

Parish Partnership Report

KCC's Budget Consultation 2021-22

KCC estimates that there will be additional spending pressures of between £70m and £120m next year and we are therefore asking the residents of Kent to participate in a budget consultation to get feedback on potential areas of spending reductions and the level of Council Tax to help us shape and balance the 2021-22 Budget. The consultation can be completed by visiting <https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/finance-and-budget/our-budget> and closes on 24 November 2020. Alternative formats are available.

Kent's Plan Bee virtual summit 2020

A virtual summit to inspire and engage Kent residents in the plight of pollinators is attracting participants from across Kent. KCC's Plan Bee Summit will take place online on 16 November to highlight work already under way and bring people and organisations together to do more to help Kent's pollinators and nearly 200 people have already signed up to attend. The virtual summit takes place on Monday, November 16 from 10.30am until 12.30pm – whilst the event is now full, you can email planbee@kent.gov.uk to be added to the waiting list should a space become available.

Knock and Check – You can make a difference this winter

This winter, Kent County Council (KCC) is backing Kent Community Foundation's Surviving Winter Campaign "Knock and Check" and asking residents in Kent to reignite the community spirit seen during the initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic and do something small to help those most vulnerable during the cold winter months.

Small actions that could make a big difference include:

- Knock on the door to say "hello"
- Offer to pick up some food or add something to your next online order
- Drop off a slice of cake or take a packet of biscuits
- Plate up an extra meal or drop off a frozen dish
- Post a note with your contact number and / or the details of helplines and support available
- Share books and magazines or recommend a good read
- Volunteer for one of our fantastic voluntary organisations in Kent and Medway
- Spread the word to family and friends

To find out more about the 'Knock and Check' campaign and to download the resource directory visit www.kentcf.org.uk/knockandcheck

Kent County Council gives almost 20,000 food vouchers to families to help feed children during half-term

Kent County Council has given almost 20,000 food vouchers to vulnerable families to help them feed their children during the half-term holiday.

KCC's scheme allowed parents and carers of eligible children to apply for one £15 voucher per child, which could be spent in either Asda or Tesco. The scheme ran between Monday, October 26 and Monday, November 2, and during that time KCC received and processed applications for 19,875 children who were eligible to receive Free School Meals.

Any Kent resident who requires support with acquiring food or collecting medicine or prescriptions, or who has any other urgent needs, can call 03000 41 92 92 or visit www.kent.gov.uk/kenttogether 24 hours a day

'Domestic abuse is everybody's business' – Council supports awareness raising campaign

In response to unprecedented challenges faced by domestic abuse services during the Covid-19 pandemic, KCC commissioned the Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS) partnership, which consists of Clarion Housing Group, Look Ahead, Oasis Domestic Abuse Service and Victim Support to create and launch *Domestic Abuse: It's Everybody's Business*, a suite of free virtual events aimed at businesses, community groups and individuals to educate, inform and inspire action across the county in a bid to ensure more victims are identified and can find safety quickly and easily.

Taking place from 25 November to 10 December 2020, the events will coincide with [the UN 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence](#) campaign, and will enable attendees to know about, understand and act against this destructive social issue.

The pick and mix programme of 16 free online events can be accessed from anywhere, at times to suit varying schedules. From first introductions to professional development with CPD accreditation for social sector professionals, there is something for every knowledge level and expertise. Sessions are as short as 15 minutes and a maximum of 75 minutes

To make Domestic Abuse *your* Business, book today at: www.daeverybodysbusiness.org

New regional adoption agency launches to recruit adopters for vulnerable children in the South East

A new regional adoption agency "Adoption Partnership South East" has launched with a focus on recruiting more new adopters across the South East and accelerating processes.

Adoption Partnership South East has been formed in response to a Government mandate that all local authorities must join a regional adoption agency by April 2020. It brings together knowledge and expertise from London Borough of Bexley, Kent County Council and Medway Council to help find loving parents and families for children with a wide range of profiles and needs waiting for their forever home.

The new partnership will provide prospective adopters across the South East region access to a larger number of children helping to find the right match quickly and speeding up processes.

To find out more about Adoption Partnership South East, or if you are thinking of adopting a child visit: www.adoptionpartnershipsoutheast.org.uk

KCC completes countywide £7.1 million resurfacing programme

Kent County Council has completed a countywide £7.1 million resurfacing programme to extend the life of around 720,000 square metres of Kent's roads.

Known as micro surfacing, the specialist treatment seals the surface of roads to preserve the structure and prevent potholes. The treatment can preserve a treated road for eight to 10 years and extends the time before more disruptive and extensive renewal works are required.

KCC opposes possible big increase in housing targets

KCC has responded in strong terms to government proposals for increased housing targets across Kent.

In a letter to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, KCC Leader Roger Gough and Mike Whiting, the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, challenge the housing numbers for Kent and stress that providing the appropriate infrastructure must precede any major developments.

The letter has been sent to Mr Robert Jenrick in response to the government consultation on its proposals. KCC challenges plans to change the standard method for assessing housing numbers. It says even the most conservative figures highlight an overall increase of more than 30%. They include increases in the targets for new housing of 115% in Dover, 86% in Dartford and 71% in Tonbridge and Malling.

The overall annual requirement for Kent and Medway is already forecast to rise from 7,577 homes a year to 12,073 (a 60% increase) following the current standard method. The proposed changes would increase this by a further 2,835 to 14,908 homes a year.

KCC stresses that it supports the Government's growth ambitions and says the county has consistently delivered more new homes than other local authorities in the south east. Together with the county's district councils, it is also involved in discussions with the government about an "Infrastructure First" strategy. It also recognises the government's commitment to build 300,00 new homes a year.

However, it says the formula behind the new proposals penalises many of the areas across the county which have already delivered significant growth.