

WARD MEMBERS REPORT TO BROOK PARISH COUNCIL NOVEMBER 2023

STODMARSH UPDATE

As widely reported, the Government's proposed amendments to the emerging Levelling Up & Regeneration Bill were defeated in the House of Lords. It is unlikely there will now be enough parliamentary time for the Government to introduce a new bill to address the issue.

It was never appropriate for government agencies such as Natural England and the Environment Agency, together with the water companies to simply pass this issue onto local authorities to resolve. A new bill would have been welcomed because the nutrient neutrality issue should have always been an issue for the highest levels of Government, with the key bodies responsible for water quality being accountable and delivering the solution.

Accordingly, the Council is now pausing work on progressing strategic wetland mitigation schemes within the borough with immediate effect because it cannot be expected to invest significant sums of money at its own risk.

BRING BACK EUROSTAR CAMPAIGN

A local petition has been set up by residents to bring back Eurostar services to Kent and is currently at over 35,000 signatures. Ashford Borough Council is promoting this to residents via Ashford For You magazine, the Council website and social media channels. If residents would like Eurostar stopping at Ashford International station again, please sign the online petition.

[Petition · Bring back Eurostar train services to Kent · Change.org](#)

If you would like to get more involved, share any information or help in any way please email: info@bringbackeurotrains.com.

RECYCLING OF ELECTRICAL ITEMS

Ashford Borough Council is running six community electrical repair, reuse or recycle events 'E-Cycle Revival', across the borough.

This is made possible due to funding from Material Focus; Ashford Borough Council has been chosen as one of over 40 projects allocated a portion of £2.5 million, to encourage Ashford borough residents to recycle their electricals. The first event took place in Wye on 14th October with other events being announced in rural locations around the borough soon.

If residents have electrical items in need of repair, they can contact the Repair Café at Singleton Environment Centre which is organised by and for residents. They can take almost any item suitable for repair, putting it back together again for reuse, with the aim of reducing waste and maintaining repair skills. If residents would like to find out more, please visit their Facebook page @RepairCafeAshford or head to their website:

<https://www.singletonenvironmentcentre.org.uk/join-in/repair-cafe-ashford/>

Alternatively working but unwanted items can be donated to the Pilgrims Hospice.

KCC WINTER HIGHWAYS UPDATE

We are now entering the winter period for 2023-24 and I would like remind residents about the KCC Highways & Transportation's winter service provisions. This year the season runs from the 20th October 2023 to 19th April 2024. Information can be found on the KCC website below:

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/what-we-look-after/winter-service>

The website will provide useful information on:

- Salt Bins (including locations)
- Gritting Routes
- How and when KCC salt the roads
- Clearing snow in the community
- The latest weather updates
- How KCC deal with rural roads with help from the local farmers
- Tips on Winter Driving

Please also have a look at the Direct Gov Snow Code web site below, which you may find has some useful information and hints:

<https://www.gov.uk/clear-snow-road-path-cycleway>

KCC also work closely with local farmers and provide them with the necessary equipment in order to clear country lanes and act as extra resources during a snow emergency. The website also provides information on all aspects of highway management, such as tree policy, information on road works and planned works, crash and casualty data. It also allows faults to be reported online at

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem>

Cllr Simon Betty

Ward Member for Bircholt