

**Kent County Council**

**Quarterly Performance Report**

**Quarter 4**

**2024/25**

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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 KPI graphs (six quarters).

<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

In Quarter 4, 2024/25, 19 of the 38 indicators are rated as Green, on or ahead of target (**two more** than Quarter 4 last year). Nine indicators reached or exceeded the floor standard and are rated Amber (**two fewer** than Quarter 4 last year), with 10 indicators not achieving the floor standard and so RAG rated Red (**the same** as Quarter 4 last year). Eleven indicators were showing an improving trend (two more than Quarter 4 last year), with four showing a worsening trend (five fewer than Quarter 4 last year).

The performance indicators giving greatest concern remain closely aligned with the services where the financial strains and demand are most acute (particularly those KPIs which have a link to cost in Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, children in care placements and Adult Social Care). 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		2	1
Governance and Law			2	1	1	
Growth, Economic Development & Communities	1	1			2	
Environment and Transport	5	1		1	4	1
Children, Young People and Education ( <i>Education &amp; Skills</i> )	2	1	2	3	2	
Children, Young People and Education ( <i>Integrated Children's Services</i> )	3	2	3	1	5	2
Adult Social Care	3	1	2	2	4	
Public Health <sup>1</sup>	3	3		3	3	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>4</b>

<sup>1</sup> In the Quarter 4 report which went to Cabinet in July, one Public Health KPI was shown to have a downward direction of travel, however this should have shown a stable / no clear trend and has been amended for this report.

**Customer Services** – Satisfaction with Contact Point advisors continues to meet target. The percentage of phone calls answered has improved to move further ahead of target. The percentage of complaints responded to within timescale remains below floor standard and so is RAG rated Red.

<b><u>Customer Services KPIs</u></b>	<b>RAG rating</b>		<b>DoT</b>
	<b>Q4 24/25</b>	<b>Q4 23/24</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 at some of the highest levels of performance seen for these indicators, but both remain below floor standards.

<b><u>Governance and Law KPIs</u></b>	<b>RAG rating</b>		<b>DoT</b>
	<b>Q4 24/25</b>	<b>Q4 23/24</b>	
% of Freedom of Information Act (FoI) 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 programme remains above target. The amount of Developer Contributions secured as a percentage of amount sought remains above its floor standard but below target.

<b><u>Growth, Economic Development &amp; Communities KPIs</u></b>	<b>RAG rating</b>		<b>DoT</b>
	<b>Q4 24/25</b>	<b>Q4 23/24</b>	
Number of homes brought back to market through No Use Empty (NUE)	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	⇒
Section 106 developer contributions secured as a percentage of amount sought	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	⇒

**Environment & Transport** - One Highways' KPI failed to meet its target, but it remained above floor standard. This was routine highway repairs reported by residents that were completed within 28 days. All other Highways' KPIs met or exceeded target, as did municipal waste recycled or converted to energy, and greenhouse gas emissions produced by KCC.

<b>Environment &amp; Transport KPIs</b>	<b>RAG rating</b>		<b>DoT</b>
	<b>Q4 24/25</b>	<b>Q4 23/24</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>AMBER</b>	⇒
% of emergency highway incidents attended within 2 hours of notification	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	⇒
% of public enquiries for Highways maintenance reported online	<b>GREEN</b>	New KPI in 24/25	⇒
% 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 & Skills** – Completion of Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) assessments in timescale remained below floor standard, but with a fast improving direction of travel. Annual EHCP reviews waiting over 12 months is ahead of target and on an improving trend. Pupils with EHCPs who are placed in independent or out of county special schools remains below its floor standard. Permanent pupil exclusions remained on its floor standard. The rate of first-time entrants to the youth justice system is on an improving trend and is ahead target.

<b>Education &amp; Skills KPIs</b>	<b>RAG rating</b>		<b>DoT</b>
	<b>Q4 24/25</b>	<b>Q4 23/24</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>GREEN</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>	⇒
Rate of first-time entrants to youth justice system – rolling 12 months	<b>GREEN</b>	New KPI in 24/25	↑

**Integrated Children's Services** – Three of the eight indicators met target. Two of the three Red KPIs are reflective of a national issue regarding foster care, with the other Red and the two Amber KPIs being influenced by the financial and workload pressures within the services.

<b><u>Integrated Children's Services</u></b>	<b>RAG rating</b>		<b>DoT</b>
	<b>Q4 24/25</b>	<b>Q4 23/24</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 foster care placements which are in-house or with relatives and friends (excluding UASC)	<b>RED</b>	<b>RED</b>	⇒
Number of foster households	<b>RED</b>	New KPI in 24/25	↓
% of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with)	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	⇒
Percentage of reviews completed within timescale by the Strengthening Independence Service (18-25)	<b>AMBER</b>	New KPIs in 24/25	↓
Percentage of Learning Disability Young People in Settled Accommodation	<b>GREEN</b>	New KPIs in 24/25	⇒

**Adult Social Care** – Three of the six KPIs are on or above target, including one which was rated Red last year showing a significant turnaround. Two KPIs are rated Red this year, one of which was also Red last year, namely, the Proportion of new Care Needs Assessments delivered within 28 days. The other Red KPI is the percentage of KCC supported people in residential or nursing care where the CQC rating is Good or Outstanding; this has fallen below its floor standard following unfavourable CQC care home inspections.

<b><u>Adult Social Care KPIs</u></b>	<b>RAG rating</b>		<b>DoT</b>
	<b>Q4 24/25</b>	<b>Q4 23/24</b>	
% of people who have their contact resolved by ASCH but then make contact again within 3 months	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	⇒
Proportion 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>GREEN</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>GREEN</b>	<b>RED</b>	↑
% of KCC supported people in residential or nursing care where the CQC rating is Good or Outstanding	<b>RED</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	⇒

**Public Health** – Three out of the six KPIs exceeded target with two of these on a positive trend. The number of adults accessing structured substance misuse treatment is below target but on an improving trend.

<b>Public Health KPIs</b>	<b>RAG rating</b>		<b>DoT</b>
	<b>Latest</b>	Previous	
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 all new first-time patients (at any clinic) receiving a full sexual health screen (excluding online referrals)	<b>AMBER</b>	New KPIs in 24/25	⇒
Number of Adults accessing structured substance misuse treatment during a rolling 12-month period	<b>AMBER</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>GREEN</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	⇒

Customer Services						
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Linden Kemkaran (from Quarter 1, 2025/26)					
<b>Corporate Director</b>	Amanda Beer					
KPI Summary	GREEN	AMBER	RED	↑	⇒	↓
	2		1		2	1

Customer contact through Contact Point (KCC's call centre) is provided via a strategic partnership, whilst Digital services are provided by KCC. In Quarter 4, the percentage of callers who rated their advisor as good continued to meet the target of 97%. The percentage of calls which were answered by Contact Point improved, moving further above target.

The activity indicator on average speed of answer remains quicker than expectations for calls to all services at 41 seconds, with the average speed of answer for priority services at 20 seconds also being lower than expectations. Average call handling time at 6 minutes 15 seconds is slightly higher than an aim of 6 minutes 4 seconds.

Contact Point received 9% more calls compared to the previous Quarter (Oct-Dec) and 6% fewer calls than Quarter 4 last year. The 12 months to March 2025 saw a 5% decrease in calls compared to the 12 months to March 2024, continuing the long-term trend of fewer calls as people have increasingly used the kent.gov website instead of calling contact point.

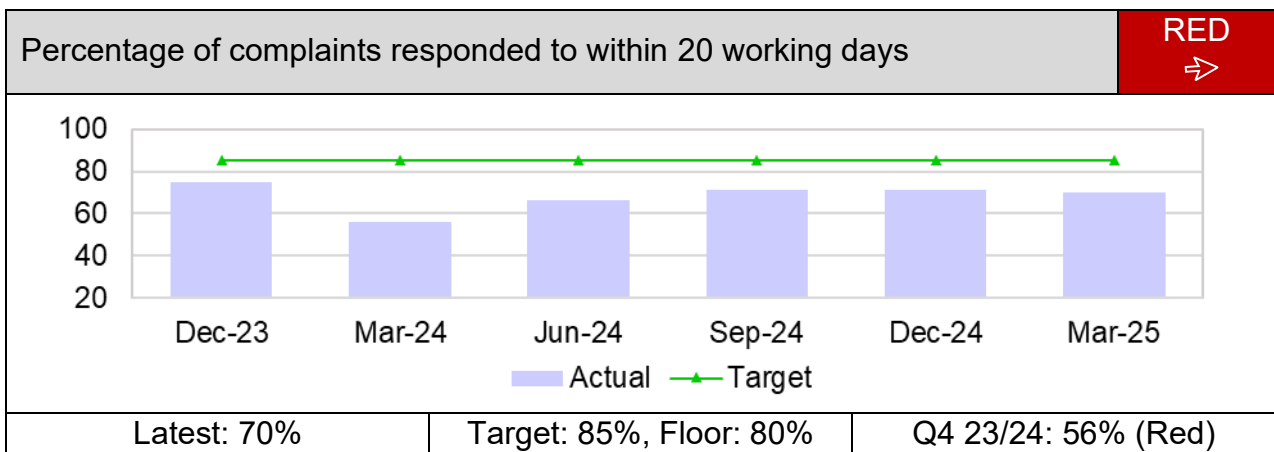
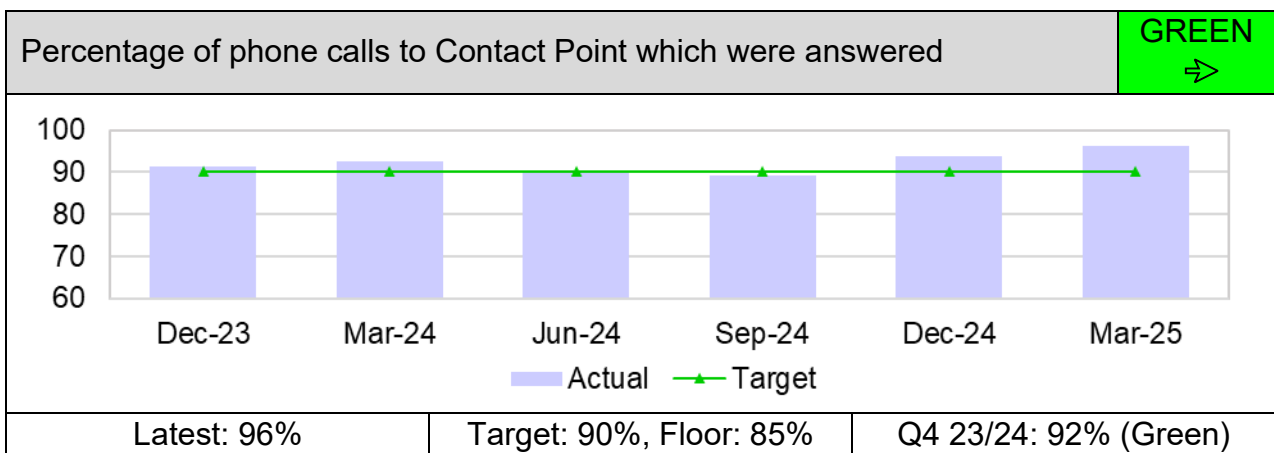
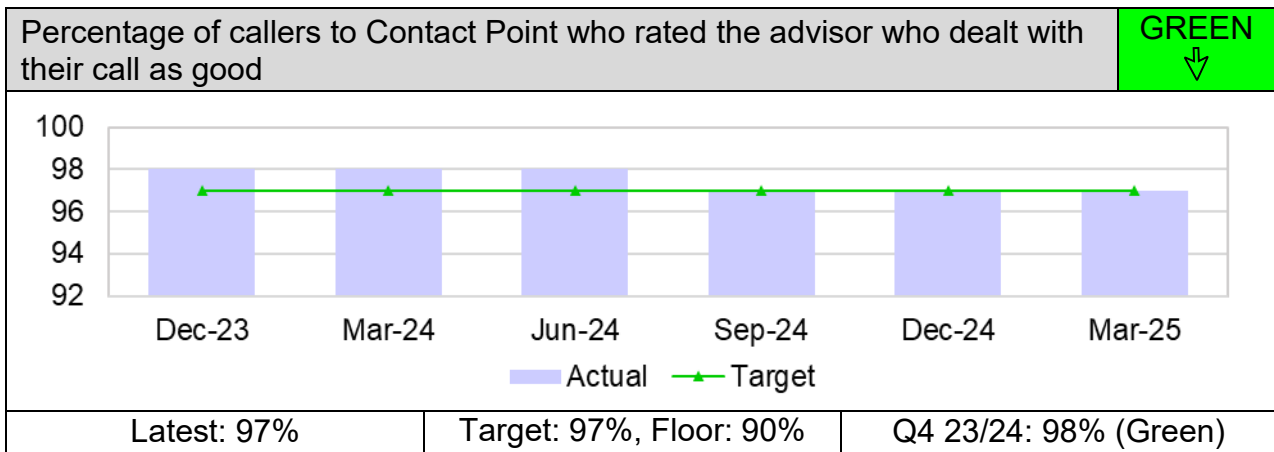
The number of visits (sessions) to the kent.gov.uk website was slightly lower than the same quarter the previous year. The most visited pages continue to be those relating to Household Waste Recycling Centres which account for about a third of all visits.

Quarter 4 saw a small decrease in the volume of complaints received compared to the same quarter last year. Annually, volumes in 2024/25 saw a small decrease of 4% on the previous year.

In terms of Directorate performance, the majority of complaints were received by the Growth, Environment and Transport Directorate who responded to 92% within timescale, the Chief Executive's Department and Deputy Chief Executive's Department, together achieved 82%, just below the 85% target. ASCH responded to 53% of complaints within timescale, however it must be noted that any agreed extensions to investigate complex cases, while agreed with the customer, will be recorded as late. CYPE saw varying levels of performance for Quarter 4 across different services. Children's Services responded to 76% of complaints within timescale, however the SEN division achieved only 9% in timescale.

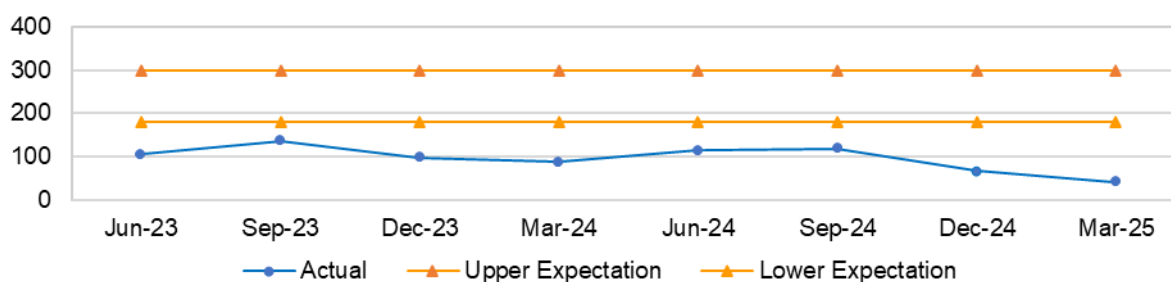
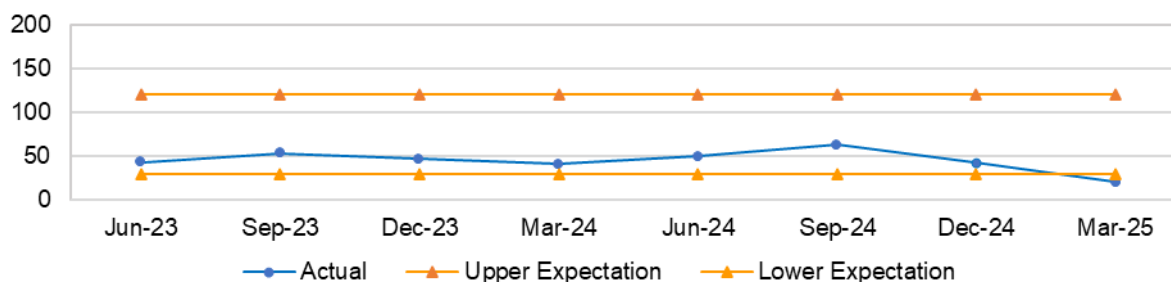
In Quarter 4, collectively we responded to 70% of complaints in the timescale, this is an improvement on last year's figure of 56% in the same quarter, and a minor decrease on the previous quarter, where 71% were answered in timescale. **The complaints team continues to work with services and managers to support their teams in responding to complaints, particularly where there are areas with backlogs.**

### Key Performance Indicators

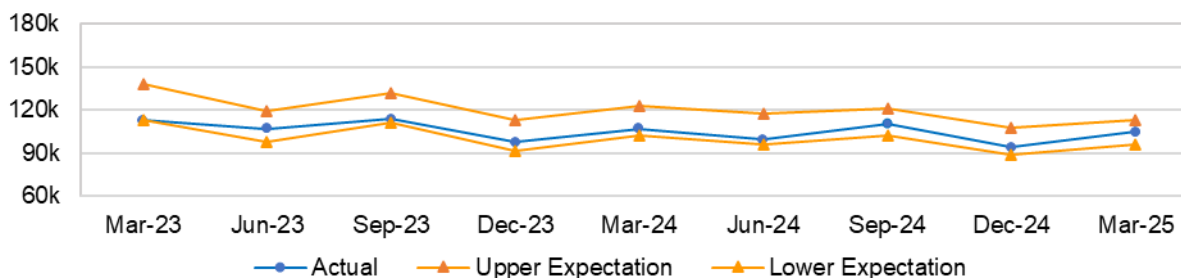


Activity indicators

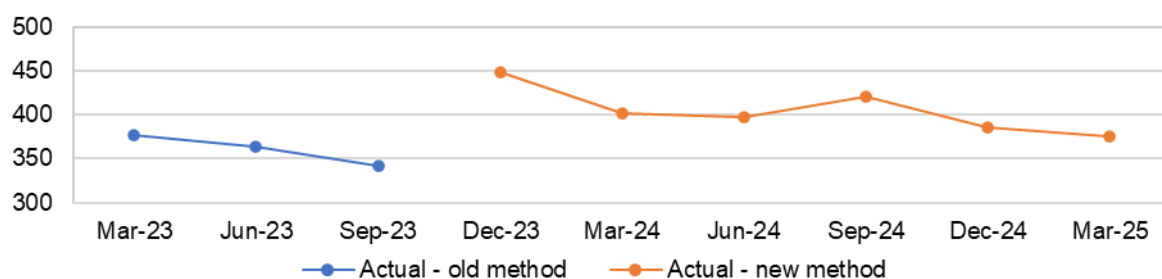
Average speed of answer (ASA) by Contact Point in seconds – **priority services**



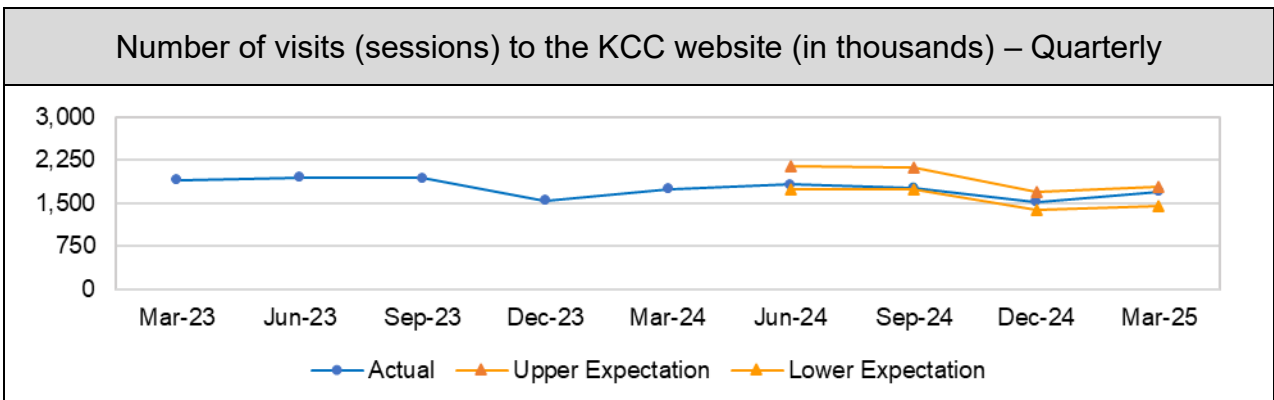
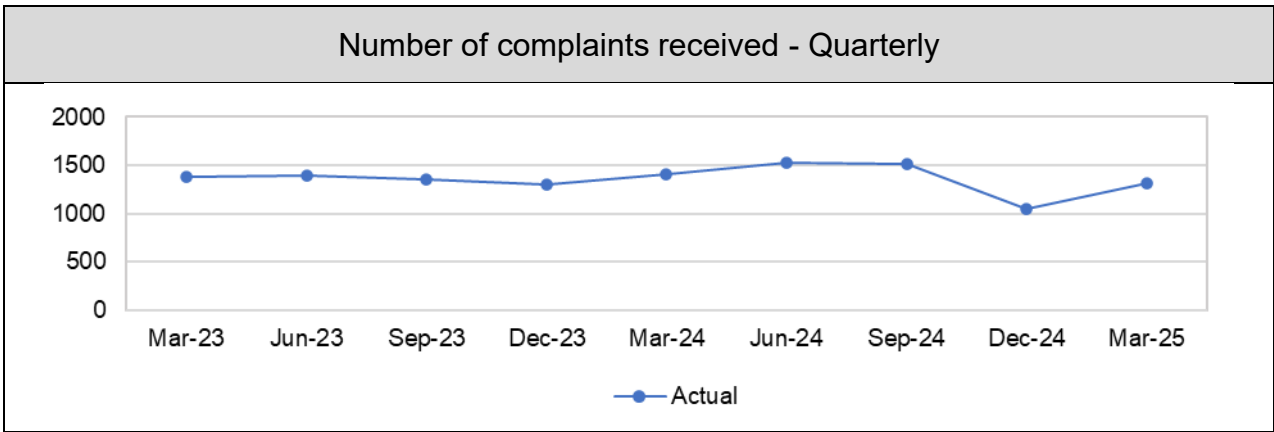
Number of phone calls responded to by Contact Point – Quarterly



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 has contributed to increased handling time in the Quarters from December 2023.



## Customer Services – Call Activity

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

Contact Point received 9% more calls compared to the previous Quarter and 6% fewer calls than Quarter 4 last year. The 12 months to March 2025 saw a 5% decrease in calls compared to the 12 months to March 2024.

Service area	Apr – Jun 24	Jul – Sep 24	Oct – Dec 24	Jan – Mar 25	12m to Mar 24	12m to Mar 25
Adult Social Care	24	25	24	27	100	100
Integrated Children's Services	18	19	19	18	76	75
Highways	13	13	11	11	60	49
Blue Badges	12	13	9	9	40	43
Schools and Early Years	8	9	6	8	32	30
Transport Services	6	12	6	7	36	32
Registrations	5	5	6	6	24	22
Waste and Recycling	8	8	5	6	28	27
Libraries and Archives	5	6	5	5	22	20
Main line	3	3	3	3	12	12
Adult Education	3	7	3	3	19	16
Other Services	2	2	1	3	8	8
Driver improvement	2	2	2	2	9	8
KSAS*	2	1	1	1	7	5
<b>Total Calls (thousands)</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>472</b>	<b>447</b>

Figures may not add up to totals due to rounding.

\* Kent Support and Assistance Service

## Customer Services – Complaints Monitoring

In Quarter 4 complaint volumes increased by 25% on the previous quarter, however volumes are in line with the same quarter last year, and 2024/25 saw a drop of 4% compared to the previous year.

For Quarter 4, 50% of complaints for CYPE were for SEN related services. The majority of Highways and Transportation complaints related to Street works / Highways Management, and 10% for Public Transport. For ASCH, Blue Badge complaints accounted for 18% of all cases.

Service	12 mths to Mar 24	12 mths to Mar 25	Quarter to Dec 24	Quarter to Mar 25
Highways and Transportation	2,567	2,267	422	522
Adult Social Care & Health	997	1,064	250	259
Integrated Children's Services	384	432	122	149
SEN	617	627	92	177
Environment and Waste	404	428	72	75
Growth & Communities (incl. Libraries, Registrations and Archives)	187	240	42	58
Education & Young People's Services	153	147	22	27
Chief Executive's Department and Deputy Chief Executive's Department	226	129	20	33
Adult Education	58	59	5	12
<b>Total Complaints</b>	<b>5,593</b>	<b>5,393</b>	<b>1,047</b>	<b>1,312</b>

<b>Customer Services – Digital Take-up</b>
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The table below shows the digital/online or automated transaction completions for key service areas where there are ways to complete other than online.

<b>Transaction type</b>	<b>Online Apr 24 – Jun 24</b>	<b>Online Jul 24 – Sep 24</b>	<b>Online Oct 24 – Dec 24</b>	<b>Online Jan 25 – Mar 25</b>	<b>Total Transactions Last 12 Months</b>
Renew a library book*	80%	83%	85%	83%	1,027,806
Report a Highways Fault	70%	64%	64%	73%	104,967
Book a Driver Improvement Course	91%	91%	87%	88%	46,258
Apply for or renew a Blue Badge	86%	88%	87%	92%	21,745
Book a Birth Registration appointment	92%	92%	91%	92%	18,014
Apply for a Concessionary Bus Pass	76%	78%	78%	78%	18,403
Report a Public Right of Way Fault	87%	87%	88%	88%	7,240
Apply for a HWRC recycling voucher	100%	99%	100%	100%	6,389

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

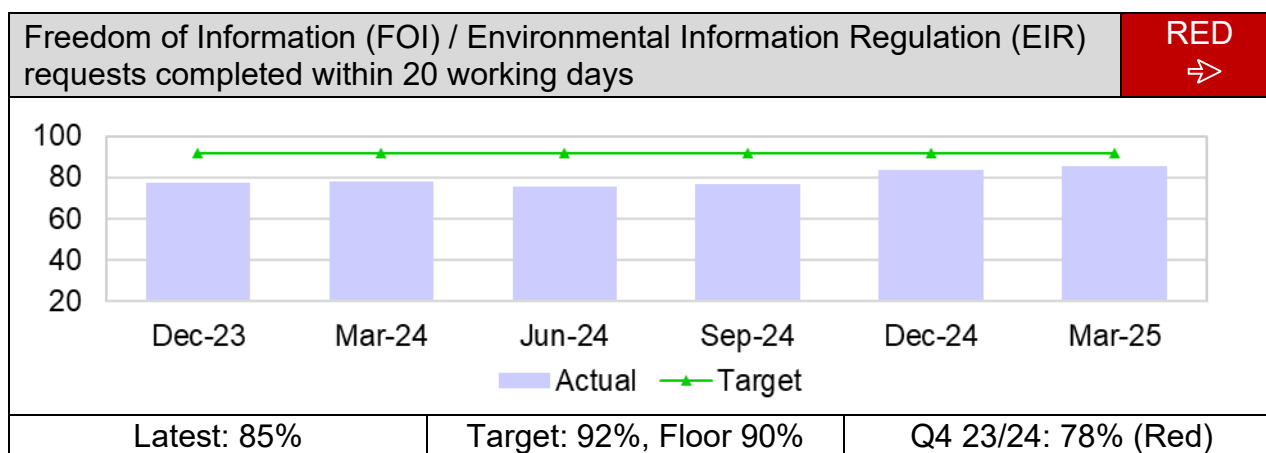
Governance, Law & Democracy						
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Brian Collins (from Quarter 1, 2025/26)					
<b>Corporate Director</b>	Amanda Beer					
KPI Summary	GREEN	AMBER	RED	↑	⇒	↓
			2	1	1	

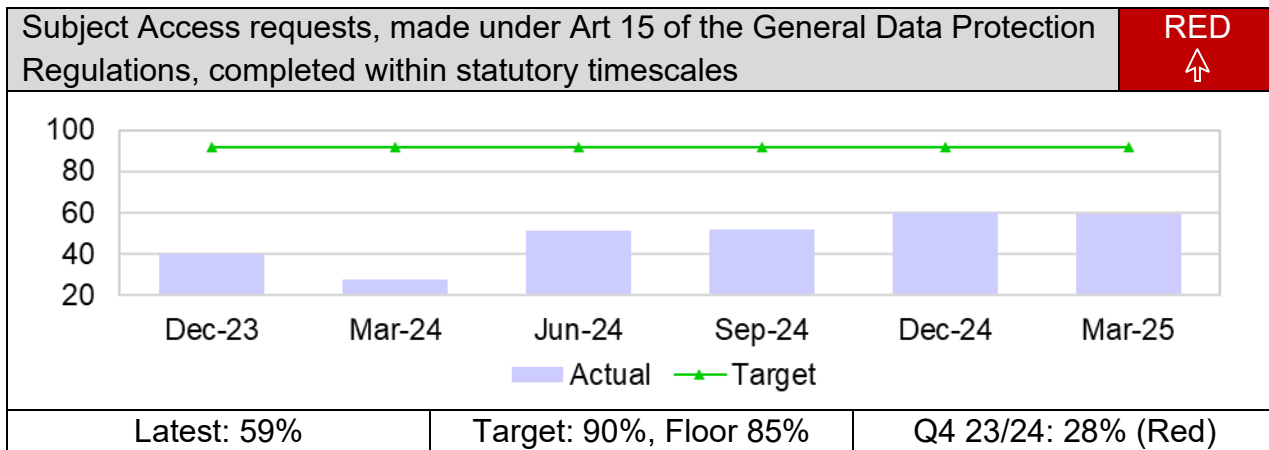
The completion within timescale of both Freedom of Information (FOI) / Environmental Information Regulation (EIR) requests, and Subject Access requests made under Article 15 of the General Data Protection Regulations, remained below their floor standards, but the improved performance seen last quarter was sustained.

The percentage of FOI / EIR requests completed within timescale, maintained its highest level of performance in over four years in this quarter. This is due to a concerted effort by staff and a greater awareness across KCC of outstanding requests following the reintroduction of a weekly report to the Corporate Management Team. No Directorate achieved target over the year, with the best performing being the Chief Executive's Department with 85% completed in timescale. The highest number of requests (953) was received by the Growth, Environment and Transport Directorate. The total number of requests remains historically high.

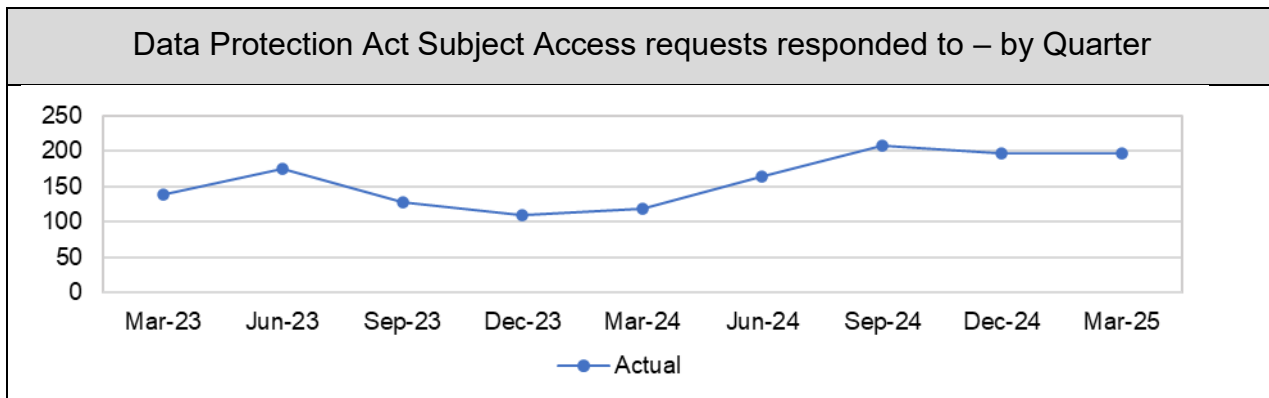
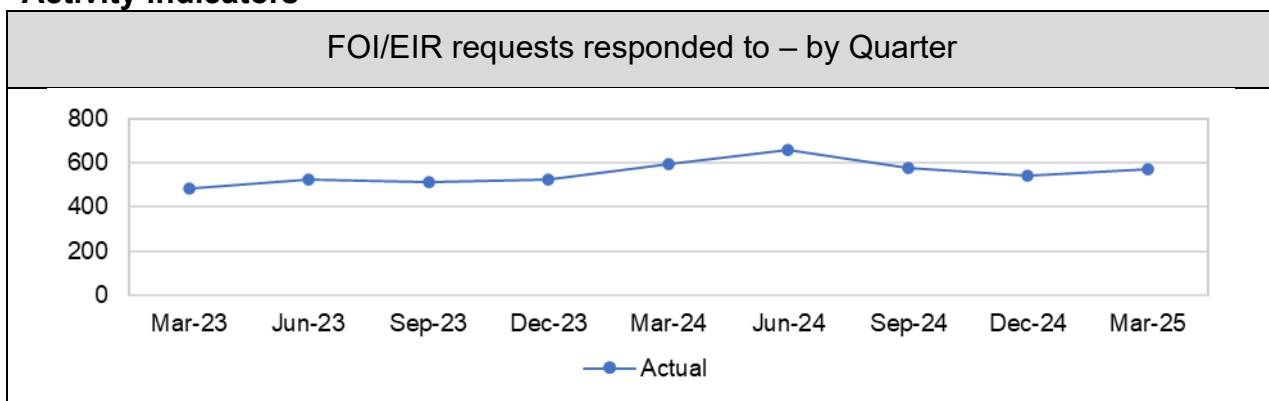
For Subject Access Requests (SARs), the improvement in performance was also sustained for the final quarter of the year. Over the year, more than 80% of requests came under the Children, Young People and Education Directorate. Reasons for delays in responding to requests include lack of resources, particularly in some operational teams, as well as delays in updating information on specific systems. The total number of requests also remains historically high.

### Key Performance Indicators








**Activity indicators**



## Growth, Economic Development & Communities

<b>Cabinet Members</b>	Paul King, Paul Webb (from Quarter 1, 2025/26)
<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.

The Quarter 3 (Oct-Dec) 2024/25 monitoring cycle of the Kent and Medway Business Fund (KMBF) recorded a net increase of 3.60 FTE, which follows a net decrease of 19.81 FTE jobs in Q2 2024/25 (Jul-Sep), and an increase of 31.0 FTE jobs in Quarter 1. In the year to the end of Quarter 3, the total net increase in job creation is 29.99 FTE, covering both jobs created and safeguarded. The decrease in the last quarter and the relatively modest increase this quarter may be reflective of the impact of the UK Government budget as businesses have fed back that the additional national insurance and other increased costs have impacted on their ability to retain and hire new staff.

Since the reopening of the KMBF Loan Schemes on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023 until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025, 412 pre-applications have been received to a value of over £42.0m. Approximately 35% of pre-applications were not approved and therefore not invited to submit a full application during this period. There are a variety of reasons for those pre-application rejections: the most common being a lack of information provided by the applicant to assess their proposals for business growth; a lack of innovation, contribution to net zero and/or impact on local supply chains; and the inclusion of ineligible expenditure. These could have been resolved by applicants reviewing the Guidance Notes. It should be noted that many rejected applicants, utilised the feedback provided positively and resubmitted a second pre-application, which they are permitted to do and have subsequently been approved. The Business Investment Team have taken remedial action to address this pre-application failure rate and are measuring its impact regularly, and offer an initial meeting online with the business, prior to them submitting their pre-application.

At the time of writing, 24 pre-applications are still active and 13 full applications to the value of £2.98m are currently being processed, with a further 15 pre-applications invited to submit a full application to a value just over £1.66m. The remaining 9 pre-applications are at various stages within the pre-application assessment process. The Kent & Medway Investment Advisory Board (IAB) have had eleven companies present to it so far with nine approved to the value of £2.3m, and two deferred, pending the provision of further information. Of the nine approved, three approved applicants later declined their loan offer. The Kent & Medway IAB Sub-Group (SBB) have had 40 companies present to them to date with 33 approved and seven rejected. The total value of the SBB approved applications is £2.49m. The total value of investments approved to date and either paid or in the process of being paid by the KMBF across both schemes is £3.4m for 35 applications.

## **Economy**

During Quarter 4, the formal transfer of responsibilities from the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) to KCC concluded with a required Deed of Variation and Transition Agreement being signed by the relevant local authorities and the Ministry for Housing, Communities & Local Government.

The Economy Team continued to work with Medway Council to carry out monitoring of the legacy capital programmes (Local Growth Fund (LGF), Getting Building Fund (GBF) and Growing Places Fund (GPF)).

KCC continued to manage the contract for the Kent & Medway Growth Hub and received confirmation that the service will continue for the 2025/26 financial year, meaning a procurement process will be launched in Quarter 1.

A first annual progress update on the delivery of the Phase 1 Implementation Plan for the Kent & Medway Economic Framework was provided to KCC's Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee in March 2025 including information on the Kent & Medway Innovation Partnership, the Strategic Partnership for Health & Economy, the 'Bring Back Eurostar' campaign, making preparations for government-funded 'Connect to Work' supported employment programme, Skills Bootcamps programme and the Made Smarter South East programme led by Surrey County Council.

## **Developer Investment Team**

The trend of relatively low levels of planning applications continued in Quarter 4 with a total of 21 being received in the three months. The drop is believed to be connected to proposed changes to the planning system being brought about through the [Planning and Infrastructure Bill](#) introduced last month, as developers awaited news on potential reforms to speed up delivery of UK housebuilding.

A total of fourteen s106 legal agreements have been completed securing £3.56m with a 95.3% success ratio against the amounts originally requested. Larger applications included in this quarter include land at Barwick Road, Dover (120 dwellings) and land at Moat Road, Headcorn (115 dwellings). The main reason for missing the 98% success ratio target is attributed to a brownfield development site at Grenham Lodge, Manston Road East, in Ramsgate, which was subject to viability issues. The District Council did not seek any affordable housing contributions for the same reason.

Resources are currently stretched as the team (along with specialists from the affected KCC service areas) defend the County Council's mitigation requirements at three concurrent live appeals. The [s106B appeal](#) for Chilmington Green (up to 5,750 homes) recommenced on the 14th April following the Inspector falling ill earlier in the year. The inquiry will run until the 2nd May. Officers also continue to be involved in the appeal for the [Highsted Park](#) application, East of Sittingbourne (two applications totalling 8,400 homes). The application was called in by the Secretary of State prior to it being determined by Swale Borough Council. The appeal is scheduled for 12 weeks, sitting in sessions between March and July of this year.

Finally, KCC is objecting to a 3,500 home development at Northfleet Harbourside due to the impact on a key minerals wharf facility on the River Thames serving the wider Kent housebuilding market.

**Mineral and Waste Policy Team**

KCC is objecting to a 3,500 home and commercial and leisure development at Northfleet Harbourside due to the impact on a key minerals wharf facility on the River Thames serving the wider Kent and London housebuilding market. The application was called in by the Secretary of State and is scheduled for 5 weeks, sitting in sessions between May and June of this year.

**No Use Empty**

In Quarter 4, a total of 86 long term empty properties were made fit for occupation through the No Use Empty (NUE) Programme, bringing the total over the last nine months to 449, and the total since the programme began in 2005 to 8,693.

The total NUE investment in converting derelict properties has increased to £109.8m (£63.5m from KCC recycled loans and £46.3m from private sector leverage). A further eight new applications were received during Quarter 4 adding to the twenty-eight reported last Quarter making a total of thirty-six applications for loan support. Twenty-nine of these are approved and in contract. Seven are approved and awaiting final legal completion and registration of security.

NUE were awarded £2.5m under the SELEP Growing Places Fund (GPF) to convert additional derelict properties which is fully allocated. The target is to return 18 empty commercial units back into use and create 36 new homes. A total of 18 projects have been approved at the end of Quarter 4 and these will return 23 empty commercial units back into use (19 completed) and create 52 homes (52 completed).

KCC Treasury have made available £28m for NUE to bring forward empty/derelict sites with planning permission for new builds. Following the recycling of £19.3m loan repayments at the end of Quarter 4, the number of new homes funded is 290 across eight Kent districts and 24 business units in Dover. A total of 24 projects have been approved at the end of Quarter 4 of which 23 are in contract. There remains a strong pipeline of projects across all NUE schemes.

Going forward, in February 2025 the KMBF Investment Advisory Board confirmed support for NUE to borrow up to £6m from the fund to make use of currently uncommitted monies to provide short-term secured loans to create new commercial workspace across the county. KMBF and NUE are in the process of sorting through governance arrangements and seeking legal advice to ensure financial compliance.

NUE will attend and present at the National Empty Homes Conference in Birmingham in May 2025 which will also mark the 20th anniversary of NUE.

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

2024/25 proved to be another positive and eventful year for LRA, marked by significant progress. Libraries saw continued increases in visits, alongside higher usage of public PCs, Wi-Fi, and the e-library services. Attendance at events and activities also expanded, and notably the Know Your Neighbourhood project in Thanet which was focused on creating events to combat social isolation and loneliness within the district resulted in a 54% increase in event attendance at Thanet's libraries over the year. Across the county, over 18,400 children took part in the Summer Reading Challenge, with Kent enjoying the highest rate of joiners in the South East, and the Archives Lunchtime Talks programme continued to draw packed audiences at Kent History and Library Centre.

Registration services experienced marked growth as well, with more ceremonies conducted (7,271 in total across the year) and a rise in the number of citizens welcomed through our celebratory citizenship events.

Over 796,500 visits to Kent's Libraries in Quarter 4 represents a 1% increase on the same period in 2023/24, while attendance to events and activities increased by 26% with over 60,900 adults and children enjoying a wide range of events to bring communities together and enhance wellbeing. Canterbury Library (The Beaney) was in the spotlight on 25 February 2025 when Her Majesty The Queen visited to unveil a statue of Aphra Benn outside the building, followed by a tour of the library.

Library issues have decreased overall by 2% in comparison with Quarter 4 2023/24, with physical issues falling by 5%, but e-Book and e-Audiobook issues increasing by 7%. Work is being carried out within the service to improve physical issues, through further staff training on stock management, a review of the stock collection policy and events such as community days to promote library services, together with the exploration of the legacy of the Know Your Neighbourhood project which resulted in increased usage of Thanet Libraries.

Quarter 4 was also a busy period for the Archive service, with 855 visitors to the Search Room representing a 35% increase on Quarter 4 2023/24. The team have carried out extensive outreach across the year, promoting the service at Ramsgate Tunnels, Dreamland Heritage Trust Local History Day, and a National Sporting Heritage Day at Mid Kent College, as well as attending conferences at Maidstone's Brompton Barracks and Canterbury Cathedral. Remote enquiries to the service have also increased in Quarter 4 by 3% on the same period in 2023/24.

The Kent Ceremonies Team delivered 851 marriage and civil partnership ceremonies during Quarter 4, representing a 7% increase on Quarter 4 last year, while the number of citizens welcomed to the UK increased by 10% for the same comparison periods, with 1,216 citizens celebrating their British citizenship.

The number of birth registration appointments delivered fell by 4% in Quarter 4 in comparison with the same period in 2023/24, while the number of death registration appointments rose by 2%. Customer satisfaction with the Registration service for Quarter 4 was 96%, reflecting the continued dedication and support of the teams to providing excellent customer service at key moments during people's lives.

### **Active Kent and Medway (AK&M)**

In February it was confirmed that two places in Kent would be included in phase one of Sport England's place-based expansion programme, which seeks to take a whole system approach to connecting the least active, and those facing the greatest inequalities of opportunities, to being more active. Sport England has committed £250 million to this programme which runs until 2028, a part of which (£180 million) will be invested into revenue and capital programmes in 80 places across England, including Thanet and Gravesham, to supercharge activity.

We will also be seeing further investment into the county as part of phase two of this programme in 2025/26.

This quarter also saw AK&M deliver our annual Primary PE conference at the Kent Events Centre, which saw 108 different schools from across the county represented.

Our Department for Education funded Opening School Facilities programme has come to an end after three years. 33 schools have benefitted from over £1m of investment for projects to enable extracurricular and community activity on school sites. These have included the establishment of a new gymnastics club at March Academy in Folkestone - which is now self-sustaining and the creation of bike storage facilities at Dame Janet Primary School in Thanet in support of active travel for students.

### **Community Safety**

Focus areas during this period for the Kent Community Warden Service (KCWS) continued to be the cost of living, assisting with food banks, warm hubs and supporting residents to access grants and funds. This includes signposting residents that are eligible for Winter Fuel Payments and Pension credit.

KCC Community Wardens are also assisting residents and communities in relation to Mental Health, loneliness and isolation, homelessness, environmental and financial crime (fraud and loan sharks), anti-social behaviour and scams. 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.

The service has been establishing themselves within a number of new deployment areas under its new geographical allocation policy (GAP) working with residents to identify gaps in services and assist in setting up community-based clubs and events. The service's webpage has been updated to show where wardens are now allocated. A small number of parish councils have taken up the offer of a sponsorship arrangement to fund warden services within their area which would not otherwise be prioritised by the GAP. The sponsorship allows KCC to increase the service's capacity beyond its budget limitations.

As part of the Kent Community Safety Trust's (KCST) role in sharing good practice and facilitating joint working, the team produces and circulates monthly E-Bulletins with the latest community safety updates and any relevant news, publications, and legislation which is circulated to over 200 practitioners across the county.

The KCST obtained funding for a trainer to deliver training sessions on Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). During Quarter 4, two sessions took place, one focused on victim blaming and rape myths and the other on what community interventions might work, with over 90 professionals in attendance across the two sessions. The poll results for the March session are not available but in January 96% rated the session as excellent or very good (rising to 100% if good is included).

### **Trading Standards**

Complex Investigations - In Operation Blackboard, three men were prosecuted for fraudulently reducing 2 million miles from 23 high-mileage vehicles using fake logbooks and MOT certificates. They received suspended sentences, community service, and were ordered to pay compensation. Operation Fable identified criminal business practices, including unauthorised vehicle use and retaining payments without completing work. Guilty pleas were entered, with sentencing in May.

Safeguarding and Community Engagement – In 2024/25, the Safeguarding team conducted 173 interventions, saving victims from losing over £431,917. They organized six Doorstep Crime Awareness events and engaged with 1,303 residents through 39 presentations. Progress was made with Kent Police on taking a more strategic lead for Doorstep Crime.

Business Advice and Compliance - Officers attended National Construction Panel meetings. The team is working with the Office of Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) on the construction products panel to help businesses comply in the steel industry, one of our officers chairs this national panel. Two new primary authority companies, London Nootropics and Nature Plus, were onboarded this quarter.

Officers also attended the national Age Verification Panel. The Local Vape Action (LVA), the national vape compliance project piloted in Kent, has been successful in Tunbridge Wells borough which saw a decrease in the number of illegal sales, and is now being set up in Ashford borough for launch in May. As part of the work with business they sent 40 advice letters to businesses regarding vape recycling.

Food and Animal Health – In Quarter 4, the animal health team collaborated with Kent Police Rural task force for joint operations and engaged with the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) and DEFRA on cases of Bluetongue and Avian Influenza. The Sheep Worrying campaign, launched in February, received over 200,000 views by March.

Consumer and Public Safety – The team identified a new nicotine strips/film product which was raised nationally as it has no age restriction controls. The Vape team completed 1,024 visits in 2024/25, seizing 25,516 vapes and 4,000 nicotine pouches. This quarter they sent 483 emails and 300 letters to businesses regarding the ban on single-use disposable vapes.

Ports Team – In Quarter 4, the team detected 81,828 unsafe/non-compliant products, including unlicensed medicinal products, Hydroquinone, and counterfeit items. They took part in Operation Sandhead with Border Force intervening in 30-40 consignments a day at Dover Eastern Docks, which also provided good networking opportunities. The team is now located in Dover District Council offices and sit with the port health team which is beneficial to both.

Legal Proceedings - There were 10 cases within the court system, with six going to Crown Court. The legal team also processed criminal cases for the Counter Fraud Team (three) and provided services to the Gypsy, Romany and Traveller Unit on processing orders to disband illegal encampments (three).

### **Creative and Cultural Economy Service**

Kent Film Office - In Quarter 4, the film office handled 105 filming requests and 137 related enquiries. We logged 71.5 filming days bringing an estimated £676K direct spend into Kent & Medway economies. Highlights for the quarter included: feature films The Family Plan 2 and Animol; TV series MobLand; and a Toyota Corolla Commercial.

Creative Economy - There are 8,900 creative industry jobs in Kent and 37.2% are in IT, software & computer services. The 6,195 creative enterprises in Kent in 2024 account for 9.6% of all enterprises. Create South East programme is a regional programme led by Kent County Council, it supports higher growth creative businesses to secure investment. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport have extended this flagship programme by another year with funding of £425,000 allowing the programme to support another 40 businesses.

By the end of Quarter 4, 209 expressions of interest have led to 113 creative businesses receiving a package of support that included intensive mentoring, business planning, pitch development and introductions to investors. Four businesses have already achieved additional investment.

Placemaking - As an area facing high levels of deprivation, significant health inequalities, and limited engagement with arts and culture, Sheppey would benefit from targeted intervention to ensure equitable access. To further this, a bid has been submitted to UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) for the Locally Unlocking Culture for Inclusive Access (LUCIA) fund. The bid process was led by the Culture and Creative Economy Team through a series of online meetings with partners and a community engagement event on 24 February at the Criterion Blue Town.

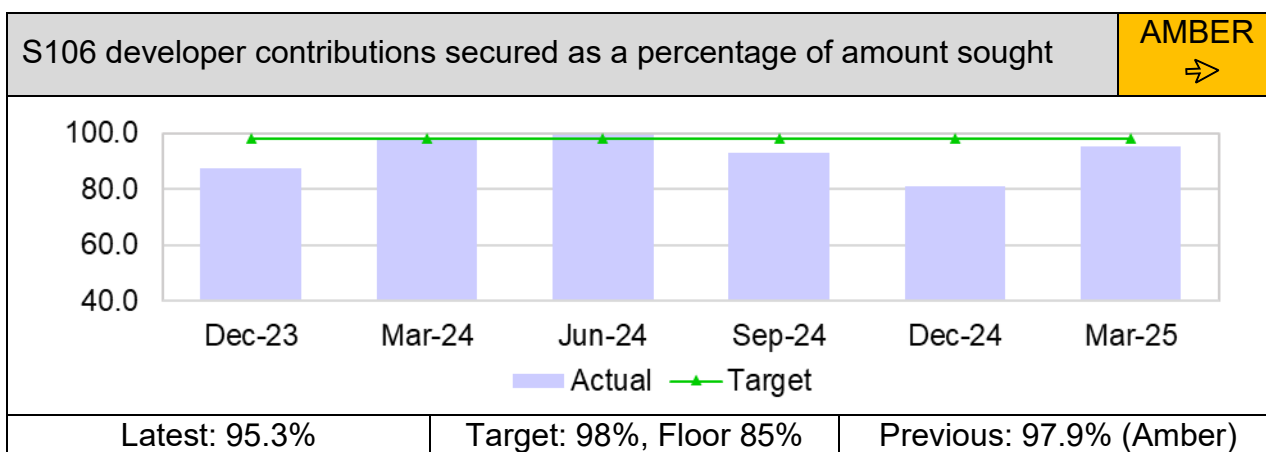
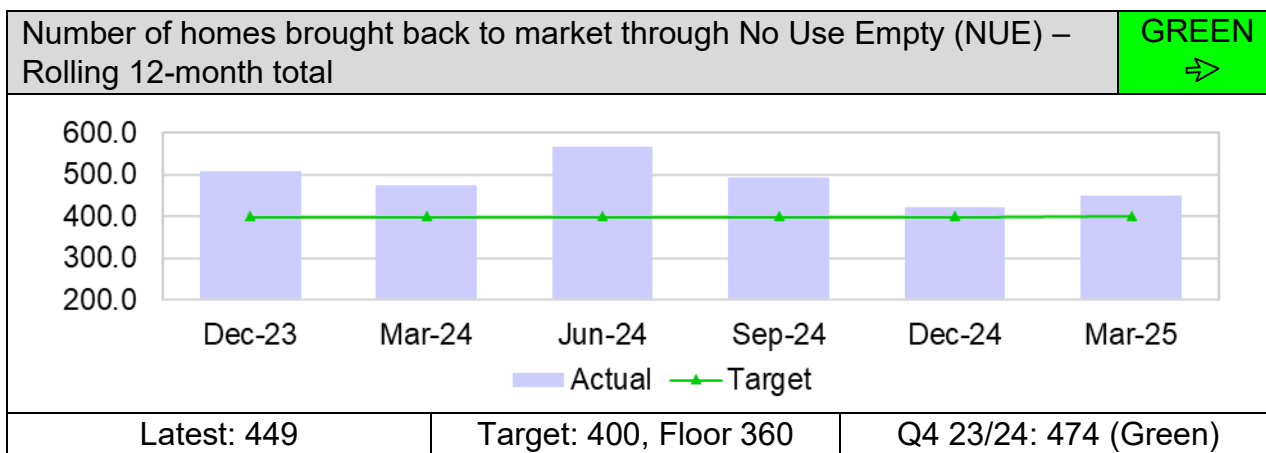
Ongoing work continues to engage Local Authorities with the Cultural Planning Toolkit which provides tools to embed cultural provision in new build and regeneration projects; this was researched and written in partnership with Creative Estuary and Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA). Significant headway has been made with Royal Tunbridge Wells to integrate model policies into the Town Centre Plan. The relationship between Creative Estuary and TCPA continues to explore ways to engage planners in the toolkit.

Playground - Playground is a programme of creativity for young children and their families taking place in libraries, Family Hubs and other venues across Kent. Playground is a partnership between Kent County Council's Culture and Creative Economy Service and Kent Libraries and achieved National Portfolio Organisation status with Arts Council England in April 2023.

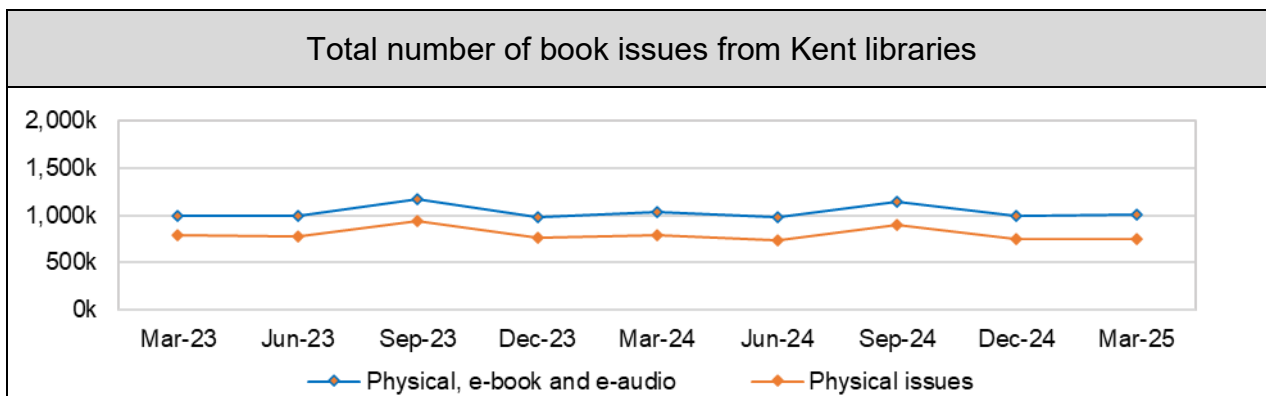
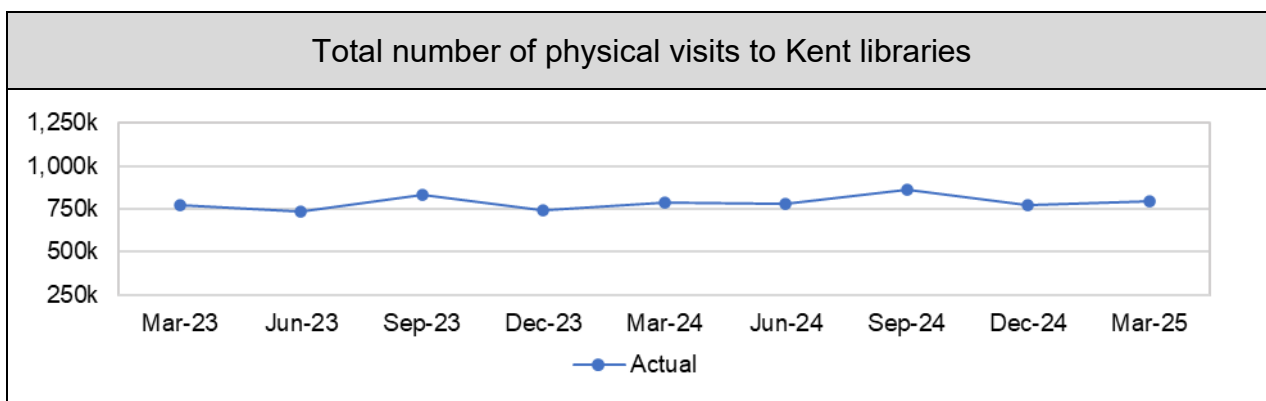
In Quarter 4 we delivered 118 Baby Playground sessions with 1,972 participants; 23 Family Playground sessions with 437 participants; 71 Playground specialist sessions with SEND families with 525 participants. In 2024/25, the total number of specialist sessions delivered was 170 (target 48) with 1,218 participants (target 187). Due to significant demand, with increasing referrals from the NHS, it has been necessary to initiate a waiting list. We plan to run some additional one-off specialist sessions in the summer of 2025 to enable children on the waiting list to experience Playground.

Playground was commissioned to deliver sessions in Finland which attracted considerable Finnish press coverage. We have also been commissioned to take Baby Playground to the [Artground](#) in Singapore in summer 25. We have submitted a proposal to Maidstone Museum who have indicated their interest in hosting sessions from autumn 2025.

### Key Performance Indicators



### Activity indicators



Environment and Transport						
<b>Cabinet Members</b>	David Wimble, Peter Osborne (from Quarter 1, 2025/26)					
<b>Corporate Director</b>	Simon Jones					
KPI Summary	GREEN	AMBER	RED	↑	⇒	↓
	5	1	-	1	4	1

### Highways

In Quarter 4 the RAG ratings for the four Highways KPIs show 3 Greens (pothole repairs, emergency incidents and enquiries made online) and 1 Amber (routine faults).

#### Pothole repairs

Empowering KCC Highways staff to address minor and urgent repairs has directly resulted in quicker responses to customer inquiries. For Quarter 4, the service responded to 97% of pothole repairs within the target timescale, giving a Green RAG rating, with 6,338 potholes repaired out of a possible 6,513. **We continue to monitor performance at the monthly Contract Board meetings to ensure performance remains on target.**

#### Emergency incidents

We have successfully achieved a Green RAG rating of 98% for attendance at Emergency Incidents within 2 hours of notification, with 807 successful responses out of 822. Although the service narrowly fell short of obtaining a Green RAG rating in previous quarters, all incidents were safely resolved. **These outcomes demonstrate an improvement compared to the 2023/24 period, and we are dedicated to sustaining and enhancing this positive trajectory.**

#### Routine Faults

We addressed 18,005 reported repair faults in Quarter 4, completing 15,076 within the target timeframe. This performance yields an Amber RAG rating of 84%, with impacts from cold and icy weather in early January, and then storm Herminia at the end of the month. While we achieved a Green RAG rating in Quarter 2, we were just one percentage point shy of this target in both Quarter 1 and Quarter 3. **We are actively pursuing performance improvements through discussions and pilot programs with the Contract Board and the Strategic Partnership Board.**

#### Public Enquiries

The total number of customer contacts regarding highway issues in Quarter 4 was down on last year's totals with 45,577, (compared to 58,838, for the same period last year). 25,372 of these were identified as faults requiring action by front line teams (compared to 33,896 for the same period last year), both are down largely due to better weather during the winter compared to the previous year.

At the end of Quarter 4, there were 6,894 open enquiries (work in progress) which compares to 12,432 at the same time last year, reflecting the more manageable workload in several parts of the business, which is unusual during the winter period and represents a significant improvement from where this has been in previous years.

### Online fault reporting

Use of the online fault reporting tool remains high with 72.4% of all enquiries in Quarter 4 coming directly from the public via the tool which is a similar level to the same period last year.

Work to encourage more online reporting has been ongoing for several years and we have seen an increased take up of around 15% when compared to the same quarter in 2019/20). This has also contributed to a near halving of the number of calls to the highway's helpline over the same period. Work on a new and improved fault reporting tool (using KCC's existing platform) has been given the go ahead and it is hoped this will go live for pothole and streetlight enquiries by the summer and for other highway services soon after.

### Street Works

Pressure from utilities companies on the teams remains high with ongoing high levels of emergency works and road space at a premium with some areas booked out for up to two years in advance. Works that would normally be coordinated to be undertaken during School holidays will need to be completed during term time as there is simply not enough time within the holidays to meet the level of demand that street works are seeing. We will collaborate closely with these utility companies to proactively establish robust communication channels for all our stakeholders including residents, schools and businesses.

A 12-month trial is due to commence with 1Spatial to use geo spatial software to produce red book compliant Traffic management plans with the aim to reduce the number of road closures. We are expecting the trial to start in June, which will be run and managed by 1Spatial in collaboration with the street works teams and utility companies. 1Spatial will provide regular updates on outcomes and successes, where the software shows that works can be carried out with reduced traffic management followed by a liaison with the relevant works promoter. 1Spatial will also liaise with utility companies to share their findings; assuming the trial shows positive results, it is expected that the utilities will see the benefits of the software and will engage with 1Spatial to continue with its use.

### **Road Safety**

The casualty figures for Quarter 4 show an overall increase of 142 casualties compared to the same quarter the previous year and a small decrease of two compared with the same quarter in 2019/20. For those casualties that were killed or seriously injured (KSI), these were up by 42 overall compared to the previous year and up by 48 compared to the same quarter in 2019/20. Comparing historical records with those completed so far across this quarter, the highest contributory factor causing these is "not looking properly", with only one record given a "possible poor or defective road surface" from the attending officer.

Quarter 4											
2024/25				2023/24				2019/20			
Fatal	Serious	Slight	Total	Fatal	Serious	Slight	Total	Fatal	Serious	Slight	Total
9	189	686	884	15	141	586	742	2	148	738	888

(Based on the latest data received from Kent Police)

### Safer Active Journeys Team

Bikeability training ended on a high in 2024/25, seeing a 12% increase on delivery from the previous year. The KCC team and the framework of training providers have all worked hard to increase our capacity to deliver and we hope to continue seeing this increase when we look at the academic year figures in the summer. In total, 9,278 children received their core Level 1 and Level 2 Bikeability training. In addition, over 1,000 children received Learn to Ride training, 1,300 received Balance Bike training, and 78 secondary school children completed their Level 3 training.

Adult cycle training is picking up as the warmer weather arrives and the team are working with wider KCC colleagues looking at team cycle training days, bike loans to encourage moving car business miles to cycle miles and also working on launching a cycle training venue at Betteshanger Country Park.

The number of live school crossing patrol sites active at the end of this quarter remains steady at 84, with 18 current vacancies out for recruitment at the start of April. We are working with our colleagues in Highway Improvements in making some improvements to our school crossing patrol sites, such as installing a zebra crossing.

We are hoping to increase our team of pedestrian trainers in the next quarter to improve on delivery of our pedestrian training scheme for Key Stage 1 children this financial year.

A record number of schools are participating in Living Streets “Walk Once a Week” (WoW) scheme. This is an active travel initiative that aims to reduce the number of cars used to travel to/from the school entrance each day. The WoW scheme incentivising travelling actively by recording and awarding “active journeys” – like walking, using a Park and Stride location, scooting, cycling etc. We now have 29 schools engaged and are hoping to increase this number next school year.

### Active Travel Intervention Team

School Streets launched at St Peter’s Methodist Primary in Canterbury on 28<sup>th</sup> April and Brunswick House in Maidstone on 19<sup>th</sup> May. Both schools will benefit from road safety and active travel initiatives including Scootability, Learn to Ride and Bikeability. The Consolidated Active Travel Fund has allocated KCC a revenue allocation of £1,304,625 for delivery of schemes / initiatives between April 2025 to September 2026. Districts and Boroughs have been offered the opportunity to request funding for Capability Building and Behaviour Change activities, which will be prioritised among partners and stakeholders.

Eighteen bikes have been provided to Maidstone and Darent Valley hospital staff for commuting, and through partnership with Cycling UK, we are able to offer regular pop-up Dr Bike sessions at both NHS sites to promote active travel.

We have worked with Sustrans, the Police and Cyclopark to redesign and deliver barriers along part of NCN177 (National Cycle Network, Route 177) to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010, providing access to all legitimate users of the NCN177.

### Active Travel Infrastructure

Active Travel funded projects are continuing to be developed through the design and construction phase with several projects having now been completed such as walking, wheeling and cycling improvements on A2034 Cheriton Rd, Folkestone and in Faversham along with cross town improvements still in construction in Sevenoaks Town. We are working closely with Active Travel England on design assurance procedures and have received further funding grants totalling £7.64m. There are also several S106 Developer contribution schemes at various phases of development such as Kent Street road widening near Kings Hill, Tonbridge & Malling which is in construction. Monitoring and evaluation of completed, existing and proposed schemes is a significant area of work for the Team.

### Safer Speeds and Enforcement Team

A report on the outcome of trial temporary average speed cameras has been finalised and the results have determined the scheme successful. Work is now underway to seek funding through appropriate channels to enable possible continuation of the project.

Work continues to secure a new contract for safety camera equipment and maintenance after 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025, and this was heard at the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2025 with the resolution to procure new contracts through national frameworks.

The new average speed camera system is operational on the A20 at Farningham following investigations after a series of speed-related personal injury crashes. Data continues to show good compliance with the speed limit.

The team also continued to deliver minibus assessments and training, mostly to school minibus drivers, as well as delivering key messages to business who have fleets of vehicles and how improving driving standards can improve overall efficiencies for their business.

### Kent Driver Education Team

Demand for course spaces over the Christmas and for the first few weeks into the New Year period is generally lower than the rest of the year. However, this then picks up again by mid-January and most spaces were fully booked for the majority of courses up to two months out.

The 1,186 courses delivered in Quarter 4 is similar to the same period last year when 1,148 courses were delivered, but the overall yearly figures show an increase from 4,329 last year to 4,627 this year.

After the successful completion of the New National Speed Awareness Course (NSAC) training, all NDORS Licenced Trainers now deliver this course. The KCC Instructors have also completed National Motorway Training for three more trainers. They are currently delivering On-Road Coach training for three trainers in April which will assist with the lack of course spaces due to recent loss of qualified Advanced Driving Instructors for the Safe and Considerate Driving Course.

There has been a drop off in availability of some trainers, as they are working for multiple course providers, which has led to reduced capacity of course spaces. Subsequently, more trainers will need to be recruited to meet the current demand.

### Safer Road Users Team

During this quarter, the Team delivered the following:

- 'Road Safety Club' (RSC) intervention to 8,836 Primary School Pupils across 65 different schools.
- Eco warriors event including facilitation for 60 year 6 pupils.
- Canterbury Christchurch University road safety towards public services qualification for 25 students.
- Train the Trainer partnership saw Police staff delivering 20 of our assemblies with 713 pupils reached.
- Road Sense Programme delivery to Year 7 pupils at 21 schools, reaching 3,645 pupils.
- Road Sense Programme delivery to Year 9 pupils at 20 schools, reaching 3,512 pupils
- Young Driver & Passenger Course delivery to Years 12 & 13 at 20 schools, reaching 2,282 pupils
- Mature Road User sessions with 6 sessions delivered reaching 140 older road users.
- Online Mobile Phone Campaign delivered
- Organic social media; January reach 196.4K, February reach 690.2K and March reach 9K

### **Crash Remedial Measures & Local Transport Plan (LTP)**

The 2025/26 Crash Remedial Measures (CRM) Cluster Site programme has now been established and a total of 80 locations met the threshold for being considered a cluster site this year, down seven on last year. The team have identified approximately 36 locations for remedial interventions across Kent. These CRM schemes range from minor signing and lining improvements to junction redesigns. The schemes are currently being designed at specific locations around the County where engineering solutions have been assessed to be able to reduce the risk of collisions occurring.

In addition to the Cluster Site programme, the Highway Improvements Team (HIT) are also carrying out analysis of routes and junctions that have been identified as 'high risk' by a series of factors that identify them as having a higher than 'normal' level of collisions compared with similar sites. Schemes are progressed through the design and associated engagement process for delivery next financial year. This cluster, junction and route review work forms a suite of Crash Remedial Measures (CRM) carried out by the authority in line with our Vision Zero approach to eliminating road fatalities by 2050.

The team have recently completed delivery of some large-scale CRM and Local Transport Plan projects. The new Zebra Crossing at Loose Road, Maidstone has been well received by the local community as has the new footway on the A26 from Three Elms Lane to Haywards Farm Shop.

The HIT are also continuing to work with elected officials, members and parishes to assist them in delivering items that have been prioritised within their local Highway Improvement Plans. The HIT is currently tasking their small but focussed Community Engagement teams to support parishes in their efforts to realise highway improvements that their communities are promoting. A high number of parishes are now engaging with the HIT to develop their own prioritised Highways Improvement Plans (HIPs). Almost 90% of parishes now have their own HIPs. We continue to issue a road safety and active travel group Newsletter to build upon our positive engagement with our parishes.

The team continue to support Speedwatch activity, school travel plans and business grants. The team have continued with regular dialogue to look at targeting their enforcement efforts based on representations received and on speed data. A bi-monthly meeting now takes place with Kent Police, the Kent Police Speedwatch Co-ordinator and officers in the Highway Improvements Team where Speedwatch results are reviewed and discussed.

### **Traffic Management**

Enforcement of Moving Traffic Offences have now operated for over six months at Beaver Rd, Ashford, having been introduced on 23 September 2024. Over this period, we have observed the volume of warning notices issued drop by more than 50%, however, the volume of Penalty Charges Notices (PCNs) issued has increased now that the warning notice period has ended. We will continue to monitor and may see a peak in PCNs before they begin to fall. Other enforcement locations remain 'quiet' except for the introduction of the Clive Road Bus Gate Gravesend which in its first three months of operation has seen 6,000 warning notices and over 4,000 PCNs issued. There has been a very strong decline over this period in warning notices by 60%, however, it is too early to monitor an exact trend with PCNs, despite a 10% reduction between February and March. Future potential 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. KCC recently signed the grant letter for 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. The team are now in the procurement process with contract award expected late summer and first installations of LEVI funded chargers expected at the end of 2025 or early 2026.

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

KCC is now the Accountable Body for £128m of Government funding from rounds one to three of the LGF. There are currently two high risk projects: Sturry Link Road and the Maidstone Integrated Transport Package (ITP). For Sturry Link Road project, the design and build contract has been signed and the contractor is progressing with the detail design. For Maidstone ITP, a review of the design for the remaining schemes and available budget including developer contributions is ongoing.

### **Transport Strategy**

KCC has been continuing to roll out its Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) programme utilising funding awards in 2023/24 and 2024/25. This has seen the delivery of a number of bus interventions such as three new bus priority schemes, a variety of fares interventions including the suppression of KCC Travel Saver costs for Kent families, the award of community transport grants and a number of highway interventions to help with reliability. The funding also continues to be vital in supporting the Kent bus network where a significant number of services across the county would no longer be operating without its existence. Recognising Kent's updated Bus Service Improvement Plan and having met all other requirements of the DfT, Kent have been awarded a further £12m of Capital and £11m of Revenue funding in 2025/26. This funding, which is now collectively referred to as the "Bus Grant" will enable us to continue to deliver initiatives consistent with the Kent BSIP in the coming year whilst ensuring that we can continue to maintain services that are now requiring of public subsidy.

The challenges impacting the sustainability of services for operators have not gone away and Bus Grant funding is now supporting more than 60 services that would otherwise not be running at a cost of over £6m per year. Bus Grant funding is only secure until the end of the 2025/26 financial year.

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

The KPI target on diversion of waste from landfill continues to be met, with 99.2% of waste over the last 12 months being recycled, composted, or used for energy generation. The total volume of waste collected continues to increase, mostly due to increased volumes at HWRCs, but remains within expectations overall. Kerbside waste volumes are 9% above pre-pandemic levels with HWRC volumes increasing, but still 24% below pre-pandemic. The total volume of waste collected is similar to pre-pandemic levels.

### **Energy and Climate Change**

The greenhouse gas emission target for Quarter 3, 2024/25 has been met with a total of 10,389 tCO<sub>2</sub>e of greenhouse gas emissions compared with the target of 10,570 tCO<sub>2</sub>e.

Although the target has been met, compared to last quarter, we saw an increase in the total greenhouse gas emissions for the first time since reporting began. Although only a small increase, this will require closer monitoring moving forward.

Sites which are not managed under KCC's facilities management contract have seen an increase in electricity and gas consumption, and our Traded Services have added new brands to their portfolio which have contributed to the increased total greenhouse gas emissions seen in Quarter 3. The contributions that the solar farms are having in reducing KCC's emissions continue to be positive.

All Kent and Medway Local Authorities, including Kent County Council (KCC), continue to promote iChoosr's *Solar Together* opportunity. Participating households and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) can benefit from competitive prices, due to the collective purchasing model, and greater energy independence.

In the 12 months to March 2025, installations for Phase 3 were completed, and installations for Phase 4 began. More than 600 low-carbon technology installations took place in this time period.

For Phase 4 only, more than 5,170 solar panels, totalling over 2.2MW of capacity, were installed in the 12 months to March 2025. These Solar PV systems are estimated to help households and SMEs avoid 477 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e in the first year after installation, with expected system lifetimes of around 25 years.

From 2020 to March 2025, over 3,600 *Solar Together Kent* installations were completed. Residents have invested around £30.48 million into 15MW of generating capacity and additional battery storage. Collectively, these Solar PV systems are estimated to help avoid over 3,450 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e in their first year of operation, with expected system lifetimes of around 25 years.

Promotion of Phase 5 is underway. Registrations opened online in March 2025 and will close in the Summer. Further information can be found on the [KCC website](#).

## **Natural Environment and Coast**

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

In Quarter 4, the public consultation on the draft Strategy was undertaken. The 8-week consultation launched on 16 January 2025, and ran until the 12 March 2025. The consultation invited residents, stakeholders and other interested parties to provide views on the draft Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

During the consultation period, the Making Space for Nature team held over 40 drop-in sessions at various locations around the county to allow people to come and discuss the Strategy in person. These included libraries in every borough, County Hall, museums, farmers markets, country parks, nature reserves, as well as farming-sector meetings and a farming exhibition show. The team engaged with over 500 people at these drop-in sessions. There were also 11 online sector focused online briefing sessions, attended by 188 and recordings of the briefing sessions had over 170 viewings.

356 consultation responses were received and work is now focussed on analysing the feedback and using this to inform the finalisation of the Strategy. The work remains on track for publication in summer 2025.

Over the past year, well in excess of 1,000 individuals have been engaged in the development of the Strategy. There were 678 individuals participating through the 20 workshops held, representing 284 different organisations, bodies, affiliations etc.

It is also worth noting that despite a very tight timeline for delivery all milestones have been met by the target date and work is on track for publication in summer 2025 as planned.

Further information on the Strategy can be found online at [www.makingspacefornature.org.uk](http://www.makingspacefornature.org.uk)

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

Work continues in supporting the county's local planning authorities (LPAs) in discharging the requirements for BNG. The latest guidance for the county's LPAs and others involved in the delivery of BNG recommends criteria for defining what is considered to be "significant on-site habitat" in Kent and Medway, outlining when the relevant planning authority is likely to expect such habitats to be maintained and monitored (with monitoring reports submitted periodically to the LPA) for a period of at least 30 years. For more detail see [Defining significant on-site habitat for Kent and Medway | Making Space For Nature Kent](#).

The ecological advice service continues to provide support to all Local Planning Authorities on their development management, with advice increasingly required in respect of BNG following the extension of requirements to all sites.

In the past year the service has developed and published four guidance documents on BNG for the county, ensuring that there is a consistent and clear approach in Kent and Medway of this new planning requirement. Training has also been provided to all planning officers and planning committee members. A monthly BNG surgery has been established for any planning officers to drop in with questions and queries. The BNG sites register has also been updated and improved.

The Ecological Advice Service is now extended to provide professional advice to all planning authorities in the county, including Medway Council. In 2024/25, ecological advice was provided on 2,397 planning applications. Within this, the service provided advice on 582 biodiversity net gain submissions.

All BNG resources can be found at [Biodiversity Net Gain for Kent and Medway | Making Space For Nature Kent](#).

### Kent's Plan Bee

The past six months has seen the new Plan Bee officer establishing the newly focussed role. Extending the post from 2 days per week to full time provides increased capacity that will allow a focus on survey and monitoring to determine what impact our efforts are having and assist us in directing resources and time to where the greatest impacts will be realised. It will also allow Kent to become involved in more strategic work and extend the ambitions beyond our own estate.

Work has included:

- Visiting and advising on possible actions for six of our Household Waste Recycling Centres.
- Promoting Kent's Plan Bee at six public events, including the Kent County Show.
- Establishing survey methods and protocols and designing a monitoring plan for 2025, with the intention of surveying key KCC sites to determine whether interventions are having an impact and to identify other measures that may be required. Other sites outside the KCC estate will also be included in the survey work
- A practice-run of rapid method for surveying grassland wildflowers at Trosley ahead of full surveying program for all Country Parks (and other relevant sites) in 2025.
- Improving reporting accuracy of KCC areas contributing to No Mow May/biodiversity enhancement.
- Gathering KCC pesticide usage data ahead of developing annual reporting system.
- Publication of three documents, intended to support the work that Plan Bee is undertaking in terms of encouraging others to design their own actions for pollinators, whether that be district action plans, interventions at the community level to help pollinators or contributing to survey efforts These were:
  - Pollinators of Kent County Council
  - Kent's Plan Bee blueprint for lower tier authorities
  - Community pollinator toolkit

Prior to the new officer's start, the team's Graduate Biodiversity Officers also ran another successful No Mow May campaign for the county in 2024, which saw 324 pledges from residents and organisations, a 19% increase from 2023. These pledges cover a total area of 141,841 m<sup>2</sup> of land, including approximately 300 hectares of wildflower-rich grassland not mown by KCC, including contributions from country parks, highways, and estate-owned sites. The Graduates have also maintained Plan Bee's social media outreach, with just short of 2,000 followers now on Facebook. Statistics show that in the past year there has been higher engagement, improved interest in content, more frequent engagement and a positive trend in follower growth. They have also produced the quarterly newsletter, received by over 2180 people.

## Kent Plan Tree

March sees the end of the 2024/25 planting season, so this is an appropriate time to reflect on achievements in this past year:

### *Plan Tree Activities:*

- Fruit Tree Planting: Since April 2024, Plan Tree have planted 119 fruit trees from the National Fruit Collection. Locations included two primary schools, two SEND learning centres, and a community kitchen garden.
- Elm Heritage Kent Group: Hosted the second meeting to develop planting strategies with representatives from Forest Research, Natural England, Forestry Commission, Making Space for Nature, Butterfly Conservation, Countryside Management Partnerships, Essex County Council, Farmer Clusters, and the Lees Court Estate.
- Spearheaded efforts to support colonies of the White-letter Hairstreak butterfly across ten farms in the East Kent Downs. Notably, new sightings of the Large Tortoiseshell butterfly were reported, indicating a comeback in areas with surviving elm trees.
- Micropropagation Trials: Services agreement with NIAB Cambridge to conduct initial trials into micropropagation using protocols provided by Trevor Fenning at Forest Research, tailored to a Dutch elm disease-resistant clone from Kent.
- Established a new working group to coordinate efforts and monitor deer density and movement patterns across Kent.
- Formed a new working group to repeat the Canopy Cover Assessment, last completed in 2019/20, to monitor progress. Kent Plan Tree aims to extend tree cover by 1.5 million new trees and increase the county's average canopy cover to 19%.
- Working on development of National Lottery Heritage Fund project bid.

### *Funding success:*

Successfully doubled our annual bid to £300k for the planting season ending March 2025, securing funding for:

- 230 Standards
- 400 Dutch-elm disease resistant Feathers (young trees)
- 13,000 Whips (very young trees)
- Three years of maintenance and other capital items.

Through four rounds of funding, KCC has successfully secured a total of £1 million from the Local Authority Treescape Fund (LATF).

### *Community Engagement and Planting Efforts:*

- National Tree Week: By November 2024, Plan Tree had made significant progress with 162 adult volunteers and 205 school children planting 10,980 trees across 14 sites funded by LATF round 3.
- Delivered educational programmes in schools and community centres to raise awareness about the importance of tree planting and conservation.
- Worked with Gravesham Borough Council, Medway Council, Thanet District Council, Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council, Dartford District Council, Canterbury City Council, and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council to plant an additional 13,500 trees in the new year for LATF round 4.
- Community Tree Nurseries: Works at Medway Council's Cozenton Nursery are finally underway. Plan Tree helped their greenspace team win £75k through the Tree Production Capital Grant for a tree nursery and community allotments.

*Achievements to date:*

- Tree Planting Success: Successfully planted and claimed all trees promised through LATF rounds 3 (10,755) and 4 (13,630). Members and Local Councillors funded, networked, supported, attended and volunteered at numerous planting events.
- Across all departments, KCC enabled 149,945 tree plantings this year.
- The Social Value Exchange initiative saw 100,000 trees planted by Countrystyle Recycling Ltd at Pleasant Farm to meet procurement commitments in their contract with KCC.
- The Countryside Management Partnerships played a crucial role in delivering volunteer planting days.

The cumulative total is now 376,113 trees since 2019/20, planting at a rate of over 60,000 trees a year. Together, we are on track to achieve Kent's goal of extending tree cover by 1.5 million new trees!

*Challenges:*

DEFRA announced in January 2025 that the two-year Woodland Creation Accelerator Fund (WCAF) would conclude on 31 March 2025. And the Forestry Commission announced in March 2025 that the LATF and Urban Tree Challenge Fund (UTCF) would not re-open for new applications.

We have been reliant on these grants to support our Plan Tree work and this poses a risk to future work and the Plan Tree ambitions. However, we understand that DEFRA is working to find new ways to support trees outside woodlands for the 2025/26 planting season.

**Kent Country Parks**

We had a busy winter managing our SSSI woodland and grasslands. Coppicing was carried out at both Shorne Woods and Lullingstone, with the reintroduction of a ride network through the woodland at Trosley. Shorne Woods also saw the last year of major tree planting for the biodiversity enhancement project aiming to link habitats through the woodland with almost 20,000 trees planted over the past three years. Our conservation grazing programmes go from strength to strength, with herds of goats helping to reduce scrub on the incredibly rare chalk grassland of both Trosley and Preston Hill and with cattle grazing due at Shorne Woods, Teston Bridge, Manor Park and Preston Hill over the spring and summer. At Brockhill we teamed up with The Woodland Trust and the local Rotary Club to plant trees around the lake. The North Kent Woods and Downs National Nature Reserve is ready for launch as a King's Series National Nature Reserve on the 30th May at Shorne Woods Country Park. Keeping Country Parks accessible has been a key theme this year with achievements in 2024/25 including -

- 9,788 people attending events
- 219 volunteers helping out across the parks with conservation and countryside care
- 2,600 junior park runners
- 19,000 adult runners in our park runs
- 1.24 million visits

We continue to improve our offer to disabled visitors, evidenced by mobility specialists Clinique Mobility being *"incredibly impressed"* by the efforts at Shorne Woods Country Park. praising our *"dedication to making the park accessible for those with mobility and sensory needs"* and calling it a *"welcoming and inclusive experience for all visitors."*

### **Countryside Management Partnerships (CMPs)**

Kent CMPs have planted over 15,000 trees in partnership with Kent Plan Tree and other groups and organisations. Kent CMPs have delivered 41 ponds for the Natural England District Level Licensing Scheme for Great Crested Newts in 2024/25. Examples of projects delivered across Kent include two training courses in the Canterbury District for groups managing open spaces, on habitat management and meadow creation and management. Three Grey to Green projects in schools aiming to make grey areas in school grounds greener and wildlife friendly. Completion of the Layered Landscapes and All The Small Things, Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) funded projects. Six volunteering task days a week across Kent & Bexley plus multiple health & wellbeing projects connecting people with nature such as the Forest Time intervention programme working with disadvantaged families. Management Site Plans written for several sites across Gravesham, contributing towards the new North Kent Woods and Downs National Nature Reserve. Habitat improvement works delivered across 12 districts, examples are : Ruxley Gravel Pits scrub and reed removal, White Hill scrub removal working in collaboration with Butterfly Conservation and Kent Down National Landscape, reduction of invasive laurel and rhododendron from ancient woodlands in the High Weald. Six Trainee placements were offered and filled in 24/25 (5 in CMPs and 1 in Parks).

### **Explore Kent**

Explore Kent's digital channels which promote the great outdoors, continued to see strong engagement. At the end of Quarter 4, Explore Kent had over 7k followers on Instagram, over 11.3k followers on Facebook, 231 followers on LinkedIn, 551 followers on TikTok and 22.2k followers on X. Our website explorekent.org had over 67.5k clicks and 3,542 route guide downloads. The new Facebook and Instagram channels for the Southeast Coast Path have continued to see growth with 1,090 followers on Facebook and 332 followers on Instagram.

In January, 43 partners attended the quarterly Green Social Prescribing (GSP) Network with guest speakers from Natural England and Kent Wildlife Trust. During Quarter 4 we have also developed a new logo for the network designed to promote GSP opportunities within Kent & Medway.

In partnership with KCC's Public Rights of Way team, Explore Kent have created a new [step-by-step video guide](#) for how the public can report problems with a right of way using their online reporting tool.

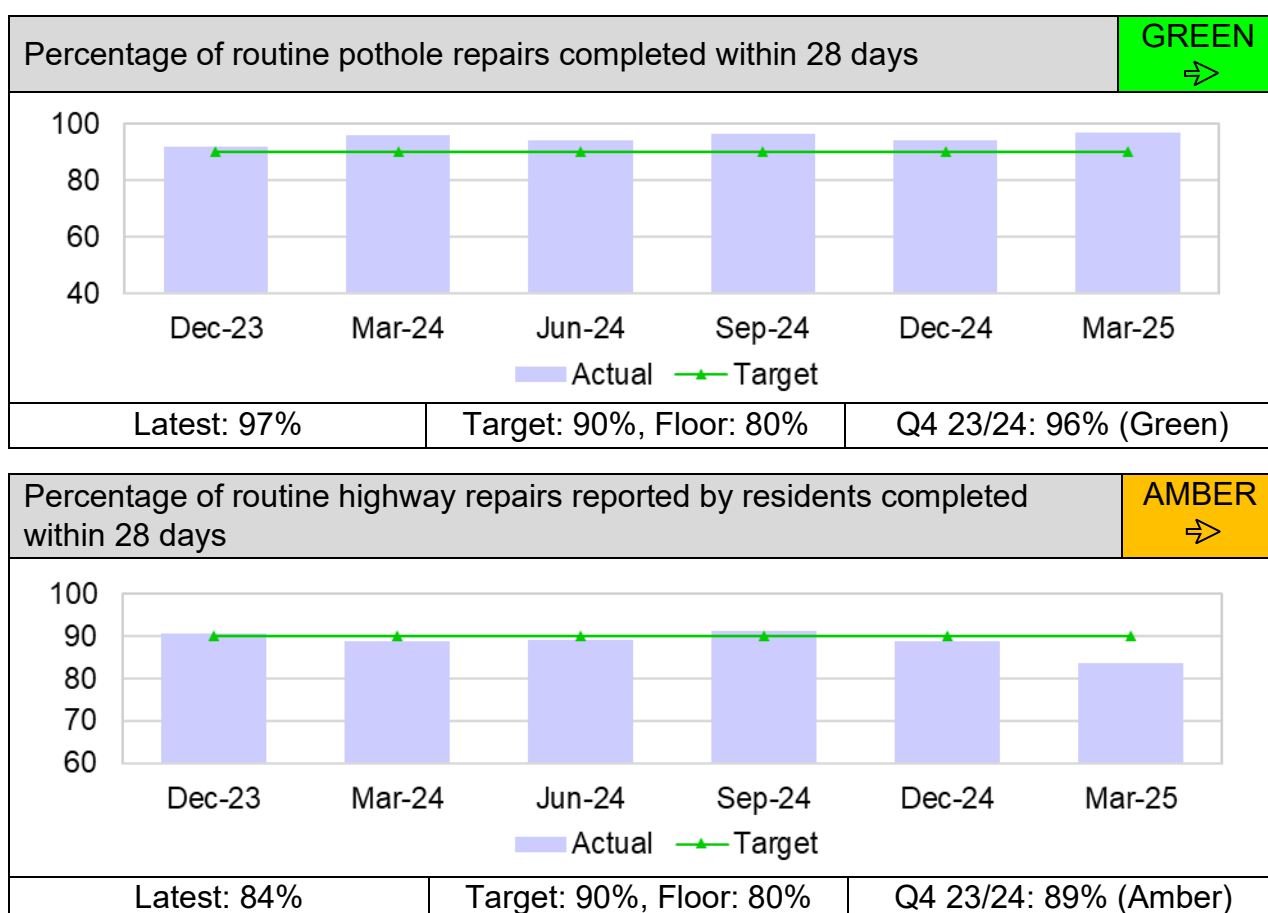
Quarter 4 has seen two new active travel maps developed – Medway and Dartford. Explore Kent have also developed some [case studies](#) showcasing how Kent residents have incorporated active travel within their daily lives.

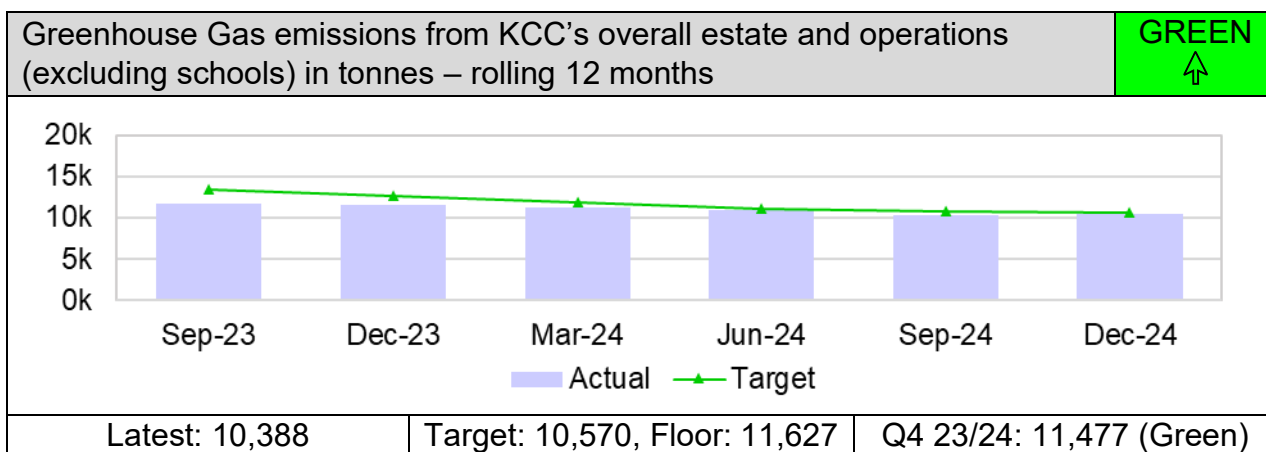
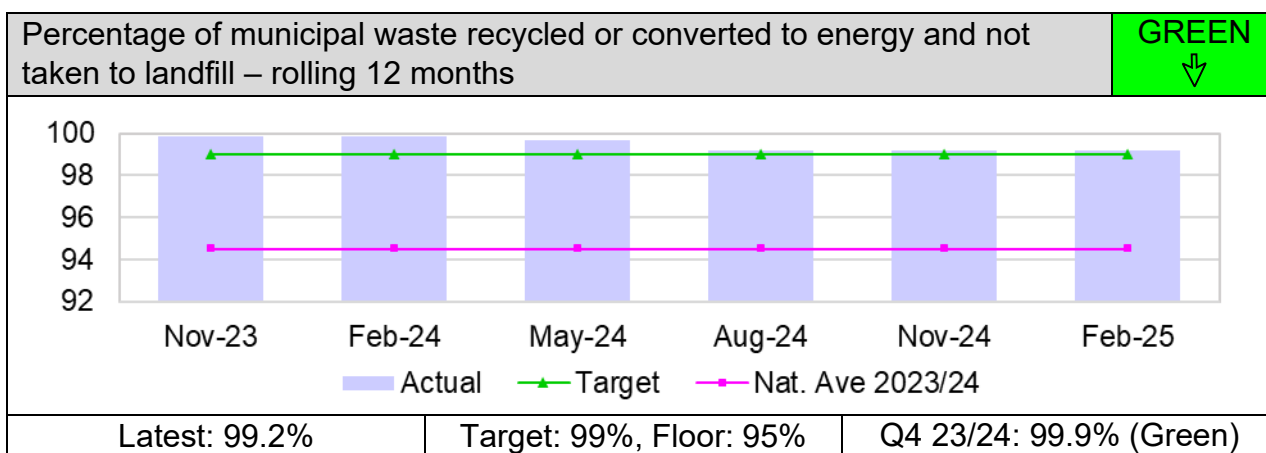
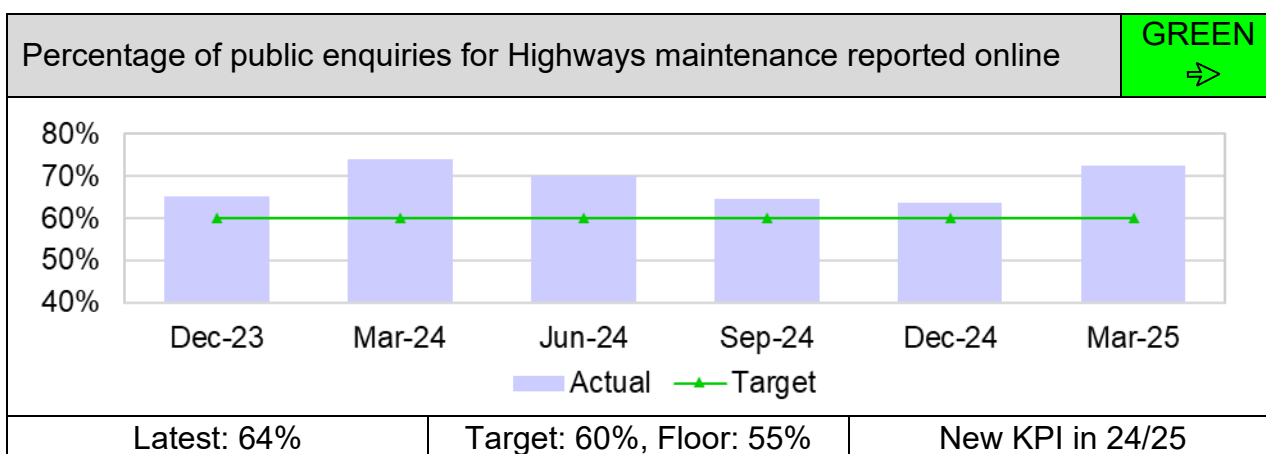
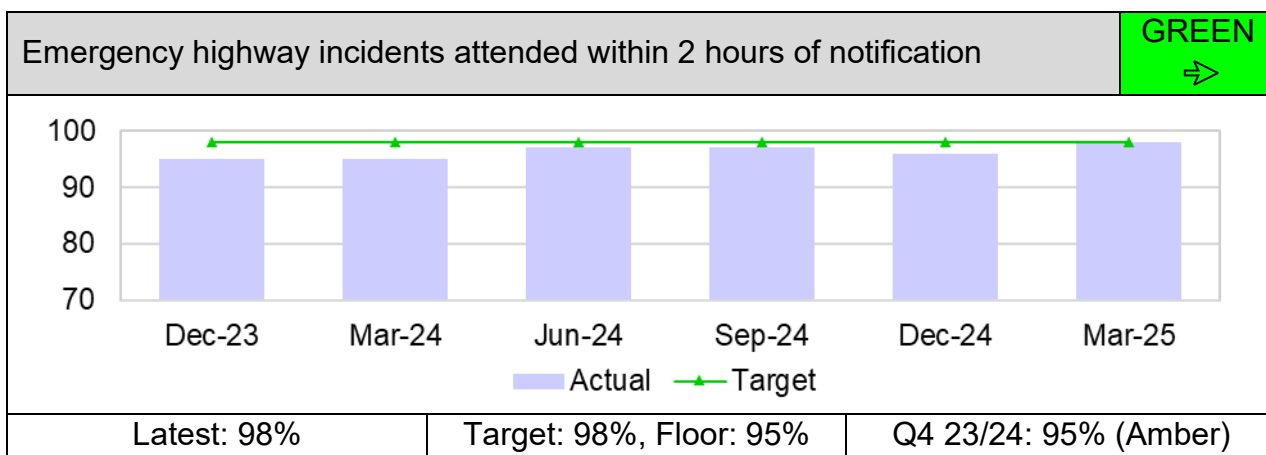
During Quarter 4, we designed two interpretation boards for Gravesend and Northfleet station detailing the walking route to the new King Charles III England Coast Path coastal path. This was financed through a successful bid to the Southeastern Customer and Community Improvement Fund. Explore Kent have also been working with Valley Invicta Primary School in Kings Hill to design a map for children with autism.

Our Farming in Protected Landscapes funded project with Kent Community Rail Partnership completed in March. The project aimed to promote access to the North Downs Way (NDW) National Trail, encouraging people to travel by rail. We had four interpretation boards installed at Charing, Lenham, Hollingbourne and Harrietsham which showcases the route from the station to the trail and how people can complete a linear walk and return by rail. We also ran a campaign with KM Media, with radio ads on kmfm Maidstone and Ashford, and printed ads in The Kent Messenger and The Kentish Express. The project ended with a guided walk which attracted 31 walkers. We conducted a survey and results showed:

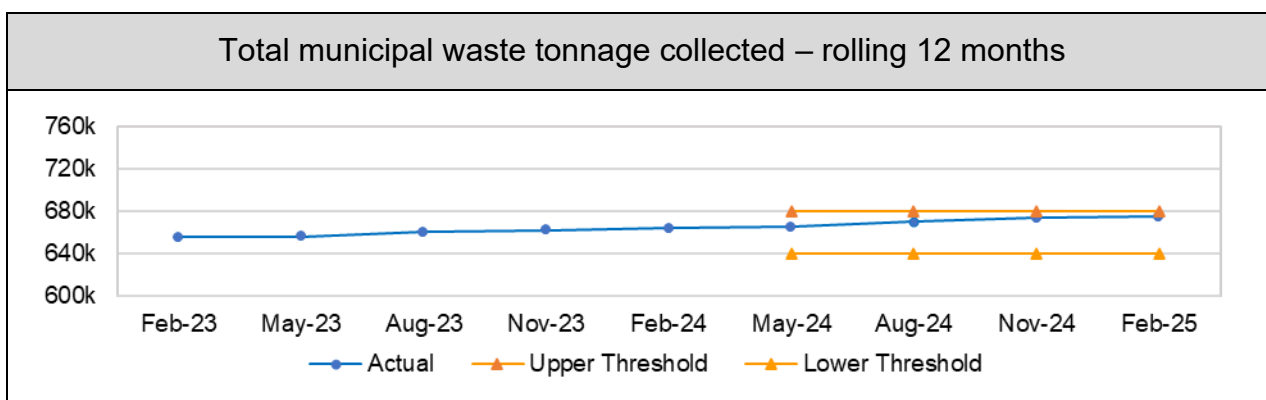
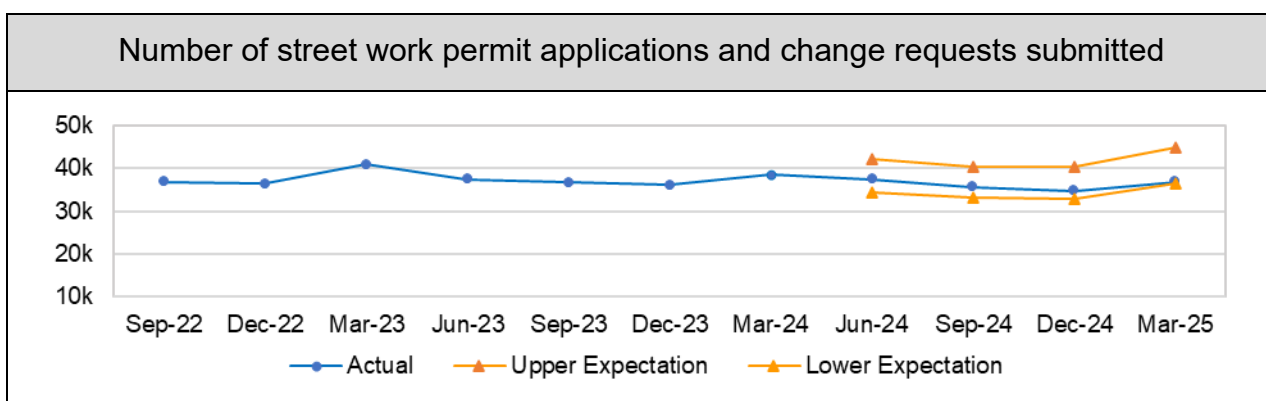
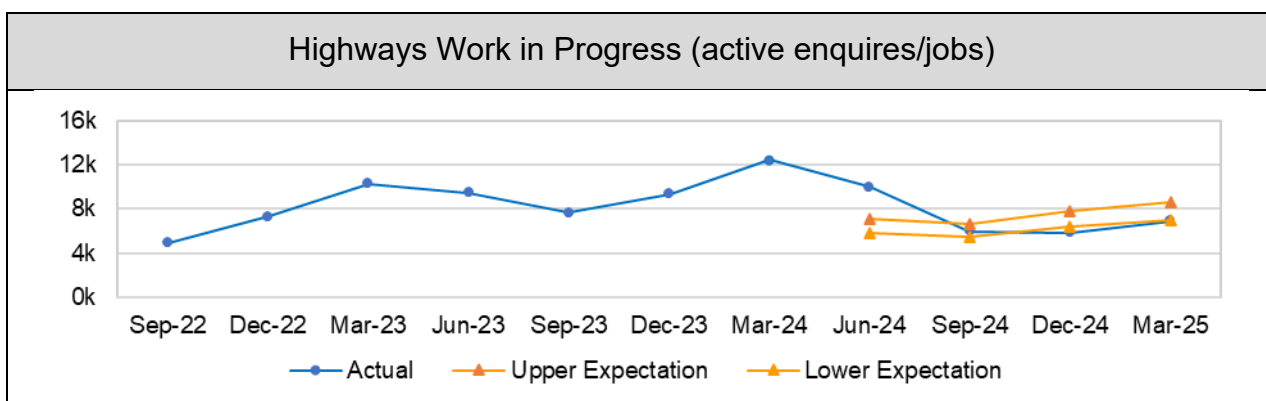
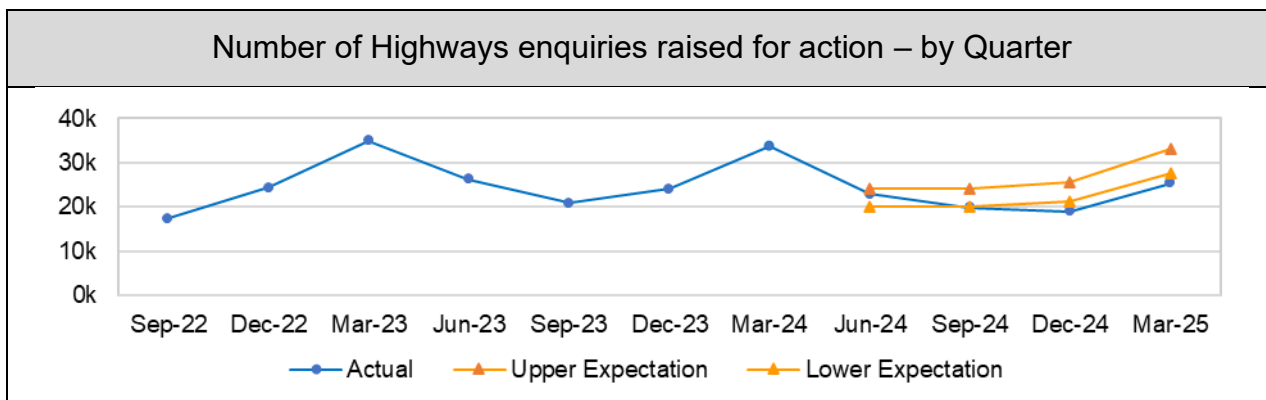
- 33% had never been to the NDW before
- 90% said they would return to the NDW by rail
- 73% stated the walk had a ‘very positive’ effect on their mental wellbeing, with 23% saying it had a ‘positive’ effect.

### Key Performance Indicators





### Activity indicators



## Children, Young People and Education (*Education and Skills*)

<b>Cabinet Members</b>	Beverley Fordham (from Quarter 1, 2025/26)
<b>Corporate Director</b>	Sarah Hammond

KPI Summary	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>RED</b>	↑	⇒	↓
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### Schools

From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024, Ofsted inspections of state-funded schools no longer included a judgement on overall effectiveness, and outcomes of ungraded inspections no longer refer to the previous good or outstanding grade. Reports now include four grades across the existing sub-categories: quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, personal development and leadership & management. The outcome of an Ofsted consultation on changes to its inspection model will be published in the summer. Ofsted intends for these changes to come into effect in November 2025 and will pause inspections in the autumn term until then. Report cards will replace the current judgement areas and grades and will be based on a 5-point scale for different evaluation areas with a short summary of the inspectors' findings.

Key issues from recent inspections include governance, curriculum adaptation and outcomes over time. The Education People (TEP) briefings continue to provide regular updates and advice to school leaders in these areas, whilst signposting support and guidance. Specific training is available to schools in line with current key issues.

On primary offer day more than 90% of Kent pupils have been offered their first-preference school, and 98% have been offered one of their three preferred schools for September 2025. For Year 7 places at secondary schools this autumn, 79% were offered their first preference, and 95% received an offer from one of their three preferred schools.

### Early Years

The overall effectiveness outcome grade for Early Years Providers Ofsted inspections remains. In Kent, 97% (524 out of 539) childcare settings on non-domestic premises are graded good or better which is one percentage point below national. During January, February and March, for early years group settings, The Education People (TEP) continued to support all settings through Annual Conversations, prioritising those due an Ofsted inspection, 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 Requires Improvement or Inadequate judgements received targeted and bespoke support, with support for plans of action and follow up visits as required. New settings were also offered support in readiness for their first inspection.

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. In the Spring term, 13,636 codes had been issued to working parents of children aged between 9 months to two-years, of which, 12,638 have been validated by KCC, meaning a validation rate of 93% which is similar to the national figure.

In the 2025 Spring term, the take up of Free for Two claims against those potentially eligible on the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) list decreased to 60.0% with 2,447 children being funded compared to 72.6% last spring. To assist future planning, parents who are eligible but do not take up a place continue to be contacted and asked why.

The Early Years and Childcare Service moved apace with the implementation of the KCC Early Years Review, Area Three: *Implement the Revised Model of Universal Support*, and Area Four: *Develop Ordinarily Available Provision*. Plans for these were firmly in place by the end of March in readiness for implementation in April.

Continuing, established and regular communications and interactions with the Early Years and Childcare Sector also took place, including:

- Quarterly meetings with the Provider Association
- 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 a year, county-wide round of briefing and networking sessions

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.

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

Based on the rolling 12-month average to March 2025, 48% of Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs) were issued within 20 weeks excluding exceptions (967 out of 2,007). As recent performance continues to improve, the rolling 12-month average will also improve but with a lag. In the single month of March, 82% of plans (107 out of 131) were issued within timescale, which exceeded the target.

The percentage of annual EHCP reviews waiting over 12 months remains at 35%, fifteen percentage points better than the target of 50%.

The percentage of pupils with EHCPs being placed in independent or out of county special schools, at 10.9%, remains higher than the target of 9.0% and did not achieve the floor standard.

The Secondary Phase Transfer completion rates by the statutory deadline improved to 97.5% this year, compared to 93% in 2024 and circa 50% the year before.

Assessment teams have continued to reduce over-timescale requests, with no case currently over 25 weeks old and only 5 cases over 22 weeks, at time of reporting. This indicates that high assessment completion results should continue, supporting improved annual rolling averages.

Kent continues to feel the effect of the delayed provision of two new special schools, leading to a continued over-reliance on independent specialist provision to compensate. Both schools were anticipated to open in September 2025 but have been delayed until September 2027 as a result of DfE decision making. Improved placement decisions are seeking to ensure efficient use of this resource. For example, analysis of Phase Transfer activity for the 2025 intake has identified that KCC made 41 fewer specialist placement decisions than forecast. This was a result of 69 **more** independent placements, and 110 **fewer** maintained special placements than expected. This indicates that overall decision making around specialist placements is reaching more settled levels, but officers are still unable to place a sufficient number of these children in maintained settings, as a result of insufficient capacity.

### **Wider Early Help**

Ninety-seven pupils were permanently excluded during the rolling 12-month period to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025, which equates to 0.04% of the school population. This is below the latest published (2022/23) national average of 0.11%. Thirty were issued to 'primary' phase pupils and 67 to 'secondary' phase pupils. Tonbridge and Malling, Dartford and Maidstone were the districts with the highest level of permanent exclusions.

The total of 97 permanent exclusions continues a downward trend since June 2024, when 105 pupils were permanently excluded. This decline is largely attributed to a notable reduction in 'secondary' phase permanent exclusions, which fell from 81 (12-monthsto June 2024) to 67 (12 months to March 2025). In contrast, the number of primary phase permanent exclusions has increased during the same period (24 pupils for the 12-months to June 2024 compared to 30 for the 12 months to March 2025).

Kent PRU and Attendance Service (KPAS) continues its work regarding suspensions and permanent exclusions. Common themes are identified, and additional processes developed to support schools to ensure all interventions are exhausted and exclusion remains a last resort as detailed in the DfE guidance on suspensions and exclusions issued in August 2024. Link Education Improvement Advisors (EIAs) support schools and regular training is provided to senior leaders, governing boards and academy trustees across the county's schools to ensure all cases of permanent exclusion are thoroughly scrutinised, as well as promoting the use of timely data to address cases where suspensions are occurring on a regular basis. KPAS also supports the work of CATIE (Countywide Approach to Inclusive Education) and continues to implement the new DfE guidance 'Working together to improve school attendance' which became statutory in August 2024.

The work of KPAS continues to be a key feature throughout the local authority, as such 'Inclusion for Success' was the topic of the recent Spring Headteachers Briefings with presentations on inclusion practises and resources for schools on Relational Approaches by Virtual School Kent (VSK) and Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) Toolkit by The Education People (TEP). In addition, good practice case studies were presented by representatives from primary, secondary & special schools & Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) and the PINS project (Partnership for inclusion of neurodiversity in schools).

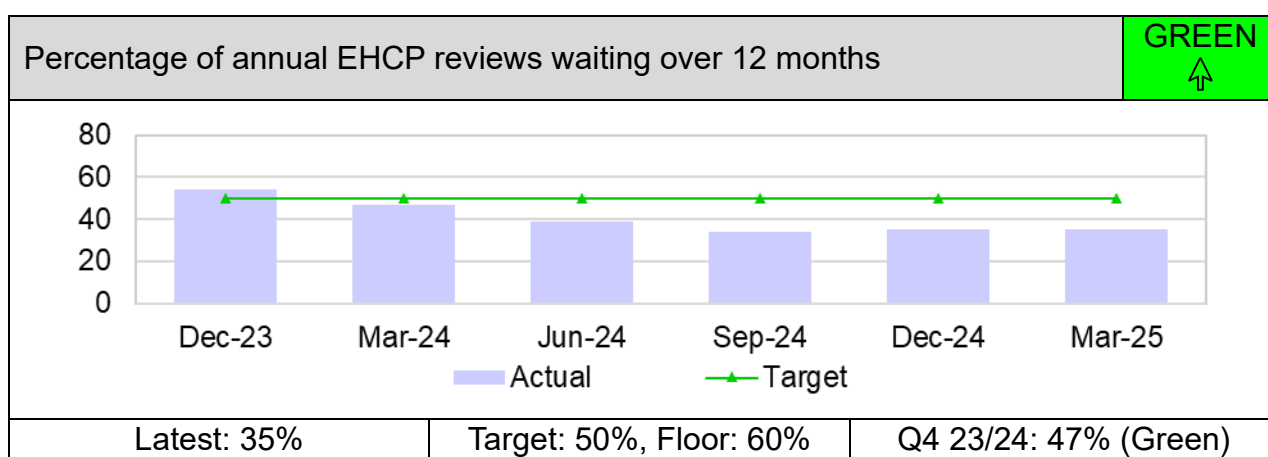
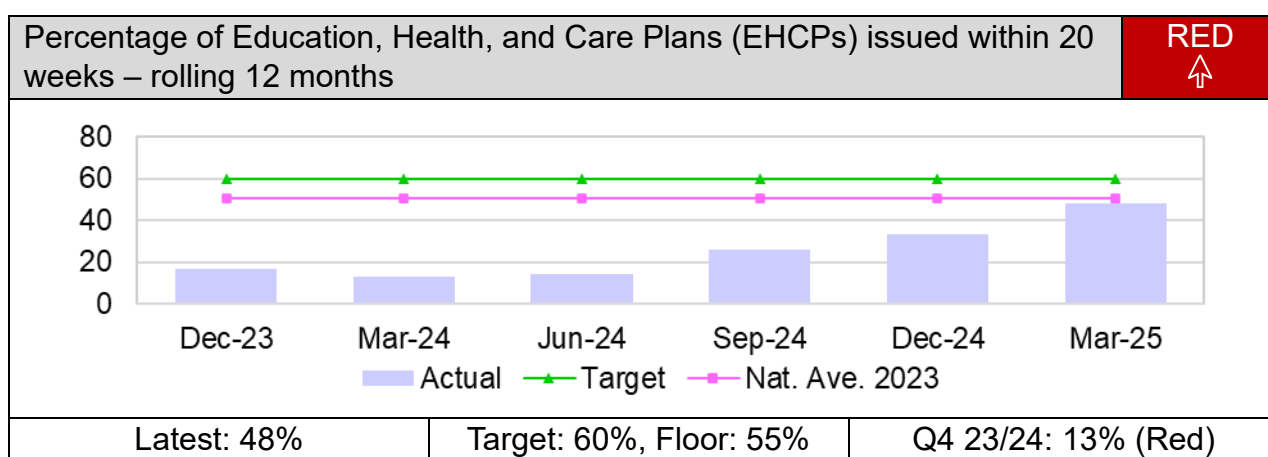
School attendance will be the theme for the Integrated Children’s Service conference in June and was an agenda item at a recent Directorate Management Team (DMT) meeting. KPAS are currently fully involved in the Action Learning Sets being run by the DfE, focused on improving attendance, and have presented in DfE good practice webinars.

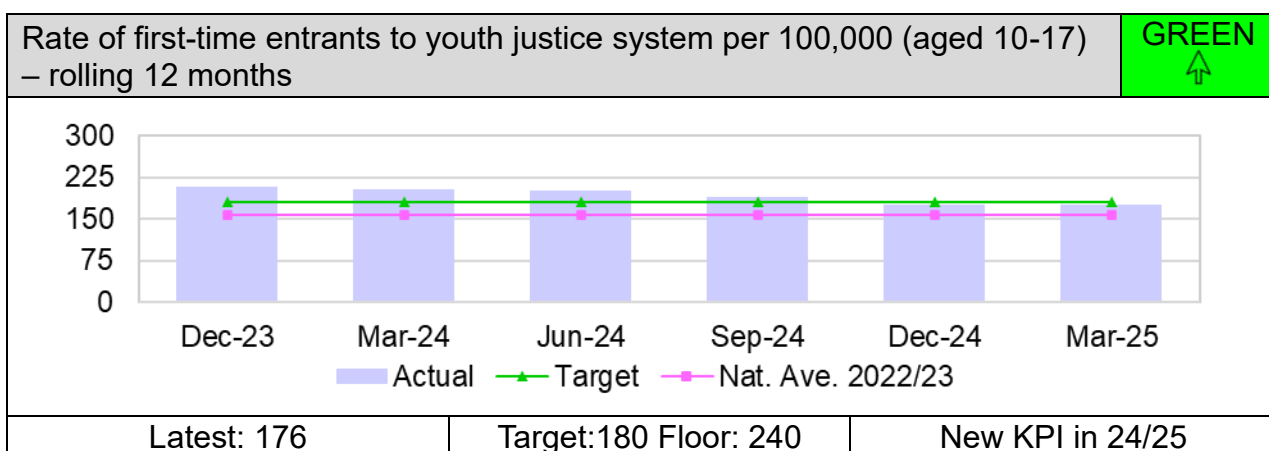
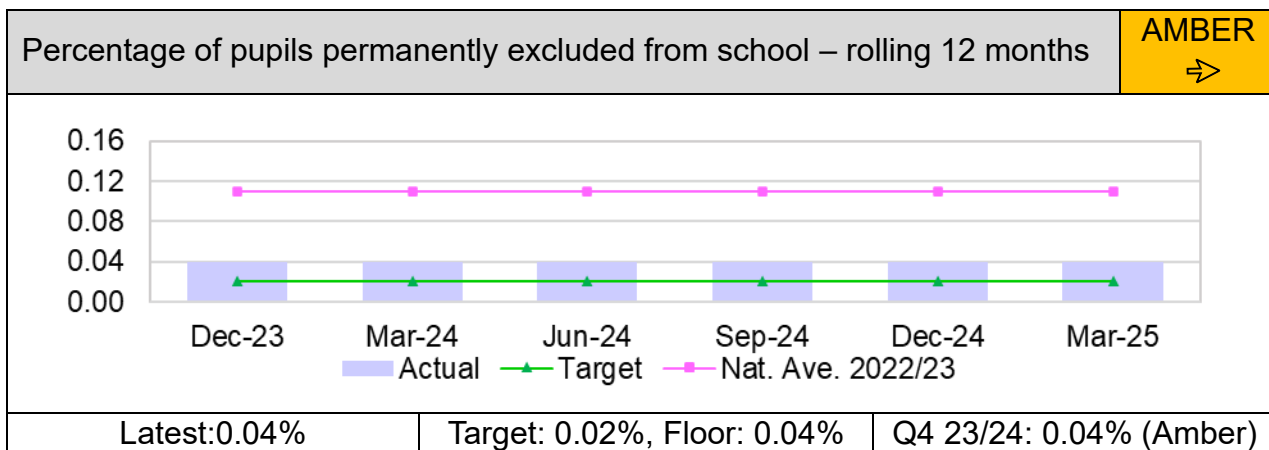
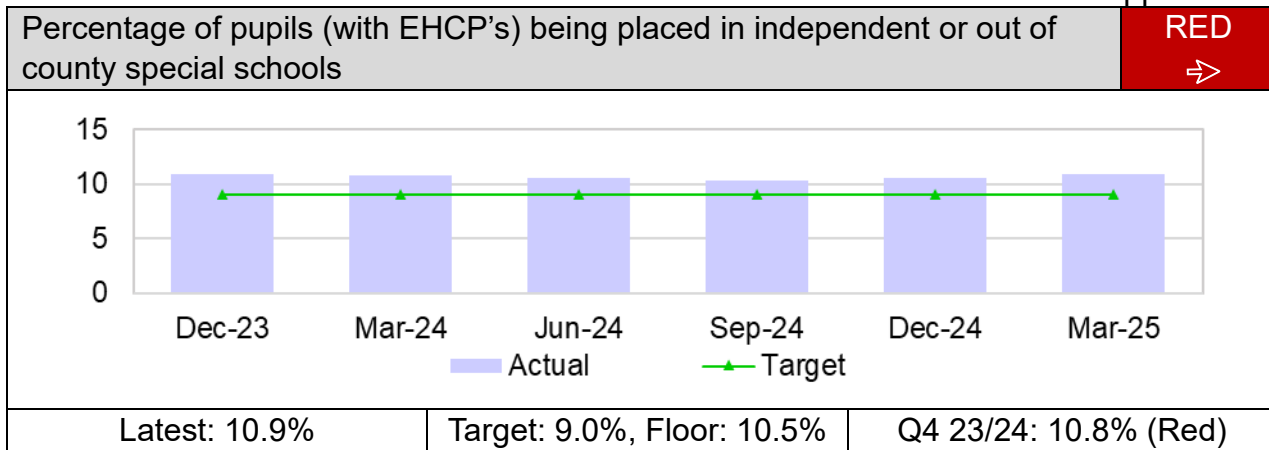
The First-Time Entrants to the Youth Justice System per 100,000 in March 2025 was 176 (rolling 12-month figure) which equates to 286 young people. This remains the lowest level reported since March 2023.

Kent Youth Justice and Adolescent Early Help continue to embed and develop, with Kent Police, a range of effective and appropriate interventions and outcomes for children who can be dealt with by an out of court process. The current trend of low First Time Entrants (FTEs) reflects the high confidence of the Police in those approaches.

It is too early to predict what impact on First Time Entrants the updated national child gravity matrix (a system for scoring offences) will have on First Time Entrants. We continue, within the partnership, to adapt and respond to national change to ensure our practice remains effective and proportionate to reduce children’s entry into the justice system, and to prevent their offending and reoffending.

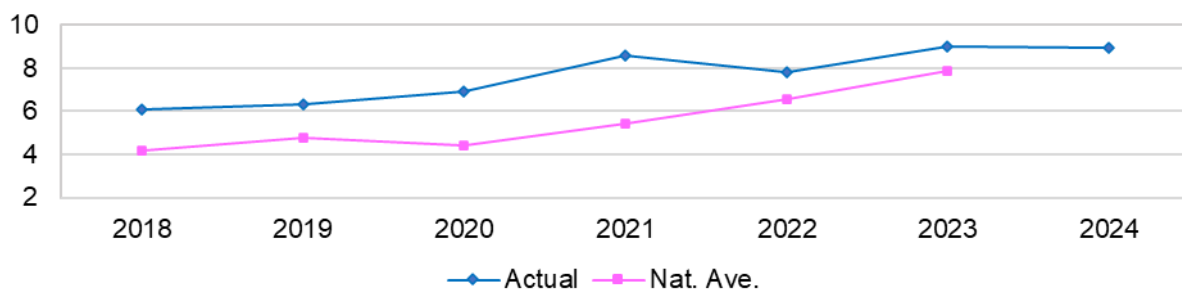
### Key Performance Indicators



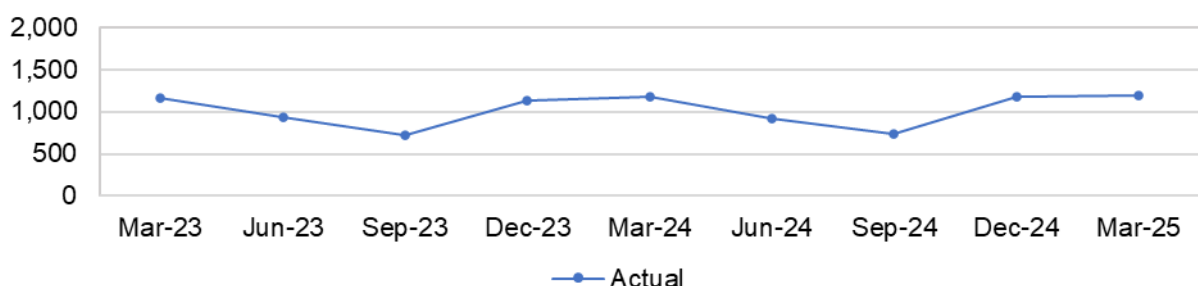


Activity indicators

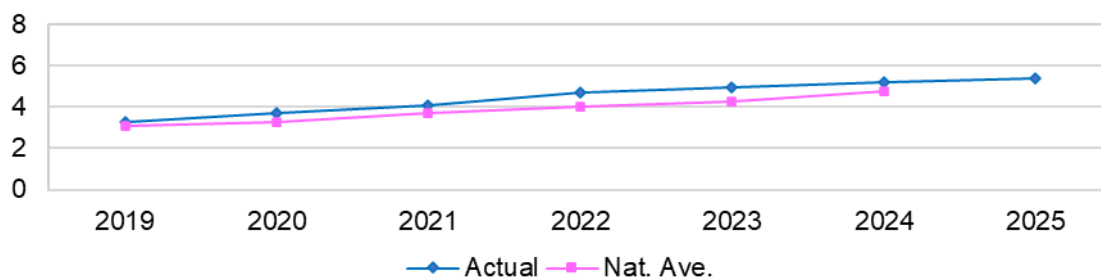
Number of initial requests for statutory assessment (for an EHC plan) per 1,000 aged 0-25



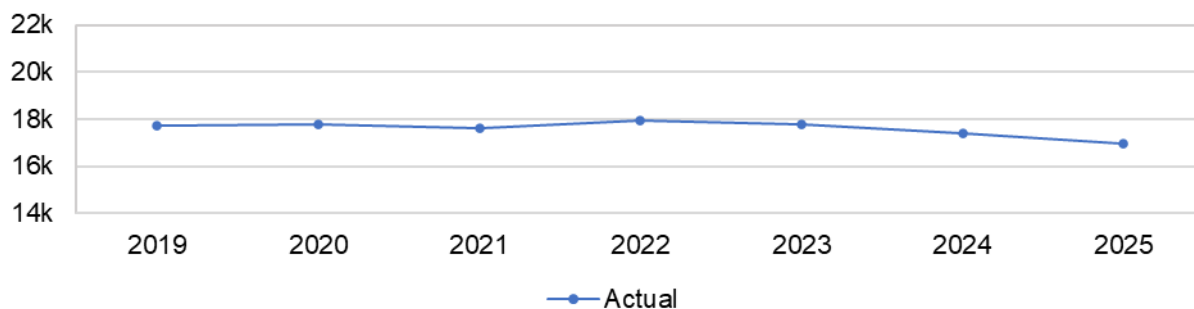
Number of initial requests for statutory assessment for an EHC plan (Quarterly)

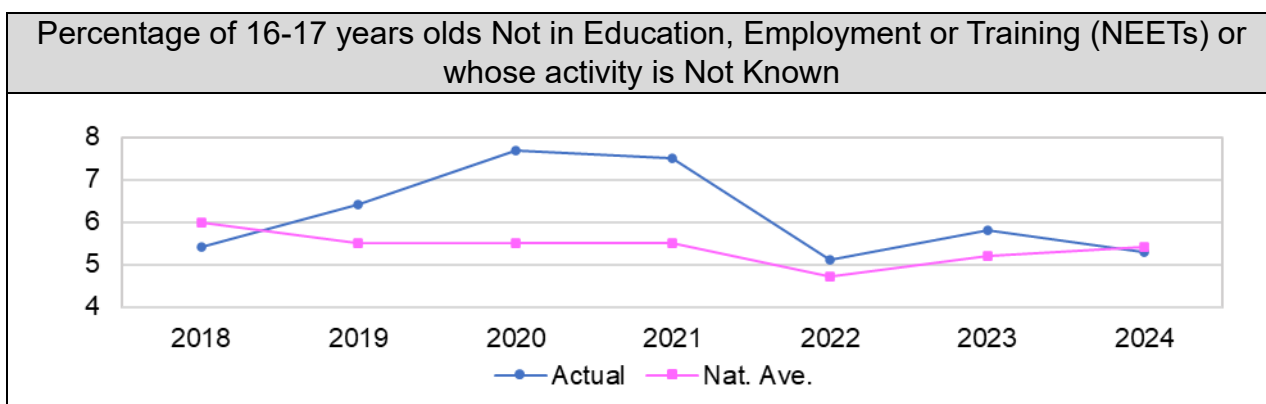
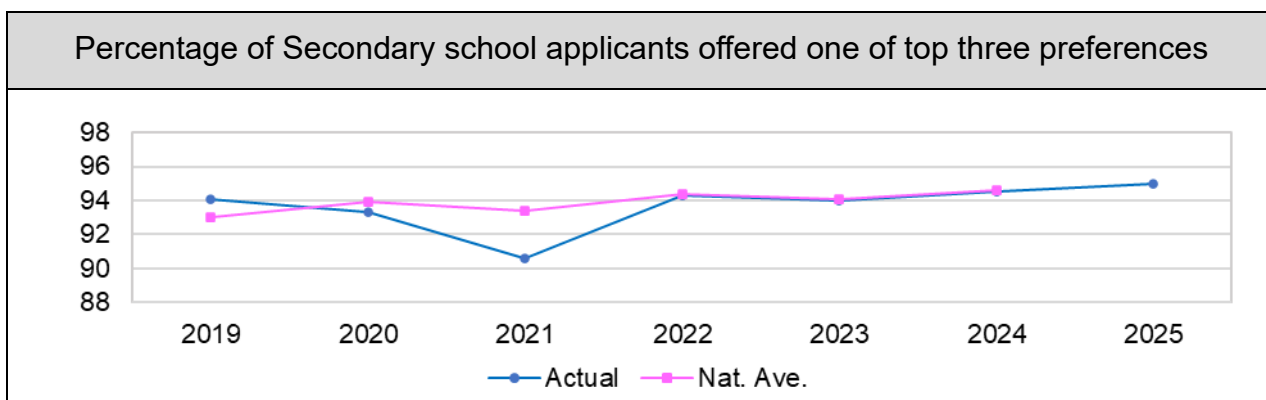
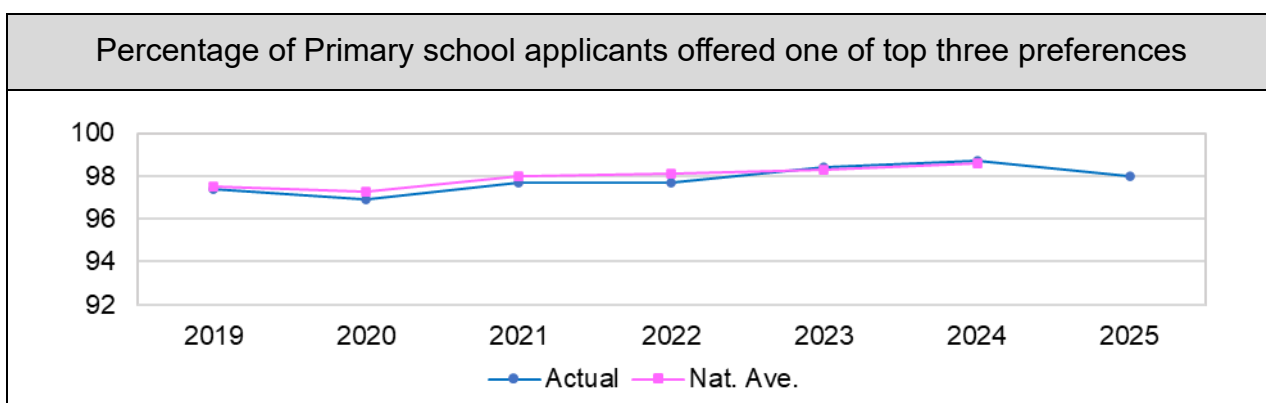
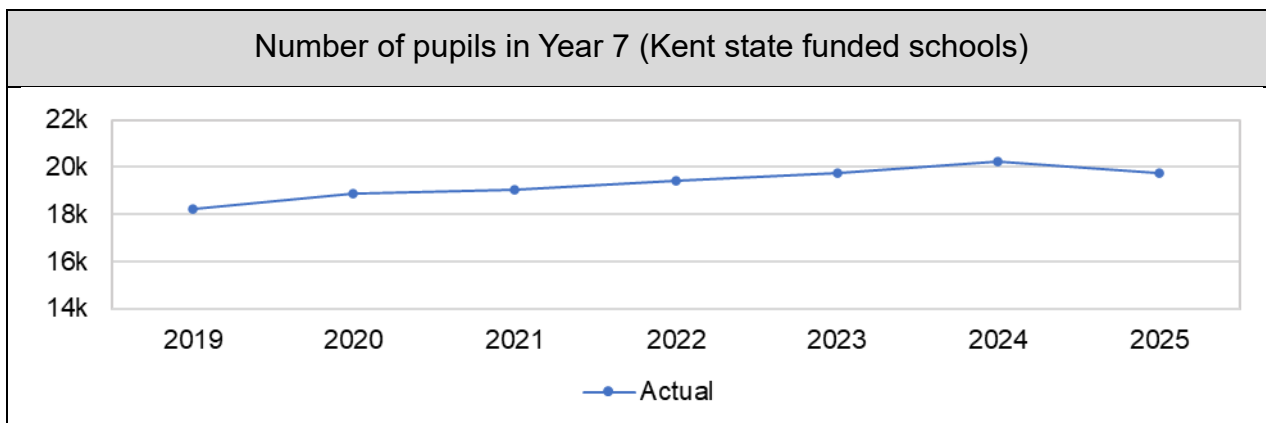


Percentage of pupils with an EHCP

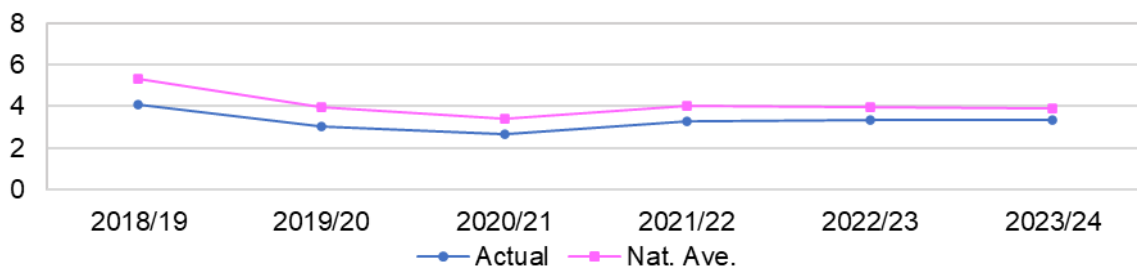


Number of pupils in Reception year (Kent state funded schools)

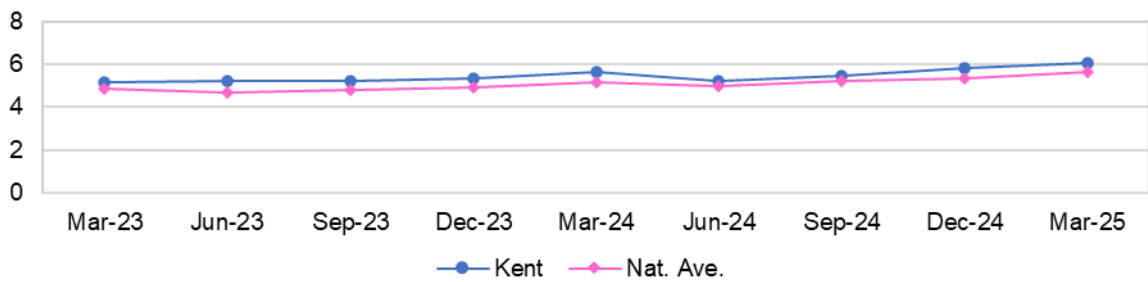




Percentage of 16-18 year olds who start an apprenticeship



Percentage of 18-24 year olds claiming Universal Credit



## Children, Young People and Education (*Integrated Children's Services*)

<b>Cabinet Members</b>	Christine Palmer (from Quarter 1, 2025/26)
<b>Corporate Director</b>	Sarah Hammond

KPI Summary	GREEN	AMBER	RED	↑	⇒	↓
	3	2	3	1	5	2

### Early Help

At the end of March 2025, there were 2,175 family cases open to Early Help units, providing support for 4,411 children and young people under the age of 18. This is a 5.5% decrease in the number of families supported when compared to the end of the previous Quarter (2,301), and 19.3% fewer families than Quarter 4 last year (2,695).

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 14.9%, a slight reduction from the previous Quarter (15.0%) and achieving the target of being 15.0% or lower.

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

On 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025, the number of open cases (including those for care leavers above the age of 18) was 11,371, an increase of 172 children and young people when compared to the end of the previous Quarter (11,199).

There were 5,929 referrals to children's social care services in the Quarter, an 8.8% reduction when compared to the previous Quarter (6,499) and 4.3% lower than Quarter 4 last year (6,193). The rate of re-referrals within 12 months for the 12 months to March 2025 was 21.9%, compared to 22.2% the previous Quarter, continuing to achieve the target of 25.0% or lower. This compares to the England average of 22.4% for 2023/24.

The percentage of case-holding social worker posts held by permanent qualified social workers employed by Kent County Council is 74.5%, which has reduced from 75.2% in December 2024 and is below the floor standard of 75.0%. Data over several years demonstrates that there is a pattern of experiencing a reduction of Social Workers at certain points during the year aligned with the cycle of recruitment. The Approach Social Work programme (previously called Frontline) has expanded and by September 2025, up to twenty Social Workers will have completed their training and joined the workforce. Frontline have advised that KCC may acquire a fifth pod of 5 trainees from September 2025 which will generate up to twenty-five Social Workers in September 2026. Nineteen Social Work Step-Up Students completed their training in March 2025 and will join the workforce over the summer of 2025. Additionally, 39 newly qualified Social Workers have been offered places from September 2025.

### Child Protection

On 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025, there were 1,151 children subject to a child protection plan, an increase of 47 children from the end of the previous Quarter (1,104). The rate per 10,000 children (aged 0-17) was 33.0, which remains below the last published rate for England of 41.6 (31<sup>st</sup> March 2024).

## Children in Care

The number of non-UASC children in care increased by 33 in the Quarter to 1,443.

The number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) in care decreased by 86 to 458, 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) decreased by 29 children over the Quarter to 1,202.

Status	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25
Non-UASC	1458	1438	1430	1410	1443
UASC	492	434	476	544	458
<b>Total</b>	1950	1872	1906	1954	1901
<b>Gender</b>					
Male	1276	1220	1248	1291	1218
Female	671	648	655	659	678
Non-binary	3	4	3	4	5
<b>Age Group</b>					
0 to 4	238	238	244	246	271
5 to 9	232	227	230	220	226
10 to 15	659	632	617	627	616
16 to 17	821	775	815	861	788
<b>Ethnicity</b>					
White	1334	1310	1305	1268	1272
Mixed	107	107	113	108	120
Asian	29	28	26	30	36
Black	117	118	105	139	149
Other	363	309	357	409	324

The percentage of Children in Care (excluding UASC) placed in KCC in-house foster care or with family/friends has remained below the floor standard of 75.0%.

Performance for this measure was 73.0% for the 12 months to March 2025, compared to 73.2% at the end of the previous quarter. Performance against this measure is impacted by the availability of in-house foster placements which is a national issue. Since the legal judgement of July 2023, KCC has had between 35-40 in-house fostering beds available for unaccompanied children under the age of 16 years being cared for whilst awaiting transfer on the National Transfer Scheme. The number of in-house fostering beds required was reviewed following the opening of the KCC Children's homes and supported accommodation. In December 2024, 12 in-house fostering beds were released from the UASC scheme and are now available for other children. Given this change in availability there should be a gradual improvement in this performance measure going forward. The number of foster beds available for the UASC scheme is reviewed on a monthly basis with consideration given to usage and predicted demand.

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 recruitment hub, Fostering Southeast, launched on 8th July 2024, followed by national recruitment activity, encouraging people to foster for their Local Authority. Additional DfE funding was secured to develop the Mockingbird Scheme - part of a support package to retain our existing foster carers. The scheme launched in October 2024 with the first two Mockingbird 'constellations' now live for South Kent and East Kent, which sees hub foster carers supporting other foster carers.

The ambition is to have four Mockingbird hub foster care constellations, one in each area of Kent, and the recruitment for a North Kent and West Kent foster carer hub is taking place. DfE funding for both the Recruitment Hub and Mockingbird has been awarded for a further 12-month period to cover 2025/26.

An additional performance measure regarding the number of fostering households was added to this report to reflect the priority of recruiting and retaining foster carers. As of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025, there were 595 approved fostering households, 84 of whom are approved Kinship Foster Carers. Actions taken to increase the number of fostering households include increased information events and recruitment stands at large community events, specific campaigns using social media and use of the “refer a friend” payment to encourage existing foster carers to support recruitment of family and friends to join Kent Fostering. Part of the recruitment strategy will be to look to our existing KCC staff group, to promote becoming a foster carer and completing the initial work on whether KCC can become a “Fostering Friendly” employer. Legal advice will inform the development of a policy prior to presenting to the Corporate Director for a decision on implementation. The service is at the initial stages of developing a “Create a Room” project, to support existing approved foster carers to create an additional bedroom for fostering, through supporting either dividing an existing room, converting a garage, having a small extension or loft conversion.

From 1st April 2024, Kinship assessment and support services were centralised, with both functions moving into the fostering service to improve the offer to all types of kinship carers including Special Guardians and Kinship (Connected Person) Foster Carers. The aim of the service is to increase the numbers of children safely placed with family and friends within their community network and reduce those needing a mainstream foster placement.

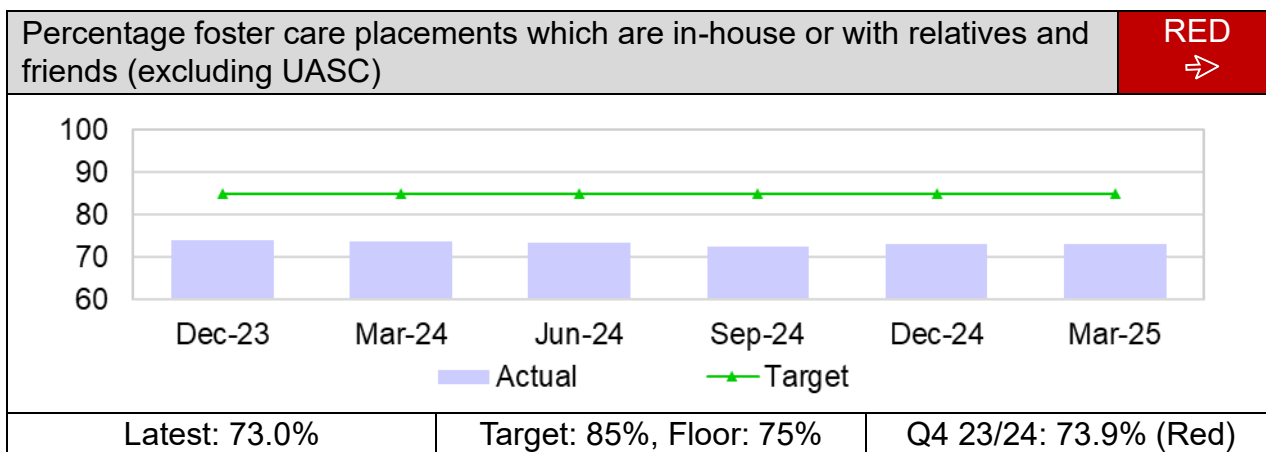
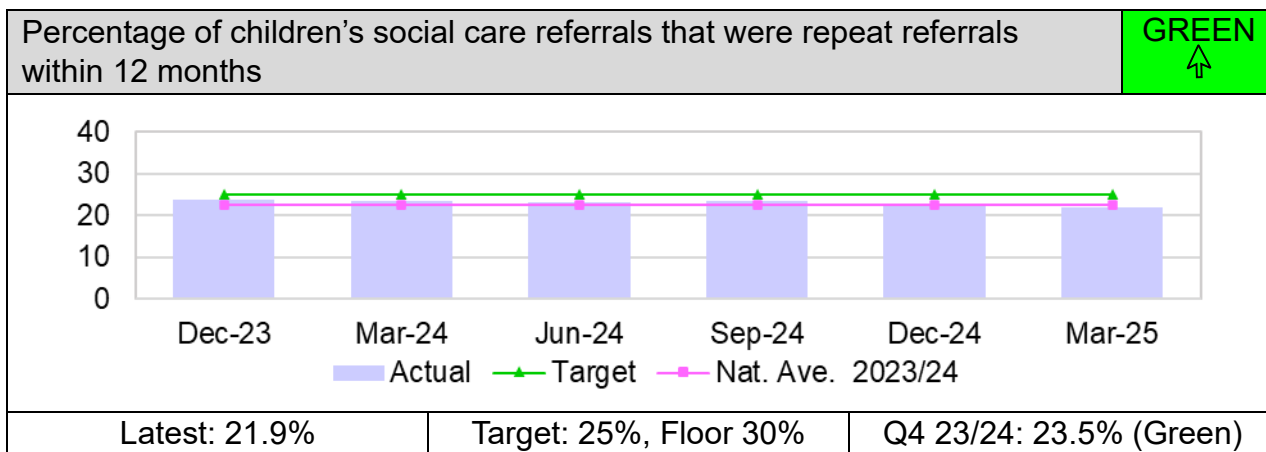
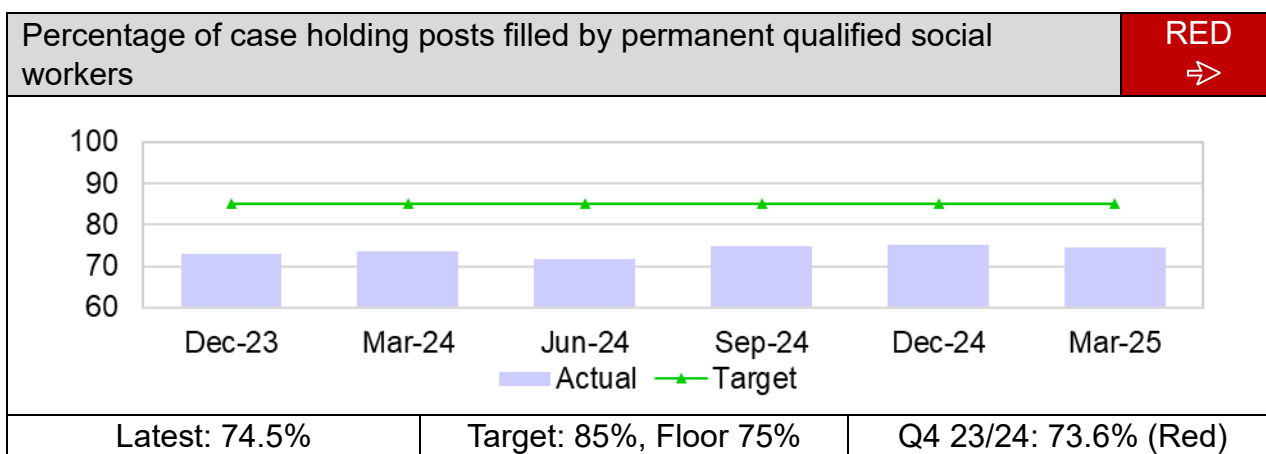
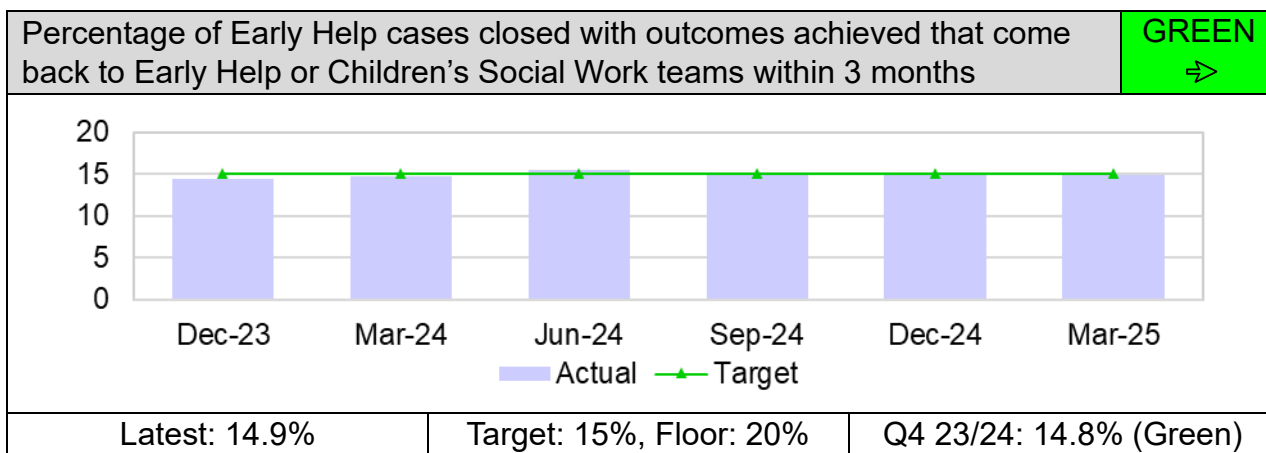
### **Care Leavers**

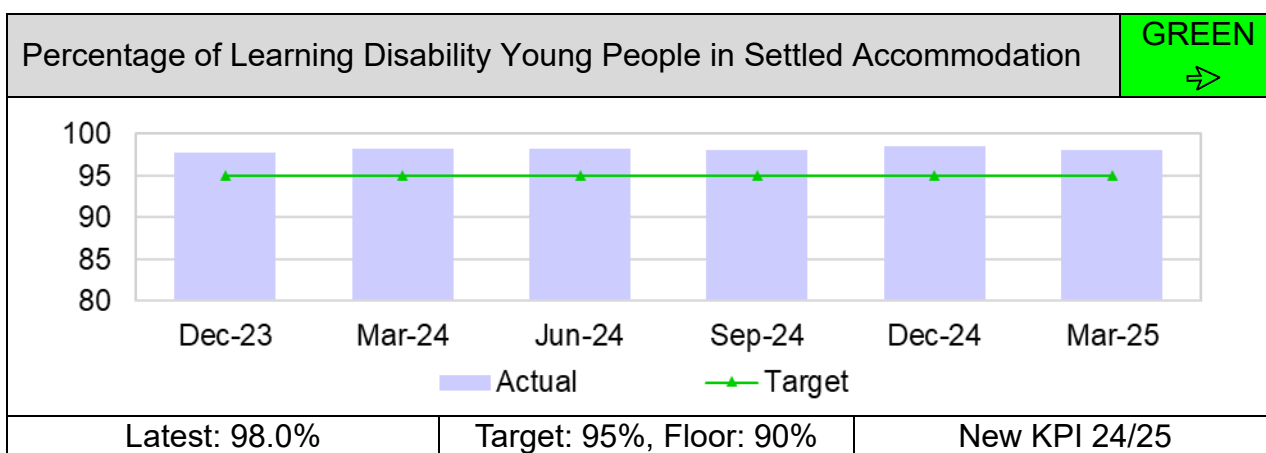
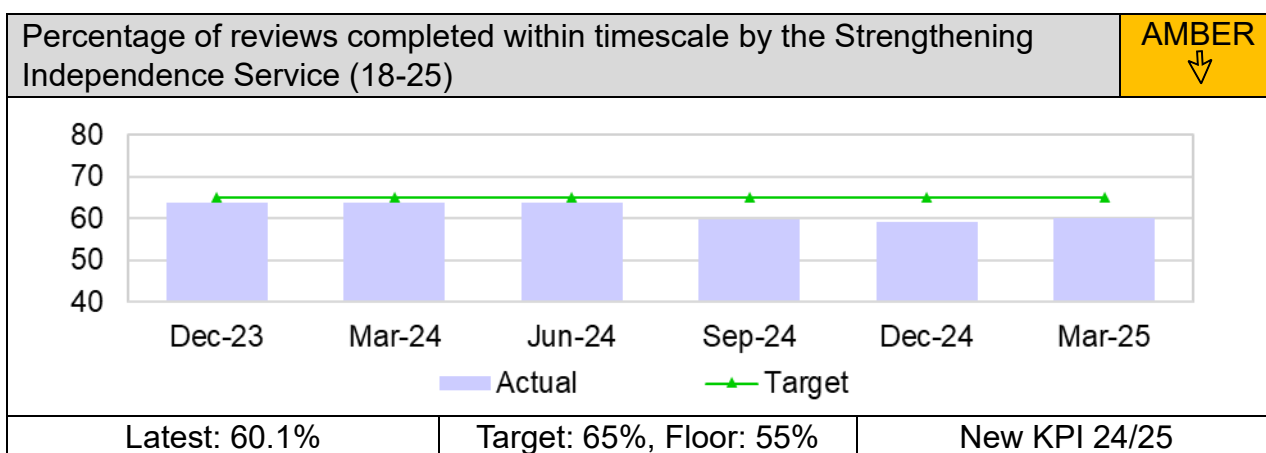
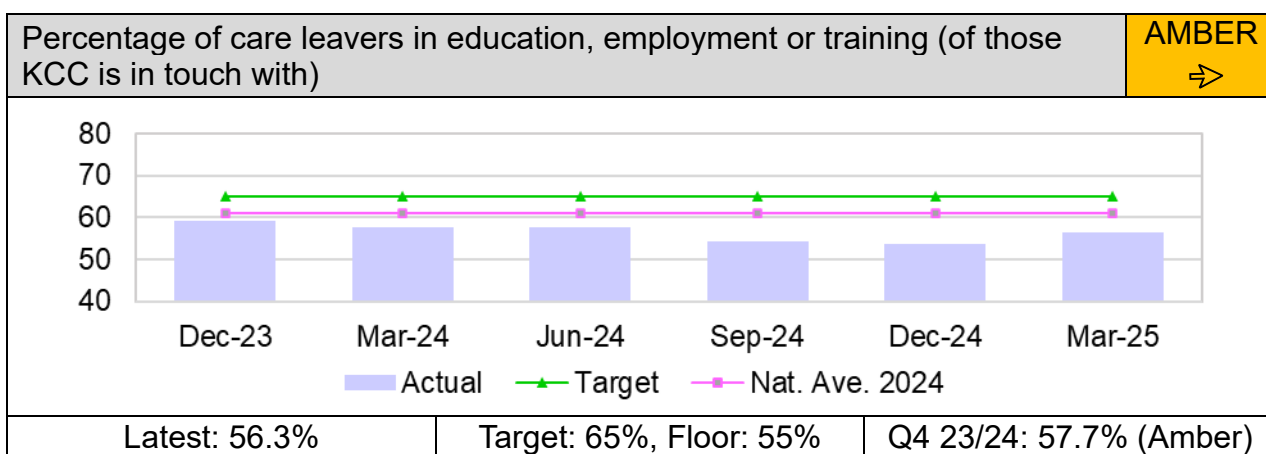
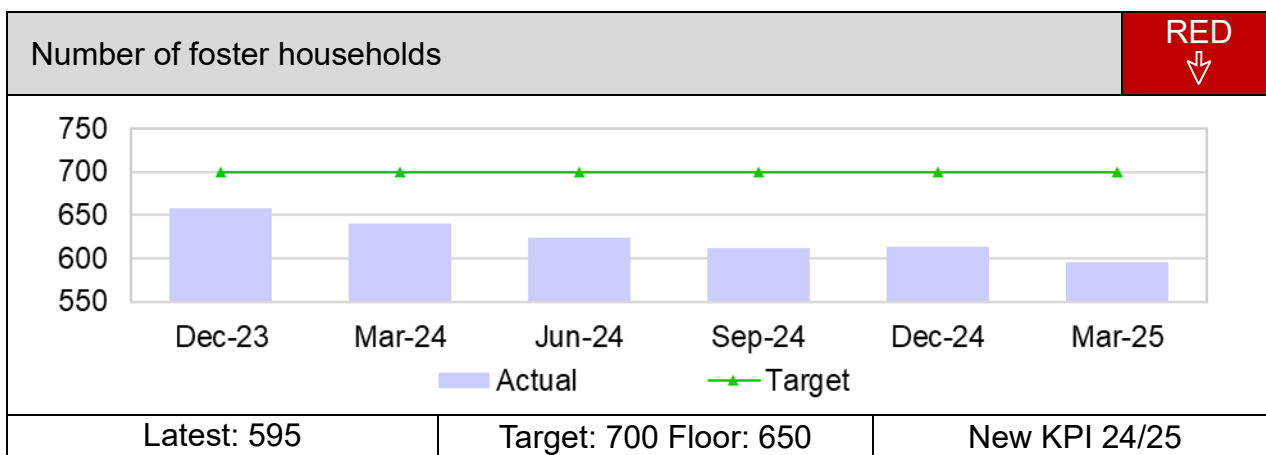
The number of care leavers at the end of March 2025 was 2,015, a decrease of 20 from the previous Quarter. Of the 2,015 care leavers, 1,066 (52.9%) were non-UASC care leavers and 949 (47.1%) were UASC. The percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training, at 56.3% remained below the target of 65.0% but has improved since the previous quarter (53.6%). A number of our unaccompanied young people remain without status, having entered the country after 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2023 and impacted by the Immigration Bill (2023). This cohort of unaccompanied care leavers, with no status, are not able to remain in education or gain employment when they reach the age of 18, impacting upon the overall numbers in education, training and employment. The Home Office confirmed unaccompanied children who entered the country during this period will have their applications prioritised, which should then lead to an improvement against the target.

### **Strengthening Independence Service**

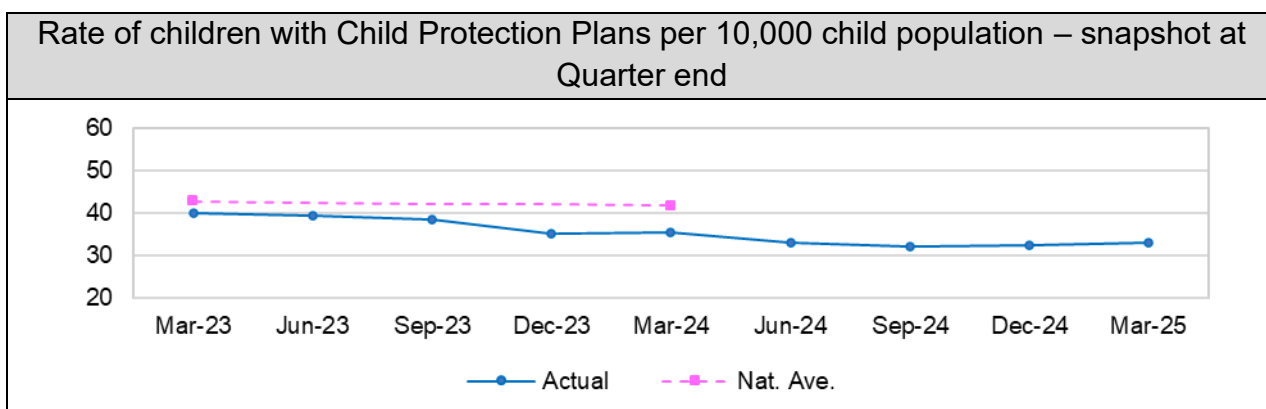
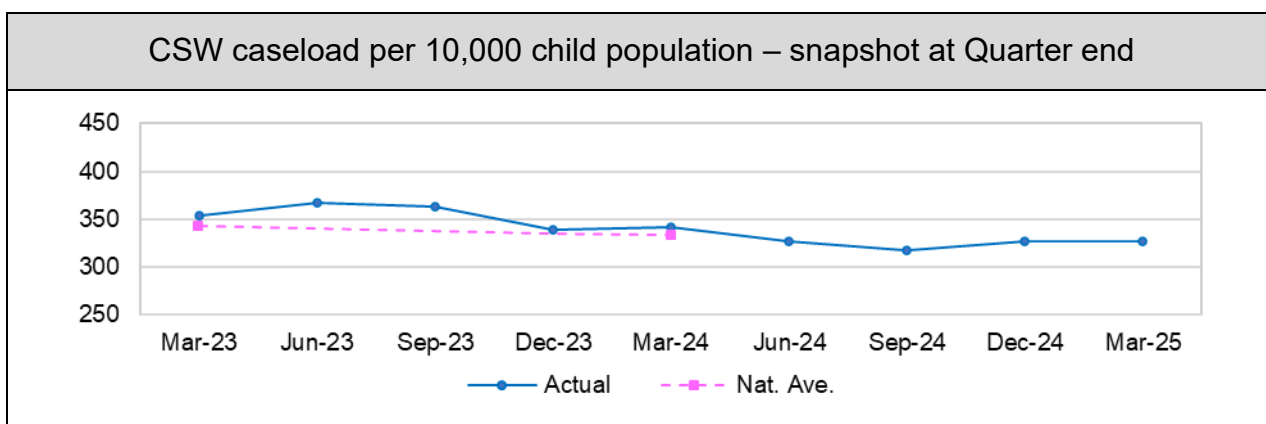
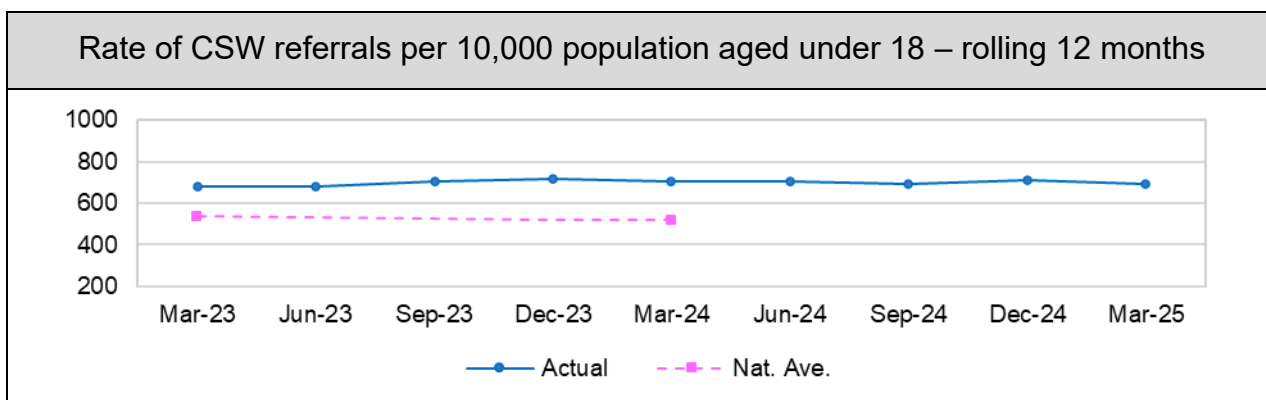
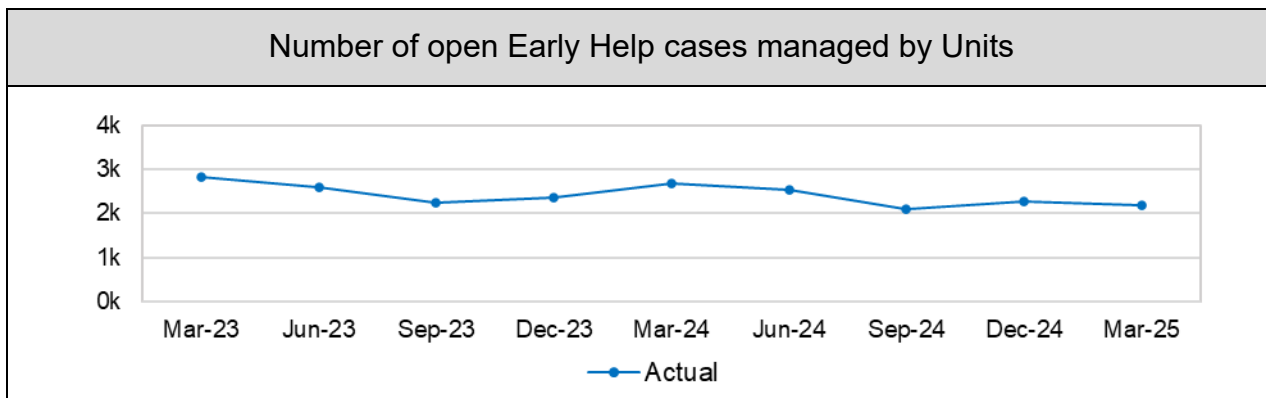
Two additional measures were added to this report for 2024/25 to cover the Strengthening Independence Service within CYPE and their support for 18–25-year-olds with a disability. For the 12 months to March 2025, the percentage of reviews completed within timescale was 60.1%, an increase from the performance at the end of Quarter 3 (59.1%) but still below the Target of 65.0%. The percentage of young people with a learning disability in Settled Accommodation is 98.0%, exceeding the 95.0% target. The 18-25 service moved from the Children, Young People and Education Directorate to the Adult Social Care and Health Directorate on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 so future reporting on this area will be included within this section of the QPR.

**Key Performance Indicators**

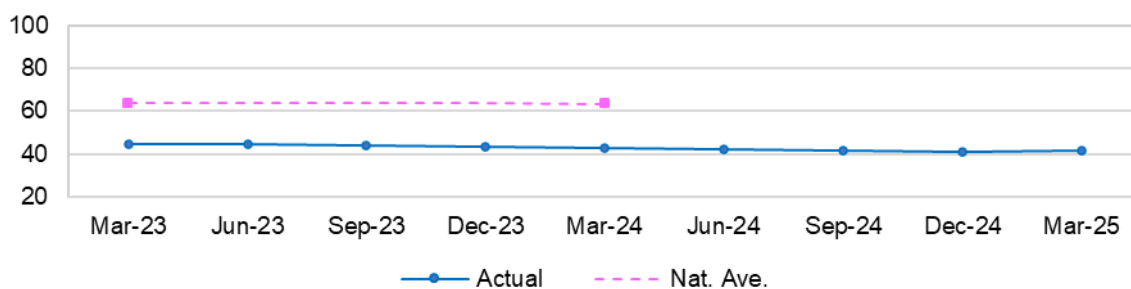




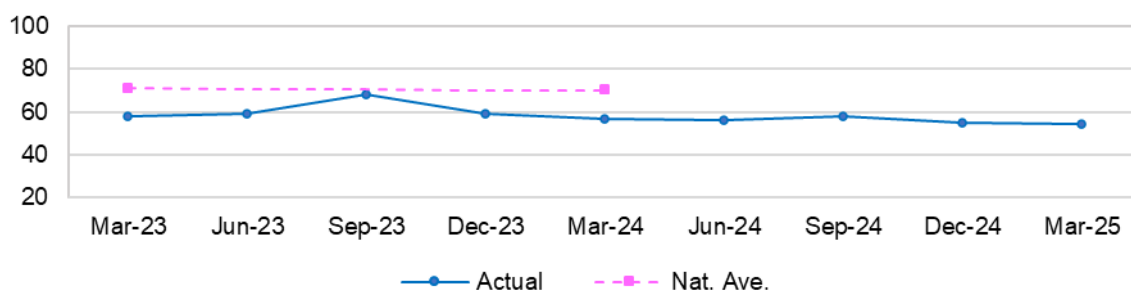
Activity indicators



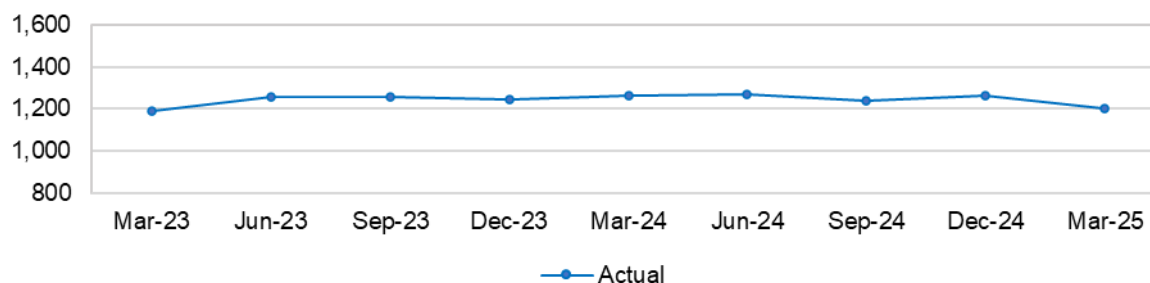
Rate of Children in Care (excluding UASC) per 10,000 child population – snapshot at Quarter end



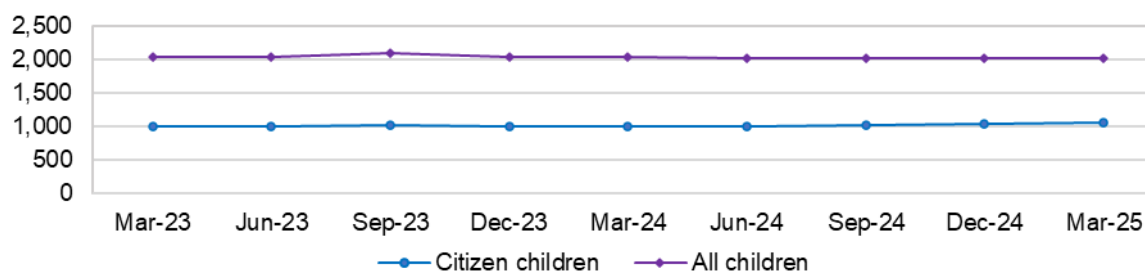
Rate of Children in Care (including UASC) per 10,000 child population – snapshot at Quarter end



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



Number of care leavers as at Quarter end



Adult Social Care						
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Diane Morton (from Quarter 1, 2025/26)					
<b>Corporate Director</b>	Richard Smith					
KPI Summary	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>RED</b>	↑	⇒	↓
	3	1	2	2	4	

### Contacts

In Quarter 4, Adult Social Care (ASC) received 44,950 contacts. When someone makes contact with ASC, the officer receiving the contact will attempt to resolve any issues – whether that be through offering information and advice, signposting to external agencies or exploring options of further care and support, with the key aim of someone not having to make a ‘repeat’ contact. In Quarter 4, 3% of contacts were from people who had made contact within the preceding 3 months, a one percentage point improvement on the previous quarter. This means the measure is RAG Rated Green for a second consecutive quarter, within the 5% target.

ASC Connect teams are organising regular in-person sessions in the community to facilitate conversations and provide appropriate support. The number of contacts that have been resolved by ASC Connect has improved and systems continue to be streamlined to meet individuals’ needs.

### Assessments

Quarter 4 saw 4,499 requests for Care Needs Assessments, a 7% increase on the previous quarter. Despite this increase in demand, fewer people were awaiting an assessment at the end of Quarter 4 when compared to Quarter 3, with Adult social care completing more assessments than were incoming for the fourth consecutive quarter.

4,510 Care Needs Assessments were completed in Quarter 4, a 5% increase on the previous quarter’s total. The proportion on Care Needs Assessments that were delivered within 28 days fell by one percentage point to **73%**, continuing a downward trend for this measure. In Quarter 4, the service focused on completing assessments for people who had been waiting for a longer period of time, which in turn impacted on this measure, keeping it below the 85% target and RAG Rated Red.

Assessments for carers are carried out jointly by adult social care and commissioned Carers Organisations in Kent. In Quarter 4, 687 carers assessments were completed with 661 requested in the quarter.

Following changes to the client recording system, Carers Organisations are now able to more accurately reflect their work in the way they record information. The development of a ‘Carers Referral’ now enables a view of signposting and other work outside of just the Carers Assessment itself. Due to this change, the volumes of Carer Assessments both incoming and completed have fallen but it should be noted that the overall rate of referral and activity within the Carer Organisations remains at a high level in Quarter 4, with ASC having involvement with over 1,700 carers in the quarter. In the same quarter last year, 1,500 carers were supported

## Care and Support Plans

Following the completion of a care needs assessment, people who are assessed as eligible for care and support will receive a care and support plan, detailing how their needs will be met and the types of services available to them. At the end of Quarter 4, 17,218 people had an active care and support plan. The number of people with an active care and support plan at the end of the quarter has remained at a similar level throughout this financial year. This is true of people supported by both ASC and people aged 18-25 with the Strengthening Independence Service (Children's, Young People and Education Directorate). The Quarter 4 figure for this metric is the highest number of people supported at the end of a quarter for at least 2 years.

Once a person's needs are deemed eligible and they have a care and support plan in place, they may receive a support package delivered in a residential or nursing setting or within their own home. In Quarter 4, 2,407 new packages of care were arranged at an average weekly cost of £699. The most common provision provided was Homecare (31%), followed by a short-term residential services (30%).

## Reviews of the Care and Support Plan (C&SP)

Care and support plans are reviewed 8 weeks after being put into place (first review) and then annually thereafter (annual review). The total number of reviews needing to be completed fell for the 5th consecutive quarter. In Quarter 4, the number of individuals requiring a first review decreased to 1,784, while those needing an annual review dropped to 5,050. Since the end of the previous financial year, this represents a 37% reduction in first reviews and a 16% reduction in annual reviews. These improvements reflect the focused efforts of the adult social care teams in completing care and support plan reviews. During Quarter 4, a total of 4,537 reviews were completed—1,971 were first reviews and 2,566 were ongoing reviews. Notably, this marks the highest number of ongoing reviews completed in a single quarter in over five quarters.

## Enablement

Enablement services may be offered by adult social care to a person requiring support. The aim of these services are to encourage a person's independence with the setting of goals and through promoting their strengths. In Quarter 4, 2,319 people were supported by Kent Enablement at Home (KEaH), the highest quarterly figure seen since before the pandemic, as activity continues to grow quarter on quarter. 1,964 people started the service in Quarter 4, 44% more than the same quarter last year. The number of people starting the service and receiving enablement has increased since the change in the external provider of enablement to KEaH.

A short-term provision in a nursing or residential setting provides adult social care with an opportunity to assess an individual's long-term needs over time, ensuring support is delivered in the least restrictive and most appropriate way, this includes those on a hospital discharge pathway. Over the last three quarters, the number of people in short-term beds at the end of the quarter has remained steady at around 1,400, similar to the start of 2023/24 but 23% higher than the end of that year. In 2024/25, in terms of new starts, there were between 900 and 1,100 new provisions initiated each quarter. In contrast, during the previous financial year, only one quarter reached 900 service starts.

### **Hospital Discharge Pathway**

Following a hospital stay, adult social care prioritises the ability of a person to remain as independent as possible on their return home and to minimise the risk of readmittance to hospital. In Quarter 4, 86% of older people (65 and older) were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement services. This measure has now risen above its target of 85% and is now RAG Rated Green. Adult social care aims to support individuals to remain in their own homes whenever appropriate. Effective reablement services play a key role in achieving this, increasing the likelihood that people receiving support can live independently.

### **Direct Payments**

A Direct Payment from ASC may be made to a person to help them to meet their needs. Such a provision can aid in helping a person to maintain their independence and give them control over the support that they receive as part of their care and support plan. The proportion of people in receipt of a direct payment remained at 26% in Quarter 4, below the target of 30% but above a floor standard of 24%. 193 people started a direct payment in Quarter 4, a figure similar to that in recent quarters. 3,123 people were in receipt of a direct payment in the quarter, with carers' direct payments continuing to rise throughout the financial year.

### **Residential and Nursing care**

If a person's needs cannot be met in their own home, it may be assessed that their needs will be met best in a residential or nursing setting. In Quarter 4, 548 per 100,000 people aged 65 or over, had their long-term support needs met by admission to a residential or nursing care home. Note, this rate relates to the number **starting** these types of placements each quarter and mirrors the current methodology used in the national Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework. This key performance indicator has remained below a target of 588 per 100,000 for the whole financial year 2024/25. Throughout the year, community provisions and non-residential settings have grown as a likely outcome for a person needing support aged 65 or over.

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) regularly inspect residential and nursing homes, sharing findings alongside an overall rating for the service. In Quarter 4, 72% of people supported in residential or nursing care were in a provision that was rated Good or Outstanding by CQC. This measure is below the floor standard of 75% and is now RAG Rated Red.

West and North Kent operational colleagues have been working with CQC following a number of inspections across these areas that had resulted in 'requires improvement' inspection outcomes. The Market Support Team is working closely with care homes to help them implement their action plans for addressing quality concerns; this includes ongoing monitoring in care homes with identified issues, and supporting providers to improve both the quality of care and their Care Quality Commission (CQC) ratings. It is important to note that when a care home has completed their action plan and made necessary improvements, there can be a delay in CQC reinspecting the home and reviewing the rating.

**Mental Health needs**

The number of people accessing adult social care provision with a mental health need increased again in Quarter 4 to 1,586. This continues a trend of the last two financial years. The 3% upward movement in the two most recent quarters is the largest increase we have recorded quarter on quarter in the past two financial years.

**Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS)**

The number of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) applications received in Quarter 4 was near record levels for KCC, with 2,756 applications received between January and March of 2025. Adult social care completed 2,616 applications in the quarter, the highest tally of the financial year. Adult social care continues to see an increase in the number of applications received, with 12% more applications in financial year 2024/25 when compared to 2023/24.

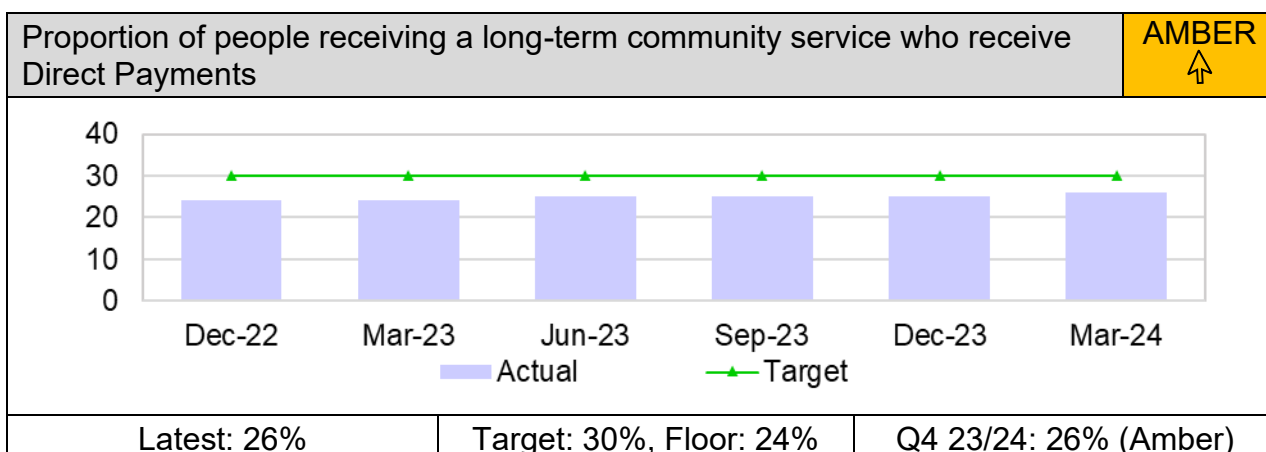
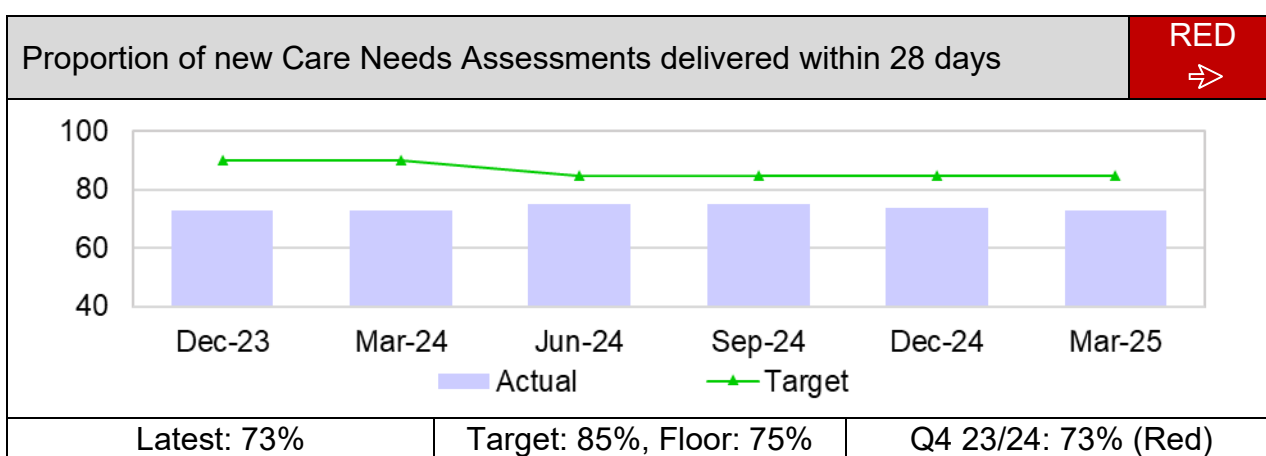
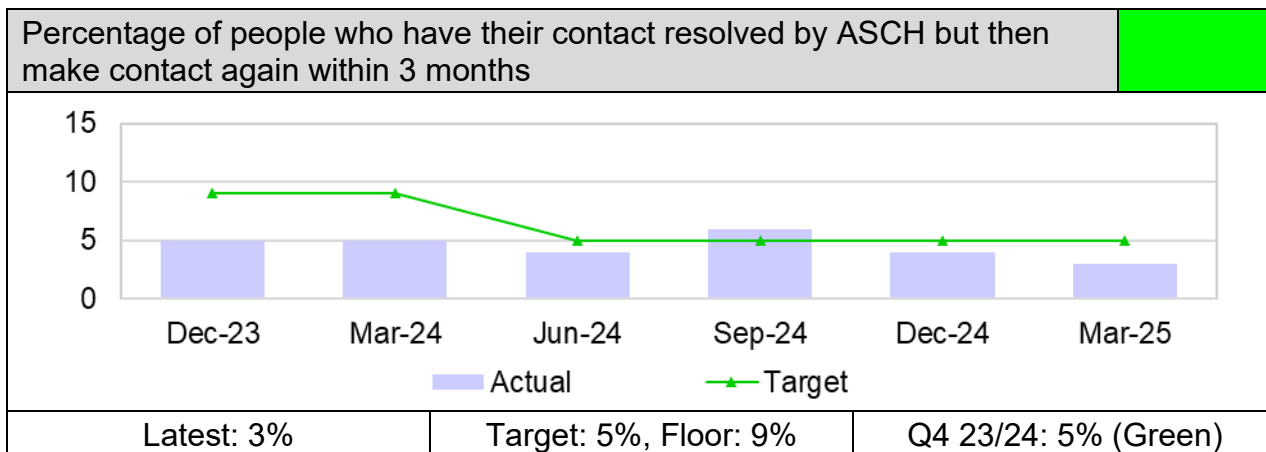
The Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) Service delivered more assessments due to an increased availability of resource. A review of our Best Interest Assessors (professionals who assess and determine the best interests of individuals lacking mental capacity to make specific decisions), has been completed and work is underway to see if this can be built upon.

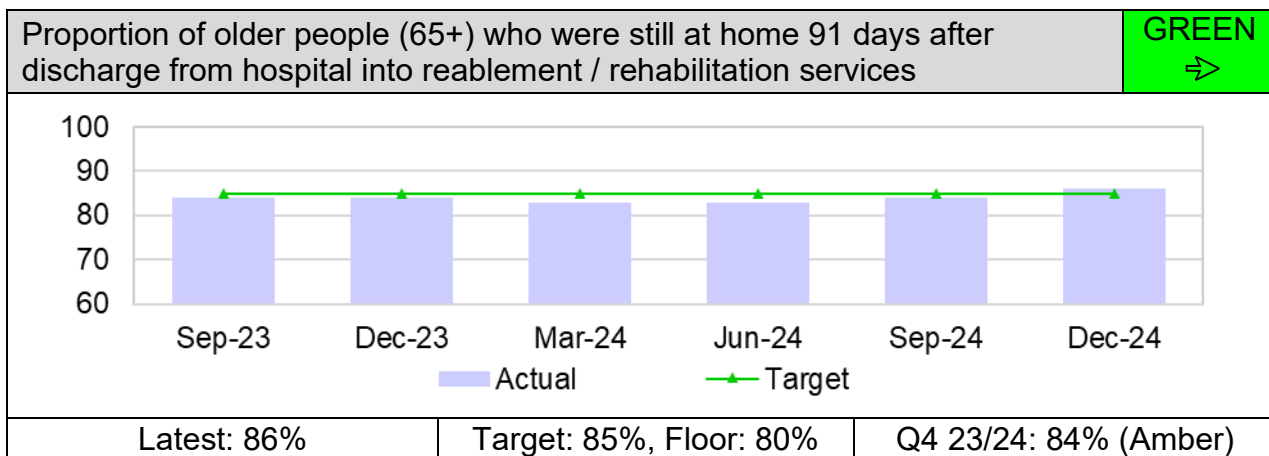
**Safeguarding**

If someone is concerned about the risk to a person with care and support needs they can report it as a Safeguarding Concern to adult social care. In Quarter 4, 5,974 safeguarding concerns were received, the highest quarterly figure and a continuation of an increasing trend. Overall, 22,518 concerns were received in 2024/25, compared to 19,321 in 2023/24 – representing a 16.5% increase year on year. Where the criteria is met, a section 42 safeguarding enquiry will be carried out. The number of enquiries open on the last day of the quarter increased by 3% - the same proportional increase as the number of concerns received. Quarter 4 saw 6,154 pieces of safeguarding work closed – a quarterly high, and a figure that is 25% higher than the same quarter last year. Over the financial year 2024/25, 22,928 closures of safeguarding work occurred, compared to 17,665 in 2023/24 – an increase of 29.7%.

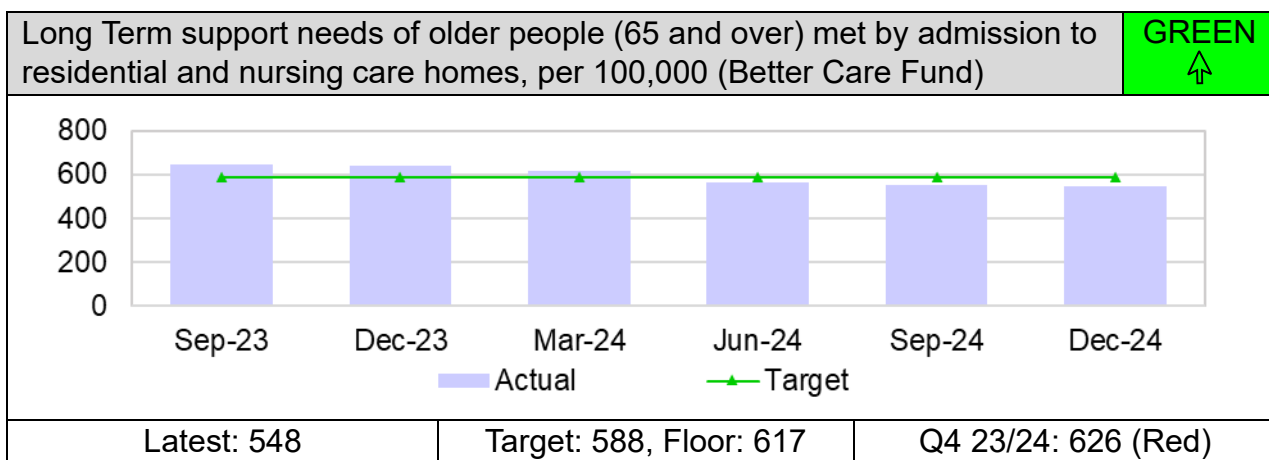
Once a safeguarding enquiry has come to an end, the risk to a person following intervention is assessed. 30% of people who had their Section 42 Safeguarding Enquiry concluded in Quarter 4 had 'risk removed' as a result of adult social care intervention – an increase of 3 percentage points when compared to the previous quarter. It is not always possible to remove a risk but there was also a reduction in the proportion of instances where 'risk remained' – falling 2 percentage points (to 11%) compared to Quarter 3.

### Key Performance Indicators

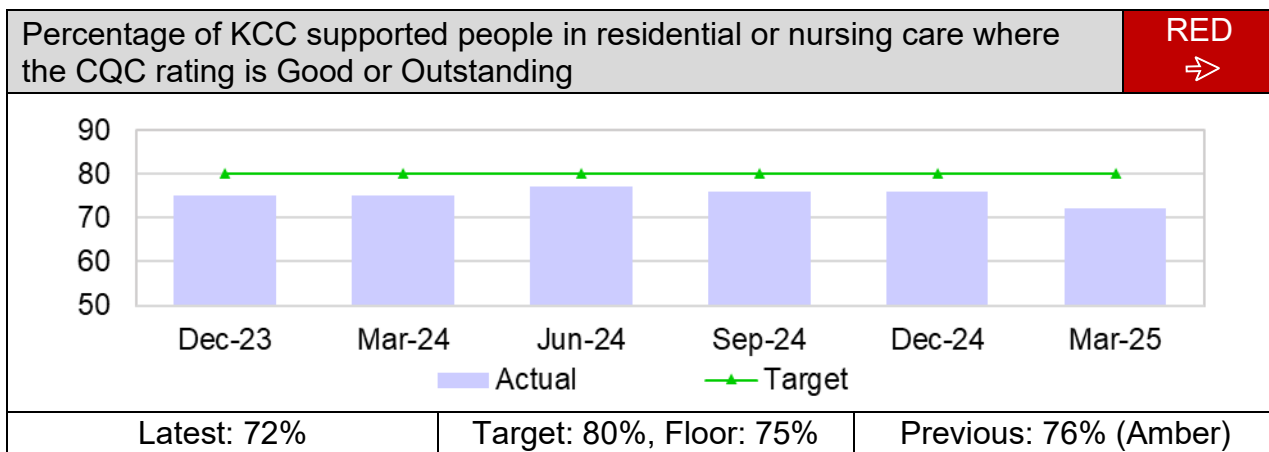




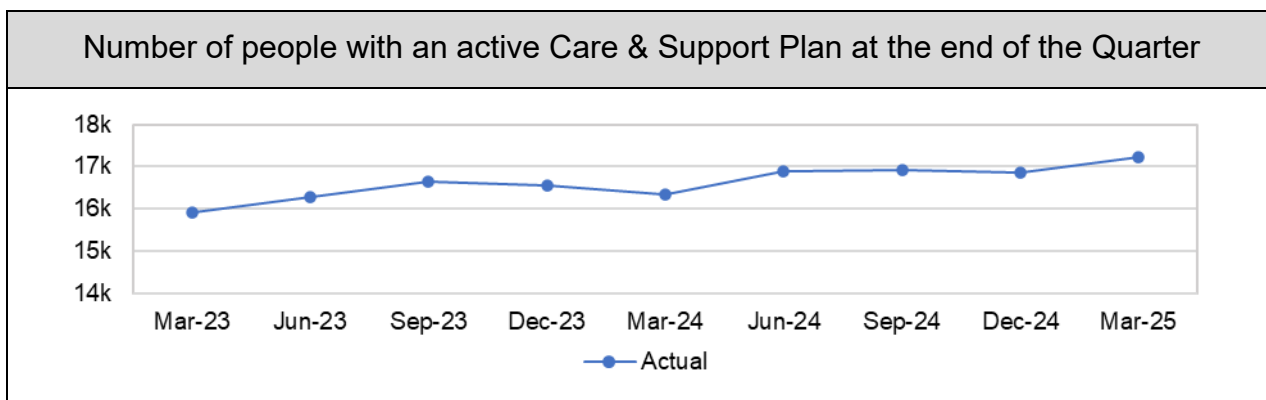
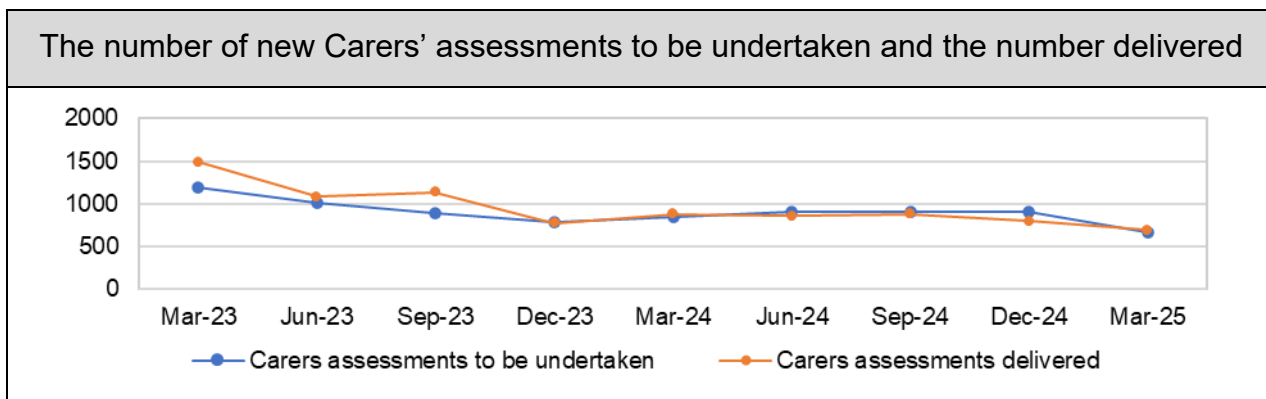
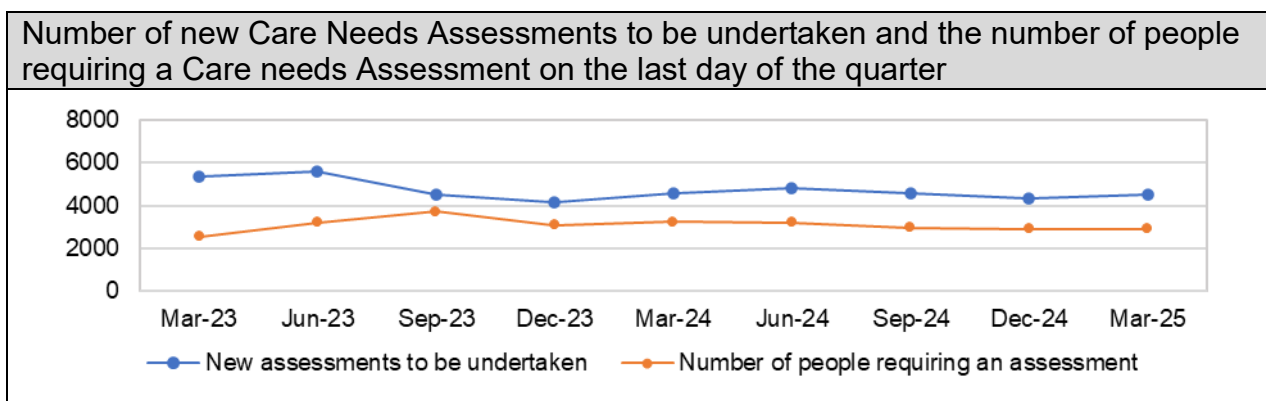
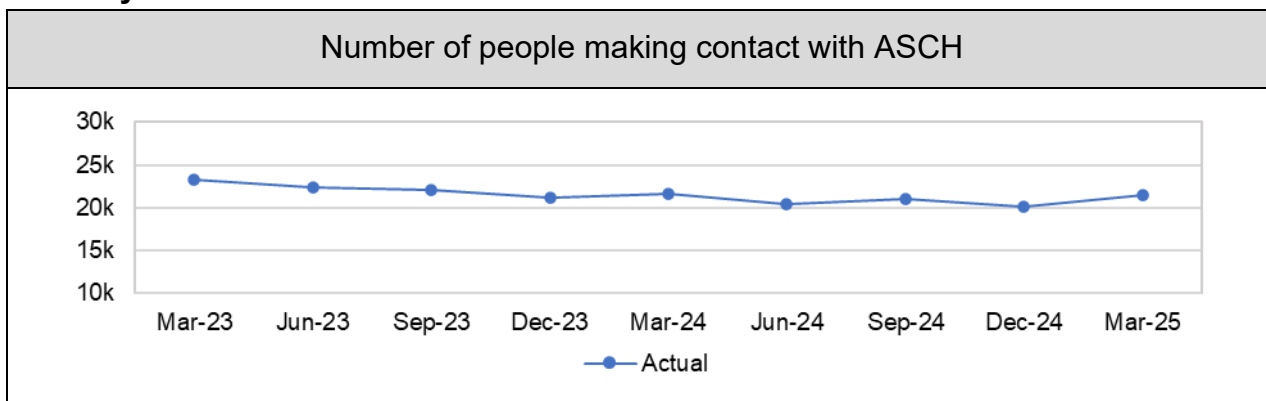
Reporting is based on the date in the Quarter that the hospital discharge occurs, with the 91 days commencing from that point.



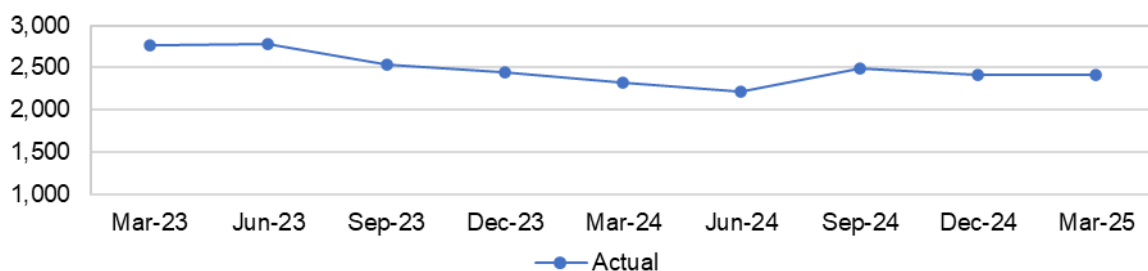
To ensure consistent comparison with previous Quarters by removing seasonality, this KPI is reported on a 12-month rolling basis and one Quarter in arrears



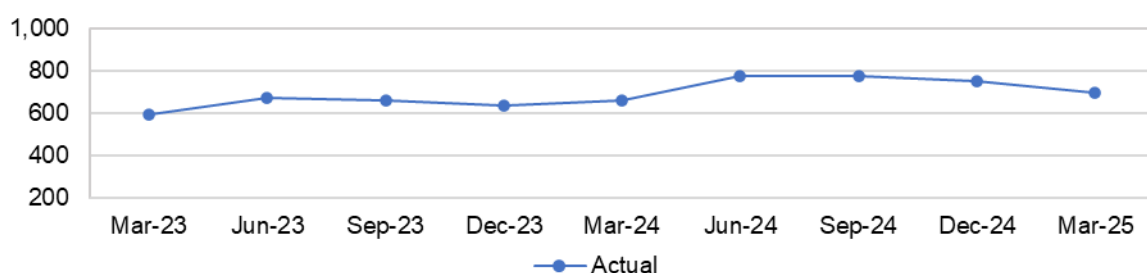
Activity indicators



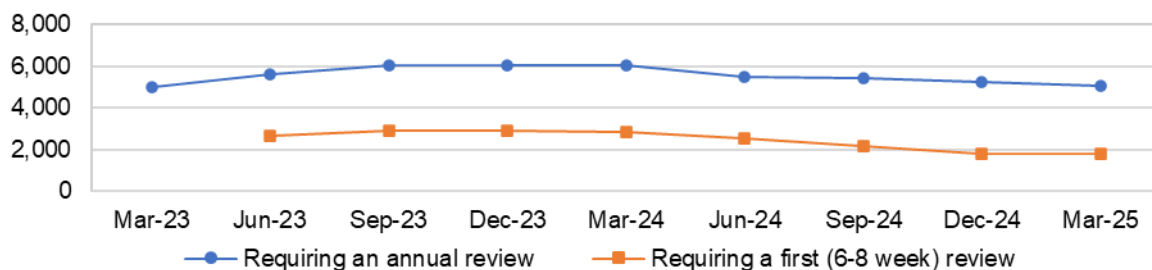
Number of new support packages being arranged for people in the Quarter



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

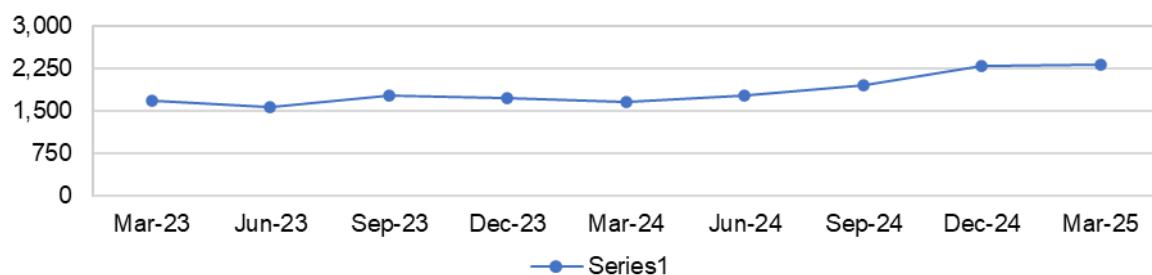


Number of people requiring a review to be completed on the last day of the Quarter

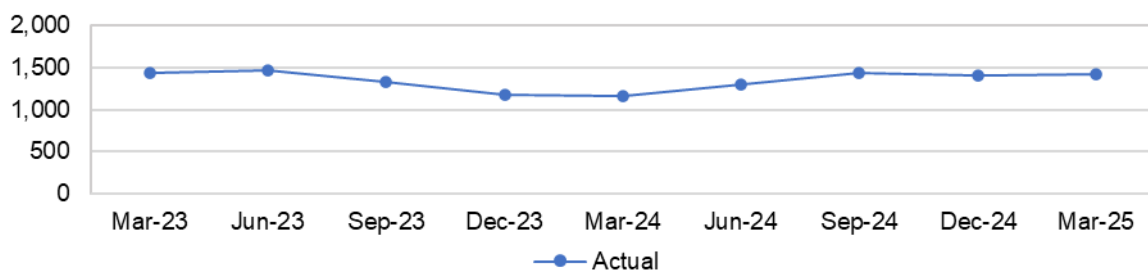


Data for requiring a first (6-8 week) review, added in Jun-23

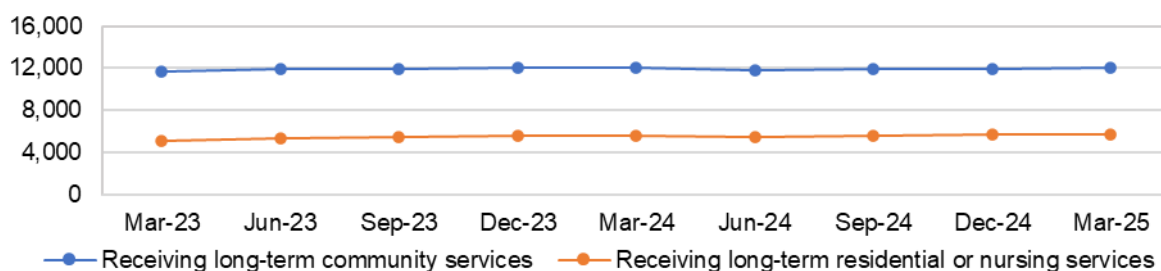
Number of people in Kent Enablement at Home (KeaH)



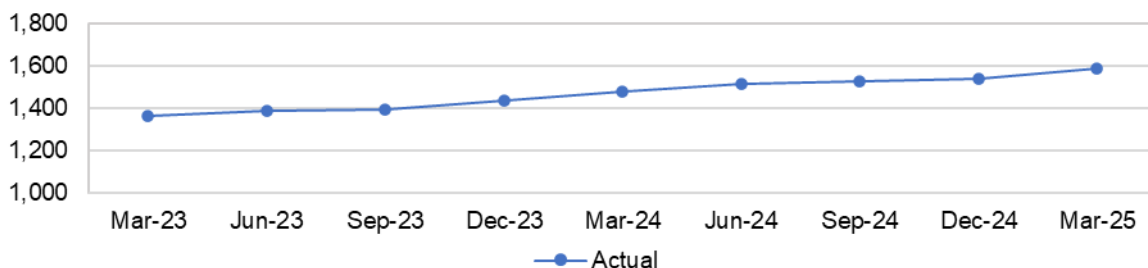
Number of people in Short Term Beds during the Quarter



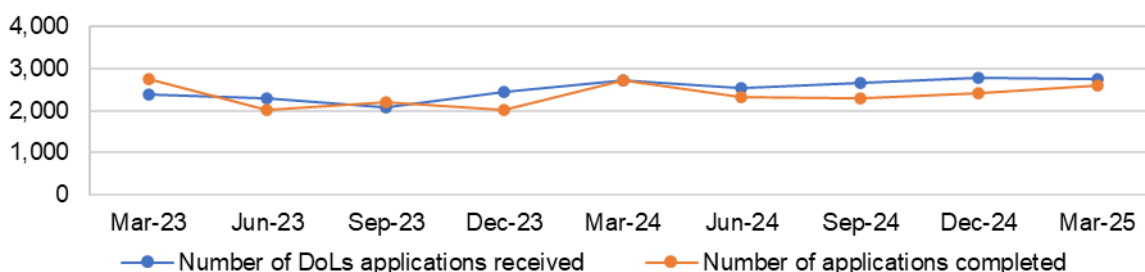
Number of people in Long Term Services



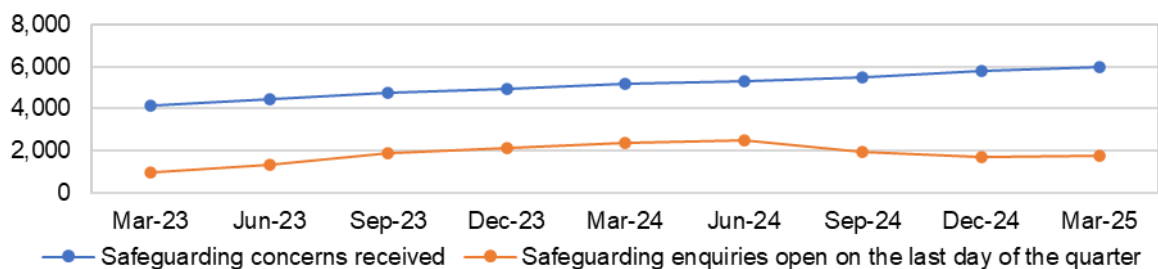
Number of People accessing ASCH Services who have a Mental Health Need



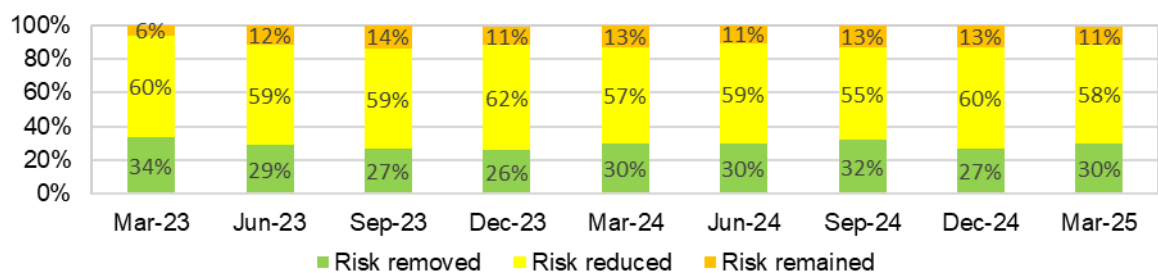
Number of DoLS applications received and completed



Number of safeguarding concerns received and enquiries open



Outcome of concluded Section 42 Safeguarding Enquiries where a risk was identified



Public Health						
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Diane Morton (from Quarter 1, 2025/26)					
<b>Director</b>	Anjan Ghosh					
KPI Summary	GREEN	AMBER	RED	↑	⇒	↓
	3	3		3	3	

### NHS Health Checks

In Quarter 4, there were 8,831 NHS Health Checks delivered to the eligible population in Kent. This represents an increase of 15% (+1,153) from the 7,678 checks delivered in the previous quarter, in line with anticipated seasonal trends. In the 12-month rolling period ending in Quarter 4, the service delivered 33,487 checks, exceeding the target of 31,000 checks. This continues the year-on-year increase of Health Checks following the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

### Health Visiting

In Quarter 4, the Health Visiting service completed 16,275 out of 18,489 scheduled health and wellbeing reviews, achieving a completion rate of 88.0%. Three of the five mandated health and wellbeing reviews met or exceeded their respective targets. The proportion of New Birth health and wellbeing reviews completed within 10–14 days was 94.0%, slightly below the 95% target. However, 98.7% of those due were completed within 30 days. The proportion of Antenatal health and wellbeing reviews completed this quarter was 47.2%, slightly below the 50% target. During the antenatal period, families continue to benefit from support through midwifery services and Family Hubs. Over the 12-month rolling period ending in Quarter 4, the service completed 66,696 mandated universal health and wellbeing reviews compared to a target of 68,000 (Amber), which was 87.2% of the 76,501 due. This is in line with the previous year's performance, where 66,846 reviews were conducted (87.1% of those due).

It should be noted that KCC has excelled in health visiting performance compared to other Local Authorities in the South East region, according to the most recent data (Q4, 2023/24) from the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID). This highlights a consistent dedication to monitoring and supporting child development at early stages, with current positive recruitment expected to support service delivery and outcomes.

### Sexual Health Service

In Quarter 4, 96.9% of first-time patients were **offered** a full sexual health screen at the Integrated Sexual Health service, and 66.7% of first-time patients **accepted**, which continued the improvement in performance towards the 72% target. Across the Sexual Health service this quarter, there were 15,039 attendances at sexual health clinics, 10,753 kits being ordered from the online STI Testing Service, 2,649 packs of condoms issued to under 25s via the Kent condom programme, and 718 issuances of Emergency Oral Contraception via Community Pharmacies for under 30s. The Sexual Health Team has begun to plan a strategy for sexual health, taking into account national policy plans and local need determined through the Kent Sexual Health Needs Assessment. The team continues to support providers to improve acceptance rates.

### Drug and Alcohol Services

The Adult Community Drug and Alcohol Services data for Quarter 4 had not been released at the time of reporting. The latest available data (Quarter 3, 2024/25) shows that 28.2% of clients (1,570 of 5,566) successfully completed structured treatment in the 12-month rolling period, exceeding the 25% target. Regarding the substance groups, the service is currently meeting its target for successful completions among *opiate* users. The successful completion rates for *alcohol* and *alcohol and non-opiate* users are slightly below target, while other non-opiate user completions are below the floor standard. However, the substance group targets are ambitious, particularly for *non-opiate* users, and Kent’s performance exceeds both the regional and national performance for all substance groups. The providers are reviewing their crack cocaine-specific interventions and developing a new Ketamine clinical pathway aimed at improving performance in this area.

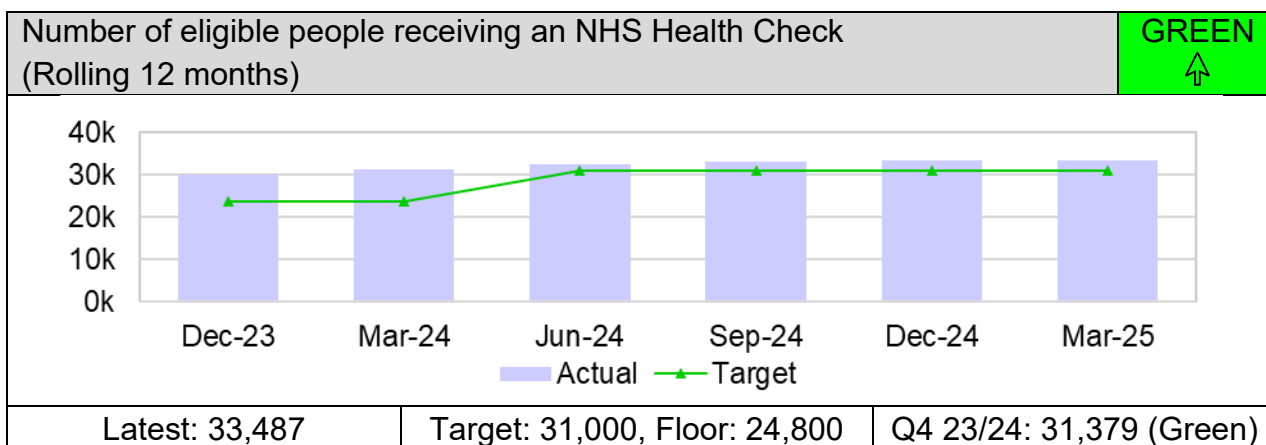
Whilst the previous focus on improving the number of people accessing structured treatment remains, in 2025/26 there will be an additional focus on quality including: ensuring the retention of people in structured treatment for at least 12 weeks, and increasing the number of people showing ‘substantial progress’ whilst still in treatment (i.e., reducing substance use, entering employment, or securing housing).

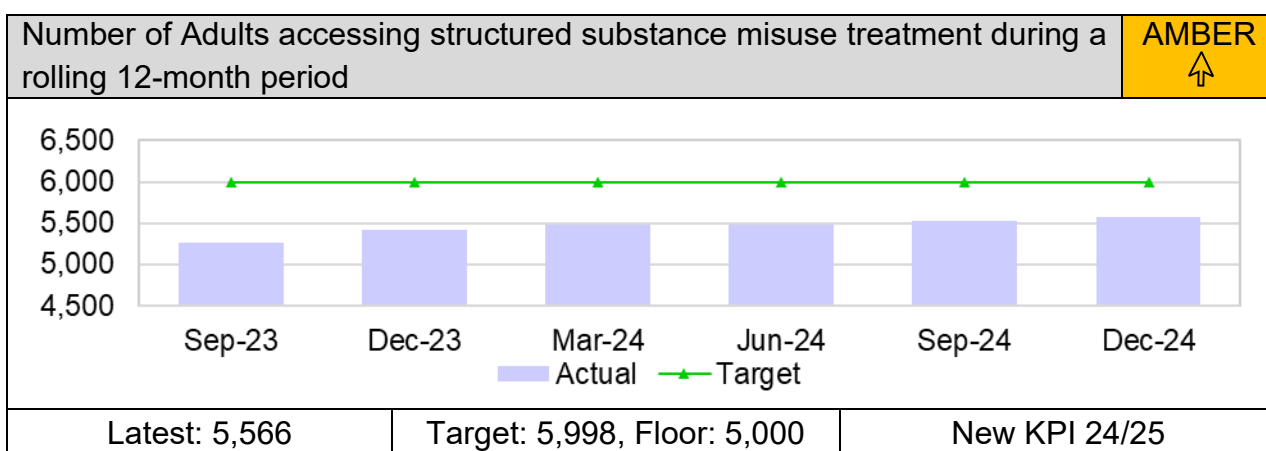
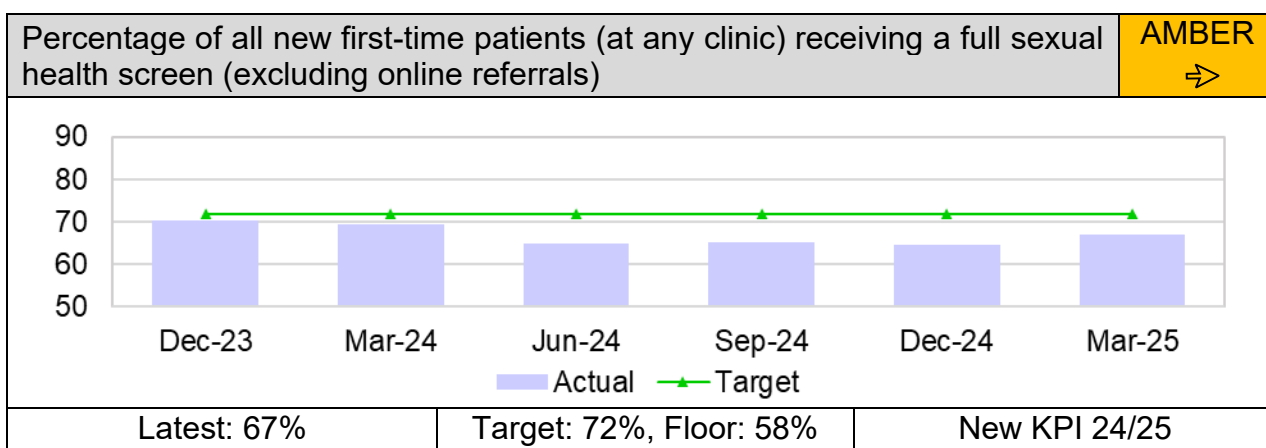
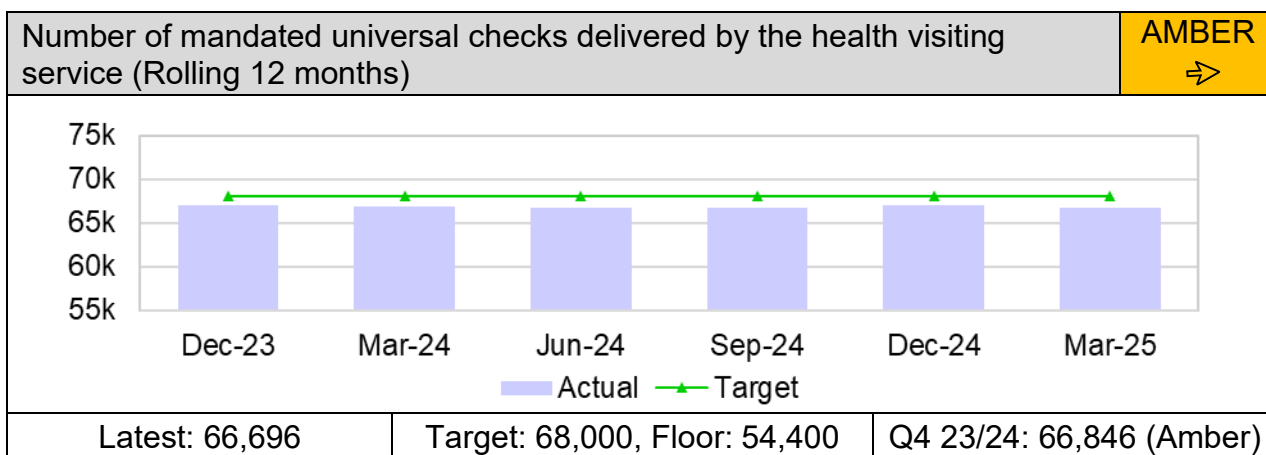
In early April, the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) confirmed their award of grant funding to KCC for 2025/26, linked to the 10-year national drug and alcohol strategy – ‘From Harm to Hope’. This funding will enable many areas of grant-funded activity to continue for the 2025/26 financial year.

### Live Well Kent and Medway

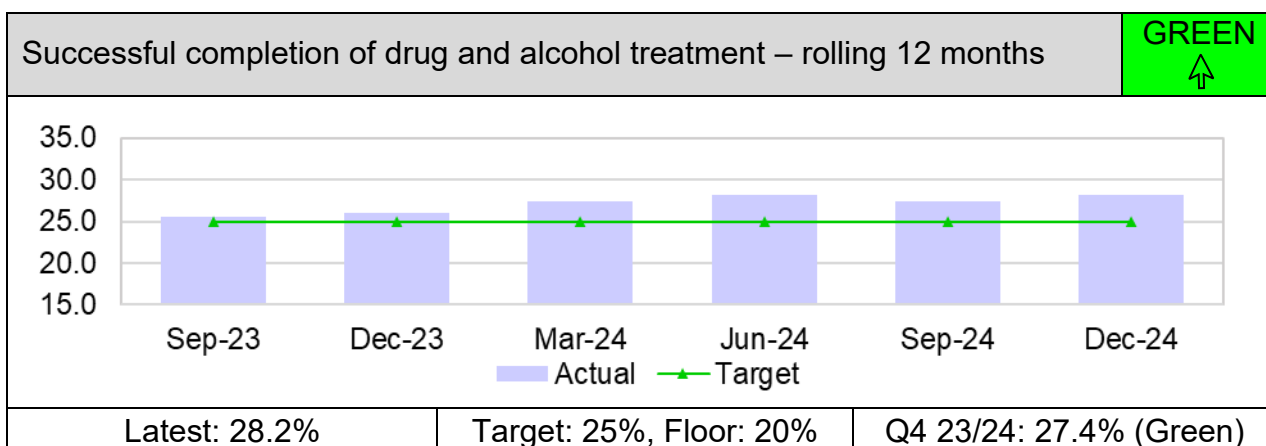
In Quarter 4, Live Well Kent and Medway (LWKM) experienced a significant increase in the number of referrals compared to the previous quarter, from 1,621 to 2,080 – an increase of 28.3%, which was attributed to its integration into the Mental Health Transformation programme. The increase has prompted continuous adaptation in service delivery to maintain high standards and achieve wellbeing goals. Despite the increased demand, LWKM has successfully upheld the quality of its services, with many people accessing the service reporting positive progress towards their personal goals (98%) and maintaining or improving in their DIALOG scale score (88%).

### Performance Indicators

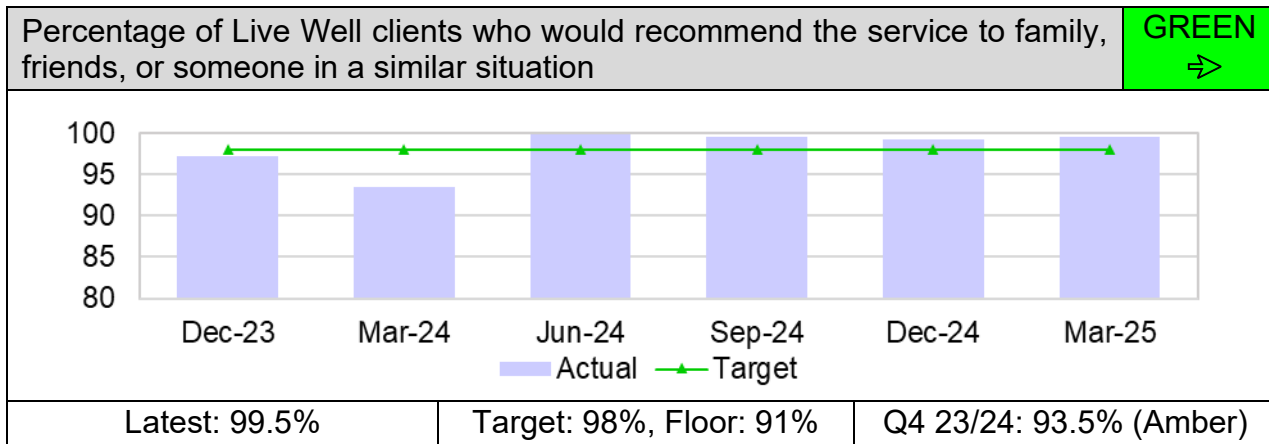




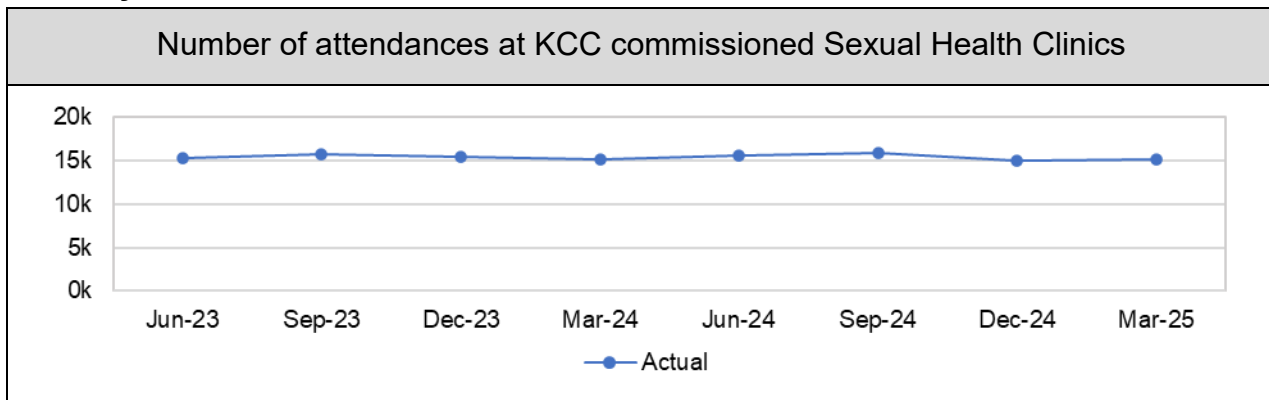
No data for Mar-25 available at time of reporting



No data for Mar-25 available at time of reporting



**Activity indicators**



## 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<sup>2</sup> in each risk level (based on the risk score) in May 2025, compared with February 2025.

	Low Risk	Medium Risk	High Risk
<b>Current risk level February 2025</b>	0	5	12
<b>Current risk level May 2025</b>	0	5	13

### KEY CHANGES DURING LAST QUARTER

#### **New Risks**

##### CRR0066: ASCH recommissioning programme (High)

A risk escalated from the Integrated Commissioning Risk Register. This risk recognises the challenges associated with recommissioning of four large contracts with time constraints, including ensuring that the new contracts support the service needs and ambitions

The recommissioning programme sits within the council's Strategic Reset Programme, and regularly reports on progress, blockers, and risks to the SRP board. (This risk was included in the February 2025 count, but details of the risk were not available until after publication of the previous report.)

##### CRR0067: SEND Delivery Improvement (Medium), and CRR0068: Delivery Against Safety Valve Agreement (High)

These are newly raised records and identifiers, but not new risk items. Previously there was a strong rationale to combine the aspects of SEND improvement and High Needs Funding block deficit, managed under risk 'CRR0056'. These have now been separated across two risks in order to reflect their evolution and differentiate between their current risk profiles. Risks created February 2025.

#### **Risks Withdrawn**

##### CRR0056: SEND Delivery Improvement and High Needs Funding shortfall

Two new risks (CRR0067 and CRR0068, as above) have been raised to differentiate between the SEND improvement delivery and funding aspects. This risk was therefore withdrawn February 2025.

<sup>2</sup> Corporate risks are those risks, which if they occurred, would have a major impact on the organisation or delivery of its priorities. Corporate risks also include cross-cutting risks that impact across directorates

**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 2025. These are summarised below.

<b>Due Date for Review or Completion</b>	<b>Actions Completed / Closed</b>	<b>Actions Partially complete</b>	<b>Actions subject to Regular Review</b>	<b>Actions Outstanding</b>
Up to and including May 2025	10	2	6	4

**CRR0003: Securing resources to aid economic recovery and enabling infrastructure (High)**

Complete

**Implementation plan for Kent & Medway Economic Framework**

A Phase 1 implementation plan has been implemented for Kent & Medway Economic Framework with Kent & Medway Economic Partnership subgroups and local stakeholders for taking forward the ambitions and action areas set out in the framework including developing a prioritised economic and infrastructure projects pipeline to focus and secure future funding resource and inform government of priorities. A new round of Growing Places Fund (capital loans) is being prepared to support projects that contribute to economic growth with a view to launching a first call for projects during 2025/26.

Action Outstanding.

**Kent Design Guide** to be refreshed and published to ensure consistency with national policy and legislation supporting the delivery of high-quality design in new development. (Previous target date 31/03/25. Refreshed target date 31/07/25).

**CRR0009: Future financial and operating environment for Local Government (High)**

Partially Complete

Developing better scrutiny of spending bids and more detailed savings plans, to improve the overall robustness of the budget setting process, thereby improving financial resilience. (Previous target date 31/03/25. Target date now 30/09/25).

**CRR0014: Cyber Information Security Resilience (High)**

Action Outstanding

Reviewing visibility of the Group's risk profile regarding cyber security, to provide reassurance that the use of any shared resources or other interdependencies from a cyber perspective are continually understood. The completion date has been extended to June 2025 to enable discussions to conclude.

**CRR0015: Sustainability of the Social Care Market (High)**Complete

Recommendations from the external consultant report in regard to cost of care, contract models and joint commissioning have been considered and integrated into the commissioning approach.

**CRR0039: Information Governance (Medium)**

No actions due for completion this quarter

**CRR0042: Border fluidity, infrastructure and regulatory arrangements (High)**Regular Review**Planning with Government**

The organisation is continuing to communicate 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 continues to prepare for two separate but interconnected schemes that will affect non-EU citizens travelling to most EU countries; the EU Entry/Exit System (EES – implementation date TBC) and the EU European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS). Regular presentations continue to be given to Members on potential impacts relating to people and goods that will follow implementation of the EU Entry/Exit System. The due date for this action has temporarily been removed due to EES being postponed until newly required EU legislation has been introduced and notice of a new implementation date is provided.

**CRR0045: Maintaining effective governance and decision making in a challenging financial and operating environment (High)**

No actions due for completion this quarter

**CRR0049: Fraud and Error (Medium)**Complete**Commissioning and Procurement process**

All tendering specification now includes a requirement for the tenderer to provide details on what procedures they have in place to prevent fraud from occurring within the contract, both in service delivery and invoicing into KCC. Ongoing support in evaluating these procedures will be obtained from the Counter Fraud Team as part of the overall evaluation process.

**CRR0052: Adaption of KCC Services to Climate Change impacts (High)**Regular Review**Delivery of the KCC Climate Change Adaptation Plan**

Delivery of the KCC Climate Change Adaptation Plan will be monitored regularly and will include service level climate change adaptation risks and incorporate climate adaptation into project and Business As Usual activity.

Regular Review**Organisation-wide environmental risk management**

The Environment team will be continuing to support the organisation to build environmental risks into KCC project work and the delivery of the KCC Environment Plan.

**CRR0053: Asset Management and Degradation and associated impacts, linked to Capital Programme affordability (High)**Action Outstanding

**Schools Financial Threshold** - Papers to Secretary of State seeking approval to increase school financial thresholds. Due to the change of Government and the time lapsed, the consultation with the Schools Forum will start again. Target date set for April 2026

**CRR0058: Capacity & capability of the workforce (High)**Regular Review

**Exit and retention surveys** have commenced, with data collection to continue to ensure a sufficient sample size to draw conclusions and determine next steps.

Action Outstanding

**Pay Strategy** – Pay strategy review to ensure it remains competitive and sustainable for the future. The target date was originally set for March 2025, however the review will now take place after the strategy is in place for a full year, with a new target date of April 2026.

**CRR0059: Significant failure to bring forecast budget overspend under control within budget level assumed. (High)**Partially Complete**Maximise scope of effective scrutiny by all Members**

A Governance Working Party has been implemented and has met regularly. The group originally anticipated reporting to County Council in 2024 but is now due to report in 2025.

**CRR0063: Capacity to accommodate and care for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking (UAS) Children (Medium)**

No actions due for completion this quarter

**CRR0064: Risk of Failing to Deliver Effective Adult Social Care Services (High)**Complete

**Redesign and redeployment of workforce.** ASC have set out plans for redesign and redeployment of workforce around two key areas of practice:

- (a) prevention, early intervention, and short-term support
- (b) long term support and adult safeguarding.

**CRR0065: Implementation of fit-for-purpose Oracle Cloud system (Medium)**Complete

A User Acceptance Testing (UAT) plan is in place stating what resource is required and when. The plan will be monitored to ensure it is effective.

Complete

Transition / change management planning has completed with a Business Readiness Group set up.

Complete

Internal communications resource has been recruited, a KNet page has been set up and regular updates and key messages provided.

These 3 controls will continue to be monitored throughout phase 1 to ensure effectiveness.

**CRR0066: ASCH recommissioning programme (High)**Complete

Development of an open framework approach to allow more new providers to join

Complete

Engagement with the care sector regarding specifications and proposed contract terms

Complete

Activities in place to restrict the use of off-framework placements.

**CRR0067: SEND Delivery Improvement (Medium)**Regular Review

Delivery of SEND Improvement Programme, which includes delivery of requirements detailed in the Kent Accelerated Progress Plan. Target date agreed, reflecting anticipated next inspection timeline.

**CRR0068: Delivery Against Safety Valve Agreement (High)**

No actions due for completion this quarter