



Towards a Sustainable
Community Strategy
2006 - 2009

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Introduction

Serving You Better, the first community strategy for Tonbridge and Malling, was published in June 2003. This set out a three year plan to address issues related to the local quality of life that were of concern to local people.

Following further consultation with the local community and partners, which focused on the review issues set out in the Review and Update document published in July 2005, a new community strategy has been produced. This sets out suggested key areas for improvement across the range of public services for the period 2006 to 2009 for Tonbridge and Malling.

This revised strategy sets out what has been achieved against the actions in the first community strategy and identifies what new issues now need to be addressed to further enhance the quality of life in Tonbridge and Malling. The strategy contains an overview of action for the next three years, more detailed actions will be found in the associated strategies and plans linked to this document. The community strategy provides a focus for all the agencies to achieve improvements in important local services in the borough and so can continue to 'serve you better' in the future.



Your views count!

The views of the people living and working in the borough have been central to the production of this community strategy. Through listening to what people told us during the consultation period for this document, we have been able to decide what issues should be included for action. The views of partner agencies have also formed an important part of the consultation process and have helped us to forge joint working arrangements which can tackle the issues identified in the most efficient way.

Towards a plan for sustainable communities

A sustainable community is a place where people can enjoy a better quality of life now and for generations to come. People need jobs, a healthy local economy, a decent home, good public services and an attractive, safe environment. To create a sustainable community, action needs to address the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area and its inhabitants.

A sustainable community also needs to be a fair one. While some parts of the borough enjoy a high quality environment and relative affluence, there are other areas where opportunities are more limited. In order for our communities to be sustainable, we need to work to improve the quality of life of people living in all areas. Access to affordable housing and public transport are problems in many parts of the borough. It is only through working in partnership that any resolution of these difficult issues can be achieved. This document provides the framework for partnership working.



What is a sustainable community?

A sustainable community is a place where people want to live and work now and in the future.

For communities to be sustainable, they must offer:

- Decent homes at prices people can afford
- Good public transport
- Schools
- Hospitals
- Shops
- A clean, safe environment

People also need open public space where they can relax and interact and the ability to have a say on the way their neighbourhood is run.

(ODPM)

In producing our community strategy, we have also had regard to the bigger picture. Decisions we make as individuals and organisations have an impact locally but also globally. As individuals we can contribute by saving energy at home, reducing the amount of rubbish we throw away by recycling more, and maybe choosing to walk a short journey instead of taking the car. These actions make an important contribution, however small, towards reducing harmful emissions that lead to climate change. The Borough Council has an important role in helping people make these changes and as a large employer, has a responsibility to lead by example. Through the Local Agenda 21 action plan, the Council is committed to sustainable development through partnership work in the wider community and also through the range of services and activities undertaken within the Council. Examples of some of the actions in the LA21 action plan include supporting local producers via farmers' markets leading to a reduction in 'food miles', promoting alternatives to the car for journeys to school and raising awareness of biodiversity issues. Corporately, the Council is getting its own house in order through producing a travel plan and looking at ways to reduce energy use in its buildings.

Area Profile

In addition to listening to the views of local residents and organisations, we have also looked at the key statistics for the area. The government has recently published Area Profiles for all districts in the country. These statistics provide valuable data on issues such as crime, economic well being, education, health and social well being and transport. Not only will this information help us to track the progress we make with certain issues, for example, through showing trends for recycling or the amount of activities for teenagers, but it will also enable us to see how we compare to other parts of the country.

Set out below are some of the indicators from our Area Profile. "Good" indicators are those that place Tonbridge and Malling in the best quartile nationally, "Poor" indicators are those that place the borough in the worst quartile nationally, "Could be Better" indicators are those that place the borough in the second worst quartile nationally. Being in the best quartile will not necessarily mean that no action will be taken however. A good example of this is crime - although our borough has a very low level of crime compared to the rest of the country, residents still rank it as a major concern. These statistics can assist us in deciding what issues need priority action, but they cannot provide the whole picture.

Good indicators

- Residents who think that community activities have got better or stayed the same over the past three years
- Residents who say that they feel fairly safe or very safe outside after dark
- Residents who think that people being rowdy or drunk in public places is a problem in their local area
- Residents who think that activities for teenagers have got better or stayed the same over the past three years
- Number of people over 60 who are income deprived
- Amount of household waste recycled
- Households with one or more persons with a limiting long term illness
- Pupils in local authority schools achieving five or more GCSEs at Grade A*-C
- Residents who travel to work by public transport

Could be better indicators

- Working age population in employment
- Mortality rates for heart disease, females all ages
- Mortality rates for respiratory diseases, males all ages
- Residents who think that local traffic congestion has got better or stayed the same in the past three years

Poor indicators

- Amount of water used per person at home
- Infant mortality rate
- Amount of traffic on the roads

Local quality of life

It is essential that the issues and actions in the community strategy are informed by the priorities of the local community. The Borough Council has a Residents' Panel of over 1400 people who are surveyed about key issues affecting the borough. We used the Panel to inform priorities set in the first community strategy and we have re-run that survey to provide new information to guide this review.

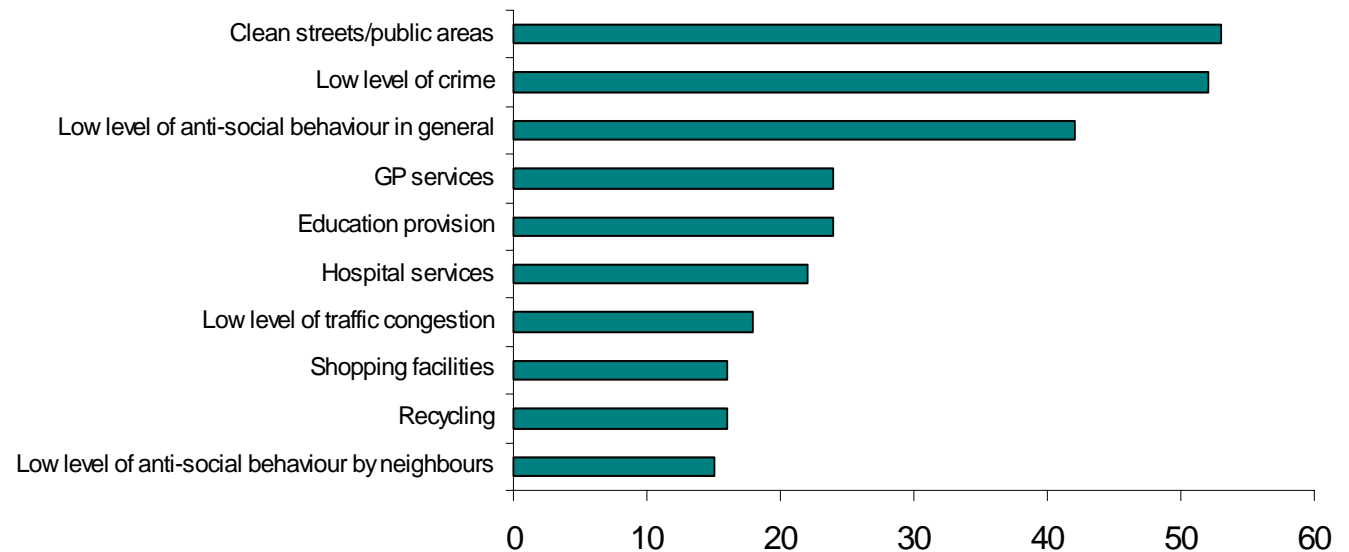
Overall satisfaction

Over 70% of residents say they are satisfied with Tonbridge and Malling as a place in which to live. This is an improvement over the last survey in 2002. At that time, 56% of residents were satisfied.

Quality of life

We asked residents what factors particularly contributed to a good quality of life. The top ten mentioned (measured as a percentage of respondents who named that factor) is set out to the right. Cleanliness, low crime and anti-social behaviour, good health care, education and shopping facilities all figured highly.

Quality of life - most important factors



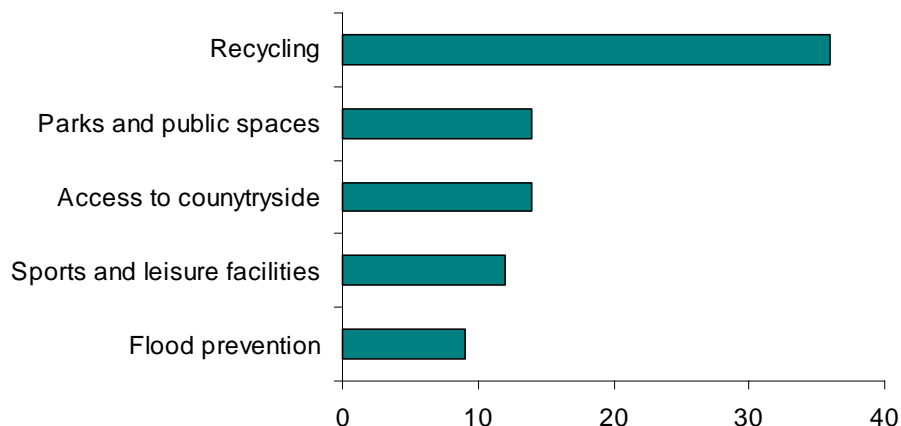
The last three years

We also wanted to get a picture of how things might have changed over the past 3 years, since the first community strategy was published. We asked the Residents' Panel which factors they believed had improved the most over the past 3 years, and which had got worse.

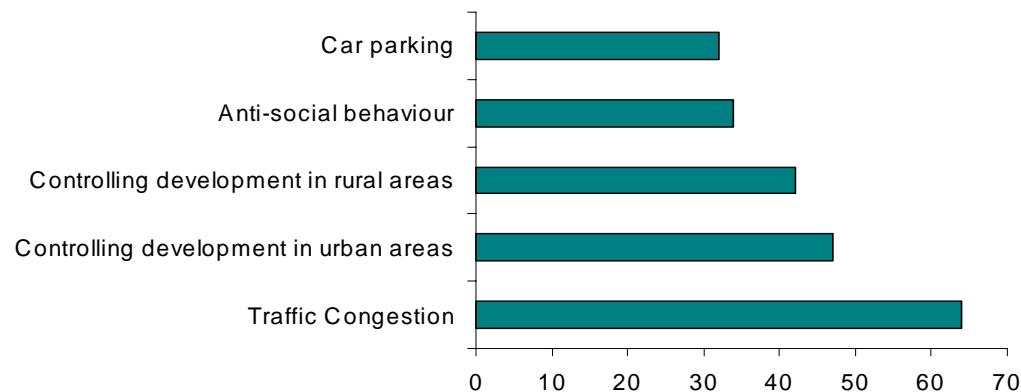
The most improved factor identified by respondents was recycling. This may reflect the introduction of the Green Waste Scheme in parts of the borough. Parks, public spaces, access to the countryside, leisure facilities and flood prevention were also considered to have improved. The opening of Leybourne Lakes Country Park may have influenced this view. There has been investment in local leisure facilities and major flood prevention works carried out in East Peckham in the past 3 years.

Factors getting worse over the past 3 years are headed by traffic congestion. The growth of traffic is a nationwide problem and Tonbridge and Malling is no exception. There are concerns about development in rural and urban areas. This is partly influenced by wider economic factors, partly by central and regional government planning policy and also by lifestyle and population changes. Anti-social behaviour is an issue which affects many people and is an increasing concern. Car parking needs to be well planned in order to meet the needs of residents, visitors and local businesses.

Top 5 factors improving over last 3 years



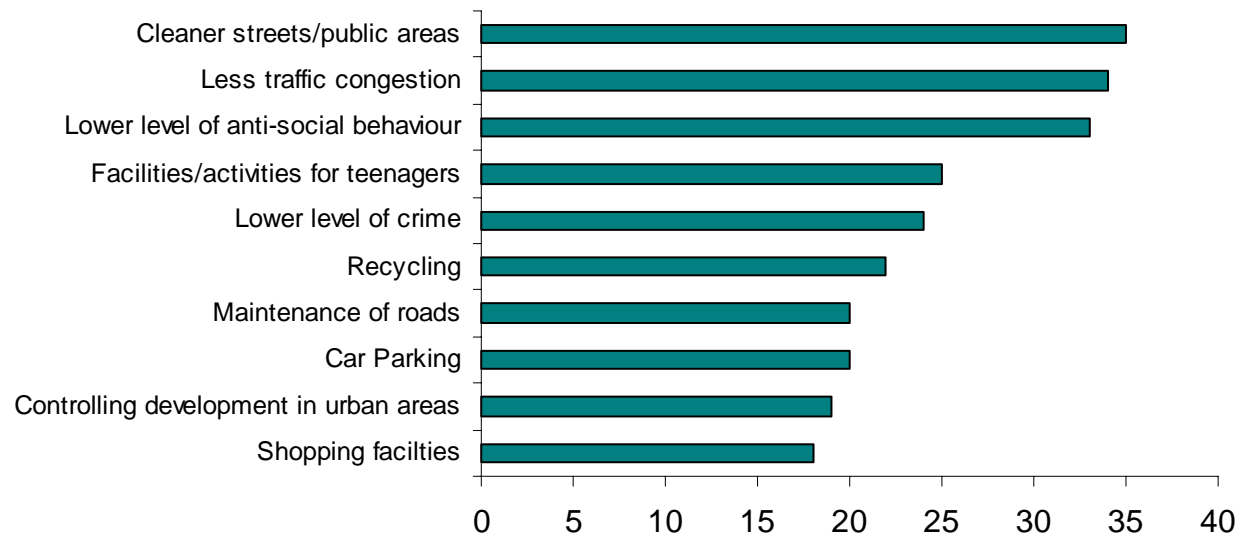
Top 5 factors getting worse over last 3 years



Your priorities for improvement

We asked what things most needed improving in the borough. The top ten priorities for improvement are shown below.

Top 10 priorities for improvement



The results show a correlation with the factors residents feel are important to the local quality of life. However, facilities and activities for teenagers and car parking were named as key priorities for improvement but not as important quality of life factors. On the other hand, quality of life factors not mentioned as priorities for improvement were GP services and education provision. Potentially, this suggests that residents are more satisfied with these services.

We also asked the Residents' Panel if they felt the council and partners should encourage healthy living. More than 73% of respondents agreed that this should be a particular priority.

The results of surveys of this kind may be influenced by the extent to which people are or have been directly affected themselves by the factors listed. We therefore asked a series of questions to work out the extent to which these issues had influenced individual judgements. Overall, for those directly affected by the factor, the same top priorities for improvement emerged. However, six additional factors came forward as priorities:

- Affordable housing provision
- Flood prevention
- Local bus services
- Antisocial behaviour caused by neighbours
- Hospital services
- Helping disabled people live more independently

Priorities across the borough

In order to complement the information collected from the Residents' Panel, the views of local community groups were sought. These views have enabled us to get a wider picture of priorities across the borough and help us to build partnerships with these important community organisations. The top three concerns of those responding to the consultation are set out below. We also asked groups if they felt the themes in the previous community strategy were still the right ones. More than 90% of respondents agreed that they were still relevant.

Top three concerns by area

All areas

- Traffic congestion
- Activities for teenagers
- Crime levels

Tonbridge

- Traffic congestion
- Activities for teenagers
- Public transport

Malling

- Traffic congestion
- Health services
- Crime levels=
- Activities for teenagers

Rural

- Crime
- Affordable housing
- Traffic congestion=
- Public transport

Vulnerable groups

Part of the consultation process involved asking the views of groups representing or working with older people and people with disabilities in the borough. For these groups, access to good quality public transport was a major issue, particularly buses. Reducing drug and alcohol abuse and extending community policing were priorities. Affordable housing for local workers and young people was also highlighted along with helping disabled people to be independent and the availability of local care for the elderly. In addition to wanting clean streets, the maintenance of pavements was specifically mentioned by groups representing older people and those with visual impairments.



Parish councils

The priorities identified by the parish councils responding to our survey match those of our Residents' Panel. Again, crime and disorder featured as a high priority with parishes wanting to see the current community policing schemes extended. Cleanliness of streets and tackling environmental crimes such as flytipping and graffiti were also priorities. Rural public transport in particular was considered poor and there are clear links between improving public transport and reducing traffic congestion. Parishes were also concerned about rat-running through villages and speeds on rural roads. Development in the countryside was a significant concern as was the timing of the provision of services for new development.

Crime and safety

- Tackling vandalism/graffiti
- Extending community policing
- Dealing with disorder issues after dark

Health

- Support for young people
- Availability of local care for the elderly
- Support for disabled people to be more independent

Transport

- Reducing traffic speeds
- Dealing with congestion hotspots
- Promoting better local bus services

Street scene

- Tougher penalties for flytippers
- Cleanliness of local streets (eg litter, dogs mess)
- Better standards of road maintenance

Environment

- Protection of the countryside
- Ensuring new development is adequately served by schools and services
- Maintaining water supply and quality

Housing and economy

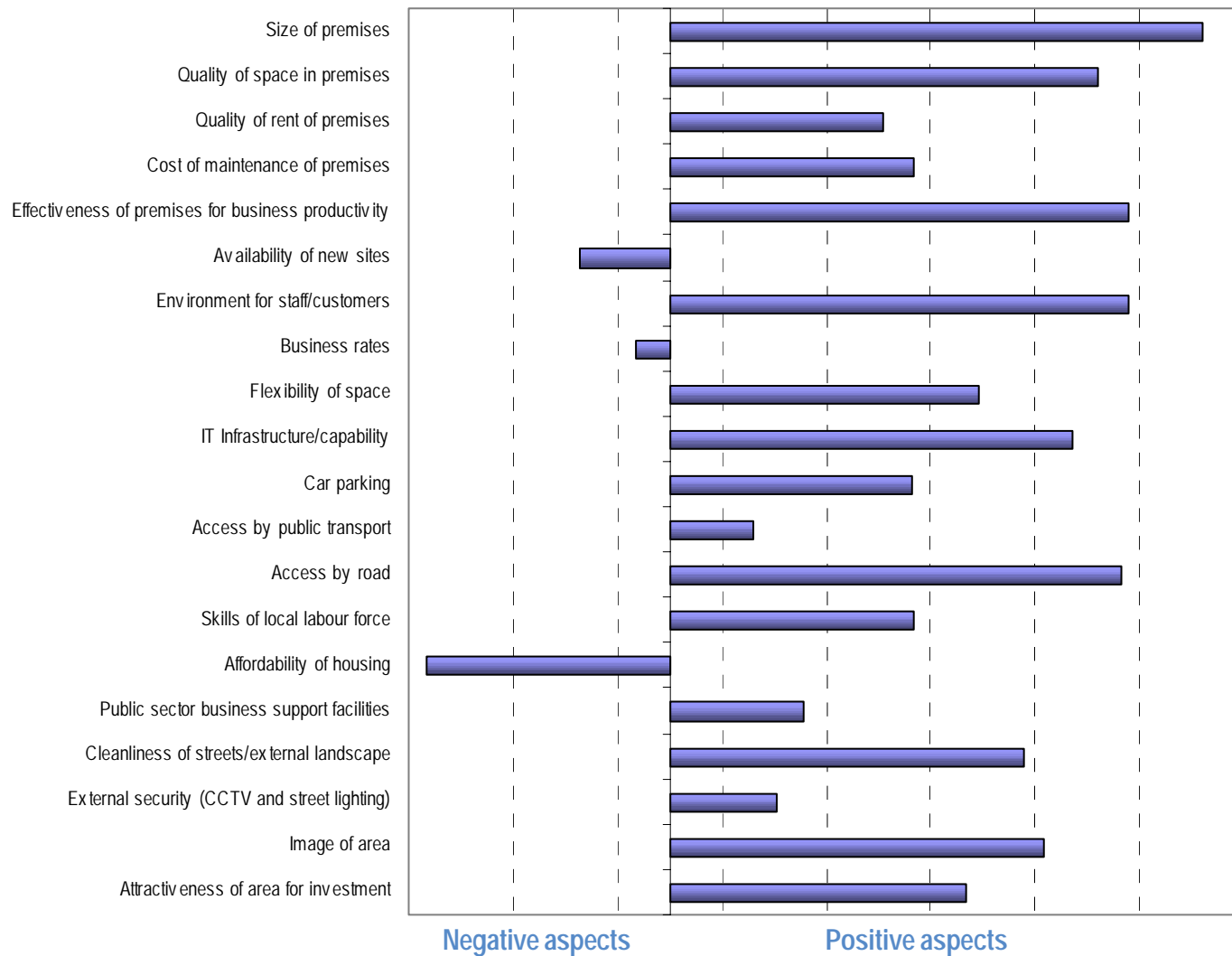
- More assistance for rural shops and services
- Improving the skills of young people
- Helping local small businesses flourish

A business perspective

As part of a survey of over 200 local businesses carried out for the Local Development Framework, we asked what they felt about Tonbridge and Malling as a place to do business. Overall, 64% rated the borough as good or very good. We then asked what businesses felt were the positive and negative aspects of operating in Tonbridge and Malling, see opposite.

The results are mainly positive. In particular, businesses felt that premises, road access and environment were particular local strengths. On the negative side, businesses were concerned about availability of new sites, business rates and affordable housing. Business rates are set by central Government and this is not a matter that can be influenced locally. However, the Local Development Framework for the borough will be addressing the need for new employment sites and work is already underway to address the housing needs of key and essential workers.

Positive and negative aspects of operating in Tonbridge and Malling borough



Young people

The views of young people can be missed in general rounds of consultation, but with activities for teenagers again being a priority for the community in general, it is vital that youngsters are consulted and their views included. The Tonbridge and Malling youth forum meets bi-monthly to discuss issues that are important to young people and to work with service providers to find solutions. We asked the forum if the priorities highlighted by young people in the last strategy were still relevant and if there were new issues which they felt were as important. Young people identified a number of important issues including action on anti-social behaviour, controlling behaviour at school and helping homeless people. Health issues were also a major concern with issues such as obesity, smoking and mental health highlighted.

Health

Still important:

- Alcohol and drugs too easily available
- More places for advice about relationships, sex and pregnancy for young men and women.

New issues:

- Tackling obesity
- Help to stop or not start smoking
- Helping with emotional problems

Transport

Still important:

- Cost of public transport
- Safety when cycling

New issues:

- Safer routes to school/college

Crime and Feeling Safe

Still important:

- More things to do
- Better transport to get to places and events
- More police presence and better street lighting

New issues:

- More action on anti-social behaviour
- Tackling drug users and dealers
- Dealing with vandalism

Environment

New issues:

- Do more to encourage recycling
- Bigger issues such as global warming
- Amount of development in the locality

Careers and Education

Still important:

- Bullying
- Truancy
- Better careers advice
- Better information on local jobs

New issues:

- Controlling behaviour at school
- Improving the Connexions service

Housing

Still important:

- Advice on living independently
- Cheaper housing

New issues:

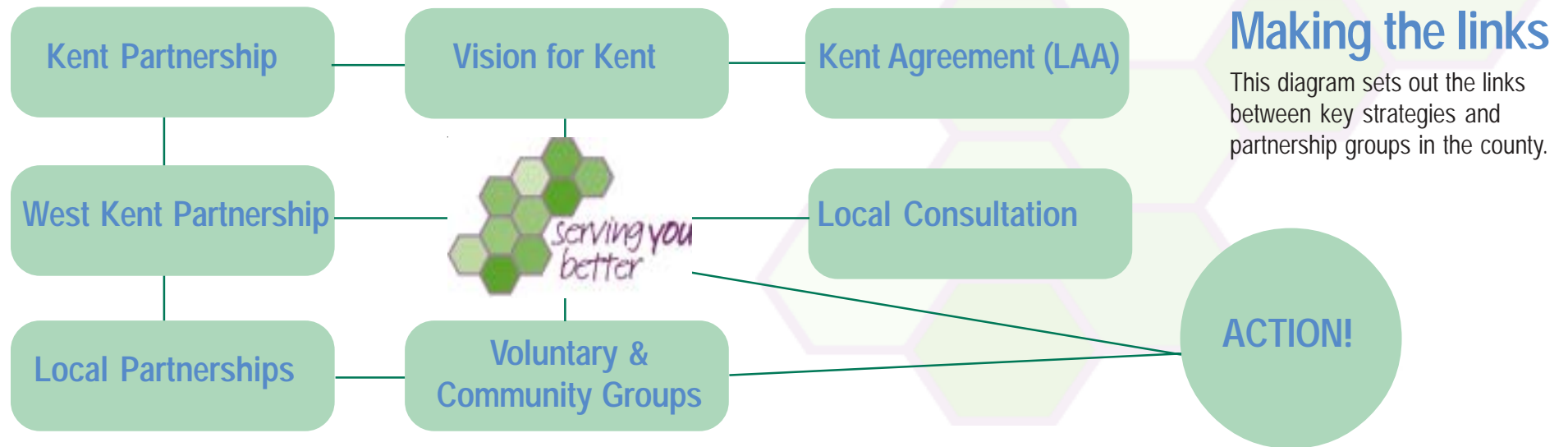
- Helping people employed locally with housing
- Helping homeless people
- Special housing for the disabled/elderly

Working together in partnership

Many of the issues identified through community consultation cannot be solved by one organisation working alone. Increasingly, public sector organisations are working together to deal with issues which cut across the responsibilities of several bodies. Partnership working is led in our area by the West Kent Partnership. This group of senior public, voluntary, community and private sector representatives looks at issues which effect the quality of life enjoyed by people in the area. There are a number of sub-groups looking at key issues for West Kent such as affordable housing, transport planning and economic development. The West Kent Partnership sits below a partnership for the whole county - The Kent Partnership. This body deals with more strategic issues of importance to Kent as a whole. It also oversees the preparation of the Vision for Kent, a community strategy for the county.

In order to create a sustainable community strategy, we need to make links beyond the boundaries of our borough, into Kent and the wider world. Many of the issues and themes covered by the Vision for Kent are common to those in our community strategy. The county document is aspirational and focuses on the economic, environmental and social well-being of the people of Kent over the next 20 years. Our strategy seeks to translate wider aspirations into local action as well as dealing with issues of more concern to our local population. Links with the Vision for Kent are set out within each theme.

In addition, a Local Area Agreement for the county of Kent (called the Kent Agreement) has been adopted. This document sets out key performance targets across a variety of themes. Again, links with the Kent Agreement are set out within each community strategy theme. A list of the priority outcomes set out in the document can be found on page 39.



Our vision and the key themes

Based on the local community's future priorities for improvement, the opportunity has been taken to review and simplify the overall vision for the borough. The following has been adopted:

A borough which is safe and clean, with less traffic congestion and comprises vibrant, healthy and distinctive local communities where there is good access to jobs, housing, leisure opportunities and social care.

The first community strategy was based on six key themes covering key community priorities. As part of consultation for the new strategy, consultees were asked whether these themes remained relevant. In general, there was support for retaining the original six themes.

For this strategy, therefore, the majority of existing themes have been carried forward largely unaltered including those for crime, cleanliness, and traffic and transport. Community consultation did, however, indicate a need for the strategy to address health issues in more detail, particularly to address inequalities of provision and healthy lifestyles. The original theme about housing, health and social care needs has been amended to take account of this.

Access to affordable housing has been identified as a major local issue. To reflect this and the interrelationships, this topic is included within a new theme alongside a strong economy.

Consultation with young people in the borough also indicated a wide range of issues of concern to them, issues which cover all of the adopted themes. For this reason, youth issues are not confined to a single theme and have been reflected, where appropriate, across all six.

The community strategy key themes for the period 2006 to 2009 are as follows:

A safe place with low levels of crime

A cleaner, smarter borough

Improving health and reducing inequalities

Protecting and enhancing the environment

Managing traffic and car parking

Decent housing and a strong economy

A safe place with low levels of crime

Living in an area with low levels of crime and anti-social behaviour is considered important for a better quality of life. Our first community strategy focused on the need to reduce crime levels and fear of crime and increase the reporting of incidents of anti-social behaviour. The Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP), involving the Police, the Borough and County Councils, Fire & Rescue Service, Primary Health Care Trusts, the Probation Service, the Drug and Alcohol Team and Russet Homes, is responsible for addressing crime and disorder issues in the borough.



Key achievements 2003-2006

- Overall, crime levels have reduced by 4.3% over the period 2003-2005 and have remained low compared to national, regional and county comparisons.
- Levels of burglary have decreased to a very low level and vehicle thefts have also reduced over the past three years. The work of the CDRP in increasing home security, tackling drug misuse and deploying technologies such as Automatic Number Plate Recognition, CCTV and drug detection equipment has assisted in these reductions.
- Some types of crime have increased over the last three years including criminal damage and crimes against the person. Nearly two-thirds of crimes against the person are incidents of domestic violence. To tackle this problem, the CDRP commissioned a support service for victims and has campaigned successfully to encourage more people to report incidents of domestic violence.
- Anti-social behaviour remains a problem in some communities. The CDRP has employed an officer to deal with complaints from the public and co-ordinate a multi-agency approach to tackling such behaviour and its causes.
- Tackling fear of crime is a major issue in the borough. Significant progress has been made in achieving 'higher visibility' policing in a number of locations to reassure the public. There are now nine Police Community Support Officers and seven Community Wardens. These additional officers are working in a total of seventeen local communities across the Borough.
- The CDRP has worked with young people and youth organisations to provide clubs, meeting places and activities and also to encourage the reporting of crimes against young people. The Y2Crew Summer Scheme, which operates in Snodland, East Malling, Hadlow and Tonbridge, is effective in involving vulnerable young people in positive activities. Numbers of young people attending the Activate holiday programme have increased by 18% over the past 2 years.

Community priorities

Crime consistently ranks as a major concern for residents of the borough. Crime statistics show that the borough has comparatively low levels of crime and that some types of crime have fallen over the past three years. In addition, the Area Profile shows that more people feel safer outside after dark now than they did three years ago.

However, our Residents' Panel believe that levels of anti-social behaviour have got worse. Local community groups feel that programmes to reduce drug and alcohol misuse are important and parish councils want to see community policing extended. Some types of crime have increased, including increases in criminal damage, and violent crime (particularly domestic violence).

Young people are also concerned about crime. Many would welcome more community policing, action taken against drug users and dealers and better street lighting. They also acknowledge the importance of having things to do as a way of diverting those at risk of committing offences away from crime. The Area Profile shows that 68% of residents think activities for youngsters have improved over the past three years, however, Residents' Panel respondents identified providing activities for young people as a continuing priority.



CDRP strategy

The Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership published a three year strategy in 2005. This strategy focuses on improving the quality of life of residents and visitors to the borough by addressing a number of priority areas. These priority areas are:

- Criminal damage
- Offences against the person
- Substance misuse
- Environmental crime
- Anti-social behaviour

Copies of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership Strategy 2005-2008 can be obtained from the Borough Council or online at www.tmcridereduction.org.uk

Key issues for this strategy

Reducing overall levels of crime and disorder continues to be a major issue. There needs to be an increased focus on specific crime types where increases have occurred as well as continuing the efforts made in areas where crimes are reducing. Tackling anti-social behaviour will have an impact on overall crime figures, as well as improving the quality of life for people living and working in the borough. Crimes are not distributed evenly across the borough and some areas experience higher levels than others. The CDRP will be carrying out a further study of those geographic areas where levels of crimes are higher than the average for the borough. Community policing has increased visible police presence and many people would like to see this expanded. Young people need to be supported and given opportunities to get involved in positive activities. The views of young people need to be considered when planning new activities.

Proposed actions 2006-2009

- Support the work of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership in tackling priority crimes and monitoring the actions set out in the Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy.
- Encourage more community policing through the recruitment of additional Police Community Support Officers and Community Wardens.
- Ensure young people, particularly those at risk of committing crimes, have access to appropriate and affordable positive activities and increase the range of these opportunities.
- Work with partners to reduce the effect that anti-social behaviour has on people living and working in the borough.
- Ensure the CDRP monitors all crimes including those not identified as priority areas, such as burglary and vehicle crime, and takes action if levels of these types of crime increase.



Making the links



Performance measures

Residents views on vandalism, graffiti and damage to property or vehicles

Amount of violent crime

Residents views about anti-social behaviour

A cleaner, smarter Borough

A clean environment is a safer and more pleasant place to be and an area that is well cared for tends to suffer less anti-social behaviour such as vandalism and graffiti. Our first community strategy focused on improving the co-ordination between services working in our streets and public spaces and to make it easier for residents to report problems via a single telephone number. Another objective was to involve the community via educational campaigns, and to increase enforcement against those committing environmental crimes.



Key achievements 2003-2006

- A new street scene service, bringing together those responsible for street cleaning, maintenance and lighting, was launched in 2003. This has provided better co-ordinated responses to problems reported by the public.
- The Streetline telephone hotline was introduced to deal with a wide range of problems including potholes, road gritting, littering, dog fouling, streetlights, abandoned vehicles, fly-tipping and graffiti.
- The council now has a number of 'Street Monitors' who report on a wide range of street scene related issues in their local area and more are being recruited.
- The Cleaner Borough Campaign is a high profile programme of educational and community-based initiatives aimed at making people aware of the environmental problems associated with litter, fly-tipping and graffiti. Over the last three years, more than 85 'Bash the Trash' events have taken place with schools, parish councils and local groups.
- Action has been taken against those dropping litter or not cleaning up after their dogs. From January 2005 to January 2006, 57 Fixed Penalty Notices for littering and 9 for dog fouling were issued.
- Operation Cubit has been successful in targetting abandoned and untaxed vehicles in the borough and has now been extended to include graffiti cleansing and fly-tipping clearances in a number of areas.
- Over the past three years, road maintenance investment has increased and additional works have been carried out.

Community priorities

Clean streets and public areas with less litter, dogs' mess, dumped rubbish and abandoned cars, was considered the most important factor for a good quality of life by our Residents' Panel. A survey of residents undertaken in 2003 revealed that 68% were very or fairly satisfied that public land was being kept clear of litter and refuse. In the 2005 survey, nearly 20% of respondents felt that the cleanliness of parks and open spaces had improved over the last three years. Parish councils were keen to see tougher penalties for fly-tippers and graffiti dealt with.

During the last financial year, the percentage of land assessed as containing an unacceptable level of litter and detritus was 10%, an almost 6% increase on the previous year. This increase was due to a small number of sites that registered an unacceptable level of cleanliness upon which resources are now being focused.

The maintenance of roads was identified as a priority for improvement. Groups working with or representing elderly people and those with visual impairments also felt that pavement maintenance should be a priority.



Street Scene Action Plan

The Street Scene service brings together staff and agencies concerned with maintaining a clean and healthy environment. The Street Scene Action Plan includes a wide range of initiatives which the service is presently progressing, including:

- tackling graffiti
- dealing with fly-tipping
- promoting health via street scene
- attaining green flag awards for parks
- cleaner borough and kent campaigns with schools and communities
- enforcement against those dropping litter and dog fouling.

Key issues for this strategy

In order to continue to improve and maintain the cleanliness of the environment, we need to take enforcement action against those committing environmental crimes, educate people about the dangers and cost of these types of activities and do more to keep streets and public areas clean. Enforcement action against those littering and fly-tipping has been successful and these activities need to continue. The government has introduced regulations which require householders to ensure their waste is disposed of properly, and this new duty needs to be publicised. A graffiti strategy has been produced and further work needs to take place. The community has a big part to play in maintaining clean streets and public areas. The successful Street Monitors scheme enables people to get involved in their local area and there needs to be a continuing programme of education projects with children and young people. Environmental crimes such as littering, fly-tipping, abandoned vehicles and graffiti are also a priority for the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership. Effective road and pavement maintenance is dependent on adequate resources being made available and budgets need to reflect community concerns.

Proposed actions 2006-2009

- Work with partners to implement the Graffiti Action Plan to prevent graffiti appearing, meet specified targets for its removal, identify perpetrators and provide evidence for prosecution.
- Further involve local communities in maintaining a clean street scene through the recruitment of additional volunteer street monitors and Cleaner Borough Campaign events.
- Work with partners to prevent fly-tipping and prosecute perpetrators through the implementation and promotion of new legislation and the launch of a reward scheme.
- Address the problem of environmental crimes, including littering, by recruiting an Environmental Enforcement Officer.
- Work to secure a higher priority for road and pavement maintenance.



Making the links



Performance measures
The amount of land with unacceptable levels of litter
Reported fly-tipping cleared up within a set time
Residents views about road and pavement repairs

Improving health and reducing inequalities

A sustainable community is one where everyone, young and old, rich and poor, regardless of their race or beliefs, has access to the services they need. Our first community strategy focused on caring for older people, finding things for young people to do and on improving the quality of life for people living in Snodland and East Malling. These communities were identified as being particular areas in need. The first strategy also recognised the important role the voluntary and community sectors have in supporting vulnerable people in the borough.



Key achievements 2003-2006

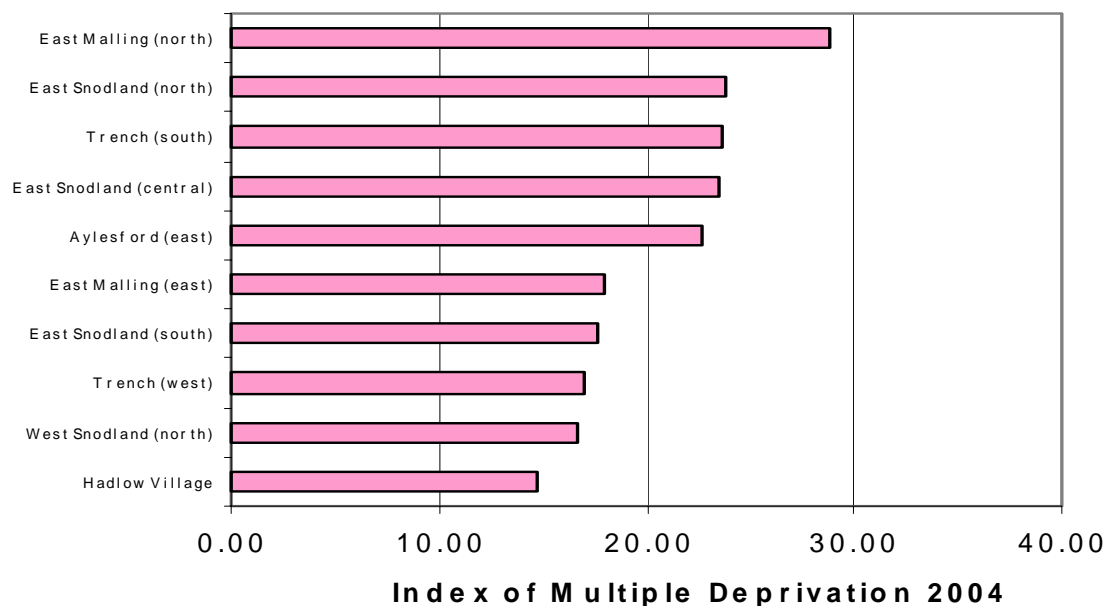
- Government funding of £1.39 million has been made available for Mid and West Kent to enhance the role of the voluntary sector in providing services to keep older people healthy, enhance social care and reduce hospital admissions.
- Proposals for a new hospital at Pembury are well advanced and the development should be completed by 2010/11. Ensuring patients using services at Maidstone and Pembury hospitals do not face excessive travel and receive the best care is an ongoing concern which needs to be resolved.
- The West Kent Compact, an agreement between the voluntary and community sector and local councils and Primary Health Care Trusts, is already improving partnerships across the sectors.
- A good practice guide on consulting with hard to reach groups has been produced.
- The Supporting People Locality Plan has reviewed the needs of people with learning disabilities, those with mental health problems and older people. New housing projects have been set up for vulnerable groups in Snodland and Tonbridge through partnership working with local Primary Care Trusts and Russet Homes.
- There has been extensive work with young people over the past 3 years. A skatepark, designed by young people, has been built in Tonbridge and support has been given to parish councils to develop skating facilities in Borough Green, Wrotham and Platt. Additional activities have been provided in the Easter holidays. The youth forum has been relaunched and will be at the forefront of youth policy development.
- Some areas of the borough have communities which have high levels of need compared to the rest of the borough. The Snodland Partnership continues to promote the regeneration of the town with funding for community projects, support for local police and employment.
- A major community project to improve the quality of life of people living in East Malling is now operating and two community workers have been employed to develop projects and work in partnership with local people.

Key Areas of Need

The Government published new data in 2004 about areas in need called the Index of Multiple Deprivation. This assesses local communities against a range of indicators including employment, skills, poverty and access to services. The graph opposite shows that East Malling and Snodland continue to be areas of priority. However, the new data has identified parts of Trench ward in Tonbridge and other areas such as Aylesford and Hadlow as areas of need. The West Kent Partnership is investigating opportunities for support funding to enhance key services in these communities along with other priority areas in Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells.

Regeneration efforts have been focused on the East Malling area over the last two years. A project group is in place and consultation with the local community over priorities for improvement has been undertaken. Two community workers have now been employed to develop projects and work in partnership with local people and support agencies. In addition, Russet Homes have commenced major refurbishment works on the Winterfield Estate.

Key Areas of Need



Health Profile

In general, residents of Tonbridge and Malling enjoy better health than the average for the country. However, there are inequalities across the borough. The borough has the 3rd highest life expectancy of all local authorities in Kent and Medway. The 2002-2004 Health Profile for the borough shows that 29% of all deaths were due to cancer, 39% due to circulatory disease and 13% due to respiratory disease. The area has low rates of cancer compared to the rest of Kent and Medway but the numbers of cancer deaths have risen. Deaths from heart disease and strokes have reduced over the past 10 years. There is a link between deprivation and poor health with generally higher rates of circulatory disease, respiratory disease and cancers in poorer areas.

The overall rate of infant mortality (up to 1 year old) is lower than the county as a whole, however significant differences exist, with rates in priority communities (East Malling, Snodland, Trench) being significantly higher than in the rest of the borough. The overall rate of teenage conceptions is well below the national average and currently decreasing, however again there are significant variations with higher rates in Trench Ward.

Alcohol and drugs

Nationally, alcohol abuse is a serious problem. There are 15-22,000 alcohol related deaths each year and 40-70% of A&E admissions are alcohol related. 33% of incidents of domestic violence are linked to alcohol misuse and 17 million workdays are lost each year.

Choosing Health

Lifestyle choices can have a major impact on our health and well being. The Government's Choosing Health White Paper identifies 5 key areas where we make choices and sets out how support can be given to those who wish to move to a healthier lifestyle. To achieve the aims of the White Paper, health organisations, local councils and others will need to work in partnership to improve healthy living in the communities they serve. The 5 areas are:

- Alcohol and drugs
- Sexual health
- Obesity and exercise
- Smoking
- Mental and emotional well-being

Mental and emotional well being

Nearly a third of people who see their GP have a mental health component to their illness. At any one time, 1 in 6 adults has a mental health problem. In people over 65, 1 in 20 have some form of dementia rising to 1 in 5 of the over 80s. In addition, 1 in 5 workers are affected by work-related stress.

Sexual health

There are rising numbers of sexual infections. Some diseases are increasing rapidly, such as Chlamydia which can cause infertility. However, primary care facilities cannot currently cope with demand for services. The conception rate for under 18s is falling but remains high in some local areas.

Obesity and exercise

The health consequences of obesity are considerable including respiratory disease and cancer. The percentage of overweight adults and children is rising. There is a link between areas of deprivation and child obesity.

Smoking

Smoking causes 20% of all deaths nationally. Between 2001-2003, 448 of the 2801 deaths in the borough were attributable to smoking. Across the UK, 1000 hospital admissions per day are due to smoking, 50% of smokers die prematurely and of those, 50% will not even pass middle age.

Community priorities

Local hospitals and GP surgeries are both services which the Residents' Panel believe have an impact on quality of life. While GP services were not identified as a priority for improvement, hospital services were. Local hospital services are undergoing a period of significant change and people are naturally concerned about what impact this might have on them in the future.

Many people living in the borough enjoy good health, but there are significant health inequalities, particularly in some of the priority communities. Community groups were concerned with the availability of local care for the elderly and helping those with disabilities to be more independent.

More than 90% of the Residents' Panel agreed or strongly agreed that the council and our partners should encourage healthy living. Young people also wanted more to be done to promote healthy lifestyles through tackling obesity, helping people stop or not start smoking, advising on sexual health and promoting mental and emotional well being.

The Index for Multiple Deprivation and Health Profile for the borough shows that significant inequalities exist across the area.



Vulnerable groups

- Homeless
- Physically disabled
- Learning disabled
- Ex-offenders
- Young people in and leaving care
- Supported children/families
- People with HIV/Aids
- Drug users
- Victims of domestic violence
- Mentally ill
- Older people
- Victims of crime
- Asylum seekers and BME Groups

Key issues for this strategy

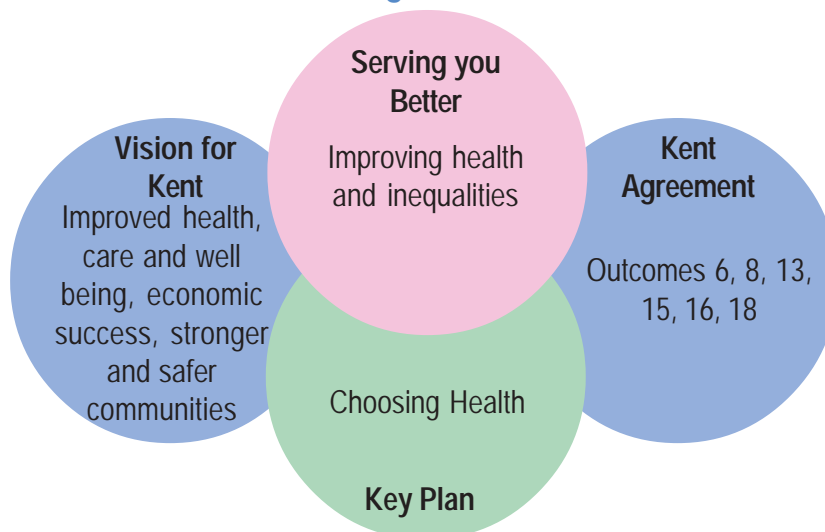
Having good health is something that many people take for granted but is effected by the choices we make. We need to work with partners in the health sector to ensure that healthy living is promoted and made easier for everyone in the borough, particularly those living in priority communities. With the major changes brought about by the new hospital in Pembury, there is a need to ensure that acute services will remain accessible and of a high quality in the future. Often, more vulnerable people in the community find it harder to get the support and help they need. There is a need to continue to promote equality for more vulnerable people by better identifying and meeting their needs and also through ensuring services are accessible. The provision of good preventative care to vulnerable people can assist in reducing the burden on acute hospital services and help people live independently for longer. The voluntary sector has an important role to play in improving health and promoting equality and needs appropriate support. Projects focusing on priority communities are required to address inequalities and help those living in difficult circumstances to help themselves.

Proposed actions 2006-2009

- Work with partners to enable people to choose a healthier lifestyle, through taking more exercise, eating healthily and not smoking
- Support the early completion of the District General Hospital at Pembury and ensure good transport access to hospital services for borough residents
- Support the voluntary and community sector through the implementation of the Compact Action Plan
- Ensure vulnerable groups can access the services they need and receive good preventative care.
- Work in partnership to tackle inequalities in priority communities in the borough (particularly Trench ward) through promoting health, supporting young people and improving opportunities leading to independence



Making the links



Performance measures

Residents views about local health services

The accessibility of council buildings to disabled people

Community projects running in priority communities

Protecting and enhancing the environment

For the purposes of this strategy, 'environment' encompasses both the countryside and the built environment, towns and villages. Our first community strategy proposed a large number of actions under this heading, reflecting the level of concern felt by residents. Controlling development was a key issue, along with protecting and enhancing the borough's biodiversity and wildlife habitats. Involving local people in nature conservation was another objective along with improving access to the countryside for everyone.



Key achievements 2003-2006

- A new planning framework for the borough is under preparation. The first stage of the 'Local Development Framework' involved drawing up core planning policies for the borough to control new development and promote good design.
- Government approval for the development of three major sites in the borough at Holborough, Leybourne Grange and Kings Hill has been given. Legal agreements have been drawn up to ensure community facilities are provided. The sites will provide a focus for new homes in the borough and will enable other more environmentally sensitive areas to be kept free from development.
- A new country park at Leybourne Lakes was formally opened in November 2004 and provides a major countryside recreation facility for the north of the borough. Elsewhere, a new cycle link between Tonbridge and Penshurst Place is now open.
- The LA21 action plan has been reviewed and will address wider issues of sustainability including green travel, healthy living and purchasing. Community initiatives such as healthy walks and farmers' markets continue to operate successfully.
- Involving the wider community in conservation is an important objective. The Gardening for Wildlife Scheme encourages everyone to get involved in nature conservation.
- Village Design Statements are an important way of giving people a say about their locality. Several groups have been supported in preparing Statements for their villages.
- A £1 million local flood prevention scheme at East Peckham has been completed. This was funded by the Borough Council, DEFRA, the Environment Agency and other partners and should help prevent flooding of roads and property in the future.

Community priorities - local development

Tonbridge and Malling borough has a high quality environment with good links to the capital and is consequently under pressure for development. Residents and parish councils feel that such development, in existing towns and villages and in the countryside, should be carefully controlled. In addition, parish councils told us that new developments should be adequately served by facilities such as primary health care and schools.

Access to good shopping facilities was identified by our Residents' Panel as being important for quality of life and reduces the need to travel to other centres. Town and local centres are particularly important as a focus for a range of community and cultural activities.



The Local Development Framework

Development taking place in the borough is currently guided by policy in the local plan, development briefs and other relevant planning policy documents. On adoption, development will be guided by the Local Development Framework (LDF). The LDF is like a 'filing cabinet' – it will contain a series of 'files' or documents that together set out the land-use planning policies for the Borough to guide future development to allocated sites and protect the green belt and other more sensitive areas. The LDF will seek to deliver the spatial aspects of the Community Strategy by responding to local concerns.

Key issues for this strategy

Development has emerged as a key issue. The LDF will need to balance the desire of local people to restrain building with the need for housing and other development in the borough. In addition, the character of existing towns and villages needs to be protected through the promotion of good design in development schemes and adequate services should be provided for new developments. The countryside and green belt is a valuable asset to the borough and should be protected through focusing new development on previously developed land, with due consideration given to the contribution brownfield sites make to local ecosystems. Wildlife habitats need to be protected and enhanced through increasing the connectivity between habitats and securing appropriate management. A major enhancement project for Tonbridge Town Centre is being progressed. This will involve partnership working with landowners and other agencies to achieve the redevelopment of key sites and the re-investment of the returns on such development to provide major environmental, public space and transport enhancements in and around the town centre.

Community priorities - sustainability issues

Although the borough has a high recycling rate relative to other districts, the need for additional recycling provision has been identified as a priority for improvement by local people. At 16%, the amount of waste recycled is above the national average, but much more needs to be done to achieve the government's target for the UK of 30% by 2010.

Maintaining a good water supply and avoiding shortages was an issue identified for improvement by parish councils. Retaining an adequate water supply is an important aspect of nature conservation and the management of river catchments. The Area Profile shows that daily domestic water use in the borough is amongst the highest in the country suggesting a need for more careful consideration of how water is used in the home. Parts of the borough are subject to severe flooding and preventing flooding has emerged as an additional priority in the Residents' Panel survey particularly for those living in areas at risk.

Young people are keen to see increases in the number of people recycling and wider issues such as global warming tackled.



The Green Waste Scheme

The Green Waste Scheme is currently serving 24,000 households in the borough. Each of these households has a green-lidded wheeled bin for compostable waste and cardboard, a green box for newspapers and cans and a black-lidded bin for non-recyclable waste. Recyclable waste is collected one week with residual waste in the black-lidded bin collected the next. Where the scheme is in operation, recycling rates of over 45% are being achieved. A further expansion of the scheme is planned for 2006 to 30,000 households with a view to all eligible households in the borough receiving this service by 2007.

Key issues for this strategy

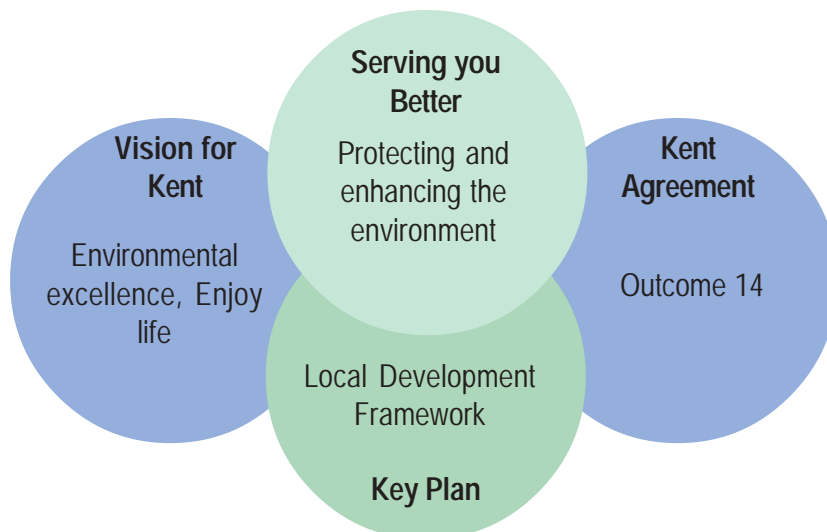
With the support of local residents, a high recycling rate has been achieved, and with the expansion of the Green Waste Scheme, the amount of waste diverted from landfill sites will increase further. Efforts need to be focused on ensuring the maximum amount of waste can be recycled with the minimum disruption to householders. Water supply is a key issue with decreasing levels of rainfall overall, but increased 'extreme' weather events like that which led to severe flooding in some parts of the borough in 2002. There is a need to work with partners to improve the supply of domestic water, encourage people to use water more responsibly and deal with the threat of flooding. Our LA21 action plan seeks to address wider sustainability issues. Climate change has links to several themes set out in this strategy and requires cross-cutting solutions. Increasing recycling, improving public transport and building better homes can all contribute to reducing greenhouse gases.

Proposed actions 2006-2009

- Through the Local Development Framework, work to protect the character of the borough's villages, towns and countryside whilst meeting the need for new development in a sustainable manner.
- Take forward the master plan to achieve new development within Tonbridge Town Centre.
- Increase the extent and connectivity of wildlife habitats in the borough, and secure their appropriate management, through partnership working.
- Implement the Local Agenda 21 action plan, including promoting sustainability issues to residents and businesses.
- Increase the borough's recycling rate through promoting the schemes currently available and expanding the green waste scheme.
- Work with partners to address local flooding issues and promote water conservation through reducing water use and improving the water supply infrastructure.



Making the links



Performance measures

New homes built on land which has been developed before

Designated land important for nature conservation which is in a good condition

Amount of household waste recycled

Managing traffic and car parking

Well managed, integrated and accessible transport systems are a vital part of a sustainable community. Our first community strategy sought to address traffic congestion, improvements to public transport and excessive traffic speeds in sensitive areas. The management of on and off-street parking was also a key objective.



Key achievements 2003-2006

- The problem of excessive traffic speeds on a number of borough roads has been tackled through a programme of casualty reduction measures at critical locations and through additional enforcement. Sites with a record of injury-related crashes have been targeted for traffic calming and other similar treatments to reduce speeds. There a number of fixed speed cameras and mobile camera units deployed in problem areas. Eight interactive speed signs and the Council's mobile Speed Indicator Device are also now in use.
- The Borough Council runs the Streets Ahead! school travel scheme to promote alternatives to the car for the school run. Funding has been provided to promote walking bus schemes in the borough and schools encouraged to develop travel plans.
- A wide range of improvements to the parking arrangements across the borough have been implemented in a phased programme of work under the Parking Action Plan. Local parking plans for West Malling and Tonbridge are in place with plans for Snodland, Hadlow and Borough Green in preparation.
- Additional parking attendants have been recruited to deal with illegal parking, particularly in problem areas such as outside schools and at bus stops.
- Congestion is a serious problem in some parts of the borough. Works have begun on the construction of the Leybourne bypass. A new access to West Malling station with additional commuter parking is under consideration. A signing strategy for Tonbridge has been implemented to direct through traffic away from the high street.
- Work has been carried out to improve access to buses for people with disabilities and parents with pushchairs along the A20 corridor. There has been an increase in 'real time' bus information at bus stops and more of these signs are to be introduced.
- A 400 space commuter car park has been constructed at Blue Bell Hill.

Community priorities

Traffic congestion was identified by the Residents' Panel as an important factor in quality of life and the second highest priority for improvement. 65% of respondents believed traffic congestion had got worse in the last 3 years. Groups in both the Tonbridge and the Malling areas also rated congestion as a top concern. Parish councils were concerned with congestion and also with speeding, particularly on rural roads.

Public transport was identified as a priority for improvement by groups in rural areas, young people and groups working with the elderly and disabled. While the percentage of residents who travel to work by public transport at 12.6% compares favourably to nationwide figures, estimated traffic flows for all vehicle types compare poorly.

Young people were concerned about the cost of public transport, safety when cycling and finding safer and more sustainable routes to school or college. The lack of availability of transport can severely limit the leisure opportunities of young people, particularly in the rural areas of the borough.

Car parking, both on and off street, was identified as a priority for improvement by the Residents' Panel.



Local Transport Plan

Kent County Council is currently preparing its Local Transport Plan for 2006-11. The plan will identify new major road schemes and set out key policies managing traffic and public transport in the county. One of the major schemes identified is the A228 Colts Hill Strategic Link. The plan also sets out what funding is available for road schemes, road safety improvements, rights of way and cycling, amongst other issues. In 2005, Kent County Council adopted sole responsibility for highways management in the borough.

Key issues for this strategy

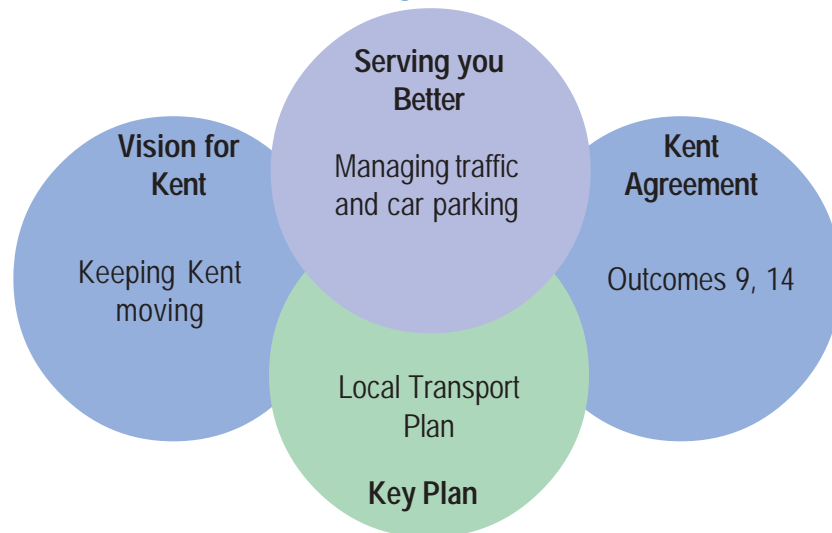
Tackling traffic congestion in the borough is a major issue. The Traffic Management Act 2004 requires local authorities to identify congestion and air quality hotspots and programme schemes to address problem areas. A list of congestion priority areas has been drawn up with a view to directing road improvements to areas of concern. Excessive traffic speeds put other road users, pedestrians and cyclists at risk and require increased enforcement and the regular review of speed limits. The Speedwatch scheme enables local communities to work with the police to pinpoint sites where there is a persistent problem and identify drivers travelling at inappropriate speeds. Public transport, particularly buses and taxis, is crucial for young people, the elderly and people with some disabilities and the availability of quality services can assist in reducing traffic congestion. Station improvements at West Malling and Tonbridge are planned to improve access and car parking arrangements for rail users. In addition, more accessible information about the services currently available and better linkages between public transport modes will assist users and potential users. With a change in the local rail franchise, and the introduction of domestic services on the Channel Tunnel Rail Link in 2009, there is some scope to ensure existing and new services better meet the needs of local people. Parking needs to be well managed, through improvements in parking spaces and regulation, in order to meet the needs of local residents.

Proposed actions 2006-2009

- Focus road improvements to deal with safety, speed, air quality and local congestion problems, particularly identified priority areas.
- Provide support for parish councils and other community groups wishing to participate in the Speedwatch scheme.
- Work with partners to improve the accessibility, affordability and reliability of public transport and make timetabling information more widely available.
- Promote sustainable school travel through safer routes to school initiatives.
- Ensure parking is regulated to meet the needs of residents, businesses and visitors.
- Work with train operators to secure improvements to local domestic rail services.



Making the links



Performance measures

Residents views about traffic congestion

Residents views about public transport

Decent housing and a strong economy

Stable employment and good quality, affordable housing are key components of a sustainable community. For housing, our first community strategy focused on the need to increase the amount of affordable housing being provided and to prevent homelessness. Our economic objectives were to raise the profile of the wider West Kent area in partnership with others, address the need for essential worker housing, and provide support for community shops, particularly within rural communities.



Key achievements 2003-2006

- West Kent partners have worked successfully on the implementation of the Area Investment Framework 2003-2006
- A major study of the IT needs of home-based businesses has been completed with funding support from SEEDA
- With the assistance of Action with Rural Communities in Kent, direct support and advice to key rural shops in the borough has been provided
- The target of providing affordable homes has been exceeded via partnership working with local housing associations. There were 113 houses completed between 2004 and 2005 with another 210 likely to be completed in 2006
- The Borough Council has worked with partners to reduce homelessness and, through Russet Homes's redevelopment of temporary accommodation at two sites in the borough, a better solution for those with urgent housing needs has been provided
- For those needing emergency accommodation, the average stay in B&B accommodation has been reduced from 7.5 weeks in 2003/4 to 5.5 weeks in 2004/5.
- The Home Improvement Agency spent nearly £1 million on home adaptations for almost 2000 West Kent clients with disabilities or other needs over the past 3 years.
- Two major essential worker housing studies for West Kent have been completed which have been widely regarded as examples of best practice nationally. They have confirmed that the high cost of housing is a significant problem for local employees. The first affordable housing scheme for essential workers has been constructed in Tonbridge. The council introduced a Key and Essential Workers Policy in July 2005 to help local employees access affordable home ownership.
- A major study concluded that tourism generated £136 million of income in 2003, and supported over 2800 jobs in the borough. A grant from SEEDA for a destination management system now enables visitors to book local accommodation online via the Heart of Kent website.

Community priorities

More affordable housing was viewed as a priority by those unable to gain access to owner occupation, rural-based local groups, young people and local businesses.

Other issues which emerged from consultation related to providing good preventative care and promoting independence, particularly for older people and people with disabilities. Dealing with homelessness, particularly amongst younger people was also a concern.

The key economic issues identified were helping young people improve their skills, support for rural shops and services, help for small businesses and a need for new business sites. Young people expressed concerns about better careers advice, improving the connexions service and dealing with bad behaviour within schools.



The Housing Strategy 2005 - 2008

Meeting local housing needs is a key priority within the borough. The Housing Strategy focuses on five key priorities: provision of affordable housing; tackling homelessness; private sector renewal and energy efficiency; assisting vulnerable households; and addressing crime reduction.

Key issues for this strategy

Meeting our targets for the provision of affordable housing for priority cases and others such as essential workers is a key objective. The Local Development Framework requires 30% of larger housing developments to be affordable housing and this will contribute to achieving our targets. In addition, more needs to be done by public and voluntary bodies across West Kent to tackle and prevent homelessness, particularly amongst younger people. Older people and those with disabilities need 'Homes for Life' which are able to meet changing needs and enable people to live more independently for longer. Telecare is an innovative scheme currently being piloted in the borough which uses technology to support people in their own homes.

A new Area Investment Framework for West Kent is to be published shortly. It will set out what actions are required to address local economic issues. This will draw on the Regional Economic Strategy for the South East and Kent Prospects, the county economic strategy. The West Kent Partnership and its sub groups will have the responsibility for its implementation.

Education and skills remain key issues locally. Recent reviews undertaken by the Learning & Skills Council concluded that, whilst many young people achieve good academic results, more vocational learning opportunities are needed. West Kent College has invested in a very successful vocational learning facility at North Farm in Tunbridge Wells. Additional work-based learning opportunities for students are needed to expand vocational learning and entry to work direct from school.

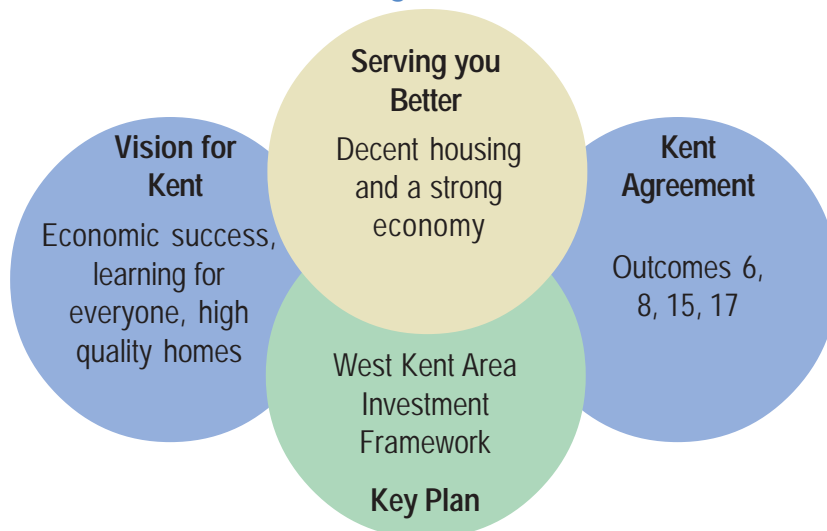
There are gaps in the provision of support and advice available to young people. Better careers advice is needed and there should be access to advice on emotional well-being, particularly within schools. Partnership working to address the issues set out in the Government Green Paper 'Youth Matters' will need to take account of these gaps in provision.

Proposed actions 2006-2009

- With West Kent partners, implement the action plan of the West Kent Area Investment Framework 2006-2009
- Support the provision of vocational courses and practical work-based learning opportunities within school clusters and colleges
- Work with partners to increase the support and advice available to young people on careers and well-being issues within schools and colleges.
- Increase the amount of affordable housing made available to those with a priority need and essential workers
- Address the need to prevent homelessness locally and across West Kent, particularly younger people in need.
- Work in partnership to enable older people and people with disabilities to live independently for longer through extending the use of Telecare and providing 'Homes for Life'.



Making the links



Performance measures

Additional affordable homes provided each year

Residents views about job prospects

Young people aged 16-24 in full-time education or employment

Implementation

<p>A safe place with lower levels of crime</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the work of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership in tackling priority crimes and monitoring the actions set out in the Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy. • Encourage more community policing through the recruitment of additional Police Community Support Officers and Community Wardens. • Ensure young people, particularly those at risk of committing crimes, have access to appropriate and affordable positive activities and increase the range of these opportunities. • Work with partners to reduce the effect that anti-social behaviour has on people living and working in the borough. • Ensure the CDRP monitors all crimes including those not identified as priority areas, such as burglary and vehicle crime, and takes action if levels of these types of crime increase. 	<p>Lead</p> <p>Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership</p> <p>KCC/TMBC</p> <p>Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership</p>	<p>Plan</p> <p>Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy</p> <p>Youth Agreement</p> <p>Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy</p>
<p>A cleaner, smarter borough</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners to implement the Graffiti Action Plan to prevent graffiti appearing, meet specified targets for its removal, identify perpetrators and provide evidence for prosecution. • Further involve local communities in maintaining a clean street scene through the recruitment of additional volunteer street monitors and Cleaner Borough Campaign events. • Work with partners to prevent fly-tipping and prosecute perpetrators through the implementation and promotion of new legislation and the launch of a reward scheme. • Address the problem of environmental crimes, including littering, by recruiting an Environmental Enforcement Officer. • Work to secure a higher priority for road and pavement maintenance. 	<p>Lead</p> <p>TMBC/CDRP</p> <p>TMBC</p> <p>TMBC</p> <p>TMBC</p> <p>Kent County Council</p>	<p>Plan</p> <p>Street Scene Action Plan</p> <p>Local Transport Plan</p>
<p>Improving health and reducing inequalities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners to enable people to choose a healthier lifestyle, through taking more exercise, eating healthily and not smoking • Support the early completion of the District General Hospital at Pembury and ensure good transport access to hospital services for borough residents • Support the voluntary and community sector through the implementation of the Compact Action Plan • Ensure vulnerable groups can access the services they need and receive good preventative care • Work in partnership to tackle inequalities in priority communities in the borough (particularly Trench ward) through promoting health, supporting young people and improving opportunities leading to independence 	<p>Lead</p> <p>Primary Care Trust</p> <p>VCS KCC/TMBC</p>	<p>Plan</p> <p>Choosing Health</p> <p>Compact Action Plan</p> <p>Priority Community Plans</p>

Implementation

<p>Protecting and enhancing the environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through the Local Development Framework, work to protect the character of the borough's villages, towns and countryside whilst meeting the need for new development in a sustainable manner. • Take forward a master plan to achieve new development within Tonbridge Town Centre. • Increase the extent and connectivity of wildlife habitats in the borough, and secure their appropriate management, through partnership working. • Implement the Local Agenda 21 Action Plan, including promoting sustainability issues to residents and businesses. • Increase the borough's recycling rate through promoting the schemes currently available and expanding the green waste scheme. • Work with partners to address local flooding issues and promote water conservation through reducing water use and improving the water supply infrastructure. 	<p>Lead TMBC</p> <p>TMBC Kent Wildlife Trust/TMBC</p> <p>TMBC</p> <p>TMBC/ Environment Agency/Water Providers</p>	<p>Plan LDF</p> <p>TTC Masterplan Nature Conservation/ Leisure Strategy LA21 Action Plan/Recycling Strategy</p>
<p>Managing traffic and car parking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus road improvements to deal with safety, speed, air quality and local congestion problems, particularly identified priority areas. • Provide support for Parish Councils and other community groups wishing to participate in the Speedwatch scheme. • Work with partners to improve the accessibility, affordability and reliability of public transport and make timetabling information more widely available. • Promote sustainable school travel through safer routes to school initiatives. • Ensure parking is regulated to meet the needs of residents, businesses and visitors. • Work with train operators to secure improvements to local domestic rail services. 	<p>Lead KCC</p> <p>CDRP/TMBC KCC/TMBC</p> <p>TMBC KCC/TMBC</p>	<p>Plan</p> <p>Local Transport Plan</p> <p>Parking Action Plan</p>
<p>Decent Housing and a Strong Economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With West Kent partners, implement the action plan of the West Kent Area Investment Framework 2006-2009 • Support the provision of vocational courses and practical work-based learning opportunities within school clusters and colleges • Work with partners to increase the support and advice available to young people on careers and well-being issues within schools and colleges. • Increase the amount of affordable housing made available to those with a priority need and essential workers • Address the need to prevent homelessness locally and across West Kent, particularly younger people in need. • Work in partnership to enable older people and people with disabilities to live independently for longer through extending the use of Telecare and providing 'Homes for Life'. 	<p>Lead WKP KCC Connexions</p> <p>TMBC TMBC KCC/PCT</p>	<p>Plan AIF</p> <p>Housing Strategy</p>

Summary of indicators

Indicator	Baseline	Target*
A safe place with low levels of crime		
% of residents who think that vandalism, graffiti and damage to property or vehicles is a very big or fairly big problem in the borough	59.5%	53%
Violent crime per 1,000 population	9.5	9.5
% of residents who think that people being rowdy or drunk in public places is a very big or fairly big problem in the Borough	39.9%	35%
A cleaner, smarter borough		
% of relevant land assessed as containing an unacceptable level of combined deposits of litter and detritus	12.3%	3.54%
% of reported high priority fly-tips collected within 24 hours	99%	100%
% of residents who think that for their local area, over the past 3 years, that road and pavement repairs have got better or stayed the same	55.9%	59%
Improving health and reducing inequalities		
% of residents who think that for their local area, over the past three years, that health services have got better or stayed the same	73.32%	81%
% of all council buildings where public areas are suitable for and accessible to disabled people	54.54%	64%
Number of priority communities served by at least one neighbourhood body and/or community-led project	2	3
Protecting and enhancing the environment		
% of new homes built on previously developed land	86%	90%
% area of land designated as a SSSI within the local authority area, which is found to be in favourable condition	65%	72%
% of household waste sent for recycling	15.93%	17%
Managing traffic and car parking		
% of residents who think that for their local area, over the past three years, that the level of traffic congestion has got better or stayed the same	28.94%	37%
% of residents who think that for their local area, over the past three years, that public transport has got better or stayed the same	67.17%	78%
Decent housing and a strong economy		
Additional affordable homes provided each year	113	150
% of residents who think that for their local area, over the past three years, that job prospects have got better or stayed the same	74.82%	80%
% of young people (16 -24 year olds) in full time education or employment	85.6%	90%

* Targets have been set to ensure Tonbridge and Malling falls within the top quartile nationally for each of the adopted indicators.

Kent Agreement

Summary of objectives

Outcome	Block 1: Children and young people	Outcome	Block 2: Safer and stronger communities	Outcome	Block 3: Healthier communities and older people
1	To promote the physical, emotional, social and intellectual development of young children so they flourish at home and at school	8	To develop the economic prosperity of Kent	15	To promote independence through employment for those who are able to work.
2	To significantly improve performance in literacy and numeracy in primary schools	9	To make Kent a safer place to work, live and travel	16	To promote and improve the health of Kent's residents and reduce health inequalities by addressing variations in health across the County
3	To improve the education of children in care	10	To reduce crime affecting local communities	17	To improve Kent residents' access to homes of excellent quality, in the right place, at the right time, and at the right cost
4	To identify children and young people (aged 0 to 18) with emotional and / or psychological difficulties at the earliest possible stage and respond with the most effective support	11	To reduce the harm caused by illegal drugs, including substantially increasing the number of drug misusing offenders entering treatment through the CJS.	18	To promote independent living for all
5	To increase attendance in primary schools	12	To reassure the public, reducing fear of crime and anti-social behaviour and building confidence in the Criminal Justice System without compromising fairness		
6	To increase the number of young people who have the skills and vocational qualifications for work	13	To increase the capacity of local communities so that people are empowered to participate in local decision making and delivery of services.		
7	To improve participation and engagement by all children and young people in youth, cultural and community activities.	14	Cleaner and greener public spaces		

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