds practices that promote and support health and wellbeing.

Wealden District Council became the first to achieve a bronze Wellbeing at Work Award, closely followed by Crowborough-based manufacturer Servomex which was presented with the same award this month. The Prideaux Group, a chain of three care homes based in Bexhill and Eastbourne also earned the Commitment Award last month.

Communities, Economy and Transport

Apprenticeship boost as roadshows return

The Apprenticeship Roadshows have returned to East Sussex. The Sussex Council of Training Providers, in partnership with East Sussex County Council, are holding events in Hastings and Eastbourne.

Each year around 2,500 apprentices start in East Sussex, providing excellent opportunities for young people beginning their careers and new routes for employees wanting to change direction.

Roadshow attendees will be able to find out more about traineeships and apprenticeships, including higher and degree level apprenticeships, and meet local employers with live apprenticeship vacancies in their area. East Sussex County Council, the NHS and a number of local employers and training providers will be at the roadshows promoting their apprenticeship and training opportunities.

More information is available on the [Careers East Sussex website](#).

Children invited to join the Gadgeteers' Summer Reading Challenge

Young readers in East Sussex are being encouraged to discover the science and innovation in the world around them as they take on the Summer Reading Challenge. East Sussex libraries are calling on children aged four to 12 to read six books over the summer months as part of The Reading Agency's Gadgeteers Summer Reading Challenge 2022.

This year the Science Museum Group are bringing a science themed challenge to libraries across the county that will inspire youngsters to use their imagination and creativity and show that reading and science are for everyone.

Free science themed workshops and events will also be taking place at East Sussex libraries this summer. In addition, digital skills company TechResort will be running virtual reality sessions and PyBadge coding workshops.

The Summer Reading Challenge starts next month and runs from July 9 to September 10 in all East Sussex libraries.

For more information visit [the East Sussex Libraries](#) and [Summer Reading Challenge websites](#).

Flying the flag for our armed forces

The annual Armed Forces Day fell on Saturday 25 June. The event is intended to raise awareness of the contribution made by the nation's servicemen and women and to show support for the armed forces.

Cllr Bob Bowdler, the county council's Armed Forces Champion was joined by the Lord-Lieutenant for East Sussex, Andrew Blackman, in raising the flag at County Hall on Monday 20 June.



In 2018 the council was awarded a national accolade for the support it gives to the armed forces community. It received a silver award under the Ministry of Defence (MoD) Employer Recognition Support Scheme, which honours employers that show a commitment to supporting current and former military personnel.

The council is a signatory to the Armed Forces Covenant, a promise that those who have served in the armed forces are treated fairly and suffer no disadvantage. The award was recognition of the support the council gives to armed forces cadet volunteers, and to members of the Army Reserve and the way it has trained members of staff as armed forces 'champions' under the MoD-funded Forces Connect South East programme.

Funding to boost air quality welcomed by council leaders

Sussex-Air, a partnership of local authorities across Sussex, has been awarded £876,300 from the Department for Food, Environment and Rural Affairs (Defra) for local projects which will improve air quality across the County.

The first project includes upgrading the exhausts of around 40 double-decker buses serving Brighton & Hove and parts of East and West Sussex to reduce the emissions they produce.

The second project aims to raise public awareness of the impact of air pollution and, alongside an upgraded monitoring network, Sussex-Air partners will relay the science and health impacts of poor air quality to our local communities. The Sussex network of air quality

analysers will be supplemented with additional particulate (PM) monitors and a network of sensors.

Major investment in roads and pavements

East Sussex County Council's Cabinet have approved additional, one-off funding of £5.8 million at the end of 2021 to carry out additional work on top of that covered by the annual £20.4 million highways maintenance budget.

Schemes benefitting from the additional funding have now been identified by local East Sussex Highways teams looking at the current condition of roads and pavements, as well as considering issues raised by the public and councillors.

Council leaders agreed to give East Sussex Highways an additional; £2.5 million for extra patching work on road surfaces and to repair potholes; £1.8 million to improve pavements; £1 million to replace aging roads signs, bollards and posts, and £500,000 to refresh lines and road markings.

Further information about work on the county's roads and pavements can be found on the [East Sussex Highways website](#).

Residents begin to reap benefits of library strategy

East Sussex residents are starting to enjoy the benefits of support and activities introduced as part of an updated five-year Library Strategy. The strategy was updated to ensure that the growing needs of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable are met whilst new, high-quality services that all residents can access and enjoy are developed and enhanced.

The Step into Reading programme has been launched at five East Sussex Libraries and offers one to one mentoring support to help adults learn to read. Young people are also being encouraged to access library services with a range of activities and groups including STEM activities, and homework and activity clubs for primary school children. Young families are also benefitting from the updated strategy with Rhymetimes or Storytimes now running in all 17 county council libraries. Some dual language Storytimes now take place with volunteers offering stories in Polish, Turkish, Spanish, Lithuanian and Russian, with a Ukrainian Storytime being planned.

More information about the strategy, which runs until 2027-28, can be found [on the East Sussex Libraries website](#). The website also contains [a schedule of all events and activities](#).

Cllr Bob Bowdler

Wealden East Division