

Housing

Amended June 2023

This local information pack covers:

- information and advice about housing
- types of housing for older people and how to apply
- **a list of sheltered housing, retirement schemes and almshouses**
- empty homes
- energy and water
- heating costs
- home insurance
- home safety and security
- homelessness
- homesharing
- landlords
- leasehold and park homes
- mortgage and rent arrears
- moving furniture and moving home
- neighbour disputes
- pest control
- renting and repairs, replacing boilers and heating systems
- social and supported housing
- tradespeople
- weather emergencies

If you cannot find what you are looking for please contact us as we may be able to help further. Amendments and additions are also welcome. We publish other local information packs covering:

- Care agencies and support for carers
- Care homes
- Health and wellbeing
- Help at home
- Legal advice and power of attorney
- Memory loss and dementia
- Money matters
- Social activities
- Transport, travel and leisure

Age UK Sevenoaks & Tonbridge is a registered charity no. 1088213

01732 454108 www.ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk

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Information and advice on housing

Age UK

We provide many different services:

- Information & advice
 - publications on housing 0800 169 6565
 - help filling in forms. We can help you at our office. We may be able to visit you or arrange for the Department for Work & Pensions to visit you
- Independent Living Support (help with housework, shopping, gardening, dementia activities etc)
 - Edenbridge, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge, West Malling and Westerham areas 01732 454108
 - Swanley area. Try Age UK North West Kent 01474 564898
- Befriending (volunteers who can visit you at home for a weekly chat)
 - Edenbridge, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Westerham areas 01732 454108
 - Swanley area. Try Age UK North West Kent 01474 564898
- Adaptations, aids and equipment in Sevenoaks District. Contact James Keast (Your Home co-ordinator) 07864 959141
- Home bathing
 - Edenbridge, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge, West Malling and Westerham areas. Ask Kathy in Independent Living Support at Age UK 01732 454108 to put you in touch with people
 - Swanley area. Try Age UK North West Kent 01474 564898
- Chiropody and toenail cutting home visits
 - Sevenoaks area. Hollybush Day Centre 01732 741558
 - Swanley area. Try Age UK North West Kent 01474 564898
 - Tonbridge area 01732 454108
- Handyperson in Swanley area. Try Age UK North West Kent 01474 564898
- Escorted hospital appointments in Swanley area. Try Age UK North West Kent 01474 564898
- Meals on wheels in Swanley area. Try Age UK North West Kent 01474 564898

Citizens Advice

Free phone advice Monday-Friday 9am-5pm. Some office appointments may be possible.

- Aylesford, New Ash Green, Otford, Sevenoaks, Snodland, Swanley and Tonbridge 0808 278 7810
- Edenbridge and Westerham 0808 278 7962

Community Navigators

Free information and advice on finding the right sort of home. Contact INVOLVE 0300 081 0005 communitynavigation@involvekent.org.uk If you live in the Swanley area contact IMAGO 0300 011 1965 navigation@imago.community

Domestic Abuse Support Services in Kent & Medway

Safe refuge accommodation and adaptations to make the home safer by creating "sanctuaries" within the home 0808 168 9276 www.domesticabuseservices.org.uk

Domestic Abuse Volunteer Support Services (DAVSS)

PO Box 530, Tunbridge Wells TN2 9TB 01892 570538 (Helpline open Monday to Friday 10am to 1pm; can leave a message at other times) office@davss.org.uk
www.davss.org.uk This is the local helpline for men and women who are experiencing physical, sexual, emotional or financial abuse from current or former partners or other family members.

Dove Project

Refuge spaces in the South East 01702 300006

First Stop – Elderly Accommodation Counsel

If you are not sure which option is most suitable and you want to talk through it then you can contact First Stop Advice for Older People. This is a service run by Elderly Accommodation Counsel, a charity that advises older people and their families on downsizing, sheltered housing, retirement housing and other housing options. They can help identify what potential difficulties an individual is facing and provide support on housing options available. You can phone them on 0800 377 7070 and leave a message requesting a callback from an advisor info@firststopcareadvice.org.uk
www.firststopcareadvice.org.uk You can also search for retirement housing on their database at www.housingcare.org

Help to Buy Scheme

Government scheme to make home ownership more of an option. New-build and re-sale homes may be available for shared ownership 0333 321 4044
helptobuyeastandsoutheast@bpha.org.uk www.helptobuyese.org.uk

Housing Advice Teams

The Housing Advice Team at your local council may be able to offer advice for people losing their homes, facing eviction, rough sleepers and general advice for people over 55. They can provide guidance on how to join the local housing register to rent social housing, how to apply for a housing association home, rural housing schemes, self-build and custom-build homes

Independent Age

6 Avonmore Rd, London W14 8RL 0800 319 6789, 020 7605 4200
advice@independentage.org www.independentage.org

- free telephone and email service offering advice (a similar service is also offered by Age UK)
- a publication on choosing a care home which also explores other housing options for later life
- befrienders for people who are lonely, isolated or living alone

Your Home co-ordinator

In Sevenoaks District, trained advisors can support you with housing issues. Contact James Keast 07864 959141 jameskeast@ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk

Orbit

Build and provide a range of homes including rented and low-cost home ownership options 0800 678 1221 info@orbit.org.uk www.orbit.org.uk

Refuge

Safe houses for women and children escaping domestic violence 0808 200 0247
www.refuge.org.uk

Sevenoaks District Council HERO Advice Service

Information and guidance on housing problems 01732 227000
hero@sevenoaks.gov.uk www.sevenoaks.gov.uk

Sevenoaks District Seniors Action Forum

If you would like to improve bus services to villages contact Sevenoaks District Seniors Action Forum who campaign on this and many other issues www.sdsaf.org

Shelter

0808 800 4444 www.shelter.org.uk Legal advice on homelessness and all aspects of housing.

Social Services

03000 416161. Social Services provide many forms of support and you can ask for a free assessment of what support you might need and whether they might make any financial contribution. If you are looking after someone it may be quicker to get a free carer's assessment from INVOLVE 0300 081 0005

communitynavigation@involvekent.org.uk www.involvekent.org.uk If you live in Swanley contact IMAGO 0300 011 1965 hello@imago.community
www.imago.community

Your local council

Contact your local council to report:

- dangerous structures
- dangerous trees
- flooding and other major emergencies
- noise
- licensing issues
- fumes
- other environmental health complaints

Types of housing for older people

Age UK produce publications on housing options (downsizing, sheltered housing, retirement housing etc) 0800 169 6565

Some of the information in this pack is based on the database held by Elderly Accommodation Counsel, a charity that advises older people and their families on their housing options. Distances from facilities and other details are subject to change – please contact the relevant organisation for the latest information. The details are for information only, we cannot make recommendations.

The first thing to consider is what type of housing you are looking for. There are many types of housing for older people:

- age exclusive housing (for older people). There is usually an alarm system but no other support is provided and people are expected to live independently. Examples are some of the almshouses run by charities
- retirement housing (also known as sheltered housing or warden-assisted housing). This is the most common type of housing for older people. It usually has a warden or scheme manager although they may live off-site or there may be “floating support” with periodic visits from a member of staff
- enhanced sheltered housing where additional support is provided in some way. Examples are Roman Court in Edenbridge, Raphael & St Michael’s Court in Hildenborough and Castle Court in Tonbridge. You need to check what they actually mean by this
- some retirement or sheltered housing may be next door or on the same site as a care home. An example is Rockdale in Sevenoaks
- extra care housing (also known as assisted living or housing-with-care) for people who can no longer live completely on their own. This may be for people who need a minimum of 3-4 hours per week care or support but do not need 24-hour complex medical supervision. Personal care may be available from their care agency or you can employ your own carers or have family carers if you prefer. Support may be available for other things such as housework, washing and ironing. Housing staff may be present on site 24 hours in case of emergencies. There may be additional charges for care and support. Examples are Hollybush Court in Sevenoaks, Kemsing Extra Care Housing and Rosewell House in Tonbridge. You need to check what they actually mean by this
- retirement villages. This is the luxury end of the spectrum. Support is available – at a cost. An example is Audley Care in Tunbridge Wells 01892 577174 www.audleyretirement.co.uk
- some organisations run their own housing for older people. For example, there is a Royal British Legion village in Aylesford offering homes for veterans and their families 01622 795910 living@rbli.co.uk

How to apply

Most housing for older people is either social housing (to rent) or leasehold housing (to buy). The largest providers of social housing are housing associations who usually have a waiting list based on the council housing waiting list. If the housing is run by West Kent Housing or Moat Housing Association you must apply through Kent Homechoice www.kenthomechoice.org.uk If you do not have internet access or need help applying online and bidding online for properties there are a number of people who may be able to help you:

- there are public computers in libraries
- there is a public computer in West Kent Housing reception (100 London Rd, Sevenoaks) and reception staff may be able to help you use it
- the Gateway office in Tonbridge Castle may be able to help you. Tel: 01732 770929, 844522

- phone Community Navigators to see if they can help you. Contact INVOLVE 0300 081 0005 communitynavigation@involvekent.org.uk If you live in the Swanley area contact IMAGO 0300 011 1965 navigation@imago.community
- phone Moat Housing on 0300 323 0011 and ask if they can help you
- phone Sevenoaks District Council on 01732 227000 and ask if their HERO Advice Service can help you
- Citizens' Advice may be able to help. Free phone advice Monday-Friday 9am-5pm. Some office appointments may be possible.
 - Aylesford, Larkfield, New Ash Green, Otford, Sevenoaks, Snodland, Swanley and Tonbridge 0808 278 7810
 - Edenbridge and Westerham 0808 278 7962
- INVOLVE. Advocacy and help representing your views 03000 810005
- The Advocacy People (formerly SEAP) may be able to help. PO Box 375, Hastings TN34 9HU 0330 440 9000 info@theadvocacypeople.co.uk www.theadvocacypeople.co.uk May be able to do home visits.

However there are some other independent providers of social housing for older people (such as Rockdale or almshouses) where you can apply directly. You can also apply directly if you are buying leasehold housing or where housing is available for shared ownership. Age UK's Information & Advice Service may be able to help you fill in the forms for these schemes 01732 454108. The properties available at Rockdale are kept up-to-date at www.rockdale.org.uk/properties-available

Housing for older people to rent

Aylesford

Queen Elizabeth Court. Royal British Legion village near Aylesford

- Assisted living scheme
- Domiciliary care agency on site
- For Armed Forces veterans and their dependants over 55
- Contact Royal British Legion Industries 01622 717463 living@rbli.co.uk

Bat & Ball

Fishers Oak, Grove Rd, Bat & Ball, Sevenoaks TN14 5DA

- Age exclusive housing
- 8 one-bed flats. Built in 1990. Not wheelchair-adapted
- Community alarm service
- Garden
- People who have worked in pubs and couples have priority. Social activities are actively encouraged. **New residents accepted from 55 years of age.** Both cats & dogs generally accepted (subject to conditions). Flats occasionally available but waiting list was oversubscribed in 2019
- Shop & post office in Bat & Ball 0.2 miles; GP Sevenoaks (St John's) 1 mile; nearest town Sevenoaks 1.5 miles; bus stop 0.2 miles; 3 buses an hour to Sevenoaks
- Rent (social landlord) from Anchor 0800 020 9516

Garden Court, Garden Rd, Bat & Ball, Sevenoaks TN13 3QR

- Age exclusive housing
- 24 one & two-bed flats
- Visiting management staff (a weekly visit from a Housing Officer) and community alarm service
- Shops (Bat & Ball) 0.4 miles; post office (Bat & Ball) 0.5 miles; GP Sevenoaks (St John's) 0.6 miles; nearest town Sevenoaks 1.5 miles; bus stop 0.2 miles; hourly buses to Sevenoaks
- Rent (social landlord) from West Kent Housing Association 01732 749400

Queen's Drive, Bat & Ball, Sevenoaks TN14 5DB

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 20 one-bed flats. Built in 1977. Includes mobility standard properties
- Non-resident management staff (24 hours) and community alarm service
- Garden
- Access to site fairly easy but less so for less mobile people
- Shop & post office (Bat & Ball) 0.3 miles; GP Sevenoaks (St John's) 0.6 miles; nearest town Sevenoaks 1.5 miles; bus stop 0.1 miles; half-hourly buses to Sevenoaks
- Rent (social landlord) from West Kent Housing Association 01732 749400

Brasted

Pym Orchard, Brasted near Westerham TN16 1JT

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 10 one-bedroom bungalows. Built in 1962. Includes mobility and wheelchair standard properties
- Non-resident management staff and community alarm service
- Garden
- Access to site fairly easy but less so for less mobile people
- Shop & GP (in village) 0.2 miles; post office (Sundridge) 0.7 miles; nearest town (Sevenoaks) 5 miles; bus stop 0.2 miles; hourly buses to Sundridge and Sevenoaks
- Both cats & dogs generally accepted
- Rent (social landlord) from West Kent Housing Association 01732 749400

Chiddingstone

Margaret Hyde Houses. 3-6 South Row, Wellers Town, Chiddingstone near Edenbridge TN8 7BG

- Age exclusive housing
- 4 one-bed flats & cottages. Built in 1839
- Access to site fairly easy
- Shop & post office (in village) 0.8 miles; GP (Edenbridge) 5 miles; nearest town (Edenbridge) 5 miles; may be occasional buses
- This almshouse charity caters for people from the Parish of Chiddingstone in the first instance, if no need in the Parish, this could be extended to

Sevenoaks District Council area. Both cats & dogs generally accepted (but must not become a nuisance to residents)

- Rent (social landlord) from Margaret Hyde Charity 01892 870483

Chipstead

Denesfield Court, Homedean Rd, Chipstead TN13 2RU

- Age exclusive housing
- 16 studio & one-bed flats. Built in 1981
- Community alarm service
- Lounge, garden
- Access to site fairly easy
- Shop & post office (Riverhead) 1 mile; GP (Sevenoaks) 2 miles; nearest town (Sevenoaks) 2 miles; bus stop 350 feet; hourly buses to Riverhead and Sevenoaks
- **New residents accepted from 50 years of age**
- Rent (social landlord) from Moat Housing Association 0300 323 0011

Cowden

Chantlers Mead, Cowden near Edenbridge TN8 7HU

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 20 one-bed flats & bungalows. Built in 1966. Includes mobility standard properties
- Non-resident management staff and community alarm service
- Garden
- Access to site easy
- Shop, post office, GP (Edenbridge) 5 miles; nearest town (Edenbridge) 5 miles; bus stop 0.2 miles; occasional buses to Edenbridge or Tunbridge Wells
- Both cats & dogs generally accepted (in bungalows only)
- Rent (social landlord) from West Kent Housing Association 01732 749400

Dunton Green

Hamlyn Court, Darenth Lane, Dunton Green near Sevenoaks TN13 2XU

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 40 one & two-bed flats. Built in 1991
- Visiting management staff (support provided by West Kent Housing Association), non-resident management staff and community alarm service
- Lift, lounge, laundry, guest facilities, garden
- Whole site accessible by wheelchair. Access to site easy
- Shop (Tesco) 0.2 miles; post office (Riverhead) 0.6 miles; GP (Sevenoaks) 2 miles; nearest town (Sevenoaks) 2 miles; bus stop 0.2 miles; 4 buses an hour to Riverhead and Sevenoaks
- Weekly social activities include bingo, darts, pool, outings and suppers organised by residents. **New residents accepted from 55 years of age**

- Rent (social landlord) from Moat Homes Ltd 0300 323 0011. £105.38 inclusive per week (cost in 2015)

Edenbridge

Church St, Edenbridge TN8 5BG

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 6 one-bed bungalows. Built in 1968. Includes mobility standard properties
- Non-resident management staff and community alarm service
- Garden
- Access to site easy. Shop & post office 600 yards; town centre 600 yards; GP 1 mile; bus stop 0.3 miles; regular buses to Tunbridge Wells
- Both cats & dogs generally accepted
- Rent (social landlord) from West Kent Housing Association 01732 749400

Queen's Court, Edenbridge TN8 6DN

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 26 one-bed flats. Built in 1989. Includes mobility and wheelchair standard properties
- Non-resident management staff and community alarm service
- Lift, lounge, dining room, laundry, guest facilities, garden, hobby room, activities room, library, assisted bathing facility
- Kent Association for the Blind visit once a month
- Whole site accessible by wheelchair. Access to site fairly easy. Shop 50 yards; GP 75 yards; town centre 100 yards; post office 0.7 miles; bus stop 0.2 miles; regular buses to Edenbridge and Tunbridge Wells
- Weekly social activities. Both cats & dogs generally accepted, but not to be replaced
- Rent (social landlord) from West Kent Housing Association 01732 749400

The Plat, Edenbridge TN8 5BJ

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 20 one & two-bed flats & bungalows. Built in 1968. Includes mobility and wheelchair standard properties
- Non-resident management staff and community alarm service
- Access to site easy. Distances: shop & post office 0.4 miles; town centre 0.5 miles; GP 1 mile; bus stop 0.4 miles; regular buses to Tunbridge Wells
- Both cats & dogs generally accepted (only in bungalows)
- Rent (social landlord) from West Kent Housing Association 01732 749400

Fordcombe

Reeves Court, Fordcombe near Tunbridge Wells TN3 0RP

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 5 one & two-bed flats. Built in 1972. Includes mobility standard properties
- Non-resident management staff and community alarm service

- Shop & post office (Speldhurst) 2.3 miles (Tunbridge Wells); GP (Tunbridge Wells) 5 miles; nearest town (Tunbridge Wells) 5 miles; may be occasional buses
- Rent (social landlord) from West Kent Housing Association 01732 749400

Hildenborough

Raphael & St Michael's Court, Hollenden Park, Coldharbour Lane, Hildenborough near Tonbridge TN11 9LE

- Enhanced sheltered housing. You need to check what they actually mean by this
- 26 one & two-bed flats. Built in 1984. Includes mobility and wheelchair standard properties
- Close Care scheme with resident management staff (24 hours) and community alarm service. You need to check what they actually offer
- Lift, restaurant, laundry, guest facilities, garden
- Access to site fairly easy but less so for less mobile people. Distances: bus stop 400 yards; shop 600 yards; post office 700 yards; nearest town 2 miles; GP 400 yards; social centre 400 yards
- Regular social activities. Some meals available. **New residents accepted from 55 years of age**
- Rent at market prices from Raphael Medical Centre 01732 833924

Holtye Common

Countess of Thanet Almshouses, Holtye Common near Cowden TN8 7EL

- Age exclusive housing
- 8 studio & one-bed flats & cottages. Built in 1892 and renovated in 1963
- Garden
- Access to site fairly easy. However the almshouses are fairly isolated in a hamlet so a car or ability to walk 1/2 mile to a bus is advisable. Shop & post office (Ashurst Wood) 4.1 miles; GP (Edenbridge) 6 miles; nearest town (Edenbridge) 5 miles; one bus a week to Sevenoaks
- This almshouse charity caters for retired older people who have had to leave tied accommodation. **New residents accepted from 50 years of age**. Both cats & dogs generally accepted
- Rent (social landlord) from Countess of Thanet Almshouses 01342 850902

Kemsing

Church Lane, Kemsing TN15 6LU

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 16 one-bed bungalows. Built in 1965. Includes mobility and wheelchair standard properties
- Non-resident management staff and community alarm service
- Garden

- Access to site fairly easy but less so for less mobile people. Shop & GP 440 yards; post office (Otford) 2.4 miles; nearest town (Sevenoaks) 3 miles; bus stop 0.3 miles; half-hourly buses to Sevenoaks
- Both cats & dogs generally accepted
- Rent (social landlord) from West Kent Housing Association 01732 749400

Kemsing Extra Care Housing, Nightingale Rd, Kemsing

- Extra care housing
- 31 one-bed flats and 20 two-bed flats to rent and to buy. Opening late 2018.
- Carers available
- Lounge, restaurant, terrace/orangery, activity room, hair salon, therapy room
- Nearest town Sevenoaks with half-hourly bus service
- **New residents accepted from 55 years of age**
- Rent (social landlord) from Rapport Housing & Care 01634 729161

Mary Burrows Gardens, Kemsing TN15 6LR

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 4 one-bed flats & bungalows. Built in 1973. Includes mobility and wheelchair standard properties
- Non-resident management staff and community alarm service
- Garden
- Access to site fairly easy. Shop & GP 440 yards; post office (Otford) 2.3 miles; nearest town (Sevenoaks) 3 miles; bus stop 0.2 miles; half-hourly buses to Sevenoaks
- Both cats & dogs generally accepted (in bungalows only)
- Rent (social landlord) from West Kent Housing Association 01732 749400

Knockholt

Hampton Cottages, Old London Rd, Knockholt TN14 7JW

- Age exclusive housing
- 10 cottages. Built in 1884 and renovated in 1992
- Community alarm service
- Shop & post office (Halstead) 1.1 miles; GP (Sevenoaks) 4 miles; nearest town (Sevenoaks) 4 miles; occasional buses to Sevenoaks and Orpington
- Rent (social landlord) from Hampton Cottages Charity 01959 533323

Leigh

Charlotte Cottages, High St, Leigh near Tonbridge TN11 8RH

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 4 one-bed bungalows. Built in 1963. Includes mobility standard properties
- Non-resident management staff and community alarm service
- Shop, post office & GP (in village) 500 feet; nearest town (Tonbridge) 2 miles; bus stop 300 feet; regular buses to Tonbridge
- Rent (social landlord) from West Kent Housing Association 01732 749400

Saxby Wood, Leigh near Tonbridge TN11 8RR

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 12 one-bed flats & bungalows. Built in 1969. Includes mobility standard properties
- Non-resident management staff and community alarm service
- Both cats & dogs generally accepted (in bungalows only)
- Shop, post office & GP (in village) 0.1 miles; nearest town (Tonbridge) 2 miles; bus stop 0.1 miles; regular buses to Tonbridge
- Rent (social landlord) from West Kent Housing Association 01732 749400

Otford

Twitton Meadow, Otford near Sevenoaks TN14 5JP

- Age exclusive housing
- 16 one-bed flats & bungalows
- Access to site fairly easy but less so for less mobile people. Shop, post office & GP (in village) 1 mile; nearest town (Sevenoaks) 3 miles; bus stop 0.1 miles; occasional buses to Sevenoaks
- **New residents accepted from 60 years of age.** Both cats & dogs generally accepted
- Rent (social landlord) from Places for People Homes 0845 850 9571

Penshurst

Forge Close, Penshurst near Tonbridge TN11 8DA

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 10 one-bed bungalows. Built in 1956. Includes mobility standard properties
- Non-resident management staff and community alarm service
- Both cats & dogs generally accepted
- Shop, post office & GP (in village) 250 feet; nearest town (Tonbridge) 4 miles; bus stop 500 feet; regular buses to Edenbridge and Tunbridge Wells
- Rent (social landlord) from West Kent Housing Association 01732 749400

Old Almshouses, Rogues Hill near Penshurst TN11 8BD

- Age exclusive housing
- 6 studio flats. Built in 1833 and renovated in 1979. Includes mobility standard properties
- Community alarm service
- Garden
- Access to site fairly easy. Shop, post office & GP (in village) 0.4 miles; nearest town (Tonbridge) 4 miles; bus stop 0.4 miles; regular buses to Edenbridge and Tunbridge Wells
- This almshouse charity caters for people who have lived in the Parish of Penshurst & Fordcombe for no less than 2 years
- Rent (social landlord) from Penshurst Almshouses 01892 870619

Seal

Bentleys Bungalows, Childsbridge Lane, Seal near Sevenoaks TN15 0BU

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 8 one-bed bungalows. Built in 1955. Includes mobility standard properties
- Non-resident management staff and community alarm service
- Garden
- Access to site fairly easy. Shop (in village) 0.5 miles; post office (Bat & Ball) 1.5 miles; GP (Kemsing) 2 miles; nearest town (Sevenoaks) 3 miles; bus stop 100 feet; 3 buses an hour to Sevenoaks
- Both cats & dogs generally accepted
- Rent (social landlord) from West Kent Housing Association 01732 749400

Church St, Seal near Sevenoaks TN15 0AS

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 4 one-bed flats. Built in 1970. Includes mobility standard properties
- Non-resident management staff and community alarm service
- Access to site easy but less so for less mobile people. Shop 50 yards; post office (Bat & Ball) 1.2 miles; GP (Kemsing) 2 miles; nearest town (Sevenoaks) 2 miles; bus stop 0.1 miles; 3 buses an hour to Sevenoaks
- Rent (social landlord) from West Kent Housing Association 01732 749400

Johnson's Court, School Lane, Seal near Sevenoaks TN15 0BE

- Age exclusive housing
- 24 one & two-bed flats. Built in 1991
- Community alarm service
- Lift, garden
- Access to site easy. Shop 200 yards; post office 1.2 miles; GP Sevenoaks (St John's) 1.5 miles; nearest town (Sevenoaks) 2 miles; bus stop 500 feet; 3 buses an hour to Sevenoaks
- **New residents accepted from 55 years of age**
- Shared Ownership from Moat Homes Ltd 0300 323 0011

Each home is available on a shared ownership basis. This means that you purchase a share in a one or two bedroom apartment. The share is between 25% and 75% of the full market value, and is purchased using existing savings. You then pay a rent and service charge on the share that you do not own. This scheme is for people that are unable to afford to purchase a home outright. We may also be able to assist you if you are looking to downsize and utilise sales proceeds to fund some living costs (however this will be assessed on an individual basis).

Knox Court, Middle Lane, Seal near Sevenoaks TN15 0DS

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 14 one-bed flats. Built in 1983. Includes mobility standard properties
- Non-resident management staff and community alarm service
- Access to site easy but less so for less mobile people. Shop 50 yards; post office (Bat & Ball) 1.2 miles; GP (Kemsing) 2 miles; nearest town (Sevenoaks) 2 miles; bus stop 0.2 miles; 3 buses an hour to Sevenoaks
- Rent (social landlord) from West Kent Housing Association 01732 749400

Seal House, Main Rd, Seal near Sevenoaks TN15 0AF

- Retirement/sheltered housing

- 8 one-bed flats. Built in 1964. Includes mobility standard properties
- Non-resident management staff and community alarm service
- Garden
- Access to site easy but less so for less mobile people. Shop 50 yards; post office (Bat & Ball) 1.1 miles; GP (Kemsing) 2 miles; nearest town (Sevenoaks) 2 miles; bus stop 0.2 miles; 3 buses an hour to Sevenoaks
- Rent (social landlord) from West Kent Housing Association 01732 749400

Sevenoaks

Clare Way, Sevenoaks TN13 1QL

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 15 one-bed flats. Built in 1955. Includes mobility standard properties
- Non-resident management staff and community alarm service
- Garden
- Shops & post office 0.9 miles; GP 1 mile; town centre 1 mile; bus stop 0.2 miles; hourly buses to Sevenoaks
- Some meals available
- Rent (social landlord) from West Kent Housing Association 01732 749400

Hollybush Court, Hollybush Close, Sevenoaks TN13 3UX

- Extra care housing. You need to check what they actually mean by this
- 52 one & two-bed flats. Built in 1989. Includes mobility and wheelchair standard properties
- Extra Care scheme with non-resident management staff and community alarm service. You need to check what they actually offer
- Lift, lounge, laundry, guest facilities, garden, community centre, hobby room, assisted bathing facility
- Whole site accessible by wheelchair. Shops, post office & GP 0.5 miles; town centre 0.5 miles; bus stop 0.25 miles; frequent buses to town centre
- Regular social activities include fish and chip suppers, day trips, film evenings
- Rent (social landlord) from West Kent Housing Association 01732 749400

Linden House, 16 Mount Harry Rd, Sevenoaks TN13 3JH

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 36 one-bed flats. Built in 1997. Includes mobility standard properties
- Non-resident management staff and community alarm service
- Lift, lounge, dining room, laundry, guest facilities, garden, community centre, hobby room, activities room, library and assisted bathing room
- Access to site easy. Shop & GP 50 yards; post office & town centre 0.9 miles; bus stop 0.2 miles; frequent buses to town centre
- Frequent social activities include postural stability, yoga, cookery, flower arranging, day trips and computer classes, organised by residents & West Kent Housing Association
- Local greengrocer & chemist deliver to Linden House
- SDC minibus to take people shopping twice a week
- Rent (social landlord) from West Kent Housing Association 01732 749400

Rockdale, Rockdale Rd, Sevenoaks TN13 1JT

- Supported independent living. Rockdale Housing Association is a charitable organisation offering 24-hour on-site support
- 123 studio, one & two-bed flats. Built from 1968 onwards. Includes wheelchair standard properties
- The accommodation is located in Garden Apartments (48 flats), The Pleasance (19 flats), Beatrice Wilson Apartments (50 flats) and Stable Court (6 flats)
- Resident management staff (24 hours 7 days per week) and community alarm service. Home help available for shopping and cleaning. Do not provide personal care but support co-ordinators can help you to arrange this through private care agencies or Social Services.
- Lift, lounge, dining room, laundry, guest facilities, garden
- Access to site fairly easy. Shops & town centre 50 yards; post office, GP & bus stop 100 yards
- Frequent social activities include coffee mornings, afternoon teas, games and entertainment organised by warden and residents' social club. Also art clubs, exercise and dance classes, computer clubs etc. Some meals available in The Pantry restaurant Tuesday - Friday and Sundays). **New residents accepted from 60 years of age**. Both cats & dogs generally accepted, but not to be replaced (subject to prior agreement)
- Rents include central heating and hot water supply. Council tax, water rates, phone and electric bills will be additional. It may be possible for rent and service charges to be met by Housing Benefit if you are eligible. Support charges will be additional
- Age UK's Information & Advice Service may be able to help you fill in the forms for Rockdale 01732 454108, 01732 366100. The properties available at Rockdale are kept up-to-date on their website at www.rockdale.org.uk/properties-available
- Rent (social landlord) from Rockdale Housing Association Ltd. Contact Hannah Evenden, Lettings Officer 01732 468641 hannah.evenden@rockdale.org.uk

St John's Court, St John's Hill, Sevenoaks TN13 3NU

- Age exclusive housing
- 16 studio flats. Built in 1973
- Garden
- Access to site fairly easy. GP 0.1 miles; shops 0.2 miles; post office 0.4 miles; town centre 1 mile; bus stop 0.1 miles; frequent buses to town centre
- Scheme originally linked to adjacent C of E church but now run by Moat Housing Association although there is no warden or other support except visits from the estate manager. **New residents accepted from 50 years of age**
- Rent (social landlord) from Moat Homes Ltd 0300 323 0011

Servite House, Cobden Rd, Sevenoaks TN13 3UB

- Age exclusive housing

- 4 studio & one-bed flats
- **New residents accepted from 50 years of age**
- Shop & GP 0.1 miles; post office 0.6 miles; town centre 1 mile; bus stop 0.2 miles; frequent buses to town centre
- Rent (social landlord) from West Kent Housing Association 01732 749400

Sevenoaks Almshouses, c/o Sevenoaks School, High St, Sevenoaks TN13 1HU

- Retirement/semi-sheltered housing
- 17 one-bed flats
- The almshouses in Sevenoaks were established in around 1418 by William Sennocke. The current building was built in 1730 and has been much modernised since
- Laundry, garden, community room
- Access to site easy but less so for less mobile people.
- Shop 100 yards; post office, GP & town centre 0.4 miles; bus stop 0.1 miles; hourly buses to town centre
- This almshouse charity caters for people with limited financial means who live in or have lived in Sevenoaks area. You must be able to look after yourself. Social activities may be available at Sevenoaks School next door. **New residents accepted from about 60 years of age**
- Rent (social landlord) from Sevenoaks Almshouse Charity 01732 455133 extension 301 almshouses@sevenoaksschool.org
www.sevenoaksalmshouses.org

Solefields Rd, Sevenoaks TN13 1PG

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 36 one-bed flats. Built in 1948. Includes mobility standard properties
- Non-resident management staff (part-time) and community alarm service
- Garden
- Shop 0.3 miles; post office, GP & town centre 0.6 miles; bus stop 0.3 miles; hourly buses to town centre
- Rent (social landlord) from West Kent Housing Association 01732 749400

The Retreat, The Drive, Sevenoaks TN13 3AA

- Age exclusive housing
- 7 one-bed bungalows. Built in 1904 and renovated in 1975
- Garden
- Access to site easy but less so for less mobile people. Shops, post office, GP & town centre 0.2 miles; bus stop 400 feet; frequent buses to town centre
- This almshouse charity caters for people born in Sevenoaks or who have lived there for at least 10 years, with preference to members of the Methodist Church. Frequent social activities include meals, clubs and worship organised by the Methodist Church
- The Trust fosters a good community spirit among residents; it is a Christian foundation associated with the adjacent Methodist Church
- Rent (social landlord) from The Retreat Almshouse Charity 01732 452064

Shoreham

Shoreham Almshouses, Filston Lane, Shoreham near Sevenoaks TN14 7SR

- 2 self-contained bungalows suitable for single people. Built about 1600
- Easy access to site. Shop & post office 0.2 miles; GP (Otford) 2 miles; nearest town (Sevenoaks) 5 miles; bus service on demand to Sevenoaks
- Rent (social landlord) from Shoreham Almshouses 07879 655459
shorehamalmshouses@outlook.com

Tonbridge

Augustine & Gundolph House, Dry Hill Park Rd, Tonbridge TN10 3BQ

- Age exclusive housing
- 12 one-bed flats. Built in 1981
- Access to site easy but less so for less mobile people. Distances: bus stop 500 yards; shop 500 yards; post office 1 mile; town centre 1 mile; GP 1 mile; social centre 1 mile
- **New residents accepted from 50 years of age**
- Rent (social landlord) from Moat Homes Ltd 0300 323 0011

Becket Court, Alexandra Rd, Tonbridge TN9 2BD

- Retirement housing
- 14 two-bed flats. Built in 1998
- Concierge staff available Monday to Friday and community alarm service
- Lift. Limited parking
- Access to site easy. Distances: bus stop 100 yards; shop 100 yards; post office 0.5 mile; town centre 0.5 mile; GP 0.5 mile; social centre 0.5 mile
- **New residents accepted from 55 years of age**
- Rent (social landlord) from Clarion Housing Group 0300 100 0303

Bentall House, 7 Dryhill Park Crescent, Tonbridge TN10 3BJ

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 10 studio flats. Built in 1969 and renovated in 1995 with new lift
- Resident management staff (24 hours) and community alarm service
- Lounge, dining room, laundry, guest facilities, garden
- Distances: bus stop 100 yards; town centre 0.7 mile
- Some meals available (lunch and supper 7 days a week)
- Rent (social landlord) from Abbeyfield Tonbridge Society Ltd 01732 354616

Frome Court, Longmead Way, Tonbridge TN10 3TS

- Retirement housing
- 21 studio & 3 one-bed flats. Built in 1984
- Concierge staff available Monday to Friday and community alarm service
- Lift, lounge, laundry, guest facilities, garden
- Access to site easy. Distances: bus stop 100 yards; shop 200 yards; post office 1 mile; town centre 2 miles; GP 1 mile; social centre 100 yards
- **New residents accepted from 55 years of age**

- Rent (social landlord) from Clarion Housing Group 0300 100 0303

Hatton Housing Trust Ltd

- 100 flats in Tunbridge Wells area
- **Applicants should be over 55 (retired or about to retire)**, have close connections with the area and have performed some voluntary service to the community
- You must be able to live independently as there is no warden
- Apply via Claire Mitchell at Warners Solicitors 01732 770660
c.mitchell@warners.law

Leslie Tew Court, Derwent Rd, Tonbridge TN10 3TX

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 18 one-bed, 9 two-bed, 1 three-bed and 2 studio flats. Built in 1990. Includes mobility and wheelchair standard properties
- Non-resident management staff 4 days per week and community alarm service
- Lift, lounge, laundry, guest facilities, garden
- Access to site easy but less so for less mobile people. Distances: bus stop 400 yards; shop 75 yards; post office 0.5 mile; town centre 2 miles; GP 0.25 mile; social centre 100 yards
- Regular social activities include coffee mornings, organised by tenants assisted by the scheme manager. **New residents accepted from 55 years of age**
- Developed by Riverside Retirement Living, 2 Estuary Boulevard, Liverpool L24 8RF
- Rent (social landlord) from Riverside Retirement Living 0345 111 0000

Mary Magdalene House, Priory St, Tonbridge TN9 2AZ

- Retirement housing
- 24 studio & one-bed flats. Built in 1984
- Concierge staff available Monday to Friday and community alarm service but only in part of the complex. You need to check if it is available
- Lift, stair-lift, lounge, laundry, guest facilities, garden
- Access to site easy. Distances: bus stop 0.75 mile; shop 0.5 mile; post office 0.75 mile; town centre 0.75 mile; GP 0.75 mile; social centre 1.5 mile
- **New residents accepted from 55 years of age**
- Rent (social landlord) from Clarion Housing Group 0300 100 0303

Penruddocke House, The Ridgeway, Tonbridge TN10 4NL

- Retirement housing
- 31 one-bed flats. Built in 1977
- Concierge staff available Monday to Friday and community alarm service
- Lift, lounge, laundry, guest facilities, garden. Limited parking
- Access to site easy. Distances: bus stop 100 yards; shop 0.5 mile; post office 0.5 mile; town centre 2 miles; GP 1 mile; social centre 1 mile
- **New residents accepted from 55 years of age**

- Rent (social landlord) from Clarion Housing Group 0300 100 0303

Rosewell House, Tudeley Lane, Tonbridge TN11 0FT

- Extra care housing scheme for over-55s. You need to check what they actually mean by this
- 59 one & two-bed flats. Built in 2018
- **For over-55s**
- 35 flats available at affordable rent. You need to be on the council's housing register and nominated by the council 01732 876067
housing.services@tmbc.gov.uk
- Wheelchair-accessible throughout
- Person-centred care packages
- Optional events and activities eg coffee mornings, flower arranging, craft classes, film nights, outings etc
- Handyman service to change lightbulbs, put up pictures or shelves, hang curtains etc
- Washing and ironing (additional charge)
- Housing staff on site 24 hours in case of emergencies and community alarm service
- Lounge, garden, activity room, hair salon/therapy room, WIFI in some areas, lifts, off-road parking, mobility scooter store, pets accepted
- Access to site fairly easy. nearest town (Tonbridge) 1 mile; station 1 mile; bus stop at top of road; buses to town centre
- Restaurant serving lunch
- Rent (social landlord) from Rapport Housing & Care (formerly Abbeyfield Kent) 01732 363081

St Augustine House, Priory Rd, Tonbridge TN9 2BB

- Retirement housing
- 21 one-bed flats. Built in 1998
- Concierge staff available Monday to Friday and community alarm service
- Lift, lounge, laundry, guest facilities, garden. Limited parking
- Access to site easy. Distances: bus stop 100 yards; shop 100 yards; post office 0.5 mile; town centre 0.5 mile; GP 0.5 mile; social centre 0.5 mile
- **New residents accepted from 55 years of age**
- Rent (social landlord) from Clarion Housing Group 0300 100 0303

Town Lock House, Lockside, Lyons Crescent, Tonbridge TN9 1EA

- Retirement housing
- 26 one-bed flats. Built in 1993
- Concierge staff available Monday to Friday and community alarm service
- Lift, lounge, laundry, garden, situated by river. Limited parking
- Access to site easy. Distances: bus stop 10 yards; post office 0.25 mile; town centre 300 yards; GP 150 yards; social centre 1 mile
- **New residents accepted from 55 years of age**
- Rent (social landlord) from Clarion Housing Group 0300 100 0303

Weald

Knole Close, Weald near Sevenoaks TN14 6RB

- Retirement/semi-sheltered housing
- 8 one-bed flats. Built in 1975. Includes mobility standard properties
- Non-resident management staff and community alarm service
- Garden
- Shop & post office 0.2 miles; GP (Sevenoaks) 3 miles; nearest town (Sevenoaks) 3 miles; bus stop 0.5 miles; occasional buses to Sevenoaks
- Rent (social landlord) from West Kent Housing Association 01732 749400

Lambarde Cottages (Weald Almshouses). 21-29 Glebe Rd, Weald near Sevenoaks TN14 6PB

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 8 one-bed bungalows. Built in 1832 and renovated in 1960 and modernised again more recently. The Almshouses at Weald are situated opposite the parish church. Each cottage consists of a living room, separate kitchen, bathroom and bedroom
- Small gardens
- Access to site fairly easy. Shop & post office 0.4 miles; GP (Sevenoaks) 3 miles; nearest town (Sevenoaks) 3 miles; bus stop 20 yards; occasional buses to Sevenoaks
- This almshouse charity caters for people with limited financial means who live in or have lived in the Sevenoaks area. You must be able to look after yourself. **New residents accepted from about 60 years of age**
- Rent (social landlord) from Sevenoaks Almshouse Charity 01732 455133 extension 301 almshouses@sevenoaksschool.org
www.sevenoaksalmshouses.org

Mount Pleasant, Weald near Sevenoaks TN14 6QA

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 8 one-bed flats. Built in 1975. Includes mobility standard properties
- Non-resident management staff (part time) and community alarm service
- Garden
- Shop & post office 0.2 miles; GP (Sevenoaks) 3 miles; nearest town (Sevenoaks) 3 miles; bus stop 0.4 miles; occasional buses to Sevenoaks
- Rent (social landlord) from West Kent Housing Association 01732 749400

Westerham

Moreton's Court Almshouses, London Rd, Westerham TN16 1BE

- Age exclusive housing. Older people in need. On average one vacancy per year. Waiting list in operation
- 12 one-bed flats. Built in 1901
- Community alarm service
- Gardens and laundry

- Shops, post office, GP & town centre 0.2 miles; bus stop 0.2 miles; hourly buses to Sevenoaks
- Rent (social landlord) from Moreton Almshouse Charity. Monthly maintenance contribution. Contact Sarah Marriott 01732 866482, 07715 178517 sjmarriott@hotmail.com
- They also have 3 flats in Vicarage Hill and 2 flats in New St

Housing for older people to buy

Edenbridge

Eadhelm Court, Penlee Close, Edenbridge TN8 5FD

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 34 one & two-bed flats. Built in 2012
- Non-resident management staff and community alarm service
- Lounge, laundry, guest facilities, garden
- Shops, post office, GP, town centre 0.2 miles; bus stop 0.2 miles
- Leasehold
- Cost: Prices from £227,950 (at 28/11/2014)
- Buy from McCarthy & Stone 0800 919132

Roman Court, 1 High St, Edenbridge TN8 5LW

- Enhanced sheltered housing. You need to check what they actually mean by this
- 52 one & two-bed flats. Built in 2005
- Assisted Living scheme with resident management staff (24 hours, 7 days) and community alarm service. You need to check what they actually offer
- Lift, lounge, dining room, laundry, guest facilities, garden
- Shops, post office, GP, town centre 350 feet; bus stop 0.1 miles
- Some meals available. Both cats & dogs generally accepted (subject to terms of lease and landlord permission)
- Leasehold
- Care provider: Allied Healthcare
- Developed by McCarthy & Stone
- Buy from First Port 0333 321 4072

Hadlow

The Maltings, Carpenters Lane, Hadlow near Tonbridge TN11 0DQ

- No longer specifically retirement flats but one block is mainly over-55s
- 22 flats. Built in 1987
- Now owned by the residents; flats will be advertised for sale by local estate agents

The Square, Hadlow near Tonbridge TN11 0DD

- Age exclusive housing
- 10 two & three-bed cottages
- **New residents accepted from 55 years of age**

- Managed by Grange 01488 668655
- Buy leasehold from Fifty5Plus 01488 668655

Hildenborough

Raphael & St Michael's Court, Hollenden Park, Coldharbour Lane, Hildenborough near Tonbridge TN11 9LE

- Enhanced sheltered housing. You need to check what they actually mean by this
- 26 one & two-bed flats. Built in 1984. Includes mobility and wheelchair standard properties
- Close Care scheme with resident management staff (24 hours) and community alarm service. You need to check what they actually offer
- Lift, restaurant, laundry, guest facilities, garden
- Access to site fairly easy but less so for less mobile people. Distances: bus stop 400 yards; shop 600 yards; post office 700 yards; nearest town 2 miles; GP 400 yards; social centre 400 yards
- Regular social activities. Some meals available. **New residents accepted from 55 years of age**
- Buy leasehold from Raphael Medical Centre 01732 833924

Kemsing

Kemsing Extra Care Housing. Nightingale Rd, Kemsing

- Extra care housing
- 31 one-bed flats and 20 two-bed flats to rent and to buy
- Carers available
- Lounge, restaurant, terrace/orangery, activity room, hair salon, therapy room
- Nearest town Sevenoaks with half-hourly bus service
- **New residents accepted from 55 years of age**
- Rent (social landlord) from Rapport Housing & Care 01634 729161

Seal

Johnson's Court, School Lane, Seal near Sevenoaks TN15 0BE

- Age exclusive housing
- 24 one & two-bed flats. Built in 1991
- Community alarm service
- Lift, garden
- Access to site easy. Shop 200 yards; post office 1.2 miles; GP Sevenoaks (St John's) 1.5 miles; nearest town (Sevenoaks) 2 miles; bus stop 500 feet; 3 buses an hour to Sevenoaks
- **New residents accepted from 55 years of age**
- Shared Ownership from Moat Homes Ltd 0300 323 0011
- Each home is available on a shared ownership basis. This means that you purchase a share in a one or two bedroom apartment. The share is between 25% and 75% of the full market value, and is purchased using existing savings. You then pay a rent and service charge on the share that you do not

own. This scheme is for people that are unable to afford to purchase a home outright. We may also be able to assist you if you are looking to downsize and utilise sales proceeds to fund some living costs (however this will be assessed on an individual basis).

Sevenoaks

Park House, St John's Rd, Sevenoaks TN13 3JZ

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 23 one & two-bed flats. Built in 1988
- Visiting management staff (House Manager works 20 hours per week), non-resident management staff (part-time) and community alarm service
- Lift, lounge, laundry, guest facilities, garden, conservatory
- Access to site easy, but less so for less mobile people. Shop & GP 0.2 miles; post office (Bat & Ball) 0.5 miles; town centre 0.75 miles; bus stop 0.1 miles; frequent buses to town centre
- Monthly social activities include coffee mornings, afternoon teas, and scrabble organised by residents. New residents accepted from 60 years of age. Both cats & dogs generally accepted (subject to terms of lease and landlord permission)
- Buy leasehold from First Port 0333 321 4072

Pavilion Gardens, The Vine, Dartford Rd, Sevenoaks TN13 3SU

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 13 two-bed flats. Built in 1991
- Non-resident management staff (part-time) and community alarm service
- Lift, guest facilities, garden, garages
- Whole site accessible by wheelchair. Access to site easy but less so for less mobile people.
- Shops, GP, post office & town centre 0.4 miles; bus stop 0.1 mile
- **New residents accepted from 60 years of age.** Both cats & dogs generally accepted (subject to terms of lease and landlord permission)
- Buy leasehold from Pavilion Gardens (Sevenoaks) Ltd through estate agents

Rockdale (Constant Meadow and Webbs Meadow). Akehurst Lane, Sevenoaks TN13 1JW

- Supported independent living. Rockdale Housing Association is a charitable organisation
- 28 one- and two-bed flats. Built 1987-2002
- The accommodation is located in Constant Meadow and Webbs Meadow. Includes mobility standard properties
- Resident management staff (24 hours 7 days per week) at main site nearby and community alarm service. Home help available for shopping and cleaning. Do not provide personal care but support co-ordinators can help you to arrange this through private care agencies or Social Services.
- Lounge, laundry, garden. Constant Meadow also has a lift

- Access to site easy. Shops, post office, GP, town centre 0.2 miles; bus stop 0.2 miles
- Regular social activities at main Rockdale site (see below). **New residents accepted from 60 years of age.** Both cats & dogs generally accepted (subject to prior agreement)
- Age UK's Information & Advice Service may be able to help you fill in the forms for Rockdale 01732 454108, 01732 366100 The properties available at Rockdale are kept up-to-date on www.rockdale.org.uk/properties-available
- Buy leasehold from Rockdale Housing Association Ltd. Contact Hannah Evenden, Lettings Officer 01732 468641 hannah.evenden@rockdale.org.uk

Rockdale (Laurie House and Summerbank). Rockdale Rd, Sevenoaks TN13 1JT

- Supported independent living. Rockdale Housing Association is a charitable organisation offering 24-hour on-site support
- 29 one- and two-bed flats. Built 2015-2016
- The accommodation is located in Laurie House and Summerbank. Includes mobility-standard properties
- Resident management staff (24 hours 7 days per week) and community alarm service. Home help available for shopping and cleaning. Do not provide personal care but support co-ordinators can help you to arrange this through private care agencies or Social Services.
- Lift, lounge, laundry, garden
- Access to site fairly easy. Shops, post office, GP, town centre 0.1 miles; bus stop 0.1 miles
- Frequent social activities include coffee mornings, afternoon teas, games and entertainment organised by warden and residents' social club. Also art clubs, exercise and dance classes, computer clubs etc. Some meals available in The Pantry restaurant Tuesday - Friday and Sundays). **New residents accepted from 60 years of age.** Both cats & dogs generally accepted, but not to be replaced (subject to prior agreement)
- Age UK's Information & Advice Service may be able to help you fill in the forms for Rockdale 01732 454108, 01732 366100. The properties available at Rockdale are kept up-to-date on www.rockdale.org.uk/properties-available
- Buy leasehold from Rockdale Housing Association Ltd. Contact Hannah Evenden, Lettings Officer 01732 468641 hannah.evenden@rockdale.org.uk

The Acorns, Bradbourne Park Rd, Sevenoaks TN13 3YD

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 22 one & two-bed flats. Built in 1990
- Non-resident management staff (part-time) and community alarm service
- Lift, stair-lift, garden
- Access to site easy. Distances: bus stop 300 yards; shop 300 yards; post office 1 mile; town centre 1 mile; GP 0.5 mile
- Shop 0.2 miles; GP 0.5 miles; post office & town centre 0.8 miles; bus stop 0.2 miles; frequent buses to town centre

- **New residents accepted from 60 years of age.** Both cats & dogs generally accepted (subject to terms of lease and landlord permission)
- Buy leasehold from First Port 0333 321 4072

Swanley

Burlington Lodge. Birchwood Park Avenue, Swanley BR8 7AU

- Churchill Retirement Living
- 01322 788597
- www.crl.co.uk/burlington-lodge

Tonbridge

Castle Court, 25-29 Hadlow Rd, Tonbridge TN9 1QU

- Enhanced sheltered housing. You need to check what they actually mean by this
- 53 one & two-bed flats. Built in 2005
- Assisted Living scheme with resident management staff and community alarm service. You need to check what they actually offer
- Lift, lounge, dining room, laundry, guest facilities
- Distances: town centre 500 yards
- Some meals available. **New residents accepted from 60 years of age.** Both cats & dogs generally accepted (subject to terms of lease and landlord permission)
- Developed by McCarthy & Stone
- Care provider: Allied Healthcare
- Buy leasehold from First Port 0333 321 4072

Castlefields, The Slade, Tonbridge TN9 1HS

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 23 one & two-bed flats. Built in 1999
- Visiting management staff (House Manager works 10am to 3pm), non-resident management staff (part-time) and community alarm service
- Lounge, laundry, guest facilities, garden
- Access to site easy but less so for less mobile people. Distances: bus stop 100 yards; shop 100 yards; post office 100 yards; town centre 100 yards; GP 100 yards; social centre 100 yards
- Weekly social activities include occasional coffee mornings, garden party, birthday and Christmas parties. **New residents accepted from 60 years of age.** Both cats & dogs generally accepted (subject to terms of lease and landlord permission)
- Buy leasehold from First Port 0333 321 4072

Holmes Court, Medway Wharf Rd, Tonbridge TN9 1GS

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 64 one & two-bed flats. Built in 2008
- Resident management staff and community alarm service
- Lift, lounge, laundry, guest facilities

- Whole site accessible by wheelchair. Access to site easy. Distances: bus stop 600 yards; shop 200 yards; post office 600 yards; town centre 299 yards; GP 600 yards; social centre 500 yards
- Regular social activities include coffee morning, games nights, and social evenings. **New residents accepted from 60 years of age.** Both cats & dogs generally accepted (subject to terms of lease and landlord permission)
- Developed by McCarthy & Stone
- Buy leasehold from First Port 0333 321 4072

Merryfield Court, Waterloo Rd, Tonbridge TN9 2SL

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 34 one & two-bed flats. Built in 1992
- Resident management staff and community alarm service
- Lift, lounge, laundry, guest facilities, garden
- Access to site easy but less so for less mobile people. Distances: bus stop 200 yards; shop 200 yards; post office 500 yards; town centre 200 yards; GP 500 yards
- Weekly social activities include Tuesday coffee morning, Wednesday coffee afternoon, Thursday exercise classes, and occasional evening entertainment organised by residents' social committee. **New residents accepted from 60 years of age.** Both cats & dogs generally accepted (subject to terms of lease and landlord permission)
- Developed by McCarthy & Stone
- Buy leasehold from First Port 0333 321 4072

Riverside Court, Lyons Crescent, Tonbridge TN9 1EZ

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 39 one & two-bed flats. Built in 1985
- Non-resident management staff and community alarm service
- Lounge, laundry, garden
- Access to site easy. Distances: bus stop 250 yards; shop 250 yards; post office 600 yards; town centre 250 yards; GP 400 yards; social centre 500 yards
- Regular social activities include coffee mornings. **New residents accepted from 60 years of age**
- Buy leasehold from Hyde Group 0800 328 2282, 0300 123 2233, 0845 606 1221

Rosewell House, Tudeley Lane, Tonbridge TN11 0FT

- Extra care housing scheme for over-55s. You need to check what they actually mean by this
- 59 one & two-bed flats. Built in 2018
- **For over-55s**
- 9 one-bed flats and 15 two-bed flats available to buy leasehold through the Older Person's Shared Ownership scheme (OPSO). You can be an existing homeowner but must have an annual income below £80,000. You buy 75% of the property's value. You are not charged rent for the remaining 25% but if

you sell, you only sell 75%; the housing association always retains 25%. You are responsible for internal repairs, bills, care & support; the housing association are responsible for external maintenance

- Wheelchair-accessible throughout
- Person-centred care packages
- Optional events and activities eg coffee mornings, flower arranging, craft classes, film nights, outings etc
- Handyman service to change lightbulbs, put up pictures or shelves, hang curtains etc
- Washing and ironing (additional charge)
- Housing staff on site 24 hours in case of emergencies and community alarm service
- Lounge, garden, activity room, hair salon/therapy room, WIFI in some areas, lifts, off-road parking, mobility scooter store, pets accepted
- Access to site fairly easy. nearest town (Tonbridge) 1 mile; station 1 mile; bus stop at top of road; buses to town centre
- Restaurant serving lunch
- Buy leasehold from Rapport Housing & Care (formerly Abbeyfield Kent) 01732 363081

St Giles Lodge, Shipbourne Rd, Tonbridge

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- Built 2018
- Non-resident management staff and community alarm service
- Lift, lounge, guest facilities, garden
- Developed by Churchill Retirement Living
- Buy leasehold 01732 386478

Waterside Lodge, Bradford St, Tonbridge TN9 1FS

- Retirement/sheltered housing
- 31 one & two-bed flats. Built in 2014
- Non-resident management staff and community alarm service
- Lift, lounge, laundry, guest facilities, garden
- Developed by Churchill Retirement Living
- Buy leasehold from Millstream Management Services 0800 077 8717

Wateringbury

Meadow View Court

- One-bed and two-bed flats
- Hair salon, lounge, dining room, activity room and garden
- Housing support and care team on site every day
- Shared ownership available
- **New residents accepted from 55 years of age**
- Buy leasehold or shared ownership from Rapport Housing & Care 07534 973360 sales@rapporthc.co.uk www.rapporthousingandcare.co.uk

Housing schemes for older people elsewhere in the UK

You can find details of other housing schemes on the Elderly Accommodation Counsel's database www.housingcare.org

Care homes

See our Care Homes information pack for a list of local care homes

Empty Homes

Reasons to bring your unoccupied property back into use

- You may be missing out on revenue from rental income
- You may be paying more for council tax, insurance, utility bills and repairs
- Your empty property may be a target for vandalism and other anti-social behaviour which can mean additional costs to repair damage

Help may be available from your council

Undertaking property renovation works and selling or renting out your property

- Sevenoaks Private Sector Housing Team 01732 227000
empty.homes@sevenoaks.gov.uk www.sevenoaks.gov.uk
- Tonbridge Private Sector Housing Team 01732 876395, 876067
privatesectorhousing@tmhc.gov.uk

Energy and water

See below in this information pack for section on heating costs and repairs. The Citizens' Advice Consumer Service can help with complaints.

See also our Money Matters information pack for energy and water debts

Electric emergencies

If you spot a potential hazard or to find out what it is safe to do near overhead power lines or underground cables 0800 40 40 90 (24 hours) www.nationalgrid.com

Gas emergencies

To report a gas or carbon monoxide emergency or if a pipeline is struck (even if no gas leak has occurred) 0800 111 999 (24 hours) www.nationalgrid.com

Free carbon monoxide detectors from Citizens' Advice energy@nwkent.cab.org.uk

Heating breakdown

If you are a social housing tenant you should ask your landlord if you can borrow a heater

Lighting costs

7% of a typical household's energy bill goes towards lighting. You could save £45 over the lifetime of a lightbulb by replacing traditional light bulbs with low energy compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs). If you have halogen downlighters in your home and replace them with LED light bulbs, you could save about £40 a year on

your electricity bills. You may be able to get LED lightbulbs from Green Doctor. This is part of the Groundwork charity 0800 233 5255 www.south.greendoctors.org.uk

Meter problems

- If you can't reach your meter, your supplier should move your meter. Tell them if it's above your head or outside or in a separate building. They must try to move your meter to somewhere you can get to. You shouldn't have to pay to move your meter so if your supplier tries to charge you, think about switching to a supplier that won't. If you tell your supplier that you're planning to switch, they might remove the charges
- If you have a pre-payment meter but can't easily get to a shop to put money on it, tell your supplier. They might offer you another way to top up, for example online or by text message
- If you have a disability or illness that makes it hard for you to use, read or put money in a pre-payment meter or bad for your health if your electricity or gas is cut off then your supplier has to replace your pre-payment meter with a normal meter (one that lets you pay for energy after you use it rather than before)

Power cuts, gas and water interruptions

To report a power cut, call 105. Visit www.nationalgrid.com to find out how to prepare for power cuts. You can ask utilities to add you to their Priority Services Register if you are a pensioner, disabled, hearing-impaired, visually-impaired, have a chronic illness or a long-term medical condition including speech difficulties or other special needs such as severe financial insecurity. This may give you:

- advance notice if your supply is going to be interrupted
- priority reconnection if the supply is interrupted
- alternative facilities for cooking and heating during an interruption of supply
- help during emergencies
- It may also give you other benefits:
- extra help to use your meter or appliances
- annual gas safety checks
- free advice on being more energy efficient
- protection from cold callers
- moving your meter somewhere easier to read
- regular meter readings if you can't read it
- bills sent to a relative, carer or friend to help you check them (they do not have to have Power of Attorney)
- bills and meter readings in large print, braille, audio tape, textphone or typetalk if you're visually or hearing impaired

Recommended temperatures

Below 15 degrees Centigrade, blood thickens. This means there is an increased risk of cardio-vascular and respiratory problems. That is why you should keep your home warm when it is cold outside. To minimise these risks, the recommended temperature for your bedroom is 16-18 degrees Centigrade and the recommended temperature for your living room is 18-21 degrees Centigrade. At night, if you are getting up to go to the toilet you should wear slippers or similar rather than walking barefoot on cold floors which can cause a shock to your cardio-vascular system

increasing the risk of strokes or heart attacks. To stay healthy without spending too much money on fuel, set a timer for your heating to come on before you get up and switch off before you go to bed. In very cold weather, adjust your heating to come on earlier so you're not cold while your home warms up.

Shower heads

If you've got a shower that takes hot water straight from your boiler or hot water tank (rather than an electric shower) then you may be able to fit a water-efficient head that could reduce your hot water usage whilst still maintaining the sensation of a powerful shower. Some water companies are giving shower heads away for free, so contact your water company to see if you could receive one.

Smart meters

What is a smart meter?

These are a new type of meter for gas and electricity which the Government has decided will be offered to households.

Do you have to accept one?

- They are optional.
- However if your old meter has to be replaced it will be replaced by a smart meter.

Potential benefits

- Meters will no longer have to be read manually. This will reduce the likelihood of incorrect meter readings or difficulty accessing your meters. It may also be more convenient for you as you won't have to let anyone in to read the meter. It will also save the suppliers money as they won't have to employ meter readers.
- The new meters give better information about your energy use so you can see exactly how much you spend in pounds and pence in a straightforward format.
- Bills will no longer be estimated.
- Paying in arrears by quarterly bills or Direct Debit should become more accurate. However if you pay by Direct Debit it is evened out over the year so you pay more in summer and less in winter. It may take suppliers a year to get this right and re-adjust your Direct Debits.
- Paying in advance by prepayment should become one of the cheapest ways to pay for energy. You will no longer need to use a key or card to top up your meter and you will get an alert if your credit is low as well as being able to see how much credit you have left (building it up if you wish and knowing how much you have as emergency credit). You can top up at a shop, by phone, online or using an app.
- The new meters are more tamper-resistant.

How do they work?

- You do not need Wi-Fi or the Internet for the smart meter to work – they work by sending meter readings over a mobile phone signal.

- The engineer will also install a small rectangular communication hub which uses a small amount of electricity. This allows your smart meters to communicate with your in-home display and with a data communications company for smart meters which sends your meter readings to your energy supplier.
- You can decide how often energy usage information is shared with your energy supplier. They can ask your permission to enable them to automatically collect daily or even half-hourly meter readings or you can choose to share a meter reading just once a month.
- If you opt for half-hourly meter readings your supplier can advise you on your peak periods of usage. This advice is only if you ring them; they don't ring you.
- They will not know what appliances you are using.
- They cannot use your data for marketing without permission. You will be asked if you wish to opt in to any marketing or sales for other products. They cannot try to sell you anything when the engineer visits but they can beforehand or afterwards.
- If you live somewhere that has no mobile phone signal then you will continue to receive estimated bills which you can correct by reading the meter manually yourself as at present.
- You do not need to have any rewiring done on your home to have a smart meter.
- You do not need to be a tech genius to use a smart meter – it's simple.

What is the in-home display?

You should be offered an "In-Home Display" or "Smart Energy Tracker". Designs vary but you should be able to see at the press of a button:

- Exactly how much energy you have used in the last hour, week or month.
- The approximate cost.
- If your electricity usage is high, medium or low.
- Updates in near real time for electricity usage and every half hour for gas.

Using the in-home display

- If you have both gas and electricity you will have just one in-home display but two separate smart meters.
- Some will have warning lights to tell you when your usage is particularly high (red) or low (green) so if you choose to check it you can decide whether to increase or reduce how much energy you are using. For example:
 - An electric shower uses 9-10 kilowatts
 - A gas fire (at full heat setting) uses 4 kilowatts (but only heats one room)
 - Gas central heating (for a 3-bed house) uses 4 kilowatts (but heats the whole home)
 - A gas cooker hob (fully in use) uses 3 ½ kilowatts
 - An electric fan heater uses 3 kilowatts
 - An oven (at gas mark 7) uses 1 ½ kilowatts
 - A microwave uses 700-900 watts

- An LED TV (40" HD) uses 70 watts (similar to a lightbulb)
- Knowing how much it actually costs may give you more confidence to turn up heating if you are cold.
- It can be plugged in anywhere with a socket and moved if you wish. However it has to be within reasonable range of your smart meters.
- If you leave the in-home display plugged in all the time it will cost you about £10 per year.
- If the power is interrupted it will automatically re-set.
- If you don't want to use it, you can leave it unplugged in a cupboard.
- Some in-home displays can be a bit baffling at first but if you are familiar with using a smartphone you should be able to learn how to use it.
- Some in-home displays are more accessible to use. For example, some have speakers for people with eyesight or memory difficulties. Or they may have big buttons for people with dexterity or perception difficulties.
- It is easier to get these if you are already on the supplier's Priority Services Register but you can still get them even if you aren't.
- If you switch supplier your smart meter may be incompatible. In due course your smart meter will be updated remotely so you won't need to change meters but you may temporarily be unable to read them. If thinking of switching, it may be better to switch before getting a smart meter.

How do you get a meter installed?

- Your supplier will contact you when they are ready to offer you a smart meter.
- Alternatively simply contact your energy supplier. They will install your smart meter free of charge.
- They will agree a date and time with you for the installation and won't show up on your doorstep unexpectedly.
- You won't be charged for installation but everyone will share installation costs through their energy bills. However once installation has been paid for, overall costs should go down for energy suppliers.
- If you rent your home and pay your own bills you do not need your landlord's permission but it is a good idea to tell them you are getting a smart meter. If your landlord pays your bills then it is up to them whether to get a smart meter.

What to expect on the day?

- The engineer will arrive for a pre-arranged appointment to install the smart meter. They should present a valid photo ID card which you can verify.
- You can also have a friend or relative present during installation.
- You will need to know where your current meters are located and they will need to be easily accessible.
- They will be put in the location of your current meters but are a bit smaller than traditional ones.
- You will need a separate one for gas if you have both electricity and gas.
- Installers do not have to dig up your garden.
- You must be present throughout installation, which will take approximately one hour for an electricity meter (plus another hour if you have a gas meter). If it takes longer than two hours they will need to return for another visit.

- During this time, your energy supply will be cut off temporarily.
- If your gas and electricity are from separate suppliers then whoever puts in the first smart meter will also set up the in-home display and communications hub.
- If a gas meter is being installed, a basic gas safety check will also be performed on relevant appliances. If an appliance is unsafe it will be disconnected.
- Once the meter has been installed, your installer will show you how to use your new in-home display and answer any questions you may have. This is true in theory but the quality of their advice may be variable.
- If you have a complaint, contact your supplier. If you are still dissatisfied after 8-12 weeks you can contact the Energy Ombudsman 0330 440 1624.
- Free advice and further information is available from Citizens' Advice Consumer Helpline 0808 223 1133 or Smart Energy GB
www.smartenergygb.org

Supplier details

A Lifebook enables you to record all sorts of useful details which will not only help you to be more organised but could also be invaluable to a family member or a friend if they need to locate important information about you in an emergency. You simply follow the step-by-step instructions to fill in the various sections with your details, contacts and locations of important documents. The life contacts section deals with recording details of your gas, water and electricity suppliers. The LifeBook is available in both a booklet and computer versions. More information from Age UK 0800 678 1602 www.ageuk.org.uk/lifebook

Switching suppliers

Switching might not save you any money while there are fewer tariffs available than usual. It's important to seek impartial advice before switching, for example from the Citizens' Advice Consumer Service 0808 223 1133. Age UK also produce publications on switching suppliers 0800 169 6565

There are two main schemes which work in different ways:

- Energylinks is an independent energy comparison service which has a partnership with Sevenoaks District Council called Switch & Save. Unlike many energy comparison websites which only look at tariffs from the biggest energy suppliers, it compares prices from all UK energy suppliers
 - People can phone them on 0800 410 1147 or 01732 227111. These numbers go through to a national call centre which can only help people over the phone
 - However if people would prefer to talk through it with someone face-to-face at Sevenoaks District Council office then this can be arranged but only by phoning a different number (01732 227155). This may be particularly helpful to older people who have difficulty using the phone
 - People can also visit www.sevenoaksswitchandsave.co.uk
- Energy Deal Switch has a partnership with Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
You can register free-of-charge by phoning the council or at www.energydealswitch.com Once a year they will tell you who is offering the

best energy deal and how much you could save. If you decide to switch then they will help you through the process.

Other options:

- Citizens' Advice run a neutral comparison website called Energy Compare 0808 223 1133 www.energycompare.citizensadvice.org.uk
- Consumer Focus run a website about choosing an energy supplier, price comparison and switching www.consumerfocus.org.uk
- Green Doctor. This is part of the Groundwork charity 0800 233 5255 www.south.greendoctors.org.uk They can:
 - Help you switch your energy tariff to a better deal
 - Advise you on reducing energy use at home
 - Support you to access the Warm Home Discount or Priority Services Register
 - Support you with applications for energy or water debt relief
 - Refer you for the installation of larger measures if needed
 - Refer you to other support organisations within your community if needed
 - Deliver small efficiency measures, such as LED lightbulbs or draught proofing
- LRB Organise. Leanne Bradshaw can help with switching suppliers 07854 693711. www.lrb-organise.co.uk

Water

- Age UK produce publications on complaints, payment arrears and saving water 0800 169 6565. The Consumer Council for Water may also be able to help
- Water is supplied by South East Water 0333 000 0005 customer.care@southeastwater.co.uk www.southeastwater.co.uk/your-account/pay-your-bill/difficulty-paying-your-bill
- Waste water and sewage are dealt with by South East Water or Southern Water 0800 027 0363 payless@southernwater.co.uk www.southernwater.co.uk/difficulty-paying-your-bill

You can ask the water companies to add you to their Priority Services Register if you are a pensioner, disabled, hearing-impaired, visually-impaired, have a chronic illness or a long-term medical condition. This may give you additional help if the water is turned off. You can also have bills in large print, braille, audio tape, textphone or typetalk if you're visually or hearing impaired

- If you are on a low income (less than about £16,000 and excluding any benefits you receive) you may be eligible for a fixed tariff which may reduce your bills. For example, South East Water has a Social Tariff which will cap your water supply bill at about £165 per year and give you 25% off your waste water bill
- If you or someone in your household has a health condition requiring a high use of water and are also on means-tested benefits you may also be eligible for a reduction under a national scheme called WaterSure
- If you are in debt to the water companies they may be able to write off your arrears under schemes such as Helping Hands

- If you share a bathroom with other households you may be eligible for a reduction
- Green Doctor. This is part of the Groundwork charity 0800 233 5255 www.south.greendoctors.org.uk They can:
 - Help you switch your energy tariff to a better deal
 - Advise you on reducing energy use at home
 - Support you to access the Warm Home Discount or Priority Services Register
 - Support you with applications for energy or water debt relief
 - Refer you for the installation of larger measures if needed
 - Refer you to other support organisations within your community if needed
 - Deliver small efficiency measures, such as LED lightbulbs or draught proofing

Heating costs

See section above in this information pack for section on energy and water

See section below in this information pack for replacing boilers and heating systems

See also our Money Matters information pack for energy and water debts

Getting more information

- **Age UK.** They produce many publications. To get them 0800 169 6565
 - help with heating costs
 - saving energy
 - switching energy suppliers
- **Independent Age.** They produce Being Winter Wise which explains about keeping your home warm and making winter more affordable. You can get it from Independent Age 0800 319 6789 www.independentage.org
- **Your local council.** You can get free water-saving devices, thermometer cards and information on how to save money on fuel bills from:
 - Sevenoaks Housing Policy Team or HERO Advice Service 01732 227000 hero@sevenoaks.gov.uk www.sevenoaks.gov.uk
 - Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council 01732 844522 www.tmbc.gov.uk

Getting free advice

- **Citizens' Advice.** They can give you impartial and confidential advice on your energy, for example, struggling to pay bills, requiring better deals on energy, guidance on the most appropriate payment methods etc. Free phone advice Monday-Friday 9am-5pm. Some office appointments may be possible.
 - Aylesford, Larkfield, New Ash Green, Otford, Sevenoaks, Snodland, Swanley and Tonbridge 0808 278 7810
 - Edenbridge and Westerham 0808 278 7962
- **Energy Saving Trust.** Their advice service can advise you on how to save energy in your home. You can call them on 0300 123 1234 (all you pay for is a national rate call).
- **Green Doctor.** This is part of the Groundwork charity. www.groundwork.org.uk/greendoctor They can:
 - Help you switch your energy tariff to a better deal

- Advise you on reducing energy use at home
- Support you to access the Warm Home Discount or Priority Services Register
- Support you with applications for energy or water debt relief
- Refer you for the installation of larger measures if needed
- Refer you to other support organisations within your community if needed
- Deliver small efficiency measures, such as LED lightbulbs or draught proofing
- **Kent County Council.** They may be able to send you an energy saving advice pack. Contact Warm Homes 0800 170 1174
warm.homes@kent.gov.uk www.kent.gov.uk/warmhomes

Reducing your heating bills

- **Winter Fuel Payments**
 - Yearly one-off tax-free payment to help all older people keep warm in winter.
 - It is worth about £100-300 per year depending on your age and whether you are single or a couple.
 - It's not means-tested and it does not depend on whose name is on the bill.
 - Contact the Department for Work & Pensions to see if you're receiving it 0845 915 1515 www.gov.uk
- **Cold Weather Payments**
 - Extra help for people who are on some income-related benefits with increased heating costs during periods of very cold weather.
 - If you are eligible (eg getting means-tested benefits such as Pension Credit Guarantee Credit) then you will be paid £25 automatically each time it drops below zero degrees Centigrade for seven consecutive days at any point between November and March.
 - However this length of very cold weather is quite rare.
- **Warm Home Discount Scheme**
 - You could get money off your fuel bills under the Warm Home Discount Scheme. It is worth about £140 per year. This won't affect your Cold Weather Payment or Winter Fuel Payment. You may be eligible if you get Pension Credit Guarantee Credit or are on a low income. Usually it is for electricity but it can be for gas instead if you get dual fuel (both from the same supplier). Mainly big suppliers are part of this scheme so you could lose out if you switch to a company that doesn't offer it.
 - If you are on Pension Credit Guarantee Credit, the Department for Work & Pensions will write to you telling you how to apply. If you haven't received that letter by December you can phone them on 0800 731 0214. Once you have applied initially it is usually automatic in subsequent years
 - If you don't get Pension Credit Guarantee Credit but are on a low income then should apply direct to your energy supplier as early as possible. A limited number of discounts are available. Not all energy suppliers take part and if you switch supplier you need to apply again

- If you live in a park home (mobile home) you will need to apply online through Charis Grants (Age UK can help you do this)
www.charisgrants.com/park-homes-warm-home-discount-scheme
- **Warm Homes Assistance**
 - Your local council can visit to assess if there are any significant health and safety hazards in your home, for example:
 - if you are living in a cold home
 - if you have damp and mould
 - if you have a leaking roof etc.
 - If you rent your home they can liaise with your landlord.
 - If you own your home your local council can advise on funding available to improve your housing conditions and may be able to help fund works in your home to reduce those hazards if you are on a low income such as income-related benefits. They may also be able to help if you have a long-term health condition.
 - Funding of up to £10,000 may be available, subject to availability. You should not be in Council Tax arrears and the assistance is repayable if you sell your home.
 - Sevenoaks District Council 01732 227000
 - Tonbridge Housing Team 01732 876067, 876395
housing.services@tmbc.gov.uk
privatesectorhousing@tmbc.gov.uk
- **Loft and cavity wall insulation**
 - Age UK produce publications on energy efficiency and insulation 0800 169 6565
 - Insulating your home is a great way of being warmer in the winter and saving money. Energy companies will do it if the loft is tidy but you need to empty it first of anything that is stored up there.
 - You may also be able to get subsidised loft and cavity wall insulation through Energy Company Obligation funding to residents across Kent. You do not need to be on benefits or a low income to qualify but the support available will depend on your property type and where you live
 - You may also be able to get a Disabled Facilities Grant. Contact your local council
 - Sevenoaks 0800 587 7795 info@arangroup.co.uk
www.arangroup.co.uk
 - Tonbridge Housing Team 01732 876067, 876395
housing.services@tmbc.gov.uk
privatesectorhousing@tmbc.gov.uk
- **Radiator panels**
 - Radiator insulation panels could reduce heating bills by 12-15%. These may be available free to older people. They are quick and easy to install.
 - Sevenoaks District Council 01732 227155
 - Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council 01732 844522
- **Different ways of paying for fuel**
 - Economy 7 used to be cheaper but is now often poor value
 - Prepayment is where you pay upfront in a shop for example
 - The best tariffs are generally fixed-term tariffs where the fuel price is fixed for a limited period

- Green tariffs tend to be more expensive though possibly more environmentally friendly
- Further discounts may be available if you have dual fuel (gas and electricity from the same supplier), pay online or pay by direct debit.
-
- **HUG Scheme.** Provides sustainable warmth for residents who do not have gas. Covers storage heaters, solar heating, double glazing etc. Contact your local council to see if they are part of it
- **Independence at Home.** Help people with physical disabilities or mental health conditions and their families or carers with essential equipment, breaks, home repairs etc www.independenceathome.org.uk

Home insurance

- The Money & Pensions Service can give you more information about different types of insurance 0800 011 3797 www.moneyhelper.org.uk
- You could also look at a price comparison website such as www.moneysavingexpert.com
- Age UK works in partnership with selected insurance companies to provide insurance. To find out more ring 0800 323 4430 or visit www.ageco.co.uk
- However it may be worth shopping around. Contact the Association of British Insurers for more information about buying insurance 020 7600 3333.
- Contact the British Insurance Brokers' Association to find an insurance broker in your area 0870 950 1790
- The Financial Conduct Authority can confirm whether a firm is authorised to sell insurance 0845 606 1234
- LRB Organise. Leanne Bradshaw may be able to help with getting quotes for home insurance 07854 693711 www.lrb-organise.co.uk

Lifebook

This enables you to record all sorts of useful details which will not only help you to be more organised but could also be invaluable to a family member or a friend if they need to locate important information about you in an emergency. You simply follow the step-by-step instructions to fill in the various sections with your details, contacts and locations of important documents. The possessions section deals with recording details of your significant possessions or valuables such as jewellery and cars. The LifeBook is available in both a booklet and computer versions. More information from Age UK 0800 678 1602 www.ageuk.org.uk/lifebook

Home safety and security

Anti-social behaviour

Age UK

You can get publications on anti-social behaviour in housing by ringing Age UK 0800 169 6565.

Fire safety

See also our Health & Wellbeing information pack for hearing loss or sight loss, and our Help at Home information pack for peace-of-mind.

Kent Fire & Rescue Service Safe & Well Team

Kent Fire & Rescue Service Safe and Well Team carry out home safety visits to provide advice for people who may be at risk in their homes; this can be due to memory issues, disabilities or smoking. Following an assessment of your home, they can provide fire prevention devices such as fire retardant bedding and blankets, smoke alarms for people including those with hearing & visual problems, cooker switches, letterbox sealing and safety ashtrays. They will also replace battery-operated smoke alarms over 10 years old. They can also fit lockable covers for electric sockets and arrange lockable gas valves to shut off gas cookers for people with dementia 0800 923 7000, 01622 692121. home@kent.fire-uk.org
www.kent.fire-uk.org

Town & Country Home Improvement Agency

0845 605 7017 infohia@tch.org.uk www.tch.org.uk Town & Country can give advice on fire safety including providing carbon monoxide sensors (£15. Price subject to change). Free carbon monoxide detectors are also available from Citizens' Advice energy@nwkent.cab.org.uk

Home safety

Age UK

Things that might help:

- night lights with motion sensors
- safety beams
- magnetic door & window alarms
- wireless doorbells
- digital monitors
- key safes
- door entry systems

How to get them:

- You can get information on safety, adapting your home and disability equipment by ringing Age UK 0800 169 6565
- Get an assessment from Occupational Therapists or Care Navigators (see Aids & Equipment section above) to see if you can get them free or at reduced cost
- You can buy them from mobility shops (listed in Aids & Equipment section above). The Disabled Living Foundation can give you more information on choosing products for older and disabled people 0300 999 0004

Community Navigators

Free information and advice on staying safe in your own home. Contact INVOLVE 0300 081 0005 communitynavigation@involvekent.org.uk If you live in the Swanley area contact IMAGO 0300 011 1965 navigation@imago.community

Town & Country Home Improvement Agency

0845 605 7017 infohia@tch.org.uk www.tch.org.uk

- Free advice to talk through what help you might need. They can visit you at home if you want
- Key safes can be installed. From £55 (price subject to change)
- Grab rails can be installed to make it easier to get in and around your home. The charge depends on the work you need

Independent Age

Advice for Later Life explains how to make your home safer and easier to manage. You can get it from Independent Age, 6 Avonmore Rd, London W14 8RL 0800 319 6789, 020 7605 4200 advice@independentage.org www.independentage.org

Minor repairs to stairs, floors and steps, keysafes etc. Also safety & security repairs

- You can apply for a **Safe & Secure Grant** if you live with a health condition at home (including dementia) or are over 60.
- Grants can be obtained for grab rails, chair raisers, bath seats, raised toilet seats, ramps and stair rails.
- You can also apply for additional things to keep you safe such as mortice locks, door chains, window locks and even new front doors.
- There are also aids to help those with memory problems who might, for example, leave the bath running or forget to close the front door or need colour and contrast to aid orientation in their home.
- The work must cost less than £1000. These grants are discretionary but are not means-tested.
- These grants are only available to owner-occupiers, private tenants or shared ownership schemes. Social tenants should approach their housing association.
- Disabled Facilities Grants are also available for major adaptations such as flush-floor showers and stairlifts.
- Contact your local council and ask for Private Sector Housing

Police Community Support visits

You can ask a Police Community Support Officer to pop round if you are vulnerable to scams. Ring West Kent Police on 101.

Warm and Healthy Homes visits

Ask for the council's private sector housing team to see whether they can offer you a free visit to identify health & safety hazards in your home such as it being cold or

steep uneven steps without handrails or dangerous electrics. They may be able to advise you on any funding available to help improve poor housing conditions. Where necessary they may be able to put you in touch with appropriate organisations such as the Home Improvement Agency or Kent Fire & Rescue Service

- Sevenoaks District Council 01732 227000.
- Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council 01732 876395
privatesectorhousing@tmbc.gov.uk

Power cuts, gas and water interruptions

You can ask utilities to add you to their Priority Services Register if you are a pensioner, disabled, hearing-impaired, visually-impaired, have a chronic illness or a long-term medical condition. This may give you:

- advance notice if your supply is going to be interrupted
- priority reconnection if the supply is interrupted and a priority phone number for regular updates
- alternative facilities for cooking and heating during an interruption of supply
- help during emergencies such as home visits or contacting your family to ring you and reassure you if you are prone to panic or have memory loss

It may also give you other benefits:

- extra help to use your meter or appliances
- annual gas safety checks
- free advice on being more energy efficient
- protection from cold callers
- moving your meter somewhere easier to read
- regular meter readings if you can't read it
- bills sent to a relative, carer or friend to help you check them
- bills and meter readings in large print, braille, audio tape, textphone or typetalk if you're visually or hearing impaired

To get this help you have to contact utilities and register. If you need help applying:

- Age UK. We can help you at our office or we may be able to visit you or arrange for DWP to visit you 01732 454108
- Citizens' Advice can also help you. Free phone advice Monday-Friday 9am-5pm. Some office appointments may be possible.
 - Aylesford, Larkfield, New Ash Green, Otford, Sevenoaks, Snodland, Swanley and Tonbridge 0808 278 7810
 - Edenbridge and Westerham 0808 278 7962

Homelessness

You can get publications on homelessness and finding private rented accommodation by ringing Age UK 0800 169 6565. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2018 means that a council still has to help you to find a home even if you not what they would call a priority. They cannot say that you have made yourself intentionally homeless. However this does not mean that they have to provide you with a home; simply that they have to help you to find one or help you to stay where you are. They can only refuse to help you if they can prove that there is a "deliberate and unreasonable refusal to co-operate" on your part. If they say this then you should seek help from:

- Citizens' Advice. Free phone advice Monday-Friday 9am-5pm. Some office appointments may be possible.
 - Aylesford, Larkfield, New Ash Green, Otford, Sevenoaks, Snodland, Swanley and Tonbridge 0808 278 7810
 - Edenbridge and Westerham 0808 278 7962
- INVOLVE. Advocacy and help representing your views 03000 810005
- The Advocacy People (formerly SEAP). PO Box 375, Hastings TN34 9HU 0330 440 9000 info@theadvocacypeople.co.uk
www.theadvocacypeople.co.uk May be able to do home visits.

Bridge Trust

Services for homeless people to prevent them from falling back into homelessness. Supports anyone between 18 and retirement 01732 368363
info@thebridgetrust.org.uk www.thebridgetrust.org.uk

Citizens' Advice

You can get advice if you are served with a notice seeking possession or a family member is unable to occupy the family home and is asked to leave. Their housing specialist is based at Tonbridge Castle, Castle St, Tonbridge 0808 278 7810
www.citizensadvice.org.uk/local/north-west-kent

Crosslight Advice

01732 300425 info@crosslightadvice.org www.crosslightadvice.org Crosslight Advice (formerly West Kent Debt Advice) can provide specialist rent arrears and debt advice to help prevent homelessness. They offer free face-to-face debt advice, financial education, practical assistance and ongoing support to anyone who needs it regardless of background, faith or circumstance. They are based at Vine Evangelical Church in Sevenoaks or Tonbridge Baptist Church. You can also ask Age UK to refer you by contacting us on 01732 454108

Homeless Link

Search for hostels and homelessness services 020 7840 4430
info@homelesslink.org.uk www.homeless.org.uk

Lookahead

Homelessness advice and supported housing for people with mental health needs, learning disabilities and autism 020 7368 4600 getintouch@lookahead.org.uk
www.lookahead.org.uk

Pathways to Independence

Accommodation and support for single homeless people 01634 819649
www.beyondhomelessness.org.uk

Porchlight

Can provide support if you are on the streets, sleeping rough or just have nowhere to go and no-one to turn to about pressure in your life 0800 567 7699, 01227 760078
headoffice@porchlight.org.uk www.porchlight.org.uk

Samaritans

Can provide emotional support, day or night 01892 532323 Text messages: 07725 909090 National helpline 08457 909090 jo@samaritans.org
www.samaritans.org

Shelter

0808 800 4444 www.shelter.org.uk Can help if you are worried about homelessness or staying with friends.

Vicar's Relief Fund

Can provide financial support for people who are at risk of, or currently experiencing, homelessness to maintain their tenancies. Only accept applications from front-line staff who are providing support to people experiencing homelessness.
www.smitfc.org

West Kent Mediation

Can provide mediation sessions to resolve disputes. This could help to keep you in your home, allow you to return to your home or provide more time to find suitable alternative accommodation 01732 469696 www.wkm.org.uk

West Kent MIND

Can provide wellbeing support if you are threatened with homelessness or recovering from losing your home or worrying that you could lose your home 01732 744950 www.westkentmind.org.uk

Your local council

Free confidential advice is available from your local council. In addition, if you are on the streets or sleeping rough and it is freezing for several nights, your local council may have a responsibility to arrange a temporary place in a shelter for you

- Sevenoaks District Council 01732 227000.
- Tonbridge Housing Team 01732 876067 housing.services@tmbc.gov.uk

Homesharing

Cohabitas

This is an online property portal for the over-40s, where everyone advertising or looking for a room to rent is 40 or above. The presumption here is that this is a commercial arrangement – the person looking for a room would generally pay rent rather than provide services www.cohabitas.com

Homes for Ukraine

This and similar schemes should be treated with caution. There have been a few issues such as refugees becoming homeless after relations with hosts break down as well as some safeguarding concerns. Relationship breakdowns appear to mainly arise due to well-meaning hosts now appreciating the reality of what they are undertaking including the impact of additional household members on bills. If considering this option you should make sure you fully understand what might be involved www.advice-ukraine.co.uk

Rent a Room

This lets you earn up to £7,500 per year tax-free from letting out furnished accommodation in your home, but the additional income may affect entitlement to means-tested benefits. You will generally lose the single-person's 25% reduction in Council Tax and any Pension Credit or Housing Benefit may be reduced.

www.gov.uk/rent-room-in-your-home/the-rent-a-room-scheme

Supportmatch Homeshare Service

01604 905517, 07742 807677, 07847 072490, 020 3633 6066

info@supportmatch.co.uk www.supportmatch.co.uk

- This is a service which matches a householder who has a spare room and low-level support needs with a homesharer, typically a younger person needing affordable housing.
- The householder provides a room and shared facilities rent-free in exchange for 10 hours per week of companionship, overnight security and some practical help around your home. This could include domestic help such as cooking, shopping, housework or gardening but does not include any personal care.
- No rent is paid. Instead Supportmatch charge the older person £99 per month and the homesharer £159 per month to cover the cost of finding and supporting suitable matches. The Homeshare UK website states that this 'represents a significant saving on...similar domestic help', however, and the amount paid to the homeshare service could be offset through reductions in their gardening and cleaning bills.
- Similar services elsewhere in the UK are listed on www.homeshareuk.org

Landlords

Age UK

You can get publications on finding private rented accommodation and tenants' rights by ringing Age UK 0800 169 6565

Shelter

0808 800 4444 www.shelter.org.uk Can help if you are having problems with your landlord

Warm and healthy home visits

Your local council can help tenants by liaising with landlords on repair issues. They will deal with problems informally where possible, but can enforce landlords to undertake works.

- Sevenoaks District Council 01732 227000
- Tonbridge Housing Team 01732 876067, 876395
housing.services@tmbc.gov.uk privatesectorhousing@tmbc.gov.uk.

Leasehold and park homes

Age UK

We produce publications on mobile homes 0800 169 6565

Leasehold Advisory Service

020 7832 2500 www.lease-advice.org Advice on leasehold and park homes.

Mortgage and rent arrears

See also our Money Matters information pack for further information on debt advice

Age UK

We produce publications on equity release, lifetime mortgages and retirement 0800 169 6565

Money & Pensions Service

If you're on certain benefits and you're struggling to pay your mortgage, you may be able to get help from the government to pay the interest on your mortgage. This is called Support for Mortgage Interest (SMI). It will be paid as a loan - which must be repaid when you die or sell your home. If you're getting SMI as a benefit now, you will be offered the choice of taking out an SMI loan in future. The amount you have already received as a benefit does not need to be repaid. Before you decide whether an SMI loan is the best option for you and your household, it's a good idea to seek professional advice.

- Call the Money & Pensions Service 0800 011 3797 www.moneyhelper.org.uk for free, impartial money advice. Lines are open Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm and Saturday, 9am to 1pm. Calls are free.
- Call Citizens' Advice. Free phone advice Monday-Friday 9am-5pm. Some office appointments may be possible.
 - Aylesford, Larkfield, New Ash Green, Otford, Sevenoaks, Snodland, Swanley and Tonbridge 0808 278 7810
 - Edenbridge and Westerham 0808 278 7962

Shelter

0808 800 4444 www.shelter.org.uk Legal advice on housing and debt, court representation and payment plan negotiations. Can help if you are struggling to pay your rent or your mortgage.

West Kent Communities

Help West Kent Housing Association tenants to manage debt 01732 749451 www.westkent.org If you are a tenant of another Housing Association, they may also be able to help.

Your local council

If you are having difficulty paying your mortgage or in debt, free confidential advice is available from your local council

- Sevenoaks HERO Advice Service 01732 227000 hero@sevenoaks.gov.uk www.sevenoaks.gov.uk
- Tonbridge Housing Team 01732 876067 housing.services@tmhc.gov.uk

Moving furniture

See our Help at Home information pack

Moving home

Age UK produce publications on removals and selling a house 0800 169 6565. See our Legal Advice information pack for solicitors who can help with conveyancing

If you are on means-tested benefits you may be able to get a Budgeting Loan from the DWP Social Fund to help with removal costs

Britannia Bearsbys

Based in Tonbridge and Aylesford 01732 358900, 01622 611861

info@bearsbys.com www.bearsbys.com

Chatfields Home Removals

Waterloo Rd, Tonbridge TN9 2SN 01732 651163 info@chatfieldsremovals.co.uk

www.chatfieldsremovals.co.uk

Coppards Removals

Based in Bromley

- Kings Hill, Sevenoaks and West Kingsdown 01732 757797
- Tonbridge 01892 320400
- Westerham 01959 546514

Crutch Brothers

22 Morleys Rd, Tonbridge TN9 1RA 01732 359043 enquiries@crutchbros.com

www.crutchbros.co.uk

Goodfellows Removals & Storage

Based in West Malling 01732 841841, 0800 634 6794

www.goodfellowsremovals.co.uk

GP Removals

Hermitage Lane, Aylesford ME20 7PX 01732 871503, 0800 644 0182

info@gpremovals.co.uk www.gpremovals.co.uk

Robert Draper Ltd

Removal firm based in Sevenoaks 01732 452783 www.robertdraper.co.uk

Senior Services

Relocation service specialising in helping older people to move home 07939 042805.

info@seniorservicesmanagement.co.uk www.seniorservicesmanagement.co.uk

Sevenoaks Removal Company

01732 414173, 07307 390002 removalssevenoakskent@outlook.com

www.sevenoaksremovalcompany.co.uk

Neighbour disputes

See our Legal Advice information pack

Pest Control

Homeowners and tenants normally have to pay though tenants should check with their landlord if they will pay; it will depend on their tenancy agreement

- Sevenoaks District Council. Their Pest Control Team will remove wasps, rats, mice, bedbugs, squirrels, ants, fleas and cockroaches. You will probably have to pay but may be eligible for a discount if you are on benefits. You can get more advice from them on 01732 227000 direct.services@sevenoaks.gov.uk www.sevenoaks.gov.uk
- Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council. Their Pest Control section can give you advice 01732 876299 pest.control@tmbc.gov.uk www.tmbc.gov.uk They use a contractor called Monitor Pest Control Ltd who will remove rats, mice, bedbugs and cockroaches free of charge for people on council tax benefits. Everyone else has to pay. They will also remove other pests but you will have to pay 01474 358855 info@monitorpestcontrol.co.uk www.monitorpestcontrol.co.uk

Renting

Age UK

You can get publications on finding private rented accommodation, repairs, security of tenure and tenants' rights by ringing Age UK 0800 169 6565.

Citizens' Advice

Can help with tenants' rights (rent, repairs, security of tenure etc). Free phone advice Monday-Friday 9am-5pm. Some office appointments may be possible.

- Aylesford, Larkfield, New Ash Green, Otford, Sevenoaks, Snodland, Swanley and Tonbridge 0808 278 7810
- Edenbridge and Westerham 0808 278 7962

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Crosslight Advice

01732 300425 info@crosslightadvice.org www.crosslightadvice.org Crosslight Advice (formerly West Kent Debt Advice) can provide specialist rent arrears and debt advice to help prevent homelessness. They offer free face-to-face debt advice, financial education, practical assistance and ongoing support to anyone who needs it regardless of background, faith or circumstance. They are based at Vine Evangelical Church in Sevenoaks and Tonbridge Baptist Church. You can also ask Age UK to refer you by contacting us on 01732 454108

Shelter

0808 800 4444 www.shelter.org.uk Can help with tenants' rights (rent, repairs, security of tenure etc).

StepChange

National debt charity providing expert debt advice and fee-free debt management. Can help you tackle rent arrears www.stepchange.org

Your local council

If you are having difficulty paying your rent free confidential advice is available from your local council. You may be eligible for Housing Benefit.

- Sevenoaks District Council 01732 227000
- Tonbridge Housing Team 01732 876067 housing.services@tmbc.gov.uk

Repairs

See section below for replacing boilers and heating systems

- **Decent Homes Grants**
 - This can give you financial assistance for repairs and improvements.
 - Contact your local council for details
- **Handy Heroes**
 - The West Kent Hospital Discharge Scheme covers Sevenoaks
 - Based in Tunbridge Wells Hospital and Darent Valley Hospital.
 - Work with patients to help ensure their home is suitable for them to leave hospital.
 - The service provides a detailed home assessment, advice on home adaptation funding and financial assistance alongwith access to the Handy Hero team who can react quickly to requests for small home repairs or work to prevent further accidents, reducing the risk of a hospital re-admission.
 - 01732 227000 and ask for Handy Heroes.
- **Home Improvement Assistance**
 - Your local council can visit to assess if there are any significant health and safety hazards in your home, for example:
 - if you have significant trip or fall hazards such as dangerous steps or stairs
 - if you have poor fire safety such as dangerous electrics or a smoke alarm that doesn't work
 - if you have a leaking roof etc.
 - If you rent your home they can liaise with your landlord.
 - If you own your home your local council can advise on funding available to improve your housing conditions and may be able to help fund works in your home to reduce those hazards if you are on a low income such as income-related benefits. They may also be able to help if you have a long-term health condition.
 - Funding of up to £10,000 may be available, subject to availability. You should not be in Council Tax arrears and the assistance is repayable if you sell your home.
 - Sevenoaks District Council 01732 227000
 - Tonbridge Housing Team 01732 876067, 876395
housing.services@tmbc.gov.uk
privatesectorhousing@tmbc.gov.uk
- **Repair Cafés**
 - Monthly Saturdays 10am-1pm St Luke's Church, Eardley Rd. There are other repair cafes in other areas
 - Volunteers will repair items such as toasters, lamps, hairdryers, clothes, bikes, toys and crockery 07980 168572
sevenoaksrepaircafe@gmail.com
- **Your local council**

- Sevenoaks Housing Policy Team 01732 227000
www.sevenoaks.gov.uk
 - Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council 01732 844522 www.tmbc.gov.uk
- If you rent your home from a social housing landlord, they're responsible for dealing with most repairs. However, it's up to you to tell them because they aren't responsible until they know about it

Replacing your boiler or heating system

We are not aware of any scheme for free boilers but it may be worth contacting Age UK on 0800 169 6565 to see if they produce any publications on grants for boilers. Some help may also be available from the following:

- **Kent & Medway Warm Homes.** This is a partnership between your local council and Kent County Council offering financial help with boilers, heating systems and insulation.
 - People of any age on means-tested benefits (eg Universal Credit, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support, Pension Credit Guarantee Credit) may be eligible for Warm Homes grants for heating or insulation. There may be a waiting list
 - If you are over 65 with a diagnosed long-term medical condition, you may also be eligible for help from your local council
 - In Sevenoaks 0800 587 7795 info@arangroup.co.uk
www.arangroup.co.uk
 - In Tonbridge & Malling Email: privatesectorhousing@tmbc.gov.uk
Web: www.simpleenergyadvice.org.uk
- **Affordable Warmth Obligation.** This is a Government scheme where you may be eligible for funding towards a replacement boiler or heating system. Contact your energy supplier to see if they are part of this scheme.
www.gov.uk/energy-company-obligation
 - If you own or privately rent your home you may be eligible
 - If you rent social housing you may also be eligible if your home has a poor energy efficiency rating.
 - If you are on a low income and benefits you may be eligible
- **Town & Country Home Improvement Agency**
0845 605 7017 infohia@tch.org.uk www.tch.org.uk Health & Housing Co-ordinators may be able to provide assistance with new boilers. Grants of up to £3000 may be available
- **Your Home co-ordinator.** You may be able to get a Discretionary Grant up to £7500 for a new boiler. This is effectively a loan. The council would give you the money but it has to be repaid either by you if you move or by your beneficiary if you die and your home is sold. In Sevenoaks, contact James Keast 07864 959141 jameskeast@ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk
- Vulnerable residents may also be able to get a **Safe & Secure Grant** from your local council to cover boiler installation.

Social housing

Age UK

You can get publications on finding council and housing association housing, repairs and security of tenure by ringing Age UK 0800 169 6565.

Citizens' Advice

Can help with tenants' rights (rent, repairs, security of tenure etc). Free phone advice Monday-Friday 9am-5pm. Some office appointments may be possible.

- Aylesford, Larkfield, New Ash Green, Otford, Sevenoaks, Snodland, Swanley and Tonbridge 0808 278 7810
- Edenbridge and Westerham 0808 278 7962

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Kent Homechoice

Manage the social housing register (council housing waiting list) on behalf of local authorities and housing associations. You can also approach your local housing association to get on it www.kenthomechoice.org.uk

MOAT

Housing association providing affordable homes and services for people in housing need 0845 600 1006 customer@moat.org.uk www.moat.co.uk

Shelter

0808 800 4444 www.shelter.org.uk Can help with tenants' rights (rent, repairs, security of tenure etc).

West Kent Housing Association

Provide homes in Kent for people who can't afford them on the open market 01732 749000 customerservices@wkha.org.uk www.westkent.org

Your local council

If you are having difficulty joining the housing register (waiting list) free confidential advice is available from your local council

- Sevenoaks District Council 01732 227000
- Tonbridge Housing Team 01732 876067 housing.services@tmhc.gov.uk

Supported housing

Avenues Group

Supported living and housing for people who have learning disabilities, autism, acquired brain injuries, challenging behaviour and/or other multiple/complex needs. 0300 323 0405 info@avenuesgroup.org.uk www.avenuesgroup.org.uk

Kent Social Services

If you need supported housing to live an independent life ask the Supported Housing Team for an assessment 03000 416161 social.services@kent.gov.uk www.kent.gov.uk

Lookahead

Homelessness advice and supported housing for people with mental health needs, learning disabilities and autism 020 7368 4600 getintouch@lookahead.org.uk www.lookahead.org.uk

MacIntyre (Learning Disability Supported Housing)

Supported living in Edenbridge for adults with learning disabilities and autism 01908 230100 hello@macintyrecharity.org www.macintyrecharity.org

Rethink

Supported housing for people with mental health problems 01732 742351, 01215 227007 info@rethink.org www.rethink.org

Tradespeople

See also our Legal Advice information pack for complaints about tradespeople.

Age UK

Age UK Sevenoaks & Tonbridge do not keep a list of tradespeople. However some Age UK's do have details of local tradespeople but bear in mind that their tradespeople may charge for travelling to Sevenoaks and Tonbridge areas:

- Age UK London business directory. They charge companies £470 per year to be listed. The companies have to provide references and be members of a trade organisation for any complaints. Customers are asked for feedback 0800 334 5056 www.aublondon.co.uk/
- Age UK Maidstone trusted traders list 01622 753618. www.ageuk.org.uk/maidstone/our-services/traders-list
- Age UK produce publications on finding tradespeople 0800 169 6565. The Citizens' Advice Consumer Service may also be able to help

Trading Standards Checked

03000 414141 <http://tschecked.kent.gov.uk> www.kent.gov.uk/business/trading-standards This is Kent County Councils' fair trader scheme that helps people find reliable, honest and trusted tradespeople. Rigorous background checks are carried out by Trading Standards. These include:

- consumer complaints and non-compliance with legislation.
- a review of confidential and restricted information supplied by external organisations, other public authorities and the police, in addition to checking information that is freely available to the public.
- Public Liability Insurance check.
- Identification checks.
- Credit Checks (including Insolvency, Bankruptcy and County Court Judgements).
- Mandatory Accreditation and Qualification checks.
- Verification of trading address / registered address.
- Checks into company trading history.

Tradespeople have to agree to follow a Code of Conduct. You should note that it does not prevent things from going wrong or guarantee the quality of workmanship. However it does mean that should any problems occur, they should be dealt with in a reasonable manner. This should ensure that they are not "cowboys" or "rogue

traders". You should also note that tradespeople have to pay to be in the scheme. Other schemes which may not carry out as many checks include:

- Checkatrade 0845 408 4866 www.checkatrade.com/kent
- Trustmark 0333 555 1234, 01344 630804 www.trustmark.org.uk

Town & Country Home Improvement Agency

0845 605 7017 infohia@tch.org.uk www.tch.org.uk

- If you need a tradesperson (for example you need a plumber, electrician or decorator) they can't make particular recommendations but they can give you a few names of tradespeople they use on a regular basis who they think are reliable and trustworthy so you can ring round to get quotes.
- If you wish to make bigger changes to your home they can draw up detailed specifications for any building work and commission it to make the changes you want.
- They may be able to investigate grants, loans or charitable help to pay for any large work.
- They may be able to help you to stay warmer by arranging for thermostats to be fitted on radiators, free servicing of gas fires and boilers and getting financial help if you need a new boiler.

Lifebook

This enables you to record all sorts of useful details which will not only help you to be more organised but could also be invaluable to a family member or a friend if they need to locate important information about you in an emergency. You simply follow the step-by-step instructions to fill in the various sections with your details, contacts and locations of important documents. The life contacts section deals with recording details of your tradespeople. The LifeBook is available in both a booklet and computer versions. More information from Age UK 0800 678 1602

www.ageuk.org.uk/lifebook

Weather emergencies

Cold

Age UK

You can get publications on keeping warm in winter by ringing Age UK 0800 169 6565.

Independent Age

You can also get Being Winter Wise which explains how to look after yourself during the coldest months. You can get it from Independent Age 0800 319 6789

www.independentage.org

Floods

Floods on roads and blocked drains

If there is a flood on the road or in a public drain and it may cause injury or is putting homes at risk ring Kent County Council on 03000 418181 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm) or 03000 419191 (other times) www.kent.gov.uk

Sandbags

You can have sandbags delivered free of charge if there is a flooding emergency. Contact your local council and ask for the Emergency Planning Team

Staying safe in floods

If you need advice on staying safe in a flood, phone the Government's Floodline on 0345 988 1188 (24 hours) www.gov.uk/help-during-flood

Snow

Community Safety

If you need help in heavy snow and have no one else to turn to try contacting Community Safety at your local council:

- Sevenoaks Community Safety Unit 01732 227000
information@sevenoaks.gov.uk
- Sevenoaks Volunteer Development Agency may also have volunteers who can help older and isolated people in bad weather. Contact Fiona 01732 454785
- Tonbridge & Malling Community Safety Unit 01732 876395
customerservices@tmbc.gov.uk

Snow clearing and gritting

Contact Kent County Council 0845 247800

Vehicle emergencies

If you need 4x4 vehicles to help you in an emergency phone South East 4x4 Response on 01622 962636 (24 hours) or 999. If it is not an emergency phone 07040 900456

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