

Agenda Item No:



Report To: Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Cabinet

Date of Meeting: Tuesday 1st July 2025
Thursday 10th July 2025

Report Title: Ashford Borough Council Annual Performance Report
2024/25

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Job Title: Governance and Data Protection Officer

Natalie Sloan
Performance and Insight Officer

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Heather Hayward
Portfolio Holder for:

Summary: The Annual Performance Report is an
Important pillar to the council's transparency agenda.

The Annual Performance Report:

- Summarises some of the achievements and milestones the council has realised over the year in the context of the Borough Plan 2024 – 2028.
- Summarise performance against the council's suite of key performance indicators (KPI's) for the year 2024 – 2025.

Key Decision: No

**Significantly
Affected Wards:** None

Recommendations: **The Cabinet is recommended to:-**

- I. Note the contents of the Annual Performance Report and approve its publication on the council's website.**

Policy Overview: The Annual Performance Report offers a means by which the council can embrace the transparency agenda and provides an opportunity to reflect on its performance and achievements from the last financial year.

Financial Implications:	None
Legal Implications:	None
Equalities Impact Assessment:	Not required as the Annual Performance Report is a record of past performance and does not propose any new actions.
Data Protection Impact Assessment:	Not required
Risk Assessment (Risk Appetite Statement):	Not required
Sustainability Implications:	None
Other Material Implications:	None
Exempt from Publication:	No
Background Papers:	Borough Plan 2024-28
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Report Title:

Introduction and Background

1. The Annual Performance Report (2024/25) is an important pillar for the council's transparency agenda:
 - Providing an opportunity to look at the council's achievements and the milestones reached, in the context of the Borough Plan, from the past financial year.
 - As well as summarising the council's performance against its suite of key performance measures.
2. The Annual Performance Report details the retrospective year covering the period up until 31st March 2025.
3. With this being the first Annual Performance Report reflecting the Borough Plan the opportunity has been taken to reorganise and recode the full KPI suite.
4. It is important to note that since the closure of the period and the date of this report's publication, many of the items covered, performance indicators measured, will have moved on and further detail about this progression will be covered in future quarterly reports where appropriate.

Current Position

5. The Borough Plan is the council's corporate plan. It describes in strategic terms the council's priorities for the period. It is from this plan, the council's policies and strategies, operational plans as well as teams and officer's objectives flow.
6. The vision of the Borough Plan: *To make Ashford a place where people, business and nature can collectively thrive*, is supported by three pillars, those of:
 7. Planet – *Reducing greenhouse gas emissions and creating places for nature will be at the heart of everything we do.*
 8. People – *Listening and serving the Ashford community is our philosophy; we will make best use of available resources to build an equitable and fair society.*
 9. Place – *Planning for the future of our community to make Ashford a place people are pleased to call home and love to visit.*

10. Highlights from the respective themes covering the year are detailed in the narrative report Appendix A, with the full annual Key Performance Indicator suite set out in Appendix B.
11. As part of our broader performance monitoring objectives and following a meeting with the Corporate Management Team, a performance framework is being developed with the focus on continuous improvement.
12. As well as an increased focus on service level or operational measures this developing framework, focusing on the collection of meaningful, reliable and actionable data, which is often already held within corporate systems, may result in alterations or additions to the current KPI suite.
13. Any impact on the KPI suite will be highlighted and explained in future performance periodic reports.

Conclusion

14. This is the first Annual Report for the Borough Plan 2024-28, which outlines the strategic vision and objectives guiding the council's work over the next four years.
15. The suite of Key Performance Indicators included at Appendix B in this report have been pulled from across services to give a view of the council's current performance reflected in the themes of the Borough Plan.
16. The Performance Indicators will be presented again in the Q1 Quarterly performance report where a further update will be provided on current performance and any notable changes.

Contact and Email

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Appendix A

Draft

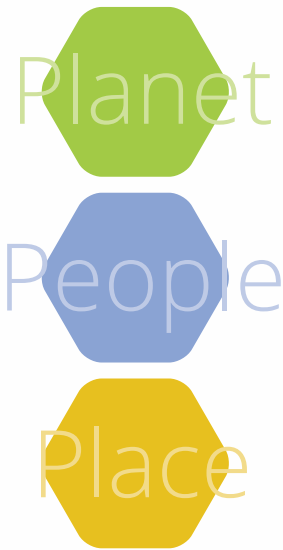
Ashford Borough Council

Annual Performance Report

2024-2025

Contents

Contents	02
Message from the Chief Executive	03
The Borough Today	04
Borough Plan 2024-28	06
Planet	08
People	12
Place	16
Underlying Principles	22



Message from the Chief Executive



Welcome to the first Annual Performance Report, reflecting our new Borough Plan 2024-28 – this provides an opportunity to look back on some of the achievements, milestones and challenges seen across our borough over the last year as we strive towards our vision, to make Ashford a place where people, business and nature can collectively thrive.

From heat networks and community orchards to increased electric vehicle provision and communal recycling, from enhanced homelessness support and new move-on accommodation to events like the Carnival of the Baubles and food and drink festivals, from continued support to the Ashford cinema, to the supersonic Ashford Express, there have been numerous positive activities and initiatives taken place during this period.

The year has also seen some significant changes as we have relocated the delivery of our services to International House, embraced a new waste and recycling contract, partnered with Canterbury City Council to create Stour Environmental Credits Ltd – helping to unlock housing developments and are beginning to see the efficiency gains from a number of system changes and improvements.

There continues to be changes on the horizon as we work with our neighbouring councils on the government’s vision for simpler local government structures. With the aim of improving outcomes for residents, improved local accountability and savings which can then be reinvested into public services.

The local Planning Authority are working on a new Local Plan, there is a lot for our planners to deal with, with proposed changes to housing trajectories and national planning framework changes. We have already held a series of events explaining what the Local Plan is, but please do keep a look out on our webpages for the opening of formal consultation stages.

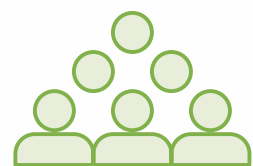
At the end of last year, we self-referred to the Housing regulator and following subsequent engagement were awarded a disappointing C3 consumer grading. The actions on the improvement plan have now largely been completed, with improvements to the compliance and repairs teams, 80% completion of a stock condition survey and enhancements to tenant engagement.

I hope you enjoy reading this report and I look forward to sharing with you future updates about these projects and many other developments from our Borough Plan as they unfold over the coming years.

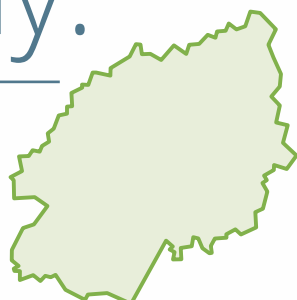
Tracy Kerby



The borough today:



Population
132,740
(Census 2021)



Area
224 square miles
(largest borough in Kent)



Households
53,576
(Census 2021)



Ethnicity
12% population black and ethnic minority
(Census 2021)



Average House Prices
£346,000 increase of 1.7%
(March 2025 - Housing prices in Ashford ONS)



Average Annual Salary
£32,493
(Annual Pay - Gross, Full Time
(Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, ONS)



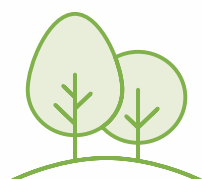
Crime
10,261
All Ashford Borough crime for the year
Fall of 6.8% on the year



Average Private Rents
£1188 annual increase of 8.7%
(April 2025 - Housing prices in Ashford ONS)



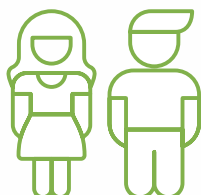
Visitors each year
4.1 million day visits
269,000 staying trips
(Visit Kent - Economic Impact of Tourism 2023 results)



National Landscapes
(formerly AONB)
2 areas
High Weald and Kent Downs



Number of businesses
6,490 - VAT and/or PAYE registered
90.9% are micro business (0-9 employees)
(KCC - UK Business Counts 2024)



Life Expectancy at Birth
Male - 80.0 | Female - 83.3
(Local Authority Health Profiles -
Fingertips Public Health Data)



Unemployment rate
3.2% (March 25)
(Economy and employment data - Kent County Council)



Universal credit claimants
16.0% - December 2024
(KCC Universal Credit Claimants, February 2025)



14% of homes
are rented from the council or a housing association
(Census 2021)



17.9% of homes
are rented from a private sector landlord
(Census 2021)

Borough Plan 2024-2028

The Borough Plan 2024-28 that this Annual Performance report is based upon sets out the council priorities over a four-year period, as we face the dual challenges of climate and economy and strive towards our vision: To make Ashford a place where people, business and nature can collectively thrive.



Three pillars support this vision:

- Planet** - Reducing greenhouse gas emissions and creating places for nature will be at the heart of everything we do.
- People** - Listening and serving the Ashford community is our philosophy; we will make best use of available resources to build an equitable and fair society.
- Place** - Planning for the future of our community to make Ashford a place people are pleased to call home and love to visit.

This Annual Report highlights the steps made towards this vision during the last year.



Planet



Heat Networks - the opportunities in the borough

Heat Networks are an established technology increasingly being promoted as the most efficient low carbon alternative replacement for gas networks, particularly in higher density areas where individual heat pumps are not practical or desirable.

Ashford Borough Council was successfully awarded funding in 2022 to explore both the technical and commercial feasibility for a heat network in the town, as a core contributor to our commitment to achieving net zero in the borough by 2050.

In June, Cabinet members received an update on progress to date and discussed ambitions and next steps as part of a wider energy strategy for Ashford.



A partnership with Cenergist aims to help tenants save money, water and help protect the local environment

Devices will be installed free of charge in our 5,000+ social houses allowing our tenants and leaseholders to help save water and money – and enable around 750 new council homes to be built in the area.

The patented Control Flow devices help save water by regulating the water flow and stabilising water pressure, resulting in water being heated more efficiently, leading to reduced water and energy bills. The initiative provides long-term reductions in water wastage from council-owned homes, as well as improving the performance of existing gas boilers.

The initiative will provide the nutrient neutrality solution that will enable the building of 750 new homes by offsetting future nutrient emissions.



08



09



A new waste and recycling service

The new waste and recycling contract began in March 2024 and saw the introduction of new collection vehicles. These vehicles, along with route optimisation, will significantly reduce the environmental impact of the service.

The core basis of the service did not change, with a weekly collection of food and alternate weekly collection of dry recycling and residual waste, along with an optional fortnightly collection of garden waste. This collection schedule has helped make Ashford one of the best recycling local authorities around.

Going forward, the authority will be looking at introducing food waste recycling to all properties including communal properties, where it is reasonable to do so. We have an aim to introduce or improve the level of dry recycling within these communal properties in the borough.

These improvements should result in an increase to the recycling rate nearer to 55% in the following year.

[An update on the performance and communication of the new waste contract with Suez](#) was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in November.



Two Kent councils join forces to launch innovative plan to help unlock housing developments from 'Stodmarsh ban'

Ashford Borough Council and Canterbury City Council have established a Joint Venture company to satisfy nutrient neutrality rules in the River Stour catchment area, enabling thousands of much-needed new homes to be built.

A report setting out how the neighbouring authorities plan to unlock housebuilding in the two districts was presented to Ashford Borough Council's Cabinet during the reportable period (Thurs 26 Sept), with members approving recommendations that have led to the Joint Venture Company being created.

Stour Environmental Credits Ltd will source the mitigation that is required to get the stalled housing market moving in the River Stour catchment area of both authorities. It will enable the buying and selling of mitigation credits to developers, enabling them to demonstrate that their housing schemes are nutrient neutral and can proceed.

Ashford's Cabinet heard that the councils would set up Stour Environmental Credits using some of the £9.8m of the Local Nutrient Mitigation Funding awarded to the catchment by Government.

The new company will bid for approximately £4m funding from this allocation, with £450,000 to cover the first year's running costs and the balance to buy enough mitigation to unlock around 2,000 homes in Ashford and Canterbury.



Ashford Borough Council completes its Electric Vehicle Charge Points installation project

Following a successful installation of Electric Vehicle Charge Points (EVCPs) at Vicarage Lane car park, Ashford Borough Council (ABC) is delighted to announce that it has completed its initial phase of implementing EVCPs across the borough.

The Vicarage Lane car park installation now means that there are 29 EVCPs in ABC car parks in Ashford and Tenterden, with 53 connections.

Ashford Borough Council expanding communal property recycling

Ashford Borough Council is making it easier than ever for residents to recycle with the introduction of recycling (dry recycling) and food waste bins in all communal properties across the borough.

As part of an extensive bin store review in communal properties and in line with the UK Government's Simpler Recycling plans, over 5,000 properties will gain access to these new facilities.

This roll out, already underway, will be completed over the summer and will ensure the large majority of properties in the borough will now have access to recycling services.



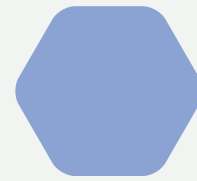
Community Orchards planted across the Ashford borough

A £50,000 grant from the Coronation Living Heritage Fund (CLHF) has allowed hundreds of fruit trees to be planted across the borough to create or expand community orchards.

This unique tree planting initiative was created to mark the Coronation of HM King Charles III with parish and community councils invited to apply for fruit trees. Ashford Borough Council also created and enhanced new and existing orchards on areas of its own open spaces.

A total of 545 trees, which included apples, pears, cherries and plums from a local, family-run nursery, have been planted under the scheme.

Planting took place in January and February and couldn't have been done without the help of a number of fantastic volunteers from local groups such as Willesborough WI, the Amber Foundation, children from Ashford Oaks Primary School and lots of local residents who came along to take part.



New Disabled Facility Grants policy helps people to stay in their own homes

The council has reviewed its approach to the help and support provided to local residents who are in need of aids, equipment and adaptations in their own home in order to help them remain independent, safe and cared for.

A report to Cabinet in June reminded councillors that Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) are managed through the council's Private Sector Housing team. The grants relate to privately owned and rented housing and not to the council's own housing stock, which is managed via the Housing Revenue Account.

The council funds the DFGs through the Better Care Fund (external funding through Kent County Council) and General Fund capital receipts. We allocate around £1m a year to the scheme.

The report explained that currently the council does not have a specific policy relating to Disabled Facilities Grants. The new policy sets out the way in which we provide both mandatory and discretionary grants for private sector adaptations, in accordance with current legislation and guidance.



Award-winning Eat Well Spend Less

The incredibly successful Eat Well Spend Less roadshows received recognition at the Healthwatch Awards in the period. The roadshows were part of a wider 'Winter Well Events' programme which received an award for excellence in collaboration.

The roadshows started back in 2022 and bring together a range of partner organisations including frontline NHS staff and Ashford Borough Council officers, outreach organisations and charities, in one easy-to-access place.

They provide practical advice, information and support in key areas such as: healthy eating on a budget, health checks and MOTs, benefits advice, support available from food banks and other voluntary sector provisions.

Co-ordinated by ABC, the number of partners from a wide range of support services and charities has increased dramatically since those first few events two years ago, with over 20 different organisations at the most recent event.



Work starts on new homes to replace properties damaged by Mill View explosion

Ashford Borough Council has started work on building four new homes to replace a row of houses that were badly damaged following an explosion at Mill View in Willesborough in 2021.

Contractor Jenner has begun construction of two, three-bedroom homes and two, two-bedroom homes constructed on the cleared site where 13, 15, 17 and 19 Mill View previously stood.

Three council-owned properties and one privately owned home were badly damaged in the explosion, which a Kent Fire & Rescue Service investigation later found was caused by a leak from a portable gas heater in one of the homes. Alternative accommodation was provided for the people affected.

The new homes will be built to a high standard, with a focus on energy efficiency, including solar panels on roofs. Measures have also been included that will help 'future-proof' the properties – straight stairs that would allow a stair-lift to be installed if required, and square shaped bathrooms so they could easily be converted into a wet room.

Work on building the four new homes in Mill View is expected to be completed by August 2025.



Ashford Borough Council buys 14 newly-built studio apartments in town centre to help tackle homelessness

Ashford Borough Council has acquired the freehold interests of 13-14 Elwick Road. The building consists of 14 newly-built studio apartments and the long leasehold interest of the ground floor commercial space.

The council acquired the adjoining property – Trafalgar House at the bottom of Bank Street – in May 2023 and this latest deal will enable the authority to use both buildings to bring forward much needed cost-effective temporary accommodation. 13-14 Elwick Road shares common parts with Trafalgar House.

The ability to place 33 individuals / households in Trafalgar House, in addition to the 14 apartments at 13-14 Elwick Road plus Christchurch House (eight units), Christchurch Lodge (eight units) and, from September 2024 Fortis House at Henwood (23 units), will help significantly lower the spend on costly bed and breakfast accommodation to the General Fund.



Stepping up support for rough sleepers in Ashford

Ashford Borough Council opened an Outreach Centre in January as part of renewed steps to support rough sleepers during the winter.

Together with partners, the council is establishing the facility at the Beacon Centre in Bank Street, Ashford to complement the work of its outreach service. The council's Single Homeless Team will operate from there three days a week (Mon/Wed/Frid), coinciding with the church's lunch service on Mondays and Fridays, where rough sleepers gather for food, warmth and social support.

The Beacon Centre will offer a warm, welcoming space from 8:30am to 9:30am, providing a breakfast and drop-in service for rough sleepers. During this time, officers will assess individuals' needs, develop personalised support plans, and facilitate appointments from 10am to 1pm.

Warm Spaces in Ashford

Four of Ashford Borough Council's Dahlia independent living schemes were designated as Warm Spaces last winter to provide a welcoming and comfortable environment for local people to meet and socialise.

A free hot drink and biscuits, a range of activities, support and advice, accessible entrance to the buildings with disabled toilets, parking and free Wi-Fi were all provided by the council. This is the third year that ABC has participated in the national Warm Spaces campaign.

For details of the national Warm Welcome Spaces campaign visit www.warmwelcome.uk



Innovative Fortis House move-on scheme launched in Ashford

The prospects for individuals and families facing homelessness in Ashford have improved hugely following the completion of an ambitious scheme by Ashford Borough Council to deliver 23 high quality move-on accommodation apartments on an under-used car park near the town centre.

The council has worked with ZED PODS Ltd, an award-winning British company, to design and build high-quality, extremely energy efficient modular homes for the site. The firm built the modules at its Peterborough factory before delivering them by road to Kent, where a giant crane lifted each of the 12 tonne units into position on top of a steel framework.



Work due to start on Oakleigh House in Ashford to create 59 high-quality homes for older people and adults with learning disabilities

Construction work will start shortly on creating 59 high-quality homes for older people and adults with learning disabilities on the site of a former sheltered housing scheme in South Ashford.

The scheme in Watercress Lane is estimated to cost £17m and is part of Ashford Borough Council's commitment to preparing for the needs of an ageing population by building and remodelling accommodation for older people to live more independently in homes that are the right size for their needs.

The old Oakleigh House was demolished in 2023 and the site was cleared ready for work to start on building a new scheme containing 59 homes, along the lines of the successful Dahlia independent living developments at nearby Farrow Court, East Stour Court, Berry Place and Danemore in Tenterden.

The independent accommodation for older people at Oakleigh House will comprise 54 flats with a communal lounge area, a covered terrace with views into the courtyard, a hair and therapy suite, a meeting room, mobility scooter parking, and an office.

The scheme will be built to HAPPI standards, combating isolation in older people and enabling them to meet, chat and form their own community.

The accommodation for adults with learning disabilities consists of five apartments. The developments will be arranged around two open courtyards with the main entrances located near to the junction of Watercress Lane, Cross Stile and on Beaver Lane.

Place



Our Local Plan Explained

Ashford Borough Council is preparing a new Local Plan for the borough and during the period, invited local communities to get involved in the process.

The council held a series of events throughout the summer to provide residents with the opportunity to find out more about how the new Ashford Local Plan will be prepared, what it will cover, what stage are we at, and when we will go out to formal public consultation.

Attendees were able to share their aspirations for the borough, as well as frustrations, on matters such as the environment, future needs for local

housing, jobs, green spaces, and both existing and new infrastructure as well as a whole range of other topics that fall within the remit of planning.

A Local Plan provides the opportunity to shape the places that we live, work and socialise.

It addresses the needs for housing and employment, and provides a series of planning policies covering many other topics such as community facilities and infrastructure, the natural and historic environment, adapting to climate change and achieving well designed places.



Showcasing the best of Ashford – proposals to improve town centre market offer

Proposal for the expansion of the monthly Makers Market and creation of new permanent street trading pitches within Ashford Town Centre are on the way.

During the reportable period (Thursday 27 September) Ashford Borough Council's Cabinet gave the green light to recommendations from a cross-party working group which was created to improve the market offer in Ashford Town Centre and find a sustainable, community-led approach to its implementation

Last year, Cabinet approved setting up this group to investigate opportunities for market activity in the town centre, alongside delivering the aims in the existing Town Centre Reset Strategy*, in response to a Motion put forward to Council to create a "Best in Kent" market.



Ashford Food & Drink Festival

The annual Ashford Food & Drink Festival was a huge success, with the month-long event celebrating the very best food and drink the borough has to offer.

Throughout July, the town centre served up a menu full of wonderful food and drink activities, alongside some tempting offers. From wine tasting, teddy bear picnics, markets, weekend festivals, to pizza making and competitions.

Highlights included:

Ashfood! at Elwick Place – a family friendly event featuring food stalls and entertainment, including live music from Whiskey & Wine, cocktails from World Margarita 2024 finalist Lexi Palmer Brown from Hide Bar and Oyster Buoys with seafood delicacies.

A Tasting Evening with The Wine Garden of England and Boys Hall at Revelations in St Mary's Church.

The Award Winning Comedian That Cooks – George Egg! at Coachworks and much more.



Listed building work progressing at Newtown Works

Work to restore the listed buildings in Newtown is progressing well and remains on course for completion by the summer.

This includes brickwork cleaning for the Locomotive Shed and Engine Shed and works to restore the Clock Tower, Paint Store and Acetylene Store, which is set to get underway soon.

The work is on schedule for completion in June and these works are essential in ensuring the significant heritage assets on the site are restored and brought back into active use.

One of these heritage assets of particular local interest is the clock tower, with its Thwaites and Reed manufactured clock inside.



Ashford Borough Council to continue supporting cultural events and festivals

The updated Ashford Festival and Events Framework 2025-2028 was agreed by Cabinet on Thursday 12 December and was approved by Full Council. The framework will be used as the direction for the council's continued support and delivery for festivals and events in Ashford Town Centre and across the borough.

The council has been testing and piloting a range of festivals and activity over the past three years following the adoption of the original framework in 2021 (Festival and Events Framework 2021-2024).

Many successes have been achieved from the first framework and the new one reflects these as well as including new opportunities to help ensure the borough continues to have a broad, diverse and attractive programme of events.

The framework helps stimulate a vibrant town centre events programme for residents, visitors and businesses through large participative carnivals, stunning murals, family art trails, grassroots music gigs and food festivals.

Council improving play facilities and open spaces across the borough

Rectory Way, Kennington, a small public open space will receive £77,000 worth of upgrades from Section 106 funding to revitalise the play area. The new design has been guided by the natural landscape, adopting a fresh approach to enhance the space.

The play area has been reimagined to create a more inviting environment, improving play facilities for young children while retaining elements of the existing equipment.

These improvements ensure clear sightlines throughout the space, with pathways no longer dividing the area. The addition of new benches, along with the integration of the natural landscape, aims to transform Rectory Way into a rejuvenated and vibrant community space.

Using a maintenance budget, the council will also be undertaking a further £100,000, worth of repairs across three other play areas: Westhawk Farm Play Park, Kingsnorth, School Road Play Area, Hothfield and Henley Meadow, Tenterden. These repairs aim to maintain high-quality play facilities in the area.

Mr Doodle goes to town...

Ashford's internationally-renowned artist Mr Doodle has created what is believed to be one of the world's longest artworks – and his latest eye-catching creation is entertaining pedestrians and motorists alike near Ashford town centre.

The head-turning mural or doodle is a remarkable 203m long and was painted in just one day on Friday 6 December, with Mr Doodle defying challenging weather conditions!

The site, opposite the railway station and the Hampton by Hilton hotel, has been earmarked for the borough's tallest building, the Infinity residential apartments.

Ashford residents enjoyed festive fun at Carnival of the Baubles despite storm

Storm Bert didn't stop the festive cheer in Ashford Town Centre on Saturday 23 November. Despite the parade part of Carnival of the Baubles having to be cancelled, the community still came out in their droves to support the event and the day was fun filled from start to finish.

Over 1,500 people visited the Bauble Illumination Station, which was set up in County Square. The lights were dimmed with all the lanterns on display and lit up and DJs played music to create a Carnival of the Baubles festive cave.

Created by local businesses, schools and community groups this year's lanterns were based on this year's theme – The Place That Makes Us – with hearts of the community, a steam locomotive 'Stour Express', a stag and lots more.

Ashford's month-long live music event, Create draws record numbers

Create Music Village's month of live music in Ashford drew to a close for 2024 after attracting record numbers of local people to its events and workshops.

Over 1,800 music-lovers attended Create's gigs and creative sessions throughout October at venues around the town including Coachworks, Low Key Taproom, Revelation and The Ashford Cinema.

Highlights included a sell-out return performance from Riskee and the Ridicule, a vibrant family friendly day with Just Vibez at Coachworks, Barrioke and Ashford's Mayor taking to the dance floor at Deptford Northern Soul Club at Revelation plus the chance to see some incredible local and emerging talent, free of charge with Create Introducing at Low Key Taproom.

The 2024 programme not only featured a more diverse array of performers, but also succeeded in attracting a wider cross section of people from the local community, with a significantly increased number of children and young people accessing this year's events.



All aboard, The Supersonic Ashford Express has arrived!

Younger visitors to Ashford Town Centre are now able to get on board a new dedicated play space, as The Supersonic Ashford Express has arrived in Ashford Town Centre

The plans for a new train themed play area were unveiled by Ashford Borough Council late last year, but its arrival was delayed slightly. The good news is, it has arrived in time for Spring and the Easter half term.

The installation of play equipment in the raised area in front of the bandstand creates a fun, attractive space for young children and families to enjoy in town. It is specifically designed to reflect Ashford's unique heritage, incorporating elements related to the town's railway history, like locomotives, carriages, and platforms.

The type and style of the play equipment has been chosen with sustainability in mind as well as considering things like maintenance, damage and anti-social behaviour in the design process. It has also been designed with accessibility and access for children of all abilities.

It will cost around £150,000, which covers manufacturing, installation, and ongoing maintenance over a long period. It is funded by the national UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and developer contributions (Section 106) from the Designer Outlet and The Range developments (so this is not funded by local taxpayer money, it is funding allocated for spending on town centre improvements).



Park Mall Shopping Centre to play its part in Town Centre transformation

Long-held plans to transform Park Mall Shopping Centre moved a step closer after Ashford Borough Council's Cabinet and Full Council approved plans to demolish the shopping centre, replace it with an interim surface level car park and explore ideas for what the area could be transformed to in the future.

Despite the council's best efforts to revive its fortunes, the Park Mall shopping complex has been in a state of spiralling decline for several years and is operating at a significant loss.

Therefore, this move would reduce the council's operating losses on the site and pave the way forward for the onward redevelopment and regeneration of Park Mall.

This has been a long-held ambition for the council and remains a key priority, as set out in our current corporate plan - Our Plan for the Borough (2024-2028).

By securing the freehold, the council now has full control over the onward redevelopment plans for the site, with these plans playing an important role in the wider regeneration of the town centre.

In December 2024, Cabinet and Full Council members agreed to recommendations to purchase the Park Mall freehold, which was completed at the end of January 2025.



The show must go on! Council extends The Ashford Cinema contract

Ashford's popular town centre cinema is going to continue under the same management team, which has seen The Ashford Cinema become a firm favourite - meaning film lovers, families and local community groups can continue enjoying the latest blockbuster hits and meeting friends for a drink or bite to eat.

The news comes after Ashford Borough Council agreed to extend the current contract, which has seen a change in fortunes to the entertainment hub, based at Elwick Place.

The Ashford Cinema has established itself as the local community cinema and event space. It is providing affordable and accessible entertainment offers to local residents, whilst also delivering a growing range of community events and activities.

Last year, Ashford Borough Council announced their intention to step in and takeover operating the venue, after Picturehouse announced they would be leaving.

The newly branded cinema opened its doors for the first time on Wednesday 24 April 2024. Run under the day-to-day management of industry experts The Big Picture (Cinema & Leisure Solutions), its offer and fortunes, have been transformed with a range of exciting offers and events to appeal to a more family friendly and local community audience.

This arrangement was initially for a year, but has now been extended for a further 18 months.



Freedom Leisure awarded new leisure centre contract

Freedom Leisure, one of the UK's leading not-for-profit leisure trusts that operates over 130 leisure and cultural facilities across England and Wales, has been chosen by Ashford Borough Council to manage Tenterden Leisure Centre until 2035.

The leisure trust has been operating the leisure centre on an interim basis on behalf of Ashford Borough Council and has now secured a new long-term contract from April 2025. Tenterden will be the fourth leisure facility in the borough managed by Freedom Leisure along with Ashford's Stour Centre, Julie Rose Stadium and Spearpoint Pavilion.

The new arrangement will see significant investment into the centre from both Ashford Borough Council and Freedom Leisure amounting to £2.6m. Planned improvements include the introduction of a new soft play area, new and improved water features in the pools, a new reception and catering area and a complete modernisation of the pool changing facilities.

Users of this very popular leisure centre will also benefit from new equipment in the gym and an upgraded group exercise studio.

Underlying Principles

Planning a bright future - council sets out its priorities for the borough

Ashford Borough Council has set out its focus for the next four years in a new corporate plan.

Titled 'Our Plan for the Borough – 2024-2028', it sets out the council's priorities as we face the dual challenges of climate and economy and strive to bring people and organisations together to achieve our vision:

To make Ashford a place where people, business and nature can collectively thrive.

Regulator of Social Housing gives Ashford Borough Council a C3 consumer grading

Following Ashford Borough Council self-referral and through subsequent engagement, the regulator concluded that the council does not have adequate systems and processes in place for the delivery and oversight of legal requirements relating to tenant health and safety and that held data about homes is of poor quality.

As a result of this, failings in how Ashford BC was meeting health and safety requirements were highlighted, including overdue electrical safety checks, fire remedial actions that have not been completed and smoke and carbon monoxide detection that has not been installed in some homes.

The actions on the Improvement Plan have largely now been completed. A new Compliance Team was put in place covering all the 'Big 6 Compliance' areas with an industry standard compliance system introduced to ensure all compliance records are in one place. The Repairs Team is also being fully resourced and also supported by better systems.

More than 80% of the stock has now been surveyed and a comprehensive programme of planned works is being put together. Across all housing areas, a tighter performance monitoring and management process has been put in place, focusing not only on the areas of weakness picked up last year, but also on areas of strength to ensure there is no slippage.

On the tenants' engagement side, residents are being encouraged to get more involved in designing and improving housing policies, processes and practices. Two key aspects of this is the setting up of a Tenants Scrutiny Panel and Tenants Voice to ensure council residents are at the centre of helping us drive improvement forward.



Ashford Port Health impact being felt at Sevington Border Control Post



The Border Control Post (BCP) at Sevington is now one of the busiest in the United Kingdom. Serving both the Port of Dover and Eurotunnel which combined transport 40% of the UK's imports of meat and dairy products into the UK.

Ashford Port Health is based at Sevington alongside other regulatory bodies such as DEFRA (Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs) and other government agencies.

The Port Health service is among the top three performers undertaking hundreds of checks on imported food on a daily basis alongside the City of London and Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority. Given the short journey times of the Short Straits crossings, Government data has estimated that these two routes account for 25% of the total UK perishable food imports.

The Port Health service is also a key contributor to National Policy Development, playing a prominent role in the Association of Port Health Authorities (APHA) and working with other regulatory bodies such as DEFRA.



Local
Government
Reorganisation

Ashford Borough Council moves from Civic Centre to International House

Ashford Borough Council have now moved from the Civic Centre building in Tannery Lane to our new home at International House.

Taking place in phases, our main back office and staff have moved across, including our customer service reception, which is now open at the new location, opposite Ashford International Station, from Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm.

For residents this means that our face-to-face customer services are now located at International House in Dover Place but otherwise there should be no other changes to the services we deliver.

Future plans for the Civic Suite, including the Council Chamber and Mayor's Parlour, as well as our Monitoring Centre, will be explored further. For now, council meetings will still take place in the same location in Tannery Lane.

We are working on options for the future of the Civic Centre site, so further updates for that part of the project, will be announced in due course.

Our new address is: **International House, Dover Place, Ashford, TN23 1HU.**

Update on Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution in Kent - March 2025

In February, the government rejected Kent and Medway's request to be part of the priority programme for devolution. This decision was a significant disappointment for many, as a Kent Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) would have enabled greater local decision-making, empowering communities and enhancing public service delivery.

However, the government has signalled that further devolution opportunities may arise, although no definitive timetable has been provided. Kent's Leaders will continue advocating for the alignment of devolution proposals with the implementation of new Unitary Councils, ensuring a coherent and strategic transition for residents.



Ashford Borough Council is committed to being open and transparent and we follow the code of recommended practice for local authorities on data transparency. As well as our performance reports we produce a number of monitoring reports which are made available on our webpages including:

- Annual Governance Statement
- Statement of accounts and Budget books
- Quarterly Financial monitoring report
- Medium term financial monitoring report
- Housing current delivery reports
- Planning updates and many more

Appendix B

Annual Performance Report 2024 – 2025
Borough Plan Themes and Key Performance Measures

Planet
Key Performance Measures - Reported Annually








Code & Short Name	Description	2023- 2024 Annual Figure	2024- 2025 Annual Figure	Latest Note								
KPI.Planet.001 Council's carbon footprint (tCO2e) Annual	Council's carbon footprint (tCO2e)	In May 2021 report from Laser Energy returned a carbon baseline of 3599 tCO2e for Y2019/20										
In July 2021 Ashford Borough Council declared its aim to become carbon neutral in its own estate and operations by 2030 and Borough wide by 2050. Actions and approach to achieve this was included within - Climate Change Action - A Systemic Approach.pdf (moderngov.co.uk) . which have now concluded. A self assessment estimates that 86% of actions outlined in the original Climate Action Plan were completed.												
A carbon baseline position was commissioned in May 2021 and a further assessment is planned to demonstrate direction of travel in our own operations. Following significant activity (decarbonisation projects at our leisure facilities and mover to IH) it is considered an appropriate time to re measure our position. With growth of internal expertise and knowledge of the sector, a new strategy and approach is being developed this year and will include revised targets and measures. It is recognised that carbon tonnages do not particularly resonate with the public and measures that deliver a more accessible narrative are being developed alongside for the next action plan.												
KPI.Planet.002 Council owned renewable energy provision (kWh) Annual	Total potential capacity of council owned renewable energy provision (kWh)	22-23 estimated average of 365,024.18 kwh per year.	Total installed solar capacity is 477KWs or 477080watts									
<table><tr><th>Ashford</th><th>Production</th><th>Co2/KG</th><th>Co2/Tonnes</th></tr><tr><td>Whole Estate Jan 2024 to Dec 2024</td><td>184201.01</td><td>42918.84</td><td>42.92</td></tr></table>					Ashford	Production	Co2/KG	Co2/Tonnes	Whole Estate Jan 2024 to Dec 2024	184201.01	42918.84	42.92
Ashford	Production	Co2/KG	Co2/Tonnes									
Whole Estate Jan 2024 to Dec 2024	184201.01	42918.84	42.92									

KPI.Planet.003 Number of EV charging points on council property Annual	Number of EV charging points on council property	Annual measure – Baseline figure from 21-22 14 EV charging points on council property. 22-23 37 Council managed charging points 23-24 39 Council managed charging points	29 EVCPs in ABC car parks in Ashford and Tenterden, with 53 connections.	These can be found in the following locations: Edinburgh Road car park (six) Civic Centre car park (nine) Vicarage Lane car park (three) Station Road (Tenterden) car park (two) Elwick Place car park (three) Victoria Road car park (two) Tenterden Leisure Centre car park (two) Station Road (Ashford) car park (two)
KPI.Planet.004 Air Quality	Number of Air Quality Management Areas	Annual measure 23-24 0 Air Quality Annual Status report produced each June	24-25 0 Air Quality Annual Status report produced each June	Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) are declared when there is an exceedance or likely exceedance of an air quality objective. After declaration, the authority should prepare an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) within 12 months setting out measures it intends to put in place in pursuit of compliance with the objectives. Ashford Borough Council currently does not have any declared AQMAs. For reference, a map of Ashford Borough Council's monitoring locations, as well as those undertaken by National Highways within Ashford, is available from 2024 Air Quality Annual Status Report
KPI.Planet.005 Area of land (km2) managed for nature conservation Annual	Area of land (km2) managed for nature conservation	1.2km2 of land managed for nature conservation	1.2km2 of land managed for nature conservation	Ashford Borough Council have set out how they will increase biodiversity within council-owned green spaces by introducing a variety of habitats and varying maintenance regimes. The creation of more meadows and enhanced Land Management Plans across the borough, will benefit wildlife, improve the wellbeing of our residents by connecting them with nature as well as continuing to maintain our open spaces in a way that promotes a sense of place and space.

KPI.Planet.007 Level of biodiversity in defined project areas Annual	Level of biodiversity in defined project areas	23-24 Increased 16,000m2 total a new total of 138,000m2	24-25 - 138,000m2	Area or defined biodiversity remained the same in the 24/25 year. Ashford Borough Council have set out how they will increase biodiversity within council-owned green spaces by introducing a variety of habitats and varying maintenance regimes.
KPI.Planet.008 Contamination rate in recycling loads Annual	Contamination rate in recycling loads	2023/24 = 19.2% contamination rate	2024/25 = 13.9% contamination rate	This is the percentage of waste delivered to the Materials Recovery Facility that was rejected as contamination
KPI.Planet.009 Reported incidences of fly-tipping Annual	Reported incidences of fly-tipping Annual	Total fly tips reported April 23 – March 24 was 1249.	Fly tipping reports for 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 - 1132	

Planet
Key Performance Measures - Reported Quarterly

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2024/25			Q2 2024/25			Q3 2024/25			Q4 2024/25			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.Planet.010 Number of organisations committed to active travel plans cycling/ walking	Number of organisations committed to travel plans cycling/ walking	Cycle Counters There is currently discussion with KCC Transport Planners in the potential funding of or re-allocation of some electronic counters that can be placed on some of the key town and borough cycleways (yet to be determined) for active travel. We want to better understand the current numbers of cyclists using the cycleways and trails for active travel (and leisure). We want to understand the current use and monitor usage levels and then review the utilisation after the implementation of a targeted marketing and promotions plan of these routes. This will support increased activity levels and may also show the economic, environmental, and social benefits of these routes and future planning			KCC are looking into funding x2 electronic counters so that we can measure a key active travel route in the town which will allow us to combine a marketing and promotions plan to measure success via increased utilisation and develop KPI's to measure impact.			Cycle counters are currently with KCC and they are proposing to provide x2 cycle counters to ABC to measure two key routes both urban and rural. Which will feed into a future KPI KCC and Active Travel England approved £25,000 funding for ABC to expand the current LCWIP. aecom were appointed as the successful consultants to deliver this project. As part of this project aecom and ABC Officers will formulate a list of key stakeholders from across community and local groups to officials, and involve and deliver a borough wide plan that reflects the growth in population and links to the new 'borough plan' for healthy communities.			KCC have provisioned x2 eco-counters and the data will be downloaded to the eco-vision platform - and provide a report to measure the utilisation on the two routes selected, there is also funding from Natural England to support this project. In terms of the expanded local cycling and walking infrastructure plans (LCWIP) the first stakeholder online session is being planned for key stakeholders in the first instance led by Aecom, with Survey HQ being used as an ABC platform to capture the feedback in the proposed routes for the town and wider borough. It is also intended that the Citizens panel is used and Ashford College to capture wider views, which will then link to an in-person event later in the year with more time spent to ensure that as much feedback is achieved.			

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2024/25			Q2 2024/25			Q3 2024/25			Q4 2024/25			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
		and decisions aligned with the LCWIP.						Each stakeholder group will be listed as part of the project with their views and involvement captured.			Cycle Circle have been funded to deliver; learn to ride sessions for up to 60 new cyclists; cycle refurbishment programmes based at local schools; cycle fix programmes to support local riders; local cycle rides for cyclists to explore Ashford routes.			
KPI.PLANET.011 Recycling Rate	% of borough waste recycled or composted	51%	50%		50%	50%		46%	50%		48% Total for the year	50%		Contract change Q1 2024/25 Defra's nationwide recycling league tables - Local authority collected waste: annual results tables (Historical) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Waste Services Contract: An update on the performance and communication of the new waste contract with Suez report was presented to O&S in November report available - Report Title:														
KPI.PLANET.012 Refuse Collection Success Rate	% of successful refuse collections per 100,000 refuse collections made.	Please see comment below for Q1 data.			99.92 %	99.96 %		99.7%	99.96 %		99.8%	99.96%		99.8% covering the 24/25 year.

Code & Short Description Name	Q1 2024/25			Q2 2024/25			Q3 2024/25			Q4 2024/25			Latest Note
	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	

Contract change Q1 2024/25

Count of Service		Column Labels		
Row Labels	Food	Recycling	Residual	Grand Total
Mar	287	270	190	747
Apr	961	524	828	2313
May	2085	1491	1316	4892
Jun	754	456	453	1663
Jul	263	249	208	720

Data slightly unclear for the Q1 period as missed bins were not reported as normal at the start of the contract change with missed/ uncollected streets rolled over to the subsequent days for collection rather than flagged as missed.

Figures from May onwards, however, are more reliable and show the increase in missed collections as a result of the contract change, new routes and equipment becoming established. These figures begin to fall as the period progresses and are continuing to be closely monitored as part of the broader contract management.

Waste data from UK local authorities is reported to WasteDataFlow with statistics available at the following links. [WasteDataFlow Waste and recycling statistics](#)

KPI.PLANET.013 Digital uptake - % of total council /% Increase transactions completed electronically.	Digital uptake - % of total council /% Increase transactions completed electronically.	88.25%	80%	✓	85.93 %	80%	✓	94%	80%	✓	87.63 %	80%	✓	2024-25 overall uptake: 89.37%
	Digital uptake - % of total council /% Increase transactions completed electronically.													

People
Key Performance measures - Reported Annually

Code & Short Name	Description	2023- 2024 Annual Figure	2024- 2025 Annual Figure	Latest Note
KPI.PEOPLE.001 Indices of multiple deprivation score Annual	Indices of multiple deprivation score	152 – Last available update 2019		
<p>Deprivation is a multi-dimensional problem and, to reflect this, the Indices of Deprivation are based on a basket of indicators organised across seven distinct types of deprivation or ‘domains’. These are: 1. Income Deprivation; 2. Employment Deprivation; 3. Education, Skills and Training Deprivation; 4. Health Deprivation and Disability; 5. Crime; 6. Barriers to Housing and Services; and 7. Living Environment Deprivation. The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) combines information from the seven domains to produce an overall relative measure of deprivation.</p> <p>The latest release is the English Indices of Deprivation 2019 (IoD2019) and is published by central government to help local authorities identify the most disadvantaged areas so that resources and funding can be allocated appropriately.</p>				
KPI.PEOPLE.002 Health profile indicators	Health profile indicators for smoking prevalence, healthy weight and physical activity	Smoking prevalence in adults (18+) current smokers - latest data 2022 – 13.6% Percentage of physically active adults – 2022/23 – 71.9% Overweight prevalence in adults (18+) – 70%	Smoking prevalence in adults (18+) current smokers - latest data 2023 – 13.3% Percentage of physically active adults – 20223/24 – 70.4% Overweight prevalence in adults (18+) – 64.3%	Most recently available information source and trend data available at: Local Authority Health Profiles - OHID (phe.org.uk)
KPI.PEOPLE.003 Annual footfall to key leisure sites	Annual footfall to key leisure sites: Stour Centre, Julie Rose, Tenterden Leisure Centre	496,940 This is the Annual Participation for all sites for the 23-24 contract period.	733,560 This is the Annual Participation for all sites for the 24-25 contract period	

Freedom Leisure Year-on-year growth for the 2024/2025 period has been achieved through a combination of strategic initiatives and operational excellence. Key drivers include the successful implementation of innovative marketing campaigns, which have significantly increased the Freedom brand visibility and customer engagement. Additionally, Freedom are enhancing the quality of customer service and operational standards at the sites in the Ashford Contract which has resulted in higher customer satisfaction and retention rates driving higher utilisation and participation.

Freedom have developed award-winning Healthy Community outreach programmes, such as Strength in Mind and the Zoggs free swimming initiative for children from underserved socioeconomic backgrounds, which have had a substantial impact on driving participation and memberships. All programmes and memberships growth have exceeded their own company targets monthly and annually and the Ashford contract is seen as a flagship in community delivery.

<p>KPI.PEOPLE.004</p> <p>Value of grants awarded via community grant fund. Annual</p>	<p>Value of grants awarded via community grant fund</p>	<p>Awarded: £304,399.54 Capital Grants: £46,855 Events Reset: £4,000 Ward Member Grants: £88,569.54 Community Services: £164,975</p>	<p>Awarded: £268,680 Capital Grants: £62,099 Community Event Grants: £10,000 Ward Member Grants: £96,081 Community Services: £100,500</p>	
<p>KPI.PEOPLE.005</p> <p>Trends in volunteering Annual</p>	<p>Trends in volunteering</p>	<p>The council's Community Connector contract with the Ashford Volunteer Centre helps to support a resilient and sustainable local voluntary and community sector in the Ashford Borough, which in turn enables its independence, diversity and accessibility.</p> <p>During this period 516 community groups were signposted to additional support and advice – this has included local support provided by Ashford Borough Council (in particular to services supporting the cost-of-living crisis) and to Kent County Council.</p> <p>19 individuals were supported to establish different community groups in the borough.</p> <p>67 community groups received additional support (e.g. funding, governance and business planning)</p>	<p>The council's Community Connector contract with the Ashford Volunteer Centre helps to support a resilient and sustainable local voluntary and community sector in the Ashford Borough, which in turn enables its independence, diversity and accessibility.</p> <p>During this period 720 community groups were signposted to additional support and advice – this has included local support provided by Ashford Borough Council (in particular to services supporting the cost-of-living crisis) and to Kent County Council.</p> <p>74 Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations received tailored support in funding applications, governance, and business planning.</p>	

		<p>or were signposted when more specialist support was required.</p> <p>Volunteers were connected to 293 VCSE organisations operating in the Ashford Borough. In addition, 27 commercial organisations were signposted to VCSE organisations that employ social volunteering in the borough.”</p>	<p>AVC promoted 211 free training opportunities on topics including volunteer management, governance, and fundraising.</p> <p>30 VCSE groups received direct DBS support, ensuring safer recruitment processes. 8 VCSE organisations were assisted in implementing sustainability initiatives.</p> <p>7 organisations were assisted in compliance and reporting, preventing potential funding loss.</p> <p>Volunteers were connected to 521 VCSE organisations operating in the Ashford Borough. Additionally, 29 individuals received dedicated guidance in launching new community projects.</p>	
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People
Key Performance measures - Reported Quarterly

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2024/25			Q2 2024/25			Q3 2024/25			Q4 2024/25			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PEOPLE.006 Council Affordable Housing - New Build	No. of additional new build affordable homes delivered by council housing	0			1			23			0 24 (2024/25)			
KPI.PEOPLE.007 Council Affordable Housing - On-Street Purchases	No. of additional on-street purchase affordable homes delivered by council housing	34			8			2			8 52 (2024/25)			
KPI.PEOPLE.008 Homelessness - New Triage Cases	No. of new triage cases	513			465 July (186) August (137) Sept (142)			428 October (137) November (157) December (134)			470 January (164) February (160) March (146)			

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2024/25			Q2 2024/25			Q3 2024/25			Q4 2024/25			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PEOPLE.009 Homelessness Preventions (still in accommodation)	No. of households where homelessness was prevented	42			45 July (20) August (12) Sept (13)			81 October (31) November (34) December (16)			90 January (32) February (24) March (34)			
Demand for the service remains consistently high, and to support this, an additional resource is being recruited. This role will help strengthen our ability to engage with households as soon as they present to the service, improving our chances of preventing homelessness and providing timely assistance to those in need.														
KPI.PEOPLE.010 Number of families in temporary accommodation six week on		2			4			5			2			
Data represents the number of families who have been in B&B accommodation for over 6 weeks at the end of each respective quarterly period														
The team have managed to keep the number of families in B&B over 6 weeks under the MHCLG target of 6. In order to achieve this, requires close monitoring and managing to create a chain lettings approach.														





Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2024/25			Q2 2024/25			Q3 2024/25			Q4 2024/25			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PEOPLE.011 Housing arrears	Housing arrears as a percentage of rent collectable	2.58%			2.73%			2.73%			1.62%			

Q4 figure covers up to 06-04-2025 showing the arrears at the end at Q4 - £513,126.77.

I now have an accurate end of year rent debit for the year which is now £31,630,319.56

The arrears percentage for end of year 2024/25 is now calculated at 1.62%.

The improvement is largely due to 2024/25 being a 53-week year. Rents were charged over 52 weeks and we gave tenants a rent-free week that many used to make extra payments and reduce arrears.

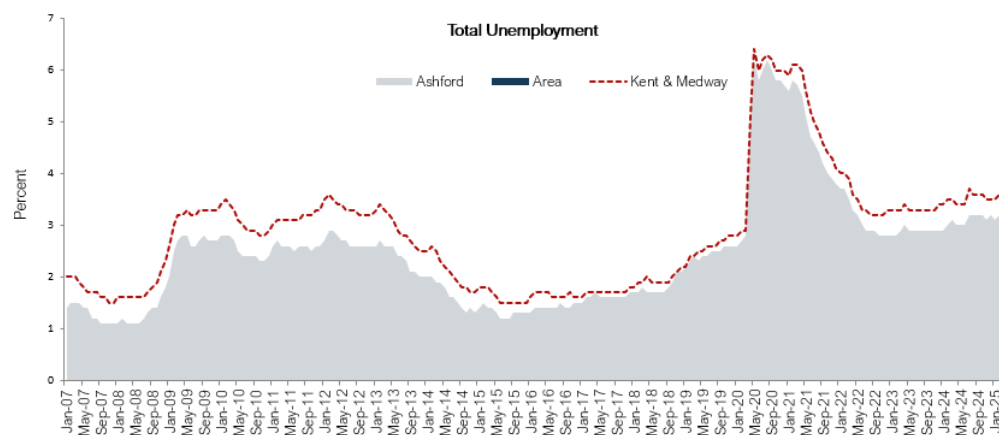
KPI.PEOPLE.012 Housing voids – average void time (excluding major voids)	Average void time	14.1	21		41	21		29	21		55	21		
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Non-performing contract now ended and a reconfigured voids process now in place with all the teams involved looking at areas requiring better efficiency. It is anticipated that the benefits of these changes will begin to be evidenced in increasingly better outturns in 2025

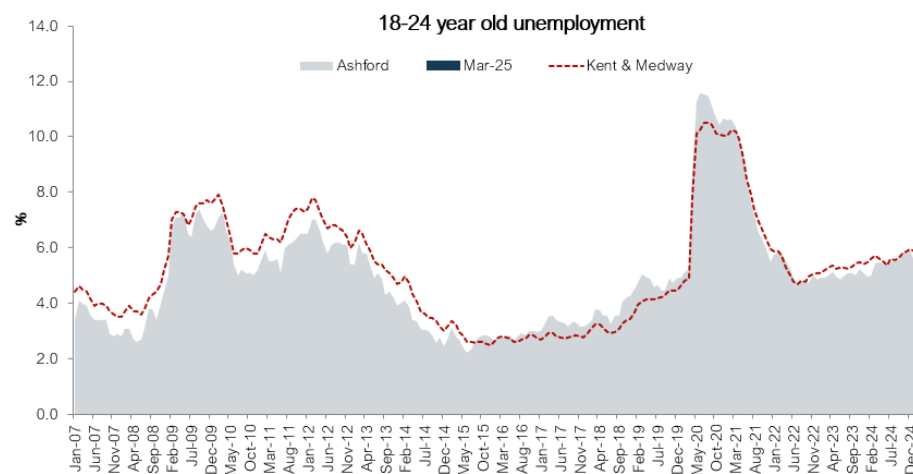
April 2025 figure 43

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2024/25			Q2 2024/25			Q3 2024/25			Q4 2024/25			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PEOPLE.013 Number of adaptations completed against number waiting (HRA)		33 / 72			9 / 59			62 / 91			50 / 99			<p>Number of adaptations completed against number waiting (HRA): 50 / 99</p> <p>Number completed 1st January 2025 – 31st March 2025 (50) against the number received 1st January 2025 – 31st March 2025 (99, which includes the 50 completed). This covers both minor and major adaptations.</p>
KPI.PEOPLE.014 Number of adaptations completed against number waiting (DFG)		No current waiting list			No current waiting list			40 Budgetary allocation utilised for the year with an expectation of a yearly overspend of circa £180K by the end of the financial year.			No current waiting list			All referrals are immediately submitted to our agents so they can be generated as an application. The client is contacted within 2-6 days, and our agents will attend to carry out the application process.
KPI.PEOPLE.015 Disabled Facilities Grants Completed	No. of disabled facilities grants administered by the council	36			21			27			10			

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2024/25			Q2 2024/25			Q3 2024/25			Q4 2024/25			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PEOPLE.016 Disabled Facilities Grant Spend	Actual spend per month for disabled facility grants	£329,992.81			£355,563.96			£229,872			£166,599.04			
KPI.PEOPLE.017 Unemployment	Unemployment figures taken monthly from Kent County Councils Economy and employment data.	3.1%			3.3%			3.3%			3.2%			March data set More information available within - Economy and employment data - Kent County Council



Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2024/25			Q2 2024/25			Q3 2024/25			Q4 2024/25			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PEOPLE.018 Unemployment 18-24yr olds	Unemployment 18-24yr olds taken monthly from the Kent County Council economy and employment data	5.2%			5.4%			5.7%			5.8%			March data set More information available within - Economy and employment data - Kent County Council



Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2024/25			Q2 2024/25			Q3 2024/25			Q4 2024/25			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PEOPLE.019	Support to 'vulnerable' groups through leisure centre activity	Latest information from August 2024						Latest Information from November 2024			Latest Information from February 2025			
		Healthy Communities						Healthy Communities			Healthy Communities			
		Key group highlights: Xyla Health & Wellbeing has been selected to deliver the NHS Diabetes Prevention Programme (NHS DPP) across our Ashford sites. NHS England, Public Health England and Diabetes UK have committed to improving efforts to prevent diabetes, It will be launched at the Stour.						Key group highlights: Xyla Health is in place and looking to host their first face-to-face sessions			Our partnership with Kent and Medway NHS Trust has allowed us to facilitate a number of workshops around mental health including an ADHD workshop in February.			
		Five schools identified that could benefit from the ZOGGS funding. This initiative, which provides free yearly swimming lessons and rotates year groups each term, will benefit approximately 250 students, offering them the opportunity to learn a crucial life skill.						NHS Health Checks now taking place at all ABC sites			Staff and members at Tenterden took place in the Move for Mind Challenge in January, a 31-day initiative to highlight the importance of mental well-being alongside physical health.			
		Tenterden: An outreach program for Tenterden Food Bank based at the site has been set up, and we are meeting with the Mildred Trust to support more community programs.						NHS Health Checks now taking place at all ABC sites			The Stour Centre proudly partnered with Kent Kindness to facilitate social 5 a-side football sessions for young refugees under the care of the local council			
		<u>Health</u> One You Kent visited both Tenterden, JRS and The Stour, delivering Health Checks and Blood Pressure Checks to members at both sites.						<u>Health</u> Open Weekend—The Freedom Leisure Les Mills Launch Day took place on the 28th September 2024. This event was a great success that offered a number of free exercise classes, free use of the gym and £1 main pool swimming. This event encouraged physical activity and active participation to members and non-members alike.			Reclaim the Night free 5k run took place at the Julie Rose Stadium, an event that provided a powerful space for women to come together to reclaim their right to feel safe at night.			
		<u>Young People</u> This summer saw the launch of the Stour Centre Summer Passport Challenge. The passport encourages children to stay active at the Stour Centre by collecting various activity stamps.						One You Kent visited Tenterden, JRS and The Stour, delivering Health Checks and Blood			Charlton Athletic Club delivered a free community suicide prevention event at the Stour as part of their ongoing initiative to support individuals who have been sectioned under the Mental Health Act or are engaged with crisis services.			
								One You Kent visited Tenterden, JRS and The Stour, delivering Health Checks and Blood			Unite Nightclub launched as part of our steps to creating an inclusive and welcoming space at the centres. With over 100 attendees, this event was a great success welcoming adults with learning difficulties to attend.			

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2024/25			Q2 2024/25			Q3 2024/25			Q4 2024/25			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
		<p>The Rising Sun Service helps children suffering from domestic violence and abuse. This partnership will generate invoiced income for Clip to Climb, catering, and soft play while supporting this essential local community outreach.</p> <p>Link up with the Nike store from the local Ashford Outlet, which provides Community Ambassadors to support sessions in the community, specifically targeting young people between the ages of 5 and 17.</p> <p>The LTS programme now has over 2400 children signed up and Continuation of the Julie Rose juniors programme, providing 150 children across three evenings.</p> <p><u>Older People</u> Walk 2 Jog Programme at JRS remains a popular weekly session with an average of 14 attendees, at each weekly session, a total of 112 visits for the month.</p>						<p>Pressure Checks to members at all sites.</p> <p><u>Young People</u> Tenterden and The Stour supported approximately 300 families in the HAF Programme, providing free family swims and food packages in partnership with Active Kent, Medway, and Ashford Early Help Hubs.</p> <p>The LTS programme now has over 2980 children signed up.</p> <p>The Stour Centre and Julie Rose Stadium facilitated HAF holiday clubs provided by Elite Coaching during October, with spaces sold out across all sessions.</p> <p>The Stour Centre hosted a two day event in October called Strength in Mind. The primary focus of Strength in Mind was to provide students in the local community with insights into the</p>						

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2024/25			Q2 2024/25			Q3 2024/25			Q4 2024/25			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
								importance of mental health.						
								<u>Older People</u> The Walk 2 Jog Programme at JRS reached the finals of the UK Active Awards 2024.						
								Pickleball, No-Strings and Evergreen Badminton expanding with a number of sessions a week, now affiliated with Badminton England with chance to gain funding for new nets and further support in these sessions.						

Place
Key Performance Measures - Reported Annually

Code & Short Name	Description	2023- 2024 Annual Figure	2024- 2025 Annual Figure	Latest Note
KPI.PLACE.001 Percentage of creative industries in the borough	Percentage of creative industries in the borough	8.3%	8.8%	Creative industry enterprises Ashford 2024: 570 enterprises equating to an increase of 2.7% (15 enterprises) on the year. Kent 9.6% Creative industries in Kent
KPI.PLACE.002 Percentage of tourism related businesses in the borough	Percentage of tourism related jobs in the borough	6.7%	6.7%	Tourism enterprises in Ashford 2024: 435 enterprises representing 6.7% of enterprises. This is a 1.2% (5) increase on the previous year. Kent average 9.1% Tourism Industries in Kent

Place
Key Performance Measures - Reported Quarterly

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2024/25			Q2 2024/25			Q3 2024/25			Q4 2024/25			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PLACE.003 Food Hygiene Rating	% of businesses in the borough with a food hygiene rating above 3	98.3%	98.5%	✓	98.4%	98.5%	✓	97.8%	98.5%	✓	98.6%	98.5%	✓	

Food Hygiene Rating System

Distribution of FHRS ratings over time for Ashford at 05/04/25 01:31



Number of establishments in each rating

FHRS Rating	Aug - 24	Sep - 24	Oct - 24	Nov - 24	Dec - 24	Jan - 25	Feb - 25	Mar - 25	Apr - 25
5 - Very good	941	948	970	982	993	990	994	982	978
4 - Good	80	79	76	79	82	85	86	93	93
3 - Generally satisfactory	42	29	29	28	28	29	31	33	33
2 - Improvement required	8	9	10	12	13	11	10	10	10
1 - Major improvement required	8	8	8	10	11	8	7	4	4
0 - Urgent improvement required	1	1	1	1	1	2	3	2	2
Total rated establishments	1080	1074	1094	1112	1128	1125	1131	1124	1120
Establishments with rating of 3 or better	1063	1056	1075	1089	1103	1104	1111	1108	1104
Awaiting inspection	90	82	69	57	48	48	45	53	53

During the presentation of the Q3 Performance report a Member raised that they felt that a number of premises, where they had been downgraded, continued to show and or advertise their previous food hygiene rating.

Trading Standards (KCC) would be responsible for enforcing the legislation that covers display of an incorrect rating.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2024/25			Q2 2024/25			Q3 2024/25			Q4 2024/25			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	

The scheme as it operates does not allow ABC to remove a hygiene rating sticker, as the business has 3 weeks from being notified of the score to lodge an appeal. There is also no requirement for a rating to be displayed at the premises. When we write to a business following an inspection, we do inform them of their responsibility to remove the old sticker.

This is something we can check when a revisit is completed, however a revisit would normally be undertaken within the appeal / notification period, so still time for an appeal to be lodged. We would inform a business if the wrong rating is being displayed during a visit, and where practical remove a rating if it is outside of any appeal period.

KPI.PLACE.004 Business survival - current vacancy rates	Current Vacancy rates	10.4%	10.38%	10.16%	11.1%	5,406 premises in the borough 601 with either an exemption or empty relief indicating vacancy.

Business survival, measure based upon our business rates records comparing the total number of rated premises against those which have an empty property exemption or relief applied to their accounts.

Date	No of props	Exemptions	Empty 'Reliefs'
01-Jul-23	5437	306	197
01-Oct-23	5442	298	217
01-Jan-24	5451	319	222
01-Apr-24	5423	314	236
01-Jul-24	5422	313	252
01-Oct-24	5411	313	249
01-Jan-25	5412	303	247
01-Apr-25	5406	338	263

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2024/25			Q2 2024/25			Q3 2024/25			Q4 2024/25			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PLACE.005 Ashford town centre vacancy rate	Ashford town centre vacancy rate	18.8%			18.7%			17.7%			18.3% (April25)			The area surveyed is the High Street, Middle Row, New Rents, North Street, Bank Street, Tufton Street, County Square, Park Mall and Elwick Place. This is surveyed manually quarterly.

All areas - including County Square, Park Mall and Elwick Place

Vacant Units - 63

Total Units Surveyed - 344

Vacancy Rate - 18.3%

Town Centre Streets - excluding County Square, Park Mall and Elwick Place

Vacant Units - 31

Total Units Surveyed - 237

Vacancy Rate - 13.1%

Surveys are a snapshot on the day, meaning that upcoming openings and closures are not factored in. With the upcoming relocation of Park Mall tenants it is anticipated that the vacancy rate will reduce. Additionally, there are a number of properties, where there are live Planning issues, offers being negotiated and absent landlords, which are not able to be taken up at present.

KPI.PLACE.006 Contribution to budget commercial investments	Contribution to budget from commercial investments	95.46%			92.19%			85.52%			98.75%			Contribution to budget from commercial investments utilising the budgeted figures provided as part of the council's budget books.
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The Corporate Property Annual Performance Report 2023/24 reviewing revenue performance of the Council's corporate property portfolio during the financial year, as well as advising on its expected future performance: [Report Title](#); Commercial Property Annual Performance Report 2023/2024.

Performance of the Commercial Property Portfolio was also reported to O&s in February report available: [O&S Report 25th Feb 2025](#)







Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2024/25			Q2 2024/25			Q3 2024/25			Q4 2024/25			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PLACE.007 Vacancy rates (in our corporate property)	Vacancy rates (in our corporate property)	11.6%			10%			6.8%			8.4%			

While vacancy levels remain elevated, the office market is steadily improving. Hybrid working remains popular, although there has been a noticeable return to office spaces. Rents are on the rise, and new coworking venues have emerged, reflecting the evolving demand for flexible work environments.

Industrial and distribution sectors continue to thrive, with a notable shift towards Grade A spaces, particularly those prioritising sustainability, as a key driver of demand throughout 2024.

The retail sector has experienced a positive turnaround, thanks to more affordable rents. Discount stores, along with cafes, barbers, and other local services, are performing strongly. Town centres are shifting focus from purely transactional retail to offering more experiential opportunities, with services and hospitality leading the way in this transformation.

KPI.PLACE.008 Number of ongoing s106 files	number of ongoing s106 files	Number of new s106 files opened – 3	Number of new s106 files opened – 2	Number of new s106 files opened – 6	Number of new s106 files opened – 2	
		Number of Draft s106 agreements sent out – 2	Number of Draft s106 agreements sent out – 4	Number of Draft s106 agreements sent out – 7	Number of Draft s106 agreements sent out – 6	
		Number of s106 cases completed - 0	Number of s106 cases completed - 1	Number of s106 cases completed - 1	Number of s106 cases completed - 0	









Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2024/25			Q2 2024/25			Q3 2024/25			Q4 2024/25			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PLACE.009 Planning decision quality - Major	Measured by the proportion of decisions on applications that are subsequently overturned at appeal	New measure			3.03 %	10%		4.5%	10%		5.8%	10%		Latest available data reflecting 24 months to end of March 24.
KPI.PLACE.009b Planning decision quality – Non Major	Measured by the proportion of decisions on applications that are subsequently overturned at appeal	New measure			0.43 %	10%		0.2%	10%		0.2%	10%		

Reported with lag time (normally 9 months) allowing for appeals to process.

The quality of decisions made by local planning authorities for applications for major and non-major development, measured by the proportion of decisions on applications that are subsequently overturned at appeal (including those arising from a 'deemed refusal' where an application has not been determined within the statutory period).









Planning Decision Quality measures replace previous Planning Application Approvals measure. Planning application approval information is available within the statistical return nationally reported available at [Live tables on planning application statistics](#) data tables P152 & P154

The Q4 figures indicate that the Council continues to be successful in the majority of cases that are appealed to the Planning Inspectorate and indicators for both major and non-major schemes fall well within the national and local threshold of 10% of overall decisions being overturned.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2024/25			Q2 2024/25			Q3 2024/25			Q4 2024/25			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PLACE.010 Speed of Major Planning Application Decisions	% of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks (or within such extended period as agreed in writing between the applicant and the local authority)	100%	65%		100%	65%		100%	65%		100%	65%		
KPI.PLACE.011 % of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks amended to reflect 24 rolling month	% of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks amended to reflect 24 rolling month	71%	75%		76%	75%		81%	75%		83%	75%		









The latest data tables on local government Planning including Ashford Borough Council, covering the speed and quality of planning decisions are available at the following link: [Live tables on planning application statistics](#)

Performance in Q4 for this indicator has further improved the Council's position against the rolling Government target where it should be noted that the Government minimum target is 60%. Going forwards, the national rolling target will be measured against a 12 month period reduced from a 24 month period with this being reflected in future reporting periods.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2024/25			Q2 2024/25			Q3 2024/25			Q4 2024/25			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PLACE.012 Speed of Non-Major Planning Application Decisions	% of minor and other planning applications determined within 8 weeks (or within such extended period as has been agreed in writing between the applicant and the council).	92%	75%		92%	75%		95%	75%		95%	75%		
KPI.PLACE.013 % of non majors determined within 8 weeks amended to reflect 24 rolling month	% of non majors determined within 8 weeks amended to reflect 24 rolling month	85%	80%		86%	80%		87%	80%		88%	80%		

The latest data tables on local government Planning including Ashford Borough Council, covering the speed and quality of planning decisions are available at the following link: [Live tables on planning application statistics](#)

Performance in determining non-major schemes remains significantly above target and has improved when measured against the rolling national performance indicator.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2024/25			Q2 2024/25			Q3 2024/25			Q4 2024/25			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PLACE. 014 Number of live planning casework reducing backlog	Number includes all conditions applications, pre-app cases, as well as applications for outline, full or reserved matters consent. Reducing backlog with a capacity set at 550 open cases	595	550		535	550		590	550		621	550		
		(407)			(326)			(382)			(437)			

Q4 has seen this indicator rise as more applications have been received in the period before the annual increase in planning application fees came into force on the 1st April. This was exacerbated in the short term due to some unforeseen staff absences resulting in slightly longer processing times for some applications but resource availability has now improved. It remains the position that, once the number of cases restricted from a decision being made due to nutrient neutrality (Stodmarsh) is accounted for, this indicator still lies well below the 550 case target figure. The setting-up of the Joint Venture Company (Stour Environmental Credits) with Canterbury City Council to acquire and manage nutrient mitigation credits will help to unlock some of these cases in the near future and should allow the gross caseload figure to fall back below the target figure.

KPI.PLACE. 016 Parking usage	Parking usage Ashford and Tenterden	259,083			302,647			270,097			265,919			Made up of 178,293 from Ashford town centre car parks & 87,626 from Tenterden car parks.
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New Measures Port Health	Potential income against actual collected %	<p>Potential income for the year 2024-25, £21,232,299, actual income achieved £9,399,527 , 44% of income recovered</p> <p>Despite the reset with EU, the clear message is that we are being asked to carry on as normal as nothing has yet been changed and we need to keep implementing the BTOM and carrying out SPS controls until any legislative changes are developed and implemented.</p>												
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Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2024/25			Q2 2024/25			Q3 2024/25			Q4 2024/25			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
		Q4 – income Jan 955,617 Feb 965,695 Mar 1,289,153												

Underlying Principles

Key Performance Indicators - Reported Annually

Code & Short Name	Description	2023- 2024 Annual Figure	2024- 2025 Annual Figure	Latest Note
KPI.UP.001 Mean Gender Pay Gap	The difference in average pay between men and women in the council's workforce	9.3% Data is retrospective so relates to 31 March 2023 - Ashford Borough Council's statistics on the gender pay gap amongst their staff for 2022-23.	Mean (average) gender pay gap in hourly pay: 7.0% Median (mid-point) gender pay gap in hourly pay: 8.9% This dataset shows the gender pay gap amongst Ashford Borough Council staff for the 2023-2024 financial year.	
KPI.UP.002 Number of local procurements		New measure for 2024-25 10 (10%) x Ashford borough (including Tenterden) 28 (27%) x Kent (excluding the Ashford Borough figure above)		

For contracts over £25k in value there are 103 on the contracts register that had a contract start date between the period of 01/04/2024 and 31/03/2025.

Of these 103 there are:

- 10 (10%) x Ashford borough (including Tenterden)
- 28 (27%) x Kent (excluding the Ashford Borough figure above)
- 65 (63%) x Nationally excluding both Kent and Ashford Borough figures above.

Of the 10 that are in the Ashford borough there are:

- 7 (70%) x Services – 3 of which are in operation and 4 that have expired
- 0 (0%) x Supplies
- 3 (30%) x Works – 2 of which are in operation and 1 that has expired









Of the 28 that are in Kent there are:





- 19 (68%) x Services – 12 of which are in operation and 7 that have expired
- 2 (7%) x Supplies – 2 of which are in operation
- 7 (25%) x Works – 5 of which are in operation and 2 that have expired

KPI.UP.003 Percentage of invoices paid on time	Invoices paid within 30 days of the date of the invoice	97.86%	93.16%	Figures exclude housing repairs Period has seen a significant increase in the number of invoices processed
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Key Performance indicators - Reported Quarterly
Quarterly Measures

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2024/25			Q2 2024/25			Q3 2024/25			Q4 2024/25			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.UP.004	Number of Stage 1 complaints	224			178			181			216			
KPI.UP.005	% Stage 1 complaints resolved in 10 days	62%			71%			70%			69%			
The council has reduced its complaint handling time from 15 to ten days following guidance released by the Ombudsman. Whilst the guidance won't be officially adopted until early 2026, adoption by the council now will ensure compliance and expediate the resolution of complaints.														
KPI.UP.006	Number of Stage 2 complaints	49			39			34			41			

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2024/25			Q2 2024/25			Q3 2024/25			Q4 2024/25			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.UP.007	% Stage 2 complaints resolved in 20 days	84%			72%			79%			68%			
KPI.UP.008	Average time taken to process a benefit change of circumstance in no. days	1.77	10		1.87	10		2	10		1.76	10		
KPI.UP.009	Average time taken to process a new benefit payment claim in no. days	29.91	28		28.94	28		28.69	28		26.94	28		As working age claimants move over to UC, we are left with more complicated cases to assess such as temporary accommodation & supported accommodation cases, that generally take a bit longer to assess.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2024/25			Q2 2024/25			Q3 2024/25			Q4 2024/25			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.UP.010 FOI Response Rate	% of freedom of information requests responded to within 20 working days	98%	95%		98%	95%		98%	95%		99.5%	95%		Quarter 4 – 230 requests received in the period. 1 answered outside the require 20 working day window.

774 requests received across the year – 6 answered outside the 20 working day deadline

KPI.UP.011 Business Rates Collection	% of national non-domestic rates collected by the council - cumulative figure per month	29.72%	24.75%		57.93%	49.5%		82.57	74.25%		97.43%	99%		Government finance including Ashford Borough Council, covering borrowing and investment, capital payments and receipts, local Council Tax support, quarterly revenue outturn and receipts of Council Taxes and national non-domestic rates are available here
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This excludes credits; by including credits it would increase in-year collection to 98.38%.





Due to a number of external factors, particularly economic climate and not being able to pursue recovery action promptly due to unavailability of court dates, it means more current financial year debt is now collected after year-end (i.e. in the next financial year) than previously was the case (i.e. reminders/summons/liability orders are delayed due to court dates). This has an impact on in-year collection rates.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2024/25			Q2 2024/25			Q3 2024/25			Q4 2024/25			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.UP.012 Council Tax Collection Rate	Percentage of council tax collected - cumulative figure per month	29.58%	24.57%	✓	57.29%	49.14	✓	84.92%	73.71%	✓	97%	98.25%	⚠	
<p>This excludes credits; by including credits it would increase in-year collection to 97.2%.</p> <p>Due to a number of external factors, particularly economic climate and not being able to pursue recovery action promptly due to unavailability of court dates, it means more current financial year debt is now collected after year-end (i.e. in the next financial year) than previously was the case (i.e. reminders/summonses/liability orders are delayed due to court dates). This has an impact on in-year collection rates.</p>														
KPI.UP.013 Compliance - Gas Safety Certificates	% of ABC properties with up to date gas safety certificates	100%	100%	✓	100%	100%	✓	100%	100%	✓	100%	100%	✓	Performance remains consistently on target. Equally important, this is now captured on ABC's True Compliance system.
KPI.UP.014 Number of days sickness per full time equivalent		9.8 days per FTE						9.35 days (annualised) per FTE						<p>Based on the total FTE, as at 30 September 2024, average absence due to sickness was 9.35 (annualised) per FTE.</p> <p>This is down from the last six month period when</p>

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2024/25			Q2 2024/25			Q3 2024/25			Q4 2024/25			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
														average absence was 9.80 days (annualised) per FTE.

Information collected on a six-monthly basis in order that the Council's senior team have an up-to-date overview of key HR Metrics.

[OS Sickness Report 2023_24.pdf \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

KPI.UP.015	Average wait time for customer service calls - to be benchmarked with results across Kent	0h 01m 59s	0h 01m 38s		0h 01m 30s	0h 01m 38s		0h 1m 29s	0h 01m 38s		0h 01m 20s	0h 01m 38s		Measure returned to target in the quarter following the slight increase on call transaction time for Q1 which was due to the implementation of our new waste contract. Call handlers were becoming acquainted with the new associated systems and new working practices.
Average Speed of Customer Service Calls Answered														

KPI.UP.016	Number of ongoing or pre-action litigation/court/inquiry proceedings	Number of ongoing litigation matters = 159	Number of ongoing litigation matters = 156	Number of ongoing litigation matters = 164	Number of ongoing matters = 180	
Number of ongoing or pre-action litigation/court/inquiry proceedings	Number of cases where costs have been awarded against ABC = 23 All these are associated to Disrepair Claims	Number of cases where costs have been awarded against ABC = 6 All these are associated to Disrepair Claims	Number of cases where costs have been awarded against ABC = 5 These continue to be associated to Disrepair Claims	Number of ongoing matters/number of cases where costs have been awarded against ABC or settled with costs = 3		

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2024/25			Q2 2024/25			Q3 2024/25			Q4 2024/25			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.UP.018	Social media engagement	Q1 (Apr – June)			Q2 (July – Sept)			Q3 (Oct – Dec)			Q4 (Jan – Mar)			
		Impressions:			Impressions:			Impressions:			Impressions:			
		Facebook: 528,018 X (Twitter): 7,480 Nextdoor: 186,716 Instagram: 2,977			Facebook: 424,616 X (Twitter): 13,366 Nextdoor: 216,415 Instagram: 6,201			Facebook: 410,496 X (Twitter): 7,886 Nextdoor: 212,358 Instagram: 13,905			Facebook: 534,147 X (Twitter): 4,303 Nextdoor: 91,648 Instagram: 12,438			
		Followers:			Followers:			Followers:			Followers:			
		Facebook: 11,844 X (Twitter): 9,026 Nextdoor: 30,678 Instagram: 2,906			Facebook: 11,950 X (Twitter): 8,951 Nextdoor: 30,678 Instagram: 2,956			Facebook: 12,098 X (Twitter): 8,848 Nextdoor: 31,717 Instagram: 3,021			Facebook: 12,344 X (Twitter): 8,754 Nextdoor: 32,483 Instagram: 3,079			

Ashford Borough Council's Communications team is responsible for managing the council's social media accounts. Our most active platforms that residents can engage with the council on, include Facebook, X (Twitter), Nextdoor and Instagram.

The data will allow the Council to better understand the needs of our residents and ensure that our social media strategy is shaped by the results of the data.

With circa 50,000 combined total followers across all ABC social platforms, the Communications Team are also actively exploring methods to further grow each platform through various digital tools so that they can effectively reach more residents across the borough, including those in rural areas.