

July 2021

# KALC NEWS

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## Boundary Commission review

### of Parliamentary Constituencies consultation

As highlighted in the June KALC News and the June and July KALC CEO Bulletin, the Boundary Commission for England (BCE) has published its initial proposals for new Parliamentary Constituency boundaries. BCE has produced a partner pack and anyone can respond to the consultation **which closes on 2 August**. The proposals include increasing the number of Parliamentary Constituencies in Kent from 17 to 18, with changes to existing boundaries in some areas. For further details, please visit <https://boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk/2023-review/>

**We would strongly encourage all member councils to consider the proposal for their Parliamentary Constituency area and to respond directly to the BCE if it has any concerns/issues with the proposals.** KALC's long-held position has been to not respond as an organisation to proposed Boundary changes, as they can be quite divisive between individual Parish Councils. Some might like a proposed change to a particular area, while other member councils might not as they have strong individual links with existing MPs/boundaries. We are encouraging all member councils to consider the proposals and for councils to respond from their own perspective, as the Boundary Commission must take into account the input of electors in reaching an equitable outcome.

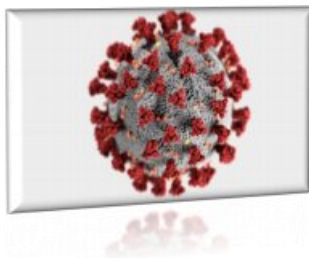
### KALC 2021 AGM being held virtually on Saturday 13th November 2021

The above was agreed at the Executive Committee meeting on 17 July. We are delighted to confirm that Rachel Coxcoon, Director of Climate Guide and Director of the Climate Emergency Support Programme at the Centre for Sustainable Energy has agreed to give a presentation on the Climate Emergency Action Plan for local government, communication and carbon footprinting. Some of you may have seen Rachel's articles in the Clerks Magazine.

Motions for the AGM will need to be submitted to the KALC Chief Executive ([chief.executive@kentalc.gov.uk](mailto:chief.executive@kentalc.gov.uk)) by **Friday 17 September 2021**.

The KALC Executive Committee also agreed at its 17 July meeting to accept the recommendations from the KALC Climate Change Advisory Committee to hold all KALC Working Group, Advisory Committee, Finance & General Purposes Sub-Committee and Executive Committee meetings virtually to reduce KALC's mileage for members and staff and help minimise our carbon footprint.

## COVID 19 UPDATES



The Government recently issued its plans for Stage 4 of the Lifting of Lockdown at a press conference on Monday 12 July. This set out the “roadmap” for 19 July 2021 and you can read about those changes here: [COVID-19 Coronavirus restrictions: what you can and cannot do - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/coronavirus-restrictions-what-you-can-and-cannot-do) There are likely to be updates over the coming months, depending on the science and data that ensues over the summer. It is, therefore, very important to keep up to date!

## LOCAL RESPONSE



Protect Kent and Medway is still the site you should visit for local responses to the current state of play in terms of COVID 19 rules.

The webpage has lots of regional resources for Kent and Medway, but will still direct users to the GOV.UK site for further information, which is detailed above.

You can access the Protect Kent and Medway webpage by following this link: [Protect Kent and Medway - Kent County Council](https://www.kent.gov.uk/protect-kent-and-medway)



## OTHER USEFUL RESOURCES

The KALC website is always updated on a regular basis with current links and information here: [Home - KALC \(kentalc.gov.uk\)](https://www.kentalc.gov.uk)

Likewise, there are further resources and updates via the NALC website here: [National Association of Local Councils - Information on COVID 19](https://www.nalc.gov.uk/information-on-covid-19)

## LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT AT KALC

KALC is still running all of its Learning and Development opportunities in an online format for the foreseeable future. We are looking to start “face to face” events from January 2022, which will run alongside our virtual events and the Nimble/NALC/KALC eLearning programme.

We begin our Autumn programme of events on 2 September with our online Dynamic Councillor workshop. This has proved very popular in its present form and is a good way for your new councillors (or those who might need a refresher) to learn about their role in your community. Key dates for officers diaries are our annual **Clerks' and Finance Conferences which have now been arranged for September and October.**

Further details can be sought via our website in due course when we have drafted programmes and have confirmed speakers for those events.



## WHAT'S ON?

Here are our current events and ones to look forward to:

- 5 August – Clerks Networking Event (pilot event for clerks in the Canterbury area)
- 2 September – Dynamic Councillor Workshop
- 9 September – Data Protection for Councillors
- 28 September – Annual Clerks Conference
- 29th September – Public Speaking Skills for Councillors
- 9 October - An Introduction to Project Management
- 14 October - Data Protection for Clerks and Officers
- 19 October - Freedom of Information Skills for Local Councils
- 20 October – Annual Finance Conference



## KALC BITESIZE LEARNING

### Summer 2021 - Newly Launched Courses!

KALC has its summer programme of Bitesize Learning and Development courses in partnership with the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and Nimble eLearning.

Nimble eLearning courses are designed to be short: in most cases, no longer than an hour in duration. The emphasis is on subjects you would like to gain more information from, but don't want to spend too much time in doing so. KALC has handpicked several webinar based sessions that you can join, **and all of them come priced at a very reasonable price of £14 plus VAT. Non Member Councils are charged at £28 plus VAT**

#### What Can We Expect?

- An online course delivered by NALC and Nimble eLearning that you can work through at your own pace, that shouldn't take too much time.
- A learning outcome that is suitable for your needs and simple to achieve.
- Various subjects to choose from that enhance your Learning and Development aims for the Local Council tier.
- The opportunity to boost your Career and Professional Development (CPD) portfolio: most courses come with a validated CPD point system, and the minimum is 1.5 CPD Credits per course.

Visit our website here:

[https://www.kentalc.gov.uk/Bitesize\\_Training\\_31970.aspx](https://www.kentalc.gov.uk/Bitesize_Training_31970.aspx) for further details

We will continue to add new subjects during the year and there will be no time limit as to when you sign up for the session.

#### Here are our latest courses:

- Team leadership essentials
- Data Protection Essentials
- Anti-bribery essentials
- Fire safety essentials
- Home working essentials
- Information security awareness
- Introduction to Local Councils
- Introduction to Planning for Parish Councils
- Display Equipment Assessment
- Managing and Reducing Stress

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Local Councils**

**Dover District Council Offices  
White Cliffs Business Park  
Whitfield, Dover  
CT16 3PJ**

**Email: [kalc@kentalc.gov.uk](mailto:kalc@kentalc.gov.uk)**



The KALC website is accessible to all member councils. If you are a clerk/RFO or a councillor in our membership, you should obtain a "Log In" password. It's easy to do, and means that you can have information at your fingertips!

You can do so by emailing Laura Dyer: Click on this link [Sign Up for KALC Website Access](#) or by emailing Charmaine Keatley here: [Sign Up for KALC Website Access](#)

We look forward to hearing from you!





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Kent Association of Local Councils

## How to Book Our Events...

Kent Association of Local Councils uses its website and Eventbrite to announce its events so that delegates can choose the workshop or conference they wish to attend. At the present time, all our events are delivered online via the Zoom video conferencing programme, which we find suits everyone's needs when we cannot deliver traditional face to face venue events. Both Eventbrite and Zoom are easy to use with a few simple pointers.

We will always send out a "flyer" to inform our membership of upcoming events, so look out for them in your inbox.

There will always be a hyperlink for you to click on, which will direct you to our website in the first place.

The date and time will be shown here, with a brief description of the event. Click on the relevant link and that will take you straight to the Eventbrite booking page for the event you would like to join.

We strongly encourage individual Councillors to sign up for an event via the Clerk to the Council. However, when that is not possible, please check with your clerk before booking your own place.

There are two sections that need to be completed. One is the "ticket buyer" - this is the Clerk or Responsible Finance Officer. Invoices are generated automatically from the site, so you should know what is payable to KALC immediately. You should insert the name and contact details of the Clerk/RFO here so they receive our invoice at once. KALC no longer sends out invoices for Training and Events.

The second section refers to the "Attendee". This is for the individual who will be attending the event. It is particularly important that the email address for that person is entered and is correct as this is where all joining instructions will be sent. Do double check the form before you hit the "Send" button.

If all your details are correct, you will receive a notification via Eventbrite (not KALC) one week before and again within 48 hours of the event that informs you of:

- The date and time of registration
- 
- What you might need to read beforehand and any links that will provide that information
- 
- The joining instructions - a link to the Zoom account and Meeting ID should that fail.
- 

We also provide contact details so that if you encounter any issue on the day, we can help you as much as possible.

That should mean that you get the best outcome from attending one of our online courses.

We are always happy to help if you have any problems in booking your place but hope that this guide will help you to book an event at your own leisure.

## Dive Into Our Social Media!

*In the beginning, we used to ask - "Are you on Facebook?" ...*

From its humble beginnings around fifteen years ago, platforms such as Facebook and Twitter have evolved and have given way to other more "instant" sites that mean news is never far away.

The more traditional apps and sites such as those already mentioned now work hand in hand with others such as Instagram and Whatsapp. It is no coincidence that these are part of the Facebook Family.

Likewise, YouTube is from the same stable as Google, and Apple has a myriad of different apps that are exclusive to their platform too.

Local councils were sometimes slow to put their presence on any of these sites due to different constraints on publicity, confidentiality and so on.

However, it is clear that during the COVID 19 Pandemic, usage of them has increased greatly and our sector is now embracing the most popular platforms to disseminate news to great advantage.

Many of our member Councils have site pages on Facebook and quite a few are now using Instagram as a "go to" way of getting news out to residents quickly. It seems as if Facebook is now seen as a platform for an older age group in general. Whilst Instagram seems to be fashionable amongst those who are under 35, it is now gaining a positive reputation with older users.

KALC has had a presence on both platforms for some time, but has generally been used when we have had a specific campaign to promote.

We are now keen to use our Social Media accounts to promote as much as possible, with links to our website and to let you know any "breaking news" that you can access instantly. Our Facebook page doesn't allow commenting and is purely used as an information point. However, we are



asking your councils to "**Follow Us on Facebook**" as much as possible. You can do this by clicking on this link: [Kent Alc | Facebook](#)

We are also encouraging you to find us on Instagram and become one of our followers here : [Kent Assoc of Local Councils \(@kentalc\)](#) • [Instagram photos and videos](#)

Include us in your posts if you want us to know what you are doing by adding us in a conversation as @kentalc. We also use a hashtag: #kentalc which will also alert KALC to your posts.

It is clear that whilst we know that Social Media is here to stay, it is also evident that our tier needs to be adept at using it in the best way possible. Make sure you put your good news in a place where your residents can see it. Encourage your communities to "follow" you, but make sure that your comment settings suit your way of communication and don't invite unwelcome activity.

As a final point, there is an excellent article from the Local Government Association which will give councils some ideas on best practice for Social Media. You can access it here: [Strategic social media | Local Government Association](#)

Likewise NALC has some good templates for social media in its member pages here: [Templates \(nalc.gov.uk\)](#)

In the meantime, we look forward to seeing you on our sites and hope to follow you via ours!





## NEWS FROM OUR NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

**The Civility and Respect Project Working Group** agreed at its latest meeting on 28 June 2021 a joint statement committing to promote civility and respect in public life. The statement, which summarises the core aims and values for securing permanent change in the local (parish and town) council sector, reads:



“Civility and respect should be at the heart of public life and good governance is fundamental to ensuring an effective and well-functioning democracy at all levels.

The intimidation, abuse, bullying and harassment of councillors, professional officers and staff, in person or online, is totally unacceptable; whether that is by councillors, professional officers, staff or members of the public.

This can prevent councils from functioning effectively, councillors from representing local people, discourage people from getting involved including standing for election, and undermine public confidence and trust in local democracy.

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC), county associations and One Voice Wales (OVW), as the membership organisations representing the first tier of local government in England and Wales, and the Society of Local

Council Clerks (SLCC) as the professional body for clerks, are committed to working together to promote civility and respect in public life, good governance, positive debate and supporting the well-being of councillors, professional officers and staff.

To that end the group will be working to deliver tangible resources, actions and interventions in four main areas: providing councils with the tools to support good governance; lobbying to strengthen the standards regime and encourage more people to get involved; training; and processes to intervene to provide support to struggling councils.”



The meeting of the working group also finalised plans for the appointment of a fixed-term project officer, funded by NALC and SLCC, to drive forward the projects' key priorities and tangible objectives. Other issues covered at the meeting, which was held online, included a local resolution protocol, links to the Improvement and Development Board (IDB) and lobbying.



## NEWS FROM OUR NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

**nalc**

News from Our National Association

### English Rural launch a new guide on rural housing for councillors



English Rural launched their new guide (*Parish Councillors' Guide to Rural Affordable Housing*) aimed at local (parish and town) councillors on affordable rural housing on 5 July 2021.

Rural communities can only thrive if good quality affordable homes are available to those who live and work in rural areas. Yet, in many rural communities, affordable housing is lacking, or in some cases, absent. This is not a new problem, but one that has grown worse. Across the country, local councils have supported and been a critical partner in delivering small scale affordable

rural housing developments. These have provided high-quality homes that are affordable to run.

The guide is an interactive document packed with information, case studies and short videos. Additionally, it takes you through the different options available, the stages in the development process, who the key players are, and insights on the technical matters that help make decisions. The guide will help you deliver new homes that you can be proud of, and your community thrive.

English Rural is a specialist provider of community-led, affordable rural homes established in 1991. They are one of the leading national advocates on affordable rural housing issues.

You can access the guide by using this link:

[parish-councillors-guide-to-rural-affordable-housing.pdf](https://www.ruralhousingalliance.net/parish-councillors-guide-to-rural-affordable-housing.pdf)  
([ruralhousingalliance.net](https://www.ruralhousingalliance.net))

### Stop Press: NALC has launched an online event regarding Rural Housing:

**MAKING RURAL HOUSING MORE AFFORDABLE 17 NOVEMBER 2021**

For booking, pricing and further information, follow this link:

[MAKING RURAL HOUSING MORE AFFORDABLE \(nalc.gov.uk\)](https://www.nalc.gov.uk/MAKING-RURAL-HOUSING-MORE-AFFORDABLE)

## NEWS FROM OUR NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

# inalc

News from Our National Association

### NALC hosts historic first meeting of women councillors

**NALC held its first National Network: Women councillors meeting on 5 July 2021**, which aims to help women councillors from across England's local (parish and town) councils to connect, learn, support and share good practices.

The network chaired by NALC chair, Cllr Sue Baxter, discussed the issues facing women councillors such as behaviour, progressing into leadership roles, using gender-neutral terms and accessing support and advice.

Cllr Baxter also took the opportunity to thank all women councillors for all their efforts in supporting their communities during the pandemic, as part of Thank You Day.

Cllr Baxter, said: "I was thrilled to host the first meeting of the network, as this is something I've felt strongly about setting up for some time, particularly as the first-ever woman chair of NALC. Over the last few years, NALC's #MakeAChange campaign has aimed to encourage more people all backgrounds and experiences to get involved in their community and stand for election as

councillors. I was delighted that so many councillors who came to the meeting were new to local councils and just starting out on the rewarding journey to make a change where they live. The meeting provided an invaluable opportunity for new and more experienced councillors to discuss issues of common interest and provide mutual support, and identify ways of staying in touch with each other. I'm keen for more women councillors to join the network and this first meeting was a really important and positive start."

The network is one of a series of new networks NALC has established this year. Other networks focus on coastal communities, the LGBT+ community, young councillors, with more to be announced.

To find out more and to join the network, please contact NALC at [policycomms@nalc.gov.uk](mailto:policycomms@nalc.gov.uk)



The NALC Star Council Awards are now at the Finalist stage and you are invited to vote for Council of the Year. For this category only, local (parish and town) councils, county associations and members of the public have the chance to determine who has won this category by voting (only one vote per local council, county association and member of the public will be permitted). You can find out more by following this link: [STAR COUNCIL AWARDS 2021 \(nalc.gov.uk\)](https://nalc.gov.uk)

One of our clerks, **Aniko Szocs, Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council** is a finalist for the title of Clerk of the Year! We wish her the very best of luck in the category when the award ceremony takes place, online, later in the year.

## NEWS FROM OUR NATIONAL ASSOCIATION



### Upcoming Online Events From NALC...

News from Our National Association

NALC has arranged some major online events over the next few months:

#### THE FUTURE OF HIGH STREETS AND TOWN CENTRES - 29 SEPTEMBER 2021

High streets and town centres are at the heart of local communities. They provide essential services, facilities and spaces that bring people together. Yet 2020 was the worst year for the high street in 25 years, with the closure of many shops and job losses. Footfall has been declining while online shopping has increased, with the pandemic accelerating both. How do we reinvigorate and repurpose high streets and town centres?

With markets leading the return of the high street, how can they play a vital part in the recovery? What role should local (parish and town) councils play in helping build back better? The event will look at the importance of high streets and town centres and their ever-changing landscape, how to revive them, consider what's next for the future, and provide expert insights and advice.

#### FUTURE COMMUNITIES 2021 — 2 DECEMBER 2021

You will have a chance to discuss and debate the key issues facing your communities, network and share good practices with fellow councillors, clerks and council staff from across England, and connect

with sector-specific suppliers in our innovative online exhibition.

The online conference includes:

- Opportunity to hear direct from the NALC chair
- Five inspiring and thought-provoking keynote sessions which include a Q&A segment
- Four practical workshops running simultaneously (repeated twice) providing advice, guidance and insights
- A dedicated sector-specific exhibition marketplace with information on products and services with 1-2-1 meetings available in real-time
- Meet the conference headline sponsors (BHIB Councils Insurance, Blachere Illumination and CCLA)
- All keynote and workshop sessions recorded and available after the event
- Two coffee breaks and a lunch break to refresh, network and visit the exhibition marketplace
- Online cafe to meet and connect with other attendees



Further information, pricing and booking can be found by using this link:

[Upcoming events \(nalc.gov.uk\)](https://www.nalc.gov.uk)

## NEWS FROM KENT COUNTY COUNCIL



### Are you a Mature Driver, or maybe you have older parents?

KCC Road Safety have just released a duo of Let's Go Mature Driver videos aimed at those 60+ but any driver may pick up a tip or two. The aim is to raise awareness at what makes drivers vulnerable, what risks they may encounter, increase drivers' knowledge of age related changes and how to enhance their safety.

Vision, Fatigue, Where we Crash, Speed Limits, Eco Driving and Smart

Motorways are some of the subjects covered.

Interested? Then contact us on [roadsafety@kent.gov.uk](mailto:roadsafety@kent.gov.uk) if you would like to view these videos. As soon as they are available, we will send the link to you for viewing.

Let's all drive safely for longer.

### **A five-year plan for managing Kent's £24 billion highway network of roads, footways, bridges, drains and lights has been published by Kent County Council.**

The new Highways Asset Management Plan brings together the entirety of KCC's highways assets to provide a safer, more sustainable, and more resilient highway network in the future.

The document aims to move towards treating the management and maintenance of highway assets as a multi-year endeavour, rather than an annual one, highlighting the importance of consistency of funding and approach over that longer period, to enable KCC to deliver a more efficient service with better condition outcomes.

We have made significant advances in our management and delivery of highway maintenance in recent years and have been able to make well-informed decisions around service levels, priorities, risks, and our future approach, so that resource is allocated appropriately.

Nevertheless, KCC is in an increasingly challenging environment, with deteriorating assets, increasing traffic volumes, uncertainty around future national funding and, more recently, facing the impacts of the global pandemic. The document not only details how KCC will care for its most valuable asset but is an investment strategy and action plan for the next five years.

The new plan explains how asset management contributes to achieving strategic outcomes (Part 6 of main document), including environmental, active travel and road safety priorities, and also describes how assets are managed and how decisions are made based on risk (Part 3).

It goes on to set out what is known about current and predicted asset condition based on different levels of future funding – see Part 4 of main document and Appendix A. Importantly, as we clearly cannot afford to do everything we would like to, it explains our service levels in terms of what we do, what we do not, alongside an assessment of associated risks – see Appendix B.

For the first time, we have published as part of the plan a detailed forward works programme (see Appendix C), so that the people of Kent know what maintenance is planned. For some assets, the covers the next five years, whilst for others this includes the next two years, with an intention to extend this further.

The plan also includes an action plan (see Part 6 of main document) to further improve our approach to asset management, contributing to achieving environmental, active travel and road safety objectives.

Our new plan for the coming years will deliver a more efficient highway maintenance service with better outcomes, and enable us to deliver a safer, more sustainable, and more resilient highway network. It also means we can evidence the need for additional Department for Transport funding.



## NEWS FROM KENT COUNTY COUNCIL



### Updates from Kent Street Lighting

Following the success of previous years Festive Lighting and Hanging Basket applications the Street Lighting Team would like to thank all of you who have submitted your applications in good time for us to complete any additional testing which may be required. We thought now would be an ideal time to remind you of the process for Attachments to Illuminated Street Furniture on the Highway and other ancillary works and why additional testing is needed for attachments. Already we have received many Festive Lighting applications for this coming December, the sooner the better.

#### Why we need to check assets?

Street lighting columns are designed to have a bracket and lantern attached and nothing else. Any attachment creates an additional load therefore we need to ensure that our assets are not going to fail if an attachment is added.

To ensure that public safety is maintained, we firstly need to know which assets you would like use for attachments. We need to know the exact dimensions and weight of the attachment and have a photograph of the equipment or the manufacturers specification. We will then carry out a check of our asset records, which includes structural testing records, any existing attachments, any outstanding works orders and so on. The Area Street Lighting Engineer is also consulted to see if they are aware of anything that may stop permission being granted. Following these checks, if the assets are potentially suitable for the attachment, we will contact you to advise if further structural testing is required.

#### Difference in structural tests

We have been asked 'If you structurally test your assets, then why is an additional test required?'. We carry out structural testing of our assets as part of our maintenance regime. This test covers the integrity of the base of the column and the joint at the shoulder of the column. This test takes into account the weight of the bracket and lantern but does not allow for any other attachments.

If an attachment is to be added, we need to know if the column is strong enough to take the additional load. This is not just the weight of the attachment but also the surface area which has an impact on the wind loading. This test that is carried out is called a 'load test' and is required for all attachments, with the exception of wrap around garland lights. A load test is carried out by a specialist contractor and the results are guaranteed for 3 years. The test will also recommend the height at which it is acceptable to install the attachment. The load test and report can take some time to carry out, therefore it is recommended you send in your applications well in advance of the date that you require the attachments to be installed. Should the report show that an asset has failed Load Testing we will not necessarily replace the column as it may still be structurally sound, if this is the case, we will suggest that alternative decorations are sought.

#### Other requirements

In the application there are certain conditions that must be evidenced before a permit will be authorised. These are in place to ensure that we have competent contractors working on our assets and where energy

## NEWS FROM KENT COUNTY COUNCIL



being used, that this is paid for. It is essential that this evidence is provided as soon as possible to prevent the application being delayed.

### **Fees**

In 2016 fees were introduced for the processing of permits. This recovers the administrative and engineer time taken to review each permit. The fee does not include any load testing that may be required, and this is chargeable to the applicant.

A new permit application or change in assets to be used currently attracts a fee of £103.00. A repeat application using the same assets is charged at £30.00. Fees are reviewed each year and new rates are published in April. The application form can also be found on the KCC website: -

[https://www.kent.gov.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0014/5261/Attachments-to-street-lights-licence.pdf](https://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0014/5261/Attachments-to-street-lights-licence.pdf)

An application is required every year so that we can carry out the checks identified above and verify that assets are still suitable to be used.

Whilst we would like to accommodate all requests for attachments, this is just not possible. I hope that the above explains why we sometimes have to refuse or adjust an application.

We try to process every application within 28 days, but please feel free to send applications in early for certain events. For further information, please do not hesitate to contact Sharon Robbins via e-mail on [sharon.robbins@kent.gov.uk](mailto:sharon.robbins@kent.gov.uk).



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# Town and Parish Councils – Opening Up Facilities as Restrictions Ease

Advice from Came & Company and the Risk Management Team at Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.



## Introduction and background

Following our online Risk Management session in May, we received a number of questions and queries with respect to opening up of Town and Parish Council facilities as we emerge from the COVID-19 restrictions.

Insurers are experiencing an increase of claims being brought, in respect of COVID-19 infections, where the claimant is alleging that someone else has been negligent in some way and that resulted in them, the claimant, contracting the virus.

Whilst it is not possible to prevent a claim being brought in the first instance, as this the individual claimant's right/prerogative, having a robust risk management approach that can be evidenced through your risk assessments and safe operating protocols will increase the likelihood that the claim can be defended.

This short briefing note provides some guidance as to the risk factors and mitigation that you will need to give consideration to in that risk assessment process, as you start to reopen facilities and move towards a more 'business as usual' outlook going forward.

### Eased restrictions/rules

Whilst there may be what appear to be hard deadlines for the removal of 'law based' restrictions and rules, the Government has made it clear that best practice guidance designed to reduce the potential transmission of the COVID-19 virus will remain and, wherever practical, organisations and businesses should still factor these arrangements and mitigations into their risk assessments.

The need to consider the hazards associated with the COVID-19 virus, as part of your general risk assessment, is not waived immediately restrictions are lifted in the wider daily life context and, in fact, is likely to remain for the short to medium term future.

## Council Meetings

One of the first matters you are likely to be considering, if not done already, is how to recommence 'in person' council meetings.

This should be considered using your COVID-19 risk assessment and we would strongly recommend maintaining:

Minimal direct personal contact and a degree of social distancing, i.e. no handshaking or other physical greeting, 1m minimum social distancing where practical, including seating arrangements

- Wearing of facemasks/coverings when entering and leaving the room
- Provision of hand sanitising facilities at entrances and exits
- Cleaning materials available to wipe down surfaces before and after meetings



- Adequate ventilation through the room during the meeting

## Hiring out of facilities

When hiring out your own facilities to third parties for events such as birthday parties, other organisation meetings, etc., you will need to review your hire agreements to reflect the roles and responsibilities of each party to the contract in light of the best practice guidance.

If you are the premises provider, owner or landlord;

In discharging your duties under the Occupiers Liability Act(s) you will be expected to ensure the premises are fit for purpose/use before each hire, including making arrangements to present/hand them over to the individual or organisation hiring in a clean and hazard free condition.

It would be prudent to provide basic cleaning equipment at the premises, e.g. wipes, disinfectant sprays and paper towels, together with instructions as to the expectations of the hirer in leaving the room(s)/facility in a clean and safe condition after use.

Establish post hire checks, together with additional cleaning if required, before the next hire of the room(s)/facility.

If your organisation is hiring facilities from another, for the purpose of holding meetings etc., then the suggested mitigations outlined above work, in effect, in reverse. Engage with your landlord/hirer to agree each other's roles and responsibilities in advance and ensure that you follow and implement the controls agreed.

For more information please get in touch and this is just one guide available for free in the Resource Centre of our web site at <https://www.parishinsurance.co.uk/resource-centre/>

Kevin Millard – Regional Representative for Kent

Kevin.millard@cameandcompany.co.uk

Direct Tel. 01483 462 897



The opinions and views expressed in the above articles are those of the author only and are for guidance purposes only. The authors disclaim any liability for reliance upon those opinions and would encourage readers to rely upon more than one source before making a decision based on the information.

## Don't ignore it, share it!

The return to the "new normal" has started and more businesses have returned to the office and recreational pursuits have started again, so coastal areas have become a lot busier in the last month or so.

OCG's (Organised Crime Groups) will continue to exploit routes via the channel to smuggle commodities such as guns and drugs into the UK, the money raised could be used to fund terrorism. They also arrange and charge large amounts of money to bring migrants across the channel.

Over 3,000 migrants have successfully crossed the channel so far this year. Last year there were over 8,400. We are interested in who could be amongst them. So need to detain them at their first port of entry into the country which may well be the beach area. That is why we ask that any suspicious activity or items left along the coast line is reported.



## 'National Terrorism Threat level remains at Substantial'

Aviation routes are also a target of OCG's, light aircraft and helicopters have been utilised in previous years to smuggle commodities including people in to and out of the country. So we ask that any unusual activity around an airstrip or by a pilot is reported.

Even though the national terrorist threat level remains at Substantial – An attack is likely, we ask that you all remain vigilant when you are out and about. Your support to us is vital in helping to keep our borders safe, so if you do see anything out of the ordinary please don't ignore it, share it with us.



**Kent  
Police**

## CT Borders Engagement Team

We are out in both Maritime and Aviation communities and trying to catch up with most of you over the summer. If you have any questions or concerns and want a chat please get in touch and we will arrange a visit.

We will also be recording another VLOG over the summer

Stay safe and keep well. Rachel and Colin

**Protecting and serving  
the people of Kent**



In an **EMERGENCY** only call



**999**

when life is in **immediate danger** or when a **crime is in progress**



Report

**ONLINE**

The easy way to report crime



Report a crime, incident or non-injury collision in minutes



Receive your confirmation email and reference number immediately

Front counters



You can report issues to one of our front counters. To find your nearest one visit our website.

[www.kent.police.uk/contact](http://www.kent.police.uk/contact)

Crimestoppers



Call **0800 555 111**

100% anonymous. Always.

- They are not the police
- Nobody will know you have helped us
- They pay cash rewards of up to £1,000

[www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org)

Hate crime reporting hubs

Visit one of our reporting hub drop-in surgeries based in Medway. You don't need an appointment (in most cases) and will be given advice and support by a trained team member.



[www.kent.police.uk/hatecrime](http://www.kent.police.uk/hatecrime)

**ActionFraud**

Report Fraud & Internet Crime

Report online fraud or scams to ActionFraud



Report 24/7

[actionfraud.police.uk](http://actionfraud.police.uk)



**0300 123 2040**

Mon-Fri 8am to 9pm  
Sat & Sun 9am-5pm

Ask the Police

No need to phone. Get an instant answer online.

Browse the **A to Z** question finder



[www.askthe.police.uk](http://www.askthe.police.uk)

True Vision

!\*@#!!



Visit the True Vision website to find out more about hate crime, what to do if you are a victim and to make a report online.

[www.report-it.org.uk/home](http://www.report-it.org.uk/home)

Country Eye – rural crime app



Snap a photo of the suspicious behaviour, incident or concern.



Receive updates and alerts on the incident you submit.



Tell us where you are or use your phone's built in GPS location.

[www.countryeye.co.uk](http://www.countryeye.co.uk)

Nuisance and environmental issues

Contact your local council for:



Noise complaints



Abandoned vehicles



Fly tipping

[www.gov.uk/find-your-local-council](http://www.gov.uk/find-your-local-council)

**101**

Call **101** to report crime and other concerns that do not require an emergency response

For example:

- property damaged
- suspect drug use or dealing or:
- give information about crime
- have a general enquiry



Contact the Police and Crime Commissioner **Matthew Scott**

- Write to OPCC, Kent Police HQ, Sutton Road, Maidstone, ME15 9BX
- Call on 01622 677055
- Email [contactyourpcc@pcc.kent.police.uk](mailto:contactyourpcc@pcc.kent.police.uk)
- Twitter @PCKENT
- Visit the website [www.kent-pcc.gov.uk](http://www.kent-pcc.gov.uk)



**Kent Police**



## KENT FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE UPDATES

*Together we make a difference*



Kent Fire &  
Rescue Service

together

At Kent Fire and Rescue Service, we're fortunate to have the support and commitment of our volunteers.

This year marks 10 years of KFRS' Volunteers, and the team continues to grow from strength-to-strength, both in size and in the variety of roles available, to help create a safer future for Kent and Medway. The volunteer team is looking to expand again, with a range of vacancies which went live on 4 June.

Dedication, motivation, collaboration and compassion sum up the spirit of volunteering at KFRS. They lie at the very heart of our volunteers, and are reflected in everything they do in their role as part of the wider KFRS family.

Our volunteers take on a range of important roles within KFRS, including supporting our teams with tasks, such as research and organising resources, and customer-facing responsibilities.

Their invaluable contributions help to ensure we deliver a high quality service to all of our customers, in a variety of situations and scenarios.

Please, take a look around and hear from more of the volunteers themselves about why they enjoy being part of the KFRS family, and find out how you could join the ever-growing team.

More information regarding roles available can be found here: [Our roles - Kent Fire and Rescue Service \(fire-uk.org\)](#)

*Thank you to our wonderful volunteers*

we couldn't do it without you





Grass, crop and woodland fires can have a devastating impact, injuring or killing wildlife, destroying property and livelihoods, and even putting people's lives at risk.

As we enter peak season for these types of incidents, residents, workers and visitors are being urged to do their bit to reduce the number of accidental grass fires across the county.

Most happen between May and September when grassland can get very dry, and many are caused by out of control bonfires, as well as careless disposal of hot smoking materials, and disposable barbecues.

In a bid to crack down on these largely avoidable types of incidents and make the county safer for everyone, KFRS has launched an accidental grass fire prevention campaign which will educate the public about what they can do to help and stay safe.

### **These types of fires can have devastating consequences"**

Colin King, KFRS' Assistant Director for Customer Engagement and Safety, said: "In 2020 our crews responded to 617 accidental grass fires, many of which were preventable.

"Grass, crop and woodland fires have the potential to take hold and spread rapidly, especially in warmer months when grassland can be very dry – 83% of last year's accidental grass fires happened between May and September.

"These types of incidents can have devastating consequences, therefore it's important that everyone living, visiting and working in the county plays their part in preventing them from happening in the first place – something we hope this campaign will help to achieve."

The campaign will highlight simple things people can do to avoid accidentally starting grass fires, and as a result protect themselves, the local community, property and wildlife. Such as:

- **When lighting a bonfire, keep it to a manageable size, make sure it's well clear of greenery and property, and always supervise it while it's burning. Avoid having a bonfire in windy weather.**
- **Dispose of smoking materials responsibly, making sure they're fully stubbed out and cooled before being put in a bin - consider using a portable ashtray when on the go.**
- **Place disposable barbecues on a sturdy, non-flammable surface when cooking, away from greenery and property, and only place in a bin once fully cool.**

Colin added: "Grass fires often require a large amount of fire service resources and can take hours, days or even weeks in complex cases, to fully extinguish. This campaign is all about working together with the public to drive the number of accidental grass fires down, keeping people safe and freeing up our crews to respond to other, less-preventable emergencies.

"While everyone can play their part in this, it is inevitable that grass fires will still occur and we advise people not to try and tackle grass fires, or any fire, themselves - instead to move to a safe place and call 999. We will always be here to respond when people need us."



**Kent Fire &  
Rescue Service**



Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS) has a message for anyone thinking about starting fires deliberately in the county –

**'We're watching you'.**

In a bid to crackdown on acts of arson across Kent and Medway, the service has joined the national initiative, FireStoppers, inviting local people to join in the anonymous fight against deadly fire setting.

FireStoppers encourages residents to share intelligence about people they suspect are responsible for incidents of arson, anonymously, 24/7, 365 days a year.

As part of the initiative, areas identified as arson hotspots will be honed in on by KFRS, with signage and targeted social media campaigning used to educate and deter arsonists, or those considering setting fires.

In the last five years, crews have attended 8,988 deliberate fires, involving buildings, vehicles and outdoor areas.

Colin King, Assistant Director for Customer Engagement and Safety, said: "Not only do arsonists put their lives and the lives of others at risk, but they take firefighters away from other emergencies unnecessarily. It's a criminal offence to start a fire deliberately, and we want arsonists to know that the fire service, together with the residents of Kent and Medway, are watching and will report them.

"By joining FireStoppers, we hope members of the public can help us to reduce the number of deliberate fire incidents, by sharing valuable information completely anonymously.

"The reporting service is available both online and over the phone, and is free to use at all times of the day, all-year round.

"Ongoing emergencies should still be reported by calling 999."

It's a criminal offence when someone intentionally starts a fire in order to destroy or damage something, whether that's a building, or outdoor areas such as grasslands and woodlands.

Call FireStoppers on 0800 169 5558 or report online – it's always free and always anonymous.

## HM THE QUEEN - HER PLATINUM JUBILEE!



Further details of HM The Queen's Platinum Jubilee were announced on 2 June 2021. After a particularly tumultuous year and a half for us all, this was a welcome message and means that next year will be a cause for celebration nationwide.

Local communities were at the forefront of the Diamond Jubilee in 2012, which was a fabulous time nationally as it coincided with London hosting the Olympics that year. Kent's local councils were especially active in both events. There is no doubt that the same level of commitment will be shown for the

celebrations next year too. You will have already received some correspondence regarding the weekend of 2 to 5 June 2022.

2022 is a landmark year for the United Kingdom, and it is sure to be a wonderful celebration. Lets do our part and make sure Kent shines as usual! Updates are on the front page of our website and further information will be in future editions of KALC News.

**Download Forces  
CONNECT in the Apple  
app store or Google Play store.**

Support and advice for members  
of our armed forces community.



Make sure that your Armed Forces Community knows about the Forces CONNECT app that has recently been launched by Surrey County Council and various Armed Forces Community stakeholders. It has been designed for all members of the Armed Forces and

currently has over 9000 users. The Forces Connect app is designed to link users in four easy clicks to organisations offering immediate help and support across a wide range of services. The information is updated monthly, there are no charges or adverts and there's no need to enter any personal data.

To download the app, search "Forces Connect" in Apple's App Store or the Google Play Store.



## Missing From Your Inbox

### ARMED FORCES COVENANT

Hythe Town Council is the latest of our members to sign the Armed Forces Covenant. At a ceremony held at Oaklands, the Hythe Town Council offices, Councillor Naomi Slade (Town Mayor) signed the Covenant in the presence of her daughter Eilah and the Deputy Mayor, Jim Martin.



### More about the Armed Forces Covenant...

The covenant focusses on helping members of the armed forces community have the same access to government and commercial services and products as any other citizen.

This support is provided in a number of areas including:

- education and family well-being
- having a home
- starting a new career
- access to healthcare
- financial assistance
- discounted services

Further information about support services available to both serving personnel and their families , and veterans and their families are provided on GOV.UK.

Find information about working, jobs and pensions for members of the armed forces and their families .

For more information about the background of the Armed Forces Covenant go to the covenant policy .

You can also read the Armed Forces Covenant promise in full here .

# Missing From Your Inbox

## COVID-19 Funding from Kent County Council

### Grants of up to £10k available for organisations to support the mitigation and management of outbreaks, as well as reintegration schemes

In the response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the UK Government has given Kent County Council (KCC) funding to support the mitigation and management of outbreaks.

They have developed this grant fund to provide support to local communities with proactive containment, intervention measures and innovative reintegration schemes.

You can find more information about the funding available, including eligibility on the [Kent County Council website here](#).

The grant fund will support initiatives that prevent or mitigate outbreaks in Kent County Council's geographical area, or that support the safe reintegration of groups that have been disproportionately affected by coronavirus (COVID-19).

KCC is currently accepting bids for:

[Engaging communities and reducing risk factors \(PDF\)](#)

[Reintegration activities for families with young children or expectant parents \(PDF\)](#)

[Safe reopening of community venues \(kent.gov.uk\)](#)

## Consultation, Consultation, Consultation...



• As part of the government's new National Bus Strategy, Kent County Council has been asked to create a **Bus Service Improvement Plan for Kent**.

They want to make sure the plan incorporates the views of Kent residents. The survey is open now and will run over the summer months and **closes on 29 August 2021**. Visit [www.kent.gov.uk/busfuture](http://www.kent.gov.uk/busfuture) to find out more and participate.

“Kent County Council is currently consulting on KCC's Budget for 2022-23. We need to consider that we may have to make some difficult decisions in the near future, but before we do this, we would like to hear your views on:

- The future of services – how comfortable would you be to see spending reductions on a range of services?
- Council tax – is a modest rise acceptable if it helps to sustain the services you most value?
- Doing things differently – what are the most important things we should consider when deciding how to do things differently?

**This consultation closes on Monday 19 September 2021. Please [visit our webpage](#) to find out more and participate in this consultation.”**

## Missing From Your Inbox



### Kent Volunteering Awards 2021

The KM Group Charity Team has launched the Kent Volunteering Awards for this year. The awards recognise those who have made a valuable contribution in volunteering activity. This year has seen an admirable increase in those who have given up their time to help others and the Awards are a welcome addition in acknowledging this.

Further information and instructions for nominations can be found here:

[Inspire Schools/KM Charity Team Kent Volunteering Awards - Inspire Schools/KM Charity Team](#)

The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) published the Build Back Better High Streets Strategy setting out the government's long-term plan to support the evolution of high streets on 15 July 2021

The Strategy was announced by the Prime Minister and is a key part of his plan to level up the country. It sets out the government's plan for high streets and how high streets and town centres in England can adapt and thrive after the COVID-19 pandemic. It sets out government action across five areas:

- Breathing new life into empty buildings
- Supporting high street businesses
- Improving the public realm
- Creating safe and clean spaces
- Celebrating pride in local communities

Further information here:

Announcement: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-strategy-to-regenerate-high-streets>

Strategy: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/build-back-better-high-streets>



## HEALTH AND WELLBEING: EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

### “Lower my Drinking” Launches in Kent

Estimates show the majority of people (75%) drink sensibly and in safe limits but in Kent, approximately 295,000 people are drinking above the recommended safe limits – with 23 per cent at increasing or higher risk and two per cent are dependent on alcohol.

Excessive alcohol consumption\* can lead to high blood pressure and also trigger an irregular heartbeat, both of which increase the risk of having a stroke, heavy drinking increases the risk of having a stroke by more than three times. It is also a risk factor for some cancers, particularly head and neck cancers and breast cancer. By drinking less and within the recommended limits, you will reduce your risk of having a stroke, cancer and depression.

Health experts are concerned that the Covid-19 restrictions mean people have been drinking more at home and are not aware of their alcohol intake levels. “With the impact of Covid continuing to affect people’s lifestyles, work and relationships, we are really concerned about people’s drinking habits,” explains Jess Mookherjee, Consultant for Alcohol and Drugs Misuse at Kent County Council. She adds: “We know that some people have already cut back but for many, especially those drinking at home, it’s incredibly difficult to appreciate how many units you’re pouring and we are seeing evidence nationally that people are drinking more regularly which is already leading to a rise in alcohol-related health harms.”

Kent residents are urged to try the ‘Lower My Drinking’ online tool at [www.lowermydrinking.com](http://www.lowermydrinking.com) which asks 10 questions about drinking habits before giving users a score and information of where they can get support in Kent to help cut back if they are consuming too much. There is further online support from the ‘Lower My Drinking’ app which is provided by Breaking Free Online and is available on the Google and Apple stores.

It helps Kent residents to self-assess their drinking using a simple questionnaire which then either directs people to the app which can track their alcohol consumption and provides tips to help them cut down, or signposts those who require professional help to their local support services.

There are a range of services available in Kent to help people to get the treatment they need including One You Kent Lifestyle services in the community that can support people if they need further help to cut back. Mark Cummings, One You Kent Locality Lead said: “A healthy lifestyle is a key factor for preventing illness. One You Lifestyle Advisers will spend time discussing any concerns you have including alcohol and the effects that drinking too much could be having on your health and wellbeing.”

A range of formal and informal alcohol support services are available, such as AA and Smart Recovery and Al-anon for friends, family and carers of alcoholics. KCC also commissions specialist treatment providers to provide structured treatment for alcohol addiction. Forward Trust runs the East Kent Community Drug and Alcohol Service while Change Grow Live (CGL) provides the West Kent Drug and Alcohol Wellbeing Service.

Residents can find a range of tools, tips and local support services that can help you at [www.kent.gov.uk/lowermydrinking](http://www.kent.gov.uk/lowermydrinking) or call 0300 123 1220.

Jess Mookherjee added: “People who are affected by alcohol addiction do not have to suffer alone, we want them to get help. It is important to get support they need at the right time. If people are drinking because they are depressed and stressed we urge them to see their GPs or contact Live Well Kent. Alcohol is never the real solution for these issues. **“For those who feel their drinking is hurting themselves or loved ones, or they are having trouble keeping their lives in control, we urge them to get the support available now, your lives are important, help is available”**.”

## YOUR ALLOTMENTS - MUCH MORE THAN A VEGETABLE PATCH

### What is an allotment garden?



In simple terms, it is a patch of land that you can rent for a low fee and grow your own fruit and vegetables. It is something that is now engrained in British culture and has been since its humble beginnings via the Allotment Act 1908. The law meant that Councils had an obligation to supply land if demand required it, and so a “craze” that has been more or less constant began.

Like most things, the evolution of the Allotment Garden has had peaks and troughs. During both world wars, when supply of groceries became compromised, people embraced the idea. Fast forward to the Swinging Sixties and the “disposable” culture it brought with it, the allotment was seen as “untrendy”. The image it had up until the new century was somewhat “old hat” and a hobby that was only taken up by those who had time on their hands to do so.



However, with the prospect of a Green Revolution, Climate Change and various other factors, the allotment movement has evolved with our current times and has become a very popular past-time.

Councils with allotment space have long waiting lists for those who wish to participate, and they soared during the latter part of our Lockdowns as people were able to use their space when the lifting of restrictions allowed it.

Many of our member councils have allotment sites and it would seem that the demand is there to expand these or identify new areas of land that can be created for the purpose.



[The National Society of Allotments and Leisure Gardens \(NSALG\)](#) is the main “go-to” website for information on creating and managing such a project in your community. NSALG have a myriad of resources available

publicly and you can find them here:

[National Allotment Society Leaflets – The National Allotment Society – National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners Ltd \(nsalg.org.uk\)](#)

We are always keen to hear about your success (or not) with allotment land and would appreciate your stories. Do contact us with pictures so that we can feature you in the KALC News!

### WHY HAVE AN ALLOTMENT GARDEN IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

- It promotes a good, ecologically sound diet for participants
- It values community cohesion
- It emphasises Green Values that are so important in 21st Century
- It encourages “good” wildlife, including bees,
- It is good for the Health and Wellbeing of participants, and prevents social isolation.
- It creates a community “sense of achievement” and endorses local councils as being part of a sound and proven first tier of government that cares for its resident population

## Kent Association of Local Councils

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Dover District Council Offices  
White Cliffs Business Park  
Whitfield  
Dover  
CT16 3PJ

[kalc@kentalc.gov.uk](mailto:kalc@kentalc.gov.uk)

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[www.kentalc.gov.uk](http://www.kentalc.gov.uk)

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### Contacting Us...

For KALC specific issues contact Terry Martin:  
[chief.executive@kentalc.gov.uk](mailto:chief.executive@kentalc.gov.uk) or phone 07475  
034346

For legal & technical advice contact Clive Powell:  
[adviser@kentalc.gov.uk](mailto:adviser@kentalc.gov.uk) or phone 07475 017247

For Finance, Events, KALC website and general  
enquiries contact Laura Dyer:  
[manager@kentalc.gov.uk](mailto:manager@kentalc.gov.uk) or phone 07475  
066155

For Events, KALC News and general enquiries  
contact Tricia Casey-Green:  
[communications.officer@kentalc.gov.uk](mailto:communications.officer@kentalc.gov.uk) or phone  
07577 058306 (9.00am to 12:00pm – Monday,  
Tuesday, Thursday, Friday)

Training and Partnerships Officer – Charmaine  
Keatley: [support@kentalc.gov.uk](mailto:support@kentalc.gov.uk) or phone 07378  
175948

## Vacancies in the County

KALC is always happy to promote any vacancy you may have within your Council. This is a free service if you are in membership.

At the present time, there are several positions that are currently advertised on our site.

Take a look at the page here:

[Vacancies - KALC  
\(kentalc.gov.uk\)](http://www.kentalc.gov.uk)

