

The  
ASHFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL  
KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

# DISTRICT DELIVERY DEAL



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ASHFORD





# 1: OVERVIEW

The Ashford Borough Council- Kent County Council District Delivery Deal is an agreement to work together to deliver better outcomes for residents and business of the borough and, by extension Kent.

The deal has 2 parts:

- A focus on key strategic projects
- An improved way of working together

## DELIVERY PRIORITY

001.

**Delivery of Chilmington Green** – including completion of legal agreements; delivery of A28 improvements; agreement of Design Code; phase 1 masterplanning and establishment of Community Management Organisation

002.

**Construction of Ashford College** – including completion of land assembly; build programme; input into curriculum planning and opening

003.

**Ashford International Station Spurs Project** – including completing the design work needed; finalising the funding package and working with all partners to secure delivery with minimum disruption to services

004.

**Enabling the Jasmin Vardimon Dance Academy** – working with the Company and funding partners to scope and then deliver the project

005.

**Creation of leisure and commercial scheme for Elwick Place** – including completion of land transfers; helping securing commitment from leisure operators and an acceptable scheme design; putting public realm management arrangements in place and delivery of associated town centre parking

006.

**Potential expansion of the Designer Outlet** – full consideration of scheme and its relationship with the town centre; now permission is granted work with partners to deliver project, including environmental enhancements en route to the town centre and town centre projects

007.

**Construction of J10a, M20** – work to achieve acceptable design; finalise funding arrangements; co-ordinate with consideration of related development and work with partners – especially Highways England – to deliver scheme

008.

**Development of the Commercial Quarter into a commercial centre for Kent** – complete public realm works; bring forward office development and create starter buildings and create starters

## OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES: BETTER WAYS OF WORKING

### THEME 1: MORE EFFECTIVE DELIVERY OF INFRASTRUCTURE FOR GROWTH

001.

**A streamlined, evidence-based strategic infrastructure framework** (the Kent and Medway Growth and Infrastructure Framework) that aligns with and supports the emerging Ashford Local Plan.

002.

**A stronger emphasis on Design Quality** which will include a review of the **Design Protocol for Ashford**, which seeks to set a benchmark for ABC/KCC commissioned public building projects. In addition, the authorities will explore the scope for ABC to use its urban design skills and experience of design review and public involvement in design workshops to assist KCC in providing a county-wide support service at the early stages of KCC capital project delivery.

003.

**A clear and robust CIL and s106 strategy** with early agreement on the level of contributions to be sought to enable social and physical infrastructure required to be delivered, without undermining scheme viability or reduced build costs that would lead to poor design quality.

004.

**A commitment to the strategic coordination of Council property management as a pilot for One Public Estate programme.** In considering the transfer of land owned by each Council to support the Councils collective objectives, on a case by case basis both Councils will consider the extent to which economic regeneration and community factors are to be taken account when assessing 'best consideration' under Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972.

005.

**Reciprocal consultation on strategic planning applications and other strategic planning** to ensure impact on both.

### THEME 2: A MORE EFFECTIVE APPROACH TO HIGHWAYS TRANSPORT AND WASTE

008.

**A joint approach to street maintenance, highway verge and roundabout maintenance** with scope to review the frequency and quality of maintenance, including development and maintenance of gateway approaches as well as management of town centre spaces.

009.

**More coordinated enforcement of lorry parking and minor incidents** to provide more effective responses to keeping streets in Ashford safe.

0010.

**Exploring roll-out of the KCC caretaker scheme to the Ashford Town Centre Action Team** to explore building on the delegated model in place for town centre maintenance of soft landscape, including regular joint, on-site town centre reviews to monitor progress.

0011.

**Sustaining and enhancing waste recycling performance through strong strategic partnership working** under the auspices of the Mid Kent Waste Partnership, to deliver a high quality and seamless service to Kent residents to explore the potential for new recycling markets, increasing the number of materials that can be recycled at the kerbside.

### THEME 3: DELIVERING QUALITY OF PLACE

0012.

**Joint commitment to playing a leading role in promoting health and well-being** – continuing to focus and strengthen the Ashford Health and Well-being Board, with the appropriate dedicated support on both the part of the County and District. The Board has a crucial role co-ordinating the provision of facilities and the commissioning of services to 'join up' our approach to creating a healthier borough.

0013.

**Coordinated approach and campaign to encouraging outdoor leisure and active travel**, as part of the borough's integrated transport strategy, including promoting Ashford as a cycling town to help promote the benefits of cycling; complete missing parts of the cycling and pedestrian network; and encourage green transport and healthy lifestyles.

0014.

**A jointly prepared and agreed strategic framework for cultural and creative industries in Ashford** that confirms the borough's role in the wider Kent picture. This work will ensure that the Kent and Medway Cultural Strategy 2015-2023 reflects and supports delivery of the Ashford Cultural Strategy.

0015.

**Exploration of a more collaborative approach to use of intelligence in delivering trading standards and public protection**, including an improved service for the delivery of licensing.



## 2: FOCUS ON DELIVERY

The Deal focuses on delivery of the joint strategic priorities “The Big 8” for the borough of Ashford.

Since April 2016, the Deal has also focused on delivery of 5 Operational Priorities, identified from the original 15 set out in the District Deal.



# 2: FOCUS ON DELIVERY

## Delivery Priority

DD1	Chilmington Green
DD2	Ashford College
DD3	Ashford International Station Spurs Project
DD4	Jasmin Vardimon Dance Academy
DD5	Elwick Place
DD6	Designer Outlet Expansion
DD7	Construction of J10a, M20
DD8	Commercial Quarter

# Operational Priority

OD3	A clear and robust CIL and s106 strategy
OD4	Strategic coordination of property management
OD8	Joint approach to street maintenance & highway verge
OD9	Coordinated enforcement of lorry parking
OD 10	Caretaker scheme to TCAT

# Governance





# SUCCESS

## Overarching successes

The “Big 8” and 5 priority areas have seen KCC and ABC working together in innovative ways.

Officers in both organisations have found new ways of working together, collaborating across both authorities.

The Ashford District Deal is a model of best practice used by Kent County Council to demonstrate how the County and District Authorities can work together.

The deal illustrates how two tier government can collectively deliver across a range of shared strategic priorities.



The Leaderships' collective commitment to the Deal has given licence to officers across both organisations to explore more practical, innovative and effective ways of working.

The existence of the Deal and demonstration of a mutual commitment between ABC and KCC has begun to 'unlock' issues before they occur or require escalation.

The Deal has identified areas of existing good practice between teams within the organisations as well as areas for improvement.

It is clear that there has been areas of significant progress, there are also lessons to be learnt and more work to be done.

4:

## LESSONS LEARNT

Principles of the District Deal are embraced at the highest level of both organisations however filtering this way of working down through all levels and all teams, in both organisations remains a challenge.

Some issues are complex, they require bespoke solutions and are not often replicable. An agreed 'protocol' approach does not suit every situation.



# 5: REFRESHING THE DEAL

Significant progress has been made on the agreed Delivery and Operational Priorities set out at the start of the District Deal. With this in mind the District Deal officer team and leadership has agreed to set new areas for focus during 2017/ 2018.

# 6:

# AREAS STILL IN FOCUS

The Ashford key strategic projects, the “Big 8” remain at the heart of the District Deal. These projects have the greatest collective ability to unlock the borough’s potential and contribute to the future growth and economic success of Kent and Medway.

DD1	Chilmington Green
DD2	Ashford College
DD3	Ashford International Station Spurs Project
DD4	Jasmin Vardimon Dance Academy
DD5	Elwick Place
DD6	Designer Outlet Expansion
DD7	Construction of J10a, M20
DD8	Commercial Quarter



# 7: NEW AREAS OF FOCUS

New areas of strategic priority have emerged in the past 12 months of the District Deal.

## New Delivery Priorities

DD9	<b>Newtown Works</b> This major regeneration opportunity has strategic and historic importance both for the town and the wider County. The Borough and County Councils will be working closely together with the landowner to explore options and create a viable project to secure the long term future of this important heritage asset.
DD10	<b>Conningbrook Lakes Country Park</b> This country park is an asset of strategic importance to the Borough and, as detailed plans are drawn up to create a great visitor attraction, the two Councils will need to work closely together to bring forward the next phase of this park.

# Existing District Deal Operational Delivery Priorities for focus

OD6	<b>Coordinated commissioning of health and social care infrastructure</b> , working together from the earliest stages of residential developments to deliver quality health and social care infrastructure. This includes regular consultation between commissioning teams and an emphasis on working together to design in health care to projects from the very outset
OD12	<b>Joint commitment to playing a leading role in promoting health and well-being</b> – continuing to focus and strengthen the Ashford Health and Well-being Board, with the appropriate dedicated support on both the part of the County and District. The Board has a crucial role co-ordinating the provision of facilities and the commissioning of services to ‘join up’ our approach to creating a healthier Borough
OD13	<b>Coordinated approach and campaign to encourage outdoor leisure and active travel</b> , including promoting Ashford as a cycling town to help promote the benefits of cycling; work to complete missing parts of Ashford’s cycling and pedestrian network; and encourage green transport and healthy lifestyles
OD15	Exploration of a <b>more collaborative approach to use of intelligence in delivering trading standards</b> , including an improved service for the delivery of licensing

# New Operational Priorities

In 2016, new areas of focus emerged that had not featured in the original District Deal signed in 2015. The District Deal board considers the following areas are of such strategic importance to both Ashford and in some case Kent more widely, that they should be added to the District Deal Operational Priorities.

OD16	<b>Broadband</b> Improving Broadband infrastructure by delivering Kent's BDUK Phase Two programme. Promoting Ashford as a beacon area for FTTP delivery and fibre roll out
OD 17	<b>Chilmington Protocol</b> Develop and agree a Protocol to support the delivery of the infrastructure, providing officers with an approach to working which promotes partnership, flexibility, creativity and openness. This protocol will be a pilot for a new way of working which promotes quality design from the outset of a development.
OD18	<b>Ashford Town Centre Developers Group</b> Developing a joint innovative approach to infrastructure delivery and site coordination between town centre developers



# NEXT STEPS

- District Deal Board approval
- Kent County Council Member sign off
- Ashford Borough Council Member sign off
- PR Opportunities



# Appendix 1- Specific Successes

## **OD3- A clear and robust CIL and s106 strategy**

- With s106 continuing to play a key role, both authorities have developed an agreed approach to identifying eligible projects and a working model for resolving contributions issues on a site by site basis for strategic development. The workshop held to agree a joint position on contributions requested for the Powergen site is an example of this approach in practice

## **OD4- Strategic Coordination of Property Management**

- Terms were agreed for the relevant land transfers at Elwick Place, Commercial Quarter and Powergen, with lessons learnt about the levels of information and transparency needed to progress complex negotiations quickly.
- Ashford Borough Council have reviewed the way it holds property and landholdings data to greater effect. The new collated data will be uploaded onto the KCC EPIMS system, as part of a wider One Public Estate Programme

## **OD8- Joint approach to street maintenance and highway verges**

- Positive approaches have been taken by both authorities on the newly developed Fly Tipping Protocol and the Kent Resource Partnership. Teams in both authorities are demonstrating coordination on waste, street cleansing and cold weather salting.
- Verge planting at Junction 9 is being coordinated as a direct result of officer collaboration

## **OD9- Coordinated enforcement of lorry parking**

- The authorities are coordinating efforts on Operation Kindle and the new Enforcement Protocol on lorry parking. This has resulted in an increase in the use of the Ashford lorry park
- The Ashford Local Plan provides for increased overnight lorry parking provision at Waterbrook
- The authorities provided a coordinated response to the Operation Stack consultation and continue to work together to lobby for a long term solution for Kent

## **OD10- Exploring the roll out of the Caretaker Scheme to TCAT**

- Ashford rural parishes have rolled out the KCC caretaker scheme and the authorities are collaborating on work plans for the new Ashford grounds maintenance company, Aspire.
- T-CAT now undertake independent maintenance within the town centre where there are no moving vehicles. T-CAT also provide support and additional resource to KCC maintenance teams where KCC have road closures and appropriate insurance in place

A strong operational relationship between the two authorities, established through the District Deal is credited with significant progress in the Council's Big 8 strategic priorities:

### **DD1- Chilmington Green**

This is one of the biggest developments underway in the Country. Over the next 25 years or so a new community will be created based on two key themes the Council has demanded throughout:

1. strong design quality standards to create a fine place; and
2. an innovative Community Management Organisation to own and run open spaces and many local facilities.

Construction of the road accesses and other infrastructure works is already underway.

## **DD 2- Ashford College Campus**

The new Ashford College is under construction and the first phase will open to students this autumn, 2017. It will provide a wide range of improved training opportunities for local people and the skills needed as the area's economy develops.

## **DD3- Station Spurs**

The new generation of Eurostar trains demand revised signalling arrangements in order to access the International Station. The Borough and County Councils have secured funding of over £10m needed for these works from the South-East LEP and is working with Network Rail and the rail operators to make sure the works needed are in place with minimum disruption to the service.

#### **DD4- Jasmin Vardimon**

This project, to help create the Jasmin Vardimon Dance Academy, is being led by Kent County Council working with the Arts Council England and Ashford Borough Council. The intention is to create a purpose-built new training base and academy for this internationally-renown company, currently based in the Stour Centre.

#### **DD5- Elwick Place**

This development, including cinema, restaurants and a hotel, is due to be on site later this year, 2017.

#### **DD6- Designer Outlet Expansion**

This project – promoted by owners McArthur Glen – will substantially expand the centre and bring new, international brands to the town. Work is programmed to start later this year, 2017.

## **DD7- Junction 10a**

The Government has recently announced that it will support the gap in funding J10a. This funding is in addition to the substantial funding already secured by the Borough and County Councils and other partners from the South East LEP. The independent local examination process is now underway with the junction due to open during 2019.

## **DD8- The Commercial Quarter**

Construction of the first major office building and the first investment of this type for many years in Ashford's town centre is now underway.