

# AGENDA

## External Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting



Date: Tuesday 14 July 2009  
Time: 6.30 pm  
Venue: Town Hall, High Street,  
Maidstone

Membership:

Councillors Hotson (Chairman), Mrs Parvin (Vice-Chairman), Batt, Mrs Gibson, Marchant, Paterson, Sherreard and Yates

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1. The Committee to consider whether all items on the agenda should be web-cast.
2. Apologies.
3. Notification of Substitute Members.
4. Notification of Visiting Members.

**Continued Over/:**

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**Issued on 2 July 2009**

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**David Petford, Chief Executive, Maidstone Borough Council,  
Maidstone House, King Street, Maidstone Kent ME15 6JQ**

**5. Disclosures by Members and Officers:**

- a) Disclosures of interest.
- b) Disclosures of lobbying.
- c) Disclosures of whipping.

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**6. To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information.**

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**7. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 16 June 2009. 1 - 12**

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**8. Sustainable Community Strategy Consultation. 13 - 16**

Interview with Dr J M Speight and the Community Planning Co-ordinator, Jim Boot.

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**9. Railway Services Review. 17 - 34**

Interview with Mathew Nash and Laura Cloke of "Keep Our Trains".

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**10. Sustainable Communities Act. 35 - 36**

Interview with the Director of Prosperity and Regeneration, Alison Broom.

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**11. Future Work Programme and Forward Plan of Key Decisions. 37 - 46**

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**12. ITEM FOR NOTING: Community Safety Statistics. 47 - 66**

## MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE EXTERNAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 16 JUNE 2009

**PRESENT:** Councillor Hotson (Chairman)  
Councillors Marchant, Mrs Gibson, Sherreard, Batt,  
Yates and Chittenden

**APOLOGIES:** Apologies for absence was received from Councillors  
Mrs Parvin

**9. The Committee to consider whether all items on the agenda should be web-cast.**

**Resolved:** That all items on the agenda be web-cast.

**10. Apologies.**

Apologies were received from Councillors Mrs Paterson and Mrs Parvin.

**11. Notification of Substitute Members.**

It was noted that Councillor Chittenden was substituting for Councillor Mrs Paterson.

**12. Notification of Visiting Members.**

It was noted that Councillor FitzGerald was a visiting Member with an interest in Agenda Items 8, 9 and 10.

**13. Disclosures by Members and Officers:**

Councillor Mrs Gibson declared a prejudicial interest during Agenda Item 8, "Leader of the Council: Plans and Priorities for 2009/10" when Maidstone Housing Trust (MHT) issues were raised, as she was a Board Member for MHT.

**14. To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information.**

**Resolved:** That all items be taken in public as proposed.

**15. Minutes of the Meetings Held on 21 April 2009 and 27 May 2009.**

Members requested that the following amendments to the minutes of the meeting held on 21 April 2009 be made:

- Minute № 98, paragraph 6, bullet point 2: change "where" to "were";
- Minute № 98, paragraph 6, bullet point 4: remove the words "however staff would need to be paid for this time".

Councillor Marchant also requested that he be sent details of the European Legislation that required that casual staff be paid holiday pay.

**Resolved:** That

- a) The minutes of the meeting held on 21 April 2009 be agreed and duly signed by the Chairman subject to the following amendments:
  - i. Minute № 98, paragraph 6, bullet point 2: change "where" to "were";
  - ii. Minute № 98, paragraph 6, bullet point 4: remove the words "however staff would need to be paid for this time";
- b) The minutes of the meeting held on 27 May 2009 be agreed and duly signed by the Chairman; and
- c) Councillor Marchant be sent details of the European Legislation that required that casual staff be paid holiday pay.

## **16. Leader of the Council: Plans and Priorities for 2009/10.**

The Chairman highlighted to the Committee a letter that had been received from Dr J M Speight with regard to the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) consultation. He requested that the Leader respond to this in his presentation, and that officers be invited to the next Committee meeting to respond to Dr Speight's concerns, particularly with regard to the timescales for consultation. Dr Speight requested that the Assistant Director of Development and Community Strategy be invited to that meeting, and also stated that he was disappointed with the lack of response to his e-mail by the Committee. The Chairman reassured Dr Speight that the Committee was taking the issue seriously.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Chris Garland, stated that he understood Dr Speight's concerns with regard to his consultation response not being fully included in the SCS consultation. However, Dr Speight's report had included some good ideas, particularly regarding public engagement, which were being considered by officers and the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Board. The SCS was an evolving document and these ideas could be worked into future versions. Councillor Garland maintained that the SCS consultation had been both rigorous and robust.

### Mid-Kent Improvement Partnership (MKIP)

Councillor Garland considered MKIP to be one of the key drivers to deliver substantial savings in light of economic pressures, reduced income from services such as planning, and the likelihood of a reduced Revenue Support Grant. MKIP was also valuable in terms of shared skills and knowledge. It was national Conservative policy to pursue shared services. Proposals this year included a shared Human Resources (HR) function, and the Head of HR was already assisting Swale Borough Council with this. It was likely that the arrangement would include a designated HR Officer for each Council, with one main strategic unit for all four councils. This would deliver £300,000 revenue savings per year for the Council, though this would not happen in 2009-10. Shared services in Legal were also being pursued, though it was essential that this did not result in a loss of sovereignty for the Council. A shared Revenues and Benefits service was being investigated which would deliver savings of £1.3 million. MKIP had long term aspirations to combine back-office functions into one building for all four councils, and possibly to then offer those services to other local authorities.

Councillor Garland emphasised that there were no current plans to pursue unitary status through MKIP.

With regard to shared services, a Councillor stated that while the Scrutiny partnership with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council worked well in some ways, there was concern over the reduction in support for Scrutiny. The Leader stated that it was not the place of the Executive to get involved in the management of Scrutiny, however he noted that the Scrutiny Section was placed under pressure last year due to a higher than average number of call-ins. The Chairman informed the Committee that the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee was carrying out a review of the Overview and Scrutiny Function this year and scrutiny support would be considered as part of this.

### Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)

The LSP had operated through workshops rather than formal meetings last year. The Leader had been criticised for the lack of public meetings and formal minutes, however he considered the resulting SCS to be justification of this approach. This approach had also led to greater involvement from businesses and the LSP was becoming more robust. Officers had been instructed to invite the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) and the Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce (KICC) to join the LSP Board; if they were interested, this would go through the due process to be ratified, including a public meeting.

The LSP had been awarded £294,000 to take forward individual projects, and actions within the SCS had been developed with partners to ensure buy-in, both of which were positive steps for the future working of the LSP.

In response to a question, the Leader stated that attendance was still an issue but it was improving, though there was concern that some meetings were still "top heavy" with Council officers. The FSB, KICC and the Primary Care Trust were regular attendees, as were local churches.

A Member raised concern that the LSP sub-groups, including the Health Action Team and the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, did not report to Members or publish minutes, indicating a lack of transparency. The Chairman agreed that greater transparency was needed.

#### Kent County Council (KCC)

Councillor Garland stated that relations with KCC had improved. KCC had assisted the Council on the Kent International Gateway (KIG) planning application in terms of both money and support; this would continue for the KIG hearing in the autumn, and KCC's support would give weight to the Council's argument.

KCC was interested in the High Street Regeneration project and had provided officer support for the design and implementation of this. The Leader and the Cabinet Member for Regeneration would continue to lobby for financial assistance.

There had recently been rumours that KCC intended to make a bid for unitary status, however Councillor Garland had spoken with the Leader and the Deputy Leader of KCC who had confirmed that the rumours were false. It was emphasised that such rumours should not be able to affect the good relationship between the County Council and District Councils.

A Councillor requested that the Leader lobby KCC for financial assistance for parish councils responding to the KIG inquiry, which had significant cost implications. Councillor Garland stated that parishes would receive officer assistance from both the Council and KCC. He also suggested that parishes should lobby Central Government as there was political pressure for KIG to move forward so it was important for the parishes to get into the Whitehall system.

#### Maidstone Housing Trust (MHT)

[Councillor Mrs Gibson declared a prejudicial interest due to her position as MHT Board Member and left the room for the duration of the section]

Councillor Garland and the Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Fran Wilson, were involved in re-negotiating MHT's governance arrangements. MHT was the Council's preferred provider of affordable housing and the Council had 75% nomination rights to MHT properties. MHT wanted to change its name to "Golding", pay board members and remove the Council's "golden share" arrangements. The Council had agreed to these in principle subject to several key points, and negotiations were going well. MHT would remain the Council's preferred provider but the Council would use other Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) as well according to their track record, ability to deliver and bearing in mind best value. The

Council was looking at working in partnership with an RSL consortium and developers to deliver more affordable housing.

In response to a question, Councillor Garland explained that MHT wished to expand beyond Maidstone which was why it wanted to change its name and governance arrangements. If it expanded beyond the Borough, it was not appropriate for the Council to continue to have constitutional involvement with it, though it would continue to work with it as with any other RSL.

A Councillor stated that it was important to keep Members updated on the negotiations with MHT as this was a very important matter. The Leader agreed.

### Sustainable Communities Act (SCA)

The Council had agreed a motion put forward by Councillor Batt at its meeting on 22 April 2009 to develop robust proposals to make use of the provisions within the SCA. Resource pressures would prevent the Council from meeting the 31 July 2009 deadline, however it was believed that there would be a further deadline in October 2009 which would hopefully be met. Most parishes were very keen on the provisions within the SCA. A citizen's panel would need to be developed to consult on proposals; it had been suggested that the LSP be used for this, but it was considered that this would be too narrow a forum. The Director of Prosperity and Regeneration was leading on this for the Council.

### Other

In response to a question, the Leader stated that if Committees wished to interview Cabinet Members more frequently, they were welcome to request this.

With regard to regional issues, it was confirmed that the South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA) no longer existed. The Council was working reasonably well with the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA); SEEDA had supported KIG but following lobbying had agreed to speak with the Leader and other Council representatives to hear the Council's case against it. SEEDA was generally supportive of the Council and its actions. Councillor Garland stated that it was difficult to ascertain the value of SEEDA to the Council beyond relationships, though these were clearly important, as SEEDA was not able to provide any funding to the Council's regeneration and development projects. A Councillor suggested making a public appeal to SEEDA for financial assistance with regeneration projects, and the Leader stated that while forcing a clear response in this way could have benefits, this approach would not be helpful at the present time.

**Resolved:** That

- a) Dr J M Speight, the Assistant Director of Development and Community Strategy and the Community Planning

- Co-ordinator be invited to the July meeting of the Committee to discuss the Sustainable Community Strategy consultation; and
- b) The Leader's plans and priorities for 2009-10 be noted.

**17. Cabinet Member for Community Services: Plans and Priorities for 2009/10.**

The Chairman welcomed the Cabinet Member for Community Services, Councillor Marion Ring, the Community Development and Social Inclusion Manager, Ian Park, and the Community Safety Co-ordinator, David Hewetson, to the meeting. The Chairman informed Members that further to Mr Hewetson's attendance at an earlier meeting, crime statistics that had been requested had now been received and would be included on the next meeting agenda.

Councillor Mrs Ring referred Members to her action plan for 2009-10 (attached at Appendix A) and highlighted that for all actions, she needed to work with partners. It was vital that the right partners were in place and were prepared to deliver on key actions.

In response to a question, Mr Hewetson explained that the community safety booklet that had been distributed to 40,000 households in the Borough had no cost to the Council. The Kent Police Authority had covered most of the cost, with advertising revenue making up the shortfall. The booklet had only gone to 40,000 households as it was part of a free publication. Copies had also been given to public bodies and parish councils.

With regard to Borough Grants, following a best value review these had to help the Council to meet its strategic priorities. All applications were scored on this basis. The budget for these had been cut this year. For those applicants who had been unsuccessful in obtaining a grant from the Council, an officer was meeting them individually to assist them to apply for alternative funding. There would not be money available for parishes to bid for projects this year.

A Councillor asked what progress had been made on cold-calling zones. Mr Hewetson explained that cold-calling zones were a preventative measure, with posters being put up informing cold-callers that it was a "no cold-calling" zone. Police, councillors and Neighbourhood Watch were aware of this, so if a cold-caller was reported, it could be dealt with more effectively. Two cold-calling zones were in place in the Borough and were proving to be worthwhile. The project was being led by the Neighbourhood Watch Officer at Mid-Kent Police.

It was highlighted by a Committee Member that youth services were delivered in conjunction with KCC, however KCC's spend on youth services was quite low. The Cabinet Member was asked whether enough support was received from KCC. Councillor Mrs Ring stated that KCC had not been as forthcoming with funding as she would like, so she was working hard to



ensure that they played a big enough role. She requested that Kent County Councillors kept encouraging KCC to make an appropriate contribution. Members agreed that a written report on KCC's involvement in and contribution to the Council's youth services should be received in 3 months.

Other issues discussed included:

- Last month had seen a 9.8% decrease in crime compared to an overall drop of 7.8% last year, though there were seasonal increases in violent crime and issues with double counting of some crimes;
- The transfer of the CCTV control room was due to take place in January 2010, and it was likely that this would be in conjunction with the establishment of the multi-agency Community Safety Unit;
- The Youth Café project had been taken over by a Trust and the Café was expected to open by November 2009;
- The Council was monitoring the situation regarding the swine flu pandemic and would put actions in place and work with partners as appropriate to deal with this;
- Older person's exercise areas in parks were considered a good idea and Age Concern was believed to have funding for equipment for these;
- The Cabinet Member was involved with the YMCA play area scheme in Coombe Farm, though it was noted this was for Coombe Farm only and not the rest of Tovil; and
- Approximately the same number of places were available on Hotfoot play schemes this year as last year.

Finally, the Chairman requested an update on the Committee's 2008-09 report, "Diverse Communities: Community Cohesion and the Integration of Ethnic Minorities in the Borough". Mr Park explained that the actions outlined in the response to the report were being worked on. It was hoped that the Mela would take place over more than one day this year, and the St George's Day parade had been successful. The LSP had agreed to approach the Maidstone Cultural Group or the Mela Steering Group to improve ethnic minority representation on the LSP. A report would go to the LSP Board shortly to try to encourage community cohesion to be dealt with within all LSP sub-groups to ensure an integrated approach. The Committee requested an update on progress in 3 months.

**Resolved:** That

- a) A written report on Kent County Council's involvement in and contribution to the Council's youth services be received in 3 months; and
- b) A written report on progress on the "Diverse Communities: Community Cohesion and the Integration of Ethnic Minorities in the Borough" report be received in 3 months.

## **18. Work Programme 2009/10.**

The Acting Overview and Scrutiny Manager outlined the topics that had been put forward as work programme items following the work programming workshop on 27 May 2009. It was also highlighted that the Committee was also responsible for scrutiny of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership following the implementation of that aspect of the Police and Justice Act 2006.

The Chairman stated that it was important for the Committee to press for continued support for the Scrutiny Section to ensure that all of the work that the Committee wished to carry out could be done. The Committee agreed to write to the Chief Executive with regard to this.

The Committee agreed to carry out a review of rail services to London, noting that these were being cut and residents were being forced to use alternative train stations to access services. Additionally, Maidstone was a Growth Point and appropriate public transport for the growing population was therefore vital. It was agreed that parish councils should be consulted as part of this review.

A review of holiday play schemes was also approved, and it was suggested that this should take two months later in the year.

A Member highlighted that the Sustainable Communities Act was dynamic and an exciting opportunity and Scrutiny could help officers to develop proposals. The Acting Overview and Scrutiny Manager confirmed that the Act fell within the remit of the Corporate Services OSC, however permission could be obtained from the Chairman of that Committee to take on the review. The Committee agreed to request this permission and, subject to this, invite the lead officer to the Committee's meeting in July to provide an update on the Council's response to the Act.

A written update on the progress of the Mental Health Working Group was requested for the July meeting.

**Resolved:** That

- a) A letter be sent by the Chairman on behalf of the Committee to the Chief Executive, copying in Group Leaders, with regard to resources for overview and scrutiny;
- b) A major review of railway services between Maidstone and London be carried out;
- c) A review of holiday play schemes be carried out later in the Municipal Year 2009-10;
- d) Permission be requested from the Chairman of the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee to take on scrutiny of the Sustainable Communities Act;
- e) Subject to (d) the lead officer on the Sustainable Communities Act be requested to provide an update on

- the Council's response to the Act at the July 2009 meeting; and
- f) An update on the Mental Health Working Group be provided at the July 2009 meeting.

**19. Future Work Programme and Forward Plan of Key Decisions.**

The Committee agreed to begin its review of railway services at its July 2009 meeting, alongside consideration of the Sustainable Community Strategy consultation and an update on the Sustainable Communities Act as agreed during earlier items, and agreed that due to the number of issues on the agenda, suggested timings should be included.

**Resolved:** That

- a) The Committee begin its review of railway services at its meeting on 14 July 2009; and
- b) The agenda for the 14 July 2009 meeting include suggested timings for items.

**20. Duration of the Meeting.**

6:30 p.m. to 9:05 p.m.

**21. Appendix A**

**CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**ACTION PLAN 09/10**

**Introduction**

This is a wide ranging portfolio and it covers the following:

**Young People**

- To be the lead Cabinet Member for young people

**Lifelong Learning**

- To be the Lead Cabinet Member for Lifelong Learning

**Health**

- To be responsible on behalf of the council for all health and community health matters including the

development, in conjunction with the council's partners, of the Community Health Plan

### **Crime and Disorder**

- To be responsible for all aspects of community safety in the borough

### **Social Inclusion**

- To formulate and review policies to achieve a more socially inclusive society in Maidstone
- To guide, advise and provide a strategic overview on social inclusion issues

### **External Affairs**

- To take responsibility for relationships with external partners and agencies, including parish councils ( Kent County Council (KCC), the Primary Care Trust (PCT) and the Police.

My priorities for the year within my brief are as follows:

### **Young People**

- To oversee the opening of the Youth Café on a sustainable basis
- To support the development of the Maidstone Youth Forum for the engagement of all young people in the borough with Kent County Council
- To support the development of a joint District Youth Strategy for the Borough
- To seek opportunities for additional funding to enhance the provision and support for children in need in respect of the Hotfoot Play Schemes and other activities organised and facilitated by the council
- To work in partnership with KCC Youth Service and the YMCA to develop youth involvement and participation in positive activities at the play areas in Park Wood, Mangravet and Clare Park as part of their refurbishment

## **Lifelong Learning**

- To work with KCC to help ensure that the proposed Maidstone Skills Studio serves the needs of the community.
- Through the LSP and the Children and Young People's Local Partnership Boards to support actions within the council's remit to improve educational attainment and skills/qualifications levels within the borough.
- To continue to lobby education and training providers on behalf of local community education needs.

## **Health**

- To help ensure the efficient and effective use of the Choosing Health Plan and other related funding initiatives to promote public health and associated community development activities within the borough
- To lead and develop the multi-agency Maidstone Health Action team as a thematic sub-group of the LSP to achieve improved health outcomes
- To deliver a programme of healthy lifestyle initiatives from out of the Urban Blue bus in various locations within the borough, in partnership with other agencies.

## **Crime and Disorder**

- To work closely with the SMP to continue to reduce levels of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour
- To work with police and partners to increase public reassurance and improve perceptions on ASB and crime reduction (NI 17 and NI 27)
- To promote the development of a multi-agency Community Safety Unit at Maidstone House by January 2010
- To ensure the re-location of the CCTV control room to Maidstone House is effectively managed and achieved within budget by January 2010
- To publish a free Community Safety booklet delivered to 40,000 households in Maidstone, To promote crime prevention and safety messages from a variety of SMP partners.

## **Social Inclusion**

- To support the Mela and use it to build on its success in promoting and delivering Social inclusion and community cohesion objectives

- To support the development of the Corporate Equality Plan to engage and involve hard to reach and socially excluded groups in the borough
- To support the development of neighbourhood action plans, working with key partners in programmes to help reduce deprivation and its consequences
- To work to improve access to the council's services and facilities for all residents of the borough
- To ensure borough grants provision is effectively targeted.

### **External Affairs**

- To promote productive relationships with local parish councils, including regular liaison meetings and an annual conference to consider matters of mutual interest
- To promote effective partnership working with the voluntary and community sector within the borough as a means of delivering Council and shared priorities.
- To continue to develop effective working relationships at KCC Cabinet level on community matters affecting the borough
- Developing good effective relationships with the PCT to achieve shared objectives
- To promote effective working with housing providers in the borough in order to achieve portfolio priorities.

### **Older People (Emerging Theme)**

- To support the development of the Older Person's Forum to effectively engage older people in the borough.

### **Working with partners**

- To promote the consideration of issues affecting older people

## Maidstone Borough Council

### External Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 14 July 2009

#### Sustainable Communities Strategy: Consultation

**Report of:** Overview and Scrutiny Officer

#### 1. Background

1.1 At the Committee's last meeting, it was drawn to Members' attention that a resident, Dr J M Speight had raised concerns with regard to the Sustainable Community Strategy Consultation. Dr Speight's letter to the Committee is attached at [Appendix A](#).

1.2 The relevant extract from the draft minutes of the meeting is as follows:

"The Chairman highlighted to the Committee a letter that had been received from Dr J M Speight with regard to the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) consultation. He requested that the Leader respond to this in his presentation, and that officers be invited to the next Committee meeting to respond to Dr Speight's concerns, particularly with regard to the timescales for consultation. Dr Speight requested that the Assistant Director of Development and Community Strategy be invited to that meeting, and also stated that he was disappointed with the lack of response to his e-mail by the Committee. The Chairman reassured Dr Speight that the Committee was taking the issue seriously.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Chris Garland, stated that he understood Dr Speight's concerns with regard to his consultation response not being fully included in the SCS consultation. However, Dr Speight's report had included some good ideas, particularly regarding public engagement, which were being considered by officers and the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Board. The SCS was an evolving document and these ideas could be worked into future versions. Councillor Garland maintained that the SCS consultation had been both rigorous and robust."

1.3 Following their discussions, Members resolved:

"That Dr J M Speight, the Assistant Director of Development and Community Strategy and the Community Planning Co-ordinator be invited to the July meeting of the Committee to discuss the Sustainable Community Strategy consultation".

1.4 The Assistant Director of Development and Community Strategy will be on annual leave for the meeting, however the Community

Planning Co-ordinator will be in attendance to discuss the SCS consultation with the Committee and Dr Speight.

2. **Recommendation;**

- 2.1 Members should consider the concerns raised by Dr. Speight and consider what lessons, if any, can be learnt for future Council consultations.
- 2.2 Any recommendations made by the Committee should be referred to either the Leader of the Council, as the Cabinet Member responsible for the SCS, or the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration during its one-off review of the Council's consultation processes.



## APPENDIX A

### To All Members of External Overview and Scrutiny Committee

With regard to Agenda Item 8 for the forthcoming meeting of the External Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting of 16th June 2009 – Leader of the Council: Plans and Priorities for 2009/10 – I would be obliged if Members of Committee would take note of the following.

As I understand it, one of the areas of the Leader of the Council's portfolio which is of relevance to the External OSC is the *Sustainable Community Strategy*. The Leader bears responsibility for it and for the work of the *Local Strategic Partnership* in delivering the Strategy's objectives.

Before the SCS was taken to full Council on 22nd April, the opportunity to monitor the decision taken by Cabinet on 8th April on the SCS may well have been taken up by the External OSC. Of this I am not sure, since unfortunately webcasting of the meeting of the External Overview and Scrutiny Committee's meeting of 21st April failed to function. I am reliant on the draft minutes. With regard to the Leader of the Council's claim that the *Sustainable Community Strategy* had taken a wholly inclusive approach, I wish in the strongest terms to counter Councillor Garland's assertion. The undertakings of the *Local Strategic Partnership Operational Group* on 7th April, and the Cabinet which dealt with the Management Team's Report on 8th April, do not accord with his affirmation.

To put the matter in perspective, I should point out first of all that at the External OSC meeting of 24th November 2008, Members were led to believe that "the draft plan would go to Cabinet on 14 January 2009, followed by a 6 week public consultation" and that "it would then be amended as necessary and taken to Cabinet in March before being approved by Full Council". A different timetable was announced at the meeting of the External OSC of 17th February 2009. It was then confirmed by Officers that it was intended that the Strategy would undergo six weeks of public consultation, beginning in March 2009, and would be brought back to Cabinet in April 2009. This is where things seem to have gone awry.

In order to secure a 6-week period, prior to the scheduled meeting of the Cabinet of 8th April, the public consultation would have had to have commenced before the end of February, not in March. The *LSP* did not even approve the document for public consultation until its meeting of 5th March. Public consultation actually did not start until 16th March – the Report of the Management Committee to the Cabinet confirms this start-date (thus Members of Cabinet were aware). This entailed a maximum of 22 days. Most damning of all, and quite at odds with the title of Appendix F in the Management Team's Report, viz. "Results of Community Roadshow and On-line Consultation Combined 16th March to 6th April", the content of that appendix dealt with submissions only up to 2nd April. This effectively further reduced the public consultation period to a mere 18 days.

It is perhaps of some relevance that the Council's Constitution states that the Executive will "report to Council on how it has taken into account any recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee". Whilst the 6-week consultation period was not a specific recommendation of the OSC, it was implicit in its agreement to it, given on 17th February, that this should be

the case. No mention of the reduction in the period of public consultation was announced to Full Council at its meeting of 22nd April. Indeed, the presentation of the SCS to Council was somewhat flawed by the critical absence of the Appendices (pointed out by Councillor Horne) which were listed in the Record of the Recommendation of Cabinet to Council. An examination of these would have revealed to Members of Council that, as regards public consultation, something was amiss.

I was fully aware that the consultation period was scheduled to end on 6th April. I had informed the SCS's Co-ordinating Officer on 2nd April that my representation would not be ready until the closing date. He fully understood that I would submit it on the very last day. I spent considerable time and effort in producing a 25-page submission. The bottom-line is that no account whatsoever was taken of this by Members of the Cabinet at the meeting of 8th April. No written or verbal references were made to my contribution. It is notable that the item of the SCS with its attendant Report was hastily added in an amended Agenda on 7th April, just one day before the Cabinet meeting took place. Quite frankly, if the handling of public engagement by the *LSP* and the Cabinet is not a matter for detailed scrutiny by the External OSC, then I will be even more appalled than I already am by *MBC's* undertakings. Public engagement is as nothing if Officers and Members abuse it in such an outrageous fashion. I have been in communication with Councillor Garland and have received neither adequate explanation nor apology. The core issue has been persistently evaded in his replies. Whilst he has expressed his dismay that I am aggrieved, not once has he said that he is sorry for any part of the string of circumstances which culminated in the disdainful ignoring of my contribution. I find this deplorable.

My hope is that for once appropriate censure will be meted out to what is quite a large number of people involved in this matter. I do not think I need to point out that the SCS is an overarching document of immense significance. Critical to its credibility is public empowerment through effective engagement.

Dr. J.M. Speight      8th June 2009

## **Maidstone Borough Council**

### **External Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Tuesday 14 July 2009**

#### **Rail Services between Maidstone and London**

**Report of:** Overview and Scrutiny Officer

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 At its last meeting the External OSC agreed to carry out a review of rail services to London, noting that these were being cut and residents would be forced to use alternative train stations to access services. Additionally, Maidstone was a Growth Point and appropriate public transport for the growing population was therefore vital.

#### **2. Keep Our Trains**

- 2.1 "Keep Our Trains" has been campaigning against the cessation of the fast service between Ashford and Cannon Street (via Maidstone East), which is due to take place from December 2009.

- 2.1 "Keep Our Trains" campaigns for the following:

That:

- Southeastern keeps the off-peak fast train service between Ashford and Cannon Street.
- Southeastern improves the off peak service with a regular fast service into east London.
- Southeastern guarantees early and proactive publicity of all changes to their timetables and engages in full commuter consultation well in advance of such changes.

#### **3. The Route Utilisation Strategy**

- 3.1 Network Rail has produced a Route Utilisation Strategy (RUS) which outlines the strategic vision for the future of the railway that serves Kent, parts of East Sussex and London. In particular, the RUS reflects changes which will result from the high speed services to and from St Pancras, which are to begin running in December 2009. This will be followed by the Thameslink Programme, which is to be introduced by 2015. The Route Utilisation Strategy covers a time period of 30 years (2009 – 2039). Consultation began in 2008 and will end on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2009.

- 3.2 Capacity of existing rail services was considered in addition to the expected future demand. Despite the economic downturn it is expected that demand will grow. This is due to a growth in housing and employment opportunities and an increase in rail services as a result of High Speed One. The RUS focuses primarily on the main line to/from Victoria, Charing Cross and Cannon Street. Major towns affected include Maidstone, Canterbury, Medway, Ramsgate, Ashford, Folkestone, Dover, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells and Hastings.
- 3.3. The consultation reports that there are six downfalls of the existing rail service:
1. Capacity to and from London at peak times.
  2. The need to offer services earlier and later in the day.
  3. To improve services from Kent into and out of London.
  4. To improve services within Kent.
  5. To maintain and improve the punctuality of services.
  6. To ensure that the rail service is able to meet the future needs of the rail service.

#### **4. Passenger Demand.**

- 4.1 Within the RUS area, it is expected that passenger demand will increase by 32 percent between 2007 and 2019. This is due to the following:
- The High Speed One should stimulate growth and will enable East Kent to be within a reasonable travelling time from London, providing new job opportunities.
  - The impact of the planned major housing development in the Thames Gateway and around Ashford is likely to provide an increase in user demand.

#### **6. The RUS outlines the following concerns that have arisen as a result of the proposed changes:**

- 6.1 Southeastern will provide a two trains per hour, all day service to Victoria (as per today) but no services via London Bridge (due to the withdrawal of the off-peak one train per hour fast Cannon Street services, in the current off-peak timetable)
- 6.2 The Medway Valley line does not currently serve a sizeable settlement at either end of its route. At the northern end, journeys between the Medway conurbation and Maidstone require a change of train at Strood, whilst at the southern end passengers must in general change at Paddock Wood. The result is that, for example, a journey from Maidstone to Tunbridge Wells currently requires two changes of train and takes over an hour. Unsurprisingly, many people make these journeys by car.

- 6.3 From December 2009, there will be no direct trains between Maidstone and Canterbury. Those passengers making this journey will need to change at Ashford.
- 6.4 Journeys to Maidstone from London will, in many cases, take longer than the time taken to reach Ashford and east Kent on the High Speed line. This is due to the relatively low overall speed of the Otford/Bromley South route, together with no station having been provided on the High Speed line in the Maidstone area.
- 6.5 Concerns have also been raised with regard to the access of services from Ebbsfleet. The RUS states that; "the station is inaccessible by rail from the nearby county town of Maidstone, so many commuters on the High Speed domestic services from this town are expected to drive to Ebbsfleet."

## **7. Services into London**

- 7.1 From December 2009 Maidstone will have two services per hour which will run into London Victoria during off peak times and three services per hour during peak times. From 2015 onwards it is expected that services will increase to four trains per hour during peak times.
- 7.2 From December 2009 one train per hour during off peak times will run from Ashford to Blackfriars via Maidstone East. It is aimed that this will be increased by an additional train per hour in 2015.

## **8. Other Options Considered**

- 8.1 The consultation outlines that it may be possible for the peak only Ebbsfleet to St Pancras service to be extended back to include either Ashford or Maidstone West. If the service were to run from Maidstone West this would provide extra capacity for Gravesend and Strood, however, consultation suggests that it would be more beneficial to run the service from Ashford.

The RUS also considered increasing services between several locations in Kent, as well as services to London. This included Maidstone. Consideration of increasing these services was largely due to stakeholder request. However, increases will not be made at any of these locations as additional increase in operating costs can not be justified by the demand for the service. The RUS also considered services which would provide a link between Maidstone and Medway, however this was also considered not to be viable.

Many services via Maidstone East are currently limited to only six cars due to short platforms at Kemsing, Barming, Hollingbourne, Harrietsham and Charing. It may be possible to lengthen these trains to 8 or 12 cars. However, this will require the use of

Selective Door Opening (SDO), which is available only on Class 375 trains with SDO fitted.

## **9. Summary: Potential Impacts of the RUS on Maidstone**

Overall, the RUS highlights the following potential impacts for Maidstone, although not all have yet been committed to:

- All day service to Thameslink route from 2015, in addition to services to Victoria.
- Potential for peak services to St Pancras via the Medway Valley line and Gravesend, subject to further analysis.
- A direct route throughout the day to Tonbridge from 2009, not requiring a change at Paddock Wood.
- Consideration of a bus link to Ebbsfleet for international services.
- Consideration of line speed improvements west of Maidstone
- The possible extension of trains to eight or 12 cars.

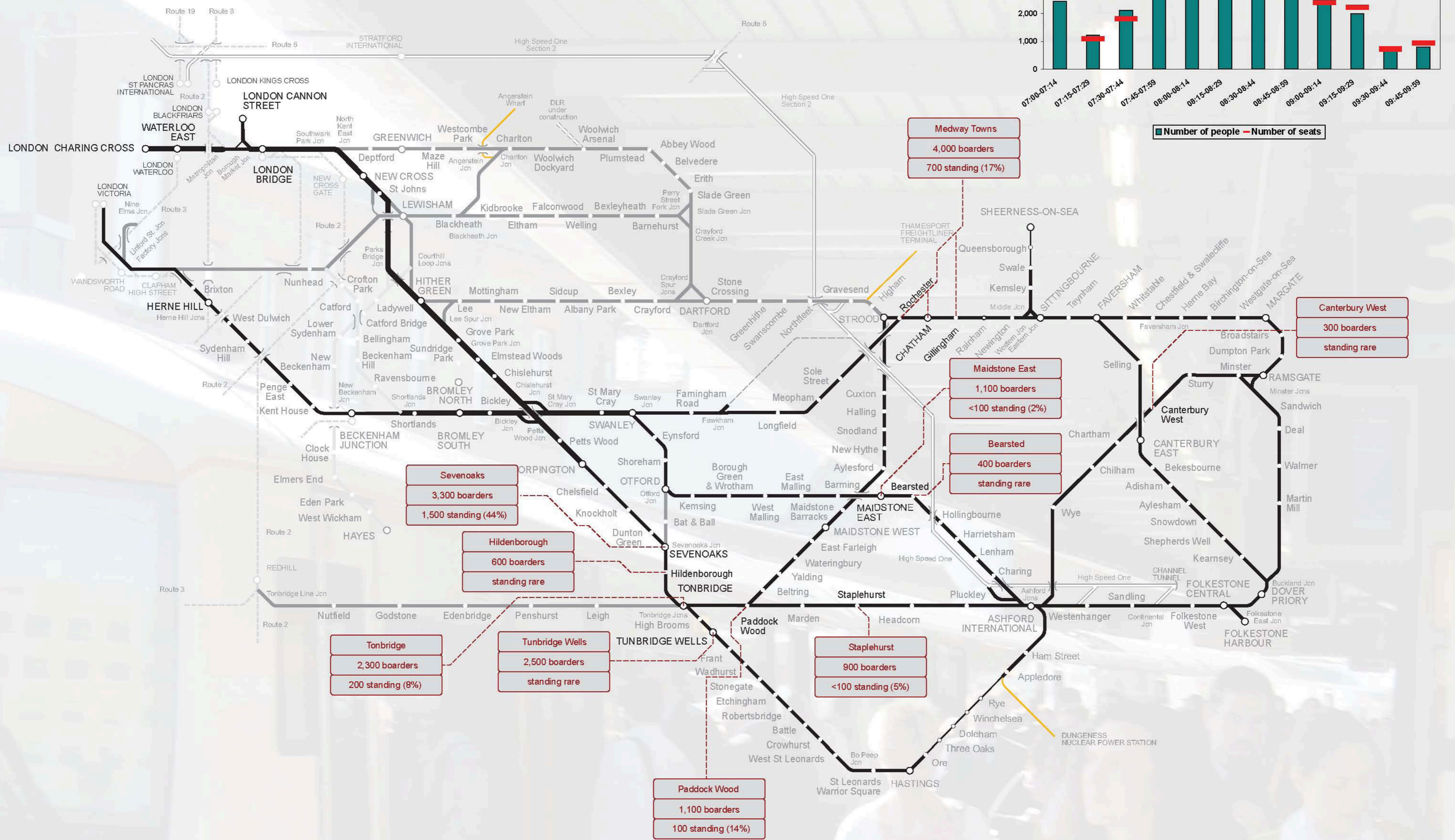
- 10.** The relevant extracts of the RUS have been attached at the end of this report. Information compares passenger demand for rail services within the major towns affected by the changes. Additionally, service maps provide information regarding the current services that run and those that are proposed to begin in December 2009 and 2015.

## **11. Recommendation:**

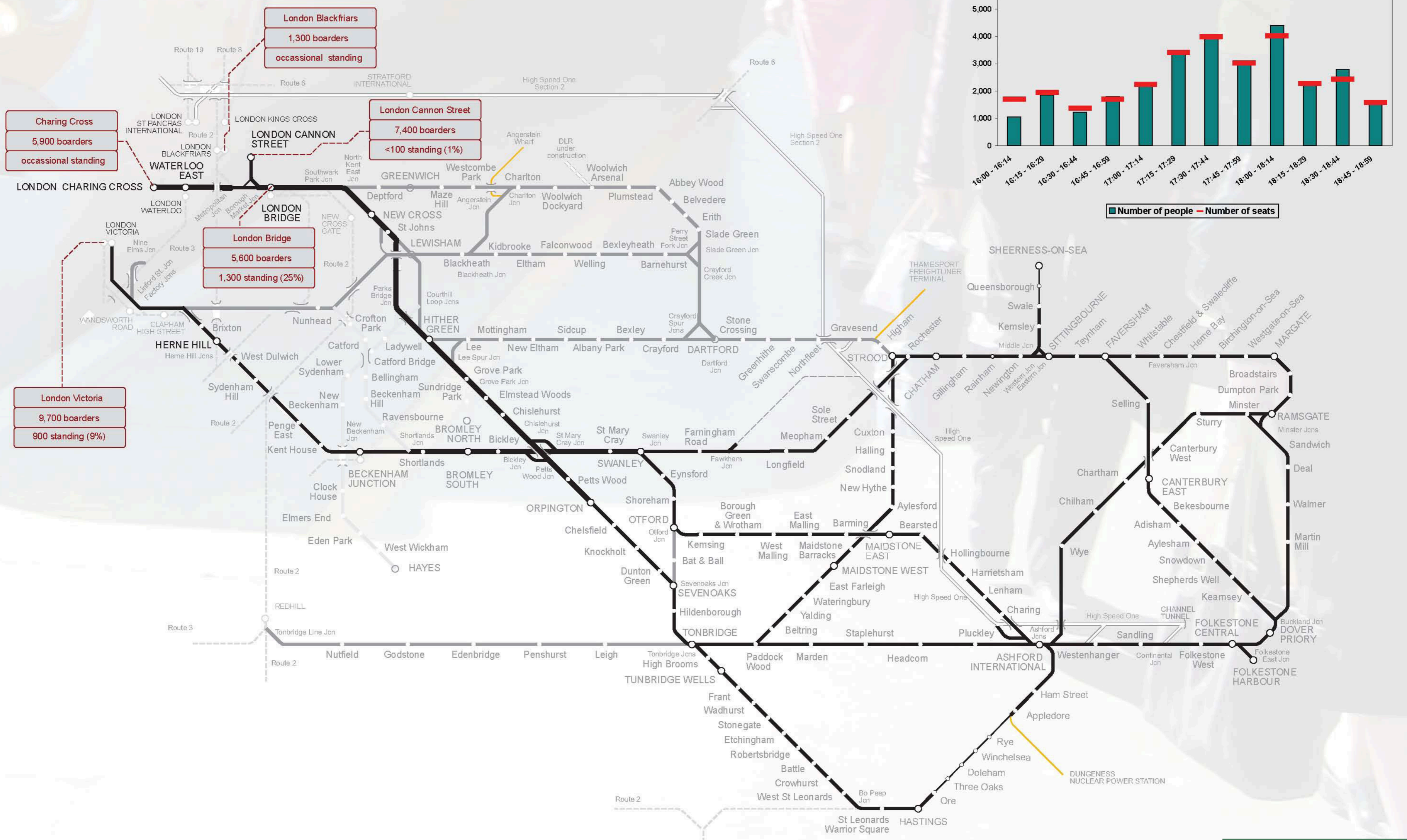
- 11.1 The Committee should consider the proposed amendments to Maidstone's rail service and whether they wish to support the campaign against the removal of the Ashford to Cannon Street (via Maidstone East) fast service in December 2009.
- 11.2 The Committee is then recommended to instruct the Overview and Scrutiny Team to compile a response to the consultation, if Members believe this to be appropriate. It is recommended that the Chairman be given responsibility for approving the Committee's submission in order to ensure it is submitted before the deadline.

# London: Peak Passenger Demand

## Morning peak demand

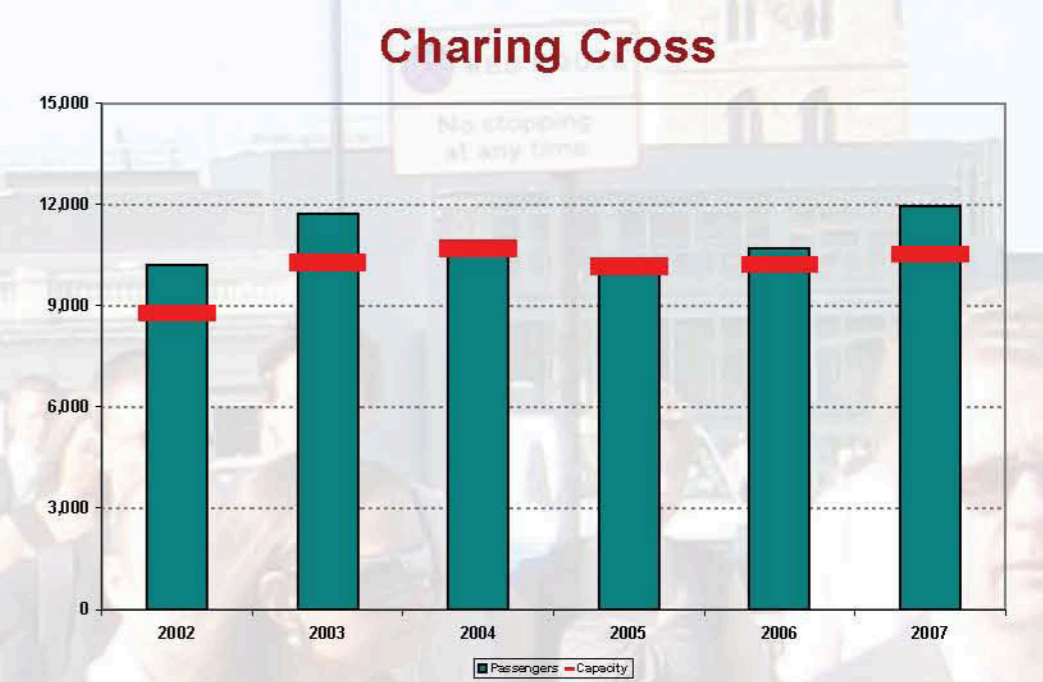
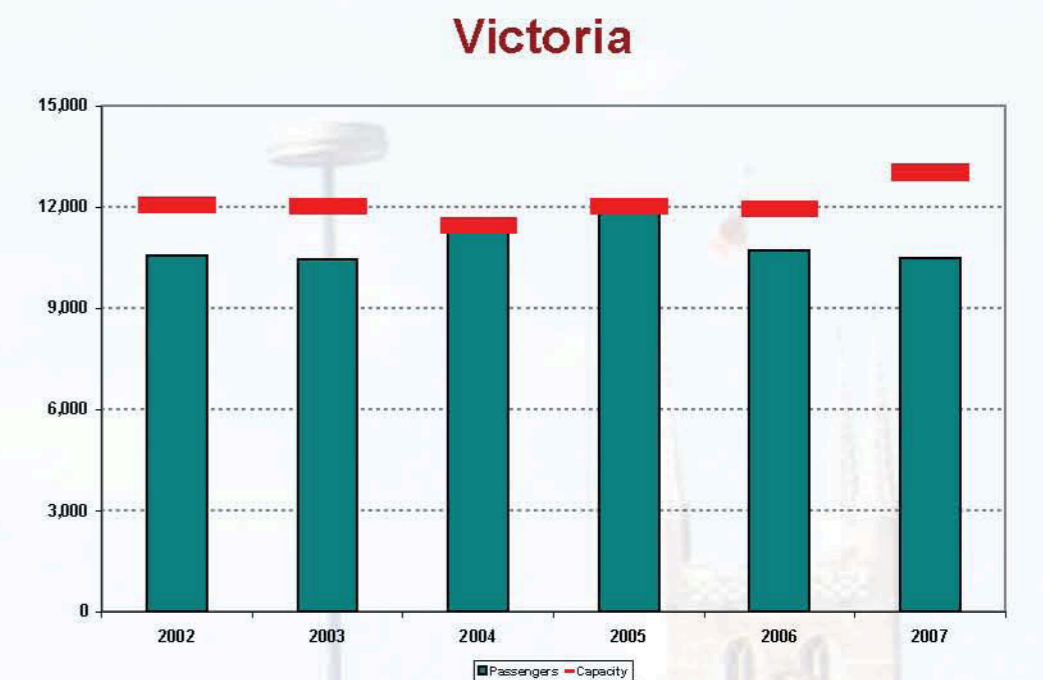
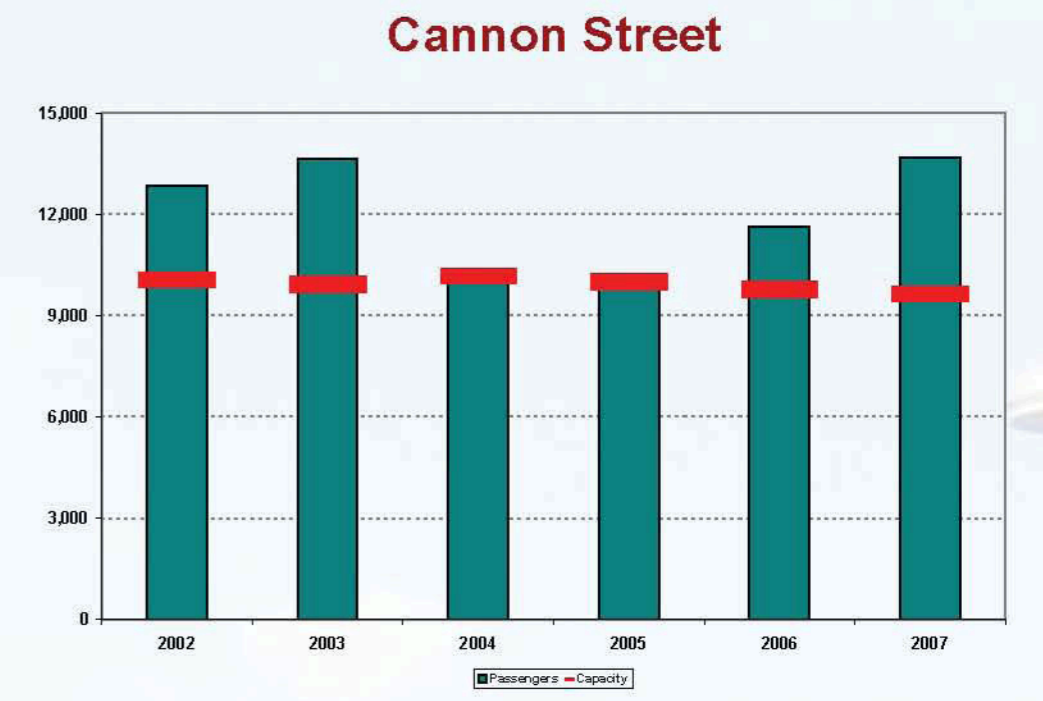


## Evening peak demand

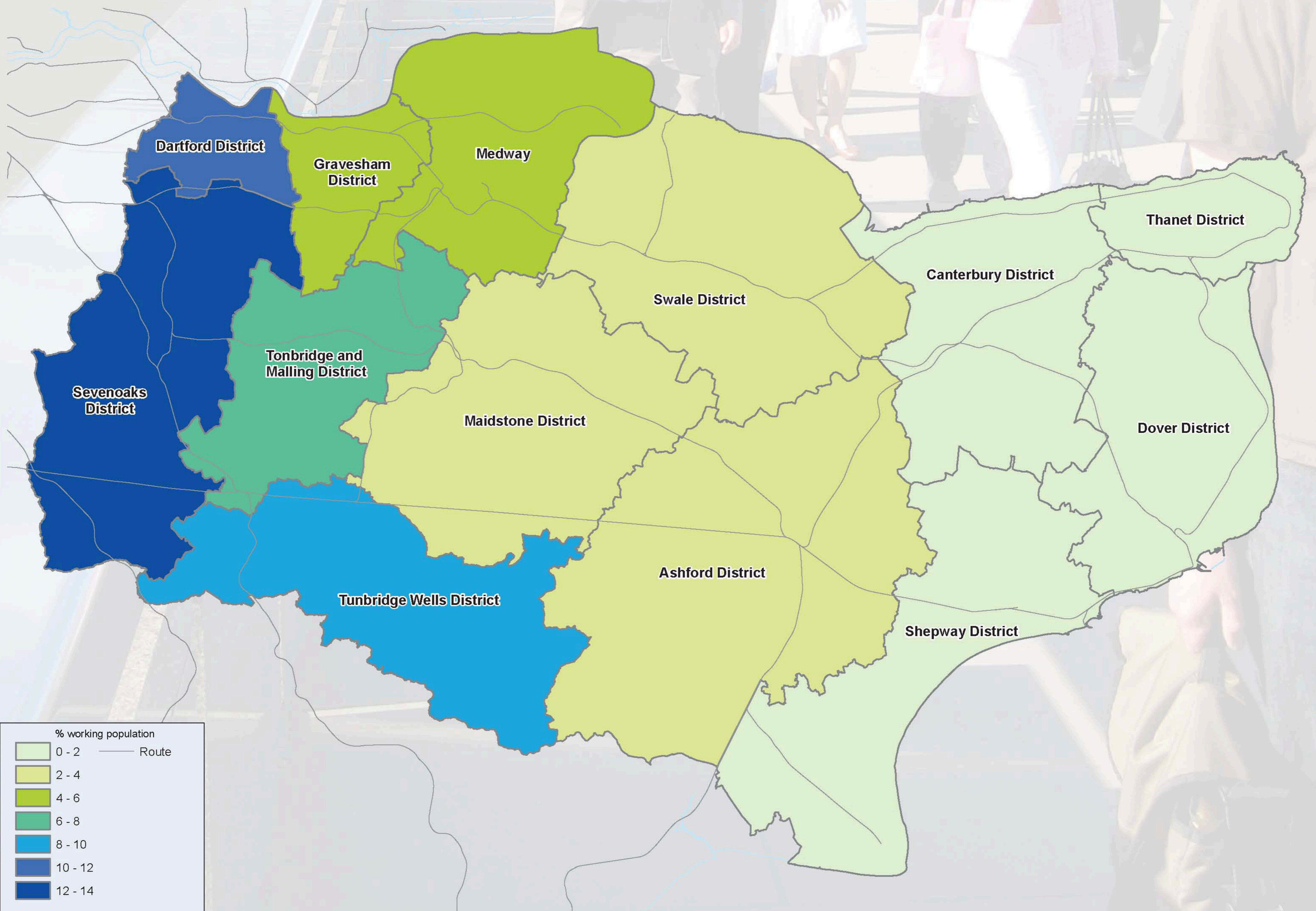


# London: Peak Passenger Demand

**Trend in passenger use - Outer Services**  
**Morning Peak (0700 - 0959) maximum loads and declared capacity**  
 (Source: DfT Greenbook counts)



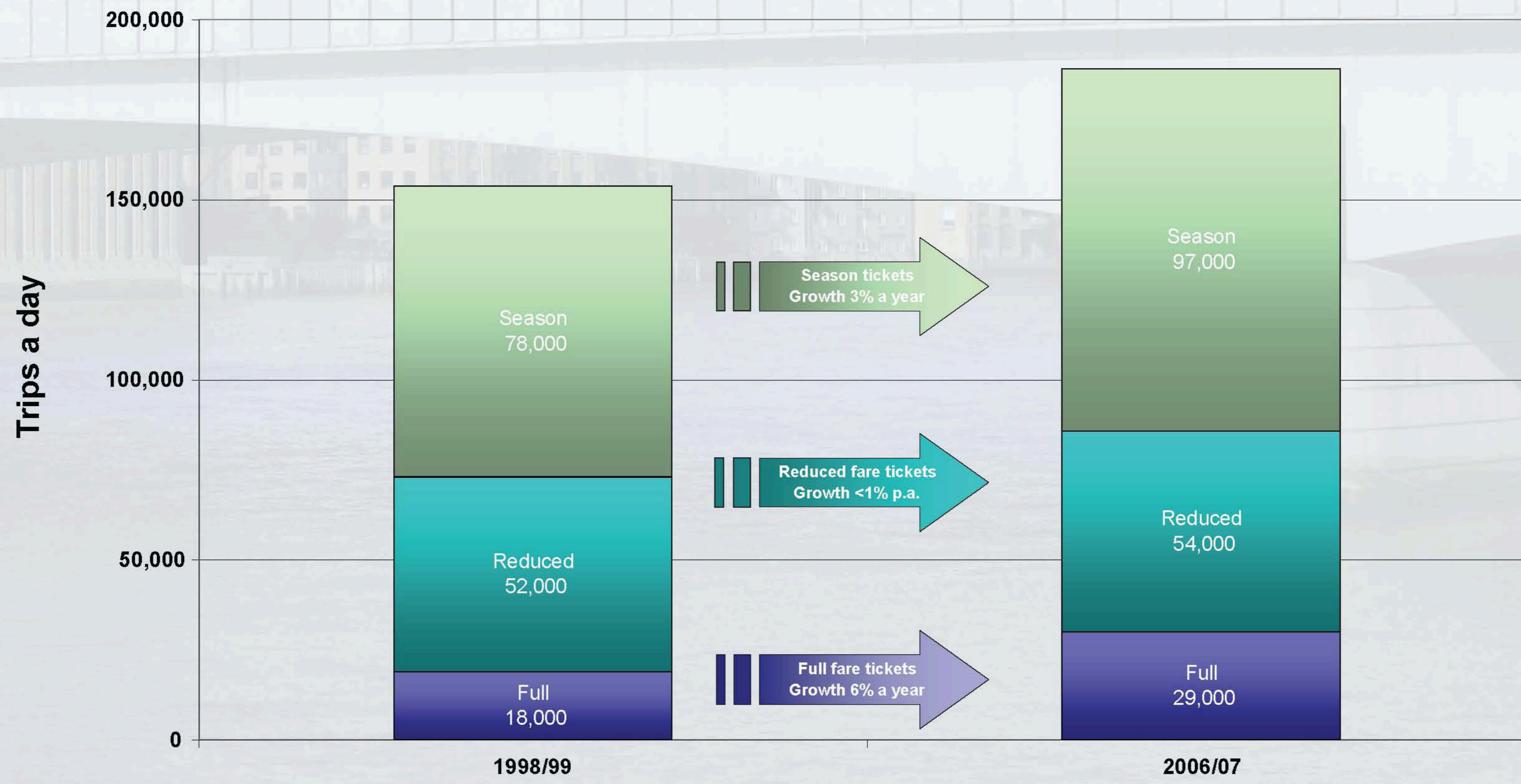
## Commuting to London by Train from the Kent RUS area



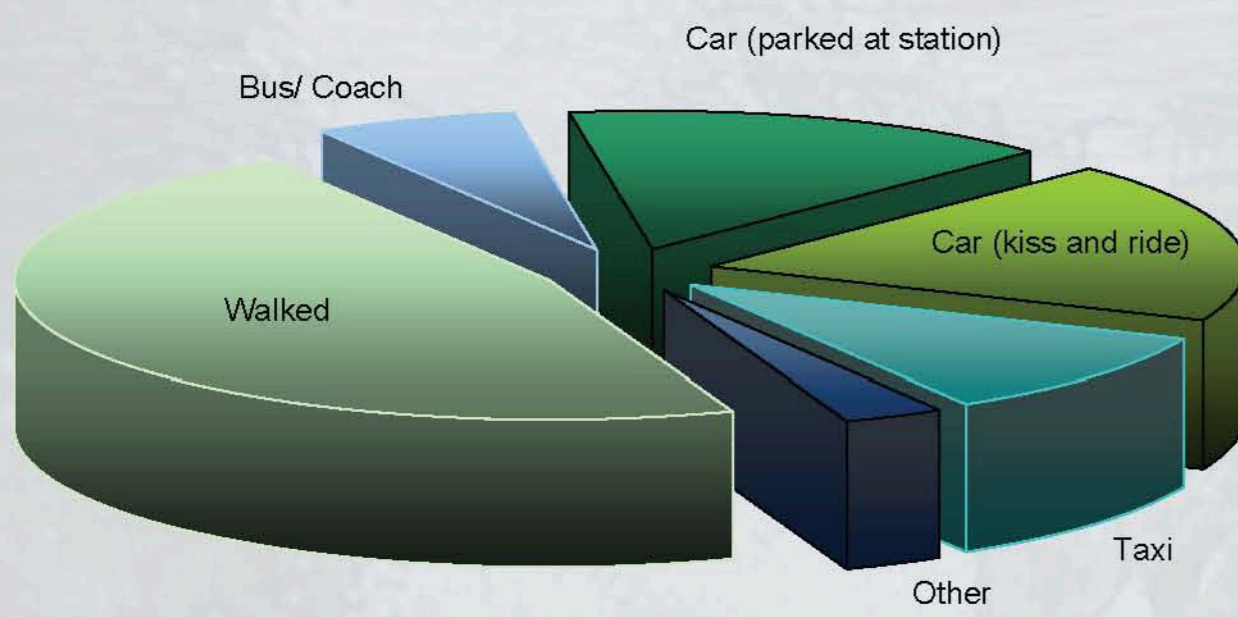


# Kent RUS area: Passenger Usage

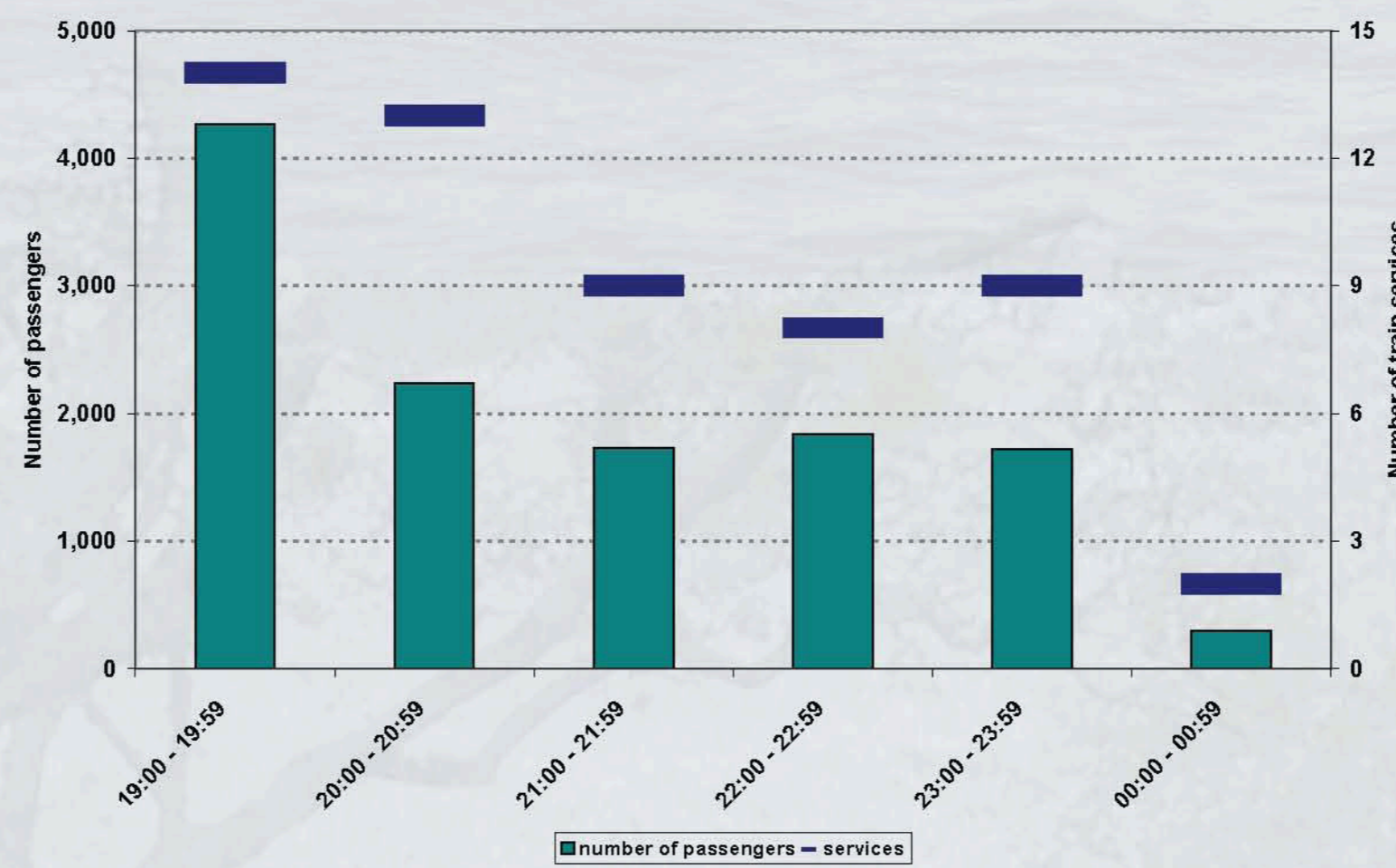
## The rising use of rail in Kent



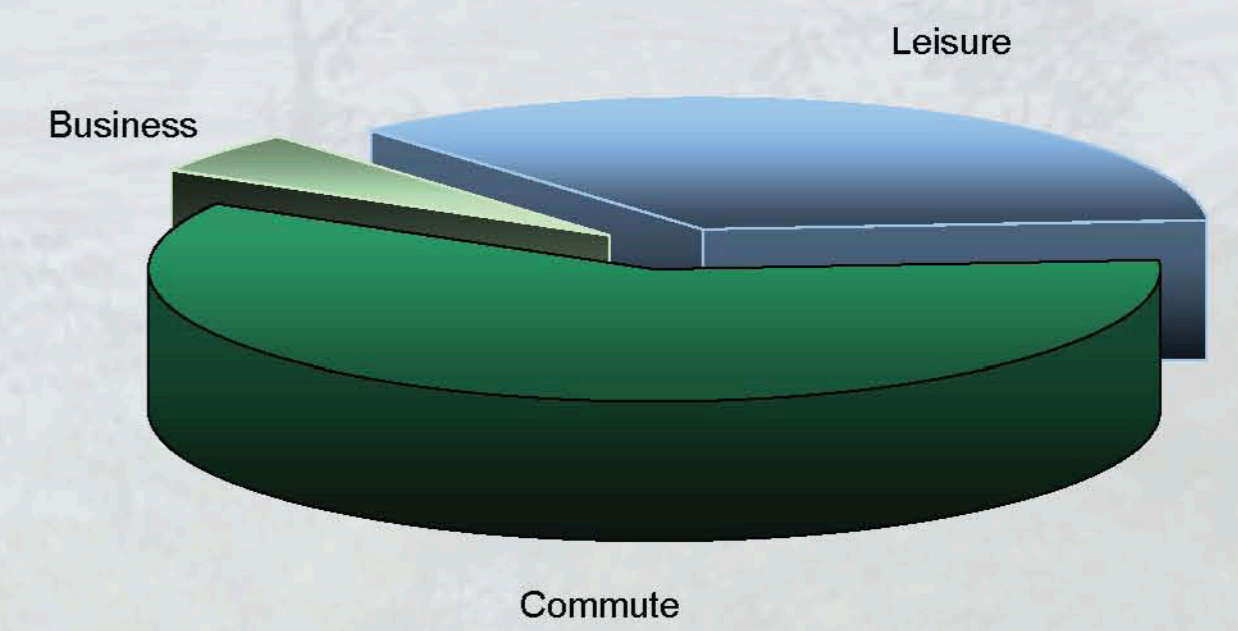
### Getting to the station



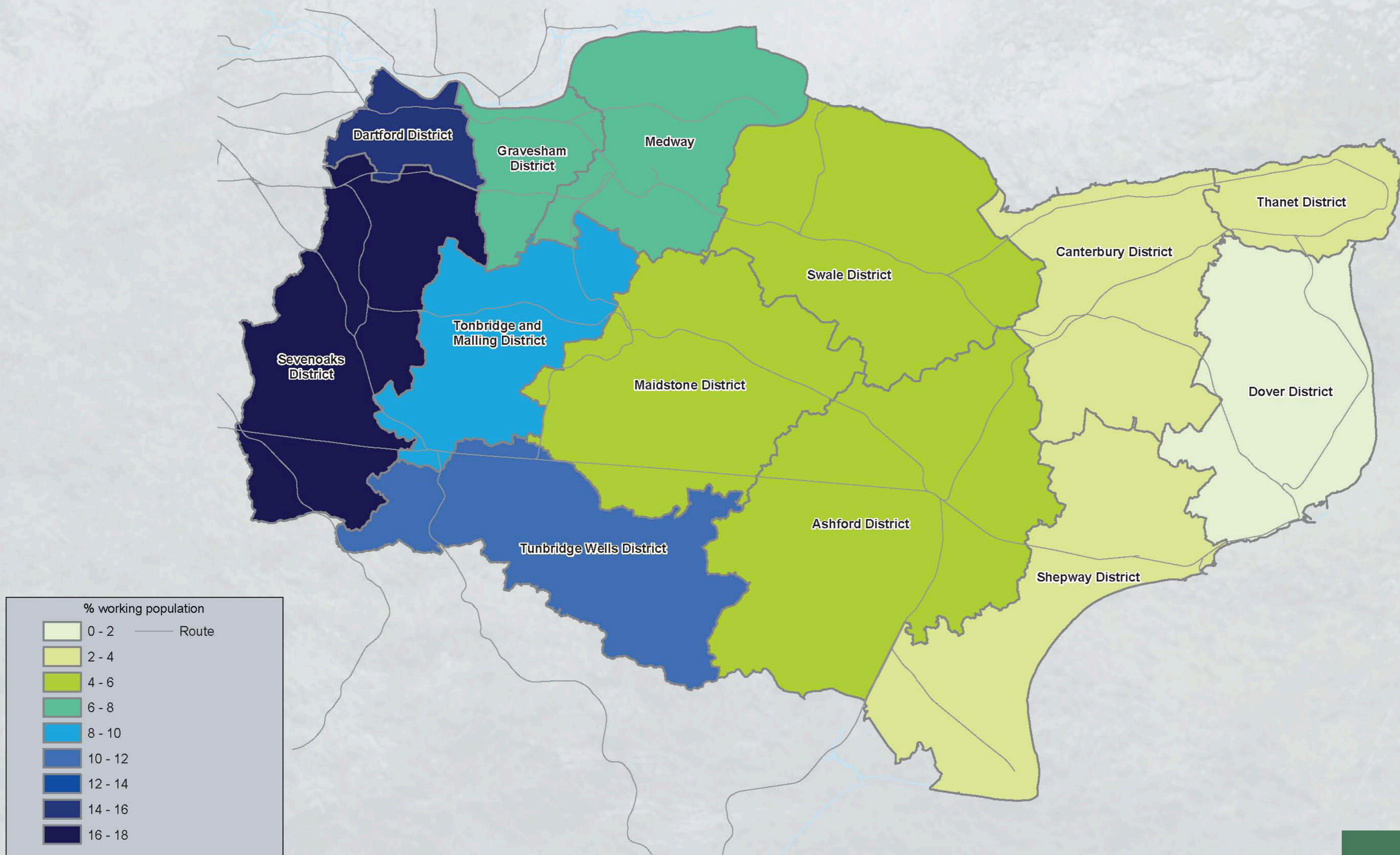
### Evening train journeys



### Journey purpose

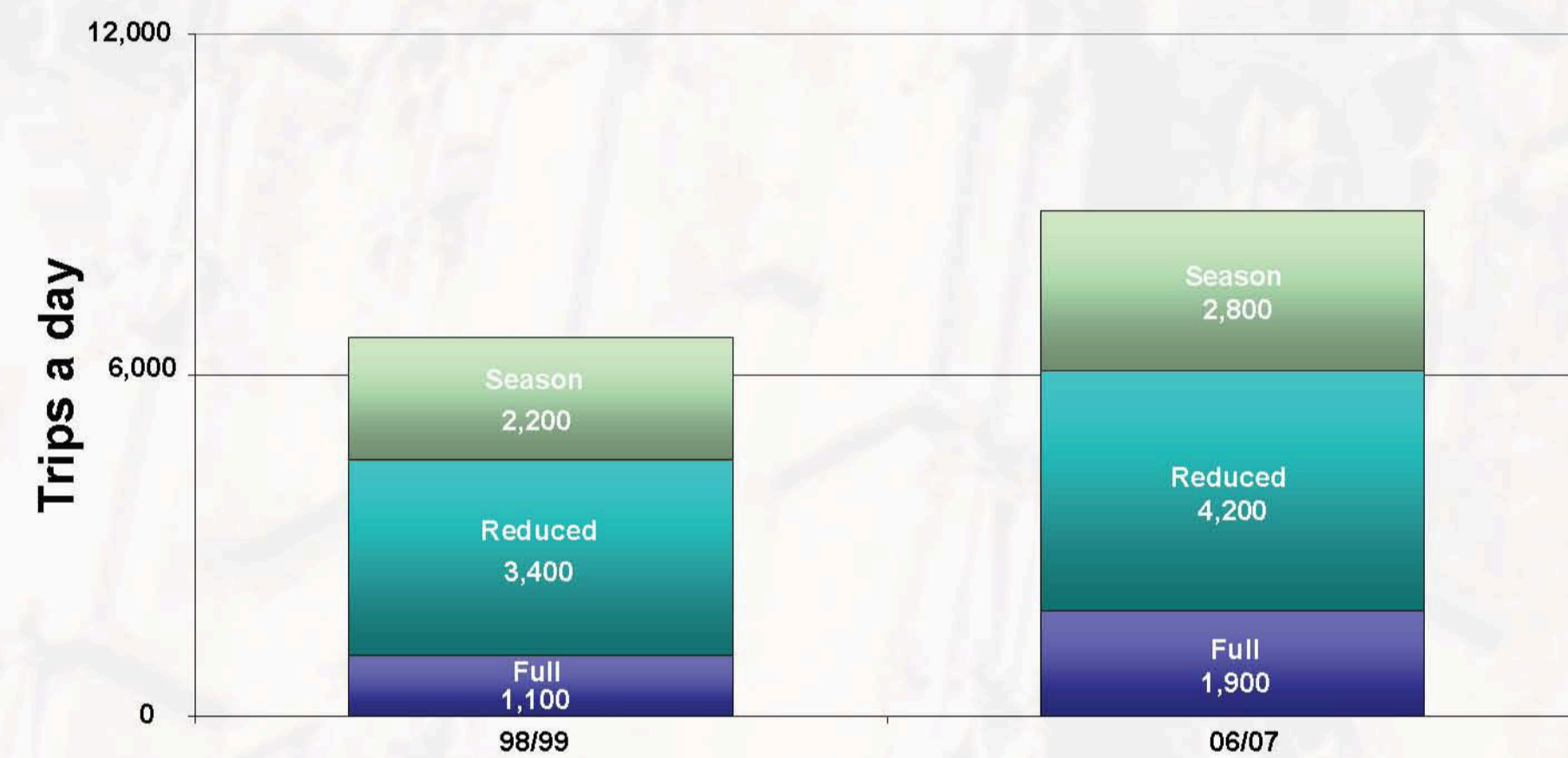
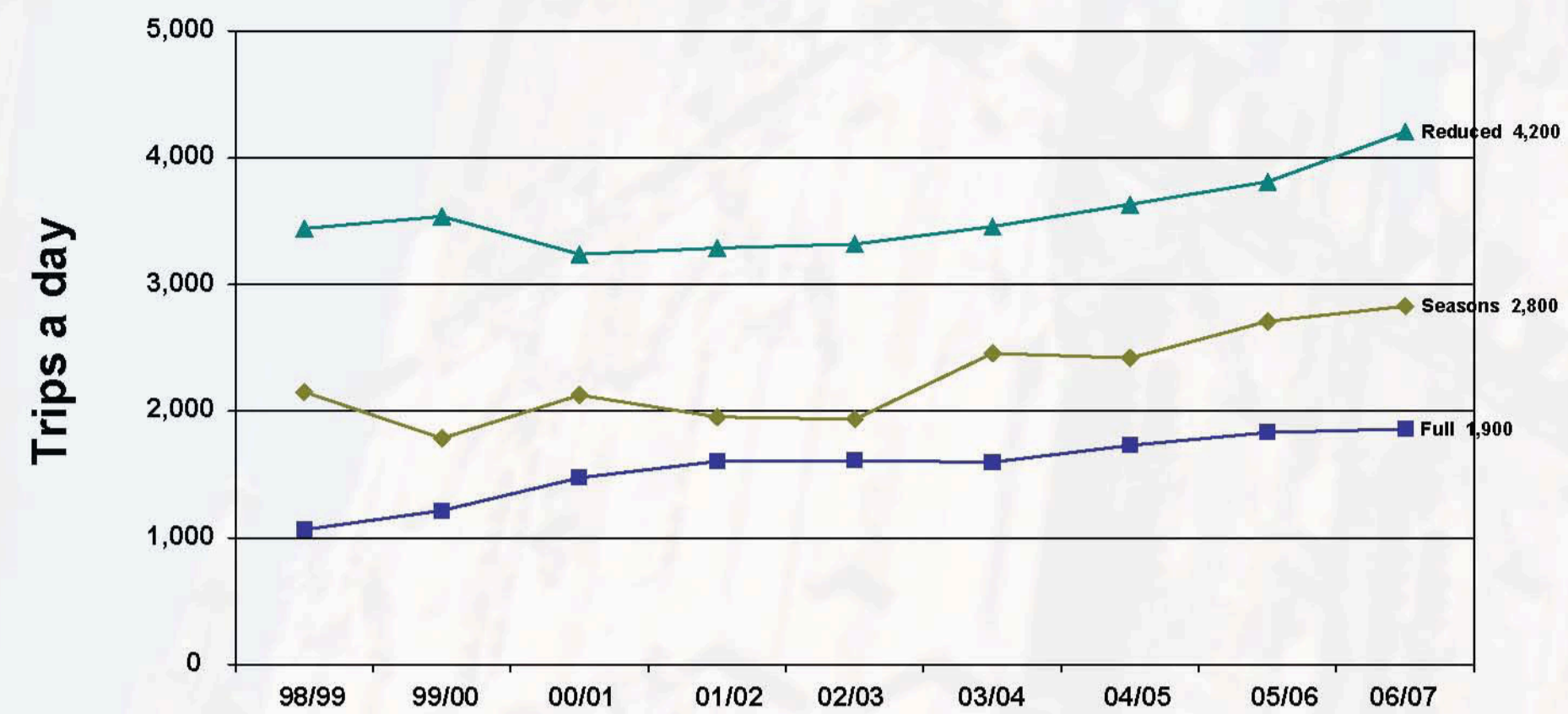


## Commuting by train from the Kent RUS area

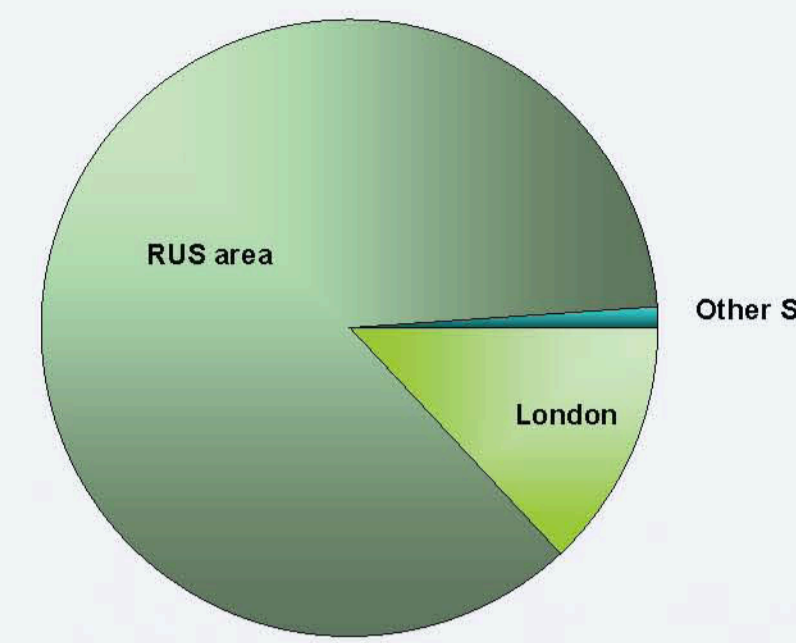


# Canterbury

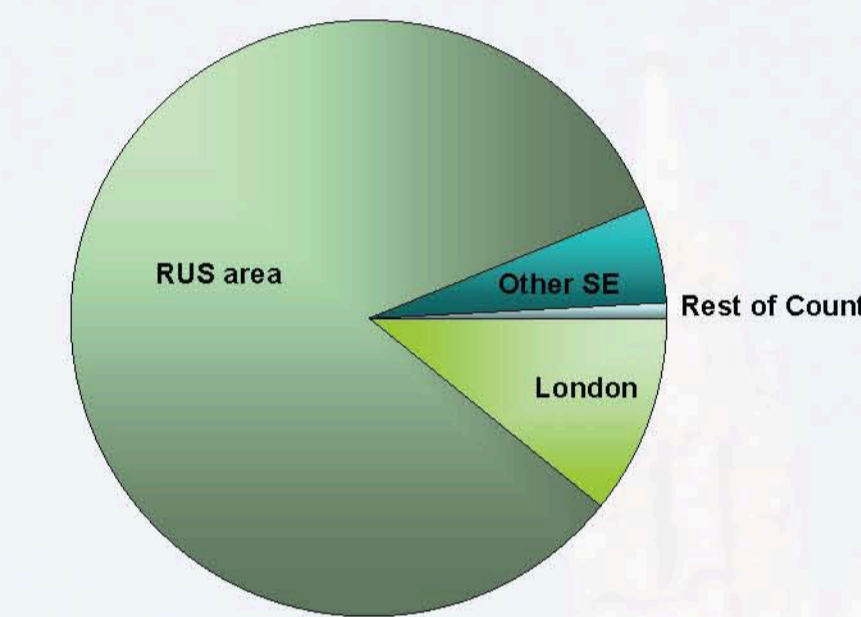
## The rising use of rail in Canterbury



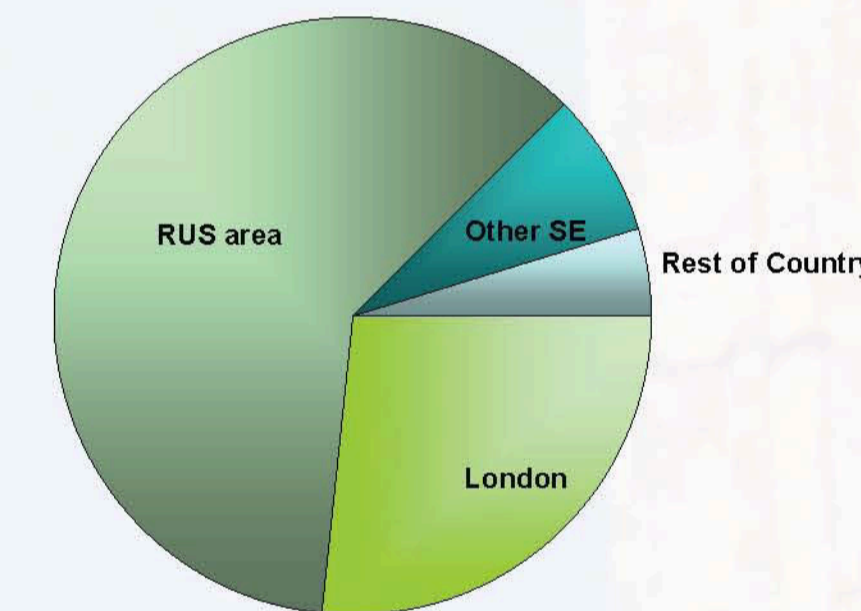
Season tickets  
Growth 3% a year



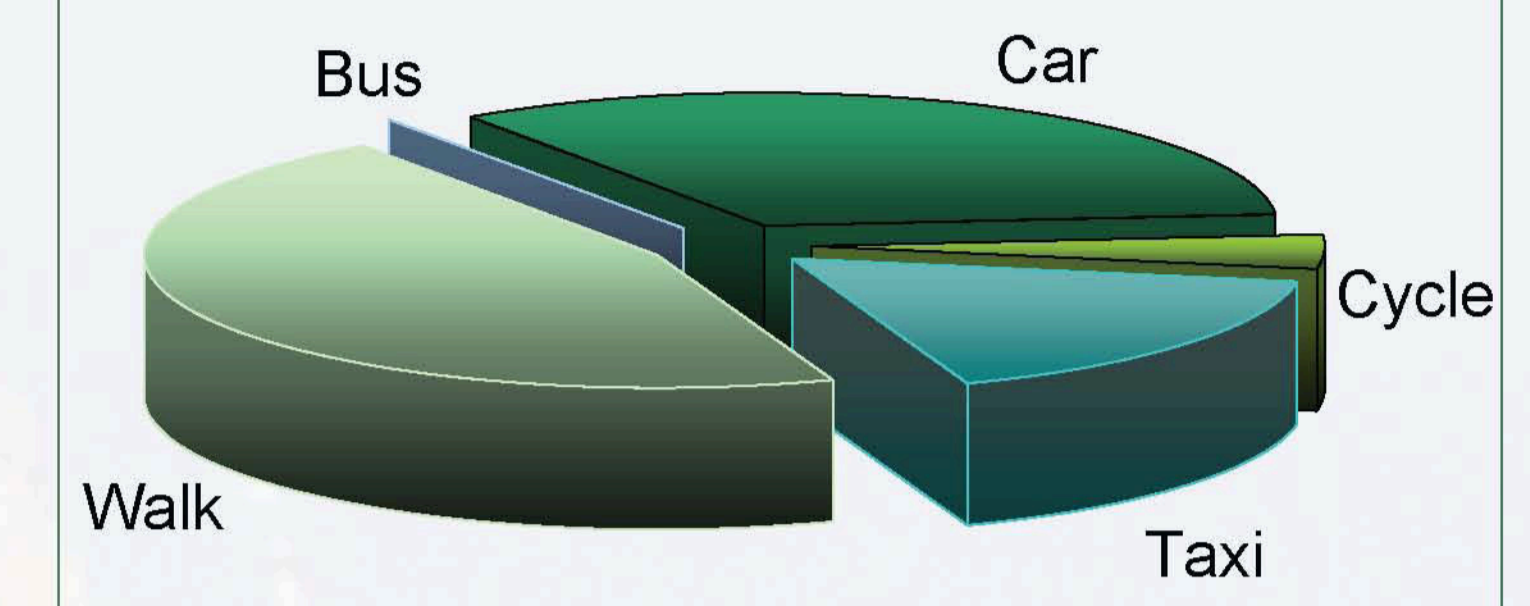
Reduced fare tickets  
Growth 3% a year



Full fare tickets  
Growth 7% a year

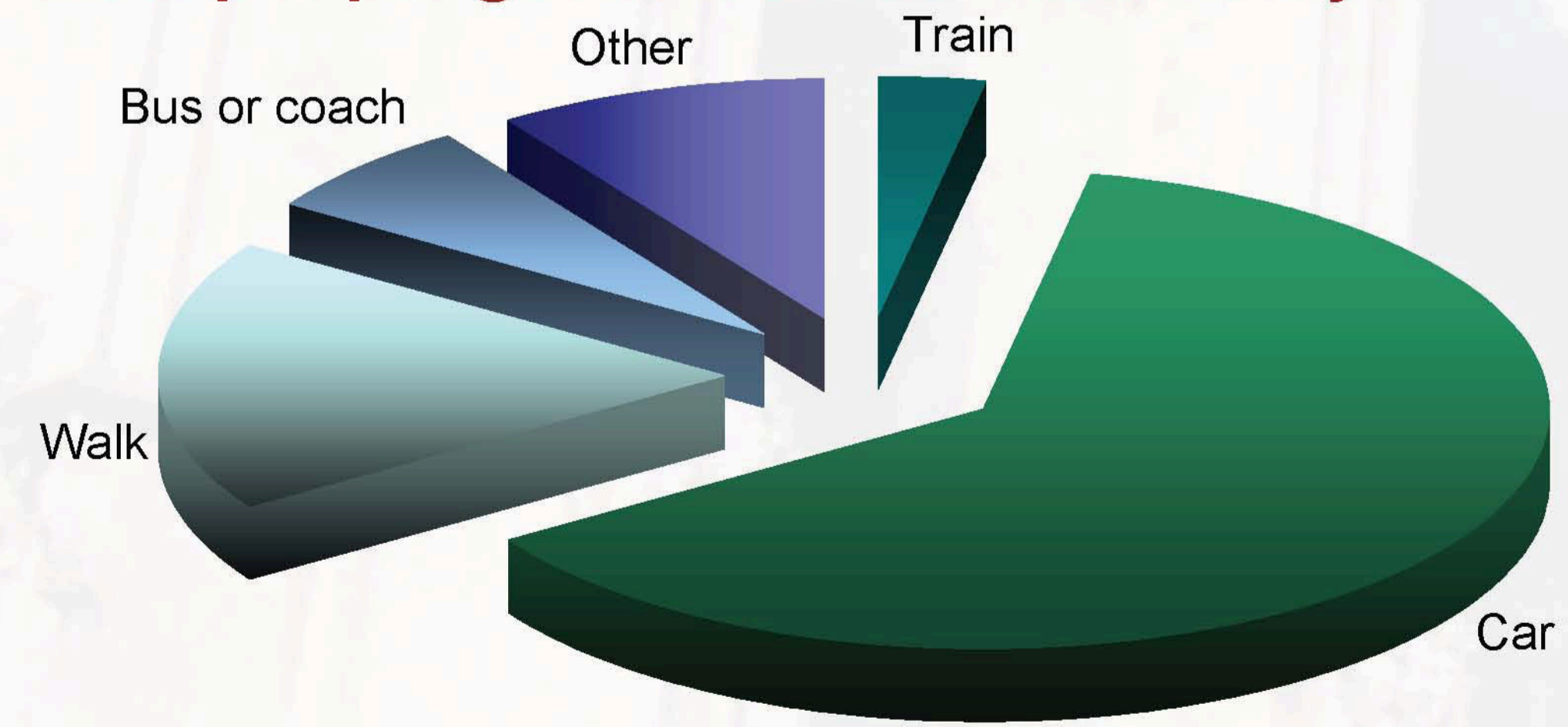


## How people get to the station



Source: LATS data

## How people get to work in Canterbury



Workforce of c. 16,000

3% commute into Canterbury by train

1,600 people arrive by train each morning

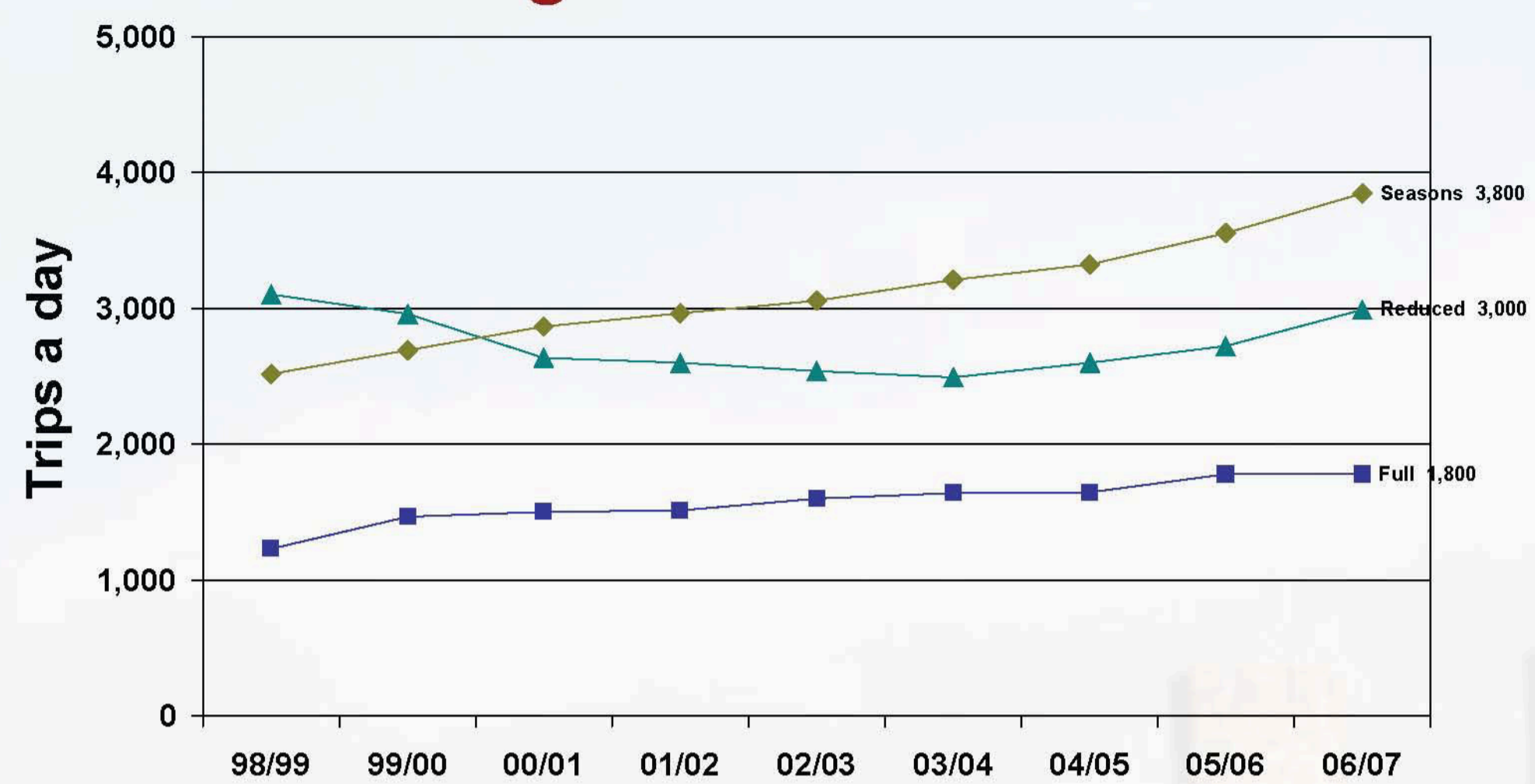
## Commuting from Canterbury

2% of resident workers commute to London by train

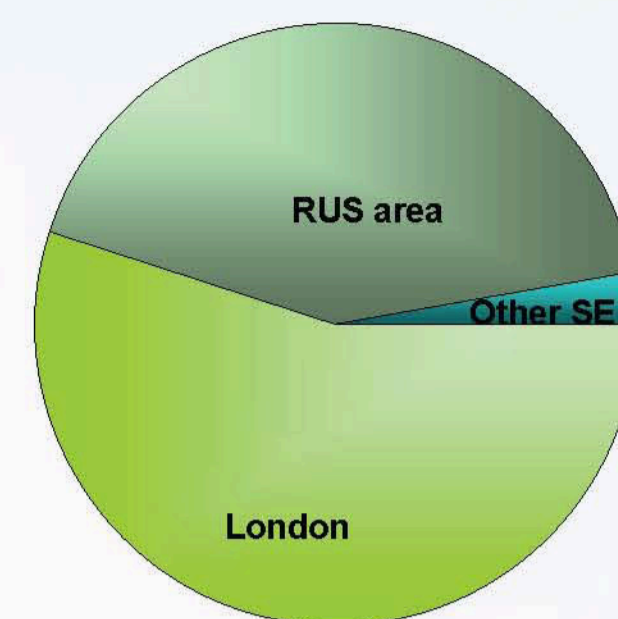
A further 2% commute elsewhere by train

# Maidstone

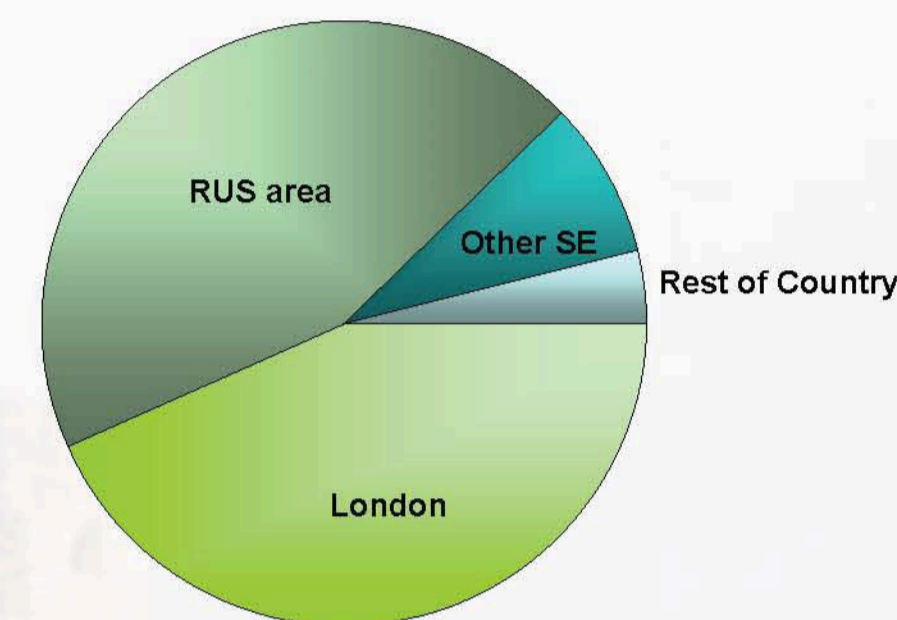
## The rising use of rail in Maidstone



Season tickets  
Growth 5% a year



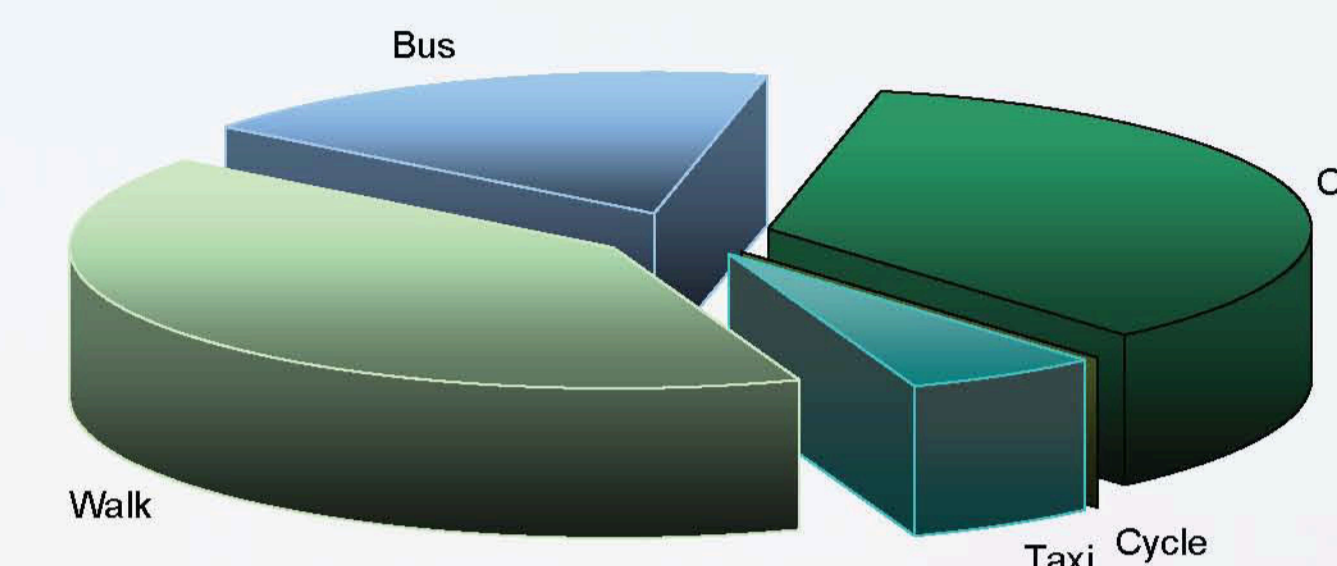
Reduced fare tickets  
Growth 5% a year



Full fare tickets  
Growth 5% a year

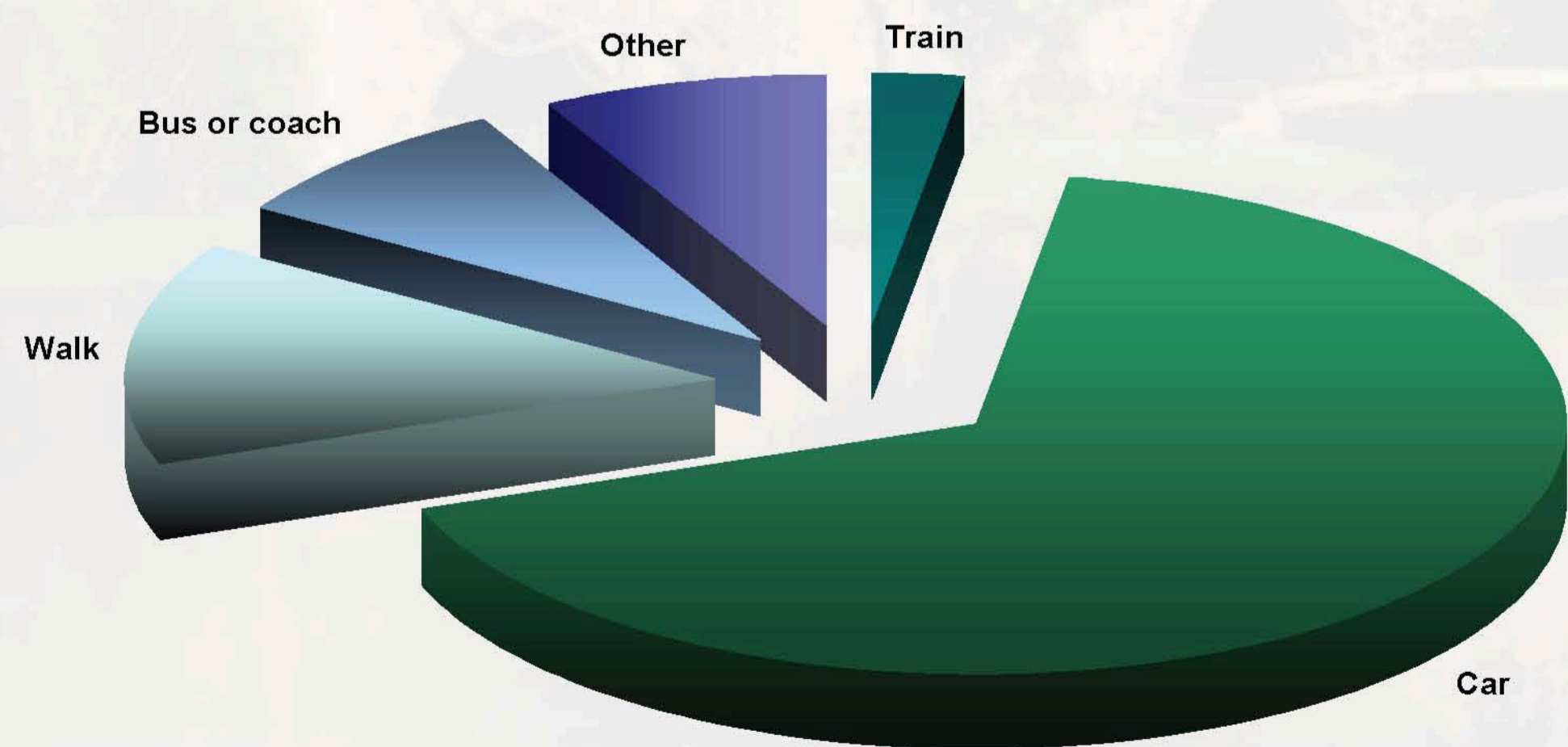


## How people get to the station



Source: LATS data

## How people get to work in Maidstone



Workforce of c. 28,000

3% commute into Maidstone by train

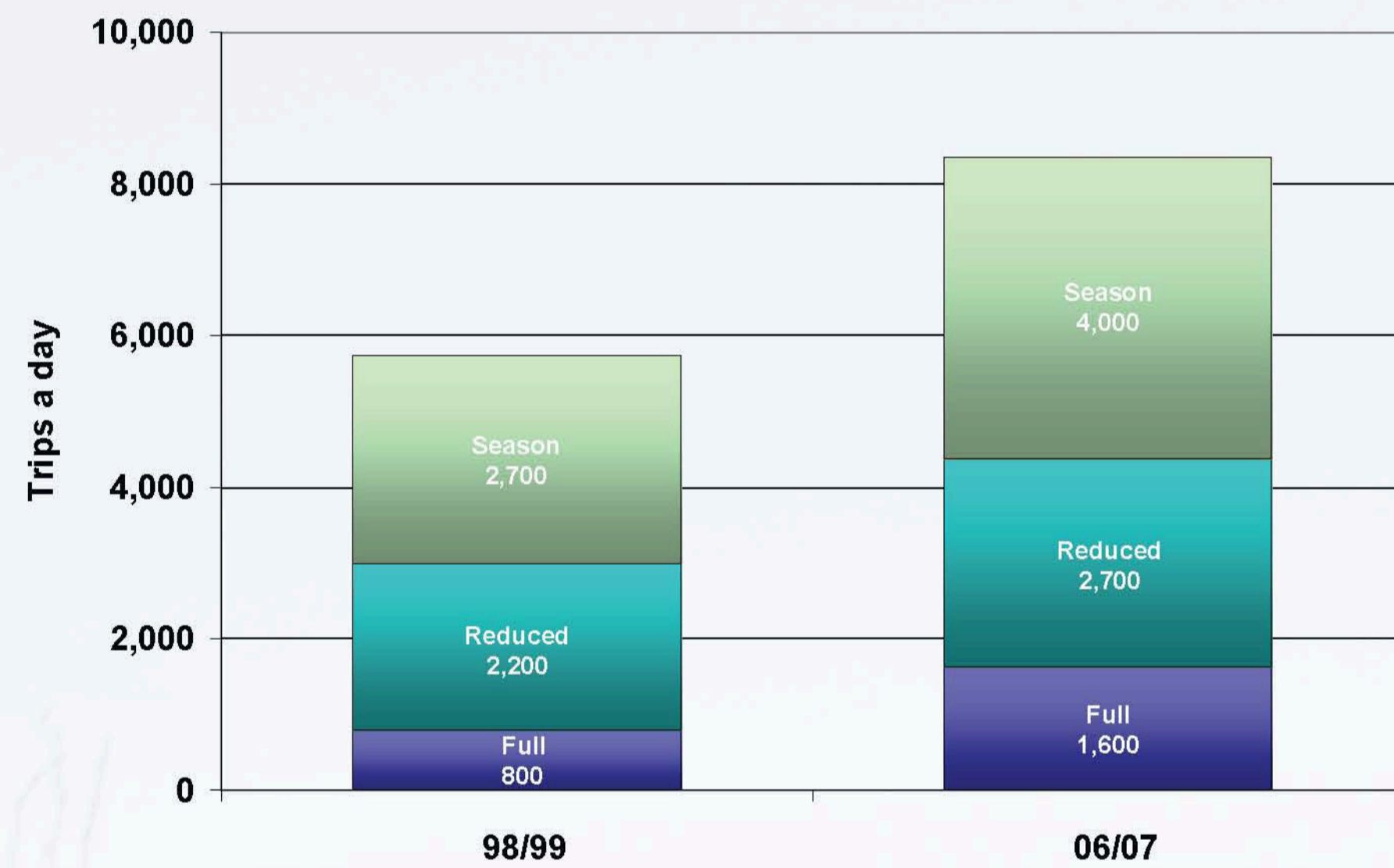
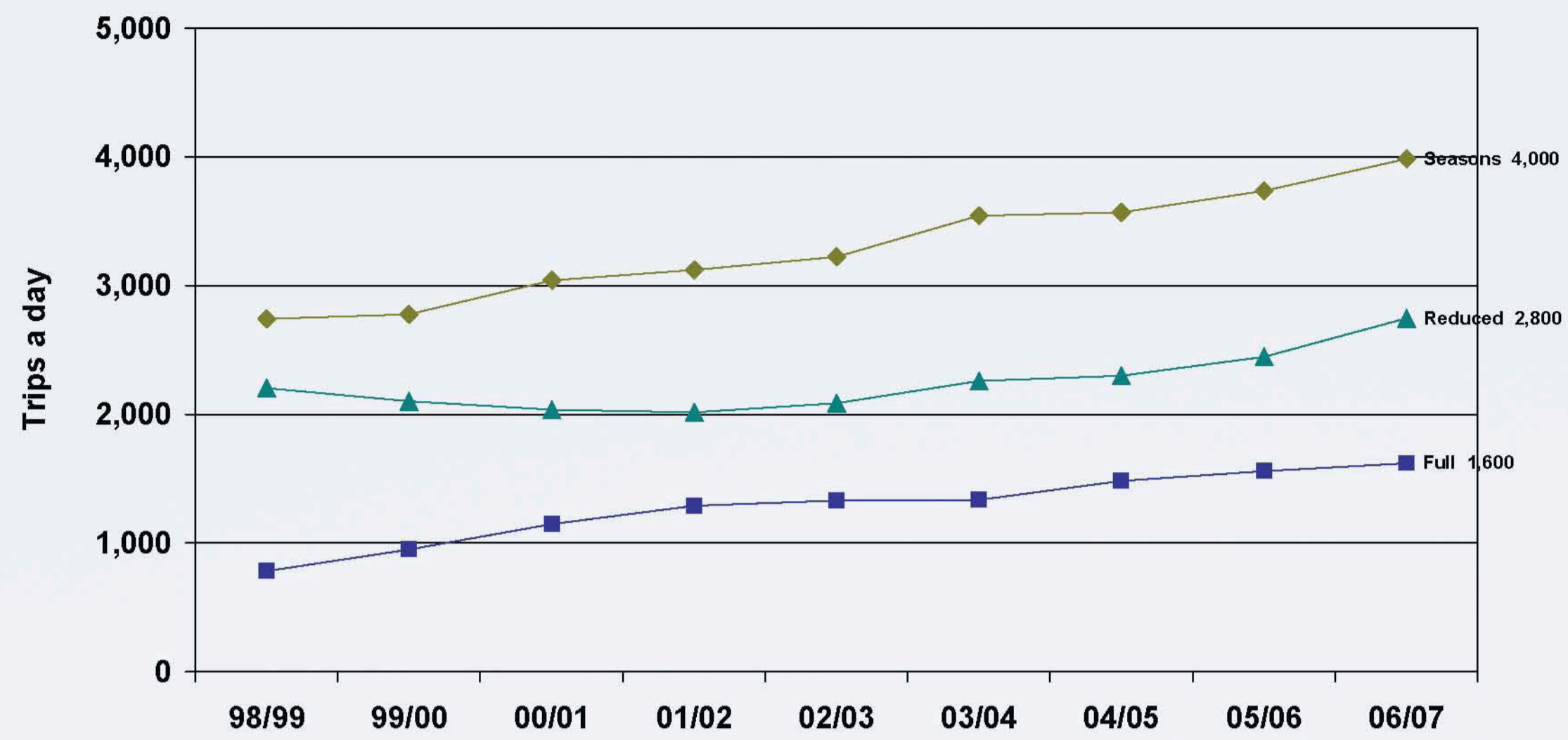
800 people arrive by train each morning

4% of resident workers commute to London by train

A further 2% commute elsewhere by train

# Ashford

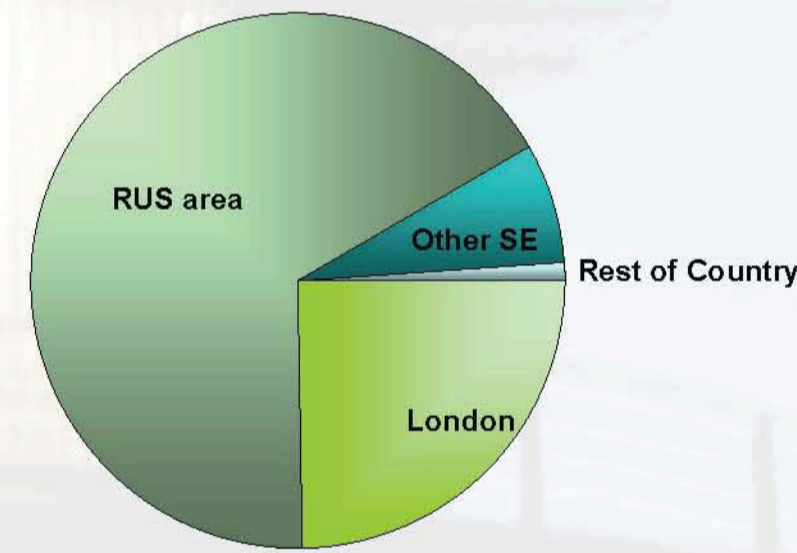
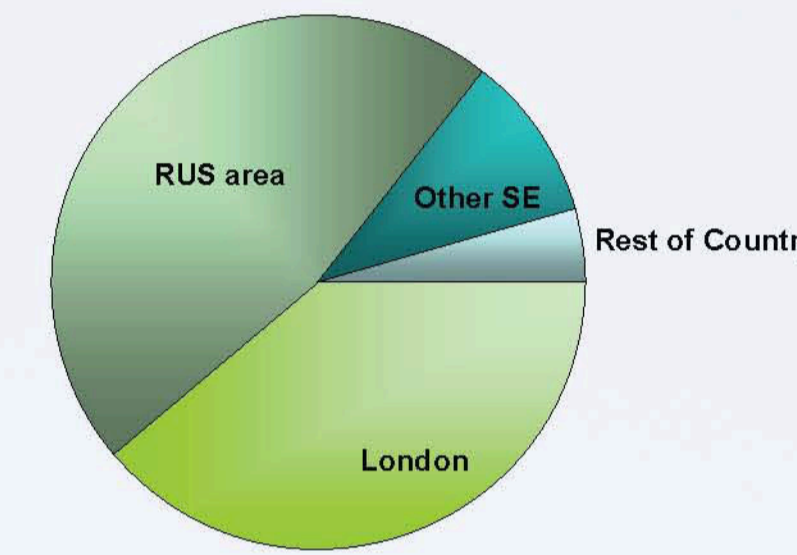
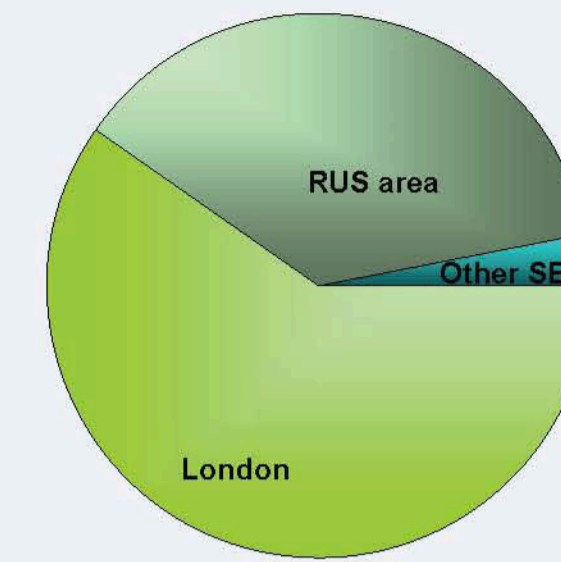
## The rising use of rail in Ashford



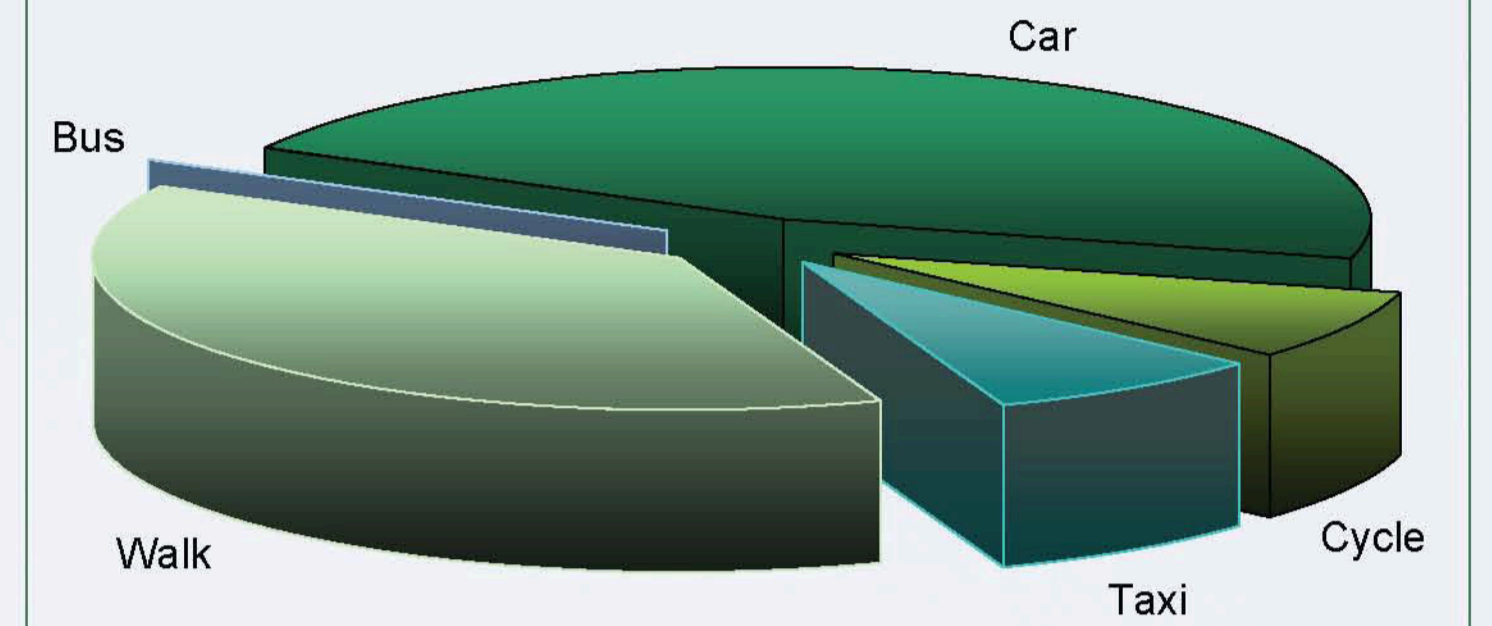
Season tickets  
Growth 5% a year

Reduced fare tickets  
Growth 3% a year

Full fare tickets  
Growth 9% a year

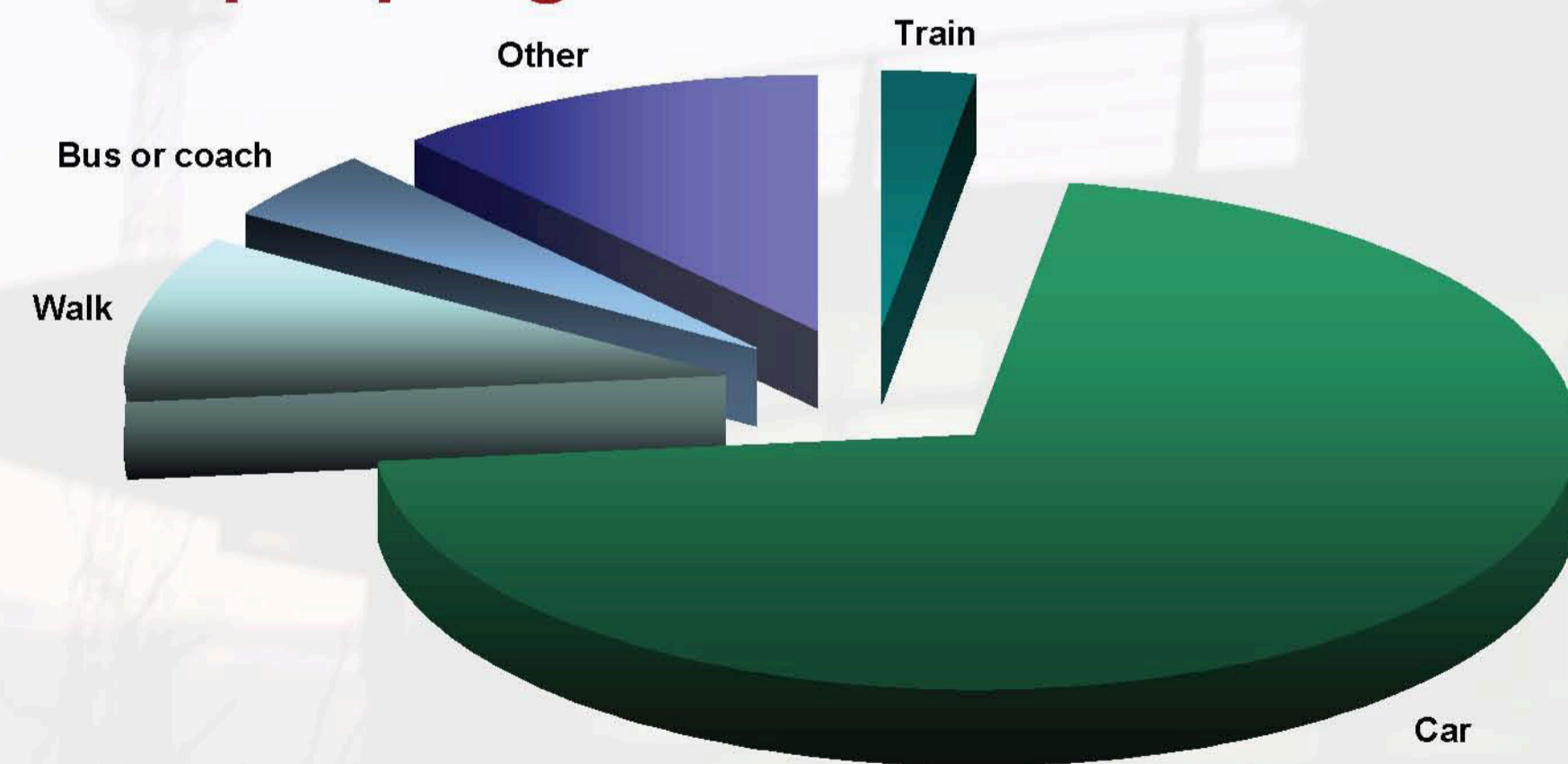


## How people get to the station



Source: LATS data

## How people get to work in Ashford



Workforce of c. 31,000

2% commute into Ashford by train

1,100 people arrive by train each morning

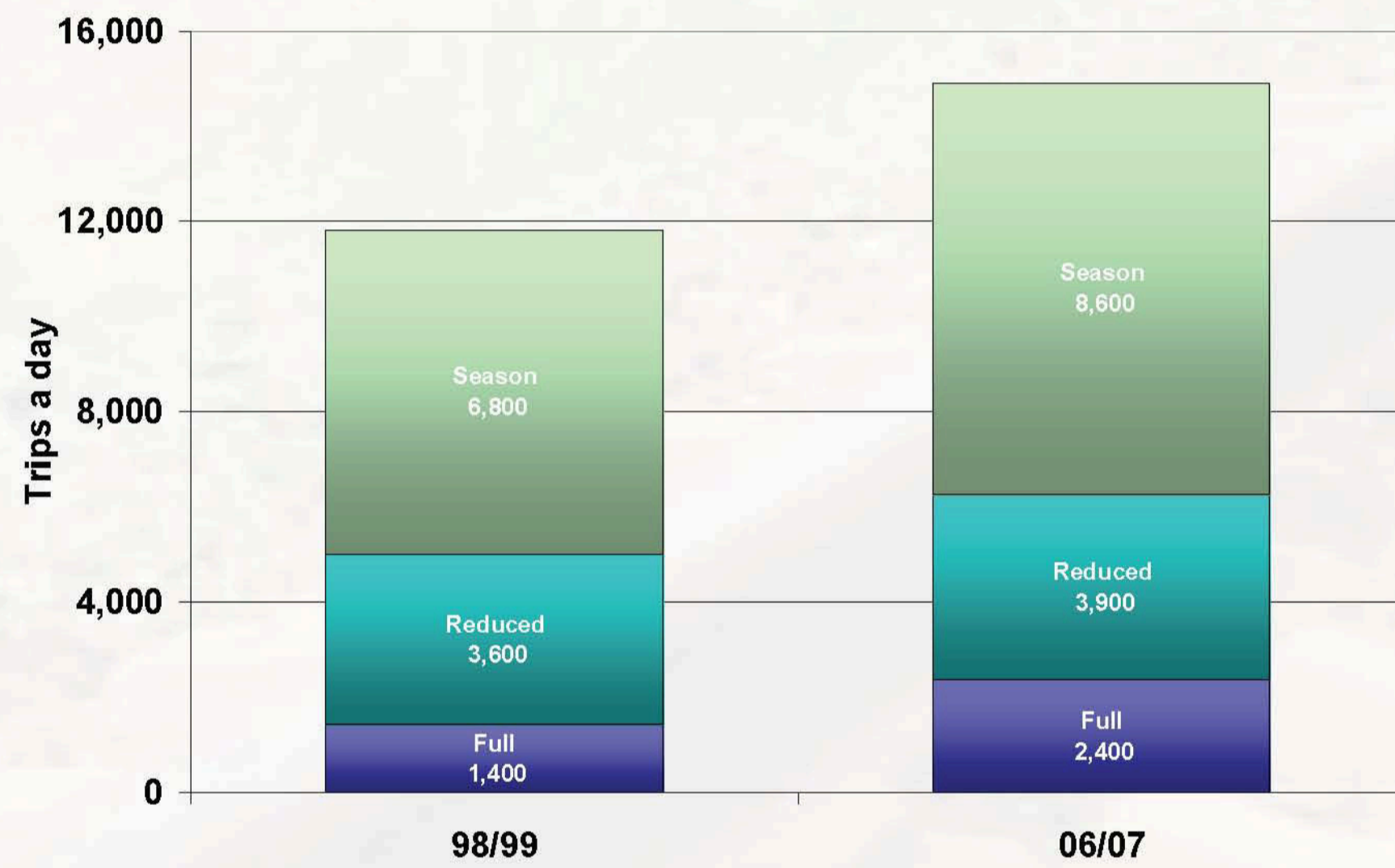
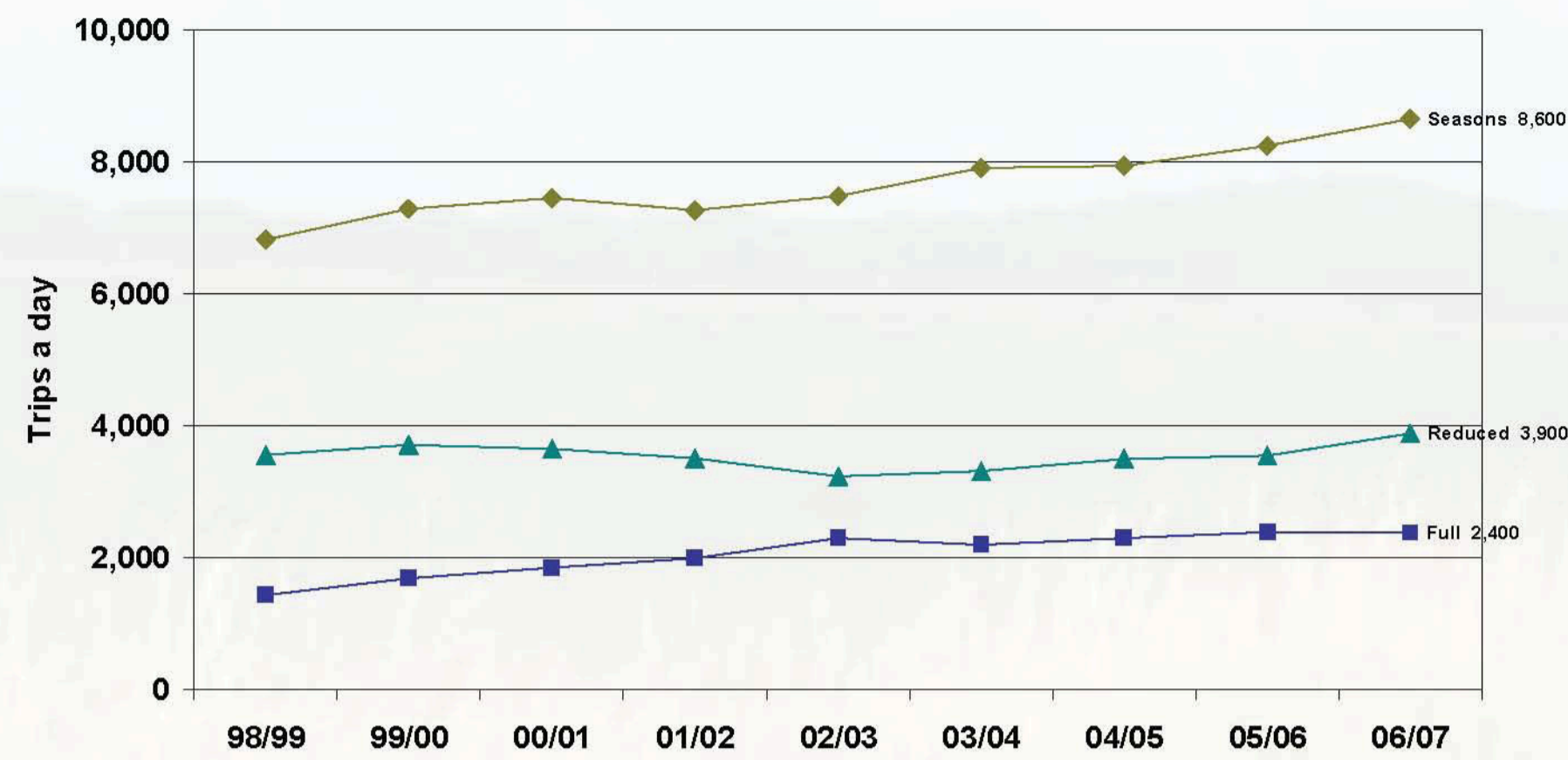
## Commuting from Ashford

4% of resident workers commute to London by train

A further 2% commute elsewhere by train

# Tonbridge

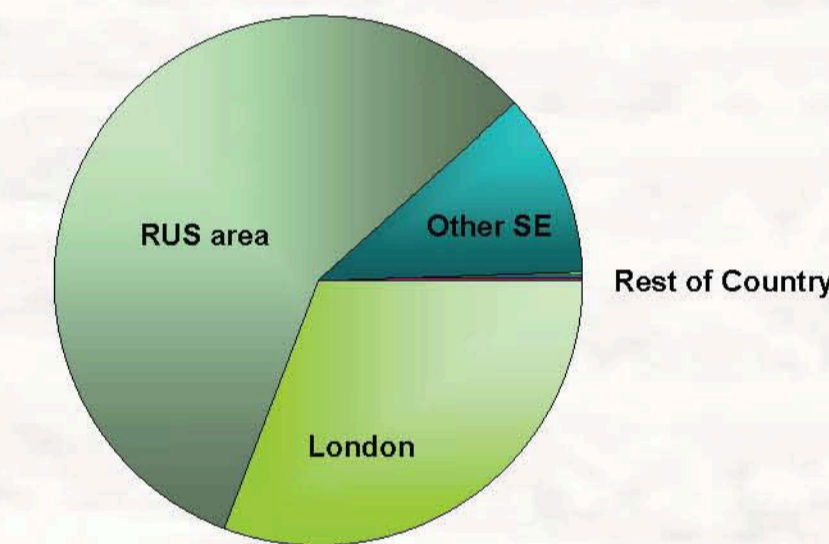
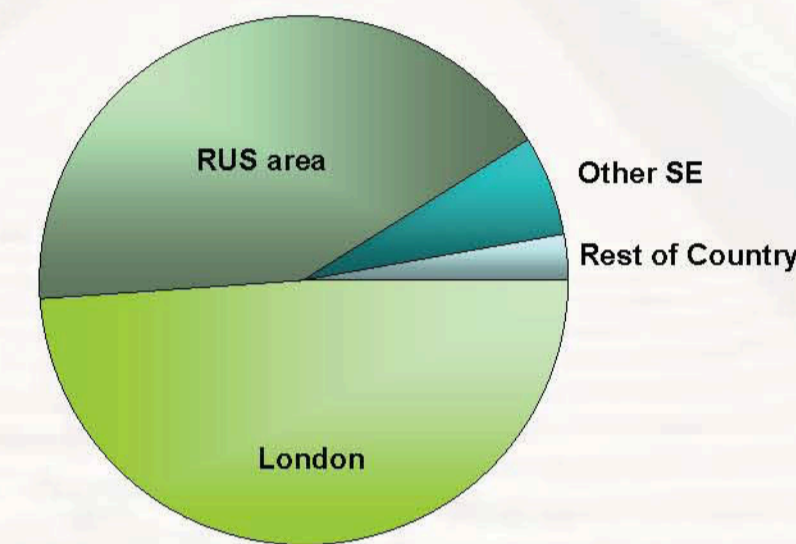
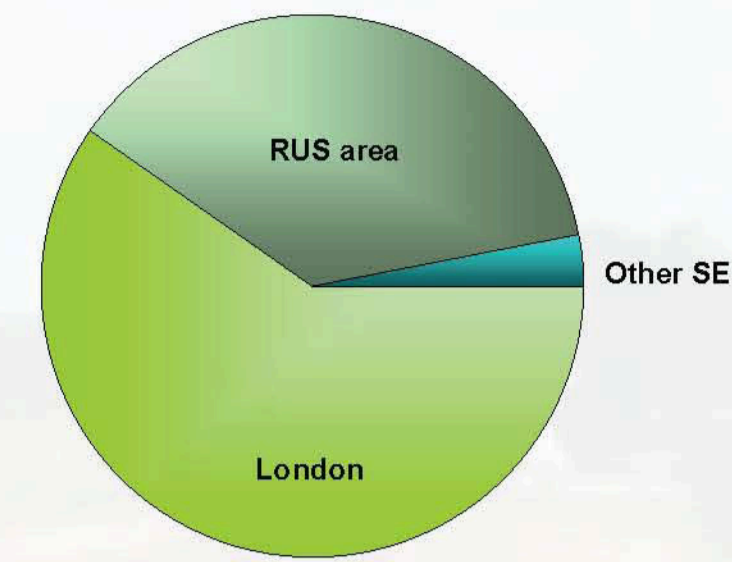
## Rising use of rail in Tonbridge



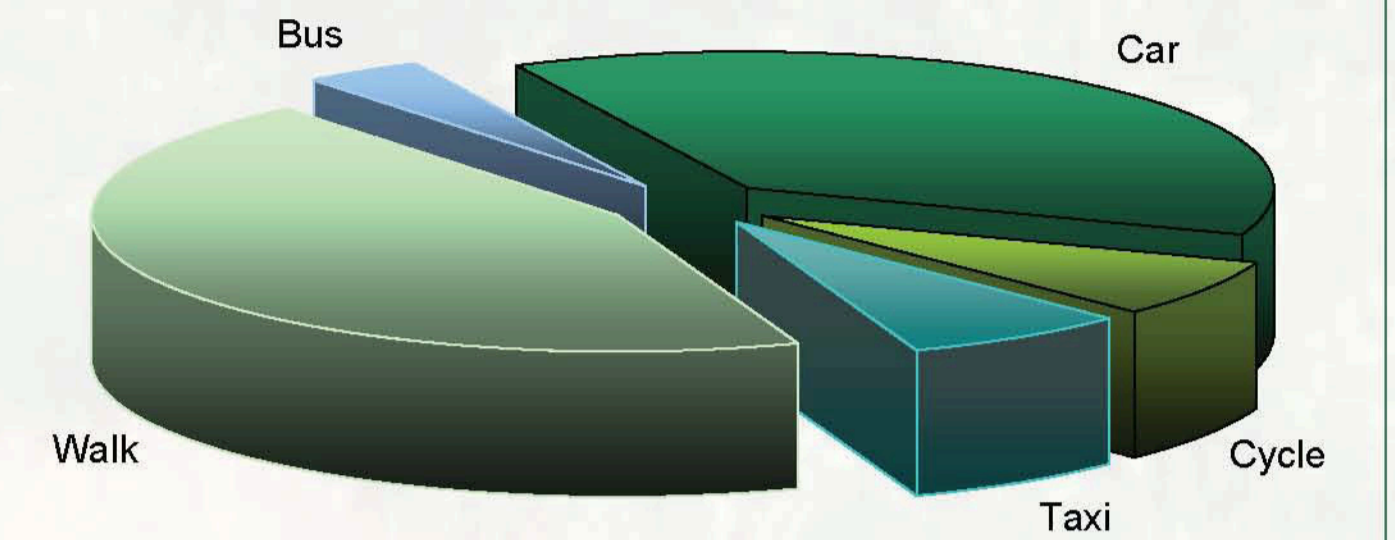
Season tickets  
Growth 3% a year

Reduced fare tickets  
Growth 1% a year

Full fare tickets  
Growth 6% a year

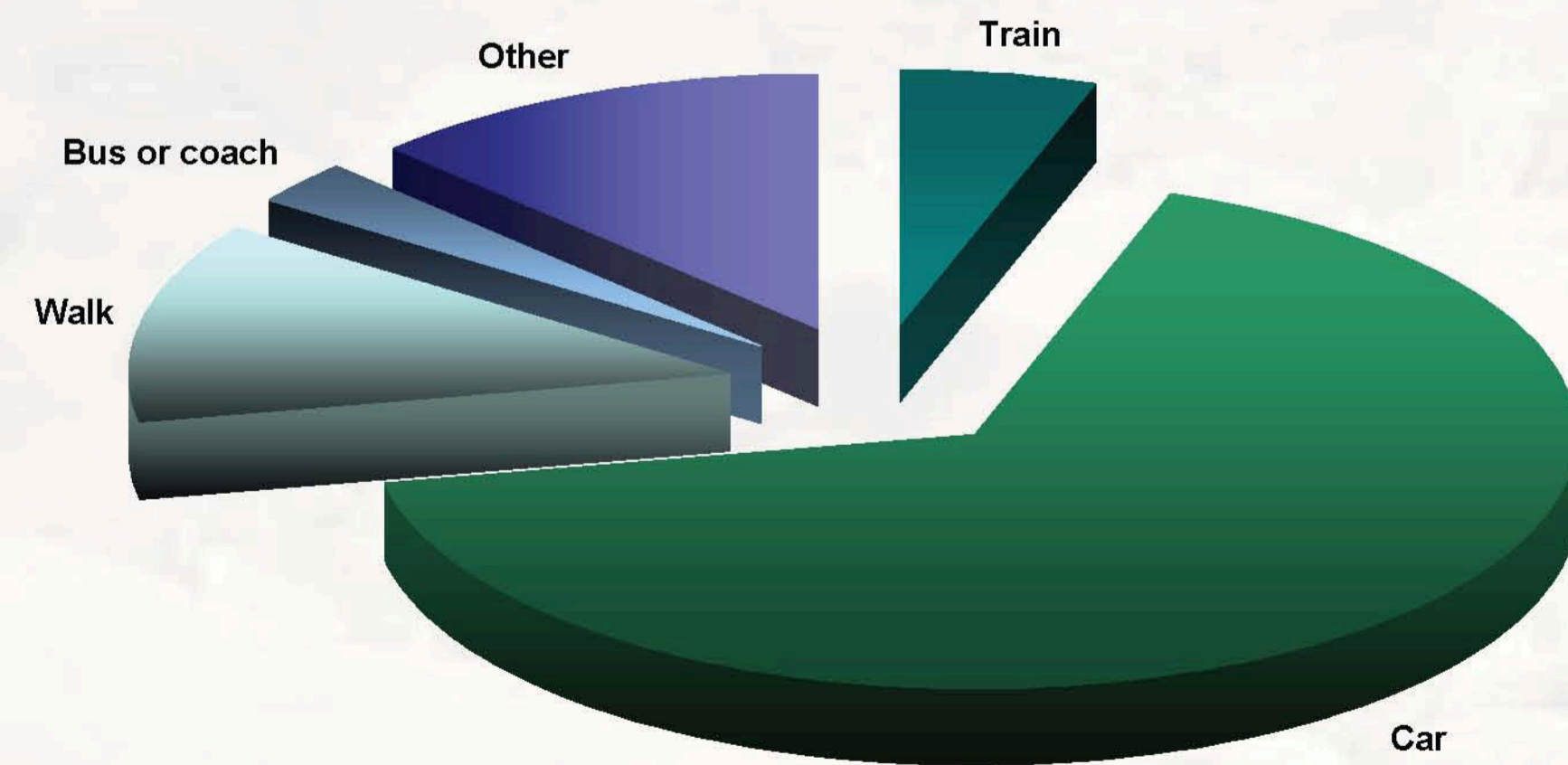


## How people get to the station



Source: LATS data

## How people get to work in Tonbridge



Workforce of c. 17,000

3% commute into Tonbridge by train

2,400 people arrive by train each morning

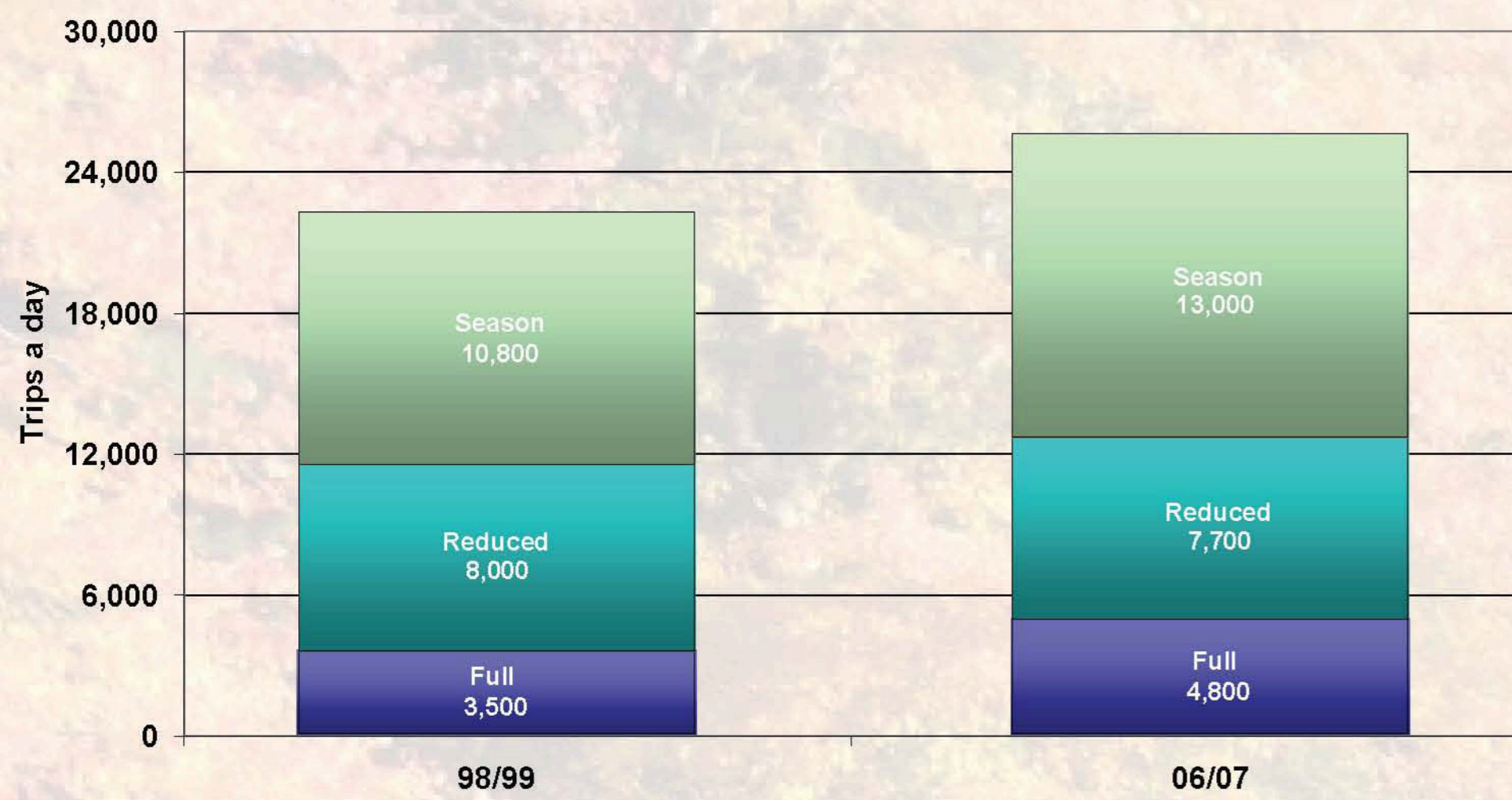
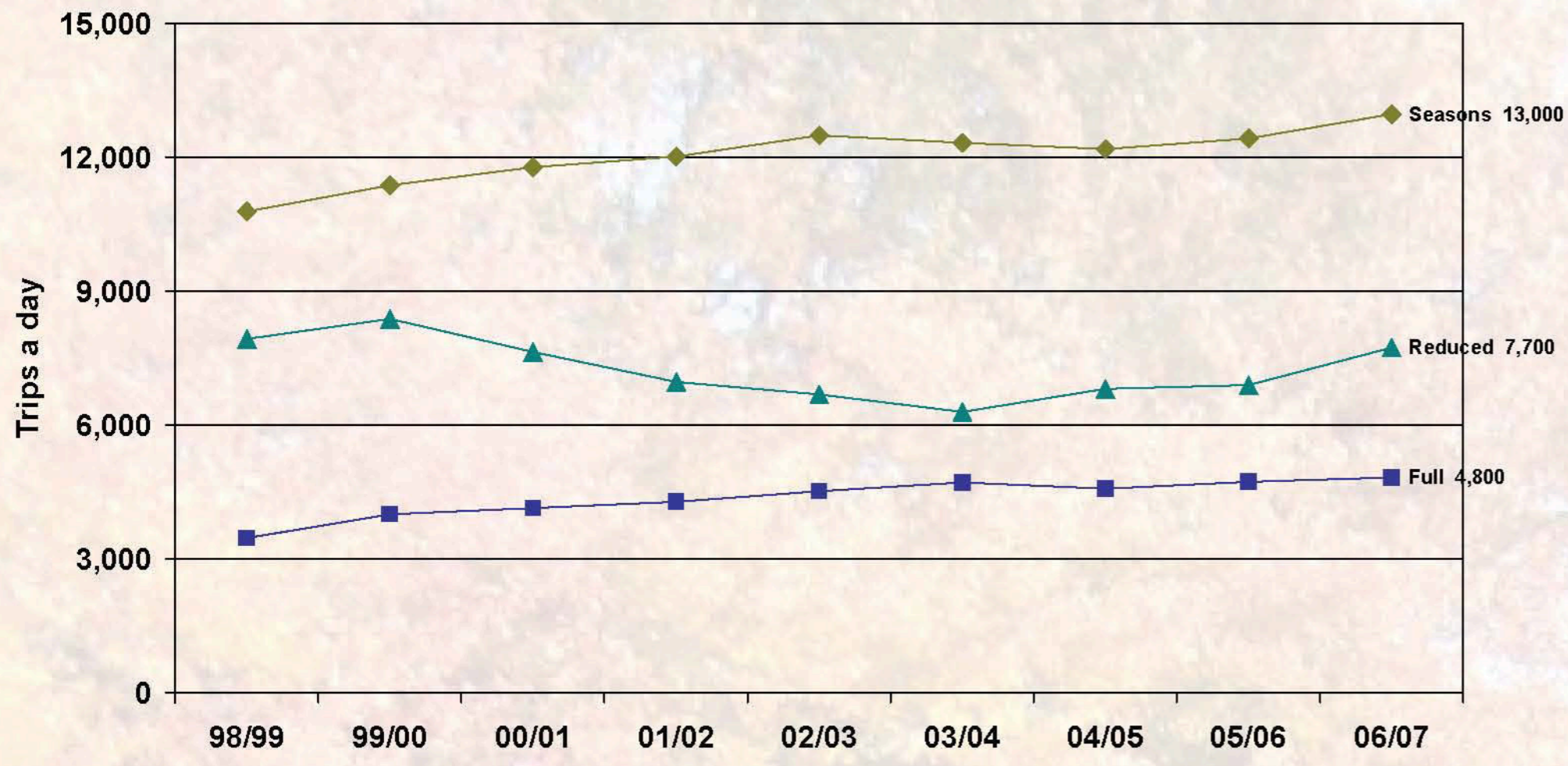
## Commuting from Tonbridge

8% of resident workers commute to London by train

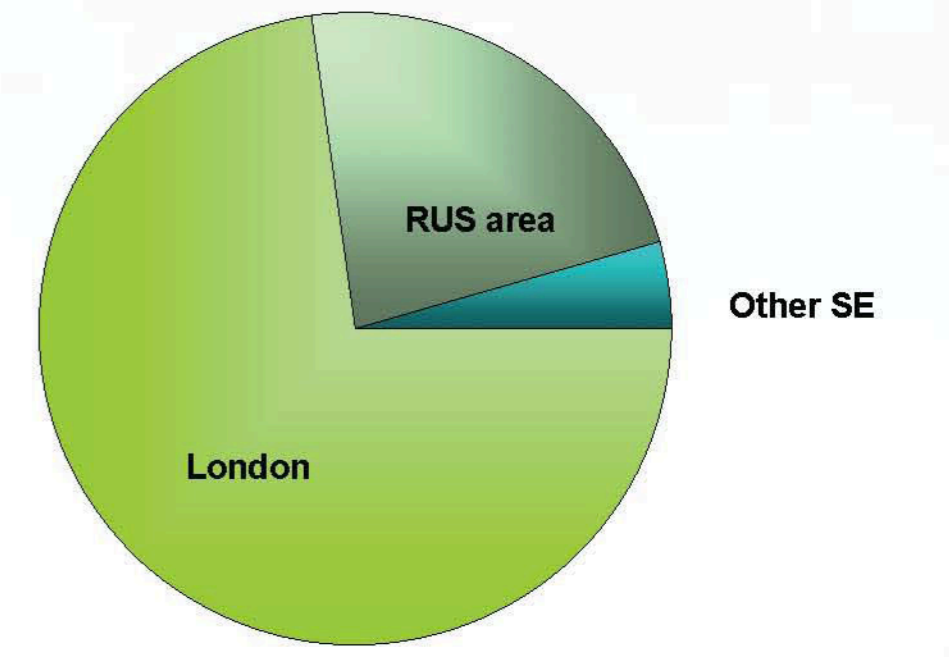
A further 2% commute elsewhere by train

# Medway Towns

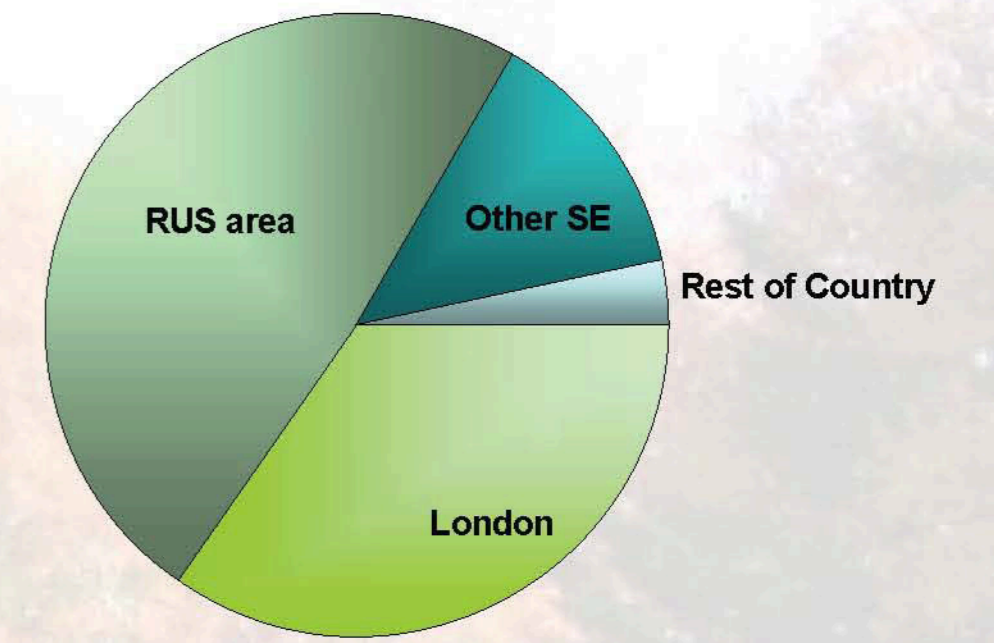
## Rising use of rail in Medway Towns



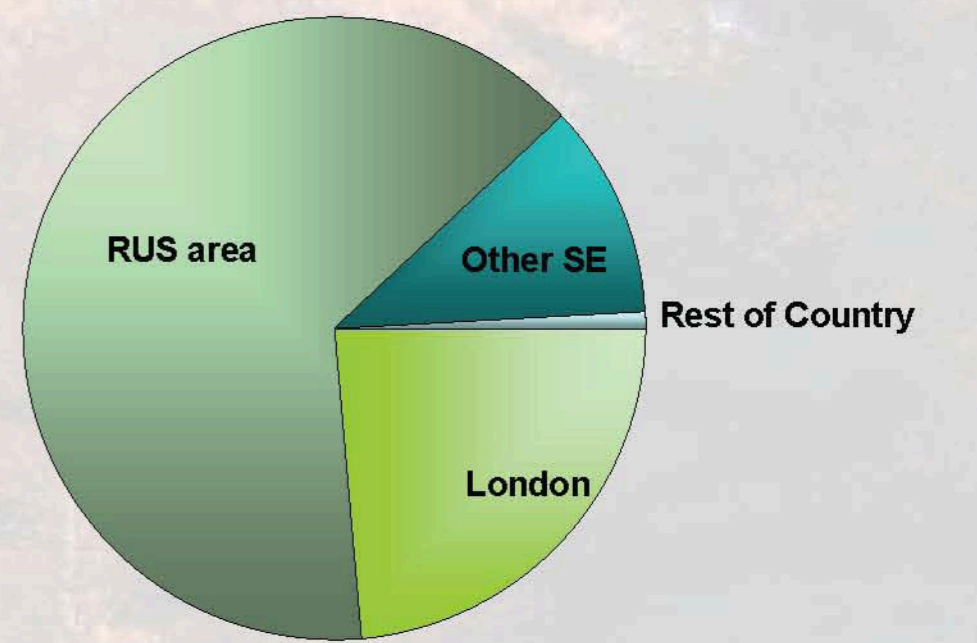
Season tickets  
Growth 2% a year



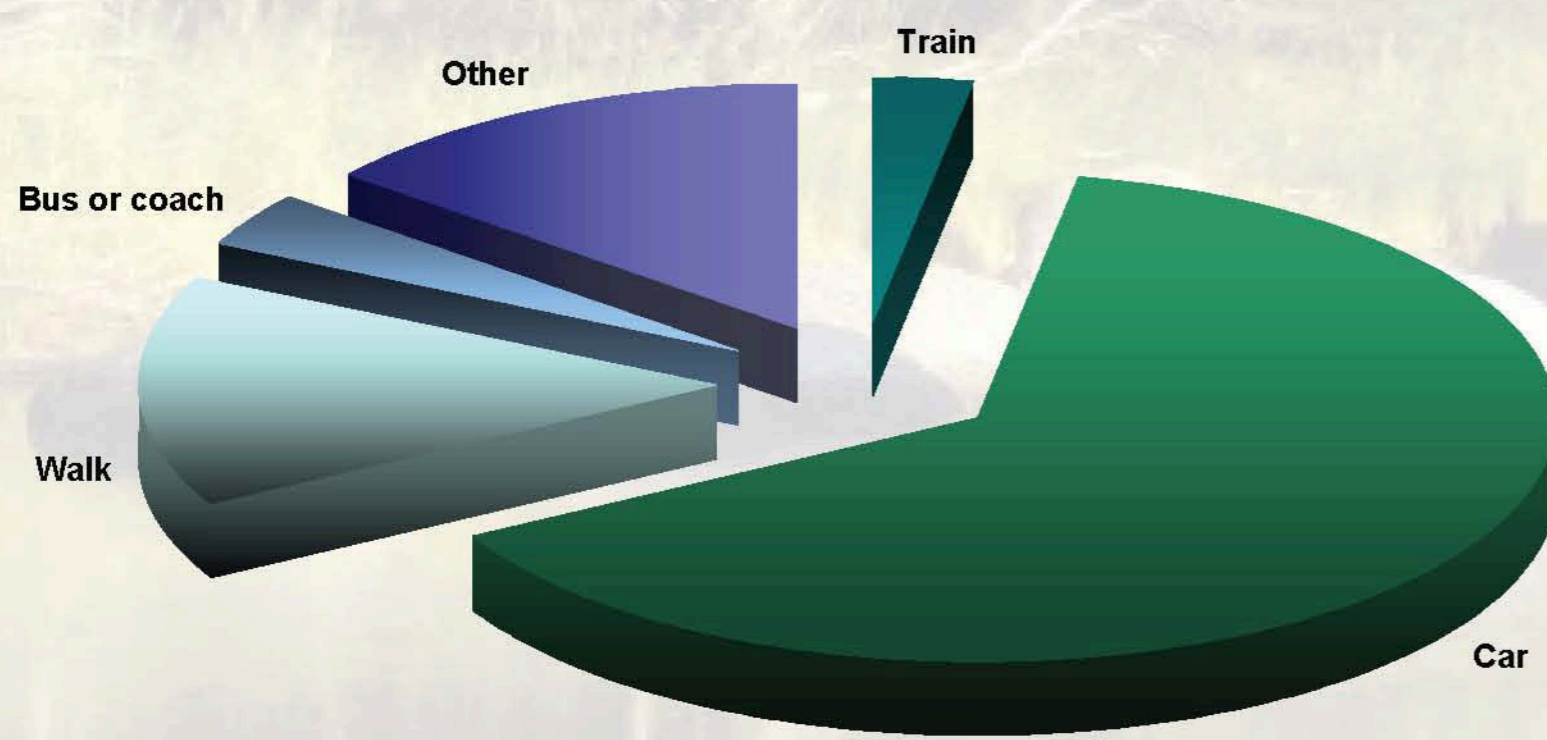
Reduced fare tickets



Full fare tickets  
Growth 4% a year



## How people get to work in in Medway Towns

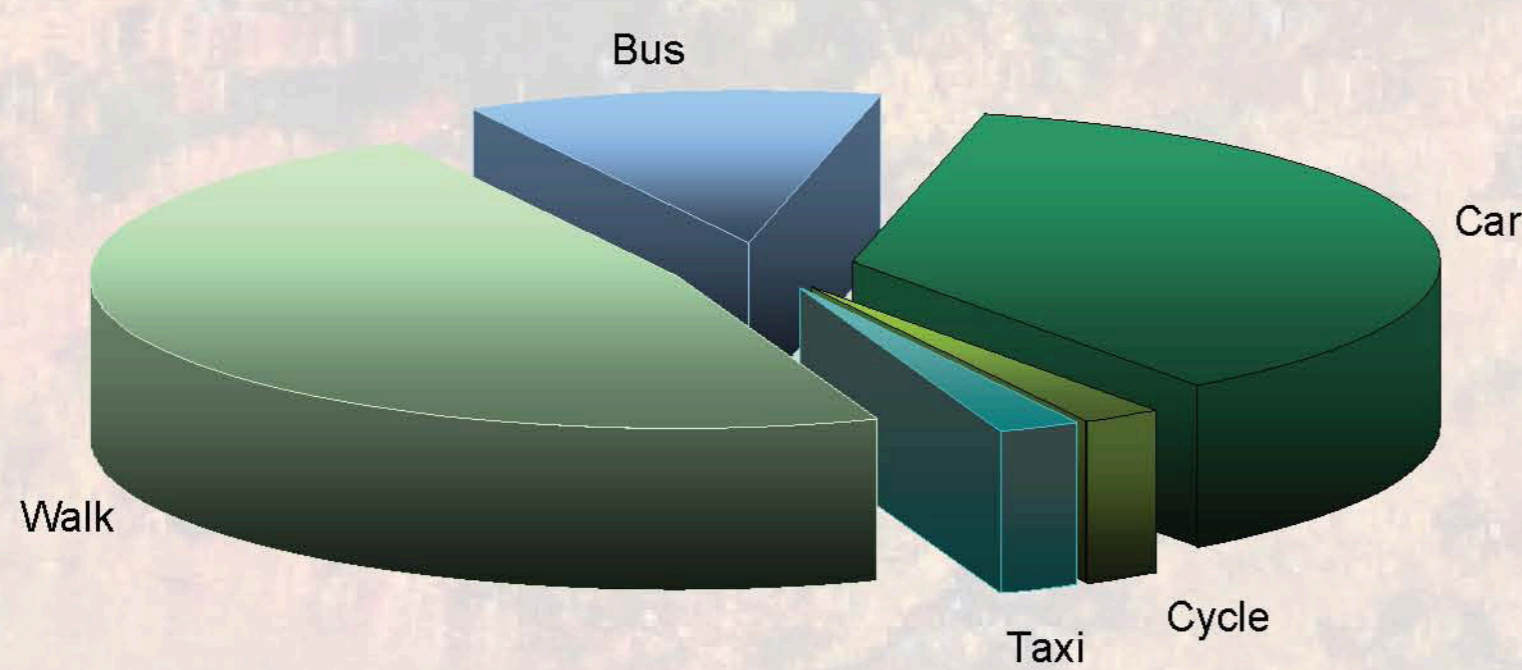


Workforce of c. 27,000

3% commute into Medway Towns by train

2,400 people arrive by train each morning

## How people get to the station



Source: LATS data

## Commuting from the Medway Towns

5% of resident workers commute to London by train

A further 3% commute elsewhere by train

**Figure 3.2 – Existing high peak timetable structure  
London arrivals 08:00 – 08:59**

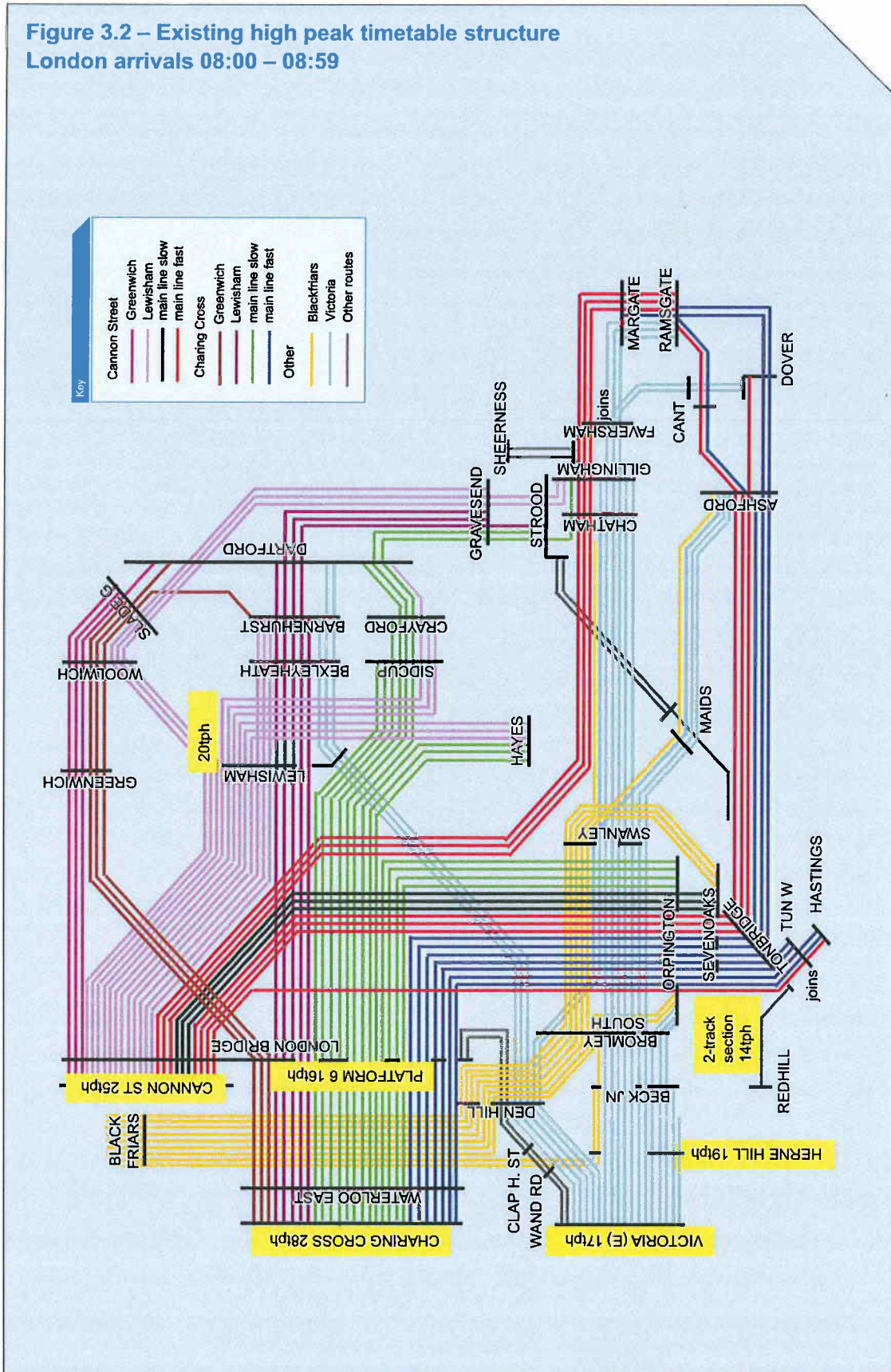


Figure 3.3 – Existing off-peak standard hour

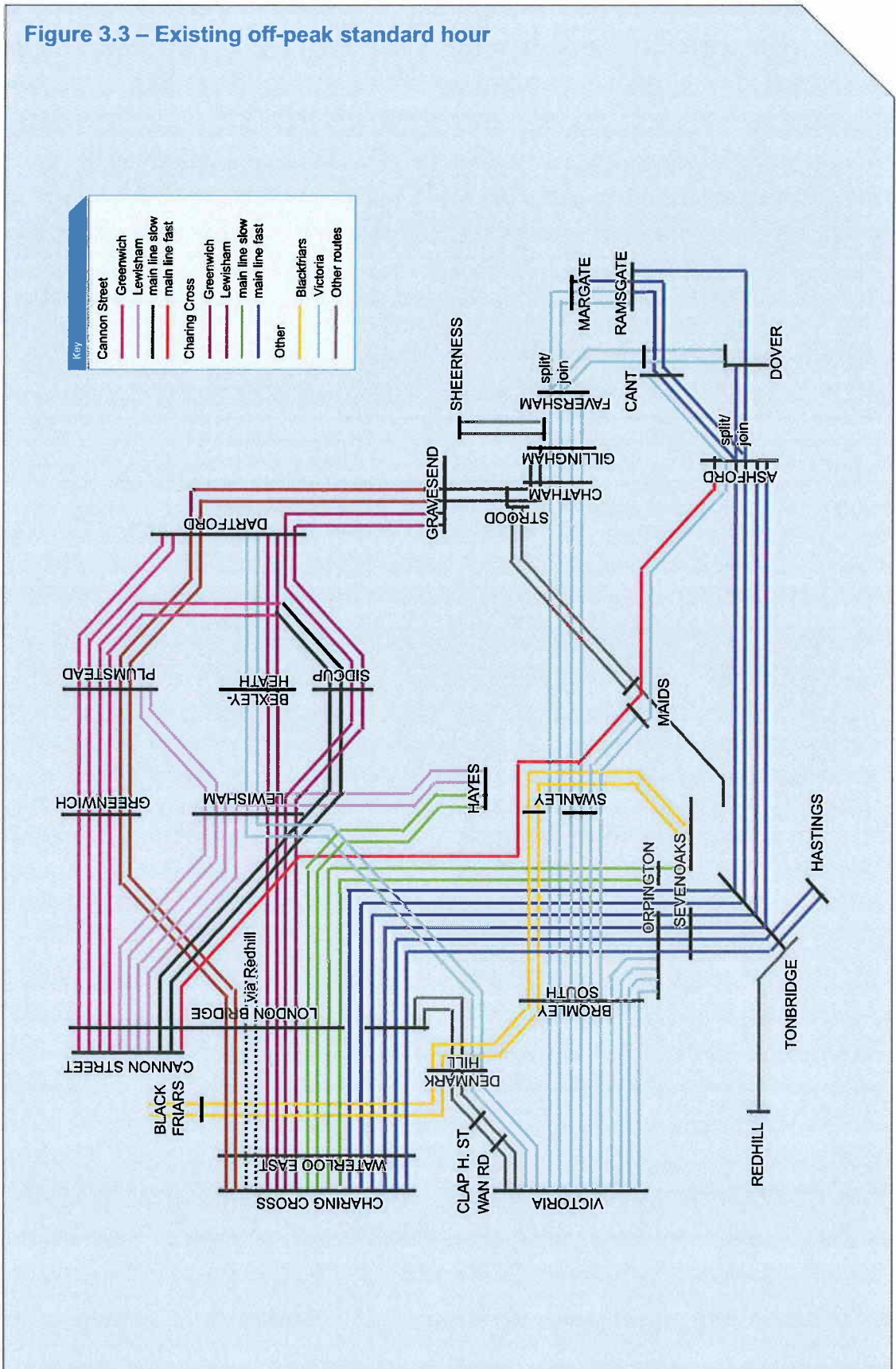




Figure 4.1 – Southeastern December 2009 timetable structure  
 Peak arrivals in central London 08:00 – 08:59

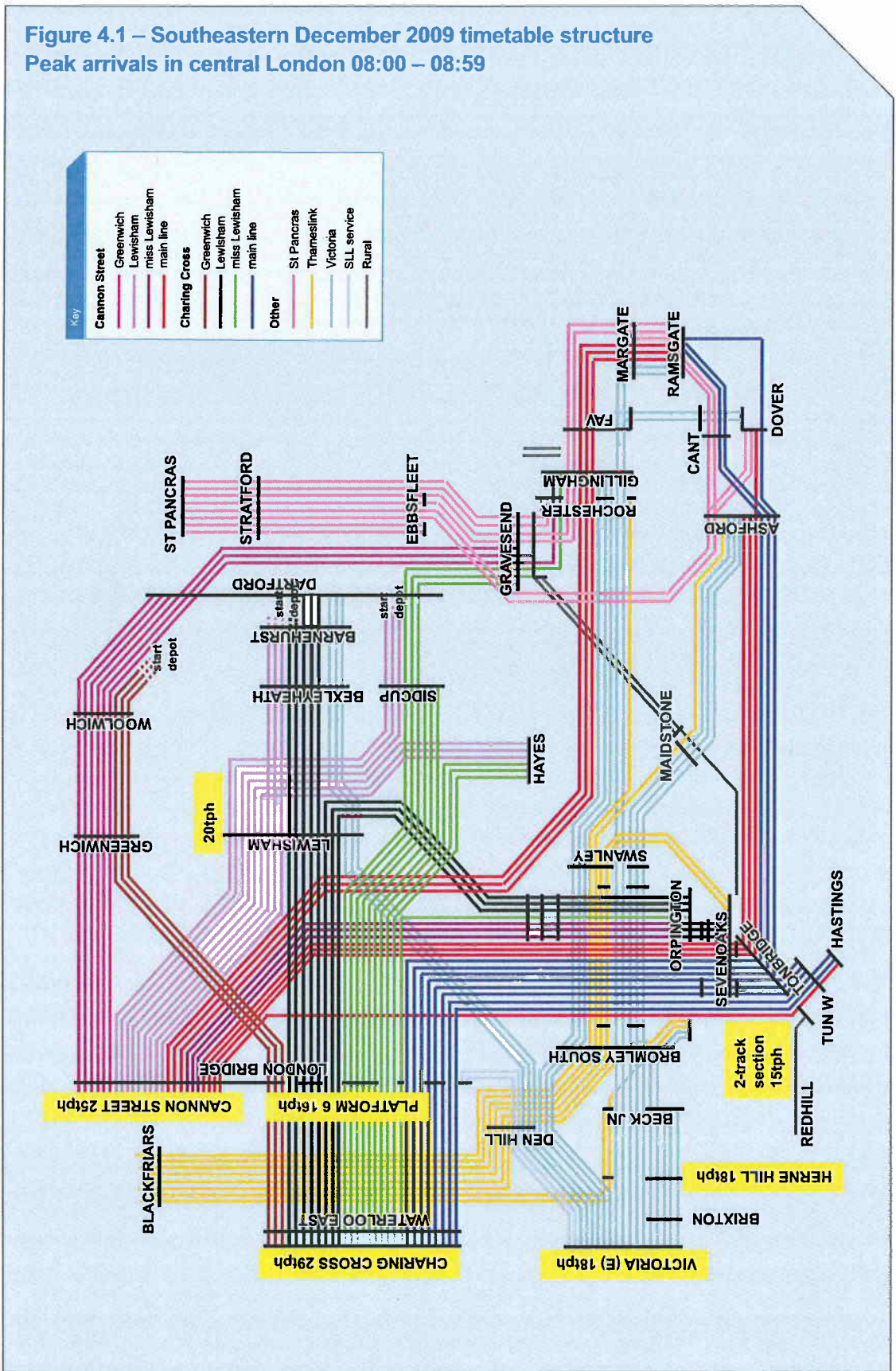


Figure 4.2 – Southeastern December 2009 timetable structure  
Off-peak standard hour

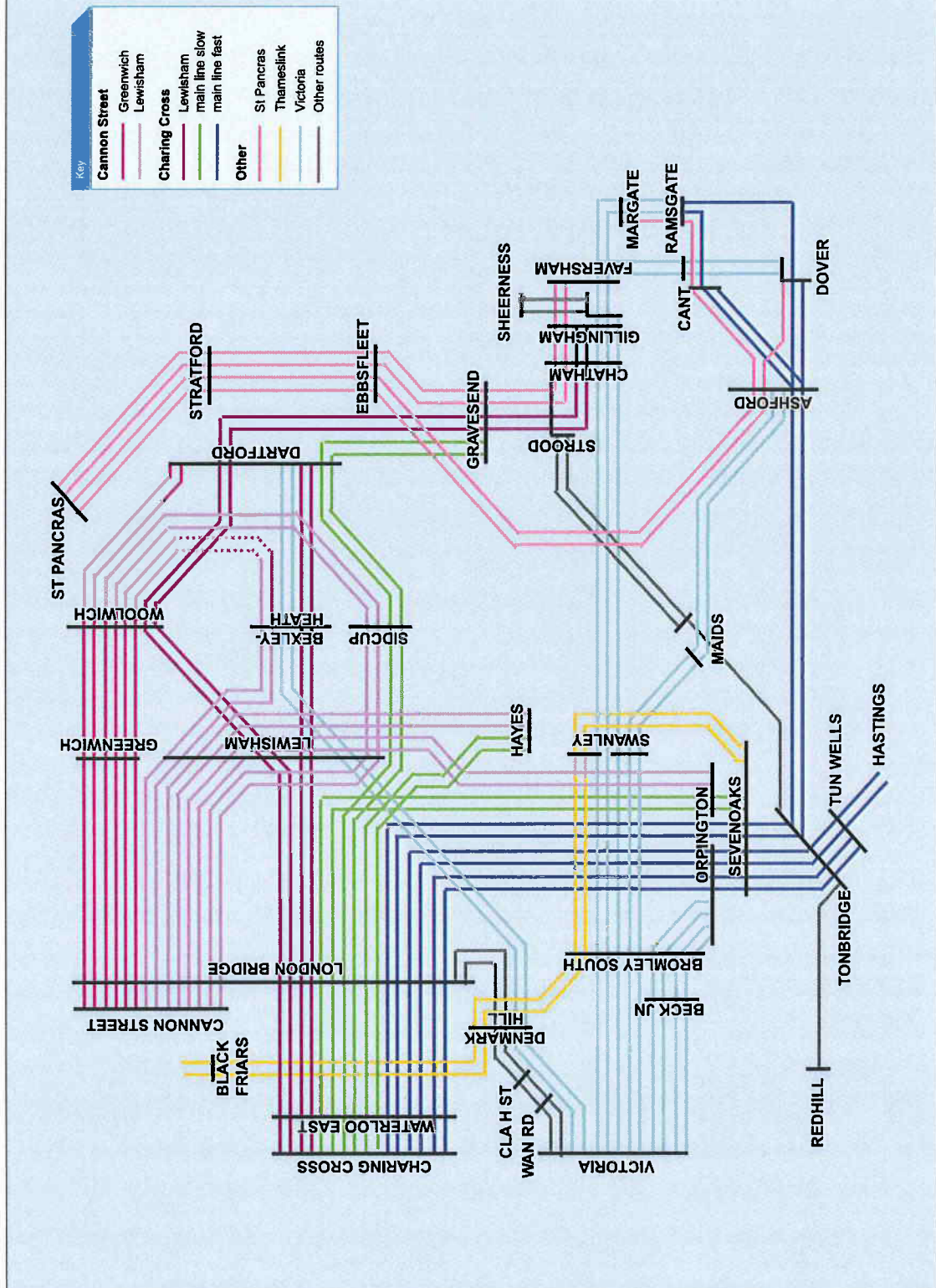


Figure 4.3 – 2015 High peak timetable assumptions

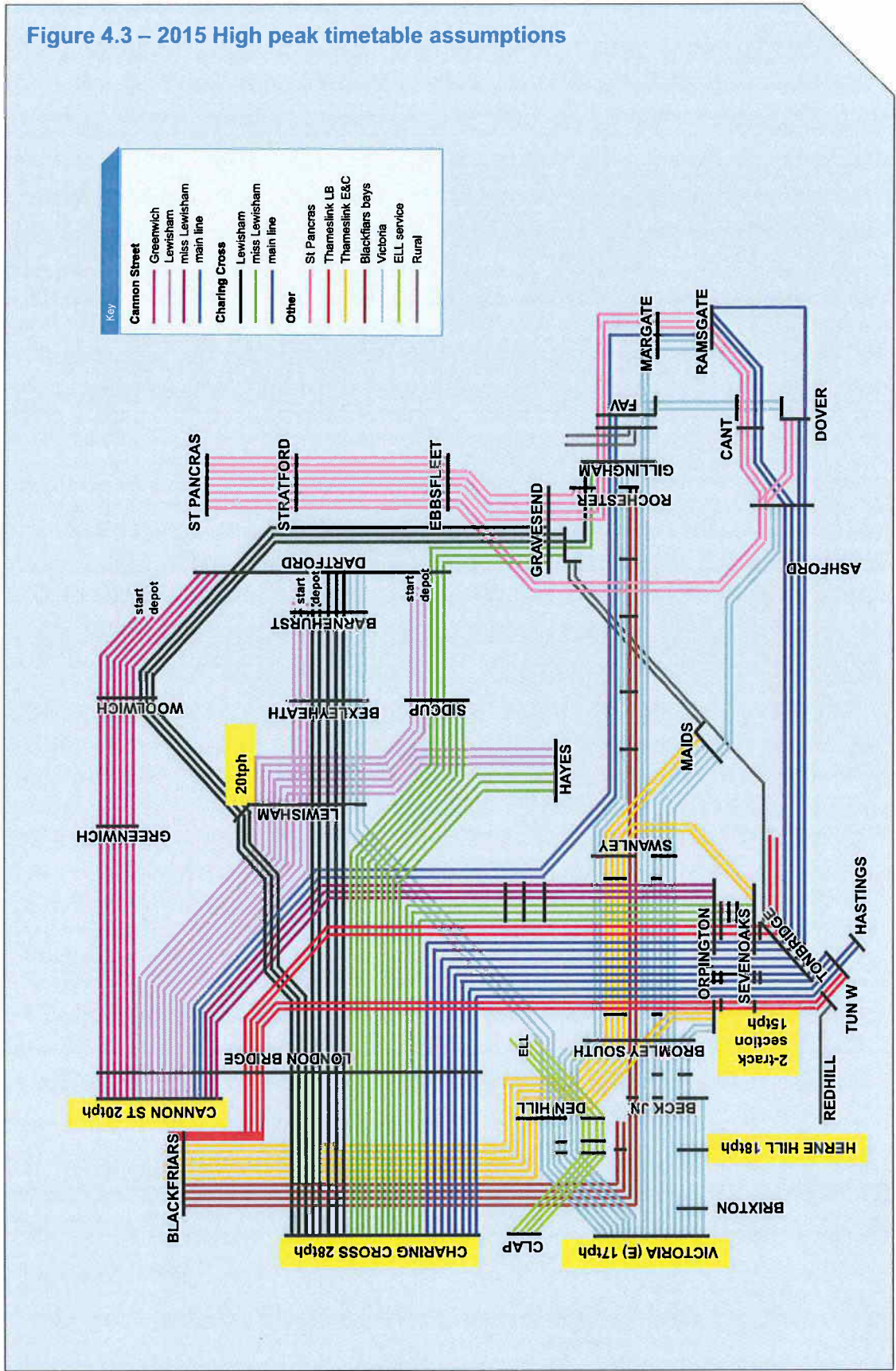
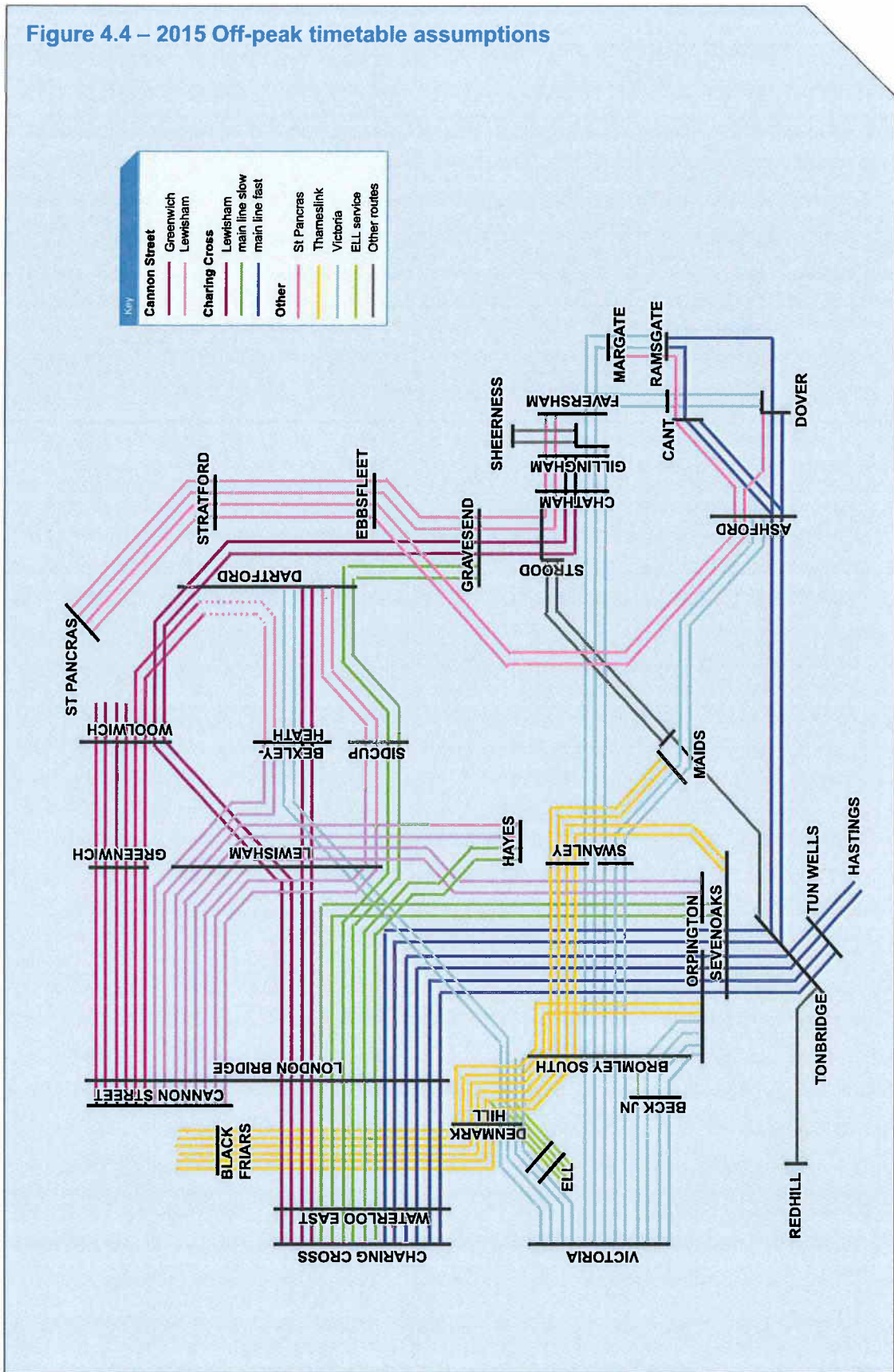


Figure 4.4 – 2015 Off-peak timetable assumptions



## **Maidstone Borough Council**

### **External Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Tuesday 14 July 2009**

#### **The Sustainable Communities Act**

**Report of:** Overview and Scrutiny Officer

#### **1. Background**

- 1.1 At the Committee's last meeting, it was requested that the Director of Prosperity and Regeneration, Alison Broom, inform the Committee of actions the Council has or is planning to take with regard to the Sustainable Communities Act. The relevant extract from the minutes is as follows:

"A Member highlighted that the Sustainable Communities Act was dynamic and an exciting opportunity and Scrutiny could help officers to develop proposals. The Acting Overview and Scrutiny Manager confirmed that the Act fell within the remit of the Corporate Services OSC, however permission could be obtained from the Chairman of that Committee to take on the review. The Committee agreed to request this permission and, subject to this, invite the lead officer to the Committee's meeting in July to provide an update on the Council's response to the Act."

- 1.2 The Chairman of the Corporate Services OSC, Councillor Paulina Stockell, has granted permission for the Sustainable Communities Act to be taken on by the External OSC.

#### **2. The Sustainable Communities Act**

- 2.1 Communities and Local Government provides the following summary of the aims of the Sustainable Communities Act 2007:

"The Sustainable Communities Act aims to promote the sustainability of local communities. It begins from the principle that local people know best what needs to be done to promote the sustainability of their area, but that sometimes they need central government to act to enable them to do so. It provides a channel for local people to ask central government to take such action. It is also a new way for local authorities to ask central government to take action which they believe would better enable them to improve the economic, social or environmental well-being of their area. This could include a proposal to transfer the functions of one public body to another.

The scope of the Act is very broad, covering economic, social and environmental issues. It does not limit the type of action that could be put forward, provided the action is within that broad scope. It is

for local people to decide what they think needs to be done to promote the sustainability of their area.

The Act is designed to strengthen the role of communities. It provides a simple process by which the ideas generated by local communities are fed through their local authority and a body known as the "selector" (which we envisage will be the LGA) to central government. As it will not be possible for all suggestions to be put direct to central government, local authorities and the selector will have a "short-listing" role. The government will consult the selector and try to reach agreement on which of the proposals on the short-list should be implemented. The government will respond to all of the suggestions that are short-listed by the selector and will publish an action plan setting out how it will take forward the suggestions that it adopts.

As well as enabling local communities and local authorities to make suggestions for government action, the Sustainable Communities Act also ensures that communities are better informed about the public funding that is spent in their area. New "Local Spending Reports" will provide quick and easy access to information about where public money is spent. This will enable local authorities, their partners and communities to take better informed decisions about the priorities they choose to pursue to promote the sustainability of their local community<sup>1</sup>."

- 2.2 An invitation was issued on 14 October 2008 by the then-Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Hazel Blears, for local authorities to submit proposals under the Act. The deadline for the submission of proposals is 31 July 2009. These proposals should be sent to the Local Government Association which has been appointed as the "selector" under the terms of the Act.

### **3. Recommendation**

- 3.1 It is recommended that Members consider how the Council is intending to make use of the SCA, and whether it would be of benefit for the Committee to be involved in this work.

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<sup>1</sup> Communities and Local Government (February 2008) *Sustainable Communities Act 2007: A Guide*

## Maidstone Borough Council

### External Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 14 July 2009

#### Future Work Programme and Forward Plan of Key Decisions

**Report of:** Acting Overview and Scrutiny Manager

#### **1. Future Work Programme**

- 1.1 The Future Work Programme for the Committee is attached at [Appendix A](#); Members are requested to consider this to ensure that it is appropriate and covers all issues Members currently wish to consider within the Committee's remit.

#### **2. Forward Plan**

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3 February 2009, Members considered the Forward Plan of Key Decisions and agreed that "this should be a standing item on the agenda to ensure important issues were dealt with in a proactive, rather than reactive, manner." Those sections of the Forward Plan relevant to each Committee will therefore now be included on each Committee agenda under the "Future Work Programme" item.
- 2.2 The Forward Plan for 1 July 2009 – 31 October 2009 contains the following decision relevant to the External Overview and Scrutiny Committee:
- Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2020 Action Plan Implementation and Performance Management.

A report with further details on this is attached at [Appendix B](#).

- 2.3 Members are recommended to consider the section of the Forward Plan relevant to the Committee and discuss whether this item requires further investigation or monitoring by the Committee.

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## External Overview and Scrutiny Committee

### Future Work Programme 2009-2010

Date	Items to be considered
27 May 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman</li> </ul>
16 June 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview with Leader and Cabinet Member for Community Services – priorities for the year</li> </ul>
14 July 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SCS Consultation</li> <li>• Sustainable Communities Act update</li> <li>• Railways</li> </ul>
11 August 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CDRP Scrutiny</li> </ul>
15 September 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crime Rates in the Borough</li> </ul>
13 October 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Children’s Services Partnerships written update</li> <li>• Health Services in Maidstone</li> </ul>
10 November 2009	
8 December 2009	
12 January 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holiday play schemes (provisional date)</li> </ul>
9 February 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holiday play schemes (provisional date)</li> </ul>
9 March 2010	
13 April 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview with Leader and Cabinet Member for Community Services – Progress Over the Year</li> </ul>

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# **MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS**

1 July 2009 –  
31 October 2009

Councillor Christopher Garland  
Leader of the Council



## **INTRODUCTION**

This is the Forward Plan which the Leader of the Council is required to prepare. Its purpose is to give advance notice of all the "key decisions" which the Executive is likely to take over the next 4 month period. The Plan will be updated monthly.

Each "key decision" is the subject of a separate entry in the Plan. The entries are arranged in date order – i.e. the "key decisions" likely to be taken during the first month of the 4 month period covered by the Plan appear first.

Each entry identifies, for that "key decision" –

- the subject matter of the decision
- a brief explanation of why it will be a "key decision"
- the date on which the decision is due to be taken
- who will be consulted before the decision is taken and the method of the consultation
- how and to whom representations (about the decision) can be made
- what reports/papers are, or will be, available for public inspection
- the wards to be affected by this decision

## **DEFINITION OF A KEY DECISION**

A key decision is an executive decision which is likely to:

- Result in the Maidstone Borough Council incurring expenditure or making savings which is equal to the value of £250,000 or more; or
- Have significant effect on communities living or working in an area comprising one or more wards in Maidstone.

## **WHO MAKES DECISIONS?**

The Cabinet collectively makes some of the decisions at a public meeting and individual portfolio holders make decisions following consultation with every member of the Council. In addition, Officers can make key decisions and an entry for each of these will be included in the Forward Plan.

## **WHO ARE THE CABINET?**



**Councillor Christopher Garland**  
Leader of the Council  
[chrisgarland@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:chrisgarland@maidstone.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01622 687606



**Councillor Marion Ring**  
Cabinet Member for Community Services  
[marionring@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:marionring@maidstone.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01622 686492



**Councillor Richard Ash**  
Cabinet Member for Corporate Services  
[richardash@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:richardash@maidstone.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01622 730151



**Councillor Mark Wooding**  
Cabinet Member for Environment  
[markwooding@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:markwooding@maidstone.gov.uk)  
Tel: 07932 830888



**Councillor Brian Moss**  
Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture  
[brianmoss@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:brianmoss@maidstone.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01622 761998



**Councillor Malcolm Greer**  
Cabinet Member for Regeneration  
[malcolmgreer@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:malcolmgreer@maidstone.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01634 862876

## **HOW CAN I CONTRIBUTE TO THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS?**

The Council encourages and welcomes anyone wishing to express his or her views about decisions the Cabinet plans to make. This can be done by writing directly to the appropriate Officer or Cabinet Member (the details of which are shown for each decision to be made).

Alternatively, the Cabinet are contactable via our [website](#) where you can submit a question to the Leader of the Council or any Cabinet Member on-line. There is also the opportunity to invite the Leader of the Council to speak at a function you may be organising.

Cabinet Roadshows are held 3 times a year in different wards. This is an opportunity for you to meet the Cabinet Members direct and discuss any issues that may concern you.

Title:	Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2020 Action Plan Implementation and Performance Management
Portfolio:	Leader of the Council
This will be a "Key Decision" because:	It is a Policy Framework document
Purpose:	To agree as a corporate project the future implementation and performance management of the SCS Action Plan.
Decision Maker:	Cabinet
Proposed Date of Decision:	12 August 2009
Consultation and Method:	The Sustainable Community Strategy was extensively consulted upon including workshops with stakeholders such as voluntary and community sector organisations, faith groups and minorities, a community road-show and on-line consultation toolkit.
Representations should be made to:	Jim Boot, Community Planning co-ordinator jimboot@maidstone.gov.uk
Representations should be made by:	15 July 2009
Relevant documents:	None.
Wards affected:	All Wards;
Other Information:	The Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2020 is available online at : <a href="http://www.digitalmaidstone.co.uk/community/community_strategy.aspx">http://www.digitalmaidstone.co.uk/community/community_strategy.aspx</a>
Director:	Alison Broom, Director of Operations
Head of Service:	Brian Morgan
Report Author:	Jim Boot

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## **Maidstone Borough Council**

### **External Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Tuesday 14 July 2009**

#### **Community Safety Statistics**

**Report of:** Overview and Scrutiny Officer

#### **1. Background**

- 1.1 At its meeting on 17 March 2009 the Committee requested that the Community Safety Co-ordinator, David Hewetson, provide the Members with particular statistical evidence. The relevant extract of the minutes is as follows:

##### **“Partners and Communities Together (Formerly Police and Communities Together)**

The Chairman invited the Community Safety Co-ordinator, David Hewetson, Sergeant Mick Hayes from Kent Police and Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) Supervisor Trevor Knowler to outline the progress of Partners and Communities Together (PACT) over the last twelve months.

Mr Hewetson informed the committee that PACT groups provided local residents with the opportunity to identify, to the local partners, their three key priority concerns for the local area. PACT groups then aimed to address these three concerns.

The Committee was told that PACTs continued to receive support and enthusiasm and had assisted in achieving a decrease in crime of 8.2% within the last year. PACTs had adopted a less formal approach to ensure feasibility of adequate public engagement.

Sergeant Mick Hayes identified that PACTs receive more direct support within rural than urban areas of the borough. Within the rural areas the number of PACTs and the resources available for each had increased. There were 33 PACTs established within the 16 rural wards of Maidstone as opposed to only 1 within each of the borough's urban wards. Within the rural areas of Maidstone PACT surgeries had been held, within each ward, monthly and letter drops were carried out regularly. Urban areas tended to rely more heavily on the support of local PCSOs to encourage community engagement.

The PACTs identify three priorities for the local area. Kent Police assisted in a number of campaigns which had involved the local media as a result of priorities identified through PACT meetings. Recently, “Operation Reconsider” was publicised with the aim of discouraging heavy goods vehicles from using roads which they

may easily damage. Kent Police had also recently assisted the local PACT at Grove Green to carry out a litter pick. In answer to a question concerning the decline in attendance at PACT meetings, Mr Hewetson suggested that this may reflect resident's increased satisfaction with their local area.

The Committee were informed by Mr Knowles, that PACTs had been less successful in urban areas. PCSOs however encouraged community engagement, within urban areas, without the requirement of attending monthly PACT meetings.

The Committee were in agreement that within rural areas, fear of crime had decreased and satisfaction of policing had improved. The Committee requested that they be provided with figures which enabled a comparison of crime figures between the urban and rural areas. In response to a question Mr Knowles confirmed that PCSOs were able to monitor more than one ward, ensuring regular PCSO presence. The Committee was informed that Kent Police had liaised with Parish Councils and attended community events such as tea and coffee mornings.

Mr Hewetson recognised that young people may be more difficult to engage with, however the Safer Maidstone Partnership had worked with the Multi-Agency Youth Development Action Group (MAYDAG) in order to ensure the involvement of younger people. The Committee was also informed that MAYDAG provided funding for a number of outreach workers. A Member questioned whether enough work had been carried out with regard to the area surrounding Shepway South shops, which had a bad reputation with regard to anti social behaviour. The Cabinet Member for Community Services requested that these concerns be raised at the next Safer Maidstone Partnership, partnership and tasking group, and a response be given directly to the relevant Councillor.

David Hewetson presented the Committee with statistical data relating to PACT and crime issues. It was identified that speeding featured most frequently as a priority for the PACTs, during 2008/09. The CDRP performance report was presented and it was indicated that perception of crime within the borough had fallen suggesting that the work of PACTs was beneficial. It was requested that the Committee be informed as to why crime associated with the night time economy had increased.

Members congratulated Kent Police on the success of the PACT scheme.

**Resolved:**

**That the Community Safety Co-ordinator David Hewetson:**

provide the Committee with data enabling a comparison of the crime figures within the rural and urban areas of the Borough.

provide the Committee with greater information with regard to the increase in night time crime and how Maidstone's night time crime rate compares to the Kent average.

provide figures with regard to primary and secondary fires, which enable a comparison of winter and summer months.

David Hewetson and Kent Police report back to the External OSC in six months time to provide the Committee with an update of crime rates within the Borough.

The concerns of Councillor Mrs Williams and Councillor Ring with regard to the perceived lack of police presence in particular areas of Shepway South, be raised at the next meeting of the Partnership and Tasking group and a response be given to Councillor Mrs Williams."

- 1.2 The please find attached the requested statistical information.
2. **Recommendation:**
  - 2.1 The Committee is recommended to note the information.

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## Crime Safety Statistics: Primary and Secondary Fires

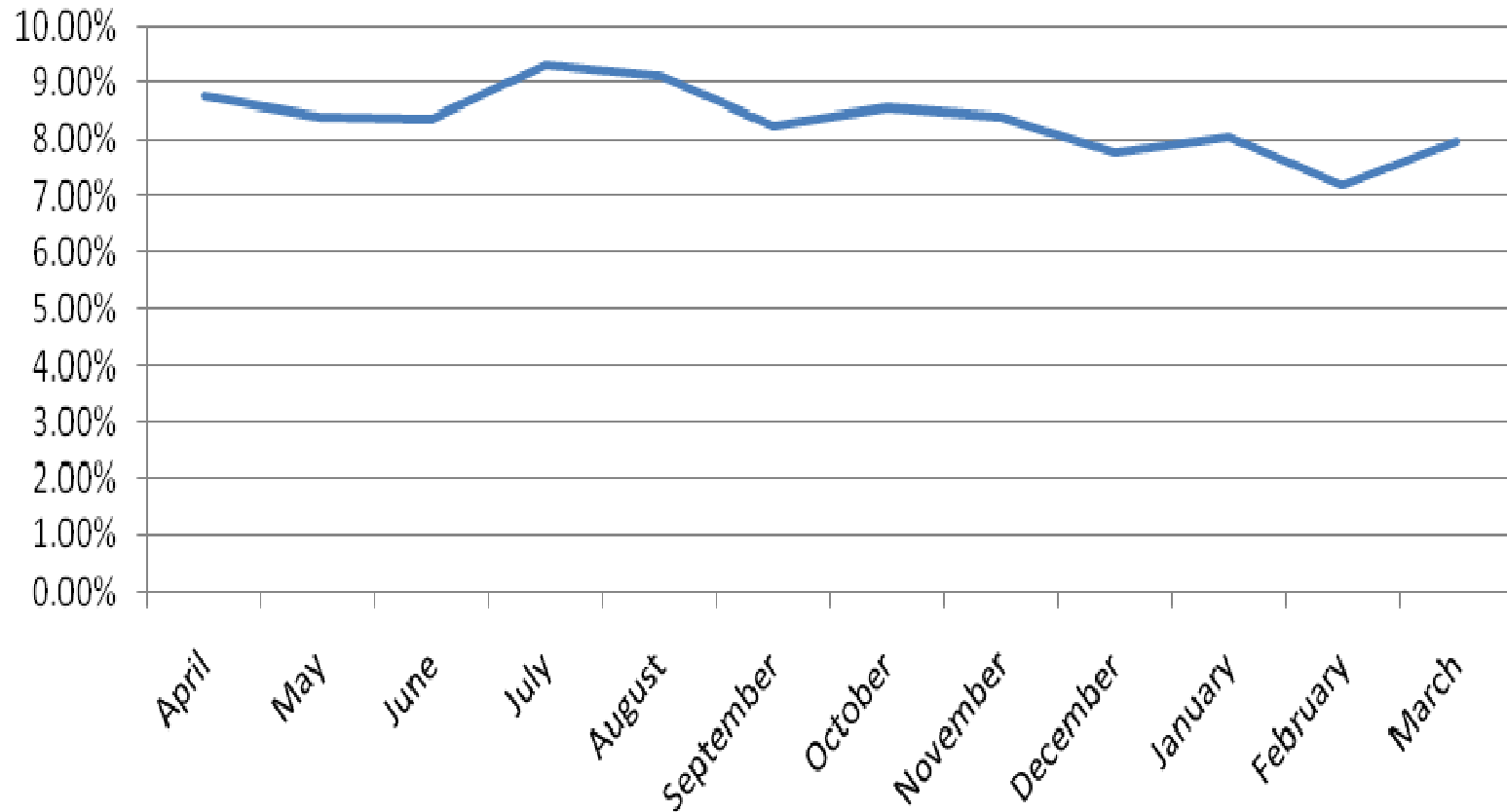
### Primary Fires - KFRS

Historic Data	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	Total
2001-02	457	477	428	495	458	381	427	444	404	383	333	430	5117
2002-03	425	409	387	458	465	439	413	407	405	390	359	423	4980
2003-04	444	392	413	411	502	447	430	389	345	375	349	345	4842
2004-05	384	399	306	370	375	360	359	351	352	366	303	343	4268
2005-06	351	330	368	412	395	345	331	349	334	363	290	322	4190
2006-07	312	264	336	373	343	272	301	296	243	282	263	282	3567
2007-08	278	268	275	301	255	282	321	316	256	263	260	223	3298
2008-09	253	248	243	255	241	216	237	221	229	236	205	265	2849

### Monthly proportion of incidents

Historic Data	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	Total
2001-02	8.93%	9.32%	8.36%	9.67%	8.95%	7.45%	8.34%	8.68%	7.90%	7.48%	6.51%	8.40%	100.00%
2002-03	8.53%	8.21%	7.77%	9.20%	9.34%	8.82%	8.29%	8.17%	8.13%	7.83%	7.21%	8.49%	100.00%
2003-04	9.17%	8.10%	8.53%	8.49%	10.37%	9.23%	8.88%	8.03%	7.13%	7.74%	7.21%	7.13%	100.00%
2004-05	9.00%	9.35%	7.17%	8.67%	8.79%	8.43%	8.41%	8.22%	8.25%	8.58%	7.10%	8.04%	100.00%
2005-06	8.38%	7.88%	8.78%	9.83%	9.43%	8.23%	7.90%	8.33%	7.97%	8.66%	6.92%	7.68%	100.00%
2006-07	8.75%	7.40%	9.42%	10.46%	9.62%	7.63%	8.44%	8.30%	6.81%	7.91%	7.37%	7.91%	100.00%
2007-08	8.43%	8.13%	8.34%	9.13%	7.73%	8.55%	9.73%	9.58%	7.76%	7.97%	7.88%	6.76%	100.00%
2008-09	8.88%	8.70%	8.53%	8.95%	8.46%	7.58%	8.32%	7.76%	8.04%	8.28%	7.20%	9.30%	100.00%
Monthly Average	8.76%	8.39%	8.36%	9.30%	9.08%	8.24%	8.54%	8.38%	7.75%	8.06%	7.17%	7.96%	100.00%

## Monthly Average



## Crime Safety Statistics: Primary and Secondary Fires

### Secondary Fires - KFRS

Historic Data	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	Total
2001-02	391	630	762	864	587	433	339	444	264	234	264	500	5712
2002-03	770	453	534	606	699	726	499	300	228	227	392	646	6080
2003-04	969	574	666	853	1567	1311	831	385	299	294	429	448	8626
2004-05	548	528	593	665	590	433	364	358	292	315	310	434	5430
2005-06	422	466	695	986	672	469	344	336	265	243	222	348	5468
2006-07	465	297	489	1032	663	393	279	350	180	189	226	303	4866
2007-08	626	350	265	312	405	452	258	309	177	167	278	266	3865
2008-09	279	309	347	493	334	308	256	179	141	130	165	264	3205

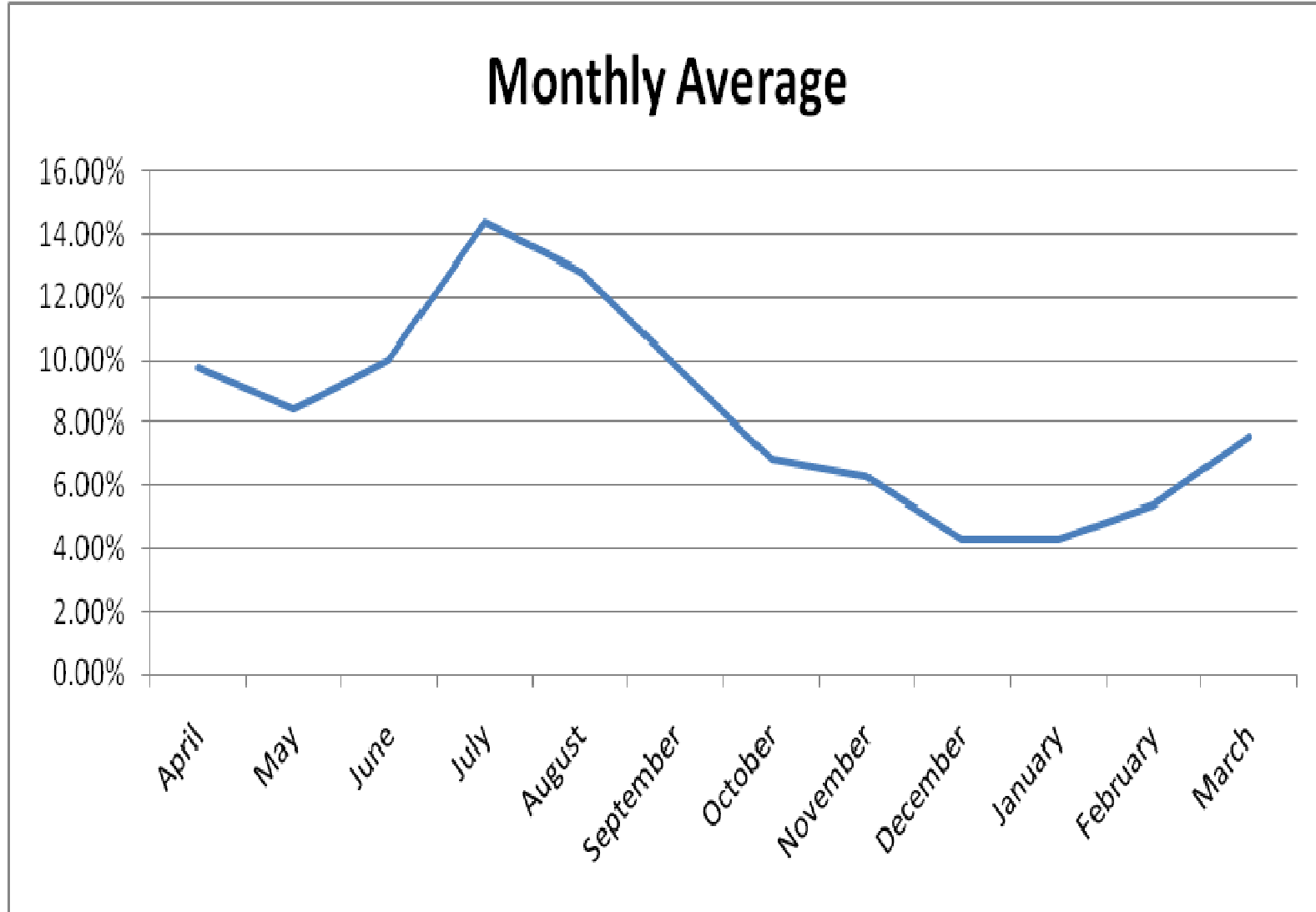
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### Monthly proportion of incidents

Historic Data	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	Total
2001-02	6.85%	11.03%	13.34%	15.13%	10.28%	7.58%	5.93%	7.77%	4.62%	4.10%	4.62%	8.75%	100.00%
2002-03	12.66%	7.45%	8.78%	9.97%	11.50%	11.94%	8.21%	4.93%	3.75%	3.73%	6.45%	10.63%	100.00%
2003-04	11.23%	6.65%	7.72%	9.89%	18.17%	15.20%	9.63%	4.46%	3.47%	3.41%	4.97%	5.19%	100.00%
2004-05	10.09%	9.72%	10.92%	12.25%	10.87%	7.97%	6.70%	6.59%	5.38%	5.80%	5.71%	7.99%	100.00%
2005-06	7.72%	8.52%	12.71%	18.03%	12.29%	8.58%	6.29%	6.14%	4.85%	4.44%	4.06%	6.36%	100.00%
2006-07	9.56%	6.10%	10.05%	21.21%	13.63%	8.08%	5.73%	7.19%	3.70%	3.88%	4.64%	6.23%	100.00%
2007-08	16.20%	9.06%	6.86%	8.07%	10.48%	11.69%	6.68%	7.99%	4.58%	4.32%	7.19%	6.88%	100.00%
2008-09	8.71%	9.64%	10.83%	15.38%	10.42%	9.61%	7.99%	5.59%	4.40%	4.06%	5.15%	8.24%	100.00%

Monthly Average	9.77%	8.42%	10.03%	14.40%	12.85%	9.80%	6.87%	6.32%	4.30%	4.28%	5.38%	7.59%	100.00%
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### Monthly Average





### NEIGHBOURHOOD OVERVIEW - MAIDSTONE URBAN

Population - estimated Mid 2007 Kent County Council	Day to day Comparison				Days passed	
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76,600	<b>31st MARCH - YEAR END</b>				365	
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OFFENCE	2007/8	Crime per 1000 people	2008/9	Current per 1000	Difference 2007/8 2008/9	
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#### CRIME

BD	240	3.13	208	2.72	-32	-13.33%
BOTD	422	5.51	373	4.87	-49	-11.61%
CD	1817	23.72	1563	20.40	-254	-13.98%
DRUG	252	3.29	365	4.77	113	44.84%
F & F	232	3.03	192	2.51	-40	-17.24%
OTHER	107	1.40	132	1.72	25	23.36%
ROBBERY	68	0.89	64	0.84	-4	-5.88%
SEXUAL	100	1.31	72	0.94	-28	-28.00%
SHOP'G	808	10.55	887	11.58	79	9.78%
TFMV	411	5.37	493	6.44	82	19.95%
THEFT	216	2.82	1012	13.21	796	368.52%
TOMV	97	1.27	210	2.74	113	116.49%
TO CYCLE	1325	17.30	115	1.50	-1210	-91.32%
V INT	75	0.98	107	1.40	32	42.67%
VAP	1925	25.13	1713	22.36	-212	-11.01%
TOTAL	8095	105.68	7506	97.99	-589	-7.28%

#### STORM CALLS

ASB (CODES:-301/384)	6225	81.27	5613	73.28	-612	-9.83%
ROWDY (Codes:-359/377)	3217	42.00	2789	36.41	-428	-13.30%

### NEIGHBOURHOOD OVERVIEW - MAIDSTONE RURAL

Population - estimated Mid 2007 Kent County Council	Day to day Comparison				Days passed	
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67,500	<b>31 MARCH YEAR END</b>				365	
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OFFENCE	2007/8	Crime per 1000 people	2008/9	Current per 1000	Difference 2007/8 2008/9	
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#### CRIME

BD	124	1.84	96	1.42	-28	-22.58%
BOTD	368	5.45	296	4.39	-72	-19.57%
CD	713	10.56	606	8.98	-107	-15.01%
DRUG	50	0.74	66	0.98	16	32.00%
F & F	167	2.47	192	2.84	25	14.97%
OTHER	25	0.37	41	0.61	16	64.00%
ROBBERY	26	0.39	7	0.10	-19	-73.08%
SEXUAL	25	0.37	32	0.47	7	28.00%
SHOP'G	80	1.19	52	0.77	-28	-35.00%
TFMV	346	5.13	288	4.27	-58	-16.76%
THEFT	194	2.87	506	7.50	312	160.82%
TOMV	22	0.33	209	3.10	187	850.00%
TO CYCLE	544	8.06	25	0.37	-519	-95.40%
V INT	67	0.99	51	0.76	-16	-23.88%
VAP	415	6.15	413	6.12	-2	-0.48%
TOTAL	3166	46.90	2880	42.67	-286	-9.03%

#### STORM CALLS

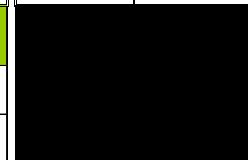
ASB (CODES:-301/384)	2329	34.50	2238	33.16	-91	-3.91%
ROWDY (Codes:-359/377)	719	10.65	694	10.28	-25	-3.48%

### MAIDSTONE UNKNOWN LOCATIONS

2007/8	2008-9
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#### CRIME

0	0
0	0
5	1
1	7
2	2
10	4
3	1
8	7
0	0
2	3
0	0
1	0
19	16
0	0
13	11
64	52



2008-09 Urban Crime per Ward

	Allington	Bridge	East	Fant	Heath	High Street	North	Park Wood	Shepway North	Shepway South	South	Sum:	% of Maidstone Urban Crime
BURGLARY DWELLING	7	3	18	11	6	72	24	23	23	11	10	208	2.77%
BURGLARY OTHER	13	25	39	29	13	96	23	21	60	8	46	373	4.97%
CRIMINAL DAMAGE OFFENCES	32	61	130	105	77	401	113	212	224	134	74	1563	20.82%
DRUG OFFENCES	6	19	28	26	10	192	22	14	34	9	5	365	4.86%
FRAUD AND FORGERY	12	9	6	22	10	56	25	33	6	1	12	192	2.56%
OTHER OFFENCES	0	5	7	24	6	54	7	7	14	4	4	132	1.76%
ROBBERY	1	1	2	1	4	30	3	6	15	0	1	64	0.85%
SEXUAL OFFENCES	2	3	6	6	5	22	8	12	5	1	2	72	0.96%
SHOPLIFTING	4	50	15	21	21	631	10	42	1	75	17	887	11.82%
THEFT FROM MOTOR VEHICLE	9	16	49	42	20	133	69	42	54	28	31	493	6.57%
THEFT OFFENCES	3	12	16	27	11	46	24	21	24	15	11	210	2.80%
THEFT OF MOTOR VEHICLE	2	8	10	3	2	36	13	8	20	6	7	115	1.53%
THEFT OF PEDAL CYCLE	15	44	49	93	64	451	52	68	79	42	55	1012	13.48%
VEHICLE INTERFERENCE	0	5	14	11	3	35	15	5	11	6	2	107	1.43%
VIOLENCE AGAINST THE PERSON	30	59	92	212	90	716	97	148	130	91	48	1713	22.82%
Sum:	136	320	481	633	342	2971	505	662	700	431	325	7506	100.00%
% of Maidstone Urban Crime	1.81%	4.26%	6.41%	8.43%	4.56%	39.58%	6.73%	8.82%	9.33%	5.74%	4.33%	100.00%	

2008-09 Urban ASB per Ward

ASB/Month	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	SUM	%
Allington Ward	14	7	11	9	11	17	13	5	10	15	18	10	140	2.49%
Bridge Ward	18	19	19	29	27	30	30	24	20	11	23	17	267	4.76%
East Ward	64	58	35	55	29	39	39	36	43	40	33	38	509	9.07%
Fant Ward	54	65	52	51	38	37	24	19	30	34	49	52	505	9.00%
Heath Ward	44	36	35	28	23	27	20	13	13	22	20	42	323	5.75%
High Street Ward	114	126	98	130	149	93	111	93	125	93	129	117	1378	24.55%
North Ward	44	42	38	29	33	37	39	36	25	20	36	50	429	7.64%
Park Wood Ward	35	41	47	52	55	46	51	35	41	38	52	60	553	9.85%
Shepway North Ward	52	71	50	64	52	65	46	47	47	38	67	57	656	11.69%
Shepway South Ward	44	31	34	46	60	63	65	35	44	47	58	47	574	10.23%
South Ward	29	35	28	13	14	23	22	28	15	22	28	22	279	4.97%
Sum:	512	531	447	506	491	477	460	371	413	380	513	512	5613	100.00%

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2008 – 09 Rural Crime by Ward

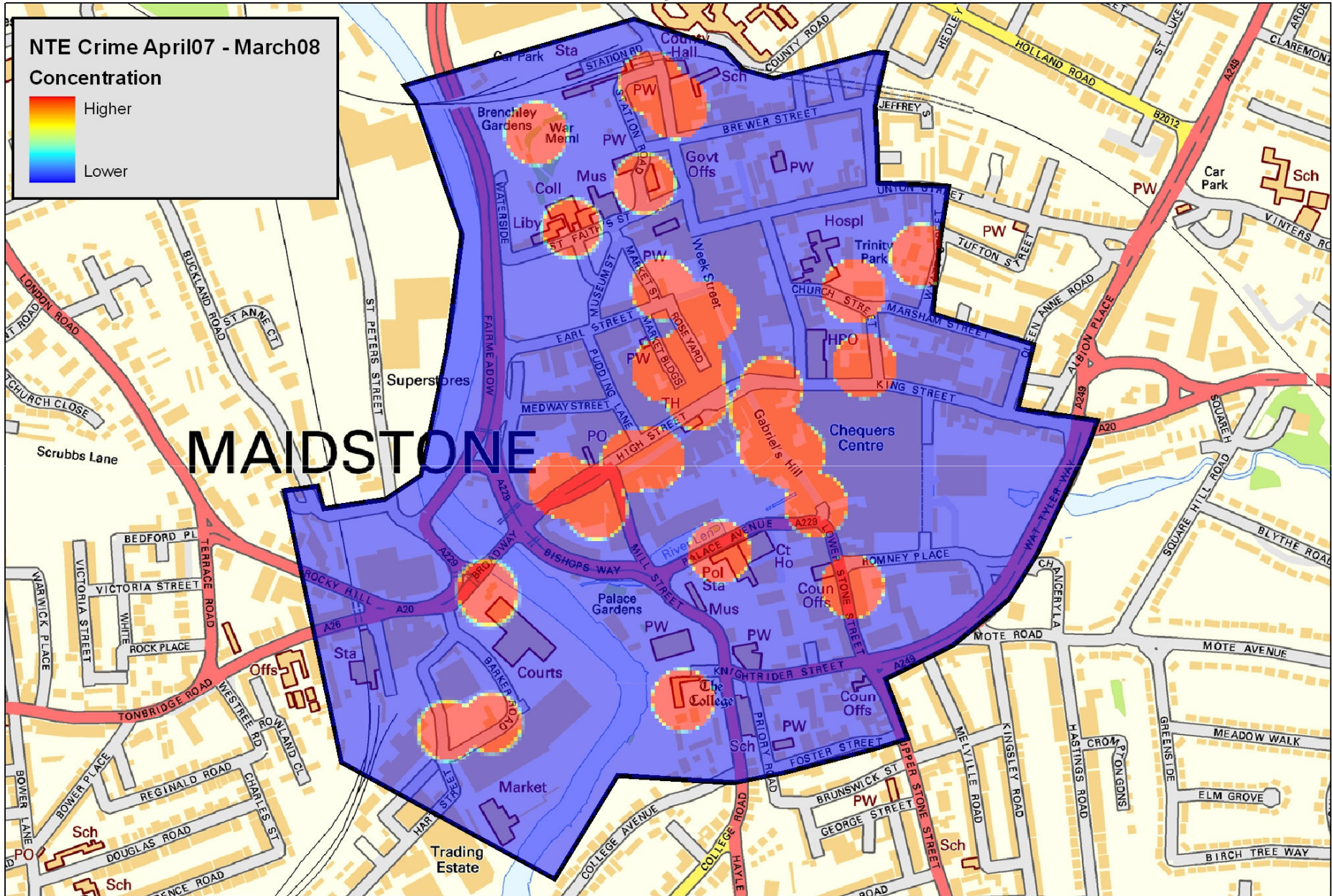
	Barming	Bearsted	Boughton Monchelsea and Chart Sutton	Boxley	Coxheath and Hunton	Detling and Thurnham	Downswood and Otham	Harrietsham and Lenham	Headcorn	Leeds	Loose	Marden and Yalding	North Downs	Staplehurst	Sutton Valence and Langley	Sum:	% of MAIDSTONE RURAL TRENDS
BURGLARY DWELLING	0	8	4	16	6	12	2	6	5	4	1	17	5	7	3	91	3.16%
BURGLARY OTHER	0	12	9	35	33	17	6	20	25	8	14	54	17	28	18	290	10.07%
CRIMINAL DAMAGE OFFENCES	9	52	15	67	50	33	32	70	60	17	20	77	27	48	29	592	20.56%
DRUG OFFENCES	7	5	3	8	4	5	2	2	1	1	2	16	5	4	1	62	2.15%
FRAUD AND FORGERY	4	17	1	14	4	28	3	17	8	2	1	3	66	21	3	186	6.46%
OTHER OFFENCES	0	2	0	7	2	4	5	1	3	4	1	5	4	2	1	40	1.39%
ROBBERY	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	3	0	0	1	7	0.24%
SEXUAL OFFENCES	4	1	0	6	3	1	0	4	1	1	0	5	2	2	2	30	1.04%
SHOPLIFTING	0	20	0	15	4	1	0	2	5	0	0	0	0	5	0	52	1.81%
THEFT FROM MOTOR VEHICLE	5	19	16	44	22	24	16	41	14	3	8	29	22	13	12	280	9.72%
THEFT OFFENCES	1	10	13	21	22	18	8	14	14	10	4	35	17	11	11	497	17.26%
THEFT OF MOTOR VEHICLE	0	7	2	3	1	1	1	3	3	0	2	0	0	0	2	207	7.19%
THEFT OF PEDAL CYCLE	11	27	28	53	41	58	7	50	53	22	9	59	42	19	27	24	0.83%
VEHICLE INTERFERENCE	0	6	1	5	9	1	3	2	2	2	1	7	3	3	6	49	1.70%
VIOLENCE AGAINST THE PERSON	7	25	12	64	33	15	14	46	21	9	21	48	17	38	43	409	14.20%
Sum:	48	211	104	359	234	218	99	280	215	83	84	358	227	201	159	2880	97.78%
% of MAIDSTONE RURAL TRENDS	1.67%	7.33%	3.61%	12.47%	8.13%	7.57%	3.44%	9.72%	7.47%	2.88%	2.92%	12.43%	7.88%	6.98%	5.52%		100.00%

## 2008 – 09 Rural ASB by Ward

ASB/Month	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	SUM	%
Barming Ward	4	4	4	6	2	3	2	1	4	1	4	8	43	1.92%
Bearsted Ward	14	16	13	11	13	15	6	12	16	18	11	15	160	7.15%
Boughton Monchelsea and Chart Sutton Ward	7	10	11	12	8	5	5	6	4	4	10	6	88	3.93%
Boxley Ward	39	43	50	47	38	25	26	35	38	23	16	52	432	19.30%
Coxheath and Hunton Ward	20	11	22	17	18	11	17	11	14	11	18	27	197	8.80%
Detling and Thurnham Ward	7	9	12	17	13	8	8	7	6	4	10	5	106	4.74%
Downswood and Otham Ward	7	14	6	11	9	6	5	6	7	20	12	14	117	5.23%
Harrietsham and Lenham Ward	30	17	18	22	12	9	9	6	19	9	16	14	181	8.09%
Headcorn Ward	13	17	20	13	19	16	9	10	12	17	14	16	176	7.86%
Leeds Ward	1	5	9	3	7	2	4	6	1	1	8	5	52	2.32%
Loose Ward	5	3	2	8	5	10	2		3	4	7	3	52	2.32%
Marden and Yalding Ward	16	30	22	34	22	10	18	13	22	14	33	22	256	11.44%
North Downs Ward	11	5	13	10	9	5	8	3	8	7	7	3	89	3.98%
Staplehurst Ward	14	19	18	21	13	11	11	15	8	12	5	5	152	6.79%
Sutton Valence and Langley Ward	13	13	10	9	18	12	10	7	11	9	13	12	137	6.12%
Sum:	201	216	230	241	206	148	140	138	173	154	184	207	2238	100.00%

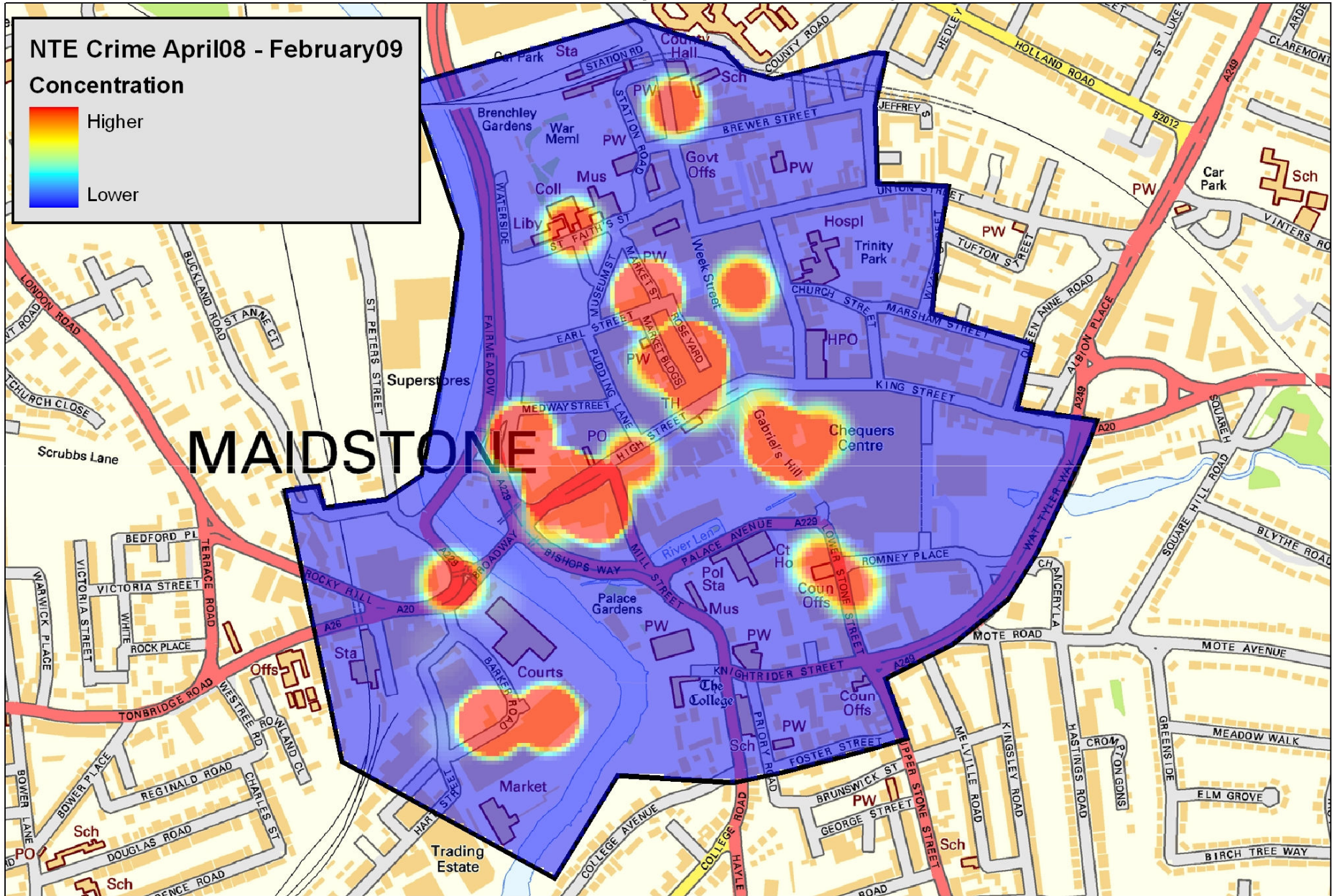
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# NTE Crime April07 - March08



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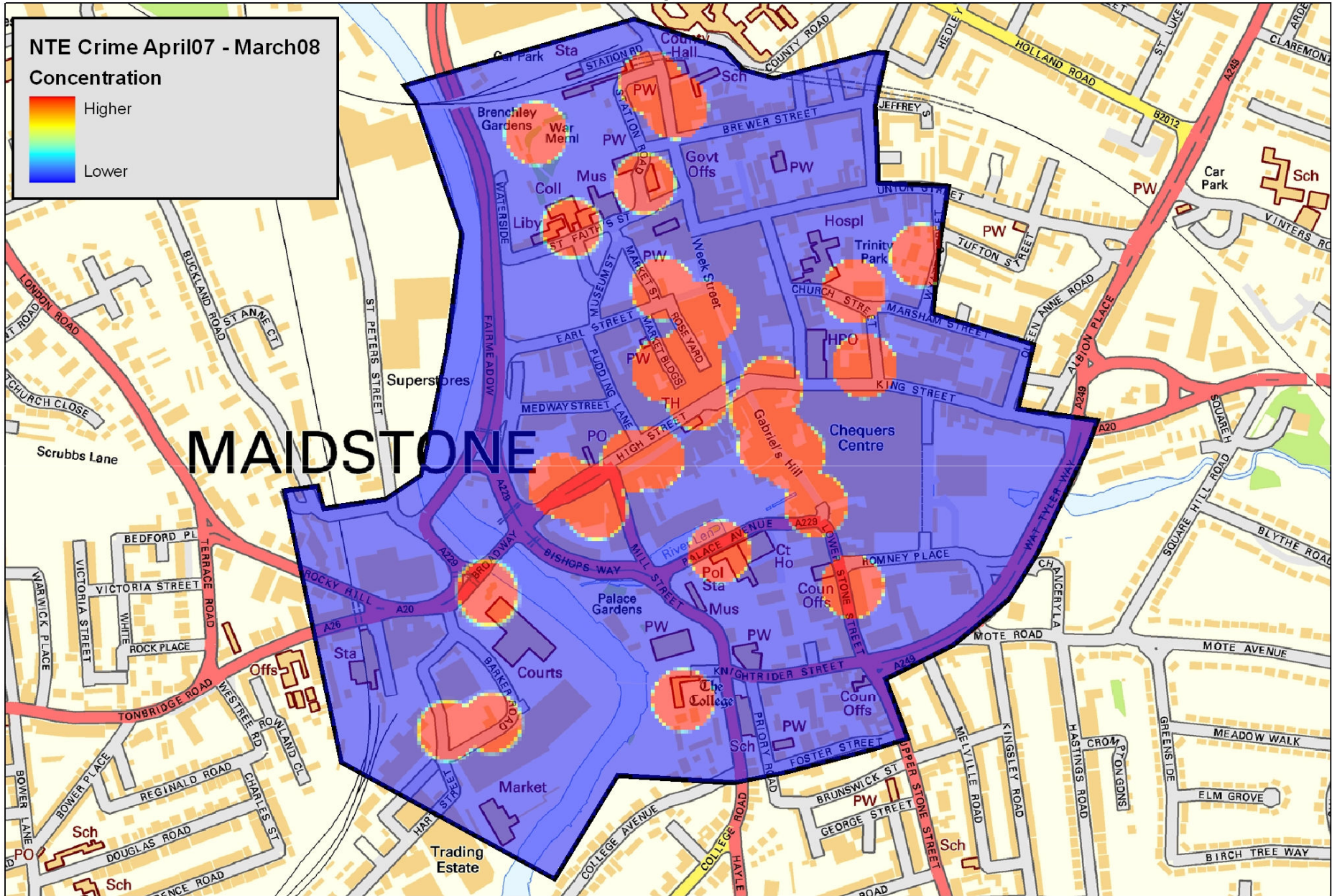
# NTE Crime April08 - February09



62

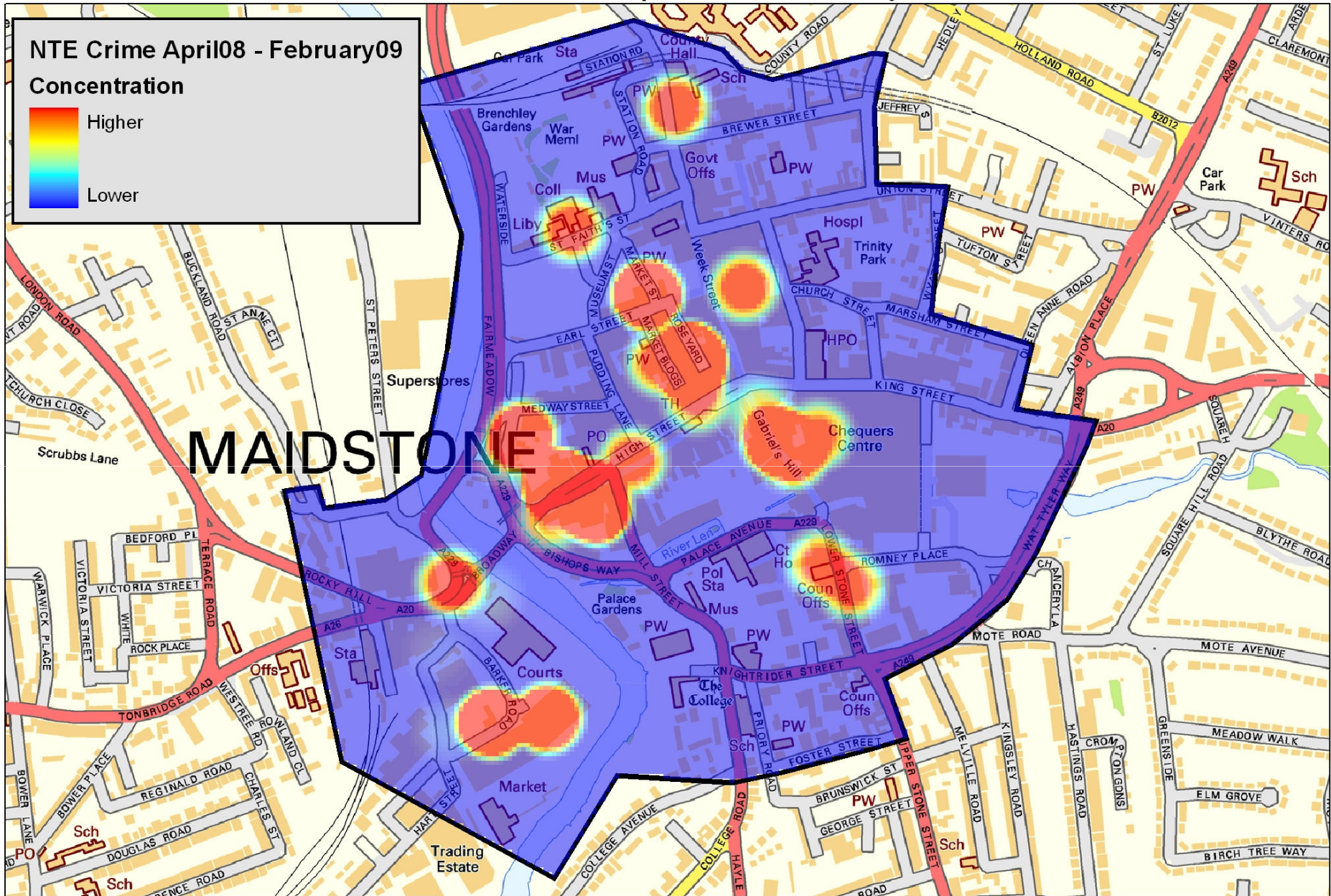


# NTE Crime April07 - March08



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# NTE Crime April08 - February09



MAIDSTONE

## Details of NTE Crime Policing Plan Target

Monday

0000hrs – 0359hrs

2000hrs – 2359hrs

Tuesday

0000hrs – 0359hrs

2000hrs – 2359hrs

Wednesday

0000hrs – 0359hrs

2000hrs – 2359hrs

Thursday

0000hrs – 0359hrs

2000hrs – 2359hrs

Friday

0000hrs – 0359hrs

2000hrs – 2359hrs

Saturday

0000hrs – 0359hrs

2000hrs – 2359hrs

Sunday

0000hrs – 0359hrs

2000hrs – 2359hrs

The dates are taken from BOb based on the reported financial year, but the NTE hours are based on the Committed Date Mid Point.

Crimes are excluded when the Committed Date Mid Point is greater than or equal to 6 hours.

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Domestic Abuse is excluded

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Discovered by Police crimes are excluded

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Only crimes with a MO of 'Offender under the Influence (Drink/Drugs etc)' attached to the crime report are included.

*Definition – Perceived by victim / witness / police officer to be under influence of any intoxicating substance. Do not use where the victim / witness are unwilling or unable to assess this.*

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Home Office Codes Included (codes in italic are new for 2008/09)

1 Murder

2 Attempted Murder

4.1 Manslaughter

4.2 Infanticide

4.3 Intentional destruction of a viable unborn child

4.4 Causing death by dangerous driving

4.6 Causing death by careless or inconsiderate driving

4.7 Causing / allowing death of child / vulnerable person

4.8 Causing death by careless or inconsiderate driving

4.9 Causing death by driving : unlicensed drivers etc  
4.10 Corporate Manslaughter  
5 Wounding or other act endangering life  
5A Wounding or carrying out an act endangering life  
5B Use of substance or object to endanger life  
5C Possession of items to endanger life  
8A Other wounding  
8D Racially or religiously aggravated other wounding  
8F Wounding or inflicting grievous bodily harm without intent  
8G Actual bodily harm  
8H Racially or religiously aggravated wounding or inflicting grievous bodily harm without intent  
8J Racially or religiously aggravated actual bodily harm  
8K Poisoning and female genital mutilation  
37.1 Causing death by aggravated vehicle taking  
105A Assault without injury  
105B Racially or religiously aggravated assault without injury  
17A Sexual assault on a male aged 13 and over  
17B Sexual assault on a male child under 13  
19C Rape of a female aged 16 and over  
19D Rape of a female child under 16  
19E Rape of a female child under 13  
19F Rape of a male aged 16 and over  
19G Rape of a male child under 16  
19H Rape of a male child under 13  
20A Sexual assault on a female aged 13 and over  
20B Sexual assault on a female child under 13  
21 Sexual activity involving a child under 13  
22A Causing sexual activity without consent  
22B Sexual activity involving child under 16  
70 Sexual activity etc with a person with a mental disorder  
88B Other miscellaneous sexual offences  
88C Other miscellaneous sexual offences  
88D Unnatural sexual offences  
88E Exposure and voyeurism  
34B Robbery of personal property

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NTE Town Centre areas, as defined by the 6 BCUs, are identified by running the above data through GIS.