

**Kent County Council**

**Quarterly Performance Report**

**Quarter 4**

**2023/24**

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## Key to KPI Ratings used

This report includes 38 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), where progress is assessed against Targets which are set at the start of the financial year. Progress against Target is assessed by RAG (Red/Amber/Green) ratings. Progress is also assessed in terms of Direction of Travel (DoT) using arrows. Direction of Travel is based on regression analysis across the whole timeframe shown in the graphs.

<b>GREEN</b>	Target has been achieved or exceeded
<b>AMBER</b>	Floor Standard* achieved but Target has not been met
<b>RED</b>	Floor Standard* has not been achieved
↑	Performance is improving (positive trend)
↓	Performance is worsening (negative trend)
⇒	Performance has remained stable or shows no clear trend

\*Floor Standards are the minimum performance expected and if not achieved must result in management action.

## Key to Activity Indicator Graphs

Alongside the Key Performance Indicators, this report includes a number of Activity Indicators which present demand levels for services or other contextual information.

Graphs for activity indicators are shown either with national benchmarks or in many cases with Upper and Lower Thresholds which represent the range activity is expected to fall within. Thresholds are based on past trends and other benchmark information.

If activity falls outside of the Thresholds, this is an indication that demand has risen above or below expectations and this may have consequences for the council in terms of additional or reduced costs.

Activity is closely monitored as part of the overall management information to ensure the council reacts appropriately to changing levels of demand.

## Executive Summary

17 of the 38 indicators are rated as Green, on or ahead of target (two more than the same Quarter last year). 11 indicators reached or exceeded the floor standard and are rated Amber (one more than the same Quarter last year) with ten indicators not achieving the floor standard and so RAG rated Red (two fewer than the same Quarter last year). Nine indicators were showing an improving trend (seven more than the same Quarter last year), with nine showing a worsening trend (two fewer than the same Quarter last year).

The performance indicators giving greatest concern remain closely aligned with the services where the financial strains and demand are most acute (particularly Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, children in care placements and Adult Social Care). This affirms that the right indicators are being used to assess performance, with KPI results reflecting the areas of greatest challenge. Due to this being a reflective report on the last Quarter, performance may not always correspond to what people are experiencing at the current time, particularly when demand fluctuates on a seasonal basis, such as for Highways indicators.

	G	A	R	↑	⇒	↓
Customer Services	2		1		3	
Governance and Law			2		1	1
Growth, Economic Development & Communities	1	1			2	
Environment and Transport	3	2	1	1	5	
Children, Young People and Education	7	3	4	3	5	6
Adult Social Care	1	3	2	3	2	1
Public Health	3	2		2	2	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>9</b>

**Customer Services** – Satisfaction with Contact Point advisors maintained above target performance. The percentage of phone calls answered improved for the second Quarter running, moving further above target. The percentage of complaints responded to within timescale declined, remaining below floor standard and so still RAG rated Red.

<b>Customer Services KPIs</b>	<b>RAG rating</b>		<b>DoT</b>
	<b>Latest</b>	<b>Previous</b>	
% of callers to Contact Point who rated the advisor who dealt with their call as good	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	⇒
% of phone calls to Contact Point which were answered	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	⇒
% of complaints responded to within timescale	<b>RED</b>	<b>RED</b>	⇒

**Governance and Law** - Freedom of Information (FOI) / Environmental Information Regulation (EIR) requests responded to in timescale, and Data Protection Act Subject Access requests completed within timescale, remain below floor standards, with the latter KPI continuing on a declining trend.

<b><u>Governance and Law KPIs</u></b>	<b>RAG rating</b>		<b>DoT</b>
	<b>Latest</b>	<b>Previous</b>	
% of Freedom of Information Act (Fol) requests completed within 20 working days	<b>RED</b>	<b>RED</b>	⇒
% of Data Protection Act (DPA) Subject Access requests completed within statutory timescales	<b>RED</b>	<b>RED</b>	⇩

**Growth, Economic Development & Communities** – The number of properties brought back into active use through the No Use Empty remains above target. The amount of s106 Developer Contributions secured as a percentage of amount sought improved but was just below target.

<b><u>Growth, Economic Development &amp; Communities KPIs</u></b>	<b>RAG rating</b>		<b>DoT</b>
	<b>Latest</b>	<b>Previous</b>	
Number of homes brought back to market through No Use Empty (NUE)	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	⇒
Developer contributions secured as a percentage of amount sought	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	⇒

**Environment & Transport** For Quarter 4, one of the Highways KPIs was RAG rated Green, two Amber, with one Red rated (Percentage of satisfied customers with routine Highways service delivery). Municipal Waste recycled or converted to energy, continues to be above target, and the reduction in Greenhouse Gas emissions also remains ahead of target.

<b><u>Environment &amp; Transport KPIs</u></b>	<b>RAG rating</b>		<b>DoT</b>
	<b>Latest</b>	<b>Previous</b>	
% of routine pothole repairs completed within 28 days	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	⇒
% of routine highway repairs reported by residents completed within 28 days	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	⇒
% of emergency highway incidents attended within 2 hours of notification	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	⇒
% of satisfied customers with routine Highways service delivery, 100 call back survey	<b>RED</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	⇒
% of municipal waste recycled or converted to energy and not taken to landfill – rolling 12 months	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	⇒
Greenhouse Gas emissions from KCC estate (excluding schools) in tonnes – rolling 12 months	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	⇩

**Education & Wider Early Help** – Schools continue to exceed the inspection target, with Early Years settings now also exceeding their target. Completion of Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) assessments in timescale decreased further below the floor standard and remains RAG rated red, but is expected to start improving from the next quarter. The KPI measuring annual EHCP reviews waiting over 12 months improved for the third Quarter in a row, moving ahead of target. Pupils with EHCPs who are placed in independent or out of county special schools improved slightly but continues to miss floor standard. Permanent pupil exclusions remains on its floor standard, and so is rated Amber. The number of first-time entrants to the youth justice system reduced slightly but remains Amber rated.

<b><u>Education &amp; Wider Early Help KPIs</u></b>	<b>RAG rating</b>		<b>DoT</b>
	<b>Latest</b>	<b>Previous</b>	
% of all schools with Good or Outstanding Ofsted inspection judgements	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	⇒
% of Early Years settings* with Good or Outstanding Ofsted inspection judgements	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	↑
% of Education, Health Care Plans (EHCPs) issued within 20 weeks – rolling 12 months	<b>RED</b>	<b>RED</b>	↓
% of annual EHCP reviews waiting over 12 months	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	↑
% of pupils (with EHCP's) being placed in independent or out of county special schools	<b>RED</b>	<b>RED</b>	⇒
% of pupils permanently excluded from school – rolling 12 months	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	↓
Number of first-time entrants to youth justice system – rolling 12 months	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	⇒

\* childcare on non-domestic premises

**Children's Social Care & Early Help** – Four of the seven indicators met target, the same as the previous three Quarters. Percentage of case holding posts filled by permanent qualified social workers decreased, moving further below floor standard. The percentage of foster care placements which are in-house or with relatives declined further below floor standard for the second Quarter running. The percentage of Care Leavers in education, employment remains below target, and is on a negative trend.

<b><u>Children's Social Care &amp; Early Help KPIs</u></b>	<b>RAG rating</b>		<b>DoT</b>
	<b>Latest</b>	<b>Previous</b>	
% of Early Help cases closed with outcomes achieved that come back to social care teams within 3 months	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	↓
% of case holding posts filled by permanent qualified social workers	<b>RED</b>	<b>RED</b>	↓
% of children social care referrals that were repeat referrals within 12 months	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	↓
% of child protection plans that were repeat plans	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	↑
Average no. of days between becoming a child in care and moving in with an adoptive family – rolling 12 months	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	⇒
% of foster care placements which are in-house or with relatives and friends (excluding UASC)	<b>RED</b>	<b>RED</b>	⇒
% of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with)	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	↓

**Adult Social Care** – One KPI continues to meet target and is RAG rated Green. The proportion of new Care Needs Assessments delivered within 28 days improved slightly, but remains below floor standard. Long Term support needs of older people met by admission to residential and nursing care homes reduced but still does not meet the floor standard and continues to be RAG rated red. The number of people in short-term beds decreased for the third Quarter in a row. The number of people accessing services who have a mental health need continues to grow.

<b>Adult Social Care KPIs</b>	<b>RAG rating</b>		<b>DoT</b>
	<b>Latest</b>	<b>Previous</b>	
% of people who have their contact resolved by ASCH but then make contact again within 3 months	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	↑
% of new Care Needs Assessments delivered within 28 days	<b>RED</b>	<b>RED</b>	⇒
% of people receiving a long-term community service who receive Direct Payments	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	↑
Proportion of older people (65+) who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement / rehabilitation services	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	↑
Long Term support needs of older people (65 and over) met by admission to residential and nursing care homes, per 100,000	<b>RED</b>	<b>RED</b>	↓
% of KCC supported people in residential or nursing care where the CQC rating is Good or Outstanding	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	⇒

**Public Health** – Three out of five KPIs are exceeding target, and two of these continue on an improving trend. The number of mandated checks delivered by the health visiting service is below target and on a declining trend. The percentage of Live Well clients who would recommend the service to family, friends or someone in a similar situation, fell for the second Quarter running and remains RAG rated Amber.

<b>Public Health KPIs</b>	<b>RAG rating</b>		<b>DoT</b>
	<b>Latest</b>	<b>Previous</b>	
Number of eligible people receiving an NHS Health Check – rolling 12 months	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	↑
Number of mandated universal checks delivered by the health visiting service – rolling 12 months	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>AMBER*</b>	↓
% of first-time patients (at any sexual health clinics or telephone triage) who are offered a full sexual health screen	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	↑
Successful completion of drug and alcohol treatment	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	⇒
% of Live Well clients who would recommend the service to family, friends or someone in a similar situation	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	⇒

\* Previous data has been revised, resulting in this RAG rating moving from Green to Amber

<b>Customer Services</b>
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<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Dylan Jeffrey
<b>Corporate Director</b>	Amanda Beer

KPI Summary	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>RED</b>	↑	⇒	↓
	2		1		3	

Customer contact through Contact Point (KCC’s call centre) is provided via a strategic partnership, whilst Digital services are provided by KCC. The percentage of callers who rated their advisor as good remained at 98%, exceeding the target.

The call answer rate improved for the second Quarter in a row, increasing to 92% and staying above target.

For the activity indicators on average speed of answer, this remains quicker than expectations for all calls at 1 minute 28 seconds. Priority calls average speed of answer at 41 seconds is at the quicker end of the expected range. Average call time decreased to 6 minutes 42 seconds but remained above the target of 6 minutes 4 seconds.

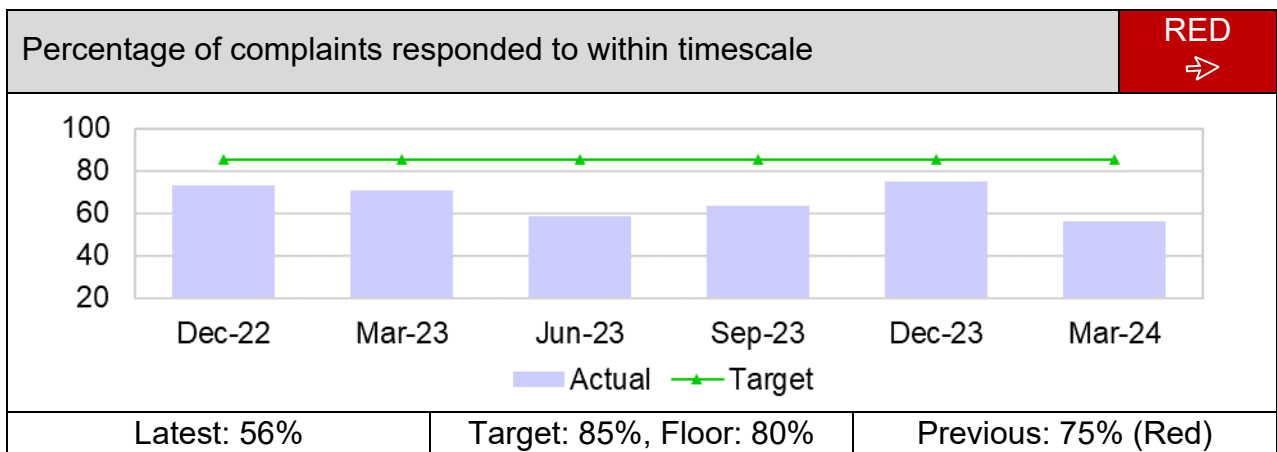
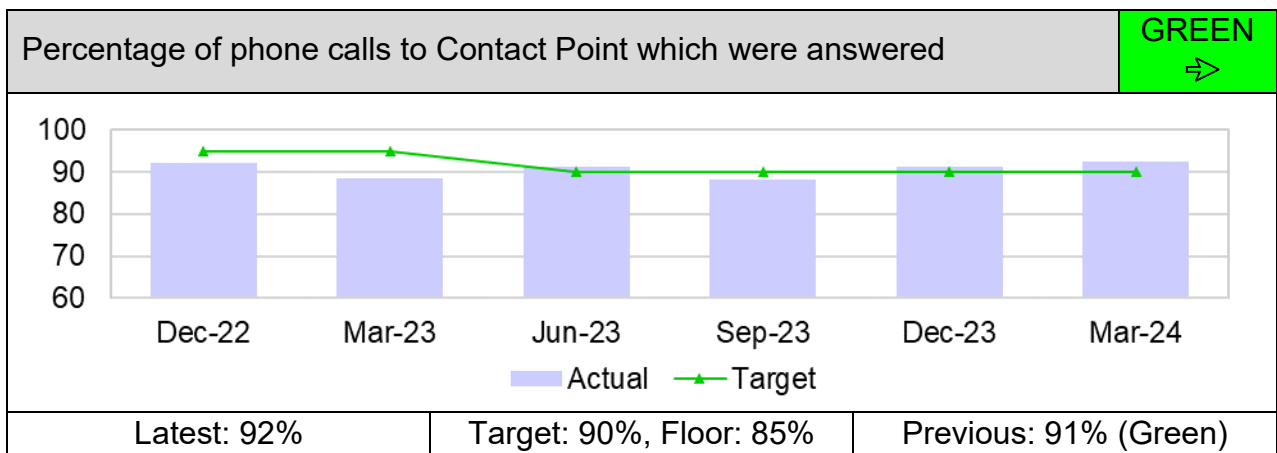
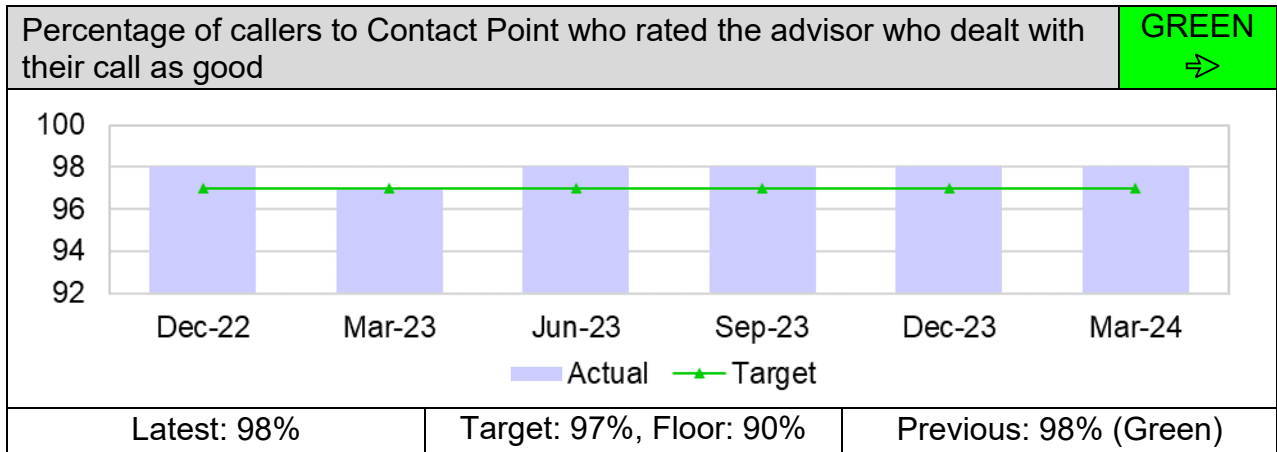
Contact Point received 8% more calls compared to the previous Quarter but 9% fewer calls than Quarter 4 last year. The 12 months to March 2024 also saw a 9% decrease in calls compared to the 12 months to March 2023.

The number of visits (sessions) to the kent.gov.uk website was 8% lower than the same Quarter the previous year. This may in part be due to a change in the website’s cookie control mechanism rather than an actual reduction in website usage. This change was made by the Marketing and Residence Experience Team in December 2022 following customer feedback and recent case law, to include a clear and obvious "Reject All" button on the cookie control mechanism. This makes it even easier for users to tell us that they don’t want us to use cookies, which are needed to count website traffic. Pages relating to Household Waste Recycling Centres continue to be the most visited.

Quarter 4 saw a 4% increase in the number of complaints received compared with the previous Quarter and a 2% increase on the same Quarter last year. Between January and March, 56% of complaints were responded to within timescales. This is a decrease on last Quarter’s performance. A concerted effort is being made to clear the backlog of older cases, but this does have an impact on the closure of new cases in timescale and the subsequent impact on performance of the KPI was expected.

In terms of Directorate performance, the Chief Executive’s Department and Deputy Chief Executive’s Departments, together achieved 64% of responses within timescale; Growth, Environment and Transport, 77%; Adult Social Care and Health, 54%; and Children, Young People and Education, 15%.

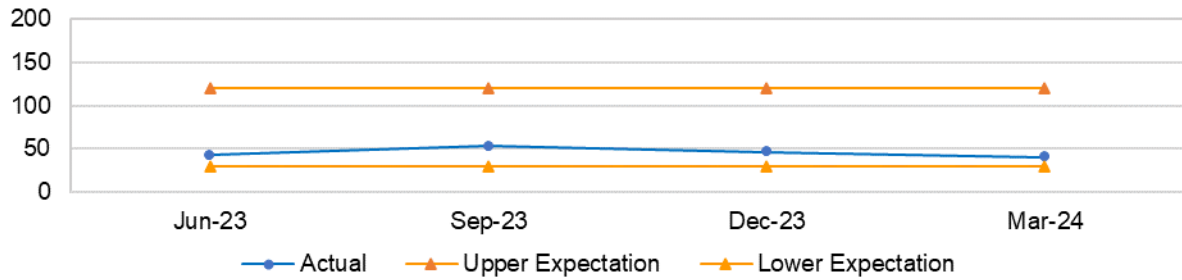
## Key Performance Indicators



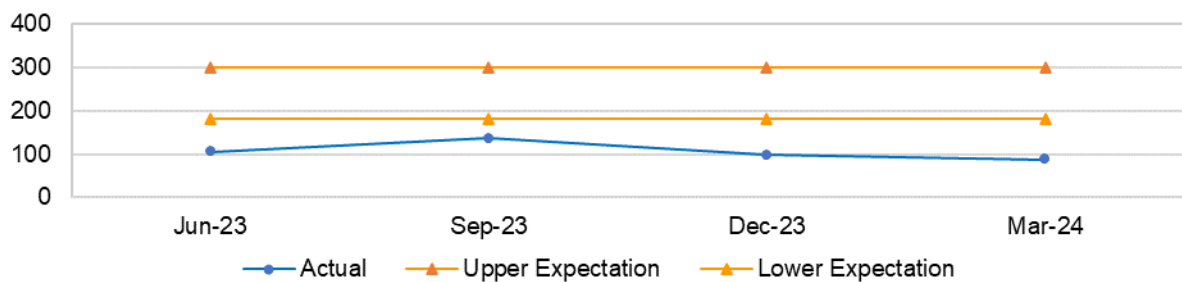


## Activity indicators

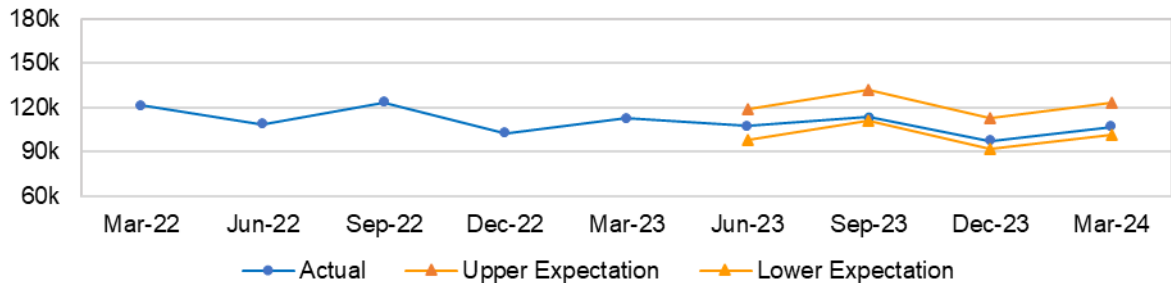
Average speed of answer (ASA) by Contact Point in seconds – **priority services**



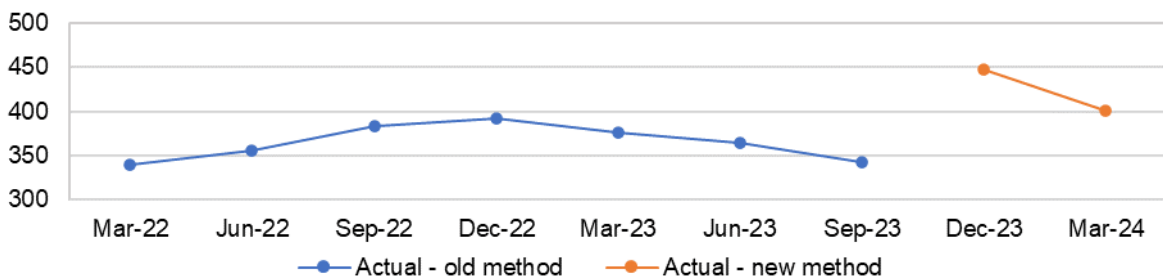
Average speed of answer (ASA) by Contact Point in seconds – **all services**



Number of phone calls responded to by Contact Point – Quarterly

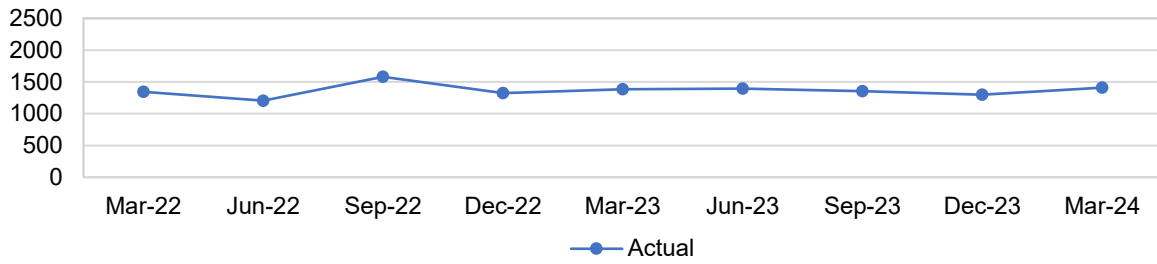


Average Contact Point call handling time in seconds – Quarterly

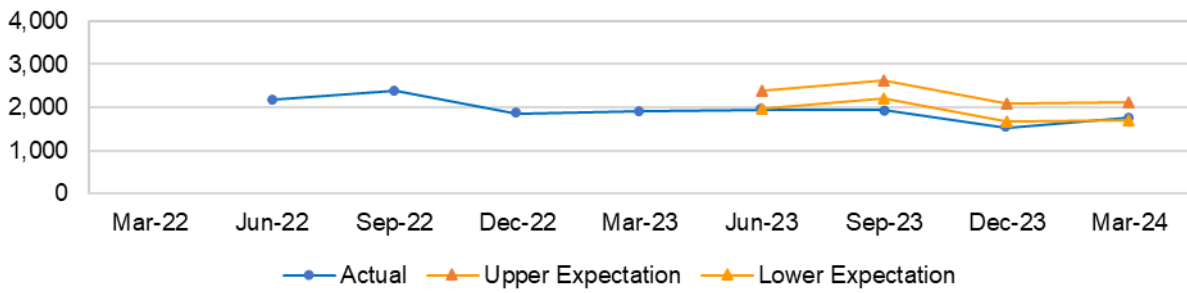


Agilisys changed the way call handling time was recorded from November 2023, by adding a set automatic aftercall time (the period of time immediately after completing the contact with a customer but where more work is required to finalise the transaction: e.g. entering details such as comments about the conversation, follow-up actions, etc). This will contribute to increased handling time in the Quarters from December 2023.

### Number of complaints received - Quarterly



### Number of visits (sessions) to the KCC website (in thousands) – Quarterly\*



\* Due to a review of KCC's use of cookies on kent.gov.uk no visitor data was available from October 2021 until February 2022. Reporting of this data recommenced from the June 2022 Quarter.

## Customer Services – Call Activity

### Number of phone calls to Contact Point (thousands)

Contact Point received 8% more calls compared to the previous Quarter but 9% fewer calls than Quarter 4 last year. The 12 months to March 2024 also saw a 9% decrease in calls compared to the 12 months to March 2023.

Service area	Apr- Jun 23	Jul - Sep 23	Oct - Dec 23	Jan – Mar 24	12m to Mar 23	12m to Mar 24
Adult Social Care	25	26	23	26	106	100
Integrated Children's Services	19	20	19	18	72	76
Highways	14	15	15	16	57	60
Blue Badges	9	12	9	10	48	40
Schools and Early Years	7	9	8	9	21	32
Transport Services	10	11	7	7	49	36
Registrations	7	5	5	6	32	24
Libraries and Archives	5	6	5	6	27	22
Waste and Recycling	9	9	5	5	32	28
Adult Education	4	6	4	5	21	19
Main line	3	3	3	3	15	12
KSAS*	2	2	2	2	12	7
Driver improvement	2	3	2	2	14	9
Other Services	2	3	1	2	8	8
<b>Total Calls (thousands)</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>516</b>	<b>472</b>

Figures may not add up to totals due to rounding.

\* Kent Support and Assistance Service

## Customer Services – Complaints Monitoring

Quarter 4 saw the number of complaints received increase from the previous Quarter by 4% and by 2% on the same Quarter last year. Over the 12 months to March 2024 there has been an 9% increase in complaints received compared to the 12 months to March 2023.

In Quarter 4, frequently raised issues included SEN provision, Active Travel Schemes, potholes and drainage issues.

Service	12 mths to Mar 23	12 mths to Mar 24	Quarter to Dec 23	Quarter to Mar 24
Highways, Transportation and Waste Management	2,409	2,567	679	611
Adult Social Services	959	997	233	264
Integrated Children's Services	340	384	105	128
SEN	570	617	123	186
Education & Young People's Services	240	153	30	35
Libraries, Registrations and Archives	258	187	45	48
Chief Executive's Department and Deputy Chief Executive's Department	150	226	38	41
Environment, Planning and Enforcement & Economic Development	150	404	37	80
Adult Education	81	58	6	15
<b>Total Complaints</b>	<b>5,157</b>	<b>5,593</b>	<b>1,297</b>	<b>1,408</b>

## Customer Services – Digital Take-up

The table below shows the digital/online or automated transaction completions for key service areas where there are ways to complete other than online.

Transaction type	Online Apr 23 - Jun 23	Online Jul 23 - Sep 23	Online Oct 23 - Dec 23	Online Jan 24 – Mar 24	Total Transactions Last 12 Months
Renew a library book*	83%	83%	84%	83%	1,068,674
Report a Highways Fault	70%	63%	65%	74%	128,556
Book a Driver Improvement Course	89%	88%	87%	91%	44,909
Book a Birth Registration appointment	49%**	70%	67%	65%	25,276
Apply for or renew a Blue Badge	81%	82%	81%	84%	21,929
Apply for a Concessionary Bus Pass	75%	78%	78%	78%	16,937
Report a Public Right of Way Fault	87%	87%	89%	88%	6,221
Apply for a HWRC recycling voucher	100%	99%	99%	99%	5,638

\* Library issue renewals transaction data is based on individual loan items and not count of borrowers.

\*\* The online booking system for birth registrations was unavailable for part of April 2023 due to the migration to a new system and caused a reduction in those completed online for that Quarter

## Governance, Law & Democracy

<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Dylan Jeffrey
<b>Corporate Director</b>	Amanda Beer

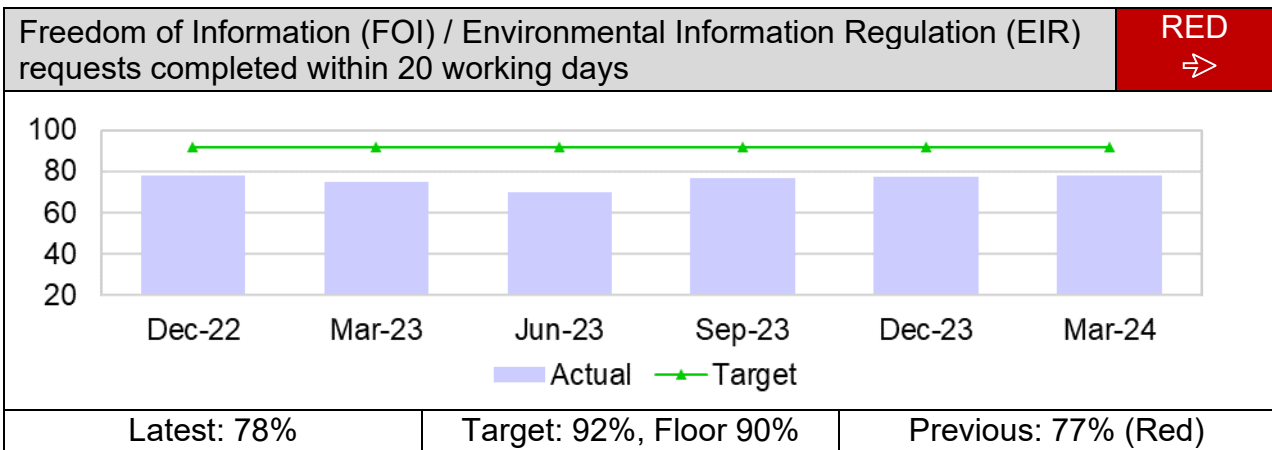
KPI Summary	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>RED</b>	$\uparrow$	$\Rightarrow$	$\downarrow$
			2		1	1

Both Freedom of Information (FOI) / Environmental Information Regulation (EIR) requests, and Subject Access requests, made under Article 15 of the General Data Protection Regulations, completed within statutory timescales remain below their floor standards.

The percentage of FOI / EIR requests completed has not met target for several years. With regards to performance in 2023/24, no Directorate achieved target, with the best performing being Growth, Environment and Transportation with 79% completed in timescale, this Directorate also had the highest number of requests (620 requests). The volume of requests has been above expectations for the year, and particularly high in Quarter 4. Some of this increase has come from requests for information on specific issues, including the Herne Bay Active Travel Scheme, accommodation for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, and potholes or the general state of roads.

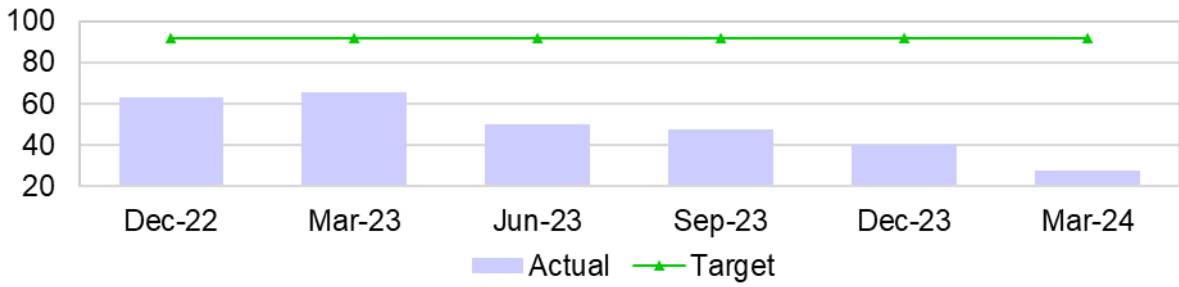
For Subject Access Requests (SARs) since April, nearly 80% of these came under the Children, Young People and Education Directorate. Reasons for delays in responding to requests include complexity of some requests, resourcing issues, and the significant amount of time it takes to appropriately redact records.

### Key Performance Indicators



Subject Access requests, made under Art 15 of the General Data Protection Regulations, completed within statutory timescales

**RED**  
↓



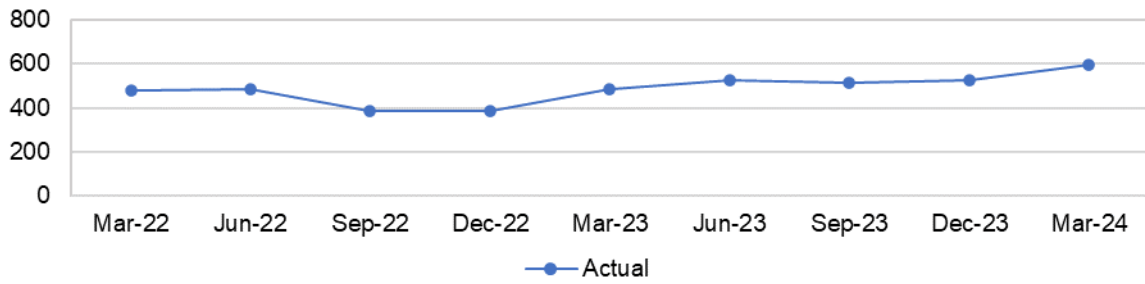
Latest: 28%

Target: 90%, Floor 85%

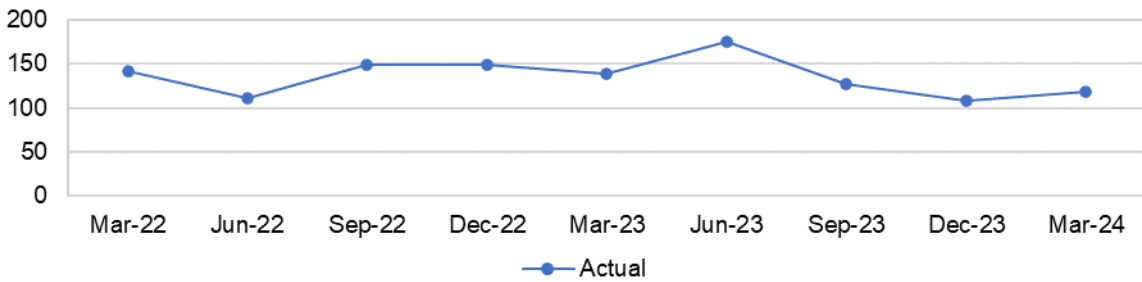
Previous: 40% (Red)

**Activity indicators**

FOI/EIR requests – by Quarter



Data Protection Act Subject Access requests – by Quarter



## Growth, Economic Development & Communities

<b>Cabinet Members</b>	Derek Murphy, Clair Bell
<b>Corporate Director</b>	Simon Jones

KPI Summary	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>RED</b>			
	1	1			2	

### Support for Business

KCC continued to use funds from the Government’s Regional Growth Fund (RGF) to create and sustain employment opportunities in Kent.

Since 2017 the latest figures (to the end of Quarter 3, 2023/24), show the Kent and Medway Business Fund (KMBF) has provided finance of £18.8m to 132 Kent and Medway businesses, creating 545 new jobs and safeguarding a further 161 jobs in the Kent and Medway area.

The current economic climate has continued to have an adverse impact on those Kent’s businesses which had previously received loans, with a continuation of requests being made to KCC to revise loan repayment terms. From the feedback provided by the companies, we believe that this is due to increases in costs particularly for those companies undertaking development projects.

Until the most recent Quarter, we have generally seen a relatively steady growth in job creation by companies funded by the KMBF each quarter, helped by new investments and projects coming into the portfolio. However in the most recent quarter there was a drop of 20.0 FTE in the overall job creation. This may be because the first new loans to be awarded under the KMBF have not yet reached completion and so the immediate impact of the loan has not yet been recorded.

KMBF loan schemes, including the Small Business Boost (SBB), continue to operate with the same level of interest as reported previously.

Since the reopening of the KMBF Loan Schemes on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023 until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, 168 pre-applications have been received to a value of over £16.8m of which 144 are KMBF SBB (£9.1m) and 24 are KMBF (Standard) Loans (£7.7m)

Of these, 42 pre-applications are still active and 19 full applications to the value of £2.2m have been received so far, with a further 11 pre-applications invited to submit a full application to a value just over £1m. The remaining 14 pre-applications are at various stages within the pre-application assessment process. The Kent & Medway Investment Advisory Board (IAB) have had two companies present to it so far with both approved to the total value of £700k, the Kent & Medway IAB Sub-Group (SBB) have had five companies present to them to date with four approved and one rejected, though one of the approved companies declined the loan offer due to being unable to meet the security requirements. The total value of the SBB approved applications is £258,000. The total value of investments approved to date by the KMBF is therefore five applications to the value of £958k. These are now proceeding through the legal process, and the first payments are expected imminently.



The South-East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) has, in addition, provided funding for the Innovation Investment Loan scheme which the KMBF team manages for applications from companies in Kent and Medway. Since 2017, over £7.4 million of loans have been made to 32 businesses creating 162 Full-time Equivalent (FTE) jobs and safeguarding 74 FTE jobs.

### **Economy**

During Quarter 4, the Economy Team continued to make progress and plan for KCC taking on new responsibilities with the closure of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) in March 2024. Before the end of March there were some delays with finalising SELEP's closure and transferring responsibilities to, for our purposes, KCC on behalf of Kent & Medway as the new Functional Economic Area (FEA). It is anticipated that the full transfer of responsibilities to all FEAs in the former SELEP region will conclude in Quarter 1, 2024/25 to include responsibility for strategic economic planning, business representation and managing government programmes where directed.

### **Developer Investment Team**

For Quarter 4, a total of 41 planning applications were received. Twenty-four s106 legal agreements have been completed securing a total of £10.7m, a 97.9% success ratio against the amounts originally requested. Larger applications included in this quarterly report are at Pound Lane, Ashford (550 dwellings) and Four Elms, Land North of Town Station Cottages, Edenbridge (340 dwellings). The KPI figure is 0.1% below target due to viability issues with three 100% affordable housing schemes being directly delivered by Thanet District Council. The district determined that there was insufficient viability to afford the secondary education contributions of £159k, however mitigation for SEND and all other community services that were requested for, have been secured.

### **No Use Empty - Converting derelict buildings for new housing and commercial space**

In Quarter 4, a total of 59 long term empty properties were made fit for occupation through the No Use Empty (NUE) Programme bringing the total to 8,244 since the programme began in 2005.

The total NUE investment in converting derelict properties has increased to £104.1m (£59.7m from KCC recycled loans and £44.4m from private sector leverage). All available funds for the financial year 2023/24 were allocated. Six new applications for loan support were received in Quarter 4 which are being processed and subject to approval will be funded in Quarter 1 of 2024/25.

NUE were awarded £2.5m under the SELEP Growing Places Fund (GPF) to convert additional derelict properties. As at the end of Quarter 4, loans to the value of £2.4m had been approved, funding 91 new homes. GPF awarded a separate £2m for NUE Commercial Phase II. The target is to return 18 empty commercial units back into use and create 36 new homes. A total of 17 projects have been approved at the end of Quarter 4 and these will return 22 empty commercial units back into use and create 52 homes. There remains £31k left to allocate (NUE C Phase II).

KCC Treasury made available £24m for NUE to bring forward empty/derelict sites with planning permission for new builds. Following the recycling of £15.3m loan repayments, at the end of Quarter 4, the number of new homes funded is 232 across eight Kent districts. There remains a strong pipeline of projects across all NUE schemes.

NUE was featured on Meridian TV during national empty homes week as the headline news item on 6 March 2024 which included interviews with a property owner in Dover and our Strategic Programme Manager.

### **Libraries, Registration and Archives (LRA)**

2023/24 has seen continued growth in many areas of LRA activity, with a number of highlights throughout the year. Over 20,000 children participated in the “Ready, Set, Read!” Summer Reading Challenge, the much-anticipated refurbishment of Herne Bay Library was completed with positive feedback from customers, and during its first full operational year, Kent Register Office Oakwood House became well established as a popular venue for weddings and civil partnerships, as well as increasing numbers of individual citizenship ceremonies. The venue delivered 143 marriages and civil partnerships during Quarter 4, representing a 21% increase on the same period in 2019/20 when these services were delivered from Archbishop’s Palace.

Over 786,700 visitors were welcomed into Kent’s Libraries during Quarter 4, an increase of 2% on the same period in 2022/23. Over 48,000 attendees enjoyed a wide range of events and activities, an increase of 9% on the previous year and possibly an indication of the rising use of libraries as community spaces which bring people together, enhance wellbeing, and help to combat loneliness and social isolation.

Kent Libraries continues to improve and develop its spaces to meet the needs of customers and during Quarter 4, Margate Library was refreshed with the children’s library completely refurbished. Customers have commented that the new-look library is much more comfortable and inviting to visitors and particularly families. Potential visitors to Kent Libraries are now able to take a virtual tour of 31 libraries across the county as a result of funding from the Arts Council LibraryOn project, so that visitors who may have accessibility needs are able to familiarise themselves with the spaces online before visiting in person. Phase Two of the project involves the development of an easy-to-use room hire offer at selected Kent Libraries.

Library issues increased by 11% compared to Quarter 4 last year, and while physical issues have decreased very slightly by 0.2%, the e-offer has continued to flourish, with e-books increasing by 9% and e-audiobooks by 31% for the same comparator Quarter last year.

A two-week closure of the Archive Search Room, including a pause in taking enquiries, in January 2024 for essential collection work contributed to an 11% reduction in enquiries compared to the same Quarter the previous year. Physical enquiries only dropped by 2%, with just 36 fewer in-person enquiries than the previous year. The collection work carried out during the closure included the checking and re-cataloguing of parts of the collection as well as the digitisation of images, all of which serves to increase the accessibility and range of the collection available to customers using the Archive’s resources which is important in the ongoing development of the service.

The number of death and birth registrations has continued to settle to more expected pre-pandemic levels. Death registration appointments fell by 8% for Quarter 4, with 4,779 appointments delivered. Birth registration numbers remain reasonably stable , with 4,134 appointments delivered.

Ceremonies have increased by 33% in comparison with the previous year. This is partly due to the increasing take-up of individual citizenship ceremonies which have proved popular since this option was offered at Oakwood House as well as Danson House in Bexley, with 1,099 new citizens welcomed to the UK from January to March 2024 as opposed to 646 the previous year. However, there was also a significant increase in wedding and civil partnership ceremonies, with ceremonies in Kent Approved Premises in particular rising by 33%.

### **Active Kent and Medway**

The last quarter of 2023/24 has been a busy one for the Active Kent and Medway Team and we are delighted to be working with Sport England to deliver two new programmes.

The first of these relates to our engagement with a new national programme to support National Governing Bodies and their local clubs to promote good practice and safe sport for children, young people and adults on a local level. This is being done through the development of a new, national network of Sport Welfare Officers and we are delighted to have secured funding to enable us to recruit two officers to support work in this important space across Kent. The second focuses on the activation of multi-sports facilities across the county for which we have been awarded £143k by Sport England to pilot this programme across 13 multi use games areas open to the public; these will help to get more people to be more active, more often with a real focus on those facing the greatest inequalities and challenges when it comes to getting involved in sport and physical activity.

Our Everyday Active programme continues to go from strength to strength – we are now delighted to have a champion in every district of the county. Further information on our flagship campaign can be found here [Everyday Active Kent](#). More and more activities are being shared with residents across Kent every week and we continue to provide support and training to healthcare and link-workers on having conversations about physical activity and the many benefits being more active has for both our communities and individuals.

Finally, thanks to KCC investment, 24 facility improvement projects have been identified for capital grants this year, including support for floodlights and clubhouse development for Faversham Strike Force football club, and conversion of a former Youth Centre in Dartford into a community sports club.

### **Community Safety**

Focus areas during this period for the Kent Community Warden Service (KCWS) continue to be the cost of living, homelessness, reports of environmental and financial crime (fraud and loan sharks), anti-social behaviour and scams, and working closely with Kent Police whilst the new Neighbourhood policing model is implemented. Wardens continue to deliver the social prescribing model, 'Positive Wellbeing' across the service as part of their wider offer of support to residents and communities. Also, during this period, the service has been implementing a new case management system to improve data and information management around supporting our vulnerable users.

A total of six Community Safety Information Sessions (CSIS) were delivered in 2023/24 along with a range of other events. The final CSIS event for 2023/24 was held in January and had a focus on premises licensing and building safety. Of those who responded to the event survey, 100% rated the session as excellent or very good. Further sessions are being planned for 2024/25 with the first taking place in April 2024.

On behalf of the Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP), the Kent Community Safety Team (KCST) worked with partners to deliver a multi-agency partnership event on Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) on the 19th March 2024. Approximately 200 people attended on the day, with 125 attending in-person at the Kent Event Centre and a further 75 attending virtually. Based on current feedback 85% of those who responded to the survey rated it as 'excellent' 'very good' or 'good'. The presentations are available on the Safer Communities Portal and an ASB Resource Pack has been developed that includes useful links and contact information for a range of agencies.

### **Kent Minerals & Waste Local Plan**

Following County Council's consideration of the pre-submission draft of the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan in December 2023, preparation of evidence for independent examination of the Local Plan by the Planning Inspectorate took place between January and March 2024. This included the final public with District and Borough Councils and other key stakeholders.

### **Gypsy Romany Traveller Residents (GRTR) Service**

The Site Improvement Project funded by the Government is progressing well, and three of the KCC sites have been finished, with another three close to completion. The works on the last site are planned to start in May, with expected delivery in December 2024.

The GRTR Service has made a great effort to lower historic debt of the residents, and we have achieved a decrease of almost 20% (£64k) in the previous financial year. During 2023/2024 the Team also handled 43 Unauthorised Encampments on KCC land.

### **Creative Economy**

#### Kent Film Office

In the 4th quarter of 2023/24, the film office handled 122 filming requests and 111 related enquiries. We logged 134 filming days bringing an estimated approx. £300k direct spend into Kent & Medway.

Highlights for the quarter include Changing Ends season 2, and Toyota and Lynx campaigns.

#### Supporting creative businesses

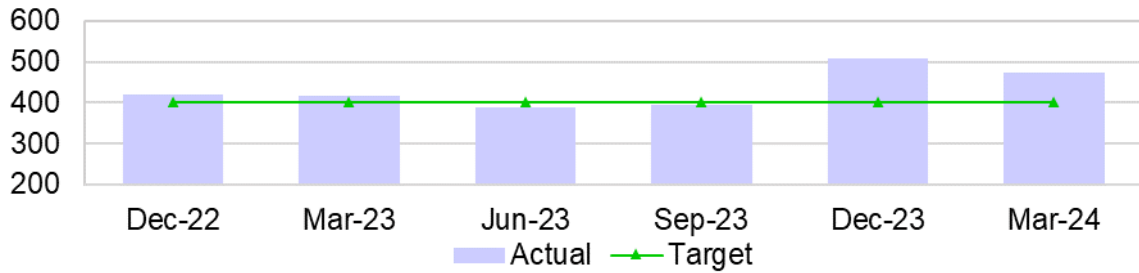
We continued to lead the partnership delivering the regional sector specific business support programme Create South East..

From the start of the programme to date the customer base has grown to 600 creative businesses generating 416 expressions of interest including 32% from Kent, with Margate, Folkestone, Tunbridge Wells and Canterbury being the most frequently occurring business locations. 108 full applications (36% Kent, excluding Medway) have followed.

## Key Performance Indicators

Number of homes brought back to market through No Use Empty (NUE) – Rolling 12 months

**GREEN**



Latest: 474

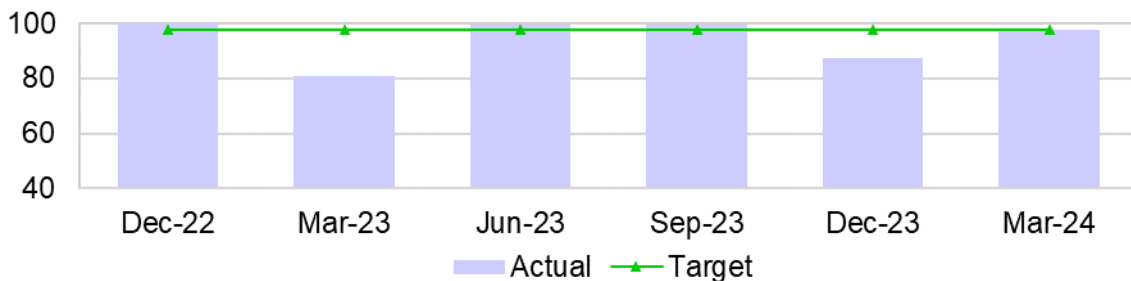
Target: 400, Floor 350

Previous: 509 (Green)

Actuals are totals for 12 months to end of Quarter shown.

Developer contributions secured as a percentage of amount sought

**AMBER**



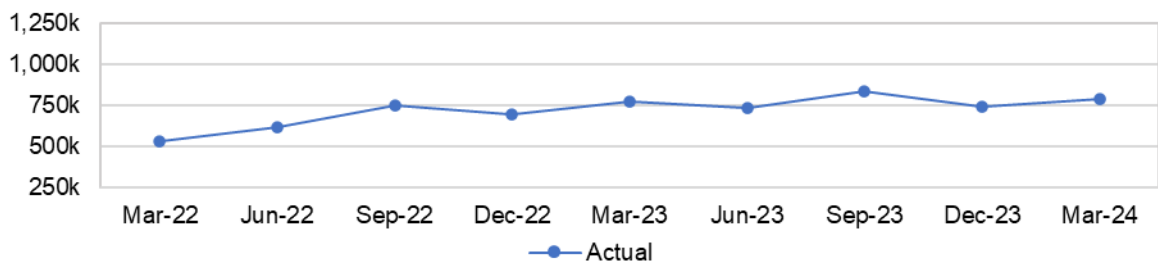
Latest: 97.9%

Target: 98%, Floor 85%

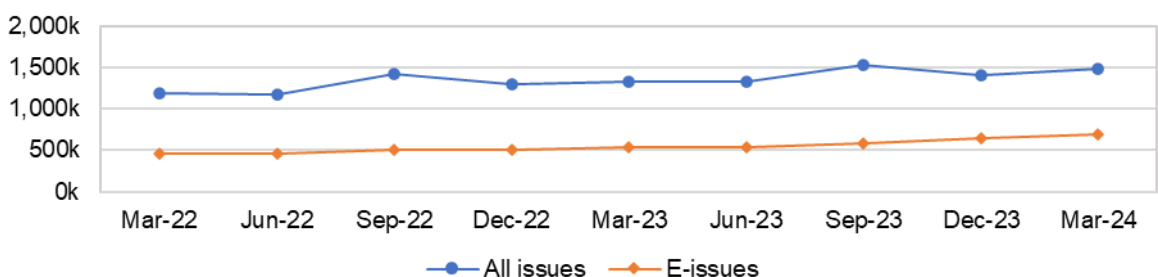
Previous: 87.0% (Amber)

## Activity indicators

Total number of physical visits to Kent libraries



Total number of book issues from Kent libraries



## Environment and Transport

<b>Cabinet Members</b>	Neil Baker, Roger Gough
<b>Corporate Director</b>	Simon Jones

KPI Summary	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>RED</b>	↑	→	↓
	3	2	1	1	5	

### Highways

For the final Quarter one of the Highways KPIs is RAG rated Green, two Amber and one Red. Highways teams and front-line staff are working at high capacity due to higher-than-expected numbers of enquiries.

#### Potholes repairs

Since empowering KCC Highways staff to complete minor and urgent repairs, we have achieved faster responses to customer enquiries. Demand in this service continues to be above the expected range owing to particularly heavy rainfall. The number of potholes requiring repairs this Quarter was 8,011, of which 7,688 were completed on time yielding 96% a Green RAG rating. **Teams continue to work hard especially under the Pothole Blitz contractors to decrease the backlog and we critically monitor the performance of Amey, through the Contract Board and the Strategic Partnership Board to ensure continued improvements in service delivery.**

#### Emergency incidents

Attendance at Emergency Incidents within two hours of notification missed its target of 98% and delivered 95% (Amber RAG rating). The service attended 949 callouts with 47 failing the target attendance time but with all incidents made safe. **We are working with Amey to help improve response times to emergencies. For instance, every depot now has a dedicated emergency crew, reducing the need to make safe their current job before attending an emergency.. We will also continue to work with Amey to drive efficiencies.**

#### Routine Faults

The total number of faults reported for repairs this quarter is 23,653, of which 20,996 were completed on target giving 89% (Amber RAG rating) and only just missing the target by 1 percentage point. The service continues to experience higher than expected demand which is mainly due to unprecedented weather. **This service is part of the Amey improvement roadmap and we continue to discuss strategies on how to improve performance at both the Contract Board and the Strategic Partnership Board.**

#### Call back survey

The 100-call back survey was moved to bi-monthly in September 2023 and the last one was carried out in March 2024 as Agilisys are no longer able to resource this. The number of customers satisfied with the Highways & Transportation service fell to 82% (Red RAG rating). Negative feedback from our customers included dissatisfaction at the time it took for issues, such as drainage problems and pothole repairs, to be resolved. **Customer feedback continues to be important to us, and will be a key feature in any fault reporting tool we adopt.**

### Contacts and enquiries

The total number of customer contacts regarding highway issues in Quarter 4 was down on last year's totals with 58,838 (compared to 67,898 for the same period last year). Just under 33,900 of these were identified as faults requiring action by front line teams (compared to close to 35,000 for the same period last year) and both are slightly above expectations even for a busy winter.

Use of the online reporting tool remains high with 74% of all enquiries in Quarter 4 coming directly from the public via the tool (compared to 72% for the same period last year). Work on a new reporting tool (My Kent Highways) has been delayed and the Business Performance Team are currently investigating alternative providers.

At the end of Quarter 4, there were 12,432 open enquiries (work in progress), which compares to 10,277 at the same time last year, reflecting the increased workload in several parts of the business. Overall workload has remained high through the last year and remains above expected levels.

### Street Works

Pressure on the teams remains high with ongoing high levels of emergency works which impacts the team's ability to coordinate effectively. Building Digital UK have announced that Cityfibre have been awarded the contract to roll out superfast broadband to hard-to-reach places in Kent. This is a multi-year project and will result in an increase of closures in rural locations. **We are adequately resourced for this project as the Streetworks teams have dedicated Broadband Coordinators and inspectors as well as our recent recruitment for road closure inspectors. We have already started engagement with both BDUK and CityFibre to set out our expectations and requirements for the roll out of this project across the county.**

### **Road Safety**

The casualty figures for Quarter 4, show an overall decrease of 348 casualties compared to the same Quarter the previous year and a decrease of 318 compared with the same Quarter in 2019/20 (pre-pandemic). For those casualties that were killed or seriously injured (KSI), these were down by 13 overall compared to the previous year and down by 9 compared to the same Quarter pre-pandemic; fatalities however were higher.

Quarter 4											
2023/24				2022/23				2019/20			
Fatal	Serious	Slight	Total	Fatal	Serious	Slight	Total	Fatal	Serious	Slight	Total
16	141	593	750	7	163	927	1098	2	164	902	1068

Bikeability training has been provided to nearly 12,000 children across Kent this financial year, from teaching children how to learn to ride a bike through to teaching KS2 and KS3 pupils how to ride out on the roads. This is a great achievement and working with our framework of training providers we aim to reach more children in 2024/25 supported by increased funding from the Bikeability Trust. Adult Cycle training has been working in partnership with Public Health and Darent Valley Hospital supporting their year of cycling initiative with free courses for members of staff to increase their confidence riding on the roads with the aim that they will choose to cycle to work when able to. The team are looking into rolling this out with other hospitals in Kent.

The Safer Active Journeys Team, are working with Living Streets to sign schools up to their WOW Walk to School programme. WOW is a pupil-led initiative where children self-report how they get to school every day using the interactive WOW Travel Tracker. If they travel sustainably (walk, cycle or scoot) once a week for a month, they get rewarded with a badge. More info here - [WOW - the walk to school challenge \(livingstreets.org.uk\)](http://livingstreets.org.uk). The number of live school crossing patrol (SCP) sites in March was 79 with 18 current vacancies out for recruitment. The team are focusing on ways to improve sites such as securing funding for upgrading to programmable school warning lights and also continuing to monitor our SCP sites to support wellbeing of our frontline staff and their working environment.

Work undertaken as part of the KCC Vision Zero programme supports the five elements of the Safe System:

- Safer Roads and Streets
- Safer Speeds
- Safer Behaviours
- Safer Vehicles
- Post Collision Response (Working Group not yet formed)

In support of the Safer vehicles and Safer Speeds themes, our Safe Speeds and Enforcement (SSE) Team is continuing to provide minibus driver assessments for local schools. The SSE Team are also continuing with the temporary average speed camera trial. The cameras have been moved to a second test site and enforcement is live. The Kent and Medway Safety Camera Partnership digital upgrade of equipment is complete with new Detling Hill average speed cameras now installed and operating..

In support of the Safer Behaviour theme, our teams have delivered various educational interventions:

Kent Driver Education Team

- Demand for courses across both Kent and the UK continues to grow and venue demand is now increasing again after poor weather and lower enforcement over the last Quarter.
- 1,148 courses were delivered in Quarter 4 compared to 1,015 for the same period last year. Year-end total shows 4,451 courses were delivered against 3,580 courses over the whole of the previous year.
- Kent delivered its first National Risk Rider Awareness Course (NRRAC) in March, with client numbers being extremely low, especially across the winter months where this course is for motorcycles. Due to low client numbers Kent will only be offering one course per Quarter and will review this if uptake increases.

Safer Road Users Team

- 'Road Safety Club' intervention has been delivered to 7,331 Primary School Pupils across 61 different schools.
- 16 primary schools have attended 'Safety in Action' events across the county, with 889 pupils receiving a dynamic carousel intervention.
- 9 Secondary schools are currently piloting the new 'Distractions' Road Sense programme in year 7, reaching 1,704 pupils during this quarter.
- 7 secondary schools are piloting the new 'Good Decisions' Road sense programme for Year 9 pupils, reaching 1028 pupils this quarter.
- 17 schools and colleges have received Young Driver and Passenger courses reaching 1,969 young people.
- 6 Mature driver presentations were delivered to 214 experienced drivers within Kent communities.



## **Traffic Management**

Work continues with preparations for undertaking enforcement of moving traffic offences. There are now delays caused by the interface with the DVLA system which is a national problem, and we are waiting for a resolution date as to when the new DVLA system will be available. Proposed enforcement locations are posted on our Moving Traffic Enforcement consultation hub on the Let's Talk Kent consultation page.

The Network Innovation team are working on developing Kent's strategy for the delivery of on-street charging infrastructure. Following our Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee approval to proceed, the team have been working through the extensive application process in order to secure over £12m capital funding from the Government's Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI). This will support the delivery of Electric Vehicle chargers for those residents without access to off-street parking and driveways and the outcome of our bid is expected in June 2024.

## **Local Growth Fund (LGF) Transport Capital Projects**

Through SELEP, KCC is managing £128m of Government funding from rounds 1 to 3 of the LGF. There are currently two high risk projects, Sturry Link Road and the Maidstone Integrated Transport Package. For Sturry Link Road project, the design and build contract has been signed and the contractor is progressing with the detail design. A further update was presented to the last SELEP Accountability Board in February 2023, prior to SELEP disbanding. For Maidstone ITP, construction commenced on the Coldharbour Roundabout in February, and the scheme is likely to complete in December 2024.

## **Transport Strategy**

Following the conclusion in December of the Examination of National Highways' Development Consent Order (DCO) application for a new Lower Thames Crossing, in March the Examining Authority submitted its recommendation to the Secretary of State for Transport. This triggered a further consultation by the Secretary of State on matters still outstanding to which the Transport Strategy team coordinated KCC's response. The Secretary of State should make a decision by end of June, on whether the new Lower Thames Crossing is granted planning consent.

The urgent decision that was taken in December to allow KCC to enter into a legal Side Agreement with National Highways for financial compensation for the potential impact on visitor numbers to Shorne Woods Country Park during the construction phase, was implemented in February. The Side Agreement between National Highways and Kent County Council for this financial compensation has now been sealed. Negotiations continue on another Side Agreement relating to the impacts of the Lower Thames Crossing on vulnerable road users on the A228 as identified by National Highways in its environmental impact assessment.

Work to develop a new Local Transport Plan 5 (LTP5) for Kent has continued through the Member Task and Finish Group and progress will be reported to the County Council in the next Quarter before a public consultation on the full draft plan.

On 6<sup>th</sup> March the results of the business survey which called for international rail services to resume in Kent were published. Over 500 businesses responded, and this evidence will be used to make the case to government and the operator for a resumption of services at Kent's international rail stations.

On 27<sup>th</sup> February the preliminary meeting concluded, and the Examination commenced of Gatwick Airport's Development Consent Order (DCO) application for routine use of its northern runway, which in combination with its main runway will increase the airport's capacity. The Transport Strategy team co-ordinated, drafted and submitted KCC's Written Representation setting out the authority's position on the proposal and a Local Impact Report detailing the positive, neutral and negative impacts of the proposed scheme on the county. The Transport Strategy team has also attended issue specific hearings to ensure that KCC's views on the scheme are represented and submitted a Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement. The Examination will last for six months and will conclude in late August.

### **Resource Management & Circular Economy**

The KPI target on diversion of waste from landfill continues to be met, with 99.9% of waste over the last 12 months being recycled, composted, or used for energy generation. For comparison. The 0.1% going to landfill includes asbestos, with landfill being the only approved way to dispose of this material.

The total volume of waste collected over the previous 12 months increased for the fourth Quarter in a row following previous reductions. Kerbside waste volumes are 9% above pre-pandemic levels and HWRC volumes down by 32%, with total waste collected similar to pre-pandemic levels.

### **Energy and Climate Change**

Core KCC emissions have halved since 2019. This is predominantly due to 1) the streetlight dimming project, 2) LED lighting rollout in streetlighting, traffic signals and displays and Highways, 3) Installation of LED in KCC estates and 4) solar PV installation on KCC own buildings, 5) swapping a small number of boilers to air source heat pumps and 6) the significant renewable electricity produced by Bowerhouse solar farm. Bowerhouse provides half of the emission reduction seen since 2019 and in effect provides renewable electricity for street lighting, traffic signals and displays, and a portion of the electricity use in estates. Reductions in emissions from the KCC owned/leased vehicles is due to a reduction in miles travelled since Covid, although this is now increasing since a return to business as usual.

Over 10,900 residents have registered for the third phase of the Solar Together Kent collective-buying scheme. Around 3,040 homes have been installed with solar panels and/or batteries since the first phase opened in 2020, alongside 134 electric vehicle charging point installations. Up to Spring 2023, the Solar Together opportunity has leveraged more than £23.5m of resident investment in renewable energy across Kent.

### **Natural Environment and Coast**

#### Plan Tree

The tree planting season is over for another year and Kent Plan Tree has successfully planted:

- Over 17,000 whips (1-year old saplings) of native tree species.
- 118 standards by Soft Landscapes (Highways) to replace failed mature street trees.
- 38 standard Dutch elm disease (DED) Resistant cultivars
- 346 DED resistant elm cultivars targeting the White-letter Hairstreak butterfly.

Together KCC has enabled the planting of 63,127 trees over the 2023/24 planting season, bringing the cumulative total to 225,984 trees by end of March 2024.

Kent Plan Tree worked with many different organisations and individuals from private landowners through to national organisations (for example RSPB). Supported by the Countryside Management Partnerships (CMPs), trees were planted across Kent with the help of volunteers, corporate groups and landowners. In total, volunteers gave over 2,800 hours to help with the planting.

The next phase of the project has now started scheduling the maintenance and monitoring to ensure the new trees establish successfully. We have already seen strong new growth on trees in their second growing season, helped by the mild and wet weather in late winter and early spring.

Planning is underway to secure planting sites for the second year of the Local Authority Treescape Fund (LATF) with 11,000 whips and 119 fruit trees already funded.

At the end of February, the team submitted an early application for £300k to Round 4 of the LATF. This is now only a one-year fund requiring all the trees to be planted and accounted for by 31st March 2025 to coincide with the anticipated end of the Woodland Creation Accelerator Fund (WCAF). With this in mind, we have maximised the opportunity to fund as many trees as possible and included an additional 13,000 whips, 230 standard trees and 400 feathers (young trees). We will be notified if our bid is successful later in the summer.

We are planning to work with a range of partners to deliver this work including the CMPs, Gravesham and Thanet councils, Upper Medway and Stour IDBs, KCC Highways and the KWT Farmer Clusters.

In March, Elm trees hit the headlines with local and national media taking an interest in DED resistant cultivars that have been developed in Kent. Plan Tree are proud to have been able to provide elm trees as part of our planting in 2023/24. A second meeting of the Elm Heritage Kent group is planned in May at Lees Court where the new cultivars are being trialled. We will be working with our partners to promote the disease resistant cultivars in planting schemes across Kent next season.

#### Kent & Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)

Work has continued at a pace on the LNRS. In the past three months the following has been achieved:

- First milestone of mapping Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity
- Eight sector specific online briefings held in January, attended by 232 people.
- Five pressures and priorities stakeholder workshops held in February, attended by a total of 200 people, representing 137 different organisations, bodies, affiliations etc.
- Online “action for nature” mapping tool developed and launched in February, for people to identify where they are already delivering actions that support the recovery of nature.
- Activity in March included, priorities shortlisting, first draft of strategy area description, workshop reports, commencement of priorities shortlisting and species longlist created, and the launch of “Making space for nature champions” school activity pack.
- Focused stakeholder engagement activities continue, targeted at: landowners and farmers; unitary, borough, district, parish and town councils; river and freshwater stakeholders; and coastal and marine stakeholders. Plus work to engage stakeholders considered by Defra as “not the usual suspects” but necessary for the development of the strategy.

The project also met with Defra to discuss the progress and what happens next – during this meeting the need for burdens funding to be continued beyond March 2025, if we are to continue our Responsible Authority role in respect of the LNRS, was highlighted.

All project outputs and information can be found on the website - [Making Space For Nature Kent](#)

#### Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and Ecological Advice Service

On 12<sup>th</sup> February 2024, BNG became a mandatory requirement on all new planning applications for major development (subject to specified exemptions).

We have now published the Kent BNG site register and the Interim Strategic Significance Guidance for Biodiversity Net Gain in Kent and Medway, as well as general guidance on BNG.

A dedicated online platform to provide access to all these resources has also been created - [Biodiversity Net Gain | Making Space For Nature Kent](#)

The BNG officer and Ecological Advice Service team have also been preparing this Quarter for the full introduction of BNG in April, when requirements will also be extended to small sites from 2nd.

#### **Kent Country Parks (KCP)**

KCP had a busy Winter welcoming over 2,000 visitors to attend around 25 events across Brockhill, Shorne Woods, Lullingstone and Trosley. A feedback form designed to encourage children to share their opinions after their visit was launched during this period and so far, has had a positive response. The farming in protected landscape funded works were completed with the installation of a life-size pony made out of ironworks found from archaeological excavations at Shorne Woods and a group of 'framing the view' sculptures at Lullingstone as part of the discovery trail. Two hectares of coppice works were completed to enhance the woodland biodiversity, provide biomass for the heating at Shorne Woods and Trosley and firewood sales to offset the parks running costs. A comprehensive veteran tree survey with individual tree management plans was completed at Lullingstone which marked the end of the Darent Valley Landscape Partnership funding for the site.

#### **Kent Countryside Management Partnerships (KCMP)**

KCMP has continued to support Plan Tree with further tree planting including 150 trees planted at 3 primary schools in Tunbridge Wells. Volunteering has been busy across the County delivering habitat and access improvements as well as a number of litter picking events. Medway Valley Countryside Partnership delivered two well supported litter picks at and in the river at Tonbridge for the Environment Agency. Regular volunteers were joined by local supporters, the canoe club and other organisations. The two events together resulted in approx. 90 bags of rubbish being collected along with around 34 shopping trollies. A new long-term forest school programme started with a local school in Tunbridge Wells for children and young people with profound, severe and complex needs. Kentish Stour Countryside Project completed the Doddington Natural Flood Management works which included 1km of hedge planting, a new flood water storage; habitat reports for 7 farmers in the Upper East Stour Farm Cluster Group.

## **Explore Kent**

In Quarter 4, Explore Kent's digital channels 24 saw strong engagement with over 22,630 followers on X. Over 6,600 followers on Instagram (193 new followers), and over 11,800 followers on Facebook (233 new followers). Our website [ExploreKent.org](https://www.explorekent.org) had a total of 71,000 visitors and 13,444 of our route guides were downloaded.

In January, Explore Kent coordinated the Green Social Prescribing Network. Drawing together partners from health, social prescribing and providers of green space, interested in developing green social prescribing initiatives across the county. Around 50 partners were represented at the network.

We continued to promote campaigns and the enjoyment and respect of the public rights of way network, through use of short promotional films, for example: [Explore Kent's Trails \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...) and [Explore Easy Access Trails \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...). We promoted footpath and bridleway improvements on our social media channels to highlight the public rights of way improvements being undertaken by the team. This included the opening of the CC27 footpath in Canterbury, which had been inaccessible for over ten years.

We are working with Medway Council to create an 'Explore Medway' section of our website, promoting the benefits of being outdoors, having access to green and blue spaces and local walking and conservation volunteering opportunities in the area. We have expanded our parks and green spaces pages to allow Medway residents to access their nearest green space, alongside the promotion of 'Better Medway's' Health Walks.

We continued working with the Active Travel Team and partners to promote walking and wheeling for short journeys, utilising a range of promotional films, for example: [What is Active Travel? \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...) and [The Big Bike Revival \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...). In March, we published our 12<sup>th</sup> Active Travel map in Tenterden allowing residents and visitors to discover how far they can travel on foot or bike in just 15 minutes.

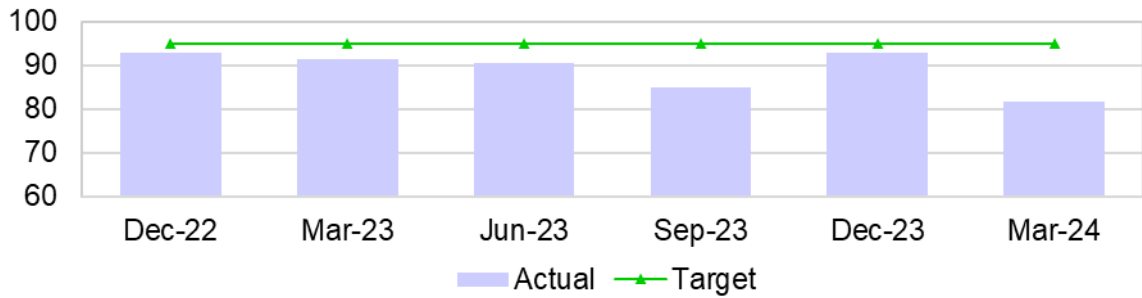
We worked to promote the mental and physical health benefits of being active outdoors, working with partners, including coordinating a Countryside Communications group (Active Kent and Medway, Country Parks, Kent Downs National Landscapes) to collaborate on campaigns.

### Key Performance Indicators

Percentage of routine pothole repairs completed within 28 days			<b>GREEN</b> ⇒																					
<table border="1"> <caption>Actual vs Target Data for Pothole Repairs</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Period</th> <th>Actual (%)</th> <th>Target (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Dec-22</td> <td>86</td> <td>90</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mar-23</td> <td>75</td> <td>90</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jun-23</td> <td>76</td> <td>90</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sep-23</td> <td>82</td> <td>90</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dec-23</td> <td>92</td> <td>90</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mar-24</td> <td>96</td> <td>90</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Period	Actual (%)	Target (%)	Dec-22	86	90	Mar-23	75	90	Jun-23	76	90	Sep-23	82	90	Dec-23	92	90	Mar-24	96	90
Period	Actual (%)	Target (%)																						
Dec-22	86	90																						
Mar-23	75	90																						
Jun-23	76	90																						
Sep-23	82	90																						
Dec-23	92	90																						
Mar-24	96	90																						
Latest: 96%	Target: 90%, Floor: 80%	Previous: 92% (Green)																						
Percentage of routine highway repairs reported by residents completed within 28 days			<b>AMBER</b> ⇒																					
<table border="1"> <caption>Actual vs Target Data for Highway Repairs</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Period</th> <th>Actual (%)</th> <th>Target (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Dec-22</td> <td>89</td> <td>90</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mar-23</td> <td>85</td> <td>90</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jun-23</td> <td>78</td> <td>90</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sep-23</td> <td>88</td> <td>90</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dec-23</td> <td>90</td> <td>90</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mar-24</td> <td>89</td> <td>90</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Period	Actual (%)	Target (%)	Dec-22	89	90	Mar-23	85	90	Jun-23	78	90	Sep-23	88	90	Dec-23	90	90	Mar-24	89	90
Period	Actual (%)	Target (%)																						
Dec-22	89	90																						
Mar-23	85	90																						
Jun-23	78	90																						
Sep-23	88	90																						
Dec-23	90	90																						
Mar-24	89	90																						
Latest: 89%	Target: 90%, Floor: 80%	Previous: 91% (Green)																						
Emergency highway incidents attended within 2 hours of notification			<b>AMBER</b> ⇒																					
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Latest: 95%	Target: 98%, Floor: 95%	Previous: 95% (Amber)																						

Percentage of satisfied customers with routine Highways service delivery, 100 call back survey

RED



Latest: 82%

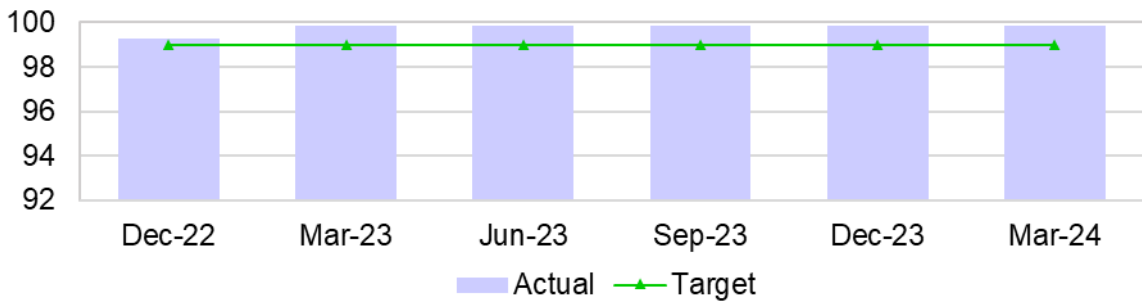
Target: 95%, Floor: 85%

Previous: 93% (Amber)

NB: Since September 2023 the survey has moved from monthly to bi-monthly.

Percentage of municipal waste recycled or converted to energy and not taken to landfill – rolling 12 months

GREEN



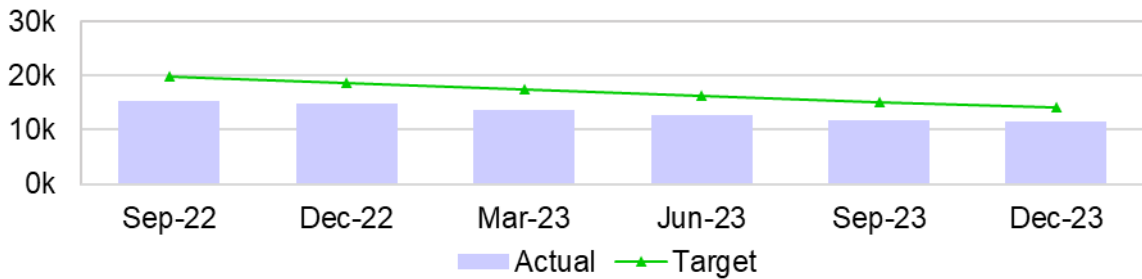
Latest: 99.9%

Target: 99%, Floor: 95%

Previous: 99.9% (Green)

Greenhouse Gas emissions from KCC estate (excluding schools) in tonnes – rolling 12 months

GREEN



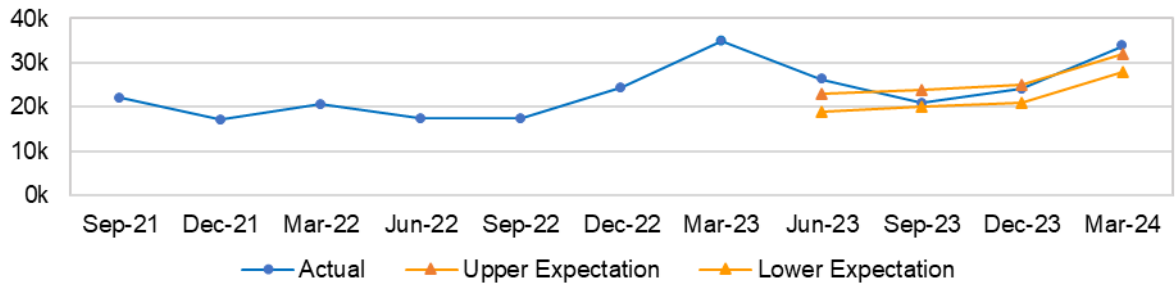
Latest: 11,477

Target: 11,907, Floor: 13,100

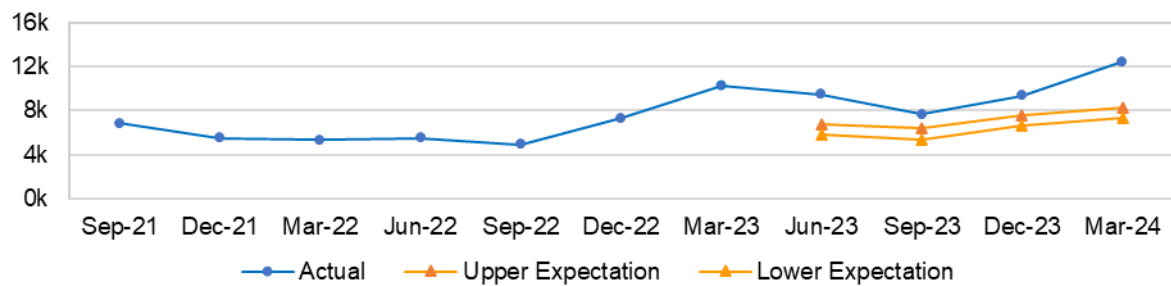
Previous: 11,773 (Green)

## Activity indicators

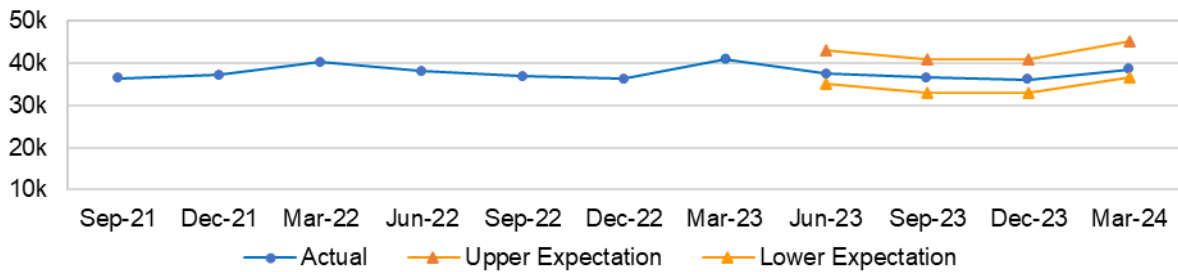
### Number of Highways enquiries raised for action – by Quarter



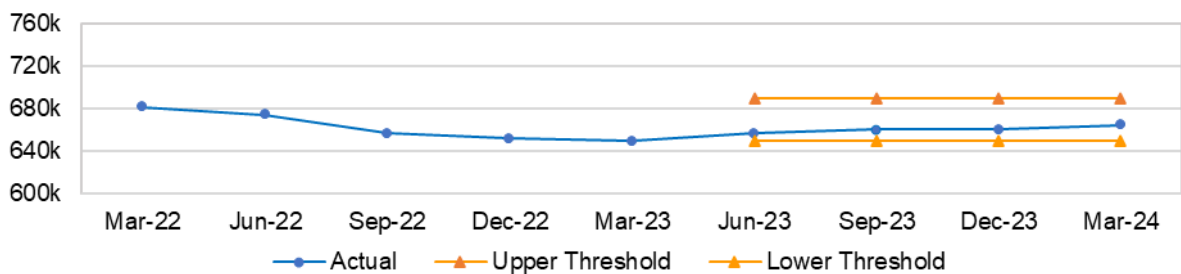
### Highways Work in Progress (active enquires/jobs)



### Number of street work permit requests



### Total municipal waste tonnage collected – rolling 12 months





## Children, Young People and Education

<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Rory Love, Sue Chandler
<b>Corporate Director</b>	Sarah Hammond

KPI Summary	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>RED</b>	↑	⇒	↓
	7	3	4	3	5	6

### Schools

Based on the inspection data as at the 31st March 2024, 92% of schools in Kent (543 of the 592) were Good or Outstanding, compared to the national figure of 90%. The percentage of Primary schools judged as Good or Outstanding at 92% is slightly higher than national figure of 91%. 88% of Secondary schools were judged to be Good or Outstanding which compares favourably to 83% nationally. The percentage for Special schools, at 92%, was two percentage points higher than the national position. All six Alternative Provision schools (100%) were good or outstanding compared to the national figure of 87%.

Assessment for learning in the wider curriculum is a common theme at inspection, evaluating whether staff effectively identify where pupils have misconceptions in their learning. Headteacher wellbeing has also been given higher priority, and attendance continues to be a local and national focus. The Education People (TEP) briefings continue to provide regular updates and advice to school leaders, whilst signposting support and guidance. This term's briefings covered a range of issues including the revised Early Years Foundation Stage Frameworks (January 2024) and changes to implementation of the Education Inspection Framework (EIF).

### School Places and Admissions

In Primary schools, out of the 16,653 Kent applicants, 16,436 (98.7%) received one of their three named schools and 15,198 (91.3%) were offered their first preference, a slight increase over last year.

In secondary schools a total of 22,479 parents and carers applied for a place for their child in a Kent school for September 2024. This is 141 fewer than last year, with the number of Kent pupils applying having decreased by 474, falling from the historic peak in 2023. The proportion of Kent pupils offered a place at their first-preference school has increased this year to 78.6%.

### Early Years

The latest inspection data for the percentage of Early Years settings rated Good or Outstanding is 99%, one percentage point above the target and four percentage points higher than the national average of 95%.

For early years group settings, The Education People (TEP) continues to support all good and outstanding settings through Annual Conversations but prioritises those due an Ofsted inspection to assist them in retaining a good or better Ofsted judgement, making clear recommendations where appropriate and offering the 'Securing Good' programme to those in their inspection and not meeting at least Good Ofsted grade descriptors. Settings with a Requires Improvement or Inadequate judgement receive targeted and bespoke support, with support for plans of action and follow up visits as required. New settings are also offered support in readiness for first inspection.

In the 2024 Spring term, the take up of Free for Two claims against those potentially eligible on the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) list increased to 72.6% with 2,978 children being funded. Last year the take up figures for Spring 2023 were 69.6%.

Established and regular communications and interactions with the Early Years and Childcare Sector continue, including quarterly meeting with the Provider Association, the scheduled termly (six times annually) generic Early Years and Childcare Bulletin, with communications in between these being sent when appropriate and necessary with ongoing contact with individual providers as required. Three times annually, a county-wide round of Briefing and Networking Sessions are offered. The Early Years and Childcare Service's Threads of Success training offer continues to be delivered principally on virtual platforms, as recruitment and retention challenges continue to make it very difficult for providers to attend face-to-face training, even when this is funded and therefore free for providers to attend.

The Early Years and Childcare Service, working in partnership with KCC Management Information (MI) and Finance, continue to implement the Government's New Free Entitlements and Wraparound Provision initiatives. 7,245 codes have been issued to working parents of two-year-olds, of which 5,317 have been validated by KCC, meaning a validation rate of 73%, which is above the national figure of 64%.

### **SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability)**

Based on the rolling 12-month average to March 2023, 13% of Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs) were issued within 20 weeks excluding exceptions (332 out of 2,496). In the single month of March, 40 plans (15%) were issued within timescale. The percentage of annual EHCP reviews waiting over 12 months is 47%, three percentage points within the target of 50%.

The number of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) completed within 20 weeks is expected to remain below the target while the service balances completion of the backlog of older cases for those children and their families who have been waiting the longest. A dedicated backlog team identified 1,080 out of timescale cases on 1 September 2023, which had been reduced to 97 by the end of March. This backlog is therefore on track to be cleared by the target date of April, at which point we would expect to see the KPI improving.

While 20-week performance remains low, there has been a steady month-on-month improvement since September. Overall staff output in processing new requests has considerably increased.

Phase transfer deadlines have now passed for pre and post 16 pupils. Over 93% of Year 6 to Year 7 cases have now been finalised, which compares favourably to the levels around 70% at the same point last year. While the Post-16 team have faced considerable challenges as a result of low staffing levels at the start of the phase transfer process, and subsequently an inexperienced workforce, the team successfully finalised 70% of cases by the statutory deadline. While this still represents a significant shortfall in the required decision making, it is a significant improvement on last year's 30% completion rate. This highlights the potential for further significant improvements next year now that staffing issues are fully resolved. All casework teams remain focussed on resolving outstanding cases as quickly as possible.

## **Wider Early Help**

105 pupils were permanently excluded during the rolling 12-month period to March 2024, which equates to 0.04% of the school population. 26 were issued to 'primary' phase pupils and 73 to 'secondary' phase pupils. The current level of pupils excluded is comparable with the rolling 12-month period to June 2015 (104 pupils – 0.05% of the school population). Dartford district accounted for 20 of the 105 pupils excluded across the County, followed by Tonbridge and Malling district with 14 pupils and Maidstone district with 13 pupils in the rolling 12-month period to March 2024.

The PRU, Inclusion and Attendance Service (PIAS) continues to identify common themes and develop additional processes to support schools to ensure all interventions are exhausted and exclusion remains a last resort as detailed in the Department for Education guidance on suspensions and exclusions issued in September 2023. This includes the development of practices such as an inclusion intervention checklist, the appropriate use of directions off-site (alternative provision) and using inclusion champions to support schools. PIAS continues to provide regular training to governing boards and academy trustees across the county's schools to ensure all cases of permanent exclusion are thoroughly scrutinised and is promoting the use of data to address cases where suspensions are occurring on a regular basis.

Work continues within KCC to drive inclusion in school and reduce suspensions and permanent exclusions (and increase attendance), including CATIE (Countywide Approach to Inclusive Education) which uses an inclusive leadership programme, core training offer, whole school nurture approach provided by Nurture UK, and Special School outreach work delivered by the Specialist Teaching and Learning Service and Local Inclusion Forum Team (LIFT).

The number of First-Time Entrants to the Youth Justice System in Kent in March, at 320 (rolling 12-month figure), continues to be above the target of 270 and is RAG-rated Amber.

In line with the national trend, Kent's first-time entrants increased over the preceding rolling reporting periods. This was also reflected in the Kent Youth Justice's statistical neighbour group. However, the latest performance indicates a slight reduction in first time entries for Quarter 4. We cannot currently compare this against national and family data.

The partnership rollout of Outcome 22 (O22 - Diversionary, educational or intervention activity) is progressing and Kent police report that 143 children had been made subject to outcome 22s in the year up until February 2024. This may be an underlying factor for the reduction in first time entrants.

In partnership with KCC's QA team, the youth justice service has recently undergone a mock inspection, based on the HMIP inspection framework. This included an inspection of "Domain 3 -out of court disposals" which is the primary work stream which diverts children from the criminal justice system. Any learning from this process, including any areas for improvement, will be incorporated into the Youth Justice partnership improvement plan, which will be co-produced, agreed and monitored by the County Youth Justice Board and its partners.

In liaison with the Youth Justice Service, the KCC QA team continue to progress with creating a performance framework which measures recidivism rates of out of court disposals.

Kent continues to deliver the 'Turn around' prevention programme to promote a suitable education, training or employment offer for each child, and works with children and their families, alongside Early Help, towards full-time participation. In the longer term, by engaging those children in full-time education, training or employment, this programme will safeguard those children, prevent their offending, and further reduce the numbers of First Time Entrants.

### **Early Help**

At the end of March 2024, there were 2,681 open family cases with Early Help units providing support for 5,423 children and young people under the age of 18. This is an 11.6% increase in the number of families supported compared to the end of the previous Quarter, but 8.5% fewer families than Quarter 4 last year.

The performance measure for 'Percentage of Early Help cases closed with outcomes achieved returning to Early Help or Children's Social Work teams within 3 months' was 14.8% for the rolling 12 months to March 2023, similar to the previous Quarter (14.4%) but continuing to achieve the target of below 15.0%.

### **Children's Social Care - Staffing and Caseloads**

The number of open cases (including those for care leavers above the age of 18) was 11,697 on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, an increase of 312 children and young people when compared to the end of the previous Quarter.

There were 5,914 referrals to children's social care services in the Quarter, a 5% increase when compared to the previous Quarter but in line with the number received in Quarter 4 of 2023 (5,979). The rate of re-referrals within 12 months for the 12 months to March 2024 was 23.5%, compared to 23.8% the previous Quarter, continuing to achieve the target of below 25.0%. This compares to the England average of 22.4% for 2022/23.

The percentage of case-holding social worker posts held by permanent qualified social workers employed by Kent County Council (73.6%) increased slightly, from 73.0% in December 2023 but has remained below the floor standard of 75.0%. **Management actions being taken, regarding the recruitment and retention of Social Workers, include: a focus on reducing caseloads and administrative burdens to assist with the retention of social workers; participation in the Frontline programme which funded 12 Social Work Apprenticeships along with Kent's own Step-up to Social Work Apprenticeship programme.** The average caseload for Social Workers in Children's Social Work Teams was 21.8 cases in March 2024, above target caseload of no more than 18 cases. This has reduced from an average of 25 cases at the end of Quarter 1 (June 2023).

### **Child Protection**

On 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, there were 1,212 children subject to a child protection plan, an increase of 32 from the end of the previous Quarter. The rate per 10,000 children (aged 0-17) was 36.0 which remains below the last published rate for England of 43.2 (31<sup>st</sup> March 2023). The percentage of children subject to a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time increased by 0.6 percentage points, from 19.1% in December 2023 to 19.7% in March 2024. This is within the target range of between 17.5% and 22.5% and compares to an average for England of 23.6% (March 2023).

## Children in Care

The number of non-UASC children in care decreased by 6 in the Quarter to 1,460. The number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) in care decreased by 51 to 480 with some of these young people awaiting transfer to another local authority under the National Transfer Scheme. The number of children in care placed in Kent by other local authorities (OLA) increased by 21 children over the Quarter to 1,267.

Status	Mar 23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24
Non-UASC	1,505	1,491	1,314	1466	1460
UASC	448	491	803	531	480
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,953</b>	<b>1,982</b>	<b>2,117</b>	<b>1,997</b>	<b>1,940</b>
<b>Gender</b>					
Male	1,254	1,296	1,514	1329	1273
Female	696	683	600	666	664
Non-binary	3	3	3	2	3
<b>Age Group</b>					
0 to 4	272	253	175	253	239
5 to 9	220	233	189	231	235
10 to 15	689	690	717	665	655
16 to 17	772	806	1,036	848	811
<b>Ethnicity</b>					
White	1,392	1,392	1,235	1344	1330
Mixed	109	104	99	109	112
Asian	26	31	26	23	26
Black	93	100	194	110	114
Other	333	355	563	411	358

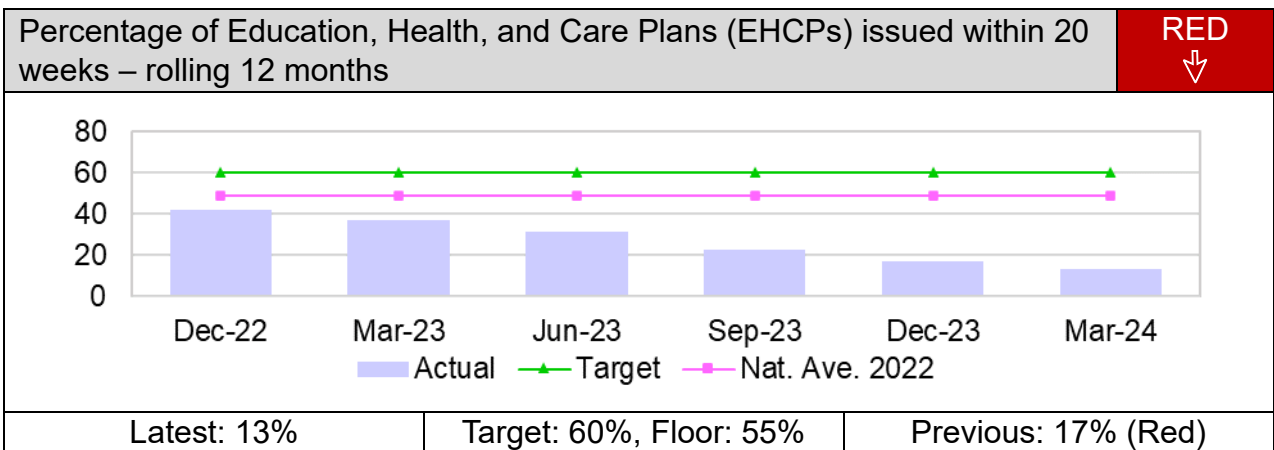
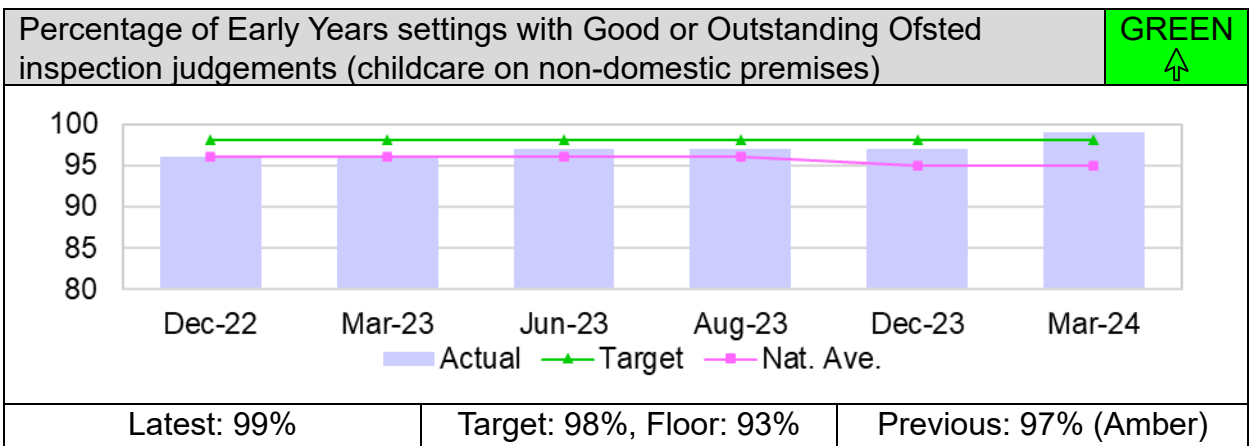
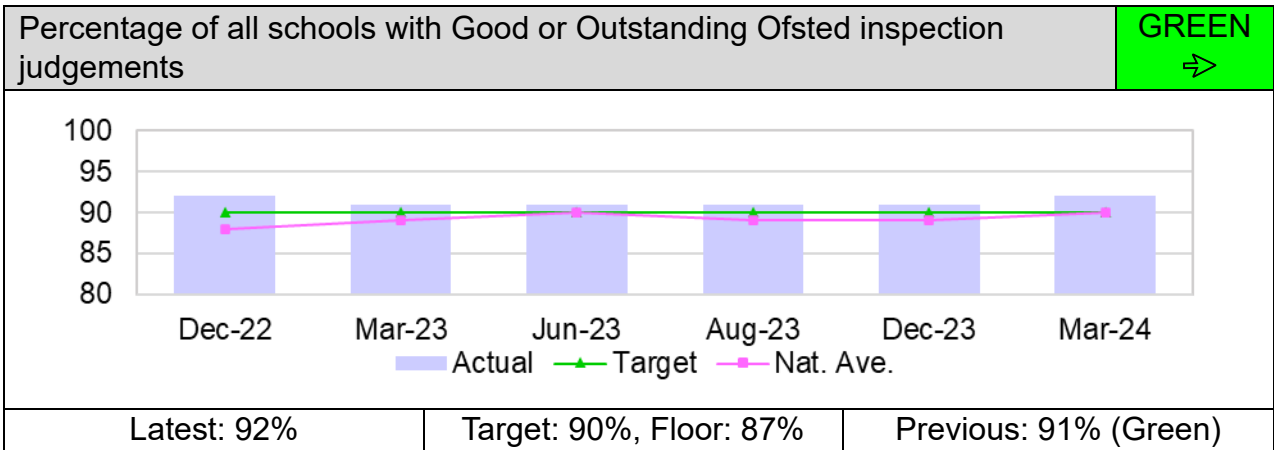
The percentage of Children in Care (excluding UASC) placed in KCC in-house foster care or with family/friends decreased in the Quarter from 74.5% in December 2023 to 73.9% in March 2024, below the floor standard of 75.0%. **Performance against this measure is impacted by extended timescales of care proceedings and the availability of in-house foster placements, which is a national issue. Kent Fostering is part of a cluster of Local Authorities who received DfE funding to support a national approach to the recruitment and retention of Local Authority Foster Carers. A national recruitment hub is in development, alongside funding to set up a Mockingbird Scheme to provide additional support to existing foster carers. From 1st April 2024, Kinship assessment and support services will be centralised and move into the fostering service to improve the offer to all types of kinship carers including Special Guardians and Connected Person Foster Carers. The aim will be to increase the numbers of children safely placed with family and friends within their community network and reduce those needing a mainstream in house foster placement.**

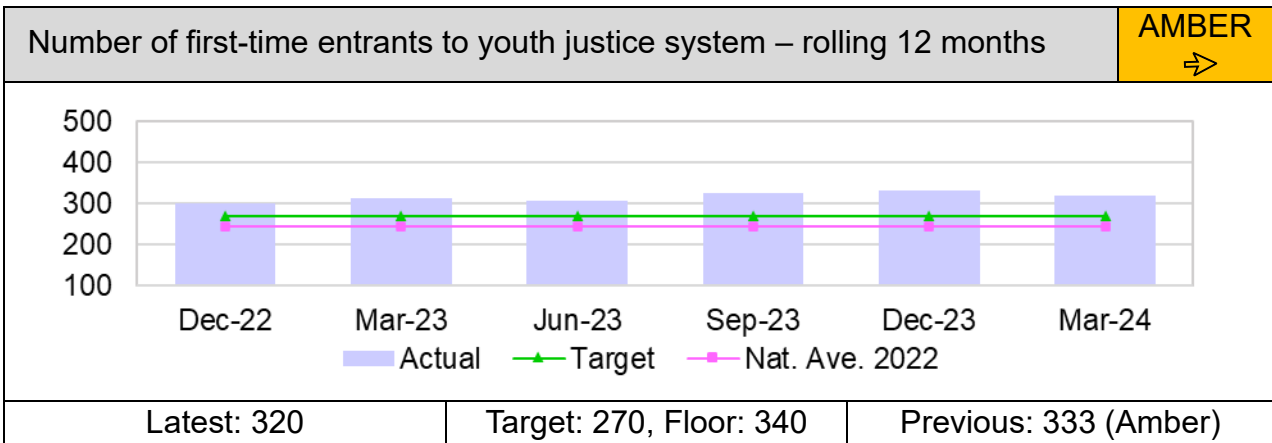
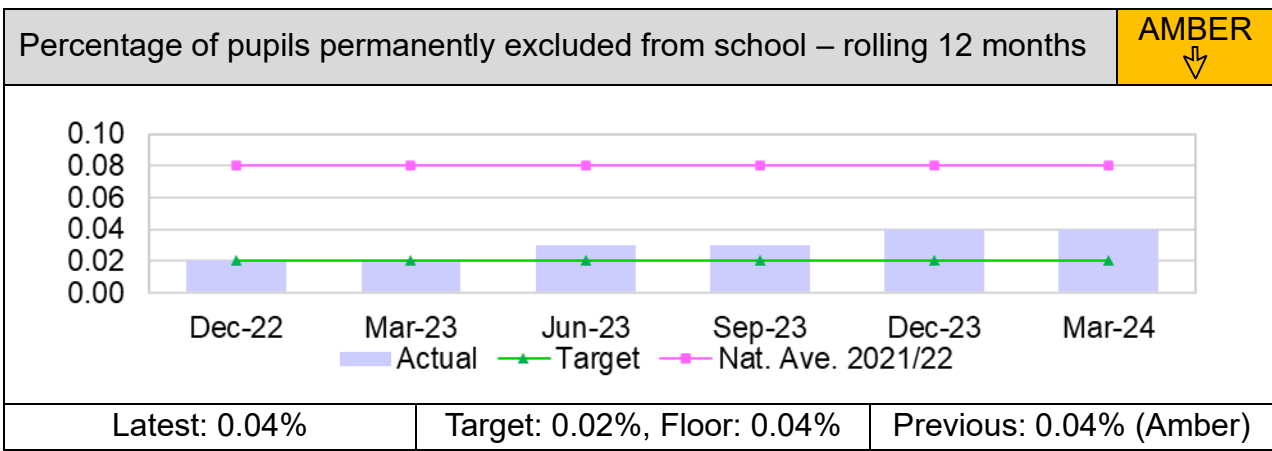
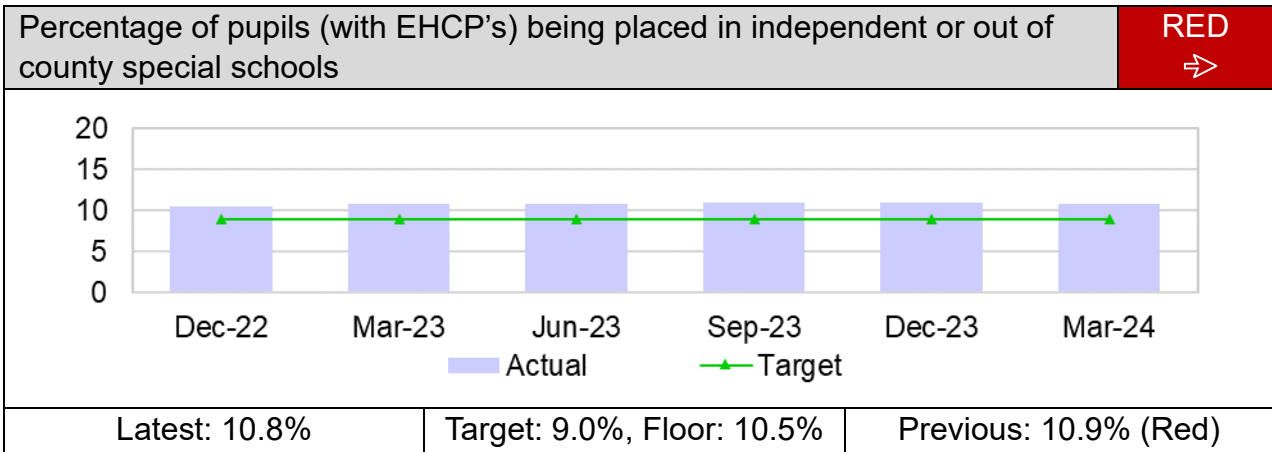
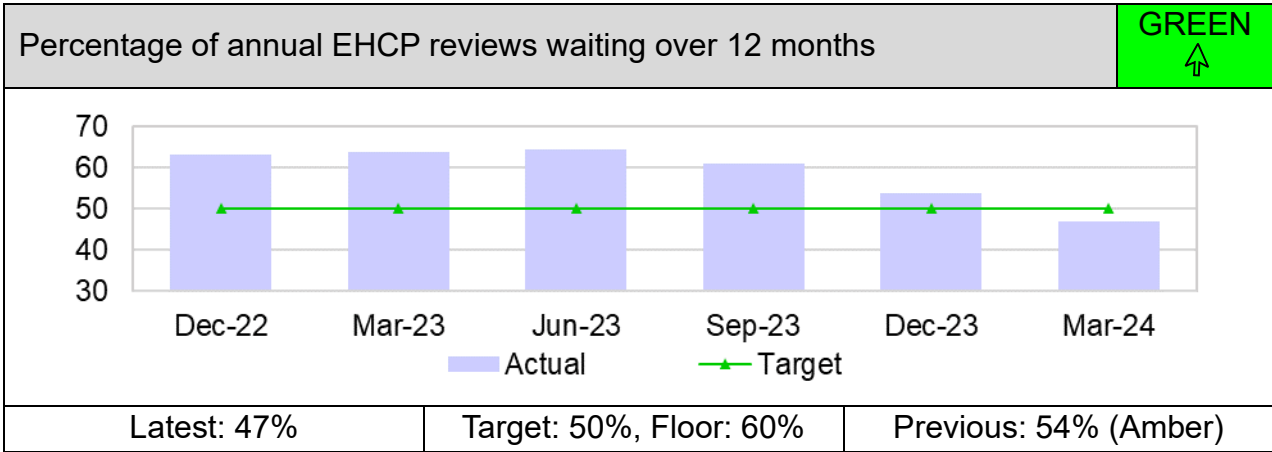
For children adopted in the last 12 months, the average number of days between coming into care and moving in with their adoptive family continues to outperform the nationally set guide of 426 days. The average number of days for Kent's children at the end of March 2024 was 340 days, an improvement when compared to the average of 348 days at the end of the previous Quarter.

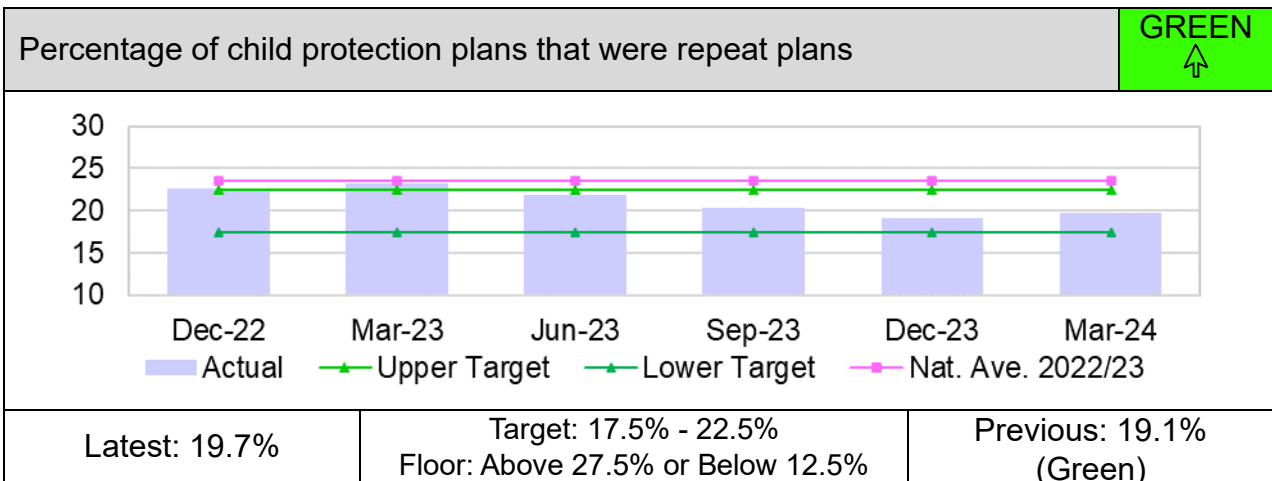
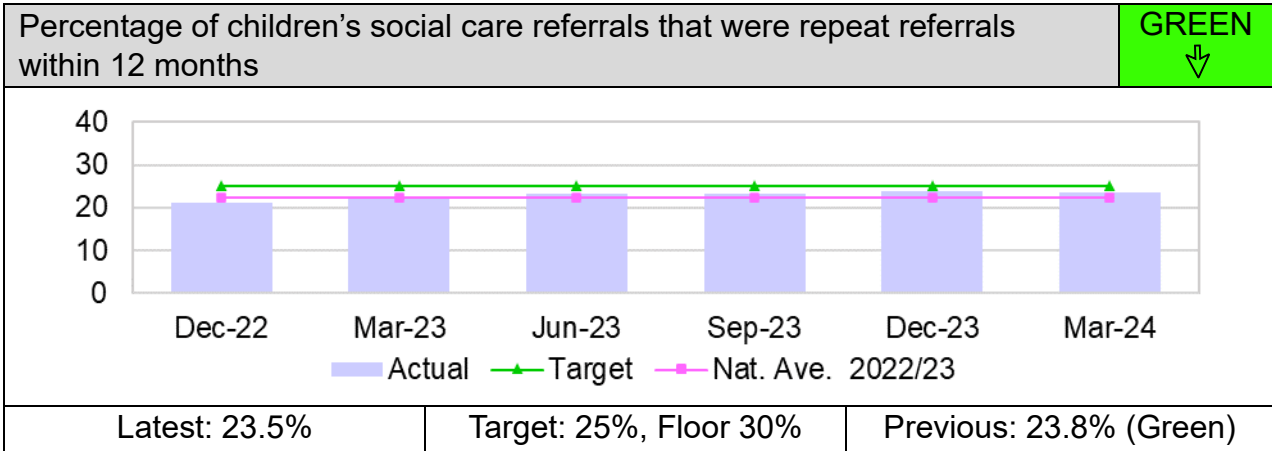
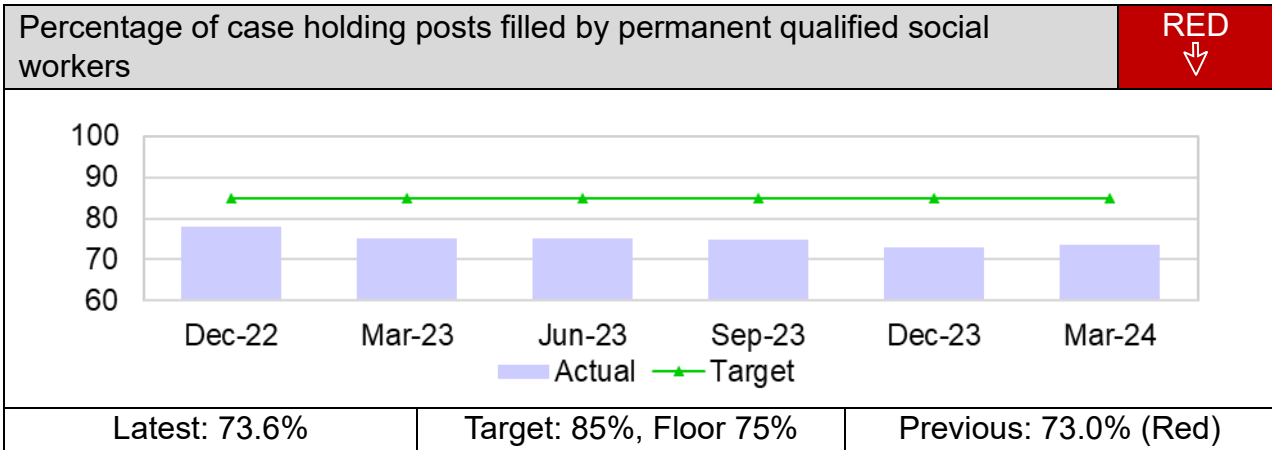
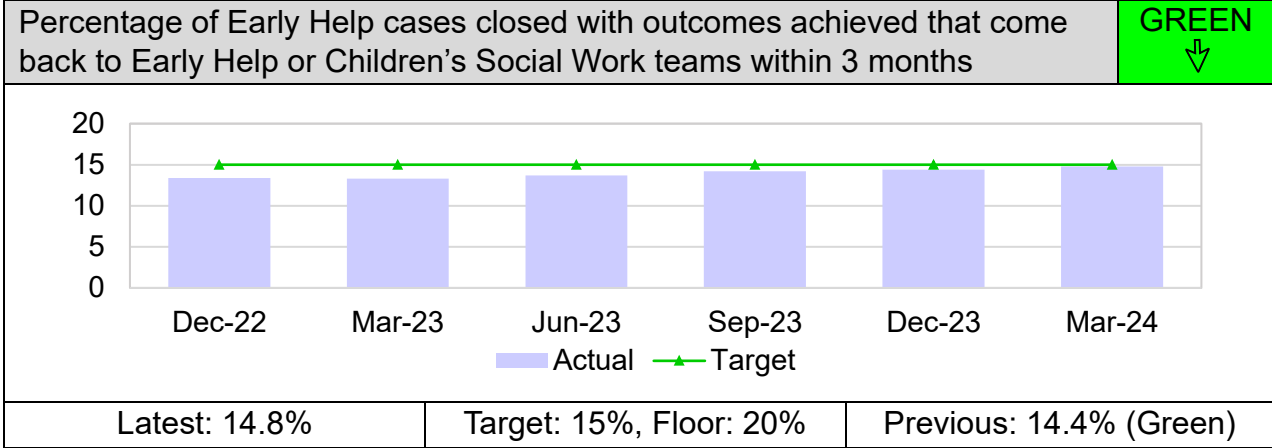
### Care Leavers

The number of care leavers at the end of March 2024 was 2,033, a decrease of 10 from the previous Quarter. Of the 2,033 care leavers, 1,002 (49.3%) were non-UASC care leavers and 1,031 (50.7%) were UASC. The percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training, at 57.7%, remained below the target of 65.0%. Given the impact of the Immigration Bill (2023), UASC will not be able to remain in education or gain employment when they reach the age of 18. This means KCC's percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training will eventually fall below 50%.

### Key Performance Indicators



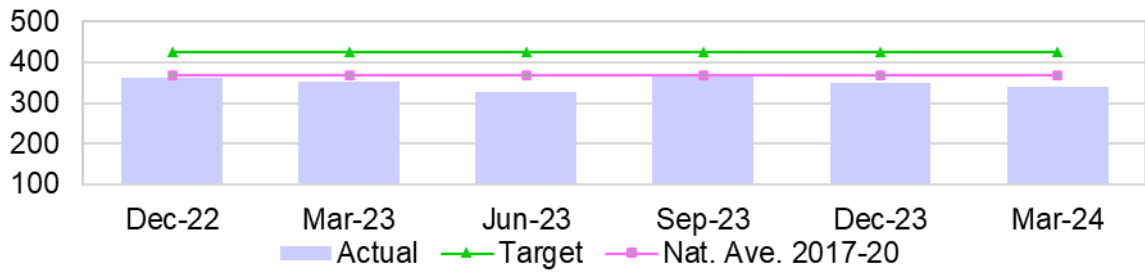






Average number of days between becoming a child in care and moving in with an adoptive family

**GREEN**  
⇒



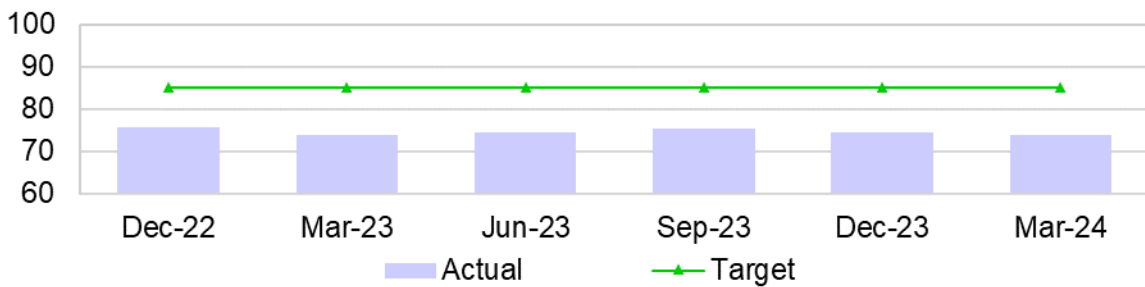
Latest: 340

Target: 426, Floor: 450

Previous: 348 (Green)

Percentage foster care placements which are in-house or with relatives and friends (excluding UASC)

**RED**  
⇒



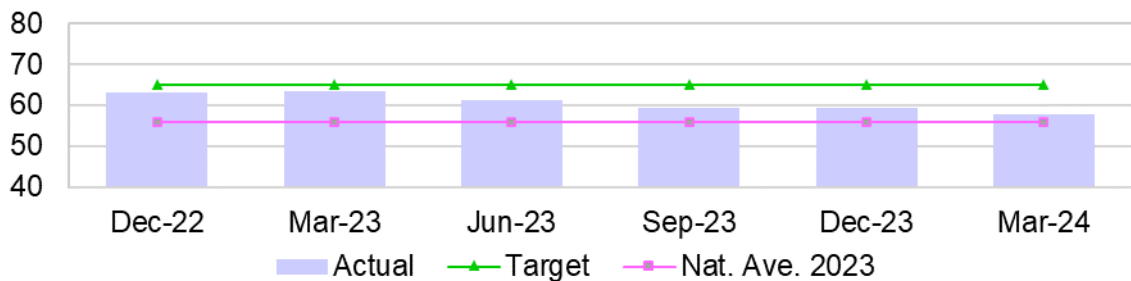
Latest: 73.9%

Target: 85%, Floor: 75%

Previous: 74.5% (Red)

Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with)

**AMBER**  
↓



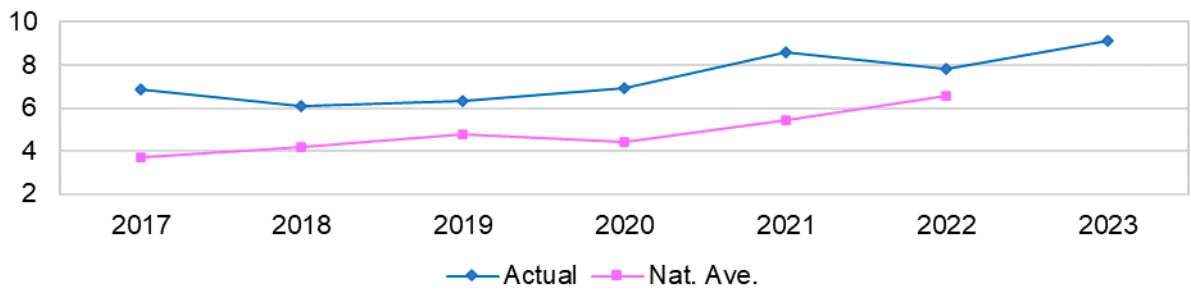
Latest: 57.7%

Target: 65%, Floor: 55%

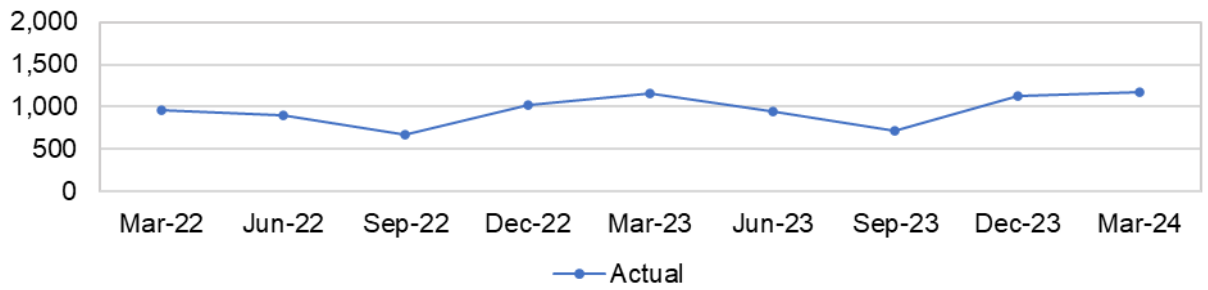
Previous: 59.3% (Amber)

## Activity indicators

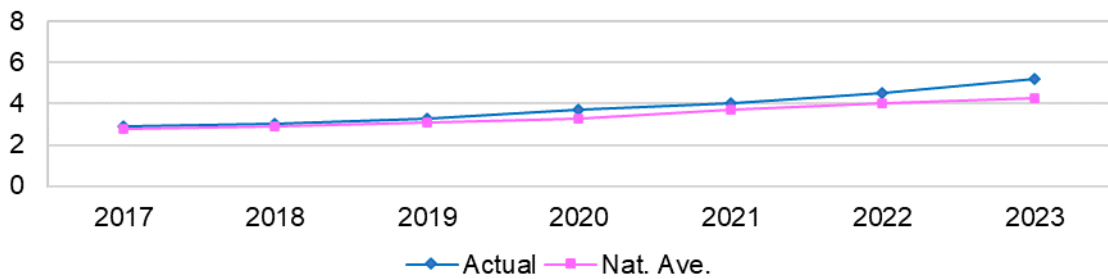
Number of initial requests for statutory assessment (for an EHC plan) per 1,000 population



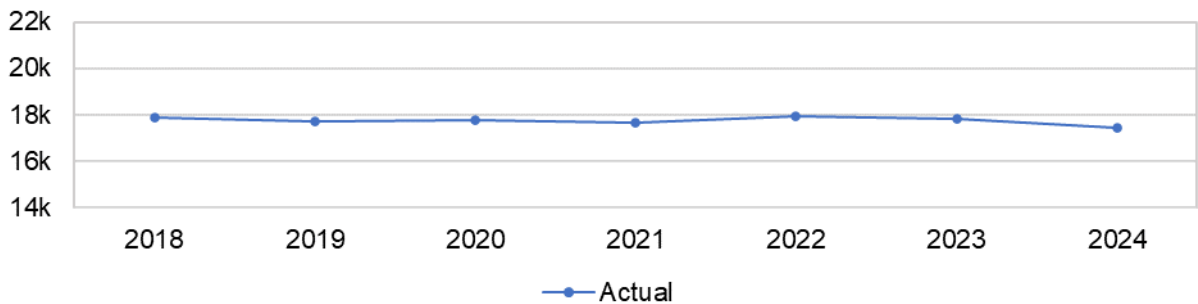
Number of initial requests for statutory assessment for an EHC plan (Quarterly)



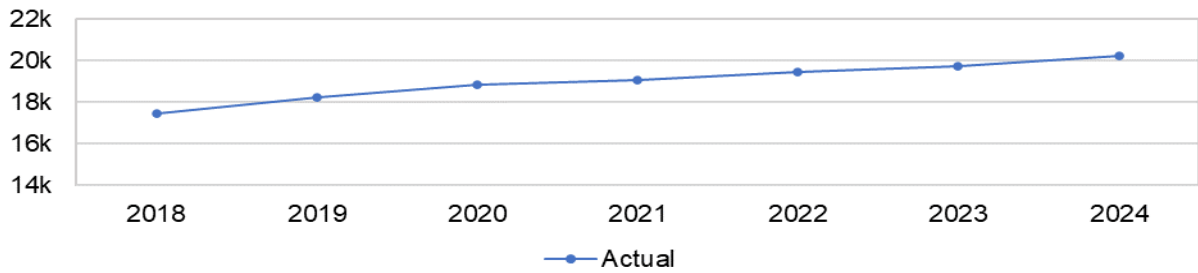
Percentage of pupils with an EHCP



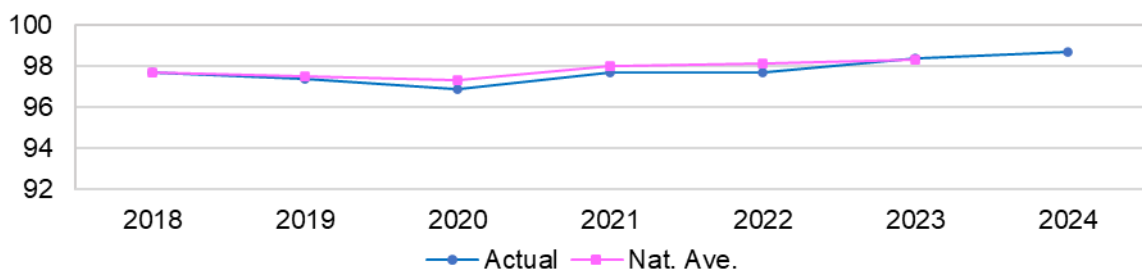
Number of pupils in Reception year (Kent state funded schools)



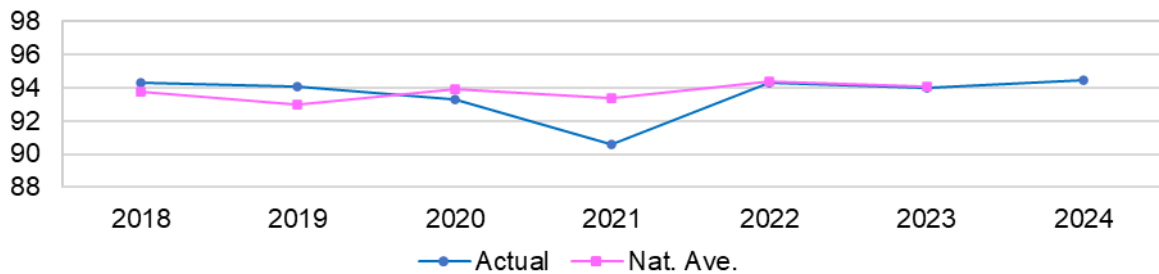
### Number of pupils in Year 7 (Kent state funded schools)



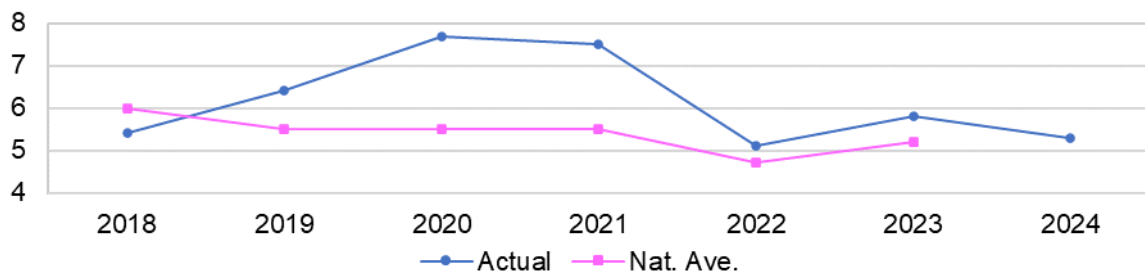
### Percentage of Primary school applicants offered one of top three preferences



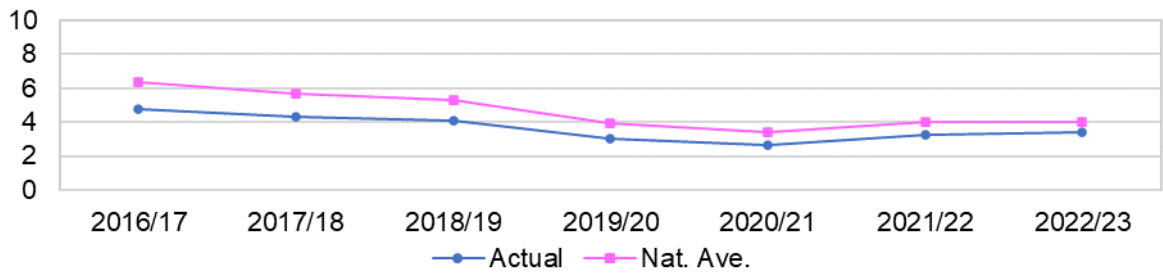
### Percentage of Secondary school applicants offered one of top three preferences



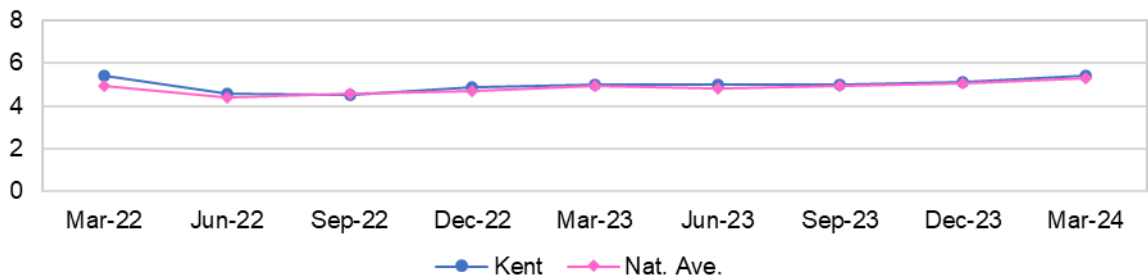
### Percentage of 16-17 years olds Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs) or whose activity is Not Known



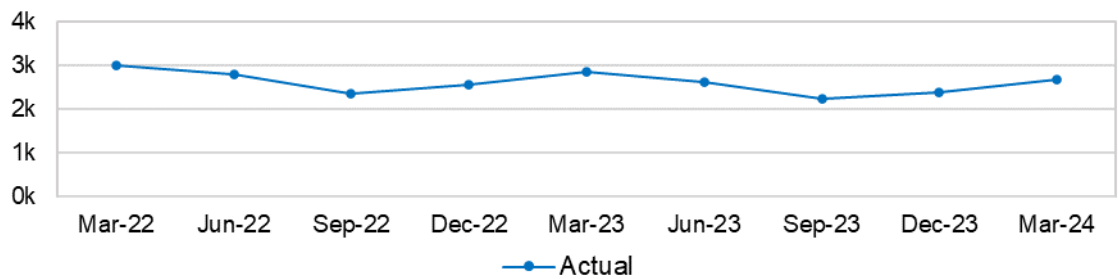
### Percentage of 16-18 year olds who start an apprenticeship



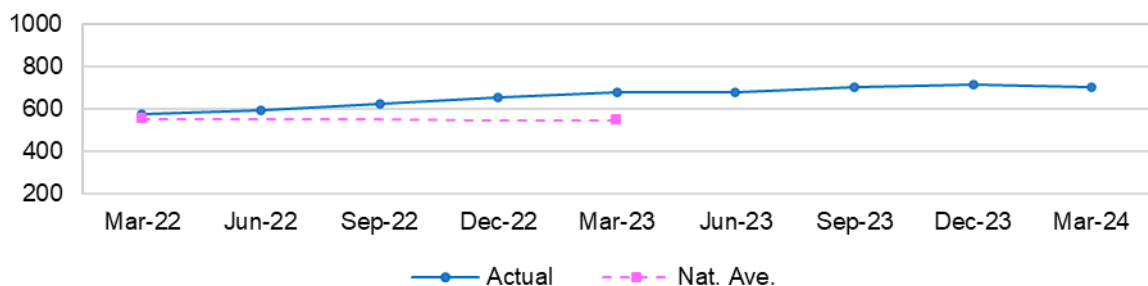
### Percentage of 18-24 year olds claiming Universal Credit



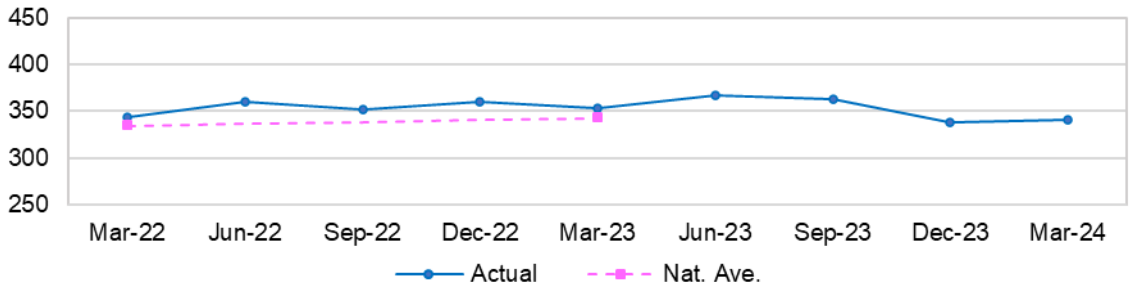
### Number of open Early Help cases managed by Units



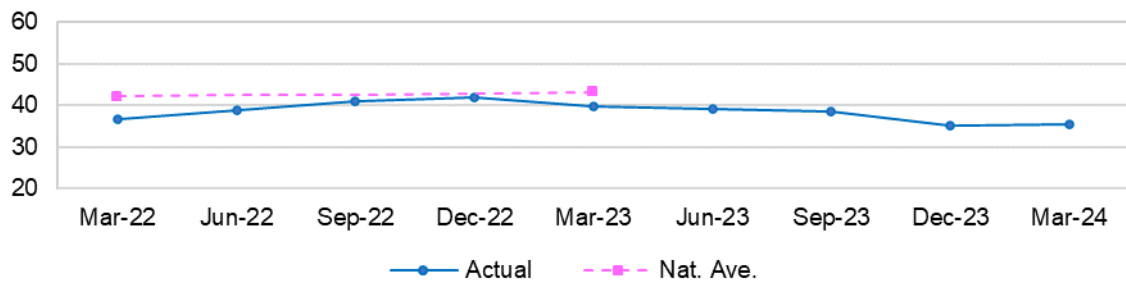
### Rate of CSW referrals per 10,000 population aged under 18 – rolling 12 months



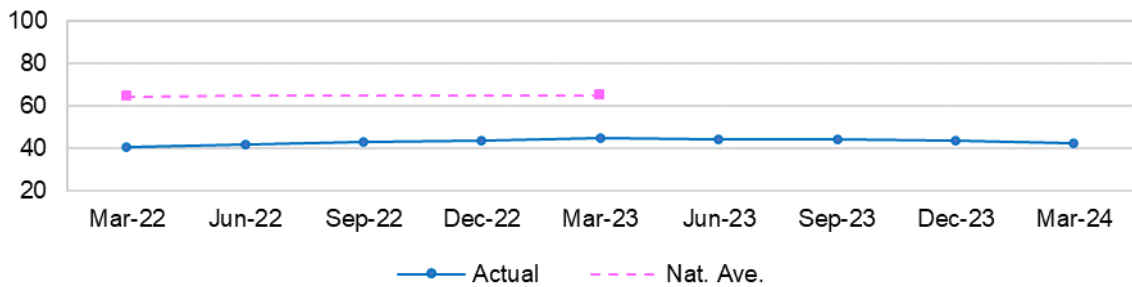
CSW caseload per 10,000 child population – snapshot at Quarter end



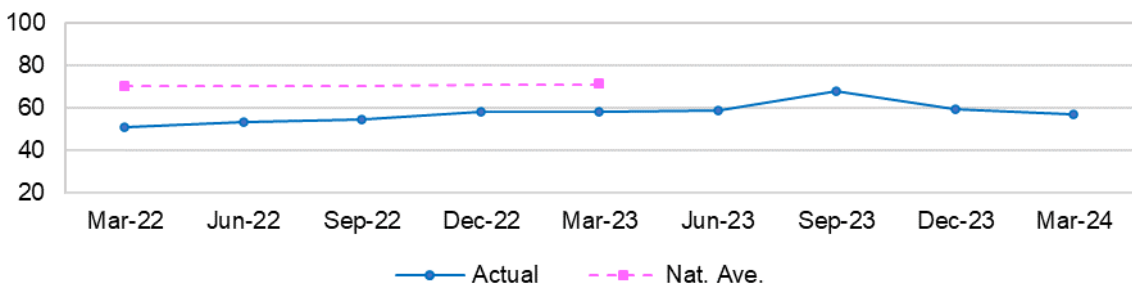
Rate of children with Child Protection Plans per 10,000 child population – snapshot at Quarter end



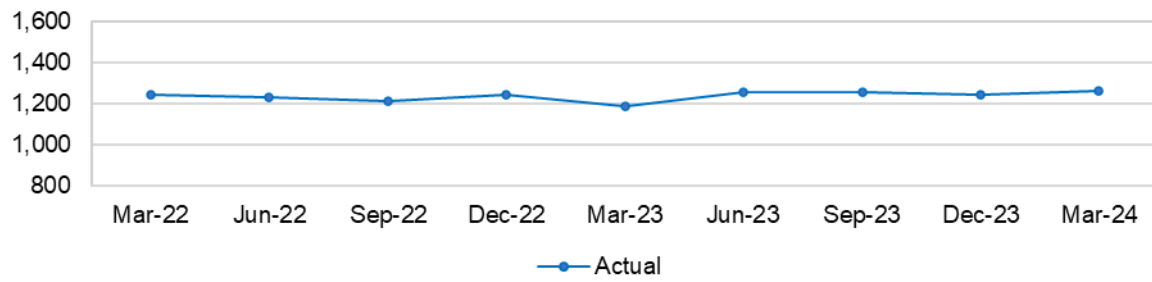
Rate of Children in Care (excluding UASC) per 10,000 child population – snapshot at Quarter end



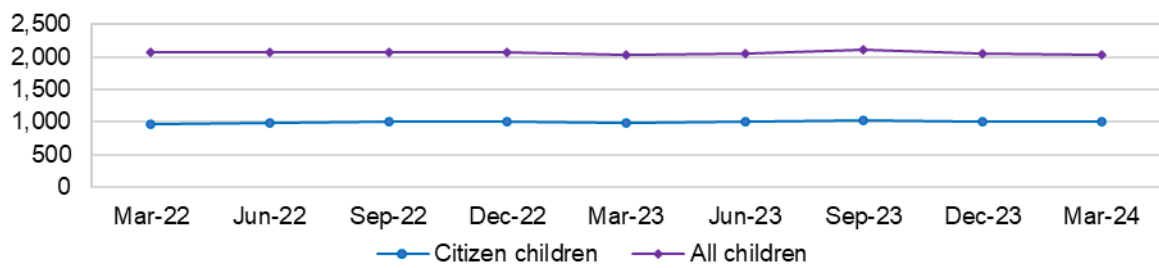
Rate of Children in Care (including UASC) per 10,000 child population – snapshot at Quarter end



Number of other local authority children in care placed into Kent – snapshot at Quarter end



Number of care leavers as at Quarter end



<b>Adult Social Care</b>
--------------------------

<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Dan Watkins
<b>Corporate Director</b>	Richard Smith

KPI Summary	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>RED</b>	↑	⇒	↓
	1	3	2	3	2	1

**Contacts**

Adult social care had 21,671 people make contact in Quarter 4; for the whole of 2023/24 it was 53,626 people, with a total volume of 178,193 contacts. The KPI on the percentage of people who re-contacted adult social care, having had a previous contact resolved with advice and information, moved to 5%, remaining below the threshold of 9% and continues to be RAG rated Green.

The aim of the Area Referral Service is to provide advice and support which prevents, reduces or delays the onset and development of need to keep people as independent as possible for as long as possible; this is in line with the Care and Support Statutory Guidance of the Care Act 2014. The implementation of the Locality Operating Model in April 2023 changed the delivery model of our “front door” and moved to having the Area Referral Services based on a more local footprint, widening the team to include social workers and social care practitioners. This has improved the local knowledge and professional support offered at first contact with adult social care.

In addition to providing telephone advice there is also a suite of online Self-Assessment tools, providing an opportunity for people, or those who support them, to help them understand their needs and the services available as well as the financial side to accessing social care support. The online self-assessment tool relating to needs provides a ‘prescription’ of advice including the option for a digital solution alongside the traditional options.

Quarter 4 saw adult social care complete 4,382 Care Needs Assessments. For 2023/24 there were 18,105 Care Needs Assessments completed, with an incoming volume of 18,787. **Delivering timely and high quality Care Needs Assessments is a key driver and priority for adult social care, and is included in all targeted work and action plans across adult social care. All Area Operational Managers are now in post in the four areas adding capacity for managing performance.** It is important to note that each Care Needs Assessment is delivered with the person, for the person, and is worked through with their agreement and this can take time.

For the KPI of the percentage of Care Needs Assessment completed within 28 days for Quarter 3, 73% were completed within 28 days. Although this is another increase on the 66% seen in Quarter 1, it is still below the floor standard of 80% and is RAG rated Red. Initial figures for Quarter 4 also show 73%, however these remain under review and are subject to updates.

881 Carers’ Assessments were completed in Quarter 4 by adult social care and the Carers’ organisations. This was above the number that were proposed at 851. **Adult social care is ensuring that the new practice assurance panel process implemented in March 2024 will increase the identification of Carers and the offer of a Carers Assessment.**

Where eligible for support, people receive a Care and Support Plan (C&SP) which details, with the person, how they can be supported and the services they may receive. Adult social care had 16,350 people with an active C&SP at the end of Quarter 4. Not everyone will go on to need a support package and adult social care has seen varying numbers of new support packages being arranged each Quarter, in Quarter 3 it was 2,395 and in Quarter 4 it was 2,069, however both of these figures will change as the client recording system continues to be updated. The average weekly cost of a new support package was £620 in Quarter 3, provisionally reducing to £603 for Quarter 4, however these figures are also subject to change.

### **Annual reviews of the Care and Support Plan (C&SP)**

Adult social care completed 2,306 annual reviews of the C&SP in Quarter 4, with 9,278 for the whole of 2023/24. This volume of completions is below the number of ongoing reviews becoming due, but the completions in Quarter 3 and Quarter 4 have led to a stabilisation of the number of people requiring an annual review on the last day of the Quarter at around 6,000. **Operational Teams are prioritising delivery of reviews, both the first review at 6-8 weeks and the annual reviews.**

### **Enablement**

Where people need short-term enablement services, adult social care has the Kent Enablement at Home Service (KEaH) which aims to keep people independent and in their home. Quarter 4 saw a decrease on the previous Quarter in the number of people actively receiving this support to 1,656. Although there were decreases in Quarter 3 and Quarter 4, overall, 2023/24 had 5% more people accessing KEaH when compared to the previous year.

The KEaH Service continues to work with referrals from multiple sources, including from acute and community hospitals, and reaches out to adult social care teams to help maximise the opportunities for people to receive enablement. The KEaH team have spent this time helping those who are ready to leave but are unable to do so (for example they need further support but a provider has not been located) and were able to make substantial progress with helping those move to a new provider.

There will be people who require residential or nursing care on a temporary basis (either while their longer-term needs or circumstances are assessed, or to provide respite) via the hospital discharge pathways or from community settings, and adult social care has been working to reduce the use of Short-Term Beds as well as the amount of time people spend in them, ensuring they maximise the opportunities for people to remain independent in their own homes. There was another decrease in short-term bed use into Quarter 4 of 9% on the previous Quarter, with 1,071 people in a Short-Term bed. This is the lowest number for Quarter 4 we have seen for 2 years.

### **Hospital Discharge Pathway**

Ensuring people only spend the time they need to in a Short-Term bed, and the work by the enablement services, such as KEaH and Occupational Therapists meant that adult social care maintained 84% of people aged 65 and over at home 91 days after discharge from hospital having had reablement services. Winter pressures started in Quarter 3 and continued into Quarter 4 and work continued with partners in the integrated Transfer of Care Hubs, with cross-working by the Short Term Pathways Teams and Health colleagues.



## **Direct Payments**

Direct Payments are nationally recognised as an effective way to enable people to remain independent and in their own homes with clear personal choice and control of their support. In Quarter 4 there was an increase to 26% of people in community services with a Direct Payment and is the highest we have seen for over 2 years. This measure does however remain RAG Rated Amber. There continues to be increases in the numbers of carers, people with learning disabilities, and mental health needs receiving a Direct Payment.

## **Residential and Nursing care**

Adult social care continues to see people aged over 65 years old going into long term residential and nursing care. In the 12 months to the end of Quarter 3, adult social care admitted 626 people per 100,000 of the population aged over 65, meaning the KPI remains RAG-rated Red. It is expected that reported figures will increase as the information on the client recording system is updated.

Although the aim is for people to leave a short-term bed and go back to the community, there have been some increases this year in the move from a short-term bed to a long-term bed. Adult Social Care has seen more people needing to start a long-term placement in a care home in general, either from hospital discharge pathways or following increased needs. **Practice assurance panels were introduced in March 2024 to ensure all opportunities for support in the community are considered and exhausted before people enter long term support in care homes.**

The percentage of Kent County Council supported people in a care home with a Care Quality Commission (CQC) rating of Good or Outstanding was maintained at 75% for Quarter 4 and continues to be RAG Rated Amber. There has been no increase in the proportion of those in an Inadequate home this Quarter remaining at 1%.

There are currently eight care homes (2 older person care homes and 6 learning disability, physical disability, and mental health care homes) who have contract suspensions in place to prevent further placements. A collaborative approach between Kent County Council, Health colleagues and external agencies is taken to support providers to deliver on comprehensive multi agency action plans to improve CQC ratings.

## **Mental Health needs**

The number of people with mental health needs who are contacting services is increasing, which is a trend seen nationally, with the majority of these being in contact with adult services.

Adult Social Care are supporting discharge from Mental Health hospitals as a priority to ensure people who are in need of inpatient Mental Health services are supported. **We are working closely with Kent and Medway Partnership Trust and other partners to implement the transformation of Mental Health services, which will see the implementation of a new model for Community Mental Health Teams. This started in East Kent and is now being developed across the county with the aim of providing better access to health support.**

We support people across a spectrum of need levels from those with co-occurring conditions, people with behaviours that challenge, to people who require lower levels of support to maintain their independence. Some people with Autism are also recorded as having a primary mental health need and require varying support provision.

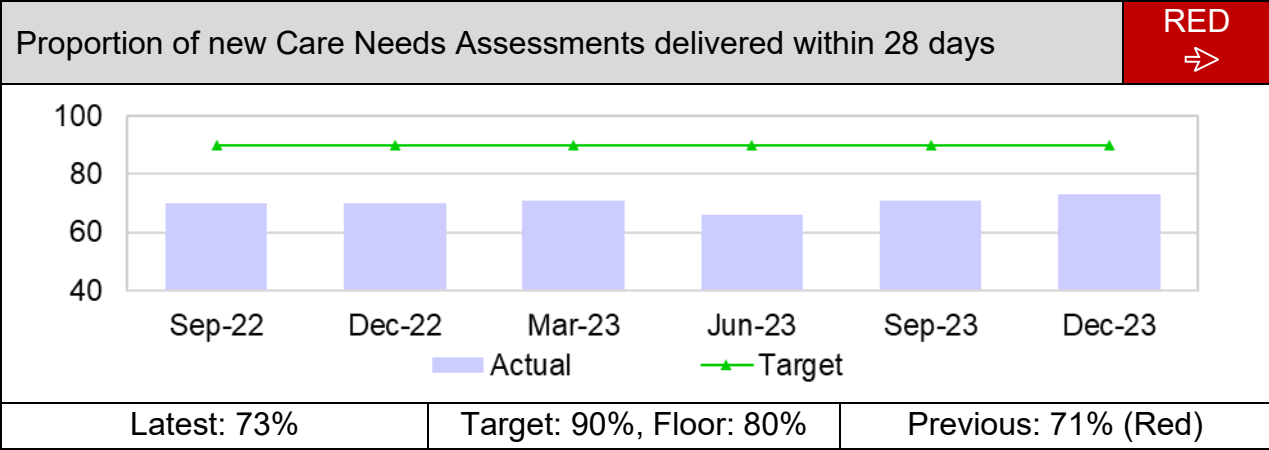
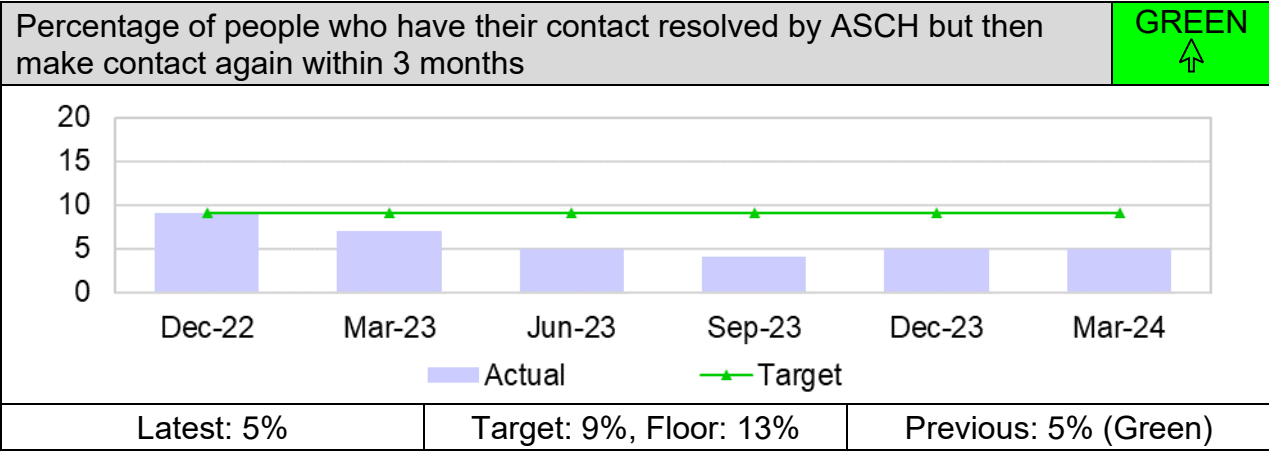
**Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS)**

In Quarter 4, and specifically in January, Adult Social Care received the highest number of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) applications: 2,731 were received, 1,041 in January alone. Increased demand is expected in Quarter 4 each year but this was above expectations. For the whole of 2023/24 over 9,500 applications were received, an increase of 1% on the previous year. The DoLS Team completed 2,733 assessments in Quarter 4, more than matching the number received. In total, 8,984 assessments were completed in 2023/24, a 2% increase on 2022/23.

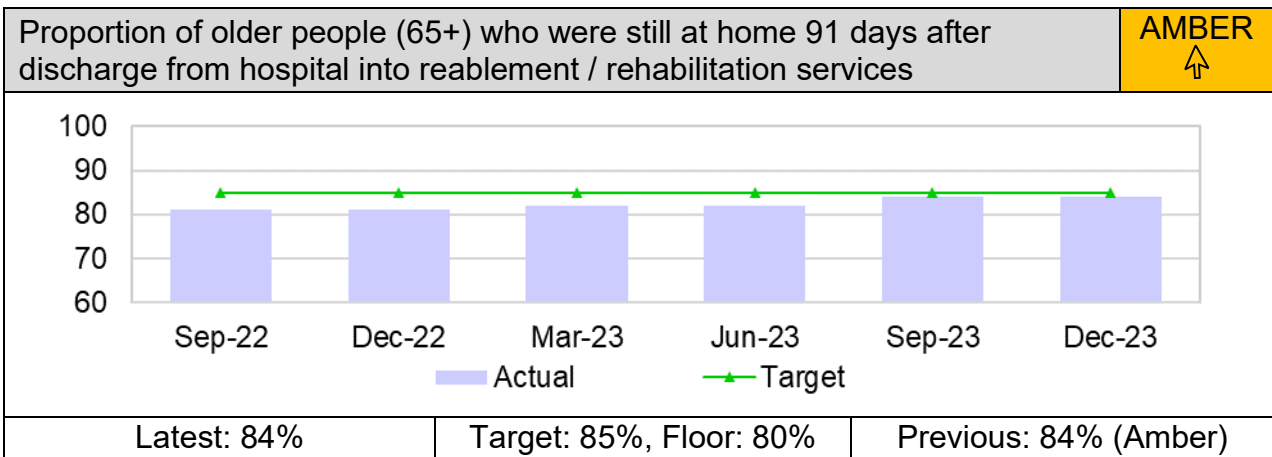
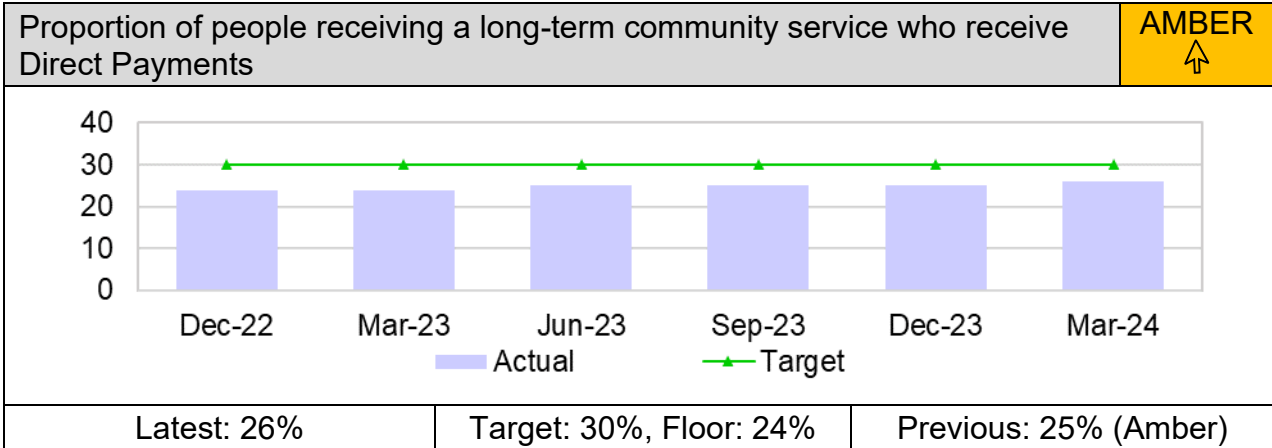
**Safeguarding**

The number of safeguarding enquiries open on the last day of the Quarter continues to increase. Quarter 4 saw a further increase in safeguarding concerns received of 5% and an increase of 8% in active Safeguarding enquiries compared to Quarter 3. The new Safeguarding Hubs were implemented at the end of Quarter 4 and their work on the incoming safeguarding concerns is expected to give the community teams working on the enquiries more time to complete them. The teams are already reporting back the positive effect of the hubs on helping to manage safeguarding.

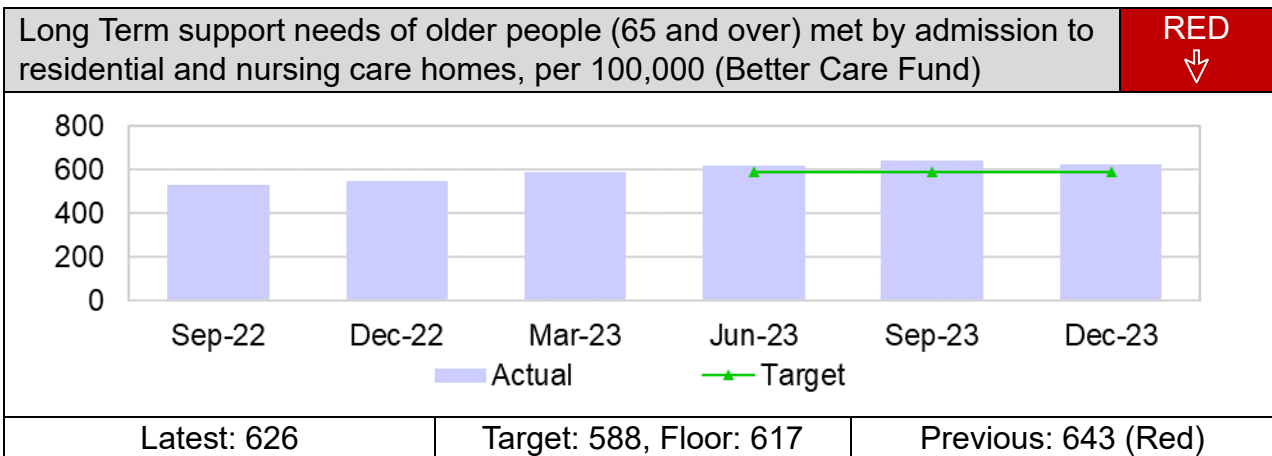
**Key Performance Indicators**



KPI Reported one Quarter in arrears.



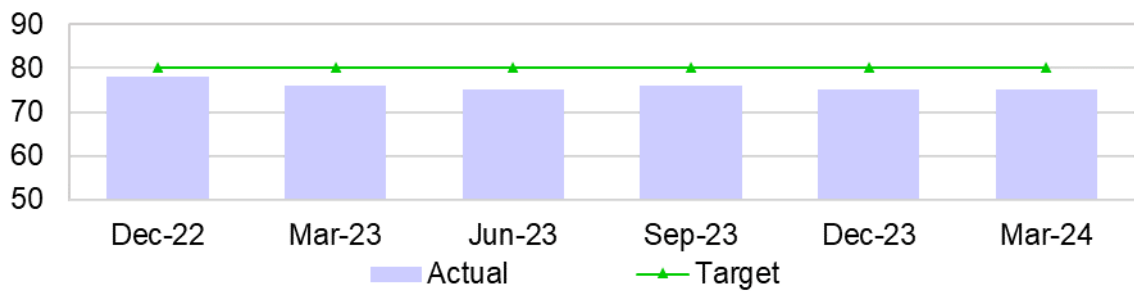
Reporting is based on the date in the Quarter that the hospital discharge occurs, with the 91 days commencing from that point.



To ensure consistent comparison with previous Quarters by removing seasonality, this KPI is now being reported on a rolling 12-month basis, and one Quarter in arrears.

Percentage of KCC supported people in residential or nursing care where the CQC rating is Good or Outstanding

AMBER



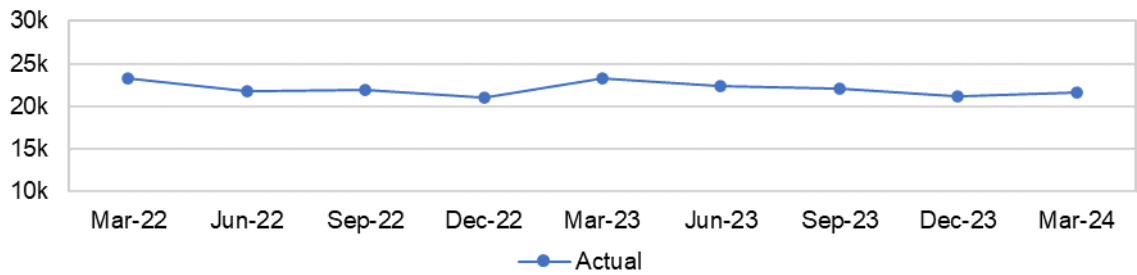
Latest: 75%

Target: 80%, Floor: 75%

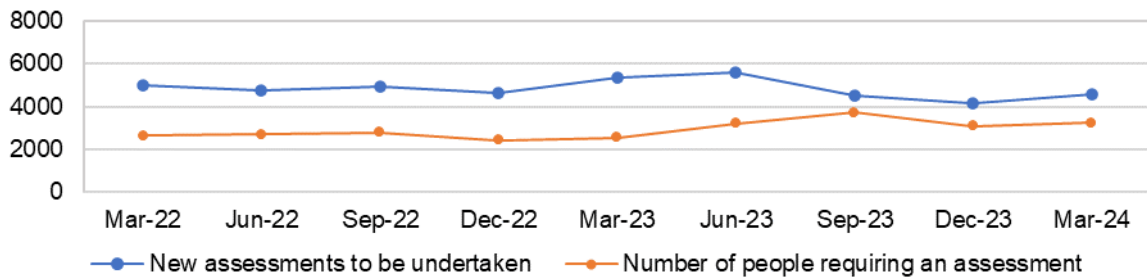
Previous: 75% (Amber)

### Activity indicators

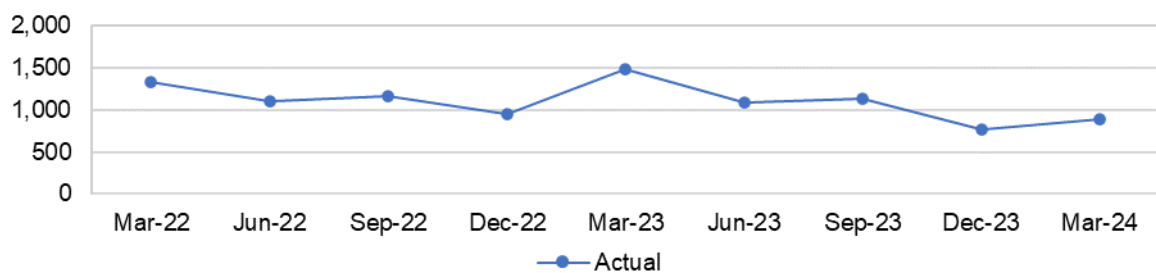
#### Number of people making contact with ASCH



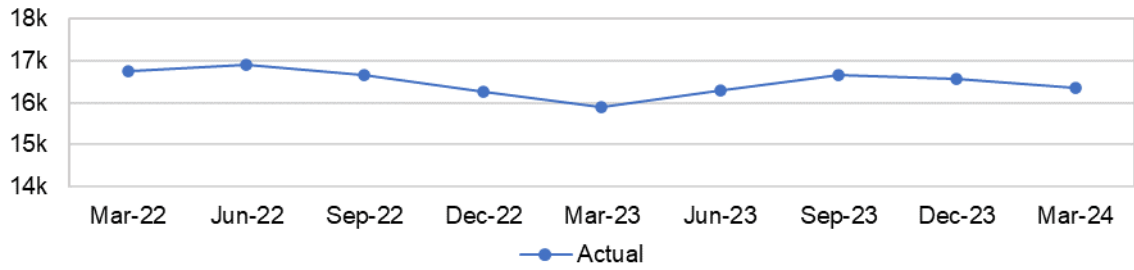
#### Number of new Care Needs Assessments to be undertaken and the number of people requiring a Care needs Assessment on the last day of the quarter



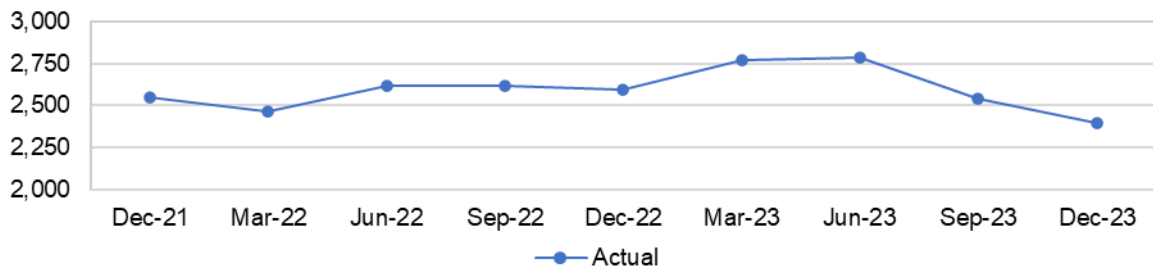
#### Number of new Carers assessments delivered



### Number of people with an active Care & Support Plan at the end of the Quarter

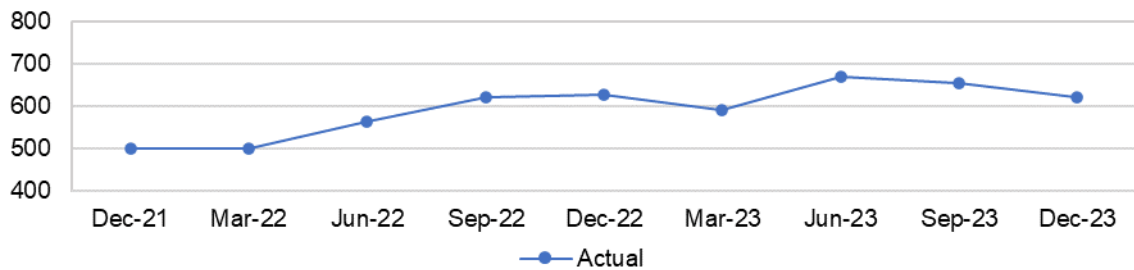


### Number of new support packages being arranged for people in the Quarter



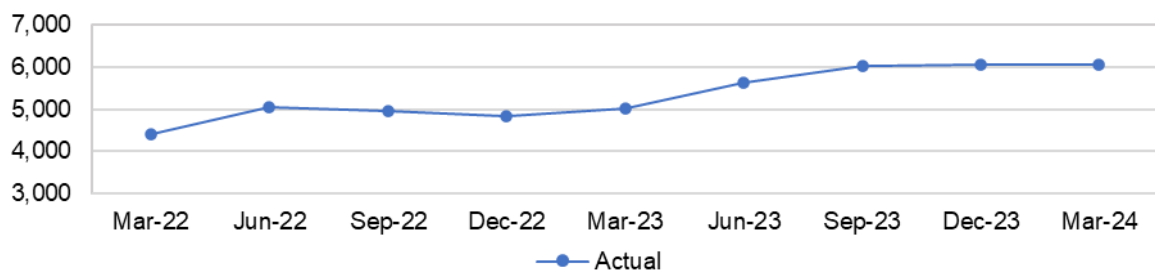
Reported one Quarter in arrears.

### Average cost (£s per week) of new support packages arranged for people in the Quarter

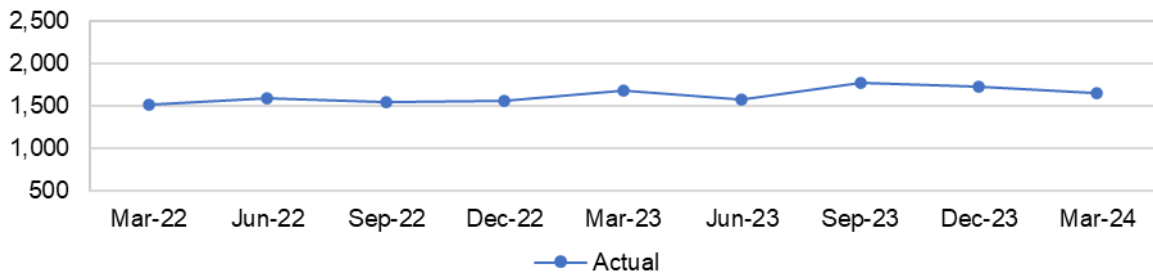


Reported one Quarter in arrears.

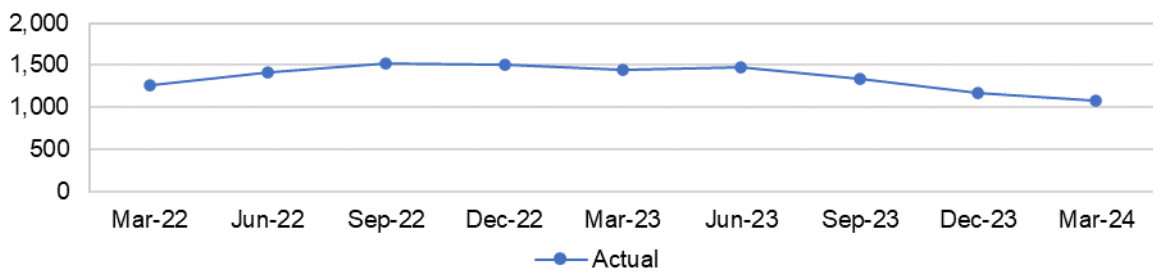
### Number of people requiring an annual review to be completed on the last day of the Quarter



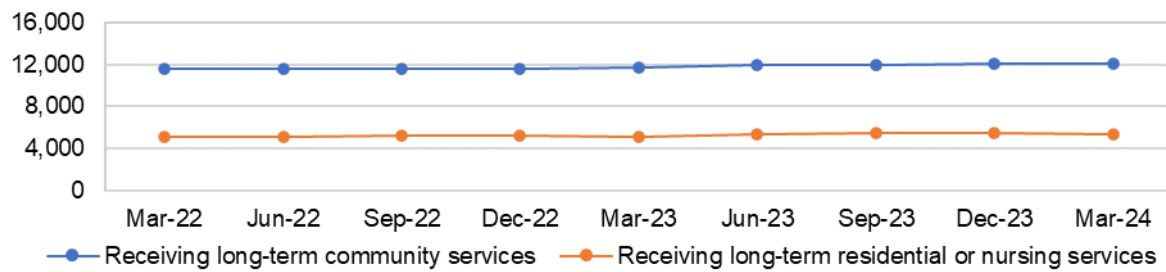
### Number of people in Kent Enablement at Home (KeaH)



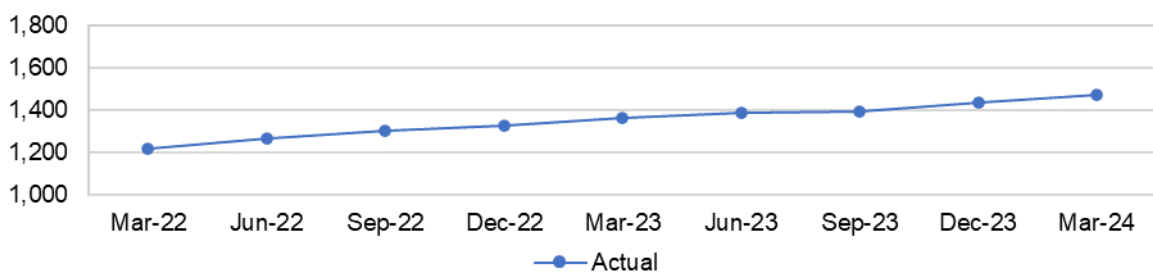
### Number of people in Short Term Beds during the Quarter



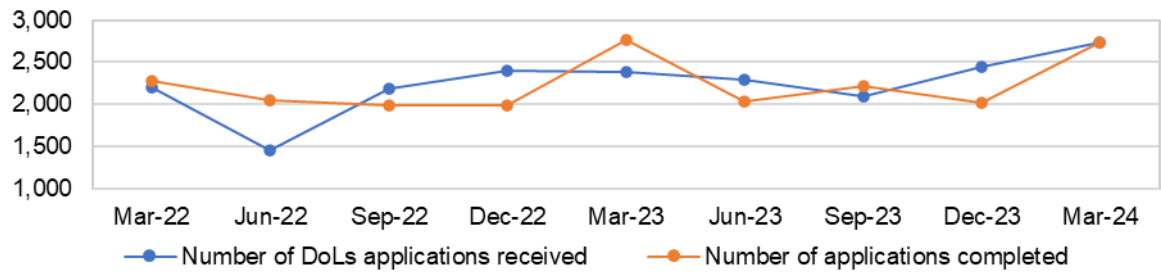
### Number of people in Long Term Services



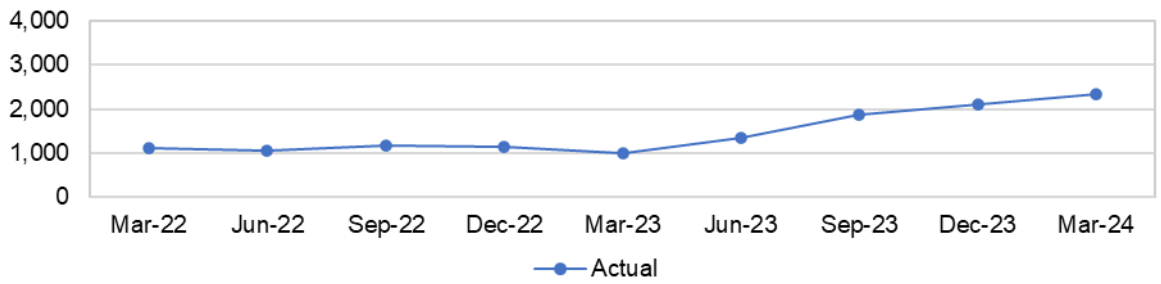
### Number of People accessing ASCH Services who have a Mental Health Need



### Number of DoLS applications received and completed



### Number of safeguarding enquiries open on the last day of the Quarter



Public Health						
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Dan Watkins					
<b>Director</b>	Anjan Ghosh					
KPI Summary	GREEN	AMBER	RED	↑	⇒	↓
	2	2	0	2	1	1

### NHS Health Checks

In Quarter 4, there were 8,894 NHS health checks delivered to the eligible population. This represents an increase from the 7,322 checks delivered in the previous Quarter and from the 7,703 checks delivered in Quarter 4 the previous year (2022/2023). A total of 31,379 checks were delivered in the 12 months to March 2024, exceeding the current target of 23,844.

### Health Visiting

In Quarter 4, the Health Visiting Service delivered 16,587 mandated universal health and wellbeing reviews, slightly lower than the previous quarter (16,789). The service delivered 66,846 health and wellbeing reviews in the 12 months to March 2024, slightly below the annual target of 68,000. Three of the five mandated contacts met or exceeded the targets. The commissioned provider has identified an error in the way data has been captured since migration to a different IT system. This has resulted in over-reporting of activity related to antenatal visits affecting Quarter 1 to Quarter 4 2023/2024 and has since been rectified. Historical performance has been updated within this report.

### Sexual Health Service

In Quarter 4, the service continued to perform well with 8,586 (99%) patients offered a full sexual health screen in integrated sexual health clinics. This exceeded the 95% target. In this Quarter, the total online screening kits ordered and sent to Kent residents increased compared to the previous Quarter from 10,414 to 10,876.

### Drug and Alcohol Services

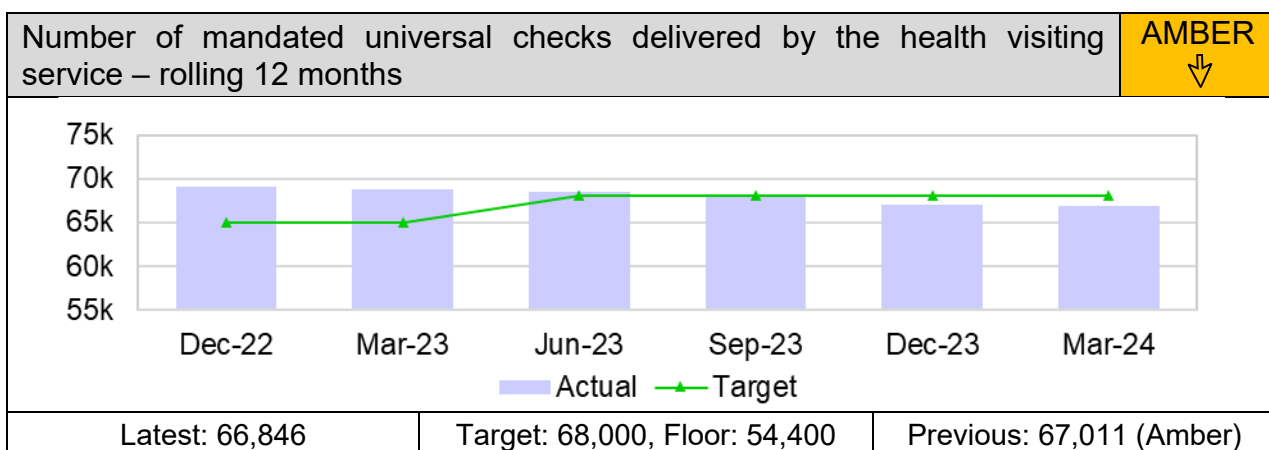
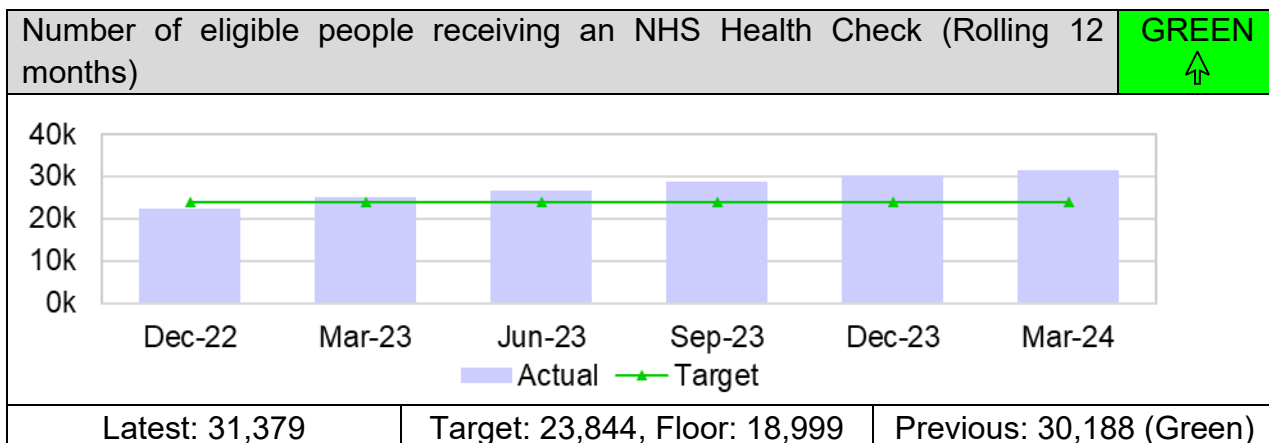
In Quarter 4, Community Drug and Alcohol services continued to perform above target for the proportion of successful completions from drug and alcohol treatment (27%). Whilst overall numbers in treatment have improved, the number of opiate users in treatment in Kent is declining. At the latest Kent Combatting Drugs Partnership, partners came together to review some of the barriers and generate solutions to getting more opiate users into treatment. This included the provision of breakfast and supper clubs to improve engagement and looking to increase pharmacy access for those who are prescribed Opiate Substitution Therapy. Commissioners, providers, and individuals from Kent's Lived Experience Recovery Organisation will also be supporting the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) with an upcoming opiate diagnostic conversation to understand the picture nationally.

### Live Well Kent and Medway

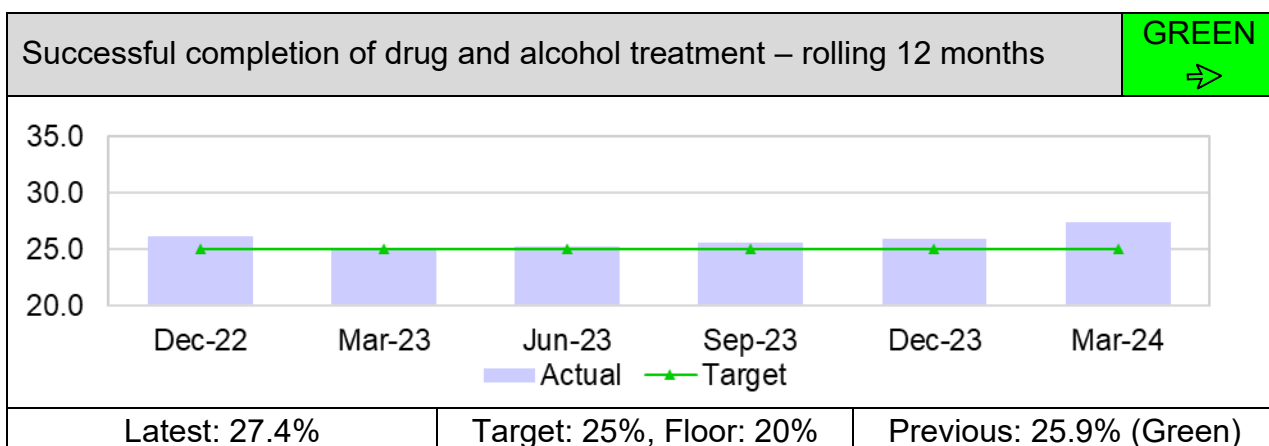
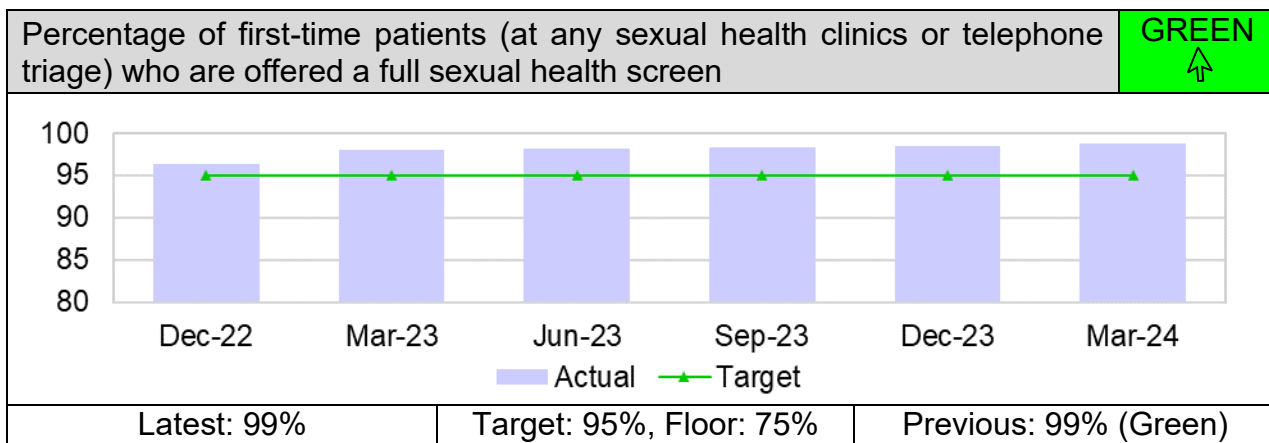
In Quarter 4, Live Well Kent and Medway (LWKM) completed the first year of its contract with good outcomes continuing to be achieved, including 96% of service users reporting improvements in their personal goals during the Quarter. The service continues to integrate with the Community Mental Health Framework (Community Mental Health Transformation). For example, workers from both providers have been trained in a cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) 'lite' intervention, which will be offered in all geographical areas following a successful pilot in Thanet since May 2023.



## Performance Indicators

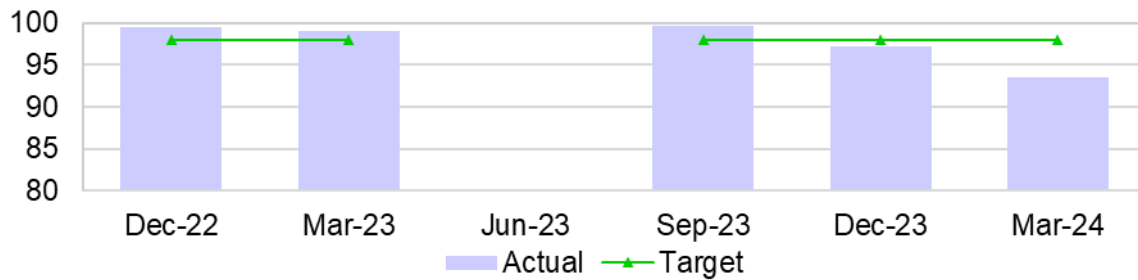


\*A reporting error identified by the provider has resulted in a revision to figures back to Jun-23.



Percentage of Live Well clients who would recommend the service to family, friends, or someone in a similar situation

AMBER →



Latest: 93.5%

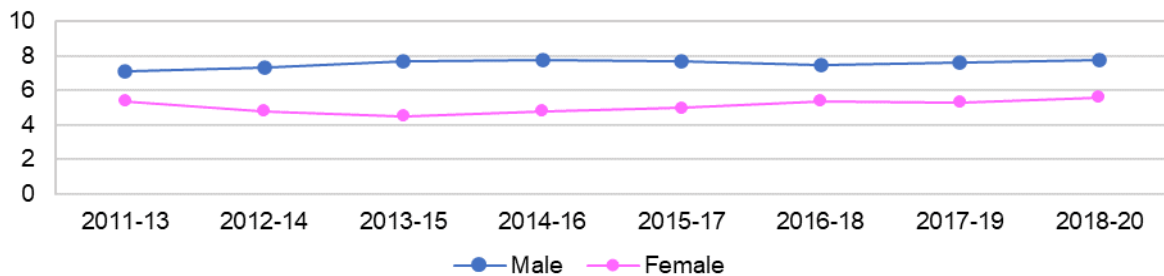
Target: 98%, Floor: 91%

Previous: 97.3% (Amber)

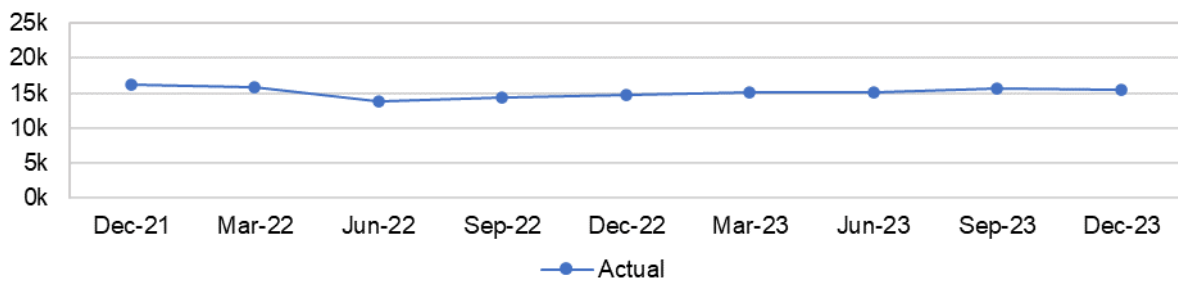
The transfer of clients due to a new service contract necessitated a data reset for the exit survey completions. As a result, data is not available for Jun-23.

Activity indicators

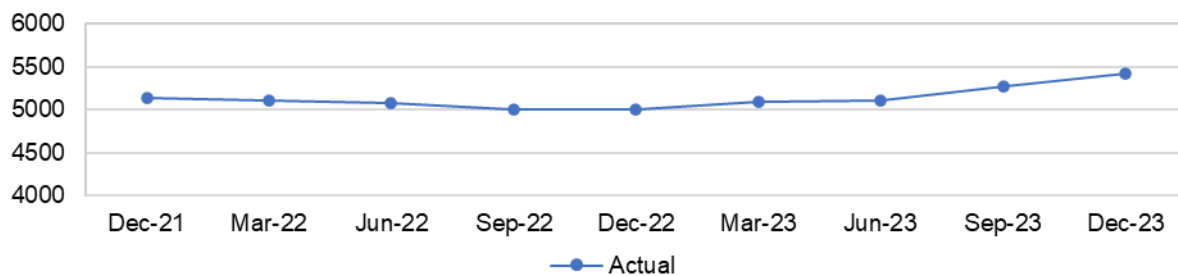
Life expectancy gap in years between least and most deprived areas



Number of attendances at KCC commissioned Sexual Health Clinics



Number of adults accessing structured Substance Misuse Treatment Services



## Corporate Risk Register – Overview

The Council, along with the local government sector, continues to operate in an increasingly difficult financial and operating environment, which carries significant risk implications for the achievement of the Authority’s objectives.

The table below shows the number of corporate risks in each risk level (based on the risk score) in May 2024, compared with February 2024.

	Low Risk	Medium Risk	High Risk
<b>Current risk level February 2024</b>	0	9	13
<b>Current risk level May 2024</b>	0	4	13

### KEY CHANGES DURING LAST QUARTER

#### DE-ESCALATED RISKS

CRR0001: Safeguarding Vulnerable Children. There will always be a need for vigilance and no complacency regarding this risk. However, there are comprehensive controls in place that have received independent assurance. Therefore, the risk has been delegated to directorate level, with the emphasis on the Director of Children’s Services to escalate to CMT if required.

CRR0004 - Simultaneous Emergency Response and Resilience. Throughout the past year, KCC has been engaging with an independent review of the Kent Resilience Forum (KRF) to provide clarity on KCC’s role, contribution and responsibilities as a partner within the KRF. One key outcome from this was the redesign and strengthening of KCC’s Emergency Planning and Resilience Service. The Council has proven to be adept at handling numerous incidents concurrently in recent years, with this becoming “business as usual”. Therefore, the risk has been delegated to directorate level, from which the Risk Owner (Director of Infrastructure) can escalate if there are particular concerns. Standalone corporate risks still remain for specific threats, such as cyber-attacks and the upcoming introduction of the EU’s Entry Exit System (EES).

CRR0050 - CBRNE incidents, communicable diseases and incidents with a public health implication – KCC response to and recovery from the impacts of the Covid-19 public health emergency. Following the annual review and refresh of the corporate risk register at the end of 2023 it was proposed that, providing there were no further concerns regarding communicable diseases over the winter period, this risk be deescalated to the Public Health risk register in April 2024. The risk continues to be monitored by the Director of Public Health and can be re-escalated to the corporate risk register should the risk profile change.

## MITIGATING ACTIONS

The Corporate Risk Register mitigations are regularly reviewed for their continued relevance and urgency, and new mitigations introduced as required.

Updates have been provided for 22 actions to mitigate elements of corporate risks that were due for completion or review up to May 2024. These are summarised below.

Due Date for Review or Completion	Actions Completed / Closed	Actions Partially complete	Actions subject to Regular Review	Actions Outstanding
Up to and including February 2024	6	11	4	1

### **CRR0003: Securing resources to aid economic recovery and enabling infrastructure**

#### Actions Outstanding

#### **Kent Design Guide**

Kent Design Guide to be published – work was paused due to reprioritisation of activity in the current challenging financial and operational environment and has now been entered in the 2024/25 divisional business plan with a revised date of March 2025.

### **CRR0004: Simultaneous Emergency Response, Recovery and Resilience**

#### Partially Complete

#### **Emergency Planning**

Restructure of Emergency Planning functions is complete, recruitment is underway for a number of vacant posts. It is anticipated that recruitment to the vacant roles will be completed by December 2024.

### **CRR0009: Future financial and operating environment for Local Government**

#### Complete

Development of Outcomes Based Budgeting - As part of early planning for the 2025/26 budget and associated Medium Term Financial Plan, a hybrid approach is being adopted that will take aspects of the Outcomes Based Budgeting approach (strengthening analysis and evidence that includes aligning performance and finance information) and combine with more traditional incremental budgeting (to update for the full year impact of current year changes and probable use of reserves since the plan was made). Combined with more effective financial management, this should provide for a more robust approach towards aligning resources to priorities, within constrained finances.

#### **CRR0015: Sustainability of the social care market**

##### Complete

External consultant has completed the review of existing commissioning arrangements, including cost of care assessment, and made recommendations to be considered by the business.

#### **CRR0042: Border fluidity, infrastructure and regulatory arrangements**

##### Regular Review

##### **Planning with Government**

The organisation is working with Government to develop short, medium and long-term plans for border resilience looking at infrastructure and technological solutions.

##### Regular Review

##### **Preparation for impacts**

The organisation is preparing for two separate but interconnected schemes that will affect non-EU citizens travelling to most EU countries; of the EU Entry/Exit System (EES - October) and the EU European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS). Regular presentations are being given to Members on potential impacts relating to people and goods as a result of implementation of the EU Entry/Exit System.

##### Regular Review

##### **Business continuity and response plans test exercises**

The Resilience team are carrying out exercises to test internal KCC business continuity and response plans at regular intervals up to and once the EU Entry Exit System is implemented.

#### **CRR052: Impact of climate change on KCC services**

##### Partially Complete

##### **Adaptation Programme actions**

A revised KCC adaptation Programme is being developed. This has been drafted and shared with staff for initial comments. Preparation for presentation to Cabinet Committee is being planned.

#### **CRR0056: SEND and High Needs Funding**

##### Regular Review

##### **Implementation of SEND Improvement Programme**

A review of the Accelerated Progress Plan (APP) took place on Friday, 26<sup>th</sup> April 2024.; in preparation for this review evidence was submitted to the Department for Education (DfE) in advance. The outcome of this review meeting will be made available in due course. Reporting continues to the DfE in line with Kent's Safety Valve Agreement and is progressing.

**CRR0058: Capacity and capability of the workforce**

Partially Complete

**Exit and retention surveys**

Work is ongoing with support from the Analytics service to consider the benefits of implementing exit and retention surveys in order to identify the drivers for both leavers and for those who chose to stay. Further progress update in June 2024.

**CRR0059: Significant failure to deliver agreed budget savings and manage demand**

Partially Complete

**Maximise scope of effective scrutiny by all Members**

A report on decision making was delivered to the Governance and Audit Committee in March 2024, as well as a report on scrutiny to the Scrutiny Committee in early 2024. In addition to this, a Member Governance Working Party has concluded its work and will be reported to County Council in July 2024. been established.

Complete

**Collation of business case information for 2024/25**

Robust delivery plan information has been developed for 2024/25 to support key savings – including milestones, risks and dependencies.

**CRR0060: Reinforced Autoclaved Concrete (RAAC)**

Partially Complete

**Corporate landlord estate**

Assessment and where appropriate surveying of the corporate landlord estate is ongoing and is anticipated to be completed by end of June 2024.

**CRR0061: Care Quality Commission (CQC) Assurance**

Complete

**CQC Steering Group Terms of Reference**

CQC steering group has approved the terms of reference and will meet on a monthly basis to monitor and process assurance activity.

Partially Complete

**Communications and engagement plan**

A draft version of the plan has been shared with the CQC steering group for their review and approval.

Complete

**Test of Assurance Peer Review**

Outcomes from the test of assurance have been shared with the Chief Executive, the Corporate Director for Adult Social Care and Health, and the Directorate Management Team.

Partially Complete

**Team Meetings**

Principal Social worker and CQC Assurance Lead have attended a number of team meetings to discuss CQC assessment process and use the opportunity to engage and support staff. Significant progress has been made with visits to remaining teams anticipated to be completed by the end of June.

**CRR0063: Capacity to accommodate and care for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking children (UASC)**

Partially Complete

**Home Office and DfE Negotiations**

Intensive negotiations taking place with Home Office and Department for Education on how to ensure suitable placements are provided for unaccompanied children, in line with our duties. The Home Office and DfE are providing funding support to KCC until March 2025, which is being used to bring additional buildings online by late September 2024 to accommodate new UASC and to support them until their transition on to the National Transfer Scheme (NTS). Funding is also being utilised to secure foster placements and supported accommodation until the buildings are ready.

Partially Complete

**Reception centre commissioning**

Commissioning of a new facility to operate as a safe care reception centre is progressing and requires the service provider to receive planning permission, for which a decision is awaited.

**CRR0064: Risk of Failing to Deliver Effective Adult Social Care Services**

Complete

**Workstream review**

Ongoing review of workstreams across the Directorate to ensure that all available resources are directed towards the delivery of statutory functions, savings and efficiency plans and all non-essential work is stepped down.

Partially Complete

**Human Resources and Operational Development (HROD) Plans**

Plans developed with HROD to ensure we maintain a highly skilled and effective workforce through specific recruitment and retention activity. A national campaign to recruit social workers is live, as is the advert for the managed service to support with review activities.

Partially Complete

**External consultancy analysis of the opportunities to work to prevent, delay and reduce need for care and support to inform our preventative strategy –**

Bids for Adults' and children's transformation partner have been received and evaluation with presentations planned for mid-May. A decision regarding the successful partner is anticipated by mid -June.