**District Dispatch**

My name is Diane and I am the Chief Executive of Chichester District Council. As a General Election has now been called, I will be writing the District Dispatch column on the run up to the elections.

As a council, we are working incredibly hard to prepare for the election on Thursday 4 July. There are a few dates for your diaries — the last date to register to vote is midnight on 18 June; the last day to apply for or make a change to a postal vote is 5pm on 19 June; and the last day to apply for a proxy vote and voter authority certificate is 5pm on 26 June. We also want to remind people that they now need ID to vote, which you can find out more about at: [www.chichester.gov.uk/voterid](http://www.chichester.gov.uk/voterid). You can also access further information and advice at: [www.chichester.gov.uk/elections](http://www.chichester.gov.uk/elections) and I will be providing further reminders over the weeks ahead.

Next week will mark 80 years exactly since one of the largest and probably most famous allied actions of World War Two — Operation Overlord, better known as D-Day. On 6 June 1944, more than 160,000 Allied troops landed on the beaches along the Normandy coast in France. This was the largest seaborne invasion in history. Along with the associated airborne operations, it marked the beginning of the liberation of France and western Europe.

Many events are taking place across the district to mark this important day, which honours the bravery and sacrifices made by those who were involved in D-Day. Selsey is holding a civic ceremony on Thursday 6 June at 8.30pm: [www.destinationselsey.co.uk/whats-on/events/selseys-commemoration-of-the-80th-anniversary-of-d-day-at-east-beach-green](http://www.destinationselsey.co.uk/whats-on/events/selseys-commemoration-of-the-80th-anniversary-of-d-day-at-east-beach-green). North Mundham Parish Council are holding a commemorative event at their village hall at 7pm on Thursday 6 June. Tickets for this free event, can be requested at: <https://northmundham.org>. And, Southbourne Council are organising a picnic in the park between 11am and 3pm on Saturday 8 June at Southbourne Recreation Ground: <https://southbourne-pc.gov.uk>.

I’m also pleased to say that our museum, The Novium, in Chichester has also produced a display to mark this important anniversary and you can find out more at: [www.thenovium.org/exhibitions](http://www.thenovium.org/exhibitions). On Thursday 6 June, there will also be a special talk led by Paul Kopeček. He will be explaining how three Czechoslovak Squadrons flew from Apuldram to protect troops during and after the D-Day invasion.

Apuldram was one of 18 airfields under the command of the RAF Tangmere Sector Operations Room based at Bishop Otter College in Chichester. Within the talk Paul will be cover how these Czechoslovak pilots managed to escape the Nazi invasion of their country; how they eventually joined the RAF; what their role was in Operation Overlord; how Apuldram functioned as an airfield; and what happened to those who survived the war when they returned to Czechoslovakia. This fascinating talk will take place from 6pm to 7pm and lasts for approximately 60 minutes. Tickets cost £7.50 and you can find out more at: [www.thenovium.org/whatson](http://www.thenovium.org/whatson)

In other news, now that the weather is hopefully improving, we are encouraging people to step into summer with the latest programme of HeartSmart walks. The walks are completely free and are offered by our Chichester Wellbeing service. They range from 30-minute walks of one mile, to all day walks of ten miles and take place at different locations across the district.

The walks are led by volunteer walk leaders and are designed to cater for all ages and abilities. They offer the opportunity for people to not only exercise, but also meet new people. To book a HeartSmart walk please visit: [www.chichester.gov.uk/heartsmart](http://www.chichester.gov.uk/heartsmart) or call 01243 521041.

To keep in touch with the latest news and events, please sign up to our monthly email newsletter at: [www.chichester.gov.uk/newsalerts](http://www.chichester.gov.uk/newsalerts) and follow our social media channels, where we post daily.

Best Wishes

Diane Shepherd

Chief Executive at Chichester District Council

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