



Welcome to the May 2026 edition of our Residents' eNewsletter.



Left to right: Cllr Martin McCabe (Labour Group Leader), Cllr Ian Davey (Green Party Leader), Cllr Donna Johnson (Local Alliance, Selsey and Chairman), Cllr Jay Mercer (Leader of West Sussex County Council and the Liberal Democrat Group).

New 'cross-party alliance' for West Sussex

A new Liberal Democrat-led cross-party alliance has been formed to run the county council following this month's local elections.

The leaders of the Liberal Democrats, Green Party, and Labour Group, alongside the newly appointed Chair Cllr Donna Johnson of the Local Alliance, Selsey, have agreed to work together.

The alliance will now work collectively to set council priorities, agree the budget, and oversee the delivery of essential services.

All members (picture below) attended a [meeting of Full Council at County Hall, Chichester](#), where Councillor Jay Mercer, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, was appointed Leader of the Council, and Councillor Sam Raby as Deputy Leader.

A series of appointments were also made to the new Cabinet.



[Read more about the appointments made](#)



Have your say on local government reorganisation

The government wants to hear your views on its proposal for reorganising councils in West Sussex.

Rather than choose to implement one of the two locally developed and financially sustainable options we put forward, ministers have instead decided to consult on a modified version of the two unitary option.

You can read the [county council's full statement in response here](#).

The consultation runs until 15 June, and your responses will inform the government on which proposal, if any, it takes forward for West Sussex.

Take part in the consultation



Do you look after a friend or family member?

Caring for others can be challenging, but you don't have to do it alone.

Carers Support West Sussex can provide guidance, practical help, and emotional support for unpaid carers.

They have a range of services, from benefit advice to accessing carer funds, support groups, carer hubs, events and a carer helpline.

Support for adult carers is also available from the [Carers Health Team](#) and for young carers under 18 from the [Young Carers Family Service](#).

More information about Carers Support



Growing demand for foster carers

We are urging local residents to consider fostering, particularly for sibling groups, to help keep brothers and sisters together during times of upheaval.

With a growing demand for foster carers, we're highlighting how staying with siblings can provide vital comfort, stability and a sense of belonging for children entering care.

The appeal coincides with Foster Care Fortnight (11 to 24 May), celebrating the everyday moments that help children rebuild trust and feel safe.

Anyone able to offer a loving home, especially for siblings, could make a lasting difference to a local child's life.

Could you provide a loving home?



Preparing for retirement

Retirement is a major life transition and while for many it can reduce stress and improve health, for others the loss of daily structure and workplace relationships can affect overall wellbeing.

Research shows that people who retire without a plan often experience a dip in their mental health, so it's important to think ahead and prepare for this next stage of life.

You can find mental health support on the '[How are you really feeling?](#)' website, or visit the link below where you can read Jay's story about how she prepared for retirement with a simple 3-point plan.

Photo from the Centre for Ageing Better

[Read Jay's story](#)



It's Magical May in our libraries!

Hear spellbinding stories of magical creatures and fantastical folklore, with charming crafts too this half-term in our West Sussex libraries.

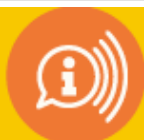
Once Upon a Storytime events are perfect for young princes and princesses alike, while for teens and young people, we have the return of Crafternoon at Bognor Regis and Burgess Hill libraries.

These activities are free, but spaces are limited, so please book to avoid disappointment.

And as May is national Share a Story Month, library staff will be sharing some of their favourites at the [regular Storytime sessions](#) and will have special visitors at some of them.

Book half term activities

More news



Head to our [Newsroom](#) to find all the latest news.

- We do hope you have an enjoyable bank holiday this weekend. Please be aware an amber heat-health alert has been issued for the South East from 2pm today (Friday 22 May) until 5pm Wednesday 27 May. Ensure you [stay healthy, cool and prepared during the hot weather with advice and support](#).
- [Firefighters are urging residents to take extra care](#) after crews attended six garden fires across West Sussex in less than a fortnight.

- Enjoy the outdoors this summer but be 'Tick Aware'. [Here are some simple steps](#) you can take to stay 'tick aware' and protect yourself from tick-borne infections like Lyme disease and tick-borne encephalitis.
- West Sussex residents are being [encouraged to repair, reuse and reduce waste](#) through the Big Fix this May.
- Twelve young people have [successfully graduated from the latest GRIT course](#) run by our West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service.

Did you know?



This bank holiday weekend and half term is a great time to discover Sussex in bloom, from colourful gardens to peaceful green spaces.

Explore ideas for days out at [Experience Sussex](#) and discover beautiful [gardens to visit](#).

Did you know Sussex Day is celebrated on 16 June? The perfect excuse to get out and make the most of the county's landscapes and local traditions.

Did you receive this eNewsletter from a friend? [Sign up here](#).



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with people you didn't know
needed you, or that you needed**

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