

FIVE YEAR VISION & STRATEGY FOR THE SOUTH OF ASHFORD GARDEN COMMUNITY 2021 - 2025

PICKING UP PACE

Since the start of the 21st century, there has been a resurgence of garden city principles in urban design and planning across the country. This has been a reaction to decades of austerity in planning, semi-urban sprawl, poor design standards, housing inequality and environmental erosion.

Architects and Planners began modernising the garden city model with citizen participation, fair trade, economic growth, energy efficiency and carbon reduction, to name just a few subjects at the forefront of urban development.

Recognising Ashford's central economic and infrastructural role within Kent, an increasing demand for housing had been evidenced in and around the town. One of the largest sites allocated to meet this housing demand was Chilmington Green.

From the word go this new community has been shaped using 21st century garden city principles. Early on it was clear that Chilmington Green would be unique, in particular because of its approach to governance and community-led stewardship as seen with the formation of the non-profit Chilmington Management Organisation.

With two further development sites proposed next to Chilmington Green (the developments of Court Lodge and Kingsnorth Green), it was a natural response to ensure these remained joined-up and in step with similar design principles under a single umbrella.

This is how *The South of Ashford Garden Community (SAGC)* became defined, and in 2019 a series of public engagements set the groundwork for this Vision & Strategy.

SETTING A VISION

The SAGC will be the thread which fastens together a series of distinct neighbourhoods emerging amongst the existing communities to the South of Ashford over the next thirty years and beyond.

By providing good governance and a commitment to long-term stewardship, the SAGC will guide decision making on sustainable transport networks, green corridors, high quality landscaping and community facilities for the benefit of both new and existing residents. Priority will be given to pedestrian friendly spaces, inclusive venues and carbon neutral living using sustainable technologies where possible, whilst promoting healthy lifestyles and community leadership.

The SAGC is committed to being;

A SUSTAINABLE PLACE FOR RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

A DESTINATION FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

SHAPED BY LOCAL HERITAGE AND CULTURE

WELL CONNECTED FOR ALL WALKS

GOVERNED BY LOCAL PEOPLE WITH A VIBRANT ECONOMY

Please see publication for complete descriptions.

SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FIVE YEAR ACTION PLAN

- Implement a safer streets campaign across the SAGC sites
- Produce a Sustainable Transport Strategy for the SAGC which links into the town centre
- Integrate biodiversity net gain within Discovery Park planning
- Align SAGC objectives on sustainability with the 'Ashford to Zero Plan'
- Secure early preventative health services within the SAGC
- Setup SAGC governance arrangements and stewardship bodies at Court Lodge and Kingsnorth Green
- Evolve the Community Stakeholder Group to expand its membership and to lead on early community projects

WHERE TO NEXT?

Explore further opportunities to deliver ecological enhancement through activities (such as tree planting) where these can benefit residents.

Further outreach to residents of areas less engaged with the SAGC, broadening interest through more targeted programmes and opportunities (eg. working with young people).

Building on the emerging community development programme at Chilmington Green, resident working groups should be established which can take ownership of local projects.





SOUTH OF ASHFORD
GARDEN
COMMUNITY

