



Newsletter

9th JULY 2019

Welcome to our first newsletter! We started Save Capel just 7 weeks ago and have been overwhelmed by the support and generosity shown to us. Thank you everyone! This newsletter will bring you up to date on our progress so far. We hope that it will also help people who are getting to know us for the first time to hear a bit about what we're doing and why. There is more information at savecapel.com and we are also on Facebook and Twitter (@capelsave).

Save Capel was formed at the end of May to let everyone in the Parish of Capel and beyond know about the TWBC Draft Local Plan that shocked many residents when it was partially unveiled at small presentations in May.

The Parish of Capel is one of 20 wards in the Borough of Tunbridge Wells. The hamlet of Capel is within the Parish and is home to the beautiful, medieval Church of St Thomas a Becket. In this newsletter, when we refer to Capel, we are talking about the Parish as a whole. Some maps of the Parish and the Borough are at the end of this newsletter. A large part of the west side of Paddock Wood is within the Parish of Capel.



In May, Capel Parish Council helped local residents to get together to form a Working Party to look at the Draft Local Plan in more detail and understand the implications of the proposed housing and roads on the Parish. The Working Party became the engine room of the Save Capel campaign. Groups were set up to look at the areas shown in our flower (alongside). Each group has at least 5 people. Some groups have as many as 17! This Working Party of 85 people has investigated hundreds of aspects of the draft plan, with over 60 actions ongoing. This activity is vital, to build and show

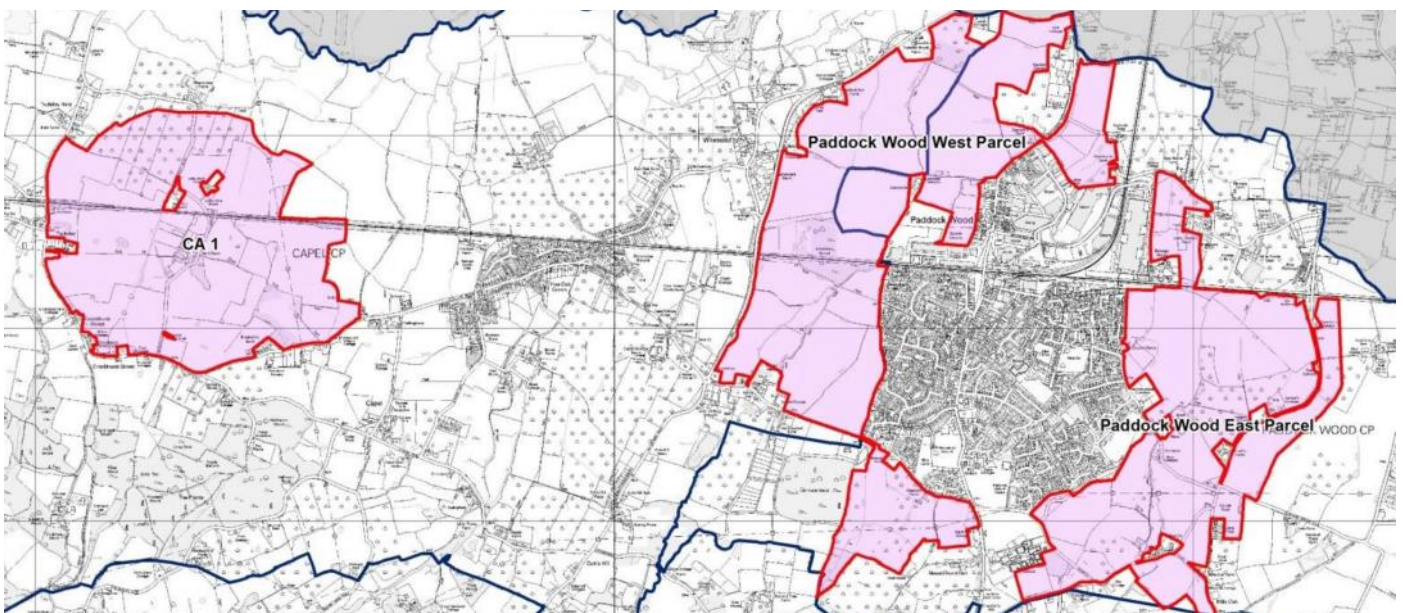
TWBC our considered, evidence based arguments to oppose the draft Local Plan. We now feel strong and stable enough to take the teams, information gathering, experiences and energy of the Working Party forward to develop a Capel Neighbourhood Plan.

Save Capel has attracted press coverage on BBC South East News, in the Times of Tonbridge, the Courier, Kent Messenger, KMTV and on BBC Radio Kent. More than 2,000 people have signed our petition with more events and pop-up information stands planned in July, August and September.

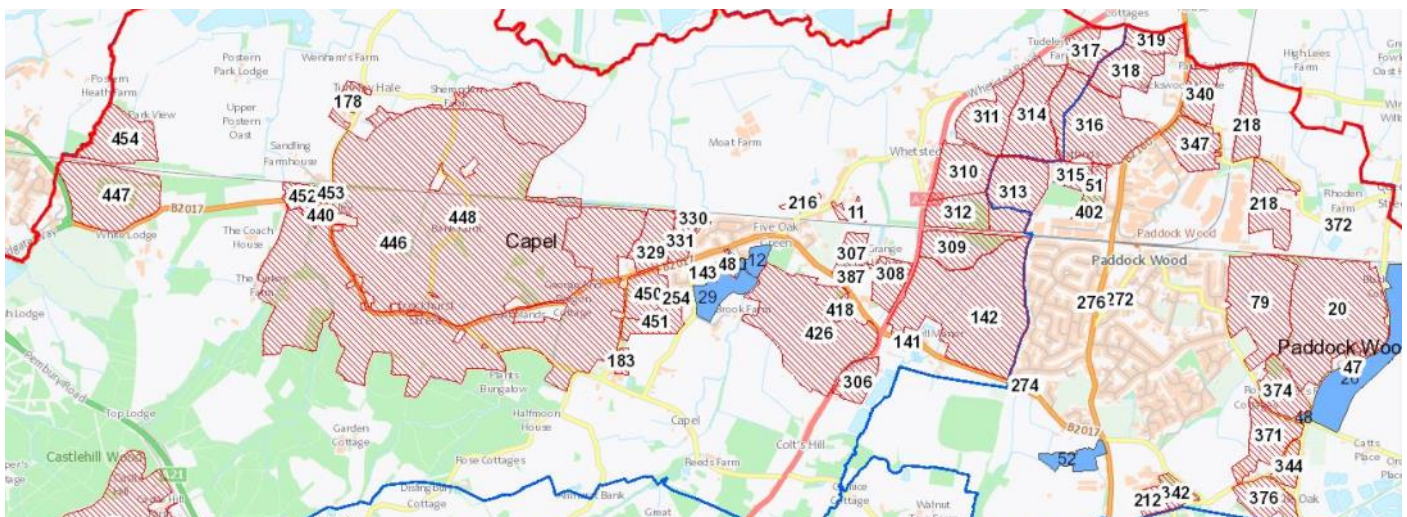
What do we know about the housing and road plans for our Parish?

There isn't a lot of information available yet, as the draft Local Plan presentation we were given in May was not a view of the finished plan. At present, the draft Local Plan is due to be published on Monday 29th July. It was originally due to be published in January, then kept being delayed. It is possible that this was due to more land being added at a late stage. The Tudeley sites were not in the original 'Call for Sites' process, so this part of the draft plan was a complete shock! All of the maps shown below are on savecapel.com and can be 'zoomed' to show more detail. They are also available on TWBC's website.

In May, we were told that 2,500-2,800 houses would go on CA1 (Tudeley) with a further 4,000 on Paddock Wood, of which 1,500+ will be to the west, in East Capel. If the draft Local Plan is adopted then the Parish of Capel, which currently has 950 houses, will have 5,000 or more. A senior school on site 447, a new primary and expansion of Capel School were also mentioned, with a new road "somewhere".



The pink areas are the areas of proposed new housing. The blue lines are the ward boundaries. The red hashed areas below that are not already pink will be considered for housing in the 2024 local plan. TWBC say that the housing is required due to national requirements. We understand that but know that the housing can be spread across the borough, particularly along the A21 corridor. There are also brownfield sites that can be developed locally. The draft Local Plan includes Tudeley because a single landowner, Hadlow Estate (the trading name of Goldsmid Settled Estates), offered up their land for development and TWBC think dealing with one landowner will be easy, despite the land's lack of infrastructure, its status as Green Belt and many other compelling issues that have no solutions or crippling expensive solutions.

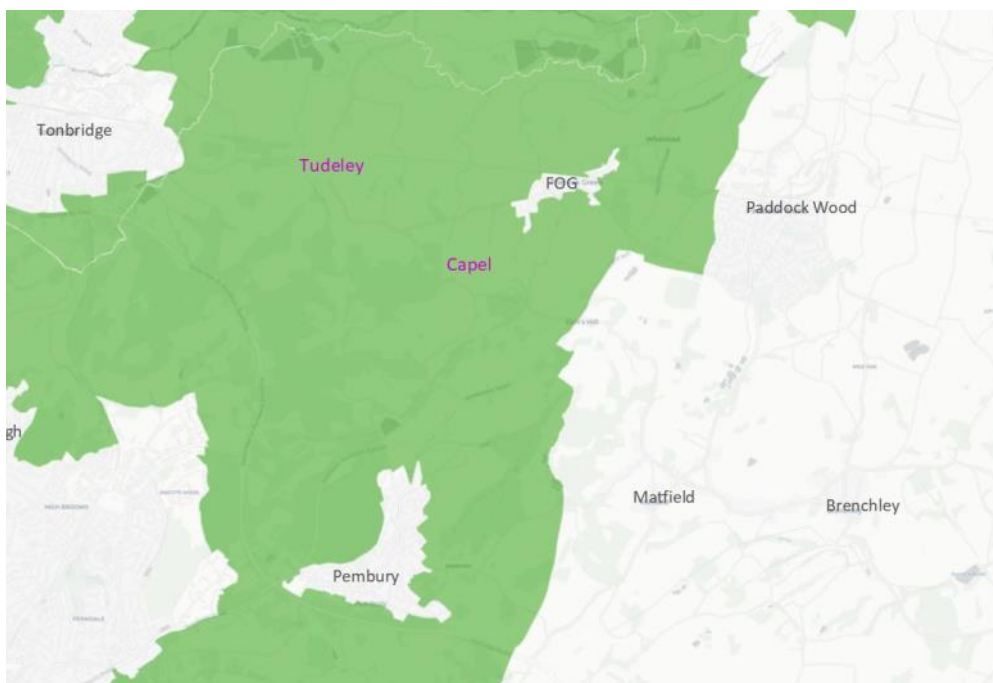


Tunbridge Wells Borough is made up of 20 Wards. TWBC would like to put most of their new house building in just 3 wards; Capel, Paddock Wood West and Paddock Wood East, right up at the north of the Borough, next to the border with the Borough of Tonbridge & Malling. This plan will put a huge amount of strain on Tonbridge. They will bear the brunt of many of the road, commuting, school and GP issues arising from such a lot of new houses being built. The people living in those houses will be paying council tax to TWBC. The 8,000+ cars from the new houses will flood the roads of Tonbridge, Hadlow, East Peckham and beyond.



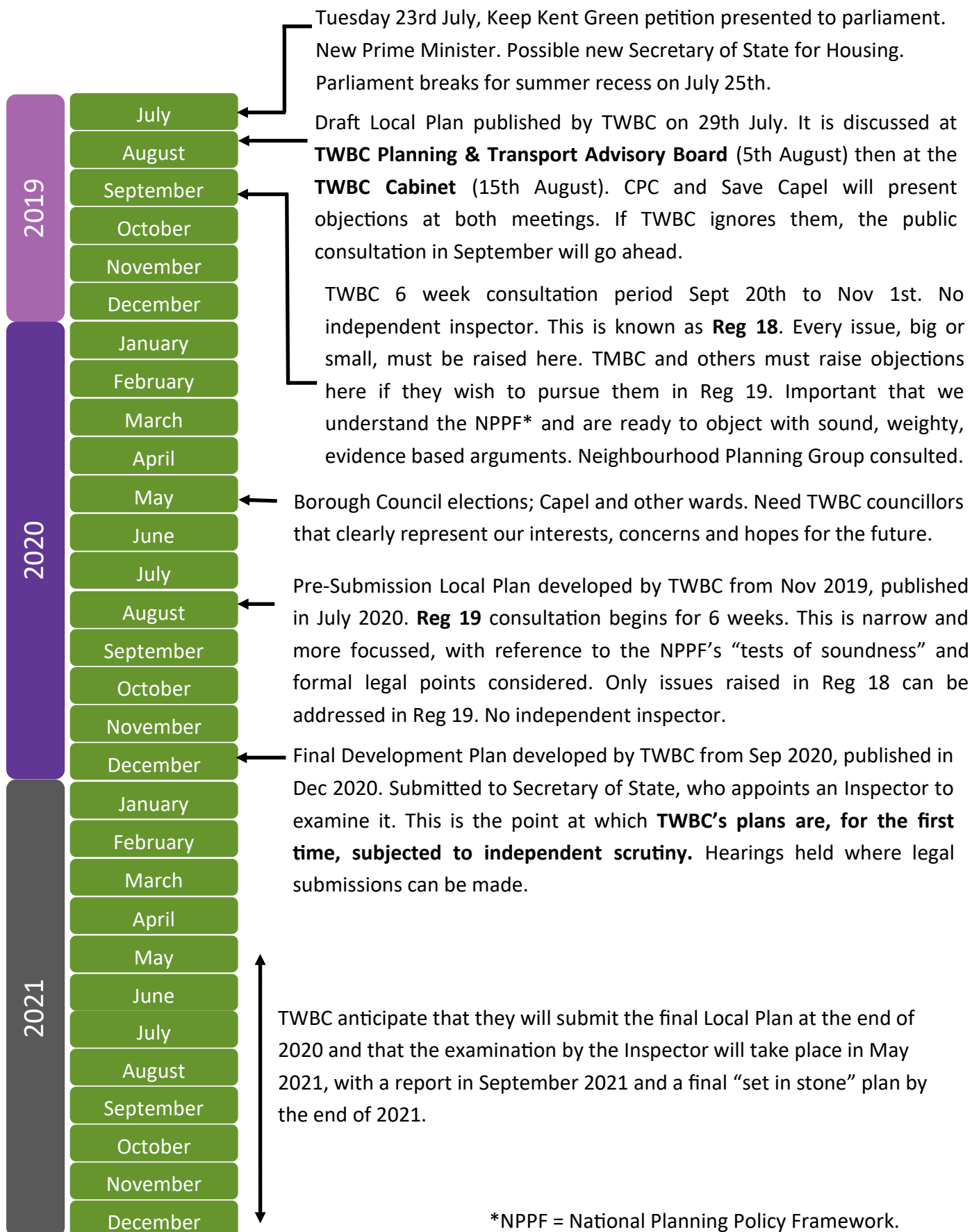
The landowner encouraging Capel's inclusion in the Local Plan (Hadlow Estate) has always insisted that they have conservation and long term stewardship at the heart of their business. The family burial plot on Hartlake Road and land directly adjacent to Tudeley Church is included in the "Call for Sites" (land offered up for sale for housing/roads/retail units). Hadlow Estate have declined to comment on why they have suddenly offered up the central village of their estate and large swathes of land nearby for sale when they know it will result in the destruction of wildlife, biodiversity, agriculture and their family's legacy. Their agents are informally implying that the housing will be stylish and sustainable.

There is no way that you can punch a 400 acre and 200 acre hole in the green belt (Tudeley 400, East Capel 200) and style them out! We look forward to hearing their views and implore them to explain their position. They know this land well. The infrastructure issues on this land are insurmountable.



The shaded green area shows the Metropolitan Green Belt.

When will we know more?



New Neighbourhood Plans for Capel, Paddock Wood and other wards in TWBC can only be adopted after the Local Plan has been adopted. While the Local Plan is being developed, NP teams are part of TWBC's consultation process and can query/advise/object. Once the Local Plan is "set in stone" the NP teams agree to work on how the Local Plan should be implemented within the Parish/Town.

What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

“Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and **shape the development and growth of their local area**. They are able to choose where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built, have their say on what those new buildings should look like and what infrastructure should be provided, and grant planning permission for the new buildings they want to see go ahead.” gov.uk

Why do we need a Neighbourhood Plan?

“Neighbourhood planning enables communities to play a much stronger role in shaping the areas in which they live and work and in supporting new development proposals. A neighbourhood plan forms part of the development plan and sits alongside the local plan prepared by the local planning authority. Decisions on planning applications will be made using both the local plan and the neighbourhood plan, and any other material considerations. Neighbourhood planning provides the opportunity for communities to set out a **positive vision for how they want their community to develop over the next 10, 15, 20 years** in ways that meet identified local need and make sense for local people.” gov.uk

How can we create a Neighbourhood Plan?

Capel Parish Council (CPC) is responsible for Neighbourhood Planning. A group of people can get together and say that they would like to develop a Neighbourhood Plan. If CPC are happy that they have the best interests of the community at heart and the skills to do a good job, then they can let them create the Capel Parish Neighbourhood Planning Team. In setting up the Local Plan Working Party, CPC were able to see, up close, the work and co-operation across the community to address concerns over the draft Local Plan. The Capel Parish Local Plan Working Party will now become the Capel Parish Neighbourhood Planning Team. Initially, the Convenors of the Working Party and Save Capel Co-ordinator will work together as a **Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group** (NPSG). A small group of Parish Councillors will join the NPSG for regular meetings to enable efficient communication with CPC and to offer advice. This team of ten will evolve and adapt over time to make the best use of expertise within the Parish. We are very grateful to Capel Parish Council for their guidance and support. With the Neighbourhood Plan Teams and Steering Group up and running, we can say a big “Thank You” to our Parish Councillors and let them return to attending to their CPC duties without additional WP/NP meetings. If you would like to know more about getting involved with the NPSG please email savecapel@gmail.com.

What happens next?

We hope that we can show TWBC that there are better options for housing than the current draft Local Plan proposals in East Capel and Tudeley. We don't know how long it will take to do this, or the outcome with regard to the proposals possibly being reviewed and returning in the future. This makes the Neighbourhood Plan very important as a method for our voice to be heard this year and onwards to the next version of the Local Plan (2024) and beyond.

Please support us! We need your help! Please sign our petition at savecapel.com and get in touch via savecapel@gmail.com if you have any expertise or ideas to share. Thank You!



£5.00
PER
PERSON



QUIZ NIGHT

The Schools at Somerhill

Saturday 27th July

7PM ARRIVAL 7.30PM START
MAXIMUM TEAMS OF 6 | BIG RAFFLE
BRING OWN DRINKS AND NIBBLES

EMAIL TEAMS TO SAVECAPEL@GMAIL.COM

FIVE AID

In support of **SAVECAPEL**



The Dovecote Sat 27th July

With music from the 60s and 70s through to present day, the DS Collective will entertain and energise you! It's an Open Mic night. The PA will be set up so feel free to turn up with your music/instrument and put your name on the list.

7pm to Midnight

£5 on the door (suggested donation)