# Maidstone Borough Council DRAFT Communications Action Plan 2022 - 2023



#### For more information contact the MBC Communications Team

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### Communications Action Plan 2022 – 2023

The team works in line with a communications and engagement calendar which is populated and updated on a monthly basis reflecting services, projects and campaigns with both internal and external partners and stakeholders.

We work in partnership to produce, facilitate and run campaigns and projects highlighting what the Council does and how it works supporting residents and businesses to be a safe place to work and live.

Part of the role of the Communications Team is to help raise awareness and engagement of these campaigns using a variety of channels to deliver appropriate messages.

Focusing on the four MBC priorities under Thriving Place we also promote Maidstone as the Business Capital of Kent to inform and engage with investors, residents, businesses and stakeholders.



## **Priority - A Thriving Place**

Maidstone is a borough that is open for business, attractive for visitors and is an enjoyable and prosperous place to live for our residents.

Maidstone is the Business Capital of Kent; we will continue to grow our local economy with high employment, good local jobs and thriving local businesses.

We want our town and village centres to thrive and be fit for the future. We will lead investment in the County town and rural service centres through our regeneration projects and working with partners.

We are proud of our heritage and will continue to grow our leisure and cultural offer.



#### MBC COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN – July 2022 – June 2023

PRIORITY AREA	Key campaign messages	Audience and outcomes
A THRIVING PLACE		
UK Shared Prosperity Fund – Communities and Engagement	The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is a central pillar of the UK government's Levelling Up agenda and provides £2.6 billion of funding for local investment by March 2025. The Fund aims to improve pride in place and increase life chances across the UK investing in communities and place, supporting local business, and people and skills.  MBC will be using the funding (£1.2m) over three years to restore and build Pride of Place in Maidstone Town Centre.  This would include community engagement, marketing material, creative community grants to support and promoting all events and activities taking place. The Council would also establish MBC led flagship annual events - spring, autumn and winter – suggestions include:  • 24 Nov 2022 – Magic of Christmas in Maidstone (working in conjunction with One Maidstone)  • Harvest Food & Drink Festival – Oct 2023  Creative Communities Grants:  In addition, as part of the UKSPF, the Council is inviting people to apply for Creative Community Grants; this will include individual artists and creatives, community groups and cultural organisations.  The grant funding will help support events and activities that encourage arts engagement and community cohesion in the borough of Maidstone.	Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone  Outcomes: Improved awareness of the work being carried out by Maidstone Borough Council and partners to introduce enforcement through our services areas work. To recognise the contribution of our resident's contribution to our borough.  Aims: An improved sense of safety reflected Raise awareness of joint schemes between the community protection team, Police and any other third-party agencies
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Maidstone – The Business Capital of Kent - Economic Development	To support and promote Maidstone as the Business Capital of Kent including:  Business Networking events – at the MBC Business Terrace Produce and publish a monthly Business Newsletter To produce business led communications To support and promote the work of the Maidstone Innovation Centre	Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone  Outcomes: Improved awareness of Maidstone as the Business Capital of Kent and raise the profile of the Business Terrace and Innovation Centre  Aims: To raise number of tenants to the Business Terrace and Innovation Centre and to encourage new businesses locate in Maidstone
Compassionate City  – Communities and Engagement	To promote and launch the annual Compassionate Community Awards working with Heart of Kent Hospice (HoKH).  Supporting HoKH to promote and launch Maidstone Compassionate City – spring 2023	Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone  Outcomes: To establish Maidstone as a Compassionate City  Aims: To work with communities to encourage engagement and introduce Maidstone as a Compassionate City

#### MBC COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN – July 2022 – June 2023

Visit Maidstone -	To support and promote the visitor economy across the borough working	Audiences:
Economic	with the MBC tourism led team – Visit Maidstone to encourage and	Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone,
Development	increase visitor numbers to the attractions across the borough. This would help improve the economic picture for the entertainment, leisure	trade press stakeholders - everyone
	and hospitality industry in and around Maidstone.	Outcomes: Raise and improve the awareness of Maidstone as a place to visit,
	The communications team will help promote and facilitate a variety of things including:	shop and stay
		Aims:
	Events	Establish Maidstone as a first class visitor destination and to
	Things to do in Maidstone	increase footfall, economic spend and visitor numbers to the
	Visitor Information	borough
	Venues	
	What's On	
	Shopping	
	Food and drink	
Lockmeadow -	To support and promote the Lockmeadow entertainment complex	Audiences:
Economic Development	marketing and promotional events.	Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone
	MBC owns the Lockmeadow building and works closely with all the	
	tenants to support their work.	Outcomes:
		Improved awareness of the work being carried out by Maidstone
	The Council is also responsible for a variety of events which they	Borough Council and partners to introduce enforcement through
	schedule throughout the year including:	our services areas work
	Maidstone River Festival entertainment stage	
	Producers Market – monthly	Aims:
	Maidstory (with One Maidstone)	An improved sense of safety reflected
	Monthly charity Quiz- ongoing	Raise awareness of joint schemes between the community
	Music on Terrace – Monthly	protection team, Police and any other third-party agencies
	<ul> <li>Santa's big post box – annually Nov/Dec</li> </ul>	

Town Centre Planning - Planning, Policy and Environment	Working with the Planning, Policy and Environment team we support and promote Maidstone as the County Town highlighting the changes and improvement work planned to help restore trust, a feeling of safety and pride in the town centre including:  - Business and investment opportunities - Town Centre Task Force - Reinvigorating the town - Five Opportunity Sites - Sustainability and Growth - Public Consultation	Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone  Outcomes: To restore trust in Maidstone as a town centre for residents, visitors and businesses  Aims: An increase in visitor numbers and businesses locating in the town centre. Promote improvement projects in and around the town centre and raise awareness of joint schemes between MBC and partner organisations
Residents Survey - Communities and Engagement	To promote and support the annual MBC Residents Survey including:  Public engagement events Social media Digital Marketing Press Releases	Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone  Outcomes: To understand what people think of Maidstone; their concerns, needs and the way people live and work across the borough  Aims: An improved understanding of what our residents like, dislike, want and don't want in Maidstone. How they would like it to develop and improve

#### MBC COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN – July 2022 – June 2023

Maidstone Museum – Economic Development	To promote and support Maidstone Museum exhibition and events including:  • Exhibitions • School visits • Meeting venue • Holiday activities for children • Schools virtual learning workshops • Father Christmas & festive producers market	Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone  Outcomes: To raise the profile of Maidstone Museum by promoting events, exhibitions and encourage local people and visitors to use the facilities of the Museum and highlight the way that it supports the town centre community
		Aims: Increased visitor numbers to the Museum; improve dwell time, increase number of events planned and held as a meeting venue and improve sales to ticketed events and in the Museum shop

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## **Priority - Homes and Communities**

We want to have a place that people love and where they can afford to live. This means ensuring that there is a good balance of different types of homes, including affordable housing.

We will have safe and desirable homes that enable good health and wellbeing for our communities. We will address homelessness and rough sleeping to move people into settled accommodation.

We will work with our partners to improve the quality of community services and facilities including for health care and community activities. Residents will be encouraged and supported to volunteer and play a full part in their communities.



#### MBC COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN – July 2022 – June 2023

HOMES AND COMMUNITIES		
1,000 Affordable Homes – Planning and Development	To promote and support MBC's commitment to acquiring an additional 1,000 houses for Local People on affordable terms including:  • Promotion of work that is being carried out to achieve the commitment through press releases, social media and digital communications	Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone  Outcomes: To enable and support MBC in reaching its commitment to acquiring 1,000 affordable homes in the borough  Aims: To promote and establish Maidstone as a place for people to move to, live and buy a home
MBC Engagement Events – Economic Development	To support and promote engagement events taking place across the borough including:  Parks and Open Spaces Town Centre Jubilee Square Maidstone Museum Lockmeadow Maidstone Leisure Centre Trinity Community Hub	Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone  Outcomes: Raise awareness of events and increase community engagement across the borough  Aims: To promote all that is happening in Maidstone to improve a feeling pride of place and increase visitor numbers, dwell time and tourism economy

Help for Ukraine – Communities and Engagement	To help and support Help and Homes for Ukraine across Maidstone borough including:  Community events for refugees and host families Produce and provide information/literature Provide information regarding housing, health and community facilities Support – refugees and host families Promote monetary payments	Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone  Outcomes: To support host families and refugees from Ukraine providing them with a sense of place and reassurance in the borough of Maidstone  Aims: To inform and reassure both host families and refugees of MBC services and community support that is available to them
Energy Efficiency Support – Housing, Revenues and Benefits, Communities and Engagement	To promote and support energy efficiency support and the work MBC services are providing including:  Exceptional hardship payments; social housing payments Debt advice and support Housing Benefit Universal credit customers Council Tax Arrears funding — ongoing Financial Inclusion — ongoing Winter Fuel Allowance Winter hardship payments	Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone  Outcomes: To provide reassuring messages for residents and businesses outlining what is available to them through the work of the MBC energy efficiency support services  Aims: To increase reassurance and provide information to refugees and host families to the support available to them

#### MBC COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN – July 2022 – June 2023

Housing – Housing and Inclusion	To promote and support the work of the MBC Housing Team including:  Homefinder – Landlord promotion Helping You Home Trinity Community Hub Annual Homeless Count Outreach Team Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP)	Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone  Outcomes: To raise awareness of the work of the MBC Housing services  Aims: To inform and engage with those that need help and support from the MGC Housing Teams
Democratic and Electoral Services	Support and promote the work of the Democratic and Electoral Services Team including:  Annual Canvass Electoral Register MBC Committee Meetings Local, PCC, Parish and General Elections Candidate Nomination process Registering for postal vote	Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone  Outcomes: Highlighting and raising awareness of the MBC Democratic and Electoral Services Team  Aims: To increase awareness and the community engagement and improve number of people casting their votes at elections

Policy & Resources	To promote and support the work of the MBC Policy & Resources Team including Public Consultations:  Residents Survey Community Resilience Fund Public engagement events Local Plan Review Community Infrastructure Levy Leisure Facilities	Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone  Outcomes: To encourage public engagement in all the consultations and events that MBC facilitate  Aims: To improve awareness and increase engagement with residents and businesses

# **Priority - Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure**

We want Maidstone Borough Council to work for the people who live, visit and work; now and in the future.

We want a borough where there is a variety of jobs, housing needs are met and infrastructure is in place to meet the growing needs of our residents and economy.

We also want to ensure we lead and shape our place as it grows, including leading master planning and investing to bring about high quality housing and jobs in the borough.



EMBRACING GROWTH AND ENABLING INFRASTRUCTURE		
Local Plan Review – Planning, Policy and Environment	To promote and publicise the Maidstone Local Plan Review (LPR) to report on the process and inform the public of where they can access information on the progress of the review.  The communications team supports the LPR by reporting on:  Providing information on each stage of the process Inform the public on the LPR outcomes Each consultation stage How the process works	Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone  Outcomes: Increase awareness of the requirements of a Local Plan Review and highlight the process behind it  Aims: To engage with all residents, businesses and stakeholders to promote the process of the Maidstone Local Plan Review and improve understanding of the legal requirement
Trinity Community Hub - Housing and Inclusion	Supporting communications and promoting the re-opening of Trinity House ad a Community Hub in the centre of Maidstone comms including:  Public and stakeholder engagement event Official opening of Community Hub Trinity Venue Hire Community engagement events The work of the MBC Outreach and Housing Teams Partner organisations working with MBC teams	Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone  Outcomes: Improved awareness of Trinity and the role it plays as a Community Hub in the town centre  Aims: Provide an understanding and reassurance to residents, the local community and stakeholders of the role of Trinity Community Hub and increase awareness of the important role it will have

#### MBC COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN – July 2022 – June 2023

Maidstone Innovation Centre - Economic Development and Regeneration	To support and promote the Maidstone Innovation Centre as the Med-Tech industry business centre including:  • Tenants business profile • Business and office space available • Meeting venue hire	Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone  Outcomes: To improve and raise awareness of the Maidstone Innovation Centre and the role it plays in the community  Aims: Increase the number of tenants at the MIC and encourage usage of the conference room and venue hire
LOC8 – Economic Development and Regeneration	To promote and support the construction and opening of LOC8 - the new business development park situated just off junction 8 of the M20 including:  • Facilitate official opening event • Promote and work with partner organisations	Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone  Outcomes: To introduce LOC8 as a new facility for residents, businesses and stakeholders to use in the borough  Aims: To help establish LOC8 as a Maidstone's premiere commercial park

## **Priority - Safe, Clean and Green**

We will keep Maidstone an attractive and clean place for all.

Maidstone is a safe place to live and we want our residents to feel safe.

We want to protect and where possible enhance our environment and make sure our parks, green spaces, streets and public areas are high quality by ensuring they are looked after, well managed and respected.



#### MBC COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN – July 2022 – June 2023

SAFE CLEAN AND GREEN		
Enforcement – Community Protection, Waste Crime, Housing and Inclusion	Town Centre Task Force launch summer 2022- joint operation with Maidstone Borough Council Community Protection Team Kent Police and partners organisations.  Place Based Enforcement including:  Planning Enforcement Community Protection Waste Crime Housing & Homelessness - Animal welfare Antisocial Behaviour Awareness	Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone  Outcomes: Improved awareness of the work being carried out by Maidstone Borough Council and partners to introduce enforcement through our services areas work  Aims: An improved sense of safety reflected Raise awareness of joint schemes between the community protection team, Police and any other third-party agencies
Safer Streets – Community Protection	Maidstone has received £565,877 funding which has been secured by the Police & Crime Commissioner (Matthew Scott). This is to provide safety improvements around the town centre and Brenchley Gardens district. This will include more outreach workers, self-defence classes for women and an expansion of the Best Bar None scheme for licensed premises, which promotes good practice and improved customer safety.  • MBC will be working with: Kent PCC's Office • Kent Police • Kent County Council • Maidstone & Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust	Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone  Outcomes: Improved awareness of the work being carried out by Maidstone Borough Council and partners to introduce enforcement through our services areas work  Aims: An improved sense of safety reflected Raise awareness of joint schemes between the community protection team, Police and any other third-party agencies

Community Protection	<ul> <li>Promoting the work of the MBC Community Protection Team including:</li> <li>Maidstone Town Centre Task Force</li> <li>Rural Task Force (based in Marden)</li> <li>Safer Streets</li> <li>Safety Advisory Group</li> </ul>	Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone  Outcomes: To help the people of Maidstone to understand the work of the Community Protection Team and fell safer in the town and across the borough
		Aims: An improved sense of safety across the borough To raise awareness of the work of the Community Protection Team and improve their understanding of how they are helping the residents, businesses and third party partner organisations in the borough
Environmental Services - Environmental Health	Promoting the work of the Environmental Services Team including:  Clean Air for Schools Improve air quality Improve health and wellbeing Improving environmental health Anti-idling outside schools campaign	Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone  Outcomes: Improve air quality Improve health and wellbeing Improving environmental health Improving air quality across the borough of Maidstone Improving the health of our children  Aims: Anti-idling - Clean Air for Schools campaign – to raise awareness for drivers to switch off engines outside schools. To improve air quality, health and wellbeing for residents of Maidstone

#### MBC COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN – July 2022 – June 2023

Environmental Waste Team	<ul> <li>Waste collections services across Maidstone</li> <li>Recycling advice and information         <ul> <li>including waste collections and services</li> </ul> </li> <li>Volunteer Opportunities – Litter Picking</li> </ul>	Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone  Outcomes:  • To improve awareness of service • Improve recycling in the borough • Encourage people to improve their recycling and waste habits  Aims: To raise awareness and continue to inform residents and businesses of the work of the Environmental Waste Team and services they provide
Flood protection - Environmental Health, Communities and Engagement	Flood preparation —  Raising Awareness of flooding — town centre and surrounding areas  Call for Flood Wardens Informing of danger of potential floods Sign up for flood alerts	Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone  Outcomes:  Improve the awareness of flooding and the dangers Increase number of flood wardens across the borough  Aims: To keep our residents and businesses out the danger of floods, inform them of when flooding is expected and update them of the changing weather situation. To encourage people to sign-up to become Flood Wardens and for flood alerts

Waste Crime Services	<ul> <li>#CleanUpMaidstone campaign</li> <li>Community Projects including fly-tipping</li> <li>Vehicle seizure joint operations with Kent Police</li> </ul>	Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone  Outcomes: Improved awareness of the work being carried out by Maidstone Borough Council and partners to introduce the Waste Crime Team  Aims: An improved awareness of what the MBC Waste Crime Services carry out and promote the work that they do
Parks and Open Spaces - Grounds & Open Spaces	<ul> <li>National Love Parks Week</li> <li>Green Flag Awards</li> <li>Mote Park Café and visitor centre opening</li> <li>Safety in Parks</li> <li>Cobtree Manor Park Golf Club House</li> <li>Events being held in the parks across the borough</li> </ul>	Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone  Outcomes: An improved awareness for residents and visitors of the parks and open spaces that are available across the borough of Maidstone  Aims: An increase in numbers of visitors to the parks and open spaces across the borough and more events in those areas

#### MBC COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN – July 2022 – June 2023

Mote Park Café	Working with the contractor - BBS Construction to promote the work	Audiences:
and Visitor Centre -	being carried out on the new café and visitor centre in Mote Park	Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone,
Economic	including:	trade press stakeholders – everyone
Development,		
Parks and Open	New café leaseholder	Outcomes:
Spaces	Opening event	Promote the new facilities in Mote Park for residents, visitors and
	Venue availability	community groups
	Facility Hire and use of the café for community groups	
	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	Aims:
		An increase in number of users to the Mote Park Café and visitor
		centre and to encourage more community groups to use the
		facilities

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