

Tuesday, 15 September 2026

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the **Sevenoaks Youth Council** to be held in the **Council Chamber, Town Council Offices, Bradbourne Vale Road, TN13 3QG** on **Wednesday, 23 September 2026 at 6:00 PM.**



Town Clerk

Youth Council Members:

Aahana Verma	Grace Bejarano	Naima Karki
Aalim Saeed-Tirmizi	Harry King	Nelly Schiefer
Adelina Suslikova	Harry Powell	Pendar Ahmadvazir
Aditya Srinivasan	Henry Thomas	Penelope Muccino
Aidan Hirst	Hugo Welsh	Penelope Rowbotham
Alex Jin	Ines Wang Neto	Poppy-Grace Dixon-Lyon
Ali Esad Kutuloglu	Ishwar Sharma	Presha Vyas
Alice Warren	Jasper Barnes	Reza Panlavi
Alicia Ho	John Ng	Rhea Engineer
Allegra Delli Rocioli	Joshua Maddox Aquino	Riddley McDermott
Angelos Maroulis	Joshua Maretlane	Riley Ferguson
Arina Evtushenko	Julien Beck	Russell Street
Aryana Mahdavi Ardestani, Chair	Karam Kandhari	Ryan Zhaeentan
Audrina Chan	Katie Lo	Sarah Pardasany, Social Media Officer
Ayan Motwani	Kisali Wijesekara	Sayeesha Boysen
Benjamin	Lily Court	Scarlet Gane
Caspar Tillieux	Lizzie Hunt, Treasurer	Shinki Yu
Catherine Barden de Leon	Lukas Abromavicius, Vice Chair	Shiv Lamba
Charlotte Bagoee	Logan Lewis	Simi Akintoye
Chelsey Dai	Mackenzie Willis	Sofia Vittoria Moschini
Clement Isong	Mark Bielikov	Sophia Yu
Cynthia Chen	Max Oser	Sophia Sheridan
Cyrus Tillieux	Max Rowland	Summer Chen
Dhriti Pasumarty	Maximilian David	Susanna Local
Ethan Cook	Megan Philips	Taani Shukla
Eva Wang, Social Media Officer	Mila Skoko	Thomas Heregods
Finn Chadwick	Milly Anscorb	Thomas Mather
Franz Lahura-Sturm	Mirabel Poulson	Vihaan Sharma
George Kelly	Morgan Ingarfield	Vyom Bhandari

1. GUEST SPEAKER: KENT POLICE

To receive a talk from Kent Police

2. GUEST SPEAKER: THE BEATLES IN SEVENOAKS

To receive a talk from Juliet Stephens from Sevenoaks Sings Community Choir on 'The Beatles in Sevenoaks'

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive and accept apologies for absence from members who are unable to attend the meeting.

4. MINUTES OF THE SEVENOAKS YOUTH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 10TH JUNE 2026

To approve and sign the Minutes of the Sevenoaks Youth Council Meeting held on 10th June 2026 as a true record.

(Document attached: 2026-06-10 - DRAFT Youth Council - Minutes.pdf — pp. 5–20)

5. FIANCE REPORT

To note the budget for 2025/26

(Document attached: Agenda Item - Finance Report - Youth Council - September.pdf — p. 21)

6. HOUSE IN THE BASEMENT (HITB) YOUTH CAFE- MANAGERS REPORT

To receive and note Daren's Report.

(Document attached: Agenda Item 6- HiTB Managers Report.pdf — pp. 22–23)

7. FRIENDS OF RHEINBACH- PEN PAL SYSTEM

To receive a PowerPoint on the draft idea for a Modern Pen Pal System put together by a Youth Councillor over the Summer.

(Document attached: Voluntary Modern pen Pal Programme Sign Up draft .pdf — pp. 24–25)

(Document attached: Voluntary Pen-Pal Programme Between Sevenoaks and Rheinbach.pdf — pp. 26–37)

8. SUMMER EVENTS REPORT

To receive and note the summer events report.

(Document attached: Agenda Item 8- Summer events report.pdf — pp. 38–44)

9. SEVENOAKS REFILL

To receive and note the redesigned poster for Sevenoaks Refill project that was put together by a Youth Councillor over the Summer.

(Document attached: Sevenoaks Refill Scheme Posters.pdf — pp. 45–48)

APPENDIX I — Public Documents

4. MINUTES OF THE SEVENOAKS YOUTH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 10TH JUNE 2026

2026-06-10 - DRAFT Youth Council - Minutes.pdf

5. FIANCE REPORT

Agenda Item - Finance Report - Youth Council - September.pdf

6. HOUSE IN THE BASEMENT (HITB) YOUTH CAFE- MANGERS REPORT

Agenda Item 6- HiTB Managers Report.pdf

7. FRIENDS OF RHEINBACH- PEN PAL SYSTEM

Voluntary Modern pen Pal Programme Sign Up draft .pdf

Voluntary Pen-Pal Programme Between Sevenoaks and Rheinbach.pdf

8. SUMMER EVENTS REPORT

Agenda Item 8- Summer events report.pdf

9. SEVENOAKS REFILL

Sevenoaks Refill Scheme Posters.pdf

Sevenoaks Town Council
Minutes of the meeting of the Youth Council
Held on Wednesday 10 June 2026,
in the Council Chamber, Town Council Offices,
TN13 3QG

Meeting commenced: 18:00

Meeting concluded: 19:00

Aahana Verma	Apologies	Lily Court	Apologies
Aalim Saeed-Tirmizi		Lizzie Hunt, Treasurer	
Adelina Suslikova	Apologies	Lukas Abromavicius, Vice Chair	Apologies
Aditya Srinivasan	Present	Logan Lewis	Present
Aidan Hirst		Mackenzie Willis	Present
Alex Jin		Mark Bielikov	
Ali Esad Kutuloglu		Max Oser	
Alice Warren	Apologies	Max Rowland	Present
Alicia Ho		Maximilian David	
Allegra Delli Rocoli	Present	Megan Philips	
Angelos Maroulis	Apologies	Mila Skoko	Apologies
Arina Evtushenko	Present	Milly Anscomb	Present
Aryana Mahdavi Ardestani, Chair	Present	Mirabel Poulson	
Audrina Chan		Morgan Ingarfield	
Ayan Motwani		Naima Karki	
Benjamin	Present	Nelly Schiefer	Present
Caspar Tillieux		Pendar Ahmadvazir	
Catherine Barden de Leon	Apologies	Penelope Muccino	
Charlotte Bagoee		Penelope Rowbotham	
Chelsey Dai		Poppy-Grace Dixon-Lyon	
Clement Isong		Reza Panlavi	Present
Cynthia Chen	Apologies	Rhea Engineer	Apologies
Cyrus Tillieux	Present	Riddley McDermott	
Dhriti Pasumarty		Riley Ferguson	Apologies
Ethan Cook	Present	Russell Street	
Eva Wang, Social Media Officer	Apologies	Ryan Zhaeentan	
Finn Chadwick	Present	Sarah Pardasany, Social Media Officer	
Franz Lahura-Sturm	Present	Sayeesha Boysen	
George Kelly	Present	Shinki Yu	
Grace Bejarano	Apologies	Shiv Lamba	
Harry King	Present	Simi Akintoye	
Henry Thomas		Sofia Vittoria Moschini	
Ines Wang Neto		Sophia Yu	Apologies
Ishwar Sharma	Present	Sophia Sheridan	Present
Jasper Barnes		Summer Chen	Present
John Ng		Susanna Local	
Joshua Maddox Aquino	Apologies	Taani Shukla	
Joshua Maretlane	Present	Thomas Heregods	
Julien Beck		Thomas Mather	
Karam Kandhari		Vihaan Sharma	Present
Katie Lo	Present	Vyom Bhandari	
Kisali Wijesekara	Present		

Sevenoaks Town Council
Minutes of the meeting of the Youth Council
Held on Wednesday 10 June 2026,
in the Council Chamber, Town Council Offices,
TN13 3QG

In attendance: Linda Larter MBE, Town Clerk, Daren Mountain, Manager of House in the Basement Youth Café and Ieuan Chandler-Wilson, Youth Committee Clerk.

1 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was noted that, as this meeting took place during the exam season, many of the Youth Councillors expressed their apologies.

RESOLVED: To receive and note the apologies for absence as above.

2 - Guest Speaker: CONNECT TO WORK

The youth councillors received a Teams call and PowerPoint presentation from Claire from Connect to Work, a Kent County Council Project that supports young people aged 16+ facing disadvantages and disabilities in taking their next steps. The project has been funded by Central and Local government alongside schools and colleges. The programme operates voluntarily, where the young person can reach out to Connect to Work without the need for a professional referral. The programme for each individual runs for a maximum of 12 months, depending on the young person, as they can drop out at any time. Over the course of the project, the young person is given 1-1 support to obtain realistic goals depending on what they want out of the project; this can be as simple as wanting to boost their confidence, applying for a job, preparing for an interview, and/ or writing a C.V. Any young person who might have some form of disability, health Conditions and/ or facing complex barriers to work can be supported through the project, the project is mainly for individuals to self-refer via an expression of interest form.

Claire reported that project currently has been running for one year out of the five years they have funding for, and in that time, they have gone from 14 staff to a team of 58.

The PowerPoint that Claire presented can be found at the end of the minutes.

3 - MINUTES OF THE YOUTH COUNCIL HELD ON 18th MARCH 2026

The Youth Council noted that in their last meeting, they had agreed to help promote Kooth Mental Health to other young people struggling with their mental health. It was noted that this was important assistance during stressful exam time.

RESOLVED: To accept the minutes of the Youth Council meeting held on the 18th of March 2026 as a true record.

4 - VIDEO ON TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS

The Youth Council received a video on local Town and Parish Councils which was created by the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) to help explain how local councils such as the Sevenoaks Town Council operate. The video can be viewed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?si=UNRZYCWBg674on-O&fbclid=IwY2xjawSXWkVleHRuA2FlbQlXMQBzcnRjBmFwcF9pZBAyMjlwMzIxNzg4MjAwOD>

Sevenoaks Town Council
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5 - Finance Report

The Youth Council noted that the Charity Bake Sale was still on the Finance Report and should be removed.

It was noted that their budget had increased by £500

RESOLVED: To note the Youth Council's balance was £1,501.70

6 - CURRENT MATTERS REPORTS

RESOLVED: To receive and note the current matters report.

7 - HOUSE IN THE BASEMENT (HiTB) YOUTH CAFE

The Youth Council heard from Daren that House in the Basement had been going very well, with many young people helping to volunteer at House in the Basement and helping with cleaning and painting the walls outside HitB, getting it ready for Sevenoaks in Bloom regional entry for South and Southeast in Bloom. It was noted that many of the Youth Councillors volunteer at House in the Basement.

Daren reported that there were many different events planned over the Summer holidays, from an upcycling event on the 19th of June, Dungeons and Dragons workshop, Fishing Sessions, African Drumming Workshop, Open Mic Nights and a podcast interview with some of the young people at HitB.

Daren also mentioned that on the 12th of August, the House in the Basement will be taking a convoy of three minibuses to Broadstairs. One from the Town Council and two from Knole Academy, it was noted that in the past, the youth council has helped towards funding this trip and offered to help with the donation towards the Minibuses from Knole Academy.

RESOLVED: For the Youth Council to donate **£150** towards the cost of the Minibus.

8 - PLASTIC FREE SEVENOAKS PLEDGE

The youth council noted that at a previous meeting, they had mentioned that they wanted to know about the Refill Scheme. It was noted that the Refill scheme is a National Scheme that highlights local businesses where you can fill up your water bottle for free. Many of the businesses that support this scheme have the Refill sticker in their window.

Youth Councillors also heard that prior to COVID, the Town Council started to promote a plastic-free Sevenoaks to local schools and businesses. It was noted that the Town Council were now looking to revive this project and asked if the Youth Council could help.

Sevenoaks Town Council
Minutes of the meeting of the Youth Council
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RESOLVED: For Youth Councillors to place posters for the Plastic Free Sevenoaks Pledge in their schools to help promote it.

9 - Kent Police Interdependent Advisory Group

The Youth Council noted they had received an invitation for representatives of the Youth Council to attend the Kent Police Independent Advisory Group. The Chair opened this to the Members, and three young people put their names forward as representatives.

RESOLVED: For the representatives to attend the meetings of the Kent Police Independent Advisory Group and provide feedback to the youth council on these meetings.

It was noted that the next meeting was **Thursday, 9th July -18.30 at Sevenoaks Primary School**

10 - FRIENDS OF RHEINBACH

The Youth Council received a request from the Friends of Rheinbach to help come up with ideas on how to create a modern pen pal program with young people in Rheinbach. The youth council came up with a few ideas, such as:

- Talking to schools that already teach German
- Zoom/ Teams calls, Emails, it was noted that with these options, online safeguarding will come into this.
- Does Rheinbach have a youth council that they can communicate with?
-

The Youth Council noted that it would be worth talking to their schools about whether this is something that young people in the town would be interested in doing and setting up a volunteer group within the Youth Council to lead the project with support from STC staff and, at a later stage, support from the Friends of Rheinbach to move the project forward on their side.

RESOLVED: For youth councillors to talk to their schools and see if this is a project that young people would be interested in. Youth Councillors were also asked if any were interested in developing this as a voluntary project – creating a sign-up form, promotion, considering operational matters, and analysing success.

11 - UPCOMING EVENTS

It was noted that the Skateness event was taking place again this year on Wednesday, 5th August, 11 am-4 pm. The Youth Council expressed an interest in attending the event and having a stall to raise money; it was suggested that they could either have a cake sale or hold a raffle (raffle item to be purchased from Youth Council funds).

**Sevenoaks Town Council
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TN13 3QG**

RESOLVED: For members of the Youth Council to have a stall at the Skate Park in Greatness Recreation Ground on Wednesday, 5th of August and to hold some form of Fundraising event.

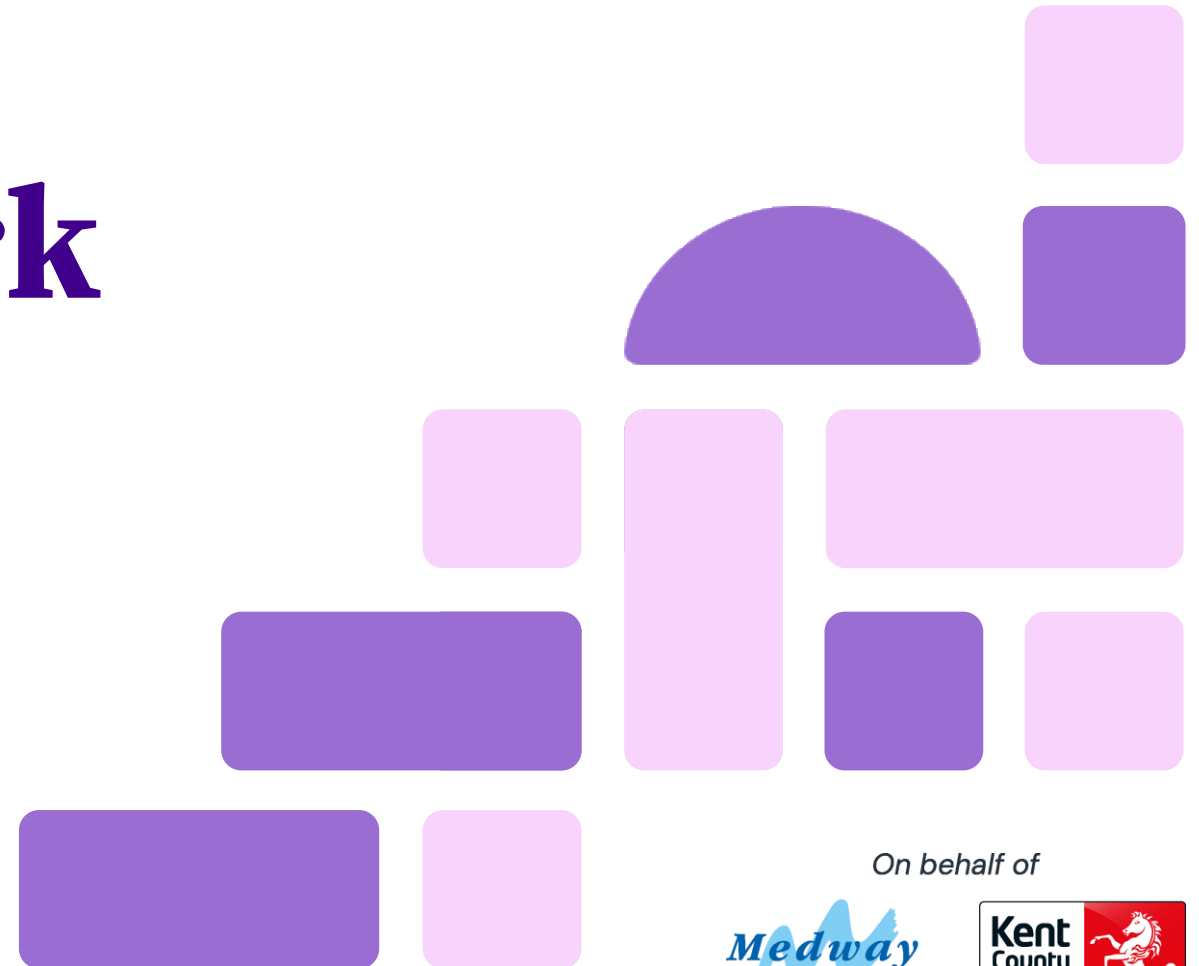
There being no further business, the Chair closed the Meeting.

Signed
Chair

Dated

Connect to Work overview

Supported Employment Service



The Education People

- ✓ Supporting people with a disability and disadvantages into paid employment for over 32 years
- ✓ Funded by central and local government, schools and colleges
- ✓ Members of BASE and hold Excellence Status in SEQF Model Fidelity.



What do we do?

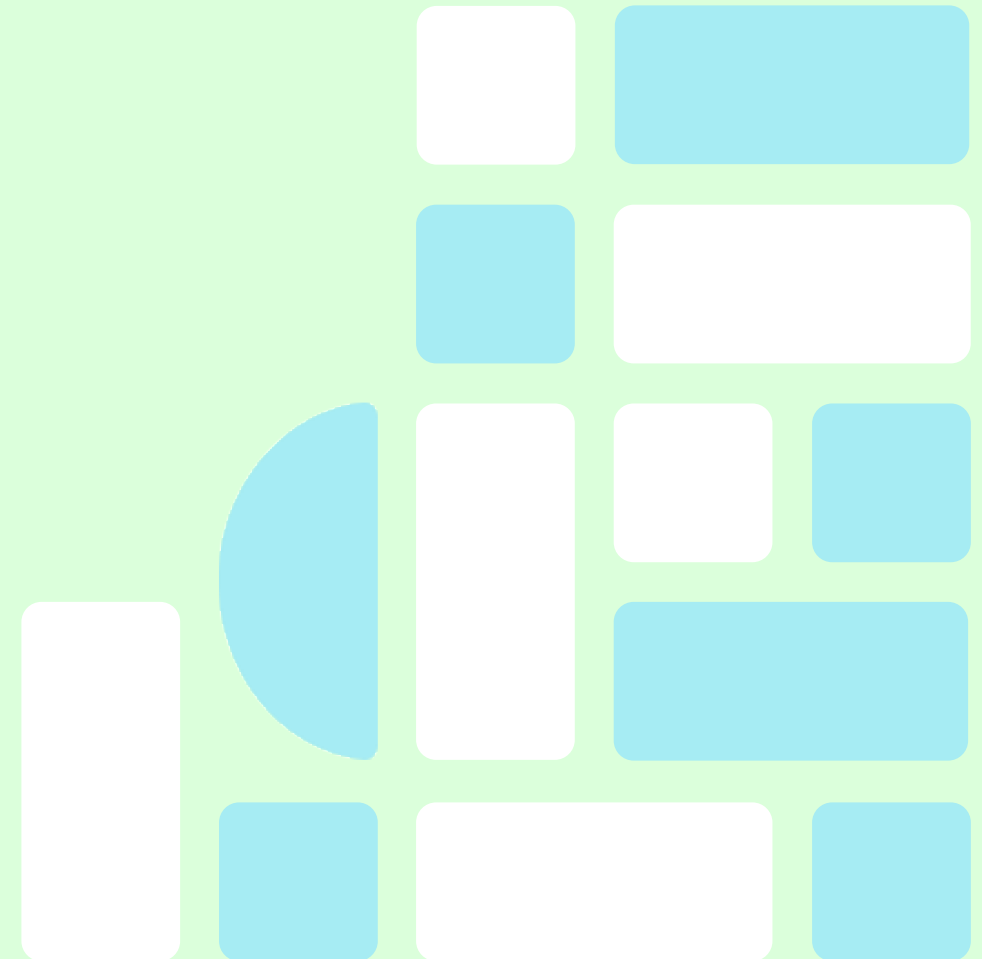
We support individuals with disabilities, health conditions, and complex barriers to employment to find paid work.

Scope

- Available across England and Wales
- We support across Kent and Medway

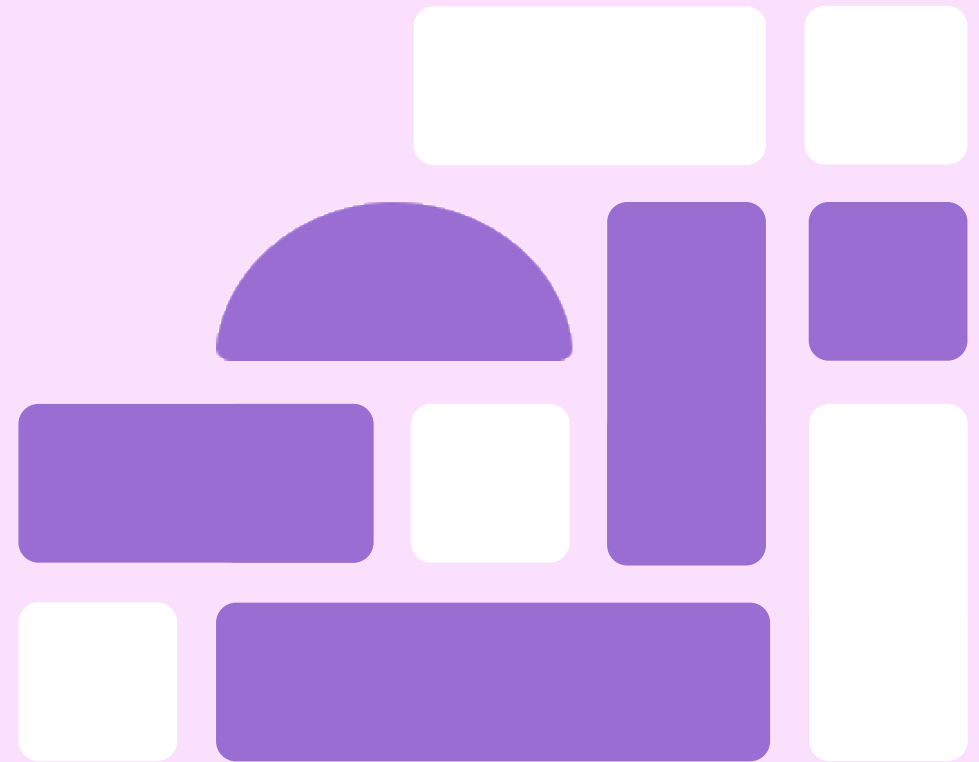
Voluntary

- Individuals choose to join the program
- Maximum of 12 months (4 months retention)



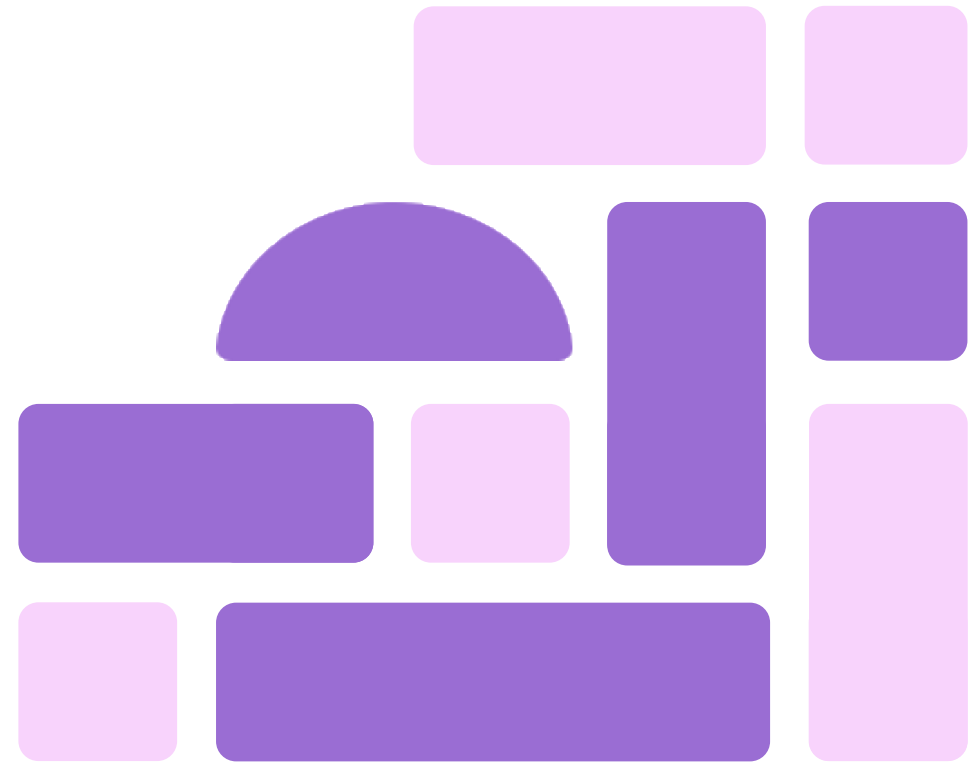
Suitability

- 18+
- Not on any other work support programme
- Motivated to work
- Not in paid work / At risk of losing work (retention referral)
- Individuals can self-identify.



Who can we support?

- ✓ Disabled individuals
- ✓ Individuals with health conditions
- ✓ Individuals facing complex barriers to employment, such as...
 - ➔ an offender or ex-offender
 - ➔ a carer or ex-carer
 - ➔ a homeless person
 - ➔ a former member of the Armed Forces, a member of the reserves, or a partner of current or former Armed Forces personnel
 - ➔ a person whose current or historical drug or alcohol dependency presents a significant barrier to employment
 - ➔ a care experienced young person or care leaver
 - ➔ a refugee, a resettled Afghan
 - ➔ a person on the Ukrainian scheme
 - ➔ a victim or survivor of domestic abuse
 - ➔ young people involved (or at risk of being involved in) serious violence
 - ➔ a victim of modern slavery.



What does Supported Employment look like?

Customer
engagement

Vocational
profile

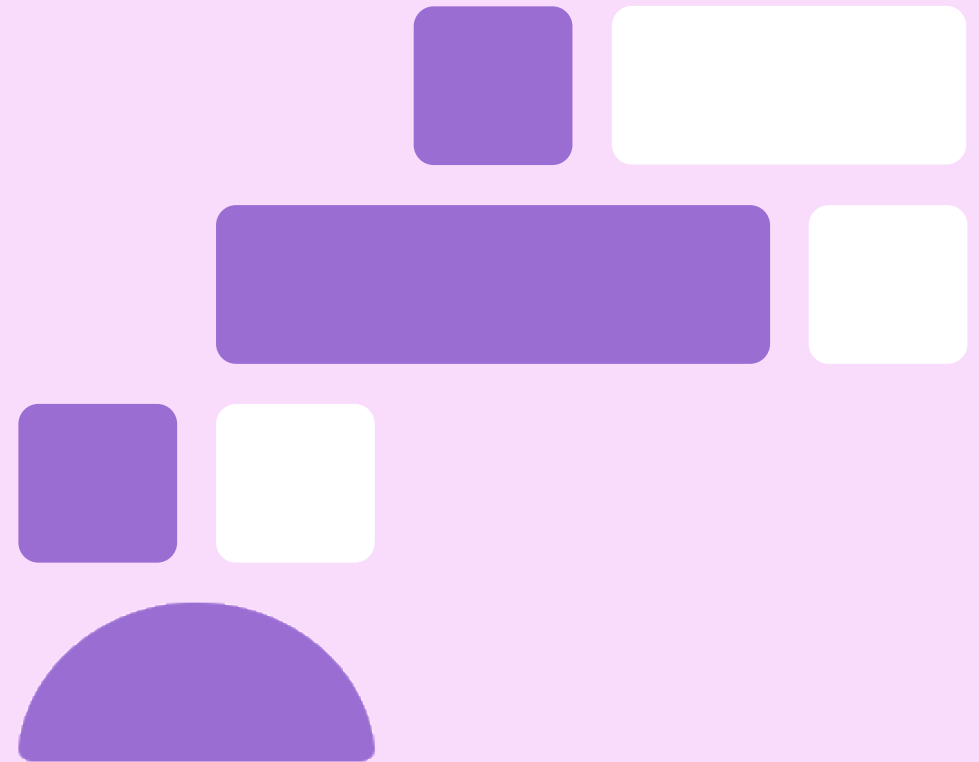
Employer
engagement

Job
matching

In work
support

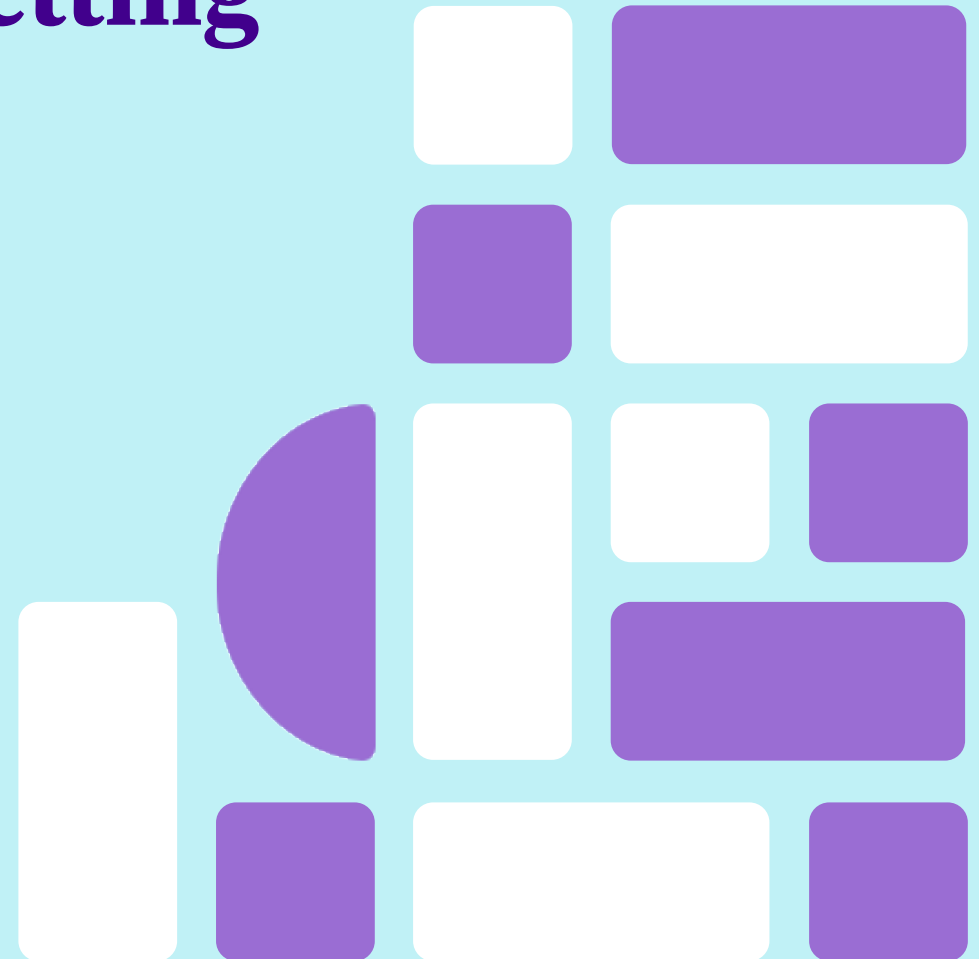
How could Supported Employment help?

- ✓ Help you decide on a career.
- ✓ Write a great CV.
- ✓ Apply for a job.
- ✓ Prepare for an interview.
- ✓ Talk to employers.
- ✓ Support with travelling to work.
- ✓ Support in work.
- ✓ Advice on benefits.



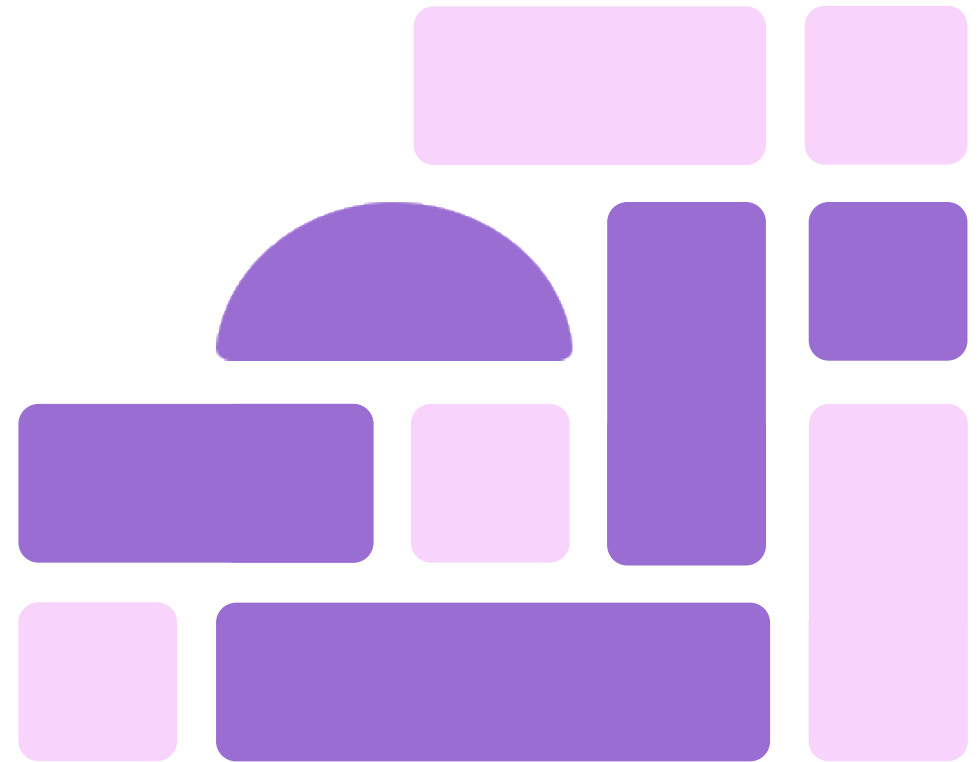
Expressing Interest and Getting Involved

- ➔ Individuals can self-refer.
 - ➔ You can support someone to refer.
 - ➔ Chat to our team about collaboration.
1. Complete our expression of interest form.
 2. Include as much information as you can.
 3. Look out for contact from our team.



Next steps

- What groups is your organisation supporting?
- What barriers are your service users facing?
- Who else in your organisation needs to know about Connect to Work?
- How can we support you?
- What extra information do you/we need?



Get in touch



theeducationpeople.org

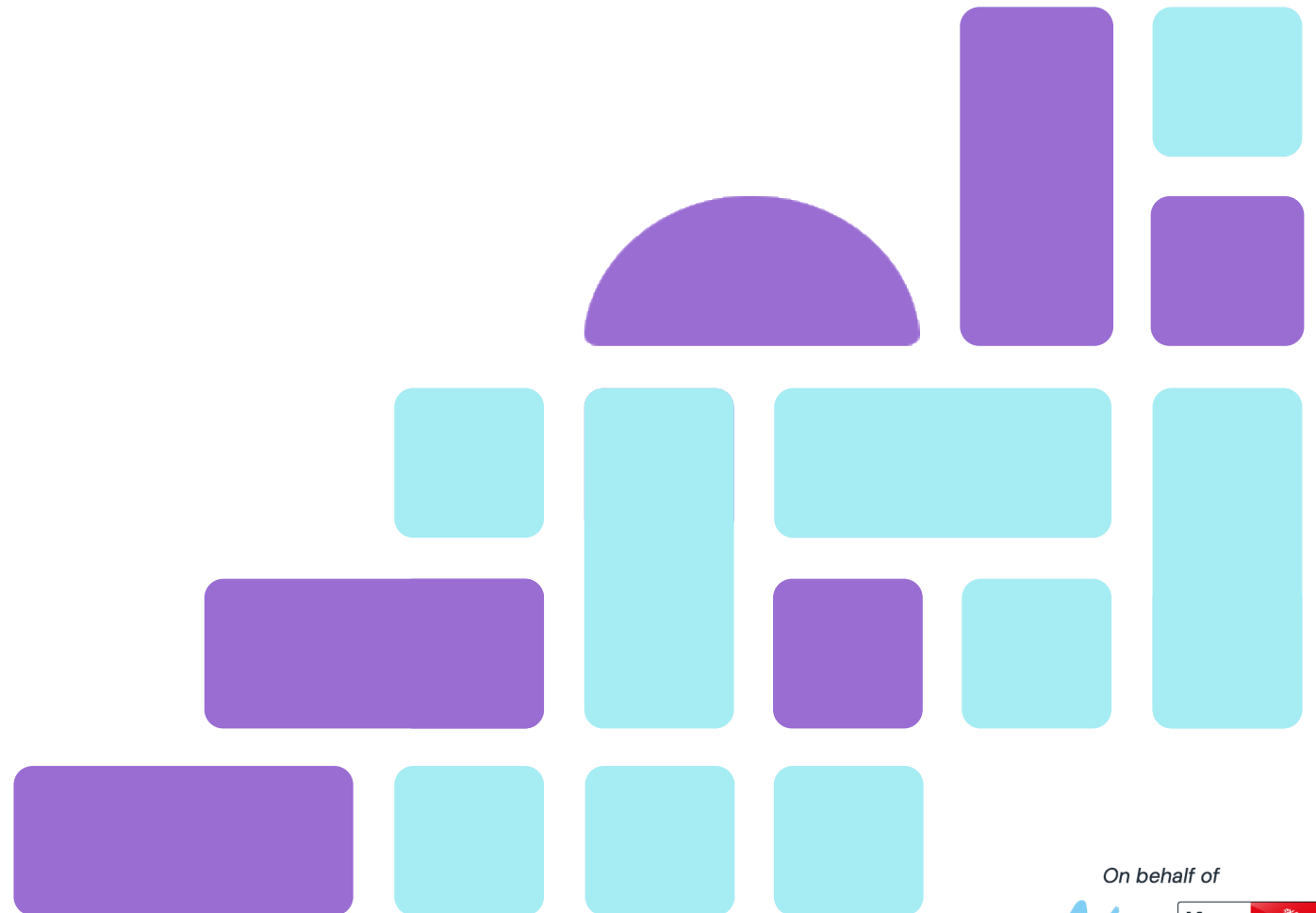


ses@theeducationpeople.org



03301 651 135

Questions



Agenda Item **Sevenoaks Town Council**
3A **Youth Council General Income and**
7555/43 - EMR

2026/27

	Expenditure	Income	Committed
	£	£	£
Carried Forward from 2024/25:	1,101.70		
2026/27 Budget allocated:	500.00		
Total 01/04/25 starting balance:	1,601.70	£1,601.70	£ -
Restringing of Guitars			£100.00
	£ -	£1,601.70	£100.00
Available Funds	£ 1,501.70		
	£ 1,501.70		

Agenda Item **Sevenoaks Town Council**
3B **Youth Council Charity Income and**
7555/43

2026/27

	Expenditure	Income
	£	£
Starting Balance: 01/04/2025		£ -
Budget allocated: 0.00		£0.00
Cake Sale		£ 18.00
Donated to Friends for Families	£ 18.00	
	£ 18.00	£18.00
Available Funds	£ -	
	£ -	

Sevenoaks Town Council
Youth Council- Wednesday 23th September 2026



House in the Basement Youth Café Manager:

May 2026 Figures:

In May, House in the Basement saw 216 come through the door over 18 sessions; 26 of these were new to the Youth Café. We held 4 SEN sessions, seeing 42 young people and had 4 detached sessions using the Town Council's electric community minibus at Greatness Recreation Ground.

We also attended the Sevenoaks District Council's Health and Wellbeing Roadshow at the Stag Plaza suite, meeting a few parents and other organisations with lots of networking & good conversations.

We also held a girls' night on the 30th of May.

June 2026 Figures:

In June, we had 173 young people join us over 17 sessions, with 15 of these being new. We held 4 SEN sessions and saw 43 Young people attend. We also held 3 detached sessions at Greatness Recreation Ground.

We had a group of Young people who organised and held an upcycling workshop at House in the basement, bringing in old clothes and upcycling them.



We also held an Open Mic night at the end of the month.

July 2026 Figures

We had 195 young people; 13 of these were new over 18 sessions. We had 4 SEN Tuesday sessions, seeing 38 Young people, and had 3 detached sessions at Greatness.

**Sevenoaks Town Council
Youth Council- Wednesday 23th September 2026**

August 2026 Figures

We were open on 16 occasions in August, seeing 228 young people; 36 of these were new, the largest spike in new young people this year. We had 4 SEN sessions, seeing 25 Young people and 4 Detached sessions, not including all of the events and trips HitB has been involved in this Summer.

The Summer school holidays were a busy time for HitB; we saw lots of new people at a time when Sevenoaks, as a town, can be quiet.

Our 4 workshops (fishing and Dungeons and Dragons) were all oversubscribed, with some keen Mums getting in early with bookings mainly due to advertising; more are planned for October half term.

34 of us went to Broadstairs on a hot (35c) day, plenty of time spent in the sea, big thanks to Holly who was an extra lifeguard between the flags for several hours.

Skateness was slightly less busy than the last couple of years, but still a great day in the sun. Detached on a Thursday was quieter

Sadly, SAYT lost 11-8 to HitB at our football match, which we plan to do again in October half term on the Trinity school site.

We have another open mic night scheduled to take place on September 25th 2026.

One of our long-term visitors, who first came to HitB 10 years ago & is an SEN adult, has asked to volunteer at HitB



Voluntary Modern Pen-Pal Programme Sign-up Sheet draft

Note that you must be 11-18 to participate in this scheme

Beachten Sie, dass Sie zwischen 11 und 18 Jahre alt sein müssen, um an diesem Programm teilnehmen zu können.

All fields marked with * are necessary to fill in if it is in the language you have chosen

Alle mit * gekennzeichneten Felder müssen ausgefüllt werden, wenn die gewählte Sprache verwendet wird.

Please tick the language you intend to answer in (you can tick more than one)

Bitte kreuzen Sie die Sprache an, in der Sie antworten möchten (Sie können mehrere Sprachen ankreuzen).

English ☐

Deutsch ☐

*Date of birth:	*Geburtsdatum:
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*First names:	*Surname:
*Vorname:	*Nachname:

What school do you currently attend?	Welche Schule besuchst du derzeit?
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When providing an Email address for extra safety you must make a new email address not connected to any private info or other accounts to ensure personal safety.
Wenn Sie aus Sicherheitsgründen eine E-Mail-Adresse angeben, müssen Sie eine neue E-Mail-Adresse erstellen, die nicht mit privaten Informationen oder anderen Konten verknüpft ist, um Ihre persönliche Sicherheit zu gewährleisten

*Email address:	*E-Mail-Adresse:
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Hobbies/interests

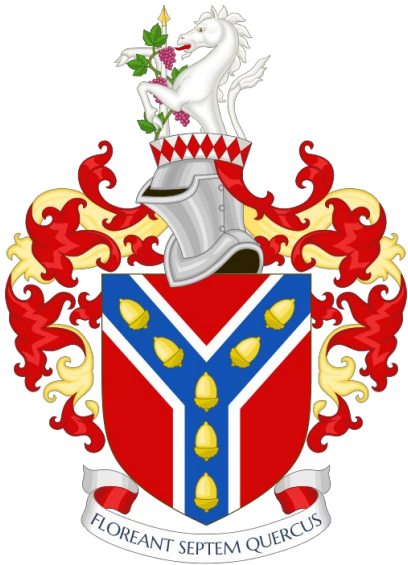
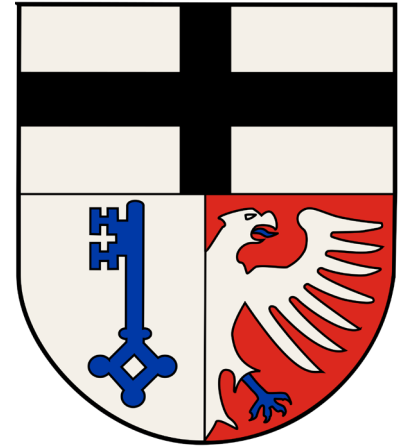
*Languages spoken:

*Sprachen gesprochen:

Hobbys/Interessen



Voluntary Pen-Pal Programme Between Sevenoaks and Rheinbach



Outline of the Town Twinning relationship

What is Town Twinning?

- It is a legal or social partnership between two cities, towns, villages or local authorities that promotes cultural, commercial and social links between the two localities.
- These agreements are not regulated by the UK government and the arrangements are entirely organised between the two towns.

The Town Twinning relationship with Rheinbach

- Our relationship with Rheinbach began in 1995 with the formation of the Friends of Rheinbach organisation in Sevenoaks the purpose of which was to develop a friendly relationship with the Town of Rheinbach. A charter was signed between the towns in 2000 officially cementing the relationship between the two towns. There is also a sister organization in Rheinbach called 'Freunde von Sevenoaks'.
- Rheinbach was chosen due to it's similar size, population and Geography with it being close to major cities such as Bonn which is only 13 miles away. It is also known for it's rich history with it being known for fine glassware with the town containing a school for glassblowing.

What does this relationship involve? (From the FoR site)

- Making new friends with people of common interest in Germany
- Attending social events
- Possibly visiting Rheinbach (done every other year)
- Enjoying visits from Freunde von Sevenoaks.



Freunde von Sevenoaks

Decisions needed

Other suggestions

- Due to the volume of work needed to be done it may be preferable that most of the decision making be made by a smaller group of the youth councillors who will be given the task of organising the scheme and the Youth Council instead decide on who should run the scheme and a budget for the scheme.

- Agree on an age range for the programme
- Agree on what is needed for a sign-up form and review the draft for consideration
- Agree what is needed for a parental consent form and review the draft for consideration
- Agree on how the programme should be managed and who out of the youth council should set it up
- Agree on how participants will be matched
- Agree on what platform to use
- Agree on a budget for the programme and what to spend it on
- Agree on how often participants should communicate
- Agree on how the programme should operate
- Agree on GDPR considerations
- Agree on Safeguarding considerations
- Agree on how the programme should be advertised
- Agree on which Rheinbach organisations should be contacted
- Agree on how to measure the success of the scheme.

Potential opportunities /overview



Opportunity rover



What are the potential benefits for a young person in participating?

- Cultural Awareness Participation could increase cultural awareness of German culture among young people in Sevenoaks.
- Mental Health – This project could help people who struggle with poor mental health and loneliness find companionship online .
- Language Learning – Can help language students with their studies as it provides an opportunity to speak in another language (though not necessarily)

How can we encourage people to take part?

- Ensure people understand how beneficial it can be for them personally and professionally.
- Advertise the scheme in relevant areas such as schools and youth groups.
- Have Youth Councillors personally advertise the scheme to their friends to allow it to proliferate naturally.
- Have German students help with the advertising in Germany to ensure relevance/correct translation in that area.

Age ranges to be considered

- 11-18 – This is the age range for the Youth Council so may be the best choice so all members can participate additionally are more likely to possess the prerequisite technology and technological literacy.
- 11-16 – This age range would make it easier to advertise to secondary school age students interested in the programme.
- 4-10 – This age range could be considered if we wanted to target the scheme at younger people but may be challenging as people of this age may not be technologically literate.
- 4-18 – This age range could be considered to allow all relevant people to participate across all schools and youth groups.

Note: social media will be banned for under 16s in the spring of next year.

Sign-Up Process

What information would be helpful to collect?

- Name
- Age (To ensure people of the same age are matched correctly)
- School (Not necessary)
- Hobbies/Interests – (needed to match people with similar interests.)
- Language(s) spoken
- Digital information (email address, username etc.)

Parental consent form considerations

- Child's information (full name as it appears on official documents, date of birth and gender)
- Description of specific activity being authorised
- Emergency contact information
- Relevant health information
- Dated signature
- Proof of legal authority over the minor

Safeguarding considerations

- If adults are involved DBS checks would be needed
- Signed consent form from a parent or guardian (if they are underaged).
- Ensure all participants have signed a code of conduct outlining what can and can't be spoken about in the pen-pal service.
- Some kind of enforcement mechanism would be needed so participants can report misconduct.
- A blocking mechanism would need to be implemented to prevent spam and allow participants to back out of negative situations.
- ID/age verification would be needed to ensure people are the age they say they are. (ideally not age estimation face scans as that would be a safeguarding concern).

Link to draft sign-up form here: [Voluntary Modern pen Pal Programme Sign Up draft .docx](#)

Link to draft parental consent forms here: [Parental Consent Form German.docx](#), [Parental Consent Form English.docx](#)

(note all links allow you to edit the forms)

Operation of the programme

Management of the programme

- The running of the programme should be done by the Sevenoaks Youth Council who will set up and then maintain the project.
- A group of youth councillors could volunteer to head up this proposal as having the entire Youth Council run it together wouldn't necessarily be feasible.
- Failing this, responsibility of the programme could fall to the Youth Services Committee.

Participant matching considerations

- Participants could be matched based on age with participants being given someone of their age (+ or - 1 year)
- Participants could be matched with other participants who have similar interests to spark conversation.
- Participants ideally would be matched with someone from Rheinbach who speaks German or German and English.
- For people less interested in the language learning aspect they could be speaking to just English speaking Germans or communicate using a translator

Communication platforms to be considered

- Email – benefits of this platform are that it is free, easily accessible and it does fit the format of this being digital pen-pals (as it technically is mail) although sharing email addresses does come with risks with people being able to expose you to spam and in extreme cases phishing attacks and identity theft (To get around this I would suggest participants create a new email to participate on any email service such as Google or Yahoo that is not linked to any of your personal information).
- Text messages – On platforms such as Whatsapp, IMessage and other messenger apps you use your phone number to communicate with people but sharing this information publicly has risks similar to email but it is harder to get a new phone number compared to Email to mitigate this threat.
- 3rd party platforms – Apps such as Facebook, Discord, Instagram and other social media apps could be used to connect participants. The main risks of these are that they are poorly moderated and simply being on them can expose you to unrelated harmful content and many of them may be banned soon for under 16s.
- Established digital pen-pal apps – Apps currently exist that allow people to connect overseas online such as Slowly, Global Penfriends and Penpal World although upon further investigation a lot of these apps essentially being social media that is specifically connecting people in other countries with it similarly lacking safeguards and flexibility

Operation of the programme

Costs considerations:

- Most of the cost of this scheme would be related to advertising with it being possible that money would need to be spent on the cost of printing posters.
- Money may also need to be spent on an age verification programme to ensure all participants are the age they claim to be.
- If sign-up forms are sent physically the cost of printing them would need to be considered.
- Many of these costs could be mitigated by advertising digitally and potentially not doing age verification if that is not required to meet safeguarding requirements.
- Money may also need to be spent on DBS checks for anyone 16 or over that would want to participate in the running of the programme as well as safeguarding training.

How often should participants communicate?

- Flexible system – rather than deciding how often participants contact each other instead deciding that paired participants could decide that amongst themselves based on their availability
- Non-flexible system – We as a youth council decide how often people communicate essentially to ensure that the communication continues over a longer term for example we could have participants communicate on a weekly, fortnightly or monthly basis.

Order of operations draft

1. Send out the sign-up form and parental consent form digitally and physically to relevant parties involved such as local schools and youth groups in the Sevenoaks and Rheinbach areas. (ensure they are aware they should fill out the sign-up sheet first before the consent form)
2. After receiving the applications via mail or email we then look through and sift out all failed application (any forms that are missing important sections or the participants are too young/old to participate)
3. We then email the successful applicants informing them of their success along with an age verification link which ensures participants are the age they say they are.
4. Upon successfully verifying their age we can go through and pair people from Rheinbach with people from Sevenoaks that are of the same age and with similar interests.
5. People will then be emailed the email address of their penpal so they can begin conversation sending emails through us so they can be vetted before sending them on.
6. During the operation of the programme participants can email the host of the programme to leave the programme, report misbehaviour or to seek advice.
7. Participants have the power themselves to block their paired partner at any time for any reason.

Safeguarding and GDPR



GDPR

- In this program we will be collecting personal information including Names, Dates of Birth, email addresses and places of education for the sign up form and for the parental consent form we will be additionally collecting: the names, phone numbers and email Addresses of the parents/guardians of the participants involved
- To manage this data and store it securely we will need to ensure that all information collected and stored is placed in password protected folders on secure drives the STC Onedrive should work for this purpose as it can only be accessed by STC members.
- We also must ensure that we only store data that is relevant to the programme and make sure there is no 'just in case' data stored
- We must ensure that when someone leaves the programme their data is promptly deleted
- Ensure participants are aware that the data is being stored and inform them that at any moment they can ask for the information to be deleted

Safeguarding (It is important to note that STC has a child and vulnerable adult safeguarding policy we must adhere to)

- To ensure proper safeguarding we need to ensure participants are placed with people in a similar age range ideally + or - 1 years from their age or we establish age brackets for them to be placed in.
- Messages should be monitored before being sent out to prevent harmful information being shared.
- A blocking mechanism would be needed to allow participants to stop any harmful communications they may receive.
- A reporting system may be needed to participants who are breaking code of conduct are removed.
- Any sharing of photo's must be approved by parental consent
- It may be smart to ensure there is no one on one interactions and keep most interactions to groups to prevent one on one grooming.
- We may need to consider spending some money on a dedicated secure messaging portal that moderators can monitor messages before being sent.
- Anyone involved in the creation of the programme that is ages 16 or over may need a DBS check to meet safeguarding
- Safeguarding training may also be necessary for those monitoring messages so they are prepared to deal with any negative messaging.

Promoting the programme

How is this going to be advertised to young people? (as they may potentially be reluctant to participate)

- Demonstrate the safety of the scheme so people do not feel they will be endangered by joining.
- Be genuine in any marketing traditional corporate slogans and messages tend to be ineffective as they often use forced slogans and glossy finishes to advertise their products.
- Show the human side of what we are doing and ensure all advertising isn't too polished as young people tend to be resistant to that kind of advertising.
- Show how the programme will be a good opportunity to connect with people in Rheinbach reminding them of the importance of town twinning
- We could create an interactive advertisement in schools where they are given activities relating to Rheinbach and then at the end of the activities they are told about the Pen-pal scheme.

Communication channels (for advertising)

- Town council press releases/contacts
- Posters (around the town and in the House in the Basement)
- Youth Council social media
- Advertising in schools (Knoke Academy, Sevenoaks school etc.)
- Advertising in sports clubs (Sevenoaks rugby club/Sevenoaks football club)

Key messages of promotional materials

- 'Make a friend across borders' – connect personally with someone in Rheinbach
- 'Town twinning in action' – Turn our civic relationship into a real friendship
- 'Build confidence and curiosity' – Speak to new people and engage with their culture
- 'Discover German culture' – experience the complexities of German culture first hand!
- 'Safety is our priority' – We ensure all our participants are safe and secure when speaking to new people in Rheinbach

Rheinbach organisations

What would be needed in any communications to Rheinbach organisations?

- Information related to what the Youth Council is explaining that we are connected to the Sevenoaks Town Council that is twinned with Rheinbach
- Information relating to what they would need to do such as send out forms to students and potentially even advertise the scheme.
- Detailed information on what our Pen-Pal scheme involves including
 - Sign up process
 - Safeguarding procedure
 - How the programme will work
 - How it will be managed
 - How people will be matched

Mayor of Rheinbach Dr. Daniel Phiesel

Web: [Mayor of Rheinbach: City of Rheinbach](#)

Contact: buergemeister@stadt-rheinbach.de

Surster Weg – Community primary school

[Home - GGS Sürster Weg](#)

- Contact: info@ggsnet.de
 - This organisation is a school for children aged 6-10 which is German primary school age
- Youth Centre JuZe – Youth and Diaconal centre
- [Youth Centre – JuZe – Ev. Parish of Rheinbach](#)

- Contact: 02226/14858, felix.mors@ekir.de
- Provides Youth services for people 8-21 years old they do activities such as football, billiards, cooking and even provide counselling

Städtisches Gymnasium Rheinbach

[Städtisches Gymnasium Rheinbach](#)

- Contact: 02226/5919, sekretariat@sgrnet.de
- This type of school spans from 10 to 18/19 where students are rigorously prepared for university whether they are made to study languages, mathematics, natural sciences and humanities.

Erzbischöfliches Sankt-Joseph-Gymnasium Rheinbach

[Home | Archbishop's St. Joseph-Gymnasium Rheinbach](#)

- Contact: sekretariat@sjg-rheinbach.de
- This is a gymnasium school that specialises in getting students to university this school though is far more traditional with it being sponsored by the archdiocese of Cologne.

Glasfachschule NRW

[School - Glass College](#)

- Contact: info@glasfachschule.de
- This is a vocational school that focuses on the making of glass and teaching people how to make glass and glass blowing technique

Gesamtschule Rheinbach

[Rheinbach Comprehensive School](#)

- Contact: +492226158597
- This school is a general educational school with it having both vocational and academic opportunities.

Measuring and analysing success

How do we know if the project is successful?

- If there has been a lot of engagement with the scheme on both sides
- If the experience has been valuable for participants
- If the scheme was good value for money
- If there is interest in future town twinning activities

How do we measure this?

- Number of sign ups
- Cost compared to qualitative and quantitative effect of the scheme (Was it worth it for how much we spent)
- Number of active participants after 3 months
- Written report on the success of the scheme
- Participant survey
 - Link to survey [Participant survey.docx](#) (this link does allow editing of the document)

Recommendations

Main issues we could encounter

- Technical issues with email – participants may struggle to set up an email or struggle to use the Email. We may also struggle to find a reliable age verification system
- Participation – Without proper advertising we may have a low participation rate.
- Retention – members of the

How I think the project can be achieved

Age range

- I think the best and most feasible age range for this project is 11-18 as it encompasses the age range of the Youth Council which would allow the group that works on it to include anyone who in the Youth Council that wants to help with the programme and not just certain people. It also would allow for all people in secondary school or 6th form to participate in the programme in the UK and all people in German Gymnasium to participate.

Sign-up process

- I believe that the sign-up sheets and parental consent forms that I designed are sufficient for their purpose, but I do believe they need checking for translation errors by someone who speaks German.

Management of the programme

- I think the management and decision making surrounding the programme should be delegated to a small group of youth councillors who has the time and ability to create the scheme.

Participant matching

- Participants should be matched based on their age + or – 1 year and based on their similar interests that will be decided by the group that organises the programme

Communication platform

- The communication platform that I think we should use is Email but only if participants create a new email not connected to any accounts before joining to prevent any safeguarding or digital safety issues.

Cost/budget

- I believe most of the budget should be spent on an age verification programme, advertising and potentially DBS checks and safeguarding training other expenditure would be unnecessary as email is a free service.

Order of operations

- On slide 7 there is my recommendation for how I believe the operation should run on a day to day I also believe that we should keep a document of which email is linked with which email to ensure Pen-Pals are not mixed up

GDPR and safeguarding

- The GDPR proposals I set out in the section of slide 8 show comprehensively how we can keep GDPR compliance with all data collected being in a locked folder on the STC onedrive and deleted if participants leave the programme. A lot of the safeguarding mechanisms are baked into the operation of the programme with messages being monitored we just need to be careful that only a few approved and trusted people are monitoring them (potentially these people are given safeguarding training to make them more equipped to deal with that they read)

Promoting the programme

- To ensure the success of the programme how the programme is to be advertised should be at the discretion of the group of Youth councillors organising it.

Rheinbach organisations

- All Rheinbach organisations listed should be sent the relevant documents and given relevant information to convince them to adopt the programme make it clear they do not need to spend any money and all we need is them to advertise it to students.

Measuring success

- Use multiple methods to measure the success of the scheme such as: number of participants, survey, written report, cost-reward analysis.

July and August 2026 have possibly been among the busiest summer months yet for the Town Council in terms of free activities and events for children, young people and families.

An exceptionally varied programme has taken place across the town, ranging from family activities, live theatre and skateboarding to fishing, Dungeons & Dragons, football and a trip to the seaside.

Importantly, the Town Council and all of the organisations and partners have worked to make the programme as accessible as possible. All of the activities were provided free of charge, with the sole exception of the Broadstairs trip, for which a nominal contribution of £5 per young person was requested to help cover travel costs and an ice cream for each young person.

Bandstand and Family Activities on The Vine

The summer programme began at the end of July with the Bandstand events and free family activities facilitated by Play Place, taking place on Thursdays between 6 pm and 8 pm on The Vine.

Families have been able to enjoy activities including crafts, soft archery and badminton, while also enjoying live music from the Bandstand.



"She Shreds" – Free Girls' Sessions

Samsara Sport delivered two sets of free "She Shreds" girls' sessions during the summer.

The first took place on 28 July, attracting 11 young people to the 6–11-year-old session and a further 4 young people to the 11+ session.

A second session was subsequently held on 18 August, continuing the opportunity for girls to participate; these sessions proved even more popular, with 11 young people in the 6–11-year-old session and a further 12 young people in the 11+ session.



Family Fun Day – Greatness Recreation Ground

August began with the Family Fun Day on Tuesday 4 August at Greatness Recreation Ground, facilitated by Sevenoaks District Council and hosted by Sevenoaks Town Council.

The event attracted up to approximately 150-200 people throughout the day and brought together a wide variety of organisations and activities.

Play Place, Kent Police, NHS Recovery and Wellbeing College and West Kent Housing were among those attending. Company of Critters also delivered animal handling and educational sessions featuring reptiles and insects, as well as a particularly friendly tortoise, which proved a popular addition to the day's activities.

Skateness – Greatness Skate Park

The following day, Wednesday 5 August, the Town Council hosted Skateness at Greatness Skate Park, facilitated by Kings Ramps.

The event featured skateboarding, BMX and scooter demonstrations alongside stalls and activities from House in the Basement, Sevenoaks Area Youth Trust (SAYT), Sevenoaks Youth Council, NHS Recovery College and Sevenoaks Repair Café.

Sevenoaks Youth Council also held a bake sale as part of the event.

Over the course of the day, it is estimated that approximately 100–150 young people attended.

The following comments were received via Facebook after the event:

“Thank you to everyone involved today it was great xx”

“We had a brilliant time today! Thank you so much, it was such a nice, inclusive atmosphere and my daughters loved it”

“It was amazing, thank you!”

“Thanks for putting on the event. Always a pleasure to come to something local and inspire kids to skate. It’s the best community. That’s my son X pictured trying a kickflip Indy over the box”

Sevenoaks Repair Café: *“Another great opportunity to connect with the community and offer some repair skills. Thanks [Sevenoaks Town Council](#)”*



Bradbourn Re-Born – Fishing Sessions

On Tuesday 11 August, House in the Basement used Sevenoaks Town Council's Community Bus to transport young people to Monk Lakes for the first in a series of free fishing trips.

The sessions form part of the Bradbourne Re-Born project and have been facilitated by West Kent Rivers Trust, House in the Basement and Sevenoaks District Council, with funding from the National Lottery.

The response from families and young people has been outstanding. Every summer fishing session was fully booked, along with the additional session planned for the October half-term.



House in the Basement – Annual Broadstairs Trip

On Wednesday 12 August, House in the Basement took the Town Council's Community Bus to Broadstairs, travelling in convoy with two minibuses from Trinity School.

Approximately 30 young people were able to enjoy a day at the beach.

This was the only summer activity for which a charge was made. A contribution of just £5 per young person was requested to contribute towards the travel costs and the cost of providing each young person with an ice cream during the trip.

Keeping the contribution to a nominal amount helped ensure that the trip remained affordable and accessible to local young people.



Dungeons & Dragons

On Thursday 13 August, House in the Basement hosted Dungeons & Dragons sessions for young people.

These sessions proved extremely popular and, like the fishing activities, were completely booked throughout the summer.

A further Dungeons & Dragons session was hosted on Thursday 27 August, providing another structured and social activity for young people towards the end of the school holidays.



Alice's Adventures in Wonderland – Free Outdoor Theatre

The week commencing 17 August saw the arrival of the Town Council's free performances of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, performed by Cats Grin Theatre Company and Stratford Theatre Company.

Four performances were scheduled across the town:

- **Tuesday 18 August** – Bat & Ball Centre
- **Wednesday 19 August** – Pontoise Play Area
- **Thursday 20 August** – Greatness Recreation Ground
- **Friday 21 August** – The Vine Gardens

Each event across all four locations sold out internationally, with a high demand for The Vine Gardens, where the allocation was subsequently increased to 350 tickets. This then sold out for a second time before all of the other performances. During the performance at the Bat and Ball centre, despite having 200 tickets allocated for the show, only around 180 people attended; this is still the most we have had attend the event at the centre, as last year we only saw around 80 attendees.



House in the Basement vs SAYT- 11-a-side friendly football match

House in the Basement and SAYT went "toe to toe" in an 11-a-side football match, providing another opportunity for young people engaged with the two youth organisations to come together through sport. Sadly, House in the Basement Youth Café lost to SAYT.



The summer programme then drew to a close over the final week of August, with House in the Basement once again taking the Community Bus to Monk Lakes on Wednesday 26 August for the second instalment of the fishing sessions.

This was followed by the final session of the popular Dungeons & Dragons sessions on Thursday 27 August.

Design a Christmas Light Competition

Alongside the summer programme, the Town Council has also launched its Children's Design a Christmas Light competition for the 5th year. Inviting young people up to age 11 to submit their designs by Thursday 17 September so that the winning design can be turned into a functioning Christmas light in time for Christmas.

Overall

The scale and variety of activities delivered during July and August demonstrate what has been an exceptionally busy, and possibly the busiest yet, summer programme for Sevenoaks Town Council and House in the Basement. It should be noted that for events such as the fishing and the D & D sessions, HitB were approached by the provider who was interested in running these sessions alongside HitB and the Town Council rather than us going to them. It was noted that the D&D sessions are hoped to flesh out from the Provider into their own project later in the year; it was noted that these might be charged sessions separate from House in the Basement.

The interest in some of the summer events has been extremely strong, with ticketed events like Alice's Adventures in Wonderland seeing high turnout.

Their involvement helped ensure that the programme ran smoothly and that young people were able to access a wide range of activities and opportunities throughout the summer holidays.

**FREE WATER REFILLS
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FOR BRINGING YOUR OWN CUP
FILLING YOUR OWN LUNCHBOX INSTEAD OF
SINGLE-USE PACKAGING**

Sevenoaks

**REFILL
SCHEME**



REDUCE SINGLE USE PACKAGING PLASTIC IN YOUR AREA

ALL AT THESE LOCATIONS:

CAFE AT THE STATION
CAFE ON THE VINE
COOK
EAT'N MESS
HOLLYBUSH CAFE
LIQUORBOX AND PANTRY (SUNDRIDGE)
MALABAR
RAFFERTY'S
SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COUNCIL
SEVENOAKS WILDLIFE RESERVE
THE CAFE & SANDWICH BAR
THE ROYAL OAK (NEW ASH GREEN)
THE STAG THEATRE
THE WHITE HORSE
THE PEACOCK ROOMS

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around Sevenoaks!**

**EAT, DRINK OR SHOP WITHOUT
SINGLE-USE PACKAGING.**

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TO DRINKING WATER ON THE GO, TAKEOUT
WITH YOUR OWN LUNCHBOX, OR GROCERY
SHOPPING WITH LESS PACKAGING...**

A LOCAL CAMPAIGN WITH A GLOBAL IMPACT



Sevenoaks
TOWN COUNCIL



SEVENOAKS
TOWN TEAM

REFILL involved businesses:

Cafe at the Station

Cafe on the Vine

COOK

Eat'n Mess

Hollybush Cafe

Liquorbox and Pantry (Sundridge)

Malabar

Rafferty's

Sevenoaks District Council

Sevenoaks Wildlife Reserve

The Cafe & Sandwich Bar

The Royal Oak (New Ash Green)

The Stag Theatre

The White Horse

The Peacock Rooms



Sevenoaks
Youth Council



DOWNLOAD THE REFILL APP TO FIND WHERE MORE SEVENOAKS REFILL PLACES ARE

- **FREE WATER REFILLS**
- **PLACES OFFERING DISCOUNTS AND REWARDS FOR BRINGING YOUR OWN CUP**
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JOIN THE REFILL REVOLUTION

**REDUCE PLASTIC WASTE
MEET CLIMATE ACTION TARGETS
PROVIDE GREATER ACCESS TO FREE
DRINKING WATER**

REFILL involved businesses:

**Cafe at the Station
Cafe on the Vine
COOK
Eat'n Mess
Hollybush Cafe
Liquorbox and Pantry (Sundridge)
Malabar
Rafferty's
Sevenoaks District Council
Sevenoaks Wildlife Reserve
The Cafe & Sandwich Bar
The Royal Oak (New Ash Green)
The Stag Theatre
The White Horse
The Peacock Rooms**

**SEVENOAKS OFFERS FREE WATER REFILLS,
PLACES OFFERING DISCOUNTS AND REWARDS
FOR BRINGING YOUR OWN CUP, AND PLACES
FILLING YOUR OWN LUNCHBOX INSTEAD OF
SINGLE-USE PACKAGING**



Sevenoaks
TOWN COUNCIL



UK HOUSEHOLDS THROW AWAY 90 BILLION PIECES OF PLASTIC PER YEAR

**Help to mitigate this by using the REFILL program
and refill your water at local areas for free**

REFILL involved businesses:

**Cafe at the Station
Cafe on the Vine
COOK
Eat'n Mess
Hollybush Cafe
Liquorbox and Pantry (Sundridge)
Malabar
Rafferty's
Sevenoaks District Council
Sevenoaks Wildlife Reserve
The Cafe & Sandwich Bar
The Royal Oak (New Ash Green)
The Stag Theatre
The White Horse
The Peacock Rooms**