

KCC Councillor Wayne Chapman

Town / Parish Council Report – March 2026

(Covering Appledore, Biddenden, Rolvenden, Rolvenden Layne, St Michaels, Tenterden, Wittersham, Kenardington, Newenden, High Halden, and Stone-cum-Ebony)

1. Highways Update

Tenterden High Street: Overnight roadworks completed for the bus stops / bus stands outside The Vine pub and opposite the Town Hall, there has been parking tickets issued to buses broken down by ABC enforcement officers which have been correctly issued.

Tenterden – Appledore Road: UK Power Networks' planned works along Appledore Road, including the connection of new streetlights near the Oakridge Grange / Bovis Homes development, these works originally planned for three / four separate planned road closures condensed into one week, there are many reported highway traffic issues and the works over ran slightly and communications from UK Power Networks have been inconsistent, creating understandable frustration for residents, we are still seeking some clarity to the ongoing situation, there is a planned Teams call 4th March with the KCC Streetworks Senior Coordinator for Tenterden Councillors to air views, opinions and concerns, at KCC we are looking for solutions going forward, again with this ongoing concern thank you to Cllr Sue Ferguson, Tenterden Town Council Community Engagement Councillor, for championing residents' concerns and keeping the community well informed.

Once all utility works have concluded we can look to diarise the much needed Appledore resurfacing project.

Tenterden, Woodchurch Road: 23rd Feb – 20th March, (Section 278 Oakridge Grange / Bovis Homes development), Developer-funded footway, verge and bus stop improvements are progressing under temporary traffic management. These upgrades will enhance safety and accessibility once completed.

Biddenden

Winter patching works on Sissinghurst Road have stabilised areas affected by frost damage. Further inspections are scheduled as temperatures normalise.

High Halden

Drainage investigations near the A28 are ongoing. Ensuring effective surface water management remains a priority ahead of heavier spring rainfall.

Kenardington & Stone-cum-Ebony

Rural lane inspections undertaken through January and February have identified minor defects, now programmed for repair.

Newenden – A28 Bridge

Newenden Bridge on Rye Road will be closed for three consecutive weekends to conduct essential repairs to the bridge parapet following impact damage.

These closures will take place on:

28th February to 1st March, 7th to 8th March, 14th to 15th March

Closure times: 07:00 Saturday – 19:00 Sunday (each weekend)

The closure will be in place at the bridge over the River Rother, on the A28 between Kent and East Sussex. A full diversion route can be found on One.Network.

This work is necessary to ensure the bridge remains safe for all road users.

We've informed local businesses and will provide further updates as repairs progress.

Thank you for your patience while we carry out these essential works. Maintenance remains scheduled for 2026/27 with the full closure expected for 12/16 weeks. I continue to monitor progress and will update residents when more detailed timescales are confirmed.

2. Winter / Spring Driving

Kent County Council's winter resilience programme has operated effectively across the division, with routine gritting carried out on priority routes and additional attention given during adverse weather periods.

As we move into spring:

Pothole repair volumes are being assessed.

Surface dressing schedules are being finalised.

Drainage and verge maintenance will increase.

Residents are reminded to continue reporting issues via:

www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-or-track-a-problem-on-the-road-or-pavement

3. Kent County Council Budget Full Council Meeting

Thursday 12th February, we passed our first Reform UK KCC Full Budget and we voted it through with the majority of the vote. Thank you to the hard working Kent County Council staff as well as the 151 Officer for the independent analysis and approval. A reduced increase, a 3.99% rise on the KCC element of Council Tax, whereas the opposition parties wanted to tax higher with 4.99% just like previous years, that would of been 25% increase from what we delivered as the Reform UK Administration.

4. Public Consultation of Local Government Reorganisation & Devolution (LGR&D)

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) is coming to Kent, now it is time for public consultation.

LGR will cost Council Tax payers lots of money, with little to no money or funding from the Central Labour government to help, and they are implementing and forcing this upon the residents of Kent.

Option 1A: The Kent County Council Model - The financially sound option

Fastest financial payback (approx. 3.3 years), Lower duplication of senior management & back-office costs, Stronger monitoring savings than 3, 4 or 5 unitary models

1a Delivers County wide services easier, rather than a patchwork of policies across boundaries

The more councils you create, the more overheads you duplicate.

One Kent Council means one monitoring structure, one senior team, one strategy.

LGR Reform should save money — not multiply admin costs!

The other options put forward by other district councils may suit their local area better, the KCC option 1A is better for all of Kent.

To take part in the government's consultation, visit Local government reorganisation in Kent and Medway.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-reorganisation-in-kent-and-medway/proposals-for-local-government-reorganisation-in-kent-and-medway>

The deadline for responses is Thursday 26 March 2026.

5. Kent reserves and Cadets Day

24th February at County Hall Maidstone, we had the honour of welcoming some of Kent's armed forces to celebrate the annual Kent Reserve and Cadets Day, military reserve units and cadet detachments from across Kent and Medway represented at an event to highlight the support and benefits armed forces personnel can bring to employers and wider communities, they were welcomed by the KCC Leader Linden Kemkaran and Chairman of Kent County Council (KCC), Richard Palmer, who himself served with the 2nd Battalion the Queens Regiment as well as currently being adult staff in the Air Training Corps (RAF Air Cadets).

Reservists can join the Royal Navy, British Army and Royal Air Force and special forces in Kent and Medway and their day jobs can range from refuse workers to business leaders.

Information stalls were set up in the Stone Hall of County Hall to showcase the work of different regiments cadet units and how their skills can support employers.

6. KCC Family Hubs Courses

Family Hubs across Kent offer free courses to help you feel more confident, connected and supported — from pregnancy, baby's first months and to the teenage years.

Baby bonding, Understanding behaviour, Online safety, Building stronger relationships

Whatever stage of parenthood you're at, we're here for you.

Explore the courses and book your free place today: <https://loom.ly/Kyd-Wbw>

7. KCC Feed Your Foodie Campaign

Thank you, Kent! You have recycled an extra 2,000 tonnes of food waste since September compared with last year. That's a 22% increase - or 143 double-decker buses' worth

This didn't happen by accident, it happened because of you

Your efforts to pop those peelings, leftovers and even used tea bags into your caddy are making a real difference!

It's not too late to join in: order your caddy at www.kent.gov.uk/foodwaste

8. Parish / Town Council Meetings – February 2026

If I am unable to attend any Parish / Town Council meetings in March due to other commitments, I am as always available via email wayne.chapman@kent.gov.uk if needed.

9. Contact Details

Email: wayne.chapman@kent.gov.uk

For highways, street lighting, or footpath issues, please report online via:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-or-track-a-problem-on-the-road-or-pavement>