

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



Honouring Strength, Inspiring Change

This Sunday is International Women's Day, a global celebration of the social, economic, cultural and community contributions of women everywhere. Here in our housing community, women make up the majority of our residents - and we want to take a moment to recognise the strength, resilience, and generosity you bring to our shared spaces every single day.

Whether you're supporting neighbours, caring for family, volunteering in the community, or simply managing life's daily challenges, please know that you are seen, valued, and appreciated.



Why International Women's Day Matters

International Women's Day is more than a celebration - it's a global moment to raise awareness about gender equality, recognize the impact of women in every industry, and support continued progress. From leadership and education to health and entrepreneurship, women play a vital role in shaping a better tomorrow.



Lewes District Council

EASTBOURNE
Borough Council



Celebrating Women In Our Community

SPOTLIGHT! Women in Leadership

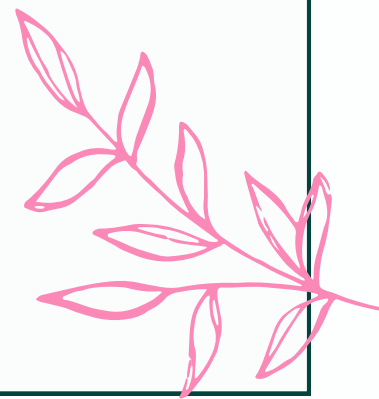
Name: Debbie Twitchen

About: Despite living with several serious health conditions, Debbie remains a powerful force in her community. She represents tenants across the Lewes District and leads the Landport Residents Association, supporting over 700 households. Thanks to her energy and commitment, the group runs book clubs, games cafés, film nights, community BBQs, Easter hunts and regular litter picks.



Debbie also founded the Landport Foodbank, which has grown to support 81 households, and she works constantly to raise funds and coordinate volunteers. She chairs the Landport Community Hub charity, home to a nursery for children with additional needs and projects like a repair café.

At district level, Debbie chairs TOLD and leads key tenant panels, managing a £20,000 budget for community projects. Her fairness, dedication and compassion make her an inspiring champion for residents.



What's On

International Women's Day at The Gather

Sunday 8 March • 10:30am – 3:30pm

The Gather, The Beacon Shopping Centre, Eastbourne

Join the community for a special celebration recognising the achievements of women and girls locally and around the world.

This year's theme, "Give to Gain," highlights the power of sharing time, knowledge and support to create greater equality for women.

The event will be opened by the Mayor of Eastbourne and is free for everyone.

Event Highlights

- Living Library – meet and chat with inspirational local women
- Stories from community leaders and change-makers
- Opportunities to connect, reflect and get inspired

Come along, get involved, and celebrate the incredible women shaping our community.



Celebrating Women In Our Community

SPOTLIGHT! Women in Leadership

Name: Jaime Wainwright-Jones

1. What does International Women's Day mean to you, and how does it influence the work you do within the council?

Celebrating women's achievements, I am privileged to be in a position where I can influence decision making, policy and practice whilst being a role model and advocate for equality.

I am proud to be a Woman in a Leadership Role particularly in the Housing Sector where Women are still underrepresented.

Equality, empowerment, empathy, energy!

2. Can you share a moment in your career where you felt especially proud, inspired, or supported as a woman in leadership?

When I started my Leadership Career in the public sector many years ago, I was in the minority around the decision making table which was 80% male, I met a woman who had passion, drive and ambition who was a Housing Lead and empowered me to find my voice. She taught me that making mistakes was okay as long as I was accountable and learnt from them. I applied for a promotion around a year later that took me to the next level, leaving my imposter syndrome behind and realising that I was good enough. I got the job, completed my Master Degree and never looked back!

3. What message or piece of advice would you give to women and girls in our community who want to shape positive change where they live?

Be bold, find your voice and use it, put yourself forward, believe you can make a difference and never give up.

She believed she could, so she did!



SPOTLIGHT! Local Women-Led Business

Wayfinder Woman – Eastbourne

Wayfinder Woman is an award-winning, women-run charity in Eastbourne dedicated to helping women build confidence, overcome challenges, and feel supported through life's changes.

For over a decade, they've offered peer support, confidence-building workshops, and a welcoming hub led by women with lived experience - creating a safe space where women feel heard and valued. They also offer volunteering opportunities for women looking to grow, connect, or give back.

📍 Suite 1-2, Highlight House, Eastbourne

☎ 01323 886171 🌐 wayfinderwoman.org.uk



Women's Day Knowledge Corner

Did you know?

Inspiring Local Women: **Caroline Croft (Lewes)**

Caroline Croft, Director of Patina, has spent over a decade shaping one of Lewes' most cherished community traditions - the Moving On Parade, a creativity-led rite of passage for children transitioning to secondary school. Under her leadership, Patina now supports thousands of young people and works with 15 schools across the district. She was nationally recognised with a British Empire Medal for her contributions to youth arts and community life.

Inspiring Local Woman: **Miss Alice Hudson (Eastbourne)**

Miss Alice Hudson made history as Eastbourne's first woman councillor in 1919 and later became the town's first female Mayor, breaking political barriers at a time when women were only just gaining the right to vote. Her leadership helped shape Eastbourne's civic life and paved the way for future generations of women in public service.

Inspiring Women Who Changed the World

Malala Yousafzai – Global advocate for girls' education and the youngest-ever Nobel Peace Prize laureate.

Marie Curie – Pioneering scientist whose research on radioactivity transformed modern medicine.

Wangari Maathai – Environmentalist and founder of the Green Belt Movement, empowering women and protecting ecosystems.

Myths vs Facts About Women's Equality

Myth: "Gender equality has already been achieved."

Fact: Progress continues, but inequalities in safety, pay, and leadership still affect women globally.

Myth: "Women's health needs are the same everywhere."

Fact: Access to care, education, and support varies widely, affecting outcomes for millions of women.

The Story of International Women's Day

International Women's Day began in the early 1900s as a movement for women's rights and equality.

Today, it's celebrated worldwide as a moment to honour women's achievements, raise awareness, and advocate for a fairer future for all.

Support for Women's Wellbeing

Local Support Services

We're also highlighting a few organisations that offer advice, support, and services for women:

Women's Health Services

East Sussex Sexual Health Service

Sexual health clinics, contraception, testing & specialist support.

☎ 0300 013 2050 🌐 eastsussexsexualhealth.co.uk

Lewes Victoria Hospital

Gynaecology & community midwife clinics.

📍 Nevill Road, Lewes ☎ 01273 474153

Mental Wellbeing Support

Southdown Wellbeing Centres

Wellbeing planning, groups & mental health support for adults.

☎ 01323 405330 🌐 southdown.org

Health in Mind (NHS Talking Therapies)

Support for stress, anxiety, depression & low mood.

☎ 0300 0030 130 🌐 healthinmind.org.uk

Community Safety & Advice

Lewes & Eastbourne Community Safety Partnership

Local safety initiatives, crime prevention & support.

🌐 lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk (Community Safety)

Citizens Advice East Sussex

Free, impartial guidance on housing, money & wellbeing.

Lewes District: 0808 278 7892

Eastbourne: 0800 144 8848

Domestic Abuse Support

Change Grow Live – East Sussex Domestic Abuse Service

Confidential support for anyone 16+ affected by domestic abuse.

☎ 0300 323 9985

East Sussex Refuge Service (Clarion)

Refuge accommodation & specialist support.

🌐 womensvoice.org.uk/east-sussex-refuge-service

Lotus Families (Women-centred support)

Trauma-informed recovery services for women & children.

☎ 01273 612025 🌐 lotus-families.org.uk

If you need support or would like signposting, please reach out in confidence to our team.

You Make Our Community Strong

Three Things You Can Do to Celebrate Women's Day

1. Support a Women-Led Local Business

Choose to shop with, share, or recommend a women-run business in our community. Even small actions - a purchase, a review, or telling a friend - help local women thrive and strengthen our district's economy.

2. Share Appreciation With a Woman Who Inspires You

Send a message, text, or handwritten note to a woman who's made a difference in your life. Whether it's a family member, neighbour, teacher, colleague or friend, a few kind words can have a huge impact.

3. Learn Something New About Women's History

Spend a few minutes discovering an influential woman from history, a local female leader, or the story behind International Women's Day. Growing our awareness helps us recognise how women's achievements shape our world - and our own community.

Tell Us: Which Woman Inspires You?

We're collecting short quotes from residents:

"What woman inspires you - and why?"

We will share a digital collage of your responses next week!

Send your responses to:

Tenant.Involvement@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk

Local History

Literary icon Virginia Woolf made her home at Monk's House in Rodmell, a peaceful village in the Lewes District. The 17th-century cottage became her creative refuge, surrounded by the South Downs she loved. Woolf often walked the paths by the River Ouse, drawing inspiration from the landscape.

Though born in London, her years in Rodmell shaped some of her most enduring work and left a lasting local legacy.

Quotes from Inspiring Women Around the World

"I raise up my voice - not so I can shout, but so that those without a voice can be heard."

— **Malala Yousafzai**

"We are all made of stories, and shaped by the stories of others."

— **Jeanette Winterson**

"There is no limit to what we, as women, can accomplish."

— **Michelle Obama**

You Make Our Community Strong

Get Involved: Women's Voices in Our Community

We're proud to have so many strong, talented and compassionate women in our housing community - and we'd love more of you to help shape what comes next. Our tenant groups play an important role in improving services, strengthening neighbourhood connections, and making sure residents' voices are truly heard.

If you're passionate about community, have ideas to share, or simply want to be part of something positive, we'd love to welcome you.

Interested in joining?

Email us at Tenant.Involvement@leweseastbourne.gov.uk and a member of our team will get in touch.

Your voice matters — and together, we can make our community even stronger.



♥ Thank You

Thank you to the women who shape our community with strength, compassion, creativity, and courage. Today, and every day, we celebrate you.

Warm regards,
Tenant and Community Engagement Team

