

# Maria Caulfield's Update for Ringmer

## Jan 2024

Please accept my apologies that I am unable to join you at your upcoming meeting. I do however have the following updates for the parish.

### Launch of East Sussex Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4)

I am pleased to share exciting news regarding the commencement of the consultation phase for the draft East Sussex Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4), which began this week. I invite you to contribute your views to this important statutory document that outlines the transport policy and strategy framework for the area.

The LTP4 Strategy, Implementation Plan, and supporting documents are available on the County Council's consultation hub <http://eastsussex.gov.uk/DraftLTP4> from November 27, 2023, to February 25, 2024. I encourage you to review these documents and share your views.

Please take the time to share your views on the LTP4 Strategy and its implementation plan. Your input will help shape the future of transportation in our area.

For any questions or to arrange a meeting with officers, please contact the Council via email at [LocalTransportPlan@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:LocalTransportPlan@eastsussex.gov.uk) or call the ESCC Switchboard on 0345 608 0190.

### 'Excellent' Rating on Local Bathing Waters

I am delighted at the recent announcement from the Environment Agency, confirming the Excellent quality rating for the bathing waters in the Lewes Constituency, specifically Birling Gap and Seaford. The Environment Agency assesses over 400 bathing waters across the country annually, categorising them as Excellent, Good, Sufficient, or Poor based on water quality. This year's results, reflecting a 96% compliance with minimum standards, with almost 90% achieving the highest ratings of Excellent or Good, underscore the continuous efforts needed to enhance bathing water quality. Government initiatives, such as the 'Plan for Water,' which involves a substantial investment of approximately £1.6 billion addresses issues like sewage discharges, nutrient pollution reduction, and water supply augmentation. I acknowledge the progress made since the 1990s, highlighting that increased regulation and sustained investments have significantly improved coastal bathing waters across England.

## New Planning Policy Update

I approve of the recently released updated National Planning Policy Framework by the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, Michael Gove.

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the governments planning policies for England and how these should be applied by local planning authorities.

The revised framework updates a number of planning policies, the most important to the local area include changes to the housing targets and local plans.

Local planning authorities use a system called the Standard Method to calculate housing need in the area. There has been concern that this produces a number that is too high for areas such as Lewes and Wealden. The government have responded to this concern by making clear in the framework that the number produced by the Standard Method is a starting point and is advisory, meaning that mandatory housing targets have been abolished.

The government also want to ensure that local authorities have up-to-date local plans and will punish authorities who drag their feet and don't produce them on time.

Lewes District Council has not had an up-to-date local plan since 2021, and this has caused a raft of speculative development in the area, some of which have been approved which may not have been if a local plan had been in place.

## Encouraging local bids for £1 Million Defibrillator Fund

I am delighted to encourage local organisations to apply for the £1 million Community Automated External Defibrillators Fund, an initiative aimed at increasing the presence of AEDs in critical public locations to save lives. As the MP for Lewes and a Minister in the Department for Health and Social Care, I have advocated for improved defibrillator accessibility, even introducing a bill in Parliament to mandate their installation in public buildings like schools and leisure centres. Through collective efforts with groups like the British Heart Foundation, the government committed to placing a defibrillator in every state-funded school last year. Defibrillation is crucial in treating cardiac arrest, and the DHSC's £1 million fund will contribute to deploying an additional 2000 publicly accessible defibrillators nationwide, furthering our mission to make defibrillators readily available in life-threatening situations. Organisations can apply for funding at <https://www.defibgrant.co.uk/>

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