



**WHAT MATTERS
2005-2009**

Implementation Plan

This plan responds to the What Matters Youth Strategy which reflects on the views and concerns raised by local young residents from the borough of Ashford.

The Ashford Partnership

Key organisations working together to serve and improve the local community

Executive Summary

Introduction

1. The What Matters strategy takes the views of young Ashford residents and places their key concerns into a strategic framework that is realistic and presents achievable projects and outcomes for local agencies over the next three years.
2. The strategy starts from the viewpoint that young people can make an enormous contribution to the local community. Ashford's youth population is set to grow unlike most other Kent districts so it is timely to reflect on the needs of the current population and make improvements (appendix A provides the distribution of young people in Ashford today).
3. The strategy responds to the findings of the *What Matters* consultation undertaken in 2004; a summary of the findings is available as a complementary document. This survey concluded that respondents, aged between 11 and 19 years of age, yearn for something better. They want to be involved in deciding what's available and how it's run and have lots of ideas about how to improve things.
4. Clearly, these concerns do not cover all aspects of young people's lives but this strategy aims to focus on them. Under 'Strategic links' in Section 1 of the strategy the other/additional areas that as agencies we would prioritise for their individual well being including health, education and careers is mentioned. Tackling the needs of vulnerable young people is also covered here.
5. The What Matters survey points to five key areas of concern: getting to places, having things to do, having a say, safe and clean streets, and improved leisure facilities. The strategy reviews each key concern in Section 2 that are summarised in the box below

Key concerns

Getting to places - The lack of appropriate transport is a top issue for most young residents whether considering the bus, cycle or walking. The perception of crime and antisocial behaviour inhibits young people from travelling and accessing key services and leisure facilities.

Having things to do - A lack of activity is a major cause of unhappiness for local young people. This may be more to do with informing them on what is already available near their home and empowering them to direct what is provided.

Having a say – Young people need the opportunity to be able to access and choose a suitable way of ensuring their voices are not only heard, but listened to, through many different democratic processes such as youth committees, forums, councils, conferences, surveys and events.

Safe and clean streets - The issue of 'not feeling safe' in their neighbourhood must be addressed. Media attention on the minority of young people who cause crime locally fuels this perception and creates an unfair image for all young people. Young people are also concerned about having a cleaner and safer neighbourhood and should be encouraged to actively participate in improvements.

Improved leisure facilities - It is well documented and understood that Ashford has a dearth of cultural facilities. In the long term, Ashford's Future will go a long way to address this need. In the meantime, the facilities we do have need to be improved and promoted using communication channels young people use and understand.

6. Each concern draws on the *What Matters* findings, as well as other relevant evidence and research to provide 'key challenges for action'. It also explains current activity alongside potential solutions and examples of good practice.

Implementation

7. The strategy replaces the previous youth plan produced by Ashford Borough Council in 2000.
8. Section 2 of the strategy describes our approach to the implementation of the ideas put forward under each key concern. It explains that the implementation plan is based upon three guiding principles. These are explained in the box below.
9. The Ashford Partnership (LSP) will provide a way of ensuring effective joining up and has a key role in establishing realistic and properly resourced implementation.
10. The Ashford Partnership will need the support of a number of umbrella organisations and their membership including Ashford Children's and Young People's Consortium, Ashford Youth Forum Trust, Ashford Youth Advisory Group, Ashford Community Network, plus parish councils and urban community forums in order to deliver.
11. The involvement of young people in taking forward this strategy is crucial to its success. Young people, as the driving force, are what set this strategy apart from other local policies.
12. This strategy will require long-term commitment. Quick wins are needed to make progress for the sake of credibility amongst young people and agencies. A number of these are identified in this implementation plan.
13. Section 3 of the strategy covers monitoring and evaluation. It explains that a range of performance measures are included in this implementation plan and suggested that quality of life measures may help to gauge the overall success of the strategy.
14. A 'Youth Charter' completes this strategy and shows that the Ashford Partnership is committed to making a positive difference to what matters to local young people. Local young people will also need to support delivery and further action.

Guiding principals for action

More Involvement– Continue to involve young people in what is provided, how and when. Positive two way processes of listening and expressing views are vital so decision-makers and local young people can respect, encourage and value each other and work together effectively. Channels for influencing programming of activities and services must be created to allow young people to inform delivery and influence how and what is delivered, when.

Improved awareness – Improve the way young people receive information on services and what is available. We need to market products, services and facilities better to reach young people. They need to receive information in a format and language they associate with and understand. Coordination of local information for young people needs to be addressed.

Extending access - Provide better activities and help young people to participate. We need to encourage young people to regularly participate in positive activities by overcoming barriers such as cost, transport, opportunity and choice.

1. More involvement - Continue to involve young people in what is provided, how and when.

Priority Project 2006/07	Key Action	Lead/Partner	Milestones	What Matters Concern	Funding Strategy	Outcome Ref. (see back page)
1.1	<p>Promote channels to ensure young people are aware of how to get involved through the 'Having A Say' Campaign</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Produce a card, detailing access routes to decision makers b. Deliver an annual marketing campaign called '16 and Ready to Vote' c. Develop goashford.com to include interactive discussion boards to accommodate a two way channel for raising views and concerns 	ABC Ashford YFT	<p>Launch leaflet and card Jan 06</p> <p>Campaign by June 06</p> <p>Update site by 2007</p>	Having A Say	Department for Constitutional Affairs & ABC	3 4 5
1.2	<p>Encourage local neighbourhood bodies to engage young people in local decisions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Focus on role of parish council and urban forums within annual youth conference 2006 b. Map current participation level c. Seek to develop neighbourhood youth forums 	ABC KCC Y & C Community Wardens Kent Police Parish Councils & Community Forums	<p>a) April 06-</p> <p>b) July 06</p> <p>c) begin 06</p>	All	Department for Constitutional Affairs & ABC Electoral Commission Funding sources tbc	3 4 5 7
1.3	Pilot school/youth club visits by Councillors to engage and inform young people of their role.	ABC Local Schools	Quarterly	All	Within existing resources	3 5
1.4	<p>Achieve charitable status for Ashford Youth Forum Trust (YFT) and promote youth charter.</p> <p>Compile and deliver a three-year development plan to increase involvement and representation by young people on a range of issues. Focus on an annual youth conference, training for members & funding</p>	Ashford YFT	<p>Charitable status and business plan by Sept 06</p> <p>Training ongoing</p> <p>Conference each April</p>	Having a say	Officer time Funding tbc	3 4 5
1.5	Provide a framework for communication between transport providers and local young people.	Kent Highways Ashford YFT	By April 2007	Getting to places Having A Say	tbc	1 2 5
1.6	Lobby that young people's views should be represented on decision-making groups. Promote best practise to a range of agencies in getting young people involved, for example in provision of new facilities and services.	Ashford YFT Children and Young People's Consortia Ashford's Future	Ongoing	Having A Say	Officer time	3 4 5

2. Improved Awareness - Improve the way young people receive information on services & what is available

Priority Project 2006/07	Key Action	Lead/Partner	Milestones	What Matters Concern	Funding Strategy	Outcome Ref. (see back page)
2.1	Gather information on what local facilities and activities are open to young people and produce a 'what's on offer' resource that is both accessible and current.	ABC Ashford YFT	Summer 06	Things To Do	Funding to be identified	6 11
2.2	Coordinate the marketing of holiday activities in the borough and look at ways to raise the profile of these events and activities.	ABC, KCC Y & C Police, YMCA	Summer 06	Things To Do Improved Leisure Facilities	Potential bid to CDRP	6 11
2.3	Produce 'in the spot light' coverage of specific facilities and activities throughout the year using a range of media and outlets. Work with service providers to promote these activities during the campaign.	ABC Local media	Ongoing	Things To Do	Funding to be identified	6 11
2.4	Create (in consultation with young people) a high profile and targeted awareness campaigns to tackle the perceptions of both young people and adult perceptions of young people on a range of issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Fear of crime - including the need for a greater sense of security and playing safe b. Young people as citizens: making a contribution, less discrimination of young people and different cultures 	Ashford YFT Community Safety Unit ABC, KCC Y & C Ashford Police	Annually from Sept 07 Sept 2008	Safe clean streets Getting to places Things to do Having a say	Community Chest Awards for All To be identified	8 9 10 4 5
2.5	Advertise transport information and where to find it as part of a 'Get On' campaign targeting young people on using bus, cycle, train routes.	Kent Highways Ashford YFT	Spring 2007	Getting to places Things to do	Awards for All	1 2
2.7	Promote the need for and concerns of young people for a cleaner, greener neighbourhood and how they can take action.	ABC	Spring 2007	Safe and clean streets Things to do	Big Lottery	6 7 8 9

3. Extending Access - Provide better activities and help young people to participate.

Priority Project 2006/07	Key Action	Lead/Partner	Milestone	What Matters Concern	Funding Strategy	Outcome Ref. (see back page)
3.1	Engage with current leisure service providers to investigate pricing and the feasibility of a discount card for young people.	ABC Leisure Providers Children's Consortia	2007	Things to do Improved Leisure Facilities Getting to places	Potentially through central government as part of Youth Matters Green paper	11 12
3.2	Pilot a new bus route around the town centre, which stops at key sites (bowling alley, stour centre) of interest to young people.	Kent Highways ABC Ashford YFT Private sector	Launch by Dec 2006	Getting To Places	Big Lottery/local retailers?	1 2 11 12
3.3	Seek to secure capital funding for new and improved neighbourhood and local facilities such as play areas for teenagers, spaces for young people to meet and gain access to information, advise and positive activity.	ABC Ashford Partnership KCC Y & C	2006-2009	Things To Do	ABC Capital fund To be identified on a project by project basis	6 12
3.4	Raise quality, choice and opportunity in current activities provided by the voluntary sector Including: a. Updating the Working With Young People Pack as required and promote. b. Seek and align (where appropriate) revenue funding for better and wider activities for young people delivered by the voluntary sector.	ABC ABC Ashford Community Network	Annually 2007/8	Things To Do Things To Do	ABC TBC	6 7 6 7 11 12
3.5	Work to secure major leisure facilities for young people, including an ice rink, arts centre, new skate & BMX Park, sports facilities.	ABC KCC Y & C Ashford Futures Local developers Local landowners	Ongoing	Improved Leisure Facilities	Within existing resources	5 7 11 12
3.6	Help young people to try new activities through: a. a borough wide 'free taster' and 'welcome' campaign to promote participation in current club activity and leisure projects. b. a number of high profile events to inspire young people to participate in a healthy active lifestyle.	ABC KCC Sports Development Unit KCC Y & C PCT	Early 2008	Things to do	tbc	5 6 7 11 12

Performance Framework

The What Matters Performance Framework includes gathering baseline data on initiatives within the Implementation Plan (see outputs below) and defines what outcomes are perceived (see opposite).

Specific and relevant performance indicators under the three main delivery headings - more involvement, improved awareness and extending access – provide a wider measure of the action plan's impact.

Current planned minimum outputs over three years include:

- A total of five new campaigns on What Matters issues;
- Between ten and fifteen young people to regularly participate in neighbourhood youth forums;
- 50% increase in 16 year olds registering to vote;
- 30 individual training sessions for young people;
- A total of 25 visits by Councillors to groups of young people;
- 50% increase in online visits to goashford.com/youth;
- At least three young persons conference, with around 100 participants;
- A total of 1,500 young people engaged in activities in the summer holidays;
- Two well-funded building-based youth facilities;
- A total of 10 new events and programmes for young people;
- Support provided to 15 voluntary and community sector projects that involve young people;
- Creation of at least three new forums where young people are involved in planning new provision.

These outputs will be monitored annually and new ones may be added. As some projects and campaigns do not start until the second or third year the full calculations cannot be appreciated and judged until the end of 2008.

Visit www.goashford.com for the What Matters Youth Strategy and further information.

Perceived Outcomes (refer against specific projects in the plan).

Getting to places

1. Increased knowledge of local transport sources and issues.
2. Better used transport modes and routes.

Having a say

3. Raised awareness of their rights and responsibilities in the community.
4. Stronger identification with local community.
5. Increased social, communication skills and confidence.

Things to do

6. Enhanced neighbourhoods.
7. Increased social interaction and new relationships.

Safe and Clean streets

8. Increased awareness of the impact that vandalism and illegal graffiti has on the community and specific victims.
9. Reduction of graffiti and littering in targeted areas.
10. Lower fear of crime.

Improved Leisure facilities

11. Increased awareness of local activities and facilities.
12. More active lifestyle.

Performance Indicators

These will be measured through a survey (sample of 500) of local young residents aged 12 to 19 undertaken to the end of the strategy in 2008.

More involvement

- Percentage of young residents surveyed satisfied with a) The opportunities for participation in decision-making in relation to local youth provision and b) Feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area.
- Number of young people (16-18 years old) included on the electoral register (as a proportion of the total population of the same age).

Improved awareness

- Percentage of young residents surveyed who feel well informed about local activities and opportunities.

Extending access

- Percentage of young residents surveyed satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live or feel it is improving.