

REPORT TO WOULDHAM PARISH COUNCIL 7th October 2025

By the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Councillors for

Aylesford North and North Downs Ward

Councillors Dave Davis, Alex McDermott and Roger Dalton

LOCAL PLAN – UPDATE

1. We are getting close to the start of the Regulation 18 consultation. There are currently discussions happening at TMBC as to what this might look like, given most of the evidence underpinning the Local Plan has now been completed. To meet the key December 2026 deadline for final submission to the Planning Inspectorate, it is vital this consultation takes place. Your preparations need to cater for this.
2. A key parish document to have up to date and to raise during the consultation where appropriate is the Parish Capital Plan.

DEVOLUTION

3. On Wednesday 3 September, Kent's councils asked its advisors KPMG, whose work is being paid for by the government, to look in more detail at two options for unitary councils and the areas they should cover. These are options 3a and 4b as below. You will note they have the same geography for us – combining the boroughs of Tonbridge and Malling, Maidstone, Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells.
4. Once KPMG and council officers have worked together to draw up business cases for each of the options, each council will go through its own decision-making process to decide which option it supports. Business plans need to be submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government by 28 November. The final decision rests with ministers.
5. Kent County Council, which prefers one Council covering the whole of Kent and Medway, has effectively withdrawn from this work after its preferred model was not shortlisted on 3 September and is putting forward its own submission.

Three unitaries

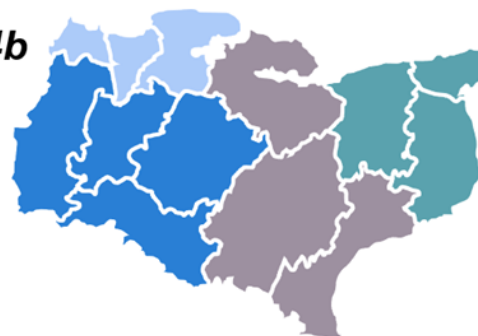
3a



A three unitary option with a north, east and west unitary.

N	W	E
686,716	567,062	677,906

4b



N	W	E	M
528,337	567,062	424,559	411,726

A four unitary option with unitaries in the north, west, centre and east with Folkestone and Hythe in the central unitary.

PARISH PARTNERSHIP PANEL

6. We did report on this at your last meeting but this is a fuller update with links. At the Parish Partnership Panel on 28th August there was an excellent and full briefing on the state of affairs on Devolution and the Local Plan, as at that date. Much of the detail is still valid. We recommend it to all councillors. You Tube Chanel link to the meeting is at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WiFHmJm6isY>

7. The minutes of the meeting are also full of more detail on this and the Local Plan and can be seen and downloaded from:

<https://democracy.tmbc.gov.uk//ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=165&MId=5984&Ver=4>

A229 BLUE BELL HILL ROAD REPAIRS

8. Though a KCC matter, you should note the extensive road works going into the A2229 on Blue Bell Hill in the coming months. Your clerk will be aware of this work. TMBC are checking the extent of this work at present, to see if it affects any of our operations.

9. There does seem to be a mass of traffic moving through Burham which is probably coming along Pilgrims Way with long convoys early in the morning and conflicting with the school bus runs.

MR17 Closure

10. Though not in your parish, this footpath will affect Peters Village residents. Kent County Council has made an Order, the effect of which is to temporarily close Public Footpath MR17 between New Court Road and Old Church Road from 22 September 2025. The path will be closed for a maximum of six months, although it is expected that it will reopen 31 October 2025. The path is closed because of repairs to the embankment.

WOULDHAM RECREATION GROUND WALL

11. We are pleased to see a positive approach from Trenport to the Parish Council trying to enable you to issue licences to put gates in the recreation ground wall for those residents who want it. We realise there are details to be worked out with residents on this.