

Migrant Workers Review

**Report of the Local Economy and Housing Select Committee
Municipal Year 2007-08**



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Chairman's Introduction

This is the second in depth review undertaken by the Local Economy and Housing Select Committee, which was carried out by a working group of Councillors Chater, Mrs Crowhurst, and Mrs Herriot.

The working group conducted many site visits during the course of the review. Members found that meeting people in their place of work instead of the Town Hall encouraged greater conversation and sent out the right message to those who gave up their time to pass on their experiences and inform the review. This is a practice that we shall continue to adopt when undertaking future reviews.



One of the key findings of the review was that the provision of information to migrant workers was limited and the review makes a number of recommendations to address this. I hope all the recommendations will be accepted as they are intended to help the Council engage with new migrant communities and ensure that the needs of these residents are addressed. I would like to thank the working group for their commitment to undertake such an involving review and for compiling a valuable piece of work.

Beverly Palmer

2008/09 Chairman, Local Economy and Housing Select Committee

The Local Economy and Housing Select Committee

The Select Committee is responsible for scrutinising a range of services/areas, principally Economic development, Transport, Housing, Tourism, and Planning.

For the municipal year 2007/08 the following Council Members sat on the Committee :

Eleanor North (Chairman)
Bev Palmer (Vice-Chairman)
John Chater
June Crowhurst
David Elliott
Glenn Hall
Hugh Patterson
Ron Weeden
Frank Williams
Chris Woodward

The Migrant Workers working group constitutes:

June Crowhurst (Chair)
John Chater
Lesley Herriot

Acknowledgements

Committee Members would like to extend their thanks to all the people who took the time to meet with the working group and inform the review. These include Stuart and Guna Shields, Jemma Alexandra, Keith Marden, Richard Barham, Gerrie Packham, Mrs Mann, Pi Townsend, Christine Lumb, Terry Crosswell, Rob Orme, Rosemary Olivier, Di Mancini, David Crosby, Helen Clarke, Mandi Baker, Peter Jervis and the staff at Downingbury Farm, Michael Holman, Alan Mayhew, Father Peter Stodart, and Marketa. Thanks also to Stephanie Bollen Hickman for informing the review and to Nazeya Hussain and Holly Goring for helping the working group and Scrutiny Officer along the way. The Committee would also like to thank Laurence Doig for supporting the review and compiling this report.

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Executive Summary

A working group of the Local Economy and Housing Select Committee has conducted a review into migrant workers in Tunbridge Wells Borough. The review aims to gain a wider understanding of the impact of migration on the Borough's public services and investigate the needs of migrant workers and how these can be met. The review will feed into research currently being undertaken by Community and Corporate Planning and recommend direction for this work.

During the course of the review the working group carried out a number of site visits and interviewed a wide range of witnesses including School Headteachers, migrant workers on Downingbury Farm, JobCentrePlus, the Citizen's Advice Bureau, and an international work experience organisation.

As a result of the investigations of the working group, it became apparent that the provision of information to migrant workers was limited and this formed a key element of the review. The working group has found that a welcome leaflet to include key information would be of great benefit to migrant workers in the borough. This leaflet could include key information on a number of areas including, but not limited to, housing, healthcare, leisure activities, employment rights, and money matters. It could also point to more detailed information available on the Council's website. The working group is also recommending that the Council should use an existing public event to pass on key information to the borough's migrant workers, who could meet Councillors, frontline staff, and Officers from other key services. This could be organised with the Head of the Citizen's Advice Bureau, who has expressed interest in the proposal.

The working group found that teachers in the borough had difficulties when children who did not speak English as a first language arrived at the school after the term had already begun. Members are therefore recommending that Kent County Council investigate the viability of a roving teaching assistant to visit the borough's schools when this occurred.

The working group has identified that limited access to English language lessons is a particular concern and the work undertaken by the Community and Corporate Planning Service should promote the provision of these classes through the welcome leaflet and other appropriate means. While the working group was unable to investigate the affect migrant workers have had on hospitals in the borough, the doctors who provided feedback indicated that new residents from EU countries have different needs and this has affected the way practices operate. The working group is recommending that the Council investigate the ways in which the needs of migrant patients have been addressed by hospitals in the borough.

The Housing Service is launching a Minority Ethnic Housing Strategy and the working group is pleased that this strategy will address some of the issues facing migrant workers, including information provision. Members agreed that involving migrant workers at the consultation stage was a welcome decision and recommend that new migrant communities should be consulted when new policies and strategies are drafted.

The working group hopes that the recommendations listed on page 7 will lead to improved provision of information for migrant workers and assist them in accessing the services available to them as residents of the borough.

1. List of Recommendations

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC)

- 1 A welcome leaflet for migrant workers should be produced to provide information on the following:
 - Workers rights;
 - Housing;
 - Healthcare, including mental health help available;
 - Leisure activities;
 - Education for both adults and children;
 - Religious organisations;
 - Money matters;
 - Community services;
 - Advice organisations such as the CAB; and
 - A map of the local area.

The leaflet should be distributed at key points of access for migrant workers including schools, Churches, shopping centres, the Gateway (when open), Hospitals, doctors' surgeries, train stations, key employers and employment agencies. An analysis of the costs of producing the leaflet should be undertaken. Additional funding could be generated through partnership working and advertising from local businesses. An example of a basic welcome leaflet, produced by New Life Church, is attached as Appendix R (page 57).
- 2 The Council should work with partners to build a bigger picture of the impact and needs of new migrant communities in the borough.
- 3 The front page of the Council's website should include a link to a translation website to assist those trying to access the site who have trouble reading English but are fluent in another language. This should be highly visible.
- 4 The Council should use an existing public event to pass on key information to migrant workers in the borough. This should be organised in partnership with other organisations such as Citizen's Advice Bureaux and JobCentrePlus.
- 5 **Kent County Council** investigate the viability of a roving teaching assistant to visit schools in Tunbridge Wells Borough specifically to assist pupils who do not speak English as a first language.
- 6 The Council should investigate the ways in which the needs of migrant patients have been addressed by health services, in particular the borough's hospitals.
- 7 That the Community and Corporate Planning Service review should promote the provision of English language classes through the welcome leaflet and other appropriate means.
- 8 Future consultation and engagement on the Council's policies and strategies should take account of hard to reach groups, including new migrant communities.
- 9 That Language Line or a similar service is used by Gateway staff when translation of documents or interpretation is needed.

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 One of the first tasks for the working group was to define what was meant by the term: “migrant worker.” The group agreed to define a ‘Migrant worker’ as a person who is engaged or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a State of which he or she is not a national.¹ Migrant workers make a significant contribution to the local economy, contribute to a diverse culture, and are consumers of local resources and services. However, service providers are concerned that not enough is known about new migrant communities, how services should reflect their needs, and what can be done to promote the range of support and services they are entitled to as residents.

National Perspective

- 2.2 In May 2004 ten countries (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Cyprus and Malta) were granted accession into the European Union. This added 75 million people to the Union, over half of which are Polish. Bulgaria and Romania acceded in January 2007. The accession meant that residents of these countries were free to enter and work in the UK without visas or work permits.
- 2.3 The Home Office projected that 13,000 immigrants would enter the country each year following the accession. However, this turned out to be a gross underestimate. To provide some perspective, 713,450 non-UK nationals registered for National Insurance Numbers (NINOs) in 2006/07.²
- 2.4 Official statistics generated through the Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) and allocation of NINOs do not include unofficial migrants. They also fail to show movement between areas, and don’t count outflow of migrant workers, only inflow. A study in Bolton found that almost half of migrant workers were counted on neither WRS nor NINo³. Only estimates of current numbers can be made due to the unavailability of accurate figures and this is often cited as a cause of the negative stories surrounding migrant workers in both local and national media.
- 2.5 The migrant worker population has increased numerically and the nature of issues facing them is changing. However, because accurate numbers are difficult to attain it is hard to sufficiently plan for the needs of migrant workers.
- 2.6 Seasonal agricultural workers often live on local caravan parks or in accommodation provided onsite, while longer working seasons or yearly working means that rented accommodation is preferred. Because caravan parks and farms are often isolated this can make it difficult for workers to access the nearest towns if they do not have their own transport.

¹ Rod Laird Organisation (February 2008) *How to research and engage with migrant workers from Eastern and Central Europe*

² Department for Work and Pensions website *National Insurance Number Allocations to Overseas Nationals entering the UK* at <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd1/niall/nino_allocation.asp>

³ Rod Laird Organisation (February 2008) *How to research and engage with migrant workers from Eastern and Central Europe*

- 2.7 According to the Audit Commission⁴ new European migrants are net contributors to the economy, have helped to keep wage inflation down in skill shortage areas, and have filled shortage positions in the public sector.
- 2.8 In April 2008 the House of Lords Select Committee on Economic Affairs published a review into immigration in the United Kingdom⁵. The review found that immigration has “little or no impact on the income of the resident population in the long run.” It also stressed the importance of English language training and the need to improve the method of data collection. A report published by the government’s Department for Work and Pensions⁶ in June 2008 found that the UK’s Eastern European migrants have not caused unemployment or stopped UK workers from finding jobs.

Local Perspective

- 2.9 The Audit Commission report⁷ states that major employers and employment agencies often have the most up to date local intelligence. Therefore the Council’s communication links with local businesses, especially in the agricultural sector, are crucial in gaining a good picture of migrant worker populations in the borough.
- 2.10 Kent County Council published a briefing paper on migrant workers in September 2007⁸. The paper analysed statistics of all foreign nationals who were allocated a National Insurance Number (NINo) between 2002/03 and 2006/07, regardless of their length of stay. Figure 1 (overleaf) shows that during this period the number of migrant workers in Tunbridge Wells borough almost doubled from 440 to 860, which represented the seventh highest number in all Kent districts and 1.3% of the people of working age in the borough. A similar trend was experienced throughout Kent over this time period. The increase in the number of migrant workers in Kent is primarily due to the numbers of workers from Poland, followed by the Slovak Republic, the Republic of Lithuania, the Czech Republic, and the Republic of Latvia.

⁴ Audit Commission (January 2007) *Crossing borders: Responding to the local challenges of migrant workers*

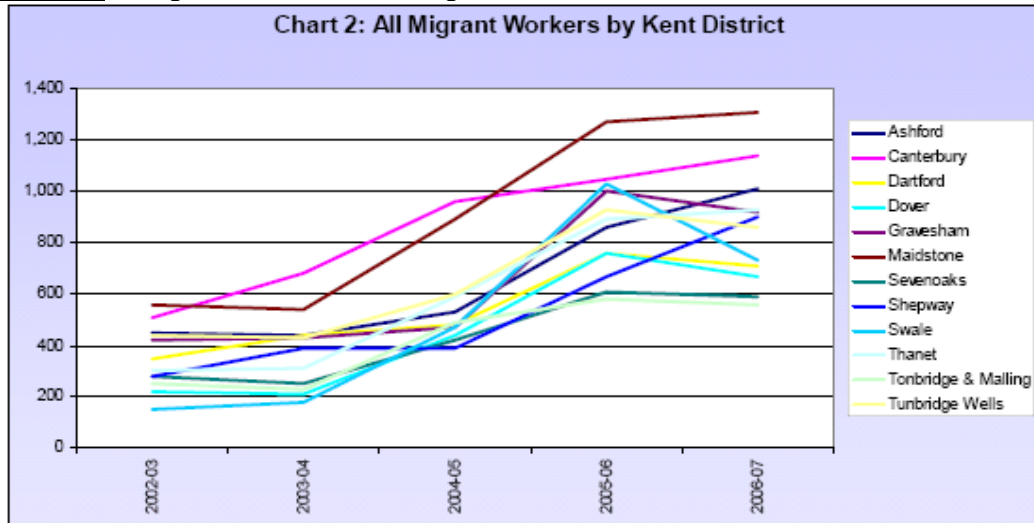
⁵ House of Lords Select Committee on Economic Affairs (April 2008) *The Economic Impact of Immigration*

⁶ Lemos, S & J. Portes (June 2008) *The impact of migration from the new European Union Member States on native workers*

⁷ Audit Commission (January 2007) *Ibid*

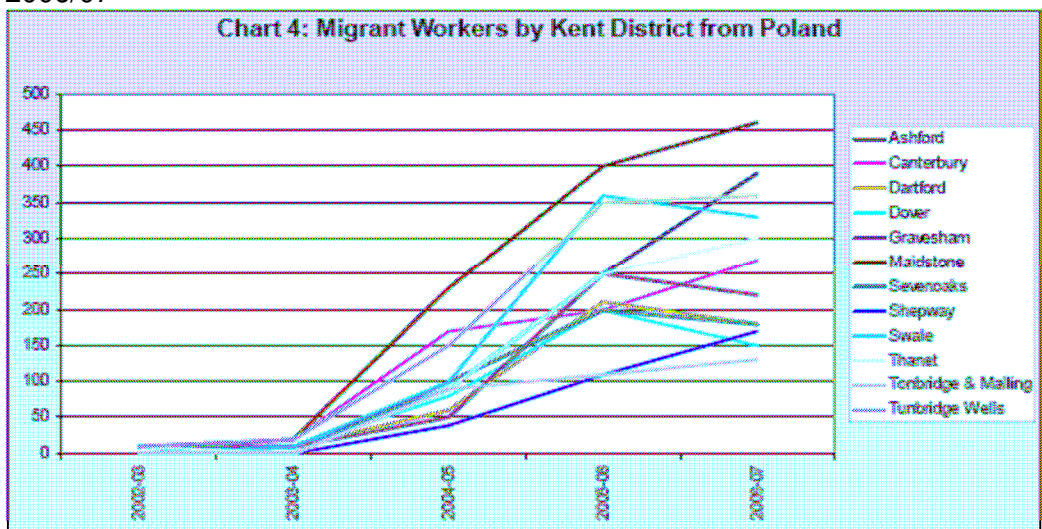
⁸ Kent County Council (September 2007) *Migrant Workers in Kent 2002/03 to 2006/07 – Briefing Paper*

Figure 1 – Migrant workers entering Kent Districts from 2002/03 to 2006/07⁹



2.11 Of the 860 migrant workers who registered in the borough in 2006/07, 360 were from Poland. Figure 2 shows that Tunbridge Wells borough has consistently been in the top three districts in the county for Polish workers.

Figure 2 – Polish migrant workers entering Kent Districts from 2002/03 to 2006/07¹⁰



⁹ Kent County Council (September 2007) *Ibid*

¹⁰ Kent County Council (September 2007) *Ibid*

3. Objectives of the Review

- 3.1 At the first Local Economy and Housing Select Committee meeting of the municipal year 2007-08 Members agreed that a review into migrant workers in the borough should be undertaken. Following the 4 December 2007 Select Committee meeting the working group was formed and tasked with carrying out the review.
- 3.2 The working group met on 4 January to discuss the objectives of the review. At the meeting Members were informed that the Community and Corporate Planning Service was currently undertaking research into migrant workers and their impact on the Borough. Members discussed the role that Scrutiny should play in the review and agreed that the working group should interview a wide range of witnesses in order to further understand the issue. The information gathered would be used to make informed recommendations regarding the direction of the Community and Corporate Planning work and improvements to services.
- 3.3 The working group agreed the following objectives for the review:
- To gain a wider understanding of the impact of migration on the Borough's public services and recommend necessary action;
 - To investigate the needs of migrant workers and identify how they can be met; and
 - To feed into research currently being undertaken by Community and Corporate Planning and recommend direction for this work.
- 3.4 To gain a wider understanding of the impact of Migrant workers on the borough's public services and the needs of migrant workers the working group looked at the following areas:
- The provision of key information for migrant workers;
 - How schools have adapted to an increase in pupils who do not speak English as a first language;
 - How Doctors have been affected by the different needs of migrant workers and their families;
 - The provision of English language lessons in the borough; and
 - The Council's Housing Service and how it has addressed migrant workers.

4. Methodology

- 4.1 The Local Economy and Housing Select Committee set-up a working group to carry out the review. The working group identified that as work was already being undertaken on this area within the Council it was important that they avoided duplication. The working group used a variety of methods to gather information during the course of the review including:
- Interviews;
 - Site visits;
 - Desk-top research; and
 - Surveys.
- 4.2 Communication between the working group and the Community and Corporate Planning Service has been thorough throughout the review to ensure that work was not duplicated and that witnesses were not contacted multiple times by different Council departments. Officers from the Community and Corporate Planning Service were consulted on potential witnesses and draft questions ahead of each interview.
- 4.3 The working group agreed that meeting witnesses at locations convenient to them would send out the right message about the objectives of the review. It would also encourage more open conversation between both parties. Therefore, following the first meeting, where appropriate the working group visited all witnesses during working daytimes at the witness's place of employment.
- 4.4 The working group sent a letter to 31 of the doctor's surgeries in the borough asking for feedback on whether migrant workers had increased surgeries' workloads or affected the way the surgeries operated.
- 4.5 Desktop research has been undertaken to inform the review. This included analysis of documents published by the Audit Commission, Citizens Advice Bureau, and Kent County Council among others, to gain an insight into the key issues surrounding migrant workers and discover what action other local authorities had taken to address the needs of their changing populations.

5. Findings of the working group

Increasing the provision of key information to migrant workers

- 5.1 In January 2007 the Audit Commission published a report on migrant workers in the UK¹¹. The report included recommendations that local authorities should work alongside people and organisations that have good links with migrant workers including employers, landlords, and voluntary and faith organisations. Local authorities should demonstrate community leadership and coordinate responses to population change from outside organisations.
- 5.2 The report found that there is a general lack of adequate advice, information, and guidance provided to migrant workers throughout the country. It recommended that language, advice, and information provision issues should be addressed and services modified to reflect the changing population and meet their diverse needs. A good practice guide published by the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)¹² states that migrant workers often have a lack of understanding of their rights and entitlements, along with rules and procedures. This was echoed in the meeting with Pi Townsend of the Tunbridge Wells and District CAB.
- 5.3 The working group visited Concordia¹³, a not-for-profit organisation whose aim is “to provide young people with quality opportunities for international work experience, fostering cross-cultural understanding and friendship.” Members met the Executive Director, Farm Services Manager, and Student/Agent Services Manager, who gave them an information booklet that the company distributes to all farms associated with the organisation. This booklet contains a wealth of information on many issues facing migrant workers who are new to the country.
- 5.4 When the working group visited Downingbury Farm they talked with several migrant workers, who informed the group that they were not aware of how to access English language lessons and had not established bank accounts in the country. They were also unaware of the activities that were available in Tunbridge Wells¹⁴. They had not been provided with any information about leisure activities and this would have been really useful on arrival. They were particularly interested in boot fairs in the area. A map of the local area would also have been informative. Stuart Shields¹⁵ also cites the question of what leisure activities are available as one that has been asked at *The English Project* class.
- 5.5 The working group discussed the lack of information provision and agreed that a welcome leaflet should be produced by the Council to provide key information to migrant workers in the borough. Members agreed that the booklet produced by Concordia would be extremely useful and that a welcome leaflet developed by the Council should include similar information. It should also include a map of the local area and details of leisure facilities available. The Concordia

¹¹ **Audit Commission (January 2007) *Ibid***

¹² Citizens Advice Bureau (September 2005) *Ibid*

¹³ Appendix H

¹⁴ Appendix L

¹⁵ Appendix Q

booklet has been passed on to the Head of Community and Corporate Planning for information.

- 5.6 Collaboration between agencies is crucial and the drafting of a welcome leaflet should involve engagement service providers, employers, and landlords. The areas where migrant workers may be at risk should be identified and highlighted. The working group believes that migrant workers themselves should be consulted on the information that should be included in a welcome leaflet. Migrants from Eastern Europe are historically wary of governmental authorities. This means that engagement is often difficult for organisations such as local authorities and the police. Therefore good contacts should be identified and consulted, such as community leaders and the witnesses already interviewed including Marketa and the migrant workers at Downingbury Farm.
- 5.7 The West Norfolk Diverse Communities Partnership produced a welcome pack in 2005, which was translated into five different languages. This pack contained information on five key themes: employment and benefits; housing; health; education; and community services. The Slovakian resident who was interviewed explained that she did not know that she could go to the Doctor when she was ill¹⁶. It is crucial that migrant workers are aware how to access the health services to which they are entitled and this should form a key aspect of the welcome leaflet. Information on mental health help, such as the Samaritans phone number, should also be included. Christine Lumb of Concordia explained that depression due to homesickness and the culture shock of living in the UK was a problem that has affected some of Concordia's registered migrant workers¹⁷.
- 5.8 At the working group's meeting with Mandi Baker from JobCentrePlus¹⁸ Ms Baker informed the group that as long as someone had the right to live and work in the UK they did not need a National Insurance Number (NINO) to begin employment. An application for a NINO took significantly longer when migrant workers applied without already having a job. However, some employers would not hire migrant workers who had yet to apply for a NINO. Ms Baker suggested that this could be due to a lack of understanding of current legislation on the part of employers. The working group believes that the welcome leaflet should be distributed to key employers in the borough. Therefore information about NINOs and workers rights should be included for the benefit of employers as well as employees.
- 5.9 In order that the welcome leaflet is accessible to as many migrant workers as possible it should be distributed at key points of access for migrant workers. This would include schools, Churches, shopping centres, the Gateway (when open), Hospitals, doctors' surgeries, train stations, employers and employment agencies. The list in the recommendation is not exhaustive and the working group suggests that the Officer tasked with producing the leaflet should identify any further information to be included.

¹⁶ Appendix O

¹⁷ Appendix H

¹⁸ Appendix K

Recommendation 1

A welcome leaflet for migrant workers should be produced to provide information on the following:

- **Workers rights;**
- **Housing;**
- **Healthcare, including mental health help available;**
- **Leisure activities;**
- **Education for both adult and children;**
- **Religious organisations;**
- **Money matters;**
- **Community services;**
- **Advice organisations such as the CAB; and**
- **A map of the local area.**

- 5.10 Additional funding to support the production of the welcome leaflet could be generated through working in partnership with other organisations and advertising from local businesses. The working group believes that partnership working in this field is crucial in order to utilise the knowledge and expertise of other organisations. In order for a bigger picture of new migrant communities to be drawn up the work carried out by the Community and Corporate Planning Service should address recent research undertaken by organisations including the Institute of Community Cohesion and BMG Research.

Recommendation 2

The Council should work with partners to build a bigger picture of the impact and needs of new migrant communities in the borough.

- 5.11 The Draft Minority Ethnic Housing Strategy (see page 19) includes an action that, where practicable, letters, leaflets, and policies produced by the Housing Service will advertise the Language Line translation service. The working group supports this policy and believes that residents who experience difficulty reading English should also be able to access information posted on the Council's website. Some CAB websites advertise a free translation facility¹⁹ and working group members believe that a link to a free translation website should appear on the front page of the Council's website.

Recommendation 3

The front page of the Council's website should include a link to a translation website to assist those trying to access the site who have trouble reading English but are fluent in another language. This should be highly visible.

- 5.12 When the working group visited Concordia, Members were informed that an event to share information and welcome migrant workers into local communities would be beneficial for both local people and migrant workers²⁰.

¹⁹ Citizens Advice Bureau (September 2005) *Supporting migrant workers in rural areas*

²⁰ Appendix H

The working group believes that an existing public event could be used to pass on key information to migrant workers, including the welcome leaflet. Local people would also benefit from meeting new European residents to dispell any myths and rumours that could spread. Some local authorities have held information days for local migrant communities. These have been held with other agencies to share the costs of interpreters and ensure the days provide a wealth of information²¹.

- 5.13 Several CAB across the country have been very proactive in engaging with migrant worker communities and have held special advice sessions to find out their problems and provide advice to a large number of people at once. One CAB organised a 'family day and barbeque' for Portuguese residents to help identify the needs of that community. Some CAB have forged links with the cultural associations of migrant workers and disseminate information through them²². This helps reach different cultural groups from the same country.
- 5.14 At their meeting with Pi Townsend²³ the working group heard that the Tunbridge Wells CAB had not organised any specific events to meet and advise migrant workers in the Borough. Ms Townsend informed the group that she would be very interested in helping to organise such an event in partnership with other organisations.

Recommendation 4

The Council should use an existing public event to pass on key information to migrant workers in the borough. This should be organised in partnership with other organisations such as Citizen's Advice Bureaux and JobCentrePlus.

²¹ Audit Commission (January 2007) *Ibid*

²² Citizens Advice Bureau (September 2005) *Supporting migrant workers in rural areas*

²³ Appendix G

Schools

- 5.15 The working group visited and spoke with the Headteachers from four schools in Tunbridge Wells: Sherwood Park Community Primary School, St. Mark's School, St. Augustine's Catholic Primary School, and St. Gregory's Catholic Comprehensive School. Attempts to meet with a representative at St. Barnabas School proved unsuccessful.
- 5.16 At the working group's meeting with Mrs Mann²⁴, Headteacher of St. Augustine's Catholic Primary School, the group was informed that the School employed a teaching assistant who spent time with pupils who did not speak English as a first language to help them learn English. This post was funded through the School's own budget. The group was informed that an extra teaching assistant who spent some time at the school would be extremely valuable. Mrs Mann explained that a year six pupil who did not speak any English had arrived at the beginning of the school year. This posed a significant challenge to the teacher who had not received prior notice. Mrs Mann stated that this pupil would have benefited greatly from more one to one teaching than had been possible with the school's resources.
- 5.17 Schools encourage parents to enrol their children at the beginning of the school year but sometimes children entered the school when the term had already begun. This sometimes happened because a family from another country had arrived in the borough during term-times. Each Headteacher that was interviewed stated that when new pupils who did not speak English as a first language arrived during term-time staff did not have time to prepare accordingly or make contingencies for any additional resources needed. This presents a significant challenge to teachers.
- 5.18 The working group discussed the viability of a roving teaching assistant funded by several schools in the area that could spend a day or two in each school, when needed, to help teach children who did not speak English as a first language. This would particularly help when pupils arrived during term-times. The schools could communicate with each other to coordinate schedules. Mrs Mann explained that this would make a significant difference to St. Augustine's School. If the costs were shared between several schools it would provide excellent value for money to each school. The children who did not speak fluent English would benefit from periods of one to one tuition, the remainder of the class would benefit from increased attention of the teacher, and the teachers' workload should be lightened as a result. The working group believes that Kent County Council, as the Local Education Authority, should coordinate this action.

Recommendation 5

That Kent County Council investigate the viability of a roving teaching assistant to visit schools in Tunbridge Wells Borough specifically to assist pupils who do not speak English as a first language.

²⁴ Appendix F

Doctors

- 5.19 The working group was informed by Christine Lumb of Concordia that migrant workers often decided not to register with Doctors when in the UK. Accident and Emergency departments are often their first port of call, as it would be in their own country. The Audit Commission report²⁵ states that the majority of migrant workers are young and healthy. However, dependants who join migrant workers bring different health issues and are likely to use more health services.
- 5.20 At the first working group meeting Members agreed that it would be important to contact the borough's doctors to find out whether migrant workers have affected the way they operate. 31 surveys were sent out to Doctor's surgeries across the borough. Ten responses were received, of which four stated that the surgery was unable to provide any information regarding the nationality of its patients²⁶.
- 5.21 Every surgery that replied to the survey stated that there has been a notable increase in the number of EU people applying to register at the practice since the 2004 EU accession. Some respondents explained that these new patients often needed a translation service in order to fully understand medical advice and information. This often meant that appointments took significantly longer than for patients who spoke fluent English and one surgery stated that it now had difficulty scheduling regular clinics for general illnesses such as asthma and diabetes. Surgeries also indicated that Eastern European residents often need pregnancy-related help, one respondent stating that necessary immunisations after giving birth are not always given due to a lack of understanding on the part of the mother. Because pregnancy-related issues are often time-consuming, the increase in these has also placed extra demands on doctors.
- 5.22 The working group believes that more research is needed into the ways in which the needs of migrant patients have been addressed by the health service, in particular the borough's hospitals.

Recommendation 6

That Council should investigate the ways in which the needs of migrant patients have been addressed by the health service, in particular the borough's hospitals.

²⁵ Audit Commission (January 2007) *Ibid*

²⁶ Appendix P

English Language Lessons

- 5.23 At the working group's meeting with Mandi Baker from JobCentrePlus, she informed the group that the limited number of places for applicants for English language classes in the area meant that migrant workers often registered to join classes but faced a wait of several months prior to courses beginning. This made it more difficult for them to communicate and find employment.
- 5.24 In May 2008 the working group visited Downingbury Farm in Pembury and met the farm's owner, Peter Jervis, who introduced the group to ten workers who had all recently arrived to work on the farm for six months. They had all come from Romania or Latvia through the Harvesting Opportunities Permit Scheme (HOPS). HOPS places foreign students on farms in the UK during the planting and harvesting season and is part of the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS).
- 5.25 The workers told the group that their main concern was that they would like to be able to learn the English language but they did not have any resources for doing so. One of the workers explained that the workers desired English lessons but that they worked from Monday to Friday and were not able to drive anywhere as there were no cars available for them to use. Mr Jervis informed the group that the HOPS scheme specifically requested farmers not to provide private vehicles to workers. He explained that he often transported the workers to different events or social activities.
- 5.26 The working group met with Stuart and Guna Shields, members of Tunbridge Wells New Life Church (see page x), and were informed about *The English Project*: an English language course that Mr and Mrs Shields administrated at the Church. The migrant workers they had come into contact with had required help mainly because of their limited knowledge of the English language and also help filling in forms, accessing the internet to book flights home and to keep in contact with their families. The New Life Church had started the English Language school project in August 2007 teaching an elementary and an advanced language course with a café.
- 5.27 The working group passed on details of *the English Project* to Ms Baker following the meeting. Ms Baker has made contact with Mr Shields and we will begin referring people to the class.
- 5.28 The difficulty for migrant workers to access English language classes is of particular concern to the working group. Members believe that this should be examined in more detail in the work being undertaken by the Community and Corporate Planning Service.

Recommendation 7

That the Community and Corporate Planning Service review should promote the provision of English language classes through the welcome leaflet and other appropriate means.

Housing

- 5.29 Migrant workers' accommodation is often pre-arranged by agencies and employers. Some of the problems associated with this are high rents, overcrowding, poor living conditions, and there is evidence of minimum standards not being met on both caravan sites and rented accommodation²⁷.
- 5.30 At the working group's meeting with the Council's Head of Housing Services and Housing Needs Manager, the group was informed that the Housing Service had legal duties to inspect properties in the borough and take appropriate action against landlords who breached property standards. Rented houses were inspected when officers received complaints from tenants. If tenants did not complain about conditions then it is unlikely that the Housing Service would become aware that any problem existed.
- 5.31 At the same meeting, the Housing Needs Manager explained that there were currently approximately 1700 households on the Housing Register. Of these, 48 were from EU countries, 37 of whom were from Poland²⁸. Nearly all of the households from EU countries that were on the Housing Register were currently living in overcrowded conditions. There is anecdotal evidence that migrant workers sometimes choose to live in overcrowded conditions because it is cheaper, which proved especially helpful for those earning the minimum wage or less.
- 5.32 The Head of Housing Services explained that a pilot project to identify private rented housing in targeted areas of the borough would shortly be introduced and was included in the Housing Service Plan. Under this project Housing Officers would call at rented accommodation on selected streets in the borough to check with tenants that living conditions were suitable. This would help identify properties that had poor living conditions but whose tenants were unwilling to inform the Council.
- 5.33 The working group supports the pilot and believes that this proactive approach will help the Housing Service to identify residents who are in need of assistance but unsure of the support available to them. This approach will undoubtedly be time-consuming but it is a welcome strategy in engaging those residents who are unable or unwilling to approach the Council.
- 5.34 The Audit Commission²⁹ found that migrant workers are not considered in most local and regional housing and planning strategies. The working group is therefore pleased that the Council is launching a Draft Minority Ethnic Housing Strategy that has been developed specifically to meet the needs of these residents, including migrant workers. The working group is also pleased that representatives of minority ethnic groups are being consulted in order to further develop the strategy. Members believe that new migrant communities should be involved in the consultation and engagement process of other plans and strategies launched by the Council.

Recommendation 8

Future consultation and engagement on the Council's policies and strategies should take account of hard to reach groups, including new migrant communities.

²⁷ Audit Commission (January 2007) *Ibid*

²⁸ Figures correct as of 13 May 2008

²⁹ Audit Commission (January 2007) *Ibid*

- 5.35 The introduction of the Choice-Based Lettings (CBL) scheme later in 2008 will change the way people on the housing register are allocated property. The new system will allow people to bid for properties that become available. This could create a barrier to people who do not speak English as a first language. The working group is pleased that the Draft Minority Ethnic Housing Strategy has identified this potential problem and recognised the need to ensure that information on CBL should be available in languages other than English.
- 5.36 The Draft Minority Ethnic Housing Strategy also suggests that the Housing Service could produce a leaflet specifically aimed at migrant workers. This would contain information on housing conditions, tenants' rights and details of key contacts. The working group supports this action and believes that this information should be included in a welcome leaflet for migrant workers. Awareness of housing-related support that is available to migrant workers is often poor³⁰. It is therefore crucial that the Housing Service has an input into the information included in a welcome leaflet.
- 5.37 The Gangmaster's Licensing Authority (GLA) was established in April 2005 following the deaths of 23 Chinese cockle pickers in Morecambe Bay in February 2004. It regulates agencies, organisations, and individuals who supply labour to the agriculture, forestry, horticulture, shellfish gathering, and food processing and packaging industries.
- 5.38 The GLA requires gangmasters who apply for licenses to complete a form detailing working and accommodation conditions for the migrant workers they supply. The GLA's procedure is that they act on any complaints received from migrant workers regarding accommodation by informing the Local Authority. Housing Officers then accompany GLA Officers to carry out an inspection of the site and take appropriate action. The Housing Policy and Research Manager explained that the Housing Service supported the work that the GLA undertook to inform Housing Officers of potential problems.
- 5.39 The CAB report³¹ found that many bureaux have recruited and trained specialist staff with language skills to address the needs of residents who do not speak fluent English. Information published by the Council presented at Gateway should also be available in languages other than English. The leaflets that JobCentrePlus provided were available in several different languages. JobCentrePlus uses The Big Word Translation and Interpretation Service. This was an excellent service that usually provided translators on the phone within five minutes of a request being made. The Council is signed up to the Language Line translation service and the working group believe that this service should be used by staff at the Gateway.

Recommendation 9

That Language Line or a similar service is used by Gateway staff when translation of documents or interpretation is needed.

³⁰ Audit Commission (January 2007) *Ibid*

³¹ Citizens Advice Bureau (September 2005) *Supporting migrant workers in rural areas*

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 The working group agreed that migrant workers should be provided with key information to ensure that they are aware of their rights and how to access the assistance that is available to them and their families. Migrant workers living and working in rural areas were also unaware of the leisure activities available to them in the local area. If a welcome leaflet was produced by the Council this could include key contacts, information, and summaries of their rights and entitlements as residents of the borough.
- 6.2 Information on key issues could also be disseminated to migrant workers at an existing social event. Councillors and Officers, along with representatives of key organisations such as the Citizen's Advice Bureau and JobCentrePlus, could distribute information about living and working in the borough. This would provide an informal setting and help show those who are wary of state institutions that the Council is accessible to all residents.
- 6.3 The most useful thing the Council could do to support migrant workers would be to act as a signpost to services through providing information in its Gateway and reception. The working group believes that Gateway staff should be able to provide information, both verbal and literary, to residents who do not speak or read fluent English. Therefore, the Language Line translation service should be used by Gateway staff.
- 6.4 The working group identified that migrant workers impacted public services in a number of different ways. The School Headteachers that were visited all explained how they helped pupils who did not speak English as a first language. It is clear that when these pupils arrive at Schools mid-term it provides significant difficulties for teachers, who need to pay extra attention to these pupils while still teaching the class. The working group believes that a teaching assistant who visited schools when this situation occurs would provide great benefit to teachers and pupils alike and so this review recommends that Kent County Council investigates the viability of this proposal.
- 6.5 The working group has identified that the limited access to English language lessons is a particular concern and the provision of these classes should be promoted. Courses such as *The English Project* at New Life Church could increasingly act as a useful starting point for migrant workers while they await enrolment into formal English language classes and the working group is pleased that it has been able to pass this information on to JobCentrePlus and Downingbury Farm.
- 6.6 The working group was unable to investigate the affect migrant workers have had on hospitals in the borough. The doctors who provided feedback indicated that new residents from EU countries have different needs and this has affected the way the practice operates. Therefore the Council is recommended to investigate how the needs of migrant patients have affected the borough's hospitals and suggest any action that should be taken.
- 6.7 The working group believes that the Housing Service should be congratulated on the development of the Minority Ethnic Housing Strategy. Part of this Strategy will directly address the specific concerns of migrant workers, who have been included in the consultation process. The working group supports

this action and believes that hard to reach groups, including new migrant communities, should be consulted along with other residents in the drafting of the Council's new Policies and Strategies. The rented accommodation door-knocking project that will be undertaken by Housing Officers is also a welcome initiative. EU nationals are traditionally wary of governmental institutions and could be apprehensive about contacting the Council for assistance. This project will help identify poor living conditions some properties whose tenants were reluctant to seek advice or assistance.

- 6.8 Migrant workers, while still a small section of the population of Tunbridge Wells Borough, are an important part of the Borough's economy and culture. It is vital that the Council, as a community leader, ensures its services are accessible to all those living in the borough and leads the way in helping migrant workers to live here. The issues facing migrant workers on a daily basis were clear to the working group, and issues surrounding information, housing, health and education services were of particular concern. The Committee hopes that this review will pave the way for improved services by the Council and its partners while positively influencing the ongoing work of the Community and Corporate Planning Service.

Appendix A – Interview with Stuart and Guna Shields, members of Tunbridge Wells New Life Church

Date:	20 February 2008
Members Present:	Councillors Mrs Crowhurst and Mrs Herriot.
Officers Present:	Angela Woodhouse (Overview and Scrutiny Partnership Manager)

Summary of Evidence

MW010/07 The Chairman welcomed Mr Shields and his wife to the meeting and thanked them for taking the time to meet with the group and share their experiences. Mr Shields explained that the New Life Church affiliated to New Frontiers and Evangelical Lives was established in Southborough in 1993. Mr Shields explained that the largest community group they ran was a mother and toddler group, which also included a health drop-in service. The migrant workers they had come into contact with had required help mainly because of their knowledge of the English language and help with forms, accessing the internet to book flights home and to keep in contact with their families. The New Life Church had started the English Language school project in August 2007 teaching an elementary and an advanced language course with a café. The first evening 24 students had attended this number dropped to a small core of students. During the first term there had been a wide range of students attending the course including Georgian, Ukrainian, Latvian, Polish, Slovakian, Lithuanian, Russian, Romanian and Afghan.

Following the first term the church had advertised the course more widely through flyers in the Polish shop and pub, despite this push there had not been an increase in attendance. The group who had attended classes were seasonal workers from the local farm who had returned home in December, in January the church decided to undertake a research project to ascertain what people in the town outside of the church wanted in terms of needs and courses. As attendance had been sporadic from some students they now charged a deposit for the course, which would be reduced for every lesson not attended. It was hoped that this financial penalty would provide an incentive to attend lessons once students had signed up for a course. So far 40 students had been through the language school. Volunteers staffed the school and café and the café was free for customers, the facilities were provided by the Church.

The group discussed the mother and toddler group and whether worries and problems were identified in that forum. It was explained that those who attended the group saw it as an opportunity to meet others and relax. Most were integrated, however Mr and Mrs Shield's observed that the Muslim women who attended appeared not to integrate with any other groups. The group was very popular and had not needed to be widely advertised.

With regard to the migrant workers Mr and Mrs Shields had come into contact with, many required help with practical issues such as accommodation, forms and finding work. It was believed that many came to the UK to experience the culture. Many they had come into contact with had been students who would go back to their home countries to continue studying. It was identified that there were some families who came over and were looking to stay in the UK longer term particularly from Poland and Slovakia, often they came to Kent and used contacts within their community to find work elsewhere.

The following issues were raised:

Transport – the Church provided transport to and from classes, from the farm to increase attendance.

Employment – the employees they had met, stated that they were treated fairly and spoke positively about the pay and working conditions. Most seemed to work seasonally and those that stayed longer than a year had been less happy.

Housing – the lack of affordable housing was an issue for migrant workers, particularly if they tried to move on from the farm, once they left their position they then lost accommodation. An example was given of one family who had moved to Bexhill to find work and accommodation, to afford housing a family of four were sharing accommodation with another couple.

Crime – They were not aware of any incidents where migrant workers had been victims of crime.

People Trafficking – not aware this was an issue locally

Qualifications – concern was expressed that skills and qualifications had not been transferable in the UK, an example was given of a qualified bus driver, a number of companies he had applied to for work had turned him down as he did not own a British Driving Licence, he had however found a job with Hams Travel locally. Another was a plumber who had trained abroad and was now working for a building company.

Mr Shields informed the Committee that New Life Church was now looking at the information it could provide for migrant workers to sign post them to services they may need.

Appendix B – Interview with Jemma Alexander, Community Projects Manager at Pembury Baptist Church

Date:	20 February 2008
Members Present:	Councillors Mrs Crowhurst and Mrs Herriot.
Officers Present:	Angela Woodhouse (Overview and Scrutiny Partnership Manager)

Summary of Evidence

MW010/07 The Chairman welcomed Mrs Alexander to the meeting and thanked her for agreeing to meet with the working group, explaining that they were looking at the issues affecting migrant workers and the effects on the local economy and local community. Mrs Alexander explained that it was a relatively new area and they did not have any projects directly linked with migrant workers. It was explained that migrant workers were employed at Downingbury Farm as well as local businesses including the Camden Arms (mainly from New Zealand) and other pubs and takeaway restaurants. Only two workers from the farm had attended the church and migrant workers seemed to have very little presence in the village. The group discussed where the workers from the farm would go if they were not in the village. They agreed that a visit to the farm would be useful to meet the owner and see the accommodation offered. The group considered the impact that may be had on other services such as health and agreed that the Chairman would visit the Doctors in Pembury to see if they accessed services locally. The group was pleased to note that Mrs Alexander would be happy to set-up a sign-posting service for migrant workers including providing internet access if that was needed.

Appendix C – Interview with Keith Marden, Headteacher of Sherwood Park Community School

Date:	18 March 2008
Members Present:	Councillors Chater, Mrs Crowhurst and Mrs Herriot.
Officers Present:	Laurence Doig (Overview and Scrutiny Officer)

Summary of Evidence

MW015/07 Mr Marden welcomed the Councillors and Officer and informed the working group that at present ten of the schools pupils did not speak English as a first language. This represented 3.5% of the school's pupils as it currently taught 350 children. Mr Marden had worked at the school for twenty years and over that time the majority of the children who did not speak English as a first language were from the Philippines or Bangladesh. He explained that a child had entered the school 18 months ago without being able to speak any English at all. She was now fluent in English.

Mr Marden explained that a large proportion of the pupils at his school experienced speech or language difficulties. The school currently employed 22 teachers and 27 classroom assistants. He explained that on arrival at the school, all pupils were individually assessed on their reading and writing ability and progress throughout the years closely monitored. Although the school encouraged children to enrol at the beginning of the school year children sometimes entered the school when the term had already begun. This sometimes happened because a family from another country had arrived in the borough during term times. While this was always managed it did present a significant challenge to teachers. In such cases, the child joined the appropriate class and lessons continued as normal. The teacher monitored the progress of the child to ensure he/she did not experience too many difficulties in learning the language. Mr Marden explained that interaction with fellow pupils in the playground proved a crucial aspect of English language learning.

Mr Marden stated that no staff were employed specifically to assist children who do not speak English as a first language. The school received the support of Debbie Wilcox, the Specialist Teacher for Minority, Ethnic and Bilingual children for the Tunbridge Wells cluster. She paid regular visits to the school and provided advice to teachers who taught children whose first language was not English.

The group was informed that, in general, once children who did not speak English as a first language learnt to read and write in English their grades were very positive. Each year the school received £280 from the Government Department for Children, Schools and Families for each pupil who did not speak English as a first language. This money was to be spent on any extra resources required.

Appendix D – Interview with Richard Barham, Headteacher of St. Mark’s School

Date:	18 March 2008
Members Present:	Councillors Chater, Mrs Crowhurst and Mrs Herriot.
Officers Present:	Laurence Doig (Overview and Scrutiny Officer)

Summary of Evidence

MW016/07 Mr Barham informed the group that 179 pupils attended St. Marks School, 8 of which did not speak English as a first language (EAL pupils). These children came from many different countries and no one particular country or geographical region dominated. Mr Barham explained that the Local Education Authority provided the school with advice on how to assist children who did not speak English as a first language. He stated that these pupils generally progressed well at the school. They learnt alongside other children, and teachers helped them with translation difficulties. Mr Barham stated that children who did not speak English as a first language benefited from playing at break times where they talked freely with children who were fluent in English. This proved an important part of the process of learning the English language.

The group was informed that the school had experienced difficulty communicating with parents who did not speak English as a first language but that this rarely happened. He added that sometimes children joined the school during term-times due to having newly arrived in the Borough. While this was not ideal and provided a significant challenge, teachers ensured that new pupils were helped to integrate and brought up to speed as quickly as possible. Mr Barham informed the group that the school received £280 per pupil who did not speak English as a first language per year to spend on resources to assist learning.

Note. Since the meeting Mr Barham has received the School’s budget for 2008/09. He informed the group that the total figure the School would receive for additional resources for EAL pupils would be £505. As the School taught 8 EAL pupils this figure now represented £63 per pupil.

Appendix E – Interview with Gerrie Packham, Practice Supervisor of the Duty and Initial Assessment Team, Tunbridge Wells Social Services

Date:	18 March 2008
Members Present:	Councillors Chater, Mrs Crowhurst and Mrs Herriot.
Officers Present:	Laurence Doig (Overview and Scrutiny Officer)

Summary of Evidence

MW 017/07 The group thanked Ms Packham for taking the time to meet and share her experiences. Ms Packham explained that she was the Practice Supervisor of the Duty and Initial Assessment team. The team's prime purpose was to assess where social work intervention was required to ensure a child's safety or to change behaviour that was leading to a family breakdown. Her team was responsible for cases involving families with a member under the age of sixteen years old. They worked on cases that were identified as in need of help and had been referred to Social Services. She explained that her team would deal with migrant workers and their families using the same Social Services eligibility criteria they use for any other family. It was agreed that this criteria should be forwarded to Members for information. In cases where there was a language barrier between the family and the social worker, a community interpreting service was used. These interpreters were used at meetings and accompanied social workers on visits. Ms Packham emphasised the importance of being able to communicate information accurately to families helped by Social Services. Therefore good quality, reliable interpreters were crucial in cases involving families that did not speak fluent English. The group discussed reports in other areas of the country where children had been used to translate information about health and illnesses to their parents because affordable translation services could not be found. All were in agreement that this was an appalling practise.

The following points were discussed:

- The group agreed that it was important that information was made easily available in other languages and in particular those that were most often used, for example Polish;
- The group discussed the perception that an Eastern-European community was developing around the Camden Road area of Tunbridge Wells;
- In response to a question, Ms Packham stated that since January 2008 her team had not been asked to work with any families that had recently arrived in the country; and
- A Councillor stated his concern that migrant workers were being exploited because they were not aware of their employment and residential rights and that this was a prime focus of the Scrutiny review. The group explained that another aim of the review was to identify how services were adapting to the needs of Eastern European residents and what the Council could do to help.

Appendix F – Interview with Mrs J. Mann. Headteacher of St. Augustine’s Catholic Primary School

Date:	27 March 2008
Members Present:	Councillors Chater, Mrs Crowhurst and Mrs Herriot.
Officers Present:	Laurence Doig (Overview and Scrutiny Officer)

Summary of Evidence

MW021/07 Mrs Mann welcomed the Councillors and Officer to St. Augustine’s School. The group explained that as part of the review the group were visiting schools in order to gain an understanding of how schools have adapted to teaching pupils who did not speak English as a first language.

Mrs Mann informed the group that St. Augustine’s School taught 315 children and of these approximately 45-50 did not speak English as a first language, most of which were in the early-years classes. The majority of these children were from Philippine families and a large number were from Holland or Eastern European countries. Because St. Augustine’s was a Catholic School it was attractive for families who had arrived in the Borough from Catholic countries. Mrs Mann explained that the diversity of the pupils undoubtedly added to the School’s positive atmosphere. She said that because there were a large number of Philippine pupils these children tended to socialise together. There was no integration problem between English and non-English children.

Mrs Mann informed the group that the school was often given very short notice in advance of new pupils arriving. This made it difficult for the school to know if any extra resources were necessary. The school could not apply for extra funding from the Local Education Authority without knowing how many extra pupils would be arriving and could not apply for funding retrospectively. When new pupils arrived and spoke English as a second language or did not speak English at all, it was extremely challenging for staff to prepare classes. Mrs Mann explained that if there were any spaces at the School they were offered to any child, regardless of their English-language proficiency.

The group discussed school results and statistics and heard that the grades of children who did not speak English as a first language and were in their first year at the school were generally lower than the School’s average. As the children progressed through subsequent years and became more confident using English their grades improved considerably. The school sometimes had new pupils who could not speak any English enter year six. This proved particularly challenging as it meant that they only had one year learning English before starting secondary school. Teachers often had no prior notice of these admissions.

The group was informed that the School used web pages on the Internet to assist with translation for children who did not speak fluent

English. Teachers also had picture cards that were used to help these pupils learn the English language. Debbie Wilcox visited the staff once or twice per term and provided training and assistance for teaching non-English pupils. She had brought in a starter pack that was used with new pupils who did not speak English as a first language. Mrs Mann explained that the pack was beneficial for the new pupils but it meant that the teacher had to spend time away from the rest of the class. This would affect the education of the other children in the class.

Mrs Mann informed the group that the School received no funding to specifically spend on resources used to teach children who did not speak English as a first language. She explained that the School employed a teaching assistant who spent time with these pupils to help them learn English. This post was funded through the School's own budget. The group was informed that an extra teaching assistant who spent some time at the school would be extremely valuable. Mrs Mann explained that a year six pupil who did not speak any English had arrived at the beginning of the school year. This posed a significant challenge to the teacher who had not received prior notice. Mrs Mann stated that this pupil would have benefited greatly from more one to one teaching than had been possible with the school's resources. The group agreed that this was a problem that was experienced by other schools. They discussed the viability of a roving teaching assistant funded by several schools in the area that could spend a day or two in each school, when needed, to help teach children who did not speak English as a first language. The schools could communicate with each other to coordinate schedules. Mrs Mann explained that this would make a significant difference to St. Augustine's School. If the costs were shared between several schools it would provide excellent value for money to each school. The children who did not speak fluent English would benefit from periods of one to one tuition, the remainder of the class would benefit from increased attention of the teacher, and the teachers' workload should be lightened as a result.

Appendix G – Interview with Pi Townsend, Head of Tunbridge Wells and District Citizen’s Advice Bureaux

Date:	27 March 2008
Members Present:	Councillors Chater, Mrs Crowhurst and Mrs Herriot.
Officers Present:	Laurence Doig (Overview and Scrutiny Officer)

Summary of Evidence

MW022/07 The working group thanked Mrs Townsend for agreeing to meet and Mrs Townsend welcomed the group to the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB). She informed the group that the Bureau now opened on Saturday mornings and that this had proved popular with people who worked from Monday to Friday. She explained that the Bureau often helped clients with different problems on Saturdays due to their difficulty in going on weekdays.

The group was informed that the Bureau asked every client to fill in a form with details of their age group, sex, ethnic origin and other details. However, this was not compulsory and many clients did not complete the form, therefore accurate statistics of the clients who use the CAB were not collected. Ms Townsend explained that the prime concern of migrant workers who sought advice from the CAB was a perception that they were treated less fairly than other residents. They often did not understand that they had certain statutory rights as UK residents as they had never been provided with that information. The CAB would often direct migrant workers to the Trades Union Congress website where full information about workers rights was posted in eleven different languages. The CAB was always able to offer advice on employment rights and this was one of the main reasons migrant workers accessed the CAB.

The CAB used a translation service based at the University of Kent, which cost the CAB £65 per 1000 words. Ms Townsend stated that friends or relatives of clients have offered to translate documents in the past. However, the CAB did not often pursue this due to the importance of translating detailed information accurately. The CAB did not use interpreters because they proved too expensive.

Ms Townsend informed the group that the CAB used specialist support units to gain information that was not located at the CAB. This was often on specific immigration-related advice. She explained that the CAB could provide advice on all aspects of consumer or employment rights but was heavily regulated on immigration advice it could provide. Under the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner, the CAB was qualified to provide Level One immigration advice. This included diagnosis of the member of the public's need for specific immigration advice, the provision of one-off advice, and basic administrative support. Level Two and higher required a solicitor to be present.

The CAB had not organised any specific events to meet and advise migrant workers in the Borough. Ms Townsend informed the group that she would be very interested in helping to organise such an event in partnership with other organisations. This could prove extremely beneficial for new migrant residents who would be provided with important advice and information. In response to a question, Ms Townsend stated that the CAB would work with voluntary organisations if the projects were mutually beneficial. The organisation had previously worked with the Council on domestic violence and homelessness initiatives.

Ms Townsend informed the group that residents from Eastern Europe were often wary of the state and governmental organisations. Some did not know that the CAB was an independent organisation and were therefore also reluctant to visit to seek advice. The group heard that the main publicity the CAB carried out was placing leaflets in doctor's surgeries. However, the majority of clients heard about the Citizen's Advice Bureau through word of mouth.

Appendix H – Interview with Christine Lumb, Executive Director; Terry Crosswell, Farm Services Manager; and Rob Orme, Student/Agent Services Manager of Concordia

Date:	31 March 2008
Members Present:	Councillors Mrs Crowhurst and Mrs Herriot.
Officers Present:	Laurence Doig (Overview and Scrutiny Officer)

Summary of Evidence

MW026/07 Mrs Lumb welcomed the working group to the Concordia office. She explained that Concordia had been operating the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme since the early 1960's. The organisation supplied a large number of farms in Kent with migrant workers and its staff had a clear idea about some of the difficulties these workers experienced when newly arrived in UK.

The group heard that the Church was often the first port of call when migrant workers arrived in the UK. Approximately 95% of workers that Concordia helped to find employment were seasonal workers and almost all of these earned the minimum wage. Mrs Lumb informed the group that migrant workers often undertook employment that UK nationals were not interested in, for example fruit picking and other agricultural work. She stated that village businesses profited from seasonal migrant workers who boosted the local economy in the summer months by spending their money in local shops. However, more should be done to make local villages aware that a large number of migrant workers would be arriving in the summer.

Mrs Lumb informed the group that generally workers who registered with Concordia were welcomed into local communities but there were occasions when migrant workers reported bullying. She explained that the workers who registered with Concordia were predominantly 20-25 year olds who had good English language skills and studied at universities in Europe. European residents could find out about the organisation from agents in their own country such as universities and travel agents, who were supplied with Concordia's details and information about the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme. All potential workers had full medical checks before they left their home countries. Concordia stipulate that the farms at which they place workers have to provide key information to their workers prior to their arrival in the UK. Concordia produces a guide for new workers in the UK and distributes this to all the farms at which it places workers. The guide is produced in several languages and includes information on all the key issues that migrant workers are likely to face, including money matters, accommodation, workers rights and health and safety.

The group heard that migrant workers often decided not to register with Doctors when in the UK. The majority of those who did register remained on the registration list even when they had moved to another part of the country or left the country altogether. This distorted the

numbers of migrant workers in local areas. One of the big problems facing migrant workers was affordable dental care. The wages that migrant workers earned was often too low to enable them to seek dental treatment when needed and many would only visit the dentist as a last resort. Depression due to homesickness and the culture shock of living in the UK is also a problem that has affected some of Concordia's registered migrant workers. Mrs Lumb stated that young women are sometimes exploited because they are unaware that their rights in the UK are different to their rights back home. The support structure that Concordia offered meant that workers could always contact an advisor who would help them resolve problems or put them in touch with an appropriate organisation. Mr Crosswell was aware of other agencies that did not help migrant workers when they arrived in the UK but simply provided workers with an employer's address.

Mrs Lumb informed the working group that an event to share information and welcome migrant workers into local communities would be beneficial for both local people and new migrant workers. She noted that people from Eastern European countries were often suspicious of governmental organisations and this should be reflected in any event that was organised. Mrs Lumb stated that a common perception was that there were two main areas of concern for local people regarding migrant workers: that jobs were being taken and that affordable housing was being taken. Local people would benefit from meeting new European residents to dispell any myths and rumours that could spread. She explained that migrant workers often lived in overcrowded conditions because it was much cheaper to share the cost of accomodation. Migrant workers are most vulnerable when their visas run out and they could be evicted from their accomodation without having anywhere else to reside. Concordia ensured that accommodation was organised prior to their migrant workers entering the country. This would often be in mobile homes and caravans.

Concordia helped migrant workers to open bank accounts. However, workers from Eastern Europe were often wary about keeping money in accounts due to experiences back home and so would sometimes keep large ammounts of cash. The group heard that Citizen's Advice Bureaux had been extremely helpful to migrant workers but many were not aware that such an organisation existed. Mrs Lumb stated that migrant workers in the UK were increasingly seeking non-agricultural employment.

Appendix I – Interview with Rosemary Olivier, Headteacher, and Di Mancini, EAL Co-ordinator, of St. Gregory’s Catholic Comprehensive School

Date:	31 March 2008
Members Present:	Councillors Mrs Crowhurst and Mrs Herriot.
Officers Present:	Laurence Doig (Overview and Scrutiny Officer)

Summary of Evidence

MW027/07 Ms Olivier welcomed the group to St. Gregory’s School and explained that children of many different nationalities attended the school. Of the school’s 1038 pupils, 91 spoke English as an additional language (EAL pupils), representing 8.7% of the total. Due to the increase in number of pupils learning English the school employed a full-time teaching assistant solely to help these pupils. This assistant was funded from the school’s own EAL budget resources. Ms Olivier stated that the school would not have been able to manage the number of EAL children without the specialist teaching assistant.

The school also had a designated EAL area for pupils who did not speak English as a first language, where they could learn and socialise together. The area included computers, flags and maps of different countries and other information resources. The group was informed that non-British children did not experience difficulties befriending British children. The EAL area provided a place where these children could gather and socialise as well as learn and helped spread knowledge of different countries and cultures. This helped these pupils bond and build confidence and make sure they did not feel isolated. It also helped to educate British pupils about different nationalities and assisted with the school’s culture and communication field of learning. The school also held a carol service last Christmas which included songs from several different nations to help educate children about different cultures.

Ms Olivier explained that when the school did not know that new EAL pupils were arriving it meant that staff did not have time to prepare accordingly or make contingencies for any additional resources needed. She informed the group that sometimes new EAL pupils arrived at the school after the term had already begun. When this happened the new pupils would spend time learning in the EAL area and gradually enter the classroom with all the other pupils. Ms Olivier informed the group that two refugees from Afghanistan had recently joined the school and she would be seeking advice on how to address their particular needs.

In response to a question, Ms Olivier explained that usually at least one parent spoke good English and so communication with parents was generally not a problem. The school translated administration information into Polish and Tagalog to assist parents who had difficulty reading English.

The school also employed three Polish staff: an administration assistant, an IT technician, and an assistant caretaker. Each of these

employees had been sent on English courses to improve their language skills. The school also employed a teaching assistant from Hungary for a year, who was now a fully qualified teacher.

Appendix J – Interview with David Crosby, Head of Housing Services, and Helen Clarke, Housing Needs Manager, of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

Date:	13 May 2008
Members Present:	Councillor Mrs Crowhurst
Officers Present:	Laurence Doig (Overview and Scrutiny Officer)

Summary of Evidence

MW031/07 Councillor Mrs Crowhurst thanked Mr Crosby and Mrs Clarke for meeting and, along with the Overview and Scrutiny Officer, provided an overview of the Migrant Workers Review. The group discussed the potential recommendation that a welcome leaflet for migrant workers should be produced. Mr Crosby asked if the Council produced a welcome leaflet for any other residents in the borough as other districts currently distributed this information to new residents.

Mr Crosby explained it would be beneficial for the working group to also talk with the Housing Policy and Research Manager, Mrs Bollen Hickman, who could provide further information on the housing renewal area of the Housing Service. Mrs Bollen Hickman would also be able to provide further information on the Housing Service's links with the Gangmasters' Licensing Authority.

The group was informed that the Housing Service had legal duties to inspect properties in the borough and take appropriate action against landlords who breached property standards. Rented houses were inspected when officers received complaints from tenants. If tenants did not complain about conditions then it is unlikely that the Housing Service would become aware that any problem existed. The group noted that there is anecdotal evidence that migrant workers sometimes chose to live in overcrowded conditions because it was cheaper, which proved especially helpful for those earning the minimum wage or less. Mr Crosby explained that a pilot project to identify private rented housing in targeted areas of the borough would shortly be introduced and was included in the Housing Service Plan. Under this project Housing Officers would call at rented accommodation on selected streets in the borough to check with tenants that living conditions were suitable. This would help identify properties that had poor living conditions but whose tenants were unwilling to inform the Council.

The Housing Service operates a mandatory licensing scheme for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in the borough. Non-licensable HMOs are also routinely inspected by Housing Officers. Mr Crosby informed the group that Officers often inspected upstairs accommodation in Chinese and Indian restaurants due to overcrowded conditions. Officers work closely with Kent Fire and Rescue Service and Health and Safety Officials on such cases. In cases when migrants plan to bring family members into the UK to join them, Housing Officers inspect properties on behalf of the Home Office to ensure living conditions are suitable.

The group heard that Housing Officers carried out inspections of caravan parks in the borough. Research commissioned by Kent County Council and carried out by the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) had indicated that a large number of farms in the County had caravan dwellings on-site. Mr Crosby stated that this was also a planning issue as planning permission had to be granted for caravans to be used for residential purposes. The Planning Enforcement Team Leader, Alan Bringloe, and the Environmental Health Officer, Lynne Clark, had recently carried out work on this issue.

A Private Sector Housing Officer, Thomas Best-Shaw, has been in post since early April 2008 to lead on implementation of the Council's pilot Private Accredited Lettings (PAL) Scheme and would work closely with private landlords and letting agents to improve the quality of privately rented properties in the borough. The PAL Scheme will allow landlords to apply for accreditation on-line. Following inspection, if landlords were successful they could advertise their property with a PAL seal of approval to prove that their property met the suitable standard.

Mrs Clarke told the group that when people who did not speak fluent English contacted the Housing Service, they were generally accompanied by a friend or family member who could assist with translation. The Council was signed up to the Language Line translation service and when particular legal information had to be communicated Language Line was used to ensure accurate translation. The Housing Service has not experienced a huge demand for translation or interpretation.

The group was informed that the Housing Service would be producing a leaflet later in 2008 to include important health and housing information. This would be distributed to key organisations in the borough including Accident and Emergency units at hospitals. Mrs Clarke emphasised the importance of providing information to migrant workers so that they were aware of the services available to them. She explained that the Housing Needs Team operates daily housing advice surgeries to address housing concerns.

Mrs Clarke explained that there were currently approximately 1700 households on the Housing Register. Of these, 48 were from EU countries, 37 of whom were from Poland. Nearly all of the households from EU countries that were on the Housing Register were currently living in overcrowded conditions. Since April 2007 the Housing Service had re-housed 9 EU migrant households. Mrs Clarke explained that in her experience EU migrants were generally very proactive and when given advice and information they would often go out and find their own accommodation.

The group discussed the perception that foreign nationals migrate to the UK and take social housing at the expense of locals. The group agreed that in Tunbridge Wells this was definitely not the case as less than 3% of households on the Housing Register were EU migrants. However, it often proved difficult to get this message across to people who had pre-formed opinions.

Mr Crosby informed the group that he did not consider that the A8 EU accession in 2004 had significantly impacted on the demand for affordable private rented accommodation in the borough. He stated that this accommodation was in high demand in the current financial climate but that there was no clear evidence that demand from EU migrants had substantially contributed to this. The group heard that migrant workers who were employed by hoteliers or restaurant owners would often be offered in-house accommodation tied in with their employment.

The group heard that the Cabinet had approved the Minority Ethnic Housing Strategy for consultation in March 2008. This made several references to migrant workers and it would be useful for the group to look over this document. Mr Crosby also stated that he had produced a briefing report on EU migrants and the Joint Housing Register for Council leaders. He agreed to forward this to the Overview and Scrutiny Officer for information.

Note. Following the meeting the Overview and Scrutiny Officer spoke with the Housing Policy and Research Manager, Stephanie Bollen Hickman, who provided some information on the Housing Service's relationship with the Gangmaster's Licensing Authority (GLA). The GLA was established in April 2005 following the deaths of 23 Chinese cockle pickers in Morecambe Bay in February 2004. It regulates agencies, organisations, and individuals who supply labour to the agriculture, forestry, horticulture, shellfish gathering, and food processing and packaging industries.

The GLA requires gangmasters who apply for licenses to complete a form detailing working and accommodation conditions for the migrant workers they supply. The GLA's procedure is that they act on any complaints received from migrant workers by informing the Local Authority. Housing Officers then accompany GLA Officers to carry out an inspection of the site and take appropriate action. Mrs Bollen Hickman explained that the Housing Service supported the work that the GLA undertook to inform Housing Officers of potential problems.

Appendix K – Interview with Mandi Baker, Customer Service Manager at Tunbridge Wells JobCentrePlus

Date:	13 May 2008
Members Present:	Councillor Mrs Crowhurst
Officers Present:	Laurence Doig (Overview and Scrutiny Officer)

Summary of Evidence

MW032/07 Ms Baker welcomed Councillor Mrs Crowhurst and the Overview and Scrutiny Officer to JobCentrePlus (JCP). She explained that while JCP gathered information on clients' ethnicity, this was sent to the Office of National Statistics, which collected the information from all JCPs. Statistical information on the ethnicity of JCP clients was not kept in-house. She informed the group that the Tunbridge Wells JCP provided approximately 650 people with jobseekers allowance. While she did not have detailed statistics, she explained that a very small number of these were migrant workers.

Ms Baker explained that the biggest problem facing migrant workers who accessed JCP was the language barrier. JCP used The Big Word Translation and Interpretation Service. This was an excellent service that usually provided translators on the phone within five minutes of a request being made. The leaflets that JCP provided were available in several different languages. Many of the staff members at JCP also spoke more than one language and could assist with translation. These staff members were not employed specifically as translators but the skill proved extremely beneficial when clients who did not speak fluent English accessed JCP.

Ms Baker informed the group that the largest area of employment for migrant workers who accessed JCP was the construction industry. Several construction companies in the area now employed Polish-speaking receptionists because of the high numbers of Polish workers they employed. Tunbridge Wells JCP was helping an increasing number of female migrant workers to find jobs. The hotel industry was also employing more migrant workers, particularly from Spain and Portugal, and the Tunbridge Wells Travelodge had recently employed a few.

Migrant workers who accessed JCP predominantly found out about the service from talking with friends or family who had been helped in the past. Word of mouth from those migrant workers helped by JCP was generally very positive. Ms Baker explained that a low percentage of migrant workers who accessed JCP were benefit claimants. They used the service to help find employment.

Ms Baker informed the group that the limited number of places for applicants for English language classes in the area meant that migrant workers often registered to join classes but faced a wait of several months prior to courses beginning. This made it more difficult for them to communicate and find employment. Nonetheless, Ms Baker

explained that in her experience migrant workers were extremely proactive in finding jobs and once they had been provided with important information would actively seek employment themselves.

The group heard that JCP nationally wanted to concentrate on helping jobseekers find employment but that most resources were allocated to help people access benefits to which they were entitled. Members of staff that helped to find jobs for jobseekers concentrated on helping the most vulnerable people into work. Ms Baker explained that the Tunbridge Wells JCP had an impressive record on helping lone parents and people over fifty years of age into employment with young people in particular benefiting from the Government's 'New Deal' initiative.

Ms Baker informed the group that as long as someone had the right to live and work in the UK they did not need a National Insurance Number (NINO) to begin employment. An application for a NINO took significantly longer when migrant workers applied without already having a job. However, some employers would not hire migrant workers who had yet to apply for a NINO. Ms Baker suggested that this could be due to a lack of understanding of current legislation on the part of employers.

The group was informed that JCPs had been provided the ability to be more robust with clients after they had received benefits for a period of 13 weeks. Ms Baker explained that once people received benefits for approximately six months they often found it difficult to change their mindset and get back into employment. She said that Royal British Legion Industries was always extremely helpful in assisting JCP in helping people return to employment. Tunbridge Wells JCP also had a good track record of returning jobseekers to work within three weeks of their registering.

Councillor Mrs Crowhurst thanked Ms Baker for meeting. The Overview and Scrutiny Officer informed Ms Baker that the group had also met with Stuart Shields, who ran the English Project at New Life Church in Southborough. This was an English language class that operated once a week. The Officer agreed to pass on details of the English Project to Ms Baker.

Appendix L – Interview with Peter Jervis, Owner of Downingbury Farm in Pembury, and the farm’s migrant workers

Date:	22 May 2008
Members Present:	Councillors Mrs Crowhurst and Mrs Herriot
Officers Present:	Laurence Doig (Overview and Scrutiny Officer)

Summary of Evidence

MW035/07 The Councillors thanked Mr Jervis for inviting them to the Farm. Mr Jervis introduced the group to ten workers who had all recently arrived on the farm to work for six months. They had all come from Romania or Latvia through the Harvesting Opportunities Permit Scheme (HOPS). HOPS places foreign students on farms in the UK during the planting and harvesting season and is part of the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS).

Councillor Mrs Crowhurst thanked the workers for agreeing to meet the Councillors and informed them of the work the group had undertaken and the purpose of the review. The workers told the group that their main concern was that they would like to be able to learn the English language but they did not have any resources for doing so. One of the workers explained that the workers desired English lessons but that they worked from Monday to Friday and were not able to drive anywhere as there were no cars available for them to use. Mr Jervis informed the group that the HOPS scheme specifically requested farmers not to provide private vehicles to workers. He explained that he often transported the workers to different events or social activities. The workers explained that if they were unable to attend lessons then learning materials would still be greatly appreciated. This would allow them to learn English at the farm in their free time. Councillor Mrs Crowhurst told the workers that the Councillors had met Stuart Shields, who ran ‘The English Project’ at New Life Church in Southborough. The Overview and Scrutiny Officer was asked to speak to Mr Shields to ask whether he could visit the farm or provide any English language learning resources.

The workers informed the group that they were not aware of many activities that were available in Tunbridge Wells. They had not been provided with any information about leisure activities and this would have been really useful on arrival. A map of the local area would also have been useful. They were particularly interested in boot fairs in the area. The Councillors informed the workers of some of the facilities for young people available in the town and explained that boot fairs were popular around Pembury in the spring and summer and were usually held at weekends. The workers informed the group that it was difficult to spend social time in the either Tunbridge Wells or Tonbridge because access to these towns via bus services from Pembury was poor outside of working hours. The workers had used a taxi minibus on one occasion but this had been too expensive for them to consider it again.

The workers explained that they would like to have more contact with English people. Mr Jervis informed the Councillors that the farm also employed a couple of English workers but that they worked on weekends and didn't really socialise with the European workers. He explained that he was not in favour of his European workers attending local pubs to drink in Pembury village.

The Councillors were informed that the workers lived in a building on the site of the farm. Mr Jervis said that their living conditions were adequate. The workers told the Councillors that they had not established bank accounts in the country and were paid in cash. They told the Councillors that if any of the workers needed medical attention they would visit the local doctor.

Appendix M – Community and Corporate Planning Interview with Michael Holman, Chairman of Tunbridge Wells Twinning and Friendship Association, and Alan Mayhew, Professor at the University of Sussex

Date:	7 December 2007
Officers Present:	Holly Goring (Research and Information Officer) and Nazeya Hussain (Head of Community and Corporate Planning)

Summary of Evidence

Nazeya Hussain welcomed Mr Holman and Mr Mayhew to the Town Hall and informed them of the purpose of the meeting and reasons for the research.

The meeting focused around the need for the Council and partner agencies to map and engage with new migrant communities living and working within the borough. Mr Holman and Mr Mayhew explained that in most cases, the European migrant communities were not in fact communities but individuals from various east European countries who did not necessarily congregate or form communities.

They explained that a number of highly qualified migrants were entering the UK and finding employment that required a low number of qualifications. They also said that in this area it was fairly easy to distinguish between the different groups that are residing here – some are young (generally central and eastern European migrants) and are unlikely to settle whereas others have families and are perhaps more qualified and wish to settle in the borough.

They discussed possible sources of information and thought that a number of European migrants were likely to be working at W. A. Turner (an industry on the outskirts of Royal Tunbridge Wells), in agricultural industries (which look for seasonal workers), and in more casual industries such as public houses and retail.

They explained that June Bridgeman of Soroptomist International of Tunbridge Wells and District was producing a leaflet for women on equalities and accessing services. They advised that it may be worth finding out what information Ms. Bridgeman has found in the process.

They continued to discuss the great work being carried out by organisations in the local area. St. Gregory's Catholic School and Bennett Memorial were regarded as very well organised in welcoming new pupils who did not speak English as their first language and required additional support.

They also suggested other contacts and places in the area that could possibly help with our research. Suggestions were the Polish shop, the Pub opposite the polish shop and Camden Lighting Shop in Camden Road, the previously mentioned schools, St. Augustines Catholic Church, Jackie Jedrzejewski of Southborough Town Council,

Dowingbury Fruit Farm at Pembury and possibly Tonbridge Police Station.

Mr Holman and Mr Mayhew were very helpful in providing contacts upon which to gather more research. Ms Hussain thanked them for their help and suggested that contact should be maintained.

Appendix N – Community and Corporate Planning Interview with Father Peter Stodart of St. Augustine’s Catholic Church

Date:	17 December 2007
Officers Present:	Holly Goring (Research and Information Officer) and Nazeya Hussain (Head of Community and Corporate Planning)

Summary of Evidence

Nazeya Hussain welcomed Fr. Peter Stodart and informed him of the purpose of the meeting and reasons for the research. Fr. Peter discussed the history of in-migration explaining that Polish in-migration was first seen post WW2. Many Polish Churches were set up across the country and these groups had different views and lifestyles to that of the current European communities moving into the area.

Fr. Peter believed that the first contact new European migrants made when arriving in Tunbridge Wells was with friends or contacts within networks that they already knew. It is then, that they are likely to find out about the Church and often use the Church to build new networks.

Fr. Peter believed that several European communities were present in the Tunbridge Wells area, including Polish, Czech, Slovak and Lithuanian. Some of these were very involved in the Catholic Church in their own country and so were likely to maintain that connection with the Church here. Other migrants have found the style of mass is slightly different but they still enjoy the link with the Catholic Church.

Fr. Peter thought that the majority of migrants were highly skilled and the majority were also young single people, who are likely to marry back in Poland. However, Fr. Peter believed that some are beginning to settle with their families here. He thought this was apparent by the numbers accessing local schools, which shows migrants want their families to integrate fully in the community. He explained that a small group of around twenty young migrants had formed their own social network and this network has helped other new migrants in the area.

Fr. Peter stated that there were some difficulties with the children of these migrant communities entering schools in the area, as with any school placement. The main schools that these groups wish their children to go to are St. Gregory’s Catholic School, Bennett Memorial, and St. Augustine’s Primary School. Fr. Peter thought that these communities might be quite disappointed if their children could not access a school with a church connection.

St. Augustine’s Church has an area on their notice board in the entrance specifically for international communities. This may be a space that the Council could use to advertise events or post information for European communities. Ms Hussain explained that she might also look to include European migrants in the boost survey section of the Borough Wide Survey, where hard to reach groups are surveyed. Fr.

Peter requested that if the Council targeted the group of young people from St. Augustines Church for interviewing he would like to see a copy of the questionnaire.

Ms Hussain asked Fr. Peter whether the Church had had much contact with the Filipino community. Fr. Peter thought that there were a large number of Filipino's in this area and predicted that there were around 500 individuals but though that these individuals were much more settled in the community.

The Filipino community mainly moved to Tunbridge Wells through arranged work with the Health Services. Many have moved on from their original (first) accommodation and have located around York Road and Dudley Road but more are moving further out of the centre of Royal Tunbridge Wells. Fr. Peter also explained that the Filipino community hold a cultural show at the Camden Centre every year.

NH thanked Fr. Stodart for the information provided and explained how this will help to build a picture of the current situation in Tunbridge Wells.

Appendix O – Community and Corporate Planning Interview with Marketa, a Slovakian resident (Marketa is a pseudonym)

Date:	10 January 2008
Officers Present:	Holly Goring (Research and Information Officer) and Nazeya Hussain (Head of Community and Corporate Planning)

Summary of Evidence

Marketa was welcomed to the Town Hall and Ms Hussain explained the purpose of the meeting and what the Council aimed to achieve from the research.

Marketa explained that she originally came to Tunbridge Wells through an au pair agency and therefore lived with a family in the area. She explained that migrants who came to Tunbridge Wells alone would have very different experiences than those who had contacts in the area. If it was someone's first time, she explained that they do not have the experience or references to gain employment and rent accommodation. She stated that migrants cannot register for a National Insurance number unless they have a bank account, but often bank accounts cannot be obtained until the relevant information is provided as well. If migrants have no bank account it presents difficulties gaining employment and therefore it becomes a vicious cycle.

Marketa explained that she had to wait three months before she could find employment at a Hospital and an English friend helped her to do so. Renting accommodation was difficult as she explained that a number of adverts stated that landlords requested references in the local newspaper. For those who could not provide a reference, the first question the landlord asked was whether they had a job and were earning.

Marketa first came to this area through an Au Pair agency and didn't know anyone in the area. On arrival she described how having poor English meant it was difficult to explain what she wanted to say. She felt that many au pairs did not have the support they needed from the English families. As an au pair, Marketa did not know she could go to the Doctor when she was ill but became unwell and therefore had to register with a local Doctor. She advised that her personal circumstances assisted her to register because by being an au pair she had a permanent address.

Marketa felt that Slovaks in the area were generally single, whereas the Polish were more likely to settle with their families. Marketa went to West Kent College to learn English but had difficulty accessing the college for these classes. She was dependant upon the train but the college was also quite a distance from the station. She had heard that translators for driving tests were available and was currently learning to drive. She thought that a general guide or booklet might be a good way of letting new resident migrants know what support is available. These

guides could then be placed in the schools, language classes, the Church and shopping centres.

Marketa also discussed the concern that she had with new migrant families moving to the area. The accommodation they take is not necessarily in good condition as it is cheaper and looking after their children is sometimes difficult if they are busy working. She believed that most families would move to London when entering the UK but if they knew someone in an area like Tunbridge Wells it is likely that they would come straight here.

When asked whether she knew where new European migrants tended to live and go out in the area, she thought some people might be living down Camden Road, past the bridge. Marketa also thought we might be able to find people in the JobCentre, the Polish bar and in the Wetherspoons pub, where she used to meet with friends when she was an au pair and did not have much money.

Marketa also explained that registering for a National Insurance number was now made more difficult as applicants were required to go to JobCentrePlus in Maidstone. There is no direct train service and if your use of the English language is poor, it proves difficult.

Ms Hussain thanked Marketa for coming to talk about her experience and thanked her for providing so much helpful information.

**Appendix P – Feedback received from Doctors surgeries in the borough
(information provided in March 2008)**

<i>How many (and what rough percentage) of your registered patients are from an EU country and likely to be migrant workers or family members?</i>	
Location of surgery	Response
Royal Tunbridge Wells	Not recorded.
Lamberhurst	Probably less than 2%
Royal Tunbridge Wells	Not known
Brenchley	1-2%
Royal Tunbridge Wells	250 (8%)
Royal Tunbridge Wells	No way of gauging this as register doesn't state country of origin

<i>Has there been any notable increase in the number of EU people applying to register at your practice since the 2004 accession into the EU of ten countries?</i>	
Location of Surgery	Response
Royal Tunbridge Wells	Yes – mainly from Poland
Lamberhurst	Yes, but only a few more
Royal Tunbridge Wells	Yes
Brenchley	Slight increase – mainly people working in pack houses and fruit picking which has always been seasonal
Royal Tunbridge Wells	Yes
Royal Tunbridge Wells	Significant increase in patients. Vast majority are non-English citizens

<i>How has any increase in registrations affected the services provided by the surgery?</i>	
Location of Surgery	Response
Royal Tunbridge Wells	Yes – extra demand on consultants
Lamberhurst	No
Royal Tunbridge Wells	The need to ask for a translator for consultations is new to us. Lack of information on childhood immunisation – we have to actually seek the info and transcribe it to English equivalent. Also expectations of the service are high i.e. to the level that they would normally pay for, e.g. longer consultation etc
Brenchley	Hasn't really affected services
Royal Tunbridge Wells	Yes – maternity, language difficulties
Royal Tunbridge Wells	Eastern European residents often need pregnancy-related help. Necessary immunisations after giving birth are not always given due to a lack of understanding on the part of the mother. It is now difficult to schedule regular clinics for general illnesses such as asthma, diabetes due to the vast numbers of patients. New patients undergo a health-check, which is time-consuming. Pregnancy issues are also very time-consuming, meaning that patients with day-to-day problems are often left waiting.

<i>Do you provide any special services, for example translation, to address specific needs of migrants? If so, please provide details.</i>	
Location of Surgery	Response
Royal Tunbridge Wells	No – Usually arranged by patient
Lamberhurst	Not necessary
Royal Tunbridge Wells	We bring in a translator as appropriate
Brenchley	No
Royal Tunbridge Wells	No
Royal Tunbridge Wells	No, but translation/interpretation is needed and will be looked into

<i>Do you have any other comments?</i>	
Location of Surgery	Response
Royal Tunbridge Wells	The Surgery has stopped admitting new patients due to an overload, especially within the past year. More than 300 new patients have registered from June 2007 to March 2008, increasing the number of registered patients from 7,800 to 8,111. This places a huge demand on services.
Pembury	It is with regret that I have to inform you that we have no way of identifying migrant workers from our clinical system.
Goudhurst	We do not collect this information so regret we are unable to help you
Cranbrook	I apologise – due to increasing work commitments and low morale caused by the government I do not feel able to complete this – I have to limit my work to that which benefits my patients
Royal Tunbridge Wells	I have moved away from the area so will not be sending back the Survey

Appendix Q – Details of *The English Project*, operated by Stuart and Guna Shields at Tunbridge Wells New Life Church

The *English* Project



Background information about the church

New Life Church was founded in 1993 and currently has around 200 adult members. We meet at the New Life Centre (the former ambulance station) in Speldhurst Road, Southborough. We also use the Calvary Church building in the centre of the town for some activities. The church runs a number of regular activities including a mums and toddlers group, Kidz Klub, a fathers and toddlers group, marriage course, and coffee morning (popular with older people) amongst of others. We are affiliated to *Newfrontiers*, a family of over 200 churches in the UK and some 500 worldwide.

Origins of The *English* Project

The church has for some time had members from other nations and currently there are 17 nations represented. We regularly come into contact with people from other nations through the various projects that we run. After EU enlargement in 2004 we found that increasingly they were people from the new EU nations such as Poland and the Baltic Countries. Generally these were people who spoke good English and were successfully adapting to life in the UK.

In 2005 however three Poles from a farm in Bidborough started coming to the church. Their English was much more limited and as we got to know them it became clear that they had various practical needs as well. Apart from the language, these included practical assistance with filling in forms, finding out information, use of the Internet and friendship.

We realised that there were large numbers of people similar to them on the same farm and in the town as a whole and we started to investigate how we could provide this sort of help on a larger scale.

August - December 2007

As a result, two of us trained and qualified as English language teachers and in August 2007 we started a language school and drop-in one evening per week. Initially we advertised only on the farm in Bidborough with which we had begun to establish a relationship. We had 24 students the first evening - all bar one was from or connected to the farm. Over the course of the next five months we had students from Poland, Slovakia, Lithuania, Russia, Georgia, Romania, Latvia, Ukraine and Afghanistan. We ran two classes, one at elementary level and one at intermediate level along with a café and other activities for students to practise the English language they had learned.

We charged a flat fee of £15 simply to cover the cost of a course book and other materials. This meant the tuition itself was effectively free.

Over time the numbers of students dwindled. The reasons for this were not clear but it became obvious that tiredness after early mornings and long hours was a big factor. There were also other logistical issues that required liaison with the farm to try to resolve.

After the project had been running for a number of weeks we started to advertise more widely in the town. There were various expressions of interest but this did not leave to any further students.

January 2008 to date

In January 2008 we restarted with new students from the same farm. This time they were joined by others from the town. As a result of our experience we made some changes to the way that we were operating. One was to move the day to Wednesday, and another was to ask students to pay a deposit prior to lessons. The idea of the deposit is simply is to get students to commit to coming to a certain number of lessons. If they come to all the lessons then we give them the deposit back. We have found this to be effective in increasing the consistency of attendance and it has helped greatly with our planning of lessons.

To date about 40 students have gone through the school, some just for a short time, others for up to a term.

Organisation

All the staff including the teachers are volunteers. We decided initially that the café should charge just to cover costs but in practice we have waived the charges. If numbers greatly increased we may re-impose the charges. It is worth noting that many of our students would not be eligible for Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funding either because they are not EU nationals or they are not on benefits. Facilities – which include classrooms, a kitchen and café area - are provided free of charge to us by the church.

Information service

We have also been involved in trying to answer questions posed by migrant workers and putting together a compendium of useful information. Examples of questions we have been asked include the following or similar:-

- Do I need to re-register my foreign vehicle here?
- How do I get insurance for my vehicle?
- Do I need a visa to travel to France? (From non EU national).
- How do my girlfriend and I get married in the UK?
- How can I legally stay in/come back to the UK?
- What should I go and see in London?
- How do I prove to the Polish Authorities that I am paying National Insurance in the UK?
- How do I learn to drive in the UK?

Research project

In January we also started a research project with the aim of finding out in more detail what the needs of migrant workers in the town were. We have been joined in this by a part-time researcher. From people we have spoken to so far it has emerged that:-

- There are a range of motivations for people coming to the UK. These include to earn money, education, to learn English and simply to see what life here is like.
- Impressions of UK life are often very positive, The stability of society, way of life, high standard of living and politeness of people on the street have all been mentioned as part of the plus side of living in this country.
- The negatives mentioned so far have not been many or significant – differences in food and climate for example. See below however for some issues that have emerged from our experience more generally.

Issues affecting migrant workers.

In the course of the work we have done and in the early stages of our research the issues relating to migrant workers that we have come across are as follows:-

- Feedback from workers about the way they have been treated at work seems generally to be reasonably positive.
- Housing is a significant problem especially for people who want to move away from accommodation tied to a job. This might be because they have got another job without accommodation or (in the case of the farm we have done a lot of our work with), children are not (we are told) allowed to live on site.
- For example one Polish man that we know lodged with a family in the church after getting a new job using his skills. Because he wanted to bring his family over to the UK he eventually moved to a cheaper area and obtained a private rent. To help pay for this they took in another Polish family as lodgers. leaving the house fairly overcrowded.
- Crime has not been mentioned as an issue to us, perhaps reflecting the generally low level of crime in the area.
- Other forms of victimisation have been rarely mentioned. It is probably significant that many EU migrants look very similar to existing TW residents. One girl told us that she and two other friends were spoken to rudely in a pub for they were speaking their own language but we are not aware of this being a common occurrence.
- One of our contacts reported that she was bullied (and possibly unfairly dismissed) in her workplace (not in Tunbridge Wells). In that case the person responsible was from a different A8 country.

We are not aware from the contacts that we have had of people trafficking or exploitation of migrants.

