

Kent Design Guide: Mock-up

Cabinet Presentation - 10 March 2026

1. Proposal: Interactive Design Guide for Kent

Purpose

To create a single, shared online guide that sets **quality standards** for **new homes and neighbourhoods** being built in Kent, focusing on the design and planning process.

What it is

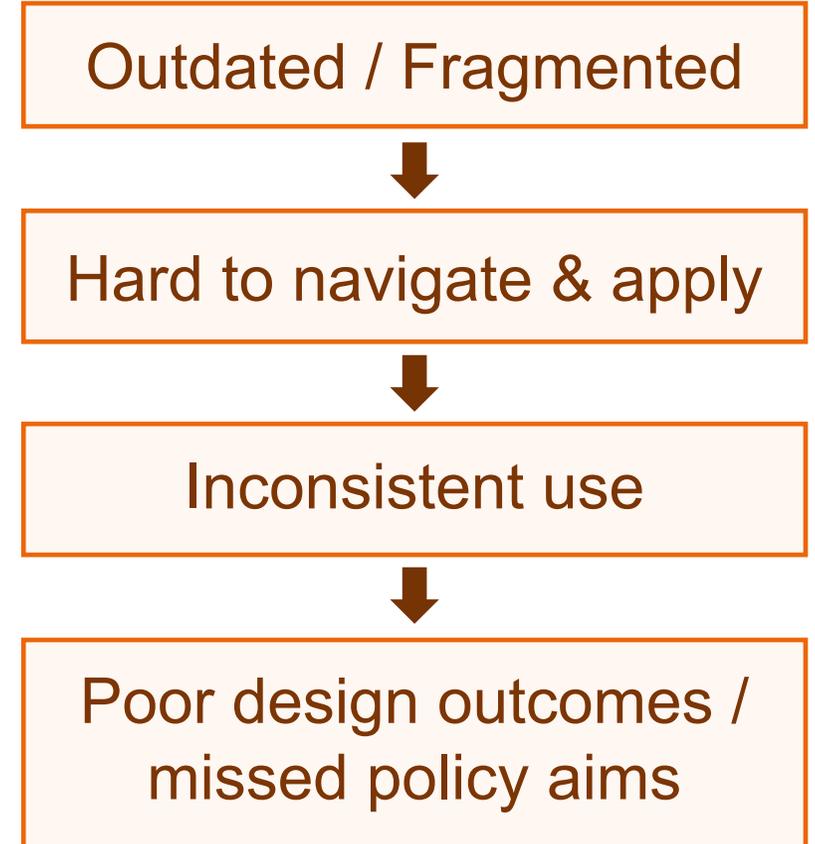
- An interactive, public-facing website
- Used by officers (KCC & Local Authorities), design teams (e.g. architects) and landowners/developers/builders
- Supports consistent, clear and accessible design and placemaking guidance



2. The Problem: Current Challenges

- **Outdated:** existing guide (2005) is over 20 years old.
- **Fragmented:** guidance spread across multiple separate pdf documents uploaded to KCC website.
- **Static:** difficult to update (changing policy/best-practice, innovation, stakeholder requirements).
- **Unintuitive:** lack of hierarchy, hard to navigate.
- **Under-utilised:** inconsistent use across council and developer teams/not used as intended (if at all).

This can **increase costs and delivery time** for developers, whist **reducing workload efficiency** for officers.



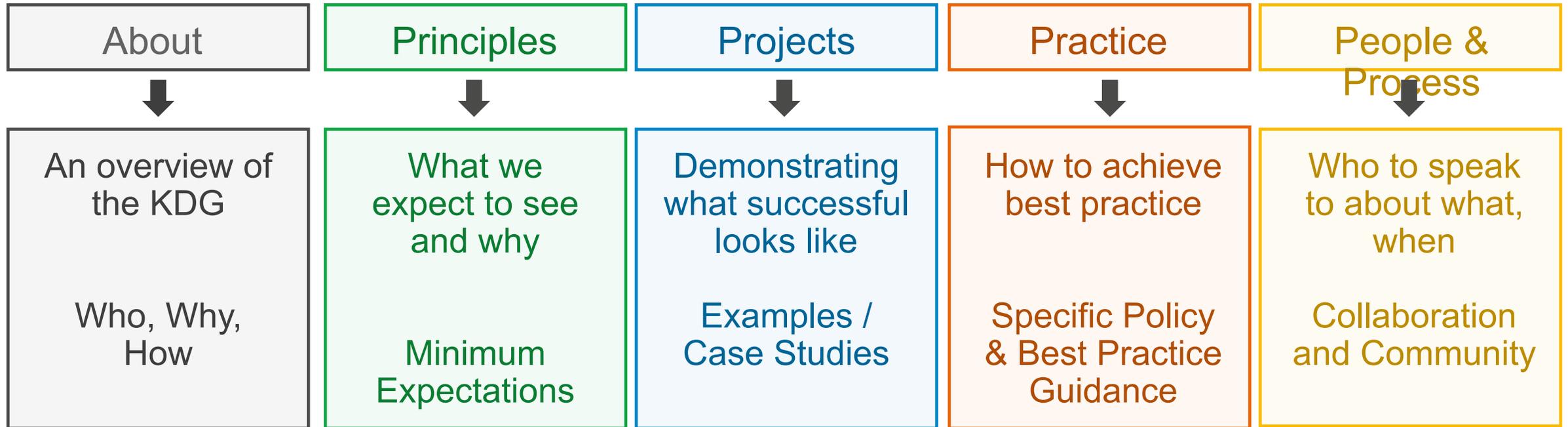
3. Problem Solving: Stakeholder Engagement

- Workshops, meetings, surveys
- Stakeholders have invested time in process
- Expectation management regarding outcomes
- Stakeholder-led solution proposed



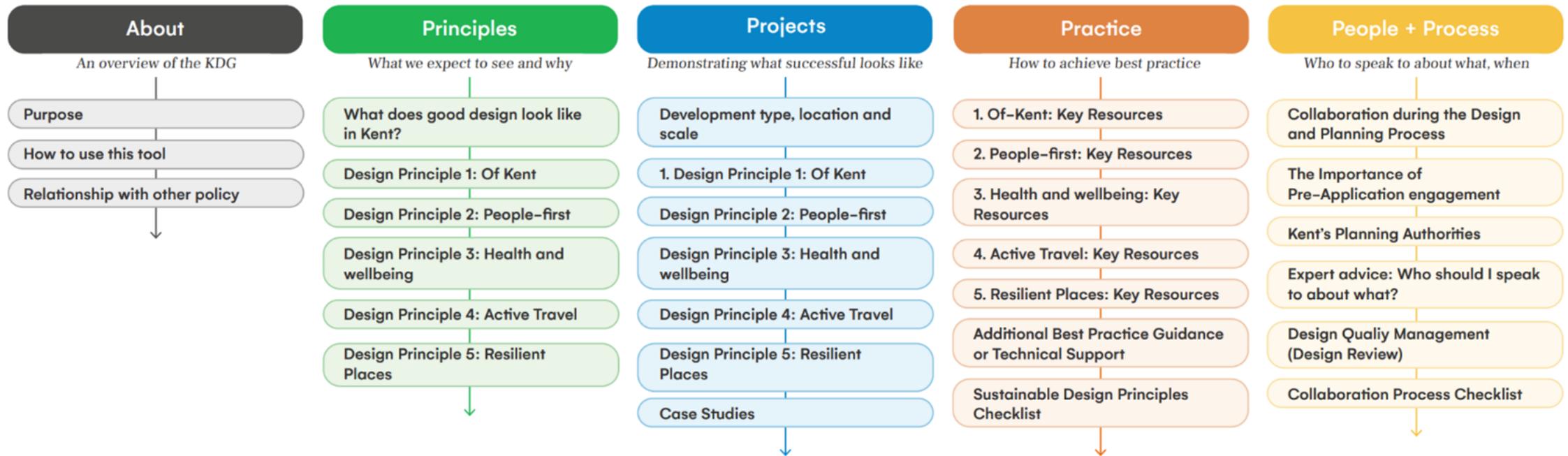
4. Proposed Solution: Interactive Design Guide

A clear, updated, interactive and easy to navigate guide.



Website structure/content overview: Illustrative wireframe diagram only – not final design

5. Website Structure



An overview - who this is for, who owns it, why it exists and what it focuses on. To support the navigational journey of each user, clarity on how to use the website is included. How the KDG should be read with other policy/guidance is outlined early on.

Setting the scene - what does good design look like in Kent? It is something that meets those design principles. This section demonstrates the importance of sustainability/climate in Kent and outlines clear shared goals for design quality setting.

Acknowledging the varied developments in Kent - what applies, where? This section provides clarity on what is expected of applicant teams, dependant of their development type, location and scale. It includes case studies to provide clarity on

Providing the tools to deliver the Sustainable Design Principles via a best practice design process. This section includes a hierarchy of links to policy/guidance/best practice resource. This content is in support of LDA policy helping

Emphasising the importance of collaboration in a best practice design and planning process. This section connects KCC, the LPAs and applicants to enable effective collaboration. It highlights which KCC officers/departments can provide

6. Kent Design Principles

The five Key Design Principles are:

1 - Of Kent: Design for Kent's Identity - Landscape, Heritage, and Character

Demonstrating the various and unique local design characteristics, features and vernaculars "Of Kent" to be followed.

2 – People First: Support Sociable, Inclusive, and Resilient Communities

Demonstrating design concepts that put "people first" such as the need for privacy, security, space and sustainability.

3 – Health and Well Being: Promote Health, Nature, and Active Living

Provides design information for living standards, dealing with ageing populations, accessibility and social and community cohesion.

4 – Active Kent: Enable Connected, Accessible, and Low-Carbon Mobility

Demonstrates design the facilitates active lifestyles and walkable communities as well as the expectations around access to green space, recreation and sport.

5 – Resilient Places: Deliver Sustainable, Low-Carbon and Climate-Resilient Places

Promotes use of sustainable materials, energy efficiency and protection of our natural environment and resources.

About	Principles	Projects	Practice	People & Process
Purpose		Type, Location & Scale		Collaboration during the Design and Planning Process
How to use this tool		Design Principle 1: Of Kent		The Importance of Pre-Application engagement
Relationship with other policy 		Design Principle 2: People First		Kent's Planning Authorities
		Design Principle 3: Health and Wellbeing		Expert advice: Who should I speak to about what?
		Design Principle 4: Active Travel		Design Quality Management (Design Review)
		Design Principle 5: Resilient Places		Collaboration Process Checklist 
		Case Studies 		

Background 'wow' images of exemplar Kent developments

Example drop-downs on homepage. Illustrative wireframe diagram only, colours indicative – not final design

Case Studies

Filter:

Type	Location	Scale
Housing	Town Centre	1-9 homes

Case Study Name

- Key information
- Notable response/approach to Kent Design Principles
 - Of Kent
 - People First
 - Health and Wellbeing
 - Active Travel
 - Resilient Places
- Interactive links to relevant information in 'Practice' and 'People & Process' sections
- Key lessons learned

Image/Photograph focused	Image/Photograph focused	Image/Photograph focused
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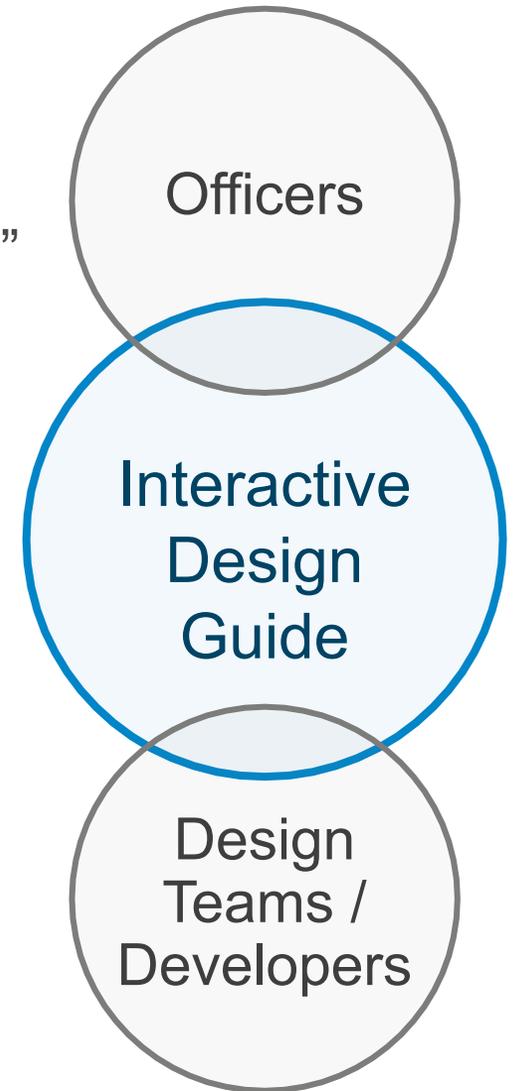
Example contents page (case studies). Illustrative wireframe diagram only, colours indicative – not final design

7. Scenario 1: How Officers Would Use It

“When meeting with a developer who is seeking pre-application advice...”

1. Clear process for multidisciplinary collaboration set out in guide
2. Officers check emerging proposal against the design guide
3. Rationale is clearly evidenced against guide’s core principles, referencing case studies/best practice
4. Officer has confidence when decision making
5. Developer builds using agreed standards
6. Better quality homes and neighbourhoods for Kent residents

Clarifies expectations, enhances collaboration, equips officers with tools to promote high quality places.

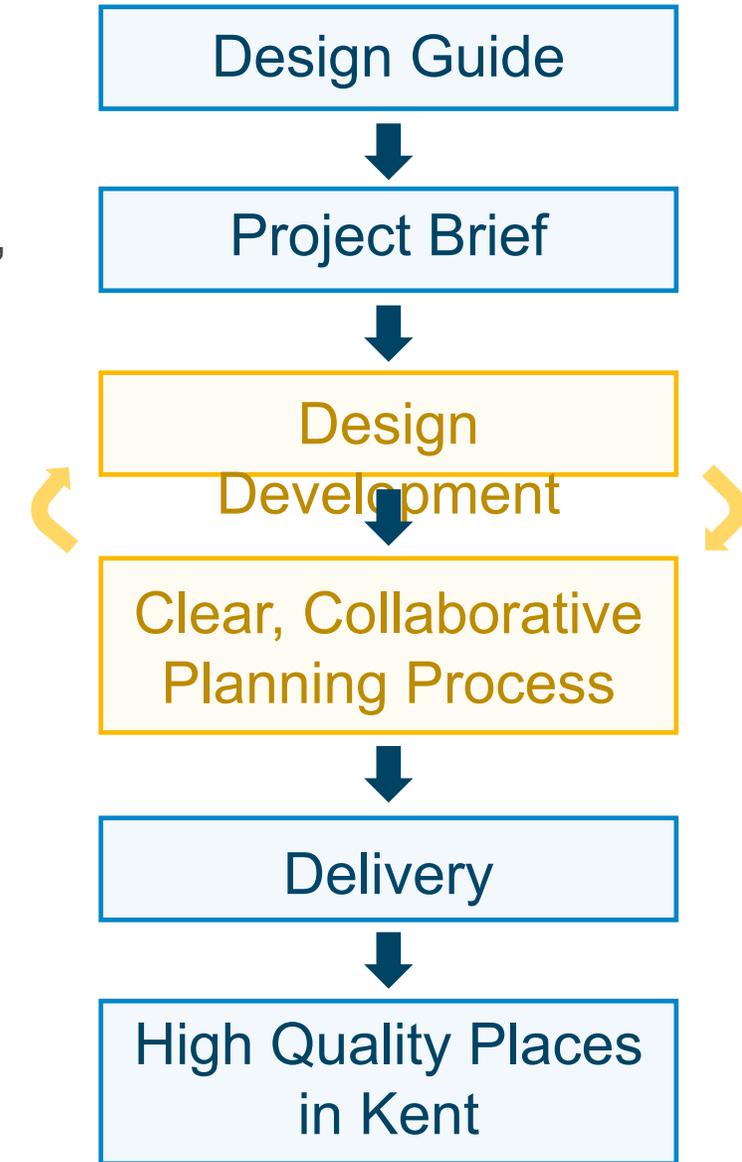


8. Scenario 2: How Developers Would Use It

“When buying land/writing a design brief for a new development...”

1. Developer refers to design guide and is clear on Kent’s expectation
2. Associated costs are factored in early on
3. Design team’s brief is deliverable against guide’s core principles
4. Collaborative planning process with key stakeholders, including communities
5. Developer builds using agreed standards
6. Better quality homes and neighbourhoods for Kent residents

Clarifies expectations, enhances collaboration, speeds up delivery of high-quality places.



9. Draft Prototype

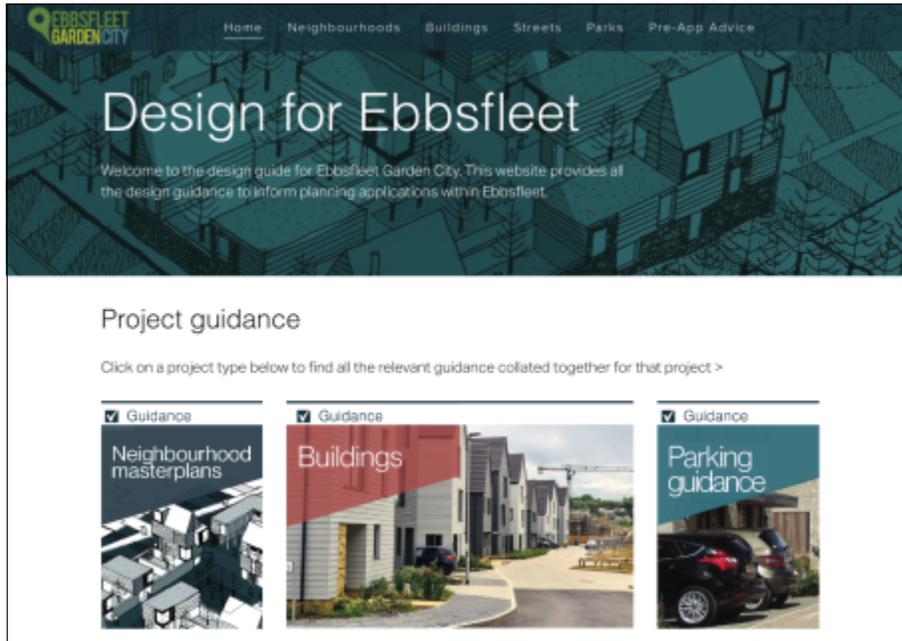
- First iteration
- Prototype
- Draft status
- Established framework
- Updates needed to reflect stakeholder feedback
- Strategy for governance and management



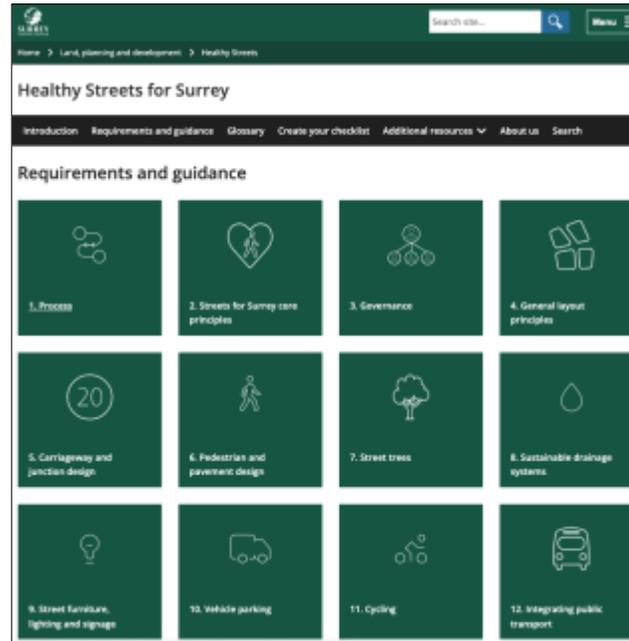
Purpose

This site has been created for all those involved in the design, planning and development process in Kent and Medway. Above all, it communicates key guidance on **placemaking** for the county, to encourage development that is

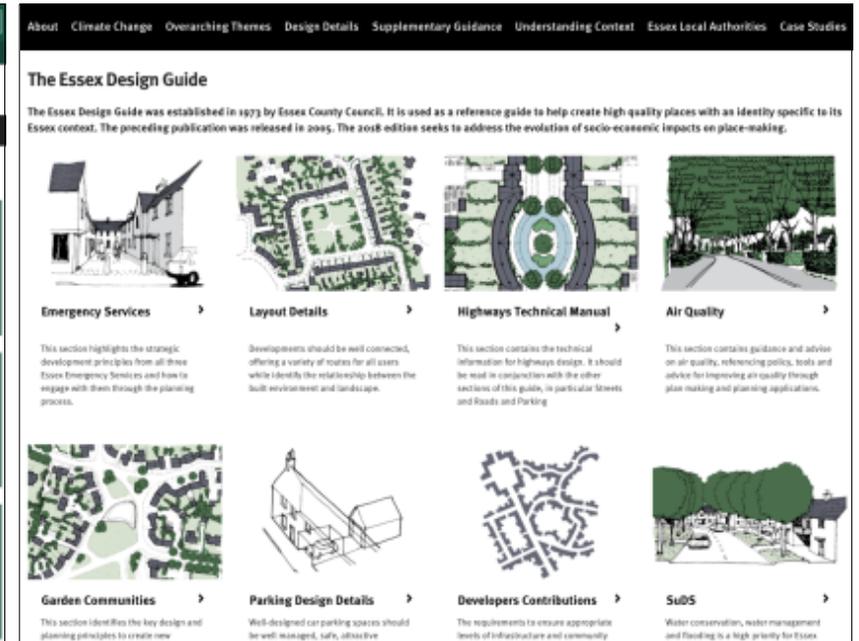
10. Interactive Design Guide: Examples



Ebbsfleet Design Guide



Healthy Streets for Surrey



The Essex Design Guide

11. Benefits and Next Steps

Benefits

- Co-created guide to meet stakeholder needs
- Shared expectations for new homes/neighbourhoods
- Clearer standards for developers/design teams
- Additional quality management tool for KCC/Local Authority officers (regardless of LGR outcomes)
- Improved accessibility/navigation/usability

What this is not

- Not a full redesign of council branding
- Not high-cost software/web development (draft website exists)

Next steps

- Compile guide content (mix of existing, revised and new)
- Update draft website prototype
- Test with target audience
- Launch the Kent Design Guide website
- Continued content development and management in collaboration with key stakeholders

Thank you

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