

Public Document Pack



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EXTRAORDINARY CABINET

29 MAY 2013

An Extraordinary meeting of the Cabinet will be held at **7.00 pm on Wednesday, 29 May 2013** in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent.

Membership:

Councillor C Hart (Chairman); Councillors: Everitt, Fenner, D Green, Johnston and Poole

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LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

To: **Extraordinary Cabinet 29th May 2013**

Main Portfolio Area: Housing and Planning

By: **Simon Thomas, Planning Manager**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Summary: This report relates to a proposed issues and options consultation for Thanet's new Local Plan. The report explains what the new Local Plan is, and the process for its production, as well as setting out the purpose of the proposed consultation. A summary of the proposed consultation document is provided, as well as the proposed methods of consultation. It is recommended that the consultation document be agreed for consultation to take place on the issues and options for Thanet's Local Plan.

For Decision

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 National planning policy stresses the central importance of a Local Plan. It is key to delivering sustainable development that reflects the vision and aspirations of local communities and providing the framework for guiding the determination of planning applications in order to manage development effectively.
- 1.2 There have been significant changes to the planning system over the last two years, which has resulted in the need to review our previous approach to the production of planning policy documents. The Localism Act 2011 proposed the abolition of the Regional Spatial Strategies (South East Plan 2009) which set Thanet's targets for growth. The Council now has to determine its own targets for growth through the Local Plan. In addition, new national planning policy, the National Planning Policy Framework, has been published, replacing all previous government planning policy statements and guidance notes. These changes have resulted in the need for new evidence to be gathered regarding the economic potential of the District, and likely future population growth and housing requirements.
- 1.3 It is now proposed that a single Local Plan for Thanet will be prepared, rather than separate Core Strategy and Site Allocations Documents. This was agreed by Cabinet in January 2013 with the adoption of a revised Local Development Scheme.
- 1.4 This report relates to the proposed Stage 1 Public Consultation – Thanet Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation, as set out in the Local Development Scheme.

2.0 The new Local Plan

- 2.1 The new Thanet Local Plan will be the Council's single and overarching planning policy document, which will cover the whole of the District, for a minimum 15 year period to 2031.

- 2.2 The document will include a district wide vision and strategic objectives. The Plan will set out policies and proposals that will be used to guide decisions and investment on development and regeneration over the period to 2031. It will set out how and where the homes, jobs, community facilities, shops and infrastructure will be delivered and the type of places and environments we want to create. It will also identify land to be protected from development, such as open space.
- 2.3 The Plan will form the statutory planning framework for determining planning applications and replace the current 'saved'¹ policies from the Thanet Local Plan 2006.
- 2.4 National policy requires the Plan to be 'sound'. This means:
- **Positively prepared** – the plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development;
 - **Justified** – the plan should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence;
 - **Effective** – the plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities; and
 - **Consistent with national policy** – the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 2.5 The Local Plan must be based upon adequate, up-to-date and relevant evidence about the economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of the area, and evidence collection is on-going.
- 2.6 The background work and evidence has informed the identification of strategic options and detailed policy options, which are subject to the proposed consultation. The issues and options process is required to ensure that the Local Plan is justified when considered against reasonable alternatives.

Sustainability Appraisal

- 2.7 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires us, in preparing a Local Plan, to carry out an appraisal of the sustainability of the proposals and prepare a report of the findings of the appraisal. The purpose of Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is to promote sustainable development through the better integration of sustainability considerations into preparation and adoption of plans. In response to a European Directive (the SEA directive) national regulations also require that certain planning documents are subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans. The requirements for the SEA are incorporated into the SA process.
- 2.8 An interim SA has been carried out, assessing all of the options against the SA objectives. The sustainability appraisal process will continue to be applied in

¹ These are policies from the Thanet Local Plan 2006 that were saved by the Secretary of State's direction (under paragraph 1(3) of Schedule 8 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004), and continue to be part of the Development Plan, until specifically replaced.

subsequent stages of preparing the Local Plan and will be an integral part of assessing and identifying the preferred options following this proposed consultation.

3.0 The proposed consultation

3.1 The purpose of this consultation is to seek the views of the public and other stakeholders in relation to the issues and options that the Local Plan will address. This consultation is vital in achieving early and meaningful community and stakeholder engagement to inform the development of the Local Plan.

The other stakeholders include:

- specific consultation bodies comprising the statutory consultees, including town and parish councils and neighbouring authorities;
- general consultation bodies including interest groups and voluntary groups;
- other agencies, including for example the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England;
- businesses, business organisations and representatives;
- service providers, for example education establishments and health services; and
- developers and landowners.

The consultation document

3.2 This report includes a summary of the main content of the consultation document, which is provided in full at Annex 1.

3.3 The introductory parts to the consultation document explain the purpose and context of the consultation. This includes an explanation of the process, including a timeline, for producing the Local Plan, the work that has already been done, why we have had to re-assess the approach we have taken previously and what will happen next. The document explains how people can respond to the consultation. It also explains what we have to take into account in developing the Local Plan, including national planning policy.

3.4 A portrait of Thanet is set out which identifies specific issues and opportunities for Thanet. This is followed by a proposed Vision for Thanet in 2031, and the proposed Strategic Priorities and Objectives for the Local Plan.

3.5 The main body of the consultation document outlines the issues and options that are being considered in our approach to planning for the future of Thanet; including the levels of growth that should be planned for and how the growth should be accommodated. The document is structured in four topic areas; economy; housing; environment and quality of life; and transport.

The economy section considers future levels of employment growth, including the role of the airport and how much employment land is needed and where. The role of Thanet's town centres, as well as issues in relation to the visitor economy and rural economy, are also considered.

The housing section looks at the number of homes that need to be provided to 2031, as well as where the new homes should be located and also the type of new homes that should be provided.

The environment and quality of life section considers issues in relation to Thanet's Green Wedges, the countryside, important landscapes as well as Thanet's green

infrastructure. Other issues that are covered include climate change, providing a healthy environment, creating high quality environments, including design and heritage, as well as planning for community facilities.

The final section looks at how we can enable an efficient and effective transport system.

- 3.6 The document explains why we need to address each issue; what evidence we have and the key facts and information relating to the issue, followed by a discussion of the issue.
- 3.7 A set of consultation questions are proposed, relating to each issue. The questions are set out in separate document, annexed to this report (Annex 2). However, on the online consultation portal (outlined in 3.9) the questions will directly follow the commentary on each issue.

Consultation Methods

- 3.8 It is proposed to seek consultation responses through a variety of methods.
- 3.9 The consultation questions will form the framework for written responses. The Local Plan online consultation portal allows people to read and respond to the consultation in a quick and easy way. This is proposed to be our preferred method of response and we will be encouraging responses to be provided this way. The document and questionnaire will also be available to download, and paper copies can be provided where necessary.
- 3.10 As well as newspaper and website promotion, leaflets and mail-outs, and in order to publicise, encourage and assist with responses to the consultation, we are proposing to hold a number of consultation events at venues across Thanet. These will include drop-in sessions and presentations to Parish and Town Councils.
- 3.11 We are also proposing to obtain views by holding a stakeholder conference, targeted workshops and focus groups.
- 3.12 It is proposed that the formal consultation period will commence in June. The statutory time period required for this consultation is 6 weeks. However, to ensure that people have sufficient time to consider the issues fully, be able to attend consultation events and provide responses, it is recommended that the consultation should be for 10 weeks.

4.0 Options

- 4.1 (i) To approve the consultation document and agree public consultation takes place for 10 weeks.
- (ii) Not to approve the consultation in the form set out in this report.

5.0 Corporate Implications

5.1 Financial and VAT

- 5.1.1 It is envisaged that any costs associated with the consultation can be absorbed within current budgeting procedures for preparation of the Local Plan and this report does not give rise to specific additional financial implications.

5.2 Legal

- 5.2.1 The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 set out the requirements of a local planning authority when preparing a Local Plan. The Regulations require local planning authorities to notify specific bodies and persons of the subject of a local plan which the local planning authority proposes to prepare and invite each of them to make representations to the local planning authority about what the local plan with that subject ought to contain.
- 5.2.2 The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 set out the requirements in relation to the Sustainability Appraisal (SA), and requires that the SA considers all reasonable alternatives.
- 5.2.3 Legal advice has been sought in relation to the consultation process that should be carried out in order to meet the statutory requirements. It advised that it is important that the consultation process should inform the process of option selection i.e. that consultees have a genuine opportunity to influence the decision made. This requires consultation on all reasonable alternative options not just in relation to sites but also in terms levels of development, how that development should be distributed and how it should ultimately be managed. The legal advice confirmed that a two stage consultation is the only reasonable option for the consultation process.

5.3 Corporate

- 5.3.1 The Local Plan will represent the Council's overarching plan for shaping future development of the District over the period up to 2031. It contains a vision and sets out the issues and opportunities facing the district and takes account of the plans and resources of a wide range of agencies and organisations who will participate in its delivery.
- 5.3.2 The production of the Local Plan will help to deliver the majority of the Council's priorities in the Corporate Plan. In particular the Local Plan will play a key role in supporting the growth of our economy and the number of people in work, planning for the right type and number of homes in the right place to create sustainable communities, working to improve parking and transportation and protecting and preserving our public open spaces.

5.4 Equity and Equalities

- 5.4.1 The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out the way in which all sectors of the community will be given the opportunity to become involved in the planning process. The SCI was subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment, and this consultation is proposed to take place in accordance with the SCI.
- 5.4.2 An Equalities Impact Assessment will be carried out at the next stages of the production of the Local Plan, when a draft plan is produced.

6.0 Recommendation

- 6.1 That the consultation document is approved and it is agreed that public consultation takes place for 10 weeks.

7.0 Decision Making Process

- 7.1 This is a key decision, affecting Thanet's communities and appears in the Forward Plan. At this stage a public consultation is being proposed and can be agreed by

Cabinet. The Local Plan final document for submission to the Secretary of State will need to be agreed by Full Council, and will subsequently, following independent examination, become Council policy.

In order to meet the timetable set out in the Local Development Scheme, this decision is exempt from call-in, as outlined in the Chairman's consent dated 14th May 2013 (Background Paper 1).

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Reporting to:	Simon Thomas, Planning Manager

Annex List

Annex 1	Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation Document
Annex 2	Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation Questionnaire

Background Papers

Title	Where to Access Document
Background Paper 1	Chairman's consent under rule 15(j) of the overview of Scrutiny Procedure Rules dated 14 th May 2013

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	Sarah Martin, Financial Services Manager
Legal	Harvey Patterson, Corporate and Regulatory Services Manager

Thanet District Council

Thanet Local Plan

Issues and Options Consultation Document



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1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this consultation

Thanet is preparing its new Local Plan. This consultation is taking place to seek your views on our proposed approach to planning for the future of Thanet.

We need to decide what level of growth is right for Thanet and how we can plan positively for that growth, through the Local Plan. There are a number of issues and options that we are asking for your comments on. This is an important part of the process and it is crucial that we get your views.

1.2 The new Local Plan

The Plan is a key Council document that is required to guide and deliver the Council's plans and aspirations for growth. It is essential to shaping change in a form which is desired by the Council and Thanet's communities, and for the delivery of development projects and infrastructure.

The Plan must be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development, and be in accordance with national planning policy.

The Plan should be aspirational but also realistic and should provide sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change. The Plan must be based upon up to date, sound evidence. We have to be able to demonstrate that the Plan will be deliverable and therefore the proposals included within it must be viable and realistic. The Plan will be delivered by a number of partners, including the private sector. These are important considerations to have in mind when responding to this consultation.

The Plan will set out policies and proposals that will be used to guide decisions and investment on development and regeneration over the period to 2031. It will set out how and where the homes, jobs, community facilities, shops and infrastructure will be delivered and the type of places and environments we want to create. It will also identify land to be protected from development, such as open space. The Plan will form the statutory planning framework for determining planning applications. It will replace the 'saved' policies from the Thanet Local Plan 2006.

1.3 What is included in this document

To set the scene and explain the context to this consultation, the rest of Chapter 1 introduces the purpose and context of the consultation explaining:

- previous work that has taken place, including consultations;
- why we have had to re-assess the approach we have taken previously;
- the proposed consultation process and what happens next;
- how to respond to the consultation; and
- what we have to take into account in developing the Local Plan.

Chapter 2 presents a portrait of Thanet identifying the specific issues and opportunities for Thanet.

Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation Document

Chapter 3 includes:

- The Vision for Thanet – where we want to be in 2031
- Strategic Priorities – what are the priorities in order to get there
- Objectives – what are the detailed proposals for delivering the priorities

Chapter 4 is the main body of this consultation, where the issues and options are set out. This part is structured across the following topic areas:

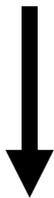
- Economy
- Housing
- Environment and Quality of Life
- Transport

This document refers to technical terms and other documents; these are set out in the glossary at Annex 1.

1.4 What we have done, where we are now and what we need to do next

Early work

- Engaged with a wide range of stakeholders, including local residents, organisations and agencies whose aspirations, programmes and plans will serve to shape Thanet and its places
- 2005 an issues and options public consultation took place
- November 2009 we consulted on the Core Strategy Preferred Options. A summary of the comments received is available on the consultation portal.
- Background work and evidence collection



Changes to the planning system that have affected our approach

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** published in March 2012 replacing the majority of previous national planning policy
- Emphasis is upon local authorities to produce a Local Plan that objectively identifies and then meets the housing, business and other development needs of an area.
- Revocation of the Regional Spatial Strategies.** The South East Plan 2009 set regional targets for growth, including required housing targets for Thanet to 2026. The South East Plan was revoked on 26th March 2013
- Targets for growth must now be determined by the Council, based upon the needs of Thanet.



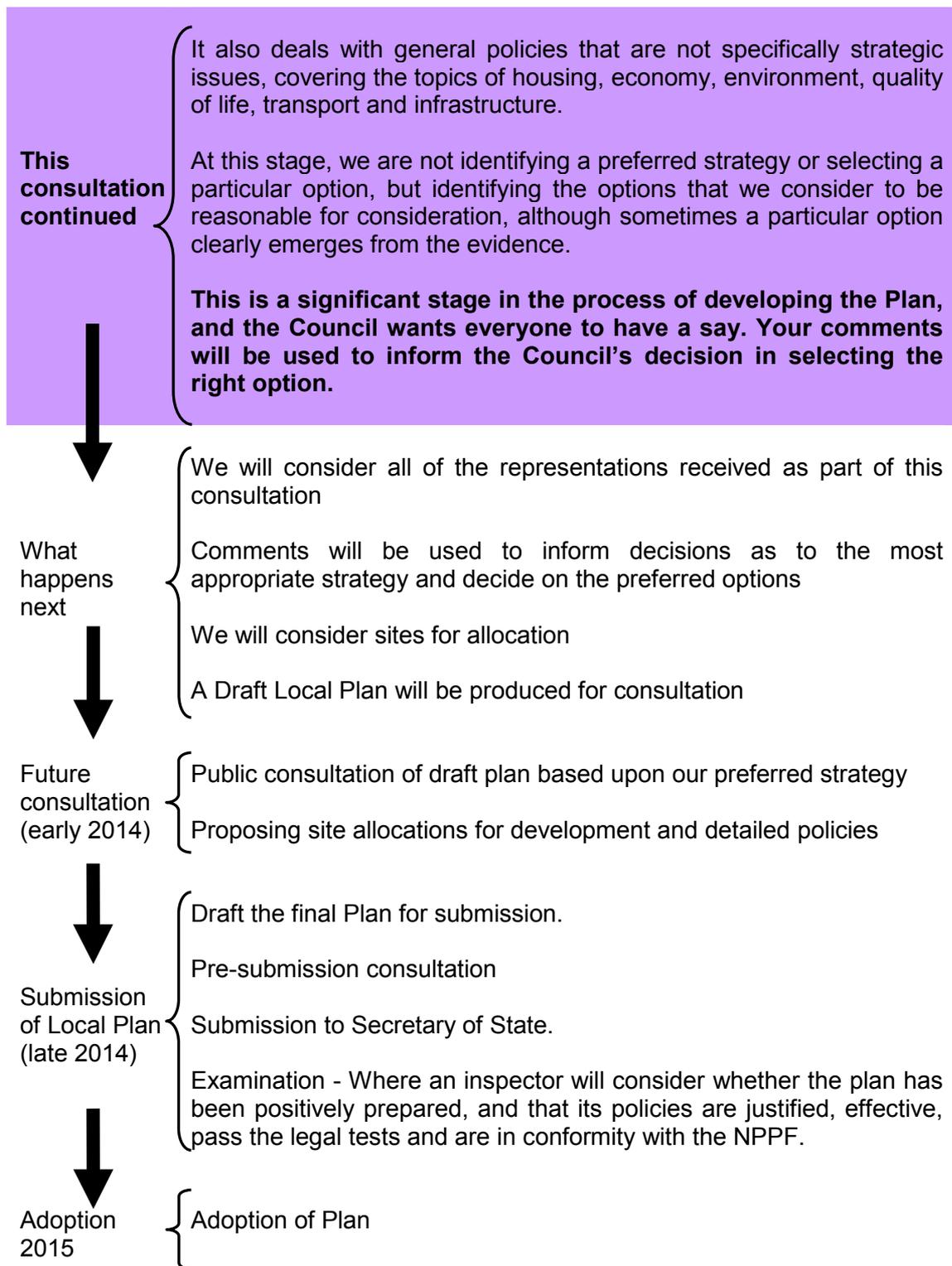
What we are doing as a result of these changes

- We have carried out additional studies that will inform our choices and options in meeting the need for jobs and homes in Thanet.
- Considering different options for growth than those presented in the 2009 consultation
- Planning for the period to 2031 to cover a 15 year period.
- Producing a single Local Plan document, rather than separate Core Strategy, Site Allocations and other Development Plan Documents, in accordance with the NPPF.



This consultation

- This is the first of three consultations that are proposed to take place prior to the submission of the Plan to the Secretary of State.
- It deals with strategic issues, including the overall levels of development and broad strategy for the location of development.



1.5 This Public Consultation

When you need to give us your comments

The consultation period runs from INSERT DATES and comments must be received during this period.

How to give us your comments

Go to <http://consult.thanet.gov.uk> where you will need to register to comment.

(If you have already registered during a previous consultation simply enter your username and password)

We would prefer all comments to be made electronically, via this online consultation portal. This is also the quickest and easiest way of responding.

If you are not able to respond this way, you can download a questionnaire from INSERT LINK or pick up a paper copy of the questionnaire from the Thanet Gateway, Cecil Street, Margate, and at public libraries in the District. Please send completed questionnaires to local.plans@thanet.gov.uk or Strategic Planning, Thanet District Council, PO Box 9, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent, CT9 1XZ.

Consultation Events

Check our website for details of the consultation events we will be holding. Details will also be available at the Thanet Gateway and at public libraries.

How we will use your comments

Your comments will be open to public inspection and cannot be treated as confidential.

This is a significant stage in the process and the Council wants everyone to have a say. Your comments will be used to inform our future decisions on the Local Plan.

1.6 What we need to take into account

There are a number of other policies and strategies, as well as evidence, assessments and stakeholder involvement that we must take into account in developing a Local Plan, and are explained below:

- Other Policies, Plans and Strategies including
 - National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
 - Sustainable Community Strategy
 - Thanet Corporate Plan 2012-16
 - Other local strategies
- Community Engagement
- Duty to Co-operate
- Research and evidence
- Sustainability Appraisal
- Habitats Regulations Assessment

Other Policies, Plans and Strategies

The Local Plan process does not start with a blank canvas. It needs to be all encompassing and take into account and reflects the various policies, plans and strategies of Government and other bodies who have a role in delivering and influencing the future of the places in which we live.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Account must be taken of the context of national planning policy, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which sets the Government's view of what sustainable development in England means in practice for the planning system.

Sustainable Development

Sustainable Development is defined as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The UK's Sustainable Development Strategy set out five guiding principles of sustainable development; living within the planet's environmental limits; ensuring a strong, healthy and just society; achieving a sustainable economy; promoting good governance; and using sound science responsibly.

The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF sets out what this means in practice for the planning system.

There are three dimensions to sustainable development; an economic role; a social role and an environmental role.

An economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation, and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;

A social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a

high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and

An environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change moving to a low carbon economy.

To achieve sustainable development economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system.

The Plan needs to positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of the area. It should be aspirational but also realistic and should provide sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change. The Plan must be based upon up to date, sound evidence. We have to be able to demonstrate that the Plan will be deliverable and therefore the proposals included within it must be viable and realistic.

Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)

The East Kent Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS), covering Thanet and its neighbouring Districts, was adopted in 2009. It identifies the challenge for East Kent and how we can best contribute to the success of wider community objectives. The Strategy identifies climate change, community cohesion, educational underperformance and a more balanced housing market, without sacrificing, and indeed asserting, aspects of the area's distinctiveness. The SCS' vision, work themes and priorities provide fundamental context for the Local Plan. Context for the Local Plan is also provided by Kent's Sustainable Community Strategy - Vision for Kent 2012-2022.

Thanet Corporate Plan

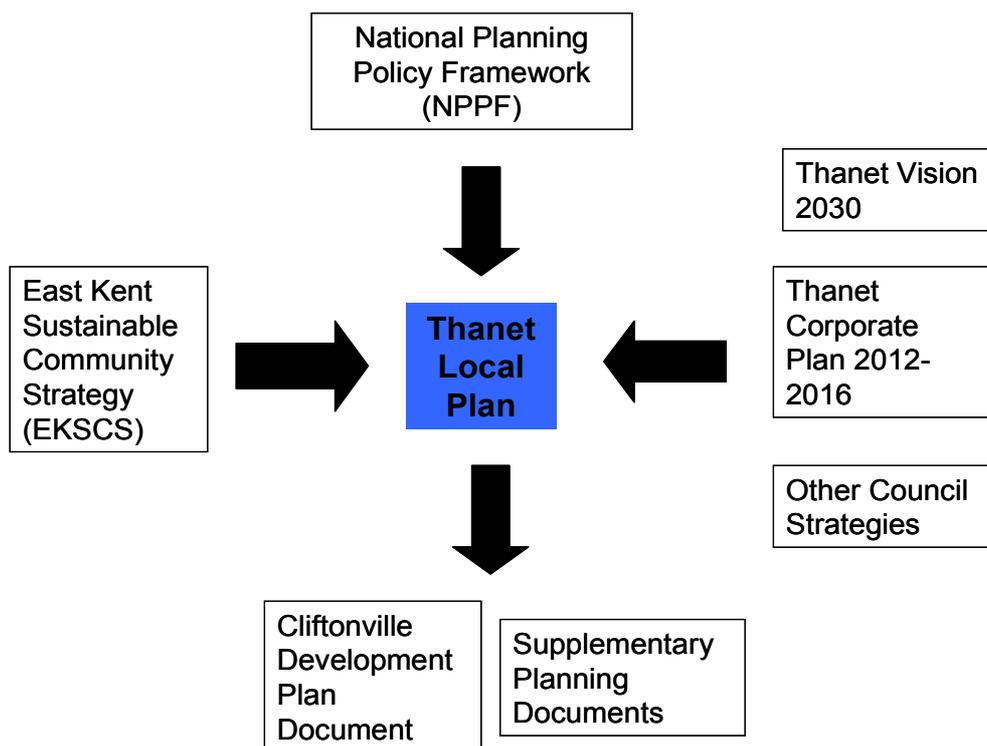
The District Council's Corporate Plan 2012-16 sets aims, priorities and actions the Council proposes to deliver to the community in meeting the Council's Vision 2030. The Plan was developed in consultation with the community and identifies 11 priorities. This includes supporting the growth of our economy and the number of people in work, tackling disadvantage, improving parking and transportation, planning for the right number and type of homes in the right place, supporting cultural, sports leisure and coastal activities, as well as protecting our public open spaces.

The Local Plan will aim to help deliver the key priorities and actions of the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Corporate Plan.

Other Local Strategies

The Council has a number of other plans and strategies, such as the Economic Strategy and Housing Strategy. The Local Plan will be informed by these and will also help to deliver actions within them.

The following diagram explains the relationship of the Local Plan with other key plans and strategies.



Community Engagement

As an essential part of the process we will continue to seek the views of individuals and organisations, including from the public, private and voluntary sectors, and this consultation forms an integral part of this.

Previous consultations have included a series of conferences, and formal public consultation periods, as well as informal and ongoing discussions with a number of key stakeholders, including statutory consultees. Representations received in response to previous consultations have been used to inform this consultation document, and in particular the vision, strategic priorities and objectives.

Duty to Co-operate

Planning issues are not constrained to local authority boundaries. National policy requires that public bodies cooperate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries, particularly those that relate to strategic priorities.

We are working with other authorities to ensure that strategic issues are properly co-ordinated and clearly reflected in the Plan.

Research and Evidence

The Local Plan needs to be based on adequate, up-to-date and relevant evidence about the economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of Thanet.

The evidence we have collected, and will continue to collect includes specific studies and a variety of statistical and other information. A list of the relevant studies is provided in Annex 2 and these are available to view at [INSERT LINK](#)

Sustainable Development and Sustainability Appraisal

The Local Plan will be founded upon the principles of sustainable development, and what this means for Thanet.

Over the course of its preparation the Local Plan will be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal which is a continuous appraisal of the sustainability of its proposals.

The following two documents have been produced and provide background and supporting information to this consultation:

- Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report
- Sustainability Appraisal Interim Assessment

These documents are available to view at [INSERT LINK](#)

Habitats Regulations Assessment

The Local Plan will also be subject to and informed by "Appropriate Assessment" or Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) which is required under the European 'Habitats Directive'. This is an assessment of the potential impacts of implementing a plan or policy on European sites of nature conservation importance (Natura 2000 Sites) and aims to avoid any potentially damaging effects. There are a number of these sites within Thanet. We also need to consider those sites within the neighbouring Districts of Dover and Canterbury.

A formal assessment will be undertaken when the draft Plan has been prepared.

Equalities Impact Assessment

The Local Plan will be subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment.

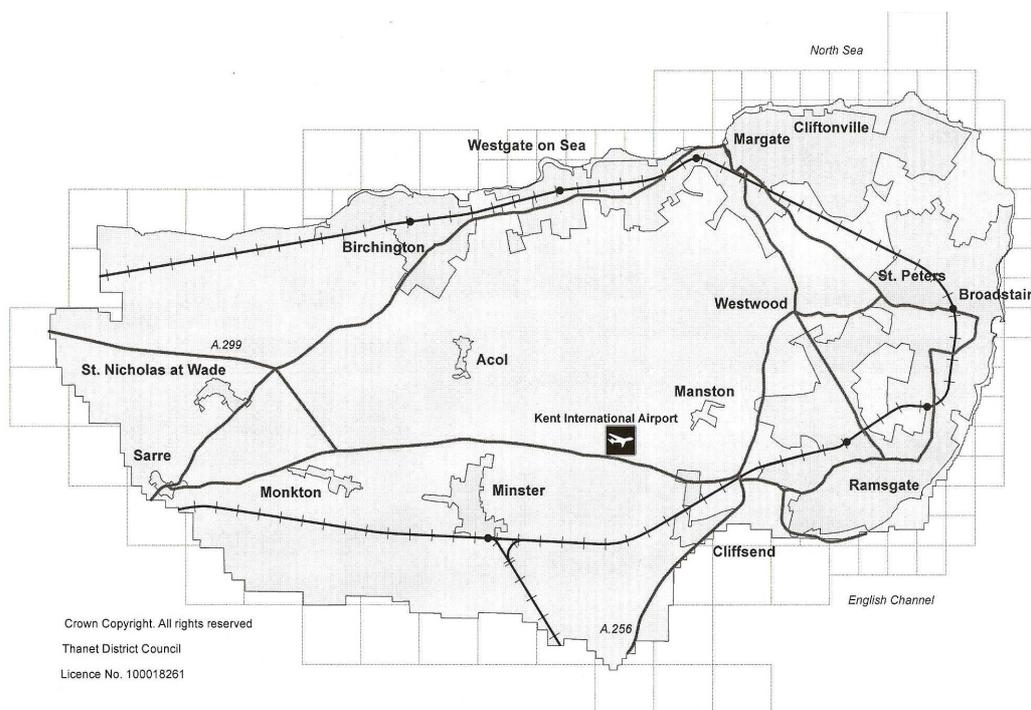
2. Thanet - the key issues and opportunities

In order to inform the plan for the future, we must have a good understanding of the characteristics of Thanet today, and the issues and opportunities that it presents. These are set out in the evidence and background papers supporting this consultation document.

The following profile of Thanet provides an overview of the key characteristics, problems, issues and opportunities that need to be addressed.

2.1 Profile of Thanet

Thanet lies at the eastern end of Kent, in close proximity to continental Europe. It has three main coastal towns of Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs. The built up area is densely populated and forms an almost continuous urban belt around the north east coast. This is separated by areas of countryside between the towns and providing relief in the built area. There are also attractive coastal and rural villages.



The district has an area of 103 square kilometres and a resident population of 134,400¹. About 30% of the district is urban with 95% of the population living in the main urban area around the coast. Thanet is the fourth most populated district in Kent, with the second highest population density. Thanet is a popular area for retired people to live, and has the highest number of over 65 year olds in the county whilst having a lower proportion (59.6%) of 16-64 year olds than the county (62.6%).

¹ ONS mid-year population estimates (2011)

INSERT PICTURE OF BEACHES AND CLIFFS

The district of Thanet is a unique and vibrant coastal area, with an attractive environment and a number of unique features. There are 32 kilometres of coastline with attractive chalk cliffs and beautiful sandy beaches and bays, many of which have been awarded European Blue Flag status. Much of the coast is also recognised for its internationally important habitats, including coastal chalk and significant populations of coastal birds. This is reflected in the coast's designation under international and national legislation, including Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Protection Areas, and Special Areas of Conservation. These areas are protected by legislation to prevent harm to them from development change and other activity.

Thanet is also rich in history, with over 2,600 listed buildings and 21 Conservation Areas. Its historic landscape contains many archaeological sites dating back to pre-historic times.

Outside of the urban area, much of the land is high quality and intensively farmed agricultural land.

Thanet has some areas which are at risk from flooding. These are confined to the low lying areas of the countryside to the south west of the district, and along the very edges of the coast, affecting small areas of Margate and Ramsgate.

INSERT PICTURE OF TOWNS/COUNTRYSIDE

In 2005, a new town centre was established at Westwood. This brought many retailers not previously represented in Thanet, which has significantly reduced the 'leakage' of retail spend from the District. The centre continues to attract investment, with further development planned over the next few years. The area does however suffer from traffic congestion, and accessibility around the centre, particularly by foot, is not convenient.

The district benefits from excellent road access to and from the M25 and London via the M2 and dual carriageway A299. Access to Dover and beyond is via the A256, with the recently completed East Kent Access Road providing dual carriageway for the majority of the route. Access to the nearby cathedral city of Canterbury and to Ashford is via the single carriageway A28. Thanet has rail links to London, Canterbury, Dover and Ashford, and since 2009 High Speed domestic rail services operate from Thanet to London St Pancras using the High Speed 1 route via Ashford.

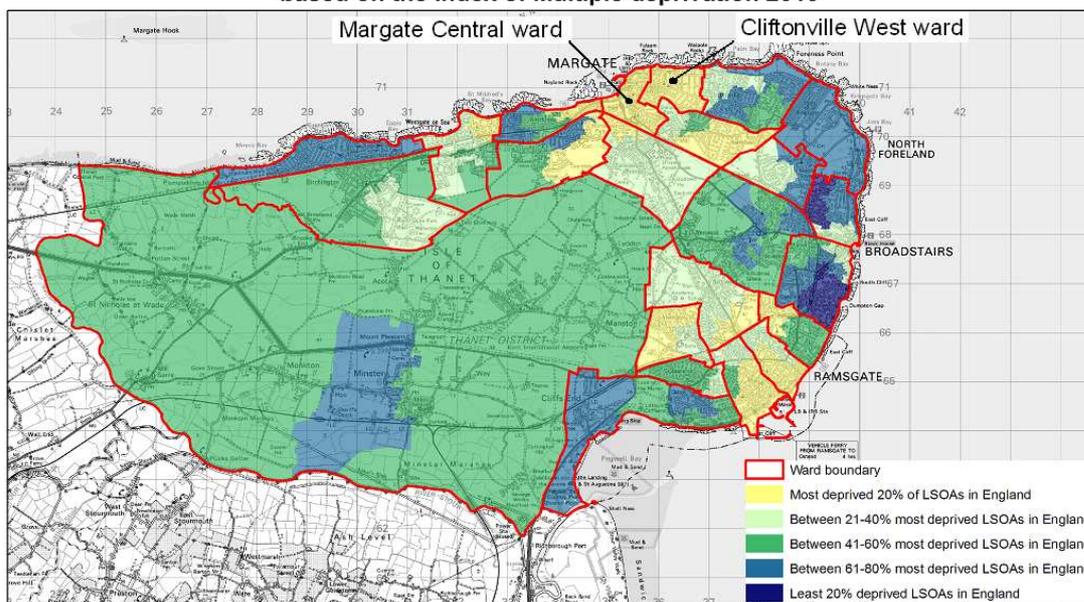
Thanet has an international airport whose current activity is predominantly in the freight market, but with some passenger services. Ramsgate is a major cross channel port with passenger and freight services to Belgium. It has also recently established itself as a base for servicing offshore wind farms.

The tourism sector has continued to grow over the last couple of years, compared with declines in the SE and England. However, Thanet has a generally weak economic and employment base, and is underperforming when compared to the region. Productivity is below the county average and Thanet experienced a steeper decline in total employment in 2011 than the South East and England. Thanet's Business Parks have been slow to develop, and there is a significant amount of undeveloped employment land.

The towns' high streets have continued to suffer, particularly Ramsgate and Margate, with vacancy rates significantly above the national average. However, alongside the opening of the Turner Contemporary Gallery in April 2011, Margate's Old Town and lower High Street has seen a significant number of new businesses opening,.

The district is ranked as the 49th most deprived district out of 326 authorities in England with the highest average proportion of households in poverty within Kent. Average skills levels of Thanet's residents are lower than the rest of Kent and England, with unemployment levels (claimant count 2012) at 6.2%, twice that of Kent. Wage levels are also lower than the national and regional average.

National Rank of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Thanet based on the Index of Multiple deprivation 2010



Source: Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010, Communities and Local Government (CLG)
Produced by Research & Intelligence, Kent County Council

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The overall quality of life of Thanet's residents is extremely varied. Some residents in enjoy a very high quality of life, including living in high quality residential environments. However, Thanet also has a number of highly deprived wards with many people with support needs. These areas are also characterised with pockets of urban decline and poor housing stock. A key challenge is to ensure that everyone has the same opportunities by reducing inequalities in the area and improving quality of life for all.

3. The Vision, Strategic Priorities and Objectives

A proposed vision, strategic priorities and objectives have been developed following an analysis of the characteristics of the area, the key issues and challenges we face, stakeholder consultation and other plans and strategies.

They build upon the proposed vision and objectives that were presented in the 2009 consultation and have been refined taking into account the comments we received on that consultation, and the Council's current Corporate Plan.

This section firstly sets out what we want Thanet to be like in 2031 – The Vision. This is followed by the Strategic Priorities that we consider to be critical to achieving the vision. The objectives then provide more detailed proposals for delivering the priorities.

3.1 Thanet 2031 – the vision

TO FOLLOW

3.2 Strategic Priorities

These are the strategic priorities we have identified in order to achieve the vision.

- Create additional employment and training opportunities, to **strengthen and diversify the local economy** and improve local earning power and employability.
- Facilitate the continued **regeneration of the coastal town centres**, developing their individual and niche roles, whilst also **consolidating the role and function of Westwood** as Thanet's primary retail centre, ensuring retail expenditure is retained within the district.
- Provide **homes** that are accessible to, and suited to the needs and aspirations of, a settled and balanced community.
- Safeguard local distinctiveness and promote awareness, responsible enjoyment, **protection and enhancement of Thanet's environment**, including the coast, countryside, rich seaside heritage, historic environment, diverse townscapes and landscape, biodiversity and water environment.
- Provide an efficient and effective transport system, delivering the **transport infrastructure** required to support existing communities and new development.

3.3 Objectives

The draft objectives of the plan are set out below:

Strengthen and diversify the local economy

- Support the diversification and expansion of existing businesses in Thanet, particularly in the tourism and green sectors, and provide the right environment to attract inward investment.
- Retain and attract skilled people.
- Support the sustainable growth of Manston Airport and Ramsgate Port.
- Support additional improvements to the high speed rail links that will achieve further reduction of journey times.
- Provide a sufficient and versatile supply of land to accommodate expansion and inward investment by existing and new business.
- Facilitate the provision of accessible, modern and good quality schools, as well as higher and further education and training facilities to meet the expectations of employers as well as a confident, inclusive and skilled community.
- Facilitate the tourism economy to take advantage of the area's unique coast, countryside, and the townscape and cultural heritage and potential of the coastal towns, while safeguarding the natural environment.
- Support a sustainable rural economy, including best and most versatile agricultural land.

Regeneration of the coastal town centres and consolidation of Westwood

- Guide investment in the coastal towns to support the tourism economy and provide for the needs of local communities.
- Reshape Margate town centre and seafront to achieve a sustainable economic heart celebrating its traditions as a place of relaxation, leisure and seaside fun and growing reputation as a cultural destination.
- Assist Ramsgate to achieve its full potential capitalising on its historic and nautical heritage and visitor economy.
- Retain and enhance Broadstairs' role as a popular location for visitors and residents.
- Enable Westwood to consolidate and evolve as an accessible, successful and sustainable residential and business community with an excellent range of homes, schools, leisure, sports, shops and other facilities in an attractive environment.

Housing

- Plan for sufficient new homes to meet local community need so that, irrespective of income or tenure, people have access to good quality and secure accommodation.
- Meet the housing needs and demands of a balanced and mixed community and to support economic growth.
- Safeguard family homes and the character and amenity of residential areas.
- Increase the supply of affordable homes.

Environment and Quality of Life

- Accommodate the development needed to optimise access to jobs, key services and facilities required to promote the physical and mental well-being, independence and quality of life of all sections of the community, and retain young people.
- Preserve and enhance Thanet's exceptional built historic environment and ancient monuments and their settings.
- Safeguard and enhance the geological and scenic value of the coast and countryside, and facilitate its responsible enjoyment as a recreational and educational resource.
- Retain the separation between Thanet' towns and villages as well as their physical identity and character.
- Protect, maintain and enhance the District's biodiversity and natural environment, including open and recreational space to create a coherent network of green infrastructure that can better support wildlife and human health.
- Mitigate and adapt to the forecast impacts of climate change (including the water environment, air quality, biodiversity and flooding)
- Use natural resources more efficiently, increase energy efficiency, the use of renewable and low carbon energy sources, to reduce the District's carbon footprint.
- Facilitate improvements within areas characterised by poor quality housing, empty property and poor physical environment.
- Ensure that all new development is built to the highest attainable quality and sustainability standards and enhances its local environment.
- Reduce opportunities for crime and the fear of crime
- Ensure Thanet's community has access to good quality social and health services
- Broaden and improve the range of active leisure facilities to encourage greater participation within the local community.
- Support the social, economic and physical revitalisation of Margate and Cliftonville West in line with community aspirations and through partnership working.

Transport and other Infrastructure

- Promote development patterns and behaviour that will minimise the need to travel or use private cars to access services and amenities.
- Facilitate the enhanced integration of the High Speed 1 network with wider public transport and highway network by supporting infrastructure that would maximise its benefits
- Promote an efficient public transport system alongside expansion of larger scale transport infrastructure.
- Facilitate provision of direct walking and cycling routes to reduce potential congestion, noise and pollution.
- Deliver required improvements to the road network in order to reduce congestion and pollution, and to accommodate new development.
- Facilitate the provision of infrastructure required to support new development and communities, including water, energy, telecommunications, utilities, waste, health, social care, education, flood risk and coastal change management.

4. The Issues and Options for Thanet

This section looks at the issues and options we are considering in order to deliver the vision and objectives of the Local Plan, deciding on our approach to planning for the future of Thanet. This includes the levels of growth that should be planned for and how the growth should be accommodated. We also consider how we can shape growth through the Local Plan.

The document is structured in the topics of economy, housing, environment and quality of life, and transport.

4.1 The Economy

What is included in this section

This section covers the topic area of the economy and considers the following issues:

1. What level of employment growth should be planned for?
2. How much employment land is needed and where?
3. How can we promote our Economic Infrastructure Assets?
4. How should Thanet's town centres develop?
5. How can we support the rural economy?
6. How can we support the visitor economy?
7. How can we support communications infrastructure and home working?

Strategic Priorities and Objectives

It is a proposed strategic priority of the Local Plan to **create additional employment and training opportunities, to strengthen and diversify the local economy and improve local earning power and employability**

It is also a strategic priority to **facilitate the continued regeneration of the coastal town centres, developing their individual and niche roles, whilst also consolidating the role and function of Westwood at the District's primary retail centre, ensuring retail expenditure is retained within the District.**

In achieving this we consider the following draft objectives to be appropriate:

Strengthen and diversify the local economy

- Support the diversification and expansion of existing businesses in Thanet, particularly in the tourism and green sectors, and provide the right environment to attract inward investment.
- Retain and attract skilled people.
- Support the sustainable growth of Manston Airport and Ramsgate Port.
- Support additional improvements to the high speed rail links that will achieve further reduction of journey times.
- Provide a sufficient and versatile supply of land to accommodate expansion and inward investment by existing and new business.
- Facilitate the provision of accessible, modern and good quality schools, as well as higher and further education and training facilities to meet the expectations of employers as well as a confident, inclusive and skilled community.
- Facilitate the tourism economy to take advantage of the area's unique coast, countryside, and the townscape and cultural heritage and potential of the coastal towns, while safeguarding the natural environment.
- Support a sustainable rural economy, including best and most versatile agricultural land.

Regeneration of the coastal town centres and consolidation of Westwood

- Guide investment in the coastal towns to support the tourism economy and provide for the needs of local communities.
- Reshape Margate town centre and seafront to achieve a sustainable economic heart celebrating its traditions as a place of relaxation, leisure and seaside fun and growing reputation as a cultural destination.
- Assist Ramsgate to achieve its full potential capitalising on its historic and nautical heritage and visitor economy.
- Retain and enhance Broadstairs as a popular location for visitors and residents.
- Enable Westwood to consolidate and evolve as an accessible, successful and sustainable residential and business community with an excellent range of homes, schools, leisure, sports, shops and other facilities in an attractive environment.

Issue 1 - What level of employment growth should be planned for?

Introduction

Why do we need to address this issue?

We need to understand the number and type of jobs that will be created over the next 20 years to ensure that we can plan for them and provide the right conditions to enable them to be delivered.

National planning policy requires us to plan for all foreseeable types of economic growth and the Local Plan should:

- set out a clear economic vision and strategy for their area which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth;
- set criteria, or identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment to match the strategy and to meet anticipated needs over the plan period;
- support existing business sectors, taking account of whether they are expanding or contracting and, where possible, identify and plan for new or emerging sectors likely to locate in their area. Policies should be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan and to allow a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances;
- plan positively for the location, promotion and expansion of clusters or networks of knowledge driven, creative or high technology industries;
- identify priority areas for economic regeneration, infrastructure provision and environmental enhancement; and
- facilitate flexible working practices such as the integration of residential and commercial uses within the same unit.

Thanet Council's Corporate Plan 2012-2016 sets out the priorities for the District. Priority 1 of the Plan states that the Council will support the growth of our economy and the number of people in work.

The Council's Draft Economic Strategy aims to achieve the following:

- Develop the right environment and conditions to deliver real economic growth and prosperity
- Place businesses at the forefront to give an enterprise-led focus to activities and programmes of the public sector
- Capitalise on our natural assets, heritage and culture that are our unique selling points, to encourage private sector investment and support the visitor economy
- Capture potential opportunities from moving to a low-carbon future
- Encourage the business community to exploit the opportunities of new technologies to improve productivity and resilience
- Work with education and training providers to develop a skilled and ambitious workforce, in current and future generations.

What evidence we have on this issue

We have carried out an analysis of the likely job creation in the district by looking at three different options for the economic future in Thanet. A summary is provided below, a more detailed consideration and the evidence supporting this is available in the following documents:

- Employment Topic Paper

- Employment Land Review 2010
- Economic and Employment Assessment 2012 (Experian)

Key Facts and Information

The following key facts are important when considering what level of employment growth should be planned for.

- Thanet's economic productivity has been consistently below the South East and England.
- In Thanet tourism and the green sector comprise a larger proportion of total businesses in comparison to the South East and England.
- Skilled trades and caring, leisure and other service occupations are dominant.
- Thanet has fewer professional and managerial occupations than the South East and also England although the number of people employed in these occupations has been rising for the last few years.
- Manston airport is of regional significance and currently handles approximately 37,000 passengers and 27,000 tonnes of freight per annum.
- Unemployment has historically been above the Kent average and has grown from 3.2% in 2009 to 5.6% in 2012.
- Thanet has fewer individuals with no qualifications (8.6%) than the Kent average (11.4%), but also a lower number of people with qualifications at NVQ level 3 and above.
- In terms of economic output Thanet declined in output by 0.4% in line with the UK as a whole, this is in contrast to the South East which grew by 0.2% in 2011.

Considering what level of employment growth should be planned for

Along with the key facts and information above, the following are factors to take into account and to help you consider what level of employment growth should be planned for.

Future Employment Growth

Our evidence includes an assessment of the future employment growth in the District between 2011 and 2031, and outlines three potential economic scenarios.

Predicting what may happen in the future is not an exact science, and there are a number of factors which may affect the likely outcome. Whilst there should be an element of ambition, the Local Plan needs to be realistic and demonstrate that its proposals are deliverable.

Baseline

The evidence from the Economic and Employment Assessment 2012 suggests that the most likely future is one where the economy continues to perform in a way which it has done in the past, taking into account what is expected to happen in the national economy, but factoring in local patterns. Where the economy in Thanet has performed better in a particular sector when compared to the national picture, this is taken into account.

In this scenario the District would see continued growth in education, health, residential and social care, accommodation and food services and professional services, with declines in manufacturing. This results in an additional 3,100 jobs in the District over the 20 year plan period.

Economic Higher Growth

In this scenario the economy will perform better in some sectors than it has in the past. It takes specific account of the Council's Draft Economic Strategy which identifies the tourism and green sectors as potential significant growth opportunities. Analysis shows that if this were to happen 5,100 jobs could be created in the District.

Economic Lower Growth

This scenario is based around the uncertainty in relation to the national economy, addressing the possibility that the economy could return to recession, and analysis indicates this could have a negative effect on the future job growth, with only 1,200 jobs being created in the district.

Table 1 outlines other factors to consider in deciding what level of employment growth should be planned for

Table 1 - Options for Employment Growth

OPTIONS	NUMBER OF JOBS	FACTORS TO CONSIDER
Based on past patterns of growth 'Baseline'	3,100	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jobs would be provided for local people.• There would be growth in the visitor economy, including creative industries and green economy in line with Council's Corporate Plan and draft Economic Strategy.• There would be growth in sectors that will attract a younger working age population.• Skills of local people will need to be developed to take advantage of these jobs.• There is competition for labour supply within East Kent, due to our ageing population.• There would need to be additional housing to accommodate in-migration of workers.
Additional growth in visitor and green economy 'Economic higher growth'	5,100	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Further job opportunities would be provided for local people.• Strong growth in the tourism and green sectors would have a knock-on effect for the rest of the economy.• Significant intervention and support likely to be required from the Council and its partners making this level of growth more challenging to deliver.• There would be a need to plan for a higher level of housing. However there is a risk that, if the jobs are not delivered, more housing will attract economically dependent migrants.
Based on economy returning to recession 'economic lower growth'	1,200	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There would be limited opportunities for local people.• Levels of socio-economic deprivation in Thanet would be unlikely to be improved significantly.• This is a pessimistic approach not supported by national policy.

The role of the Airport in delivering future employment growth

Through the Local Plan we need to decide whether to plan for growth at the airport within the overall employment growth. If the airport were to grow, it is important that the Local Plan takes account of this to ensure that the effects of this can be planned for, for example providing sufficient housing and employment land.

The above job growth scenarios do not take into account any potential growth at Manston Airport.

A separate assessment has therefore been made of job growth taking into account two varying levels of growth in airport operations. One of the scenarios assumes that the airport will grow in line with the current owner's Airport Masterplan. This would result in an additional 2,420 jobs by 2031.

The other lower growth scenario compares the airport with other airports of a similar size in similar locations. This scenario assumes that passenger numbers would reach 200,000 per year and results in an additional 240 jobs by 2031.

There is current uncertainty over the future growth of the airport. The targets in the Masterplan have currently not been met and there is also uncertainty regarding the Government's future policy for aviation in the South-East. However, a new domestic flight service commenced at the airport in April 2013, with flights to Amsterdam, providing further international connections.

Issue 2 - How much employment land is needed and where?

Introduction

Why do we need to address this issue?

For the Local Plan to adequately plan for employment growth it is necessary to understand the amount of land and floorspace that is needed to facilitate the employment growth. We also need to understand what type of land is needed and where the jobs should be located.

The National Planning Policy Framework says we should plan for and accommodate all foreseeable types of economic growth.

What evidence we have on this issue

The Economic and Employment Assessment 2012 assessed likely job growth and resulting floorspace requirements. Other key pieces of evidence are the Council's Employment Land Review 2010. The Employment Topic Paper also draws together a range of evidence.

Key Facts and Information

The following key facts are important when considering how much employment land is needed and where.

- Only 30% of employment growth is expected to be in the traditional B use² classes traditionally found on business parks.
- The visitor and green economies are expected to provide employment growth.
- Other sectors of growth are education; accommodation and food services; professional services; health; residential and social work; administrative and supportive service activities; land transport, storage and post; retail; real estate and specialised construction activities.
- Approximately 74 hectares of the land allocated in the Local Plan 2006 is currently vacant and available (Table 2).
- We also have a number of existing developed employment sites that are protected by the Local Plan 2006 (Table 3).

The allocated and protected sites have existing infrastructure such as roads and utilities, and many of them are either fully or partly occupied. The protected sites are occupied by established business and built units potentially ready for occupation.

Much of Thanet's allocated employment land is located around Manston and Westwood. The evidence concludes that the majority of growth in the B Use Classes is likely to be in offices (B1) and Storage and Distribution (B8) It is predicted that there will be a net loss in industrial floorspace (B2).

Table 2 identifies the allocated sites from the Thanet Local Plan 2006.

² B Use includes Office, Industrial, Storage and Distribution uses

Table 2 – Allocated sites from Thanet Local Plan 2006

SITE	Developable Area (hectares)
Manston Business Park	46.07
Eurokent Business Park	19.85
Thanet Reach Business Park	4.59
Manston Road, Ramsgate	1.07 1.59
Hedgend Industrial Estate	1.47
TOTAL	74.64

Table 3 identifies a range of existing employment sites which are retained under Policy EC12 of the Thanet Local Plan 2006

Table 3 - Existing Protected Employment Sites

Site Name	Area (ha)
Westwood Industrial Estate	26
Pysons Road Industrial Estate	22.8
Dane Valley Industrial Estate, St. Peters	8.5
Haine Road Industrial Estate	6.52
Laundry Road (Telegraph Hill) Industrial Estate	3.68
All Saints Industrial Estate	2.45
Manston Road Depot	2.97
Tivoli Road Industrial Estate	2.45
Cromptons Site	2.26
Jentex	2
140-144 Newington Road	1.12
Princes Road Depot	0.98
Whitehall Road Industrial Estate	0.95
Northdown Industrial Estate	0.89
Pioneer Business Park	0.64
Suffolk Avenue Factories	0.45
Manston Green	0.38
Magnet and Southern	0.29
St Lawrence Industrial Estate	0.19
Fuller's Yard	0.17

Considering how much employment land is needed and where

Along with the key facts and information above, the following are factors to take into account and to help you consider how much employment land is needed and where.

As stated above only 30% of employment growth is expected to be within uses that would traditionally be found on our Business Parks. The other 70% of employment growth will be in sectors that will be located elsewhere in Thanet, including within the town centres, and for example in schools, hospitals and care homes, which will also be facilitated through the Local Plan. This section considers the need for traditional business parks in the District.

Amount of land

The Employment Land Review 2010 and the Economic and Employment Assessment 2012 considered this issue. Table 4 identifies land requirements associated with different methods of calculating the requirements, as well as maintaining the existing supply of employment land.

Table 4 – Amount of Employment Land needed

Method	Approx Needed to 2031 (ha)
Based upon the employment growth scenarios determined by Experian	Range between 3 and 15 (ha)
Based upon past take up rates	26 (ha)
Maintain the existing supply of employment land as identified in Thanet Local Plan 2006	74 (ha)

The lower level of B Use Class employment land required as a result of the predicted employment growth could be restrictive and unoptimistic given historic take up rates. It is also inflexible and may not sufficiently accommodate any significant unforeseen developments and alternative uses. Furthermore restricting supply could have the effect of limiting the variety of site opportunities for potential investment.

We also need to acknowledge that there are potential inaccuracies in forecasting, and therefore additional land may need to be provided as a buffer, to ensure that we are providing sufficient land to accommodate all potential economic development.

Maintaining the supply of employment land at existing levels may mean that land remains vacant, although the generous supply does allow for flexibility in accommodating one off developments or alternative uses. However the National Planning Policy Framework requires us to review sites and if they are not likely to come forward for employment use we should consider alternative uses.

There is need to provide sufficient land to:

- ensure there is a choice of sites to attract inward investors;
- compensate for loss of employment land to other non B uses; and
- ensure that contingency provision exists to accommodate significant unforeseen developments within the existing supply rather than finding further land for the development

Type and Location of Land

The Employment Land Review 2010 included an appraisal of existing sites and scored them according to marketability, sustainability, deliverability and strategic planning factors. This appraisal is contained in Table 27 on page 71 of the Employment Land Review May 2010. The main aim of the exercise was to establish whether the existing sites satisfy the future

requirements of employment growth in the District. We will be reviewing this assessment of existing allocations and this consultation will help to inform this review.

Thanet's allocated employment sites provide a range and type of employment land in various locations. Manston Business Park acts as the District's prime business location strategically located at the centre of Thanet and adjacent to the airport.

We need to decide where to locate employment land and whether the existing allocations are in the appropriate location.

The employment sites protected in the current Local Plan 2006 are occupied by existing business premises, are often small in size and located in residential areas. It is concluded in the Employment Land Review that these sites are of importance because they are ready for occupation and provide a particular function in the Thanet economy, as they provide low cost, affordable premises. However a lot of the premises are in poor condition and current market indications suggest that redevelopment to provide improved premises may not be viable. However, if these sites are not protected they may be vulnerable to pressure for alternative uses, such as residential development.

Accommodating Other Uses

Certain other uses such as motor car showrooms are not provided for through other means in the Local Plan. These and are also difficult to predict and it would therefore be inappropriate to designate specific land for these uses. An option to accommodate these uses would be to allow flexibility on all or some of the Business Parks that will be identified.

Issue 3 - How can we promote our Economic Infrastructure Assets?

Introduction

Why do we need to address this issue?

The port and airport are important infrastructure assets as they support economic growth in the District. They provide important links to the continent and beyond and also provide job opportunities. We therefore need to consider how these can be supported through the Local Plan.

The introduction of the High Speed rail link has greatly decreased commuting times to London improving our connectivity with the region. We need to consider how we can ensure that this benefits the Thanet economy.

What evidence we have on this issue

The main evidence on this issue comes from the Employment Topic Paper and the Airport Masterplan. We will also need to take into account the Council's Port Masterplan.

Key Facts and Information

The following key facts are important when considering how we can promote our economic infrastructure assets

Manston Airport

- At present the airport handles mainly freight. In 2011 figures indicate that it handled 37,000 passengers and 27,000 tonnes of freight per year.
- Dutch airline KLM has recently signed up to run a shuttle service to Schipol Airport in Amsterdam where a significant number of onward connections can be accessed.
- The current terminal is capable of handling up to 700,000 passengers per year.
- The Thanet Local Plan 2006 supports the development, expansion and diversification of the airport subject to visual, noise, air quality, traffic generation and groundwater quality restrictions.
- The Thanet Local Plan 2006 reserves certain land for airside development and also for a new terminal.

Ramsgate Port

- The Port is important existing infrastructure that currently deals with in the region of 130,000 tonnes of freight per year and 200,000 passengers per year.
- It has the potential to support future economic growth particularly in the green economy.
- The Thanet Local Plan 2006 permits further development at the Port if it improves shipping, traffic through the port, new routes and complementary land-based activities, and there is a need for the development. It requires development to be compatible with the character and function of the seafront, and acceptable in terms of environmental impact and restricts further land reclamation beyond the western extremity of the Port.

Rail Infrastructure

- The High Speed Rail Network was introduced in 2009 and has reduced journey times to and from London to 76 minutes

- Further improvements to the line have been agreed to further reduce journey times
- KCC's Local Transport Plan "Growth without Gridlock" includes proposals for a new station on the high speed line to the south of the airport.

Considering how we can promote our Economic Infrastructure Assets

Along with the key facts and information above, the following are factors to take into account and to help you consider how we can promote our economic infrastructure assets.

The Airport

The current owners of the airport, Infratil, produced a Masterplan in 2009 which estimated a significant increase in passenger and freight numbers for the airport to 2033. It also includes details of future airport expansion such as a new terminal building. The airport remains an important economic asset and provides an opportunity to encourage growth in Thanet.

The Airport Masterplan identifies land adjacent to the airport on the Northern Grass as being suitable for office, industrial and warehouse (B1, B2 and B8) uses. This site will be considered alongside other employment sites, however it is considered in the Employment Land Review that allocating this site could have a negative impact upon the development of Thanet's other established Business Parks.

Specific policy support for the airport is likely to be required in order to safeguard the airport and in order to positively support development that would enhance its function and contribution to the wider economy. Another important consideration is the impact of any growth upon the environment and quality of life in the District. These issues were recognised in the Local Plan 2006 which includes a policy supporting development at the airport, subject to specific criteria. The principle of this policy approach is an option in dealing with this issue.

The Port

Thanet is preparing a Port Masterplan which will guide future development. The Local Plan will need to reflect and support this. It will therefore be necessary to review the current policy to ensure that it remains consistent with the Masterplan.

High Speed Rail Link

The introduction of faster trains on the Ramsgate to St Pancras route, utilising the High Speed rail link (HS1), in December 2009, means that Ramsgate is only 76 minutes from London. This may have positive benefits for Thanet, whether this be by attracting additional business to the area, or with people living here any working outside of the District.

A Parkway Station located to the west of Ramsgate on the existing rail line is being explored by Kent County Council and is set out as a proposal in the Local Transport Plan. This would be accessed from the new East Kent Access road, and designed to serve both the airport and to act as an accessible parking location for commuters.

Another option is to utilise the existing stations and to plan for their increased use. In order to achieve this it may be necessary to increase capacity at Ramsgate station, which is the closest to the airport and has the shortest connection time to London. This could include for example additional parking provision.

KCC's Local Transport Plan also looks at other ways of improving connectivity, facilities and infrastructure at other stations across Thanet. Funding is in place to improve both Margate and Ramsgate railway stations in terms of accessibility by public transport.

Issue 4 - How should Thanet's town centres develop?

Introduction

Why do we need to address this issue?

Town centres play an important role in the economy and the community as a whole and often reflect how the wider economy is performing. It is important that the Local Plan sets out a clear strategy for their growth and development. Thanet's coastal town centres are in need of attention and intervention and a strategy that facilitates growth and synergy of Thanet's centres is a priority.

National planning policy recognises the importance of town centres and a core principle of the NPPF is ensuring their vitality and viability. It requires us to recognise town centres as the heart of their communities and pursue policies to support their viability and vitality. In order to do so national policy requires us to:

- define a network and hierarchy of centres;
- define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas and set policies to make clear which uses will be permitted in such locations
- allocate a range of suitable sites to meet the needs for all town centre uses, including residential and this should not be compromised by limited site availability;
- include policies for the consideration of proposals for main town centre uses which cannot be accommodated in or adjacent to town centres;
- promote competitive town centres that provide customer choice and a diverse retail offer and which reflect the individuality of town centres;
- recognise that residential development can play an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres; and
- plan positively for the future of town centres that are in decline in order to encourage economic activity.

What evidence we have on this issue

The Town Centre Assessment 2012³ carried out an assessment of retail need, a commercial leisure assessment and an assessment of tourism and cultural uses across Thanet looking at existing facilities and the requirements of Thanet to 2031. The Employment Topic Paper also contains evidence on this issue.

Key Facts and Information

The following key facts and information are important when considering the future of the town centres in Thanet.

Town centres have been in decline for reasons including the global recession, success of internet shopping and the rationalisation of retailing. Many retailers are choosing to serve larger catchments from a single location with a larger scale store. Thanet has not been

³ Town Centre Retail, Leisure, Tourism and Cultural Assessment 2012 (produced by Nathaniel Litchfield and Partners, commissioned by Thanet District Council)

immune to this decline and the traditional coastal town centres of Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate have experienced high vacancy rates.

Westwood Cross opened as a new town centre in June 2005. Its purpose was to 'clawback' expenditure lost to Canterbury and beyond. An Expenditure Survey carried out in 2000 showed that the District was losing approximately £100 million in retail expenditure outside Thanet. Westwood Cross delivers the larger scale premises in a single location that retailers now seek and a range of national multiples not previously seen in Thanet have located here. Westwood Cross has proved successful in retaining shopping spend within the District. At 2000 we only retained 53.4% of shopping spend and this has now improved to 84% for High Street goods and 98% for food shopping⁴

National planning policy requires that commercial town centre development should be located in existing town centres. Where this is not possible it should be accommodated on suitable edge of centre sites. Where that is not possible the need should be met in other accessible locations that are well connected to the town centre. This is called the sequential approach.

Town centres uses are defined by the National Planning Policy Framework as

- retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres)
- leisure, entertainment facilities, the more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, bars and pubs, night-clubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, and bingo halls)
- offices
- and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities)

Role of the town centres (hierarchy)

We are required by national planning policy to set out a network and hierarchy of centres. Identifying the existing hierarchy allows us understand the role and function of the town centres and their inter-relationship. A major factor in determining the role of the centres is the catchment which they serve. The role and hierarchy of the centres is set out below:

Westwood. This centre sits at the top of the hierarchy as it caters for high order need, attracts the major national retailers and has a catchment that includes the population of the whole of Thanet as well as areas beyond the District boundary, attracting people from outside the District.

The Coastal Town Centres: Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate. The catchments of these town centres are their individual town populations and tourist trade with a wide range of shops to cater for everyday need, special interest and the tourist trade. These towns have traditionally attracted national retailers and services as well as local businesses.

District Centres Cliftonville, Westgate, Birchington and Minster. These centres cater for local needs and services. They serve large residential and semi rural locations but catchments are limited and these locations are not appropriate for large scale retail development.

Local Centres: Several across the District such as Westbrook and St Peters. These cater for a more restricted local need and tend to have a small catchment. These centres provide services such as takeaways, hairdressers and small convenience stores. Business is often local rather than the national multiples. These centres are not appropriate for large scale

⁴ Given factors such as the level of internet shopping nationally these latest figures are probably a best case scenario

Retail Need

In order to provide and adequately plan for town centre development it is essential to identify the need for the different uses. Assessing future town centre need is also a national planning policy requirement. When devising a strategy for the town centres we have to consider how we can accommodate this need including considering whether to increase or decrease the size of the town centre boundaries.

National growth rates along with information about local spending habits, obtained through a telephone survey in 2012, have been used to estimate the need for retail development to 2031.

The assessment concluded the following additional need for food (convenience) shopping floorspace (gross) over the period 2011 to 2031:

- There is very little need in the District for more food shopping floorspace. Only 3,941 sq.m by 2031.
- There is no need for any additional food floorspace at Westwood and Broadstairs until after 2021.
- There is no need for any additional food floorspace at Ramsgate until after 2026.
- Birchington and Westgate together have a small need of further 192 sq.m by 2016 increasing to 510 sq.m by 2031.

The assessment concluded the following additional need for high street (comparison) goods floorspace over the period 2011 and 2031:

- The need at Westwood Cross is small at 448 sq.m by 2016 but increases to 7,459 sq.m by 2021, 16,487 sq.m by 2026 and 27,870 sq.m by 2031.
- Broadstairs has a need for a further 4,091 sq.m by 2031.
- Elsewhere there is very little need for additional floorspace for high street goods.
- Increasing the market share of Westwood result in the need for an additional 9,603 sq.m of high street goods floorspace by 2031 in addition to the 27,870 sq.m identified above.

Other retail uses

The Town Centre Assessment assumed that a further 20% of the identified retail need should be provided to accommodate restaurants, cafes, takeaways and drinking establishments, as well as financial and professional services, showing that:

- There is a need for 9,500 sq.m of such floorspace across the District at 2031.
- Reflecting the retail need, the greatest need is at Westwood with Ramsgate and Margate having a much smaller need.

Commercial Leisure

The Town Centre Assessment showed there is no quantitative need for commercial leisure development, including cinemas and bowling alleys. However given the potential of the visitor economy in Thanet, further provision could be supported.

Vacancy rates at 2012

Table 5 shows the amount of vacant floorspace in the town centres in 2012.

Table 5 - Vacant floorspace compared to floorspace need by 2031 in the Town Centres (2012)

Town	Current Vacant Floorspace sq.m	Total Floorspace Need to 2031 sq.m
Westwood	480	36,280
Margate	2,970	3,119
Broadstairs	600	6,104
Ramsgate	3,230	1,200

District and local centres

District and local centres perform an important role in the retail hierarchy catering for basket and top up shopping located in sustainable locations often in walking distance from people's homes. The current Local Plan aims to maintain provision in these centres at an appropriate level and this is reflected in Policy TC8 which says that proposals for additional shopping provision will be permitted where they meet a local need, widen the choice and quality of facilities and are of an appropriate scale. An appropriate scale was considered to be no more than 1000 sq.m.

Primary and Secondary Frontages

National Policy says that the Local Plan has to define Primary⁵ and Secondary⁶ frontages within the Town Centre boundaries and decide what uses are appropriate in each.

Thanet's current planning policy allows shops, financial and professional services, restaurants, cafes, drinking establishments and hot food takeaways in the Primary Shopping Frontages. It is also supportive of leisure, culture, heritage and tourism uses in this area. The Thanet Local Plan 2006 does not identify a secondary frontage policy for the town centres.

Considering How Thanet's Town Centres Should Develop

The future role of the town centres

We need to consider whether the existing role of the towns remains appropriate for their future development, and ensure they are resilient to anticipated future economic changes.

The role of the coastal towns in providing for people's everyday needs

Evidence from the Retail Needs Assessment Survey 2009 and the Town Centre Assessment 2012 shows that people do their food shopping at the large supermarkets located around Westwood. There are however benefits in terms of sustainability of food shopping need being met within the town where people live. An option for consideration is increasing the role of the coastal towns in their provision of food shopping. Providing such provision in the coastal towns would result in additional people visiting the towns on a regular basis to fulfil their everyday needs. This could have the effect of increasing footfall in the towns and supporting other shops and businesses, further supporting the objectives of

⁵ Primary frontages are likely to include a high proportion of retail uses which may include food, drinks, clothing and household good (NPPF)

⁶ Secondary frontages provide greater opportunity for a diversity of use such as restaurants, cinemas and businesses (NPPF)

the continued regeneration of the coastal towns. If this option were considered appropriate, it may result in the need to identify specific sites or land for allocation.

We have considered whether this would also be appropriate in relation to high street goods. However, food shopping catchment areas are much smaller than the catchment areas for high street goods. Increasing the role of the coastal towns for high street goods would result in catchments that would overlap and compete with each other, and for this reason large scale retail development in the coastal towns is unlikely to be viable. To support the objectives for the coastal towns, their future role should be to develop with a diversity of uses, including tourism, cultural and leisure uses, to complement the higher order retail need provided at Westwood and also to support the visitor economy.

Westwood's role

An option considered in the Town Centre Assessment is increasing the role of Westwood in the sub-region. The Assessment looked at what level of floorspace would be needed if we were to increase market share for high street goods. This assumes that people who live in Thanet at present and still shop outside of the District, primarily at Canterbury, would shop at Westwood instead. The potential for this may be greater if Westwood becomes more attractive and accessible. This option should not result in additional competition for the coastal town centres but rather claw back shopping spend that is currently lost to areas outside Thanet's district boundary. If this were to be proposed, there would be a much greater need to provide for shopping floorspace at Westwood (an additional 9,603 sq.m). In considering the merits of this option it is relevant that the current retention rates are particularly good when comparing them to other towns.

The need for other Retail Uses

With regard to the need for uses such as restaurants, cafes and drinking establishments, the Town Centre Assessment concludes that an additional 20% of the floorspace identified for retail need should be provided for these uses. This reflects the typical composition of town centres.

At Westwood this results in a significant amount of additional floorspace due to the amount of need identified for retail development. It therefore may not be appropriate to plan for this amount of additional floorspace for such uses at Westwood. However, these uses play an important role in attracting tourists to the town centres and are therefore particularly important for the coastal towns.

How do we accommodate the need for retail development

Margate and Ramsgate have a high level of vacant commercial premises in their town centres. This is nearly enough vacant floorspace to meet the retail need identified for these towns until 2031, although there may be the need for some reconfiguration or redevelopment to make this suitable for future occupiers. This is not the case at Westwood and Broadstairs where vacancy rates are much lower. It will therefore be necessary in these towns to consider specific allocation of sites to accommodate the need.

The Town Centre Assessment suggested that the floorspace requirements at Broadstairs could be accommodated at Westwood due to space constraints within and around Broadstairs town centre.

At Westwood, within the existing commercial areas⁷ there are opportunities for redevelopment and potential reconfiguration of the retail areas in order to accommodate the need for development. It is important to note there are also existing planning permissions (totalling approx 20,000 sq.m), including the redevelopment of Sainsbury's at Westwood that will meet some, but not all, of the retail need.

Commercial Leisure Development and tourism and cultural uses

It is clear from the assessment that Thanet does not have a quantitative need for further major commercial leisure development and arts and cultural uses. However it is also necessary to consider qualitative factors such as regeneration and the need to increase the attraction of the towns for visitors by providing year round facilities, including creative and cultural facilities. Whilst it might not be appropriate to allocate specific sites for such development, the plan could adopt a flexible approach to enable such developments to be considered favourably if they did come forward.

District and Local Centres

When looking at District and Local Centres the Council envisaged that any new retail shops within these centres should be local shops, to serve the local catchment of the particular centre. It was recognised that there may be a need for local food stores that may be larger than other local shops, but these should have a maximum floorspace of 1000 square metres. The role of the District and Local Centres is still considered important and an option is the continuation of this approach.

Primary and Secondary Frontages

Traditionally planning guidance has discouraged uses other than retail within the core areas of town centres. This is no longer a requirement of national policy and Local Planning Authorities must now propose what uses they consider to be appropriate.

We can use the required definitions of primary and secondary frontages to try and shape the future of the town centres, identifying where we consider the focus of the town centres should be and what uses we want to see in them.

Given the nature of the Coastal town centres and their role in attracting tourism growth it may be appropriate to allow a greater range of town centre uses within the core town centre. Allowing an element of residential would also add footfall and vitality to the town centres.

Determining planning applications for town centre development which is proposed outside of a town centre

National planning policy requires local authorities to set policies for the consideration of proposals for main town centre uses which cannot be accommodated in or adjacent to town centres.

It requires impact tests to be carried out for all town centre development proposed outside of town centres and not in accordance with a development plan. If a local threshold for this impact test is not set then the NPPF suggests a 2,500 sq.m threshold. As development should be appropriate in terms of scale and nature to the centre in which it is located, the

⁷ The existing commercial area comprises the main Westwood Cross Shopping and Leisure Development, the Former Grupo Antolin site and Sainsbury's superstore, Westwood Gateway Retail Park, Westwood and East Kent Retail Parks, DFS, Former Westwood School and Fire Station sites, Tesco Extra, and Broadstairs Retail Park.

Town Centre Assessment considered this issue for Thanet and concludes that impact tests should be applied at the following thresholds for Thanet's towns:

- Westwood Cross, Margate and Ramsgate – 1000 sqm
- Broadstairs, Cliftonville, Birchington and Westgate – 500 sqm
- Everywhere else in the District – 280 sqm

The recommendation states that that this should apply to all edge and out of centre food and non food retail proposals. The assessment states that developments in local parades and centres should primarily serve the community within which it is located and therefore catchment areas should not be more than 800 metres.

An example of applying the above impact thresholds would mean that outside of the town centre boundary in Margate but within the Margate area any development over 1000 sq.m would need to apply an impact test.

Issue 5 - How can we support the rural economy?

Introduction

Why do we need to address this issue?

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) dedicates a specific section to the rural economy and says that Local Plan policies should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. It says local plans should

- support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings;
- promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
- support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside; and
- promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

In Thanet given the size of the rural area and its proximity to the urban area and existing employment land, as well as its relatively affluent socio economic profile it is not considered that rural economic growth is one of Thanet's priorities. However, it is acknowledged that economic growth in the whole District is desirable particularly in terms of rural tourism and delivering services to the local population.

The issue of rural tourism is dealt with under the issue of how we support the visitor economy.

What evidence we have on this issue

Evidence relating to this issue is contained in the Economic and Employment Assessment 2012, Employment Land Review 2010, and in the Employment Topic Paper. We have also carried out an audit of village services and businesses.

Key Facts and Information

The following key facts are important when considering how to support the rural economy:

- 9% of firms are located outside of the urban area in Thanet.
- Sectors which have an above average proportion of rural firms include wholesale, retail and construction.
- The green sector in particular the secondary green sector⁸ has an above average proportion of firms within rural locations (20%).
- Village services contribute to the rural economy.
- The majority of Thanet's agricultural land is classified as best and most versatile.

⁸ Secondary green sector includes activities which are partly 'green' such as electricity, manufacture of energy equipment, quantity surveyor and sustainable transport.

- Nationally agriculture accounts for 1% of the economy (GVA) and 1% of employment but it produces 60% of the food we eat and manages 70% of the total land area.
- In terms of the wider economy agriculture supplies the food processing industry which is a much greater contributor to the economy and provides business to ancillary industries.

Current policies from the Local Plan 2006 support the rural economy including the following issues:

- Support of village services through the use of existing residential properties (Policy R3)
- Positive support to retaining a reasonable level of shopping provision in Thanet's rural settlements (Policy R4)
- Support for farm diversification subject to criteria including that the proposed use is complimentary to the farm holding, impact upon landscape setting and nature conservation, best and most versatile land, traffic generation and utilisation of available farm buildings (Policy CC10)

Considering how we can support the Rural Economy

Along with the key facts and information above, the following are factors to take into account and help you consider how to support the rural economy.

The Thanet Economic and Employment Assessment 2012 suggests that given the split of businesses in Thanet the focus for economic growth should be within the urban area. However, a focus on transport and communications infrastructure is recommended as it would ensure that businesses within rural areas have access to high speed broadband that could unlock growth opportunities and further enable home working. The transport network must also be robust in order to easily access larger centres and support networking opportunities such as those provided at the Kent Innovation Centre.

One of the major factors to consider is the proximity of the rural settlements to Thanet's urban area and the reliance of the rural population on the towns for employment and services. A considerable number of rural residents both work and use services in the towns as well as in Canterbury and Dover. The level of car ownership in the villages also tends to be higher than in the towns. This could suggest that Thanet's villages perform more of a suburban function than a rural one; however, the majority of residents are reliant upon a car. It is also important to consider the character and attractiveness of the villages and the rural area.

Conversion of existing buildings and the development of new buildings

The reuse of rural buildings for economic development is particularly desirable as it supports the rural economy without land take and brings redundant buildings back in to use which can enhance the appearance of the rural area. Uses that may be appropriate for conversions include rural tourism, retail, offices or industrial and storage providing they were compatible with the location. This could also be beneficial in terms of reducing reliance on the car, providing that they are located within or in close proximity to the villages.

The NPPF also supports sustainable new build development that is well designed. The concern with supporting this is that it may lead to sporadic economic development in the countryside which could bring about cumulatively significant changes in the distinctive open countryside that is characteristic of Thanet. In rural area outside of the villages such

development is unlikely to be sustainable because of the impact upon landscape, the character of the countryside and greater reliance upon the car for accessibility.

However there may be circumstances where development requires a rural location such as equestrian uses.

Agricultural Diversification

The NPPF states the Local Authorities should support farm diversification that would strengthen and protect the productive base of farm units and allow the continued viability of farms. This is important as farm diversification would support the needs of the food production industry and contribute towards the aim of food security for the UK. However, farm diversification projects can also bring with them problems of traffic, landscape and the irreversible loss of agricultural land. An option is to develop a policy which supports farm diversification, subject to criteria.

Village Services

Village services include local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

The proximity of Thanet's villages to the town centres and high levels of car ownership in the villages may make their shops and services vulnerable given market forces. However these services are essential for the elderly and people without access to a car and it is not sustainable for residents to have to travel several miles by car for everyday items and services.

Currently Acol, Cliffsend, Manston, Monkton, St Nicholas and Sarre lack accessible services to meet the day to day needs of their residents. Large scale development in these settlements would not be appropriate. Small scale top up and basket shopping would be beneficial to the rural economy and is more compatible with the form and character of the villages.

As well as supporting the provision of new facilities it is also important that existing village services are protected. The Thanet Local Plan 2006 contains a policy protecting existing and supporting new community facilities (Policy CF1). It states that planning permission for the change of use of an existing community facility to a non-community facility will only be granted where it can be demonstrated that there is no longer a sufficient need for the facility or that adequate alternative accommodation is provided. Village shops and services are considered under the umbrella of community facilities and currently considered by this policy. It is considered important to maintain the principle of this protection through the same or a similar policy.

Needs of the food production industry

The NPPF states that Local Planning Authorities should identify barriers faced by the food production industry. These could include issues such as flexibility for farmers to diversify farming business in order to make the business viable. This often includes converting redundant agricultural buildings to other uses such as shops, leisure uses and offices.

Supporting the protection of best and most versatile agricultural land in the light of food security requirements is also important for the food production industry, and therefore it may be appropriate for the new Local Plan to contain such a policy.

The need to support the sustainable intensification of farms is also important so that they can remain competitive in the current market dominated by large scale supermarkets. New technologies that assist farming, such as renewable energy technologies and on farm water storage, need to be supported. Approval for new and replacement farm buildings where the old ones are unsuitable is also important. Farm retail units are a further way to increase income for farmers and support the continuing function of the farm business. An option is therefore to include policy supporting agricultural related development.

Issue 6 - How can we support the visitor economy?

Introduction

Thanet has a wealth of tourist, leisure, hotels and other facilities, many of which remain from before the decline in the British tourism industry. Some of these are well used and are of great benefit to the economy.

These facilities are located in both urban and rural areas and include town centre, cultural, arts and heritage uses. Thanet's natural assets and built environment attract visitors in their own right.

Why do we need to address this issue?

The NPPF says that Local Planning authorities should support existing markets and identify and plan for sectors and clusters in the general economy. Tourism is an existing sector that has strong growth potential.

It also says that to ensure the vitality of town centres a range of sites should be allocated to meet the scale and type of tourism and cultural development needed in town centres.

National planning policy also states that in order to support a prosperous rural economy Local Plans should support sustainable rural tourism and, leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside.

Creating a distinctive profile as a visitor destination is one of the priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy 2009. The strategy highlights current low visitor spend and the need to attract the staying visitor. The Council's Corporate Plan and the Draft Economic Strategy also aim to support the visitor economy for residents and visitors. This is being developed through a Destination Management Plan for Thanet.

What evidence we have on this issue

Evidence for this issue is contained within the Employment Topic Paper and the Town Centre Assessment 2012.

Key Facts and Information

The following key facts are important when considering how we can support the visitor economy.

- Tourism accounts for 9% of the economy⁹, a significant contribution to the local economy.
- There were around 2.5 million tourism day trips to Thanet in 2009 which was an 11% increase on 2006⁹
- The number of overnight tourism trips is estimated at 521,000, 83% of which were domestic visitors and 17% were from overseas⁹

⁹ according to the 2009 Visit Kent Survey "The Economic Impact of Tourism of the District on Thanet"

- Around £93,453,000 was spent by overnight visitors which suggest that each overnight visitor generates £179. Over half of all domestic overnight visitors stayed with friends and family⁹
- Thanet's beaches were awarded 9 Blue Flags in 2012.
- Language schools make a significant contribution to Thanet's economy; in 2011 £11,433,000 was spent on accommodation alone, an increase of 6% from 2009. This accounts for a third of all overnight trip expenditure from overseas visitors.¹⁰
- Tourism jobs are traditionally found within Accommodation and food services; Arts, entertainment and recreation; and Retail sectors¹¹.
- Total employment across the tourism related industries in 2011 was 4,069 employees, this includes both full and part time employment.

Promoting new tourism facilities

The current Local Plan 2006 supports new tourism facilities including:

- Development that would extend or upgrade the range of tourist facilities, increase the attraction of tourists to the area or extend the season (Policy T1)
- Proposals for self-catering accommodation including static and touring caravans (except at or near the coast)
- Identifying particular sites suitable for tourism uses, including the Former Hoverport Site at Pegwell Bay and The Lido site in Margate
- Language schools, subject to certain criteria
- Amusement Arcades¹² in Margate and Ramsgate only. Amusement Centres¹³ are in principle considered appropriate within defined town centres

Protection of Existing Facilities

The current Local Plan 2006 protects the following tourism facilities:

- The beaches are protected according to their role as either major holiday beaches, intermediate beaches or undeveloped beaches. Policies identify what development would be acceptable on each according to their character and protects them accordingly
- Dreamland is protected for its tourism use
- Self-catering accommodation where it is considered the loss of the facility would seriously affect the maintenance of a reasonable choice of tourist accommodation in Thanet.

Considering how we can support the visitor economy

Along with the key facts and information above, the following are factors to take into account and to help you consider how we can support the tourism industry.

¹⁰ The Economic Impact of Tourism on Kent and Medway 2011 by Visit Kent (published December 2012)

¹¹ Tourism within the following SIC (industrial classification) codes are hotels; camping sites etc; restaurants; bars; activities of travel agents etc; libraries, archives, museums etc; sporting activities; and other recreational activities.

¹² These offer a mix of amusements with prizes as well as entertainment-only machines ranging from pin-ball to video games. Arcades are often open to all age groups and offer a bright noisy holiday atmosphere. These kinds of amusements are often found on the seafront.

¹³ This is usually limited to amusements with prizes, although ancillary retail and refreshment facilities may also be provided. These uses are based on the traditional amusement arcades but they exclusively use modern electronic machinery. Prize bingo is normally played on console machines. Centres tend to be far more discreet than arcades and are closed shop fronts suppressing noise within the property. Access is usually denied to clientele under a certain age. Operators tend to seek to locate these centres in traditional High Street locations.

The figures show that tourism is significant to Thanet and there is scope to increase the number of people that make overnight stays in the area, to provide further benefits to Thanet's economy. A good visitor economy can also provide benefits for the residents of Thanet in terms of leisure facilities, attractive public realm and quality of life which can also encourage businesses and families to move in to an area. It is therefore appropriate to encourage tourism related development and seek to revitalise the seaside towns.

Promoting New Tourist Facilities

How to promote general tourism facilities

Although Thanet has a wealth of existing tourism facilities, in order to further enhance the visitor experience and encourage overnight stays, there is a need to promote new facilities and services.

National planning policy supports tourism uses within town centres. The provision of facilities in the town centres should be encouraged to support the town centres, as well as to provide clusters of facilities in accessible and sustainable locations. However it may also be beneficial to the visitor economy to allow tourism uses in other locations.

The current Local Plan 2006 contains a policy that allows new tourist facilities where i) they support the range of facilities in the area, ii) increase the attraction of the area, iii) extend the season. We need to ensure that new tourism facilities are appropriate for the area and will positively contribute the attractiveness of Thanet as a tourism destination. We are considering whether additional criteria should be introduced to ensure that tourism facilities are appropriate for Thanet. For example, whether it:

- reinforces the distinctiveness of the locality;
- is accessible in terms of both public transport and publicity;
- facilitates regeneration;
- complements existing attractions;
- displaces an existing facility.

Some tourism facilities require a rural location. As set out in the Council's Draft Economic Strategy it is therefore important to support these and ensure that they are accessible and sustainable. The re-use of existing buildings can be a beneficial and sustainable way of providing new tourism facilities in rural areas.

The identification of particular sites for tourism uses should also be considered. The current Local Plan 2006 identifies the Lido, Margate and the Hoverport, Pegwell as having potential for tourism development. We need to consider whether these sites, and any others should be specifically identified to help encourage tourism development.

Accommodation

Existing hotel provision in Thanet currently caters more for the budget market. Thanet has a number of touring and static caravan sites which provide self-catering accommodation suitable for families.

Tourist accommodation is important in increasing tourist spend by providing the facilities for people to make overnight stays. Facilities must be attractive to tourists in order to capitalise on the trend for shorter breaks in the UK and demand for better overall quality and service. There is increased demand for boutique and designer hotels fuelled by more sophisticated tastes.

It is important to consider how to encourage hotel development in Thanet and ensure that this is located in the right place. Hotels are identified by national policy as town centres uses

and are supported within our towns. It might also be appropriate to allow hotel accommodation outside of town centres, by either allocating sites or generally supporting such development elsewhere in Thanet.

It is an option to continue with current policy for self-catering accommodation, which supports touring and static caravan accommodation apart from at the coast. However, there is currently a lack of alternative family accommodation near the coast. It therefore may be appropriate to consider allowing touring caravans near the coast, in particular locations.

Consideration also needs to be given to the overall level of support to be given to new and expanded caravan parks in Thanet. Caravan parks can provide good value family accommodation and support the tourism economy; however there are also environmental impacts which need to be taken into account, such as traffic and landscape.

Language Schools

Language schools are a major contributor to the economy so it is appropriate that the Local Plan supports their development. However, there is also a need to consider where concentrations of such uses might impact upon the character of an area. These issues need to be balanced against the potential benefit to the economy and therefore a supportive policy subject to criteria could be a solution, following the principles of the existing policy.

Amusement Uses

The main issues to consider when planning for amusement uses are their impact upon the character and appearance of the area, as well as potential noise and disturbance. All of the considerations are dependent upon the areas in which the amusement uses are located. Current Local Plan 2006 policy supports amusement arcades in certain seafront areas of Margate and Ramsgate only. Amusement centres are considered appropriate within all of the town centres. We will need to consider whether this policy is still appropriate when considering new applications for amusement uses. Without a policy it may be difficult to refuse amusement uses in inappropriate locations. Any policy restriction would need to be justified.

Protection of Existing Facilities

The visitor economy could also be supported by protecting existing tourist facilities and resisting their loss to certain changes of use. However, this approach could result in tourist facilities that remain vacant and become derelict if they are no longer in use. A policy that requires evidence that a tourist use is no longer viable could be effective, or we could identify specific sites that are considered particularly important to Thanet's visitor economy, that should be protected.

Beaches

We also need to decide how best to protect our natural assets that are of benefit to the tourist economy such as the character of the beaches. In order to take full advantage of the beaches, they require sufficient facilities and services, such as parking and amenities, to enhance their attractiveness. This can also help support the management and maintenance of the beaches.

Certain beaches may be suitable for development of beach concessions and chalets and others may not. Zoning areas where such uses would be approved is being considered. We are working with the Council's Tourism Team to ensure that future policy supports and enables proposals within the Destination Management Plan. The current policies on major holiday beaches, intermediate beaches and undeveloped beaches in the Local Plan 2006 may still be appropriate for all of the beaches in Thanet.

Issue 7 - How can we support communications infrastructure and home working?

Introduction

Why do we need to address this issue?

National policy requires Local Plans to support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including telecommunications and high speed broadband. It also requires us to facilitate flexible working practices such as the integration of residential and commercial uses within the same unit (live/work)

What evidence we have on this issue

The Economic and Employment Assessment 2012 looks at home working along with the Employment Topic Paper.

Key Facts and Information

- The proportion of people that are home working is relatively high in Thanet.
- Home based working is a growing trend and 63% of home based businesses are in the service sectors¹⁴
- Advanced, high quality communications infrastructure is essential for sustainable economic growth.

Considering how can we support communications infrastructure and home working

Along with the key facts and information above, the following are factors to take into account and to help you consider how we can support communications infrastructure and home working.

Home-working is a sustainable method of working and can be encouraged as a way to strengthen the economy.

The Economic and Employment Assessment 2012 highlighted that home working is significant in Thanet. It is not clear from the evidence whether these are small local businesses starting up from home or employees of companies potentially outside the District. In either case this is considered beneficial to the wider economy as it likely to bring money into the District.

As the service sector represents a significant proportion of Thanet's economy it is reasonable to assume that live/work is a growth opportunity for Thanet's economy and should be supported.

Some small scale home-working may not require planning permission. However, where home-working does require planning permission considerations should be had to the impacts upon the neighbourhood, including for example traffic, noise and disturbance. In

¹⁴ Understanding Kent's Home Based Business Sector.

The service sector is the sector of the economy that provides services rather than goods, and includes attention, advice, access, experience and discussion. For example transport, sale of goods, entertainment, hotels and banking.

order to support such proposals but to ensure that any potential impact is acceptable, an option is to include a positive policy supporting such uses subject to criteria.

Flexible office space (workhubs) with professional equipment and meeting space that can be hired and used in an ad hoc manner by home based workers can also support home working. Business advice may also be important. It is considered that these facilities can be accommodated on identified Business Parks or in the town centres.

Communication Infrastructure

As well as supporting home based working, communications infrastructure is essential to a successfully functioning economy.

The development of high speed broadband technology and other communications networks also plays a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services.

In order to support this, an option is to ensure all new development or particular developments are appropriately supported by high speed broadband and other communications technology. However, this may not always be feasible and/or viable.

4.2 Housing

What is included in this section

This section covers the topic area of Housing and considers the following issues:

8. How many homes do we need to provide?
9. Where should our new homes be provided?
10. What types of new homes do we need to provide?

Strategic Priority and Objectives

It is a proposed strategic priority of the Local Plan to **provide homes that are accessible to, and suited to the needs and aspirations of, a settled and balanced community.**

In achieving this we consider the following draft objectives to be appropriate:

- Plan for sufficient new homes to meet local community need so that, irrespective of income or tenure, people have access to good quality and secure accommodation.
- Meet the housing needs and demands of a balanced and mixed community and to support economic growth.
- Safeguard family homes and the character and amenity of residential areas.
- Increase the supply of affordable homes.

Other proposed strategic priorities are relevant to housing issues including in particular regeneration of the coastal town centres, and protecting and enhancing Thanet's environment.

Many of the other draft objectives are also significant in relation to housing issues including for example those relating to retaining and attracting skilled people, the role and function of Westwood, retaining the separate identities of our towns and villages and minimising the need to travel especially by car.

Issue 8 - How many homes do we need to provide?

Introduction

Why do we need to address this issue?

We need to provide sufficient homes in Thanet in order to accommodate a growing population and to help create sustainable communities.

The South East Plan, a regional plan approved by Government in 2009, required us to plan for at least 7,500 extra homes in Thanet over the 20 year period to 2026. Government has since abolished that Plan and local councils are responsible for deciding how many homes are appropriate for their area. We now need to decide how many additional homes we will need to provide for over the Local Plan period to the year 2031.

National planning policy expects our Local Plan to fully meet objectively assessed need for market and affordable housing in the housing market area, taking account of household and population projections, need for all types of housing and housing demand.

What evidence we have on this issue

We have carried out an assessment of the Housing Market (Strategic Housing Market Assessment - SHMA) alongside other authorities in East Kent. This has been supplemented by demographic and economic modelling to determine likely future households and housing requirements. We are updating our assessment of sites that may be available and suitable as future housing land (Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment - SHLAA). A Housing Topic Paper has also been prepared setting out the considerations in detail and containing additional supporting information.

Key Facts and Information

The following key facts are important when considering how many homes we need to provide.

- Thanet's housing market area is essentially self-contained.
- Thanet has traditionally seen out-migration of the younger age groups, and in-migration of the older age groups, with people looking to retire in the District.
- Over the past 10 years we have built 5268 new homes (including conversions of existing properties).
- Over the 5 year period to 2012 we brought about 500 empty properties back into use as homes.
- National forecasts suggest Thanet's population will grow by 11,500 between 2011 and 2021 (Source ONS interim 2011 sub national population projections).
- Thanet has an ageing population and reducing labour supply.
- New homes will need to be provided in order to meet the needs of Thanet's existing residents, as well as those moving in to the District.
- Due to the ageing population and changes to the existing population structure, we will need to attract working people to Thanet.
- There is a high level of need for affordable homes.
- At present more people commute out of Thanet for work than into it, and this is expected to continue in the future.

- Population forecasts indicate there will be increase in single person households in the future.

We have developed five scenarios as a starting point for considering the number of homes that should be provided. These are based upon potential changes in future population and households taking into account changes to the existing population, assumptions about economic growth and the number of people coming in to Thanet. It is important to note that these five scenario-based forecasts do not give us the answer but provide a starting point to assist the debate.

Table 6 - Dwelling Forecast Scenarios

Scenario	Explanation	Extra homes needed 2011-2031 (annual average required)
1. Zero Migration	Theoretical illustration of how Thanet's population would change if in and out migration were assumed to be equal. This is useful in order to understand how the existing population is expected to change.	3,714 (186)
2. Economic Lower Growth	Based on predicted employment growth of, 1229, 3082 and 5071 jobs respectively. The economic scenarios assume that any shortfall in the resident workforce will be met by people coming to live in Thanet. However, such incomers will include some non-economically active migrants which may include elderly people but also for example children of economically active migrants.	7,600 (380)
3. Economic Baseline		9,639 (482)
4. Economic Higher Growth		11,791 (590)
5. Trend Migration	Assumes past migration levels continue at the same rate as over the past five years.	11,648 (582)

The forecasting model assumes the following:

- Unemployment rate decreasing steadily from current levels to 3% by 2031.
- A commuting rate of 1.10, where more people are commuting out of Thanet to work than in.
- An allowance for empty property with a steady reduction from a dwelling vacancy rate of 5.65% to 5% by 2031.

Considering how many homes we need to provide

Along with the key facts and information above, the following are factors to take into account and to help you consider how many homes we need to provide.

Who do we need to provide homes for?

We need to provide sufficient homes to meet the needs of local people. We also need to provide for people moving into Thanet. Past patterns show that people migrate to the District, and this is likely to continue in the future, particularly older people looking to retire.

In-migration is also important to help secure mixed communities and to make sure there is a sufficient workforce to support economic growth.

The level of housing provision needs to be consistent with the overall vision of the Local Plan. Priority and aspiration should therefore be attached to factors such as economic growth and developing more balanced communities across Thanet.

We do not consider providing housing at a level that will only meet the needs of the existing population (as illustrated in the zero migration forecast) is a realistic option as it would likely conflict with the requirements of national planning policy.

Homes to support economic growth

The economic scenario forecasts assume that any shortfall in the resident workforce will be met through in-migration. Such in-comers will also include some migrants who are not working, including elderly people and also children of migrants. Competition to attract working in-comers is likely to be strong across East Kent.

Housing numbers associated with the economic lower growth scenario are similar to those in the South East Plan which represented a likely minimum level to be provided for. Under this scenario Thanet's labour supply would decrease.

Housing numbers associated with the migration trend and economic higher growth scenarios are similar to the actual level of dwelling completions experienced in Thanet over the last 5 years. This level of delivery has not resulted in improved local economic or employment growth and a significant element of it has been in flats.

The need for economic and employment growth remains a priority for Thanet, and availability of sufficient quality housing is important to achieve it. If higher job growth levels are achieved then continuation of recent dwelling completion rates may be appropriate. However, if employment growth does not meet this level, providing for this number of new homes may risk an increase in the number of economically dependent migrants to Thanet. This is a significant consideration in light of the implications of the Welfare Reform Act for benefit rules which may cause in-migration by benefit dependent households to areas with a supply of cheap rented property. It is also possible of course that some of these homes could be occupied by people working outside Thanet.

The economic forecasts that have been considered in this paper do not make any allowance for an increase in employment that may arise from the Airport. If there is significant job growth at the airport there may be a need to provide additional housing alongside it.

What are the different effects of the five scenarios?

Table 6 illustrates how much housing might be required alongside the five scenarios which are based on differing assumptions about population and job growth.

The population, age structure (including age structure of in-comers), make up of household types, and size of labour supply vary between the five scenarios, and are important considerations in assessing the impact of the scenarios and level of housing that might be appropriate.

All scenarios indicate:

- a decrease in the number of families with dependent children, and of larger households with or without children.
- an increase in the number of people beyond retirement age

- an increase in the number of childless couples and lone parents, and, (more substantially) an increase in one person households.

Thanet's resident workforce would decrease under the Zero Migration and Economic Lower Growth scenarios.

The Zero Migration scenario would result in loss of young and working age people.

The Migration Trend and Economic Higher Growth scenarios would result in the highest level of increase in young people and working age people.

Affordable homes

The need for affordable housing in Thanet and its neighbouring areas is very high. The households in need of affordable housing are included in the forecasts above.

One way of meeting the need is to require residential planning applications to include an element of affordable housing. A study of market viability suggests that delivery of housing schemes may be compromised if we were to require an element of more than 30% affordable housing.

In theory the higher the overall amount of housing we plan for the higher the number of affordable homes that may be delivered as part of it. However, the level of need for affordable homes is so substantial that aiming to meet it all would have very significant implications for the amount of overall housing land that would need to be identified to accommodate it.

Finding land for the new homes

National planning policy expects us to meet objectively assessed needs for new homes unless this would be significantly outweighed by other policies within it. It applies great weight to the most important wildlife sites (which in Thanet's case are essentially located at and around the coast). However, building on countryside, would not in itself be a constraint on the number of new homes that should be built.

Nonetheless locally important considerations, such as protecting the separate identities of the Thanet towns, need to be factored in when considering future housing land options for the District. We are updating an assessment of land that is available for housing (SHLAA), which looks at a pool of sites in Thanet for their housing potential. This includes taking account of environmental factors that may be affected if they were developed. Work to date suggests that the urban area containing the coastal towns and some undeveloped sites (as defined in the Local Plan 2006) may have capacity to accommodate in the region of 5000 additional homes by 2031.

Empty property brought back into use can make a valuable contribution to housing requirements. Where the empty property was in non residential use it represents a true addition to the overall housing stock.

The scenario forecasts referred to earlier assume a modest reduction in the percentage of vacant dwellings from 5.65% to 5% over the period 2011-2031. Forecast dwelling requirements would be correspondingly reduced if a higher reduction in empty dwellings is achieved and vice versa. The removal of Council tax reductions on empty property and other measures that might be introduced to penalise long empty property could serve to increase the number of empty properties brought back into use.

Market Demand and Delivery

An independent economic viability study of housing development in Thanet notes the difficulty of assessing the overall dwelling capacity the market can deliver year on year. However, it indicates that in general housing development will be viable even after a level of contribution has been made towards affordable housing and other supporting infrastructure.

Net dwelling delivery over the last 5 years has averaged 600 units per year, and has been as high as 889 in a single year. Through this consultation and other exercises we are gathering further information about the number of new homes the market may be capable of delivering.

What infrastructure and services will be needed to support the new homes?

We are working with the agencies and bodies responsible for delivering and regulating infrastructure such as transport, utilities and community facilities. This work will help identify the infrastructure that would need to be provided alongside different levels of future housing.

Issue 9 - Where should our new homes be provided?

Introduction

Why do we need to address this issue?

We need to identify the best locations for new homes in Thanet.

National planning policy requires us to identify a supply of sites for new homes (where possible as far ahead as 15 years). It expects us to meet objectively assessed needs for new homes unless this would be significantly outweighed by other policies within the National Planning Policy Framework.

It applies great weight to the most important wildlife sites (which in Thanet's case are essentially located at and around the coast). However, building on countryside, would not in itself be a constraint on the number of new homes that should be built.

Nonetheless locally important considerations, such as protecting the separate identities of the Thanet towns, need to be factored in when considering future housing land options for the District.

What evidence we have on this issue

We are updating an assessment of a large number of sites for suitability and viability for future housing development (Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment - SHLAA). This process includes consideration of environmental criteria. Once the number of new homes to be provided for is established the Council will need to use the SHLAA information to identify the most suitable sites to allocate. This consultation will assist us in deciding the right strategy to do so.

Key Facts and Information

The following key facts are important when considering where our new homes should be provided.

- In recent years about 95% of the new homes in Thanet have been provided on land that was previously developed. Much of this was in the urban area and included re use of buildings including conversion to flats.
- In looking at housing needs to 2031 our SHLAA currently under review. Work to date suggests that the urban area containing the coastal towns and some undeveloped land (as defined in the Local Plan 2006) may have capacity to accommodate in the region of 5000 additional homes by 2031. However this indicative figure will very much depend on the type and density of homes provided.
- Meeting future housing requirements to 2031 will almost certainly mean some greenfield land in the existing countryside will be needed.

National planning policy identifies various factors affecting how we should assess the best locations for new homes. These include:

- Recognising the character and beauty of the countryside and undeveloped coast.

- Focusing development in sustainable locations to make fullest use of public transport , walking and cycling.
- Minimising flood risk.
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.
- Making effective use of previously developed land (sometimes called “brownfield land”) as opposed to land not previously developed (sometimes called “greenfield land”).
- Availability of supporting infrastructure such as transport, recreational space and other community facilities.

Considering where our new homes should be provided

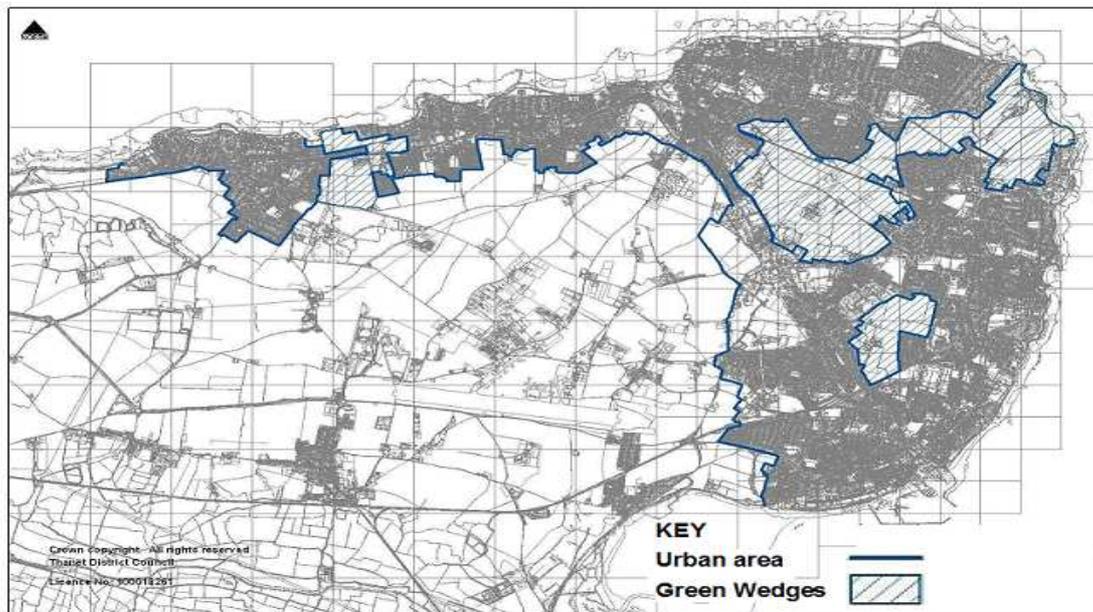
Along with the key facts and information above, the following are factors to take into account and to help you consider where our new homes should be provided.

Thanet's characteristics

In considering how to locate housing development in the most sustainable locations we need to take account of Thanet's individual location, development pattern and other circumstances. Locally important considerations, such as protecting the separate identities of the Thanet towns, need to be factored in when considering future housing land options for the District.

Thanet is a relatively small district surrounded on three sides by the coast. Map 1 shows the location of the urban area containing the three main coastal towns. Outside this area is generally open countryside which includes high quality farmland and contains the seven rural settlements.

Map 1 - Urban Area and Green Wedges



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Green Wedges

Thanet's Green Wedges (shown hatched on Map 1) serve an important function by maintaining the physical separation between, and identity of, the Thanet's coastal towns. Within an otherwise continuous urban coastal belt these Wedges have consistently been subject to strong protection from development that would undermine this function. However, as they adjoin the existing built up areas of the towns their locations are nonetheless sustainable in many other respects. We will need to take a clear and balanced approach in considering their importance alongside the need for sustainable locations for new homes. Future policy options for the Green Wedge are included elsewhere in this consultation, in the Environment and Quality of Life section.

Habitat

Thanet has wildlife designations of international and national significance which are essentially located around the coast.

Flood risk

Flood risk areas in Thanet are largely confined to the low lying areas of open countryside outside the urban areas and for the most part outside the rural settlements.

Historic heritage

Thanet has a rich and varied historic heritage including archaeological remains. A large number of conservation areas and listed buildings are focused within the towns and rural settlements.

Countryside and coast

The landscape character and sensitivity of Thanet's countryside and coast is varied. It includes the remoteness, wildness and open skies of Pegwell Bay, the vast, flat, open landscape of the former Wantsum Channel, the Wantsum North Shore which provides the unique setting of the former channel-side villages, and the urban coast, characterised by the presence of traditional seaside architecture, active harbour areas and beaches and some extensive sweeping views.

Access to services

The majority of Thanet's existing homes are located in the urban belt containing the coastal towns of Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs. This urban area contains a number of centres and other facilities including employment, schools, doctor's surgeries and the hospital which are highly accessible by public transport. This is illustrated by an indicative contour on Map 2¹⁵. Housing located in that area is generally less reliant on private cars to access a range of facilities. The rural settlements are less well served and more reliant on use of cars.

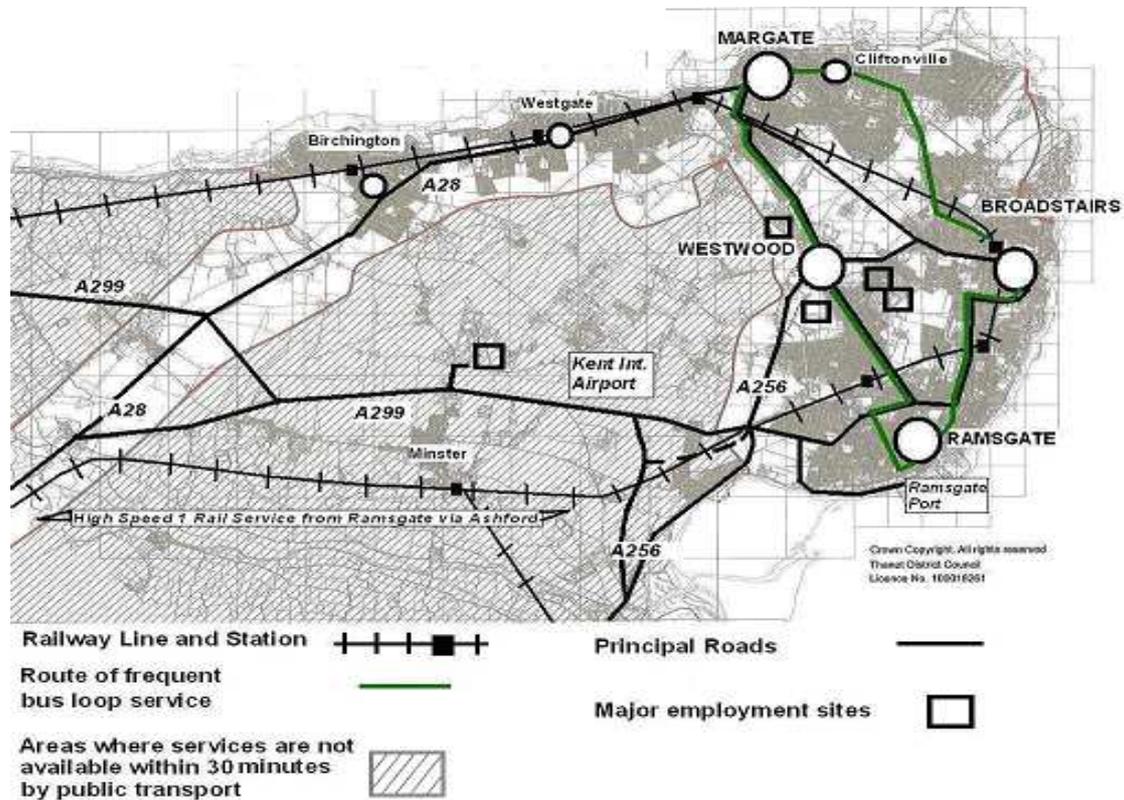
Air quality

The urban area of the Thanet Towns together with Cliffsend is designated as an air quality management area. An action plan has been prepared with the objective of improving air quality generally (through reduced transport emissions) and in consequence achieving

¹⁵ It is important to note that changes in public transport service routes and relocation of facilities could change the contour. However, it is included for indicative purposes.

specific reductions in such emissions at St Lawrence in Ramsgate and The Square, Birchington. In focusing on increasing use of sustainable means of transport, the action plan notes the importance of locating development in a way that reduces emissions overall and of reducing the direct impact of new development, for example by contributing to measures to help implement the action plan.

Map 2 – Accessibility Considerations



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Existing built up areas and provision of greenfield housing land

There has been concern among Thanet's communities that many residential developments, conversions and redevelopments (often consisting of flats or small houses) are cramming too many dwelling units and residents into the existing built-up areas, and eroding their character, individuality and attractiveness. Any criteria introduced to prevent such erosion, must recognise that a corresponding increase of greenfield land provision would be needed. Therefore we need to decide the right balance between the levels of previously developed and greenfield land to be identified for future homes. We also need to assess the right grouping and location of the greenfield housing land.

Mixed uses and empty property

In assessing land requirements both for homes and employment it is possible that some housing could be delivered as part of schemes based on mixed use. The potential contribution that can be made from empty property is mentioned earlier in this paper.

Supporting infrastructure

We are preparing an infrastructure delivery plan which will provide information on the infrastructure available and required to accommodate future housing site options. In general locations in and adjoining the built up areas are most likely to be able to benefit from existing infrastructure, although they may be required to secure any necessary improvements to their capacity.

Issue 10 - What types of new homes do we need to provide?

Introduction

Why do we need to address this issue?

As well as providing for the right number of new homes, we need to ensure they will be of the required type, size and cost.

National planning policy expects our Local Plan to meet need for market and affordable housing in the housing market area, taking account of household and population projections, need for all types of housing and housing demand, deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities. This includes: -

- Planning for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community (for example families with children, older people, people with disabilities, service families and people wishing to build their own homes).
- Identifying the size, type, tenure and range of housing that is required in particular locations, reflecting local demand.
- Taking specific account of local need for affordable housing in rural areas.

Our Corporate Plan seeks to achieve the right type of new homes to create safe sustainable communities, and attract more employees and residents including working age adults, young families and elderly people.

The main objective of our Housing Strategy is to deliver quality and affordable homes required to achieve sustainable communities and support regeneration and economic development, make better use of the existing stock across all tenures, and enable vulnerable people to live independently.

What evidence we have on this issue

An assessment of housing need in Thanet and our neighbouring districts was published in 2009. This Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) considers the mix of housing and the range of tenures the local population is likely to need. It was carried out before government announced that housing numbers to be provided for would be decided by the councils themselves. In light of this and because we now need to plan up to 2031 we are reviewing the validity and robustness of the SHMA's conclusions. A Housing Topic Paper which consider the issues of housing mix, and a separate paper relating to Houses in Multiple Occupation and Student Accommodation have been prepared.

Key Facts and Information

The following headline messages from the SHMA are important when considering what type of homes we need to provide:

1. Critical challenges are the impact of an ageing population, the loss of younger age groups and the effect on working age population. This argues for an improved

housing “offer” for incoming households as well as meeting the needs of an ageing population.

2. Factors including more single older people, in-migration by smaller households, fewer married couples and other social changes indicate that single person households will increase in number. However, there is a greater supply of smaller units than family homes.
3. Regeneration and economic strategies need to be supported by provision of appropriate and attractive housing products for higher earners to ensure young local families can stay.
4. To support growth, housing development will need to prioritise a mix of homes to support a young and expanded workforce including affordable and market homes at different price levels
5. Future policy should prioritise a rebalancing of the stock to incentivise provision of family homes and control the expansion of flattening of larger homes, but also recognise there is solid demand for smaller homes from important sectors of the community such as young single people who need to be retained in the area, students and increasing numbers of older single people.
6. Housing policy has a strong role to play in rural communities for example by supporting balanced communities and village services.

Considering what types of new homes we need to provide

National planning policy expects us to plan for sustainable, inclusive, mixed, balanced and healthy communities including thriving rural communities. Clearly Thanet’s communities are affected by the type, size and affordability of the housing stock in their particular neighbourhoods. For example some areas have higher or lower proportions of flatted/detached homes and of market/affordable housing than other areas. A key question is how far we should be looking to change the existing balance.

The findings and conclusions of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) together with updated information we have obtained are factors to take into account and to help you consider what type of homes we need to provide. There are summarised below.

Additional information we have already gathered to inform the review of the SHMA is also included below. Responses to this paper will also help inform the review.

The challenges

A critical challenge for East Kent is the forecast increase of older (especially very elderly) people and loss of younger age groups. It is essential to improve the housing offer to incoming younger households and meeting the needs of an ageing population.

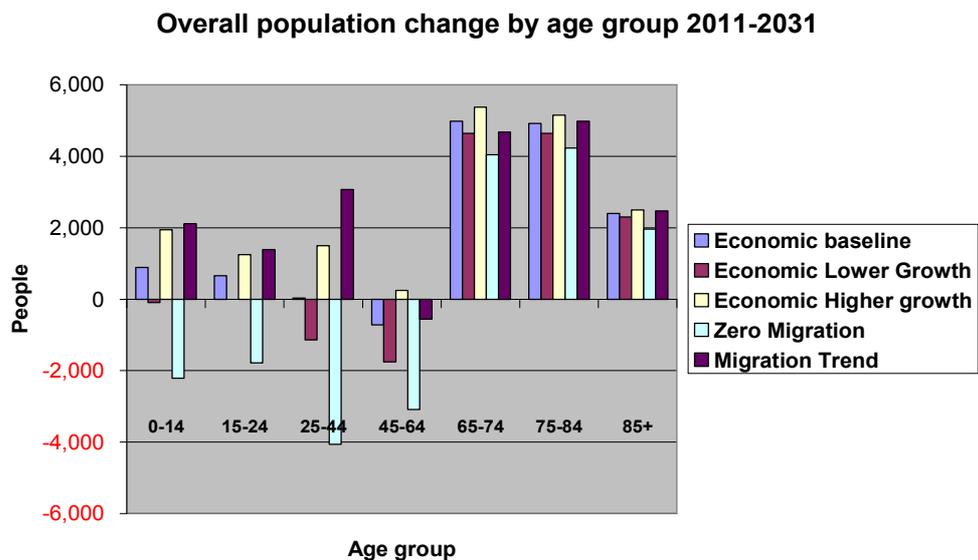
While single person households are expected to grow in number there is already a relatively greater supply of smaller homes than of family homes.

Reflecting economic aspirations we should aim to : -

- prioritise a mix of affordable & market homes.
- re-balance the stock to incentivise provision of family homes.
- support retention of young families to supply the future labour force.

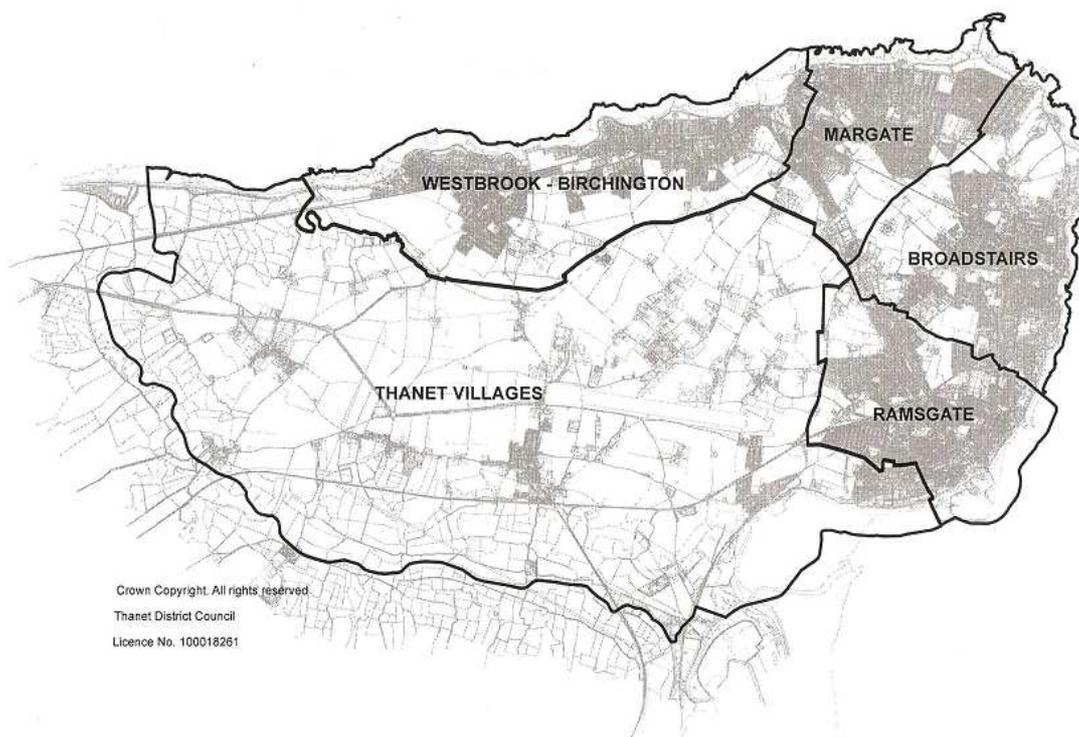
Updated information indicates these findings remain essentially correct. Updated household type forecasts continue to show an increase in small households (including one person, lone parent and childless couple households) and a decrease in larger households (2 or more adults and children). However, they do indicate some increase in younger age groups may be achieved in scenarios above nil migration and above economic lower growth.

Chart 1 - Forecasts of Population Change by Age Group 2011-2031



Local housing markets

Map 3 - Local Housing Market Areas Identified in the SHMA



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The SHMA identifies individual housing market areas defined by household demand, preferences and linkages between where people live and work. As shown on map 3, Thanet's local housing market areas are all contained within and do not overlap the district boundary. The SHMA outlines the characteristics and issues facing these local areas. For instance it recommends protecting larger family homes from subdivision or redevelopment to provide smaller homes as a means of safeguarding the housing offer and values; with a particular need for such protection in Westbrook, Westgate, Margate and Ramsgate.

Affordable homes

Affordable housing means housing provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. The SHMA considers need both for social rented housing (including affordable rent) and intermediate housing (which is homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent but below market levels e.g. shared ownership). The Housing Topic paper sets out a definition of types of affordable housing contained in national planning policy.

For Thanet, the SHMA estimates that to accommodate backlog and newly arising need over a 5 year period we would require over 1500 additional affordable homes to be delivered in the district each year. (For other districts in the sub region the picture is similar). Current policy in Thanet Local Plan 2006 expects planning applications for residential development of 15 or more homes to include an element of 30% affordable homes. National planning policy says that where need for affordable homes is identified; our policies should expect this to be met on site unless alternative provision is justified.

Alongside the very substantial need for more affordable homes, we need to ensure the level of affordable housing we require does not make residential schemes unviable. The SHMA recommends:

- Subject to economic viability assessment residential sites of 15 or more dwellings should include an affordable element of 30% and in the local housing market areas of Broadstairs and the Thanet Villages, 35%.
- An affordable housing split of 70% social rented and 30% intermediate.

The SHMA recognises issues facing rural communities and the importance of enabling younger and lower paid residents or incomers to live in these communities. It suggests that subject to local economic viability studies the 15 dwelling threshold be reduced in the rural market areas as far as viable and in Thanet's case an affordable element of 35% which may also help to support a vibrant village community.

To help address most acute need the SHMA recommends we prioritise development of larger affordable homes. It indicates that to ensure a minimum of 50% of need is met for each dwelling type the make up of additional affordable homes should reflect the split shown in table 7 below. In addition it recommends we consider policy initiatives to "disincentivise" creation of additional smaller units where there is no identified need, and encourage larger units, for example preventing conversion of family homes.

We are currently reviewing our evidence on need for affordable housing. It is anticipated that this will confirm that the level of need remains substantial. An economic viability study of development in Thanet (2012) indicates that a headline district-wide target of 30% affordable housing in new residential schemes would be appropriate without impacting on

scheme viability, and schemes of less than 15 dwellings could also provide or contribute towards affordable housing.

Table 7 - Guideline split for prioritising need for affordable homes in Thanet

	Thanet
1 bed flats	27%
2 bed flats	13%
2 bed houses	15%
3 bed houses	34%
4+ bed houses	11%

Market homes

Although difficult to forecast, the SHMA sets out guideline proportions for the size and type of market homes and at which sections of the market by value they should be targeted. This is illustrated in tables 8 and 9. An aspirational survey which informed this split indicates that priority for market housing should be given to developing larger roomed houses with 3 or 4 bedrooms that are semi-detached in style. It also notes that because existing properties are preferred to new build, consideration should be given to “de-converting” flatted properties where opportunities arise.

Table 8 - Guideline proportions for market homes in Thanet

Singles	1 bed flat	20%
Couples no children/singles/needing support	2 bed flat	10%
Couples with children	2 bed house	25%
Couples with children	3 bed house	35%
Couples with children	4+ bed house	10%

Table 9 - Guideline proportions of market homes by value for East Kent area

	Entry level	Mid market	Upper market
1 bed flats	40%	35%	25%
2 bed flats	35%	45%	20%
2 bed houses	35%	45%	20%
3 bed houses	20%	45%	35%
4+ bed houses	10%	50%	40%

Type of homes

The SHMA notes that, compared with Dover, Canterbury, Shepway and Swale Districts, Thanet (at 22% in 2001) had the highest proportion of flats, and that policy should rebalance the stock to incentivise provision of family homes and control the number of conversions of larger homes to flats.

In some cases proposals to provide further flats in Thanet have raised concerns about town cramming in neighbourhoods, loss of garden space, erosion of the stock of family houses, concentrations of poor quality small flats resulting in densely populated, polarised and transient communities and importation of benefit dependent households. Thanet has a substantial number of large properties physically capable of accommodating flats.

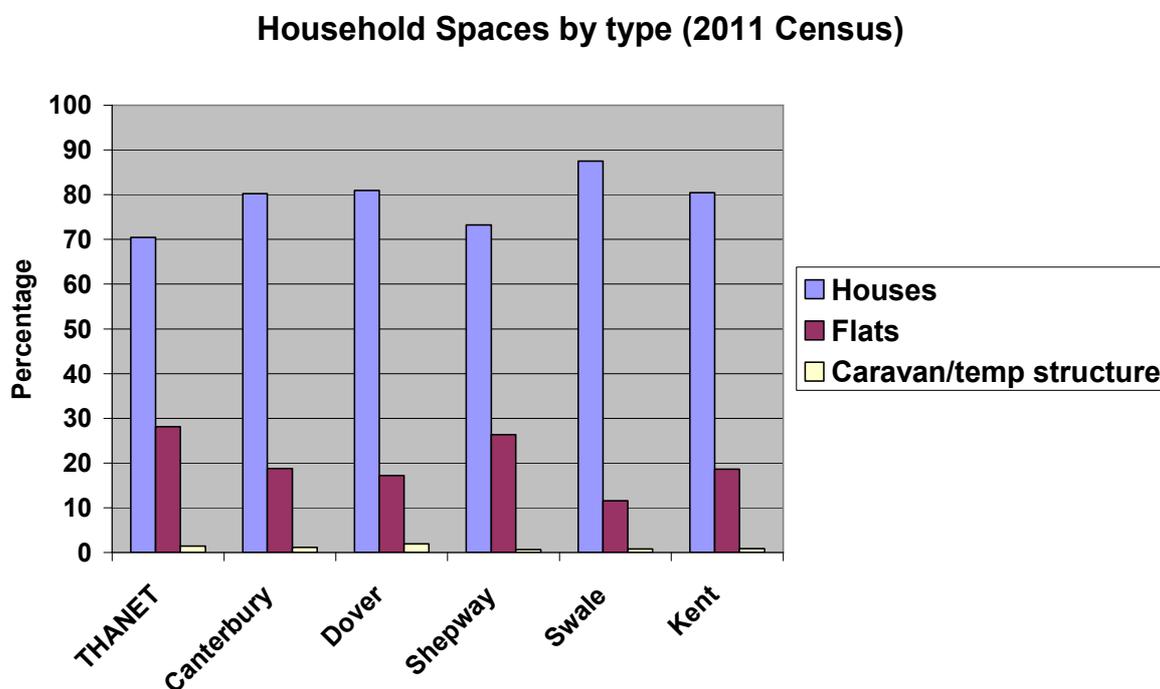
Where accommodation is to a good standard, flats can help meet the needs of mixed communities. Such accommodation can also serve both to reduce the call on greenfield housing land and possibly provide beneficial uses of historic and other buildings too large for modern use as family houses. We will also be preparing a Quality Development supplementary planning document, which will set out guidance to enable proposals for new homes to be based on decent, attractive and sustainable standards.

Over the period 2004 to 2008, flats accounted for a significant proportion of property transactions in Thanet, and in recent years the proportion of new homes that were flats has been as high as 80%. However, property transactions show a general decline in the proportion of flat sales since the 2004 – 2008 peak. House sales have shown a more steady trend, with a perceptible increase in the proportion of semi-detached and detached property sales since 2008.

In 2010 we adopted a development plan document restricting further one bedroom flats and bed sits in Cliftonville West Renewal Area as there was compelling evidence that increasing the stock of such accommodation was a factor fuelling transience and multiple deprivation. Monitoring has not revealed any evidence that this restriction has increased applications to provide such accommodation elsewhere in Thanet.

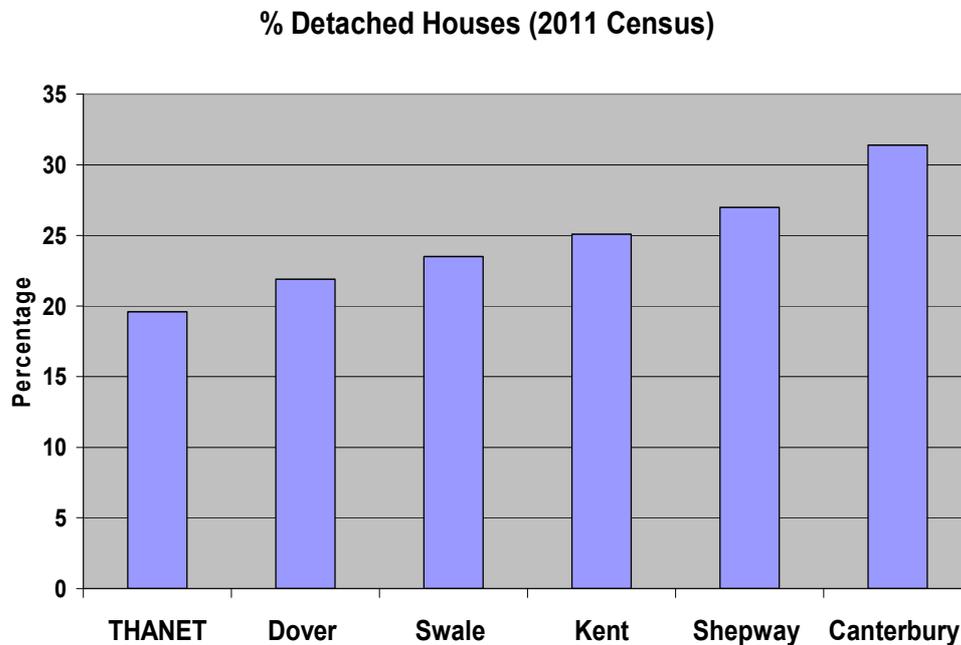
At 2011 Thanet still had a higher proportion of flats than the districts shown in Chart 2 (28% compared with 22% in 2001). Conversely as shown in Chart 3 Thanet also has the lowest proportion of detached houses.

Chart 2 - Dwellings by type – flats/houses



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Chart 3 – Percentage of Detached Houses



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- Houses in multiple occupation (HMO's)

We use this term to describe houses which are occupied by unrelated individuals sharing basic amenities. Where a good standard of accommodation is provided, well managed HMO's can provide a valuable source of affordable accommodation for people on low incomes including those starting off in the economy as young professionals. While noting the projected increase in small households the SHMA encourages continued enforcement of high standards for HMO's.

Existing HMO's are often of low quality and when poorly managed can result in neighbourhood disturbance, fear of crime, and a transient, unsettled community. In light of such problems in Cliftonville West Renewal Area the development plan document referred to earlier also restricts additional HMO's in that particular area.

We have established a local direction meaning that planning permission is required for HMO's anywhere in Thanet. Our current policy for considering HMO applications focuses on their likely effect on the character and amenity of the local area including factors such as noise, disturbance, car parking and refuse.

An option would be to carry forward the existing policy under which the impact of proposals for HMO's is judged against their individual circumstances. Alternative options could include:

- Identifying additional areas (beyond Cliftonville West Renewal Area) where a restrictive approach to new HMO's is to be applied.
- Identifying a maximum percentage of HMO's that would be acceptable in general or in specific parts of Thanet.
- Restricting HMO proposals that would result in the loss of particular types of residential accommodation (for example houses suited to modern family living requirements).

Such alternative options would need to be justified by supporting evidence.

Rural housing

The SHMA recognises the importance of enabling younger and lower paid residents or incomers to live in rural communities, and makes recommendations to improve the prospects of negotiating affordable homes as part of new housing developments in rural settlements.

The option also exists to consider exceptionally allocating sites for affordable housing that would not normally be released for housing (for example just outside villages' built up confines). Rural parish surveys have been carried out to ascertain the level of local housing need that exists. This will help us decide what policies may be needed.

Housing requirements of specific groups

Families

The SHMA notes a predicted decline in family households over the period to 2026. In support of economic regeneration and mixed communities it recommends measures to encourage family incomers, and support younger households and families already in the sub region, including:

- More emphasis on provision of medium and larger homes
- Encouraging affordable housing in rural areas.
- Promoting "place-making" to create living environments attractive to families

Older people.

Forecast growth in the older population is a major factor that will increase single person and childless households. There is a growing preference to independent living and remaining at home into later life implying a greater need for care services and increased demand for specialist accommodation for older people. Providing attractive and suitable housing could encourage downsizing from under occupied accommodation to help meet wider need and demand.

The SHMA recommends that on developments of 15 or more units 100% of affordable housing units be developed to "Lifetime" standards and at least 20% of market units be developed to these standards. (Lifetime standards refers to ordinary homes incorporating design features that add to the comfort and convenience of their occupants and supports their changing needs at different stages of life, for example the needs of some wheelchair users).

Young people

The SHMA notes a predicted reduction in the number of people in the 16-24 year old age group. It also notes that newly forming households are on lower incomes, that young people have difficulty accessing owner occupied accommodation and are often ineligible for affordable housing. Thus options are often restricted to private renting or remaining in the family home. The SHMA notes that there may be a widened role for Intermediate housing, including shared ownership.

People with long-term illness and disabilities

In 2001 a lower proportion of permanently sick/disabled households were owner occupiers and more likely to live in social rented accommodation. The SHMA notes that 58% of households with a disability would like to live in a bungalow and that in relation to mobility related problems, the recommendations above regarding Lifetime Homes would be beneficial. It also notes a continuing need for housing support for people with mental health problems. Recommendations include considering a proportion of bungalows in new developments in conjunction with Lifetime Homes standards, and acknowledging the continuing need for adaptations to existing property.

The 2011 population census indicates that the proportion of Thanet's residents with long term health problems or disability limiting day to day activity was 23.4%. The comparable figure for the South East was 15.7%. It also suggests that the number of people in communal establishments including care and nursing homes in Thanet has declined over the 10 year period to 2011.

We are working with the County Council to update our understanding of the type and level of needs of residents requiring social care, including people with physical disability and mental health problems.

Gypsies and travellers

The SHMA refers to a separate assessment of needs for gypsies and travellers published in 2007 which suggested a requirement in Thanet for 4 pitches up to 2012 and 1 additional pitch from then to 2017.

With neighbouring district councils we are obtaining an updated assessment. Unless this demonstrates specific need requiring land allocation, the Local Plan may just set out criteria to judge any planning application that might come forward. Such criteria might include that such uses and location should not impact unreasonably on surrounding uses, and adequate access to facilities like schools, jobs and healthcare.

Students

The SHMA notes that students are a group with particular housing requirements often met through private renting in the form of shared accommodation such as houses in multiple occupation (HMO's). It notes that HMO's can help meet the needs of various groups requiring affordable housing, but often have problems (associated with the condition of the accommodation and management standards).

We are working with Christ Church University to improve our understanding of future need for accommodation associated with students attending the Broadstairs campus and to identify any issues that the Local Plan may need to address to accommodate sufficient and suitable accommodation.

4.3 Environment and Quality of Life

What is included in this section

This section covers the topic area of the Environment and Quality of Life and considers the following issues:

11. How can we maintain a physical separation between Thanet's towns and villages?
12. How do we ensure that new development respects Thanet's important and valued views and landscapes?
13. How can we protect, maintain and enhance Thanet's green infrastructure to better support wildlife and human health?
14. How can we adapt to, and mitigate against, the effects of climate change?
15. Which policies do we need to maintain a safe and healthy environment?
16. How can we provide high quality homes, developments and neighbourhoods?
17. How can we protect and enhance Thanet's heritage assets and their settings?
18. How should we plan for community facilities?

Strategic Priority and Objectives

It is a proposed strategic priority of the Local Plan to

- **Safeguard local distinctiveness and promote awareness, responsible enjoyment, protection and enhancement of Thanet's environment, including the coast, rich seaside heritage, historic environment, diverse townscapes and landscape, biodiversity and water environment**

In achieving this we consider the following draft objectives to be appropriate:

- Retain the separation between, physical identity and character of, Thanet's towns and villages.
- Safeguard and enhance the open and historic characteristics of Thanet's countryside and landscapes.
- Protect, maintain and enhance the District's biodiversity and natural environment, including open and recreational space to create a coherent network of green infrastructure that can better support wildlife and human health
- Safeguard and enhance the geological and scenic value of the coast and countryside and facilitate its responsible enjoyment as a recreational and educational resource.
- Mitigate and adapt to the forecast impacts of climate change (including the water environment, air quality, biodiversity and flooding)
-
- Use natural resources more efficiently, increase energy efficiency, the use of renewable and low carbon energy sources, to reduce the District's carbon footprint.
- Promote development patterns and behaviour that will minimise the need to travel or use private cars to access services and amenities.

- Facilitate provision of direct walking and cycling routes to reduce potential congestion, noise and pollution.
- Facilitate improvements within areas characterised by poor quality housing, empty property and poor physical environment.
- Ensure that all new development is built to the highest attainable quality and sustainability standards and enhances its local environment.
- Reduce opportunities for crime and the fear of crime
- Preserve and enhance the district's exceptional built historic environment and ancient monuments and their settings.
- Facilitate the provision and evolution of accessible, modern and good quality schools and higher and further education and training facilities to meet the expectations of employers and a confident, inclusive and skilled community.
- Ensure Thanet's community have access to good quality social and health services
- Broaden and improve the range of active leisure facilities to encourage greater participation within the local community.

Issue 11 - How do we maintain a physical separation of open countryside between Thanet's towns and villages?

Introduction

Why do we need to address this issue?

Thanet's open countryside is particularly vulnerable to development pressures because of the small size of the district and its relationship with the urban areas, the openness and flatness of the rural landscape and the proximity of the towns.

Local Plan policies have historically been used to prevent urban sprawl, maintain the separation of the Thanet towns and prevent their coalescence, thus preserving their unique identities.

National planning policy states that local plans should take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. It includes a criteria based policy stating the only circumstances where isolated homes in the countryside would be considered acceptable.

What evidence we have on this issue

More detailed evidence surrounding these issues can be found in the Natural Environment Topic Paper.

Key Facts and Information

The following key facts are important when considering green wedges and the countryside

Thanet's Countryside

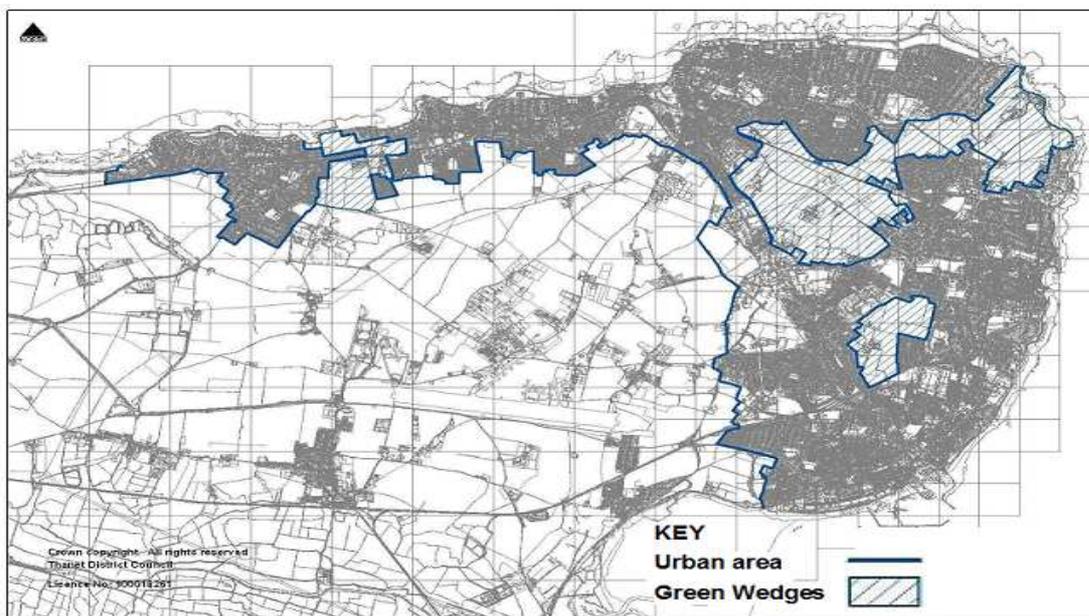
- Thanet's countryside is important in providing areas of openness in between the densely developed urban areas and provides important landscape views that contribute to the district's character and sense of place.
- The countryside includes three Green Wedges which provide a visual relief between the Thanet towns, maintain a physical separation between the towns and retains each towns unique character and identity. The Green Wedges have been historically protected from development.
- Much of Thanet's countryside is best and most versatile agricultural land and is therefore important for farming and the wildlife it supports
- The countryside has historically been protected from inappropriate development by county and local policies. County policy protected the countryside for its own sake, and later local plan policies protected the countryside from sporadic development and urban sprawl.
- The 2006 Thanet Local Plan identified urban and village confines to define the areas of countryside to be protected.
- The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment suggests that to meet housing requirements, some undeveloped land in countryside will be required. The principles for the location of housing are dealt with in the Housing section of this consultation. It

is necessary to consider what level of protection should be given to areas that are not allocated for development.

Green Wedges

The principal settlements of Thanet are separated by areas of open countryside which are known as the Green Wedges. Thanet has three Green Wedges that differ in size and character. The largest is the one that separates Margate and Broadstairs. Substantial areas of this Green Wedge consist of high quality agricultural land in large open fields without fences or hedgerows. Other parts have isolated belts of woodland. The other two Green Wedges which separate Birchington and Westgate, and Broadstairs and Ramsgate are considerably smaller but perform a very significant function and, due to their limited extent are also potentially more vulnerable to development pressures.

Map 1 - Urban Area and Green Wedges



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There is very limited built development within the Green Wedges. The areas have level or gently undulating landform and generally sparse vegetation. These factors allow many extensive and uninterrupted views across open countryside. The public perception of space, openness and separation is largely gained from roads and footpaths that run through or alongside the Green Wedges in undeveloped frontages. It is important as it adds to the quality of life and well being perceived by people in the community

The principal functions of and policy aims for Thanet's Green Wedges are:

- Protect areas of open countryside between the towns from the extension of isolated groups of houses or other development.
- Ensure physical separation and avoid coalescence of the towns thus retaining their individual character and distinctiveness.
- Conserve and protect the essentially rural and unspoilt character, and distinctive landscape qualities of the countryside that separates the urban areas, for the enjoyment and amenity of those living in, and visiting, Thanet.
- Prohibit all but essential development and other development which does not detract from the character and appearance of the area.

The Green Wedge policy has been consistently and strongly supported at appeals. Inspectors' comments in appeal decisions, and the Inspector's Report to the Thanet Local Plan Inquiry, highlight the significance of the open countryside between the Thanet Towns, in providing visual relief in a highly urbanised area.

Considering how we will maintain a physical separation of open countryside between the Thanet towns and prevent urban sprawl

Along with the key facts and information above, the following are factors to take into account and to help you consider this issue.

It is considered that the aims of planning policies protecting the Green Wedges are still relevant and applicable. Allowing sporadic development within the Green Wedges would set a precedent and could result in urban sprawl and the merging of the Thanet towns. Some of the views across the Green Wedges are important in terms of landscape character, and providing a sense of openness.

In order to meet the objectives, we consider that the green wedges should continue to be protected by planning policy. However, there is potential for the land to be used more beneficially. Furthermore, it is considered that the Green Wedges form an important part of Thanet's green infrastructure network.

The Green Wedges are, in parts, relatively unattractive and not always accessible to the public. There is an opportunity to enhance the Green Wedges by creating and enhancing wildlife habitats, for example to encourage farmland birds, and to make the areas more accessible, potentially for recreation use. This may require changing farming activities.

Thanet's provision of accessible and natural open spaces does not meet national standards and, due to the coastal nature of the district being surrounded by sea on three of its boundaries, there is limited opportunity to create new open spaces, particularly for recreational use, within the district.

Issue 12 - How do we ensure that new development respects Thanet's important and valued views and landscapes?

Introduction

Why do we need to address this issue?

Thanet has historically been recognised for its distinctive wide, simple and unrestricted views and dramatic chalk cliffs along parts of its coastline. The landscapes contribute to Thanet's sense of place and island characteristics, as well as economic benefits in making the district an attractive place that people want to come to.

National planning policy states that one way the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment is by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes.

What evidence we have on this issue

Previous landscape assessments have been carried out for Thanet. These include the following:

- Preliminary Report of the Isle of Thanet Landscape Assessment Survey, Thanet District Council Planning Department February 1993.
- Kent Historic Landscape Characterisation – Croft, Munby & Ridley May 2001.
- The Landscape Assessment of Kent – October 2004, prepared for Kent County Council by Jacobs Baktie.

A review of Thanet's landscape character areas has also been carried out to inform the new local plan. The findings from this assessment, and summaries of the previous assessments can be found in the Natural Environment Topic Paper.

The following section draws out the key facts, information and relevant considerations from the above evidence in order to help inform your thinking

Key Facts and Information

The following key facts are important when considering Thanet's landscapes:

- Thanet's landscapes reflect the District's historical evolution.
- The landscape area is defined by the former limits of the island that was cut off from the mainland by the Wantsum Channel until it silted up around 1000 years ago.
- The Council has sought to protect these important landscapes in previous local plans.

The Thanet Local Plan 2006 identifies the following as important Landscape Character Areas:

- Pegwell Bay – large open skies, sweep of chalk cliffs, open and relatively unspoilt landscape.
- Former Wantsum Channel – former sea channel, vast flat open landscape, important visual evidence of the physical evolution of the Wantsum Channel.
- Former Wantsum North Shore – visual evidence of the growth of human settlement, agriculture and commerce, long views of the former Wantsum Channel and Pegwell Bay.

Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation Document

- The Central Chalk Plateau – generally flat or gently undulating landscape with extensive unenclosed fields.
- Quex Park – formal and extensive wooded parkland and amenity landscape.
- Urban Coast – long sweeping views of the coast, traditional seaside architecture.

National policy states that we should be protecting and enhancing valued landscapes. A number of valued landscape character areas have been identified in Thanet, and it is therefore considered that these should be protected and enhanced through policy.

Issue 13 - How do we protect, maintain and enhance Thanet's green infrastructure to better support wildlife and human health?

Introduction

Why do we need to address this issue?

Thanet boasts a wealth of natural features including internationally and nationally designated sites and associated species, a magnificent coastline, chalk cliffs, geological features and areas of open countryside with distinctive landscapes and views. It is important that these are maintained and enhanced, and could be better linked to provide a comprehensive green infrastructure network.

National planning policy states that local plans should plan positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure. It states that local ecological networks should be identified and these should include the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors, stepping stones that connect them, and areas identified by local partnerships for habitat restoration or creation.

National planning policy also states that international, national and locally designated nature conservation sites should be protected, with appropriate weight given to the importance of their designation.

What evidence we have on this issue

The Council carried out an Open Space Audit (2006). A Natural Environment Topic Paper has been prepared which includes evidence to inform the issues of Green Infrastructure.

The Kent Habitats Survey provides ecological information on habitat type and potential importance for nature conservation. A new survey was completed at the end of 2012 – this is the third survey to be carried out. A report is being prepared which will include information on the changes that have happened since the previous survey was carried out in 2003 such as:

- Habitats that were not present in 2003
- Semi improved grassland which was under-recorded in previous surveys
- New areas with potential to be designated as Local Wildlife Sites

The following section draws out the key facts, information and relevant considerations from the above evidence in order to help inform your thinking

Key Facts and Information

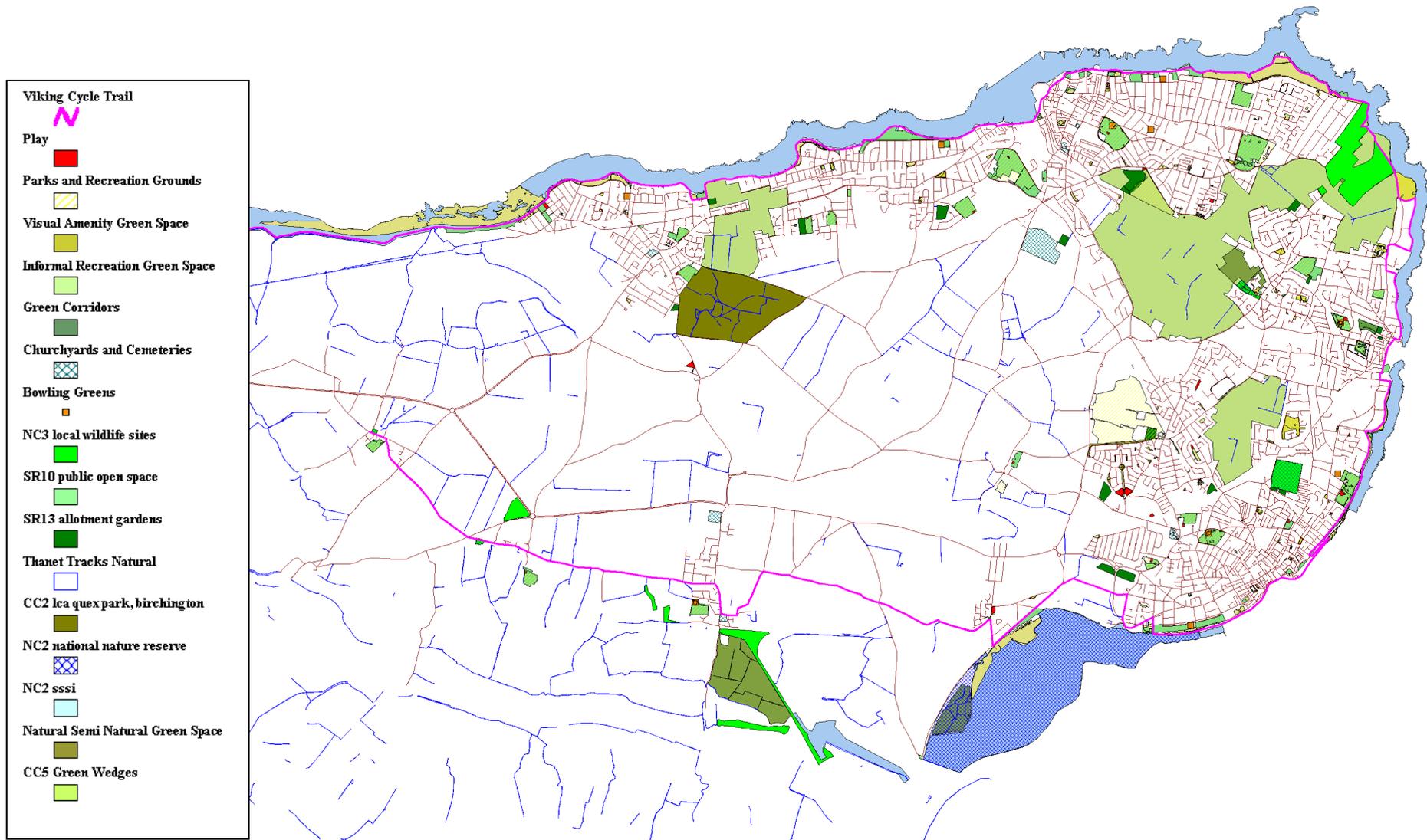
The following key facts are important when considering how we protect, maintain and enhance Thanet's green infrastructure to better support wildlife and human health.

Natural England defines Green Infrastructure as:

'..... a strategically planned and delivered network comprising the broadest range of high quality green spaces and other environmental features. It should be designed and managed as a multifunctional resource capable of delivering those ecological services and quality of life benefits required by the communities it serves and needed to underpin sustainability. Its

design and management should also respect and enhance the character and distinctiveness of an area with regard to habitats and landscape types.'

Map 4 – Thanet's existing Green Infrastructure Network



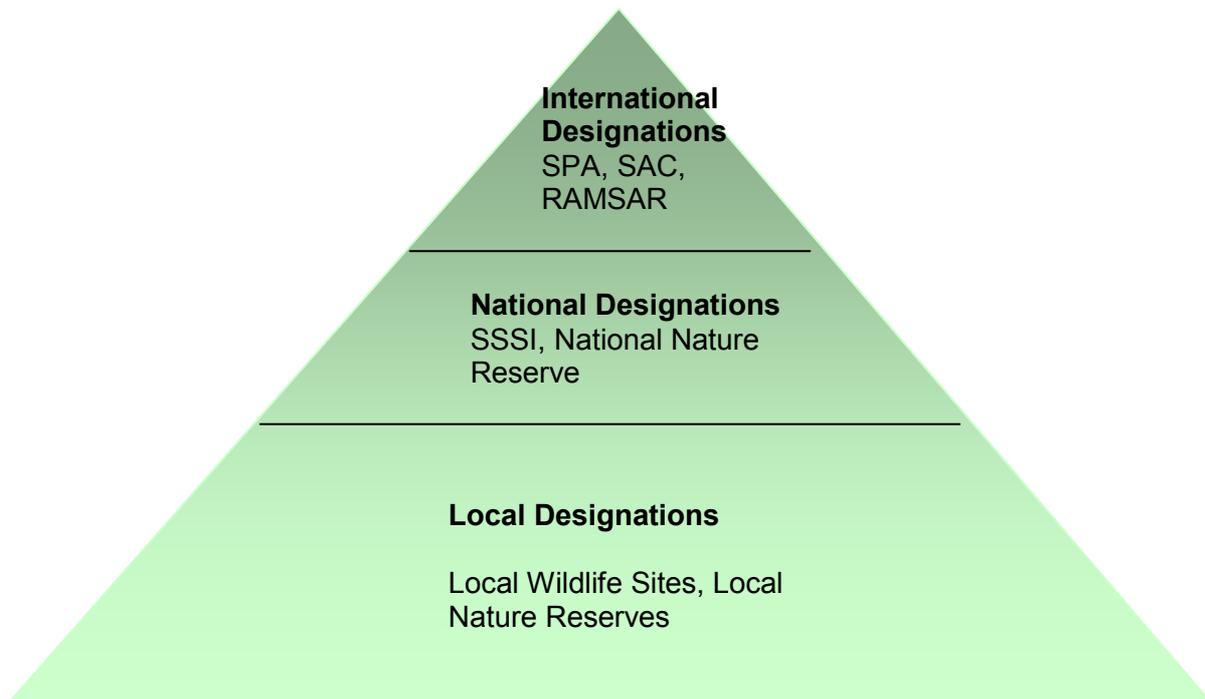
Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey map with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office (C) Crown Copyright 2011

Thanet's existing Green Infrastructure is shown on Map 4.

A working group of the East Kent Councils has identified three categories of Green Infrastructure – Biodiversity, Linear Features and Public Amenity Space (Civic Amenity).

Biodiversity Features

Thanet contains a rich variety of habitats. Designated sites of international, national and local value and extensive areas of wetland and farmland habitat harbour both protected and priority species. The diagram below shows the hierarchy of these designations from international, national to local importance.



The internationally designated sites (Special Protection Area, Special Area of conservation and RAMSAR) are defined under European laws and comprise a network of sites across Europe designated for their important habitat and/or birds. Most of the Thanet coastline is designated and is important for its intertidal chalk, caves, species (such as blue mussel beds and piddocks), dunes and mudflats, and certain migratory and breeding bird species.

The nationally designated sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest and National Nature Reserve), also cover the coastline, and have similar features to the international sites, including over 30 nationally rare species of terrestrial and marine plants, 19 nationally rare and 149 nationally scarce invertebrate species and roost sites for migrating and wintering birds.

There are two Local Nature Reserves located at Monkton and Pegwell Bay, and eight Local Wildlife Sites. These sites host locally important habitats.

There are also four Roadside Nature Reserves which have been identified for their habitats and connections to areas of rich biodiversity and include important features such as calcareous grassland, lizard orchids and diverse populations of butterflies and dragon flies.

Thanet has three Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS) that are important for historical, scientific research or educational reasons. These are located at Monkton Nature Reserve, Pegwell Bay and St Peters Quarry.

There will be policies in the Local Plan to give protection to all of the designated sites listed above.

Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs) have been identified to facilitate the delivery of landscape scale habitat recreation and restoration, and to connect designated sites and priority or Biodiversity Action Plan habitats. Thanet has two BOAs:

- Thanet Cliffs and Shore – covers the majority of the internationally and nationally designated coastal habitats, extending throughout Thanet as far as Whitstable
- Lower Stour Wetlands – follows the old Wantsum Channel incorporating the reclaimed marshes of Wade, Monkton and Minster. It continues around the coast to the Sandwich mudflats and sand dunes.

Linear Features

Thanet's Open Space Audit identifies linear features as

'Sites that provide venues for walking, cycling and horse riding amongst others uses. Often they can provide a key "green" link and offer travel routes for both local residents and local wildlife migration'

Thanet's Linear features include:

Walking Routes

The Saxon Shore Way is a 160 mile route from Gravesend to Hastings. Part of the Saxon Shore Way runs through Thanet (Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate)

The Turner & Dickens Walk is a 4 mile route between Margate (Turner Contemporary) and Broadstairs (Dickens House Museum)

Cycling Routes

The Viking Coastal Trail is a 27 mile route around the Thanet Coast line from St Nicholas at Wade to Reculver Towers. The route is National Cycle Route 15.

Public Amenity Space (Civic Amenity)

This includes open spaces such as parks, informal recreation, green space, natural and semi natural green space, amenity green space, outdoor sports facilities, play facilities for children and young people, allotments and churches and cemeteries.

The Open Space Audit found that Thanet currently has an under provision of accessible natural spaces compared to national standards.

Considering how to protect, maintain and enhance the Thanet's green infrastructure to better support wildlife and human health

Along with the key facts and information above, the following are factors to take into account and to help you consider this issue:

Impact of development on Internationally protected sites

One of Thanet's main attractions for leisure and recreation is its beaches and seafronts which are widely used by both residents and visitors. However there is a potential conflict between the use of these areas and the internationally protected sites, particularly with regard to bird and recreational disturbance. One of the main potential disturbances is from dogs. Growth and development will inevitably bring more people to the district, which will likely attract even more visitors to the seafronts and the protected sites, so the protection of these sites, and potential alternative areas for recreational use which are not coast specific, are essential considerations.

We are working with the other East Kent Authorities and other stakeholders to gain a better understanding of this issue and how we can help to mitigate against it, where necessary.

Providing alternative space for dog walkers

Design in new developments can accommodate dog walkers, this can help reduce conflicts and provide alternative green space for new residents. This could include:

- Designing green spaces that attract dog owners away from sensitive sites.
- Accommodate circular walks in the design of new developments.

Accessible Open Space

The Open Space Audit found that there is an insufficient amount of publicly accessible open space in the district. It would be desirable to create new areas of open space, both to contribute to the provision in the district, and also to relieve recreational pressures on the protected sites by providing alternative recreational areas. However the urban areas are already densely developed and there is little opportunity to create new open space.

Opportunity for new Green Infrastructure (GI) through development

As well as the three main types of GI mentioned above, there is scope for GI to be integrated into new developments, for example by creating back gardens, planting and landscaping, hedgerows and sustainable drainage systems. The provision of new public amenity space in developments is a current policy requirement that could be continued. This type of GI helps to create linkages and ecosystem networks.

Local Green Spaces

The NPPF allows communities to identify land as Local Green Space through the local plan process. Local Green Space must be:

- In reasonably close proximity to the community it serves.
- Demonstrably special to a local community and hold particular significance (for example, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity or richness in wildlife).
- Local in character and not an extensive tract of land.

Other important species

The open countryside within the Thanet District is known to support a number of important species of farmland birds. As farmland birds have declined over the last few decades it is important to ensure that remaining populations are protected and allowed to increase. The green wedges also provide a dispersal route for migratory bird species which are present on the coast, especially during the winter season. Changing farming practices within the green wedges would increase populations of farmland and migratory birds by enabling more ecologically diverse habitat to be created.

Issue 14 - How can we adapt to, and mitigate against, the effects of climate change?

Introduction

Why do we need to address this issue?

A significant amount of new legislation and policy has been put in place that affects the role of planning at a local level:

- The Climate Change Act 2008 introduces a statutory target of reducing carbon emissions by 80% below 1990 levels by 2050 and an interim target of 34% by 2020.
- The EU directive on renewable energy, under which the UK is committed to sourcing 15% of its energy from renewable sources by 2020.
- The Energy Act 2008 introduces feed-in tariff powers.

Adapting to, and mitigating against the effects of, climate change have become a Government priority and are issues that can be addressed to some degree through planning policy and development management.

National planning policy states that adapting to, and mitigating against the effect of, climate change is a core planning principle. This can be achieved by planning for new development in locations and ways which reduce greenhouse gas emissions, actively support energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings and set any building sustainability standards in line with the Government's zero carbon buildings policy.

National planning policy lists expectations to improve energy efficiency in new development in terms of decentralised energy and sustainable design, and ways of increasing the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy. It stresses the importance of addressing longer term factors such as flood risk, coastal change, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape.

The Council has been implementing South East Plan policies (now revoked) to address the effects of climate change and the need to reduce the consumption of resources

The Climate Local Kent Commitment is being adopted by districts and organisations across Kent to support targets to work towards achieving this.

What evidence we have on this issue

The following documents provide evidence on this issue:

- Renewable energy for Kent 2012 (KCC)
- Climate Local Kent Commitment
- Kent Local Climate Impacts Profile
- Cliftonville – Design for future climate
- Stour Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy
- River Basin Management Plan
- Water Resource Management Plan
- Thanet Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
- Surface Water Management Plan
- Shoreline Management Plan

These are summarised in four topic papers relevant to Climate Change:

- Climate Change Topic Paper – includes evidence to support adaptation and mitigation methods that might be appropriate for Thanet.
- Water Cycle Topic Paper – includes flooding, coastal erosion, the supply and demand for water and water quality.
- Quality Development & Heritage Topic Paper – includes a section about Sustainable Design and Construction.
- Natural Environment Topic Paper – includes Green Infrastructure, Green Wedges, and Landscape Character Areas.

Key Facts and Information

The following key facts are important when considering how we can adapt to, and mitigate against the effects of climate change.

Climate change is a change in weather patterns, caused by the increased levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere produced by the use of fossil fuels.

The effects of climate change are already being seen in Kent, and include:

- more erratic weather conditions including an increase in the number of ‘hot weather’ events, storms and also freezing temperature events;
- increase in sea levels and wave crest;
- increase in coastal water temperature;
- length of growing season has extended by 1 month since 1990; and
- increases in flooding and droughts.

In order to address this, we need to ensure that new development can contribute to:

- Adapting to Climate Change by minimising vulnerability and providing resilience to the impacts of climate change
- Mitigating against Climate Change by reducing our emissions

The Climate Local Kent Commitment sets aims which include:

- 34% reduction in emissions by 2020 (2.6% reduction per year)
- Retrofitting to existing homes
- Reduce water consumption from 160 to 140 litres per person per day by 2016
- Increase renewable energy deployment in Kent by 10% by 2020

Considering how we can adapt to, and mitigate against the effects of climate change

Along with the key facts and information above, the following are factors to take into account and to help you consider how we can adapt to, and mitigate against the effects of climate change.

Solar Parks

In the last three years, the council has granted planning permission for 12 solar parks. These are mainly located in fields, or parts of fields, are temporary (most have a 25 year lifespan), and the land can revert to its original use when the panels are removed. The location of a solar farm will usually be near to a connection to the national grid due to cost implications for connection, and will require the erection of a fence surrounding the site which is required by law. The Council has considered the principle of development in the

countryside, visual impact and landscaping in all of the applications that have been granted permission.

Retrofitting to existing development

There are a number of measures which can be applied to existing buildings to counteract the effects of climate change, such as

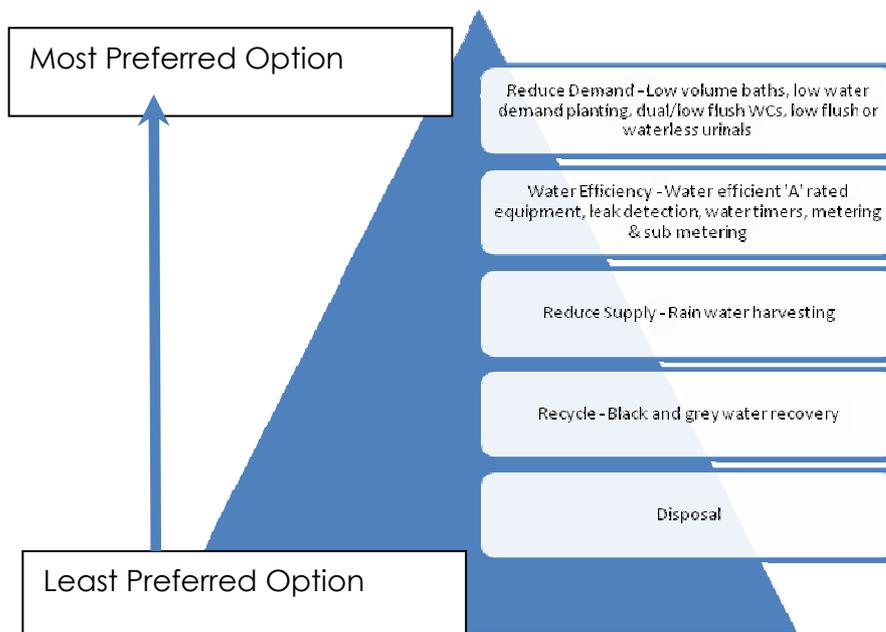
- Draughtproofing
- Insulation
- efficient lighting
- solar glass
- re-use of chimneys
- shade trees
- covered verandahs
- green walls
- vertical trellisage
- light coloured solar reflective surfaces

Water Efficiency

Water efficiency becomes increasingly important in a changing climate with rainfall that will become more variable and erratic in any given year. The south east is already an area of 'serious water stress', so the prudent use of water resources is of particular importance both now and in the future. In the south east, around 150 litres of water per person is consumed every day.

In order to reduce water consumption, the management of water in proposed development should follow the most effective ways of conserving water, shown in Diagram 1.

Diagram 1 – Ways of Conserving Water



Source: Cliftonville – Design for future climate

This can be achieved both in retro fitting existing buildings, and in new developments by measures such as:

- tap flow regulators
- low volume capacity baths
- reduced flow, aerated showers
- low volume, dual flush wcs
- water efficient appliances
- rainwater harvesting tanks

Coastal Change

As sea water meets cliffs and shores, it causes sediment or rocks to be broken down and washed out to sea. This can cause coastal erosion where the shoreline retreats, or accretion if sediment builds up elsewhere over time. This process is likely to happen quicker during storms and high winds. Consideration needs to be given to whether policy is required to either, identifying land which is unsuitable for development, or requiring consideration of such issues on a site by site basis.

Flooding

Thanet's main areas at risk of flooding are the former Wantsum Channel area and Margate Old Town area. The NPPF states that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk, but without increasing the risk of flooding elsewhere. It explains the approach that should be taken for development in flood risk areas in the main NPPF document and also in an accompanying Technical Paper.

Surface Water Flooding

Localised surface water flooding can be addressed by using Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS). Surface water runoff in built up areas tends to flow rapidly into the sewer system, which places a burden on the sewerage network and increases flood risk downstream as piped systems have limited capacity. SUDS can slow the rate at which water disperses, thus reducing the risk of flooding.

Types of SUDS which can be used include:

- Green roofs -Multi-layered systems comprising of vegetation cover or landscaping above a drainage layer
- Rainwater Harvesting - Re-use water and reduce the rates of surface run-off
- Rain Gardens - Captures and soaks up water that runs off roofs ,driveways and other hard surfaced areas. Acts as a filter so clean water then slowly soaks into the ground. Planted with trees and shrubs suitable for moist conditions
- Permeable Paving - Allows surface water to infiltrate through the paving into the soil beneath. Water can be temporarily stored in the paving before it is infiltrated or released into a drainage system
- Infiltration/filtration trenches -A shallow, excavated channel to create an underground reservoir – filtration trenches include a perforated pipe so water filtrates into the surrounding soil and is then transferred to a disposal unit

Infiltration methods are unlikely to be appropriate in some parts of Thanet due to the quality of the groundwater. Groundwater from the chalk rock beneath the Isle of Thanet is used to supply water for drinking water, agriculture, horticulture and industry. It also feeds the springs that emerge along the coast and near the marshes. Thanet's groundwater is extremely vulnerable to contamination as substances (natural substances and man-made chemicals) are able to pass rapidly through the thin soils and the natural fissures (cracks) in the Chalk rock to the groundwater below the ground surface.

Sustainable design and construction in new development

The Council's Corporate Plan aims to increase the proportion of developments which are based on sustainable energy and energy efficient buildings.

The Code for Sustainable Homes is the national standard for the sustainable design and construction of new homes. The Code aims to reduce our carbon emissions and create homes that are more sustainable. There are 6 code levels which new developments can aim to achieve and relate to the minimum percentage reduction in emissions – Level 1 is a 10% reduction and Level 6 would be a zero carbon home

The Code for Sustainable Homes levels are set out in Table 10 below.

Table 10 – Code for Sustainable Homes

Level	% energy efficiency higher than Part L1A of the Building Regulations	Daily water usage (litres)per person
1	10	120
2	18	120
3	25	105
4	44	105
5	100	80
6	Zero carbon	80

Source: *www.gov.uk*

The requirements to provide these could have an impact on the viability of development in Thanet. The Council commissioned an Economic Viability Assessment of development to inform its review of the SHLAA. Part of this assessment included an assessment of the impact upon viability of providing homes to sustainable and lifetime standards and to support mixed communities.

Table 11 summarises the findings, based on a recommended provision of affordable housing at 30%:

Table 11 – Viability of Code for Sustainable Homes Levels in Thanet

Code Level	Viable
3	Yes
3 + water requirement at level 5	Yes
4	Yes
4 + water requirement at level 5	Affordable housing provisions would need to be reduced from 30% to 20% for development to be viable
5	Affordable housing provisions would need to be reduced from 30% to 10% for development to be viable

Source: *Economic Viability Assessment of development in Thanet (2012)*

The evidence indicates that for viability reasons, it may be unrealistic to request new developments to be built at the highest code levels in order to improve quality, as this would likely inhibit development. This viability evidence was based upon a set of assumptions, which may need to be reviewed alongside the development of proposed policies.

The design of a building or development can help adapt to climate change by increasing solar gain and reducing winter heat loss

There are measures that can be taken in the design of new development that will help reduce energy consumption and provide resilience to increased temperatures, such as:

- the use of landform
- layout
- provision of adequate space for recycling and composting
- building orientation
- tree planting
- landscaping

Landscaping can be particularly beneficial as it can provide stepping stones, wildlife corridors or new habitats, and contribute to Thanet's Green Infrastructure network. In terms of adapting to climate change, building integrated vegetation (i.e. planting on building walls and roofs) can help to reduce solar gain as vegetation has a much higher reflective capacity than masonry, as well as providing a cooling effect through evaporation of water and water from plants back into the atmosphere. Planting can also help mitigate against poor air quality by presenting a large surface area for filtering air. A large tree can deliver the same cooling capacity as five large air conditioning units running for 20 hours a day during hot weather. New planting can help provide more comfortable, cooler spaces via summer shading.

District Heating

District heating schemes supply heat from a central source directly to homes and businesses through a network of pipes carrying hot water. This means that individual homes and business do not need to generate their own heat on site.

Large energy users, or 'anchor loads' are an essential part of a district heating network to provide a base heat demand that will allow a system to run efficiently. Anchor loads could be large energy users such as industry, schools, hospitals or leisure centres with heated swimming pools. Map 5 shows a heat map for Thanet showing potential areas suitable for District Heating (Renewable Energy for Kent).

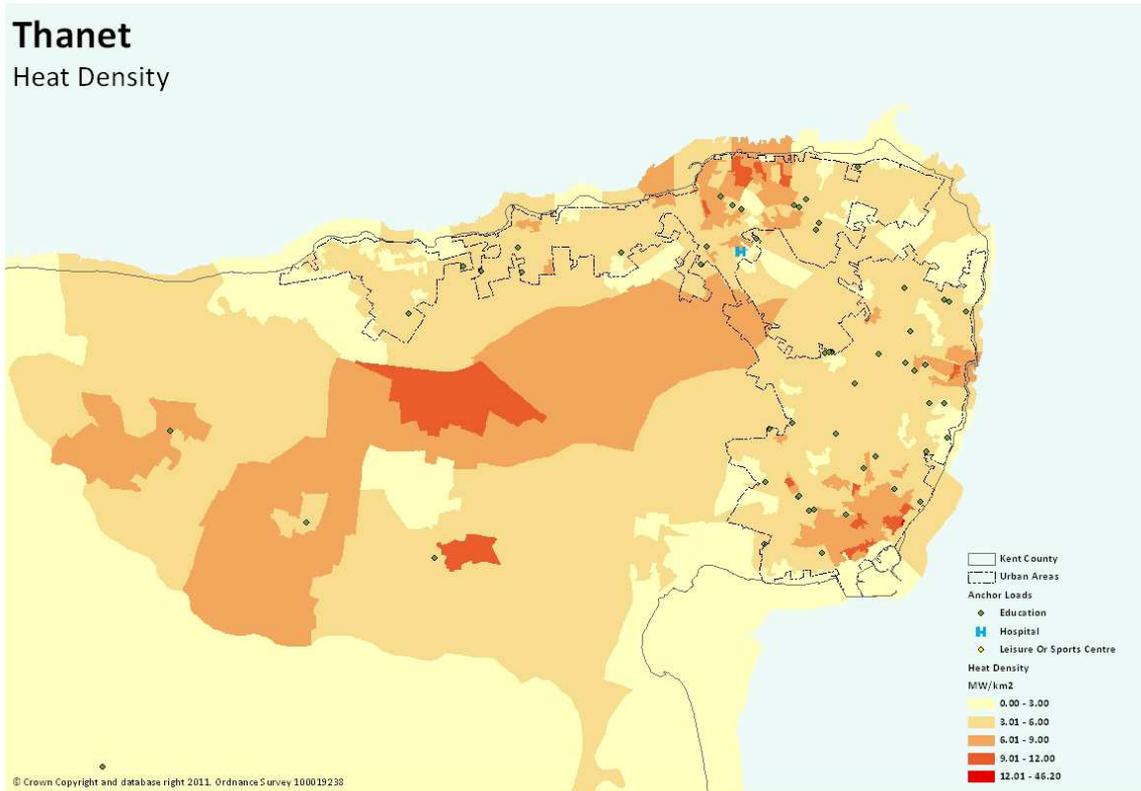
District heating is most suitable where there is a high density of built development, and especially where there is a mix of building types (The larger high heat density area shown outside the urban boundary is the airport). This diversity of energy demand helps to keep combined heat and power (CHP) or boiler plant running in a more steady state for longer, which is more efficient.

Evidence shows that district heating networks may come forward at a variety of scales.

Wind Energy

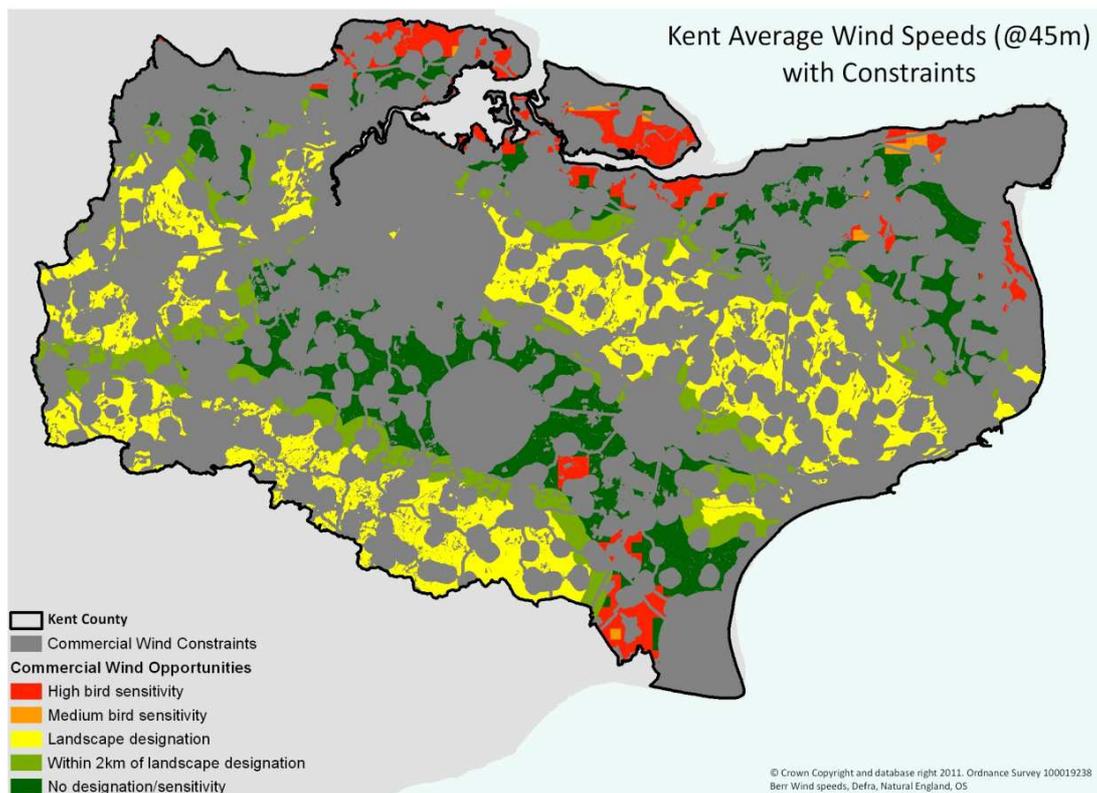
Map 6 below shows where there are opportunities and constraints for potential large scale wind developments (Kent Renewable Energy Report). The areas that have no commercial wind opportunities, due to the wind speeds, have been greyed out on the map. Other constraints include roads, railways, airports, built up areas, local nature designations and bridleways and footpaths.

Map 5 - Heat Map for Thanet



Source: Renewable Energy for Kent. Aecom 2012.

Map 6 - Average Wind Speeds for Kent

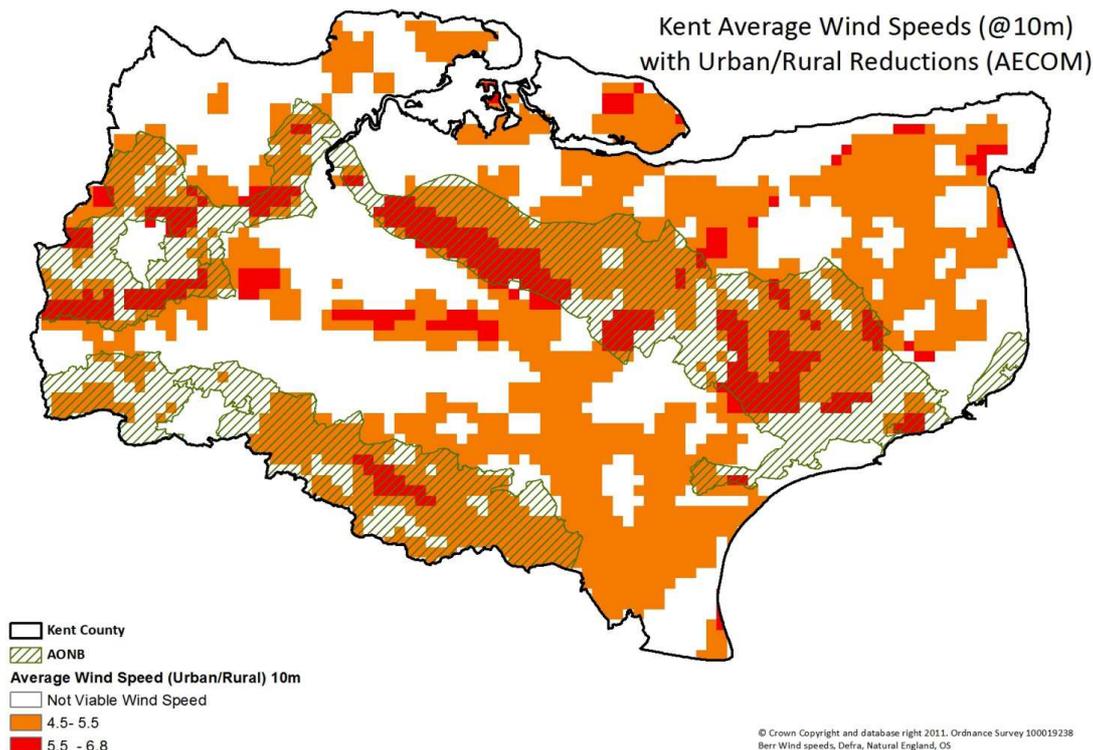


Source: *Renewable Energy for Kent. Aecom 2012.*

Map 6 shows Thanet as being greyed out, therefore constrained and with few suitable areas for large scale wind development.

Map 7 below shows the potential for medium and small scale wind development. The map shows that much of the district does not achieve sufficient wind speed for medium and small scale wind. However there are some areas where sufficient wind speeds may be achievable.

Map 7 - Potential for Medium and Small Scale wind development



Source: *Renewable Energy for Kent. Aecom 2012.*

Medium and small scale turbines are less efficient and, proportionally to energy output, are more expensive. However they have fewer barriers for deployment and can help raise awareness of the importance of low carbon energy. Local assessment will need to examine the realistic potential for small scale wind in more detail, as it is suggested that small turbines should only really be promoted where wind speeds are good and the site is not obstructed by trees and other buildings. Consideration may also need to be given to the proximity of any proposed turbines to the airport as they can affect the airports surveillance radar and instrument landing systems.

Promoting alternatives to the private car

The most significant change likely to generate demand for travel will result from new housing development. The proportion of households with access to a car in Thanet remains lower than in any other district in the county. KCC's Carbon Footprint Report (2009) identifies Thanet as having the lowest per capita road transport carbon emissions, almost half the national figure. This could also be due to Thanet's peripheral location as 40% of carbon emissions come from freight vehicles. Due to the location of the District, it does not have significant levels of through-traffic.

Despite Thanet's comparatively low emissions from transport, there are still areas which exceed national standards as the volume of traffic passing through those areas has polluted the air quality to a level which fails to meet the government's air quality standards, and could have a detrimental impact on our quality of life. Air quality is dealt with more specifically elsewhere in this consultation.

It is necessary, therefore, to consider the location of development in areas accessible to a range of services on foot and by public transport, preventing urban sprawl and improving local high streets and town centres. These issues are discussed further in the Housing and Transport sections.

Other measures to consider include providing safe and attractive cycling and walking opportunities, including showers and changing facilities in employment related development, and locating cycle parks close to town centres/entrances

Richborough

In March 2012 the cooling towers at the Richborough Power Station site were demolished. The site is included in Kent County Council's Waste Local Plan for waste to energy development. There have also been a number of renewable energy developments in recent years at and around the site.

Issue 15 - Which policies do we need to maintain a safe and healthy environment?

Introduction

Why do we need to address this issue?

There are various issues that may need to be addressed by planning policy in order to protect the environment, including:

- Pollution,
- contaminated land,
- unstable and derelict land,
- air quality,
- noise,
- light pollution, and
- groundwater quality.

National planning policy requires new development to be appropriate for its location in order to prevent unacceptable risks from pollution and land instability. It highlights the importance of considering the acceptable use of land for any proposed development, rather than the control of processes or emissions as these are subject to approval under pollution control regimes. Planning decisions should ensure that any new development in Air Quality Management Areas is consistent with the Air Quality Action Plan, and that planning policies and decisions limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, dark landscapes and nature conservation.

What evidence we have on this issue

- Air Quality Action Plan
- The Council has prepared a Quality Environment Topic Paper

Key Facts and Information

The following key facts are important when considering which policies we need to maintain a safe and healthy environment:

- There is pollution control legislation to control potentially polluting development. However the risk of pollution is a material consideration in determining planning applications.
- There are sites in Thanet that have been used for the deposit of refuse or waste so may generate harmful gases.
- There are some areas in Thanet where ground stability may be an issue, including areas such as the marshes, land overlying the caves at Ramsgate and Margate, and at Dane Valley Road, Margate.
- Some sites in Thanet are known to be contaminated.
- Thanet generally has very good air quality; however there are areas at The Square in Birchington and High Street St Lawrence, Ramsgate where air quality is poor due to pollution from road transport. An urban wide Air Quality Management Area has been declared to enable effective management of air quality.

- There are currently planning policies to control noise generated by development, including aircraft noise.
- Light pollution is currently controlled using the Institute of Lighting Engineers guidance.
- Thanet's groundwater is of poor quality and is vulnerable to contamination due to Thanet's thin soils and cracks in the chalk rock, which means pollution would soak through quickly to the groundwater. However the groundwater is used to supply water for drinking water, agriculture, horticulture and industry and also feeds the springs that emerge along the coast near the marshes, so it is important that there is no further contamination to the groundwater.
- The Thanet Local Plan 2006 included policies addressing all of the above issues.

Considering which policies we need to maintain a safe and healthy environment

Along with the key facts and information above, the following are factors to take into account and to help you consider which policies we need to maintain a safe and healthy environment

Potentially Polluting Development

Although pollution is controlled under separate legislation, it is still considered necessary to weigh up the effects of development that might cause the release of pollutants to water, land or air, or from noise, dust, vibration, light or heat, when deciding whether or not to grant planning permission.

Landfill Sites

There are sites in Thanet that have been used for landfill, or that are close to landfill sites. Sites that have been used for the deposit of refuse or waste may generate explosive or otherwise harmful gasses. Thanet has approximately 26 such sites which are all listed in the National Landfill Atlas (Environment Agency).

A former landfill site will be unlikely to be actively gassing after 40-50 years of its closure. The Council is required to consult the Environment Agency, as Waste Regulation Authority, before granting consent for development within 250m of land which is, or has within 30 years of the relevant application, been used for the deposit of refuse or waste.

Unstable Land

For development on unstable land, it may be necessary for the developer to carry out specialist investigations and assessments to determine the stability of the site proposed for development and identify any remedial measures that will be needed to deal with instability.

Contaminated Land

For development on contaminated land, a site investigation and assessment may be needed to establish the levels of contamination present and identify any remedial measures to clean the site to make it suitable for its proposed end use.

This is an issue that could be included in planning policy.

Local Air Quality Monitoring

The Council has an Air Quality Action Plan to address the Urban Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) that was declared in 2011 where air quality fails to meet required standards.

The Action Plan considers a broad approach to strategic planning, transport planning, sustainability and climate change.

Planning is an effective tool to improve air quality. It can be used to locate development to reduce emissions overall, and reduce the direct impacts of new development, through policy requirements.

An AQMA makes consideration of the air quality impacts of a proposed development important. However, there is still a need to regard air quality as a material factor in determining planning applications in any location. This is particularly important where the proposed development is not physically within the AQMA, but could have adverse impacts on air quality within it, or where air quality in that given area is close to exceeding guideline objectives itself.

General Noise Control, Aircraft Noise, Aircraft Noise and Residential Development

The Government's Noise Policy Statement for England stated priority is to:

'Avoid significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life from environmental, neighbour and neighbourhood noise within the context of Government policy on sustainable development'.

The second aim is to mitigate and minimise adverse impacts, and the third is to contribute to the improvement of health and quality of life through effective management control of noise.

Policies could be included in the local plan to reflect these aims in terms of general noise, and also aircraft noise.

Light Pollution

Different forms of light pollution are identified as:

- Light Spillage – artificial illumination that results in the spillage of light that is likely to cause irritation, annoyance or distress to others
- Light Trespass – the spilling of light beyond the boundary of the property on which the light source is located
- Light Glare – the uncomfortable brightness of a light source when viewed against a dark background
- Sky Glow – the brightening of the night sky above our towns and cities

Due to Thanet's open landscapes and vast skies, poor outdoor lighting could have a substantial adverse effect on the character of the area well beyond the site on which the lighting is located.

Groundwater Protection Zones

Hazards to Thanet's groundwater include petrol stations, gas works, drainage from roads, drainage from the airport, leakage from sewers, pesticide storage, septic tanks, sheep dips, and farm buildings.

Uses that can cause pollution to the groundwater include dry cleaners, mechanics, scrap metal, photo processing, and some sustainable drainage systems.

In Thanet there are considerable risks to the groundwater from both urban and rural activities. This risks are intensified by the compact nature of the District.

Issue 16 - How can we provide high quality homes, developments and neighbourhoods?

Introduction

Why do we need to address this issue?

Good design can help improve and enhance areas by ensuring high quality developments, and can help reduce the opportunities for crime and the fear of crime.

National planning policy places a high importance on good design stating that pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life. Planning should seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunity to improve the character and quality of an area.

What evidence we have on this issue

The Council has prepared a Quality Development Topic Paper which provides more detail and evidence relating to the issues of general design principles, heritage assets, Areas of High Townscape Value, housing density, development on garden land and sustainable design and construction (although the consultation questions for this are dealt with in the Climate Change section)

Key Facts and Information

The following key facts are important when considering how we can use design policies to help create homes and communities that people will be attracted to and want to live in

Thanet's towns, villages, coast and countryside enjoy a diverse and rich built heritage which contributes significantly to the District's unique sense of place and identity. There are 21 conservation areas and approximately 2500 listed buildings – the highest concentration in the South East. There are also Areas of High Townscape Value which have valuable characteristics. However there are some areas in the district where the townscape quality is not quite so good, with developments of mediocre and poor quality, and areas of neglect. The historic town centres contain a high concentration of listed buildings. The urban areas have been developed to a high density, with high numbers of flats – largely due to the availability of large properties formerly used as hotels which lend themselves to conversion to flats, and the subdivision of larger family homes. Some of the urban areas boast a rich architectural heritage including attractive Victorian Terraces and Regency Squares and large and attractive and art deco properties along the coasts. Some suburbs and the rural villages are characterised by lower density development, with large, well-spaced properties and a number of tree lined streets.

General Design Principles

Planning policy has been used to ensure appropriate design in developments since the adoption of the 1998 Isle of Thanet Local Plan. The 2006 Thanet Local Plan design policy (D1) has been saved, is still being successfully used and has been supported by planning inspectors at appeal.

Areas of High Townscape Value

Areas of High Townscape Value (AHTVs) were first identified in the Isle of Thanet Local Plan 1998, and were also included in the Thanet Local Plan 2006. The AHTVs are considered to possess certain characteristics meriting special recognition, mainly the separation between buildings, the open form of development and the contribution made by landscaping.

Thanet Local Plan policy D7 identifies 11 AHTVs and only allows development that is complimentary to the special character of those areas.

The existing areas are:

Callis Court Road, Broadstairs

Holly Lane, Northdown

Canterbury Road, Westgate

Palm Bay Avenue, Cliftonville

North Foreland, Broadstairs

Royal Esplanade, Broadstairs

Royal Esplanade/Prince Edward's Promenade, Ramsgate

South Cliff Parade and Western Esplanade, Broadstairs

Kingsgate Avenue, Broadstairs

Park Avenue, Broadstairs

Sea Road, Westgate

Area including Shakespeare Road, Constable Road, Wilkie Road, Nasmyth Road, Colman's Stairs Road and Spencer Road, Birchington

Cliff Road and The Parade (part), Birchington

This policy has been successfully used and supported by planning inspectors at appeals.

Considering how we provide high quality homes, developments and neighbourhoods

Along with the key facts and information above, the following are factors to take into account and to help you consider how we can use design policies to help create homes and communities that people will be attracted to and want to live in

Green Infrastructure/Landscaping

Green Infrastructure can be created through landscaping and through design – there is potential for the creation of wildlife corridors and stepping stones in new developments. Landscaping can soften the impact of new buildings, lend a sense of maturity to new development and help to establish a sense of place. It also has a crucial role in terms of wildlife habitat creation and improving biodiversity, particularly in urban areas. However it should be an integral part of the design of a development, rather than consisting of 'offcuts' of leftover land or as a way of camouflaging poor design.

Safe places and communities

There are opportunities to facilitate meetings between members of the community who might not otherwise come into contact with each other, including through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres and active street frontages which bring together those who work, live and play in the vicinity. Safe and accessible developments with clear and legible

pedestrian routes and high quality open space will also help achieve this by encouraging the active and continual use of public areas.

Thanet suffers higher crime rates than the average for Kent. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on councils to do all they reasonably can to reduce crime and disorder locally and improve people's quality of life as a result.

Design can help achieve a safer environment including the following ways:

- Well defined routes, spaces and entrances
- Ensuring different uses do not conflict
- Ensuring publicly accessible spaces are over-looked
- Places that promote a sense of ownership
- Physical protection (i.e. security features)
- Places where human activity creates a sense of safety
- Future management and maintenance

Advertisements

Advertisements need planning permission, and it is important that they are controlled through planning policy as they can form an integral part of the streetscene providing gaiety and colour, or they can be alien, intrusive and discordant. It is also important to make sure that they are not a danger to the public or highways. It is particularly important to consider their impact when they are located in conservation areas, since there are a significant number of commercial premises in conservation areas in Thanet's historic town centres.

Density

Density is a measure of the number of dwellings which can be accommodated on a site or in an area. Housing density can affect the streetscene in a number of ways including:

- The space between buildings
- Amenity and private access
- Parking
- Provision/retention of trees and shrubs
- Surface water run off

The 2006 Thanet Local Plan requires special justification for developments of less than 30 dwellings per hectare, and for less than 50 units per hectare for developments in town and district centres and other locations with good public transport accessibility.

To give an idea of the context of housing densities, Table 12 below shows the densities achieved by different types of housing form:

Table 12 – Densities of different forms of Housing

Dwelling type	Dwellings per hectare
Detached houses	10
Semi-detached houses on street	16
Semi-detached houses on cul-de-sac	31
Terraced houses – medium frontage	53
Terraced houses – wide frontage	44
Flats – 4 storey perimeter blocks	155
Flats – 4 storey cluster blocks	67
Mixed houses and flats	140

Source: Llewelyn-Davies, 2000, cited in <http://cibworld.xs4all.nl/dl/publications/Pub281/14Chapter-10.pdf>

Higher density developments could have positive or negative impacts:

Positive:

- Conserves land by reducing the loss of open countryside/Greenfield land.
- Where located in a built-up urban area they will be well served by public transport, with many journeys achievable by foot or bicycle, thus reducing the need for car travel.
- Cost of providing infrastructure for utilities such as water, gas, electricity and waste disposal reduces.
- Creates vitality and diversity.

Negative:

- Large numbers of flatted developments could lead to a transient community (as has happened in Cliftonville).
- Large numbers of flatted development result in small, poor quality developments, properties owned by absent landlords so poorly maintained.
- Lack of open spaces/landscaping.
- If located in more rural areas there is potential for traffic congestion due to reliance on private car.

Thanet has some areas which are already densely developed. Some areas such as Cliftonville have seen significant numbers of conversions of large buildings (often previously used as hotels) into flatted accommodation which has, in some areas, had a detrimental impact due to small, poor quality developments, absent landlords, and a transient population. It could be argued that setting a lower density in such areas could reduce the proliferation of flats. However, due to the nature of some sites available for development in these areas, it may not be possible to develop anything other than at a high density.

Other areas of the district, such as AHTVs, benefit from lower density developments due to the character and appearance of the area – it could be considered appropriate to limit the density of new developments in these areas.

Development on Garden Land

In June 2010, national planning policy was changed removing private residential gardens from the definition of previously developed land. This gave the Council more flexibility to be able to refuse the inappropriate development of garden land which could result in 'town cramming', and protect the character of residential neighbourhoods.

In Thanet, applications have been refused for development on garden land due to the impact development would have on the character and appearance of the streetscene. Some parts of the district enjoy a high quality environment, with spacious surroundings, and a development within a garden could have a detrimental effect. Residential gardens also form part of Thanet's green infrastructure – the district is deficient in areas of open space (discussed in more detail in the Natural Environment paper) so development of garden sites may not be appropriate, and may be unnecessary, if there is still a supply of housing sites available. There could also be instances where a development within a garden could be beneficial to the streetscene, where the property would be a frontage development.

Other Design Issues

We consider the following issues are also important and have included them in previous design policies :

- Residential Amenity Value

- Character and appearance of surrounding area
- Compatibility with and impact on neighbouring buildings
- Pedestrian/Cyclist/vehicle movement
- Provision for disabled access
- Integration of public art
- Provision for clothes drying facilities and refuse disposal/dustbin storage
- Incorporation of sustainable drainage systems

Areas of High Townscape Value

There may be other areas in Thanet worthy of Area of High Townscape Value designation, or the areas that are currently designated may no longer be appropriate. There may also be areas of special character that should be enhanced by planning policy.

Issue 17 - How can we protect and enhance Thanet's heritage assets and their settings?

Introduction

Why do we need to address this issue?

A key issue for the new Local Plan will be to ensure that all new development respects and understands the heritage of the District, balancing the need for growth against the need to protect and enhance the historic environment

Government policy states that local plans should set out 'a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment'. It places more emphasis on putting heritage assets to viable uses, the wider benefits that can be achieved by the conservation of the historic environment and the desirability of new development in making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. It also includes criteria which would need to be fulfilled for a proposed development which would lead to substantial harm or loss of a heritage asset.

What evidence we have on this issue

A Heritage Strategy is being prepared for Thanet. It is proposed that it will be aligned with the Local Plan and we have started to develop an evidence base to support this strategy and the Local Plan.

The evidence includes assessing the significance of heritage assets in the area, including their settings, and the contribution they make to their environment. It also involves assessing the potential of finding new sites of archaeological or historic interest.

Evidence relating to the historic environment in Thanet can currently be found in the Kent Historic Environment Record, as well as Conservation Areas Appraisals and Management Plan.

Key Facts and Information

The following key facts are important when considering how we protect and enhance heritage assets and their settings.

- Thanet has 21 conservation areas which vary considerably in age, size, character and style.
- There are approximately 2,500 statutory listed buildings in Thanet – the highest concentration in the South East.
- Thanet has a number of highly significant Grade I or II* listed buildings, including St Augustine's and Sir Moses Montefiore Synagogue, Ramsgate, Scenic Railway, Margate.
- Thanet has 12 Scheduled Ancient monuments, including Monastic Grange and pre-conquest Nunnery at Minster Abbey.
- Thanet is also rich in archaeological remains. The remains of all periods from Neolithic to Modern are recorded within the area and consist of both burial and settlement archaeology.

- There are also Areas of High Townscape Value which have valuable characteristics.

Thanet is a pre-dominantly coastal district which is interspersed with rural settlements. Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs are the principal settlements in Thanet District, and each is famous for its seaside setting and attractive historic town centres.

Thanet can trace its origins to pre-historic activity with the remains of all periods from the Neolithic to Modern recorded within the area, and consist of both burial and settlement archaeology. It is this rich heritage and the close proximity to the sea that gives the district its special character and distinctiveness. This is emphasised by the large number of highly graded designated heritage assets, often connected to the strong relationship with the sea either in the form of commerce, health or leisure.

Thanet can be described as a district with a diverse and vibrant character. The character of the district coastal areas owes much to the juxtaposition of grand seafront developments and the smaller scale domestic 'vernacular' buildings associated with working harbours and holiday resorts. The character of the rural areas owes much to the strong links with early Christianity and the ensuing development of medieval parishes centred on the church.

Some of the key distinctive qualities of Thanet's historic environment include:

- The richness of 18th, 19th and 20th century development linked to the sea (including grand residential terraces, harbours, leisure and health facilities as well as defence.)
- The strong associations with internationally recognised people including AW Pugin, Sir Moses Montefiore and George Sanger and their significant legacies within the built environment.
- The presence of significant historic technical innovation (including the Scenic Railway, Clifton baths, Albion Gardens)
- The wealth of public and private historic open spaces (including many planned squares, parks, cemeteries, chines, cliff top promenades, coastal topography and significant views)
- The Victorian/Edwardian suburbs and post-war housing developments (including Westgate on Sea)

Considering how we protect and enhance Thanet's heritage assets and their settings

Along with the key facts and information above, the following are factors to take into account and to help you consider how we protect and enhance heritage assets and their settings

National Policy requires Local Plans to include a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. Given the importance of the District's heritage and its wider social, economic and environmental benefits and the role that the historic environment can play in regeneration, this is considered essential for the District.

Based upon our current understanding of the historic environment in Thanet, we consider the following issues to be integral to developing a positive strategy for the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.

- The continued preservation and enhancement of existing, and, where appropriate, designation of new Conservation Areas. This would need to be supported by the on-going production and review of Conservation Area Appraisals. Consideration will also

need to be given to the principle of Article 4 directions in Conservation Areas to restrict permitted development rights.

- The continued protection and enhancement of listed buildings, historic parks and gardens and scheduled monuments, buildings of local interest and other heritage assets.
- The identification and, where appropriate, protection of the District's archaeological heritage.
- Addressing Heritage at Risk (including those assets on the Heritage at Risk Register) in a positive and proactive manner.
- Listed buildings are designated by English Heritage under certain criteria; however there are other important historic buildings in Thanet which are not listed, so currently not protected by any specific policy. These buildings could form a 'local list' which would be designated by the Council, and subsequently afforded protection through planning policy.
- Ensuring that information about heritage assets produced as part of plan making and development proposals are made publicly accessible in order to improve our understanding of the historic environment.

Policy options

National policy sets out in detail the way in which applications affecting heritage assets and non-designated heritage assets should be determined. It is therefore not considered necessary to repeat national policy; however it may be necessary to develop policies relating to the following issues:

- To support the function of a 'local list' it would be necessary to include a policy within the Local Plan setting out the criteria that will be considered for applications.
- There is an increasing number of planning applications
- for solar panels, and other renewable energy installations, to both public buildings and private dwellings. It is likely that applications will be received for listed buildings, and buildings in conservation areas. It may therefore be necessary to develop a criteria based policy
- There are a number of historically significant sites in the District. It may be necessary to develop site specific policies where particular requirements for the development of this site are required in order to protect and enhance the historic value of the site.

Issue 18 - How should we plan for community facilities?

Introduction

Why do we need to address this issue?

Social, cultural and community facilities are an integral part of developing inclusive and cohesive communities.

One of the core principles in the NPPF is to take account of and support local strategies to support health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities to meet local needs.

National planning policy also states that planning policies and decisions should plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities and other local services, and to guard against the unnecessary loss of such facilities.

It states that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields should not be built on unless the land is surplus to requirements, or the development will result in better provision of open space or sports and recreational provision.

Public rights of way and access should be protected and enhanced, and opportunities should be sought to provide better facilities for users.

What evidence we have on this issue

We are working with infrastructure providers to understand what facilities are required to support new development, and to inform the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Key Facts and Information

The following key facts are important when considering how we can make sure there is sufficient provision of shared facilities for our communities.

The need for new community facilities, and more detail about how we can provide them, will be addressed once the number and location of homes that will be built in the district has been decided.

The Thanet Local Plan 2006 includes policy CF1 which is a criteria based policy granting the development of new community facilities or the re-use of existing community facilities for alternative community uses. It also resists the change of use or re-use of a community facility for a non-community use. Policy CF2 requires development contributions where a new development results in the need to provide new or upgraded community facilities. Policy CF3 permits the development of new educational and training facilities.

The Planning Obligations and Developer Contributions SPD, adopted in 2010 and subject to public consultation, sets out when the provision of new community facilities will be required in new developments (for developments of 10 or more dwellings), including

- Leisure & Recreation – including play space, sports facilities, open space, youth facilities
- Education – including Primary, Secondary, Adult Education

- Adult Social Services

This SPD will be re-written in conjunction with the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Considering how we plan for community facilities

Along with the key facts and information above, the following are factors to take into account and to help you consider how we plan for community facilities.

Facilities such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship can help enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.

In addition to requiring new developments to be provided with the necessary community facilities, there are other ways we can make sure there is a sufficient provision of these facilities:

- Protecting existing facilities.
- Allowing new facilities to be developed.

The Council currently uses saved local plan policy CF1 for assessing planning applications relating to community facilities.

The policy has been used in decisions to grant planning permission for new or additional community facilities. Examples include:

- Extensions to accommodate additional dental or doctors surgeries
- Change of use of building to a church
- Erection of children's play equipment
- Erection of building to contain swimming pool and changing facilities
- Erection of building comprising health care centre and pharmacy
- Erection of Parish Hall

The policy requires the re-use of a community facility for other uses to be justified by demonstrating that there is no longer sufficient community use for the facility. There have been instances where planning permission has been granted and a community facility has been lost. The policy has also been used to ensure that replacement community facilities are provided in the area.

There have been instances where buildings previously used for community facilities have been demolished, so the redevelopment of the site has not been considered for a replacement community use as that facility no longer exists. If community facilities are lost, they are often difficult to replace. We need to ensure that any policy is specific and strong enough to protect existing community facilities, and can ensure the replacement of alternative community facilities where there is a local need.

4.4 Transport

What is included in this section

This section covers the topic area of transport and considers the following issue:

19. How can we enable an efficient and effective transport system?

Strategic Priority and Objectives

It is a proposed strategic priority of the Local Plan to **provide an efficient and effective transport system, delivering the transport infrastructure required to support existing communities and new development.**

In achieving this we consider the following draft objectives to be appropriate:

- Promote development patterns and behaviour that will minimise the need to travel or use private cars to access services and amenities.
- Facilitate the enhanced integration of the High Speed 1 network with wider public transport and highways networks by supporting infrastructure that would maximise its benefits.
- Promote an efficient public transport system alongside expansion of larger scale transport infrastructure.
- Facilitate provision of direct walking and cycling routes to reduce potential congestion, noise and pollution.
- Deliver required improvements to the road network in order to reduce congestion and pollution, and to accommodate new development.
- Facilitate the provision of infrastructure required to support new development and communities, including water, energy, telecommunications, utilities, waste, health, social care, education, flood risk and coastal change management.

Issue 19 - How can we enable an efficient and effective transport system?

Introduction

Why do we need to address this issue?

An efficient and effective transport system will be important in achieving the strategic priorities proposed for the Local Plan. For example our communities need affordable and convenient access to the employment, training, shops and community facilities which they may require from day to day. Reducing the need to travel, especially by private cars, can help cut down emissions which affect air quality and contribute to climate change.

National planning policy expects us to promote sustainable development. This includes managing patterns of growth to make fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling and focusing significant development in locations which can be made sustainable. Specifically it emphasises the need to balance the system in favour of sustainable means of travel that will provide people with choice.

Kent County Council's transport delivery plan "Growth Without Gridlock" proposes a programme of strategic transport solutions to accompany planned growth in the County. Highlighted projects include potential for rail line speed improvements between Ramsgate and Ashford and a Thanet Parkway station in the vicinity of Manston Airport.

The East Kent Sustainable Community Strategy envisages a high quality integrated transport network with reduced congestion and pollution, offering a wide choice of accessible transport to all sections of the community. This includes effective connection of the wider public transport network with the high speed 1 rail service offering reduced journey times to London and the South East for all.

Our Corporate Plan emphasises the importance of transport for residents, business and visitors, and the need to address issues such as traffic flow, congestion, illegal nuisance parking and road safety. It focuses on the need to encourage sustainable travel by supporting improvements to public transport, increasing cycling, and walking routes and to review the parking strategy.

What evidence we have on this issue

To help us consider the most sustainable options for locating future development, how we can promote greater use of sustainable means of transport and how to tackle existing transport challenges we are preparing a Transport Strategy. Preparation of this Strategy will involve detailed assessment of transport issues, including dealing with significant congestion and delays in the transport network.

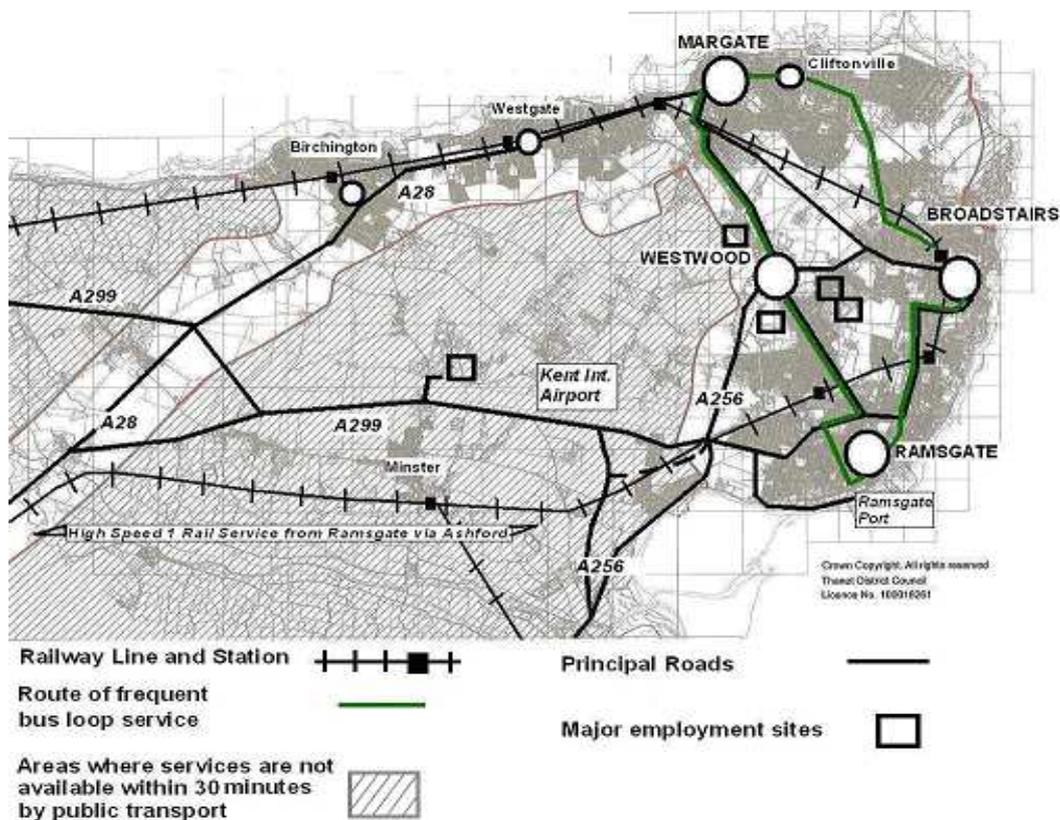
Key Facts and Information

The following key facts are important when considering how we can deliver an efficient and effective transport system.

- National planning policy recognises that different policies and measures will be required in recognition of different opportunities in different communities.

- Thanet has a highly individual pattern of development and associated transport links. The multi-centred urban area containing the coastal towns and Westwood is generally well served by a range of facilities that can be conveniently reached by public transport, facilitated in particular by the presence of the Thanet loop bus service. The rural villages however, are less well served and therefore more dependent on car based travel to access many such services.
- Thanet is served by seven railway stations. The domestic rail connection to the High Speed 1 rail link network has improved travel times between Thanet and London, helping to reverse previous perceptions of the district as peripheral by potential investors and by people who might wish to live in and commute from Thanet for work.
- Following opening of Westwood Cross in 2005, the Westwood area has developed as a destination in its own right. However, it occupies a key junction on the principal local road network, so we need a formal strategy to avoid future traffic congestion and enable safe and convenient travel to and within the area.
- Ramsgate Port and Manston Airport are significant pieces of transport infrastructure supporting an international gateway function for Thanet. Their connectivity with London and the Sandwich Corridor has been boosted by recent completion of the East Kent Access road improvement scheme.

Map 8 - Key Transport Links



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- The urban area of the Thanet Towns together with Cliffsend is designated as an air quality management area. A draft action plan aims, through various measures, to improve air quality generally (through reduced transport emissions) and in consequence achieve specific reductions in such emissions at St Lawrence in Ramsgate and The Square, Birchington. In focusing on increasing use of sustainable means of transport, the action plan notes the importance of locating development in a way that reduces emissions overall and of reducing the direct impact of new development, for example by contributing to measures to help implement the action plan.
- New and improved transport services and infrastructure require coordination by various agencies and may require funding by new development. The Transport Strategy referred to earlier will identify the major infrastructure required and guide delivery of future transport improvements.

Considering how we can deliver an efficient and effective transport system.

Along with the key facts and information above, the following are factors to take into account and to help you consider how we can deliver an efficient and effective transport system.

At the present time we believe the following specific transport issues in particular will need to be addressed in considering options for the Local Plan.

- Reducing the need to travel (especially by car) to access the facilities we need day to day.
- Encouraging more people to walk, cycle or use public transport.
- Making better use of the High Speed 1 rail link and integrating it with wider public transport and highways networks.
- Identifying solutions for dealing with significant congestion and delays in the transport network.
- Improving through-traffic flows at Westwood and facilitating convenient and safe movement within the area.
- The level and location of public car parking needed in the town centres.
- Deficiencies in the transport system to deal with existing problems or accommodate future growth.

Annex 1 Glossary of Terms

Affordable housing: Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market.

Social rented housing is owned by local authorities and private registered providers (as defined in section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008), for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. It may also be owned by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Homes and Communities Agency.

Affordable rented housing is let by local authorities or private registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing. Affordable Rent is subject to rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable).

Intermediate housing is homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels subject to the criteria in the Affordable Housing definition above. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent, but not affordable rented housing.

Homes that do not meet the above definition of affordable housing, such as “low cost market” housing, may not be considered as affordable housing for planning purposes.

Air Quality Management Areas: Areas designated by local authorities because they are not likely to achieve national air quality objectives by the relevant deadlines.

Article 4 direction: A direction which withdraws automatic planning permission granted by the General Permitted Development Order.

Best and most versatile agricultural land: Land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification.

Birds and Habitats Directives: European Directives to conserve natural habitats and wild fauna and flora.

Climate change adaptation: Adjustments to natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic factors or their effects, including from changes in rainfall and rising temperatures, which moderate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities.

Climate change mitigation: Action to reduce the impact of human activity on the climate system, primarily through reducing greenhouse gas emissions

Coastal Change Management Area: An area identified in Local Plans as likely to be affected by coastal change (physical change to the shoreline through erosion, coastal landslip, permanent inundation or coastal accretion).

Community Infrastructure Levy: A levy allowing local authorities to raise funds from owners or developers of land undertaking new building projects in their area.

Community Right to Build Order: An Order made by the local planning authority (under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) that grants planning permission for a site-specific development proposal or classes of development.

Core Strategy: The Council produced a consultation document for a Core Strategy in 2009. The Core Strategy was a high level document containing strategic policies. The Council is now producing a local plan which will include strategic level policies, site allocations and development management policies.

Decentralised energy: Local renewable energy and local low-carbon energy usually but not always on a relatively small scale encompassing a diverse range of technologies.

Designated heritage asset: A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.

Development Management: Development Management is the process by which planning applications are determined.

Development Plan: This includes adopted Local Plans and neighbourhood plans and is defined in Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

DPD: Development Plan Document. These are policy documents on a specific topic that make up part of the Development Plan. The Cliftonville Development Plan Document was adopted by the Council in February 2010.

Economic development: Development, including those within the B Use Classes, public and community uses and main town centre uses (but excluding housing development).

Ecological networks: These link sites of biodiversity importance.

Ecosystem services: The benefits people obtain from ecosystems such as, food, water, flood and disease control and recreation.

Edge of centre: For retail purposes, a location that is well connected and up to 300 metres of the primary shopping area. For all other main town centre uses, a location within 300 metres of a town centre boundary. For office development, this includes locations outside the town centre but within 500 metres of a public transport interchange. In determining whether a site falls within the definition of edge of centre, account should be taken of local circumstances.

EEA: Economic and Employment Assessment.

ELR: Employment Land Review.

European site: This includes candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas, and is defined in regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.

Geodiversity: The range of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils and landforms.

Green infrastructure: A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

GTAA: Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment. An assessment of the future need for accommodation for the gypsy and traveller community.

Heritage asset: A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

Historic environment: All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.

HMOs: Houses in Multiple Occupation: Housing which is occupied by 3 or more unrelated individuals sharing basic amenities.

HRA: Habitats Regulations Assessment. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 transposes EU Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats of wild flora and fauna into UK national law. The Regulations provide for the designation and protection of 'European sites', the protection of 'European protected species', and the adaptation of planning and other controls for the protection of European Sites. Assessments for significant effects on habitats must be carried out and mitigation measure identified.

International, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity: All international sites (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, and Ramsar sites), national sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and locally designated sites including Local Wildlife Sites.

Local Enterprise Partnership: A body, designated by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, established for the purpose of creating or improving the conditions for economic growth in an area.

Local Plan: The plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authorities in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Localism Act: The Localism Act was introduced in 2011. Its aim was to devolve powers from central government into the hands of individuals, communities and councils.

Main town centre uses: Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment facilities the more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, night-clubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).

National Planning Policy Framework. National planning policy (NPPF): This is the Government's statement of planning policy with which all Local Plan's must be in conformity. Where a local plan is silent on an issue planning decisions will be made in accordance with national policy. This document came into force in March 2012 and replaces the planning policy statements and planning policy guidance notes (PPS' and PPGs).

Neighbourhood plans: A plan prepared by a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum for a particular neighbourhood area (made under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

Older people: People over retirement age, including the active, newly-retired through to the very frail elderly, whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing for those looking to downsize from family housing and the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs.

Open space: All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

Out of centre: A location which is not in or on the edge of a centre but not necessarily outside the urban area.

Out of town: A location out of centre that is outside the existing urban area.

People with disabilities: People have a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment, and that impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. These persons include, but are not limited to, people with ambulatory difficulties, blindness, learning difficulties, autism and mental health needs.

Plan Period: The plan period we are working on is 2011-2031.

Planning condition: A condition imposed on a grant of planning permission (in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) or a condition included in a Local Development Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

Planning obligation: A legally enforceable obligation entered into under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal.

Playing field: The whole of a site which encompasses at least one playing pitch as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010.

Pollution: Anything that affects the quality of land, air, water or soils, which might lead to an adverse impact on human health, the natural environment or general amenity. Pollution can arise from a range of emissions, including smoke, fumes, gases, dust, steam, odour, noise and light.

Previously developed land: Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.

Primary shopping area: Defined area where retail development is concentrated (generally comprising the primary and those secondary frontages which are adjoining and closely related to the primary shopping frontage).

Primary and secondary frontages: Primary frontages are likely to include a high proportion of retail uses which may include food, drinks, clothing and household goods. Secondary

frontages provide greater opportunities for a diversity of uses such as restaurants, cinemas and businesses.

Priority habitats and species: Species and Habitats of Principle Importance included in the England Biodiversity List published by the Secretary of State under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

PSZ: Public Safety Zone. The Civil Aviation Authority is responsible for these zones. The policy objective is the restriction of development near civil airports and no increase in the number of people living, working or congregating in these zones.

Ramsar sites: Wetlands of international importance, designated under the 1971 Ramsar Convention.

Regional Spatial Strategy: The Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East is the South East Plan adopted in 2009. This was produced by the South East England Regional Assembly which later became the South East England Regional Planning Body. This organisation and the South East Plan have been revoked under the Localism Act 2011.

Renewable and low carbon energy: Includes energy for heating and cooling as well as generating electricity. Renewable energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment – from the wind, the fall of water, the movement of the oceans, from the sun and also from biomass and deep geothermal heat. Low carbon technologies are those that can help reduce emissions (compared to conventional use of fossil fuels).

Rural exception sites: Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. Small numbers of market homes may be allowed at the local authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.

Saved policies: Policies from the Thanet Local Plan 2006 that are still in place and form part of the Development Plan for Thanet, currently used for determining planning applications.

SCI: Statement of Community Involvement.

Shoreline Management Plans: A plan providing a large-scale assessment of the risk to people and to the developed, historic and natural environment associated with coastal processes.

SHLAA: Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment providing information to assess and allocate the best sites for new homes.

SHMA: Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

Site of Special Scientific Interest: Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Special Areas of Conservation: Areas given special protection under the European Union's Habitats Directive, which is transposed into UK law by the Habitats and Conservation of Species Regulations 2010.

Special Protection Areas: Areas which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds found within European Union countries. They are European designated sites, classified under the Birds Directive.

Stepping stones: Pockets of habitat that, while not necessarily connected, facilitate the movement of species across otherwise inhospitable landscapes.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Sustainability Appraisal (SA): A procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant environmental effects. The SA broadens this out to assess the economic, social and environmental effects.

Supplementary planning documents: Documents which add further detail to the policies in the Local Plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan.

Sustainable transport modes: Any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, low and ultra low emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport.

Town centre: Area defined on the local authority's proposal map, including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. References to town centres or centres apply to city centres, town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance.

Transport assessment: A comprehensive and systematic process that sets out transport issues relating to a proposed development. It identifies what measures will be required to improve accessibility and safety for all modes of travel, particularly for alternatives to the car such as walking, cycling and public transport and what measures will need to be taken to deal with the anticipated transport impacts of the development.

Transport statement: A simplified version of a transport assessment where it is agreed the transport issues arising out of development proposals are limited and a full transport assessment is not required.

Travel plan: A long-term management strategy for an organisation or site that seeks to deliver sustainable transport objectives through action and is articulated in a document that is regularly reviewed.

Wildlife corridor: Areas of habitat connecting wildlife populations.

Windfall sites: Sites which have not been specifically identified as available in the Local Plan process. They normally comprise previously-developed sites that have unexpectedly become available.

Annex 2 Background and Evidence Documents

Baseline Evidence
Thanet Economic and Employment Assessment December 2012 (Experian)
Employment Land Review 2010
Town Centre Retail, Leisure, Tourism and Cultural Assessment 2012 (Nathaniel Litchfield and Partners)
Strategic Housing Market Assessment for East Kent Sub Region June 2009
Economic and demographic forecasts for Thanet District Council, Feb 2013 (Business Intelligence, Research and Evaluation, Kent County Council)
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2010
East Kent Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment Report 2007-12
Housing Information Audits
Economic Viability Assessment of development in Thanet District June 2012
Village audits
Landscape Character Assessments and Updates, 1993, 2001, 2004 and 2012
Open Space Audit (2006)
Kent Habitats Surveys 2003 and 2012
Renewable Energy for Kent April 2012 – Part II: Underpinning the Vision (Aecom)
A Local Climate Impacts Profile for Kent – A summary of impacts from past severe weather events 1996-2010 (KCC)
Climate Local Kent Commitment
Cliftonville – Design for Future Climate II
Stour Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy (May 2003)
River Basin Management Plan – South East River Basin district (December 2009)
Water Resource Management Plan
Thanet Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) (2009)
Surface Water Management Plan (November 2012)
Shoreline Management Plan – Isle of Grain to South Foreland (2008)

Thanet Air Quality Action Plan 2013
Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report
Sustainability Appraisal Interim Assessment
Topic Papers
Employment Topic Paper
Housing Topic Paper
Houses in Multiple Occupation and Student Accommodation
Settlement Pattern and Hierarchy
Climate Change Topic Paper
Water Cycle Topic Paper
Quality Development and Heritage Topic Paper
Natural Environment Topic Paper
Quality Environment Topic Paper
Baseline Evidence/Topic Papers (in preparation)
Employment Land Review Update
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Update
Review of Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update
Transport Strategy
Infrastructure Delivery Plan
EK Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment Report (update)

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Thanet District Council

Thanet Local Plan

Issues and Options Consultation Questionnaire

Issue 1 - What level of employment growth should be planned for up to 2031?

1.1 Taking into account the evidence regarding future potential employment growth, which of the following employment growth options to 2031 do you think is most realistic?

Please select one option.

- Baseline - projects job growth taking into account historic trends resulting in 3,100 jobs
- Economic Higher Growth - assumes high job growth in the tourism and green economy sectors resulting in 5,100 jobs
- Economic Lower Growth - assumes that the economy will return to recession resulting in 1,200 jobs

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

1.2 To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should plan for additional employment growth at the airport?

Please select one option.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER

1.3 What level of employment growth at the airport do you consider to be more realistic?

Please select one option

- Airport High Growth - additional 2,420 jobs by 2031
- Airport Low Growth - additional 240 jobs by 2031
- No Growth

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

1.4 Do you have any further comments to make on the level of employment growth that should be planned for?

Issue 2 - How much employment land is needed and where?

2.1 The evidence indicates that there is a need for between 3 and 15 hectares of employment land (for office, industrial, storage and distribution) to 2031, with Thanet's current supply of vacant allocated employment land totally approximately 74 hectares (see Table 2). To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following options?

Please select

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
a) Provide the amount of land that the evidence indicates is required	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Provide the amount of land that the evidence indicates is required, plus additional land as a buffer to for example, ensure that there is sufficient choice, allow for one off developments and compensate for the loss of the land to other non B uses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Consider, where appropriate, using some of the existing allocated employment land for alternative purposes (If you agree or strongly agree, please specify below which uses you consider to be appropriate)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Maintain the existing supply of allocated employment land	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

2.2 In relation to the type and location of employment land, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Please select

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
a) We should provide a variety of sites in a range of locations across the district	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) We should provide all employment land in a single location or cluster in the district	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Thanet's need for employment land can be accommodated by a selection of sites from our existing supply (see Table 2)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) We should continue to protect the existing developed employment sites which are currently protected in the Thanet Local Plan 2006 (see Table 3)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) We should be flexible on our Business Parks and allow other job creating development in addition to office, industrial and warehouse uses.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWERS and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

2.3 Do you have any further comments to make in relation to how much employment land is needed and where?

Issue 3 - How can we promote our economic infrastructure assets?

3.1 Existing planning policies support the development, expansion and diversification of the airport subject to environmental criteria, as well as protecting particular land for airport related development.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that this policy approach should be continued?

Please select one option.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

3.2 In relation to Thanet's rail infrastructure and in order to contribute to the economic potential of the District, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following options?

Please select

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) Provide a new station designed to serve commuters and/or the airport	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Increase the use of existing stations, including providing increased capacity at Ramsgate Station	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWERS and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

3.3 Do you have any further comments to make in relation to Thanet's economic infrastructure assets?

Issue 4 – How should Thanet’s Town Centres Develop?

4.1 In relation to the future role of Thanet's town centres, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following options?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) The coastal towns should adopt a stronger role in providing convenience shopping (goods to meet everyday needs, including food)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Plan for a level of development at Westwood which would maintain its existing market share in the District and wider area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Additional growth should be planned for at Westwood to increase its market share	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

4.2 In addition to planning for retail needs, within each of the town centres, do you think that we should provide additional floorspace to accommodate the need for the following uses. Please select all that apply.

Please select

	Restaurants /Cafes	Takeaways	Pubs/Bars	Financial and Professional Services (banks etc.)
a) Westwood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Margate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Broadstairs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Ramsgate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

4.3 To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should be flexible in our town centres to enable leisure development?

Please select one option.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

Stage 1: Issues and Options Consultation Questionnaire

4.4 In relation to accommodating Thanet's need for town centre development, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Please select

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) In Margate town centre the existing vacant premises should be used to accommodate the need	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) In Ramsgate town centre the existing vacant premises should be used to accommodate the need	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) In Westwood the existing retail areas can be used to accommodate the need through redevelopment and/or reconfiguration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) In Broadstairs, as there is insufficient space within the existing town centre, land should be identified on the edge of Broadstairs town centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) In Broadstairs, as there is insufficient space within the existing town centre, the need should be accommodated at Westwood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

4.5 To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should continue to support small scale retail development in Thanet’s District and Local Centres (as set out above)?

Please select one option.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

4.6 Proposals for town centre uses over a particular size outside of the town centres will be subject to an impact test. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following local size thresholds being set?

Please select

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) Westwood Cross, Margate and Ramsgate - 1000 sqm	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Broadstairs, Cliftonville, Birchington and Westgate - 500 sqm	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Everywhere else in the District - 280 sqm	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

4.7 Do you have any further comments to make in relation to how Thanet's town centres should develop?

Issue 5 - How can we support the rural economy?

5.1 In relation to supporting the rural economy, to what extent do you agree or disagree that we should do the following?

Please select

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) Support farm diversification projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Protect existing and support the development of new village shops and services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Protect best and most versatile agricultural land	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Support agricultural related development, including farm retail units	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Support the conversion of existing rural buildings for economic development purposes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Support new build development for economic development purposes within the existing villages	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Support the need for agricultural related dwellings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWERS and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

5.2 Do you know of any barriers facing the food production industry that the Local Plan could address?

5.3 Do you have any further comments to make in relation to how we can support the rural economy?

Issue 6 - How can we support the visitor economy?

6.1 In relation to tourist accommodation, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following?

Please select

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) Support hotel developments in areas outside of the town centres	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Continue to support caravan parks (touring and static) in rural locations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Continue to restrict caravan parks (touring and static) at the coast	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Continue to restrict the redevelopment of existing self-catered accommodation where necessary, to maintain a reasonable choice of tourist accommodation in Thanet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

Stage 1: Issues and Options Consultation Questionnaire

6.2 In relation to providing new tourist facilities, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following?

Please select

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) We should continue to support new tourist facilities where this would extend or upgrade the range of tourist facilities, increase the attraction of tourists to the area or extend the season	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) We should identify particular sites (outside of the town centres) that would be suitable for tourism facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

6.3 In relation to protecting existing tourist facilities, which of the following options do you think would be best?

Please select one option.

- Protect all existing facilities to restrict their loss
- Only allow the loss of an existing facility where it has been demonstrated not to be viable
- Only protect identified sites which are of particular importance to Thanet's visitor economy

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

6.4 In relation to specific tourism uses, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following options?

Please select

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) Continue to zone Thanet's beaches as 'major holiday', 'intermediate' and 'undeveloped', depending on their character and level of facilities appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Continue to support language schools subject to their local impact	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Continue to only support amusement arcades in certain seafront areas of Margate and Ramsgate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Continue to allow amusement centres in the town centres	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWERS and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

6.5 Do you have any further comments to make in relation to how we can support the visitor economy?

Issue 7 - How can we support communications infrastructure and home working?

7.1 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following options?

Please select

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) Support home-working subject to local impacts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Expect all new development to be provided with the infrastructure to support high speed broadband and other communications	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWERS and/or PROVIDE REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

7.2 Do you have any further comments to make in relation to how we can support communications infrastructure and home-working?

Issue 8 - How many homes do we need to provide?

8.1 In deciding how many homes are needed, how important do you think the following factors are?

Please select

	Very important	Important	Not that important	Not important at all
a) Providing more choice for Thanet's residents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Providing homes for people who want to move to Thanet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Providing homes to support economic growth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Providing homes for people who live in Thanet, but may work outside the District	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) The need for more affordable housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Impact on traffic and travel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Impact on the amenity/character of existing neighbourhoods	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Impact on the environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Capacity of the market to deliver	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j) Capacity of infrastructure and services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

8.2 We have developed dwelling forecasts for considering the number of homes that should be provided. These are based upon potential changes in future population and households taking into account changes to the existing population, assumptions about economic growth and the number of people moving in to Thanet. The projections based upon the economic growth scenarios assume that any shortfall in resident workforce (which is expected to decrease over the plan period as a result of an ageing population) will be made up by people moving in to Thanet, creating demand for additional homes.

In deciding how many homes need to be provided to 2031, which of the following projections do you think is the best starting point?

Please select one option.

- Past migration trends of about 820 in-comers per year (Short Term Migration)
- Economic Lower Growth (based on 1,200 more jobs by 2031)
- Economic Baseline (based on 3,100 more jobs by 2031)
- Economic Higher Growth (based on 5,100 more jobs by 2031)

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

8.3 Do you have any further comments to make in relation to how many homes are needed?

Issue 9 - Where should our new homes be provided?

9.1 Which of the following broad approaches do you think is right in guiding the future location of new homes?

(Please note that in any approach we may apply, we anticipate that some greenfield land will be required for future homes)

Please select one option.

- Maximise development within the existing built up areas of the towns and villages in order to minimise use of greenfield land
- Focus on existing built up areas of the towns and villages but with restrictive criteria, for example to safeguard gardens / family homes / sites that are not previously developed land
- Focus provision on greenfield sites and aim to restrict housing sites in the existing built up areas to those important for regeneration

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

9.2 If any is required, how do you think the greenfield housing should be provided?

(Please note that in any approach we may apply, we anticipate that some greenfield land will be required for future homes)

Please select one option.

- At a single location
- At a small number of locations
- At dispersed sites

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

Stage 1: Issues and Options Consultation Questionnaire

9.3 If any is required, which of the following do you think is the right location for new greenfield homes?

(Please note that in any approach we may apply, we anticipate that some greenfield land will be required for future homes)

Please select one or more

- Adjoining the urban area
- Adjoining the villages
- Freestanding countryside sites
- As a new settlement

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

9.4 Do you have any further comments in relation to where our new homes should be provided?

Issue 10 - What types of new homes do we need to provide?

10.1 In deciding what types of homes should be provided, how important do you think the following factors are?

Please select

	Very important	Important	Not that important	Not important at all
a) The needs and aspirations of the existing community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Achieving balanced and mixed community neighbourhoods	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Need and demand from people moving into Thanet to work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Need and demand from all people moving into Thanet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) The need for more affordable homes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Impact of particular types of homes upon the character of existing neighbourhoods	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

Stage 1: Issues and Options Consultation Questionnaire

10.2 In relation to the type of market homes that should be provided, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following guideline proportions as recommended by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2009?

Singles	1 bed flat	20%
Couples with no children/singles/needing support	2 bed flat	10%
Couples with children	2 bed house	25%
Couples with children	3 bed house	35%
Couples with children	4+ bed house	10%

Please select one option.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

10.3 In relation to the type of affordable homes that should be provided, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following guideline proportions as recommended by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2009?

1 bed flats	27%
2 bed flats	13%
2 bed houses	15%
3 bed houses	34%
4 bed houses	11%

Please select one option.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

Stage 1: Issues and Options Consultation Questionnaire

10.4 In relation to delivering new affordable homes to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following options?

Please select

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) Future housing development should include 30% as affordable housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) All new housing development should be expected to provide affordable housing irrespective of the total number of dwellings proposed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) In some cases affordable housing could be provided off site or through a financial contribution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) The provision of affordable housing should be on the basis of 70% social rent and 30% intermediate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Continue to exceptionally allow release of land adjoining the built up parts of our rural villages where this would deliver affordable housing to meet the needs of the village	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

10.5 In relation to Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following options?

Please select

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) Continue to allow HMOs subject to consideration of their effects on the local character and living environment of an area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Restrict HMOs in certain areas (If you agree or strongly agree with this please identify the areas below and why)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) The number of HMOs in a particular area should be restricted beyond a specific level (If you agree or strongly agree with this please state the percentage below and why)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

Stage 1: Issues and Options Consultation Questionnaire

10.6 In considering sites or proposals for gypsy and traveller accommodation, to what extent to you agree or disagree the following factors should be taken into account?

Please select

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) Impact on surrounding uses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Access to facilities (such as schools, jobs and healthcare)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

10.7 Are you aware of any housing requirements relating to particular people/groups that need to be provided for? For example older people, students, service families or people wishing to build their own homes. Please specify.

10.8 Do you have any further comments to make in relation to the type of homes we need to provide?

Issue 11 - Maintaining physical separation between Thanet's towns and villages

11.1 How important do you think the principle of Green Wedge areas between Thanet's main towns is for the District?

Please select one option.

- Very Important
- Important
- Not that important
- Not important at all

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

11.2 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following?

Please select

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) We should enhance the Green Wedges by encouraging increased access, leisure uses, provision of open space, and creation of new wildlife habitats	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) We should maintain protection of the rural and open character of the countryside between Thanet's towns and villages	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

11.3 Do you have any further comments in relation to how we can maintain the physical separation of open countryside between the Thanet towns and villages?

Issue 12 - How can we respect Thanet's important views and landscapes?

12.1 In relation to Thanet's view and landscapes, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following?

Please select

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) The characteristics of the landscape character areas identified in the Thanet Local Plan 2006 are still important	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Thanet's important landscapes should continue to be protected through the Local Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWERS and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

12.2 Do you have any further comments in relation to respecting Thanet's important and valued views and landscapes?

Issue 13 - How can we protect, maintain & enhance Thanet's green infrastructure?

13.1 To what extent do you agree or disagree that existing areas of public open space should be protected and enhanced?

Please select one option.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

13.2 Do you know of any other areas that we haven't identified on Map * above that could be used for public open space, local green spaces or new green infrastructure? Please specify.

13.3 In relation to the provision of new green infrastructure, to what extent do you agree or disagree with providing for the following in new development?

Please select

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) Effective green infrastructure to contribute to Thanet's green infrastructure network	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) A net gain in biodiversity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Provision and management of new accessible open space	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Mitigation against any loss of farmland bird habitat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Private gardens/play space	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Enhancement of the Green Wedges to contribute to Thanet's green infrastructure network	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Enhancement of Biodiversity Opportunity Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWERS and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

Stage 1: Issues and Options Consultation Questionnaire

13.4 How effective do you think the following would be in contributing towards achieving a net gain in biodiversity in new development in Thanet?

Please select

	Very effective	Effective	Not that effective	Not effective at all
a) Planting of hedgerows	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Provision of green roofs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Creation of ponds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Provision of bat boxes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Provision of bird boxes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Creation of urban green corridors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Creation of roadside verges	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Tree planting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Provision of off-site enhancements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWERS and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

13.5 How effective do you think the following methods would be in reducing disturbance to birds at the nationally and internationally designated nature conservation sites around Thanet's coast?

Please select

	Very effective	Effective	Not that effective	Not effective at all
a) Signage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Wardening at the designated nature conservation sites	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Provision of alternative, accessible natural spaces	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Developments designed to accommodate dog walkers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

13.6 Do you have any further comments in relation to how we protect, maintain and enhance Thanet's green infrastructure to better support wildlife and human health?

Issue 14 - Adapting to, and mitigating against, the effects climate change

14.1 In relation to adapting to the effects of climate change, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following for Thanet?

Please select

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) Require new development to include water efficiency measures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Require conversions of buildings to include retrofitting measures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Restrict development along the coast where it may be affected by coastal erosion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Apply a local policy in relation to flood risk to expand on the requirements of the NPPF	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Encourage the use of sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) in new developments to manage surface water run off	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWERS and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

14.2 In relation to mitigating against the effects of climate change, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following for Thanet?

Please select

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) Require new development to meet a specific Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Require new development to incorporate design principles including landscaping, layout and use of materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Require new development to obtain an element of its energy from renewable or low carbon sources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Encourage District Heating Systems in suitable and viable locations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Require new developments to incorporate measures to reduce the use of the private car	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Encourage development of solar farms in appropriate locations (with criteria to assess applications)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Encourage other forms of renewable energy developments in appropriate locations (Please specify as appropriate)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Allocate sites/identify areas which would be suitable for large scale renewable energy development (Please specify as appropriate)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWERS and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

14.3 Do you have any further comments in relation to how we can adapt to, and mitigate against the effects of climate change in Thanet?

Issue 15 - Maintaining a safe and healthy environment

15.1 To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should have policies in place to address the following issues?

Please select

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) Pollution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Contaminated Land	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Unstable and Derelict Land	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Air Quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Noise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Light Pollution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Groundwater Quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWERS and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

15.2 Do you have any further comments in relation to which policies we need to maintain a safe and healthy environment?

Stage 1: Issues and Options Consultation Questionnaire

Issue 16- How can we provide high quality homes, development and neighbourhoods?

16.1 In providing high quality homes, development and neighbourhoods how important do you think the following are?

Please select

	Very important	Important	Not that important	Not important at all
a) Living conditions of existing and new residents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Character and appearance of the area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Compatibility with, and impact on, neighbouring buildings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Pedestrian/Cyclist/vehicle movement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Provision for disabled access	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Open spaces and gaps in development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Landscaping and planting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Provision of wildlife habitats and corridors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Measures to prevent crime and disorder	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j) Integration of public art	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k) Provision for clothes drying facilities and refuse disposal/dustbin storage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l) Incorporation of sustainable drainage systems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m) Appropriate design and location of advertisements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
n) Size and layout of new residential accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWERS and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

16.2 To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should continue to identify and protect areas that are of high townscape value?

Please select one option.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWERS and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

16.3 Please specify if you think there are areas that should be identified as Areas of High Townscape Value, and explain why?

Stage 1: Issues and Options Consultation Questionnaire

16.4 In relation to the density of new housing development which of the following options do you think is best?

Please select one option.

- Zone areas of the District with specific density requirements
- Do not set specific density requirements but ensure that new developments reflect the density of the surrounding area
- Continue the current requirement of 30 dwellings per hectare, and of 50 dwellings per hectare in town and district centres and other locations with good public transport

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

16.5 Please identify any particular circumstances where you think housing development on private residential gardens should be restricted in Thanet, and explain why.

16.6 Do you have any further comments in relation to how we can provide high quality homes, developments and neighbourhoods?

Issue 17 - How can we protect and enhance's Thanet's heritage assets?

17.1 In relation to protecting Thanet's heritage assets and their settings, how important do you think the following are?

Please select

	Very important	Important	Not that important	Not important at all
a) Preservation and enhancement of existing Conservation Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Designation of new conservation areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Restricting the right, in Conservation Areas, to make certain minor changes to a house without the need for planning permission (permitted development), by use of Article 4 directions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Protection and enhancement of listed buildings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Protection and enhancement of historic parks and gardens	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Protection and enhancement of scheduled monuments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Protection and enhancement of buildings of identified local interest and other non-designated heritage assets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Identification and, where appropriate, protection of archaeological heritage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Taking a positive, proactive approach to heritage at risk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

Stage 1: Issues and Options Consultation Questionnaire

17.2 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the National Planning Policy Framework provides sufficient policy and guidance for determining planning applications in relation to Heritage Assets?

Please select one option.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

17.3 To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should have policies in relation to the following?

Please select

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
a) Locally listed buildings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Renewable energy and the historic environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Site specific policies for significant heritage assets with development potential	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

17.4 Do you have any further comments in relation to how we can protect and enhance heritage assets and their settings?

Issue 18 - How should we plan for community facilities?

18.1 In relation to ensuring there are sufficient and appropriate community facilities in Thanet, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following options?

Please select

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
a) Continue to protect existing community facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Protect existing community facilities subject criteria and/or exemptions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Continue to allow new community facilities to be developed where they support a local community need	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

18.2 Are you aware of a need for any particular community facilities not currently or adequately provided for? Please specify what and where.

18.3 Do you have any further comments in relation to how we can plan for community facilities?

Issue 19 - How can we enable an efficient and effective transport system?

19.1 In relation to enabling an efficient and effective transport system, how important do you think that following are?

Please select

	Very important	Important	Not that important	Not important at all
a) Reducing the need to travel (especially by car) to access the facilities we need day to day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Encourage more people to walk, cycle or use public transport	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Making better use of High Speed 1 rail link	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Dealing with any 'pinch-points' in the transport network	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Improving through-traffic flows at Westwood and facilitating convenient and safe movement within the area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) The level and location of public car parking needed in the town centres	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Addressing the deficiencies in the transport system to deal with existing problems or accommodate future growth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER and/or SUGGEST REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

19.2 Do you have suggestions about measures that may help to deal with the issues identified in Question 19.1? Please specify.

19.3 Do you have any further comments in relation to how we can deliver an efficient and effective transport system?

Ramsgate Royal Sands – Options

To: **Extraordinary Cabinet – 29th May 2013**

Main Portfolio Area: **Operational Services**

By: **Mark Seed – Director of Operational Services**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Ward: **Eastcliff**

Summary: **To consider options for future action following the end of the four month period agreed at the 22nd January Cabinet meeting for the developers of Royal Sands to have demonstrated the financing for the construction of the development.**

For Decision

1.0 Current Situation

1.1 At the Cabinet meeting on 22nd January it was resolved that

“Cabinet set a review period of 4 months from 22nd January 2013 and request officers at the end of this period to prepare an options report to Cabinet if either the finance is not in place for the completion of the development or no agreement is in place for the construction and operation of a hotel.”

1.2 As the four month period has now passed without these criteria being met it is necessary that the options in relation to the future of the current development agreement and leases for this site are now considered.

1.3 In the meantime a petition was considered at the meeting of Council on 18th April as set out in Annex 1, and it was agreed that the petition be referred to the Overview & Scrutiny Panel. As a result of this the Panel agreed the following at its meeting on 23rd April:

1. To set up a Pleasurama Site Development Task & Finish Group as a priority scrutiny project for 2013/14;
2. Officers to draft the terms of reference

1.4 At the time of drafting the report the Scrutiny task and finish group has yet to meet and consider its terms of reference.

2.0 Discussion and Proposals

2.1 The issue of the development of the Pleasurama/ Royal Sands site has been a matter of contention since before the decision to take forward the current proposals at the end of 2002. This has surrounded all aspects of the development including its form agreed under planning, the choice of the developer, the nature of the developer, the conditions within the agreements and changes to these, and retention of the developer despite the site not being moved forward.

- 2.2 This process has taken place under three separate administrations, but needs a collective way forward for the council that represents a political accord. This should reflect the need for a development to be completed that complements the future regeneration of Ramsgate, and provides a financial return for the council on a key water front site.
- 2.3 In addition, the future of the agreement and leases with SFP needs to be assessed carefully, as unilateral decisions on these by the council are almost certain to be challenged legally by the developer. The bottom line is that such action is uncertain, potentially costly, and likely to take a long time to resolve.
- 2.4 It is important that consideration of this issue is primarily focussed on where we are going and how to achieve that aim, with the prime elements being:
- An agreed development for the site
 - A timescale to complete this development
 - A financial return to the council for the site
 - An understanding of the risks involved in any course of action
- 2.6 The report is specifically not proposing a legal way forward for the council as this requires to be considered in a way that does not prejudice any future court action and the position of the council within this. Such a way forward also needs to be supported by high level commercial and legal advice that dovetails with the direction of travel for the council.
- 2.7 In this context it would seem to be appropriate for Cabinet to support the setting up of the task and finish group by Overview and Scrutiny and ask them to consider and recommend a course of action. In doing this it would be appropriate to consider the following:
- Encouraging the task and finish group to focus primarily on the key issues to help guide the way forward for the council as a whole
 - Committing Cabinet in supporting the work, including the cost of seeking confidential legal and commercial property advice
 - Advising that consideration of action moving forward that may involve legal processes needs to be done in a way that does not prejudice the position of the council
 - Ensuring that the legal, financial and time risks associated with any proposed course of action are considered with care
 - Encouraging an expeditious result so that Cabinet can move forward on this
- 2.8 Due to the lack of progress by the developer it is no longer possible to consider the option of waiting for them to deliver, even though the final deadlines within the agreement have not been breach. In addition, the need for a cross party independent consensus on future action supports the role of the Scrutiny task and finish group, rather than alternative routes.
- 2.9 The council has been very supportive in relation to this development, mainly in recognition of the difficult financial market over the last 5 years. However, the repeated failure of the developer to make progress is no longer acceptable to the council. The lack of any substantial progress in resolving the issues that were discussed in the Cabinet report in January, and failure to reach a conclusion within the four month period agreed by Cabinet, gives the council no confidence for the future.

- 2.10 On this basis, the future of the development has entered a new phase in which the council is actively seeking an alternate way forward, with a key focus on the determination of the current development agreement and leases.
- 2.11 This has become too much of a key issue to wait until the current deadline in 2014 and the possible extension to 2017. The continued failure to deliver gives the council no confidence that progress will be made, and a rapid move to considering and deciding on alternatives is essential.

3.0 Corporate Implications

3.1 Financial and VAT

- 3.1.1 The primary long term impacts of choosing a specific course of action on the site and the costs of this need to be assessed as part of the risk analysis work as part of review by the Scrutiny task and finish group. In relation to this report the proposed support to seek initial high level commercial and legal advice can be met from existing budgets.
- 3.1.2 In addition to the legal risks involved with ceasing the current arrangements can be added the timescales involved in seeking an alternative proposal and the financial risks of this in comparison to the current arrangements and the potential return to the council.

3.2 Legal

- 3.2.1 It is not proposed to set out a full legal analysis of the situation at this stage as this will have to be considered in some detail through the Scrutiny process. However, a clear option as a course of action would be to seek to cancel the current development agreement and leases or not provide an extension to any timescales. As indicated above these courses of action are almost certain to be challenged legally, so any legal risk assessment through the Scrutiny process must assess the chances of being successful, the costs that may be involved, and the timescales to achieve the result in court.

3.3 Corporate

- 3.3.1 The future of the current development agreement and leases is seriously in doubt. There are risks associated with taking action about this, as set out in this report, but the repeated failure by the developer to move forward on site, despite the willingness of the council to assist, is no longer acceptable. As set out above, the failure to deliver has to change the council's approach to this site development and its consideration of options for the future. This represents Cabinet's entire dissatisfaction that the four month deadline it gave to the developer to resolve matters and make progress on site has not been met. Care needs to be taken in relation to considering options for the future as indicated above, but now is the time to take this step.

3.4 Equity and Equalities

- 3.4.1 The proposal in this report does not have any impacts on groups with protected characteristics.

4.0 Recommendations

4.1 That Cabinet supports the setting up of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel task and finish group, and advises that the following considerations should be taken into account in proposing a course of action for the council:

- A focus primarily on the key issues to help guide the way forward for the council as a whole
- Cabinet's support for the work, including the cost of seeking confidential appropriate legal and commercial property advice
- Consideration of action moving forward that may involve legal processes needs to be done in a way that does not prejudice the position of the council in a court action
- Legal, financial and time risks associated with any proposed course of action are considered with care, including those associated with alternative developments
- Seeking an expeditious result so that Cabinet can move forward on this site

4.2 That Cabinet expresses its strong dissatisfaction with the progress made by the developer in the last four months to move forward with this development, and signals a shift into a new phase of the development in which it wishes to see robust alternatives to the current arrangements being developed and acted upon by the council.

5.0 Decision Making Process

5.1 The proposed decision is within the council's budgetary and policy framework.

Contact Officer:	Mark Seed, Director of Operational Services
Reporting to:	Sue McGonigal, Chief Executive

Annex List

Annex 1	Petition to Council 18 th April 2013
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Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
None	N/A

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	Sarah Martin, Financial Services Manager
Legal	Harvey Patterson, Corporate & Regulatory Services Manager



Agenda Item 4
Annex 1
Save Our Heritage
Petition to Thanet District Council
Stop the Freehold of
the Pleasurama site being sold

We the undersigned believe the proposed sale of the Pleasurama freehold to the current developer is an unacceptable solution, since this developer has lost public trust and confidence and this proposal will not achieve the stated aim, of regenerating the Ramsgate Seafront. We now call on Thanet District Council to dismiss this developer and this proposal on the following grounds:

1. Flawed Information - In December 2002 a presentation was made to the Tory led TDC by their preferred developer. This was a British Virgin Islands (BVI) registered Company led by anonymous people, backed by a Swiss Bank (Société Financière Privée S.A) that wasn't even registered as a bank at the time and partnered by a well known brewer (Whitbread) who took an early exit.

2. No Action - For over 3 years, despite being given the go ahead, SFP Venture Partners BVI did nothing to regenerate the site. However, in early 2006, they incorporated a new company SFP Ventures (UK) Ltd, registered at their accountant's address. This was in response to complaints from Councillors that TDC should not be dealing with a BVI, as there were concerns about money laundering, tax evasion, and the identity of the developers.

3. Unmet Conditions - TDC had concerns about guarantees and asked SFP Ventures (UK) Ltd to provide a Bond of £5.6M and, from 2006 to 2009, SFO Ventures (UK) Ltd., failed to get this Bond. From 2006 to 2009 they also failed to get work started on the site.

4. Insufficient Proofs - In 2009, despite advice from TDC Officers, the Cabinet reduced this Bond down to a £1M deposit and papers seen still show Cabinet dealing with the BVI Company, despite the assurances TDC gave that they were not. Further insufficient proofs that SPF could fund this scheme were accepted by TDC. In effect, it looks like the Council may have been duped by this company. These documents now should be re-examined, as they provide the basis for the agreement TDC then came to. But, if they were fraudulent, the whole basis for this contract is invalid and should now be held up to legal scrutiny

It is now 2013 and TDC are considering the exit strategy for this debacle might be selling on the freehold of the site to a technically insolvent Company, who may well wait until they can make a profit by selling it on, however long that takes. This is not good enough.

Since 1998 the regeneration of the Pleasurama site has lurched from crisis to crisis and we believe it is now time to remove this flawed developer and take a new look at other options.



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Corporate Performance Report

To: **Extraordinary Cabinet – 29 May 2013**

Main Portfolio Area: **Business Services**

By: **Adrian Halse, Policy and Business Planning Manager**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Ward: **All wards**

Summary: **Presenting the Corporate Performance Report for the financial year 2012 to 2013 - setting out the performance of the Council against the Corporate Plan priorities and identifying further action where appropriate.**

For Decision

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2012-16 was approved in April 2012. It sets out 11 priorities that the Council will focus on over the next four years:
1. support the growth of our economy and the number of people in work
 2. tackle disadvantage across our district
 3. support our community and voluntary organisations
 4. make our district a safer place to live
 5. work to improve parking and transportation in our district
 6. make our district cleaner and greener and lead by example on environmental issues
 7. plan for the right number and type of homes in the right place (with appropriate tenure) to create sustainable communities in the future
 8. support excellent and diverse cultural facilities and activities for our residents and visitors
 9. support a broad range of sports, leisure and coastal activities
 10. influence the work of other agencies to ensure the best outcomes for Thanet
 11. protect and preserve our public open spaces
- 1.2 When the plan was approved it was agreed that the activities the council would undertake in support of the Corporate Plan priorities would be captured within the service plans.

2.0 Current progress against corporate goals

- 2.1 The Corporate Performance Report attached as Annex 1 pulls together the different projects, and KPIs identified through service planning, and aligns them to the Corporate Plan priorities.
- 2.2 There are 33 projects listed. Of these, thirteen were completed within the year with a further three nearing completion. Of the remainder, twelve are on track; five face some risk and one faces significant risk.
- 2.3 There are 39 KPIs listed where tracking data is available. Of these, 26 are on target, four are slightly worse than target and nine are significantly worse than target.
- 2.4 Where activity is not on track, an explanation with steps being taken is identified.

3.0 Looking ahead

- 3.1 The report in Annex 1 identifies key projects against each priority for the coming year.

3.0 Options

- 3.1 To note the council's performance and consider the remedial actions listed.

5.0 Corporate Implications

5.1 Financial and VAT

- 5.1.1 The report has no specific financial implications. All activities listed have been planned within the council's agreed budget. Remedial actions will usually be carried out within existing budgets, where this is not possible funding proposals will be taken through the appropriate channels in keeping with the council's established financial controls.

5.2 Legal

- 5.2.1 There are no specific legal implications to this report.

5.3 Corporate

- 5.3.1 This report provides members with an update on the council's progress against its Corporate Plan priorities.

5.4 Equity and Equalities

- 5.4.1 The equality implications of each of the projects identified in the report will be considered as part of the project planning process in accordance with the emerging equality policy.

6.0 Recommendation(s)

- 6.1 That Cabinet note the council's performance and consider the remedial actions listed (as set out in option 3.1 above).

7.0 Decision Making Process

- 7.1 This is a non-key decision

Contact Officer:	Adrian Halse, Policy and Business Planning Manager
Reporting to:	Sarah Martin, Financial Services Manager

Annex List

Annex 1	Corporate Performance Report for the period April 2012 to March 2013
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Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
<i>Corporate Plan 2012-16</i>	http://www.thanet.gov.uk/council__democracy/corporate_plan_2012_to_16.aspx

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	Sarah Martin, Financial Service Manager
Legal	Harvey Patterson, Corporate & Regulatory Services Manager
Communications	Justine Wingate, Communications Manager

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Corporate Performance Report

For the period April 2012 - March 2013



Report key and guidance

This report provides an update on progress against projects, performance indicators and service actions against each Corporate Plan priority. Symbols are used to give a quick indication of progress for projects and KPIs.

	Projects	Performance Indicators
	The project is completed or on track	Performance is on target
	The project is slightly off schedule or at risk of going off schedule	Performance is worse than target
	The project is significantly off schedule	Performance is significantly worse than target

Where a project or indicator is highlighted as an amber circle or red triangle an explanation is given and remedial actions are identified.

Priority 1: We will support the growth of our economy and the number of people in work

The Council is committed to help drive growth across the district by promoting investment, skills, employment, efficiency and innovation to provide a sustainable mixed economy. We will actively promote opportunities such as Regional Growth Funds and will continue to lobby to improve accessibility and development opportunities. The Council cannot deliver this priority on its own and will take the lead through the Thanet Regeneration Board, working with partners from public, private and voluntary sectors to bring jobs into the area.

The Council has direct responsibility for the Ramsgate Port and Marina, a key driver in the local economy. Consequently, a number of the projects and indicators listed below relate to our work at the Port and Marina.

Key Projects

Alert	Description	Progress update	Explanation (if not on target) and Remedial Action. Next steps.
	Develop the Local Plan	The Local Plan sets out Thanet's strategy for growth to 2031. A first draft consultation document has been shared with Cabinet Advisory Group and Cabinet/SMT. This document is supported by the Local Plan evidence base and takes account of the significant recent changes to planning policy.	Cabinet will be asked to approve the Local Plan consultation document on 29 May 2013. If agreed the consultation will begin in June 2013.
	Develop the Ramsgate Port Master Plan	<p>Following three stakeholder meetings with port and harbour users, local businesses, residents groups and members a draft of the masterplan was developed. The draft plan was not considered to be developed sufficiently to be presented to the Cabinet Advisory Group and then move on through the formal adoption process. The consultants engaged for the initial development of the Masterplan will undertake further work on the draft.</p> <p>Stakeholder meetings and work by the port and harbour project team have already identified opportunities to move forward, undertake feasibility studies and seek external funding, in line with the emerging masterplan.</p> <p>Issues raised during the consultation</p>	<p>The Masterplan adoption timetable has been adjusted on the forward plan for Scrutiny, Cabinet and Council. A revised plan will be considered by the Cabinet Advisory Group, leading with the intention of presentation to Overview and Scrutiny, Cabinet and Council, as well as undertaking more consultation.</p> <p>Individual projects will be progressed during 2013 as separate projects, with the potential for European funding to assist feasibility work, and an opportunity for a bid under</p>

		about the management of the port and harbour are already having an impact on the way services are being delivered, as well as the investment being undertaken on the site as part of normal operations.	the Coastal Communities Fund.
	Deliver improvements to Ramsgate Port and Harbour through the Interreg Patch Funding project	<p>This completed project involved the installation of a new breakwater, a review of health & safety, and purchase of equipment to improve the infrastructure at the port.</p> <p>These changes have helped generate additional income for the marina and will help develop a planned maintenance programme at the harbour.</p>	The website update to display tidal data is expected to be available early in the 2013-2014 financial year.
	Deliver improvements to Ramsgate Port and Harbour through the Interreg Yacht Valley project. (Match funded project)	<p>The programme of work has been completed, including installation of new electrical, water, telephone and drainage supplies for each arch. Replacement of six weak floors and internal stairways for four double arches are nearing completion.</p> <p>15 units will shortly be available for letting to marina related or harbour supporting businesses.</p> <p>Feasibility studies have now started on studies for both dry-dock and the Yacht Service Centres.</p>	<p>The nature of utility works undertaken as part of the project led to delays in completing the works and more disruption than was originally expected. Major change to deal with delays in spend has been agreed with project partners and EU.</p> <p>The speed of progress by utility contractors also caused concern to existing businesses in the arches. These matters have been resolved and the works completed, but have impacted on the rating of the project overall.</p>
	Develop a Economic Development and Regeneration Strategy for Thanet	<p>The Economic Development & Regeneration Strategy has been drafted, creating a strategic direction for the district that all stakeholders can engage with. This draft was out for public consultation until December 2012.</p> <p>An action plan has now been drafted in line with the draft strategy.</p>	The draft action plan will go to Cabinet on 29th May 2012, requesting approval to consult on the intended actions.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Alert	Description	Target	Actual	Explanation (if not on target) and Remedial Action
	% of Council owned commercial property which is vacant	10%	4.09%	
	Number of unfilled Job Centre Plus vacancies per 1,000 population aged 16-64	3.16	4.01	Data relates to November 2012 – the most recent available
	Number of visits to the tourism website	677,879	1,182,361	
	Number of enquiries to the VIC service	73,379	84,143	
	Rental income received by Kent Innovation Centre and the Margate Media Centre	£208,000	£248,266	
	Average total metrage of occupied permanent berths in Ramsgate Royal Harbour	4km	4km	
	Number of fishing and angling boats in Ramsgate Marina	47	41	This is in line with normal fluctuation as boats move between the south coast harbours.

Looking Forward - key projects for 2013 – 2014

Project name	Service	Due Date
Produce a Local Plan that seeks to achieve sustainable development and diversify the economy in our district, for submission to Secretary of State	Planning	July 2015
Project manage the Yacht Valley Project at Ramsgate Harbour	Commercial Services	June 2014
Develop the Ramsgate Port Masterplan	Maritime Services	October 2013
Carry out a study on the feasibility of an alongside quay and a new breakwater at the Port of Ramsgate through the Interreg LO-PINOD project.	Engineering & Technical Services	December 2013
Introduce Community Infrastructure Levy – to maximise funding for community infrastructure and facilities, subject to viability assessment	Planning	July 2015

Priority 2: We will tackle disadvantage across our district

The Council is committed to tackle the issues which can lead to disadvantages for residents through lack of work, skills and poor housing. We will work towards our vision that everyone in Thanet has the same opportunities to access housing, work and an income close to the Kent average, while ensuring that the momentum of economic growth is maintained.

Key Projects

Alert	Description	Progress update	Explanation (if not on target) and Remedial Action
	Develop a local Council Tax discount scheme	The scheme has been delivered on schedule. It has minimised reductions in benefits for working age claimants to protect the most vulnerable within the district.	
	Ensure that the Council is prepared for the impacts of welfare reform	<p>The Welfare Reform Group is well established. Monitoring and information sharing is going well. Unknown factors relate to the Government timetable which has changed several times. The main impacts are predicted in around 6 months to 2 years as residents start 'not coping'.</p> <p>Good communications exist within the group. Corporate and operational risks have been identified with mitigations in place where possible. Work continues – the Welfare Group will continue to monitor, plan and mitigate in line with a dynamic action plan. Issues will be escalated to SMT and members as necessary.</p>	<p>There is uncertainty over the government's ability to implement to their stated timetable, and to deal with issues related to advice on implementation.</p> <p>The team will continue to keep a close eye on developments nationally and locally so that the council is able to take action quickly when needed.</p>
	Review the Housing Allocation Policy	<p>Consultation on the draft allocations policy has taken place and 178 comments have been received. Public awareness has been raised by the consultation, and it has sparked a lot of media interest. Applicants on the housing register including residents (social tenants) have also had the opportunity to view the document and have 'their say'.</p> <p>If adopted by Full Council on 11 July 2013 all those who are currently on the housing waiting list will be prompted to reapply online, this will ensure that all applicants are assessed by the new</p>	There has been a slight delay due to absence which resulted in the Cabinet and full Council dates being pushed back; however the project is still on target to go to Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet in May 2013.

		Allocations Policy criteria. This will create a more manageable housing register.	
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Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Alert	Description	Target	Actual	Explanation (if not on target) and Remedial Action
	Average length of time to process Disabled Facilities Grants (referral to completion) (weeks)	78 wks	57.54 wks	
	Number of approaches for housing advice	2,609	1,797	
	Number on the housing waiting list	4,781	5,978	<p>The number of applicants for social housing continues to increase, reflecting the local impact of economic downturn.</p> <p>The Council is committed to increasing the availability of social housing and affordable housing through projects such as the Margate Housing Intervention Project, which are listed under priority 7.</p> <p>The completion and implementation of the new Housing Allocations Policy will help to ensure housing supply is best matched to the local need</p>
	Average time taken to process all new claims and change events for Housing and Council Tax Benefit	9.43 days	7.72 days	
	Benefits accuracy – percentage of Housing and Council Tax Benefit decisions that were correct.	95.9%	96.93%	
	Number of affordable homes delivered	102	105	

Looking Forward - key projects for 2013 – 2014

Project name	Service	Due Date
Plan for and mitigate the impact of welfare reform upon the Community and TDC service provision in liaison with other departments and external agencies	Community Development	March 2014
Review and introduce the Housing Allocation Policy	Housing Services	July 2013
Facilitate the objectives of the Margate Task Force and review its successes, leading to a decision on whether to expand the project	Community Development	March 2014
Facilitate the objectives of the Troubled Families programme	Community Development	March 2014

Priority 3: We will support our community and voluntary organisations

The economic climate has made it much tougher for the diverse range of community and voluntary organisations which operate in Thanet. The Council is committed to working with our partners in the community and voluntary sector, recognising the value of their work and the difference they make to the lives of local people. The Council is also committed to implementing its responsibilities under the new Community Rights effectively so that local communities are empowered to direct and influence their futures.

Key Projects

Alert	Description	Progress update	Explanation (if not on target) and Remedial Action
★	Ensure that the Council is prepared for neighbourhood plans and the Community Right to Build	<p>Parish and Town Councils have been provided with information in order to assist them in deciding whether and how they might become involved in neighbourhood planning. Ongoing liaison continues with Parish and Town Councils and a neighbourhood group over the year, including an event facilitated by Planning Aid.</p> <p>Early indications suggest that there is likely to be the development of 2/3 neighbourhood plans across Thanet in the coming year.</p>	
★	Ensure that the Council is prepared for the Community Right to bid	<p>The council has established procedures for compliance, and those procedures have had initial testing through the application process. Guidance for interested groups is published on the TDC website.</p> <p>One application has been received so far, which has been decided against the applicant. The owner has until 24th April to request a 'listing review' of the decision. A fact finding meeting is shortly to be held - this may become the basis of a second application.</p>	
★	Ensure that the Council is prepared for the Community Right to Challenge	<p>The council has established procedures for compliance. Guidance is published on the TDC website. Administrative arrangements are in place to handle bids under the Community Right to Challenge. To date no bids have been received.</p>	

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Alert	Description	Target	Actual	Explanation (if not on target) and Remedial Action
	Number of initiatives undertaken in partnership with the voluntary/ community sector which support the delivery of the Council's priorities	12	15	
	Number of community groups working in active partnership with the Council on open spaces	10	14	
	Total throughput for TDC organised sport activities	5,400	6,810	

Looking Forward - key projects for 2013 – 2014

Project name	Service	Due Date
Work with local communities (resident, parish & business groups) to jointly develop sustainable solutions to meet expectations of waste management and street cleanliness	Thanet Frontline	December 2013

Priority 4: We will make our district a safer place to live

The Council's partnerships with the police and other agencies involve detailed planning to tackle the issues and the offenders who cause most harm, using a range of statistics, data and local knowledge to identify the level of support needed in each neighbourhood. The Council recognises that issues of anti-social behaviour such as noise nuisance, dog fouling, littering and dumped rubbish have a major impact on the quality of life for residents and uses a variety of methods to tackle these. The safety of the public is a key concern for the Council's Environmental Health team, helping to prevent food poisoning incidents and accidents by ensuring businesses operate to the required legislation.

Key Projects

Alert	Description	Progress update	Explanation (if not on target) and Remedial Action
	Implement the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme	<p>The scheme has been bedded in with local traders over the last year by carrying out food hygiene inspections in accordance with the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.</p> <p>As at 31st March this provided 258 Thanet food premises with a score reflecting the hygiene found at the time of the inspection. This encourages food business operators to ensure that their premises are meeting legislative requirements prior to our inspection so that they can gain the highest rating possible (5).</p> <p>The ratings for individual premises are available on a national website and via phone apps so that anyone can view ratings to help them choose where to purchase food. The rating is a reflection on food hygiene not food quality.</p> <p>The inspection regime of food premises will continue over the next year with more businesses receiving a rating.</p>	<p>As reported to Cabinet in March, there have been some difficulties this year due to changes in legislation in other areas of food safety impacting on our ability to meet the targets originally envisaged at the start of the project. The delay is primarily the result of establishing a Designated Port of Entry (DPE) at Manston airport until recruitment of a new DPE team is completed.</p> <p>Whilst there will be a period of readjustment the intention is to catch up on the targeted backlog by the end of the project (February 2016).</p>
	Implement the Thanet Community Safety Plan	<p>The 2012-13 Community Safety Plan set 23 actions to be completed within the year, focussing on ASB, Domestic Abuse, Violent Crime and Substance Misuse.</p> <p>All projects have been completed satisfactorily as agreed by the Community Safety Partnership executive group and the scrutiny function (CDRP</p>	

		<p>Working Party) provided by district Councillors.</p> <p>47 high risk ASB cases have been discussed by the multi-agency ASB Panel resulting in actions being taken and completed in 41 of these. 6 cases remain the focus of the agencies.</p> <p>47 ASB warning letters and 7 Acceptable Behaviour Agreements have been issued.</p> <p>The Domestic Abuse Forum has undertaken a re-launch of the One Stop Shop which gives confidential advice to anyone concerned, and a number of seasonal campaigns have been used to increase awareness. Attendances have increased and many more people are receiving support.</p> <p>A programme focussing on alcohol, substance misuse and violence was delivered to 4300 U18s via secondary schools and street projects.</p> <p>Operations were carried out at licenced premises by swabbing toilets and using drugs dogs.</p> <p>The Drug Test on Arrest pilot delivered 706 compulsory drugs tests of which 257 were positive. 143 people have accessed drug treatment based on this. Those refusing have had larger sanctions placed upon them for non-attendance. No remedial action is required for this year's plan.</p> <p>The 2013-14 community safety plan has been drafted with a suggested 31 actions. This is higher than last year as a further priority 'Acquisitive Crime' has been selected. The priorities were supported by the public consultation in which 89% agreed that targeted areas were the correct ones to focus on. The actions will deliver visible campaigns and projects and hopefully contribute to a further reduction in crime and ASB in Thanet.</p>	
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Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Alert	Description	Target	Actual	Explanation (if not on target) and Remedial Action
	Percentage of food hygiene premises awarded 3 stars or more	88.1%	88.0%	<p>There has been an improvement since last quarter and performance is now close to target. It is expected that the percentage will drop as the inspection programme moves to focus on premises which are unlikely to achieve 3 stars.</p> <p>This is all part of the strategy of the programme which is designed to drive up standards over time by improving awareness of food hygiene.</p>
	Number of reported crimes per 1,000 population	55.36	74.37	<p>This measure records crimes reported to Police. Whilst overall levels of recorded crime in Thanet have been reducing year by year for more than five years, the target reflects a long-term aspiration to have a crime rate that is in line with the average for the Kent Police area.</p> <p>For the Council appropriate remedial action is taken through the Community Safety Programme (see 'Implement the Thanet Community Safety Plan' above)</p>
	Number of anti-social behaviour (ASB) cases notified to the Community Safety Team	660	694	<p>A larger than expected number of cases was referred to the team this year; though numbers stabilised during the last quarter.</p> <p>High numbers can be attributed to a number of causes: Better/more accurate recording; national media focus on Police and Crime Commissioner elections; reduction of resources in partner agencies; and the economic crisis.</p> <p>A wider advertising campaign in 2013-2014 will try to educate people about what can and can't</p>

				be done and advise who the correct agency/department is to contact. Reports will also identify case rating (high, medium or low impacts) to help improve focussing of our resources.
	Biannual Inspection Programme – Percentage of urgent defects rectified within 14 days (coastal engineering)	80%	100%	All urgent defects have been dealt with within 14 days.

Looking Forward - key projects for 2013 – 2014

Project name	Service	Due Date
Implementing the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme in food premises across the district enabling the public to make an informed choice regarding the hygiene standards in food premises.	Environmental Health	March 2016
Assess the opportunities for making efficiencies in CCTV provision.	Environmental Health	August 2013
Facilitate the Community Safety Partnership and its delivery of the Community Safety Plan	Community Development	March 2014
Set up the required infrastructure for Kent International Airport to hold Designated Port of Entry status.	Environmental Health	June 2013

Priority 5: We will work to improve parking and transportation in our district

The recent growth in visitor numbers following the opening of the Turner Contemporary and further developments over the coming years will place increasing demands on local transport and parking provision. The Council is committed to developing a Parking Strategy, in consultation with local people, which sets clear direction for the regulation and management of off and on street parking arrangements. The Council can only achieve improvements to roads and pavements in partnership with Kent County Council, which is the lead local organisation responsible for transport and highway matters. The Council will endeavour to influence and encourage them and government to tackle this important issue.

Key Projects

Alert	Description	Progress update	Explanation (if not on target) and Remedial Action
	Conduct a parking review and develop a new Parking Strategy	Parking consultation was carried out providing an opportunity for local communities to express their preferences. A new Parking Liaison Meeting has been set up, so that parking related departments could work closer together.	Progress since the consultation was limited by resources availability for both communications and project management. Analysis of the consultation output was delayed. The Parking Policy and Fees are due to go to Cabinet in June, with a review to decision by the Council in July 2013.
	Work with Kent County Council (KCC) to inform a transport strategy for the area	Worked is progressing with Kent County Council on agreeing a draft document to map out what the Strategy needs to cover, and collating information needed to underpin the strategy. The Strategy will address Corporate Plan requirements and provide essential baseline information to underpin Thanet's Local Plan. This work is in its early stages. SMT endorsement of the approach to the draft strategy will be sought in May. This will also ask for instructions as to how members should be engaged.	

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Alert	Description	Target	Actual	Explanation (if not on target) and Remedial Action
N/A	Number of PCN's issued	N/A	9,685	
	Income from on-street parking	£703,860	£702,238	Whilst combined income from on and off-street parking meets the parking income target, there has been a slight decline in the numbers of people parking in metered areas this year.
	Income from off-street parking	£914,660	£916,716	

Looking Forward - key projects for 2013 – 2014

Project name	Service	Due Date
Produce Transport Strategy for Thanet (in conjunction with KCC)	Planning	December 2013
Develop a parking strategy for Thanet	Commercial Services	June 2013

Priority 6: We will make our district cleaner and greener and lead by example on environmental issues

The Council is committed to deliver street cleansing and waste and recycling services that deliver value for money, recognising that these are two of the most important services that we provide. The Council will use both education and enforcement to encourage effective management of waste and a reduction in littering and dumped rubbish.

The Council is committed to reducing its own carbon footprint and to encouraging sustainable energy solutions locally, supporting the operations of London Array and Thanet Offshore Wind from Ramsgate Port.

Key Projects

Alert	Description	Progress update	Explanation (if not on target) and Remedial Action
	Install solar panels at the council offices	<p>This project was completed before the end of July 2012, in keeping with the Feed in Tariff (FIT) deadline, in order to maximise the financial advantage to the Council.</p> <p>Solar power is now being generated during daylight hours, so TDC is getting an amount of 'free' electricity daily, this saves on payments to the external energy supplier. FIT payments to TDC started from 28th August 2012.</p>	
	Replace the cremator furnaces at the Crematorium	<p>New energy efficient cremators and an emissions abatement system have been installed. The works also included installing a heating system, a heat exchanger, emergency lighting, fire alarm, CCTV, a side access road, staff parking, storage refrigeration, a new control room and refurbishment of other areas within the crematorium.</p> <p>The crematorium can now handle and cremate bigger 'Bariatric' coffins. 100% abatement of emissions is being achieved; gas bills are reduced even with the new central heating system.</p> <p>The cremation service was still provided throughout the project, so no income was lost to the service; and the new facilities are now available to Crematorium and users.</p>	

		Snagging of works is complete and a 10 year cremator maintenance plan is in place.	
	Introduce new waste and recycling services	<p>The improved waste service will increase resident recycling. New waste vehicles are procured, and tenders for containers have been evaluated in April, with contract award expected in May 2013.</p> <p>Consultation with staff is ongoing, including health & safety considerations; training is being established. The programme is working to time, and crew confidence has enabled us to implement the project using an 'early adopter' model for two rounds to commence in mid-September.</p> <p>Staff morale has improved because of their involvement in the project through a Workers Advisory Group, and 'toolbox' talks.</p> <p>The project has stimulated the creation of policies to support the service; these will be submitted to SMT before roll-out.</p>	
	Carry out upgrade to the waste transfer site	<p>Whilst a planning application for this upgrade is being progressed, there are concerns about the depot's fitness for purpose.</p> <p>Initial review of holistic service requirements is starting to give a new understanding of risk, and alternative approaches are being considered.</p>	The main immediate risk is ability to service the new fleet of vehicles at the Manston site. The cost implications of contingencies are being evaluated, and a report will be provided to SMT. This may lead to a more detailed options appraisal for future vehicle servicing arrangements.
	Develop new approaches to undertaking street cleansing to improve results and public perception, whilst reducing costs.	<p>All streets have been assessed for usage and cleansing needs; the results have led to a zoning of cleansing for the whole of Thanet.</p> <p>Ramsgate has successfully been used to test the method, and team working. The pilot has substantially improved street cleanliness in the centre of Ramsgate; the method has been permanently adopted for Ramsgate.</p> <p>We have established a reliable working method that will be applied to the rest of Thanet, based on zoning requirements.</p>	

		Full roll-out of the cleansing methods will provide more consistent and better street cleansing. Engagement with communities will commence following the 'Public Realm' project programme.	
	Public Realm Project	A high level of review of enforcement activities has informed the scope for this Project. The Project Team has been created and project work commenced. Outcomes should be delivered in 2013/2014. The project will continue to plan for a period of 6 months with a final report due in Autumn 2013.	

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Alert	Description	Target	Actual	Explanation (if not on target) and Remedial Action
	Percentage of household waste sent for re-use, recycling and composting	30%	27.45%	The new waste service will add recycling streams and hence improve the figure.
	Residual household waste per household per quarter (reported quarterly)	120 kg	127.5 kg	Figure is for period April to December 2012 as year-end data is still being collated. The new waste service will add recycling streams and hence improve the figure.
	The number of street cleansing complaints combined with the number of dumped waste & gull damage reports	3,800	4,007	Street Cleansing complaints remain within target but the level of dumped waste and gull damage reports is higher than it was last year. Detailed analysis of the dumped waste and gull damage data is currently being undertaken, to inform future service delivery. When the identity of persons dumping waste is known a referral is always made for enforcement action.
	The number of street scene enforcement actions taken	350	465	
	Satisfaction with street cleanliness	70%	52.1%	A new approach to street cleansing will be rolled out over the next year. This will provide greater mobility of cleansers and better

				mechanical sweeping. Litter associated with household collections and the ability of some residents to adequately contain their waste is a major issue. A high level task group, enforcement action and a Public Realm initiative are concentrating a large resource in solving the causes of uncontained litter.
	Satisfaction with household waste collection	80%	79.1%	An improved collection service will commence in November 2013. This will provide a much wider range of items collected from the doorstep including glass, more plastics and food waste.
	Satisfaction with household recycling	71%	70.1%	An improved collection service will commence in November 2013. This will provide a much wider range of items collected from the doorstep including glass, more plastics and food waste.

Looking Forward - key projects for 2013 – 2014

Project name	Service	Due Date
Develop and lead an approach to improving the management of the public realm and pilot, review and make recommendations for improved service delivery as part of the council's improvement programme	Business Services	November 2013
Introduce new waste and recycling services	Thanet Frontline	March 2014
Carry out upgrade to the waste transfer site	Thanet Frontline	August 2013
Develop new approaches to undertaking street cleansing to improve results and public perception whilst reducing costs	Thanet Frontline	March 2014
Install solar panels at the Crematorium	Property Services	September 2013

Priority 7: We will plan for the right number and type of homes in the right place (with appropriate tenure) to create sustainable communities in the future

The Council intends to ensure that local housing is developed appropriately to create mixed and sustainable communities. Locally, average house prices and rents are high when compared to average household income. The Council aims to ensure that everyone in Thanet has access to housing that is both affordable and of high quality. The Council is committed to continuing its successful work in bringing empty properties back into use, and will work with partners to tackle and provide innovative solutions to the problems of empty properties.

Key Projects

Alert	Description	Progress update	Explanation (if not on target) and Remedial Action
	<p>Deliver the Margate Housing Intervention Project</p>	<p>An additional £4million of funding from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) has been obtained. Four properties have been secured; one has been transferred to KCC for redevelopment, and refurbishment of the other two has started. A further 13 properties are being pursued for purchase.</p> <p>The private sector has been assisted in bringing 125 units of accommodation back into use as 55 flats/homes.</p> <p>Since site work began on the first property there has been a positive impact from this project. Activity from private developers and owner occupiers is increasing and there has been a positive response to media coverage and promotional activity. The number of empty properties that have been developed and reconfigured into larger homes by the private sector is very positive and will assist us in ensuring the project is a long term success.</p> <p>Feasibility investigations are now being made with a view to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Developing a loan scheme for owner occupiers who purchase an empty property as their main residence in the area. 2) Develop a lease/repair approach to deal with some commercial empty properties. 	

		3) Ways of supporting the creative sector where appropriate to build on the success of Turner Contemporary.	
	Develop an in-house scheme for managing private rented accommodation	<p>A consultant was commissioned to carry out a feasibility study on the potential for developing a successful local letting agent. The study has been completed and assessment is being made of how the scheme could be implemented.</p> <p>The feasibility study has enabled us to reconsider our current approach to service delivery, and consider new ways of delivering services to deal with homelessness, and ways of working with private landlords. This will be a good starting point for the Council to prepare for dealing with issues that arise from welfare reform.</p> <p>The next step is to have regard to the report and develop options for service transformation moving forward. This will include developing a business plan for setting up an agency and the services that are required to support this as well as a thorough cost benefit analysis.</p>	
	Develop a new Housing Strategy for the District	<p>A Housing strategy has been written, and following extensive consultation was agreed by the Council in February 2013.</p> <p>Key priorities were identified through an initial public consultation which was undertaken in December 2011. A full six week consultation on the draft was then undertaken starting in October 2012 - a link to the strategy was sent to over 150 main stakeholders, a dedicated page was set up on the TDC website, and hard copies made generally available. At the same time a members briefing was held, the draft was presented to the Parish Forum and SMT managers for comments. The draft was considered by Overview & Scrutiny Panel, and then agreed by Cabinet in January, before adoption as Council policy in February.</p> <p>The document will be in place until 2016, setting out TDC's strategic Housing objectives for all partners and stakeholders. The Housing Strategy will inform housing aspects of the emerging</p>	

		<p>Local Plan; and it provides direction for the other housing documents which will be produced in 2013, such as the Allocations Policy and Tenancy Strategy. These documents will be subject to their own consultation and scrutiny.</p> <p>The Action Plan within the Housing Strategy is a dynamic working document and progress will be reported to SMT and members annually. This is to ensure the document is kept up to date and that we are tackling housing issues which emerge before the next refresh is due in 2015/16.</p> <p>Achievements are already being made towards targets in the action plan which forms part of the Housing Strategy, such as the Empty Properties project which received funding from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA).</p>	
	<p>Acquire 30 units for affordable housing in Ramsgate</p>	<p>Under the HCA empty homes programme the council had a target to deliver nine units of affordable housing by March 2013. Seven units have been purchased this year, one of which has now been completed. These properties would otherwise have remained empty, and we are bringing them back into use as affordable housing to be managed as part of our existing housing stock.</p> <p>Despite falling short of the initial target, the HCA have awarded our programme additional funding as one of only a few councils that have been able to deliver the programme successfully.</p> <p>Next steps include pursuing further properties in the target area and potentially to widen this to tackle other problem properties.</p> <p>We have also received additional funding to deliver a lease repair scheme; this will be further developed to assist with properties where purchase may not be a feasible option.</p>	
	<p>Deliver the Selective Licensing Scheme in Margate and Cliftonville</p>	<p>During the year the Council's selective licensing scheme was legally challenged. The Council's view was upheld in Court, and has been successfully defended at appeal. Unfortunately the judicial review</p>	

		<p>process delayed the timescale required for demonstrating significant impact within this financial year. However, we have identified an increase in the level of fire safety works that have been carried out in licensed premises and an increase in the number of gas safety and electrical safety checks that have been carried out.</p> <p>Over 700 licences have been issued in respect of over 1100 units of accommodation, and enforcement action has commenced. The fee income generated by the scheme pays for the staff resources required to deliver the scheme. We are in the process of recruiting additional staff for the delivery and enforcement of the scheme.</p> <p>The scheme makes it easier for us to contact landlords and managing agents where issues have been identified around property condition, anti-social behaviour and management issues.</p> <p>Activity will be closely monitored for the remainder of the designation. The designation is due to end in March 2016.</p>	
	<p>Complete a housing asset appraisal</p>	<p>The HRA Asset Management Strategy is a new project now at an early stage.</p> <p>Geographic Information System (GIS) work has so far electronically mapped approximately 75% of HRA land holdings. The first phase of the project gathers information on the garage sites.</p> <p>A draft strategy is being produced. This will set out the processes for dealing with HRA sites, including those which are surplus to requirements and could be suitable for redevelopment. Site appraisals will be undertaken for sites which could be redeveloped.</p> <p>We are starting to verify sites that may be suitable for redevelopment, and hope to be able to bid within the round of HCA funding bids that has just opened for monies to build new affordable homes.</p>	

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Alert	Description	Target	Actual	Explanation (if not on target) and Remedial Action
	Number of private sector housing notices issued on landlords	200	167	Enforcement activity has reduced due to the need for significant activity on selective licencing and reduced staffing levels. The existing staff continue to work effectively but the target was set based on optimum staffing levels. Recruitment is under way to bring the service to strength.
	Number of empty properties brought back into use	100	113	
	Number of affordable homes delivered	102	105	

Looking Forward - key projects for 2013 – 2014

Project name	Service	Due Date
Improve the tenure balance in Margate and Cliftonville West through the Margate Housing Intervention Project. Including delivery of the clusters of empty homes (COE) funding.	Housing Regeneration	March 2014
Develop an in-house scheme for managing private rented accommodation	Housing Regeneration	June 2013
Deliver HCA empty homes funding by bringing 30 empty homes back into use	Housing Regeneration	March 2015
Deliver and enforce the selective licensing scheme in Margate and Cliftonville	Housing Regeneration	April 2016
Complete Housing Asset Management Strategy	Housing Services	March 2014

Priority 8: We will support excellent and diverse cultural facilities and activities for our residents and visitors

The Council is committed to Thanet's heritage as a seaside destination and recognises the role that theatres, museums, galleries, festivals and events play in making Thanet a great place to live in and to visit. In an environment where funding for the cultural sector is reducing, the Council is placing greater emphasis on working with partners and exploring other ways of providing services and facilities.

The Council is committed to the visitor economy, working in partnership with Visit Kent to market the area to potential visitors across the country, and is driving forward the development of the Dreamland Heritage Park aiming to build on the increased tourism offering created by the Turner Contemporary.

Key Projects

Alert	Description	Progress update	Explanation (if not on target) and Remedial Action
	Deliver the Dreamland Heritage Amusement Park	<p>Following the council's application for compulsory purchase (CPO) of the site, the owner's appeal against the CPO was heard by the planning inspector who upheld the Council's application. The owners subsequently appealed the inspector's findings, but the High Court's decision (2 May) was to award in TDC's favour.</p> <p>In order to protect the listed structures urgent works to the cinema were undertaken. A further urgent works notice has been issued in respect of the organ. These works are now in progress.</p> <p>Hemingway design is now working with the Trust on the layout of the proposed theme park.</p>	<p>The current landowners have indicated that they intend to apply direct to the Court of Appeal for leave to appeal against the decision of the High Court. The Council will continue to defend its position.</p> <p>The Council is protecting and progressing the opportunity to regenerate Margate. It is consistently endeavouring to facilitate a viable Theme Park of historic thrilling rides, and will take appropriate action to achieve this end.</p>

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Alert	Description	Target	Actual	Explanation (if not on target) and Remedial Action
	Number of visits to the tourism website	667,879	1,182,361	
	Number of enquiries to the VIC	73,379	84,143	

	service			
	Number of visits to TLF leisure centres	414,000	452,377	
	Total number of participants in Thanet Coast project public and community events	6,900	7,619	Figures stated reflect the position as at end of January 2013.

Looking Forward - key projects for 2013 – 2014

Project name	Service	Due Date
Work with partners to deliver the Dreamland Heritage Amusement Park	Economic Development & Regeneration	June 2014

Priority 9: We will support a broad range of sports, leisure and coastal activities

The Council continues to provide a diverse range of indoor and outdoor leisure facilities and also provides activities throughout the year in all areas of the district for all ages. The Council is committed to ensuring that Thanet's coastline is protected and maintained to a high standard, recognising that it is a fantastic free resource for active recreation. The Council offers a variety of beach and water sports activities around the coast for residents and visitors alike.

Key Projects

Alert	Description	Progress update	Explanation (if not on target) and Remedial Action
	Deliver the Margate flood and coast protection scheme	<p>The Margate Flood and Coast Protection Scheme reached the stage of substantial completion and was opened for use by the public on 28th March 2013. A small amount of work is still outstanding but this is minor in nature (mainly finishing and decorative items) and will be completed by the end of April. The scheme has been delivered for substantially less than the £6.2 million grant allocation. This has allowed additional work such as the tidal pool refurbishment and railing refurbishment to be funded using the same grant funding.</p> <p>The improvement in flood defence provision at Margate from a 1:20 year standard to 1:200 year standard is now in place.</p> <p>The additional work across the bay to refurbish the Marine Pool will continue separately and is anticipated to be completed by the end of May 2013.</p> <p>A separate contract to fully refurbish the railings on Marine Terrace was awarded in March and is programmed for completion at the end of June 2013.</p>	
	Deliver Pegwell Bay flood defence scheme	<p>The construction phase of the Pegwell Flood Defence Scheme reached substantial completion on 28th March 2013.</p> <p>The scheme consisted of a concrete flood wall and earth bund. Three access points with flood boards were also included in</p>	

		<p>the project.</p> <p>The scheme is designed to sustain the current standard of flood defence to the low lying area of Sandwich Road for the next 50 years. The standard of flood defence will in fact be significantly improved for the majority of the next 50 years as the scheme has been designed to allow for the future effects of climate change. This project will benefit residential properties in the low lying area of Cliffsend immediately behind Sandwich Road.</p> <p>The final account is still to be determined but the total scheme cost is anticipated to show a saving of approximately 20% of the approved grant allocation of £208k.</p> <p>The contract for the scheme allows for a 12 month defects correction period during which there will be close liaison with the contractor on any issues or defects which may arise.</p> <p>The scheme will require ongoing routine maintenance, which will be managed by TDC using existing term maintenance provisions for coastal zone works.</p>	
	<p>Develop the new Ramsgate Pool and Spa</p>	<p>The Your Leisure (formerly Thanet Leisure Force and Vista Leisure) contract is on track to deliver new sports facility for Thanet in summer 2013. Completion of building work is expected to occur in late June/ early July 2013.</p> <p>The outside of the building has been completed. Most of the internal alterations for the new sports centre have been completed. Mechanical and electrical installations are progressing well.</p> <p>On completion the existing Ramsgate pool will close and it will be decommissioned when the new pool is opened.</p> <p>A meeting of Your Leisure communications team and TDC communications is intended when a completion date is firmly set.</p>	<p>A delay of four weeks is anticipated over the life of the programme, due to problems with materials and programming of sub-contractors. These have been addressed by Your Leisure.</p>

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Alert	Description	Target	Actual	Explanation (if not on target) and Remedial Action
	Number of visits to TLF leisure centres	414,000	452,377	
	Total throughput for TDC organised sport activities	5,400	6,810	

Looking Forward - key projects for 2013 – 2014

Project name	Service	Due Date
Undertake a review of sport, leisure and play facilities and agree priority sites for necessary improvements in liaison with Economic Development	Community Development	March 2014
Build and refurbish the Ramsgate pool	Economic Development & Regeneration	August 2013

Priority 10: We will influence the work of other agencies to ensure the best outcomes for Thanet

The Council plays a key leadership role for the local area, and is committed to building strong relationships with other service providers from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors. As well as providing assistance and support, the Council influences and challenges other service providers, encouraging them to develop their service in ways which best meets the needs of people in Thanet.

The Council is a lead member of a number of partnership bodies including the Thanet Regeneration Board, the Margate Task Force and the Community Safety Partnership. We work with many types of organisation including local residents groups, charities and larger organisations such as the University and Kent Fire and Rescue. Our efforts to deliver every one of the other ten priorities involve partnership working in some form and key partnership activities are identified in the priorities which they support. The work of the Margate Task Force project cuts across a number of the priorities and was monitored against this priority in 2012/13. For 2013/14 it has been assigned to priority 2 (we will tackle disadvantage across our district).

Key Projects

Alert	Description	Progress update	Explanation (if not on target) and Remedial Action
	Guiding, facilitating, and supporting the work of the Margate Task Force (MTF)	<p>This multi-agency team is co-located on the 4th Floor of the TDC Cecil Street offices. Operational team work is ongoing, primarily via Street Weeks (10). The MTF Executive Group meets regularly to steer direction of the Task Force, reporting to the MTF Board as necessary.</p> <p>Co-location has meant more efficient services from partner organisations and for residents - referrals are dealt with much quicker now.</p> <p>The Street Week programme has identified key work streams for the future.</p> <p>It is agreed that the MTF Executive Group will oversee the Troubled Families programme. A five year plan is in development as Task Force moves into next phase.</p>	

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

None have been identified against this priority.

Looking Forward - key projects for 2013 – 2014

Project name	Service	Due Date
Establish a Local Health and Wellbeing Board	Community Development	March 2014

Priority 11: We will protect and preserve our public open spaces

Thanet has a diverse range of public open spaces, from areas of cliff top grassland through to formal parks, all a vital part of the natural environment that enriches the quality of life for our communities and visitors alike. The Council is committed to preserving them and retaining the character of the district whilst enabling sensitive enhancements for the benefit of all.

Key Projects

Alert	Description	Progress update	Explanation (if not on target) and Remedial Action
	<p>Submit a bid for funding for the reconstruction of the North Thanet Sea Wall</p>	<p>This project is for study work only. The completed study will inform a document called a Project Appraisal Report. This document forms the business case for a coast protection scheme and will be used as the basis of an application to release national grant funding.</p> <p>The scheme will be designed to deliver the refurbishment of two lengths of north Thanet sea walls which were constructed in the mid 1950's.</p> <p>These two lengths of sea wall are between Epple Bay and Westgate Bay, and also Westgate Bay and St Mildred's Bay. The scheme has not been allocated national funding by the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee in the 2013/14 financial year. However the work will appear on the Council's annual Medium Term Plan submission to the Environment Agency in May this year with the intention of attracting funding for the construction phase during next financial year. This study will inform a business case and Project Appraisal Report which will in turn form the basis of an application to release grant funding for the Sea Wall Reconstruction scheme.</p> <p>The two reports that are the output of this study work were completed in April.</p>	

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Alert	Description	Target	Actual	Explanation (if not on target) and Remedial Action
	Number of community groups working in active partnership with the Council on open spaces	10	14	
N/A	Satisfaction with parks and open spaces	N/A	70%	This is the first year that a satisfaction question for parks and open spaces was included in the budget consultation. It will enable trend to be captured in future years, and targets set in relation to previous results.

Looking Forward - key projects for 2013 – 2014

Project name	Service	Due Date
Design North Thanet Sea Wall Reconstruction Study and Bid	Engineering & Technical Services	April 2013
St. John's Cemetery, Margate, extension to burial ground	Crematorium & Cemeteries	July 2015

Land Transfer at The Centre, Newington

To: **Extraordinary Cabinet – 29 May 2013**

By: **Lauren Hemsley, Strategic Housing Manager**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Ward: **Newington**

Summary: **To approve the transfer of land at The Centre, Newington to Orbit Group Limited to enable the delivery of 19 additional affordable homes.**

For Decision

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 Orbit Group Limited is the Housing Association currently redeveloping The Centre in Newington to deliver 60 new affordable homes. The land associated with this delivery has already been agreed under the Property Sale Agreement of 30th March 2011.
- 1.2 Orbit has now secured further funding from the Homes and Communities Agency to deliver additional units at the site, but this will require the transfer of land outside of the original agreement.
- 1.3 There are two sections of Thanet District Council owned land which will enable the delivery of 19 additional homes in total. The first is a small section of land in the middle of the site which was originally intended for a Gateway building with parking. As funding has not been available to deliver this building planning consent has now been granted for 4 new houses (land marked 'a' on the attached plan) in order to progress the regeneration of the whole site. The second section of land is the former Flowing Bowl pub site, also know as the Cherry Orchard. This site will enable 15 new houses to be built and planning consent has also been granted for these units (land marked 'b' on the attached plan).

2.0 The Current Situation

- 2.1 Orbit is progressing well on site with the redevelopment. To date 12 affordable houses and 6 flats have been completed and let to households on the housing register and 4 shared ownership houses have also been delivered.
- 2.2 The transfer of these two plots of land will enable the delivery of 19 new affordable houses, which will be allocated to households on the housing register and will be subject to a Local Lettings Plan.
- 2.3 The council has progressed land transfers to Orbit as part of the original Property Sale Agreement for the site. As the two sections of land (identified in 1.3) fall outside of this agreement, a Cabinet decision is required to approve the transfer.

- 2.4 Orbit will continue to follow the legal procedures as set out in the Property Sale Agreement dated 30th March 2011 for the transfer of the remaining land at The Centre.

3.0 Options

- 3.1 For Cabinet to agree the disposal of land as identified in Annex 1 to Orbit Housing Association to enable the provision of further affordable homes.

4.0 Next Steps

- 4.1 Dependent on Cabinet's decision, to progress the transfer of both sections of land to Orbit. The contractor can then remain on site and move straight onto the next phase of the redevelopment. The transfer of the remaining sections of land, which form part of the Property Sale Agreement, will continue to progress as set out within the legal document.

5.0 Corporate Implications

5.1 Financial and VAT

- 5.1.1 It has been agreed that Orbit will cover the costs TDC have incurred to date for the Flowing Bowl site. This will include the purchase price of the site, demolition costs, planning fees and associated costs incurred totalling £168,216.11.

The gateway land is to be transferred, as per the previous land transferred to Orbit under the Property Sale Agreement for £1.

5.2 Legal

- 5.2.1 These sites were not contained within the original Sale Agreement because at that stage one of the sites was intended for the provision of a Gateway building and funding from the HCA had not been secured to redevelop the Flowing Bowl site. External solicitors will be instructed to progress the transfer on behalf of the council due to the timescales required to complete the transfers. Orbit has agreed to cover these legal costs. The transfer will ensure any liability for the land as per the Highways Agreement, Sewer Agreement and Deed of Grant of Easement are removed and transferred to Orbit.

5.3 Corporate

- 5.3.1 The transfer of land has strong links with the ethos and priorities of the Corporate Plan as it will enable new affordable homes to be delivered. It links directly to Priority 7: "We will plan for the right type and number of homes in the right place to create sustainable communities in the future". The transfer of the land at The Centre will also work towards increasing the availability of housing association provision, contribute to the delivery of the Housing Strategy and positively encourage the development of the right mix and type of homes to meet local needs.

5.4 Equity and Equalities

- 5.4.1 The transfer of land does not negatively impact on any residents of the district and will enable the provision of 19 new affordable homes.

6.0 Recommendation

- 6.1 For Cabinet to approve the transfer of two pieces of land at The Centre, Newington as identified in Annex 1 as land 'a' and 'b' and described as the Gateway land and Flowing Bowl land.

7.0 Decision Making Process

- 7.1 A non-key decision for Cabinet decision.

Contact Officer:	Lauren Hemsley, Strategic Housing Manager
Reporting to:	Madeline Homer, Director of Community Services

Annex List

Annex 1	Plan of land to be transferred
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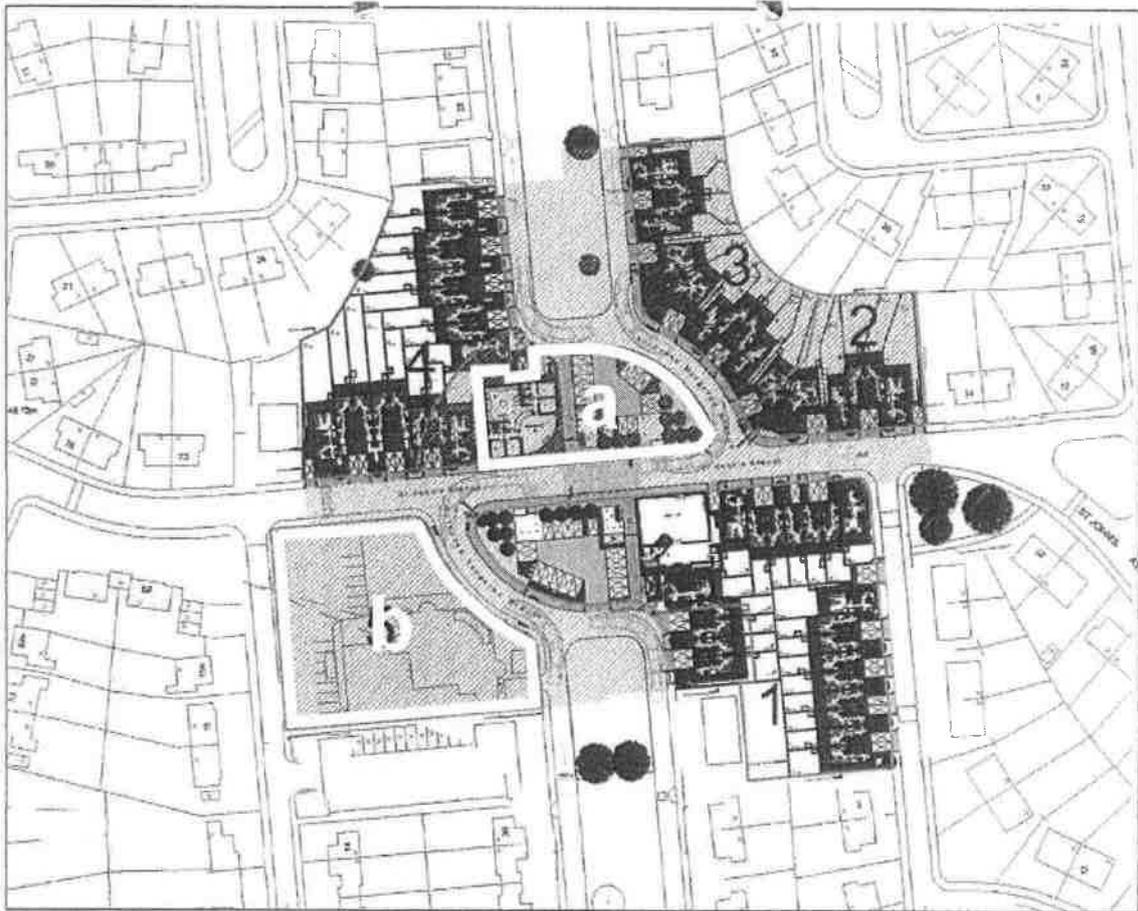
Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
Property Sale Agreement	Legal – c/o Judith Woodward

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	Sarah Martin, Financial Services Manager
Legal	Harvey Patterson, Corporate and Regulatory Services Manager
Communications	Hannah Thorpe, Corporate Communications Officer

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Allocations Policy

To: **Extraordinary Cabinet – 29th May 2013**

Main Portfolio Area: **Housing & Panning Services**

By: **Victoria May, Housing Options Manager**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Ward: **All wards**

Summary: **To approve the Allocations Policy following the close of consultation.**

For Decision

1.0 Introduction and Background

1.1 The current Lettings Policy was adopted in October 2004 following publication of Allocations of Accommodation Code of Guidance. There is a statutory obligation for each local housing authority to publish how they will let their homes. The economy has changed considerably and the new National Allocation Policy was published in June 2012 taking into account the new powers the Localism Act gives local Authorities. This report is to obtain Overview and Scrutiny views following the close of consultation. The consultation comments are attached.

2.0 The Current Situation

2.1 The Allocations Policy made nine key proposed radical changes in the new policy which are:

- Closed housing register to households outside of the Thanet district
- Introducing a residential criteria
- Tighter guidelines when accessing unacceptable behaviour
- Rise in age for additional bedrooms for children of opposite sex
- Tighter guidelines on additional bedroom requests for carers
- Re-categorisation of priority bands
- Priority for Armed Forces personnel
- Tighter guidelines on dealing with households who owe current or former tenancy debts
- Clarification on income, savings and assets

2.2 The proposed changes were originally discussed and introduced to members in September/October 2012 via 3 workshops which 19 Councillors attended. The Allocations Policy was also presented to the SMT Managers Forum on 20th December 2012 and a further Cabinet briefing was held on 7th January 2013. Additional workshops were held with East Kent Housing and the Housing Options Team which was informative.

2.3 The Allocation Policy did receive a lot of media interest including local paper coverage and discussions were aired twice on local radio stations. Cllr Green was invited to attend a discussion on BBC Parliament around proposed changes.

- 2.4 The main focus of the Allocations Policy is to use the powers outlined in the Localism Act to prioritise local people within Thanet and ensure that households that apply on the housing register are assessed fairly to maximise the use of the available stock by ensuring that households are housed in appropriate sized, affordable accommodation and that we house those in the most housing need.
- 2.5 The 5 week public consultation closed on 1 March 2013. We emailed out a link to the draft Allocations Policy to approximately 100 stakeholders to include housing associations, East Kent local authorities, Kent County Council, Thanet MPs & Members and other partner organisations. A dedicated page was uploaded onto the TDC website for the duration of the consultation and there were also links from the communications consultation pages. In addition to target the existing households on the housing register an information page was set up on KentHomechoice enabling those that were actively placing bids for social housing to view the document and take part in the snap survey for the consultation. Hard copies were made available for collection at the Gateway and were posted out to residents on request who were unable to access a computer or call into the gateway.
- 2.6 In total we received 178 online responses of which 72 were households on the housing register. The comments made focussed on the nine key areas and the following issues relating to the content of the Allocations policy were raised from the responses and following Overview & Scrutiny's comments they have been incorporated into the final revised Allocations policy for cabinet to agree.

3.0 Results and actions

3.1 Closed housing register to households outside of the Thanet district

Result: This was supported with 88.2%(157) of people agreeing or strongly agreeing, with 2.2%(4) neither agreeing or disagreeing, and 9.6%(17) disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with this proposal. Of the 9.6%(17), 23.5%(4) of these responses were from households on the housing register that live outside of the Thanet District.

Action: No change to policy

3.2 Introducing a residential criteria

Result: This was supported with 82%(146) of people agreeing or strongly agreeing, with 2.8%(5) neither agreeing or disagreeing, and 14.7%(26) disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with this proposal. Of the 14.7%(26), 26.9%(7) of these responses were from outside of the Thanet District.

Action: Due to homeless households being assessed against local connection criteria in the Housing Act 1996 (amended 2002) they should be excluded from the residential criteria.

3.3 Tighter guidelines when accessing unacceptable behaviour

Result: This was supported with 92.1%(164) of people agreeing or strongly agreeing, with 3.9%(7) neither agreeing or disagreeing, and 3.3%(6) disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with this proposal.

Action: No change to policy

- 3.4 Rise in age for additional bedrooms for children of opposite sex
- Result:** This was supported with 69.7%(124) of people agreeing or strongly agreeing, with 10.7%(19) neither agreeing or disagreeing, and 18%(32) disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with this proposal. Of the 18%(32), 46.9%(15) are currently on the Housing Register.
- Action:** No change to policy
- 3.5 Tighter guidelines on additional bedroom requests for carers
- Result:** This was supported with 71.4% (127) of people agreeing or strongly agreeing, with 19.7% (35) neither agreeing or disagreeing, and 7.9% (14) disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with this proposal. Of the 71.4%(127) who agreed and strongly agreed with this proposal, 23.6%(30) are registered disabled.
- Action:** Section added to include a room maybe disregarded if it has specific adaption's such as a through floor lift at the social housing providers discretion.
- 3.6 Re-categorisation of priority bands
- Result:** This was supported with 74.7% (133) of people agreeing or strongly agreeing, with 14% (25) neither agreeing or disagreeing, and 10.2% (18) disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with this proposal. Of all the responses received 40.4% (72) were received from households on the Housing Register.
- Action:** No change to the policy
- 3.7 Priority for Armed Forces personnel
- Result:** Of all the responses received, 65.7%(117) of people agreed or strongly agreed, with 21.9% (39) neither agreed or disagreed, and 11.8% (21) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this proposal.
- Action:** Assess the Armed forces personnel against residential criteria (2.1) & (6.6) Owner/occupiers.
- 3.8 Tighter guidelines on dealing with households who owe current or former tenancy debts
- Result:** This was supported with 87.7% (156) of people agreeing or strongly agreeing, with 6.2%(11) neither agreeing or disagreeing, and 5.1% (3) disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with this proposal.
- Action:** No change to policy
- 3.9 Clarification on income, savings and assets
- Result:** This was supported with 80.9% (144) of people agreeing or strongly agreeing, with 7.9%(14) neither agreeing or disagreeing, and 9.6%(17) disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with this proposal.
- Action:** To reword and divide this section to improve understanding.
- 3.10 Additional section has been added to the Allocation Policy relating to bedroom tax which is now in section 8.3.

4.0 Options

4.1 For cabinet to agree the final version of the Allocations Policy which can then progress to full council.

5.0 Next Steps

5.1 To take the Allocation Policy to full Council.

6.0 Corporate Implications

6.1 Financial and VAT

6.1.1 The Allocations Policy has very limited financial implications. The consultation has been carried out using the TDC web pages and links to these web pages were emailed out to stakeholders. We produced some hardcopy documents and in addition to officer time, this is the only cost incurred in producing the policy.

6.2 Legal

6.2.1 The author considers there are no legal implications.

6.3 Corporate

6.3.1 The Housing Policy has strong links with the ethos and priorities of the Corporate Plan. In particular Priority 2 “We will tackle disadvantage across the district” stating we will focus on disadvantaged groups to better target the services they need & working with partners to tackle the main housing issues effecting local people. Other priorities like 7: “We will plan for the right type and number of homes in the right place to create sustainable communities in the future.” Meeting local housing need and supporting this by housing local people will improve Thanet residents’ quality of life.

6.4 Equity and Equalities

6.4.1 Equity and equality are addressed within the policy, but an Equalities Impact Assessment has also produced (please see attached in draft). The policy does not negatively impact on any residents of the district and aims to improve the chances of households in housing need to be being re-housed in social housing.

6.0 Recommendation

6.1 For Cabinet to recommend the Allocations Policy and agree to proceed with the timetable for the document to go to Council in July for approval.

7.0 Decision Making Process

7.1 This is a key decision to go to Full Council. It is a key decision because the Allocations Policy is for the whole district and therefore affects all wards.

Future Meeting:	Date:
Full Council	11 July 2013

Contact Officer:	Victoria May, Housing Options Manager
Reporting to:	Madeline Homer, Director of Community Services

Annex List

Annex 1	Amended Allocations Policy draft
Annex 2	Consultation comments
Annex 3	Full Equality Impact Analysis - Draft

Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
None	N/A

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	Sarah Martin – Financial Services Manager
Legal	Gary Cordes – Legal Services Manager
Communications	Hannah Thorpe – Corporate Communications Officer

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Thanet District Council

Housing Allocation Policy



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Foreword

This policy sets out our priorities for how social rented housing in the Thanet district is allocated, and the guidelines which determine entitlement and eligibility to that housing. This will supersede any existing and former policy relating to the allocations of housing and is in accordance with the requirements of Section 167 of the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002.

It also explains what help people can expect from us in meeting their housing needs, and sets out the system and processes by which we let council-owned homes and make nominations for housing owned and managed by housing associations. The policy sets out:

- Who is eligible to be accepted onto the housing register
- How homes are allocated
- How to apply to Thanet's housing register
- How priority for housing applicants will be given
- How transfer applications will be assessed
- Eligibility for different property types

As at 1st April 2013, the Council is landlord of 3047 properties which are broken down as follows:

Accommodation Type	No of Properties
Studio Flats	79
One bedroom flats/maisonette	552
One bedroom house	1
Two bedroom flats/maisonette	787
Two bedroom house	596
Three bedroom flats/maisonette	27
Three bedroom houses	924
Four bedroom flats/maisonette	2
Four Bedroom houses	78
Five bedroom house	1

During the period 1st April 2012 to 31st March 2013 we housed 282 households in the following accommodation:

Accommodation Type	No of Lets
Studio Flats	20
One bedroom flats/maisonette	95
One bedroom house	0
Two bedroom flats/maisonette	83
Two bedroom house	26
Three bedroom flats/maisonette	22
Three bedroom houses	33
Four bedroom flats/maisonette	0
Four Bedroom houses	3
Five bedroom house	0

As you can see, there is clearly insufficient social housing in the Thanet district to meet the need of every household on the housing register. It is therefore essential that each household is assessed and given the appropriate priority against the new policy.

1.0 Introduction

The Housing Register and this Allocations Policy operates under the provisions of the Housing Act 1996 – Part VI (as amended) and takes into account the three codes of guidance issued by the Government - Allocation of Accommodation: Code of Guidance for Housing Authorities 2002, the Allocation of Accommodation: Choice Based Lettings Code of Guidance for Housing Authorities 2008 and Fair and Flexible: Statutory guidance on social housing allocations for local authorities in England 2009. This Policy will be reviewed annually and may have to be amended to reflect any legislative changes.

1.1 Aims of the allocation policy

The Choice Based lettings policies and key objectives are:

- Empower applicants by offering choice, through a range of housing options, choice and information which will enable them to make realistic decision in relation to their future housing prospects.
- To target scarce resources to those in the greatest need.
- To challenge the perception that a homeless application offers the best route to re-housing, where possible creating active incentives for applicants to choose the housing register.
- Ensure sufficient priority is awarded to transfers in order to make best use of the social housing stock.
- Promote the development of sustainable mixed communities and neighbourhoods of choice

2.0 Who is eligible?

2.1 Residential Criteria

Households, who are Thanet residents and have been living within the Thanet district for a continuous period of 3 years immediately prior to date of application. For households currently temporarily residing outside of the district and where their principle home was in Thanet prior to moving can be considered if they have been resident in Thanet for 3 out of the last 5 years. Examples of this could be hospital, HMP, temporary lodgings, women in refuges.

Armed Forces Personnel will be exempt from this criteria providing their last settled home was in Thanet immediately prior to entering the Armed Forces.

Households that are owed a duty under the Housing Act 1996 (Amended 2002) will be exempt from this criteria.

Households who can evidence full time employment within the district and require to live in the area due to their job can also be considered.

2.2 Qualifying persons

Qualifying persons, all 'qualifying persons' are eligible to have their application added to the Housing Register. Part VI of the Housing Act 1996, (as amended), confirms that the Secretary of State may prescribe who are or are not qualifying persons. Currently, the following persons are entitled to join the housing register:

- Qualifying persons aged 16 or 17 (see Section 4 for further details)
- Any person aged 18 or over, and

- Their current home is their only home, or sole residence, unless proven otherwise with reason and
- They do not have access to a suitable home elsewhere, and
- They are not already on the housing list, either on their own or with someone else, and
- They are not ineligible for housing assistance under section 160A(1) and (3), and 185(2) of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended), or any regulation prescribed by the Secretary of State. In general terms a person from abroad who is subject to immigration control is ineligible for housing assistance, and
- They, or a member of their household, have not been guilty of unacceptable behaviour serious enough to make them unsuitable to be a tenant.

2.3 Ineligible due to unacceptable behaviour

Thanet District Council may treat persons as ineligible for an allocation of accommodation if they or a member of their household have been guilty of unacceptable behaviour serious enough to make them unsuitable to be a tenant or lose their home. Examples of unacceptable behaviour are;

- breach of tenancy agreement
- nuisance or annoyance to neighbours
- conviction of using for immoral or illegal purpose
- damage or neglect of your home
- conviction for arrestable offence in the locality of your home
- domestic violence causing another household member to leave the home
- false statement to induce grant of tenancy
- premium paid for assignment
- subletting
- tied accommodation when dismissed for misconduct

Where a person has previously been found not eligible due to unacceptable behaviour, but now believes this should no longer be held against them, the applicant can make a fresh application. The local authority can allow an application if they are satisfied that the person's behaviour has improved. This would be accepted, where an applicant had held a tenancy and a good tenancy reference was received or if specific satisfactory documentation was received upon Thanet District Councils request.

2.4 Voluntarily worsening your housing circumstances

Where an applicant moves from accommodation that was available for their occupation that was more suitable for them than the accommodation they have moved to and which it was reasonable for them to have continued to occupy. This category also applies where they have left temporary accommodation provided by the council under a duty arising via the Housing Act 1996 (as amended Homelessness Act 2002) to provide interim accommodation to homelessness households. For an applicant to have intentionally worsened their circumstances there must be evidence that it would have been reasonable for the applicant to have remained in their original accommodation.

3.0 Assessment of Need

3.1 The banding system

To try and be as fair as possible in deciding who should be offered properties, we use a banding system to determine priority for re-housing. Assessment is based on an applicant's housing circumstances, suitability of the property, and any medical problems.

Persons eligible to join the housing list will have their application assessed by a Housing Options Advisor and placed into one of four bands, in accordance with the 'Fair and flexible' statutory guidance. The bands are referred to as 'A, B, C, and D', and applications in band A will be given the highest priority for re-housing, band B the next highest, then C, with band D applicants having the lowest priority. Further details of how an applicants circumstances will determine the priority band they are placed in, are set out in (Appendix 2).

Band A – Urgent housing needs

Factor 1	Urgent medical or welfare needs.
Factor 2	Management transfer.

Band B – Serious housing needs

Factor 1	People occupying very overcrowded housing or otherwise living in very unsatisfactory housing conditions.
Factor 2	Social housing tenants in Thanet who are under-occupying by one bedroom or more.
Factor 3	Armed Forces Personnel

Band C – Reasonable preference

Factor 1	People who are homeless
Factor 2	People occupying unsanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions.
Factor 3	People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds, including grounds relating to a disability

Band D – General housing needs

Factor 1	People who are intentionally homeless, or who have deliberately worsened their housing circumstances
Factor 2	People who are homeless by another local authority

3.2 Medical priority

Applicant's who indicate in their application form that they consider their health or disability is adversely affected by their current housing conditions, will be asked to complete a Welfare and Medical Assessment form describing their health problems. Additional information, such as from a medical professional, may also be submitted. A home visit may be made to establish how the medical issue is affected in real terms by their housing situation. Applicants should be aware that even if they provide supporting documents stating that a move to alternative accommodation is essential, it is for the council to determine the appropriate level of priority in accordance with the allocation scheme (See Appendix 3 for more information).

All medical information supplied will be assessed initially by the Thanet Medical Panel, consisting of a minimum of two council Housing Advisors. Cases that are unable to be determined due to the complexity will be advised of the Kent Agency Assessment process. Dependent on the case, we can request

information from Now Medical. Applicants will be advised by letter of the medical priority awarded and the type of accommodation identified as being suitable for their needs.

If we determine that a particular type of property is required on medical grounds; for example a home with no internal stairs, the applicant will be expected to bid for accommodation matching that criteria. Bids placed on accommodation that does not meet the required criteria may be bypassed. Contact may be made to explain your accommodation needs based upon the information we have on file. If the applicant continues to bid on accommodation that does not meet their medical requirements any priority awarded on medical grounds will be reviewed. If an applicant's medical circumstances improve, any priority awarded on medical grounds will be reviewed and may be removed.

3.3 Kent Agency Assessment

The Kent Agency Assessment (KAA) process is a mechanism for Health or Social Services professionals, and their agents, to refer an applicant with a housing related health/support need, to the council for help accessing suitable accommodation. A Kent Agency Assessment should be used where an applicant requires re-housing due to a health/support need that cannot be met in, or is being exacerbated by, their current accommodation and the form provides all the supporting information required to assess an applicant's housing needs. Applicants will be advised by letter of the level of priority awarded and the type of accommodation identified as being suitable for their needs.

Where an applicants needs are so great or severe that general housing is not suited, there are documents to evidence this or where a duty of care is owed by another statutory partner Thanet District Council will be able to refuse the KAA and send back to the referrer to ensure the applicant is provided with the appropriate accommodation that is suited to the applicants needs.

3.4 Suitable size of accommodation

The council considers the suitable size of accommodation for a household to be as shown in the following table. Properties that have specific adaption's such as a through floor lift, the social housing provider can disregard this as a bedroom.

Single Person	Studio or one bedroom flat (inc up to 32 weeks pregnant)
Couple	One bedroom flat (inc up to 32 weeks pregnant)
Families with one child (under 18)	Two bedroom flat, maisonette or house
Families with two children of the same sex up to 16 years old	Two bedroom flat, maisonette or house
Families with two children of the opposite sex where the eldest child is under 10 years old as in line with housing benefit regulation	Two bedroom flat, maisonette or house
Families with two children of the opposite sex where at least one child is 10 years old or over as in line with housing benefit regulations	Three bedroom flat, maisonette or house
Families with three children	Three bedroom flat, maisonette or house
Families with four or more children	three or four bedroom flat, house or maisonette
Households with special housing needs	studio flats, bungalows, sheltered flats and accommodation as defined by Kent Agency Assessment (see section 3.3)

3.5 Additional bedroom requests/carers

Where households request an additional bedroom due to medical or health needs we will not allow additional rooms for medical equipment, or for the applicant or partner to occupy additional rooms. We will only consider the room requirement of households to be increased as in line with housing benefits for a carer if:

- The carer is not already a household member (in which case they may be able to share with other members of the household, a partner perhaps, so being a carer doesn't entitle them to an extra room), or
- A non resident carer is required for either the claimant or the partner and the claimant or partner receives disability living allowance care at either middle or highest rate or attendance allowance and supporting evidence is provided by a medical professional to confirm this requirement.

3.6 National Witness Mobility Service (NWMS)

In order to assist the national police force to tackle serious crime and to support witnesses in the legal process, the council works in partnership with colleagues in the NWMS and will, as required, accept referrals from this source.

Such cases will have been assessed and verified by the NWMS managers and referrals will only be accepted with the agreement of the Housing Options Manager. There are particular confidentiality considerations for such cases and no personal information will be taken until the applicant accepts a direct offer of accommodation in the district. Any proposed offer will be checked for suitability by the NWMS before the offer is made and details of successful lettings may not subsequently be made available to the public.

3.7 Other considerations in determining need

Because of the shortage of social housing and in order to make best use of all the available stock, there may be occasions when properties are restricted to applicants who have particular medical needs. There are limited availability of purpose built and adapted properties for people with disabilities. People with a need for such accommodation will be considered for suitable vacancies on the basis of medical priority. If a ground floor property becomes available, and at the time of allocation there are no suitable applicants requiring ground floor accommodation the property may then be let to those registered for a house, maisonette or upper floor accommodation, at the discretion of the council.

Priority for houses will be given to applicants with dependent children therefore if the household consists of adult children only i.e. over the age of 18 you may not be offered a house. Because of the very limited availability of four bedroom homes, priority for three bedroom properties with two living rooms (lounge & dining rooms), will be given to larger families, to ensure best use is made of the available stock. For households that are pregnant, 6 weeks prior to the birth of the baby, registration will take place of baby X to enable those households to bid on suitable accommodation. This will mainly benefit those that would require an additional bedroom following the birth.

4.0 **Determining priority**

4.1 Homeless households

We are committed to extending choice of housing to those who are accepted as homeless under the Council's statutory duties, ensuring effective use of Council

resources and the provision of temporary accommodation. Consequently those accepted as being owed the full statutory housing duty under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended), will be given a period of a month from notification of acceptance within which to bid for properties through Kent Homechoice. If at the end of the month they have not been bidding appropriately for a property, officers may bid on their behalf for each suitable property that becomes available and may change bids when an applicant has applied for a property that they are ineligible for. When a bid is successful for a suitable property this will then constitute as a offer or nomination for the purposes of discharging the homeless duty. Direct lets can be made to households owed a homeless duty.

The Localism Act 2011 gives a legislative change to enable the way in which the duty on authorities to secure accommodation under section 193(2) of the 1996 Act can be brought to an end with an offer of suitable accommodation in the private sector. These changes allow local authorities to end the main homelessness duty with a private rented offer. The duty can only be ended in the private rented sector in this way with a minimum 12 month assured shorthold tenancy. If the household becomes homeless within two years of taking the tenancy then the reapplication duty (section 195A(1)) applies.

4.2 Separated households

If one member of the household is suitably housed and the 'partner' could move into the property without causing additional housing need then their banding could be prioritised based upon that accommodation.

Children will only be considered on an application if they primarily reside with that household. If that child also resides with another household they will only be considered as part of the household they primarily reside with.

4.3 16 and 17 year olds

Young people under the age of the age of 18 are eligible to join the housing register (subject to exemptions). If you are aged 16 or 17 the law states that you are not old enough to hold an assured or secure tenancy. In exceptional circumstances an applicant aged under 18 maybe eligible to join the housing register:

- If you are a non-dependent applicant aged 16 or 17, requiring independent accommodation, which is not provided by Specialist Childrens Services (SCS)
- If you are a teenage parent aged 16 or 17
- If you are aged 16 or 17 and leaving local authority care
- If you are aged 16 or 17 and owed a housing duty by Thanet Council

Where you are an applicant aged under the age 18 and are eligible to be on the housing register, if you are successful within an allocation of a property, you must have an appropriate adult aged 18 or over, to hold your tenancy in trust for you until you reach the age of 18. This will be in the form of an "Equitable Agreement" where the trustee will hold the legal estate, but is not liable for the rent.

Young people may also be asked to attend and interview with a Neighbourhood Manager from East Kent Housing to ensure that you have the skills to sustain a tenancy. You must be willing to be referred for floating support to assist with tenancy sustainment if necessary.

If you are under 18 and have a serious housing problem, you are homeless or in threat of becoming homeless, please contact either Kent County Council

Children's Specialist Services on 08458 247 100 or the Housing Options Team. We will make every effort to ensure that you are able to remain within your parental or family home. Where it may not be appropriate for you to remain in your home, you will need to attend a joint assessment with a Housing Options Officer and Children's Specialist Services Social Worker to see what your needs are. This will be arranged with you and normally will take place within your home or at the Thanet Gateway.

4.4 Serious Offenders

Applications made by serious offenders, as defined by the Serious Crime Act 2007 will be subject to an appropriate assessment of their eligibility, which will take MAPPA (Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements) guidance into account. Any allocation will only be made following a multi-agency risk assessment and where suitable and safe accommodation has been identified.

4.5 Armed Forces

Armed Forces Personnel means a person who is serving in the regular forces or a person who has served in the regular forces within three years of the date of their application for an allocation of social housing under Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996. The Regulations give effect to the Government's commitment to ensure that members of the regular and reserve forces, and their families, are given appropriate priority for social housing if they need it when serving or after they have left the Armed Forces.

These Regulations are made by the Secretary of State under section 166A(7) of the Housing Act 1996, inserted by section 147 of the Localism Act 2011. Section 166A(7) gives the Secretary of State power by regulation to amend the reasonable and additional preference provisions in section 166A(3) which determine who has priority for an allocation of social housing.

The Regulations provide that local housing authorities must frame their allocation scheme to give additional preference to the following persons if they fall within one or more of the statutory reasonable preference categories and are in urgent housing need:

- a) serving members of the regular forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service
- b) former members of the regular forces
- c) bereaved spouses or civil partners of those serving in the regular forces where (i) the bereaved spouse or civil partner has recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled, to reside in Ministry of Defence accommodation following the death of their service spouse or civil partner, and (ii) the death was wholly or partly attributable to their service
- d) existing or former members of the reserve forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness, or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service

For members of the Armed Forces, band B will be awarded and residential criteria will be applied (2.1). In addition armed forces personnel will not be discriminated against when assessing their financial situation (6.4/6.5) however if they own their own home the normal assessment will take place (6.6).

5.0 Housing for older people

5.1 Sheltered housing

Sheltered housing is housing designed for persons over 55 with housing related support needs. Sheltered housing will normally only be available to persons requiring the level of support offered in this type of accommodation. Eligible persons may be subject to an assessment by the landlord to establish their support needs and suitability for living in the scheme selected. Applicants over 55 years of age will be considered as well as applicants with a disability who require the accommodation and support provided within a sheltered scheme. In the latter case, some landlords will accept persons over 50 years of age.

Priority for allocations to ground floor sheltered and elderly persons accommodation will be given to current tenants on the housing register, living on an upper floor, within the same block, who have a medical/mobility need for ground floor accommodation. Allocations made thereafter will be based on individual need. This will then free up a property for another applicant via CBL. If the assessment indicates that the person requires a higher level of support than can be provided by sheltered housing, they will be advised that sheltered housing would not be appropriate and referred to Adult Care Services.

5.2 Extra care housing

Extra care is housing for older people where additional support and social care services are provided in accordance with assessed need. Extra Care housing is intended to enable older people to live as independently as possible for as long as possible and improve the quality of life and choice that older people can expect as they become less able. Extra care housing will be advertised through Kent Homechoice but a dedicated allocation panel, consisting of representatives from the Council and Social Services, will make allocations. Allocations through this panel will be based on an assessment of the level of support and care required by the applicant.

6.0 Financial criteria

6.1 Current rent arrears

We may take into account, in accordance with S167(2B) of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended), current rent arrears. If a tenant of a social landlord applies on the housing register we will apply for a tenancy reference from your current landlord. If the applicant/tenant is in arrears and there is a failure to maintain a payment arrangement, the application maybe suspended until the situation is resolved. For households that are affected by welfare reform and have accrued rent arrears, each case will be considered on their own merit based upon circumstances, level of debt, reasons why they are effected, efforts to pay etc. Where any application is suspended for the above reasons the applicant will be notified in writing of the decision and the grounds for it (S167(4A)(b)).

6.2 Former tenancy debts

We may also take into account former tenancy debts with another social landlord (registered social landlord or local authority). If an outright possession order was granted by the court and no efforts have been made to clear this debt, or we have reason to believe that an outright possession order would have been granted, we will not consider your application until this debt has been cleared. If a debt is owed to any social housing provider you will not be eligible for housing on the housing register.

Housing associations (HAs) participating in the choice based lettings scheme may have policies which prevent them offering a tenancy to an applicant who has former/current tenant arrears with another local authority or HA.

6.3 Statute Barred debts

A debt is statute-barred if legal proceedings for the recovery of the debt from the debtor have not been started within a period of six years from the date when the debt became payable. Although the debt continues to exist, Thanet District Council is unable to take any legal action against an applicant in order to recover the debt.

If an applicant applies for housing and has a former tenancy debt with Thanet District Council and it is **not** statute barred then the applicant will be required to clear this debt subject to any duty that the council may have to an applicant under relevant legislation.

If the debt **is** statute barred then Thanet District Council will not pursue this debt through the legal channels however the applicant will still be required to clear this debt.

6.4 Income

If any member of the household is earning a higher rate salary which places them in the higher or additional rate taxable bands (as per HM Revenue & Customs) then you will not be considered on the housing register.

6.5 Savings and Assets

If an applicant applies on the housing register and has savings and/or assets of over £16k they will not be considered on the housing register as in line with housing benefit regulations (Armed Forces Personnel will be exempt from this rule). The applicant will be expected to use this money to secure accommodation. If it is considered that an applicant has purposely deprived themselves of capital in order to meet the criteria to apply on the housing register their application will not be considered.

6.6 Owner/Occupiers

If an applicant owns their home they will not be considered on the housing register unless there is a substantial reason to move. If specific or specialist accommodation is required due to change in circumstances, each application will be considered on its own merit.

7.0 Allocations exceptions

7.1 What does this mean?

People who apply to join the housing register are assessed in accordance with the provisions of Part VI of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended). There are a number of circumstances where people will be assessed outside of this and will have their applications managed by the local authority and/or housing association separately. These circumstances are:

- Mutual exchange.

- An application made under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) (Homelessness) and consideration for temporary accommodation under this Part.
- Transfers involving a temporary decant for major works, or other management reason not involving an application from the tenant.
- Where a local authority secures the provision of suitable alternative accommodation under the Land Compensation Act 1973, section 39.
- The grant of a secure tenancy under the Housing Act 1985, section 554 or 555, regarding a defective home.
- Any duties arising from an application made under the Rent (Agriculture) Act 1976, section 27 or 28.
- Where a secure tenant dies, the tenancy is a periodic one, and there is a person qualified to succeed the tenant under the Housing Act 1985, section 89.
- Where a secure tenant with a fixed term tenancy dies and the tenancy remains secure by virtue of the Housing Act 1985, section 90.
- Where a secure tenancy is assigned to someone who would be qualified to succeed to the tenancy if the secure tenant died immediately before the assignment.
- The grant of a secure joint tenancy where the tenancy is held by one of the joint tenants as a sole tenancy.
- The grant of a secure sole tenancy to a former joint tenant, where the joint tenancy has been terminated by one joint tenant and the other tenant wants to remain in the property (when this is in accordance with eligibility for that specific property type).
- Where a secure tenancy vests or is otherwise disposed of in pursuance of an order made under:
 - the Matrimonial Causes Act 1973, section 24 (property adjustment orders in connection with matrimonial proceedings);
 - the Matrimonial and Family Proceedings Act 1984, section 17(1) (property adjustment orders after overseas divorce); or
 - the Children Act 1989, Schedule 1, paragraph 1 (orders for financial relief against parents).

8.0 Transfer applications

8.1 Thanet District Council tenants

Social tenants can apply to move to alternative council and housing association owned property. Priority awarded to their application will be based on an assessment of their housing needs. Applications for transfer may be made jointly by separate tenants of the council who wish to apply for housing together, on the condition that both tenancies will be relinquished if the council makes an acceptable offer of a transfer to a third property. Transfer applications will be subject to checks relating to the condition of the applicant's property and their compliance with the conditions of their tenancy.

8.2 Transfer Incentive Scheme/bedroom tax

In order to encourage council tenants who are under-occupying homes to move to smaller non-family housing, or if a tenant is occupying fully adapted, wheelchair accessible accommodation and no longer requires the use of these facilities, a grant of £1,000 is currently offered. Any debt owed to Thanet District Council will be cleared using this money prior to the remainder being paid to you. This grant will only be payable if the move is as a result of a successful bid to alternative council or housing association property through the choice based lettings scheme. For more information please refer to the East Kent Housing Transfer Incentive Scheme policy.

8.3 Bedroom Tax for tenants

From April 2013, people of working age who under-occupy their property will have their housing benefit cut by 14% for one spare room and 25% for two or more spare rooms. Therefore, for tenants who are affected should contact their landlord/housing officer. The social housing provider should explore your housing options and if a move is appropriate and agreed either a direct let will be offered within existing stock or you will be placed into band B for under-occupying.

8.4 Management transfers

The council recognises that there may be exceptional circumstances where the only way a housing need can be resolved is through the use of discretion. If a council or housing association tenant has an urgent need for re-housing due to a confirmed risk to the personal safety of themselves or their household, or other exceptional factors, their landlord may agree a management transfer. This will only be agreed if there are no other options available or feasible and you are in immediate housing need. Please contact East Kent Housing for more information on the Management Move Policy.

9.0 How homes are let

9.1 Choice based lettings

We are one of 14 local authorities and 23 housing association partners involved in Kent Homechoice the choice based lettings service which is used to let social homes across the whole of Kent. As a partner we are committed to offering the greatest choice possible in the allocation of social housing in the district, whilst ensuring that housing goes to those with the greatest need.

Choice based lettings (CBL) schemes are designed to introduce an element of choice for people who apply for council and housing association homes. Choice based lettings allow people applying for a home, including existing tenants who want a transfer, to bid for properties which become available. Available properties are advertised through various channels and the adverts will describe the property and which type of household can bid for it. For example, if it is for an elderly or disabled person, or for a household which needs a certain number of bedrooms.

Where an applicant may have difficulty in making bids for properties without assistance, they may nominate a friend, relative or advocacy worker from an appropriate agency to act on their behalf. In certain circumstances applicants can be added to the assisted bidding list and sent a fortnightly personalised freesheet with details of all the properties they are eligible to bid for. Once bids have been made they are sorted in order of priority, and the person with the highest priority normally gets considered first for the property. If that person turns the offer down, the next person on the list gets the chance to see it, and so on.

There will be certain situations where choice in the allocation of housing has to be restricted – such as when the council or a housing association needs to re-house a household in an emergency. The circumstances when this may apply are set out in the policy. Apart from these exceptional cases, housing will be allocated to applicants who bid for a specific property, and all applicants will have the opportunity to bid for properties they are entitled to be considered for, having regard to household size and other eligibility criteria.

Choice based lettings enables those seeking housing in the district to identify the level of priority they have been awarded within the allocation scheme, to develop

awareness of the availability of accommodation suitable to their needs within the district, and to make informed decisions which balance their need for accommodation with the availability of properties that meet their requirements. As a result applicants can decide whether to wait until they have sufficient priority to obtain their ideal property, or whether to lower their aspirations and bid for properties they are more likely to have a chance of obtaining. It also helps applicants to make an informed choice about whether they wish to seek alternative solutions to their housing needs.

9.2 Length of time

The housing register will differentiate between people who are in the same priority band according to the date their priority band was awarded.

9.3 Local lettings policies

Local Lettings Policies have been introduced to help maintain and promote a balanced and sustainable community, in line with the Kent Sustainable Communities Protocol. The Council has the power under s167 (2e) of the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002, to allocate particular accommodation to people of a particular description, whether or not they fall within the reasonable preference categories or not. However, in operating local lettings policies, we need to ensure that, overall, reasonable preference for allocations is given to applicants in the reasonable preference categories; and that our local lettings policies do not discriminate, directly or indirectly, on racial or other equality grounds, as set out in Paragraph 5.26 of the Allocations Code of Guidance issued in November 2002.

Examples of situations when a local lettings policy may be used include:

- New developments where there is a need to achieve a balanced mix of household sizes
- Criteria that aim to reduce the likelihood of anti-social behaviour in areas that have existing high levels of ASB.
- Rural Housing developments where a local connection is identified in the Section 106 agreement.

Following the implementation of a Local Lettings Plan on a development any lets on the site will be subject to the same criteria as outlined in the plan.

9.4 Discretionary powers

The Allocations Policy cannot cover every eventuality and in special cases where there are exceptional needs or hardship, the Housing Options Manager has discretionary power to review any criteria within the policy to ensure an additional priority is awarded and/or approve offers of housing, sometimes outside of choice based lettings. A full audit trail should be available to evidence the decision reached and the reasons why.

10.0 Applying to the Thanet Housing Register

10.1 What is the Housing Register?

The Housing Register is essentially the list of people who wish to be housed by a social landlord in the Thanet district and existing tenants who wish to transfer to another council or housing association property. We receive a large number of enquiries each year from people looking to rent a home in the district and the

housing register is constantly growing. Regrettably, there are only enough properties becoming available to be able to house those most in need. As a result of this shortfall, applicants for housing, and in particular those identified as having no or low need, may never be housed. We will only accept households who would reasonably be expected to reside with each other and joint tenancies will only be offered to cohabiting couples as recognised in law.

Applicants may want to consider other options for re-housing such as renting accommodation in the private sector. Thanet District Council has a team of Housing Options Officers who can provide advice and information about how to access other types of housing. Further information about other options available can be found on the Kent Homechoice website: www.kenthomechoice.org.uk

Because of the limited amount of social housing available, we have a system to prioritise households on the housing register in accordance with their identified need for housing and to manage the letting of social homes in accordance with our objectives. The criteria and rules that relate to this system are set out in (Appendix 2) of this policy.

10.2 How to apply for housing

People wishing to apply for housing should complete a housing application form. To do this visit the Kent Homechoice website at www.kenthomechoice.org.uk and choose the Register tab.

It is important that the application is completed fully and any evidence requested on the form is provided. Additional priority for length of time on the Housing Register will only start to accrue from the date that we receive all the information necessary to make an assessment. Incomplete applications without photographs and supporting information may be returned to the applicant. Once the form has been completed and all the information has been provided, the council may need to make additional enquiries.

In accordance with S171 of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended), a tenancy granted on the basis of information subsequently found to be false or because material information has been withheld, may result in legal action being taken by the landlord to recover possession of the property. In addition it may be decided that an applicant has committed a criminal offence where:

'he knowingly or recklessly makes a statement that is false and may lead the council to award priority for housing if the statement was relied on when assessing the application'.

A person guilty of such an offence would be liable on summary conviction to a fine of up to £5,000.

10.3 Proof of identity and supporting information

The housing options department has a service level agreement with the housing benefit department, enabling officers to use the verified identification documents, to process their housing register application.

Every person making an application to the housing register will need to supply 2 identical passport-sized photographs, or an alternative type of photographic identification acceptable to the council, for each named applicant or joint applicant must accompany all applications. These should be recent photographs with the applicant's name printed on the reverse together with his/her signature. (Appendix 1) has more information about providing proof of identity.

10.4 Renewing an application

It is an applicant's responsibility to renew their application each year. Every applicant will be sent a renewal request, close to the anniversary of the date of registration, which will include a request to provide information on any change in circumstances. If the renewal form is not returned within four weeks the application will be cancelled without further notice. An application can only be considered for reinstatement in exceptional circumstances and if the request is made within six months of the cancellation date.

10.5 Changes of circumstances

Once placed in a priority band, applicants should notify the Council of any material change in their circumstances that will affect their priority for housing, for example:

- A change of address, for themselves or any other person on the application.
- Any additions to the family or any other person joining the application
- Any member of the family or any other person on the application who has left the accommodation.
- The health of any member of the family or any other person on the application, getting better or worse.
- A change in the applicants income or employment status

Applicants will normally be required to complete a new housing register form. Applications will be temporarily suspended from bidding while the Council assesses the information provided by the applicant and completes further enquiries that may be necessary. The council will carry out an assessment of each applicant's entitlement and priority for re-housing on the basis of information which has been provided by the applicant or otherwise received in connection with the application.

10.6 Members of the council, staff members and their relatives

To ensure that we are seen to be treating all applicants fairly, any application from members of the council, employees of the council or associated persons must be disclosed on the application form. Such applications will be assessed in the normal way but in addition be passed to the Housing Options Manager to be audited. In order to ensure public confidence, any accommodation allocated to the applicant under the scheme must be approved by the Housing Services Manager following appropriate checks. The term 'associated persons' above is as defined in S178 of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended).

11.0. Reviews and Customer Feedback

11.1 Right to a review

Applicants have the right to ask for a review of any decision made under the terms of this policy with which they do not agree.

Please note that only information that has already been supplied can be reviewed. If an application has been correctly assessed but the applicant failed to supply the requested or appropriate information at the point of application they are not entitled to have their application reviewed. They will instead be asked to submit a new application, which gives a clear account of their current situation. If an applicant is eligible for inclusion onto the housing register by virtue of this new application, priority will begin from the date that all the correct information is received. **An application will not be backdated.**

A request for a review must be made to the Housing Options Manager within 21 days of being notified of the decision. Following the request for a review being received the Council has a maximum of 8 weeks to respond. If the review is likely to take longer the applicant will be notified of the amended response time. The Council's decision on the review will be final and the applicant will not be entitled to a further review of that decision. Reviews of decision requested under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) are outside the scope of this Allocations Policy.

11.2 Complaints, compliments and comments

We aim to provide a high standard of customer care and to treat every application equally. We appreciate feedback and would welcome any comments about how we can improve or increase the service that we offer. If an applicant is dissatisfied with any aspect of the way in which their application for housing is dealt with, other than one for which a review can be requested, they should contact the council and, if the matter is not resolved to their satisfaction, make a formal complaint which can be via telephone, email, in writing or by visiting the Thanet Gateway Plus.

12.0 Equality and diversity

We are committed to delivering a service that is accessible and equitable to all the communities that we serve. We will ensure that people will be treated with respect and dignity. We will monitor access to the housing list, and the assessment of need in accordance with our equality impact assessment. We will make certain that no-one is discriminated against on the grounds of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Sex (gender)
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

The various application forms referred to in this policy can be made available in a number of different languages. We can also arrange a translation service for people who visit the Council Offices. If you require this service, you should contact our Housing Options Team.

13.0 Information sharing

13.1 Information Sharing Protocol

We will share data provided by a person applying for housing in accordance with the Information Sharing Protocol agreed by the Kent Choice Based Lettings Partnership. When completing an application form, either using a paper copy of the form or on-line, the person is asked to provide their consent to the sharing of personal data between the parties to the protocol. Personal data can be shared provided the person has given informed consent and the sharing is for the purposes for which consent is given. Informed consent means that the person has the capacity to give consent, is aware of what information is to be shared, whom it is to be shared with and what it is to be used for. Personal information is only disclosed to other parties with the person's consent or in exceptional

circumstances where disclosure without consent is necessary. These reasons are:

- Where there are overriding legal, social or public interest considerations, for example there is a risk of seriously harm to the person themselves or to others if the information is not disclosed.
- Where the information is required by a local authority department or external auditors to carry out a statutory function.
- Where the information is required by the police as part of a criminal investigation.

13.2 Personal Data

Information provided to the council by housing applicants is confidential. The Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) provides individuals with a right to request access to any of their personal data held by the Council, and a right to know where the data came from, how it is used and why it is held. Such a request is called a “subject access request” and applies to personal data in housing files.

Subject access requests should be made in writing to the Director of Community Services, and must describe the information sought. Applications must state their name and provide proof of their identity (please see appendix 1).

If the person considers the personal information they have received is inaccurate, they may request that it is amended or removed from their records. If this is accepted by the council, appropriate action will be taken to amend the records. In the event of a disagreement, the information will remain and the person’s comments will be recorded on file.

Disclosure of information may be denied by the local authority in the following circumstances:

- The information could prejudice criminal proceedings.
- Legal professional privilege could be claimed.
- A care professional is of the opinion that disclosure could result in a risk of serious harm to the person or others as a result of disclosure.

Information held on file may include documents submitted by third parties, for example, health care professionals. This will only be provided to the applicant with the permission of the third party concerned.

Appendix 1 – Application Checklist

Please check that the information you have given is correct, ensuring that:

- You have answered all the necessary questions
- You have included your name, address and postcode on page 1 (if you are of 'no fixed abode' you must use state a care of or correspondence address)
- You have signed and dated the application form
- You have or will be providing the following items (these must be originals and not copies)

Proof of Identity

(This is required for ALL household members).

Please provide either ONE of the documents from list A or TWO documents list B

List A

- Passport
- Driving Licence
- Birth or Marriage Certificate
- Medical Card

List B

- A letter addressed to you from a solicitor, social worker, probation officer, the Home Office, HM Revenue & Customs
- A letter addressed to you from Housing Benefit or Council Tax
- A recent gas, electricity or water bill
- A recent bank statement

Proof of Current Address

(This must be provided even if you are of 'no fixed abode' and only using the address as a care of or correspondence address)

Please provide ONE item from the list below for each adult or non-dependent child named on the application to be re-housed.

- Utility Bill
- Council Tax bill
- Bank/Building Society Statement
- Housing Benefit entitlement letter
- College/School letter
- Letter from a professional person or organisation (i.e. Doctor; Probation Service; Social Services)
- Payslip with address
- Letter from Department of Work & Pensions (e.g. Benefit or Pensions letter)
- Tenancy agreement (if you are still within the fixed term of the tenancy)
- Mobile phone or telephone Bill

Proof of Income

(Please provide proof of ALL income being received by the applicant)

- The last six weekly, last three fortnightly or last two monthly wage slips for you and your partner.
- Your latest accounts if you are self-employed and letter from the HMRC which indicate self-employment
- Benefit award letters i.e. Job Seekers Allowance, Employment Support Allowance, Pension Credit

- Child Benefit award letter
- Working and Child Tax Credit letters

Proof of Savings or Capital

(For people not receiving income-based Job Seeker's Allowance, Income Support, income-related Employment Support Allowance, or Pension Credit Guarantee)

- Full statements for each account showing the last two months' transactions
- Documents showing any stock, shares, bonds, or certificates owned

Additional Documentation

(You will also be required to supply additional documentation should any of the following apply)

- Proof of pregnancy i.e. MAT B1 form or pregnancy record (including the EDD)
- At least two valuations of any property owned in the UK or abroad and details or any outstanding mortgage or loans secured on this property.
- Home Office documentation, such workers registration scheme documents; residence cards or visas, for persons subject to immigration control or persons who do not hold a Great Britain and Northern Ireland passport.
- Notice to quit, possession order, notice of eviction or letter giving notice if you are being asked to vacate your current home.

Without this information it will not be possible to process your application for housing, so you must provide everything as quickly as possible.

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Appendix 2 – Priority bands and criteria for reasonable preference

The banding scheme reflects the legal requirement set out in the section 167(2) of the Housing Act 1996 which requires that the allocations system gives “reasonable preference” for people in five groups:-

- *People who are homeless (within the meaning of Part VII (7) of the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002)*
- *People who are owed a duty by any local housing authority under section 190(2), 193(2), or 195(2) of the 1996 Act (or under section 65(2) or 68(2) of the Housing Act 1985) or who are occupying accommodation secured by any such authority under section 192(3)*
- *People occupying unsanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions*
- *People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds (including grounds relating to a disability); and*
- *People who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the authority, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or to others).*

The local authority may award “additional preference” to particular individuals, provided that they have “urgent housing needs”. The authority may take into account a wide range of actions when considering whether to give an individual “additional preference” or whether to give a lesser priority, but it must be able to explain the reasons for the decision.

Band A – urgent housing needs

Applications from persons who meet the following criteria:

1. Urgent medical or welfare needs.
Where an urgent medical need has been agreed with the local authority or a high priority referral has been accepted by the local authority under the Kent Agency Assessment procedure.
2. Management transfer.
Where the social landlord requires the tenant to move or the tenant needs to move due to violence, harassment, intimidation or threats of violence likely to be carried out, major works or other urgent management reason.

Band B – serious housing needs

Applications from persons where none of the above in Band A applies but who meet the following criteria:

1. People occupying very overcrowded housing or otherwise living in very unsatisfactory housing conditions.

Where a household is suffering from the following:

- a. Major overcrowding, that is lacking two or more bedrooms.
- b. Living in supported housing and needs to move, as support is no longer required.

- c. Where a Category One hazard exists under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System, which cannot be resolved within a reasonable time.
2. Social housing tenants in Thanet who are under-occupying by one bedroom or more.
3. Members of the Armed Forces

Band C – reasonable preference

Applications from persons where none of the above in band A or band B applies but who meet the following criteria:

1. People who are homeless.
Where the local authority have accepted a re-housing responsibility under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended), or determined that the person does not have a priority need for accommodation, or the household will be homeless soon.
2. People occupying unsanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions.
Living in insecure housing, for example on a licence agreement or non-secure tenancy, but excluded occupiers
Lacking bathroom or kitchen
Lacking inside WC
Lacking cold or hot water supplies, electricity, gas, or adequate heating
Overcrowding
Sharing living room, kitchen, bathroom/WC
Property in disrepair, with a Category 1 hazard
Poor internal or external arrangements
Social housing tenants in Thanet under-occupying by one bedroom
3. People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds, including grounds relating to a disability.
Where a medical need has been agreed with the local authority or a priority referral has been accepted by the local authority under the Kent Agency Assessment procedure.
4. Mobility.
People who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the local authority, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship to themselves or to others. For example, to give or receive care, or to take up employment.

Band D – general

Applications from persons where none of the above in band A, band B or band C applies, or:

1. People who are intentionally homeless, or who have deliberately worsened their housing circumstances.
Where a decision has been made by the local authority under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) or, where a person has deliberately worsened their housing circumstances and would have been found to be intentionally homeless if an application under Part VII had been made.

2. People who are homeless by another local authority

This applies where a duty is owed by another local authority under section 190(2), 193(2) or 195(2) of the Housing Act 1996, or who are occupying accommodation secured by another local authority under section 192(3).

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Appendix 3 - People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds (criteria may apply to any member of the household)

Medical or welfare priority is awarded where the current housing is adversely affecting the health or wellbeing of an applicant, or member of their household, and whereby a move would positively improve their health or wellbeing. Below are examples of where priority would be awarded.

Band A – Urgent medical or welfare needs

- Any life threatening illness being made worse by housing conditions
- A person who is housebound due to stairs or steps (e.g. using a wheelchair in an upstairs property)
- Any person who requires specifically adapted accommodation that they are lacking.
- Any person who cannot be released from hospital until alternative accommodation is secured.

Band C – People needing to move on medical or welfare grounds, including grounds relating to a disability

- Severe mental health problems affected by current accommodation.
- Elderly persons with moderate to severe arthritis which significantly affects mobility (e.g. spine, legs) living upstairs or on a steep hill.
- Conditions requiring on going medical treatment, being very severely exacerbated by living conditions (e.g. extreme cases of asthma).
- Conditions causing a reduction in mobility (e.g. breathlessness, dizziness) when combined with stairs or poor location.

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Q1. Closed Housing Register

How strongly do you either agree or disagree with the proposal to close the Housing Register to applicants from outside Thanet?

139 (78.1%) *Strongly agree*
18 (10.1%) *Agree*
4 (2.2%) *Neither agree nor disagree*
3 (1.7%) *Disagree*
14 (7.9%) *Strongly disagree*

Any other comments - you have space to provide a response of up to 1,000 characters

58 (32.6%)

Strongly Agree

thanet residents should get first choice over people who dont work or live in thanet

1. There may be exceptional cases of applicants with family ties to Thanet.

Only individuals from thanet should be on the housing register

I was born & bred here & i could not get housed at all as outsiders were getting housed as the amount of children they have also i think people who are debtors should be made to prove they can clear their debts no matter their circumstance,i beleive a lot of people are finding a way to fiddle the bidding system as well

Unless they have good reason, i.e. relatives need help from one another, so have to be nearer to look after relatives.

It's an appropriate time to start taking control and focus on our local residents. I think the current system is extremely unfair. We have a lot of people coming into the area who fancy living by the sea or who think it will be cheaper. Also a lot of eastern europeans have moved to this area knowing that they could get council housing and benefits.

This is only common sense and will stop undesirables from other parts of the country settling among us in Thanet. Unless of course they can pay for accomodation here. strongly agree as i have been on the housing register since december 2011 i am in band c and have been informed by a council employee that even though my circumstances have changed considerably in the past 4 weeks my band will not change as i have enough in savings and monthly incomings due to a private pension to rent in the private sector.i have just under 5 thousand pounds in savings and receive around 1,150.00 per month in pensions so i feel the changes would benefit myself and other persons in my position,at my time of life i am 65 next month there is a need to have some savings so as not to be a burden on my family i worked for croydon council for over 25years and joined the pension scheme to give myself a better quality of life in later years and feel i should not be discriminated against because of this.the private sector have very few properties for mature tenants and are very expensive the housing association seem to have a great deal of properties for fifty pl us persons.

It's hard enough as it is to obtain a home, without the need for applicants from other areas.

Would be a great approach for other social landlords to take also. Would also be helpful if the private sector would follow suit to reduce the burden being placed on the area by London boroughs and other areas more affected by the Welfare Reform proposals.

The Highest Priority should be given to those who were actually born in Thanet if they have children, so that they can stay close to their immediate families.

This should have been done years ago

Hopefully this policy will stop the transit to this area of "Dole by the seaside" unemployed. Local people who have a commitment to Thanet will stay long term in the housing provided.

I believe parts of Thanet (particularly Cliftonville West) have become "dumping grounds" for persons from other towns and cities ie London or elsewhere, in particular single persons. This is still going on and it creates an unfair pressure on one bedroomed accommodation in Thanet.

Please also remove from the register any applicants currently on it who are from outside the area.

Thanet has been a dumping ground for other boroughs 'problem' residents for too long. This should have been sorted years ago.

thanet is a small place, residents from within its boundaries should not have to wait longer than people from outside the area. this is a welcome change in housing policy.

As a council, there is a responsibility to ensure that those within our own district are given a priority.

We need to look after the area housing as others from outside the area who just want to live by the sea has to be stoped

Local schools, doctors etc are already heavily over subscribed. People should not be encouraged to move to Thanet for a ride!

Thanet needs to have an opportunity to stabilise and sort out many of its problems. This is a step in the right direction

i was put into band d cat with no explanation.and have been on the list years and years.properties are rarely given to band d so i am slowly loosing faith with the council.so why on earth do we give priority to outsiders of thanet when you cant house the people already here

Whilst I agree with this proposal I hope that TDC will not support any Government proposal to require those with "unoccupied" bedrooms to house immigrants.

Whilst I agree with this proposal I hope that TDC will not support any Government proposal to require those with "unoccupied" bedrooms to house immigrants.

I think it is brilliant that they are now only going to give local housing to LOCAL people! it means us that live here will have a greater chance of finding a property within the area we choose to live and having to live here for 3 years first is even better.

As a homeowner some might think I'm not in a position to make any judgements about this proposal, but being able to walk into your own house and shut the door is the fundamental need of any human being, be it rented or owned, and how disheartening it is for so many Thanet born people to see "outsiders" arriving here and seemingly taking priority! So yes these are positive proposals, my question is, why has it taken so long?? I think it's great that the people who live and care in Thanet are given priority over outsiders

Thanet housing needs to be kept for Thanet Residents. Far too many migrants being offered council housing when local residents on the register are not prioritized for their needs. Too many dodgy private landlords who don't upkeep the properties just grab the rent!

The council should not allow Government pressure to take more immigrants. The next step for this Government would be to suggest that those in under occupied accommodation should take in immigrants.

This area is drowning under the level of claimants and benefit recipients and yet we allow people from other areas to continue to come into the area and add to the numbers of those in need.

Local homes for local people should be the priority. People in more 'need' from other areas should be prioritised in the LA area they live only.

Maybe East Kent Housing area?

Thanet cannot support its own residents already. There is a lack of jobs, schools, doctors etc so why would we want to continue to increase the housing register from outside the area, thus putting more strain on our limited resources? People of Thanet do not want Thanet to turn into an urban grotto and that is exactly what is happening because all the councillors of the area give a damn about money in their own pockets, they don't give a damn about the area themselves. Truth is most of them probably don't even come from the area and I would bet my last £1 that a good number of councillors don't live in the area! How the hell are we supposed to turn the fortunes of a town like Margate around when we keep filling the area up with people claiming benefits? The gap between the income levels in Thanet and the cost of living in Thanet purely because we are in the south is becoming too great and honest, decent workers are struggling to find a point to it all. I think changing the banding systems and finally showing equality to the people who actually pay their taxes is long overdue and only fair. Why should people who don't work be the only ones to benefit where housing is concerned? I'm pretty sure that wasn't the original point of the social housing ethos in this country! It is almost impossible for anyone to get on the property ladder if they live off a single salary anymore so why shouldn't this long discarded section of the society benefit from the right to buy situation with council properties they could rent, if they were offered them too? Surely it is more financially beneficial to Thanet District Council to have a balanced quota of private paying tenants to housing benefit tenants to even out the cost of supporting people on benefits? With all due respect to the current government the Right to Buy Schemes available only offer properties in the middle of the Newington Estate or in Canterbury and they are still too expensive for what people earn around here... and I know, I've looked! This area deserves more. The workers of this area deserve more.

It should always have been this way.

I am in my 3rd year of waiting for a council house & of course ill agree with anything that benefits Me & my daughter

I agree that a local policy should be in place. I have lived and worked in the Thanet area all my life. I have little chance to affordable housing in the area I contribute to. It seems unfair that the banding policy means that people with no connection can be housed in a new affordable property because they have been "dumped" in Thanet by other authorities, in refuges ect.

It is unfair that local people are not housed first from the Housing Register. This area has for a long time has people "dumped& here from other areas (notably London areas) as well as immigrants coming in. It is important that agricultural land is not used for housing as once that is gone, Thanet will lose some of its charm. Therefore, make any housing only for local poeple and renovate old or empty housed after warning any owners.

we live in the area and its our councils money that is being spent so we deserve priority. personally i have been waiting 3 years to be moved after living in thanet all my life

Agree

Special cases should be allowed to join register, eg to unite a family

although i think people who have very strong links who have moved away ahpuld still be considered. for example if someone moved away but are now divorced and their parents and children are here they should still count. I think a minimum of five years should be considered with people who have been here or at least went to school here being the highest priority.

If we can not house the people in Thanet then surely we can not house the people that is not in Thanet.

However, there may be certain circumstances where a non-resident has a valid reason to want to move to Thanet, eg. to live near family for health reasons.

I think there should be residential criteria as there is such a housing shortage in Thanet

Neither agree or disagree

The people from outside Thanet may wish to work here but would leave property in their area for others. The vast number of new lettings to people from abroad is much more serious as local people are not able to get a place within a reasonable time.

Disagree

I think that this needs to be flexible and looked at on a case by case situation. For example, I am aware of a case where an elderly gentleman (over 80) living in London in council/housing association accommodation wishes to move closer to his son who lives in Ramsgate. His son has a partner and two small children and can not move out of Thanet to move closer to his father.

There is a concern that Children who are cared for by the local authority and resident in Thanet that are not resident for 3 years but have made strong local connections will be disadvantaged from securing a stable and long term home in an area where they have developed social relationships and secure attachments to the community

I agree in general with this proposal, however discretion should be allowed for special circumstances, for example, an elderly parent or parents wishing to move back close to their family from outside the area. This would not only be morally correct but would ensure family care for older people and would off-load the social services and NHS on a national level. there would be real cost benefits at national level or though they may not be seen locally. Perhaps government could recognise this and contribute to Councils implementing such a policy.

Strongly disagree

I feel that this will impact upon those clients who are fleeing another area, for example where they are victims of domestic abuse

My elderly father has lived in Thanet for quite a number of years, after my mother died he has got progressively ill,so I need to move from Wilts to be near him. I am 61 and would need social housing for I would need security of tenancy that I would not get with private lettings. Being on pension credit I could not afford private letting.

Stops people (on low incomes) having the freedom to move around. This is what councils have done to traveller people and are now exercising this same policy to poor people. housing should be open to all and be undiscrimitory. people should be allowed to live in what are they choose as they could have a very valid reason for wanting to live in a different area

I lived in Thanet for 23 years. I moved away and got married and now I want to return but unfortunately cannot buy a property therefore I need the council's help.

I have been on the housing list for 2 and a half years and bid regularly. I desperately want to move back to Thanet and due to your new rule changes that's going to be completely unaffordable. I want to work but will not be able to afford the private landlords rents. This will now result in me staying where I am and remaining here whether I like it or not, I'm devastated at this change. I understand the practicalities of the rules but still think they are totally unfair and biased. Could you not change it so as not to add anymore from outside Thanet but include existing applications? If I now move th Thanet I wont be able to work as I wont be able to afford the private Landlord rates

I think that exceptions should be allowed. Each application should be considered individual and considered on the grounds of the reason for the application. The applicant needing to move out of their current borough due to their welfare and have local connections such as family or work should be considered and given priority if necessary.

The policy stated that those eligible are Thanet residents who have been living within the Thanet district for a continuous period of 3 years immediately prior to date of application. Does this apply to those fleeing Domestic Abuse, who may have come to Thanet to live in the Refuge or have fled DA to the Thanet area to be with a support network; or those that have fled the area and returned with legal protection. Many clients are unable to live in the area with which they have local connection as this is simply their danger area, this excludes them from being on the housing register.

There maybe many varied reasons for a person wishing to be accommodated in Thanet - family connection, one's only friends being already resident, etc,

2. Residency Criteria

How strongly do you either agree or disagree with the proposal to introduce new residential criteria which requires applicants to have lived in Thanet for a minimum of three years in order to qualify for the Housing Register?

127 (71.3%) *Strongly agree*
19 (10.7%) *Agree*
5 (2.8%) *Neither agree nor disagree*
9 (5.1%) *Disagree*
17 (9.6%) *Strongly disagree*

Any other comments - you have space to provide a response of up to 1,000 characters

55 (30.9%)

Strongly Agree

I hope this means priority is given to residents of Thanet and not non-English families.
minimum 5 would be better

I strongly agree that there should be a 3 year residential criteria as long as it does not affect homeless applicants.

about time there are to many people that have never lived in thanet that get a house just like that where people that have lived here all there lives are still waiting years

Unless relatives are needed to be closer to look after relatives, flexibility for qualification

We need to stop accommodating people from all over the South East.

This is a very good idea as it will dissuade people from moving to be near the sea or because they feel it is a cheap area.

This has been needed for many years now. I am glad our council has grasped the nettle!
I have lived in Thanet my whole life, and people who have just moved here are being prioritised over me. Disgusting

Would prefer to see five years' continuous residency.

This should be five years.

We need to safe the true residents of thanet

With this criteria, there will already be commitment to the area.

An excellent suggestion for which Members and Officers alike should be commended.

You should add people who have previously lived in this area and have direct family here too. I was a council tenant in thanet for 15 years before I went into the military. Upon return found that I could not get council housing.

Should be longer

i think that 5 years should be the minimum and then only applicable if in full time employment

I think the minimum should be increased to 5 or more years at least though in order for the person to have made some kind of contribution to the area they wish to settle in applicants should also prove that they have worked for the minimum of three years to qualify

i feel that it is a very fair way to allow people who have lived in the area a long time to be housed first. As the real residents end up getting pushed to one side and never seem to get a look in as people come to the area and they know how to work the system so they get straight to the top of the list and housed first.

For too long Thanet has been a dumping ground with all the socio-economic problems that that brings. We are trying hard to rejuvenate our area and need people keen to develop a sense of belonging and community spirit.

here here

Thanet residents are already concerned regarding the amount of persons being relocated to Thanet from London and districts to free up London housing stock for more rental money.

For far too long Thanet has been a dumping ground and all the socio-economic problems that that brings. We are all trying hard to improve our area in many many different ways, so it is vitally important that all residents have a genuine need to live here. Supporting and showing an interest in their local community allows it to grow and develop into a pleasant place for us all to live in.

Personally I would like the time period to be a minimum of 5 years.

Longer - 5 to 10 years

This is a good starting point as TDC is not saying we won't accept people from outside the area but that people who wish to move here or are placed here by other councils have to show that they settled into the area and are supporting the local economy.

Local residents should always have priority.

Once again I have lived here since 2005

I believe that this will enhance the social housing estates as alot of the 'local' residents take more pride in Thanet and it's future .

At least three years should be a criteria for anyone to be considered but not at the expense of anyone who has born here or lived here much longer. There should also be checks to make sure there is no 'cheating' and the people being considered to try to integrate (learn English if necessary) and do contribute.

Agree

people should be living in thanet a lot longer before they can qualify for housing

This would be good for the community

I agree with this but do hope there would be put in place a special circumstance priorit, for excample : A mother/father feeling there home from a different area due to domestic violence, a family member having come to the area and care for an elderly relative.

Some cases must be based individualy.

I agree to a point, but there is always the possibility that someone who has not lived in Thanet for three years will require emergency accommodation or otherwise due to unforeseen circumstances. Perhaps if they can prove that they already had plans to remain in the area long term? Through a job contract or something?

There should be some descretion to this rule ie if you have left the area with 12 mths for a valid reason & return

Agree, however there should be allowances for exceptional circumstances.

please clarify this for people who are already on the register. Will they remain on the register?

Neither agree or disagree

i would recommend living in thanet for at least 5 years. you should be moving to the area for other reasons than to find housing

How does that work with the people already on the register that have not lived in Thanet for 3 years? I will have lived here for 3 years in July.

Moving because location is liked or ethnic groups exist should be discouraged. The private sector is not an option if you need to work here.

Disagree

add 'or no connection with thanet' to criteria .. eg if someone from Whistable works in Thanet they should be allowed to join the Thanet register, likewise to unite families

Similar to comments on question one

Should be a minimum of 2 years some residents if in an emergency situation would have to go to a private landlord or homeless (and homeless is to be changed according to circumstances). No 2 years is enough. If your on the register like myself I've got to wait till Sept 2013 when Ive been in Thanet 3 years not acceptable.

Strongly Disagree

3 years is not long enough to demonstrate a real connection to the area. This proposal is too simplistic. We should be looking at a larger picture, ie: is their a solid and long term (many years) family connection with the area and more importantly, with a specific village if this is where they are trying to go. We should be looking at overall family history and not just requiring individuals to have been "in the area" for a few years.

Residents of Supported Housing (for which there is no local connection applied) may have only been resident in the district for a short time (up to 2 years) before being ready to move on to independant accommodation. In applying a 3 year local connection requirement, these tenants will not be able to access social housing which may 'silt up' the scheme and have a negative impact on throughput in supported housing. This is particularly pertinent in cases such as domestic abuse and accommodation for offenders where it may not be possible or desirable for the client to reconnect to their area of origin.

should have proof that they have worked in this area already and show that they have indeed already contributed to the local area by paying their taxes and their own rent before they can apply for housing in the area. Too many people think they deserve homes just because they are humans and exist, a large number of people in this area need to be reminded that they are required to earn the privelege of social housiong because that's what it should be - a privelege, to help out those truly in need of some help. I have a friend who has had a council property in Thanet since she had her first baby when she was 17, she's now 38 and she's never worked, she's sitting pretty in a 3 bed house that is furnished a lot more expensively than my ridiculous privately rented 1 bed flat, her kids want for nothing, and as far as she's concerned she's covered by TDC until her dying days. Due to the fact I have worked since I was 15 and don't have this lifestyle I find that attitude s hocking and it's the root of many painful arguements between us old friends. I also know of old school friends from the Newington Estate who have somehow been able to 'take over' the houses they grew up in just because their parents had the tenancy before them... What the hell is that all about? Needless to say most of them don't work either. Most of these people that I know of have no desire to work because they get more if they don't. It's a ridiculous system that needs completely overhauling. Make them work for it first!

This will impact upon clients who are presented with a need before they have lived in the area for three years, for example where they experience domestic abuse, become medically unwell or are evicted from their property by landlords for no fault of their own. Keeps people in their place of origin. Stops poor people travelling to look for work. Makes people fleeing domestic violence return to the place of their abuse. Makes people with substance misuse problems moving away from their place of abuse, stay in the place where they got caught up and near the people they used with.

i disagree with this as in this day and age why put so many restrictions on how long you live in an area .it should be equal opportunities and to change areas when needed

I think 3 years is too long

I think that each application should be considered an individual case. Someone who has lived in Thanet for three years or more may not need housing as much as someone who has not.

As above. Those in the local refuge may not have originally made the choice to move to Thanet, it may have been the only available place of safety. However, when making an application to live in Thanet, they are making a choice to live in and contribute to the Thanet area. Likewise, those fleeing abuse, who have come to the Thanet area to be among a support network, have a connection to the area and yet will not be considered in the application

As answered in proposal 1, Would suggest an individual would have genuine reasons for applying for housing. They would be expected to be very genuine, given the uninviting employment scenario.

3. Unacceptable behaviour

How strongly do you either agree or disagree with the proposal to provide specific guidance on excluding households who have been guilty of unacceptable behaviour?

141 (79.2%)	<i>Strongly agree</i>
23 (12.9%)	<i>Agree</i>
7 (3.9%)	<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>
2 (1.1%)	<i>Disagree</i>
4 (2.2%)	<i>Strongly disagree</i>

Any other comments - you have space to provide a response of up to 1,000 characters

43 (24.2%)

Strongly Agree

Why should people with unacceptable behaviour be able to move.

Badly behaved neighbours can be a blight to people living near them, creating stress in their own home.

I believe that many social tenants in Thanet have got away with poor behaviour (particularly that of their children) for far too long and that the Council is just not tough enough on this poor behaviour.

With an appeals procedure if there are special circumstances, but it's a good approach

Any person committing ASB should be evicted not rehoused fined up to 5000 and given a 5 year prison sentence (no bail conditions). A zero tolerance approach is required. And the housing should implicate this to the residents when signing them on the tenancy they should be made to sign an agreement to that effect if broken they're out.

Anyone who has already been evicted or in prison should not be able just to move to get away from their past errors.

Long overdue.

Other councils particularly in London do exactly this. Thanet needs to send out a clear message. Tenants who behave badly should not be entitled to have council property.

Definitely. I don't want any undesirables taking up residence in my street!
WE ALL HAVE THE RIGHT TO LIVE IN PEACE AND NOT BE AFRAID OF OUR NEIGHBOUR.SOME
TENANTS DO NOT RESPECT THEIR NEIGHBOURS AND NOT ENOUGH IS DONE TO PROTECT
THEM.

Anybody who has a criminal record or debts should not be given a home against
somebody who has behaved, and who pays their tax every week.

It is hoped that this will help make people accountable for their behaviour and accepting
that with rights, come responsibilities to others.

Be careful of refusing problem families as they will turn to a private landlord and in certain
areas this will be detrimental. They should be sent back to the area they originate from.
Pay their fare and inform their local council this would be cheaper in the long run. This
includes Drug addicts, ex-prisoners and alcoholics who are sent here by their local
council or prison, as we have the facilities to deal with them here.

If people abuse the system & cause upsets they should not be allowed a local authority
houses

This is the right course. With no regulation of letting agents/estate agents,and too many
uncaring landlords, it can effect a whole neighbourhood adversely with just ONE
unsuitable tenant.

Another excellent improvement. I am impressed. Well done Thanet!

As an owner occupier in Cliftonville I and many other residents are sick to death of seeing
rubbish thrown into gardens and the street from some of these in social housing.We have
a single mother on benefits living next door to us who has loud late night parties most
nights and a constant string of drug dealers going in and out. Social services and the
council have done nothing to sort this problem out and we have all but given up trying,
being constantly stonewalled by officialdom.

Don't see why the council should take on problem people it only costs the taxpayer more
money. This might make people pay their rent and sort their behaviour out. This is good,
makes people responsible for their actions.

Wholly agree. You do not want to be raising children in the vicinity of such families if it can
be avoided

any persons who behave badly wether residents or not should not be provided with any
form of housing or benefits

strongly agree, as alot of people abuse their tenancy and have no respect for there
homes or their nieghbours around them, so they dont desevre to be living there,
sepecially when there are genuine people who are desperate to live in affordable
housing!!!

Thanet needs strong emphasis to improve all social behaviour and this is a step in the right
direction

It must be very hard for the law abiding residents to live adjacent to those who feel they
are untouchable and behave unacceptably.

If any event is considered to have unacceptable behaviour then i totally agree. However if the event was a 'one off' and the household has not repeated the event or any other for a specific time, say 2 years then they should be re considered.

In previous decades having a local authority home was a proud sign and somewhere along the way that proud sign has been replaced by a yob anti social culture who feel it is there right. A social housing estate should be a place of community once again, as it was in days gone by. This should also be extended to domestic violence victims who continue to bait their partners/ex partners which causes a blight on current residents. It is far too easy to get away with inappropriate behaviour. Most of us are law abiding citizens so to live adjacent to a household who have no care or respect for themselves or their environment must be a nightmare. Life isnt easy for many but that doesnt mean they are exempt from sorting their own problems and responsibilities. They must be encouraged to prioritise their needs budgetary incomes and not depend on outside agencies to bail them out every time.

Benefits should help those in need and not cause hardship to anyone else as a result but it is long over due that people be held accountable for their actions.

They don't change

Why should the law abiding majority have their lives disrupted or live in fear because of some anti-social people who basicaly don't give a damn about others

Slums aren't built.... They are made. If you behaved badly in private accommodation you would be evicted and the landlord would not allow you another tenancy. Bad behaviour has a negative effect on so many people. I hope that with this being in place people will have to take responsibility for keeping a roof over there heads. Also gives other tenants reassurance that any people causing others nuisance will be dealt with.

If people are moved because of reasons given above, checks should be made to make sure they do not continue the same behaviour elsewhere. If rent arrears are due to unforeseen circumstances eg illness, redundancy, unemployment help should be given. If households were from out of area to begin with, they should be returned to there previous authority.

TDC needs to stop rewarding bad behaviour. It's not the responsibility of private tenants in the street to keep unruly neighbours under control, it's the responsibility of the council who keep handing everything to them on a plate regardless of their social behaviour.

its about time this sort of behaviour coming from council estates is controlled....the councils concerned can do something about this problema and they dont deserve a property if they dont know how to abide by the basic social rules

Continued social behaviour obviously contrary to the well being and comford of others, should be dealt with swiftly. anyone genuinely unfortunate enought to fall fowl of keeping up rents due should be extended consideration for a reasonable time in accordance with their circumstances.

Agree

In todays economic times I do not believe everyone should be automatically unable to apply for housing due to rent arrears. However nuisance neighbours etc should not be offered alternative housing by the council.

Continuous episodes of anti-social behaviour need to be addressed seriously and not moved on elsewhere to make another council estate area become the next trouble spot - Also if rents for these people who persist with this unwanted behaviour increased maybe they would be less inclined to cause such issues and problems - make them pay for their own wrong doing.

depends on type of behaviour

Neither agree or disagree

WHAT DOES ONE CLASS AS UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR ?

Although I am aware that all people have a right to housing, it is a shame to move people who are guilty of unacceptable behaviour to a place where residents are not guilty of this. This often has a detrimental effect upon those residents who are not problematic. They will often, and rightly, complain about a noisy/bad tenant's behaviour which sometimes results in said tenant being shipped around. A vicious circle, as tenant is never settled...More adequate help could be provided in the form of support to help prevent bad behaviour reoccurring? Equally, there should not be a build up of 'problem' tenants in one area. A very tricky issue!

Disagree

It is unacceptable that Young People who are looked after by the local authority might be disadvantaged from securing their own accommodation via TDC on the basis of any current presenting behaviour. Young People often demonstrate developmentally delayed behaviour which given time and support will improve but to omit an application on the grounds cited under proposal 3 is discriminatory

Strongly Disagree

I strongly disagree that there should be an exclusion for household members who have been guilty of unacceptable behaviour/rent arrears within the tenancy as some applicants have lived within a household where there could have been in a violent/controlling/financial relationship and not been able to get away from the abuse. The client's partner or child may have been guilty of the unacceptable behaviour and the client will be punished for this as well as having to deal with the behaviour and other consequences

The policy states that Where a person has previously been found not eligible due to unacceptable behaviour, but now believes this should no longer be held against him, the applicant can make a fresh application. The local authority can allow an application if they are satisfied that the persons behaviour has improved. This would be accepted, where an applicant had held a tenancy and a good tenancy reference was received or if specific satisfactory documentation was received upon Thanet District Councils request. What therefore happens to those clients who have been found ineligible based on the behaviour of their partner or behaviours forced upon them by an abusive partner. A good tenancy reference would not be available if the client has not been able to live independently of the perpetrator. This again furthers the abuse already suffered at the

handsof a perpetrator

4. Additional bedrooms for children

How strongly do you either agree or disagree with the proposal to provide additional bedrooms for families with two children of the opposite sex only where the eldest is over 10 years old?

79 (44.4%) *Strongly agree*

45 (25.3%) *Agree*

19 (10.7%) *Neither agree nor disagree*

19 (10.7%) *Disagree*

13 (7.3%) *Strongly disagree*

Any other comments - you have space to provide a response of up to 1,000 characters

39 (21.9%)

Strongly Agree

Why not indeed? When I was young we had no choice in cramped accomodation.

People in owner/occupier circumstances have to make do and live within their circumstances. The same should apply in the social rented sector.

Again; this makes perfect sense.

People are choosing to have more children even though they are not in a position to support them because it means they can get a bigger property.

grew up in the 70's and 80's in a 3 bedroom house with no central heating and with 2 parents and 3 siblings. We had to share bath water heated from saucepans on the gas cooker and 2 bedrooms between the 4 of us the entire time we were under our parents roof. It never affected us mentally and all of us work hard and appreciate everything we have. The truth of the matter is - if people want children then they should be able to pay for them before having them or acknowledge that things will be tight. It is not the responsibility of hard working people to compensate for others' inability to use birth control properly and to bow down to their demands of a bedroom for each child they pop out! Quite frankly they're lucky they get more than 1 bedroom for knock down rental prices at all. Again, it's all about society needing to be reminded that they don't automatically deserve money for nothing and that just because they have children it doesn't mean we all have to bend over bac kwards to accommodate them, especially when it's at the cost of the taxpayers.

Agree

Makes sense until there is more affordable housing stock on the market.

They still have to pay the rent and not get let off. To many families getting away with this issue. Again it should be made clear to families at the time of signing the tenancy agreement.

but i do think size of bedrooms should be taken into consideration when allocating properties as even when sharing rooms a child still needs its own space.

Difficult because children of different sexes older than 10 need their own rooms but I ask what would people in the private sector/people with mortgages have to do..... make do! This is ok for families with opposite sex children but there is no guidelines for those who have same sex children as there should also be a limit on the age gap for these families, the age gap between the children should be taken into account not just the fact they are the same sex.

It is ideal for a family with children of different sexes to have their own private space I don't see that this should cause any problems. Children if grown up sharing a bedroom probably don't see a problem.

I think given the shortage of larger housing this is a wise decision.

Neither agree or disagree

This is not a reason to allow some single parents to have a larger house when a new partners children move in.

Not sure of my views on this one

Unfortunately, having two children of the same sex I fall foul of this. My 14 year old son desperately needs his own room to do homework in. It's not fair on him.

This is a difficult one... But due to the empty bedroom reform I think that the council have to take some responsibility in making sure the family will be able to afford the property.

Also many hard working families who have brought there homes are over crowded and do not have the luxury of there children having there own rooms.

I think that this might be too restrictive if the mix of sized accommodation available might allow the Council to allocate a larger dwelling to a family with children under 10 provided they understand that they will not get the max in terms of HB.

Disagree

Needs to remain at 8 years as schools will need to be considered for secondary education

if the oldest child is a girl i think 10 is to old, some hit puberty by then

Children develope at different ages and 8 years olds should have a different room.

Children mature more quickly these days and I do not feel it is appropriate for boys and girls to share. Certainly foster carers have to provide separate bedrooms over age of 7.

The children should be younger than 10 years old

I agree that it should be in line with HB, I feel that 8 is a more appropriate age.

I can see your point about housing benefit. But it is still not acceptable for only 10 years age children to have their own room. It should be younger It should remain at eight years old. You have allowed too many one and two bedroomed flats to be converted. Families, like everyone else need space and a garden!
beraing in mind that some people produce larger families so that they can get coucil funded accomodation at the tax payers expence

It is wrong to put a 10 year old boy in the same bedroom as an eight year old girl

Think this should be done on a case by case basis just to cover any issues over disabled children that may need a room for themselves.

Children mature much younger these days so I think 8 years old should be kept This is an ill considered idea and the Housing Benefit criteria are at fault as well. This is a panic response to shortage of money.Ten year olds now, and particularly girls can fast be approaching puberty and should be able to expect privacy. their will most certainly be repurcussions to this policy and they will include the social services, the police, child welfare and family breakdown.

There will be circumstance where children are unable to share a bedroom of any age. Disability, illness or behavioural issues may result in a child needing a bedroom of their own. It should therefore be the choice of the parent to pay any additional costs, which may be financed using moneys granted for the purposes of supporting those with disability such as DLA.

Strongly Disagree

chikdren need space I feel that 10 is too old for children of the opposite sex

This could be very distressing for children exspecailly as some you girls start their menistration earlier and earlie, nine years old is not uncommom .

Two children of different genders can perfectly easily share until the elder is 10. This needs to be more rigorously enforced as it would free up homes with more bedrooms for families who genuinely need the extra rooms.

It seems short sighted to me, those children will need rehousing after two years.

A child of ten is fully aware of their body and from my own experience should not have to share their bedroom with a sibling of the opposite sex. The younger sibling should not see their brother/sister naked, possibly in the early stages of puberty. Similarly a pair of same sex siblings with the eldest being in their teens should also not have to share with their younger sibling, for example, a 16 year old sharing with a 5 year old. I feel this is wrong. Children are maturing at an earlier age, plus they are being taught sexual education in school from 5 years old in England, this means that they will have a greater awareness of differences between the sexes, therefore, the younger age should be maintained. We are all aware that this will impede on housing stocks within Thanet, but TDC need to weigh up housing against sexual abuse/incest.

Do you take in to account a child with a disability I.E Autism where sharing a room would just not work.

i am in this situation now but yet NO HELP. this is a contridiction on the letter i received today. my eldest is 12 and my son 10, my youngest 7 but yet all in one bedroom..... the letter stated i will not be getting any help with my situation any time soon,(but yet im

a WORKING MOTHER) and dont scrounge of the goverment

5. Additional bedrooms for carers

How strongly do you either agree or disagree with the proposal to introduce guidance on additional bedroom requests for carers in line with current Housing Benefit guidelines?

76 (42.7%) *Strongly agree*

51 (28.7%) *Agree*

35 (19.7%) *Neither agree nor disagree*

11 (6.2%) *Disagree*

3 (1.7%) *Strongly disagree*

Any other comments - you have space to provide a response of up to 1,000 characters

18 (10.1%)

Strongly Agree

i agree as it much be much more cost effective for a person needing care to be able to stay in there own home the alternative being a residential setting which is very expensive. Need to make sure you look after the people that need it but stop others from taking advantage of the system.

Rooms could be adapted for carers if family members. However there could be valid reasons why the carer may need their "own space" All applicants should be assessed on a case by case request

I have a disabled daughter, and work with people with disabilities so qualified to comment on this.. I don't believe for a moment that many if not most are using this to their advantage! If over night is required the carer should not ideally be asleep. I have to get people to care for my daughter at times over I have to make use of what I have, usually involving my lounge! If constant over night care is required then maybe they need to approach other agencies. I think the currant criteria is open to abuse and should be changed.

We can't afford to house carers in these hard times.

Clear guidance will help those who need carers, enusring they have fair access to accommodation that meets thier needs, removing ambiguity and helping prevent abuse of the system from fraudulent attempts to under-occupy.

You should introduce an effective register of adaptated properties and consult with OT's regardibng allocation of these properties.

Again if the person with the disability was actually born in Thanet or have been here for more than five years they should have priority over those who come into the area from outside because we have cheap accommodation which is not always suitable.

But what will happen when the medical circumstances no longer apply?

Agree

as long as it is long term care needed

With the many cuts in social care, any prospect of assistance in some way, even in the form of the simple provision of an extra bedroom, is more than welcome!

Agree providing they relay are disabled in some way. I have lived all over the UK and have never seen so many so-called disabled people wandering around on crutches as I have in Cliftonville. The new government assessments should hopefully sort this nonsense I and other taxpayers have to support.

Neither agree or disagree

Don't know enough about it.

This is for an independent body to decide not the council.

Disagree

What is the criteria for over 60's who are seriously ill and only have a 1 bedroom unit.

Where's the carer gone sleep on the sofa. This needs more consideration given.

In a lot of cases, carers need their own room to be able to have proper rest. The bedroom of the person being care for may also have equipment in therefore less room and due to medical reasons the carer may not be able to share the same bedroom.

surely it depends on each persons needs

Strongly Disagree

My father has motor neurone disease and has been deteriorating for the past 2 years. There are occasions that his family have needed to stay at his flat and this is going to increase in the future. We sleep on his 2 seater sofa and spend an uncomfortable night and then pass to the next family member when we go to work. As an occasional measure this is of course fine but as this becomes a nightly issue someone will have to move in with him as he is adamant that he will not go into a home. Under those circumstances I feel that family members should be afforded the same consideration as paid carers particularly as we are not being paid but are acting out of love

6. Re-categorisation of Bands

How strongly do you either agree or disagree with the proposal to re-categorise the housing bands?

88 (49.4%) *Strongly agree*

45 (25.3%) *Agree*

25 (14.0%) *Neither agree nor disagree*

9 (5.1%) *Disagree*

9 (5.1%) *Strongly disagree*

Any other comments - you have space to provide a response of up to 1,000 characters

53 (29.8%)

Strongly Agree

although i think it should only be for people who have lived here for a minimum three years.

However, I think the Council should go further. There are a lot of people sitting on the list living in suitable accommodation who just fancy a move and yet they are able to get Band B/C. If people are not bidding regularly then they should be removed from the list.

New applicants every week join bands A and B, and get homed before anybody in band C and D. Which effectively means people in bands C and D will never be homed. So what is the point in us applying for this? Completely agree with this, and this should be enforced as soon as possible and give people like myself in band C a better chance.

An obvious solution to stop people making themselves homeless to get a house.

I strongly agree if this makes it fairer for all, however, stringent checks should be made especially if out of area, to make sure applicants are telling the truth.

when i was assessed by housing benefit for the property i live in he said it was classed as one n half bedrooms.so why was i put in band d,which you rarely give a property to I think it was made quite clear at our meeting with Vicky May on Friday 15th February. band c gets housed probably 3 maybe 4 times in a year if lucky! 3yrs i been waiting in band c even thou i have children of 3yrs & 18yrs opposite sex. its to long

because of finacial situation and no family ireally do need help ihave lived in thanet fo nearly 40 years and iam on band d which is ridiculous i need help no wonder i havent had any response iam in the wrong band please hurry up and change this

I live in a house that is currently making my children ill.

i strongly agree with giving people in band c and d more of an opportunity to be housed as i have been on the waiting list in band d for 7 years and i am desperate to be re housed before i am forced into a shared or one bedroom property as i am a single working mother who is renting privately and i am really struggling to cope with my rent and other out goings, and i just want to be given a break and be able to give my son a better lifestyle of living.

i agree as being in band c there are several times after bidding that you are not even considered which makes you feel there is no point in bidding.

Fed up with people working the system by making themselves deliberately worse off. About time people were forced to try and look after themselves first rather than expecting the council/contry to do it for them. Think the services need looking after as when they are finished in their service to the country they need help think the Council is right to put these people above those that haven't done a thing for their country other than take.

Agree in principal. But would someone in band b because of medical needs automatically be upgrade to band a.

This may or may not work but the fact of the matter is every family is different and this should also be taken into account.

It does seem unfair that a single person who has been on a waiting list for a long time doesn't ever get to the top of the list because they don't have dependants. Girls who fall pregnant seem to get priority which doesn't always seem fair
I am still not sure if this will personally benefit me... But yes I agree that the old banding was unfair due to the reasons in question 1. Also the old banding which I have been on for 4 years means I will not be housed. I work hard, my eldest daughter works hard we both care for my youngest. I have to find £650pcm I do get a percentage paid by hb. The house is full of problems and not suitable for my youngest needs. But I won't be housed by tdc. If I had a decent affordable home it would make a huge difference to us as a family... I need help to cope. Sadly because I am not a alcoholic or my children haven't got social workers I have to struggle each week to pay such a high rent. Hopefully the new banding might help families like mine.

I believe that the people who are to be placed in Band D (intentionally homeless, those who have deliberately worsened their housing circumstances and those homeless by another authority) should not be placed on the Thanet Housing List at all.

There is no reason to make things too easy. The council needs to think about its council tax payers - too many hard luck stories these days!

Appendix 2 (housing criteria) has accidentally omitted Armed Forces Personnel under category B. It is also good to see deterrents for people to make themselves intentionally homeless to get an unfair foot on the ladder.

seems a sensible idea

Band C, your referral to 'unsanitary' conditions could be interpreted as 'dirty' property, this should be clarified/brought in line with the HHSRS.

I am currently in a band C and on the website it says reason urgent medical need. So shouldnt I be a band A?

Agree

I think the Council should concentrate on Bands A, B and C and drop Band D altogether. What is management transfer? And why is it banded urgent?

What about the people who can't afford to live in there homes who have to privately rent? what band would that come under?

Agree generally but not sure about the justification for prioritising Armed Forces personnel above other deserving categories. Also, does that mean only Armed Forces personnel who have a local connection? Whilst I think that Armed Forces personnel do an outstanding job, so to do our police officers, doctors, nurses, and firemen. Should we therefore give priority just to Armed Forces personnel? I think on balance perhaps that should be removed. Clearly if the member of the armed forces personnel have been disabled out of the service, then they will presumably be in Band A under urgent medical needs anyway?

band d needs looking at as if someone has been made homeless by another local housing authority I do not see why we should have to house them at all
Members should not allow the Government to put pressure upon those in accommodation with under utilised bedrooms to take in immigrants or the homeless.
Members should expand any scheme that allows existing tenants to move to accommodation with fewer bedrooms, previous schemes paid the elderly £500 to move out of family accommodation to single bed roomed units.
provided the 3 year resident rule still applies

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Members should not allow the Government to put pressure upon those in accommodation with under utilised bedrooms to take in immigrants or the homeless.
Members should expand any scheme that allows existing tenants to move to accommodation with fewer bedrooms, previous schemes paid the elderly £500 to move out of family accommodation to single bed roomed units.

Neither agree or disagree

Having been on the list for over 13 years, and with 3 children in a single bedroom (one Autistic, and one over 16), we believe we should be in a Band higher than C. However that is where we are placed. If the changes move us up then good, but looking at the information this doesn't look likely.

This is just playing with numbers as you well know. you will still have x amount of property and y number of applicants. All this will achieve is to move a large number of people into the lower bands. The end result will be that people in bands C and D will still have little or no prospect of being housed. the council has just increased it's ability to juggle. For example, "management transfer" is a totally neutral exercise so band A is actually just "urgent medical need" And how come "homeless" is not in Band A ? you can't get much more urgent than that !

There does not seem to be a mention of people who struggle financially to pay private rental costs. I have lived in Thanet for 31 of my 39 years and due to a disability which is not recognised by the benefits system, my family have to spend all available income on living costs. Very wrong I think

A start would telling some of the fifteen year old girls round here who deliberately get themselves pregnant to get a flat and all expenses paid for by we hard pressed tax payers that it is their responsibility and not ours.

im not sure how to answer this as i have been on the council housing for 14 years and if i agree i could go down the list as i live in a 2 bed flat with 3 children who are now teenagers and we struggle every day and i have lived in thanet my whole life it would be unfair for me to be put down the list after 14 years

Management transfers should be given only in very serious circumstances. Medical should be a priority Homeless by another authority stop them coming to Thanet. Peoples incomes need to be taken inoto consideration Im 60 live off a tinu private pension and have small hsg benefit I got told to move, how the hell can I up and move at 60, Ive no husband or kids and Im not living in a sub standard accommodation either.

Need to study this more - haven't got enough time now.

How can you define a person making themselves intentionally homeless? Each persons situation is very different & of course there are those that want to play the system but there are also those that try hard to but simply are unable to manage.

There does not appear to be any reference to people moving on from supported housing. If these households are not given sufficient priority on the housing register there may be lack of throughput in supported housing, negatively impacting the availability of such services to the district.

The assessment of the banding should be done more often by an independent body not on paper by form filling.

I don't agree with the Band D, as you have stated that you have to have lived in Thanet for 3 years to qualify for housing, but you have put that people who are homeless by another local authority will be able to apply and go on the housing register in Band D. How does this work? You have also put into the Band D group people who have made themselves intentionally homeless? they have obviously caused a problem whereby their Landlord has had to go through the trouble of getting them out of their property, yet you are rewarding these people with housing.

Disagree

People who are unintentionally homeless surely should be of higher priority than C. Surely those that are homeless from other authority areas wouldn't qualify for housing here as they are form outside Thanet. Seems contradictory.

I would like to see a policy that rewards those who have an excellent record in terms of payment of rent etc and who have maintained and even improved their accommodation. New or more desirable accommodation within the District should be allocated to those that have earned it. Social housing should be a ladder of opportunity not a lottery. To my mind it is scandalous that a newly arrived immigrant family can be allocated a very desirable property. This creates envy and a sense of injustice.

Band C 2) should be in Band B

People who are homeless or who need to move because of disability should be in a higher band. Also how is the criteria between unsatisfactory and very unsatisfactory

made? Who makes these decisions?

Strongly Disagree

No changes made to facilitate current tenants mobility unless they have a spare bedroom.

Band D also contains Transfer Applications that do not have reasonable preference which means absolutely no chance have getting a move although we may be good , paying tenants with no ASB just wanting to move from a bad area to better our circumstances. Many probably like myself that where not given an option with choice based lettings and were put in this situation in the "take it or leave it" days.

There is no consideration for Young People who are looked after by the local authority who are already significantly disadvantaged. If this group are not considered as priority within bands A & B there will be a demonstrable increase in homelessness as the supported accommodation and local authority responsibility for supporting these young people ceases at 21.

i think each application should be taken on its own merit as everyones circumstances are different and affect people differently and should then just be put in a set order on one list. also in order of applying .

I feel that with applicants being placed into band C when they are homeless will mean that it will take longer to be rehoused. even though applicants that are homeless are in need of housing ASAP.

Where are the provisions for victims of domestic abuse? Is this no longer a priority for the Council?

Band B serious housing need include those living in supported housing and needs to move as the support is no longer required. Will this apply to all clients living in the refuge who are being part funded by supporting people? Other allocations policies, including Kent policies, use a different assessment criteria for those suffering Domestic Abuse and, if appropriate, place clients in band A. Why the discrepancy within the Kent area alone? While appendix A suggests that a management transfer is an option for those suffering violence, living in social housing, as previously stated, historically this has rarely been an option for TDC clients. This is clearly not though an option for those not renting social housing. I fail to understand how being homeless can take less priority than any of those highlighted in band B. Over or undercrowding and those in the armed forces cannot reasonably be in a higher priority than those that are homeless surely.

Armed Forces personnel who have lived in Thanet for three years before being in the Forces should be top Band A, I would like to say I have no family in the Forces.

7. Armed Forces Forces

How strongly do you either agree or disagree with the proposal to introduce specific guidance around housing allocation for Armed Forces personnel?

71 (39.9%) *Strongly agree*

46 (25.8%) *Agree*

39 (21.9%) *Neither agree nor disagree*

10 (5.6%) *Disagree*

11 (6.2%) *Strongly disagree*

Any other comments - you have space to provide a response of up to 1,000 characters

33 (18.5%)

Strongly Agree

I agree with this its about time the Army arrived in Thanet! However this policy should be for NCO's and other ranks. Officers should pay their own way.

before my ex husband and myself came out of the army, we were allocated a council property in margate,it was a relief to know we had somewhere to live, especially with all the other worries we had to face in civvy street, we were 22years living army life, and was not prepared enough for civvy life. but thats another story

When i came back from military service I was informed that you did not have a military housing officer and informed that TDC did not need one. Due to your lack of understanding my and my partners needs, we were forced into renting in public sector. I now have a home where the landlord makes no repairs and has not done so for a year. We've been in accommodation where the heating has never worked and the landlord point blank to make repairs. My medical condition has now worsened as has my mental state.

as long as they have strong links to the area and have served the minimum four years. Priority should be given to those injured in combat. Perhaps band A.

Thanet should have done this long ago.

Armed Forces are having to deal with a lot of stress without the worry of housing allocations. So I think they should be given help in this area without discrimination.

See comment 6

We were ex army when we ended our tour. We were offered accomodation strait away. If it were not for TDC we would have been on the streets with a child.

Good to see the Council supporting service personnel and their families. Excellent example to set others.

Forces personnel should always have priority when it comes to housing needs

help our heroes they deserve it

Armed forces should receive additional priority as they make a huge contribution to the country.

Armed Forces should get additional priority for housing for their contribution to the country.

Armed Forces personnel who have lived in Thanet for three years before being in the Forces should be top Band A, I would like to say I have no family in the Forces.

Agree

are the armed forces discriminated against ? , the 3 year resident criteria should still apply For any injured personnel.

Armed forces personnel should not be discriminated against especially if they have family in the area

If the personnel are from Thanet, then they should have priority in Thanet, if not, the priority should be given by the Authority where they have a connection. Also priority should be awarded to those, for example, who have served on the frontline/served for 12 months or more. Just simply serving at some stage in some area should not give priority to any authority (Thanet)

Neither agree or disagree

Savings and investments should be used first in part where ever they come from.

I don't know enough personally to comment....

they should be treated the same as anyone applying for housing

Disagree

Tough one - i know that people are fighting for our country but surely the army should help these people not the council?

I am not sure about the justification for prioritising Armed Forces personnel above other deserving categories. Also, does that mean only Armed Forces personnel who have a local connection? Whilst I think that Armed Forces personnel do an outstanding job, so to do our police officers, doctors, nurses, and firemen. Should we therefore give priority just to Armed Forces personnel? I think on balance perhaps that should be removed. Clearly if the memner of the armed forces personnel have been disabled out of the service, then they will presumably be in Band A under urgent medical needs anyway?

I think the armed forces should house their own personnel.

I strongly respect and value the armed forces personnel. However, these men and women come from a home town or village, a family area, a place where they grew up and where their family and friends are. There is no logical reason why the residential criteria should not be applied, except of course that we must get rid of the 3 year nonsense which they clearly cannot satisfy. Yes, they should get help and their contribution to their country must be recognised. We should ensure that they get "fair access to housing" but it should still be in the area that they call home.

Strongly Disagree

This group should be treated the same as anyone else

i strongly disagree as im sure these make enough money over 16000 a year to be able to rent or buy

Why the special treatment? Were they being discriminated against?

I can see no reason why they get special attention, after all these people volunteer for the forces, not like after the second world war when people who had been called up forcibly came home.

I strongly disagree that members of the Armed Forces should be in Band B. they should have to meet the residential criteria rather than being placed directly into Band B. they should also be assessed regarding their financial situation the same as everyone else. Why is this group being given a specific dispensation? Why not also local nurses, doctors etc?

Those made homeless because they are not able to continue their work in the armed forces need to be prioritised because they may be homeless, not because of their job or lack of it. We have many men and women who serve their country, such as police and medical staff, they are not afforded the same consideration. Applications need to be processed based on the level of need, Those who have lost their homes due to being medically discharged should surely be prioritised over those who have ended their tour or duty as predicted years before. They have had the time and opportunity to save and plan ahead for the future.

8. Former and current rent arrears

How strongly do you either agree or disagree with the proposal to introduce tighter guidelines on former and current rent arrears?

124 (69.7%) *Strongly agree*
32 (18.0%) *Agree*
11 (6.2%) *Neither agree nor disagree*
6 (3.4%) *Disagree*
3 (1.7%) *Strongly disagree*

Any other comments - you have space to provide a response of up to 1,000 characters

35 (19.7%)

Strongly Agree

If I miss a payment on my council tax the council will send the bailiffs after me. Why should they be any different?

Taking responsibility for our actions is something the majority do. Hopefully this proposal will deter those who feel there is always someone out there to sort out their mess but at the same time help those genuinely in trouble.

It's a ridiculous situation where debts have no consequences, unlike in the real world. Increase rent arrears until rent arrears are cleared.

I am able to pay my rent and have always paid my rent. I fail to see why someone who refuses to pay and gets into arrears with their rent should be given housing!

Why should people who are in debt to the council have a home provided to them? There are lots of people who require social housing, but perhaps can't get one because these people with arrears are on a higher housing scale. Some people really appreciate that they have a home and never get into arrears.

Should this include deposit/bond debts. At present no responsibility is taken by the applicant & debts are accruing in their name, that they should still be responsible for. Debts should not be written off and people should pay rent arrears back from their benefits automatically

We must ensure that our fellow resident accept responsibility for their actions and if they do not or have previously not paid their rent then that should be taken into consideration on all future applications. I would suggest that all former tenant arrears must have been cleared prior to an applicant being accepted onto the housing list.
The council have a duty to everyone to ensure that everyone pays what is due.
Affordable housing is just that so not any excuse to get into arrears.

As I outlined in my comments for proposal 3, it is so important that those tenants who owe money, must be encouraged to budget their monies and spend it more appropriately, as long as it is proved not their fault.

People with rent arrears should not be able to move until the arrears have been repaid. Tighter guidelines should ensure support is given early on to nip any problems in the bud, thereby hopefully preventing higher debts, which will be of benefit to both applicants and council.

don't pay your way, don't get anything back is my view. Make people responsible for the choices they make, paying for fags, booze and staffordshire terriers isn't more important than keeping a roof over your head.

So pleasing to see that finally, people will be made accountable for their actions. Housing those with a history of rent arrears and non-payment only pushes the Council's debts up creating an un-necessary burden on the Council's resources and rule abiding tenants who pay every month. Hopefully people will start to learn that if you don't pay your way and prioritise other things over paying your rent that you will lose your home or right to access to social housing. It wouldn't be acceptable in the private sector! Also good to see unacceptable behaviour being addressed through these sanctions. Finally, some accountability!

This depends on whether the applicant has consistently refused to manage their affairs and if by paying back what they owe will keep them behind and unable to pay in the future.

every effort should be made to ensure that accrued debts are paid within as short a time as possible and not moving just to avoid their obligations

Everyone else has to pay their way and pay their debts. As I've said already - too many people in this area think they deserve everything for free and get away with not paying their debts. We need to free up money to help those who truly need it, who find themselves suddenly in trouble because of ill health / family bereavement / redundancy etc.

Why should people who have not paid their rent previously have the same rights to housing as people who make the effort and pay their bills.

Agree

The council has a duty to ensure that they are able to collect monies owed, providing this does not place those who owe the money in a situation that would be detrimental to their well being.

A tougher line should also be taken upon tenants who do not look after the decor or gardens of their accommodation.

The system of informing tenants of their housing benefit and how much they need to pay needs to be set out clearer, that way those who owe money in arrears will have a better understanding of how much they actually owe. The amount of paper work and calculations that are sent out now are very confusing and not clear, especially to those with learning problems or the elderly.

to be applied with compassion but not softly so taken advantage
Agree with appropriate support

Neither agree or disagree

YOU CAN TIGHTEN GUIDELINES BUT IT STILL DOES NOT MEAN IT WILL SOLVE DEBT IT WILL JUST CAUSE MORE CONFUSION TOO MUCH IS HAPPENING TOO SOON AND A LOT OF PEOPLE DO NOT UNDERSTAND ANY OF IT ALSO ITS THE GENUINE PEOPLE THAT ALWAYS GET TARGETTED NOT THE ONES WHO DELIBERATELY GET THEMSELVES INTO DEBT

i think if its a small amount then evicting them is wrong cos everyone is struggling in this economy but if were talking thousands then yes

Disagree

There is a need to recognise that some Young People who are formerly looked after by the local authority are at high risk of being disadvantaged if their developmental delay impacts on their capacity to manage - there is a need to have specific policy aimed at engaging with the Young Person and their support network to negotiate in this area rather than disadvantage them further

Peoples incomes need to be taken into consideration Im 60 live off a small private pension retired have no husband or kids, I cant afford all the costs to move it cost me 7000 when I moved from London to Thanet 3 years ago, I dont have the money now Im lucky to have the heating on and get food let alone move to smaller units Im in a 1 bed flat got no rent arrears.

Debtors should not be able to escape payment by moving.

maybe if have outstanding arrears but unfair to penalise former arrears as everybody can get behind from time to time

This should not be given priority over the needs of the client

Strongly Disagree

Rent arrears should be look at and consideration taken into account. rent arrears are not always the applicants fault sometimes it is circumstances that are beyond the applicants control that cause rent arrears. every case should be looked at rather than a blanket policy

Those with Rent arrears and former tenancy debts may be deemed ineligible for housing on the housing register. Financial abuse is as much an issue for those suffering DA as physical abuse and this offers no opportunity for clients who are now in control of their own finances to be accepted on the housing register. Owner occupiers may, unless there is a substantial reason to move, will not be considered on the housing register. Does DA offer a substantial reason? Under the new Legal aid guidelines, funding for the application of Injunctions is less likely. The criteria for funding is far stricter, requiring specific proof of DA, excluding many from the right to apply. When the sale of a property is dependent on the cooperation of the perpetrator, it is likely that the sale will be jeopardised making the client homeless for prolonged periods of time. This is particularly unfair when the proceeds of the sale of the house may not secure further accommodation.

9. Savings and Assets

How strongly do you either agree or disagree with the proposal to introduce restrictions on income, savings and assets?

105 (59.0%) *Strongly agree*
39 (21.9%) *Agree*
14 (7.9%) *Neither agree nor disagree*
11 (6.2%) *Disagree*
6 (3.4%) *Strongly disagree*

Any other comments - you have space to provide a response of up to 1,000 characters

39 (21.9%)

Strongly Agree

Social housing should be for those who need it most, and those who earn or possess assets in excess of 16,000 should, all things considered, be eligible to rent privately.

If you can pay for your own accommodation you should so. Don't expect the tax payer to fund your lifestyle.

As there aren't enough houses to go round I think this is important. Social housing should only ever be a temporary safety net and people need to move on. This will release housing continuously.

Oh absolutely. Why on earth would anyone with any decent income want to live in a Council House? They should be there for those of us who cannot afford decent housing.

we need to ensure: - people don't own other properties - receive income from other sources that aren't taxed e.g. fostering - what happens when circumstances change over time as people move into employment or gain savings

This seems to be common sense. Social Housing is clearly for those in most need. If applicants have savings, income or assets then they should seek housing in the private sector.

Social housing should be for people in genuine need. There are lots of schemes available if you have capital, homebuy ect. And can afford local rents with that income

Housing should be for the poorest.

i think the cap should be lower around £8,000

I think the cap is an excellent proposal, however i feel that 16,000 is still very high bearing in mind that with a 10% deposit on a mortgage that would mean that the applicant could potentially purchase a mortgage for 160,000. Could this not be lowered further? Also i think the salary cap is again too high, could this not be lowered? The higher rate tax band is for those earning 35,000+ so if you earn 34,000 (well above the national average) you can apply for a council house. Could this not be done on individual circumstances? As i would have thought an individual with no dependants who earns 20,000 per year would have enough of an income to afford to privately rent a house and therefore not need the authorities help.

There are a lot of people in Social Housing who are very well off, able to run two cars etc. This is grossly unfair to those in genuine need sitting on the list who can't get anything. There are also lots of people living in houses too big for them. They should be automatically moved.

If you can afford savings or have a good job, buy a house or rent privately, leave affordable rents for those on low pay.

Too many people are housed in council/housing assoc when they could easily afford to rent or buy in the private sector

I think the cap on assets should be much lower.

Would be good to see a stop to right to buy or at the very least people having to pay the market rate for their properties rather than enjoying unacceptable discounts that those in the private sector wouldn't.

I agree if people who earn a decent wage that would allow them to buy or pay a decent rent should do so. Be careful of pensioners who may have £16,000 or more in the bank as they are living longer and need a nest egg to pay for replacing goods and providing for their funeral. Living from 65 to 85 years, £16,000 is not a great amount to cover 20 years.

people I know who work cannot afford to get on the property ladder and also do not have savings anywhere near £16,000. These same people - if they had saved enough, wouldn't dream of apply for housing anyway as they would have too much pride for that so why should anyone else? I think it's bad enough that people earning upwards of £50k a year can claim benefits for children they have. Again, this country needs to be reminded that social housing / social funding is limited and should only be for those who need genuine help. Something like this would be a start to sorting out a big issue in this area - which is people sitting pretty in council houses they were awarded as young people on the dole with babies, who now have older children and are 2 working parents - but still reside in a rent controlled council house! If both parents are now working then they need to go private, not fill their council house parking spaces with new cars, their council house lounges with large screen tv's and their council house bedrooms with laptops and tv's for each child!

People who have the means to comfortably rent privately should not have access to social housing.

Seems to be mere common sense, like most of these proposals - who could possibly object? Ignore the bleatings of the do-gooders and install a fair and sensible system.

Agree

Where any existing tenant is proved to be an high earner or win or inherit a large sum of money he/she should be given time to move out. In all cases the needs of children must be consider, for example, finding suitable accommodation close to existing schools. If you become aware of an existing tenant who has won a lot of money or are in the higher tax bracket you should consider all their housing/health needs before requiring them to move.

If you become aware of an existing tenant who has won a lot of money or are in the higher tax bracket you should consider all their housing/health needs before requiring them to move.

Older people who perhaps have savings but need warden control/supported living, shouldn't be excluded.

I agree in part, as i feel £16000 is a very low figer,as when you think it wont even buy a car now days,£30,000 would be a more realistik amount,

I was very happy to have a council property for approx two years. It gave me the chance to save up for a deposit and buy my own home. However, I don;t think people should bepenalised for working. I don;t think adult only families (not pensioners) who have not yet contributed via work to the local community should get priority. In fact i think families who do work but are on low incomes should be placed ahead of those who have been on long term benefits (except for those on long term disability benefits).

Does anybody earning £40000 a year really need social housing?

savings should be taken into account in some cases but again every case needs to be assessed. applicants that are in a higher tax bracket should not be offered social housing.

Neither agree or disagree

I think there should be a restriction but care should be taken in some circumstances such as a break up of a marriage/partnerhisp where one person may have assets over the cap rate but the other person may need housing and not have much in the way of finances or assets.

I don't agree with the saving part of this proposal. £16,000 is not a lot and people may have cut back on other things in order to save for a child to go to uni' funeral costs, family weddings etc while others just spend everything they get and expect the state/council to pay out all the benefits etc. I do agree if someone is earning about the 40% tax bracket they should not be placed on the register

Disagree

Its not just about money it can be situation espacially in this situation of being in need of housing there are other factors to consider like guarantors needed money up front debt

The proposal for higher rate tax payers makes sense. To bar people with assets of £16000 is stupid and just shows how far removed our leaders are from real life. £16000 will go nowhere today. For the average family on no benefits it would maybe last about 8 months. I think the principle is a good one but the figure is too low.

no clarity on what will happen if the person has assets over £16k, but does not have income and their assets fall below £16k.... higher rate tax payer through regular income, not one time event, and for two or more years out of 3 - if would be unfair to move a person out if one good years income pushes them to the higher rate band. But there is no reason why not to charge such a person a higher rent for the period whilst a higher rate

tax payer also take into consideration household size

£16,000 savings isn't much. Higher limit.

not everyone's got the money to live in other types of accommodation. I had to rent off a private landlord because I'm retired I had to put 5000 up front and all these landlords are the same they won't have you unless you're working. I moved to Thanet for a better quality of life, where I lived in Greater London there was nothing but Anti Social Behaviour I agree with this in principle, however there will always be clients who, due to domestic abuse, have money in their name, that they are unable to access because they are in joint names. As per the previous question, access to these funds may take years to access through the judicial process

Strongly Disagree

EITHER YOU WANT TENANTS TO HAVE NO DEBTS SO DOES IT MATTER WHAT THEY HAVE. THEY JUST MOST PROBABLY VERY CAREFUL WITH THEIR MONEY SO WHY SHOULD THEY SUFFER FOR SHIRKERS

Although somebody may be on a good wage, that doesn't necessarily mean they have that wage to budget every month. They may have debts or bills to pay e.g for a parent in care. Therefore I believe the wage should be higher than that, approximately £25,000 a year.

this is the same old story...if you've been bought up to take control of your own life and saved by working for the full 45yrs of your life then you're not entitled to anything...people with savings over £16,000 should have the same rights as people who just don't bother saving and expect everybody else to keep them in housing and benefits Some housing and areas can still be unaffordable and cause debt to occur and eviction to take place. There needs to be a cap on private housing benefit to prevent people falling in to debt.

10. Other Comments

In all cases the needs of children must be put first.

The Council and its partners should return to the requirement that tenants should maintain their decor and gardens. Assistance should only be given to those elderly infirm, with special needs. Those who do not comply will sadly have to be advised that they could be moved on.

The Council and its partners should return to the requirement that tenants should maintain their decor and gardens. Assistance should only be given to those elderly infirm, with special needs. Those who do not comply will sadly have to be advised that they could be moved on.

Reading through your suggested policy changes it sounds like you're aiming the changes at locals on benefits with no chance of anyone else gaining a slight chance of a house

The checking of applicants should not be affected by social workers and charity organisations and prison bodies. Every property not occupied full time by the applicant must be taken back into the system.

Whilst I understand that there is greater demand than Thanet can accommodate, this new policy will further marginalise some of the most vulnerable clients in our community and will increase street homelessness and subsequent social problems in Thanet. If this were being introduced alongside other measures to build and buy more housing stock and to cap rent increases in the private sector it would not be as harmful as this policy clearly will be.

I've been bidding on the council register for nearly 3 years and I still haven't got anywhere. I have 4 children in a small crowded room but people with less children get housed before me. I think the council needs to prioritise whom they house and house the people who need it like me but the council won't listen.

I feel that you need to either have been in Thanet all your life or at least a minimum of 3 years before being entitled to be housed in the area.

I feel that these proposals begin to penalise those who have abused the social housing system in the past and to prevent an inflow from outside the District. Why not reward good existing tenants with better housing in terms of location and type of property? The biggest scandal in social housing is the allocation of housing to unmarried/unsupported young mothers. All single mothers under 23 years of age should be housed in Group homes. If they are a cause of overcrowding in the parental home they should be expected to move to such accommodation or into the private sector and the parents should not be allocated a larger home because they are sheltering adult children of either sex.

I feel that this is a good idea and should be done

with a 5-year minimum in the area or very strong links with priority to low-income families but where they are working or only been on benefits for a short while. I do not think people who have recently arrived in the area should take priority over those with strong links to Thanet. I would like to see a system similar to the one I had for the short time I lived in Bromley. They gave you 10,000 back in 1990 if you gave up your council home to buy your first house. It meant we could return to Thanet (where I had lived since the age of 4) and had money towards a deposit and fees. It was only if you actually bought the home and it was paid to your solicitor. I would also like to see a scheme where money is paid for people to downsize their home perhaps 1,000 plus removal costs when they have extra bedrooms. Also something for the pensioners. I would suggest give up your flat and move to more supportive/sheltered accommodation again 1,000 plus removals. These schemes would help release more housing. I would also like to see more social housing for the single under 25s which is very hard to find without a guarantor. Even decent flatlets would be ideal perhaps from old buildings that are currently stood empty and could be purchased by the council.

Having been a council tenant for 16 years and on the transfer list for 10 years now, I do not feel that the new allocation policy does anything to help people such as myself desperate to move from an unpleasant area stuck in category D. The Localism Act addresses support for mobility of existing tenants and I do not feel that this allocation policy reflects that at all. Surely if transfers are included in the numbers of the housing register, actioning more of these will reduce the list quicker as there is still a property to let at the end of a transfer. There is no consideration for good tenants, who look after their property, pay their rent on time, every time with a proven track record of good behaviour. Decent existing customers will be forgotten at the bottom of the list as they have been for so long already.

I feel it is going to be harder to be housed in Thanet, it will also be harder for tenants to apply for a transfer. the bedroom tax only affect tenants under the age of 60. If tenants are not using all the bedrooms in their tenancy they should be offered smaller properties that will release more homes for applicants on the waiting list.

No good telling the public to move. A lot of people like myself are retired at 60 and dont have the money. I cant get a job at my age Im to old the firms wont emply you and theres no work about in Thanet either. I live in private accommodation by the time I pay out I got 60 to live off for the month. Who going to pay all my moving fees and put 5000 up front for a private landlord again. The housing benefit peopel really need to do alot more research and stop telling the public to move home its not an option in this current economic climate.

I think it will lead to areas in the community where nobody will want to go if the council housing is only available to low income families

Working at a women's refuge I am very aware how the new allocations policy may affect women looking to be housed in the local area. I believe you cannot have a black and white blanket policy and in the long run this will only increase homelessness and social problems.

has been being stated that those making a homeless application, will be considered under a different section of the act. However under present policy, those found homeless are placed on the housing register and able to bid on properties, how does this differ under the new allocations policy? It would seem that those homeless due to domestic abuse will now also be in band C, where they may have previously been in band A, making the time in temporary accomodation longer The policy states that an offer of suitable accommodation in the private sector would discharge the duty to those that are homeless. Would this offer be the offer of the bond scheme? The availability of a crisis loan to support the 4 weeks rent in advance is becoming rare and is likely to be even rarer with the changes to the benefit system. Therefore the bond scheme is becoming less of an option. References and guarantors are also requested and again pose huge problems for many fleeing DV. What therefor an option for those suffering violence, living in social housing, as previously stated, historically this has rarely been an option for TDC clients. This is clearly not though an option for those not renting social housing.

Please use this space to provide any further comments or ...

There is no recognisiton within the draft policy that considers how Young People who were formerly looked after by the Local Authority will not be additionally disadvantaged by the proposed changes

Our main concern is how the local connection requirements will impact on residents of supported housing who may well have originated from outside of thanet, and not been resident in the district for 3 years or more, particularly in the case of domestic abuse and offenders who may not be able to return to their originating area. Additionally, it is not detailed which level of priority people moving on from supported housing will be granted, which could lead to lack of throughput and poor use of supported housing resources in thanet.

I think after waiting for 3 years & bidding every fortnight & being 1st bidder in every property you need to give a little more Feedback instead of keep writing not in the first 20,I am always in the 1st 20 & you never prioritise me & Never give me ant decent feedback,I've seen the kind of provoke that are taking the homes that I'm bidding on & very rarely are they decent or English,think you need to give decent feedback to loyal people,you seem to just give houses to foreigners that don't work,why is that ?

More emphasis should be placed on compulsory buying from absent landlords of empty/derelict properties. Any developments agreed with Housing Association etc should be for local people first. Consideration should also be given to the impact on the local area and thought given to adequate roads/transport/shops/schooling doctors and NHS dentists etc. Also provision for community centres and young people to keep them from getting into trouble. Little thought seems given to infrastructure or the impact of extra population on existing services and little or no thought for increasing GP's, dentists, patients or local hospital admissions. Please try and keep the open land farmland and the few trees we have left in Thanet. Also keep any crooks, drug addicts and troublemakers out of Thanet we do not have enough resources to cope.

More needs to be done to ensure the tenants once housed are keeping up with their contract agreement, very much like spot checks on the home or even on any benefits that are being claimed for, this would stop or even detract some families of committing fraud. Also there needs to be put in place a system where non-smoking families are not put into residential housing blocks next to those who smoke, it is still a health issue as smoke and its harmful substances are lingering about the air, even when the doors are closed.

my only argument is that you believe if one, say of a married couple is working, then they can afford private renting, possibly so, claiming council tax and housing benefit ok. we are on the council list, and we would like a place where we can settle down and not have to move every 6 months or so, due to the owner selling up, i am 62 this year, my husband is 51 this year, we both are on medication, which is obviously keeping us alive, otherwise we wouldn't be taking it. so we don't need the stress of having to up sticks and move about. also we are not snobs, but there is a lot of anti social behaviour on many of the council estates, which i agree should be looked into, and should be changed, they should be moved out, let them suffer like they have made the estates suffer. it would be nice to hear people say that is a nice council estate instead of the normal, no you don't want a move there, or buy a property there, and that's what we hear all the time

I think it is about time and as a local resident who has lived here my whole life i strongly agree to this policy.

I am against the prospect of applications made by those outside of Thanet being declined. I think all applications should be looked into and considered on the basis of circumstances.

Nice to be asked an opinion. Hope it gets read and discussed and not just binned.

Some good ideas and it is a start. We tax payers are fed up with being taken for a ride by those who refuse to take responsibility for their 'lifestyle' choices.

Would like to see more updated information so customer can see progression and expectation of the bidding. Personal contact at least once a year whilst on the list and hopes for allocation. I have been on list since 2007 with no contact or update of expectation.

I'm so pleased that the council has started to tackle the current grossly unfair system for allocating the scarce resources. It will make it much more difficult to abuse the provision of social housing and more people should be able to benefit.

feel that the changes will be very welcome in my eyes, because there are far too many people that know how to work the system ie; youngsters having babies and staying with mum and then they plead over crowding so they get re-housed and immigrants come into the area and plead they dont understand and then they have the support from representatives who also work the system to fight there corner so they are also housed quicker? so i feel that if a youngster is mature enough to have a baby then they can stand on their own two feet for a while and i feel that they should also wait 3years before they are housed becuse it is only then a baby really needs more space and immigrants should also wait there turn just as anyone else. Because i was a single mum at 29 and i was made homeless twice and i didnt have the help from family TO house me and i didnt get re-housed and was forced to find private housing?? and have been struggling ever since i have been on the waiting list for 7 years hoping i will be given a break in life and have an opportunity to life in affordable housing.

PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN IN PRISON FOR ASSAULT/VIOLENT CRIMES SHOULD NOT BE GIVEN COUNCIL HOMES.

Ive heard that when a property has been bid on and the bidding being closed thst the first 5 people with priority have the chance to have the property and if no one wants it then it goes back on for bidding why is this? Is this true?

The policy needs to provide more shorter term tenancies for people so that they don't get a council home for life. You end up with older people living in family homes for years and years with no homes for people who need them. Please please look at offering more shorter term tenancies that help people for a shorter period of time such as 2-5 years. This means people can have their tenancy renewed if needed but people move on/out if they can. This could be a step up into buying a home and link in to the right to buy. Also please look at people 'who take advantage of the system' and kick their children out at 16 and they become homeless or have a baby to get higher points.

about changes in circumstances e.g. an applicant is on Benfeit when housed but subsequently enters paid employment? If they are earning a reasonable salary (above a certian threshold), should they continue to be entitled to social housing or should that be freed up for someone in more need. Essentially, should a council house be for life or only a stepping stone into the private housing market? Should tenancies be for fixed terms e.g. three to five years whith the expectation that tenants should be moving on to the private sector once their circumstances improve? Whilst it is almost certianly outside of your powers, I am opposed to the Right to Buy. I see no sense in selling off social housing stock when we have so little. Tenants benefit from subsidised rent below what they would pay in the private sector. Why should they then be able to buy the property at a discount? We already have insufficient housing stock, and accordingly it makes no sense to sell it off. O therwise, I am almost wholly supportive of your proposals which I congratulate you for putting forward. Well done!

The current system is totally unfair to local families. Thanet will continue to spiral into poverty all the time the rest of the UK use it as a dumping ground. Without the option of automatic housing I believe that this will slow the growth of our problems. I know so many people like born here, raised our children here and get no support from our council when our need is genuinely high! I have watched brand affordable houses being wrecked by people walk into refuges, drug rehabs and into homes... And they haven't lived or contributed in any way to the local economy.where Thanet district council is concerned charity really should begin at home.... And there area will once again be great...

Brilliant Plan

Believe that people should only be in social housing whilst they are in need of it. Once they are able to afford private housing they should be moved on to allow the social housing to be available to more people. Rents should also be in line with private housing to discourage people from wanting to be in social housing purely for the lower rent.

a lot more help and advice should be given when applying for housing. and the housing team should be trained to treat everybody like theyre all non working people on benefits.

There should be five year tenancys, as people's situations do change,(family size and income) and certainly no life tenancys which I understand is the case at present.

is now empowered to give some preference to applicants who are of working age and working or even volunteering in the community. That would ensure that we get a mix of tenants truly reflecting the population mix. This might improve estate environment and help reduce ASB. Circumstances change throughout life and TDC should take this into consideration to ensure recycling of housing - a precious commodity. Will there be various sorts of tenancy agreement? Are tenancies a mixture of short and long-term with specified review periods enabling TDC to reduce expectations of a "subsidised house for life"? If not, can TDC justify why tenants may have this preferred status at public expense for life? Family homes should have fixed-term agreements and regular review dates to ensure that new families can be placed in them, avoiding under-occupation in the future. High rise units should be carefully allocated to improve mix of tenants - but ensuring those with physical dis abilities are not unsuitably housed there. Short-term tenancies for younger working people may be the answer here. Does the policy allow for this?

Tackle antisocial behaviour better, it's a nightmare currently living with this kind of behaviour from the flat above. You also need to make better regulations for private sector landlords, such as repairs etc. I was forced into private housing and for the last year have battled with the landlords agents to make repairs but nothing has beed done at all.

i think that O.A.P.S who are living in bedsits paying topup need more help in securing a home to live in

Its a shame the document does not reward those people who are working in this community. People who receive benefits, have their rent paid for them, and the government states how much they can live on. Those people who work hard and usually with 2 jobs as most of the jobs in this area are only part time, have difficulty in keeping up with their rent and bills, but manage, we have all spent money on our properties to make them our homes, only to receive our NTQ, then having to move out and find somewhere new to live again, plus keep the family together, and holding down a job

I think it is about time that restrictions were put on people who want and have social housing. They/we are lucky to have these properties which are maintained and affordable.

There needs to be a change as My Family have been on housing list Band D for 4 years and bid every time and never get a chance

Well done Thanet Council, you finally managed to pull your thumbs out of your collective arses and introduce decent policy for a change.

I found it helpful to complete this questionnaire as when i was telephoned to inform me my change in circumstances would make no difference to finding a home and almost certainly my band would not change and to rent in the private sector.i understand there is a large waiting list but i don't feel there was a need to be so cold and blunt i was upset for several days afterwards.

I think it is fair and takes action on people that behave badly or don't pay there way. there aren't many council houses left so they should go to people that really need them, not people that want them because theyare cheap and get maintained better than private rented places. Difficult times, right way to deal with them.

We are currently in a 3 bed property with stairs. Neither of us can now use stairs so the space upstairs is un used. We are worried that even though we are looking for a smaller place we would still be penalized by the bedroom tax. We know properties are well sought after but we are trying to do the right thing by leaving this place so a family can have it.

personally i think if you have rent arreas then you shouldnt get allocated another place till you have paid up,the changes to the banding dosnt matter as it dosnt mean a thing the truth be told i,e if you live else where in the country or further afield all you have to do is show up at the council office and you get a place befor people that have lived here all there lives one thing the council does need to do is put there residents first and all the houses that are borded up sort them out as there are too many in thanet that could be used that arnt

It with some thankfulness that the council has taken the oportunity to make theses changes. I'm concerned though, that immigrants from Eastern Europe who arrive here and cost the council a great deal in Housing benefit and maternity services, as well as taking up places in schools, will continue to do so.

I am pleased that TDC is at last addressing the ridiculous situation we have nationwide of over reliance on social housing, the ridiculous expectation that the council provides housing to all, and those who choose to produce child after child need to consider the consequences of their own actions and not expect the Council to give them larger accommodation. Perhaps they might think, do I earn enough to have another child, rather than what more can I get out the system if I have another child. Well done!

A sensible, fair and realistic approach to the environment we are now in. It is a shame this approach wasn't taken a few years ago.

Consult with OT's to ensure adapted properties are sensibly allocated and avoid theb wasteful practice of taking out expensive adaptations. Maintain a register od adapted properties.

A good move.

yes i believe people under 30 should be looked at more as these type of people can be the worse for loud music and late night party's and also drug and drink use to much of and i think thanet council needs to do more checks before willing to house people do checks like orbit does.if not check other council in the uk where they have set up a sister business where they own the stock but trade as a housing association it can be done i have done some research and aylesbury vale council as done that and they have hardly any trouble,

I also think that people who have more bedrooms than they actually need ie a couple whos family have now left home should be required to move within a specific timescale. There should be no 'rights' to stay in a three/four bedroomed property when there are only two of you or a single person.

an excellent set of new policy measures!

A very sensible piece of proposed legislation if it is enforced properly and maintained.

I think the whole 'shake up' is just what we need for you to be able to manage OUR Thanet Council better

The needs of children of school age should be the first consideration

parents both moved to Thanet in the 50's and 60's as it was the English Riviera and the place to be. It horrifies them that it has become what it has and that their children have been left to deal with a rotting area. Thanet District Council need to lay down the law to people who take this area for a ride, and by this I don't mean just the Thanet residents who take everything for granted - I also mean Kent County Council, various London borough councils who are trying to dump their unemployed residents down here and to an extent the UK Government and courts who are also trying to turn us into an urban grotto. This area deserves more and it's about time Thanet District Council stood up to be counted and a reform such as this one is a good start. If this goes the way it is hoped then maybe next you can start dealing with the increasing number of London visitors to Margate beach who are parking illegally all over the pavements and being abusive to the locals, and who not only are bringing their own food to the area and therefore not actually spending any money in the local shops - but are happily leaving a ton of rubbish on the beaches everyday!

I look forward to seeing these proposals being implemented, I think that Thanet Council has finally woken up. I wish you the very best of luck with your proposals, it will be for the good of the Thanet community and Thanet Council that these proposals are implemented.

does not appear as though TDC has made any changes to increase mobility to Transfer Applications, I have been patiently waiting for this allocation policy to see if TDC will take advantage of the recommendations in the Housing Allocation Guidance for local authorities to help Transfer Applicants it appears you have chosen to completely ignore the ones below: "1.6 Transfers at the tenants request, where the authority is satisfied the tenant does not have reasonable preference, do not fall within Part 6 and housing authorities may set their own transfer policies in relation to these tenants. Authorities should consider how to make the best use of this flexibility. Providing tenants with greater opportunities to move within the social sector can help promote social and economic mobility and make the best use of social housing stock." "1.8 Housing authorities may decide to operate a separate allocation system for transferring tenants who are not in the reasonable preference bottom of the list because they do not need an additional bedroom or have an empty one to give up. I don't feel it is an unreasonable request after ten years of waiting to know why this is not enough for a transfer from an awful place!

I am very pleased to see this new mood of realism from our council. It has taken a long time, but this is a step in the right direction. I hope this spirit will spread to all other areas of council work. And I'm very glad that you have consulted the people of Thanet about these proposals - that is the true spirit of democracy, of which we have too little in this country! Well done and keep it up.

were do I stand with this new policy as I have 3 children living in a small damp flat with no heating and have been on the housing list for 14 yrs stuck on band c

The council should be offering homes to people across the bands, not just those in bands A and B every week. I have been on this list for almost a year and a half, and haven't even come close to obtaining a home. I think it is despicable the way the council offer homes to foreign people, and others whom move into the area suddenly. I have lived in Thanet my entire life, I pay my taxes and bills, and get absolutely nothing in return, especially from the council. Just because they have easy lives driving their Mercedes cars, others, such as myself, struggle with the collapse of our economy, and seek help from those who have life easy. Changes need to be made promptly, before serious repercussions take place.

Private housing - Private landlords need to be stopped from charging high rents - if the council can charge £100 per week so should private landlords instead of charging double. Also help should be provided for the private sector to gain properties easier as guarantors are not always easy to come by or in a position to be a guarantor, this then makes private housing very difficult to obtain also charges fees - deposits and rent in advance also makes finding properties difficult and very hard to obtain.

The Thanet area is a wonderful place to live and work but we should not keep accepting that other councils from more affluent areas can just dispose of their social housing tenants because they can't afford to pay them housing benefit. We are all losers as we have to suffer the cutbacks the council has to impose because of this. Why are we taking these people from outside the area when there is very limited skilled jobs available, a lack of good school places and other amenities which are important to the social well being of the local residents. We should be promoting Thanet as a place to visit, by providing things such good hotels, tourist attractions such as a Sea Life Centre or a Ice rink where people will come but go home again. This would encourage spending ion the area, provide jobs and give Thanet back it's place as a place to visit and enjoy.



Full Equality Impact Analysis

Title of review	Allocations Policy
Service	Housing Services, Community Services
Date of review	May 2013
Date of next review	July 2014
Lead officer, Job Title and Service	Victoria May, Housing Options Manager
Review team	Claire Grant, Business Services
Scope of the analysis	The Housing Options Service manages the housing register and has a statutory obligation to offer housing advice and options. One of the key areas is homeless intervention and prevention. The current Lettings Policy was adopted in October 2004 following publication of Allocations of Accommodation Code of Guidance. There is a statutory obligation for each local housing authority to publish how they will let their homes. The Allocations Policy should have a life of approximately 3-5 years however this is subject to change should there be any further new government policy or legislation.
Beneficiaries	The Allocations Policy is an important operational document that sets out how we will allocate social homes. Nine key areas have been identified to consult on which are the main changes to the document which will affect households on the housing register and new applicants.
Stakeholders	Stakeholders to the Allocations Policy include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Residents - Council Members - Council Staff - Public Sector Partners (e.g. Police, Kent County Council, Fire & Rescue and NHS) - Housing Associations - Community & Voluntary Organisations - Social tenants
Relevant data and research	Having reviewed the housing register it is at a record high with nearly 6000 households on the housing register of which over 2600 households are on the register with no re-housing need. There are 501 households on the housing register who live outside of the Thanet district.

	<p>Research and data is still emerging of households effected by bedroom tax and welfare changes and it is essential that the housing register has provision to address this issue to ensure accommodation is affordable.</p>
Access complaints	<p>No specific complaints have been received relating to the Draft Allocations Policy.</p>
Engagement	<p>The Allocations Policy has been developed over a number of months by the Housing Options Manager. The implementation of the Localism Act enabled local authorities to have more power in the way social homes are allocated.</p> <p>It was decided to hold member's workshops to obtain views of how they would like to see the policy shaped and written to ensure that potential powers enabled from the Localism Act were explored and key decision were heard to ensure the policy met the housing need within Thanet. These were held on the 25 September, 26 September and 1 October 2012.</p> <p>In addition the Housing Options Team were consulted on including the key messages from the members workshops and these were held on 16 October and 19 October 2012.</p> <p>On 31 October 2012 East Kent Housing were consulted on to ensure the draft document met their needs.</p> <p>SMT were presented with the Allocations Policy on 20 December 2012 and the key changes were discussed.</p> <p>A public consultation is due to run from Friday 25 January to Friday 1 March 2013 to give members of the public an opportunity to comment on the draft Allocations Policy. The consultation will be available to complete online and hard copy surveys will also be available upon request or to collect from local libraries and council offices. The consultation will be promoted through the local press, on the council's website, by posters in key public places and through social media channels. Key stakeholder and partner organisations will be contacted directly to ensure they have an opportunity to comment and to invite them to promote the consultation through their own communication channels to their customers. A link to the online survey will also be published on the Kent Homechoice website to residents currently bidding for a property.</p>
Results of Engagement	<p>The formal consultation has not yet commenced however the feedback and comments received from all workshops have helped to inform priorities for the Allocations policy and requests were made to have these clearly set out upon consultation. They are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Closed Housing Register - Applicants will be required to meet minimum three years residency criteria to qualify for the housing register. - Exclusion for households who have been guilty of unacceptable behaviour - Additional bedrooms for families with two children of the opposite sex where the eldest is over 10 years old - Additional bedroom requests for carers in line with Housing Benefit guidance - Homeless Households placed into Band C - Armed Forces Personnel prioritised and not effected by other criteria's

	<p>set out in policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tighter guidelines on former and current rent arrears taking into consideration of the changes to welfare reform. - A cap on assets and savings to the value of £16k inc exclusion for households earning a salary in the next tax bracket <p>A full report will be issued to SMT with the consultation outcome.</p>	
Relevance to the Duty:		
<p>1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination – harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;</p> <p>The policy aims to make long term improvements to the way in which social housing is allocated ensuring those most in need are considered and appropriately banded. It also aims to ensure that Thanet District Council makes best use of its housing stock enabling households to fully understand their housing options. The Housing Act outlines ‘Reasonable Preference’ categories that should be prioritised appropriately and this has been addressed within the policy ensuring consistency and fair treatment of this category of households.</p>		
<p>2. Advance equality of opportunity – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it by;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policy seeks to have a consistent approach to disabled households who require additional rooms for carers to ensure that the criteria is clear and in line with housing benefits which will ensure any accommodation offered is affordable. Section 3.5 clearly states the criteria that applicants will be assessed against. • The policy seeks to prioritise households with medical difficulties appropriately to ensure that they are linked in with the relevant agencies for adequate support. Section 3.3 outlines Kent Agency Assessment which enables statutory agencies to assess health/support need and housing conditions to recommend appropriate level of priority. • The provision for extra care housing is outlined in the policy to enable elderly households who require a supported environment to be considered for re-housing. Section 5.2 outlines that support and care required will be assessed via a dedicated allocations panel. 		
<p>3. Foster good relations – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, by; tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people with a protected characteristic and others.</p> <p>The Allocations Policy contributes to this aim and raises the awareness of protected characteristics by outlining specific groups within the policy and making the verification criteria clear.</p>		
Equality impacts raised or identified:		
<p>The Allocations Policy provides a clear framework for households who wish to apply on the Thanet Housing Register and details how housing will be allocated.</p>		
Protected Characteristic	Commentary	
Age	Impact	The delivery of the Allocations Policy will have a positive impact of all ages ensuring accommodation offered is affordable and

		sustainable
	Mitigation	None needed
Gender	Impact	The delivery of the Allocations Policy will have a positive impact on both men and women
	Mitigation	None needed
Race	Impact	The Allocations policy aims to have a positive impact for all people regardless of their race. All EEA National households will be re-assessed at time of re-application to ensure they are eligible for housing.
	Mitigation	All EEA National households will be re-assessed at time of re-application to ensure they are eligible for housing.
Disability	Impact	The Allocations Policy will aim to ensure appropriate sized social housing is offered to households who require it.
	Mitigation	Direct lets on specific disabled accommodation will be an option to ensure disabled people can access appropriate adapted homes.
Religion or belief	Impact	The Allocation Policy aims to have a positive impact for all people regardless of their religion or belief.
	Mitigation	It seems there is little or no evidence in this area.
Gender reassignment	Impact	This Allocation Policy aims to have a positive impact for all people regardless of gender reassignment.
	Mitigation	It seems there is little or no evidence in this area.
Sexual Orientation	Impact	This Allocations policy aims to have a positive impact for all people regardless of their sexual orientation.
	Mitigation	It seems there is little or no evidence in this area.
<p>The Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken and there is no reason to state at this time that the content of the Allocations Policy will negatively impact on any groups with protected characteristics. In fact the Allocations Policy focuses on prioritising local residents within Thanet and re-categorising the banding system to give a greater opportunity for lower banded households to obtain housing.</p> <p>Opportunities to further the aims of the duty will be investigated during equality impact analysis of individual projects such as online registration.</p>		
Actions arising from analysis:		
Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
To undertake equality impact analysis (EIA)'s yearly to assess the impact of the Allocations Policy where there is relevance to the Public Sector Equality Duty/protected characteristic(as defined within the Equality Act 2010)	Housing Options Manager	July 2014

Acceptance

Name and signature of assessing officer and date of assessment.

Name: **Position:**

Signed: **Date:**

What to do now:

- Attach the EIA as an annex to your report to Members. Members must have all of the information before them at the time of making the decision. Also remember to complete the Equalities section in the report template.
- Send a copy of the EIA to the clerk to the Equalities Group – claire.grant@thanet.gov.uk to enable the review date and any actions arising to be added to the Equality Objectives Plan which is monitored by the Corporate Equalities Group and reported to SMT.

Please be aware that this assessment will be published on the Council's web pages and must not contain any information that may identify individuals.

- Add your actions to your service plan.
- Report your outcomes to the clerk to the Equalities Group, we are keen to publicise our equalities work and ensure that success is captured and good practice shared.

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Thanet's Economic Growth and Regeneration Strategy – Phase Three

To: **Extraordinary Cabinet – 29 May, 2013**

Main Portfolio Area: **Economic Development and Regeneration Services**

By: **Madeline Homer, Director Community Services**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Ward **All Wards**

Summary: **To provide Cabinet with the opportunity to endorse the delivery of Phase three of Thanet's Economic Growth and Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan**

For Decision

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Council is committed to driving growth across the district by promoting investment, skills, employment and innovation to provide a sustainable, balanced economy. Officers have developed the strategy so far in two phases, to bring it to its current position.
- 1.2 Phase One: Setting the Direction – this phase recognised the key issues facing the economy, it proposed a vision and strategic direction, summarised the economic context of Thanet and identified the sectors of the economy that are important to Thanet or have the potential to deliver growth. The document outlined the areas where support is required to help business of any size and in any sector to prosper in Thanet. The development included undertaking research and engagement with key stakeholders.
- 1.3 Phase Two: Understanding the opportunities – this phase helped shape dialogue between all those engaged in economic growth. This highlighted that for the public sector partners to agree the strategic direction and align their activity, the private sector must be engaged. This engagement started by opening up the Thanet Regeneration Board to private sector members to enable the Board to hear first hand what business think and what they require. A consultation document was used to gain feedback from key organisations and groups; it was intended to give all partners confidence about the key priority areas, so they could develop their own policies and activities.

2.0 The Current Position

- 2.1 Phase Three: Action and Policy – this phase includes having taken reactions to the priorities put forward in the strategy and feedback from those directly involved in industry, through the engagement process. The action plan has been developed and is currently in draft format, ready for targeted consultation with key stakeholders.
- 2.2 The strategy is also being prepared to make the relevant changes to fully implement Phase three. This includes updating the statistical data using information from the most recent Census, adding links to other strategic documents and a series of indicators for monitoring purposes. This will ensure that the strategy is ready for adoption when the consultation period is completed.

3.0 Next Steps - Consultation

3.1 The action plan will go out for full consultation, to selected stakeholders, for a six week period from Friday 31 May. The deadline will be Friday 12 July, at which point relevant changes will be made and the final strategy and action plan will be prepared for adoption by Cabinet. It is anticipated that changes will be made during the process through close working with the stakeholders.

4.0 Corporate Implications

4.1 Financial and VAT

4.1.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this phase of the strategy and action plan.

4.2 Legal

4.2.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this phase of the strategy and action plan.

4.3 Corporate

4.3.1 Thanet's Economic Growth and Regeneration is a key priority for the Council and this action plan is the delivery tool by which the Council can implement its regeneration priorities, in partnership. The consultation allows the Council to ensure that it takes into account key stakeholders opinions, thus mitigating risks associated with the strategy and its delivery.

4.3.2 The strategy directly supports delivery of the Corporate Plan 2012-16 through the following priorities:

- Priority One – We will support the growth of our economy and the number of people in work
- Priority two – We will tackle disadvantage across our district
- Priority three - We will support our community and voluntary organisations
- Priority five – We will work to improve parking and transportation in our district
- Priority six – We will make our district cleaner and greener and lead by example on environmental issues
- Priority eight – We will support excellent and diverse cultural facilities and activities for our residents and visitors
- Priority nine – We will support a broad range of sports, leisure and coastal facilities and activities
- Priority ten – We will influence the work of other agencies to ensure the best outcomes for Thanet

4.4 Equity and Equalities

4.4.1 There is no equity and equalities issues with the consultation process for the action plan, officers will ensure that all types of businesses and relevant stakeholders will be consulted with.

5.0 Recommendation(s)

5.1 Members are requested to approve officers to consult on the action plan during the period 31 May - 12 July, 2013 and complete the strategy ready for adoption.

Contact Officer:	Louise Askew, Economic Development Officer,
Reporting to:	Madeline Homer, Director of Community Services

Annex List

Annex 1	Economic Growth and Regeneration Strategy draft Action Plan
Annex 2	Setting the Direction for Economic Growth in Thanet – Draft

Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
None	N/A

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Name the officers consulted in the drafting of the report

Senior Management Team on 23 April, 2013
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CONSULTATION DRAFT

Economic Growth and Regeneration Strategy Action Plan

Timescale key:
 Short term - 1-2 years
 Medium term - 3-5 years
 Long term - 6-10 years

Priority one: Business growth

No	Action	Lead and partners (subject to discussion with partners)	Milestones	Timescale	Resources	Outcome
P.1.1	Work with existing Business Networks to encourage and enable networking opportunities across Thanet	Thanet District Council Thanet and East Kent and Kent Channel Chamber's of Commerce, Thanet Business Forum, Federation of Small Business, Business Networking International and other small business networks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct an audit of existing private sector networks to fully understand their scope and priorities. 2. Identify any gaps 3. Regularly attend network events 4. Establish an annual business growth summit to understand the barriers to growth and retention 5. Identify the opportunity of setting up a partnership organisation between the private and public sector across Thanet that aims to work collectively across all sectors of the business community 	Short term	Thanet District Council officer time and budget	<p>Positive awareness and private sector engagement.</p> <p>Established and developed networks for new businesses.</p> <p>Improved business networking to create more business opportunities for collaboration and local trade</p>
P.1.2	Engage with key businesses in Thanet	Thanet District Council Locate in Kent, private sector	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify who the key businesses are, using an agreed criteria (e.g. Size, export activity, key sectors, large local supply chains etc) to engage with and arrange a series of meetings to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify their needs - Research what they perceive as barriers to growth and investment - Identify opportunities to solve any issues and promote that this has been done - Review the situation with regards to business rates across the district - Promote opportunities to investment 2. Develop an ongoing aftercare programme with key business managers and owners, including all types and size of businesses and inward investors 	Short term	Leader, Chief Executive, Director Community Services time	<p>An effective aftercare and feedback process that assists in driving communication and the development and promotion of economic strategy.</p>
P.1.3	Develop a marketing and promotional programme to identify Thanet as a place to live, work and create businesses.	Thanet District Council Kent County Council, Locate in Kent, Visit Kent, private sector	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Utilise and promote the Grow For It campaign 2. Promote a series of key messages; generic and sector specific about Thanet and the opportunities available 3. Align the branding and images and prepare a new set of marketing materials that will effectively communicate key messages about the area and will attract investment 4. Work with partners promoting the area to ensure the right messages are being used and deliver joint activities, ensuring there is consistent promotion of Thanet's business advantages. Engage champions within the business community to use the messages, branding and images to promote the area through their networks 5. Develop a website that provides relevant information and links for those interested in business in Thanet; whether local or looking to invest. This needs to be high quality and appeal to business people and investors 6. Develop a press campaign to promote the district, particularly via sector specific activities, through relevant press. Identify a budget to deliver advertorial content where relevant 	Short term	Thanet District Council officer time Funding will be identified to deliver this	<p>Changed perception of Thanet as a place to invest in and do business</p> <p>Increase in inward investment activity</p> <p>Business champions through out the business community talking about and promoting the district</p>
P.1.4	Engage with regional and national organisations to attract investment in the area.	Thanet District Council Locate in Kent, Kent County Council, Local Enterprise Partnership	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a network of support within the council to ensure that we get the maximum conversion from enquiry to investment by adopting best practice techniques for responding to enquiries, following up and maintaining contact with key decision makers 2. Take advantage of existing contacts and develop an engagement plan and create marketing channels to attract investment with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Locate in Kent - UK Trade and Investment - The Local Enterprise Partnership - Department for Business, Innovation and Skills - The Home and Communities Agency - Department for Communities and Local Government - International Department at Kent County Council 3. Research who the potential key sector investors are, including direct foreign investment 4. Identify whether there are any professional intermediaries and networks who we should be linked to and develop relationships with 	Short term	Thanet District Council staff resources Resources to host a series of events	<p>Increased awareness of the district as a place to invest and do businesses</p> <p>Direct foreign and inward investment in Thanet</p>

CONSULTATION DRAFT

P.1.5	Identify what opportunities there are to deliver and/or draw together business support and advice in Thanet	Thanet District Council Thanet and East Kent, Kent Channel and Kent Invicta Chambers of Commerce, Universities/ Colleges, Kent County Council, Business Support Kent, High Growth Kent, East Kent Services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct a comprehensive survey of what exists across the district of business support, training, available sites and premises, professional services, access to finance, mentoring, pro-bono support. What local facilities exist that can aid business growth 2. Map partners who are involved in Thanet's economic growth and identify gaps in their delivery. This will need the partners to be bought together in a network, which could form a sub-group of the Thanet Regeneration Board 3. Work with partners and the Chambers to strengthen support for start-up's 4. Consider the requirement for and options of having a CRM system which will provide the ability to track enquiries and businesses over a period of time. This will be used to design programmes and further support businesses locally 5. Identify a single brokerage model and ideal customer journey of business support activity. Develop a more effective and targeted provision that will increase the number of sustainable businesses with the ability to grow job numbers 6. Review the opportunities to develop activities for supporting supply chain developments for businesses in the district. Identify how they can grow and develop to support business growth 7. Work with businesses who are interested in developing as social enterprises and community interest companies to ensure they get the right guidance and expertise. Deliver guidance and funding days 8. Using existing research to identify the requirements for those who are home working in the district with regards to support 9. Deliver a series of public sector procurement seminars, promoting the changes in the council's local procurement process that encourage local businesses to gain access to our contracts 10. Ensure through signposting that businesses are aware of existing sector organisations and peer support networks including High Growth Kent and support for exporting goods and services 	Short term	Funding and resources will need to be sought to deliver this activity	Increased employment. Increased profitability of potential high growth businesses. Increased levels of inward investment into high growth businesses
P.1.6	Encourage and attract businesses to locate to key strategic employment sites	Thanet District Council East Kent Opportunities, Kent County Council, Locate in Kent, Homes and Communities Agency	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the East Kent Opportunities business model and marketing for effectiveness 2. Identify and promote key sites through the Employment Land Review 3. Develop a programme of dialogue with Locate in Kent and the Homes and Communities Agency 4. Ensure continued development of previously owned SEEDA assets in the district 	Short term	Kent County Council, Thanet District Council, Homes and Communities Agency	Full utilisation of identified employment land, including Manston
P.1.7	Develop a vision and strategic plan for each of the main Town Centres/High Streets in Thanet	Thanet District Council Town Teams, private sector including key landlords in the towns, Market's	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a strategy via research to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide a clear direction about what the role of Thanet's town centres should be, whilst considering and being flexible to market forces. - The physical design and planning implications for the high streets - Identify new uses for the town centres, including bringing education uses into them to create footfall and sustain existing buildings - Identify the opportunities for developing the evening economy to encourage footfall and support for exiting and growing businesses - Review what opportunities there are around the provision of quality markets and their place within the town centres 2. Engage and facilitate the Town Teams through an identified framework 3. Develop and facilitate co-ordinated activities around the public realm and signage, ensuring that our town centres are welcoming and inviting to visitors and residents 4. Provide appropriate facilitation in making sites available for development through engagement with land owners, where possible reducing barriers to development and drawing together interested stakeholders 5. Develop a model for high street management and roll over to district centres to ensure diverse economy is developed 6. Encourage and promote private sector redevelopment and upgrading of town centre office accommodation 	Short term	Thanet District Council staff resources Possible funding resources to be identified	Creation of vibrant town centres that are fit for purpose and sustainable Community led economic development
P.1.8	Work with partners to identify sources of funding to deliver regeneration activities	Thanet District Council Kent County Council, Local Enterprise Partnership, MACH, private sector	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish the districts strategic priorities and approach to its engagement with East Kent authorities, Kent County Council and the Local Enterprise Partnership 2. Ensure that the authority and partners are aware of the potential funding sources available e.g. structural funds, ERDF 3. Identify suitable projects and partnerships to access the relevant funding 	Short term	Thanet District Council officer time, MACH, THI Resources required for master planning and professional services	Regeneration projects delivered across the district and effective approach to the identification of appropriate resources and partners Community led economic development

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P.1.9	Deliver a directory of businesses for Thanet	Private sector	Research and identify a private sector organisation, for examples Burrows Communications Ltd who have delivered a number of other Kent Council's directories, to produce a business directory of Thanet.	Short term	Thanet District Council staff resources	Provide a tool for businesses to develop local supply chains and information gathered on all businesses within the district
P.1.10	Work with local businesses to support delivery of their corporate social responsibility activities	Thanet District Council and Private Sector	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Identify which businesses have a policy of corporate social responsibility Work with the identified businesses to join up their objectives and requirements with potential regeneration delivery opportunities 	Short term	Thanet District Council staff resources	<p>Support provided by the private sector to help regeneration in the district.</p> <p>Engaged private sector in a variety of activities across Thanet</p>
P.1.11	Establish an International working group and use Thanet's assets to build an international profile	Thanet District Council Manston Airport , Kent County Council , Local Enterprise Partnership	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Identify potential attendees, to include: Manston Airport, Port of Ramsgate, Kent County Council, Business Support Kent, Discovery Park Ltd, Thanet and East Kent, Kent Channel and Kent Invicta Chambers of Commerce, Marine Studios, land owners, possibly neighbouring authorities and set the group up Work with the owners at Manston Airport to realise the potential of this asset, whilst being mindful of the environmental implications and working around the night time flying policy Establish international links and networks to promote Thanet and its unique selling points Ensure local businesses are able to participate in international networks and are in a position to take advantage of exporting/importing opportunities Engage proactively with the Government, Kent County Council and the Local Enterprise Partnership about their aviation policies. Understand national and regional strategic approaches to aviation to help engage partners Promote that Manston Airport run a public open day to engage residents and local businesses to have a better understanding of the airport and its potential 	Short term	All partners time	<p>Thanet businesses are able to extend their networks internationally.</p> <p>Increased exporting and importing from the district</p> <p>Increased overseas visitors.</p> <p>Improved engagement with the airport and residents.</p> <p>Enabling development through strategic direction of the airport</p>
P.1.12	Lobby to maintain Thanet's Assisted Area Status	Thanet District Council Kent County Council , Local Enterprise Partnership	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the County Council and the Local Enterprise Partnership to lobby on the district behalf Provide evidence to maintain the districts Assisted Area Status to support Thanet's opportunities 	Short term		Secure Thanet's Assisted Area Status
P.1.13	Use local planning policies to promote a sustainable and balanced economy	Thanet District Council	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Consult on, adopt and implement of the Local Plan, which responds appropriately to encourage growth Facilitate business requirements for inward investment and growth, to achieve their desired ambitions within the policy framework 	Short to Medium term	Thanet District Council officer time and relevant budgets	<p>Thanet will have a Local Plan with specific guidance, policies and site allocations - support economic growth and the highest quality development</p>
P.1.14	Encourage business and job growth through the Expansion of the East Kent programme	Kent County Council East Kent Partners Group	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the Expansion East Kent programme to new and existing businesses Signpost people to the Enterprise Clubs to ensure businesses are getting the right advice about accessing the funding and starting up businesses Targets for the Regional Growth Fund application is 5,000 jobs to be created, across the four East Kent Districts, by 2016 	Short to Medium term	Regional Growth Fund, Kent County Council, Jobcentre Plus	<p>Increase in business growth.</p> <p>Increased employment.</p> <p>Unlocking of private sector.</p> <p>Investment in the local economy</p>
P.1.15	Review Thanet's rural economy	Thanet District Council Kent County Council	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver a review Thanet's rural economy to identify what it contributes to the wider Thanet economy Identify opportunities to support rural businesses in Thanet, including potential rural funding programmes 	Medium term	Thanet District Council officer time	<p>A strong and sustainable rural economy</p>
P.1.16	Identify and develop a new sector in Thanet creating high skilled and well paid jobs	Thanet District Council Locate in Kent, Kent County Council, Local Enterprise Partnership	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate the need for and procure research to identify potential market/sector opportunities. Prepare the area to encourage investment –identify support packages that will allow new businesses to easily move into Thanet Develop a targeted inward investment approach to access links into the selected markets 	Long term	Resources to be secured	Secure Thanet's economic future

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Priority two: Investing in assets

No 1	Action	Lead and partners (subject to discussion with partners)	Milestones	Timescale	Resources	Outcome
P.2.1	Continued development of the Port of Ramsgate and Royal Harbour	Thanet District Council Interreg, Port and Harbour Stakeholders	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and adopt the Port Strategic Plan which has an evolving scope and purpose. The plan will be a high level guide for the future operation, development and management of Ramsgate's port facilities. It will recognise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the significant opportunity for the port to contribute to local and regional growth through job creation and attracting new investment; that the exploitation of the port's commercial and leisure assets is key to realising that growth potential; and the need to ensure that the port's future development and growth balances its business needs with those of the local community and is achieved in ways that are safe, sustainable and environmentally sensitive Undertake a feasibility study in connection with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The development of an Alongside Quay / rock groyne revetment Creating a commercial quay and fisherman's facilities Feasibility for moving the security hut to allow better access for trucks Complete the Yacht Valley project, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refurbishment of Military Road arches Feasibility study for Yacht Service Facilities and Smeaton Dry Dock 	Short term	<p>Thanet District Council officer time</p> <p>Consultants where required</p> <p>Lo-Pinod</p> <p>Yacht Valley</p>	<p>Expanded range of ferry services.</p> <p>Rationalisation of Port and Harbour buildings and facilities</p> <p>Construction of an alongside quay, with the East Pier.</p> <p>Extension delivered to attenuate wave energy.</p> <p>Commercial boat park designed and built and a boat hoist installed.</p> <p>Military Road arches refurbished to enable full occupancy</p>
P.2.2	Ensure that the district has the right commercial sites and buildings to enable businesses to start, develop and grow.	Thanet District Council Locate in Kent, Kent County Council, Commercial Estate Agents, Homes and Communities Agency	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a report that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Links with the Councils Employment Land Review Identifies what developments and infrastructure improvements are required Provides a greater understanding of office space requirements are to support the extension of Eurokent Business Park Review whether supply of land meets demand from businesses Understand business location requirements based on current and recent take-up, both in Thanet and outside of the area to identify different trends Investigate need for speculative build Identify and promote suitable buildings for SME occupation while working with others to promote better use of space Undertake a campaign of lobbying to workspace providers promoting Thanet as an investment location Ensure regular engagement and development of positive relationships with the commercial property sector 	Short term	<p>Thanet District Council officer time</p> <p>Kent County Council Regeneration Fund</p> <p>Resources within the marketing and promotion of Thanet</p>	<p>A full suite of appropriate commercial accommodation.</p> <p>Businesses thriving through being based in the right accommodation</p>
P.2.3	A new transport strategy prepared by Kent County Council and Thanet District Council will identify local road improvements to improve travel around the district	Thanet District Council, Kent County Council East Kent Regeneration Board, Stagecoach, South Eastern, Highways	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Draft a bespoke Transport Strategy for Thanet which will address challenges and opportunities and identify policies, actions and investment needed to facilitate smooth, convenient, efficient and sustainable travel. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate sustainable delivery of housing, economic growth and other essential development by informing the emerging Local Plan Provide a basis to lobby for and support bids or policies to secure funding to deliver key transport infrastructure and service improvements Incorporate a Parking Strategy including policies for charging and quality parking provision that will underpin the visitor, and other economic functions of the district and its town centres. Deliver appropriate partner consultation Work with partners to lobby for improvements to rail services and infrastructure that is required to reduce passenger journey times Set-up a local Transport Providers Network Strategy Endorsed 	Short term	<p>Thanet District and Kent County Council's officers time</p> <p>Procurement of robust baseline information potentially available within existing budget</p>	<p>A bespoke Transport Strategy for Thanet</p> <p>Smooth, convenient, efficient and sustainable travel.</p> <p>Lobbying support and/or policies to secure funding to deliver key transport infrastructure and service improvements.</p> <p>Policies for charging and the provision of quality parking across the district and its town centres.</p>
P.2.4	Pursue investment in HS1 and review existing station capacity to maximise benefits of rail infrastructure to key assets	Kent County Council East Kent Regeneration Board, Thanet District Council	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Review the business case for enhancing station capacities Assess the economic impact of enhanced rail infrastructure on Thanet's keys assets Explore the option of addressing park and ride facilities in the district 	Short term	<p>Kent County Council Resources</p> <p>Thanet District Council officer time</p>	<p>Enhanced transport capacity to support growing and regional activity, for example the Airport and Discovery Park</p>

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	Thanel District Council Officer time	Short term	Make best use of the resources made available to Thanet
<p>P.2.5</p> <p>Work with the East Kent Spatial Development Company to review alignment of its objectives with Thanet's corporate priorities.</p>	<p>Thanel District Council East Kent Spatial Development Company, Kent County Council</p>	<p>Short term</p>	<p>1. Review the capacity of East Kent Spatial Development Company to deliver further infrastructure within the district 2. Depending on the outcome of the review, ensure that Thanet projects form part of the Company's business plan</p>
<p>P.2.6</p> <p>Develop a priority programme of sites and properties in Thanet and identify opportunities for local authority and private sector collaborations, partnerships and/or joint ventures</p>	<p>Thanel District Council Kent County Council, Homes and Communities Agency, private sector, Local Enterprise Partnership, MACH</p>	<p>Short term</p>	<p>1. Create a priority list of sites, in partnership with key stakeholders to develop the way forward for the sites/properties. Prepare potential development schemes and drawings for the programme 2. Promote the sites/properties and review how they might be delivered through partnerships and/or joint ventures 3. Ensure that the Council makes best use of its property portfolio through completion of the Asset Management Strategy and better understand the wider public sector asset base in the district that might provide opportunities 4. Use existing collaboration agreements, such as with the Thanet and East Kent Chamber of Commerce and Jobcentre Plus agreements as models to work with other organisations 5. Ensure the Council has a good commercial awareness through a review of potential public and private sector partners and access to appropriate skills 6. Understand better how to maximise the potential of private sector finance 7. Using the priorities of the East Kent Growth Strategy identify partners to apply for relevant infrastructure funding 8. Work with partners to review available mechanisms to deal with persistent market failure 9. Identify a pool of talent of high level representatives who can support the regeneration agenda and potential chair/host subject specific groups</p>
<p>P.2.7</p> <p>Bring long-term empty properties back into use as homes</p>	<p>Thanel District Council Kent County Council, Homes and Communities Agency</p>	<p>Medium term</p>	<p>1. Deliver 30 units of affordable housing through purchase repair – Mar 2015 2. Deliver 20 units of affordable housing through lease repair – Mar 2015 3. Finalise the draft Delivery Plan – August 2013 4. Identify funding sources and apply where relevant to deliver bringing empty properties back into use, for example the Homes and Communities Agency Empty Properties Round two bid for empty units above retail properties – March 2013</p>
<p>P.2.8</p> <p>Ensure that all properties have access to a 2MB broadband service and improve access to superfast broadband services</p>	<p>Kent County Council</p>	<p>Medium term</p>	<p>1. Award delivery contract for the broadband service with completion by the end of 2015 2. Address perceptions about the benefits of delivering free Wifi, highlight what already exists via the market and promote</p>
<p>P.2.9</p> <p>Through the Live Margate Housing Intervention Programme, transform the housing market within the wards of Cliftonville West and Margate Central</p>	<p>Thanel District Council Kent County Council, Homes and Communities Agency</p>	<p>Long term</p>	<p>1. Rebalance the housing market in Cliftonville West and Margate Central by: - Increase the proportion of family homes - Improve living and housing standards - Encourage investment and owner occupation 2. Acquire and refurbish 300 units to create a tipping point to attract private sector investment – by 2020</p>
<p>P.2.10</p> <p>Deliver the Thanet Housing Strategy</p>	<p>Thanel District Council Homes and Communities Agency, Department for Work and Pensions</p>	<p>Long term</p>	<p>1. Deliver 280 new affordable homes for rent and low cost home ownership by 2016 2. Explore the potential to deliver local authority shared ownership accommodation 3. Support the production of housing policies in the Local Plan to provide the right mix and type of market housing to reflect needs and aspirations, and support Thanet's economic regeneration 4. Contact all housing associations with housing stock in Thanet and other Housing Associations working in Kent, to discuss development opportunities in Thanet. 5. Ensure the strategic housing priorities for Thanet are integrated into the East Kent Regeneration Board discussions and objectives</p>

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Priority three: Green economy

No	Action	Lead and partners (subject to discussion with partners)	Milestones	Timescale	Resources	Outcome
P.3.1	Through consultation with businesses develop a good understanding of the different elements of the sector; who are the businesses and how to work with them.	Thanet District Council Locate in Kent, Kent County Council, private sector organisations, East Kent College	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Through the Fusion Project review the supply chain mapping exercise to identify Thanet businesses 2. Deliver an audit of what business activity is taking place within the low carbon and renewable energy economy in Thanet, researching what businesses there are and where they are based. Map what local services are available and identify the gaps, based on an understanding of what is required through the consultation with the private sector 3. Working with partners deliver a 'green sector' conversation to explore the opportunities available for a low carbon economy to thrive, with specialists and businesses 4. Host a skills conversation in Kent, with education providers, Crown Estates, the Sector Skills Council and other relevant bodies to ensure that we are taking advantage of the opportunities being presented 5. Identify the timeline for supply chain delivery to the windfarm operations and maintenance contracts 6. Review opportunities for businesses to deliver through consortiums and what support they require to do this 7. Identify any patterns and cross delivery opportunities of 'green' business in Thanet 	Short term	Thanet District Council, Kent County Council and Locate in Kent officer time Fusion Programme delivery Resources required	The public sector is informed and able to engage with the private sector through relevant conversations. A good understanding of businesses working within the green sector across Thanet. Consortiums developed with a good understanding of the Operations and Maintenance contracts. Identify cross delivery, skills and knowledge share opportunities
P.3.2	Deliver a programme of marketing and promotion to the green sector	Thanet District Council Locate in Kent, Kent County Council	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and improve the Port of Ramsgate website 2. Establish mechanisms to promote the area and activities at the Port through the press 3. Ensure that links are developed between the sectoral promotion and Kent County Council's Grow for it campaign and the opportunities through Expansion East Kent 4. Improve links with the development of the Kent Wind Energy Network 	Short term	Thanet District Council's officer time with Locate in Kent activities through the Kent Core	Use all media routes to promote the area as a hub for green and sustainable technologies and development. Marketing tools kept up to date Advantage taken of external programmes
P.3.3	Identify requirements for an exemplar green technology/ renewable energy facility in the area.	Thanet District Council/ Kent County Council Private Sector	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a brief for consultants to produce a feasibility study into the development of a visitor and innovation centre for low carbon technologies 2. Identify potential private sector partners to work with on the scheme and develop a relationship with them during the feasibility process 3. Review the potential funding and delivery options based on the results of the feasibility study 	Short term	Thanet District and Kent County Council's officer time, Fusion Programme	Funding and delivery model sought and developed. An exemplar green technology building, drawing businesses to the district
P.3.4	Investigate other sources of renewable energy and identify whether we can take advantage through existing infrastructure	Thanet District Council Locate in Kent, Kent County Council, Government Departments, private sector	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research what opportunities are available through consultation with partners, government organisations and the private sector 2. Understand their requirements and identify resources within the district to support these 3. Develop a plan to take advantage of and support the development of any potential new opportunities 	Short term	Thanet District Council officer time	Being asset/strategically ready to take advantage when the opportunities become available
P.3.5	Understand the relationship between Thanet's economy, Discovery Park and Dover District	Thanet District Council Dover District Council, Discovery Park Ltd	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a programme of engagement with Discovery Park Ltd and Dover District Council to ensure joined up working and support 2. Identify opportunities available along the Richborough Corridor with regards to green industries 	Short term	Thanet District Council officer time	Maximise opportunities between significant assets within the Richborough Corridor
P.3.6	Help deliver potential waste sites and opportunities for waste to energy in the district	Thanet District Council Locate in Kent, Kent County Council, private sector engagement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Respond to future consultation and enquiries from Kent County Council in a timely manner and ensure updates from the Kent planning Policy Forum are shared where relevant. 2. Support appropriate development by liaising with potential developers 	Short term	Thanet District Council officer time	Published Minerals and Waste Plan. Contact from potential developers Development of sites
P.3.7	Deliver an Air Quality Action Plan for the district	Thanet District Council	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enables joint working and support for the planning process and the delivery of transport actions 2. Provide an annual report to DEFRA on the targets from the action – annually 	Short term	Thanet District Council officer time	Provide a strategic approach to improving air quality in Thanet through reduced pollution and improved traffic flows
P.3.8	Work with partners to take advantage of the opportunities available through Government policies and programmes for carbon neutral activities	Thanet District and Kent County Council Kent and Medway Partnership, Kent Forum	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deliver a Thanet based pilot as part of the initial £18m Eco funding for pilots within Kent 2. Improve local publicity and signposting so households and businesses are aware of existing schemes to reduce their environmental impact 3. Encourage small scale renewable energy installations in communities, employment sites and housing estates 4. Identify funding and partnership opportunities with the Technology Strategy Board 5. Develop local actions and projects to support the Climate Local Kent Commitment 	Long term	Thanet District Council and Kent Council officer time Eco Funding Identify other funding resources	Reduction of Co2 emissions, savings in energy costs for householders and business. Increased renewable energy production; reduced energy bills. Increased revenue possibility via 'feed in tariffs'.

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Priority four: Heritage, culture and the visitor economy

No	Action	Lead and partners <i>(subject to discussion with partners)</i>	Milestones	Time scale	Resources	Outcome
P.4.1	Develop and Implement the Destination Management Plan	Thanet District Council Visit Kent, Blue Sail, local partners and the private sector	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deliver a series of consultation sessions and workshops to create and understanding of 'our place', develop a strategic review and headline priorities. Use the headlines to develop an action plan and consult on the final document 2. Start recruitment for a Destination Management Plan Co-ordinator 3. Create a Project Delivery Group with membership drawn from the public and private sector as required, as a sub-group of the Thanet Regeneration Board 4. Develop a project management programme for the three priority areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Priority one - Beach Management and Development - Priority two - Coastal Regeneration - Priority three - Telling our stories 	Short term	Thanet District Council officer time and budget	Higher profile of Thanet as a place to visit for quality English coastline and seaside towns. Numbers of jobs created and sustained. Growth in volume and value of tourism. Number of bedspaces and room occupancy. Greater community pride and cohesion between the coastal towns. Stronger industry and public sector partnerships. Greater visitor satisfaction
P.4.2	Deliver an annual marketing and PR plan that positions Thanet as a leading destination for day trips and short breaks	Thanet District Council Visit Kent, tourism sector businesses	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and deliver a marketing and PR plan 2. Launch the new multi platform visitor information website 3. Allow visitors to build their own itineraries online, through grouping together and suggesting types of activities 	Short term	Thanet District Council officer time Visit Kent, Partners in the Destination Management Plan	More visitors, including international Increased visitor spend More overnight stays
P.4.3	Provide a coordinated approach to visitor information provision across the district	Thanet District Council Local partners, private and third sector organisations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a business plan for the Visitor Information Services including volunteer run services, information points and ambassadors. The plan will identify actions for delivering and improving services 	Short term	Thanet District Council officer time Tourism budget	Exploit the district as a creative destination
P.4.4	Support the East Kent bid for UK City of Culture 2017	East Kent Regeneration Board, MACH, Turner Contemporary, Manston Airport	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Initial bid to be completed 2. Announcement of shortlist 3. Engage creative practitioners to develop the bid 4. Work with the airport operators to maximise visitors through their access to international markets 	Short term	Thanet District Council officer time	More visitors, including international Increased visitor spend More overnight stays
P.4.5	Explore the cultural offer across Thanet	Turner Contemporary Kent County Council, Thanet District Council	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with Turner Contemporary and Ramsgate arts groups to explore the opportunities to extend the impact of 'Turner effect' across the district 2. Identify opportunities of working with Kent County Council East Kent Arts activities to promote the cultural offer in Thanet 	Short term	Turner Contemporary and Thanet District Council officer time	Exploit the district as a creative destination
P.4.6	Through the Margate Arts Culture Heritage partnership identify opportunities to grow and sustain the creative sector in Margate	MACH, Thanet District Council, Kent County Council, Crate and Limbo, private and third sector organisations, European Partners	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify derelict sites that MACH can support to bring back into use 2. Research the opportunities to deliver a Community Trust organisation in Margate/Thanet to support the area's heritage assets for future use and enabling best use of them 3. Deliver a creative work hub in the Margate Media Centre 4. Work with the private sector to deliver new/enhanced public space and artists' studio complex in Bilton Square 5. Refine the partnership approach to identify proposals for key heritage sites that provide opportunities to support the creative sector 	Short term	MACH, Thanet District and Kent County Council's officer time Funding from INTERREG, Kent County Council, MACH, Private sector, Art Council	Sites bought back into regular use. New creative industries established with increased footfall in the Old Town. Funds raised for restoration increased public access to historic sites
P.4.7	Deliver a Heritage Strategy for Thanet	Thanet District Council English Heritage, Kent County Council, local interest and heritage organisations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deliver a programme of research into the heritage of Thanet, to develop and demonstrate an understanding of the historic environment of Thanet, including an assessment of the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make to the environment 2. Create a map based resource for presenting and sharing the information 3. Use the evidence to inform the Local Plan and the development of planning policy 4. Develop the heritage strategy and action plan including priorities and work streams for future heritage work, through consultation with the community 5. Support delivery of the strategy and action plan 	Short term	Thanet District and Kent County Council's officer time Additional staff resource will be required Funding request made to English Heritage.	Evidence gathered about the historic environment, including a central map based resource available to the public

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P.4.8	Develop a Tourism Training Academy as part of developing skills within the hospitality and tourism sector	East Kent College Thanet District Council , Visit Kent	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify specialist facilities for delivering sector specific training, for example identify opportunities for a training restaurant in Thanet, away from the East Kent College campus 2. Review potential tourism and hospitality related opportunities for the Yarrow building on the East Kent College campus 	Short to Medium term	Identify potential funding sources	High level of skills within the hospitality sector use of vacant properties
P.4.9	Continue the successful delivery of the 10 Year Cultural Vision for Margate (2009-2019)	MACH, Thanet District Council , Kent County Council, Turner Contemporary, Dreamland Trust , Visit Kent	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a delivery plan for the next two years (2013-2015) in partnership with key cultural organisations and funders: 2. Share successes to date via Creative Margate website and launch event 3. Take the plan to the Council's Senior Management Team 	Short to Medium term	Thanet District Council officer time, Funding via MACH, Arts Council England, Heritage Lottery Fund, English Heritage, Thanet District and Kent County Council, and private sector	A plan for the cultural sector Funds raised and secured for investment in cultural infrastructure Improved and expanded cultural offer
P.4.10	Develop the digital creative sector in Thanet	Thanet District Council Marine Studios , Kent County Council, Education providers and Health providers including, Health and Wellbeing Board, Coastal Commissioning Group	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a vision and strategy for the digital sector identifying what the strategic actions are to develop the sector, using GEEK and feedback from the 2013 Digital Sector Conversation. Use it as a mechanism for encouraging growth and investment and to highlight how organisations, businesses and people might fit into the bigger picture 2. Scope the opportunities for delivering a digital healthcare conference. Building on initial discussions with KCC and health care providers, identify how to develop a route to marketing within the healthcare sector by bringing it together with relevant digital businesses 3. Identify opportunities of being involved in the Games4Change European network 4. Develop a network of organisations who have participated in the development of the digital sector via the various events and activities. Identify the opportunities of the private sector hosting and running network events and further sector conversations 5. Support the continued delivery of the GEEK Festival, working with the delivery organisation to access funding and the partners to develop the programme and other activities outside the core festival week. The aim is to create a sustainable festival that can operate without public sector funding 	Short to Medium term	Thanet District Council officer time MACH with Interreg funding Funding via Arts Council, Thanet District Council, Kent County Council, private sector and sponsorship Researching other funding opportunities	An active digital sector in Thanet, taking advantage of the critical mass available in Kent and growing. A sustainable digital festival in GEEK, drawing people into Thanet nationally and internationally. Innovative solutions to healthcare issues being faced by the district
P.4.11	Deliver the Dalby Square Townscape Heritage Initiative Scheme	Thanet District Council Heritage Lottery Fund	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve 30 buildings through the grant programme 2. Deliver public realm improvements 3. Bring three empty properties back into use 4. Support two 'Conservation Enterprises' to be created 5. Develop a community education and involvement programme 	Short to Medium term	Thanet District Council officer time Heritage Lottery and Thanet District Council funding	Improved quality of life for the residents of Dalby Square
P.4.12	Review what opportunities are available to the district through funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund	Thanet District Council Heritage Lottery , Community Groups , 'Friends Of organisations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the opportunities to deliver further Townscape Heritage Initiative schemes in the district. Review the possible schemes, development of the application would require 5% of the costs to be met by the Council (£2,500) and an application for one scheme could be submitted by 31 August, 2013 (submissions accepted annually at the end of August). If successful, identify budget for match funding for the scheme - up to £1m is 5% match funding, over £1m is 10% match funding 2. Review the possible projects that could access Heritage Grants for their regeneration. The funding programme is a two round process and takes rolling applications. The programme provides grants from £100,000 to over £10m and requires an element of match funding (project dependent) 3. Identify the opportunity to access Parks for People funding. The funding programme is a two round process with first round applications due by February and August annually. The grants provide from £100,000 to £5m with 5% match funding required for up to £1m and 10% for over £1m. 4. Review the potential to access Places of Worship funding. The funding programme is a two round process and takes rolling applications. The programme provides grants from £100,000 to £250,000 and requires an element of match funding (negotiable) 5. Review the below projects for the potential to access Heritage Enterprise funding (once the criteria is announced). The programme is two round processes and details are expected at the end of April 2013. The programme provides grants from £100,000 to £5m. 6. Understand the opportunities that will arise from the Skills for the Future funding programme, which has yet to be announced. The programme provides grants from £100,000 to £1m, match funding a minimum of 5%. 7. The Catalyst Heritage programme is a single round process with a deadline of August 2013. It provides grants of up to £10,000 from HLF (or Arts Council) to increase fundraising capacity and does not require match funding. 	Short to Medium term	Thanet District Council officer time Match funding to be sought for all levels of project	Heritage funding bought into the area. Supported and improved heritage assets across the district. Engagement with organisations interested in Thanet heritage assets in Thanet

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P.4.13	Support the creation of a training facility/academy for the digital economy and creative sector	East Kent College Thanet District Council, Private Sector	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Access £3.3m funding for a creative arts centre to include a theatre, digital media suite and music performance spaces to open Develop a quality scheme to fit within the campus Identify a relevant programme of delivery to enhance the digital and creative economy and support its sustainability within the Thanet economy through training opportunities 	Short to Medium term	Government Grant Private Sector funding East Kent College and Thanet District Council officer time	Quality, joined up creative and digital training in the district
P.4.14	Create a Risk Register of Heritage assets	Thanet District Council Community and third sector organisations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mobilise the Conservation Area Action Groups and Civic Societies to assess the condition of the historic building stock of the district Provide a database which would identify the most efficient use of resources in sustaining these assets 	Short to Medium term	Funding resources required to enable the third sector to deliver	Sustainability of the heritage assets in Thanet
P.4.15	Support the development of enterprise skills in the third sector to enable them to take advantage of existing assets and funding opportunities	Thanet District Council Friends of Margate, Museum, Friends of Tudor House, Dickens Fellowship, Margate Conservation and Heritage Federation, Crate, Limbo, Resort Artist Group	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Support organisations to develop capacity to operate key heritage sites to improve the visitor offer Work with heritage groups to strengthen the cultural impact of Thanet's assets Facilitate delivery of training and skill development of volunteers in heritage assets Facilitate the development of credible networks between the different sectors to enhance mutual exchange of skills and services to enhance the local economy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide learning and mentoring opportunities between local organisations to share experiences in capital development, management of space and models to achieve sustainability: Create Limbo share knowledge Networking opportunities developed and regularly held between creative and non-creative sectors to encourage bartering/ trading and the flow of ideas and knowledge between sectors: museums as host centres 	Short to Medium term	Thanet District Council officer time Friends of Margate Museum, Dickens Fellowship, MACH, Heritage Lottery Fund	Improved heritage and cultural offering. Increased usage/visits Improved sustainability of third sector organisations Funds raised for restoration of buildings and art collection Sustainable future for the museums. Heritage trails operating in Margate and Broadstairs
P.4.16	Use events to support the regeneration of the area	Thanet District Council Visit Kent, Broadstairs and Ramsgate Town Council's, Margate Charter Trustees	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Review 300 land hires, identify viable events and support to grow Identify economic impact of the Council's events funding. Provide a model/template for organisations to complete, with training, to complete and identify the impact of their events Promote the area as a destination for large scale, national events to take advantage of the areas assets, including land and venues. Diversify the kinds of activities that take place in Thanet Develop a plan to identify sponsorship opportunities 	Short to Medium term	Thanet District Council officer time	Events bring visitors into the area. A quality programme of events across the year. Proven economic impact of event funding.
P.4.17	Deliver a regeneration programme of Margate's heritage leisure buildings	Thanet District Council Kent County Council, Your Leisure, Dreamland Trust	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Identify future potentials of the Winter Gardens <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit consultants to develop a first stage report into the future options for the Winter Gardens, and the Dreamland Cinema <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated reporting and monitoring process in place With Your Leisure to identify viable funding sources to repair the building fabric and up grade facilities Identify future potential of the Theatre Royal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit consultants to develop future options for the Theatre Royal Management Agreement in place for a minimum of three years period Ten year business plan developed for the theatre Deliver the Dreamland Park project – A Park of thrilling heritage rides <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following the successful Compulsory Purchasing decision of the Dreamland site achieve vestment of the land to enable works to start Work with Hemingway Design to engage with local communities to Opening during 2014, depending on legal matters Identify the future potential of the Dreamland Cinema Complex and Ballroom (using consultancy work completed alongside the Winter Gardens) 	Medium to long term	Thanet District Council officer time Funding sources to be identified	Improved cultural offering; increased usage/visits. Sustainable future for the assets. Refurbishment of key sites in Margate. Deliver aspirations of residents and visitors
P.4.18	Deliver a regeneration programme of Ramsgate's waterfront	Thanet District Council	<p>Identify projects and proposals to bring back the use of the number of buildings that are prominent sites in Ramsgate, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Royal Victoria Pavilion: Actively promote the transfer of the current long term lease to an investment partner who is able to bring the site back in use, reflecting a balance of primarily commercial development, but linked to community uses. Ramsgate Tunnels: Continuing to support the Ramsgate Tunnels Heritage Group and Ramsgate Town Council to achieve external funding to open parts of the tunnel complex as a visitor and heritage attraction, drawing on their historical usage during the war. Royal Sands: Enabling the completion of the current mixed hotel, commercial and residential development by early 2015, or move to an alternative development proposal if this proves necessary. Motor Museum: Continuing to support Project MotorHouse to achieve external funding to reopen the building as a community facility focussed on young people developing skills by helping run a mixed use venue incorporating an indoor/outdoor theatre, cinema, gallery, shop, offices, function room and restaurant. Amusement Arcade: through the council regeneration efforts, support the development of this privately owned site on the waterfront in Ramsgate 	Medium to long term	Thanet District Council officer time Funding sources to be identified	Improved cultural offering; increased usage/visits. Sustainable future for the assets. Refurbishment of key sites in Ramsgate Deliver aspirations of residents and visitors

CONSULTATION DRAFT

Priority five: Skills for employment and growth

No	Action	Lead and partners (subject to discussion with partners)	Milestones	Timescale	Resources	Outcome
P.5.1	Deliver Community Learning Hub's across the district, where need is identified	Work and Skills Group East Kent College, Thanet District Council, Jobcentre Plus, CXK Ltd, Kent County Council, NHS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Create a task and finish group to identify the opportunities for 'Learning Hub's' across Thanet Provide resources to deliver a review of need and demand to develop a robust proposal for Learning Hub's Identify potential funding sources to deliver the required Hub's Review potential sites Deliver relevant and viable Learning Hub 	Short term	Thanet District Council officer time to develop the proposal	Local skills engagement Community led economic development. Reduced barriers to skills delivery
P.5.2	Deliver a Thanet wide, employer endorsed 'Employability Programme'	East Kent College, CXK Ltd Jobcentre Plus, Kent County Council, Schools, Private Sector	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a group of private sector organisations (Thanet Business Forum members) to feed into, support development and endorse the programme Develop a list of requirements and training to ensure that young people are ready for employment, through the private sector working group Launch the programme Promote the Employability Programme to ensure young people are ready for work Test and monitor the young people going through the programme to ensure employers agree with the training and that it is working 	Short term	East Kent College, Private Sector	Young people able to develop key skills to make them ready to work. Guaranteed work experience
P.5.3	Deliver an East Kent Skills Plan	East Kent Regeneration Board, Kent County and Thanet District Council's, Education and Skills providers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with partners and develop an East Kent Skills Plan Identify a programme of actions to be take forward by partners Identify funding sources to take forward actions 	Short to Medium term	Skills Funding Agency	Strategic direction for education and training providers to link with
P.5.4	Identify barriers to Thanet businesses delivering apprenticeships	East Kent College Thanet and East Kent Chamber of Commerce, private sector, apprenticeship providers Kent County Council	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Report commissioned via the Thanet and East Kent Chamber of Commerce, to highlight the barriers identified by small and medium enterprises for taking on apprentices Create a local model for the delivery and support of quality apprenticeships, to include the 'on and off' the job training, wages and wrap around support Develop a Thanet Apprenticeship charter as part of an East Kent Apprenticeship Academy, to promote quality apprenticeships and therefore encouraging young people into this route to employment and creating jobs that are sustainable 	Short to Medium term	East Kent College and private sector	Increased awareness and understanding of quality apprenticeships. Private sector engaged in supporting young people into work
P.5.5	Align skills development with current and new industries in Thanet. Deliver the right practical skills required for 'the job' and high level skills to 'lead the industry	Thanet Regeneration Board Thanet District and Kent County Council's, East Kent College, Canterbury Christ Church University, schools and Private Sector	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the need for work groups to be developed as part of the Regeneration Board on the below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tourism and the hospitality sector Technologies with a focus on green industries Creative and digital sector Life sciences associated with Discovery Park Carry out detailed audits of each priority sector to understand the training programmes currently on offer and the potential job opportunities Create and promote case studies for the priority sectors that clearly outlines the opportunities and future career prospects to local people 	Short to Medium term	Thanet District and Kent County Council's officer time Funding resources to be identified	Sector specific training and skills development. Growth in specific sectors in Thanet. Engagement with the private sector
P.5.6	Identify the provision of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths) training	Kent County Council All education providers in East Kent	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To carry out a detailed audit of STEM provision (in East Kent) to understand the training programmes currently on offer and the resulting gaps Feed into the East Kent Skills plan to ensure that the right skills are being delivered, to take advantage of opportunities across East Kent 	Short to Medium term	Kent County Council and education providers	Quality delivery of key STEM courses
P.5.7	Review how the partners can engage with the CITB	Thanet Regeneration Board CITB Construction skills	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Identify how each of the partners can use construction projects to support skills development and apprenticeships in Thanet Assess the opportunity to use local policies and procedures to promote the activities of CITB 	Medium Term	Officer time	Young people able to develop key skills in construction
P.5.8	Establish a strategic education and skills group in Thanet	Schools, further and higher education providers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the potential attendees, from school, further and higher education and private sector training organisations Recruit an independent chair, with an understanding of education, not linked to any one organisation Set the agenda and the strategic context, presenting opportunities to feed into the regional/national context 	Long term	To be identified	Strategic engagement and direction setting across all levels
P.5.9	Create the right learning environment for young people	Schools, further and higher education providers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Review how learning should be structured in a way to engage young people, with meaningful training for employment from the age of 14. Identify the opportunity to develop a first class training facility that provides a clear pathway through secondary education, further training and into employment. 	Long term	To be identified	Improved attainment at Key Stage four. Reduce NEEETs

DRAFT – FOR CONSULTATION



Setting the Direction for Economic Growth in Thanet

Phase 1 of Thanet's approach to
Economic Growth

Draft for Consultation

Agenda Item 8
Annex 2

Setting the Direction for Economic Growth in Thanet

Growing a prosperous economy through an effective public and private sector partnership ***to accelerate economic growth to achieve greater productivity and profit for our businesses, more jobs, and increased prosperity for our residents***

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Introduction

Thanet District Council is committed to driving growth across the district by promoting investment, skills, employment, efficiency and innovation to provide a sustainable, balanced economy. This will build on a strong track record and tradition of partnership working. This tradition will be continued through the Thanet Regeneration Board, bringing together partners in the public and private sectors to develop stronger working arrangements and consider opportunities for greater coordination and collaboration.

This document is the first phase of a new approach to promoting economic growth in Thanet. It sets out the areas where action needs to be focused to achieve balanced sustainable growth that will deliver jobs and prosperity.

Our approach to economic growth will be phased to ensure that we achieve an intelligent methodology to economic growth that makes best use of the resources available to us and maximises the impact of our activities.

Phase One: Setting the Direction this initial document. Recognising the key issues facing our economy this document proposes a vision and strategic direction

that could realise our full potential. It summarises the economic context of Thanet, identifies the sectors of the economy that are important to Thanet or have the potential to deliver growth and outlines the areas where support is required to help business of any size and in any sector prosper.

Phase Two: Understanding the opportunities – this document will help shape the dialogue between all those engaged in economic growth. Not only do all the public sector partners need to agree the strategic direction and align their activity but we must engage with business. This engagement has already started, by opening up the Thanet Regeneration Board to private sector members, we will hear first hand what business think and what they need from us.

Phase Three: Action and Policy Reactions to the priorities put forward here, and feedback from those directly involved in industry will be used to inform the development of actions and policies that will unlock growth and prosperity.

Together these three Phases will form our Strategy for Growth.

We have developed this first document by undertaking substantial research and engagement with key stakeholders. Whilst we do not anticipate the direction of travel to change, we recognise that we will need to be flexible to react and respond to the opportunities that arise.

The district council's engagement with key stakeholder has already started and will continue to build. We are engaging with the Thanet Business Forum and strengthening our relationship with the Chambers of Commerce.

Similarly, the development of projects and policies is already underway. Work on a new masterplan for the Ramsgate Royal Harbour and Port has started, the development of a new Local Plan which will set planning policies is underway, and the Expansion East Kent loan programme has been launched.

'Setting the Direction' will provide the framework for projects and define a role for the public and private sectors in creating the conditions that make Thanet the first choice destination to live, work, visit and invest in.

This document has been structured around seven key sections:

- First setting out our vision and overall aims
- This is followed by a summary of the economic conditions of Thanet
- The third sections outlines the role of heritage, culture and the visitor economy arguably the bedrock of the Thanet economy
- The fourth section introduces the potential importance of new strand to Thanet Economy the green agenda
- Thanet is also a very diverse economy and this is recognised in section five
- Section six identifies the importance of equipping people with the right skills
- Section seven indentifies the importance of the physical assets and infrastructure required to allow business to grow.

Our Vision and Aims

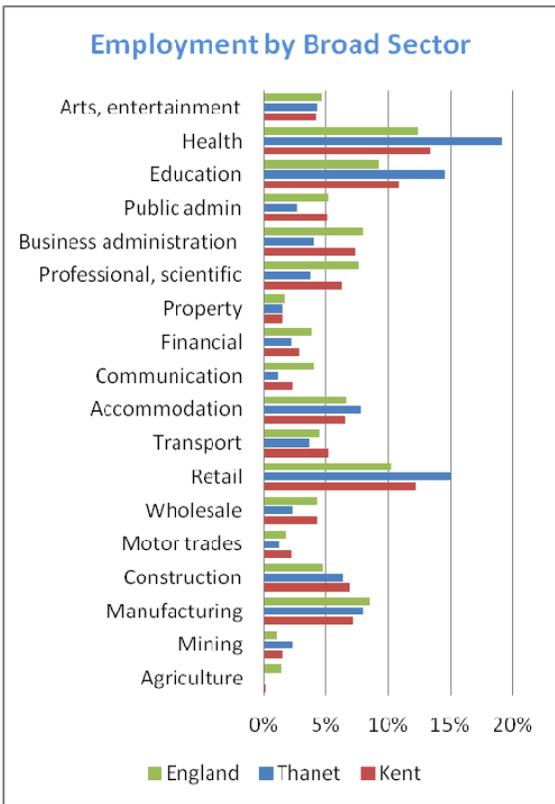
Our aims are based on the shared vision of the private and public sector in Thanet which is to:

accelerate economic growth to achieve greater productivity and profit for our businesses, more jobs, and increased prosperity for our residents.

The underlying aims are to:

- Develop the right environment and conditions to deliver real economic growth and prosperity
- Place businesses at the forefront to give an enterprise-led focus to activities and programmes of the public sector
- Capitalise on our natural advantages, the assets, heritage and culture that are our unique selling points, to encourage private sector investment and support the visitor economy
- Capture potential opportunities from moving to a low-carbon future

- Encourage the business community to exploit the opportunities of new technologies to improve productivity and resilience
- Work with education and training providers to develop a skilled and ambitious workforce, in current and future generations.



Thanet's Economy

Thanet is a creative, innovative and inspiring place. Its environment has shaped the economy over centuries. Its rich soil supported a thriving agriculture sector. Natural harbours sparked an age of maritime discovery and traditions, and the beauty of its coast created an irresistible visitor destination. The influence of Thanet's beauty has inspired famous authors and artists such as Dickens and JMW Turner.

In 2010, Thanet's population was estimated to be 132,000 people. Of these, around 79,000 are aged 16-64 (a proxy for the working age population) – around 77% are economically active (those working or actively seeking work). Some 41,000 people work in around 2,800 VAT-registered business and a further 10,000 are self-employed creating around £1,700 million of Gross Value Added (a measure of the wealth of the economy). These numbers confirm that Thanet is a significant economic unit.

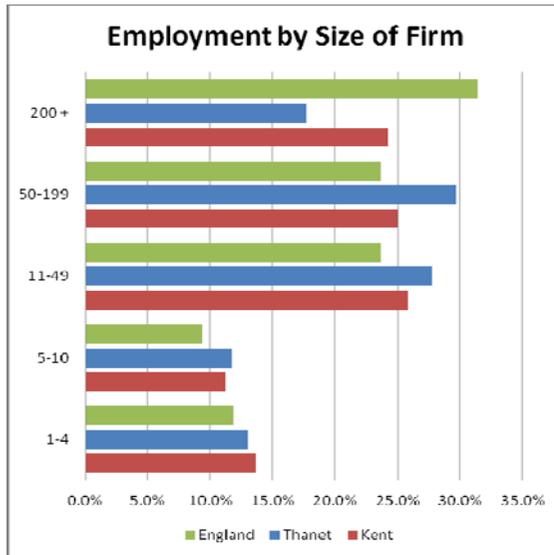
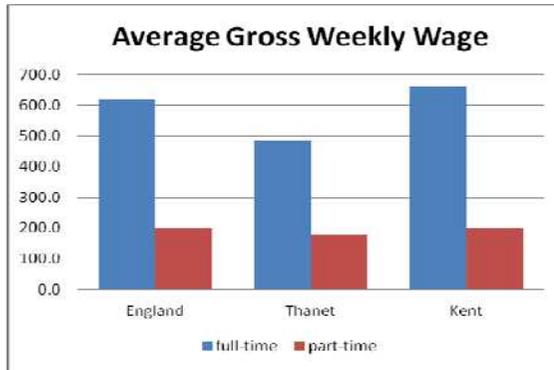
It is not just its relative size that defines the economy of Thanet: its definition comes more from its diversity. Thanet is a coastal district but it is also predominantly rural. Whilst there are three significant coastal towns – Broadstairs, Margate and Ramsgate

– the population density across Thanet is still relatively low. Consequently the density

of economic activity is lower than the national average: there are fewer workers, consumers and subsequently business in any given area. This limits the efficiency of labour markets and there is limited opportunity for businesses to find specialist suppliers. The provision of specialist financial, technical and business support services are predominately located outside the district.

Thanet also suffers from its peripherality – the economic catchment area is limited; bounded by coastline along its eastern, northern and southern edges. Although Thanet has a significant population it is still a small market and to bring wealth in, goods must be sold to customers outside the area. Distance to major population areas increases the costs of reaching these markets. This has an impact on the competitive position of our firms and has an impact on final product prices, wages, profitability and productivity.

Low productivity levels feed into low profitability for local firms, limiting their ability to invest and expand and providing low wage levels. Earnings are significantly below the English average and amongst the lowest in England.



In part, the low wages are a result of the trading conditions that our businesses face. The sectors that are more prominent in Thanet and have greater levels of employment tend to pay lower wages, where ever they are located. This is further compounded by the occupation mix within the industries. Thanet has fewer workers in the relatively higher paid, professional, technical and managerial occupations.

Even in sectors where productivity is high, there are structural weaknesses that limit further growth. The majority of these are micro or small-sized enterprises. Some are 'lifestyle business' with no ambition for growth and innovation; others are family businesses struggling with the trade-off between growth and control.

Around a quarter of all enterprises in the area have turnover below the VAT threshold – this includes a significant number of self-employed people. Nationally over 30% of employees work for a business that employs 200 or more workers. In our area it is less than 20%. By contrast, over a quarter of people work in a firm employing less then 10 people, nationally it is one fifth.

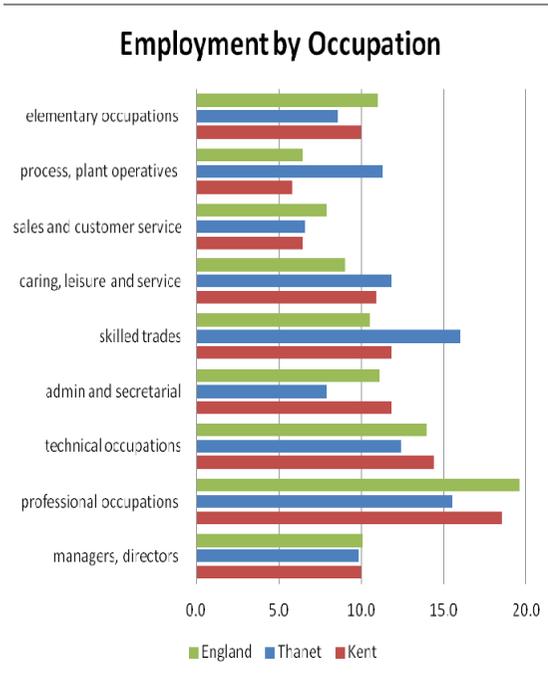
Linked to the occupation and industrial structures is a weak skills structure in the workforce. There is a significantly lower

proportion of the population with higher level qualifications (NVQ 3 or above) in the areas compared to either the regional or national average, and a higher concentration of people with no qualifications.

There is also a dominance of employment in the public sector and whilst this has an important role to play in any economy, it is not a strong driver of growth and wealth creation. With over a third of employees working in the public sector there is a need to balance this to ensure that there is scope for our economy to grow.

There is a pressing need to diversify and grow both our productivity and employment base. And this, can only in the current economic circumstances, come from the private sector.

The peninsula nature of Thanet that contributes to its peripherality also provides a unique natural environment that, for a long time has supported a significant tourism industry. Whilst direct employment may only be around 10% of the total workforce, the secondary impacts of the tourism industry are also significant. The level of spend during the holiday season is critical to supporting the retail sector and local supply chains.



The structural weaknesses in Thanet’s economy are not recent developments. Unemployment levels have consistently been above regional and national averages. During the growth period between 1995 and 2007 the unemployment numbers fell – and at a slightly faster rate than national rates. Increased economic buoyancy raised the levels of business start-ups and survival rates and increased wealth and incomes which reduced issues of social exclusion. During this time economic performance across Thanet also improved. Levels of unemployment were above the national averages but progress towards closing the gap was being made. By 2007 the gap between the unemployment rate in Thanet and that in Kent (and England) was the smallest it had been for a decade.

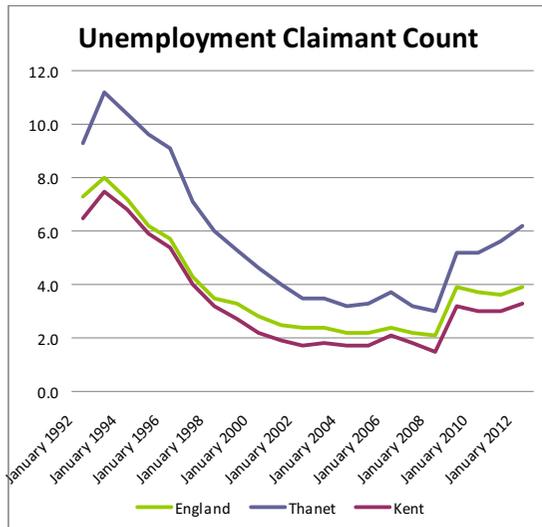
Since late 2007 the UK economy has been gripped by a severe and persistent ‘credit crunch’. Consequently, economic growth slowed during 2008 as the effect of modest real disposable income growth, tighter credit conditions, a weakening housing market and depressed confidence levels fed through from the financial sector into the real economy. In the second half of 2008, output levels fell and the economy began to shrink. By the end of 2008 the national economy was officially in recession and, despite a

slight return to growth late in 2009 has remained so.

The national economy has struggled and Thanet has been hit particularly hard; unemployment has increased faster than the regional and national rates. The progress made in closing the gap with national economic performance achieved over the previous decade has been reversed. The recession has emphasised some of the inherent weaknesses in our economic structure. The low productivity, low wage businesses that characterise Thanet’s economy will continue to face a number of challenges when the national economy emerges from recession.

Whilst there is no doubt that Thanet faces some economic challenges, these are balanced by a range of opportunities.

Inland connections have improved significantly. The East Kent Access Road provides dual carriageway from the M25. The Access Road links Thanet and major economic assets such as Manston, Kent’s International Airport, the Port of Ramsgate and Discovery Park to the UK’s main arterial road network in less than 60 minutes. The introduction of High Speed 1



rail services has reduced commuting from central London to Ramsgate to 76 minutes and Margate to 88 minutes.

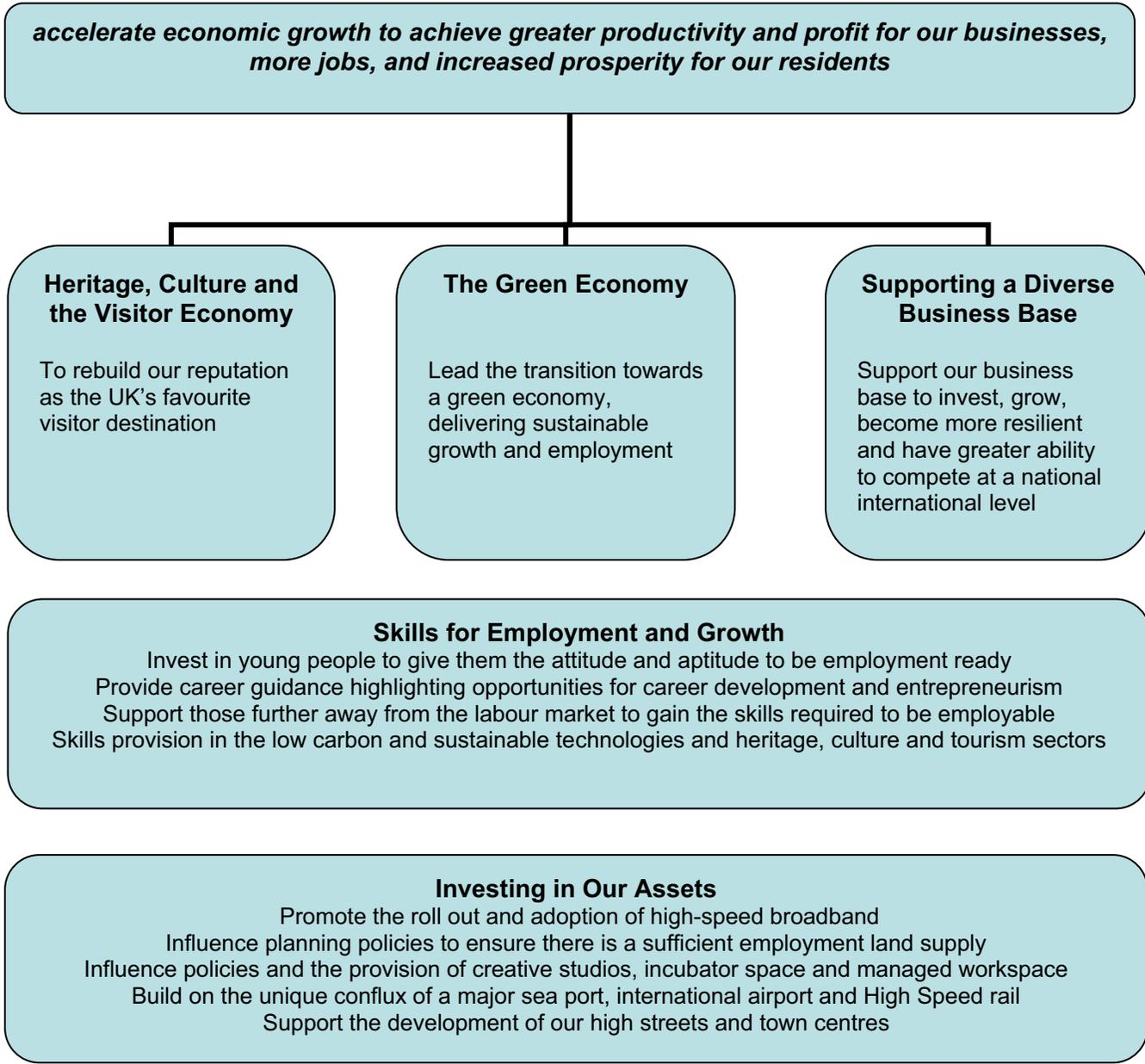
Our area benefits from a strong knowledge and science base. The facilities at Discovery Park in Sandwich provide research and development infrastructure that is second to none. This provides the perfect base for any sized knowledge based business, in particular those relating to the life sciences.

As the economy modernises infrastructure still holds back productivity growth. The use of ICT and prominence of knowledge driven businesses will be boosted as broadband connectivity is improved.

The housing supply in Thanet must also reflect the needs and aspirations of a more inclusive community, having regard to prospective and economic growth. The housing offer in Thanet can play an important role in encouraging economic growth. As well as re-building our reputation as a visitor destination we need to have a wide range of housing assets within our rich heritage assets to encourage people to relocate here. Having the right product in the right place will support the local community and the types of jobs needed to deliver a more balanced economy.

We will achieve this by:

- Talking to business to understand their needs and the opportunities Thanet can offer
- Working with further and higher education to develop an education presence on the high streets
- Attract new industry and new investment to the district
- Work towards ensuring the supply of housing responds to the needs of our residents
- Improve wage levels which are amongst the lowest in the UK, and employment opportunities to reduce the dependence on the informal economy
- Build on the transport and communications infrastructure improving the flows of goods and people between our key markets
- Maximise opportunities to provide financing for business investment and growth e.g. Expansion East Kent
- Work with businesses to understand regulatory activities which inhibit growth.



To build our reputation as the UK’s favourite visitor destination, a concerted and collaborative effort is required to:

- Create a positive image to create pride and influence
- Improve the quality of service and value for money for the visitor economy as a whole
- Establish a real sense of enjoyment whilst being a safe destination for everyone who visits, lives and works here
- Improve the current tourism offer, building on our heritage assets, and service delivery via a better skilled workforce. Working with local businesses to promote the area.

Heritage, Culture and the Visitor Economy

With its unique heritage, landscape features and coastlines Thanet is a major tourist destination attracting over 2.5 million visitors per year. The scale of this activity is reflected in the contribution tourism related industries make. The tourism industries account for around 10% of all employment as much as the manufacturing industries and twice as much as the construction industry.

Globally, tourism is a growing industry and it is an incredibly competitive market place. Booking patterns have shifted with a rise in late bookings and an increasing use of the internet to research and book holidays. With high competition, consumers are demanding more from their holiday experience and are constantly seeking value for money. These changes are making it increasingly challenging for destinations and businesses to differentiate their product and position themselves in a crowded market place.

The nature of tourism in the UK is changing. Whilst the main product of the industry is still the traditional family holiday, the emphasis is shifting. The average length of stay of holidaymakers has fallen

and more second holidays, short breaks and activity holidays are taking place. Cultural activities such as food and drink and heritage are increasingly important elements of the visitor experience.

Investment in the new Turner Contemporary is helping build a new niche for Margate with benefits that could spread across the whole of Thanet. Ambitions for the restoration of Dreamland will build on the traditional values and reputation but in a way that attracts a new modern audience to build Thanet into a year-round destination. Broadstairs is a typical traditional seaside resort with a reputation as a charming historic town with a variety of festivals that play a key part in its success as a tourist destination. Ramsgate is a bustling town centred on its spectacular Royal Harbour. The historic architecture and marina have helped support a lively visitor industry, with a café culture and stylish shops. There is a nautical theme with oyster bars, seafood restaurants and chandlers; all established parts of the local economy.

Adding value through new services and products and offering quality of service are critical to encouraging customer loyalty. Creating links and routes between

attractions across Thanet will build the offer the visitor and capture greater levels of tourist activity.

Maintaining our heritage assets, walking and cycling routes, the quality of public spaces and beaches and our housing stock will be important to deliver high quality visitor offer and resident experience. Equally investment in the skills of the staff working in the sector to provide the best welcome and service to visitors will be required.

There is some evidence that seasonality is reducing, with events and other initiatives successfully extending the main season into shoulder months, improving job opportunities. To fully capture the benefits of our heritage we must promote and develop our assets to make Thanet a first choice location for 52 weeks of the year.

For the visitor economy to succeed, the whole district must be committed to delivering a quality experience for visitors and residents alike – the quality of place as a whole is as important as the nature of individual attractions. The quality of the toilets, street-cleaning, public realm, shopping, signage, information, transportation, entertainment, restaurants and service need to work together to provide a quality experience.

We will achieve this by:

- Developing a new Destination Management Plan to steer and align our tourism support activity
- Work with attractions operators and owners to build the links between different attractions and areas of Thanet.
- Work with transport providers to develop public transport links between visitor attractions
- Improve signage between key points in each of our towns
- Work across council departments to improve the public realm.

To lead the transition towards a green economy, delivering sustainable growth and employment we must:

- Work with industry to capitalise on our role as the support base for England’s largest offshore wind farms
- Build low carbon supply chains
- Develop opportunities for businesses to share best practice to improve productivity.
- Maximise the potential of Government policies and programmes to create growth.
- Prepare for the future development and deployment of offshore technologies that build on the infrastructure that is already here.

The Green Economy

Thanet is surrounded by offshore wind farms: Thanet Offshore, London Array and the nearby Kentish Flats are now established features of the seascape around Thanet. Whilst there has been some success in capturing the economic benefits of this new technology there is potential for more. The hosting of operational and maintenance facilities for the offshore arrays at Ramsgate Port is a significant achievement. The challenge now is to capture any ‘spin off’ business and skills issues which may arise from this achievement.

Wind has been the world’s fastest growing renewable energy source for the last eight years. As the cost of generation falls and the urgent international need to tackle CO² emissions and prevent climate change grows, it’s a trend that is set to continue. As the windiest country in Europe and world leader in off-shore technology, the potential exists to meet the UK’s energy needs several times over. A single project requires the contribution of many different people employed in many different jobs, from research and development through to construction and maintenance. This means people from a range of backgrounds and with a range of skills are always needed.

Our opportunities do not just come from wind energy. Our reputation for offshore work with the wind farms places us in a strong position to capture the benefits of the next technological developments. Wave and tidal energy technologies are still in there infancy and we need to act now to position ourselves as a prime location for business involved in developing, testing and deploying these technologies.

Whilst central government has a headline target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions there are a number of real benefits for residents and business that flow from this. The Green Deal will help households introduce energy efficiency measures to reduce energy usage and fuel bills. Not only does this help the household but it also provides local supply chain opportunities.

Developing a green economy also needs to promote sustainable patterns of production and consumption that are resource and energy efficient, low-carbon and low waste, non-polluting and safe, and which produce products that are responsibly managed throughout their lifecycle. The green agenda covers the greening of processes, under which all industries continuously improve their resource productivity and environmental performance and become

more efficient and competitive.

In building a green economy there will be a focus on those industries that deliver environmental goods and services in an industrial manner, including, for example, waste management and recycling services, renewable energy technologies, and environmental analytical and advisory services.

We will achieve this by:

- Making links across the industry to consolidate opportunities for growth including research and development.
- Work with existing renewable energy businesses to publicise supply chain opportunities and work with local firms to meet the opportunities.
- Where needed work with partners outside of Thanet to help people get the skills they need to work in the green industries
- Deliver a demonstration project showing how homes in conservation areas can adopt energy saving technologies.

To support our business base to invest, grow, become more resilient and have greater ability to compete at a national and international level we must:

- Work with the Chambers of Commerce to help businesses become successful
- Encourage and enable networking opportunities through existing organisations across Thanet.
- Promote investment by existing businesses and attracting new inward investment. Utilise available land and premises, funding opportunities and growth of supply chains
- Align our image and brand campaigns to attract investment, people, skills and knowledge in to the area
- Use local planning policies to promote a sustainable and balanced economy

Supporting a Diverse Business Base

Thanet’s economy has been in transition throughout the later stages of the 20th century and into the 21st century. Some of the district’s traditional sectors have been under pressure, with some decline, imposing a need for diversification to enable economic growth.

The composition of the economy has significant variations from the national average. This is to be expected. Over time the unique natural and cultural assets have tended to steer the economy towards certain activities. For example, the fertile lands have naturally tended towards agricultural uses whilst the beaches and coast have supported tourism.

The continuing importance of agriculture to Thanet’s economy has been underlined with significant private sector investment over recent years. For example, Thanet Earth is a highly efficient production facility adopting the latest technologies and production techniques where the core staff are some of the highest skilled in the sector. It is a clear demonstration of the competitive advantages of Thanet as a location. With an abundance of fertile soil, coastline and

sunshine Thanet has much more to offer at the high knowledge end of research and production in agriculture and aquaculture.

The public sector is one of the sectors that dominate Thanet’s economy. Over the last decade Thanet has confounded regional and national growth trends. Sectors which have grown nationally have shrunk here. Similarly, sectors that have shown significant growth in employment on Thanet have fallen nationally. Even in the sectors which have shown strong growth their total employment is still a small proportion of all jobs.

The factors that influence an industries location are becoming less of a constraint as knowledge and a skilled workforce become relatively more important. Those businesses that have located here have done well. Although there are only a few of them, the manufacturing and processing companies that are in Thanet are first class. The Fujifilm Speciality Ink Systems factory, won the Best Process Plant Award at the 2011 Best Factory Awards.

Transport and Infrastructure links are the lifeblood for our area and vital for enterprises to reach customers, suppliers and exchange knowledge and information. Whilst physical access to Thanet with new road and rail investment has improved digital connectivity is still weak. ICT infrastructure is critical for

improving productivity and increasing employment and will be a particular priority

It is not just the economic structure in Thanet which presents opportunities. The designation of an Enterprise Zone at Discovery Park in the neighbouring district of Dover is a major opportunity for the workforce and supply chain business in Thanet. A unique response to the downsizing of Pfizer the Enterprise Zone offers the potential for east Kent to maintain its position as a global leader in life science and pharmaceutical production.

Whilst there is some strength and resilience in having broad industrial base, there is also some weakness. The lack of specialism prevents agglomeration benefits accruing – where training providers and specialist suppliers can develop alongside key industries to build a competitive advantage unique to the place. To strengthen Thanet's economic base it will be essential to bring new investment that enhances the businesses that are already here.

We will achieve this by:

- Delivering a marketing campaign to attract business and investors to the area.
- Developing a new Local Plan that supports the growth of our economy.
- Releasing council-owned assets for economic development where this is appropriate
- Developing a closer working relationship with the Chamber of Commerce and other business representative groups.

Skills development is one of the key drivers of economic growth. To maximize the growth potential of we must:

- Ensure our partners invest in young people to give them the skills needed to access jobs
- Provide career guidance to highlight opportunities for career development and entrepreneurship in Thanet
- Support the long term unemployed to get the skills required to get back into work
- Target skills provision at those sectors which give us the greatest chance of providing enterprise-led employment and growth.

Skills for Employment and Growth

People provide the impetus for economic growth and an enterprising and aspirational workforce will address a number of structural economic weaknesses. A skilled workforce is one of the essential aspects that stimulate inward and indigenous investment. There are significant benefits from increasing both enterprise and aspirations in the district.

Investment in skills provides the opportunity for people to use the full range of their talents, increasing their own prosperity. In work progression creates gaps in the workforce for others to take up – this is an important part of increasing employment opportunities for those not in employment.

We face significant challenges in relation to skills levels in the labour force with a high proportion of our working age population with no qualifications. There is a strong link between skills and qualifications, employment rates and income levels. Increasing the employment rate is now accepted as one of the key elements in reducing high concentrations of deprivation in disadvantaged communities.

In order to ensure work becomes the route out of deprivation, a number of inter-

generational barriers need to be overcome. While multi agency delivery over an extended timescale will be required to remove some of the physical barriers, one of the underlying barriers is much harder to remove.

Low ambition can pass from one generation to another and it is imperative that this is addressed so that a more enterprising and entrepreneurial culture underpins the labour force and supports growth. These issues are not common across Thanet but where they do occur the deprivation symptoms are severe and specific interventions – such as the Margate Task Force have been established to address them.

Continued investment by East Kent College and the proximity to both the Canterbury Christ Church University (particularly with its presence in Broadstairs) and the University of Kent have the potential to boost skills development in our area.

The role of skills development is not just about getting people into work. Whilst this is

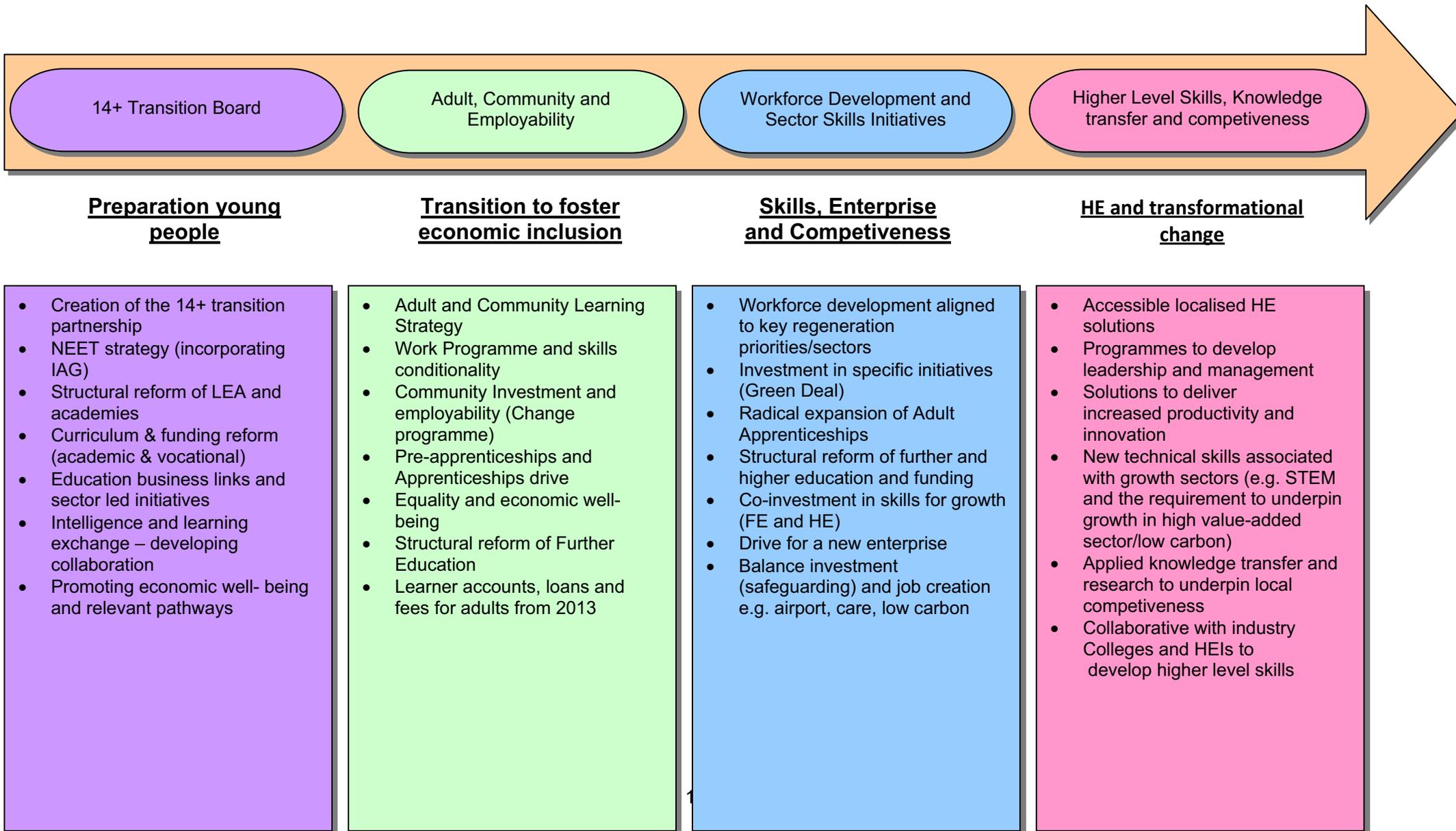
a vital step in realising the economic potential of our area we also need to pay attention to the development needs of those in work. Continued investment in training and staff development is a key mechanism to improve productivity and business performance. With many of our business affected by seasonal and transient employment patterns there is sometimes limited incentive to invest in workforce development.

Enhancing the skill levels of our residents and reducing high levels of worklessness are critical issues for Thanet if we are to tackle our productivity gap.

We will achieve this by:

- Working with further and higher education to ensure training opportunities match business needs
- Assist Further and higher education providers establish a presence in the town centres to help people understand what learning opportunities are available and make it easier for people to take up learning.
- Encouraging business to invest in the skills of their workforce

Employment and Skills: Strategic ‘Framework’



Building the desire, ambition and aspiration for business to invest in and grow in Thanet must be backed up the provision of infrastructure which is critical to business success. To ensure business and people flourish we will:

- Promote the roll out and adoption of high speed broadband
- Influence planning policies to ensure there is a sufficient supply land allocations for new premises
- promoting policies and the provision of space that meets the specific needs of business in certain sectors or at certain points in the growth (particularly creative studios, incubator space and managed workspace)
- Build on the unique conflux of a major sea port, international airport and High Speed rail connection – especially enhanced rail infrastructure
- Support the development of our high streets and town centres.

Investing in Our Assets

The economy is changing. There will always be a role to move people and goods. But increasingly growth and prosperity is coming from moving ideas and knowledge. A lack of ICT connectivity is acting as a constraint on business growth. In addition there are a number of businesses who are simply not aware of the potential of ICT to increase sales and productivity.

There is a well-established relationship between ICT adoption, its exploitation and productivity at the business level. High speed broadband and internet connectivity is regarded as an essential enabling infrastructure, without which many of the value-adding benefits of ICT (the ability to trade, research, communicate and market online) are unachievable. Without high speed internet access the ability to share large files and use technologies that demand reliable, high bandwidth services such as video streaming (used in the media and creative sectors as well as in engineering in applications such as multi-site rapid prototyping and 3-D modelling, VOIP/VTC and mobile working applications) can not be realised.

Innovation is regarded as one of the most powerful of productivity drivers within all economies and, in addition to the creativity

and flair necessary to successfully exploit new ideas, ICT are viewed as a critical enabling tool for innovation (across all sectors). There are significant areas of Kent – including the rural parts of Thanet that do not achieve the Government’s Universal Commitment of connection speeds above 2Mbs. As a result a large number of people and business do not have satisfactory access to Broadband connectivity placing them at considerable disadvantage

Manston, Kent’s International Airport is established itself as a major cargo base for the UK and has the potential to develop significant airport-related activities. Not only does the airport act as an economic entity in its own right – employing people to run its business and spending in the local supply chains – it can also play a wider role in promoting economic growth. This role can include the tangible effects such as spin out of airport related activity, development of the logistics industry and improving access. But it can also include less tangible effects linked to the image and reputation of an area.

The challenge, as with any major development, is to maximize the positive economic contribution whilst minimising any negative impact on the quality of life which is

one of the key features of Thanet.

The airport is only one element of a comprehensive transport system that adds to our competitive position. The Port of Ramsgate gives easy access to the North Sea, the English Channel and into mainlined Europe, providing a perfect base for supplying key European markets. The road access is excellent with a dedicated access road and it is only 60 minutes from London's arterial hub the M25. The port represents a niche UK facility, The Royal Harbour provides one of the South East's finest marinas.

A new Transport strategy for Thanet will be developed alongside the new Local plan. This will identify how the transport infrastructure works, identify any weaknesses and priorities for improvements.

A strong retail and leisure economy is of fundamental importance to both the sustainability of the local economy and the local community. It is also a key mechanism in attracting and retaining people and expenditure to the district – both as residents and as visitors. Until recently the provision of the main retail and leisure offer was spread thinly across the two main towns of Margate and Ramsgate and to a lesser extent Broadstairs. However the

development of a 'town centre' at Westwood Cross with new department stores and a range of other national retail brands has focused 'high street retailing' in one location and developed a critical mass which is sustainable and ensures a greater proportion of retail spend is retained on Thanet.

Success at Westwood Cross has inevitably presented a further challenge to the coastal towns. The challenge now is for the traditional high streets to define their own unique characteristics and offer services that compliment Westwood Cross fulfilling a High Street function which is more than just retail.

Margate's old town is beginning to demonstrate how this can be achieved, with niche, bespoke shops that dovetail the wider heritage and creative offering developing in Margate. Broadstairs and Ramsgate have their own niche positions which will continue to develop and complement the offering across Thanet.

Significant investments have been made to unlock land for industrial and commercial development. Some £35 million has been invested to ensure that serviced sites are available for private sector investment in the strategic employment sites at EuroKent and the Manston Business Park.

Many smaller and start up business require ready made space with the flexibility to adapt and respond to their needs. It is important that private sector developers are encouraged to provide flexible accommodation that meets the needs of our businesses.

Not all the assets that promote our economy are located within the district. The development of the High Speed rail link from London St Pancras has vastly improved connectivity. Continued improvements in the rail infrastructure will see journey times from Ramsgate to London fall to below one hour. The completion of the East Kent Access Road is a huge boost to the connectivity and accessibility of Thanet as a destination. The port, airport, road and rail links will work alongside better internet speeds to ensure that Thanet is recognised as a first choice location. We must be careful to protect and enhance our key access routes.

Our almost unique natural and built environment creates a quality of life that is almost unrivalled. To realise our ambitions we must also have a housing market that responds to and supports our economic aspirations. There will be a new Housing Strategy to sit along side our Economic Strategy to help ensure people get the most out of living and working here. Our strategic

approach to housing is key in taking advantage of the quality of housing that exists in the district and provide houses that are fit for the future. We will require the right kind of housing to continue to encourage investment and new people to live in the area.

We will achieve this by:

- Developing a new masterplan for the Port of Ramsgate
- Supporting the roll out of the BDUK programme to deliver high speed broadband across Kent.
- Working with the town teams to rejuvenate their high streets.

Moving to Phase 2

This document is the first Phase in our approach to economic development in Thanet. Whilst it is based on robust research and has been subject to a degree of informal ‘sense checking’ with key stakeholders it is appropriate that formal consultation is undertaken.

It is recognised that a wide range of stakeholder have an interest in economic development, but there is a need to effectively manage the consultation process. The document will be available on the Thanet District Council website for general comment. But consultation will aim to get responses from targeted organisations including:

- HCA
- Canterbury Christ Church University
- East Kent College
- NHS
- English Heritage
- Kent County Council
- Job Centre Plus
- Turner Contemporary

- Connexions
- MP for Thanet South
- MP for North North
- The Thanet Business Forum (and its members)
- Thanet and East Kent Chamber of Commerce (and its members)
- Kent Channel Chamber of Commerce (and its members)
- Thanet Business Network (and its members)
- Thanet Trade Fair
- Business Networking International
- Federation of Small Business (FSB) (and its members)
- 4 Networking Thanet
- Visit Kent
- Locate in Kent
- Kent Institute of Directors
- Broadstairs Town council
- Ramsgate Town Council
- Local Authorities: Ashford, Dover, Shepway and Canterbury

To translate the strategic direction into detailed actions and policies we need to fully understand the requirements of businesses, the opportunities that exist and what we need to do to capture them. The responses to the consultation will help this but we will also need to undertake specific engagement with business to develop detail actions to will unlock growth.

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KENT LOCAL AUTHORITY MORTGAGE SCHEME (LAMS)

To: **Extraordinary Cabinet - 29 May 2013**

Main Portfolio Area: **Housing & Planning Services, Financial Services**

By: **Harvey Patterson, Corporate & Regulatory Services Manager**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Ward: **All**

Summary: **To seek Cabinet approval to the adoption of the Kent Local Authority Mortgage Scheme (LAMS) to assist first-time buyers in Thanet accessing the local housing market.**

For Decision

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Council's adopted Housing Strategy sets out the Council's commitment to explore the opportunities for assisting first-time buyers and households on low-incomes to access the local housing market.
- 1.2 Inability to access the local housing market is a major concern for an increasing number of households in the district. Many lenders require purchasers to have a deposit of 20%-25% of the property value in place to enable them to take up a mortgage offer. A household looking to purchase a two bedroom family homes at a purchase price of £145,000 (the average price of a two-bed terrace in Thanet is £144,537) would therefore need to have deposit of between £29,000 and £36,250.
- 1.3 An increasing number of local authorities across the country are either looking to establish or have established a Local Authority Mortgage Scheme (LAMS) to assist first-time buyers in their areas. There are already two live LAMS in Kent at Gravesham and Tunbridge Wells with a third at Shepway at an advanced stage. Much of the exploratory work around LAMS has been completed by Sector Treasury Services, an independent provider of capital financing, treasury and strategic advisory consulting services to UK public service organisations, In particular, Sector has obtained legal advice on the legality of local authorities establishing a LAMS.
- 1.4 One of the advantages of establishing a LAMS in Kent is the decision of Kent County Council (KCC) to enter into partnership agreements with participating Kent districts to match fund scheme contributions of between £500,000 and £2,000,000, Consequently, if the Council agrees to invests £500,000 in LAMS, KCC will provide a further £500,000 to assist first time buyers in Thanet.
- 1.5 The specific LAMS available under the KCC partnership arrangement is provided by the Lloyds TSB Group. Although other lenders are participating in LAMS nationally, Lloyds TSB is the biggest lender involved to date. The Lloyds TSB scheme is only available to help first-time buyers purchasing second-hand rather than new build properties. This differs from the Government's recently announced 'Help to Buy Scheme' which is not restricted to first time buyers and, unlike LAMS, is only available for the purchase of new build properties.

2. Funding Options

2.1 Sector has highlighted two potential models for delivering LAMS. The scheme can be used to provide mortgage indemnities either on a cash-backed or unfunded basis.

2.2 The table below summarises the key differences between the two LAMS models:-

Scheme	Cash backed LAMS Model	Unfunded LAMS Model
Investment	Requires a capital sum to be invested with the lender for the duration of the Requires a capital sum to be invested with the lender for the duration of the scheme £500,000 from TDC)	No requirement to invest the capital sum with the lender.
Return on Investment	The cash-backed scheme will deliver a return on the capital sum invested – estimated to be in the region of 3% per annum.	No investment return is received as no funds are invested with the lender. The lender may pay a premium of £500 per mortgage guaranteed under the scheme (would be shared with KCC). TDC's share of premium would be approx £15k which could contribute towards a provision for possible mortgage default payments.
Funding any Mortgage default	The interest paid on the invested sum will be returned to the Council – the interest can also be used to fund any mortgage default payments to the lender	The Council would need to pay the cost of any mortgage defaults through existing revenue resources. It is not permitted to pay the lender any default indemnity out of capital resources.
Opportunity Costing	Requires a capital sum to be invested for the period of the LAMS scheme (i.e. for a 5 year period). This will prevents the resources from being invested in other Housing initiatives	No requirement for any investment to be made, allowing capital funds to be used for other projects. However, revenue funds will need to be made available to cover any mortgage default payments.
Match Funding	KCC will match fund a cash-backed LAMS initiative and have agreed to match fund the Council's £500,000 contribution.	KCC are unable to support the unfunded approach to LAMS at this time.
Existing LAMS	Sector recommends the Cash-backed LAMS model	Most local authorities establishing LAMS to date have followed the cash-backed model.

- 2.3 It is therefore recommended that the Council implement a cash-backed LAMS scheme, for the following reasons:
- 2.3.1 Unfunded LAMS would not generate sufficient revenue resources to cover the potential risks of mortgage default payments becoming payable by the Council.
 - 2.3.2 Alternative investment options would be unlikely to offer interest returns at the same enhanced rate available through the Scheme.
 - 2.3.3 Cash-backed LAMS would enable the recycling of the capital investment into other projects or further LAMS at the end of the investment period.
 - 2.3.4 KCC will match fund £500,000 for a cash-backed LAMS in Thanet.

3.0 How the Scheme will Operate

- 3.1 The Scheme available under the KCC partnership arrangement is aimed at helping those who can afford mortgage payments, but cannot raise the initial deposit, to get on to the property ladder. Under the Scheme the Council specifies the value of properties that can be purchased through it.
- 3.2 If a potential first-time buyer meets the strict credit criteria applied by the lender, and of equal importance, meets the criteria set out by the Council to qualify for a mortgage under the Scheme, then the KCC/TDC partnership (the Partnership) will provide a top-up indemnity. The indemnity will be for the value of the difference between the typical loan to value (LTV) mortgage; i.e. 75%, and a 95% LTV mortgage. The potential buyer will thereby obtain a 95% mortgage on similar terms to a 75% mortgage, but without the need to provide the substantial deposit usually required. For example, an eligible first-time buyer seeking to purchase a property in Thanet valued at £145,000 would have to find a deposit of £7,250 as opposed to a deposit of £36,250 - and it is this difference (£29,000) that KCC and TDC will jointly indemnify.
- 3.3 LAMS mortgage rates are priced at similar rates to 75% loan to value mortgages and at present the interest rates offered for these are in the region of 2.68 % to 3.99% Applicants will be able to access the same mortgage offers as other purchasers, including fixed rate mortgages. At the end of the LAMS period, applicants will also have access to the same range of mortgage products as other purchasers.
- 3.4 The indemnity will be in place for a fixed 5 year period for each mortgage granted under the Scheme, which may be extended for a further 2 years if a mortgage is in arrears in the last 6 months of the initial 5 year period.
- 3.5 The indemnity would only be called upon if a loss is crystallized by the lender. By way of example, if a property valued at £145,000 with a mortgage of £137,750 and with the Partnership indemnity of £29,000 was sold following repossession at £100,000 net of attributable costs, the full value of the £29,000 indemnity would be requested by the lender. If, however the property was sold at £130,000 net of costs, i.e. an actual loss of £7,250, then £7,250 would be requested from the Partnership. Any loss in excess of the value of the indemnity would be attributable to the lender. The lender would request payment from the Partnership, who would undertake to make payment within 30 days. Under the proposed Partnership with KCC, any losses would be shared equally by KCC and TDC.
- 3.6 The Partnership will be required to place a 5-year deposit at the start of the Scheme to the full value of the indemnity being offered (i.e. a deposit of £1m for the Thanet Scheme; £500,000 from TDC and £500,000 from KCC). The deposit will be in place for the term of the indemnity, i.e. 5 years (with the possibility of a further 2 year extension if the mortgage is in arrears at the end of the initial 5 years). At the end of the period the whole amount of the deposit will be returned in full to the Partnership. The Partnership will receive interest

on the monies deposited and it is anticipated that the interest received will be in the region of 3% per annum, based on current market predictions. Based on an interest rate of 3%, the £1million deposit will generate an overall return of £150k over the 5 years, which will be shared equally between KCC and the Council. The actual interest rate applicable is set when the deposit is placed with the lender and is fixed for the whole of the 5 year term.

3.7 The Council will also enter into a match-funding agreement with KCC prior to the launch of the Scheme.

3.8 If approved by Cabinet and Council, it is envisaged that the Thanet LAMS could be launched by September 2013. The Scheme will be launched with a joint TDC/KCC publicity campaign

4.0 TDC Eligibility Criteria

4.1 To ensure that the largest number of local first-time buyers benefit from the Scheme taking into account local housing market selling prices, it is recommended:-

4.1.1 that the maximum loan available under the Scheme is £137,750, i.e. 95% of the average price of a two bedroom terrace house in Thanet; and

4.1.2 that the Scheme is only available to first time buyers currently resident in the district in respect of the purchase of residential properties in the district to be achieved by the use of postcode restrictions.

4.2 In this way it is estimated that a Thanet Scheme established with initial combined resources of £1m will assist approximately 30 to 60 first-time buyer households in Thanet to access the local housing market (depending on property values). In addition to this, market intelligence from lenders suggests that each LAMS initiated property purchase will help to increase the level of property purchase activity in the wider Thanet housing market, by creating on average a further chain of three to four moves per LAMS purchase. This has the potential to provide a small but welcome boost to the local economy.

5.0 Options

5.1 To approve the adoption of a LAMS Scheme for Thanet with an investment of £500,000 match funded by KCC for the reasons given in paragraphs 2.3.1 to 2.3.4 above.

5.2 Not to approve the adoption of LAMS Scheme for Thanet.

6.0 Corporate Implications

6.1 Financial and VAT

6.1.1 A draw down of £500k from the New Homes Bonus will be required to support this Scheme. KCC have agreed to match fund this, meaning £1m will be available in total.

6.1.2 As each mortgage granted under the Scheme reaches the end of the 5 year initial period, the Council will have the relevant proportion of its cash-backed indemnity returned from the lender. The exact timing of the repayment of the total indemnity sum will be dependent upon the date that actual mortgages are agreed by the lender. In the intervening period the Council will receive annual interest on the total deposit made of £500,000. Assuming an interest rate of 3%, this will be £15,000 per annum or £75,000 over the 5 year life of the scheme.

6.1.3 Market intelligence supplied by Sector indicates the average risk of default on a first-time buyer's mortgage is less than 0.5% (£2,500 for the £500,000 invested). However Sector

suggests a more prudent provision for possible default is established for the LAMS scheme. A 4% provision for default equates to £20,000 for the £500,000 invested. It is anticipated the accrued interest on the deposit will be sufficient to cover any potential losses through mortgage default repossession. As any default would be a charge upon the General Fund it is proposed that all of the interest to be received from the Scheme is initially set aside in a ring-fenced revenue reserve to help mitigate this risk. This is reflected in the risk management matrix set out in **Annex 1**.

- 6.1.4 Although Lloyds TSB is a major UK financial institution it has required direct intervention from the government to prevent it suffering a potential collapse during the banking and financial crisis of 2008 and 2009. However, the Council currently view Lloyds TSB as a high quality counterparty for investment purposes because of the government support they currently receive. It is clearly in the government's interest to continue its support of Lloyds TSB to ensure it receives its (or the taxpayers) investment back. However, it has to be acknowledged that over the medium term there is a small risk the bank could fail jeopardising the return of the Council's £500,000 deposit. This is reflected in the risk management matrix set out in **Annex 1**.

6.2 Legal

- 6.2.1 The Monitoring Officer has seen the legal provided to Sector by Field Fisher Waterhouse and to Shepway by Eversheds and is satisfied that the Council has the power pursuant to Sections 435 and 442 of the Housing Act 1985 to enter into a cash-backed Local Authority Mortgage Scheme with Lloyds TSB. Moreover, for the reason given in this report it is considered that to do so would constitute a reasonable exercise of these powers.

- 6.2.2 Lloyds TSB requires the Council to enter into an Indemnity Agreement and Deposit Deed supported by an Opinion given by the Monitoring Officer that the Council has the necessary powers to enter into the Agreement and that all of the Council's internal procedural requirements have been complied with. As this will place the Monitoring Office under a personal liability to Lloyds TSB, the Council is also required to provide the Monitoring Officer with an express indemnity pursuant to the Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Authorities (Members and Officers) Indemnity Order 2004.

- 6.2.3 The Council will also enter into a match funding Agreement with KCC.

6.3 Corporate

- 6.3.1 As set out in the report.

6.4 Equity and Equalities

- 6.4.1 The Table below considers the Public Sector Equalities Duty. It is considered that there will be no adverse impacts to persons with protected characteristics as a result of the Council adopting a LAMS Scheme:

Public Sector Equalities Duty Impacts		
Question	Answer	Explanation
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this report have the potential to disadvantage or discriminate against persons with protected characteristics	No	The use of objective financial eligibility criteria by the lender or the recommendation the Council restrict the availability Scheme to first time buyers in Thanet does not directly or indirectly discriminate against, or disadvantage, persons with protected characteristics
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this report have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	Yes	The provision of the guarantee should increase the accessibility of mortgages to those who would not otherwise be able to afford them and thus assist residents of the district to address their housing needs.
c. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?	N/A	

7.0 Recommended to Council

- 7.1 That the proposed Local Authority Mortgage Scheme for Thanet with eligibility being limited by post code to first time buyers living in the district for the purchase of properties in the district, be agreed.
- 7.2 That the Council's contribution to the proposed Local Authority Mortgage Scheme for Thanet of £500,000; be taken from the New Homes Bonus.
- 7.3 That based on the local housing market for first time buyers the maximum property loan be set at £137,750.
- 7.4 That the Corporate & Regulatory Services Manager in consultation with the Financial Services Manager be authorised to enter into Indemnity and Deposit Agreement with Lloyds TSB and a Match Funding Agreement with Kent County Council.
- 7.5 That the Monitoring Officer be personally indemnified against any potential losses incurred by Lloyds TSB as a result of mortgages provided through the propose LAM for Thanet to enable him to provide the Opinion Letter required by Lloyds TSB.

8.0 Decision Making Process

- 8.1 The recommendations in this report will be referred to full Council for approval.

Contact Officer:	Harvey Patterson, Corporate & Regulatory Services Manager, ext 7005
Reporting to:	Dr Sue McGonigal, Chief Executive, ext, 7001

Annexes

Annex 1	Risk Matrix
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Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
None	N/A

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	Sarah Martin, Financial Service Manager
Legal	N/A
Community Services	Tanya Wenham, Housing Regeneration Manager
Communications	Justine Wingate, Corporate Information Manager

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Annex 1

KENT LAMS - RISK MATRIX

Perceived Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigation
Failure to address the housing needs of the local community- in particular the aspiration of potential first time buyers to access the local housing market – placing increased pressure on the social rented stock within the district and the Council's Housing Options Service	High	Medium	Introduce a LAMS Scheme for Thanet
Losses sustained as a result of Mortgage defaults. Prudently, a default rate of 4% equates to £20,000 on the Council's deposit of £500,000	High	Low	All interest received by the Council in respect of the deposit for this initiative will be specifically earmarked to cover any potential losses resulting from mortgage defaults. Any potential losses will be shared with KCC
The lender is unable to repay the deposit to the Council	High	Low	Lender is seen as currently viewed as high quality. The UK Government appears committed to supporting the part-nationalised banks to ensure their financial recovery and to protect the taxpayer's investment in them

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TRANSEUROPA OUTSTANDING DEBT

To: **Extraordinary Cabinet – 29 May 2013**

Main Portfolio Area: **Financial Services**

By: **Sarah Martin, Financial Services Manager**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Ward: **All**

Summary: **To clarify the outstanding debt position in relation to Transeuropa and to seek approval to use the sources of funding identified to deal with the debt.**

For Decision

1.0 Introduction

1.1. Following the news of the termination of business by the ferry operator Transeuropa NV and its subsequent filing for insolvency, the council has reviewed its debt position with the company. The outstanding debt now stands at circa £3.3m and given that the operator is no longer trading, it will now be necessary to make full provision for the debt within the 2012/13 statement of accounts.

2.0 Background

2.1 Detailed discussions began with Transeuropa about its financial viability back in November 2010. At this time the company advised the council that it wished to review the tariff agreement as escalating fuel prices were causing them financial difficulties. These discussions culminated in a meeting in Ostend in March 2011 with both Transeuropa and the council's Ostend counterparts. Transeuropa made it clear at this time that they needed temporary support from both the council and Ostend to ensure the ongoing future of the business. The company had started making substantial losses due to continued high fuel prices and to the price war being waged between the cross channel operators as a result of the French government's deficit funding for Sea France. At this time the company had also recently reduced to two vessels operating instead of the previous three. The council was keen to ensure the continuation of Transeuropa's business, whilst also protecting its own financial position. It therefore agreed to a three month deferral of fees which would be added to the existing debt. A payment plan for the existing debt was also agreed to 2014. At the same time, Ostend also agreed to waive an element of their charges. Through close contact with Ostend, officers were confident that the council's offer of credit was both necessary and reasonable.

2.2 Subsequent discussions with Transeuropa showed that they were in talks with potential investment partners to help secure their future. As a result of this, Transeuropa requested that the deferral of fees be extended until an investment partner was in place. Payments of around £80k per month in respect of the outstanding debt were received from July 2012 through to September 2012, which was seen as a positive sign that the position was improving.

- 2.3 Discussions with potential investors continued throughout 2012 and council officers had regular updates from Transeuropa on the progress of these discussions. Ultimately in November 2012, agreement was reached with an Italian investment company. It was hoped that this investment would secure the financial viability of the company, thereby ensuring the recovery of the council's outstanding debts. Indeed, a third vessel, the Ostend Spirit, commenced sailings in February 2013 which was taken as a positive sign that the company's fortunes had taken a turn for the better.
- 2.4 Throughout the negotiations, the course of action with regards to the management of the debt was shared with the Cabinet Leader and Finance Portfolio holder in administration at that time.
- 2.5 On 17 April 2013, to the council's great disappointment, the Ostend Spirit had to be returned to P&O in accordance with the charter arrangement as the promised funding had not been released to Transeuropa by the Italian investors. This was seen as a sign of the company's failing financial position by some of its creditors who took the opportunity to seize the company's two remaining cross channel vessels within Ostend Port, thereby causing them to cease operations and prompting insolvency proceedings.

3.0 The Current Position

- 3.1 The council has now reviewed its outstanding debt position with Transeuropa and can confirm that the debt stands at circa £3.3m. Although the council has lodged its debt with the company administrators and intends to take whatever action it can to chase the debt, good accounting practice means that the council needs to provide for the debt in full within its 2012/13 statement of accounts. It is proposed to use the following sources within 2012/13 to fund this debt:

- A sum of £1m has been identified in respect of prior year adjustments to housing benefit subsidy. This is a highly volatile budget due to the impact on the subsidy of increases in caseloads and errors in benefit calculations and so normally any underspend would be put into the Customer Services Reserve to mitigate any future overspends. However, the current balance in this reserve is considered appropriate for this purpose and therefore this budget underspend can be utilised to offset the Transeuropa debt position;
- Unallocated unringfenced grants of £92k have been identified;
- A balance of £43k remains on the Housing and Planning Delivery Grant reserve which is unallocated;
- A sum of £1m will be drawn down from the New Homes Bonus;
- Savings in the cremator project of £196k will be utilised;
- Carry forward budgets of £257k from prior years have not been utilised and will therefore be taken to offset this debt;
- A sum of £200k will be taken from the Priority Improvement Reserve which will still leave a balance of £405k to support invest to save and one-off initiatives;
- A sum of £196k will be taken from the VAT Reserve;
- The bad debt provision has been reviewed and a sum of £200k can be taken to contribute towards this debt.

The above funding sources give a total of £3,186k. It is anticipated that there will be an underspend for 2012/13 over and above that already reported to Members and it is recommended that the balance required to offset the outstanding debt position be taken from any such underspend.

4.0 Options

4.1 Members agree the proposed sources to fund the debt.

4.2 Members identify alternative sources of funding.

5.0 Next Steps

5.1 Officers will continue to make every effort to recover the outstanding debt.

5.2 Talks are progressing to identify a new ferry operator to mitigate the ongoing budget impact. In the meantime, significant day to day operational savings have already been made at the port and harbour and a wider moratorium on discretionary spending has been implemented to address the budget gap as a result of Transeuropa ceasing operations.

6.0 Corporate Implications

6.1 Financial and VAT

6.1.1 A sum of circa £3.3m has had to be identified to offset the outstanding debt that has been accumulated as highlighted in paragraph 3.1 above. The exact final figure will be recognised within the accounts as part of the closure of accounts process.

6.1.2 Throughout the accumulation of the debt and up to the current time, officers have shared information with the council's external auditors to ensure proper accounting practice has been followed.

6.2 Legal

6.2.1 The Legal team will endeavour to take whatever action is available to chase the outstanding debt.

6.3 Corporate

6.3.1 Corporate priorities can only be delivered with robust finances. This report has identified how the Transeuropa debt position can be addressed without impacting on the delivery of the council's priorities.

6.4 Equity and Equalities

6.4.1 There are no equity or equality issues arising directly from this report.

7.0 Recommendation

7.1 That Members approve the sources identified in paragraph 3.1 to fund the outstanding debt.

Contact Officer:	Sarah Martin, Financial Services Manager
Reporting to:	Sue McGonigal, Chief Executive and S151 Officer

Annex List

None	N/A
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Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	
Legal	