

Medway 2037

Sustainable, Waterfront, Learning City: creatively connecting innovation people and place; driving growth for all



FOREWORD

Regeneration is both exciting and challenging. It is exciting to witness the tangible signs of regeneration as they emerge from the ground; rewarding to hear of people and businesses wishing to relocate to Medway and uplifting to hear how the lives and wellbeing of Medway residents have been positively transformed. Such achievements drive us on but must be delivered within a context of reduced government funding and must provide the taxpayer with high value for money. Medway 2037 rises to the challenge, positively creating the framework for the fast-paced delivery of significant benefits, offering growth for all.

Medway 2037 ensures that the tremendous pace of regeneration in Medway continues. You will see plans for new homes at major new developments such as Rochester Riverside and Chatham Waterfront. You will see that our river, ecology, green spaces, culture and heritage have important roles to play in preserving and emphasising what makes Medway special. You will see that infrastructure requirements – including health, social care and wellbeing, education, transport and culture – are paramount. You will see that economic prosperity – new and growing businesses, high-quality business accommodation and a range of highly- skilled and well-paid jobs – is fundamental to everyone's success.

All of our ambitions reinforce the headline priority of our Council Plan:
to ensure that Medway is a place to be proud of. Medway 2037 will help residents, businesses and visitors alike to champion this sentiment.

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KEY REGENERATION SITES:

1. ROCHESTER RIVERSIDE
2. INNOVATION PARK MEDWAY
3. CHATHAM WATERFRONT
4. STROOD RIVERSIDE
5. CHATHAM MARITIME
6. CHATHAM WATERS
7. GILLINGHAM WATERFRONT
8. ISLE OF GRAIN COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT
9. KINGSNORTH
10. TEMPLE WATERFRONT

OVERVIEW

Medway Council is preparing a new Local Plan to provide direction for future growth for all.

The aim of the Local Plan is to ensure that Medway grows sustainably, to enable those who live and work here to have an outstanding quality of life, and to provide land for the homes, jobs and services that people need.

The Local Plan will protect and enhance the area's distinctiveness, helping to promote and secure investment in the area's outstanding environment and heritage and helping to create a prosperous place, with advantages and opportunities for new and existing communities.

Medway 2037 complements the Local Plan by developing a structured route map in support of the policies which will frame expected growth and setting out an exciting vision of the future Medway which these policies will help secure. If the Local Plan exists to manage growth, Medway 2037 exists to deliver it.

Medway 2037 sets out the special qualities of the area that provide a bedrock for regeneration. It identifies six priorities, along with three cross cutting themes, as the focus for regeneration actions over the short, medium, and long-term, and introduces the Medway Regeneration Delivery Plan, the framework for translating ambition into prioritised actions. Innovation, the net zero transition and growth for all will be at the heart of everything we do. Its priorities and objectives flow through to the work programmes of regeneration delivery partners across Medway and the south east, including those developed in more detail in Medway Council's related economic development and regeneration strategies developed, aligned and adopted alongside Medway 2037 regarding Town Centres, Innovation, Employment and skills, and the River. The final chapter explains in more detail how this will be achieved.

MEDWAY 2037 SETS OUT THE SPECIAL QUALITIES OF THE AREA THAT PROVIDE A BEDROCK FOR REGENERATION.

MEDWAY: THE PLACE FOR SUCCESS

Medway continues to grow attracting new residents and businesses and providing every reason for those already settled to remain. Even since Medway 2035 was written in 2018, and despite the challenges of Covid-19, we have seen transformational changes.

In 1984, the closure of Chatham Dockyard had a devastating economic impact across Medway, leaving many residents jobless and many school leavers searching for prospects.

Today, Medway is transformed, and proud to be home to thriving universities, an £86m further education campus, a University Technical College, The Royal School of Military Engineering and an array of apprenticeship and adult education opportunities.

We have one of the strongest engineering and manufacturing sectors in the south east and are a respected and established creative industries hub, with creativity permeating multiple sectors. Medway is at the vanguard of innovation and enterprise, with plentiful start-up and growth business space for graduates and entrepreneurs, and with land available for commercial development.

Figures show that Medway's economy is worth over £5.8bn¹ – with a growth rate ahead of the rest of the UK. The economy has proven resilient in the face of the impacts of Covid-19.

Medway's popular and historic town centres serve a population of over 275,000 – one of the largest conurbations in the south east outside London. There are excellent transport links from the capital, continent and beyond, including HS1 rail services with a journey time from London as short as 34 minutes. At the same time, abundant countryside and award-winning green spaces are just minutes away.

THE RIVER MEDWAY IS RESURGENT – ONCE AGAIN AT THE HEART OF MEDWAY'S ECONOMY AND IN THE HEARTS OF MEDWAY RESIDENTS.

Medway attracted over 4.6m visitors each year before the pandemic, many enjoying our array of free festivals and events, and world-class military, religious and industrial heritage. The River Medway has an increasingly bustling and vibrant waterfront with exciting development opportunities – distinct from its protected and highly-valued marshland areas – and is at the heart of Medway's plans.

Culturally, Medway excels. It is home to the highest concentration of listed buildings and scheduled monuments in the country, two theatres, and the Royal Engineers Museum, Library and Archive (the only designated collection in Kent).

Medway has received significant Heritage Lottery Fund, Historic England, and Levelling Up Fund investment, at The Historic Dockyard Chatham, Rochester Cathedral, Eastgate House, the Huguenot Museum and the Great Lines Heritage Park. Medway is a nationally recognised creative city: its innovative cultural partnership, Creative Medway, is set to deliver the Council's new Cultural Strategy, its growing creative industries cluster is a key node in the Thames Estuary Production Corridor, a landmark programme for creative and cultural production, and the Arts Council has identified Medway as a Priority Place for investment.

Beyond Medway's borders are a host of assets that enhance Medway's attractiveness as a place to live – ranging from shopping and leisure opportunities at Bluewater and Westfield Stratford City, to outstanding days out at the coast. The unrivalled beauty of Leeds Castle is also just moments away.

Partner agencies show an uplifting readiness to invest in Medway. Network Rail invested £26m in a brand-new train station in Rochester in 2015, and has funded improvements in all of Medway's five stations. A state-of-the-art bus station and reconfigured road network supports a vibrant atmosphere at Chatham waterfront under the gaze wellbeing strategy, developed with NHS partners seeks to ensure that local people's lives are as full, meaningful and healthy as possible. We are also delivering on our ambition to become a child friendly city.

Medway Council is an outward-looking unitary authority, at the forefront of acquiring, preparing, and delivering land for regeneration both through its wholly owned, innovative and successful delivery vehicle, Medway Development Company, and through and spearheading exciting partnerships. It has a suite of adopted development briefs to promote and guide regeneration activity and has an excellent track-record of consultation and engagement – including the flagship Developer Forum, and the wide-ranging stakeholders of the Place Board. Since 2018 and the previous adoption of Medway 2037, Medway Council, Medway Council has secured an additional £27m of government funding to invest in regeneration projects alongside successfully securing £170m to deliver infrastructure that will unlock transformational growth for the Hoo peninsula.

Medway is the place to live, work, learn, visit – and invest.

Medway: The Place Which Delivers

The scale and pace of Medway's transformation in recent years has been extraordinary. Medway is a place where things get delivered. Medway Council has worked hard to provide leadership in working with strong and trusted partners to identify *where* intervention is required, *what* is needed to unlock potential and transformational change, and then securing funding, investment, and resources to deliver targeted projects and interventions.

We are proud of what we have achieved. The proof is in the delivery: working with government agencies and delivery partners we are seeing the reinvention of Rochester Riverside; through our own development company we are delivering high-quality homes across Medway and reinvesting the returns back into Council services; we have delivered public realm improvements across the Medway towns; we have worked hard, and creatively with our partners, over the last three years to secure hundreds of millions of pounds of government funding which will unlock transformative and catalytic infrastructure, housing, workspace and community projects.

The work doesn't stop here: there is so much more to be delivered to realise Medway's potential. The Council will continue to explore new and innovative ways of working to realise the vision, confidently able to demonstrate to prospective funders and partners that *Medway is a place which delivers.*"

DESTINATION: 2037

Imagine... 2037

Medway is an even greater place to live.

There will be a diverse mix of high-quality housing and employment space, and new waterfront and town centre communities. Fast and efficient transport connections and outstanding infrastructure and services will link us all. Healthy, prosperous, active residents will enjoy spending their leisure time locally, exploring Medway's world-class heritage, nature, diverse and creative town centres, and culture.

Medway is an even greater place to work.

Residents have a wide range of high-quality employment opportunities. The number of local people working in Medway has an impact on carbon footprints, which are down, and air quality, which is up. Local businesses have prospered, and new ones continue to grow capitalising on supply chain opportunities at major regional developments such as Ebbsfleet Garden City, the Lower Thames Crossing and London Resort Park. Collaboration between Medway's universities and businesses drives innovation.

Medway is an even greater place to learn. Residents have a wide range of outstanding academic and vocational learning opportunities on their doorstep, equipping them for high-value employment. Graduates and students are inspired and supported to remain in Medway. Learning disciplines are matched by employment opportunities, including the emerging sectors of hydrogen, agri-tech, and the net zero transition economy.

Medway is an even greater place to visit. Visitors boost spend in the area, supporting business growth and creating jobs, and encouraging investment in facilities and services which residents enjoy. Visitors cherish Medway's unique and special qualities, including its heritage assets and the leisure and recreation opportunities provided by the river, and this protects them for future generations.

Everyone has benefitted from the area's regeneration

Medway is smart. Cutting edge-technology drives assets and services. Streetlights respond to movement, and bins raise an alert when they're full. Traffic lights reduce journey times, mobile phones monitor health conditions. Car clubs mean you don't need to own a vehicle to drive.

Medway thinks like a city. City-scale facilities thrive. People all over the world know Medway – where it came from, and what it stands for.

Medway is on the map.

IN 2037, MEDWAY WILL BE A SMART CITY THAT RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES ARE PROUD OF – FOR ITS HOUSING, EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, LEISURE, AND CULTURE OPPORTUNITIES, AND FOR OUTSTANDING ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE. ITS VIBRANT WATERFRONT ECONOMY, DIVERSE AND CREATIVE TOWN CENTRES, RICH HERITAGE AND INSPIRATIONAL GREEN SPACES WILL ENRICH MEDWAY AS A PLACE TO LIVE, WORK, LEARN AND VISIT.

MEDWAY IS INCREASINGLY A SUSTAINABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY, WHERE QUALITY HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES ARE PLENTIFUL, AND WHERE THE SOCIAL AND PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT PROMOTES EXCELLENT LIVING. IT IS PROUD TO HAVE DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY LIVING HIGH ON ITS RADAR.

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MEDWAY: A PLACE TO LIVE

£1bn transformational change

- new homes
- regeneration programmes underway in Chatham, Strood, Rochester riverside and Gillingham

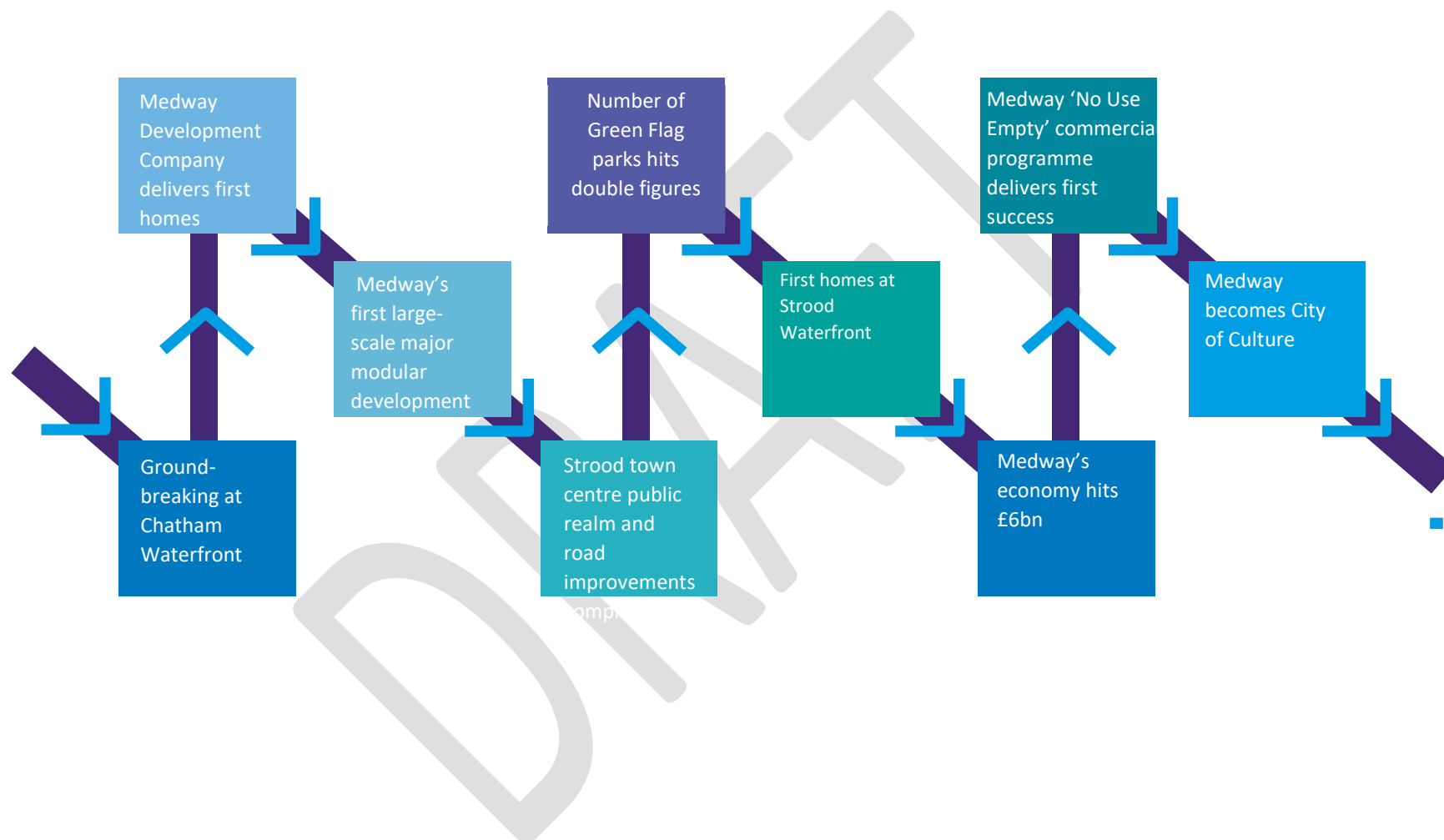
Well connected

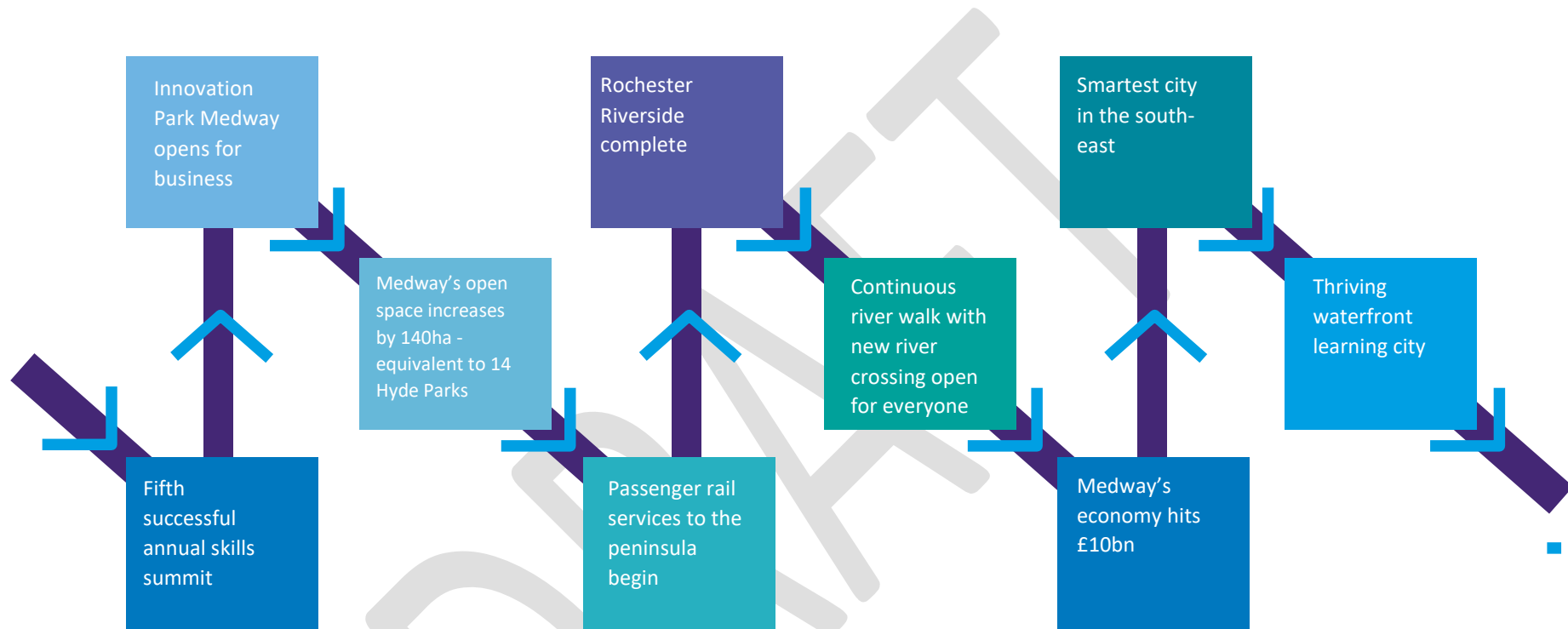
- 34 minutes by high speed train to London
- five stations (£37m upgrades)
- excellent links to motorways, airports and Europe

7 miles of Waterfront Development

Lowest Council Tax in Kent and one of the lowest rates in the M25 corridor

MILESTONES FOR SUCCESS





“THERE IS REAL MOMENTUM BEHIND BUSINESS GROWTH AND INNOVATION IN MEDWAY, WITH STRONG COLLABORATION BETWEEN SECTORS SECURING RISING LEVELS OF GROWTH, EMPLOYMENT, FUNDING AND RESEARCH.”

PAUL JACKSON OBE – CO-FOUNDER AND CEO OF DOVETAIL GAMES, AND CHAIRMAN OF MEDWAY INNOVATION BOARD.

MEDWAY: A PLACE TO WORK

Growing employment spaces to suit all businesses:

- Innovation Centre Medway
- Innovation studios Medway
- North Kent Enterprise Zone at Innovation Park Medway will bring 1,300 high quality jobs
- Growing network of flexible workspaces, including in town centres, diversifying the innovation ecosystem

Space for larger industrial units.

Entrepreneurial hub for engineering, manufacturing, creative and innovative tech businesses. Diverse sector opportunities in healthcare, agriculture, maritime industries, tourism, and construction.

Medway's economic growth rate is 3% higher than the national average.

MEDWAY: A GREAT PLACE TO LEARN

Universities with 12,000 students, Mid-Kent college and University Technical College developing vocational skills.

Excellent secondary, grammar, and private schools.

Productive collaborative links between education and local businesses - developing skills for the future.

More than 80% of our schools have an Ofsted rating of good or better.

“MEDWAY’S FURTHER EDUCATION SECTOR IS COMMITTED TO IMPROVING SKILLS AND TRANSFORMING THE LIVES AND FUTURES OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE IN MEDWAY. THE DEVELOPMENT OF SKILLS IS SUPPORTED BY FOUR OUTSTANDING LOCAL UNIVERSITIES, AND A GROWING AND DIVERSE ARRAY OF EMPLOYERS WHO, WORKING WITH US, ARE CREATING SOME AMAZING OPPORTUNITIES.” SIMON COOK – PRINCIPAL AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE, MIDKENT COLLEGE

THE ANNUAL PRIDE IN MEDWAY AWARDS CELEBRATE LOCAL HEROES – SUCH AS COMMUNITY INNOVATORS WHO USE THE POWER OF VOLUNTEERING TO ADDRESS SOCIAL CHALLENGES LIKE ISOLATION. VOLUNTEERS CONTRIBUTE AN AVERAGE OF 15,500 HOURS A YEAR AT MEDWAY’S GREEN SPACES ALONE.

MEDWAY: A GREAT PLACE TO VISIT

Attracting nearly 5 million visitors each year. Tourism supports 6,000 jobs in Medway and brings £360m to the local economy

RICH HERITAGE - OUTSTANDING TOURIST DESTINATION

- Second oldest cathedral in the country
- Historic Dockyard Chatham
- Two ancient castles
- Rich connections with Dickens

Water access and maritime leisure offer Protected estuary environment

Home to sporting excellence

- Gillingham Football Club
- Holcombe Hockey Club
- Medway Park - Regional centre of sporting excellence
- Host to international sports events and tournaments
- Ski slope and ice rink

Over 30 days of free festivals and events each year

RANSCOMBE FARM – A BLEND OF NATURE RESERVE AND WORKING FARM – HAS BEEN DESCRIBED BY BOTANIST DAVID BELLAMY AS “MEDWAY’S MIRACLE”

PRIORITIES

Medway's ambitious regeneration vision is encapsulated in six priorities. Embedded within all our priorities is a focus on innovation, the net zero transition and the growth for all. We work to ensure no adult or child is left behind, as we head towards the outstanding Medway of the future.

1 DESTINATION AND PLACEMAKING: PUT MEDWAY ON THE MAP AS A SMART AND SUSTAINABLE WATERFRONT LEARNING CITY

2 INWARD INVESTMENT: INCREASE HIGH-VALUE BUSINESSES AND EXPAND HIGH-QUALITY EMPLOYMENT

3 TOWN CENTRES: RENEW, DIVERSIFY, AND ACTIVATE OUR TOWN CENTRES

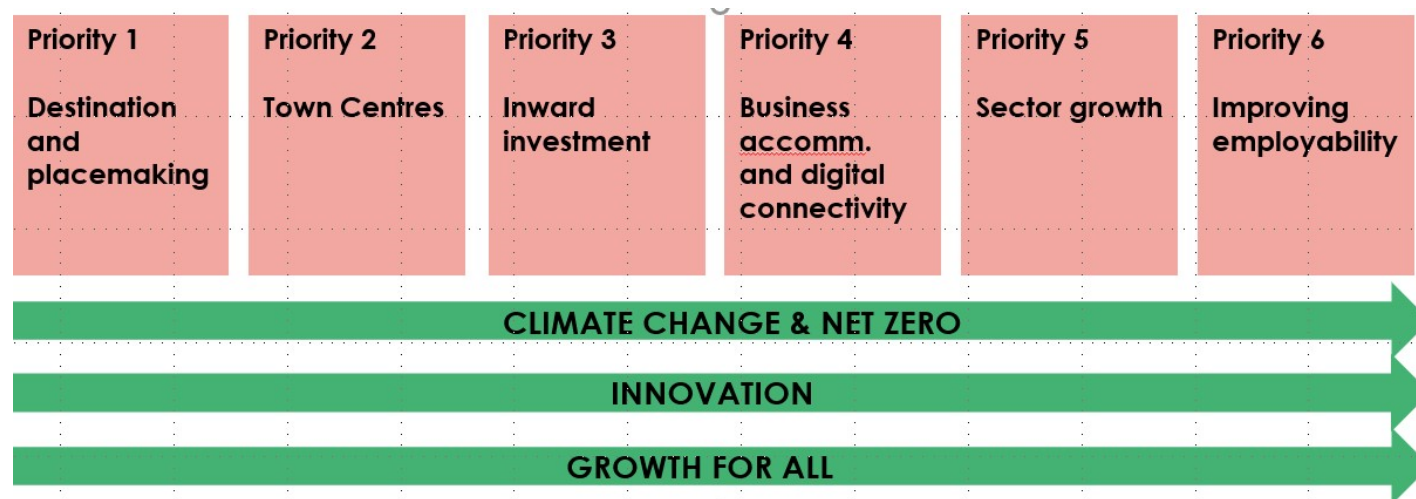
4 BUSINESS ACCOMMODATION AND DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

5 SECTOR GROWTH: ENHANCE A STRONG MIXED ECONOMY

6 IMPROVING EMPLOYABILITY: MATCH BUSINESS DEMAND AND SKILLS SUPPLY: PROVIDE THE RIGHT INFRASTRUCTURE FOR BUSINESS SUCCESS

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KEY CROSS-CUTTING THEMES



The key themes of innovation, the net zero transition and growth for all, will be at the heart of delivering on our 6 key priorities. These have never been more important as we focus on delivering sustainable growth by working more efficiently, creatively, and innovatively than ever before.

KEY THEME 1: INNOVATION

Innovation is at the heart of Medway Council's approach to delivering economic growth and will continue to be critical as we seek to unlock further productivity and economic gains. Innovation is not just an abstract term. We will innovate by acting and working differently across all of our key priorities to deliver tangible outcomes.

Destination and placemaking

We will position and promote Medway as a place of innovation, advertising our success stories.

Inward Investment

We will work to attract the most innovative businesses to locate in Medway, identifying and responding to business needs to attract high-value jobs.

Town Centres

We will think and deliver differently in our town centres, providing the spaces and places for innovative and creative uses to flourish.

Business accommodation and connectivity

We will continue to deliver, and support partners in delivering, the ambitious pipeline of innovation-focused commercial workspace projects which will host the next generation of innovation-intensive businesses.

Sector growth

We will support and promote emerging economic sectors including agri-tech, hydrogen and the opportunities arising from the transition to a net zero economy and industry 4.0.

Improving employability

We will facilitate skills and education outcomes aligned with business demands now and in the future which is a pre-requisite for catalysing innovation outcomes

KEY THEME 2: CLIMATE CHANGE & NET ZERO

Medway Council has announced a climate emergency and adopted a Climate Change Action Plan. Accordingly, we will embed the net zero carbon agenda at the heart of our key priorities recognising that acting and delivering in a more environmentally friendly way does not sit apart from our core activities, it is at the centre of them.

Destination and placemaking

We will work to deliver green places, striving ourselves, and supporting others, to deliver exemplary sustainability credentials

Inward Investment

We will work to attract innovators in the latest sustainable technologies and sectors, from Modern Methods of Construction to hydrogen production

Town Centres

We will work to create walkable, cyclable town centres with reactivated high streets home to creatively reused existing assets benefiting from embodied carbon

Business accommodation and connectivity

We will deliver on our pipeline of new workspaces in sustainably accessible town centre locations

Sector growth

We will promote and pioneer emerging and nascent sectors, taking opportunities wherever feasible to lead by example in stimulating demand in new, clean growth sectors

Improving employability

We will support the equipping of businesses and their existing and future employees with the skills they need to flourish in a zero-carbon economy

KEY THEME 3: GROWTH FOR ALL

Delivering growth for all is the third key theme we have embedded across all of our priorities. This means:

Destination and placemaking

We will work with communities and local stakeholders to understand and deliver the places they want to see, celebrating the diverse communities of the Medway towns which collectively make up our city

Inward Investment

We will focus efforts to secure funding, investment, and delivery in all of our Medway towns to support inclusive growth which will leave no child or adult behind

Town Centres

We will prioritise interventions in Gillingham and Rainham to complement the ongoing investment in and delivery of projects in Chatham, Rochester and Strood

Business accommodation and connectivity

We will deliver business accommodation and support for start-ups in locations cross Medway

Sector growth

We will promote growth in Medway's existing and emerging key sectors to support the creation of high-value jobs for Medway's communities

Improving employability

We will support our further and higher education institutions in aligning their course requirements with the needs of our residents to enhance employability outcomes

DESTINATION AND PLACEMAKING

The River

The River Medway is a high value nature conservation area. Its estuary is both a Marine Conservation Zone and a Special Protection Area under international law for its birdlife. It is the historic heart of Medway, a central part of our identity. It offers multiple benefits for health and wellbeing, for the economy and for nature. Its waterfront has outstanding potential for increased recreational, leisure and commercial uses in appropriate locations.

Medway Council will develop a River Strategy to guide the future direction, use and development around the River Medway. We will co-ordinate and deliver the exemplary build-out of our substantial waterfront estate, creating and enhancing high-quality, sustainable, vibrant and attractive community settings. We will promote increased public access to and leisure use of the river, including increased use of piers and jetties, and active ground-floor frontages. This will help to unlock and add to the quality of Medway's waterfront environment and support a vibrant waterfront economy and outstanding quality of life. The River Medway will become a focus for celebration and creative expression.

We will secure and use developer contributions to ensure a continuous waterfront walk and public access along both banks of the river.

THE RIVER MEDWAY IS THE HISTORIC HEART OF MEDWAY.

Housing

Delivering new homes to meet the needs of Medway residents is key to maximising regeneration and economic growth. Medway's Local Plan will set out our strategy for meeting our growing and changing population's need for housing.

To meet the identified need Medway Council will continue to lead on a number of exciting major developments, trailblazing innovative ways of delivering high-quality housing and employment space, including via the Medway Development Company, potential joint venture arrangements with landowners and developers, and off-site modular construction opportunities. We will build on the evident delivery momentum – both led and supported by Medway Council and prioritise the unlocking of development at Strood waterfront and on the Hoo Peninsula, to complement ongoing delivery in Chatham, Rochester and Gillingham.

Medway Council will support modern manufacturing methods, including the development of a modern manufacturing hub on the Hoo Peninsula, accelerating housing delivery by actively promoting modern methods of construction for sites within Medway – for example by showcasing the flagship Kitchener Barracks development.

Infrastructure

Successful delivery of homes and jobs is underpinned by timely and sufficient investment in infrastructure - including health and social care provision (in particular primary care), education, transport, culture and more.

Medway Council will maintain a robust and up-to-date Developer Contributions Guide in support of its Infrastructure Delivery Plan which identifies the services and investments needed to deliver sustainable and successful growth. We will continue to ensure that agreements within the Developer Contributions Guide are actively promoted to developers from the outset of discussions and are integral to planning permission.

Building on significant and continued success - not least securing £170m government investment in infrastructure delivery on the Hoo Peninsula - we will continue to fully engage with government agencies and strategic investment bodies to secure national and regional funding for major infrastructure projects across Medway.

We will identify and progress large-scale infrastructure projects for foreign direct investment, as appropriate. We will prioritise delivering, with partners, the diverse range of transformational projects for which we have recently secured government funding.

Transport

A functioning, modern city needs fast and efficient connections between homes, jobs, services, and destinations.

Medway Council will support and promote initiatives to increase capacity and reduce or maintain journey times across Medway, via road improvement schemes and smart technology, and via increased uptake of public transport, and supporting active travel through cycling and walking. This will include engaging with external bodies to secure funding for identified schemes. We recognise the health and wellbeing benefits from increased active travel which will increase as air pollution levels drop as reliance on vehicular transport reduces along with increased use of clean fuel technologies.

Longer-term, Medway Council will support and promote a bold behavioural shift towards integrated city-scale public transport solutions. This will include an exploration of the river as a natural highway, and the linked development of a network of passenger piers.

Medway Council will explore the potential contribution hydrogen fuel technologies could play in delivering more sustainable transport solutions. This will complement planned investment in Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure. These will play an important role in Medway's transition to a zero-carbon future.

Medway Council will ensure residents benefit from infrastructure investment outside the immediate area, for example the Lower Thames Crossing; we are working to consider the wider impacts on the roads in Medway and mitigate the environmental impacts.

Smart city

Medway aspires to be the leading smart city in the south-east, investing in smart technology across all disciplines and promoting and supporting take-up by our partners. To achieve this, we will be 'smart aware', exploring and progressing modern technological responses to infrastructure and social needs and opportunities, such as transport and health care. We are already rolling out a number of pilot projects – working in partnership with CityFibre who are investing £40m in the delivery of Gigabit Fibre across Medway - and have agreed a five-year route map to deliver initiatives including LED street-lights, road temperature sensors, EV charging points.

MEDWAY ASPIRES TO BE THE LEADING SMART CITY IN THE SOUTH EAST.

Chatham – heart of the city

Chatham is the geographic centre of Medway and has a population of just under 80,000. It has a busy high street and thriving cultural scene and attracts visitors from outside Medway. The character of Chatham is enriched by the unique heritage assets of The Historic Dockyard, Fort Amherst and the green backdrop of Great Lines Heritage Park. Chatham's centre boasts two theatres, one of which has received several million pounds of investment from the Government which will transform the accessibility, quality, and technological capacity of the facility. There is a waterfront walk from Gun Wharf to Sun Pier, with lighting, trees, and CCTV.

The city centre benefits from a £4m government funded placemaking scheme, providing major public realm improvements between the train station and waterfront and from £8.5m investment in a new Heath and Wellbeing Centre. The Heritage Lottery Fund has invested £2m in initiatives linking Chatham's outstanding military setting to its waterfront heart.

Chatham is the most sustainable of Medway's towns, with major rail and transport hubs and a significant area of retail floorspace. An enhanced visitor experience throughout the city centre – with a particular focus between the train station and waterfront – will include the delivery of two new public squares.

A greater diversification of land use in the centre will promote an enhanced range of leisure opportunities to boost the daytime and evening economy. New employment uses and high-quality city living will increase disposable income within and around the high street. Over £25m of government investment has been secured since 2018 from the Levelling Up Fund, Future High Streets Fund and Historic England to invest in a range of transformative initiatives to diversify and activate Chatham's town centre. We will continue support for enhanced creative industries presence in and around the town centre, and throughout Medway as a whole. We will promote the role of the arts and creative industries, including in collaboration with further and higher education institutions, in creatively activating our town. We will explore the potential for a pedestrian bridge connecting Medway City Estate and Chatham centre, bringing further disposable income to the town.

Chatham Maritime

Chatham Maritime is a real story of regeneration success. Once derelict industrial wasteland has been carefully transformed over three decades into a sustainable and vibrant community of almost 2,000 homes, with leisure, entertainment and education at its heart, a new school and doctor's surgery, and with great respect for ecology and heritage. The residential core has been billed as 'Britain's first and only strategically planned island community', and is adjacent to a bustling marina. Medway Council has played a leading role in planning for and securing Chatham Maritime's success. This is continuing with exciting plans for 'the Docking Station', the proposed conversion of a listed former police station and section house which will be home to the University of Kent's Institute for Cultural and Creative Industries which has recently secured government funding, uniting the Historic Dockyard and Universities at Medway complex, and providing unrivalled opportunities for Medway's cultural and creative students and practitioners and businesses.

"CHATHAM MARITIME IS A REAL BEACON OF REGENERATION SUCCESS. THE MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT – FEATURING HUGELY POPULAR HOMES, LEISURE, RETAIL AND ENTERTAINMENT VENUES, AND THE OUTSTANDING UNIVERSITIES AT MEDWAY COMPLEX – IS AN EXCELLENT CASE STUDY OF HOW TO CREATE SUSTAINABLE, VIBRANT COMMUNITIES. CHATHAM MARITIME BOTH RESPECTS THE PAST AND EMBRACES THE FUTURE". MATTHEW NORWELL, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, THAMES GATEWAY KENT PARTNERSHIP.

Individual and vibrant places: collectively Medway

Alongside Chatham, the towns of Strood, Rochester, Gillingham and Rainham possess an exceptional geography, a rich heritage and resurgent economies. We propose to celebrate and reinforce the diverse identities of the places which make Medway what it is today.

We recognise that the impacts of Covid-19 have accelerated and amplified many of the challenges facing our town centres, which are so crucial to our towns, and we have made town centres a separate key priority in recognition of this.

However, we recognise that our places are more than our town centres. Our towns are made up of communities, neighbourhoods, connections, parks, infrastructure, homes, places of work, learning and leisure. For Medway to thrive as a city, all of its individual towns need to as well. We have a vision for the Medway towns, each individually and diversely vibrant, contributing to a collective, distinct and 'uniquely Medway' identity.

Strood

Strood is the best connected of Medway's towns, with a journey time from London of just 34 minutes, excellent motorway connections, and stunning views of historic Rochester. It is compact and vibrant, with multiple shops, supermarkets and convenience stores, and a thriving retail park and successful market. It benefits from £6m investment in a Health and Wellbeing Centre and a £9m town centre transport and public realm improvement scheme.

A significant amount of developable land within Strood is within Medway Council's control. These sites have capacity to accommodate transformational developments able to capitalise on their stunning Riverside position. We will prioritise the unlocking of these sites as a major driver of new homes and

economic growth to support Strood's identity as a thriving town. We will continue to integrate the retail park, High Street and the proposed major developments to maximise spend opportunities in the town centre as a whole.

Rochester

Rochester Castle and Cathedral define the town centre, which boasts a strong independent retail sector. Rochester is home to many of Medway's most successful festivals and events and has a popular award-winning farmers' market. Rochester has a thriving tourist economy, and a £26m train station on its doorstep. Covid-19 had a significant impact on the visitor economy across the UK and we will focus on supporting Rochester's bounce back through a celebration of its numerous heritage assets and thriving centre.

We will progress the role of Corporation Street in consolidating links between the major development at Rochester Riverside and its historic centre. We will consider the creation of Market Square – a centre for cultural events at the heart of Rochester High Street and a vibrant link between old and new. Supported by Heritage Action Zone funding we will continue to invest and promote in connections between Rochester and Chatham – Chatham Intra – recognising that enhancing the physical and perceived links between Rochester and Chatham as places will strengthen their complementary identities.

ROCHESTER IS HOME TO MANY OF MEDWAY'S MOST SUCCESSFUL FESTIVALS AND EVENTS AND HAS A THRIVING TOURIST ECONOMY AND A £26M TRAIN STATION ON ITS DOORSTEP. IT IS PROUD TO BE HOME TO KENT'S FIRST DEMENTIA FRIENDLY MARKET.

Gillingham

Gillingham is the proud home of the Royal School of Military Engineering and more than 1,000 university students, and is an increasingly popular location for families. It is home to Kent's only league football club and to Kent's largest hospital, at the heart of the Medway community. This is vital for future healthcare provision for Medway residents and offers multiple training and career opportunities. The superlative Great Lines Heritage Park is on its doorstep.

We will promote increased usage of the town centre by the significant local communities nearby and at the waterfront. We will boost the town centre through supporting the introduction of diverse and innovative uses, working to attract funding, catalysing and building the capacity of entrepreneurs, businesses and community groups and working in partnership to deliver the projects and uses to see Gillingham. Gillingham Football Club hopes to relocate and build a new stadium, and if the club moves, we will work with them to maximise employment and regeneration opportunities at the old and new club sites.

Rainham

Rainham has a compact and popular retail area serving local needs. Where new development comes forward, we will seek to integrate with existing communities, through upgrading public realm, walking and cycling routes, and linking the town with local neighbourhoods, countryside and coast.

The emphasis will be on strengthening and diversifying Rainham town centre for retail, leisure and community uses, securing its role as a valued and vibrant area for local people. We will work closely with local stakeholders and partners to identify the changes they wish to see and help them to realise their vision.

The Hoo Peninsula: growing villages and an economic hub

This rural area comprises a network of villages, strategic employment and infrastructure sites (including energy production and facilities for the importation of energy, fuel and minerals), and a productive agricultural economy, set within a landscape of estuarine marshland, wooded ridges, and farmland. Much of the area is designated of national or international importance for its environmental value. The Hoo Peninsula has a distinctively different character to urban Medway.

Villages such as Hoo St Werburgh are growing, and there is a need to plan for sustainable community development providing the services and infrastructure they need alongside the delivery of new housing and jobs. Large sites at Grain and Kingsnorth are important to Medway's portfolio of employment land. Medway Council has recognised this importance; £170m infrastructure funding from government dedicated to the delivery of transformational infrastructure, will provide opportunities to unlock significant housing and employment growth on the Hoo peninsula.

We will ensure that services and infrastructure are delivered in support of new housing and jobs. This includes opportunities to boost the economy and the environment. We will support and promote opportunities for visitor and leisure activities sensitive to the area's environment. We will pursue the unique opportunities at Grain and Kingsnorth to use water and rail transport and accommodate land-intensive activities - such as a modern manufacturing hub and potentially innovative and strategic hydrogen fuel production and distribution infrastructure. The large-scale employment sites of the Hoo Peninsula will form a strategic node in the South-East's economy providing space for large scale industrial businesses to relocate into, and expand within, Medway creating high-value employment opportunities.

Public realm – creating and connecting destinations; a modern, accessible city

Medway's open spaces provide a high-quality landscape and are significant environmental, recreational, health and wellbeing assets. The attractiveness, inclusivity, and accessibility of the public realm in Medway's town centres and neighbourhoods is crucial to ensure the continuing viability and vitality of these areas and to create safe and appealing places for people to meet and enjoy a range of activities.

We will increase our focus on maintaining and enhancing our existing public realm. Our public spaces will play a key role in delivering on a number of our broader agendas: creating child friendly spaces, hosting smart technologies and celebrating our creative and cultural strengths through temporary and permanent public art installations and events. We will activate our town centres by pioneering innovative meanwhile uses: public realm, places and spaces for experimentation, creation and entrepreneurialism.

We will continue to invest in our significant public realm and green space assets to maximise walking, cycling, event and leisure opportunities across Medway and to provide a network of linked destinations. This includes securing Green Flag status for outstanding open spaces and a programme of placemaking improvements across our town centres.

Regenerating and developing communities needs to go hand-in-hand with transforming health and wellbeing, an aim that is reflected in Medway 2037's bold and vibrant vision for the future. As new initiatives build growth in Medway, local health and care services must change to meet people's needs effectively now and into the future. As a partnership of NHS, social care and public health, we are focussed on improving the range, access and quality of care that people receive in hospitals, GP surgeries and health centres as well as helping them to lead healthier, happier lives. By working closely with local people and organisations we are supporting Medway's regeneration story. Glenn Douglas, Chief Executive, Kent and Medway Sustainability and Transformation Partnership

Heritage and culture – world-class breadth and depth

Medway will embrace and promote the fascinating past which shaped its present and will influence its future. Our world-class heritage landscape is an outstanding setting for a modern city. Medway's world-class military, naval and religious heritage will continue to be heralded as a unique attraction for the area.

However, it is not just our internationally renowned heritage assets which makes Medway special. Our towns are full of historic buildings and places with incredible stories. We want to uncover more of these buildings and stories: the Heritage Action Zone funding we secured is supporting us to do exactly this at Chatham Intra, delivering investment into historic buildings, supporting programmes of events and art exhibitions and place promotion. We want to open up Medway's fascinating and lesser-known heritage to a much wider audience.

We will articulate a clear strategy that recognises the significance of our heritage, and its place in building the identity of our future city. We will create a strategy for investment and prioritisation which helps make heritage relevant to our existing communities and growing population, including through the creative re-use and celebration of heritage assets, and which echoes the aims of our strategic funding partners.

We will seek to increase the number of day and overnight visitors, and the amount of visitor spend, by the provision of supporting facilities and infrastructure and the promotion of cultural and physical links between historic assets.

We will carry on promoting the Great Lines Heritage Park Vision and Masterplan, increasing the quality and quantity of publicly accessible greenspace and heritage at the heart of the city, and providing a major green link between town centres and a significant health and wellbeing asset for Medway recognising that the experience of having access to open and green spaces during Covid-19 has underscored their importance to our communities.

THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF MILITARY ENGINEERING HAS BEEN BASED IN MEDWAY FOR OVER 200 YEARS.

“MEDWAY HAS ACHIEVED MUCH TO BE PROUD OF IN ITS BRIEF 20 YEAR HISTORY. MOST IMPRESSIVE IS THE WAY THAT THIS CONTINUUM OF REGENERATION LEARNS LESSONS, AND TAKES INSPIRATION FROM ITS PAST. THE SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS OF RECENT YEARS PROVIDE A SOLID AND STRATEGIC FOUNDATION FOR AN EXCITING FUTURE BASED ON A REAL SENSE OF PLACE AND AMBITIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH.” BILL FERRIS OBE – CHIEF EXECUTIVE, CHATHAM HISTORIC DOCKYARD TRUST.

TRANSFORMING PRIORITY: MEDWAY'S WATERFRONT

Our major regeneration sites are supported by development opportunities across Medway. The council is promoting and responding proactively to development opportunities at sites that conform to planning policy expectations. Medway Council is both directly delivering and supporting partners to unlock strategic sites. In the 3 years since Medway 2037 was adopted significant progress has been made on many of Medway's most strategic and complex sites, delivering high-quality developments.

Temple Waterfront

Medway Council is working with key landowners and delivery partners to develop Temple Waterfront as a well-integrated new community of up to 600 homes within a beautiful waterfront setting, connected to Strood town centre by an attractive waterfront walk. Unlocking the delivery of this site is a key priority for the Council.

Rochester Riverside

Rochester Riverside is Medway's flagship regeneration opportunity. Medway Council is co-ordinating the exemplary build out of Rochester Riverside to deliver a high-quality, sustainable, vibrant and attractive community setting, which integrates with and augments historic Rochester. The new community will feature 1,400 homes, a new school, greenspaces, play equipment, hotel and community facilities. Significant progress has been made in delivering Rochester Riverside acting as a catalyst and setting the standard for development across Medway.

Strood Waterfront

Medway Council will prioritise the transformation of the former Civic Centre and Strood Riverside site into a flagship development of over 1,100 homes, boasting stunning views of historic Rochester, excellent travel connections, and with unique and immediate access to two town centres. The vibrant development will connect seamlessly with Strood High Street, complementing and augmenting the existing town centre, whilst the new population will enhance the town's economic performance. The quality of the development, including the waterfront public realm, will reflect the Medway standard being delivered at Rochester Riverside.

Chatham Waterfront

Chatham Waterfront is a vibrant regeneration zone at the heart of the city. Medway Development Company is delivering the high-quality build out of Chatham Waterfront, delivering new spend opportunities for Chatham town centre via the creation of attractive and sustainable residential units and leisure outlets. This key regeneration zone will act as a catalyst for the development of the wider waterfront area, including cultural and event space.

Chatham Maritime

St Mary's Island is a 150-acre residential development that forms part of the 350-acre Chatham Maritime regeneration project. Now almost complete, St Mary's Island includes play areas, a doctors' surgery, a community centre, and a primary school. It is surrounded by stunning river views. Chatham Maritime also includes the Dockside Outlet Centre, and the exciting Interface Land development area, with the potential for a residential-led development and supporting commercial uses.

Gillingham Waterfront

This 10-acre waterfront site adjacent to Chatham Docks is in progress and delivering a mix of commercial and residential accommodation as well as increased public access to the river. Phase I of the development provided 600 new purpose-built student apartments for the University of Kent.

Chatham Waters

This major mixed-use regeneration scheme is underway and will ultimately deliver up to 1,350 homes, 3,500 jobs, a hotel, conference centre, shops and university facilities across a stunning 26-acre waterfront site.

CELEBRATING THE RIVER MEDWAY

The River Medway: the heart of our identity

The River Medway is fundamental to the Medway towns: the very reason the Medway towns exist. The history of the River is synonymous with that of the evolution of our places and communities. The way in which we use the River has changed significantly over the generations: the closure of the Naval dockyard in 1984 was the end of an era and marked the beginning of the transformation of the Medway Towns which has gathered momentum ever since.

A diverse range of groups and stakeholders currently use and engage with the River Medway and its waterfront: recreational and leisure users, tour operators, hobbyists, environmental groups, heritage enthusiasts, tourists, walkers, commercial operators and an increasing number of residents.

The River is a source of pleasure, opportunity and identity. It is something that is used and experienced; it is more than just the stunning backdrop to our rejuvenated waterfront regeneration sites, increasingly home to vibrant mixed-use communities.

Recognising both the challenges and opportunities presented by the River Medway we have committed to develop an evidence-backed River Strategy which will set out a proposed vision, strategy, and associated Delivery Plan, for the future use and engagement with the River, including identifying key investment priorities.

This proposed River Strategy will creatively embed the key themes of Medway 2037 at its heart: innovation, zero carbon and growth for all.

INWARD INVESTMENT

Investment to unlock innovation and jobs

The aim of inward investment is to attract both jobs and businesses to the local economy. Raising the quality and quantity of jobs in Medway will secure important employment opportunities for residents and offer resilience to the Medway economy. There is significant opportunity to attract leading businesses to Medway and to grow our established high-value business base. Our investment in bringing forward sites such as Innovation Park Medway will be essential in attracting high-value businesses and providing the grow on space for our existing success stories to expand.

Medway has an established Inward Investment Strategy and works closely with Locate in Kent in support of its inward investment objectives. We will continue to promote Medway as a destination of choice for growth businesses, and develop Medway's reputation as a one-stop shop local authority for employment enquiries and needs. As well as helping local businesses to grow, we will focus on firms looking to relocate from London and UK firms looking for a second base. The experience of Covid-19 is causing many businesses to consider their existing operational models and we will look to capitalise on opportunities through advocating the benefits of locating in Medway, not least the strong transport connectivity, skilled labour force and lower commercial occupancy costs. The multi-stakeholder Medway Place Board, supported by Medway Council, and its network of business champions will continue to make the case for all parts of Medway.

Year-on-year we will seek to increase business presence in Medway, particularly businesses with high value activities. We will pursue efforts to protect business premises with higher-value uses through the planning system and by exploring opportunities for Medway Council to invest in property assets to assure higher value uses.

We will explore the opportunity to encourage industrial estate renewal and the associated intensification of uses, in particular, at Medway City Estate. This will realise opportunities to provide the quality employment land, of the right type and location for growing businesses in Medway.

We will continue to support businesses to remain, grow and relocate in Medway via advice, guidance and the promotion of grants and funding instruments, acknowledging the critical importance of these services during Covid-19, and recognising the important role Medway can play in connecting businesses with opportunities and advice and other businesses and institutions in Medway's innovation ecosystem.

GOVERNMENT HAS INVESTED OVER £10M IN INNOVATION PARK MEDWAY WITH THE DELIVERY OF SITE INFRASTRUCTURE UNDERWAY AND A STREAMLINED PLANNING FRAMEWORK PUT IN PLACE BY THE COUNCIL, THAT WILL SUPPORT THE DELIVERY OF A HIGH-VALUE EMPLOYMENT CENTRE.

TOWN CENTRES

Medway's town centres: the heart of our communities

Medway's town centres sit at the heart of civic life. Each of them is unique. This distinctiveness reflects the many and varied roles and functions these town centres fulfil for residents, workers, and visitors to Medway.

Medway's town centres are home to many thriving businesses, enterprises, and new ideas; some treasured buildings and places to shop, eat, drink, work and enjoy. There are countless local success stories, which we should all celebrate. However, the needs of those who use Medway's town centres are changing and wider social, economic, and technological drivers have, over time, created real challenges for the historically retail-focused town centres of Medway.

The impact of Covid-19 on town centres across the UK has been profound, and Medway is no exception. Prolonged and repeated public health restrictions have accelerated the growth of online retailing and amplified the already challenging trading conditions for many of our town centre businesses. Some of these immediate impacts could well have longer-lasting impacts. Whilst this clearly creates challenges for more traditional high-street retailing, this also means there are opportunities to innovate, create and do things differently.

Within this context the Council is prioritising its town centres, to celebrate their distinctiveness, to unlock their potential and to catalyse their renewal. The Council has prepared a Town Centres Strategy which sets out the vision, rationale, and proposed action plan for this policy priority, including an emphasis on defining a plan which will embed Medway 2037's three cross-cutting themes of growth for all, innovation, and net zero transition.

Medway's town centres: what we have achieved so far

Medway Council has had great success in attracting public funding from various sources – Levelling Up Fund, Getting Building Fund, Future High Streets Fund, Heritage Action Zone – and the projects these investments will deliver are set to be transformative and catalytic in equal measure. These build on the already positive changes made, particularly through public realm investments. However, this is only the start of the process. We recognise that significant investment and support is required in all our town centres and the Council is committed to unlocking transformative change across Medway.

We will strive to support the diversification, revival and activation of all of our town centres: each one faces different challenges and is presented with different opportunities. We will work to ensure no town centre is left behind, including a focus on delivering change in Gillingham and Rainham to complement recent investment and development in Chatham, Rochester and Strood.

TOWN CENTRES

Medway's town centres: our approach to unlocking their potential

The future of our town centres will celebrate all that is already unique and distinctive about each of our individual places whilst embracing change and providing space for a range of uses to come to our high streets; uses which will be rooted in the communities of Medway providing something for everyone, delivering diversity rather than a 'one size fits all' approach.

Our Town Centres Strategy sets out how we will deliver transformation of our town centres. We will:

- Take a place-based approach to delivery
- Develop a strong vision and narrative that celebrates the individuality of each town centre, but that unites them under a common goal, which will directly inform what is delivered
- Balance pragmatism with aspiration
- Support the growth and diversification of businesses and uses in our town centres
- Develop the supporting partnership structures needed to facilitate and deliver the changes needed for our town centres to flourish
- Make town centres places that everyone can access and benefit from.
- Ensure our town centres respond to the net zero agenda and benefit from innovation
- Support the delivery of improved outcomes for all of Medway's town centres

BUSINESS ACCOMODATION AND DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

The right tools for success

Medway is home to a number of significant business and industrial estates that provide good quality accommodation for the area's 14,000+ businesses. Medway Council has led the charge in the development of business premises, in particular by bringing forward its owned and operated Innovation Centre and Studios both with superfast broadband. There is a growing opportunity to build on these successes, including progressing with the delivery of Innovation Park Medway following significant government investment in delivering infrastructure.

With a generally ageing commercial stock profile, most employment estates operating at capacity, and a lack of modern office space to allow business growth, Medway Council has worked hard, in partnership with key stakeholders, to successfully secure significant investment which it will use to deliver a number of high-quality workspace projects in its town centres. These spaces will allow Medway businesses to grow and to attract inward investment.

The Council acknowledges that it will need to unlock development in a range of locations to meet different business needs, including edge-of-centre sites. Medway Council will investigate acquisition and investment opportunities, leading by example in securing high-value employment space. It will continue to support the ongoing development of key industrial sites on the Hoo Peninsula to accommodate large-scale commercial occupiers.

We will seek optimised use of the railway line from Hoo junction to the Isle of Grain, supporting intensified usages. We are securing and promoting the highest possible broadband speeds across Medway working in partnership with CityFibre on the rollout of Gigabit broadband recognising broadband speeds as a modern foundation of success.

DELIVERING SPACES FOR INNOVATION

Medway Council has led the way in delivering high-quality commercial workspace to support SMEs establish and grow and has an exciting pipeline of projects set to be delivered to cater for businesses at all stages in their growth journey having recently secured significant government funding.

Innovation Centre Medway and Innovation Studios Medway

Innovation Centre Medway is Medway's flagship business accommodation, where technology innovators, start-ups and early years organisations are given the space and support to grow into thriving businesses. Opened in 2009, Innovation Centre Medway was joined in 2017 by its satellite site, Innovation Studios Medway – a purpose-built space ideal for start-up and micro-firms in Strood.

Innovation Park Medway

The Council has secured funding for, and is delivering, the infrastructure required to enable the delivery of over 100,000 sqm of innovation-intensive commercial and industrial floorspace focused on its key sectors including advanced engineering and manufacturing. Work has taken place to establish potential demand, delivery, and operational models. The Council will work to deliver a commercially viable scheme which supports innovation and economic outcomes, being flexible in its approach to delivery in response to market demand.

DELIVERING SPACES FOR INNOVATION

The Docking Station – being delivered by the University of Kent in partnership with Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust, supported by funding secured by Medway Council from the Levelling Up Fund. This will provide a home for the Institute of Cultural and Creative Industries and include incubator and accelerator space for the creative industries.

The Fitted Rigging House (South) – being delivered by Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust, supported by funding secured by Medway Council from the Levelling Up Fund. This project will creatively re-use a listed heritage asset to create high-quality office space for growing businesses to complement the Historic Dockyard's existing cluster of emerging and established creative and digital businesses.

The Brook Theatre – this project, funded through the Levelling Up Fund, will deliver high-quality flexible workspace for SMEs working in the creative and cultural sectors alongside the refurbished theatre with business support and guidance provided in partnership with the ICCI based at the Docking Station.

The Innovation Hub, Pentagon Centre – funded via the Future High Streets Fund this project will repurpose part of the redundant first floor of the Pentagon Centre to provide a flexible workspace for SMEs and entrepreneurs across all sectors with access to business support and guidance to help them on their growth journey.

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SECTOR GROWTH

Capitalising on our strengths

Medway's industrial heritage has made Medway a commercially attractive place, particularly for engineering and manufacturing businesses, but also for construction businesses and functions which support the financial and public sector. Whilst a challenging time for all, our key sectors have proven resilient in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Medway is thriving as a creative hub, pre-pandemic tourism was continuing to grow with positive signs of its recovery, and there is an increasing focus on the healthcare sector to reflect growing and ageing populations.

We will develop a coherent approach to employer engagement. We will engage with the Kent and Medway Guilds, with a focus on Medway's key sectors, promoting collaboration between schools, colleges and employers.

We will support the development of Medway as a 'creative city', delivering on the legacy of our bid to become a City of Culture and capitalising on being designated as a priority place for investment by the Arts Council and the importance of creativity across sectors. This will be reflected in the delivery of a number of creative industries focused workspace projects and related interventions following recent successes in securing funding.

Medway is set to benefit tremendously from the new Kent and Medway Medical School, which will deliver 100 undergraduate places each year, with multiple medical placements in local healthcare facilities.

Medway Council will support emerging key sectors, including hydrogen, agri-tech and potential opportunities for existing sectors in transitioning to the net zero economy and technological changes. We will both support and encourage investment in these sectors, but will proactively take a pioneer role, where feasible, in engaging with emerging sectoral opportunities.

MEDWAY'S KEY SECTORS:

- Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing
- Construction
- Creative and Cultural
- Health and Social Care
- IT and Digital.

IMPROVING EMPLOYABILITY

Match business demand with skills supply and retain graduate talent.

Approximately 56 per cent of Medway workers have local jobs, below the Kent figure of 78 per cent. Medway's thriving further education and university presence offers an excellent skills base and significant scope to secure high quality jobs for a high-quality workforce. This will help maintain or reduce traffic flows outside Medway and increase leisure-time opportunities for residents.

To help Medway's workers find local jobs that meet their skills and aspirations, and thereby secure growth for all, we will promote the importance of lifelong learning and skills attainment and, promote new local job opportunities stemming from inward investment to residents, apprentices, and graduates. We will support and encourage jobs in new and emerging sectors, working with our education providers to align the delivery of skills to emerging needs.

We will continue to support the development of the Medway Skills Board, spearheading an integrated 'one-council' approach to skills development from reception to retirement and providing a specific forum for college and university engagement. The Skills Board will shape and work to deliver the aims of an 'all age' skills plan for Medway, bringing benefits to residents and businesses alike. We will keep abreast of employer skills demands and support education providers in matching local supply with local requirements.

Medway Council will continue to lead by example in recruiting a significant cohort of apprentices each year through its Apprenticeship Academy. We will work directly with local businesses and training providers to match applicants to industry, and to raise understanding of the value of apprenticeship opportunities.

In particular, Medway Council will work with the University Technical College to promote higher-level apprenticeships as an attractive next step for students.

SCHOOLS AND DISCIPLINES TAUGHT AT MEDWAY UNIVERSITIES:

- Pharmaceutical, chemical and environmental sciences
- Engineering and science
- Journalism
- Animation
- Digital and media
- Business
- Craft and product design
- Professional practice
- Computing
- Performing arts
- Music and fine art
- Photography
- Policy, sociology and social research
- Early years and education
- Health and social care
- Sport and exercise science

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FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Medway is proud to be home to a number of thriving universities, an £86m further education campus and a University Technical College. It is therefore extremely well placed to support entrants to the labour market and growing businesses. A strong and diversified economy includes highly skilled employment opportunities for Medway's graduates.

Building on the success of Innovation Centre Medway, funding and delivery of Innovation Park Medway, and other key future innovation hubs – including the new home of the Institute of Cultural and Creative Industries at the Docking Station in Chatham Historic Dockyard, we will work closely with further education and higher education providers to secure appropriate job opportunities across Medway, and to prepare Medway businesses for supply opportunities such as Ebbsfleet Garden City and the Lower Thames Crossing .

We will seek to increase the percentage of Medway's 12,000 students who stay in Medway, after they graduate, supporting and developing initiatives to promote talent retention. This will include the promotion of Medway as an innovative and creative city, and a specific focus on engineering / manufacturing and construction in addition to emerging sectors such as agri-tech and hydrogen technologies. We will support and drive opportunities arising as part of the net zero carbon transition economy and industry 4.0.

MEDWAY IS PROUD TO BE HOME TO THRIVING UNIVERSITIES, AN £86M FURTHER EDUCATION CAMPUS, AND A UNIVERSITY TECHNICAL COLLEGE.

REGENERATION DELIVERY

Vision without action is merely an idle dream.

Yet combined with action, vision is the foundation of an exciting and sustainable future which benefits all of Medway's residents.

Alongside Medway 2037 sit a number of strategies which articulate *how* we will deliver on our key priorities and themes. Collectively Medway 2037 and supporting strategies inform the Medway Regeneration Delivery Plan – a detailed analysis of the short, medium and long term actions which will deliver our ambitions. These actions provide a pipeline of projects ready for engagement with those who are ready to invest.

Medway Council has a strong track record of delivering major projects in partnership with funders and the private and third sectors. We will continue to work with other agencies to deliver high quality regeneration in line with public expectations and to manage resources effectively.

Forward-thinking authorities recognise that plans evolve. Medway Council is at the vanguard of regeneration, not just in leading by outstanding example on project delivery but by promoting a research and development watching brief, remaining alert to new priorities and influences, and seeking out new opportunities and partnerships.

Medway 2037, its supporting strategies, and the Delivery Plan are flexible working documents, ready to respond rapidly to emerging intelligence in the pursuit of growth for all.

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MEDWAY 2037 SET OF STRATEGIES

Alongside the refreshed vision for growth set out in Medway 2037, the Council has worked to develop and refresh its related set of economic development and regeneration Strategies. These Strategies bring to life this vision with detail of how we will seek to deliver on our key priorities and themes. These strategies include linked Delivery Plans.

These Delivery Plans, focused on specific areas, form part of the wider Delivery Plan for Medway 2037.

Collectively, this set of documents comprise a consolidated, fully aligned vision, targeted strategies, and a single, consolidated Delivery Plan.

Medway 2037 Strategies

This diagram shows the alignment and relationship between Medway Council's core regeneration and economic development strategies:

