



## **RYARSH PARISH COUNCIL**

### **February Parish Council Meeting**

- A street lantern on Birling Road on a traffic calming island was damaged by vandalism, causing water leakage which is causing the light to stop working occasionally. The Parish Council will replace the lantern.
- The Parish Council continues to liaise with Kent Highways to progress the Highways Improvement Plan wherever possible. We will update you when there is action to report.
- There are problems with fly tipping in various locations. Fly tipping can be reported to the Borough Council – [waste.services@tmbsc.gov.uk](mailto:waste.services@tmbsc.gov.uk) or online [www.tmbc.gov.uk/bins-waste/report-fly-tipping](http://www.tmbc.gov.uk/bins-waste/report-fly-tipping) or on the Country Eye App [www.countryeye.co.uk](http://www.countryeye.co.uk)



### **Kent County Council**

County Councillor Hohler provided the following report:

- KCC continues to work hard to present a balanced budget for the next financial year which remains a challenge.
- The bus industry in Kent (as in most parts of the UK) remains privatised. Since the start of 2022 Government and other support has enabled KCC to protect around 50 school services that were at risk of withdrawal. These services continue to be funded using Government funding. The cost of these services is estimated at around £3m a year when accounting for the contribution made towards them from passenger revenue.
- These commitments have exhausted the funding available through Government, and KCC's own budgets for supporting bus services are also fully allocated. Unfortunately, we are starting to see bus service cancellations get presented to us again with no funding available. KCC are not in a position to protect them and if other possible operators do not view them as commercially sustainable then they will stop. These cancellations will include school buses.
- There has, during 2022, been a recovery of Kent's tourism and the hospitality sector which has meant more jobs and good news for Kent.
- The University of Kent, with a group of staff and student volunteers, have, during the autumn, collected 5,500 Kg of surplus fruit and vegetables from local farms and distributed them via FARESHARE UK to charities, food banks and community initiatives
- The Business Investment Team has been processing over 100 pre applications from small and medium sized businesses in Kent and Medway for grants from £26,000 to £600,000 to grow and innovate.
- Hundreds of patients across Kent are now receiving care at home when they would normally have had to stay in hospitals thanks to Home First, the long awaited integration of health and social care, now in action.
- Childrens, services in Kent have recently been awarded an outstanding rating.
- The Port of Dover and the surrounding area could be hit by major disruption later this year when the EU Entry-Exit system launches. KCC has made the Government aware of their concerns and how it is likely to cause long traffic queues.
- Dog owners in Kent are being urged to keep control of their pets in the countryside, following a rise in attacks on sheep.

- Our trading standards officers have been working very hard to stop the huge imports of illegal vapes. KCC had asked the Government to ban them, which they have now done. However, they remain a problem as teenagers are attracted by their bright designs and different sweet and fruity, flavours.



### **TMBC**

Borough Councillor Banks attended the Parish Council meeting.

- He has liaised with the Planning Officer about the Ryarsh Place Farm application. If she is minded to reject it she will produce a report, which would go to the Inspector if the applicant appeals the decision.
- He is working with Clarion about a property in Woodgate Road. They have given a third deadline of 19<sup>th</sup> February to deal with the fly tipping issue.
- TMBC are doing better financially than other Councils in Kent. Officers are being prudent looking at car parking charges to raise revenue, but he does not believe it is needed at the moment and will object to this.
- He is aware of the problems people have in seeing a doctor. When we talk about planning, this issue must be raised – what are the facilities to serve the housing that should be included, such as schools, doctors etc. These are needed to support the housing. The Integrated Care Board (ICB) should be consulted and say they support the proposals.



### **Kent Highways – Potholes**

County Councillor Hohler has been in contact with Kent Highways, who have confirmed that pothole enquiries have been steadily rising over the past couple months. They are still aiming to repair within 28 days, however most locations where road widths do not allow adequate safety zones for the contractor Amey to deliver, they are looking at road closures. They estimate 60% of pothole jobs require more in-depth liaison and planning works before a gang has even attended to repair which will have an impact in keeping with the 28 day guarantee. This explains the overrun when a job is due for repair. Amey are completing more jobs than before.

Information about potholes, how to report them and how they are filled is available on the KCC Website <https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/what-we-look-after/roads/potholes>

### **Next Parish Council meeting**

The date of the January meeting is **Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2024**, 7.30pm, at Ryarsh Church Hall.

You can contact the Clerk by email at [clerk@ryarsh-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@ryarsh-pc.gov.uk). For more information, please go to our website [www.ryarsh-pc.gov.uk](http://www.ryarsh-pc.gov.uk)

## Fly-tippers and litter bugs to face heftier fines



Dropping rubbish on the streets could cost you £500

Councillors have recommended an increase in the penalties for littering and fly-tipping in Tonbridge and Malling. Changes to government legislation allow councils to increase the maximum fixed penalty for littering from £150 to £500. The maximum for fly-tipping has risen from £400 to £1,000.

Members of the Communities and Environment Scrutiny Select Committee meeting on 7 February considered a range of increases that could now be adopted to deter people from dropping or dumping rubbish. A report set out four options, ranging from keeping penalties at current levels to adopting the new maximum for both types of offence.

The committee voted to support a two-tier approach to littering fines and moving to the maximum of £1,000 for fly-tipping. First time or small scale littering offences would attract a penalty of £250, or £125 if paid early, rising to the maximum of £500 for larger items or repeat offences.

The increase follows a pilot scheme with enforcement specialists, NES, which deploys officers in towns and villages across the borough to issue penalties for littering and investigate fly tips. The pilot is one of a range of measures contributing to the council's work to care for the environment, one of four [strategic priorities](#) set out in its corporate plan.

The trial scheme saw more than 3,400 fines issued during its first twelve months. Figures for 2022-2023, show Tonbridge and Malling recorded 833 incidents of fly-tipping and issued 83 fixed penalty notices for that offence, more than any other authority in Kent. [In June 2023](#), councillors agreed to extend the trial so a permanent contractor could be appointed.

Cllr Martin Coffin, cabinet lead for transformation and infrastructure, said: 'When we prepared the report and looked at the options we had, we wanted to send a strong message. Everyone agrees that fly-tipping is absolutely abhorrent, so we will be making it widely known that that the fine for anyone caught doing it in Tonbridge and Malling will now be £1,000.'

Referring to comments from committee members about the need for enforcement officers to exercise discretion when dealing with littering, he added: 'We can also ensure that the operatives are trained so that they can understand the difference between an accidental and deliberate littering.'

The changes are due to be implemented when a new fly-tipping and litter enforcement contract starts later this year.



Tonbridge & Malling health walks are free, fun and friendly – perfect to help you get active, meet new people and improve mental health and well being.

### **Platt Walk**

Where: St Marys Platt Church, TN15 8NE  
When: Every **Monday**  
Walk starts: 10am outside the church  
Walk lasts: 60-90 minutes  
*(Walk may include hills)*

### **Hildenborough Walk**

Where: Recreational Ground, TN11 9HY  
When: Every **1st and 3rd Monday**  
Walk starts: 10am from car park  
Walk lasts: 60-90 minutes  
*(Walk may include stiles)*

### **Leybourne Walk**

Where: Leybourne Lakes Country Park, ME20  
When: Every **Tuesday**  
Walk starts: 10am main car park  
Walk lasts: 60-90 or 30 minute walks available

### **Tonbridge Walks**

Where: Tonbridge Pool, TN9 1HR  
When: Every **Wednesday**  
Walk starts: 10:15am from main entrance  
Walk lasts: 30 minutes

Where: Tonbridge Pool, TN9 1HR  
When: Every **Wednesday**  
Walk starts: 11am from main entrance  
Walk lasts: 60-90 minutes  
*(Walk may include stiles)*

### **Leybourne Walk**

Where: Leybourne Lakes Country Park ME20 6AA  
When: Every **Thursday**  
Walk starts: 10am from the main car park  
Walk lasts: 60 or 30 minute walks available

### **Hadlow Walk**

Where: Hadlow Square, TN11 0DA  
When: Every **Thursday**  
Walk starts: 10:30am opposite the pharmacy  
Walk lasts: 60-90 minutes  
*(Walk may include stiles)*

### **Snodland Walk**

Where: Snodland Medical Practice, ME6 5SN  
When: Every **Thursday**  
Walk starts: 11:30am outside medical practice  
Walk lasts: 45-60 minutes

### **East Malling Walk**

Where: East Malling Centre, ME19 6SD  
When: Every **Friday**  
Walk starts: 11:00am from the centre café  
Walk lasts: 60-90 minutes

# **ONE YOU KENT**

**Phone:** 01732 876 347

**Visit:** [tmbc.gov.uk/community/health-one/3](http://tmbc.gov.uk/community/health-one/3)

**Email:** [healthy.living@tmbc.gov.uk](mailto:healthy.living@tmbc.gov.uk)



# Volunteers needed!

Tonbridge & Malling health walks are free, fun and friendly - perfect to help you get active, meet new people and improve mental health and well being.



## Why we want you

Our aim is to give people the confidence to get out walking and enjoying the outdoors in a safe way and help people be healthier. To do this we need people to share their enthusiasm for the benefits of walking with others in their community by leading walks in your local area.

You'll work with the Coordinator and other Walk Leaders in your area to deliver a range of accessible walks that enable people to bring activity into their lives and feel the benefits. We want everyone to have access to a short, friendly group walk within easy reach of where they live to help them become and stay healthy.

Get in touch by emailing [healthy.living@tmbc.gov.uk](mailto:healthy.living@tmbc.gov.uk) or call 01732 876347



# ONE YOU KENT



Visit: [tmbc.gov.uk/community/health-one/3](http://tmbc.gov.uk/community/health-one/3)

Email: [healthy.living@tmbc.gov.uk](mailto:healthy.living@tmbc.gov.uk)



**We've launched an exciting project with Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council, which includes gifting devices along with training.**

Supporting residents who are in financial hardship, unemployed and seeking employment and those in employment to support continued employment and career development.

**Find out more about the the project and how to make a referral >**

 Funded by UK Government

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**LEVELLING UP**



Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council, using funding from the Business Rates Retention Pilot Programme and UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), have granted Kent County Council's Digital Inclusion & Capabilities Service (Digital Kent) funding to deliver support to their digitally excluded residents.

**We are now open to accept referrals for a limited time.** The referral needs to be submitted by a professional and they must ensure that the beneficiary meets the eligibility criteria.

For more information, how to refer someone and the eligibility criteria, please visit [our website](#).

For further details about how we use personal data and information, please refer to [our privacy policy](#).

If you have any questions or queries relating to this project, please get in touch by emailing [digitaltonbridge@kent.gov.uk](mailto:digitaltonbridge@kent.gov.uk).



## GRAFFITI AND STREET ART CONSULTATION

We are currently running a consultation to get resident's views on our work to tackle graffiti.

Graffiti is defined as writing or drawings scribbled, scratched or sprayed illegally on a wall or other surface in a public place. This can be seen in many towns and villages across the country but unfortunately we have also seen a small increase in Tonbridge & Malling. We would like to get resident's views on graffiti and whether they have seen an increase in the borough. This will help us develop our plans around how we tackle this subject. As part of this we may look to develop graffiti walls. A graffiti wall is an area that has been set aside to allow people to legally 'tag'. Below is the link to the survey for you to share as appropriate.

[Graffiti and street art consultation – Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council \(tmbc.gov.uk\)](https://tmbc.gov.uk/graffiti-and-street-art-consultation)



# Guided group walks – March 2024



Our friendly group is one of 13 Ramblers groups in Kent and part of the national Ramblers walking organisation. We explore the beautiful countryside of Tonbridge and Malling and surrounding areas.

You don't have to be a Ramblers member to try up to three 'taster' walks with us. If you're new to our walks, please contact the walk leader to check that their walk will suit you.

*Chagall East Window at Tudeley Church – 14 March walk*

**For details of these and other upcoming walks and walk leaders, see our [Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/tonbridgeandmallingeramblers) or visit [www.tonbridgeandmallingeramblers.org.uk](http://www.tonbridgeandmallingeramblers.org.uk).**

Sunday 3 March	Circular walk from Platt along the Wealdway through Shipbourne Forest and return via Mereworth Woods. Some short sections of quiet lane walking. Moderate difficulty.	5.5 miles
Wednesday 6 March	A circular meander through Mereworth Woods to Gover Hill returning via Herne Pound. Moderate difficulty.	5.5 miles
Thursday 14 March	Tudeley and Capel 'special churches' walk via Capel Church with its 13th century wall paintings and All Saints Tudeley, the only church in the world to have all its stained-glass windows designed by the celebrated 20th century artist, Marc Chagall. Moderate difficulty with 10 stiles.	6.5 miles
Sunday 17 March	Horsmonden to Broad Ford and Brandfield through orchards, fields and farm tracks. Great views of the High Weald, Greensand Ridge and the Teise and Medway river valleys. Some quiet lanes; some stiles and hills; moderate difficulty.	5 miles
Thursday 21 March	Heaverham Hike: circular walk with a steep ascent at the start to the North Downs Way with far-reaching views. Four stiles; moderate difficulty.	5 miles
Sunday 24 March	Circular walk from Wrotham up to Stansted for a bird's eye view over the Weald. Steep climb at the beginning out of Wrotham. Moderate difficulty.	5.5 miles
Thursday 28 March	Circular walk from Barming along the banks of The Medway to Watlington, returning via Kettle Bridge with wonderful river views. Some road walking; moderate difficulty.	6 miles

Walks usually start mid-morning. There's a short half-way break (bring refreshments) and we usually finish near a pub. Most walks are dog-friendly (see website).

