



Future Jobs Fund

Building strong foundations & long lasting experiences

Review of Delivery of Future Jobs fund by Kent
County Council

FJF: Supporting people back to work

A DWP funded initiative

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Introduction

This report will provide a background to the development and provision of the Future Jobs Fund (FJF) project, which was delivered by Kent County Council's Supporting Independence Programme – FJF team, funding was provided by Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), and to show the key points of learning that came from the successful completion of the project.

FJF ran from October 2009 to March 2011 around Kent, and delivered a range of different roles to support people who were long term unemployed back to employment. The range of roles available varied across the county and were dependant on the local community.

Key outcomes from FJF project include:

- 890 into paid employment
- Potential save to the public purse from benefits saved
- Supporting the young people of Kent into work
- New approach
- Positive work experience
- Valuable work reference

Background

The 2009 Budget announced a guaranteed offer of a job, work-focused training, or meaningful activity to all 18 to 24 year olds before they reach the 12 month stage of their claim to Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA).

The Young Person Guarantee was to be available from early 2010 but the government wanted to get it up and running as soon as possible – with some places starting as early as October 2009 through the Future Jobs Fund.

As well as a new job through the Future Jobs Fund, the guarantee will also consist of,

- support to take an existing job in a key employment sector – DWP intend to offer up to 100,000 places with funding for sector-specific training, recruitment subsidies and training on the job
- a work-focused training place, lasting up to six months, with providers incentivised to secure job entries
- a place on a Community Task Force, which will be contracted provision focused on improving individuals' employability and delivering real help in local communities.

The Minimum Criteria for the Future Jobs Fund to be able to claim grant monies per role would be.

- Role has to be for at least six months
- Minimum of 25+ hours per week
- Minimum Wage
- Had to be a new role
- Have to be unemployed and been claiming for nearly 12 months(26 to 50 weeks)
- Age of client to be between 18 to 24 (or from unemployment hotspot)
- A benefit to the community

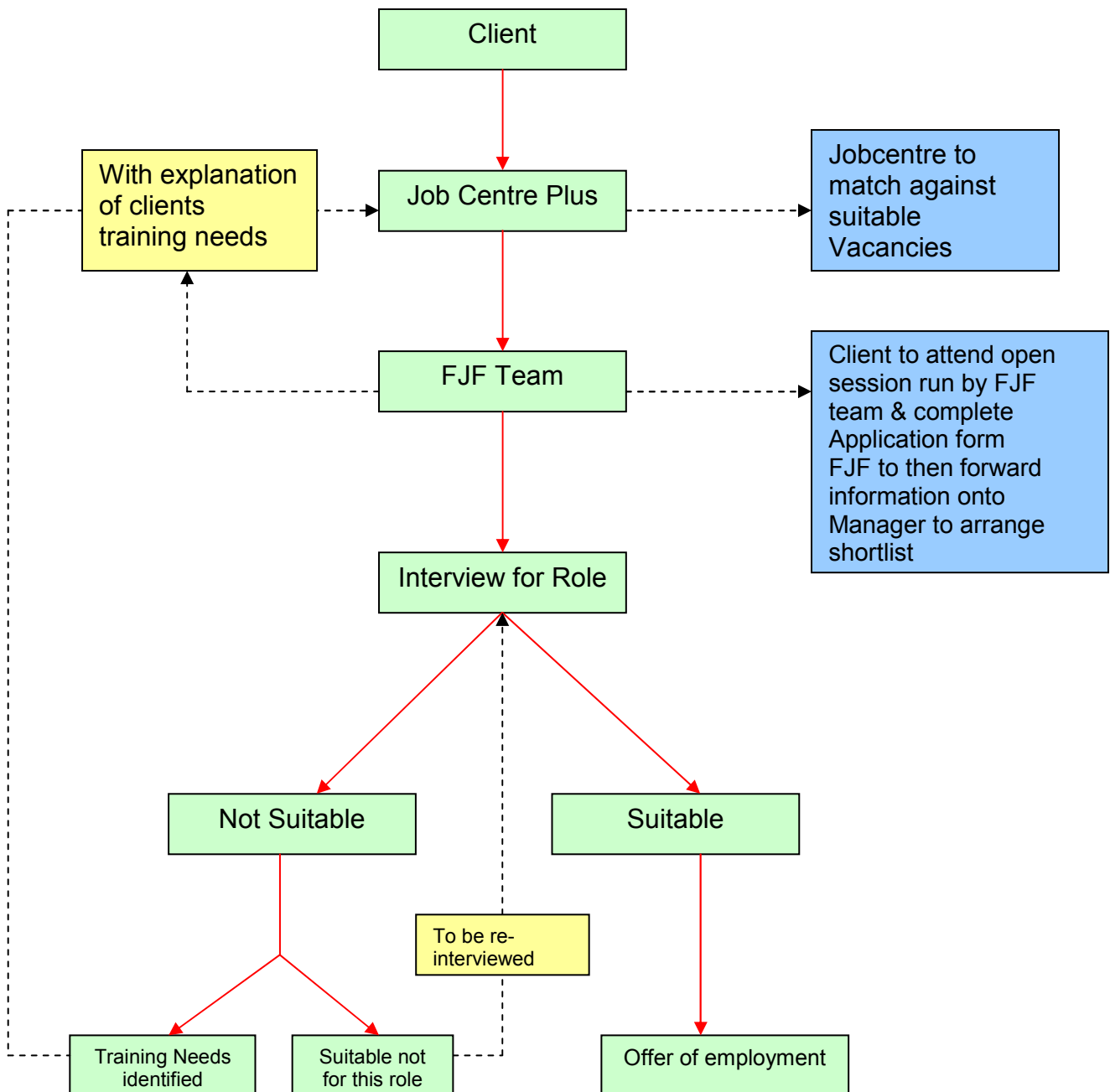
In Kent we had three major contract holders who all had a slightly different approach. Kent County Council (Backing Kent Jobs) successfully bid to provide 890 jobs across Kent within the public, private and third sector within the period Oct '09 – April'11. The initial 6 month contract from DWP had a profiled target of 250 jobs. The other contract holders Thanet Works offered 119 roles within Thanet and Gateway Knowledge Alliance to provide 614 roles across North West Kent, Medway and Swale.

FJF was seen as an opportunity to extend the work already carried out by our Supporting Independence Programme (SIP) which is currently involved in managing our apprenticeship programme. SIP is a catalyst for innovation. It seeks to challenge prevailing wisdom and silo mentality to pull together effective solutions which fit the needs of the people of Kent; rather than those of any one partner organisation. To enable maximum outcome the team which was set up to manage the fund had over 15 year's experience of working on various Government schemes helping people back to work.

Delivery of programme

KCC successfully obtain a contract with the DWP to deliver FJF across parts of Kent, we had bid for funding to provide 1000 jobs, but this was changed to 890 jobs. It was agreed to provide 640 roles within KCC and 250 in partner organisations. We created our delivery model which is shown below:

A team of 3 staff and at least 2 FJF trainees were required to run the programme and to be managed by Supporting Independence member of staff. The budget to run this team will be funded from the FJF fund with no direct cost to Kent County Council. The flow chart below shows how the team would deliver the programme.



At the beginning of the project we started by having set days in each Jobcentre (12 in total), we dealt with and due to demand and limited resources; we had to change our process slightly. We agreed to carry out telephone interviews rather than face to face meetings to help speed up the process and we also arranged set interview days to assist employers in recruitment of staff through FJF.

The funding was split over two contracts, the first for 360 starts and the second for 640 starts. The programme was due to start in October 2009, this did not really start until November 2009 due to various reasons i.e. referrals system was not in place, employers were not ready to take starts and other issues around resources.

Our first contract we started brightly with the Community Wardens taking 30 starts, but unfortunately not many other managers from KCC became involved despite many approaches through different mediums. We had to set about approaching other organisations and employers, which resulted in a delay in completing our first contract, we agreed to reduce our numbers from 360 to 250 and we achieved this by the end of May 2010.

In the second contract we continued the momentum gained from grant 1 and completed our contract in early March 2011. This was mainly due to the lessons learnt in our first contract. We changed our procedures to better suit the clients and JobCentre Plus to ensure a smoother operation and this meant we were able to meet our targets ahead of time.

We achieved our last start on the 25th of March 2011, to ensure consistent performance, we carried out monthly reviews with the client either in person or by phone and record the conversation to show process, record performance and deal with any issues, and we also carry out reviews with the employer.

The charts shown below are the age range of referrals and of clients who successfully found work and you will see we have worked with over 25 year olds from unemployment hotspots.

Age of people referred

Age	Female	Male
18	215	306
19	222	344
20	133	305
21	133	304
22	106	285
23	79	243
24	42	181
25+	18	54
Total	948	2022

Age of people employed through FJF

Age	Female	Male
18	48	83
19	55	106
20	36	98
21	34	91
22	38	90
23	26	73
24	18	58
25+	8	28
Total	263	627

Looking at the performance of FJF we have analysed how many people have gone onto further employment and how many completed the 6 month programme we have had 442 complete the full six months. This has shown that FJF has been a very successful programme in achieving successful positive outcomes and helped in developing skills.

So far we have helped 253 people into work and another 11 people into full time education to re-training.

Overall performance of FJF contract showing leavers (up until 28/07/11)

Leaver Destination	Total
Claimed Income Support	2
Claimed Jobseeker's Allowance	63
Found another (non-FJF) job	276
Gone Abroad	3
Gone to full-time education	11
Gone to prison	1
Not known	343
Grand Total	699

Leaver Destination	Total
Claimed Income Support	0.29%
Claimed Jobseeker's Allowance	9.01%
Found another (non-FJF) job	39.62%
Gone Abroad	0.43%
Gone to full-time education	1.57%
Gone to prison	0.14%
Not known	48.94%

Performance of Grant 1 showing all leavers

Leaver Destination	Total
Claimed Income Support	2
Claimed Jobseeker's Allowance	37
Found another (non-FJF) job	127
Gone Abroad	2
Gone to full-time education	9
Not known	73
Grand Total	250

Leaver Destination	Total
Claimed Income Support	0.80%
Claimed Jobseeker's Allowance	14.80%
Found another (non-FJF) job	50.80%
Gone Abroad	0.80%
Gone to full-time education	3.60%
Not known	29.20%

Performance of Grant 2 showing leavers (up until 28/07/11)

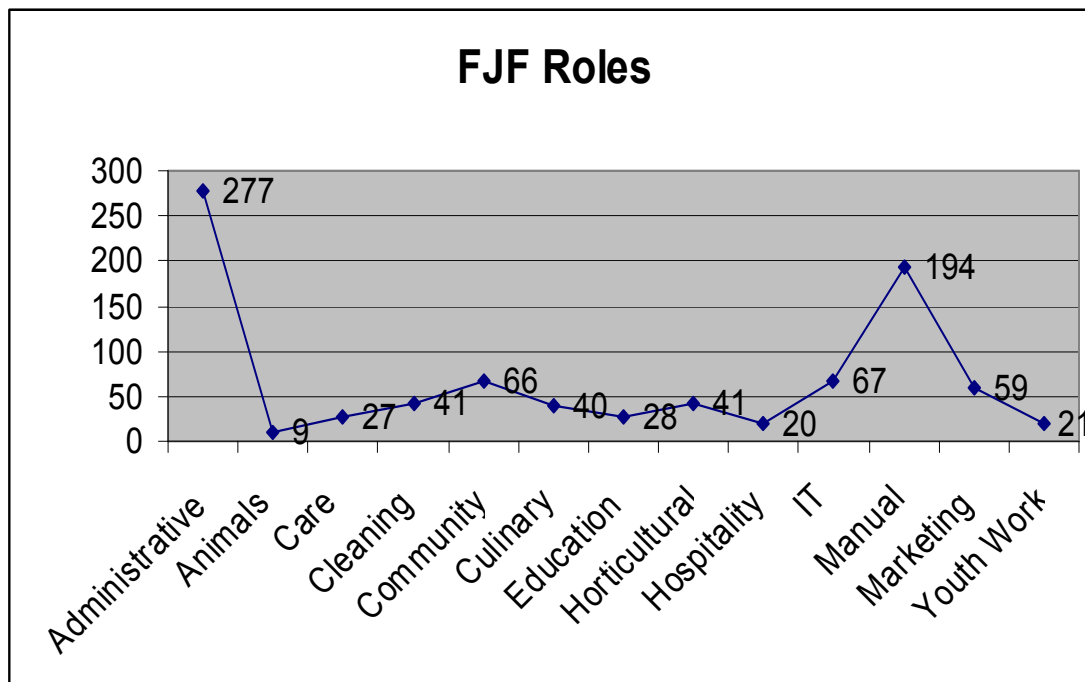
Leaver Destination	Total
Claimed Jobseeker's Allowance	26
Found another (non-FJF) job	149
Gone Abroad	1
Gone to full-time education	2
Gone to prison	1
Not known	270
Grand Total	449

Leaver Destination	Total
Claimed Jobseeker's Allowance	5.79%
Found another (non-FJF) job	33.18%
Gone Abroad	0.22%
Gone to full-time education	0.45%
Gone to prison	0.22%
Not known	60.13%

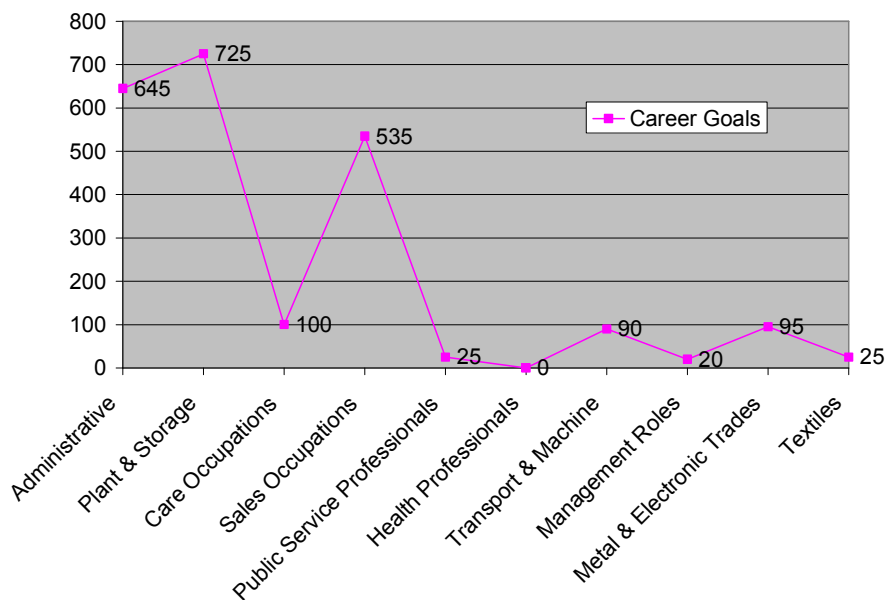
So far of the 276 who have gone into work 58% have been taken on by the company who employed them through FJF first and we have shown the breakdown per grant.

Grant number	Total
Grant 1	61.42%
Grant 2	55.32%
Grand Total	58.21%

The range of roles that we have been able to offer has been due to a very supportive group of employers and we have shown a breakdown of the jobs we have been able to offer. On writing our original bid Jobcentre Plus provided information on the career goals of claimants in the Kent region, which is very closely match to the roles that have been offered through FJF.



Breakdown of top 10 vacancies and career goal of 18-24 in Kent



Due to successfully helping young people back to work, we have looked at the possible benefit save. The figures below are based on a JSA claimant who is claiming Housing and Council Tax support. Based on KCC's FJF contract, the potential benefit saved by staying in employment for 6 months would be £3.2 million against £5.8 million allocated for the total grant spent. A potential save over a ten year period the benefits saved would be over £30 million if 50% remained in employment, we currently have 40% of all FJF clients into employment and this would potentially save £25 million of benefits.

	Contract Figures	Job retainment	
Average Weekly JSA payment	£52		
Average cost for Housing/ Council Tax Benefit	£87		
Total cost per week per claimant	£139		
Total cost per year per claimant	£7,216		
Total cost per year for 890 claimants	£6,422,276	40% <table border="1" data-bbox="1233 353 1466 398"><tr><td>£2,568,910</td></tr></table>	£2,568,910
£2,568,910			
Total cost over 10years for 890 claimants	£64,222,756	40% <table border="1" data-bbox="1233 398 1466 439"><tr><td>£25,689,104</td></tr></table>	£25,689,104
£25,689,104			

Summary

FJF was an opportunity to help the young people of Kent gain worthwhile experience of employment and supporting them into work. Unfortunately the funding for FJF has now stopped and the new work programme has recently started. In the current climate the roles available will possibly be limited and provision needs to be provided to help them ensure that the work programme is successful in Kent. The experience and expertise gained by the FJF team should not be lost, but should be utilised to support the work programme provision so that we do not create another generation of young unemployed people who will become another forgotten generation

Survey of Young People

A survey was carried out to help analyse the reasons why people were facing difficulty in finding employment. The sample consisted of 100 employees who were part of the Future Jobs Fund (FJF) scheme, aged 18 – 24. Before joining the FJF scheme 38% of the participants were unemployed for 2-6 months, with a significant 20% of people being unemployed for more than 12 months.

The participants expressed that they felt the main challenges facing them in finding employment were experience, education and travelling to work.

27% suggested that experience was their main barrier to employment, with another 18% expressing education as their main barrier. The participants were surveyed on their qualifications and experience as well as the difficulties that they had faced in finding employment. 20% had no qualifications of any nature (including GCSEs), with the most common skill (23%) being labouring experience. This indicates not only the value of qualifications as a route into employment, but would also show a possible lack of job opportunities for people with labouring experience. IT skills were also rare amongst the group, with only 10% having IT skills. This is a clear demonstration of the importance of IT skills in finding employment, 85% said that the skills they have learnt will be useful, with 55% happy to consider apprenticeships with less pay.

Mobility was another large issue with 16% denoting that they felt distance to work was their main barrier to employment, and 66% saying that they thought travel would cause a problem in finding employment. Of the 100 participants surveyed only 26 could drive, with almost 100% of those that could not drive wanting to learn. Those that wanted to learn noted that the main reason stopping them is funding the learning. 79% are happy to use public transport and 60% would be willing to travel 2-5 miles, with a further 30% prepared to travel further.

From the views put forward by the participants of the survey the main barriers to employment are in the areas of experience and education, with the majority noting this as their major difficulty when trying to find employment. With such a vast majority being unemployed for long periods of time before joining the FJF scheme and with a significant proportion having little or no qualifications, the results indicate that this is the main area that needs to be addressed. With 85% saying that the skills gained will be useful to them and almost everyone (91%) confident that the scheme has been helpful both personally and professionally, the scheme looks promising to break the boundaries which have been expressed as fundamentally the most challenging when trying to find employment.

The survey confirms that all participants have found the scheme to be a very useful tool in helping them find work and is unlike in other programme that has been developed in the welfare agenda.

Survey of FJF Employers

We have carried out a survey with the majority of the businesses who became involved in the FJF scheme. A survey was carried out to help analyse the reasons why the business became involved with the scheme and in the current climate what requirements they would need to be met to form part of any new welfare programmes.

The businesses who were involved in the scheme expressed that they became involved due to a variety of reasons, these included partnership working with KCC, helping to grow their business whilst helping the local community, meeting part of their mission statement as a social enterprise to help jobseekers back to work, finally one authority said that “the local strategic partnership and council needed to address the issue of rising unemployment and FJF was the perfect opportunity.”

All employers were asked if they did not have the funding would they have been involved with the programme. They all stated without the support financially they would not have been able to take on any FJF employees. Some of the views expressed in the survey stated that funding was a key factor. It helped expand the number of opportunities that could be offered. Without FJF, employers could not have afforded to take on new staff. Certainly without funding our partner organisations would not have been able to be involved.

From the views raised we asked about future involvement in Government welfare programmes most agreed the need for funding to help support the business, but also to help the employee i.e. support with transport cost and a longer time to help up skill them.

The survey was keen to understand whether the scheme was a positive experience and their views. The views expressed are that the programme has been very successful and was a fantastic scheme to get young people back to work. All surveyed agreed it had been a positive experience for their organisations.

Lessons from KCC Delivery

Our own views as the LAB was that FJF was a very positive experience not only being able to help young people back to work; but being able to help support local businesses and build positive relationships.

As a provider, Kent County Council is not an expert in all employment fields, nor can it provide all the opportunities on its own. We have worked in partnership with the local District and Borough Councils, building on existing partnerships and creating new ones where old ones did not exist., Ashford Borough Council, Canterbury City Council, Dover District Council, Maidstone Borough Council, Sevenoaks District Council and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council have all provided and filled opportunities through the Future Jobs Fund with Kent County Council.

Another strength of the scheme is the way in which we, Kent County Council administered our programme to provide support throughout to both the young person and business. On completion of an application, applicants are given an initial interview to ensure that they are aware of the role they have applied for, before being submitted for the job. The support then continues if they are unsuccessful, they either referred for another role or given feedback to help identify additional training needed to be able to found suitable work. On obtaining a suitable job through FJF, they are then given extra support through monthly reviews and job search training whilst on the programme. All our businesses are given support through-out the interview process and once they have taken employees on, they are provided with regular monthly contact to ensure any issues are dealt with immediately.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Future Jobs Fund has been a very positive and valuable experience not only for the young people, but also the employers in the scheme and the members of KCC who have been involved in the programme.

At the beginning most professionals stated that the scheme should have been longer than six months and as we come to the end of the scheme, we would agree a longer option would have had greater benefit and help more with finding work. The way forward is a scheme which incorporates the apprenticeship route and helps support the business financially in engaging with the long term unemployed, not only would we be able to up skill the local communities we would be able to regenerate the communities.

The FJF has been a very positive scheme for both the young people involved and the businesses who have engaged with them in so many ways. The clients have developed a variety of skills which they will be able to take to any future role. Employers have been able to engage with a client base that they have been wary off in the past due to assumptions made. We must use this opportunity to develop this further by engaging with them either through the apprenticeship route or future Government scheme, the only issue on the horizon is the lack of funding available to support local businesses that in the current financial climate have limited cash flow to work with the client base and may not engage again.

The referral of clients raised issues that would need to be addressed in future, including: not attending interviews; poor attitude; no work ethic; sickness record and not being job ready. In the future we need to have a pre work training to help create a work ethic.

We would ask that any other programmes have a longer timeframe to help the client and employers; to ensure quality of service, the programme being fit for purpose and to help create a training programme that would help up skill the client and support businesses to grow in the future.

As we begin to close down FJF, the programme has had a positive experience on the staff involved, the young people who gained valuable experience and businesses that took the opportunity to join the programme.

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I would like to thank to the following teams and organisations that supported the Future Jobs Fund project at various stages throughout the delivery. This list also demonstrates the range of organisations that the FJF team collaborated with over the project's duration.

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- Animate and Create
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- Avante Care & Support
- Blackthorn Trust Borg Knight
- Brogdale Collections
- Canterbury City Council
- Canterbury High School
- Canterbury Oast Trust
- Channel Chamber of Commerce
- Citizens Advice Maidstone
- DGSM Your Choice
- Direct 2 Communications
- Dr Mahmud, Pembury Hospital
- DWP
- Friday People
- FTSE 2010
- Future Creative
- Hadlow College
- HFT
- High Meadow
- Ideal Websites
- In-Touch
- Joining Hands Kent
- Architecture Centre Kent
- Childrens Fund Network
- Kent County Council
- Kent Enterprise Trust
- Lion Insulation
- Locate In Kent
- Loop Computer Reuse
- Maidstone Borough Council
- Maidstone Day Centre
- Maidstone Museum
- MCCCH Society
- Meteor
- MH Community Care
- Mid Kent College
- Museum of Kent Life
- NRG Plumbing
- Oriac House Learner Centre
- Parents Consortium
- Porchlight
- Princes Golf Club
- Promotions House
- Romney Resource 2000
- Sencio Community Leisure
- SES Training
- Sevenoaks District Council
- Signs and Imaging
- St Paul's Community Trust
- Stag Theatre
- Surf Marketing
- Sutton Valence Primary School
- Thanet Community Development Trust
- Thanet Voluntary Community Sector Forum
- The Bay Trust
- Town & Country Cleaners
- Town & Country Housing
- Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
- Vali Engineering
- Vista Leisure
- Want To Learn
- West Kent Housing Authority
- West Kent Primary Care Trust
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- Whitstable Castle
- Wild Wood
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