

OCTOBER 2015

Trenport

member of the Ellerman Investments Group



Connections for a new community

Peters Village and its 1,000 new homes should be 'well-connected' from the start, through proposals for enhanced bus services.

Highlights are:

- a Medway east to west bank service using the new Medway bridge - part of the Peters Village project - linking with peak hour fast trains to London via Snodland station
- better connections with employment and shopping offered by the Medway Towns and Maidstone
- the scheme's potential to lure people away from car use.

The Residential Travel Plan (RTP) was commissioned by Peters Village developer, Trenport Investments, for county council consultations.

It will encourage walking, cycling, and car share to drive down 'single occupant' car journeys, but the RTP also reflects an evolving transport landscape.

Trenport Director Chris Hall explained: "The transport picture for Peters Village changed while the project was on hold from 2006 until we started onsite last year, so had to be taken into account.

"There is, for instance, less demand for links with Kings Hill and West Malling: employment options in the former have scaled down, while the latter no longer has the fastest train services into London locally – east bank residents will now look to Snodland and the Medway Towns for the best rail access into the capital.

"The key issue remaining is how existing services can be extended or re-routed, with congestion from street parking on Wouldham High Street and current bus use heading the agenda; both factors have been taken on board in our discussions with KCC and Arriva."



'Exciting development' as Bellway named first to build at Peters Village

A UK top five house builder, Bellway, is to construct the 152-home Phase 1 on Trenport's Peters Village development near Wouldham on the east bank of the Medway - delivery of these new properties will start in 2016.

"This is a very exciting development," said Trenport Director Chris Hall.

"Construction of the infrastructure for Peters Village continues on schedule, but the site now gains real presence and significance to local people as the first homes start to be built.

"And we are delighted that we have reached agreement with one of the biggest and best known house builders in the country; one with a high reputation for delivering customer satisfaction.

"That's exactly the benchmark we would want, and accords with us setting the tone of design and quality high at Peters Village by securing detailed planning permission for the first homes ourselves."

Bellway was founded in the north east of England in 1946, but has since become a national concern – one of its divisional offices is located at Kings Hill, West Malling.

Chris Hall added: "Even as Bellway moves towards building the first homes, we already know that there will be hefty demand for these properties.

"Since we began actively registering interest on all types of property in September 2014 we have had almost five hundred inquiries in total.

"And while the 152 Phase 1 properties

do not include affordable homes, there is provision for 65 within the overall 157 units for Phase 2 and Trenport, working with affordable homes developer Guinness Partnership, plans to prioritise development of those particular properties.

"This will quickly foster a community feel at Peters Village by accommodating those who have grown up in the local area, yet cannot afford a home at full market price.

"We also fully expect sales momentum on Peters Village to speed up as physical evidence grows of progress on the new bridge over the Medway.

"It is currently bang on schedule for the opening in August 2016 (see overleaf).

"All in all, the progress of sales inquiries and general level of interest in the new development paints a bright future for Peters Village and the surrounding area.

"And Trenport is currently working hard with its architects and other consultants to refine proposals for the village centre facilities, including the new community hall and changing rooms, the medical centre and local retail units.

"Trenport hopes to submit the detailed applications for these buildings shortly."

■ **A further announcement will be made shortly on www.trenport.co.uk about how people can express an interest in buying a property on Phase 1 – an update on affordable properties will follow with news on phase 2.**

Bellway



Phase 1: Riverside perspective



Archaeology by popular demand

Presentations outlining the archaeology of the new Peters Village development attracted unprecedented interest.

Demand for the original 'The Archaeology of Peters Village' evening was so high, in fact, that another date was arranged by popular demand, enabling some 200, mostly local people, to attend over both evenings staged by site developer Trenport, though demand still exceeded supply.

Chris Clarke of CgMs Consulting, commissioned by Trenport to manage the archaeological investigations ahead of construction work starting, said: "On a development the size of Peters Village we would normally expect no more than 50 people at a presentation about the site's archaeology."

"So it is great to hear that upwards of 250 people attended or were interested in attending to learn some history of their local area."

Those lucky enough to get seats at Burham Old School Community Centre on Sept 14 and Oct 5, heard a fascinating story of how the Peters Village site's prime location on the River Medway – a key transport link for early civilization – made it important from Neolithic through to Roman times.

Chris Hall, Director of Trenport, welcomed everyone and Chris Clarke outlined how archaeological preparation for Peters Village had started 10 years earlier:

"So, contrary to popular belief, it is not some last minute rush, with archaeologists called in as the developers move their machines onsite."

He added that, within the six months prior to construction, archaeologists worked on ten different areas of excavation, extending from Court Road, Burham, to near the riverside location of the former Peters Lime & Cement Works – the



Iron Age Burial - radiocarbon date 360–90 BC

brown field site for the new Peters Village community.

Isca Howell, Senior Archaeologist at MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) then took up the narrative, describing how his team found many artefacts such as coins, pottery and even graves, but the real excitement was evidence of human works, such as a Neolithic 'causeway enclosure' – a sure sign of major habitation around 4,000 years BC – near the new line of Court Road:

"It's not clear whether these structures were ceremonial or defensive," he said. "But there are 70 across the country, and they may have had a life span of just a few generations."

"What we can say is that these were remarkable monuments created long before the Egyptian Pyramids."

Bronze Age remains were found near Court Road and Church Street, suggesting extensive habitation/settlement too, but curiously little evidence was found of Iron Age habitation apart from a Greek-style coin, dating from around 100BC - an example of the earliest coinage found in Britain.

With the arrival of the Romans in 43AD, came evidence of field systems taking advantage of the rich alluvial flood plain beside the Medway and, in addition to the known Roman villa near Burham, the Peters Village excavations found evidence of another development near Bell Lane, notably a ditch, postholes left by a possible defensive palisade, and a trackway or crude road.

But research suggested the Roman presence was in the form of estates and sub-estates rather than villages and towns.

Mr Howell said that, by contrast, there was little evidence of the Saxons and the timeline then jumps really to mediaeval times and the founding of the estate that was to become Wouldham Manor in the Tudor era - one of the best mediaeval artefacts found was a horse pendant.

The local landscape then underwent dramatic change in the late 1800s as the cement industry geared up and led to the construction of Peters Works.

After the presentation, members of the audience lingered to view artefacts and chat to the archaeologists over refreshments.

Medway gets new crossing with style

An elegant bridge over the River Medway is taking shape near the villages of Halling and Wouldham.

This all-new river crossing is part of a £50 million scheme by Trenport – backed by £19.5 million of Government funding from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) - to create the new 1,000-home Peters Village community and connect it with neighbouring areas on both banks of the Medway, while also improving their transport links.

Work on the overall project began in May 2014, with bridge construction itself from spring this year, preceded by sheet pile strengthening of the river banks bearing the roadway onto the crossing.

Trenport Managing Director Tony Parson said: "The whole scheme is right on schedule and we are particularly pleased with progress on the bridge."

"This will soon open up new employment, education, shopping, and recreation horizons for the east bank villages of Wouldham, Burham and Eccles, as well as serving their new neighbour Peters Village



through linking with the A228 on the Medway's west bank.

Two coffer dams - effectively watertight boxes resting on the river bed – enabled site teams to build the two bridge supports, now poking their heads above the dams.

Each support has 15 piles running 48-50 metres down through the river bed into rock to support the weight of the bridge and roadway.

These pile foundations were core drilled, and then filled with steel reinforcements and concrete – a quieter and more

environmentally-friendly process than conventional piling. Two temporary jetties advanced steadily from the river banks to carry the plant and machinery needed for the piling and coffer dams, and enable the three bridge spans to be constructed: two 40-metre sections between each bank and its nearest support, with a 60-metre mid-section to complete the crossing.

Tony Parson added: "The jetties are crucial, as the spans will be formed from concrete in situ, rather than pre-fabricated and brought in by road; this is faster and causes less traffic congestion, and totally in keeping with our site contractor Bam Nuttall's methods - a company known for environmental awareness and 'good neighbourliness'."

A second bridge is also being constructed over the nearby rail line, west of the river bridge, replacing one which would be unable to cope with traffic using the new crossing. Both new bridges will be fully open by late summer 2016, with the whole Peters Village development due for completion in 2022.



So who do you think you are?

It was a moment to bring a tingle to the spine.

Proof that there is much more to your family history than you ever realised – a moment like those from TV's popular 'ancestor hunt' Who Do You Think You Are?

Hugh Peters grew up believing his family were Midlands stock, until sons Mark and Tim stumbled across connections with the Medway-based Peters family, the dynasty behind the huge Peters Lime & Cement Works on the river's east bank – site of the new Peters Village community - and once owners of the long since demolished Wouldham Hall.

So Hugh and wife Felicity, and Mark and Tim, visited the area seeking graves that might prove this connection.

"We arrived at Halling Church, not really expecting to find much," said Hugh. "Only to be faced with this massive headstone – it belonged to Thomas Peters, my great-great grandfather."

"I felt this huge rush of emotion; Mark and Tim had worked it all out beforehand, of course, but I suddenly realised there really was this connection with our wider family, once quite well-known in this part of Kent and including Thomas' older brother, William, who began the cement dynasty."



Hugh, Emily and Mark Peters look out over the landscape that founded the fortunes of their ancestors

The disconnection had occurred two generations earlier in London: Hugh's grandmother Nina Thatcher travelled from her Shropshire home to work in the then well-known Kensington dairy Welford & Sons, later marrying one of the company managers, Ernest Peters – a member of the Kent family.

Within two years though, tragedy struck: whether through stress or depression, Ernest took his own life, leaving his young wife pregnant with a son, Ernest junior – Hugh's father.

"But what had thrown us previously was that my dad had been born in Shropshire," said Hugh, 76. "Until we realised my poor widowed grandmother

must have returned to the bosom of her family to help bring up her baby.

"She later moved near Warwick where she bought a village shop, ran it single-handedly and raised my dad. I was then born in the brewing town of Burton-on-Trent, with no idea of the Kent connection."

Now living in south London, Hugh – a semi-retired director of a motor trade group – wants to know more about his lost family, with help from Mark and Tim, both equally fascinated.

"We have become hooked by the whole Peters Works story," admitted Mark, who recently visited the Peters Village site as a guest of Trenport, along with his three-year-old daughter Emily, and dad.

"So we would love to hear more about this operation, in its heyday the largest of its kind in the world with a workforce of 1,000 men and a fleet of 80 barges, which rose so quickly in the late 1800s, before declining almost as fast."

■ **If you can help Mark and Hugh's ancestral search or simply pass on information about your own family's connection with Peters Works, please tell us via Trenport's Peters Village community liaison manager Shirley Boards: shirley.boards@trenport.co.uk or 01233 224980.**

Trenport agrees orchid 'dark arts' project

Trenport aims to build more than homes at Peters Village over the next few years – it also wants to create a new colony for a rare orchid.

Part of the site is already home to an outpost of the Man Orchid – so-called because the blooms resemble a cascade of dangling human figures. Trenport's ecological advisors are working to ensure this exotic-looking plant's tenure is further assured by the establishment of a new colony through sowing and laboratory propagation of seed.

The work represents part of ongoing environmental mitigation and enhancement efforts by Trenport, which included preserving the local habitat of the Great Crested Newt, and safeguarding one of only two UK populations for the Marsh Mallow Moth by transplanting and propagating the equally scarce and hollyhock-like Marsh Mallow plant - the moth's preferred habitat.

However, propagating the Man Orchid is a far more challenging task according to Dominic Woodfield, Director of Trenport's specialist independent ecological consultants Bioscan:

"Wild orchids are notoriously fickle. Translocating plants at Peters Village has been tried by others, without obvious success, so we have opted for a two-pronged approach: harvesting and transplanting ripe seed heads to encourage natural germination, but also attempting to propagate seeds here at Bioscan (near Oxford).

"This is a bit of a dark art. Successful germination of the tiny dust-like seeds in the wild is dependent on the presence of a mycorrhizal fungal partner but may be achieved in the lab with a surrogate culture.

"The seeds also require various pre-treatments and careful handling before sowing onto culture. The whole process takes up to three years so we won't really be sure for some time whether we have succeeded or failed.

"Given this risk, it reflects well on



Man Orchid found at Peters Village

Trenport that the company is prepared to fund something with such a slim chance of success. We are working hard to maximise the chances of their investment fostering a new colony of which they can be proud."

Trenport Director Chris Hall said: "While our main aim is to be a quality developer of land, we see no conflict with caring for and enhancing the habitat of rare flora and fauna. We have a good track record so far and we hope the orchid project brings yet more success."

The Man Orchid (*Orchis anthropophora*) likes alkaline soils produced by limestone and chalk, as in the Peters Village area where chalk used to be quarried for cement production.

The plant is common across Europe, but rarer in the UK, with colonies largely confined to southern England.

Given a well-drained grassy or edge-of-shade spot it will grow to a foot in height, blooming from April to June to produce its distinctive yellow-green 'man' flowers, leading to seed pods packed with microscopic seeds.

New home proposed for historic school



Wouldham Primary School – currently celebrating its 150th anniversary - has approached Trenport about re-locating to Peters Village.

Trenport Director Chris Hall explained: "The governors' ambition is for a state-of-the-art facility. This would replace the much loved, but sadly out of date existing school and provide excellent facilities and much needed space; enough to meet the needs of families in Wouldham and future demand from Peters Village. Trenport welcomes the initiative, which has the full support of the local education authority.

"This plan, would supersede the proposed new one-form entry primary school included within the Peters Village development, and intended purely to serve needs arising from the new homes there.

"We understand there will be a consultation on these proposals and Trenport is happy to support this process in any way which would be helpful."

Schools arts project update

Trenport and its Peters Village site developer Bam Nuttall have pledged to follow-up on the success of this year's inaugural Tri-history Arts Project or 'Why I Love My Valley'.

Primary school pupils in Wouldham, Burham and Eccles, were offered £3,500 in prize money for individuals and their schools, with some entries now expected to inspire community art exhibits commissioned by Trenport for the new Peters Village community.

However, the 2016 competition will be slightly different, as Trenport Community Liaison Manager Shirley Boards explained:

"When we launched the original competition, we envisaged that it would have a triennial flow, one year involving all pupils at the three village schools and then Year 5 (aged 9-10) children the following two years and so on.

"This takes pressure off both teachers and pupils for what is a major – though wonderfully creative - undertaking."

Details of the next competition will be announced on www.trenport.co.uk soon, with work likely to start in January.

Keeping you informed and how to contact us:

- In the first instance, please log on to our new website www.trenport.co.uk which is readily accessed via PC, tablet or smartphone and offering news and quick answers to many queries rather than ringing the site helpline.
- However, the **Helpline 01634 863092** continues, so

please call if you have a query about any matter relating to the construction of Peters Village and the new Medway crossing. All calls will be logged.

- Your Ward and Parish Councillors, local news publications are also regularly updated with news.
- If you would like a copy of

this newsletter in larger print, please contact us via the above helpline number.

- Inquiries from people considering buying at Peters Village can now be registered on our website though, as mentioned on page 1, we hope to have a direct contact for the builder available online shortly.



Homes & Communities Agency