

More urban villages and town centre improvements are planned for Dartford, Gravesend, Swanscombe, Northfleet, Queenborough, Rushenden and Sittingbourne that will carefully integrate new and existing development and ensure genuine gain for local people. A connecting system of green corridors, parks and wildlife habitats is integral to all the new developments.

Ashford town centre with its historic buildings, tree-lined walkways, floral displays and street entertainment mix easily with busy street cafes and excellent modern shopping facilities that complement the town's international Eurostar station with domestic services planned as part of the growth.



Walking in Kent



The Oast Houses

Business and Enterprise

The council works with partners to support small and medium sized businesses and encourage the development of emerging business sectors – particularly creative and cultural industries, scientific and knowledge-based industries and the land-based economy. The county even has a dedicated film location officer to help promote Kent to the film and television industry. Links between business and education are being strengthened so that Kent schoolchildren gain valuable work experience that will help them develop new business skills.

To help ensure local people benefit from the construction contracts needed to build Kent's major developments, the CLIK website is being developed to link people to construction training and employment opportunities throughout Kent. (www.kent.gov.uk/CLIK)

Sustainable Development

Housing developers are encouraged to invest in schools, parks, transport and community facilities to make new housing schemes into successful neighbourhoods. KCC works hard to make sure there is adequate investment to support new development and relieve pressure on existing towns and villages.

A Developers' Guide and Kent Design Guide have been produced to aim to ensure high design standards across the county and make Kent a future showcase of design excellence, sustainable living and strong, supportive communities. Copies are available online at www.kent.gov.uk/regeneration.

To reduce the impact of climate change, energy efficiency is being encouraged as well as the use of renewable energy sources and the conservation of natural resources – such as water – while bio-fuels and new wind farms are also being developed.

Tourism and Visitors

Tourism contributes more than £1.8m to Kent's economy and this figure increases if local arts, cultural, sport and leisure activities are taken into account.

Kent County Council aims to improve and support the businesses involved in the tourism industry, and promote Kent as a great visitor destination – both for traditional activities and more unusual sporting, cultural and leisure interests which are becoming increasingly popular. An online booking service has been developed and can be found at www.visitkent.co.uk.

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