MAIDSTONE
Borough Council

REPORTS FOR DECISION BY THE
CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION

Date Issued: **10 December 2009**

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A Record of Decision will be issued following the conclusion of 5 clear working days from the date of issue of the Report

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MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION

REFERENCE FROM THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENT ADVISORY GROUP

Date Issued: 10 December 2009

1. ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2008/09

1.2 On 2 December 2008, the Local Development Document Advisory Group considered the report of the Assistant Director of Development and Community Strategy regarding the submission of the Annual Monitoring Report ("AMR") to the Secretary of State.

1.3 Some Members of the Group had requested amendments and a copy of these were circulated at the meeting. The members concerned explained the reasoning behind the amendments. The Group were informed that a programme of re-surveying the ancient woodland areas will take place over the next 3 years and this would result in changes to the relevant indicator.

1.4 Following the meeting, a rogue figure was identified in the AMR housing trajectory (table 3.8). The figure 1,836 was incorrectly inserted into the SHLAA column for the year 2012/2013. As a result, the subsequent figures in the table were incorrectly calculated. The figures in table 3.8 have now been recalculated and the associated graphs (figures 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3) amended. The amended table and graphs have been attached for your convenience. The corrected trajectory still demonstrates that the Council is able to achieve the 11,080 requirement.

1.5 The amended AMR is attached at Appendix A.

RESOLVED: That the Cabinet Member for Regeneration be recommended to approve the Annual Monitoring Report for submission to the Secretary of State, subject to the following amendments (text to be deleted has been struck out and replacement text is highlighted in yellow):-

i) Para 2.11: People who live or work in Maidstone earn more than the ~~in~~ Kent average (excluding Medway). Earnings continued to increase from 2007 to 2008 (latest figures). There is however a marked disparity (10.42%) between those who work in Maidstone and those who commute to London or elsewhere ~~People who live in Maidstone earn more than those who work in Maidstone. This is because people who live in Maidstone often commute to London and elsewhere to work.~~ In 2008, the average Maidstone resident earned £23,975 and the average person who worked in Maidstone earned £21,713, ~~this is a disparity of 10.42%.~~

ii) Para 2.13: However, Maidstone's Growth Point status will attract new investment for regeneration and improved transport links. Surprisingly despite the towns proximity to London (2.11 above) 46.1% (2001 census)

of all journeys to work are made within Maidstone Borough. ~~This is a relatively high rate given the town's proximity to London.~~

iii) Para 4.14: However, ==such== conditions are unnecessary if ==either the new build is on the footprint of the existing building or demolition was clearly stated in the plans.== ~~for the remaining dwellings because they are either being built on the footprint of the existing dwelling or it was clearly stated in the plans that the existing dwelling would be demolished.~~

iv) Para 4.10: Work being undertaken for the Town Centre Study recognises ==Maidstone's rivers== ~~the river~~ as a key asset and will look to improve access to the river==s==.

v) Tables 2.5 and 3.14: To incorporate figures for semi-natural ancient woodland if data is available.

vi) Para 4.8: The word "potential" be removed from the last line.

This document is produced by

Maidstone Borough Council

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Contents

Introduction

1.1 Maidstone's Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) provides a framework with which to monitor and review the effectiveness of Development Plan policies in addressing local circumstances over the monitoring period 1st April 2008 to 31st March 2009. The AMR is submitted to the Secretary of State by 31 December 2009, so there is an inevitable time lag between 31 March 2009 and when the AMR is submitted and published. Whilst the data is a correct statement of conditions over the monitoring period the situation may have changed in the last nine months for certain indicators such as employment and house prices due to the unprecedented change in the economic situation.

1.2 The AMR should assess whether policies in the Development Plan and related targets or "milestones" set out in the Local Development Scheme have been met or whether progress has been made in meeting them. Where targets are not being met or are not on track to be achieved, the AMR must set out the reasons why and the appropriate action to be taken. Chapters 2 to 4 of this document cover the period 1st April 2008 to 31st March 2009, whilst chapter 5 reviews the Local Development Scheme programme.

1.3 The AMR should address the impact policies are having on national, regional and local policy targets, with a particular emphasis on demonstrating how policies will deliver new housing. The document ought to consider whether local policies need adjusting or replacing because they are not working as intended, and whether policies need to be reviewed to reflect changes in national or regional policy. If changes are necessary, then the AMR must set out the actions needed to achieve this. The AMR is a vital part of the "Plan, Monitor, Manage" process, providing a review of whether policies are working. The policies subject to this review include saved Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan policies (September 2007) and policies contained in adopted LDF documents.

1.4 The Report should not set out the detail of how policies might be revised or amended, but it should clearly set out the steps that will be taken to address such concerns.

1.5 The AMR is structured as follows:

- Contextual indicators demonstrate the wider social, environmental and economic characteristics of the Borough.

- Core Output Indicators are defined through national policy guidance and the indicators must be collected on a consistent time frame.

- Local Indicators address policies and local issues not covered by Core Output Indicators.

- The review of the Local Development Scheme assesses the progress of the timetable for preparing local development documents. It should demonstrate whether or not the Council has met its key milestones (or targets) for the production of documents. If the Council has failed to meet any of its milestones, the AMR should explain why,and new priorities should be reflected in any review of the Local Development Scheme.

Contextual Indicators

2.1 Contextual indicators establish the broader descriptive character of Maidstone Borough in terms of the social, environmental and economic characteristics of Maidstone. The following section includes statistics and commentary used to analyse each indicator. Many of the indicators illustrate historic trends and compare Maidstone with Kent, the South East and England. The contextual indicators are confined to key characteristics of the area and local issues, setting the scene for planning the future development of Maidstone Borough. The issues raised in this section are addressed in the Core Indicators and Local Indicators sections of the AMR, which monitor in more detail the development of the Borough during 2008/09.

2.2 Maidstone is the County Town of Kent and an important administrative and commercial centre. The Borough has a population of 142,800 [1] and a dwelling stock of 63,781 (as at 2009). The Borough comprises one main urban area, located to the north west of the Borough, together with a large number of large and small villages located in its extensive rural hinterland. The characters of the built and natural environments vary considerably.

2.3 The protection of Maidstone's rural environment and biodiversity are important issues for the Council because the Borough is the subject of a number of environmental constraints, including Metropolitan Green Belt, the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Special Landscape Areas and Areas of Local Landscape Importance. Furthermore, parts of the borough adjacent to its rivers lie within a floodplain and contain nature designations, such as the Special Area of Conservation, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Local Wildlife Sites. Strategic policies also restrict development through defined Strategic Gap and southern anti-coalescence policies. These constraints are illustrated on figure 2.1. It may appear from this map that there are some areas of the borough that are unconstrained but Maidstone comprises large swathes of best and most versatile agricultural land, including areas of grades 1 and 2 agricultural land.

2.4 National policies require local authorities to make the best use of previously developed land in urban areas before releasing greenfield sites for development, so the quality and protection of the built environment is also an important consideration for the Council to avoid "town cramming".

2.5 Maidstone Borough has direct rail links to London and the proximity of the capital is a factor in shaping the local economy, house prices and travel. Two designated growth areas, Thames Gateway to the north and Ashford to the east, will also have an increasing effect on the economy, environment and growth of Maidstone Borough.

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1 Source: ONS Resident Population Estimates, Mid 2008

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2.6   Whilst Maidstone has transport links to London and the coast via two railway lines and the M20 motorway, it suffers from congestion in the town. Further and improved infrastructure will be necessary for Maidstone to grow and sustain the quality of life and assist movement.
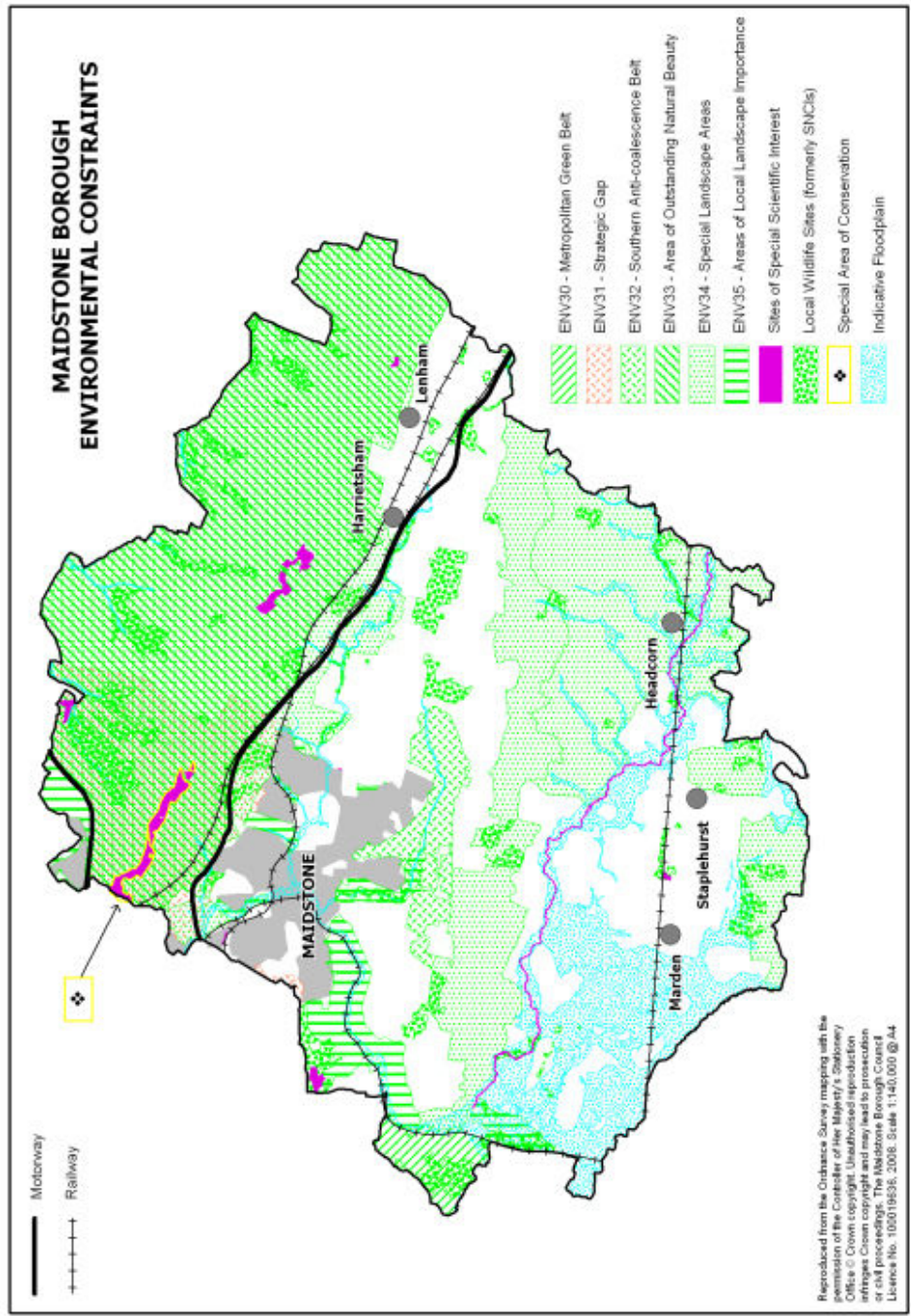
Figure 2.1 Maidstone Environmental Constraints

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Demographic Structure

Population change from 2006-2026
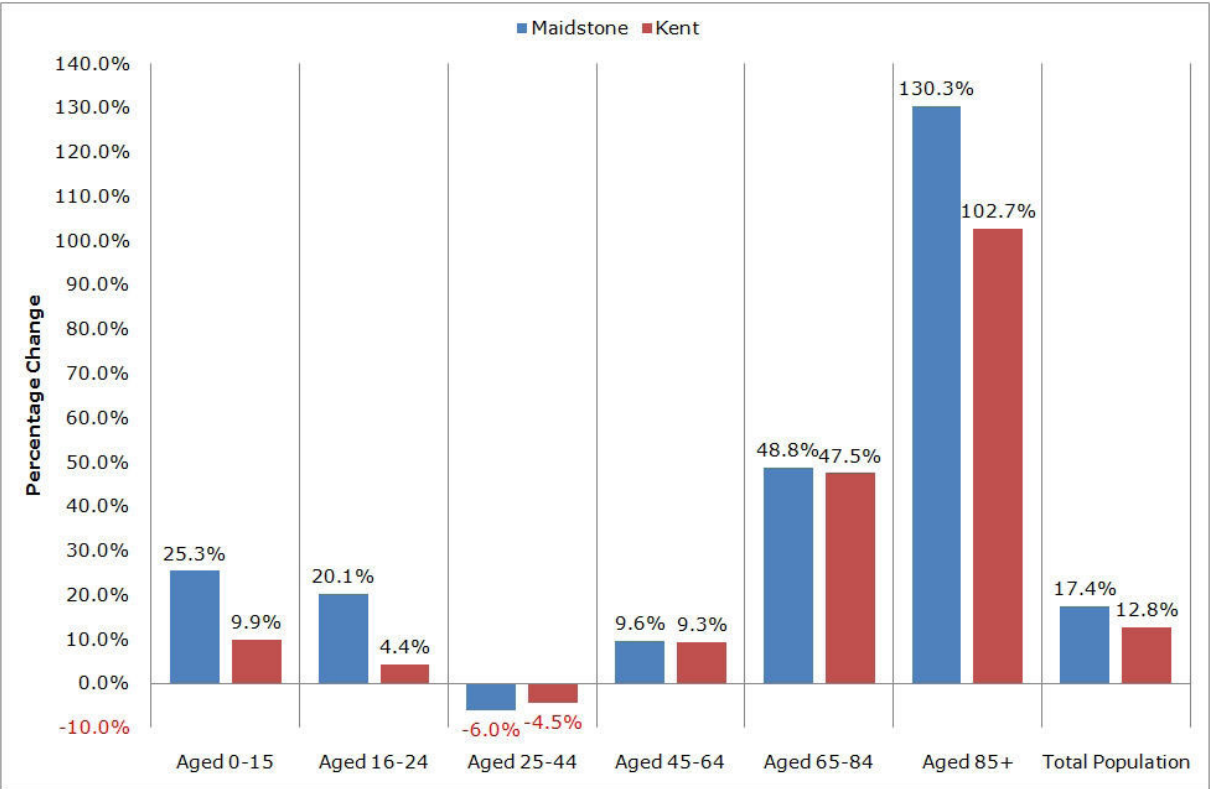
Figure 2.2 Population change in Maidstone and Kent 2006-2026

Change in number of households and size 2006-2026

	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	Change
Households	59,200	62,000	64,700	67,400	70,200	
Household Change		+2,800	+2,700	+2,700	+2,800	+11,000
% Change		+4.73%	+4.36%	+4.17%	+4.15%	18.58%

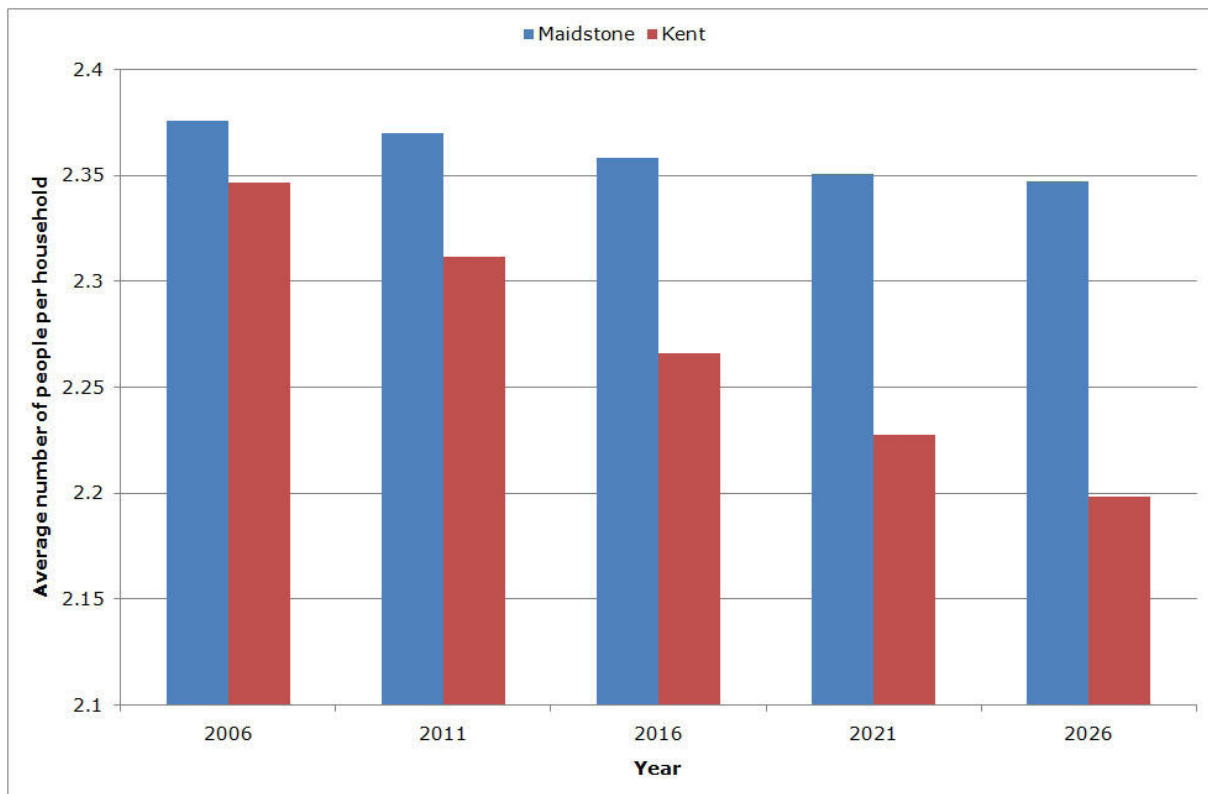Table 2.1 Household projections in Maidstone 2006 to 2026

Figure 2.3 Change in average household size in Maidstone and Kent 2006-2026

2.7   The population statistics in figure 2.2, table 2.1 and figure 2.3 are forecasts published in September 2009 by Kent County Council, based on the South East Plan housing target for Maidstone of building 11,080 dwellings between 2006 to 2026. The number of households is forecast to rise more than the level of population growth in the same period. Overall, the total population in Maidstone will grow by 17.4% between 2006-2026 and the number of households will increase by 18.58% over the same period. The contrast in population and household increases is due to a predicted continued decrease in household size caused by an increase in single person households as elderly people live longer, people separate and divorce, and young people form single person households. The decrease in household size in Maidstone is not as significant as in Kent as a whole. In Kent, the total population will grow by 12.8% and the total number of households will increase by 18.58%. The ageing population is not unique to Maidstone, although the percentage increase in this sector of the community in Maidstone is greater than Kent which clearly has implications for services, particularly the health service.

Socio-Cultural Issues

Crime

Crime type	Maidstone			Kent (including Medway)	South East	England
	2007/08	2008/09	% change	% change	% change	% change
Violence against person	2,353	2,131	-9.43	Not Comparable		
Robbery	97	72	-25.77	-11.90	6.15	-5.32
Burglary (dwelling)	364	304	-16.48	-7.78	1.20	1.70
Theft of a motor vehicle	410	419	2.20	-12.98	-13.37	-13.24
Theft from a vehicle	759	784	3.29	-8.62	-7.49	-8.37

Table 2.2 Crime Statistics (Source: National Statistics) Note: Kent figures totalled from individual districts statistics

2.8   Between 2007/08 and 2008/09 there has been a fall in the number of offences for violence against the person. The number of offences for robbery and burglary (from a dwelling) has also decreased more significantly in Maidstone than in Kent. In contrast, there have been slight increases in regional and national figures. The number of thefts of motor vehicles and thefts from motor vehicles in Maidstone has increased but declined in Kent, the South East and England.

2.9   The Council addresses local crime and disorder through the Safer Maidstone Partnership, which has published the Maidstone Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy (2005-2008) and reviewed in the Review and Action Plan 2007/08. In Maidstone there is a robust approach to tackling domestic violence and in managing the largest and most dynamic night time economy in the county. It is also important to "design out" crime in all new developments, and this issue will be addressed throughout LDF policy documents.

Unemployment

	Maidstone	Kent (including Medway)	South East	England
No. Unemployed August 2009	2,465	34,981	454,766	1,548,678
% Rate Unemployed (Residential)	2.8	3.5	3.7	4.2
No. Change since 2008	1,295	16,314	200,658	654,000
% Change since 2008	110.7	87.4	79.0	73.1

Table 2.3 Unemployment Statistics (Source: Kent County Council)

2.10 Unemployment has more than doubled in Maidstone over the last year, although the percentage of resident unemployment in Maidstone is still lower than in Kent, the South East and England.
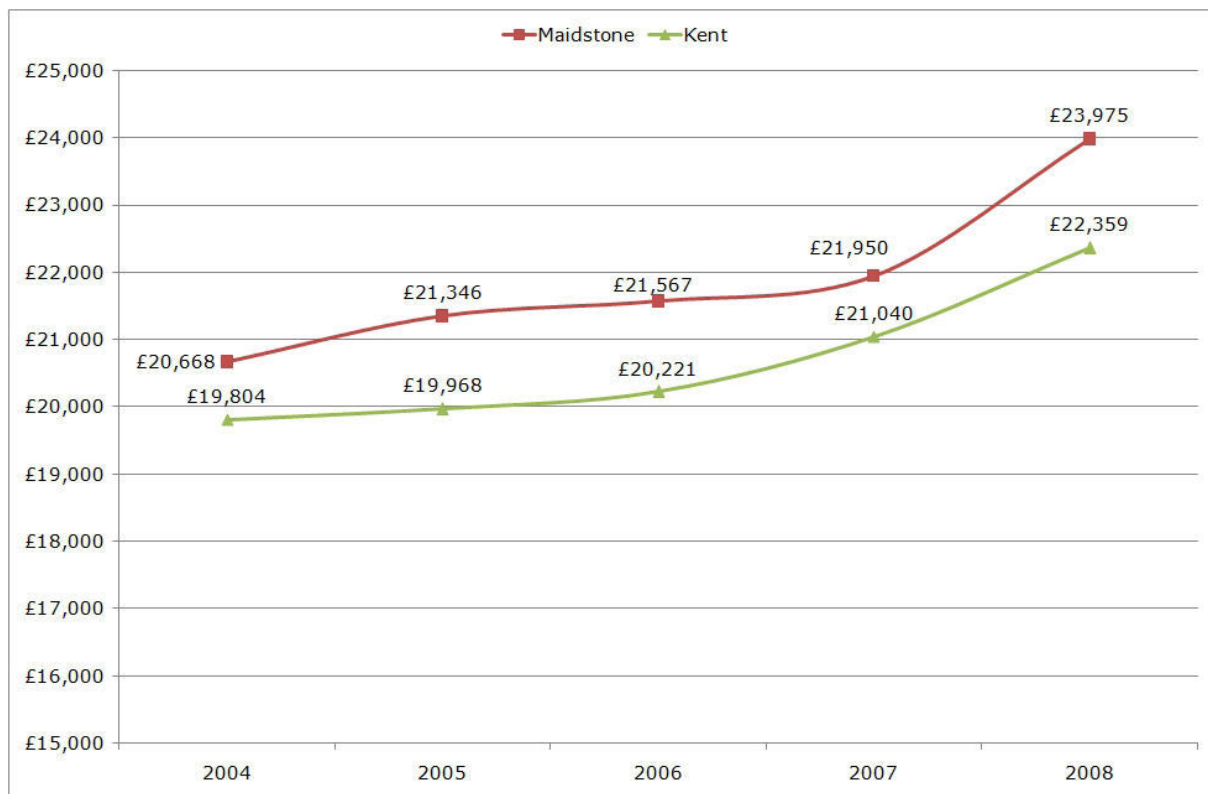
Earnings

Figure 2.4 Residents Annual Earnings figures from 2004-2008 - Maidstone compared to Kent (exluding Medway) (source: Office of National Statistics)
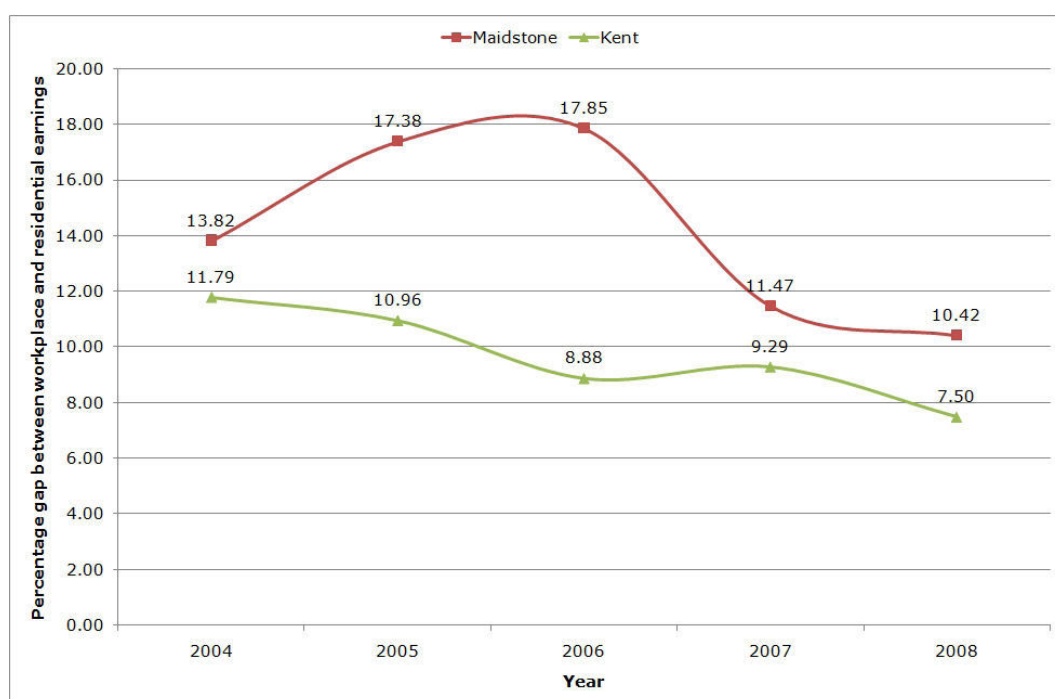
Figure 2.5 The percentage difference between Resident and Workplace Based Annual Earnings (2008) Maidstone compared to Kent

2.11   People who live or work in Maidstone earn more than the Kent average (excluding Medway). Earnings continued to increase from 2007 to 2008 (latest figures). There is however a marked disparity (10.42%) between those who work in Maidstone and those who commute to London or elsewhere. In 2008, the average Maidstone resident earned £23,975 and the average person who worked in Maidstone earned £21,713. The gap between residential and workplace earnings in Maidstone was greater than in Kent where the difference was 7.50% in 2008. Figure 2.5 shows that the disparity between workplace and residential earnings has narrowed since 2006 for Maidstone and since 2007 for Kent.

2.12   The Gavurin Maidstone State of the Economy Report (2008) stated that people working in banking, finance and insurance and manufacturing were likely to be the people commuting out of Maidstone for work. People travelling into Maidstone for work were likely to be those working in public administration, education and health, transport and communication and hotels and restaurants.

2.13   Maidstone's direct rail links to London and the proximity of the capital are factors in shaping the local economy, house prices and travel. Designated growth areas in Thames Gateway and Ashford, together with restraints on employment in Maidstone, could encourage greater commuting on a congested transport network. However, Maidstone's Growth Point status will attract new investment for regeneration and improved transport links. Surprisingly despite the towns proximity to London (2.11 above) 46.1% (2001 census) of all journeys to work are within Maidstone Borough. The

higher wages brought in by residents commuting out can contribute to forcing up house prices, causing problems of affordability. A balanced economy is an important aim for the Council. Based on current trends new jobs will be created in the service sector, so most new jobs are likely to be in non-business class premises rather than the traditional employment land used by offices and industry that continue to offer relatively low pay.

GCSE results

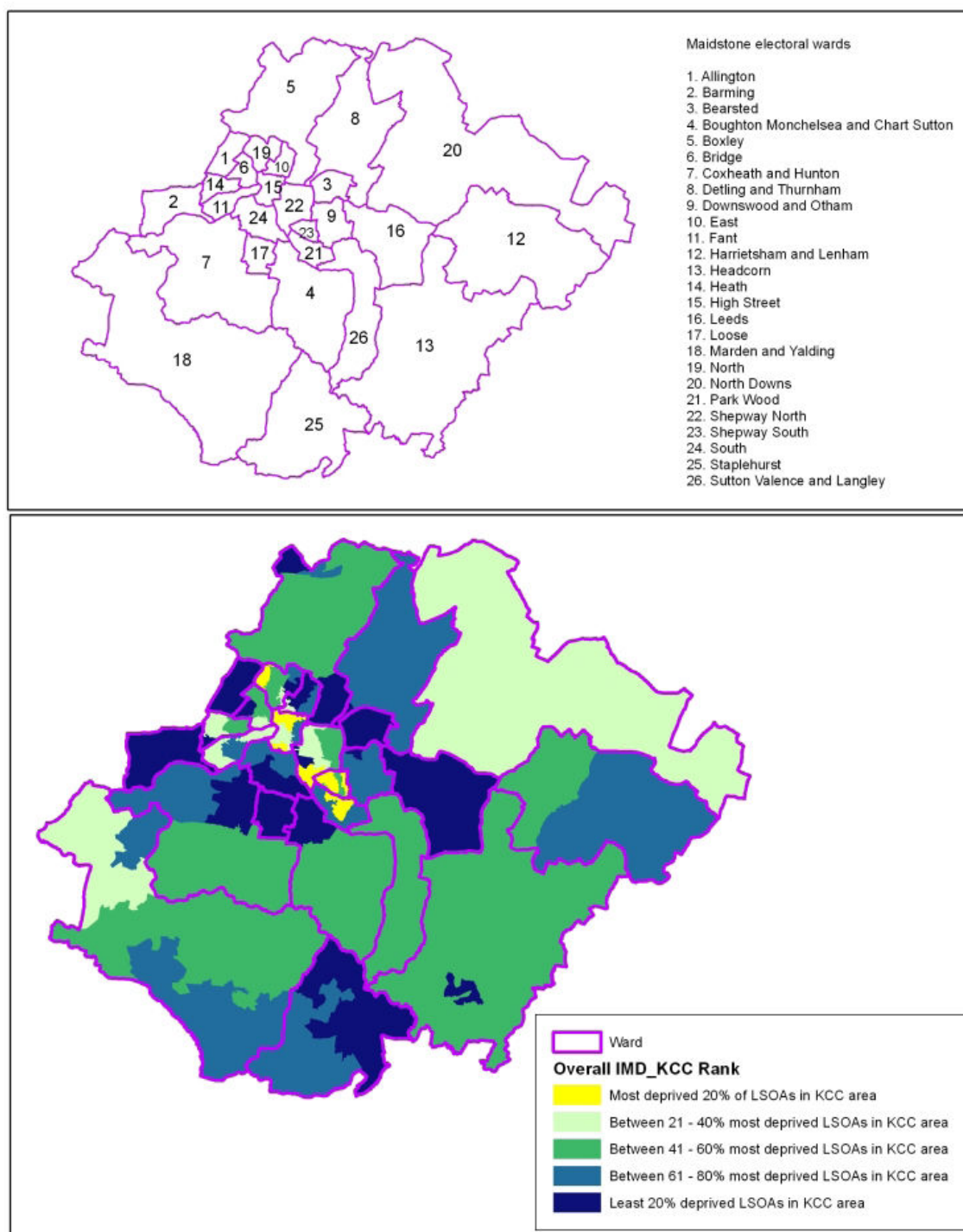|	Maidstone	Kent (including Medway)	South East	England
September 2007 to August 2008	71.6%	66.4%	66.1%	65.3%
September 2006 to August 2007	68.4%	63.4%	62.1%	62.0%
September 2005 to August 2006	65.0%	59.6%	59.5%	58.5%
September 2004 to August 2005	64.9%	57.6%	57.6%	56.3%
September 2003 to August 2004	60.7%	54.3%	55.3%	53.7%

Table 2.4 GCSE and Equivalent Results for Young People Achieving 5+ A* - C (Source: Government Neighbourhood Statistics) Note: Results in 2006/07 and 2007/08 are not comparable with previous years due to a shift from age-based reporting to stage based reporting

2.14   Maidstone's GCSE results overall show a greater achievement in gaining 5 or more subjects at grades A* to C when compared to county, regional and national statistics.

Multiple Deprivation

2.15   Compared to Kent (excluding Medway) urban wards contain the highest levels of deprivation in the borough. The most deprived lower super output areas are located in North, High Street, Shepway North, Shepway South and Parkwood wards. However, North ward and Shepway North ward also contain lower super output areas of least deprivation. An objective of the new Sustainable Community Strategy adopted in 2009 is to tackle health, education and employment inequalities in areas of disadvantage. In Parkwood residents will take a lead in facilitating 'Planning for Real' community involvement exercises which will inform a Neighbourhood Action Plan to be completed in March 2010. Maidstone Borough Council is working in partnership with Maidstone Housing Trust, Kent County Council and the Police to co-ordinate this exercise.

Maidstone electoral wards

1. Allington
2. Barming
3. Bearsted
4. Boughton Monchelsea and Chart Sutton
5. Boxley
6. Bridge
7. Coxheath and Hunton
8. Detling and Thurnham
9. Downswood and Otham
10. East
11. Fant
12. Harrietsham and Lenham
13. Headcorn
14. Heath
15. High Street
16. Leeds
17. Loose
18. Marden and Yalding
19. North
20. North Downs
21. Park Wood
22. Shepway North
23. Shepway South
24. South
25. Staplehurst
26. Sutton Valence and Langley

Ward

Overall IMD_KCC Rank

Most deprived 20% of LSOAs in KCC area

Between 21 - 40% most deprived LSOAs in KCC area

Between 41 - 60% most deprived LSOAs in KCC area

Between 61 - 80% most deprived LSOAs in KCC area

Least 20% deprived LSOAs in KCC area

Source: Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007, Communities and Local Government (CLG)
Map produced by The Analysis and Information Team, Kent County Council
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Kent County Council

Figure 2.6 County rank (excluding Medway) of Lower Super Output Areas in Maidstone Borough based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007 (source: Kent County Council)

Economy

House Prices and Sales
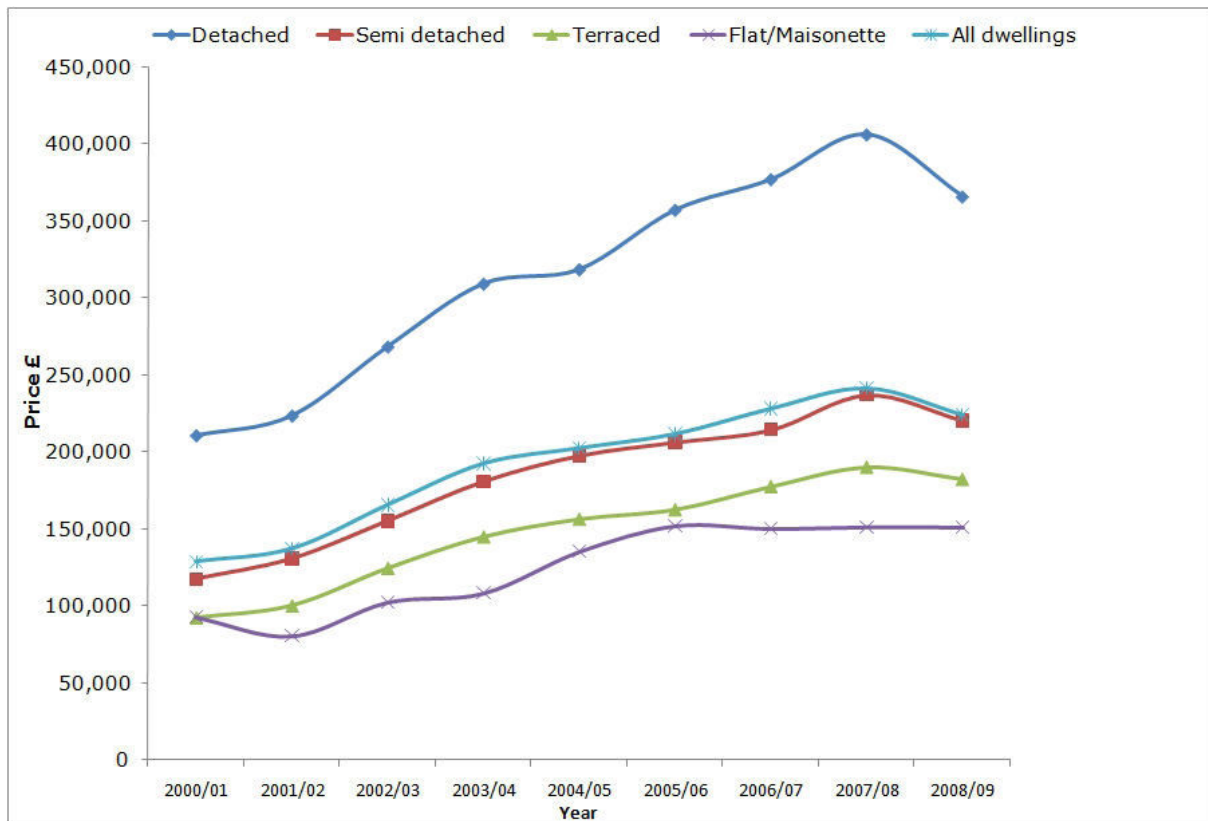
Figure 2.7 Maidstone Annual House Price Change (source: Land Registry)
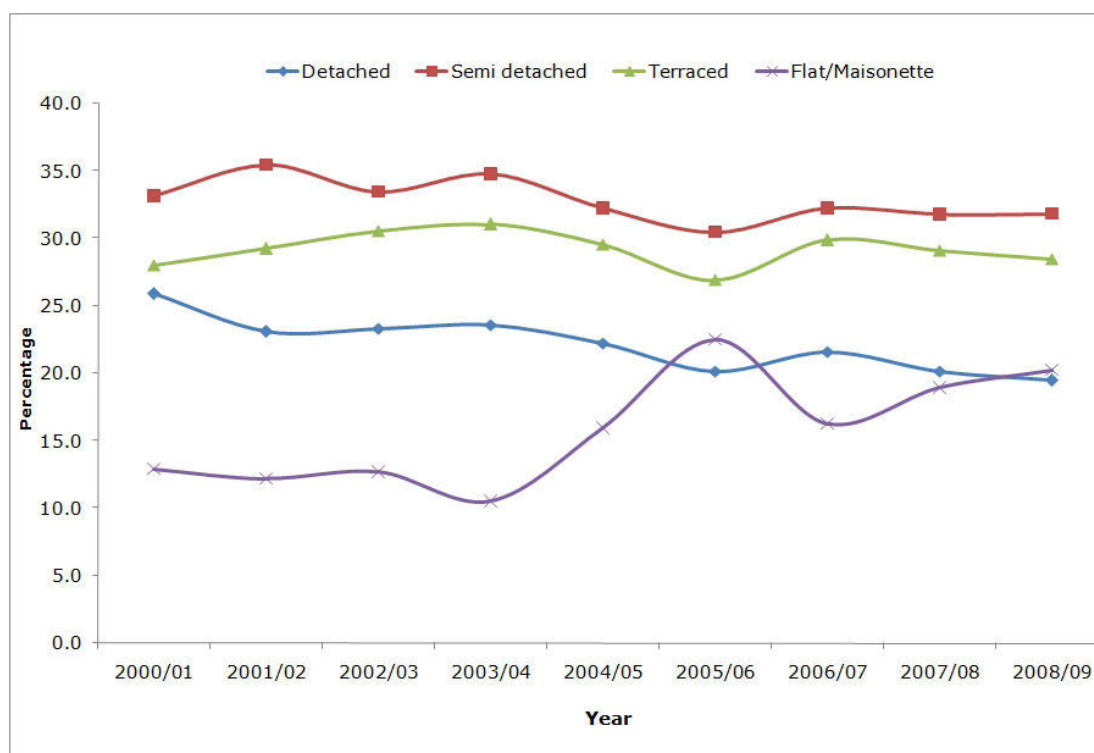
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Figure 2.8 Maidstone house sales as a percentage of total sales by type of property (source: Land Registry)

2.16 House prices rose steeply in Maidstone until 2007/08. During 2008/09 house prices decreased for all types of dwellings especially detached houses. Total sales declined dramatically during 2008/09 from 3,379 in 2007/08 to 1,659 in 2008/09 (Land Registry). During 2008/09 flats/maisonettes accounted for a higher percentage of sales than detached houses, reflecting the release of high density urban sites for development in recent years.

2.17 The average cost of a property in Maidstone in 2008/09 was £223,848 compared to £241,257 in 2007/08. The average cost of a flat was £151,119 in 2008/09 compared to £151,235 2007/08. As the price of flats/maisonettes has remained relatively stable,based on a 95% mortgage and a 3 times gross income to lending ratio, a person would still have to be earning nearly £48,000 to buy a flat in an averaged priced area of Maidstone. The average annual salary of a worker in Maidstone is £21,713. [2]. A large proportion of the population does not earn enough to purchase a flat, even in the cheapest areas of Maidstone. Restricted mortgage lending during the recession has made purchasing a house even more unattainable for the average person. The Housing Needs Survey (2005) demonstrated a marked increase in affordable housing need since the previous survey

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2   'Workplace' figures refer to people who are employed in Maidstone regardless of where they live.

had been undertaken in 2001. The provision of affordable housing is a key priority for the Council, which is being addressed through the adopted Affordable Housing DPD.

Environment

Natural Environmental Assets

Natural Environment Assets	km²	%	Number
Total Area of Borough	393.40	100.00	
Metropolitan Green Belt	5.29	1.34	
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	107.19	27.25	
Special Landscape Areas	200.21	50.89	
Areas of Local Landscape Importance	15.01	3.82	
Floodplain	47.72	12.13	
Ancient Woodland (semi-natural and replanted)	31.24	7.94	
Special Area of Conservation	1.37	0.35	1
Sites of Special Scientific Interest	2.70	0.69	9
Local Wildlife Sites (formerly Sites of Nature Conservation Interest)	22.62	5.75	58
Roadside Verges of Nature Conservation Interest			34
Local Nature Reserves			2

Table 2.5 Key Assets of the Natural Environment (source: Maidstone Borough Council)

2.18 Much of Maidstone's rural area is constrained by its high quality landscape and strategic policy constraints (see figure 2.1), as well as the rich biodiversity of the Borough. The measurement of the floodplain area has been refined as a result of the detailed Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (May 2008).

2.19 Environmental constraints must be taken into account in the Council's plans for growth and a balance struck between the need for growth and the need to protect a high quality environment.

Local Nature Reserves

2.20 Local Nature Reserves (LNR) are already established at Vinters Valley Park and Boxley Warren. Maidstone is also considering the designation of further LNRs (table 2.5), although no formal decisions on future designations have yet been made. However, the River Len reserve is currently an informal reserve which is intended to be formally declared as an LNR in the near future. The River Len is a habitat for a rare fauna including water vole, white-legged damselfly and Desmoulin's whorl snail.

Potential Local Nature Reserve	Location
Admiral and Gorham Wood	Bicknor
Dove Hill Wood	Boxley
Horish Wood	Boxley/Detling
Bredhurst Wood	Bredhurst
Fant Wildlife Area	Maidstone
Five Acre/Wents Wood/Weavering Heath	Maidstone/Boxley
Hayle Place Stud Farm	Maidstone
Mote Park	Maidstone
Palace Wood	Maidstone
River Len Reserve	Maidstone
Senacre Wood	Maidstone
Sandling Park	Maidstone
Bell Lane Nature Area	Staplehurst
Lime Trees Open Space Ponds	Staplehurst
Poyntell Ponds	Staplehurst
Four Oaks Wood	Sutton Valence

Table 2.6 Potential Local Nature Reserves Under Consideration

Housing and the Built Environment

Vacant private sector property

Figure 2.9 Vacant private sector property as a percentage of all private sector

2.21 The percentage of private sector vacant dwellings in Maidstone steadily fell until 2006, but rose in 2007 and increased again in 2008. There were 724 vacant private sector properties in 2008, which have been empty for six months or more. This figure has now reduced to 660 vacant units as at 1st April 2009. There were 1,985 empty properties at 1 April 2009, most of which were unsold flats.

Number of Households on the Housing Register (Waiting List)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Maidstone	2,562	1,764	2,079	2,290	2,863
Kent (including Medway)	36,377	42,576	36,888	38,408	N/A
South East	181,196	195,700	208,419	203,161	N/A

Table 2.7 Number of Households on the Housing Register (Waiting List) (source: Kent County Council/Maidstone Borough Council)

2.22 The number of households on the Housing Register has increased since 2008. There are 2,863 households on the Housing Register in 2009, which is an indication of the need for affordable housing in the borough. This issue is being addressed through the Affordable Housing DPD.

Homeless households

	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Maidstone	293	174	53	41	37
Kent (not including Medway)	2,322	1,607	1,241	1,260	N/A
South East	12,420	9,330	6,660	5,510	N/A

Table 2.8 Homeless Households (source: Kent County Council/Maidstone Borough Council)

2.23 The number of homeless households has decreased since 2008.

2.24 In November 2007, 511 households were living in overcrowded conditions, which decreased to 219 in August 2008 (source: Maidstone Borough Council). In November 2009, there were 927 housing register cases awarded overcrowding points, affecting a total of 1,150 children. In most cases the overcrowding is (probably) a household with one child living in a one bedroom property. However, there are 183 cases where there is more than one child involved. Children over 16 have a right to their own room.

Built environment assets

Built Environment Assets	Numbers
Conservation Areas	41
Listed Buildings	2,016
Grade I	42
Grade II*	103
Grade II	1,871
Scheduled Ancient Monuments	28
Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest	6
Important Historic Parks and Gardens	9

Table 2.9 Assets of the Built Environment (source: Maidstone Borough Council)

2.25 The quality and protection of the built environment is an important consideration for the Council. The Borough has a large number of historically listed buildings and 41 Conservation Areas, of which 6 are located in or adjacent to the urban area. In June 2009, the Peugeot car showroom, a white tiled art deco building located next to the old millpond was classified as a grade II listed building. In July 2009, the former London and County Bank, 18 High Street, an 1860s Edwardian, Art-Nouveau-style building was also grade II listed.

2.26 Maidstone has numerous built environment assets, which should be maintained and protected.

Maidstone Borough Profile

2.27 Whilst the contextual indicators highlight a number of the borough's important features, the protection, enhancement and regeneration of Maidstone's key assets need to be carefully monitored and managed. These socio-economic and environmental issues are interdependent but they can be broadly grouped into the following themes: housing, employment, transport, the built environment and the countryside. These themes are monitored and evaluated in greater detail in the Core Output Indicator and Local Indicator chapters.

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Core Output Indicators

3.1   Core Output Indicators are set by national policy guidance, which cover issues of business development and town centres, housing and environmental quality.

Business Development and Town Centres

Core Output Indicator BD1: Total amount of additional floorspace - by type

To show the amount and type of completed employment floorspace (gross and net).

	B1a (offices not within A2) m^2	B1b (Research & Development, studios, laboratories, hi-tech) m^2	B1c (Light industry) m^2	B2 (General Industry) m^2	B8 (Storage or distribution) m^2	Total m^2
Gross	10,603	1,048	5,160	1,640	19,749	38,200
Net	6,175	1,048	2,008	-2,181	10,199	17,249

Table 3.1 Total amount of additional floorspace 2008/09 (source: Maidstone Borough Council)

3.2   During 2008/09 there has been a net gain in completed employment floorspace:17,249m^2 compared to 5,168m^2 during 2007/008. Most of the net gain has been in use class B8 (storage or distribution). A new warehouse in Marden accounts for a significant quantity of this gain, and a Parkwood storage company has also extended its B8 floorspace. A unit in Marden changed use from B2 (Light Industry) to B8, accounting for most of the net loss of B2. New office headquarters at Eclipse Park accounts for a large proportion of the completed B1a (office space). A research and development company has located at Newnham Court, accounting for most of the increase in B1b (Research & Development, studios, laboratories, hi-tech) completed floorspace. The quantity and quality of employment land throughout the borough is subject to further analysis as part of the evidence base for the Core Strategy and other Local Development Documents.

Core Output Indicator BD2: Amount of employment floorspace on previously developed land - by type

To show the amount and type of completed employment floorspace (gross) coming forward on previously developed land (PDL).

	B1a (offices not within A2) m^2	B1b (Research & Development, studios, laboratories, hi-tech) m^2	B1c (Light industry) m^2	B2 (General Industry) m^2	B8 (Storage or distribution) m^2	Total m^2
Gross	6,256	189	4,143	112	19,081	29,781
% gross on PDL	59.00%	18.03%	80.29%	6.83%	96.62%	52.15%

Table 3.2 Amount of Floorspace on Previously Developed Land 2008/09 (source: Maidstone Borough Council)

3.3   52.15% of employment floorspace (gross) was completed on previously developed land in 2008/09. This compares to 97.09% in 2007/08, 66.5% in 2006/07, 74.39% in 2005/06 and 100% in 2004/05. This significant decline of completed development on previously developed land is because more employment floorspace has come forward on agricultural land during 2008/09. This demonstrates that Maidstone cannot sustain very high percentages of development on brownfield sites, particularly given a need for better placed new sites that are located to suit modern employment needs. A proportion of greenfield land will be required for new sites that will be allocated for development in Local Development Documents.

Core Output Indicator BD3: Employment land available - by type

To show the amount and type of employment land available.

	A2/B1 (Offices)	B2 (General Industry)	B8 (Storage or distribution)	Total
Sites Allocated m^2	25,800	11,100	0	36,900
Hectares	2.58	1.11	0	3.69

Table 3.3 BD3(i) Sites allocated for employment uses in the Local Plan 2008/09 (source: Maidstone Borough Council) NB: Use class categories will be refined in future AMRs

	B1a (offices not within A2)	B1b (Research & Development, studios, laboratories, hi-tech)	B1c (Light industry)	B2 (General Industry)	B8 (Storage or distribution)	Total
Sites for which planning permission has been granted (net) m^2	31,068	187	6,079	16,408	-4,117	49,625
Hectares	3.11	0.02	0.61	1.64	-0.41	4.96

Table 3.4 BD3(ii) Site for which planning permission has been granted for employment uses, but not included in (i) 2008/09 (source: Maidstone Borough Council)

3.4   The amount of employment land allocated for employment uses in the Local Plan remains unchanged from 2007/08. The greatest proportion of planning permissions has been granted for B1a office use. The Council will address the need for suitable employment sites in the Core Strategy and and other Local Development Documents.

Core Output Indicator BD4: Total amount of floorspace for 'town centre uses'

To show the amount of completed floorspace (gross and net) for town centre uses within (i) town centre areas and (ii) the local authority area.

	A1 (Shops) m²	A1 (Shops) m²	A2 (Financial and Professional Services) m²	A3 (Restaurants and Cafés) m²	A4 (Drinking Establish-ments) m²	A5 (Hot food Take-aways) m²	B1a (Offices not within A2) m²	D2 (Assembly and Leisure) m²	Total
	Net Tradeable Floorspace: Sales space which customers have access to (excluding areas such as storage)	**Gross Internal Floorspace**: The entire area inside the external walls of a building and includes corridors, lifts, plant rooms, mezzanines, services accommodation e.g. toilets but excludes internal walls							
Gross	3,146	3,146	770	638	64	98	10,603	1,249	19,714
Net	1,422	1,231	-781	547	-247	-457	6,175	929	8,819

Table 3.5 BD4(ii) Town Centre uses in Maidstone Borough 2008/09 (source: Maidstone Borough Council)

3.5 (i) Maidstone does not yet have a defined town centre area for planning policy purposes, so it is not possible to monitor BD4(i). The town centre boundary will be defined in the Core Strategy.

3.6 (ii) The definition of 'town centre' use is specified in the Core Output Indicators guidance (update 2/2008) published by Communities and Local Government. This definition excludes use classes A3 (restaurants and café), A4 (drinking establishments) and A5 (hot food take-aways). However, to gain an understanding of all use classes, these uses have been monitored in addition to use classes A2, B1a and D2 specified in the BD4 Core Indicator. Overall, there has been a net gain in the total amount of floorspace for the defined 'town centre uses' in the Local Authority area during 2008/09. There have been net losses in use classes A2 (financial and professional services), A4 (drinking establishments) and A5 (Hot food take-aways). The losses in the A2 and A5 use classes have been to other employment use classes or mixed use with residential development. Two pubs (A4) have been redeveloped for residential use during 2008/09.

Housing

Core Output Indicator H1: Plan period and housing targets

To show the planned housing period and provision.

Start of Plan Period	End of Plan Period	Total Housing Requirement	Source of Plan Target
01/04/2006	31/03/2026	11,080	South East Plan

Table 3.6 Plan period and housing target

3.7   The South East Plan published in May 2009 requires that 11,080 dwellings are built in Maidstone Borough between 2006-2026, representing an increase in requirement from the draft target of 10,0800.

Core Output Indicator H2

(a): Net additional dwellings - in previous years

To show recent levels of housing delivery.

(b): Net additional dwellings - for the reporting year (2008/09)

To show levels of housing delivery for the reporting year.

(c): Net additional dwellings - in future years

To show likely levels of housing delivery

This information should be accompanied by the **(i) area (in hectares)** and **(ii) the annualised plan target applying to each of the 5 years**. *NB: (i) data for area (in hectares) is unavailable.*

(d): Managed delivery target

To show how likely levels of future housing are expected to come forward taking into account the previous years performance.

	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Net additional dwellings - in previous years	379	816	756	714	992	441

Table 3.7 Core Output Indicator H2a & b: Number of Net Additional Dwellings
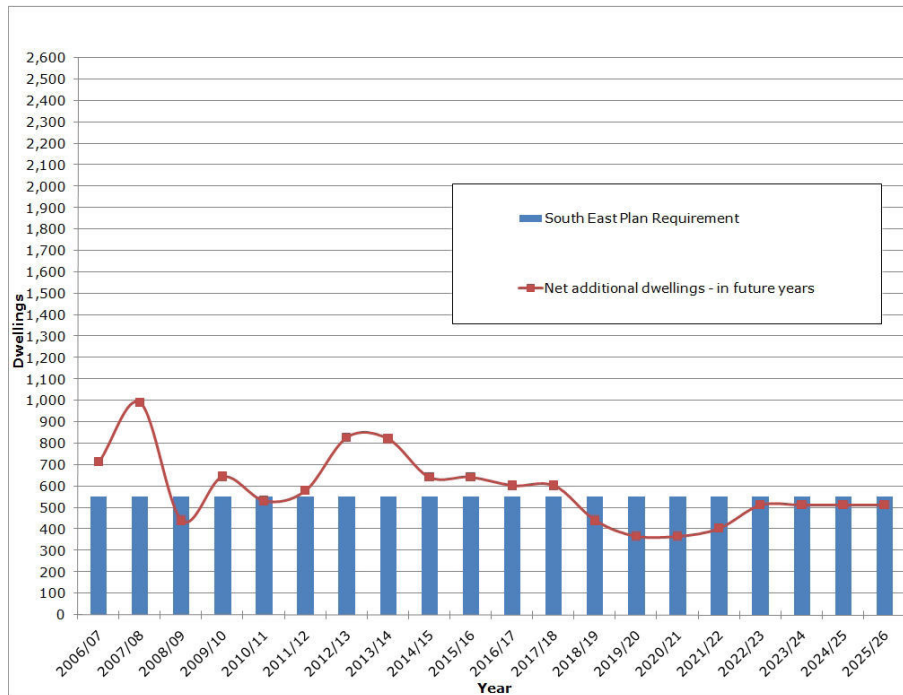
Figure 3.1 Housing land supply (completions and estimated land supply) against South East Plan requirement 2006 to 2026 (source: Maidstone Borough Council)
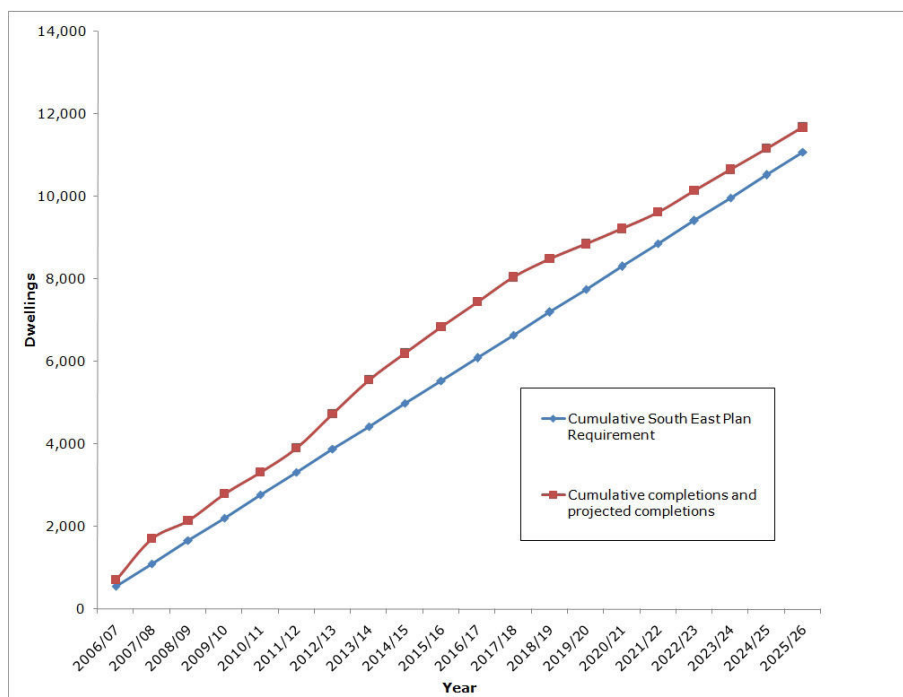

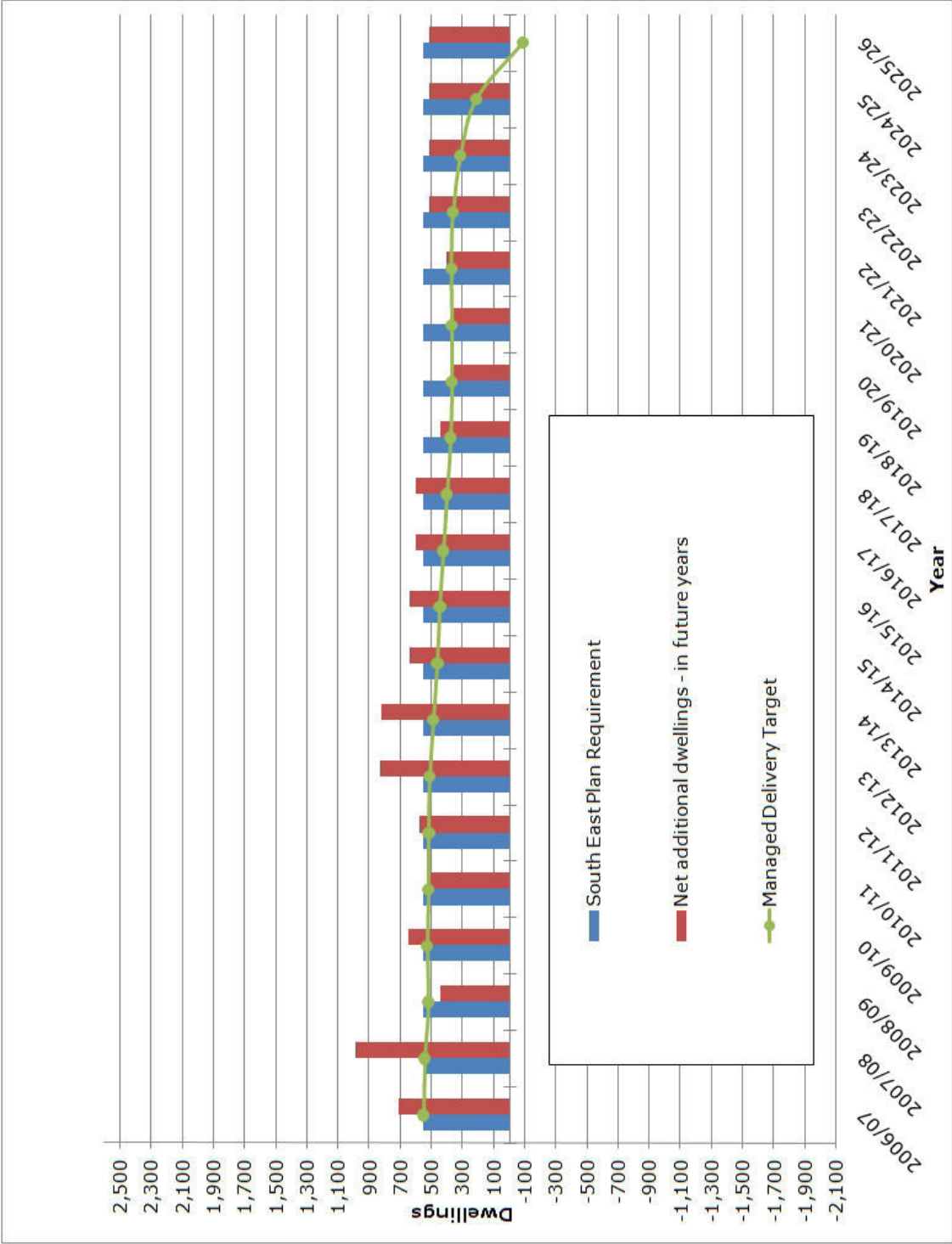Figure 3.2 Maidstone Cumulative Housing Requirement v Supply (source: Maidstone Borough Council)

Figure 3.3 Maidstone Borough Housing Trajectory (Based on CLG Model) (source: Maidstone Borough Council)

	H2c (c): -Target (South East Plan requirement) (c)	Cumulative South East Plan requirement	Annual completions and consents	H2(c)(i): Area (ha) - consents	SHLAA	Windfall	H2c (a): Net additional dwellings - in future years	Cumulative completions and projected completions	H2d: Managed Delivery Target p.a.	Years remaining	
2006/2007	554	554	714				714	714	554	20	actual
2007/2008	554	1,108	992				992	1,706	546	19	actual
2008/2009	554	1,662	441				441	2,147	521	18	actual
2009/2010	554	2,216	645	16.53			645	2,792	525	17	current year
2010/2011	554	2,770	532	10.49			532	3,324	518	16	year 1
2011/2012	554	3,324	581	35.48			581	3,905	517	15	year 2
2012/2013	554	3,878	528	13.33	300		828	4,733	513	14	year 3
2013/2014	554	4,432	291	6.42	530		821	5,554	488	13	year 4
2014/2015	554	4,986	113	1.54	530		643	6,197	461	12	year 5
2015/2016	554	5,540	114		530		644	6,841	444	11	
2016/2017	554	6,094	73		530		603	7,444	424	10	
2017/2018	554	6,648	73		530		603	8,047	404	9	
2018/2019	554	7,202	72		368		440	8,487	379	8	
2019/2020	554	7,756			368		368	8,855	370	7	
2020/2021	554	8,310			368		368	9,223	371	6	
2021/2022	554	8,864			368	36	404	9,627	371	5	
2022/2023	554	9,418			368	145	513	10,140	363	4	
2023/2024	554	9,972			368	145	513	10,653	313	3	
2024/2025	554	10,526			368	145	513	11,166	214	2	
2025/2026	554	11,080			368	145	513	11,679	-86	1	
	11,080		5,169		6,510		11,679				

Table 3.8 Annual Housing Trajectory for South East Plan Requirement (Core Output Indicator H2c and H2d) (source: Maidstone Borough Council)

Annual Monitoring Report 2008/09

3.8 Figure 3.1 shows annual dwelling completions and projected completions in Maidstone against South East Plan requirements. Housing land supply consists of outstanding planning permissions that have yet to be implemented, and is informed by the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) published in May 2009. The SHLAA is an evidence document that looks at what land is potentially available for development in the Borough and assesses that land to see if in principle it is available, deliverable and developable. The SHLAA identifies sites on that basis alone, and does not apply further planning and sustainability criteria. The sites in the SHLAA are not allocations, these are made through the development plan process. The land supply also includes an allowance for windfall sites from 2021/22 onwards.

3.9 Annual build rates fluctuate, so figure 3.2 demonstrates how Maidstone is meeting the cumulative South East Plan requirement. The trajectory shows the Borough will in fact have met its requirement by 2026. However, whilst Maidstone can meet its housing targets over the plan period as a whole, rates of delivery slow in the medium term resulting in a need to allocate strategic sites in the Core Strategy to maintain a rolling 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites.

3.10 In the longer term the SHLAA figures will be refined through the Core Strategy and other land allocation documents to ensure targets are met. The housing trajectory in table 3.8 and figure 3.3 compares actual and projected net annual housing completions against the South East Plan annual requirements over the 20 year period. The green line of the graph (figure 3.3) shows the number of completed dwellings needed each year to meet South East Plan targets.

3.11 The trajectory examines, on an annual basis, how many additional dwellings will be needed at any one point in time to meet the housing requirements remaining over the period of the plan. For example, in 2008/09 cumulative completions are 2,147. Subtract this figure from the total requirement over the plan period (11,080) and the remaining balance to provide for is 8,933 units. In 2008/09 there are 17 years to run to the end of the plan period, so the Council needs to build at a rate of 525 units per annum to meet the final target of 11,080 dwellings (8,933/17 years).

3.12 Maidstone's housing land supply has been assessed against emerging South East Plan housing requirements. Annual completion rates fluctuate according to market conditions and construction rates for property types. For example, a block of flats will be under construction for a longer time period than the equivalent number of houses that will steadily add to completion rates. The 2007/08 monitoring period had the highest ever housing completion figure at 992, due to the high volume of flats built in that year. The economic downturn has most likely contributed to a reduction in completions of 441 in 2008/09. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) took account of market trends when looking in more detail at the deliverability of housing projections.

Core Output Indicator H3: New and converted dwellings - on previously developed land

To show the number of gross new dwellings being built upon previously developed land (PDL)

	% Brownfield	% Greenfield
2004/05	96.8	3.2
2005/06	94.5	5.5
2006/07	96.6	3.4
2007/08	86.8	13.2
2008/09	88.9	11.1
2004/05 to 2008/09	92.7	7.3

Table 3.9 Percentage of Completed Dwellings on Previously Developed Land (Brownfield)
(source: Maidstone Borough Council)

3.13 A high proportion of units in the borough have been completed on brownfield sites, consistently since 2004/05. During 2008/09, 489 dwellings (gross) were built on brownfield sites.

3.14 High levels of housing development on previously developed land are expected to continue in advanced of allocating greenfield sites through Local Development Documents. Maidstone will not be able to maintain such a high percentage of brownfield development in the longer term. Nor should it have to, when national targets and the South East Plan seek an average target of 60% of new dwellings on previously developed land.

3.15 The ability to rely so heavily on previously developed land will end over the next few years as LDF documents that allocate land are adopted, as Maidstone will need to look towards the release of a proportion of greenfield sites to meet South East Plan housing targets.

Core Output Indicator H4: Net additional pitches (Gypsy and Traveller)

To show the number of Gypsy and Traveller pitches delivered.

	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Pitches with permanent consent	10	0	9
Pitches with permanent consent and personal condition	2	3	0
Total	12	3	9

Table 3.10 Net additional pitches (source: Maidstone Borough Council)

3.16 The Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment indicated a need for some 32 pitches in the borough for the 5 year period between 2006 and 2011. Table 3.10 shows that significant progress has been made in the first three years of that period. The South East England Partnership Board is progressing a Partial Review of the South East Plan which will confirm the Borough's requirement for Gypsy and Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople pitches for the period 2006 to 2016. The Partial Review is due to be completed by late 2010/early 2011.

Core Output Indicator H5: Gross affordable housing completions

To show affordable housing delivery.

3.17 Maidstone's Housing Needs Survey (2005) demonstrated that local plan policies were not meeting its need for affordable housing. The Survey showed that affordable housing need represented 173% of the Borough's total housing supply at that time. In order to assist in addressing this need, the Council adopted an Affordable Housing DPD (2006). Policy AH1 seeks 40% affordable housing on sites yielding 15 units or more, or of 0.5 hectare or greater.

Social rent homes provided	Intermediate homes provided	Affordable homes Total (gross)
187	19	206
90.78%	9.22%	

Table 3.11 Gross Affordable Housing Completions 2008/09 (source: Maidstone Borough Council) Figures reported to SEPB

	All dwellings completed (net)	Affordable dwellings completed (net)	Percentage of affordable dwellings completed
2004/05	816	114	13.97%
2005/06	758	56	7.39%
2006/07	714	147	20.59%
2007/08	992	205	20.66%
2008/09	441	204	46.25%

Table 3.12 Affordable Dwellings Completed as a Percentage of All Completed Units (source: Maidstone Borough Council)

	No. all units (net) secured through new planning consents for sites of 15+ units	No. affordable housing units (net) secured on new planning consents for sites of 15+ units	Percentage of affordable housing units secured
2006/07	58	23	39.70%
2007/08	247	132	53.44%
2008/09	509	202	39.69%

Table 3.13 Affordable Dwellings Secured as a Percentage of New Planning Consents determined according to Policy AH1 (source: Maidstone Borough Council)

3.18   206 (gross) affordable dwellings were <u>completed</u> during 2008/09, including 77 dwellings secured by Section 106 legal agreements, 112 dwellings acquired without legal agreement, and 17 on small sites for which a Section 106 was not required. New Build Homebuy/Shared ownership properties are included in the figures because they are included in the Affordable Housing DPD definition of intermediate housing. These figures do not include large Maidstone Housing Trust regeneration schemes at Bell Road or Coombe Road.

3.19   Policy AH1 requires 60% of the total affordable housing requirement for each site to provide for socially rented units. During 2008/09, 90.78% of the affordable units completed fell into the socially rent category due to the high proportion of dwellings purchased by Registered Social Landlords.

3.20 Completion rates fluctuate according to market conditions and construction rates for property types. Often the affordable housing element of a larger site is associated with a particular phase of the development, so affordable units are not built evenly over the construction period. Consequently, to measure the success of the Council's affordable housing policy, the number of affordable housing units <u>secured</u> on new planning permissions are monitored. On sites of 15+ units or 0.5+ hectare, 202 (net) affordable dwellings (39.69%) have been secured in 2008/09 in accordance with Policy AH1. In addition, 17 affordable dwellings have been granted during 2008/09 on sites of less than 15 units.

Core Output Indicator H6: Housing Quality - Building for Life Assessments

To show the level of quality in new housing development.

3.21 This information is not available for 2008/09. The indicator will be monitored once the council has an assessor or assessors trained by CABE. CABE plans to train Local Authorities over the coming three years, and is prioritising training in Growth Point areas. The South East England Partnership Board envisages that there will potentially be a lack of data in the short term. CABE states that the Building for Life tool will be used to assess and score developments at the pre-planning discussion stage. Upon completion of development the site would be visited; at this stage the original assessment can be referred to and, providing the site has not changed from pre-planning discussions, the score will still apply. The site may require re-assessment and a new score applied upon completion.

Environmental Quality

Core Output Indicator E1: Number of planning permissions granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on either flood defence grounds or water quality

To show numbers of developments which are potentially located where (i) they would be at risk of flooding or increase the risk of flooding elsewhere and, (ii) adversely affect water quality.

3.22 The Environment Agency initially objected to five applications granted during 2008/09 but the objections were subsequently withdrawn for four of these applications subject to the submission of further information and/or conditions.

3.23 One planning permission was granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency. The Environment Agency objected to the residential mooring at Allington Pump Station on the grounds that the site is located

within a zone 3 flood risk area, and that during a flood event there would be no means of safe access to the mooring by groups such as the emergency services, or means of egress by the occupants which could result in harm to life. This was not considered to be a robust reason of refusal in the context given the character of the development, which was assessed as being water compatible; the history of the site; and the location of the permanent residential mooring in close proximity to Allington Marina, and would not therefore result in a new or substantially increased level of risk to occupants or emergency services. A condition requiring a flood event plan covering both evacuation of the residential mooring and access for emergency vehicles and crews was required within 3 months of the date of approval.

3.24 There were no objections to planning applications on the grounds of water quality.

3.25 The Council will continue to monitor the number of planning permissions that are granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency, and will include conditions in the interest of flood defence where appropriate.

Core Output Indicator E2: Change in areas of biodiversity importance

To show losses or additions to biodiversity habitat.

3.26 Areas of biodiversity importance across the borough of Maidstone include Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Local Wildlife Sites (LWS), Local Nature Reserves (LNR) and Ancient Woodland.

3.27 The borough currently does not have any National Nature Reserves (NNR), Special Protection Areas (SPA) or Ramsar Sites (RS).

3.28 There have been no additions or losses of biodiversity important sites during 2008/09 (Table 3.14).

Areas of biodiversity importance	Number of Sites	Area (Ha)	Loss (No.)	Loss (Ha)	Addition (No.)	Addition (Ha)
SAC	1	142	0	0	0	0
SSSI	9	278	0	0	0	0
LWS	58	2363	0	0	0	0
LNR	2	116	0	0	0	0
Ancient Woodland (semi-natural and replanted)	N/A	3124	N/A	0	0	0

Table 3.14 Areas of biodiversity importance across the borough 2008/09

Core Output Indicator E3: Renewable energy generation

To show the amount of renewable energy generation by installed capacity and type

Including wind onshore, solar photovoltaics, hydro and biomass (landfill gas, sewage sludge digestion, municipal and industrial solid waste combustion, co-firing if biomass with fossil fuels, animal biomass and plant biomass)

3.29 Six planning applications have been granted during 2008/09 for renewable energy generation. These include:

- 5kw wind turbine
- 5.67kw solar photovoltaics
- Two planning applications for unspecified solar panels, which have subsequently been installed.
- 150kw biomass plant building to be used to generate power from the burning of wood chippings. The application explains that the new biofuel system would replace the existing fossil fuel system that serves a sizable group of listed buildings that have a greater demand for energy than the average rural home.
- Building to house a biomass electricity plant at the Apiary Park, generating electricity from burning coppice wood chips sourced from the by-products associated with the local coppicing industry. The plant produces 100kW of instantaneous power and is capable of providing almost 800MWh over a year of carbon neutral electricity to the national grid, equivalent to the average annual electricity demand of approximately 170 homes.

3.30 Crossways, Pagehurst Lane in Staplehurst is a house incorporating sustainable building practices completed during 2008/09. The house was built using locally sourced building materials including Kent clay and forest stewardship council coppice sweet chestnut. Its innovative design includes an arched roof covered with an insulating layer of soil which will eventually become populated with native species. Crossways has 26sqm of the UK's first PV-T system, this is a combined solar photovoltaic and solar thermal panel that produces heat and electricity. The house provides a high level of thermal mass with a heat recovery ventilation unit, it has vacuum insulated doors and triple glazing, with the glazing orientated south to benefit from maximum solar gain.

3.31 This core output indicator is designed to pick up planning permissions granted for large installations. It excludes schemes installed under the General Development Order and does not incorporate measures under Code for Sustainable Homes and BRE Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) included as part of a larger planning applications.

3.32 The Council has only started specifically monitoring planning applications for renewable energy since 2007/08. As the database of planning applications is built up, the methodology for monitoring this indicator will become more refined. In the future, planning applications granted for renewable energy generation will be surveyed to establish when the application is implemented. The Council will facilitate further schemes throughout the borough, particularly through planning conditions to secure additional provision. Policies and appropriate indicators for renewable energy will be developed through the Local Development Framework, and will respond to requirements set out in the Planning and Energy Act and the Regional Spatial Strategy.

Local Indicators

4.1 Local indicators address policies and local issues not covered by Core Output Indicators. Local policies referred to are contained in the adopted Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan (2000), saved from 28 September 2007. In December 2006 the Affordable Housing DPD and Open Space DPD were adopted; the effectiveness of policy AH1 is monitored in the Core Output Indicators chapter and OS1 is monitored in this chapter. Themes reviewed in this chapter include the built environment, the countryside, employment and transport.

4.2 Like Core Output Indicators, data availability can be limited and the Council will explore means of gathering and recording data for improved monitoring for future Annual Monitoring Reports.

OS1 - Open Space Development Plan Document

The amount of Open Space that should be provided on residential developments.

4.3 Policy OS1 delivers open space to achieve the objectives of the Green Spaces Strategy, as required by PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation. The success of the policy is monitored by tracking the changes for 8 categories of open space provision within the urban and rural areas of the borough. Minimum standards set for Natural and Semi-Natural Green Spaces will be monitored for 2009/10. Currently there are no minimum standards for Green Corridors. Where current provision is below standards set per 1000 population or hectarage, figures show a minus sign. The standards are currently under review following a recent refinement of the categorisation of the open space typologies.

4.4 During 2008/09 five planning applications secured open space in accordance with policy OS1, providing on-site open space to meet the needs of specific developments and raised £64,575 for off-site contributions. In addition, the development at Hayle Place secured £150,000 for improvements, refurbishment and renewal of South Park, Armstrong Road, and £500,000 to establish and maintain a 12ha Country Park.

4.5 Two planning applications allowed at appeal did not secure open space. In one case the inspector did not impose a condition because the developer submitted a unilateral undertaking, securing health care rather than open space. The other application site allowed at appeal was in close proximity to Mote Park.

	Total population	Current provision (hectares)	Hectares per 1000 population	Local minimum standard	Above/below standard per 1000 population	Above/below standard (hectares)
Parks and Gardens						
Urban	98,500	213.37	2.17	2.30	-0.13	-1.28
Rural	45,000	0	0	0	0	0
Borough	143,500	213.37	1.49			
Natural and Semi-Natural Green Spaces						
Urban	98,500	812.76	8.25	N/A	N/A	N/A
Rural	45,000	2,095.44	46.57	N/A	N/A	N/A
Borough	143,500	2,908.20	20.27			
Green Corridors[3]						
Urban	98,500	16,688	169.42	N/A	N/A	N/A
Rural	45,000	91,556	2,034.58	N/A	N/A	N/A
Borough	143,500	108,244	754.31			
Amenity Green Space						
Urban	98,500	65.19	0.66	0.70	-0.04	-3.94
Rural	45,000	68.65	1.53	0.80	0.73	32.85
Borough	143,500	133.84	0.93			
Provision for Children - Equipped Play						
Urban	98,500	6.98	0.07	0.12	-0.05	-4.93
Rural	45,000	3.46	0.08	0.09	-0.01	-0.45
Borough	143,500	10.44	0.07			
Outdoor Sports Facilities						
Urban	98,500	145.91	1.48	1.40	0.08	7.88
Rural	45,000	119.90	2.66	2.70	-0.04	-1.80
Borough	143,500	265.81	1.85			
Allotments and Community Gardens						
Urban	98,500	19.86	0.20	0.21	-0.01	-0.99
Rural	45,000	10.59	0.24	0.18	0.06	2.70
Borough	143,500	30.45	0.21			

3   Measured by length rather than hectares

	Total population	Current provision (hectares)	Hectares per 1000 population	Local minimum standard	Above/below standard per 1000 population	Above/below standard (hectares)
Cemeteries and Churchyards						
Urban	98,500	36.62	0.37	0.66	-0.29	-28.57
Rural	45,000	19.88	0.44	0.59	-0.15	-6.75
Borough	143,500	56.50	0.39			

Table 4.1 Policy OS1 Categories of Open Space Provision 2006

Maidstone's Rivers

To enhance the quality of the riversides.

4.6   As a new Growth Point Maidstone is faced with delivering a growth programme that, amongst other things, addresses issues and complies with legislation associated with the water cycle and environmental capacity. Rivers and the landscapes they form are unique and can be sensitive to change. To achieve sustainability, these principles must be embedded into planning processes and based on robust evidence gathered from relevant Borough-wide studies.

4.7   A Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), undertaken in 2007/8 in line with the requirements set out in PPS25 (Development & Flood Risk), investigates surface water, sewer and groundwater flooding, identifies Flood Risk Zones and predicts climate change impacts on predicted river and tidal flood events. The next steps will involve undertaking the PPS25 Sequential Test when identifying sites for development and, if needed, a Level 2 SFRA.

4.8   An Outline Water Cycle Study is currently being undertaken to assess the impacts of the growth programme on flood risk management, water resources and supply, water quality and ecological services. The final report will set out conclusions regarding those impacts and any recommendations regarding the need for a Stage 2 Detailed study.

4.9   Other strategies that will have a direct bearing on planning for the riverside are the Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy, the Local Biodiversity Action Plan and the Borough-wide Landscape Character Assessment, all of which are currently in progress.

4.10   Work being undertaken for the Town Centre Study recognises Maidstone's rivers as a key asset and will look to improve access to the rivers.

Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

To resist development that would have a detrimental effect on the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

4.11 The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 required each AONB partnership to prepare and review a management plan. The first Kent Downs AONB Management Plan was published in April 2004. The first revision was published in April 2009 and covers a period 2009-2014. The Management Plan sets in place clear aims, policies and actions for the conservation management and enhancement of the AONB for a five year period and sets a longer term vision. The Kent Downs AONB Management Plan is the result of a long and detailed consultation process and has been formally endorsed by each of the Local Authorities who have the AONB in their area, including Maidstone Borough Council.

4.12 The Management Plan will be supported by an action plan which is currently being prepared by the AONB Unit in consultation with local authorities.

Conversion of Rural Buildings for Residential Purposes

Criteria for the reuse and adaptation of rural buildings for residential purposes.

4.13 During 2008/09, 4 rural buildings were granted planning permission for residential conversion, 3 supersede previous applications granted for the conversion of rural building for residential purposes. The outstanding planning permission was for the conversion of a redundant oast to a three bedroom dwelling. During 2008/09, 5 planning applications for the conversion of rural buildings were refused in accordance with saved local plan policy ENV45, demonstrating that this policy is being effectively implemented.

Replacement Dwellings in the Countryside

Replacement dwellings in the countryside should be no more visually intrusive than the original dwelling and the new dwelling should not result in an unacceptable loss of amenity.

4.14 13 applications for replacement dwellings in the countryside were granted in 2008/09, of which 4 superseded previous applications for replacement dwellings. The majority of applications granted have a condition which requires the original dwelling to be demolished. However, such conditions are unnecessary if either the new build is on the footprint of the existing building or demolition was clearly stated in the plans.

4.15 Four replacement dwellings located in the countryside were refused, of which 3 went to appeal. One of the refusals was dismissed at appeal. On two sites, where initially the replacement dwellings were refused, new applications were submitted which were subsequently granted within 2008/09. Reasons for the initial refusals were that the proposed dwellings were too visually intrusive. The new planning applications redesigned the proposed dwellings in accordance with saved local plan policy H32 and other polices, demonstrating the effectiveness of policy H32.

Residential Extensions SPD

4.16 The Residential Extensions SPD was adopted in May 2009. It provides detail about how national, regional and local planning policies are applied in relation to extensions to properties in built up areas and within the countryside. Extensions are a common form of development in the Borough and therefore have an important influence on shaping the local environment. The SPD raises awareness and guides applicants in achieving high quality design by providing design guidance on the appropriateness of proposals for different types of extensions. It assists the appraisal of particular proposals, to deliver improved designs on the ground which enhance the character of the area.

Character Area Assessments SPDs

4.17 The London Road Character Area Assessment SPD and Loose Road Character Area Assessment SPD were adopted in December 2008. The aim of these SPDs is to identify the locally distinctive features that define the character of the defined areas. They raise the awareness and provide design guidance on the appropriateness of, and potential for, types of development within the area. The SPDs assist with the appraisal of proposals in the determination of planning applications and the allocation of development sites.

Amount of eligible open spaces managed to Green Flag Award standard.

4.18 In 2009 Clare Park retained its Green Flag status.

Retention of Employment Sites

Designated employment land resists the loss of employment land to other uses, unless the retention of the employment use has been fully explored without success.

4.19 During 2008/09 two planning consents have been granted for non-employment uses on employment land specified in policy ED2. In one case the previous use already had an established non-employment use on the site. The other planning application approved was for a hotel in the town centre designated for B1 employment use which should be retained as such unless this has been fully explored without success. However, tourism is recognised in Draft PPS4 'Planning for Sustainable Economic Development' as a form of economic development, and it is considered that such a use may assist regeneration of the surrounding employment area. In addition there is encouragement under saved local plan Policy ED18 for additional Town Centre hotel accommodation.

Integrated Transport Strategy

An Integrated Transport Strategy is followed. All new developments should be safely and securely related to movement networks.

4.20 The Integrated Transport Strategy adopted in 2005 is currently being updated and expanded to support the Core Strategy of the Local Development Framework. Consultation on the draft Integrated Transport Strategy is expected to be undertaken with the public consultation stage of the Core Strategy next Summer.

4.21 In Maidstone, priorities include the Urban Traffic Management and Control Project (a new upgraded system has recently been installed), the Borough Council's Park and Ride services, the Quality Bus Partnership (between the Borough Council, County Council and Arriva), the cycle network (as identified through the Maidstone Cycle Forum), and the County Council's Car Club and Carshare website.

4.22 New developments are expected to be as sustainable as possible, both in location and in the measures that individual sites are required to fund. Travel Plans are now sought from both commercial and residential applications, along with appropriate contributions to facilitate and support sustainable transport.

4.23 The future transport strategy is being developed through traffic modelling work to assess the impact of Core Strategy options for distributing development, including a planned urban extension to be connected to the

town centre, and will allow all developments to contribute to an overall strategy that aims to meet the targets being set by local, regional and central government.

4.24 The success of these measures will continue to be monitored through the Local Transport Plan process, by which the County Council, as local highway authority, bids for funds to central government and reports on their effectiveness.

Percentage of new dwellings completed at:

i. less than 30 dwellings per hectare;

ii. between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare; and

iii. above 50 dwellings per hectare.

	Year	Large Sites (5+ dwellings)	Small Sites (1-4 dwellings)	All Sites
Less than 30 dwellings per hectare	2006/07	14.16%	50.62%	21.08%
	2007/08	11.53%	43.75%	15.53%
	2008/09	8.15%	46.97%	17.64%
Between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare	2006/07	41.33%	17.90%	36.89%
	2007/08	34.29%	22.22%	32.79%
	2008/09	31.89%	12.88%	27.27%
Above 50 dwellings per hectare	2006/07	44.51%	31.48%	42.04%
	2007/08	54.19%	34.03%	51.68%
	2008/09	59.95%	40.15%	55.09%

Table 4.2 Percentage of new dwellings completed at less than 30 dph, 30-50 dph and above 50 dph

4.25 Overall, 82.36% of dwellings completed on <u>all</u> sites in 2008/09 were constructed at a density greater than 30 dwellings per hectare in accordance with government advice (27.27% between 30 and 50 units plus 55.09% at greater than 50 units). This compares to 78.93% in 2006/07 and 84.47% in 2007/08, which demonstrates that Maidstone is making best use of its available development sites.

4.26 In 2008/09, 91.84% of dwellings on <u>large</u> sites were constructed at a density of greater than 30 units per hectare (31.89% + 59.95%). 46.97% of dwellings on <u>small</u> sites were built at a density of less than 30 dwellings per hectare, which is a reflection of the nature of small site development in rural areas, for example, replacement dwellings or the conversion of rural buildings.

4.27 These figures relate to the average density of each development site, rather than individual applications where there may be several applications for a single site at varying densities. Densities are calculated using net site areas, i.e. after subtracting hectarage for other land uses associated with the planning consent.

Maidstone Town Centre

Maidstone town centre is identified as a regional scale comparison goods centre. Proposals for retail development which would undermine the strategy for, or the vitality and viability of, the town centre will not be permitted. The Borough Council will implement and support initiatives to enhance the attraction of the town centre.

4.28 A Town Centre Study is currently being undertaken as part of the evidence base for the Core Strategy, and this work will be developed into an Area Action Plan (AAP) that will guide the redevelopment and regeneration of the town centre in terms of land use, design, phasing and the implementation of schemes. The aim of the Town centre Regeneration AAP is to enhance the vitality and character of the town and to identify different land use "quarters" for office, retail, etc., and to define their roles. Opportunities for appropriate mixed use development will be identified and highways, transport, cycle and pedestrian routes will be improved. Conservation, environmental protection and enhancement of the town centre are also important aspects of this study, which will also consider access to the riverside and the need for community, leisure and/or tourism facilities.

Local Development Scheme Review

Introduction to the LDS

5.1 The Council is required to publish a Local Development Scheme (LDS) to identify the range of Local Development Documents (LDD) it will produce over a minimum three year period, together with a work programme for the various stages of document preparation. Specifically, the LDS must record the Council's intentions to prepare Development Plan Documents (DPD) and Area Action Plans (AAP) that comprise part of its Local Development Framework (LDF).

5.2 The latest revision to the Local Development Scheme approved by the Secretary of State came into effect on 7th September 2009. A copy of the Scheme can be viewed and downloaded from the Local Development Framework page of the Council's website.

5.3 The LDS explains how the Council will manage the preparation of documents, the timescale within which they will be produced, how documents are resourced, and the main "risks" to the production timetable and how risks will be addressed. The LDS must ensure that the LDF is is kept up-to-date and that the community is actively involved in the process. Delivery of the programme is monitored through the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), which should highlight the need to review the LDS if required.

5.4 Whereas the monitoring period for reviewing policies through the AMR covers the period 1st April to 31st March, the review of LDS "milestones" relates to the calendar year (January to December). This section of the AMR therefore compares the progress of document production during 2009 against the targets set out in the approved LDS (2009).

5.5 Government legislation and advice on the LDF plan making process is set out in:

- Planning Policy Statement 12: creating strong safe and prosperous communities through Local Spatial Planning (June 2008)

- Planning Manual (a continually updated web-based manual that accompanies PPS12)

- Statutory Instrument 2008 No. 1371 Town and Country Planning (Local Development)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2008 (June 2008)

- Planning Act (November 2008) - Part 9

- Statutory Instrument 2009 No. 401 Town and Country Planning (Local Development)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2009 (April 2009).

5.6 PPS12 focuses on the Core Strategy as the key element of the LDF, emphasising the value of community engagement in the plan making process and the importance of a sound evidence base. This involves a wide and continual form of consultation with stakeholders (Regulation 25) and the public (Regulation 27), although the extent of public engagement should reflect the scale of the issues being addressed by the DPD or AAP. The consultation process gives local authorities flexibility in deciding the extent of consultation according to the complexity of the document and local circumstances. Following public consultation, objectors can appear at an Independent Examination into the DPD or AAP.

5.7 Under the plan making Regulations, there are four project milestones for the production of a DPD or AAP that comprise:

- Consultation of statutory bodies on the scope of the Sustainability Appraisal for the DPD

- Publication of the DPD for formal public consultation (Regulation 27)

- Submission of the DPD to the Secretary of State (Regulation 30)

- Adoption of the DPD (Regulation 36).

5.8 The adoption of a sound Core Strategy is a key milestone in securing Housing and Planning Delivery Grant, and its policies form the essential "hook" on which a number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) can be prepared. An SPD can expand or add detail to an adopted DPD or AAP but it cannot create new policy or allocate land. Whilst an SPD involves stakeholder and community participation and consultation, documents are not subject to Independent Examination.

Review of the LDS

5.9 The approved LDS (2009) sets out the timetable for the production of 5 DPD/AAP documents over a 7-year period January 2009 to December 2015, clearly identifying the stakeholder and public engagement stages of plan production and highlighting document milestones. Given the recent approval date of the LDS, all milestones have been met in 2009 and are on target to be met for subsequent years. Additionally, the Annual Monitoring Report submission target was successfully achieved in December 2008, as it has been in previous years.

Document	Stage	Target date	Date Achieved	Target met?
Core Strategy DPD	Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report - Consultation with Statutory Bodies	August 2009	August 2009	Yes

Document	Stage	Target date	Date Achieved	Target met?
Gypsy & Traveller Pitch Allocations DPD	Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report - Consultation with Statutory Bodies	August 2009	August 2009	Yes
Town Centre Regeneration AAP	No milestones 2009	N/A	N/A	N/A
Maidstone Urban Extension AAP	No milestones 2009	N/A	N/A	N/A
Land Allocations DPD	No milestones 2009	N/A	N/A	N/A
Annual Monitoring Report 2008	Submission to Secretary of State	December 2008	December 2008	Yes

Table 5.1 LDS milestones (2009)

5.10   In addition to documents that are measurable against milestones, the Council adopted an SPD for Residential Extensions in May 2009, and endorsed supplementary guidance for the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2009-2014 (March 2009) and the Kent Design Guide 2005/06 (May 2009).

5.11   The Council's prime focus for plan production is its Core Strategy, and the evidence base for this document was expanded in 2009 by completion of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (May 2009), an Employment Land Review (September 2009), and a Retail Needs assessment Update (August 2009). The Council will publish further evidence as it is completed over the forthcoming months, prior to public consultation on the draft Core Strategy during summer 2010. All Core Strategy evidence published to date has been prepared in accordance with government policy and guidance and is available on the Council's website.

5.12   Work on the Gypsy & Traveller Pitch Allocations DPD has also begun, and the first round of public consultation on potential development sites will commence in January. This consultation will start a couple of weeks behind the original schedule but will not impact on the overall programme or affect the milestones set out in the LDS.

5.13   Whilst it is no longer a requirement to include a programme for SPDs in the LDS, the Scheme explains that once the Core Strategy is adopted in December 2011 it will provide the higher tier policies necessary to facilitate the production of a number of important SPDs for Landscape Character Areas, a Parking Strategy, Air Quality Management, and further Special

Character Areas. The proposed Planning Tariff SPD is likely to be superseded by the need to incorporate a Community Infrastructure Levy policy in the Core Strategy to comply with emerging government legislation due to be published in spring 2010. The Council will give consideration to prioritising the publication of SPDs following the adoption of the Core Strategy.

5.14 Meanwhile, the Council has set up a cross-district/county working group under the umbrella of the Kent Design Initiative to produce guidance on Inclusive Design (formerly referred to as Access and Facilities for Disabled People). The document will be published as an appendix to the Kent Design Guide and ultimately endorsed as supplementary guidance to Maidstone's LDF.

Risk Analysis

5.15 If the Council is to keep on track with the approved LDS timetable in 2010 and beyond, it is imperative that any risks to the programme are identified and addressed as far as practicable. The key risks to the LDS programme are set out below.

Housing and Planning Delivery Grant

5.16 The plan making element of Housing and Planning Delivery Grant (HPDG) funding is dependant on meeting milestones for the Core Strategy DPD, together with other DPDs or AAPs that allocate sites for more than 2,000 dwellings. Additional HPDG is available for demonstrating a 5-year housing land supply, and for the completion of Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (SHLAA) and Strategic Housing Market Assessments (SHMA). The Council's land supply is monitored through the Annual Monitoring Report, Maidstone's SHLAA was published in May 2009, and work on the SHMA is currently underway. However, any delays to the LDS programme will impact on the receipt of HPDG which could have implications for staff and financial resources.

Housing Delivery

5.17 Government advice makes clear that local authorities must demonstrate that they have a five year supply of deliverable sites available for housing, and should identify a further 10 years supply of developable sites suitable for residential development. Local authorities must also illustrate the expected rate of housing delivery through a housing trajectory in their Annual Monitoring Reports. The housing trajectory for Maidstone is set out in chapter 3 of this AMR.

5.18 The Council's housing trajectory seeks to meet the housing targets set out in the South East Plan of 11,080 dwellings over a 20-year period from 2006 to 2026. The trajectory demonstrates that, once land is allocated for housing through Local Development Documents, Maidstone can meet its housing targets.

5.19   Therefore, the issue is whether Maidstone can maintain a rolling 5-year supply of deliverable sites until such time as land allocations DPDs and AAPs are adopted. Taking account of deliverable non-implemented planning consents and the potential from allocated brownfield sites, the Council has 6.4 years of housing land supply at 1st April 2009. Deliverable sites are those that are readily available for development and are not subject to constraint. This figure takes no account of windfall sites, identified SHLAA potential, or frozen local plan greenfield allocations.

5.20   The Council is therefore confident that it has a sufficient short term supply of residential land and that it can meet its overall housing target to 2026. However, following implementation of the revised LDS programme for document production, careful monitoring of the delivery of sites indicates a medium term dip in the 5-year supply of housing land due to the rate at which sites allocated in DPDs or AAPs can be developed. Consequently, the Council has identified a need to allocate a small number of strategic housing sites in the Core Strategy to ensure it maintains a rolling 5-year housing land supply throughout the plan period. This is a position that will continue to be carefully monitored through future AMRs and annual Housing Information Audit surveys, so that action can be taken if there is a likelihood that a 5-year supply will not be maintained.

Core Strategy DPD

5.21   The prime risk to the Core Strategy programme is the potential receipt of an adverse decision by the Secretary of State in respect of the planning appeal seeking a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI) at junction 8 of the M20 motorway. Maidstone Borough Council has produced extensive evidence to support its rejection of the SRFI proposal, and has decided to proceed with the Core Strategy timetable in advance of the appeal decision.

5.22   Whilst this approach presents a high risk to the LDS programme, there are also risks associated with delaying the Core Strategy timetable, not least the need for an up-to-date policy framework for determining planning applications as well as probable consequences for housing land supply.

5.23   The Council is hopeful that an appeal decision will be made before Publication stage of the Core Strategy in December 2010 so that, in the event of an adverse appeal decision, the impact on the LDS programme can be minimised by reviewing the Core Strategy as early as possible in the plan making process.

Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Allocations DPD

5.24   Following an identified and urgent need to allocate land for gypsy and traveller accommodation, the Council is preparing a dedicated DPD to meet the needs of this sector of the community in advance of the Core Strategy and other land allocation documents. This approach responds to local pressures speedily and in a managed way, and land allocations for new pitches can be adopted more quickly and are not subject to potential delays

to the Core Strategy timetable. The Core Strategy will contain the criterion-based policy to determine planning applications on unidentified (or "windfall") sites, and the Council will ensure consistency between the two DPDs.

5.25 Producing an early Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Allocations DPD carries risks in terms of the timing of the current consultation for the Partial Review of the South East Plan to identify district level pitch requirements. Ultimately, Maidstone's confirmed pitch requirement in the South East Plan could be lower or higher than currently estimated. However, this risk must be balanced against the risk of planning applications being granted on appeal rather than through planned provision with the community. Mitigation measures will include the phased allocation of contingency sites that would be released if targets proved to be greater than expected.

5.26 The LDS also acknowledges that the adoption programme for the Gypsy & Traveller Pitch Allocations DPD could be delayed if the Examination Inspector withheld his/her report pending the outcome of the Core Strategy Examination. This risk is not within the Council's control.

5.27 To ensure that staff resources are not diverted from the production of the Core Strategy, the Council has employed consultants to produce at least the first stage of the Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Allocations DPD.

Sound Evidence Base

5.28 The evidence base for the Core Strategy and other documents is, to a large extent, reliant on the expertise of various consultants. Deliverability within set time scales is a risk, although the risk is mitigated by the appointment of several consultants to carry out a variety of tasks as opposed to one or two major contributors. The consultants are closely managed and monitored by Officers to make sure that agreed programmes are met.

5.29 Other risks arise from the fact that the production of some of the evidence base is dependent on the completion of other evidence. To combat this difficulty, detailed timetables have been prepared to ensure that interdependent pieces of work are well managed and completed to strict deadlines.

5.30 The government has published a number of policy and advice documents over the past two years that set out what evidence is required to support Core Strategies and how such evidence should be produced. To minimise the risk of producing unsound evidence, the Council has met with the Planning Inspectorate and the Government Office for the South East to confirm that its approach to producing its evidence base for the Core Strategy and other DPDs and AAPs is sound, in terms of quantity and quality.

Resources

5.31 A budget to produce the LDF was set for a 5-year period from April 2007. Since that time, government requirements for the production of the Core Strategy evidence base have expanded and are proving to be onerous for District Councils in terms of financial and staff resources. Budgetary and staff resources are closely monitored to minimise risk to the LDS programme.

5.32 The lack of staff resources impacts on the production of LDF documents. A long term vacancy for a Principal Planning Officer has proved very difficult to fill, so a Planning Officer was offset against the post for a one year contract that expires in the New Year, at which point the vacancy will be re-advertised. Further staff losses during 2009 include a part time Planning Officer who is on maternity leave. Clearly the recruitment and retention of staff is critical in reducing the risks to the Council's abilities to meet its LDS milestones, although the LDF process will always remain vulnerable to interruptions in staffing levels, such as sickness, maternity leave or vacancies.

5.33 Despite continued staffing difficulties, the Spatial Policy Team has experienced a near-full compliment of staff this year. However, during 2009 senior staff resources, including the Team's Manager and Senior Highways Engineer, were diverted from the Core Strategy to prepare evidence for the Kent International Gateway planning application and subsequent appeal for the SRFI proposal. The loss of these resources, together with the senior Officer vacancy and maternity leave outlined above, clearly had an impact on the Council's ability to maintain the programme for the production of the Core Strategy evidence base. These difficulties were mitigated by prioritising the workload and by the willingness of staff to work additional hours to ensure the Core Strategy timetable was maintained.

Acronym	Term	Description
	The Act	The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended by the Planning Act 2008.
AAP	Area Action Plan	AAPs target specific areas of development or change. AAPs have the status of DPDs.
-	Affordable Housing	Affordable housing is that which is provided with subsidy, for rent and intermediate market housing, for people who are unable to resolve their housing requirements in the local private sector housing market because of the relationship between housing costs and incomes. This definition covers housing for social rent and intermediate housing, i.e. shared ownership, low cost home ownership and sub-market rent. (Affordable Housing DPD 2006)
AMR	Annual Monitoring Report	The AMR provides a framework with which to monitor and review the effectiveness of local policies, and to establish whether policy targets or milestones for LDDs set by the LDS have either been met or progress made towards meeting them.
CABE	Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment	The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) is the government's advisor on architecture, urban design and public space. It encourages policy makers to create places that are safe, beautiful and efficient to run. (www.cabe.org.uk)
CLG	Communities and Local Government	The Department of Communities and Local Government sets policy on local government, housing, urban regeneration, planning and fire and rescue. It has responsibility for all race equality and community cohesion related issues in England and for building regulations, fire safety and some housing issues in England and Wales. The rest of its work applies only to England. (www.communities.gov.uk)
-	Core Strategy	The Core Strategy is a Development Plan Document. Once adopted it will set out in general terms, how, where and when development will take place in Maidstone Borough over a 20-year period 2006 to 2026.
-	Development Plan	In accordance with legislation all planning applications should normally be determined in accordance with Development Plan policies. Maidstone's development plan comprises the South East Plan, adopted DPDs and saved local plan policies.
DPD	Development Plan Document	A DPD is a spatial planning document that is subject to independent examination. DPDs form part of the

Acronym	Term	Description
		development plan for a local authority's area, and include the Core Strategy. AAPs have the same status as DPDs.
EA	Environment Agency	The Environment Agency is the leading public body for protecting and improving the environment in England and Wales, with particular responsibilities for river, flooding and pollution. (www.environment-agency.gov.uk)
GOSE	Government Office for the South East	GOSE represents central government in the south east region. Its role is to promote better and more effective integration of government policies and programmes at a regional and local level. (www.go-se.gov.uk)
-	Index of Multiple Deprivation	The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007 combines a number of indicators, chosen to cover a range of economic, social and housing issues, into a single deprivation score for each small area in England. This allows each area to be ranked relative to one another according to their level of deprivation. The Indices of Deprivation are produced at Lower Super Output Area level. (Definition from www.communities.gov.uk)
KCC	Kent County Council	The first tier of local government for the County. Responsible for highways, children's services and education, social services, minerals and waste planning etc. This AMR uses statistics from various sources collated by KCC.
LDD	Local Development Document	LDDs comprise statutory Development Plan Documents (DPD), Area Action Plans and the LDF Proposals Map, and non statutory Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD).
LDF	Local Development Framework	Introduced by the Planning Act 2004, the LDF is a folder of documents containing DPDs, AAPs, saved local plan policies, SPDs, the Proposals Map, the SCI, the LDS and the AMR. Together these documents provide the framework for delivering the spatial planning strategy for the borough.
LDS	Local Development Scheme	The LDS is a business programme or timetable listing the documents the Council will produce under the LDF within a minimum 3-year time frame, explaining how documents will be prepared and when they will be published.
LNR	Local Nature Reserves	Local Nature Reserves are formally designated areas for both people and wildlife. They are places with

Acronym	Term	Description
		wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally. They offer people special opportunities to study or learn about nature or simply to enjoy it. (www.naturalengland.org.uk)
LSOA	Lower Super Output Area	This is the name for Lower Layer Super Output Areas used for census outputs. In England and Wales Super Output Areas (SOAs) are a geographical hierarchy designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics. Unlike electoral wards, the SOA layers are of consistent size across the country and will not be subject to regular boundary change. Lower Layer SOAs have a minimum population of 1,000 and are used as the building blocks for Middle Layer SOAs. (www.ons.gov.uk)
MBC	Maidstone Borough Council	A second tier local authority. The local planning authority responsible for producing the LDF and the determination of most planning applications.
MBWLP	Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000	The Local Plan was adopted by the Council in 2000 and it set the policy framework for determining planning applications. The MBWLP contains planning policies for protecting the environment and proposals for allocating sites for new development in the Borough. From 28 September 2007 only some of the policies in the MBWLP continue to form part of the Development Plan: such policies are called "saved" policies. LDF documents will gradually delete or replace saved local plan policies. MBWLP policies that have NOT been saved, or have been replaced by LDDs, will NOT be used in the determination of planning applications.
ONS	Office for National Statistics	The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is the executive office of the UK Statistics Authority, a non-ministerial department which reports directly to Parliament. ONS is the UK Government's single largest statistical producer and is responsible for the production of a wide range of economic and social statistics. (www.ons.gov.uk)
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance	Published by the government, PPGs set out national guidance for the determination of planning applications. They are gradually being replaced by Planning Policy Statements.
PPS	Planning Policy Statements	Published by the government, PPSs set out national policy to guide development. PPSs are gradually replacing Planning Policy Guidance.

Acronym	Term	Description
RSS	Regional Spatial Strategy /South East Plan	The RSS sets out the region's policies for the development and use of land, and it forms part of the development plan. The South East Plan (2009) is the RSS for the south east, setting a framework for the sustainable development of the region for the period 2006 to 2026, and ensuring development plans conform to the regional planning framework.
S106	Section 106 legal agreements	Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 allows a Local Planning Authority to enter into a legally binding agreement or planning obligation with a land developer. The obligation is termed a Section 106 Agreement. Such agreements can cover almost any relevant issue and can include sums of money. (www.idea.gov.uk)
SA	Sustainability Appraisal	The SA is a tool for appraising policies to ensure they reflect sustainable development objectives, including social, economic and environmental objectives. Under the Act, an SA must be undertaken for all DPDs or AAPs.
SCI	Statement of Community Involvement	The SCI specifies how and when the community and stakeholders will be involved in the process of preparing LDF documents.
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment	SEA is a generic term used to describe the environmental assessment of policies, plans and programmes. The European SEA Directive requires a formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes, including those in the field of planning and land use.
	South East Plan	See Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment	MBC published its SHLAA in May 2009. The primary role of the SHLAA is to identify sites with potential for housing within and adjacent to defined settlements; to assess the housing potential on sites; and to determine if or when sites are likely to be developed. The SHLAA aims to identify as many sites with housing potential in and around as many settlements as possible in the study area, and the Council then undertakes public consultation on which sites should be developed in accordance with its development strategy. (www.communities.gov.uk)
SHMA	Strategic Housing Market Assessment	A Strategic Housing Market Assessment aims to estimate housing need and demand, and indicate how the distribution of need and demand varies across

Acronym	Term	Description
		the plan area. It considers future demographic trends and identifies the accommodation requirements of specific groups. (www.communities.gov.uk)
SoS	Secretary of State	Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.
SEEPB	South East England Partnership Board	The Partnership Board is responsible for commissioning and approving a Regional Strategy, which will combine the South East Plan and the Regional Economic Strategy. Key partners in delivering the Strategy include GOSE, the Highways Agency, the Homes and Communities Agency and the Environment Agency. (www.se-partnershipboard.org.uk)
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document	An SPD provides detailed supplementary guidance about how adopted planning policies will be implemented. Unlike a DPD or AAP, an SPD does not have to undergo Independent Examination, but it is still subject to stakeholder and public participation and consultation.
SCS	Sustainable Community Strategy	The Sustainable Community Strategy is produced by a partnership of the local public, private, voluntary and community sector with the aim of improving the social, environmental and economic well being of their areas. Local authorities must have regard to the SCS when preparing LDF documents. Maidstone's Community Strategy was adopted in 2009.
	Supplementary Guidance	Supplementary Guidance was introduced as part of the plan making system in June 2008 (PPS12:creating strong safe and prosperous communities). Local authorities can endorse publications prepared by regional or strategic bodies as supplementary guidance to their LDF. The Guidance is not part of the LDF but, if documents are subject to adequate stakeholder and public consultation, it carries commensurate weight to an SPD in decision making processes.
-	Unidentified Sites or Windfall Sites	Sites which become available for development which were not previously identified as allocations in a local plan or LDD, nor identified as commitments through previous planning permissions.

Table 6.1 Glossary