



# Building Control Partnership Delivery Plan



Director  
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Last updated

Tony Van Veghel  
1  
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## 1. SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN – 2015-2016

1 Objective		Improve customer service utilising IT development and increased customer interactions			
Action	Output	Impact	Resources	Milestones/P.I.s	Lead Officer
1.1 Development of on-screen plan vetting	Acquire larger scale monitors	Increased plan checking within performance targets and reduced costs	Within current budget	May 2015	Phil Harris
	In-house training to all surveyors		Within current training budget	June 2015	Phil Harris
	Monthly and 3 monthly review of use and output		Within current budget	July to September 2015 monthly then 3 monthly	Derek Base / Robert Wiseman
1.2 Implementation of real time inspection records	Information updated at time of inspection on database	Improved customer information	Within current budget	June 2015	Derek Base / Robert Wiseman
1.3 Increase the number of site inspections per surveyor	Number of inspections per surveyor increased by 20%	Achieving new target time per visit	Within current budget	Quarterly review	Phil Harris
1.4 Achieving national performance indicator for plan	85% plan vets within 10 working days, 100%	Improved turnaround time	Within current budget	Quarterly review, monitoring report	Phil Harris

1 Objective		Improve customer service utilising IT development and increased customer interactions				
Action	Output	Impact	Resources	Milestones/P.I.s	Lead Officer	
vetting	within 15% working days	for plan vetting		and covalent		
1.5	Improve consistency to plan vetting and site inspection with the development of function based teams	Restructuring group to accommodate functional teams	Change in working practices for surveyors	Within current budget	June 2015	Tony Van Veghel
		Appointing dedicated team leaders to oversee consistency and quality checks	Improve consistency	Within current budget	August / September 2015	Tony Van Veghel / Phil Harris
		Monitoring consistency and provide training where required	Improved consistency for both plan vetting and site inspection records	Within current budget	Monthly monitoring until March 2016	Derek Base / Robert Wiseman
1.6	Tracking of applications via website and refine self-serve search facility	Identify funding to develop new website	Web capable of delivering customer tracking	To be investigated	End April 2015	Janine Boughton
		Development of website		To be investigated	October 2015	Janine Boughton
		Testing of enabling customer viewing of	24 hour access for customers to	Within current budget	March 2016	Janine Boughton

1 Objective		Improve customer service utilising IT development and increased customer interactions			
Action	Output	Impact	Resources	Milestones/P.I.s	Lead Officer
	current stage of application	view stage of application			
1.7 Improved communication with customers	Automated notification of inspection on booking	Confirmation of site booking to customer	To be investigated	End April 2015	Janine Boughton
	Greater use of email communication to customers	Faster and immediate notification	Within current budget	June 2015	Janine Boughton / Phil Harris
	Notification to customers prior to visit by surveyor	Confirmation of time of visit to customer	Within current telephone budget	August 2015	Derek Base / Robert Wiseman

2 Objective		Increase income generation by increasing market share and further expansion of partnership				
Action		Output	Impact	Resources	Milestones/P.I.s	Lead Officer
2.1	Expansion of partnership to incorporate Canterbury Building Control	Increase resource to partnership to retain and improve resilience	Wider opportunities to generate income	Within agreed budget	April 2015	Tony Van Veghel
		Restructure and realignment of boundaries	Change in working practices for surveyors	Within agreed budget	September 2015	Tony Van Veghel
2.2	Develop account management	Greater frequency in engaging with partners	Retention of partners and market share	Within current budget	Quarterly	Derek Base / Robert Wiseman
2.3	Develop marketing strategy for 2016/2017	Strategy incorporating restructured building control and new commercial consultancy	Increase market share and generate additional income	Transformation bid and marketing budget	September 2015 to March 2016	Janine Boughton / Tony Van Veghel
2.4	Provision of additional complimentary services	Identify additional services and resources which can be delivered to the public and private sector	Expand consultancy services and generate additional income	Within current budget / self-financing	June 2015	Tony Van Veghel / Phil Harris
		Market additional services		Within current budget / self-	July 2015 to September 2015	Tony Van Veghel / Phil Harris

2 Objective		Increase income generation by increasing market share and further expansion of partnership			
Action	Output	Impact	Resources	Milestones/P.I.s	Lead Officer
	Monitor and review consultancy	Determine performance and income	financing Within current budget	November 2015	Tony Van Veghel / Phil Harris



3 Objective		Development of consultancy services with dedicated staff under separate company			
Action	Output	Impact	Resources	Milestones/P.I.s	Lead Officer
3.1 Investigate setting up separate company	Engage consultants to investigate appropriate delivery model	Report to be taken to Joint Committee	Transformation bid	May 2015	Tony Van Veghel
	Appoint appropriate qualified and dedicated staff	Focus delivery model to customers	Invest to save / self-financial	October 2015	Tony Van Veghel / Consultancy Manager
	Increase services to a wider market (regionally and nationally)	Wider opportunities to generate income	Self-financing / return on investment	March 2016	Consultancy Manager
3.2 Determine the distribution of surpluses	Working group set up to reach agreement on the percentage split of any commercial surplus	Agreed mechanism and time period for repaying original setup costs	Within Partner Authority budget for officer time	June 2015	Joint Committee Members, Steering Group Officers, Financial Officers, Legal Officers

## 2. CONTRIBUTION AND SUPPORT FOR COUNCILS PRIORITIES

2.1. As STG is a Partnership of three authorities, it is important that its values reflect those of the three councils.

Gravesham's priorities are:

- to achieve a safe, clean and green place of choice
- to foster vibrant and cohesive communities with affirmative action to promote meaningful engagement, diversity and social inclusion, health and well-being, leisure and culture
- to seek to provide and work with others to ensure quality and affordable housing
- to secure a sustainable and buoyant economy, particularly in the town centre and Ebbsfleet, with attractive investment opportunities and a developing tourism market and to maximise regeneration opportunities for the benefit of existing and new communities
- to invest in the future of Gravesham through development of its youth
- to transform the council into an economically sound organisation delivering excellent accessible services that provide value for money.

Medway's priorities for the next three years are:

- Safe, Clean and Green Medway
- Children and young people have the best start in Medway
- Adults maintain their independence and live healthy lives
- Everybody travelling easily around Medway
- Everyone benefitting from the area's regeneration

Medway Values

- Putting the customer at the centre of everything we do
- Giving value for money

Swale's priorities are:

- Healthy environment
- Open for business
- Embracing localism

2.2. There are clear links between the three and all revolve around regeneration and sustainability, maximising opportunities for local communities and delivering quality services. These are also encompassed in the values of putting the customer at the heart of everything we do and giving value for money.

## **Regeneration**

### **Linked to Council Priorities:**

- to secure a sustainable and buoyant economy, particularly in the town centre and Ebbsfleet, with attractive investment opportunities and a developing tourism market and to maximise regeneration opportunities for the benefit of existing and new communities - Gravesham priority
- Everyone benefitting from the area's regeneration – Medway priority
- Healthy environment – Swale priority

2.3. Our consultancy is now able to offer a range of services to the major regeneration projects in the area. Early intervention in the design process will eliminate issues that could provide conflicts with legislation at a later date. Our range of services include:

Code for sustainable home assessment, SAP calculations, SBEM calculations, Display Energy Certificates, Access Audits and Fire Risk Analysis and reports.

We have also teamed up with colleagues LABC Services, the commercial arm of LABC, through whom we are able to offer air pressure testing, acoustic testing and have access to CDM co-ordinators together with other expertise and specialism's which we are now able to facilitate.

- 2.4. We also work with colleagues in Private Sector Housing and Environmental Health to aid the transformation of areas through social regeneration, providing advice on bringing back into use empty and dilapidated properties, houses in multiple occupation and the refurbishment and repair of commercial premises. We have a number of joint meetings with Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) and have shared technical updates through the seminars we have organised.
- 2.5. We offer the design and surveying team expertise in the design of many adaptations to Medway's schools, and have partnered with a number of architectural practices that are working through programmes of school extensions and adaptations. We work with Medway Education and Business Partnership to assist in work experience for school leavers.

### **Links to STG Delivery Plan Reference:**

- Objective 3 (see page 9)

## **Sustainability**

### **Linked to Council Priorities:**

- to achieve a safe, clean and green place of choice – Gravesham priority
- A clean and green environment – Medway priority
- Healthy environment – Swale priority

2.6. Building Control has a major part to play in ensuring the innovative designs for the regeneration of the area are still compliant with the Building Regulations. As sustainability is an important part of the Government's agenda to reduce CO2

emissions and reduce energy costs for everyone, the adaptation and renovation of buildings within the area, together with control of new buildings will ensure the impact on the environment and energy bills are kept to a minimum.

2.7. The Government have stated:

“The Energy White Paper produced by the Government acknowledged the reality of climate change and stated a commitment to putting the UK on a path to cutting carbon dioxide emission by 60% before 2050 with real progress by 2020 by cutting emissions by 34% of the 1990 levels.

With around half of the CO<sup>2</sup> emissions coming from building energy use, the Building Regulations are a key part of Government efforts to tackle climate change through higher building standards. CLG recognise that Building Control professionals are at the forefront of these efforts.”

2.8. A major impact on the repair and maintenance of housing stock will be the effect of Green Deal. The Green Deal is a new Government initiative that is designed to bring together business and home owners to employ more green technologies in their properties. The idea is to install this technology to the property with no upfront costs as the costs will be paid back through energy bills over a period of time. This is unlike a conventional loan because if the owner moves out of the property the bill stays with the property where the savings are occurring and does not move with the bill payer. The golden rule of the Green Deal is that the expected financial savings must be equal to or greater than the costs attached to the energy bill.

2.9. The Green Deal was introduced by the Energy Act 2011 which has three principle objectives: tackling barriers to investment in energy efficiency; enhancing energy security; and enabling investment in low carbon energy suppliers. The Green Deal creates a new financial framework to enable the provision of fixed improvements to the energy efficiency of households and non-domestic properties, funded by a charge on energy bills that avoids the need for consumers to pay up front costs. It includes provisions to ensure that from April 2016 private residential landlords will be unable to refuse a tenants reasonable request for consent to energy efficiency improvements where a finance package, such as Green Deal and/or the Energy Company Obligation is available.

2.10. The Government are also revitalising the Home Energy Conservation Act requiring all English local authorities to report a proposed energy conservation measure to improve the energy efficiency of their residential accommodation as the Green Deal can enable them to achieve this.

2.11. New proposals to simplify and streamline housing standards for house builders are out for consultation. The consultation sets out a number of planned changes to housing standards which include phasing out the code for sustainable homes and introducing minimum space standards for new housing. The DCLG have said that the new proposals would “help free up the industry, support growth and get high quality homes built”. The intention is to move more of the sustainable section of the code to the Building Regulations so that

they can be controlled nationally with space standards included in planning legislation.

2.12. The Government are also consulting on Allowable Solutions, a key measure by which house builders will ensure that all new homes are zero carbon by 2016. Allowable solutions is the overarching term for the carbon offsetting projects or measures which house builders may support to achieve the zero carbon homes standard. These are:

- Undertaking the full 100% of carbon abatement on site through connected measures.(eg, a heat network)
- Meeting carbon reductions through off site actions such as improving other existing buildings (eg, retrofitting), renewable heat or energy schemes, or by building to a higher standard than the current Part L requirements.
- Using a third party allowable solutions provider to deliver carbon abatement measures for them which are sufficient to meet the house builders obligations.
- Paying into a fund which invests in projects which will deliver carbon abatement on their behalf.

These allowable solutions will form an integral part of achieving zero carbon and will need to form the basis of both the building control and consultancy pre-application discussions STG will have with clients.

2.13. This key message from the Government and the demand from the construction industry for pre-application advice and discussion mean it is imperative that STG invest in continually training staff to provide the lead and the service that is required. This necessary training will ensure that sufficient qualified staff are available to provide a design service through the consultancy, and a checking service through the administration of the Building Regulations without compromising the necessary checks and balances which need to be in place to ensure complete scrutiny in both the design and checking processes, similar to that which exists in private sector competition.

**Links to STG Delivery Plan Reference:**

- Objective 3 (see page 9)

**Maximising Opportunities for local communities**

**Linked to Council Priorities:**

- to foster vibrant and cohesive communities with affirmative action to promote meaningful engagement, diversity and social inclusion, health and well-being, leisure and culture – Gravesham priority
- to seek to provide and work with others to ensure quality and affordable housing – Gravesham priority
- to invest in the future of Gravesham through development of its youth – Gravesham priority
- Children and young people having the best start in life – Medway priority

- Older and vulnerable people maintaining their independence – Medway priority
- Embracing localism – Swale priority

Through our work with the housing sections of the partner authorities we help to deliver improvements to council owned properties through the Decent Homes, condition surveys and fire risk assessments. During these surveys we also assess health and safety requirements of the occupants and impacts on the community.

- 2.14. Through joint training, guidance and information sheets, together with builder and architect forums, the Partnership aims to support all of our customers in their building projects. Over the next 3 years mini guides will be developed both locally and nationally to cover general standards of construction on many projects in the domestic market such as garage conversions, small extensions and removal of load-bearing walls. This will assist in ensuring a consistent approach to the many challenges, the multitude of complex and interactive regulations now presents to every development.
- 2.15. Inclusive design is a paramount requirement of both newbuild and refurbishment works. Advising on compliance with The Equalities Act and Part M of the Building Regulations is a major part of public protection inspection services (non-fee earning) work. This not only delivers a more suitable environment for disabled people, but also transfers the benefits to the greater community, i.e. young families, older people and those caring for others.
- 2.16. The majority of the work of the Partnership is concerned with protecting the community through health and safety requirements in the regulations or in other sections of the Building Act.
- 2.17. Important examples of health and safety requirements include fire safety (means of escape, fire spread and access for the fire service) structural safety and satisfactory drainage. In addition, the Partnership deals with dangerous structures, demolitions, dilapidated buildings and contraventions of the Building Regulations. The CLG have programmed a consultation exercise on housing standards to determine if security and some other sections of the code for sustainable homes legislation ought to feature as a separate part of the building regulations.
- 2.18. We assist with a number of local agents and private sector housing sections to ensure adaptations comply with the Regulations to enable older and vulnerable people to stay in their homes and maintain their independence.

**Links to STG Delivery Plan Reference:**

Objective 1 Action 1.5, 1.6, 1.7 (see page 5 & 6)

Objective 2: Action 2.1 & 2.4 (see page 7)

Objective 3 Action 3.1 (see page 9)

**Delivering quality services**

**Linked to Council Priorities:**

- to transform the council into an economically sound organisation delivering excellent accessible services that provide value for money. – Gravesham
- Putting the customer at the centre of everything we do - Medway
- Giving value for money - Medway
- Open for business - Swale

2.19. Our customer survey revealed that the overall service provided by STG is of a very high standard with 97% of respondents rating it good to excellent. A further postal survey was carried which targeted owners of properties where works had been carried out.

2.20. Of the processes involved with delivering the service, communication and speed of delivery were seen as important by all customers in last years survey (81% to 100% rated this as important), it is therefore encouraging to see that 93% to 95% of customers feel they have received a Good to Excellent service in this.

2.21. The development of the new back office system will improve many elements of our customer service. Through 2015/16 we will be able to deliver a better service on site with access to real time information and through further developments of the system the ability to deliver inspection notes, notices and letters on site. Customers will be able to track the progress of applications online and carry out initial surveys on their properties through the web. We will be revisiting and revising guidance documentation for owners and developers to improve consistency on site and ensure communication throughout the life of the project is improved.

2.22. Local Authorities have a duty to ensure that building work complies with the Building Regulations (Section 91 of the Building Act 1984). If our requests to rectify contravention fail then, as a last resort, more formal action is used. There are two courses of action available:

Prosecution of the builder in the Magistrates Court under Section 35 of the Building Act 1984: in most cases, action must be started within six months of the contravention being discovered, the period of discovery being extended in 2008 to two years from the date the works were completed.

Notice under Section 36 of the Building Act 1984 requiring the owner to remove or rectify the contravening work. This Notice must be served within 12 months from the date of discovery of the contravention.

2.23. Most enforcement work is carried out by negotiation, and in 2009/10 the CLG asked authorities to demonstrate activity in this area. Prosecutions through the courts are an exception, but every day a number of the inspections carried out involve some form of intervention to either prevent or rectify work which was in contravention of the Regulations. We have worked with our software provider to design a way of capturing this information in the form of pre-contravention inspection reports and we will monitor this monthly to reflect the number of

inspections carried out that have protected consumers from building regulation contraventions during the course of their development.

2.24. As mentioned previously, consistency remains an important requirement identified by customers. We will be examining this area through the provision of training and shared experiences of staff and designers, the use of guidance notes and the use of comprehensive clauses, conditions and site notes.

**Links to STG Delivery Plan Reference:**

Objective 1 Action 1.2 – 1.5 – (see page 4 & 5)

Objective 2 Action 2.4 – (see page 7)



### 3. SERVICE RISKS

#### Risk rating key

#### Likelihood

- A. Very high
- B. High
- C. Significant
- D. Low
- E. Very low
- F. Almost impossible

#### Impact

- 1. Catastrophic (showstopper)
- 2. Critical
- 3. Marginal
- 4. Negligible

Host Directorate: RCC			<b>Service: STG Building Control</b>		<b>Manager: Tony Van Veghel</b>		Portfolio Holder: STG Joint Committee	
Risk Title: Finance and Strategy					Description of Risk: Reduced income			
Date	Risk No	Risk Rating	Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences if Risk Realised	Mitigation/Action Points for Risk Owners	Service Plan Ref.	
10/09/14	01	C3	Increased competition resulting in loss of market share	65% of market share	Insufficient income to cover expenditure on chargeable account resulting in an increase on the followings year's chargeable rate which may make us uncompetitive.	Reduced expenditure to limit income deficiency. Look for alternative income streams through consultancy service.	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.7, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4	
10/09/14	02	C3	Inability to sustain growth and acquire	Reduction in market share and	Inability to match income with expenditure resulting in	Invest in training and development of staff so as to	1, 1.1-7, 2.1, 2.4,	

Host Directorate: RCC			Service: <b>STG Building Control</b>		Manager: <b>Tony Van Veghel</b>		Portfolio Holder: STG Joint Committee	
Risk Title: Finance and Strategy					Description of Risk: Reduced income			
Date	Risk No	Risk Rating	Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences if Risk Realised	Mitigation/Action Points for Risk Owners	Service Plan Ref.	
			additional business.	consultancy services income	increase in following year's chargeable rate. Surveyors chargeable time transfers to enforcement activity which would not be sustainable from the contributions. Consultancy losing income and not sustainable.	diversify resources into consultancy work. Increased time allocation monitoring.	3.1	
10/09/14	03	D3	Current economic situation leading to increased debt arising from unpaid invoices.	Increased number of applicants unable to pay invoices.	Number and value of debtors increased affecting the budgeted income figure. Unpaid invoice provision within budget would need to be increased.	Careful monitoring of debtors list. Vigorous pursuit of large debts. Files clearly marked where invoice remains unpaid so as site surveyor can pursue on inspection. Taking over the functions of invoicing and dept collection from the finance department.	1.5, 1.6	

Host Directorate: RCC			<b>Service: STG Building Control</b>		<b>Manager: Tony Van Veghel</b>		Portfolio Holder: STG Joint Committee	
Risk Title: Inadequate Staff Development					Description of Risk: Insufficient investment in staff			
Date	Risk No	Risk Rating	Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences if Risk Realised	Mitigation/Action Points for Risk Owners	Service Plan Ref.	
10/09/14	04	D3	Failure to suitably develop staff to meet the needs of the business and match personal self improvement expectations.	The market is regularly changing to offer alternative services to clients which compliment building regulation work. The Partnership requires staff to be trained to deliver a more diverse service and remain competitive.	Insufficient skill base would result in customers being more attracted to the competition with a resultant loss in work.	Ensure staff are well trained and able to compete with the services offered by the private sector.  Develop training matrix to ensure staff development through PDR process.	1.1-1.7, 2.1, 2.4, 3.1	