

# **Vision for Kent**

## **(Draft for Kent Partnership annual conference)**

Kent People in Partnership

for a better tomorrow

A document for Kent Partners  
Vision for Kent, version 2, published April 2006  
Kent Partnership logo

## **Foreword**

Kent is a county with a long and proud history and an exciting future. It is also a county with strong public, private, voluntary and community sector partnerships that come together in the Kent Partnership in a determination to tackle the challenges facing Kent.

The challenges for our county are based on maximising the economic opportunities arising from Kent's location between London - a growing world city - and continental Europe. At the same time we must use these new economic opportunities and harness the strength of our partnership across Kent to tackle the deep-seated social, health, environmental and educational challenges facing our county. We must also ensure everyone has access to a decent education and opportunities for learning.

Kent is in a period of change, facing increased development, house building and regeneration. We must take the opportunity to revitalise our towns while ensuring that all new development is of the very highest quality, creating communities that are attractive, safe, and friendly. We must also protect and enhance our county's heritage, our Garden of England countryside, our coast and our traditional villages and market towns. We must raise the quality of life for all, making Kent a county that people are proud of, where communities, families and individuals prosper and enjoy life, and where people really want to live.

### **Paul Carter**

#### **Chairman of Kent Partnership and Leader of Kent County Council**

### **Partners**

The Kent Partnership, the Local Strategic Partnership for Kent, has representatives from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors. It directs and oversees progress on the Vision for Kent and has a key role in encouraging community leadership, new initiatives and the effective delivery of services.

Partners who have worked on the Vision for Kent include:

Kent County Council	Kent & Medway Economic Board
Ashford Borough Council	Kent Police
Local Strategic Partnerships	Kent Probation Service
Canterbury City Council	Kent Workforce Development Confederation
Creative Foundation	Land Securities Development
Churches Together in Kent	Learning and Skills Council
Dartford Borough Council	Local Criminal Justice Board
Dover District Council	Locate in Kent
English Nature	Maidstone Borough Council
Environment Agency	Medway Council
Federation of Small Businesses	MORI
Government Office for the South East	North West Kent Racial Equality Council
Gravesham Borough Council	Port of Dover
Job Centre Plus	South East England Development Agency
Kent Association of Parish Councils	Sevenoaks District Council
Kent Children's Fund	Shepway District Council
Kent Community Alliance Network	Strategic Health Authority for Kent
Kent Council for Voluntary Youth Services	Swale Borough Council
Kent Fire & Rescue Service	
Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce	

Swale Primary Care Trust  
Thanet District Council  
Tonbridge and Malling Borough  
Council

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council  
University of Kent

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The Vision for Kent is the community strategy for the county. It sets the direction of travel for all the key players who are working to improve the quality of life of everybody in Kent. The Vision provides an overview of what Kent is like now, outlines some of the challenges we face and acts as an umbrella document for the activities of all the key partners in Kent. It aims to pull us in a common direction. We do not want to reproduce the existing plans and strategies of all our partners but to identify common objectives within each of them. We also aim to add value by sharing information and resources; by not creating new targets but by signposting existing ones; by building on what we have got rather than starting from scratch. It is a long-term vision and one that we all need to help to achieve.

We have divided the Vision into eight key themes. These have their own vision statements and their own assessment of where we are today, where we would like to get to and signposts to activity that will help us achieve the overall vision. There are also some key future challenges that cut across the eight themes and will require a more joined-up approach. These will be the areas that the Kent Partnership focuses on in the coming years.

## **The Vision**

### **Kent will be a county...**

- **where a vibrant and successful economy and targeted regeneration are delivered and sustained**
- **where learning is promoted and supported for everyone - for life, for employment and for enjoyment**
- **where people lead healthier lives and enjoy high quality services that meet their needs for health, care and wellbeing**
- **where a high quality environment and countryside are protected and enhanced for current and future generations**
- **where communities are stronger, safer and confident in the face of change**
- **where people enjoy life through an enhanced and accessible range of recreational, sporting, artistic, and cultural opportunities**
- **where jobs and services are easily accessible for all sections of the community and where traffic growth and congestion are reduced**
- **where housing needs are met and decent, high quality homes help create attractive, safe and friendly communities**

## **Background**

The original Vision for Kent, published in 2002, set out how we aimed to improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the County of Kent over the next 20 years. This revised Vision for Kent builds on what we have achieved and captures the changing nature of some of the issues facing us.

The Vision for Kent provides the framework for all other plans and strategies in Kent. Although it sets out a 20-year vision, the pace of change is so fast that it is important that we regularly review and check our planned course and make any amendments necessary.

In reviewing the Vision for Kent we have used information from a wide range of sources to get a picture of what is happening across Kent, what people think and where there might be gaps or challenges facing us. We have also built on the lessons learnt from the original process. Feedback indicated that housing needed a more prominent role, and we have sought to address this. We have also aligned themes more closely in the case of health and communities. The previous work indicated a need for much closer collaboration with Local Strategic Partnerships, local authorities and other partners in Kent, as well as those bordering Kent. We have tried to make those links and ensure synergy between what we are all doing.

A government review of sustainable communities recommended that the next generation of community strategies should be explicitly developed as *sustainable* community strategies. To support this we have carried out an informal sustainability appraisal looking at the economic, social and environmental challenges and attempting to reconcile areas of conflict. The section in each theme entitled 'joining up our thinking' illustrates some of the ways in which this reconciliation can be achieved.

Another principle that has been considered throughout the development of the revised Vision for Kent has been an equalities impact assessment to look at positive action to promote equality, diversity and supporting independence.

### **Who is this document for?**

This document is primarily intended for the partners and key stakeholders in Kent who have a part to play in delivering this Vision. A summary distilling the key messages for the wider public, outlining what they can do to help or how they can get involved, will be published alongside this document and distributed to communities across Kent.

We hope and believe this document reflects the aspirations of the people of Kent and we recognise the importance of letting them know – in a variety of ways and on an ongoing basis - how we think what we are doing will help meet those aspirations. Continuing to listen to the people of Kent, and reviewing the Vision in response to what we hear, will be vital to ensure that it remains a true community strategy.

### **What is Kent like today? A profile**

To understand the challenges facing us in the future, we need to take stock of where we are today. Throughout the review of the Vision for Kent people have focussed on what makes Kent distinctive.

So what does makes Kent distinctive? There are major differences between the west and east of the county. The west of Kent has a reputation for being fairly affluent, but

this masks pockets of deprivation. There are also issues facing the west of the county in relation to high levels of commuting to London and relatively high numbers of retired and economically-inactive people. The east of Kent, on the other hand, has major areas in need of regeneration but many assets in the form of the coastal towns, a spectacular environment and a rich heritage. Proximity to London and Europe makes Kent unique while creating problems of congestion and high volumes of through traffic and freight. Kent contains two of the government's major growth areas in Thames Gateway and Ashford and faces significant growth in the rest of the county. This provides opportunities to create new, sustainable communities and to attract investment, but brings challenges in terms of protecting the environment, integrating new and existing communities and providing the infrastructure to support growth.

In delivering this Vision we must remember the things that make Kent distinctive and diverse and build on them for future generations to enjoy.

A few key facts and figures about the county as it is today:

- Kent is divided into 12 local authority districts and the neighbouring unitary authority of Medway
- Kent has 18 towns, one city, and more than 300 parishes
- 77% of Kent people live in urban areas and towns and 23% in rural areas
- Kent is known as the "Gateway to Europe" and has the longest coastline of any English county
- More than half the UK's goods pass through Kent's ports or the Channel Tunnel
- Kent is a popular choice for tourists and visitors, with tourism valued at nearly £1.6 billion a year
- Kent has two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, 20 International Wildlife Sites, 102 Sites of Special Scientific Interest and 10 Special Landscape Areas
- Kent has two stretches of heritage coast, more than 18,000 listed buildings and more than 500 Conservation Areas
- Agricultural land makes up 70% of Kent
- Kent has seven main natural character areas – the Greater Thames Estuary, North Kent Plain, Kent Downs, Wealden Greensand, Low Weald, High Weald and the Romney Marshes
- Kent is one of the largest counties in the UK and a population of 1.3 million
- 3.5% of the population is black or minority ethnic
- Over the past 10 years there has been an 11% increase in the number of households due to population rise and migration into Kent. Over a quarter of these households are home to one person
- Three-fifths of Kent residents have lived in the county for more than 21 years
- As well as people, Kent is home to some 13,000 rare and threatened species of plant and animal
- 13.5% of Kent's working population commutes to London and a further 17% to other areas outside Kent (mainly Surrey and Sussex)
- 60% of residents have said they are "very satisfied" with Kent as a place to live, citing low levels of crime, clean streets and road/pavement repairs as most important
- Average household income in Kent is lower than in the rest of the south east
- Kent is below the regional average for skills – 28% of the working population have no qualifications
- Kent has a comparatively low unemployment rate of 1.8% (it is 2.4% for the rest of the UK) but this is above the regional average of 1.4%

- 17.2% of the population is over 65 (and rising) and 20.2% is 15 or under (and falling)
- Kent residents produce 1.25 tonnes of waste per household a year (and rising)
- 28% of household waste is recycled and composted
- Most of us do not feel very involved with our local community. We seem to value private concerns more than public ones, with 51% saying they are “too busy” to get involved in community activities
- Some areas of west Kent have good rail links, especially to London, but other areas of Kent remain geographically isolated, with rail travel to east Kent from London taking longer than it does to Yorkshire
- Kent’s cars together drive more than 16 million miles on a typical weekday (excluding lorries and other vehicles). The large volume of freight traffic adds to the environmental impact of this travel
- The average Kent household makes 1.2 shopping trips a year across the Channel by ferry or tunnel

**Kent is a unique county with many opportunities, but we need to be careful of the impact of change and ensure that all the people of Kent have the best opportunities for a high quality of life and that Kent remains a place where people want to be.**

### **Future challenges for Kent**

While the Vision for Kent is divided into eight distinct themes, the review has highlighted a number of strategic, long-term challenges that cut across many or all of these themes. None of these challenges can be addressed by a single theme, but the total of the work envisaged in all the themes should address them. Ensuring that these challenges are kept at the forefront of our minds will be a priority for the Kent Partnership.

- The growth agenda - Kent faces enormous pressure in the numbers of houses it will have to accommodate to meet government targets. The growth areas in Ashford and Thames Gateway, as well as the ongoing growth in housing across the rest of Kent, will have a significant impact on the county. As well as new growth we have areas that are in need of regeneration, in particular our coastal towns, a major asset yet to reach their full potential. How do we deliver the essential infrastructure to support sustainable development? How do we reconcile our ambitions for growth, a better quality of life and a high quality environment? And how do we ensure that new communities are integrated with existing ones?
- Economic change – Kent currently has low employment growth, low household income and high deprivation compared to the rest of the south east. How do we utilise our unique proximity to London and continental Europe? How should we respond to economic change and globalisation? How do we persuade new businesses to invest in Kent and develop home-grown enterprise? How do we attract the right people with the right skills for the jobs in Kent and help people reach their full potential? How do we raise Kent’s economic performance in line with the rest of the south east without further degrading our environment? And how do we deal with trade in the rest of Europe and beyond and make the most of opportunities for Kent’s residents?
- Environmental and climate change – Kent’s unique countryside, coast, natural resources and wildlife remain among its most prized assets, but all face

considerable pressure from pollution, development and particularly climate change. The scientific consensus that climate change is happening is supported by Kent's recent experience of extreme weather. What are the implications of rising sea level for our coastal county? What are the threats to our economy, communities and wildlife of droughts, floods and more extreme weather? And how can we reduce Kent's contribution to climate change while preparing for those seemingly inevitable impacts?

- An ageing population – demographic trends show that our population is getting older and living longer, while fewer people are having children. Many older people will want to work longer than the current retirement age. Many provide invaluable services through volunteering and helping out in their local communities. Will older people want to re-skill? How can we tap into the wealth of skills and knowledge possessed by an ageing population? How can we extend leisure facilities for life? How can we ensure access to continued learning for older people? Will the working age need to be extended? How will pensions be funded in the future? What will be the extra costs of care, support and maintaining independence?
- Diversity and choice – Kent has many distinct and diverse communities, both of interest and of place. We need to encourage cohesive communities and ones that are resilient to change. People also want to have some control over the way services are delivered, which can vary depending on the area in which they live. There is a drive for personalisation and choice. How can we develop strong and active communities and tackle inequalities while maintaining Kent's diversity? How can we provide the right services to the right people in a way that gives them some control? And how can we build communities that are stable while accommodating rapid cultural, social, economic and environmental change?
- Engaging communities – increasing the public's involvement in decision making and devolving power to individuals and local organisations is increasingly important. How can we better understand and reflect what the people of Kent need to improve their quality of life? How can we strike a balance between their competing demands? How can we deliver services and information to people at the most appropriate level and in the most efficient way? And how can we empower people to take an active part in local democracy, in decision-making and in supporting their own communities? How can we build the capacity within communities to engage in local decision making?
- Promoting Independence – there is an established partnership approach to making a real difference to poorer communities in Kent. It works in the most disadvantaged localities and with the most disadvantaged groups in the population by building bespoke approaches to tackling the issues that lead to those people living lives of dependency. How can we ensure that people with a range of disadvantages are supported to lead fulfilled and independent lives and contribute to their communities? How can we best give individuals control and power over the support they receive from a wide range of agencies? How can we best support people with disabilities in a way that puts the onus on society to ensure that it is not unwittingly excluding people?

These are the key strategic issues that emerged time and again from the review as central to the quality of life for the people of Kent over the next 20 years. There are references to many of these issues running as a thread through the different themes;

while this risks a degree of repetition, it was felt to be vital to reinforce their importance and demonstrate how they relate specifically to each theme.

Many of these challenges may appear beyond our control, but we should not feel powerless. There are individual and collective actions we can take that will make a big difference over the next 20 years. We may not be able to do everything we would like to do and there will be some difficult choices to make, but tackling these issues provides a clear set of common objectives for the coming years.

### **Kent in the wider world**

Because Kent does not exist in isolation from global issues it is important that the Vision for Kent reflects our relationships with international, national and regional partners and with tiers of government.

Internationally, the influence of EU policy and legislation on our future development, particularly in the fields of environmental protection and economic development, will continue to be profound. Our activity should seek to strengthen further the already strong links developed with European partners through, for example, joint working with sister regions on the continent.

At national level, the influence of Westminster and Whitehall will continue to be felt strongly through processes like the government's Sustainable Communities Plan and house building targets, public service reforms and its wider policy agenda. The greatest challenge emerging at regional level is perhaps the development of the South East Plan. London is a dominant influence and a strong relationship with the capital will be beneficial.

To date, Kent has led the way in forging a new way of working between central and local government. Influencing these processes and ensuring that where they present opportunities we take them and where they represent threats we stand up for Kent's interests, will be crucial. The Vision for Kent will provide us with a clear platform for lobbying international, national and regional government for support in meeting our objectives.

### **Related initiatives**

**The Kent Agreement:** This comprises the Local Area Agreement (LAA) and the Local Public Service Agreement phase 2 (LPSA 2). It brings Kent Partners together to work for the people of the county with the aim of increasing independence and raising personal fulfilment, and acts as a vehicle for taking forward the ambitions contained in this Vision. It includes key targets agreed jointly between the Kent Partners and government. These targets are designed to be challenging but achievable, and they reflect a move towards preventing problems rather than simply tackling them at a later stage. The LAA comprises four key blocks – children and young people; safer and stronger communities; healthy communities and older people; economic development and sustainable communities.

The Kent Agreement goes well beyond a simple list of targets. Government offers a Performance Reward Grant for meeting the LPSA targets, along with the opportunity to negotiate freedom from regulation and prescription. Success in the first LPSA, which ended in April 2005, brought with it a Performance Reward Grant of around £21 million.

The Kent Agreement brings Kent's partners together to work for the people of the county, with the aim of increasing independence and raising personal fulfilment. It acts as a vehicle for taking forward the ambitions contained in this Vision.

**The Supporting Independence Programme:** This programme is based on the premise that public services and community development initiatives, if delivered without considering the longer term, can actually increase levels of dependency. With this in mind, preventative action and the promoting opportunity for all, especially opportunity to achieve fulfillment through independence and work and to enjoy a higher quality of life, should be at the heart of all public services. The aim is to support, co-ordinate and re-focus the work of relevant partners in order to help achieve this, and in doing so reduce the welfare spend across Kent.

We have also recently undertaken a review of the **Kent Environment Strategy** and **Kent Prospects** (the economic strategy for Kent), and ensured that, where possible, the objectives align so that we are neither duplicating effort nor giving rise to conflicting aspirations. These strategies will continue to provide the detail of our environmental and economic objectives to complement the high level aspirations set out in the Vision for Kent.

### **Delivering and monitoring the Vision**

The Kent Partnership has developed this Vision for Kent. Over the coming years, partners will work together to deliver this Vision as well as the priority areas in the Kent Agreement. These outcomes will make a big difference to the quality of life in Kent but will require all of us to be creative, take risks, trust each other and change the way we work. All those involved are committed to working together in a strategic and co-ordinated way for the benefit of the people of Kent and have given up staff time and resources as well as sharing valuable information and support.

Delivery and monitoring will be through mechanisms that already exist rather than new ones. The Kent Agreement will form a major part of the delivery, although because it does not cover all of the goals set out in the Vision and is based on a three-year cycle, more will need to be done. We also need to work with the district Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs), the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships and other local delivery agencies to ensure we tap into the vast knowledge and core priorities already identified. ***It is incumbent upon the partners to reflect this Vision for Kent in their own business plans and spending priorities.*** We must all focus our efforts and resources on tackling those areas where we can make a difference by working together. We are all accountable, and the Kent Partnership and Kent Public Service Board will review progress towards our common objectives at regular intervals. The Kent Public Service Board (KPSB) is a sub group of the Kent Partnership. It was established in September 2004 to bring together the key public sector decision makers in Kent who, combined, have an annual budget of about £7 billion.

We have deliberately not developed any new short-term targets as there are mechanisms already in place to measure and check progress towards our aims. The district LSPs, the Kent Environment Strategy and Kent Prospects, along with the Kent Agreement all have action plans against which progress can be measured and monitored. However, it is important that we make regular checks across all of our activity to assess whether or not we are achieving what we have set out to achieve.

The Kent Partnership will commission progress reports every two years and conduct a full review in five years. There will also be an annual conference to share information and discuss progress.

The sustainability appraisal and associated monitoring schedule for Vision for Kent will enable us to ensure we are not focussing too heavily in one area at the expense of another. We will look to the Quality of Life performance indicators to see if we can establish some synergies in existing monitoring and report progress against them.

### **Kent working in Partnership**

There are 10 LSPs in Kent that have developed community strategies, including the Kent Partnership, which spans the county. As a unitary authority, Medway also has an LSP and its own community strategy. Each community strategy is unique to the area that it covers, although there are often issues that are common to all. It is important that the Kent Partnership works closely with the district LSPs and other partnerships, such as those in the growth areas, to ensure we complement each other's work and do not duplicate effort.

The Vision for Kent will be implemented alongside the local community strategies, through their local strategic partnerships, which generally follow district boundaries.

Outlined on this map are the key issues identified by the districts themselves within their community strategies.

*(Map outlining the district LSP boundaries and some of the key issues in each area. Written version here for information. Please note this will be a graphic display spread across two pages only)*

#### **Ashford**

- Growth area for housing and jobs
- Situated between Europe and London
- Some isolated rural communities

#### ***Key issues for the district are:***

- Thousands of new houses planned
- Providing for new and existing communities
- Providing infrastructure and jobs to match housing increase

#### **Canterbury**

- Historic Cathedral City
- Centre for higher and further education
- Small seaside towns and rural villages

#### ***Key issues for the district are:***

- Tourism and cultural economy
- Improving public transport and reducing congestion
- Matching local skills to local jobs

#### **Dover**

- Busiest passenger ferry port in the world
- Deprived areas in need of regeneration
- Gateway to Europe

#### ***Key issues for the district are:***

- Traffic and pollution (especially from freight)
- Encouraging investment and new jobs

- Tackling social problems in deprived areas

### **Dartford & Gravesham**

- Part of the Thames Gateway
- Close proximity to London
- One of the UK's largest Sikh populations

#### ***Key issues for the districts are:***

- Delivering sustainable regeneration that benefits local communities
- Improving housing and cultural facilities and preserving the green belt
- Improving local skills base to match employment opportunities

### **Maidstone**

- Thriving leisure and retail economy
- The natural place to do business in Kent
- Key rural service centres

#### ***Key issues for the district are:***

- Influence of the growth areas of Ashford and the Thames Gateway
- Attracting more residential and high quality development
- Reducing congestion, improving infrastructure and public transport

### **Sevenoaks\***

- High quality natural environment
- Good transport links to London
- An affluent and attractive place to live

#### ***Key issues for the district are:***

- Safe and caring communities
- A green and healthy environment
- A dynamic and sustainable economy

### **Shepway**

- Channel Tunnel Rail Link
- Long coastline and rural areas
- An ageing population

#### ***Key issues for the district are:***

- Community safety
- Regeneration
- Attracting new investment and employment

### **Swale**

- Part of the borough is in the Thames Gateway
- Stunning coastal and wetland habitats
- Areas of deprivation and lowest wages in Kent

#### ***Key issues for the district are:***

- Large proposed housing growth
- Improving skills, learning and education
- Protecting the natural environment

### **Thanet**

- Famous seaside towns
- Diverse coastal habitats
- Pockets of deprivation and social problems

#### ***Key issues for the district are:***

- Tourism, retail and cultural economy
- Supporting vulnerable people
- Improving transport links to London

### **Tonbridge & Malling\***

- Attractive urban/rural mix
- Good local quality of life
- Focus for growth at Kings Hill

#### ***Key issues for the district are:***

- Providing affordable housing
- Keeping crime and disorder low
- Caring for the local environment

### **Tunbridge Wells\***

- High quality natural and built environment
- Strong cultural and historical links
- Thriving town centres and rural villages

#### ***Key issues for the district are:***

- Affordable housing and retaining skilled workers
- Community safety and fear of crime
- Traffic congestion, parking and public transport

### **Medway**

(on the map Medway will be white, along with other areas outside Kent, and display the name “Medway Unitary Authority”. It will have its own explanation box stating: “Medway is a unitary authority, which has its own LSP and Community Plan”)

\* = Sevenoaks, Tonbridge & Malling and Tunbridge Wells have a joint LSP for their local area known as the West Kent Partnership.

## **ECONOMIC SUCCESS – OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL**

### **The vision**

A Kent where innovative and creative businesses, self-reliant and skilled people and supportive and responsive organisations in private, public and community sectors sustain economic success and regeneration.

### **Current situation**

Kent is uniquely located as a gateway between continental Europe, London and the rest of the south east but has not yet fully capitalised on this position. In the global economy, Kent will need to improve its performance, particularly in terms of skills, innovation and productivity, to ensure its long-term economic success and prosperity.

The opportunities facing Kent are huge. A growing European Union means bigger markets but more competition for investment and jobs. The Ashford and Thames Gateway growth areas are taking shape, but the current national focus on housing-led growth needs to be balanced by an equal focus on high quality jobs and infrastructure. Higher education in Kent is also rising to the challenge of reaching out to Kent's communities and businesses, a key factor in developing the knowledge economy – but fewer graduate job opportunities are found in Kent than elsewhere. The introduction of CTRL domestic services will help change market, investor and entrepreneur perceptions of the county, with the London 2012 Olympics providing further opportunities for Kent's economic development. Kent's regeneration areas have the potential for significant growth, particularly when compared to the more congested and costly parts of the south east and London. The presence of a skilled workforce and supporting infrastructure will have a major influence on the county's future success. Demographic change and an ageing population bring a need to ensure the skills and experience of older generations are used to help Kent prosper.

Economic growth has in the past often been associated with environmental degradation - but prospects for 'smarter, greener growth' are evolving fast. Kent should position itself as a leader in this area, developing a low-carbon economy with improved resilience to the rigours of climate change while taking advantage of the opportunities it may bring. Kent's high quality environment is an asset that not only sustains employment in leisure, tourism, agriculture and the like, but also offers a key resource to underpin future prosperity. Regeneration that revitalises our coastal towns and engages communities can also serve to demonstrate how tensions between economic development and the environment can be resolved.

Kent's businesses across public, private and voluntary sectors can all make major contributions to addressing the county's growth, regeneration and environmental challenges. The role of small businesses, in particular, is and will be a key factor in shaping Kent's future prospects, given companies with fewer than 100 employees account for 98% of the total stock of firms.

### **Recent progress**

Since 2003 the health of Kent's economy has improved, with for example:

- A 10.8% increase in employment opportunities<sup>1</sup>
- A 9.7% rise in the number of VAT-registered businesses<sup>2</sup>
- A 19% increase in the number of people employed in knowledge-intensive sectors<sup>3</sup>
- An increasing trend for Kent to attract high quality and knowledge-intensive jobs<sup>4</sup>
- Improving market perceptions of Kent's property markets<sup>5</sup>

However, key issues remain to be addressed, including:

- Lower rates of economic productivity than nationally and in the south east<sup>6</sup>
- Levels of skills and qualifications which fall below national and south east levels<sup>7</sup>
- Continuing disparities between disadvantaged parts of Kent (e.g. East Kent, the coastal towns, parts of North Kent) and the more prosperous parts of the county (e.g. North Kent, West Kent and the Channel Corridor), including lower employment rates
- The continuing need to attract new investment and job opportunities

## Long term goals

Our long-term goals include:

- Developing a 'mosaic economy' made up of individual components which are important and distinctive in their own right and which work together to create a larger, cohesive picture.
- Developing successful and innovative businesses, especially within our diverse and vibrant small business community, that respond to global and local opportunities and challenges and have access to:
  - high quality business development support, sector and cluster networks
  - flexible business accommodation
  - supply chains and market opportunities
  - public sector goods and service procurement opportunities
  - best practice, knowledge and technology, including links with the higher education community and research base
  - a skilled workforce whose career aspirations are met through a range of learning and vocational training opportunities
- Making Kent a key location for inward investment and high quality jobs that takes advantage of our main urban centres and our links to London, the south east, the rest of Europe and the global business community
- Making 'smart development' in public and private sectors the norm rather than the exception, generating less waste and making more efficient use of energy, natural resources, previously-developed land and infrastructure

<sup>1</sup> 1998-2002 (Kent Economic Report 2004)

<sup>2</sup> 1994-2003 (Kent Economic Report 2004)

<sup>3</sup> 1998-2002 (Kent Economic Report 2004)

<sup>4</sup> *Locate in Kent* monitoring reports

<sup>5</sup> Kent Property Market Review 2004

<sup>6</sup> Kent Economic Report 2004

<sup>7</sup> Kent Economic Report 2004

- A vibrant rural economy where an invigorated farming industry meets market needs for food and non-food crops and takes advantage of opportunities in sustainable land management and local produce
- Achieving a high quality infrastructure and an integrated transport network that serves the needs of businesses, the workforce and communities
- Economic renewal in urban areas and rural centres, especially Kent's priority regeneration areas and coastal towns, where people's health and wellbeing is enhanced by access to learning, employment, business and leisure opportunities
- Increasing employment rates (especially amongst disadvantaged groups and areas), reducing poverty and encouraging social inclusion through innovative and flexible approaches and collaborative working at the local level
- Realising a knowledge-rich economy and centre for entrepreneurship where people are motivated to learn and acquire new skills for their own personal development and career aspirations
- Developing leading edge sectors, clusters, organisations and businesses (e.g. land-based, construction, creative and cultural industries, tourism, eco-enterprises and social enterprises)
- Realising an economy where more flexible ways of working, enabled by new communication technologies, make a significant contribution to Kent's prosperity and productivity
- Valuing the contribution of the voluntary and not-for-profit sectors, faith groups, and unpaid workers to community cohesion, regeneration and employability
- Valuing the contribution skilled incomers and temporary workers make to Kent's economy
- Promoting independence through employment for those who are able to work

### **Short term priorities**

To meet these long-term goals, we need to give short-term priority to:

- Helping Kent's people reach their full potential through workforce development and enhanced skills in all sectors but particularly in construction, eco-enterprise, tourism, the land-based sector, creative and cultural industries
- Developing the economic prosperity of Kent
- Developing links with key markets in the UK and beyond and attracting high quality inward investment, projects and jobs
- Capturing potential benefits from the London 2012 Olympics, especially those with the potential to last beyond 2012
- Delivering high quality, sustainable design solutions, especially in Kent's growth and regeneration areas, which benefit local businesses and people
- Supporting the land-based sector to help it respond to new market challenges and opportunities, including non-food crops and locally produced food
- Providing flexible business accommodation in growth and regeneration areas, and in other urban locations, to meet a range of business needs – from incubators to local businesses and inward investors
- Developing the Supporting Independence Programme and associated activities, including the social economy, which aim to remove barriers to work for more disadvantaged individuals and communities
- Developing employment opportunities for graduates
- Improving efficiency in the logistics chain and encouraging local supply chains to reduce the economic costs of congestion and stimulate the local economy

### **Joining up our thinking**

- Learning for everyone – informal and formal lifelong learning routes, vocational training, developing skills for the knowledge economy and for high value, low impact sectors
- Improved health, care and wellbeing - capturing the economic benefits of a healthy workforce plus the health benefits of high and stable levels of employment, supporting people with a range of disabilities or disadvantages to participate in the economy, flexible working and reducing work-related stress
- Environmental excellence - preparing for climate change impacts and opportunities, (e.g. green technologies), improving resource efficiency and reducing waste, Kent as a leader on green technology
- Strong and safe communities - reducing poverty and crime, maximising fulfilling employment and minimising disorder, businesses tuned into issues related to corporate social responsibility, using the skills and experience of older generations
- Enjoying life – maintaining a healthy work/life balance, developing leisure and tourism industries
- Keeping Kent moving - breaking the link between economic growth and traffic growth and delivering jobs close to where people live, new and flexible ways of working to reduce the need to travel
- High quality housing - delivering economic regeneration through urban renaissance and mixed-use developments, delivering quality design and sustainable construction, ensuring housing growth is in step with employment growth

#### **Further details and targets**

- Kent Prospects - Economic Development and Regeneration Framework, 2006 to 2012
- Kent & Medway Economic Board - KMEB Economic Framework
- Regional Economic Strategy
- Kent Property Report

## LEARNING FOR EVERYONE

### The vision

A Kent where learning is stimulated and supported for everyone, for life, employment and enjoyment, in ways that are sensitive to individual, family and community needs and aspirations, placing our schools and other centres for learning at the heart of our communities.

### Current situation

Kent's schools continue to perform strongly. From 2000 to 2004, early years and childcare places increased from 28,000 to more than 36,000. Primary school attainment levels are rising - Key Stage 1 and 2 tests for 2005 indicate Kent's schools are improving more quickly than national rates. Secondary schools have also continued to make substantial improvements, and innovative programmes led by KCC in partnership with head teachers have contributed to further increases in already high attainment levels. In 2005, Kent achieved its best-ever national examination and test results for all key stages, with a large proportion of Kent's young people also attaining above average performance at 'A' level. A major review of specialist provision was undertaken in 2001 and implementing that plan is now providing a robust framework for delivering services for pupils with special educational needs. Improvements have also been made in the speed at which excluded pupils are re-integrated back into education. However, despite these successes, there is still room for further improvement, and KCC, in partnership with schools and other organisations, is continually seeking to develop the quality of early years, primary and secondary education in Kent. Exploring ways in which broadband and information technology have the potential to revolutionise learning for the future and taking forward the Every Child Matters aspirations of the Children Act highlight this commitment.

Post-16 access to learning opportunities varies considerably between districts. In response, KCC, the Learning and Skills Council and Connexions have developed a 14-to-19 Learner Strategy and Action Plan. Related initiatives include opening five vocational centres, with a further 12 in the pipeline. Although adults have improved skills attainment levels, more needs to be done to encourage employers, individuals, and disadvantaged communities to embrace a culture of lifelong learning. Support agencies, training providers and businesses also need to communicate more about ways of tackling skills shortages and gaps in key sectors and about tailoring learning opportunities to an ageing population. These are vital activities if Kent wants to improve its economic performance and prosperity.

Employment rates and skill levels are considerably lower in Kent's priority regeneration areas and coastal towns. Experience in Kent has highlighted that the most effective means of engaging individuals can be developing informal and intermediate learning and work opportunities, often provided by voluntary and community-based organisations and social enterprises.

The further and higher education sector is also playing a key role in widening access to learning opportunities for Kent's communities – but graduate job opportunities tend to be fewer than in other parts of the south east. Colleges, universities and the public and private sectors are, however, looking at a range of innovative ways to increase graduate retention. These include supporting enterprise and entrepreneurship, work

placements and developing networking and knowledge transfer links between academic and business communities.

Kent's growth areas in the Thames Gateway and Ashford will place additional pressure on education providers to respond across the spectrum of early years, primary, secondary, vocational, further and higher education provision.

### **Recent progress**

In recent years Kent has been successful in:

- Extending early years places through new nurseries and other childcare provision
- improving attainment at key stages 1 and 2 and making significant improvements in key stage 3, GCSE and A level performance
- Improving levels of school attendance
- Raising the attainment levels of looked-after children
- Developing specialist provision in line with needs
- Developing collaborative structures to widen student choice and raise standards
- Harnessing and embedding ICT, particularly through 'proof of concept' projects
- Offering a wider range of vocational options for young people
- Developing community schools which offer a rich variety of after-school activity and support services which are open to the wider community
- Attracting older learners into adult and further education
- Facilitating learning for young people in community facilities including the youth service and libraries
- Systematically developing strategies and action plans across all phases of learning
- Attracting, retaining and developing high quality staff to help achieve this

Despite these improvements some key challenges remain:

- Continuing to raise the attendance and attainment levels of a number of children and young people, particularly some boys and especially in areas of social disadvantage
- Raising the knowledge and skills levels of 16-to-19 year olds and adults by further increasing participation in education and training
- Matching vocational provision to needs in the local economy
- Addressing the needs of disadvantaged communities in priority regeneration areas and coastal towns
- Planning for the implications of Kent's growth areas

### **Long term goals**

Our long-term goals are to:

- Establish a culture that values learning in all communities
- Raise standards of attainment and promote achievement and a love of learning for all
- Stimulate and support lifelong learning and vocational training opportunities to raise aspirations, widen participation and develop skills and economic independence
- Work in partnership to address the skills and learning needs of individuals, communities and businesses in public, private and community sectors

- Maximise the opportunities information and communication technology provides for personalised and work-based learning
- Enhance integrated services around the needs of children, families and the wider community to sustain social, economic and educational development in local areas
- Improve the engagement of children, young people and their families in service design and delivery and empower and support effective parenting
- Promote healthy lifestyles, positive behaviour and relationships, respect for equality and diversity, moral, emotional and spiritual development and environmental awareness
- Provide safe, secure and stable learning environments at the heart of every community
- Anticipate learning needs and plan appropriate responses to demographic change in all of Kent's communities, especially in the growth and priority regeneration areas
- Support the development of higher education provision in Kent and encourage community and business outreach activities

### **Short term priorities<sup>8</sup>**

For children, and in the context of achieving the Every Child Matters outcomes of the Children Act:

- Continuing to develop Kent's high quality early years, primary and secondary provision
- Promoting the physical, emotional, social and intellectual development of young children so they flourish at home and at school
- Significantly improving performance in literacy and/or numeracy in primary schools
- Improving the education of children in care
- Identifying children and young people with emotional and/or psychological difficulties at the earliest possible stage and responding with the most effective support
- Increasing attendance at primary and secondary schools

For young people and adults:

- Increasing the number of young people who have skills for life and work through work-related learning and vocational training options, vocational centres, improved information, career advice and guidance
- Increasing participation rates in further and higher education through activities including the 'Aim Higher' campaign
- Raising the learning and work aspirations of young people and adults, especially in disadvantaged areas and communities, by providing access to learning opportunities, vocational skills and training provision and providing better skills brokerage for business
- Developing the ways business and employers are involved in the training of young people and adults in education to help them prepare for working life
- Supporting the role of the social economy and community-based initiatives in providing high quality informal and intermediate 'work based' learning opportunities

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<sup>8</sup> Taken from Every Child Matters and Kent Agreement, outcomes 1-6

## **Joining up our thinking**

- Economic success – opportunities for all, developing skills for life and a higher-value economy, developing links between education and business communities, providing vocational training in key sectors e.g. construction and health care, schools procuring local goods, produce and services
- Improved health, care and wellbeing - educating for healthy lifestyles including healthy eating, sex and drugs education
- Environmental excellence - improving environmental education, including natural phenomena, local heritage, economic development, utilities and energy, developing eco-schools, further and higher education facilities (resource and energy efficient)
- Stronger and safer communities - providing safe learning environments and schools as community hubs, education as a means to curb anti social behaviour, communities engaging in learning, learning about personal and social development, including self-esteem, tolerance and respect, tapping into the knowledge, skills and experience of the older generation
- Enjoying life - engaging children, young people and the education sector in sports, leisure and culture, learning as both formal and informal activity throughout life, using and developing the skills of older generations
- Keeping Kent moving - improving access to education without increasing traffic and damaging the environment (e.g. the school run), community transport, walking buses (health and wellbeing), new information technology and personalised learning
- High quality homes - ensuring that appropriate education provision is made in 'growth' areas

## **Further details and targets**

- Children Act – Every Child Matters outcomes
- Kent Children and Young Persons Plan
- Community Schools Strategy
- 14-to-19 Learner Strategy
- Kent Primary Strategy
- Kent Secondary Strategy
- LSC National, Regional and Kent & Medway plans

## IMPROVED HEALTH, CARE AND WELL-BEING

### The vision

A Kent where people lead healthier lives, with high quality services that meet their needs for health, care and wellbeing and where people with disabilities are supported to lead independent lives within the community

### Current situation


Kent is generally a healthy place in which to live, but there are wide variations in people's health across the county. The priority is to reduce health inequalities and improve the health outcomes for people in more disadvantaged communities. Regeneration in parts of Kent can contribute to this but only if adequate local jobs and housing opportunities are created. Changes to the structure of the workforce will require higher education and skills levels.

In the future, Kent will have more one-person households and more older people. Already there are more than 113,000 people aged 75 or over living in the county. This is set to increase significantly over the next 20 years. New services have already been developed using new technologies to help people live independently. Telecare and Telehealth allow monitoring within the home to avoid hospital and clinic attendances. More people are taking control of their own lives and the services they need through on-line self assessment, the expansion of direct payments and the introduction of purchase cards which simplify the individual purchasing arrangements for social care services.

The number of children in the county is expected to fall, in line with national trends, but with some 313,000 children, Kent has more children than the whole population of Coventry (305,000), so ensuring every child is healthy and remains safe will remain a key priority.

In addition, Kent's growth areas offer both challenges and opportunities to create sustainable and healthy communities. Health and social care will contribute to this objective in two ways by ensuring:

- services meet the needs of new and existing populations
- sound public health principles underpin our planning (for example through the creation of cycle ways, green spaces and easily accessible leisure facilities)

Vital to both objectives is a good mix of affordable, social and key worker housing. Some new premises and other infrastructure will be needed to support the development of healthy communities. New hospitals may not be needed, although some hospital facilities will have to be expanded. More patients will be treated at home or in the community in local primary and community health and social care centres, reducing the need to travel longer distances. 

There has already been considerable investment, and access to services has been significantly improved. More than £2 billion a year is now being spent on funding health and social care services in Kent. New investment has also ensured that intermediate care services have been enhanced so that more people can be treated away from hospital and in their own homes. Far more social care services are now

situated and delivered alongside health and primary care services. Greater choice of services will encourage people to remain independent for longer.

### **Recent progress**

Progress has been made in a number of areas:

- Rolling out the *Healthy Schools* scheme across Kent
- Introducing the five-a-day fruit scheme that has successfully promoted a healthier diet
- Helping more than 25,000 people in Kent stop smoking
- Achieving the targets in the first Kent Local Public Service Agreement (reducing unnecessary hospital admissions, reducing the number of looked-after children and increasing the number of adoptions)
- Reducing waiting times for inpatient and outpatient appointments
- Significantly improving waiting times in A&E departments across Kent so that more than 98% of people are now seen within four hours
- Cutting waiting times to see a family doctor or a member of his surgery team
- Reducing the time children spend on the child protection register
- Introducing new services to support children in their communities and help keep families together, for example family group conferencing
- Improving public access through multi-agency provision at Ashford Gateway
- Re-investing more than £6m in preventative care services
- Achieving two three star hospital trusts in Kent. In 2005, for the first time, there are no zero-star NHS organisations in the county.
- Maintaining Kent Social Services' three star status for the third year running

Many challenges remain, though, including:

- Increasing life expectancy for all in Kent
- Tackling health inequalities
- Ensuring there is an adequate supply of affordable, quality care that meets the needs of the increasing number of people with increasingly complex care needs

### **Long term goals**

Our long-term goals are to:

- Help the people of Kent to live safely and independently in their local communities
- Improve the health and the physical and mental wellbeing of the population and reduce inequalities
- Support people with long-term conditions
- Ensure that all children are safe
- Support families to stay together
- Provide security for all in old age
- Ensure adults who are vulnerable receive the support they need to maintain their safety and independence
- Provide people with the information and support they need to maintain healthy lifestyles

### **Short term priorities**

To meet these long-term goals, health and social care services in Kent will have to:

- Promote and improve the health of Kent's residents and reduce health inequalities by addressing variations in health across the county
- Address the wider factors affecting people's health as well as treating the conditions from which they suffer
- Empower people to make healthier choices that help prevent them from being ill
- Promote health through large employers and use employment, commissioning and other working practices to enhance healthy living and wellbeing
- Embrace new technologies to help more people live independently, with the services they need delivered in the way they want
- Develop seamless services for children across all agencies
- Develop a wide range of preventative community schemes to support families
- Continue to improve waiting times for surgery
- Ensure easy access to accident and emergency centres
- Continue to improve access for cancer services
- Reduce the incidence of hospital acquired infections
- Plan and deliver health and social care services for growing populations in Kent
- Involve service users in the design of future care provision to improve their experience
- Recruit and retain the highly-skilled staff necessary to work in a modernised health and social care sector
- Provide people with the infrastructure to use public rights of way and access the countryside in order to encourage people to walking or cycle more on a daily basis
- Work with KCC and district councils to ensure that health and social care services are accessible
- Promote independent living for all

### **Joining up our thinking**

- Economic success – opportunities for all, equality of opportunity for all, maintaining a work/life balance and reducing stress, work as the best form of welfare
- Learning for everyone – giving children and young people key public health messages so that they can make informed, healthy lifestyle choices
- Environmental excellence – making use of the natural environment to improve health, the positive impact of open and green spaces on wellbeing and recovery
- Stronger and safer communities – addressing the wider factors affecting health, valuing the role of voluntary and community groups in providing health and social care and support, involving people in decision making about services and providing choice
- Enjoying life – promoting independence, enjoying healthy lifestyles (e.g. taking part in sport) at all ages, maximising the potential benefits of the 2012 Olympics, eating fresh, local produce
- Keeping Kent moving – access to health and social care services that reduces the need to travel, walking and cycling as healthy ways to travel
- High quality homes – homes for life and maintaining independence e.g. building on the opportunities provided by Telehealth

### **Further details and targets**

- Active Lives – The Future of Social Care in Kent
- Better Care, Higher Standards
- Direct Payments
- Every Child Matters
- Supporting Independence Programme

## ENVIRONMENTAL EXCELLENCE

### The vision

A Kent where our countryside, coast, natural resources, wildlife and heritage are protected and enhanced for their own sake and for the enjoyment of current and future generations and valued as the key to a high quality of life in both urban and rural areas

### Current situation

The high quality of Kent's environment is recognised by the number of international and national landscape and wildlife designations there are across the county. These include the Kent Downs and High Weald Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Special Protection Areas of the Kent coast and eleven National Nature Reserves including Stodmarsh, Elmley and Dungeness. These places, and many other areas of countryside, farmland and open space which enjoy a lower level of protection, are vital to the quality of life of Kent's residents. They provide natural beauty, tranquillity, wildlife havens, opportunities for leisure and an all-important place to 'get away from it all'. The large number of conservation areas in Kent is a further indication of the special nature of Kent's countryside and the settlements within it.

Kent's reputation as the Garden of England is a precious but fragile one. Development, pollution and traffic all take their toll on our landscapes and natural resources. Much 'ordinary' countryside suffers from neglect and fly-tipping, and the whole county faces the pressures of growth. Many historic buildings and archaeological sites are at risk, and much of our special wildlife faces a similar fate as the Kentish Plover – a bird which owes its name to the county but no longer breeds here. While urban and rural environments face distinctive challenges, many – such as noise, litter, and light and air pollution – are common to both. And while we are working hard towards an urban renaissance, it has yet to slow the rate of out-migration from our towns or deliver the high quality public realm to which we aspire.

Environmental problems like poor air quality tend to have disproportionate impacts on disadvantaged communities, making environmental improvements a matter of social justice and requiring solutions to environmental problems that help address inequality.

Recent floods, water shortages and heatwaves suggest that climate change is now a reality. These threats are not just an issue for wildlife. Our natural systems give us the clear air, water and fertile soil we need to sustain life itself, as well as protecting us against floods, controlling pests and disease and providing opportunities for recreation. As such we have a vested interest as well as a responsibility to reduce our impact on the environment and reverse its historic decline.

The changes facing the environment also present significant opportunities – for example, to establish Kent as a leader in energy crops, renewable energy technologies and sustainable waste land management practices. We will take full advantage of these with a new and positive approach, respecting nature's limits in our search for prosperity, maximising efficiency in our use of resources and placing a higher value on the environment in the decisions we take as organisations and individuals. We must also balance a need for change in our rural areas with conservation of the environment, given the role of Kent's high quality landscape in supporting the rural economy through tourism, agriculture and leisure-based

activities. As we get better at dealing with the symptoms of environmental decline, we can focus our energies more on dealing with the root causes. By re-doubling our efforts, we can leave an environmental legacy to future generations of which we can be proud and a countryside whose character and economy have been enhanced rather than threatened by change.

### **Recent progress<sup>9</sup>**

Since 2003 there have been some notable improvements in the state of Kent's environment, particularly in relation to:

- Noise complaints - down 15% in the past two years
- Abandoned cars - down 41% in the past two years
- Waste recycling rates - on target at 28%
- Fly-tipping - facing a crackdown through the Clean Kent campaign

However, less progress has been made with more fundamental issues of environmental quality such as:

- Traffic – rising faster in Kent than the national average in recent years
- Water use - still rising despite increased scarcity
- Waste generation - up 4% and rising twice as fast in Kent as in the rest of the region
- Natural habitats and the historic environment - facing continuing losses and fragmentation
- Air quality – facing decline due to emissions and climate change impacts

### **Long term goals**

Our long-term goals are for a Kent that is:

- Reducing its contribution to climate change by reducing energy use and increasing energy efficiency while preparing for its impacts and helping to meet the national target of a 20% reduction in CO2 emissions by 2010
- Rich in key natural resources - water, air, land and soil - which are of the highest quality and managed sustainably in the interests of people and wildlife
- Reversing historic losses in biodiversity and restoring, linking and recreating natural habitats on a landscape scale
- Reducing its 'ecological footprint' – the resources we consume in relation to our fair 'share' of what is available globally – to sustainable levels
- Protecting and enhancing the beauty and diversity of its countryside and the richness of its historic environment for their own sakes and our enjoyment
- More aware of the global environmental impacts of the resources it consumes and is progressively reducing those impacts
- Meeting the economic and social needs of rural and urban areas in ways which respect both their character and the limits of their environments to absorb change and development
- Working with nature to manage the risk of flooding sustainably

### **Short term priorities**

To meet these long-term goals, we need to give short-term priority to:

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<sup>9</sup> Kent Environment Strategy: 2005 Progress Report

- Maximising efficient use of land by re-using previously-developed land and buildings and raising the density and quality of development
- Delivering the highest possible standards of sustainable construction (at least the BREEAM/EcoHomes 'very good' standard) and making efficient use of resources in both new and existing developments
- Reversing the growth in road traffic and its impacts, reducing the need to travel by car and lorry and making better use of existing transport infrastructure before building more of it
- Reducing the amount of commercial, construction and domestic waste we generate and managing what is left with minimal environmental impact
- Reducing energy use, maximising energy efficiency and increasing the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources in line with regional and national targets
- Investing in enhancing our landscapes, wildlife, habitats and heritage and ensuring that new development contributes positively to them wherever possible
- Delivering the Kent Biodiversity Action Plan and its key objective of halting the loss of biodiversity in Kent by 2010
- Meeting the requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive to improve water quality and manage water sustainably
- Avoiding development in areas at risk of flooding unless the risk can be managed in a sustainable manner

### **Joining up our thinking**

- Economic success – opportunities for all, breaking the link between economic growth and environmental degradation, preparing for climate change impacts and opportunities and developing eco-enterprise
- Learning for everyone - improving environmental education and developing skills for the high-value, low-impact economy, schools as environmental assets
- Improved health, care and wellbeing - positive health benefits of access to countryside and open space, negative impacts of poor air and water quality
- Stronger and safer communities - reducing environmental crime, vandalism, graffiti and fly-tipping
- Enjoying life - providing leisure and recreation through a high quality environment and making our heritage accessible to people, informal ways to enjoy our countryside such as walking, cycling and orienteering
- Keeping Kent moving - reducing environmental problems and inequalities (e.g. air quality) by reducing traffic and its impacts, support for alternative forms of transport to the car such as walking, cycling and public transport
- High quality housing - delivering quality design and sustainable construction, homes which are energy, waste and water efficient

### **Further details and targets**

- Kent Environment Strategy and related progress reports
- Kent Biodiversity Action Plan
- Kent and Medway Structure Plan
- Kent Design Guide

## **STRONGER AND SAFER COMMUNITIES**

### **The vision**

A Kent whose communities are stronger and safer and that are confident in the face of social change, supportive in their response to challenges and opportunities and respectful of the differences within and between them

### **Current situation**

Kent is a very large and diverse county and many of its communities enjoy a strong identity. Long-term trends, though, are changing some of the traditional aspects of community life. Long distance commuting is now far more commonplace, and an ageing population will change the dynamics of communities still further. Unskilled employment will fall, creating challenges around developing new skills and life-long learning. Kent is facing significant growth of its existing communities as well as the development of 'new' communities in the designated growth areas.

The place or circumstances in which people live often affects their life chances. Crime and anti-social behaviour is often more prevalent in areas that are economically deprived, isolated or in need of regeneration. Vandalism, graffiti, litter, abandoned cars or fly-tipping all damage the quality of the local environment. It is therefore important that we promote a strong sense of pride in the local environment and provide local services through the extended policing family that helps to reassure people and reduce the fear of crime.

A range of global and local challenges influences the safety and security of people in Kent. Some communities live in fear of crime and disorder, and for them the incidence of anti-social behaviour, criminal damage, insulting, offensive and threatening behaviour remains too high. A key issue in Kent is the paradox between actual and perceived levels of crime, and the media has a crucial role to play in influencing this. Internationally, terrorism, climate change, globalisation and population migration exert often more subtle, but no less important, influences.

In the light of these challenges, fair play, respect and tolerance have emerged as key issues for our society, along with the need to avoid discrimination on the basis of faith, culture, gender, age, social circumstances, sexuality and disability. For Kent's communities to thrive they must value the contribution of everyone in society. Encouraging and enabling individuals to take an active part in community life will ensure Kent's communities are confident enough to assimilate and integrate new members and embrace diversity.

Current challenges for community safety include the implications of the '24/7' society, high travel volumes across the county and confidence in the criminal justice system. Changing demographics and growth will bring new challenges, including 'designing in' safety to residential environments and protecting the built and natural environment from anti-social behaviour and disorder. The Kent Agreement should deliver further improvements in community safety.

Kent's communities have a great heritage and offer outstanding opportunities for community development, engagement and participation. Community leaders in Kent need to support networks to help residents and visitors make the most of what Kent's communities have to offer. The voluntary and community sector in Kent play a vital role in this networking. This sector helps develop and sustain the engagement of

those in Kent's communities through the full range of their activities – social, cultural, spiritual and environmental.

Increasing participation and engagement in promoting social inclusion, challenging discrimination, strengthening community cohesion and building sustainable communities brings many benefits. Research shows that voluntary activity is associated with better health and lower crime, improved educational performance and greater life satisfaction. Involvement in decisions that affect people and the places they care about can enhance the sense of citizenship. We can build legitimacy and support for often tough or controversial decisions through robust and inclusive engagement.

### **Recent progress**

Community safety has become a focus for partnership working, with a multi-agency approach centred on the Kent Partnership and the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs). This work has been supplemented by an increase in the extended policing family which now includes neighbourhood policing, Community Support Officers (CSOs), Community Safety and Rural Wardens (for Kent County Council and other local authorities) and more Special Constables. These highly-visible community safety initiatives are helping to create strong links between communities and public services and deliver results such as:

- A reduction in acquisitive crimes (such as burglary and car theft)<sup>10</sup>
- Fewer deaths and casualties from fires<sup>11</sup>
- Fewer incidents of disorder
- The introduction of Home Safe vans
- A better quality, cleaner environment

The Clean Kent campaign has also led to improvements in the quality of the local environment

### **Long term goals**

Our long-term goal is for a Kent which:

- Is composed of confident, stable communities which are well-equipped to deal with change
- Is characterised by supportive and enabled individuals, families and communities
- Is strengthened by a partnership approach in which communities work together with public services
- Informs and enables its residents to 'think global and act local' in addressing complex environmental, physical and social issues
- Is confident enough to embrace all cultures and diversity
- Ensures that communities include the diverse range of people of all abilities which live within them
- Develops new communities that are as active and engaged as existing communities
- Enjoys effective community leadership and a network of support systems
- Is made up of strong and vibrant communities working together to achieve their potential

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<sup>10</sup> Kent Public Service Agreement

<sup>11</sup> Kent Public Service Agreement

## **Short term priorities**

To meet these long-term goals, we need to give short-term priority to:

- Supporting independence and promoting opportunities for disadvantaged individuals and communities in Kent
- Adhering to the principles set out in the Kent Compact to create a framework for positive change and a proactive relationship between partners and the voluntary and community sectors
- Increasing the capacity of local communities so that people are empowered to participate in local decision-making and in delivering services
- Meeting the regeneration needs of Kent's communities and fostering active involvement, community development, engagement and participation
- Supporting and developing Kent's voluntary and community organisations (VCOs), including faith groups, and increasing the numbers of people active with VCOs
- Helping vulnerable people to help themselves and become active citizens in a community based on stable and independent families
- Reducing the harm caused by illegal drugs
- Reducing alcohol misuse
- Ensuring people are safe in their homes from violence, crime, fire and accidents
- Making Kent a safer place in which to work, live and travel
- Reducing crime affecting local communities
- Ensuring freedom from hate crime, antisocial behaviour, fear and harassment
- Reassuring the public, reducing the fear of crime and antisocial behaviour and building confidence in the criminal justice system
- Creating cleaner and greener public spaces

## **Joining up our thinking**

- Economic success – opportunities for all, encouraging social enterprise
- Learning for everyone – education and awareness to reduce fear of crime, promote an understanding of safety issues and foster strong communities, tapping into the skills, experience and knowledge of the older generation
- Improved health, care and wellbeing – reducing inequalities, valuing the role of the voluntary and community sector in providing health and social care services to communities
- Environmental excellence – clean, green and safe spaces in which to live and play
- Enjoying life – access to the countryside for all, increasing participation in community activities
- Keeping Kent moving - improving safety on the roads and better public transport networks
- High quality homes – designing in safety and designing out crime

## **Further details and targets**

- Kent Compact
- Kent Agreement
- Supporting Independence Programme (SIP)
- KCC Community Safety Strategy
- Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRP)
- CDRP Community Safety three-year strategies

## ENJOYING LIFE

### The vision

A Kent where residents and visitors can enjoy the recreational, sporting, artistic and cultural opportunities the county has to offer, and where the range and quality of those opportunities is enhanced and made accessible to as broad a cross-section of the community as possible

### Current situation

How we spend our spare time is crucial to enjoying life in Kent. Opportunities are all around us and there is a huge variety to suit all interests.

Kent needs to make the best use of its natural, cultural, historic, leisure and sporting assets for residents and visitors to enjoy. We must ensure that the people of the county can access a full range of opportunities to discover more about what the county has to offer and can participate in enjoying life in Kent. As a beautiful county we need to encourage more people to access and appreciate our countryside and heritage. We need to make sure we make the most of assets such as our historic attractions and our Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty so that we can protect and enhance them for future generations. Some of our coastal towns face deprivation and are in need of regeneration and we need to make the most of the unique leisure and cultural opportunities our coastline has to offer. The tourist economy in Kent is also enriched by the cultural facilities activities, and creative industries that the county has to offer – helping Kent to be seen as a “go to”, not a “go through” county.

Some areas already lack cultural activities and facilities. Planning these facilities into new communities is as important as addressing current under-provision. The people of Kent often struggle to find a work/life balance, and we need to provide a range of high quality facilities and activities that everyone can access and enjoy in their leisure time. This is particularly important in rural areas, where there is often a lack of facilities for young and older people, which can increase social isolation. Many people stop being involved in learning, sport, arts and associated leisure activities in adulthood and so miss out on the undoubted benefits.

Kent also faces a shortage of suitable venues in which to showcase the performing and creative arts and host international standard sporting events. Addressing this through better provision and delivery of events will help promote Kent's identity and culture both within and beyond the county. While formal provision for leisure activities is important, it is vital that this is not achieved to the exclusion of, or at the expense of, informal leisure activities that do not require special infrastructure or organisation. Simply enjoying a walk in the countryside, kicking a ball about or walking the dog are popular, affordable and enjoyable activities, requiring only that accessible countryside and open space continues to be there for Kent's residents to enjoy.

### Recent progress

- The successful bid for the 2012 Olympics in London will provide a range of opportunities for Kent, from improved sports facilities for young people to improved tourist attractions and cultural opportunities
- The construction of Turner Contemporary in Thanet will provide a focus for culture, tourism and the arts for residents and visitors alike

- The Dover Discovery Centre is a popular centre for learning and enjoying community life
- Kent had 3.3.million visitors last year, more than any other English county
- Eurostar provides a link to the continent and makes Kent an easy and attractive place to visit, as do the popular cross-Channel services from Dover and Folkestone

## Long term goals

Our long-term goal is for a Kent which:

- Is an attractive place in which tourism and leisure is developed in a structured and sustainable way
- Improves participation and engagement by all children and young people in youth, cultural and community activities<sup>12</sup>
- Enables the people of Kent to fulfil their sporting potential
- Promotes the importance of the arts, a sense of community and pride in place, cultural diversity and regeneration
- Develops its libraries as centres in the community where Kent residents can enjoy learning
- Has thriving sports facilities to help enhance health and social wellbeing
- Makes the coast, countryside and historic environment accessible to all and recognises its contribution to quality of life

## Short term priorities

To achieve these long-term goals, in the short-term we need to give priority to:

- Ensuring everyone in Kent understands the cultural, artistic, sporting, learning and leisure opportunities open to them and making sure there are venues in which they can be showcased
- Embedding Kent's schools at the centre of community activity and ensuring that their offer extends beyond the traditional school day while developing them and other community facilities as multi-use centres for a range of leisure activities
- Equipping Kent's children and young people to develop and flourish at home and school
- Identifying the need for additional sporting facilities, developing sports performance and enhancing coach and club development
- Developing sport in schools, disability sport and lifetime leisure activities suitable for an ageing population
- Developing visitor management strategies for Kent's country parks, open access countryside and public rights of way
- Achieving a balance of good tourist accommodation
- Addressing the need for additional conference and exhibition space
- Developing Kent's potential for hosting high profile events and activities
- Making the most of the '2012' potential before during and after the Olympics for the benefit of Kent

## Joining up our thinking

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<sup>12</sup> Kent Agreement Outcome 7.

- Economic success - opportunities for all, economic opportunities in providing for leisure, sport, arts, cultural activity etc
- Learning for everyone – access to community facilities, schools as community assets, informal learning opportunities for all ages in arts, culture and sport
- Improved health, care and wellbeing – links between health and leisure/sporting activities such as reducing obesity, enjoying a healthy, active lifestyle, getting children and young people involved in active lifestyles and interests from an early age
- Environmental excellence – need for high quality environment for recreation and leisure, access to the countryside e.g. public rights of way, Kent's AONBs as assets to enjoy
- Stronger and safer communities – secure environments for all activities, link between sport and social responsibility, fair play and respect, more quality activities for young people that reflect their interests and the link to reducing antisocial behaviour
- Keeping Kent moving – accessibility to community facilities, especially for those who experience social isolation, easily accessible activities with support for those who need help to participate, enjoying alternative ways to travel e.g. walking and cycling
- High quality homes – quality of housing and public realm, enjoying the potential of technology within the home such as wireless broadband connections

#### **Further details and targets**

- Cultural Strategy
- Rural Strategy
- Kent Compact
- Kent CAN
- Kent Tourism Alliance
- Kent Sports Development Unit
- District Creative and Cultural Strategies
- Voluntary Infrastructure Consortium Kent (VICK)

## KEEPING KENT MOVING

### The vision

To provide good accessibility to jobs and services for all sections of the community in Kent and to improve the environment by widening the choice of transport available, developing public transport, walking and cycling and reducing traffic growth and congestion

### Current situation

Kent is a dispersed and large rural county of 1.3 million residents, 78% of whom live in households with access to a car. Although 70% of those residents live in urban areas, there is no one major centre of urban density and this pattern of population distribution leads to relatively high car dependence, particularly in rural areas. This presents real challenges for the county, including congested inter-urban routes, air quality and congestion problems in our towns and the undermining of the character of rural areas.

People are becoming more affluent and are living longer and more active lives, adding to the demand on road and rail networks. The population of Kent is forecast to grow significantly and the number of households is set to rise by 93,000 between 2001 and 2016, creating more pressure on the networks. At the same time, the 22% of households that have no access to a car or who are unable to drive rely on public transport, walking or cycling to access jobs, schools and other services. In some areas the provision of public transport is not good enough to support people's desire for independence, access to work and so on.

It is clear that balances must be struck between enabling the efficient movement of people and goods and protecting the environment as well as between the needs of different road users. While transport policy for Kent must recognise the significance of the car as a means of transport, there is also a need to encourage, wherever possible, a shift towards public transport as well as a need to reduce the need to travel in the first place. In short, we need to change our approach to transport to ensure that we capture the benefits of increased mobility while reducing the negative economic, social and environmental costs associated with congestion and pollution.

New technology has a significant role to play in increasing access to jobs, services, learning and leisure activities for people who find it difficult to use existing transport arrangements. Changing work patterns are also being encouraged to reduce the need to travel.

Rail services are gradually improving, with new rolling stock being introduced and punctuality and reliability increasing. The new Integrated Kent Franchise and use of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link for domestic services will significantly improve journey times, particularly between East Kent and London.

The impact of freight traffic on Kent continues to rise, causing environmental impacts and an increased need for road maintenance. Cross-Channel freight also causes significant delays when Operation Stack is initiated, while overnight lorry parking in inappropriate places without facilities causes a serious antisocial nuisance to many residents and businesses. At the same time, the proportion of freight crossing the Channel by rail remains disappointingly low, going against the trend elsewhere in the

country. There is also an identified need to increase expenditure on road maintenance to facilitate travel across the county.

### **Recent progress**

There has been significant progress in terms of road safety and the promotion of alternative modes of transport, including:

- A 32% reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured on Kent's roads
- A 45% reduction in the number of children killed or seriously injured on Kent's roads
- A 17% increase in bus use on 200/01 levels
- A 106% increase in bus user satisfaction (from 33% in 2000/01 to 68% now)
- An increase in cycling of 56% on 2000/01 levels
- New technology advances that have helped to improve access to social care services – specifically Telecare, Telehealth and self-assessment web sites
- The opening of the Ashford Gateway – an innovative new centre that will improve access to a range of multi-agency services

Some major challenges remain, however, such as:

- Meeting the needs of the 22% of Kent's households with no car
- Addressing traffic growth, which continues to rise at 2% per annum
- Reducing the negative impacts of transport on air quality and greenhouse gas emissions
- Reducing the 67% of all work-related trips which are made by car

### **Long term goals**

Our long-term goals are for a Kent in which:

- Transport networks support independence by improving links to jobs and services
- Key services are brought closer to people, reducing the need to travel
- The need to travel both within and through the county is reduced
- The adverse effects of transport are stabilised and, where possible, reversed
- Integration maximises the use of public transport
- The local highway network is maintained to maximise the safe and efficient use of road space
- Transport systems are safe and secure for all users
- New development does not generate excessive demand for travel by road
- Efficient, sustainable transport links with London and the rest of the UK are maintained
- International freight traffic covers its true costs
- The network does not become gridlocked, for example through the imposition of Operation Stack
- Better use is made of existing infrastructure, especially where this reduces pressure for new build

### **Short term priorities**

To meet these long-term goals, in the short-term we need to give priority to:

- Improving personal security, accessibility, affordability, journey times and reliability on public transport and making good information more widely available
- Providing better integration between public transport services and other means of transport through good interchanges and through-ticketing on trains and buses
- Improving the quality and reliability of rail services in the new integrated Kent Franchise
- Ensuring new CTRL services reach as far as Dover and Thanet and that the appropriate level of service is provided on existing lines
- Ensuring essential public transport and road infrastructure is in place in the growth areas before developments are completed
- Encouraging the transfer of freight from road to rail and solving the problems caused by disruptions to cross-Channel flows and Operation Stack
- Reducing the need to travel by promoting flexible working and home deliveries
- Reducing the environmental impacts of transport by promoting alternative fuels, public transport, walking and cycling
- Encouraging rural and community transport initiatives and solutions
- Supporting a national road-pricing scheme when better public transport services are provided
- Exploring the use of travel on rivers and around the coast and the potential for moving freight in the same way
- Developing local rights of way so that they are more useful for trips to public transport stops, local shops, schools and services
- Improving public rights of way and giving people information about them and the confidence to use them

### **Joining up our thinking**

- Economic success – opportunities for all, efficient use of transport networks, improving access to jobs and services, reducing the need for commuting by car, flexible working options to reduce the need to travel
- Learning for everyone – better access to educational services and facilities, walking buses
- Improved health, care and wellbeing – improving air quality and promoting healthy transport choices like walking and cycling
- Environmental excellence – reducing and reversing the negative environmental impacts of transport, high quality green infrastructure
- Stronger and safer communities – improving the safety of the road and public transport networks, improving social inclusion and tackling social isolation through better public transport links
- Enjoying life – increasing accessibility for all people to cultural, sporting, artistic and leisure facilities and other services
- High quality housing – reducing car dependence and the need to travel, working from home as an alternative to travel

### **Further details and targets**

- Local Transport Plan/Accessibility Strategy
- South East Plan and Regional Transport Strategy
- Kent and Medway Structure Plan
- Kent Environment Strategy

## High Quality Homes

### The vision

A Kent where housing needs are met and new homes are built to the highest quality of design creating inspiring places where people want to live. A Kent where new housing is clustered around neighbourhood centres, with open space and community facilities that draw people together to create attractive, safe and friendly communities and where existing homes are improved and maintained to meet the needs of individuals and families.

### Current Situation

Kent is an area of opportunity because of its ideal location between London and the rest of Europe and because of the number of sites - particularly brownfield sites - available for investment, housing development and economic growth. This, combined with a high quality natural environment, makes it an attractive option for new housing development.

Kent contains two of the government's "growth" areas, and housing targets are high across the county. Two-thirds of the target number are needed to meet the growth in Kent's own population, including first-time buyers and the increasing number of people living alone. The remaining third is to meet predicted migration into Kent (mostly from elsewhere in the UK).

This proposed growth in housing numbers presents many challenges. Although Kent is seen as an affluent county, parts of Kent have high levels of deprivation and low household incomes. Parts of East Kent and the coastal towns face deep-seated challenges, while other parts of Kent feel the economic 'pull' of London and the 'leakage' of graduate talent, both of which make it increasingly difficult to recruit and retain staff in essential services.

Kent has a 10-year supply of housing land available, mostly on brownfield sites. This is, however, not being built on because of a dramatic shortage in funding for roads, schools, water supply, health, leisure and community facilities. The over-reliance on funding from developers to deliver affordable housing is an additional challenge.

Affordability and the need to develop a range of housing options is a significant issue across Kent. Even in parts of the county where property prices are lower, the affordability gap is significant because local income levels are also lower. There is a need for a range of housing options, affordable homes (particularly for staff in essential services) and social rented housing to meet identified local needs. There is also a need for all homes to meet (or exceed) the national Decent Homes standard and a need for housing solutions which support older people and other adults with additional needs to live independently at home.

The impact of new housing on the environment and the character of existing settlements remain a key concern in a highly-developed county like Kent. Some of these concerns can be addressed by high quality design that can bring social, environmental and economic benefits to an area. The Kent Planning Officers' Group has drawn up a new Kent Design Guide that emphasises the overriding importance of improving the quality of design across Kent.

In addition, reducing energy use in the home and improving energy efficiency and flood resilience will help reduce the causes, effects and costs of climate change on

households. The need to ensure that current homes are as energy-efficient as possible connects closely to supporting the independence of older people and is often expressed as 'affordable warmth'.

Building more compact communities will add to vibrancy and improve the viability of public transport services, while new construction techniques and technologies will help raise skills and create economic opportunities in their own right.

As well as maximising the use of brownfield land, we must bring empty homes into use to support regeneration and improve existing communities. Engaging these communities in designing changes to the places where they live or when planning for growth can lead to innovative and creative solutions that are liked and valued by local people.

Issues of personal safety in the home and the adaptability of homes to meet individual needs are significant since the proportion of Kent's population aged over 75 will continue to increase. We must create homes for life that anticipate future change – whether that is demographic, social or climatic change.

### **Recent progress**

While affordability of housing remains a key issue, there have been some positive features related to housing performance in Kent in recent years:

- Average annual housing completions increased from 4,470 in the period 1998 - 2001 to 5,000 between 2001 and 2004
- Housing development on recently completed sites has exceeded national targets for minimum densities
- House prices, particularly in parts of North and East Kent, remain affordable in relation to other parts of the south east
- Land already identified for housing can support more than 54,000 new homes, equivalent to a 10-year supply at currently planned rates

Less positively:

- The number of households in temporary accommodation has more than doubled, despite a government target to halve numbers by 2010<sup>13</sup>
- Energy use, waste generation and carbon emissions continue to rise<sup>14</sup>
- Housing development on previously-developed land, at 62% in the period 2001 – 2004, remains below the target of 70%<sup>15</sup>

Furthermore, the claimed benefits of an increased housing supply have yet to reach those most in need - those people for whom 'getting on the housing ladder' is not even a distant prospect. It is far from clear that simply building more houses will significantly improve affordability. For this group, providing decent housing (public or private) with affordable rents will remain the priority.

### **Long term goals**

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<sup>13</sup> ODPM HIP data for 1998/99-2002-3

<sup>14</sup> DEFRA, 2005

<sup>15</sup> Kent Housing Land studies– 2004 and Kent and Medway Structure Plan 2003.

Our long-term goal is for a Kent that is:

- Developing whole communities, not just building new houses, creating attractive, safe and friendly neighbourhoods
- Improving the quality of homes, both new and old
- Integrating new and existing communities
- Providing choice and access and meeting the needs of the individual and family
- Delivering high levels of sustainability

### **Short term priorities**

To meet these long-term goals, we need to give short-term priority to:

- Improving Kent residents' access to homes of excellent quality, in the right place, at the right time and at the right cost
- Attracting funding for infrastructure to go with new housing and securing development contributions wherever appropriate (using the Development Contributions Guide)
- Promoting mixed developments which include a range of housing types
- Ensuring quality design for all new homes in line with the principles and standards set out in the Kent Design Guide
- Promoting world-class design and innovation in construction and refurbishment, designing in safety and health and designing out crime
- Developing 'smart homes' that maximise the use of technology within the home and connectivity between the home and the wider world to facilitate home-based learning and working
- Increasing the proportion of homes, in both the public and private sectors, that meet or exceed the Decent Homes standard
- Creating incentives and enforcing responsibilities that drive homeowners and private landlords to repair and maintain their property
- Increasing the number of long-term empty properties that are returned to use as homes
- Providing new homes close to jobs and amenities (and vice versa)
- Improving, integrating and making accessible public services and local amenities
- Promoting the provision of supported housing for vulnerable adults/households
- Supporting older people and providing appropriate choices to encourage them to leave unsuitable accommodation and move to homes more suited to their needs
- Promoting the Lifetime Homes standard for new developments and large-scale refurbishments
- Increasing the range of funding available to support the delivery of all forms of affordable housing
- Linking the supply of affordable homes to the recruitment and retention of staff in essential services
- Working towards a situation where no vulnerable household is in temporary accommodation
- Increasing the number and/or capacity of authorised transit and permanent encampment sites for Gypsies and travellers and removing every unauthorised development or encampment
- Increasing the number of sheltered housing developments with extra care services
- Maximising the use of brownfield sites and the re-use of construction materials and empty properties

- Improving energy efficiency and affordability in the home, minimising waste and the consumption of natural resources
- Retaining local distinctiveness and character as part of a commitment to high quality design in the construction and refurbishment of homes
- Encouraging developments to achieve an energy rating equivalent to 10 on the NHER scale and/or the BREEAM/ECO Homes 'very good' standard

### **Joining up our thinking**

- Economic success - opportunities for all, providing homes close to present and future jobs, developing the construction industry (skills and sustainability)
- Learning for everyone – improving access to community facilities, developing skills in delivering high quality, sustainable homes
- Improved health, care and wellbeing – designing in health and delivering affordable warmth, using technology to deliver health in the home e.g. Telehealth
- Environmental excellence – maximising the efficient use of resources in the construction and occupation of new and existing homes, maintaining a rich natural environment in and near residential areas, homes which are energy, water and waste efficient
- Stronger and safer communities – designing out crime in residential areas, designing homes to maximise independent living e.g. lifetime homes
- Enjoying life – creating mixed communities and improving access to community facilities
- Keeping Kent moving – reducing the need to travel, safer streets, access to services, jobs and community facilities

### **Further details and targets**

- Kent Design Guide
- 'Kent - What Price Growth?'
- Kent and Medway Structure Plan
- South East Plan
- Kent Housing Group
- District council housing strategies
- Regional Housing Strategy
- Kent Developers' Guide

**What happens next?**

The Vision for Kent will be taken forward through the work of the Kent Partnership. A sub group of the partnership will oversee the development and delivery of the Vision through existing mechanisms and by developing ways of working better together. Partners will report back through the Kent Partnership web site and through regular progress reports as well as the annual conference.

It is important to remember that none of this is set in stone – Kent will continue to change and new challenges will present themselves. Through regular reviews and monitoring, the Kent Partnership will endeavour to adapt and respond to any changes and so improve the quality of life for people in Kent.

**Further information and contact details**

If you would like to find out more please contact

Kent Partnership Director, Kent County Council on 01622 224022

Head of Community Planning, Kent County Council on 01622 696201

Web address -

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