

East Kent

Ashford

As the commercial property market returns after the pandemic, Ashford is in a strong position to recover and reap the benefits from a post-pandemic world. Ashford remains an important commercial location driven by key developments:

- co-working and start-up office space for BizSpace opened in July
- 140-bed Hampton by Hilton hotel welcoming guests from August
- green light given for a distribution centre at Waterbrook.

Town centre

At 1,257m² (13,530ft²), the Jasmin Vardimon Dance Academy is one of Kent's largest cultural infrastructure projects. It is on the Henwood Industrial Estate and will form the centre of a major new arts hub with a number of light industrial units, in total 3,453m² (37,168ft²), to attract creative businesses to the area.

The Coachworks, opposite Ashford International Station is a collaboration with Turner.Works to transform disused industrial buildings into a mixed-use campus providing co-working space for start-ups and smaller companies, flexible event space and a food and drink destination. Across the railway line, the Curious Brewery and visitor centre, now under new ownership, is a focal point for an increasingly strong tourism offer.

The Council supported the delivery of Elwick Place, a flagship leisure venue with a 900 seat Picturehouse cinema and 58-bed Travelodge. Nearly all of the units are let to independent food and drink outlets and it contributes to renewed confidence within the high street alongside several other new retail faces. The Council's Town Centre Reset document presents further opportunities for investment.

McArthurGlen's 9,290m² (100,000ft²) expansion of Ashford Designer Outlet, has added 50 new stores and allowed it to increase revenue and now become the best performing McArthur Outlet in Europe.

Nearby, on the former Newtown railway works, permission has been given for Ashford International Film Studios.



CREDIT: STONEHOUSE DEVELOPMENTS

Proposal for Infinity Ashford rooftop restaurant/bar and café at the new residential development.

The scheme, by Quinn Estates in partnership with The Creative District Improvement Company and Time + Space Studios will see the creation of 6,968m² (75,000ft²) of TV and film studio space, likely to attract national and international companies.

Infinity Ashford, a landmark high quality residential development on a prominent brownfield site in Ashford opposite the international railway station has received permission. The scheme comprises four main buildings plus townhouses fronting the River Stour. The 16-storey mixed-use development comprises 214 apartments and nine townhouses, with secure parking for 200 vehicles. The design for Infinity Ashford, by Canterbury-based ON Architecture features a rooftop restaurant/bar, café and commercial space, and an attractive elevated landscaped courtyard set in the middle of the buildings.

Infrastructure and sites

Digital connectivity and investment is at the heart of the borough's economic focus. 5G is live in Ashford town centre, while Netomnia and Openreach are investing to bring Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) to between 30,000 and 50,000

premises in Ashford. Openreach are upgrading Tenterden to FTTP under their Fibre First programme.

The delivery of Junction 10a of the M20, provides substantial opportunity for increased commercial and residential property development through the Waterbrook and Finberry developments. The 11ha (27acre) site will have an Inland Border Facility providing customs clearance for goods arriving from abroad and planning for a distribution centre at Waterbrook has been approved.

Eureka Park, developed by Quadrant Estates at M20 Junction 9, comprises 27,871m² (300,000ft²) over 38ha (94acres) with opportunities for new investment. Helix Property have developed 2,635m² (28,363ft²) of co-working and start-up office space for BizSpace, which opened in July, while there has been strong interest in smaller industrial units at the council owned 4,366m² (47,000ft²) Carlton Road Business Park.

Ashford is 9th on the Property Week Hot Housing Index for 2021, as the residential offer in the town centre continues to evolve with several developments within walking distance of the station on former brownfield sites.

Infrastructure and Regeneration

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CREDIT: BDW

Chilmington Green, Ashford.

Elsewhere in the borough, permission for 725 units at Conningbrook Park, on a masterplanned site including a school, gym, community centre and medical facilities was given last year. Chilmington Green, part of the South Ashford Garden Community, will eventually see 5,750 new homes built. Crest Nicholson continues to develop a mix of family homes at their new village at Finberry near M20 Junction 10.

Canterbury

The last twelve months has proved to be a highly challenging period for Canterbury district's economy and commercial property market. The area has not been immune to the

impacts of the pandemic, which has affected the office and retail property markets in particular. Despite this, there are still positives that can be drawn from changing trading and working environments.

While the property sector looks to adapt to a post-pandemic world where the prospects for general office space are less certain, demand for high quality, modern business centres providing flexible office accommodation and support facilities remains strong. Despite higher levels of tenant turnover in 2020 and early 2021 compared to previous years, take up at East Kent Spatial Development Company (EKSDC) owned and managed Clover House (Whitstable) and Canterbury Innovation Centre have now returned to high levels with both reporting occupancy of 90% at June 2021.

In Canterbury, while many well-known high street retail and hospitality brands have seen a number of store closures, a marked recovery has been taking shape. Alongside 25 new businesses which have opened this year there has been interest in further retail units with some under offer or some seeking changes to properties to allow other commercial uses. Outlets have also used the last twelve months to repurpose, revamp and make other modifications to adapt to a changing trading environment.

An important part of the city's commercial recovery has been led by the food and drink sector along with the leisure and hotel industries. Two key Canterbury regeneration projects are helping to drive this recovery.

The £115m Riverside Development is located in the Kingsmead area, North East of the city centre. Construction of this mixed-use leisure led development, anchored by a five screen Curzon cinema, has continued apace throughout the last year – despite the well documented challenges the construction sector has faced. The commercial and student accommodation elements of the scheme are due for practical completion at the end of the summer/early autumn, with the latter delivered using modular methods of construction. The two residential sites, comprising a total of 189 homes, have been handed over to the Hyde Group's contractor, Jenners. Leasing of the commercial units is well underway with an encouraging amount of interest and engagement from the market with six of the twelve commercial units under offer.

Secondly, the former Slatters Hotel site in the city centre, has been transformed into a new 129-bed Hampton by Hilton hotel incorporating two listed buildings and a glass panel in the reception area showcasing the remains of a Roman theatre. The £20m development also boasts a 24-hour fitness centre, meeting rooms, secure offsite parking as well as an onsite, rooftop bar/restaurant allowing visitors to dine above the city. Now open and taking guest bookings the development has brought a renowned hotel brand to one of the UK's most historical cities while re-using buildings and enhancing the street scene.

In addition, two prominent retail units on the Wincheap Estate have recently been let by the Council. A building materials supplier and bathroom retailer have been secured for the two sites left vacant by Homebase and Laura Ashley respectively.

The market for industrial space remains robust locally underscored by ongoing letting activity at Barton Business Park. Three of four new build light industrial/distribution/warehousing units, each with mezzanine floors have already been taken. Developed by the Fort Knight Group this forms



CREDIT: HOLLAMAY

Hampton by Hilton Hotel, Canterbury.



CREDIT: HMV ARCHITECTS

Proposal for KMMS Student Residences, Canterbury – aerial view of picnic area.

part of a four-block project totalling approximately 3,143m² (33,831ft²) with more blocks in the pipeline.

Close to the University of Kent’s Canterbury campus a new development is proposed to provide major student accommodation. At Giles Lane the 935-bed purpose-built accommodation is set to be arranged in 5 blocks, ranging from 3 to 6 storeys. Other new amenities include new sports facilities, highway and other transport improvements and green infrastructure.

Finally, to plan for land use needs up to 2040, Canterbury City Council is to review its Local Plan. Over the last year it has held a series of conferences/consultation events with residents and property and land-based stakeholders. It is now consulting on a vision for the future of the district, setting out options for growth and development. The review also included two ‘Call for Sites’ exercises asking landowners/ developers to propose potential locations for development and other land uses to meet future economic need.

Dover

Just 21 miles from mainland Europe, Dover is a vital international gateway and is the busiest roll-on roll-off ferry port in Europe. Ferry services operate to Calais and Dunkirk, and Dover is also a major port of call for cruise lines. Combine this with excellent links to central London, just an hour away by High Speed One, Dover is superbly connected for doing business. Dover is looking to the future with a range of major investments and regeneration projects.

Port of Dover

In June 2021 the Port of Dover opened ‘Clock Tower Square’, the latest phase of the redevelopment of Dover’s Western Docks. Part of a new marina and waterfront development, the 1,000m² (10,764ft²) site combines fresh design with artefacts from Dover’s history to create a contemporary site that’s perfect for relaxing and appreciating local culture.

Freight transport continues to be a major driver of new investment as Dover retains its dominance as the closest link

for goods between the UK and Europe. The Port of Dover remained open for vital trade throughout the pandemic.

The Dover Cargo Terminal at the Western Docks is complete with an eight chamber temperature controlled warehouse in operation. All stages of the operation including storage, container stripping and distribution can now be conducted at a set temperature. This is a huge development for logistics and cargo customers. At the Eastern Docks ferry terminal, Irish Ferries has joined the premier Dover to Calais route, whilst DFDS has introduced the longest ever ferry to operate from the port, the 214m long Côte D’Opale. P&O Ferries are constructing two revolutionary new double-ended ferries due to enter service in 2023. With two impressive state-of-the-art cruise terminals, Dover has the capacity to accommodate three cruise ships at once. Dover is the second largest cruise port in the UK with 25 different cruise operators.

Open Golf Championship, Sandwich

The 149th Open Golf championship took place in July at the Royal St. George’s Golf Course. It is the fifteenth time the iconic course has hosted the world’s greatest golfers and brought in around 30,000 visitors per day. With worldwide TV coverage and beautiful weather, millions of viewers



CREDIT: GORDON YOUNG, HMV ARCHITECTS

New Dover Marine Office, Dover Western Docks.

Infrastructure and Regeneration

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around the world witnessed the landscape of the area. The district is home to Kent's 'Golf Coast' with three of the best links golf courses in the world, all of which have hosted The Open – Royal St. George's Golf Club and Princes Golf Club in Sandwich, and the Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club in Deal.

Dover town centre

Dover District Council (DDC) is investing in the future of the town centre. This includes redesigning Dover's Market

Square with a £3m project, supported by £2.44m from the Coastal Communities Fund. The square will include a unique misting water feature that will act as a wayfinder and enliven the space, creating a focus for children to play and families to congregate.

A £3.2m award from the Future High Streets Fund and a £1.7m commitment from DDC will deliver two key projects designed to increase footfall and spend locally. A refurbished subway will encourage greater movement between the town centre and waterfront and a new creative centre in Bench Street will enhance the offer of the lower end of the town centre.

A £9.1m restoration of the Grade I Listed Maison Dieu is underway with help from a £4.27m grant from Heritage Lottery Fund. The project will bring redundant spaces back into commercial use, including the Mayor's Parlour as a holiday let and a unique new café in the Victorian gaol cells!



CREDIT: DOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL

Proposal for Market Square, Dover.

In 2024 the Maison Dieu will be open to the public for the first time in its 800-year history as part of the creation of a heritage quarter in the town.

Legal & General's £53m St James Development has a range of top names in retail and leisure. The latest business to take a 418m² (4,500ft²) unit is Rico Sabor, a Kent based tapas restaurant.

DDC's town centre business grant scheme continues awarding businesses up to £10,000 for property refurbishment costs in Dover, Deal and Sandwich. DDC also has a green energy grant scheme where businesses can apply for up to £10,000 for green energy efficiency investments. Grants have been awarded to 52 businesses.

Transport

DDC has been awarded £16.1m from the government's Housing Infrastructure Fund to support a FastTrack bus system to connect Whitfield, Dover town and Dover Priory station. Fastrack buses will have priority on the proposed route to include a new bus, cycle and pedestrian-only bridge across the A2 at Whitfield and dedicated new link road to Guston. Sandwich station was improved for The Open with a new footbridge and extended platform to allow 12-car High Speed One trains.

Tourism Strategy

A tourism strategy for Dover district, marketed as 'White Cliffs Country', was launched in May by the Minister for Sport and Tourism, Nigel Huddleston MP. This aims to stimulate market growth, employment and investment in the visitor economy.

Discovery Park

Discovery Park in Sandwich is home to over 160 businesses and continues to bring investment as a Life Sciences Opportunity Zone. Recent developments include a new 75-bed Travelodge. The site is now a thriving part of the South East's life science community offering high quality laboratory, office and manufacturing facilities. Pfizer retains a strong presence and recently announced a £10m manufacturing investment to speed development of breakthrough medicines. Around 50% of businesses have expanded at Discovery Park, 80% collaborate together and 20% of on-site jobs are created by the park.

Housing

DDC has begun an ambitious programme to build 500 new homes across the district with 147 affordable homes currently complete, under construction or in planning at six locations. This includes the recent £12.5m development of 65 homes in Harold Street, Dover comprising 24 apartments for social rent, 29 shared ownership apartments and 12 town houses. Each contain a purpose-built work/live space ideal for remote working. Work is well underway at both Aylesham Garden Village and the Whitfield Urban Extension. New 'eco-friendly' homes are being built in Eastry manufactured using a hyper structurally insulated panel system. The 50 homes will achieve an EPC rating above the highest category of A in the UK.

Other developments

The former Leaf Hotel in Whitfield is now officially the Holiday Inn Dover following major remodelling/ refurbishment with a new Bella Italia restaurant. Home Bargains has invested £4m in its new Dover store creating 120 local jobs. Co-op has invested £620,000 in a new store which runs on 100% renewable electricity, forming part of the rejuvenation of the former Buckland Mill site.

For further information:

www.investindover.co.uk

Folkestone & Hythe

The fresh sea air, expansive beaches, green countryside and the arts, culture, food and drink offered by the district are highly attractive, particularly for people re-evaluating their lifestyles due to the pandemic.

The district's popularity continues to soar and it consistently attracts relocators from London and the South East. A successful Triennial run and a slew of articles in the national media make the district one of the most popular destinations in the UK. A highly accessible location, its High Speed One service to London St Pancras in just 53 minutes, and direct connections to Europe via Eurotunnel and access to the M20 and M2 motorways add to its appeal.

Businesses succeed here and find space in hubs, co-working spots and larger commercial spaces. Creative and digital industries, artisans and independent retailers make up a large proportion of businesses here.



The F51 Urban Sports Park in Folkestone is due to open in 2022.

Folkestone Place Plan

Folkestone's new town centre Place Plan sets out the blueprint for how the area will evolve in the future.

The District Council commissioned architecture/urbanism experts We Made That to lead the delivery of this plan, working with partners such as Steer, PRD, Fletcher Priest and the Night Time Industry Association. Following engagement with stakeholders, businesses and residents, the Place Plan details the vision and actions to harness the potential of the town via public spaces, roads, development and bringing new activities to Folkestone.

High Streets Fund

This grant award scheme launched in 2019 to bring forward schemes to improve the district's 11 high streets and drive footfall. To date 43 projects have been approved with awards totalling almost £600,000 with a number of vacant units coming back into use. These have complemented further investments by the council in Folkestone to improve signage, street furniture and the environment.

Developments

FOLCA building, the former Debenhams, Folkestone

This historic building is set for an exciting future and has been renamed Folca after a local competition won by two residents who suggested it should be linked to the ancient name for Folkestone. Following purchase by the Council in 2020 its meanwhile use is by the NHS as a mass vaccination centre. The Council is bringing forward a phased development to create a health centre in phase 1 in partnership with local GP practices who will relocate.

Retaining architectural features, including the original Art Deco and Victorian building façades is a priority and professional advice is being provided by Invicta Architectural. Subject to planning, completion of the first phase is anticipated by 2025. Phase 2 of the project includes commercial, leisure and residential and the programme is expected to start while phase 1 is in operation.

Ship Street

This former gasworks site is positioned between Folkestone Central station and the town centre. It was purchased in March 2021 by the Council as part of wider regeneration and forms part of the Place Plan and was taken to market as part of a testing exercise after acquisition. The Council is now liaising with developers to establish the route forward to de-risk the site and a strategy for delivery. The scheme of around 100 homes will be an exemplar development in design and sustainability, with links to the arts and creative sectors.

Mountfield Road, Romney Marsh Business Hub

This new hub is intended for local enterprises that have outgrown home-based locations or are businesses coming to the area. With 12 permanent offices, break out and meeting rooms, it will accommodate a diverse range of enterprises and support their growth.

Marketing, the result of a joint venture between the Council and the East Kent Spatial Development Company, with support from the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority is expected to start in the autumn ahead of completion at the end of 2021. Grants to support businesses taking space are offered by the Council and will also support the marketing.

Funding has also been agreed and work started on the land opposite. A new road and associated infrastructure is being

Infrastructure and Regeneration

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installed to bring forward this 4ha (10acre) site allocated for employment and due for completion early 2022. This will allow businesses to develop their own units within the established industrial estate at Mountfield Road to create several hundred new jobs. Consultants will be supporting the Council in the marketing and it is expected that plots will be released soon.

Biggins Wood, Cheriton

Caesars Way, Cheriton, is earmarked for a 77-unit residential development to include a mix of market and affordable housing and mixed-use commercial development of 5,800m² (62,431ft²). Acquired by the Council in 2016, it is currently unused and vacant land with areas of hardstanding. It has been used as a clay pit, brick works and a concrete batching plant. Ecological work has commenced with completion planned for 2025. An application for grant funding has been made to help bring forward housing schemes on brownfield sites. It supports the costs of ecological and environmental works required prior to development. After remediation, construction of the housing will commence in earnest.

Coast Drive, New Romney

This scheme is set to transform the 250 space Coast Drive car park into a beachside visitor destination, with 108 new beach chalets, a water-sports/environmental education centre, catering kiosk, boardwalks and toilets with fully accessible facilities. This will echo the already successful beach chalet project at Folkestone Coastal Park.

The adjacent beach and Littlestone Greens, which offers open space, a play park and existing beach huts, are Sites of Special Scientific Interest, and the nearby Varne Boat Club/RNLI lifeboat station have launching facilities. New boardwalks will improve beach access while protecting

the SSSI. Parking facilities will be upgraded, with a 75-space car park and 100 further spaces including disabled and EV charging. Subject to consents and funding, the project will open in 2022.

Highview, Folkestone

The Highview School site is to be transformed into a mixed residential scheme, made up of one-bed flats and two to four-bed houses. Designed to tie into the surrounding residential area with appropriate green space and parking scheme it is due to be complete by autumn 2023.

East Cliff – destination play area and visitor centre

Currently a tennis and bowls area, by 2022/3 this open space will have a new destination play area and visitor centre with parking and upgraded toilet facilities. The scheme is being progressed by the Council as landowner, working with a community group setup to provide and access funding.

Princes Parade

Work is progressing at this 150-home scheme on Hythe seafront, which will also include a hotel, shops and green spaces. The project will return the area, a former municipal tip, to public use and with a new swimming pool and leisure centre. Plans are being led by the Council and include the creation of a vehicle-free seafront promenade to open up the area for the enjoyment of visitors and residents.

Cheriton Parc

Motis Business Centre, within Cheriton Parc, provides 27 managed office suites starting from 15m² (160ft²) which benefit from shared facilities and a gated car park with 200 spaces. Planning has been submitted to progress the site in 2022, extending the existing Centre to offer further Class E offices of 557m² (6,000ft²), children's nursery, café and gym. The plans include six commercial Class E and Class B8 units, the provision of a 115 space truck stop, a transhipment



Proposal for Otterpool Park, near Hythe.

CREDIT: FOLKESTONE AND HYTHE DISTRICT COUNCIL

building plus ancillary welfare facilities and a transport logistics office building.

Saga building

Middleburg House previously occupied by Saga Plc, at the time of this report has received a conditional offer. Interested parties are currently looking at options for the site including a mixed-use commercial and residential scheme.

Otterpool Park

Otterpool Park LLP has been progressing plans for this major new Garden Town, set within a countryside setting near Hythe. An application is due to be resubmitted for the first 8,500 homes, up to eight schools, community facilities, employment space and associated infrastructure. To be delivered over 30 years, subject to approvals, the project team is working to a start date of 2022.

At the Local Plan Examination in Public the Planning Inspectors concluded that the submitted Core Strategy Review can be made sound by main modifications, providing confidence that Otterpool Park will secure its allocation in the Local Plan. Detailed plans for Phase 1 were revealed in March. This key area of the Garden Town has 1,900 homes, the town centre and commercial area, Westenhanger station and a new Castle Park. This area will also contain two primary schools, community facilities, a leisure centre, shops and places to eat, drink and socialise.

For further information:
www.otterpoolpark.org

Thanet

The local economy has continued to grow seeing further inward investment, increased visitor numbers (given uncertainty with overseas travel) and people relocating to the area or working at home. House prices have risen, driven by purchasers who are exiting the London market. Improved connectivity is driving entrepreneurs to set up businesses for the local, national and international markets. It is recognised that the effect of the pandemic will be long lasting, on individuals, businesses and the local economy, potentially reshaping the local community. Outdoor attractions and local accommodation providers have benefitted from the 2021 staycation market.



Proposal for the new Thanet Parkway Station.

Thanet District Council Local Plan was formally adopted in July and sets out the framework for future growth and development in the district to 2031. It identifies land for 18,000 new homes. Despite the pandemic work has continued on the key new build sites and a range of smaller sites adding to the variety of housing on offer. Last year saw an increase of 45% in completions over the previous year. Work is now well underway to build the new Thanet Parkway station west of Cliffsend, on the Ramsgate to Ashford International line. This will increase rail connectivity to London, Kent and access High Speed One. Once completed in 2023, journey times to London will be around one hour with parking for 300 cars as well as secure parking for bicycles and motorcycles. In turn this gives employment options for local residents and improves investment opportunities in Thanet's business parks.

Manston

Owners of the land at Manston Airport submitted an application for a development consent order. It proposes to re-open and develop Manston Airport into an air freight facility to handle at least 10,000 air cargo movements per year whilst offering passenger, executive travel and aircraft engineering services. Following the examination process, the Secretary of State for Transport has sought views on the proposals, commissioned an independent aviation assessor

to consider the need for the proposals, with a report in due course.

Manston Business Park, owned by East Kent Opportunities, a partnership between Kent County Council and Thanet District Council has seen significant business investment with the completion of light industrial units for sale or rent, creating jobs in the area. Manston is well connected by dual carriageway to the motorway network.

Significant public sector investment is raising Thanet's profile among private investors and developers, with many opportunities to play a part in the exciting and diverse regeneration and reimagining of the area. A major road improvement (the Inner Circuit) is proposed to ease pressure on roads in Thanet. Part of this route, the A28 Birchington, Acol and Westgate-on-Sea Relief Road, is in the 'top ten' list of high-priority schemes for the South East. It will help to link existing and planned housing to key employment and leisure at Westwood Cross, Quex Park and the seafronts. It is part of a £3.5bn, five-year investment programme to cut congestion, speed up journeys and support growth across the South East. It was submitted to government by Transport for the South East, a new regional body of local authorities, business groups and the transport industry. It is being considered by the Department for Transport.

Infrastructure and Regeneration

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Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs

The Council's use of its property portfolio also contributes to local economic growth. The industrial estate at Blenheim Close, Broadstairs has new/renewed leases to a firm of tool hire machinery for construction and gardening and an automotive upholstery business. Tivoli Road employment site in Margate is available and is being reviewed for commercial development of 20 light industrial units.

The Council has developed a vision for its main high streets and has received funding from the Future High Streets Fund (Ramsgate) and the Town Deal Programme (Margate). A £19.8m bid for Ramsgate was made to the government's Levelling Up Fund in June to cover investment in creating a Green Port, developments to the Royal Harbour and new community spaces in Newington and central Ramsgate for training and career development. This aims to create long term pathways for skills training and jobs in central Ramsgate. Alongside this, the 'Future Ramsgate Investment Plan' aims to make the most of assets and deliver a shared vision across Ramsgate to transform and regenerate the town.

In Margate, up to £22.2m of funding has been secured for a Town Deal with government for a number of projects across Margate. Some will encourage further public/private investment to bring forward key developments to create new jobs and address some of the impacts of the pandemic. Business cases are being developed to allow Margate to 'level up' and take advantage of the opportunities in the economy nationally. Tourism and creative industries are important sectors and will form part of the solution for regenerating town centres.

Despite the national retail picture, Thanet's high streets were beginning to buck the trend with growth in the independent retail and food/beverage sectors. Short term support, in the

form of grants for small businesses helped to maintain this. In total, £28m has been provided to local business owners as well as work to support the safe reopening of high streets following the pandemic such as temporary adaptations to high streets and seafronts, with support from the Reopening High Streets Safely Fund and Welcome Back Fund.

Thanet's coastal resorts are being rediscovered, moving beyond the traditional seaside holiday. Their pull is now broader, attracting businesses and individuals looking to achieve the all important, work-life balance, whilst remaining a place to holiday. Relocate to Thanet to realise a coastal location, within easy reach of London, supported by the excellent High Speed One service.

Margate and Ramsgate have a huge variety of businesses, freelancers and creative practitioners to help drive a reputation as a location for film, TV and photoshoots. Visual appeal, proximity, affordability and creative flair make it an excellent choice for creative agencies and principal broadcasters when contracting for shoots and programme making. There is an opportunity to attract a cluster of such creative production companies to Thanet. In the last year, leading publications, household names and high-end brands have used Thanet's beaches, bays and towns as a backdrop for their photoshoots and productions, including Killing Eve, The Larkins, Whitsable Pearl, The Great, Vogue Portugal, John Lewis, River Island and Net a Porter. In 2020-2021, filming generated approximately £770,000 for the Thanet economy.

Trips to the popular and award-winning resorts of Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate rose by 9.9% in 2019 (from 2017). With investment in a number of large hotels planned, this trend is set to continue. There is a growing demand for out of season, short break, coastal tourism and smaller, alternative business events with an experiential element. The Local Plan makes provision for small-scale accommodation such as a seaside glamping or camping site to cater for these markets. Thanet's 19 miles of coastline and its cultural offer attracted 4.6m trips in 2019 which resulted in a 9.9% increase in value of the sector to the district (2017-2019). The sector accounts for 20% of total employment but there is now a dedicated focus on developing a year-round economy, driven by a focus on experiential tourism and commitment to the Anglo-French Interreg Experience Project.



CREDIT: HOLLAWAY

Proposal for Nayland Rock Hotel & Spa, Margate.

Margate's cultural resurgence has helped regenerate the Old Town with independent shops, galleries and eateries as well as the renowned Turner Contemporary. Dreamland, the historic amusement park, is also a music venue and events space. Planning permission has been granted for a 124-bed hotel adjacent to the site, to extend its out of season offer to encompass business, meetings, incentive, conference and events travel. The new Crab Museum, due to open later this year, and the steady increase in independent shops in Cliftonville add to the town's year-round offering for locals and visitors.

Broadstairs is looking firmly to the future however, with a number of independent shops, bars and restaurants launching throughout the town over the last year, including in a number of key sites on the seafront and harbour arm.

Ramsgate, the only Royal Harbour in Britain, and celebrating its 200 year Royal Charter this year, is a busy destination containing 650 leisure berths. Ramsgate is also recognised as one of the original ten founding national Heritage Action Zones by Historic England, one of only two in the South East.

For further information:
www.thanet.gov.uk

Kent County Council Property

Basic Need Programme for Schools

Kent County Council produces a Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent (KCP) annually. The KCP sets out the principles to determine proposals and forecasts the need for future provision across Kent schools. It illustrates how the Council discharges its statutory responsibility to secure places for early years, Special Educational Need & Disabilities, primary and secondary children.

KCC have delivered expansions to 26 schools for over 4,355 pupils. For 2022, we are on course to deliver at least another 19 expansions and new schools resulting in an additional 3,937 places. Three new primary schools have opened during this period:

- Chilmington Green Primary, a 2FE with a 26-place nursery and a Specialist Resource Provision (SRP) Unit for Stour Academy Trust
- Ebbsfleet Primary School 1FE with 2FE infrastructure, 26-place nursery and SRP Unit for Maritime Academy Trust
- Platt Primary School: Increased pupil admissions to 1FE and worked with the DFE under Priority Schools Building programme to relocate and build a new 1FE Primary School.

Three Special Educational Need expansions:

- Beacon Satellite (Phase 1) part refurbishment of an old secondary school in Walmer. Phases 2 and 3 will follow once funding agreed
- Broomhill (North and West) 108 additional places achieved by installing mobiles and refurbishment works
- Meadowfield Special School: 100 additional places achieved by design and build extension to the existing school.

The Basic Need Programme developed opportunities through our Framework contractors/sub-contractors to offer construction apprenticeships:

- temporary Services
- scaffolding
- modern methods of construction (Streif)
- painting and decorating
- mechanical

- electrical
- carpentry and joinery
- flooring
- apprentice construction manager.

Kent Estates Partnership

The Kent Estates Partnership (KEP) brings together Kent local authorities, NHS, Higher Education/Further Education, blue light services and central government to identify and promote collaborative projects and opportunities. KEP enables engagement with the national One Public Estate programme (OPE), providing the potential for bids for OPE, MHCLG and other funding opportunities.

OPE provides support and funding to deliver ambitious property-focused programmes in collaboration and taking a strategic approach to asset management.

OPE funding is designed to help project initiation/development work for projects with a higher risk profile. The expansion of the programme to include MHCLG Land Release Fund (LRF) has enabled partners to bid for funding towards projects further on in the process and considered 'shovel ready'. It is aimed at small-scale land remediation and infrastructure works on land unusable for development. KEP has entered bids in four funding rounds and has been allocated £1.2m in OPE funding and £0.87m from two rounds of MHCLG's LRF.

All the projects are targeted to ensure the efficient use of the public sector estate and support the release of surplus land for housing. The successful projects are:

OPE

- Dartford Town Centre including Integrated Health & Social Care Campus
- Dover Discovery Centre
- Ebbsfleet Grove Road
- Ebbsfleet Integration of Healthy Living & Preventative Care Services
- KEP Shared Spaces Working Group
- Maidstone East Civic Quarter
- Paddock Wood Community Centre
- Repton Housing & Health Hub
- Sittingbourne Civic Quarter
- West Kent Blue Light Hub

- West Kent Partnership
- Whitfield Public Sector Office Hub.

LRF

- Brunswick Street and Union Street, Maidstone
- Kings Street Car Park, Maidstone
- Heather House and Pavilion, Maidstone.

Expected outcomes across the partnerships for the successful bids are £23m in capital receipts, with £1.9m in revenue savings, an estimated 3000 jobs created and over 1000 homes built as a result of these projects. For example, the Brunswick and Union Street schemes secured £658,000 to help prepare and decontaminate the land. This project is nearing completion and will deliver 94 new homes.

For further information:

www.KentEstatesPartnership@kent.gov.uk

Other projects

Southborough Community Hub

A new mixed-use development in the heart of Southborough, delivered by KCC, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Southborough Town Council with funding from land sales, NHS and Football Foundation:



Southborough Hub.

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Infrastructure and Regeneration

Continued

- library
- community hall
- Southborough Town Council offices
- retail unit
- medical centre
- sports pavilion
- Southborough Town Council depot

It commenced in November 2019 and then continued with new pandemic working restrictions and guidelines, completing in March this year.

Creative Enterprise Quarter, Ashford

One of Kent's largest cultural infrastructure projects is under construction with anticipated completion in spring 2022 forming the "Creative Enterprise Quarter" in Ashford.

The new Jasmin Vardimon facility is being built piloting an innovative and unique approach by using the value of the industrial units as an enabling development to provide investment for new building. Further capital investment has been secured from Arts Council England, the Cultural Recovery Fund's Capital Kickstart Fund, Ashford Borough Council (ABC) from the Business Rates Retention Pilot (a fund which aims to support housing and commercial growth in the borough) and the South East Local Enterprise Partnership's Getting Building Fund.

Jasmin Vardimon, will be a new creative hub with state-of-the-art facilities for the internationally renowned dance company to expand and create the company's touring productions and rehearsals. Dedicated studios will grow the company's acclaimed educational programmes and community classes and provide additional incubator space for small creative businesses. The primary creation space with a large studio, fully sprung dance floor, full lighting,

sound and audio visual will be available to hire by external creative companies. A new café and meeting rooms will provide flexible community spaces.

The building will form the centre of a major new arts hub in Ashford known as the Creative Enterprise Quarter with the 26 light industrial units ranging from 314m² (3,380ft²) to 339m² (3,649ft²) GIA with mezzanine options available on all units. This provides 3,453m² (37,168ft²) of commercial units for sale/lease to attract creative businesses and the commercial market.

For further information:

info@jasminvardimon.com

phil.hubbard@sibleypares.co.uk

Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund Success

Kent County Council has received government funding of £20.6m for energy projects within the Council's estate. In addition, a further £1.2m for school site energy projects from the governments Department for Business Energy & Industrial Strategy's Public Decarbonisation Scheme has been provided. Cumulatively, it is anticipated that the projects will reduce carbon emissions from the Council's estate by 40% (some 7,097 tonnes of CO² based on the latest energy usage of 17,660 tonnes to September 2020), and enable delivery towards its net-zero carbon emissions target.

Alongside delivery of the net-zero target, the proposed projects will reduce the Council's energy costs and provide an income from two solar parks. It aims to stimulate the low carbon economy in Kent, create jobs and set up key development infrastructure to meet future energy challenges such as security of supply.



Proposal for Jasmin Vardimon Dance Academy, Ashford.