► Kent County Council continued...

also encourages the wider use of seasonal, local produce – which supports not just the local economy, but also benefits the environment through reducing food miles.

Kent's rural areas are also inherently entrepreneurial with high levels of self-employment. Broadband access and new ICT developments are creating new opportunities for rural businesses to locate and compete in rural areas. Kent's proximity to London and the advent of high speed rail services will further increase the opportunities for more home-based and rurally located business start-ups in Kent.

Urban Regeneration

Thames Gateway North Kent and Ashford are two of the government's major growth areas. In north Kent, where over 30,000 new homes and 50,000 new jobs will be created by 2020, a key focus will be on the new highspeed rail link at Ebbsfleet.

Dartford, Gravesend, Queenborough and Sittingbourne will see exciting new mixed-use developments, such as The Bridge at Dartford; and Fastrack a highly innovative and successful buslink. There will also be stunning new parklands and a network of connecting green routes.

The development at Ashford is planned as urban villages close to a revisited town centre and provides new traffic calming, a grand civic square and learning campus. Some 30,000 homes and 29,000 jobs will be created over the next 25 years with innovative transport projects, such as the Smartlink express transit system and a new town centre road scheme helping to bring about this transformation.

The major focus of development in Thames Gateway North Kent will be a combination of visionary urban villages and city-style living close to a new international passenger station at Ebbsfleet. This will connect the area to London in 17 minutes and Paris/Brussels in 90 minutes, providing an ideal business choice for companies wanting a strategic location, innovative design and high quality of life.

Picture courtesy of Dartford Council

The Bridge, residential development

Ideal business choice for companies wanting a strategic location