

Here & Now

The borough council's newspaper for Tonbridge and Malling residents



Dam delights East Peckham residents



The Mayor, Cllr Derek Still, joins Sir John Stanley MP and East Peckham residents at the commissioning of the dam

The sun shone and East Peckham residents cheered as the dam designed to protect their homes from flooding from the Coult Stream was officially commissioned at a special ceremony on 18 November.

The Mayor of Tonbridge and Malling, Cllr Derek Still, and local MP, the Rt. Hon Sir John Stanley unveiled a commemorative plaque on behalf of the East Peckham Flood Relief Partnership to mark the occasion, which was attended by all the agencies who worked on the project and many of the residents who helped to develop the scheme. Children from East Peckham Primary School were also there on the day to bury a time capsule containing memorabilia about the flood-relief project and life in East Peckham today (see page seven).

The completion of the dam marks the end of a complex, multi-agency project, which began in 2003 after floodwater from very heavy rainfall devastated the area for the second time in two years. The 300m long, four-metre high dam is a critical part of the £1million scheme and can store over 80,000 cubic metres of floodwater from the Coult stream catchment area even during the most extreme storms.

The East Peckham Flood Relief Partnership was set up by the borough council's Chief Executive, David Hughes, when it became clear after the 2003 floods that no single organisation had overall control of all the different aspects involved in flood protection. The aim was to co-ordinate a multi-agency approach to research the cause of the flooding and design a programme of work, including the construction of the dam, which would reduce the risk of flooding in future. The partnership includes Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council, the Environment Agency, the Upper Medway Internal Drainage Board, Kent County Council, East Peckham Parish Council, Southern Water Services and the East Peckham Flood Group. Bureau Veritas was appointed as lead consultant to the Partnership and worked with the borough council to project manage the scheme and contractor CA Blackwell Ltd carried out the work.

Steve Humphrey, the borough council's Director of Planning and Transportation, says: "This has been a real community project. In less than three years, we have been able to design and build a dam that will make flooding from the Coult Stream a thing of the past and I would like to thank everyone who has worked so hard to make the scheme a reality."

The scheme was substantially funded by a grant from Department of Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) with contributions from Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council, the Environment Agency, the Upper Medway Internal Drainage Board and Kent County Council.

TM YOUTH TEXTING

Young people in Tonbridge and Malling can now register to get free text messages giving them all the latest information about events and activities in the borough.

Any young person aged 11 to 16 can register their mobile phone number with the borough council by calling Youth and Play Development Officer, Karena Harmer on 01732 876169, emailing karena.harmer@tmbs.gov.uk or texting 07876 685104. Each young person will then receive regular free information updates directly to their mobile phone.

Updates will range from the latest activities, competitions and special offers at the council's leisure centres, SNAP

(Say No And Phone) dance night dates, Easter



and summer Activate activities, the Y – 2 Crew summer holiday programme, Youth Forum meeting dates, festivals, concerts and sporting events and competitions and a variety of events organised by the council in partnership with other organisations like Kent County Council Youth and Community, the health service, voluntary groups, Kent Police and the Kent Fire and Rescue Service.

This new service is totally free and, in line with the Data Protection Act requirements, is also completely secure with all numbers being held on a password-protected database and used only by the borough council. So if you want to know more about what's going on and where – just register your number now and we will get texting!

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