

## Communities Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee Background paper for Item B6 | 16 September 2010.

This paper summarises the Communities Directorate consultation and involvement activities, as set out in the Unit Business Plans (2009/10).

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### 1 Influencing strategy and policy development

The Communities Directorate ran a number of consultation and involvement programmes last year to help shape strategy and policy developments.

1.1 **Cultural Strategy:** The stakeholder consultation for the Kent Cultural Strategy was undertaken primarily with a group of selected delegates who attended three Cultural Summits over the course of a year. These Delegates were selected to reflect the range of partners who the strategy is aimed at – i.e. those with the strategic authority to influence decision making. The second Summit took place in September 2009 and introduced areas for debate and feedback. Discussion was captured through notes taken at facilitated breakout groups, Twitter social media and broader feedback forms for those wishing to provide more considered feedback after the event. The text of some “tweets” was used to influence the first draft of the Cultural Strategy. For example, “Kent should be known for the cultivation of new talent and creativity as well as historical relevance.” and “Build on Kent’s cultural and heritage strengths. Use cultural geographic hotspots and key themes. Celebrate Creativity”.

1.2 At the third Summit (April 2010) the draft strategy was presented to delegates who debated the content, led by key cultural leaders. One of the participants proposed altering “Intention 2” of the draft to a commitment to stewardship (and not custodianship). The change was supported by all delegates and adopted. Delegates were then given an online consultation tool to feedback in detail. Some feedback was used verbatim in the strategy document. The action plan is to remain a live e-document to allow for an ongoing consultation with partners on the delivery of the strategy.



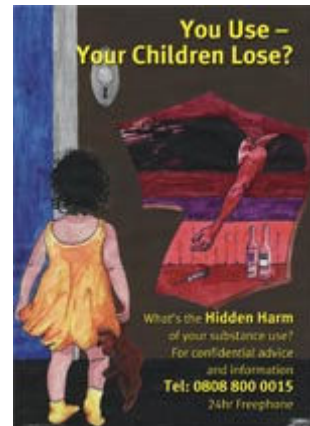
1.3 **Kent Alcohol Strategy:** The Kent Action on Alcohol Steering Group developed an Alcohol Strategy for Kent (2010-13) in consultation with a broad range of stakeholders and interest groups. A partnership approach was adopted in creating the strategy, as such an approach was considered essential for an effective response to alcohol. The strategy built on the Report of Kent County Council’s (KCC) Select Committee on Alcohol Misuse<sup>1</sup>, which was developed around an

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<sup>1</sup> *Alcohol Misuse Select Committee Report*, March 2008, Kent County Council

extensive consultation with key stakeholders including service user representation, local councils, service providers and national experts.

- 1.4 **Hidden Harm:** As part of the development of this strategy, a user-led Hidden Harm Focus Group was established which has informed the cross-organisational Hidden Harm strategy. The strategy itself also sets, as a priority for action: “Service user involvement in the implementation of the Hidden Harm strategy and to involvement of children, parents and families in the commissioning system”<sup>2</sup>.
- 1.5 The Kent Drug and Alcohol Action Team’s Hidden Harm Focus Group involves people who have been affected by substance misuse. Their aim is to raise awareness amongst service users, health professionals, social services and the criminal justice system of the harms to children and young people caused by a parent’s substance misuse. To help achieve this they developed and implemented a public information campaign: “You Use – Your Children Lose?” It aims to encourage parents to question the effect of their substance misuse on their children.
- 1.6 Three posters were developed. Two depict hard-hitting images, which will be displayed where parents have already identified their misuse. The third depicts an iceberg, showing how the effects on children are largely hidden from view, and is for display in general health and community settings. The group is planning to continue this project by producing information leaflets and hosting workshops aimed at both service users and professionals to champion the Hidden Harm agenda.
- 1.7 **Supporting People five year strategy:** To ensure that the strategy is fit for purpose the team consulted with all statutory partners to gain a thorough understanding of their priorities. Consultations employed a range of mechanisms:
  - Face to face meetings with officers and elected members of all districts / boroughs, and representatives of Kent Adult Social Services, PCTs in east and west Kent and 26 providers
  - 14 focus groups involving 72 service users
  - Electronic surveys submitted by 250 service users and 6 providers
  - Workshop for members of the Commissioning Body
  - Consultation conference for members of the Commissioning Body, Core Strategy Development Group, Executive Board of Providers, and service user panel.
- 1.8 The consultation process involved asking some critical questions about the services, the way the programme had been shaped and the potential

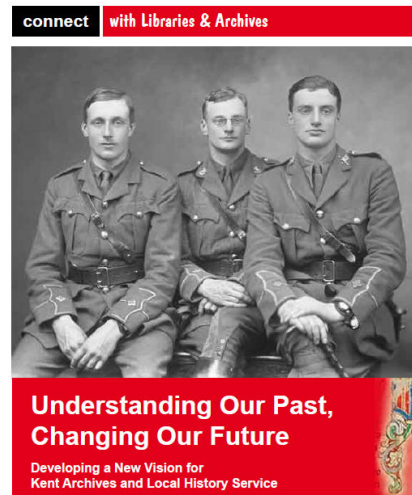


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<sup>2</sup> *Hidden Harms Strategy for Kent 2010-13*, June 2010, Kent County Council, page 10

challenges for the future. A Service User Day took place at the end of 2009. Through their own experiences panel members were able to help identify ways that the programme can be improved and gave valuable insight into how effective the support they have received has been. The material gained through all these processes and activities were analysed and fed into the strategy development process. Details of views and suggestions provided were included in the strategy document as an Appendix.

1.9 **Archives.** The consultation centred on a key document produced for the purpose called '*Understanding Our Past, Changing Our Future*'. This document highlighted the potential of the service to work in new and different ways with different audiences. Individuals, customers and groups were engaged at meetings, promotional events, visits, tours and talks and questionnaires and comment cards were also used.



1.10 Information and comments from the consultation has been used to inform the archive and local history strategy and the new Kent History and Library Centre, especially in relation to collections, access, digitisation, partnerships and outreach. It is also informing the layout and design of the new centre. A key theme from the consultation was more access to historic material from the collections locally. This is already being worked on, by scanning and copying historic documents and making them available to local groups, in local libraries and on the internet.

1.11 Consultees (who gave their contact details) are being kept up to date on the progress of the strategic plan and this will continue once the development plan is in place and underway. This is being done through the website, the Herald Newsletter, press releases and appearances in the media, and includes regular updates on progress with the Kent Library and History Centre.

1.12 The **Kent Approach to Reading and Literacy:** this strategy aims to engage the whole community and will help underpin the work of schools, Kent's Regeneration Framework and the Children and Young People's Plan.

1.13 A survey in Kent, disseminated by the Kent Partnership and Children's Trust, highlighted some of the barriers to success which will help to target future action. These barriers include:

- lack of confidence of parents and practitioners around knowing what steps they could take to access help and support for literacy
- attitudes of staff in some sectors which come into contact with adults with low literacy skills, including 'not my responsibility'

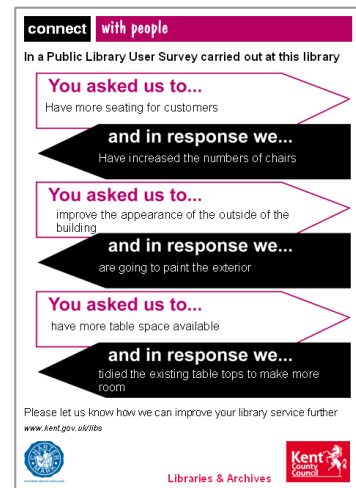
- a lack of effective signposting and referral
- 1.14 The Kent Approach has been developed in partnership and through consultation with a wide range of external organisations and across the County Council. These include KCC Cabinet, COG/CMT, Communities and CFE Learning and Skills POSCs, Local Boards, Kent Partnership, Kent Employment and Skills Board, Kent Community Development Managers Group, Kent Housing Officers Group, Aimhigher (a consortium of Kent and Medways' Universities and schools), Amicus Horizon Housing Association, Canterbury Christchurch University, Connexions, Jobcentre Plus, Kent Probation Service, NHS West Kent, and Volunteer Reading Help. These have all helped to inform the priorities and target audiences for the Kent Approach.
- 1.15 Partners have also developed and tested a number of approaches including many which involve the public. These include Reading Buddies in schools, volunteers who work with Children's Centres to deliver the Doorstep Library to pre-school children, the involvement of housing tenants to get more families reading, adults with learning disabilities running reading events, young people promoting books to their peers, Volunteer Reading Help volunteers, Libraries and ArchivesTime2Give volunteers, and the involvement of therapy dogs and their volunteer owners to inspire children to improve their skills. Employee Volunteering is currently working with CFE's Reading Recovery team to develop a KCC Reading Buddies scheme.
- 1.16 **Sport, Leisure and Olympics planning.** The Directorate's Sport, Leisure and Olympics Service worked closely with partners and stakeholders, through established and well-maintained networks, to make sure its business plan fully reflected their priorities and needs, and avoided duplication of work across the county. Throughout the year, staff within the Sport, Leisure & Olympics Service supported and attended a wide range of networks and groups involved in sport and Olympic / Paralympic work in the county, regionally and in some cases nationally. Locally, this included Kent Association of Leisure & Cultural Officers, Kent Association of Sports Development Officers, Kent School Sport Networks, County Governing Body of Sport Networks, Physical Activity and Health Networks and the 8 sectoral task groups related to the Olympic and Paralympic work.
- 1.17 Regular contact with groups and organisations at local, regional and national level enables the service to be aware of developments in policy as well as gaining invaluable ongoing feedback on partner requirements. In September 2009, staff in the service began to identify potential future priority areas of work for the following year (2010-11) at a Planning Day, based on the knowledge gained through these networks. Between October and December 2009, Senior Managers then held a series of individual meetings with district councils (as these are key partners). This enabled the Service to "profile" each of the districts and to discuss

both their priorities and the future priorities that the Service had identified.

- 1.18 Districts said that the priorities the Service had identified were appropriate and that they complemented and supported their own local priorities, whilst not duplicating work. This enabled the service to develop the business plan for 2010-11 with confidence and the draft Plan was shared with the Policy Team and Senior Managers and the Cabinet Member for Communities as part of the Business Planning process. The individual district meetings on the overall direction of work were felt to be extremely valuable by the district councils and it has been decided that these should take place on an annual basis at the same time of year to assist both ourselves and the Districts to understand each other's priorities and to review the district "profiles".

## 2 Influencing delivery and planning of “universal” services

- 2.1 **Libraries and Archives** carried out its annual public satisfaction survey across 11 libraries - Ashford, Birchington, Hadlow, Marling Cross, Ramsgate, Sevenoaks, Sheerness, Swanley, Teynham, Tenterden and Tonbridge.
- 2.2 The questionnaire asked customers (split into two groups – adults and children/young people) about overall service, the quality and condition of the books, information services, access to the library and the condition of the libraries both externally and internally.
- 2.3 Each of the district teams has a localised action plan where improvements and changes to service points are being carried out or that have now been completed. These include things like changes to the layout and counter, additional cushions for the children's library, book exchanges at various libraries and improvements to ICT facilities.
- 2.4 All of the information has been fed back to customers using "you said....we did..." posters which are displayed in the libraries. Some of this information is also posted onto the Kent Libraries Service's [kent.gov.uk](http://kent.gov.uk) web pages.
- 2.5 The annual **Ask a Kent Librarian** survey evaluates user satisfaction with the service. A 25% random sample of the customers who used the service was surveyed. The survey is conducted using a questionnaire



which is emailed, posted or gone through over the phone (depending on how the enquirer contacted us in the first place).

2.6 Looking at results over several years, general satisfaction with the service is fairly stable and at a consistently high level. Results, as well as being shared with senior managers are also sent to district managers / other relevant staff and then published on the KCC website.

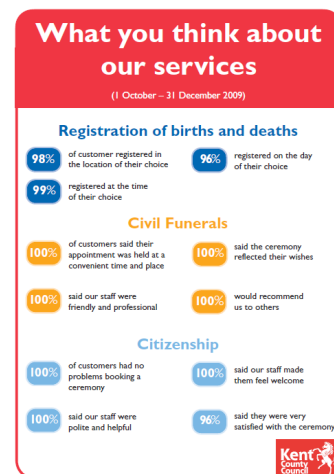
2.7 A slow but steady decrease in satisfaction with the timeliness of responses (though still high at around 90%) was identified. The service's customer base was much smaller 5 years ago and enquiries could be dealt with much faster. The drop reflects the fact that the team is now dealing with enquiries coming in from 2 service points (A Kent Librarian and The Information Point) and with a higher level of demand, especially for information services for businesses since it has been provided for free to local companies. To address this trend, staffing patterns have been adapted to better meet demand.

2.8 **Library open access and postal loan customer surveys:**

Customer satisfaction and general feedback was sought through surveys to help with planning stock purchases and to help define the direction of the service. A percentage of the customers were surveyed over the phone and sometimes spoken with in person if staff were visiting them for any reason. Results were fed back to the Libraries and Archives business support team and to the senior management team. Where recommendations arose for a particular team, such as our transport team, that was fed back to them directly. Information about stock choices is also given direct to publishers of audio books and large print books to help inform them as to future choices of published materials. Each year a targeted customer newsletter is produced and this includes information about what the service did in response to the information gathered through the surveys. The next newsletter is due in autumn 2010.

2.9 **Registrations and ceremonies** regularly collect satisfaction survey data from customers about the services they receive. Results are routinely shared with their senior management team. The results of the surveys have influenced several aspects of the Units operations, as well as confirming a consistently high level of customer satisfaction. Posters showing quarterly results are displayed in waiting areas.

2.10 Surveys were posted to a selection of customers who married or had a civil partnership with the Registration Service in 2009. Overall the results of this survey were very encouraging and a full report was submitted to the Strategic and Operational Leadership Teams. Various decisions have been made as a result of the consultation. For example, one major



event was cut from the annual schedule and the service is looking at amalgamating several publications. Surveys provided in the packs given to the new citizens at their citizenship ceremonies gave extremely positive responses with few (if any) negative comments.

- 2.11 **Community Learning and Skills (CLS):** Because of the nature of its business, Community Learning and Skills (formerly Kent Adult Education and KEY services) is increasingly developing a market research approach. Successfully operating in a competitive market place, while still having clear social drivers underpinning its activities are the twin goals.
- 2.12 Their work led the Ofsted inspectors to note in their recent report that, *“Managers and teachers listen to what learners have to say about specific courses and use this to make appropriate changes”* and *“Kent Community Learning and Skills offers an extensive range of courses responding well to the needs of local communities”*<sup>3</sup>.
- 2.13 A **CLS Learner Involvement Strategy** was introduced last year to foster and promote a culture of learner involvement throughout CLS. This is being achieved by supporting learners to be more actively involved in: teaching and learning, the wider CLS community and quality improvement procedures. Clear information on the findings and subsequent actions taken in response is being provided.
- 2.14 The first **CLS Learner Forum** was launched at the end of 2009 using paper and online surveys as well as informal focus groups (available if learners stated that this type of learner involvement was preferred to completing surveys). Top-up courses were rated highly and there was some interest in creating/attending own class or interest group (Learning Revolution Agenda). There is a high level of returners to the service which emphasises the need to maintain high levels of learner satisfaction to retain students. Learner Forum information was fed back to Programme Managers and district-specific feedback was fed back to District Staff.
- 2.15 The **Kent Youth Service** supports and encourages young people to meet together in a secure environment, to have fun and to form friendships. “Engagement” is inherent in youth work and there are daily conversations between Youth Officers and young people about activities available through projects and centres. However, a number of specific consultation and involvement activities also took place to gain opinions and understanding on a range of specific subjects.
- 2.16 Continual improvement of the Youth Service’s programmes and services takes place through the direct involvement of young people at a local level in the design, delivery and evaluation of project provision - this is

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<sup>3</sup> (Kent Community Learning and Skills Inspection Report, Ofsted, June 2010)

carried out in a wide variety of ways dependant on the client groups and nature of provision. As a result of this programmes of delivery are constantly changing and evolving.

- 2.17 The **Youth Service’s “non-user survey”** used a short questionnaire asking (over 600) young people across Kent about why they do not take part in Youth Service positive activities. Rates of participation in positive activities found in our survey corresponded well with TellUs 4 at around 63%. The biggest barriers to participation were a lack of interest and being too busy with education or part-time work. Results were published and distributed to Youth Service managers and then taken to area meetings to produce some specific, localised actions. A report was also distributed to partners via the Youth Advisory Groups who were asked to propose specific local responses as well. Action plans from these responses are currently being drawn up.
- 2.18 The **Youth Service’s Peer Inspection programme** covered the Ashford and Shepway areas in January – February 2010. Results were fed back to Area Teams and partners in a number of workshops. The report highlighted some specific areas for development such as an increased focus on Curriculum Delivery and improved planning and evaluation. The inspection involved a team of Youth Service staff from around the county along with some young people visiting and assessing the range of provision across the area and producing an Ofsted style report. Several specific pieces of work have taken place as a result of this work. For example family sports days focused on encouraging young people from the Nepalese community to engage with provision in Ashford have been very successful.
- 2.19 A small group of young people (known as the **Youth Service Sub Group**) from across the county met together on several occasions to consult on the review of Kent Youth Service and the general service planning and direction.
- 2.20 The **Kent Youth County Council (KYCC)** gives young people the opportunity to have their say on important issues and to get involved in making a difference to the lives of young residents. Members play a vital part in helping KCC politicians and staff understand youth issues and concerns. In 2009, the Kent Youth County Council elections saw 106 candidates standing and 170 schools, projects and town centres registering as polling stations. A total of 27,473 votes were cast and the young people elected were announced at the Results Day, at Session House, County Hall on Saturday 28 November.
- 2.21 Examples of the Kent Youth County Council activity include:
  - 2.21.1 Positive Activities Select Committee - KYCC members joined the county councillors in the chamber to discuss and advise on the provision of activities from young people around Kent.

2.21.2 The Kent Cultural Summit invited KYCC to share and exchange views on the strengths and needs of culture in the county, as well as agree on the process of working with other agencies.

2.21.3 Intergenerational Cohesion Seminar with 30 EU commissioners and members of the European parliament, KCC officers and researchers from the University of Kent. KYCC were invited to discuss the relationships between young and older people and how they can be developed.

- 2.22 The **Youth Opportunities Fund and Youth Capital Fund** have supported young people's engagement in positive activities since 2008. Last year (2009/10) nearly £1.4 million was awarded by young people to their peers across Kent. Panels of young people decide which projects get money from the funds. They have supported projects like the Maidstone Peace One Day Festival, the Skatepark refurbishment in Swanley and the East Kent Young Beekeepers' Project.
- 2.23 **Kent Trading Standards** continued to run regular satisfaction surveys with both consumers and businesses. Last year (2009/10) businesses were largely complimentary about its services though some were unhappy about unannounced visits.
- 2.24 Consumers said their top priorities are around: ensuring that traders don't persistently deny consumers' rights, scams and doorstep criminals. Dissatisfaction amongst consumers arises mainly because Trading Standards adopts an "intelligence led" approach to focus resources and so does not investigate each individual consumer problem reported to it. Such results have influenced the Trading Standards approach to communications which is now considering more effective ways to get across the message that it does use the complaints it receives to inform its "intelligence led" approach towards targetting campaigns and enforcement activity.
- 2.25 The service's **Buy With Confidence** scheme achieved a very high satisfaction level (98% overall) with the vast majority of customers very happy with the service received from traders in the scheme. Customers have also been recommending traders for inclusion onto the scheme (based on their own good experiences) and several new Members have joined the scheme as a result.
- 2.26 Trading standards also ran an **underage purchases survey** to find out how easy or difficult it is for underage young people to buy age-restricted products such as alcohol or cigarettes and where they get them from. The results suggested that most underage young people buy their alcohol & cigarettes through older friends and family members, but the survey was not representative so future activity will be done via connexions rather than volunteer schools.
- 2.27 Trading Standards also tested satisfaction levels with its **Alerts service** (email messages to community group representatives) to help identify

areas where improvements could be made. A third of recipients reported feedback about the messages indicating 100% consider the messages useful; 96% say messages informative. Warnings about scams and doorstep criminals considered most useful. Majority of messages passed on to others. Some improvements in layout and format were identified and current messages are now also published in full on the Kent Trading Standards website.

### **3 Influencing delivery and planning of targeted support services**

- 3.1 **Substance misuse services:** The Kent Drug and Alcohol Action Team (KDAAT) runs two permanent expert groups to bring together experience and opinions from both “sides” of the treatment system. Those receiving treatment are represented by the Service User Expert Panel. Those working in substance misuse services in Kent contribute to the Service Provider Expert Group. These two groups ensure that the Operations Team is able to make informed decisions on current issues and on the shape of future services.
- 3.2 The **Service User Expert Panel** meets on a monthly basis and membership of the group is by nomination or invitation in order to maintain an even balance of service users from across Kent and the different service providers. KDAAT staff are present and consult the group on different aspects of their work. External organisations, such as Job Centre Plus, often join the group to discuss areas of their operations. The group acts as a reference panel, provides independent views and feedback on local substance misuse issues.
- 3.3 Following a presentation at a Panel meeting by a Job Centre Plus adviser, the group was able to suggest more effective places where Job Centre Plus information could be displayed e.g. substance misuse agencies, supermarkets and amongst service user groups.
- 3.4 At that same meeting, the Job Centre Plus (JCP) adviser received a request from panel members that JCP keep figures on all substance misusers they refer into treatment. JCP are looking into this as they currently only record referrals of those with crack or heroin drug problems.
- 3.5 The Panel’s members also advised on the redevelopment of KDAAT's website. Their input influenced the information available on the site (which went live in July 2010), including:
  - where to find help should be easy to find - only 3 clicks away - services to be listed in town order
  - links to the service centres' websites where the individual could click on a map and directions on how to get there plus transport links

- information needs to be blunt - not pink and fluffy
- the addition of a few testimonies of people who have sought help would be encouraging for people to read.

Service user experts visited Gateways in March and provided feedback on the service from a KDAAT service user perspective.

3.6 The Kent Drug and Alcohol Action Team **Needs Assessment** 2009/10 was completed in November 2009 and was presented for consultation and feedback to:

- KDAAT's Treatment Provider Expert Group
- KDAAT's Service User Expert Panel
- the Adult Joint Commissioning Group (including representatives from local health service commissioners, probation, police, jobcentre plus)
- the KDAAT Board

The needs assessment informed the development of the KDAAT Partnership's 2010/11 Adult Treatment Plan which was also presented to the above groups.

3.7 KDAAT also ran **several programmes to involve young people** in the development of services. These activities were focused on particular themes including ADHD, needs of families and kin carers, and risk-taking behaviours. All provided a deeper understanding of perceptions and factors affecting young people affected by substance misuse and their families.

3.8 **Housing-related support.** The Supporting People team have actively encouraged service users to really get involved in helping to develop the Supporting People services and people who use or have used the services have offered help and advice in a number of ways including, for example:

- improving information leaflets,
- writing policies on reimbursing expenses to service users,
- designing the Support Services Directory,
- helping us to decide what services might be needed in the future.

3.9 There is also a **Service User Panel** which is made up of people who are currently receiving support and who also attend one of their own support provider involvement groups. Members of the panel, attend meetings every 6 weeks for a maximum of 1 year. Each meeting has an agenda with a specific topic area and members get involved in a range of issues such as designing and amending policies; conference planning and recently the Panel compiled the Supporting People Service User Charter.

- 3.10 The Supporting Independence Programme (SIP) and KASS's Kent Sensory Services team identified a gap in information for and about **sensory impaired people** living in Kent and a conference was held to promote existing services, gain the views of Kent residents and take forward a number of actions from the conference. An event planning group was established involving 2 blind and 3 deaf clients who met on a monthly basis. The conference format involved a panel question and answer session in the morning, a market place area with a variety of organisations demonstrating their products and round table discussions so all delegates could raise their concerns in smaller groups.
- 3.11 Following the panel session and round table discussions feedback was collated into a detailed report. The major issues identified were:
- Provision of services and support whilst attending a doctors appointment or receiving treatment in hospital. Staff are not always aware that the patient is deaf or sight impaired, this in turn can result in patients not understanding the treatment they need to receive or not knowing their food has been brought to their bedside.
  - Public transport information, although lots of bus stops and train stations now have automated display boards or loud speakers announcing the next stop etc, this is not currently countywide so improvements need to be made.
  - What benefit's sensory impaired people are entitled to and the limits to personal budgets for purchasing specialist equipment, which is often life changing.
  - Advertising boards ("A" frames) obstructing many of the pavements in towns across Kent.
- 3.12 This report is still in the development stages and once finalised will be shared with senior managers in the Sensory Services/KASS and CMY directorates, in order to see how outcomes can be taken forward and actions taken to resolve the issues raised by Kent residents. It is also planned to share this report with all the delegates who attended the conference, and many wished the conference to be an annual event. A debrief meeting was held with the clients who were part of the planning group prior to the conference, to gauge how they felt the conference went and if there were any areas which could be improved upon in the future.
- 3.13 **Apprenticeships:** Supporting Independence Programme business and employer events were held to promote business involvement with apprenticeship schemes, in particular, and to find out more about what information businesses would want; what would incentivise them to engage in the scheme and what support they might need for example in setting down policies and strategies within their own organisations. This consultation covered private sector organisations, non-KCC public sector organisations and Kent schools.

- 3.14 A number of activities were run to gain the views and opinions of businesses and employers to help shape the Kent Apprenticeships programme. These included:
- a number of breakfast meetings including the Thanet Business network, various chamber events and the 20/20 business breakfast.
  - an Apprenticeship workshop for the public sector in July 2009
  - an employer breakfast in February 2010 during National Apprenticeship week
  - various exhibitions promoting Kent Apprenticeships
  - 1:1 meetings with schools and other public sector organisations
- 3.15 Feedback was generally positive with delegates saying that they had found the information sessions useful and would consider taking on an apprentice. The information gathered was shared with strategic partners, The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) and The Kent Association of Training Organisations (KATO). The information has shown that it is increasingly important to promote the benefits of Apprenticeship to employers.
- 3.16 Following the relatively low attendance at these meetings and briefings (largely due to work conflicts and traffic problems) the service has responded by getting out on the road with an “Apprenticeships Bus” and also acted on other requests for additional information. Some were also assigned a training provider to meet with them on a 1:1 basis and support them in recruiting an apprentice.
- 3.17 **Future Jobs Fund:** Future Jobs fund (FJF) engaged with local business to support the development of employment opportunities through the fund. Different types of business were approached and FJF was explained to them and interested in joining the scheme was established. Businesses have shown their interest by signing a service level agreement to provide an employment opportunity - 64 companies signed up generating 758 job opportunities.
- 3.18 Following meetings with managers and businesses, the way starts are recorded have been changed to look at wider issues. DWP only wanted to know starts and leavers; but this was amended to show *where* a leaver has gone i.e. to go back to Job Centre Plus, into employment, going into education & other. Working with Job Centre Plus the referral process was changed to improve efficiency and respond to the needs of clients to improve turn around time.
- 3.19 **Resettlement of Young Offenders:** Building on the participation work it carried out in 2008/09, the Youth Offending Service held a workshop in May 2009 to identify a best practice model for resettlement provision. The workshop, held between YOT staff and Cookham YOI staff explored some of the recommendations made in the report of the original resettlement study. This then subsequently led to a bid being made to

the Youth Justice Board for funding for an Integrated Resettlement Service.

- 3.20 **Learners with disabilities:** Adults with learning disabilities were involved in developing a short version of the Adult Education Service's Disability statement because some student information was too wordy and not easy for everyone to understand - especially those with low literacy skills. Learners who attended Independent Living Skills courses wrote the text and chose the graphics for a statement. This document is now available in all centres and on our website. They have also helped to develop a short version of our Student Charter and this will be available later this year.
- 3.21 **KEY Training:** Satisfaction surveys were completed during 09/10 (as part of KEY Training's self assessment process). Quality Improvement Plans were completed as a result of the self assessment process so responses that required action would be included in the overall actions in this plan. Accessibility surveys of KEY Training premises were undertaken at quarterly intervals with the full annual surveys, to include detailed Disability Discrimination Act checks to be completed in October 2010.
- 3.22 **Kent Youth Theatre Network:** The county wide Network met regularly and is an important mechanism for learning about immediate needs and aspirations. Input from the Network informed plans for the 2010 Youth Theatre Festival. New ideas and insights as a result of this two-way dialogue are shared on an informal and ongoing basis around the Network, which is appropriate to its operating model and the youth base of its membership.
- 3.23 **Positive Ticketing Pilot** (Community Safety) was implemented in Sherwood, Tunbridge Wells in April 2009 and is an engagement tool that provides a gateway to better relationships between authority figures and young people by rewarding good or improved behaviour. An independent evaluation study (which will include an element of consultation) is currently underway.
- 3.24 **Restorative Neighbourhoods Pilot** (Community Safety) was implemented in Maidstone Borough and Shepway District in January 2009 to address the community's priority concerns by bringing victims, offenders and communities together (if appropriate) to decide on a response to a particular crime/issue. The pilot area was extended in November 2009 to the Tunbridge Wells Borough, to involve all frontline officers including KCC Community Wardens. An independent evaluation study (which will include an element of consultation) is currently underway.
- 3.25 **Turner Contemporary:** works closely with the local business community, through the Margate Town Partnership, to understand local

business needs and to coordinate activities to maximise benefits for the local community

- 3.26 TOOL, an intergenerational project run by Turner Contemporary with a number of partners was established in direct response to requests from members of our young people's and senior citizen's group. It will help inform a future exhibition to be run in the gallery during 2011.
- 3.27 The Access Group were consulted during the design stages of the Turner Contemporary gallery and helped to inform the design of the building and its fixtures, fittings and signage.
- 3.28 Cultural Ambassadors is run in collaboration with the University for Creative Arts and enables people with low or no qualifications to follow an accredited course exploring cultural regeneration. Cultural Ambassadors from past years now help us to recruit new participants, and play a central role in delivering and shaping the course.

## 4 Influencing capital projects

- 4.1 **Kent Library and History Centre:** Consultation is ongoing and channels have been open during the intervening period (2009/10). However, the project is now moving into a new phase where feedback and views on the internal design, layout and services are being sought and used to shape plans.
- 4.2 Archive-related consultation has been with users, community archive groups, local and family history groups and District Councils who deposit their records with the service. This is informing the development plan for the service as a whole as well as the building itself.

**connect with people**

**Kent Library and History Centre**  
**Your comments answered**

Thank you very much for your response to our consultation so far on the Kent Library and History Centre. Here are some of your frequently asked questions.

**Why is there so much glass in the design – won't it make the building very hot inside?**

The building is designed to make use of as much deflected natural light as possible to give the building a light and open feel. Overhangs on the south and east facing sides of the building will shade it from direct sunlight. The building is being designed to the highest environmental standards which will keep it warm in winter and cool in summer. It will be a very energy efficient building to run.

**Why is concrete being used instead of more traditional materials such as Kentish ragstone or natural wood?**

Concrete has been chosen both for its affordability and also for its environmental impact. The building will be of heavy mass construction, enabling the building to store and regulate internal heat effectively. The architect's initial graphics give the building a rather stark appearance, but the use of colour and lighting will soften this as the design process continues.

**Will the archives of Canterbury Cathedral be moved here?**

The centre will include the material from the Centre for Kentish Studies and the East Kent Archives Centre at Whitehall. As much of the material at Canterbury belongs to the Cathedral and Canterbury City Council there are no plans for this material to be included. We will continue to work closely with the Cathedral Archives in the future.

**Will the historic material in the archive be more accessible in the new building?**

Yes. As well as having better facilities in the new building we will be making digitised copies of many of our important documents so that they can be shared more widely across the county. Where the most fragile and important artefacts have to be carefully protected, we will also have a community history room with an extensive collection of archive and local history material.

**What library stock will you have in the building?**

As the new flagship library for Kent we will be planning a significant investment in new books for the centre. This will mean that not all the books currently held at Maidstone or County Central Libraries will become part of the new centre stock. We have an ongoing programme of managing the books to ensure they are up-to-date, in good condition and meeting the reading needs of our customers. This work is still in the very early stages and we will continue to involve customers in our plans as they develop.

**Will there be toilets and a refreshment area?**

Toilets will be provided in the building as well as a small refreshment area.

**When is it going to happen?**

Planning permission will be applied for this summer and it is hoped that building can begin on the new site early 2010. The opening of the new centre is planned for early 2011. We will be continuing to consult widely on the development during that time and inform people of this exciting project's progress.

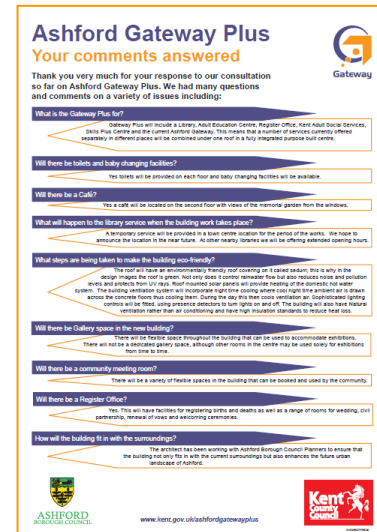
- 4.3 Library Service staff also took the opportunity to engage young people in the project and get their views by talking to them at the Maidstone "House"<sup>4</sup>. Not only did the experience give useful insights on what sorts of things young people would value in the new centre, but it also reinforced the importance of engagement and involvement in the design and development of library services for young people generally.

<sup>4</sup> HOUSE is a branded campaign developed to raise awareness and change risky behaviours amongst young people, based on the principles of social marketing.

4.4 **Ashford Gateway Plus:** The consultation for Ashford is very similar to Kent History and Library Centre in that there was a major burst of activity about the external design for the building (in 2008) and now consultation on the internal layout, design and public services consultation is underway.

4.5 While channels of communications and opportunities to contact us with ideas and views remain open (for example through the dedicated project web page) there will be “spikes” of activity keeping pace with the various phases of the construction project.

4.6 Current public consultation is taking place using display materials in Ashford’s County Square shopping centre, all the key service locations, local children’s and community centres and with the community partnership for adults with learning and physical difficulties. The Ashford Access Group was also consulted. These banners, plus those for the Kent History and Library Centre, were on display at the 2010 County Show.



4.7 Material generated through consultation activities is collated and analysed and fed in the appropriate decision-making process. As with the Kent History and Library Centre, posters are used to keep customers and other interested people informed about the feedback and queries received.

4.8 **Gravesend Library:** A Community Development Librarian is regularly visiting a vast array of community groups including the Gravesham Access Group, Kings Farm and Northfleet Forum. The role is twofold: to ask for views about the project and to feed back to communities and interested groups about progress with the project.

4.9 There has also been a display in Gravesend Library on which customers can post comments, and the Community Development Librarian has also been out on Gravesend High Street to talk directly to the general public about the project (both providing information and asking for views/comments). All this information is collected on a central spreadsheet which all of the project team can access. Key themes and views are fed back to the board at regular intervals.

4.10 A good example of how our consultation work has led to changes with this project is that the original design for the new facade received a great deal of negative criticism from the public. So the architects were asked to go “back to the drawing board” and the new design they produced (which is the one being used) was received much more positively.

## 5 Influencing other functions, services and initiatives

- 5.1 **KCC Community Wardens** provide a reassuring visible presence in 128 communities across Kent. They deal with low level crime and anti social behaviour working with partner agencies to make Kent a safer place to live. Much of their work involves engagement activities with local residents, often helping communities solve local problems themselves. They can have a real and lasting impact on the lives of the residents in their communities, as they have the time to listen to people, they can offer help and advice and are committed to finding solutions to their problems.
- 5.2 In 2009/10, KCC Community Wardens spent over 75% of their time on visible presence activities within their communities which included more than 34,000 interactions with the public and approx. 17,000 incidents relating to the environment (for example, highways, littering, dog fouling, flytipping).
- 5.3 A couple of examples of their work last year include:-
  - 5.3.1 A warden received a high number of complaints from local residents regarding parking around school gates resulting in driveways being blocked and cars double parked. Children were also being noisy and rude, running over gardens and breaking down fencing. The warden with the local police, held a meeting for all residents to discuss the issues. The result was that a Neighbourhood Watch has now been set up, community members are communicating, parking issues have been resolved and this was gained through engagement rather than enforcement.
  - 5.3.2 In order to encourage the young and elderly to engage with each other and break down barriers, a warden arranged a trip to Hastings as some of the people in her community had never seen the sea and building on the success of this trip she sourced funding that enabled 230 young and old people to visit Chessington World of Adventures together.
- 5.4 **The Kent Cultural Baton:** Public and stakeholder involvement was used to shape the Cultural Baton project. A Project Management Board was set up to advise on various aspects of the project and to make decisions together on behalf of the Kent Partnership. The group includes representatives from the arts sector, District and Borough councils and the third sector.
- 5.5 The public were asked for their views on the Baton candidates based on a shortlist prepared by the Selection Panel. The Panel was a group of experts in the arts and culture field formed to decide which idea should be taken forward. The panel took into account all the views expressed by the public when making their decision. The successful candidate was also the public's preferred choice. The public can nominate places for the Baton to stop at during its journey up to the 2012 Games in London.

- 5.6 The **Sport, Leisure & Olympics Service Customer Satisfaction Survey** was run in autumn 2009 to ascertain the satisfaction levels of partners and customers, covering all of the key functions of the Service. Views were sought on the overall impression of the service, staff friendliness and helpfulness, accessibility of staff, clarity of forms and communication, usefulness of promotional material, quality of support and advice given, efficiency of dealing with requests and usefulness of the website.
- 5.7 Partners and contacts expressed clear satisfaction with the service, with 96.7% of partners stating that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the service. A summary report of the Survey results was produced and provided to the Service's Senior Management Team, with headline results being raised with Communities Directorate Senior Management and the Cabinet Member and Deputy Cabinet Member for Communities. The summary report was also placed on the Service website and the headline results were also reported in the Team's Annual report for 09-10, which is distributed widely to partners.
- 5.8 **Scientific services:** Kent Scientific Services provides analytical and calibration services. The analytical section mainly serves local authority enforcement agencies. The calibration service is also open to the private sector. Therefore its consultation activities tend to be directly with existing clients, and aims to establish how services can be improved. Regular review meetings were undertaken and were usually positive, constructive and complimentary on quality and service delivery. A joint Client Forum took place with Hampshire Scientific Services. As a result of this sort of activity, new procedures were developed to meet client needs, such as melamine in foods, drugs of abuse screening and sample collection courier routes.

## **6 Planned activities that did not go ahead in 2009/10**

- 6.1 **Envision follow-up** – As one final element of the programme was yet to complete, specific formal evaluation and consultation work is now planned for a later date. However, the usual channels of customer feedback remained available for customers to use if they wanted to give feedback on the IT systems.
- 6.2 **Reviews** of the Kent Apprenticeship Programme and the Kent Community Programme did not take place as a wider review of adult skills and employability was subsequently planned (and is now currently underway).