

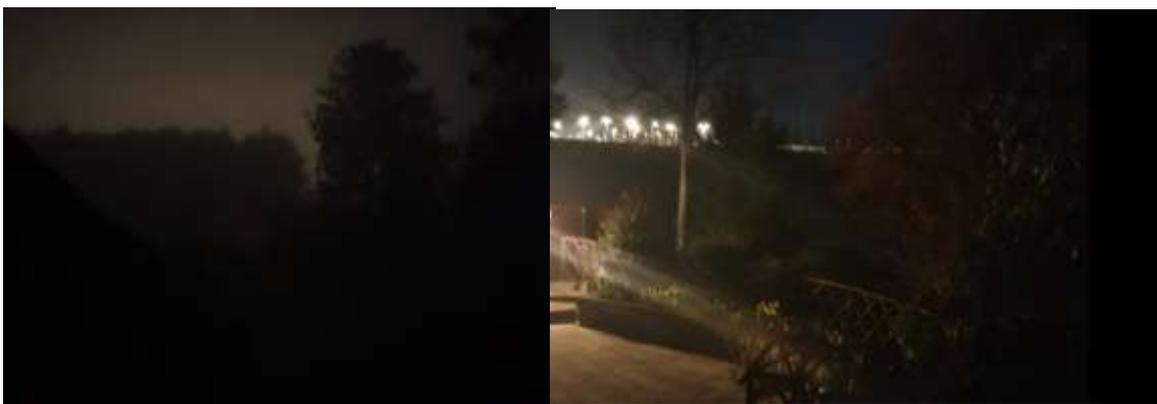
COUNCIL UPDATE 11.2021

IBF LIGHTING

16 baffles have been installed around the perimeter for Church Road; an additional 7 baffles are to be installed; those are being procured so are not installed yet. This would mean a total of 23 baffles (once the additional ones are installed). These are trying to reduce the glare to Church Road from the lighting columns in the photo.



The DfT have proposals to install a sensor/controlled lighting system to dim the streetlights. The hope is to either have a sensor system so that areas not in use overnight automatically dim, or a fully real-time controlled lighting system where the lights can be dimmed in non-operational areas overnight. This should make a substantial difference once installed as is illustrated below on 17th, 23rd and 24th September.



17th, 23rd & 24th September lighting

April 2021 lighting

Trees in front of the acoustic barrier have been planted, it's going to take time for them to mature in order to screen the view. A request has been made to extend this to the security hut and reduce inconsiderate noise from employees but is unlikely to affect the noise from drivers and badly maintained brakes.

HIGHFIELD LANE

Work has commenced on cutting back the sides of the hedges on Highfield Lane.



Weed strimming around the IBF generally started on 27 September and is expected to last two weeks.

NATIONAL HIGHWAYS SIGNAGE

The topographical surveys to identify sites for signage to the Sevington IBF has not yet been completed as the division of traffic from Dover Port to the new IBF at Whitfield near Dover and Sevington IBF is yet to be agreed. This is because the activities by DEFRA at Whitfield IBF are yet to be agreed. This decision will influence the traffic flows and signage. Rachel Mclean MP is no longer a Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the DfT so the Leader of KCC, Roger Gough has agreed to contact her replacement, Trudy Harrison MP, to get an update of progress.

IBF PURCHASE

The DfT are still working on the options for land to the east of Highfield Lane and have promised an update “in due course” when they have completed their priorities at Sevington.

In terms of EU importers to the UK, the post-Brexit paperwork was due to be implemented from 1 October 2021 with physical checks from 1 January 2022. Paperwork checks are now delayed until 1 January 2022 and physical checks

are now delayed until 1 July 2022. Safety and security checks are also delayed until 1 July 2022.

EU exporters to the UK will therefore continue to enjoy a competitive advantage over UK exporters to the EU until 1 July 2022. Since 1 January 2021 UK exporters to the EU have faced the full range of post-Brexit paperwork. In addition, exporters will now be required to complete Export Health Certificates only from 1 July 2022.

IBF ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS

A number of finds emerged from the excavation ahead of work starting on the Sevington IBF. KCC hope to allow archaeological artefacts to be put on display, however, the process can be complicated. First the “best” artefacts need to be conserved and stabilised and studied by the specialists and finally their long-term storage needs to be secured. The archaeological contractor would be willing to hold a talk on their findings to the Mersham History Group and might be able to bring along some of the finds.

KCC Heritage are managing a Chilmington Green Community Archaeology Project with a community archaeologist. Although this is on hold at the moment, the project would include community days and events. Even though Sevington is not within the Chilmington Green area, these events will be open and it may be that the Sevington finds can be brought along to a heritage event.

On the legal side, the artefacts belong to the landowner, the DfT, and their consent is required. Putting artefacts on display does pose challenges and it may be that Ashford Museum is able to give local people the chance to view the conserved artefacts at some stage.

ASB IN QUANTOCK DRIVE

A new NHW scheme has been set up in the area of Quantock Drive and roads off of it namely Exmoor Rise, Brecon Rise, Cheddar Close, Mendip and Dunkery Rise with virtually 100% membership. Drug users had been reported using in the alleyway adjacent to the garages in Exmoor Rise. This type of crime drives much of the routine crime that hits communities such as thefts from sheds, garages, vehicles and outbuildings are often to fund drug purchases.

Whilst carrying out that work several vulnerable persons were located which resulted in follow up visits as well as a “Safe and Well” visits from Kent Fire and Rescue Service who check for smoke detectors and carry out fire risk assessments to keep people safe.

SPEEDING AND NOISY EXHAUSTS

The KCC/ABC Joint Transport Board September meeting considered with Kent Police, National Highways, KCC and ABC how to manage the anti-social impact of excessive speed and noisy exhausts on roads around Ashford including the A2070.

The issue surrounds the tuna community whose exhausts cause excessive noise; lockdown seems to have produced a new cohort of motorcyclists who do not have regard to the impact they have on the wider community.

A task and finish group will be set up to develop a noise action plan and learn how other communities have tackled this issue. Solutions could include acoustic cameras and variable message signs. In the meantime, residents are asked to submit dashcam footage online at <https://www.kent.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/>. Over the summer there have been, on average, one report to 101 every four days; it needs to be more than that to secure resources from Kent Police.

PLAY AREA INVESTMENT

Rylands Road Play Area. Plans include a new play space, outdoor gym area, Multi Use Games Area, outdoor furniture, cycle racks and new footpaths and landscaping to improve access and connectivity. The cost is £340,000.

The Rylands Road Play Area Group have raised a total of just over £25,000 towards the area, through a combination of funders providing grants (Kennington Community Council, my KCC CMG £4,212.59, Ashford Leisure Trust and Tesco bags for life scheme) and events. These funds are confirmed for providing the outdoor gym element of the Rylands Road scheme and as there are conditions to spend the funds in a specified time the outdoor gym will be brought forward as the first item to be completed as part of the overall programme.

The consultation exercise with the communities in relation to the block of space housing the bockhanger shops, car park, kickabout area and where the Bockhanger Community Centre was sited was held on 28th September 2021. Both projects are linked because Rylands Road Play Area is a short walk from the shops.



Spearpoint Recreation Ground Play Area. A brand new play space hub including outdoor gym area, outdoor furniture, cycle racks and new footpaths to improve access and connectivity to complement the existing football, tennis and trim trail offer. ABC are looking at an opportunity for improvements to the Public Rights Of Way network at Spearpoint that would enhance the linkages and routes to this site, making it easier for local people to access the site and build greater links to the Council's Walking & Cycling agenda. The cost is £360,000.

Both projects are hoped to be completed by the end of the summer holidays, 2022.

TREE PROTECTION ORDERS

The cutting down of trees alongside Bilham Farm Track is a timely reminder that trees that need a TPO must be notified to planninghelp@ashford.gov.uk



New graffiti in the disused agricultural buildings has been reported to Strutt & Parker.

LOCKHOLT CLOSE

KCC Landscape Services will now replace 5 Aspen trees with Cherry trees following ABC approving the planning permission to do so. This follows reports of damage from the roots.

KCC ADULT SOCIAL CARE

Plans for a new strategy for Adult Social Care have been announced by KCC, focusing on how it intends to deliver more person-centred care and support for individuals, their carers and families. Its proposals are outlined in a six-week consultation launched this week.

KCC intends to change its approach over the next five years so that residents who may need help from more than one service would have only a single point of contact. Information would then be shared with other relevant services without the need for the client to outline their requirements again.

The ambition is to offer a “seamless” experience for the people KCC supports by ensuring its services work more closely together. People will also have accessible information, guidance and advice as early as possible. The consultation, which closes on 24 October, can be found here: letstalk.kent.gov.uk/adult-social-care-strategy

NHS SCRUTINY

The KCC Health Scrutiny Committee (which I chair) heard about the increasing waiting lists and delays in securing GP appointments as we emerge from pandemic at its meeting on 16th September 2021. The hugely unpopular, but entirely predictable tax punishment on the British public for a pandemic of £36bn over three years, will combat Covid related waiting lists and then spare people from selling their homes to fund social care.

It is now for NHS leaders to make sure these vast sums of money that will be handed to them are not squandered. NHS leaders are expected to spend the money efficiently reducing waiting times and increasing access to GPs.

But the way in which the NHS set up quickly and efficiently the huge network of vaccination centres and simple booking system was unmatched anywhere in the world. So there must be unbridled confidence the NHS will rise to the challenge; the risk that we do not see a rapid improvement is vanishingly insignificant.

EAST KENT TRANSFORMATION



Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group submitted an application by the 9th Sept deadline to the Department of Health & Social Care for £450m funding to improve access to A&E services in east Kent. DoH&SC have said that they will only finance 9 projects across England and around 100 applications were made by the deadline.

The East Kent project is considered a priority across the south coast area and has the support of local MP's.

The outcome is likely to be known by May 2022 and there are likely be further submissions around the business case as the long list and then short lists are created. Assuming the application is successful the consultation over how the transformation takes place (option 1 is two new A&Es in Margate and Ashford and Option 2 is the "super" hospital in Canterbury) is expected in Autumn/Winter 2022/23.

KEY PLANNING ISSUES

- 21/01173/AS - 5 houses in Kingsford Street, I have called this into the planning committee.
- 21/01169/AS - Frith Road, 30 park homes for residents aged 50, I have called this into the planning committee.
- 19/01004/AS - retrospective change of use of the Chequer Tree Paddock site, ABC awaiting PINS hearing date following refusal from ABC.
- 21/01595/AS - ecological study and nutrient neutrality for 400 new homes proposed on Waterbrook (Charters Edge). Concerns expressed about apparent plans to resurrect the "Ashford Great Park" from 2004 with plans showing a planned link to Conscience Farm (18/00095/CONQ/AS) and loss of wildlife area that was recently used to locate owl boxes.
- 21/00595/AS - concerns expressed with long delays over time to approve.
- CO/19/00223 – under investigation by officers.

PIPER PRODUCTS SITE REDEVELOPMENT

I attended the ABC planning committee on 15th September and spoke on behalf of the Central Ashford Forum to support the redevelopment of the brownfield site as affordable council at the end of Mabledon Ave. This was my speech:

The Forum supports the application because it addresses the housing needs in Ashford with 1,700+ applications on the housing list.

The application will bring street scene improvements and regeneration by replacing the demolished Piper Products including tidying up the land between the application site and

River Stour. There have been reports from local residents of noise, smells and dust from the previous occupant including damage to the kerb and verge from vehicles accessing the site.

We have the following comments:

- 1. A number of trees are to be removed along the northwest and southeast boundaries. This is an opportunity for native tree planting between the application and Stour.*
- 2. Links to riverside walks are encouraged. The new footpath linking Mabledon Ave to Mill Court and open space should be designed to accommodate to link the station and designer outlet. Lighting needs to be provided in front of the new development as it is currently very dark to walk along. By this stretch being pedestrian / cycleway, it will contribute towards a link from the station and designer centre to Essella Road/Osborne Road without using Hythe Road.*
- 3. The bin storage arrangements should be "future-proofed" by allowing for the possibility of a third bin being required by national legislation for paper and cardboard.*
- 4. 20% electric vehicle charging points is too low as petrol and diesel vehicles are being phased out with them no longer being available to purchase new by 2030. This is something that ABC should be taking the lead.*
- 5. The detailed design of the units will use renewable and low carbon energy sources and include energy and water efficiency measures. It is expected that the most optimal solution would include electric heating rather than gas/oil, again this is something ABC could take the lead.*
- 6. Issues with traffic circulation and parking might arise, particularly at busy school drop-off and collection. Mabledon Avenue and Linden Road have parking on both sides limiting traffic to one way only at a time. If issues arise it may need to be addressed by parking controls.*
- 7. There is a chance with this application for a clever bit of building design, as the present buildings are at an angle, but the proposed housing does not respect that line. A landmark building or a simple realignment could integrate the new development with existing housing but this can be dealt with by reserved matters.*

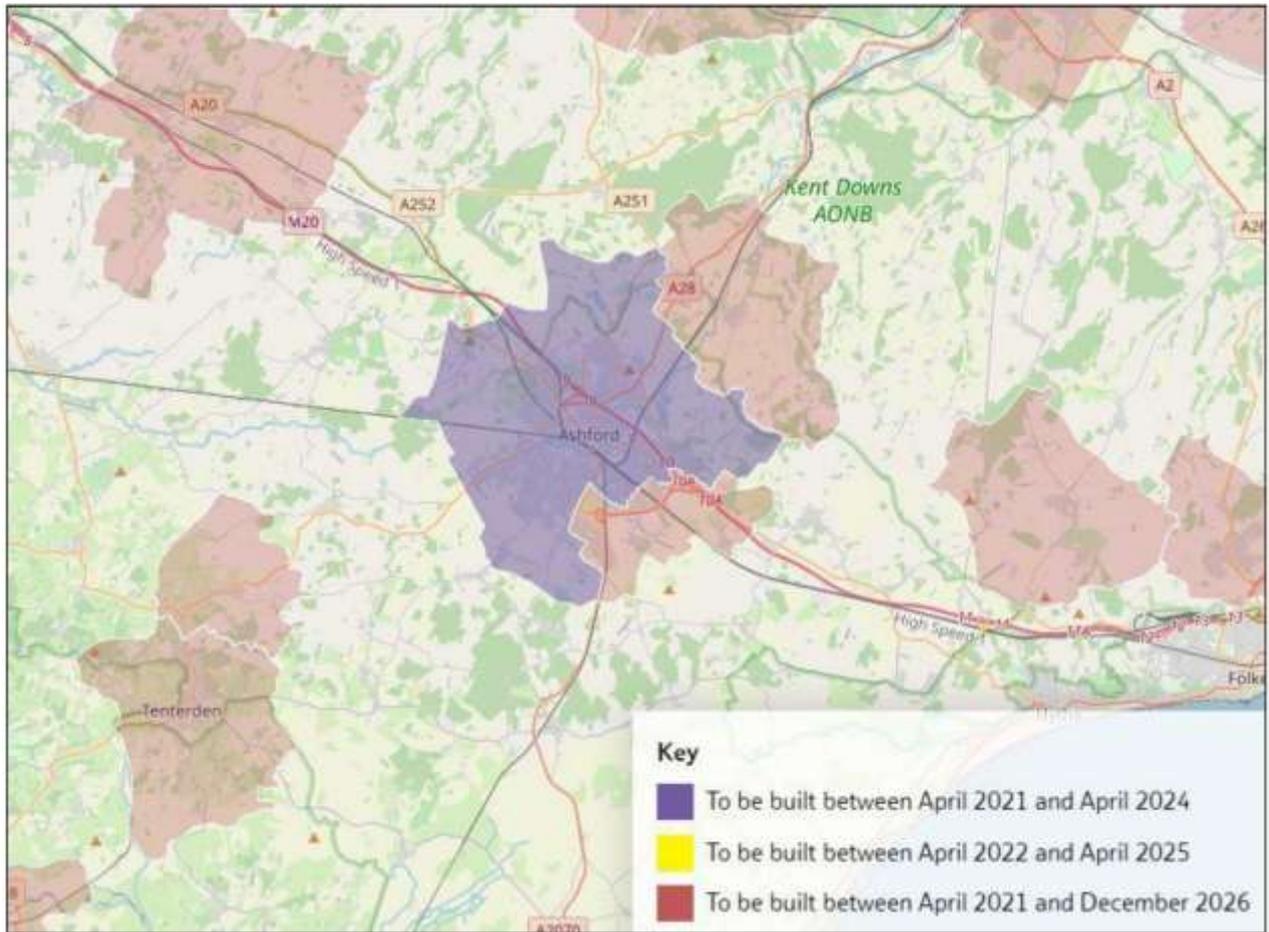
I am delighted that the application was approved.

BROADBAND

Openreach and Netomnia have announced their plans for a FTTP rollout across the Ashford Urban Area. This will see approx. 30,000 premises served by Openreach and Netomnia FTTP with Netomnia rolling FTTP out to a further 20,000 premises (including businesses). ABC has reached agreement with both companies to work collaboratively and to ensure disruption to residents is minimised where possible and the rollout is a success. ABC is also coordinating this rollout with KCC.

Openreach has also announced that the Sevington exchange is due to be upgraded to FTTP however this is not scheduled to begin until after 2023 with their website quoting a deadline of December 2026.

The following map shows Openreach's planned FTTP rollout for the Ashford Borough.



TRINITY PARK

The developers have created a website which gives some detail of what is proposed - <https://www.trinitylakes.co.uk/home>

The application essentially delivers the Local Plan allocation (375 residential units and additional commercial development) by way of an outline application. The proposals have been developed to achieve 'neutrality' in terms of the nitrates and phosphates (Stodmarsh) issue by including a large area of wetlands and some land taken out of agricultural production.

This area is home to many birds (Linnets, Kestrels, Goldfinches etc), reptiles (grass snakes and adders) and many small mammals, also a great variety of wild flowers including (in the spring) spotted orchids. There is an opportunity to comment on the website.



ROLE OF PARISH COUNCILS

The KALC Meeting on 1st September included a paper how the parish, town and community councils should work with the borough and county councils. The National Improvement Strategy for Parish, Community and Town Councils identified five themes of activity that individual councils **may choose to fulfil:**

- service deliverer – using their range of discretionary powers in areas from local transport to local economy
- culture creator – creating opportunities for local people to come together and participate in cultural, community-focused, and recreational activities
- place shaper – whether through neighbourhood planning or in maintaining local land and property
- builder of community resilience – for example by facilitating community participation in action on local issues
- community leadership – exploiting their representative mandate.

The table below identifies five broad categories of activity and indicates some potential roles that sit within them. This illustrates that there are multiple ways through which town, community and parish councils can support and release

the capabilities of their communities and it is now down to them to say what they want to do.

Influence and respond	Place-shaping	Community activation	Service/ asset delivery	Service/ asset accountability
<p>Comment on planning applications.</p> <p>Respond to principal authority consultations.</p> <p>Representing the town or parish at area boards.</p> <p>Influence service levels of principal authority contracts that affect their areas (eg grass cutting).</p>	<p>Neighbourhood planning.</p> <p>Affordable housing.</p> <p>Running local events.</p> <p>Encouraging local commercial activity eg pop up cafes at community events or seasonally.</p> <p>Vision for local parks, land and buildings.</p> <p>Community shops.</p> <p>Community centres.</p>	<p>Co-ordinating volunteers.</p> <p>Support to community action (as in COVID-19 pandemic) and community support.</p> <p>Befriending services.</p> <p>Grant and fundraising eg to support libraries</p> <p>Economic development, including job clubs</p> <p>Climate change initiatives.</p> <p>Youth projects.</p>	<p>Community libraries.</p> <p>Grounds maintenance.</p> <p>Sports facilities.</p> <p>Minor highways functions (eg footpaths, signs and verges, cleansing).</p> <p>Car park provision and management.</p> <p>Leisure and arts centres.</p>	<p>Allotments.</p> <p>Bus shelters.</p> <p>Cemeteries and church yards.</p> <p>Community centres.</p> <p>Litter bins/litter picking.</p> <p>Markets.</p> <p>Museums.</p> <p>Parks/open space.</p> <p>Play areas.</p> <p>Public conveniences.</p> <p>Tourist information centres.</p>

BATTLE OF BRITAIN MUSEUM

The unveiling of the new Graydon Gates at the National Memorial to “Remembering the Few” at Capel-le-Ferne was held on 14th September 2021, the eve of the 81st anniversary of Battle of Britain Day. New digital, LED projectors are used to enhance the 'Scramble Experience' for visitors.

I was pleased to have given £1,000 from my Member's Grant towards the total to support this important national monument and museum.



THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS OF KENT COUNTY COUNCIL CONTRIBUTED £51,000 AS PART OF THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN MEMORIAL TRUST'S 80TH ANNIVERSARY APPEAL.

ALAN MARSH	IAN THOMAS	PAUL COOPER
ALAN RIDGERS	JAMES McINROY	PAUL MESSENGER
ANDREW BOWLES	JAN OZOG	PAULINE BERESFORD
ANDREW COOK	JOHN WRIGHT	PENNY COLE
ANDY BOOTH	KEN PUGH	PETER HOMEWOOD
ANN ALLEN	LESLEY GAME	PETER LAKE
CATHERINE RANKIN	MARGARET CRABTREE	PETER OAKFORD
CHARLIE SIMKINS	MARK DANCE	RICHARD LONG
CLAIR BELL	MATTHEW BALFOUR	ROBERT THOMAS
DAN DALEY	MICHAEL HILL	ROGER GOUGH
DAVID BRAZIER	MICHAEL NORTHEY	RORY LOVE
DEREK MURPHY	MICHAEL PAYNE	ROSALIND BINKS
DIANE MARSH	MIKE ANGELL	SARAH HAMILTON
DICK PASCOE	MIKE WHITING	SHELLINA PRENDERGAST
EMMA DAWSON	NICK CHARD	STEVE MANION
ERIC HOTSON	NIGEL COLLOR	SUE CHANDLER
GARY COOKE	PAUL BARRINGTON-KING	SUSAN CAREY
GEOFF LYMER	PAUL BARTLETT	TONY HILLS
HARRY RAYNER	DAVID MONK	TREVOR BOND
	PAUL CARTER	



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