Stratford View

News, stories and services for residents

- Cost of living support
- Community assets receive major funding boost
- South Warwickshire Local Plan: separating fact from fiction



Winter 2026

Sign up to our newsletter 'The Online View' for fortnightly updates!

Welcome to the Stratford View

Our District's magazine



St James' Church, Southam

Welcome to the latest issue of our residents' magazine. Inside, you'll find updates on Council activities, as well as information on the projects and initiatives we're delivering to support our communities.

Alongside this publication, we offer a range of channels so you can access updates in a way and at a time that suits you:

- **Fortnightly online newsletter**
  Sign up to receive news straight to your inbox.
- **Social Media**
  Follow us for daily updates and announcements.
- **Council website and app**
  Your go-to for detailed information and services.
- **Annual Council Tax booklet**
  Providing essential financial and service details.

@StratfordDC **@StratfordDC** **Stratford-on-Avon District Council** **@stratford.dc**

Get in touch

We are keen to receive ideas for content in future issues and receive any feedback on the magazine, contact us at: **corporate.communications@stratford-dc.gov.uk**

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If you find the text in this magazine difficult to read we can supply it in a format better suited to your needs. We try to write everything in plain English and want to make sure that everyone has access to the information they need.

All information correct at time of printing.

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Sign up to My District

Scan the QR code or search **stratford.gov.uk/mydistrict** to access extra features such as postcode facilities and local service information.

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Front cover image: Pillerton Priors

Sign up to 'The Online View' for fortnightly updates

Scan the QR code or search **stratford.gov.uk/newsletter**



South Warwickshire Local Plan

Planning for our future together

Thank you to everyone who took the time to have their say on the future of South Warwickshire. The Regulation 19 consultation has now closed and your representations will form an important part of the next stage of the Local Plan process.

Preparing a Local Plan is a lengthy process, and the involvement of local communities is an important part of that journey. The Regulation 19 consultation followed previous rounds of public engagement, including the initial Scoping and Call for Sites consultation in 2021, Issues and Options in 2023 and Preferred Options in 2025.

What happens to your comments now?

All representations received during the Regulation 19 consultation will now be analysed and collated ahead of independent examination and will be published on the website in due course.

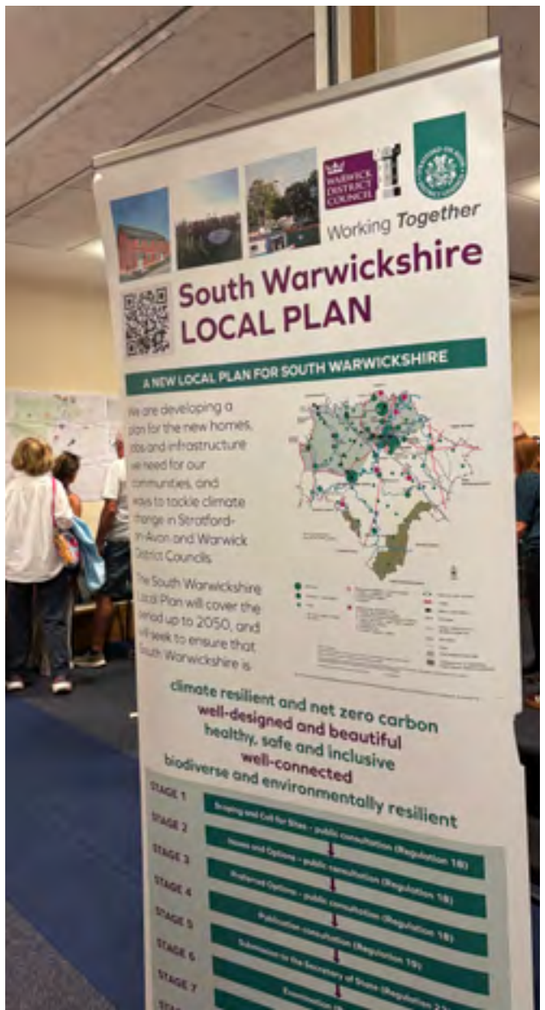
The Plan, supporting evidence and representations will then be submitted to the Government for independent examination. The purpose of the Regulation 19 stage was specifically to consider whether the Plan meets the relevant legal requirements and whether it is considered "sound", including whether it has been positively prepared, justified, effective and is consistent with national policy.

This means that the comments residents submitted have not disappeared into a filing cabinet. They form part of the evidence that will accompany the Plan through the independent examination process.

Working *Together*

Keep up to date

To follow the Plan's progress, see the latest timetable and find out more about the next stages, visit
www.southwarwickshire.org.uk
or scan the QR Code



Myth

"The Local Plan is just about building new houses."

Fact

Housing is an important part of the Plan, but it is far from the whole story.

The Plan takes a much wider view of what South Warwickshire needs for the future. As well as identifying locations for housing and employment growth, it considers the infrastructure required to support communities, along with green and blue infrastructure, community and leisure facilities, renewable energy, the low-carbon economy and the future of our town centres.

Put simply, planning for new homes also means thinking about the places, facilities, infrastructure, employment opportunities and environment that make communities work.



Myth

"Once the Local Plan is adopted, every development shown in it automatically has planning permission."

Fact

No. This is an important distinction.
The Local Plan is a strategic planning document that sets out the long-term approach to growth and identifies proposed locations for housing, employment, infrastructure and other development needs across South Warwickshire up to 2050. The councils describe it as guiding where new homes, businesses, employment and infrastructure are located across the combined and District areas.

Adoption of the Local Plan does not, in itself, grant planning permission for development.

Where planning permission is required, proposals brought forward subsequently by developers will still need to go through the relevant planning application process before permission can be granted.

That process provides the opportunity for the detailed aspects of individual proposals to be assessed against the development plan and other relevant planning considerations.

At its heart, the Local Plan is about making decisions now to help shape what South Warwickshire will be like in the decades ahead.

Myth

"If we don't have a Local Plan, there won't be any more development."

Fact

Government planning requirements mean South Warwickshire will need to accommodate additional housing. Having an up-to-date Local Plan provides the councils with the opportunity to plan positively for that growth and decide how homes, employment and supporting infrastructure should be considered together. Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick District Councils' stated approach is that a robust and comprehensive Plan allows development and infrastructure to be better planned while helping to protect the environment and support sustainable communities. In other words, the choice is not simply between development and no development. Having a Plan gives South Warwickshire a framework for shaping change rather than leaving its future to be determined without an up-to-date strategic plan.

Council invests in vital new accommodation to support vulnerable women

A remarkable transformation has taken place in Stratford-upon-Avon, where a once tired and vacant property has been reimagined as a modern, safe and welcoming home for women facing homelessness or housing insecurity.

The newly refurbished accommodation represents far more than a building project. It is an investment in people, providing vulnerable women with the stability, dignity and support they need to rebuild their lives and move towards independent living.

The development forms part of Stratford-on-Avon District Council's ongoing commitment to tackling homelessness and supporting some of the most vulnerable members of the community.

The building has undergone an extensive renovation, converting the property into high-quality, self-contained accommodation, with each resident having access to their own private living space, including an ensuite bathroom and kitchenette.

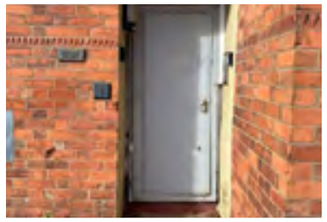
The result is a welcoming environment that provides a dedicated women-only space offering privacy, security and the opportunity to begin life anew.

Speaking to the BBC during a behind the scenes visit, one resident praised the accommodation for helping her feel **safe** and **supported** during a difficult period in her life.

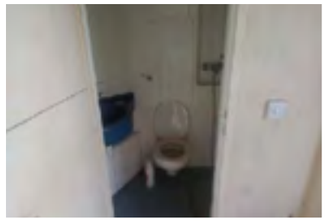
> "I was able to feel secure and happy. I feel really comfortable here. It's really nice here. They've got everything set up. It's lovely."

Before renovation









A partnership approach to support

The accommodation is part of a wider network of services aimed at preventing and reducing homelessness across the District. The District Council works closely with a range of organisations and support agencies to ensure residents can access advice and assistance that meets their individual circumstances.

This partnership approach recognises that homelessness is rarely just about housing. Effective support often requires addressing a range of personal, social and practical challenges to help people achieve long-term stability.

After renovation

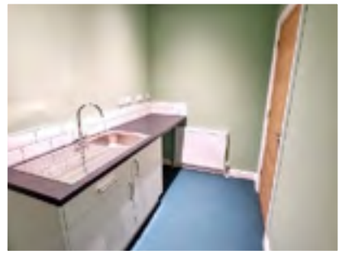












Meeting a growing need

Last year, Stratford-on-Avon District Council received 1,075 homelessness approaches. Of the 688 applications from single households, 283 were from women, accounting for around 41% of all single applicants. During the same period, 73 single women required accommodation, with a number already living in temporary housing.

For many women experiencing homelessness, the reasons behind their circumstances can be complex, ranging from relationship breakdowns and domestic abuse to financial hardship, health issues or the loss of existing housing arrangements.

Having access to accommodation specifically designed for women helps address a recognised gap in local provision and provides an environment where residents can feel secure while receiving the support they need. The scheme provides a crucial stepping stone between crisis accommodation and fully independent living. Residents can maintain their independence while accessing tailored support to help sustain future tenancies, improve wellbeing and develop the confidence and skills needed to move forward positively.

Help is available

Anyone who is homeless or worried about becoming homeless can contact Stratford-on-Avon District Council's Housing Advice and Homelessness Service for support.

Telephone: 01789 260126 or 01789 267575
Out of hours emergency homelessness service: 01789 267575 (select Option 3)
Email: **homeless@stratford-dc.gov.uk**
Address: Elizabeth House, Church Street, Stratford-upon-Avon, CV37 6HX

Further information is available at: **https://www.stratford.gov.uk/homelessness**

Elections Matter

Local Elections on 6 May 2027

On 7 September 2026, the Government wrote to all councils affected by the current Local Government Reorganisation proposals to advise that it will review the decision to implement a North and South Warwickshire Council from 1 April 2028. As part of this review, the Government stated that the scheduled Stratford-on-Avon District Council elections will go ahead next year.

So, as things stand, on 6 May 2027, electors will have the opportunity to vote not only in the election for all Stratford-on-Avon District Council wards, but also in elections for all Parish and Town Councils.

The District Council is made up of 39 wards, with two wards each returning two councillors and the remaining wards each returning one councillor, all elected for a four-year term.

There are parish and town councillor seats to be contested across 78 Parish Councils and 5 Town Councils.

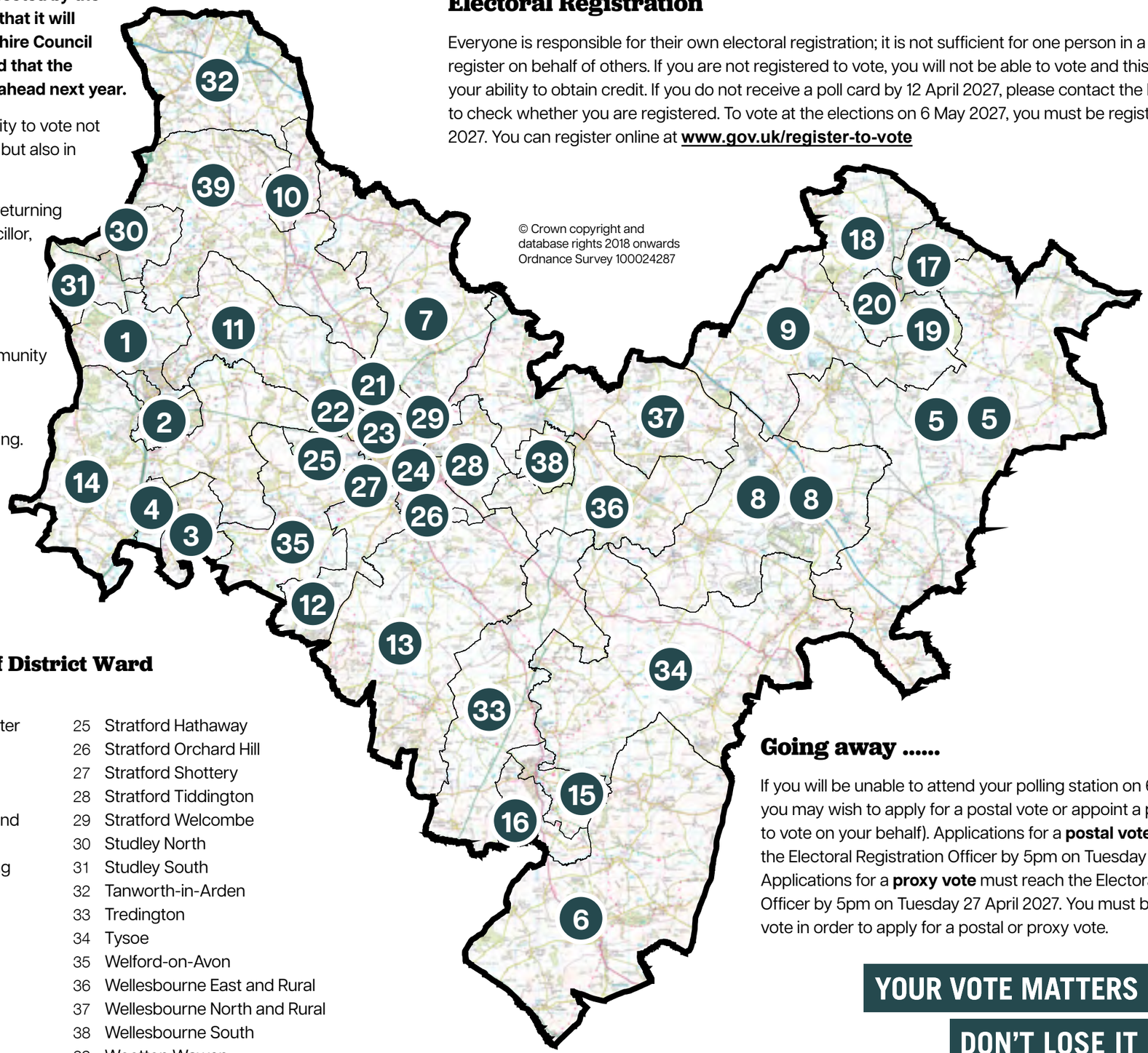
This is your opportunity to have a say in who represents your community and makes decisions at a local level for the next four years.

Remember to look out for your poll card, which will tell you where your polling station is and provide important information about voting.

For more information go to
www.stratford.gov.uk/elections
or call 01789 260208

Electoral Registration

Everyone is responsible for their own electoral registration; it is not sufficient for one person in a household to register on behalf of others. If you are not registered to vote, you will not be able to vote and this may also affect your ability to obtain credit. If you do not receive a poll card by 12 April 2027, please contact the District Council to check whether you are registered. To vote at the elections on 6 May 2027, you must be registered by 19 April 2027. You can register online at **www.gov.uk/register-to-vote**



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Key to the number on the map and the name of District Ward

Wards 5 and 8 have 2 members

1 Alcester East
2 Alcester Rural
3 Bidford East
4 Bidford West
5 Bishop's Itchington, Fenny Compton and Napton
6 Brailes and Compton
7 Claverdon and Snitterfield
8 Gaydon, Kineton and Upper Lighthorne
9 Harbury
10 Henley-in-Arden
11 Kinwarton
12 Long Marston
13 Quinton
14 Salford Priors and Alcester Rural
15 Shipston North
16 Shipston South
17 Southam East, Central and Stockton
18 Southam North and Long Itchington
19 Southam South
20 Southam West
21 Stratford Avenue
22 Stratford Bishopton
23 Stratford Clopton
24 Stratford Guildhall and Bridgetown
25 Stratford Hathaway
26 Stratford Orchard Hill
27 Stratford Shottery
28 Stratford Tiddington
29 Stratford Welcombe
30 Studley North
31 Studley South
32 Tanworth-in-Arden
33 Tredington
34 Tysoe
35 Welford-on-Avon
36 Wellesbourne East and Rural
37 Wellesbourne North and Rural
38 Wellesbourne South
39 Wootton Wawen

Going away .....

If you will be unable to attend your polling station on 6 May 2027, you may wish to apply for a postal vote or appoint a proxy (someone to vote on your behalf). Applications for a **postal vote** must reach the Electoral Registration Officer by 5pm on Tuesday 20 April 2027. Applications for a **proxy vote** must reach the Electoral Registration Officer by 5pm on Tuesday 27 April 2027. You must be registered to vote in order to apply for a postal or proxy vote.

YOUR VOTE MATTERS
DON'T LOSE IT

Growing older in Stratford District

Help, support and opportunities

Getting older can bring new opportunities, but it can also present challenges. Whether you're looking for financial support, help with rising energy costs, ways to stay active in your community, or opportunities to give something back, there are a range of services available across Stratford District to help you live well and stay connected.

Could you be missing out on Pension Credit?



Many people who are entitled to Pension Credit are not currently claiming it. Pension Credit is designed to top up income for people over State Pension age and can also unlock access to additional support, including help with housing costs, Council Tax Reduction and free TV licences.

You may be eligible if you have reached State Pension age and your weekly income falls below the qualifying thresholds - £238 for single or £363.25 for couples. Some people with higher incomes may still qualify, particularly if they have caring responsibilities, disabilities, housing costs or dependent children.

To find out more or make a claim visit the government Pension Credit website: **https://apply-for-pension-credit.service.gov.uk/start** or contact the Pension Service on **0800 99 1234**.

Don't miss out on the support available and remember to share this information with friends, neighbours and family members who could benefit.

Support available for energy bills

With energy costs continuing to place pressure on household budgets, the Stratford Energy Support Fund can provide financial assistance to vulnerable households struggling to pay their energy bills. Support can be used towards gas, electricity, oil or LPG costs.

The fund is available to households that have a gross household income up to £31,000 (not including PIP or DLA), no household savings and a vulnerability, including people with long-term health conditions, disabilities, young families or those experiencing significant financial hardship.

For further information, contact **Act on Energy** on **0800 988 2881** or visit their website **www.actonenergy.org.uk/support/sesf**

Make a difference as a volunteer driver



Do you enjoy driving and have some spare time? Becoming a volunteer driver could be a rewarding way to support local residents while helping them maintain their independence.

VASA operates a volunteer transport service across Stratford District and surrounding areas, taking people to medical appointments, community activities and social events. Drivers can choose how often they volunteer and mileage costs are reimbursed.

If you've held a full driving licence for at least three years, have appropriate insurance and a roadworthy vehicle, you could help make a real difference to someone's day. For more information, call **01789 777 990** or visit **https://vasa.org.uk**

If you haven't got a driving license or would like to volunteer in other ways, please visit Warwickshire CAVA the local voluntary and community sector infrastructure organisation for Warwickshire and Solihull at **www.wcava.org.uk** or call them on **01789 332 962**



Stay connected this winter

Keeping active and connected is important at every age. Kissing it Better, a healthcare charity dedicated to reducing loneliness and isolation among older people, produces local What's On calendars that highlight activities, events and social opportunities across South Warwickshire.

From community groups and exercise classes to social gatherings and creative activities, the calendars provide a simple way to discover what's happening locally and meet new people. They are also useful for carers looking for activities and support.

To access the South Warwickshire calendar, visit the Kissing it Better website **https://kissingitbetter.co.uk/calendars/** and you can also call them on **07831 136 152** or email them on **calendars@kibmail.co.uk**

Keeping active this winter

Everyone Active offers a wide range of opportunities for older adults to stay active, healthy and connected, both in leisure centres and within local communities across Stratford District. Activities include swimming, gym sessions, walking sports, low-impact fitness classes, and specialist sessions designed to support mobility, strength and overall wellbeing.

They also deliver a variety of community-based classes in local venues close to where people live, making it easier to get involved without travelling far. These include seated exercise classes to support strength and balance through gentle movement, and they also provide a friendly social setting. They are designed to help older adults maintain independence, improve confidence and meet new people in a friendly and supportive environment.

To find out more about activities available near you, visit **https://www.everyoneactive.com/centre/stratford-leisure-centre** email **Stratfordinfo@everyoneactive.com** or visit the enquiry page **https://www.everyoneactive.com/contact-us/**

everyone ACTIVE

You'll feel better for it

A new road to adventure for young cyclists

Young cyclists in Stratford-upon-Avon are already enjoying a bigger and better cycle training track following a £150,000 refurbishment at the Recreation Ground.

The popular facility has been transformed, with the track now twice its original size and featuring new road layouts, additional traffic lights, pedestrian crossings and a lay-by area designed to replicate real-life road conditions. The improvements allow children to build cycling confidence and road awareness in a safe, traffic-free environment.

The project also included resurfacing the existing track, installing additional traffic lights with improved timings to keep riders moving, and creating new landscaped hills and mounds that add fun and challenge to the experience.

Recognising the track's popularity, the District Council has also expanded the bike parking area and added new benches, giving parents, grandparents and carers comfortable places to watch young riders in action.

Completed three days ahead of schedule despite challenging heatwave conditions, the upgraded track has already proved a hit with local families.



The enhanced facility forms part of the District Council's ongoing commitment to providing high-quality outdoor spaces that support active lifestyles, health and wellbeing across the District.



The Environmental and Neighbourhood Services Portfolio Holder, **Cllr Lorraine Grocott,** said:

> “The track provides a safe and fun place for young people to develop their cycling skills and confidence, while the new seating areas create a more welcoming space for parents and carers. Investing in our parks and open spaces helps ensure they remain attractive, accessible and enjoyable for everyone, and it's wonderful to see this facility being used exactly as intended.”

You're not alone

Accessing cost of living support

Stratford-on-Avon District Council has introduced an improved Cost of Living Support Referral Form, making it quicker and easier for residents to access advice, practical help and support during challenging financial times.

With many households continuing to feel the impact of rising living costs, concerns about energy bills, housing costs and everyday expenses can place significant pressure on both finances and wellbeing. The Council is committed to ensuring that residents can find the right support as easily as possible when they need it.

The new referral form acts as a single point of contact, connecting residents with a range of free services provided by the District Council and its partner organisations.

Support and information are available in several key areas, including:

- **Training and skills development**
- **Health and wellbeing services**
- **Money and financial assistance**
- **Transport assistance**
- **Employment and job-seeking support**
- **Housing and accommodation issues**

The form has been designed to be simple and accessible. Residents can complete it themselves, or a family member, support worker, healthcare professional or other trusted representative can submit it on their behalf with their consent.

Once a referral has been received, the information is securely shared with the most appropriate Council service or partner organisation. Residents are then contacted directly to discuss their situation and explore the support available to them.

The positive impact of the District Council's support services is already being felt by local residents. One resident who received assistance shared:



> “Your advisors have been **professional**, **patient** and **sympathetic** with me, while providing me with sterling counsel. They are very much a credit to your organisation. I felt really comfortable asking for help and the lady I spoke to was brilliant.”

If you, a family member or someone you know could benefit from support, the Cost of Living Support Referral Form is available on the Stratford-on-Avon District Council website at: **www.stratford.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support**

Investing in community assets across Stratford-on-Avon District

Community buildings, village halls, recreation grounds and play areas are at the heart of life across Stratford-on-Avon District, bringing people together and supporting local activities. Thanks to Stratford-on-Avon District Council's Community Grant Scheme, a number of these valued facilities will now benefit from significant improvements, helping them continue to serve residents for years to come.

Launched during the 80th anniversary year of VE Day and VJ Day, the scheme provided a share of £350,000 to support projects that celebrate the strength of community while honouring the generation who sacrificed so much during the Second World War.

Following the successful award of small grants earlier this year, five organisations have now received funding through the Large Grant Scheme.

Alcester Town Council to refurbish the kitchen at the Eric Payne Centre

Alcester Town Council was awarded £26,624 to refurbish the kitchen at the Eric Payne Centre, a well-used community venue at the heart of town life. The existing kitchen, originally installed second-hand in 2009, had become outdated and lacked adequate storage.



"The kitchen is a vital part of the centre's day-to-day operation, supporting everything from community events and meetings to social activities and celebrations. The Town Council would like to thank the District Council for its support in helping us deliver this important improvement for the benefit of the Alcester community"

Vanessa Lowe, Town Clerk for Alcester Town Council

Beaudesert and Henley-in-Arden Joint Parish Council for Play Project

In Henley-in-Arden, the Beaudesert and Henley-in-Arden Joint Parish Council received £43,929 for its 'Henley for All' Sensory and Inclusive Play Project. Improvements at Jubilee Park and The Riverlands will introduce accessible and inclusive play equipment for wheelchair users, disabled children and those with sensory or neurodiverse needs, helping more families enjoy the parks together.



"We are delighted to receive this funding, which will enable us to deliver meaningful improvements to play spaces across Henley-in-Arden. By investing in high-quality, sustainable facilities across two parks, we are strengthening community wellbeing and ensuring our public spaces meet the needs of a growing and diverse town, both now and into the future."

Cllr Wendy Andrews, Chair of the Joint Parish Council

Henley Memorial Hall for entrance hall improvements

Henley Memorial Hall secured £42,500 to improve its entrance area, replacing ageing single-glazed units and heavy manual doors with modern automated alternatives. As well as creating a more welcoming arrival experience, the improvements will enhance accessibility and reduce energy loss within the historic building.



"This grant is a tremendous boost for everyone who loves and uses the Hall. It allows us to honour our building's history by ensuring it remains completely welcoming, inclusive and accessible to the entire community. It also allows us to further our commitment to a greener, more sustainable future for the hall."

Ian Smedley, Chairman of the Memorial Hall Management Committee

Lighthorne Village Hall to rebuild its north annexe

The largest award of £100,000 was granted to Lighthorne Village Hall to support the demolition and rebuilding of its structurally compromised north annexe. The project will safeguard the future of a building that has been a focal point for village life since the 1960s, while creating improved facilities and additional flexible space for community use.



"We are very grateful to receive this funding from the District Council. The replacement annexe will be a multi-functional space, delivering improved changing facilities, much-needed storage, and better areas to hire out for increased future revenue."

Fiona Driver, Chair of the Village Hall Management Committee

Muntz Hall and Recreation Ground in Tanworth-in-Arden for improvements

At Muntz Hall and Recreation Ground in Tanworth-in-Arden, a grant of £77,714 will fund modernisation and sustainability improvements to the village sports clubhouse and Scout hut exterior. The upgrades will help transform the site into a more accessible, sustainable and fit-for-purpose facility for local sports clubs, youth groups and community organisations.



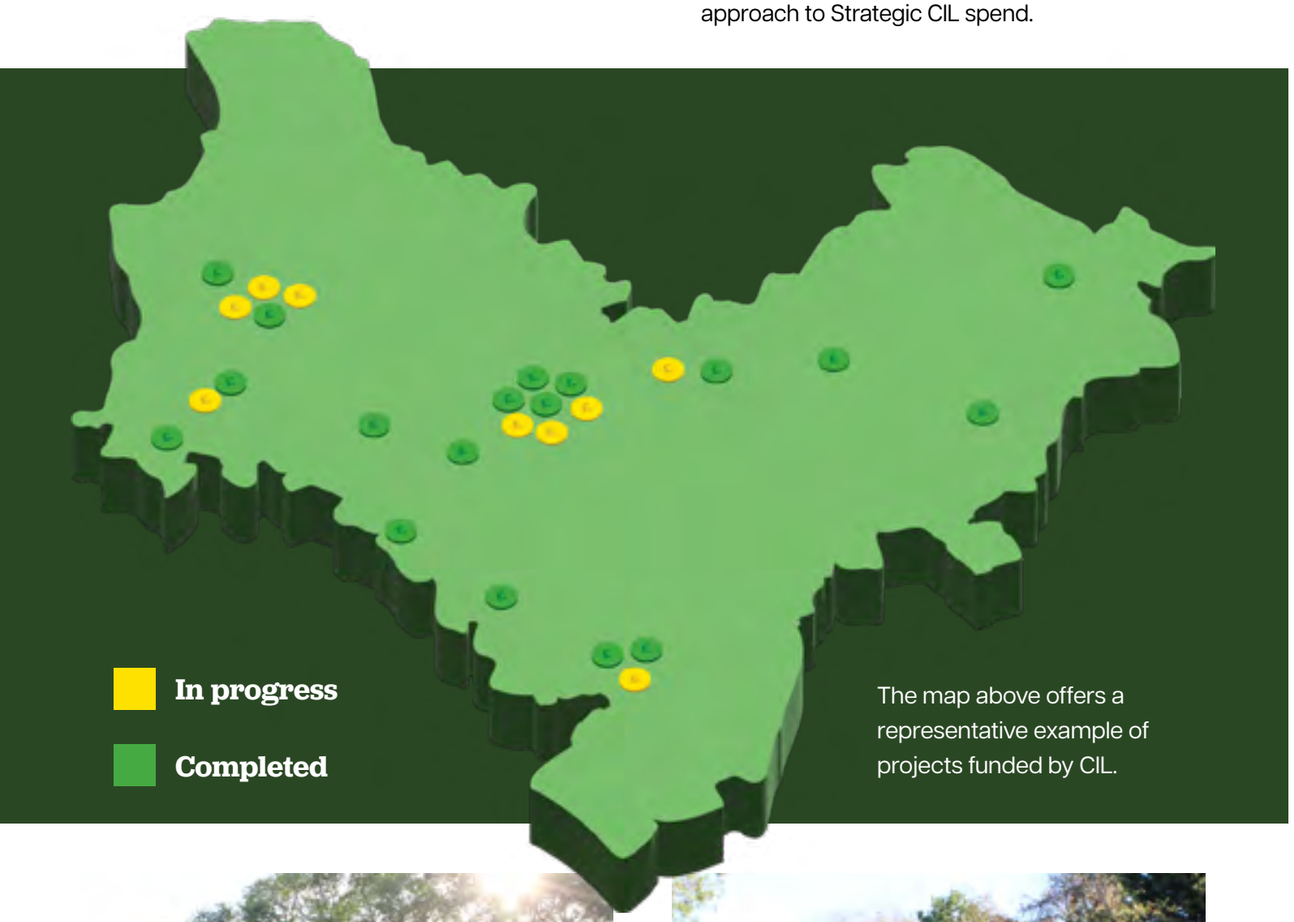
"We are delighted to receive this support from the District Council. The investment will enable us to create a modern, accessible and sustainable facility that supports sport, youth and adult activities and community events for generations to come."

David King, a spokesperson for the project

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Strategic CIL is the portion of total CIL receipts that is retained by the District Council to spend on infrastructure projects.

Under current legislation, 5% of CIL receipts are used for administering the levy and a portion of receipts are retained by the Town or Parish Council in which the CIL was raised. These arrangements are not affected by the new approach to Strategic CIL spend.



In progress

Completed

The map above offers a representative example of projects funded by CIL.



Cottage Lane Play Area, Stratford-upon-Avon



Cottage Lane Play Area, Stratford-upon-Avon

CIL is changing

Under this new approach, Stratford-on-Avon District Council will take a more targeted approach to strategic CIL funding, prioritising essential infrastructure where development and population growth are putting pressure on local facilities. Projects will also be assessed to ensure they are realistic, deliverable and provide value for money.



Making funding go further

Another important change is a greater focus on combining strategic CIL with other sources of funding, including developer contributions, CIL held by parish and town councils and external funding.

This means CIL could help fill a funding gap or unlock additional investment, enabling the money available to go further and potentially helping more infrastructure projects become a reality.

Together, these changes will provide a clearer and more targeted approach to investing CIL, helping to ensure communities experiencing growth benefit from the infrastructure and facilities they need



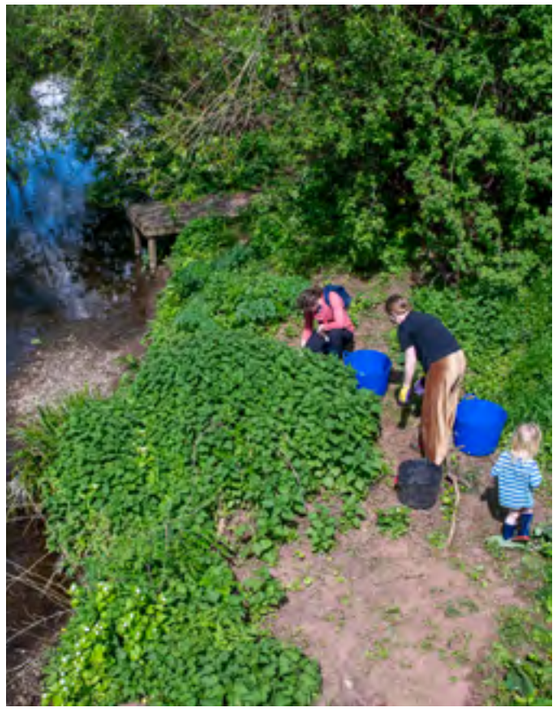
Packhorse Road Play Area, Stratford-upon-Avon

Deputy Leader and Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder, **Cllr George Cowcher**, said:

> “This new approach to allocating strategic CIL receipts will ensure that funding allocations are driven by evidence of development impact and by working closely with infrastructure providers, the District Council aims to achieve greater strategic benefits and transformative results for local communities.”

River Arrow and Alne Revival

Supporting community action for healthier rivers



Stratford-on-Avon District Council's Climate Change Nature Fund (CCNF) awarded a £750 grant to the River Arrow & Alne Revival (RAAR) group in Alcester, supporting practical community action to improve and monitor the River Arrow.

The funding has enabled volunteers to purchase a water-testing kit, PPE and equipment for river-care activities, native riverside plants, and signage to raise awareness of the project at Gunnings Bridge.

Using the CCNF funded testing kit, volunteers now carry out regular water-quality monitoring, helping to build a better understanding of local river conditions. The grant has also supported around six volunteer river-care sessions over the past two summers, with activities including litter picking and the removal of invasive Himalayan balsam. Together, these sessions generated an estimated 36 to 60 hours of volunteer effort.

Native riverside and wetland plants have also been purchased and will be planted later this autumn, following the completion of nearby Highways works. This will provide further habitat improvements for wildlife along the river corridor.

A temporary information poster displayed at Gunnings Bridge helped explain the project and acknowledged the District Council's support. The high-footfall location attracted interest from local residents, with several people contacting RAAR after seeing the sign.



Kyla Brown, Deputy Town Clerk at Alcester Town Council, said:

> "The project is creating lasting benefits for the local environment. Reusable equipment and ongoing water-quality monitoring will continue to support community-led conservation work, while practical river-care activities and future planting will help enhance biodiversity and improve the health of the River Arrow for years to come."



Have you got a green idea?

Round Four of the CCNF is now open!

The Community Climate and Nature Fund (CCNF) is an initiative run by Stratford-on-Avon District Council that provides funding to local councils, community groups and charities to reduce carbon emissions and improve local biodiversity. Since it was set up in November 2023, £250,000 has been allocated to local initiatives by the scheme, across 53 projects.

The CCNF will fund projects which meet one of the following criteria:

- Projects which result in a direct reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.
- Projects which build resilience to the impacts of climate change.
- Projects which will result in research enabling access to more significant funding applications.
- Projects which will result in the enhancement of biodiversity.

The following groups can apply for grant funding through the CCNF:

- Town or Parish Councils
- Formally constituted charity and community groups
- Sports clubs

Eligible applicants can apply for up to £10,000 per project.

How to apply:

Please send any enquiries about the CCNF to our email **climate.emergency@stratford-dc.gov.uk** and our team will guide you through the application process.

Round Four will be open until April 2027, and applications will be appraised once every three months.

All applications will be considered at the nearest appraisal date following their submission. For your application to be considered at the next appraisal date (13 January 2027) please submit your application by 5pm on Monday 11 January.

The provisional dates are as follows:

- **13 January 2027**
- **7 April 2027**

Scan the QR code or search '**Community Climate and Nature Fund**' on our website

State of the District 2026

The District Council's Performance, Consultation and Insight team produces an annual report providing a snapshot of the State of the District in numbers: an insight into areas such as population, housing and house prices, employment, education, health and crime.

This year's report's findings include: an increase of just under 3,000 to the District population; an increase in the median house price but a softening in the median price to earnings ratio; a fall in the crime rate; and an increase in the physical activity rate amongst adults.

Housing

Median House Price

8.96x is the median house price to income ratio which rises to 9.23x for the lower quartile house price to income ratio.

£370,000 Stratford

£315,000 Warks

£300,000 England

Population and health



148,772 residents of Stratford-on-Avon District (estimated)

47.9y median age

If the District was **20** people...



Under 18s 18-64 65+

85.5y **82.0y**

Life expectancy

67% of adults active for 150mins+ per week

Dementia = **52%**

Diagnosis rates

Employment

79% of 18-65s are employed in full or part-time work

Employee breakdown

Of those employed adults, **79%** are employees and **21%** are self-employed.

£715.10

Women's average full-time weekly wages

Women's median weekly pay is equal to 75% of men's

£957.30

Men's average full-time weekly wages



The full report is available to read on the Council's website:

www.stratford.gov.uk/council-democracy/insight.cfm

Crime



Anti-social behaviour

15.4 crimes
per 1,000 residents

Violent & sexual offences

23 crimes
per 1,000 residents

everyone ACTIVE

STRATFORD LEISURE CENTRE

YOUR HEALTH . YOUR COMMUNITY

Bridgeway, Stratford-upon-Avon CV37 6YX

✓ Modern gym facilities
✓ Swimming for all ages
✓ Soft play and Ninja TAG for kids
✓ Group fitness classes
✓ Friendly, welcoming environment

NINJA TAG ACTIVE

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT
www.everyoneactive.com/centre/stratford-leisure-centre

Leisure centres celebrate major refurbishments

with Olympian at community open day

Residents across Stratford-on-Avon District are already seeing the benefits of continued investment in local leisure facilities thanks to major improvements at Shipston Leisure Centre and Stratford Leisure Centre.

Stratford Leisure Centre recently celebrated the completion of a £175,000 refurbishment with a fun-filled Community Open Day that welcomed more than 800 visitors through its doors.

The free event gave local people the chance to explore the centre's newly upgraded facilities while enjoying a packed programme of activities.

Families took part in swimming sessions, group exercise classes and personal training tasters, while visitors also enjoyed badminton, pickleball, table tennis and Hyrox challenges. Younger residents made the most of soft play, Active Antz, Ninja Tag sessions and a roller disco.

A special appearance from Team GB sprinter and TV personality Harry Aikines-Aryeetey added to the excitement, as the athlete joined in with gym challenges, met visitors and inspired people to embrace active lifestyles.

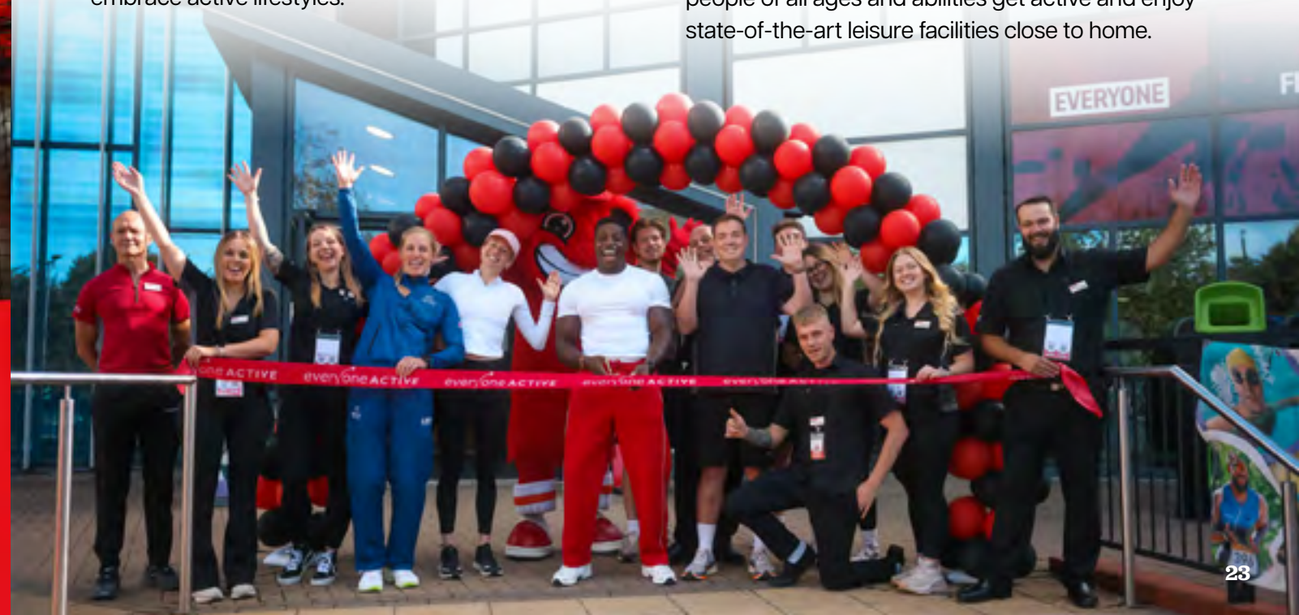
Visitors were also invited to support Everyone Active's charity partner, The Ben Kinsella Trust, and helped to raise more than £500 during the event.

The refurbishment has delivered a state-of-the-art gym featuring the latest Life Fitness equipment for cardio, resistance and functional training. It forms part of a wider programme of improvements at the centre, including a refreshed health suite, sauna and steam room, an upgraded cycle studio and the addition of a popular new soft play facility.

Shipston Leisure Centre has also received a £175,000 refurbishment, transforming its changing facilities following a joint investment from Stratford-on-Avon District Council and Everyone Active.

The upgrade features modern changing areas, new showers, toilets and lockers, enhanced accessibility and two new family changing cubicles, creating a more welcoming, comfortable and convenient experience for visitors.

Together, the investments are making a real difference to local communities, with both projects reflecting a shared commitment to helping more people of all ages and abilities get active and enjoy state-of-the-art leisure facilities close to home.



Think ahead, get home safe

Stratford-on-Avon District Council is reminding residents to plan ahead and look out for each other when enjoying a night out this winter.

The District Council's CCTV team works closely with Warwickshire Police and local businesses to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour, including drink and drug driving. Between April 2025 and March 2026, CCTV operators identified 50 incidents of suspected impaired driving.

If you're going out, make getting home safely part of your plans:

- Charge your phone before leaving home.
- Check public transport and save the details of trusted taxi or private hire firms.
- Agree with friends how everyone will get home safely.
- Make sure you have enough money for your journey home.
- Avoid drinking alcohol before heading out, as this can lead to drinking more than intended.

Never drink or take drugs and drive. Choose a designated driver, public transport, a licensed taxi or private hire vehicle, or arrange to stay nearby.



If travelling by taxi or private hire, check the vehicle's licence plate and the driver's identity badge before getting in. If you are unsure, ask the driver to show you their licensing details.

Look out for others too. If someone appears uncomfortable because of another person's behaviour, and it is safe to do so, offer support or ask if they need help. In an emergency, always call 999. Anyone aged 18 or over who is concerned about their alcohol or drug use can also seek confidential support from Change Grow Live (CGL), which provides one-to-one and group support locally.

By planning ahead, making safe choices and looking out for one another, we can all help make nights out across the District safer and more enjoyable.



Rural Crime Advisors boost expertise to help protect Warwickshire's heritage

Stratford-on-Avon District Council's Rural Crime Advisors, Alison Packer and Rebecca Jenkins, have completed specialist training to help protect Warwickshire's historic environment from heritage crime.

As part of the Council's Community Safety Team, the Advisors support residents, farms and rural businesses across South Warwickshire with practical crime prevention advice, security visits and targeted initiatives.

They also hold Community Crime Prevention Toolbox events in local villages, offering advice and equipment such as alarms, property-marking kits and Faraday pouches.

Their latest training, delivered through Historic England's Heritage Crime Awareness Course, will strengthen their knowledge of offences affecting historic buildings, monuments, archaeological sites and landscapes.

The Rural Crime Advisor roles are jointly funded by Stratford-on-Avon District Council and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Warwickshire, helping connect rural communities with the police and other partners.

Need rural crime prevention advice? Residents, rural businesses and community groups can contact the Rural Crime Advisors through the website: **www.stratford.gov.uk/ruralcrime**

If a crime has already occurred, residents should report it to Warwickshire Police on 101, or 999 in an emergency.



> "Alison and Rebecca's work is greatly appreciated in our rural communities and I thank them for their continued commitment. I live in a rural community and it is very important to me that residents in these areas of our District are not overlooked.
>
> Working with our partners, such as Warwickshire Police's Rural Crime Team, we can help to prevent rural and heritage crime and protect residents."
>
> **Councillor Natalie Gist**, Portfolio Holder for Law and Governance

My journey in the UK

A refugee's story

Starting again in a new country can bring many challenges, from finding a home and navigating unfamiliar services to supporting a family, continuing education and finding work. In this personal story, one resident shares her experience of rebuilding her life in the UK with her young daughter, the support and kindness they received along the way, and how their journey has inspired her to give back to the community.

Testimonial



Coming to the UK was not an easy decision for me. I left my home country with my young daughter because I was concerned about our safety and felt that I needed to find a safer place for us. Leaving behind everything familiar was difficult, but I hoped that the UK would give us the opportunity to start again and build a better future.

When we arrived, I applied for asylum and was placed in accommodation for asylum seekers with my eight-year-old daughter. Those first months were very challenging. Living in a hotel, away from family, friends and everything I knew, made me feel lonely and uncertain. I also did not understand how the systems in the UK worked, which made everyday life even more difficult. I had to deal with many unfamiliar things while trying to stay strong for my daughter.

After receiving my immigration documents, we were able to move from temporary accommodation into a home of our own. Having a stable home gave us a sense of security, but we still had to adapt to a new way of life.

One of my biggest challenges was supporting my daughter when she started school. She had to adapt to a new language, a different education system and a completely new environment. I had to support her while learning about the education system myself. It was challenging for both of us, but gradually we began to settle.

I was also determined to work and contribute to society. I came to the UK with qualifications, skills and professional experience, but I soon discovered that qualifications and experience gained abroad are not always easily recognised here.

Finding work that matched my previous experience was therefore difficult. Rather than giving up, I started taking casual jobs. I believe that it is important to remain productive, continue learning and contribute to society, even when circumstances are difficult. At the same time, I decided to return to education and begin my university journey in the UK. Starting again was challenging, especially while adapting to a new language and academic system, but I saw education as an important step towards a better future.

Supporting People Fleeing Conflict

Stratford-on-Avon District Council works alongside Warwickshire County Council, public health and community groups to prepare for a safe and smooth integration for those resettling here. Stratford-on-Avon District Council has been working to identify accommodation for families and is encouraging local landlords to get in touch if they have a property to let for resettling schemes. Local landlords with a self-contained property can contact the council at **socialinclusion@stratford-dc.gov.uk** for further information.

Stratford Welcome Here is a local charity who's focus is welcoming and supporting refugees arriving to reside in Stratford-upon-Avon and the surrounding area. Welcome Here is continuing to help families arriving through the Afghan and the UK Resettlement schemes.



Today, my daughter and I are more settled. Life is still not without challenges, but I feel much more confident and hopeful about the future. I am continuing my education and looking for opportunities to develop professionally and use my skills.

Giving back to the community has also become very important to me. During some of the most difficult moments of my journey, I received kindness, support and encouragement from people and organisations around me. That support made a real difference in my life and helped me feel that I was not alone. Because I experienced that support myself, I now want to give something back. I am interested in volunteering because I want to help others who may be facing difficulties similar to those I experienced. For me, volunteering is a way of supporting a cause I believe is meaningful and of returning some of the kindness that was shown to me.

My journey has taught me that starting again does not mean starting from nothing. I brought with me my qualifications, experience, knowledge and determination. Rebuilding my life has taken time, patience and courage, but I have continued moving forward, one step at a time.

There are still challenges ahead, but today I look to the future with hope. I want my daughter to know that difficult beginnings do not have to define our future. With support, determination and opportunities, it is possible to rebuild a life, contribute to society and help others along the way. My journey is still continuing, but it is now a journey filled with hope, purpose and a desire to give back to the community that helped us find a new beginning.

Growing a greener District

Thousands of new trees are taking root across Stratford-on-Avon District thanks to Stratford-on-Avon District Council's ongoing commitment to improving biodiversity, tackling climate change and enhancing local landscapes. Since launching the Free Trees for Farmers scheme in 2024, the District Council has distributed an impressive 29,000 trees to farmers across the District.

Following the success of the initiative, Cabinet approved funding in July 2026 for a further two rounds of the scheme, ensuring support will continue through to 2028.

The programme helps farmers plant a wide variety of native trees and hedgerows suited to their land. Over the years, farmers have been able to choose from a range of tree packs, including hedge packs, fruit tree packs and woodland packs. Whether planting a handful of trees or several hundred, participants have been able to select species that best support their farming operations and local wildlife.

The scheme was originally delivered in partnership with both the Heart of England Forest and Warwickshire Wildlife Trust.

Since 2025, Warwickshire Wildlife Trust has continued as the Council's delivery partner, helping farmers create and enhance habitats across the District.



Local Communities

Building on the success of the farming scheme, the District Council has also launched a new Free Trees for Town and Parish Councils initiative. The scheme provides local councils with funding to purchase and plant native UK tree species on their own land, helping communities improve green spaces, increase biodiversity and create lasting environmental benefits for future generations. Each application can request funding of up to £10,000, with applicants able to choose the tree species most suitable for their local area. Any costs above £10,000 must be supported through additional funding sources.

The initiative has already helped several local councils bring tree planting projects to life, including:

- **Bidford-on-Avon Parish Council**: 16 trees
- **Beaudesert and Henley-in-Arden Joint Parish Council**: 80 trees
- **Ilmington Parish Council**: 4 trees
- **Southam Town Council**: 18 trees
- **Welford-on-Avon Parish Council**: 20 trees

Of the original £50,000 fund, more than £34,000 remains available, providing further opportunities for town and parish councils to invest in greener, healthier communities

Applications open!

The scheme is open and will remain open until January 2027, at the latest, giving local councils the opportunity to plan tree planting projects that will benefit their communities for years to come.

Applications are assessed at various points throughout the planting season, with funding awarded on a first come, first served basis.

Stratford District comes together for Armed Forces Day

A huge thank you to everyone who joined us in Stratford-upon-Avon for Armed Forces Day 2026 and helped make the occasion such a memorable community celebration.

Residents and visitors came together in Stratford-upon-Avon on Saturday 27 June 2026 for a packed programme of activities celebrating and thanking the Armed Forces community.

Thank you also to everyone involved in organising, supporting and taking part in the events and for helping us show our appreciation for those who serve, have served and support our Armed Forces community.





Supporting our Armed Forces community all year round

Stratford-on-Avon District Council formally signed the Armed Forces Covenant Pledge, demonstrating its commitment to ensuring those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, are treated with fairness and respect.

As part of that pledge, the District Council works with public sector partners to make information and support accessible to the Armed Forces community. It also provides specific housing support, including an Armed Forces Champion and, for eligible serving and former Armed Forces personnel, additional preference through Home Choice Plus.

The District Council also recognises the valuable skills and experiences that members of the Armed Forces community bring to the workplace. Its commitments include support for employees who are reservists or Cadet Force Adult Volunteers, as well as employment opportunities for those leaving the Armed Forces. A Guaranteed Interview Scheme is available to eligible Armed Forces candidates who meet the essential criteria for a Council vacancy.

Find out more about the District Council's support for the Armed Forces community on our website: **www.stratford.gov.uk/armed-forces**

Recycle for Stratford District



Donate wearable clothes to a charity shop or pass them on to someone else.

Even a small change in our habits can help keep useful items in circulation.



Borrow and share.

Reusing isn't limited to clothes. The District Council also highlights The Stour Toy Library in Shipston-on-Stour, where members can borrow toys rather than buying new ones. Membership is £5 a year and borrowing is free. Toy swap events are organised by Warwickshire CAVA in Bishopton, Stratford-upon-Avon. Keep an eye on WCAVA's Facebook page for more information.

Food can be saved from waste too.

Community fridges operate in Bidford-on-Avon and Alcester, while the Community Kitchen in Stratford-upon-Avon turns surplus food into free meals for the local community.



Before you bin it, pause and think: could it be repaired, reused, donated, shared or borrowed instead?

Find local Repair Cafés and other waste-reducing initiatives at **www.stratford.gov.uk/community-connections**



Keep it loose: don't bag your recycling

When putting recycling into your blue lidded wheelie bin or box, remember one simple rule: keep it loose!

Please don't put your recycling into plastic bags before placing it in your bin. At the Sherbourne Recycling, the Materials Recycling Facility (MRF), recycling is sorted into different material streams using specialist technology, including infrared beams that identify different types of materials.

When recyclable items are tied up or contained inside a bag, the sorting equipment cannot easily identify and separate them. This can mean valuable recyclable materials are not sorted as intended.



What should I do?

It's simple:



Put your cans, tins, plastic bottles and containers, cardboard and other accepted recycling loose into your recycling bin.



Plastic bags and wrapping can be recycled, but they also need to go into the bin empty and loose, rather than being used to hold other recycling.



Never put a bag full of recycling into your wheelie bin. Empty your recycling straight into the bin instead.



Keeping your recycling loose gives it the best chance of being correctly identified and separated at the MRF, helping us recycle as much as possible.



Not sure which bin it goes in?

If you're unsure about how to dispose of something, Stratford-on-Avon District Council's A-Z Recycling Made Easy directory can help. Simply look up your item to find out which bin it belongs in or how it should be disposed of.

Before you bin it, check it! Visit the directory on the Council's website on **www.stratford.gov.uk/a-z**



SCAN ME

Download our app 'Stratford District Council'

Find out which day you need to put your bin out, where and how to recycle different materials and report a missed collection to us all in one place!

GET IT ON Google Play

Download on the App Store



Collection Service



Garden Waste collections are suspended from Monday 28 December 2026 to Friday 8 January 2027 inclusive.

Your refuse, recycling and food waste collections will change over Christmas

Normal collection date		NEW collection date over Christmas
Friday 25 December 2026	→	Monday 28 December 2026
Monday 28 December 2026	→	Tuesday 29 December 2026
Tuesday 29 December 2026	→	Wednesday 30 December 2026
Wednesday 30 December 2026	→	Thursday 31 December 2026
Thursday 31 December 2026	→	Saturday 2 January 2027
Friday 1 January 2027	→	Monday 4 January 2027
Monday 4 January 2027	→	Tuesday 5 January 2027
Tuesday 5 January 2027	→	Wednesday 6 January 2027
Wednesday 6 January 2027	→	Thursday 7 January 2027
Thursday 7 January 2027	→	Friday 8 January 2027
Friday 8 January 2027	→	Saturday 9 January 2027

Normal collections will resume on Monday 11 January 2027.

Please ensure your bins are presented at the edge of your property by 6am on your new collection day.

Xmas trees collected 9 January - 22 January 2027.

Working together
to deliver Waste Services

Stratford & Warwick Districts recycle