

**A Social Regeneration Strategy  
for Medway  
2008-2016**

## **PREFACE**

Medway Council, Medway Renaissance Partnership, the UK government, South East England Development Agency and other local partners are working together to transform the Medway area through a twenty-year programme of physical regeneration, which will deliver housing, new employment and new community, cultural and civic facilities. Phase one of this physical regeneration, worth £120 million of investment, has been spent on the remediation and preparation of brown-field and urban land along Medway's waterfront to enable mixed-use development.

Medway Council is committed to the principle that everyone in Medway, regardless of where they live or their status, should have the opportunity to access quality of life benefits arising from Medway's regeneration. This is reflected in the Council's corporate priority "Everyone benefiting from the regeneration of Medway".

Medway Council established a pioneering Social Regeneration service in 2004, which has instigated an initial programme of social regeneration, founded on close partnership working with other local and regional stakeholders, the local community and with the UK government. This initial phase has amounted to over £4 million of mainly revenue investment – a combination of UK government, South East England Development Agency (SEEDA), EU and local financial resources.

Medway Council considers that more needs to be done to reinforce the importance of social regeneration as a vital and integral component of delivering a sustainable community in Medway. This is why the Council convened a working party involving Medway Renaissance, third sector representatives, the Local Strategic Partnership and SEEDA to draw up Medway's draft social regeneration strategy. All agree that the strategy is necessary to ensure that all communities in Medway benefit from the ongoing regeneration and development of the built environment of the area. All agree that the imperative for everyone in Medway to benefit from the regeneration is inextricably linked to the realisation of the Sustainable Communities vision<sup>1</sup>, which underpins the allocation of resources from the UK government to enable regeneration in Medway.

Following a fifteen-week public consultation period, the Medway Council Cabinet has approved the Strategy and adopted it as part of Medway's Regeneration Framework on 1 April 2008. Twenty-eight local, regional and national organisations contributed to the consultation. The Medway Local Strategic Partnership has also endorsed the Strategy. The key actions emanating from the Strategy are closely aligned to Medway's Local Area Agreement.

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<sup>1</sup> This strategy defines a sustainable community, in accordance with the national Sustainable Communities Plan, as being a place where people are able "to live and work both now and in the future", which "meets the diverse needs of existing and future residents", is "sensitive to the environment" and which contributes to a high quality of life.

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<sup>2</sup> This excel spreadsheet identifies in which wards the most disadvantaged 25 neighbourhoods are situated, according to the Multiple Index of Deprivation 2007.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Social Regeneration Strategy defines how all communities in Medway should benefit from Medway's regeneration programme. It also identifies how disadvantaged local communities should:

- I) Secure social inclusion through stronger and enhanced local services
- II) Gain economic inclusion via employment opportunities arising
- III) Access environmental and physical neighbourhood improvements

This document presents strategic aims and corresponding strategic objectives, underpinned by a framework of strategic priorities. It provides a detailed indicative action plan for the period of the strategy.. The strategy reflects the broad diversity of local needs that should be addressed if the regeneration of Medway is to deliver a cohesive and sustainable community. It defines both the strategic rationale and the course of action required so that communities and neighbourhoods across Medway can share in the benefits of the regeneration programme set out in the Regeneration Framework.

- 1.3 This strategy is closely aligned to Medway's Regeneration Framework 2006 – 2016 which sets out the vision for the physical transformation, necessary to achieve a "sustainable community" in Medway.  
[http://www.medway.gov.uk/medway\\_regeneration\\_framework\\_2006-2016.pdf](http://www.medway.gov.uk/medway_regeneration_framework_2006-2016.pdf)
- 1.4 This strategy should be read in conjunction with the regeneration framework, community plan, local development framework, the economic development statement, the Medway learning and skills plan and other "sister" documents declared in section 3 of the strategy.
- 1.5 At a national level, Medway's Social Regeneration Strategy takes account of the UK government's cross cutting review of sub-national economic development and regeneration, which was issued in July 2007.
- 1.6 At a regional and sub-regional level, Medway's Social Regeneration Strategy complements the South East Regional Economic Strategy and the Kent and Medway strategic planning framework.
- 1.7 At a local level, one of Medway Council's stated core priorities is "Everyone in Medway benefiting from the regeneration". Medway's Local Strategic Partnership endorsed the draft Social Regeneration Strategy as part of the process of public consultation. The Strategy correlates closely with the ten priorities set out in Medway's Community Plan 2007-2010 and its strategic objectives fit very well with indicators selected as part of Medway's Local Area Agreement.

## WHY A SOCIAL REGENERATION STRATEGY?

- 1.10 The physical development and regeneration of Medway is a key element of the Thames Gateway's Interim Plan<sup>3</sup>. This highlights the intended dramatic transformation in Medway over the next two decades: 16,000 new houses; a 20% increase in the population with an additional 50,000 living in Medway; up to 40,000 new local employment opportunities.
- 1.11 It is vital that communities across Medway not only feel a part of this transformation but also derive tangible value from it. Without this, community cohesion<sup>4</sup>, particularly between new arrival communities and existing communities, will not be achieved.
- 1.12 A key purpose of this strategy is to highlight the crucial importance of social regeneration as an integral part of the delivery of Medway's regeneration programme - essential to the sustainable communities vision.
- 1.13 **Social regeneration** is when the regeneration process harnesses tangible quality of life improvements for the direct benefit of local communities, particularly those experiencing social and economic disadvantage. It can deliver a range of tangible benefits for local people, including:
- The removal of barriers to employment
  - Better access to local services, particularly at neighbourhood level.
  - Marked improvements to the urban environment in disadvantaged areas.
  - Powerful and effective partnerships between statutory service providers and voluntary and community sector organisations
  - Resident centred neighbourhood improvements.
  - The integration of new and existing communities.
  - An empowered role for local residents in social regeneration programmes,
- 1.14 In Medway, the design of social regeneration action is founded on "Community Futures Workshops", which bring together local residents in dialogue with service providers. Neighbourhood Action Plans are the principal output, centred on resident defined priorities - the starting point for the delivery of social regeneration. The indicative Action Plan in Appendix I to this Strategy draws on resident priorities already defined at 26 "Community Futures" Workshops, involving over 150 local people.

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<sup>3</sup> DCLG November 2006

<sup>4</sup> This strategy defines a cohesive community as one where all in Medway share a common vision and a common sense of belonging, where all feel valued and share in quality of life and employment opportunities, where all have similar life opportunities and where strong and positive relationships are being developed between people in Medway from different backgrounds and circumstances.

## **2. *Executive Summary***

### **2.1 The Vision**

Medway's vision is to become a City of Learning, Culture, Tourism and Enterprise where all constituent communities are able to enjoy the benefits of the regeneration programme

### **2.2 The long term strategic goals for Medway are as follows:**

- To build cohesive communities where all people can benefit from the regeneration opportunities.
- To respond directly to the government's vision of creating a sustainable community where people are able to both live and work "now and in the future". It will work in active partnership with national government and regional bodies to progress and deliver this vision.

### **2.3 Delivering a Sustainable Community In Medway**

This strategy contends that the achievement of "Sustainable Communities" is only possible through a combined intervention of social, economic and physical regeneration, abiding by the highest environmental improvement standards. From a social regeneration perspective, this means adhering in the short, medium and long term to the following seven building blocks of a sustainable community:

- Integrating new arrival residents with existing residents in order to create a single united and cohesive community
- Maximising local jobs for local people by investing in workforce skills development and business start-up, strengthening the employability of the most disadvantaged communities.
- Generating a strong and vibrant community and voluntary sector so that all people have access to community services.
- Enhancing the quality of life of the most marginalised communities by providing access to neighbourhood services
- Addressing relatively weak urban infrastructure experienced by existing communities in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and delivering sustainable access to urban environmental infrastructure (utilities, waste management services, sustainable transport, open spaces etc).
- Realising the provision of a sufficient volume of community facilities and employment sites on the newly regenerated sites and ensuring service provision is accessible both to new and existing communities.

Two practical steps that will be taken in the immediate term are:

- Local partners to ensure social regeneration priorities feature within the local area agreement, thereby aligning and pooling resources for delivery
- Social regeneration activities to be mainstreamed as priorities for delivery and then implemented by statutory service providers in Medway.

**2.4 As an ongoing consideration, three cross-cutting strategic priorities have emerged that underpin the Social Regeneration Strategy and identify notable beneficiaries of social regeneration, as follows:**

**Strategic Priority One – Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods**

Medway has 25 neighbourhoods amongst the worst off 25% of neighbourhoods in the country. This is according to the government's Multiple Index of Deprivation, which states that there are 164 neighbourhoods in Medway.

**Neighbourhood Social Exclusion** - Communities residing in these areas are experiencing adverse social circumstances, which are having a major impact on quality of life, exacerbating their social exclusion. These include a lack of access to health and community services, relatively poor health, prevalent hotspots of crime and anti-social behaviour, relatively poor quality living conditions, a lack of access to open spaces and a higher proportion of lone parent families or households with people needing long term care.

**Neighbourhood Economic Exclusion** - These communities also invariably hold a weak and disempowered position in the local labour market, preventing them from access to higher value employment. This is mainly due to relatively low skills and qualification levels. In a number of these neighbourhoods, over 50% of the working population possess no qualifications whatsoever, according to the Multiple Index of Deprivation (IMD). Such communities also face other significant barriers to employment – personal, social and financial. It is absolutely vital for social regeneration action to be taken so that these communities have the opportunity to benefit from higher value employment offered by Medway's regeneration programme. In turn, these communities will more readily own the benefits of Medway's regeneration. This is key to the success of establishing a cohesive community with new arrival communities.

**Strategic Priority Two - Disadvantaged Communities**

Medway has a rich diversity of communities and champions the cause of upholding harmonious relations and engaging all its communities so that they have a stake in its strategic development and regeneration. This is of vital importance if Medway's vision and longer term priority for building cohesive communities is to be realised. The following are examples of communities of interest in Medway and this list is by no means exhaustive:

**Medway's Older Workers** - Medway is diverse as regards the age range of its population. There exists a significant cohort of older workers, a number of whom are disadvantaged by skills gaps due to the changing nature of the economy. These structural changes in the local economy have sometimes resulted in redundancy and unemployment amongst older workers. There is a danger that they will experience greater difficulty in accessing the benefits of the influx of new employment opportunities arising from Medway's regeneration unless social regeneration intervention can assist them to re-skill and up-skill so that they can adapt to the changing skills requirements of the economy.

**Medway's Young People** - Medway is also characterised by having a particularly young population, with some neighbourhoods in Medway having as many as 35% of the population under the age of 19 (Source: IMD). The "Every Child Matters" agenda highlights the imperative of ensuring that children and young people from all social and ethnic backgrounds share the same quality of life rights and opportunities. It is particularly important therefore for services for children and young people to feature sufficiently prominently as part of the strengthening of neighbourhood social capital and the capacity building of the voluntary and community sector in Medway. It is also very important that action is taken to enable young people that fall into the "NEET" (Not in Employment, Education or Training) category to find education or employment pathways that work towards their social and economic inclusion.

**Medway's disabled communities** must also play a full and active part in the economy of the area and across Medway's communities. This means ensuring that they have opportunity to access training and employment including tailored training when necessary. It also means broadening the provision of community services that cater for the disabled as an integral part of capacity building the voluntary and community sector in Medway and neighbourhood services. Ultimately it means the provision of services that are sensitive to the day-to-day needs and priorities of all Medway's disabled communities.

**Medway Carers** – The Indices of Multiple Deprivation reveal that in Medway there are a significant number of people, notably people of working age that are caring full time for dependents in the household, preventing them being active in the local labour market and acting as a significant obstacle in accessing local services. This leaves carers often just as isolated as those for whom they are caring and this makes them amongst Medway's most hard to reach groups.

**Medway's BME Communities** - According to Census data, over 7.7% of the population in Medway are from an ethnic minority community. There are a broad diversity of communities from a range of different faiths and cultures. There are 21 different ethnic community organisations affiliated to the Medway Ethnic Minorities Forum. Ethnic minority communities can experience an inability to access local employment and community services because the methods of delivery are sometimes not sensitive to their cultural needs and traditions. There



are also newly arrived communities and those from the older worker generation who require sustained support in English language training.

**Medway's Faith Communities** – Medway is populated by communities from a range of different faith backgrounds. They have formed an extremely active part of Medway's voluntary and community sector, developing places of worship to service the spiritual well being of their communities whilst also establishing a broad range of services to the local community. These include community-learning programmes, childcare, after school and breakfast clubs, social clubs and events etc. Faith communities are key layers in upholding harmonious community relations and they will have a key role to play in delivering a single cohesive community in Medway, integrating new arrival communities.

### **Strategic Priority Three – A Single Cohesive Medway Community**

Everyone in Medway, regardless of where they live or their status, should benefit from the quality of life and employment benefits arising from Medway's regeneration.

**The New Communities-** The population of Medway is currently expanding on the back of new housing developments and could increase by as many as 50,000 people, which will represent a 20% expansion in the population of Medway compared to currently. These new communities stand to benefit from proximity to an array of new urban infrastructure and services built in proximity to the new housing. A key priority is therefore to achieve the effective integration of these incoming communities with the existing communities in Medway whilst also ensuring delivery of the required levels of physical and community infrastructure.

**Meeting the Growing Demand for Local Services** - Efforts must be made to ensure that these new communities are linked to the existing communities. It is likely that a number of these new communities will require access to training and skills development themselves and advice on employment in order to facilitate their access to local employment opportunities. Furthermore, to reflect the increased population, it is particularly important that sufficient resources are made available to enable the development of additional community services and community infrastructure – schools, health services, community centres, small retail services etc. This will ensure new communities can access quality of life benefits and build community togetherness with existing communities.

**Ensuring Existing Communities Benefit** - At the same time, action must be taken to enable existing communities easy access to the flagship Medway cultural and community facilities and zones of employment to be delivered by Medway's regeneration programme. It is imperative existing communities are engaged and involved in the process of physical regeneration through broad consultation. Ultimately, existing communities must gain tangible quality of life benefits from Medway's regeneration if they are to share ownership of the vision for Medway and if a sustainable and cohesive community is to be realised.

## Conclusion

- 2.5 Fundamentally important to the success of delivering this strategy is not only the ability to attract external funding investment, but also for key stakeholder organisations to prioritise social regeneration activities and mainstream budget provision. The new focus around the Local Area Agreements in terms of key agencies agreeing provision and working to jointly fund the delivery of joint targets will be extremely helpful to this work, ensuring social regeneration actions are prioritised within the LAA.
- 2.6 Realising the vision for Medway's Social Regeneration Strategy of all constituent communities enjoying the benefits of the transformation of Medway is an essential pre-requisite if the government's vision for a sustainable community is to be achieved. It is absolutely vital for local people in Medway to be able to access the new employment opportunities arising and for a sufficient volume of social and community infrastructure to be in place so that Medway can truly become "a place where people can both live and work now and in the future".
- 2.7 There currently exists a situation in Medway where around 41% of the working population commute outside of Medway to find employment. At the same time there are numerous marginalised and disadvantaged communities with a lack of access to key community services or unable to access higher value employment opportunities. Moreover, Medway's population is set to increase by as much as 50,000. This means that the achievement of both Medway's vision and the government's sustainable communities vision presents a considerable challenge. It is crucial therefore for social regeneration intervention to be given equal status in combination with physical and economic regeneration
- 2.8 There are currently Neighbourhood Action Plans operational in five of the most disadvantaged neighbourhood areas in Medway. These have led to the successful delivery of an initial social regeneration programme worth over £4 million of investment from local, regional, national and European sources, over a three-year period.
- 2.9 Ultimately, this Social Regeneration Strategy not only clearly demonstrates the strategic imperative for social regeneration as an integral part of regeneration in Medway; it also provides a robust framework for the formulation and delivery of an array of practical social regeneration interventions. The direct connection to local Neighbourhood Action Plans, which are founded on resident priorities for social regeneration, provides an effective way of empowering local people and engaging local residents in the regeneration process. Investment in the delivery of the Strategy is essential if a single cohesive and sustainable community is to be achieved in Medway.

### 3. MEDWAY'S APPROACH TO SOCIAL REGENERATION

To achieve the vision behind the Social Regeneration Strategy it is essential that alongside the physical regeneration programme for Medway equal status be given to social and economic inclusion measures. Physical regeneration will achieve social and economic benefits but it must also take into account the needs of the disadvantaged and marginalised communities. The Social Regeneration Strategy has the following three strategic aims:

**Strategic Aim 1 – To create a cohesive and inclusive community**

This will include measures to improve community safety, health, youth, cultural services, access to community services and continuing the development of a strong voluntary and community sector.

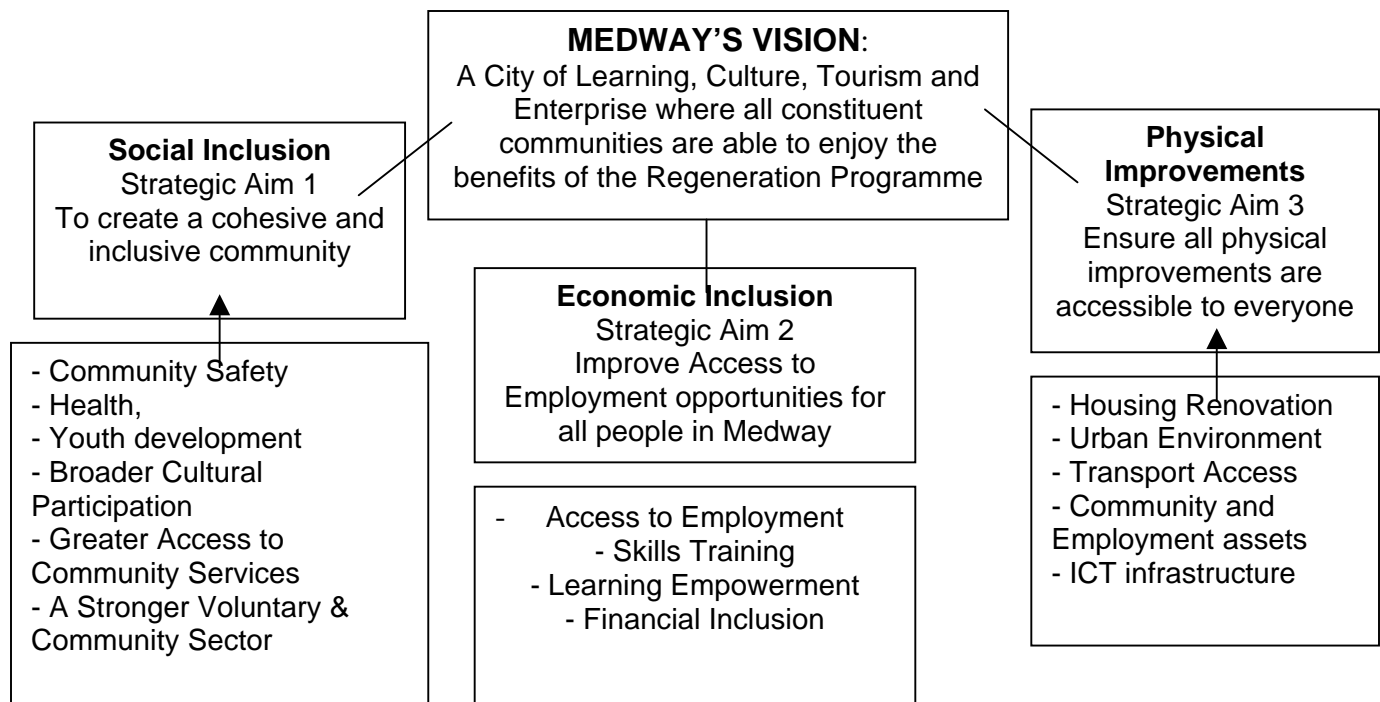
**Strategic Aim 2 – To improve access to employment opportunities for all.**

This will include skills training, access to qualifications, community learning empowerment, financial inclusion and action to assist disadvantaged communities overcome barriers to employment.

**Strategic Aim 3 – To ensure physical improvements are accessible to all**

This will include the renovation of existing housing, urban environmental improvements, improved public transport access, enhanced road and street infrastructure, the realisation of community and employment assets for both existing and new communities and broadening access to ICT infrastructure.

#### VISION AND STRATEGIC AIMS



- 3.1 However, these three strategic aims must be interwoven with the three cross cutting strategic priorities that underpin this strategy, which emphasise a geographic and sectoral approach to ensure everyone in Medway is included in the strategy and has opportunities to benefit from the Regeneration Programme. This is illustrated below.

<b>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>DISADVANTAGED NEIGHBOURHOODS</b>	<b>DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES</b>	<b>A SINGLE COHESIVE MEDWAY</b>
<b>SOCIAL INCLUSION:</b> Community Safety Health Youth Culture Hard to Reach communities Third Sector Capacity			
<b>ECONOMIC INCLUSION:</b> Employment Skills Learning Empowerment Financial Inclusion			
<b>ACCESS TO PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS:</b> Housing Environment Transport Community & Employment Sites ICT Infrastructure			

- 3.2 The three strategic aims are transposed into strategic objectives, which are listed as themes in the table above. Each strategic objective and its rationale are outlined in the section below. Each objective corresponds closely to a sister plan or strategy, which is affiliated to the Local Strategic Partnership and Medway Community Plan. The sister plans set out the Medway wide response to the challenges set by each strategic objective. This underlines the close correlation between the Social Regeneration Strategy and the plans that underpin the Local Strategic Partnership.
- 3.3 The strategic objectives are presented on the following pages.
- 3.4 The type of social regeneration interventions necessary to deliver the strategic objectives are described in Appendix I to this Strategy in the form of an indicative action plan. The voluntary and community sector have a pivotal role to play in the delivery of many of these social regeneration project actions in view of their ability to engage and interact with the local community in disadvantaged neighbourhoods on a day to day basis.

## **STRATEGIC AIM 1: - To create a cohesive and inclusive community**

### **Strategic Objective 1.1 – Tackle Localised Anti-Social Behaviour and Reduce Fear of Crime**

One of the main issues articulated by local residents living in disadvantaged communities is a 'fear of crime' and a general feeling of lack of community safety, particularly at night. This is also a key area of concern for many ethnic minority communities, new arrival communities and for older people. This fear of crime serves to dissuade local residents from being more active in their communities and can also affect adversely community quality of life and well-being.

The Neighbourhood Action Plans formulated to date provide consistent feedback from local residents and community representatives in that they all advocate the strengthening of neighbourhood policing, better co-ordinated and stronger enforcement in areas affected most by anti-social behaviour and direct action to reduce the fear of crime prevalent in such neighbourhoods. Action in response will include the establishment of neighbourhood police offices and surgeries, making use of existing community infrastructure such as schools, libraries and community centres.

This strategic objective complements the **Medway Community Safety Plan**, which sets out how partner public agencies, community organisations and local people, can work together to reduce crime. <http://www.medway.gov.uk/comsfty-2.pdf>

### **Strategic Objective 1.2 – Improve Health Awareness and Strengthen Access to Health and Social Care Services**

Medway experiences a quality of health amongst its population overall which compares adversely to other parts of the region and nationally. The mortality rate is significantly higher than the regional and national average and 31% of households have at least one person with a limiting long-term illness.

Judging from the feedback within the Neighbourhood Action Plans produced to date for the Chatham area, local residents are particularly concerned about the lack of health care services in the vicinity. There appears to be a direct correlation between the relative absence of health service facilities and adverse health deprivation data, notably in areas like Twydall where the health statistic is a major contributing factor to making it one of the most disadvantaged wards.

The integrated Council and Primary Care Trust Public Health team works on the delivery of public health improvement targets, which are linked to the above. These are presented in the **Annual Public Health Report**. The latest report can be found at [http://www.medway.gov.uk/cabinetdecisions-past\\_issues.asp?ID=1214](http://www.medway.gov.uk/cabinetdecisions-past_issues.asp?ID=1214)

There is an excellent opportunity for partnership working between Medway PCT, Medway Council and the local voluntary and community sector on the provision of health and health information services in the heart of local communities. Potential venues include schools, libraries and community centres.

### Strategic Objective 1.3 – Empower Young People and Improve Youth Facilities

The prevailing media image is that young people are often seen as potential perpetrators of crime but statistically it can be shown that they are far more often victims. Children and young people tell us that one of the main reasons for becoming involved in anti-social behaviour is the lack of 'things to do' and 'places to go' that could give them meaningful activity.

Medway has a relatively young population – 28% of the population is under the age of 19 compared to a regional and national average of 25%. Over 33% of households have dependent children compared to a regional average of 29%. In many of Medway's most disadvantaged neighbourhoods, the proportion of young people is higher still – for example on the White Road estate, young people make up 35% of the population. There is excellent potential for local community centres to respond to this challenge and in addition schools are broadening their community role via the extended schools programme.

The Neighbourhood Action Plans to date have highlighted the imperative of developing services and facilities dedicated to children and young people. The absence of such facilities has a detrimental effect on self-esteem and sense of purpose and can create the conditions for anti-social behaviour.

This action should build on the work of the detached youth team where youth workers link up with young people in the heart of their communities:

<http://www.medway.gov.uk/index/learning/youngpeople-3/youth/37910.htm>

There is also an excellent opportunity to embrace and involve young people in the process of Medway's physical, social and economic regeneration. A recent highly practical example was the design by young people in the All Saints neighbourhood of Chalk Pit Community Park.

In addition, young people in the 16-25 age bracket face relatively more difficulties in accessing jobs and action needs to be taken to assist them to overcome this economic exclusion. This will be complemented by signposting services for 14-19 year olds, seeking to prevent young people from falling into this position.

Mid Kent College have created a new range of courses, for enrolment every January, which are specifically tailored for young people that have dropped out of

mainstream education and training. The College is also expanding its work related learning curriculum in partnership with local schools to strengthen the preparation of young people for the world of work.

The themes above link closely to the **Medway Children and Young People's Plan**, found at: <http://www.medway.gov.uk/g1095-artwork-3.pdf>

#### Strategic Objective 1.4 –Broaden Participation in Cultural Activities

Cultural activities are often not encouraged, explored or valued in disadvantaged communities and can be seen as not relevant. However, they can allow diverse communities to express themselves, breaking down barriers and helping create more cohesive communities. In order to achieve its vision of becoming a City of Culture, it is vital that access to cultural activities is as broad as possible and that all communities share in its benefits and enjoyment as an integral part of the identity of Medway. It is also very important that local communities in Medway can share in the employment benefits of a growing cultural sector and an increasing number of creative industries. .

Broadening community engagement in cultural activities can also provide invaluable work experience, which can strengthen local community employability. It can act as a stepping-stone for a return to education and training. It can reinvigorate the sense of community togetherness and it can also make an important contribution to the growth of social capital by encouraging people to take up volunteering roles for the benefit of their community.

Medway is intending to submit formally an application for World Heritage Site status in 2011 for Chatham Historic Dockyard and the surrounding sites and fortifications. World Heritage Site status would be an enduring accolade – testimony to the skills of thousands of Medway residents.

This objective is directly relevant to the thematic priorities in Medway's Cultural Statement, which can be found at: <http://www.medway.gov.uk/culturelowres.pdf>

Medway is actively taking forward a programme of action and a campaign designed to put it firmly on the map as regards the provision of services related to the 2012 Olympics. An £11 million initiative called "Medway Park" is set to establish a regional centre of sporting excellence, which will be of lasting benefit to local residents. It is extremely important that all communities in Medway have the opportunity to access the quality of life benefits emanating from this initiative. In terms of sports development, the Medway 2012 initiative declares the aim of creating a regional centre of sporting excellence in Medway and presents how to increase sports participation in Medway:  
<http://www.medway.gov.uk/london2012/61746/69361.htm>

This overriding rationale for broadening participation in sport connects well with other Strategic Objectives presented in this Strategy, notably the need for action to deliver more healthy living, to empower young people, capacity build the voluntary and community sector and to serve hard to reach communities.

This objective of broadening participation in sport links closely to the strategic priorities set out in Medway Council's Sports Development Strategy which can be found at: [http://www.medway.gov.uk/final\\_strategy\\_1\\_.pdf/](http://www.medway.gov.uk/final_strategy_1_.pdf/)

**Strategic Objective 1.5 – Strengthen access to Local Community Services by the most hard to reach communities**

Often disadvantaged communities and marginalised groups most in need of community services can find them hardest to access. This can be due to:

- I) A lack of knowledge and awareness of local services and systems
- II) Geographic marginalisation of communities in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, rendering services physically difficult to access.
- III) Communication barriers such as language, literacy and numeracy.
- IV) A lack of self-confidence, self-esteem or other adverse circumstances.

These factors affect in particular disadvantaged communities such as new arrival communities and ethnic minority elders, whose knowledge of English can be limited. Furthermore, new arrival communities are hampered by their lack of familiarity with the nature and structure of local services or how they inter-relate. Social regeneration interventions in this context should focus on English language training and the integration of new arrival communities. Mid Kent College is now an on-line centre for the citizenship test for people wanting to permanently reside in the UK.

Older people and elders in the community can experience adverse physical circumstances, which impede their ability to access local services. In Medway's disadvantaged neighbourhoods, elders can be faced with very difficult personal circumstances due to financial difficulties and a sense of isolation and fear, particularly if the area is experiencing crime and anti-social behaviour. This can have a detrimental impact on self-esteem and personal healthy and well-being. The development of services and facilities that cater for elders is a key part of assisting them to retain and sustain their independence for longer periods, thus reducing the demands upon local social care services.

There is excellent potential to make use of community venues in the heart of these neighbourhoods as well as schools through the extended schools initiative. More information on the extended schools service is provided at: <http://www.medway.gov.uk/index/learning/schoolinfo/38456/47941.htm>



**Strategic Objective 1.6 – Increase the capacity in the Voluntary and Community Sector**

The voluntary and community sector in Medway has over 580 Voluntary and Community organisations (VCO) that provide a range of services and interventions for local people. The strengthening of the capacity and capability of the sector will make a key contribution to the social inclusion of disadvantaged communities in Medway's regeneration programme and to a more cohesive and inclusive society. This is due to the remit that many community organisations have in acting as dedicated advocates for particular disadvantaged groups. They are able to involve and engage the most hard to reach communities and play a key role in enabling these people to access vital local services, which can improve day-to-day quality of life and access to job opportunities.

This role is also distinct and highly valuable in enabling statutory service providers to access the most disadvantaged communities through close partnership working with voluntary and community organisations. Increasingly voluntary and community organisations are equipped to offer valuable skills training and employment support. However the organisations in many cases face major organisational development and capacity building challenges due to a lack of consistent funding, a lack of professional expertise and organisational inefficiencies. Once again local community centres can support these organisations, as can schools through the extended schools programme. In addition the culture of partnership working across the sector needs to be maximised, making best use of local resources.

In terms of community infrastructure and their close links into significant sections of the local population, faith community organisations have a major role to play in enabling access to local services at neighbourhood level. The sector has a number of "neighbourhood champions" offering a physical base for a range of "doorstep" local services. There is also excellent potential for local voluntary and community organisations to make much more use of libraries and schools as venues for local service delivery.

## **STRATEGIC AIM 2 – To improve access to employment opportunities for all people in Medway**

Strategic Objective 2.1 – Improve access by local communities to local employment opportunities

According to the Annual Business enquiry employee analysis there are just under 85,000 jobs in Medway of which just over 52,000 are full time. The delivery of Medway's programme of waterfront regeneration could create up to 40,000 new employment opportunities. This is the target set by Medway's Economic Development Strategy.

In order to realise the government's vision of a Sustainable Community in Medway, it is crucially important to maximise the number of local people in Medway that have the ability to access local employment. At the same time there are a number of significant challenges to be addressed if the vision of a community where "people live and work now and in the future" is to be achievable.

The unemployment rate in Medway's most disadvantaged neighbourhoods runs at around 7%, which is over double that of the average in Medway. Furthermore, 20% of Medway's workforce, numbering of 30,000 people of working age, is classed as economically inactive and many of these people are faced with specific barriers to employment that prevent them from accessing jobs. Amongst the rest of the workforce, a significant number are also in low value employment, which is also a contributing factor to their economic inclusion. The fact that the average GVA per head in Medway is just 68% of the UK average (see section 4.4) provides a clear illustration of the depth of this situation, particularly when comparing with the average income of those working in the South East region, which is 110% of the national average!

A sizeable proportion of Medway's workforce will be excluded from the economic and quality of life benefits of the new employment arising from Medway's regeneration, unless intervention action is taken that provides specialist neighbourhood and community services across Medway, which work with those facing economic exclusion to identify and overcome the barriers to employment with which they are faced. These barriers can be related to financial debt, social problems linked to drugs, alcohol and family breakdown, personal difficulties and a lack of self-esteem, day to day commitments such as those faced by lone parents and people with long term care dependents. They can also be directly linked to geographic disadvantage and marginalisation, due to difficulties physically in accessing local services and the absence of services in the vicinity.

The marginalisation and economic exclusion experienced by this section of Medway's workforce will also act as an impediment against their ability to access

higher value employment arising from Medway's regeneration, despite the fact that on occasions they may have the necessary skills and experience potentially to access it. Local employment agencies and intermediary services have a particularly important role to play in the pro-active promotion of new employment opportunities, making use of more informal channels of communication via community organisations that have day to day access to the hardest to reach.

Local employment services such as Job Centre Plus with support from Medway Council have formed effective local partnerships with voluntary and community sector organisations, located in the heart of disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Neighbourhood Managers, employed by these community organisations via funding from the Regional Development Agency have worked with local people referred by Job Centre Plus. The economic inclusion of disadvantaged communities is entirely complementary to the principle of maximising access to local jobs by local people, which is a cornerstone of the government's Sustainable Communities vision:

[www.communities.gov.uk/communities/sustainablecommunities/whatis/](http://www.communities.gov.uk/communities/sustainablecommunities/whatis/)

In order for local people to have the opportunity to access local and higher value employment, this employment needs to be generated in the first place. Medway's Economic Development Statement sets out a strategic plan to secure up to 40,000 new jobs in Medway over the period of the regeneration programme: [http://www.medway.gov.uk/ed\\_full\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.medway.gov.uk/ed_full_strategy.pdf)

Strategic Objective 2.2 – To enable Medway's workforce to access vocational skills and qualifications

The regeneration of Medway is going to create a range of diverse employment opportunities. For that to stimulate the achievement of a sustainable and cohesive community, it will require a local workforce with a skills base across all levels of skills and qualifications. If as broad a spectrum of Medway's local workforce is to derive maximum benefit from future local employment opportunities, then it is vitally important that they are equipped with the relevant vocational skills and qualifications. This applies equally to the ability for Medway's workforce to access new higher value employment.

As illustrated in Section 4.5, Medway's workforce is lagging behind both the regional and national average as regards the proportion of people that are equipped with skills qualifications, particularly higher level qualifications. Only 16% of the workforce possesses a degree compared to the South East average of 28%. At the lower end of the scale, just 55% of the workforce has NVQ level 2 qualifications compared to the regional average of 66%. The major implication of this is that the local workforce is going to be in a much weaker position in

relation to accessing new employment arising from Medway's regeneration. This in turn will work against the imperative of maximising local jobs for local people as a pivotal agenda in delivering a sustainable community in Medway.

More of Medway's workforce need to gain access to vocational skills that are directly related to the key growth sectors of Medway's economy, where most of the new employment is likely to arise. This includes specialist manufacturing construction, health and social care, cultural and creative industries, higher education, retail and marine technologies. Medway's Economic Development Statement has further information: [http://www.medway.gov.uk/ed\\_full\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.medway.gov.uk/ed_full_strategy.pdf)

The government Leitch Review highlights that a skilled and flexible workforce is essential if the UK economy is to sustain competitiveness both locally and globally. The "Train to Gain" initiative is providing the opportunity for Medway based training providers, such as Mid Kent College, to form effective partnerships with local businesses, working with them to upskill their employees. Invariably it is the larger businesses that are more responsive to this and more should be done to work with them to encourage their small business suppliers to access the "Train to Gain" service in support of their workforce development.

Medway's rapidly expanding university sector has a major role to play in equipping the local workforce with higher level vocational skills that are in high demand from growth sectors of the local economy. A new "multi-versity" campus has been constructed for over 6,000 students with courses provided by four different universities there. A fifth specialises in Art & Design at Rochester. It is estimated that the campus will add £10 million to the local economy and create 600 additional jobs. In addition, Mid Kent College is opening a new site at Lower Lines and one key objective will be to improve access to Higher Education by local people.

Some communities of interest in Medway in many cases will only be able to access key vocational skills if they receive especially tailored training, which may be removed from mainstream locations and standard techniques. In the case of some BME communities and new communities, this may include language training, including in the relevant business vocabulary. To attract young people that may have been disaffected from mainstream education and training, training may need to take place in a more informal setting. Training will also need to cater for the needs of Medway's disabled communities.

Some of the older sections of Medway's workforce possess significant amounts of experience and at the same time may have skills and qualifications which require refreshing and updating to take account of structural economic and technological changes. Action is required to ensure that older workers can overcome labour market weakness by refreshing and updating skills. In addition, many businesses are faced with an ageing workforce where it is crucial for the

benefits of their knowledge and experience to be imparted to younger colleagues.

The basis for skills development across Medway's workforce is presented in Medway's Skills Plan: <http://www.medway.gov.uk/index/business/63825.htm>

**Strategic Objective 2.3 – To deliver learning empowerment for Medway's disadvantaged workforce**

A significant section of Medway's workforce is faced with economic exclusion from the benefits of the regeneration programme simply because of the extent of their weakness in the local labour market, encapsulated in the fact that they possess no qualifications whatsoever. According to the local area labour force survey of Medway, 15% of the working population are without any qualifications whilst 25% have not reached NVQ level 1. This amounts to around 40,000 people from Medway's workforce and compares to the regional average of 19%. In some disadvantaged wards in Medway 38% of the workforce have not reached Level 1, whilst in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods, 50% of the workforce are without qualifications.

Approximately 7.7% of Medway's population is from an ethnic minority community and across these communities there are individuals that also require support in English language training in order to empower their ability to access local employment. Moreover, a recent influx of communities from central and Eastern Europe has substantially increased the importance of English language training as a key component of the empowerment of the local workforce.

Medway has a relatively young population, in some disadvantaged neighbourhoods reaching 35% of all people. Young people between the ages of 16 and 24 face disadvantage in the labour market in view of their relative lack of work experience, negative perceptions as to their reliability and in some cases due their disaffection from the mainstream education and training environment, where they have previously failed to gain skills and qualifications. Young people in this situation can be described as "NEETS" – "not in education, employment and training". It is very important for the empowerment of Medway's workforce to include specific action to embrace and provide young people with the opportunity to access the employment benefits of Medway's regeneration in the future.

If the empowerment of these most disadvantaged sections of Medway's workforce is to be sustained medium to long term then it is vital for Skills for Life training not simply to be seen as an end in itself but also for it to act as a gateway for progression on to higher level vocational training to enhance employability. A Medway Workforce Skills Forum will bring together community organisations, resident representatives and local training providers in order to establish a single

pool of information and to set up local mechanisms for referring local community beneficiaries from one training initiative onto another. The ability to sustain the progression of an individual in relation to obtaining skills and qualifications will be the key value added for this Skills Forum.

Voluntary and community sector organisations have a vital role to play in delivering community learning at venues in the heart of disadvantaged communities. An increasing number of VCS groups are able to offer fully accredited training to local people at entry level and up to Level 1. A very good example of this is Church in Society, which has set up “1<sup>st</sup> Byte” centre venues to offer accredited training to local people in ICT and “Skills for Life”.

Strategic Objective 2.4 – To address financial exclusion and overcome debt as a barrier to skills and employment

Medway is no different from other parts of the country in that there exists amongst its communities a sizeable number of people that are faced with the burden of financial debts. For Medway’s most disadvantaged communities this burden can be exacerbated in circumstances when those debts are placed with more unscrupulous private lenders. People can find themselves in a spiral of rising debt and a vicious circle of ongoing financial struggle that proves extremely difficult to escape from. This “poverty trap” in which people can find themselves makes it extremely difficult to access skills development and higher value employment opportunities, which can serve as a means to reduce these financial difficulties and improve quality of life. In many circumstances, the most disadvantaged are simply not able to open bank accounts with reputable financial institutions.

The Medway Credit Union has been in existence for a decade and there is excellent potential for this service to be refined and expanded to provide a consistent and dependable financial service to local communities, particularly those from the most disadvantaged areas.

Furthermore, there is also untapped potential existing amongst the broader voluntary and community sector as regards the provision of financial advice and financial management expertise, such as through bodies like the Citizens Advice Bureau. Statutory providers should pursue more robust partnerships with voluntary and community sector organisations such as these in order to enable access by the most hard to reach communities to the financial services offered by such organisations.

Finally, financial management and awareness should be a high priority when defining and implementing community learning programmes at venues in the heart of disadvantaged communities.

### **STRATEGIC AIM 3 – To ensure physical urban improvements are accessible to everyone**

Strategic Objective 3.1 – To undertake a renovation programme of the poorest quality housing stock.

Medway has twenty-five neighbourhoods, which feature amongst the poorest 25% in the country and the vast majority are situated towards the centre of Medway's urban agglomeration, where the housing is often terraced and far more densely clustered. Many of these neighbourhoods have housing stock that date back to the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth century, built to house workers for the naval dockyard and other manufacturing industry. It is these areas that are faced with the poorest quality housing stock in the Medway area, typically experiencing structural weaknesses and energy consumption inefficiencies. This has an adverse impact on the quality of life of those that reside in the housing.

In addition, these disadvantaged neighbourhoods also contain a larger proportion of properties, which are vacant or derelict where there is sadly untapped dormant potential for such properties to respond to accommodation needs.

The neighbourhoods also are characterised by a larger proportion of households that contain dependents in need of long-term care or households with elderly couples or elderly people living on their own. There is a major need to ensure that housing can cater for older people and the disabled, so that these communities of interest can retain their independence and autonomy longer, delaying the need to rely on social care services.

The rationale for this strategic objectives correlates closely with thematic priorities presented in Medway's housing strategy, notably "to ensure housing in Medway meets the needs of the whole community". Further information on this strategy is found at: [www.medway.gov.uk/index/housing/64756/64757.htm](http://www.medway.gov.uk/index/housing/64756/64757.htm)

This will build on housing energy efficiency measures, the uptake of which Medway Council is promoting through the Kent Energy Efficiency Advice Centre on behalf of the Energy Saving Trust.

Strategic Objective 3.2 – To implement improvements to the urban environment, which enhance community well being.

One of the major neighbourhood improvement needs that Medway residents have identified in the Neighbourhood Action Plans produced to date is the need to enhance the quality of the urban environment. There are three principal

themes, which underpin this priority that form the basis for the arguments presented by existing communities, when formulating the Action Plans.

The first is the need to address the problem of fly tipping, dirt and graffiti, which can beset Medway's most disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Medway's alley-gating programme is making a contribution towards eradicating hotspots of fly-tipping but a more sustained and intensive programme of action is required to deliver fundamental improvements. This complements Medway's Waste Management Strategy, which can be found at:

<http://www.medway.gov.uk/index/environment/waste/wastestrategy.htm>

The second is the relative lack of open spaces and outdoor leisure/play areas for people to access in Medway's most disadvantaged neighbourhoods. This can have knock on adverse impacts on other issues such as the fact that young people have no areas where they can socialise, the broader community have an absence of areas where they can engage in leisure pursuits and take exercise. The absence of such open spaces can not only have a detrimental impact on levels of health and well being, it can also undermine community cohesion in that it means that there are a lack of communal spaces where people can meet and interact. This can worsen the sense of isolation and fear. The proposed Great Lines City Park is situated close to the centre of Chatham and adjacent to several disadvantaged neighbourhoods. There is excellent potential for this 30 hectare site to be transformed into a substantial community asset. The Park will be developed in close consultation with local communities. Medway Council has developed a Countryside and Open Space Strategy, which also responds to the reality that both new and existing communities "need and desire a high quality countryside and open space close to where they live, work and play". This strategy document is found at: [http://www.medway.gov.uk/consultation\\_draft\\_coss.pdf](http://www.medway.gov.uk/consultation_draft_coss.pdf)

The third is the direct link that can be drawn between poor quality urban environmental infrastructure – such as badly maintained alleyways, poor lighting, overgrown footpaths etc and the tendency for these zones to act as a magnet for crime and anti-social behaviour. It is particularly important to undertake targeted urban environmental improvements not only to combat the conditions anti-social behaviour but also to reduce the propensity for this poor infrastructure to accentuate the fear of crime, which has an adverse impact on community well being and individual stress levels.

Through the Neighbourhood Action Plans drawn up as part of the initial programme of social regeneration, local people have been engaged in the design, development and delivery of such urban environmental improvements. This partnership working with local residents in both the process and the achievement of such improvements can have an extremely beneficial effect on social inclusion and community cohesion.



**Strategic Objective 3.3 – To enhance transport infrastructure in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and strengthen transport links to the regeneration zones.**

If local residents from across Medway's communities are to access the benefits of the regeneration programme, particularly those from the most marginalised neighbourhoods, it is particularly crucial that transport connections and services are enhanced. This will provide local people with the opportunity physically to travel to the waterfront regeneration zones whether it be to access new employment opportunities arising or new cultural, commercial or leisure facilities, which will be providing a range of services to Medway's community, each making a positive contribution to community quality of life. This includes retail centres, cultural facilities such as theatres and music centres and leisure services such as restaurants, bars, cinemas and other aspects of the evening economy.

At the present time, there are a number of practical barriers that impede the ability for particular communities in Medway, notably those in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods, to access transport links and the types of destinations described above. This includes the reality of a lack of affordability of public transport experienced by these communities. Furthermore there is an experience of a public transport service as often far too infrequent, where buses can be overcrowded and where the routes can be inflexible so restricting the ability for people to access other parts of Medway. It is clear that a lack of access to public transport is contributing to marginalisation and exclusion of people residing in some disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Remedial action to expand public transport access can make a key contribution to combating social exclusion by connecting people to local services and local zones of employment. Initiatives such as "The Villager" community bus scheme on the Hoo Peninsula should be rolled out across Medway.

There is also a need to address hotspots of car congestion and pollution, which are likely to be exacerbated by new communities taking up residence in the new housing, unless intervention action is taken. Some neighbourhoods also experience congestion in residential zones due to their unnecessary usage as "rat runs". There are also situations where road safety is particularly compromised. Action needs to be considered in these circumstances to improve traffic flows and the well being of local people.

During the community workshops process that have defined the first wave of Neighbourhood Action Plans in Medway, local residents have highlighted the negative impact that poor transport infrastructure can have on a sense of community pride for the area in which they live and their sense of well being. It is these visible improvements that can bring home to people real tangible improvements to their living environment to demonstrate that they too can share in the practical benefits of regeneration. A number of the target neighbourhoods are adversely affected by relatively weak transport infrastructure, notably roads

of deteriorating quality, poor quality street furniture, a lack of bus stop amenities and insufficient parking. Residents are drawing a sharp contrast between these infrastructural weaknesses and the physical transformation of waterfront zones, which in some cases are situated adjacent to disadvantaged neighbourhoods of existing communities.

Medway Council has recognised the need to tackle congestion, make roads safer and improve accessibility in Medway's Local Transport Plan:

<http://www.medway.gov.uk/index/environment/transplanning/43663.htm>

Strategic Objective 3.4 – To maximise community and employment assets in the regeneration zones and in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, which enable the integration and cohesion of both new and existing communities.

The vast bulk of the £120 million of government and public funding invested in Medway's regeneration to date is focused on the physical remediation and preparation of the waterfront in advance of becoming "mixed use" sites for housing, employment, community facilities and commercial services. Up to 16,000 new houses will be constructed across Medway both along the waterfront and in or close to existing urban centres. The population of Medway is expected to rise by up to 20% over the next two decades.

One of the major challenges is to ensure that sufficient community and social infrastructure is in place to cope with the demands of both new and existing communities. Greater use must be made of existing community assets at neighbourhood level – libraries, schools, community centres and facilities – to broaden community access to vital local services and to enhance the quality of their responsiveness to neighbourhood level needs. In addition, the achievement of a sustainable community is particularly reliant on the rapid expansion of Medway's employment base accessible by both the new communities and existing communities. Finally, the nature of mixed-use developments across Medway should act as an effective catalyst to enable community cohesion between the incoming communities and Medway's existing communities, with a view to creating a single united city. This means that existing communities should also be able to access the new physical assets, which will produce community quality of life benefits and employment.

Medway's Regeneration Framework emphasises the importance of economic and social regeneration being delivered alongside the physical regeneration of the waterfront zones, which will rely on new community and employment assets: [http://www.medway.gov.uk/medway\\_regeneration\\_framework\\_2006-2016.pdf](http://www.medway.gov.uk/medway_regeneration_framework_2006-2016.pdf)

**Strategic Objective 3.5 – Broaden and Strengthen the Capacity of ICT Infrastructure in the heart of local communities**

It is clear that ICT infrastructure can play an important role in enabling communities to access local services and information about the regeneration transformations taking place in Medway. A number of community centres situated in the heart of disadvantaged neighbourhoods are already equipped with computer suites. These can also act as “doorstep” venues for learning, training and qualifications, whether it be in the use of ICT software itself (through qualifications like CLAIT or ECDL) or whether it be making use of the ICT as a medium to train people in other vocational skills that can empower their position in the local labour market.

These computer training venues only exist in a limited number of areas and where they do exist, more needs to be done to extend their accessibility by local people. A key priority therefore is to strengthen and broaden the capacity of ICT infrastructure and services in the heart of local communities in Medway, investing in such facilities on the back of stronger partnership working between local community organisations, the Council and local training providers that can deliver training at such venues. The installation of such ICT facilities can serve to establish community venues in the heart of the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods as viable learning and training locations, accessible to the more hard to reach sections of the local community. In addition, greater use should be made of the free internet access and computer services available at fifteen local libraries in addition to the two mobile libraries that serve the Hoo peninsula.

## APPENDIX 1\*

# ACTION PLAN

### Strategic Aim 1 – To create a cohesive and inclusive community

\* Presents indicative list of thematic social regeneration actions arising from the strategic objectives. Neighbourhood Action Plans and Medway's social regeneration programme will define the detailed targets and outcomes the specific projects related to these themes.

Strategic Objective 1.1 – Reduce Community Fear of Crime			
INDICATIVE ACTIONS	Action Plan Project Description	MILESTONES	OUTCOMES
<b>1.1 Community Safety</b> To enable more visible neighbourhood policing and a stronger police presence.  To undertake more effective and better co-ordinated enforcement action against crime, anti-social behaviour and civil infringements  To take action to address the causes of the fear of crime.			
Strategic Objective 1.2 Improve Health Awareness and Access to Health & Social Care Services			
INDICATIVE ACTIONS	Action Plan Project Description	MILESTONES	OUTCOMES
<b>1.2 Health &amp; Social Care</b> To develop community healthy living centres and satellite facilities to serve disadvantaged communities and improve health levels.  To facilitate access to social care services by the most disadvantaged communities.  To undertake a pro-active promotional programme of health awareness and healthy living.			

Strategic Objective 1.3 Empower Young People and Improve Youth Facilities			
INDICATIVE ACTIONS	Action Plan Project Description	MILESTONES	OUTCOMES
<b>1.3 Medway's Young People</b> Strengthen the capacity of young people's services in the community and establish youth centre facilities in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods.  Engage and involve young people in the delivery of neighbourhood services and in community cohesion initiatives.  Develop tailored services that empower young people disaffected from education, employment and training in order to enable their economic inclusion.			
Strategic Objective 1.4 Broaden Participation in Cultural Activities			
INDICATIVE ACTIONS	Action Plan Project Description	MILESTONES	OUTCOMES
<b>1.4 Cultural Activities</b> Broaden access to cultural activities across Medway's communities, particularly in the most disadvantaged areas.  Enable community engagement and participation in the Medway 2012 programme  Create the conditions for cultural expression and creativity amongst the disadvantaged communities, staging cultural community events and delivering training support to access jobs in the cultural and creative industries sector.			

Strategic Objective 1.5 Strengthen access to Local Community Services			
INDICATIVE ACTIONS	Action Plan Project Description	MILESTONES	OUTCOMES
<p><b>1.5 Access to Community Services</b></p> <p>To establish “doorstep gateway” neighbourhood services at community venues, including schools, in the heart of disadvantaged areas that enable local people to access local community services.</p> <p>To develop cultural mediation and advocacy services to facilitate access to local services by communities from across Medway’s diverse ethnic communities.</p> <p>To deliver community cohesion initiatives that can instil a sense of common purpose and create a common community spirit of togetherness across faith, cultural and societal boundaries.</p>			
Strategic Objective 1.6 Increase the capacity in the Voluntary and Community Sector			
INDICATIVE ACTIONS	Action Plan Project Description	MILESTONES	OUTCOMES
<p><b>1.6 Voluntary &amp; Community Sector</b></p> <p>To develop dedicated social enterprise support services at local level, which equip community organisations with the expertise to generate their own income, operate with minimal grant dependency and with organisational efficiency.</p> <p>To establish a ‘Community Chest’ initiative, which enables the delivery of community projects, co-financed by a partnership of stakeholders in Medway, including local statutory organisations and businesses - directly responding to priority actions set out in the Local Area Agreement.</p> <p>To realise the potential for the VCS to deliver key neighbourhood services to the hardest to reach communities</p>			

## Strategic Aim 2 – Improve Access to Employment Opportunities for all People in Medway

Strategic Objective 2.1 – To improve access by local communities to local employment opportunities			
INDICATIVE ACTIONS	Action Plan Project Description	MILESTONES	OUTCOMES
<p><b>2.1 Access to Employment</b></p> <p>To sustain and expand local neighbourhood management services, which work with disadvantaged communities to identify and remove barriers to employment, working with them to access higher value employment.</p> <p>To instigate new local employment partnerships, which gain a commitment from businesses to employing local people and which promote access to new employment opportunities by Medway's most disadvantaged communities.</p> <p>To deliver tailored employment support services to communities of interest that experience labour market disadvantage, such as new arrival communities, some BME individuals and some older workers.</p>			
Strategic Objective 2.2 –To enable Medway's Workforce to Access Vocational Skills & Qualifications			
INDICATIVE ACTIONS	Action Plan Project Description	MILESTONES	OUTCOMES
<p><b>2.2 Access to Vocational Skills</b></p> <p>To equip Medway's workforce with higher level vocational skills and qualifications via employer centred training delivered at community venues across Medway.</p> <p>To design and deliver especially tailored training packages, which cater for communities of interest within Medway's workforce and enable them to access skills and qualifications, directly related to new and emerging employment opportunities.</p> <p>To empower older workers by refreshing and updating their skills, providing specialist careers advice and work placements to facilitate changes in career direction, whilst also enabling them to accredit previous experience, providing access to qualifications through the APEL process.</p>			

Strategic Objective 2.3 – To deliver learning empowerment for Medway’s disadvantaged workforce			
INDICATIVE ACTIONS	Action Plan Project Description	MILESTONES	OUTCOMES
<p><b>2.3 Community Learning Empowerment</b></p> <p>To establish and sustain Skills for Life learning programmes in numeracy, literacy and other key skills, delivered at community venues across Medway and in the heart of disadvantaged neighbourhoods.</p> <p>To design and deliver ESOL and other especially tailored training for BME communities and other disadvantaged groups at neighbourhood venues.</p> <p>To recruit disaffected young people without qualifications onto especially tailored training programmes at community venues, designed to re-integrate them into education and training.</p>			
Strategic Objective 2.4 – To address Financial Exclusion and Overcome Debt as a Barrier to Skills and Employment			
INDICATIVE ACTIONS	Action Plan Project Description	MILESTONES	OUTCOMES
<p><b>2.4 Action for Financial Inclusion</b></p> <p>To extend the geographic remit of Medway’s Credit Union, and expand its membership so that disadvantaged communities across Medway can access its services.</p> <p>To establish informal financial advice and guidance services at community venues in the heart of Medway’s most disadvantaged neighbourhoods.</p> <p>To provide access to informal education and training sessions in financial management and bookkeeping for local people experiencing debt difficulties.</p>			



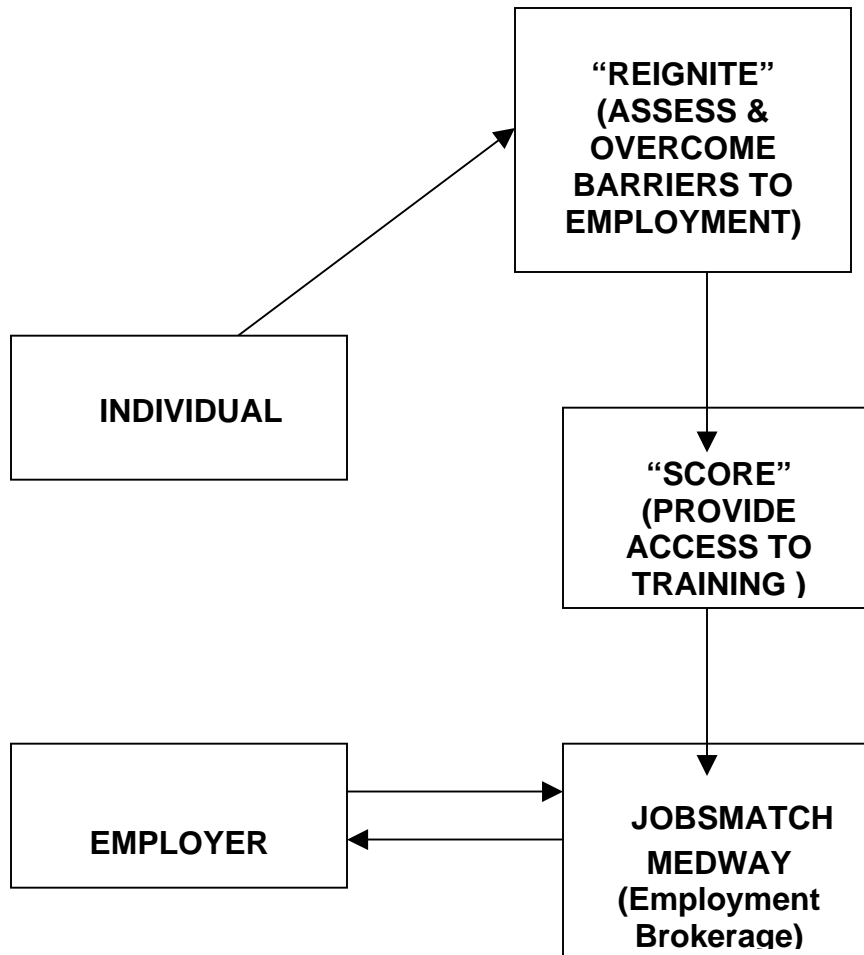
### Strategic Aim 3 – Ensure all Physical Improvements are Accessible to Everyone

Strategic Objective 3.1 – To undertake a renovation programme of the poorest quality housing stock			
INDICATIVE ACTIONS	Action Plan Project Description	MILESTONES	OUTCOMES
<p><b>3.1 Housing Renovation</b></p> <p>To carry out structural renovation works, targeting the poorest quality housing stock and delivering community housing and garden improvement initiatives.</p> <p>To design and implement a housing energy efficiency programme.</p> <p>To work in partnership with housing associations and local landlords to restore vacant and derelict properties as fit for habitation.</p>			
Strategic Objective 3.2 – To implement improvements to the urban environment which enhance community well being			
INDICATIVE ACTIONS	Action Plan Project Description	MILESTONES	OUTCOMES
<p><b>3.2 Urban Environment</b></p> <p>To eradicate the problem of fly-tipping and graffiti in designated neighbourhood hotspots, improving the standards of street cleanliness.</p> <p>To design and deliver community open spaces in partnership with local residents.</p> <p>To undertake urban infrastructure improvements, which can have a positive impact on community safety in zones adversely affected by anti-social behaviour and fear of crime.</p>			

Strategic Objective 3.3 – To enhance transport infrastructure in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and strengthen transport links to the regeneration zones			
INDICATIVE ACTIONS	Action Plan Project Description	MILESTONES	OUTCOMES
<p><b>3.3 Transport Improvements</b></p> <p>To generate new affordable community bus services to serve disadvantaged neighbourhoods that reduce community marginalisation.</p> <p>To undertake remedial action to enhance traffic flows, reduce congestion and strengthen road safety.</p> <p>To implement transport infrastructure improvements, including road and street furniture, redesigning parking and broadening its availability in target zones.</p>			
Strategic Objective 3.4 – To maximise community and employment assets in the regeneration zones and in disadvantaged areas			
INDICATIVE ACTIONS	Action Plan Project Description	MILESTONES	OUTCOMES
<p><b>3.4 Maximise Community Assets</b></p> <p>To plan and deliver community infrastructure serving Medway's new communities sufficient to meet the new service demands.</p> <p>To realise the community development potential of target redundant sites across Medway, transforming them into vibrant community assets.</p> <p>To enable access by all communities in Medway to the employment and quality of life benefits of the waterfront mixed use developments.</p>			

Strategic Objective 3.5 – To broaden and strengthen the capacity of ICT Infrastructure in the heart of local communities			
INDICATIVE ACTIONS	Action Plan Project Description	MILESTONES	OUTCOMES
<p><b>3.5 Community ICT Infrastructure</b></p> <p>To establish new ICT suites at community venues, which provide viable new locations for training, information and guidance.</p> <p>To strengthen the capacity of existing ICT community facilities.</p> <p>To generate new cross-sectoral partnerships of community organisations, the local authority and local training providers in order to instigate new ICT community and learning initiatives.</p>			

## APPENDIX 2 – MEDWAY JOBS AND SKILLS



## **APPENDIX 3**

### **MEDWAY - A CHALLENGING STRATEGIC CONTEXT**

By 2021 Medway will become a city with a population of around 300,000 people. With more people living in Medway, it will be a more diverse community with more jobs and employment opportunities and more pressure on local infrastructure. The influx of new population, coupled with the existence of significant social and economic disparities that are prevalent between Medway's neighbourhoods means that the delivery of both the government's Sustainable Communities vision and the vision for this Strategy constitutes a considerable challenge. This section looks at key statistical data in Medway, which illustrates the extent of this challenge and which has also informed the development of the Strategic Aims and objectives of this strategy. It also provides a SWOT analysis.

**Medway's Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods** - The Medway area consists of some disadvantaged neighbourhoods where communities are experiencing marginalisation and isolation as well as various social, personal, financial or other circumstantial barriers, preventing individuals from accessing training, employment or local services. According to Index of Multiple Deprivation statistics, 25 neighbourhoods in Medway count amongst the poorest 25% nationally, whilst Medway also has some of the wealthiest neighbourhood areas in the country.

**Local Wealth Generated Per Head** - Medway has the lowest average GVA per head amongst its constituent working population of any urban area in the South East of England. This is a clear indication of some structural weaknesses in the local economy in Medway, as follows:

- I) Relatively low value employment locally
- II) Low qualification levels amongst local working population, which is a barrier to accessing higher value employment and higher incomes.
- III) Significant skills gaps amongst the local workforce, which dissuades potential inward investors from establishing themselves in Medway and bringing in higher value employment.

The **Medway Economic Development Statement** provides a position statement for the Medway economy for the longer term with a plan of action related to enhancing skills, competitiveness and jobs in Medway.

[http://www.medway.gov.uk/ed\\_full\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.medway.gov.uk/ed_full_strategy.pdf)

The following table reinforces the reality of the adverse circumstances affecting communities working in Medway as well as disadvantages existing in the local economy. The table demonstrates that overall Medway is lagging behind Kent in terms of income per head and that there is a significant disparity of average

income in comparison with the South East of England average. Whereas the region as a whole leads the way in terms of wealth alongside London, the Medway average GVA per capita in dramatic contrast ranks 110<sup>th</sup> lowest out of 128 areas nationally and 87<sup>th</sup> out of 93 local areas in England as a whole. Over the period 1998-2002. Medway has lagged even further behind GVA per capita growth in the South East England region, worsening the disparity.

GVA per head comparison (nearest equivalent to income per head)

	<b>1998</b>		<b>2002</b>		<b>1998-2002</b>
<b>Area</b>	<b>GVA (£)</b>	<b>UK Index</b>	<b>GVA (£)</b>	<b>UK Index</b>	<b>UK Index Change</b>
Medway	8586	67	10326	68	+1%
KCC	10868	85	12753	84	-1%
South East	13695	107	16758	110	+3%
England	13085	102	15633	102	0%
United Kingdom	13023	100	15614	100	

(ONS 2004)

### Disadvantaged Communities

**Young People** – Medway has a relatively young population, as illustrated by the following table, which sets out some demographic comparisons by age in relation to the regional and national level. There are 28% of the population under the age of 19 compared to the regional average of 25%.

<b>Age Range</b>	<b>MEDWAY</b>	<b>SOUTH EAST</b>	<b>ENGLAND</b>
Under 5s	19,551 <b>(8%)</b>	570,339 <b>(7%)</b>	3,530,869 <b>(7%)</b>
Under 13s	49,020 <b>(20%)</b>	1,395,151 <b>(17%)</b>	8,648,613 <b>(18%)</b>
Under 19s	69,324 <b>(28%)</b>	1,978,923 <b>(25%)</b>	12,319,418 <b>(25%)</b>

**Young People & Older Workers** – In the local labour market, both young people and older workers are experiencing levels of disadvantage which are relatively significant, as illustrated in the table below which sets out the numbers and percentage of Job Seeker Allowance claimants compared to the regional and national average.

<b>Age Range</b>	<b>MEDWAY</b>	<b>SOUTH EAST</b>	<b>ENGLAND</b>
16-24	1,320 <b>(31%)</b>	23,510 <b>(28%)</b>	244,010 <b>(31%)</b>
50 and over	780 <b>(18%)</b>	15,710 <b>(19%)</b>	129,170 <b>(16%)</b>

**Medway's BME Communities** – Over 7.7% of Medway's population is from an ethnic minority background, according to the latest census data figures available. The table below provides a snapshot of the most prominent ethnic minority communities residing in Medway:

Asian or Asian British; Indian	2.02%
Other white ethnicities	1.45%
Mixed Ethnicity	1.09%
White: Irish	0.93%
Chinese or other ethnic group	0.42%
Asian or Asian British; Pakistani	0.39%
Black or Black British; Caribbean	0.36%
Asian or Asian British; Other Asian	0.31%
Black or Black British; African	0.27%
Asian or Asian British; Bangladeshi	0.23%
Other Ethnic Groups	0.23%

The above figures do not take into account the more recent influx of new arrival communities, notably from central and eastern Europe, where there is a need to achieve the integration of these communities with existing communities.

**Medway's Skills Gaps** An assessment of local social and economic statistics reveals that one of the major challenges facing Medway is the skills gap that exists between the requirements of employers in growth sectors arising out of the regeneration and the actual skills base amongst the workforce. A significant and substantial investment is required in workforce skills development, enabling much greater access to vocational qualifications at all levels for Medway's people from the "skills for life" programme through to greater access to degree level training. This work is developing in much greater detail in the Medway Skills Plan, which details employer needs and appropriate skills and training provision at all levels and should be read in conjunction with this document.

**Medway's Relatively Low Skills Base** – The low skills base is not only clearly evident at the lower end of the skills spectrum but also pervades dramatically through all qualification levels. It is particularly stark when one compares the proportion of the population in Medway with a degree / NVQ 4 level qualification which stands at just 16.2% of the population compared to a national average of 25.2% and 28.5% in the South East. The gap at NVQ3 and NVQ2 level is also significant with Medway lagging behind both the South East and GB averages.

The full extent of Medway's socio-economic weakness in terms of its workforce is set out below:

Qualification levels (working population)

	<b>Medway (Total)</b>	<b>Medway (%)</b>	<b>South East (%)</b>	<b>GB (%)</b>
NVQ4 and above	25,000	16.2	28.5	25.2
NVQ3 and above	53,000	33.6	46.9	43.1
NVQ2 and above	86,000	55.1	66.0	61.5
NVQ1 and above	118,000	74.9	81.1	76.0
Other Qualifications <sup>5</sup>	16,000	9.9	8.0	8.8
No Qualifications	24,000	15.0	10.8	15.1

Local area labour force survey (Mar 2003-Feb 2004)

**Skills Trends** – The relative situation of the Medway workforce in terms of the skills base has hardly changed in comparative terms to the national picture or the regional level. The table below demonstrates that there have been some small improvements in regard to NVQ4 and NVQ2 whereas in contrast NVQ 3 and 1 levels have actually worsened.

Qualification levels (working population) – changes since 2000.

	<b>Medway (Total)</b>			<b>South East (%)</b>			<b>GB (%)</b>		
	<b>2000</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>+/-</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>+/-</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>+/-</b>
NVQ4 and above	12.7	16.2	<b>+3.5</b>	25.9	28.5	<b>+2.6</b>	22.5	25.2	<b>+2.7</b>
NVQ3 and above	32.8	33.6	<b>+0.8</b>	43.6	46.9	<b>+3.3</b>	39.3	43.1	<b>+3.4</b>
NVQ2 and above	51.4	55.1	<b>+3.7</b>	63.0	66.0	<b>+3.0</b>	57.9	61.5	<b>+3.6</b>
NVQ1 and above	77.2	74.9	<b>-2.3</b>	79.2	81.1	<b>+1.9</b>	73.5	76.0	<b>+2.5</b>
Other Qualifications	7.3	9.9	<b>+2.6</b>	8.8	8.0	<b>-0.8</b>	9.7	8.8	<b>-0.9</b>
No Qualifications	15.5	15.0	<b>-0.5</b>	12.0	10.8	<b>-1.2</b>	16.8	15.1	<b>-1.7</b>

Local area labour force survey (Mar 2003-Feb 2004)

**The Medway Skills Plan** unveils a new strategy and plan of action for Medway, which aims to empower Medway's workforce through the provision of key vocational skills and qualifications required by employers whilst also attracting higher value employment to Medway. It is vital that training providers deliver vocational programmes that match current employer needs and pre-empt future needs arising from Medway's regeneration.

<http://www.medway.gov.uk/index/business/63825.htm>

<sup>5</sup> Other qualifications include foreign qualifications and some professional qualifications.



A broad range of socio-economic circumstances are affecting Medway's population adversely, which must be addressed through social regeneration if a sustainable and cohesive community is to be realised.

The following table provides a broad overview of these adverse circumstances that exacerbate social and economic exclusion:

	<b>MEDWAY</b>	<b>SOUTH EAST</b>	<b>ENGLAND</b>
Numbers of Households accepted as homeless	9.6%	6.9%	7.8%
Infant Mortality – Rate per 1000	5.7%	4.0%	5.1%
% of Households on LA Register for social housing	4.8%	2.4%	3.1%
Standardised Mortality Ratios	107	92	99
All people of working age claiming a key benefit	13%	10%	14%
Households with no adults in employment with dependent children	5.01%	3.29%	4.83%
Households with dependent children	33.75%	29.18%	29.45%
Households with 1 or more person with a limiting long term illness	31%	29.4%	33.6%
Lone Parent Households	6.82%	5.22%	6.42%

### **SWOT ANALYSIS OVERVIEW OF MEDWAY'S POSITION**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Location close to London and mainland Europe, enhanced by new high speed link via nearby Ebbsfleet International Rail station	A significant proportion of the local workforce with low skills levels and poor educational attainment
Strong local partners and service providers in the voluntary, public, private and faith sectors	A number of neighbourhoods experiencing localised deprivation and disadvantage
Growing population, creating the potential for sustained local socio-economic dynamism	A history of a fragmented voluntary sector, less unified than other similar areas
Successful developments in Chatham Maritime	High levels of economically inactive
New and expanding University campus	Higher levels of unemployment
Major brownfield land sites being regenerated for mixed use development	Lower levels of income from earnings
Success in neighbourhood action planning	Community infrastructure development needs
An extremely good track record in leveraging external funding for social regeneration.	Significant pressures on local government finances
Central Government support through the Thames Gateway	Uncertainty over future funding and mainstream support
An established regeneration strategy	Historically, some poor quality developments
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
Drawing in new business investors and jobs	Resistance from partners
New development sites for employment land, housing and community facilities and services	Poor delivery of community projects alienating those communities
An expanding university sector offering high quality higher education and research, with excellent potential to attract high calibre students, graduates and R&D innovation.	Difficulties in remediating brownfield sites and the additional costs of redevelopment
Neighbourhood action planning in target areas	Government funding routed to Olympic Park
Maximising the legacy of the Olympic games	Reduced number of targets for new LAA
Delivering services more locally	Growing pressures on public sector budgets
Voluntary and Community Sector carrying out more service delivery, maximising volunteers	Increasing older population profile and rising costs of social care
Local Government White Paper provides the opportunity for Medway to play a lead role in shaping its own destiny through the LAA	Growing population placing major demands on local service provision, which will not be sustainable without greater public investment
Stronger and a more integrated community	A lack of revenue funding investment
Raised levels of personal aspirations	
Increased levels of investment and opportunities arising from Olympics 2012	
The changing image of Medway	
Critical Mass – city scale activity	

## **APPENDIX 4**

### **THE PRINCIPAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUNDING**

#### ***Potential Sources***

Funding to deliver this strategy will be drawn from a number of sources, both public and private. Much of the existing activity has been grant funded and is therefore strictly time constrained. Where the activity is required in the longer term, beyond the life of present funding agreements, then other funding strategies must be established.

#### ***Medway Council –The first phase of Social Regeneration***

Medway Council is an active supporter and leader of social regeneration in Medway. Medway Council established the pioneering Social Regeneration service in 2004 and since then has instigated an initial programme of social regeneration, worth nearly £4 million, thanks to resources from the UK government, SEEDA and the EU, which have supplemented local funds. This programme has been founded on Neighbourhood Action Plans, targeting five of Medway's most disadvantaged neighbourhoods. It has delivered a range of quality of life benefits to existing communities in Medway, ranging from new community open spaces to vocational skills and qualifications, to employment support outreach to action for the construction of new community centre facilities, to housing renovation. This programme features over 50 individual local community projects and through its co-ordinating role, Medway Council has set the standard for even greater outcomes and impact, which need to be achieved through social regeneration if the vision for this strategy and the goal of a sustainable and cohesive community in Medway is to be realised. The Neighbourhood Action Plans were drawn up through a programme of "Community Futures" Workshops undertaken in each target neighbourhood. At the workshops, Council representatives sat down alongside other service providers, community organisations and local residents. The views and priorities of local residents were taken as the starting point for the Neighbourhood Action Plans, which have formed the basis for the definition of a tangible programme of neighbourhood improvement and social regeneration. Medway Council is seeking with all its partners to build on the achievements to date of this initial phase of social regeneration, in order to deliver the medium to long-term goal of implementing a social regeneration programme as an integral part of the regeneration of Medway. This requires a longer-term financial commitment at all levels.

#### ***Public Sector Mainstreaming***

Where social regeneration activities are close to the strategies' of key partners, especially in the public sector, it is reasonable to expect them to align and pool resources for delivery.. This will enable the regular mainstream funding and resources required to sustain social regeneration. This should include in particular mainstream investment in transport and the town centres.

Mainstreaming has the advantage of providing match funding for other grant streams where this is necessary, and provides continuity in project or activity delivery.

Working through the LSP should allow potential pooling of mainstream funding. Other partnerships, including the Community Safety Partnership for example, will be in a position to encourage pooling.

It is crucial that the delivery of social regeneration should draw on mainstream resources for the financial years ahead, notably via alignment with selected LAA indicators.

### ***Sustainable Communities***

Medway Renaissance leads on the sourcing of funding from the Department for Communities and Local Government Sustainable Communities Plan programme. This source of funding is one of the most important in deriving the benefits of a *truly sustainable community* to match the housing and infrastructure development. This strategy is linked to the aims of the Framework Strategy for Medway and will source funding to match Medway Council's activity to achieve the objectives of the Social Regeneration Strategy.

### ***Planning Gain***

The Section 106 payments negotiated with developers are additionally directing the necessary physical infrastructure. This strategy provides a framework for considering Section 106 for Social Regeneration so that new and existing communities can enjoy the benefits of the investment in physical development. Those involved in the negotiation of Planning Gain payments should therefore consider the impact of each development on the neighbouring social infrastructure in addition to that being developed.

### ***European Funding***

At the time of writing the upcoming programmes for European Structural Funding streams are being developed. The primary funds relating to Medway are the European Social Fund (ESF) - which is linked to learning and preparation for employment – and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) – which funds infrastructure and physical projects.

Medway Council has been very successful in securing European funding to assist in the development of the area. In addition the Universities will be able to source funding from Lifelong Learning Programmes such as Leonardo da Vinci, which is focused on vocational training.

€9.4m of Structural Funds has been allocated to the South East as a whole.

Three key programmes are under preparation:

- Competitiveness and Employment European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) programme
- Competitiveness and Employment European Social Fund (ESF) programme
- Territorial Co-operation Objective (ERDF) programmes which include the North West Europe Programme including the whole of the SE. The North Sea Programme, which covers Kent and Medway and Interreg IIIc, which again covers the whole of the region.

As these programmes develop it is important that residents of Medway have the opportunity to benefit from cross border co-operation in developing a sustainable community.

The Competitiveness and Employment programmes have a single priority axis is: *“Innovation, knowledge transfer and sustainable productivity”*, with two themes falling out of this:

- Promoting the knowledge economy
- Promoting sustainable production and consumption.

Clearly the opportunities for securing support for promotion of the knowledge economy, and the subsequent derived benefits to increased employment, economic activity, GVA and local incomes make this an important potential source of funding.

### ***South East England Development Agency***

In light of the Review of sub-national Economic Development and Regeneration the role of SEEDA may change significantly to a level of policy and strategy work, and commissioning local partners to deliver the targets identified in the RES. Many targets regarding NEETS, employment and training can be met through social regeneration activities.

Significant investments in capital projects across the area are providing the basis for community capacity building. Without the revenue sources to continue this, future effectiveness of such capital investment is endangered.

Steps are being taken to support the Regional Economic Strategy through the development of a strategy for social enterprise development, and community enterprise hubs. It is necessary that there is continued development of the revenue streams to support those essential services that otherwise may not be supported by other funders with limited resources.

Medway Council and partners must work with SEEDA to establish how the Single Fund can support continued community development, and preserve the achievements made to date

### ***Voluntary & Community Sector Funding***

Voluntary and community organisations are playing a key role in the delivery of neighbourhood services and in ensuring social regeneration benefits the hardest to reach communities. In turn, they have access to particular sources of funding to support their capacity building and the delivery of projects to benefit local people.

The Local Infrastructure Development Plan provides a 10-year vision for the community and voluntary sector in Medway and there are specific funding sources aligned to it, which will enhance the capacity of the sector.

The voluntary and community sector (VCS) also brings with it substantial “in kind” resources in the delivery of social regeneration initiatives, in view of the broad pool of volunteers that it can draw on and the community facilities that many VCS organisations operate.