

COMMUNITY LEARNING AND SKILLS

Annual Accountability Statement 2024/25



Purpose

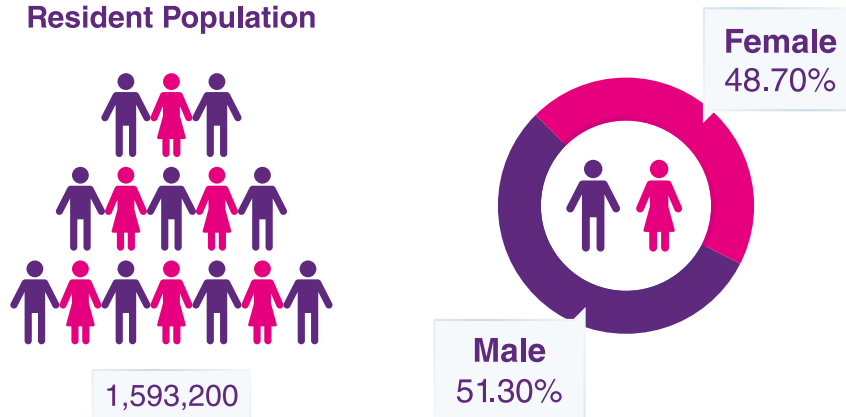
The purpose of Kent County Council's Community Learning and Skills Service is to provide and secure learning opportunities for Kent's residents which will: engage and build confidence, prepare them for further learning and employment; improve essential skills in areas such as English, ESOL, maths, digital skills; equip parents/carers to support children's learning, and improve health and wellbeing to develop strong, integrated communities.

Strategic Aims



Kent

Resident Population



Kent is divided into 12 local authority districts, with Medway Unitary Authority located within it.

Kent borders London boroughs, which has implications for workforce travelling to work in London, and is the Gateway to Europe.

Kent has a greater proportion of young people aged 14 years and under and of people aged 50+ years than the England average. But it also has an ageing population with the number of 65+ years old forecast to increase by 40.7% between 2022 and 2040, yet the proportion of population aged under 65 is only forecast to increase by 12.3%.

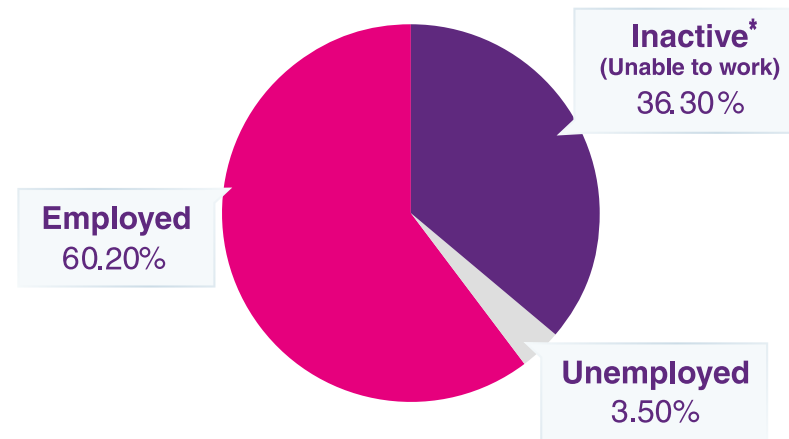
Economic activity of working age residents (16 – 64)

The number of people who were unemployed in Kent in February 2024 was 33,635 which is 7.7% higher than last year. The unemployment rate in Kent is currently 3.5%, this is below the GB average rate of 3.8%.

Youth unemployment (18-24) in Kent is 5.3%, which is slightly above the national average of 5.2%.

Thanet has the highest rate of youth unemployment in the South East at 9.9%.

In Kent, unemployment has increased for both males (+5.7%) and females (+10.4%) since last year. Currently 4% of males and 3% of females are unemployed.



*Unable to work includes those who are students, long-term sick or disabled and carers

Qualifications

Of the population aged 16 to 64, Kent has a lower proportion of people with RQF4 and above qualifications than the national average. Kent has 41.7% compared to 45.1% for England as a whole.

Kent has higher proportions of people with RQF3 & RQF2 qualifications. And a marginally higher proportion of people with no qualifications at 7.2% than the England average of 6.6%.

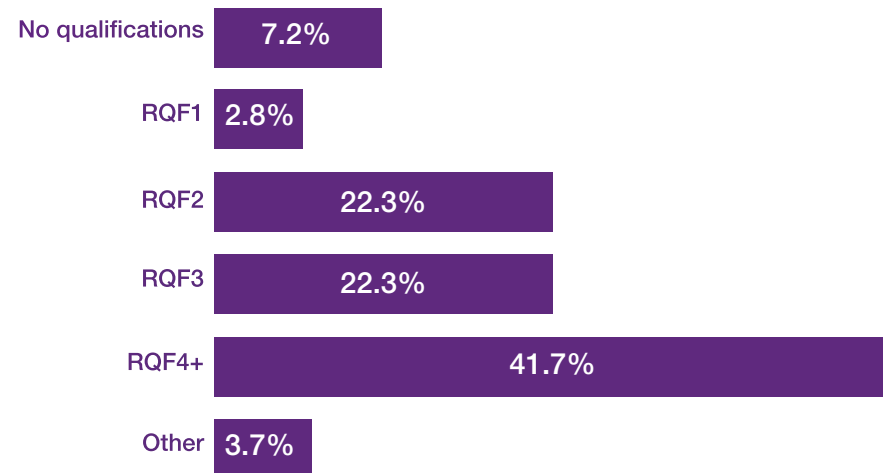
RQF (Regulated Qualifications Framework)

RQF1 = GCSE grades 1-3 (G-D)

RQF2 = GCSE grades 4-9 (C-A*)

RQF3 = A level

RQF4+ = Certificate of higher education, level 4 diploma or level 4 NVQ and above



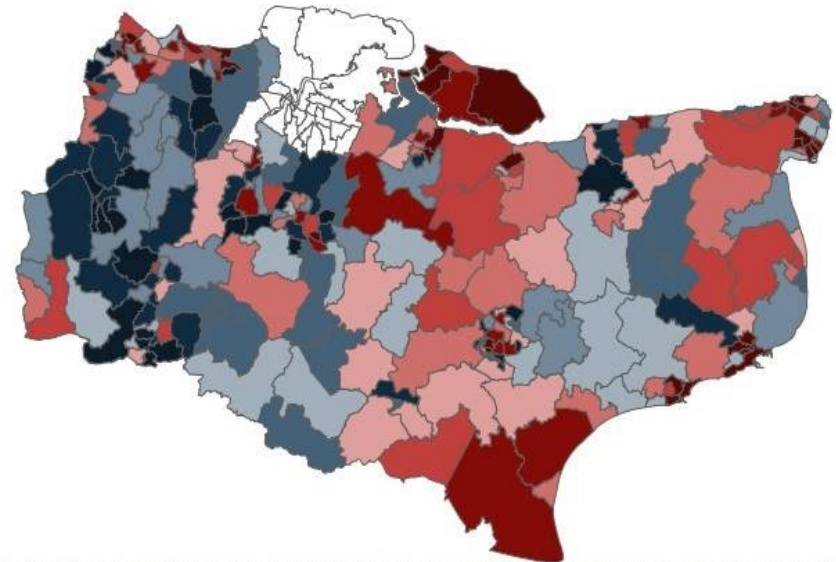
Deprivation

The number of Kent LSOAs that are within the 10% most deprived LSOAs in England between the IMD2019 and the previous IMD2015 remains at 51. Thanet continues to rank as the most deprived local authority in Kent. Gravesham has experienced the largest decrease in deprivation relative to other areas.

District	Weighted IMD Score Per District	KCC Districts IMD Rank
Thanet	31.31	1
Swale	27.08	2
Folkestone & Hythe	24.15	3
Dover	22.16	4
Gravesham	21.41	5
Dartford	18.81	6
Ashford	18.55	7
Canterbury	16.80	8
Maidstone	16.80	9
Tonbridge and Malling	13.33	10
Sevenoaks	12.44	11
Tunbridge Wells	11.31	12

KCC IMD Deciles for 18+ Population per Ward

KCC Wards IMD Decile ● 1 ● 2 ● 3 ● 4 ● 5 ● 6 ● 7 ● 8 ● 9 ● 10



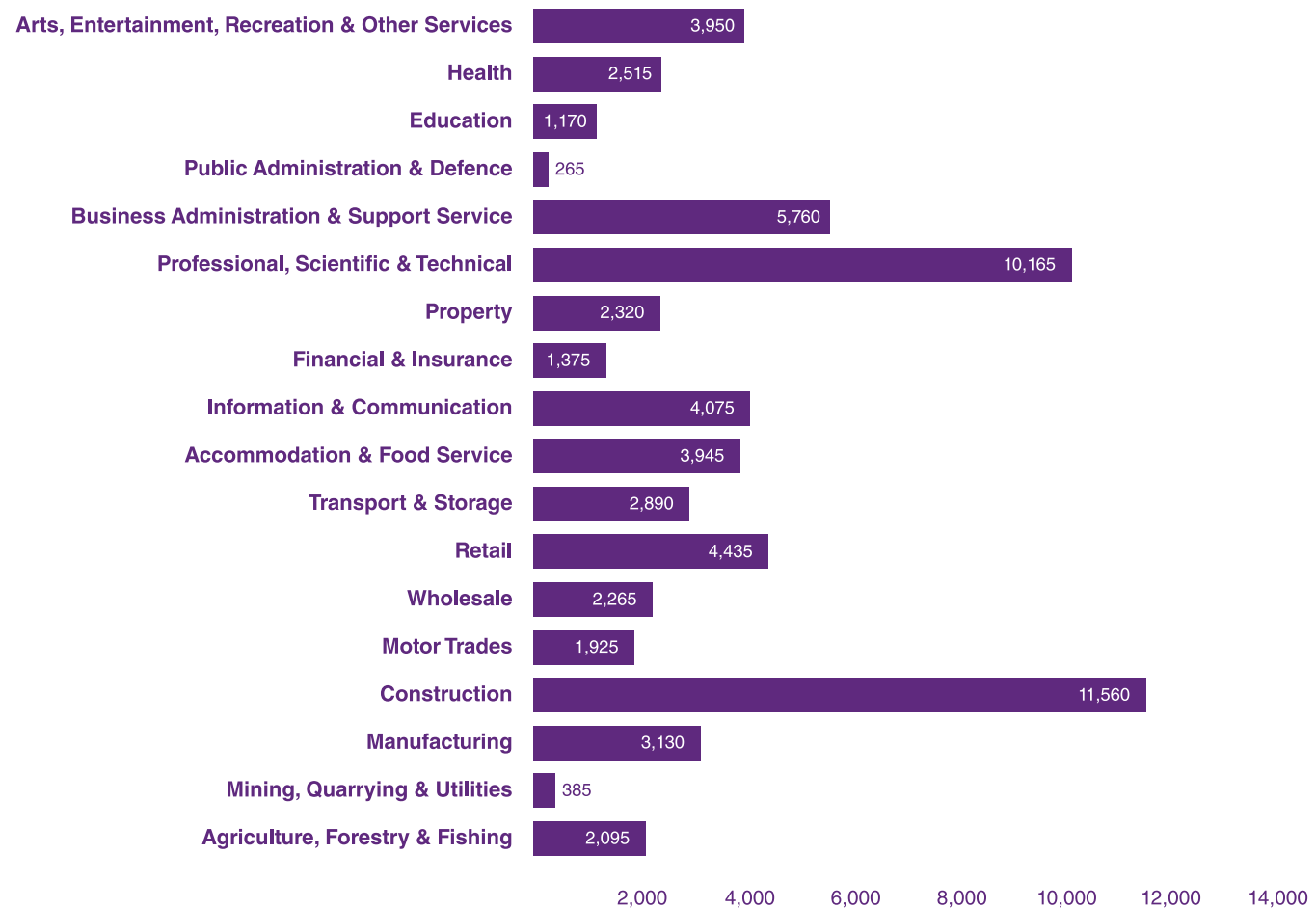
The deciles are based on the ranking of the 271 KCC wards (2019) according to their IMD Score (calculated from LSOAs), with a higher score indicating greater deprivation. The top decile (1) contains the most deprived 10% KCC wards, whereas the bottom decile (10) contains the least deprived 10% KCC wards.

Business in Kent by industry

There are over 60,000 enterprises in Kent employing 647,300 people. 12.5% of people in Kent were self-employed.

Most enterprises in Kent (89.7%) are classed as micro businesses and employ 9 or fewer people. 9.4% are classed as small (10 to 49 people), 1.4% medium (50 to 249 people) and 0.3% large (250+ people).

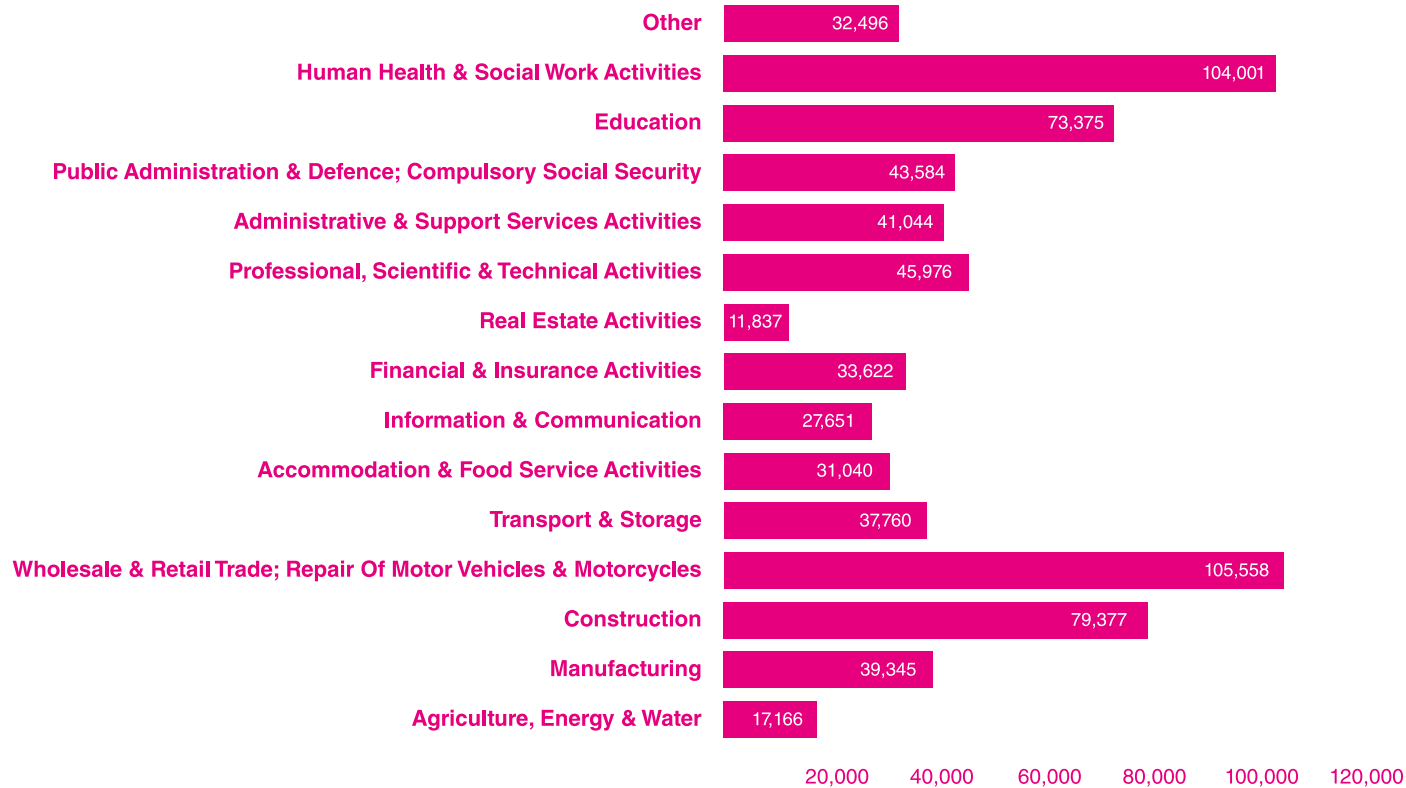
The biggest number and percentage increase in jobs was in Arts, entertainment & recreation (+4,500 jobs, +36%).



Employees in Kent by industry

Employee jobs in Kent have increased by 1.8%, (+11,200 jobs) over the last year. This is a lower increase than the regional average of +3.1% and the national average of +3.1%.

Kent has a larger proportion of jobs in 8 industrial sectors than seen nationally. The biggest differences were in wholesale and retail trade (Kent 16.3%, GB 13.9%).



Broadband in Kent

The average internet speed in Kent is 114Mbps, this is 1% lower than the UK average (116 Mbps.) The median download speed is 56 Mbps, 8% lower than the UK median (60 Mbps). The average upload speed is 18 Mbps, which is 0.89% lower than the UK average. Most people's internet connections are rated 'fast', however, 30% of the population are considered to have 'slow' or 'very slow' internet connections.

(Information from Fair Internet Report 2024)

Public Health in Kent

With Kent having some of the most (bottom 10%) socially deprived areas in England, there is a correlation to health in the county. The prevalence of obesity among primary school children is double in the most deprived areas compared to the least deprived. Additionally, England's chief medical officer's annual report 2021 highlighted that coastal communities have some of the worst health outcomes in England. With 350 miles of coastline, Kent is home to a number of these communities further impacting health in the county. In the most deprived areas, female life expectancy is 6 years lower, and for males 8 years lower.

Within Kent, 25% of residents reported having a form of disability or long-term health condition and 9% of Kent's population provide some level of unpaid care.

30% of suicides in the county are impacted by domestic abuse and with the growth in the aged 85+ population, forecasted to be 30,000 by 2036, a 50% increase since 2018, there are many health challenges facing Kent.

Skills Demand

At national level, The Growth Plan 2022 sets out new measures for economic growth including helping the unemployed into work and those in jobs secure better paid work.

The Skills White Paper (January 2021) set out how further education will reform so it supports people to get the skills the economy needs. Focusing post-16 skills on this core mission will increase productivity, support growth industries and give individuals opportunities to progress in their career.

At local level, The Kent and Medway Economic Framework set out three overarching objectives to support the development of an economy that is more "productive, sustainable and inclusive". In 2023 the new Kent and Medway Local Skills Improvement Plan was launched and identified the following sectors key to Kent & Medway skills needs:

Construction

Manufacturing & Engineering

Fresh Food & Food Production

Health and Social Care

Education

Alongside these, the sectors **Transport & Logistics** and **Creative Industries** will have future skills needs.

These skills are principally focused on employers' requirements, however, social, technological and policy change will drive demand for new skills across the economy. Two main transformational changes were identified:

Decarbonisation: the UK's commitment to net zero carbon emissions by 2050 is a key driver of investment in low carbon technologies. This will impact the whole economy: ultimately, all businesses will need to become low carbon businesses and therefore, developing skills associated with decarbonisation will be key.

Digitalisation: with rapid advances in digital technology and advanced digital capabilities, digital skills are a priority, with the need to ensure digital skills are embedded across the board and to improve digital skills within the existing workforce.

Community Learning and Skills

Kent County Council's Community Learning and Skills (CLS) Service contracts with the Department for Education (via the Education and Skills Funding Agency) to annually deliver learning opportunities to all parts of the County, through our programmes for adults, Apprenticeships and Study Programmes.

For the academic year 2024-25, CLS will deliver a wide and diverse range of courses, from pre-entry to Level 5, under the following categories:

Skills & Employment



Family Learning



Health & Wellbeing



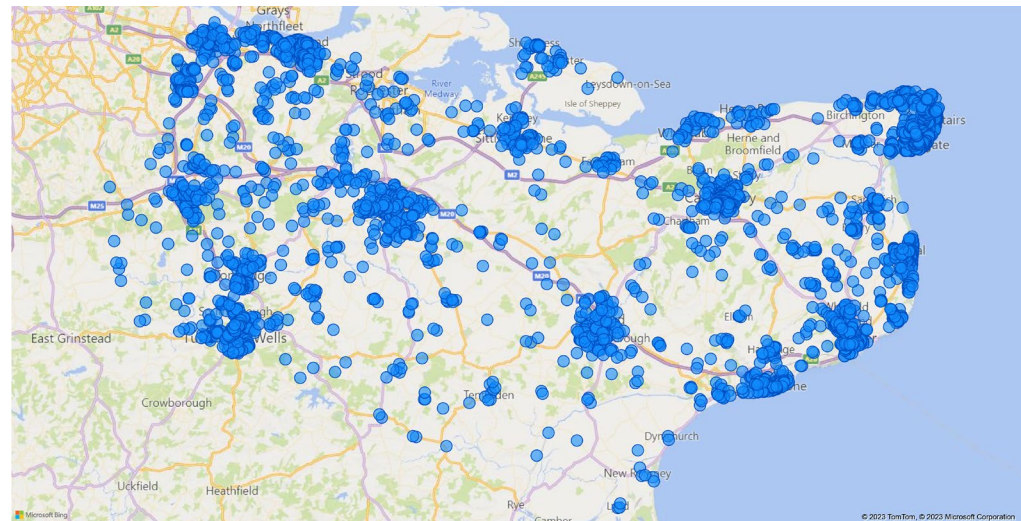
CLS also leads on the delivery of the Department for Education's 'Multiply' programme, working with multiple referral and delivery partners across Kent. Multiply aims to increase the numeracy skills and confidence of ten distinct cohorts of adults without Level 2 qualifications in numeracy.

CLS deliver from 16 main centres across the County.

As well as from community venues, children's centres, schools and faith centres.



Spread of learners by postcode



Community Learning and Skills: 2024-25

Strategic Priority and Aims

Measurable Outcomes

Contribution towards National, Regional and Local Priorities for Learning and Skills

CLS will continue its core delivery including English, maths and ESOL; programmes for Counselling, AAT and Early Years; a small creative and languages offer; Multiply and a small Apprenticeship offer. For academic year 24/25, CLS will focus on the priorities identified below.

Strategic Priority 1: Support the Kent Economy

- Increase delivery of Study Programmes for Young People across Kent, including those with EHCPs and UASC, to reduce NEETs and provide positive progression into FE or employment. Offer high quality sub-contracted delivery where appropriate (subject to Cabinet decision).

250 NEET learners complete Study Programmes which include employability skills, English, Maths and a work experience placement. Positive outcomes include employment, a traineeship, apprenticeship or a college placement.

55 learners with EHCPs will complete Supported Internships, including appropriate work experience.

100 UASC will complete ESOL study programmes which support language development to progress to further learning and/or other positive outcomes.

KCC Priority (Framing Kent's Future 2022-26): Levelling Up Kent:

To support the Kent economy to be resilient and successfully adapt to the challenges and opportunities it faces over the coming years, work with partners to develop a skills system for Kent that delivers skills that are resilient to changing workforce needs and opportunities and supports people to higher level skills.

Integrated Care Strategy, 2024

- Support and grow our workforce

Pathways for All

- Make a concerted effort to improve the outcomes for young people from our post-16 provision
- Enable a wider range of provision to be locally accessible
- Improve provision below Level 2 and provide good pathways into further learning at higher levels
- Support young people's mental health

Strategic Priority 1: Support the Kent Economy

- Using funding, including Tailored Learning funding, work with local partners including Public Health, DWP, Chamber of Commerce, NCS, providers, Housing Associations and 3rd sector to increase delivery to those furthest from the labour market, to support positive steps towards employment and other positive outcomes, with particular focus on LSIP priorities. Offer high quality sub-contracted delivery where appropriate (subject to Cabinet decision).

3,000 hard to reach adults will take part in engagement activities as a first step to their employability journey.

5,000 learners will complete employability programmes which move them closer to, into or up in work.

500 adult learners with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) will complete courses to develop independence, skills and confidence.

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Integrated Care Strategy, 2024

- Support and grow our workforce

Kent & Medway Skills & Employment Group plan, 2024

Local Skills Improvement Plan Kent and Medway, 2023

Strategic Priority 2: Family Learning

- Utilising Tailored Learning funding, support families so children thrive, in conjunction with other KCC departments, schools and children's centres, deliver a programme of family learning to increase parents/carers' skills, their understanding of how their children are educated and appropriate parenting. Increase the number of courses which support understanding of particular Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND). Increase the number of men accessing courses.

2,100 parents, guardians, children and other family members from schools and other community partners, focusing on identified areas of deprivation, benefit from family learning programmes.

1,200 adults benefit from Parenting Courses.

KCC Priority: New models of care and support

To support the most vulnerable children and families in our county, ensuring our social work practice supports manageable caseloads, reflective learning, joined up safeguarding and effective corporate parenting arrangements.

Integrated Care Strategy, 2024

- Give children and young people the best start in life

Strategic Priority 3: Health and Wellbeing

- Utilising Tailored Learning funding, work with Public Health and other relevant local partners to increase health, wellbeing and resilience outcomes for Kent's residents.

500 learners will complete engagement activities which support them to adopt positive physical and mental health and thereby to live and age well, and be resilient and independent.

5,000 learners benefit from programmes designed to improve mental and physical health and wellbeing through accessing programmes designed to develop social, cultural, creative, intellectual and physical skills.

5,000 learners report a feeling of improved resilience as a result of their courses, helping them to better manage their own wellbeing, and where appropriate performance in the workplace (DWP Retention in Employment).

350 learners, including older learners, develop Essential Digital Skills and attend other IT courses which reduce isolation, help them access services, develop skills for work and stay safe online.

KCC Priority: Infrastructure for Communities

To work with our partners to hardwire a preventative approach into improving the health of Kent's population and narrowing health inequalities

Integrated Care Strategy, 2024

- Tackle the wider determinants to prevent ill health
- Support and grow our workforce
- Grow our skills and workforce

Public Health Framework ambitions:

- Starting well, living well, aging well
- 5 ways to wellbeing

Approach to Developing the Plan for 2024/25

The aims, objectives and targets identified in this statement are the result of a high degree of engagement and interaction between CLS and key stakeholders across the County.

It complements and underpins the priorities identified in Framing Kent's Future: Kent County Council's overarching strategic statement, as well of those of its constituent directorates for Adult Social Care and Health; Children, Young People and Education; Growth, Environment and Transport as well as Chief and Deputy Chief Executive's Departments.

It has also actively engaged and interacted with a wide range of stakeholders external to the Council. These include local schools and colleges, Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce, third sector agencies operating in the County and agencies such as Department for Work and Pensions.

Furthermore, it is also the product of widescale engagement with Kent's residents, as employers and employees, trainees, apprentices, parents, volunteers and its past, present and future learners.

Finally, it supports the overall direction of travel identified by the Education and Skills Funding Agency, Ofsted (in its Education Inspection Framework) and national governmental priorities, such as those identified in its Levelling Up agenda.

Annual accountability statement

On behalf of Kent County Council, it is hereby confirmed that the plan as set out above reflects an agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills on XXXXXX 2024.

The plan will be published on the Council's website within three months of the start of the new academic year and can be accessed from the following link: www.communitylearningandskills.co.uk

Rory Love
Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, KCC

Key documents

Framing Kent's Future - Our Council Strategy 2022- 2026:
www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/framing-kents-future

Pathways for All:
<https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/college-sixth-form-employment-and-training/kent-16-to-19-review-pathways-for-all>

Kent and Medway Local Skills Improvement Plan:
<https://kentemployerskillsplan.org/kent-medway-lsip-2023/>

Kent and Medway Skills and Employment Group plan:
https://www.kent.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/116706/Kent-and-Medway-Employment-Plan.pdf

Public Health Framework:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/public-health-outcomes-framework>

Kent Public Health Annual Report 2021:
https://www.kpho.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/138270/Kent-APHR-2021-Coastal-Communities.pdf

Kent and Medway Integrated Care Strategy:
<https://www.kmhealthandcare.uk/about-us/vision-and-priorities/kent-and-medway-integrated-care-strategy>

The Growth Plan 2022:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-growth-plan-2022-documents/the-growth-plan-2022-html>

Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/601980f2e90e07128a353aa3/Skills_for_jobs_lifelong_learning_for_opportunity_and_growth__web_version_.pdf

Kent and Medway Economic Partnership:
<https://www.kmep.org.uk/app/uploads/2024/03/Kent-Medway-Economic-Framework-Web-Version-March-2024.pdf>

Multiply Prospectus:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1068822/Multiply_Investment_Prospectus.pdf

CLS Ofsted report 2020:
<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/42/52836>

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