



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

29 February 2024

Ms Eleanor Hoyle  
Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health  
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council  
Gibson Building, Gibson Drive  
Kings Hill, West Malling  
Kent, ME19 4LZ

Dear Eleanor,

Thank you very much for your e-mail dated 5 February 2024 regarding lighting on the footpath between Townlock and Cannon Lane as part of the Tonbridge Riverside Environmental Improvement Scheme.

I am disappointed that following my initial e-mail on 15 June 2023, my office had to chase for a reply on 24 October 2023, 5 December 2023 and 5 February 2024. This is despite being assured that a reply would be received by 14 December 2023.

This disappointment is added to by the reply of 5 February 2024, which states that the Council has no immediate capability of delivering on this much needed project to provide a lighted footpath between the busy Town Centre and the busy industrial estate in Tonbridge, an area which has seen significant population growth in recent years and has planned development over future years too.

While your reply indicates that the Council has not identified funding for this lighting, it is a project which the Council has committed to delivering over recent years. I gather the scheme was first introduced and selected for evaluation in the 2015/15 Capital Plan review, meaning it has been under consideration for the past nine years.

Residents and visitors to the area have to take their safety into their own hands when walking along this stretch of the River Medway. The footpath is narrow in many places and there is no protection from the river. The presence of industrial buildings means there is no other light source in the evenings during winter months and I know of many local residents who will take a considerably longer route to get to and from facilities due to there not being any lighting on the footpath. Indeed, many use their car for short journeys instead, adding further traffic to our busy roads.

I would be grateful if Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council would be able to reconsider its position on prioritising this project and look to progress this simple lighting scheme as a matter of urgency. I know the Gasholders development will help provide lighting to a part of the route but it is essential that this is accelerated to ensure it is safer to walk between the town centre and industrial estate.

I will also be writing to local residents to seek their views on this matter.

I look forward to hearing back from you, and trust this will be received in a timely manner.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Tugendhat".

**TOM TUGENDHAT**

Member of Parliament for Tonbridge and Malling

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