

KENT GRADUATE PROGRAMME

YOUR APPLICATION PACK

TO AN
EXCITING
FUTURE

RECRUITING LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROFESSIONALS OF THE FUTURE

Apply online:
[kent.gov.uk/jobs/starting-your-career/
kent-graduate-programme](https://kent.gov.uk/jobs/starting-your-career/kent-graduate-programme)
Closing date: **31st July 2026**

Your Graduate Procurement Trainee application pack includes:

Introduction to
Kent County Council

Job description

Recruitment selection criteria

Vacancy timetable

Working for Kent County Council





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June 2026

APPLICANT INFORMATION PACK

Dear Candidate

Application for the post of Graduate Procurement Trainee

Thank you for your interest in this challenging but rewarding role on our Graduate Programme. The successful candidate will be offered a position, ensuring the right skills, experience and knowledge mix exist in the team.

Our Recruitment Process

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) during the recruitment process

We welcome the thoughtful use of AI to help you research roles, refine your application and prepare for interviews. However, please make sure everything you submit reflects your own experience and ideas, and that you can discuss examples in your own words. It is not acceptable to copy and paste generic AI-generated responses in your application, nor is it acceptable to use AI to answer questions during an interview or use answers provided by AI for situation-based interview questions.

Step 1 - Application Form

We consider several factors when assessing your suitability for a graduate role. The first stage is your application form.

If you are interested in this opportunity, please apply as soon as possible as we may close applications before the closing date if we receive a large number of applications from suitability qualified candidates so if there's a programme you're really interested in, do get your application in early to avoid disappointment. We would also encourage you to allow plenty of time to complete your application form as we want to understand what makes you an excellent fit for a graduate role here at KCC.

Entry Requirements

Please remember to tell us about your degree and GCSE Maths and English qualification(s) or equivalent. **Please note, you must already hold all entry requirements by the programme**

start date. Failure to include your qualifications in your Application Form may mean that your application is automatically excluded.

Tailoring your application

When making your application, refer to the **Person Specification** contained in this application pack and use the 'reason for application' to demonstrate how your past experience, knowledge or skills and achievements will transfer to the position you are applying for (please provide examples). Please list your full employment history and explain all gaps in employment. You may also want to use this section to describe why the role appeals to you and how this role fits with your long-term career aspirations. Your application form (and CV if you uploaded one) will be used by the Graduate Team to decide whether to shortlist you for the next stage of the selection process.

Step 2 – Online Assessment

At this stage, we will ask you to complete an interactive online assessment. The assessment helps us evaluate candidates fairly and equally. The blended assessment is designed to represent a typical working day and consists of Situational Judgement, Applied Numerical Intellect and Applied Verbal Intellect items. The assessment also includes a short video interview consisting of four questions.

Following the assessment, you will be able to download your candidate report. This report is designed to help you identify areas that you're naturally good at and where you may want to focus on developing. It also offers suggestions and hints and tips for how you can grow your future potential. We encourage you to take some time to reflect on your report and use this new understanding to guide your career planning. Your report looks at your responses against four areas known to predict work success based scientific research. We call these four pillars: Applied Intellect, Digital Mindset, Creative Force, and Grit.

Reasonable Adjustments

We believe that every person should have a fair and equal chance to succeed in our assessment process. If you require adjustments in relation to a disability, a neurodiverse condition (e.g. dyslexia), a medical condition or another individual need please let us know so we can understand how you are impacted and put the right support in place for you.

Step 3 - Sifting and Shortlisting

We'll assess your application form against the criteria in the Person Specification and at this stage we will review your video interview too. Please be patient at this stage as our shortlisting team will be busy reviewing a number of applications and video interview submissions for multiple roles and will update you on your application as soon as they are able to.

Step 4 – Interview

Candidates that are successful following the first sift recruitment exercise will be informed as soon as possible and invited for interview by e-mail. Please note these interviews will be face-to-face and will be held in Maidstone. Please make a diary note of the interview date.

At KCC we use a mixture of role-specific and values-based questions, to ensure that all new graduate recruits have the skills and ability to do the job and the behaviours, attitude and values to be successful in their role. KCC's values can be found [here](#).

Final Outcome

The successful candidates will be contacted as soon as possible after the last interview.

As you have invested your time in applying for a role at Kent County Council, we would encourage you to request feedback, regardless of the outcome, as feedback will be invaluable to you when preparing for future interviews.

Step 5 – Offer

If you are successful, we will make you an offer to join us. Between your offer and your start date our recruiting managers will be in contact with you to let you know everything you need ahead of your first day at KCC. Our graduate team will also be available to offer any support you may need.

Eligibility Criteria for Apprenticeships

Apprenticeship Funding

All of our Graduate Pathways consist of an embedded apprenticeship qualification. To be eligible for apprenticeship funding, you'll need to have resided in the UK, the British Overseas Territories, or Crown Dependencies (Channel Islands and Isle of Man) continuously for at least three years prior to the start of the apprenticeship programme.

This is to ensure Kent County Council is compliant with the [apprenticeship funding rules](#). These are the rules employers must follow to get funding for apprenticeship training in England.

Unfortunately, if you do not meet the above residency requirement, we will be unable to progress your application for the Graduate Programme.

Do you accept applications from non-UK citizens?

Our Graduate Programme Pathways consist of an embedded apprenticeship qualification so to be eligible for apprenticeship funding as a non-UK national you will need to:

- Have a valid and eligible residency status and the right to work in England.
- Have been resident in the UK and Islands or British Overseas Territories **for at least the previous three-year period** on the first day of the apprenticeship.
- Your residence in the UK and Islands has not during any part of that period been wholly or mainly for the purpose of receiving full-time education.
- You have permission granted by the UK government to live in the UK and such permission is not for education purposes only.

This is to ensure Kent County Council is compliant with the [apprenticeship funding rules](#). These are the rules employers must follow to get funding for apprenticeship training and assessing apprentices in England.

Further details on Right to Work in the UK can be found on the UK [Visas and Immigration](#) page.

If you have any queries regarding your eligibility for the programme, please contact the Kent Graduate Programme Team at kgp@kent.gov.uk.

International Degrees

If you have a degree from another country, you must be able to provide evidence that your Degree is equivalent to our 2:2 entry requirements.

You are responsible for providing documentation and meeting any associated costs; we will normally ask to see evidence of your 2:2 Degree (or equivalent) during our pre-appointment checks.

The [UK National Information Centre](#) for the recognition and evaluation of international qualifications and skills (UK ENIC) provides information about the comparability of different international qualifications.

Introduction to Kent County Council

Visit our website at www.kent.gov.uk

We are the UK's largest local authority, with a workforce in excess of 30,000 people, including maintained schools, serving a population of 1.6 million. We have various offices in central locations and a large number of service establishments throughout Kent; our corporate office is based in Maidstone.

More than two thirds of our workforce provide services directly to the public – such as domiciliary Care Workers, Classroom Assistants, Social Workers, Teachers, and Occupational Therapists etc.

Our annual budget covers a huge range of services. This translates into a host of interesting roles and career paths awaiting those who want to work in a leading- edge public sector organisation.

Aims and Objectives

Our focus is to work as one council to design and deliver a cohesive, modern public service offer for all Kent's residents, businesses and communities. This will bring together change projects consistently across the council and create organisational design opportunities to transform the way we work, including our people, assets, technology, structures and service delivery.

Success in delivering this aspiration will be determined using the following criteria:

- Working beyond the limit of organisational and service boundaries
- Thinking beyond the limit of our statutory powers
- Building capacity to provide sector and system leadership
- Delivering at both strategic and local scale
- Supporting economic security
- Delivering a cohesive service offer
- Flexibly uses its assets as part of public service design and delivery

[Reforming Kent](#) is our top-level council strategy for 2025 to 2028. It sets out the priorities that we will focus on over the next four years to tackle the challenges and make the most of the opportunities that the county is facing. Through delivering these priorities, our aim is to improve life in Kent and build a solid foundation for the county's future success.

Political Arrangements

The County Council has 81 members (Councillors) and elections take place every four years.

The political composition of the County Council is as follows:

Reform UK	47 members
Liberal Democrat	12 Members
Restore Britain	7 Members
Conservative	6 Members
Green Party	5 Members
Independent	2 Members
Labour Group	2 Members

There is a Cabinet of Executive Members which meets regularly to debate policy issues and make key decisions. The cabinet comprises of:

Linden Kemkaran	Leader of Kent County Council
Brian Collins	Deputy Leader of Kent County Council and Cabinet Member for Finance
Peter Osborne	Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport
Chris Hespe	Cabinet Member for Local Government Efficiency (DOLGE) and Local Government Reorganisation
Georgia Foster	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care
Paul Webb	Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Beverley Fordham	Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
Richard Palmer	Cabinet Member for Communities and Regulatory Services
Jamie Henderson	Cabinet Member for Environment, Coastal Regeneration and Public Health
David Wimble	Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Special Projects

Structure of KCC

The structure of the organisation is as shown [here](#)

The Corporate Management Team consists of ten members. For more information on the Corporate Management Team please click [here](#)

The directorates are as follows:

Growth, Environment and Transport

The Directorate comprises a range of key frontline, strategic, policy and commercial functions, and plays a major role in making Kent a better place to live, work and visit. The services provided, and the future the directorate helps to shape, affects every household in Kent. This includes strategic responsibility for the future of the county in terms of planning, economic development, transport policy, and major transport improvement schemes, waste disposal and recycling services. In addition, GET manages country parks; libraries; and delivers enforcement services including trading standards, community safety and emergency planning.

Responsible for services that include:

Highways, Transportation & Waste, Regulatory Services, Economic Development, Community Safety & Emergency Planning, Libraries, Registration & Archives, Sport & Country Parks, Arts including Kent Film Office, Development Planning, Planning Applications, North Downs Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Flood Risk & Environment, Sustainability & Climate Change and Heritage Conservation

Adult Social Care and Health

The Directorate commissions and provides a range of services to improve outcomes for older and vulnerable adults, including those with mental health issues or disabilities, and their families. The Directorate supports vulnerable adults to live independently by promoting their wellbeing and supporting their independence. Services for adult mental health and learning disability already work in integrated teams with NHS colleagues and as a key partner in the Kent and Medway STP we are developing multi-disciplinary teams within communities to support local care.

Responsible for services that include:

Adults Central Referral Unit, Adult Community Teams, Safeguarding and quality, Kent Enablement at Home, Sensory and Autistic Spectrum Conditions Service, Integrated/Registered Care Centres, Day Centres, Community Learning Disability Teams, In-House Provision and Mental Health Services.

Children, Young People and Education

This Directorate combines and integrates the statutory responsibilities of Specialist Children's Services together with Education services and the targeted and universal services for children and young people within Early Help and Preventative Services. There is a strong focus on alignment of resources to help ensure achievement of one of the key County Council strategic outcomes: 'Every child and young person in Kent gets the best start in life'. To improve outcomes for children and young people, services within the Directorate are working together with relevant partners to deliver the vision set out in the Children and Young People's Services Integration Programme.

Responsible for services that include:

Children's Social Care, Adoption & Fostering, Standards & School Improvement, Skills & Employability, Early Years and Childcare, Provision Planning, Fair Access, Educational Psychology, SEN Assessment & Placement, Youth Justice, Outdoor Education Centres, Children's Centres and Youth Hubs, Inclusion & Attendance, Early Intervention and Community Learning & Skills and Disabled Children and Young People Teams.

Chief Executive's and Deputy Chief Executive's Department (Amanda Beer, Chief Executive and Benjamin Watts, Deputy Chief Executive)

Responsible for services that include:

- Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance
- Finance
- Governance, Law and Democracy
- Commercial and Procurement
- Infrastructure
 - Health and Safety
- Technology
- People Operations
- Public Relations and Communications
- Portfolio Management Office
- Public Health

Kent County Council

Job Description

Directorate: Strategic and Corporate Services

Unit/Section: Commercial and Procurement Division

Grade: KSF

Responsible to: Commercial & Procurement Manager

Purpose of the Job:

The Kent Graduate Programme (KGP) Procurement and Commercial pathway is an exceptional opportunity for graduates seeking to become a successful commercial professional within an organisation striving to secure high quality contracts that represent value for money for the county's residents.

The Graduate Procurement Trainees will support the Commercial and Procurement Division (CPD) to carry out projects to run effective procurement processes for teams across the organisation. The team works on a broad range of areas and adapts to current Council priorities and changing legislative requirements for public procurement.

The Graduate Procurement Trainees should demonstrate the ability to understand the needs of other teams and combine these with good practice ways of working to deliver effective procurement solutions. They should actively embrace change and seek to support the efforts being made to continuously improve and transform the way that Kent contracts with other organisations.

The Graduate Procurement Trainees will participate in the programme for two years, completing a series of projects across the CPD in order to obtain a broad range of experience, knowledge and skills. Projects will involve progressive responsibility and accountability covering areas including Growth and Communities, Environment and Waste, Highways and Transportation, Property, Facilities Management, Consultancy, Social Care, and Indirects (Common Goods and Services) - including Finance, HR and ICT.

The Graduate Procurement Trainees will learn about the CPD, and how procurement is used to achieve strategic outcomes. They will gain experience of Commercial and Procurement from networking and opportunities for wider work experience across the division.

The programme places a strong emphasis on personal and professional development focusing on the knowledge, skills and attributes required by procurement professionals within the organisation.

Trainees will have the opportunity to complete the Procurement and Supply Chain Level 4 apprenticeship.

KGP CPD Trainee Main Role and Responsibilities

1. To work consistently at a high level in each project, adding significant value to the work of the Division whilst developing procurement knowledge and skills and building organisational understanding.
2. To represent the CPD across the organisation, building strong professional relationships with colleagues, team members and internal clients.
3. To provide reliable support to Commercial and Procurement Managers in the planning and delivery of commercial strategies and end-to-end procurement exercises. This may include project management, supporting tender processes and evaluations, supporting contract negotiations, carrying out supplier performance evaluations and risk management.
4. Support the analysis of markets using appropriate market intelligence and analysis methodologies.
5. To develop and maintain a good understanding of the Procurement Act 2023 and/or the Provider Selection Regime (PSR) and ensure procurement activity is conducted in accordance with changes in legislation.
6. To use relevant procurement related systems and databases to manage procurements and fulfil procurement reporting requirements.
7. To commit to and seek out further relevant personal and professional development opportunities in order to succeed throughout the programme.
8. To be an active member of the Kent Graduate Programme peer group.

KCC's Main Role and Responsibilities

1. To identify appropriate projects, and complementary work shadowing opportunities, in consultation with Trainees.
2. To equip Trainees with the right knowledge and tools needed to complete projects.
3. To provide a structured learning and development plan to ensure that those on the programme develop a good foundation on which to become a successful commercial and procurement professional.
4. To communicate a clear vision of what a Trainee should achieve, in order to progress throughout the programme.
5. To provide a strong network of support to ensure that Trainees have the advice, support and guidance which will help them succeed.



NB: This job description is provided to assist the job holder to know what his/her main duties are. It may be amended from time to time without change to the level of responsibility appropriate to the grade of post.

Kent County Council

Person Specification:

The following outlines the criteria for this post. Applicants who have a disability and who meet the criteria will be shortlisted.

Applicants should describe in their application how they meet these criteria.

As part of this Graduate Pathway there is a requirement to undertake a Procurement and Supply Chain Apprenticeship Level 4 therefore, we are unable to accept applications from those with an equivalent/higher level qualification in a related area.

	CRITERIA
QUALIFICATIONS	▪ 2:2 degree or equivalent in any discipline. ▪ GCSE Grade A-C (4-9) in English Language or equivalent (Level 2 qualification). ▪ GCSE Grade A-C ((4-9) in Mathematics or equivalent (Level 2 qualification).
EXPERIENCE	▪ Proven experience of delivering projects to tight deadlines ▪ Proven experience of working with others to deliver projects
SKILLS AND ABILITIES	▪ Ability to demonstrate teamwork and ability to build effective working relationships (e.g. consulting, influencing, persuading and negotiating) ▪ Excellent interpersonal skills with the ability to communicate well to a variety of stakeholders ▪ Good problem-solving skills including the ability to think innovatively ▪ Analytical skills, able to evaluate data and information and to draw conclusions ▪ Confident and motivated to deliver results within a fast-paced and complex environment ▪ Ability to produce plans and timescales for carrying out projects

	▪ Ability to prioritise and manage workloads effectively to deadlines ▪ Ability to research and write comprehensive reports ▪ Ability to work effectively from home and travel into the office when required ▪ Good written and verbal communication skills at level 2 ▪ Good standard of numeracy at level 2
KNOWLEDGE	▪ Commercially minded and able to demonstrate business acumen ▪ Able to demonstrate an awareness of the political and democratic processes within local government and an understanding of the relationships with other partners and statutory bodies ▪ Good standard of computer literacy including use of Microsoft applications (e.g. Word, Excel, PowerPoint)
KENT VALUES AND CULTURAL ATTRIBUTES	Kent Values: ▪ We are brave. We do the right thing, we accept and offer challenge. ▪ We are curious to innovate and improve. ▪ We are compassionate, understanding and respectful to all. ▪ We are strong together by sharing knowledge. ▪ We are all responsible for the difference we make. Our values enable us to build a culture that is: Flexible/agile - willing to take (calculated) risks and want people that are flexible and agile. Curious - constantly learning and evolving. Compassionate and Inclusive - compassionate, understanding and respectful to all. Working Together - building and delivering for the best interests of Kent. Empowering - Our people take accountability for their decisions and actions. Externally Focused - Residents, families and communities at the heart of decision making. (If this document is being used for recruitment purposes, examples of

	Behaviours which support the Kent Values will need to be demonstrated within the context of this post)
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The Procurement Pathway – An Overview

What's Involved

As a Graduate Procurement Trainee, you will be part of the Commercial and Procurement Division.

The Procurement pathway provides an excellent opportunity for graduates aiming to build a successful commercial career within an organisation dedicated to securing high-quality contracts that deliver value for money for the county's residents.

The Graduate Procurement Trainees will support the Commercial and Procurement Division (CPD) to carry out projects to run effective procurement processes for teams across the organisation. The team works on a broad range of areas and adapts to current Council priorities and changing legislative requirements for public procurement.

The Graduate Procurement Trainees should demonstrate the ability to understand the needs of other teams and combine these with good practice ways of working to deliver effective procurement solutions. They should actively embrace change and seek to support the efforts being made to continuously improve and transform the way that Kent contracts with other organisations.

The Graduate Procurement Trainees will participate in the programme for two years, completing a series of projects across the CPD in order to obtain a broad range of experience, knowledge and skills. Projects will involve progressive responsibility and accountability.

The Graduate Procurement Trainees will learn about continuous professional development, and how procurement is used to achieve strategic outcomes. They will gain experience of Commercial and Procurement from networking and opportunities for wider work experience across the division.

The programme places a strong emphasis on personal and professional development focusing on the knowledge, skills and attributes required by procurement professionals within the organisation.

Length of Programme

2 Years

Salary

You will receive a starting salary of £32,140 which will increase as you progress.

Location

Our main offices are in Maidstone, but travel may be required to other offices and locations around Kent.

We are currently operating hybrid working giving the flexibility for individuals to work from home or in one of our reconfigured office buildings. We will support you to work in a hybrid way, with the necessary induction, management and equipment.

Training and Development

The job provides you with invaluable on-the-job experience of working within the public sector and offers extensive training and development opportunities you won't find elsewhere.

Whilst on the programme, you will be provided with the right support to help you achieve the Procurement and Supply Chain apprenticeship (Level 4). We will commit to your continuing professional development and will support you in your training and as you develop your management skills and knowledge.

Entry Requirements

- 2:2 degree or equivalent qualification in any discipline.
- GCSE Grade A-C (4-9) in English Language or equivalent (Level 2 qualification).
- GCSE Grade A-C (4-9) in Mathematics or equivalent (Level 2 qualification).

Working for Kent County Council

Salary and Notice

This post is offered as a permanent contract.

The appointment will be subject to 1 months' notice.

KCC pays salaries to bank accounts on the 25th of the month unless this falls on a weekend or public holiday.

Terms and Conditions

The appointment is subject to the terms and conditions contained within the Kent Scheme of Conditions of Service.

222 hours of annual leave (equivalent to 30 days) is provided excluding Bank Holidays. You will also receive paid time off for public holidays plus a concessionary day at Christmas.

Pensions

The post holder will have the choice of contributing to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). Further details will be available for the successful applicant.

Whole Time Employment

The person appointed will be required to devote their whole-time service to the work of Kent County Council and should not engage in any other business without the express consent of the County Council.

Health and Safety Policy

The County Council recognises and accepts its responsibility as an employer, and will take positive action to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all employees and other persons who may be affected by its operations, by providing safe working conditions and a healthy and safe working environment.

Sickness Provision

Our sickness benefit scheme exceeds statutory requirements. Actual paid absence depends on how long you have worked for KCC and the circumstances of your absence. For example, after 6 years' service your benefit would be 6 months full pay and 6 months half pay.

Training and Development

KCC is committed to supporting staff to reach their full potential through annual appraisal and personal development plans, enhanced by a range of career development opportunities.

Green Travel

Our Green Travel Plan is exploring alternative modes of transport to improve travel choice and reduce congestion and pollution. This includes:

- Car sharing and emergency taxi home.
- Discounted fares, free tickets, trip planning and improved travel information.
- Pool car and bikes

Other benefits

KCC offers a range of family friendly policies including:

- A generous maternity scheme
- Emergency leave
- Parental leave
- Special leave
- Help Fund – all employees have the opportunity both to pay into the fund and to apply for help from it when experiencing financial hardship
- An in-house confidential counselling service and Occupational Health Service
- Kent Rewards - discounts at over 1,200 retailers ranging from reduced rates at Health Clubs to house and car insurance to holidays

Living in Kent

With great schools, vibrant cities, golden beaches and stunning countryside Kent has lots to offer you. Find out more about [locations in Kent](#).

Vacancy Timetable

Closing Date for Receipt of Applications: Friday 31st July 2026.

Candidates will be invited to complete a first sift activity: Monday 3rd – Friday 14th August 2026

Final Stage Interviews: Shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend interview on Monday 21st September 2026. Please note these will be face-to-face interviews and will be held in Maidstone.

Start Date: October 2026.

How to Respond

Apply online at [Kent Graduate Programme - Jobs & Careers - Kent County Council](#)