REGIONAL IMPACT / CHANGING LIVES IN OUR COMMUNITIES
INTRODUCTION

From its foundation, the University of Kent has been grounded in the community. Our continuing commitment to making a positive contribution and transforming the lives of people living in our region is borne out by the diverse ways that we connect with local people.

Many of our staff and students give up their time to volunteer in the community and support the work of charities and community groups in Kent and Medway. But our role in the region goes far beyond the volunteerism and public spirit demonstrated by our staff and students.

The arts and music programmes delivered by Gulbenkian centre and the University Music Department enrich the lives of the people who participate, opening up opportunities to take part in new cultural pursuits, and attracting leading global talent to the area. Partnerships that we have established with national and regional cultural organisations are also driving work to establish new creative hubs in our region and develop local talent in the arts.

The University supports local organisations that deliver assistance to those in need and helps to widen opportunities for local people to take part in the arts and sport. More information about how we contribute in these areas is provided in the pages that follow. I hope that you will enjoy reading about our work in the community and that it will inspire you to tap into our resources to benefit even more people in our region.

Professor Karen Cox
Vice-Chancellor and President
OUR IMPACT IN OUR COMMUNITIES

Student volunteering
Our volunteers help more than 130 local organisations with more than 90,000 hours contributed.

Keeping you informed
12,500 residents and businesses receiving our community newsletter in Canterbury.

Working with our communities
Building better relationships via our student community champions and street marshals schemes.

Meeting future healthcare needs
Kent and Medway Medical School will recruit aspiring doctors to train and work in our region.

Reaching out through research
Engaging the public with our research through projects, festivals and events.

Arts and culture hub
Welcoming more than 97,000 people to more than 1,000 arts and culture events on campus.

Find out more at www.kent.ac.uk/impact
KENT IN THE COMMUNITY

We are proud to make a significant contribution to community life in our region, not least through the voluntary activities of staff and students who give up their time to help others.

Our community of more than 2,300 student volunteers delivered more than 90,000 hours of volunteering in 2016-17. More than 200 of them spent time helping 31 local organisations, clocking up 1,225 hours on Kent Union community projects. Students tackled environmental challenges, homelessness, animal welfare issues and mental health while gaining recognised personal development skills via the Kent Student Certificate in Volunteering.

Volunteers also staff our Student Community Champions scheme. Established in 2016, the programme encourages students living off-campus to forge connections with the local community. The volunteers regularly take part in Neighbourhood Watch initiatives and Residents’ Association meetings, and provide a crucial link between the University and local people.

Staff at Kent participate in a range of public service and engagement activities that make a difference to people living in the region. These activities include supporting learning within local schools, volunteering at regional sports clubs and associations, advising community groups and business organisations and acting as ambassadors for the region. Opening up opportunities for more young people in our area to enter higher education is a vital part of the work that we do.

We work with more than 45 secondary schools in Kent to provide activities that inform local children about the university experience and encourage them to consider further study. In 2016-17, more than 18,000 school pupils in the region took part in our outreach programmes, which were delivered in part by more than 340 Student Ambassadors.

In Medway, we are the lead sponsor of the Brompton Academy. Through our sponsorship, we share our expertise and resources to provide cutting-edge learning experiences for the 11 to 18-year-old pupils who attend the school. Our partnership with the Academy helps to raise the aspirations of hundreds of children living and studying in North Kent.
CHANGING YOUNG LIVES THROUGH SPORT

Liz Flaxman

Staff member Liz Flaxman has been championing the development of new sporting opportunities for local young people. Liz, who works as Risk and Compliance Officer in the University’s Finance team, is part of a small team of volunteers who established Kent’s only grassroots football team for deaf and hearing-impaired children.

‘I first got involved with Tankerton FC in 2007 when my son played for their Under-6 team. I have a hearing impairment and so I understand how difficult it can be to feel involved, especially when playing sport. I spoke to parents of hearing-impaired children in the local area to see if there was any interest in a football team and there was lots of support. After making initial enquiries and securing some funding, we were able to launch a new Tankerton FC deaf team for five to 12-year-olds in January 2018.

“The children show a real passion for football and play with a constant smile on their faces. They go home from the sessions buzzing and eager to come back the next week. It’s hugely rewarding to see them make new friends and develop their skills.”

‘Tankerton FC is a grassroots football club, run entirely by volunteers so I also got involved in supporting the administrative side of things and pulling together the funding bids, with the help of some of the Kent Sport team. We were successful in bidding for a £3,000 grant from Canterbury City Council through their Innovation Grants funding stream to help us develop the deaf team and this will be invaluable. We were also recently recognised with an award for Community Project of the Year by the local FA, which is really encouraging for all of our volunteers.’
Kent Law Clinic provides a public legal service to members of the local community, while enriching the legal education experience for our students. The Clinic is a partnership between students, academics and legal professionals who practise in the Canterbury area. It provides a free legal service to those who need representation but cannot afford access to the law.

Since 1992, the Law Clinic has helped clients to obtain or defend sums totalling £5.6m, with £1.9m of this total secured since 2012. More than 270 students participated in its work in 2016-17, helping the Clinic’s solicitors to support clients pursuing justice in areas including housing, welfare, employment, immigration and public access to land. More than 1,400 people sought the support and advice of the Clinic’s legal team in 2016-17 and almost 140 new cases were pursued on their behalf.

Extending its reach beyond the local region, the Law Clinic is partnered with the University of Makeni’s Law Clinic in Sierra Leone. Kent students have held fund-raising events to support Makeni students and staff, donated law text books and connected with them via social networking groups to share their knowledge and educational experiences. A student exchange programme has also been in place since early 2017, providing opportunities for students from both clinics to spend time working with legal professionals in the two countries. The programme is funded by student fundraising and a generous donation from the Sigrid Rausing Trust.
Students and staff at Kent Law Clinic are working with residents to support the Whitstable Beach Campaign (WBC). The campaign group aims to protect the public’s right of access to Whitstable beach and to preserve its unspoilt nature.

Since 2011, the Law Clinic team has worked alongside the campaign group and advised on tactics to establish a legal right of public access to the beach. On the basis of that advice, the Whitstable Beach Campaign submitted an application in 2016 to register an area of the beach between the sea wall and the high water mark as a Town or Village Green.

The application was referred to a non-statutory public inquiry, which took place between April and December 2016, with Clinic solicitor Elaine Sherratt acting as the principal advocate on the campaign’s behalf. Students, administrative staff, Clinic colleagues and two lawyer-volunteers from the Clinic assisted with taking stock of the evidential and legal developments during the inquiry.

The campaign team and their advisers in the Law Clinic are now awaiting publication of the inquiry report. The case has the potential to determine whether the public has a legal right of access to beaches and foreshores in England and Wales, with significant implications for coastal communities across the country.
OPPORTUNITY IN CULTURE AND THE ARTS

In 2017, Gulbenkian arts centre at our Canterbury campus was recognised as an Arts Council of England National Portfolio Organisation. The award acknowledged the centre’s important role in the development of the arts in the region and the innovative, engaging and varied cultural programme that it delivers. Gulbenkian attracts leading artists from around the world and welcomes more than 97,000 visitors each year.

More than 10,000 young people participate in the Gulbenkian’s engagement programmes, and the centre supports a number of emerging talents and new productions every year. The ART 31, TECH31, and SCREEN31 projects help local youngsters to gain skills in the performance arts and build their confidence.

Making music
The Colyer-Fergusson Music Building plays a key role in placing our local community at the heart of our music-making programme. Local people are members of several of the choral and orchestral ensembles that perform in the building on a regular basis, and increasingly appear at locations around the region to bring music to the masses.

The Music Department at Kent attracts leading professional musicians to perform on campus for local audiences to enjoy and the annual end-of-term Summer Music Week, featuring staff, students and local performers, is the centrepiece of Kent’s musical year.

Cultural partnerships
Our commitment to the development of the cultural and creative arts in the region is wider than the activities that take place on our campuses.

We are working with Arts Council England, KM Media Group, Canterbury Festival, Canterbury Cathedral and a host of other partners to widen access to, and improve the quality of, arts and culture across Kent and Medway. We are actively working to grow our involvement in, and support for, the creative industries at Medway and to establish the area as a creative hub for the region.
ENGAGING LOCAL YOUNG PEOPLE WITH THE ARTS

bOing! International Family Festival takes place at Gulbenkian cultural centre on our Canterbury campus every summer. The two-day festival features leading artists and performers from around the world and its programme includes a variety of dance, film, art and musical performances hosted on campus and in Canterbury city centre.

bOing! is a fun opportunity for people of all ages to engage with high quality arts and culture in Canterbury. It offers a mixture of internationally recognised productions and free outdoor shows with an emphasis on play and discovery.

ART31
In addition to the annual bOing! event, Gulbenkian encourages local young people to engage with the arts on a regular basis throughout the year through involvement with ART31. The scheme takes its name from Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child, which recognises the rights of young people to access a range of cultural and artistic activities.

Since 2013, ART31 has offered opportunities for young people in Kent to get involved in the arts in ways that would not normally be available to them. More than 9,000 youngsters from the region are involved in the scheme each year.

It provides opportunities to develop front-of-house, event management and marketing skills; meet and learn from established performers or technicians; and take part in workshops to help those involved to grow their own artistic talents. ART31 also provides funding for projects to open up arts opportunities to young people in locations across Kent.

bOing International Family Festival
- Attracts more than 10,000 visitors every year
- Includes a wide range of free events
- Was selected as one of National Geographic Traveller’s best arts festivals for kids
- Attracts international artistic and musical talent to Canterbury
DEVELOPING SPORTING TALENT

Kent Sport provides support and an extensive range of facilities to suit the needs of sportsmen and women at all levels, from amateur to professional. Led by double-Olympian and former England hockey international, Mel Clewlow, the department plays a crucial role in enhancing sporting opportunities for students, staff and members of the local community.

Kent is proud to offer scholarships to students with outstanding ability to support their participation in a variety of sports, ranging from athletics and cycling to golf and American Football. There are currently 52 Kent Sport scholars competing at county and national level in 23 different sports. Past scholars include Olympic gold-medal-winning hockey player Susannah Townsend, Women’s Rugby World Cup winner Natasha Brennan and England Senior Women’s Cricketer Joanna Watts.

Sports partners
A host of local sports clubs partner with Kent Sport to enhance their provision to their athletes and provide opportunities for local people to take part in sports. Members of local cricket, hockey and rugby clubs benefit from regular consultations at the Centre for Sport Studies, making use of its rehabilitation, sports therapy, psychology and nutritional expertise.

Local people are also able to enjoy access to the full range of the University’s sports facilities, with a regular programme of exercise and dance classes and a host of playing fields, courts and sports halls available. The campus also provides the setting for Canterbury’s regular park run event. The popular Easter and summer sports camps run by Kent Sport provide coaching for local five to 14-year-olds in a range of sports to keep them active during the school holidays.

Opportunities for local people
• Our campus hosts the regular Canterbury park run event
• Kent Sport offers Easter and summer sports camps for kids
• Weekly exercise, dance and well-being classes are open to the public
• Annual membership is available to the public
Our research makes a difference to the lives of people around the globe and helps to solve 21st century problems. We work collaboratively with a host of leading institutions and organisations to increase the impact of our research and broaden its reach.

Work carried out at our research centres informs the development of national and international policy in areas including health, employment and pensions, social policy, welfare, conservation, housing, and digital communications.

Community engagement
The University’s commitment to engage with our local communities has seen us collaborate with a number of organisations to help raise awareness and maximise the impact of our research. The Medway School of Pharmacy established a Public Involvement in Pharmacy Studies Group (PIPS), which works with academics from the School on studies covering adverse reactions to medicines, development of stroke treatments and use of pharmacy services. In June 2017, we signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the University of the Third Age (U3A), formalising our relationship with the community of retired and semi-retired people seeking knowledge and opportunities to participate in research.

Our academics have participated in a number of public events in Canterbury and Medway, including sharing their research in local pubs through the pubTALK series, running scientific experiments at Canterbury Arts Festival, and assisting with Canterbury Medieval Pageant.

Kent and Medway Medical School
We will also take a leading role in the education of a new generation of medical professionals and the development of medical research in our region through our collaboration with Canterbury Christ Church University to establish the Kent and Medway Medical School.

The School will welcome its first cohort of students in 2020 and will be the first of its kind in the county of Kent. It will offer exceptional training and development for aspiring doctors in the region, with a focus on delivering opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills in primary and secondary care settings throughout the area. We will work closely with local schools and colleges to inspire a new generation of medical professionals and source students from within our region, ensuring that the future medical workforce in Kent and Medway is representative of the community that it serves.