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KENT HOMES AT NO
COST TO THE TAXPAYER

Kent People



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Leader answers
your questions



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LABOUR'S MONEY GRAB

BILLIONS OF £s OF KENT'S MONEY GOES NORTH

Year after year Kent residents pay higher council tax as the government relentlessly pursues a policy of siphoning off money from the South-East to subsidise predominantly Labour voting areas in the Midlands and the North.

In the last financial year, the government made a profit of **£15.1 billion** from South-East Taxpayers.

The government spent £62 billion on providing services (such as health, education, transport and pensions) but received from South-East taxpayers £77.1 billion! Had government funding levels been fair across the country, **Kent would have received an additional £2,000 per head of population annually.**

Kent's Cabinet Member for Finance, Nick Chard, told *Kent People*, **"In Kent we don't want special favours – we just want fairness!"**

"Gordon Brown and Alistair Darling clearly think the people of the South-East can afford to subsidise the rest of the country. It's not just the grants to local councils which are affected, but also spending on health services, police, waste disposal and investment in infrastructure. Imagine how many additional doctors, dentists, teachers or police officers could be employed, or how much our Council Tax could be reduced, had there been a level playing field."

Kent Conservative leader, Paul Carter, asked, **"Why is it that residents of Islington get funded £1,925 per person for health services yet in Kent we get £1,100 per person? These questions need to be answered. Kent is getting short changed."**

Almost every service is badly affected by this government underfunding:

- The South East has fewer police officers per head of population than anywhere else. Local Police Authorities receive just £128 per head compared to an average of £176 for the rest of England
- Government health spending in Kent is £12.4 million less than the English average. Almost all of the South-East Regional Health Authorities are in debt; with Kent's own Health Service deficit being £19.6 million
- The Revenue Support Grant for local councils in the South East is just £338 per person against a national average of £506 per person



KentPeople COMMENT

Kent People say "enough is enough". It's time the government stopped pretending that all was well in the Garden of England. Fear of crime, immigration and Gordon Brown's financial irresponsibility have all taken their toll. Local taxpayers cannot afford to pay the bills for Gordon's friends in the north. **It's time for a FAIR DEAL FOR KENT!**

If you support our campaign for A FAIR DEAL FOR KENT please sign and return the petition on the back page of this newspaper.

FREEDOM FROM TRAVEL COSTS



There has been a major breakthrough in the cost of transport for 11-16 year-old children thanks to an exciting and innovative idea from Conservative controlled Kent County Council. The scheme, called **The Freedom Pass**, will slash costs for

"The Kent Freedom Pass has made young people feel more independent and given them more freedom to do activities they wish to do in their own time, such as going to the cinema or attending one of KCC's youth centres."

Daniel Ullett, Member of the Kent Youth Council

school transport and leisure travel whilst at the same time saving parents hundreds if not thousands of pounds per year in bus fares.

Following a successful trial in three areas, the hugely popular **Freedom Pass** which allows 11-16 year-olds unlimited bus travel, 7 days per week, will be rolled out across Kent by June 2009.

The pass allows younger people freedom to access a wider range of sports and leisure activities and also gives parents more choice when choosing schools as travel costs will no longer be a major factor.

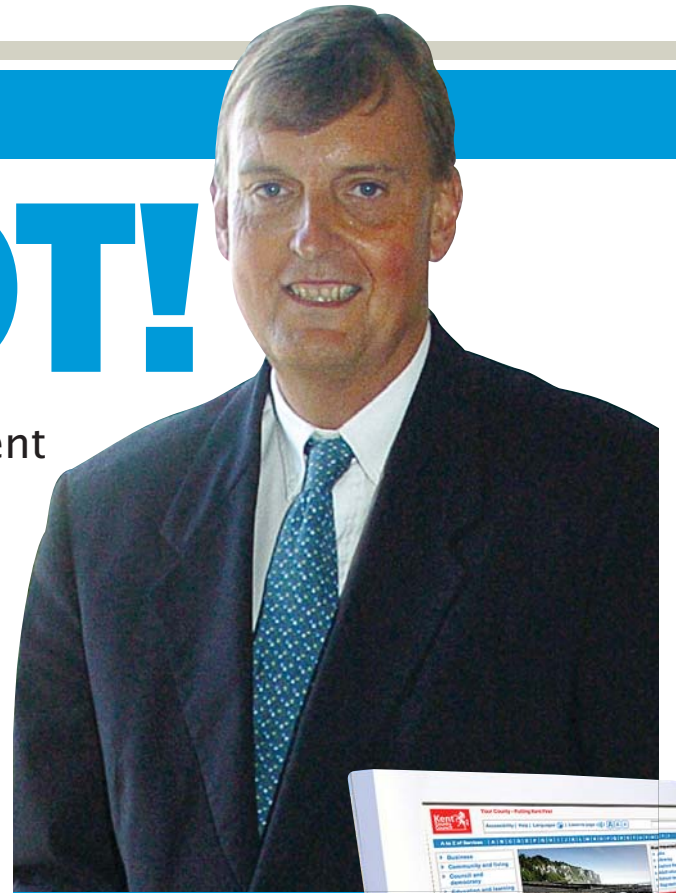
Cllr Keith Ferrin said, **"Kent Freedom Pass is an all-round winner. It gives young people greater flexibility and so far an extra 27% of students are choosing to travel by bus. That means fewer cars on the roads and less pollution. The idea originally came from Kent Youth County Council and I am pleased that together we have been able to make it work."**

Application packs will be available to collect from pilot schools in April and should be returned to the address printed on the form, along with payment of £50 and a clear passport photo.

CONSERVATIVES PUTTING KENT FIRST

ON THE SPOT!

We asked readers of *Kent People* to submit their questions to Kent County Council Leader, Paul Carter PICTURED RIGHT



Dover harbour a vital Kent employer

Will Kent Conservatives continue to support our Grammar Schools?

T Clark, Canterbury

Kent will continue to support a mixed economy of schools, including High Schools, Grammar Schools and Academies which are collectively delivering amazing results. One size fits all comprehensives have failed.

As a regular commuter I am often inconvenienced by road works and delays. What are KCC doing to sort out these problems on our roads?

L Cure, Tonbridge

"We have campaigned for the introduction of the new Traffic Management Act which gives councils like Kent the power to deal with utility companies and other agencies who are responsible for road works. I am delighted that Kent has been selected as one of three local authorities to pilot these measures. I am confident that these new powers, along with substantial investment in Highways, will result in visible improvements."

What is Kent doing to help local businesses through the economic slump?

Miss K Miller, Tunbridge Wells

"I recently hosted a meeting with local business leaders to develop ways Kent County Council can support jobs and businesses in the county. A full report of this meeting is opposite."

What do you think of Boris Johnson's plan to build an airport in the Thames Estuary?

J Dean, Gravesend

"I believe he's wrong! I support plans to maximise capacity of all the airports in the South-East from Stansted to Manston. Talking of which, Manston has enormous potential to provide massive employment opportunities in the east of the county. I am campaigning for a fast rail link from Ashford to Manston to encourage its development."

How do Kent's education results compare to the period before you took control of the council?

M Bright, Dartford

"Kent's young people have done amazingly well. This year the county had the best education result ever. When the LibDem / Labour Grouping controlled the council we were in the bottom 25% nationally, but now we are in the top. Government inspectors have said the management of Kent's children services is outstanding."



What are Kent County Council doing to support the needs of the ever increasing numbers of elderly people who need care to lead their lives?

B Miller, Sheppey

"We are providing a care package that enables older people to stay in their own homes where they are most comfortable and secure. One example is the provision of Telecare which enables people with health issues to connect their home to a medical specialist. This means that people can obtain instant medical advice and guidance from a real expert. Such initiatives make a huge difference. We have also financed the extension of free bus travel for older people to ensure they are able to meet early GP and hospital appointments without having to pay travel costs"

Do you have a question for Paul?

If you have a question that you would like to ask Paul about any issue affecting Kent please e-mail him at **paul@kent.gov.uk**

The best questions will be included in the next edition of **KENTPeople**.

You can also find out more about Paul's work at his blog site. Log onto **www.kent.gov.uk** and click on the **Leader's Blog** on the middle right hand side.



KENT THE MOST POPULAR PLACE TO LIVE IN ENGLAND and that's OFFICIAL!

By Stephen Browning

Kent is the most popular place to live in England according to a poll of 1,838 local residents undertaken by Ipsos MORI. An amazing 87% of respondents said they were satisfied with living in Kent.



PIC: AYLESFORD

NO TRUCK WITH LABOUR

Time's up for freeloading foreign lorries on Kent roads

James Balcombe reports

Every day, foreign lorries account for three-quarters of all cross channel traffic. They cause congestion, pollution and damage to Kent's roads but this Labour government gives them a free ride.

One of the major contributors to the damage are the large number of foreign lorries and HGVs which use the Kent road network on their way to and from the ports to make their deliveries across the UK. Nowhere else in Britain sustains such a heavy and prolonged battering from foreign-owned vehicles.

Local Conservatives have won widespread support for their campaign to try and ensure foreign-owned HGVs and haulage companies pay their fair share towards the spiralling cost of maintaining our roads.

Britdisc

Conservative-run Kent County Council is renewing its call for a "Britdisc" which would allow a charge to be levied on overseas hauliers using our local roads. If each overseas HGV was charged just £10 at the point of entry, this would raise £35 million per year – money that could be ring-fenced and used to fund major road improvements for the benefit of local taxpayers.



KCC leader, Paul Carter, said: "Foreign hauliers have a massive advantage. Lower fuel duty on the continent means that a European HGV operator can fill up for £300 less than in the UK and will then have sufficient fuel for a round trip to Scotland. As a result we don't even get the benefit of the tax they would pay if they bought their fuel in the UK. We do, however, get the pollution and congestion (not to mention the damage to our roads) without any financial compensation."

Brown Veto

Regrettably, despite widespread support for these measures, the plan was vetoed by Prime

Minister Gordon Brown who does not want to appear to be "a bad European" – so the people of Kent must continue to pay for the damage done to our roads.

Kent Conservatives will keep on campaigning in support of these plans which offer fairness to all Kent residents and road users. If you agree, please sign and return the petition overleaf.

"Local residents pay council tax, road tax, VAT and tax on our petrol. It's only right that those who use and damage our roads are asked to pay their fair share."

Val Sullivan
Blue Bell Hill

"Anyone who uses the M20 or the A2 can see the thousands of lorries from the continent that plough-up our roads. Everyone should contribute to the cost of maintenance"

Paul Jones
Folkestone

"I don't understand why the government is against this plan; surely it's fair on everyone. Why should Kent people always foot the bill?"

A Morris, Maidstone

KENT JOBS FOR KENT PEOPLE

"In the middle of the worst economic downturn in recent history it is more important than ever that we do all within our power to support Kent businesses and protect local jobs."

That was the clear message from the leader of Conservative controlled Kent County Council when he met with business leaders to support the Kent economy.

"We will do all we can in the public sector to help and support Kent businesses and their employees in these highly challenging times."

Paul Carter announced a package of measures to strengthen the local economy, including:

- Kent County Council will pay its bills within 20 days rather than 30 as is now the case.
- Streamlining of the procedure to make it easier for small firms to apply for council contracts.
- To deliver our multi-million capital investment programme making sure as much as possible is spent within the Kent economy.
- A "Kent Business Support Centre" to signpost Kent businesses to public works contracts in and around Kent.



- To ensure businesses are aware of their entitlement to the Small Business Rate Relief Scheme.
- A range of initiatives to support the house-building industry.
- To lobby government for the removal of unnecessary regulation and bureaucracy.
- Support for a consortia of Kent businesses to compete for larger public sector contracts outside of Kent.
- To lobby for the removal and stream-lining of the complex planning process

"The public sector in Kent spends £1 billion pa in purchasing from the private sector. We must maximise the opportunity for Kent businesses."

"I am determined that we will use public sector in Kent to support Kent businesses as far as is possible through this difficult economic recession. As Chairman of the county's Public Sector Board I will be encouraging other public sector agencies to do likewise."

WORD SEARCH COMPETITION

Castles, Houses & Gardens of Kent

Hidden in the grid to the right are ten famous Castles, Houses & Gardens of Kent. Use your skill to find and highlight the hidden words. When you have found all ten, complete your contact details in the box on the right and return to the address shown.

The first five correct entries pulled from a hat will each receive a £20 Marks & Spencer Gift Voucher.

Closing date for entries: 31st March 2009. All winners will be notified by Friday 10th April 2009.

Good luck!



- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| SCOTNEY (Castle) | PENSHURST (Place) |
| SISSINGHURST (Castle) | EMMETTS (Garden) |
| IGHTHAM (Mote) | CHARTWELL (House) |
| HEVER (Castle) | GODINTON (House) |
| LEEDS (Castle) | TONBRIDGE (Castle) |

L	P	N	Y	R	R	A	B	S	H	L	U	K	T	S
R	E	T	J	K	N	N	U	G	E	E	U	D	T	K
M	M	P	S	R	N	O	K	I	V	H	Q	W	I	H
M	O	E	C	H	A	R	T	W	E	L	L	L	E	S
R	M	M	O	U	P	R	K	N	R	I	R	E	A	G
F	H	N	T	O	N	B	R	I	D	G	E	E	B	O
U	N	P	N	H	V	J	Y	E	S	K	R	D	U	D
N	P	S	E	T	M	S	A	M	T	C	S	S	L	I
I	K	L	Y	S	A	S	A	M	N	U	T	T	M	N
T	T	S	R	U	H	S	N	E	P	M	T	H	W	T
F	P	R	R	M	T	K	U	T	S	N	S	S	K	O
R	M	D	U	Y	H	Y	B	T	P	T	H	K	E	N
M	R	E	L	N	G	I	S	S	P	U	R	K	W	F
N	S	I	S	S	I	N	G	H	U	R	S	T	J	F
T	U	O	R	S	K	M	S	W	Q	H	G	S	H	W

Support our campaigns AND tell us your views!

TICK BOX TO EXPRESS YOUR SUPPORT

- I / we support Kent Conservatives' **FAIR FUNDING campaign** calling on the government to stop taking money from the South-East to subsidise councils in the Midlands and the North.
- I / we support Kent Conservatives' **NO TRUCK WITH LABOUR campaign** to introduce a scheme to ensure foreign operated road haulage companies contribute towards the upkeep of Kent highways.

What single thing could be done to improve the quality of life in your immediate neighbourhood?

How likely are you to vote at the Kent County Council Election on Thursday 4th June?

- I will definitely vote I will probably vote
- I will probably not vote I will definitely not vote

And which political party are you most likely to support?

- Conservative Labour Lib Dem UKIP Green Other _____

Given the choice, would you prefer to vote by post or at the local polling station?

- I would prefer to vote by post I would prefer to vote at my local polling station

If you are a Conservative supporter, would you be able to help with any of the following?

- Delivering newsletters Displaying a window poster Clerical work from home
- Attending social events Helping on polling day Joining the Conservative Party

Please fill out the contact box to the right and return the whole page. Please complete the *Word Search* competition for the chance to win some M&S vouchers.

PLEASE RETURN TO:

**Kent Conservatives,
PO Box 348, Gillingham,
ME7 9AH**

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Tel/Mobile:

Email:

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Contact us



**Write to Kent Conservatives:
PO Box 348,
Gillingham ME7 9AH**



**Telephone:
01634 853322**



**Website:
www.conservativekent.com**

