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**DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL
CORPORATE PLAN 2009 - 2012**

The Corporate Plan sets out the Dartford focussed elements of the Dartford and Gravesham Sustainable Community Strategy. An overall vision for the area has been developed which is:-

To make Dartford “the place of quality and choice, a place where people choose to live, work and enjoy their leisure time”.

Both the Corporate Plan and the Dartford and Gravesham Sustainable Community Strategy develop this vision under the following five themes:

- Economic Development and Regeneration
- Health and Well Being
- Safer Communities
- Environment and Transport
- Housing and Stronger Communities

In addition the Corporate Plan includes the following theme:

- A Council Performing Strongly

This document sets out the priorities for Dartford under each of these themes taking into account Council priorities, the Local Development Framework Core Strategy, the Sustainable Community Strategy, the Kent Agreement 2 (The Local Area Agreement), and the developing North Kent Multi Area Agreement. The Plan also reflects the priorities set out in key documents such as the Dartford and Gravesham Community Safety Plan, the Kent Health Inequalities Action Plan and the South East Plan and Regional Economic Strategy.

APPENDIX A**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION****STRATEGIC AIM: TO ENSURE THAT REGENERATION IN DARTFORD IS SUSTAINABLE AND OF BENEFIT TO ALL OF OUR COMMUNITIES**

Dartford is at the heart of the Kent Thames Gateway regeneration area. The Council is determined to create a Borough with a prosperous local economy which has a sufficient range of jobs and training opportunities to enable local residents to access local employment. The financial services, environmental technologies, creative industries and construction/logistics sectors have been identified as the ones most likely to lead to sustained growth of Dartford's economy, taking advantage of its strategic road and rail links and Government objectives for the Thames Gateway. A vibrant town centre at the heart of the area's economic, social and cultural life is also a key objective for regeneration in Dartford.

Dartford has seen a significant down turn in employment since 2008. Dartford's economy is based around some of the sectors which are most vulnerable to the current recession such as financial services, construction, transport and retail, hotels and restaurants. According to the economic development consultancy Local Futures Dartford has 44% of its workforce in the most vulnerable categories, which is the highest figure in Kent. Unemployment in the Borough rose by some 1081 between April 2008 and April 2009. This is a 132% increase compared to a 103% increase in Kent and Medway over the same period, 122% in the Government Office for the South East region and 86.4% in the UK as a whole.

The unemployment rate in Dartford in April 2009 stood at 3.3%, up from 2.4% in February 2009. This is slightly below the Kent and Medway average and the UK average, but above the South East England average of 3%. Local Futures suggest that even if the recovery is underway by the second half of 2009 unemployment is likely to rise to 4% in Dartford by December 2009.

The Council will therefore work with partners to support local business and to develop employment opportunities in the sectors outlined above. The Council recognises that there are clear opportunities presented by the environmental technologies sector. The location of Suscon and the Nucleus on The Bridge provides a focus for the development of this sector. A pilot project is also being undertaken to retrofit properties to make them more energy efficient. Should this be successful it will lead to a major programme of national significance, which will have an employment impact, as well as lowering carbon emissions, improving the housing stock and lowering energy costs.

The Ebbsfleet Valley also offers opportunities for the development of the financial sector of the local economy, however the recession has hit this sector of the economy badly and development of the site is unlikely within the timescale of this plan, however there are a number of enabling actions which the Council can take to help bring the

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site forward for development such as bidding for Transport Infrastructure Funding and working with partners to complete the planning of the site.

Skills levels need to be raised if the Dartford economy is to be grown. Qualification levels in Dartford are lower than the national and regional averages. For example in 2008 38.5% of the working population of Dartford was qualified to at least NVQ Level 3, compared to a South East average of 50.8% and a UK average of 47%. The 2005 Thames Gateway skills audit suggested that 60% of the new jobs created in the area would require Level 3 qualifications or above. Dartford and North Kent as a whole has a large commuting population, the Council's aim is to provide sufficient new jobs to at least match the number of new, economically active residents coming into the Borough whilst providing opportunities for those who currently commute outside of the Borough.

Transport is also seen as being a key enabler for economic development and regeneration in Dartford and the wider North Kent area. Substantial progress has been made in developing a strategic programme of transport investment in Kent Thameside. It is recognised that transport infrastructure can help accelerate the upturn in the economy when it happens, however the current downturn in the housing market means that developer contributions are not available to forward fund programmes. There therefore needs to be a mechanism which would allow the programme to be funded and the costs later recovered from the beneficiaries of the investment. Through negotiations with MAA partners the Council has identified an approach to funding for discussion with Government.

Fastrack is a highly successful public transport system; it is the key to the sustainable development of the major sites in Dartford and North Kent. Fastrack routes A and B are already operating; C and D are dependant upon the development of Ebbsfleet Valley, which has been affected by the recession. There therefore needs to be an agreed funding mechanism. Funding for Fastrack will also be sought under the Kickstart programme.

However improvements to the transport infrastructure are not simply about roads, the railways will play a major role in creating a sustainable transport system. The redevelopment of Dartford Station will be central to creating such a system. Ebbsfleet International Station opened in 2007 linking Dartford to major European destinations and the wider European high speed train network. In November 2009 domestic services will begin from the station, which will increase Ebbsfleet's attractiveness to business.

Dartford Town Centre does not presently fulfil its potential as a centre for community life and commerce. However a number of new developments and environmental improvements are planned which will transform the centre and confirm its role as a shopping, entertainment and service centre for the Borough as a whole. The Tesco development in Lowfield Street will play a key role in regenerating Dartford Town Centre, as will the refurbishment of Central Park. The Northern Gateway site, to the north of Dartford Railway Station, will be a mixed development of homes, employment and leisure facilities. It will support the overall regeneration of the town centre.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

- ED 1.** Create opportunities for growth in the financial services, environmental technologies, creative industries and construction/logistics sectors of the Dartford economy, particularly at Ebbsfleet Valley, The Bridge and Crossways.
- ED 2.** Improve access to jobs for local people through skills, training and other initiatives.
- ED 3.** Ensure the delivery of timely transport infrastructure to support sustainable economic growth.
- ED 4.** Improve the economic performance of Dartford Town Centre against the standard range of health check indicators.

ACTIONS:

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	BY 2012 WE AIM TO HAVE ACHIEVED	LEAD OFFICER
Create opportunities for growth in the financial services, environmental technologies, creative industries and construction/logistics sectors of the Dartford economy, particularly at Ebbsfleet Valley, The Bridge and Crossways	To support the growth of the environmental Technologies sector through IfS, Suscon and the Nucleus	Developed a plan for the delivery of an eco region within North Kent Created an integrated network of innovation and enterprise initiatives in Dartford.	Regeneration Director
	To support the growth of the financial services sector by ensuring the provision of high quality office space across the area	Planning policies in place which facilitate the provision of high quality office accommodation, particularly in the Ebbsfleet Valley.	Regeneration Director

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Improve access to jobs for local people through skills, training and other initiatives.	Ensure adequate provision of flexible incubation and grow- on space for SME's is provided.	Sites identified in relevant planning policies. Increase in the number of sites available.	Regeneration Director
	Work with MAA partners to establish an Employment and Skills Board for North Kent	Board established and an employer focussed training and skills strategy in place.	Regeneration Director
	Progress proposals in the MAA to create greater personalisation and integration of support for people seeking work	Integrated pathways created to help people return to work.	Regeneration Director
	Implement local employment initiatives.	Planning conditions for developments to include requirements to train and employ local labour.	Regeneration Director
Ensure the delivery of timely transport infrastructure to support sustainable economic growth.	With MAA partners agree Memorandums of Understanding with the Highways Agency and Network Rail to agree a coordinated approach to growth and the development of sustainable transport objectives in the area.	Memorandums signed and a closer working relationship between agencies in the area.	Regeneration Director

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	With MAA partners agree with the Government a flexible single pot approach to funding for transport programmes, including the relaxation of end of year rules	Flexible funding arrangements in place	Regeneration Director
	Agree a forward funding model for transport and other infrastructure projects in Dartford and North Kent with the Government	Model agreed and in place	Regeneration Director
Improve the economic performance of Dartford Town Centre against the standard range of health check indicators.	Planning permission granted for Lowfield Street development and work underway on site.	First phase of development completed	Regeneration Director
	A master plan be agreed for the Northern Gateway site and a start on construction be made.	Construction of the Northern Gateway under way according to the agreed master plan	Regeneration Director

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INDICATORS:

INDICATOR	BASELINE	2009/10 TARGET	2010/11 TARGET	2011/12 TARGET
NI 164 Proportion of population aged 19-64 for males and 19-59 for females qualified to at least Level 3 or higher	37.8%	39%	40%	41%
Percentage of economically active people in employment	68%			
LI CP/ED 2 Increase in Dartford Town Centre's position in the Kent hierarchy	16th	15th	14th	13th
NI 171: New business registration rate (KA 2 INDICATOR)	60.7 per 10,000 resident population over 16	Awaiting latest figures from Data hub		
NI 172: Percentage of small businesses in an area showing employment growth	12.8%	Awaiting latest figures from Data hub		

APPENDIX A**HEALTH AND WELL BEING****STRATEGIC AIM: TO REDUCE OVERALL HEALTH INEQUALITY IN DARTFORD AND TO PROVIDE FOR A RICH AND VARIED QUALITY OF LIFE**

Dartford has the highest life expectancy gap, between the average age of death in deprived wards and that in the most affluent, in Kent, at some 14 years. This is higher than in some inner London Boroughs. The problem is concentrated in wards such as Joyce Green, Bean and Darenth, Littlebrook, Stone, Greenhithe and Swanscombe. Since 1998 teenage conception rates in the 15 – 17 age group has fallen by 2.3%, however in Kent as a whole the reduction has been 9.6%. Dartford has one of the highest percentages of smokers in Kent with 27.1 % of the population smoking, compared to 24.6% in Kent as a whole. This rises to nearly 40% in Swanscombe. Only 19.8% of the population eat healthily, compared to 25.4% across Kent. There are also lower levels of adult physical activity with 8.9% of the population undertaking at least 30 minutes of physical activity three times per week, compared to 11.2% in Kent as a whole, and 11.6% in England. Childhood obesity rates in Dartford, at Reception year are 11.6% compared to 9.4% for Kent as a whole. The Council, the West Kent PCT and the Voluntary Sector have been active in developing programmes in the area such as “Don’t Sit Get Fit” and a new health coordinator has been appointed.

The Council is working with NHS West Kent to identify a set of principles which will underpin our approach to the provision of additional health and social care services in Dartford, linked to the major developments planned in the area.

The Council has made large scale investments in sport and leisure facilities across the Borough, including Princes Park Community Stadium, Acacia Hall, and Dartford Judo Club. Further improvements are planned to its range of Leisure and Recreation facilities, including a new swimming pool and sports hall, improvements and additions to Central Park and the creation of footpaths and cycleways. It is recognised that sport and leisure activities can have major health benefits and the Council’s Leisure Services team will work with NHS West Kent to develop programmes designed to help people enjoy healthier lifestyles

The Council’s planning policies are designed to reduce the reliance on cars and encourage walking and cycling, by locating homes close to facilities, providing an improved public transport network and creating an attractive network of footpaths and providing green spaces as part of new developments, which meet the needs of a growing population.

The Council recognises the opportunities presented by the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. A number of venues in the Borough have been selected as possible training facilities for the Games.

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The Orchard Theatre is an important community asset and adds to the variety of attractions available to residents and visitors. The Council's aim is to tie the theatre in more strongly to the town centre's overall evening offer.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

HW 1. Reduce overall health inequality in the Borough.

HW 2. Increase the opportunities for participating in sporting, cultural and leisure activities.

ACTIONS:

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	BY 2012 WE AIM TO HAVE ACHIEVED	LEAD OFFICER
Reduce overall health inequality in the Borough.	In partnership with organisations such as the PCT introduce campaigns to encourage greater participation in sport and leisure activities in the Borough.	An increase in participation rates.	Regeneration Director
	Introduce a Borough wide "Don't Sit Get Fit" campaign and other projects designed to help people manage their weight.	A reduction in the levels of childhood obesity in the Borough.	Strategic Director
	Introduce health promotion campaigns to reduce smoking prevalence.	Reduction in smoking prevalence.	Strategic Director
	Introduce projects targeted at those most at risk of teenage pregnancy.	Reduction in the teenage conception rate.	Strategic Director

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	Produce planning guidance with NHS West Kent setting out the principles for the provision of health and social care services on development sites	Guidance agreed and implemented	Regeneration Director
Increase the opportunities for participating in sporting, cultural and leisure activities.	Use community facilities such as Princes Park and Acacia Hall to encourage people to become involved in sport. Expand schemes such as the Dartford Heath, Darent Country Park and Darent Wood volunteering schemes.	Higher rates of participation in sporting and voluntary activities.	Regeneration Director
	Implement planning policies seeking 30% greenspace on all major development sites and 20% on medium sites.	Planning Policies agreed and implemented	Regeneration Director
	Improving the integration of the Orchard theatre within the life of the Town Centre	Work with the theatre management to create a wider offer for the public.	Regeneration Director

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INDICATORS:

INDICATOR	BASELINE	2009/10 TARGET	2010/11 TARGET	2011/12 TARGET
NI 8 Adult participation in sport and active recreation (KA 2 INDICATOR)	17%	21%	26%	30%
NI 55 Obesity in primary school age children in Reception (KA2 INDICATOR)	11.6%	11.1%	10.6%	9.7%
NI 112 Under 18 conception rate	43.3 per 1000	41 per 1000	40 per 1000	39 per 1000
NI 120 All age all cause mortality rate (KA 2 INDICATOR)	613 per 100,000 pop	575 per 100,000 pop	561 per 100,000 pop	548 per 100,000 pop
NI 123 Stopping smoking	30% of adult population smoke	29%	28%	27%

APPENDIX A**SAFER COMMUNITIES****STRATEGIC AIM: TO CREATE A SAFER BOROUGH IN WHICH TO LIVE, WORK AND SOCIALISE**

The Dartford and Gravesham Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership has now published its Community Safety Plan for 2008 – 2011. The plan sets out its priorities for the area and actions which it intends to take over the next three years.

The Council also undertakes a number of regulatory activities designed to ensure the safety of residents. These include food safety, taxi licensing, the licensing of public houses and entertainment venues, parking enforcement and management of the CCTV network.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

SC 1. Increase public confidence.

SC 2. Reduce anti-social behaviour.

ACTIONS:

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	BY 2012 WE AIM TO HAVE ACHIEVED	LEAD OFFICER
Increase public confidence.	Improve the communication between communities and the CDRP through Parish Councils, community groups and the PACT panels.	10% reduction in the percentage of people perceiving ASB as a problem.	Strategic Director

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Reduce anti-social behaviour.	Tackle anti social behaviour caused by individuals or families through the Dartford and Gravesham multi agency anti social behaviour group.	Increased public confidence in the local agencies involved in tackling crime and to reduce the percentage of the public with a high level of perceived anti social behaviour in the local area to 15%.	Strategic Director
	Create designated alcohol control zones.	Reduction in alcohol related violence and street nuisance.	Strategic Director
	Continue to run Grabbacab in Dartford Town Centre.	Reduction in the percentage of the public who perceive drug use/dealing or drunk and rowdy behaviour to be a problem in their area.	Strategic Director
	Improve provision for teenagers and young people in parks and open spaces by providing suitable youth equipment such as multi use games areas and teen shelters.	Creation of safe accessible areas for young people of all ages.	Regeneration Director

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INDICATORS:

INDICATOR	BASELINE	2009/10 TARGET	2010/11 TARGET	2011/12 TARGET
NI 21 Dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime by the local council and police (LAA Indicator)	22%	N/A	N/A as Place Survey not undertaken in this financial year	32%
NI 39 Rate of Hospital Admissions per 100,000 for Alcohol Related Harm (LAA Indicator)	953	1024.4*	1089.6*	1148.6*
NI 117 16-18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) (LAA Indicator)	4.41%	4.15%	3.89%	3.63%

*(Target aimed at lowering a projected increasing trend)

APPENDIX A**ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY****STRATEGIC AIM: TO PROMOTE AN ENVIRONMENT WHICH IS ATTRACTIVE, ADAPTED TO CLIMATE CHANGE AND WHICH PROVIDES A REALISTIC CHOICE OF TRAVEL OPTIONS**

Dartford has a number of attractive assets, including its proximity to the Kent countryside, its parks and open spaces and its historic town centre. At the same time, its environment is compromised by its position on the strategic motorway network, which leads to congestion and pollution. The Council will continue to lobby for a Lower Thames Crossing, to reduce the amount of long-distance traffic needing to pass through Dartford on its way to destinations throughout Britain. In the meantime, it is necessary to pursue policies which mitigate these effects as far as possible.

In common with all other Councils, Dartford needs to play its part in dealing with the effects of climate change. These include measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, particularly carbon dioxide, and planning to deal with the increased risk of flooding.

DEFRA figures show that domestic carbon dioxide emissions per capita in Dartford are 2.7 tonnes per annum. This is below the national mean of 2.86 tonnes. However the total carbon dioxide emissions per capita in Dartford amount to some 10.9 tonnes per annum. This compares to a national mean of 10.6 tonnes.

The Council has joined the Local Authorities Carbon Management Programme, and has adopted a Carbon Management Action Plan in 2009. It will also pursue planning policies aimed at reducing carbon emissions.

The scale of development in Dartford offers new opportunities in terms of energy management and providing high quality living environments. The draft South East Plan has set a target of providing 17,340 new homes in Dartford, over the period 2006-2026. This level of housing growth will require careful phasing to ensure that housing supply is related to infrastructure provision, in particular transport capacity, water supply and waste treatment, the creation of local jobs and the provision of green infrastructure. However the new development sites will also offer an opportunity to reduce energy use and emissions through the provision of zero carbon homes and through technologies such as micro generation of renewable energy and Combined Heat and Power plants.

The Council is strongly committed to the energy efficiency and carbon reduction agenda via the exploration of the opportunities that exist in relation to retro fitting innovative energy efficiency measures to both Councils owned and private sector stock. Working alongside the Kent Thameside Institute for Sustainability the Council is embarking on a number of trial projects that will test current technologies and record both carbon savings and energy consumption, which in turn will contribute towards the Councils wider objective of reducing fuel poverty for its residents. Once the most effective and beneficial measures are agreed the Council will embark on programmes

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that will improve both its own housing stock and work in partnership with outside agencies in relation to the boroughs most energy inefficient private sector stock.

A satisfaction survey of new developments in Dartford showed that whilst there were high levels of satisfaction with the area as a whole, lack of parking space and poor management of communal and landscaped areas were seen as problems. The Council will develop its policies for the layout, design and aftercare of new developments to deal with these issues, and will implement these through the development control system.

Transport is a major issue for residents. In the 2006 General User Satisfaction Survey congestion was second only to crime in terms of the issues which needed to be improved. The new developments will increase pressure on the road system which cannot be met by building new roads. The emphasis in new development will therefore be on reducing the need for car use by increasing local employment opportunities, promoting local facilities and increasing accessibility by foot, bicycle and public transport. Fastrack routes A and B are now operational and passenger numbers have exceeded initial forecasts by some 50%. Additional routes will become operational over the coming years. The Green Grid is also being developed to link development areas across the Borough.

The Council's new recycling scheme (2007/08) has increased the recycling of household waste to 30%. This is being followed in 2008/09 with a key waste minimisation initiative.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

- ET 1.** Reduce carbon emissions.
- ET 2.** Ensure that development in Dartford is sustainable, with high standards of design, layout and energy efficiency.
- ET 3.** Manage transport demand in a sustainable way and increase travel options.
- ET 4.** Minimise the amount of waste requiring collection and disposal, and increase the amount of waste which is recycled.
- ET 5.** Ensure a high quality street scene.

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ACTIONS:

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	BY 2012 WE AIM TO HAVE ACHIEVED	LEAD OFFICER
Reduce carbon emissions.	To introduce a carbon management plan for the authority	A 35% reduction in the Council's carbon emissions.	Regeneration Director
Ensure that development in Dartford is sustainable, with high standards of design, layout and energy efficiency.	Introduce appropriate planning policies and work with developers to reduce energy use and provide high quality living environments.	Planning policies in place and being implemented through the Development Control system.	Regeneration Director
	To pilot retrofitting projects in the Borough	Retrofitting project underway across the Borough	Strategic Director
Manage transport demand in a sustainable way and increase travel options in the area.	Promote a pattern of development which ensures close links between homes and jobs and homes and facilities.	New developments created with a range of facilities and green links which promote walking and cycling.	Regeneration Director
Minimise the amount of waste requiring collection, and increase the amount of waste which is recycled.	Fully implement the new recycling and waste minimisation scheme across the Borough.	Recycling figures in the top quartile for District Council performance.	Executive Director

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<p>Ensure a high quality street scene.</p>	<p>Continue to work with the Cleaner Kent initiative and the Crime and Disorder reduction partnership to reduce fly tipping, graffiti and littering. Continue with a programme of Deep Cleans across Dartford</p>	<p>Increased resident satisfaction with cleanliness in the Borough</p>	<p>Executive Director</p>
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INDICATORS:

INDICATOR	BASELINE	2009/10 TARGET	2010/11 TARGET	2011/12 TARGET
NI 185 CO2 Reduction from Local Authority operations	22,344.6 tonnes of CO2 per annum	11.66% reduction on baseline	23.32% reduction on baseline	35% reduction on baseline
NI 186 Per capita CO2 emissions in the area (KA2 Indicator)	8.16 tonnes	7.85 tonnes	7.55 tonnes	7.27 tonnes
NI 188 Planning to Adapt to Climate Change (KA 2 Indicator)	Level 0	Level 0	Level 1	Level 2
NI 192 % Of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	22%	30%	32%	34%
NI 195 Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly posting) (KA 2 Indicator)	7%	8%	7%	6%

APPENDIX A**HOUSING AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES****STRATEGIC AIM: TO FACILITATE QUALITY, CHOICE AND DIVERSITY IN THE HOUSING MARKET AND TO CREATE STRONG AND SELF RELIANT COMMUNITIES**

Dartford is experiencing one of the greatest periods of change in its long history. There is therefore a need to ensure that local people and communities are involved in the decisions which affect their lives and that the development which takes place is relevant to their needs and aspirations. There is also an opportunity to help communities to thrive and become self reliant through participation in voluntary and community organisations.

The Council's approach to housing is to put the needs of the local community first, while also recognising the wider factors which shape the housing market. The Council wishes to promote a stable community which sees Dartford as its long-term place of choice, with a quality of life and a breadth of facilities which meet the needs of young and old alike. It considers that in the long-term, family housing with gardens is the type of housing product which is most able to adapt to the changing pattern of housing demands, and most likely to promote strong and stable communities. The Council is also determined to ensure that its own housing stock and that in the private rented sector meets the Decent Homes standards. The Council will also take steps to ensure that empty homes in the Borough are brought back into use.

The housing sector has been one of those hardest hit during the recession. House prices in the Borough fell by 11.9% between the first quarter of 2008 and the first quarter of 2009, compared to 14% in Kent as a whole. However rate of fall appears to be slowing. Prices in Dartford fell by 2.5% between the last quarter of 2008 and the first quarter of 2009, compared to 8.2% in Kent as a whole. There are variations between housing types. Over the period April 2008 to April 2009 the price of detached properties declined by 4.5%, whilst between the last quarter of 2008 and the first quarter of 2009 they actually rose by 4.9%. In terms of flats between April 2008 and April 2009 prices fell by 7.5% however between the last quarter of 2008 and the first quarter of 2009 prices rose by 15.4%. However the price of semi detached properties fell by 19.9% over the period April 2008 to April 2009, whilst between the last quarter of 2008 and the first quarter of 2009 they fell by 10.4%.

The fall in house prices has led to a substantial fall in the number of houses being built, which has in turn slowed down the development of key sites in the Borough, such as Eastern Quarry. The Council will work with partners, using initiatives such as the Kickstart Housing Delivery Programme to bring forward housing delivery and associated infrastructure projects. The Council also believes that the North Kent region should be a priority area for a "Single Conversation" with the Homes and Communities Agency.

The Council will continue to promote sport, culture and leisure as ways of engaging the community in positive activity, building on its recent achievements with the

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development of Princes Park Community Stadium, the Dartford Judo Centre, the skatepark in Central Park and its ongoing support of The Orchard Theatre. It will also engage with volunteer groups and organisations, for example through its “Salute to Youth” programme. The Council will also examine whether community development programmes could be included as part of the community element of Section 106 agreements.

The Council will engage with the community on important decisions affecting Dartford. A series of major consultation exercises has been held about the future of Central Park and the Town Centre as a whole. However in the Place Survey, undertaken in late 2008, Dartford had lower levels of satisfaction amongst residents with the local area and a lower percentage who believed that they belonged to their neighbourhood than regional or national averages. However a higher than average percentage of residents believed that they could influence decisions in their locality. Levels of volunteering are also lower than the national average.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

- HS 1.** To meet the housing needs of the Borough
- HS 2.** To promote self reliant communities.
- HS 3.** Increase the percentage of both the private rented and public housing stock reaching the Decent Homes standard.

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ACTIONS:

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	BY 2012 WE AIM TO HAVE ACHIEVED	LEAD OFFICER
To meet the housing needs of the Borough.	Agree a Local Development Framework Core Strategy setting out the appropriate mix of housing sizes and types to meet the needs of the Borough.	All newly-planned developments comply with the relevant LDF policies.	Regeneration Director
	Ensure that there is sufficient land supply to meet development needs in the Borough.	Sufficient land identified to meet requirements.	Regeneration Director
	Maximise the return of empty private sector properties back into use to meet the need for housing in the borough.	Increasing numbers of empty homes being returned to use	Strategic Director
To promote self reliant communities.	Promote volunteering activity around projects such as the restoration of Central Park and the use of facilities such as Princes Park, Acacia Hall and the Judo Centre.	A thriving voluntary and community sector with extensive public involvement in the development of the Borough.	Regeneration Director
	Investigate the possibility of including community development programmes as part of the community element of S 106 agreements.	Community development programmes in place on major developments.	Regeneration Director

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STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	BY 2012 WE AIM TO HAVE ACHIEVED	LEAD OFFICER
Increase the percentage of both the private rented and public housing stock reaching the Decent Homes standard.	Continue with the modernisation programme for all Council housing stock.	100% of the housing stock will have reached the Decent Homes standard.	Strategic Director
	Reduce the number of private sector rented dwellings which are in poor condition.	35 private sector rented dwellings to reach the Decent Homes standard.	Strategic Director

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INDICATORS:

INDICATOR	BASELINE	2009/10 TARGET	2010/11 TARGET	2011/12 TARGET
NI 3 Civic participation in the local area (KA 2 Indicator)	10%	N/A	N/A as Place Survey not undertaken in this financial year	12%
NI 110 Young people's participation in positive activities (KA 2 Indicator)	60%	N/A	68%	75%
NI 154 Net additional homes provided (KA 2 Indicator)	604	500	200	430
NI 155 Number of affordable homes delivered (gross) (KA 2 Indicator)	207	218	60	129
NI 158 % non-decent council homes	79%	80%	100%	100%
LI Number of empty homes brought back into use.	56	70	80	90

APPENDIX A**A COUNCIL PERFORMING STRONGLY****STRATEGIC AIM: TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY SERVICES THAT REFLECT PUBLIC ASPIRATIONS AND DEMONSTRATE IMPROVEMENT**

The Council is committed to the provision of high quality services. The authority has recently undertaken a number of consultation exercises to understand the views of local residents; these include the Place Survey and a major voting exercise across the Borough regarding the frequency of rubbish collection. The Council has published a set of service standards for the public, setting out the levels of service they can expect when contacting the authority. The Council has also published a Consultation and Engagement Strategy.

The Place Survey undertaken in 2008 showed that there had been a small drop in overall satisfaction with the Council, from 54% to 49%. Although the drop was below the national and regional averages. Despite this drop the Council has higher than average levels of satisfaction with its services overall, and high levels of satisfaction with key services such as waste collection and recycling.

The Audit Commission has assessed the Council as reaching Level 3 (out of 4) for the way it uses resources, which means the Council is performing well. In terms of the key performance indicators in 2007/08 53% of key performance indicators improved against a national average for Districts of between 57% and 59%. 22% of the Council's key performance indicators were in the top quartile compared to an average of 33% in Districts as a whole. The Council will use the Customer Service Excellence model to drive improvement, ensure that the Council recognises the diverse needs of local people and demonstrate high levels of customer satisfaction..

The Council recognises that it needs to identify opportunities for joint working with other authorities in order to realise savings. The Council has signed the Kent Commitment, designed to improve two tier working and identify savings through shared services. The Council will benchmark its services against other Councils in Kent and nationally.

The Council is also updating its approach to risk and resilience, ensuring that the organisation has identified the major risks to its operations and has plans in place to meet them.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

PS1 Deliver high quality services, offering value for money and demonstrating customer satisfaction and a culture of continuous improvement.

PS2. Inform and consult residents and stakeholders about Council services

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ACTIONS:

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	BY 2012 WE AIM TO HAVE ACHIEVED	LEAD OFFICER
Deliver high quality services, offering value for money and demonstrating a culture of continuous improvement.	The Council will introduce a Value for Money Strategy, to include cost benchmarking.	Level 3 for the Use of Resources.	Executive Director
	The Council will develop an Improvement Planning process across its services.	37% of key performance indicators, relating to the activities of Dartford Borough Council, in the top quartile.	Executive Director
	Identify opportunities for joint working, particularly in the provision of services, which will lead to efficiency savings.	Joint opportunities identified and agreed with savings targets identified.	Executive Director
	Develop the Customer Service model across Council services, including a programme of customer access reviews	The Council will be accredited under the Customer Excellence programme.	Executive Director
Inform and consult residents and stakeholders about Council services	Develop a Communications Strategy for the Council to complement the Consultation and Engagement Strategy	Communications Strategy in place.	Managing Director

APPENDIX A

INDICATORS:

INDICATOR	BASELINE	2009/10 TARGET	2010/11 TARGET	2011/12 TARGET
LI Overall satisfaction with the Council	49%	54%	59%	64%
LI % of key performance indicator basket which have improved	53%	59%	64%	65%
LI % of key performance indicator basket which are in the top quartile for performance	22%	27%	32%	37%
NI 179 Value for money – total net value of ongoing cash-releasing value for money gains that have impacted since the start of the 2008-09 financial year	N/A	£390,000	£400,000	
LI CP/PS 1 Use of Resources score	Level 3	Level 3	Level 3	Level
LI CP/PS 2 % of residents who feel very or fairly well informed about the Council	38%	50%	50%	55%

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