



2010-2020

**The Sustainable Community
Strategy for Maidstone Borough**

DRAFT

MAIDSTONE MATTERS – PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION – 2010-20
Draft Sustainable Community Strategy for Maidstone Borough

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Part A.

1. What is a sustainable community strategy¹?

- 1.1 The starting point for delivering better outcomes is for local partners, in the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), to create a shared vision and shared sense of priorities for a place. The vision will be set out in a Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS), which will describe how people who live and work there want it to change over time.
- 1.2 LSPs provide the forum for collectively reviewing and steering public resources, through identifying priorities in SCSs and LAAs. But (as non-statutory bodies) they are not the ultimate decision makers on such plans.
- 1.3 The purpose of the SCS is to set the overall strategic direction and long-term vision for the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of a local area – typically 10-20 years – in a way that contributes to sustainable development in the UK. It tells the ‘story of the place’ – the distinctive vision and ambition of the area, backed by clear evidence and analysis.
- 1.4 Sustainable Community Strategies should contain the following elements:
 - the **long-term vision based firmly on local needs** – this will be underpinned by a shared evidence base informed by community aspirations
 - **key priorities for the local area**, based upon this vision which may realistically be achieved in the medium term – these will inform the strategy’s delivery agreement – the LAA.
- 1.5 The goal of sustainable development is to enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life of future generations’ (Securing the Future – UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy 2005).
- 1.6 For a local priority or policy to be sustainable, it should respect five principles:
 - living within environmental limits
 - a strong, healthy and just society
 - achieving a sustainable economy
 - promoting good governance
 - using sound science responsibly

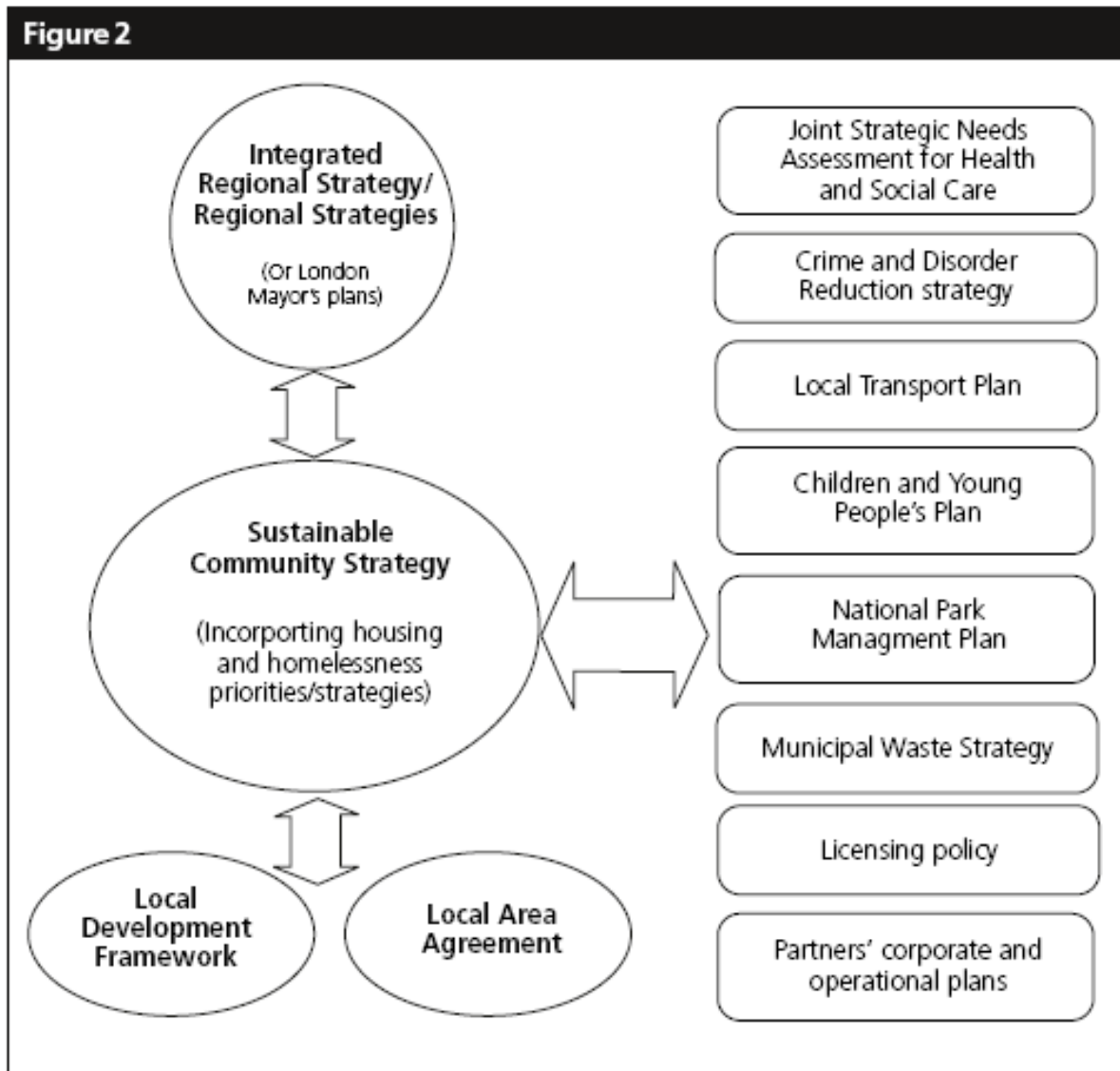
¹ Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities: Statutory Guidance, published July 2008:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/strongsafeprosperous>

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1.6 To achieve the right outcomes for people and places, there needs to be timely monitoring, review and measurement of progress against targets. LSPs collectively will need to review progress against the priorities agreed – to assess whether the activities undertaken by their members have resulted in the desired outcomes and where this is not the case, steer the appropriate changes to plans and interventions. The views of local communities themselves will of course be central to assessing if desired outcomes have been delivered and/or whether or not there needs to be a change in focus.

2. Analysis of the existing plans / strategies (based on the following)



3. Narrative of place (including SWOT analysis to follow)

4. Visions (four options based on LSP workshop on 20th October)

4.1 *Retain and build on Maidstone Borough's distinctive history / character and role as Kent's County town. To develop communities and a town where people can achieve their aspirations, improve their quality of life and enjoy an excellent environment. Particular focus on creating prosperity and balancing this with environmental quality.*

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- 4.2 *A thriving county town at the heart of Kent balancing its distinctive heritage with inspired environmental policies to build a safe, prosperous, vibrant community for the 21st century - aspiring to lead the country in quality of life and local services.*
- 4.3 *A thriving borough at the heart of Kent, balancing its distinctive heritage with inspired environmental policies to build a safe, healthy, vibrant, 21st century county town and rural communities - aspiring to lead the country in quality of life and local services.*
- 4.4 *We want Maidstone Borough to be a vibrant 21st century urban and rural community at the heart of Kent, where its distinctive character is enhanced to create a safe, healthy, high quality environment with high quality education and employment where people can realise their aspirations.*

5. Objectives

5.1 Specific (coming from the vision)

- Develop a vibrant skills based economy, create prosperity and opportunities for all (see *Chapter 1: Economy and prosperity*)
- Develop Maidstone Borough's urban and rural communities as models for 21st Century quality and sustainable living (see *Chapter 2: Homes and communities*)
- Build stronger and safer communities (see *Chapter 2: Homes and communities and Chapter 3: Crime and Safety*)
- Healthier communities and happier, more active older people (see *Chapter 4: Health and older people*)
- Build a thriving sporting, creative and cultural life for all (see *Chapter 5: Sport, creativity and culture*)
- To develop an efficient, sustainable, integrated transport system (see *Chapter 6: Sustainable and integrated transport*)
- Retain and enhance Maidstone borough's distinctive history, landscape and character (see *Chapter 7: Environmental excellence and climate change*)
- Make Maidstone Borough a place where people of all ages - children, young people and families - can achieve their aspirations (See *Chapter 8: Children, young people and families*)

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5.2 Cross cutting objectives:

- Reduce inequalities within the borough (Neighbourhood Action Plans will be developed for areas of high need including parts of: Park Wood, Shepway North and South and High Street Wards. Also see all chapters)
- Establish Maidstone Borough's reputation as a place for environmental excellence and action on climate change (see *Chapter 7: Environmental excellence and climate change*)

Part B.

Chapter 1: Economy and prosperity

1.1 Analysis of the issues

- Although GVA per worker has increased steadily between 1998 and 2005, for a borough of its' size productivity within Maidstone is weak, with seven of the 12 boroughs within Kent having a higher GVA per worker than Maidstone.²
- Analysis by Gavurin Ltd identifies that Maidstone borough has no sector specialisms, which are necessary in increasing the competitive advantage of the local economy, and stimulating inward investment. In addition, the borough's economy lacks innovation, with only 9 patent applications being made in the Maidstone economy in 2006. Low rates of innovation, tends to be closely associated with low rates of productivity and slow growth rates of the economy.³
- There is a significant difference in wages between workers and residents. During 2007 the average weekly earnings of residents was 13.27% higher than the average weekly earnings of workers.⁴ This indicates that there are large proportions of out commuters, travelling to higher value jobs.
- Maidstone currently has a lack of Higher Education institutes within the borough, which provides an obstacle to the enhancement of productivity, and economic expansion, and also encourages those who undertake higher education courses to move out of the borough.
- The town centre of the Maidstone borough and some of the larger urban areas are currently economically, socially and physically degraded.

² Shared Intelligence, *Maidstone Economic Development Strategy*, creating a 21st century county town, July 2008.

³ Gavurin, *Maidstone: State Of The Economy Report*, February 2008

⁴ Shared Intelligence, *Maidstone Economic Development Strategy*, creating a 21st century county town, July 2008.

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- Maidstone faces the introduction of the high speed rail link, domestic trains for which are planned to begin operating in December 2009. This will significantly reduce travel time into and out of London, St Pancras from both Ashford and Ebbsfleet. As a consequence, Maidstone will meet tough competition from the government’s ‘Growth Areas’, Ashford and the Thames Gateway, which are currently receiving substantial public and private investment in housing, the economy and the environment.

5.1.2 Detailed objectives:

Detailed objective	National Indicator/LAA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve productivity and business innovation. 	NI 172 Percentage of small businesses in an area showing employment growth BERR DSO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop sector specialisms and increase innovation. 	NI 171 New business registration rate ¹
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase higher value jobs within the borough. 	NI 166 Median earnings of employees in the area BERR DSO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the higher education sector within Maidstone. 	NI 106 Young people from low income backgrounds progressing to higher education PSA 11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the numbers of young people in education, training or employment. 	NI 117 16-18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) NI 152 Working age people on out of work benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regenerate the town centre and other run down areas. 	NI 153 Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods. NI 170 Previously developed land that has been vacant or derelict for more than 5 years CLG DSO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Maidstone’s competitiveness with the government growth areas is addressed. 	NI 182 Satisfaction of businesses with local authority regulatory services BERR DSO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the level of skills and qualifications amongst the borough’s working age population. 	NI 161 Learners achieving a Level 1 qualification in literacy NI 163 Proportion of population aged 19-64 for males and 19-59 for females qualified to at least Level 2 or higher NI 162 Learners achieving an

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Detailed objective	National Indicator/LAA
	<p>Entry Level 3 qualification in numeracy</p> <p>NI 174 Skills gaps in the current workforce reported by employers DIUS DSO</p>

Chapter 2: Homes and communities

2.1 Analysis of the issues:

- From 2006 to 2007 Maidstone Borough built the second highest number of new homes of any district in Kent. The Housing Needs Survey (2005) indicated that there was a need for 920 additional affordable homes a year, which is currently not met.
- The 2005 survey indicated that 59% of those who wanted to could not afford to join the private rental sector, 68% who wanted to could not afford to purchase their own home, even though 23% or more were earning over £27,000 (national average earnings).
- The demographic changes which are expected to occur within the next twenty years will lead to an increase in the number of elderly people.
- The current economic decline is already resulting in reduced housing supply, increasing repossessions, difficulty obtaining mortgages and increasing homelessness.
- Maidstone currently has over 5% of households living in fuel poverty. This will be exacerbated by increased fuel costs.
- The figures provided by the volunteer centre identify that there has been an increase in the number of volunteers registering with the centre between 2006 and 2008, and it is expected that this figure will continue to rise.
- However, it is estimated that these figures represent approximately two percent of the total number of individuals who volunteer within the Maidstone borough. There are strong practical benefits to increasing voluntary activity especially during an economic down turn.
- With the increasing numbers of people living longer in the borough, there is potentially a larger pool of active older people, but also a larger number of very elderly who may require more support.

2.2 Detailed objectives:

Detailed objective	National Indicator/LAA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tackle homelessness by increasing support for people 	<p>NI 156 Number of households living in temporary accommodation</p>

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Detailed objective	National Indicator/LAA
at risk of losing their homes.	PSA 20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase availability of affordable housing of all tenures. 	<p>NI 154 Net additional homes provided</p> <p>NI 155 Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)</p> <p>NI 159 Supply of ready to develop housing sites</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make provision for elderly and disabled people that supports independent living. 	NI 141 Percentage of vulnerable people achieving independent living
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the thermal efficiency of people's homes. 	NI 187 Tackling fuel poverty - % of people receiving income based benefits living in homes with a low energy efficiency rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the quality of the public realm in residential areas. 	<p>NI 170 Previously developed land that has been vacant or derelict for more than 5 years CLG DSO</p> <p>NI 199 Children and young people's satisfaction with parks and play areas DCSF DSO</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage active citizenship, civic participation and active volunteering. 	<p>NI 3 Civic participation in the local area</p> <p>NI 4 % of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality PSA 21</p> <p>NI 6 Participation in regular volunteering</p> <p>NI 7 Environment for a thriving third sector CO DSO</p>

Chapter 3: Crime and safety

3.1 Baseline, analysis and issues

- The data available illustrates that although Maidstone did not have the lowest rate of crime between 2005 – 2006, it saw lower rates than 6 other boroughs within Kent.
- There has been a consistent reduction in most crime categories during 2007/2008 and this has further improved since the period April 2007 to September 2008 on which the most recent Safer Maidstone Partnership Strategic Assessment is based. There was an overall reduction of 10% in crime in the full year figures for 2007/2008, when compared to the 2005/2006 baseline. When compared to the same period 2006/2007, the reduction was even more dramatic with a reduction of 13.3%.

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- However, when comparing data from 2003 until 2006 it is apparent that there has been a rise in violent crime within the borough.
- The number of police recorded offences within High Street, Park Wood, Shepway South and Shepway North shows that there has been an increase within each of these wards. In 2006 Park Wood and High Street wards were ranked 3rd and 11th worst in Kent and each of them fell by two rank places between 2005 and 2006. During 2006, High Street had a particularly high number of recorded offences 3137 out of a population of 7774 amounting to 40.4 % as compared to the KCC average ward offences of 8.9 percent.
- There is a shortfall between actual incident levels and public perceptions or fear of crime.
- During 2008 Maidstone has had the third highest numbers of entrants into the youth justice system, and experienced a significant increase in numbers between 2007 and 2008. However numbers remain significantly lower than Thanet, which has the highest numbers compared to other boroughs.
- It is predicted that alcohol related admissions to hospital will rise – indeed the LAA target is for a reduction in the predicted increase rather than an overall reduction. Maidstone’s binge drinking is already the second highest in Kent. While there are clearly links with the night-time economy, observation suggests that a contribution to these figures might stem from the concentration of hostel accommodation in the town centre.
- In 2005/6 High Street has the highest percentage of recorded drug related offences for any ward in Kent, with Shepway South and North and Park Wood wards also have relatively high rates.
- Maidstone had the largest number of people killed or seriously injured, during 2006 and 2007 in contrast to the other Kent boroughs. There also appears to be a trend showing a continual increase in the number of people killed or seriously injured within Maidstone between 2005 and 2007. 18 additional people were killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents in 2007 compared to 2005.

3.2 *Detailed objectives*

Detailed objective	National Indicator/LAA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tackle anti-social behaviour 	<p>NI 17 Perceptions of anti-social behaviour PSA 23</p> <p>NI 21 Dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime by the local council and police PSA 23</p> <p>NI 22 Perceptions of parents taking responsibility for the behaviour of their children in the area HO DSO</p>

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Detailed objective	National Indicator/LAA
	<p>NI 23 Perceptions that people in the area treat one another with respect and consideration HO DSO</p> <p>NI 24 Satisfaction with the way the police and local council dealt with anti-social behaviour HO DSO</p> <p>NI 25 Satisfaction of different groups with the way the police and local council dealt with anti-social behaviour HO DSO</p> <p>NI 27 Understanding of local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime issues by the local council and police HO DSO</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring about a reduction in violent crime. 	<p>NI 15 Serious violent crime PSA 23</p> <p>NI 32 Repeat incidents of domestic abuse PSA 23</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue the decrease in overall rates of crime. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce all crime in wards where crime is rising against the borough trend. 	<p>NI 16 Serious acquisitive crime PSA 23</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring about a reduction in fear of crime. 	<p>NI 41 Perceptions of drunk or rowdy behaviour as a problem PSA 25</p> <p>NI 42 Perceptions of drug use or drug dealing as a problem PSA 25</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the numbers of young people entering the criminal justice system. 	<p>NI 45 Young offenders' engagement in suitable education, employment or training MoJ DSO</p> <p>NI 46 Young offenders' access to suitable accommodation MoJ DSO</p> <p>NI 111 First time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10-17</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce binge drinking in the town centre and alcohol related crime. 	<p>NI 41 Perceptions of drunk or rowdy behaviour as a problem PSA 25</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce drug related offences in 	<p>NI 38 Drug-related (Class A) offending rate PSA 25</p>

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Detailed objective	National Indicator/LAA
areas which exhibit increasing rates.	NI 42 Perceptions of drug use or drug dealing as a problem PSA 25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce deaths and serious injuries from accidents on the roads. 	NI 47 People killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents NI 48 Children killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents DfT DS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make the borough more resilient to emergencies such as flooding, epidemic or fuel shortages and reduce the time it takes for communities to recover. 	NI 37 Awareness of civil protection arrangements in the local area CO DSO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	NI 49 Number of primary fires and related fatalities and non-fatal casualties (excluding precautionary checks) CLG DSO

Chapter 4: Health and older people

4.1 Analysis of the Issues

- Maidstone is not well provided in terms of facilities for step down care ie not acute but not at home.
- The PCT was recently assessed as providing only an adequate quality of service to patients. It was weak at managing its finances. The PCT has just come through two major restructures. Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust provided a weak quality of service to patients and failed to maintain the adequate standard of performance it achieved the previous year. It continued to be weak at managing its finances. The Hospital Trust was heavily criticised last year for its control of infectious diseases.
- Although the health of people within Maidstone is better than the England average, health inequalities within the borough remain prevalent; for example, men from the most deprived areas of Maidstone have, on average, a life expectancy which is 5 years lower than the life expectancy of a man from the most affluent areas.⁵
- It is predicted that Maidstone will experience considerable demographic changes within the next ten years, which will result in a major increase in the vulnerable population. From 2005 to 2020 it is predicted there will be a 30% increase of over 65 year olds in West Kent. Half of the adult

⁵ Department of Health, *Maidstone Health Profile*, 2008

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population will be over 50 by the early 2020s and many will live in areas of deprivation.

- Maidstone has a large night time economy, and although this has its advantages, these are combined with a number of problems associated with alcohol consumption that arise, particularly in relation to health. For example, Maidstone has the fourth highest alcohol related admissions rate as compared to the other Kent boroughs.

4.2 *Detailed objectives:*

Detailed objective	National Indicator/LAA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act to reduce health inequalities which exist within the borough. 	<p>NI 78 Achievement of 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths (Floor)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce preventable diseases and deaths by acting to reduce: smoking prevalence to address cancer and heart disease, reduce the harm caused by alcohol and drugs and contributing to the downward trend for reduction in obesity prevalence by encouraging healthier eating and exercise. 	<p>NI 39 Rate of Hospital Admissions per 100,000 for Alcohol Related Harm</p> <p>NI 40 Number of drug users recorded as being in effective treatment</p> <p>NI 121 Mortality rate from all circulatory diseases at ages under 75 DH DSO</p> <p>NI 122 Mortality from all cancers at ages under 75 DH DSO</p> <p>NI 123 Stopping smoking PSA 18</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for increased health problems as a result of expected demographic changes while acting to mitigate these. 	<p>NI 125 Achieving independence for older people through rehabilitation/intermediate care DH DSO</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support older people to lead healthier, more independent and active lives. 	<p>NI 125 Achieving independence for older people through rehabilitation/intermediate care DH DSO</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act to prevent poor mental health and the consequences which are associated with it. 	<p>NI 51 Effectiveness of child and adolescent mental health (CAMHs) services</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop accessible health services that all the residents of Maidstone can have confidence in. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>NI 135 Carers receiving needs assessment or review and a</p>

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	specific carer’s service, or advice and information DH DSO
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Chapter 5: Sport, creativity and culture

5.1 Analysis of the issues

- Less than a quarter of the adult population within the Maidstone borough took part in regular sport or recreation during 2005 / 2006.
- Public consultation revealed that many people felt that sport and leisure facilities were in accessible to them due to their high cost.
- The IPSOS MORI Focus Group report Dec 07 stated: ‘While leisure, culture sport and entertainment is not in itself prioritised by many respondents, one of the main issues at the heart of many discussions is the need to improve access to leisure facilities for young people. Many feel that there need to be more youth centres in Maidstone to provide young people with activities, and a place to interact.’
- Many feel that it is important to ensure that any leisure facilities are affordable, and easy to get to.
- Some of the older residents also note that they would like to see a theatre or music venue located in the town centre. This is seen as important not just to allow people in the area to access music and entertainment facilities, but also to bring local people together. The Stick Up for Maidstone report rated a new theatre or concert hall as amongst the top two ‘dreams’.
- The Stick Up for Maidstone report rated improvements to the river amongst the top two ‘dreams’. The majority wanted to ensure better use of the river in terms of entertainment. Suggestions included building cafes along the river front, or a theatre, making better use of it for walking and cycling and increasing the seating areas along it.

5.2 Detailed objectives:

Detailed objective	National Indicator/LAA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop cultural services and facilities for young people. 	NI 110 Young people’s participation in positive activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure facilities and services are affordable. 	NI 9 Use of public libraries DCMS DSO NI 10 Visits to museums and galleries DCMS DSO NI 11 Engagement in the Arts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build into the regeneration of the town centre, plans for a new concert/theatre venue. 	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance the quality, use and appearance of the river in terms of leisure, cultural and sporting facilities and activities. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase active participation in sport for all ages through provision of affordable and improved sporting facilities. 	NI 8 Adult participation in sport and active recreation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancement of the river and, Mote Park and other green spaces for sporting, recreation and cultural activities. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote awareness of the health benefits and the need to encourage adequate exercise. 	NI 8 Adult participation in sport and active recreation

Chapter 6: Sustainable and integrated transport

6.1 Analysis of the Issues

- Congestion within the borough, some of which is school related, particularly within the town centre is becoming an increasing problem.
- Congestion within the borough worsens at times when phase three of Operation Stack (which involves closing lanes on the M20 between junctions 9 and 8) is in force, during which traffic is forced to travel through the borough on the A20.
- Additionally, public consultation reveals that a sizeable proportion of Maidstone’s local people are unsatisfied with the public transport services available within Maidstone, with particular comment given to the inadequacy of access via public transport to / from rural areas of the borough, and rail services into and out of London.
- Congestion is linked to air quality. There are currently five air quality hot spots in and around Maidstone and on the M20. It is proposed that the whole of Maidstone’s urban area and the M20 is included in an air quality action zone.
- New rail time table for next year will result in a loss of services. In addition High Speed 1 will be running next year and may make Maidstone less attractive for businesses and commuters compared to journey times from Ashford to London (35 mins).

6.2 Detailed Objectives

Detailed objective	National Indicator/LAA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve transport infrastructure within the borough. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decrease congestion in hot spots 	NI 198 Children travelling to

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Detailed objective	National Indicator/LAA
in the borough and improve air quality.	<p>school – mode of travel usually used</p> <p>NI 167 Congestion – average journey time per mile during the morning peak PSA 5</p> <p>NI 194 Air quality – % reduction in NO_x and primary PM₁₀ emissions through local authority’s estate and operations. PSA 28</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have in place effective systems to ensure that the effects of Operation Stack are kept to a minimum. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the number of people who use public transport, and their overall satisfaction with the services offered. 	<p>NI 176 Working age people with access to employment by public transport (and other specified modes) DfT DSO</p> <p>NI 177 Local bus and light rail passenger journeys originating in the authority area DfT DSO</p> <p>NI 178 Bus services running on time DfT DSO</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve accessibility to public services via public transport. 	<p>NI 175 Access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop links to the international high speed rail network. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure new communities are designed to reduce the need for car travel/have provision for walking, cycling and public transport. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the need to travel. 	

Chapter 7: Environmental excellence and climate change

7.1 Analysis of the issues

- According to the IPSOS MORI report ‘Tipping Point or Turning Point’ this year: 88% (of those polled) believe, irrespective of the cause, that the climate is changing, 46% think climate change is mainly caused by humans; 9% think it is mainly caused by natural processes; 41% think it is a mixture of both. 44% are very concerned about climate change; 38% fairly concerned; and 15% unconcerned. 70% believe that if there is no change, the world will soon experience a major environmental crisis. 63% want more information in order to form a clear opinion. 45% see climate change as the most serious threat to the future wellbeing of the world; but only 19% see it as the most important issue facing Britain.

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- The data demonstrates that most CO₂ emissions are produced by industry and commercial activities. The Tonbridge and Malling and Swale local areas have the highest CO₂ emissions in Kent, with Maidstone following in third place. However, in relation to population size (per capita) it is evident that Maidstone is performing better. Thanet has the lowest rate of CO₂ emissions per capita, with Canterbury and Sevenoaks in joint second place, and Maidstone following with 6.9 tonnes of CO₂ per capita within 2005.
- Air quality can have a large impact upon human health, but while *"air is cleaner than it has been ever since the industrial revolution, local traffic hot spots continue to be an increasing problem."*ⁱⁱ
- The 2000 floods that effected Maidstone led to disruption of major communication systems, and it is estimated by *Risk Management Solutions*, as supported by the *Association of British Insurers* that £35-40 million of damage was caused (across the south east of England).ⁱⁱⁱ
- The Pitt Review^{iv} of the July 2007 floods, which was published in June 2008, stated: 'The floods saw over 55, 000 homes in the United Kingdom flooded, 7,000 people were rescued from the flood waters, and 13 people died. Although Maidstone was not directly affected by these floods, the report should be considered for the purpose of deciding the priorities of the SCS.
- The 2007 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment of Maidstone Borough stated:^v Consideration of flooding to Maidstone is particularly important since the government has highlighted it as a new growth point which involves the plan to build 10080 homes between 2006 and 2026. The report produces a number of recommendations which should be considered in relation to the new proposals for building, and should aim to keep surface run-off to a minimum. It identifies that the South of the borough seems to be at greater risk from flooding by surface run-off than then other borough areas. This is due to weald clay forming the majority of the underlying geology, which means that infiltration rates are slow. In all areas, particularly those that have been built on and are now prone to flooding it has been highlighted that the maintenance of adequate drainage is essential. It is hoped that the development of new housing will provide the opportunity to increase effective drainage within the borough (For example in Marden and Staplehurst, where it has been suggested there are currently inadequate drainage systems provided).
- Because of the increase energy/fuel prices much greater numbers are likely to fall into fuel poverty ie the proportion paying more than 10% of household income to heat and light their homes.
- According to Stick up for Maidstone, parks and open spaces were the second most popular feature of Maidstone after shopping! 80 people stated that they thought the parks and gardens within Maidstone were a positive feature of the borough. Mote and Millennium Park were given most attention, and it was suggested they provide enjoyable places to relax and an opportunity for children to play.

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- Some important natural features in Maidstone Borough are; almost a third of yew and beech woodlands found in the county, river habitats, including the River Beult Site of Special Scientific Interest, the River Medway and the River Len, Low Weald meadows, including Marden Meadow Site of Special Scientific Interest, the distinctive Low Weald landscape, with its small fields, hedgerows and ponds, woodland and grassland habitats on the chalk, Gault clay and Greensand and important geological sites, including Aylesford Quarry and Aylesford Pit.

7.2 Detailed objectives

Detailed objective	National Indicator/LAA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce waste. 	<p>NI 191 Residual household waste per household DEFRA DSO</p> <p>NI 192 Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting Defra DSO</p> <p>NI 193 Percentage of municipal waste land filled Defra DSO</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare the borough's communities and businesses to adapt to climate change – particularly extreme weather incidents such as drought, heat-waves, flooding, and the requirement for adequate drainage to minimise surface run off . 	<p>NI 188 Planning to Adapt to Climate Change</p> <p>NI 189 Flood and coastal erosion risk management</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce carbon emissions from fossil fuels across transport, commerce/business and domestic use. 	<p>NI 185 CO₂ reduction from Local Authority operations PSA 27</p> <p>NI 186 Per capita CO₂ emissions in the LA area</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance bio-diversity and links between semi-natural habitats. 	<p>NI 197 Improved Local Biodiversity – proportion of Local Sites where positive conservation management has been or is being implemented</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the role of the natural environment in reducing the impact of climate change, 	<p>NI 188 Planning to Adapt to Climate Change</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the sustainable economic use of countryside 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve access to the natural environment to enhance quality of life/health and well-being. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the environmental quality of the built and rural environment. 	<p>NI 5 Overall/general satisfaction with local area CLG DSO</p>

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Detailed objective	National Indicator/LAA
	<p>NI 195 Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly posting)</p> <p>NI 196 Improved street and environmental cleanliness – fly tipping Defra DSO</p>

Chapter 8: Children, young people and families

8.1 Analysis of the issues:

- Though the borough has a higher proportion of school leavers achieving five or more A* - C grade GCSEs, there are considerable difference between the performance of particular schools within the borough.
- During 2008 Maidstone has had the third highest numbers of entrants into the youth justice system of any district in Kent, and experienced a significant increase in numbers between 2007 and 2008. However numbers remain significantly lower than Thanet, which has the highest numbers compared to other boroughs.
- Maidstone has the fourth highest rate of under 18s who are not in education, employment or training compared to the other Kent boroughs. Additionally, Park Wood, Shepway North, Shepway South, Fant and High Street wards had more than ten percent of their 16 – 18 year olds not in education, employment or training, during April 2008.
- Within the borough there are a number of particular areas which have very high rates of teenage conceptions.
- In Maidstone the number of children participating in school based exercise is significantly lower than the England average.⁶

8.2 Detailed objectives:

Detailed objective	National Indicator/LAA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrow the gap between the best and worst performing schools at GCSE level by addressing the difference in performance that seems to be linked to child poverty. 	<p>NI 78 <i>Achievement of 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths (Floor)</i></p> <p>NI 78 Reduction in number of schools where fewer than 30% of pupils achieve 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE and equivalent including GCSEs in English and Maths PSA 10</p>

⁶ Department of Health, *Maidstone Health Profile*, 2008

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Detailed objective	National Indicator/LAA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address attendance issues and exclusions. 	NI 86 Secondary schools judged as having good or outstanding standards of behaviour DCSF DSO NI 87 Secondary school persistent absence rate NI 114 Rate of permanent exclusions from school DCSF DSO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce teenage conceptions with a particular focus on areas with the highest rates. 	NI 112 Under 18 conception rate PSA 14
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Act earlier to encourage children to be healthier by being happier as a means of addressing children’s and adolescent mental health. 	NI 116 Proportion of children in poverty PSA 9 NI 51 Effectiveness of child and adolescent mental health (CAMHs) services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dramatically increase the provision of youth activities, services and facilities as a means of addressing the high levels of young people known to the youth justice system and reduce risk taking behaviours. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the 2012 Olympics to encourage children to participate in regular sporting activities while also addressing obesity and increasing the understanding of healthier diets. 	NI 55 Obesity in primary school age children in Reception PSA 12 NI 56 Obesity in primary school age children in Year 6 DCSF DSO

Part C: Action Plan

For each objective, the action plan will identify:

- ***action/s***
- ***performance measures***
- ***performance indicators***
- ***targets***

These are to be developed jointly with partners. They will be reported/monitored by the LSP on a half-year basis.

Key to national indicator colour coding:

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- Text in red: high priority in Local Action Plan
- Text in amber: medium priority in LAP
- Text in green: lower priority in LAP
- Text in black: not included in LAA but proposed for monitoring of SCS

ⁱⁱ The Environment Agency, *State of the Environment Report 2007*, published 8th January 2008, viewed 15th July 2008, http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/commondata/acrobat/soe07final_1941006.pdf, page 17.

ⁱⁱⁱ Risk Management Solutions Inc, viewed 15th July 2008, *UK Floods, October 13 – 14 2000, Examination of UK Flood Damage During Increased Rainfall in October 2000*, http://www.rms.com/Publications/UKFLOODS_OCT13-14.pdf.

^{iv} Available at <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/thepittreview.aspx>.

^v Now available at

[http://www.digitalmaidstone.co.uk/pdf/080714_MaidstoneBC_SFRA_FINAL_May08%20\(amended\).pdf](http://www.digitalmaidstone.co.uk/pdf/080714_MaidstoneBC_SFRA_FINAL_May08%20(amended).pdf)