

••• Kent - a great place to be

Kent is a special county. It's a great place to live, work and visit – and an exciting place to do business.

With a population of 1.3million, Kent is the biggest English county, and it won't stop there. Over the next 20 years, the Government has decreed that Kent must have more than 100,000 new homes and jobs. This presents us with great opportunities and huge challenges.

One of these challenges is to protect our priceless natural environment while meeting the need to provide new homes. We are also very conscious of the need for appropriate infrastructure to accompany new homes. The necessary framework of roads, schools, libraries and community centres will be a key part of our planning to make these new homes attractive places to live.

A fine example of this is KCC's flagship housing and business park at Kings Hill, where well-designed, sustainable homes combine with attractive offices for companies and organisations.

The big growth areas are focused around the two international railway stations at Ebbsfleet in the Thames Gateway, and Ashford in east Kent.

The Channel Tunnel Rail Link and Eurostar provide good services for Kent residents and business commuters. In this way Kent is the one part of the UK linked to the financial and business capitals of London and northern Europe – which is great for our economy.

Another transport innovation in the Thames Gateway has been the

successful introduction of Fastrack, the first dedicated bus network with services running between the main towns every 10 minutes.

Shopping facilities in the county are first class and Bluewater – created in a north Kent quarry - is now internationally known as the largest shopping and leisure complex in Europe, with multiplex cinemas, restaurants and a host of specialist shops. The county's other main towns have also developed their own distinctive shopping districts such as Whitefriars in Canterbury and Royal Victoria Place in Tunbridge Wells.

If you're doing business, there are excellent conference facilities at Kent Showground, The Hop Farm, Maidstone's historic Oakwood House, and others in the grounds of Canterbury Cathedral, at Brands Hatch racing circuit and at Dover's cruise terminal. Kent also boasts many good golf courses, hotels and restaurants, often specialising in local produce.

Visitor and natural attractions don't come any better than Dover Castle and the iconic White Cliffs. The county's historic homes and castles include Hever Castle – the childhood home of Anne Boleyn and Leeds, 'the loveliest castle in the world', Churchill's home at Chartwell, as well as Lullingstone Roman Villa.

Kent is also a cultural feast, with literary connections to Jane Austen, Dickens and Marlowe; and a major



Roger Gough, Kent County Council.
Cabinet Member for Regeneration,
Supporting Independence

We're putting Kent first, which means putting the county's people first, in all that we do