

**Scrutiny Review 2003**  
**Recommendations**

Cultural Change

- a) Maidstone Borough Council must corporately accept that climate change is already happening and will only escalate over the coming years. We must begin to recognise the threats and opportunities posed by climate change and start to address them. We must take the action that we have publicly pledged to strive towards and begin to develop new policies to prepare for the changes to our climate that are already beginning to be felt. We welcome the inclusion of reference to addressing climate change in our community strategy but action must now follow both by the Council alone and in conjunction with our partners if we are to be adequately prepared to cope with climate change.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems

- f) We strongly recommend that Maidstone Local Development Plan should seek to encourage the utilisation of sustainable drainage technology in all suitable new developments and infrastructure projects. In doing this Maidstone Borough Council staff should engage in training on the latest thinking and best practice in this field and co-operate closely with partner agencies such as Southern Water and the Environment Agency.

Green Corridors

- h) We recommend that the Maidstone Local Development Plan should afford a high priority to drafting a robust 'green corridor policy' crucially incorporating, not just hospitable natural green spaces within the urban area, but also through our rural and farmed landscape.

Planning

- n) We recommend that a closer working relationship is established between the Council's Planning Officers and the Environment Agency through the establishment of a flood appraisal group similar to those which have been so successful in Scotland.

Resilient Design

- s) We recommend that tighter building control measures be developed for new builds in order to defend them against the extremes of flood, heat and storm.
- t) We accept that development pressure is such that retreat from floodplains is unrealistic, however, all evidence received pointed to the need for greater resistance to the introduction of new build development into the floodplains of our rivers.

Water Saving

- x) We recommend that the amount of water used in Maidstone Council's own buildings is reduced and that this message is promoted to the wider population. We recommend that a publicity campaign be undertaken in conjunction with Mid Kent Water and the Environment Agency, to encourage residents to become more water efficient. We also recommend that links are established between Digital Maidstone

and the relevant parts of Mid Kent Water's website. We also recommend that Maidstone Borough Council learns from the ongoing work between Ashford Borough Council and the ODPM on incorporating water saving measures into new developments.

#### Carbon Neutrality

- hh) The Committee recommend that as well as reducing our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, Maidstone Borough Council should seek to achieve 'carbon neutral' status. Maidstone Borough Council should calculate its own business CO<sub>2</sub> production and plant self sustaining woodland rather than individual trees to offset our contribution to greenhouse gas levels.

#### Energy Saving

- ll) We recommend that Maidstone Borough Council should reduce the amount of energy it uses in its own buildings and should also use its role as a community leader to work with its partners to promote energy efficiency and encourage the use of sustainable energy sources to the wider community. We recommend that Planning officers should work to encourage the use of energy efficiency and renewable energy sources in domestic, commercial and industrial properties. We also recommend that the possibility of working with Kent County Council to ensure that any new street lights and electronic display signs store solar energy during the day should be explored