

Planning Enforcement Newsletter

November 2015

Please note: This information is intended solely for the information of borough and parish councillors, staff of Dartford Borough Council and other local authority employees.

WELCOME

Dear Councillors and Staff

For some time now I have felt that the planning enforcement team should publish a newsletter to update councillors and members of staff regarding planning enforcement issues, concerns, successes, trends and changes across the borough.

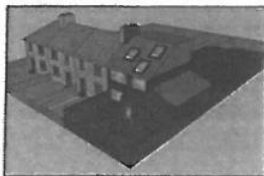
It is particularly relevant, as we approach the end of the calendar year, that you are kept up to date with such things as:

- Number of complaints reported
- Speed of response
- Types of Complaints
- Locations of complaints (by ward/parish)
- Changes to the law
- Improvements to the service
- Accountability
- Performance
- Consultations, etc.

As this is the first newsletter, I have included a number of items which I assume would be of interest but if you have a particular interest or suggestion please feel free to let me know.

DID YOU KNOW?

We are often asked what constitutes Permitted Development and the regulations are somewhat complicated in this area. Although not an official document the link below will illustrate some anomalies which may surprise you.



<http://planningjungle.com/wp-content/uploads/Part-1-of-the-GPDO-The-10-Worst-Permitted-Development-Loopholes.pdf>

THE PLANNING ENFORCEMENT TEAM

**Steve Whitehead -
Senior Planning Enforcement Officer**



Steve's previous experience includes Kent Police, Metropolitan Police, KCC Community Safety and Tunbridge Wells Community Safety Management. His remit is to improve the quality of the

service and eliminate unnecessary tasks and processes.

"I've had quite a lot of experience in putting together watertight enforcement cases by paying attention to detail and gathering substantial irrefutable evidence. I'm looking forward to moving the enforcement process forward using all available tools and technologies. My ultimate aim is to provide 'the customer' with an exceptional service and rapid response rate"

**Chris Walker -
Planning Enforcement Officer**



Chris has been with Dartford Borough Council for over 32 years and has carried out her duties as Planning Enforcement Officer for the past 12 years. Chris works 27 hours per week: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday (am)

and Thursday. Over the past 12 years Chris has gained a wealth of knowledge relating to planning enforcement and has dealt with over 600 cases.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Planning Enforcement Team attend a daily meeting with Kent Police and other partnership agencies every morning at 9.30am to keep up to date with issues within the borough

Planning Enforcement Contacts:

Christina Walker - 01322 343074
Steve Whitehead - 01322 343215

Service Improvements

In May 2015 there were outstanding planning enforcement investigations going back as far as 2007.

These cases were mainly complicated and labour intensive and needed a collaborative approach with other local authority departments and partner agencies to solve.

Chris and I decided that we were going to clear the backlog by the end of the year, which would free us to respond quickly to new cases.

I am happy to report that we now have just three cases outstanding from 2014 and a further three have had enforcement notices served, everything else is current to 2015.

We have also introduced an outstanding cases Excel spreadsheet which is available to all planning and building control staff and allows instant understanding of the position of any case at a glance.

Case No.	Description	Status	Date
14/0001	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0002	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0003	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0004	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0005	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0006	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0007	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0008	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0009	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0010	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0011	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0012	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0013	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0014	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0015	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0016	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0017	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0018	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0019	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0020	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0021	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0022	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0023	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0024	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0025	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0026	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0027	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0028	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0029	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0030	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0031	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0032	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0033	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
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14/0036	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
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14/0042	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
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14/0046	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
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14/0099	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15
14/0100	176 Police agreement with Highways Dept regarding Lane closures for Highways Dept	Completed	14/05/15

The spreadsheet is colour coded to show current status – red, for example, indicates service of an enforcement notice or other action, blue shows cases under consideration by our legal department and yellow shows ongoing investigations or cases awaiting a response from the suspected perpetrator.

One tool we use on a daily basis is the 'Uniform' software. This allows us to update progress, store notes, interrogate planning applications and examine plans.

Going Digital

We have recognized the need to move from a primarily paper based service to a totally digital system of working. This would not only save paper but will allow us to:

- ✓ Reduce the number of multiple site visits
- ✓ Work remotely
- ✓ Take notes on site
- ✓ Update our customer relationship database instantly
- ✓ Produce enforcement letters at the touch of a button
- ✓ Inspect plans on site
- ✓ Save desk space in the civic centre
- ✓ Make use of down time between appointments
- ✓ Respond almost immediately to complaints
- ✓ Upload photographs on site

to name but a few benefits.

We have been in consultation with the IT department who have managed to set up a system to allow us to work effectively and efficiently from anywhere in the borough.

I am currently seeking to obtain two laptops for planning enforcement to commence the conversion. I will, of course, update you when we have made the transition.

Additionally...

We are striving to become more pro-active, rather than reactive and to this end Chris has taken on the additional project of dealing with unauthorised satellite dishes in the conservation area.



I have elected to deal with listed building contraventions, particularly within the town centre and the growing number of unauthorised adverts which seem to constantly plague us.

Useful websites:

Darford Planning Applications

<http://www.darford.gov.uk/by-category/environment-and-planning2/new-planning-homepage/planning-applications/public-access-for-planning>

PFE 20/1/16

Graham Blew

From: administrator <administrator@kentalc.gov.uk>
Sent: 10 December 2015 16:19
Subject: Proposed Permanent M20 Lorry Area: Invitation to Stakeholder Briefing
Attachments: M20LorryArea-Public Consultation.docx

Dear Member Councils

Please see the e-mail below and attachment from Highways England regarding the launch of their public consultation tomorrow on a proposed permanent lorry area adjacent to the M20. Highways England has arranged a number of public consultation events which are set out below. The first one is on Saturday in Sellindge. The deadline for responses will be **midnight on Monday 25 January 2016**.

As you will see in the e-mail below, Highways England advise that this consultation is a non-statutory consultation to enable Highways England to obtain a broad range of feedback on general options and in due course it will be followed by a formal consultation on any preferred site that will include greater detail on the design, layout and operation, and any associated, necessary highway works.

We will be in touch again after the consultation document has been published.

Kind Regards

Terry Martin
 Chief Executive
 Kent Association of Local Councils
 Tel 01304 820173
 Website: www.kentalc.gov.uk

From: M20 Lorry Area [<mailto:M20LorryArea@highwaysengland.co.uk>]
Sent: 10 December 2015 15:04
Subject: Proposed Permanent M20 Lorry Area: Invitation to Stakeholder Briefing

Dear Stakeholder,

Proposed Permanent M20 Lorry Area: Invitation to Stakeholder Briefing

Highways England is proposing to construct a permanent Lorry Area adjacent to the M20. This letter is to tell you about the public consultation which we are launching tomorrow. The consultation will seek your views and we would like to invite you to one of the staffed public information events listed below.

Background to the Proposals

In the 2015 Autumn Statement the Government set funds aside to build a permanent area where lorries can wait their turn to cross the Channel and do not cause disruption to local people or the economy. The Chancellor stated the Government's preference for a site at Stanford but was clear that alternatives would also be considered on an equal basis ahead of making any final decision.

The Government wishes to fully test the case for a permanent lorry area as an alternative solution to Operation Stack, where lorries are temporarily queued on the M20 when there are delays and closures at the Port of Dover and Eurotunnel.

emailed to (H) 15/12/15.

Highways England
Bridge House
1 Walnut Tree Close
Guildford
Surrey
GU1 4LZ

Or by email to: m20lorryarea@highwaysengland.co.uk.

Or, from tomorrow, you can visit the consultation webpage which can be found at www.gov.uk and then searching for 'management of freight through Kent'.

Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me by the details listed below.

Yours sincerely



Paul Harwood
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Communications Division
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Tel: +44 (0) 7736 615118
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