

DRAFT

**DARTFORD AND
GRAVESHAM
COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

**UPDATE
2007 – 2008**

VERSION 8

Foreword

The first Dartford and Gravesham Community Plan, "Towards a Future Place", was published in 2003. It set out an ambitious vision for the area in terms of regeneration, community safety, health, the environment, lifelong learning and leisure and culture. Much has been achieved. Major development projects such as "The Bridge" and "The Heritage Quarter" are underway. The first phase of the Fastrack Rapid Transit Network has been introduced and a new community hospital has been opened in Gravesend.

There is still much to be done however. We need to safeguard the future of our town centres, in Dartford and Gravesend. We need to reduce levels of crime and improve educational attainment in the area. The new developments which are coming to Dartford and Gravesham must be sustainable and offer real benefits to local people. This will be a challenging agenda and now is the right time to update and revise our Community Strategy.

We are not going to produce a new Community Strategy at this point, for the following reasons. We are still awaiting Government Guidance on producing new Sustainable Community Strategies, a new Local Area Agreement is due to be negotiated by April 2008, and the Government published a White Paper on the future direction of Local Government in October 2006. This revision and update is therefore designed to set out the aims and objectives of the partnership up until April 2008. Preliminary work will also be undertaken on producing the next Sustainable Community Strategy for Dartford and Gravesham.

The Dartford and Gravesham Local Strategic Partnership does not deliver services itself, instead it works with partner agencies and groups to identify overall priorities for the area, coordinates plans and activities to ensure that those priorities are addressed, and that services are delivered in the most cost effective manner. Set out below are a series of themes and targets which focus on the priorities which have been identified by local people.

PRIORITY ISSUES (not in priority order)

1. REGENERATION, EMPLOYMENT AND TRANSPORT

2. EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

3. THE ENVIRONMENT

4. HOUSING

5. HEALTH AND WELL BEING

6. CRIME AND DISORDER

7. LEISURE AND CULTURE

8. COMMUNITIES

REGENERATION, EMPLOYMENT AND TRANSPORT

AIM: To build strong and sustainable communities in Dartford and Gravesham

WHY IS THIS A PRIORITY?

- By 2026 24,700 new homes are scheduled to be built in Dartford and Gravesham.
- By 2026 50,000 new jobs are to be created in Dartford and Gravesham.
- 76% of Dartford and Gravesham residents believe traffic congestion has got worse in the last three years (2003 GUSS).
- 23% OF Dartford and Gravesham residents travel over 20km a day to work compared to a national average of 14%. (2001 census)
- On a range of economic indicators, including yield, rental value and footfall, Dartford and Gravesend town centres are performing less well than their neighbours. (Kent County Council 2005)

OBJECTIVE	CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR	PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITY
1. Secure redevelopment, structural changes	Increase footfall in Dartford Town Centre by 5% from	1. Secure private investment in the town centres

<p>and environmental schemes which will enhance the attractiveness of Dartford and Gravesend Town Centres as places to shop, live and enjoy.</p>	<p>22,000 per week in 2005 to 23,100 per week by April 2008.</p> <p>Increase footfall in Gravesend Town Centre by 5% from 30,000 in 2005 to 31,500 by April 2008</p> <p>Average retail yield in Dartford and Gravesend Town Centres decreased from 7.75 in 2005 to 7 by April 2008</p> <p>Reduce vacancy rate in Dartford and Gravesend Town Centres by 5% from 8% to 7.6% by April 2008</p> <p>Increase rent in Dartford and Gravesend Town Centres, per metre squared, by 5%, from £470 to £493 per month by April 2008</p>	<p>2. Ensure the town Centres are safe places to visit.</p> <p>3. Ensure that the Town Centre environment is clean and welcoming.</p> <p>4. Ensure that there are regular and affordable public transport links to the Town Centres.</p>
<p>2. Increase the proportion of</p>	<p>Open an Easy access hatchery at</p>	<p>1. Ensure residents have the knowledge</p>

<p>Dartford and Gravesham residents finding local employment</p>	<p>The Bridge, with hot desk facilities for start-up businesses, supported and mentored by the Learning Shop, in partnership with NW Kent College and Start International, by September 2007.</p> <p>To partner a construction skill workshop at The Bridge providing job and training brokerage for construction and the distribution centre in partnership with the Gateway Knowledge Alliance, NW Kent College and Job Centre plus in December 2007.</p>	<p>and skill levels to be able to benefit from employment opportunities.</p> <p>2. Act as exemplar employers, employing people from disadvantaged groups, such as people with disabilities.</p> <p>3. wherever possible procure locally produced goods and services</p>
<p>3. Increase usage of public transport and provide alternatives to the car.</p>	<p>To complete the Thames Way Fastrack infrastructure scheme and secure with partners a convenient access route from Thames Way for Fastrack to service the station, by November 2007.</p>	<p>1. Develop company travel plans</p> <p>2. New developments to have facilities for their communities which removes the need to use a car</p> <p>3. Walking buses</p>

	<p>Develop and agree a scheme for the Northfleet embankment to Gravesend Fastrack connection, by December 2007.</p> <p>Local Development Frameworks for Dartford and Gravesham to include clear measures for reducing dependence upon the car, including the provision of local facilities, and improved pedestrian and cycle access. LDF's to be approved by April 2008.</p>	<p>and Safe Routes to Schools Projects</p> <p>4. Healthy Living information to emphasise the benefits of walking and using bikes</p> <p>5. Better integration of public transport elements.</p>
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LEAD PARTNERSHIP: KENT THAMESIDE DELIVERY BOARD

EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

AIM: To help local people achieve their potential and ensure that they can compete in the local economy as it develops

WHY IS THIS A PRIORITY?

- 34.8% of the working population in Dartford and Gravesham have NVQ3 or above, compared to 46% in the South East. (NOMIS 2004/05)
- 13% of Dartford and Gravesham's residents have a first degree, compared to 20% nationally (2001 Census)
- 13% of 16 – 24 year olds in Dartford and Gravesham are not in education or training, which is equivalent to the national average (ONS 2005)
- 74% of residents in Dartford and Gravesham believe that the education provision in the area has improved or stayed the same over the past three years, compared to 86% nationally (2003 GUSS)

OBJECTIVE	CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR	PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITY
1. Increase qualification levels in Dartford and Gravesham	Publish a comprehensive skills strategy for Kent Thameside by December 2007.	1. Regeneration programmes to include training elements which concentrate on those with few or no qualifications 2. Encourage young people to stay in
2. Reduce the number of 16-18 year olds not in education and employment.	Reduce the number of 16-18 year olds not in education, employment and training, in the six	

	worst wards in Dartford and Gravesham by 20%, from 160 in 2005 to 128 by April 2008	education and training through campaigns involving schools, colleges, youth services and local community organisations.
3. Increase the number of pupils, in Dartford and Gravesham, gaining 5 or more GCSE's, graded A-G.	Reduce the number of 16-18 year olds, in the 6 worst wards in Dartford and Gravesham, who do not gain 5 GCSE's graded A-G by 20%, from 50 in 2005 to 40 by April 2008.	<p>3. Partners sharing and promoting information about learning opportunities.</p> <p>4. Sharing facilities and developing joint initiatives to promote learning</p>

THE ENVIRONMENT

AIM: To make Dartford and Gravesham a cleaner and greener place to live.

WHY IS THIS A PRIORITY?

- 55% of residents in Dartford and Gravesham were satisfied with the cleanliness of the area, compared to 60% nationally. (2003 GUSS)
- 22% of land and highway, in Dartford and Gravesham was assessed as having combined deposits of litter and detritus which was unacceptable, in 2004/05, compared to a national average of 18%.
- 17.4% of waste was recycled in Dartford and Gravesham in 2004/05, compared to a national average of 15.9%, however this is below both government targets and the European average.
- 52% of residents in Dartford and Gravesham think that rubbish and litter lying around is a very big or a fairly big problem in their local area, compared to 45% nationally. (2003 GUSS)
- In Dartford and Gravesham water usage, per capita, is 165 litres per day compared to 154 litres nationally (Ofwat 2004).
- In 2004/05 Dartford and Gravesham residents produced 14 kts of CO₂, per capita, per annum, compared to a national average of 10.5 kts. (DEFRA 2003)

OBJECTIVE	CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR	PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITY
1. Improve residents	Increase satisfaction with the cleanliness of	1. Act as exemplar organisations in

perceptions about the cleanliness of the area	the area by 13%, from 55% in 2003/04 to 68% by April 2008	terms of waste minimisation, including energy and water usage.
2. Improve recycling rates in Dartford and Gravesham	Increase the recycling rate in Dartford and Gravesham by 9.5% from 17.5% in 2004/05 to 27% by April 2008	2. Provide convenient opportunities for residents to recycle waste.
3. Reduce the amount of litter and detritus on land and highway in Dartford and Gravesham	Reduce the proportion of land and highway which is assessed as having combined deposits of litter and detritus that fall below an acceptable level by 8%, from 22% in 2004/05 to 14% by April 2008.	3. Develop education and awareness programmes. 4. Carry out multi agency enforcement action against those who litter, flytip, or are responsible for vandalism and graffiti.
4. Encourage individuals and groups to become involved in projects to enhance the local environment	Produce draft Green Grid Business Plan by October 2007 Ensure that Green Grid Framework objectives are incorporated into Dartford and Gravesham LDF Core Strategies.	5. Ensure that land and property under the control of partners is adequately maintained. 6. Undertake joint projects with local communities, which allow local people to enhance the areas they live in.
5. Ensure new development in	Set clear targets for	

Dartford and Gravesham is sustainable	water and carbon neutrality and energy efficiency on new developments in LDF Core Strategies by April 2008	
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HOUSING

Aim: Ensuring a supply of high quality housing which people can afford.

WHY IS THIS A PRIORITY?

- 24,700 new homes are to be built in Dartford and Gravesham by 2026
- 1,089 new houses were built in Dartford and Gravesham in 2004/05
- House prices in Dartford and Gravesham represent 4.3 times average earnings, which is slightly above the national average of 4.1. (
- 5.5% of the dwelling stock in Dartford and Gravesham is unfit, compared to 3.5% in the South East and 4.8% nationally. (Housing Condition Survey 2004)

OBJECTIVE	CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR	PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITY
1. Meet housing supply targets	1,055 houses per year built in Dartford and Gravesham up until April 2008	1. joint working to meet the accommodation needs of vulnerable groups
2.Ensure homes are	30% of homes built	

affordable for all sections of the community	on qualifying urban sites will be affordable homes	<p>2. Identifying how the infrastructure needs of both new and resident communities is to be met.</p> <p>3. Assessing the needs of key workers.</p> <p>4. Agreeing design principles</p>
3. Ensure that new housing in Dartford and Gravesham is of the highest design quality	The Dartford and Gravesham Local Development Frameworks will contain robust design requirements for all new developments. The Frameworks to be agreed by the Planning Inspectorate by April 2008.	
4. Increase the number of homes in the social rented sector which meet the "Decent Homes" standard.	<p>Increase compliance in Dartford from 64% in 2005/06 to 75% by April 2008.</p> <p>Maintain compliance in Gravesham at 96% until April 2008.</p>	

HEALTH AND WELL BEING

AIM: To ensure that the people of Dartford and Gravesham can lead healthy and active lives.

WHY IS THIS A PRIORITY?

- Life expectancy in the lowest fifth of wards, in Dartford and Gravesham, is 76.5 years, compared to 82.3 years for the highest fifth. (APHO/DOH 2000-2004)
- 23.1% of adults in Dartford and Gravesham are obese, which is slightly higher than the national average. (Health Survey for England 2002)
- 125.8 deaths per 100,000 population aged 35 and over, in Dartford and Gravesham, were attributable to smoking. This is in line with the national average. (DOH 2002-04)
- Rates of teenage pregnancy in Dartford, over the period 1998 – 2004, have risen by 1.2%, from 43.8% to 45%. Over the same period teenage pregnancy rates in Gravesham have fallen by 4.6%, from 43% to 38.4%. Whilst in Kent as a whole the rate of teenage pregnancy has fallen by 4.1%, from 41.1% to 37%

OBJECTIVE	CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR	PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITY
1. Reduce obesity in Dartford and Gravesham	Halt the year on year rise in obesity in children under 11 by 2010.	1. Joint initiatives to inform people about health issues and how to lead healthier lifestyles.
2. Reduce levels of teenage pregnancy in Dartford and Gravesham	Reduce levels of teenage pregnancy by 50% from 423 in 1998 – 2000 to 212 by 2010. Reduction	2. Enhancing sports and leisure facilities and offering increased opportunities to play

	to 253 by April 2008.	sport and exercise.
3. Reduce levels of smoking in Dartford and Gravesham	Increase the number of 4 week smoking quitters who attend NHS smoking cessation services from 1083 in 2005/06 to 1900 by April 2008.	<p>3. Encouraging walking and cycling through transport strategies.</p> <p>4. Developing health promotion initiatives for staff.</p> <p>5. Joint support for healthy living centres.</p> <p>6. Working with young people around issues such as drugs, smoking and sexual health.</p> <p>7. Ensuring health issues are addressed as part of wider regeneration proposals.</p>

LEAD PARTNERSHIP: HEALTH IMPROVEMENT FORUM

CRIME AND DISORDER

AIM: To make Dartford and Gravesham a safer place to live and work in.

WHY IS THIS A PRIORITY?

- Community Safety is seen as the first priority for improving the area by residents of Dartford and Gravesham. (2003 GUSS)
- In comparison to 2004/05 all crime in North Kent rose by 12.8% in 2005/06. This compares to a 10% rise in Kent and a fall of 1% in England and Wales.
- In North Kent Violence against the Person rose by 24.9%, in 2005/06, compared with the previous year. In Kent the rise was 17.3%, whilst in England and Wales the rise was 2%.
- Burglary Dwelling, in North Kent, rose by 25.3% in 2005/06, compared to an increase in Kent of 4.5% and a fall in England and Wales of 7%.
- Vehicle Crime in North Kent rose by 12.6% in 2005/06, compared to an increase of 5.2% in Kent and a fall of 3% in England and Wales.
- Drug offences in North Kent increased by 71.8% in 2005/06, compared to 25% in Kent and 23% in England and Wales.
- Criminal Damage in North Kent rose by 5.5% during 2005/06, compared to a rise of 4% in Kent and a fall of 1% in England and Wales.

OBJECTIVE	CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR	PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITY
1. Reduce crime in Dartford and Gravesham	Reduce the 2006/07 figure of 22,280 offences by 10%, to 20,052 offences by April 2008.	1. Ensure new developments are "Secure by Design" 2. Collect and share

2. Reduce Criminal Damage in Dartford and Gravesham	Reduce levels of criminal damage by 15%, from 5352 incidents in 2006/07 to 4,550 incidents by April 2008.	information about crime and anti-social behaviour.
3. Reduce anti-social behaviour in Dartford and Gravesham	Reduce the number of anti-social behaviour incidents by 2% from 20,232 in 2006/07 to 19,828 by April 2008	3. Using Council and private CCTV systems to aid the detection of crime.
4. Reduce violent crime in Dartford and Gravesham	Reduce the number of violent crimes by 7%, from 4,618 offences in 2006/07 to 4,295 by April 2008	4. Providing information to residents, particularly vulnerable groups, about steps they can take to enhance their safety.
5. Reduce drug use and dependence in Dartford and Gravesham.	Introduce drug intervention programme by April 2008	5. Using licensing powers to deal with problem venues
		6. Using joint enforcement activity to deal with criminal damage and anti-social behaviour.

LEAD PARTNERSHIP: DARTFORD AND GRAVESHAM CDRP

LEISURE AND CULTURE

AIM: Preserving the heritage of Dartford and Gravesham, whilst developing a thriving leisure and cultural offer.

WHY IS THIS A PRIORITY?

- Funding for North Kent from the Sports, Heritage and Arts Lottery funds has been low between 1994 and 2004.
- Culture is an acknowledged driver of economic development, and a broader economic offer will widen the appeal of Kent Thameside
- Enjoyment of and participation in cultural activities can enhance the quality of life for local residents
- The percentage of adults, in Dartford and Gravesham, who participate in at least 30 minutes moderate intensity sport and active recreation on 3 or more days a week is 16.9%, compared to a Kent average of 19.3%, and a government target of 75%.
- Dartford and Gravesham have the lowest levels of tourism in Kent
- Ebbsfleet International Station will be a nine minute rail journey from the Olympic site at Stratford.

OBJECTIVE	CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR	PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITY
1. To increase the amount of lottery funding awarded to Dartford and Gravesham	New Grant Officer appointed by April 2008.	1. Maximising the potential for cultural and leisure activities to encourage healthier lifestyles, youth diversion, lifelong learning and supporting the local economy.
2. Increase participation rates for sport in Dartford and Gravesham	To produce a cycling programme with local schools to coincide with the Tour de France.	

	Increase participation rates by 3.6% from 16.9% to 20.5%, by April 2008	2. Secure high quality sports and leisure facilities through partnerships with private sector providers.
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LEAD PARTNERSHIP: CULTURAL PARTNERSHIP

COMMUNITY

AIM: To involve the people of Dartford and Gravesham in the decisions which affect their lives and to ensure all communities benefit from regeneration in the area.

WHY IS THIS A PRIORITY?

- There are super output areas in Swanscombe, Northfleet and Joyce Green, which are in the 20% most deprived in England. (IMD 2004)
- Nearly 7,000 children, under 16, live in low income households in Dartford and Gravesham. (Choosing Health Profile 2006)
- 82.6% of Dartford and Gravesham residents believed that community activities had got better or stayed the same over the past three years, compared to a national average of 84.8%. (2003 GUSS)
- 4.25% of over 16's in Dartford and Gravesham volunteer in sport and active recreation for at least one hour per week, compared to a Kent average of 4.4%

OBJECTIVE	CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR	PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITY
1. Engage young people in positive activities in line with the Youth Matters Green Paper, and "Every Child Matters"	<p>Develop a comprehensive programme of out of school hours activities and opportunities for young people at secondary level by April 2010.</p> <p>Deliver a Stepping Stones programme in Dartford by November</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of Youth Strategy(led by Children's Consortia) • Development of Children's Play Strategies(District Councils) • Contribution to Sure Start and

	<p>2007 and Gravesend by March 2007</p> <p>Develop the Schools Sports Partnership in Dartford and Gravesham by December 2008</p>	<p>Children's Centre Boards</p>
<p>2. Engage vulnerable and hard to reach sections of the community in developing services and participating in activities.</p>	<p>Establish partnership protocol for involving young people in the development of policies and initiatives by all partner organisations by July 2007</p>	<p>Organisation of Older person's Forum (2 per year)</p> <p>Contribution to Ethnic Health & Social Care Forum</p> <p>Active Gravesham Strategy.</p> <p>Health Action Teams</p>

LEAD PARTNERSHIP: Dartford and Gravesham Borough Councils