

REPORT TO WOULDHAM PARISH COUNCIL 2nd JANUARY 2026

By the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Councillors for

Aylesford North and North Downs Ward
Councillors Dave Davis, Alex McDermott and Roger Dalton

A HAPPY NEW YEAR AND OUR BEST WISHES TO ALL OF YOU.

LOCAL PLAN – UPDATE

REGULATION 18 CONSULTATION

1. By the time you read this the Regulation 18 consultation will be complete.
2. The table below gives the Development Allocation Responses recorded after the consultation closed. However there may still be a few comments in the pipeline waiting to be collated. . The table shows all the settlements, that put in a number of responses higher than Wouldham. When comparing the responses you must allow for the size of the settlement. Wouldham is one of the smallest settlements at about 550 houses.

Settlement	Reg 18 Responses	Number of Dwelling Allocated
Wouldham	110	40
Aylesford and Eccles	104	2000
Snodland	144	1300
Hildenborough	157	289
Highham Woods	227	1671
Borough Green	255	3000
East Peckham	271	446

3. This is an excellent success for your council. All the other settlements are much larger than Wouldham and have many more development houses allocated.

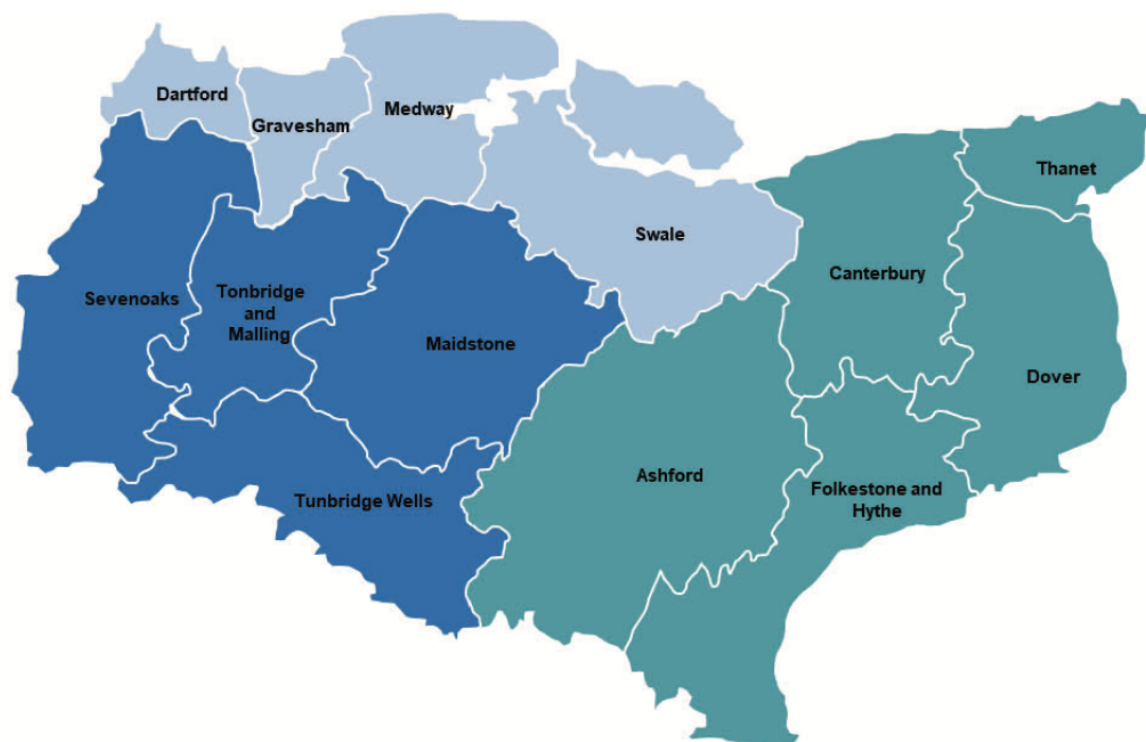
4. There are two things we hope Wouldham has achieved:
 - a. We now need to wait and see, whether, we have been able to get the 40 houses removed. However, if they do stay in their present location and format, the allotments will be safe. We need to try and get, either a very long lease of the allotments to the PC or the freehold in perpetuity.
 - b. We have strong hopes of Wouldham's place in the settlement hierarchy being reduced from Tier 3 to Tier 4 with the possibility of getting to Tier 5. This will strengthen Wouldham hand in windfall applications when and if the new Plan is approved.

REGULATION 19 CONSULTATION

5. The next stage on, will be the Regulation 19 Consultation in the summer this year. Whilst we will be free to make further comments, they will not be considered by TMBC. Those comments will be passed to the Planning Inspectors who will determine whether the Local Plan can be given final approval or not and whether any adjustments should be made in the light of consultation comments made.
6. When the Local Plan is in position, TMBC or its replacement unitary authority will be in a powerful position, to say where it does or doesn't want future development.
7. WPC need to consider its position carefully now. Assuming a bad case and the 40 houses that you have opposed are still in the plan.
 - a. Would WPC want the TMBC plan, as submitted, to fail because of those 40 houses? They must note that the only protection then to uncontrolled development are those set out in the National Planning Policy Framework such as the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
 - b. Or on the other hand, would they support the Local Plan, even with those 40 houses in but knowing the protection they have from ad hoc development not in the plan?

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION & DEVOLUTION

8. TMBC has submitted its preferred option for devolution. It is known as Option 3A. This is a 3 unitary authority solution that groups the present councils together.
9. Five Councils support this solution, Sevenoaks, Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge and Malling, Maidstone and Folkstone and Hythe.
10. This is the closest solution to the criteria set out by the Government and as such the most likely to be accepted.
11. This now rests with the Government and we expect responses about springtime to see what the future of local government in Kent will look like.



The Option 3A Unitary Authority Plan Option for Kent