



Kent Agreement 2: The Story of Place

Kent is in a period of change, facing increased development, house building and regeneration. It intends to take the opportunity to regenerate while ensuring that all new development is of the very highest quality, creating sustainable communities that are attractive, safe, and friendly. It will also protect and enhance its county's heritage, its Garden of England countryside, coast and traditional villages and market towns. It will raise the quality of life for all, making Kent a county that people are proud of, where communities, families and individuals prosper and enjoy life, and where people really want to live.

In a county as large and diverse as Kent there will be a variation in the experiences of the people who live there. Kent wishes to improve the quality of life for all, including supporting the independence of vulnerable groups who may not be able to access and experience all the County has to offer. Kent County Council and several other Kent partners are recognised as excellent or good authorities, and continued effort and progress has ensured the success of our first Kent Agreement. As we move forward into the next agreement we want to encourage Kent to be excellent everywhere.

Kent's challenges

- **Tackling child poverty and enhancing life aspirations for young people**
- **Reducing health inequalities across the county, particularly in life expectancy and obesity**
- **Reducing Kent's contribution to climate change and preparing for its impacts**
- **Supporting people to lead fulfilled and independent lives**
- **Responding to demographic change, including an ageing population**

Kent's opportunities

- **Developing sustainable growth areas and regenerating existing communities**
- **Creating a vibrant and successful economy in the face of economic change**
- **Maximising the opportunities of Kent's unique gateway position to UK and Europe**
- **Empowering everyone in Kent to participate and engage in cohesive communities**

What makes Kent distinctive?

In delivering this agreement we must remember the things that make Kent distinctive and diverse and build on them for future generations to enjoy.

- Kent is divided into 12 local authority districts and the neighbouring unitary authority of Medway
- Kent has 18 towns, one city, and more than 300 parishes
- 71% of Kent people live in urban areas and towns and 29% in rural areas
- Kent is one of the largest counties in the UK with a population of 1.38 million
- Black and Minority Ethnic people make up 5.3% of Kent's population
- Only 18.5% of Kent's households fit the "traditional family" structure of a married couple with dependent children
- The population is rising by 0.7% a year – faster than the rest of the South East & England
- Kent has greater proportions of young people (5-14) and older people (50+) than the national average
- 75.9% of the working age population are employed, with relatively high proportions employed in agriculture, chemicals and pharmaceuticals, retailing and construction
- Average household income in Kent is lower than in the rest of the South East
- Kent is below the regional average for skills – 12.2% of the working population have no qualifications
- 17.3% of the population consider themselves to have a long-term limiting illness, but more than 30,000 disabled and older people are supported to continue living independently in their own homes
- Kent has two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, 22 International Wildlife Sites, 102 Sites of Special Scientific Interest and 10 Special Landscape Areas. The county has 250 miles of spectacular coastline (Dartford to East Sussex border) and 85% of its land area is classified as rural
- Nearly 60% of passenger vehicles leaving and entering the UK come through Kent

Differences across the county

- Kent is the 104th most deprived local authority area of 149 county councils and unitary authorities across England. Thanet is amongst the 20% most deprived areas in the country, whilst Sevenoaks and Tonbridge & Malling are amongst the 20% least deprived. Education and skills remain a key issue for deprived districts such as Swale which has 5 of the most deprived areas in Kent and is 9th most deprived in the South East. 10 of the 12 districts are more deprived in 2007 than 2004, based on latest deprivation indices.



- The west of Kent has a reputation for being fairly affluent, but this masks pockets of deprivation and problems with affordability. The area experiences issues such as high levels of commuting to London, the need to protect green belt and relatively high numbers of retired and economically-inactive people.
- The east of Kent, on the other hand, has major areas in need of regeneration and significant pockets of deprivation but many assets in the form of the potential of coastal towns, a spectacular environment and a rich heritage.
- Kent has a unique gateway position due to its proximity to London and Europe, including Eurostar terminals at Ashford and Ebbsfleet, Europe's busiest and most successful passenger ferry port in Dover and the international airport at Manston. This creates problems of congestion and high volumes of through traffic and freight, including 10,000 foreign lorries vehicle movements per day travelling to and from Kent to the Continent.
- Kent contains two of the government's major growth areas in Thames Gateway and Ashford and faces significant growth in the rest of the county. This provides opportunities to create new, sustainable communities and to attract investment, but brings challenges in terms of protecting the environment, integrating new and existing communities and providing the infrastructure to support growth.
- There are significant differences in health inequalities in life expectancy, obesity and substance misuse across Kent, particularly gulfs between the east and west of the county
- Rural areas contribute significantly to the economy with more than a third of Kent's total businesses being located in rural areas. Yet, Kent's rural areas are currently experiencing significant levels of change. Continued globalisation of markets, increasing competition, agricultural policy reforms, increasing housing costs, an ageing population, increasing water scarcity and climate change represent just some of the challenges facing rural Kent.

A Vision for Kent

In 2006, 950 people from over 200 organisations and partnerships across Kent participated in developing the "Vision for Kent" – the countywide Sustainable Community Strategy. This sets out a strong sense of purpose and direction of Kent's long term aspirations over the next 20 years. Kent Agreement 2 builds on this collective vision and looks ahead to those priorities across the 8 Vision for Kent themes we wish to deliver on over the next three years and beyond.

Children in Poverty

Child poverty remains a fundamental priority for the county with over 47,000 children living in low income households and 14.7% in "workless" households. We know that children growing up in poverty are much less likely to fulfil their potential than other children.

The Kent Agreement harnesses the power of well-being and influence contained within the Kent partnership and will be a key driver helping to promote positive experiences, instilling optimism and capability in individuals and communities. Our ambition is to reduce the number of children in Kent that live in poverty by 10%, accomplished through the delivery of the priorities set out here in the Kent Agreement.

Priority Indicators supporting delivery of Kent's Poverty agenda

- NI163 proportion of population aged 10-64 for males and 19-59 for females qualified to at least Level 2 or higher
- NI152 working age people on out of work benefits
- NI161 learners achieving a Level 1 qualification in literacy
- NI162 learners achieving an Entry Level 3 qualification in numeracy
- NI117 16-18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training
- NI111 first time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10-17
- NI32 repeat incidents of domestic abuse
- NI110 young people's participation in positive activities
- NI187 tackling fuel poverty - % of people receiving income based benefits living in homes with a low energy efficiency rating
- NI155 number of affordable homes delivered
- 16 Statutory Department of Children Schools and Families Indicators

Economic Success – Opportunities For All

A key priority is supporting business growth by increasing the average productivity of businesses in Kent and reducing disparities across the County in a sustainable way through increasing business innovation and competitiveness, levels of business enterprise and attracting inward investment. Kent and Medway has one



of the lowest productivity outputs in the SE based on GVA per capita –being 24.1% lower than the SE. The KCC area's GVA per capita is 21.3% lower than the SE level. Kent seeks to seize the opportunities presented in the Thames Gateway and Ashford growth areas; build on the strong economic performance of mid and west Kent; and address underperformance in East Kent. Raising the aspirations of Kent's current and future workforce by working in partnership with communities to promote the awareness of learning, skills and job opportunities, with a focus on the county's deprived neighbourhoods is a key issue for the county. The economy is critical to improving the life experiences of those in Kent. There are strong links to tackling child poverty by tackling number of households with one or both parents without employment. There are high levels of economically inactive people that need addressing. A significant economic opportunity and challenge for Kent will be tackling climate change, which requires action both to reduce carbon emissions and to adapt to the changing climate; both need to be addressed together in order to maximise overall productivity and benefit.

Headline priorities

Improving enterprise, competitiveness and productivity

NI 163 proportion of population aged 19-64 for males and 19-59 for females qualified to at least Level 2 or higher

NI171 VAT registration rate

Promoting pathways to economic independence

NI 152 Working age people on out of work benefits

Creating a low carbon and climate change resilient economy

NI188 Planning to Adapt to climate change

Learning For Everyone

Kent is committed to improving the life chances of disadvantaged and vulnerable young people to include quality educational opportunities and access to appropriate health, housing and leisure services. Since education is a key predictor of later life chances, improving results and tackling the attainment gap is a key mechanism to sustain lower levels of poverty in the future. Kent has identified adult skills as a priority with the workforce having the lowest qualification level of any area within the South East – 12.2% have no qualifications, 16.4% are qualified to Level 1, and 34.3% have up to a Level 2 qualification (including Level 1). Tackling this issue will also have a positive impact on worklessness and is a potential issue for a future Multi-Area Agreement. 4% of Kent's (KCC area) 16-18 year olds are not in education, employment or training and it remains a significant challenge to raise the aspirations and achievements of this vulnerable group. There is a growing older population and we need to provide opportunities for adults and the economically inactive in training, employment and education.

Headline priorities

Raising aspirations and transforming skills for young people and adults

NI161 Learners achieving a Level 1 qualification in literacy

NI162 Learners achieving an Entry Level 3 qualification in numeracy

Enhancing education, employment and training opportunities

NI117 16-18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)

16 Statutory DCSF Indicators

Improved Health, Care & Wellbeing

Health inequality is a major indicator to variations in economic and social wellbeing and opportunities with strong links to crime reduction and other cross cutting areas including housing and transport. To tackle health inequalities we need to break the cycle between poverty and ill health and improve the health of the worst off. Many factors need to be addressed e.g. unemployment, effective economic development, education, housing and create an environment where people can make healthier choices. Whilst life expectancy in Kent is higher than the national average, the difference in life expectancy between the best and worst wards in Kent is 17 years, and within some districts life expectancy can differ by up to 14 years. Key priorities include tackling obesity, which presents a major challenge to public services in the future and alcohol misuse and its associated links with chronic illness, crime and anti-social behaviour. Supporting people to live independently remains a core priority for the county, particularly in light of the demographic shift towards an ageing population.

Headline priorities

Reduce inequalities in health and wellbeing

NI120 All age all cause mortality rate

NI55 Obesity among primary school children in reception year

Reducing drug and alcohol misuse and the harm it causes

NI39 Rates of hospital admissions per 100,000 for alcohol related crime

NI40 Number of drug users recorded as being in effective treatment



Helping people live life independently

NI125 Achieving independence for older people through rehabilitation/intermediate care

Improve mental health, care and wellbeing

NI51 Effectiveness of child and adolescent mental health (CAMHs) services

Environmental Excellence

The high quality of Kent's unique natural environment is recognised internationally but this reputation is a fragile one, given the significant challenges posed by climate change, and associated issues like reducing the risk of flooding to people and property. Reducing Kent's carbon footprint is a subset of the total action needed to create a low-carbon economy, focusing on environmental performance and energy use. It is vital that Kent can sustainably manage its existing waste, water and energy resources to guarantee high quality local environments for existing and future communities. Kent is working hard to preserve an environmental legacy of character landscapes and priority habitats which make the county so distinctive.

Headline priorities

Sustainable flood and water risk management

NI189 Flood and coastal erosion risk management

Reducing Kent's carbon footprint

NI186 Per capita CO2 emissions in the Local Authority area

Sustainable management of waste

NI191 Residual household waste per household

Protecting and enhancing biodiversity and landscape in Kent

NI197 Improved local biodiversity – proportion of local sites where positive conservation has been or is being implemented

Stronger & Safer Communities

This is a recognised priority for Kent, and we will focus on reducing crime by narrowing the gap to bring the experience of those most affected closer to the experience of the least affected. In particular we want to see a reduction in the level of more serious violent crimes and a reduction in alcohol related violent crime and disorder, especially that associated with the night time economy. Community perceptions continue to be influenced by the quality of the surrounding environment, and this remains a high priority for Kent's residents. Preventative activity to target those young people at risk of offending and tackling repeat incidences of domestic abuse is vital due to the cross-cutting impact of these issues on Kent's families and wider communities. Community cohesion is strongest when people have the opportunity, resources and motivation to participate in society as fully as they choose to and on an equal basis with others. Kent's distinct geographical and cultural communities each have their own unique identity and character, and we need to ensure that new and existing communities, including those from migrant communities, can participate in all the opportunities the county has to offer.

Headline priorities

Improving the quality and appearance of the street scene and open spaces

NI195 Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of litter, detritus, graffiti & fly posting)

Reducing crime and the perception of crime

NI5 Serious violent crime rate

NI21 Dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime by the local council and police

Reducing the levels of offending

NI111 First time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10-17

Reducing domestic abuse

NI32 Repeat incidences of domestic abuse

Increasing community cohesion, participation and a shared sense of belonging

NI3 Civic participation in the local area

NI6 Participation in regular volunteering

Enjoying Life

Kent's residents and visitors can enjoy the excellent range of recreational, sporting, artistic and cultural opportunities the county has to offer. We need to ensure that this range and quality is enhanced and made accessible to as broad a cross-section of the community as possible. There must be opportunities for residents of all ages to make positive life choices to improve health and wellbeing. The creative industries are one of the UK's biggest economic drivers and one of the fastest growing – an opportunity which Kent must seize. Kent is building a legacy of volunteering and engagement opportunities presented by the Olympics and the cultural Olympiad. Kent's young people in particular can benefit from the social, physical and emotional wellbeing that engaging in positive activities can bring.

Headline priorities



Improving play, cultural, arts, learning and leisure opportunities for the people of Kent

NI11 Engagement in the arts

Increasing involvement in active lifestyles, participation in sport for all ages and maximising the legacy of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic games

NI18 Adult participation in sport and active recreation

Improving the participation and engagement of all children and young people in community activities

NI110 Young people's participation in positive activities

Keeping Kent Moving

Kent is a gateway to Europe and is of great local, regional, national and international importance with its strategic infrastructure including the ports and Channel Tunnel. Congestion on Kent's road network is increasing because people are making more of their journeys by car, are making longer journeys and an increasing volume of goods is being transported on our roads. Therefore, reducing this need to travel will be achieved by locating services and jobs nearer to where people live, by encouraging people to make journeys by more efficient modes of travel like the bus, walking and cycling and by making a journey unnecessary through home working and other initiatives. Kent is committed to continuing the excellent progress in making travel safer across the county, particularly for the 17-25 age group where fatalities are most prevalent.

Headline priorities

Reducing the need to travel and making better use of existing transport infrastructure and reducing the impact of international traffic on Kent and its communities

NI198 Children travelling to school – mode of travel usually used

Improving accessibility to jobs and essential services by sustainable modes of travel

NI175 Access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling

Saving lives and reducing injuries of the roads and pavements

NI47 People killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents

High Quality Homes

Kent is a sought after location for living due to its position between London and the rest of Europe with a number of sites available for investment, housing development and economic growth. However due to this Kent is facing significant growth and regeneration challenges. This, combined with an attractive natural environment, makes it an attractive place to live, however this also raises issues of affordability, and the challenge of creating sustainable high quality communities with the appropriate infrastructure and facilities to meet the needs of new and existing residents. Housing also needs to meet the needs of vulnerable groups such the elderly, those on low incomes and those needing support to achieve independent living.

Headline priorities

Creating sustainable communities and promoting social & physical regeneration

NI159 Supply of ready to develop housing sites

Delivering sustainable homes incorporating high quality design

NI187 Tackling fuel poverty – % of people receiving income based benefits living in homes with a low energy efficiency rating

Increasing the supply of housing of all types and tenures

NI154 Net additional homes provided

NI155 Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)

Improving access to high quality housing for all

NI141 Number of vulnerable people achieving independent living