

Foreword

This Sustainable Community Strategy is a key document that will help shape the future of the Borough of Tunbridge Wells. It has been developed in partnership with a range of organisations who want to ensure the borough continues to be an excellent place to live, work and visit. We have named our Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) “**Tunbridge Wells Together**” where partnership working brings together at a local level the different parts of the public sector as well as the private, business, community and voluntary sectors so that different initiatives and services support each other and work together. This partnership fulfils the important role in promoting economic, social and environmental wellbeing in our area.

Through consultation and equality analysis we have strived to ensure that this Strategy is based on what local communities say they want now and in the future. It sets out some clear ambitions and targets which if we work together will ensure we are successful in achieving what you want.

Tunbridge Wells Together partnership which is responsible for delivering this Strategy has a clear vision that it wants us all to “Love Where We Live”. This means Tunbridge Wells is a place where people are all in a position to be satisfied that housing meets our needs, that our environment is being safeguarded, that all of our communities are stronger than they were in the past, that we are healthy and the young people of Tunbridge Wells have a bright future to take into the next generation.

Loving where we live is not just about the Council cleaning your streets, nor is it just about the police tackling crime; it is also about the people of Tunbridge Wells making a difference themselves and recognising that we all have an enormous amount to contribute to this great borough. We have set out a pledge in this Strategy which we hope reflects what we can all do together to ensure we achieve this vision.

This strategy sets out how the partnership of organisations that is **Tunbridge Wells Together** sets out to achieve this. But it means we also need your help to enhance and promote community pride in Tunbridge Wells.

Contents

SECTION 1:

Making this strategy sustainable

Delivering national, regional and local priorities

Your voice

Our ambitions for Tunbridge Wells

SECTION 2: Options for Tunbridge Wells Together LSP

Safer Communities

Stronger Communities

Children and Families

Health and Older People

Housing

Economy, Skills and Transport

Cleaner and Greener

Our Joint Pledge to help us all Love Where We Live

Making this strategy sustainable

Achieving our ambitions is our collective goal. To do this, we have a number of partnerships that contribute towards getting our borough where it wants to be. These partners have pledged to deliver the ambitions of Tunbridge Wells Together and can be seen on the ***Tunbridge Wells Together*** website.

How is the strategy sustainable?

The strategy is sustainable for two reasons. Firstly, it is based on sound intelligence and secondly, it is flexible enough to deal with any changes in circumstances that may occur. This is being written in the context of a severe recession and a changing climate, but we know that these influences and impacts will change. ***Tunbridge Wells Together*** has ensured our ambitions, and the partnership's commitment, won't change through good or bad economic times. We want to always deliver our ambitions but what may change is how we deliver them. The ambitions are for the long term, but the way we plan to achieve them has enough flexibility in the short-term to ensure we are completely realistic about what can and cannot be achieved.

Are we sure this is the right strategy for the right people for the right time?

Tunbridge Wells Together has commenced two impact assessments on this strategy:

Sustainability Impact Assessment

This has tested if this strategy has taken account of the significant issues that affect the sustainability of Tunbridge Wells. For example issues such as biodiversity, health, economic growth, waste reduction, crime, energy use, education and skills, climate change, modes of transport, access to goods, services, amenities, housing and employment, the built and natural environment.

Equality Analysis

This has tested the impact this strategy has on all of the diverse elements of our community to ensure that there is no disadvantage being shown to women, men, black & minority ethnic people, people who are older, children, young people, people who are disabled, gay, lesbian or bisexual or who are travellers.

There are also two vital components to the Sustainable Community Strategy:

The Housing Strategy and the Local Development Framework (LDF)

Of all the supporting strategies, the two most important are those relating to housing and development. The LDF is the spatial interpretation of the Community Strategy, with its own significant long-term aims for the borough. The Housing Strategy sets out the Council's medium-term ambitions to deliver good quality affordable housing, support independence for all vulnerable people, prevent homelessness, improve housing conditions in the private sector and promote safe, sustainable housing initiatives. Both of these strategies are underpinned by research into housing conditions in the borough, local people's needs and extensive consultation. For this reason, they are central to all of the work that we are undertaking to ensure that the people of Tunbridge Wells are able to say they love where they live.

How will we measure our performance?

This sustainable community strategy sets out our ambitions for Tunbridge Wells over the next fifteen years; therefore it is very important that we are able to measure whether we are obtaining our priority outcomes. The following sets out how we will measure and report on our service delivery.

Our performance management is characterised by the following key principles:

- We will ensure that the performance management is driven by our local priorities and that the information we collect is relevant and meaningful
- We will ensure that our performance management will be strategic rather than prescriptive
- We will be innovative in the way that we collect and use the information
- We will ensure that the information we use is not duplicated, instead we will make use of the information already collected by other services within the Council and across the Partnership
- Where performance indicators are set, we are confident that the information will continue to be collected for the foreseeable future, in order to provide useful comparisons over time and place
- Community satisfaction and confidence will be important performance measures and Council and Partnership services will work together on developing effective and efficient ways to collect this information.

We will also include targets from our other key documents such as the Council's Strategic Plan in our performance management framework.

Delivering national, regional and local priorities

The National context:

The last few years has found our Country subject to considerable changes, challenges and pressures. We have been through a recession and seen the election of a new coalition government, which has itself, brought considerable changes to the way in which public services are delivered. We are now seeing large scale reform and stringent budget reductions. On the horizon are significant changes to education and schools, policing, health and to communities themselves.

The introduction of the Localism Agenda in 2010 signifies new powers being given to councils and their communities. Enshrining the concept of a Big Society, which has been put forward by central government and seeks to empower individuals and their communities; ensuring that people take an active role in their neighbourhood to bring about positive change. The Coalition Government has also launched a series of legislation which gives more power to local councils, this includes;

The Localism Bill which is set to devolve greater power to Councils and local communities, with provisions which relate to powers awarded to councils, as well as housing and planning provisions and citizen empowerment.

The Public Health Bill sets out the changes to the framework for public health, including the transference of some aspects of public health to local councils, with the aim of addressing health inequalities.

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill offers powers to licensing authorities to suspend licenses where annual fees are not paid. This will help the council to recover money owing and challenge the minority of rogue businesses which do not comply.

The Welfare Reform Bill introduces a wide range of reforms to key benefits including; housing benefit, disability living allowance and reforming the employment and support allowance.

The Public Services Bill includes the promotion of social enterprises within the local community and the Local Growth White Paper proposes a commitment to ensuring that local areas are able to take a lead in developing economic growth through Local Enterprise Partnerships.

The County context:

The changes described above will bring great challenges for the public and voluntary sectors, and for the people of Kent. The county is carefully considering the services it provides and how it can utilise different and more innovative ways in which to provide them. The “Vision for Kent” is a refresh of the county-level Community Strategy. In conjunction with partners, and borough and district Councils it has developed three Countywide Ambitions to form the new Vision for Kent. They are:

To grow the economy - for Kent to be ‘open for business’ with a growing, successful economy and jobs for all

To tackle disadvantage - for all people in Kent to achieve their potential and to have increased confidence that their quality of life is improving

To put the citizen in control - for all people in Kent to be able to use their own resourcefulness to take control and responsibility for themselves, their families and communities

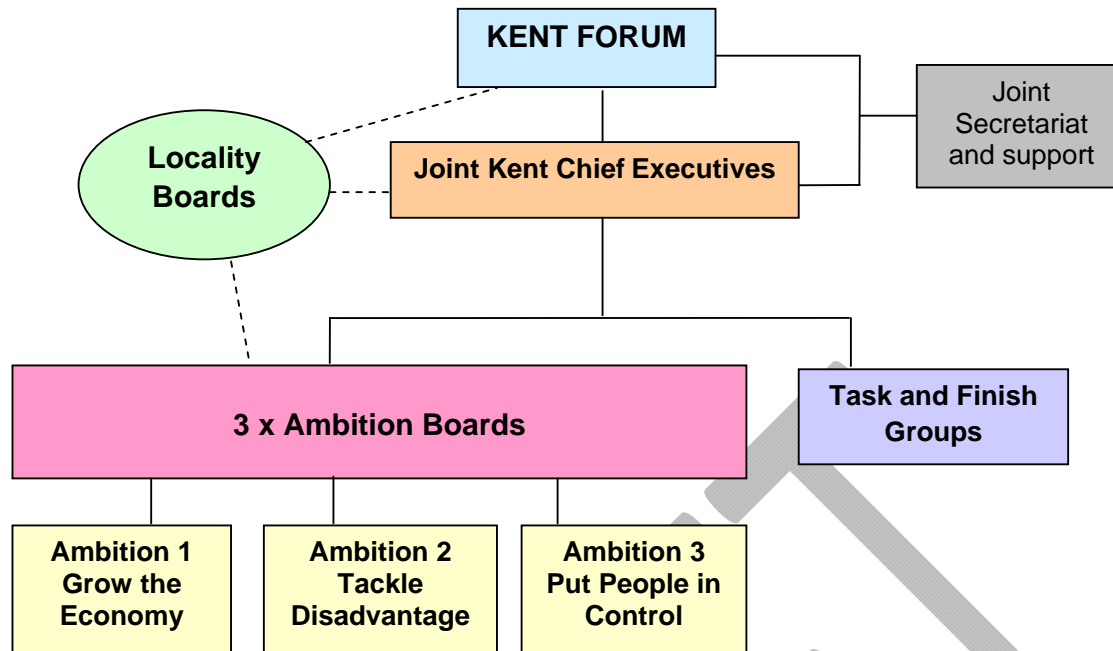
The Kent Forum has overall responsibility for monitoring the county’s progress towards the three Countywide Ambitions that make up the Vision for Kent. It brings together the democratically accountable Leaders of the authorities into a single non decision making body that has overall responsibility for co-ordinating and agreeing shared priorities and progress, encouraging community leadership, and supporting new initiatives. The Joint Kent Chief Executives will support the Forum in this task.

The Kent Forum is very keen for this county level body to be complemented by ‘Locality Boards’ that are set up at district level so as to be close enough to individual neighbourhoods to allow actions to be determined at a community level. Locality Boards will involve all KCC Members in a District Council area coming together and working more closely with Members from District Councils, initially in an advisory capacity. The Boards will identify the priorities for their locality and help shape public service delivery. The detailed arrangements on how each Locality Board will work is very much up to local discretion with the Forum having agreed a fundamental principle that ‘one size does not fit all’. Locality Boards will therefore evolve in different ways and at different speeds.

Early priorities for the locality boards include:

- Community Based Budget pilots;
- developing joint commissioning or service delivery models; and
- developing a Locality Plan or Community Strategy.

Proposed Kent Forum architecture



Local Priorities

Living, working or visiting in Tunbridge Wells means that we also have ambitions beyond just our borders. It is for that reason that **Tunbridge Wells Together** has ensured we are also taking into account the pressures we now face due to the economic downturn, the changing political landscape, as well as the aspirations for our county and region.

This Sustainable Community Strategy sets out our local ambitions, derived from extensive community consultation and feedback. Our vision for Tunbridge Wells is for everybody to **Love Where We Live** and **'to enhance and promote community pride'**. By making sure strong, healthy communities develop in our borough, we can enable our future generations to connect to better education and greater employment opportunities. Our ambitions will help us to achieve this through building a sustainable and connected borough.

This strategy has a commitment to support social enterprises. Many rural shops, pubs and post offices are currently, or may in the future be, under threat of closure. In addition, rural bus services are facing cuts. Where this is the case, **Tunbridge Wells Together**, utilising work with organisations such as Kent County Council and Action for Communities in Rural Kent, will support and encourage community or social enterprise projects to provide much needed local services and facilities.¹

¹ A social enterprise is a business with primarily social and/or environmental objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community, rather than being driven by the need to maximise profit for shareholders and owners.

In many respects the local priorities agreed by **Tunbridge Wells Together**, fit alongside the County Sustainable Community Strategy. We are seeking to have high quality homes, to be skilled and enterprising, for our society and economy to be sustainable, to have safe, inclusive, cohesive and vibrant communities that are educated and healthy.

Tunbridge Wells Together is currently working on projects that overlap with the three Countywide ambitions:

Families at Risk

We are undertaking work to use our collective resources to channel energy and solutions into one of our most deprived areas. Here we are examining a new approach to working with families who have multiple needs. We understand that there is the opportunity both to reduce duplication and improve how effective we can be by reconsidering our existing approach and refocusing our collective intervention to make sure there are better outcomes for the families involved. A new pilot Family in Focus will work with families at the root of anti-social behaviour as well as those affected by it. Through a family focused approach, those causing problems to the community will be helped to accept their responsibility to modify their behaviour.

Campaign Company: The Campaign Company has been working with the Partnership on some key projects including: **Chewing Gum Littering where research has been** carried out, enabling recommendations with regard to reducing chewing gum littering. The research found that a range of appropriate roles could be established for the community, in the prevention of chewing gum littering.

Alcohol Misuse: The Campaign Company also conducted a project into underage alcohol misuse, producing a range of recommendations which seek to influence the behaviour of young people. The research pointed to the use of holistic, familial approaches rather than single interventions focussed simply on the young people.

Pledge with the Public: The Partnership is progressing work to deliver a “Pledge with the Public”, which will encourage our communities to make a difference themselves and recognise that all of us have an enormous amount to contribute.

Your Voice

During our consultation period for this strategy, we asked you whether we had set out the right priorities for our borough and this is what you said:

You Said We Did:

- You said that low crime rates and feeling safe are important, so we set up the Community Safety Unit (CSU), bringing together officers from different agencies including Kent Police, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Kent County Council to combat crime and anti-social behaviour jointly. Crime levels have remained one of the lowest in Kent
- You rated good shopping facilities, thriving businesses and low unemployment as important. We worked in partnership with Business Link and Enterprise First, to provide advice and guidance to new businesses starting up in the borough. We supported Paddock Wood, Cranbrook and Hawkhurst to secure external funding to improve their economies. The Tunbridge Wells Farmers Market has been shortlisted in the top seven 'FARMA' Certified markets in the country
- You felt that activities for young people are important, so we launched the new 'Street Cruizer' youth bus in partnership with Kent Youth Service. This was fully funded by a grant from Kent County Council which was applied for by young people. The Street Cruizer is a 'mobile youth club', which can be taken to different locations across the borough.
- You said that you would not want us to withdraw funding for community organisations such as the Citizens Advice Bureau and Trinity Theatre, so we have continued our funding support for these organisations. During 2010/11 we donated a total of £402,110 in community grants to 23 voluntary and community organisations working in the borough.

During our consultation period for this strategy, we asked you whether we had set out the right priorities for our borough and this is what you said:

"I heartily endorse the aims and vision of this document. I would like to make some general observations:

Amenities...I am particularly concerned that the library should be maintained to the highest standards and that there should be no cut backs which might affect the quality and range of facilities.”

“Our society - sounds great. There is still so much scope to connect with and support community organisations. The most positive ‘inclusive, cohesive and vibrant ‘experiences I’ve had/seen in the town have been made possible by organisations such as Tunbridge Wells Art Partnerships, Town and Country Housing Association”

“Kent Wildlife Trust was extremely impressed by the core strategy produced by Tunbridge Wells as all policies had the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity at its core. It is our opinion that the ambitions of the Sustainable Community Strategy should support and reflect this extemporary work.”

Tunbridge Wells Together is committed to delivering those services which help us to **‘Love Where We Live’**. A key part of this is asking what is important to YOU. A recent resident’s survey showed us the following:

- 89% of people asked were extremely satisfied with their local area; and
- 93%of respondents feel safe in their local area.

When asked to rate the importance of and their satisfaction with local services the top two priorities were;

- ‘reducing crime and maintaining feelings of safety and
- ‘protecting the quality of the local environment’

The strategic assessment produced for Tunbridge Wells Community Safety Partnership has identified the following priorities for the residents of the Borough.

1. Anti-social Behaviour, focussing on young people and families in hotspots areas other than the town centre
2. Violent crime, in particular domestic abuse (including violence against women) and night time economy violence
3. Theft and handling stolen goods with a focus on shop lifting and theft in public places
4. Burglary, in particular burglary other and distraction burglary
5. Criminal damage

Recurring Themes of Concern:

Traffic congestion and road and pavement repairs

You said that traffic congestion around areas such as North Farm is a key concern. Our strategic compass proposes to carry out a study into the congestion and implement any measures which could

lead to a reduction in congestion. Our Ward Walk programme in 2010 identified that road maintenance was one of the top 5 issues of most concern to local residents. Issues tended to relate to specific maintenance required such as attention to potholes or ridges in local roads. A number of respondents also mentioned the need to improve gritting of roads during the winter months. We will continue to work with partner organisations such as Kent Highways to seek solutions to the issues around potholes, pavements and congestion.

Activities for Teenagers

You said that you thought there should be more activities for young people, particularly teenagers. We have set up the TN2 Youth Café which is now run by Kent County Council, launched the new Streetcruiser bus in February 2011 and are currently running a pilot of football and dance sessions in Calverley Park on Friday evenings. We are working closely with KCC's Youth Service to look at how we can improve youth service provision in the borough in these challenging times.

Who has been consulted over the draft Sustainable Community Strategy?

- AXA/PP
- TCHG
- KASS
- VAWK
- K college
- Courier Newspaper Group
- West Kent Chamber of Commerce
- NHS
- Kent TW Local Board
- Rural Kent
- Kent Police
- Environment Agency
- Kent Fire and Rescue
- CAB
- KALC
- Parishes
- The General Public via Limehouse consultation portal

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Our Ambitions for Tunbridge Wells

The Borough of Tunbridge Wells is an attractive and vibrant part of Kent. Our residents and visitors benefit from a range of good services and facilities, award-winning parks and open spaces, excellent education, low rates of crime, and one of the highest life expectancies in the county. Our latest residents' survey has confirmed that we have a continually high percentage of people who love where they live, currently at 89 per cent.

Tunbridge Wells is one of 12 districts in Kent. It is uniquely positioned within the county, benefiting from a rich historical legacy, home to an array of well established villages and rural communities, as well as the thriving town centres of Royal Tunbridge Wells, Cranbrook, Paddock Wood and Southborough. 55 per cent of our population live in Royal Tunbridge Wells and 45 per cent in rural towns and villages. Covering 33,127 hectares, the borough is home to a population of 107,600 residents, living in 47,375 households (2009 mid-year population estimates) representing nearly 8 per cent of the county population.

The borough borders East Sussex (Wealden and Rother districts), and the Kent districts of Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Malling, Maidstone and Ashford. It also benefits from good transport links to London and the south coast.

Tunbridge Wells is an attractive place, with over two thirds of our borough designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and includes ten Sites of Special Scientific Interest. Our residents enjoy a high quality of life with average life expectancy of 79.9 years and over 70 per cent of our residents live in owner occupied households.

In this strategy we have set out how Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, working with partners, will seek to build on some of these achievements and facilities, but also to address some of the challenges facing the borough including a high cost of living, unmet demand for housing, increasing competition from other town centres, traffic congestion and pockets of very real (but often hidden) deprivation.

In recent years, our residents, visitors and business of Tunbridge Wells have been telling us what they want the borough to be like in the future. ***Tunbridge Wells Together*** as our Local Strategic Partnership, now has an in-depth understanding of what our communities want. From Ward Walks, where we talk directly with the people of Tunbridge Wells, to surveys of our residents and the feedback that people give, we are now better informed than ever before.

This is what the people of Tunbridge Wells have told us they want for the borough:

Our VISION for Tunbridge Wells:

For everyone to **Love Where We Live** and to **enhance and promote community pride**

The things that will determine if we achieve this vision:

- Our economy
- Our environment
- Our society

Our AMBITIONS for Tunbridge Wells:

The drivers	Our ambitions	The things we want to focus on
Our economy	To have high quality homes	Housing
	To be skilled, enterprising	Economic development
Our environment	For our society and economy to be sustainable	Cleaner and Greener
Our society	To be safe	Safer communities
	To be inclusive, cohesive and vibrant	Stronger communities
	To be educated	Children and Families
	To be healthy	Health and Older People

It is these ambitions that drive this strategy and guide what we all want to achieve. We believe that if we achieve these ambitions, and can do so by ensuring that the borough is both sustainable and connected, then we will be able to say that we “Love Where We Live”.

Being able to say those words requires us all to be able to contribute and make a difference. The partnership of organisations that is **Tunbridge Wells Together**, cannot do this on its own. It needs the people of Tunbridge Wells to make a difference too.

SECTION 2

Delivering our ambitions for Tunbridge Wells

Safer Communities

Objective: To make Tunbridge Wells a safe locality for those who live, work or spend leisure time in the borough.

What will success look like in 2026?

Those who live in Tunbridge Wells and visitors who come to the borough to work, develop businesses or take advantage of the many attractions on offer will feel safer and have lower levels of worry about crime and anti-social behaviour than they do now.

This will be due in part to the fact that levels of crime and anti-social behaviour will be amongst the lowest in Kent and in the South East as a whole. In addition, there will be high levels of satisfaction and confidence in the way in which the police, the council and their community safety partners work with the public to prevent crimes from being committed and to catch and deal appropriately with offenders through the criminal justice system.

The reassurance resulting from this joint working will encourage people to spend more time in the borough of Tunbridge Wells, whether it's enjoying the countryside, getting involved in cultural and sporting activities, taking advantage of the retail opportunities available in our town centres or benefiting from what is on offer in the vibrant night-time economy.

This will be measured by:

All reported crime levels.

Feelings of safety of the people of Tunbridge Wells.

Strategies and Plans that will help deliver this ambition:

Local Development Framework

Community Safety Partnership Plan and Action Plans 2011-12

Link to Countywide Ambition

Tackling Disadvantage; Putting Citizens in Control

Main Contact:

Chair of Delivery Group: Chief Executive, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and District Chief Inspector, Kent Police

Lead Officer: Community Safety Co-ordinator, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

Safer Communities Thematic Group

Delivery by the Tunbridge Wells Community Safety Partnership:

- Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
- Kent County Council
- Kent Police
- Kent Police Authority
- Kent Fire and Rescue Service
- West Kent NHS Primary Care Trust
- Kent Probation Service
- Business Sector
- Safe Town Partnership/Pubwatch
- Town and Country Housing Group
- Registered Social Landlords
- Kent Partnership
- Kent Drug and Alcohol Action Team
- Kenward Trust
- Her Majesty's Court Service
- Domestic Abuse Forum
- Kent and Medway DV Co-ordinator
- Voluntary Action Within Kent
- Community & Voluntary Sector Organisations
- Parish and Town Councils
- Residents Groups
- Victim Support
- West Kent Neighbourhood Watch

Stronger Communities

Objective: To achieve a strong, safe, empowered, community where people are involved in decision making and have a strong sense of community pride.

What will success look like in 2026?

Young people will have the opportunity to participate in a range of activities and be able to influence decision-making.

A thriving community pride culture will have developed with high levels of volunteering and public involvement. The borough will be recognised as one of the major cultural destinations in the South East.

Tunbridge Wells will be a cohesive borough – a place where people with different backgrounds, faiths and beliefs and different generations get on well together.

The borough will be a place of opportunity – with high levels of educational attainment and skills, ease of access to a range of good quality employment and opportunities for independent living.

Families and, in particular, young people, will be supported to achieve their full potential.

This will be measured by:

Involvement of the community in decision-making, volunteering, and the arts

Civic participation in the local area

Participation in regular volunteering

Engagement in the Arts

Young people's participation in positive activities

Strategies and Plans that will help deliver this ambition:

TWBC Communication and Engagement Strategy
West Kent Arts Partnership Plan
TWBC Museum Audience Development Plan
Stronger Communities Thematic Group Action Plan
Cross working with the other thematic delivery groups

Link to Countywide Ambitions

Putting Citizens in Control

Main Contact:

Chair of the Delivery Group: Deputy Chief Executive, Voluntary Action Within Kent
Lead Officer: Head of Policy and Partnerships, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

Stronger Communities Thematic Group

Names of partner organisations:

- Voluntary Action Within Kent
- Volunteer Centre
- Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
- Town & Country Foundation
- Action with Communities in Rural Kent
- AXA PPP
- Kent Association of Local Councils
- Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum
- NHS West Kent
- Kent High Weald Partnership
- Trinity Theatre
- BTCV

Children and Families

Objective: To develop children and young people who are engaged in their learning at school and who take part in positive activities, as a family unit, outside of school.

What will success look like in 2026?

Children and young people as learners, improving their attendance, attainment and achievement at school, together with increased participation levels in sports, cultural and social activities with immediate and extended family members.

This will be measured by:

Improved attendance and attainment.
Strengthened emotional well being.
Increased parental/carer involvement both in school and in activities outside of school.

An increase in positive reporting of the behaviour and participation of children and young people in their communities.

Strategies and Plans that will help deliver this ambition:

Local Children's Trust Action Plan
TWBC Communities and Health Team Action Plan
Cross working with the other thematic delivery groups

Link to Countywide Ambitions:

Tackling Disadvantage

Main Contact:

Lead Officers: Communities and Health Manager, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Cranbrook and Paddock Wood LCSP Manager
Head of Housing, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

Children and Families Thematic Group

Names of partner organisations:

Local Children's Trust
Cranbrook and Paddock Wood Local Children's Service Partnership (LCSP)
Youth Service
Schools
Children's Centres
Youth Offending Service
NHS West Kent
Voluntary Action Within Kent
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
West Kent Police
Tunbridge Wells Community Safety Partnership

Health and Older People

Objective:

Health: To support residents across the borough to make healthier choices with a focus on those communities with the worst health outcomes, thereby reducing health inequalities.

Older People: To promote a positive image of older people and improve accessibility to local services, enabling older people to fully participate in community life whilst ensuring that those who need support to live independently have choice, control and good quality care.

What will success look like in 2026?

The gap in life expectancy across the borough will be narrowed.

Older residents in the borough will have improved access to local services and an increased opportunity to inform the development of local services. They will have a greater awareness of opportunities to get involved with their community and maintain their interests, through volunteering and other initiatives.

This will be measured by:

Life expectancy rates and infant mortality rates.

Monitoring and improving the levels of satisfaction amongst local older people.

Strategies and Plans that will help deliver this ambition:

Healthy Lives, Healthy People White Paper

Equity and Excellence White Paper

Health and Older People Thematic Group Business Plan

TWBC Communities and Health Team Action Plan

'Live Life to the Full' Public Health Strategy for Kent 2008

'Live it Well 2010-2015' West Kent PCT Strategy

Vision for Kent, Kent County Council, 2011

Kent County Council Health Inequalities Action Plan 2008

Kent Policy Framework for Later Life

Service-level strategies across Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

Cross working with the other thematic delivery groups

Link to Countywide Ambitions:

Tackling Disadvantage; Putting Citizens in Control

Main Contact:

Chair of Delivery Group: Assistant Director of Public Health for NHS West Kent (the PCT)

Lead Officers: Communities and Health Manager, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

Housing Policy & Research Manager, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

Health and Older People Thematic Group

Names of partner organisations:

NHS West Kent

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells Hospital Trust

Voluntary Action Within Kent

Kent Libraries & Archives

Age Concern

Kent LiNK

Kent County Council

Kent Supporting People Team

Town and Country Housing Group

Housing

Objective: To ensure that there is a range of housing to meet the needs of those who want to live in the borough, both now and in the future, and that all residents enjoy high standards of housing conditions.

What will success look like in 2026?

The housing market in the borough will provide a range of high quality homes meeting the housing needs of all residents with a range of tenures including affordable homes which provide real housing options for local people. The housing conditions of the borough's most vulnerable residents will have significantly improved through targeted support, and residents will enjoy improved home energy efficiency, which will positively benefit both them (through reduced fuel costs and improved living conditions) and the environment through reduced carbon emissions. Regeneration of existing large social housing estates in the borough such as Sherwood will have benefitted from investment and tenure diversification to improve the life-chances of residents and make them places where people choose to live.

This will be measured by:

The number of homeless households (1) applying for and (2) accepted for help with housing under the homelessness legislation.

The % of vulnerable people living in non-decent homes (including homes that are non-decent due to poor thermal insulation) in the private sector (owner-occupied and private rented).

Strategies and Plans that will help deliver this ambition:

Tunbridge Wells Housing Strategy 2006-2011 and sub-strategies including:

Private Sector Renewal Strategy

Empty Property Strategy

Homelessness Strategy

Minority Ethnic Housing Strategy

Kent Supporting People Strategy 2010-2015

Kent Health & Affordable Warmth Strategy

Cross working with the other thematic delivery groups

Link to Countywide Ambitions:

Tackling Disadvantage

Main Contacts:

Chair of Delivery Group: Planning Officer, Kent Adult Social Services

Lead Officer: Head of Housing, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

Housing Thematic Group

Delivery by the Borough Housing Partnership:

- Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
- Kent County Council Adult Social Services
- Kent Supporting People Team
- Kent Youth Offending Team
- Kent Probation Area
- NHS West Kent
- Parish and Town Council representatives
- Town & Country Housing Group
- Other Registered Social Landlord representatives
- West Kent YMCA
- The Bridge Trust
- Shelter
- Tunbridge Wells & District Citizens Advice Bureau
- Age Concern

- National Landlords Association
- Homes & Communities Agency
- Residents group representatives

Economy, Skills and Transport

Objective: Tunbridge Wells borough is a thriving and diverse local economy where all the residents can access quality education, employment and skills in a safe, convenient and sustainable way.

To achieve our objective of maintaining a prosperous economy and looking towards the challenges of the future Tunbridge Wells Borough Council has engaged with John Laing as a preferred development partner to create Tunbridge Wells Regeneration Company Limited. This innovative partnership arrangement will have a specific role in supporting and taking forward the priorities of the local strategic partnership within the borough including the four centres. (Tunbridge Wells, Paddock Wood, Southborough and Cranbrook).

What will success look like in 2026?

Royal Tunbridge Wells will be the best town centre in the South East to live, work and visit, supported by thriving centres of Paddock Wood, Southborough and Cranbrook.

The borough more generally will have enhanced its natural and built assets while planning for and accommodating future growth including high-speed broadband.

The borough will have capitalised on the new PFI hospital at Pembury by using it as a hub to boost the health-based economy of the wider area.

The borough will have used its designation as a regional hub to increase investment in infrastructure, such as roads and public transport.

Through improved investment in technology and infrastructure, we will have created a broader range of local employment opportunities for our residents by attracting new employers.

We will ensure that people have access to excellent, quality training and educational opportunities raising their skills and qualifications.

We will work with partners to develop a vibrant local economy that nurtures enterprise and creates a learning environment preparing people for future employment opportunities, including support for the new Skinners Kent Academy.

This will be measured by:

An increase and improvement in the number of sustainable transport schemes.

The economic activity generated within the borough through the production of new goods and services (Gross Value Added per head).

Increase in wider curriculum, out-of-school activities and apprenticeships.

Strategies and Plans that will help deliver this ambition:

Unlocking Kent's Potential: Opportunities and challenges (KCC Framework for Regeneration 2009–2020)

West Kent Area Investment Strategy and Action Plan

Local Transport Plan for Kent 2011-2016

'Unlocking the Potential: The Kent and Greater Essex Local Enterprise Partnership'

Growth Without Gridlock 2010

Tunbridge Wells Economic Strategy

Tunbridge Wells Transport Strategy

Tunbridge Wells Local Development Framework
Cross working with the other thematic delivery groups

Link to Countywide Ambitions:

Growing the Economy; Tackling Disadvantage

Main Contact:

Chair: Lead Member for Economic Development, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Lead Officer: Head of Economic Development, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

Economy, Skills and Transport Thematic Group

Names of partner organisations:

- Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
- Kent County Council – Innovation & Skills
- Kent County Council – Highways
- Business Link
- Learning and Skills Council
- Locate in Kent
- Job Centre Plus – West Kent
- West Kent College
- Kent Adult Education
- AXA PPP
- Meta Corporate Finance
- Arriva Southern Counties
- South Eastern Trains
- Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Centre
- Business Forum
- Voluntary Action West Kent
- Cranbrook and Weald Tourism and Economic Forum
- Targetfollow
- Westfield
- West Kent Chamber of Commerce
- Federation of Small Businesses – West Kent
- Bracketts
- West Kent PCT
- Connexions Kent
- Network Rail
- Courier Newspaper Group

Cleaner and Greener

Objective: To make the transition to a low carbon economy to minimise our impact on the environment and to adapt to our changing climate.

What will success look like in 2026?

The borough will remain a clean beautiful place to live, work and relax. Individuals, communities and businesses and service providers will have taken action to reduce their use of natural resources to minimise CO2 emissions, including the use of renewable energy and the installation of home insulation measures and have planned to adapt flexibly to our changing climate. We will have a local environment that is resilient and adaptable to a changing climate supporting a wide range of biodiversity.

This will be measured by:

Carbon emissions – A reduction in the per capita CO2 emissions in the area in line with the national targets in Climate Change Act 2008.

Local Environmental Quality – Improved street and environmental cleanliness

Strategies and Plans that will help deliver this ambition:

Delivery Plans for Single List of Data Requirements
Emerging Kent Environment Strategy
TWBC Carbon In-house Management Plan
TWBC proposed Low Carbon decentralisation energy plan (DELTA)
TWBC Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP)
TWBC Procurement Strategy
TWBC Health Strategy
TWBC Housing Strategy
TWBC Urban Parking Strategies for Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough
TWBC Tunbridge Wells Transport Strategy
Local Development Framework
TWBC Green Infrastructure Plan
Climate Change Plan
Environment Agency Southern Region's 'Creating a Better Place'
Local Climate Impact Profile
Cross working with the other thematic delivery groups
Kent Climate Change Adaptation Plan

Link to Countywide Ambitions:

Growing the Economy

Main Contact:

Head of Environment & Street Scene, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

Cleaner and Greener Thematic Group

Names of partner organisations:

- Environment Agency
- Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
- Kent County Council
- Town & Country Housing Group
- Business Link
- Kent High Weald Project

Our joint pledge to help us all

...we will help to:

Reduce crime.

Make Tunbridge Wells borough feel even safer.

Increase opportunities to volunteer on a regular basis.

Enable young people to be more involved in positive activities.

Enable young people to be more involved in their communities.

Give opportunities for people to improve their life expectancy.

Improve the prospects of older people in society.

Increase the number of people in decent homes.

Move people from homelessness into homes.

Improve the success of the local economy by encouraging business to start-up.

Increase the number of jobs in the borough.

Keep the streets clean by collecting your waste and recycling and tackling 'grot-spots'.

...you can help by:

Taking crime prevention measures yourself.

Seeking to make use of volunteers in your community or even volunteer yourself.

Encouraging young people to take part in positive activities.

Getting to know your neighbours and look out for your neighbours.

Eat, live and promote healthy lifestyles – take part in physical activity for 30 minutes per day.

Looking after older members of your family or older friends.

Recycling and composting more of your waste.

Saving energy in your home – it can save you money!

Reporting highway defects so they can be repaired quicker.

Picking up litter if you do it, others will soon do so too.

Report flytipping so it can be removed quickly.

Report anti-social behaviour so it can be solved quickly.

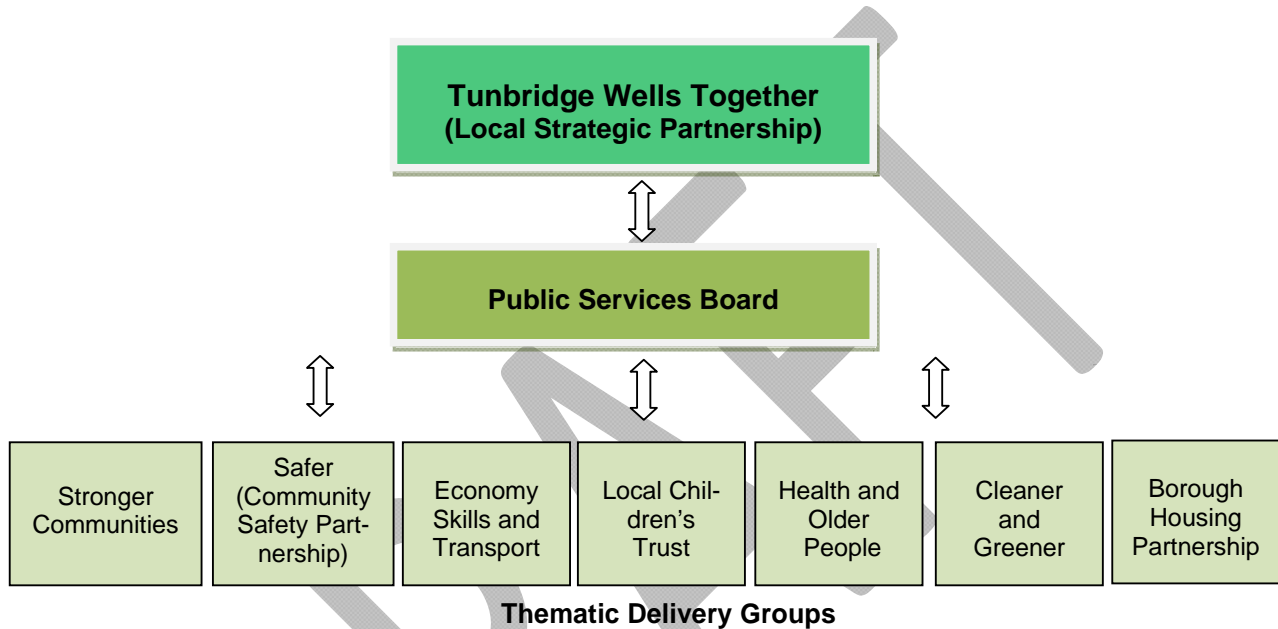
Loving where you live!

DRAFT

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Discussion Paper: Options for Tunbridge Wells Together LSP

Current Structure Diagram of Tunbridge Wells Together



The Role of our Locality Board and its relationship to Tunbridge Wells Together

An important component for delivering the localism agenda is the introduction and development of Locality Boards. Our Locality Board in Tunbridge Wells has overall responsibility for

- Advising Tunbridge Wells Borough Council on the public service priorities for the locality, for example the Locality Board could become a key contributor the Sustainable Community Strategy.
- Advise Tunbridge Wells Borough Council on service provision, moving towards combined place based commissioning where appropriate.
- Improve the local accountability to residents for public services in their area.

The Kent Forum has established a series of design principles which Locality Boards should advance.

These are to:

- (a) inject much more democratic accountability into locality partnerships;
- (b) rationalise the number of partnerships operating at the locality level;
- (c) provide a focus on delivering locality priorities;

- (d) stimulate effective joint working by local partners, including local representatives of county agencies to deliver against locality and county priorities;
- (e) support the development of the localism agenda across the locality; and
- (f) retain what works, for example by building upon existing structures where these are functioning effectively.

Members of the LSP are to be assured that there is no appetite to do away with the sustainable community strategy. However, with the proposed introduction of a new general power of competence which gives local authorities an explicit freedom to act in the best interests of their voters, unhindered by the absence of specific legislation supporting their action. Therefore no action - except raising taxes, which requires specific parliamentary approval - will any longer be “beyond the powers” of Local Government in England, unless the local authority is prevented from taking that action by the common law, specific legislation or statutory guidance. These changes to government policy, alongside the proposals for the County Strategy Vision for Kent and the implications of our Local Development Framework Core Strategy, imply a need to discuss how our LSP should look in future.

We are also aware that as best value authorities, we are under a general duty of best value to “make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.”² We can therefore give regard under the duty of best value, to consider overall value, including environmental and social value, as we attempt to review service provision. This includes the duty to be sensitive and supportive to the voluntary and community sector.

The Communities and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Select Committee at Tunbridge Wells has expressed an interest in becoming more involved in the LSP. In light of the significant changes taking place in Kent which will affect the role of the LSP in Tunbridge Wells as highlighted above, there is a meeting planned for 9 June. This will include LSP members, lead thematic group officers, members of the PSB and representatives from KCC. Its purpose is to enable discussion on the future role of the LSP and its relationship to a Locality Board.

Whilst the thematic delivery groups have served us for the past couple of years, there is now reason to question how they should be best used and aligned in the future. At the last LSP meeting we discussed the LSP focusing on Big Society issues with Voluntary Action Within Kent steering the discussion.

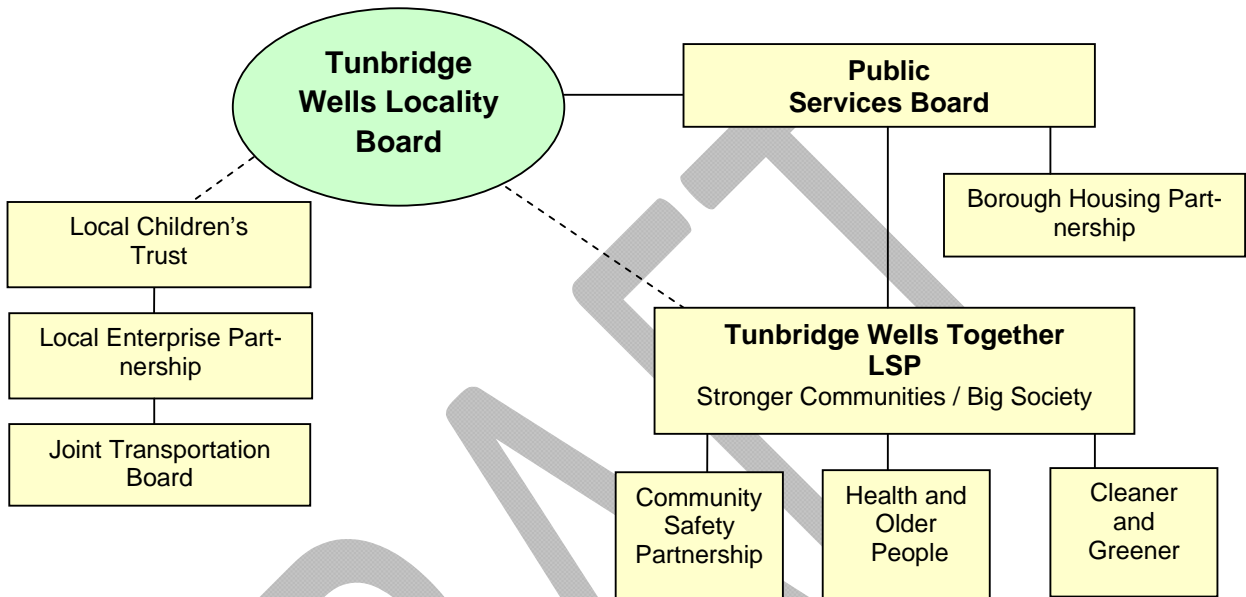
Of the thematic groups, the CSP is well advanced and is working well in its current format. Economic development has its main focus within the West Kent Partnership, there are new opportunities for cross boundary working with the LEP and this may be able to incorporate skills into its remit. Housing has been focused through the Borough Housing Partnership thematic delivery group and is both well

² CLG Best value: new draft statutory guidance

attended and used. Families and Children is proposed to be subsumed into the remit of the Locality Board as will the Joint Transportation Board.

This leaves a question over where Health and Older people and Cleaner and Greener would best fit for the best forum for their communication?

Based on the above layout, here is a strategy map of what this could look like for our LSP:



This is just an example of what the future of the LSP could look like and further discussion is encouraged as to what the LSP believes should become of the thematic groups as a means of delivering the Sustainable Community Strategy.