

Regeneration

# Business Plan 2008-2011



**Swale Forward**

# Contents

1. Introduction
2. Swale Forward's Vision
3. Review of 2007/08
4. Our priorities: The next three years
5. Adding value: Matching priorities with resources
6. Annex 1: Indicative budget 2008-11
7. Annex 2: Swale Forward Board Terms of Reference



# 1. Introduction

Welcome to the Swale Forward Business Plan for 2008-2011. This document sets out how the Swale Forward Partnership will work to meet our vision for regeneration in Swale over the next three years, and how we will put our resources to best effect.

Since its establishment in 2004 as Swale's Local Regeneration Partnership, Swale Forward has played a central role in support of the development of major schemes at Queenborough and Rushenden and in Sittingbourne town centre, and in securing the funding for major infrastructure to support the Borough's continued development. However, the Partnership has also placed a major emphasis on investment in learning and skills, which it has for some time recognised as Swale's top regeneration priority.

This Business Plan sharpens Swale Forward's role in championing Swale's strategic regeneration needs and supporting delivery of the Borough's most important regeneration schemes. To achieve this, the Business Plan envisages a closer link between Swale Forward and Swale Borough Council, while enhancing the Board's role as a multi-agency partnership.

While Swale's regeneration priorities are clear and well established, there will inevitably be policy, personnel and funding changes over the coming year, which will influence the way in which the partnership operates. To ensure that this Business Plan remains relevant, it will be updated in a year's time.

# 2. Swale Forward's Vision

Swale Forward's vision is "to achieve a transformation in Swale's economic, social and environmental profile, so that it is one of the best places in Britain in which to live, work, learn and invest".

To support this vision, Swale Forward is 100% funded by the Department for Communities and Local Government as part of the Government's investment in the Thames Gateway. Our role is to bring together the key strategic partners to build a consensus on the Borough's key regeneration

priorities, provide high-level oversight of their implementation and take action to remove blockages to delivery where they occur.

Over the medium term, the Swale Regeneration Framework seeks to deliver 9,100 new homes and 12,000 new jobs by 2016. Achieving this and ensuring that such growth is accompanied by the right community facilities, transport links, learning provision, cultural resources, open space and design quality is critical to the delivery of our overall vision, and Swale Forward focuses its resources and activity on those areas where the greatest housing and jobs delivery will take place.

# 3. Review of 2007/08

Over the past year, a number of significant milestones have been achieved:

In Queenborough and Rushenden, work has been completed on the draft master plan led by SEEDA, which has now been out to public consultation and will shortly be adopted.

Following the Planning Inspector's endorsement of the Swale Draft Local Plan, there is now a clearer strategy in place for the future development of Sittingbourne town centre. This has been supported in the past year by the establishment of a multi-agency partnership steering group chaired by English Partnerships.

In relation to learning and skills, Kent Science Resource Centre opened in September, offering Swale's first higher education provision focused on the growing bioscience sector. The acquisition of new premises at Eurolink for a new Construction and Engineering Centre has also taken place, for delivery in 2008/09.

In Sheerness, the Hope Street Centre opened, providing a new resource for the voluntary and community sector in the centre of the town as part of a network of new community facilities developed in Swale over the past few years.

Efforts have been made to improve governance and monitoring capacity in relation to the key regeneration priorities. As well as the Sittingbourne Town Centre steering group referred to above,

## 4.

# Our priorities: the next three years

the past year has seen the re-establishment of the Queenborough and Rushenden Steering Group with an enhanced remit, the Swale Skills and Employment Board and the Swale Green Grid Partnership. These have enabled partners to focus on these priority areas and have freed capacity within the Swale Forward Board to take a strategic view.

At Thames Gateway level, Swale Forward supported the development of the Thames Gateway Delivery Plan, and received in November a capital allocation for projects in Swale of £13.5 million. This funding is focused on Sittingbourne (£10.3 million) and Queenborough and Rushenden (£3.2 million). In addition, further allocations for Thames Gateway Parklands and a Strategic Economic Investment Fund (SEIF) were announced, some of which will eventually benefit Swale.

In some other areas, progress has been slower. Although a regeneration priority for the Borough, it has proved difficult to secure resources to take forward the Sheerness regeneration strategy work carried out in 2006. However, there is interest from the Port in bringing forward development proposals, and it has been possible to progress some smaller scale activity.

Development of proposals for new further education provision in Sittingbourne has similarly been somewhat slow, and will need to be a high priority over the coming year. However, the Thames Gateway Delivery Plan recognises the need for a new further education campus in Sittingbourne, and this is being progressed with the Learning and Skills Council.

Internally, there were several staff changes within Swale Forward in 2007/08, with the Chief Executive leaving at the end of October. Swale Borough Council's decision in 2007 to establish a new Regeneration Directorate has provided an opportunity to achieve better synergy between the Council and Swale Forward, and this is currently being considered. Looking to the future, this presents opportunities for Swale Forward to work more closely with the Council's planning and housing functions and to take forward a more cohesive approach to securing delivery, while ensuring that the partnership continues to reflect the needs and objectives of all partners.

Swale Forward's priorities for activity over the next three years fall into three broad categories: supporting the delivery of the main CLG-funded projects for housing and jobs growth; progressing additional strategic priority initiatives in relation to the Parklands and eco-region agendas, learning and skills and Sheerness; and ensuring that Swale is a leading participant in the regeneration of the Thames Gateway.

## Taking each of these areas in turn

### Priority 1

Supporting delivery at Queenborough and Rushenden and Sittingbourne

Combined, Queenborough and Rushenden and Sittingbourne Town Centre/ Milton Creek could deliver up to 4,000 new homes. Together, they not only form the Borough's largest concentrations of new housing delivery, they are also fundamental in providing employment growth and in raising environmental quality.

Through the Swale Forward core team and partners, Swale Forward will support these two major schemes by:

- Co-ordinating overall project steering group and partnership bodies for both projects;
- Providing resources for project management, technical work and community and stakeholder consultation and engagement;
- Promoting the schemes in their wider strategic context
- Supporting the development of strategies to secure funding for community facilities and community development alongside physical regeneration.

### Priority 2

Supporting Swale's additional strategic priorities

Delivering the Parklands, cultural and learning and skills agendas are highlighted strongly within the Regeneration Framework. On a spatial level, the need for a greater focus on regeneration in Sheerness is clearly recognised by the Swale Forward Board, given the levels of deprivation that are present in the town and its strategic economic importance as the location of one of the country's largest ports.

Swale Forward will support these additional strategic priorities by:

- Co-ordinating the Swale Green Grid Partnership and the Swale Skills and Employment Board as the key Borough-wide partnership bodies;
- Supporting the roles of Greening the Gateway Kent and Medway and Gateway Knowledge Alliance at sub-regional level, and developing close partnership links with them;
- Making resources available where appropriate, for example in the continuation of the existing Learning Co-ordination role;
- Supporting strategic priority interventions, such as the development of further education provision in Swale and working to secure funding for them;
- Making available resources to support further work in Sheerness to take forward the first stage of the Regeneration Strategy commissioned in 2006.

### Priority 3

Ensuring that Swale is a leading participant in the regeneration of the Thames Gateway

Swale's active participation in the Thames Gateway is critical to its regeneration strategy. Over the next three years, Swale Forward will support this by:

- Representing Swale's interests at Thames Gateway Kent Partnership, Thames Gateway Strategic Partnership and other regional and sub-regional bodies;
- Ensuring that Swale responds positively to emerging Thames Gateway strategy, and that Swale's position is clearly represented in new policy and strategy development;
- Commissioning strategic intelligence and reviewing the Borough's delivery targets to ensure that regional and sub-regional strategy is accurately informed;
- Maintaining liaison with external partners;
- Actively making local connections between the Government's Thames Gateway investment, the Kent Agreement and the future development of a Multi-Area Agreement.

## 5.

### Adding value: Matching our resources with our priorities

Over the next three years, Swale Forward has a core budget of £375,000 per year (of which £120,000 is revenue and £255,000 is capital). This is funded by CLG, and is committed for 2008/09 and indicative thereafter.

The budget supports the cost of the Swale Forward core team and is intended to enable the Partnership to progress its identified priorities. For the 2008-11 period, we intend to:

- Increase the capacity of partners to deliver the main projects set out in Priorities 1 and 2 above by providing additional staff resource at project officer level;
- Direct discretionary resources towards the major areas of project activity. Within this, a significant allowance has been made for learning and skills provision to support the continuation of the Learning Co-ordination function and to match new resources allocated to this area by the Borough Council.

These increases in resources for delivery are met by reductions on previous years' allocations to public relations and events and early stage project funding.

Over the Business Plan period, we will also seek to align the Swale Forward budget with additional resources identified by partners or secured as external funding to ensure that the CLG's contribution to regeneration in Swale is maximised.



## Annex 1: Indicative budget, 2008/09 – 2010/11

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Category	Total	Total	Total
<b>Totals</b>	<b>375,000</b>	<b>375,000</b>	<b>375,000</b>
Programme Manager	69,217	71,294	73,433
Finance & Monitoring Officer	32,500	40,170	41,375
Project Officer 1	24,375	33,475	34,479
Project Officer 2	29,250	40,170	41,375
Programme Support Officer	26,000	26,780	27,583
Team Building / Training	7,000	5,000	5,000
Expenses	7,600	7,741	7,792
Recruitment	3,000	0	0
Mobile Phones	1,000	1,000	1,000
Contingency	6,258	4,620	4,763
Computers	2,750	750	0
Office Furniture	1,250	500	0
General Stationery	1,300	1,000	900
Printing / Copying	1,000	1,000	800
Refreshments	750	750	750
Financial administration*	20,000	20,000	20,000
Communications	10,000	7,000	5,000
General Research / Intelligence	10,000	9,000	7,000
Learning and Skills	45,000	36,000	36,000
Parklands/ Green Grid	11,000	9,000	9,000
Sittingbourne Town Centre	11,000	9,000	9,000
Queenborough	11,000	9,000	9,000
Sheerness	11,000	9,000	9,000
SLA - SVCDC	7,000	7,000	7,000
SLA TGKP	25,750	25,750	25,750

\* Based on costs of previous arrangements with Kent County Council. Final cost to be determined.



## Annex 2: Swale Forward Board Terms of Reference

### 1. Purpose

The overall purpose of the Swale Forward Board (the Board) is to co-ordinate the implementation of strategic regeneration priorities in Swale as set out in the Swale Regeneration Framework 2006-16 and the Annual Business Plan.

### 2. Status

The Board is unincorporated and does not have any legal status. All legal liabilities and obligations relating to the work to be undertaken will be set down in bespoke contracts where required. However, these terms of reference provide a basis for co-operation, joint working and common understanding.

The Board is a sub-group of the Swale Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), and shall inform the discussions of the LSP in relation to strategic regeneration.

### 3. Membership and Governance

The Board will consist of 12 members with representatives from:

<b>Swale Borough Council</b>	Leader Director of Regeneration
<b>Kent County Council</b>	Regeneration Portfolio Holder, Managing Director of Environment and Regeneration
<b>SEEDA</b>	Kent Director
<b>Communities and Local Government</b>	Kent Team Leader
<b>Thames Gateway Kent Partnership</b>	Chief Executive
<b>Swale Private Sector Liaison Group</b>	Chair and Vice Chair
<b>Swale</b>	Chair
<b>Voluntary Forum Swale CVS</b>	Director
<b>English Partnerships</b>	Thames Gateway Director
<b>AmicusHorizon</b>	Chief Executive

If a Board member is unable to attend a meeting they may send a substitute in their place who will have full voting rights.

The Board has the ability to invite other members and or observers on to the Board, either on a permanent or temporary capacity as need arises.

## Decision Making

For the most part decisions will be made by consensus. However where a vote is required or requested each Board member (not observers) will have a single vote with the chairman have the casting vote in the case of a tie. A vote can be requested by any Board member.

## Chairmanship

The Leader of Swale Borough Council, or their representative, will act as chair with the Kent County Council elected representative acting as Vice Chair. In the case that neither the chair or vice chair are able to attend a Board meeting the Board members present will nominate a chair.

## Quorum

At least 5 Board members are required to form a quorum for a Board meeting

## Frequency of Board meetings

There must be at least 4 Board meetings a year to review progress and take appropriate actions

## Representation

Representation of Swale Forward on other partnership bodies and networks will be agreed and reviewed by the Board.

## Sub-groups

Sub groups may be set up to help in the management and operation of the Board. Any sub group must have clear terms of reference, be task orientated and, where relevant, time limited.

## 4. Governing Documents

The activities of Swale Forward will be developed and managed through the following documentation:

The Swale Regeneration Framework 2006-2016 (and future amended versions), which sets out the overall regeneration strategy for the Borough

Project Framework that will set out the projects that will deliver the priorities in the Regeneration Framework and provide the basis for managing the allocation and securing of resources.

Annual Swale Forward Business Plan to manage the delivery of projects and resources

Thematic and area based strategies and plans, as necessary

## 5. The Swale Forward Core Team

The Board will be supported by a dedicated officer team (the Swale Forward Core Team).

The team will be led by a Programme Manager, responsible to the Swale Forward Board.

Swale Borough Council will directly employ the team on behalf of the Board and will cover personnel issues and act as accountable body for spend relating to the team

The Programme Manager will be line managed by the Director of Regeneration of Swale Borough Council on a day-to-day basis.

Funding for the team is provided by the CLG

Other skills and support will be utilised from partner organisations or purchased, as required, to achieve the aims of the regeneration programme and its constituent projects.

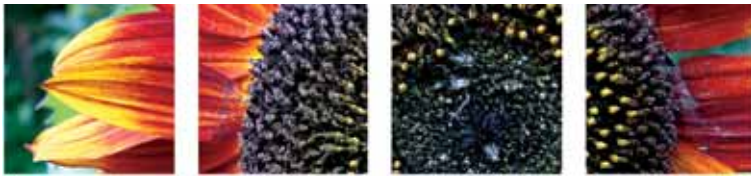
An Agenda Management and Resource Group (a sub group of the Board) will oversee Board agendas and personnel and resource issues relating to the team

The team will be based in Swale.

## 6. Variation to Terms of Reference

The Board may update these terms of reference as and when required.





## Contacting Swale Forward

Copies of this Business Plan are available on our website [www.swale.gov.uk/swaleforward](http://www.swale.gov.uk/swaleforward) If you would like further hard copies or alternative versions (i.e. large print, audio, different language) we will do our best to accommodate your request.

**Please contact Swale Forward at:**

Swale Forward,  
Swale House,  
East Street  
Sittingbourne  
Kent,  
ME10 3HT

 01795 417218