

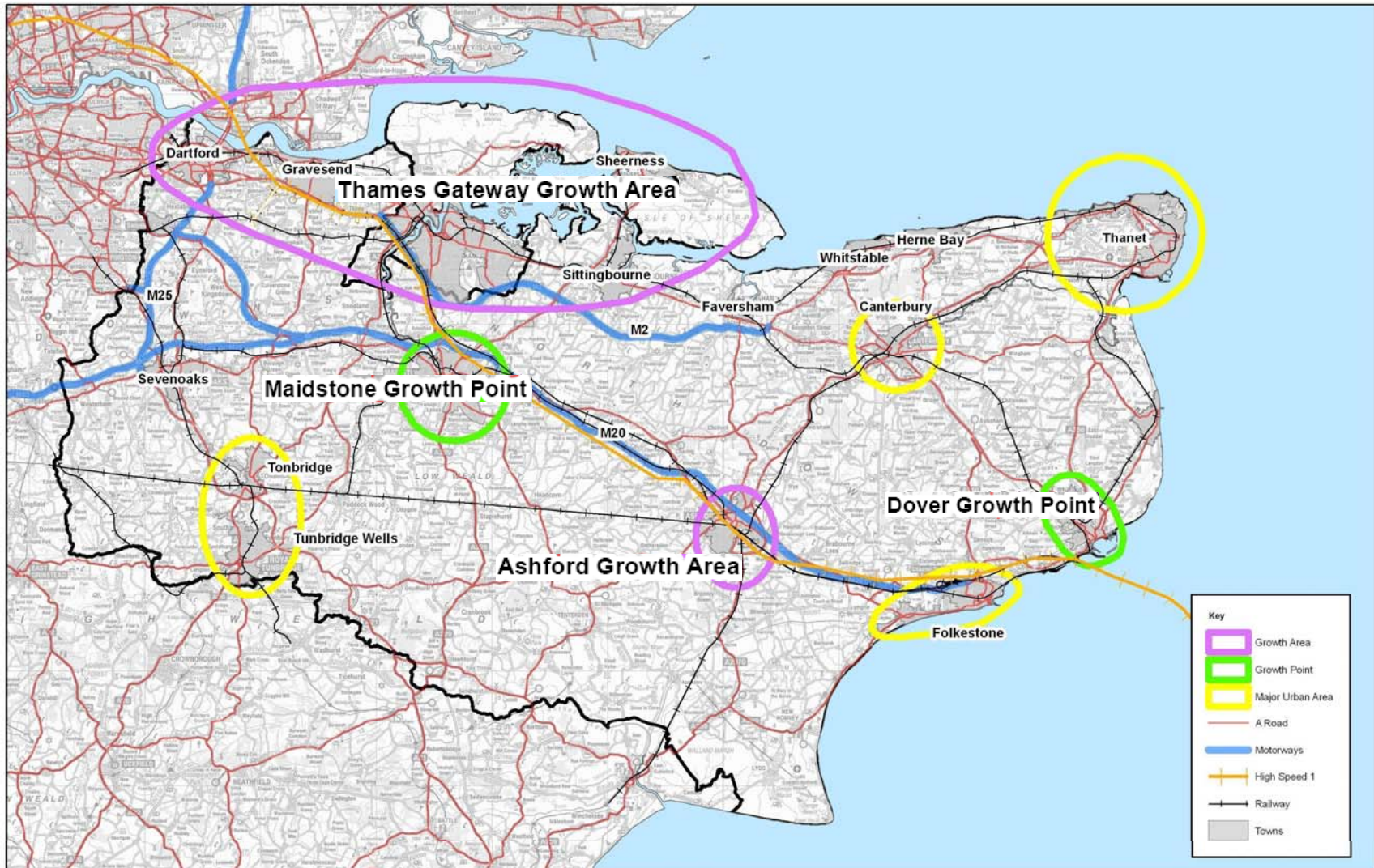
# Unlocking Kent's Potential

**Kent County Council's framework for regeneration**





# Welcome to Kent



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# Foreword by the Leader of Kent County Council and the Cabinet Member for Regeneration

In the last 20 years Kent has seen phenomenal change and growth. There are 100,000 more people living in the county, our housing stock has increased by over 60,000 homes and there are 130,000 more cars on our roads. Kent has undergone dramatic change in this time and the pace of change is set to accelerate further over the next 20 years.

As we write, the Government's target for housing growth in Kent, between now and 2026, has risen to 138,420. This could deliver a population increase of 8 per cent and a 20 per cent increase in Kent households, or three new towns the size of Dover, irrespective of the current global recession and the ability of house builders to build or the affordability of homes and availability of mortgage finance for people to buy them.

At the same time, demography is changing in a way never experienced before. We all celebrate the fact that our average life expectancy has risen to 81 for females and 76 for men. In 2006-07, net migration accounted for 73% of population growth, in contrast to 27% attributable to natural change (the surplus of births over deaths).

Along with the growth in single person households, these trends place enormous pressure on public services including transport, housing needs, education and social services. We must, however also embrace the knowledge and experience that a growing older population brings to the workplace - a group that needs to be pragmatically cultivated by employers when the bulk of the working population (25-44 year olds) is shrinking.

As well as closing the gap between Kent and the South East in relation to GVA, average earnings and disposable income,



we must also tackle the polarisation between the deprived coastal and urban areas and the more affluent areas of Kent, through essential investment in appropriate housing, education and transport regeneration, and so stimulate economic improvement.

The British economy and the Kent economy have also undergone massive structural changes in the past two decades. Over the next 20 years, the national and local economy is likely to undergo a similar upheaval.

This wide-ranging change provides far-reaching opportunities for Kent's residents and businesses, but significant challenges too. These need to be tackled to ensure that Kent's businesses are equipped with a highly skilled workforce, geared particularly towards the key growth sectors that will drive economic growth in the 21st century.

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## Redefining regeneration

**“Unlocking Kent’s Potential”** looks ahead 20/25 years as we develop our vision for the wider regeneration of the county. We want to attract more businesses and professionals to Kent that will reduce current gaps in GVA.

To us, regeneration is not simply economic growth - vital though this is - it is also about transformation in education and skills, the culture renaissance in the county and an efficient transport system that supports both the economy and residents. It is about improved housing conditions, particularly for the most vulnerable both young and old.. Working with our partners in the private, community and public sectors, Kent County Council has a critical role in ensuring this happens.

This document is all about Kent managing these massive challenges and opportunities - looking ahead, building momentum on what we have learned and delivered, starting to shape and plan now for what will be needed in the future - 10, 15, 20 years time.

## We have a choice

We stand at a crossroads - but we have a choice. We can sit back and allow the population to grow, housing to be built and leave businesses alone. But what would the consequences be? Delivering piecemeal housing development without regard to the wider infrastructure needs will result in a county where growth in some areas would be unbridled, while others would be left behind; a transport system that would further deteriorate

damaging business and frustrating everyone who lives and visits here; and businesses that may leave the county in their droves, while the public sector would be left to pick up the pieces.

The alternative to this doomsday scenario is to embrace and “masterplan” for growth and improvement, scoping now what Kent actually needs over the long term.

In a different era, the Victorians conceived what was needed to make Britain the most envied country in the world. For example, they had the vision to build the London underground before most of Kensington, Chelsea and Fulham was built out. Birmingham provides another past example of such forward thinking and civic leadership.

We need a new civic vision for the county of Kent, demonstrating the power of local people, local businesses, local government and the public sector working together to plan for positive change and regeneration in the county. We must work together with our partners and district planners in particular, to develop policies that will unleash the economic potential of our county.

## The way ahead

**“Unlocking Kent’s Potential”** is just a first step to defining what we would like Kent to look like in 20 years time.



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It sets out many of the challenges and indicates how we intend to find the answers. It is a framework for growth showing how we will go about this task, not a strategy supplying all the answers to the challenges explored here.

We have listened to our partners' views and they are reflected in the document. But we have more work to do to turn the themes set out in *Unlocking Kent's Potential* into reality.

For this reason we have appointed world renowned architect and urban designer Sir Terry Farrell to help produce a spatial vision for Kent for the next 20 years, taking into account the broad issues of housing, transport, skills and economic development. We have also commissioned a series of more detailed strategies, which will build on the ideas set out here.

We will work with central government, lobbying for change where it impedes progress or keeps control of powers and public resource which we believe would be better managed locally.

## **Our success depends on you**

Only by working together can we achieve this success that we all seek for Kent.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Carter'.

**Paul Carter**  
Leader,  
Kent County Council



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Lynes'.

**Kevin Lynes**  
Cabinet Member for  
Regeneration and  
Supporting Independence  
Kent County Council

# Five key challenges facing Kent

## Unlocking Kent's Potential is a review of the challenges and opportunities facing Kent

### *Purpose and scope*

*Unlocking Kent's Potential* aims to:

- Be forward looking. It looks to the future challenges and opportunities facing Kent in global and domestic contexts
- Set out the key questions and choices that flow from these challenges
- Be a statement of our commitment to tackle the big issues facing our county
- Scope the essential infrastructure needs for the public capital investment for the next 20-25 years

### *Approach*

- To map key trends and drivers of change
- To identify the public's concerns and expectations
- To provide an overview of Kent's current strengths and challenges
- To establish a basis for a series of strategic and pragmatic policy statements which will set our course for the future

## We have identified five key challenges...

1. Building a new relationship with business
2. Unlocking talent to support the Kent economy
3. Embracing a growing and changing population
4. Building homes and communities, not estates
5. Delivering growth without transport gridlock

## ... and two cross-cutting themes

Meeting the climate challenge

Recognising Kent's diversity

# Chapter I: Introduction

## Welcome

Welcome to *Unlocking Kent's Potential*, Kent County Council's framework for regeneration.

*Unlocking Kent's Potential* sets out the Council's overarching assessment of the key opportunities and challenges facing Kent over the next ten years. We have produced it at a time of international economic turbulence and a changing policy landscape, but in the context of longer term, structural changes and opportunities.

We have decided to produce *Unlocking Kent's Potential* for three reasons: Firstly, KCC believes that supporting the economic development of the county should be at the heart of everything we do. Within this document, we have sought to link regeneration with our role in providing the whole range of public services on which communities and businesses in Kent rely. Spending £860 million per year on goods and services, KCC is a key part of Kent's economy: we want to ensure that we use our strength to make the maximum long-term difference to the county's economy. This document states our commitment to this holistic approach.

Secondly, at a time of economic and policy change, now is an appropriate time to review our regeneration priorities. This document is not a detailed strategy, nor is it an action plan – but it provides an initial assessment of key challenges and opportunities and the choices that flow from them. Over the coming year, we will build on the overall direction of travel set out here by giving further consideration to these issues (and KCC's role in relation to them) by commissioning a series of thematic strategies.

Thirdly, we will only achieve long-term gains in prosperity by working with our partners in business and the public and voluntary sectors. All of the challenges that we have set out in this document will only be addressed by KCC working with others. *Unlocking Kent's Potential* is the County Council's statement of our willingness to lead and work alongside our partners for the long term.

## About the Framework

*Unlocking Kent's Potential* is structured in three parts.

Chapters 2 and 3 set out the changing policy context for economic development and regeneration, and explains the legislative and partnership framework within which KCC expects to work over the coming decade. They also sets out a summary of the state of Kent's economy, explaining the county's economic journey over recent years and an outline assessment of the main opportunities and challenges that we are facing.

Crucially, they set out the County Council's case for increased investment in physical and community infrastructure to accompany the growth that we will see and the aspirations of our residents and businesses that we wish to meet.

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In Chapter 4, we identify five key challenges that we need to address, and we set out how we intend to address them. The five challenges that we have identified are:

- Building a new relationship with Kent business
- Unlocking talent to support the Kent economy
- Embracing a growing and changing population
- Building homes and communities
- Delivering growth without transport gridlock

In addition, Chapter 4 sets out two themes – meeting the climate challenge and recognising Kent’s diversity – which run throughout our priorities.

Chapters 5-9 explain in greater detail our priorities within each of the five challenges.

Finally, Chapter 10 sets out how we will take *Unlocking Kent’s Potential* forward and how we will work in partnership with others to achieve the economic prosperity that is the bedrock of quality of life.

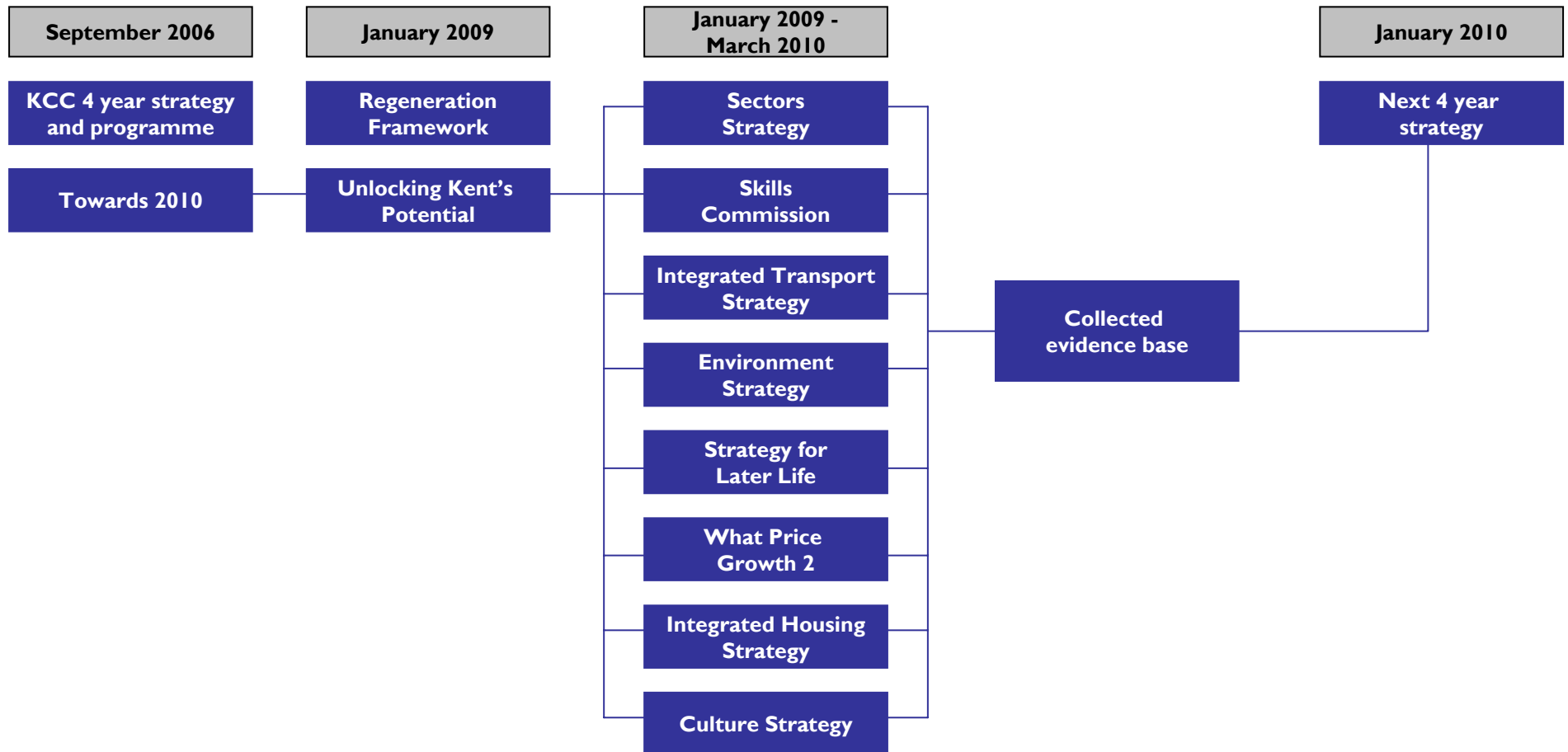
## How we’ve listened

In early 2009, we consulted extensively with partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors. This included a series of consultative meetings with District partners, discussions with key stakeholders and written responses. All these consultation channels have helped to shape *Unlocking Kent’s Potential*, and a list of the organisations which responded in writing to the consultation process is included in Annex 1.

## Moving forward

*Unlocking Kent’s Potential* will act as a catalyst to developing a range of strategies and approaches for taking economic development and regeneration in Kent forward. These will be delivered through 2009/10 and become the collected evidence base to inform KCC’s next four year strategy and programme. This is set out in the diagram below.

# Strategic position of this Regeneration Framework



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# Chapter 2: The changing policy landscape

## Introduction

The national policy landscape has changed significantly in recent months in a number of key areas, such as through the Sub-National Review of Economic Development and Regeneration in 2007. A number of changes will come into effect, that, collectively empower local authorities to lead the regeneration of their economies.

KCC must be ready to take advantage of the opportunities this presents as they come on stream. The Kent Regeneration Framework outlines how we will do this.

‘Unlocking Kent’s potential’ is not in itself a strategy but rather an overarching framework, setting out priority areas of action for the County Council over the medium term and outlining KCC’s contribution to delivering our aspirations for the county, working with our partners.

It forms a baseline for a broad policy approach including a series of further strategies for the County, which will be developed with District Councils and the Kent Partnership. It will also inform KCC’s position in relation to the new South East Single Regional Strategy, following the abolition of the Regional Assembly and the creation of the new South East England Councils arrangements.

## The policy context in Kent

*Unlocking Kent’s Potential* has been developed to complement **Vision for Kent**, Kent’s Sustainable Community Strategy, which sets the direction of travel for the county’s public, private and third sectors.

In the context both of the current economic downturn and the need for a more comprehensive assessment of the local economy (see below), we will be reviewing **Kent Prospects** in 2009.

Associated with Kent Prospects and Vision for Kent, all the members of the Kent Partnership are signatories to **Kent Agreement 2**, a three year compact between local partners and central government to improve services and quality of life in Kent. *Unlocking Kent’s Potential* will support the County Council’s contribution to Kent Agreement 2. However, it also takes a longer-term view of the need to build Kent’s economic potential.

We have also built *Unlocking Kent’s Potential* upon the **existing policy framework**, which includes the Kent Supporting Independence Programme, Active Lives (the 10-year vision for adult social care) and the Children and Young People’s Plan.

At more local level, each district (and in some cases groups of districts) prepares a range of **community and economic development strategies** and statutory **local development frameworks** reflecting local priorities in the context of Vision for Kent. Through *Unlocking Kent’s Potential*, we want to develop KCC’s relationship with our district partners, recognising both our shared agenda and local differentiation, and adding value to both our roles.

Unlocking Kent’s Potential is not a strategy but an overarching statement of KCC’s contribution, alongside its partners, to delivering the aspirations set out in the Vision for Kent. It provides the baseline for a series of strategies and discussions that are being developed.

# A greater role for local government

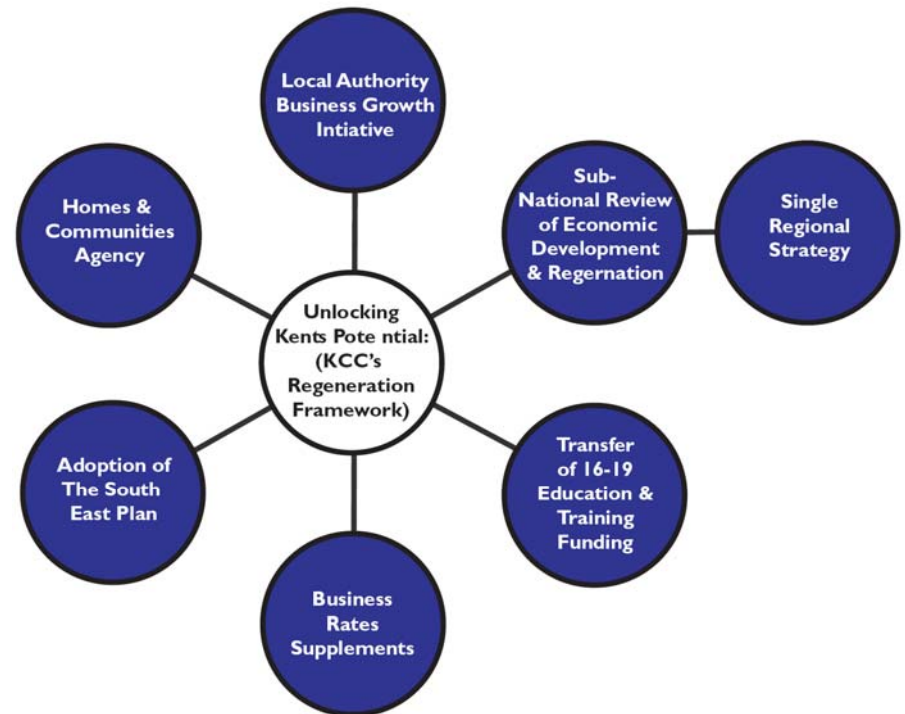
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A number of policy changes point to an enhanced role for local government.

The outcome of the **Sub-National Review (SNR)** of economic development and regeneration gives joint responsibility for regional planning and economic strategy to local authorities and the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA). Increasingly functions and programmes currently held at regional level will be devolved to local authorities, giving councils greater opportunity to influence and improve the local economy.

KCC recognises and welcomes the opportunity posed by the SNR in strengthening of the role of local authorities in delivering economic development. This includes the establishment of a focused statutory economic assessment duty for local authorities to ensure more effective prioritisation of economic development and regeneration interventions and the creation of **Economic Prosperity Boards (EPB's)** as statutory sub-regional authorities for economic development. We will work with partners to create an Economic Prosperity Board for the county.

In preparation for these forthcoming additional local government responsibilities, we are undertaking a series of strategies over the course of 2009 to support us in planning for the future.



Alongside the SNR will be the transfer to upper-tier local authorities of Learning and Skills Council powers, functions and expenditure on education and training provision for 16-19 year olds. KCC will be responsible for commissioning 16-19 education and training provision, including in the further education sector. KCC will be empowered to link this provision to the skills requirements of Kent's economy.



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Linked with this, **A New Learning Revolution**, a recently introduced White Paper, proposes additional powers for local authorities in respect of lifelong learning. The **Tackling Worklessness Review** led by Stephen Houghton also sets out a key role for local authorities in building economic opportunities, especially in disadvantaged areas, and this is reflected in the strong emphasis on workforce skills development and access to employment in *Unlocking Kent's Potential*.

Finally, the **Supplementary Rates Bill**, currently going through Parliament, will allow upper-tier authorities to charge a supplement to business rates of up to 2p per £ of rateable value on businesses with a rateable value of above £50,000 to support economic development in their local areas. Although KCC has already decided that it will not introduce supplementary business rates – especially given the current economic climate – the business community may in the future want us to use this power to fund a key piece of infrastructure that would benefit their operations.

## **A new relationship with central agencies**

The Homes and Communities Agency was formed in December 2008, by the transfer of the functions and assets of English Partnerships, the investment functions of the Housing Corporation and a number of delivery programmes from the Department for Communities and Local Government (including the Thames Gateway programme). It is the new agency responsible for delivering housing and regeneration in England.

It is a significant new partner in the regeneration and economic development of Kent. The Agency has indicated a willingness to embark on 'single conversations' with groups of local authorities about the needs of an area, leading to joint investment plans. KCC will have a key role with partners in shaping these, and there is likely to be a relationship between the local economic assessment duty and local investment planning.

## **The housing and infrastructure challenge**

The adoption of the **South East Plan** in May 2009 imposes near-impossible additional housing targets on Kent (of 6,126 dwellings per year until 2026) without providing adequate resources to deliver the infrastructure required for these new homes.

## **Changing demands on services**

**Personalisation** underpins the delivery of KCC's - and other partners' - services, which are increasingly tailored to individuals often through the mechanism of a personal budget.

As demands become increasingly diverse, increasingly people will turn to SMEs, social enterprises and the third sector (voluntary sector and charities) for their services, and we must work with these services to maximise choice and diversity of provision.

# The policy challenges for Kent

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The changing policy landscape presents challenges for Kent – and for the County Council – which we need to address.

Firstly, the recognition in Vision for Kent that achieving regeneration is not just about narrow economics, but is about achieving much broader change, means that regeneration cannot be the responsibility of any one department. The County Council is committed to placing regeneration at the centre of everything that it does, strengthening the links between the services that we provide and the future development of the county. In particular, we want to build a **new relationship with our district colleagues**, reflecting the important role that all tiers of democratic government have in championing and delivering local aspirations.

Secondly, current policy developments are taking place in the context of **increasing pressure on public spending** which is likely to last for several years. This means that we will need to redouble our efforts in working with our partners to secure the investment that the county needs, and greater strategic clarity and multi-agency ownership will assist in this. It also means that we as a County Council will need to prioritise our own investment clearly over the coming years. Finally, through agreed local investment plans, we must seek to streamline delivery processes, so that investment is directed as far as possible to the benefit of businesses and communities themselves.

## How we will work in the changing policy landscape

Kent County Council will:

- Take forward an **assessment of the local economy** in conjunction with other partners to inform future planning and delivery
- Work through the **South East Leaders' Board** to influence the development of the regional strategy
- Take a lead role in the delivery of **Kent Agreement 2** outcomes
- Work with our partners to establish robust **local investment plans** for regeneration in Kent
- Use our new and existing powers as a provider of learning and skills to **better join up the learning offer** across the county
- Put **support for regeneration** at the centre of our activity as a County Council
- Drive forward the development of **What Price Growth**, the **Integrated Housing Strategy**, the **Integrated Transport Strategy** and other key strategies to set the context for the future of Kent

# Chapter 3: The changing county of Kent

## Introduction

Kent has seen considerable structural change over the last twenty years and the changes in the next twenty will be just as significant. We need to grasp the competitive advantage provided by Kent's strategic gateway location between London and mainland Europe, which will be boosted by high speed domestic services using the Channel Tunnel Rail Link in 2009, while property and labour costs are up to 60 per cent cheaper than the capital's.

Bold decisions about investment in infrastructure are needed, including road and rail improvements, a third Lower Thames Crossing and a fast rail link to service Manston Airport and East Kent. Together, partners in Kent must work to ensure that growth is sustainable and balanced, improve the quality of life for all residents and see that no one is left behind. This Framework outlines how we will address this.



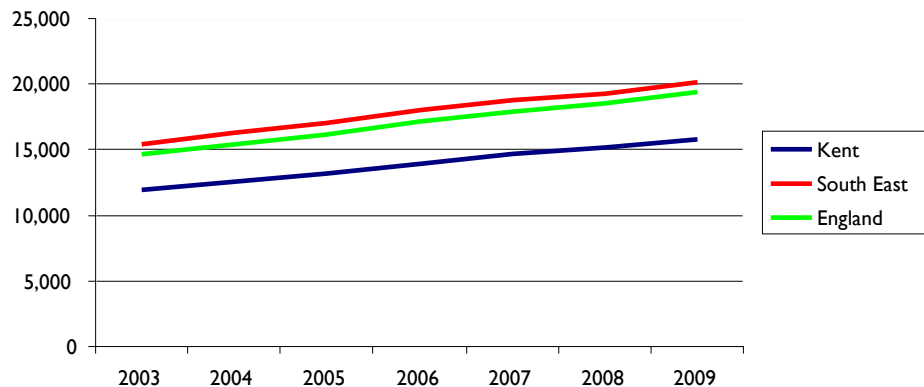
Map of Kent Coalfield – circa late 19<sup>th</sup> century

## The Past: Kent's economic journey

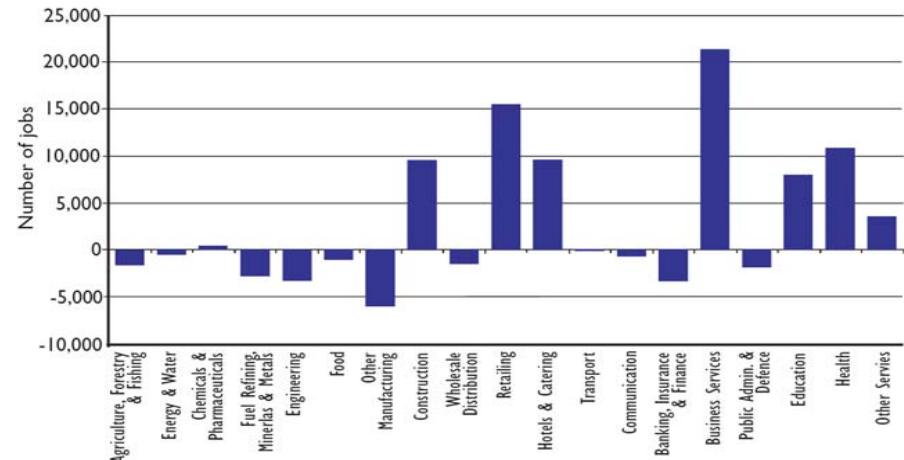
- Kent has a proud industrial and agricultural past. However, the county's traditional ship building, docks, mass tourism, paper and cement manufacturing and coalmining all fell into sharp and irreparable decline in the recession of the early 1980s. The Kent Coalfield opened in 1890 and employed 3,000 miners in 1975, but Betteshanger, the last coalmine in Kent, closed in 1989. After 400 years of service, the Royal Naval Dockyard at Chatham closed in 1984 with the loss of 7,000 jobs and Folkestone closed its cross channel passenger port in 2000.
- In the early 1980s, manufacturing accounted for almost 30 per cent of jobs and the skills base reflected the needs of the industrial economy.
- At the start of the 1980s there were no international standard business parks in Kent, we now have Crossways and Kings Hill.
- Significant improvements in transport have taken place in the last 30 years, when the M20 stopped outside Maidstone, the M25 was only partly built, the Dartford Tunnel was a renowned traffic black spot, the Thanet Way was single carriageway and train rolling stock was 30-40 years old.

# Kent's economy has transformed over the last 20 years

GVA per head (£)



Job growth by Sector, 1996-2006



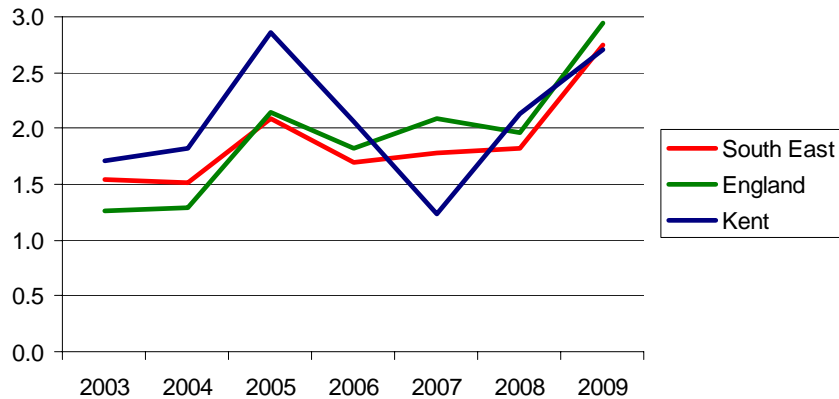
## Kent's economy today

- Kent's economic performance typically reflects the national picture rather than other counties in the South East. During the boom years of the mid 1990s to 2008, Kent enjoyed faster jobs growth than the South East and England, but gross value added (GVA) per head remains stubbornly below national and regional levels. This presents a major challenge for Kent, which will need to grow significantly faster than the rest of the country in order to close our output gap.
- In more recent times, Kent has re-invented itself with a highly diversified economy made up of 50,000 VAT registered businesses, 98% of which have fewer than 100 employees. Small and medium sized businesses have emerged across all sectors, and the growth in the stock of VAT registered businesses has slightly outperformed the South East.

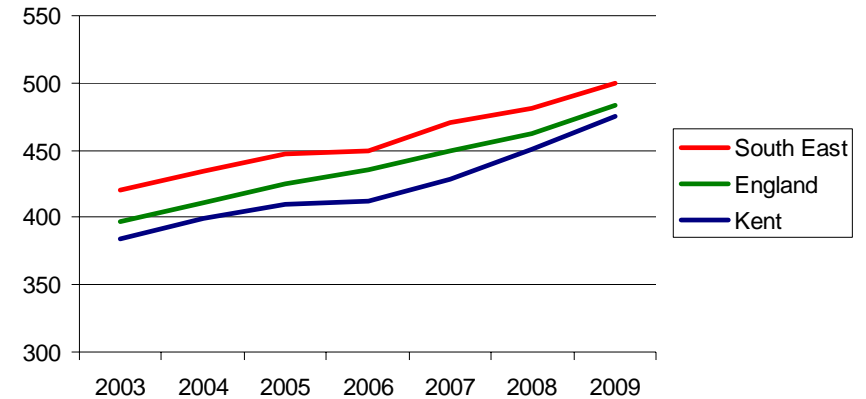
- Kent retains its distinctiveness in terms of its employment base. The sectoral composition of the county is changing, with the greatest increases in employment taking place in construction, retail and services. Yet the county also has sector strengths in the agricultural, chemical, pharmaceutical, manufacturing and construction sectors. As a county of small and medium sized enterprises, Kent is well placed to attract the innovators and entrepreneurs who will drive forward growth in high value sectors.
- This change in the nature of Kent's economy has been supported over the previous fifteen years by significant investment in infrastructure, including the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, improvements to the M20 and M2/A2, the construction of the Sheppey Crossing and Leybourne bypass, the development of Kent International Airport and the expansion of business parks such as Kings Hill and Manston Eurokent.

# We are an entrepreneurial county

Net VAT registrations as a % of business stock



£ weekly median earnings by workplace



## Supporting new business in key sectors

Whilst the first graph illustrates Kent's relative success in business start-ups, the second graph shows that we need to focus on tackling Kent's comparatively low GVA levels, average earnings and skills levels in relation to the rest of the South East. This will require providing particular support for high value-added sectors such as pharmaceuticals, creative industries, avionics, environmental technologies, construction, transport and communications and the creative industries.

Driving economic growth in these sectors will make Kent more resilient to the impact of a recessionary climate and international competition.

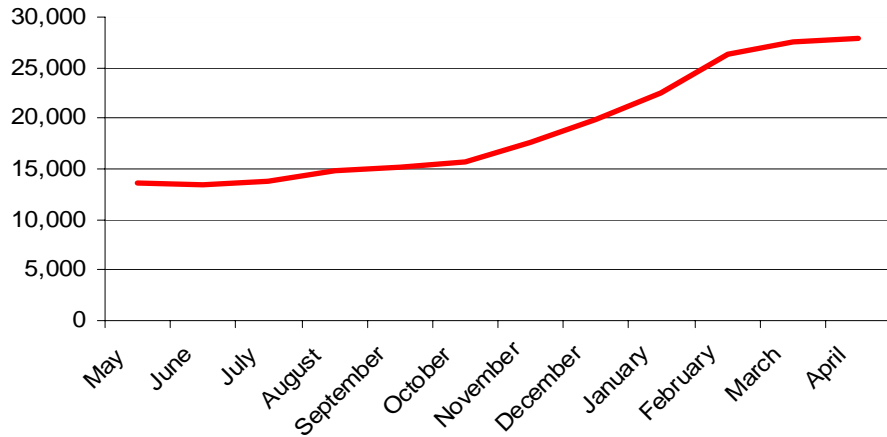
As a county of small and medium sized enterprises, Kent is well-placed to attract the innovators and entrepreneurs who will drive forward growth in high value sectors. We must therefore target our activities toward unblocking the obstacles that may deter companies from locating here, making Kent the best place to do business in the UK.

### Did you know?

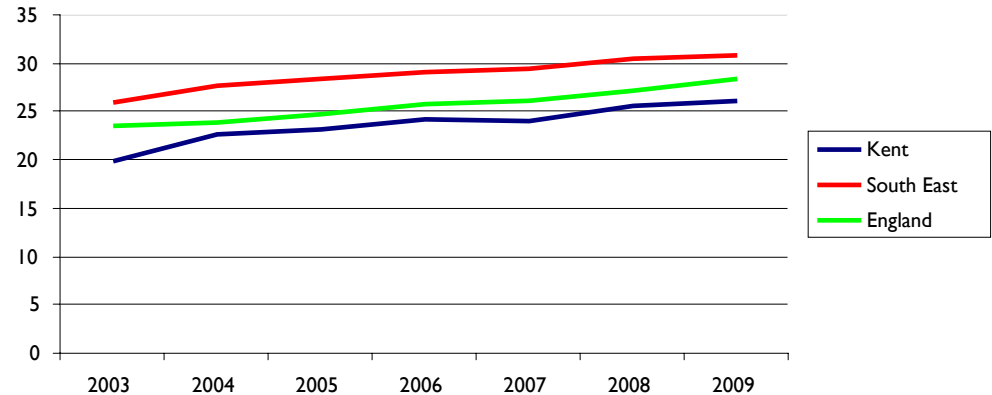
The local economy has levels of entrepreneurship that match and exceed South East rates. Business registrations per 10,000 adults in 2006 were – 53.2 in Sevenoaks, 48.8 in Tonbridge and Malling, 47.3 in Tunbridge Wells and 44.2 in Maidstone. The figure for the South East was 43.1

# We face new and developing global and national challenges

Jobseekers' Allowance claimants in Kent 2008/09



% working age population with NVQ4+



## International recession

In the short term, *Unlocking Kent's Potential* is written at a time of international economic turbulence unprecedented in recent years. The effects of global recession have been felt in Kent, as they have around the world. After fifteen years of falling or static unemployment, numbers claiming Jobseekers' Allowance more than doubled in 2008/09.

Looking to the future, current forecasts suggest a further contraction in the UK economy of 3.7% in 2009. With an increasingly interconnected economy, the impacts of recession have spread rapidly throughout the world. We will need to support businesses and employment through the downturn and to deal with the challenges of increasing demands on public services and funding pressures.

## Global change

In the longer term, Kent's economy will need to cope with intensified competition as a place to do business. As well as investment in infrastructure and support for entrepreneurs, this means addressing the county's skills deficit.

In the future, the jobs that Kent needs to attract will demand higher level skills, yet despite consistent gradual improvement, the proportion of the workforce with NVQ4+ (degree level) qualifications still lags behind the regional and national averages.



# There are major economic opportunities in the county

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## Thames Gateway - Kent



Whilst there is no doubt that international and global forces will shape the future of the Kent economy, we believe that this reinforces the need to act locally to support businesses and to help set the right conditions for economic growth. This Framework sets out some of the contributions that we intend to make to achieve this goal.

Increasing productivity is based on marshalling a range of key factors and resources. In Kent, there are a number of transformational investments that will contribute. Amongst many, these include:

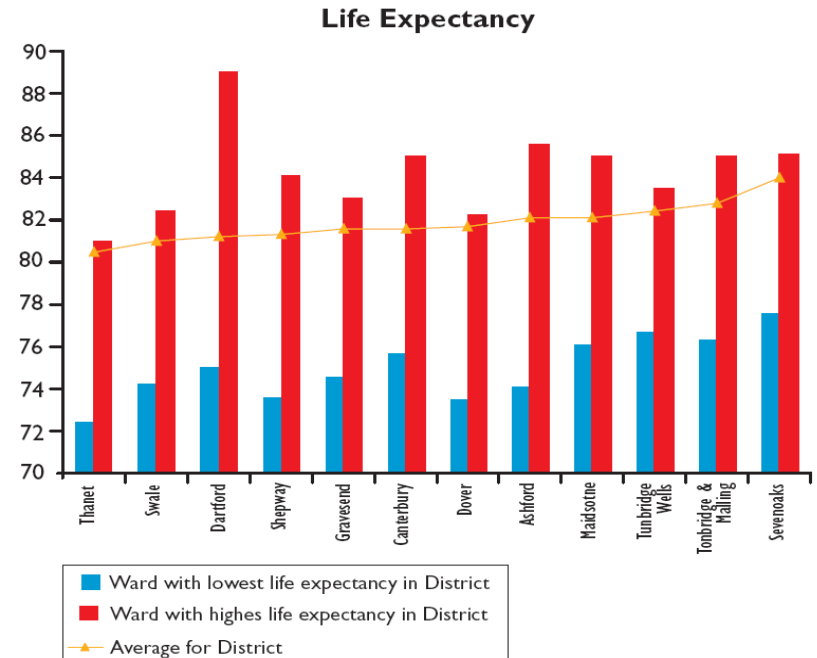
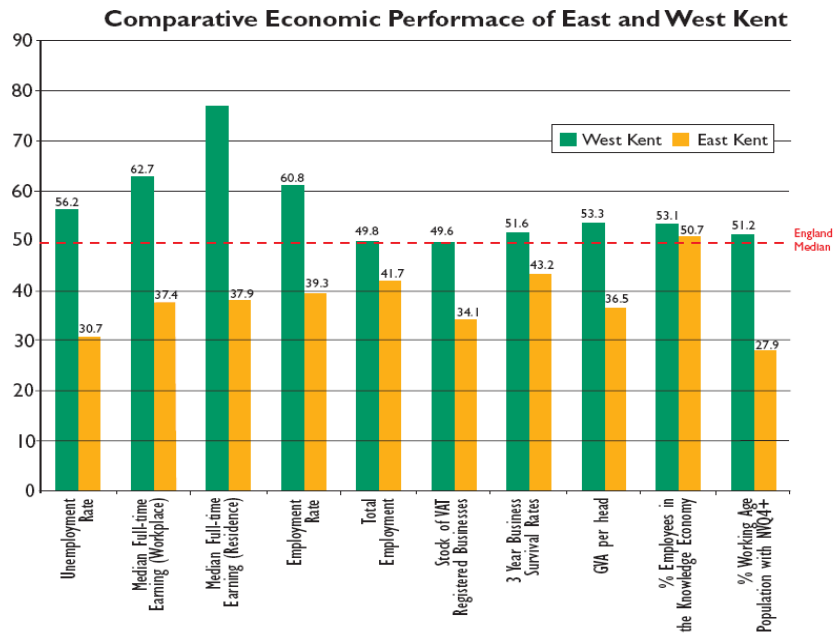
- The development and build out of employment space at Ebbsfleet Valley and Kent Thameside, Ashford, Manston, Dover and Sittingbourne

## Manston Airport



- Combining employment growth with housing growth in the Thames Gateway and Ashford growth areas and Dover and Maidstone growth points in Kent
- Maximising the role of High Speed One services and the opportunities of Manston and Lydd airports together with the expansion of the Port of Dover and the development of a third Lower Thames Crossing
- A sequence of transport investments to road and rail and public transport
- Cultural regeneration investments, especially in Margate, Folkestone and Canterbury

# We must tackle socio-economic differences within the county to deliver a high quality of life for all our residents



## Tackling divergences in economic performance

The graph highlights the wide variance of economic performance, employment patterns and skills levels across Kent. While there is considerable divergence within and between districts across the county, there are differences in educational attainment, skills, access to services and quality of housing between East and West Kent. We need to focus our efforts to ensure that no young person leaves school without going into further education, employment or training; the commercial advantage of Kent, and particularly east Kent, in property and labour costs; and tackling sub-standard housing

and reducing health inequalities so that all residents in Kent enjoy a high quality of life.

## Promoting better quality of life

Overall people in Kent enjoy better health and live longer than the average in England. Life expectancy at birth in Kent is 79.7 years (81.7 for women and 77.6 for men). But between the best and the worst wards in Kent there is a 16.6 year difference. Even in the district with the least difference (Tunbridge Wells) there is a 6.8 year gap between the best and the worst wards.



# To support growth, the right investment, service and community infrastructure is essential

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## The infrastructure challenge

When we first published ‘What Price Growth?’ we sought to highlight that the bedrock of future prosperity depended upon the timely provision of supporting infrastructure for housing and employment growth.

We will be re-writing ‘What Price Growth?’ looking ahead 5, 10, 15 and 20 years, identifying and costing the public sector capital investments needed to deliver our objectives. This will include investment to overcome the divide between the more affluent and more deprived parts of the county, and will help to inform future investment planning with our partners in Kent and with central government.

It is clear that new resources are required, to:

- Accommodate new housing growth driven by demographic change and migration, and match this to local employment opportunities
- Improve the existing housing stock
- Provide supporting community, health and cultural facilities and services
- Deliver vital transport schemes such as a third Lower Thames Crossing, solutions to Operation Stack and essential public transport improvements
- Deliver new business space that meets the needs of changing demands from the private sector
- Provide a new breed of virtual infrastructure such as high-speed next-generation broadband services
- Develop new channels of learning provision, such as apprenticeships and work based learning degrees, that allow school leavers to acquire work-based skills and knowledge
- Expand and modernise the role of our science and research sectors contributing to new growth
- Create a coherent policy framework for delivering secure energy supplies and energy security, water supply and sewerage and managing the risks of climate change and flooding



# Chapter 4: Defining our priorities

## Five priorities...

Based on analysis of the key challenges and opportunities facing Kent, we have identified five priorities for the County Council. These are:

### ***Building a new relationship with business***

We recognise that economic growth must provide the basis for sustainable regeneration, and that as competition increases, we must provide an environment in which businesses are able to grow and flourish. This means ensuring that businesses have access to the skills they need, and have scope to expand their role as creators of wealth.

### ***Unlocking talent to support the Kent economy***

We need to enable the development of the workforce of tomorrow, as well as invest in the skills of people already in work to ensure that they are able to access new opportunities. We also must make sure that we have quality and choice in learning, so that people can achieve their full potential.

### ***Embracing a growing and changing population***

As Kent's population expands, becomes older and increasingly diverse, we must ensure that the County Council and our partners plan for services that the changing population needs. We also need to make sure that we counter deprivation, especially in the most disadvantaged parts of the county, and sustain vibrant voluntary and public services at the heart of community life.

### ***Building homes and communities... not estates***

We must ensure that new housing is developed to excellent standards, with the infrastructure that it needs to support it. We also need to protect, enhance and promote the quality of the county's natural and built environment, for the benefit of new and existing communities and for its own sake.

### ***Delivering growth without transport gridlock***

As the UK's gateway county, we need to ensure that we can maintain efficient transport systems at the same time as enabling population and economic growth.

## ... and two cross-cutting themes

In addition to these priorities, we need to take account in everything we do of the need to minimise environmental costs and address the challenge of climate change. We must also consider throughout our priorities the diversity of Kent's communities and the need for flexibility in responding to change.

The two cross-cutting themes are summarised on the following page; further detail of our five priorities is set out in the chapters which follow.

# Cross Cutting Themes

## Theme 1: Meeting the climate challenge

Kent is already being affected by climate change, however part of the climate challenge is recognising the need to take action now to protect our environment from future damage. Kent County Council recognises that climate change is happening and that we have a critical role in helping Kent's businesses, communities and individuals understand and prepare for the impacts of climate change, as well as playing their part in reducing those impacts. We will be developing a new **Environment Strategy** in 2009. This will set out the actions that we will need to take in Kent to reduce carbon dependency.

Nationally, the **Stern Review**, published in 2006, considered the economics of climate change, and concluded that the costs of taking early action to reduce carbon emissions were significantly outweighed by the potential long term consequences of failing to act. Following the Stern Review, the **Climate Change Act 2008** incorporates a legally binding target for the UK to reduce its carbon emissions by at least 26% by 2020 (on a 1990 baseline). The Act also contains measures to introduce financial incentives for carbon reductions.

For *Unlocking Kent's Potential*, meeting the climate challenge means taking action to develop low carbon industries (and to develop the skills associated with them). The climate challenge also presents opportunities for economic development in Kent, given the potential that the county has to take a lead in some low-carbon sectors, and later chapters set this out further.

## Theme 2: Recognising Kent's diversity

Kent is a highly diverse county, economically, demographically, spatially and in landscape character. It includes some of the most affluent communities in the country, and some of its most deprived; it includes areas of former heavy industry now seeing major housing growth and isolated rural communities. Ethnic diversity also varies considerably across the county.

Within *Unlocking Kent's Potential*, we have deliberately sought to develop a framework to support regeneration throughout Kent. Some of the actions that we propose inevitably have more relevance to some locations and to some groups in the population than others, and we have referenced specific schemes and places where appropriate. However, we have not set out specific strategic approaches for (for example) geographical sub-areas of Kent or for rural Kent.

This is partly because this is an overarching framework, not a comprehensive strategy, and we do not want to repeat analysis that already exists at more localised or specialised level.

Our approach has therefore been to recognise that specific issues will require different actions in different places, but to consider these as part of the mainstream activity of delivering *Unlocking Kent's Potential*. This closely links with the County Council's approach to supporting rural communities, which emphasises the need to embed actions to support rural Kent within mainstream strategies.

# Chapter 5: Building a new relationship with business

## Why we need a new relationship with business

Kent businesses are facing many challenges, especially in the current economic climate. These include infrastructure constraints, recruiting and retaining employees with the right skills and competition from overseas.

Kent County Council has a role to respond on behalf of businesses to these and other challenges, to stand up and lobby for Kent businesses, and to drive through changes where necessary to the environment in which businesses operate.

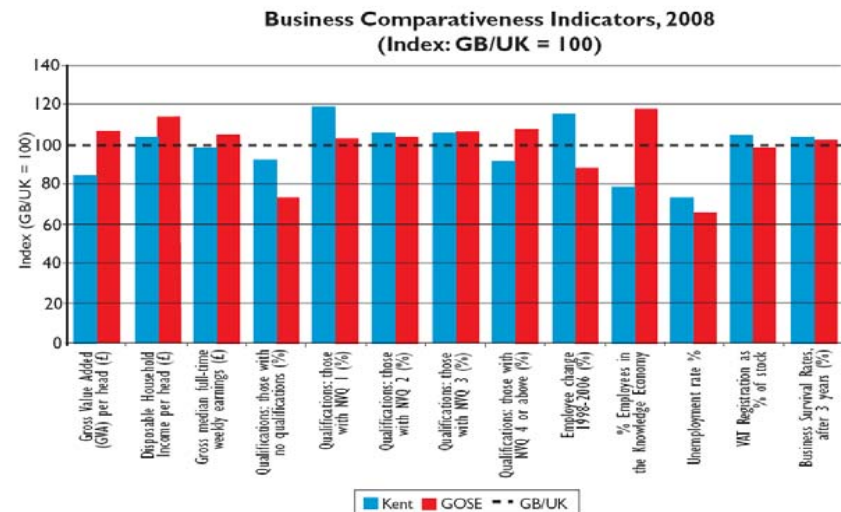
We will provide strategic leadership and practical support to the diverse Kent economy, tailored to the particular needs of defined sector groupings.

This will require us to have a new, dynamic relationship with Kent businesses, built upon an open and ongoing dialogue. We need a new conversation and dialogue with Kent businesses.

How can they be supported to weather the current economic downturn and benefit from future opportunities? We will work with businesses directly and with professional bodies such as the Institute of Directors, CBI and the Federation of Small Businesses to develop this relationship.

Although located in the South East, Kent's performance is more akin to the national economy, with jobs growth centred on the service sector – retailing, hotels and catering and business services.

The graph below shows that Kent needs to focus its efforts on developing the knowledge economy, ensuring that our education system provides the appropriately skilled workers to benefit from economic growth in the high value sectors. This in turn will increase levels of GVA, median income earnings and the amount of disposable income that can be spent in the Kent economy.



## Our track record in supporting business

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We are confident that we can make the new relationship with business work effectively because we have a strong track record of supporting Kent business. For example:

- We campaigned for and secured the construction of the international passenger stations at Ashford and Ebbsfleet.
- We spend over £860m per annum on goods and services, 60 per cent of which (more than £500m) is with local companies, often small businesses.
- With private sector partners, we have transformed the former West Malling airfield into one of the largest and most successful mixed used developments in Europe. More than £500m has been invested to date creating some 800,000 sq ft of office and business floor space with employment for 5,000 people. The site has a development capacity for a further 1.2 million sq ft of commercial floor space.
- We worked with developers and other partners in the Thames Gateway – particularly Eastern Quarry – and Ashford to maximise the business opportunities arising from the growth agenda, and to ensure that the right business and community infrastructure will be in place.
- In 1997, we established and funded Locate in Kent, our inward investment agency. In its first 10 years it has advised 468 companies to locate to Kent, or expand within Kent.
- We made a major investment in purchasing Manston and Eurokent Business Park in 2006 to develop new business, employment and housing opportunities.
- We have invested over £280m in major road schemes such as the ‘dualling’ of the Thanet Way, the Ramsgate Harbour Relief Road and the South Thames Development Route and we are now spending £70m on the East Kent Access Road. These strategic improvements ease congestion and encourage further investment. We have also spent £32m on the award-winning Fastrack.
- We have actively invested in the provision of specialist business incubator space in Folkestone, Thanet, Northfleet, Faversham and Dover.
- We changed our planning policies to facilitate the development of Bluewater and have consistently planned for the provision of sufficient business space to enable continued growth.
- We have championed and worked with the public and private sectors for transformational projects such as the cruise terminal at Dover Western Docks and the creation of new business parks including Eureka Business Park in Ashford, The Bridge in Dartford and EuroKent Business Park.

Although we are proud of our track record, we recognise that we now need to lift our game and move to a new way of working with, and supporting, business to make things happen faster and more effectively.

# We must now identify key business sectors and market opportunities for the future

## The diverse economy

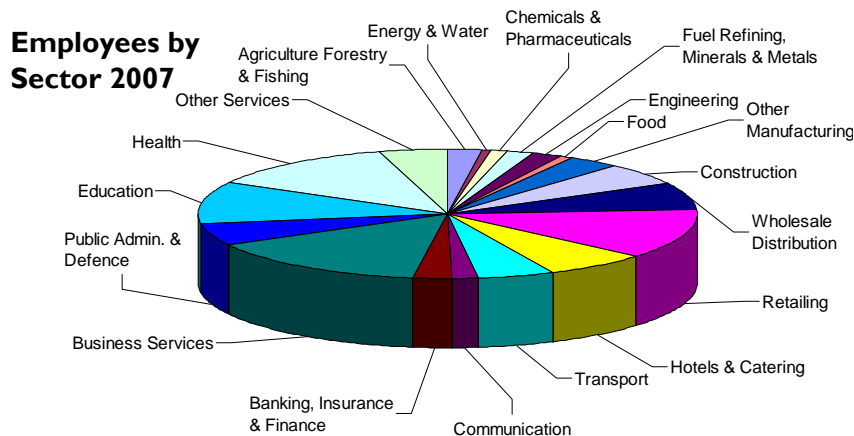
The Kent economy comprises a wide variety of businesses. We will respond to this diversity, interfacing with the different sectors to develop a Kent Sectors Strategy that will differentiate needs and target the right levels of support to each sector. It is particularly important that the “high value” sectors such as pharmaceuticals, IT, construction, financial services and creative industries are supported to drive Kent’s future economic growth.

The proximity of Kent to London has a profound effect on the economy of the county, impacting on workforce and employment patterns, with some 20 per cent of the county’s workers commuting to the capital. This impacts on housing and house prices, travel and transport patterns, and our business base. The ‘London effect’ is most pronounced in the west of the county, having a significant impact on the differential rates of growth and relative prosperity between East and West Kent.

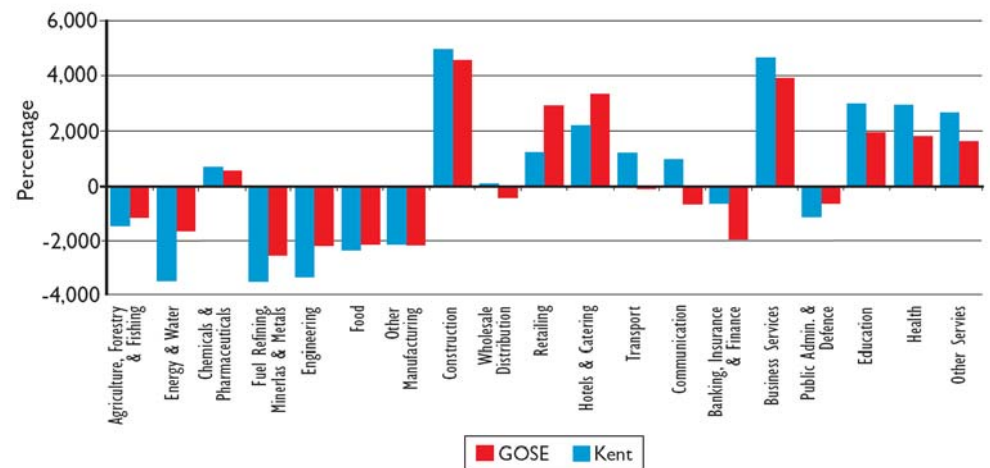
Diversity is a strength of Kent's economy and a key part of future growth and resilience in the global economy. There are business opportunities and strengths in the Kent economy.

Opportunities and strengths exist in:

- Environmental technologies and renewable energy
- Pharmaceuticals and biosciences
- Advanced manufacturing and engineering
- Aviation and defence-related industries
- Tourism, hospitality and leisure
- Creative, media and cultural industries
- Construction and the built environment
- Land based activity
- Financial, professional and business services
- Education, health and social care
- Transport and communications
- Information technology and software development

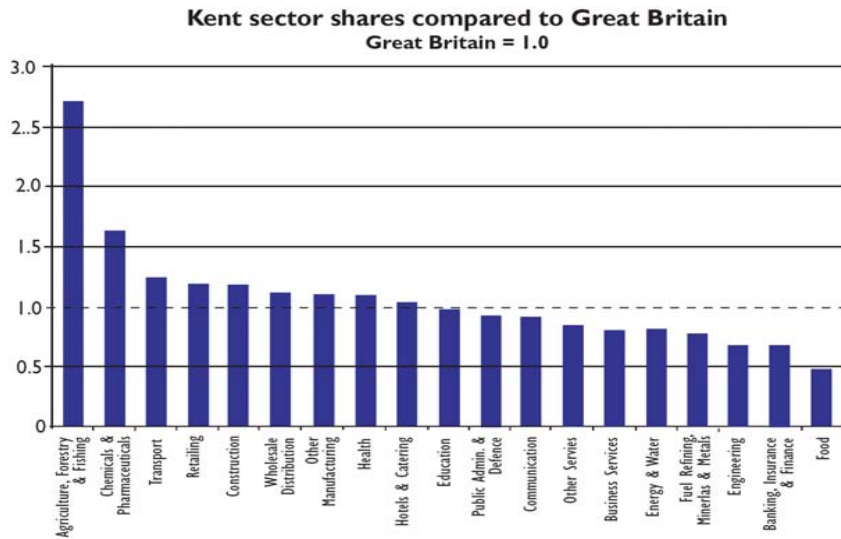


Percentage job change by sector, Kent and GOSE, 1996-2006





# Focusing on key business sectors will raise Kent's economic performance



The Kent sector shares graph illustrates the sectors in which Kent has a high proportion of employment compared with the national average.

In several high value sectors, Kent has a relatively low employment share (such as in communications, engineering, banking and finance), although this masks local variation.

The sectors strategy will help us to understand this better and enable us to identify where we should focus our resources to drive up our competitive advantage.

## Case study: Kent Film Office

A critical element in Kent's future economic success is to nurture the creative economy.

Kent is a large county with an amazing variety of urban and rural landscapes that by and large remain undiscovered by film makers. This, together with its proximity to London, good road and rail connections and a well-developed sense of place, means that the county can and does provide the magic for film.

Research has shown that 40% of visitors are very likely to visit places seen in films or on TV; and employment in the UK film industry has risen by 70% since 1996.

Kent County Council established the Kent Film Office in 2006 to take a lead in developing Kent as the place to film. It has the expertise and knowledge to understand the requirements of the film industry and has captured and supported major film and television productions in Kent. These have included Cape Wrath for Channel Four, the Margate Exodus, The Other Boleyn Girl and Half Broken Things, as well as advertising campaigns for Morrisons, Eon, Churchill, Tesco and Waitrose.

With the Kent Film Office in operation, the county is well placed to attract future productions, supporting Kent's creative, cultural and tourism industries.



# Developing the workforce

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A critical element of business development is being able to attract, recruit and develop employees to have the right skills for the job. The next chapter focuses on skills and how we will unlock talent to support businesses in Kent. From a sector and market development perspective, the Kent Economic Board and the Kent and Medway Local Skills for Productivity Alliance (LSPA) have highlighted the following 'sector and activity' based skills development priorities:

- Construction
- Finance & business services
- Science & advanced manufacturing (including environmental technologies, renewable & alternative energy).
- Transport & logistics
- Leadership & management skills
- Entrepreneurial & innovation skills
- ICT skills
- Promotion of business / education collaboration
- Measures to improve the work readiness of young people from education and training
- Engagement / re-engagement of the economically inactive into the workforce

## Working with Business For Business

KCC has an annual £860m spend on goods and services of which £320m a year is spent with 5,000 Kent SMEs. This is good news for Kent business. But evidence would suggest that Kent businesses still find it difficult to access KCC procurement systems and understand the opportunities that are available. We have been working closely with the Federation of Small Business to identify the issues, how they can be resolved and what KCC needs to do. It is this open dialogue with business and joint working to deliver added value to Kent business which is changing the way KCC does its own business for business.

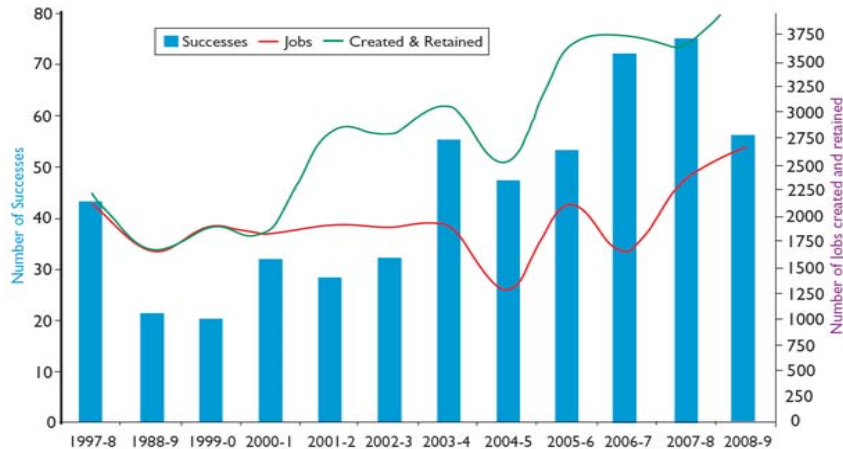
## Case Study: Thanet Earth

Investment promotion agency Locate in Kent worked closely with the Fresca Group and Robert Montgomery to assist in plans to develop the UK's most hi-tech greenhouse complex on the Isle of Thanet. More than 550 jobs will be created when Fresca teams up with specialist large-scale growers of tomatoes, peppers and cucumbers. £80m will be invested at the 91-hectare site near Monckton now officially named Thanet Earth, which will include seven glasshouses, each covering the areas of around 10 football pitches and will use the very latest in efficient hydroponic growing techniques

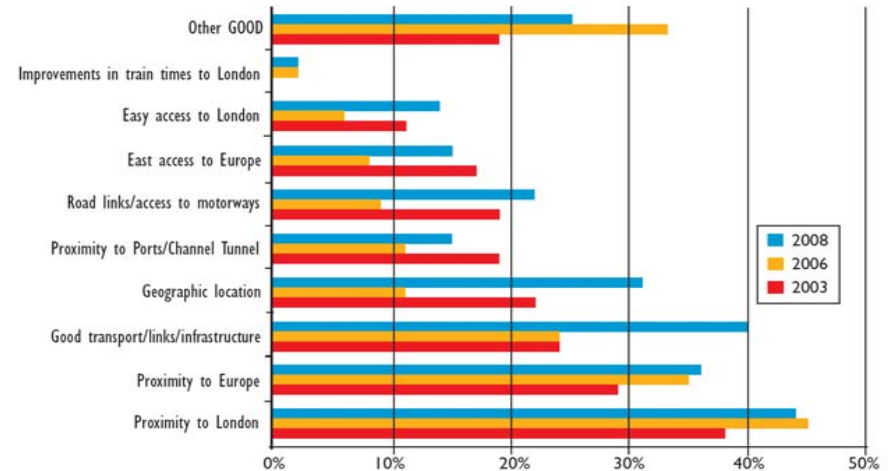
# We must market and promote the county to business and visitors

Kent is a key location for inward investment, perfectly positioned between the markets of London (7m consumers) and Europe (450m consumers).

LiK Successes Jobs 1997 - October 2008



Location factors



## Supporting inward investment

- KCC is a major financial backer of marketing the county, providing nearly £1m annual funding for the arms-length inward investment agency, Locate in Kent, which has helped more than 480 companies move to or expand in the county and has created over 20,000 new jobs.
- Kent is home to over 400 world class companies such as Pfizer, Saga, Kimberly Clark, BAE Systems, Royal Bank of Scotland and GlaxoSmithKline.
- Although on London's doorstep, property and labour costs in Kent are up to 60% lower than in London, and High Speed One services will transform access between Ashford (37mins), Canterbury (61mins), Folkestone (63mins), Dover (74 mins), Margate (98mins), London and the rest of the country.

## Promoting Kent as a visitor destination

- The visitor economy is important to Kent, with tourism worth an estimated £2.5 billion, supporting almost 50,000 people across Kent and Medway.
- Kent County Council supports the development of the visitor economy through its backing, of Visit Kent, which promotes Kent as an important destination.
- Kent has a strong offer to national and international visitors through major attractions such as Canterbury Cathedral (our largest visitor attraction, with over a million visitors per year) and the natural quality of the coast and countryside.
- KCC is also helping to support the development of the visitor economy through investment in culturally-led regeneration, especially in Kent's coastal towns such as Margate, Dover and Folkestone, making the link between economic development and quality of life.

## Commercial development: Ensuring land supply to support local business

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- To ensure that Kent businesses and inward investors have the ability to expand and to create jobs, it is essential that the planning system facilitates a strategic and market-ready supply of land for commercial development.
  - Although the commercial market has slowed since mid 2007, performance is expected to recover in 2010. Demand for business park space continues, including at Kings Hill and Manston, where Kent County Council have primary interests. We will continue to ensure through our own land ownership interests, the delivery of market ready property for development or use, particularly in readiness for an economic upturn.
  - In addition, we will seek to ensure the provision of an appropriate availability and mix of commercial space to support the development and expansion of local business and the local economy.
- Looking to the future, the South East Plan suggests potential for around 123,000 jobs in Kent and Medway between 2006 and 2026, although these projections, and the scale and location of employment land that will be required will be reviewed through the development of the new single regional strategy. Emerging guidance will require the County Council to work with District colleagues to prepare a robust evidence base to understand existing business need and likely changes in the market.

### Monitoring and planning supply

- We also have a key role in monitoring supply within the county against planning policy requirements: at the end of March 2008, there were around 480 hectares of land available for commercial development in the county.



**Eureka Business Park**, Ashford, comprises over 300,000 sq ft of built business space with outline consent for a further 1,200,000 sq ft together with car parking at a ratio of 1:280 sq ft. It is set in a 96 acre prime business location just off Junction 9 of the M20. The park has capacity to satisfy business park requirements from 1,400 sq ft upwards and bespoke design and build solutions in excess of 1,000,000 sq ft.

## How we will build a new relationship with Kent business

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We want Kent County Council to be the most business-friendly council in England. We have already established our Backing Kent Business campaign to support Kent businesses through the recession, and are planning further action. We will:

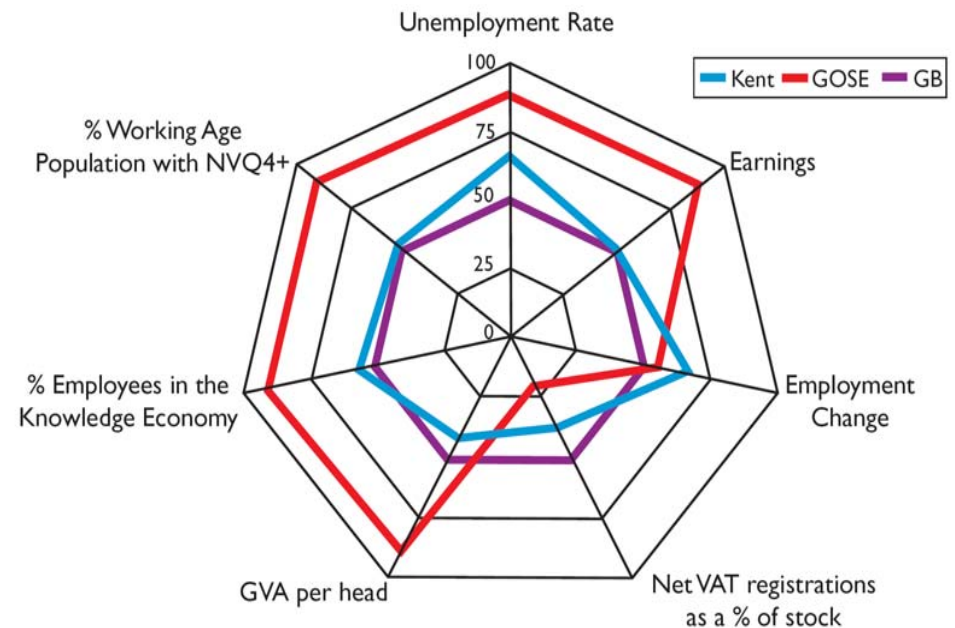
- Develop a dynamic and ongoing relationship with businesses, providing strategic leadership and practical support to the diverse Kent economy, tailored to the needs of each sector. We will publish a Sectors Strategy detailing the practical measures we will take to deliver this approach.
- Make KCC the most business-friendly council in England and, working with our partners, seek to ensure that as much local public sector procurement is with as many Kent-based companies as possible.
- Encourage a culture of enterprise in Kent through further development of KCC's vocational programme, education business partnerships and the apprenticeship programme. This will develop the right skills, aptitudes and attitudes for the entrepreneurs and employees of the future.
- Continue to invest in business infrastructure such as transport links, business park development and the development of business incubation facilities to encourage business development and growth.
- Create and sustain a Kent Business Support Centre to link with KCC, providing Kent firms with easy access to information and contacts, opening up opportunities within our framework for tendering and sub-contracting and signposting new business opportunities, grants and support.
- Simplify our procurement so that it is small business friendly. We will make sure upcoming tenders are advertised and work with businesses so that they understand KCC's procurement processes and know what is expected from tenders.
- Identify and signpost Kent business to important new market opportunities such as KCC's multi-million pound Building Schools for the Future programme and our wider capital programme.
- Seek to secure the opportunities presented by the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.
- **Maximise the opportunities** associated with the substantial programme of housing, community infrastructure and commercial development in North Kent, Ashford and elsewhere in Kent.
- Market Kent robustly to as location for **inward investment**.
- **Develop and promote Kent as a destination** for UK and international visitors.
- Work more closely with business representative organisations to **lobby central government and the European Union** to abolish regulations and red tape that impede business development.
- Continue to work to bring forward key new business parks and support the work to attract new businesses to Kent.
- Provide pragmatic support that helps Kent's businesses weather shocks such as the credit crunch.

# Chapter 6: Unlocking talent to support the Kent economy

## Aspiration, achievement and economic success

- Education and skills must drive a generational change in the life chances of people in Kent by allowing all young people to realise their potential and ambitions, raise their aspirations and broaden their horizons. An improved skills base will also support the Kent economy. The business community should be able to influence education and training in secondary schools and the further and higher education sectors.
- By building on the momentum of Kent's educational transformation, we will deliver this vision and we will build the foundations for generational change in the life chances of young people in Kent, providing the skills and talent for Kent businesses who will be central to the regeneration of our local communities.
- Access to an appropriately skilled workforce is the top factor in influencing company location and company performance in the South East of England. Therefore tackling skills deficits in local communities can significantly improve economic performance and attractiveness to new business and investment.
- The potential benefit of upskilling the Kent workforce is significant. By investing in skills - in particular Level 4 (graduate) and Level 3 (intermediate) skills - £2billion could be added to Kent's GDP over the next 30 years. Shaping future educational and training provision to meet the needs of business is vital to deliver this growth in GDP.

- In a number of key areas, such as earnings, GVA per head, graduates and employees in the knowledge economy (see diagram), Kent is behind the wider South East. Whilst this presents a strategic challenge, it also presents a huge opportunity given the comparative room for improvement in Kent.



# Developing world class education and business partnerships through effective business engagement in education and skills provision



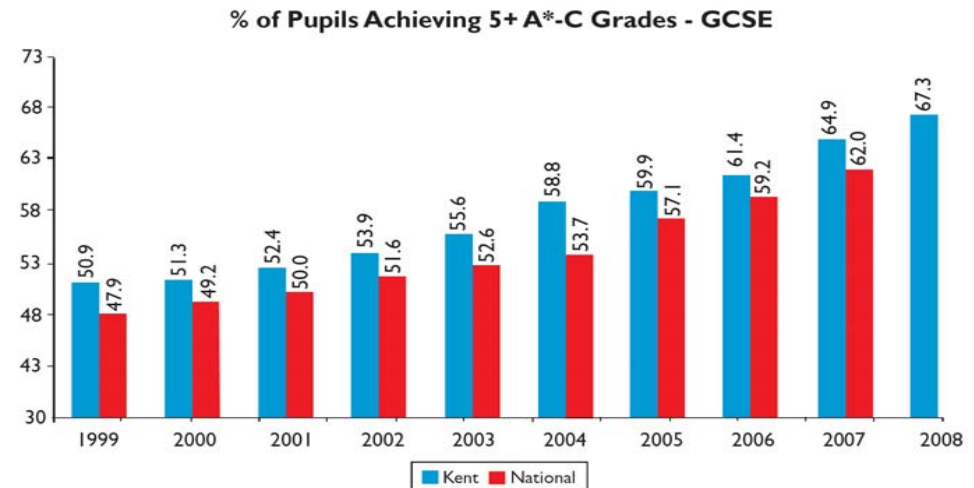
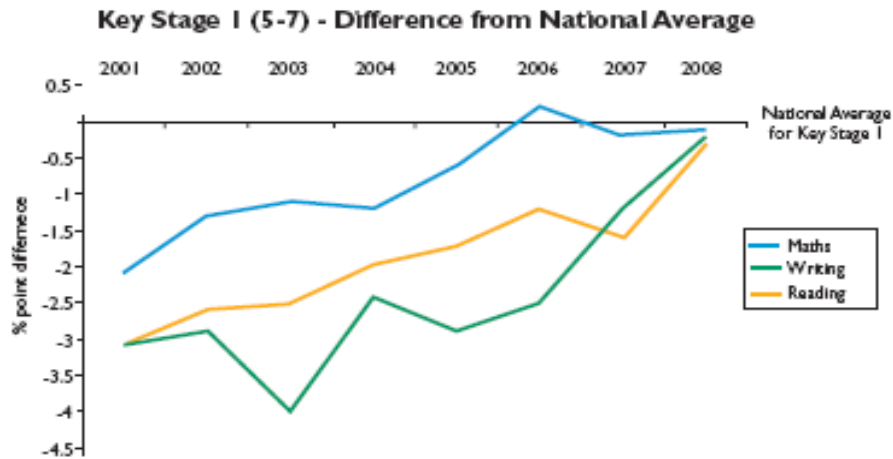
## Skills Commission for Kent

Kent County Council will set up a business-led Skills Commission for Kent to examine the strategic skills challenges facing the county and will recommend the best means for the business community to influence future education and skills provision, defining how a world class education business partnership can be developed for Kent

- Kent County Council wants to put the needs of the Kent business community firmly at the centre of its education and training provision.
- For too long the needs of the economy and of employers have been considered of secondary importance in designing this provision. In Kent, however, we have already started a new relationship with business by forming key partnerships relating to our pioneering 14 -16 curriculum. We want to go much further, and two opportunities in particular can provide a catalyst to kick start this process.
- The Sub-National Review of Economic Development and Regeneration will devolve key economic development and regeneration responsibilities and funding from the regional level to KCC, whilst the transfer the commissioning of 16 -19 education and training functions from the Learning and Skills Council will give KCC the power to commission and de-commission post -16 provision in Kent. We will also gain enhanced powers to scope the number and type of modern apprenticeships needed by employers and the demand by young people to acquire funding from the new National Apprenticeships Agency.
- These two changes will allow KCC to strategically align its economic development and education and training functions to focus on the needs of Kent businesses. This can only be achieved in partnership with the business community, which is why we want to develop a world class education and business partnership.



# Our education results at both primary and secondary level have improved



## Improving school attainment

KCC's education results have been improving rapidly over recent years at both primary and secondary level.

- Since 2001, Key Stage I pupils (5 -7 year olds) have been closing the attainment gap in reading, writing and maths, moving Kent towards the national average (which has itself increased each year) so that in 2008 our results almost converged with the national average.

- Kent's GCSE results have also improved significantly over the last 10 years and have remained consistently above national GCSE attainment levels. The number of Kent pupils achieving five or more GCSE passes at grades A\*- C has increased by 16.4 per cent between 1999 and 2008 (50.9 per cent to 67.3 per cent respectively) whilst the latest available data (2007) shows that Kent's success rate is 2.9 per cent above the national average.

## Long term changes

- However, the narrow academic achievement of the number of pupils achieving five or more GCSEs tells only part of the story. It does not capture the significant changes that we have made to our approach in Kent, how this approach has driven our success and how it is opening up young people's minds as to the opportunities that exist as they undertake education and training and prepare for the world of work.

# Making vocational and applied learning central to 21<sup>st</sup> century business needs

## Transforming the curriculum

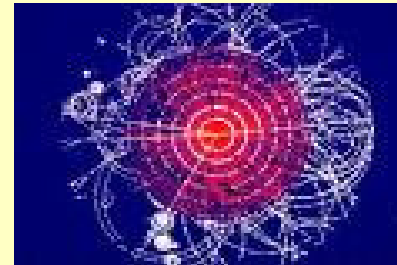
- We have transformed the Kent school curriculum so that young people have much more control over how they learn and what they learn, so they find education exciting and relevant to their ambitions, keeping them engaged and motivated whilst encouraging them become life-long learners. A Kent student can now develop a particular focus on the arts, humanities, science, technology or sport at an early age and develop practical skills through applied learning and vocational courses.
- Greater emphasis has been placed on structured project-based learning which promotes the acquisition of new skills, such as independent learning, critical thinking, group social skills and a work ethic: the very employability skills that employers say they need from their new employees.

## Transforming teaching

- Teaching is also being transformed, changing group sizes to suit each subject and the group of learners, using large master classes to small groups and providing more one-to-one support for those pupils who have learning difficulties or other needs. This approach focuses on applied learning, where theory and concepts are supported by practical application, so that students can build a real understanding of the subject matter – understanding that they can then translate into the workplace.
- This personalised approach to learning is supported by our investment in an ICT- rich environment, which stimulates young people to engage in independent learning. Research has shown that access to high quality ICT improves both overall grades and standards, equipping young people with the key skills that most businesses require in the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy.

## Case study: Langton Star Centre at Simon Langton Grammar School

- The Langton Star Centre at Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys in Canterbury aims to offer students opportunities to be involved in real physics research.
- After visiting the Medipix laboratories at CERN (the European Centre for Nuclear Research) last year, students entered a British National Space Centre competition to fly an experiment in space. They developed a small versatile cosmic-ray detector using Medipix detectors and this will fly in space in 2010 for at least five years. This detector is called LUCID – the Langton Ultimate Cosmic-ray Intensity Detector. Schools and students across the country will be able to take data from LUCID and compare that data on Earth.



- This approach, where students are involved in original research and work alongside physicists and engineers has been particularly successful in encouraging students to study physics at Simon Langton.
- Currently, 150 students are undertaking A-Level physics, and one in every 200 students studying physics at a UK university has graduated from the Langton Star Centre



# Promoting high quality vocational options

## New vocational opportunities...

- KCC understands that the academic route is not for everyone and we should not force young people down the route of GCSEs, A-levels and university if it is not for them. We have pioneered new and stimulating methods of delivering vocational opportunities for 14-16 year olds in Kent, which provide tailor-made courses relevant to the needs of the local labour market. Students can choose subjects as wide ranging as:

Construction	Horticulture
Social care	Retail
Engineering	Catering
Land-based	ICT

## ... delivering results

- Delivered through our Skill Centres (see next page) , teaching is undertaken by industry qualified professionals. The vocational curriculum has been an outstanding success, with 80 per cent of parents rating the organisation of vocational courses as either excellent or good, and 78 per cent of students reporting plans to progress into further education, employment with training or into apprenticeships.
- Over 4,000 14 -16 year olds enrolled in vocational courses in the 2007/2008 academic year - achieving our corporate Towards 2010 target two years early. The demand for vocational courses is now outstripping supply, demonstrating the clear need from young people and parents alike.
- We have revised our targets upwards to reflect this increased demand and will enable 7,000 students to enrol on vocational courses by 2010.

## Case study: SkillForce

400 Kent students have gone through the SkillForce programme, which helps build key employability skills such as team working, collaboration and communication for those young people particularly at risk of disengagement from education and training.

- Delivered by ex-armed forces personnel who build up a working relationship with students, a University of London evaluation concluded that SkillForce significantly reduced the number of school exclusions whilst improving behaviour, attendance and the attainment rates of those on the programme. KCC intends to double the number of schools that have access to the SkillForce programme.

## Excellent careers advice and guidance

Choosing the wrong career path and being in a job that does not motivate or make the most of an individual's skills is estimated to cost the economy one per cent of GDP. Getting careers advice and guidance right could add £230million to Kent's GDP.

- KCC has begun to focus on careers advice and guidance by expanding information and guidance to young people on the post -16 routes available, especially vocational options which may suit many better than A-levels and university.
- However, we must go much further. The education systems in the USA, Canada and Australia increasingly teach career management and life skills, so that young people can understand their local economies, the job opportunities that exist within them and how to acquire the skills needed to access these job opportunities. In a rapidly changing global economy that will see multiple career changes over a lifetime in response to economic shifts, career management is a core skill that all young people need.

# Transforming the school estate

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## Building Schools for the Future (BSF) and Academies programme

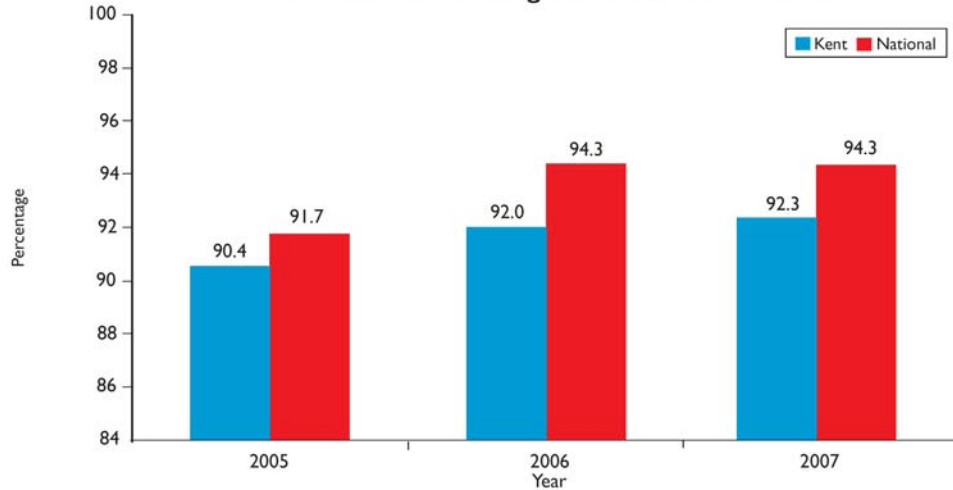
- The first phase of BSF worth £600m is already underway. By creating a bright, modern, ICT- rich environment with flexible learning spaces, the BSF and Academies programmes aim to rebuild or renew every secondary school in Kent over a period of 10-15 years.
- As the largest single school capital programme in Europe, the overall £1.45 billion BSF programme will deliver a curriculum offering real choice and diversity for all students in Kent. In addition £200 million will be spent to deliver seven new academies in the county.

## Skills Centres

- KCC has invested over £13 million in providing 21 high-quality state-of-the-art Skills Centres that deliver practical, hands-on, industry related learning for 14 -16 year olds, replicating the real work environment.
- The flagship £1.5 million Thanet Skills Studio offers courses in construction, engineering, motor vehicle, retail and catering, with 400 14 -16 year olds from Thanet secondary schools attending one day a week as part of their GCSE or vocational studies. The studio works with a range of employers including Peugeot and Jamie Oliver's Fifteen Foundation.

# Providing new choices for 16-18 year olds

**% Students achieving 2+ A-E Grades - Post 16**

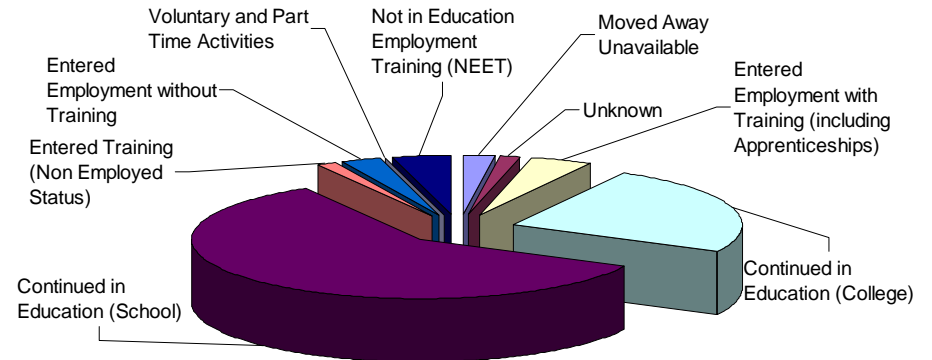


## Falling post-16 attainment

The graphs show that the decline in post -16 attainment rates is marked. A Level attainment in Kent is below the national average, whilst Kent has the lowest percentage of 19 year olds in the South East attaining level 3 (intermediate) qualifications – 48 per cent compared to 68 per cent in Surrey. Given our success rates at level 2 (GCSE) this should not be the case. It may be that the decline in attainment is partly due to a fall in the quality of provision and a more limited choice in the range of 16 -19 courses, which disengages young people from learning and allows them to drift through the 16 -19 period without focus on what they want or need to achieve.

- The government plans to increase the compulsory education and training participation age to 18 by 2015, with a target of a 90 per cent participation rate.

**Kent School Leavers by destination - Year 11 - 2007**



As the pie chart shows, 90 per cent of Kent school leavers already go into some form of education or training. The challenge for Kent is not increasing participation rates, but delivering a wide range of high quality post-16 provision.

## The need to improve choice

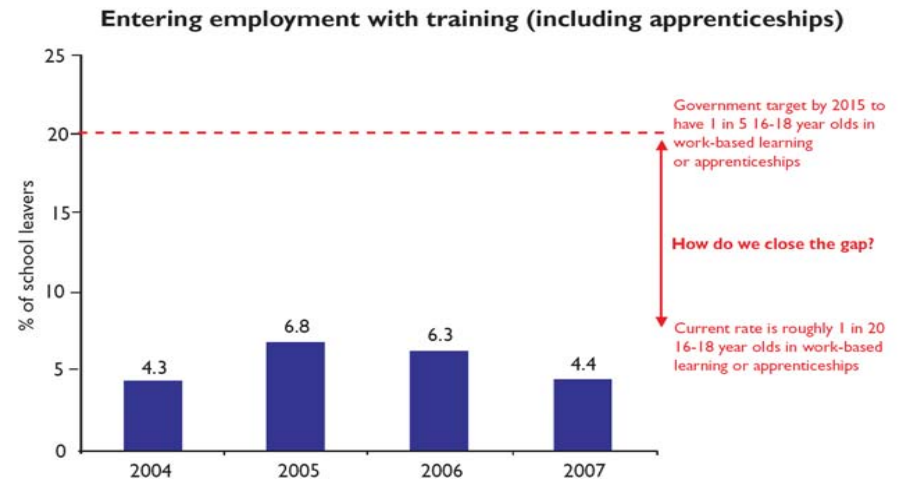
KCC believes that it can extend the successful approach that has been delivered in the pre -16 education stage to post 16 provision, and through the transfer of Learning and Skills Council 16 -19 functions and funding, we are determined to shape this provision to meet both the needs of students and the business community. Our fundamental commitment is to deliver provision that meets local economic and business need.

- One of the key issues that we will be asking the Skills Commission to examine is how best the business community can influence KCC's 16 -19 commissioning decisions to meet their needs.

# Investing in apprenticeships

## Expanding apprenticeships

- One of the particular challenges in meeting the extension of the participation age is ensuring the right mix of 16 -19 provision. The government wants to see one in five students in an apprenticeship with a level 3 qualification or work based learning by 2010.
- Currently in Kent the rate is 1 in 20, which would require a four-fold increase. Even if we could get all those not in further education or school into an apprenticeship or work-based learning, Kent would still need a 10 per cent shift from the further education and schools sector to apprenticeships in order to meet the target.
- A sectoral shift from school and further education sector into apprenticeships will be required, and high-quality provision is going to be paramount to persuade young people and their parents of the real benefits of apprenticeships. We must also market to the business community the opportunity apprentices provide, and secure their commitment to supporting more apprenticeship programmes. KCC is also committed to challenging the public sector to increase its take up of apprenticeships.

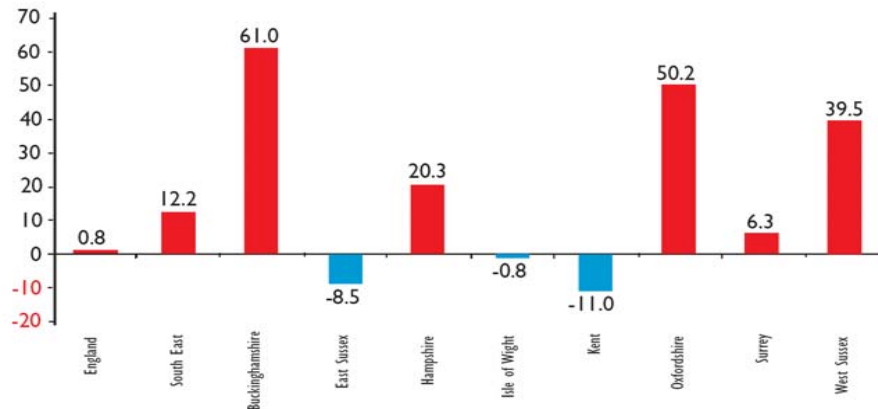


## KCC leading the way in the public sector

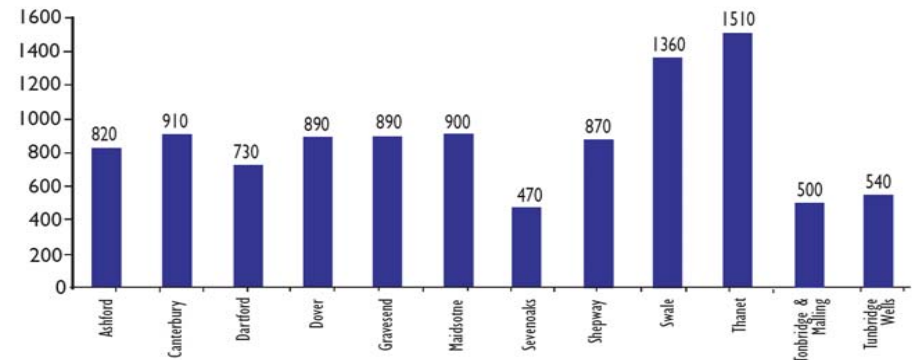
- KCC has been in the vanguard of meeting the apprenticeship challenge in the public sector by introducing our own apprenticeship service - Kent Success - and employing 140 apprentices at the council with the aim to have 250 apprentices by 2010.
- We are also using our procurement strength to promote the expansion of apprenticeships across Kent. The £600 million contract for phase -I BSF has a requirement for 400 apprenticeships to be delivered over the lifetime of the contract by the main contractor or through the supply chain.
- However, apprenticeship provision across the public sector continues to be extremely poor compared to private sector take -up and one of the key challenges for KCC is how it can facilitate the wider take-up of apprenticeships across the public sector.

# Increasing independence for young people

% change in NEETS 2008 vs 2007: South East Counties



16-24 Welfare Claims in Kent (May 2008)



## Reducing dependency; promoting activity

- The number of 16 -18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) has fallen to 3.8% in 2007. The NEET level in Kent is consistently below the national average
- Despite this relative success however, the number of 16 -24 year olds who end up on welfare is still significant and has been relatively consistent over recent years at between 10,000 and 11,000 claimants. This costs an estimated £74.6 million in welfare payments and housing and council tax benefits. While there is a strategic challenge across the county, numbers of young welfare claimants vary across Kent, and there are key concentrations in Thanet and Swale.
- KCC's ambition is that **no 16-24 year old should be unemployed or claiming benefit**. Although we do not have a statutory duty to support those over the age of 19, through our Supporting Independence Programme, we are exploring ways of helping all 16-24 year olds get off welfare and into meaningful activity.
- Many welfare claimants have multiple needs, and will require significant support to build up their skills, confidence and employability before they can gain access to and succeed in the labour market. We are exploring the options through which we can develop and facilitate growth in the number of social enterprises. This will provide a route through which this particular group of young people are engaged in meaningful activity and avoid being trapped in permanent welfare dependency.

# Investing in adult learning and skills

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## Investing in the existing workforce

- If we are to truly unlock Kent's potential, we need to invest in the skills and talent of those already in the labour market. With an ageing population, by 2020 nearly two-thirds of the jobs available will need to be filled by people who are already in the workforce today.

## Developing the skills escalator

- We want to improve the co-ordination of the adult learning offer between providers to enable individuals to have greater flexibility and choice in accessing learning, in ways that are accessible to them at any point in their lives. This will involve linking access to informal learning and first steps courses with more formal qualifications, to enable those without recent experience of learning to progress. It will also mean improving information, advice and guidance about learning and employment opportunities for adults, just as we seek to do for the county's young people.
- Already, Kent County Council has invested in a network of 13 Skills Plus centres around the county, providing opportunities for adults to develop English and maths skills. Several Skills Plus Centres are located in the county's libraries, placing skills development at the heart of community life.
- Improving the people's ability to re-train, upskill and use their talents in other ways will make them more adaptable to economic change. By promoting lifelong learning, we will not only improve opportunities for individuals, we will also reduce the economic and social costs of unemployment and re-training in the long term.

## Linking adult skills and school attainment

- It is also important that we link our objectives for raising attainment in Kent's schools with our investment in adult skills. Across Kent, many schools report that the achievement of children is enhanced when parents engage in learning with their children, and we will continue to support the development of extended schools.

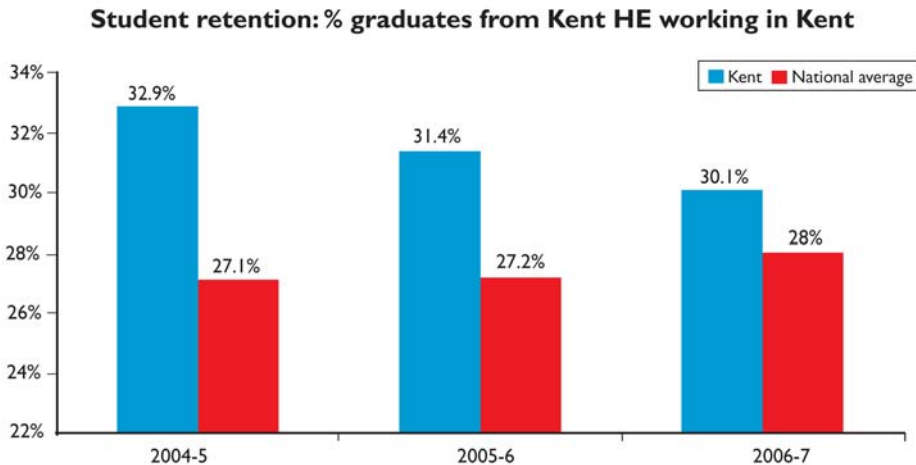
### Case study: Developing people and supporting business

- Kent Adult Education Service has supported P&O Ferries in a partnership to boost the literacy and numeracy skills of its staff. Through the free Skills Plus programme, which offers tailor-made classes to improve English and maths, every ship in the fleet now has staff enrolled and studying at the Skills Plus Centre in Dover, with Kent Adult Education.
- After P&O Ferries found some staff were experiencing difficulties with their training due to problems with their levels of literacy and numeracy, staff were encouraged to take part in a Skills Plus course.

***“Already the change in some people has been so noticeable that it is fair to say it's been life changing. Skills Plus really can help to give people the skills for life they require, boost confidence and improve their quality of life both at home and at work.” – Tim Whitaker, P&O Ferries Training Manager***



# Developing higher education and retaining graduates



## Championing the role of higher education

- The higher education sector is of crucial importance to Kent. We now have four universities with facilities located throughout the county. Altogether, the four universities have a combined student population of around 70,000 and make a significant contribution to Kent's economy through their role in generating innovation and intellectual capital, providing education, acting as cultural centres and as major employers and purchasers of local goods and services.
- Graduates add significant value to the local economy. It is important that Kent retains as many graduates from its higher education institutions as possible as they provide high added value to the Kent economy. We must reverse the trend of declining student retention rates in Kent.
- Very simply, Kent cannot afford to lose its graduates as it is already at a competitive disadvantage to the rest of the South East - we have the lowest number of graduates of any county in the region, at just 25.5% of the working population.

- This average hides huge variation at district level, with graduate proportions ranging from nearly 35% in Tonbridge and Malling to only 15% in Dover. Even the proximity of West Kent to London does not provide the county with the advantages held by similar areas bordering the capital.

## Increasing the number of Kent graduates... ... and retaining them

- We need to work to increase the number of people in Kent with graduate qualifications, and the measures set out elsewhere in *Unlocking Kent's Potential* (for example by investing in school achievement) will support us in this.
- However, we also need to better retain the graduates that Kent's universities produce. Although we have better retention rates than the national average, they have been declining in recent years. This represents a loss to the county's economy, but it also represents a loss to many graduates, who might otherwise remain in Kent if the opportunities were available.

## Developing a new partnership with the higher education sector

- Building on the developing relationships between the universities and local businesses, we want to develop a new dialogue to explore how we can encourage greater participation by Kent students in higher education, how we can promote graduate retention and how we can best harness and support our universities' innovative capacity.
- How we can best work with and support the higher education sector will be a key area of consideration for the new Skills Commission.

# How we will unlock talent to support the Kent economy

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To tackle the skills deficit in Kent and design appropriate education and training provision KCC will:

- Maximise the opportunities presented by the Sub National Review and transfer of LSC 16 -19 commissioning to KCC by developing a world-class Business Education Partnership that will strategically align our economic development and education and training functions.
- Develop a commissioning model for post -16 education and training provision that puts Kent's business needs at its heart so that young people emerge with the key skills required by the local economy.
- Establish a Skills Commission for Kent, chaired by a captain of industry with members from key economic sectors in Kent. The commission will examine the skills needs of Kent and identify areas for future investment.
- Work with higher education institutions in Kent to ensure that courses link to the skills needs of our economy, leading to more graduates living and working here.
- Ensure our curriculum focuses on building key employability 'softer' skills such as team working problem solving and developing a strong work ethic.
- Support young people to make the right choices. We will facilitate a wide range of education and training options to match young people's aims and ambitions.
- Deliver more applied and work-based learning. We will apply the successful principles of our secondary school curriculum to post -16 education and training. We will also develop our business master classes, so today's business leaders can inspire the next generation of entrepreneurs.
- Work with partners to transform careers guidance in schools, providing independent advice on the full range of career and teaching options at ages 14, 16 and 19. We will move towards teaching young people to manage their own skills needs and future careers in order to succeed in a fast changing global economy.
- Reduce the number of 16 -24 year olds on welfare by relaunching the Kent Supporting Independence Programme.
- Develop creative schemes to employ more young people in the public sector and support the growth of social enterprises across the county.

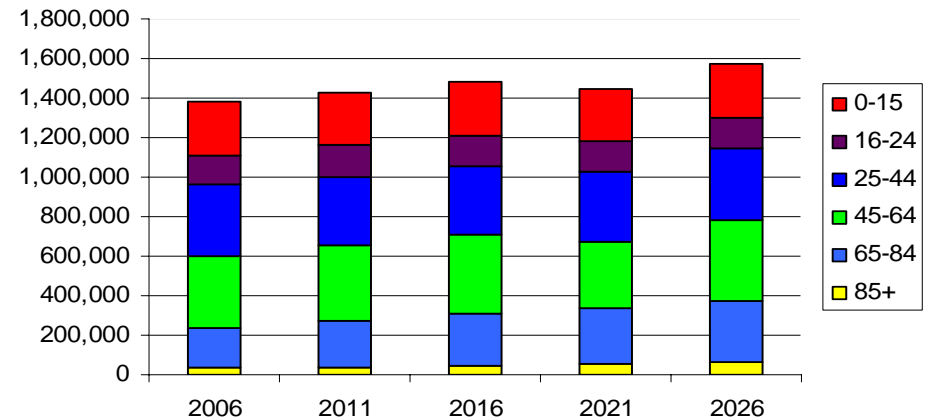


# Chapter 7: Embracing a growing and changing population

## Embracing and managing change

- Every year there are proportionately more older people and fewer younger people. This is a gradual but significant change. Older people as a group are healthier and more energetic than they have ever been, thanks to improved health care and understanding of how to stay healthy. Their expectations of themselves and how they live their lives are getting higher. They are increasingly more likely to be owner-occupiers, and include some of the wealthiest - as well as some of the poorest - people in Kent.
- Although in the future there will be more older people living alone, there will also be far more couples - the growth in number of older men is higher than that for older women.
- Older people will benefit from many of the actions within this strategy which are aimed at improving life for the population as a whole. For example, public transport and the state of the roads and pavements are particularly important to older people. In addition, there are some actions that specifically target or rely on the older population.

Forecast of Kent's population by age group  
(% = total age groups proportion of total population)



- Kent is undergoing massive demographic change
- Migration is adding to population growth and mix
- Social make-up and family breakdown increase demand on housing and services
- We must ensure an ageing population increases social capital
- We must embrace an ageing workforce and the opportunities it can present for Kent businesses.

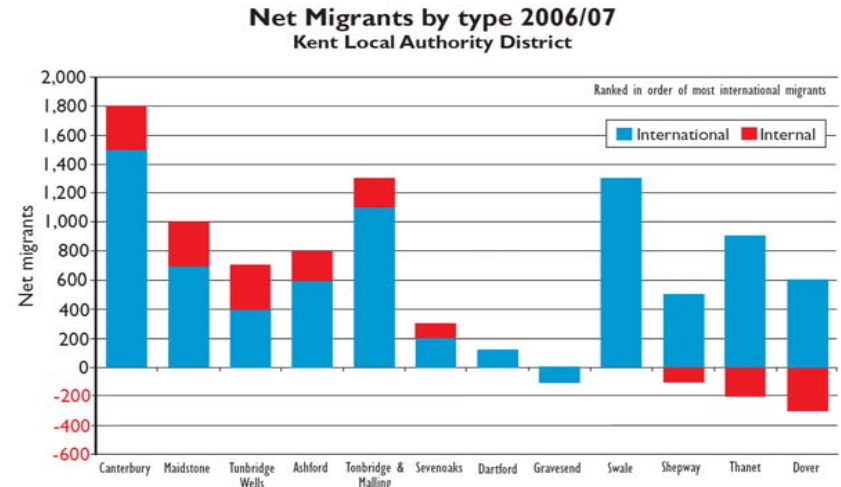
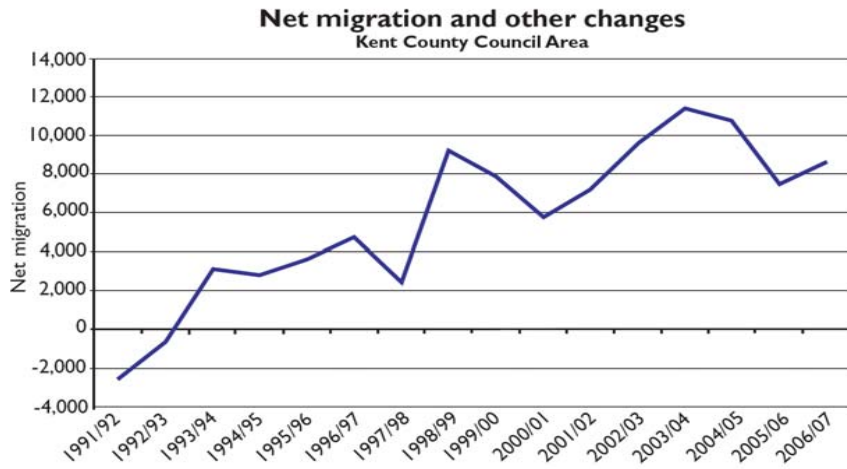
# Kent is experiencing massive demographic change

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## Demographic changes

- Kent's population is projected to increase overall by 8.3 per cent in the next 20 years. But this growth is driven by the older age groups. The over 50s will grow by 30.7 per cent in the next 20 years whilst the number of under 50s will actually fall by 4.5 per cent.
- This is despite considerable net migration into Kent (mostly from elsewhere in the UK but also from overseas).
- Kent's older population is growing faster than most areas, having the third-largest forecast increase in numbers of 65+ and being in the top forecast to increase in numbers for 85+.
- The proportion of people with disabilities of all ages is also increasing, because of improved medical care and greater survival rates. Costs of supporting people with learning disabilities is increasing nationally by 7-8 per cent per annum because more younger people are surviving into adulthood, and as middle-aged people's parents become too old to continue to care for them.
- Historically, Kent has had a high proportion of residential care homes, both for younger disabled people and for older people. For several years now the county council has had a policy of supporting people in their own homes where possible, and there is over-provision of residential care in Kent which is filled by people placed by other authorities or who choose to move to care homes in Kent.
- Financially, although there is a very significant increase in the number of older people, it is supporting younger people with learning disabilities which brings the greatest pressures on social care budgets. This is because the number of people with profound and complex needs is growing, and they can need support for decades. Promoting independence makes financial sense as well as bringing improved quality of life for the individual.

# Migration is adding to our population mix



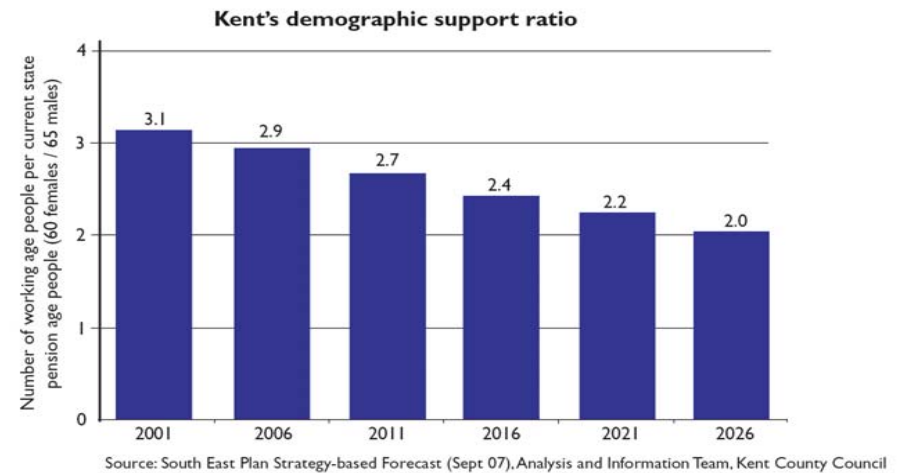
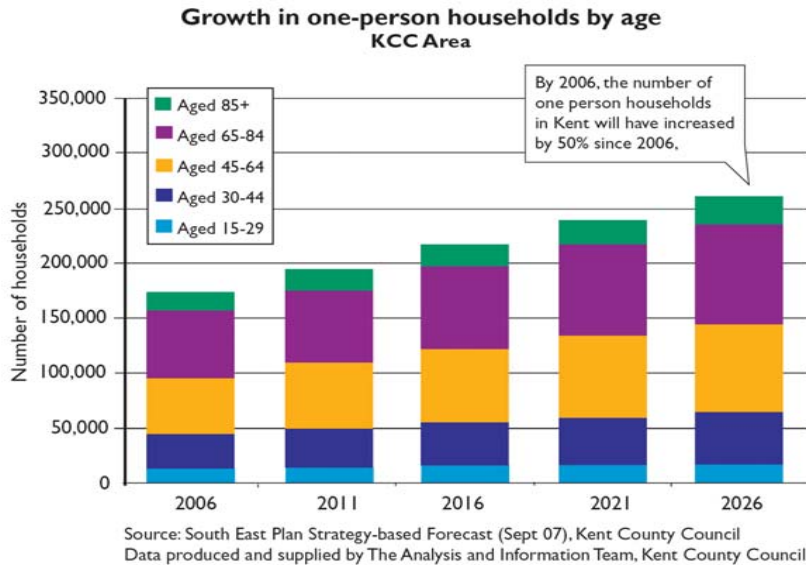
Source: Migration Indicators for Local Authority Districts, Office for National Statistics (Crown Copyright)

## Migration (mostly from within the UK) has increased

- Migration rates have changed dramatically over the last few years, in 1991 2,600 people (net) moved out of Kent, whereas in 2006 7,500 people (net) moved into Kent.
- Most migrants are from within the UK, with only a small proportion coming from overseas.
- Long-term migrants, who intend to stay in Kent, are a very small proportion of the Kent population. The only districts in 2006/7 where migrants formed more than one per cent of the population were Canterbury (1.2 per cent) and Tonbridge & Malling (1.1 per cent). However, migration was responsible for 73 per cent of growth in 2006/7 (most recent year for which figures are available).
- Overall, the impact of migration on population (directly and also indirectly through, for example, increased births because many migrants are young adults) is hard to forecast because it is affected by many factors including central government policy and the strength of the economy.

- The current recession is likely to suppress migration to Kent in the short - to- medium-term. Strategy-based forecasts suggest annual net migration will be around 6,800 in 2026, totalling 158,000 people between 2006 and 2026. This is somewhat less than the estimate made by the recent cross-party report on immigration led by Frank Field MP, but significant nonetheless.
- The number of school children from a minority ethnic background is rising (10.6 per cent in 2007, 12.3 per cent in 2008) as is the number of children whose first language is not English (4.1 per cent in 2007 to 4.97 per cent in 2008).
- There is no robust, reliable way of counting the number of migrants into Kent, so the data on migration has to be treated with caution.

# Changes in society and families place changing demands on housing and services



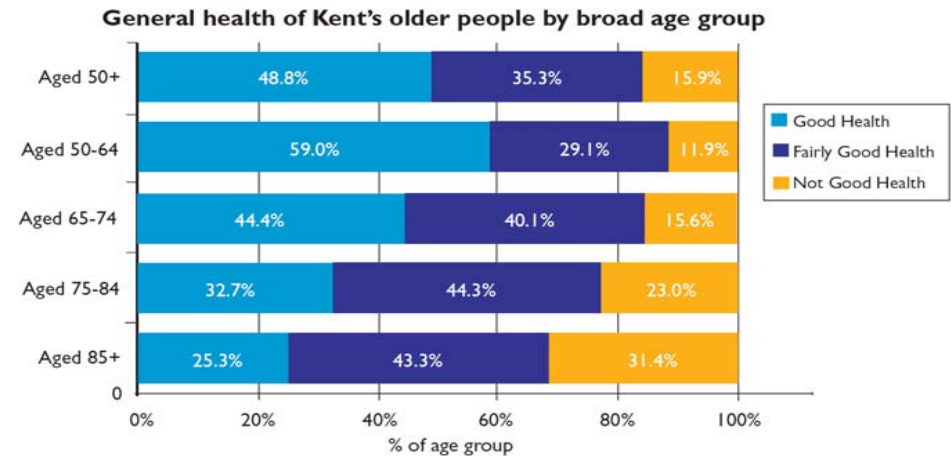
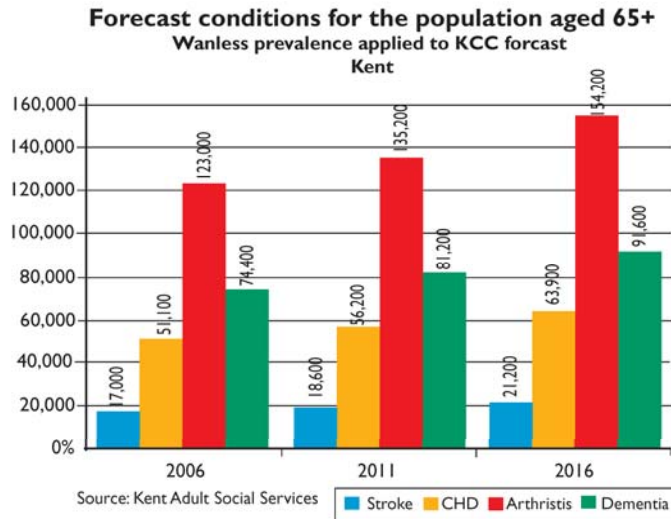
## More one person households

- The shape of families in Kent, and nationally, is changing. One of the results of the ageing population combined with increasing rates of divorce and separation is a substantial forecast growth in one-person households. This is happening across all age groups, as the graph above shows.
- Indeed, in 2006 30 per cent of the Kent population comprised one person households, and this is projected to rise to 38 per cent by 2026.

## More older people living alone

- Proportionately, the age groups that will see the biggest rise in numbers (see graph above) are the 45-64 and 85+ age groups. It is the 85+ group that has the most profound implications for planning healthy communities. The number of people aged over 85 living alone is projected to increase by 9,300 by 2026.
- We need to ensure that attractive housing options are available to encourage older people living alone to leave large family houses. We need to ensure that older people living alone are not socially isolated, but are networked into community activities.

# Our changing population presents new funding and service challenges in health and social care

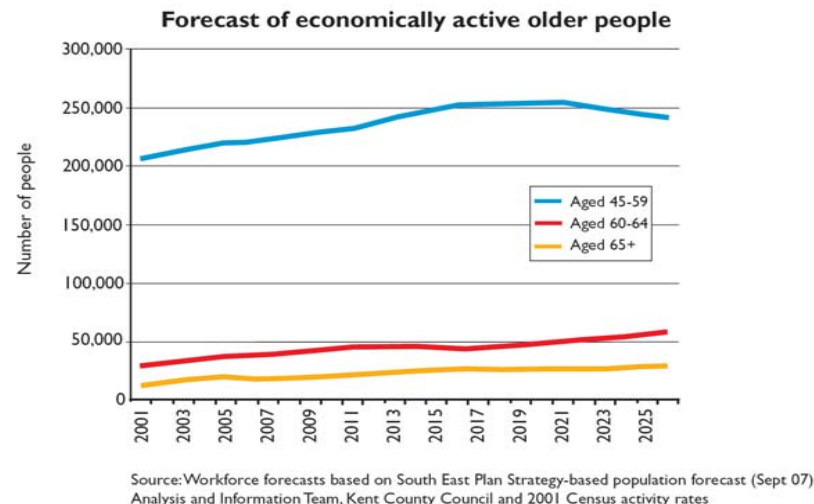
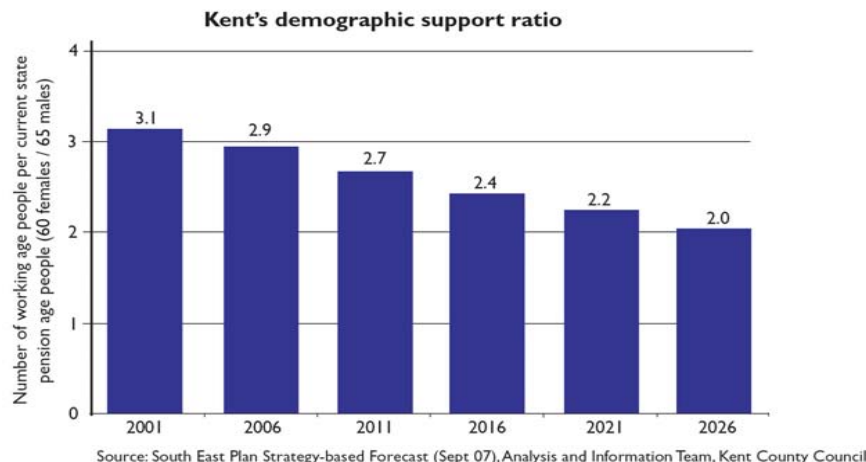


## Increased demand for health and social care

- As people get older, they are more likely to have a long-term condition such as arthritis, dementia, diabetes, coronary heart disease, or a stroke, although some people remain very healthy. If incidence of illnesses doesn't change, there will be 25 per cent more people with these conditions in Kent in 10 years time. However, some of these conditions are preventable and if people eat healthily, don't smoke, don't drink to excess and exercise they are much more likely to remain healthy. The public health strategy, Live Life to the Full, and the Health Inequalities Action Plan detail how KCC is working with partners in the districts, the NHS and the private and voluntary sectors to improve health and wellbeing.
- In designing communities, we will encourage walking, cycling, and healthy leisure activities such as sport and the enjoyment of the countryside.

- We will also continue to argue the case for Kent getting its fair share of health resources for GPs and hospitals, and social care.
- People with long-term conditions will sometimes need social care support in order to live independent lives. If we carried on providing social care in the way it is currently provided, the demographic changes would result in a 25 per cent increase in demand over 10 years. However, we are dramatically changing the way in which people are supported, with greater emphasis on intermediate care - intensive support and re-training for people after a crisis to get them back to independent living, rather than having an ongoing care package, and giving more choice and control to people over how they are supported. The third sector and the micro-economy is critical to delivering this.

# We must embrace an ageing workforce and the opportunities it presents



## The ageing workforce...

- The birth rate has been falling across the developed world. Although there has been a slight increase recently, the overall trend is for people to start their families later, have fewer children, and for a growing population to choose not to have children.
- There has been much anxiety about the 'demographic support ratio' because the proportion of people under 65 relative to those aged over 65 is falling, and is projected to fall still further. This is a real challenge – for example, the numbers of both paid and informal carers will need to increase substantially; and it is the working population's taxes and contributions that pay for today's pensions. The state retirement age is being increased, which combined with anti-ageing discrimination to enable older people who wish to continue in paid employment to do so, will go a long way towards addressing this particular challenge.

- Migration into Kent will also provide some of the solution. It does mean, however, that businesses need actively to consider the age profile of their employees and how to recruit and retain older workers.

## ... is an experienced workforce

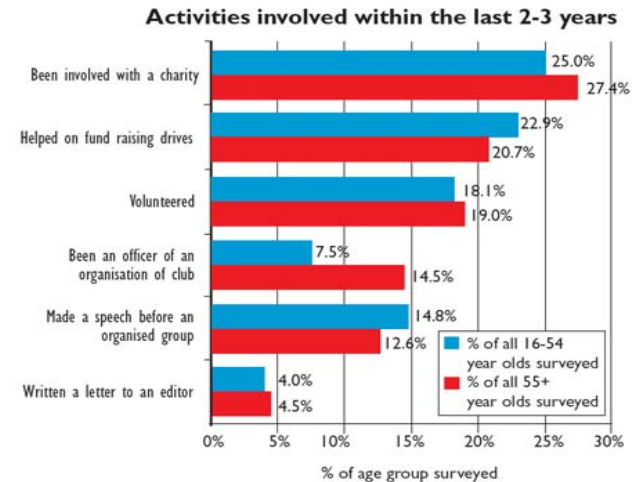
- An older workforce is also a more experienced workforce. Whilst older workers may need upskilling and retraining, particularly in new technologies, they bring continuity, knowledge and perspective to the workplace; they can be invaluable mentors to youngsters. We will work with businesses and public agencies in Kent to identify any specific actions needed to increase employment of older people.



# Social capital – drawing on experience and extending opportunity

## Supporting the voluntary sector

- A vibrant voluntary and community sector is essential to regeneration. Community activity helps to engage people in the future of the places that they live in and the services that they use; the voluntary sector provides services that can be highly diverse and responsive to clients' needs; and places with high levels of community involvement are often places that are economically successful as well.
- Kent County Council has a key role in support of the voluntary sector through the major contracts - worth £40 million per year - that we have with voluntary organisations.
- We want to build on this by having a **new conversation with the third sector** about how the County Council can support the sector financially and in kind, and how the sector can still further increase its efficiency and effectiveness, without losing the community links and responsiveness that make it unique.
- We also recognise that voluntary activity (much of it often informal) is at the heart of community life, and we will support voluntary activity at all levels throughout Kent, with a particular focus on areas of deprivation (including deprived communities in otherwise wealthy areas).
- Older people are often the backbone of local communities, supporting local organisations and clubs, looking after relatives, visiting elderly people living alone and volunteering.
- We will link the involvement of voluntary and community sector organisations with our commitment to **Supporting Independence**, engaging the third sector in our efforts to free people in disadvantaged communities in Kent from welfare dependency.



## Bringing services to the heart of the community

- Kent County Council also helps to build social capital by linking our services, joining them with those provided by other agencies, and making them as accessible as possible.
- As part of this, we are rolling out a programme of **Gateways** throughout Kent. These provide convenient physical access to services in modern retail premises. As well as providing information on County Council services, Gateways also include District Council and NHS services, with plans to increase the number of participating agencies.
- We must also ensure that the direct services we provide throughout Kent's communities are linked with wider provision. We are developing **extended schools** across the county, to enable schools to become universal access points for children's, family and community services, including family learning and adult education services, and in some cases youth and healthcare provision. We aim to ensure that by 2010, all our schools are extended schools.

## Case studies

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### The Kent Card

- The Kent Card is an innovative new payment method from KCC, which enables service users to have greater control over their own lives and make their own lifestyle choices. Following a social services assessment, service users are offered cash, known as a direct payment, as an alternative to having services provided for them. This allows them to determine for themselves when they get assistance, how and from whom. It gives users increased flexibility when they need support at short notice – they can call several agencies to get the help they need. If they are not satisfied with an agency, they can arrange an alternative of their choice independently from Kent Adult Social Services.
- The Kent Card enables payments to be made directly to individuals without the need for a bank account or complicated record keeping. KCC loads the card regularly with the amount agreed to meet the service user's need. The service user's assessed contribution or any money they may wish to use to pay for help and support can also be loaded onto the card.

### Telehealth

- TeleHealth is a new technology which has been piloted in Kent. It assists people in need of care in their own homes and aim to help people retain their independence. It is targeted at people with long term chronic conditions, specifically Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, Chronic Heart Disease and Type 2 Diabetes.
- The pilot, which is currently being trialled by 250 people across Kent, uses tried and tested equipment designed for this purpose which has an emphasis on ease of use. This enables people to measure their vital signs in their own home and send these through their home telephone to a community based clinician who then monitors them much more frequently. This reduces frequent trips to clinicians in both the community and acute sectors, whilst helping people to better understand their condition and its impact on their daily living. Through doing this, the Telehealth pilot appears to be reducing hospital admissions by increasing early interventions.
- By improving confidence and reducing anxiety, as well as freeing them from the need to access particularly hospital based care, service users lead more independent lives.
- This pilot is now the largest of its kind in Europe and it is planned to have 1000 people using TeleHealth by April 2009.



# How we will respond to Kent's growing and changing population

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To meet the challenge and embrace the opportunities of an expanding older population, we will implement Kent's Strategy for Later Life. This will identify actions needed by all partners to develop and enhance the valuable contribution, economic and social, that older people offer and to meet their needs. For example we will:

- Utilise the experience and contribution of older people to their local communities by promoting and supporting voluntary activity at all levels throughout Kent, with a particular focus on areas of deprivation.
- Encourage and support older people's use of the internet to access information and keep in contact with friends and relatives.
- Promote activities that encourage older and young people to benefit from each other's experience and skills. This includes older people acting as mentors to the younger generation, who can, in turn, teach the benefits of digital technology to older people.
- Support independent living at home wherever possible and lobby government for resources to promote this policy in innovative ways.
- Improve the quality of private rented housing; supporting asset-rich, cash-poor older homeowners to undertake home improvements. We will develop attractive housing options to encourage single older people to vacate family-sized homes.
- Help communities to help themselves through initiatives such as 'good neighbour' schemes and 'time banks', where people can do tasks for each other.
- Promote 'personalisation' of services (for example through the Kent Card) enabling people to purchase and manage the services and care they receive.
- Explore with business how to grasp the opportunities posed by an ageing workforce, and mitigate the challenges.



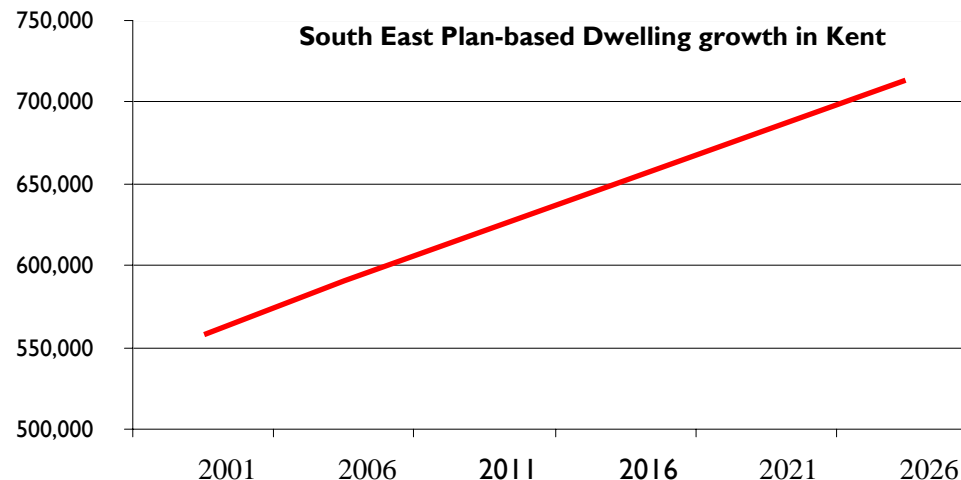
# Chapter 8: Building homes and communities, not estates

## Planning for communities

- The government wants massive housing growth in Kent over the next 20 years to accommodate growth in the population, migration into Kent from the UK and overseas, and changes in family structure resulting in smaller family units and more one-person households.
- KCC working with district councils will undertake a strategic needs assessment to ensure that housing growth is properly planned and geographically targeted, and that the community infrastructure needed to support the new dwellings is put in place so that we build communities and not just housing estates.
- We will also focus action on improving the quality of existing housing, and the regeneration of communities. We will support the third sector to foster 'social capital' and a 'sense of place'.

## County-wide and district councils' strategic approach

- The South East Plan recommends that over 123,000 new homes need to be built to meet population growth over the 2006 - 2026 period. Major housing growth planned by government in the Thames Gateway and Ashford together with allocated growth points such as those currently designated as Maidstone and Dover, will also add considerably to the number of households in Kent. In effect this represents growth equivalent to more than twice the housing stock of Maidstone.
- There is a huge disparity between this aspiration, the subsequent demand on public services and ability of the current market to deliver the quality of housing that the people of Kent deserve.



## A county-wide strategic approach: getting the balance right

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- Housing figures are far in excess of current market demand and need to be renewed regularly, particularly in light of the economic downturn. The capacity of developers to build them has been severely curtailed and, as set out in this framework for regeneration, changes in demographics require an urgent rethink of government-prescribed density figures for housing.
- The planning process is unable to adequately respond to and deliver these targets, particularly in current market conditions. Moreover, in respect of housing mix, government guidance for high-density housing (against this background of increased housing numbers) has, in many instances, resulted in an oversupply of apartments and non-family housing with a consequent failure to build a 'sense of place' and community. Despite the economic downturn, the lack of access to affordable, accessible, extra-care, sheltered and lifetime housing for the people of Kent remains an issue.
- The challenge of an economic downturn and effect on the development industry clearly, at least in the short term, threatens the ability to rely on developer contributions for the delivery of community infrastructure such as Section 106 agreements and the new Community Infrastructure Levy. We will challenge the government and the appropriate agencies to secure and agree all necessary gap funding is in place before the centrally prescribed housing numbers are delivered.
- These challenges will affect the way we live in the future, including the nature of our services, where we live, and the type of homes we live in. Kent's challenge is, therefore, to lead the way in developing sustainable and cohesive existing and vibrant new communities. The use of Health Impact Assessments will be developed further to ensure that the health and wellbeing implications of planning proposals are fully understood and accounted for.
- Our commitment, in accordance with Kent's Community Strategy, Vision for Kent, is to secure transport and community infrastructure investment, high-quality design and the right mix of housing types to ensure the best possible living environment for future generations of all ages.
- Good quality, affordable housing is a major contributor to good health. Helping the people of Kent to live healthier lives must include helping to ensure that their housing conditions are conducive to their health.

# A county-wide strategic approach: building homes and communities, not dormitory housing estates



## The challenges we face

- Kent faces a number of challenges in terms of housing provision. These include the ability to deliver centrally prescribed housing targets in the current markets, the right mix of housing (affordable, lifelong homes and sheltered accommodation); quality and design, distribution and location of housing; and accessibility and impact on the environment and greenfield land.
- We will encourage provision of the appropriate type and mix of housing through planning policy and the district councils' Local Development Frameworks and promote flexible family living, high-quality design and community cohesion.

- Tackling district housing waiting lists and the east/west Kent divide in housing will be a top priority.

## Improving choice

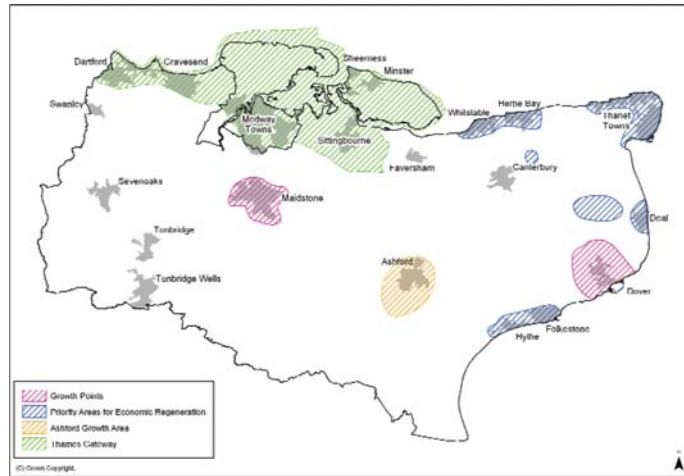
- We will also seek to extend housing options, in particular by widening the opportunity for equity sharing to attract more young professionals to Kent, get more families on the housing ladder and promote supported and lifetime homes along with an increase in the choice and variety of sheltered housing. This will need to reflect the variety of housing need across the county and disparities in affordability.
- This is particularly important if, firstly, we are to adequately address demographic change in the longer term and, secondly, influence and encourage the provision of the necessary infrastructure to support a mix of housing for future communities.
- In order to support thriving communities for the future and avoid the past mistakes of some housing estate development, we will also aim to secure the provision of essential public services, including preventative services alongside new housing to minimise social risk and encourage the growth of healthy prosperous communities.
- In this way we will seek to maximise economic and social opportunity and protect against spirals of decline as well as providing independent living as far as possible for all ages.
- With our district council colleagues we will develop a robust Kent-wide Housing Strategy with a strategic action plan to address the above issues and influence and amend government housing targets.

## A county-wide strategic approach: towards a housing strategy

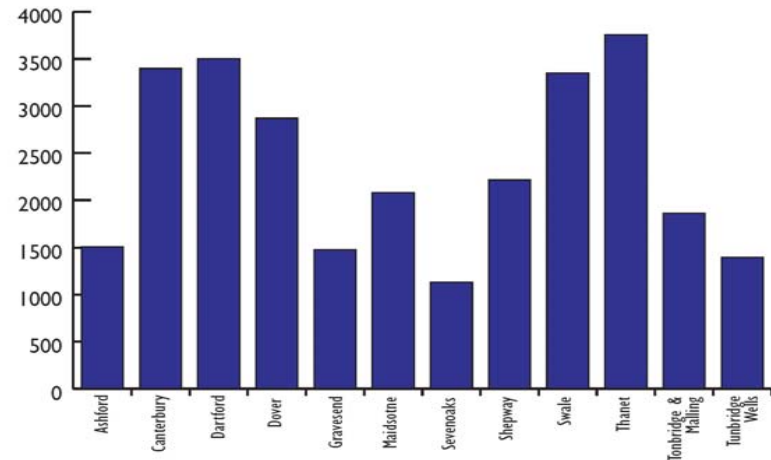
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- This scenario outlined on the previous page presents us with significant challenges, but also opportunities. KCC intends to seize these opportunities. Working in partnership with district councils and other key stakeholders we will produce a Kent-wide housing strategy. This will be built on a comprehensive but broadly based needs assessment and provide the basis for a strategic response to the huge diversity of need across the county.
- In delivering this strategic approach, the principles of high-quality design, the appropriate mix of housing, the right location, quality and accessibility of services will be paramount. They are crucial to how people enjoy their lives and how we develop healthy and prosperous communities.
- With our partners we will use this Kent-wide housing strategy to inform emerging planning policy including Local Development Frameworks and the government's proposed Community Infrastructure Levy. Working with district councils and key stakeholders we will establish a robust policy base for the delivery of these objectives.
- We are progressing the county-wide Housing Strategy in conjunction with Medway Council so that it takes a comprehensive sub-regional approach. The Strategy will seek to analyse housing supply and demand numbers and consider housing management, development and renewal issues. In developing the Strategy, we will commission an independent strategic housing market assessment for the whole of Kent, providing us with a robust understanding on which we can base future policy.

# We will work with our partners to secure investment and balanced growth across Kent



Number of households on the waiting lists in Kent in 2007



## Working with local partners

- KCC together with its district council partners, and registered social landlords can play a significant role in determining the nature of housing in Kent by influencing housing provision and working closely with the private sector to shape housing conditions. We will continue to develop policy in respect of design and community infrastructure provision, play a full part in local infrastructure planning and influence emerging planning policy.
- New Strategic Housing Market Assessments will provide comprehensive guidance at district and local market-area level on the mix of social and market housing including the role of shared equity provision, needs associated with the ageing population and special-needs groups. They will inform local policy development and the consideration of planning applications.

- Where necessary and appropriate, we will intervene to ensure that the people of Kent are able to live in the best possible homes and have the best possible opportunities.

## Working with Government

- KCC will use its leadership and influencing powers to press government and the appropriate agencies, such as the Department for Communities and Local Government and the newly formed Housing and Communities Agency, to ensure that the right type and number of new homes are delivered efficiently to the highest standard with all the necessary facilities in place.



# Case studies

## East Kent Empty Property Initiative

- There are an estimated 6,341 long-term empty properties in Kent. In a bid to get these properties back in the market as homes, KCC with District partners has developed the East Kent Empty Property Initiative, with partners including district councils
- Vacant commercial properties add to these empty homes, discouraging investment in the immediate neighbourhood, and acting as a magnet for crime including arson and vandalism. The EKEPI aims to reduce the number of long-term empty properties in east Kent. Launched in April 2005, the project ran for three years and is now to be extended across Kent.

The main target for the EKEPI has been to return to use 372 long-term vacant properties, which would represent a doubling in numbers previously achieved by the partner district councils. This target was reached before the end of the initial three year phase.



## Kings Hill

- Working with property developer Liberty Property Trust, KCC is delivering Kent's most prestigious mixed-use development on the former West Malling airfield site, now renamed Kings Hill.
- KCC entered into an equity sharing joint venture partnership with Liberty Property Trust to develop the site. The 800 acre development has delivered massive regeneration and boasts award-winning design and a top quality working and living environment. Over the next decade, the ambitious masterplan aims to provide two million square feet of new business space, 2,750 new homes and a range of community and leisure facilities that will ensure the development of a truly vibrant and sustainable neighbourhood. To date 800,000 sq ft of new business space has been developed, with over 100 companies in residence employing around 5,000 people.
- Kings Hill currently has a resident population of over 6,000 people living in 1,600 new homes. Current home builders represent some of the best known developers in the UK. Award winning designs such as the Lacuna development are an example of the commitment to quality expected of home builders selected. The choice of accommodation includes affordable housing, high-density village centre homes and a comprehensive range of family homes.

# Investing in quality of life

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## Supporting quality communities

- When we plan for new communities and when we support regeneration or the design of services in existing towns and neighbourhoods, we want to ensure that we develop sustainable and vibrant communities which enjoy a high quality of life.
- We recognise that housing quality has a major impact in established communities. We have worked with district partners to bring empty homes back into use (see the case study on the previous page), and we will continue to do so.
- Kent County Council produces the **Kent Design Guide**, which helps to ensure that new homes are built to the very highest standards, and which has been incorporated into most of Kent's local development frameworks.
- We will revise the Kent Design Guide to respond to the needs of a changing population and to ensure that it continues to provide the basis for a high quality built environment.
- We are also committed, through the cross-cutting theme of meeting the climate challenge to minimising environmental cost and reducing carbon emissions. We will support cost-effective initiatives to reduce water usage, improve domestic energy efficiency within existing and new homes, recognising the opportunity to reduce fuel costs for some of the county's most disadvantaged communities.

## Investing in leisure and culture

- If we are to develop places in which people want to live, work and invest, it is important that we support them in developing sense of place. Commercial and public leisure facilities and cultural infrastructure can support this, as well as facilitating health and community development benefits and increasing property values.
- We will support the identification of leisure, open space and cultural provision in planning for new infrastructure.

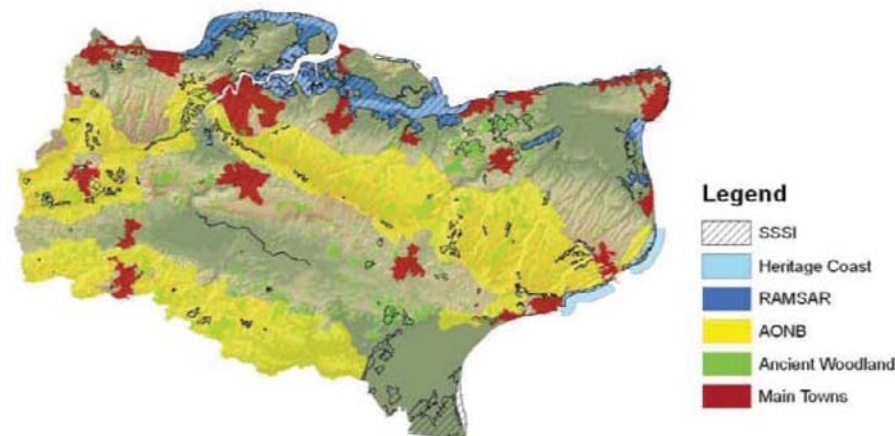
## Towards a spatial vision

- Through our commitment to building homes and communities and to protecting the county's environment, we want to ensure that we have a strong vision of Kent's character and how it might change into the future. We need to consider the environmental and social limits of change, and how we can develop a sustainable future.
- We have commissioned a spatial vision for Kent, which will be produced in 2009, helping us to address some of these issues and, alongside the housing strategy and the development of *What Price Growth?*, informing our future strategy for building homes and communities in Kent.

# Protecting and enhancing environmental quality

## Within new and existing communities...

- Environmental quality is essential to the development of new communities. Good quality, well-maintained green spaces help establish an area; connecting it to its surroundings and providing a sense of place; bringing nature into urban areas, and making places where people can play, explore, move around and feel safe.
- Green infrastructure has a role not only in providing a setting for development, but also in a range of other functions; recreation, sport, access, flood management, growing food, biodiversity and healthy living.



## ... and in Kent's countryside and coastline

- However, building homes and communities is not just about investing in urban areas. People in communities throughout Kent will benefit from our protection of the county's natural landscapes and coastline, and we must ensure that we both protect and enhance our natural assets, while improving access to them and making links between our towns and countryside.
- Kent's landscapes and biodiversity are of enormous value in themselves: as the map shows, one third of the county's land area is within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and much of Kent outside of this area is also covered by national and European designations. This adds to Kent's unique character, but also has economic value, through sensitive management supporting the development of a sustainable tourism offer. We will support the sustainable management of the Kent's built heritage and natural environment for its own sake and for its benefit to present and future communities.



# How we will build homes and communities, not estates

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Housing figures in the South East Plan are far in excess of current market demand and need to be reviewed regularly, particularly in light of the economic downturn. The lack of access to affordable, accessible, sheltered and lifetime housing for people in Kent remains an issue. We will:

- Develop a robust Kent Housing Strategy in conjunction with the 12 district councils. This will prioritise investment and feed into the Local Development Frameworks. It will address the need for a range of housing provision including equity sharing, sheltered housing and family homes. The growth in single-parent or one-person households as well as the number of elderly people in Kent requires a more flexible mix of housing.
- Ensure that new homes are built to the very highest standards and revise the Kent Design Guide to respond to demographic changes, the government's Growth Areas and the needs of the elderly and disabled.
- Encourage home improvement and energy efficiency measures to reduce living costs.

- Update What Price Growth? to lobby government to properly fund the infrastructure required to accompany centrally prescribed housing targets.
- Seek to return to use all empty homes in Kent, working with the district councils.
- Enhance and improve access to Kent's green spaces and countryside.
- Promote fuel and water utility, including the development of decentralised energy sources.
- Work with all 12 Kent district councils to provide practical support to businesses and residents in achieving Kent's carbon reduction targets.

By facing up to this challenge, acting strategically and assessing the need across the county as a whole, we will be in a position to address the disparity across the county, deal with future demographic changes and ensure the provision of the right homes in the right place for the people of Kent. In this way we will maximise economic and social opportunity for all and ensure that we create communities not housing estates for future generations.





# Chapter 9: Delivering growth without transport gridlock



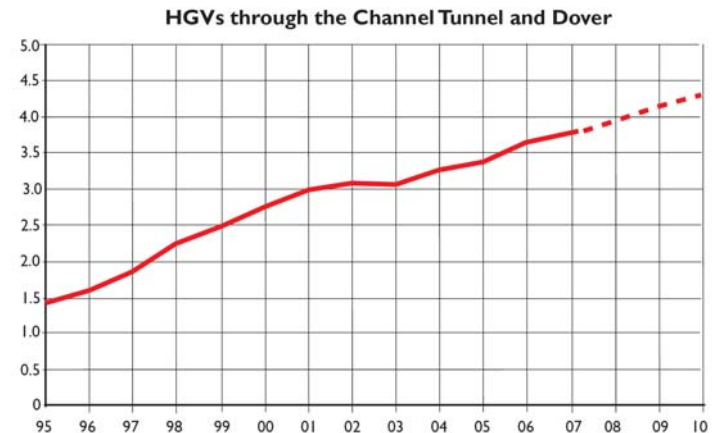
## The Gateway county

- Kent is the UK's most important gateway county, strategically positioned between London and mainland Europe. This, coupled with unprecedented growth in commercial development and housing, means we must act now to ensure that transport issues do not inhibit the regeneration potential of our county.
- Cross-channel traffic must be managed swiftly through the county, while car and public transport in Kent must be improved and town centre congestion tackled. New forms of finance must be found to improve Kent's strategic transport infrastructure.

## Challenges

- New strategic routes are required to ensure traffic flows across and through the county.
- Essential road schemes must be completed in the shortest possible time.
- High-speed domestic services must support growth in Kent County Council.
- Improved traffic management via our new control room and a new permit scheme.
- Greatly improved public transport in our urban centres and better services between our major towns.
- Rural community transport will be a vital link as our villages grow and demography changes.

# As a gateway county, Kent faces particular challenges



## Port traffic

- Dover Harbour Board predict an increase in lorry freight from 2.4m lorries per year to around 3.2m by 2015 and up to 4.5m by 2035. The county also contains major port activity at Sheerness and Ramsgate, and significant flows through the Channel Tunnel. As a gateway county, Kent bears a disproportionate amount of lorry movements adding additional wear and tear to our highways and motorways.

## Operation Stack

- Operation Stack causes delay and frustration to local road users, disruption to the local road network and major disruption to the Kent economy.
- The Quick Movable Barrier can only cope with Phase One of Operation Stack, holding just 400 lorries for no more than three to four hours and has made little difference to the level of disruption experienced this year.

## Kent's airports

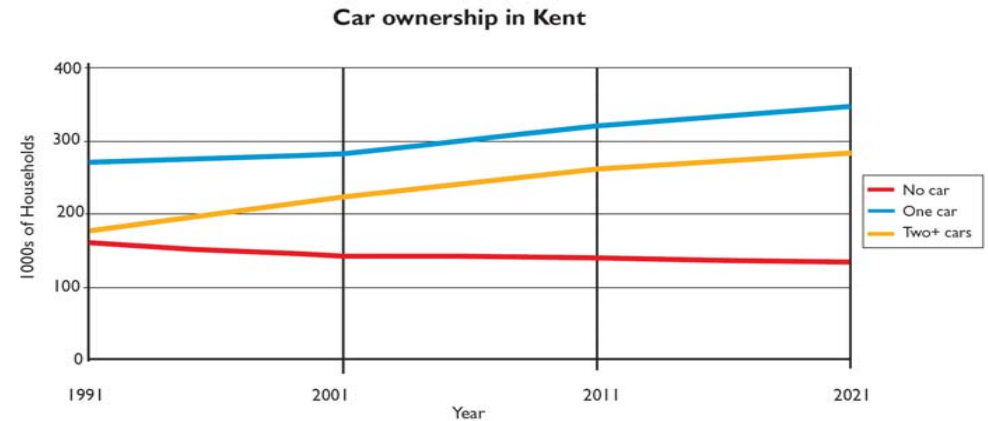
- Kent International Airport offers considerable potential to provide much needed airport capacity in the south east and will support economic regeneration in Thanet and the surrounding area. Lydd Airport also offers potential capacity.

## Short sea shipping

- Kent is surrounded by water on three of its boundaries and KCC will investigate the potential to travel by ship/boat to other parts of the county and to London.

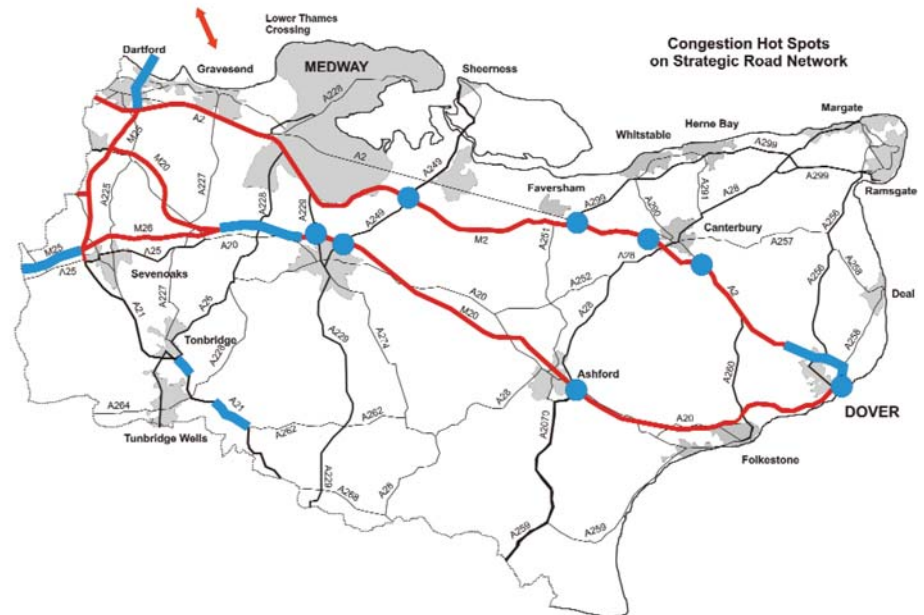


# Kent is facing increasing traffic growth



Kent's transport infrastructure is under massive pressure:

- Traffic flows have increased by 19 per cent since 1994, whilst the number of households increased by 11 per cent between 1996 and 2006.
- With 69,000 new houses planned for Kent and Medway by 2016, traffic flows will get worse unless we plan and invest in infrastructure now.
- 71 per cent of all journeys in Kent are made by car.
- Car ownership is forecast to increase by 40 per cent by 2025.
- One-person households represent a quarter of all households, creating a disproportionate demand for travel.
- 20 per cent of Kent's workers are employed outside the county
- The private car is used for 76 per cent of all work trips.
- Kent's dispersed settlement pattern with no one dominant city or town results in a large proportion of inter-urban trips that encourage the use of the private car.
- Major difficulty for the elderly and vulnerable accessing health service provision.



# We need new strategic routes and the completion of essential infrastructure schemes

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Further investment is required in major road infrastructure in Kent, in particular to support:

## Lower Thames Crossing

- An additional Lower Thames Crossing, connected with the M2, would relieve the bottleneck at the existing Dartford Crossing and on the M25. It could also be used to encourage freight traffic from the Eastern Docks at Dover to use the A2/M2 route, while the expanded Western Docks traffic would use the M20.

## A2/ M2 Corridor

- It is vital that this route is enhanced to cater for increasing volumes of traffic flowing through Dover, and to accommodate growth in the Thames Gateway and in East Kent. We will lobby the government for early implementation of a series of enhancements, including:
  - the dualling of the A2 near Lydden
  - the creation and enhancement of slip roads from the A2 at Canterbury
  - the fundamental reconstruction of the junction at Brenley Corner
  - the expansion of Junction 5 of the M2 at Stockbury and associated road infrastructure to support development at Sittingbourne, including the completion of Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road
  - early implementation of increased capacity to support Ebbsfleet Valley from the A2.

## M20 Corridor

- Significant junction improvements are essential on the M20 at Ashford to support regeneration. In particular:
  - the building of M20 Junction 10a is now in the National Roads programme and we have long supported its implementation
  - we will work with the Highways Agency to consider improvements at M20 Junction 9.

# We need new strategic routes and the completion of essential infrastructure schemes

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## M20 Corridor

- In addition, there is increasing pressure on the **M20 at Maidstone** and its occasional closure and subsequent diversion of traffic through Maidstone results in gridlock in the town. The Highways Agency has plans for opening the hard shoulder in peak periods to increase capacity, and we will work with them to co-ordinate the work of our traffic control centres.

## Improved infrastructure in Mid and West Kent

- To support the growth of Maidstone, delivery of the **South East Maidstone Strategic Link** is essential, although a route has yet to be defined
- Improvements to the route between **Tunbridge Wells and Maidstone** (including the A21 Tonbridge to Pembury and Kippings Cross to Lamberhurst and the A228 at Colts Hill) will be important given the expansion of Pembury Hospital
- We will work with the Highways Agency to consider improvements to the **A21/M25/M26 junction**.

## High Speed Rail Services

- KCC is developing plans for Parkway Stations to enhance the accessibility of the new high speed rail services. We will also press for increased car and cycle parking at other stations in Kent where lack of such facilities impedes growth.

## Improving Bus Services

- We will work with bus companies to press for improvements in standards and frequency across the county, to match the award-winning FASTRACK bus system currently carrying increasing numbers of people in north Kent.

## ...with a range of other solutions to be explored

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### Stack Park and Overnight Lorry Parks

- KCC has identified a potential site near Aldington between Junctions 10 and 11 on the south side of the M20 with good connectivity to the Channel Tunnel and Dover Docks. It will provide 500 secure overnight parking spaces for HGVs and an overflow area for up to 2,500 additional HGVs during Operation Stack.

### Britdisc/Vignette

- Introduction of a charge for lorries using Kent's roads to provide up to £40m per annum for the much-needed 'stack park' and other infrastructure improvements which will mitigate the impact of cross-channel traffic.

### Short Sea Shipping

- Potential for river taxi services between Gravesend and the City of London.

### Kent International Airport

- The KIA draft masterplan proposes major expansion with six million flights in operation by 2033, supported by a Parkway station serving high speed rail services, improved bus links and local road improvements. KCC will continue to oppose the proposal to site a needless airport in the Thames Estuary.

### Inter Urban Coach Network

- Public transport between towns does not meet the needs of modern travel. We will work with bus companies to devise regular frequency, high-quality services to link our principal towns.

### Rural Transport Network

- Many of the smaller villages and hamlets in Kent have long been without regular public transport. We will work with the third sector to devise the best way to keep vital connections to our rural hinterland.

#### Kent Freedom Pass

The groundbreaking Kent Freedom Pass was launched by Kent County Council in June 2007 and has been a runaway success.

The Freedom Pass allows students aged between 11 and 16 to purchase a pass for a one-off fee of £50, and travel when and where they want on scheduled bus services in Kent. Around 5,000 students have taken advantage of the scheme in its trial phases.

The scheme means more freedom for young people to access schools of their choice, attend out-of-school activities and to have an independent social life without relying on parents to drive them around. The Freedom Pass is great news for motorists too, especially at peak times, helping to tackle traffic congestion and pollution.

# Case study: Kent International Airport

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## A new relationship with business

### London's 4th Airport: Kent International (Manston)

- Kent International Airport provides the opportunity for improved connectivity and employment growth principally for the east Kent region but with a wider impact on the whole of Kent. The airport passenger traffic is relatively modest at present but already has a significant level of dedicated freight movements when compared with other UK airports. The airport currently employs around 100 people and supports around 120 local businesses.
- In October 2008, the owners of the airport produced a Draft Masterplan that envisages a growth in passengers to around 2.8 million per annum by 2018 and 5.8 million per annum by 2033. Freight growth is similarly predicted to increase to around 210,000 tonnes per annum by 2018 and 510,000 tonnes by 2033. The airport estimates that this level of growth would support around 3,500 jobs and 7,500 jobs for the respective forecast years.
- A successful airport would, in addition to creating jobs and supporting local businesses, attract companies to the area. This is particularly relevant to Kent International Airport as there are a number of locations within close proximity to the airport where employment land is available. KCC made a major investment in purchasing Manston Business Park in 2006 to develop new business and employment opportunities.





# Rail infrastructure: getting on the right track

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## Potential for Rail

- From December 2009, trains from east and north Kent will be using the Channel Tunnel Rail Link to access St Pancras. There will be significant journey time savings especially from Thanet, Canterbury, Ashford, Dover, Folkestone, Gravesend and Ebbsfleet which offer the potential for attracting commercial and residential development as well as tourism. However, to exploit these services fully, we need to look at growing the number of services in the future. We also need to look at the provision of new Parkway Stations to support growth and regeneration in surrounding areas.

## Fare levels

- There is concern that fare increases, of over 10 per cent in some cases, could prove to be a deterrent to the regeneration of areas of Kent and already commuting flows to London have dropped due to the credit crunch. Fares on the high speed CTRL domestic services will also be subject to a premium. We will continue to lobby government to ensure that Kent residents do not pay a disproportionate amount for rail travel compared to London residents and that fares, both on CTRL and the existing network, continue to be affordable.

## Stations

- We need to ensure that improvements to the facilities at Kent's stations and access to the stations by all modes is improved. Integrating rail travel with access by car, bus, walking and cycling is essential. We are also exploring the potential for new and exciting initiatives incorporating Smartcard technology to allow ticket-less integrated travel, cycle hire and storage and real-time journey information.
- That is why we will lobby government to allow establishment of the Kent Passenger Transport Authority, allowing Kent to run more CTRL trains during the rush hour, bring down fares for Kent commuters and ensure that transport in the county is truly integrated, making life easier for commuters, motorists and cyclists.

# How we will achieve growth without transport gridlock

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The transport improvements coming on stream will attract more businesses and jobs to Kent but we need to do more. We will:

- Publish an integrated Transport Strategy for road, rail, air and sea, that addresses the key transport solutions that need to be implemented over the next 20 years to make Kent a great place to live, work and visit.
- Lobby for smarter ways of funding road schemes such as the Britdisc (a charge on foreign-registered lorries to use UK roads) that could raise £40m annually for vital infrastructure improvements including a third, lower Thames Crossing.
- Maximise the potential of high-speed Channel Tunnel Rail Link services to act as a catalyst for further regeneration in the north and east of the county.





# Chapter 10: Working together to unlock Kent's potential

## A new approach to regeneration in Kent

- *Unlocking Kent's Potential* has explored some of the most important long term issues facing Kent in 2009. How do we provide the conditions for business growth and investment at a time of increasing global competition? How do we unlock the talent of the workforces of today and tomorrow? How do we respond to the challenge of population growth and change and ensure that all our communities benefit from economic development? How do we create sustainable communities that people want to live in? And how do we make sure that we can grow without our transport system failing?
- Overarching all these questions is a recognition that the world is changing. On a global scale, we need to improve efficiency in our use of energy, reduce waste of natural resources and adapt to living within our environmental limits. We also need to develop Kent's potential in economic conditions that are less favourable than in recent years, and in which access to funds will be more difficult.
- This is likely to mean greater prioritisation and more innovative approaches, more efficient joint working between public sector bodies, and better links with our partners in the business community and the voluntary sector. So although *Unlocking Kent's Potential* sets out the actions that the County Council will take, we will only fully deliver on them by working in partnership with others.

## Taking forward Unlocking Kent's Potential

- *Unlocking Kent's Potential* will remain a 'live' document. It is not a statutory strategy to remain in force for a defined period, nor is it a detailed business plan. Rather, it sets out Kent County Council's overall approach to regeneration.
- To drive the County Council's approach to regeneration, we have established a new **Regeneration Board**, chaired by the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and made up of Cabinet members and chief officers of the Council. The Regeneration Board will seek to ensure that the priorities and actions identified in *Unlocking Kent's Potential* are taken forward, across all parts of the organisation.

## Further strategy development

- Within *Unlocking Kent's Potential*, we have identified several pieces of strategic work that we will take forward over the coming months. These are intended to expand on the general direction that we have already set out, challenge the assumptions that we have made and engage with all those partners with whom we need to work. They will also yield action plans which we will be able to take forward, based on a clearer understanding of the issues and a firm knowledge of our role in conjunction with our partners.
- Early in 2010, *Unlocking Kent's Potential* and the strategies that follow will help to inform our overall corporate strategy for the next four years.

## Annex: List of respondents to the consultation draft

Consultation on the first draft of *Unlocking Kent's Potential* took place with organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors across Kent, including a series of discussions with the Kent Districts and key partners. In addition to members of the public, the following organisations also submitted written responses to the consultation draft :

- Action with Communities in Rural Kent
- Ashford Borough Council
- Ashford's Future
- Campaign to Protect Rural England
- Canterbury City Council
- Church in Society
- Dartford Borough Council
- Derek Wyatt MP
- Dover District Council
- Dover Pride Regeneration Partnership
- EA/ KCC E&W/ KWT/ CPRE Kent/ Kent Downs AONB Joint Response
- Environment Agency
- Government Office for the South East
- Gravesham Borough Council
- Kent Downs AONB
- Kent Fire & Rescue Authority
- Kent Housing Group
- Kent Police
- Kent Rural Board
- Kent Wildlife Trust
- LaSalle Investment Management
- Locate in Kent
- Maidstone Borough Council
- Marine South East Ltd
- Medway Council
- Port of London Authority
- Rt Hon Miss Ann Widdecombe MP
- South East England Development Agency
- Sevenoaks District Council
- Shepway District Council
- Skanska
- Swale Borough Council
- Thames Gateway Kent Partnership
- Thames Gateway North Kent Cultural Partnership
- The Prince's Trust
- Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
- Tonbridge & Malling LSP
- Trenport Investments Ltd
- Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
- Tunbridge Wells LSP
- University of Greenwich
- Visit Kent
- West Kent Partnership
- West Kent Primary Care Trust





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