



DRAFT Kent and Medway Housing Strategy 2019 –
2023

‘A Place People want to call Home’

August 2019

Executive Summary

The Kent and Medway Housing Strategy (KMHS) has been prepared by the Kent Housing Group (KHG) and is a unique document looking across a whole county area and brings District, Borough, City, Unitary and County Council ambitions together in a bottom-up approach. The aim of this strategy is to set out the strategic direction for housing across Kent and Medway, based on the collective ambitions and aims of local authorities and our housing association partners.

KHG continues to work as an inclusive social housing forum and is well respected by peers at both a national Government level and locally. The KHG brings together a strong partnership of the 12 local authorities, Medway unitary authority, Kent County Council and 14 housing associations who have stock in the county; along with Homes England, the National Landlord Association, Kent Developers Group, Kent Planning Officers Group and the South East Local Enterprise Partnership. Together, as **'the voice of housing in Kent'** we collaborate on housing issues for the benefit of Kent and its residents.

The first edition of the KMHS was published in May 2011 and then refreshed in 2012. This latest edition of the strategy has been developed to help enable organisations across the county to respond strategically to the new housing challenges that have emerged; including changes to the funding of new affordable homes and ongoing welfare reforms. Our pro-active approach to engaging and having dialogue with policy makers ensures that the key asks of our strategy are recognised, and we continue to engage in significant consultations that arise at both a national and regional level.

This edition of the strategy, along with previous editions, has not been developed in isolation and is aligned to and recognises the external factors that impact on the housing sector, both in terms of delivery of homes and the sustainment of well-balanced successful communities.

It is important to highlight that despite the clear successes created from the previous Kent and Medway Housing Strategies, coupled with the relative affluence and general economic prosperity of the county, Kent and Medway still faces very real housing challenges. Economic prosperity should mean that everyone should have access to decent housing and a good quality of life. However, sadly, not all members of our local communities have access to these basic things, with homeless and vulnerable households suffering the most consequently.

The Kent and Medway Housing Strategy establishes and provides clarity about the major strategic challenges facing our county, identifying common areas of concern with pragmatic and smart solutions to manage the challenges for positive outcomes. There are four themes that have been identified and agreed through the stakeholder workshops and engagement across the Kent Housing Group membership and associated partnerships. Each of the four themes are intrinsically linked. The themes are:

Theme 1 – Accelerating Housing Delivery

Theme 2 – Infrastructure and Investment

Theme 3 – Affordability

Theme 4 – Health & Wellbeing

KHG are committed to this strategy with the vision that all partners within our forum are able to use it to deliver and support local ambitions and objectives, provide a platform to facilitate communication and engagement across a wide range of partners, and to ensure that the county is able to meet a range of housing needs at a range of affordability levels that truly reflect the

requirements of our existing and future communities. Through strong leadership from committed partners who support this strategy coupled with working hard to make full use of spare public land, drawing on resources of housing associations, exploring partnerships with the private sector and most importantly working closely with our communities, we genuinely believe we can achieve the objectives of this strategy and much more.

As with the previous editions of the KMHS the delivery against the identified objectives will be monitored through a dedicated monitoring working group from KHG, with progress reported back at regular intervals to the whole KHG membership, the Kent Chief Executives and Leaders, along with the Board Members of our housing association partners. Continuous monitoring will ensure that the strategy is a working document that can respond to any changes that impact the housing sector and ensures that all members of KHG are accountable for the delivery of the strategy.

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Introduction to the Strategy

Purpose of the Strategy

The Kent and Medway Housing Strategy does not set out a long list of work streams and objectives that KHG are engaged in or that our members are focused upon at a local level. It does however identify and share the commitment to focus upon the priorities that are shared across our membership and partnership organisations. This strategy will aim to set out how collective ambition and partnership working can impact on the strategic objectives of a wide range of partners who all have a vested interest within the housing sector across Kent and Medway.

This strategy provides clarity about the major strategic challenges facing Kent and Medway, it identifies common areas of concern and will propose pragmatic and smart solutions to issues where a coherent and joined up vision can add value and deliver against local ambitions.

Amidst the challenging and evolving housing landscape there is no better time to develop this strategy, to set out our distinctive vision for the future of homes in the county and to outline the steps we are determined to take to achieve it. KHG is **'the voice of housing in Kent'** and strongly believe that housing is fundamentally about people and communities, not just bricks and mortar, and that housing is about homes and creating 'a place people feel proud to call home'.

Our strategy, as with previous editions seeks to not only encourage organisations across Kent and Medway to realise the benefits of a shared approach to common problems, and to use this document to realise local ambition, but to also influence government thinking and policy that will benefit our county.

The scale and diversity across the county of Kent and Medway is unique with significant disparity not just in housing need, quality and condition but also affordability, and these factors are each a contributing factor to the housing crisis that we face locally as well as nationally. Our strategy does not set out to find a 'one size fits all' solution to the challenges identified, but a collective approach to ensure that all communities across our county have access to decent good quality housing and a good quality of life, which sadly not all members of our local communities have, with homeless and vulnerable households suffering the most consequently.

The Kent and Medway Housing Strategy has been developed in collaboration across the KHG membership and other organisations which include public, private and third sector organisations, peer groups such as the Kent Planning Officers Group and Kent Developers Group, each of whom have an interest in the future of housing for Kent and Medway. Collaboration and a coordinated approach across a broad range of organisations will assist in meeting the growing demand for housing, secure investment into the county and manage the ambition for growth across the county.

National Context

This strategy acknowledges and reflects the national context that it sits within. Much of the way that we deliver housing services across Kent and Medway is governed by legislation and national policy. However, the legal framework that our organisations work within is frequently changing. Therefore, as organisations with a social conscious and commitment to meet the needs of our communities, it is essential to be innovative and flexible in finding ways to continue to deliver our housing vision for the future.

Putting this in context, here follows a summary of some of the main legislative and policy changes to have occurred over the past few years, alongside an insight into those which could impact locally for Kent and Medway.

Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

The introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 was one of the biggest changes of rights to homeless people in England for over fifteen years and introduced two new duties, the Duty to prevent homelessness and the Duty to relieve homelessness. This legislation was implemented on the 3rd April 2018 and places new legal duties on local housing authorities and amends the existing homelessness legislation in the Housing Act 1966. These new duties apply to all eligible applicants (i.e. on the basis of immigration status) and are blind to intentionality, priority need and is also blind to local connection. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has committed funding of £72m over three financial years (2017 – 2020) to assist local authorities across England to secure resources to manage the anticipated demand on housing options teams. It is not clear yet whether the New Burdens Funding post 2020 to support staff resourcing will continue.

There are a number of key elements that impact upon approaches undertaken by local housing authorities in Kent and Medway, these include:

- *Improved access to free advice and information about homelessness and the prevention of homelessness;*
- *The extension of the period in which a household is defined as 'threatened with homelessness' from 28 to 56 days;*
- *Introduction of new duties to prevent and relieve homelessness for all eligible people, regardless of priority need and intentionality;*
- *Introduction of assessments and personalised housing plans, setting out the actions housing authorities and individuals will take to secure accommodation;*
- *Public bodies are encouraged to work together to prevent and relieve homelessness through a duty to refer;*
- *Care leavers, under the age of 21, who have been looked after, accommodated or fostered in Kent, will be considered as having a local connection anywhere in Kent*

Across Kent and Medway local authorities are undertaking a review of their homelessness strategies to reflect the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, including development of Action Plans and innovative ways of working to meet their new statutory duties.

Housing associations are not included within the list of public bodies who have a Duty to Refer under this new legislation. However many, including members of KHG are engaging with local authorities to reduce homelessness and are signed up to the Commitment to Refer¹.

Welfare Reform

The Government has been undertaking a significant programme of welfare reform which was as a result of its austerity agenda. This has had an impact on both housing management and delivery of homes. The changes made through revision to welfare policies have and will continue to have an impact upon the affordability of housing in the public and private sectors, especially for those who are dependent upon benefits. Key changes that relate to welfare form and their impacts include:

- *Introduction of Universal Credit, a universal benefit payment that replaces a range of benefit payment with one flexible monthly payment directly to claimants, with full implementation expected by 2022-23. Whilst the advantage managing temporary or part time employment through Universal Credit is clear, this new policy places responsibility for managing their full income, including the payment of rent, which increases the risk of rent arrears.*

¹ <https://www.housing.org.uk/resource-library/browse/commitment-to-refer-guidance-for-housing-associations/>

- *The reduction of the Benefit Cap, from November 2016 the maximum amount that a non-working, non-disabled household could receive from state benefits (the benefit cap) was reduced to £20,000 per year, £13,400 per year for single adults (outside London). This has significantly impacted on the ability of households in accommodation of three or more bedrooms to pay their rent.*
- *Local Housing Allowance (LHA) caps for under 35's - from April 2018 single people under 35 years old, living in either social rented or private rented accommodation are eligible to receive LHA for a room in a shared property. This reform could result in a rise of homelessness amongst young people should those renting a one bed social rent property become unemployed. Currently LHA rates are frozen. The aim of the LHA is to assist low income households who rent in the private rented sector pay their rent. Low income households may become increasingly unable to access private rented accommodation and therefore seek assistance from local authorities, housing associations or family/friends to secure accommodation.*

The Social Housing Green Paper

In August 2018 Government published the Social Housing Green Paper, 'A new deal for social housing'². The aim of this Green Paper is to rebalance the relationship between residents and landlords, tackle stigma and ensure that social housing can be both a stable base that supports people when they need it and support social mobility. The paper focuses upon five key themes that include tackling stigma and celebrating thriving communities, empowering residents and strengthening the sector along with ensuring homes are safe and decent. At the time of writing this strategy the result of the consultation on the Green Paper was unknown, however, this strategy supports the commitment and focus of the five themes.

The Housing White Paper

The Governments Housing White Paper, 'Fixing the Broken Housing Market'³ published in 2017, set out their plans to reform the housing market and boost the supply of new homes in England. The White Paper set out commitment by Government to provide solutions to challenges, including planning for homes in the right places, building homes faster, diversifying the housing market and helping those in need now. The Housing White Paper is also clear that central Government see a role for supporting local authorities in housebuilding ambitions, improving capacity and capability to develop more good quality homes as well as the provision of low-cost capital funding.

The Housing and Planning Act 2016

This legislation was developed to overhaul parts of housing and town planning systems and is designed to support the Governments ambition to develop one million new homes by 2020. The main measures contained within the Act include an Extension of the Right to Buy; the sale of higher value vacant local authority homes; starter homes; the introduction of measures to tackle rogue landlords and to increase the Government's power in a situation where a local authority does not have an up to date local plan.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Governments planning policies are set out in the NPPF⁴ which was revised in February 2019 and includes how the policies are expected to be applied, with an ambition to meet the manifesto

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/social-housing-green-paper-a-new-deal-for-social-housing>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/housing-white-paper>

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

ambition of delivering 300,000 homes annually by 2020. The Government through the NPPF is committed to increasing the supply of homes through a planning led system, and ultimately using the Planning Practice Guidance to strengthen place making and housing delivery. The impact that the NPPF will have on the delivery of more homes and especially affordable homes is not yet known but there is a shift of accountability to local planning authorities through this policy framework to deliver more housing. A key element of the revised NPPF is the standardised approach to assessing housing need and measures to maximise the use of brownfield land.

The Health and Social Care Act 2012

In March 2012 the Health and Social Care Act was given Royal Assent and the focus of this act was the restructure and modernisation of the NHS by putting clinicians at the centre of commissioning, empowering patients through informed choice and a new focus on public health. Housing, Health and Social Care are intrinsically linked, and this is recognised across the county of Kent and Medway and within this strategy, with a dedicated theme about Health and Wellbeing and actions to improve the integration of services and outcomes across these three service areas.

The Care Act 2014

This Act came into effect in 2015 and signified the most significant reform of care and support, including providing people and their carers with control over their care and support; a greater emphasis upon prevention; protection for the most vulnerable people in society and provision of clear advice and support by local authorities. Throughout this strategy KHG focus and commit to prevention and protection of the most vulnerable members of our communities across Kent and Medway and recognise the importance of joint working practices to ensure the best outcomes for those we provide services to.

Work to support and improve the lives of the most vulnerable people in our communities is underpinned by the Better Care Fund⁵, a programme that links both the NHS and local authorities to join-up health and social care services and also represents the unique collaboration of the NHS, the Ministry of Communities and Local Government, the Department of Health and Social Care and the Local Government Association.

The Role of Homes England

On the 1st January 2018, Government introduced Homes England to the housing sector, the public body responsible for funding new affordable homes in England. The role and ambition of Homes England is to act as the Governments 'housing accelerator' with a bold and creative five-year strategic plan⁶ that sets out their ambitious new mission to respond to the housing challenges facing the country. Homes England are committed to a place-based approach to housing delivery, working in partnership to deliver against their strategic plan. Currently Homes England have a number of funding streams⁷ that support and compliment the Governments ambition to deliver more homes, these include the Land Assembly Fund; Small Sites Fund; Shared Ownership Affordable Homes Programme; Care and Support Specialist Housing and Housing Revenue Account Borrowing.

⁵ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/part-rel/transformation-fund/bcf-plan/>

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/homes-england-strategic-plan-201819-to-202223>

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/homes-england-funding-programmes>

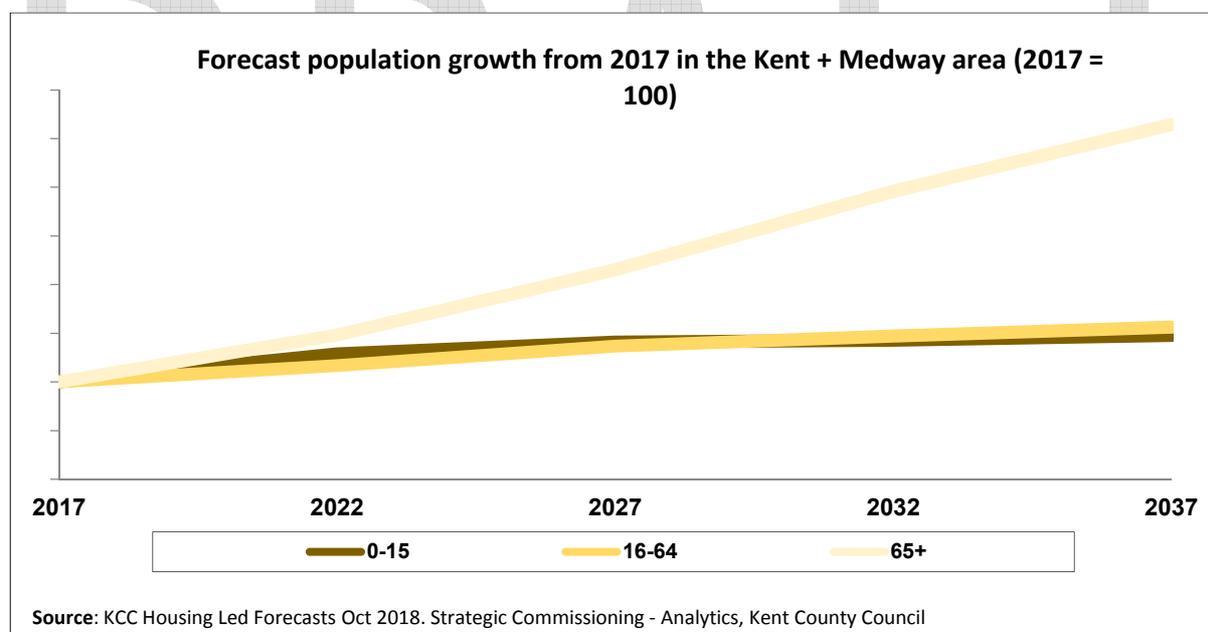
Local Context – A Snap Shot

Place

Kent is a two-tier county with 12 district and borough councils, a unitary authority and county council, and within the county boundary it boasts a land area of 1,358 square miles of land and just over 350 miles of coastline, world heritage sites, numerous conservation areas and areas of outstanding natural beauty along with listed buildings. Up to 85% of the county is classed as rural and over 40% of the businesses in Kent are based in rural areas.

People

The population of Kent and Medway in 2018 was estimated at 1,819,500⁸ the largest population out of all the English counties and by 2031 it is anticipated there will be an additional 396,300⁹ people living in the County. At the end of quarter four 2018-19 there were a total of 33,097 on the housing registers across Kent and Medway. The predicted 23% growth in population to 2031 will undoubtedly place an increased pressure upon the housing sector with regards to the provision of housing and in addition the support services that may be required to help more vulnerable members of our communities manage their homes and lives.



When considering the population of Kent and Medway it is important to recognise that this county has an ageing population, and this is predicted to increase significantly over the coming 25 years, with the number of 65+ year olds estimated to increase by at least 57.5% between 2016 and 2036.

Infographics page with key facts and figures about Kent and Medway relating to strategy to be inserted here for final draft version of the strategy.

⁸ Strategic Commissioning Analytics, Kent County Council

⁹ Kent and Medway GIF - https://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/80145/GIF-Framework-full-document.pdf

How the Kent and Medway Housing Strategy has been developed

In developing this strategy, KHG commissioned The Health and Housing Partnership LLP¹⁰ to undertake a desktop Kent and Medway Housing Market Review. Altair Limited¹¹ were also commissioned to facilitate discussions across the KHG membership and partners to identify the challenges facing the housing sector in Kent and Medway. Evidence and engagement from both commissions led to the identification of four priorities for the Kent and Medway Housing Strategy. In conjunction with the commissioning of external support this strategy is underpinned by evidence and information from a number of other sources. These include both national and local strategies, policies, updated legislation and data sets, again at national and local level.

Development, implementation and monitoring of this strategy is the responsibility of the whole Kent Housing Group membership, however endorsement of the key themes and objectives has been sought and obtained from Kent and Medway Leaders and Chief Executives, along with housing association Board Members.

Our Priorities

As previously stated, the Kent and Medway Housing Strategy identifies and provides clarity about the major strategic challenges facing our county, identifying common areas of concern with pragmatic and smart solutions to manage the challenges for positive outcomes. Locally across Kent and Medway membership organisations have responsibility for the development and delivery of a number of strategies and policies, each responding to their local areas, this strategy has been developed and informed by these strategies, it does not duplicate them but does set out the collective county wide ambitions and priorities.

Supporting the context of the Kent and Medway Housing Strategy will be an action plan for each of the identified themes. These plans along with the themes were identified through the stakeholder workshops and engagement across the membership and partners. These plans include who will be responsible for delivery of the objectives, critical to the success of the strategy.

Our four themes are:

Theme 1 – Accelerating Housing Delivery

Theme 2 – Infrastructure and Investment

Theme 3 – Affordability

Theme 4 – Health & Wellbeing

There are a number of challenges for partners in achieving these priorities. However, our ambition and commitment to deliver against the identified objectives within each priority through innovation and collaboration will overcome these challenges.

¹⁰ <https://www.thhp.co.uk/>

¹¹ <https://altairltd.co.uk/>

Theme 1 – Accelerating Housing Delivery

Our Ambition: To support planned housing delivery across the county

The South East, including the county area of Kent remains an area of high housing demand, coupled with a genuine ambition to build to meet this identified need. The housing crisis facing our county as well as nationally, is as serious as it has ever been, and the economic, social and political landscape remains unstable and unpredictable. However, housing does remain high on the national political agenda and provides a timely opportunity to explore what opportunities this may bring forward. In recent years social housing landlords have faced significant change to national housing policy, including ongoing changes to welfare reform, reduction in the value of grant for new affordable homes, imposed rent reductions, uncertainty about future funding for specialist housing provision and more recently the publication of the Housing and Planning Act 2016, the Housing White Paper, the Social Housing Green Paper and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

Working within this changing environment has placed profound pressure upon the organisations responsible for delivering high quality affordable homes, our local authorities and housing associations. It is therefore crucial, through the development and commitment to the KMHS to maximise the opportunities that partnership working can provide and ensure people in our communities receive the housing and support they need. Both local authorities and housing associations share a common purpose to ensure that the communities they serve can access high quality affordable housing. The KMHS will facilitate and enable effective partnership working and will enable us all to achieve far more.

This strategy responds to the challenge to accelerate housing delivery and managed growth. Building homes is and must be a major priority in Kent and Medway to meet the growing demand and to ensure that the local economy is allowed to reach its full potential in the future. Critical to longevity and sustainable communities that choose to live in our county is the recognised need to attract businesses into the county, businesses that provide the opportunity for jobs and homes for local people. It will require investment in infrastructure as this without question supports and rewards growth. Improvement to the essential infrastructure across Kent and Medway, including roads and transport links will ensure that across the relevant organisations we can effectively accommodate the planned growth and respond to the demand that is anticipated for our county.

Amidst the challenging and evolving housing landscape there is no better time to develop this strategy, to set out our distinctive vision for the future of homes in the county and to outline the steps we are determined to take to achieve it. KHG is ‘the voice of housing in Kent’ and strongly believe that housing is essential infrastructure and is fundamentally about people and communities, not just bricks and mortar. Housing is about homes and creating ‘a place people feel proud to call home’.

Central Government, through the Ministry of Communities, Housing and Local Government (MHCLG) and the new ‘housing accelerator’ Homes England has revised national policy and committed significant funding to enable the speedy delivery of new homes with a national ambitious delivery target of 300,000 homes per year by 2020; which include the use of innovative housing construction; a Community Housing Fund of £163 million; a £125 million Care and Support Specialist Housing Fund to develop new affordable homes that meet the needs of older people and disabled adults by 2020/21; a Move on Fund of £44 million for capital expenditure to provide up to 879 beds for rough sleepers or those living in a refuge or hostel by 2021; an updated Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme with continuous market engagement opportunities for a mix of tenures for schemes to achieve planning consent by March 2021; and the abolition of the HRA Debt Cap.

Local Plans across Kent and Medway at the time of developing this strategy are at differing stages of progression, but ultimately set out expectation for new homes across a range of tenures, translating the objectively assessed need for housing in each of their areas into land provision targets, as legislated in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). As the delivery of housing remains a focus for Government the chapter about housing has been elevated in order within the revised NPPF. Central to the government's policy aim of boosting significantly the supply of housing is the new standardised method of assessing housing need and the introduction of the housing delivery test.

The introduction of the housing delivery test is a move away from the process of getting planning permissions to focussing on outcomes and therefore this test is now part of national policy.

In February 2019, the first annual HDT results for councils were published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

$$\text{Housing Delivery Test (\%)} = \frac{\text{Total net homes delivered over three year period.}}{\text{Total number of homes required over three year period.}}$$

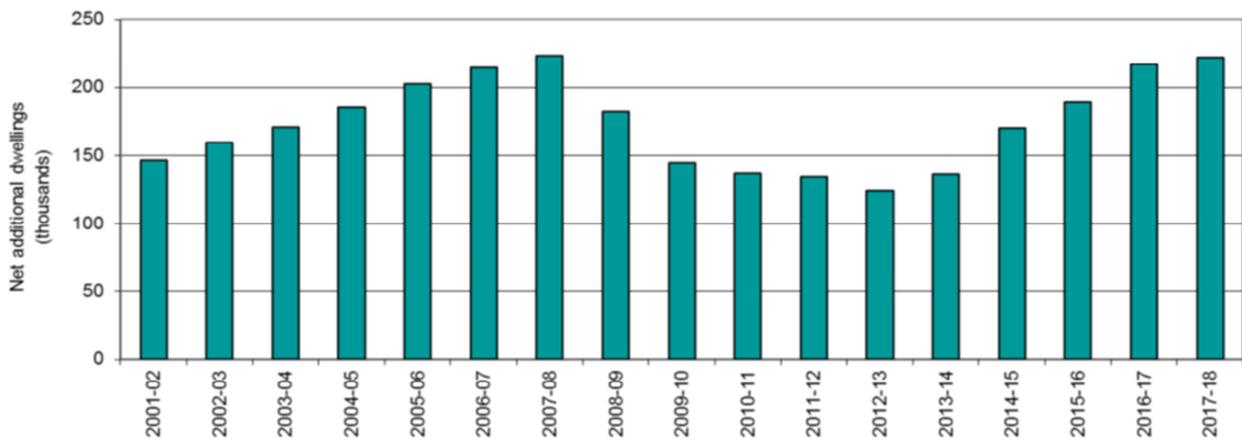
Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) are required to take specific action depending upon their HDT result, these actions persist until subsequent HDT results are published or new housing requirements are adopted.

- § **Pass (95%):** No action required.
- § **Action Plan (>85%):** LPAs are required to prepare an action plan setting out the causes of under delivery and the intended actions to increase this.
- § **20% Land Buffer (>25%):** LPAs are required for an additional 20% to be applied to the supply of deliverable sites.
- § **Presumption in favour of sustainable development (<25%):** proposed developments should be granted planning permission unless the adverse impacts outweigh the benefits.

However, from November 2019, any councils with an HDT score below 45% will fall into 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. By November 2020 this will rise to 75%.

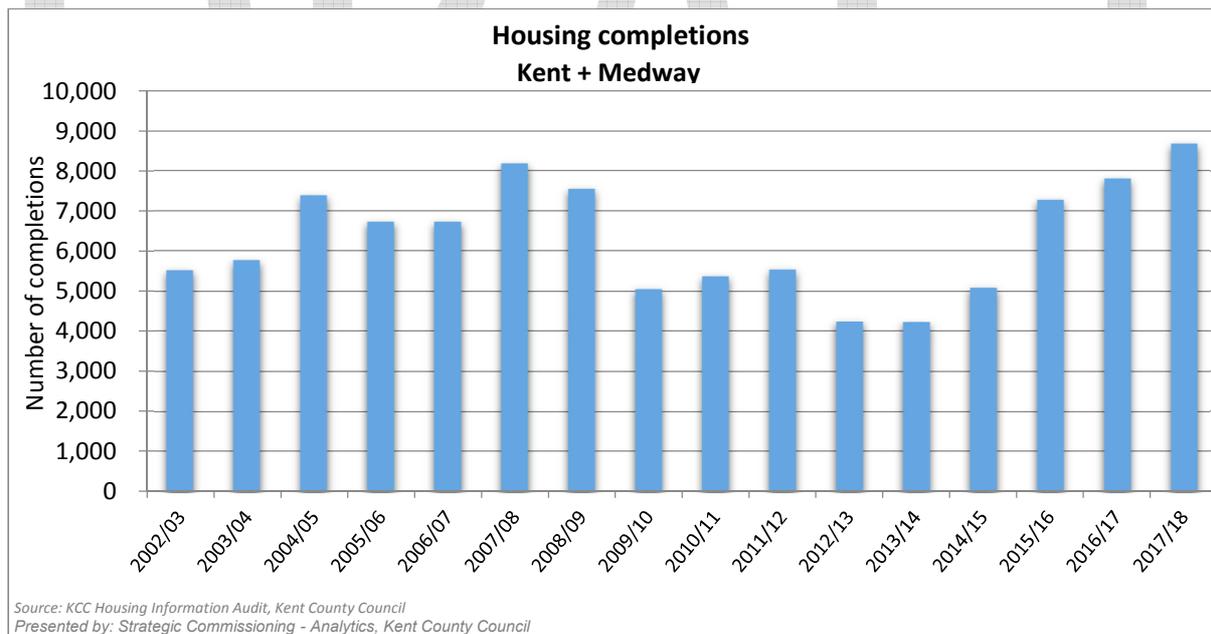
This strategy is committed to enable the acceleration of housing delivery and recognises that over recent years that the demand for housing has far exceeded the delivery rate. The scale and diversity of Kent and Medway provides great opportunities to exploit available resources and expertise within the sector. The scale of delivery of new homes is challenging as is managing local demand and expectation for those who live or wish to live in the communities of Kent and Medway. Through this strategy, the KHG membership and associated partners and stakeholders this is commitment to meet the new and emerging legislative and policy drivers that are set out by Central Government to deliver against their ambitious targets around delivery of new homes.

Nationally, the annual supply of housing across England of 222,190 net additional dwellings increased by 2% in 2017/18 compared to delivery in 2016/17.



(Source, MHCLG, Housing Statistical Release 2018)

At the year-end 31st March 2018 the highest number of new housing completions (net) were delivered in Kent and Medway since 2011, with 8,662 completions, a 2.1% increase over the previous year. This evidence indicates that the build out rate in the county is moving positively in the right direction. However, with an ageing and diverse population of just over 1.8m that is set to increase it is important to recognise and address the need for an acceleration of delivery moving forward, understanding and tackling barriers that may prevent a continued acceleration of delivery, for example unimplemented planning permission, the cost of land and the viability of sites.



At the end of March 2018 across Kent there were a total of 56,203 outstanding housing units with granted planning permission, with a total of 45,656 not yet started on site and 8,087 under construction. In Medway the total number of outstanding units at the 31st March 2018 was 6,528 with 1,201 under construction. Working with the Kent Developers Group and other appropriate partnership organisations Kent Housing Group through this strategy is committed to understand why there are significantly high number of unimplemented planning permissions and stalled units and work to reduce this number and find solutions to prevent further unnecessary barriers to development.

Historically contributing factors to the significant period of decline in house building activity across the county have included a reduction in mortgage lending through more stringent lending criteria,

the ability of housing builders to secure development finance and the impact of previous funding regimes and policy reform that provided uncertainty for developing housing associations to maintain affordable housing delivery.

Independent Review of Build Out Rates

In the autumn of 2017 the Chancellor of the Exchequer commissioned the Rt Hon Sir Oliver Letwin MP to undertake an independent review of build out rates, with the analysis of the review focused on the issue of build out rates of fully permitted new homes on the largest sites in areas of high housing demand. The report provides a number of fundamental explanations for the drivers of slow build out rates and recommendations to Government on how to reduce and close the significant gap between housing completions and the amount of land allocated or permissioned in areas of high housing demand.

Letwin concludes that it is necessary to continue with provision of more new housing, both on smaller sites, and on large sites with more effective and timely coordination between government departments, agencies and private sector operators, including dialogue and intervention regarding transport and utility infrastructure and investment into the skilled labour workforce, the latter of which is of great concern.

As well as urging Ministers to consider more coordinated provision of infrastructure for large brownfield sites aligned with an urgent programme of training and employment for the labour workforce, predominantly a focus on bricklayers, Letwin also concludes that *'if either the major house builders themselves, or others, were to offer much more housing of varying types, designs and tenures (and, indeed, more distinct settings, landscapes and street-scapes) on the large sites and if the resulting variety matched appropriately the desires of the people wanting to live in each particular part of the country, then the overall absorption rates – and hence the overall build out rates – could be substantially accelerated; the outcome at which we should aim...is more variety within those sites'*.

The report also provides recommendations with regards to a new planning framework for large sites, including the role of local authorities to work with developers to promote 'a good mix of sites', this is coupled with how to increase diversity through a new development structure for future large site developments.

This review commissioned by Government provides evidence, recommendations and therefore clear opportunities to speed up the delivery of all types of housing across large and small sites. The recommendations support and are in alignment with our ambition through this strategy to recognise the importance of choice and diversity in local housing markets, place and community, all of which are supported through a robust planning regime and collaborative approach across the public and private sectors. As the changing landscape and investment in housing delivery remains high on the national political agenda we will give further consideration to the recommendations within this review and the potential impact upon delivery of housing across Kent and Medway. Through clear and shared objectives this strategy provides the platform to act proactively and facilitate the accelerated delivery of new homes, of the right type and in the right places.

Small and Medium Sized House Builders

Small and medium-sized house builders have historically played a critical role in the construction of new housing in England. The Homes England Strategic Plan (2018/19 – 2022/23) has committed to driving market resilience and creating a competitive housing market by supporting smaller house builders, through short term development finance, investment in lending partnerships and guarantees upfront financial support to unlock access to land and promotion of good design.

Longer term priorities within the plan also include the exploration of opportunity to remove planning burdens that smaller house builders incur on complex sites and unlocking public and private land through the Small Sites Fund, to deliver up to 27,000 homes.

This commitment and investment by Homes England is welcomed and supported and whilst it is recognised that larger sites bought and owned by larger house builders and developers will be responsible for the delivery of a significant number of homes over the coming years. This strategy endorses, in partnership with the Kent Developers Group, the continued support, promotion and facilitation of dialogue with Government and Homes England to ensure that the role of the SME is remains a high priority at a national and local level to help realise the ambition to accelerate managed housing growth across Kent and Medway. The Kent Developers Group, with support from Kent Housing Group and the Kent Planning Officers Group is committed to ensure that delivery of new homes in our County are delivered at the appropriate pace, are affordable and offer choice through good design to meet the identified local housing needs and local plan requirements.

The Role of Local Authorities in Delivering Homes

The Housing White Paper was a positive signal from Government that local authorities had a role in the delivery of new homes to meet the challenging target of 300,000 new homes by 2020, committing to support those ambitious local authorities who want to explore the opportunity to improve their capacity and capability to delivery high quality homes for those in housing need.

Over recent years Kent Housing Group has advocated at a national level for the introduction of flexibility with regards to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and what this could achieve with respect to enabling delivery of new homes via local authorities. Since 2013 Government has taken steps to provide local authorities with additional headroom and financial capacity to enable housing delivery. In October 2018 the Prime Minister announced the abolition of the HRA Borrowing Cap, signifying a response to the lobbying of Government but also recognition of the role for local authorities; the opportunity to maximise partnerships between local authorities and housing associations, along with the opportunity to boost housing delivery numbers. This county wide strategy clearly recognises the changing role of local authorities with a commitment to facilitate and enable the sharing of good practice so that all local authorities in our county are exploiting the opportunities this shift change in Government policy offers.

In Kent there are thirteen local housing and planning authorities. Eight of these thirteen have retained all or part of their HRA and therefore have an immediate opportunity to respond to local housing need using their new uncapped borrowing capacity.

Case Study

The headlines from the Ashford Borough Council's bid for an increase in debt cap were that they submitted 25 sites, to provide 334 new homes for affordable rent (including houses, bungalows and flats) with funding drawn down by March 2022. The council effectively applied for £61m of headroom in order to put these plans into practice.

To put this ambitious bid into context, the council has built 280 new homes since 2011 – still a major achievement compared with figures across the southeast.

Since the announcement that the cap has been removed, the Council has gained approval from members to put these plans into action and increase of 50% of borrowing linked to Housing. Whilst work commences on the delivery of these schemes a review of the governance arrangements for

approving programs and land acquisitions needs to be undertaken as well as work with Members to establish an appetite for investment in Affordable Housing.

Ambition to deliver managed growth of housing across Kent and Medway should not be limited to those local authorities who retain a HRA. Kent Housing Group will commit through this strategy to support any dialogue between local authorities and MHCLG about the re-opening of an HRA, enabling a level playing field of opportunity to meet the county's housing need.

Right to Buy

The publication of the English Housing Strategy¹² introduced the Government's intention to change the Right to Buy and a key change was that every additional home sold under the Right to Buy would be replaced by a new home for affordable rent, more commonly referred to as '1:2:1 replacement'. Local authorities were also invited to enter into an agreement with Government to limit the use of the net Right to Buy receipts to 30% of the cost of the replacement homes, all replacement dwellings delivered under the Right to Buy 1:2:1 policy have to be provided three years from the date of a sale, which does require planning and foresight to maximise the use of this opportunity. This particular change to the Right to Buy is positive and welcomed as it does provide local authorities with another tool to impact positively upon the number of affordable homes delivered at a local level to meet local housing need.

Case Study

Gravesham's corporate plan for 2015-2019 set out the direction for the Council including its intention to tackle its housing waiting list by providing a range of new build Council homes. During this time, the Council delivered 36 new homes on Council owned sites. These included homes for older people; wheelchair housing and general needs homes.

Maintaining the Council's objective to deliver new homes, we now have a pipeline of housing delivery up to 2022 of around 270 new homes across several Council owned sites.

Our most recent housing scheme completed early in 2019. The site sat to the rear of Packham Road in Northfleet and comprised of 2 rows of lock up garages and an area of informal open space. The garages were mostly in a state of disrepair with many being too small to house a present-day car and were being used for storage or not at all. The area was also subject to anti-social behaviour including fly tipping and the informal open space wasn't being used by surrounding residents.

Through continued dialogue with Planning Officers and our architects, BPTW, a scheme was progressed which would provide 6 x 2 bed houses; 3 x 1 bed bungalows and 1 x 2 bed wheelchair bungalow. Planning permission was subsequently granted in November 2016.

When considering house types and sizes, our aim was to deliver a combination of homes on the site that would help us make best use of our existing housing stock

Whilst we knew that our greatest housing need was for 2 bed homes, we were also aware of many households who were under occupying larger family homes. This information helped us determine the housing mix to include a proportion of 1 bed bungalows, designed with an extra room in the roof area to encourage people to downsize, so allowing that little bit of extra space for a carer or family member to stay over, or to use as a hobby room.

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https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7532/2033676.pdf

Several months prior to completion, we promoted the 1 bed bungalows to tenants who were under occupying family housing and needed this type of accommodation.

Making use of our Holding Hands downsizing incentive scheme, we successfully encouraged existing tenants to downsize into the new bungalows. The bungalows were heavily oversubscribed and for this reason, we are looking to deliver more of this type across the borough whilst continuing to provide a mix of homes to meet the housing need of the borough.



Photo & Artists Impression – Alders Court Bungalows, Gravesham

New Homes Bonus

The New Homes Bonus is a payment made by Government to local authorities to reward and incentivise housing growth in their areas. It is based upon the amount of extra Council Tax Revenue raised for new build homes, conversions and long-term empty homes brought back to use. Payment of the bonus is the equivalent of the average council tax generated per new home for six years, with an additional premium of £350 per new affordable home delivered. Since its introduction by the coalition Government in 2011 close to £7 billion has been allocated through the scheme. The total funding across Kent and Medway for 2018-19 was £27,097,093 a decline on allocations for previous years across the County, as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. New Homes Bonus Allocation, Kent and Medway

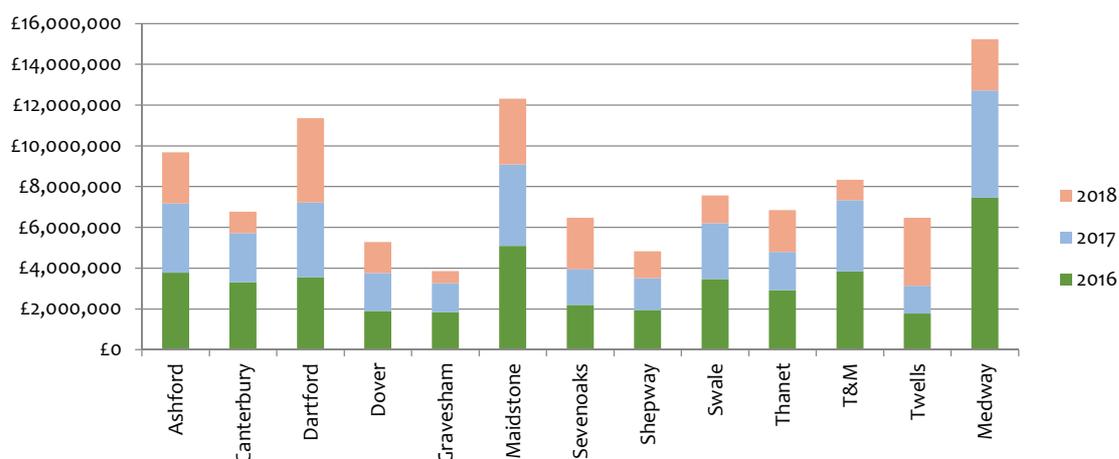
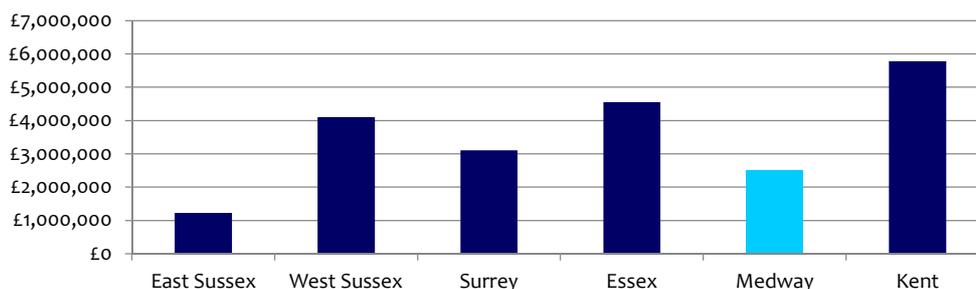


Table 2 provides a comparison of allocation of New Homes Bonus to neighbouring counties, again for 2018-19.

Table 2. New Homes Bonus Comparison Data



New Homes Bonus is not a ring-fenced fund and therefore local authorities will continue have discretions on the use of the money based upon local budget priorities.

The Role of Housing Associations

Over a significant period of time housing associations have been key to the delivery of homes, across all tenures. In recent years and in response to changes to Government policy and funding there has been a step change in how housing associations have structured and developed their business plans and financial models with a focus on being more commercial to ultimately sustain their existence and make an impact within the housing sector. Housing associations are now developing more homes for sale on the open market, this is to enable them to cross subsidise the cost of delivering affordable homes, due to the limited or less substantial grant available from Government.

However, despite a commitment to work with aspiring local authorities Government through Homes England also remain committed to working with housing associations to enable timely delivery of new homes. Since 2018 a total funding package of £1.7 million has been allocated by Government to support the introduction of Strategic Partnerships, with a current total of 23 strategic partners who are committed to deliver in the region of 40,000 affordable homes by March 2022. The introduction of Strategic Partnerships signifies a new way of working between Homes England and its partners, which includes the adoption of a mission-based approach to delivery and plans to explore how to adopt this approach across Homes England’s land, funding and powers can further generate additional supply. Five¹³ of the current Strategic Partners working with Homes England have stock in our county and are members of the Kent Housing Group.

At the time of developing this strategy the National Housing Federation has commenced the Supply Conversation¹⁴, the aim of which is to get a clearer and fuller picture of the level and breadth of development activity of housing associations. Data is being collected at quarterly intervals and is then being used to identify and understand barriers to building more homes and consider what can be done differently.

This new approach to investment and support for organisations to accelerate delivery of new affordable homes is welcomed and through this strategy there remains a commitment to work with Government through Homes England to continue to explore new approaches of investment for all housing associations, not limited to Strategic Partners, to meet the demand to deliver against ambitious targets.

¹³ Home Group, Hyde, Optivo, Southern Housing Group, Town and Country Housing,

¹⁴ <https://www.housing.org.uk/topics/new-homes/delivering-our-supply-ambition/>

Modern Methods of Construction (MMC)

It is widely recognised that the housebuilding construction industry is facing challenges in respect of workforce, skills, materials and overall productivity, all of which is impacting upon the capacity to deliver both homes and infrastructure. Although the MMC industry is an emerging one and therefore dependent up on demand, capacity and supply chains to ensure it evolves further; this strategy recognises the need to explore the potential benefits and outcomes with a move beyond conventional methods of housing delivery, which for many years have not delivered the required level of housing.

Homes England, within their current Strategic Plan commit to ‘support the uptake and development of MMC through a range of interventions’. This is not just limited to development being undertaken by housing associations or Homes England Strategic Partners but also commitment through the Local Authority Accelerated Construction Programme to ‘encourage more widespread use of MMC to help increase the speed of construction and build out’.

Working across partnerships and sectors in Kent and Medway, there is an ambition to research and explore how MMC, coupled with traditional methods of construction, could accelerate housing delivery across the county, with a commitment to understand and realise the potential local authority and housing association pipeline of delivery to support this ambition fully.

Rural Housing in Kent and Medway

With 85% of the county classed as rural, Kent and Medway has one of the largest rural populations in any county of England, as identified in the previous edition of this strategy. Up to 85% of the county is now classed as rural and over 40% of the county’s business is still based in rural areas.

Over the life time of two previous county wide strategies the focus to deliver affordable rural housing across the county has remained high. As indicated in the previous housing strategy people who live in the rural parts of the county are less able to afford accommodation from the open market due to the fact that the average rural house price remains substantially higher than the average urban house price. With access to affordable local needs housing or private rented accommodation within the rural areas remaining limited, the ability to meet local housing need is impacted. Kent Housing Group, in partnership with a range of organisations has developed and proactively reviewed the Rural Housing Protocol, which was recently updated and rebranded ‘A Guide to Developing Affordable Homes in Rural Communities’ to deliver against the vision that *‘the provision of affordable housing in rural areas is vital to ensure that rural communities continue to thrive and prosper and provide opportunities for young people to remain in the community in which they grew up and may have many connections to’*.

The guide produced by the Kent Housing Group addresses the common barriers associated with development of affordable housing in rural areas, including lack of suitable land or a reluctance by landowners to release sites, financial resource and local opposition. The aim of the guide is to:

- Ensure continued delivery of high quality affordable rural housing
- Support and enable Kent’s rural economy through sustainable growth in rural areas
- Raise awareness and understanding amongst rural communities about how to enable housing for local people in rural areas
- Develop consistent, proportional and efficient approaches to the delivery of affordable rural housing
- Share good practice and develop innovative ways to enable continued development
- Support and encourage local authorities to have robust rural housing and planning policies

In addition to the Community Right to Build and Neighbourhood Planning Government has committed to funding of £163 million across England up to 2020 through the Community Housing Fund. The aim of this funding is to support an increase in housing supply in England by increasing the number of additional homes delivered by the community-led housing sector. It will also aim to provide housing that is affordable at local income levels and remains so in perpetuity; delivering a lasting legacy for the community-led housing sector in the form of an effective and financially self-sustaining body of expertise within the house building industry in England.

Across Kent and Medway there is a strong and successful partnership between local authorities, housing associations, local Parish Councils and Action with Communities Rural Kent (ACRK) who are the housing enabler across the county. ACRK is a charity that has been working with and has been led by people in rural communities for more than 90 years. In addition to working to undertake rural needs housing surveys, they also provide direct advice and support to community organisations; provide direct advice and support to community organisations; stimulate community action in particularly voluntary action and encourage good practice; develop and manage demonstration projects; provide professional support and advice to key service providers and raise awareness of rural issues and influence decision makers.

Between April 2014 and April 2019 ACRK have gathered evidence and identified that across 64 communities in the county, there is a need for an additional 825 homes, this would average 13 homes in each of the rural communities. To date there has been approximately 97 local needs schemes delivered across Kent and Medway.

Case Study – Throwley Park Local Needs Scheme¹⁵

Through the Governments Community Housing Fund eight of the local authorities in Kent and Medway have received funding.

District/Borough Council	Funding Allocation
Canterbury City Council	£442,394
Dover District Council	£508,829
Folkestone & Hythe District Council	£437,361
Sevenoaks District Council	£51,839
Swale Borough Council	£341,232
Thanet District Council	£598,919
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	£23,655
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council	£66,938

Design

The tragic events of the Grenfell Tower fire in June 2017 signalled a major turning point for local authorities and housing associations, with medium to high rise residential tower block accommodation being reviewed for fire safety, including testing of cladding materials used on such buildings. It is therefore imperative we ensure that whilst there is a clear and evidenced need for more homes what is designed and developed today and in the future is safe.

The speed and method of delivery for new homes should not have a negative impact upon the overall quality and design. As stated within the previous edition of this strategy homes should be built with good design principles in mind and be attractive, functional and enduring. Working closely in partnership with developers and planning colleagues there remains a commitment to ensure that

¹⁵ Appendix Two

new homes are fit for purpose but are flexible in design to meet the changing needs of an ageing population, with consideration of new future proofed technologies in building design and construction to improve the performance and sustainability of homes. This is particularly relevant and necessary for homes developed in rural areas where there are likely to be barriers to investment or upgrades to infrastructure. The revised NPPF (2018) has a focus on ensuring high quality design in the planning process and that local authorities are using appropriate tools for assessment of design, all with a view to deliver high quality homes and schemes. In support of this focus and through this strategy there remains a commitment to high quality design for housing across all tenures, including specialist housing, through the development and adoption of policies and tools regarding design quality.

Case Study – Farrow Court Design Principles, PRP Architects¹⁶

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a planning charge and was introduced by the Planning Act 2008, to be used as a tool for local authorities in England and Wales with the aim to help deliver new infrastructure to support the development of their area. It came into force on 6 April 2010 through the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010. Currently the local authorities who have adopted CIL are Dartford Borough Council, Folkestone and Hythe District Council, Maidstone Borough Council and Sevenoaks District Council. For the County Council the priorities for CIL include schools, transport and the needs of older people.

¹⁶ Appendix Three

Theme 2 – Infrastructure and Investment

Our Ambition: The delivery of key infrastructure and investment into the county that will support planning housing delivery across the county

Housing cannot be developed in isolation and critical to developing sustainable communities that thrive and attract investment and interest is the necessary timely and range of key infrastructure components. Despite Kent and Medway authorities achieving high rates of housing delivery over recent years this has not been matched by the investment in infrastructure. A key ambition within this strategy is to recognise the role of housing as essential infrastructure and investment in the overall 'place making' agenda. The link between achieving sustainable growth ambitions and provision of infrastructure will result in the creation of sustainable communities, which will all be dependent upon commitment and joint working to ensure that all communities have access to vital infrastructure investment, such as schools, health care, roads and community facilities.

The Kent and Medway Housing Strategy compliments and is aligned to Kent and Medway Growth and Infrastructure Framework (GIF)¹⁷, a document that provides the framework and policy context within which infrastructure can support new housing development to take place. It provides the evidence base and therefore the platform to help attract future and sustained investment into the county and most importantly recognises that infrastructure is key to unlocking the growth potential and ambition across the county, not just with regards to meeting housing need but also for the overall economy.

In addition to working towards the common aim to reduce the identified infrastructure funding gap of £16.4 billion this strategy aims to address the practical infrastructure issues associated with housing delivery; for example the relationship and role of utility companies on new and existing sites, construction in relation to products and resource capacity and the procurement of contracts associated with development, all of which impact and become a barrier to sustained and managed delivery of homes and overall growth.

The South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP)¹⁸ published their Economic Strategy Statement 'Smarter, Faster, Together' in spring 2019¹⁹, setting out their ambitions for the south east economy which includes 'tackling housing shortages, relieving pressure on infrastructure and improving work skills across our workforce'.

Kent and Medway is one of the four federated economic areas within the SELEP, with this LEP being the largest outside of London with regards to population and economic output. This Economic Strategy Statement coupled with the strong evidence base and objectives identified within the GIF has set a pathway to ensure that investment and infrastructure in the county is timely and will support the ambition within this county wide strategy to create and support sustainable communities. Although this strategy is strongly focused on the strategic direction for housing across Kent and Medway it is widely recognised and accepted that housing delivery is more than investment into bricks and mortar, aligned to delivery of new homes or regeneration of existing stock is economic growth and the commitment to ensure that communities in our county are attractive places to live and work.

The Kent and Medway GIF outlines clear and concise messages to Government regarding infrastructure and investment, including the forward funding of strategic infrastructure, appropriate

¹⁷ <https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/environment-waste-and-planning-policies/growth-and-infrastructure-framework-gif>

¹⁸ <https://www.southeastlep.com/>

¹⁹ <https://www.southeastlep.com/SmarterFasterTogether>

costed and easier access to funding streams and constructive engagement with utility companies. Within Kent and Medway there is already committed engagement across housing planning and development colleagues with the utility companies to remove this unnecessary and costly barrier to delivery of homes. There is also a renewed commitment through this strategy to future proof the investment of infrastructure in the county building in resilience and flexibility so that the required infrastructure needed to unlock or enable delivery of homes remains fit for purpose, meeting needs now as well as moving forward.

The Kent and Medway Housing Strategy provides the platform to facilitate our narrative at both a local and national level across relevant sectors who have a vested interest in the delivery of homes. The evolving role of MHCLG and Homes England, both with a renewed focus and commitment to housing delivery offers the timely opportunity to shape how agencies work together and jointly enable delivery of homes to meet local housing need.

Housing Infrastructure Fund

Then Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government Sajid Javid MP announced funding investment of up to £2.3 million via the Housing Infrastructure Fund²⁰ in July 2017, with the aim to use this funding to ensure the right infrastructure is in place at the right time to help unlock delivery of new high-quality homes. The purpose of the Housing Infrastructure Fund is to -

- Deliver new physical **Infrastructure** to support new and existing communities;
- Make **more land** available for housing in high demand areas, resulting in **new additional homes** that otherwise would not have been built'
- Support **ambitious local authorities** who want to step up their plans for growth and make meaningful difference to overall housing supply;
- Enable local authorities to recycle the funding for other infrastructure projects, **achieving more** and delivering new homes in the future;

The Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) aims to support the preparation of a Local Plan by unlocking land which would otherwise be unavailable for development due to a lack of transport and environmental infrastructure. The HIF Forward Funding stream will provide upfront funding for strategic, high-impact infrastructure schemes that create market confidence, address environmental and transport constraints, and instigate further private and public sector funding.

In March 2019 a business case was submitted by Kent County Council and Swale Borough Council seeking a circa £38m capital grant from the Housing Infrastructure Fund to deliver major highway improvements at two junctions on the A249; Key Street and Grovehurst Road. Both junctions currently act as a constraint on housing growth beyond 2022 and delivery of the improvement schemes would release the construction of circa 3,600 planned new homes in the Swale Borough.

New Roots to Good Growth: Medway Council's £170 million HIF proposal is intended to mitigate the impact of 12,100 new homes by 2043 on the Hoo Peninsula, an area identified as a strategic location for growth in the emerging Local Plan. The transport elements comprise improvements to six existing roundabouts, a new relief road with a new access on to the A289 and the reintroduction of rail passenger services on the Grain branch. The Strategic Environmental Management Scheme will mitigate a range indirect impacts on surrounding sensitive landscapes. The Housing Infrastructure Funding announcement is anticipated at the time of the 2019 Autumn Budget.

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https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/625528/DCLG_Introduction_to_Housing_Infrastructure_WEB.pdf

Garden Communities

Garden communities are large scale developments that will create well planned and sustainable places for people to live and are part of the Government's commitment to deliver 300,000 new homes each year up to March 2020, offering opportunities for significant long-term housing and economic growth in a local area. Successful bids will have to demonstrate how the new garden community will fit with the housing need for the housing market area, including expected future population growth, critical elements to ensure sustainable communities are at the heart delivery.

In June 2019 the Secretary of State announced funding of £2.85 million for 19 new Garden Communities, which included bids by local authorities in Kent and Medway. A bid submitted to Government by Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council has received support from Government and is one of the 19 Garden Villages announced as part of the Garden Communities Programme. The £150,000 provided to help fund Borough Green Gardens will help facilitate delivery of high-quality housing, with phase one likely to commence in 2022/23 with completion of 1,720 properties by 2031. In addition to new homes the Borough Green Gardens, with support from Homes England will provide opportunities for employment, education and healthcare. This new garden settlement will also enable development of a relief road for Borough Green that will result in a number of positive outcomes that include improved traffic outcomes, pedestrian safety, air quality and more general environmental conditions for the existing community and area of Borough Green.

Ashford Borough Council were also successful in obtaining funding through this national government house building initiative and also received £150,000 financial support to enable delivery of a cluster of major developments across the borough. The South of Ashford Garden Community includes three developments, Chilmington, Court Lodge and Kingsnorth Green, with Chilmington under development and both Court Lodge and Kingsnorth Green allocated for development in the Local Plan to 2030. Chilmington is the largest of the cluster developments and will deliver 5,750 homes and it is anticipated that it will create over 1,000 jobs, alongside provision of five schools and 50% open space. The other two sites will deliver a total of 1,500 homes, a school and essential infrastructure and quality is at the forefront of development across all three of the sites within the Garden Community cluster.

Case Study – Otterpool Park, Folkestone and Hythe DC²¹

A New Working Relationship with Government for Kent and Medway

In 2018 Government committed to work with local authority areas to pursue a comprehensive approach to growth, working in partnership with both Homes England and local authorities to explore what opportunities would be available through significant investment, with outcomes that include unlocking new developments and transport infrastructure. Kent and Medway have previously been quoted as 'open for business' and this remains so with the desire and commitment to explore the potential to work with Government through a housing and growth deal that will benefit the whole county.

A Kent and Medway 'deal' with Government and Homes England would ensure provision of the public services, transport infrastructure, jobs and homes that our county's residents identify that they need both now and in the future. Working in this innovative way with Government will enable the delivery of well balanced and planned residential and commercial growth, bringing new connectivity and opportunities for local people, including the most vulnerable members living in our

²¹ Appendix Four

local communities. The success of any 'deal' agreed for Kent and Medway will be as a result of collective ambition and developed through an evidenced based process.

Therefore, building upon existing knowledge and evidence bases, developing further understanding of what infrastructure investment is required at a local level and through securing this investment by working innovatively with Government and other partners will enable growth across the housing, employment and economic sectors of Kent and Medway. The infrastructure challenge that we face across this county requires a collective response from across the housing sector, development industry, our communities and national Government.

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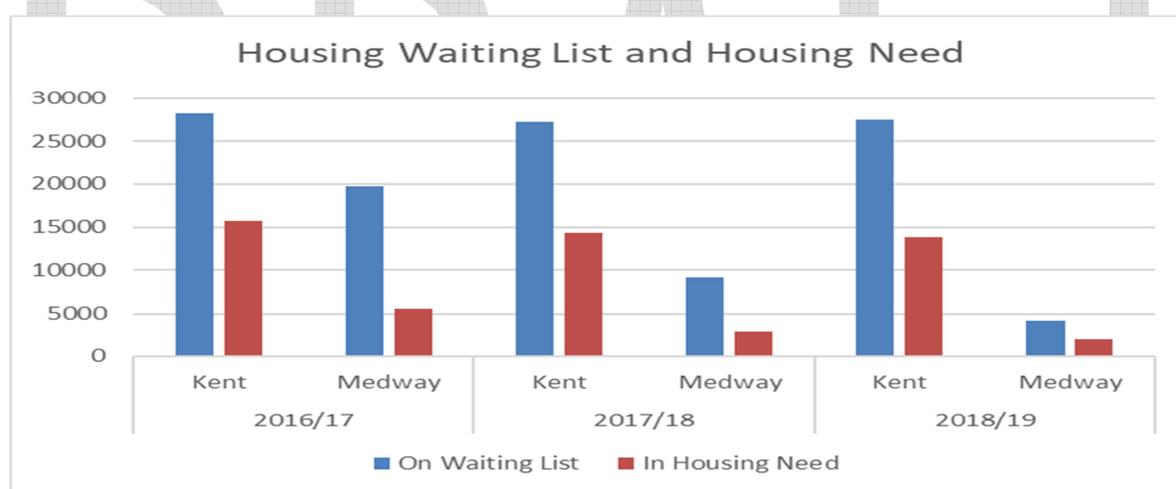
Theme 3 – Affordability

Our Ambition: Supporting provision of affordable housing across all tenures for Kent and Medway, meeting needs and aspirations

A key aim and objective of this county wide strategy is to maximise and support people within our local communities to realise independence and choice when it comes to their housing aspirations and this includes the most vulnerable members of our communities. This requires a commitment at local and national level to deliver housing across a range of tenures to meet the diverse range of housing needs that are identified, offering a pragmatic response to the need for provision of an inclusive housing offer that is affordable and attractive.

Housing Need

In April 2019 a total of 33,097 people were on the housing registers across Kent and Medway with 15,353 of this total in housing need. Since the introduction of the Localism Act local authorities across the county have reviewed their allocation policies as this legislation provided them with the power to determine which applicants qualify for an allocation of social housing. In addition to this and more recently there is the combination of local authorities undertaking pre-assessment of housing applications and actively undertaking reviews across housing registers.



Source. Kent Homechoice

Similar to other areas across the country Kent and Medway operate a choice-based lettings system, Kent Homechoice²², allowing those who are registered with the scheme to bid against properties that they are eligible for and interested in. Kent Homechoice is the partnership of all 12 Local Authorities, Medway Council and housing associations that provide social and affordable housing in Kent and Medway. This scheme offers proactive targeted support for those who are registered or seeking advice about housing options across Kent and Medway. Kent Homechoice alongside local allocation policies are continuously reviewed to meet legislative commitments and to ensure that those with the greatest housing need are supported to find the appropriate housing solutions.

The Housing Market Review undertaken in February 2018²³ identified that historically high levels of housing need were linked to the limited supply of social rented accommodation but that over time and more recently there has been significant delivery of new affordable homes, with 1,392 affordable homes delivered between the period April 2017 to March 2018 (Table 3). In both Kent and England over half of the affordable housing dwellings completed were affordable rent dwellings.

²² <https://www.kenthomechoice.org.uk/choice/default.aspx>

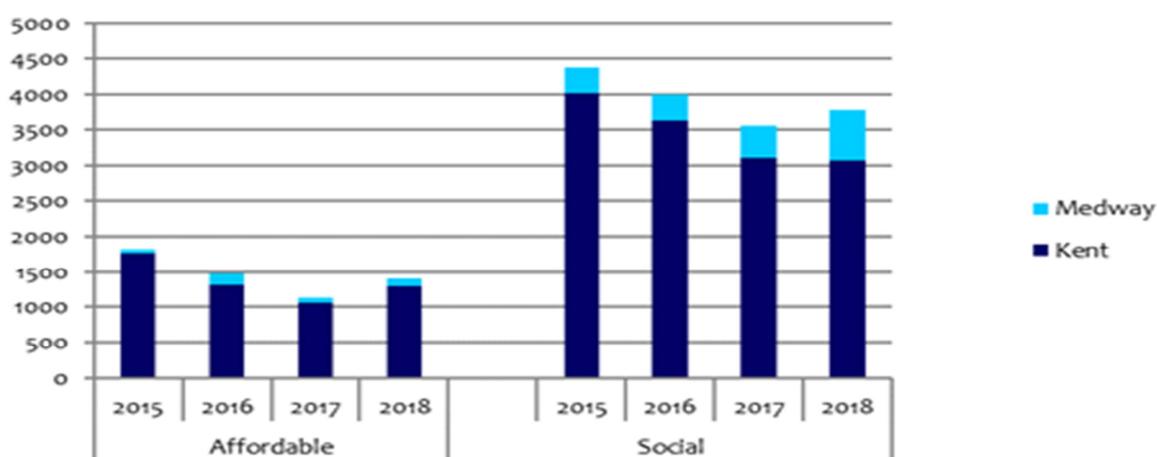
²³ Appendix Five

Table 3. Additional Affordable Dwellings (2017-18)

2017/18 Provisional	Net Additional Dwellings	Total Additional Affordable Dwellings (Provisional)	
		Number	%
England	222,194	47,355	21.3%
Kent	8,033	1,280	15.9%
Medway	685	112	16.4%
Ashford	591	166	28.1%
Canterbury	1,139	111	9.7%
Dartford	1,031	171	16.6%
Dover	446	99	22.2%
Folkestone & Hythe	445	60	13.5%
Gravesham	274	85	31.0%
Maidstone	1,286	302	23.5%
Sevenoaks	388	0	0.0%
Swale	585	70	12.0%
Thanet	238	47	19.7%
Tonbridge & Malling	1,166	116	9.9%
Tunbridge Wells	444	53	11.9%

Source MHCLG Live Table L22 (Provisional)

The chart below highlights the number of affordable and social rented tenancies granted over the period 2015 – 2018.



Source – Kent Homechoice / Locata

A household's income level coupled with the overall supply of housing will impact upon a person's choice about where they live, and the accommodation type available to them. There are variations across the county with regards to household income with the average weekly full-time earnings (median) across the county at £542.00; this is below the South East earnings of £589.20 and national earnings of £570.90, with the lowest work place earnings in Thanet at £464.50. The average property price in Kent during 2018 was £339,689, higher than the national average of £297,220 but lower than the average in the South East of £379,717. House prices for Kent and Medway have risen by 5% compared to last year, however, property sales across the county have dropped slightly, with only one district, Dartford to see property sales increase in 2018 in comparison to 2017.

It is clear that both nationally (Figure 1) and locally to Kent and Medway that household income has not kept at the pace of the increase in house prices and this has a significant impact upon the choice and affordability for those who are in housing need.

Figure 1: House prices increased more relative to earnings in Wales than in England



Source: Office for National Statistics - House Price Statistics for Small Areas, Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings

Housing costs with regards to the cost of the rental market across Kent and Medway again vary by district, as indicated below in Table 4.

Table 4. Example Rent Costs for Housing Markets

	Average Weekly Rent		
	Dartford	Thanet	England
Local Authority Properties (2017-18)	£94.17	£81.73	£86.71
	Average Weekly Rent		
	Tonbridge & Malling	Dover	England
Registered Provider Properties (2017-18)	£114.73	£90.32	£86.71
	Average Weekly Rent		England
	Kent		
Private Rented Sector Properties (Year end 2018)	£831.00		£844.00

Source – Strategic Commissioning Analytics, Kent County Council

It is evident that across Kent and Medway that a consequence of increasing housing prices and housing costs, the ability to access housing through homeownership and the rental market is becoming more limited. This strategy will therefore facilitate the opportunities to ensure that there is delivery of affordable homes across a range of tenures, through appropriately identified and essential interventions to meet housing needs and to create places and communities that people want to call home and have a long-term investment in.

Access to Homeownership

The housing market and economic climate of recent years has impacted negatively on the ability of many people to access homeownership. For a significant time, mortgage lenders have tightened the criteria for approvals and this has resulted in the requirement of large deposits to secure mortgages, coupled with more expensive mortgage products, despite the low interest rates that have been in place for a number of years. Research that supports this strategy identifies that the average age of a

first-time buyer is 36, this is for those who are not accessing home ownership with support from parents 'the bank of mum and dad'.

The Housing White Paper 'Fixing our Broken Housing Market' published in February 2017 outlined the commitment from Government to support and expand opportunities for those with an aspiration of homeownership, through helping people to save for a deposit, buy with a smaller deposit, buy at 20% below the market price, buy the home they are renting from a social landlord, buy a share of a home or save a deposit while paying a below market rent. Following the Housing White Paper in the autumn of 2017 Government, as part of the Autumn Budget announcement headlined investment of an additional £10 billion for the Help to Buy Equity Loan Scheme (formerly HomeBuy) and a new stamp duty relief for first-time buyers. More recently Government have committed to delivery of Starter Homes, targeted at younger people and first-time buyers who would otherwise be priced out of the market.

Across Kent and Medway local authorities successfully implemented a county-wide Local Authority Mortgage Scheme (LAMS) to assist first time buyers, working in a similar way to Government schemes with the requirement of a low 5% deposit and 20% being underwritten by the local authority. This scheme was successful across 3 authorities and enabling close to 100 households to buy their first home, with mortgage lending almost at £15 million.

The Kent and Medway Housing Strategy now clearly identifies a requirement and commitment to deliver affordable housing across a range of tenures, in both urban and rural areas, and importantly that homeownership opportunities should not remain limited to new build accommodation. Therefore, working in partnership with relevant organisations, utilising access to national financial support and capacity, and building upon the success of our previous strategy we will ensure further exploration and support for people to access both new and existing homes across the local housing markets of the county.

The Role of the Private Rented Sector

Over the lifetime of the last Kent and Medway Housing Strategy the role of the private rented sector has continued to evolve, and it has seen substantial growth. At 31st March 2018 the total number of dwellings in the private sector was 688,480, which equates to 87.5% of the total stock in Kent and Medway, just higher than the figure for England which is 82.7%. The importance of this sector is not only limited to offering choice for those who are unable or choose not to access home ownership opportunities but is now a necessary and vital resource for local authorities to achieve their homelessness prevention objectives. Provisions within the Localism Act to allow local authorities to discharge their homelessness duty through offering suitable accommodation to those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness in the private rented sector.

Recognition of the growth in both size and importance of this sector must be supported through investment and partnership through a range of partners to develop and maintain a high standard of housing. Across Kent and Medway there are examples of best practice and developing relationships with private landlords that enables proactive engagement and better outcomes for both those renting the accommodation and the landlords who own the stock. This strategy provides the platform to promote and enable a high standard of housing across the whole private rented sector in Kent and Medway through sharing exemplar policy and practice and through exploration of the impact of investment into the sector.

It is well evidenced that poor quality housing, often associated with the private rented market, has a detrimental impact on health and wellbeing, therefore tackling poor housing condition through investment and support of landlords will improve the wellbeing of those residing in the stock but

also improve the overall condition of the stock. Housing condition and performance also impact upon overall housing costs and therefore affordability.

In April 2017 with the start of the 2017-18 tax year the new buy-to-let tax system phased implementation commenced with the new rules to be fully in place by 2020. By 2020 landlords will no longer be able to deduct any of their mortgage interest payment from their rental income before paying tax, under the new rules the entire sum of their interest payment will then qualify for a 20% tax relief. It will be important to ensure that through communication with our private sector landlords and their respective representative bodies, such as the National Landlords Association²⁴ that as a county we collectively keep a watching brief on the impact these changes may amount to for our local private sector housing markets. Of significant concern is that landlords will choose to sell their rental properties, which then depletes the access to this essential and required tenure of housing for Kent and Medway.

In conjunction with the potential impact of the new tax relief system Government, have commenced a consultation about the abolition of section 21 notice, with the intention of removing the 'no fault evictions' and provide greater security of tenure for those who are living in private rented accommodation. The current consultation is running over a twelve week period and ends in mid-October, when responses and next steps will be shared from Government. Once more, it will be necessary to remain abreast of all relevant legislation and policy decisions at national level to not only inform decision making at a local level but to mitigate any potential negative impacts upon the private rented sector. With a clear understanding of what the critical role of the private rented sector, this strategy is supportive of appropriate interventions that will assist with the positive and sustained growth of the sector.

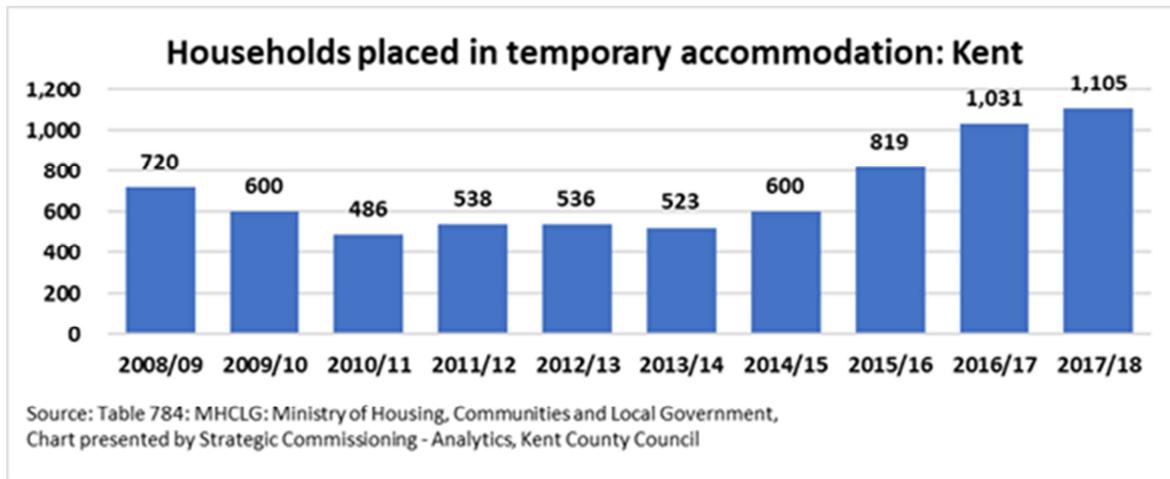
Homelessness

Each local authority across Kent and Medway is responsible for the production of a homelessness strategy, which this county wide strategy compliments and supports. As outlined within the National Context the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 was implemented from the 3rd April 2018 placing expanded duties on local housing authorities to intervene at earlier stages to prevent homelessness, it also saw the introduction of a new duty to relieve homelessness, regardless of whether a person has a priority need for accommodation or is intentionally homeless. The Duty to Refer commenced from 3rd April 2018, however public authorities were not obliged to make referrals until 1st October 2018 and onwards. All local authorities must have published updated homelessness and rough sleeper strategies that reflect all the new legislation by the end of 2019.

Homelessness is a huge cost to society, and especially for local authorities who have the statutory duty for homelessness, including the cost to provide support and advice along with finding and funding accommodation. This new legislation has forced local authorities to consider a different approach to homelessness and signifies a shift change to provide a wider range of support pathways that bring together organisations from both the public and voluntary sectors.

One of the most costly elements for local authorities with regards to homelessness is the placing of households into temporary accommodation, which is used by local authorities when a settled housing solution is not immediately available, over the last decade the number of placed in temporary accommodation has continued to increase. Below is an overview of households placed in temporary accommodation over the last decade, with a significant increase in placements over since 2014.

²⁴ <https://landlords.org.uk/>



Temporary accommodation is not only costly it is also not a desirable outcome for a homeless family, sourcing temporary accommodation for local authorities may result in placement out of area, which may impact negatively on the overall health and wellbeing of a household due to the lack of a local support network or access to local support services. This strategy is supportive of all partners with a vested interest in the positive outcomes for homeless households exploring opportunities to alternative solutions to the use or type of temporary accommodation, moving away from costly bed and breakfast or hostel accommodation to more affordable and appropriate accommodation solutions.

There are many factors that impact and place additional burdens upon the homelessness services across the county, these include national Government reforms such as Welfare Reform, the introduction and transition to Universal Credit, the economic crisis, low wage inflation, unemployment and increasing living costs. These are all in addition to a variety of causes of homelessness such as rent arrears, anti-social behaviour, the termination of tenancies within the private rented sector and poor physical and mental health, although the latter is not always identified as a trigger of homelessness. Homeless households can have a complex set of needs and managing and finding solutions to these require investment both financially and also in respect of resources.

Case Study - Dartford Hub Model as case study²⁵ – Marie Gerald to provide

Across the country and with financial support from Government there have been pilot projects to explore the benefits and outcomes from the Housing First model, learning from these pilots and exploration of how these could benefit a variety of client groups with complex housing needs across Kent and Medway is a critical objective from this strategy. The principles of the Housing First model are to provide a 'wrap around' support service for the individual or household in their home, it is therefore a support-based service focused around the person and not where the service user resides. Our action plan linked to this strategy confirms the objective to explore this model and approach in partnership with relevant organisations.

Funding from Government to support the introduction of Homelessness legislation is through a variety of funding streams that include New Burdens funding, Rough Sleeper Initiative funding, Rapid Rehousing Pathway funding, Private Rented Sector Access Fund and Flexible Homeless Support Grant. In August 2018 Government launched its Rough Sleeping Strategy which set out their vision to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and end it by 2027. This strategy was complimented by plans to support and provide funding opportunities for the 83 areas nationally with the highest numbers of

²⁵ Appendix Six

people at risk over the following two years, an additional £34 million funding. Five local authorities in Kent and Medway successfully bid and were allocated a total of £1,881,896, Table 5 provides more details about individual allocations.

Table 5. RSI Funding Allocation Kent and Medway

Local Authority	Funding Allocation
Canterbury City Council	£331,784
Maidstone Borough Council	£369, 225
Medway Council	£486,117
Thanet District Council	£483,700
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council	£211,000

Case Study – Medway Council Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) Funding – Medway to Update

Medway Council received £420,416 of RSI funding for 2018/19, their target is to relieve (or prevent from going on to the streets) 87 rough sleepers/potential rough sleepers. Since July 2018 the following services have been operating in Medway:

- A Rough Sleeper Coordinator
- Personal Budgets to be allocated by the RSI Coordinator
- Housing First Service
- Rough Sleeper Assessment & Accommodation Service
- Private Rented Sector Brokerage Worker
- Guaranteed Rents for Private Rented Sector
- Extended Temporary Accommodation Pilot
- Funding of a Mental Health Practitioner to enhance all rough sleeper services

Over the period of July 2017 to the end of October 2018 Medway have successfully relieved 37 rough sleepers & reconnected 12 rough sleepers to the local authority where they have a local connection.

All the afore mentioned funding pots vary in size and are subject to bidding, Kent and Medway have a successful history of developing joint bidding and levering in much needed funding into the County, as outlined in the RSI Case Study. It is vitally important that collectively and through the Kent Housing Group and with support and commitment of this strategy's action plans there is dialogue with Government to influence and lobby regarding the future funding streams that will determine what innovative approaches being undertaken locally can continue.

Following the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act there is a reporting requirement upon each local authority to report case level data, providing more detailed information on the causes and effects of homelessness, long term outcomes and what works to prevent it. This new reporting system is the Homelessness Case Level Information Classification (H-CLIC).

Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government has confirmed that the first year of data collected and published from H-CLIC will be experimental. The experimental data at the end of the first three quarters of the first year of implementation of the new Act (April 2018 – January 2019) identifies a total of 7,663 households were assessed across Kent and Medway, with main duty acceptances recorded at 819, a 37% decrease in comparison to the same period in 2017. Tables 6 and 7 provide a local picture about the percentage of successful prevention and relief outcomes.

Table 6. Percentage of Preventions with Successful Outcomes

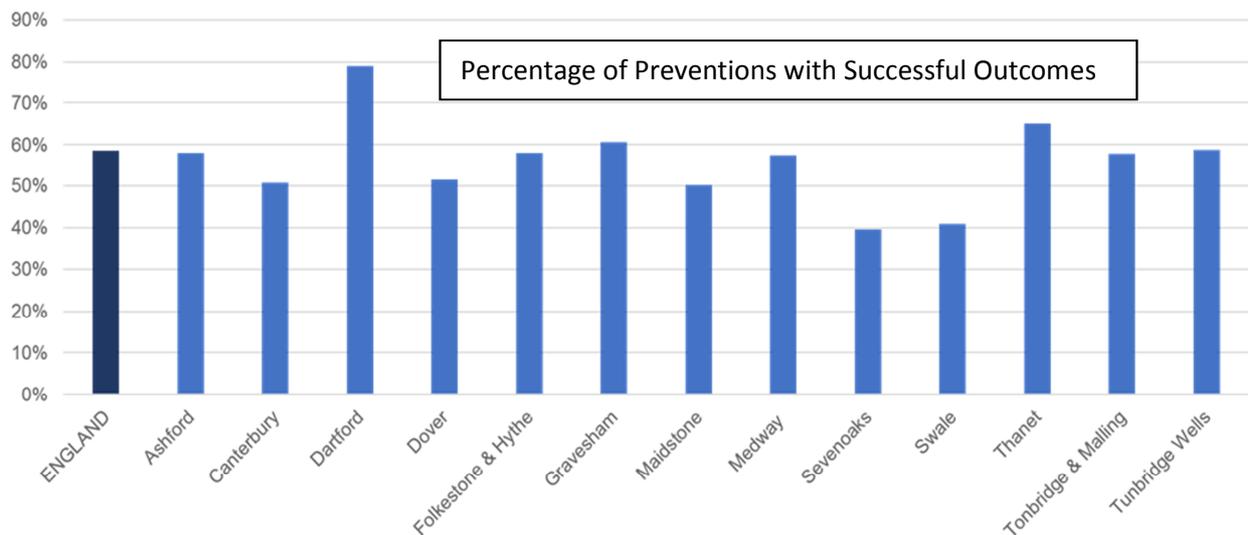
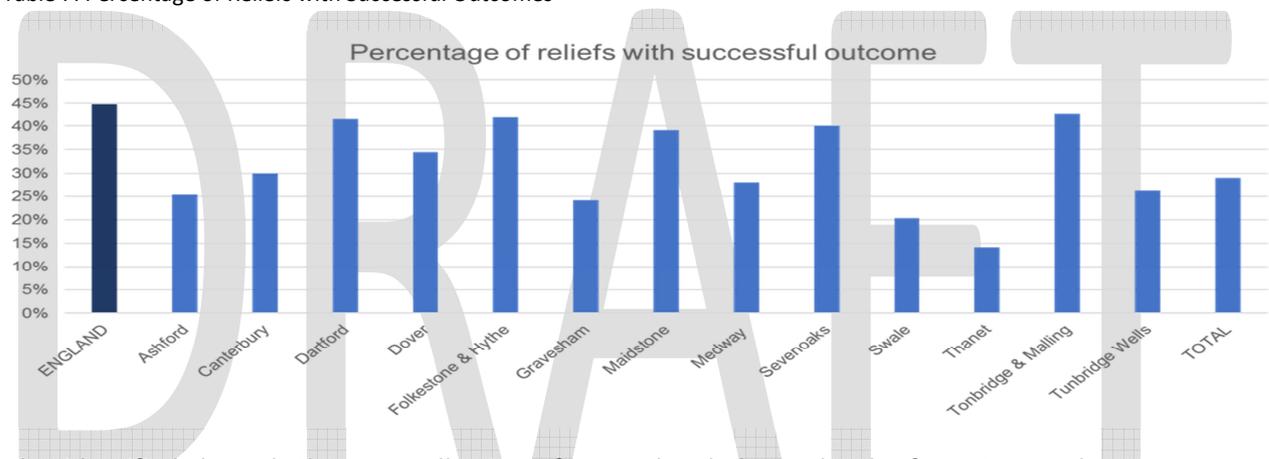
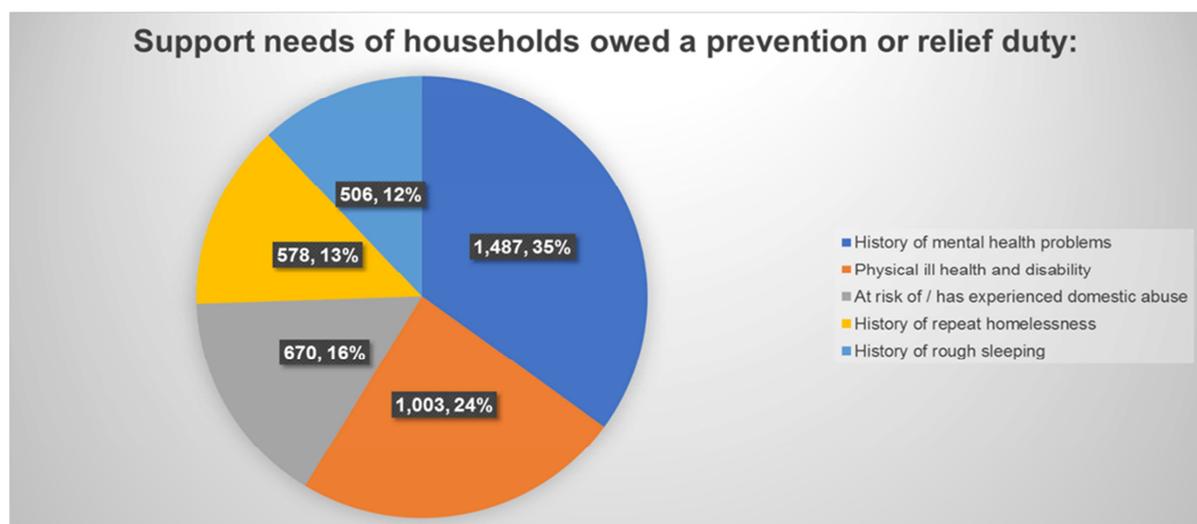


Table 7. Percentage of Reliefs with Successful Outcomes



Also identified through the new collection of more detailed case level information is the support needs of households that are owed a prevention or relief duty, which reflects the complexity of these households, who may experience one or many of these vulnerabilities that negatively impact upon their housing situation and outcomes.



Kent and Medway have a long and successful history of working across strategic partnerships and with the voluntary sectors to ensure that pathways and approaches to homelessness are

transparent, fair and consistent. There are a number of protocols that focus on specific homelessness processes and client groups, and these are reviewed to remain relevant and fit for purpose, these protocols include the Temporary Accommodation Placing Protocol, Care Leavers Housing Protocol, Intentionally Homeless Families Protocol and Housing Pathways for Criminal Justice Service Users. These protocols can all be found on the Kent Housing Group website.²⁶

Youth Homelessness

Meeting the support and accommodation needs of vulnerable young people is as much a priority as meeting these needs for the vulnerable adults living across Kent and Medway. All vulnerable young people should have access to a range of housing and support options in their local area, which enables them to realise and exercise their choice and influence their outcomes.

Kent Housing Group have worked closely with the County Council and relevant partners to develop a protocol for Homeless 16 and 17 year olds, which is now under review following the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act and changes to local commissioning arrangements. All parties remain committed to improve the outcomes for this group of young people and through partnership working and innovation in approach will continue to identify and evolve how each responsible organisation uses available resources to maximum effect.

This strategy reinforces that message that a county wide approach to tackling homelessness is an important and significant contributor to achieve better services and overall outcomes for those with the most complex housing needs.

Gypsies and Travellers

To reduce and deter unauthorised developments and encampments across the county, it will be necessary to have a strategic and collaborative plan for access to a network of affordable pitches and permanent sites, evidenced by a greater understanding of the local needs. During 2019 Kent County Council is undertaking a review of their Pitch Allocation Policy for the sites that they are responsible for managing. In 2018, Medway Council commissioned a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) with the primary objective to provide a robust assessment of current and future need for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation. The GTAA provides Medway Council with a credible evidence base which can be used to aid the implementation of Development Plan policies and the provision of new Gypsy and Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots for the period up to 2035.

As identified in the last edition of the Kent and Medway Housing Strategy, there are many settled Gypsies and Travellers living in social housing stock, which on occasion, can result in cultural and management issues. Provision of support and advice for these members of our community will help reduce these occurrences and maintain sustainable, cohesive communities.

London Migration/Placements

Migration from the Capital is not a new phenomenon. For decades, there has been a regular exchange of residents between London and the county area of Kent and Medway. This is an inevitable consequence of being London-peripheral authorities and is symptomatic of differentials in London and Kent housing markets, the desirability of living in the county, and the good quality transport links into the city making large parts of the county attractive to commuters. The opening of High Speed 1 rail routes in 2009 only increased and expanded that appeal.

²⁶ <https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/strategies-protocols/>

Whilst this organic inward migration from London can apply pressure on public services, it remains relatively sustainable whilst individual movements are of a modest size, well-dispersed, factored into estimates, and often supported by developer contributions where moves are to a new-build development.

Various parts of Kent and Medway have seen systematic placements or signposting of vulnerable individuals and households from London and other cities around the country for some time. These include the long-term housing of Looked After Children in predominantly coastal communities including Thanet, Medway and Swale, where housing type and low market rents lend themselves to care establishments, homeless households into temporary accommodation procured within the County, and individuals with complex needs. These placements do put significant strain on the receiving communities and local public services including local authorities, the County Council, the NHS and Police.

Significant concern has been the recent trend which has seen large sites across the county procured by London Boroughs either directly, or indirectly via intermediaries, to accommodate anywhere between 20 and 200 plus vulnerable homeless households from the capital at a single site, examples of these include a decommissioned Army Barracks and former office blocks. The latter was facilitated by the Government's amendment to the General Permitted Development Order 1995 in May 2013, resulting in developers no longer requiring planning permission for change of use when converting office to residential, instead being able to complete conversions under permitted development.

Placing new communities wholesale into a receiving area has and will continue to result in spatial, financial, cultural and resource-led challenges on local services, impacts on local communities as well as impacting on those households being moved. Much of this accommodation was not previously residential resulting in capacity problems for local services, with entirely new demand in the centre of towns where services were already oversubscribed, for example our GPs and Dentists.

Underpinned by the previous iteration of this strategy, insight has been shared and partnership-working enabled between local partners to ensure the best possible outcomes for those already placed into the County and surrounding existing communities. The strategy again implemented through the Kent Housing Group also supported a single strategic discourse being established with Government and the Local Government Association to lobby and inform policy to try and mitigate these unintended consequences of legislative changes.

Moving forward and most importantly through this strategy and the wider Kent Housing Group the facilitated development of a collaborative dialogue with the London Boroughs via London Councils will continue, with the aim to share intelligence on common pressures, reduce or deter these placements where at all possible, and where they are unavoidable, work together to ensure they are appropriate, well-supported, with the right wrap-around services in place to ensure successful integration. To date this approach and work streams have resulted in a significant reduction in such activity, being recognised as exemplary.

The Impact of Welfare Reform

Since 2011 Government have introduced a range of welfare policy reforms with the intention to reduce benefit dependency of households and for those affected to respond positively to the reforms by increasing income through employment, reducing outgoings where appropriate and making informed choices about housing cost expenditure. The reforms are also implemented to provide the 'safety net' for those who are most vulnerable or the poorest members of a community.

The Local Housing Allowance (LHA) remains set at the 30th percentile of market rents rather than the 50th. Due to the cost of renting across the social, affordable and private rented sectors in Kent and Medway and the limited number of properties priced at the LHA rate or below, there is and will continue to be an impact upon affordability. The Kent and Medway Housing Strategy has committed through its action plan for Affordability to continue to identify, understand and mitigate the unintended consequences of welfare reform, with a particular focus on communicating at a national level for a review of the current LHA levels.

Universal Credit is another part of the welfare reform agenda set by Government and the transitional arrangements to introduce it commenced in 2013, with the aim to replace four key legacy benefits and tax credits, with a staged roll out across Kent and Medway since its introduction. Much good work and best practice has been developed across the county by local authorities and housing associations to identify and work with households likely to be impacted by the changes in benefits, with organisations having to realign roles, responsibilities and investment to support those most vulnerable tenants falling into arrears and who may therefore be at risk of becoming homeless.

In January 2018 and in response to the changing and uncertain policy landscape regarding welfare reform and national policy regarding rent reductions for social housing landlords Kent Housing Group developed an Affordability Protocol. The aim of the protocol was to address key affordability issues head on and to work in partnership to prevent homelessness, whilst also providing a consistent and fair approach to affordability assessments undertaken by social housing landlords. The protocol will require a review and this strategy provides the context and support to undertake this work stream across a range of organisations, which is reflected within the Affordability action plan linked to this strategy document.

It is widely recognised that providing support, signposting and access to training, skills and employment will assist with improving outcomes and choices for those in housing need. There is further work required to map and understand the level of funding and resource available across Kent and Medway to assist with narrowing the affordability gap and access to housing of any tenure. This is coupled with the objectives outlined within the Kent and Medway GIF to encourage economic investment and opportunities into the county which should result in an increase in the positive outcomes of those who want live and work in Kent and Medway.

Theme 4 – Health and Wellbeing

Our Ambition: Proactively support all children, young people and adults living in the communities of Kent and Medway to achieve a high level of health and wellbeing across all aspects of their lives

The World Health Organisation defines health and wellbeing as ‘a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity’.²⁷ This definition supports the evidence and wider acknowledgement that health and wellbeing is impacted and influenced by a range of factors, including poor quality housing, unemployment, low education attainment, air pollution, behavioural factors such as smoking or a poor diet. Each factor can collaboratively or in isolation be detrimental to mental and physical wellbeing.

Housing is now well regarded as essential infrastructure and also an essential component to aid the reduction of health inequalities through integration of services. In 2008 Professor Sir Michael Marmot produced the report ‘Fair Society Healthy Lives’. This was an independent review that provided a series of key policy objectives to reduce health inequalities across England from 2010, including the creation and development of healthy and sustainable places and communities, to be achieved through integration of planning, transport, housing, environmental and health systems and through regeneration based on reducing social isolation. To understand the impact and success of the report in February 2020 The Institute of Health Equity²⁸ will publish with The Health Foundation: ‘Health Equity in England: The Marmot Review 10 Years On’, to examine progress in addressing health inequalities in England and to propose recommendations for future action. It is recommended that over the lifetime of this strategy and through a partnership approach work should take stock of the impending Marmot review and continue to build upon the success of the local document Think Housing First²⁹ and Kent’s Health Inequalities Action Plans.

Over recent years in recognition of the evolving remit of Government departments and with the unprecedented demand for health and social care services, across Kent and Medway there has been a substantial amount of successful partnership working arrangements between the housing health and social care sectors moving towards the objective of integration. The Kent and Medway Housing Strategy provides the opportunity to reinforce and ensure a future commitment to positive health and wellbeing outcomes, responding to the challenge for sectors to work more closely together, planning for our communities now and in the future by building and regenerating communities that support social cohesion and positive physical and mental wellbeing.

Access to decent, safe, secure, warm, healthy and affordable homes across all tenures should be possible for all members of our communities, regardless of employment status, income level, local connection or the state of their physical or mental wellbeing. It is therefore important that when addressing the identified housing need through the development of new housing that design and quality and access to essential infrastructure are part of a holistic and integrated planning process. This will ensure that communities thrive, that they are sustainable through the provision of high-quality efficient housing that is flexible to meet the changing needs of households and that there is access to local health or voluntary sector services which provide support and care for all those who require assistance from them.

Managing the efficiency and condition of existing housing stock across Kent and Medway is critical when considering how to mitigate health inequalities and the link to housing. Entrancingly linked to

²⁷ World Health Organisation, 1948

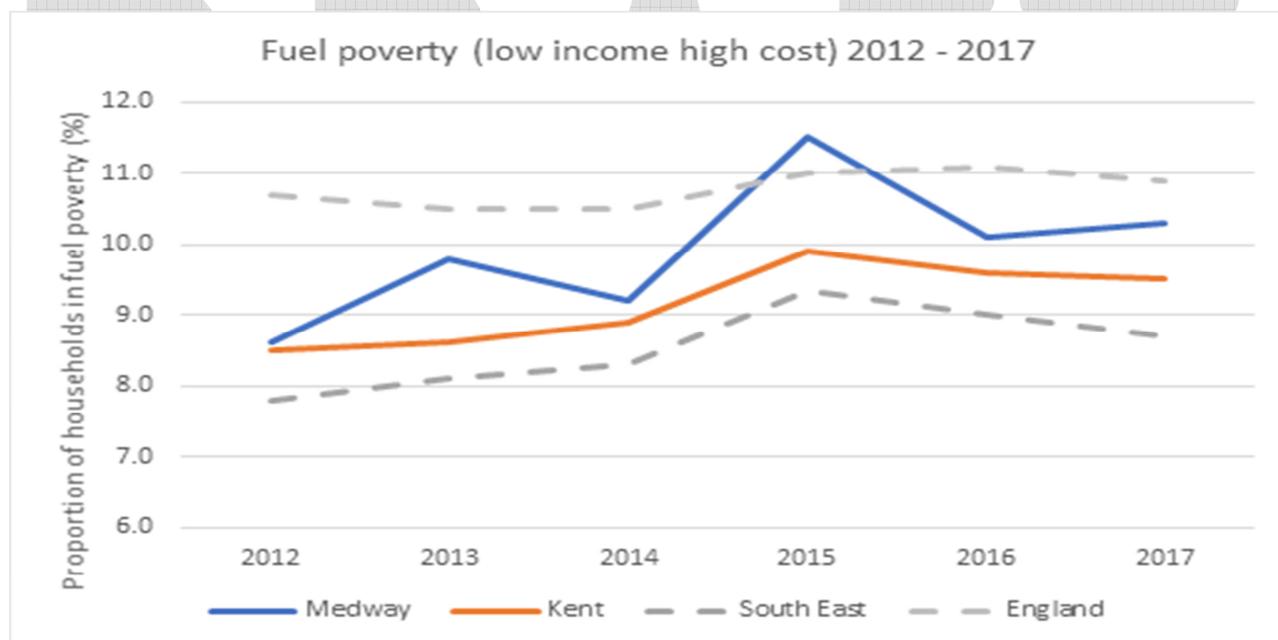
²⁸ <http://www.instituteoftheequity.org/resources-reports/fair-society-healthy-lives-the-marmot-review>

²⁹ <https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/protocols/think-housing-first/>

the energy efficiency of homes is fuel poverty. Living in fuel poverty is described as being on lower income and living in a home which cannot be kept at reasonable cost and the number of households who are suffering fuel poverty is continuing to rise. Following a recommendation within the last countywide housing strategy the Kent Energy Efficiency Partnership (KEEP) on behalf of the Kent Housing Group developed ‘Delivering Affordable Warmth – A Fuel Poverty Strategy for Kent’³⁰. The afore mentioned strategy highlights national targets and then identifies local targets, as also set out in the revised Kent Environment Strategy³¹ and associated documents. Key aims of the Kent Fuel Poverty Strategy are to broaden the evidence base of knowledge, obtain a greater understanding of fuel poverty in the county and identify, prioritise and monitor the impact interventions recommended.

Table 8 provides details of the proportion of household’s who are fuel poor across Kent and Medway, using the most recent data available. Fuel poverty across the county varies for a number of reasons, including links to areas of high deprivation and low income, in our county these are areas such as Thanet and Dover. Other reasons identified are linked to the ageing stock and location, for example rural areas where properties are not able to access more affordable heating options or due to design they are difficult to insulate.

Table (8) – Proportion of Households Fuel Poor (%)



Source - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fuel-poverty-sub-regional-statistics#2016-statistics>

It is evident that tackling fuel poverty across all housing tenures is important for improving health outcomes and reducing inequalities. It is also important to recognise that fuel poverty is not tenure specific and therefore can and does impact households living in social housing. In 2010 and 2014 Government committed to financial investment and a framework to provide households and businesses with funding to carry out improvements to properties, to improve their overall energy efficiency. Through the latter investment in 2014 the Green Deal Home Improvement Fund

³⁰ <https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/protocols/kent-fuel-poverty-strategy/>

³¹ <https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/information-and-data/Facts-and-figures-about-Kent/environmental-policies/kent-environment-strategy>

(GDHIF)³² provided households with the opportunity to claim up to £7,600 to undertake improvements.

Working alongside and aligned to the Kent Energy Efficiency Partnership is the Kent and Medway Sustainable Energy Partnership, a strategic group with representation from local authorities and housing providers whose objective includes tackling fuel poverty, lowering household bills and the reduction of CO2 emissions. In support of these key objectives this partnership is delivering the Warm Homes³³ programme which is available to residents of Kent and Medway and is funded by Energy Company Obligation funds. Between 2013 and June 2019 the Warm Homes programme had been responsible for a total of 2,446 installs and 2,639 measures, with some households have more than one insulation measured installed³⁴. Sharing and learning from the examples of the how collaborative working and effective use of available funding is critical. With fuel poverty impacting on an increasing number of households there remains a significant amount of work to be undertaken.

The Kent and Medway Housing Strategy mirrors elements of additional county wide strategies that consider issues such as air quality and fuel poverty. The Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy (ELES) is a sub strategy of the Kent Environment Strategy³⁵ and is currently under consultation. (July 2019 – September 2019). Coupled with developing strategies and action plans to reduce fuel poverty and eliminate poor air quality this strategy will aim to deliver affordable, clean and secure energy supply. The Kent Active Travel Strategy³⁶ identifies and recommends that improvement of air quality as a benefit of active travel along is one factor that can contribute positively to the overall health our communities.

It is critical that across each of the strategies there is consistency and collaboration to meet the collective objectives outlined and that evidence gathered over the lifetime of each strategy is used proactively to continue to improve on outcomes for the all members of the communities across Kent and Medway, regardless of their housing tenure.

Bringing Empty Properties Back into Use

No Use Empty (NUE) is Kent County Council's award-winning empty homes initiative and to date has returned 6,047 homes back to use. The scheme, which provides an exemplar model to tackle the issue of long-term empty homes, has also unlocked further investment from the increased support of local district and borough councils across the county.

The pioneering scheme, which introduced top-up loans in 2015, has seen further pledges totalling £800,000 from Folkestone and Hythe District Council, Dover District Council and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council. The top-up loans are a mark of heightened collaboration between local authorities, who are providing additional money in tranches of £15,000 in order to unlock larger developments. The top-up loans will be used to support the current £3.8m investment that has been allocated for the return of long-term empty housing stock to use.

In a further show of support, in 2017 owner-occupier loans were introduced as an alternative to the traditional loan model. The owner-occupier loans scheme, the latest evolution of NUE, is an

³² <https://www.government-grants.co.uk/green-deal-home-improvement-fund>

³³ <https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/campaigns-and-events/warm-homes>

³⁴ This is the current data provided by the installer to Kent County Council

³⁵ <https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/environment-waste-and-planning-policies/environmental-policies/kent-environment-strategy>

³⁶ <https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/transport-and-highways-policies/active-travel-strategy>

innovative extension of the original programme. Thanet District Council will be the first to provide loans for home owners to renovate and occupy formerly long-term empty properties.

In addition to the core activity of returning traditional empty residential properties back into use, NUE has tackled larger redundant empty commercial buildings and sites (offices, pubs, churches and warehouses), creating more than 725 new units of accommodation, with 42 units being Affordable Housing.

NUE is also helping to increase Council Tax receipts for local authorities throughout Kent, as well as attracting New Homes Bonus (NHB). The initiative has also created or safeguarded over 1,076 jobs and provided homes to more than 2,224 local people.

Mixed residential and commercial projects have also been made possible, thanks to NUE intervention and additional funding from the Growing Places Fund. This has resulted in £178,000 in new Business Rates being generated. Since its inception, NUE has awarded £29.8m in loans leveraging £30m from the public and private sectors, which have supported 1,011 units across Kent.

The NUE scheme was the first to offer interest free loans (repayable in three years) of up to £175,000 (£25,000 per unit) to those wishing to revive long-term empty properties. The initiative was launched in partnership with four local authorities (Folkestone and Hythe, Dover, Thanet and Swale). Today NUE is active across all twelve authorities in Kent, and in 2011 it was extended beyond the county with Bristol County Council and the West of England partnership launching their own empty homes initiative under the 'No Use Empty' banner.

No Use Empty has been widely praised, winning three national awards for its Partnership Working and outstanding approach to regeneration.

Case Study - Solini Court, Dover Road, Folkestone



This property is situated in a mixed residential and commercial locality close to the town centre. The building dates from around 1900 and previous uses include warehousing and more recently as a funeral directors. The site was empty for two years and was suffering from internal damage caused by a leaking roof and burst pipes. The site also attracted anti-social behaviour.

A local property developer approached NUE to seek financial support contribution along with his own financial investment, acquired the site and obtained planning permission for change of use to residential accommodation.

The property now offers 3 x 3 bedroom units and 2 x 2 bedroom and 6 x 1 bedroom units.

Optivo, formerly AmicusHorizon, manages the property on behalf of the owner at an affordable rent (80% of the market rent) offering homes for local people at affordable rents.

The Role of the Health and Wellbeing Board

Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWB) were established under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, acting as a forum to promote greater integration and partnership between bodies from public health, the NHS and local government. The boards, in partnership with clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) have a statutory duty to produce a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and a Health and Wellbeing Strategy for local populations.

With both Medway and Kent County Council wedded to the work of the Kent and Medway Sustainable Transformation Plan (STP)³⁷ both councils agreed to set up a Joint HWB in the capacity of an advisory joint sub-committee. This joint board has and will continue to consider the work of the STP and issues of shared concern across the whole county, including:

- *A focus on adult social care and health integration (local care) and on prevention*
- *Alignment of joint strategic needs assessments and developing population health*
- *Helping to shape the proposal for a system-wide strategic commissioner*
- *Considering options for the local authorities in the development of the ICSs and integrated care partnerships.*

Along with the Kent Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy³⁸, both councils will maintain and utilise their individual HWBs to keep a focus on local priorities and to discharge their statutory duties. The STP identifies the rationale, the 'Case for Change'³⁹ behind how services need to change over the next five years to achieve the right care for people for decades to come. The STP will also enable the delivery of the Five Year Forward View, which sets out the national vision for health and social care services.

Production of a JSNA is a principle responsibility of HWBs and are an assessment of the current and future health and social care needs of the local population. In 2013-14 Housing and Homelessness was a focus within the Kent JSNA⁴⁰, more recently the Annual Public Health Report 2016⁴¹ has focused on the theme of health inequalities but linked to the influence that housing has on health and wellbeing outcomes. The annual report established clear links between housing and health it has three themes:

1. Growth, Affordability and Planning
2. Indoor Housing Environment
3. Maintaining Stable Home Life

Future decision making about the planning and regeneration of housing across Kent and Medway must have consideration and proactive engagement across relevant sectors about the design, type and location of homes and infrastructure. This will ensure the sustainment of healthy communities, and that through a place making approach households and whole communities are encouraged and supported to undertake life choices or behaviours that impact positively on health and wellbeing.

The exploration and investment into minor interventions, including housing interventions through integration of services, can result in positive outcomes for vulnerable members of our communities and will also contribute to the reduction in demand upon services and associated costs of the NHS.

³⁷ <https://kentandmedway.nhs.uk/stp/>

³⁸ https://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0014/12407/Joint-health-and-wellbeing-strategy.pdf

³⁹ <http://kentandmedway.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Kent-Medway-Case-for-Change-UPDATED-APRIL-17.pdf>

⁴⁰ https://www.kpho.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/45180/JSNA-Housing-and-Homelessness-2013-14.pdf

⁴¹

https://www.kpho.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/70819/2016_Annual_Public_Health_Report_summary.pdf

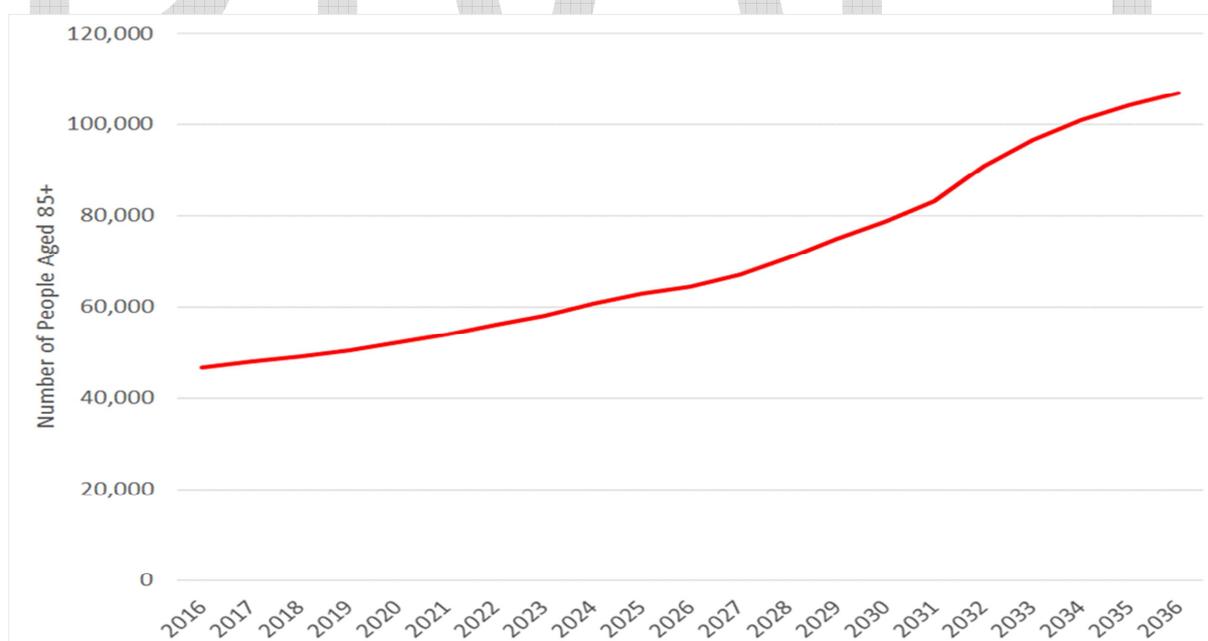
There is clear evidence that across the county there is commitment to deliver against a number of aligned objectives that will continue to improve the broad health and wellbeing outcomes for our communities. Recognition that access to high quality housing impacts positively upon health and wellbeing is welcomed, and that moving forward with financial investment, resource and commitment to appropriate interventions there will be a reduction in health inequalities and contribution to the ambition to transform and provide timely proactive services across housing, health and social care.

Older People

In 2019 we face a national housing crisis, with an insufficient number of homes available to meet the growth in overall population, a crisis also impacting at a local level. This overall growth in population is coupled with a significant growth in the population of older people, some of whom are living with long term conditions and/or with physical or sensory disabilities. Moving forward the housing options for older people who are both active or have more complex needs must be an affordable, attractive and a place they want to live in and call home. Older people should have the same opportunity to have choice about where they live, independently as for as long as possible, and this is only achievable through an integrated person centered approach to housing care and support.

The evidence base that supports this strategy has identified that across Kent and Medway as a whole the population of older people will increase substantially over the next 25 years. Using ONS⁴² 2014-based projections the population aged over 65 in Kent and Medway will increase by 68% over the 25 year period, this compares to a projected growth of around 22% in the population as a whole over the same period. With regards to planning for specialist housing development that will assist in meeting needs across the growing ageing population, there should also be consideration of the advanced older population, those aged over 85 years. Evidence supporting this strategy projects that there will be an extra 67,900 people aged over 85 in Kent & Medway by 2039 (Figure 8).

Figure 8 - Indexed Population Projections for Older People Aged 85+, Kent & Medway 2016-36



Source: KCC Housing Led Forecast Sept 2017 / Projection led forecasting used by Kent County Council and Medway Council are broadly in line with the ONS predictions used

⁴² <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity>

In 2014 the Accommodation Strategy for Adult Social Care, Better Homes: Greater Choice⁴³ was published. Developed through partnership working across the housing health and social care sectors of Kent and Medway this strategy identified how the provision, demand and aspiration for housing, care and support services would be met for adult social care clients. In early 2019 a review of this strategy was commenced and will update the strategic direction for suitable housing and care home provision for Kent and will continue to ensure that all future provision delivered is co-ordinated, mapped and sustainable. A significant achievement from the first accommodation strategy has been the completion of close to 1,000 Extra Care Homes within the county and a welcomed steadied decline in the use of residential or nursing care home placements.

Locally the concept, model and aspirations of Extra Care housing is still regarded as a necessary and attractive housing option that enables people to remain living at home independently with support or care as required. However, the speed and number of Extra Care housing schemes delivered over recent years has been negatively impacted by the uncertainty regarding the future of Government funding for specialised accommodation, which is a critical component to enable commitment to development of this type of housing. To mitigate this uncertainty and to continue to provide an attractive and affordable housing option for our ageing population there should be continued dialogue with Government about the future of funding, coupled with the exploration about the flexibility of opportunities linked to existing Extra Care housing schemes, for example an 'Extra Care Hub' model. This model could facilitate access to community-based services or communal facilities within an existing Extra Care housing scheme for those households who are in close proximity, which could assist in meeting their individual care and/or support needs.

Another model of provision for further exploration is the delivery more affordable specialised or 'care ready' housing that is flexible not only in tenure but also in meeting the changing and complex needs across not only older people but across each of the adult social care client groups.

In support of the overall ambition to deliver and provide access to the right home in the right place at the right time for older people and in addition to exploration of new innovative models of delivery, it is timely for the Kent Housing Group to revisit the Housing for the Third Age protocol, a framework developed to encourage a consistent and proactive approach to the development of older persons housing, along with information and guidance so that informed choices can be made and actioned.

Physical and Sensory Disability

The provision of accessible housing that meets the needs of those with a physical or sensory disability remains a priority across Kent and Medway. With a greater emphasis on the promotion of independence and choice for those with disabilities, coupled with the challenges of an ageing population the demands for new and upon existing accessible housing will inevitably increase in the future. It is recognised that there will not be a 'one size fits all' solution or approach to meeting the housing needs of those with a physical or sensory disability, therefore we must continue to adopt a baseline level of guidance and a pragmatic approach to meeting need across the county. Maximising the use of funding available that can assist this client group is essential and outcomes will be strengthened through an integrated approach.

In April 2015 the funding for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's) was transferred from the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) to the Department of Health (DoH). The circular issued by the Department of Health confirmed that the inclusion of the DFG within the Better Care

⁴³ <https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/adult-social-care-policies/accommodation-strategy-for-adult-social-care>

Fund (BCF) “is to encourage areas to think strategically about the use of home aids/adaptations, use of technologies to support people in their own homes and to take a joined up approach to improving outcomes across health, social care and Housing”.

As Table 9 indicates there has been significant DFG funding into the county, in 2019/20 the DFG funding has increased from last year by 7.9% to £19,060,055 million. The conditions attached to this grant remain unchanged and any money paid under this grant determination must only be used for the specific purposes of providing adaptations for disabled people who qualify under the DFG Scheme or any other social care capital projects where agreed. Over recent years the district and borough councils have each been reviewing policy and procedures to ensure that the funding allocated is used effectively to meet the needs of as many eligible households as possible. There is a disparity with regards to the allocated amount of funding across the districts and boroughs that allocation in some areas no longer reflects or is sufficient at meeting local need. With permission from MHCLG and in agreement across the Kent County Council districts work has commenced to review district allocations.

Table (9) - Disabled Facilities Capital Grant Determination 2016 – 2019/20

District / Borough	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Ashford	£708,000	£775,304	£842,979	£909,625
Canterbury	£934,000	£1,017,727	£1,101,325	£1,188,396
Dartford	£469,000	£513,627	£558,301	£602,440
Dover	£1,023,000	£1,113,133	£1,203,366	£1,298,504
Gravesham	£803,000	£882,691	£961,866	£1,037,911
Maidstone	£1,032,000	£1,131,348	£1,230,870	£1,328,182
Medway	£1,691,060	£1,854,496	£2,017,933	£2,177,470
Sevenoaks	£889,000	£976, 757	£1,064,336	£1,148,482
Shepway	£1,048,000	£1,138,882	£1,229,558	£1,326,767
Swale	£1,982,000	£2,182,185	£2,382,555	£2,570,919
Thanet	£2,342,000	£2,568,686	£2,794,932	£3,015,899
Tonbridge & Malling	£917,000	£1,007,235	£1,097,910	£1,184,711
Tunbridge Wells	£981,000	£1,079,235	£1,177,645	£1,270,749
Total	£14,819,060	£16,241,306	£17,663,576	£19,060,055

Source - <https://www-foundations.uk.com/dfg-adaptations/systems-and-apps/dfg-allocations/>

The future investment of this capital funding from Government is unknown, therefore whilst there remains significant financial allocation across our county it is imperative that the commitment to the integration of services is a continued high priority. There are a number of successful projects linked

to the DFG funding and this has enabled a strengthening of partnerships and collaborative approach across housing health and social care. Continuation of learning, evolving and sharing of good practice about the positive outcomes and success of these projects is encouraged. All this evidence gathered will be essential to enter into dialogue with Government to secure the appropriate future financial investment to ensure continued overall health and wellbeing outcomes for our communities.

Learning Disability and Mental Health

The Government Strategy 'Valuing People Now, Making it Happen'⁴⁴ was published close to a decade ago and set out a clear plan to improve the lives of people with learning disabilities, including to ensure that they have a real choice about where and how they would like to live. Over the lifetime of this national strategy and the last edition of the Kent and Medway Housing Strategy the diversity and tenure of housing options for this client group has been a priority and much has been achieved. In 2015, the 'Your life, Your Home' project was launched with the objective to reduce residential placements and increase access to and development of supported living options, coupled with the design of cost-effective service models to support this client group to inform and realise lifestyle choice, including housing. These principle objectives have now been extended to include the service provision for people with mental health needs and ensure provision of more suitable supported accommodation and pathways from acute to complex services and a reduction in standard mental health residential placements.

The revision of the Kent Adult Social Care Strategy will include a set of clear objectives for the current and future provision of housing and care for people with learning disabilities and mental health needs. The evidence base and recommendations within the revision of that strategy is how across the county, and in partnership with all providers of housing health and social care, informed decisions can be made about the how to ensure value for money, the best use of limited funding and the provision of future development of all types and tenure of housing that is flexible to meet the evolving needs of these client groups. A key objective is to refrain from flooding the local housing, care and residential markets with unrequired, unsuitable and unaffordable accommodation solutions.

Kent and Medway has a strong history of collaborative approach and joint working. Through the Kent Housing Group membership and the links KHG has to the local planning, development, health and social care sectors, it will be essential for all sectors to continue to work together to identify where there is opportunity to further influence and shape how services are commissioned for the vulnerable members of our communities.

Service Personnel

The last edition of the Kent and Medway Housing Strategy identified recommendations to support service personnel, both whilst serving and after military service has ended. These recommendations included having access to timely housing options advice to enable informed choices about how to achieve housing aspirations, and to assist vulnerable ex-service personnel through the provision of signposting and access to advice to help those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The extensive work that has been undertaken across the county, previously by the Kent Joint Policy and Planning Board is now under the stewardship of the Kent Housing Group, through the Housing Health and Social Care Sub Group.

⁴⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/valuing-people-now-summary-report-march-2009-september-2010>

The continued support for the service personnel community will be aligned to and underpin the objectives agreed by the Kent and Medway Civilian Military Partnership Board⁴⁵, who are responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the Kent Community Covenant and the Medway Community Covenant. This Board will ensure that serving and ex-armed forces personnel and their families can enjoy equal access to public services as the civilian community, and are not disadvantaged as a result of being in the military. The Board has five sub-groups which focus on Health & Wellbeing, Employment, Economy and Skills, Children & Youth, Housing and Recognise & Remember.

The Housing Health and Social Care Sub Group

In 2018 Kent Public Health became a member of the Kent Housing Group and provides financial resource to build and develop the existing relationship and partnership working across housing and health. Linked the funding provided through Kent Public Health there are a number of identified specific outcomes that integrate housing health and social care. To ensure that these are achieved and that all the relevant statutory and partnership organisations are aware and engaged the Housing Health and Social Care Sub Group has been established. This sub group take an overview of how housing, social care and health can work together to promote healthy places, communities and the health and wellbeing of individuals and will have a dedicated resource to project manage the action plan for the group. Key objectives of this KHG sub group are to:

- *To promote good health and prevent ill health, making it easier for those most at risk of poor health, or who have specific health needs, to access support and take action to help themselves and their families.*
- *To encourage organisations involved with housing, social care and health to work together to create healthier communities.*

Within the sub group action plan and as identified throughout the overall scope of this strategy health and wellbeing and integration are intrinsically linked to each other and run through three of the four strategy themes, accelerating delivery, infrastructure and investment and affordability.

The strategic priorities for this sub group reflect and will become part of the overall implementation of the ambition and agreed objectives of this county wide housing strategy, these include

1. *Articulating the strategic direction across partner organisations for housing, health and social care across Kent and Medway*
2. *Improving the integration between health, housing and social care services across Kent*
3. *Making it easier for the most vulnerable residents – across all tenures - to access the support, advice and services they need to improve their lives, through co-production*
4. *Housing vulnerable groups, which include older people, ex-offenders, people with physical and/or sensory disabilities, learning disabilities, autism, mental health problems (including substance misuse), dementia, vulnerable veterans and carers*
5. *Develop a Smoke Free Homes Strategy*
6. *Suicide prevention*
7. *Ensure safeguarding practices with the housing sector are robust.*
8. *Specific training activity, including Public Health training, mental health awareness and domestic abuse awareness*

In conclusion it is important that this strategy provides the platform to reinforce the role and influence of housing on local and county wide health and wellbeing objectives, to help transform,

⁴⁵ <http://www.kentcouncilleaders.org.uk/military/>

influence and make change happen, to ensure more effective use of resources that include value for money but most importantly ensure positive outcomes for more people across our communities.

DRAFT

ACTION PLAN *(Short Term – 12 months, Short-Medium Term – within 3 years, Duration of Strategy – within 5 years)

THEME ONE – ACCELERATING HOUSING DELIVERY				
Action	Issues to Address	What will we do?	Lead Partner / Organisation	Timescale*
1.	Streamlining Planning	<i>Kent Housing Group (KHG) will establish a task group, the Housing Delivery Task Group (HDTG), pooling expertise from across KHG members and partner organisations, to carry out the action points to accelerate housing delivery.</i>	Kent Housing Group	Short Term
		<i>Work with Kent Planning Officers Group (KPOG) and the Kent Developers Group (KDG), the HDTG will review the Viability Protocol, acknowledging the details within the NPPF and PPG. The review will include an assessment of the approach to strategic sites viability assessments, the mechanisms for viability reviews / reassessment through the construction and sales periods to protect affordable housing delivery, as well as the requirements of developers across Kent.</i>	Housing Delivery Task Group	Short – Medium Term
		<i>Working with KPOG and KDG, the HDTG will review the Planning Protocol already published and produce an enhanced update to include how to support accelerated housing delivery.</i>	Housing Delivery Task Group	Short Term
		<i>Working with KPOG and KDG, the HDTG will develop a Kent S106 Housing Guide (similar in principle to the Kent Design Guide with a scope to be agreed across members, excluding CIL), to empower and support local planning authorities across Kent when granting planning permission.</i>	Housing Delivery Task Group	Short Term
		<i>KHG will provide an annual forum with KPOG and in partnership with KDG, to improve links between developers, RPs and local planning authorities across Kent, supporting developers to partner with RPs earlier in the planning and delivery process.</i>	Kent Housing Group	Short Term

		<i>KHG in partnership with KPOG and KDG, to carry out Kent wide research into permitted development from commercial to residential, to understand its impact and to assist local authorities to respond appropriately.</i>	Kent Housing Group / Kent Planning Officers Group / Kent Developers Group	Medium Term
4.	Accessing Funding Opportunities	<i>KHG will monitor funding opportunities that are presented either through Homes England or through MHCLG to accelerate housing delivery and to forward fund infrastructure to prevent delays to housing delivery.</i>	Kent Housing Group	Duration of Strategy
5.	Maintain and Review Existing Kent Housing Group Strategies and Protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Delivering Growth Planning Protocol</i> • <i>Kent Design Guide</i> • <i>Kent Viability Protocol</i> • <i>Guide to developing affordable homes for rural communities</i> • <i>Community led planning guide (in partnership with KPOG)</i> 	Kent Housing Group	Duration of Strategy

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

KHG will provide information and opportunity to discuss changes in legislation, guidance and approach to the delivery of housing, and to include Kent Planning Officers Group (KPOG) and KCC officers delivering the Growth and Infrastructure framework.

KHG will support its members to comment on Local Plans as they emerge across Kent.

Continue to work in partnership with One Public Estate, SELEP and Kent Estates Partnership to understand the extent of opportunity on public land across Kent, and how this could then be used to provide homes. There are a number of organisations KHG will seek to involve in achieving our objectives under this theme, through publications, events and subgroups:

- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)
- Homes England
- One Public Estate
- Greater London Authority
- Private developers
- South East Local Economic Partnership (SELEP)
- Other public land owners, such as Ministry of Justice and National Health Service

ASK OF GOVERNMENT

KHG will support its members in asking government and Homes England to provide grants for the development of housing by RP's and local authorities across Kent, and in particular affordable housing and funding for stalled sites.

In partnership with the SELEP, KHG will lobby MHCLG on the important contribution Kent makes to the South East region. There is an identified funding gap in the Growth and Infrastructure Framework, and KHG will work with partners to support asks of government to reduce this gap, arguing the pivotal role Kent housing markets provide in supporting the London economy.

KHG will lobby government for more funding to support the work of No Use Empty campaign, and will specifically lobby that local authorities should have an opportunity to acquire empty homes first, ahead of any market sale.

*(Short Term – 12 months, Short-Medium Term – within 3 years, Duration of Strategy – within 5 years)

THEME TWO – INFRASTRUCTURE AND INVESTMENT

Action	Issues to Address	What will we do?	Lead Partner / Organisation	Timescale*
1.	Compliment and support the Growth and Infrastructure Framework	<i>KHG will support the Kent and Medway Growth and Infrastructure Framework (GIF), ensuring the role housing plays (as a form of necessary infrastructure and investment) is understood across Kent and wider through publicity, research and partnership working.</i>	Kent Housing Group / Housing Delivery Task Group	Duration of Strategy
2.	Addressing the Practical Issues of Developing	<i>KHG will publish an Investment Protocol to deal with the practical issues of delivering new housing developments. This will cover procurement, construction, transport and infrastructure and utilities. It will complement the Growth and Infrastructure Framework and take into account the findings of the Letwin review. The intention is not impose new restrictions or requirements that will add complexity or cost.</i> <i>KHG will work with KCC and Medway Council in their strategic planning role to explore 'District Deals' with the district</i>	Kent Housing Group Kent Housing Group and Kent County Council	Medium term Long term

		<i>authorities, which would set out the key infrastructure support that could be provided to unlocking sites (such as transport, education, social care and waste disposal), and in return district councils would seek to increase their housing delivery.</i>		
3.	Understand the Barriers	<i>Working with members, KDG, SELEP and KPOG, KHG will carry out research to understand in detail the obstacles developers and partners encounter in regards to infrastructure. This will include utilities, technology and broadband. KHG will lobby regionally for improvements in the approach of utility companies.</i>	Kent Housing Group	Short – Medium Term
4.	Accessing to Finance	<i>KHG will provide a forum through their programme of events to share best practice and discuss finance for new homes. This will include Local Housing Companies, RP funding methods, exploring institutional investment and developing more understanding amongst members of Social Impact Funds.</i>	Kent Housing Group	Duration of Strategy
5.	Maintain and Review Existing Kent Housing Group Strategies and Protocols	<i>Support the implementation and also the review of the Growth and Infrastructure Framework, as required.</i>	Kent Housing Group	Duration of Strategy

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

KHG will work closely with KPOG over the life the strategy to ensure an understanding across the two groups, and actively engage with them on the relevant actions contained within the strategy.

KHG will provide publicity, material and events to promote the work of KHG and contribution that membership organisations make to improving Kent through investment into housing.

KHG will support any bid made through the Kent and Medway Growth and Infrastructure Framework, and facilitate discussions with Homes England and MHCLG to explore options for additional funding, by providing evidence of support for the funding to housing development and sustainable communities.

Building on the existing dialogue established by KDG, KHG will engage with Highways England as the Investment Protocol emerges.

KHG will work in partnership across all members to identify funding available to meet our objectives under this theme over the course of this strategy. KHG will work closely with partners to support bids to Homes England, and co-ordinate joint bids (if these are appropriate).

There are a number of organisations KHG will seek to involve in achieving our objectives and reducing the identified barriers under this theme, through publications, events and subgroups:

- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)
- South East Local Economic Partnership (SELEP)
- Growth and Infrastructure Framework (GIF)
- Homes England
- Highways England
- KPOG
- KDG

ASK OF GOVERNMENT

KHG will continue to discuss with MHCLG its role in providing housing to support the growth of Kent, complimenting the Growth and Infrastructure Framework ambitions.

*(Short Term – 12 months, Short-Medium Term – within 3 years, Duration of Strategy – within 5 years)

THEME THREE – AFFORDABILITY

Action	Issues to Address	What will we do?	Lead Partner / Organisation	Timescale*
1.	Ensuring Affordable Housing is Affordable	<p><i>KHG will review the Affordability Protocol, to understand each partner’s eligibility criteria (both for affordable housing and access to Housing Registers), identify areas of difference and work in partnership to provide genuinely affordable housing across Kent.</i></p> <p><i>Review and research intermediate housing products, including intermediate market rent and shared ownership (and issues such</i></p>	Kent Housing Group	Short Term

		<i>as stair casing and mortgagbilty) , to ensure what is being developed is the right type of intermediate housing and meeting local housing need. KHG and the Kent Housing Options Sub Group (KHOG) will review existing services and develop a protocol on income and financial inclusion to help sustain tenancies.</i>		
2.	Improving Affordability in the Private Rented Sector and Market Housing	<p><i>KHG will explore options to get investment in the private rented sector. To also provide support for those landlords already providing properties and to open a dialogue with landlords / businesses / investors who seek to enter in to the private rented sector. KHG will provide a voice for its members to seek affordable private rented housing options for the people of Kent.</i></p> <p><i>KHG will produce a directory of schemes which help individuals access the private rented sector (such as rent deposit schemes) to provide a way for households to overcome the obstacles currently preventing them from accessing housing.</i></p> <p><i>Through the theme of accelerating housing delivery, KHG will support an increase in supply which could help in some areas reduce the price of market sale homes.</i></p>	<p>Kent Housing Group</p> <p>Kent Housing Options Group</p> <p>Kent Housing Group</p>	<p>Long Term</p> <p>Short Term</p> <p>Medium Term</p>
3.	Preventing Homelessness due to Unaffordable Housing	<p><i>KHG review homelessness prevention toolkits (including choice based lettings and direct letting processes) from across Kent to develop a KHG Homelessness Prevention Protocol.</i></p> <p><i>KHG will carry out a review of Housing First pilots carried out across Kent and feedback findings to partners, including the impact on local communities.</i></p>	<p>Kent Housing Group</p> <p>Kent Housing Group</p>	<p>Medium Term</p> <p>Short – Medium Term</p>
4.	Providing Choice	<i>KHG will assist in the review of the Kent Social Care Accommodation Strategy to reflect the supply of new homes and also the existing housing stock, and to bring it up to date with the prevention agenda and to support people living independently in the right type of accommodation.</i>	Kent Housing Group	Short Term

		<p><i>KHG will work with members to research and understand the needs and preferences of disabled people across Kent, to ensure suitable affordable housing is developed, updating the Accessible Housing Framework if necessary.</i></p> <p><i>KHG and KHOG will share lessons learned and success stories across Kent in providing housing choice which is affordable.</i></p> <p><i>KHG will commit to challenging the stigma associated with affordable housing, and support residents to see social housing as a tenure of choice.</i></p> <p><i>Working across the partnership to ensure allocation policies are sufficiently rural-proofed recognising the cost and property size challenges unique to rural areas.</i></p>	<p>Kent Housing Group</p> <p>Kent Housing Group / Kent Housing Options Group</p> <p>Kent Housing Group / Kent Housing Options Group</p>	<p>Medium Term</p> <p>Duration of Strategy</p> <p>Duration of Strategy</p>
5.	Working with Welfare Reform	<p><i>KHG will work in partnership across all members to understand the unintended consequences of welfare reform to formulate a Kent-wide impact appraisal, including use of Discretionary Housing Payments and Local Housing Allowance.</i></p> <p><i>KHG will carry out a mapping exercise on the role of the voluntary sector in providing support to households due to affordability issues across the County, with the help of partnership organisations. The outcome will be a directory of services, resources and cost impact for member organisations and a further understanding of the unintended consequences of welfare reform.</i></p> <p><i>Set up a Task Group or via the Social Impact sub group to understand best practice to support education (and the skills gap), training and employment for residents of Kent across our membership and to explore opportunities for joint working, peer support, funding and understand the social impact of these activities across Kent.</i></p>	<p>Kent Housing Group</p> <p>Kent Housing Group</p> <p>Social Impact Group</p>	<p>Short – Medium Term</p> <p>Short Term</p> <p>Short Term</p>

6.	Maintain and Review the Existing KHG Strategies and Protocols	§ <i>Rural Homes: Supporting Kent's Rural Communities</i> § <i>Kent Housing Group Affordability Protocol</i>	Housing Strategy & Enabling Sub Group Kent Housing Group	Duration of Strategy
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PARTNERSHIP WORKING

KHG will work through the subgroup structure to ensure partners are aware of actions taken to improve affordability.

KHG will complement the work of the Growth and Infrastructure Framework (GIF) and provided the necessary inputs to demonstrate the affordability issues across tenures.

KHG will encourage members to share best practice and projects which are being undertaken by member organisations to tackle the issue of affordability in housing.

KHG will work in partnership across all members to identify funding available to meet our objectives under this theme over the course of this strategy, including future Homes England funding rounds.

In partnership with members and developers building locally, through achieving aims under the theme of accelerating housing delivery, KHG will establish a Kent wide understanding on how affordable new housing supply can be provided, and the impact this causes on viability (and therefore potentially on the number of homes delivered) across Kent's different housing markets.

ASK OF GOVERNMENT

KHG will work with members to continue to be the 'voice of housing for Kent' and to make government aware of the unintended consequences of welfare reform in Kent, in particular London borough placing households in temporary accommodation in Kent, and the impacts of Universal Credit and Local Housing allowance levels. KHG will support this through research with the support of individual members, authorities and health colleagues.

KHG will initiate a dialogue with the Greater London Authority and London Councils, presenting research delivered through this strategy, to highlight the impact of placements in Kent from London boroughs, and other relevant partnership groups, and to instigate ways of working together to tackle the challenge of housing affordability across the two regions.

*(Short Term – 12 months, Short-Medium Term – within 3 years, Duration of Strategy – within 5 years)

THEME FOUR – HEALTH AND WELLBEING				
Action	Issues to Address	What will we do?	Lead Partner / Organisation	Timescale*
1.	Improving the Integration between Health, Housing and Social Care Services across Kent	<p><i>Raising awareness and establishing a joint working platform is a priority.</i></p> <p><i>KHG will establish of a Housing, Health and Social Care sub group (with membership wider than the current KHG base to include health, housing, adults social care, probation and prison services) to:</i></p> <p><i>Develop a directory of services across Kent to understand roles and responsibilities, what services, advice, funding and resources are available;</i></p> <p><i>Review referral processes with an aim to develop a protocol supporting the prevention agenda during the life of the strategy;</i></p> <p><i>Understand the role housing can play in the ‘Prevention Wedge’ in services and accommodation across Kent;</i></p> <p><i>Identify and work with Community agents across Kent to ensure they are aware of the role of KHG;</i></p> <p><i>Feed into the work of KPOG and KDG to inform the right types of accommodation is developed ‘homes for life’;</i></p> <p><i>Ensure alignment with the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) agenda;</i></p> <p><i>Support and implement identified Kent Public Health priorities that are aligned / linked to housing provision / services.</i></p>	<p>Kent Housing Group</p> <p>Kent Housing Group / Housing and Health Social Care Sub Group</p>	<p>Duration of Strategy</p> <p>Short - Medium Term</p>

		<p><i>KHG will act as a voice for housing to health and social care colleagues, ensuring the importance of housing in health and well-being is understood in order to support the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership priority which is to 'make sure people are cared for in the right place'.</i></p> <p><i>KHG will develop a protocol to share best practice and encourage additional hospital discharge schemes across Kent, in partnership with health colleagues.</i></p>	<p>Kent Housing Group / Housing and Health Social Care Sub Group</p> <p>Kent Housing Group / Kent Private Sector Housing Group</p>	<p>Duration of Strategy</p> <p>Short – Medium Term</p>
2.	Addressing Health and Housing Inequalities	<p><i>KHG will promote the prevention agenda, feeding into the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP), by representing members and promoting how working closely with housing colleagues can positively contribute to their aims.</i></p> <p><i>KHG and KHOG will support tenancy sustainment across partner organisations by providing all members with an understanding of the housing advice and support services available through a directory of services.</i></p> <p><i>KHG will continue to promote the Fuel Poverty Strategy, and support a review if necessary over the course of this strategy, and work with Kent Private Sector Housing Group (PSHG) and Kent and Medway Sustainable Energy Partnership (KMSEP) to ensure it is kept up to date.</i></p> <p><i>Kent Energy Efficiency Partnership (KEEP) will continue to deliver the Kent Fuel Poverty Strategy and the HECA reporting responsibilities by each local authority.</i></p> <p><i>KHG will ensure any protocols developed to support housing delivery include futureproofing for climate change measures and reference the Kent Environment Strategy and linked documents.</i></p>	<p>Kent Housing Group / Housing and Health Social Care Sub Group / Kent & Medway Sustainable Energy Partnership / Kent Energy Efficiency Partnership</p> <p>Kent Housing Options Group</p> <p>Kent Housing Group / Kent Private Sector Housing Group / Kent & Medway Sustainable Energy Partnership</p> <p>Kent Energy Efficiency Partnership</p> <p>Kent Housing Group / KCC Kent Environment Strategy</p>	<p>Short Term</p> <p>Medium Term</p> <p>Duration of Strategy</p> <p>Duration of Strategy</p> <p>Duration of Strategy</p>

		<p><i>KHG to develop protocol for enforcement of minimum standards for PRS across Kent (for example through a Landlord Accreditation Scheme) and to continue to support and promote the No Use Empty campaign.</i></p> <p><i>KHG will research the use of technology in housing and health context to improve outcomes for service users.</i></p> <p><i>KHG will explore options for co-commissioning and improvements to processes to reduce repetition in commissioning across Kent, for example joint working for mental health provision or establishing a Kent wide commissioning plan.</i></p>	<p>Kent Housing Group / Kent Private Sector Housing Group</p> <p>Housing Health and Social Care Sub Group</p> <p>Kent Housing Group</p>	<p>Medium Term</p> <p>Medium Term</p> <p>Duration of Strategy</p>
3.	<p>Housing Vulnerable Groups</p> <p>Ageing Population</p>	<p><i>KHG will support collaborative working across the local authority areas to work in partnership through the newly established Housing, Health and Social Care Sub Group, to understand pathways through tenures, advice, placements and tenancy sustainment for the most vulnerable groups.</i></p> <p><i>KHG will review specialist housing provision with the assistance of KHOG to understand supply and eligibility criteria across Kent, to inform a refresh of the Kent Social Care Accommodation Strategy to include a range of vulnerable groups.</i></p> <p><i>KHG will work to provide greater choice for older people in Kent. Working with KCC, Medway, KPOG and KDG, KHG will work to understand the housing needs of older people, the size, types and affordability of accommodation required, to feed into Local Plans and ensure new homes developed are suitable for the growing ageing population.</i></p> <p><i>KHG will work with KCC Adult Social Care, through the review of the Kent Social Care Accommodation Strategy to map the extra care facilities across the County, to enable providers to explore a 'hub' approach to services from extra care facilities, making</i></p>	<p>Housing Health and Social Care Sub Group</p> <p>Kent Housing Group / Kent Housing Options Group</p> <p>Kent Housing Group</p> <p>Kent Housing Group</p>	<p>Short Term</p> <p>Short Term</p> <p>Medium Term</p> <p>Short – Medium Term</p>

		<p><i>better use of existing resources to support independent living and access to services.</i></p> <p><i>Through the Kent PSHG, KHG will understand good practice in understanding the needs of older home owners, and identify any impact this could have on the Better Care Fund, Disabled Facilities Grant and Fuel Poverty Strategy.</i></p>	Kent Private Sector Housing Group	Short – Medium Term
4.	Homelessness	<p><i>KHG will update the Agency Assessment Form and Temporary Accommodation Placements Policy, to reflect a partnership approach (to be developed through the KHOG and the Housing, Health and Social Care Sub Group) and to align with the prevention agenda.</i></p> <p><i>KHG will carry out research to establish routes to homelessness across Kent to support preventative work carried out across the group.</i></p>	<p>Kent Housing Group / Kent Housing Options Group / Housing Health and Social Care Group</p> <p>Kent Housing Group</p>	<p>Medium Term</p> <p>Medium Term</p>
5.	Maintain and Review the Existing KHG Strategies and Protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Housing For the Third Age Protocol</i> • <i>No Use Empty</i> • <i>Guide for Developing Affordable Homes in Rural Communities</i> • <i>Accessible Housing Framework</i> • <i>Fuel Poverty Strategy</i> 		
PARTNERSHIP WORKING				
<p>KHG will encourage members to share best practice and projects which are being undertaken by member organisations to tackle health inequalities and to support independence at home.</p> <p>KHG will work in partnership across all members to identify funding available to meet our objectives under this theme over the course of this strategy, including influencing future funding of the Better Care Fund and therefore DFG planning and exploration of the opportunities through ECO funding.</p> <p>KHG will encourage, where appropriate and in line with legislation, the sharing of data and information to inform bids for funding to support the delivery of the strategy, develop better ways of working across KHG, and to promote a closer working relationship between health providers and housing providers.</p>				

There are a number of organisations KHG will seek to involve in achieving our objectives under this theme, through publications, events and subgroups:

- Kent Energy Efficiency Partnership
- Kent Fire and Rescue Service, particularly given the likely changes to regulation post Hackitt Review
- Kent Environment Strategy
- National Prison Service
- Community Rehabilitation Service
- Mental health services
- Public health services
- Kent and Medway Adult Safeguarding Board
- SELEP
- Voluntary Sector

ASK OF GOVERNMENT

KHG will work with members to continue to be the 'voice of housing for Kent' and to liaise with Government to understand and ascertain future funding streams to support innovate work streams being undertaken throughout Kent and Medway

Kent and Medway Housing Strategy 2012 – 2015 (and Beyond) Achievements

Theme	Achievement
Managed Growth	<p>Neighbourhood Planning Guide produced and launched 2015</p> <p>The Kent Viability Protocol developed and launched 2013</p> <p>The Kent Planning Protocol developed and launched 2016</p> <p>Joint working and shared approaches between KCC and local authorities regarding Community Infrastructure Levy</p> <p>Exploration and establishment of Local Housing Companies across local authorities</p> <p>Joint working and contribution to the Red Tap Challenge, with a priority to reduce regulatory burden to assist in housing delivery.</p>
Place Making and Regeneration	<p>Kent Tenancy Strategy Framework produced in 2012</p> <p>Joint working through the Joint Policy and Planning Board with Kent Fire and Rescue Service to protect vulnerable households</p> <p>Establishment of the Kent Design Guide and website to promote consistent and innovation about design quality and resource efficiencies.</p>
Affordability and Choice	<p>Introduction of the Kent Local Authority Mortgage Scheme across a number of Kent local authorities</p> <p>Development and production of the Kent Housing Group Affordability Protocol 2018</p> <p>Monitoring and review of the impact of Welfare Reform through Kent Housing Group sub groups</p> <p>Continuous review and update of the Kent Housing Group Rural Affordable Housing Protocol 2018</p> <p>Exploration into the opportunity of Institutional Investment in Affordable Rent and Specialised Housing provision</p> <p>Promotion and sharing of good practice about successful Accreditation Schemes from across Kent and Medway</p>
Housing Renewal	<p>Think Housing First published by the Joint Policy and Planning Board 2013, a strategic document to plan and focus on how good housing can reduce health inequalities</p> <p>Kent Agency Assessment commissioned and agreed by all 12 local authorities, a mechanism for Health or Social Care Professional to refer clients to a local authority for assistance with appropriate housing solutions</p> <p>Advice and support for tenants in the Private Rented Sector with regards to improving the efficiency of their home</p> <p>Joint working to explore the opportunities and outcomes from the Green Deal funding to benefit residents of Kent and Medway</p> <p>Joint working and engagement of priorities through the Kent and Medway Sustainable Energy Partnership and Kent Energy Efficiency Partnership</p> <p>Development and publication of the Kent Fuel Poverty Strategy in 2016</p> <p>Continued support for the No Use Empty campaign, bring further empty home back into use across the county</p>

	County wide review of Disabled Facilities Grant to help maintain independence at home through prevention via Better Care Funding, undertaken in 2016
Housing Need	<p>Monitoring and review about the use and cost of temporary accommodation across the county, with regular reporting to Kent Leaders and Chief Executives</p> <p>The Temporary Accommodation Protocol was developed and published in 2018</p> <p>Maintaining dialogue with London Boroughs with regards to placements into Kent and Medway, to mitigate the impact</p> <p>Engagement with adult and youth offending services to reduce re-offending and reduce homelessness</p> <p>Development and publication of the Care Leavers Protocol in 2018 and Youth Homelessness Protocol in 2018</p> <p>Better Homes: Accessible Housing Framework developed and published in 2013</p> <p>Development and production of the Move on Tool Kit with the Joint Policy and Planning Board to prepare residents to move on from supported to independent living</p> <p>The Kent Accommodation Strategy was published in 2014, setting the strategic direction for and to enable delivery of suitable housing and care provision for all KCC Adult Social Care client groups</p> <p>The Offender Protocol was developed by the Joint Policy and Planning Board in 2013</p> <p>Joint working across organisations to promote and provide housing advice and options for ex service personnel and the introduction of the Kent Civilian Military Covenant</p> <p>Better Housing for Better Health, Annual Public Health Report 2016</p>

In addition to the achievements listed Kent Housing Group through its events programme and in partnership with relevant organisations and sectors provides and facilitates access to training and information sessions which are linked to many of the key objectives outlined in both the last edition of the Kent and Medway Housing Strategy and this new strategy document. Key to delivery of all objectives is keep abreast of new and emerging national and local policy, sharing and exploring good practice through learning and striving to improve on current service delivery standards.

Implementation of the Kent and Medway Strategy

This strategy has been developed directly by the Kent Housing Group with engagement and input from across the range of membership organisations and those who work jointly with the group or have a vested interest in the future strategic direction of housing across Kent and Medway. To ensure continued commitment and to achieve the objectives laid out within the strategy Kent Housing Group have sought endorsement of this strategy from our member's most senior representation, including housing association Board Members, Kent Chief Executives and Kent Leaders.

The monitoring of progress and the updating of this strategy will be undertaken by the Kent Housing Group, and reported to the afore mentioned senior representatives at regular intervals. Kent Housing Group have committed to work collaboratively across its membership to promote the priorities and deliver the objectives and will also therefore work in partnership with the Kent Planning Officers Group, the Kent Developers Group, Kent County Council, the South East Local Enterprise Partnership and other relevant groups or bodies that will support the aims of this strategy.

To assist with monitoring progress against the objectives and to track the impact of this strategy the Kent Housing Group will develop a dashboard of key indicators, as has been the case with the last edition of the strategy. The proposed indicators will include data on number of dwelling completions; number and type of tenancies allocated; housing need data; house price and sales data; number of homelessness applications; placements in temporary accommodation; empty homes brought back into use and category one hazards.

Kent Housing Group will develop an implementation plan that will set out how the strategy objectives and key action points will be delivered. The implementation plan will be used to support feedback on progress across the Kent Housing Group membership and partnership organisations.

Partnership Working – Key Partnerships and Organisations

The context of this strategy has been developed from a broad range of colleagues, groups and organisations and Kent Housing Group are very proud and committed to continue joint working and collaborative engagement to deliver against the identified strategic objectives for housing across Kent and Medway.

Links to other Strategies and Frameworks

A number of strategies and frameworks across Kent and Medway that this housing strategy links with, form the evidence base for and support, these include the following:

A Guide to Developing Affordable Homes in Rural Communities	https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/protocols/guide-developing-affordable-homes-rural-communities/
Better Homes: Accessible Housing Protocol	https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/protocols/better-homes-accessible-housing-framework/
Better Homes: Housing for the Third Age	https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/protocols/older-adults-work/
Better Housing for Better Health	https://www.kpho.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0007/70819/2016_Annual_Public_Health_Report_summary.pdf

Care Leavers Housing Protocol	https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/protocols/care-leavers-housing-protocol/
Case for Change	https://kentandmedway.nhs.uk/stp/caseforchange/
Children in Care Sufficiency Strategy	https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/childrens-social-work-and-families-policies/children-in-care-sufficiency-strategy
Delivering Growth, The Kent Planning Protocol	https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/protocols/delivering-growth-kent-planning-protocol/
Development and Infrastructure, Creating Quality Places	https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/regeneration-policies/development-and-infrastructure
Domestic Abuse Strategy	https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/community-safety-and-crime-policies/domestic-abuse-strategy
English Housing Strategy	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/laying-the-foundations-a-housing-strategy-for-england--2
Foundations DFG Review	https://wwwFOUNDATIONS.uk.com/media/5665/dfg-review-2018-main-report-final-nov-2018a.pdf
Homes England Strategic Plan	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/homes-england-strategic-plan-201819-to-202223
Housing LIN	https://www.housinglin.org.uk/
Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy	https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/health-policies/joint-health-and-wellbeing-strategy
Joint Protocol for Homeless 16 and 17 Year Olds	https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/protocols/joint-protocol-homeless-16-17-year-olds/
K & M STP	https://kentandmedway.nhs.uk/stp/
K&M Energy & Low Emissions Strategy	https://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/energyandlowemissionconsultation/consultationHome
K&M Growth & Infrastructure Framework	https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/environment-waste-and-planning-policies/growth-and-infrastructure-framework-gif
Kent Accommodation Strategy for Adult Social Care	https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/protocols/better-homes-greater-choice-kent-social-care-accommodation-strategy/
Kent Active	https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/transport-and-highways-

Travel Strategy	policies/active-travel-strategy
Kent Community Led Planning Guide	https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/protocols/kent-community-led-planning-guide/
Kent Design Guide	https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/regeneration-policies/kent-design-guide
Kent Fuel Poverty Strategy	https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/protocols/kent-fuel-poverty-strategy/
Kent Integration Pioneer	https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/health-policies/kent-integration-pioneer
Kent Viability Protocol	https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/protocols/kent-viability-protocol/
Live it Well	https://shareweb.kent.gov.uk/Documents/adult-Social-Services/mental-health-services/live it well strategy %20final.pdf
Medway Development Strategy	https://www.medway.gov.uk/downloads/download/289/development_strategy
Medway Strategic Plan for Older People	https://www.medway.gov.uk/downloads/file/353/strategic plan for older peoples in medway
SELEP Economic Strategy Statement	https://www.southeastlep.com/SmarterFasterTogether
Temporary Accommodation Placing Protocol	https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/protocols/temporary-accommodation/
The Kent Environment Strategy	https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/environment-waste-and-planning-policies/environmental-policies/kent-environment-strategy
The Kent Housing Group Affordability Protocol	https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/protocols/kent-housing-group-affordability-protocol/
Think Housing First	https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/protocols/think-housing-first/
Valuing People Now	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/valuing-people-a-new-strategy-for-learning-disability-for-the-21st-century
Your Life Your Wellbeing	https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/adult-social-care-policies/your-life-your-wellbeing
Your Life Your Wellbeing	https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/adult-social-care-policies/your-life-your-wellbeing

Glossary

Affordable Housing	Housing which is either for sale or for rent, or a combination of the two, at below current market values provided to specific eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Typically it takes the form of low cost homeownership or below market rent.
Affordable Rent	A flexible form of tenure which enables social housing landlords to grant flexible tenancies, charged at up to 80% of market rent and on non-permanent tenancies.
Better Care Fund (BCF)	The Better Care Fund (BCF) provides financial support for councils and NHS organisations to jointly plan and deliver local services.
Better Homes: Housing for the Third Age	A Kent wide framework developed by the Kent Housing Group and Joint Policy and Planning Board to help facilitate and enable the delivery of high quality accommodation for older people.
Community Infrastructure Levy	A planning charge which allows local authorities to raise funds from developers undertaking new building projects in their area. The money can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure that is needed as a result of a new development.
Community Right to Build	An initiative that enables communities to take forward local development without applying for planning permission if there is overwhelming community support and minimum criteria are met.
Department of Health (DOH)	The DoH supports Government Ministers in leading the nation's health and social care to help people live more independent, healthier lives for longer.
Disabled Facilities Grant	Grants issued by local authorities to disabled people to enable adaption of homes to support independent living.
FirstBuy	A shared equity loan initiative to enable first time buyers to purchase a new build property, using an equity loan for 20% of the property purchase price.
Green Deal	Government initiative to enable private firms to offer consumers energy efficiency improvements to their homes, community spaces and businesses at no upfront cost, and recoup payments through a charge on instalments on their energy bill.
Help to Buy	
Homes England	Homes England is an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, formerly the Homes and Communities Agency.
HomeBuy	The Governments range of shared ownership housing schemes, now replaced by Help to Buy.
Homelessness Reduction Act 2017	Legislation that sets out the statutory responsibility of local authorities for assisting homeless households.

Housing Needs Assessment	Studies carried out by local housing authorities to assess future local housing requirements, in particular in relation to affordable housing.
Infrastructure	The fundamental facilities and systems serving a country, city, or other area, including the services and facilities necessary for its economy to function. Infrastructure is composed of public and private physical improvements such as roads, bridges, tunnels, water supply, sewers, electrical grids, and telecommunications.
Joint Policy and Planning Board for Housing	A former Kent wide forum where strategic issues requiring joint working between housing health and social care were raised and measures to address identified issues then developed in partnership.
Kent and Medway Civilian Military Partnership Board	The Kent & Medway Civilian Military Partnership Board actively oversees and implements the Kent Community Covenant and the Medway Community Covenant. The Board works hard to ensure serving and ex-armed forces personnel and their families can enjoy equal access to public services as the civilian community and are not disadvantaged as a result of being in the military.
Kent and Medway Growth and Infrastructure Framework	A county wide document that provides a picture of emerging development and infrastructure requirements, to support growth across Kent and Medway, up to 2031.
Kent Choice Based Lettings Partnership	A Kent wide partnership between local authorities and local housing associations enabling people on housing registers to bid for available social and affordable rented properties.
Kent Developers Group	A unique association that comprises land and property owners, developers of commercial spaces as well as residential and mixed use schemes across the county. Together they work alongside public sector partners including Kent County Council, Homes England and the Environment Agency.
Kent Energy Efficiency Partnership (KEEP)	A group with representation from all Kent local authorities, which supports the development of programmes to reduce both energy use and fuel poverty.
Kent Homechoice	The choice-based lettings service for local authority and housing association homes in Kent.
Kent Housing Group (KHG)	A Kent wide social housing forum which serves to represent the collective voice of housing across Kent and Medway. Representation is from all local authorities, Medway Unitary Authority, Kent County Council, over 13 housing associations amongst others.
Kent Housing Options Group (KHOG)	A Kent wide subgroup of the Kent Housing Group with a specific focus on homelessness and housing options.
Kent Planning Officers Group (KPOG)	A strategic county wide forum bringing together planning officers from all local authorities, who consider Kent wide planning issues and work in partnership with other Kent wide groups.
Kent Private Sector Housing Group (KPSHG)	A Kent wide subgroup of the Kent Housing Group with a specific focus on the private sector.

Local Government Association (LGA)	The LGA are the national voice of local government, working with councils to support, promote and improve local government.
Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England	The Coalition Government housing strategy which sets out ambitions to intervene in the housing market to enable delivery of homes, supporting the focus for choice and quality and improving environmental standards and design quality.
South East Local Enterprise Partnership	The South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) is one of 38 LEPs, the biggest LEP outside London, established to provide the clear vision and strategic leadership to drive sustainable private sector-led growth and job creation in their area.
Local Housing Allowance	Housing benefit usually paid to people who rent in the private rented sector.
Local Housing Authorities	Authorities with direct responsibility for delivery housing within their areas, in Kent this is the district and boroughs and Medway Unitary Authority.
Local Housing Strategy	A statutory document that is produced by local authorities and sets out their future local housing priorities, including key housing issues such as affordable housing.
Local Needs Housing	Housing that meets the housing needs of the local community and businesses.
Local Plan	Local plans are prepared by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) and should provide a positive vision for the future of each area and a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities.
Local Planning Authorities	Authorities with direct responsibility for delivering planning within their areas, in Kent this is the district and boroughs and Medway Unitary Authority.
Localism Act 2011	Government (Coalition) legislation which provided greater power to local authorities and neighbourhoods, giving local communities control over housing and planning decisions and radically altered the housing regime.
Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)	MHCLG is a ministerial department, supported by 13 agencies and public bodies
Move-on Accommodation	Settled longer term housing that vulnerable people move into when they leave supported housing or temporary accommodation.
National Landlords Association	Independent national organisation for private residential landlords.
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	Revised (2019) national framework for the planning system in England.
New Burdens Funding	The government will provided £72.7 million to local authorities to meet the new burdens costs associated with the additional duties contained within the Homelessness Reduction Act.

New Homes Bonus Scheme	The New Homes Bonus is a grant paid by central government to local councils to reflect and incentivise housing growth in their areas. The New Homes Bonus is currently paid each year for 6 years
National Health Service (NHS)x`	The National Health Service is the publicly funded national healthcare system for England and one of the four National Health Services for each constituent country of the United Kingdom. It is the largest single-payer healthcare system in the world
No Use Empty	A Kent wide initiative which helps bring back empty properties across the county back into use.
Private Accredited Letting Scheme	An accreditation scheme that aims to encourage and support landlords in attaining and maintaining good standards of letting when renting homes privately.
Registered Providers	All providers of social and affordable housing.
Right to Buy	The Government scheme that enables social housing tenants to purchase their homes at below market value via a discount.
Rural Homes: A Guide to developing Rural Housing	A countywide protocol of fact sheets that provides advice about how to enable development of affordable homes in rural communities, revised in 2019.
Section 106 Agreement	A legal agreement under section 106 of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act between a planning authority and a developer, which ensures that certain extra works related to a development are undertaken.
Shared Ownership	A form of low cost home ownership where a share of a home is purchased and rent is paid on the remaining balance.
Social Mobility	Social mobility is the movement of individuals, families, households, or other categories of people within or between social strata in a society.
Starter Homes	Starter Homes is a government initiative that aims to provide up to 200,000 affordable new-build homes to first-time buyers in England by 2020. The properties will be built on brownfield land and sold at a 20% discount compared to the market price in the area.
Successful Communities	Communities with a mix of tenure, income levels, and household types supported through appropriate infrastructure and community development initiatives and resources.
Supported Housing	Accommodation provided to vulnerable people assessed by the local authority as being in need of residential care.
Tax Increment Funding (TIF)	A method that enables local authorities to borrow against future gains in business rates to finance current development.
Tenancy Strategy	A strategy that local authorities once had to produce, setting out issues that housing associations had to have regard to when setting their own tenancy policies.
Universal Credit	Universal Credit is a payment to help with living costs, it is paid monthly and to be eligible you need to be on a low income or out of work.