

## Kent County Councillor Annual Report to Parishes 2025

We have had a year which has been shaped by external factors both political and financial for local government but despite that Kent County Council has continued to deliver frontline services and to remain financially stable (unlike some Councils).

As previously the issues that most residents contact me about are highways related, I have reported to Parishes through the year on our continued efforts to maintain the roads with a budget that is much less than needed. We have carried out 'pothole blitzes' with additional contractors when funds have been made available as well as planned resurfacing and maintenance, the level of planned maintenance we can carry out is less than ideal and that is simply because capital funding does not allow more. The reporting tool continues to be the most effective way to report potholes and other defects in the highway. I have raised issues from residents around flooding which because of changes in weather patterns are becoming more frequent and severe, the majority of the drainage system was put in place some time ago and is not always able to deal with the deluges we now get more frequent. But I do raise maintenance and drain clearing issues regularly with the District Manager.

The frequency of utility works on our roads has increased and the past year has seen significant disruption to our villages I know. I have picked up issues over signage, diversion routes and extended work times. Last month KCC were one of three authorities invited to give evidence to the Transport Select Committee of Government around this issue as a result of work done in the Council and representations made to Ministers.

Whilst Highway Improvement Plans have their limitations I have tried to help Parish Councils make the best use of them and supported meetings to address the issues that are important, notably speeding on our roads. It's been great to see our local PC's taking action on some routes.

Our Adult and Children's social services continue to take over 50% of our available budget (36% for Adults) and this year we have again regrettably had to add an additional amount of just under 2% to our Council Tax which is ringfenced for social care to help meet that cost.

KCC continues to use new technology to help residents stay at home longer or to return home from hospital but we all know that it is people to care that make the difference and that is becoming increasingly expensive and harder to find.

Our children's services remain outstanding, with our own fostering service and training and development schemes for children's social workers being successful. Our Family Hubs are now in place across Kent to offer targeted prevention and intervention at an early stage for families.

Community Support – Helping hands

Environmental issues

Business support Discovery Park

Devolution

