

## **Out of Hours Dangerous Structure Call Out**

**Maidstone Building Control have implemented a Dangerous Structure Out of Hours call out service.**

It is Maidstone Council's statutory duty to protect people by ensuring that buildings within the Borough do not endanger public health and safety. In order to provide a more reliable service so as to protect the Council and the local community, a more formal standby system has been put in place. Similar systems are in place in other services.

The Building Control Section now operates a 24 hour / 365-day emergency service that will take appropriate action if a building or structure poses a potential danger to the safety of people in its immediate vicinity. Examples of dangerous structures attended over the past year include a fire at a warehouse causing structural damage, a high wall on a busy public highway that had started to crumble, the front of a house that had structural damage caused by vehicle impact, storm damage to a roof and general dilapidation of buildings. All qualified and competent staff will now be on call for one week at a time to attend any out of hours dangerous structure requests within the Maidstone Borough Council area. By operating a formal Rota, Surveyors will remain on call for a full 7-day period from 5 pm each Monday. Surveyors ensure that they remain within a reasonable travel time and that they always maintain telephone contact.

The Council's Out of Hours Response Service, on receipt of a call from the Emergency Services or a member of the public, will contact the Surveyor on the Rota. This will be via telephone either to a mobile phone or a home telephone. When a Dangerous structure is notified to the office within normal working hours our aim is to respond and investigate within 2 hours. If outside normal working hours, then our aim is to respond and investigate within 4 hours.

### **Costs**

The owner of any building that becomes a dangerous structure is responsible for all the costs involved in making the building safe. If the Council is unable to contact the owner at the time, and the building needs to be made safe, the Council may carry out the emergency works (Under Section 77 of The Building Act 1984) and claim the costs back from the owner.