

Kent Partnership Bulletin



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Local Government

A Report, [*The Battle to Engage - Renewing democracy for the next generation*](#), by former MP Oona King states why it is important to give the youth an understanding of democracy

Articles on the launch of Kent TV this week -

Kent community TV station hits the web (Municipal Journal, 27.9.07, page 5)

Kent's television channel 'will be independent' (Local Government Chronicle, 27.9.07, page 3)

At the [Association of Public Service Excellence conference](#) this week, Stephen Cirell - a partner in Eversheds, said that councils are not making use of the powers they already have (*'Use your powers' top lawyer urges councils*, MJ, 27.9.07, page 6)

Nick Raynsford MP writes in the MJ on the expected new powers for Local Government, *Focus on winnable goals* (27.9.07, page 11) and Chris Smith reports on the new LAAs announced last week (*The long walk to freedom*, 27.9.07, pages 12 - 13)

John Healey has fleshed out his statement of Local Government replicating Gordon Brown's move by having a Government of all the talents by publishing a pamphlet, [*Labour, leadership and locality: distinctive approaches to place shaping*](#) (LGC, 27.9.07, page 5). There is also a profile of him in the LGC (*A flag-bearer for local government* (27.9.07, pages 16 - 17).

The IDeA has published the Report - [*Gearing up for change*](#) which is a series of case studies on unitary arrangements

(Also see:

[*Preparing for the new unitary councils: a series of case studies from those who have experienced new structures*](#))

The Institute for Public Policy Research (ippr) has published - [*Public Services at the Crossroads*](#). This 'sets out a progressive agenda for public services and for the next stage of public service reform in the UK'.

Hazel Blears has given her first Labour party [conference speech](#) as Local Government minister

She referred to the [Councillors' Commission Report](#) to be published later this year

Pointed out there are not enough ethnic and female councillors

She also spoke at length about localism and greater involvement for communities in the police, health services and budgets

(Also see:

[*Councils need more women - Blears*](#)

[*Blears seeks more ethnic minority voices for councils*](#)

Minister's speech heralds the arrival of the age of localism, New Start, 28.9.07, page 5)

[LG Alert Checklist 37/07: Monday 24 September 2007](#)

[*The Times best councils to work for 2007*](#)' (sponsored by the I&DeA), features three Kent districts in the top 20 - Sevenoaks, Tonbridge & Malling and Canterbury

[The Young Foundation](#) and the [IDeA](#) are to publish a Report, *Transforming Neighbourhoods*, that covers trust with the communities they serve

Council apologies can repair public trust in services, says report, New Start, 28.9.07, page 8.

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Education

Ed Balls gave his [keynote speech](#) to the Labour party conference on Wednesday

Key points -

- Give a strategic role to local government in driving up standards
- Set up an independent exam standards body. This will also mean that [the QCA will be split in two](#)

(Also see: [Exam watchdog applauds its own split](#))

- [Introduce a new scheme to improve reading , writing and maths skills](#)

(Also see:

[Academies restored to the local fold](#)

[Balls draws battle lines with Cameron over education](#)

[Watchdog to tackle exam standards](#))

A new body is being set up for school support staff

The Times carries an article on the new ['Pre-U' examination, being developed by Cambridge University](#)

[Interview](#) with Ken Boston, the chief executive of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority

The [Higher Education Policy Institute](#) think-tank has published a Report that concludes the UK students do not work as hard as their European counterparts

(Also see: [British students 'are least hard-working in Europe'](#) - [UK students 'awarded degrees for little study'](#))

The National Association of Head Teachers has said that [marking exam papers on line could cause errors](#)

A parent and school governor from Kent, is seeking a judicial review of the Government decision to screen the film *An Inconvenient Truth* in all secondary schools

(Also see:

[Legal battle on Gore climate film](#))

The DCSF Report - [Schools and Pupils in England: January 2007 \(Final\)](#) reports on national trends

(Also see:

[Thousands still taught in oversized classes](#)

[Schools show the new make-up of Britain](#))

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Environment, Highways & Waste

Environment

The traditional light bulb will be phased out by 2009 in a bid to combat carbon emissions

(Also see:

[CFLs to replace traditional lightbulb by 2009 -](#)

[Light bulbs to be phased out, starting next year, in battle for green vote](#))

David Miliband has told the UN that the greatest threat to achieving global equality is climate change

The LGA have published - [Review of local government action on climate change](#)

Highways & Transport

A [revised Revised Highway Code](#) has been unveiled

Planning

The [charity Shelter](#) has accused councils of not building enough new homes

(Also see:

[Councils are blocking house-building, says charity head](#))

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Finance

The Local Government Chronicle (LGC) reports that Angela Eagle and John Healey have indicated, at the Labour conference, that the Supplementary Business Rate (SBR) may come on steam in the new year (*Green light for rates?*, 27.9.07, front page).

Presentations from the LGA event on 20 September - [Who wants to be a £1.8 billionaire? how to improve council tax benefit take up](#)

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Law & Order/ Legal issues

Jacqui Smith delivered her [speech on home affairs](#) to the Labour conference on Thursday. This included measures to tackle gun and gang culture, a proposal for shared local community safety budgets and the publication of local crime figures. There will also be a review of self-defence laws.

(Also see:

[Smith announces zero-tolerance crime crackdown](#))

However, the Police Federation have warned that the Government suggestion of a proposed review of the [law on self-defence is 'irresponsible'](#)

(Also see:

[Jack Straw's speech](#)

[New laws protect have-a-go home owners](#))

The Home Office has announced [new powers to stop gun and knife violence](#)

It is reported that the National Offender Management Service (Noms) is to be disbanded

(Also see:

['Disaster area' prison and probation agency to be scrapped in weeks](#)

[Offender scheme axed early as Justice Ministry tries to save reputation](#)

Leaked report hints at red tape cutbacks for offender management, New Start, 29.9.07, page 6)

[The new Commission for Equality and Human Rights watchdog wants short stay migrants to contribute towards services](#)

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Children & Family

Peter Hethrington article on the study commissioned, from the [Centre for Local Economic Strategies \(Cles\)](#), by Sefton council on the impact migrants have on the economy of an area - [At full strain](#)

The [ONS announced on Thursday](#) that migration projections have risen to 190,000

(Also see:

[Migration to Britain rises to 190,000 a year](#)

[Immigration estimates out by 45,000 a year](#)

[Smith on back foot as migrant projections jump 30%](#)

[Immigration levels 'too high and need immediate action' \)](#)

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Adult Services

Liverpool Victoria (LV=) have published a Report, the *Cost of a Parent*, at the Labour conference

(Also see:

[The 'sandwich generation' who fill caring gap\)](#)

The New Statesman (29.7.07) carries 30 page supplement called *Fair care for all*

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Health – For further information on items in this selection please contact David Turner Tel: (01622) 694196, Freecall: 7000 4196 or email: david.turner@kent.gov.uk

Alan Johnson has given [a speech](#) to the Labour conference on the priorities ahead for health services

(Also see:

[*Johnson crack down on cleanliness and infections*](#)

[*Johnson unveils new plans for tackling superbugs*](#)

[*Labour wants to win 'war' on superbugs*](#))

However, the Lancet has criticised the Government approach to tackling super bugs

(Also see:

[*Superbug plans 'ignore' evidence*](#)

[*Lancet condemns hospital deep-clean proposals*](#))

The Healthcare Commission have published a Report - [*Caring for dignity A national report on dignity in care for older people while in hospital*](#)

(Also see:

[*NHS hospitals must step up efforts to provide dignity in care to older people, says*](#)

[*healthcare watchdog in national report*](#) -

[*Elderly patients still suffer on mixed-sex wards*](#)

[*Spot checks threat to NHS trusts*](#))

The NHS Confederation has said, in a Report - *In sickness and in health*, this week that ['a personalised NHS should reach out to the most excluded'](#)

[The British Medical Association is saying that Government proposals to prevent another training disaster are inadequate](#)

The DoH has published - [*The Mental Capacity Act 2005 - Guide for Directors of Adult Social Services and Chief Executives of NHS Trusts*](#)

[A Toolkit has been compiled to help South East libraries provide health information to the public](#)

(Also see:

London libraries pilot scheme to sharpen skills and improve health, New Start, 28.9.07, page 6)

The House of Lords Science and Technology Committee has published a [Report on Allergies](#)

(Also see:

[*Britain 'is the laughing stock of Europe' for its neglect of allergy cures*](#)

[*Allergy epidemic gets 'poor care'*](#))

It is reported that the NHS Board is to be disbanded

(Also see: [*NHS business board disbands*](#))

Doctor magazine reports that rationing of NHS services is becoming commonplace

([*NHS rationing rife, say doctors*](#))

A new *Cancer Reform Strategy* is to be published this autumn

(Also see: [*Cancer screening to be expanded and waiting times to be further reduced*](#))

Action on Smoking and Health (Ash), Asthma UK and the British Thoracic Society have completed a survey that [suggests that most smokers are adhering to the smoking ban](#)

[Pilot study of primary school meals](#) and children's behaviour and performance is to be run in eight schools

[Following a review, the West Kent Primary Care Trust have decided they cannot continue to fund the homeopathic hospital in Tunbridge Wells](#)

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Government

The [Labour conference](#) was held this week. The key points of [Gordon Brown's opening speech](#):

Environment:

The expansion of the 'eco-towns' initiative from five to ten new towns
(['Eco-towns' target doubled by PM](#)
[Brown announces 240,000 homes a year](#))

The NHS:

All adults given a regular NHS checkups
An extension of GP's hours
A 'deep-clean' of every hospital to combat MRSA and C difficile
An increase in matrons
(Also see:
[PM driven by own NHS experience](#)
[Gordon Brown in pledge on NHS funding](#)
[PM promises cleaner hospitals and wider cancer screening](#)
[Gordon Brown points way to election fight](#))

Education and the youth:

A personal tutor for every secondary school pupil
([Brown backs 'personal' learning](#))
University places funded for some disadvantaged students
Individual catch-up lessons in literacy and numeracy
Unclaimed assets will be used to build new youth centres

Crime:

Each community to have its own 'neighbourhood' policing team
A review of extended licensing hours and under age drinking. He said he would not 'hesitate to change policies', depending on the conclusions of the inquiry
([Brown 'may reverse drinking laws'](#))
A reduction in police paperwork so that they can spend more time in the community

Government:

A commitment to reforming the House of Lords

(Also see:

[Unflashy Gordon embodies his slogan](#)
[Brown targets UK public services](#)
[What was new in Gordon Brown's speech? -](#)
[Mr Brown's big pitch: a Britain where all achieve their potential](#)
[Gordon Brown sets out plans for UK at Labour conference](#)
[Gordon Brown targets Tory heartlands](#)

[Gordon Brown sets out stall for Middle Britain](#)

['I will not let Britain down'](#)

The new hero of Middle England, The New Statesman, 29.9.07, pages 10 - 11)

YouGov survey for Channel 4 News has given Labour a considerable lead in the opinion polls and has further stoked election speculation

(Also see:

[Labour prepares its activists for a snap election](#)

[Brown's advisers back push for an autumn election](#)

[Gordon Brown fuels snap poll fever](#)

[Brown to decide this weekend on snap election](#)

[Brown is dressed to kill after emptying Cameron's wardrobe](#)

[David Cameron orders shift to core Tory values; Cameron puts brakes on green tax](#)

[Several By-Elections have been held this week](#)

Labour held the seats of

Dover District - Aylsham;

Dover District - Maxton, Elms Vale and Priory;

The County Council seat of Dover Town.

(Also see:

[By-elections blow to autumn poll prospects](#)

[Tories win Sunderland by-election](#))

The [Conservative party conference](#) is to be held from Sunday 30th September to Wednesday 3rd October

George Osborne has given an interview to the Spectator (*Now we have got to have something to say*, 29.9.07, page 18) and an interview to the Telegraph - [We are in a win situation, says Osborne](#)

(Also see:

[Tory tensions show as George Osborne turns fire on the 'uber-modernisers'](#)

This will be Cameron's finest hour - or the scene of a lynching, Spectator, 29.9.07, pages 14 - 15

Can Dave deliver? The New Statesman, 1.10.07, page 12)

David Miliband stated on Tuesday that the Government will not give a referendum on the EU treaty

(Also see:

[Europe will not divide us, says Miliband](#))

Boris Johnson has been named as the mayoral Conservative candidate

[Johnson named Tory candidate for London Mayor](#)

[*Boris Johnson chosen as Tory candidate for London mayor
Johnson is Tory choice to take on Livingstone*](#)

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Communities

A Report by Defra is placing the blame of the FMD spread on the first affected farmer

(Also see:

[*Farm blamed over spread of livestock virus*](#))

Four cases of the 'blue tongue' virus have been discovered

(Also see:

[*A fourth case of 'blue tongue' has been confirmed in Suffolk -*](#)

[*Farmers braced for bluetongue to escalate into an outbreak*](#)

[*Bluetongue and Foot and Mouth Disease: an integrated strategy*](#))

Libraries & Museums

Booktime is a nationwide reading programme that was launched on Tuesday to encourage parents to spend more time reading with their children

(Also see:

[*Youngsters 'prefer TV to family'*](#))

The South East Reading Development Partnership has published some guidance on how to promote reader development

(Also see:

[*New Reader Development Resources Available*](#))

Arts

Culture Minister Margaret Hodge has appointed eight 'Creative Programmers' across the country to take forward plans for an inspiring Cultural Olympiad in the run up to the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games

Sport

A campaign to recruit 10,000 voluntary community sports coaches was launched on Monday

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Forthcoming Parliamentary Business

Tuesday 9th October

Commons: UK ports.

Westminster Hall: Government policy on speech, language and communications support in educational settings; Impact of health funding on health inequalities; Licensing of child location services.

Wednesday 10th October

Commons: PMQs; Microgeneration and Local Energy Bill; Debate on an Opposition Motion: tba; Proposals for a written constitution.

Westminster Hall: Constitutional status of local government; Future of smaller general hospitals in England; Health impact of mobile telephone masts.

Lords: Principal challenges facing the National Health Service in London; Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill (Report Stage).

Thursday 11th October

Commons: Further Education and Training Bill (Lords amendments).

Westminster Hall: Human Rights Annual Report 2006—Third Report of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Session 2006-07, HC 269, and the Government's response thereto (Cm 7127).

Lords: Sustainable Communities Bill (Third Reading); Integrity of sport and the betting industry.

Friday 12th October

Commons: Not sitting.

Lords: Report of the European Union Committee on Schengen Information System II (SIS II) (9th Report, HL Paper 49).

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