

Livin' Kingston

THE MAGAZINE FOR RESIDENTS

Spring 2007



Spring into Action

Bringing our allotments to life

- Setting the budget
- Neighbourhood News
- Making the most of waste

www.kingston.gov.uk
Council Information 020 8547 5757



In Writing

The Royal Borough of
Kingston upon Thames
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By Phone

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In Person

Chessington Helpdesk

The Hook Centre

Hook Road

Chessington

020 8547 6254

Monday to Saturday,

9am – 5pm

New Malden Helpdesk

Malden Centre,

Blagdon Road, New Malden

020 8547 6252

Monday to Friday,

9.30am – 5.30pm,

Saturday 9.30am – 1.30pm

Guildhall Complex

High Street, Kingston

020 8547 5757

Monday to Friday,

9am – 5pm

Visitor Information Centre

Market House

Market Place, Kingston

020 8547 5592

Monday to Saturday,

10am – 5pm

Information in other languages and formats

If you are unable to
read a Kingston Council
document because of
disability or language,
we can assist you.

Please call the Council
Helpline on **020 8547
5757** or ask someone
to call on your behalf.

Contacting Kingston Council

A-Z of Services

Phone numbers for some of our most frequently used services are shown below. For non-local calls, all numbers begin 020.

A	
Abandoned Vehicles	8547 5973
Access (Disability)	8547 5314
Adoption	8547 6042
Adult Education	8547 6700

B	
Benefits (Council Tax & Housing)	8547 5198
Benefit Fraud Hotline	8547 5700
Births, Deaths & Marriages	8547 4600
Building Control	8547 4702

C	
Cemeteries & Crematorium	8546 4462
Children's Information Service	8547 6582
Complaints	8547 5757
Councillors & Council Meetings	8547 5021
Council Tax	8547 5196

D	
Disabled People's Services	8547 6364
Drug & Alcohol Advice	8549 9279

E	
Education & Schools	8547 5234
Environmental Health	8547 5536

F	
Fly Tipping	8547 5560
Food Safety	8547 5536
Fostering	8547 6042

G	
Graffiti	8547 5560

H	
Housing	
■ Housing Advice Line	8547 5468
■ Housing Repairs (Council tenants)	8547 4656

L	
Libraries	8547 6400
Licensing	8547 5080

M	
Markets	8547 5861
Mayor's Office	8547 5030
Museum	8547 6460

N	
Neighbourhood Committees	8547 5021

O	
Older People's Services	8547 6008

P	
Parks & Open Spaces	8547 4601
Parking	
■ Car Parks	8547 6156
■ Parking Appeals	8547 5995
■ Parking Shop	8547 1333
Planning	8547 5330

R	
Roads & Highways	8547 5929
Rubbish & Recycling	8547 5560

S	
School Admissions	8547 4610
Social Services	
■ Adults	8547 6008
■ Children	8547 6587
Sports & Leisure	8547 5207

T	
Tip (and Recycling Centre)	8549 2522
Trading Standards	08454 04 05 06

V	
Voting & Elections	8547 5026

Y	
Youth Services	8547 5815

You can also pick up a copy of the full A-Z Guide to Kingston Council Services at local libraries, leisure centres, Council reception areas and Helpdesks – or download it from our website www.kingston.gov.uk

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- Supporting *Young Kingston*
- Spring Livin' Guide



Cover photo:

Dudley Hewson, Chair of Kingston Federation of Allotment Gardeners (Photo by Justin Thomas)

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If you require a translation of the text in this publication please contact the Kingston Council Helpdesk on 020 8547 5757.

welcome to Livin' Kingston

Welcome to the Spring edition of Livin' Kingston.

For Kingston Council this time of year is always marked by the need to allocate the money it has available to set a budget for the coming financial year.

Along with many of our neighbouring boroughs, Kingston did not receive enough money from central government to meet the cost of price increases or the growing demand for statutory services. Inevitably this shortfall has an impact on the amount of Council Tax residents are required to pay towards services each year. On page 12 we look in detail at how Kingston Council has had to make some tough decisions this year to continue providing the services that residents want.

Also in this edition - inside the New Hook Centre; bringing our allotments back to life; on the street as a Police Community Support Officer; making the most of our waste and how housebound library users are making the most of the Internet.

Our summer edition will be published in June 2007.

The Editorial Team



When you have finished with this magazine please recycle it.

Play Time



Daniel Slocombe, assistant manager at Dickerage Lane.

Playgrounds in the Royal Borough are to benefit from a major cash injection following a successful £271,000 bid to the Big Lottery Fund.

Dickerage Lane Adventure playground in New Malden will benefit from new play equipment including climbing towers linked by suspension bridges, tube slides, rope ramps and firemen's poles. The equipment will provide exciting and challenging play opportunities for children age 6 to 12 years, including those with disabilities.

It's one thing improving an existing playground, but the

Big Lottery Fund grant will also allow Kingston Council to create an entirely new adventure playground at King George's Field in the South of the Borough. Plans are still at an early stage, but young people are involved in designing and choosing the equipment. Once again, providing play opportunities for children who have special needs will be a top priority.



Skerne Road has recently been upgraded.

Cycling Boost

Kingston Council has been successful in securing £2.9m from Transport for London to invest in cycling facilities in the borough over the next three years.

The majority of the funding will be spent on improving existing cycle routes that make up part of the London Cycle Network. Other projects include providing additional secure cycle parking in Kingston town centre, improving local cycle routes that are not part of the London Cycle Network and offering cycle training to residents.

The Council supports cycling as a sustainable form of transport which makes a positive

contribution to the environment by reducing traffic congestion, air and noise pollution. It is often quicker than other forms of transport for shorter journeys in congested urban areas. The investment made in cycling in recent years is paying off – cycle counts taken on Kingston Bridge last Summer indicated that cycle trips now make up nearly 6% of all vehicles crossing the bridge on a typical weekday.

Neighbourhood News

Women on Wheels



Women on Wheels cycle group is a great way for women who are nervous about on-road cycling to get together and build up confidence on their bikes, under the leadership of expert cycle trainers.

The free social rides take place on the last Sunday of every month, with riders meeting up at 10am outside Borders bookshop in Kingston Market Place.

Come along with a friend and meet fellow women cyclists, pick up some advice and find out about ideal routes for the not-so-confident.

To book a place or just find out more, telephone Kingston Council's Road Safety and Travel Awareness Unit on **020 8547 5865** or email travel.awareness@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

Easter Celebration

To celebrate Easter, Kingston's Old London Road will host a Fun Day on Friday 6 April. The Fun Day includes a free Easter egg hunt, special offers, competitions and street entertainment.

Malden Fortnight wants you

There has never been a better time to get involved with the annual community celebration in the Maldens.

The Malden Fortnight Committee is currently working on the programme of activities for 2007 on a theme of The Circus, and they would love to hear from potential sponsors and supporters.

All of the activities during the Fortnight rely on the support of local businesses and the wider community. The committee welcomes help from all quarters; whether you have a lorry available for the parade, or would like to sponsor an event, there's an opportunity to get involved.

The organising committee is always looking for new ideas for events and attractions during the festivities so if you have a suggestion please contact Brenda Kelly on **020 8715 4393**.



The Malden Fortnight Parade will be held on Saturday 7 July with the Craft Fair following a week later on Saturday 14 July.

In addition, there will be all the regular events, including the dog show, concerts, craft fair and flower show.



Volunteers go 'speed dating'

A ground-breaking information event based on the principles of speed dating has been organised to match-up potential volunteers with local charities.

The fun initiative set up by Kingston Volunteer Centre will provide anyone interested in volunteering with an ideal opportunity to meet with representatives from a number of local charities.

If you have been thinking about volunteering but are not sure what to do, this event, organised in conjunction with Kingston University, could be just right for you. Much like speed dating, volunteers move from table to table in an effort to find their perfect partner. Each charity will have four minutes to woo and impress you into volunteering some of your time to work with them.

"This event is open to all – those

with some experience of volunteering, those with none and anyone who's passing by and is just a bit curious. We will arrange the first 'dates', then it will be up to you to decide whether you are compatible and would like to pursue the relationship!" says Maria Jarvis, Manager of Kingston Volunteer Centre.

The event takes place on Thursday 29 March in the Market House, Kingston Market Place, between 4.00pm and 8.00pm. To avoid disappointment you can reserve your place on one of the 'speed matching' sessions by telephoning Kingston Volunteer Centre on **020 8255 8685**.

New Malden's new look



The improvement scheme to regenerate and revitalise New Malden High Street will be extended northward, up to New Malden railway station this year following a successful bid for funding to Transport for London.

New features will include additional raised pedestrian crossing points at the junctions of Grafton Road and Dukes Avenue and dedicated cycle parking near the entrance to the train station. New trees will also be planted and improved

street lighting installed.

To minimise disruption, the improvement works (which started in March) have been synchronized with Southern Gas Networks, who need to carry out essential maintenance work to a gas mains pipe in the area, affecting the High Street, Kings Avenue and Dukes Avenue. Southern Gas Networks is expected to arrive on site at the end of April.

Assess yourself online



A new service in Kingston is helping older people and disabled people stay independent and active.

It is sometimes difficult to admit, or even notice, that we could benefit from some help about our home. Perhaps it is a little harder bending down to get your socks on these days, or maybe the manufacturers just put the lids on jam jars that much tighter now!

Online self assessment is a quick and confidential way for older and disabled residents to assess their own needs for a range of free household equipment that can help them carry on doing everyday things for themselves.

The service provides access to a range of advice that would usually be provided by a professional, but without the need for an appointment or a home visit. This advice includes information about equipment that is provided free, in addition to other items that can be purchased privately.

With a range of items on offer, including tap turners, grab rails, long handled shoe horns, pick up sticks, trolleys and raised toilet seats, many older people will be able to enjoy greater independence in their own home.

The confidential self-assessment takes account of individuals' specific capabilities, their home environment and has no implications for someone's eligibility to access services in other ways. You make the assessment - we make the difference.

Assess yourself at - www.kingston.gov.uk/selfassessment

For residents who do not have access to a computer, help using the website is available from:

Age Concern Kingston – **020 8942 8256**, and Kingston Centre for Independent Living – **020 8546 9603**.

London Student Awards



Students in the Royal Borough are invited to enter an awards scheme dedicated to finding the most talented students in the capital.

The London Student Awards are open to all students in Years 9 and 10 and are part of the 'London's Schools Celebrating Achievement' campaign.

They are run by the Department for Education in association with BBC London. They celebrate and reward London's next generation of writers, scientists, artists and musicians.

Entrants will need to complete an exciting task along the theme of 'My School, My City' in one of six categories – Art & Design, Music, Drama, Creative Writing, ICT and Science. Six winners from each borough will go through to a London-wide final to win a unique 'money can't buy' prize.

The competition is open until Wednesday 16 May.

Entry packs have been sent to schools and can also be downloaded from www.bbc.co.uk/londonstudentawards Telephone - **020 7299 8747**.

Speaking your language

Kingston Interpreting Service would love to hear from anyone interested in training as an interpreter.

In order to meet current needs, and ensure they have translators from both genders, the service would particularly like to recruit:

- Male or female speakers of

Farsi, Somali, Kurdish, Lingala, Dari and Tygrinia

- Male speakers of Cantonese, Mandarin, Portuguese, Spanish, French and Albanian.

If you are trained, or would like to train, as an interpreter please call **020 8547 5818**.



Coming soon..... The Community Shop

Residents living on and around the Cambridge Road Estates will soon have access to an exciting new neighbourhood facility.

The new Community Shop will provide a convenient base from where local voluntary organisations will offer specialist advice and support.

Organisations that will operate out of the new facility include Citizens Advice Bureau, Kingston Law Centre, a number of health advice agencies, and services for children and young people such as Magic Roundabout. There will also be weekly Community Connected sessions, providing free Internet access for people registering with online training courses.

The Community Shop will be located on the ground floor of Madingley block on the Cambridge Road Estate and will be run by Kingston Voluntary Action (KVA) working in partnership with Kingston Council.

For more information, please contact KVA on **020 8255 3335**.

The voice of youth



17-year-old Paul Kenny from Tiffin Boys School has been elected as Kingston's Member of Youth Parliament for 2007.

Paul pipped nine other hopefuls to the post following two weeks of voting at schools and youth centres across the borough. Just a few weeks into the job, Paul has already achieved a great deal: "We are making good progress with the School Councils Forum, which acts as a link between the Kingston Youth Council and schools in the borough. It's important because it's a way of engaging with a wider range of young people."

Paul has also been involved with a more global initiative, saying: "I have also been encouraging local schools to take on more Fair Trade products and to sell mineral water that supports the *One Water Project*. The Project is an innovative scheme that sees proceeds going to build wells powered by children's roundabouts that bring much-needed water to some of the poorest communities in Africa."

Helping stretched parents



Extended child care services being provided by schools in Kingston are giving parents welcome support out of school hours and during school holidays.

The 'wrap around' services give parents access to a wide range of child care outside normal school hours. Parents can choose from a range of activities provided by their child's own school as well as using those provided by the YMCA at the Hawker Centre.

The Millard family use both the After School Club at Latchmere and the Holiday Club. Mrs Elspeth Millard says: "The After School Club is an invaluable facility - run by people the children know, in a safe, secure and homely environment." Her children, James and Saskia, both enjoyed the theme days at the Holiday

Club because they see all their friends and enjoy doing the activities together.

For construction and engineering student Mrs Eman Wild, after school clubs provide the quality of support she requires for her four children when she attends college in central London two days each week.

To find out more about extended schools services available in the Royal Borough:

Telephone: Val Mitchell on **020 8546 7181**

Email: vmitch2@rbksch.org

Fitting out the Rose

Builders have taken centre stage as they push on with the first stage of fitting-out the interior of Kingston's new theatre.

Contractors are busy on works to the infrastructure, including cabling, plumbing, lighting, heating, ventilation, electrical and air conditioning. This phase will prepare the 1,000-seater main auditorium for the professional theatrical contractors who will then move in to install specialist lighting and sound rigs, while the



Photographed by Chris Pearsall

foyers and backstage areas are completed.

"There isn't much to see from the outside at present," says Jerry Gunn, General Manager, "but the contractors will be hard at work on-site for around 9-10 months to complete the new theatre." The Rose's management team are developing the organisation and systems to operate the theatre and are busy planning for the opening season, which will be announced later this year.

Kingston Information Partnership

Keeping up with pension and benefit changes has never been easier for Kingston residents.

Kingston Council and the Pension Service formed the Kingston Information Partnership (KIP) to keep residents over the age of 60, and those referred through social services, informed about the full range of benefits available to them.

Partnership Manager, Helen Hinkley, says: "The team has considerable knowledge about benefits and can help residents fill in application forms. They will also answer queries about benefits you already receive; verify documents there and then; and arrange for any communication support you may need.

"In addition to the drop-in information points around the borough, we can also arrange for an advisor to visit residents in their own homes at a time to suit them."

The Partnership has already been very successful in ensuring that local residents are getting the most from the benefits that are available to them. In many cases this also means obtaining backdated payments for benefits that residents could have been applying for in the past.

Accessing Kingston Information Partnership:

■ Guildhall, Kingston upon Thames

Every other Tuesday (9.30am to 11.30am).

■ The Devon Way Centre, Devon Way, Chessington.

Every other Wednesday (9.30am to 11.30am).

To request a home visit telephone **020 8481 3112 / 3113.**

Neighbourhood News

New riverside furniture



This artist's impression gives a glimpse of how the riverside walkway near Kingston Bridge will soon look.

Work to install stainless steel railings, new s-shaped benches and planting will begin in April. The scheme will run along the river front from the bridge to the Gazebo Pub to improve safety and enhance the look and feel of this picturesque area. Work will be completed this summer.

Funding for local organisations

London Councils is inviting applications from voluntary and community organisations for a slice of its £28 million grants programme.

Funding is available for services providing support for London's diverse communities. To qualify, the service provided needs to benefit people from at least two London boroughs and bids from organisations serving residents in outer London are particularly welcomed.

Find out more at www.londoncouncils.go.uk/commissioning

Digging that little bit deeper

What's in your food? It's a question that has found its way to the forefront of many shoppers' minds.



Dudley Hewson, Chair of the Kingston Federation of Allotment Gardeners.

The recent introduction of clearer food labelling will help people make more informed choices, but by far the most enjoyable and satisfying way of finding out exactly what goes into your fruit and vegetables is to grow your own!

Allotment gardening is enjoying something of a revival: "2006 was a fantastic year, with more than 100 plots let in Kingston," says Dudley Hewson, Chair of the Kingston Federation of Allotment Gardeners (K FAG). A voluntary group, K FAG aims to promote allotment gardening in the Royal Borough and provide support and advice to plot holders."

Dudley continues: "All of the plots in the borough that are readily lettable have now been taken and there is a waiting list. The challenge now is to meet that demand by getting the plots that have fallen into disrepair back into a lettable state."

This is a challenge that Kingston Council and its partner Quadron are tackling head on. Working closely with K FAG, a review of the 14 Council-run allotment sites is taking place to assess which plots can be

brought back into use. Dudley explains: "There are some plots that would cost a fortune to bring back into use. We've got to be sensible and focus our efforts on those plots that are realistically re-claimable. It's not going to happen overnight, but I believe we are heading in the right direction and I am encouraged by the intentions of the Council and Quadron."

Dudley continues: "The other important job we have to do is to identify those plots which are being under-used by their current owners. We need to encourage them to either become more involved in allotment gardening or make their plots available to people who really want them."

Asked what the appeal of allotment gardening is, Dudley says: "I am exceptionally glad that I have an allotment and feel very sorry for anyone who does not. The feeling of digging something out of the ground, putting it in a pot and dishing it up on your plate takes some beating. It's a unique experience. It's hard to explain how good it feels if you've never experienced it."

It would appear that it is an

experience that an ever-increasing number of people are keen to try out. The type of people being attracted to allotment gardening has also widened. "All nationalities, ages and walks of life are represented at allotment sites these days," says Dudley. "Fruit and vegetables from all over the world are grown and we learn a great deal from each other. There also seems to be a lot of young families who are taking the use of organic products to the next level by growing their own."

The sizeable task of assessing how many allotment plots are currently unlettable, and deciding how many of these can be brought back into use, is already underway. Work to actually clear the first of the disused plots – some of which have lain derelict for many years – will start within the next 12 months.

If you would like to find out more about the Kingston Federation of Allotment Gardeners, or would like to become a member, please call **020 8942 9686**.

For details on how to rent an allotment plot, call Quadron on **020 8399 1274**

or visit

www.kingston.gov.uk/allotments



A guiding light - mentoring in the Royal Borough

For many children aged between 8 and 18 years of age, Kingston's Mentoring Scheme provides a range of support that is simply not available anywhere else. For the mentors, the scheme has also had a life changing effect.

One of those mentors is Surbiton resident Brenda Tyrrell, who joined the scheme on retirement. She wanted to continue working with young people and was particularly interested in working with young offenders.

"The scheme has made me realise how difficult it is for children and young people who are either looked after, unaccompanied asylum seekers or youth offenders, to live a normal life within the system that exists," she says. "I want youngsters to fulfil their potential and believe that with the necessary support this is possible."

Brenda firmly believes that the support of a mentor can make the difference between a young person making the right and the wrong choices, at the crucial stages in their life; "Simply locking up young offenders

doesn't provide them with the skills to take a different route. Having an adult to talk to can be the one factor that makes the difference," she adds.

Brenda, who had spent her working life as a nurse and was later involved with youth groups, enrolled on the scheme three years ago. When she was accepted on the scheme, she began the qualification which all mentors must take before beginning mentoring work.

Over her three years as a mentor, Brenda's work has included mentoring an asylum seeker, who arrived in England at 15 years of age. She encouraged him, as a parent would, to go to college and guided him through the cultural differences.

She accompanied him to job interviews, and helped him to find accommodation. The most

recent person she has been mentoring is a keen art student. Brenda has introduced her to many of London's art galleries and helped her set up her own exhibition locally.

David Bracken, Kingston Council's Youth Officer who oversees the scheme, which has currently matched 15 mentors with a range of children and young people, believes that mentoring is open to a wide range of people from various backgrounds. This fits with the mix of children and teenagers who might come to him from a youth offending background, as an unaccompanied asylum seeker or as a looked after child. "The most important quality for a mentor is the ability and the wish to relate to young people," says David.

If you would like to find out more about becoming a mentor in the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames, you can ring David Bracken for an informal chat on **020 8547 5814**.

feature

In June 2006 **Debbie Campbell** decided to make a life changing career move.

She swapped her desk job for the streets of Kingston as a **Police Community Support Officer (PCSO)**.



PCSO Debbie Campbell with Marjorie Shipwright

Debbie on the beat

Debbie is now a familiar face on the streets of Kingston, as one of the four officers in the Coombe Hill Safer Neighbourhood Team.

“I wanted a job where I could put something back directly into the community. Every day is different and presents a new challenge. I have never had a job where I have learnt so much about building and maintaining relationships,” Debbie says.

Marjorie Shipwright has been a resident at Cumberland House for over twenty five years. As a member of the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme, she believes that the Safer Neighbourhood Team is really making a difference to life on the estate.

“Debbie is just like another granddaughter. When I was burgled last year by a bogus plumber it was Debbie’s advice and support that got me through. Now she regularly calls in to check that I feel safe and always has advice if anything is troubling me.”

Debbie sees her role as a bridge between the community and the police, being both caring and

advisory. Each day begins with the Safer Neighbourhood Team carrying out reassurance patrols before working on their specialist areas. Debbie’s areas of expertise include working with Kingston Hospital, the elderly and the vulnerable. She has accompanied the Meals on Wheels team on their visits and developed good links between the elderly and other parts of the community.

This work has included Marjorie giving a talk at the Youth Centre on how elderly people may feel intimidated by the behaviour of local teenagers.

“The community needs to work together and if we can act as the glue which makes this happen, then my job is worthwhile. Since I began working as a PCSO I have been encouraged to think out-of-the-box and have piloted schemes which have been suggested by the people I meet.”

PCSOs were first introduced to the Royal Borough in 2003. People like Debbie are recognised by many as the new ‘bobbies’ on the beat in our communities, providing a visible presence and spending over 5,000 hours patrolling our streets each month.

PCSO training takes five weeks at Hendon Police College. The course includes diversity training and developing communication skills. Debbie believes that listening is the most important quality for a PCSO.

If you are interested in training to become a PCSO contact the Metropolitan Police Recruitment team on **08457 727 2212** or visit the Metropolitan Police website www.metpolicecareers.co.uk

For further information about your local neighbourhood team contact the Safer Neighbourhood Team Coordinator on **020 8721 5880** or visit www.met.police.uk/kingston



Performing

Focusing on **your priorities**

Despite the financial constraints being placed on Kingston each year, the Council remains focussed on providing the best possible local services that reflect the wishes of the borough's residents. The Council has a long track record of consulting residents and other stakeholders about budget choices to help inform budget decisions. Questionnaire surveys in recent years have given us a good picture of those services where residents want to see more spending and, conversely, the areas where they are prepared to see less money spent. This year we ran a budget discussion day with a cross-section of residents to learn about residents' views in more depth.

The findings from these exercises are reflected in our **budget decisions** –

- We have continued to protect spending on some of the key environmental services prioritised by residents such as street cleansing, recycling and maintaining roads and pavements.
- We will be doing more to target the provision of adult social services towards those in the greatest need.
- Generally, Learning and Children's Services are seen as a priority. We are increasing provision for children with complex needs and investing in local care to reduce the need for expensive placements outside the Borough.

- Relative to other services, residents generally see arts and culture as less important and we will be undertaking a thorough review during 2007 of our spending on library services.

Setting a budget

The increased grant received from Government of just £0.6m was not sufficient to meet the cost of pay and price increases or the increased demand for statutory services.

To offset this growth, the Council has continued to reduce outgoings - through efficiency savings, budget reductions and by increasing income (£3.7 million) and drawing on its own reserves (£1.9 million).

A consequence of these tough decisions is that Kingston Council will be losing as many as 75 posts, which could result in up to 56 job losses in April 2007.

"The new grant formula worsens the position of Kingston as a 'low spending but high council tax' borough and we have made strong representations about the unfairness of this and the impact the council tax has on our residents," says Councillor Derek Osbourne, Leader of the Council. "If the Government had given Kingston the average level of grant given to London boroughs in recent years, residents in Kingston would be paying council tax at the average rate, or less, rather than one of the highest in London."

well, reflecting local priorities

Following two major inspections of local services during 2006, inspectors confirmed that Kingston Council consistently performs well and they awarded it with the highest rating in the country (**'Outstanding'**) for Children's Services. The Government's Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) said that Kingston is performing well and demonstrated a three-star overall performance.

The budget for 2007/08 includes a mix of economies, efficiency savings and additional income.

This year's budget provides for:

- Continued investment in the borough's roads and pavements;
- Further developments in the waste strategy, including more recycling initiatives;
- The cost of the new Hook Centre in the South of the Borough.
- Services for adults with learning disabilities - £0.3m has been added to the budget.
- An increasing number of looked after children and children with complex needs (including physical disabilities). £0.6m has been added to the Children's Services budget.
- Increased funding to Transport for London to meet the cost of the concessionary travel permits - £0.4m has been added to next year's budget.

The combined effect of all these factors is that the Council Tax increase for Kingston Council's services will be kept just under 5%. Whilst this is higher than the Council would have chosen, it ensures that it continues to provide quality services and meets the continuing demands and needs of local residents.

How the budget will be spent

		£m
Community Services	Includes: Services to older, disadvantaged and vulnerable people, including those with a mental health problem. Temporary accommodation for over 450 homeless families and payment for free bus and train passes for 16,000 pensioners.	47.4
Learning and Children's Services	Includes: Supporting vulnerable and disabled children and their families. The development of sports and leisure for all Borough residents and providing adult education courses for 15,500 people every year.	35.3
Environmental Services	Includes: Planning the development of Kingston, managing highways, street lighting, transportation and waste disposal.	25.4
Neighbourhood Services	Includes: The management of 330km of roads, all of the Borough's parks and open spaces, seven libraries and six youth centres.	6.8
Central Services (£18.7m and Levies (£0.5m), less Use of Reserves (£1.9m).	Includes: Collecting £92 million in Council Tax and £69 million in Business Rates. Providing specialist management functions (Human Resources, Legal and Financial) and management of key strategic issues.	17.3

Further details on the CPA assessment and how we perform as a council can be found on our website at www.kingston.gov.uk/cpa



A centre for the **whole family**

Since opening in January the state-of-the-art Hook Centre has become an immediate hit with the local community, with more than 2,500 visitors each week. And now, with the opening of a brand new café, it has just got even better.

The Hook Centre is already proving to be really popular with residents. The new library is twice the size of the former Hook and Chessington Library and is stocked with over 35,000 books, in addition to public access computers, DVDs and CDs.

Since opening, more than 300 residents have joined the library, which has increased library membership by nearly 50%. On the opening day alone the library made more than 1,000 transactions.

But the Hook Centre is more than just a library for local residents, it really is a base for a whole host of community activities. Kingston Council's Helpdesk and Citizens' Advice Bureau provide information and advice throughout the week, whilst the on-site recording studio provides a first class rehearsal space and venue for young people to learn about playing, producing and recording music.

For residents wanting to develop their skills, Kingston Council's Adult Education Team runs a wide range of courses in the Learning Centre. Courses include Computing, Digital Photography, Family History and English as a Second Language.

The Community Hall is available for hire and provides a great space for community events and a crèche is due to open shortly to provide parents and carers with a place where their children can be cared for whilst they use the centre.



It is estimated that during 2007 more than 100,000 people will visit the Hook Centre. To find out more about what the centre has to offer for you, telephone **020 8547 6254** or visit www.kingston.gov.uk

Opening Hours:		
	Hook Centre	Library
Monday	9.00am - 5.30pm	Closed
Tuesday	9.00am - 8.00pm	9.30am - 8.00pm
Wednesday	9.00am - 5.30pm	9.30am - 5.30pm
Thursday	9.00am - 5.30pm	9.30am - 5.30pm
Friday	9.00am - 8.00pm	9.30am - 8.00pm
Saturday	9.00am - 5.30pm	9.30am - 5.30pm
Sunday	Closed	Closed

IT skills open the door for housebound library users

Clarice Malach finds it very difficult to leave her home in Surbiton. Although she is fit and active Clarice's husband, Solomon, requires 24-hour care.



Clarice Malach with IT trainer Alex Webb

This makes it hard for her to do the things that so many of us take for granted: popping out to the local shops, visiting friends or going to the library.

Since her husband became ill in 1996, 81-year-old Clarice has used the Community Library Service on a regular basis. "They visit our home every four weeks with a new selection of books and tapes – I couldn't live without it," she says.

It was through the Community Library Service that Clarice first heard about the IT@Home initiative, a new service provided by Kingston Council that offers housebound residents the opportunity to learn how to send and receive e-mails and browse the Internet. "Most of my family live in America and I was keen to find out how using computers could help me keep in touch with them, so I signed up."

To start with, eight Community Library Service users were visited in their homes by specially trained

tutors and given an introductory lesson to using the Internet. A three-week follow-up course was then run at Surbiton Library for those who wanted to learn more. Transport was provided for those with mobility issues and relief care was arranged for Clarice's husband. "The lessons were great fun and I met some very nice people," says Clarice.

With her new found skills, Clarice is enjoying closer contact with her family in America. "My two grandsons are both at University over there. They are very good to me, but they lead busy lives and the time difference makes it difficult to speak. Being able to e-mail each other has made a big difference. They always respond very quickly."

Clarice continues: "I have also learnt how to use the Internet to order any books I want from the Community Library Service, find out what events are taking place in the area and keep up to date with what the Council is up to. It opens up a whole new world: you can

even use the Internet to tell your MP off, should you feel the need!

"I would recommend the IT@Home course to other people in my situation. Many older people are frightened of learning new things. I would encourage those people to at least have a go with the introduction session. If you don't like it, then no-one's going to force you to carry on, but at least you can say that you gave it a go."

Last year, 20 people benefited from an introduction to the Internet session in their homes and a further five, including Clarice, completed the three-week course at Surbiton Library. Kingston Council plans to run more IT@Home courses later this year.

If you are a user of the Community Library Service and are interested in taking part in an IT@Home introduction session in your home, please call

020 8547 6453.



Managing our waste, protecting our environment

In addition to the recycling trial that got under way in March for 2,500 householders in Berrylands, Kingston Council has extended services for the collection of green waste and cardboard right across the Royal Borough.

Green waste collection

The current green waste collection scheme, using plastic sacks, is being replaced and improved this Spring.

Households will be able to purchase reusable biodegradable bags (maximum of two per household) for their green waste, which will be collected each week, along with your normal refuse collection.

The bags have a shelf life of one year, after which they will be collected to be composted. Residents who currently have green waste collected can continue to use their existing plastic sacks until September.

Door to door cardboard collection

A fortnightly collection of cardboard will be trialled in a number of selected roads across the Royal Borough in April.

White fabric bags will be provided to the households in the trial areas, along with details of the collection dates. The Council intends to roll the service out to more and more homes during the coming year.

From flats

Residents living in flats will also be able to have their cardboard collected under the new scheme.

Flats that currently receive waste paper collections (and where space permits) will be the first to receive the new containers that will enable them to collect and recycle their cardboard waste.

Special Collections

New partnerships forged by Kingston Council will increase the amount of reuse and recycling collections right across the Borough.

Following a review of its Special Collections service, the Council has formed partnerships with two organisations to increase the range of services available to residents.

In preparation for a **new waste collection** contract that will be issued in 2008, Kingston Council is trialling a range of new waste management initiatives this Spring.



A new bio-degradable green-waste bag



As a result of the partnerships residents can have their recyclable and reusable household items collected from their homes.

Furniture

Recyclable and reusable furniture collected by Kingston Voluntary Action will be used to assist families on lower income to furnish their homes with good quality furniture at minimum cost.

Items that can be collected include:

- Sofas
- Armchairs
- Tables
- Dining chairs
- Beds
- Mattresses
- Wardrobes
- Chests of drawers
- Cupboards
- Computer desks
- TV storage units.

Refuse

SITA will continue to collect items that cannot be recycled or reused.

Real Nappy Network

New parents now have an even greater incentive for using washable nappies on their children. Kingston and Merton Real Nappy Network is offering parents the opportunity to buy starter kits at a price that can't be sniffed at.

For just £20.00 (£5.00 for families on low income) the voluntary organisation is offering starter kits that include everything you need to get started in the world of real nappies. The kit includes a nappy bucket, nappies, wraps, liners and printed advice and information. The cost for all this equipment in the shops would be nearer £60.00.

To help parents get started the Real Nappy Network hosts information workshops (*Nappuccinos*) twice a month. So when you pick up your kit you will also receive a two hour advice session with practical

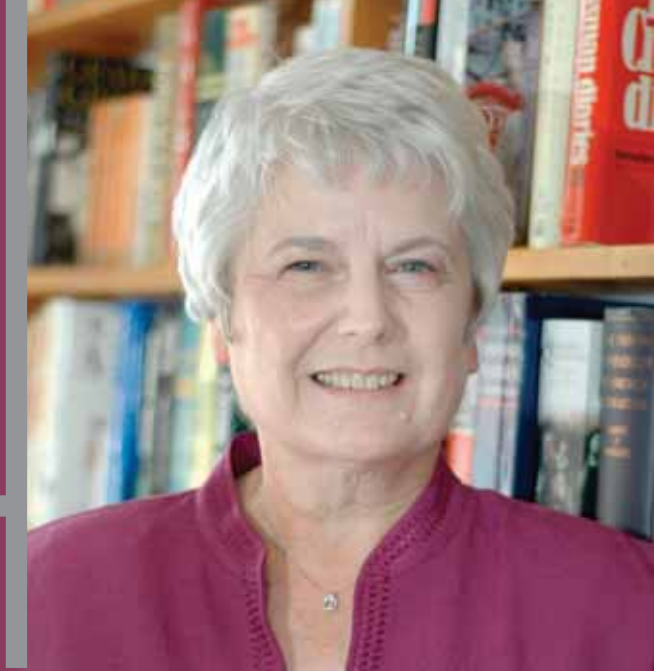
demonstrations of a variety of nappy 'systems' to give you the confidence to start using the kit straight away.

Anyone interested in getting hold of a trial kit can find out more, and book a place at a Nappuccino to suit them, by telephoning Marianna on **07949 628 148**.

Or email kingstonmertonrnn@yahoo.co.uk

 **recycle for Royal Kingston**

When she came into office last May, the Mayor, Councillor Mary Reid, took as her theme 'empowering young people'.



In support of Young Kingston

One way in which she has put this in to action is by setting up a charitable fund called **Young Kingston**. This has been the Mayor's Charity for 2006-2007 and thousands of pounds have already been raised.

Young Kingston will make grants to young people to support projects that will benefit the community. The fund will be open to anyone between the ages of 5 and 19 (and above for people with disabilities) who live or study in the Royal Borough.

University students will be available to help young people develop their ideas, prepare a plan, apply for a grant and then carry out their project. At the end of each project the young people will be expected to show what they have done with the grant, through presentations, posters, performance or any other imaginative methods.

Grants will be awarded by a panel consisting of young people themselves, who will have gained valuable skills through training for the task. All of this will happen under the professional eye of Thames Community Foundation who will host and manage the fund.

The Mayor says: "I am very excited that we have got so far with setting up Young Kingston. I do hope it will enthuse young people to help others, develop new skills and have fun.

"We will be celebrating the birth of Young Kingston just before the end of my mayoral year. Then once the schools go back in the Autumn we will launch the fund and start inviting applications from young people. There will be a web site and phone contact to make it as easy as possible for young people to get in touch.

"We have had some fantastic support to get this up and running. A local PR firm, Upward Curve, has made Young Kingston their charity of the year and given us some invaluable advice. We have also been able to draw on the expertise of people working with youth and in the voluntary sector, and indeed young people themselves.

"When I finish my term as Mayor in May we will still want to raise funds to keep the project going indefinitely."

If you would like to donate to Young Kingston please send a cheque made out to 'The Mayor's Charity Appeal' to the Mayor's Office, Guildhall, Kingston upon Thames KT1 1EU or telephone **020 8547 5030**.

The Mayor's Charity Ball

Friday 19 April

Raven's Ait Island,
Portsmouth Road, Surbiton

Tickets £55.00

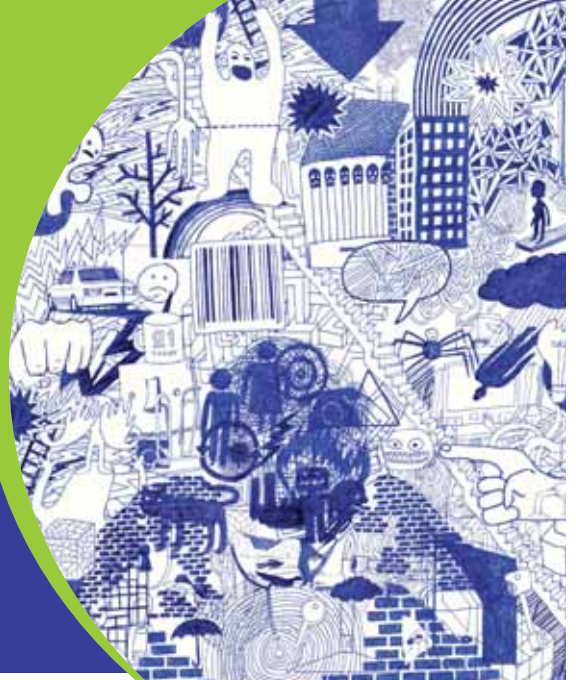
Telephone **020 8547 5030**

mayoroffice@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

www.kingston.gov.uk



Dealing with life's ups and downs



Any parent would be forgiven for thinking that young people do not always like sharing **what's on their mind.**

But anyone who travels by public transport or heard young people chatting in burger bars will know they seem comfortable telling their friends exactly what's on their mind – either in person or down a mobile phone. However, the charity *Samaritans* is only too aware that there are times when young people feel unable to share their problems or concerns even with their closest friends.

The charity aims to make emotional health a mainstream issue and the organisation believes that offering people the opportunity to be listened to in confidence, and accepted without prejudice, can alleviate despair and suicidal feelings.

Research undertaken for the charity reveals that young people look for comfort when they're upset, or 'down', sooner than any other age group. For the young people (aged 16-25 years) who were interviewed, being emotionally healthy was about having a good circle of friends they could talk with and 'having good ways of thinking about the world', but they still have emotional 'secrets' they won't share even with their closest friends.

These 'secrets' included:

- Family problems – divorce, violence, abuse, alcoholism
- Embarrassing things – sexually transmitted diseases, mistakes they make
- Things within their peer group – betrayals, relationships
- Issues their peer group wouldn't accept – drugs, sex, anti-social behaviour

An ongoing campaign by *Samaritans* is designed to highlight that the charity can help people with a variety of emotional issues - not just suicidal feelings. The campaign targets young people, especially young men, who share their problems less than women, to show that *Samaritans* will support them whatever their problem is - and that it's better to call sooner, rather than to allow a problem to develop into more of a crisis.

Getting in touch

Samaritans offer 24-hour confidential emotional support to anyone in emotional distress.

Telephone -

08457 90 90 90 (local call rates).

Write -

PO Box 9090, Stirling, FK8 2SA

Email - jo@samaritans.org

Website - www.samaritans.org

People who are deaf or hard of hearing can telephone the national minicom number on **08457 90 91 92.**

Volunteering

Samaritans offer emotional support all day and every day. The service is provided by 17,000 trained volunteers and is entirely dependent on voluntary support. To maintain this level of service the Kingston branch alone needs at least 85 *Samaritans* to be available for duty each week.

You need no qualifications to be a *Samaritan* – just time, and the temperament to be there for callers and to let them say what is troubling them without judging them or telling them what to do.

If you think you might be able to meet the challenge of supporting people in distress or despair then you can find out more at one of the informal 'Information Evenings' on Wednesday 11 April and Tuesday 5 June.

If you would like to come along or find out more please telephone **020 8399 6676.**

Living' Guide



Paint the town Green

Across the Borough
25 May - 5 June 2007

To celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the Green Fair this year, Kingston Council is inviting everyone to enjoy a fortnight 'painting the town green'.

In recognition of the continued success of the Green Fair Kingston has organised a ten day environmental festival - *Paint the Town Green* – between 25 May and 5 June.

The festival will incorporate the Green Fair itself on Monday 28 May (Bank Holiday), London Sustainability Week, World Environment Day, as well as a whole range of environmental activities organised by communities, businesses and schools across the Royal Borough.

The twentieth anniversary of the Green Fair also provides the perfect platform to unveil an ecological footprint campaign in Kingston, designed to demonstrate what residents and businesses can do to reduce their impact on the environment.

The *Ecological Footprint Working Group* brings together a wealth of knowledge, experience and creativity from across the community to raise awareness of

what we can all do to reduce our impact on the environment. The group includes representatives from Kingston Council, Kingston University, The Green Fair, Kingston Permaculture, Greenpeace, Fairtrade, Kingston Voluntary Action, Kingston and Merton Real Nappy Network and Newsquest.

The national ecological footprint is 5.4 hectares per person, some 65% higher than what the planet has to offer (1.8 hectares per person). At 5.64 hectares per person Kingston has one of the highest footprints in the UK.

Footprint surgeries at the Green Fair will give visitors practical advice about action they can take at home to reduce their environmental impact.

Kingston Green Fair

Monday 28 May
Canbury Gardens,
Lower Ham Road, Kingston.
Telephone - **020 8974 8608**
www.kingstongreenfair.org.uk



10 ways to reduce your ecological footprint

1. Buy loose fruit and vegetables – no need for packaging or plastic bags.
2. Reduce the amount of waste you produce and re-use waste items such as plastic containers and shopping bags.
3. Recycle more at home and compost your kitchen scraps and cardboard.
4. Turn your thermostat down by 1°C. It could cut your heating bills by up to 10%.
5. Switch off all appliances such as your TV, DVD player and microwave when not in use.
6. Only use your dishwasher and washing machine when you have a full load.
7. Use a watering can to water your garden.
8. Try filling the bath one third full in order to save 10,000 litres of water each year – this is based on one bath a day.
9. Reduce the number of short trips you take. Try walking or cycling. This can improve your health as well as benefit the environment.
10. Car sharing reduces travel costs, lessens congestion, pollution and parking problems.

What I Heard About Iraq

Tuesday 1 May
Arthur Cotterell Theatre,
Kingston College, Kingston Hall
Road, Kingston KT1 2AQ
7.30pm

Winner of the *Scotsman Fringe First Award* at last year's Edinburgh Festival, this new drama employs direct quotes from politicians, military chiefs, soldiers and Iraqi citizens to reveal the unfolding human story behind the US-led invasion of Iraq.

Tickets £8.00 (£5.00 students) from Visitor Information Centre, Market House, Kingston (**020 8547 5592**) and online at www.kingston.gov.uk

Global Arts Summer Bazaar

Kingston Parish Church
Saturday 23 June

Celebrate midsummer with Global Arts colourful summer bazaar in the grounds of Kingston Parish Church, opposite John Lewis. Arts and crafts from around the world, delicious food, live music and dancing will all make this a day to remember.

www.kingston.gov.uk/arts

Affordable art for sale

Saturday 30 June - Saturday 21 July

Kingston Contemporary Open provides local artists with the opportunity to showcase and sell their work at three local venues - The Stanley Picker Gallery, Kingston Museum and Art Gallery and John Lewis (Kingston).

www.kingston.gov.uk/arts

Kingston - Readers' Festival

Venues across Kingston
23 April - 26 May

Audiences can enjoy five weeks of talks, discussions, workshops and literary appreciation seminars. From award winning chefs, scientists and philosophers to prize-winning novelists and biographers, there's plenty to feed the mind as well as the body!

Historian **David Starkey** opens the Festival with a talk on the Monarchy and will be followed during the coming weeks by many other leading names, including **Jacqueline Wilson, Claire Tomalin, Roy Hattersley, Ali Smith, Simon Hoggart, Livi Michael, Dr Rupert Sheldrake,**



Roy Hattersley and friend.

Clive Stafford Smith, Wendy Cook, Lynn Knight and William Dalrymple.

Programmes are available from John Lewis, Borders, Borough libraries, the Visitor Information Centre, Market House, Kingston, and online at www.kingston.gov.uk/arts

Tickets

Online - www.kingston.gov.uk/eticketing
Telephone - Greenbee: **0845 6100325** (booking fee applies).
And from John Lewis, Wood Street, Kingston upon Thames.

May Merrie

Monday 7 May
Kingston town centre

Celebrate the annual May Merrie, with a host of free family entertainment including children's shows, music and dance, magic and street theatre - along with Kingston Fayre on The Fairfield, with arena events, stalls, music and fairground rides.

Kingston Museum will host free family fun including a visit from the Napoleonic Society. There will also be street entertainment across the town centre in Clarence Street, the Market Place, Eden

Walk Shopping Centre, the Parish Church Gardens and The Fairfield.

Telephone **020 8547 5016** for further information or see a full programme of events at www.kingston.gov.uk



Sport

516



Every other Saturday
Arena Sports Hall, Kingston
College, Kingston Hall Road,
Kingston KT1 2AQ

A fortnightly Saturday morning sports club for children with special needs. One and a half hours of fun and games, including basketball, athletics, mini tennis, kwik cricket, mini squash, boccia and much more.

March Saturday 31
April Saturday 14 and 28
May Saturday 12 and 26
June Saturday 9 and 23
July Saturday 7 and 21

5 to 10 years (10.00am - 11.30am)
11 to 16 years (11.30am - 1.00pm)

No need to book but places are limited and will be given on a first come first served basis.
Telephone **020 8547 5207** for further information.

Multi Sports Day



Arena Sports Hall, Kingston
College, Kingston Hall Road,
Kingston, KT1 2AQ
Wednesday 11 April
Multi Sports Day for children
with special needs.

5 - 10 years (10.00am - 11.30am)
11 - 16 years (11.30am - 1.00pm)
£5.00 per session.
To book your place please
telephone **020 8547 5207**.



Drills, Skills and Thrills

Tuesday 10 April - Wednesday
18 April (excluding weekends)

Three hours of fun playing
football, rugby, athletics,
basketball, cricket, netball,
rounders, hockey and more,
for ages 9 - 12 years.

Latchmere Recreation Ground,
Latchmere Road, Kingston
(9.30am -12.30pm)

Alexandra Recreation Ground,
King Charles Road, Surbiton
(1.30pm - 4.30pm)

£1.50 per session (booking not
necessary).

For more information telephone
020 8547 5207

Easter Activities



The Easter Activities brochure is packed with activities, courses and play schemes taking place across the Borough during the school holidays. It is available from libraries, leisure centre and council information points, or telephone for your FREE copy on **020 8547 5200**.

London Youth Games 2007

The London Youth Games are Europe's largest youth sports event. Kingston Council is inviting local young sporting talent to try out for one of the many squads that will represent the borough.

To be eligible participants must be between 10 and 17 years of age and either live in or attend a school or college in the borough. All trials and training sessions are FREE and all successful trialists will receive Kingston squad t-shirts and sweatshirts.

To register your interest in joining the Kingston squad, sponsored by St. George PLC, telephone Kingston Council's Sports and Recreation Services on **020 8547 5207**.

Live Music Way Out West Jazz



Ram Jam Club,
46 Richmond Road, Kingston.
Music: 8.30pm -11.30pm

**21 March - Pianist/composer
Kate Williams** playing tunes from
her latest album *Scenes and
Dreams*.

**24 March - Miles vs Monk -
The Rematch.** Live versions of
music from two albums released
in 1957 - *Miles Ahead* and
Monk's Music.

**28 March - Jazz vocalist and
songwriter Katriona Taylor** with
a trio playing Latin music.

**4 April - Mike Outram Organ
Trio** (Guitar, Organ and Drums)

**11 April - Guitarist Tony
Heiberg** playing new
jazz/crossover originals with his
quintet.

18 April - Emily Saunders Band

**25 April - Way Out West
Allstars** including Tim
Whitehead, Eddie Harvey, Tony
Heiberg, Kate Williams, Tony
Woods and many others.

**27 April - Tim Whitehead and
Tony Woods Quartet.**

Wednesdays: £8 (£5 concessions)
Weekends: £9 (£6 concessions)
Reservations: **020 8549 8709**
Information: **020 8567 2004**
www.jazzinlondon.net/wayoutwest

Community Events

River celebration

13 – 22 July
A fortnight of river based
activities *Putting the Thames
back into Kingston*.

Live on the river

Friday 13 – Sunday 15 July
Music and Arts on the John Lewis
riverside.

Kingston Regatta

Saturday 14 and Sunday 15 July
Kingston Riverside
Telephone - **07952 586784**
www.kingstonregatta.co.uk

Dragon Boat Challenge and Festival of Sport

Sunday 22 July
Canbury Gardens,
Lower Ham Road, Kingston
Telephone:
Dragon Boats - **020 8390 3511**
email: gascoignes@btclick.com
Festival of Sport - **020 8547 5209**
(Sports Council)

Kingston Museum The Snitchy Titch Show

Thursday 12 April 2007, 2.30pm
A puppet show especially suitable
for children 3-6 years of age and
their families. A one-off chance to
meet award winning TV puppet
star Ronnie Le Drew (ITV's *Zippy*).
£2.00 per child (accompanying
adults free).

A Day in the Life of a Puppeteer

Thursday 12 April 2007, 7.00pm
A FREE animated talk for older
children and adults, by famous
puppeteer Ronnie Le Drew (ITV's
Zippy).

Free storytelling

Tuesday 17 April, 11.00am
Jane Richardson reads *The Magic
Mask and other stories from
around the World*, for 4-7 year-
olds and their families.

The Magic of Masks and Puppets Workshops

Friday 13 April and Monday 16 April
11.00am - 1.00pm and
2.00pm - 4.00pm
Drop in workshops for 5 -11
year-olds and their families.
Make masks and puppets
inspired by the museum's
exhibition. Entrance £1.00 per
child (accompanying adults FREE).

To book a place in advance
telephone Kingston Museum
on **020 8547 6460** or email -
Kingston.museum@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

Historic Guided Walks Kingston

Walks start at 2.30pm from the
Church Gates in the Market Place
on the first Sunday in April and
then every Sunday between
Easter and September.

Surbiton

Walks start at 2.30pm from
Surbiton Railway Station on the
second Sunday of each month
between April and September.
Walks last approximately
1½ hours and cost £3.00.

Themed walks also take place
throughout the summer and
guided walks can be privately
arranged if required. Telephone -
020 8942 7015 or **020 8546 8048**
www.kingstontourguides.org.uk

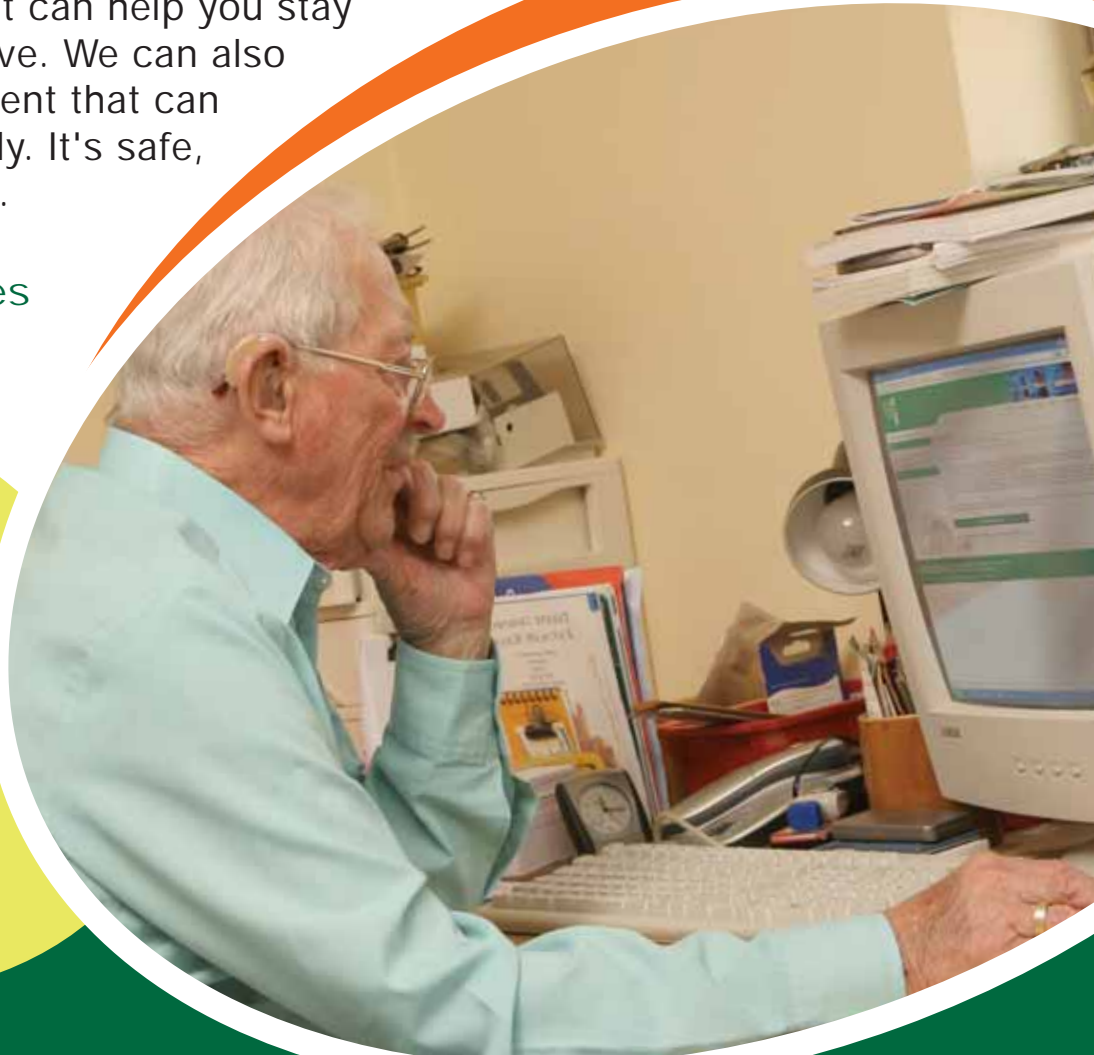
Assess yourself for the help that is right for you and stay

Independent and active

Assess yourself online for a range of free equipment that can help you stay independent and active. We can also inform you of equipment that can be purchased privately. It's safe, easy and confidential.

Equipment includes

- Grab rails
- Tap-turners
- Trolleys
- Pick-up sticks
- Stools
- Jar openers
- Long handled shoe horns and much more.



If you would like help visiting the site, contact:

Age Concern, Kingston 020 8942 8256
Kingston Centre for Independent Living 020 8546 9603

www.kingston.gov.uk/selfassessment

