

Headline

December 2020



News from your Local Lib Dem Team in West Malling



20mph area set to grow?

Trudy Dean writes: "KCC have at last agreed to begin consultations about extending the 20mph limit in West Malling. I've had to pay for the consultation from my councillors Community Fund, but this is a huge step forward.

Now we have the opportunity to include many more of the major residential roads, and routes to school. Norman, Offham, Fartherwell, Ewell, Alma, Sandown, Epsom and St Leonards would all be included together with More Park Primary school, the St Thomas More Church, and the railway station.

Check out the back page map of the area suggested for a 20mph limit to find your road. The blue roads are ones where 20mph limits are being proposed, or already exist. The red roads are routes which can be included only if money can be found for solid engineered features, like platforms or chicanes, to bring speeds down to 20mph.



Nick and Trudy at the current boundary of the 20mph zone on Norman Road

Year after year when we survey local people, one of the top complaints is always about the speed of vehicles. As well as the safety of residents and especially children, people complain of noise, pollution and vibration.

So please give us your views by email, Freepost, or online survey (details on the back page). We want to make sure the final scheme which is consulted on is the one most people are happy with."

Trudy chosen to stand again

Local Lib Dems have chosen Trudy Dean to stand as their candidate for Kent County Council in the May 2021 elections. Trudy is currently County Councillor for West Malling, East Malling and Larkfield. She is the Chairman of West Malling Parish Council.

Nick Stapleton is also standing in Malling North for the Leybourne and Snodland Area.

Trudy says "In these difficult times, it's not easy to see what the future holds. But I will continue to work to keep West Malling the special and neighbourly place it is to live. The Age Concern Centre in Norman Road needs to open services to the community again, our open spaces must be protected, and our High Street helped to flourish.

Keeping local people informed has always been important to me and I now send out a direct mail online local newsletter roughly every fortnight. If you would like to receive it, email me on Trudy.Dean@kent.gov.uk

Sign up to our email bulletin! Email Trudy.Dean@kent.gov.uk

We are also on social media!

Facebook: West Malling & Leybourne Matters

Twitter: @WMallingLibDems

Cheers for Hannah!

Well done Hannah Rose of Rose's Coffee and Juice, Swan Street. Her crowd funding for the High Street Christmas lights has topped £7,000 towards to the £10,000 target. The fund was set up to replace the cut in the annual Borough Council Grant and the lockdown, making normal donations from shops and businesses difficult. To make a donation go to www.gofundme.com/west-mallings-christmas-lights

Where will you be on May 6th 2021?

Will you be on holiday, or visiting family or friends, or at home due to illness? Right now none of us know. But on that day Kent residents will be choosing their Kent Police Crime Commissioner and their County Councillor. So make sure you don't lose your vote, and apply to vote by post. Anyone can have a postal vote.

To apply to vote by post, download the postal vote application form, print it out and complete it by hand. Make sure you provide your date of birth and signature. You can then either scan the completed form and email it to voting@tmhc.gov.uk or post to Electoral Services, Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council, Gibson Building, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling, ME19 4LZ.



Forty Acres

As we write this article, the Inquiry into the appeal by Wates on Forty Acres is half completed. We have another four days to go. Thanks to the local residents who gave evidence to the Inquiry. The first day was dominated by discussion of the five year land supply. TMBC say they have 4.3 years, but developers say they have only 2.1 years worth. We also learnt that most Boroughs have a Borough Wide Environmental Landscape Assessment, setting out which landscapes are special and to be protected, but TMBC does not.

Wates say that their proposal does not close the gap between communities because Leybourne, Larkfield and East Malling are really one big suburban settlement, and the gap between houses in Leybourne nearest to the A228 roundabout and West Malling is about 425 metres, which isn't changed by the Wates development.

The Inspector will take several weeks to make her decision.

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to the crowdfunding appeal which has now passed £10,000.



Broadwater Farm Application expected before Christmas

Berkeley Homes who are behind the proposed Broadwater Farm development have decided to submit a planning application ahead of the Local Plan being finalised, as they are entitled to do. The application is expected to be submitted before Christmas. Ahead of that Berkeley Homes have been carrying out a pre-application consultation. Information can be found at <https://www.berkeley-broadwater.co.uk>

As part of the allocation for housing in the draft Local Plan, development had been confined largely to the area south of Pikey Lane. Berkeley Homes are now proposing that 7 hectares of playing fields for the proposed schools should be sited north of Pikey Lane and that Pikey Lane itself should be closed to traffic. They say Kent County Council require this so as to achieve a unified school site.

At present there is still no firm proposal to deliver an access road from the development directly into Kings Hill. Instead, the development would be served solely by a spine road leading from the development through the middle of the Broadwater Farm and New Barns Conservation Area, joining the A228 close to West Malling station.

Once the planning application has been submitted we will share details on our West Malling and Leybourne Matters Facebook page.



No surgeries at present - but we are still here to help

Since March 2020, Trudy Dean and Nick Stapleton have been unable to hold their monthly residents' surgery. As we are writing this, we are in Tier 3 and we don't know what the next few months will bring. Nick says "Whilst we can't currently meet with you in person, we are still here to help, and have been working just as we were before lockdown. If you have any issues, comments or suggestions, please do contact us using the details on the back page." (The photo above was taken in 2019, pre-pandemic).

We would also like to take this opportunity to wish you all (an early!) seasons greetings, and let's hope for a better 2021!

Planning Matters

The application for demolition of 25, West St and replacement by 3 terraced houses and two semi detached houses has been refused. Officers said rightly that it was over intensive development, and inappropriate for the Conservation Area.

An application for two "self build" houses on Norman Road between "Countryways" and the bungalow near the village hall has still to be decided by TMBC.

Rotten egg smell

The awful smells in recent weeks in parts of West Malling, Kings Hill and Leybourne have come from test runs of the new food waste treatment plant at Blaise Farm Quarry, King Hill.

The plant material used to test the equipment has included maize and potatoes which have generated excess hydrogen sulphide giving off the rotten egg smell. This is not the normal material which the equipment will be dealing with. A permit was granted in mid November for commercial operations to start. Food from household waste collected from doorstep caddies will be treated in sealed containers, producing gas, fertiliser and material which can be used in landscaping roads and land raising.

No odours should escape from this process which has the snappy title of 'anaerobic

digestion'. Please report any further problems with smells to peter.thomason@tmbc.gov.uk

Dirty signs and broken posts

Nick Stapleton writes:

Over the past few weeks I have been reporting a lot of dirty or broken signs and sign posts across Leybourne and West Malling. For example, the tilted bus stop post outside Boots on West Malling High Street, the no entry signs at the end of Birling Road and the STOP sign that is almost constantly facing the wrong way at the end of Swan Street.

If you know of any broken or dirty signs, please do let us know and we can organise a repair.



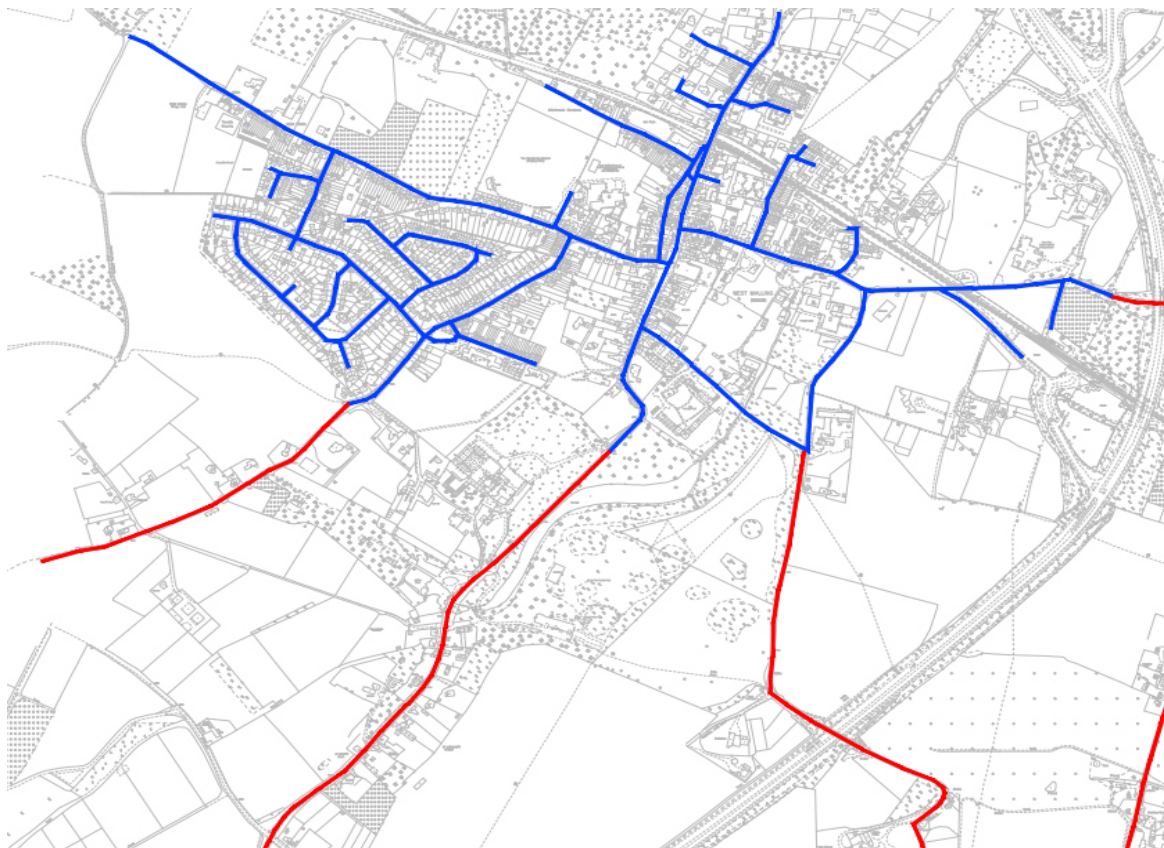
Nick says "Congrats to Lucas Hair and SB Hair & Beauty for winning the Christmas window display competition."

"There were so many brilliant windows across the town and well done to all of the shops that made such an effort!"

The Local Plan

The draft Local Plan setting out where houses would be built in Tonbridge and Malling until 2031 was submitted for government approval in January 2019. Inspectors began their first meeting on the Plan in October, with other meetings planned for November and the New Year. But, within days of beginning, the government Inspectors called a halt to the proceedings.

The Inspectors said they had serious concerns that the TMBC Local Plan had not met Government regulations, and said they would write a letter to the Council as soon as possible to explain these concerns. However, at the time of writing this Headline, it has still not been received. A common theory is that TMBC should have offered Sevenoaks Borough some help with meeting their targets since the whole of Sevenoaks Borough is in the Green Belt. Other people suggest that the cause of the problem is that TMBC have failed to provide a five year supply of residential land ready for development as the government requires.



Complete this slip and return it to 'FREEPOST, KENT LIB DEMS'. Alternatively, you can contact us using the details below, or complete a short survey online at:

www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/BFXWC7Y

Do you support the proposed extension of the 20mph zone in West Malling?

YES ☐

NO ☐

Please explain why you do or don't support the proposal -

Name.....Phone.....

Address.....Email.....

Your local team

Get in touch!



Nick Stapleton Borough Cllr for WMalling & Leybourne - nicholasgstapleton@gmail.com

Trudy Dean County Cllr for WMalling, EMalling & Larkfield - trudy.dean@kent.gov.uk

Bill Banks Parish Cllr for Leybourne - bill.banks1700@gmail.com

Nick Taplin Parish Cllr for Leybourne - nick.taplin.libdems@gmail.com

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