

# Public Document Pack

## TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

### PARISH PARTNERSHIP PANEL

Thursday, 27th November, 2014

**Present:** Cllr N J Heslop (Chairman), Cllr M A Coffin (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Mrs J A Anderson, Cllr J Atkins, Cllr J A L Balcombe, Cllr D Keeley, Cllr Miss A Moloney, Cllr M Parry-Waller, Cllr H S Rogers, Cllr A G Sayer and Cllr Mrs C J Woodger.

Together with Addington, Borough Green, East Malling and Larkfield, Hadlow, Kings Hill, Mereworth, Plaxtol, Snodland, Trottiscliffe, Wrotham Parish and Town Councils and County Councillors Mrs V Dagger and Mrs S Hohler.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Balfour and Mrs Bellamy.

### PART 1 - PUBLIC

#### **PPP 14/17 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 4 September 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman; subject to noting that Plaxtol Parish Council were present at that meeting.

#### **PPP 14/18 UPDATE ON ACTION IDENTIFIED IN THE LAST MINUTES**

There were no actions identified.

#### **PPP 14/19 KENT POLICE SERVICES UPDATE**

Chief Inspector Gill Ellis, Borough Commander for Tonbridge and Malling, provided an overview of the achievements made in performance and the neighbourhood policing agenda.

It was reported that the overall position in Tonbridge and Malling remained good with a slight reduction in all crime over the period October 2013 – October 2014. In fact, the Borough had the second lowest crime levels in Kent. Violence against the person had seen an increase but it remained the third lowest in the County.

There was a raised service for repeat victims of anti-social behaviour and there was a targeted approach to help those residents who felt vulnerable and intimidated as a result.

Additional resource had been provided for East Malling as Kent Police had recognised the need to tackle the increase in low level crime and

anti-social behaviour. There was currently higher police visibility in the community.

Snodland Town Council referred to the good work being done between the local Police Community Support Officers, residents and the Town Council to tackle 'pavement parking' which was greatly appreciated.

Reference was made to the Safer Town Partnership Crime Prevention road show arranged for 13 December and the Chairman hoped that this would visit other major retail centres in the Borough.

Chief Inspector Ellis advised of new Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPO) and Domestic Violence Protection Notices (DVPN), which were applied for by police and granted by the Magistrates' Court. These were designed to provide immediate protection for victims of domestic violence where no other enforceable restrictions could be placed upon the perpetrator. The law allowed a DVPO or DVPN to be made even if the victim did not agree to it and placed certain conditions on the perpetrator, including preventing entry to and being within a certain distance of the home and requiring them to leave the home. These new powers were welcomed by the police as an effective tool in tackling and preventing domestic abuse.

#### **PPP 14/20 STOP SMOKING SERVICES**

Natalie Ayles of the Kent Community Health NHS Trust advised that Stop Smoking was a Kent wide service that delivered a range of interventions to help people stop smoking.

The service was free, although prescription charges could apply in some circumstances. A number of programmes were offered including a seven week quit programme, behavioural support and nicotine replacement therapy. In addition, 400 people in local communities had received training to provide additional help in delivering the programmes.

Particular reference was made to a number of areas in the Borough where Stop Smoking was having difficulty engaging with the local communities and these included:

Aylesford

Burham, Eccles and Wouldham

East Malling

Snodland East and West

The Service was keen to encourage communities to participate and especially welcomed local knowledge, information and promotion of the programmes available.

Members felt that there were potential opportunities for working with local focus groups and voluntary organisations, of which there were many in Tonbridge and Malling, and suggested that the Chief Corporate Policy Officer (M Raymond) be contacted for further advice and contact details.

The referral line number for the Stop Smoking Service was 0300 123 1220

#### **PPP 14/21 CARE ACT 2014**

This item was WITHDRAWN from the agenda.

The Panel agreed that this should be revisited at the next meeting of the Parish Partnership Panel on Thursday 19 February 2015.

The Kent County Council Community Engagement Manager advised that the County Council were now focusing on eligibility of care and looking for participants affected by the changes to provide feedback. Meetings were being arranged with Senior Forums to discuss the implications of the proposed changes and to look at what practical information could be offered.

Any comments on the Care Act 2014 could be sent to [james.harman@kent.gov.uk](mailto:james.harman@kent.gov.uk) as it was important that views from Tonbridge and Malling were represented.

#### **PPP 14/22 COLLECTIVE ENERGY SWITCHING**

Members were advised that Energy Deal was the brand name for a collective switching scheme, which the Borough Council were supporting to help residents access a better deal on home energy bills.

Collective energy switching was where likeminded groups of consumers formed large numbers to negotiate a better deal with gas and electricity suppliers. There was no set model for how individual schemes operated, although this was normally facilitated by a third party who actively negotiated a better tariff for the consumers they represented.

Taking part in the scheme was free to register and there was no obligation to switch. The first step in the process was to register an interest and this was anticipated to be from 2 December 2014 until 2 February 2015. This could be done online at [www.energydealswitch.com](http://www.energydealswitch.com)

Alternatively the Private Sector Housing Team could register interest for those who did not have access to the internet and could be contacted on 01732 876 395 for further advice and assistance.

Members were invited to promote the scheme amongst their communities as it was important to raise public awareness, especially as only 20% of people routinely switched. Partner organisations, such as Russet Homes, would also assist with publicity.

In response to a question, it was reiterated that this Scheme related to domestic use and not business and did not cover oil or LPG fuels. It was also reported that this initiative had been running since 2013 previous experience had found that utility companies engaged in the scheme.

The Borough Council hoped to publicise the initiative using media outlets, the website, libraries, parish council offices, housing associations and a potential letter to all benefit recipients.

Kings Hill and Wrotham Parish Councils offered to include the Borough Council's press statement regarding the initiative in their parish magazines.

The Chief Executive took the opportunity of advising Members that Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council had recently launched its own twitter account and actively encouraged staff to use social media as a way of communicating with residents. In addition, the 'my account' element of the website was now live and enabled residents to register and receive regular updates on new schemes and initiatives. Finally, Media Services had contacted all parish and town councils within the Borough to create a circulation list to receive press releases for inclusion in local newsletters.

#### **PPP 14/23 KENT COUNTY COUNCIL SERVICES UPDATE**

The Kent County Council Community Engagement Manager reported that the County Council were on track to deliver this year's saving target of £81m on top of savings of £269m achieved over the last three years. However, there were indications from Government that the squeeze on local government finance would continue until at least 2018 which was a significant challenge.

Due to reduced levels of Government funding and the spending demands on services additional savings from the budget would be required and it was likely that a further £260m during the next three years would be needed.

As part of the budget setting process a full public consultation had been launched to give residents the opportunity to comment on how the

savings could be achieved. More information and links to the questions could be found at:

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/have-your-say/budget-consultation>

The consultation closed on 28 November 2014 and any responses would be considered before the budget was set in 2015.

It was also reported that Kent County Council opposed a second runway at Gatwick airport and this issue was to be discussed by Cabinet in the near future.

Members referred to the recent consultation on Community Wardens and expressed disappointment at the perceived lack of consideration given to the responses submitted. In response, the County Council Member for Malling North advised that feedback was extremely valuable and all views were taken into account. With regard to Community Wardens there might be opportunities for volunteers to assist wardens and/or different ways of working.

Particular reference was made to the Kent Emotional Well-being Strategy for Children and Young People Consultation which was open until 5 January 2015. Further information was available on: <http://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/EWStrategy/consultationHome>

The Chief Executive of Tonbridge and Malling took the opportunity to update Members on the position regarding flooding measures within the Borough.

Tonbridge and Malling continued to work closely with the EA, Kent County Council, Southern Water, Kent Police and Kent Fire and Rescue Services to ensure flood protection and emergency planning measures were as robust as possible. It was noted that 30 properties still remained uninhabited since the flooding over Christmas and New Year.

East Peckham, Hildenborough and Tonbridge town centre had flood warden schemes strengthened or established and there was an ongoing relationship with Aylesford Flood Committee.

Members were reminded that capacity for the Leigh Flood Storage Area had implications for the whole borough and preparatory work was in hand to increase this sometime around 2020. There had been a £100k funding contribution from the Borough Council towards a design of a possible scheme, although the overall cost to increase capacity by 60% was estimated at £11-12m. It was hoped that funding for flood measures would be announced as part of the Autumn Budget Statement on Wednesday 3 December 2014.

In addition, the Leigh Flood Storage Area scheme had been promoted for Local Enterprise Partnership Funding but the outcome would not be known until January. However, it was possible that a funding shortfall would still remain.

The Borough had received flood defence funding from DEFRA with £200k for Hildenborough for protection measures and improvement schemes were currently being designed. East Peckham had also received funding to protect residents.

Finally, a technical newsletter from a multi-agency working group, which outlined all the latest developments, would be attached to the Minutes for information.

Any parishes requiring assistance on emergency planning for floods could contact the Chief Engineer (M O'Brien). It was also suggested that Hadlow Parish Council be contacted and asked to share their emergency planning template as this was an example of good practice.

#### **PPP 14/24 TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL SERVICES UPDATE**

The Chief Executive provided an update on key points relevant to Tonbridge and Malling. The headline messages included:

- Airport Commission consultation

The consultation was open until 3 February 2015 and parish councils, individuals and groups were encouraged to submit a comment.

- Community Enhancement Fund

This fund had given £219k to 102 organisations and 15 parish councils across the Borough. A schedule setting out the full details of the distribution would be shared in due course. Meanwhile, further information was available on the Borough Council's website.

- Memorial Gardens

Gardens in Aylesford and Tonbridge had been successfully refurbished and had had well attended Remembrance Services.

- Financial Arrangements with Parish Councils

Members were reminded that the budget allocation to parish councils had increased by 1.3%, as reported at the last meeting of the Parish Partnership Panel, and this had been approved by Cabinet in October.

The council tax base figures for individual parishes were being calculated and it was indicated that the council tax reduction scheme

allocation would be passed on to parishes, together with an estimate of any election costs. Parishes were encouraged to complete their precept forms by 27 January 2015 to fit in with the Borough Council's budget preparation schedule. Written notification would be received in due course and once the financial settlement for the Borough Council was known.

The meeting ended at 9.45 pm

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# Kent Police Update

## Tonbridge & Malling Parish Partnership Panel

**27<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

**Chief Inspector Gill Ellis**

# Kent Police Mission

'Provide a first class service **protecting** and **servng** the people of Kent'

## **Vision** of the Chief Constable and Police and Crime Commissioner

'Our joint vision is for Kent to be a safe place for people to live, work and visit. By protecting the public from harm, we will allow our communities to flourish and by working with the public and partners, we will provide a first class policing service that is both visible and accessible. We will retain neighbourhood policing as the bedrock of policing in Kent. We will be there when the public need us and we will act with integrity in all that we do.'

## Kent Police **Values**

- We will put the public first and deliver a service to be proud of.
- We will serve with integrity and professionalism.
- We will treat everyone with fairness, respect and dignity.
- We will be innovative, use resources wisely and operate as one team.
- We will act with humility, compassion and courtesy.
- We will listen, learn and strive to improve.

## Kent Police **Priorities**

- Cutting crime, catching criminals and dealing with anti-social behaviour.
- Ensuring visible community policing is at the heart of Kent's Policing Model.
- Providing a professional service, putting victims and witnesses first.
- Protecting the public from serious harm.
- Meeting national commitments for policing.
- Delivering value for money.
- Developing and supporting our workforce.

# Overview

## STRENGTHS

- -0.1% reduction (-4) Victim Based Crime offences (RY Oct 13-14) (second lowest volume in county at 4962)
- Burglary Dwelling reduced by -16.2% (-56)
- TFMV reduced by - 5% (-23)
- Criminal Damage reduced by -7.6% (-74)
- Raised service for repeat victims of ASB (vulnerable, intimidated, persistently targeted or where live adversely affected). To identify threat, risk and harm.
- Op Spitfire. Increased resources in East Malling to tackle increase in low level crime and ASB.
- Op Gear/Pilot
- Op Caddy

## WEAKNESSES

- Drug Offences increased by +33% (+93)
- Violence against the person increased by +27.6% (+274) (Force trend. But 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest level in county at 1266 Oct14)
- Town Centre losing PCSO. Will be replaced however due to recruitment/training cycles there will be a delay.

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Closer working with DA partners in particular around better information sharing to reduce risk
- 13/12 Safer Town Partnership Crime Prevention Road show
- Increased road safety capability. CPT plus other CSU based officers to receive Speed Enforcement training.
- New DVPNs & DVPOs.
- Extended joint working with KFRS, including using their premises as a PCSO base.

## THREATS

- Further CSR cuts
- Trajectory for victim based crime
- Seasonal high retail crime in town (Op Encircle)
- Flooding

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# Kent Community Health NHS Trust Stop Smoking Service

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## Natalie Ayles

## Parish Partnership Panel 27th November 2014



## Kent Community Health NHS Stop Smoking Service:

- Kent wide service
- Offers a range of interventions
- Free service



## The programme:

- 7 week quit programme
- Behavioural support and pharmacotherapies including:  
Nicotine Replacement Therapy and  
Champix



## The Service:

Covers cover a range of projects:

- GP Project
- Pharmacy Project
- Core Service
- Mental Health Project
- Workplace and Prison Project
- Training
- [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C\\_htLw78Km4&feature=youtu.be](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C_htLw78Km4&feature=youtu.be)





# Tonbridge and Malling:

## High Prevalence Areas:

Snodland East	38.5%
Trench	29.3%
East Malling	26.9%
Burham, Eccles and Wouldham	25.3%
Judd	25.0%
Snodland West	24.8%
Aylesford	24.4%
Medway	24.0%



Local knowledge and Information:

Venues in the area

Other services that are operating

Local knowledge- where people will go etc

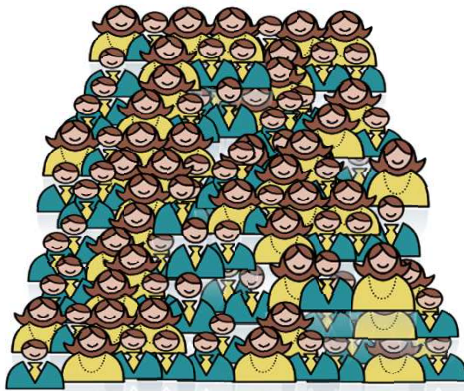
Places to promote and engage





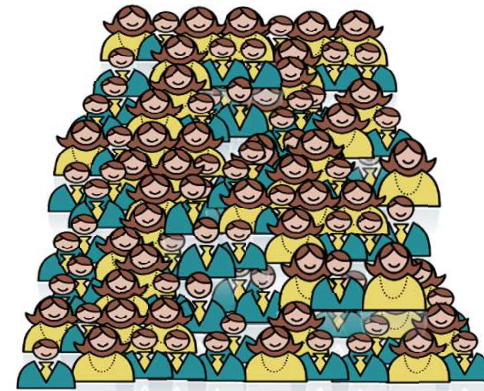
# 100 people in Kent

## Attempt to quit alone



**5 succeed**

## Quit with KCHT SSS



**55 succeed**





# Kent Stop Smoking Service

In last 5 years over 44,000 have quit with KCHT Stop Smoking Service.



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## The Stop Smoking Service

We are your experts in the field

If you have any queries call us

**0300 123 1220**  
**Referral line**



# Any Questions



# Energy Deal

SWITCH together  
to save £s on your bill



[www.tmbc.gov.uk](http://www.tmbc.gov.uk)

# Energy Deal

- What is collective switching ?
- Reasons for collective switching
- Energy Deal collective switching scheme
- What do I need to register my interest in switching?
- Frequently asked questions
- Reasons a switch may not be possible



# What is Collective Switching ?

- Collective energy switching is when consumers get together to negotiate a group deal with gas and electricity suppliers.
- Collective switching is usually facilitated by a third party who actively negotiates a better tariff on behalf of the group.



# Reasons for collective switching

- Fuel prices have risen steeply and there is no sign of any change in the pattern of future pricing.
- Many people are concerned about paying their energy bills.
- Looking for a new supplier can be time consuming and the many different energy tariff options available confusing.
- The Energy Deal scheme offers ability to switch to those who do not have a computer



# Energy Deal

Register with Energy Deal  
by 2 February 2015

Energy suppliers will  
compete to offer you the  
best energy deal

You receive a personalised  
offer showing if and how  
much you could save from  
13 February 2015

You decide if you want to  
switch and we will help you  
through the process



# What do I need to register my interest in switching ?

- The name of your current energy supplier and name of your energy tariff
- You will need information from your recent energy bill on how much gas and electricity you use each year (or how much you spend)
- Confirmation of your preferred method of payment



# Frequently asked questions

- If I register do I have to switch ?
- How long does it take ?
- Prepayment meters?
- How much will I save ?
- Is it only for on line tariff or direct debit ?
- If I am on a fixed priced tariff can I take part ?
- Will it be the same supplier for gas and electricity ?
- Data protection?



# Feed in tariff

- The six main energy companies – British Gas, EDF, Eon, Npower, Scottish Power and SSE – are obligated to pay a feed in tariff to you if you generate renewable electricity at home through technology such as solar panels
- You don't have to use the same supplier for your feed in tariff as you do for your regular electricity and gas account. Therefore, if you are on a feed in tariff and want to switch gas and electricity suppliers, your existing feed in tariff provider is obligated to continue making payments to you.

# Reasons why a switch may not be possible

- Some properties may have multiple meters registered to their address, such as when several flats have been knocked together.
- You rent your home and get gas and electricity through a meter owned by your landlord. You pay the landlord for energy and they pay the energy supplier.
- You rent and your lease specifies that you cannot change gas and electricity suppliers.
- The switch may be delayed if you have outstanding gas or electricity bills with your old energy supplier

# Energy Deal

- The contract will be for a 12 month period between the energy supplier and the consumer
- You can register up to five households on the same email address if a relative, friend or neighbour does not have access
- If you do not have a computer the Council can register your application on your behalf





# Contact details for Energy Deal

- Register on line [www.energydealswitch.com](http://www.energydealswitch.com)
- If you do not have computer access contact 01732 876395
- Leaflets are available with contact details
- Any questions contact the Private Sector Housing Team at the Council on 01732 876395



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# KCC Services Update November 2014

James Harman



# KCC Budget Consultation

KCC is on track to deliver this year's target savings of another £81m on top of savings of £269m over the last three years.

Likely to have to find a further £206m during the next three years.

£60m of capital needed to provide additional school places for the rising number of pupils in our primary schools.

Asking Kent residents to accept a small (1.99% increase) in Council Tax

Consultation for your views is open now closes 28<sup>th</sup> Nov

## **Two ways of getting involved:**

- **3 questions 3 minutes**
- **Budget Modelling Tool**

# KCC's Facts and Figures

- KCC is the largest County Council in England
  - Revenue spend **£1.8bn** (Lancs £1.7bn, Essex £1.6bn)
  - Capital investment £0.7bn over 3 years
- We employ **32,600** employees (many are part-time/sessional = 21,400 FTE)
  - of which 22,000 managed by schools
  - nearly half non schools work in social care
  - more than half earn less than £19k

# How the Council is funded

- Specific Government Grants - £909m  
DSG, Public Health, Asylum
- General Government Grants - £361m  
RSG, business rates top-up, ESG, NHB
- Council Tax - £533m
- Business Rates - £46m
- Income from fees & contributions - £308m

# KCC Annual Budget

	Gross £m	Income £m	Grants £m	Net £m
Adult Social Care	453.8	-110.3	-12.8	330.8
Childrens Social Care	143.9	-4.2	-15.2	124.5
Other Children's Services	141.1	-7.8	-90.1	43.2
Waste Disposal and Recycling	70.7	-3.5	0.0	67.2
Highway Management & Maintenance	46.4	-8.6	0.0	37.8
Home to School Transport	34.2	-3.2	0.0	31.0
Other Public Transport	40.7	-6.1	-1.0	33.6
Libraries, Registration and Archives	18.2	-5.2	0.0	13.0
Support for schools	78.6	-23.6	-46.3	8.8
Public Health	57.1	-5.8	-50.0	1.3
Other frontline services	55.3	-14.0	-13.4	27.9
Support Services	120.8	-47.4	-2.1	71.2
Corporate & Democratic	36.3	-3.1	-12.0	21.2
Debt financing	126.9	-8.5	0.0	118.4
Other financing	18.1	-7.7	0.0	10.4
Sub Total (excl schools)	1,442.2	-258.9	-242.9	940.3
Schools	714.6	-48.7	-665.9	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,156.8</b>	<b>-307.7</b>	<b>-908.8</b>	

# KCC Budget Consultation

## £1,000 OF COUNCIL SPENDING BUYS

- 2 weeks of foster care for a child who cannot live safely at home, provided by a KCC registered foster carer
- 69 hours of home care for an older person whose needs are judged moderate or substantial and who cannot meet the full costs themselves
- 100 miles of road gritted in bad weather over the course of the winter
- 430 separate library visits, enough for 16 regular library users over the course of a year.



# Service Transformation and Other Savings

Driven by - **Producing similar or better outcomes at reduced cost**

Other savings will be necessary as well as transformation

- **Staffing reductions** including restructures and vacancy management (250 to 400 fte)
- Reduction in the number of **council buildings**
- **Renegotiate existing contracts** with private and voluntary sector through better procurement and commissioning:
- Increased **income generation** from clients and trading
- **Community wardens** – 50% reduction

# Kent County Council opposes Gatwick's plans for a second runway

- Increase in over-flights and noise experienced by communities in West Kent has risen to unacceptable levels
- Overflights have risen from 10 – 20 flights-a-day to a maximum of 150
- Lack of adequate surface transport infrastructure enhancements to cope with the proposed additional demand
- Little obvious direct economic benefit to Kent

# Getting ready for Winter

- 60 Gritters on standby
- Fully stocked with 23,000 tonnes of salt
- Crews familiarising themselves with our primary salting routes, which cover nearly a third of our entire 5,000 mile road network.
- More than 150 farmers who clear a network of dedicated rural routes in really heavy conditions.

For up to date information follow us on Twitter and Facebook @grittingkent or visit: [www.kent.gov.uk/winter](http://www.kent.gov.uk/winter).

# Emotional Wellbeing Strategy Consultation

- Part 1 of the draft Emotional Wellbeing Strategy is open for consultation from 15 Oct – 5<sup>th</sup> Jan
- First part of a two-part Strategy, which sets out the vision of partners in Kent to work together in promoting positive emotional wellbeing for children and young people, and to put in place appropriate support to meet a range of needs.
- Commissioning intentions will be developed in Part 2: Delivery Plan.

# Emotional Wellbeing Strategy Consultation

- **Outcome 1 - Early Help:** Children, young people and young adults have improved emotional resilience and where necessary, receive early support to prevent problems getting worse.
- **Outcome 2 – Access:** Children, young people & young adults who need additional help get timely, accessible & effective support.
- **Outcome 3 – Whole-family approaches:** Children, young people and young adults receive support that recognises and strengthens their wider family relationships.
- **Outcome 4 – Recovery and Transition:** Children, young people and young adults are prepared for and experience positive transitions between services

**Promoting Emotional Well-being** is envisaged as a ‘golden thread’

The consultation can be accessed at:

<http://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/EWStrategy/consultationHome>

Closes on 5<sup>th</sup> Jan

# Primary Schools Admission

- Reminder Applications for Primary Schools are now open!
- Last year over 600 people applied late or not at all!
- Every child born between 1 September 2010 and 31 August 2011 needs to be registered for a school place.
- Any child moving from Infant to Junior also needs to apply.

**Closing date is 15<sup>th</sup> Jan 2015**

**Go to [www.kent.gov.uk/ola](http://www.kent.gov.uk/ola) for more info**

# Questions?

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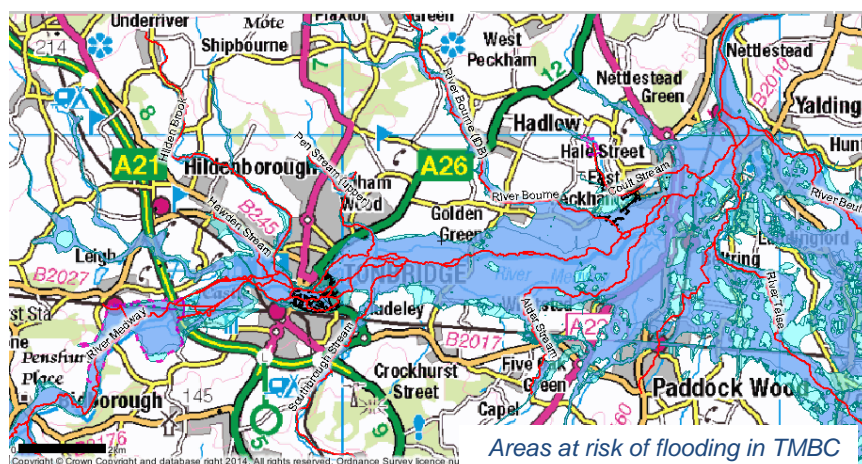
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## Managing flood risk - who is responsible for what?

This newsletter summarises progress on a range of technical matters that are being coordinated by a multi-agency group to help manage future flood risk locally.

There are a number of organisations who have a part to play in managing flood risk. These organisations have permissive powers that allow them to do works with the money allocated to them.



Areas at risk of flooding in TMBC

- Main Rivers are managed by the Environment Agency. The River Medway, the Gasworks Stream and the Botany Stream are all Main Rivers.
- Ordinary Watercourses are overseen by the Lead Local Flood Authority, in this case Kent County Council.
- Highway drains are managed by KCC Highways.
- Foul and surface water sewers are managed by Southern Water.
- Internal Drainage Board Watercourses are managed by the Upper Medway Internal Drainage Board (UMIDB) who have a duty to exercise general supervision over all matters relating to the drainage of land within the Board's area.
- Riverside or "Riparian" owners have a legal duty to manage a water course that they own. This can be summarised as having a duty to receive water and pass it on.
- The Borough Council take an overview of other watercourses and has permissive powers to maintain flows where appropriate.

## The Technical Group

Following the Christmas floods, a technical group was set up to help coordinate the activities of all of the organisations working to reduce flood risk in the borough of Tonbridge and Malling.

The group includes the Environment Agency, Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council (TMBC), Southern Water, KCC Flood Management, KCC Highways and the Upper Medway Internal Drainage Board (UMIDB). The group meets as and when needed to work together on joint problems. Communities have also selected representatives who can attend to observe and support the various activities.

This newsletter provides a brief update on some of the activities of the group.

### Borough-wide activities

#### **Maintenance**

Before the Environment Agency could start their usual annual maintenance programme, substantial works were needed to remove trees and debris from rivers across the whole catchment. In Tonbridge, 11 mature trees fell into the River Medway, severely obstructing flows. These have been removed and four debris dams have also been removed in East Peckham. Now that this is complete the Environment Agency operations teams are working through the normal maintenance programme.

#### **Improvements to the Flood Warning Service**

The Environment Agency's Flood Warning Service warns of the risk of flooding from the River Medway and the River Bourne. To be effective, Flood Warnings need to be received, understood, and trigger appropriate actions. Since the flooding, many more people have registered to receive Flood Warnings, or

update their contact details to ensure that messages are received as easily as possible. If you are not registered, or have not checked your details recently, please contact Floodline on 0345 988 1188.

After the floods, residents requested several improvements to the Environment Agency's Flood Warning Service. Following this, the Environment Agency has revised the Flood Warning Areas to make them more focussed, providing targeted information to communities that is easier to understand. Flood plans also help people to respond quickly if flooding occurs. The Environment Agency is also working with communities affected to develop community plans. For more information about personal or community flood plans, please contact Pete Curry on 01732 222969.

### **Flood Wardens**

Flood Wardens carry information between the Environment Agency and the community, helping everyone to understand what's going on in the event of a flood. A training session for new wardens was held at TMBC offices on 12 July, and another is scheduled for 18 October for areas in West Kent. The level of involvement across the borough has generally been good, but we are looking for more volunteers, especially in Tonbridge. If you're interested, please contact Pete Curry on 01732 222969, he will introduce you to the people already working in your community.

### **River levels on the internet**

Checking river levels can help understand what is happening, and what the impacts might be. The Environment Agency is aware that their River Levels on the Internet is not as good as it could be. There is a national project to improve this service, and the Environment Agency is working to ensure that the feedback from customers is fed into this project. An independent company has also recently taken the Environment Agency data and presented it in their own package called Gauge Map (<http://www.gaugemap.co.uk/>). The Environment Agency does not control or endorse this site, but it may be helpful to some people.

### **Increasing the capacity of the Leigh Flood Storage Area (FSA)**

Prior to the floods, the Environment Agency had planned to carry out works to extend the life of the Leigh FSA to 2035. Following the floods the Environment Agency has been working with Kent County Council and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council to increase the capacity of the Leigh FSA. Maidstone Borough Council is also participating in this project with a view to reducing flood risk in Yalding.

This partnership is now funding and working on development and design to accelerate the scheme. Although nothing is yet guaranteed, it is planned that a design will be in place by 2018 to enable preliminary works to commence; this should allow the main construction to be completed by 2022.

This will be of direct benefit to communities and businesses in Tonbridge and Hildenborough and will also reduce the risk of flooding further downstream in East Peckham. Open days are being held at the Leigh FSA to give the public a chance to see the structure and learn how it works.

### **Flood Resilience**

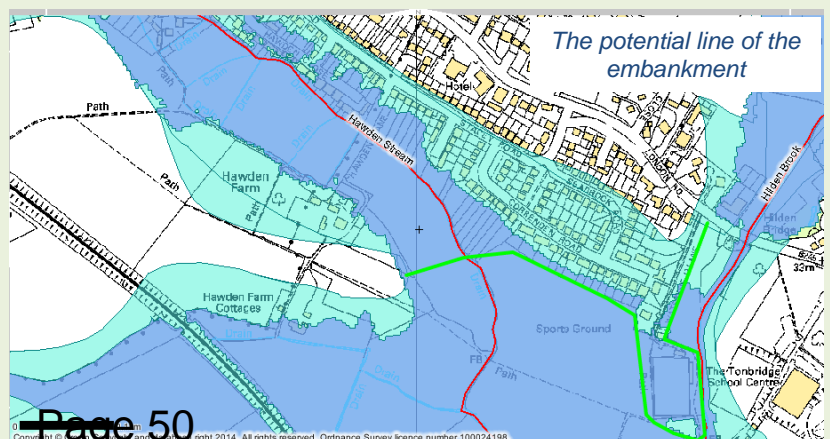
TMBC is pleased to have received 92 applications to date for the government's 'Repair and Renew' grant, providing up to £5000 for resilience improvements including flood proof doors, air brick covers and non-return valves. New applications can still be accepted although the scheme ends next year and improvement work will practically need to have been completed by the end of January 2015.

### **Hildenborough**

#### **Reducing flood risk**

Flooding in Hildenborough is driven by the River Medway. The Environment Agency has secured £200,000 of funding from the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee to design a scheme to reduce the risk of the Medway flowing up the Hildenbrook and the Hawden Stream.

The scheme will store water from the Hawden Stream on the meadows next to Hawden Farm but it is likely that a facility



to pump water from the Hawden Stream onto the sports pitches will need to be included. Design will take place over the winter and spring. Construction is planned to take place in summer 2015.

### **Flood Warnings**

The introduction of a new targeted flood warning system for Hildenborough together with trained local Flood Wardens will improve the quality of information to and from the community.

### **Maintenance works**

KCC Highways have completed the repairs to Stocks Green Road culvert. The Environment Agency are completing weed cutting and mowing of the Hawden Stream.

KCC Highways have carried out a number of cleansing and investigation jobs around Hildenborough and completed engineering works at both Nobel Tree Road and Leigh Road.

They are also investigating drainage issues at Foxbush and Bank Lane and aim to complete any outstanding works by Christmas.

## **Tonbridge**

### **New flood wall for Avebury Avenue and Barden Road area**

The Environment Agency has secured funding from the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) for a project to build a defence in the Avebury Avenue area. The flood defence is likely to be a low level flood wall behind the footpath. This project is in the planning stages but the Environment Agency hope to start construction in early 2015.

In the meantime, a contingency plan is in place to protect the community around the Avebury Avenue area if there are high river levels this winter before the permanent scheme is constructed next year. An exercise was run in September to test this contingency plan.

### **Surface water and highway drainage**

The highway drainage system in the Danvers Road area of Tonbridge has been cleansed and surveyed and no defects were found.

Highways drains in Danvers Road and the area in the immediate vicinity have been placed on an enhanced cleansing regime by KCC and will now be attended to twice a year. The next cleanse is scheduled to take place in late October before the onset of winter.

Finally, residents advised the Technical Group that they were concerned that some of the drains had become blocked as a result of the silt and debris caused by the ongoing building and repair works in the area. In response we arranged for additional cleansing to be done and this was completed in August.

### **Sewer system and sewer flood risk**

In addition to river and surface water flooding, the local sewer system, which is designed to deal with wastewater flows, for example, from toilets, bathrooms and kitchens, was overwhelmed by huge amounts of water entering it as a result of heavy rainfall and the presence of floodwater. As a result, a number of actions were identified by Southern Water. These include:

- Reviewing the maintenance programme for Southern Water's sewer / wastewater system serving the Danvers Road / Barden Road area. Southern Water will be carrying out jetting work on the foul sewers in Danvers Road at least every 12 months to ensure they operate as effectively as possible.
- Carrying out an inspection & CCTV survey of the foul and surface water sewers in the Danvers Road area. The results have been reviewed, with targeted jetting work carried out to clear any restrictions. Southern Water has also inspected the sewer outfalls (or discharge points) to the River Medway and Botany Stream and carried out work on them, for example, cutting back undergrowth around them.
- Reviewing the operation of Southern Water Tonbridge Waste Water Treatment Works (WTW) to

ensure it performed effectively at the time of the flooding. This concluded that it operated as it should and did not contribute to the flooding.

- Reviewing the hydraulic computer model for the Tonbridge catchment. It has been verified against a flow survey and covers the foul and combined sewer systems (the surface water sewers are not modelled). The model will be used to identify any possible risks to inform the local Drainage Area Plan.
- Inspecting the various chambers on the public sewers leading from the Danvers Road / Barden Road area to Southern Water's Tonbridge WTW.
- Carrying out high pressure jetting of a small section of sewer discharging into Southern Water's Tonbridge treatment works to remove any possible restrictions (for example, build up baby-wipes or fat, oil and grease). None were found, but the work has allowed Southern Water to confirm that sewer flows into the works are unrestricted.
- Confirmed that wastewater from properties in Danvers Road, Barden Road and the surrounding area flow (by gravity) to the treatment works. This means they do not discharge to Southern Water's wastewater pumping station at Sovereign Way. This pumping station was reported locally to have had an issue with one of its pumps, but due to the above, any issue would not have any impact on flooding in the Danvers Road and Barden Road area.

### **Repair Projects**

Throughout the town the floods caused extensive damage to the retaining walls and defences. The Environment Agency is carrying out repair projects at Buleys Weir, upstream of the Big Bridge and just below the castle. Collectively the projects will cost £1.7million. The works have started and will continue though to March.

### **East Peckham and Little Mill**

The Coult Stream dam stored water five times over the Christmas period reducing the flooding in the Snoll Hatch area. In line with best practice, the dam was designed using statistical techniques to estimate flow. Now the structure has been in place for nearly 10 years, there is sufficient data to review the design. Early results from the review suggest that the dam can be upgraded to increase the standard of protection offered. The Environment Agency hopes to be able to progress this project in 2015 – 2016.

The Environment Agency has secured funding from Defra Flood Defence Grant in Aid to progress the construction of an embankment to reduce the risk of flooding to homes in the village. However, additional funds are being sought to extend the area protected to the businesses in Branbridges and to Little Mill, both of which were badly affected over Christmas.

In the area around Little Mill substantial blockages have been removed from the River Bourne.

### **Contact us**

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