



Individual Electoral Registration (IER)

Communications Strategy

Background and introduction

Individual electoral registration, replacing household registration, came into effect in July 2014. From that date it was no longer possible for one person to complete and sign a registration form on behalf of a household. Each person now has to register individually and they can do this on line.

Under the new system, individuals are asked to provide 'personal identifiers', which are name, date of birth (DOB) and National Insurance Number (NINO), when they apply to register. This will allow each person's application to be verified, against information held by the Departments for Work and Pensions before they are added to the register. People who are unable to supply this information can provide alternative forms of evidence of their identity.

People who failed to register under the new system in 2014 had their registrations carried forward to 2015 - ensuring that they would be registered to vote for the May 2015 elections. However, postal or proxy voters were required to register under the new system from 2014 onwards or they would automatically lose their right to use this method of voting.

From December 2015, any person who had failed to register under the new system was deleted and not carried forward. To enable their right to vote they need to register fully under the new system, and therefore need to make a new application.

Between August and November 2015, the Council undertook the annual canvass of all residential properties in its area. Each property was sent a Household Enquiry Form (HEF). The covering letter outlined the action required, either by someone in the household completing the form and stating how many people lived in the property, but alternatively the householder could register by using the telephone hotline, website or by text. Where a HEF is completed and returned, depending on the response received, the next stage is for the ERO to send an invitation to register form (ITR) to each person in the household. Once completed, returned and verified, the person is registered. At each stage of the process the resident can register electronically which is much quicker, provided they supply their DOB and NINO at the time.

When the IER process was first introduced in 2014, the Electoral Commission undertook a nationwide communications campaign to inform the public of the changes. This progress through to 2015, with campaigns in the run up to the May 2015 elections.

The Council prepared a Communication Strategy with the local objective of successfully increasing the number of registered voters locally in Thanet particularly concentrating its targeted activity in wards/groups where registration levels were confirmed as low in previous confirmation dry run exercises. The 2016 Strategy is aimed at taking forward various streams of activity focusing on raising awareness of registration to vote and its benefits.

Thanet's population is approximately 136,000 people. The Mosaic Profile for Thanet illustrates that:

- 14.4% of the population is defined category C – retired people living comfortably
- 14.4% of the population is defined category J – middle aged parents receiving benefits living in neighbourhoods of social housing with high levels of unemployment
- 11.3% of the population is defined category L – vulnerable singles and lone parents with young children, living in high crime areas in neighbourhoods of social housing
- 11.1% of the population is defined category F - singles and divorcees approaching retirement, mostly living in privately rented flats and bungalows

The district has a high level of deprivation and a relatively low level of electoral registration.

Situation analysis

Strengths: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear focused message • Targeted communications • New national online registration available in June 2014 • Electoral Commission communications resources 	Weaknesses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited budget • Limited human resources
Opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeting specific areas of poor registration • Use of cheap/free internal channels • Councillors/staff as ambassadors for the message • Online registrations (on the spot registration) • Partnership working • Using information held by the authority 	Threats: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High hard to reach population • High transient population • A two stage process to register • A perhaps initially subtle distinction between Household Enquiry Form and Invitation to Register form.

Goals and objectives

Increase electoral registration in wards with low registration.
 Increase electoral registration with hard to reach groups.
 Raise residents' awareness of IER and its requirements and timescales.

Communication objectives

Awareness: Raise awareness of the benefits of registration/voting and how to join the Electoral Roll.

Comprehension: Explain the benefits of registering to vote under IER as part of the on-going canvass process

Voters must ensure they are registered individually under IER otherwise will lose their ability to vote.

Conviction: Increase voter engagement and the number of registered voters in Thanet, particularly in wards with poor registration.

Action: Undertake a marketing campaign, targeting areas of low registration and hard to reach groups, using a mix of channels as part of the 2016 canvass process.

Partnership

Partner	Objective
Thanet's Gateway Plus (KCC)	Raise awareness of electoral registration / address queries / assist with registrations / signpost to online registration through the year.
Call Centre (East Kent Services)	Raise awareness of electoral registration / address queries / signpost to online registration throughout the year.
Schools/Universities	Raise awareness of electoral registration / signpost to online registration throughout the year.
Local Businesses	Raise awareness of electoral registration / signpost to online registration throughout the year.
Charity Organisations	Raise awareness of electoral registration / assist with

	registrations.
Local Clubs & Organisations	Raise awareness of electoral registration / signpost to online registration throughout the year.
Neighbour Local Authorities	Combined awareness raising activity/media purchasing
Parish Councils	Raise awareness of electoral registration / assist with registrations/signpost to online registration throughout the year.
Libraries	Raise awareness of electoral registration / signpost to online registration throughout the year.
East Kent Housing	Raise awareness or electoral registration / assist with registrations/signpost to online registrations throughout the year.
Housing Associations	Raise awareness of electoral registration / signpost to online registration throughout the year.
Landlords	Raise awareness of electoral registration / signpost to online registration throughout the year.
NHS	Raise awareness of electoral registration / signpost to online registration throughout the year.
Job Centre Plus	Raise awareness of electoral registration / signpost to online registration throughout the year.
KCC	Raise awareness of electoral / assist with registration / signpost to online registration throughout the year.
Probation Service	Raise awareness of electoral registration/ assist with registration / signpost to online registration throughout the year.

Target areas

They are areas with below average registration rates generally. Locally we will undertake a communications campaign, targeting wards with a low canvass response rate. We will provide information on the benefits of registration and how to register in order to increase registration throughout the year.

Polling District Code	Polling District Area	Canvass 2015 return rate %
BSA	Kingsgate	75.38
BSB	Beacon Road	66.06
BSC	Beacon Road	78.44
BSD	Bradstowe	85.7
BSE	St Peters	75.28
BSF	St Peters	73.94
BSG	Viking	79.18
BSH	Viking	74.64
BTA	Birchington North	80.34
BTB	Birchington North	82.66
BTC	Birchington South	78.95
BTD	Birchington South	72.92
MA	Westgate on sea	72.28
MB	Westgate on sea	69.82
MC	Westbrook	67.56
MD	Westbrook	80.61
ME	Garlinge	85.83
MF	Garlinge	83.66
MG	Margate Central	44.21
MH	Margate Central	59.86

MI	Cliftonville West	44.28
MJ1	Cliftonville West	68.49
MJ2	Cliftonville West	73.22
MK	Cliftonville East	75.53
ML	Cliftonville East	78.85
MM	Cliftonville East	81.54
MN	Dane Valley	62.25
MO1	Dane Valley	74.89
MO2	Dane Valley	70.39
MP1	Salmestone	67.65
MP2	Salmestone	79.1
RA	Northwood	70.4
RB	Northwood	62.26
RC	Sir Moses Montefiore	58.67
RD	Sir Moses Montefiore	66.78
RE1	Eastcliff	71.03
RE2	Eastcliff	60.81
RF	Eastcliff	59.39
RG	Central Harbour	72.6
RH	Central Harbour	72.04
RI	Newington	65.58
RJ	Nethercourt	81.6
RK	Nethercourt	63.53
RL	Cliffsend and Pegwell	80.72
RM	Cliffsend and Pegwell	72.65
VAC	Thanet Villages	75.74
VMA	Thanet Villages	65.04
VMI	Thanet Villages	72.14
VMK	Thanet Villages	75.81
VSA	Thanet Villages	76.53
VSN	Thanet Villages	76.56

Overall response
to canvass
70.58%

Audiences	Channels for communications	Communications Partners
Internal		
Staff Members	Intranet All TDC Email Internal posters Managers briefings Staff briefings Member briefings	Corporate Communications Team. Elected Members. Electoral Services Democratic Services.
External		
General public	TDC Dedicated web pages Dedicated Facebook page	Thanet Gateway Plus Call Centre

	<p>Twitter Leaflets Outdoor Posters Local press ads/releases Radio Local newsletter ads/articles Automated information phone line</p>	<p>Local Businesses NHS Libraries</p>
Students	<p>TDC Dedicated web pages Dedicated Facebook page Twitter Outdoor Posters Leaflets Local press ads/releases Radio Student newsletter ads/articles Automated information phone line</p>	<p>Thanet Gateway Plus Call Centre Universities/6th Form Landlords Local Businesses Libraries NHS Job Centre Plus</p>
Homemovers	<p>Council channels which need to be aware of address changes: Council Tax letters/bills/website Benefits letters/bills/website Recycling & Waste letters/bills/website EK Housing letters/newsletters/website Parking (permits) Gateway</p>	<p>Thanet Gateway Plus Call Centre East Kent Housing Housing Associations Landlords Local Businesses</p>
Young People & Attainers (16-17yr olds)	<p>TDC Dedicated web pages Dedicated Facebook page Twitter Outdoor Posters Leaflets Radio Student newsletter ads/articles Automated information phone line</p>	<p>Club & Organisations Job Centre Plus 6th Form KCC (Social Services) Children's Charities / Volunteer services</p>
Black & Ethnic Minority Groups	<p>TDC Dedicated web pages Dedicated Facebook page Twitter Local BME community events Face to face (Gateway) Outdoor posters</p>	<p>Thanet Gateway Plus Community Groups Call Centre Local Businesses (ethnic food store /restaurants/venues) Clubs & Organisations Charities NHS Religious Leaders Job Centre Plus</p>
Transient population and HMO's	<p>Frontline council services communications channels : Council Tax letters/bills/website Benefits letters/bills/website Recycling & Waste letters/bills/website EK Housing letters/newsletters/website Parking (permits) Gateway</p>	<p>Thanet Gateway Plus Call Centre Charities (Mencap, Sense, Porchlight, Help the Homeless) Probation Service Landlords Libraries Temporary Accommodation (Hostels & B&B's) Local Businesses NHS</p>
Disabled and those with additional communications needs	<p>Large print literature Braille Literature Audio Accessible website Translated Literature Face to face (Gateway) Automated information phone line</p>	<p>Thanet Gateway Plus Call Centre Clubs & Organisations Charities East Kent Housing Housing Associations Landlords Local Businesses Libraries</p>

Elderly	Automated information phone line Face to face (Gateway) Local press ads/releases Leaflets	Thanet gateway Plus Call Centre Charities (Age UK, Help the Aged) KCC Social services East Kent Housing Housing Associations Landlords NHS Libraries Clubs and Organisations
Disengaged residents	Press ads/releases Outdoor posters Radio Automated information phone line Leaflets Face to face	Thanet Gateway Plus Call Centre KCC – Social services Charities (Debt support, Addiction support, mental health) Job centre plus Local businesses NHS
Rural & Village communities	Local press ads/releases Leaflets Posters Radio Dedicated web pages Outdoor posters Automated Information phone line	Parish councils Clubs & Organisations Local businesses NHS Libraries

Key messages

	Key Messages
1.	Your vote matters, don't lose it
2.	Register at any time throughout the year
3.	It is easy to register-do it online
4.	Register to vote now to ensure you can vote in the 2016 Police and Crime Commissioner Elections and EU Referendum
5.	Postal and Proxy voters - register now.
6.	Visit www.thanet.gov.uk for information.
7.	If you need help to register call Electoral Services on 01843 577500
8.	Register to vote at anytime

Evaluation

Objective	Measure	How to measure
Increase registration in wards with current low registration	Targeted communications in Cliftonville West and Margate Central	Increased registrations in Cliftonville West and Margate Central in 2015/16.
Increase awareness the benefits of early registration	Residents fully aware of the benefits of registering early	Increased registrations during the 2016 Annual canvass Increased registrations in wards identified with current low registration. Number of unique web page views. Number of retweets

		Number of Facebook page views
Encourage online registration during the year	High take up of online registrations	Increase in number of online IER registrations Reduced registration printing and postal costs.

IER Communications Activity & Progress

Internal Communications

Tactic	Target Audience	Timing	Cost	Responsibility	Actions	Progress
Managers Forum Presentation	TDC Managers		£0.00	Electoral Services	Claire Hawken to arrange	
Intranet home page article linking to IER info and online registration	All staff	As necessary	£0.00	Communications	Claire Hawken to arrange for news article to be added at key times	
Monthly Staff Briefing Slides	All staff	As necessary	£0.00	Communications	Claire Hawken to arrange for slide to be provided at key times	
Internal Posters in main and satellite offices	All staff	As necessary	£10.00	Communications	Claire Hawken to arrange for Comms to produce and distribute	
Staff Newsletter (Scoop)	All staff	As necessary	£0.00	Communications	Claire Hawken to arrange for Comms to add article to Scoop	

External Communications

Tactic	Target audience	Timing	Cost	Responsibility	Actions	Progress
Social Media:						
TDC Twitter - regular scheduled tweets	General Public Young People/Students BME	As necessary	£0.00	Communications	Claire Hawken to arrange for relevant messages to be added at key times	
TDC Facebook page - posts	General Public Young People/Students BME	As necessary	£0.00	Communications	Claire Hawken to arrange for relevant messages to be posted on TDC Facebook site	
Add register to Vote and link to online registration to staff email signatures.	General Public	As necessary	£0.00	EK IT Services	Claire Hawken to arrange for Comms to contact staff with text and logos	
Call Centre						
Call centre message –	General Public	As necessary	£0.00	Communications/EK	Claire Hawken to review and	

Tactic	Target audience	Timing	Cost	Responsibility	Actions	Progress
call centre staff to ask all callers if they have registered to vote and provide advice.	Elderly BME Transient Disengaged residents			Services	amend Elec Com Script to Call Centre with briefing and EC FAQ's	
Call waiting message	General Public Elderly BME Transient Disengaged residents	As necessary	£0.00	Communications/EK Services	Claire Hawken to review and amend call waiting script and send to call centre	
PR						
Series of Press releases	General Public Elderly Students Rural and Village Communities	As necessary	£0.00	Communications	Comms to use Draft EC Press Release include FAQs	
Press/online articles	General Public Elderly Students Rural and Village Communities	As necessary	£0.00	Communications	Direct to IER info and online registration via online press release article.	
Direct Marketing –						
Posters/Leaflets/Postcards						
Parish Council's All Elected Members Libraries Leisure centres/gyms Doctor's surgeries Supermarkets Bars and clubs Restaurants/Cafés Student Union Halls of residence	General Public Students/Young People Homemovers Elderly Disengaged Residents Rural & Village communities	September 2015	Print £250 Postage £625.00	Communications / Electoral Services	Comms to print posters and mail out. Use previous mailing lists.	

Tactic	Target audience	Timing	Cost	Responsibility	Actions	Progress
Landlords 6 th Form Colleges Cinemas Community forums Residents associations EK Housing Social housing (Orbit) Job Centre Plus Community/Social groups Volunteer Groups Community centres Debt support services Addiction support services Mental health charities Local Businesses Thanet's Gateway Plus Post offices						
Council Franking Machine Message	All	September 2015	£150.00	Communications/Post Room	Claire Hawken to discuss options with Carolyn Tinley	
Create a pack for Estate Agents to brief customers Posters 'How to' Postcards FAQ sheet Folders	All		Print internally Print internally Print internally Print internally Postage	Communications	Claire Hawken and Comms to design, print and mail.	

Tactic	Target audience	Timing	Cost	Responsibility	Actions	Progress
			£500.00			
Leaflet door drop all households						
Leaflet door drop all houses in under-registered Wards	Cliftonville West Ward Margate Central Ward	As necessary and if funding available	8338 properties @£0.20 per property for delivery and £0.15 printing £2918.30 Print internally	Electoral Services /Communications	To design new leaflet matching our campaign. To check data re. under-registered wards. To arrange deliver by canvassers	
Letters to all empty properties	Start areas with highest numbers	As necessary	3352 properties (costs as above) £1173.20		To create relevant letter To arrange deliver by canvassers	
Leaflets supplied to Gateway for forwarding to stakeholders /customers	Hard to reach Charities Support agencies	As necessary	£0.00 Print internally	Electoral Services / Communications	To forward PDF and printed leaflets to Gateway. To email PDF or html to the following partners: A Better Cliftonville - danchilcott@hotmail.com Admiral Nurse - dianne.lovetto@kmpt.nhs.uk Age UK (Thanet) -	

Tactic	Target audience	Timing	Cost	Responsibility	Actions	Progress
					<p>andrea@ageukthanet.org.uk</p> <p>Care Navigator - Annie.Hales@familymosaic.co.uk</p> <p>Carers' Support - JillAttwell@carers-doverdistrict.org</p> <p>Centre for Independent Living in Kent - cilkent@aol.com</p> <p>Citizen's Advice Bureau - distman@thanetcitizensadvice.co.uk</p> <p>Clinical Commissioning Group - hannah.price@nhs.net</p> <p>CXK (previously Connexions) - AliciaMoyles@cxk.org</p> <p>East Kent College - Beth.Walker@eastkent.ac.uk & Lucy.McLeod@eastkent.ac.uk</p>	

Tactic	Target audience	Timing	Cost	Responsibility	Actions	Progress
					<p><u>k</u></p> <p>East Kent Housing - <u>Amie.Godden@EASTKENTHousing.ORG.UK</u> & <u>lucy.tuson@eastkenthousing.org.uk</u></p> <p>East Kent Independent Living Support - <u>janet.britt@mypostoffice.co.uk</u></p> <p>Disability Drop in Centre - <u>ddic@hotmail.co.uk</u></p> <p>Job Centre Community Engagement - <u>debbie.lancaster@dwp.gsi.gov.uk</u></p> <p>KCC Children’s Centres - <u>Avril.Hall@kent.gov.uk</u></p> <p>KCC Community Engagement – <u>ann.charman@kent.gov.uk</u></p> <p>KCC Community Wardens - <u>laura.bungard@kent.gov.uk</u></p>	

Tactic	Target audience	Timing	Cost	Responsibility	Actions	Progress
					<p>KCC Libraries – Jackie.taylor-smith@kent.gov.uk</p> <p>Kent Association for the Blind - Amanda.Bodemeaid@kent.gov.uk</p> <p>Kent Police - kath.mole@kent.pnn.police.uk</p> <p>Kent Savers - Chris.Hunt@kentsavers.co.uk</p> <p>Lighthouse Project - office@thelighthouseproject.org.uk</p> <p>Migrant Help – dominika.richards@kent.gov.uk</p> <p>NHS Health Trainers - Carly.Seymour@kentcht.nhs.uk</p> <p>Rehabilitation for Addicted Prisoners Trust -</p>	

Tactic	Target audience	Timing	Cost	Responsibility	Actions	Progress
					<p>Amanda.Honour@hmpps.gsi.gov.uk</p> <p>Royal British Legion - easseter@britishlegion.org.uk</p> <p>Seniors Helping Seniors - christian@seniorshelpingseniors.co.uk</p> <p>Speak Up CIC - amanda@speakupcic.co.uk</p> <p>TG Peer Associates - tgpals@ymail.com</p> <p>Thanet Community Networks - cara@thanetcommunitynetworks.org.uk & kay@thanetcommunitynetworks.org.uk</p>	
Council Tax Communications						
Bills / Letters – add message	Transient HMO Homemovers	All year	0.00	Electoral Services/ East Kent Services	To ask if registration encouragement slip added to Council Tax letters or bills envelopes	
Benefits Communications						
Letters – add message	Transient	All year	TBC	Electoral Services /	To ask if registration	

Tactic	Target audience	Timing	Cost	Responsibility	Actions	Progress
	HMO Homemovers			East Kent Services	encouragement slip added to Benefit letters envelopes	
Advertising:						
Isle of Thanet Gazette Quarter Page	General Public Elderly Disengaged Residents Rural & Village Communities	As necessary	@£136 each £272	Electoral Services / Communications	To book media and supply artwork	
KM Thanet Extra Wrap Quarter page	General Public Elderly Disengaged Residents Rural & Village Communities	As necessary	@£100 each £200	Electoral Services / Communications	To book media and supply artwork	
Broadie newsletter	General Public Elderly	As necessary	£195.00	Electoral Services / Communications	To book media and supply artwork	
Thanet Voice Newsletter	General Public Elderly Disengaged Residents Rural & Village Communities	As necessary	£TBC	Electoral Services / Communications	To book media and supply artwork	
East Kent Housing Newsletter	General Public Elderly Disengaged Residents	As necessary	£0.00	Electoral Services /EK Housing	To email artwork to Lucy Tuson for next available edition (check with her for deadline)	
Radio (Heart/KMFM)	General Public Students/Young People Disabled Disengaged Residents Rural & Village Communities	As necessary	£Purchase in partnership with Canterbury /Dover?	Electoral Services / Communications	MG to discuss with CCC and DDC and cost if they are in agreement	
TDC Website						

Tactic	Target audience	Timing	Cost	Responsibility	Actions	Progress
Homepage feature (linking to online registration)	General Public Students/Young People BME	All year	£0.00	Electoral Services / Communications	KM to add press release as news article. JW to link to IER pages and registration.	
Homepage Banner	General Public Students/Young People BME	September 2015	£0.00	Electoral Services / Communications	MG to design banner in line with TDC campaign. Use this as default Homepage banner.	
Online FAQ's	General Public Students/Young People BME	All year	£0.00	Electoral Services / Communications	As appropriate	
Static skyscraper banners on all available pages	General Public Students/Young People BME	All year	£0.00	Electoral Services / Communications	Update with new design to match TDC campaign	
Events:						
Residents association meetings	Disengaged Residents Young People	As necessary	0.00	Electoral Services / EK Housing	To supply information and posters to EK Housing for distribution at resident meetings. Electoral services manager to attend Q&A sessions	
Thanet's Gateway plus- online registration event (with translator). Laptops and staff in Gateway to encourage and help people register.	BME General Public Disengaged residents Disabled/those with special communication needs Transient Elderly	As necessary	0.00	Electoral Services/ Thanet Gateway Plus	To discuss options and dates with Gateway Manager. This would require staffing and could be combined with the street activity.	

Tactic	Target audience	Timing	Cost	Responsibility	Actions	Progress
Attend local community events in target areas.	General Public Disengaged Residents Students/Young people Elderly BME Transient	As necessary	£0.00 if done by Elec Services staff	Communications/Electoral Services	MG to research community events in target wards during Sept/Oct/Nov Staff would be required – this could be combined with Street team activity.	
Merchandising:						
Beer Mats	General Public Students/Young People Disengaged Residents Transient Rural & Village Communities		£180 for 1000		To place order for 1000 initially and provide artwork	
'Register to Vote' Branded Sweets	General Public Students/Young People Disengaged Residents Transient	September 2015	£290.00	Communications		Completed May 2015 – still in stock to be used at above public events.