



Tony Hills KCC member for the Romney Marsh Division Report August 2024

Water Quality

We continue to have ongoing problems with water quality in Hythe Bay. We have local beaches of Littlestone and St Marys Bay, both rated as poor for bathing and these beaches the EA recommend no bathing. Dymchurch is heading in the same direction, I check weekly the latest Defra water quality results for our beaches, levels of Intestinal Enterococci (IE) and Escherichia coli (EC) are a cause for concern, not good news. St Marys Bay slightly down but still concerning, we need more urgency from the EA to find the sources of the ongoing pollution, we have only three months to find answers and get them fixed. The EA will decide at the end of the monitoring season (October) then announce how they will rate the beaches for next season by December. I will be demanding from the EA regular updates.

Water Management

My KCC working party for the Marsh has been successful in identifying positive solutions to help manage 'surface water' flooding as well as managing 'ground water' on the Marsh. The report was presented to my KCC flood and water management committee on the 16th of July. It was supported, having presented it to the chair of the Southeast flood committee for their consideration. I have been asked to prepare a bid for 'local levy' to go to the regional committee to agree funding to design a scheme to protect the Romney Marsh from flooding into the next century. I have my KCC officers working on this.

Highways

I had a site meeting with KCC officers to look at the roads from Hammonds Corner to Dungeness A power station which are in a poor condition. But at the last Dungeness Site Stakeholders Group meeting, I was informed that the NDA are now proposing to get their 'inert' material from Nickolls quarry down the Jurys Gap road on the way to Camber. So, we can expect the proposed 1500 lorry movements will come up to the Army Camp and use Robin Hood lane to connect to the Dungeness Road

KCC continues to maintain our highways on a reduced budget. But remember safety comes first, so if you find what you consider to be dangerous, please report it.

<https://webapps.kent.gov.uk/KCC.KHSFaultsGIS.Web.Sites.Public/ReportAFault.aspx>

Here are the latest details of our pothole blitz...

Pothole Blitz 2024 Project Update

Now into the third month of the Pot Hole Blitz 2024 project,

I am pleased to confirm the following progress update as of 21st June; • Total meterage of patching delivered - 138,557.61 • Total potholes filled – 4110 • 77% of the works have now been raised and passed to the contractors • 62% of the works have been completed on the network • Works will continue into mid-October.

The European 'Entry Exit Scheme'

Entry Exit Scheme progress update EES is a new electronic system that will collect and process data on the entry, exit, and refusal of third country nationals crossing the external borders of the Schengen Area*. EES will be used by border guards and enforcement authorities to track the movements of non-EU citizens and to prevent irregular migration and security threats. EES is currently scheduled to be implemented in the Autumn of 2024, with October 6th being highlighted as a probable date. The port of Dover and Eurotunnel have juxtaposed borders, meaning that at these two portals all checks are carried out this side of the channel.

Eurotunnel are developing a location within their site to be able to carry out registration. Port of Dover has very limited space in the buffer zone between the Eastern Docks roundabout and the French Customs booths. Currently, the buffer zone within the Port is the only area where EES registration can be carried out, meaning lengthy delays for all tourist traffic entering the port. Since the UK left the EU, we have seen delays at the portals of over 14 hours, we expect such queues to become far more regular with impacts on local communities across East Kent. Dover TAP and Operation Brock could become a permanent feature, rather than at peak times. KCC and the Kent and Medway Resilience Forum (KMRF) continue to prepare for the implementation. There is still no confirmation of an actual implementation date. Traffic builds up will make it more difficult for Marsh traffic to move east and access to the M20.

Housing Targets

Yes, we need more housing especially affordable, but at the District Council I will oppose any major housing development on the Romney Marsh. The figures I saw displayed in KM Kent Online, declared a new yearly target of 838 houses for Folkestone & Hythe (average build 2022/23 462 homes). Until we can sort out the threat to the Marsh from flooding and surface water, making it more resilient to ongoing climate change.

Bus Transport

I believe the Dial-a-ride scheme is due to start in September. The Romney Marsh Community Hub are working hard, With Kent funding the first year. This scheme is vital to allow Marsh residents to get to hospital for checkups, appointments etc.

The Romney Marsh Community Hub are training drivers and if you are interested in joining the scheme give them a call 01797 363 888 for more details.

Tony

Tony Hills, Kent County Councillor for Romney Marsh. F&H District councillor for Romney Marsh Ward. For details on how I will use your information please click [here](#) for my privacy notice. Home Telephone 01797 321246 Mobile 07860 295730