

### Town Centre Management

- 1.1 The Town Centre Management (TCM) initiative has existed in Maidstone since 1991. It is a public and private partnership and allows all stakeholders in the town centre to influence policy and develop a co-ordinated approach to practical improvements. In Maidstone, the partnership has enjoyed many successes particularly in achieving external funding for a number of important projects.
- 1.2 TCM is a private limited company dedicated to improving the trading environment of the town centre. It acts as a catalyst, bringing the businesses and local authorities together, imparting a two way flow of communication. TCM's role is to act strategically on behalf of the town to improve and carefully monitor its image, to maximise its appeal to potential visitors and maintain the loyalty of its residents.
- 1.3 Some of the ways in which TCM have done this include the introduction of schemes such as MaidSafe, the highly effective town centre crime reduction partnership, and Shopmobility, making the town accessible to people with walking difficulties. It also organises events for the town centre.
- 1.4 Maidstone Town Centre Management's mission is 'to create and develop active partnerships and broad networks to establish a healthy and sustainable environment which involves and benefits all stakeholders'.

**Stop Junk Mail Campaign Group<sup>1</sup>**

- 1.1 Stop Junk Mail is a self-funded, not-for-profit campaign group giving free and independent advice on how to eradicate junk mail. It is funded by contributions and all the work on the campaign is done in people's spare time.
- 1.2 The Stop Junk Mail Campaign started as a local campaign under the name 'Think Green' in Norwich in 2004 and was set up by former postman Robert Rijkhoff, who is the co-ordinator of Stop Junk Mail.
- 1.3 Its current campaign was launched in January 2007. They found that surprisingly little information was available about reducing junk mail.
- 1.4 They believe that its main achievement is that the opt-out schemes such as the Royal Mail door-to-door opt-out are now much more widely known and used.
- 1.5 *Eradicating Junk Mail*  
Stop Junk Mail believes eradicating junk mail is unnecessarily complicated in the UK. It describes eight different things the public can do if they want to live junk mail free.
- 1.6 Stop Junk Mail explains:  
"The reason why stopping junk mail is such a pain is that the Government so far allows the market to regulate itself. In recent years the Government has put some pressure on marketers to do more to reduce waste caused by junk mail, but bulk mailers have so far failed to make opting out of junk mail as easy and effective as it could and should be.

As a result of self-regulation a myriad of completely separate and half-effective opt-out schemes has been set up in recent years. At the same time marketers have introduced numerous commercial opt-out schemes which charge people to stop addressed junk mail from specific organisations and/or encourage people to opt in to receiving certain types of advertisements.

To make things worse, local Councils are still selling the edited version of the electoral register to bulk mailers for just a couple of pounds, despite calls from both the Information Commissioner and Local Government Association to treat voters' personal information with a bit more respect.

We believe stopping junk mail should be easy, effective and free. That this is possible is shown in many countries abroad, most notably in the Netherlands and Denmark. The Dutch, for instance, only need to do two simple things to stop junk mail. People register with a Mailing Preference Service to stop all (and not just some) addressed advertisements and use a readily and freely available 'no junk mail' sticker to stop unaddressed advertisements and/or free newspapers".

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<sup>1</sup> Information taken from <http://www.stopjunkmail.org.uk/>