Agenda Item No:

Report To: Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Cabinet

Date of Meeting: Tuesday 25th November 2025
Thursday 11th December 2025

Report Title: Performance Report, Quarter 2 2025/26

Report Author: Natalie Sloan
Job Title: Performance and Insight Officer

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Heather Hayward
Portfolio Holder for: Performance and Direction

Summary: This report summarises performance against the council's suite of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) set out in the Borough Plan 2024-28, for the Quarter 2 period 2025/26.

This report pulls from across council services the information necessary to reflect the quarterly KPIs. Representing these in the four themes of the Borough Plan, that of Planet, People, Place and the council's Underlying Principles.

In addition to surrounding narrative for specific KPIs where available, this report highlights some of the key actions over the quarter where relevant to the themes of the Borough Plan.

Key Decision: No

Significantly Affected Wards: None

Recommendations: **Overview and Scrutiny**
The Cabinet is recommended to:-

I. **Consider the performance data for Quarter 2 2025/26**

Policy Overview: Performance measures reflect the objectives and priorities of The Borough Plan 2024-28.

This quarterly Performance Report acts as an opportunity to monitor the progress made by the council against the Borough Plan.

Financial Implications: None

Legal Implications:	None
Equalities Impact Assessment:	Not required as the report presents information on past council performance and does not recommend any change to council policy or new action.
Data Protection Impact Assessment:	Not required
Risk Assessment (Risk Appetite Statement):	Not required
Sustainability Implications:	None
Other Material Implications:	None
Exempt from Publication:	**No**
Background Papers:	**The Borough Plan 2024 – 2028**
Contact:	Natalie.sloan@ashford.gov.uk – Tel: (01233) 330208

Agenda Item No.

Report Title: Performance Report, Quarter 2 2025/26

Introduction and Background

1. This is the sixth quarterly performance report produced since Our Plan for the Borough (known as the Borough Plan) 2024 – 2028 was presented to Cabinet in July 2024, and the second quarterly performance report of 2025/2026.

2. A number of measures continue to undergo revision and as such there may be some changes to the measures in future quarterly performance reports. For example, Ashford Port Health measures are still in development, however, in this period, an indication of the percentage of available income received is illustrated as a performance measure.

3. Any further changes will be highlighted in any following reports for transparency purposes.

Current Position

4. The Borough Plan is the council's corporate plan. It describes in strategic terms the council's priorities for the period. It is from this plan, the council's policies and strategies, operational plans as well as teams and officer's objectives flow.

5. The vision of the Borough Plan: To make Ashford a place where people, business and nature can collectively thrive, is supported by three pillars, those of: Planet, People and Place. Further information about Ashford Borough Council's Borough Plan can be found on our website.

6. These quarterly performance reports seek to provide an opportunity to monitor the council's performance as reflected by these themes.

7. Highlights from the respective themes are summarised below with the **full quarterly Key Performance Indicator suite set out in Appendix A.**

8. As part of our broader performance monitoring objectives and following a meeting with the Corporate Management Team, a performance framework has been developed with the focus on continuous improvement.

9. As well as an increased focus on service level or operational measures this framework, focusing on the collection of meaningful, reliable and actionable data, which is often already held within corporate systems, may result in alterations or additions to the current KPI suite.

10. Any impact on the KPI suite will be highlighted and explained in future performance periodic reports.

Planet

Highlights from the Quarter

11. **Cycle Ashford campaign launched to encourage residents onto their bikes**

Cycle Ashford, a new initiative to promote cycling as a key mode of active travel and leisure activity in the borough has been launched by Ashford Borough Council. It aims to increase participation from all sections of the community by making it easier for everyone to utilise the cycling infrastructure that is available.

Central to Cycle Ashford is a new website, www.cycleashford.org.uk that provides information about cycling in Ashford and a bespoke route planner. Cycle Ashford will be providing information on routes, promoting cycling events, signposting to local cycling services, as well as sharing hints and tips from local cycling enthusiasts.

The campaign is being supported by Henry Urand, para triathlon World Champion and Paralympian, and Ashford resident.

12. **Green Flag Award for Victoria Park**

In July, Victoria Park received the Green Flag Award. The Green Flag Award® scheme recognises and rewards well managed parks and green spaces, setting the benchmark standard for the management of recreational outdoor spaces across the United Kingdom and around the world.

The Green Flag Award is managed by Keep Britain Tidy under license from the UK Government Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government.

As set out in our Borough Plan, we want to make Ashford a place where people, business and nature can collectively thrive. We understand the importance of beautiful green spaces to our residents and seek to create places that offer spaces to be active, to relax and to build community, while also making space for nature.

The Green Flag Award assessment included desk research and a site visit in May this year. It assessed presentation, safety and security, maintenance of equipment, buildings and landscaping, litter and cleanliness and general promotion of the area and facilities on offer.

The site is one of 2,250 in the UK to achieve the award, which is the international quality mark for parks and green spaces.

The news that Victoria Park has met the standards required for the accreditation is testament to the hard work and dedication of the team that care for the green space so that visitors and residents alike can enjoy it.

13. **Ashford residents encouraged to recycle their food waste**

Ashford Borough Council has launched a new campaign to encourage residents to recycle their food waste by using the provided food caddies, helping reduce the amount of food waste found in both refuse and recycling bins.

As part of the campaign, households will receive:

- A helpful food waste recycling guide
- A roll of compostable food caddy bin liners
- A sticker placed on both their refuse bin and recycling bins if no food caddy is presented on collection day

Thanks to residents' efforts, food waste recycling in the borough has increased by 5% over the past year. However, nearly half of food waste (48%) is still being placed in refuse bins, and it continues to be one of the leading causes of contamination in recycling bins, so there's more we can do.

Outdoor food caddies are provided for free, including replacements, and food waste is collected weekly. Food waste collected in the food caddies is processed naturally to produce fertiliser for local farms and biogas. This biogas powers the recycling plant and contributes to the national grid, generating enough energy to power over 3,000 homes each year.

Recycling food waste can also help residents save money by encouraging more mindful shopping and reducing unnecessary purchases.

14. **Free septic tank upgrades offered to local residents to help protect Kent's rivers**

Householders within the River Stour Catchment which runs through central Kent bordering Ashford, Maidstone and Canterbury, are being invited to take part in a pioneering environmental scheme.

Old or poorly performing septic tanks will be replaced completely free of charge, as part of a major new initiative to help protect Stodmarsh SSSI (Site(s) of Special Scientific Interest) and support much-needed housing development.

The initiative, delivered by National Rivers Consortium (NRC) in partnership Stour Environmental Credits Ltd, which is a wholly owned subsidiary of Ashford Borough Council and Canterbury City Council, targets properties whose existing systems discharge excess phosphorus and nitrogen into Kent's waterways. These nutrients are a major cause of water quality decline, leading to algal blooms, loss of wildlife habitats and tighter regulations on new housing developments.

Across parts of Kent, the build-up of phosphorus and nitrogen in rivers has reached levels that risk long-term ecological damage. As a result, local councils are required to apply "nutrient neutrality" rules to new housing projects - meaning that any new development must fully offset its nutrient impact before it can be approved. This has left many housing schemes delayed or on hold.

National Rivers Consortium offers a win - win solution by upgrading outdated septic tanks with modern, high-performance sewage treatment plants, a scheme that reduces harmful nutrient run-off at source. The environmental benefit created is then translated into nutrient credits, which developers can purchase to unlock stalled housing projects elsewhere in the district.

The scheme is being delivered with the knowledge and cooperation of the local authority and aligns with Natural England's approved nutrient mitigation solution. NRC is already operating successfully in Norfolk and other nutrient-sensitive regions.

People

Highlights from the Quarter

15. **Screen Ashford 2025-2026 programme launches**

Ashford Borough Council, in partnership with Screen South and supported by UKSPF funding, is proud to announce the continuation of Screen Ashford - a flagship initiative for local filmmakers to develop their skills.

The 2025-2026 programme officially launched on 30th July at The Ashford Cinema and showcased the exciting opportunities available to Kent-based filmmakers and artists for the next year.

The evening included an exclusive screening of three exceptional short films by local filmmakers, a Q&A session with filmmakers to hear about their creative journeys, the chance to network with fellow filmmakers, creatives, and industry professionals, plus the Screen Ashford Short Film Competition has officially opened.

Since its launch in 2024, Screen Ashford has delivered a vibrant programme of film and television initiatives, including masterclasses, short film commissions, networking nights, and training sessions. These activities have reached over 1,500 participants across Ashford, with a focus on young people aged 14–35 and underrepresented groups.

The scheme has also supported the creation of four locally commissioned films and helped build a grassroots screen hub at The Ashford Cinema in Elwick Place; and studios in Bank Street; to host regular creative networking events and courses.

Past feedback from residents has been overwhelmingly positive, and the programme's impact on local talent development and cultural visibility has been widely praised. With continued investment and collaboration, Screen Ashford is now set to inspire the next generation of film and TV talent.

16. **Work completed on four new homes replacing properties destroyed by portable gas heater explosion in Mill View, Ashford**

Four new homes have been built to replace a row of houses that were badly damaged following a portable gas heater explosion at Mill View in Willesborough in 2021.

Working with Folkestone-based main contractor Jenner on the £1.25m design and build contract, Ashford Borough Council has finished construction of two 2-bedroom homes and two 3-bedroom homes on the cleared site where 13, 15, 17 and 19 Mill View previously stood.

Three council-owned properties and one privately owned home were badly damaged in the explosion, which a Kent Fire & Rescue Service investigation later found was caused by a leak from a portable gas heater in one of the council homes. Alternative accommodation was provided for the people affected by the blast.

The new homes in Mill View have been built to a high standard, with a focus on energy efficiency. Measures have also been included that will help 'future-proof' the properties – straight stairs that would allow a stair-lift to be installed if required, and square shaped bathrooms so they could easily be converted into a wet room.

Each house has two parking spaces and heating is via air source heat pumps with underfloor heating. There are also PV panels fitted to the roofs and an EV charger fitted to each property. The high standard of insulation and energy efficiency measures means the four homes are rated EPC band B.

Building work on the four homes started in autumn 2024, and the council confirms that tenants will be moving in very soon.

17. **Ashford Borough Council's lettings agency wins top award**

ABC Lettings has won a Kent Housing Group (KHG) Excellence Award in recognition of its work in helping thousands of people facing homelessness to find a new home in the private rented sector.

The lettings agency run by Ashford Borough Council scooped the top award in the Private Sector Housing category at a packed awards ceremony held at the Eastgate Centre in Northfleet on Thursday 25 September.

ABC Lettings continues to work with private sector landlords to help tackle homelessness across the borough. It works tirelessly to attract new landlords, offering a fully managed service for landlords who want a low-risk, hands off management service. For experienced landlords it also offers a tenant find service.

ABC Lettings manages more than 200 properties across Ashford, Folkestone and Hythe. It offers landlords a no hassle, no hidden cost lettings service – all from an organisation which has a reputation for a careful and considered approach and is not motivated by profit.

18. **Ashford Borough Council Partners in Major Refurbishment of Tenterden Leisure Centre**

Ashford Borough Council is delighted to announce a major refurbishment of Tenterden Leisure Centre, operated by not-for-profit leisure trust Freedom Leisure on behalf of the Council. The project, taking place from October 2025 to February 2026, represents a significant investment in modernising the facility and enhancing the experience for the local community.

The multi-million-pound initiative, jointly funded by the Council and Freedom Leisure, will ensure that Tenterden Leisure Centre continues to serve as a hub for health, wellbeing, fitness, and family activities for residents and visitors alike.

Key improvements will include:

- A brand-new interactive soft-play centre and new water-play features in the popular leisure pool.
- A modernised café with additional seating for visitors.
- Upgraded toilet and changing facilities.
- Refurbished exercise class and indoor cycling studios.

Place

Highlights from the Quarter

19. **The Ashford Festival returns, championing local talent and community spirit**

After a brief hiatus, The Ashford Festival has announced its return, with the festival taking over Civic Park on 5th-6th July.

This beloved grassroots music festival, deeply rooted in its community values, promised a weekend of local talent, vibrant market stalls and a renewed commitment to supporting Ashford.

The Ashford Festival remains dedicated to its original mission: fostering local talent and bolstering local businesses.

Attendees explored a diverse marketplace showcasing the best of Ashford's entrepreneurial spirit, while the main stage will feature a stellar lineup of homegrown musical acts, highlighting the rich artistic talent within the community.

In a move to ensure the festival's long-term sustainability and continued community benefit, the organisers implemented a £1 weekend wristband.

This nominal fee directly supports the festival's new status as a not-for-profit Community Interest Company (CIC), helping to cover essential costs and ensuring the event remains accessible for everyone.

Run entirely by a passionate team of volunteers, The Ashford Festival in the Park stands as the only field-based, community-led music festival within Ashford's event calendar.

Its return marks a significant moment for the town, offering a unique opportunity for residents and visitors alike to come together and celebrate local culture.

The festival is proudly supported by QMT Commercial Insurance and Ashford Borough Council.

20. **Grants up to £15,000 now available for businesses in the rural areas**

Ashford Borough Council has once again successfully secured funding from the UK Government's final round of Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF), as it seeks to further support rural areas in the borough.

Ashford Borough Council has secured £122,000 REPF funding, specifically to support rural businesses in the borough up to March 2026.

From Ashford Borough Council's government approved REPF plan, the money will go towards the following capital grant schemes, devised to help businesses and organisations deliver on REPF objectives and assist with much needed support.

Rural Green Business Grant – to provide grants to support energy efficiency or energy transition projects in commercial premises in rural parts of the borough.

Rural Place and Provenance Grant – to provide grants to support rural food and drink producers, hospitality and tourism attractions or venues, to increase productivity and sustainability for businesses. In addition, to support the creation of start-up spaces and tackle the 'Last Mile' challenge in rural areas, seeking to create viable travel routes to increase visitors to rural destinations.

So far, the grant schemes have supported 46 businesses and are set to lead to approximately 51,000 kg of C02 saved across the borough each year. In addition, they are set to lead to the creation of 50 jobs in rural areas of the borough.

Applications can be submitted until 11:59pm on 31st October 2025. After this, applications will only reopen if any of the funding hasn't been spent.

21. **Applications open for ScaleUp Ashford, which has helped businesses grow turnover by 28%**

Six local businesses in the Ashford borough have the opportunity to be part of the ScaleUp Ashford programme – a part-funded scheme that allows businesses the chance to grow.

Delivered by the Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce and part-funded by Ashford Borough Council, the ScaleUp Ashford programme gives businesses up to 20 hours of one-to-one support and 12 hours of peer networks over a 12-month period.

Previous programme participants have hugely benefitted from the scheme, including creating a total of 80 new jobs, increasing their average turnover by 28% and accessing capital investments of £1.8m.

Selected businesses will receive a dedicated consultant to support them, addressing and overcoming barriers to growth, support with applying for grants and funding, as well as networking and peer support from previous participants.

22. **New and improved facilities at Victoria Park**

The Victoria Park and Watercress Fields Project is a £5m+ project delivered by Ashford Borough Council and the National Lottery Heritage Fund to improve and protect Victoria Park for the local community. The park's new and improved facilities include:

Community Building – A new café with purpose-built outside seating, a room available to hire for events, clubs or classes, modern toilets, including a Changing Places facility, alongside a refurbished nursery.

Flagship new playground - A huge new playground with climbing frame, swing, trampolines, a zip-wire and more.

Sensory Garden - A colourful and fragrant garden in the heart of a woodland meadow setting to create a space perfect for mindfulness.

Seasonal Wetland Area - The creation of an entirely new seasonal wetland area in the heart of the park to allow the Stour to breathe and people to enjoy nature.

River Corridor - Opening up the riverbank and natural woodland to allow users to enjoy the Stour from a new picnic area and viewing platform.

Fountain Piazza - A better space for people at the fountain with new access and seating, improved surfacing and lighting, and new formal planting.

Community Spaces - A new secure compound for the growing volunteer groups to store materials and get trained, and a freshly surfaced multi-use games area.

Pump Track - A new hard-surface track for BMXers, skaters, and all other mini-wheels users. Designed and built by the team behind the London 2012 Olympic BMX track and with input from Ska8side users.

Underlying Principles

Highlights from the Quarter

23. **Council reorganisation takes the next step**

Kent and Medway's councils have asked their advisors KPMG to look in more detail at two options for unitary councils and the areas they should cover, it was announced Friday 5th September.

The moves comes after government ministers said they want councils in Kent and Medway to deliver their services in a different way.

In the biggest shake up of local government in 50 years, known as Local Government Reorganisation or LGR for short, they want to abolish existing councils and create a number of new unitary councils.

Unitary councils deliver all council services in the area they serve from education, social services and roads to emptying bins and providing housing services.

The options going forward are:

- Three unitary councils consisting of Dartford, Gravesham, Medway and Swale in the north; Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Malling, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells in the west and Ashford, Canterbury, Thanet, Dover and Folkestone and Hythe in the east.

- Four unitary councils consisting of Dartford, Gravesham and Medway in the north; Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Malling, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells in the west; Swale, Ashford, Folkestone and Hythe in the middle of Kent and Canterbury, Thanet and Dover in the east.

Individual councils can also choose to commission and submit business plans for other options.

Once KPMG and council staff have worked together to draw up business cases for each of the options, each council will go through its own decision-making process to decide which option it supports.

Business plans need to be submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government by 28th November. The final decision rests with ministers.

24. **Freedom Leisure celebrates shortlisting for eight prestigious UK Active Awards**

Freedom Leisure has been named a finalist in eight awards across six categories at the highly respected UK Active Awards 2025, including nominations for both the Stour Centre and Tenterden Leisure Centre.

This remarkable achievement highlights Freedom Leisure's unwavering commitment to innovation, inclusion and community impact, and reflects the strength of its people, partnerships and purpose.

The UK Active Awards recognise and celebrate organisations transforming lives through physical activity and wellbeing.

Being shortlisted across so many categories is a powerful endorsement of Freedom Leisure's mission to inspire healthier, happier communities through accessible leisure opportunities.

25. **Putting Kent Back on the International Rail Map**
Kent is not just a place to speed through; the county is more than ready to welcome back European visitors – but, at the moment, it can't.

Eurostar currently has no plans to stop in Kent, and cannot be relied on to ever bring services back. Kent County Council (KCC) is uniting with council partners, MPs, local businesses, residents and stakeholders to demand the return of international rail services to Ashford and Ebbsfleet.

On 26th September 2025 they signed a memorandum of understanding, formalising their shared commitment to bringing back international rail services to Kent. This united front demonstrates their collective determination to secure Kent's rightful place back on the international rail map.

Conclusion

26. The suite of Key Performance Indicators included at Appendix A in this report have been pulled from across services to give a view of the council's current performance reflected in the themes of the Borough Plan.

27. The Performance Indicators will be presented again in the Q3 Annual performance report where a further update will be provided on current performance and any notable changes.

Contact and Email

28. Natalie Sloan – Natalie.sloan@ashford.gov.uk

Appendix A
Performance Report – Quarter 2 2025 – 2026
Borough Plan Themes and Key Performance Measures

Planet
Key Performance Measures - Reported Quarterly

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2024/25			Q1 2025/2026			Q2 2025/2026			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PLANET.010 Number of organisations committed to active travel plans cycling/ walking	Number of organisations committed to travel plans cycling/ walking	To access the notes from previous quarters for this measure, please refer to the respective performance reports available on our website. **Q2 2025/26 update** Forecasted number of organisations committed to active travel plans cycling/walking: **2** (Cycle Circle Charity Group, The Hub) KCC are currently working on securing the cycle counter units and ABC are awaiting confirmation on when these will be available to be implemented on the two approved routes. In the meantime, with the launch of the new ABC Cycle Ashford website and interactive route planners, we will be measuring the amount of downloaded trips to assess the utilisation of these tools by local cyclists. More information on the Cycle Ashford campaign can be found on the website: Cycle Ashford - Interactive Route Planner - Suggested Cycle Routes									
KPI.PLANET.011 Recycling Rate	% of borough waste recycled or composted	48% Total for the year	50%		50.2% (June)	50%		48% (August)	50%		Contract change Q1 2024/25: Defra's nationwide recycling league tables - Local authority collected waste: annual results tables (Historical) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) Waste Services Contract: An update on the performance and communication of the new waste contract with Suez report was presented to O&S in November 2024. Report available - Report Title:

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2024/25			Q1 2025/2026			Q2 2025/2026			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PLANET.012 Refuse Collection Success Rate	% of successful refuse collections per 100,000 refuse collections made.	99.8%	99.96%		99.94%	99.96%		99.94%	99.96%		Waste data from UK local authorities is reported to WasteDataFlow with statistics available at the following links. WasteDataFlow Waste and recycling statistics
KPI.PLANET.013 Digital uptake - % of total council /% Increase transactions completed electronically	Digital uptake - % of total council /% Increase transactions completed electronically	87.63%	80%		89.76%	80%		87.48%	80%		

Month	Digital Transactions	Calls	Digital Uptake %
July-25	47600	7149	86.94%
Aug-25	44699	6122	87.95%
Sep-25	44264	6276	87.58%

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2024/25			Q1 2025/2026			Q2 2025/2026			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PLANET.014 EVCP usage - number of sessions		**New Measure**			**Q1 Total – 865** June 268 May 294 April 301			**Q2 Total – 965** September 324 August 329 July 312			

People
Key Performance measures - Reported Quarterly

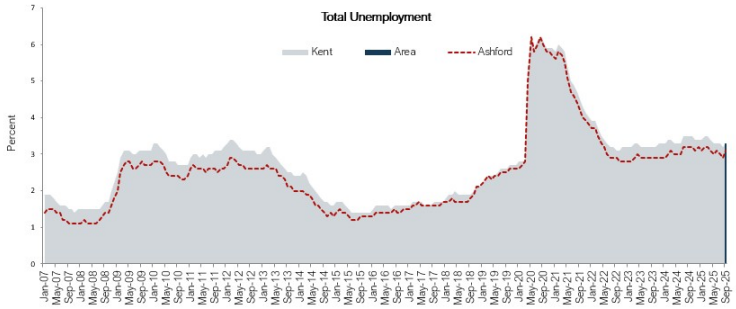
Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2024/25			Q1 2025/2026			Q2 2025/2026			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PEOPLE.006 Council Affordable Housing - New Build	No. of additional new build affordable homes delivered by council housing	0 24 (2024/2025)			0			16			
KPI.PEOPLE.007 Council Affordable Housing - On-Street Purchases	No. of additional on-street purchase affordable homes delivered by council housing	8 52 (2024/25)			6			8			
KPI.PEOPLE.008 Homelessness - New Triage Cases	No. of new triage cases	470 January (164) February (160) March (146)			393 April (124) May (133) June (136)			516 July (184) August (166) September (166)			

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2024/25			Q1 2025/2026			Q2 2025/2026			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PEOPLE.009 Homelessness Preventions (still in accommodation)	No. of households where homelessness was prevented	90 January (32) February (24) March (34)			88 April (45) May (23) June (20)			62 July (27) August (14) September (21)			Note below:
Demand for the service remains consistently high. All clients are initially triaged to establish the facts and whether there is reason to believe someone is homeless or threatened with homelessness. We are currently recruiting to a vacant post, to bring us to four FTE equivalent officers. We have a full complement of six housing options officers and two senior housing options officers. Once the team is fully established and trained, this will help strengthen our ability to engage with households as soon as they present to the service, improving our chances of preventing homelessness and providing timely assistance to those in need.											
KPI.PEOPLE.010 Number of families in temporary accommodation six week on		2			1			0			Data represents the number of families who have been in B&B accommodation for over 6 weeks at the end of each respective quarterly period The team have managed to keep the number of families in B&B over 6 weeks under the MHCLG target of 6. In order to achieve this, requires close monitoring and manging to create a chain lettings approach.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2024/25			Q1 2025/2026			Q2 2025/2026			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PEOPLE.011 Housing arrears	Housing arrears as a percentage of rent collectable	1.62%			1.66%			1.82%			Arrears at the end of Q2 – week 26, Sunday 5th September 2025 - **£586,300.62** The 2025/26 estimated rent debit is **£32,179,910.88** Based upon the Q1 £8,031,690.75 debit multiplied by 4 The current true arrears for Q2 is calculated at **1.82%.**
KPI.PEOPLE.012 Housing voids – average void time (excluding major voids)	Average void time	55	21	🛑	44	21	🛑	63.62	21	🛑	Over the past few years there have been issues with a lack of dedicated staff, poor contract management and lengthy delays in asbestos (ACM) testing, certificate (Landlord Gas Safety Record/Electrical Installation Condition Report) processing, pest infestations, and waste clearance. To address these, the team is accelerating certificate completion, improving contractor communication, revising pest treatment schedules, updating key management, and introducing weekly progress reviews. Additional steps include optimising major works, using digital inspection templates, better waste management, and enhancing contract monitoring.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2024/25			Q1 2025/2026			Q2 2025/2026			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PEOPLE.013 Number of adaptations completed against number waiting (HRA)		50 / 99			57/97			42 / 82			Number of adaptations completed against number waiting (HRA): 42 / 82 The number completed 1st July 2025 – 30th September 2025 (42) against the number received 1st July 2025 – 30th September 2025 (82, which includes the 42 completed). This covers both minor and major adaptations.
KPI.PEOPLE.014 Number of adaptations completed against number waiting (DFG)		No current waiting list			18			12			
KPI.PEOPLE.015 Disabled Facilities Grants Completed	No. of disabled facilities grants administered by the council	10			18			11			

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2024/25			Q1 2025/2026			Q2 2025/2026			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PEOPLE.016 Disabled Facilities Grant Spend	Actual spend per month for disabled facility grants	£166,599.04			£245,408.45			£194,106.07			
KPI.PEOPLE.017 Unemployment	Unemployment figures taken monthly from Kent County Councils Economy and employment data.	3.2%	3%		3.1%	3%		3.1%	3%		September 2025 data set More information available within Economy and Employment Data - Kent County Council (kent.gov.uk)



September 2025

Area	Number	Rate	Number change since last month	Percentage change since last month	Number change since last year	Percentage change since last year
Kent	32,530	3.3%	+975	+3.1%	-1,580	-4.6%
Ashford	2,575	3.1%	+115	+4.7%	-90	-3.4%

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2024/25			Q1 2025/2026			Q2 2025/2026			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PEOPLE.018 Unemployment 18-24yr olds	Unemployment 18-24yr olds taken monthly from the Kent County Council economy and employment data	5.8%	4.5%		5.8%	4.5%		6.1%	4.5%		September 2025 data set More information available within Economy and Employment Data - Kent County Council (kent.gov.uk)



18-24 unemployment

Area	Number	Rate	Number change since last month	Percentage change since last month	Number change since last year	Percentage change since last year
Kent	6,650	6.0%	+170	+2.6%	+565	+9.3%
Ashford	540	6.1%	+30	+5.9%	+50	+10.2%

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2024/25			Q1 2025/2026			Q2 2025/2026			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PEOPLE.019 Support to 'vulnerable' groups through leisure centre activity	Support to 'vulnerable' groups through leisure centre activity	To access the notes from previous quarters for this measure, please refer to the respective performance reports available on our website. **Latest Information from August 2025** **Healthy Communities** Free NHS health checks for over 40s were delivered to help identify early risks of conditions such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes and kidney disease, supporting residents to take proactive steps for their wellbeing. Parkinson's Boxing, a new programme launched in September 2025 to support people living with Parkinson's through tailored boxing sessions with an aim to improve mobility, balance and confidence. A GP referral scheme launched, offering structured, supervised activity opportunities for patients referred by their GP and provides a safe pathway into exercise for those with long term health conditions. The Centres provided a wide range of engaging activities and healthy meals over the summer holidays, ensuring children and families were supported and active. Step into the ring is launching at the Julie Rose Stadium in September. This is a new boxing and self-defence programme aimed to engage young people and support positive physical and mental wellbeing. The Rising Sun Domestic Violence Charity was invited to take part in Clip to Climb over the summer, using activity and sport to build confidence. The Summer Passport Challenge was a great success, encouraging families to stay active during the summer holidays with participants completing activities across our centres to collect stamps and rewards.									

Place
Key Performance Measures - Reported Quarterly

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2024/25			Q1 2025/2026			Q2 2025/2026			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PLACE.003 Food Hygiene Rating	% of businesses in the borough with a food hygiene rating above 3	98.6%	98.5%	✓	98.4%	98.5%	✓	98.4%	98.5%	✓	

Food Hygiene Rating System

Distribution of FHRS ratings over time for Ashford at 21/10/25 01:38

Food Standards Agency

Number of establishments in each rating

FHRS Rating	Feb - 25	Mar - 25	Apr - 25	May - 25	Jun - 25	Jul - 25	Aug - 25	Sep - 25	Oct - 25
5 - Very good	994	982	979	983	986	990	984	999	1012
4 - Good	86	93	95	95	95	94	95	96	91
3 - Generally satisfactory	31	33	33	32	31	29	30	30	30
2 - Improvement required	10	10	11	12	13	14	13	14	12
1 - Major improvement required	7	4	4	3	3	3	6	4	4
0 - Urgent improvement required	3	2	2	2	2	1	0	0	0
Total rated establishments	1131	1124	1124	1127	1130	1131	1128	1143	1149
Establishments with rating of 3 or better	1111	1108	1107	1110	1112	1113	1109	1125	1133
Awaiting inspection	45	53	61	77	91	105	106	93	84
Exempt	44	44	44	44	44	43	43	43	40
Sensitive	57	57	56	55	55	54	54	54	52
Excluded	77	70	69	68	69	69	67	69	68
Total establishments	1354	1348	1354	1371	1389	1402	1398	1402	1393

During the presentation of the Q3 2024/25 Performance report a Member raised that they felt that a number of premises, where they had been downgraded, continued to show and or advertise their previous food hygiene rating.

Trading Standards (KCC) would be responsible for enforcing the legislation that covers display of an incorrect rating. The scheme as it operates does not allow ABC to remove a hygiene rating sticker, as the business has 3 weeks from being notified of the score to lodge an appeal. There is also no requirement for a rating to be displayed at the premises. When we write to a business following an inspection, we do inform them of their responsibility to remove the old sticker.

This is something we can check when a revisit is completed, however a revisit would normally be undertaken within the appeal / notification period, so still time for an appeal to be lodged. We would inform a business if the wrong rating is being displayed during a visit, and where practical remove a rating if it is outside of any appeal period.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2024/25			Q1 2025/2026			Q2 2025/2026			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PLACE.004 Business survival - current vacancy rates	Current Vacancy rates	11.1%			11.26%			11.49%			5,432 premises in the borough 624 with either an exemption or empty relief indicating vacancy.

Date	No of props	Exemptions	Empty 'Reliefs'
01-Jul-23	5437	306	197
01-Oct-23	5442	298	217
01-Jan-24	5451	319	222
01-Apr-24	5423	314	236
01-Jul-24	5422	313	252
01-Oct-24	5411	313	249
01-Jan-25	5412	303	247
01-Apr-25	5406	338	263
01-Jul-25	5407	347	267
01-Oct-25	5432	348	276

Business survival, measure based upon our business rates records comparing the total number of rated premises against those which have an empty property exemption or relief applied to their accounts.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2024/25			Q1 2025/2026			Q2 2025/2026			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PLACE.005 Ashford town centre vacancy rate	Ashford town centre vacancy rate	18.3% (April 25)			18.3% (April 25 – latest survey)			20% (July 25)			The area surveyed is the High Street, Middle Row, New Rents, North Street, Bank Street, Tufton Street, County Square, Park Mall and Elwick Place. This is surveyed manually quarterly

All areas - including County Square, Park Mall and Elwick Place
Vacant Units - 69
Total Units Surveyed - 344
Vacancy Rate - 20%

Town Centre Streets - excluding County Square, Park Mall and Elwick Place
Vacant Units - 35
Total Units Surveyed - 237
Vacancy Rate – 14.7%

Surveys are a snapshot on the day, meaning that upcoming openings and closures are not factored in. With the upcoming relocation of Park Mall tenants, it is anticipated that the vacancy rate will reduce. Additionally, there are a number of properties, where there are live Planning issues, offers being negotiated and absent landlords, which are not able to be taken up at present.

KPI.PLACE.008 Number of new 106 files opened	Number of new s106 files opened	Number of new s106 files opened – 2			Number of new s106 files opened – 8			Number of new s106 files opened – 6			

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2024/25			Q1 2025/2026			Q2 2025/2026			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PLACE.008b Number of draft 106s sent out	Number of draft 106s sent out	Number of Draft s106 agreements sent out – 6			Number of Draft s106 agreements sent out – 9			Number of Draft s106 agreements sent out – 9			
KPI.PLACE.008c Number of 106s completed	Number of 106s completed	Number of s106 cases completed - 0			Number of s106 cases completed - 6			Number of s106 cases completed - 7			
KPI.PLACE.009 Planning decision quality – Major	Measured by the proportion of decisions on applications that are subsequently overturned at appeal	5.8%	10%	✅	6.3%	10%	✅	6.8%	10%	✅	Latest available data reflecting 24 months to end of September 24.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2024/25			Q1 2025/2026			Q2 2025/2026			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PLACE.009b Planning decision quality – Non Major	Measured by the proportion of decisions on applications that are subsequently overturned at appeal	0.2%	10%	✅	0.4%	10%	✅	0.5%	10%	✅	Latest available data reflecting 24 months to end of September 24.
Reported with lag time (normally 9 months) allowing for appeals to process. The quality of decisions made by local planning authorities for applications for major and non-major development, measured by the proportion of decisions on applications that are subsequently overturned at appeal (including those arising from a 'deemed refusal' where an application has not been determined within the statutory period). Planning Decision Quality measures replace previous Planning Application Approvals measure. Planning application approval information is available within the statistical return nationally reported available at Live tables on planning application statistics data tables P152 & P154											
KPI.PLACE.010 Speed of Major Planning Application Decisions	% of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks (or within such extended period as agreed in writing between the applicant and the local authority)	100%	65%	✅	100%	65%	✅	90%	65%	✅	

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2024/25			Q1 2025/2026			Q2 2025/2026			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PLACE.011 % of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks amended to reflect 12 rolling month	% of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks amended to reflect 12 rolling month	83% (24 rolling month)	75%	✅	91% (24 rolling month) 100% (12 rolling month)	75%	✅	97%	75%	✅	Moving forward this KPI will be reported on a 12 month rolling period, reduced from a 24 month rolling period. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-planning-performance-criteria-for-designation/improving-planning-performance-criteria-for-designation-updated-2022
The latest data tables on local government Planning including Ashford Borough Council, covering the speed and quality of planning decisions are available at the following link: Live tables on planning application statistics Performance in Q2 for this indicator has further improved the Council's position against the rolling Government target where it should be noted that the Government minimum target is 60%. Going forwards, the national rolling target will be measured against a 12 month period reduced from a 24 month period with this being reflected in future reporting periods.											
KPI.PLACE.012 Speed of Non-Major Planning Application Decisions	% of minor and other planning applications determined within 8 weeks (or within such extended period as has been agreed in writing between the applicant and the council).	95%	75%	✅	99%	75%	✅	95%	75%	✅	
KPI.PLACE.0	% of non majors determined	88% (24 rolling	80%	✅	91% (24 rolling	80%	✅	96%	80%	✅	Moving forward this KPI will be reported on a 12 month rolling

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2024/25			Q1 2025/2026			Q2 2025/2026			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
13 % of non majors determined within 8 weeks amended to reflect 12 rolling month	within 8 weeks amended to reflect 12 rolling month	month)			month) 95% (12 rolling month)						period, reduced from a 24 month rolling period: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-planning-performance-criteria-for-designation/improving-planning-performance-criteria-for-designation-updated-2022 Performance in Q2 for determining non-major schemes remains significantly above target and has improved when measured against the rolling national performance indicator.
KPI.PLACE.014 Number of live planning casework reducing backlog	Number includes all conditions applications, pre-app cases, as well as applications for outline, full or reserved matters consent. Reducing backlog with a capacity set at 550 open cases	621 (437)	550	 	589 (400)	550	 	594 (406)	550	 	It remains the position that, once the number of cases restricted from a decision being made due to nutrient neutrality (Stodmarsh) is accounted for, this indicator still lies well below the 550 case target figure. It is expected that the availability of off-site nutrient credits provided by Stour Environmental Credits and manage nutrient mitigation credits and other private mitigation providers will help to unlock some of these cases in the near future and should allow the gross caseload figure to fall back below the target figure.

<table>
<tr><th rowspan="2">Code & Short Name</th><th rowspan="2">Description</th><th colspan="3">Q4 2024/25</th><th colspan="3">Q1 2025/2026</th><th colspan="3">Q2 2025/2026</th><th rowspan="2">Latest Note</th></tr>
<tr><th>Value</th><th>Target</th><th>Status</th><th>Value</th><th>Target</th><th>Status</th><th>Value</th><th>Target</th><th>Status</th></tr>
<tr><td>KPI.PLACE.025

Revenue generated through the Border Control Post

(Port Health)</td><td>Potential income against actual collected %</td><td colspan="3">Potential income for the year 2024-25, £21,232,299, actual income achieved £9,399,527, 44% of income recovered

Despite the reset with EU, the clear message is that we are being asked to carry on as normal as nothing has yet been changed and we need to keep implementing the BTOM and carrying out SPS controls until any legislative changes are developed and implemented.

Q4 – income
Jan 955,617
Feb 965,695
Mar 1,289,153</td><td colspan="3">Potential income for Q1 2025 £6,124,679, actual income achieved £4,287,285, 70% of income recovered.

<table><tr><th>Q1 2025/ 2026</th><th>Achieved Income</th><th>Est Availabl e Income</th></tr><tr><td>April</td><td>1,467,858</td><td>2,096,94 0</td></tr><tr><td>May</td><td>1,428,020</td><td>2,040,02 9</td></tr><tr><td>June</td><td>1,391,397</td><td>1,987,71 0</td></tr></table></td><td colspan="3">Potential income for Q2 £5,253,007, actual income received £3,632,607, 69% of income recovered.

<table><tr><th>Q2 2025</th><th>Achieve d Income</th><th>Est Availabl e Income</th></tr><tr><td>July</td><td>1,304,75 1</td><td>1,693,32 1</td></tr><tr><td>August</td><td>1,054,06 4</td><td>1,689,57 9</td></tr><tr><td>Septemb er</td><td>1,273,79 2</td><td>1,870,10 7</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>KPI.PLACE.016

Parking usage</td><td>Parking usage Ashford and Tenterden</td><td colspan="3">265,919</td><td colspan="3">275,090</td><td colspan="3">272,446</td><td>Made up of 175,641 from Ashford town centre car parks & 96,805 from Tenterden car parks</td></tr>
</table>

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2024/25			Q1 2025/2026			Q2 2025/2026			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PLACE.026 Percentage of parking transactions that are cashless (Ashford)	Percentage of parking transactions that are cashless (Ashford)	**New Measure**			82.9%	85%		89.24%	85%		The introduction of the two new measures on cashless parking transactions is part of our broader aim to better understand and support the shift towards digital payment methods across our parking services. These measures will help us monitor uptake, identify trends, and assess accessibility and user experience for residents and visitors. Ultimately, we're looking to use this data to inform future improvements, ensure inclusivity, and support the Council's wider digital transformation goals.
KPI.PLACE.027 Percentage of parking transactions that are cashless (Tenterden)	Percentage of parking transactions that are cashless (Tenterden)	**New Measure**			76.8%	80%		78.65%	80%		
KPI.PLACE.028 Commercial Property - Invoiced vs Budget	Commercial Property - Invoiced vs Budget	**New Measure**			95.59%	100%		95.41%	100%		The Q2 update excludes figures for Park Mall

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2024/25			Q1 2025/2026			Q2 2025/2026			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.PLACE.029 Commercial Property - Collected Against Invoiced	Commercial Property - Income Collected Against Invoiced	**New Measure**			95.25%	100%		97.68%	100%		The Q2 update excludes figures for Park Mall

Underlying Principles

Key Performance indicators - Reported Quarterly
Quarterly Measures

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2024/25			Q1 2025/2026			Q2 2025/2026			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.UP.004 Number of Stage 1 complaints		216			219			225			The council has reduced its complaint handling time from 15 to ten days following guidance released by the Ombudsman. Whilst the guidance won't be officially adopted until early 2026, adoption by the council now will ensure compliance and expediate the resolution of complaints.
KPI.UP.005 % Stage 1 complaints resolved in 10 days		69%			70%			71%			
KPI.UP.006 Number of Stage 2 complaints		41			61			47			

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2024/25			Q1 2025/2026			Q2 2025/2026			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.UP.007 % Stage 2 complaints resolved in 20 days		68%			49%			63%			
KPI.UP.008 Benefit Change of Circumstance Processing	Average time taken to process a benefit change of circumstance in no. days	1.76	10		2.27	10		2.12	10		
KPI.UP.009 Benefit New Claim Processing Time	Average time taken to process a new benefit payment claim in no. days	26.94	28		22.82	28		23.52	28		
KPI.UP.010 FOI Response Rate	% of freedom of information requests responded to within 20 working days	99.5%	95%		100%	95%		99%	95%		Q2 - 255 information requests received with 2 answered outside the 20-working day window. 99% target date response rate for the period.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2024/25			Q1 2025/2026			Q2 2025/2026			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.UP.011 Business Rates Collection	% of national non-domestic rates collected by the council - cumulative figure per month	97.43%	99%	⚠	28.8%	24.75%	✓	57.97%	49.5%	✓	Government finance including Ashford Borough Council, covering borrowing and investment, capital payments and receipts, local Council Tax support, quarterly revenue outturn and receipts of Council Taxes and national non-domestic rates are available here Compares to 57.93% at same stage in 2024/25
KPI.UP.012 Council Tax Collection Rate	Percentage of council tax collected - cumulative figure per month	97%	98.25%	⚠	29.59%	24.57%	✓	57.02%	49.14%	✓	Compares to 57.29% at same stage in 2024/25
KPI.UP.013 Compliance - Gas Safety Certificates	% of ABC properties with up-to-date gas safety certificates	100%	100%	✓	99.95%	100%	✓	100%	100%	✓	

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2024/25			Q1 2025/2026			Q2 2025/2026			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.UP.014 Number of days sickness per full time equivalent		**9.14 days** (annualised) per FTE Based on the total FTE, as at 31st March 2025			Number of days sickness per FTE as at 30.09.25 (based on data for the 12 months up to 30.09.25) = **8.77** (actual rather than annualised data)						Update on sickness absence management activities – Introduced a proactive campaign to reduce respiratory related sickness absence in October which includes onsite flu vaccinations, communication on reducing the spread of germs, increased cleaning of regular touch points and healthy eating for immunity campaign. The campaign runs from Oct to December. The following KPI is proposed; 9 days sickness absence per FTE per annum. In September 2025 the CIPD produced their Health and Wellbeing at Work report with SimplyHealth. They reported that in 2025, across all sectors, average sickness absence rose to 9.4 days per FTE per year (up from 7.8 in 2023). The CIPD reported average sickness absence in the public sector to be 13.3 days per FTE per year. It is reasonable to benchmark our performance against the data reported by the professional body in the field of Human Resources.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2024/25			Q1 2025/2026			Q2 2025/2026			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.UP.015 Average Speed of Customer Service Calls Answered	Average wait time for customer service calls - to be benchmarked with results across Kent	0h 01m 20s	0h 01m 38s	✅	0h 01m 54s	0h 01m 38s	🛑	0h 01m 21s	0h 01m 38s	✅	The longer average speed of customer service calls in Q1 were due to the Council tax billing period (March- through to about 2nd week in April) which is always challenging each year with an increase in call volume and complexity of calls. We do have a CSA leave embargo during the billing period where only one CSA can be on annual leave at any one time to ensure as many advisors are available to take calls. This year we have also had the challenge of quite a high movement of staff to other departments (promotions) around the end of 2025/ beginning of 2026, this has resulted in a number of new CSA's join the team at the beginning of the year, who need training and are naturally slower on calls to start with until they build their confidence.
KPI.UP.016 Number of ongoing litigation/ court proceedings	Number of ongoing litigation/court proceedings	Number of ongoing matters = **180** Number of ongoing matters/number of cases where costs have been awarded against ABC or settled with costs = **3**			Number of ongoing matters = **208** Number of cases where costs have been awarded against ABC or settled with costs = **5**			Number of ongoing matters = **174** Number of cases where costs have been awarded against ABC or settled with costs = **5**			

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2024/25			Q1 2025/2026			Q2 2025/2026			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI.UP.018 Social media engagement	Social media engagement	Q4 (Jan – Mar) **Impressions:** Facebook: 534,147 X (Twitter): 4,303 Nextdoor: 91,648 Instagram: 12,438 **Followers:** Facebook: 12,344 X (Twitter): 8,754 Nextdoor: 32,483 Instagram: 3,079			Q1 (Apr – Jun) **Impressions** Facebook: 637,338 X (Twitter): 3,022 Nextdoor: 77,529 Instagram: 9,230 **Followers** Facebook: 12,616 X (Twitter): 8,670 Nextdoor: 32,837 Instagram: 3,115			Q2 (Jul – Sep) **Impressions** Facebook: 938, 756 X (Twitter): 1,135 Nextdoor: 40,098 Instagram: 30,679 **Followers** Facebook: 13,148 X (Twitter): 8,656 Nextdoor: 33,351 Instagram: 3,177			The number of impressions for X (Twitter) is lower than previous quarters as the strategy for this platform is currently under review.
Ashford Borough Council's Communications team is responsible for managing the council's social media accounts. Our most active platforms that residents can engage with the council on, include Facebook, X (Twitter), Nextdoor and Instagram. The data will allow the Council to better understand the needs of our residents and ensure that our social media strategy is shaped by the results of the data. With circa 58,000 combined total followers across all ABC social platforms, the Communications Team are also actively exploring methods to further grow each platform through various digital tools so that they can effectively reach more residents across the borough, including those in rural areas.											
KPI.UP.019 Garages Vacancy Rate	% of lettable garages	**New Measure**			40%			40%			
KPI.UP.020 Allotment vacancy rate	% of lettable allotments	**New Measure**			7%			1%			