

# **KCC ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT**

PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2008/09

DRAFT

## **About this document**

This Annual Performance Report provides highlights of Kent County Council's (KCC's) key activities and outcomes during 2008/09. It sets out:

- Our key activities in 2008/09
- How we have made an impact in 2008/09
- How we have made a difference to people's lives in 2008/09

It is one of a suite of performance reporting documents produced by KCC this year.

Detailed information on KCC's performance during 2008/09 can be found in the *Business Plan Outturn Monitoring for 2008/09*.

Detailed information on performance against the *Towards 2010* targets can be found in the *Towards 2010 Annual Report*.

Detailed performance information on the work of the *Kent Partnership* is reported to the Kent Public Service Board.

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## **Contents**

1. Our Priorities
2. What Our Customers Say
3. Connecting with Communities
4. Economic Success – Opportunities for All
5. Learning for Everyone
6. Preparing for Employment
7. Enjoying Life
8. Keeping Kent Moving
9. Environmental Excellence & High Quality Homes
10. Improved Health, Care & Well-Being: Staying Healthy
11. Improved Health, Care & Well-Being: Maintaining Independence
12. Stronger & Safer Communities
13. The Finances of Kent County Council
14. Your comments
15. Glossary

## Section 1: Our Priorities

### 1.1 KCC's strategic direction

KCC continues to act in pursuit of the county's clearly stated objectives as set out in the *Vision for Kent* (the *Vision*). This document, agreed between Kent's public, private and voluntary sectors, sets out how the county council and its partners will work together to improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the county over the next 20 years.

*Towards 2010*, a vital document designed and developed across the council in 2006, defines KCC's priorities in terms of the *Vision* and gives the business strategic direction.

At the heart of *Towards 2010* are the county council's agreed aims. These are designed to achieve:

- Increased prosperity for Kent through business growth and job creation
- Transformation in education
- Reduced traffic congestion
- Improved health and quality of life
- Quality homes in a well-managed environment
- A safer Kent
- Continued improvements in services while keeping council tax down.

The *Kent Agreement 2* is the county's Local Area Agreement (LAA) and Public Service Agreement (PSA) with the Government, signed by KCC and its major partners in Kent.

The Kent Supporting Independence Programme continues to play a fundamental role in achieving the *Vision*, *Towards 2010* and *Kent Agreement 2* targets. Of particular importance is its focus on key dependency groups including young people not in education, employment or training (NEETS) and its multi-agency approach to helping people move from dependency into employment and more fulfilling lives.

To make sure the council's resources align with its priorities, it has a Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) that looks ahead to the next three financial years. Its main purpose is to identify and estimate resources available over this period.

### 1.2 National priorities

One of the key tasks of every local authority is to achieve a balance between national and local priorities. There has been a government drive over the past few years to help councils deliver improvements in services to local people. Initiatives aimed at delivering these improvements have included:

- The Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) regime, which was introduced in 2009 as a replacement for the old Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) system. CAA takes an area-based approach to assessment, examining how well councils are working together with other public bodies in their local area to meet the needs of local people

- The Gershon Review, which required local authorities to improve efficiency and reduce bureaucracy
- The Varney report on service transformation, which included recommendations for a cross-government identity management system. This would enable greater personalisation of services and reduce duplication across government by, for instance, only requiring people to make one notification when their circumstances changed instead of notifying each public body separately
- *Every Child Matters*, a radical reform of children's services prompted by the Children Act 2004 aimed at bringing together the work of the health sector and local government and improving the delivery of health and social care for children and young people
- The *Children's Plan* a ten-year strategy to make England the best place in the world for children and young people to grow up, which places families at the heart of Government policy. The Plan aims to improve educational outcomes for children, improve children's health, reduce offending rates among young people and eradicate child poverty by 2020
- *Our Health, Our Care, Our Say*, a White Paper that sets out a radical agenda focussed on the following four overarching goals for health and social care:
  - Providing better prevention services and earlier intervention
  - Giving people more choice and a louder voice
  - Tackling inequalities and improving access to community services
  - Providing support for people with long-term conditions.
- *Putting People First*, the national vision for adult social care, which supports the Government's commitment to independent living for adults and aims to ensure every locality has a single community based support system focussed on the health and wellbeing of the local population
- *Sustainable Communities - People, Places and Prosperity*, a five-year strategy setting out the Government's vision for sustainable communities, with a focus on vibrant local leadership, resident engagement and participation and improved service delivery and performance
- Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) are non statutory, multi-agency partnerships, which match local authority boundaries. LSPs bring together at a local level the different parts of the public, private, community and voluntary sectors; allowing different initiatives and services to support one another so that they can work together more effectively

### 1.3 The economy

This year has seen economic turbulence unprecedented in recent years. In April 2008, most forecasters were still anticipating growth in the year ahead, and despite the impact of the credit crunch, economic fears focused on rising commodity prices and the prospect of increasing inflation. Yet by the March 2009, the UK economy had contracted by 4.1%, and interest rates had been cut to a record low in an effort to stimulate demand.

Looking to the future, current average forecasts suggest a further contraction in the national economy of 3.7% in 2009, before a weak return to growth in 2010. KCC's support for businesses and employment through the downturn is reflected in our commitment to Backing Kent Business and the promotion of a closer relationship between the County Council and the business community highlighted in the Regeneration Framework. However, the challenges of recession will also be

reflected in increased pressure on public spending. For KCC, this is likely to mean increased demand on the services that we provide and greater pressure on the budgets available to provide them.

#### 1.4 The duty to involve

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 sets out measures for local authorities (and other Best Value authorities) to engage their citizens, lead their communities and find new and more effective ways to deliver high quality services with their partners. The changes offer unprecedented opportunities for local leaders to set out their vision for their communities, while empowering local people to help deliver that vision.

Section 138 of the Act contains a new duty to involve local representatives and came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 for all best value authorities. The duty seeks to ensure that local people have greater opportunities to have their say. The aspiration for the new duty is to embed a culture of engagement and empowerment across the authority's functions.

The duty requires authorities to take those steps they consider appropriate to involve *representatives of local persons* in the exercise of any of their functions, where they consider that it is appropriate to do so. It specifies the three ways of involving that need to be covered in this consideration:

- **providing information** about the exercise of the particular function
- **consulting** about the exercise of the particular function
- **involving in another way**

KCC will build on existing engagement mechanisms to ensure that it meets the requirements of the duty from 2009 onwards.

#### 1.5 Personalising services

KCC is committed to personalising services to ensure they meet the needs of the people of Kent. This means continuing to innovate and improve by:

- Giving individuals and communities a stronger voice in the design and transformation of services
- Ensuring that we continue to improve access through innovative projects such as *Gateways* and the self-assessment website so that services are accessible to all
- Continuing to find new and innovative ways of offering more choice and individual control in order to meet and surpass public expectations
- Making the most of technological innovations to personalise services
- Getting the simple things right first time and ensuring an excellent customer experience for all.

KCC's *Personalisation and Engagement Board*, chaired by the Managing Director of Kent Adult Social Services, supports directorates in meeting these aims by championing improvements in community engagement, identifying and communicating good practice within KCC and maintaining a clear focus on improving the customer experience.

## 1.6 The older population

People in Britain are living longer than ever before and the population is ageing. This pattern can be found in developed economies worldwide and will have a very significant impact on the future of public services. It is essential that KCC plans for the impact this will have.

This year saw the publication of Kent's Policy Framework for Later Life, *Living Later Life to the Full*, which sets out how people in Kent want to live their later lives and what they want from public and community services and facilities.

Following extensive consultation, seven key priorities have been developed to reflect the issues and concerns that are important to the older people of Kent:

- To ensure communities are designed to be “age proof”, stronger, safer and sustainable.
- To improve transport and accessibility.
- To enable people to lead healthier lives and have better access to healthcare.
- To support people's citizenship, learning and participation in community life.
- To ensure those people who need support to live independently have choice, control and good quality care.
- To encourage people to plan for a secure later life.
- To promote a positive image of later life and dignity and respect for older people.

Key strategic targets have been drawn up under each of these priorities, and are set out in the Policy Framework. A mapping process has been carried out to identify and collate all the action public services in Kent are undertaking and planning for older people. This will publicise the excellent projects already in existence which people may not be aware of, and will also highlight key areas that require strategic and collective actions for the future.

## **Section 2: What Our Customers Say**

Our customers are everyone in Kent, not just the people who directly access our services. We constantly try to listen to what people have to say about KCC and use this feedback to improve our performance.

The views of Kent residents are very important to us. In October and November 2008, Ipsos-Mori carried out a face-to-face survey on behalf of KCC with over 1100 Kent residents, to get their opinion on living in Kent.

The results from the survey were positive, with 89% saying they were satisfied with their local area and 74% saying they felt that they belonged to their local neighbourhood. Both of these are above the national average.

The survey showed that the score for overall satisfaction with KCC increased from 46% in 2006 to 51%, although the different methodologies used mean that direct comparisons should be treated with caution. We will work hard to improve on this in the coming year.

We want to give everyone a first class service, but we recognise that sometimes we don't always get it right first time. That's why this year, following consultation, we have revised our complaints process and leaflet.

This revision is one part of the developing strategy to transform customer service by listening to what our customers want and expect. The aim is to reduce the bureaucracy involved. This strategy includes reducing the number of formal stages and changing the culture within KCC by encouraging staff to deal with complaints speedily and sympathetically, apologising when things go wrong and taking action to resolve the source of complaints by learning lessons from what causes them.

Within KCC we have developed a whole range of forums and engagement processes which enable people to express their views, which are then fed into the appropriate development/delivery processes for services. This provides people with alternative avenues, rather than resorting to making a complaint.

## **Section 3: Connecting with Communities**

### **3.1 Why it matters**

People are at the heart of everything KCC strives to achieve. We have an excellent track record of engaging with our service users in the design and delivery of what we do. However, we have achieved less success in engaging with the wider Kent public, with our decision-making felt to be quite remote from local people.

We need to ensure that in the future KCC connects with local people both as individuals who use our services and as residents and members of local communities. We want residents and service users to know that when they tell us something we not only listen but respond – operating the simple ‘you said; we did’ principle.

### **3.2 What we want to achieve**

- The wider Kent community regularly engaged with by KCC in a meaningful and constructive way, helping to inform all policy and service developments and decision-making
- The most vulnerable and least heard communities in Kent actively engaged in policy and service design
- Joined-up public services which are convenient and easy-to-access for all sections of the community
- Strong relationships between Members and their local communities

### **3.3 What has happened in 2008/09**

#### **Seeking people’s views**

Throughout 2008/09 KCC has undertaken extensive consultation with Kent citizens on major policies and service issues. These range from using the views of disabled children and their parents to design a new respite centre to consulting the wider public on the revision of the *Kent Public Health Strategy*.

In partnership with the Kent Messenger Group, KCC has established a new *Kent and Medway Citizens’ Panel*, enabling us to seek the views of a large number of Kent residents aged 16 or over. The Panel marks a first in that it is the only citizens’ panel in the country to be run jointly by a local newspaper and a local authority. So far two surveys have been undertaken, the initial benchmark and recruitment survey and a subsequent snapshot survey. Results from these have been used to inform subsequent policy development, such as the *Backing Kent Business* and *Backing Kent People* campaigns.

Membership of the Panel at the end of March stood at around 700, which is still some way below the intended target of 5000 by 2011. KCC will continue to recruit new members in 2009/10.

Consultation and participation with children and young people continues to develop.

Over 45,000 children and young people participated in the 2008 *Kent Children & People’s Survey*, up from 42,000 in 2007. Findings have been used to inform the planning of children’s services at a county, local and school level and also used in the production of a needs assessment. In early 2009, Ipsos-Mori undertook 16 “mini

focus groups” with young people in Kent to follow up on key issues such as bullying and health that arose from the Survey.

The *Children and Young People’s Plan* was reviewed in 2008 and was subject to extensive consultation with children and young people, including a series of focus groups with seldom heard children and the design and wording of the summary version which was led by a group of young people.

The *Kent Youth County Council (KYCC)* remained highly active during 2008/09 and is well-supported by young people in Kent with 30,921 young people voting in the November 2008 elections. KYCC has continued to play a strong role in giving a voice to young people in Kent and informing the work of KCC, influencing the decision to extend the Freedom Pass and being asked to inform KCC’s Policy Framework for Later Life: *Living Later Life to the Full*.

The *Framework for Participation with Children and Young People in Kent* has been produced, agreed by the Kent Children’s Trust and distributed widely to organisations in the county. An inter-agency workshop in February 2009 identified further actions to progress the work on participation and to revitalise the strategy.

Kent’s Children’s Social Services has actively engaged service users in their recruitment processes.

### **Personalising services**

Through the work of the *Social Innovation Lab for Kent (SILK)* KCC has sought to place the person at the heart of service design, both within KCC and in partnership with others.

The ‘Just Coping’ report on low income families was published in July 2008. It received a national level profile and has informed a number of additional projects in order to address the issues raised.

A partnership was created with the Digital Inclusion team at CLG to explore ways in which technology can better support families at risk. A key theme emerging from this work was that of ‘bulk buying’. This has evolved into a new cross-sector, multi-disciplinary project to create a bulk-buying model in the Parkwood area of Maidstone.

SILK undertook focused work with the Sheerness Children’s Centre to find new ways of engaging fathers in family life. The ‘Engaging Fathers’ report was published in August 2008, which resulted in the appointment of a full-time dads’ worker at the Centre.

In March 2009, SILK worked with *Gateway* frontline staff to co-design ‘Insight to Idea’ – a structured process for groups to reflect on customer needs, map their journey of interaction with the Gateway, and generate creative solutions for improved services. ‘Insight-to-Idea’ is now being used as part of a team building day for the roll out of new Gateways around Kent.

### **Public access and technology**

KCC recognises that public access in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is changing and that the way we deliver services across the whole public sector needs to change accordingly, particularly the way in which we utilise technology.

Critical to improving the customer experience and physical access to services is the Gateway, which offers increasingly convenient public service points in a retail format in high-street and town centre locations. Gateway delivers this by utilising innovative technologies and working with key public, voluntary sector and private sector organisations to shape services around people's needs.

During 2008/09, KCC began work on simplifying access to public services in Kent via the Gateway Multi-Channel programme. This has seen the expansion of Gateway from a face-to-face project, to a multi-channel project incorporating face-to-face, phone and web. This will deliver joined-up web and telephone access across the non-emergency public sector in Kent. This is being led by KCC, in partnership with district and borough councils, NHS, Fire, Police, Medway council, the voluntary sector and business organisations.

Gateway continued to be rolled-out across Kent in 2008/09 with 3 new town-centre Gateway locations opening in Maidstone, Tenterden and Tunbridge Wells. Services available within Gateway have increased during 2008/09, and currently exceed 40 agencies working in partnership under the Gateway banner. These include Post Office services through the Tenterden Gateway, the successful piloting of health prevention programmes for diabetes and blood pressure at the Ashford Gateway, Citizens Advice Bureau, West Kent College, migrant helpline, and RBLI pathways to work.

"This is a great idea - to have advice, housing advice and general help under one roof, close to the town-centre. Brilliant."  
*Customer at Tunbridge Wells Gateway*

Kent was selected as a Pathfinder for the Department for Work and Pensions-led *Tell Us Once (TUO)* initiative, which aims to vastly improve the process of informing statutory organisations in the event of the death of a loved one. The highly innovative and effective approach the Gateway service team and Registrars have taken has resulted in a very effective service being redesigned, enabling Districts staff to fully engage in TUO.

*Kent TV*, the KCC-funded broadband community channel, underwent a substantial refresh in April 2008 to enhance its usability. The refreshed site has become more interactive, with voting ability, and it has become easier to upload comments and video content. The site is widely used by both Kent residents and businesses to showcase their own content and there are now over 2000 videos available on the site, encompassing a wide range of topics from business, education, history, and sport to tourism. At the end of March 2009, visitor numbers for Kent TV reached 1.5 million, far exceeding the 250,000 target.

During 2008/09, Kent TV engaged with young people in Kent through a variety of competitions. In December 2008 it launched Animate and Create, encouraging school children to create their own animations around the title 'Cleaner, Greener and Safer' and the 'Sound Clash' Battle of the Bands competition, in association with Invicta FM. Sound Clash attracted over 80 entries and over 12,000 people registered

to take part or vote. Animate and Create was run in collaboration with Extended Schools and Clean Kent and attracted 23 entries from 11 different schools.

### **Member engagement**

KCC with its partners continues to pilot a range of models for community engagement. Building on the first successful pilot of *Neighbourhood Forums* in Dover, which was recognised by the Corporate Assessment as a good model, discussions have continued across the county with partners on a range of models of community engagement which is appropriate for each of the partners.

During 2008/09 productive discussions have taken place, which have resulted in the establishment of three Neighbourhood Forums in Gravesham based on the Dover model. In Swale the Borough Council and KCC have established Local Engagement Forums which has created a stronger link to the Swale Local Strategic Partnership. In Tonbridge and Malling and Canterbury, KCC is joining models of community engagement established by the districts which have been in place for some time.

In 2008/09 the *Member Topic Review Programme* included three select committees on: Autism Spectrum Disorder, Provision of Activities for Young People and Passenger Rail Services in Kent. Each review resulted in a number of recommendations designed to address issues identified by the research carried out. Topic reviews have a doubly beneficial effect, both in that the process itself tends to catalyse positive action and the effects of the recommendations themselves. Since the topics chosen for review are often highly significant, cross-cutting and can sometimes involve radical change, the benefits are designed to be far reaching and 'medium to long range' rather than of the 'quick fix' variety.

### **3.4 How we have made a difference**

#### **Engaging Fathers**

Seashells, a Sure Start centre in Sheerness, initiated a project with the Social Innovation Lab for Kent (SILK) and Engine to look at what kind of support fathers require and how they could provide it.

To answer this, a user centred approach was adopted that involved actively engaging fathers both inside and outside the Seashells centre. Placing a core group of 12 fathers at the centre of the work made them feel welcomed and encouraged them to participate. Talking to the fathers enabled Seashells to understand their preferences for the way they spend time with their children and how they perceive their role within the family.

As a result of the project, a full-time dad's worker has been appointed at Seashells, to act as a continued advocate for dads and ensure that their views are heard.

#### **Member Grants**

Local Members in Gravesend and Dartford have given funds to support the work of mediation in North Kent (MiNK). MiNK is a voluntary organisation that provides a mediation service for the general community, providing a free, impartial and confidential service for people involved in a neighbour or community dispute.

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Through funding from Member community grants in 2008/09, MiNK has recently been training both primary and secondary school children in schools across Dartford and Gravesend in conflict resolution techniques and to mediate between peers, helping to resolve disputes in their own schools. Pupils who have become peer mediators have found it a rewarding experience. A Dartford pupil said: "It is good to know that you are trusted by children and adults. We never tell anyone what is told to us unless it is serious and then we have to tell a teacher. Being a mediator is a great experience".

### **Gateways**

In early 2009 Brett Green and Chelsea Stevens were the very first customers to use the new Housing Plus service at the Ashford Gateway and found it invaluable. They returned to the UK after Brett's building work dried up in Spain and had no idea where to start in terms of building a new life in Ashford. Brett's Dad suggested they visit the Ashford Gateway and through Housing Plus they were able to sort out the majority of their problems, from claiming benefits and using the internet to look for jobs, to finding a Sure Start children's centre just a few minutes walk from their home.

The couple are now much happier and settled in the area and were amazed how much help they received so quickly. Chelsea says: "I don't know where we would have found all this information if it hadn't been for Housing Plus. It seems like they have made sure they are in contact with all the local organisations a person might need and have found out how they can help you. They look at the whole picture not just say, benefits, or job seeking and if Housing Plus can't help you directly it seems they always know someone who can. We can't thank them enough for all their help".

## **Section 4: Economic Success – Opportunities for All**

### **Supporting business, creating jobs**

#### **4.1 Why it matters**

Successful local businesses matter to us all. Kent County Council must do all it can to help our business community; the wealth it creates helps pay for good public services and the jobs it provides are key to a happy and successful life.

Kent has a unique opportunity to take full advantage of the busiest 'gateway' to the UK between Europe, London and the rest of the country to bring more employment to the county. We will support school leavers and the workforce to develop the right skills to access the jobs and opportunities that a thriving business sector brings. We will also capitalise on Kent's proven strengths in construction, land-based industries, pharmaceuticals, technology, tourism and biodiversity.

#### **4.2 What we want to achieve**

- Long-term sustainable economic growth in Kent
- Long-term regeneration of Kent's coastal towns
- A thriving rural Kent economy
- More jobs created and businesses moving to Kent
- Kent regarded as a premier UK tourist destination

#### **4.3 What has happened in 2008/09**

##### **Regeneration**

In January 2009, KCC published the draft of *Unlocking Kent's Potential*, KCC's Framework for Regeneration. This takes a long term view of the key challenges and opportunities affecting the county, promotes a closer relationship between the county council and the business community and provides a basis for putting economic development and regeneration at the centre of everything that we do.

KCC has carried out targeted regeneration work in the coastal towns of Margate, Dover and Folkestone. Work this year has been disrupted by the economic downturn affecting partners and funding availability. However there have been some notable successes, including the securing of £7.75m from the CABE Sea Change Programme to deliver substantial improvements to Dover waterfront and Castle facilities.

In Margate the start of work on the *Turner Contemporary* site (see Section 7) has created greater confidence in the future of the town. There have been a number of new shops, cafés and creative spaces opening in Margate's Old Town in anticipation of the gallery's opening, such as on the Harbour Arm, although the full benefits will be realised closer to or post opening. In addition developments and improvements throughout Margate Old Town, such as the de-dualling of Fort Hill, were completed in Autumn 2008.

The University Centre and new Adult Education Centre opened in Folkestone in 2008, and the Performing Arts and Business Centre, which includes business incubator space, opened in March 2009.

### **The rural economy**

In 2008/09 KCC has continued to provide support to rural businesses and communities across Kent. The *Kent Action for Rural Retailers* initiative provided specialist retail advice to 54 independent village retailers in 2008/09 to help them remain in business. The *Kent Rural Access to Services* programme has supported the creation of one community shop at Barham – which has also saved the village post office. This shop is due to officially open in August 2009 and three more community shops are currently in development for next year.

“This is a great day for our community and just shows what can be done by individuals with a common purpose who will work together to effect change. We took up the challenge in Barham and now the shop is open it makes all the effort worthwhile” *Liz Minter, Chair of Nailbourne Community Store*

The *LEADER+*, *Kent Rural Towns* and *Rural Revival* programmes have now delivered funding to over 200 rural community-based regeneration projects and assisted a range of community-led projects, including the exemplar Whealden Wheels rural

transport initiative and *Funding Buddies*, which was recently awarded over £300,000 of lottery funding to be rolled out to rural communities across Kent.

### **Tourism**

Tourist related business supports approximately 50,000 jobs in the Kent economy, which is 7% of total Kent jobs. KCC has undertaken a number of campaigns through *Visit Kent* to support tourism-related business in Kent and increase visitor spend.

A European campaign aimed at France, Netherlands, Belgium and Germany secured over £1 million Euros worth of bookings to Kent via Dutch Tour operator “House of Britain” during 2008/09. The *Other Boleyn Girl* campaign, based around the Hollywood film and delivered in partnership with the Kent Film Office brought in around £1m worth of visitor spend and PR in 2008/09.

The value of on-line bookings for accommodation in Kent *Destination Management System* has increased slightly from £300K in 2007/09 to around £370K in 2008/09, although this is below the intended target of £500K. This is partly due to the economic climate meaning people are taking shorter breaks and partly due to an increase in the number of large-scale commercial competitors within this market. In 2009 we will be reviewing our role in this market to see if we can realistically compete and where we add value.

### **Economic growth**

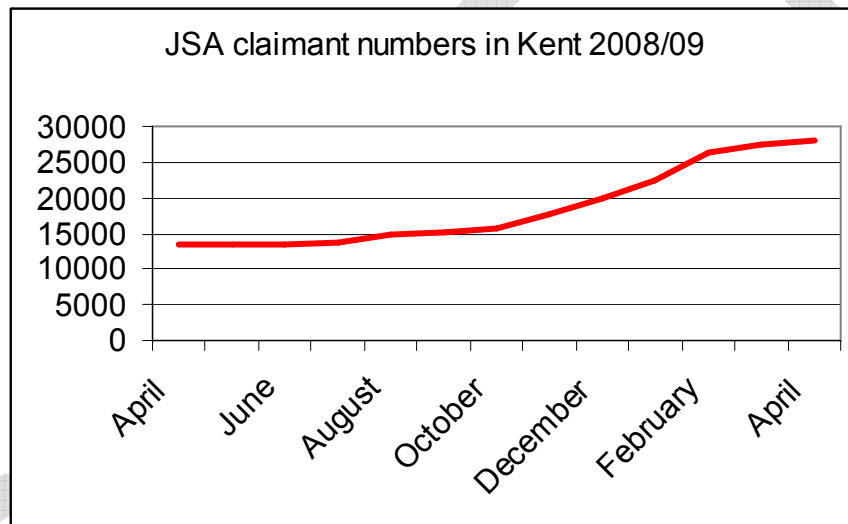
Despite the tough economic climate, *Locate in Kent* (LiK) has exceeded its target set for jobs created/safeguarded in 2008/9 and met the target for new companies investing in Kent. 3,786 jobs were created/safeguarded this year and 70 new companies invested in Kent. LiK remains optimistic that it will reach its targets for 2009/10, even though these were set before the downturn.

KCC’s *Backing Kent Business* campaign was launched in December 2008. This focuses on ten commitments by KCC to help Kent businesses through the recession. These include paying businesses supplying KCC within 20 days rather than 30. So far 78% of businesses are now paid within 20 days, up from 44% previously. We will

look to build on this further during 2009/10. We will look to build on this further during 2009/10.

KCC has continued to provide support to the film and television industry in Kent in line with the *Kent Film and Television Strategy*, mainly through the work of the *Kent Film Office (KFO)*. This year the KFO has managed over 700 filming days, taking the total income generation into the county to £13m since 2006. It has also, with the Youth Offending Service, initiated and supported a local production company, Medb Films in Ramsgate, to run a Film School for autistic children. The KFO has also supported 22 work experience placements this year.

Obviously, all our activity in 2008/09 has been in the context of severe economic turbulence. The effects of global recession have been felt in Kent, as they have across the world. After fifteen years of falling or static unemployment, numbers claiming Jobseekers' Allowance in Kent more than doubled in 2008/09, although at 3.3% remains below the national average (4%).



The coming year will prove challenging for Kent as it recovers from recession. The county will of course continue to be dependent on changes in the national and international economic climate, but the county contains significant structural economic advantages, which we will promote through a continued focus on ensuring the physical, skills and social infrastructure needed to ensure that Kent remains an attractive location in which to live, visit and invest.

#### 4.4 How we have made a difference

##### Kent Film Office

The Kent Film Office (KFO) has been dedicated in the promotion and development of the creative industries in Kent, which includes the training of young people. The unit has helped local production company Maeve Films obtain funding to set up the *Kent Film Foundation* which aims to give young adults from disadvantaged backgrounds the opportunity to find their way back into education and/or employment through work on their own films. So far the company has hosted a film school for 3 autistic young adults and 3 autistic young offenders and is hosting a further 6 places for young

offenders during summer 2009. It is hoped that they will be able to set up a long term film school for young adults from disadvantaged backgrounds, in conjunction with Thanet Works and Thanet College.

Elaine Wickham, Producer at Maeve Films is grateful for the help she has received from KFO. She says "The Kent Film Office is invaluable, not only because they offer production support and advice, but because they're totally committed to film training in Kent. They are dedicated to creating and collaborating on film initiatives that support college and university graduates, as well as young disenfranchised youth, which I think is commendable".

### **Marlow Innovation Centre**

Marlowe Innovation Centre opened in September 2008. It is the first Innovation Centre in the UK to be located on a school campus, at the Marlowe Academy in Ramsgate and was built there as a key part of the regeneration strategy for Thanet.

The Centre provides space for 6 light industrial units and 19 offices and is already nearly full, with just two spaces left to fill. Tenants are provided with free support, including free monthly Innovation and Business Support clinics and free banking advice as well as the opportunity to network with fellow tenants. One of tenants, Sarah Wallace, the owner of Clinical Litigation Services has found moving into the Centre a real benefit to her business "it's a fantastic interactive place to work, I can't stress that enough, there are all these different businesses in one place, it is very dynamic, and it means that you are forward looking and share experiences".

All tenants agree to some kind of contact with Marlowe Academy students. Sarah mentored a student from the Marlowe Academy, who had a particular interest in law. Asked about the connection with the Marlowe, Sarah said "That is something that I feel quite strongly about and I think it is a very positive thing. I think it is good for the school because there are role models here for the school children. The older pupils can see that there are thriving businesses in the Centre, and work is actually quite exciting if you are doing something that you enjoy. I think that it is a great idea to bring business and education together."

### **Wealden Wheels**

Wealden Wheels is a KCC-funded community transport operation run by volunteers to improve rural access to services in the five parishes of Pluckley, Charing, Egerton, Challock and Smarden.

It provides the opportunity for those usually housebound to get out and socialise, attend medical appointments, or just have a day out. Without Wealden Wheels, these groups would either have to rely on individuals to transport them or as in many cases they would not leave the house.

Users of the service find it invaluable and come from all age ranges. A local care home had this to say: "We have been able to book the transport for all our outings a year in advance. The drivers are always very helpful, polite and professional. The tail lift enables us to take residents whose disabilities do not allow them to sit safely in ordinary seats".

Version 0.5  
07/9/09

Alan Davies, the treasurer of Wealden Wheels is grateful for the part KCC has played in keeping this service running during 2008/09. He says "I think KCC should be properly recognised for the major contribution they have made to Wealden Wheels. Last year, after our Leader+ funding ended, KCC made a major donation to support our running costs and it was this that kept us going through 08/09".

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## **Section 5: Learning for Everyone**

### **Getting it right from the start**

#### **5.1 Why it matters**

Providing our youngest children with the very best start in life is crucial. Early years/ nursery education has an enormous impact in developing a child's readiness to learn from an early age, along with building essential social skills and good behaviour. With these key skills, a child's appetite for learning is considerably improved.

KCC acknowledges the family and education as the most important factors in ensuring that children grow into adults who are able both to look after themselves and to contribute to society as a whole. The council is convinced that education, skills, learning and well-being are key to personal success and fulfilment and to the future prosperity and quality of life in Kent. KCC is determined to improve the quality of education received by every child in every school and setting and to protect and improve the life chances of the most underprivileged and vulnerable children in our community.

#### **5.2 What we want to achieve**

- Higher quality early years education across the whole of Kent
- Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 results improving faster in Kent than the national rate
- No disruptive behaviour, bullying or vandalism in any of our schools
- Children in need in Kent, particularly the most vulnerable, fully supported to deal effectively with the problems they and their families face
- Adults in Kent given opportunities to improve their numeracy and literacy skills

#### **5.3 What has happened in 2008/09**

##### **Early years**

Kent recognises that good quality early years provision is a critical factor in developing a child's receptiveness to learn from an early age, building essential social skills and encouraging good behaviour. Since 2005, KCC has sought to increase access to early years settings through doubling the number of maintained nurseries linked to primary schools to 70, creating over 12,000 new childcare places and establishing 72 Children's Centres with a further 30 planned in areas of deprivation.

The Parklife Centre in Herne Bay, the result of a partnership between Kent County Council, Canterbury City Council and The Gap, was officially opened in January 2009. It features the Poppy Children's Centre for those up to 5 years and the Sparks Youth Centre for 13 to 19 year olds, making it the first of its kind in the county to offer services for residents from birth to their late teens.

At the end of March 2009, the percentage of early years settings with working links to schools was 35%, exceeding the intended target of 30%.

In September 2008 a new Communication, Language and Literacy Development project was established within the Gravesham LCSP, developing collaborative working across schools and early years settings through joint training and exchange

visits. This work has been successful and improvements for children in Kent are above the national and regional averages for local authorities in this project.

There was further improvement in Foundation Stage Profile data in 2008. There are thirteen aspects of learning that are assessed at the end of the reception year and twelve demonstrated improvement in 2008. Kent's performance in the percentage of children achieving the expected level in Foundation Stage was better than nationally in eight out of the thirteen areas. However, overall the percentage was slightly below the national average, at 46% compared to 49%. Work to improve this further will be undertaken in 2009/10.

### Getting results

Kent is committed to ensuring that attainment results for Key Stage 1 and 2 in its schools improve faster than the national average.

This year has shown above average increases in the percentage of pupils achieving Level 2 and above in Key Stage 1 for reading and writing, with an increase of 2% from 82% to 84% for reading and an increase of 1% from 79% to 80% for writing. This is in contrast to the national rates, which have remained static at 84% and 80% respectively. This has been helped by initiatives such as the 23 reading recovery teachers trained as part of the *Every Child a Reader* programme. In 2008, accelerated progress in reading by pupils within the programme increased to 77%.

The percentage of pupils achieving Level 2 and above in Key Stage 1 for mathematics remained the same at 90%, in line with the national rate. This year KCC piloted the *Numbers Count* project, as part of the *Every Child Counts* programme, which is aimed to improve achievement in mathematics for 7 year olds. Statistics from that pilot indicate that children's progress was accelerated by average gains of 14.4 months from 20 one-to-one sessions. We will be looking to roll the pilot out across the county from next year.

"Reading Recovery has raised the profile of reading in the school. People are talking about children's reading all the time at every level". *Carole, Kent Headteacher*

The percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 or above for *both* English and mathematics in Key Stage 2 tests increased by 2% from 67% to 69%. This rate of increase is higher

than the national rate of increase, although the overall percentage remains slightly below the national rate of 72%.

From September 2008, a differentiated programme of support was implemented in target schools. 19 schools were engaged in the *Raising Achievement in Your Schools* project, which provides an enhanced package of adviser support and challenge for schools that in 2006 had been below 65% in English and mathematics at Key Stage 2 for four years. Six of these exceeded the government's base line of 65% in at least one subject whilst others improved their performance. 20 schools were engaged in the *Intensifying Support* programme and 57 in the *Ensuring Success* programme. Both programmes showed improved performance, particularly in mathematics. Further differentiated support is planned for 129 schools from September 2009.

Attainment at GCSE level also continues to improve. In 2008, 49.7% of students achieved 5 or more GCSE A\* - C grades including English and Maths compared to the national average of 47.6%.

The improved proportion of young people leaving care with five or more good grades at GCSE was 16%, which is higher than in similar councils (9%) and nationally (11%).

More students in Kent achieved passes at A level or equivalent with 93% receiving 2 or more A -E grades, a 1% increase on last year. The quality of performance by students increased by more than four percentage points – the greatest improvement over the last four years and maintaining a seven year upward trend.

### **Tackling bullying**

*Kent Safe Schools* has developed, in partnership with the Kent Anti-Bullying Strategy Group, a ground breaking *Anti-Bullying Accreditation Scheme* which is being rolled out across Kent. Currently over 130 schools have or are working towards anti-bullying accreditation, which is set to increase as the scheme expands.

An on-line survey about bullying took place with more than 8,000 children and young people in November 2008. Results from this showed that 85% of pupils felt that their school were good at dealing with bullying (up from 77% in 2007) and only 12% said that they were being bullied, a significant reduction from 25% in 2007.

### **Supporting families**

KCC and its partners continue to focus on preventative strategies, making sure help is available at the earliest possible opportunity to respond to families in need and those who are vulnerable.

Growth in the number of *Children's Centres* in 2008/09 to 72 has enabled improved local access to services and a range of support for families of children from 0 to age 5.

KCC has expended to 240 the number of *Family Liaison Officers* (FLOs) and *Parent Support Advisers* (PSAs) working to support parents and enhance relationships and communication between parents and schools. This has led to an increase in the number of families accessing the most appropriate support from agencies and increased engagement of parents with schools and with their children's learning. Over 12,500 parents accessed advice through their FLO or PSA this year.

In addition, following consultation with parents, KCC is running a pilot programme in Dover, Gravesham and Maidstone,

appointing 3 PSAs to work with excluded children and their families, families of those at risk of exclusion and families with children out of school. These PSAs are currently working with over 30 families.

"Thank you for the wonderful services you give. I had two lovely ladies come to visit me regarding my son who has Aspergers and ADHD which has created behavioural problems. 'X' has been absolutely fantastic, she has guided me and encourages me to have the confidence to manage my son's behaviour and that I can do it." *Parent*

This year has seen increased participation in family learning and parenting programmes, Kent Adult Education Service has had just under 7,000 learners engaged on family programmes this year, with in excess of another 4,000 through family programmes with *Kent Children's University* and *Children's University in Schools*. Through evaluation parents have reported increased confidence in their own parenting abilities and improved relationships with their children as a result of engaging with both family learning and parenting opportunities.

### **Supporting vulnerable groups**

Protecting children and keeping families together is KCC's overriding priority. We continue to take robust action with our partners and through the Kent Children's Safeguarding Board to protect children and develop a wide range of preventative services, ensuring children are supported in their families and the need to remove children becomes a rarity.

The Safeguarding Board continues to work vigorously to achieve good outcomes for children. The Child Death Review Panel has been put into place and other recent achievements include promoting safe recruitment within the third sector and the broadening of the Kent E-safety strategy to include awareness-raising for parents and carers.

The *Kent Pledge* articulates our commitment to children and young people who become looked after by the local authority to ensure that they enjoy their life and achieve their potential, taking good memories of their time in care into the future. During 2008 we developed the framework for delivering effective corporate parenting in Kent, including the corporate parenting forum and the children in care council. The Kent Freedom Pass was also extended to KCC care leavers up to 21 years of age.

As part of the national *Aiming High for Disabled Children* programme, KCC together with Eastern and Coastal Kent and West Kent PCTs, are developing a range of new services to give children with disabilities the opportunity to experience enjoyable and valuable activities away from their parents and carers and give parents the chance for a break from caring. An example is an overnight activity weekend held at the Bewl/Swattenden centre, which provided disabled youngsters with their first night's stay away from home. As well as activities such as sailing and football the children were responsible for making their own beds to assist them in developing independent living skills.

*Windchimes*, a new resource centre for disabled children from East Kent was opened in July 2008. Children with the most complex needs can stay there for up to seven nights, providing parents with respite and children the opportunity to undertake a range of fun activities and socialise with other young people.

### **Adult skills and learning**

There are numerous adult learning opportunities offered throughout Kent. The *Skills Plus* initiative is offered free to adults wanting to improve their numeracy and literacy and is available through the Kent Adult Education Service. Courses are run mornings, afternoons and evenings so studies can be fitted around family life and other commitments. They are run at dedicated Skills Plus centres throughout the county and prospective students can join at any time throughout the year. In 2008/9 X,XXX learners enrolled on Skills Plus courses.

## 5.4 How we have made a difference

### Every Child a Reader

Every Child a Reader is an initiative which aims to tackle the literacy difficulties that blight many children's lives – particularly those of children who live in poverty. The initiative part funds the salary and training of highly-skilled Reading Recovery teachers in targeted schools, to provide intensive help to children most in need. Of the 386 lowest attaining children in Kent, who received Reading Recovery programmes during the academic year 2008/09, 300 (78%) successfully caught up with peers and in line with national averages. The remaining children made significant progress, with the majority making at least twice the expected rate of progress.

Pauline, a Kent Reading Recovery Teacher, says: "I've been a successful teacher for 35 years and I didn't know how to teach reading until I did Reading Recovery. To see these children who were always left behind catching up with their peers and going on to make the same progress – that's fantastic."

### Anti-Bullying Accreditation Scheme

Kent Safe Schools launched a pilot project two years ago to provide a county wide accreditation for schools in anti-bullying work. The scheme is designed to ensure that all aspects of anti-bullying work are matched in practice, not just the policy but also preventative work and awareness-raising for the whole school community. The work is supported by Kent Safe schools project officers, who provide training in peer mentoring, mediation and restorative approaches. The anti-bullying co-ordinators work with school leaders to ensure that the impact is strategic and impacts at all levels throughout the school.

One school in Dover took part during 2008/09. The school has been formed through a recent merger between two schools and the Year 6 pupils were having difficulty mixing. Kent Safe Schools worked with the Year 6 teachers and pupils throughout the academic year, including intensive work with the whole school during Anti-Bullying week, to great success. Kate Winspear, KCC anti-bullying co-ordinator says "The final test for me was the last week of term. I was invited in to the school to say goodbye to the Year 6 pupils. I watched as they rehearsed their play, full of good fun and enjoyment, all working together. One child, who had won the poster competition, told me that *'Year 6 had just got better and better'*"

### Family Support

The Children and Families Project (CAFE) was established in 2006 initially as a 6 month pilot project to develop a service to support the children and families of offenders. Following its success, largely to the involvement of a voluntary sector partner with experience of working with excluded families on a London housing estate, the project was continued with funding from KCC and Canterbury Community Safety Partnership and expanded to other areas. Positive outcomes from the project include stable accommodation, parental employment and enhanced family relationships and parenting skills.

Version 0.5  
07/9/09

The project has helped young women such as BW develop a stable family relationship. BW was referred by her partner's Probation Officer when she had a 2 year old child and was expecting another shortly. She was living in unsuitable accommodation and facing eviction. Her partner had an older son with ADHT who lived with them and they had severe finance and debt problems. The CAFE project worker helped them to negotiate with their debtors to resolve the benefit issues. She also helped them to liaise with the older boy's school to recognise his special needs. With CAFÉ's support, the family moved into more suitable and stable accommodation and BW started as a volunteer with a young families group last summer. Her partner's elder son is more settled at school with considerable improvement in his attitude and behaviour. BW believes that the CAFE support has "kept them together and made them stronger as a family".

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## **Section 6: Preparing for Employment** **Making education relevant to all our young people**

### **6.1 Why it matters**

Although Kent's overall GCSE and A level results are significantly above the national average and the county is a national leader in improving secondary education, too many students leave school with insufficient careers advice to fulfil their potential or make the right choices for entry into employment, post-16 education or university. Too many students drop out because they make ill-informed choices and too many businesses say there is a significant skills deficit in the young people they employ. Vocational courses that are tailor made to the needs of industry, matching skills to market requirements, and the provision of first-class careers guidance for young people are pivotal to our vision.

All school and college leavers should display the hallmarks of employability – knowledge, discipline, motivation, reliability and respect.

### **6.2 What we want to achieve**

- An increase in the number of young people gaining relevant vocational skills and using these to gain employment
- A reduction in the amount of young people who are NEET
- More young people being awarded apprenticeships through the Kent Success programme

### **6.3 What has happened in 2008/09**

#### **Vocational learning**

Kent's *14-24 Innovation Unit* has enjoyed great success in 2008/09 engaging with young people through its range of skills and training programmes. These include vocational masterclasses in partnership with the Royal Ballet and the Fifteen Foundation, employer-led masterclasses, industry specific 'taster' sessions and large skills masterclass conferences. These have given pupils aged 14-16 an insight into the world of work and employment and the skills they will need to be employable.

The number of young people actively engaged in the 14-16 vocational programme continues to increase. In September 2008 over 5,000 learners opted to join a vocational course, and most courses are over-subscribed. Of those attending a vocational course during 2008/09, 98% felt that it was having a positive effect on their lives.

#### **NEETs**

KCC runs a number of specific programmes aimed at young people who are, or are in danger of becoming, NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training). From April 2008, KCC has commissioned the delivery of Connexions Services to the Connexions Partnership Kent & Medway.

The *Skill Force* programme provides innovative courses for young people aged 14-16 who feel disengaged and uninspired by the traditional school curriculum. The Institute of Education at the University of London has evaluated Skill Force as providing "a unique service to schools (and is) successful in meeting the needs of

many disaffected students, improving their motivation and social skills. It has reduced exclusions, improved behaviour and attendance, and provided students with a range of vocational qualifications". In September 2008, 400 young people enrolled on Skill Force. Also in September pilot courses for post-16 students started. The Skill Force Leadership Award is designed to engage Year 12 students who traditionally have been in danger of becoming NEET. The pilot has been highly successful and will be expanded into a full programme from September 2009.

KCC ran two *Brand You Experience* sessions during 2008/09, in Dover and Maidstone. This five-day 'out of school' programme is aimed at supporting vulnerable students who are in danger of becoming NEET. It is designed to raise aspirations, provide direction, raise confidence, increase motivation, and introduce the skills of success. 84% of those that attended these sessions stated that they had found them "potentially life changing" and more are planned for 2009/10.

"I didn't realise until now that anything is possible", *Brand You Experience Participant*

The Kent Community Programme (KCP) is a 3-month programme for those who are already NEET, which combines community-based voluntary work with learning life and

employability skills. At the end of March 2009, KCP had worked with 116 young people (all previously NEET) across Kent, undertaking projects such as renovating Murston Community Centre gardens and assisting in the build of a barn in Dover. The positive routes of progression for the young people are a priority for the KCP project teams. So far, 78% of the young people involved have been guided and supported into either further education, employment or an extended work placement.

The County has taken a strategic approach to preparing groups of particularly vulnerable young people for post 16 pathways. The NEET County Strategy Group has representation from the Youth Offending Service, Alternative Curriculum, Looked After Children, Unaccompanied Minors and Children's Social Services. In 2008/09 the percentage of those aged 16-19 who were NEET and were disabled or had a learning disability was 8.2%, reduced from 10.3% in 2006. In 2008-9 the percentage of young offenders in employment, education and training was 69.8%.

Overall, the percentage of those aged 16-18 within Kent who are NEET decreased from 5.2% to 4.7% in 2008/09, significantly ahead of the national average of 6.7%.

### **Careers guidance**

High quality impartial careers advice and guidance is vital for school children to ensure that they make the career choices that suit them. Providing this information is a priority for KCC. During 2008/09, KCC has worked with leading careers advice teachers to develop a Kent Careers Education Curriculum Framework, due to start in schools in September 2009 and funded the development of nine lead teachers to focus on Careers, Education and Guidance developments, who were appointed in January 2009.

84% of secondary schools have completed the Information, Advice and Guidance careers library check and 64% of schools have reached the green standard.

Fostering good relationships between schools and the local businesses is a key way of raising students' awareness of job opportunities and helping them to understand what type of career they would be interested in pursuing. Through *Kent Works*, KCC facilitated work-related learning activity for over 7,000 young people across the county in the 2007/8 academic year. This type of activity included interview days, career awareness activity, and preparation for work experience and enterprise.

### **Apprenticeships**

The *Kent Success* apprenticeship programme has enjoyed another successful year. The programme is now a fully established and formalised employment route of entry into KCC. It is regarded as an integral element of KCC's wider workforce development strategy and KCC recruitment procedures have been re-designed to enable the easier employment of apprentices into permanent posts, in line with KCC's wider strategic workforce goals of employing more young people.

"After spending 7 months on Job Seekers Allowance, I honestly believe completing a Kent Success Apprenticeship was the best life choice I've made to date."  
*Alex Ellis, former Kent Success apprentice*

In June 2008, KCC established an innovative strategic partnership with the Learning Skills Council Kent and Medway and the Kent Association of Training Organisations to strategically lead the way in building

apprenticeships and changing the landscape of opportunity for young people, adults and employers countywide.

As at March 2009, 228 Kent apprenticeships had been taken on by KCC. Of those that have completed the programme, around 70% have remained permanently employed by KCC, 20% have found employment with other private or public sector organisations and the remainder are being supported to ensure that they move forward positively into employment and further training opportunities.

In 2009/10, priority focus will be given to radically increasing the establishment of apprenticeship schemes across the wider Kent public sector and work is already underway with the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) initiative and the contractor for the Turner Contemporary project in Thanet to provide apprenticeship placements.

## **6.4 How we have made a difference**

### **Kent Success**

Kent Success is KCC's internal Apprenticeship Programme, which enables young people aged 16 to 19 to achieve an accredited qualification in a supported work placement across a wide range of vocational skill areas. In addition, the programme provides young people with an extensive range of life and employability skills.

Chris Mitchell found out about Kent Success at his local job centre. "I got fairly average results at school, so I was finding it hard to get into work and to get into the work mode. I had a few part time jobs, like working in the local chip shop. Then at the job centre I saw the KEY training services leaflet and I thought the scheme sounded quite good."

Version 0.5  
07/9/09

Chris is now in a finance assistant job role at KCC, having realised during his apprenticeship that finance was the area he was interested in. Summing up his experience as an apprentice Chris says, "it was a good stepping platform, I made some friends through it, and it was a good move forward."

### **Swale Skills Centre**

The Swale Skills Centre opened in September 2008 and is funded by Kent County Council, the Kent and Medway Learning Skills Council and Department for Communities and Local Government.

This unique state-of-the-art Vocational Centre is designed to deliver training in construction, engineering and green sustainable technologies to all those 14 years and above. The Centre has a strong ethos of work environment and has been purposely positioned on the Eurolink Business Park to be in the heart of industry.

120 students from schools across the borough attend the skills centre one day a week as part of their GCSE option or vocational training. The number of young people taking part in a construction or engineering course there is expected to double in September 2009. As well as school age students, the centre also caters for post-16 studies and employers use the facilities to train their apprentices.

### **Master Classes**

In 2008 Kent Works joined with Brand You to facilitate a series of Master Class conferences across Kent, aimed towards year 10 and 11 students, nearing the end of compulsory education. These events are designed to introduce young people to key employability skills ranging from teamwork to business & customer awareness. They also ran Master Class Taster days aimed at year 9 pupils, which were industry specific sessions run by enthusiastic professionals, covering sectors such as engineering, media and retail.

Feedback from young people and teachers attending these events has been very positive. One teacher said "They enjoyed the environment and conference facilities, it was out of their comfort zone, but raised their aspirations". Student feedback included: "I think this could really help someone who is not sure what they want in life" and "Today has inspired me".

## **Section 7: Enjoying Life** **Kent, a great place to live and work**

### **7.1 Why it matters**

How we spend our leisure time is crucial to enjoying life in Kent. Kent has a unique heritage, beautiful countryside and great choice of leisure activities. Opportunities are all around us and there is a huge variety to suit all interests.

We must ensure that residents and visitors can discover what this county has to offer and can participate in enjoying life in Kent.

### **7.2 What we want to achieve**

- Kent established as a centre for the arts
- Continued growth in local sport across Kent
- A modern library service fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- More young people engaged in cultural activities across Kent
- A network of volunteers to support sport and cultural events across the county

### **7.3 What has happened in 2008/09**

#### **Culture**

KCC has worked hard to support arts and culture across Kent in 2008/09. The first *Kent Cultural Strategy Summit* was held in February 2009 and was attended by over 130 partners from across the county. The event helped to establish consensus on the value of culture and cultural planning and strengthened Kent's position and profile of Kent as a developer of the arts. Following the summit, a Kent Cultural Strategy is being developed, to be launched in early 2010, which will align with the KCC Regeneration agenda, in terms of recognising culture as a driver or contributor to area regeneration and community cohesion.

KCC supported several nationally-recognised arts events held in Kent during 2008/09, including the *Folkestone Triennial* and *Whitstable Biennial*. It also helped to secure £40,000 of investment for the *Light Up Open Up* event held in Dover to launch the Cultural Olympiad in the South East.

Opportunities have been created for more young people to get involved in theatre activity across Kent. The *Kent County Youth Theatre Festival* was successfully staged for the first time in March 2009, based on extensive prior consultation of organisations in Kent and wider research. This drew 150 participants and the resulting energy and consensus has enabled the start-up of new initiatives to drive forward youth theatre development.

Considerable progress has been made 2008/09 in preparation for the completion of the *Turner Contemporary* Gallery in Margate by 2010. Kent-based contractor Durtneils were appointed in October 2008 to build the gallery and work at the site began in November 2008. The gallery building programme has made noted improvements to the whole of the eastern seafront area of Margate, such as the de-dualling of Fort Hill, completed in Autumn 2008.

The Turner Contemporary Project Space occupied the former Marks and Spencer building on Margate High Street from February 2008 to September 2009, helping to build audience capacity and generate further interest in the project. A varied artistic programme will continue in the period prior to the gallery opening.

### **Sport & Leisure**

Local sport across KCC has been helped to grow through practical help and support, including administering small revenue & capital grants and helping organisations to secure funding. During 2008/09 KCC's Sport, Leisure and Olympics Service levered over £4 of external funding for every £1 spent on the service.

KCC has continued to support sports clubs in gaining nationally recognised accreditation through the *Clubmark programme*. KCC's Sport, Leisure & Olympics Service become registered in summer 2008 to run a local Clubmark Licence scheme with district councils, in order to support clubs from minority sports through the

“Clubmark identifies the club as a flagship within our community and for parents to see that we are safe and accessible” *Sheppey Rugby Club*

accreditation process. So far, 150 sports clubs across Kent have received Clubmark accreditation.

We have worked with district councils during 2008/09 to establish

10 local *Community Sports Networks* with voluntary sector sport representation, so that the local voice of sport can feed into local plans, alongside other partners. This is below the target of 13, due to a lack of interest in some parts of the county and reduced emphasis from Sport England, but more work will be done to further this in 2009/10.

Kent's work to secure a legacy from the Olympic and Paralympic Games was nationally recognised in 2008 and awarded Beacon Status. Through the *Kent Free Access to National-level Sportspeople* scheme, during the last 3 years over 700 national level sportspeople have had access to free sports facilities across the county as well as discounts on equipment, clothing and physiotherapy services. In 2008/09, 20 top performers, both disabled and non-disabled, have been directly supported with funding, branded clothing and access to dedicated sports science support funded via the County Council. In addition, a further 5 performers have been supported through P & O Funding.

This is starting to show real results for Kent sportspeople, including bronze and silver medals in Rhythmic Gymnastics at the Youth Olympic Festival in January 2009, 6 swimming gold medals in the DSE Junior Nationals 2009 and a top 10 world table tennis champion who participated in the Beijing Paralympics Games in 2008.

Kent also accommodated squads for training from USA, Canada, Iceland, France, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, Ukraine, Slovenia and Latvia.

As part of our *Kent Pledge* to children and young people who become looked after by KCC, arrangements have been established for free access to certain leisure facilities in 5 districts in Kent: Ashford, Dover, Maidstone, Thanet and Tonbridge and Malling.

Kent's *Library Services* enjoyed another good year. Overall issues are up 2.8% on 2007/08 and visitors to libraries have increased by 9%.

KCC has sought to improve the user experience through its *Library Modernisation* programme, with libraries in Ramsgate, Tenterden, Hadlow, East Peckham and Marling Cross undergoing modernisation during 2008/09. The programme seeks to find new ways of working, co-locating and working with other partners to deliver an improved, seamless service to our customers, such as locating libraries in the new Thanet and Tenterden Gateways. This has helped the service reach many more customers, with issues at the newly-refurbished Ramsgate and East Peckham libraries increasing by 67% and 11% respectively compared to 2008.

The number of young people involved in activities and borrowing books has increased at modernised libraries. On average children's fiction issues at these libraries have increased by 4.09% and children's non-fiction by 4.6% compared with 2007/8.

"Love the look and feel of the new library.  
Peaceful and welcoming."

"Lovely, bright, modern. Loads of new books"

*Customers at Hadlow Library*

In Kent, the National Year of Reading was launched in April 2008 under the banner, *Kent: a Great Place to Read.*, It has acted as a catalyst for numerous projects and initiatives such as the *Doorstep Library* in Sheerness, where volunteers from Seashells Children's Centre read stories to children in streets and in their homes.

### **Volunteering**

KCC has sought to build a strong partnership with statutory, voluntary and business organisations to support volunteering across the county. The *Kent Voluntary Advisory Group* is able to identify good practice as well as barriers to volunteer engagement and seek ways to work together to increase involvement. For example, Kent Police worked with Kent Volunteers to develop opportunities for volunteers across their services. Now some 330 are engaged, with a sizeable waiting list.

KCC launched the *Kent eVents Team* (KET) project in May 2008, a network of people willing to volunteer for one-off sport, leisure and cultural events, ready to support the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. This has been developed jointly with the volunteering networks in the county. At the end of March 2009 just under 500 people had registered with KET as volunteers and 29 sports events had been supported. We will look to build on this next year to ensure we meet our intended target of 2,500 ahead of the 2012 Games.

*Ashford Volunteers* are located in the Tenterden Gateway, and have seen a significant upturn in the number of people applying for volunteering projects since its opening.

*KCC Employee Volunteering* continues to grow. 35% of KCC staff have volunteered with many more using the encouragement we provide to volunteer in their own time. Benefits include personal and team development and evidence of making a difference to projects and the community. One example was the work conducted by Kent Highway Services Staff from Gravesend, who took part in volunteering days at the Rare Breeds Centre near Woodchurch. The Centre is run by the Canterbury Oast Trust, which changes the lives of people with learning and physical disabilities,

creating opportunities for those who would not be able to look after themselves outside a safe and supportive environment.

## **7.4 How we have made a difference**

### **Supporting future Olympians**

KCC is working in partnership with a number of other organisations to support Kent sportsmen and women to compete at a national level in the run up to the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

This year KCC has provided enhanced support to 20 of the county's top performers. These sportsmen and women were selected across a range of sports, and include disabled and non disabled performers. The ambitions of all of the performers include selection for GB at future Olympic and Paralympic Games and International events

One beneficiary is Alek Makucewicz a 17yr old international fencer from Dartford. KCC funding has enabled Alek to work closely with a sports scientist at the University of Greenwich, a nutritionist and a sports psychologist. Whilst through FANs Alek has made regular use of his local Sports Centre to train. Alek's coach recently contacted KCC to say: "all this support over the last few months has made a significant improvement in Alek as a fencer, he is fitter and a lot more confident, and this is reflected in a significant improvement in his results over recent months. Once again thank you for all your help and support".

### **Kent Youth Theatre**

Kent County Youth Theatre Festival was successfully staged for the first time in March 2009, based on extensive prior consultation of organisations in Kent and wider research. This drew 150 young participants, who enjoyed workshops on stage make-up, TV production, stage choreography, movement and new writing. The resulting energy and consensus has enabled the start-up of new initiatives to drive forward youth theatre development. Another event is planned for 2010.

### **Hadlow Library**

Hadlow Library is one of the latest KCC Libraries to undergo refurbishment as part of the Library Modernisation programme and the transformed building opened in April 2008. As Hadlow was set in a rural location, it has a fairly restricted customer base and visitor numbers had been in decline. Since the modernisation, visits are up around 13%, adult issues 13% and children's issues 52%.

As well as transforming the building, KCC has sort to change the way in which the library is used by the local community, including setting up a new reading group, arranging author visits and allowing the library to be used out of hours by local community groups. Caroline Wetten, one of Hadlow library's regular users, said "I think the modernisation is a good idea. People tend to view libraries as stuffy places, but it is now light and airy, and is easy to walk around. It helps that the staff are always friendly too, even though they haven't changed. There are new things going on that you wouldn't see in older libraries. I use the computers at the library now as well as the books."

## **Section 8: Keeping Kent Moving**

### **Tackling congestion**

#### **8.1 Why it matters**

Traffic congestion is the bane of everyone's life, whether they travel by car, bus or train. It causes frustration and pollution in equal measures, slows down economic development and hampers efforts to bring inward investment into Kent.

Further investment is needed for Kent roads and the council will continue to press the Government to give Kent its fair share of funding for new roads and improvements. KCC will also press for the building of a third lower Thames crossing and to reduce the impact on Kent of *Operation Stack*.

#### **8.2 What we want to achieve**

- High quality public transport available for all
- Better journey times and less congestion around Kent's major towns
- Greater public satisfaction with Kent's roads and pavements

#### **8.3 What has happened in 2008/09**

##### **Improving public transport**

KCC has an excellent record of working with bus providers to improve public transport in Kent. This is reflected by year on year increases in the number of people using Kent bus services. There was a 6.8% increase in 2008/09 over the previous year's figures to 55.2 million passenger journeys.

The *Ashford Quality Bus Partnership* was launched in February 2009. This included the introduction of 10 brand new low floor easy access buses, which are now running on Ashford's A line route. The buses were funded through a KCC *Kickstart* grant, with Stagecoach providing additional funding and marketing to increase patronage. Around two thirds of the total bus fleet in Kent are now easy access, low floor entry.

KCC provides financial support to around 200 bus services and seven *Kent Karriers*. Kent Karriers provide 'dial-a-ride' accessible services to disabled people and those living more than 500m from an existing bus route. A successful re-tendering of around 25% of all bus services supported by KCC has been completed within budget, ensuring services can be sustained during 2009.

KCC is providing additional funding to the *Kent and Medway Concessionary Travel Scheme for over 60s*. This has enabled the scheme's start time to be returned to 9.00am and for disabled companion passes to be valid across Kent.

During 2008/09 the *Kent Freedom Pass*, where for £50 per year young people in academic years 7-11 can travel for free on public bus services in Kent, was rolled-out to schools beyond the original pilot areas of Canterbury, Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge. In June 2008 the scheme was extended to Maidstone, Malling, Dover and Shepway and in January 2009 to schools in Swale and Thanet. The pass will be offered Kent-wide from June 2009.

The scheme has proved immensely popular, with 12,800 passes having been issued by end March 2009.

As well as the obvious benefits for young people, the scheme has had a positive effect on congestion, with KCC surveys indicating a 2-6% reduction in journey times near schools with a high take up of passes and a big shift from car users shortly after the introduction of the Freedom Pass.

On the rail front, lobbying of *Eurostar* by KCC and others was successful in getting services between Ashford and Brussels restored. A new timetable for domestic passengers comes into operation in December 2009 which will improve connections between Kent and London with more trains running from most towns in Kent. Overall, Southeastern will be operating 200 more services from mid-December – a 5% increase in capacity.

### **Reducing congestion**

Through the *Traffic Management Centre*, KCC has enabled improvements in the management of traffic to reduce congestion in Maidstone. Average peak journey times on key routes in Maidstone have reduced and the situation is being monitored.

A series of health checks at key locations in the network were carried out throughout 2008/09. These have resulted in a programme of over 50 “quick win” improvements ranging from adjusting traffic signal timings to renewing white lines, which have helped to improve traffic flows.

During 2008/09, Kent Police agreed to devolve some powers to ‘congestion busting’ teams, known as *Kent Traffic Officers (KTOs)*, who will be able to deal with traffic issues such as obstruction and will have powers to move vehicles on where appropriate. Extensive training has taken place throughout the year and all those participating have passed the required examination in order to receive the delegated powers. The KTO scheme is due to be officially launched in June 2009, once it has received approval from Kent Police.

### **Improving roads**

This year Kent Highways Services (KHS) has made improvements to the way in which it repairs roads and pavements across the county.

We are providing twice as many road patching crews as we were in April 2008 and this will be sustained throughout 2009/10.

Extra funding of approximately 35% has been provided to enable a significant increase in carriageway surfacing schemes, with nearly 1,000,000 m<sup>2</sup> of road intended to be resurfaced in 2009.

The cold weather in early 2009 caused havoc on the county’s roads, with frost creating major damage and potholes. To cope with this KHS provided additional crews for repair, peaking at 70 at the end of February 2009. During this cold spell approximately 3,000 potholes a week were being repaired by KHS. In the period

January to March 2009 over 12,000 potholes were repaired.

“I would like to thank Kent Highways for how fast they responded to a request for service. Within 30 minutes of the problem being reported to the police, Kent Highways came out and fixed the problem. I was so impressed with how polite the engineer was and how quickly Kent Highways sorted this problem out to stop any danger.” Mrs A, Margate

These improvements are having a positive impact on our customers. Net

Version 0.5  
07/9/09

satisfaction of residents with the condition of roads in Kent has steadily increased from 5% in 2006/07 to 19% in 2007/08 and 29% in 2008/09.

This is a significant improvement and compares very favourably with national surveys by Ipsos-Mori, which show net satisfaction with road maintenance remaining static at around 6% since 2006/07. KCC will look to build on this momentum into 2009/10 and beyond.

Closer links are now in place with all Parish/Town Councils and KCC Members, who all have a designated named Liaison Officer. Good relationships are being built and we are engaging positively with local communities.

## **8.4 How we have made a difference**

### **Kent Freedom Pass**

The Kent Freedom Pass (KFP) arose out of the views expressed by the Kent Youth County Council that young people needed better access to buses. The KFP was introduced as a pilot in 3 areas and following its success is now being rolled-out across the county.

Achieved through a partnership between KCC, Kent's bus operators and Kent schools, the KFP allows young people in academic years 7–11 to travel free at the point of use, on any public bus in Kent, at any time of the day, week or year, for a one-off annual fee of just £50. Due to the KFP young people across Kent now have the independence to travel to and from school or evening and weekend activities, as well as throughout the school holidays.

We undertook a questionnaire survey of young people in May 2008 in conjunction with the Kent Youth County Council. Responses demonstrate the range of benefits the project brings. These included:

"It has helped me to get to school early and I have been able to see my friends at weekends" *Katrina Rootes, Angley School*

"It gives me freedom to have a social life beyond school" *Thomas Ashby, Herne Bay High*

"I have used it to get to school and I have started to use it to help to get to my part time job" *Stuart Smitherman, Herne Bay High*

### **Keeping Kent Moving through the Snow**

The 20 October marked the beginning of winter for Kent Highway Services. From that date our winter service plans came into effect and we were ready to work to ensure that Kent's roads were kept safe during the winter months.

The planning that had taken place enabled the 'ice-busters' to respond quickly and efficiently when the snow arrived in early 2009. More than 20,000 tonnes of salt had been ordered and was stored throughout Kent in preparation for the severe weather.

Version 0.5  
07/9/09

The 53 salting crews worked throughout the nights to keep the main roads safe and passable, covering about a third of the county's road network, over 1500 miles.

Residents across Kent got in touch with KHS to express their thanks at the way in which the roads were kept clear during the winter. These included Mr E from Meopham who said: "Thank you for your excellent response to my request to grit our road. I phoned your service desk reporting that our road was like a skating rink. Within 2 hours our road and the road leading to us had been gritted. I was very impressed with this level of service, especially in the very inclement weather we have experienced over the past week".

### **Traffic Management Centre**

The Traffic Management Centre (TMC) was designed and built to enable Kent Highway Services (KHS) to more effectively manage the road network within the Maidstone area. The successful development and use of systems such as Automatic Number Plate Recognition, closed circuit television cameras, variable message signs, vehicle detectors and a KHS database called 'Cutlas' enable the TMC operators to provide 'hands-on' management of Maidstone's traffic systems.

This has enabled the TMC to ensure that when large-scale public events are held in Maidstone, such as the Radio 1 "Big Weekend" in July 2008, minimal disruption is caused to traffic and roads. The TMC has had a positive effect on congestion and journey times in and around Maidstone. A 5.6% reduction in travel time into Maidstone was recorded from Summer 2008 through to December 2008.

## **Section 9: Environmental Excellence & High Quality Homes**

### **Future generations will judge us by the quality of the environment they inherit**

#### **9.1 Why it matters**

At the heart of our approach will be a renewed pledge to protect and enhance the beauty and diversity of our countryside. The housing growth agenda enforced by central government presents enormous challenges for Kent. Our challenge is to manage this growth sensitively so that it results in the construction of quality housing with the minimum environmental impact. KCC will continue to ensure that new and existing public buildings (such as schools and offices) are as environmentally friendly as possible.

#### **9.2 What we want to achieve**

- A clean and protected natural Kent
- All people in Kent able to access and enjoy the Kent countryside
- Sustainable new housing growth across the county
- Long-term empty properties brought back into use across Kent

#### **9.3 What has happened in 2008/09**

##### **Enjoying the environment**

The *Kent Countryside Access Improvement Plan* sets out a clear strategy to protect, manage, enhance and promote access to Kent's countryside and won the prestigious "most innovative and enterprising improvement plan" in the country in March 09.

"Thank you for getting the bridleway sorted out. For the first time in years I am able to enjoy hacking out without worrying about having to turn back because of badly hung gates. Because of my disability, I am unable to mount if I have to get off to open gates and it was bliss to go round Dry Hill the other day and really enjoy the ride"  
*H Owen – Crippenden*

This includes new design standards to improve the quality of the furniture on the *Public Rights Of Way network* (gates, stiles, bridges etc). The standards were recognised in "Country Walking Magazine" as leading the way nationally in improving access to the countryside.

Four new walks in Faversham have been promoted this year in

partnership with Faversham Enterprise Partnership and Shepherd Neame Brewery.

In 2008/09 15 routes to schools were substantially improved and are now providing a facility for *walking buses* of school children to use, relieving traffic congestion at peak times in those areas.

A new *Countryside Education Pack* was launched in February 2009 and distributed to all primary schools in Kent. The pack gives teachers lesson and activity ideas tied into the National Curriculum for junior school children. They cover topics like travel to school, the Countryside Code, public rights of way, and who looks after them.

This year, KCC has also worked hard to improve our popular *Country Parks*, and new play areas were installed at four sites which all received very positive customer feedback.

We sought to protect and enhance Kent's valuable man-made heritage and in 2008 the *Historic Fortifications Project*, supported by Interreg funding, was completed. In the last four years this has helped deliver £2.5m for conservation and promotion projects including accessible trails, interpretation panels, audio-visual displays and educational projects.

## **Housing**

Housing growth in Kent must be sustainable, with the right level of infrastructure in place to support it. Through the Kent Partnership, KCC is involved in the development of a new *Kent Housing Strategy*, which is reviewing evidence on housing need and mix in terms of type, size and tenure and how planning policies might be deployed to address imbalances in the type and size of housing accommodation.

KCC is committed to ensuring that where feasible new housing development is carried out on previously developed land. Housing completion rates and the contribution of previously developed land to this remained high until early 2008. However the severe downturn in the housing market associated with the credit crunch is affecting both the level of new development and its composition in the short term.

With regards to existing property, the *No Use Empty* Initiative continued to enjoy success during 2008/09, with 728 long-term empty properties brought back into use in East Kent, exceeding its target figure of 511 properties by around 40%.

A key achievement was the enforced sale of 77 Eastern Esplanade, Cliftonville, Margate which had been in disrepair for some 20 years. Town & Country Housing Group worked with No Use Empty and Thanet District Council to bring the property back into use as affordable housing, with the first unit becoming occupied in January 2009.

Following success of the Initiative in East Kent, it was rolled-out across the rest of the Kent districts in Spring 2008.

## **9.4 How we have made a difference**

### **Faversham Walks**

2008 saw the launch of a ground-breaking Leader+ funded project to develop Faversham as a 'centre of excellence' for walking.

KCC and the Faversham Enterprise Partnership established a new partnership with Swale Borough Council, the Faversham Area Tourism Association, a consortium of local businesses, including Shepherd Neame Brewery, and local volunteer groups.

Together they developed and promoted 4 new co-branded (Faversham and Explore Kent) circular walks, supported by a voucher scheme offering visitors discounts at many local businesses. Significant investment was made in improving Faversham's public rights of way network

Laurence Young, Faversham Enterprise Partnership Manager says: "The Faversham project has made a tangible, positive difference to the local area. Businesses such as

eateries and B&Bs are reporting increasing numbers of walkers using them, good news for the local economy. Local people have also been using the routes for leisure, health and education benefits”.

Linda Harrison the leader of the walk group in Faversham regularly uses sections of the Faversham Walking Project routes. She says: “Many of my walkers have completed the four walks and are full of praise for their excellent presentation. I know that the project has inspired people to make more of their surroundings, and to benefit their health by walking on a more regular basis, and I feel that the Walking Project has been tremendously valuable in this respect.”

### **The Shorne Archaeology Project**

The Shorne Archaeology Project began as part of a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) funded Project in 2006, to identify, investigate, interpret and conserve some of the many different archaeological sites within Shorne Woods Country Park. Extended for two years until 2011, the Project has focused in particular on the remains of Randall Manor. To date four seasons of community archaeological excavations have been carried out on the site. Starting as a one week community dig, for the last two summers this has been extended to a three week excavation, with events tied into the nationwide Festival of Archaeology.

The project specifically set out to engage local communities and in 2008 involved hundreds of people from a wide age range, including local primary schools, archaeology clubs, brownie groups and a school for children with special needs. The open nature of the site enables people to get up close to and be inspired by their local heritage. Feedback from people who took part has been very positive. Comments included: “Thank you for the open day on Sunday which my children greatly enjoyed, my 6 year old daughter has now decided that she's going to dig up bones and other old stuff and find treasure when she's a grown up!” and “the archaeology weekend was brilliant, many thanks to whoever organised it”.

### **Empty Property Initiative**

The Empty Property Initiative is a partnership between KCC and district councils, which aims to improve the physical urban environment in Kent by bringing empty properties back into use as quality housing accommodation.

This year the Initiative has supported the renovation of a Victorian warehouse situated in Dover Town Centre, which had been derelict for 10 years. The Initiative provided an interest-free loan to meet the cost of turning the building into 8 residential units, which were due to be marketed in June 2009. Owner of the property, Philip Bigio, said: “The No Use Empty Initiative has been a tremendous support in facilitating the re-development of the building. We have been able to move quickly, carry out the renovations in under a year, and the net result is a cluster of new apartments in a prime location in the centre of town, which I'm sure will be sought after.”

## **Section 10: Improved Health, Care & Well-Being: Staying Healthy** **An essential part of life is staying healthy**

### **10.1 Why it matters**

Good health matters to all of us. Obesity, teenage pregnancy and smoking can all result in poor health and a lower quality of life. At Kent County Council we have a responsibility to give people support to make 'healthy lifestyle' decisions.

### **10.2 What we want to achieve**

- More adults and young people taking part in regular physical activity
- All Kent schools achieving Healthy Schools status
- Young people in Kent supported to make healthy lifestyle decisions
- Reduction in health inequalities between the best and worst wards in Kent

### **10.3 What has happened in 2008/09**

#### **Keeping Fit**

The Kent Healthy Weight Strategy promotes the key messages of more physical activity in everyday life and healthy travel through walking and cycling.

Cycling and walking to school is being actively encouraged with enthusiastic take up by pupils. There was a 1% shift to sustainable modes of travel to school in 2008/9 (against 2006/07 school census base data). In addition, as of March 09 114,000 school-run journeys had been saved through walk to school initiatives. In 2008/09 The Sustrans *Bike It* project in Ashord, that is part funded by Kent Highway Services, saw a 7.8% increase in the number of children who cycle to school every day and a 14.6% decrease in the number of children who never cycle to school.

*Naturally Active* and *Walking for Health* programmes are delivering hundreds of country walks within Kent's country parks. *Naturally Active* has attracted well over 400 people in Dartford and Gravesham

There are now 30 *Activmobs* across Kent, extending the fitness of people through a variety of different activities ranging from dancing to gardening and even dog training.

The number of Kent adults who participate in sport for at least 30 minutes 3 or more times a week has increased slightly in 2008/09 to 21.2% from 20.5% last year but still remains just below the national average (21.5%). More work will be carried out in 2009/10 to increase this.

KCC has had more success in increasing activity levels of young people during 2008/09, with the percentage of pupils taking part in at least 2 hours PE and school sport per week increasing from 87% in 2007/08 to 88%. In addition, the number of out of school hours sports programmes stood at 121 at end March 2009, up from 113 a year earlier.

KCC has worked with the School Sport Partnerships, local authorities and Extended Schools Managers to co-ordinate a successful bid for over £1million from Sport England to run a *Sport Unlimited Programme* as part of the 5 hour offer for young people to participate in PE and sport per week. In 2008/09 approximately 100 schemes were funded, providing opportunities for nearly 6,000 young people to

regularly participate across Kent in a wide range of sports opportunities. There are plans to increase this number to over 10,000 young people in 2009/10 and 2010/11.

The finals of the *Kent School Games* took place in June 2008, involving over 500 schools and 30,000 young people taking part in over 23 different sports. The Games have acted as a catalyst for additional competitive sport in the county are becoming embedded within the schools competition structures, with the Competition Managers playing a key role in ensuring increased competitive opportunities for young people in schools.

### **Healthy Eating**

The *Kent Healthy Schools* programme has had a 100% sign up in Thanet, which is our most deprived area, and is on target to reach 100% of all Kent schools by December 2009.

Further work has been undertaken in 2008/09 to help children and families with healthy eating and community healthy eating pilots have been launched to increase the uptake of healthier school meals including free school meals. Funding has been provided for two *community chef* programmes in Swale and Dartford, launched in May and July 2008 respectively.

“The fruit and veg scheme encourages them to eat good meals, not takeaway; they reckon everyone’s obese don’t they. It’s nice for children to have a home cooked dinner and enjoy it. It’s all fresh” *Parent, Vale View Community School Dover*

Lack of access to fruit and vegetables has been identified as a barrier to healthy eating and as a result four *fruit and vegetable bag schemes* were launched in areas of Kent with accessibility problems. The first bag scheme was launched at the Riverside Centre, Gravesend

in May 2008 in conjunction with Gravesend Borough Council. It runs weekly on Wednesdays and bags are sold for £3. After just 4 weeks of operation an impressive 100 bags were being sold weekly before the scheme had been formally promoted.

The latest available data shows that obesity levels in children (in years R & 6 combined) have reduced from the initial baseline set in 2006/07. Whilst this is cause for optimism the coming years will establish the trend as the data is gathered from different cohorts of children each year.

## **10.4 How we have made a difference**

### **Kent School Games**

With its partners KCC held the first Kent School Games Finals in June 2008 over a two week period.

There is great enthusiasm for the establishment of the Games, mirroring the County’s commitment to building a long-term legacy for young people from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

During the finals there were 52 separate events held resulting in 12,000 medal winners. The finals went down well with the pupils taking part in the Games. Didi Enonuya, a medal winner said: “I started as a girl who wanted to try something new

and ended as a gold medallist. I was representing Dartford Grammar School for Girls, which was a huge honour and an even bigger honour was representing Team Dartford. I started the shot putt competition just hoping it was enough and in the end I found out that I had won. It was an amazing feeling. I am so happy that I tried something new which has brought me so much success.”

### **HOUSE campaign**

HOUSE is a set designed as 4 rooms of a house in a series of temporary shops in 12 town centres. The set includes a dance machine, Wii, music, internet access and is a friendly, informal and safe place for young people to hang out. The environment was designed by young people to create a space conducive to them listening to health information and receiving help and support on their own terms.

HOUSE is hugely popular with young people with average attendances of over 50 young people per day – sometimes as many as 170 young people in a single day. Many of those who attend are young people who are not currently known to our services and young people are reporting a positive change to lifestyle attitudes and behaviours as a result of HOUSE. In 2008 a young man of 16 visited the first House in Gravesend. After about a week or so he started telling the HOUSE staff about a range of problems he had – drinking, smoking. The friendly and informal way that HOUSE operates, where no one is “forcing” help or services on people, led to this young man coming back again and again until he felt able to explain what was happening in his life and get the support he needed to find a better place to live, training for employment and eventually a job.

### **Community chef**

In May 2008, a Community Chef was recruited to the Isle of Sheppey Healthy Living Centre to work with families and children to give them confidence about food skills and cooking, a better understanding of nutrition and improve their health and diets.

Ten different targeted groups, including young people and one-parent families have had the opportunity to take part in an eight-week cooking and food skills programme, which is based on the British Nutrition Foundation’s basic life skills cooking programme.

Mike Spackman, a trained chef, stated “you have to get involved with them- how to cook, share and eat good food that’s affordable. Give people the confidence that cooking for yourself can be fun. They need to be able to stand on their own two feet, and look after themselves well.”

One of the ladies attending the class said “we thought kebabs tasted nice, but coming here and tasting cooked food from fresh ingredients is so much better. My favourite dish to cook is chicken curry I never knew how to cook anything like that before. Knowing that it hasn’t come out of a jar and that we made the sauce ourselves, made it taste so much better”

## **Section 11: Improved Health, Care & Well-Being: Maintaining Independence**

### **Helping older people and those with disabilities to be independent**

#### **11.1 Why it matters**

People are living longer. This provides major opportunities as well as challenges. KCC will encourage people to plan for their health, social and economic well-being in old age and champion senior citizens. We will lead by example to promote a positive image of older people and the value their contribution makes to community life.

The majority of older people want to live independently in their own homes for as long as possible and this is also true for younger people with disabilities or mental health problems. We will move away from traditional care models towards providing greater choice and control, giving people the support to lead their lives as they want, in their own homes.

#### **11.2 What we want to achieve**

- More older people and people with disabilities living independently
- Fewer avoidable admissions to hospital
- Carers of all ages supported
- More people, and particularly older people, in receipt of Direct Payments

#### **11.3 What has happened in 2008/09**

##### **Promoting independence**

In 2008/09 the number of people supported by community based services provided by Kent Adult Social Services to live independently rose to just over 35,000, an increase of around 2,500 from the year before.

In partnership with Eastern Kent and Coastal PCT, the Directorate was successful in bidding for the £1.5 million Partnerships for Older People Project. Out of this has sprung the *Independence through the Voluntary action of Kent Elders* project. The project is designed to give older people greater independence, enhance self-management through choice and control and reduce hospital admissions. Feedback and initial research suggests that the project has been a success to date. East Kent

*"We were very grateful for the way you respected my father's dignity and treated him with such dedicated care and compassion throughout", P Family, Newham*

is about to extend the project with six additional Care Navigators to work as brokers for self directed support.

KCC was one of only 3 authorities selected by the Department Health to be a *Whole System Demonstrator*

(WSD), which was officially launched in April 2008. The WSD project has enabled KCC to offer to more people its innovative preventative technology services *TeleHealth* and *Telecare*, enabling them to remain in their own homes. The intended outcome is for 1,000 extra people to be offered Telecare and 1,000 extra people to be offered TeleHealth by the programme end date of July 2010.

A key feature of enabling people to continue to live independently is to ensure they have choice and control over the support they need. The development of Direct Payments has made a significant contribution to this. In March 2009, 2342 people

were in receipt of Direct Payments. Over 740 of these are for older people compared to only 9 older people in 2002. A range of innovative actions has supported the increasing take up of Direct Payments, including the *Kent Card*, which was being used by 831 people as at end March 2009.

Promoting independence continues to be the overall objective which will be driven by *Active Lives for Adults*. This is a programme of total transformation for all of Kent Adult Social Services whether directly provided or commissioned from other agencies. It will deliver a structure and culture that supports people to develop solutions to their needs, from an increasingly responsive and diverse market place. Fundamental to this is *Self-Directed Support*, whereby people can self manage their support or, if they choose to, have somebody else manage it for them. KCC is currently in the middle of implementing this major programme and it will be progressively rolled out during 2009/10.

### **Supporting carers**

KCC is working to strengthen support available to people caring for relatives or friends. A *Kent Adult Carers Strategy* was due to be launched in July 2009, to be delivered by via multi-agency joint commissioning plans.

The *Kent Carers Emergency Card Scheme* was launched in December 2008. The scheme aims to provide carers with peace of mind when away from the person that they care for by offering them as much support as necessary to complete their emergency plan. Currently there are over 750 carers signed up to the scheme and the number is growing steadily and the feedback regarding the scheme has been positive.

A young carers strategy *Invisible People* was launched in June 2008. As part of the strategy, Children's Social Services allocated £20,000 to each of the 5 Young Carers projects across the county to enable them to work directly with local schools. Young carers are increasingly identifying themselves as a result of targeted work in schools and more are taking part in local projects. A range of support is being developed in mainstream and specific settings to meet young carers needs. In 2007/08, through the voluntary sector we were supporting 600 young carers across Kent. At the end of 2008/09 this figure had increased to 950.

Awareness has been raised, particularly within schools, of the needs and the support required by young carers who have caring responsibilities within their families. A group of young carers have assisted in producing a DVD that highlights their caring responsibilities and the physical and emotional impact on them. The DVD is being used as a training aid to raise the awareness of young carers. 160 young carers were funded to join leisure centres in their locality, others attended residential camping weekends. The Young Carers Provider organisations have increased their out of school activities for young carers through services commissioned by the Local Children Services Partnerships.

## **11.4 How we have made a difference**

### **Voluntary Action Maidstone**

As part of the KCC-funded Brighter Futures Group project, VAM operates a supported shopping service for older people, working with a local major supermarket which includes transport, lunch and staff support to complete supermarket shopping.

This service helps people to maintain their social contacts, good nutrition and mobility and is available to individuals who do not meet eligibility criteria for care management intervention.

Mrs H came to use the service after her husband died, as she could not get to the shops on her own. Through the service Mrs H was able to remain independent and go out shopping on her own. It also enabled her to socialise and not become isolated at a time when she was very vulnerable. Mrs H said “that the scheme makes you feel ‘part of something’ and you don’t realise what a great comfort this is to someone when they are alone”.

### **Thanet Day Opportunity Service**

Thanet Day Opportunities Service aims to support people with learning disabilities to lead full and purposeful lives within their own communities and develop a range of friendships, activities, relationships, skills and experience.

The service works with the Job Centre and with parents and carers to help each individual fulfill their aspirations and promote their independence within the community. The service offers job profiling and job coaching to service users and to the employer. Giving this support helps to encourage service users become independent individuals.

Steven works in the Day Opportunities Centre kitchen. He attended Thanet College where he gained his certificate in food hygiene. Steven came to the team to help him find employment. With help from the Job Centre and job coaching from Thanet Day Opportunities Service Steven now works part time at La Joules Cafe in Broadstairs.

Steven says; “I’m happy to be working, I meet lots of people and I’m learning all the time. I feel good and I’m being paid”. Steven, a resident of Cleveland House in Broadstairs, manages his own flat and pays rent. Working has made him more independent. The manager of Cleveland House said “it’s fantastic Steven was given the opportunity to work. It has made him feel he is a valued member of the community”.

### **Kent Young Carers Kearsney**

This year, 88 young carers aged 6 – 11 years old took part in an overnight camp at Kearsney campsite near Dover. A total of 2640 respite hours were provided for the young carers, many of whom had never been away from home overnight and several who had never been camping before. Activities included arts and crafts, sports, team games and challenges, scavenger hunt, face painting, drama and an African drumming workshop.

The weekend was a great success, with positive feedback from all who attended. Comments included “It was really cool and very funny” and “I really enjoyed meeting new friends”. The most important aspect for the young carers themselves was being able to make new friendships and having the opportunity to develop social skills and access activities and social lives outside of their caring roles.

## **Section 12: Stronger & Safer Communities**

### **We must make sure that everyone feels safe in their communities**

#### **12.1 Why it matters**

Although there is much less crime in Kent than in most parts of the country, the 24-hour society, high and increasing traffic volumes and lack of confidence in the criminal justice system have all brought concerns to the people of Kent. Our work with Kent Police, the Kent Community Partnership and Local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) are key to solving these issues.

Crime and antisocial behaviour is often worse in areas that are economically deprived, isolated or in need of regeneration. Vandalism, graffiti, litter, abandoned cars and fly-tipping all degrade communities. Alcohol and drug-related crime is also rising. It is important to promote a strong sense of pride in local communities as well as working with the police to provide services to reassure local people and reduce the fear of crime.

KCC is committed to helping to maintain Kent's low level of burglary and car theft and to working with off-licence, pub and club owners to reduce alcohol-fuelled crime and disorder, antisocial behaviour and domestic abuse. The county council will work with the police to tackle crime and with local people to create stronger communities.

#### **12.2 What we want to achieve**

- Continued reduction in levels of crime and anti-social behaviour across Kent
- People in Kent feeling safe and less fearful of crime
- Less alcohol-fuelled anti-social behaviour, particularly amongst young people
- Fewer young people entering the criminal justice system

#### **12.3 What has happened in 2008/09**

##### **Reducing crime and fear of crime**

Crime and anti-social behaviour across Kent remains at a relatively low level and is reducing. Between 2006/7 and 2008/9 there was an approximate 17% decrease in crime across the KCC area. In particular, domestic burglary per 1,000 households has decreased to 8.2% from 8.5% in 2007/08 and car crime per 1,000 population has reduced from 8.6 in 2007/08 to 7.8 in 2008/09.

People's fear of crime in Kent has also reduced. The percentage of people worried about burglary has decreased from 56% in 2006/07 to 36% in 2008/09 and fear of 4 specific crimes - domestic burglary, car theft, mugging/robbery & physical attack - in Kent has reduced from 44% in 2006/07 to 28% in 2008/09.

Kent has worked with statutory partners such as Kent Police to establish a managed and safe *Night Time Economy*. Across the County between 2007/08 and 2008/09 Night Time Economy crime (*crimes committed by offenders under the influence of drink or drugs between the periods of 8pm and 4am Monday to Sunday*) has shown a 22.7% reduction, making Kent a safer place for its residents. This is reflected in the Kent Crime and Victimisation Survey (KCVS) which shows that since 2006/07 feelings of safety at night (at home alone and walking alone at night) in Kent, have increased from 74% to 81% by the end of 2008/09. In particular feelings of safety

walking alone at night are at their highest for the last three years rising from 55% in 2006/07 to 66% currently.

KCC has worked with its partners to help raise awareness of and disrupt the activities of rogue traders. Kent Trading Standards *Rapid Action Teams* attended a property where they are made aware of a rogue trader still being on the premises. In 2008/09, we intervened 57 times and supported 141 'victims'. We also significantly disrupted the activity of 20 rogue traders. Kent Trading Standards operates an alert system to local communities to bogus trading practices, which is sent to 246 local partners, including parish and town councils. These messages are used as articles in newspapers / parish magazines. In 2008/09, 94% of recipients found the messages 'useful' and 86% found them 'easy to understand'.

KCC also supports legitimate Kent businesses through the *Buy with Confidence* scheme and there are now 102 approved businesses across Kent.

The *HandyVan* scheme provides improved home security to better protect against burglary and reduce the fear of crime for vulnerable people. The remit of the service has expanded with a wider range of services offered to make homes more secure, including the installation of hand rails and minor adaptations. At end March 2009, 7,765 safety checks had been made by the service since 2006. This is slightly below the 2008/9 target of 8,100 due to the changing remit of the service and the greater focus on spending more time with people to make them feel safe, although the service is on course to achieve the 10,800 target over the 2006-2010 period.

"Thank you for making such a difference to my peace of mind and well-being"  
*HandyVan client*

The 5<sup>th</sup> *HandyVan* has been targeted in the North Kent area since August 2007 and following a number of initiatives and a partnership focused approach, domestic burglary in Gravesham reduced by 40% between 2006/07 and 2007/08 and continued to decrease in 2008/09 by 3.5%. In addition, there has been a huge perceptual change in the percentage of residents who are worried about being burgled in Gravesham which has decreased from 70% at the end of 2006/07 to 45% at the end of 2008/09

### **Dealing with drug and alcohol problems**

The multi-agency *Kent Community Alcohol Partnership* was launched in November 2008, aimed at changing the attitudes to drinking among young people and supporting retailers to reduce sales of alcohol to underage drinkers. Local community groups are also being engaged to get their point of view and youngsters are being educated about the dangers of alcohol and diverted into alternative activities. The scheme is currently being piloted in Canterbury, Edenbridge and Thanet and is intended to be rolled out across the county at a later date.

In May 2008, KCC supported Gravesham Borough Council and North Kent Police's high profile week-long campaign to increase awareness of the role alcohol plays in health problems, crime and anti-social behaviour. It aimed to spread the word about drinking, especially under-age drinking – and encourage a safe, sensible and social approach. Trading Standards Officers undertook a series of enforcement measures across the borough during the week,

The *Kent Drug and Alcohol Action Team* (KDAAT) multi-agency partnership works to deliver the national drug and alcohol strategies at a local level in Kent. KDAAT **achieved a 13.5% increase in the numbers of problem drug users in effective treatment for the 12 months to the end of December 2008, the highest in the south-east region.**

### **Building strong communities**

*KCC Community Wardens* continue to make a positive impact in their local areas. The 101 Wardens in 128 local areas were originally envisaged as a visible uniformed presence to tackle anti-social behaviour, but have developed a much broader remit, working with a wide range of other authorities and services. Their operations range from walking buses through to providing intelligence to the Police which has led to a variety of arrests.

The Wardens facilitate a number of activities and events within their communities, both big and small to engage with the local residents. The largest of this is a countywide 7-a-side football tournament, the finals of which were held in summer 2008. Over 1,000 'hard to engage' young people, both boys and girls, were involved in this positive diversionary activity. The event was a great success and another one is being planned for next year.

Since 2006, Wardens have provided awareness training to over 9,500 people against the dangers of bogus callers, helping the elderly and vulnerable to remain safe and secure in their own homes.

The environment which people live in makes a big difference to their quality of life and their perception of their local area. The multi-agency *Clean Kent* programme has encouraged citizenship and environmental responsibility with, for example, the *Street-Wise Educational Project* being nationally recognised as good practice.

With our partners, KCC has taken a firm enforcement line against fly-tippers, which has seen 17 people receive a criminal conviction and over £12K of fines imposed.

Since last year, four of the then top 20 fly-tipping hot spots across Kent have been resolved and are no longer subject to fly-tipping. This list is dynamic with sites being added as they become a target for fly-tipping and KCC will work hard over the next year to tackle the existing hot spots.

### **Tackling youth offending**

The *Youth Offending Service* and its partners have worked hard to establish a prevention-led approach to tackling youth offending. This has resulted in fewer first time entrants to the youth justice system from 2020 per 100,000 10-17 population in 2006/07 to 1660 per 100,000 10-17 population in 2007/08. Current estimates show that this is on course to drop again to around 1480 per 100,000 10-17 population in 2008/09, although final figures will not be available from the Department for Children, Schools and Families until November 2009.

In 2008/09, a refocus of prevention activity led to the creation of *Youth Inclusion Support Panels* (YISPs) in each of the 12 Districts. The aim of the YISPs is to contribute to a reduction in the number of children and young people entering the youth justice system, which they will achieve by receiving referrals about young

people thought “at risk” of offending and co-ordinating relevant services to match their needs and risks.

KCC and its partners have also engaged young people in a range of diversionary activities during 2008/09. These include the Challenger Troop, offering an Army Cadet type approach to youth activities and a partnership, with the English Rugby Football Union to increase sports participation amongst those most “at risk”.

### **Increasing road safety**

Kent Highways Services has continued to work to improve safety and reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured (KSIs) on Kent roads. KCC’s approach has been to integrate the known benefits of education, enforcement, engineering and evaluation. A programme of countywide publicity campaigns, proactive press features and public engagement projects using road safety officers has proved effective, as has the drinking and driving campaign in the run up to last Christmas, which contributed to the lowest recorded number of road crash fatalities in December for over a decade.

KCC’s approach appears to be working, as the 2008 KSI casualty figures represents a 13% reduction in KSI casualties compared with 2007. It should be noted that the 2008 KSI road traffic casualty figures are exceptionally low, 627 compared with 723 in 2007 and represents a 5% greater reduction than the KHS target figure for 2008. This ongoing work in casualty reduction appears to be maintaining the downward trend in KSI casualties, however outside factors, such as fuel prices, may have influenced the excessive reduction in 2008

## **12.4 How we have made a difference**

### **Streetwise**

The multi-agency Clean Kent Campaign aims to make Kent a cleaner county. It takes a bold and creative approach to communication and education in order to positively influence behaviour across all sectors of society and has forged strong links with Kent schools.

Street Wise is an innovative theatre-in-education project for year 8 and 9 pupils delivered in schools, which centres on the issues of anti-social behaviour and restorative justice as its main themes. It uses actors, including a serving prisoner from a re-settlement prison, to demonstrate through theatre how relatively small acts of anti-social behaviour such as littering / graffiti can escalate to criminal activities.

A teacher at Queen Elizabeth's Grammar school in Faversham, who experienced one of the sessions stated: “I don’t think it came across really as a way of giving information. There was an information exchange. It didn’t seem the children thought they were having something done to them. There were some really dramatic moments when Sean came in, the whole hall was quiet and still and it was really quite dramatic and powerful”.

Feedback forms from the school showed that session had a good impact, with pupils stating that it had made them aware that “small things can have big consequences” and that they were less likely to drop litter or set rubbish on fire in the future.

### **Buy with Confidence**

Kent Trading Standards has joined with the other local authority Trading Standards Services in the South East to set up a scheme called Buy with Confidence (BWC). The scheme helps protect consumers from rogue traders and promotes legitimate local businesses.

Trading Standards Officers vet applicants for trustworthiness and to make sure they comply with consumer protection laws. Only traders that pass stringent checks are accepted on to the scheme and are able to display the Buy with Confidence logo. Approved businesses are constantly monitored by Trading Standards to ensure their standards remain high.

Vicky Marks and her husband Darren run Headway Doors & Windows Limited and recently joined the scheme. Vicky says: "When we applied to the scheme we had no idea how vigorous their vetting procedures would be. It ranged from contacting many customers for references and criminal record checks, to checking our complaints procedures and internal systems. After many months we were accepted and can now proudly say we are approved and recommended by trading standards, a real achievement with no better recommendation."

The scheme has grown to over 100 businesses and more and more consumers are using the scheme and feeding back favourable comments through customer feedback cards.

### **Peer-led Support Groups**

Gravesham Addiction Striving 4 Progress (GAS4P) is a peer-led support group supported by the Kent Drug and Alcohol Action Team (KDAAT), in partnership with its commissioned service providers.

In 2005, GAS4P was the first peer-led support group of its kind in Kent, since then its success has led to two other groups forming in Sheerness and Folkestone.

All of the GAS4P team have experienced problems with substance or alcohol misuse. This allows them connect to members on a personal level which is vitally important as many vulnerable people can be intimidated by professional staff.

The group offers advice and support for anyone with drug or alcohol misuse problems, while also providing information on local treatment services.

Zena Watson, Team Leader at service provider Turning Point, supports the peer-led support groups and finds the benefits and energy within the groups inspirational. "It's amazing to see the impact these groups have within their local communities. GAS4P helps those who may not be ready to access professional services and allows them to still have access to important information. For people currently in treatment the group provides a safe haven and new social or supportive networks."

## Section 13: The Finances of Kent County Council

During 2008/09, Kent County Council (KCC) has faced significant challenges and it is pleasing to record that Kent is the only County Council to score 4 stars for four years in a row in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) undertaken by the Audit Commission. They have said, "Kent County Council is improving strongly," and "the Council continues to provide excellent value for money. Strong leadership and capacity, coupled with a consistent and effective approach to performance management and improvement planning, ensures the Council is well placed to sustain its strong track record and deliver future improvements."

Our annual financial statements for 2008/09 have been approved by our external auditors the Audit Commission.

The net underspend of £7.5m (excluding £16.2m delegated schools overspend) will be added to future years' budget to help the Council's to achieve key priorities and service improvements.

The finances of a large authority like KCC are complex and are complicated by the uncertainties surrounding future government funding. One of the key issues is the growth of demand for services such as adult social care because of the growing elderly population. There is also pressure in children's social services resulting from the tragic events in Haringey.

What follows is a summary of our financial statements. The table below shows that the Council is spending more each year on improving front-line services, with efficiency savings contributing significantly to the funding of these improvements.

### Income & Expenditure Account for 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009:

Service	Gross spend	Income	Net spend in 2008/9	Net spend in 2007/08
	£million	£million	£million	£million
Regulatory Services and Emergency Planning	10.3	-3.3	7.0	6.6
Court Services	3.1	-0.4	2.7	2.9
Arts & Libraries	32.9	-3.0	29.9	26.7
Waste Management	62.7	-5.0	57.7	55.3
Environmental, Planning and Other Services	55.1	-27.7	27.4	42.8
Children's and Education Services (including schools)	1,487.3	-1,300.1	187.2	119.9
Highways, Roads and Transport Services	113.8	-8.5	105.3	92.4
Adult Social Care	471.9	-140.9	331	286.5
Corporate and Democratic Core	26.1	-15.3	10.8	12.7

Non-distributed costs	32.0		32.0	17.3
<b>Net Cost of Services</b>	<b>2,295.2</b>	<b>-1,504.2</b>	<b>791.0</b>	<b>663.1</b>
Loss (gain) on the disposal of fixed assets			-6.1	65.2
Precepts and Levies			0.6	0.6
Surplus on trading activities			-6.4	-4.6
Interest payable			56.3	55.6
Interest and investment income			-14.8	-16.4
Impairment on Icelandic Investments (1)			10.6	0
Interest Receivable on Icelandic Investments			-2.5	
Other			31.9	9.7
<b>Net Operating Expenditure</b>			<b>860.6</b>	<b>773.2</b>
Funded by:				
Government grants			-268.4	-228.7
Area Based Grant			-61.6	0
Council tax funds			-536.6	-513.1
<b>Net General Fund surplus (-) deficit (+)</b>			<b>-6.0</b>	<b>31.4</b>
<b>Amount required by statute to be debited/(credited) to the General Fund (2)</b>			<b>6.0</b>	<b>-31.4</b>
<b>Increase in General Fund balance for the year</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>General Fund balance brought forward</b>			<b>-25.8</b>	<b>-25.8</b>
<b>General Fund balance carried forward</b>			<b>-25.8</b>	<b>-25.8</b>

Note to the Income and Expenditure account

1. The impairment loss of £10.6m has been calculated by discounting the assumed cash flows at the effective interest rate of the original deposits in order to recognise the anticipated loss to the authority until monies are recovered. The 'real' loss to the Council is currently calculated to be around £4.5m. The situation is still very fluid and there have been developments since the 31 March 2009, however, these are not material to the accounts and therefore no adjustments have been made.
2. This figure comprises the reversal of items of spend which must not impact council tax, e.g. depreciation charges and transfers to and from reserves.

The balance of our general reserves of £25.8m represents the amount of money the Council has set aside to deal with unexpected events that otherwise might cause the budget to be overspent in any future year(s). The amount reflects 'best practice' guidance for local authorities and is equivalent to less than two weeks spend on services, excluding schools.

In addition to general reserves, the Council has a number of earmarked or specific reserves. These sums have been set aside to fund projects that are known to be happening in the future. This avoids uneven changes in council tax levels each year. These reserves are clearly shown in the notes to the full balance sheet, from which the extract below has been taken:

**Kent County Council Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2009:**

	31 March 2009		31 March 2008	
	£million	£million	£million	£million
Operational assets (1)	2113.8		2041.7	
Non-operational assets (2)	434.2		345.3	
Other fixed assets	3.6		3.6	
Long-term assets (3)	159.2		194.9	
<b>Total fixed and long-term assets</b>		<b>2,710.8</b>		<b>2,585.5</b>
Current assets (4)		473.9		447.0
Current liabilities (5)		-462.7		-375.1
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		<b>2,722.0</b>		<b>2,657.4</b>
Long-term liabilities				
- Long-term borrowing (6)	-998.4		-1017.2	
- Pensions liability (7)	-742.1		-571.7	
- Other long-term liabilities	-262.5		-264.9	
<b>Total long-term liabilities</b>		<b>-2,003.0</b>		<b>-1,853.9</b>
<b>Total assets less total liabilities</b>		<b>719.0</b>		<b>803.5</b>
Reserves and provisions:				
- Cash reserves		-191.2		-191.7
- Notional reserves (8)		742.1		571.7
- Capital accounting reserves (9)		-1,269.9		-1,183.5
<b>Total reserves and provisions</b>		<b>-719.0</b>		<b>-803.5</b>

Notes to the Balance Sheet

- 1 Operational assets includes land and buildings, roads, and vehicles, plant and equipment, worth a total of £2.1 billion
- 2 This is mainly due to capital projects that were 'work-in-progress' at the year-end

- 3 Money owed to KCC that will not be repaid within the next 12 months
- 4 Includes cash and bank balances, investments, and debts that will be paid to the Council within the next 12 months
- 5 Mainly represents amounts owed by the Council to service providers, most of which will have been paid within 30 days of the year-end
- 6 This is the amount outstanding from monies the Council borrowed to fund capital expenditure. Funding to repay most of these loans is part of the Government grant settlement each year. The Council has also borrowed other money (included in the £998.4m) under the 'prudential' scheme based on its ability to repay the debt
- 7 The figure of £742.1m is a notional valuation provided by the Council's pensions actuary
- 8 This balances the pension liability as detailed in note 7
- 9 The capital accounting reserves figure includes some notional reserves such as the revaluation reserve which holds the value of the change in property valuations and capital receipts reserves which hold grants, contributions and income from sales of property to fund capital expenditure in future years.

The people of Kent are entitled to know about the financial position of the County Council, but the full Statement of Accounts is a detailed and complex document. This summary is designed to give you an insight into how much we spend (income and expenditure account) and our assets and liabilities (the balance sheet).

For further information, or if you would like to comment or make suggestions on how we can improve the understanding of the Statement of Accounts, please contact Cath Head on 01622 221135 or email [cath.head@kent.gov.uk](mailto:cath.head@kent.gov.uk). Alternatively, you can view the full Statement of Accounts at <http://www.kent.gov.uk/financialpublications>.