

Ashford Borough Council

Annual Performance Report

2022-2023

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Message from the Chief Executive



Welcome to our Annual Report – this provides an opportunity to look back on some of the achievements and milestones seen across our borough over the last year. The year once again has been a challenging one, with us all living through a cost of living crisis and having to stretch our pounds even further.

We are not immune from these challenges and difficult choices are being made and will have to be made going forward, to ensure we can continue to offer effective and good value for money services, which continue to meet the justified high expectations of our residents. However, it is not all gloom, through our legacy of forward thinking, entrepreneurship, careful planning and a partnership approach we continue to be robustly placed to weather these pressures and remain focused on our long term objectives to strive for a greener, more caring and prosperous borough.

This can be seen in the year that has just gone, with our increased electric vehicle charging provision and continued commitment to tree planting; our sustained investment in our leisure, play and recreational spaces; the welcoming of the Jasmin Vardimon Companies' new purpose built space and the expansion of Ashford College; along with some fantastic events with our street art Unframed festival and the return of the Carnival of the Baubles having taken place.

There also remains much to look forward to, with the Ashford International Studios project gathering pace and the submission by Brompton of a planning application to build a revolutionary bicycle factory. I look forward to sharing with you these projects and many other developments from our Corporate Plan as they unfold over the coming years.

Tracy Kedy

Our Borough in 2022-23

Key Facts and Figures

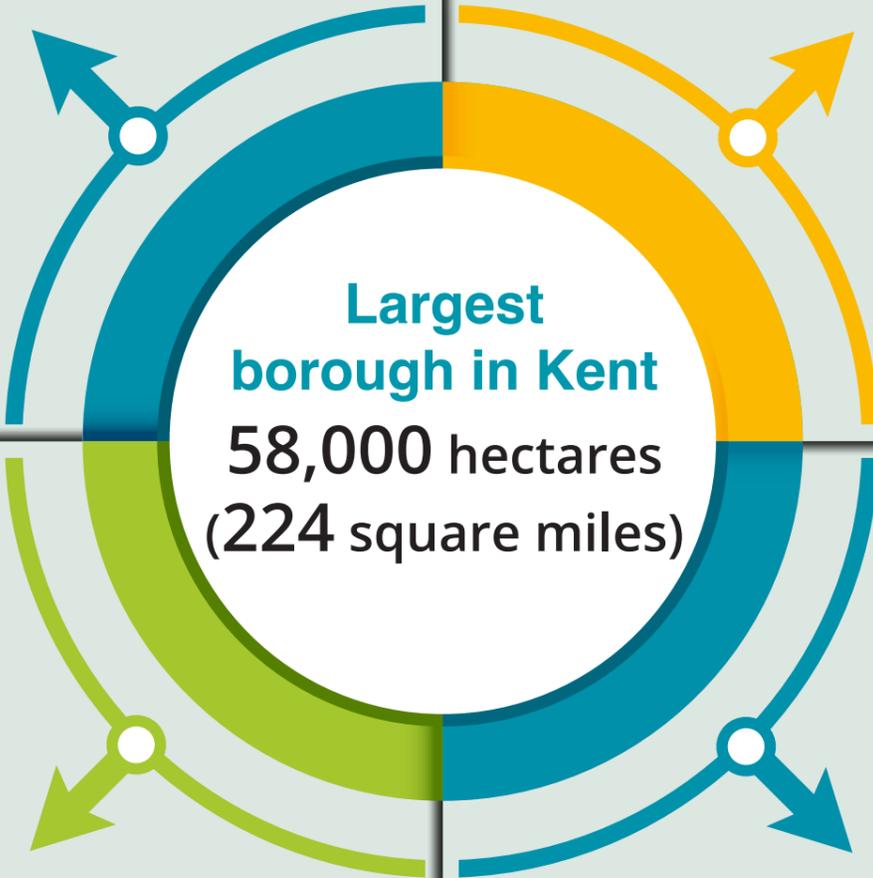
Population Census 2021

132,700 (2011 Census 118,000 this equates to a 12.5% population growth)



Ethnicity Census 2021

Ashford is an increasingly diverse borough the percentage of the population who do not identify as 'White' has increased from 6% to **12%** since 2011.



Accommodation Type Census 2021

Accommodation Type	Census 2011	Census 2021
Detached 	33.4%	↓ 32.7%
Semi-detached 	30.2%	↑ 30.7%
Terraced 	24.2%	↓ 22.2%
Flat, Maisonette or Apartment 	11.3%	↑ 13.1%
Caravan or Temporary 	1%	↑ 1.3%

Qualifications Census 2021

Highest Level of Qualification	Census 2011	Census 2021
No formal qualifications	21.2%	↓ 17.6%
Level 1 (1 to 4 GCSEs or equivalent)	15.6%	↓ 11.3%
Level 2 (5 or more GCSEs or equivalent)	17.8%	↓ 15.4%
Apprenticeship	3.9%	↑ 5.6%
Level 3 (2 or more A levels or equivalent)	12%	↑ 17.1%
Level 4 (Bachelors degree) or above	24.6%	↑ 30.1%
Other formal qualifications, level unknown	4.9%	↓ 2.9%

Corporate Plan 2022-24



The Corporate Plan 2022-24 that this Annual Performance report is based upon, starts the journey to achieving the Ashford Ambition that was developed in collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders in 2020. There are three supporting themes:

- Green Pioneer
- Caring Ashford
- Targeted Growth

Each theme has a long term aim, objectives and actions to achieve the outcomes that will contribute to realising the Ashford Ambition, this Annual Report highlights the steps made towards this ambition from the last year.

Ashford Ambition:

To be a thriving, productive and inclusive borough by 2030 and beyond; a vital part of Kent and the South East where local businesses, social enterprises, communities and the public sector provide collective leadership to promote shared prosperity, happiness and wellbeing.



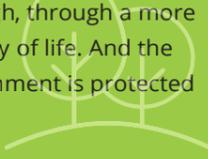
Theme

Objectives

Outcomes

Green Pioneer

Our long term aim: Every community and individual plays their part in becoming a carbon neutral borough, through a more sustainable way of life. And the natural environment is protected and enhanced.



- GP1:** Reduce reliance on fossil fuels in line with our carbon neutral targets
- GP2:** Increase biodiversity and encourage sustainable lifestyles
- GP3:** Reduce the amount of waste produced from homes and business

- Homes are energy efficient and cheaper to heat. Renewable energy generation and consumption increases. Fewer local car journeys are made, air quality improves and residents are more active and healthy.
- Communities urban and rural areas value, enjoy and respect the natural environment and the abundance of wildlife increases
- A borough free of litter, where everyone takes responsibility for minimising the amount of waste they produce

Caring Ashford

Our long term aim: Towns, villages and rural communities are welcoming, safe places for all who live and work in them, offering a high quality of life where everyone is valued and respected.

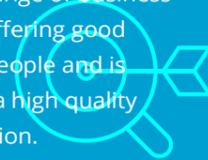


- CA1** - Homes and neighbourhoods in the borough meet the needs of local people of all ages and incomes to live sustainably and safely
- CA2** - Local people have access to life-long learning to ensure they have knowledge and skills to take up local employment
- CA3** - Reduce health inequalities and improve the wellbeing of local people
- CA4** - Communities celebrate their heritage and the diversity of their population to build a more connected community and strengthen social responsibility

- Communities feel safe and secure with easy access to locally - led services designed with communities to meet their needs
- Local people seek positive change for themselves and others through the development of their knowledge and skills, improving social inclusion and employability
- The lives of people with the worst health and wellbeing outcomes are improved
- Cultural activities and events bring communities together, increasing tolerance, respect and understanding

Targeted Growth

Our long term aim: A thriving, productive local economy supporting a range of business and industry offering good work to local people and is recognised as a high quality visitor destination.



- TG1** - Increase productivity and job opportunities and the establishment of sustainable, knowledge based and creative industries in the borough
- TG2** - Enable the improvement of digital infrastructure to support the growing needs of business, voluntary sector and residents
- TG3** - Strengthen local supply chains and increase the resilience of the local economy
- TG4** - Support growth in the visitor economy
- TG5** - Stimulate vibrant, accessible and sustainable Town Centres for residents visitors and business

- The borough attracts and grows businesses and industries that are innovative and sustainable that benefit local employment and incomes
- Fast, reliable digital connectivity is available across the whole borough so no one is disadvantaged in accessing online services or doing business
- Local business survival rates improve
- Ashford is a 'year round' visitor destination renowned for offering quality visitor experiences
- Our town centres are lively, safe places where people of all ages live, work and visit, coming together to enjoy events and activities

Green Pioneer



Progress being made on Stodmarsh mitigation measures

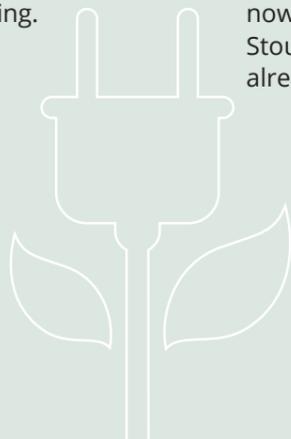
During the year we have continued to respond to the various issues that have arisen from the need for new housing and other developments to achieve 'nutrient neutrality', due to the deterioration of Stodmarsh Lakes.

Since July 2020, certain planning applications (those providing overnight accommodation, including new housing) located within the Stour catchment and/or which discharge foul water into the catchment, have been put 'on hold' until they can achieve nutrient neutrality.

In response to this issue, the council has been working on a way to deliver long term nutrient mitigation, by identifying suitable land in the borough for strategic wetlands, which can generate off-site nutrient mitigation that can then be secured by developments, allowing them to be granted planning permission.

Following March's Cabinet meeting, members agreed to support the continuation of this work on acquisition of potential sites for this purpose. They also agreed the proposed contents and broad scope of a future Nutrient Neutrality Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), and for this to be subject to public consultation in due course.

A core component of the council's strategy is the creation of strategic wetlands within the borough as a means of providing off-site nutrient mitigation. There are two projects currently ongoing.



The Queen's Green Canopy Continues

The Council have continued to take part in The Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) by aiming to plant 135,500 trees by the end of 2023, representing one tree of every resident in the borough.

QGC is a unique tree planting initiative initially introduced to mark Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee. However following the sad passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth and the now wishes of His Majesty King Charles III, the QGC initiative has been extended to give people the opportunity to plant more trees in honour Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth.

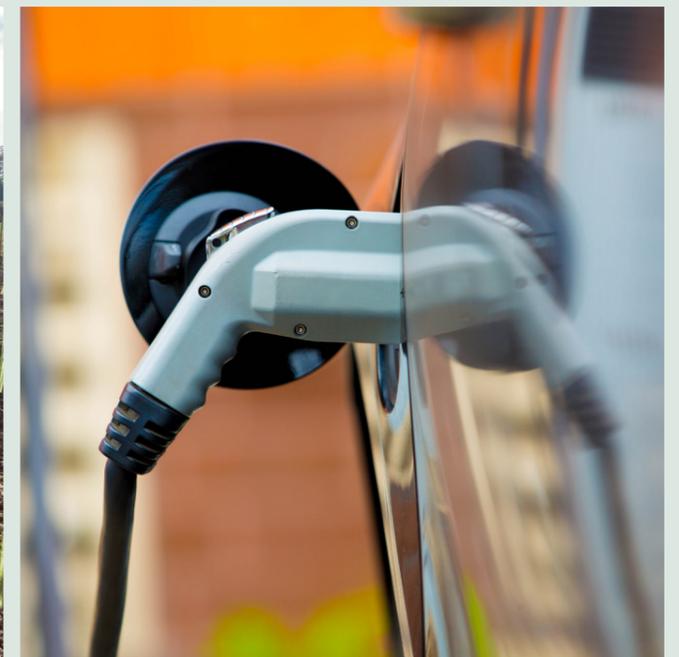
The Ashford tree planting initiative started in autumn 2021, and has continued with over 107,000 trees planted across the borough.

Tree planting has now ceased for the 2022- 2023 planting season. However we will be looking to restart planting in the autumn of 2023, in a final push to reach our target of 135,500.

More information on the initiative is available on [The Queen's Green Canopy website](#).

New Electric Vehicle Charging Points installed

The Council is continuing to work on a programme to install new electric vehicle charging points (EVCPs) throughout the borough. Nine new points have now been installed by EV dot at the Civic Centre and Stour Centre Car Park, to complement the two points already located at the site.



Aims to deliver more sustainable developments

The Council aims to deliver more sustainable forms of development by effectively tackling the causes and effects of climate change in the way it plans for new residential dwellings.

The Council's Cabinet approved the publication of Climate Change Guidance for Development Management which has been adopted as a material consideration for the purpose of making planning decisions.

The guidance provides developers, applicants and decision makers with clarity as to what the Council expect certain types of new residential development to deliver in the way of infrastructure to help mitigate the impacts of climate change.

£2.5m investment in Tenterden Leisure Centre power plant will cut carbon emissions and lower running costs

£2m of Government funding was secured to replace the ageing power plant at Tenterden Leisure Centre with a state-of-the-art system which will slash running costs, cut carbon emissions providing a boost to bold ambitions to make the borough carbon neutral by 2030

The Council also invested more than £465,000 into the ambitious project, taking the total to nearly £2.5m.

This new work follows the updating of the centre's plant during 2022, which saw a new pool air handling unit, combined with an air source heat pump, new pool filtration vessels and new control panels.



New waste and recycling service on its way

Three Kent councils have agreed a new waste and recycling contract with SUEZ Recycling and Recovery UK Ltd, worth around £19m per year across the whole Mid Kent contract.

Ashford, Maidstone and Swale councils - who work together as the Mid Kent Waste Partnership - have awarded the eight-year contract to Suez after a joint tender process. The new service begins in March 2024 and will bring in new technology and industry improvements, whilst retaining large parts of the existing service.

Fortnightly collections of waste and recycling will continue across the three boroughs, with one wheeled bin for dry recycling, alongside the regular weekly food waste collections. The new contract offers the chance to increase recycling rates, improved efficiency of the routes, lower emissions from vehicles and add better technology to keep residents up to date.

Ashford's first Great Big Green Week

During the year, for the first time, Ashford Borough Council took part in the nation campaign - The Great big Green Week (24 September - 2 October).

The council worked with local organisations to produce a weeks' worth of events. Bringing together and raising awareness of local green initiatives to the community and helping residents learn how they can play a part by contributing through everyday actions and choices.

The main event - The Great Big Green Week Roadshow, created a vibrant atmosphere in Ashford town centre. Many residents engaged with the local stalls, learning tips on recycling, saving energy, how to get a more biodiverse garden and tips on shopping locally. Families got to enjoy the free activities available, which included making your own draft excluder and for the more competitive the smoothie bike challenge.



Caring Ashford



Freedom Leisure announced as new operator of Tenterden Leisure Centre

During the period it was announced that Freedom Leisure will be operating Tenterden Leisure Centre from spring 2023.

Tenterden Leisure Trust (TLT) commenced negotiations with Ashford Borough Council to relinquish the lease of Tenterden Leisure Centre in March. Since then, the council has been working with TLT and operator Serco to enable as smooth a transition as possible.

As landlord, the council has committed to capital works for the building to improve the structure and ensure sustainability for the leisure facilities in the future and this included a new roof, a new air handling unit, a new pool filtration system and switchgear.



Ashford Community Lottery celebrates its first year

Since its launch in March 2022, Ashford Community Lottery has raised more than £22,000 for local not-for-profit groups.

More than £7,600 has been given away in winnings, and hundreds of people have won extra tickets too!

There are currently more than 70 local not-for-profit groups and organisations (good causes in lottery terms) signed up to the Ashford Community Lottery, as a fun and effective way to raise funds for their valued services in the community.

Good causes not only benefit from receiving 60p from every £1 ticket bought through their page, they also receive a host of marketing materials as well as their own Ashford Community Lottery web page.



Central Park, Park Farm play area officially opened

Local families, residents and school children attended the opening ceremony of Central Park, Park Farm's new play area on Thursday 9 March.

Central Park play area is situated in Park Farm, Ashford, and has officially been opened following a budgeted £400,000 investment, part of the council's £1.1m Play Regeneration Programme.

The brand new play area includes an all-inclusive flush roundabout, multi tower multiplay unit, a wide range of swings, including a basket swing, parent/child swing, a multi person rope swing and a sensory play zone.

There is also a new outdoor gym area, featuring a range of equipment for strength, balance, stability and agility training.

New seating, wheelchair friendly picnic tables and bins have been installed to provide a communal leisure space for residents to use.

Rylands Road brand new play area now open

Rylands Road play area, situated on Rylands Road, Bockhanger, Ashford, officially opened after a revamp following a budgeted £340,000 investment.

This brand new play area allows children of all ages and abilities lots of exciting options to play and have fun including a new multiplay unit for toddlers, trampolines and play panels, a large junior multiplay unit with a slide, large climbing unit, springers, teacup dipper and bouncing spinners, a disability friendly roundabout and a range of different swings.

The new play area facilities join the outdoor gym equipment, which were installed last year from funding raised by the local community with grants from Kennington Community Council and Ashford Leisure Trust.





Spearpoint Recreation Ground brand new play area now open

Local children, families and residents, attended the opening ceremony of Spearpoint Recreation Ground's brand new play area on Monday 13 February.

Spearpoint Recreation Ground play area is situated in Kennington, Ashford, and has officially reopened following a budgeted £360,000 investment.

The play area has been split into zones with easy access between each, for infants, toddlers, juniors, teens, a respite area and fitness area. It features 65 new play activities, with equipment for all abilities.

Working with Kompan on the design and construction of the play area, recycled materials have been used in parts throughout, with the toddler four tower multiplay unit manufactured predominantly from post-consumer plastic including recycled ocean waste.

Julie Rose Stadium officially opened after significant investment

The Julie Rose Stadium was officially re opened on Friday 17 February by the Deputy Mayor of Ashford, Cllr Larry Krause in front of Ashford MP Damian Green and representatives from Ashford Borough Council and Freedom Leisure.

The iconic venue now boasts a brand new athletics track, a new running chute and indoor throwing cage, as well as an expanded gym and exercise studio - transforming the facilities on offer after a £1 million investment.

Freedom Leisure and Ashford Borough Council worked on plans to re-surface the outdoor athletics track at the stadium, which was built in 1997.

This follows on from the complete refurbishment and opening of the new gym and exercise studio last year, and is further evidence of the great partnership between the Council and the not-for-profit leisure trust to improve the health, wellbeing and sporting facilities for the people of Ashford and the surrounding area.

The Victoria Park and Watercress Fields Project Progressed

The Victoria Park and Watercress Fields Project is a £4.5m project being delivered by Ashford Borough Council and the National Lottery Heritage Fund to improve and protect Victoria Park for the local community. The project focuses on the natural, built and social heritage of Ashford's largest public park, and particularly aims to improve it for residents by updating the community facilities and play spaces. Progress to date includes:

Sensory Garden - The garden has been re-levelled to ensure it is fully accessible to all, with new pathways and entrance points completed. It was fully seeded by our landscape contractors and planted with 2500 sensory inspired plants by our wonderful volunteers.

Wetland - The Wetland is taking shape nicely with the central islands looking very striking. Recent rainfall has demonstrated that it does hold water when it's wet, which is a positive step towards the new environment we are looking to introduce to the already varied ecology of the park.

Pump track - The brilliantly successful British Cycling Places to Ride project has put a high demand for new pump tracks on the small group of expert contractors in the UK which means that a lot of parks and communities are experiencing delays in the original timeframes for pump track works. This includes delays to the Victoria Park pump track for which we are currently waiting to confirm new construction dates.

Fountain piazza works - These works have been progressing on schedule, so far this has involved the development of the existing piazza to explore drainage issues, the expansion of the upper seating area and the new access path.

New Café/ Nursery Refurbishment - This has been progressing positively with the outline of the building completely visible and interior spaces marked out with an expectation to have the building open for the summer.

New Playground - Work has now started on the new children's play park. Without any delays from weather or materials, we anticipate this should be complete by the summer.





Eat Well Spend Less Continues In 2023

Last year's popular Eat Well Spend Less roadshow returned to the borough in 2023. The roadshows focus on providing targeted help and advice for local families who may need extra support as a result of rising food prices.

The events brought together a range of partner organisations including frontline NHS staff and council officers, outreach organisations and charities, in one easy-to-access place. Families were able to access a range of services including:

- Guidance from Our Kitchen on shopping, preparing and cooking healthy, nutritious meals
- Benefits and housing advice and advice on what support is available locally
- Information on where and how to access local food banks
- Advice on what support is available locally
- Health MOT's from Kent Community Health (NHS) Foundation Trust

Jasmin Vardimon Company unveils state of the art space in Ashford

The acclaimed dance company becomes the first choreographer-named organisation to have its own purpose-built home outside London. JVC has revealed its new state-of-the-art purpose-built home.

Eight years in the planning and part funded by a £3million National Lottery grant with other financing from Kent County Council and Ashford Borough Council, JVC Home also includes incubator and start-up spaces for emerging local creative companies and individuals.



Work begins on Phase 2 of Ashford College

It's an exciting time for Ashford College, with construction work underway on a brand new extension.

Called Phase 2, the new wing will house classrooms and laboratories for Business, Information Technology, and Engineering. The new facilities will create a renewed focus on these up-and-coming fields, and allow 250 more students each year to access the high quality education offered at Ashford College.

Featured will be an 'Engineering Hub', which will highlight the role engineering can play in creating solutions to climate change and promoting decarbonisation.

The extension will also be key in delivering the new T Level qualifications, which are equivalent to three A Levels and provide learners with work experience as part of their training.



Ashford Civic Awards honour community heroes

The Ashford Borough Council Platinum Jubilee Civic Awards took place on Friday 23 September at Chart Hills Golf Club, Biddenden.

The awards provided an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the hard work and dedication of individuals who have enriched the lives of others in their community, who have made significant achievements or who have acted as role models for our residents.

Taking place in this historic year of the Platinum Jubilee of the reign of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the event honoured those people who have delivered community service by outstanding achievement or dedicated contribution within the borough of Ashford.

Short-stay accommodation for homeless people at Henwood Road car park

Plans have been approved to create new high quality short-stay accommodation apartments for homeless people on the under-used Henwood car park on the edge of Ashford town centre.

This will be the first-of-its-kind modular development in the borough. As well as all necessary flood risk mitigation measures, these apartments will be highly-insulated and triple-glazed, with heat recovery ventilation and integrated solar panels. The fabric of the building designed to create zero carbon homes with low energy consumption and running costs.



Targeted Growth



Ashford International Studios project gathers pace

Plans are gathering pace to deliver an exciting film studios-led £250m investment and regeneration project.

The TV and film studios on the site of the derelict Newtown Works railway site will bring significant benefits to Ashford in terms of investment and job creation, and promises to be one of the most important economic drivers for the borough.

Cabinet agreed that a loan facility of £50m be made available to the AIDC for the construction of the studios and workshop space, subject to the completion of the due diligence process and to the granting of planning permission satisfactory to the film studio operator. It was agreed that this loan facility will either be repaid on completion of the works from the sale proceeds or through a lease to an operator on a long-term basis.



Ashford's street art festival UNFRAMED

UNFRAMED, Ashford's first mural festival officially launched. Our contemporary street art trail, curated by Accent London and The London Mural Company, has transformed blank walls and building surfaces into high quality mural paintings and bespoke integrated artwork.

Work began on the murals, at the beginning of March 2023, when world renowned Mr Doodle, who lives in the Ashford borough, created what is believed to be the world's biggest doodle on the side of a multi storey car park.

Other artists including Alex Chinneck, Charley Peters, Curtis Hylton and local artist Danielle Williamson have all taken on the challenge of converting blank walls into spaces of colour and creativity.

After several weeks of work bringing the murals to life, the festival was officially launched at Coachworks Ashford, on Friday 31 March 2023.

To find out more about the festival, please visit the [Love Ashford website](#).

Brompton submits planning application to build revolutionary bicycle factory of the future in Ashford

Ashford Borough Council has confirmed that a planning application has been received from Brompton for a revolutionary new factory, delivering a £100 million investment for the local area and potential for up to 4,000 jobs for the Kent economy.



Carnival of the Baubles kicked off the countdown to Christmas in Ashford town centre

Christmas celebrations were in full swing in Ashford in late November as Carnival of the Baubles brought a day of festive, family fun to the town centre.

Thousands of people lined the streets to watch the Outer Space themed procession of giant illuminated lanterns and baubles make its way through the heart of the town. Local school children and community groups gathered at Elwick Place and proceeded up

Bank Street through to the Lower High Street where the procession came to a celebratory end with an amazing drumming performance by Blocofogo. The star of the show was BinBot, a giant mechanical puppet, who led the procession of lights alongside students from Theatre Train Ashford and the man himself, Father Christmas, who danced his way up the street in a rocket.



Reset sets out next stage of development and regeneration of Ashford Town Centre

There has never been a more important time to set out a clear focus and strategy for Ashford Town Centre. High streets up and down the country are facing many challenges with the after-effects of the Covid pandemic joining the cost-of-living crisis, ongoing financial uncertainty, and the growing competition of online shopping. What is clear is that the space required for retail in town centres is shrinking.

Ashford Borough Council understands the challenges that our town centre residents, businesses, users and community groups face. Town Centres are facing considerable changes over a short period of time, being influenced by wider economic, environment and social changes. It is vital that we continue to invest in carefully thought-through ideas and solutions to help bring about significant change, for the benefit of all.

The Town Centre Reset – including the revitalisation of our High Street is a 'Super 6' project, and a key priority in our Corporate Plan 2022-24. It identifies a number of areas that require improvement and intervention, and these areas have had to be prioritised to focus available resources over the next few years.

Works begin to preserve the life of Ashford Shared Space

During the period Kent County Council (KCC) carried out roadworks aimed at preserving the life of Ashford Shared Space and Lower High Street.

Once achieved the area will be better preserved for the longer term, making it more resistant to damage in the future and improving accessibility.

Works totalling up to £600,000 began in November and is expected to be completed in five phases with everything aimed to be completed by the Spring of 2023.

The scheme is a joint project by KCC and Ashford Borough Council (ABC), originally set up to improve the look and feel of the town centre as well as enhancing safety for pedestrians.

Fabric of Ashford

Ashford's high street saw a series of family-friendly events and workshops as part of The Fabric of Ashford; The Place That Makes Us campaign. This has featured a line-up of events throughout July and August including pop-up workshops, live music, storytelling workshops, street entertainment and art installations.

The finale event on 20 August showcased the borough's community spirit in the form of the Ashford Tapestry; a community-created art project comprising colourful fabric artwork, all sewn together to form an impressive art installation.

New places to enjoy in Ashford Town Centre

Parts of Ashford Town Centre looked a little different during the period as new seating, furnishings and bunting decorating upper Bank Street and Middle Row.

The temporary pilot scheme delivers some interventions that links to key themes from the Town Centre Reset - integrated play, feature lighting, temporary public realm and outdoor seating. If successful this could lead to further, more permanent features in the future.

The short-term regeneration project aimed to encourage active and healthy lifestyles by introducing informal play opportunities, attractive places to meet and dwell and enhancing of public spaces.

It provided a new look and feel to areas of the town centre, with additional cleaning, re-decoration and new planting, bunting and seating adding a touch of colour.



Ashford Borough Council supports businesses with two innovative programmes

As part of our continued commitment to developing the economic prosperity of the borough, we are working with Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce (KICC) to roll out two exciting programmes to support businesses and enable them to grow further.

Scale Up Ashford and Growth Entrepreneur Ashford are both expert-driven growth and expansion schemes to help businesses to fulfil their full potential and explore new ideas and concepts that they need might need further guidance or help to drive forward.



Our Principles

Residents' survey reveals satisfaction levels with Council

The 2022 Residents' Survey indicates that residents' general views on the council and our performance have stayed broadly consistent. Satisfaction levels with key services remains high and efforts to improve community safety and communication with residents appear to have been effective.

The survey, which took place over the summer, asked residents for their views regarding the council and specific service areas, their local area and other topical questions.

Feedback on the council's response to the pandemic was positive and residents were generally happy with our digitalisation efforts.

The continued importance of accessible in person options for older and digitally excluded residents was also made clear.

Areas for improvement include residents continuing to feel they have little influence over council decisions whilst development and car parking provision in the borough remain areas where residents were less satisfied.

[Residents Survey 2022.pdf \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)



Hello Ashford - finding out resident's views on our Town Centre changes

Using the engagement platform Hello Lamp Post, members of the community will be able to interact with objects around the town centre via their mobile phone.

Residents can strike up conversations with familiar street furniture such as benches, bins, flower beds, lamp posts, the bandstand and more.

Signs are placed in and around Bank Street and Middle Row, you can either text the number displayed on the sign or scan the QR code to receive information on the object.



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

Annual Performance Report 2022 – 2023
Key Performance Indicators

PI Status		Long Term Trends	
	Alert		Improving
	Warning		No Change
	OK		Getting Worse

Green Pioneer Annual Measures

Code & Short Name	Description	Baseline Figure	2022- 2023 Annual Figure	Latest Note
CP_KPI_01 Council's carbon footprint (tCO2e) Annual	Council's carbon footprint (tCO2e)	Annual measure – Baseline figure 3599 tCO₂e for Y2019/20 Work is ongoing to begin using the LGA toolkit and redefining our baseline to include scope 3 emissions, including: - staff commuting travel and top 3 contracts (Leisure – Stour Centre, Waste and Housing Maintenance).		In July 2019 Ashford Borough Council declared its aim to become carbon neutral in its own estate and operations by 2030. The Climate Change Advisory Committee (CCAC), leads on the commitment to act and achieve this agenda.
<p>In May 2021 officers initiated consultancy work with Laser Energy (our corporate estate energy provider) to establish the Council's own carbon baseline (on own assets and assist with the borough wide picture) with a view to modelling potential carbon descent plans for net zero for council owned assets. This returned a carbon baseline of 3599 tCO₂e for Y2019/20</p> <p>Detailed information on Ashford Borough Council's framework for climate action is included within - Climate Change Action - A Systemic Approach.pdf (moderngov.co.uk).</p>				

Code & Short Name	Description	Baseline Figure	2022- 2023 Annual Figure	Latest Note
CP_KPI_02 Council owned renewable energy provision (kWh) Annual	Total potential capacity of council owned renewable energy provision (kWh)	21-22 estimated average of 492,493.31 kwh per year.		<p>This is made up from metered readings from ABC portfolio which is 303,213.31 kwh plus 189,280 kwh which is designed in capacity for the Stour Centre (no meter available).</p> <p>The council has been proactive in installing Solar PV on its buildings since 2011.</p> <p>The importance of maximising the use of solar photovoltaic (PV) on Council buildings is understood and projects including the installation at Carlton Road - Stour Centre Car Park - Ellingham Industrial Estate - Blindrooms Lane are being explored.</p>
CP_KPI_03 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. 24.633 KWH consumed	37 Council managed charging points	<p>Ashford Borough Council has started a programme to install some EV chargers (EVCPs) throughout the borough. Residents and visitors can expect more places to charge electric vehicles as part of plans to accelerate the transition to cleaner modes of transportation. The council currently has 37 live council managed charging point bays.</p>
<p>As we install the EVCPs and go live with hardware and software, we will update our website and external sites such as Zap Map and use local media to advise accordingly. As part of our installation, we will be including 22kw and Rapids to future proof demand.</p> <p>This proposal will improve service by increasing access to charging facilities for the anticipated increase in electric vehicle users in the coming years. This will encourage the use of electric vehicles while reducing the environmental impact of vehicle emissions.</p>				

Code & Short Name	Description	Baseline Figure	2022- 2023 Annual Figure	Latest Note
CP_KPI_04 Air Quality	Number of Air Quality Management Areas	Annual measure – Baseline figure from 21-22 0 Air Quality Annual Status report produced each June	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 2022 Air Quality Annual Status Report (ashford.gov.uk)
CP_KPI_05 Area of land (km2) managed for nature conservation Annual	Area of land (km2) managed for nature conservation	86,156M2 of meadows created	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.

The council’s in-house landscape management service, Aspire, are proposing to make some changes to selected areas of land they manage including introducing areas of uncut grass for meadow creation. [The Creation of Meadows and enhanced Land Management Plans to support increased biodiversity: \(moderngov.co.uk\)](https://www.moderngov.co.uk)

Code & Short Name	Description	Baseline Figure	2022- 2023 Annual Figure	Latest Note
CP_KPI_07 Number of trees planted (net gain) supported	Number of trees planted (net gain) supported through ABC projects	Annual measure – Baseline figure from 21-22 40,000 trees have been planted across the borough so far	107,000 trees planted to date	As part of the Platinum Jubilee, Ashford Borough Council has been delivering a tree planning programme with the aim of planting one tree for each resident living in the borough in 2022. There will be almost 135,500 trees planted over the three year programme.
CP_KPI_08 Level of biodiversity in defined project areas Annual	Level of biodiversity in defined project areas	New meadow areas have been created at Queen Mothers Park and Singleton to date.	122,000 M2 of meadows	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.

Code & Short Name	Description	Baseline Figure	2022- 2023 Annual Figure	Latest Note																		
CP_KPI_11 Contamination rate in recycling loads Annual	Contamination rate in recycling loads	average total contamination rate for 21-22 was 13.72%	Top 4 contaminants in recycling (with average %) – again based on present figures Food = 4.4% Textiles = 2.2% Black bags = 0.76% Sanitaryware/nappies = 0.73%	<p>Recycling is collected commingled via an alternate weekly collection system using a 240-litre green wheeled bin, or clear sacks, with accepted materials including paper and card, cartons, plastic bottles and pots, tubs and trays, metal cans, and glass bottles and jars accepted at the kerbside. Residual waste is collected using 180-litre wheeled bins, and the council offers a weekly food waste and fortnightly garden waste service.</p> <p>Rejected contaminated loads, for example, contained black sacks, food waste, nappies and sanitary waste, as well as other non-recyclable items, are sent to the Allington Energy from Waste (EfW) facility, where due to their contamination, loads are incinerated, rather than being recycled.</p>																		
CP_KPI_12 Reported incidences of fly-tipping Annual	Reported incidences of fly-tipping	Annual measure – Baseline figure from 21-22 1514 registered fly-tips.	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2020 – 2021</th> <th>2021 – 2022</th> <th>2022 – 2023</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>No. of fly tips registered</td> <td>2027</td> <td>1514</td> <td>1292</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fines Issued</td> <td>7</td> <td>48</td> <td>14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total £ paid in fines</td> <td>£775.00</td> <td>£3595.77</td> <td>£6450</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>					2020 – 2021	2021 – 2022	2022 – 2023	No. of fly tips registered	2027	1514	1292	Fines Issued	7	48	14	Total £ paid in fines	£775.00	£3595.77	£6450
	2020 – 2021	2021 – 2022	2022 – 2023																			
No. of fly tips registered	2027	1514	1292																			
Fines Issued	7	48	14																			
Total £ paid in fines	£775.00	£3595.77	£6450																			

Green Pioneer Quarterly Measures

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2022/23			Q2 2022/23			Q3 2022/23			Q4 2022/23			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
CP_KPI_06 Number of organisations committed to active travel plans cycling/walking	Number of organisations committed to travel plans cycling/walking	Officers are developing a proposal for a travel plan for Ashford Borough Council staff. Work continues to explore how we can work with a local business to pilot an active travel plan within the borough to inform further role out. Initiatives to get people cycling through 'guided rides' and bike repair and maintenance schemes have been successful and will continue to be offered.												
CP_KPI_09 Recycling Rate	% of borough waste recycled or composted	54.67 %	50%		52.67 %	50%		47.53	50%		49.6%	50%		Average for first 3 Quarters 49.6% - Data for Quarter 4 not currently available. DEFRA's nationwide recycling league tables.

Our recycling rate is cyclical with a fall seen over the Christmas, new year period. Garden waste collected during the winter months also falls with tonnages being low up until the warmer/drier days return in the spring.

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

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2022/23			Q2 2022/23			Q3 2022/23			Q4 2022/23			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
CP_KPI_10 Refuse Collection Success Rate	% of successful refuse collections per 100,000 refuse collections made.	99.96 %	99.96 %		99.96 %	99.96 %		99.97 %	99.96 %		99.96 %	99.96 %		Q4 based on Jan data only

[New Waste Contract.pdf \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#) This Cabinet report identifies the evaluation undertaken, the costs and the key changes and benefits that will occur from the proposed new waste contract.

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

Caring Ashford Annual Measures

Code & Short Name	Description	Baseline Figure	2022 – 2023 Annual Figure	Latest Note
CP_KPI_14 Number of all recorded crime figures Annual	Recorded Town Centre crime	Victoria ward which includes the town centre rolling year all crime figure 1894, 16% fall on previous year violence against the person 782, 7% fall on previous year.		Ashford Community Safety Partnership: an update on community safety activity in the borough 2022/2023 was presented to March's O&S committee Report Title: (modern.gov.co.uk)

In Autumn 2021, following a successful bid to the Home Office, Ashford was awarded almost £550,000 to make the streets of its town centre safer, particularly for women and girls. To date this has enabled:

- Installation of four CCTV cameras in Edinburgh Road Car Park
- Installation of nine public space CCTV cameras in key locations such as the station underpass and Beaver Road
- Improved monitoring of CCTV cameras at Elwick Place by switching them to the council's monitoring centres platform
- Purchase and distribution of over £5k worth of safety equipment to the public
- Educational inputs to year six pupils around staying safe and healthy relationships
- Complete replacement of the Memorial Gardens fencing
- Creation of Safe Spaces and associated bystander training for staff who work within the town centre
- Additional APAC radios were purchased to improve connectivity for businesses and Safe Spaces
- Streetwise app development – over 5000 downloads so far and the app developer is in discussion with other boroughs due to its success in Ashford
- Improvements to the street scene through alleyway mirrors, litter picking equipment and pressure washer for Biffa
- Providing Ashford Street Pastors with a purposed vehicle, the first district mobile Safe Space. The vehicle supports the Street Pastors' activity in the night-time economy, allowing them to expand their operations to safeguard more vulnerable people

Code & Short Name	Description	Baseline Figure	2022 – 2023 Annual Figure	Latest Note
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Additionally, Ashford Borough Council has joined forces with Charlton Athletic Community Trust (CACT) a project which aims to use the power of sport and physical activity to create safer, stronger and more respectful communities by engaging with young people in some of our most high-need areas.

This project has now been funded until 1 April 2025. With Charlton Athletic to date provided 1-2-1 mentoring to 21 high risk young people as well as 'PL Kicks' sessions on a Friday evening which is regular attendance by at least 40 young people. The venue at Tower's School provides a central and safe location where coaches can have a positive impact on young people. This has helped to improve community cohesion and reduce risky and anti-social behaviours.

They have managed to increased their mentoring hours at Goldwyn and Tower's School by the number of referrals they have received for both locations. This has helped to reduce violent crime, improve the understanding of the services available to young people, parents, and the school. Additionally, they have managed to build stronger and healthier relationships with for young people.

Young people have expressed to having an increased understanding and awareness of their behaviours on themselves and others, and the risks associated to them.

CP_KPI_15	Number killed or seriously injured on Ashford's roads	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Collisions</th> <th>Casualties</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Fatal</td> <td>7</td> <td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Serious</td> <td>37</td> <td>44</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Slight</td> <td>199</td> <td>284</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>243</td> <td>335</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Collisions	Casualties	Fatal	7	7	Serious	37	44	Slight	199	284	Total	243	335	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Collisions</th> <th>Casualties</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Fatal</td> <td>4</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Serious</td> <td>50</td> <td>56</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Slight</td> <td>202</td> <td>311</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>256</td> <td>371</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Collisions	Casualties	Fatal	4	4	Serious	50	56	Slight	202	311	Total	256	371	The number of personal injury collisions at any location in Kent is available at www.crashmap.co.uk .
			Collisions	Casualties																														
Fatal	7	7																																
Serious	37	44																																
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Number killed or seriously injured on the roads Annual	Calendar year 2021	Calender year 2022 – subject to final revision from DfT.																																

Code & Short Name	Description	Baseline Figure	2022 – 2023 Annual Figure	Latest Note
<p>The County is served by three Highway Authorities: Kent County Council (KCC), Highways England and Medway Council. Kent Police collects over 60 pieces of statistical data for each injury crash for the whole county.</p> <p>Crashes are categorised by severity:</p> <p>Fatal - a crash resulting in a death Serious - detention in hospital, includes paralysis, fractures and severe lacerations Slight - includes whiplash, sprains and minor lacerations</p> <p>Human error is a factor in 95% of road crashes. Based on the Department for Transport's (DfT) figures the cost to the community of a fatal crash is around £1.9 million, a serious crash costs in the region of £216,000 and a slight crash costs £23,000. For more information about crash and casualty figures please see www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/road-safety/crash-and-casualty-data.</p> <p>Ashford Borough Council is committed to supporting the introduction of lower speed limits within the borough. It hopes to see more schemes being introduced and has adopted a Vehicle Speed Policy to help encourage this to happen.</p>				
CP_KPI_16 Number of play areas revamped/refreshed/replaced Annual	Number of play areas revamped/refreshed/replaced	This year, Brisely Farm and Goat Lees, completely refreshed the safety surfaces of both.	There have been three brand new play areas opened at the end of 2022 and beginning of 2023; Central Park, Park Farm, Rylands Road, Bockhanger and Spearpoint Recreation Ground, Kennington, which were part of the £1.1m Playground Regeneration Programme.	Ashford Borough Council is committed to providing local communities with high quality and accessible play spaces, and we continually seek to secure additional funding to maintain and strengthen the local play offer. Work on installing new individual pieces of play equipment in a number of play areas across the borough has started. Works includes the installation of new swings, springer units, multiplay units, climbing frames, seesaws and inclusive roundabouts.

Code & Short Name	Description	Baseline Figure	2022 – 2023 Annual Figure	Latest Note
CP_KPI_23 Indices of multiple deprivation score Annual	Indices of multiple deprivation score	152	152 – Last available update 2019	IMD - Rank of average rank (National) - 1 being the most deprived National rank out of 317 local authorities.
<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>				
CP_KPI_24 Health profile indicators	Health profile indicators for smoking prevalence, healthy weight and physical activity	Most recently available information source and trend data available at: Local Authority Health Profiles - OHID (phe.org.uk)	Smoking Prevalence in adults (18+), Source annual Population Survey 10,096 10.1% . Percentage of physically active adults, Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (based on the Active Lives Adult Survey, Sport England) 66.9% . Percentage of adults (18+) classified as overweight or obese, Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (based on the Active Lives Adult Survey, Sport England) 63.5% .	

Code & Short Name	Description	Baseline Figure	2022 – 2023 Annual Figure	Latest Note
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The One You shop continues to see an increase in visitor numbers delivering a variety of free health services. [Find out more details about the One You health shop located in Ashford's Park Mall shopping centre.](#)

A series of Eat Well Spend Less roadshows took place in July, August and September, across East Kent, focussing on providing targeted help and advice for local families who may need extra support because of rising food prices. The 12 events (three in Ashford) brought together a range of partner organisations (over 50 across the region) including Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust, frontline NHS staff and council officers, outreach organisations and charities, in one easy-to-access place. More are planned for 23-24. [Eat Well Spend Less a success \(ashford.gov.uk\).](#)

CP_KPI_25 Annual footfall to key leisure sites	Annual footfall to key leisure sites	Data from latest available quarter: Quarterly data Stour centre visitors 82,880 Julie Rose visitors 6,261	Data From latest available quarterly report with comparison from the same period the previous year Quarterly data Stour centre visitors 80,552 compared with 61,861 in prior year comparable period.. Julie Rose 7,899 compared with 6,328 in prior year comparable period.	A continued focus on growth of participation is resulting in positive growth in the majority of areas. Major investment works of the track replacement at Julie Rose Stadium took place during the year.
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Code & Short Name	Description	Baseline Figure	2022 – 2023 Annual Figure	Latest Note
CP_KPI_28 Exceptional Circumstance Payments spend Annual	Exceptional Circumstance Payments	Expenditure on ECP 2022 April to June £20,980.00	£65,568.55 ECP expenditure for 2022/2023.	An Exceptional circumstances Policy has been created by Ashford Borough Council to assist persons who have applied for Council Tax Reduction and who are facing 'exceptional circumstances'. This is to provide further assistance where an applicant has made a claim for Council Tax Reduction but do not qualify for support or even with support are unable to meet their Council Tax liability.
<p>Our Welfare Intervention Officers continue their support for people who need help with any housing or benefit related issues. Providing practical advice and signposting to other helpful organisations.</p> <p>Offering advice with; Council Tax, including Council Tax debt advice; Claiming Council Tax reduction or housing benefit; Claiming Discretionary Housing Payments or Council Tax Exceptional Circumstances Payments; General housing advice, including advice regarding rent arrears; Referrals for homelessness advice; General advice around claiming other benefits and support, such as Universal Credit, Foodbank vouchers, and other Department for Work and Pension benefits.</p>				
CP_KPI_29 Value of grants awarded via community grant fund. Annual	Value of grants awarded via community grant fund	£334,453.70 for 2021/22	£390.856.43 for 2022/23	Value of grants awarded via Community Grants Fund this financial year: £ 390,856.43 Broken down into: Capital £94,725 Event Reset £12,050 Community Services £162,520 Ward Member £121,561.43

Code & Short Name	Description	Baseline Figure	2022 – 2023 Annual Figure	Latest Note
<p>CP_KPI_31</p> <p>Trends in volunteering Annual</p>	<p>Trends in volunteering</p>			<p>The council funds a community connector project delivered by Ashford Volunteer Centre (AVC) aimed at supporting a resilient and sustainable local voluntary and community sector (VCS) in the Ashford Borough, which enables its independence, diversity and accessibility.</p> <p>During 2022/2023 the AVC has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • had 262 VCS group registered with AVC to receive info and signposting via an e-newsletter and social media on current support available for VCS such as training, funding streams, targeted help with cost of living issues, best practice, consultations etc. • Three in person courses delivered on Micro volunteering, Duke of Edinburgh Scheme and Virtual Volunteering. • Three VCS networking event delivered during the year • offered advice and support to 12 individuals looking to establish new community groups in the borough • 29 community groups received additional support on funding/governance/business planning • Over 260 community groups connected with the county-wide Kent Volunteers project in order to access over 100+ free volunteer management resources • Volunteers signposted to 194 organisations operating in the Borough of Ashford • To celebrate National Volunteers Week, AVC held 2 volunteer get-togethers, sent thank you cards to all registered community groups, and signposted to useful Volunteers Week resources e.g. templates for press releases, logos etc • Supported the ABC 202 Civic Awards and networked groups with the Lord Lieutenant of Kent’s webinar that promoted the Queens Award for Voluntary Services – the highest award for voluntary groups. • Highlighted environmental schemes, ideas and free training aimed at encouraging green principles • Worked with ABC green champions to help increase council ‘greener’ community group engagement

**Caring Ashford
Quarterly Measures**

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2022/23			Q2 2022/23			Q3 2022/23			Q4 2022/23			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status										
CP_KPI_13 Food Hygiene Rating	% of businesses in the borough with a food hygiene rating above 3*	99.2 %	98.5%	✔	98.8%	98.5%	✔	98.8%	98.5%	✔	98.5%	98.5%	✔	

Ashford Borough Council's Annual Food Service Plan 2022/23, includes a review of performance in delivering official food controls during 2021/22 is available at: [Food Services Plan 2022/23.pdf \(moderngov.co.uk\)](https://www.moderngov.co.uk/2022/03/24/food-services-plan-2022-23/)

CP_KPI_17 Council Affordable Housing - New Build	No. of additional new build affordable homes delivered by council housing	17			0			0			4			Regrettably delivery on site has stopped due to Stodmarsh nutrient neutrality. We are however able to report that we are just completing on 4 x shared ownership homes on the Chilmington site - these are 4 x Jarvis s106 acquisitions.
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[Housing Revenue Account HRA Business Plan 2022 -2052 including Financing and Affordable Homes Pro.pdf \(moderngov.co.uk\)](https://www.moderngov.co.uk/2022/03/24/housing-revenue-account-hra-business-plan-2022-2052-including-financing-and-affordable-homes-pro/)

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2022/23			Q2 2022/23			Q3 2022/23			Q4 2022/23			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status										
CP_KPI_18 Council Affordable Housing - On-Street Purchases	No. of additional on-street purchase affordable homes delivered by council housing	3			1			1			2			Two properties were completed in Q4 this period - one in FairView and one in King's Prospect. These are both street purchases for the HRA stock

As listed in previous quarters this way of acquiring properties is not as competitive as it was during recent years since the property market boomed over the early part of last year when the stamp duty holiday was in place. There are reports that the market is slowing down so the suitability of such an approach in the market will be re-evaluated as things progress.

CP_KPI_19 Homelessness Presentations	No. of homelessness presentations	391			466			394			631			Q4 is cyclically the quarter with the highest presentations, following the quieter Christmas months and as families deal with money and family pressures following the festive period. However, there were an additional 227 presentations compared to Q4 2021/22.
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The reasons for increases in presentations are in the main due to affordability issues and also private sector landlords leaving the market. Despite this sharp upturn the housing options team has managed these presentations and the number of placements into temporary accommodation has remained fairly static as a result. The team are continually assessing the availability of alternative housing for those under threat of homelessness and have been successful in procuring private properties via the social lettings agency. However the continued impacts from a lack of affordable housing delivery due to Stodmarsh is adding to the pressures for those waiting in temporary accommodation.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2022/23			Q2 2022/23			Q3 2022/23			Q4 2022/23			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status										
CP_KPI_19b Homelessness Preventions (still in accommodation)	No. of households where homelessness was prevented	24			28			27			30			

The latest data tables on local government housing including Ashford Borough Council, covering social housing sales, homelessness, and affordable housing supply are available at the following links: [Social housing sales](#) [Homelessness](#) [Affordable housing supply](#)

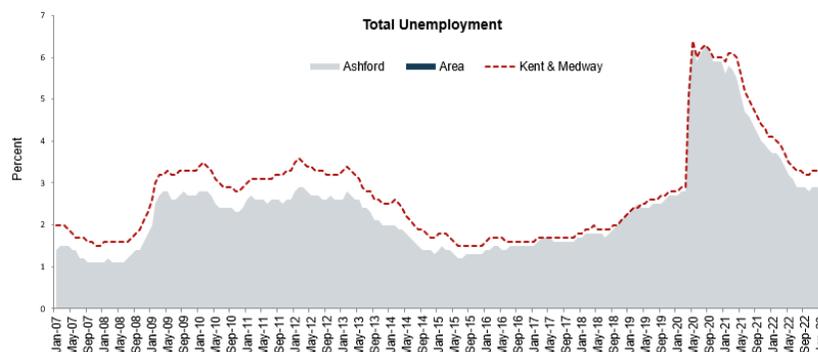
Temporary Accommodation has seen a further increase in demand and is forecasting an additional pressure of £197,000, [Novembers Quarterly Financial Monitoring: \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#) this is a total variance of £400,000 on the original budget. This trend is reflected across the County.

CP_KPI_20 Disabled Facilities Grants Completed	No. of disabled facilities grants administered by the council	19			20			20			32			Total 91 completed cases for the year. Highest completion seen in a year.
CP_KPI_20b Disabled Facilities Grant Spend	Actual spend per month for disabled facility grants	£196,521.61			£284,750.48			£309,199.04			£235,990.22			Final payment month, backdated payments may increase the total.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2022/23			Q2 2022/23			Q3 2022/23			Q4 2022/23			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status										

This report sets out the findings of a review into the Councils' processes for administering Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's) and disabled adaptations in the Council housing stock [Disabled Adaptations Review.pdf \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

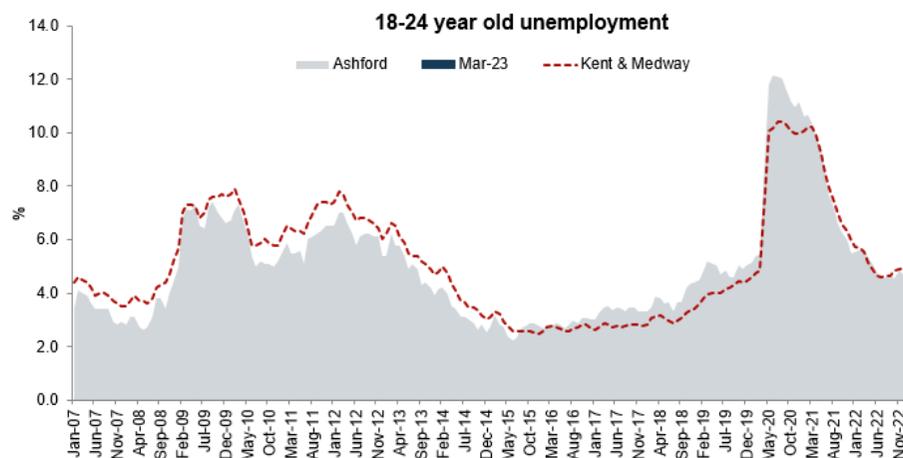
CP_KPI_21 Unemployment	Unemployment figures taken monthly from Kent County Councils Economy and employment data.	3.2%	3%	3%	3%	More information available within - Economy and employment data - Kent County Council 14.9% or a 430 fall on the previous year.



March 2023

Area	Number	Rate	Number change since last month	Percentage change since last month	Number change since last year	Percentage change since last year
Ashford	2,465	3.0%	+85	+3.6%	-430	-14.9%
Kent & Medway	38,765	3.4%	+920	+2.4%	-5,190	-11.8%

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2022/23			Q2 2022/23			Q3 2022/23			Q4 2022/23			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status										
CP_KPI_22 Unemployment 18-24yr olds	Unemployment 18-24yr olds taken monthly from the Kent County Council economy and employment data	4.9%			4.9%			4.7%			4.9%			More information available within - Economy and employment data - Kent County Council 12.5% or 65 fall on the previous year.



18-24 unemployment

Area	Number	Rate	Number change since last month	Percentage change since last month	Number change since last year	Percentage change since last year
Ashford	455	4.9%	+20	+4.6%	-65	-12.5%
Kent & Medway	7,110	5.1%	+210	+3.0%	-550	-7.2%

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2022/23			Q2 2022/23			Q3 2022/23			Q4 2022/23			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
CP_KPI_26 Benefit Change of Circumstance Processing	Average time taken to process a benefit change of circumstance in no. days	1.94	10		2.17	10		2.14	10		1.91	10		Benefit change of circumstance processing time continues to remain on target.
CP_KPI_27 Benefit New Claim Processing Time	Average time taken to process a new benefit payment claim in no. days	28.78	28		27.72	28		26.1	28		24.97	28		Processing time returned to target following Q1 delay in the processing of a number of new claims in Exempt Supported Accommodation and Temporary Accommodation due to delays in obtaining clarification regarding subsidy implications from the DWP
CP_KPI_30 Number of tickets sold local lottery Scheme	Number of tickets sold local lottery scheme – generating x amount.	Since start of scheme 17 Feb 2022, 16,614 tickets			Since start of scheme 17 Feb 2022, 24,106 tickets			Since start of scheme 35,305 tickets sold			Since start of scheme 46,134 tickets sold			Lottery – Tickets sold to 01/04/23 46,134, generating £27,680.40 income for good causes

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2022/23			Q2 2022/23			Q3 2022/23			Q4 2022/23			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status										

Income direct to good causes rose by 10p to 60p from each ticket sale from 7 Nov when change takes effect.

Information about the Ashford Community Lottery is available from [Ashford Community Lottery: Easy online fundraising for good causes - Ashford Community Lottery](#)

CP_KPI_32 Support to 'vulnerable' groups through leisure centre activity	Support to 'vulnerable' groups through leisure centre activity	<p>New in this quarter: Refugee Football; refugee football starting with Kent Refugee Kids at Spearpoint Cardiac Rehab; now hosted at the Stour Centre the cardiac rehab service re-located from Kingsnorth 2 days per week</p> <p>Ongoing projects and activities: SEND Activities; partnered with a local inclusive dance school to provide free facilities for their pilot scheme, aimed towards SEND 16-24 year olds. Refugee Support; now accommodating 135 Afghanistan and Ukrainian refugee families with free membership. This was extended to Ukrainian refugees during this quarter</p> <p>Saturdads; a weekly soft play session targeted towards male caregivers spending time with their children.</p> <p>Silent Sunday (SEND); a weekly soft play session targeted towards children up to 12yrs with special educational needs</p> <p>Learning Difficulties Group, East Kent NHS Foundation; This is a 10- week course where supervised access to the gym and an exclusive Aqua Aerobics class is offered.</p> <p>75+ free swimming; was launched recently in Q2 and now has 9 members. Local link ups to Age UK are aiming to boost participation.</p> <p>Fit for Life; (Julie Rose) programme continues to grow in popularity with excellent feedback</p>
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An update on the Freedom leisure contracts was provided to members prior of November's Cabinet.

**Targeted Growth
Annual Measures**

Code & Short Name	Description	Baseline figure	2022 – 23 Annual Figure	Latest Note
CP_KPI_37 Percentage of creative industries in the borough	Percentage of creative industries in the borough	8.6%	8.3%	<p>Creative industry enterprises Ashford 2022: 540 enterprises equating to 8.3% of all enterprises fall of 5.3% on the year (30) a 0.9% decrease (-5) fall on 5 years.</p> <p>Kent 9.4%</p> <p>Creative industries in Kent</p>
CP_KPI_40 Percentage of tourism related businesses in the borough	Percentage of tourism related jobs in the borough	6.2%	6.2%	<p>Most recent data 2021</p> <p>Tourism enterprises in Ashford 2021: 410 enterprises representing 6.2% of enterprises. this is a 1.2% (5) fall on the previous year but a 12.3% increase from 5 years ago. Employing circa 5000 people.</p> <p>Kent average 8.6%for 2021.</p> <p>Food & Drink Production Industries in Kent 2022</p> <p>Economy and employment data - Kent County Council</p>

**Targeted Growth
Quarterly Measures**

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2022/23			Q2 2022/23			Q3 2022/23			Q4 2022/23			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status										
CP_KPI_33 Business survival - current vacancy rates	Business survival, measure based upon our business rates records Current Vacancy rates	8.65%			9.4%			9.2%			9.2%			5423 properties - 343 exemptions and 154 empty reliefs
<p>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.</p>														
CP_KPI_34 Ashford town centre vacancy rate	Ashford town centre vacancy rate	15.4			15.5			15.2			14.3			Apr-23 - 335 units surveyed 48 empty (14.3%)

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2022/23			Q2 2022/23			Q3 2022/23			Q4 2022/23			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status										

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.

Vacancy rates peaked at 20% in September 2020, due to the effects of the Coronavirus pandemic. Although improved from the low, vacancy rates remain significantly above the previous low of 8% in November 2017, and remain significantly above national benchmarks, which were 12% in January 2022

[Ashford Town Centre Reset - Strategy Action Plan.pdf \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

CP_KPI_35	Contribution to budget from commercial investments utilising the budgeted figures provided as part of the councils budget books. Measure to start from Sept 20	92.2			81.5%			88%			93%		Figure based on Ellingham, Carlton Road, Elwick Place, International House, Matalan and Wilkos.
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The Corporate Property Annual Performance Report 2021/22 reviewing revenue performance of the Council's corporate property portfolio during the financial year, as well as advising on its expected future performance: [Corporate Property Performance Annual Report 2021/22](#)

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2022/23			Q2 2022/23			Q3 2022/23			Q4 2022/23			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status										
CP_KPI_36 Vacancy rates (in our corporate property)	Vacancy rates (in our corporate property)	8%			6%			6.5%			9.7%			

Site	Square foot let	Total square foot	Percentage let
Ellingham	64,397 sf	64,397 sf	100.0%
Carlton Road	37,244 sf	42,065 sf	88.5%
Elwick Place	92,026 sf	104,391 sf	88.2%
International House	71,101 sf	82,462 sf	86.2%
Total	264,768 sf	293,315 sf	90.3%

Major sites that we acquired for commercial/investment purposes included. Please note Park Mall and the Commercial Quarter are not included as these were purchased for development and regeneration purposes.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2022/23			Q2 2022/23			Q3 2022/23			Q4 2022/23			Latest Note																
		Value	Target	Status																										
CP_KPI_38 Digital uptake	Digital uptake - % of total council /% Increase transactions completed electronically.	83	80		80.39	80		83	80		83.02	80		<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Jan-23</th> <th>Feb-23</th> <th>Mar-23</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Digital Transactions</td> <td>48712</td> <td>36326</td> <td>40526</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total Transactions</td> <td>56084</td> <td>42430</td> <td>48817</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Digital Uptake</td> <td>86.86%</td> <td>85.61%</td> <td>83.02%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Digital Transactions	48712	36326	40526	Total Transactions	56084	42430	48817	Digital Uptake	86.86%	85.61%	83.02%
	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23																											
Digital Transactions	48712	36326	40526																											
Total Transactions	56084	42430	48817																											
Digital Uptake	86.86%	85.61%	83.02%																											

The Customer Service, IT and Digital Strategy was adopted at the end of June 2022 with a key focus of keeping the customer at the centre of our services. [Customer Service IT Digital Strategy.pdf \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

CP_KPI_39 Social media engagement	Social media engagement	<u>Q1 (April-June)</u> Impressions Facebook: 977,240 Twitter: 62,471 Nextdoor: 91,593 Instagram: 2,747 Followers Facebook: 10,115 Twitter: 9,082 Nextdoor: 25,536 Instagram: 2,574	<u>Q2 (July-Sept)</u> Impressions Facebook: 867,487 Twitter: 47,088 Nextdoor: 123,428 Instagram: 8,766 Followers Facebook: 10,459 Twitter: 9,112 Nextdoor: 26,407 Instagram: 2,633	<u>Q3 (Oct-Dec)</u> Impressions Facebook: 798,723 Twitter: 27,170 Nextdoor: 172,687 Instagram: 11,724 Followers Facebook: 10,679 Twitter: 9,101 Nextdoor: 27,004 Instagram: 2,677	<u>Q4 Jan-March 2023</u> Impressions: Facebook: 522,101 Twitter: 21,731 Nextdoor: 110,663 Instagram: 5,105 Followers: Facebook: 11,002 Twitter: 9,109 Nextdoor: 27,996 Instagram: 2,718	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, 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
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Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2022/23			Q2 2022/23			Q3 2022/23			Q4 2022/23			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status										
													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.	
CP_KPI_41	Parking usage	243,026			259,506			277,199			289,988			
Parking usage	Ashford and Tenterden Car Parks													

New Car Parks

- Adleys Yard car park opened in March 2023 bays. This has 19 bays, including a dual EV charge point/disabled bay

We can also ensure that people visit and stay in our communities by deploying technologies that improve access and services for all of our consumers. Our cashless parking system is accessible in all car parks for individuals who wish to pay using a mobile device. This has been a tremendous success, with strong client participation.

**Our Principles
Annual Measure**

Code & Short Name	Description	Baseline figure	2022 – 2023 Annual Figure	Latest Note
CP_KPI_49 Complaints resolved at Stage 1	% of complaints resolved as stage 1	85.62%	92.13%	527 stage 1 complaints received Jan-Dec 2022, of which 45 escalated to stage 2. Significant increase in complaints seen compared to the previous year with housing complaints seeing an increase.
CP_KPI_50 Mean Gender Pay Gap	The difference in average pay between men and women in the council's workforce.	8.8%	7.3%	7.3% Data is retrospective so relates to 31 March 2022 - Ashford Borough Council's statistics on the gender pay gap for 2021/22 The difference in average pay between men and women in the council's workforce, expressed relative to men's earnings. A positive figure indicates that women are paid less than men on average. A negative figure indicates that the average pay for women in the organisation is higher than the average pay for men.

**Our Principles
Quarterly Measures**

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2022/23			Q2 2022/23			Q3 2022/23			Q4 2022/23			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status										
CP_KPI_42 FOI Response Rate	% of freedom of information requests responded to within 20 working days	98%	95%		95.6%	95%		100%	95%		98%	95%		202 requests received in the Q4 period 2 completed late. Across the year 759 requests received 17 completed late ~98% completed on time
CP_KPI_43 Business Rates Collection	% of national non-domestic rates collected by the council - cumulative figure per month	30.12 %	24.75 %		56.38 %	49.5%		82.11 %	74.25 %		98.6%	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
CP_KPI_44 Council Tax Collection Rate	Percentage of council tax collected - cumulative figure per month	30.1%	24.57 %		57.25 %	49.14 %		85.57 %	73.71 %		97.5%	98.25 %		

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2022/23			Q2 2022/23			Q3 2022/23			Q4 2022/23			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
CP_KPI_45 Percentage of invoices paid on time	Percentage of invoices paid on time	1 st April 2022 – 17 th March 2023 Invoices paid within 30 days of the date of the invoice - 96.56 %												
CP_KPI_46 Gas Safety Certificates	% of ABC properties with up to date gas safety certificates	99.81 %	100%		99.74 %	100%		99.87 %	100%		100%	100%		
Our homes must meet the needs of local people of all ages, incomes and abilities to live sustainably and safely, our target is 100% and there is reviewed focus to achieve this consistently with a zero tolerance approach to access issues.														
CP_KPI_47 Number of days sickness per full time equivalent		For the complete year 21/22 8.04 days per FTE						10.41 days per FTE						

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2022/23			Q2 2022/23			Q3 2022/23			Q4 2022/23			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status										

Sickness absence per employee Q3 01 Oct 22 to 31 Dec 22 latest available data

A total of 1,293.77 days were lost due to sickness absence during the quarter 01.10.22 to 31.12.22; annualised this figure would be 5,175.08. FTE at 31.12.22 was 497.29. Therefore, total days sickness per FTE (annualised for a 12-month period) equals 10.41 days. Please note that this is a winter quarter which has been annualised and absence levels are higher during this peak period of seasonal illnesses.

[Annual Sickness Report 202122.pdf \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#)

CP_KPI_48	Average wait time for customer service calls - to be benchmarked with results across Kent	0h 01m 14s	0h 01m 38s		0h 01m 30s	0h 01m 38s		0h 00m 49s	0h 01m 38s		0h 00m 48s	0h 01m 38s		
Average Speed of Customer Service Calls Answered														

CP_KPI_51	number of ongoing litigation/court proceedings (volume measure)	Number of ongoing litigation matters = 92	Number of ongoing litigation matters = 109	Number of ongoing litigation matters = 118	Number of ongoing litigation matters = 125	Measure covers those litigation/court proceedings being furthered by legal services.
number of ongoing litigation/court proceedings (volume)		Number of cases where costs have been awarded against ABC = 0	Number of cases where costs have been awarded against ABC = 0	Number of cases where costs have been awarded against ABC = 0	Number of cases where costs have been awarded against ABC = 0	

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2022/23			Q2 2022/23			Q3 2022/23			Q4 2022/23			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status										
measure)														
Ongoing trend of Disrepair claims which now make up a third of all litigation cases in which we are defending matters and a decline in areas such as environmental crime cases where we are prosecuting matters.														
CP_KPI_52 number of new 106 files opened	number of new 106 files opened	Number of new 106 files opened - 10	Number of new 106 files opened - 6	Number of new 106 files opened - 4	Number of new 106 files opened - 7	Number of new 106 files opened - 7	Number of new 106 files opened - 7	Number of new 106 files opened - 7	Number of new 106 files opened - 7	Number of new 106 files opened - 7	Number of new 106 files opened - 7	Number of new 106 files opened - 7	Number of new 106 files opened - 7	<p>In the Q1 period, one Appellant chose to complete 27 s.106 Deeds for each of his two appeals. This reflects the high number of completed cases for this period.</p> <p>The Overview and Scrutiny Committee formed a Task Group to review the council's Section 106 process, recommendations available within the final report. S106 Task Group - FinalReport.pdf (modern.gov.co.uk) with a S106 Scrutiny Review - Update provides to the committee in May 22</p>
		Number of draft 106 agreements sent out - 4	Number of draft 106 agreements sent out - 7	Number of Draft 106 agreements sent out - 1	Number of Draft 106 agreements sent out - 1	Number of Draft 106 agreements sent out - 1	Number of Draft 106 agreements sent out - 1	Number of Draft 106 agreements sent out - 1	Number of Draft 106 agreements sent out - 1	Number of Draft 106 agreements sent out - 1	Number of Draft 106 agreements sent out - 1	Number of Draft 106 agreements sent out - 1	Number of Draft 106 agreements sent out - 1	
		Number of 106 cases completed - 56	Number of 106 cases completed - 3	Number of 106 cases completed - 4										

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2022/23			Q2 2022/23			Q3 2022/23			Q4 2022/23			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
CP_KPI_53 Planning Application Approvals	% of planning applications approved	85%	90%		90%	90%		92%	90%		87%	90%		

The national average performance for the percentage of planning applications approved is usually around 87 to 88%. As the financial year has progressed our performance here has stabilised to around target.

A recent update on the Stodmarsh situation was presented to Cabinet [Report Title: \(moderngov.co.uk\)](https://www.moderngov.co.uk), explaining the progress made towards a mitigation to this strategic issue.

CP_KPI_54 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)	50%	65%		69%	65%		88%	65%		78%	65%		
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Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2022/23			Q2 2022/23			Q3 2022/23			Q4 2022/23			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
CP_KPI_54 b % 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	82%	75%		79%	75%		77%	75%		76%	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 remains good across the broader period in respect of major application determinations. Q1 performance was below par but it was based on just 11 cases (i.e. 5 out of 12 is 55%). The cases that ran over the statutory target date were mostly subject to particular causes of delay and difficulty associated with S106, Stodmarsh, Committee referral and two were refused without agreement to an EOT from the applicant.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2022/23			Q2 2022/23			Q3 2022/23			Q4 2022/23			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status										
CP_KPI_55 Speed of Non-Major Planning Application Decisions	% of minor and other planning applications determined within 8 weeks	86%	75%		83%	75%		81%	75%		85%	75%		
CP_KPI_55 b % 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	90%	80%		89%	80%		87%	80%		86%	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 non-major schemes remains strong and above target.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2022/23			Q2 2022/23			Q3 2022/23			Q4 2022/23			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
CP_KPI_56	Number of live planning casework reducing backlog	817	550		831	550		985	550		792	550		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

Stodmarsh continues to be an affecting factor which is holding applications up (approximately 220 cases). In relation to Stodmarsh, officers are continuing to take cases to the point where proposals can be agreed in all other respects pending the nutrient mitigation solution.

February clearance week resulted in 143 applications being determined.

A recent vacancy has arisen in one of our Team Leader positions with recruitment being actively pursued. Otherwise, staffing resources remain fairly stable in the Development Management Team with most posts now filled on a permanent basis and workloads being managed accordingly. Further strategies are being deployed in order to continue to reduce the overall caseload of the service where possible, whilst accounting for the obvious constraints with Stodmarsh.