

Clerk - Meopham Parish Council

From: Terry Martin <chief.executive@kentalc.gov.uk>
Sent: 28 June 2017 10:21
Subject: KFRS/KALC Fire Hydrant Initiative
Attachments: KFRS- KALC Fire hydrant initiative project June 17.pdf

Dear Member Councils

As many of you will know, KALC has been working with Kent Fire & Rescue Service (KFRS) over the last 5 years on the fire hydrant initiative project, which is aimed at helping to increase community resilience within local communities. We are delighted that many councils have already signed up to the initiative and are monitoring and reporting any fire hydrant defects and water provision issues in their local area to KFRS. The initiative gained national recognition last year when it was a runner-up in the NALC 2016 Star Councils CALC Outstanding Project of the Year category.

KFRS undertook a review of the initiative at the beginning of the year and held a number of review meetings around the county, which many councils attended. Further details of the Fire Hydrant Initiative are attached. We would encourage member councils to sign up to the initiative, if they have not already done so. As the document makes clear, inspections are to be visual inspections only and no risks should be taken at any time.

If you would like to see the fire hydrant map for your area, then please e-mail manager@kentalc.gov.uk or call Laura on 01304 820173 and we will send it on to you. Please note that due to data protection, these maps should not be displayed on public domain websites.

If you would like to discuss the Fire Hydrant Initiative Project further or would like to sign up to the initiative then please contact Steve Lewis in the Water Services Team at Kent Fire & Rescue Service at water.services@kent.fire-uk.org or telephone 01622 692121.

Kind Regards

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

FIRE HYDRANT INITIATIVE PROJECT

Kent Fire & Rescue Service (KFRS) – Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC)

Background

The fire hydrants used by fire and rescue services to supply water for firefighting are called statutory fire hydrants (as opposed to private fire hydrants found on private water mains). They are owned, installed and maintained by Kent's five water companies.

Fire hydrants are mainly found on pavements, but can also be found on the road or in nearby public spaces, such as grass verges.

Currently KFRS Water Services department inspect all statutory fire hydrants within Kent & Medway using a rolling risk based programme. There are currently 26981 statutory fire hydrants within Kent, this number however is increasing on a monthly basis due to new infrastructure being built throughout the County.

KFRS have been working in partnership with KALC to help increase community resilience within local Parish and Town Council's (PTC) and one of the initiatives put in place is for local residents to help monitor and report fire hydrant defects and water provision issues within their local area, ensuring issues are resolved in a timely manner. The fire hydrant initiative project has been in place for 5 years and KFRS are looking at getting as many PTC involved as possible. Local Councils should contact their insurers to let them know that they are looking to be involved in the project.

Introduction

KFRS will continue to inspect fire hydrants throughout Kent & Medway on a rolling risk based programme and the inspections we are asking local PTC's to undertake are in addition to the ongoing work KFRS undertake. Whether your Local PTC helps identify defects or not will have no impact on the service provided by the Authority.

The inspections can be undertaken by anyone within the Local Council or community.

The inspections are to be visual inspections only and no risks should be taken at any time.

All issues reported to KFRS will be rectified based on the severity of the defect.

We are simply asking that.... If you see a defect **PLEASE REPORT IT!!!**

Reporting process

Problems with a fire hydrant can be reported in several ways:

Direct to KFRS Water Services team:

- Email:
water.services@kent.fireuk.org
- By phone:
[01622 692 121](tel:01622692121) - Extension 2391
- In writing:
Water Services team, Kent Fire
and Rescue Service
Headquarters, The Godlands,
Straw Mill Hill, Tovil, Maidstone,
ME15 6XB
- Kent County Council online
reporting tool - [Report online to
Kent County Council](#)
- Smartphone app - [Country Eye](#)

Out-of-hours reporting (including emergency issues)

If the problem appears to be dangerous or is noticed outside office hours, please report directly to your local water company:

- [Affinity Water South East](#)
0800 376 5325
- [South East Water](#)
0333 000 0365
- [Southern Water](#)
0330 303 0368
- [Sutton and East Surrey Water](#)
01737 772000.
- [Thames Water](#)
0800 714 614

Problems that can be reported by PTC include:

Missing, damaged or covered fire hydrant marker plates

Missing or damaged hydrant marker plates can usually be fixed by KFRS.

Hydrant marker plates are rectangular yellow signs, with a large black H and a pair of numbers, usually attached to a wall, lamp post or a short concrete post. The two numbers on the plate show the size of the water main and the approximate distance of the hydrant from the plate.

In some areas, thermal H markings are burnt into the roadway, as shown below. These are predominantly used in rural areas where marker plates are at higher risk of being covered over or damaged.



As well as marker plates, all hydrants are also shown on the digital maps available in fire engines, so that the nearest one can be found while firefighters are on their way to an incident. This also means that even if marker plates are missing or broken, the fire service will still be able to find them in most cases, and once reported they will be repaired in due course.

If the marker plate is covered by overgrown grass or plants, residents can help by cutting back any plants or bushes that are covering the hydrant indicator post.

Dangerous, missing or cracked hydrant covers and frames

When a fire hydrant cover is missing or cracked, it can expose the hydrant to the elements, which can cause it to freeze and silt up. This can stop it working when firefighters need it.

Leaks from fire hydrants

Most leaks are below ground and not visible, but even leaks on the surface are often not reported due to people assuming someone else will have already reported a problem. Leaks affect water flow and pressure from a fire hydrant, making it less effective if firefighters need to use it. Please report any leaks as soon as they are discovered.

Leaks from water supply pipes or mains

Leaks from water supply pipes or mains are the responsibility of the water company but can affect the availability of water from a fire hydrant. The sooner leaks are reported to the water company, the sooner they can fix the problem.

Illegal use of fire hydrants

Many problems with fire hydrants are caused by illegal use. It is illegal to use a fire hydrant to obtain water for purposes other than firefighting "unless authorised by the Water Authority or another person to whom the hydrant belongs" (source: Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, section 42, subsection 6).

The public can tell the local water companies or KFRS when they suspect illegal use. Key pieces of information such as the registration number and any company names on a vehicle, along with the date, time and location of the activity will be very helpful, but please avoid confrontation with suspected offenders.

Parking on or preventing access to a fire hydrant

It is an offence to be parked over or to prevent access to a fire hydrant when it is required for firefighting (source: Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, section 42, subsection 7). If cars are seen to be continuously parking over fire hydrants this should be reported to the water services team at Kent Fire and Rescue Service.

Drivers should be considerate when parking near a fire hydrant marker post and the Local Council could ask friends, relatives and neighbours to be aware, as this could save time in an emergency.

Alternative emergency water supplies

As well as fire hydrants, Kent Fire and Rescue Service can use open water sources at incidents, including ponds and swimming pools. Please suggest these sources - if they are on private land owned or occupied by an individual or company - to the water services team, giving key information including the location and capacity if known.

KFRS is already aware of all public water sources such as rivers.

In the event of a fire, KFRS will use every available water source to tackle it. After the incident, any water that has been used will be replenished free of charge by the local water company, in liaison with the Fire Service.

New Development sites

To ensure we capture all development sites within Kent & Medway, PTC's are encouraged to report any new developments within their area to the water services team so they can ensure all fire safety aspects of the new infrastructure are in place.

Parish and Town Council fire hydrant maps

Maps identifying the locations of the fire hydrants within your Parish or Town are available through KALC. Please note that due to data protection, these maps are not to be displayed on public domain websites.

Free home safety advice and services

KFRS offer free home “[safe and well](#)” visits, to request a visit please:

- Call **0800 923 7000**
- Email home@kent.fire-uk.org

KFRS would like to thank KALC, Local Councils and their communities for their support and assistance with this initiative.

LEGAL ADVICE STRAIGHT TO YOUR DESK



By Debbie Ashton and Nicholas Hancox

Debbie Ashton is the National Legal Advisor for the SLCC and works at Nicholas Hancox Solicitors

www.nicholashancox.co.uk

GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) will come into force in the UK on 25 May 2018. When we wrote about the GDPR in the November 2016 issue of *The Clerk* (page 6), there were a lot of 'unknowns' as a consequence of Brexit. There are still some 'unknowns'. But, what we do know, is that GDPR is coming.

What does this mean for you and for your council? It means that data protection law is changing and you need to be ready for 25 May 2018.

Preparing for the GDPR

Are you ready? What preparations have you made? If you have not yet started preparing, you need to find out what is changing and tell your council. Then your council can agree a plan as to how the council will prepare and how it will ensure it meets its obligations under the new legislation which will bring the GDPR into force in the UK next year. This is likely to require an investment of time and money for your council.

So, where to start? There is some information on the SLCC Advice pages, but a key place to look is on the Information Commissioner's website:

<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/data-protection-reform/>

Here you can find information, a self-assessment toolkit, and links to related external sources including a link to the GDPR itself.

You may find it helpful to read the documents 'Overview of the GDPR', '12 Steps to take now' and 'Getting ready for the GDPR' (which includes a link to the data protection self-assessment toolkit); and your council should do an audit to find out and make a record of such things as: what personal data the council holds, for what purpose, on what legal basis, details of any persons with whom the personal data is provided, and details of how long the council will keep the

personal data. For instance, if you are employed as clerk, your council will hold personal data about you as a council employee. There will be a contractual arrangement between you. Your council may perhaps share some of your personal data with a payroll service provider. Your council may need to keep some personal data about you on file even after your employment ends, to ensure that it can provide a reference to a future employer or in respect of future pension entitlement.

Data Protection Officers

Articles 37, 38 and 39 of the GDPR are about the designation, position and tasks required of a Data Protection Officer. A public authority which is processing personal data will need to designate someone as its Data Protection Officer.

The Data Protection Officer may be a staff member, or may fulfil the tasks on the basis of a service contract. It is also possible for a single Data Protection Officer to be designated for more than one public authority. (Is there any likelihood of sharing a Data Protection Officer with your council's principal authority or with a group of other local councils?)

It is important that the person is designated 'on the basis of professional qualities and, in particular, expert knowledge of data protection law and practices and the ability to fulfil the tasks referred to in Article 39' (Art. 37(5)). If the role is going to fall to you as clerk, you should tell your council what support and resources you will need to take on this responsibility.

So, if your council hasn't started to prepare, it's time to do so. Do look at the ICO website and watch out for more updates from the SLCC.

Nicholas Hancox Solicitors Ltd

Specialist Solicitors for Local Councils

www.nicholashancox.co.uk

01493 754004

CORRESPONDENCE LIST FOR ADMINISTRATION & RESOURCES MEETING –
26.09.17

05/09/17	Letter from Oil Club re: MPC Heating Oil Club (AC)
13/09/17	Email from GBC re: Local Plan (AC)
	Email from GBC re: Supplement Update from KCC on Gravesham Joint Transport Board (AC)
	Email from resident re: Correction of History Data (AC)
	Email from GBC re: Minutes for Cabinet 4.9.17 (AC)
14/09/17	Email from Woodland Trust re: Tree Planning Guidance (AC)
	Email from Cllr McTavish re: Aviva Community Fund 2017 (AC)
	Email from Invicta Law re: registering the villages greens/draft statements of truth
	Email from resident re: accessing their garden with a van on Pitfield Green for moving house
15/09/17	Email from GBC re: Minutes for Environmental Services Cabinet 11.9.17 (AC)
	Email from GBC re: Meeting of Parish Council Chairmen 20.9.17 CANCELLED (AC)
	Email from Kent 4 Community Newsletter 15.9.17 (AC)
	Email from GBC re: Minutes for Performance/Admin Cabinet 7.9.17 (AC)
	Email from Tree Warden with Kent Tree and Pond Partnership re : potential issue with a tree on Pitfield Green (E&A)
18/09/17	Email from GBC re: Agenda for Housing Cabinet Committee 27.9.17 (AC)
	Email from KCC Highways re: temporary road closure at Johns Road, Meopham (AC)
	Email from Agent re : Planning Permission granted for Judson's Pavilion (JPC)
	Email from Rural Kent re: Inside Track Issue 248 (AC)
	Email from ACRK re : AGM invite (AC)
	Email from KentCAN re: Kent in Brief (AC)
19/09/17	Email from GBC re: Playsite Check (SG/PL)
	Email from GBC re: Licensing Committee Agenda (AC)
	Email from KALC re: NALC Chief Executive Bulletin 32 (AC)
	Email from KALC re: time extension to rights of way consultation (AC)
	Email from KALC re: DCLG consultation (AC)
	Email from KALC re: Rural Policing update (AC)
	Email from KALC re: Flood Warden training event (AC)

