

Annual Report from Nick Chard, Kent County Councillor. May 2021

What an extraordinary year this has been, the over-riding concern and attention has been the Covid 19 pandemic. I'm pleased to report that your County Council has worked extremely well for the benefit of our communities and continued to function and deliver its core work. All the public services, County Council, District Councils, Health and Emergency Services worked together as the Kent Local Resilience Forum to co-ordinate resources and deliver the additional support in an effective and timely manner. Due to previous investment and foresight, Kent County Council was able to work remotely and continue the business of delivering services in Kent.

Most of my contact with constituents this year has centred on issues that impact on their quality of life; their concerns for traffic speed, traffic congestion, parking, individual concerns for Social Care and Education, traffic pollution and some large planning applications, Cover's Farm, Chevening Parklands, Fort Halsted and Broke Farm.

Kent County Council has a Member's grant scheme that has given me the opportunity to support some very worthwhile local requests; a £2000 grant for the boiler replacement at Knockholt Village Centre, removing a dangerous tree at Crockham Hill wildlife area, renovating Halstead play area, helping to fund Sundridge and Ide Hill Covid 19 Community support.

I also supported a local scheme in Westerham with my Member's grant to implement a comprehensive 20 mph scheme. I was able to reduce the time, using my network of contacts at KCC, from an initial idea from Westerham Town Council, through design, consultation, and agreement to implementation.

Not all the improvements rely on the Member's Grant scheme; the improved pedestrian crossing lights in Riverhead were requested by the parish council and together we approached Kent County Council who upgraded all the lights, I worked with Chevening Parish Council to improve the long-standing problems associated with blocked road drains in Chipstead.

Some of the current and future concerns of local communities are centred around planning, these include Covers Farm restoration in Westerham, Chevening Parkland landscaping, Fort Halstead and Broke Hill. I have been working with District Councillor colleagues to make sure those concerns are heard and discussed in the right places. The potential impact of these developments is large, when added cumulatively, they are enormous.

I pledge to work with local communities and my District Councillor colleagues, as your elected representative, to stand up for you, make sure your concerns are heard in the right places and fight for improvements and changes to improve the quality of life in this wonderful area of Kent.

Nick Chard 13th May 2021