

Tackling Worklessness & Poverty Report Card

POPULATION: Young People in Maidstone (under-25s)

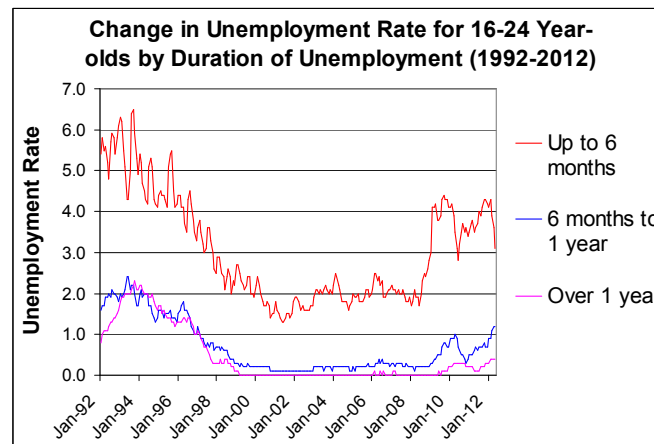
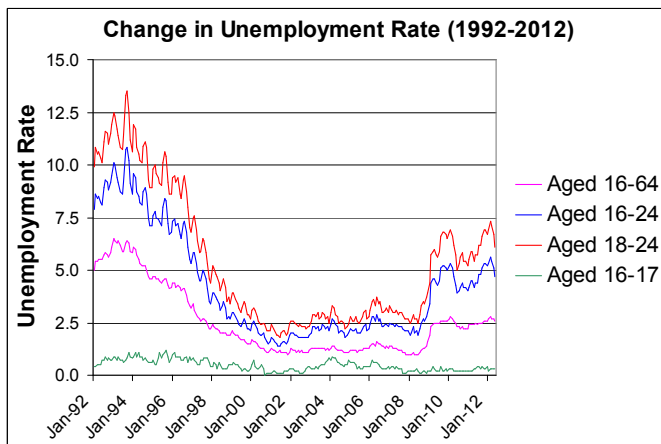
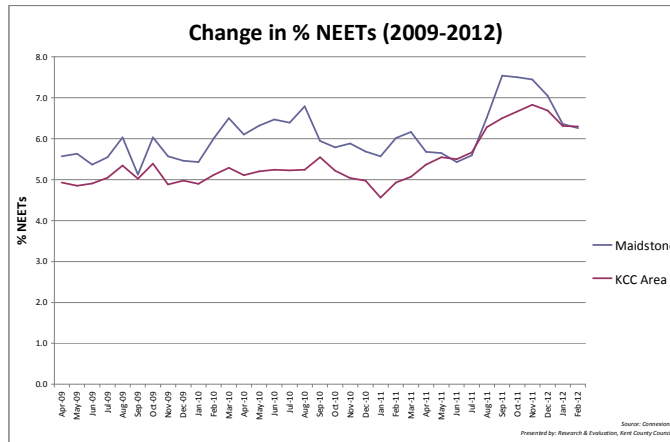
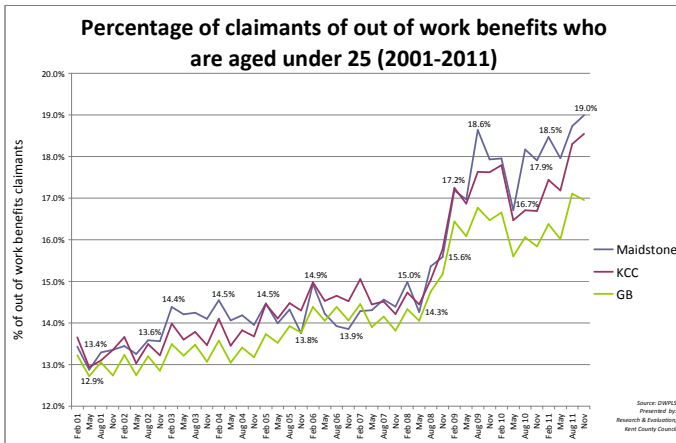
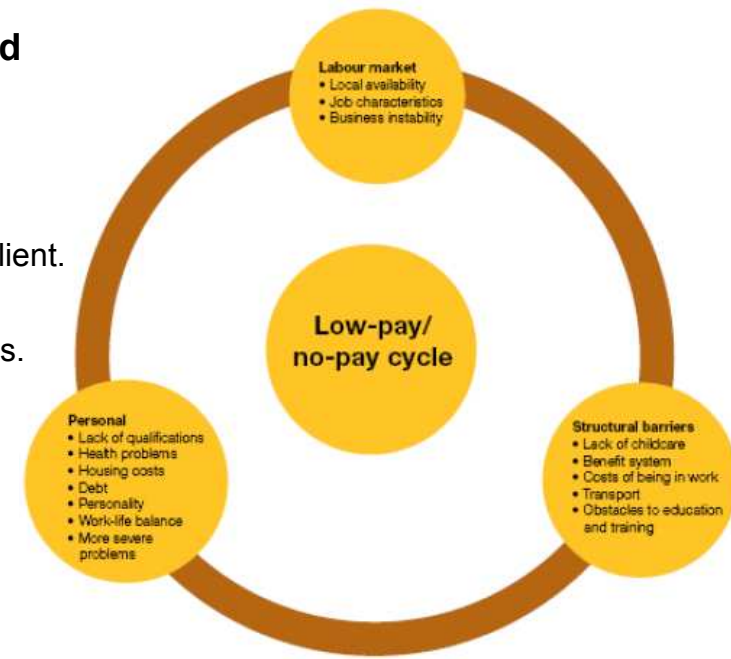
OUTCOME: People are self-sufficient

What does this look like? Young residents developing a range of applied work skills in a diverse job market, so that individuals, families and communities are healthy and resilient.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Being self-sufficient impacts on people's wellbeing, quality of life and the sustainability of communities. Family poverty is tied to family income, so worklessness and low wages are primary drivers behind poverty. Focusing on young people will contribute to breaking the cycle of worklessness and poverty.

KEY POPULATION INDICATORS



DATA DEVELOPMENT / RESEARCH

- Identify those young people who are unemployed or on low incomes and those at risk
- Map existing skill sets (the target population) and available development (education/training providers) to current/potential job opportunities (local employers) – to facilitate matching and identify/forecast gaps
- Analyse barriers to employment
- Comparison of income and housing costs over time

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THE STORY BEHIND THE CURVES

- While *unemployment* is broadly comparable in Maidstone, for young people it is getting worse over time and comparatively. 18-24s make up the biggest proportion of those unemployed in Maidstone.
- An *inter-generational* cycle of worklessness and poverty is contributing to this problem. This can be concentrated in some communities. For some, transportation into areas where there is work is a barrier.
- Some young people do not have the basic *skills* needed to take advantage of employment opportunities that do exist.
- The trends are also related to the *infrastructure for jobs*; efforts to turn the curve on unemployment need to be done hand in hand with developments in the job market.
- Determinants of *health* include socio-economic factors, so it is important to address these to be able to positively impact on health inequalities (both physical and mental). The economic downturn could affect this further, as this has been the case in previous recessions. Work cannot provide a sustainable route out of *poverty* if job security, low pay and lack of progression are not also addressed.

KEY PARTNERS

- Maidstone Borough Council
- Kent County Council
- Employers
- Chamber of Commerce
- Jobcentre Plus
- Connexions
- Schools & Colleges

WHAT WORKS?

- Enabling work-readiness – many different opportunities to learn applied work skills (e.g. youth volunteering, training, apprenticeships, work experience, family education programmes)
- Addressing barriers for those not working – including family education, mentoring, building confidence and removing policy-based perverse incentives

ACTION CRITERIA

- Working with employers
- Appropriate to young people's needs
- Range of skills and opportunities
- Deliverable by Maidstone Locality Board partners

STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

To break the cycle of worklessness and poverty through a programme that enables young people to gain applied skills that are valued by employers – ACTIONS & MILESTONES TO BE DEFINED

- Including:
1. Invite Jobcentre Plus to join the Maidstone Locality Board (as a voting member). **COMPLETED (August 2012)**
 2. Review and evaluate all services and projects for unemployed or NEET young people. Either Align (do once and properly) OR Stop (take action if no/poor outcomes).
 3. Develop a better understanding of employers' requirements and the local job market by working directly with Maidstone employers.
 4. Link with related workstreams (eg Community Budgets, Troubled Families, Progress!, Work Programme, Youth Contract, Youth Guarantees, Kent Jobs for Kent Young People, Access to Work, Welfare Reform, Universal Credits, Personal Budgets, Localisation of Council Tax Support etc).
 5. Commission the Business Partnership and Financial Inclusion Partnership to deliver/co-ordinate the programme (on a task & finish basis). Quarterly progress reports to be presented to the Maidstone Locality Board.