

WALDESLADE MEETING 26 JANUARY 2011 St ALBANS CHURCH

Minutes

1. Welcome and Introductions

Barry Hughes (TAMS Chairman) welcomed all to the first formal meeting of the Forum following its launch event held on 1st November 2010. He recorded his thanks to Geraldine Stramrod, a member of the Management Committee, for all her work in organising and publicising this meeting which sought to focus on issues for older people in the Walderslade/Blue Bell Hill area.

He also welcomed the speakers for the meeting and Cllrs Allan Sullivan and Peter Homewood who represent the local ward.

2. About the TAMS Forum

Barry Hughes explained that the purpose of the new Forum was to address issues of importance to local older people and ensure these are taken up with the right agencies eg Borough Council, County Council, NHS, Kent Police etc. The aims and objectives of the Forum were set out in the Mission Statement circulated at the meeting. He pointed out that, to engage a wide range of older residents from across the Borough, there was a need for the Forum to hold local meetings in different locations. The next meeting was therefore being organised in Tonbridge and the meeting following that would then return to the Malling area, but probably at another location eg Borough Green or West Malling. The Forum would, however, return to Walderslade/Blue Bell Hill at a later date.

3. Penny Graham – Directorate Involvement Group for Kent Adult Social Services

Penny Graham gave a presentation on her role on the Directorate Involvement Group for Kent Adult Social Services. This was a group set up to help identify issues and concerns about support for older people. She referred to the challenges arising from the recent re-organisation of the service which now placed adult social services alongside those for the elderly and disabled. There was also a challenge in gathering views from older people across the

whole of Tonbridge and Malling, a diverse and extensive geographical area. She invited attendees at the meeting to highlight any issues of concern they had about social services and what sort of services they might need in the future. A number of more immediate concerns were raised including:

- § The differing services provided by KCC and Medway Councils, the boundary of which ran through Walderslade. For example, Medway provided a hospital discharge support service whereas KCC did not.
- § Access to local GPs was seen to be a problem for many older people who needed an appointment urgently. It was reported that there were difficulties accessing the telephone booking service with extensive holding times which were charged at a premium (0844) rate. It was reported that the use of this system was a contractual matter that the surgery could not change.
- § Difficulties with public transport services to reach hospital appointments. There was a lack of decent bus services to Maidstone and Medway Hospitals and excessive waiting periods due to poor timetabling for the Tonbridge and Malling area.

4. Age Concern Malling: Older People's Transport and Support Services

Keith Austin, CE of Age Concern Malling gave an outline of the role of his organisation which provided a range of support services for the elderly including day centre services at West Malling, Pop-ins at Borough Green, Snodland, West Peckham and East Malling, transport services including shopping trips and advice on financial and benefit issues.

He explained that he was exploring the possibility of extending these services to the Walderslade/Blue Bell Hill area but would need to obtain additional funding to achieve this. In particular, he was exploring the idea of an on-demand transport service to provide a cheaper option (a small charge would be made) for shopping/medical visits which would also be available to those with mobility problems. He hoped that the service would be up and running by March. In addition, he was also exploring the possibility of arranging a older person's pop-in facility to serve the area but additional funding would be required.

Geraldine Stramrod commented that many of these sorts of initiatives required volunteers to come forward and offer support eg volunteer drivers etc.

During the discussion that followed a number of points were made by attendees including:

- § The need to promote the volunteer driver services operated by the Volunteer Bureau which needed to be booked in advance.
- § Age Concern Medway does serve the area but cannot deal with residents in the KCC area

- § The ASD free bus service provided by Medway Council was not available
- § The free ASDA bus service only served one side of Tunbury Avenue but they were being encouraged to extend this service by TAMS so that more local residents could access it

5. Character Area Assessment – Walderslade

Jill Peet of TMBC gave a presentation on local work to prepare a character area assessment for the Walderslade area. She explained that the assessment would help the Borough Council determine future planning applications in the area but identifying local features of importance that needed protecting and areas that could be enhanced and improved.

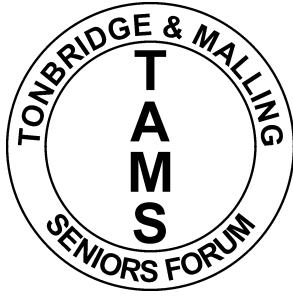
A draft assessment and maps were available to the meeting for viewing and comments were invited on these at the end of the meeting. She also agreed to supply copies of the maps so that others might have the opportunity of commenting.

Attendees raised a number of issues in relation to local environmental issues including the future of the Upper Bell PH, still derelict. Cllr Sullivan explained that planning permission had been granted for a residential redevelopment but this had not been implemented due to the recession. The owner has responsibility for keeping the site secure. Problems of trespass and vandalism were ongoing.

6. Any Other Business

Tamsin Ritchie (TMBC) attending the meeting to promote recycling services and the street monitors scheme. She reported that a local Bash the Trash event was to take place on 26th March. Safety items including shed alarms, personal alarms and purse chains will also be available from the Community Safety Partnership.

The Chairman thanked the speakers and every one attending and closed the meeting.



**TONBRIDGE AND DISTRICT MEETING
14 APRIL 2011
AGE UK HALL, BRADFORD STREET**

Minutes

7. Welcome and Introductions

Barry Hughes (TAMS Chairman) welcomed all to the second meeting of the Forum and the first to be held for the Tonbridge area. He outlined the background to the TAMS Forum, the formation and membership of the management committee, and the intention for the Forum to meet 6 times in the year, with 3 meetings in Tonbridge and 3 in various locations around the Malling area. Anthony Hayward, Vice-Chairman, outlined his role on the management committee as the representative covering the Tonbridge area and also explained the format for today's meeting.

8. Pembury Hospital Development Update

The Chairman welcomed the following staff from the Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust who had kindly agreed to attend the meeting to give an update on the new Pembury Hospital scheme:

Terry Coode – Director of Corporate Affairs
Jeanette Cooke – New Hospital Commissioning Manager
Alan Hewitt – Travel Co-ordinator

The team outlined the background to the construction of the new hospital and passed around images of the new building. It was reported that, following the initial opening of the Women's and Children wards in January, the remainder of the hospital would be opened by September 2011. The Trust were working with local transport providers and the County Council to improve public transport services to and from the hospital. The aim was to provide a 15 minute bus service from Tonbridge Station.

Concerns were raised about the adequacy of the proposed bus services from Tonbridge and from outlying rural areas such as East Peckham. In addition, due the lack of services serving residential areas, access to the Station 'hub' by public transport was felt to be difficult. Reductions in the subsidy given to rural services by KCC would also had reduced local bus services in some areas. Concerns were also raised about the frequency and timing of services

which often conflicted with times given for out-patient appointments. The need for bus services to link Pembury and Maidstone Hospitals was also mentioned.

The Trust explained that hospital appointments were organised at times which took account of the travel needs of patients. NHS funds were limited given the need to focus on patient care and the costs of subsidising rural services were not economic. Cllr Chris Smith (KCC) confirmed that, given the need for the Authority to make savings, some rural services' subsidies had had to be withdrawn. The Trust reported that they were also working with local organisations who provided volunteer driver services in the area and confirmed that they were working with Arriva to develop a new service between Pembury and Maidstone hospitals.

The Trust confirmed that residents had a choice as to which hospital they could be referred to. For emergency treatment, ambulance teams and paramedics would determine which hospital was best able to deal with trauma given the specialist teams which were available. They confirmed that A&E at Pembury was not yet open and that signage at Pembury would be improved. In response to a query about the role of Tonbridge Cottage hospital, the Trust indicated that this facility was operated by the Primary Care Trust. They would, however, be keen to see the Cottage Hospital continue to be used to allow patients to leave acute facilities and undergo further recuperation in local community settings.

The Trust indicated that further open days at Pembury were being held in the summer and these would be advertised in the Courier. In addition, it was agreed that details of the visits would also be passed to the TAMS Secretary for onward distribution.

The Chairman thanked the Trust's representatives for attending the meeting and for their informative presentation. He indicated that, given the interest in local bus services, a future TAMS meeting might include a presentation from Arriva Bus Services.

9. Rowena Love – Age UK Sevenoaks and Tonbridge.

R Love reported that the former Age Concern (Tonbridge) was now Age UK (Tonbridge and Sevenoaks). This followed national merger between Help the Aged and Age Concern to form Age UK and a local merger between the former Tonbridge and Sevenoaks Age Concerns.

RL reported that the former Age Concern Tonbridge started in 1998 based in Bradford Street with a day care centre at Town Lock. Funding was received to support the work of the organisation from KCC, TMBC, Age UK and from local funding raising and sponsorship. Funding enabled a range of support services for the elderly to be provided including a drop-in on weekdays between 10am and 12pm. Advice was available on a wider range of issues and help with form-filling was provided. The day centre was open on Tuesdays

Wednesdays and Fridays with a capacity of 18 which provided support for the elderly and their carers.

Age UK (Tonbridge and Sevenoaks) also provided IT training on a one to one basis, help with hearing aids in partnership with HI Kent, foot care, and a Monday exercise class.

10. KCC Service Update – Cllr Chris Smith

Cllr Smith described KCC services as a 'business' with a turnover of £1.7B and a population to serve of 1.4M. He outlined a number of the services the County Council provided for the benefit of older residents and drew attention for the Council to have to make significant financial savings in the next four years. In response to questions, the following points were made:

- KCC was committed to maintaining local library services but accepted that they needed to be modernised to meet the different needs of residents. Book loaning was now a much smaller part of the service.
- Provision of care homes was focusing on the quality of care they provided which in some cases required the modernisation and upgrading of such facilities.
- The national bus pass scheme was now operated by the County Council. Previously the scheme, when operated by the Borough Council, had a 9am start which was additional to the 9.30am national scheme start with the additional costs being met by the council tax payer. KCC were unable to afford to maintain this added benefit due to budget constraints.
- The County Council were working hard to reclaim investments made in Icelandic banks and were hopeful that 90% of the money invested would be returned.
- Concern was raised about the legality of cycling on pavements and pedestrian crossings and reference was made to a leaflet which had been produced which explained the regulations etc. It was felt that better enforcement by the police was required.
- It was explained that bus shelters were owned and operated by Arriva (although parish councils did own some in the rural parishes). A particular need to replace a damaged shelter in Quarry Hill was raised.
- A concern regarding the future of sheltered accommodation was raised. Due to new standards being required, it was felt that there was a danger that older accommodation might be lost. It was explained that Russet Homes was responsible for this type of housing in the Borough so they should be approached about the matter.

11. Any Other Business

Attention was drawn to an engagement event on 3rd June at the Malling Scholl East Malling at which the TAMS Forum would be represented.

The issue of publicity for TAMS meetings was raised to encourage more local people to attend its meetings. Better links with existing groups were required. In response, it was explained that considerable publicity for the meeting had been undertaken, including posters, leaflet drops and articles in the Tonbridge Courier. The Management Committee would, however, look at this issue further.

A Hayward suggested that an informal group for Tonbridge might wish to meet after formal TAMS meetings to discuss local Issues relevant to the Town.

The Chairman extended an invitation to anyone interested to become a member of the TAMS management committee and help with the running of the Forum.

The Chairman thanked the speakers and every one attending and closed the meeting. A date for the next TAMS meeting in Tonbridge would be considered by the management committee and publicised in due course.