



DARTFORD

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Corporate Plan

2024-2027

www.dartford.gov.uk



The Glimmer Twins
by Amy Goodman, celebrating:

Sir Michael Philip Jagger
Born in Dartford 26th July 1943

Keith Richards
Born in Dartford 18th December 1943

Foreword

Most councils will create Corporate Plans that set a strategic direction for the local authority. Here in Dartford we have typically tried to take things a step further by ensuring our Plan has relevance for the whole community - residents, businesses, voluntary organisations, local groups and anyone who contributes to our great borough.

I make no apologies for the fact that this Corporate Plan focusses on challenges as well as opportunities, and also sets ambitions that may not always be within our immediate control. Leading a council, and a community, isn't always about making the easy decisions, but sometimes about using the leverage and influence we have to achieve things that other local councils may not. From setting the lowest Council Tax of any district in Kent to investing in great play spaces, public facilities and family events when others are cutting back, the decisions we take are unashamedly local in their focus and I don't believe it should be any other way.

For this four year plan we took the themes we believed to be important to Dartford and tested them with a wide public consultation that has helped shape the plan we publish here. For each theme we are clear about the objectives

we have for our borough and what key actions are needed to achieve them.

I know every Council Leader will claim pride in their own authority but I think we can point to REAL achievements which show how Dartford achieves and delivers more than many authorities. The services delivered by council staff and contractors - including weekly waste collections, stunning parks, new play spaces, events and new social housing - seem to be welcomed and popular with taxpayers. We combine sound finances, resilience and low taxes at time when plenty of other councils are struggling financially. Not every council would (or could) invest in play spaces such as Buccaneer Bay, or continue to commit to a programme of amazing events that bring our communities together, but we do so proudly.

Challenges remain, particularly the growth and development ambitions sometimes imposed on us from others, but these must never be a reason to try any less to create a strong, creative, happy and successful community that provides a backdrop for decent people to build good lives.

That's what this plan is about.



Jeremy Kite MBE Leader of Dartford Borough Council



***It's Only Rock 'n Roll
(But I Like It),
The Rolling Stones, 1974***

'Delivering Council Services may not be as exciting as rock n' roll but we are proud to do it.'

Values and Priorities

Councils are not all the same. Some seem to achieve more than others.

Dartford Borough Council is relatively small compared with many neighbouring local authorities but our proximity to London means we have got used to handling substantial pressures - particularly from development and traffic.

Our response has been to focus relentlessly on common-sense and the 'resident voice', using it to guide our decision making. Over the years, it has meant that we have delivered more community facilities and great public spaces, more services guided entirely by resident-choice (like weekly bin collections) and lots of events and policies designed to knit our growing community together. Our council tax has been frozen more times than almost any other council in the country too!

One of our constant frustrations is that we are not responsible for half the things people assume we are. Many aspects of our world - like housing numbers, development regulations and even the need to get started on the Lower Thames Crossing are decisions taken by others. We could stand back and allow all these impacts to pass without much comment (and sometimes protest) but that wouldn't be a reflection of who we are. So, we tend to be outspoken and innovative - gaining a reputation for standing out from other councils. We don't mind that. There are worse things for a local council to be than active on behalf of local people.

All this means that our values and priorities are really important.

We're not really interested in what other councils do - we want to take common-sense decisions on behalf of our borough and the people who live and work here.



Dartford's Big Day Out



New Accessible Homes

In this corporate plan, many of the themes are interrelated but all are underpinned by a set of core values:



- Value for money. We will be clear about what we are doing, why we are doing it and how we measure the effectiveness of what we do. We will also strive to improve wherever possible



- We will champion equality, diversity and safeguarding



- Valuing council staff and capturing enthusiasm and passion to deliver excellent services for our residents



- Accessible services for all



- Celebrating the character, heritage and best of Dartford Borough



- Working in partnership and lobbying/influencing others wherever possible to lead and drive positive improvements



- We will maintain sustainable council finances and strong governance and ensure transparency in decision making

The Council's priority themes:



- Housing



- Economic Growth



- Traffic & Transport



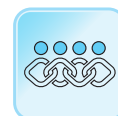
- Safety



- Public Health



- Environment



- People and Communities

Housing



Housing

Put simply, we want everyone to have safe, affordable housing.

Of course, that's easier said than done when housing is in short supply all over Britain. Here in the south rents can be especially high and purchasing a property can seem out of reach for many but especially those trying to take the first step on the housing ladder.

Everyone seems to agree that more homes are needed but, let's face it, building them is not always popular with existing communities. It's a big challenge for a council like ours and there are few easy solutions. Despite that, we're determined to make a difference and help as many people as possible, particularly established Dartford families and their children, enjoy safe and decent housing.

Some of our key ambitions include providing more of our own housing stock - rekindling the council house tradition that served our country's housing need well in the past, influencing the condition of homes in the Private Rented Sector and driving up the fairness and transparency of service charges levied by management companies on new private estates. We will also unashamedly prioritise the housing need of established Dartford families and their children.



Langley Square



Accessible housing at Mead Crescent



Building Communities



Our ambitions

- ✓ Ensure that our homes are well maintained and empower tenants to shape and influence their own communities
- ✓ Relieve homelessness in our town, work to eradicate the causes of it and end rough sleeping
- ✓ Encourage well-designed new housing that offers a genuine mix of tenure, style and affordability
- ✓ Continue to intervene directly in the affordable housing sector by rekindling the tradition of building Council Houses for the benefit of local people
- ✓ Support a strong, high quality, private rented sector by driving up standards and cracking down on bad landlords and ensuring those residents paying private management fees are treated fairly
- ✓ Provide a high quality and responsive housing service that's built on respect for aspiring and existing tenants. We want to be practical, honest and straightforward in all the information and advice we give
- ✓ To use planning powers to control new housing development and create sustainable places where the closeness of community facilities like schools, shops, leisure, public transport and recreation minimises the use of vehicles and allows people to live as part of a healthy, sustainable community. We will consider the availability of infrastructure such as schools, doctors, transport improvements and green spaces when considering any new development proposal
- ✓ In a planning system dominated by national policies and rules, we will nevertheless use the powers we do have to protect and enhance the interests of local communities
- ✓ Support flexible, life-time homes and develop planning policies which help build stable communities suitable for all types of families and every stage of life
- ✓ Strive for full compliance with the Regulator for Social Housing's consumer standards in delivering good quality homes & services to the tenants that live in our homes



Key Actions

- ✓ Develop pragmatic plans which respond to the views of Tenant Satisfaction Surveys and communicate openly with tenants and leaseholders about our proposals
- ✓ Support new affordable housing for sale and rent with our housing association partners
- ✓ Actively pursue opportunities to increase our stock of affordable council housing through new build and purchases
- ✓ Deliver a revised Private Sector Renewal Strategy to help improve housing conditions
- ✓ Continue to actively promote grants for disabled adaptations, home improvements, energy efficiency and to decrease fuel poverty in the private sector
- ✓ Maintain a housing register of those in housing need to enable them to access good quality affordable homes when it becomes available
- ✓ Test planning applications for new housing development against our adopted Local Plan - ensuring new builds meet our standards, that larger sites provide affordable housing and that a mix of house types and sizes is provided to create real communities
- ✓ Ensure that new housing development provides appropriate open space and responds to the requirements from partners responsible for infrastructure such as new schools, transport improvements and health facilities
- ✓ Resist planning permission for windfall housing sites that aren't identified in our local plan unless there is a clear benefit to the local community
- ✓ Give clear and straightforward advice on how to apply for Universal Credit/Housing Benefit/ Disability Benefits. To process claims as quickly and efficiently as possible and ensure residents are receiving the support to which they are entitled
- ✓ To continue working with experienced and empathetic partners to tackle homelessness and end rough-sleeping
- ✓ To use responsibly the laws and regulations available to us to increase the safety of housing and the health of residents
- ✓ Carry out housing repairs to our stock to a good standard and meet or exceed the Decent Homes Standard
- ✓ Maintain a robust Local Plan to identify where housing is appropriate and where it is not

How will Dartford residents, communities and businesses benefit?

Residents



- ✓ Residents should receive clear and straightforward advice about housing
- ✓ Those in poor housing or experiencing bad service from landlords, management companies and housing providers can expect support from us

Communities



- ✓ Communities should have a clear understanding of how our local plan works and recognise those locations where residential development is encouraged and those where it is not
- ✓ Neighbourhoods can expect built developments to contribute to local communities through good design, public realm and an uplift in quality. Our planning powers will support and enhance neighbourhoods across the Borough, using new development to improve a real sense of place and access to facilities
- ✓ We want to inspire mixed, vibrant and generous communities where good things happen

Businesses



- ✓ Being clear about where growth is planned can help enterprising businesses plan for the future. Good housing improves the attraction of the area to people with skills and abilities to drive our local economy forward. Our aim is for local businesses to meet a greater proportion of purchases and local demand for services

Darford Borough Council Corporate Plan 2024-2027

Economic Growth



Economic Growth

Economic growth is key to the future of the borough.

Places to work, career opportunities at all levels and services that all residents need are all reliant on a growing and changing economy. We will enable our businesses to grow and diversify by taking a positive approach to change and growth.



Dartford Business Awards



High Street 2023



Christmas Lights



Objectives

- ✓ Support employment for local people
- ✓ Retain and grow a prosperous economy with a plentiful choice of jobs to drive up local employment opportunities. To match employment growth with the encouragement of good and suitable places to work
- ✓ Encourage investment in the Borough, particularly the town and urban centres by providing a high quality public realm and city attractions to our town environment
- ✓ Help local businesses overcome barriers to growth
- ✓ To grow the cultural/leisure offer further, with The Orchard Theatre in particular acting as a catalyst to help further promote the town centre's arts and creative activities and mid-evening economy; with the potential to repurpose and reinvigorate under-used buildings/spaces
- ✓ Maximise the potential of business development close to Ebbsfleet International Station to support the productivity of investment and knowledge based employment in the Borough
- ✓ Harness the regional economic potential of Bluewater for local employment and business opportunities
- ✓ Seek to retain a high proportion of resident spending power within the Borough in order to support supply chains and businesses



Key Actions

- ✓ Plan for appropriate local commercial space to reduce the need for 'long commutes' to work and relief pressure on the highway network
- ✓ Maintain a positive approach to regeneration and updating existing employment floorspace within the urban employment areas identified in the Local Plan
- ✓ Require all major developers to commit to using local businesses and labour and to provide training when it's practical to do so
- ✓ Secure the delivery of local skills training or apprenticeships in new development projects
- ✓ Support provision of start-up business accommodation
- ✓ Protect existing identified employment areas for job generating uses
- ✓ Target growth sectors and support clusters of high technology and creative industries
- ✓ Encourage enlightened development that recognises the value of culture, art, leisure and sports to build stronger communities
- ✓ Achieving a vibrant Dartford Town Centre through continuing to create an attractive public realm in an enjoyable and accessible environment. To continue the strategy of permitting residential growth in existing urban and town centres to minimise urban sprawl and create stronger and more vibrant town communities. To grow a resident community in the town centre with a choice of housing for young and old, boosting the town centre economy and supporting a permanent sense of security
- ✓ Provide Licensing, Environmental Health and Safety services that support businesses to deliver safe, high quality services in the borough
- ✓ Use council procurement to support local businesses and pay bills promptly to support the local economy

How will Dartford residents, communities and businesses benefit?

Residents



- ✓ Better opportunities for jobs and prosperity
- ✓ More chances to develop skills and fulfil personal potential and ambitions
- ✓ Greater pride from investment in key neighbourhood and local centres
- ✓ Greater pride and satisfaction from being part of a greener, thriving economy
- ✓ Availability of a good range of services and workspace availability
- ✓ Likelihood of a longer period of residency within, and attachment to, a local neighbourhood.

Communities



- ✓ Investment in places will improve local quality of life
- ✓ Working with/making the case for investment from KCC, NHS bodies, DWP, etc. to improve provision
- ✓ Business rates contribute to better Council services

Businesses



- ✓ Opportunities for expansion and jobs growth supported by a growing population
- ✓ Stronger business partnerships
- ✓ Importance of Dartford town centre as a focus for economic activity, supported by housing growth and reinforcing the town as a focal point
- ✓ 'Yes we can' Support for vibrant and multi-sectoral base of SMEs, within a local economy that works

Traffic and Transport



Traffic and Transport

Whichever way you look at it, traffic has an undeniable impact on the life of Dartford residents. But there is more to our transport network than cars, and we want to create a brighter future with a range of transport opportunities.

We will work robustly with relevant authorities such as National Highways and KCC to lobby for infrastructure and solutions which positively impact the daily lives of our residents and keep our town moving.



Local Cycling and Walking



Bridge Between Dartford Station and the Town



Fastrack



Objectives

- ✓ Continue campaigning regionally and nationally for the basic right of residents to enjoy a fully operational road network
- ✓ To encourage the adoption of more sustainable methods of transport through the provision of reliable alternatives
- ✓ Support an enlightened and realistic approach to transport integration in order to minimise traffic impacts. Work with partners to encourage uptake of sustainable travel and manage the impact of vehicular travel on the strategic and local road network
- ✓ Continue focusing on the re-use of previously developed land, rather than increasing the footprint of the built environment, and maximising Fastrack routes and other existing good connections to public transport, services and infrastructure, particularly in the north of the Borough
- ✓ Support alternatives to the private car to enable people to choose to lessen their reliance on private vehicles, particularly at peak times, in order to reduce congestion
- ✓ Support a range of upgrades to the transport network, and a choice of sustainable and active travel options, with rapid and reliable public transport linking existing neighbourhoods and new developments to key destinations and facilities, together with a high quality and comprehensive walking and cycling network
- ✓ To achieve the upgrade and delivery of modern public transport facilities, and better interchanges
- ✓ To ensure cycling, walking and pedestrian routes are safe and well-lit
- ✓ Reduce the impact of traffic on air quality, both traffic passing through and generated within the borough.'



Key Actions

- ✓ Advocate strongly at regional and national level for the Lower Thames Crossing to relieve pressures on the M25 and local roads
- ✓ Continue developing strong working relationships with Kent County Council (as the local highways authority) and National Highways to lobby for improvements such as Junction 1a on M25 and other strategic measures to improve the road network
- ✓ To maintain a common-sense approach to encouraging sustainable methods of transport, recognising that adopting measures hostile to motorists is counter-productive. We will encourage modal shift through the delivery of attractive and viable alternatives to the private vehicle
- ✓ Create a more sustainable taxi fleet
- ✓ Implement the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan through new developments in partnership with KCC as highway authority supported by CIL funding where necessary
- ✓ Expand and refresh partnership working to support delivery of enhanced Fastrack services
- ✓ Support the implementation of the Fastrack tunnel between Bluewater and Ebbsfleet and require the opening of the Fastrack route through Ebbsfleet Valley as soon as possible
- ✓ Work with partners for options to improve Fastrack priority through key junctions to improve journey reliability when there is traffic congestion and support KCC in the roll out of electrical buses for the Fastrack service
- ✓ Deliver secure cycle parking in new developments
- ✓ Continue to advocate for improvements to Dartford railway station and stations across the Borough
- ✓ Continue to consult and implement the Dartford Town Centre Parking Study to ensure commuter parking is directed away from local residential roads
- ✓ Encourage the use of the rivers for the sustainable transport of goods and passengers as part of proposals for strategic scale development
- ✓ Encourage a stronger Dartford town centre economy and the use of local retail, employment and leisure facilities to reduce the length of trips by private car

How will Dartford residents, communities and businesses benefit?

Residents



- ✓ Improved air quality
- ✓ Healthy active lifestyles
- ✓ Fewer delays on local roads arising from congestion on the M25 and the strategic national network
- ✓ Ease of access to jobs and facilities
- ✓ Genuine options to move around the Borough, other than by private car

Communities



- ✓ More pleasant environment
- ✓ Better connected communities
- ✓ Opportunities for recreational cycling and walking as well as for journeys to work and school

Businesses



- ✓ Reduced time lost to congestion
- ✓ Improve access to local employment through public transport expanding pool of potential employees which is important in area of local employment where London acts as a drawer for employees

Safety



Safety

Dartford expects all partners to play their part in creating and enforcing a safe borough.

We will focus on tackling crime, disorder anti-social and illegal behaviour through our own services and will demand other statutory partners and public services to do the same.



Brewery Square



School Safety



Catching Flytippers



Objectives

- ✓ Utilise the tools and powers available to the council to tackle anti-social behavior (ASB)
- ✓ Help communities to feel safe by improving public perception of safety and reducing the fear of crime
- ✓ Reduce crime and disorder including violence against women and girls
- ✓ Set a high quality safety and health standard for businesses in Dartford Borough and assist businesses in meeting those requirements.
- ✓ Promote personal safety and reduce crime committed in Dartford businesses
- ✓ Operate safe and compliant spaces and events within the borough
- ✓ Carry out robust enforcement of littering, anti-social driving and fly-tipping offences
- ✓ Remove graffiti and other evidence of ASB quickly
- ✓ New buildings and spaces should be designed to avoid providing opportunities for crime
- ✓ Grow the mid-evening economy, particularly in the town centre: through diversified uses and activities, family friendly activities to be encouraged and supported in the town centre and district centres
- ✓ Residents and businesses are proud of the town centre and public places in the Borough and frequent them regularly so that the streets and spaces are well-used by law abiding people rather than freeing them up for anti-social behaviour to take place



Key Actions

- ✓ New developments should all be required to provide adequate lighting along new streets, within car parking areas and along key walking routes. Opportunities will be taken to upgrade lighting wherever possible through legacy developments in the Town Centre and elsewhere. Lobby KCC over replacement of street lighting with LED units
- ✓ New developments required to be designed to provide visual policing of streets and spaces and design out crime
- ✓ Enforcement of car parking controls to reinforce message to community that the Council will support enforcement of rules and care about the streets
- ✓ Maintain quality of environment, street cleaning and fly-tipping removal
- ✓ Maintain landscaping to ensure there are views along paths and footways are clear minimising hiding places and the perception of a poor environment
- ✓ Provide Licensing, Environmental Health and Safety services that support businesses to deliver high safe services in the borough
- ✓ To continue to make use of Community Protection Warnings/Notices and Public Spaces Protections Orders to reduce the detrimental impact that anti-social behaviour (ASB) can have on local people/communities
- ✓ To continue to take a leading role in the Community Safety Partnership, as part of the council's statutory responsibility to ensure that all statutory partners are working together to do all they can to reduce crime, disorder and ASB in Dartford
- ✓ To continue to make use of CCTV and evidence-gathering technology to improve public safety in and around the Town Centre whilst assisting partners such as the Police by producing evidence in order to bring offenders to justice
- ✓ Act promptly to reports from the public to the Council where non-compliance or crime occurs in Dartford businesses. This includes issuing litter Fixed Penalty Charge Notices, enforcement activities and the removal of graffiti and fly-tipping
- ✓ Increasing DBC enforcement officers visibility in Dartford (review of Kingdom access areas and introduction of Town Centre Managers)

How will Dartford residents, communities and businesses benefit?

Residents



- ✓ Residents will feel safe in their community, home and whilst visiting and using businesses in Dartford. They will live in a cleaner borough that they are proud of

Communities



- ✓ Improved sense of ownership of public areas and pride in our Borough
- ✓ Greater use of public spaces to bring communities together thereby out-numbering the negative influences

Businesses



- ✓ Safe routes for employees going to work
- ✓ Secure Dartford's reputation as a safe place to do business that cares about business wellbeing
- ✓ Assist with loss prevention, staff feeling safe when coming to work, deterring offenders and taking prolific offenders off of the streets making Dartford a safe place to work

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Public Health



Public Health

There are many factors which determine and affect the health of our communities.

While the delivery of health services is not controlled at Borough Council level we will work to identify inequalities in public health, lobby for accessible health services and ensure our powers are used effectively to improve health outcomes for Dartford people.



Promoting Better Air Quality



Wildflower Meadows



Outdoor gym, Central Park



Objectives

- ✓ We will consider the health impacts of everything we do to ensure our actions positively impact the health of Dartford's population
- ✓ To understand the type and causes of health inequalities in Dartford
- ✓ Create a Dementia Friendly Community, increasing awareness and understanding of dementia and of people living with dementia
- ✓ Create a practical strategy to improve the health and wellbeing of residents aged 50+ and reduce health inequalities
- ✓ Improving health and wellbeing, and air quality arising from congestion, through reducing the need to travel by private vehicle, particularly by retaining and providing jobs, services, shops, community facilities and open space at suitable locations close to residential areas and where good public transport services are within easy walking distance
- ✓ Protect and enhance existing green spaces whilst encouraging improved walking environments and sporting facilities
- ✓ Continue efforts to reduce pollution across the borough and promote better air quality



Key Actions

- ✓ Maintain an effective Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) collection system to secure payments from all new qualifying residential developments to support the provision of new facilities serving residents where a need is identified by the service providers, with an element reserved for Town/Parish Councils (or local community projects in the unparished northwest of Borough)
- ✓ To maintain an Infrastructure Delivery Plan and update this annually to identify the needs for new health infrastructure to meet the needs of new development
- ✓ Work with Director of Public Health in public health matters that impact on Dartford residents and businesses. Eg infectious disease safety and monitoring
- ✓ We will tackle the causes of health inequalities and this work will be led and monitored by our Health Inequalities Action Group
- ✓ We will underpin all DBC policies with an understanding of the interconnected social determinants that impact Dartford residents health and wellbeing; economy, employment, education and learning, leisure and physical activity, green space, pollution, crime and personal safety, social cohesion, volunteering, governance
- ✓ We will work closely with Primary and Secondary Health Care Providers to better understand what services are not being accessed and why and co-design and implement solutions that promote equality in health outcomes for Dartford's residents such as Falls Prevention and accessing diagnostic and mental health services
- ✓ Delivery of an Air Quality Action Plan
- ✓ To provide and improve childrens' playgrounds, skate parks and outdoor fitness gyms across the borough and demand the provision of new open spaces in new developments
- ✓ Provide a subsidised Pest Control Service for those in need

How will Dartford residents, communities and businesses benefit?

Residents



- ✓ Decrease in behaviours that negatively impact health such as smoking, poor diet, lack of exercise, alcohol abuse, poor sexual health. Improved access to primary and secondary health services
- ✓ Services and provision that recognise the changing health needs of residents at different life stages
- ✓ Greater access to parks and open spaces, and play areas and outdoor gyms will lead to improved fitness levels and mental wellbeing

Communities



- ✓ Interconnected policies that positively impact education, employment, income, social support and community safety and health and wellbeing
- ✓ Resource of committed volunteers, access to life skills and experience that can support delivery and governance of the voluntary and social sector
- ✓ Maintain local parks and open spaces that provide feature focal points to meet, be active/ play or relax

Businesses



- ✓ Thriving active communities support existing businesses and build economic confidence and innovation
- ✓ Being a Dementia Friendly business helps retain customer base. People with dementia will know that the business is accessible to them, values their custom and is committed to serving them (number of people with dementia is increasing, by making changes now businesses will be anticipating a growing need and legislation under the Equality Act 2010 to provide inclusive services.)
- ✓ A healthier community can lead to a reduction in staff absences'

Darford Borough Council Corporate Plan 2024-2027

Environment

Environment

How we preserve, enhance and celebrate the environment we live in is vital to the future of Dartford.

From tackling behaviours which negatively impact our streets to protecting and prioritising our natural environment, we will both lead and influence others. We will adopt a net zero strategy that reflects the way people live.



Volunteers Looking After The River



Solar Panels on Civic Centre Roof



Heron on River Darent



Objectives

- ✓ To encourage a more responsible approach to consumption of resources and the management of waste
- ✓ Support the shift towards cleaner modes of transport with benefits to air quality and health
- ✓ Protect, enhance and increase green space for the benefit of people, wildlife and effective sequestration of carbon
- ✓ Increase biodiversity and encourage sustainable development and lifestyles
- ✓ Support the generation of renewable energy across the Borough
- ✓ Support decarbonisation in businesses, homes and the council's own properties
- ✓ Empower residents, businesses and communities to make informed decisions on climate change and access relevant grants
- ✓ Ensure the Borough is able to adapt to the effects of climate change and contributes towards reducing Dartford's carbon footprint through an increase in the proportion of water efficient buildings, the uptake of domestic and small scale renewable energy, and promoting environmental resilience, new greenspace and tree planting
- ✓ Prioritise path to a Net Zero Carbon future
- ✓ Promote sustainable local environments and habitats, achieving biodiversity net gain and active and healthy living, at new developments and through greenspace (including urban parks and open space) and landscape protection and provision, enhancing the green grid of footpaths, public rights of way, cycle routes, wildlife corridors, rivers and countryside links
- ✓ Existing green spaces, habitats, and tree coverage will be protected and enhanced, and new provision will be made, to absorb carbon dioxide, support biodiversity and reduce surface water runoff
- ✓ Protect good quality trees which contribute to the green environment and also absorb CO2 and provide urban cooling and plant new trees and landscaping where appropriate and opportunities arise
- ✓ The design, location and construction of development will: minimise energy consumption; regulate internal temperatures; provide appropriate natural shading on buildings, at street level and in open spaces; incorporate renewable or low/ zero carbon energy sources; and allow for other new sustainable technologies to be provided or readily incorporated in the future



Key Actions

- ✓ To increase the number of orchards and wildflower meadows across the borough
- ✓ To implement a service for the separate collection of food waste
- ✓ To develop the effectiveness of the street cleaning service
- ✓ Work with partners to support public transport use and improvements to infrastructure
- ✓ Support active travel in the Borough via the development of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan for Dartford.
- ✓ Produce a DBC EV Strategy and improve the network of EV Charge Points in the Borough
- ✓ Continue to signpost and promote energy efficiency schemes and grants to help businesses and residents decarbonise
- ✓ Continue to champion more sustainable development through the Local Plan
- ✓ Implement the DBC Air Quality Action Plan - monitor air quality and proactively support initiatives to reduce air pollution (e.g. anti-car idling campaigns and 'school streets' where school roads are closed to traffic at pick up and drop off times)
- ✓ Continue to support residents and businesses to reduce energy consumption and increase renewable energy purchase and generation via Solar Together scheme and Kent Energy Deal
- ✓ Improve the percentage of household waste reduced, recycled and composted
- ✓ Improve access to open space, food growing and wildlife through land management, community gardening and habitat creation
- ✓ Ensure planning policy protects urban open spaces and green infrastructure from development and maintains a Green Belt from inappropriate development
- ✓ Water efficiency: require all houses (via planning policy) to deliver the improved water efficiency of 110 litres per day to be secured through building regulations
- ✓ New development required to mitigate climate change through compliance with Local Plan and national policy
- ✓ Use of Tree Preservation Orders to protect trees where appropriate
- ✓ Enhance bio-diversity where new development takes place, on-site where possible or where more appropriate off-site to enhance habitats
- ✓ Require new developments to plant appropriate trees and landscaping through Local Plan policy
- ✓ Enhance the environment around the Rivers Thames and Darent whilst maintaining their flood and ecological functions of the land adjacent

How will Dartford residents, communities and businesses benefit?

Residents



- ✓ Benefits public health (active travel, improved air quality)
- ✓ Homes more energy efficient
- ✓ Reduction in waste/litter
- ✓ Improved access to enhanced green space
- ✓ Green job opportunities
- ✓ Improve knowledge of Climate Change/Climate action

Communities



- ✓ Help with resilience to effects of climate change
- ✓ Increase community engagement and cohesion
- ✓ Community pride in local area
- ✓ Improve knowledge of Climate Change/Climate action
- ✓ Community Gardening/Growing local produce
- ✓ Reduce neighbourhood waste through composting

Businesses



- ✓ Attractive and healthy environment encouraging employees and also supporting external investment
- ✓ Clarity on requirements where new development is proposed

People and Communities



People and Communities

We will build and support strong communities where people live rewarding lives and have access to opportunities, services and activities regardless of their background.

We recognise that culture, sport and heritage are excellent ways to develop communities and bring people together. As such we will provide, support and encourage a wide range of events, activities and facilities.'



St Georges Day Celebrations



Dartford Festival of Light



Dartford Museum



Objectives

- ✓ Enjoy successful partnerships with the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector
- ✓ Support communities to thrive and develop and prioritise community cohesion
- ✓ Continue providing grants to help community groups to thrive
- ✓ We will invest in and support the ambitions, opportunities and skills of Dartford's young people
- ✓ Involve Dartford's residents in decision making through consultation and engagement work
- ✓ Expand on and diversify the Council's events programme and spread activity across the borough to bring people together and enable community ownership, whilst supporting the development and delivery of safe events by others
- ✓ Community facilities that help promote social interaction as well as minimise the need to travel by car should be provided within local communities
- ✓ Develop sense of pride in place and community through existing cultural assets such as Dartford Museum, The Orchard Theatre and sporting venues, and use CIL and other funding to help improve and fill gaps in provision



Key Actions

- ✓ Deliver a range of dynamic and affordable cultural events and activities for residents
- ✓ Formalise the structure through which the council engages with the VCSE sector on strategic direction, providing a forum for discussion and challenge
- ✓ Deepen our understanding of the role the VCSE sector plays in supporting and improving the lives of Dartford's residents by working closely with the NWKent Voluntary Sector Alliance
- ✓ Use our grants to support community, arts and cultural projects
- ✓ Provide consistency in our approach to grant funding
- ✓ Consider opportunities for partnership approaches where appropriate
- ✓ Promote volunteering
- ✓ We will invest in building a Food Partnership in Dartford
- ✓ Improve Dartford Museum
- ✓ Lead the way on Apprenticeships – creating career pathways
- ✓ Create and publish an annual events calendar to communicate the broad range of leisure activities
- ✓ Where possible and practicable (for example on larger developments), new local community facilities will be provided as part of the development, creating attractive and vibrant places to live
- ✓ Ensure our facilities continue to meet the needs of our changing communities
- ✓ We will work closely with residents, community groups and key stakeholders to support the needs of community through the CIL programme

How will Dartford residents, communities and businesses benefit?

Residents



- ✓ Greater sense of ownership and belonging
- ✓ A range of facilities and services that contribute to quality of life
- ✓ Local residents receive the financial support they are entitled to

Communities



- ✓ Opportunities for growth of the community and diversity of choices
- ✓ Cohesive neighbourhoods without barriers to movement supports community to movement or progression

Businesses



- ✓ Mixed use neighbourhoods allow business to embed themselves into communities
- ✓ Successful communities with access to a variety of services and facilities retains spend within the area on local businesses and service



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Corporate Plan 2024-2027

