



Annual Equality and Diversity Report

A reflection on the 2021-22 Year

Published: Xx 2023

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Foreword

Thank you for taking the time to read the council's Equality and Diversity Annual Report.

This report has been produced in accordance with the Public Sector Equality Duty created by the Equality Act 2010. The purpose of this document is to:

- Provide a range of demographic and socio-economic information. This can be used to better understand the needs of our local communities and those that may be affected by council services, policies and practices, and in order to inform decision-making and policy development.
- Demonstrate how the council has engaged with the community, taken actions to enable better understanding of different customer needs and ways to support them, and considered potential equality and diversity implications prior to making decisions.
- Outline the activities the council has undertaken during 2021-22 to promote equality, diversity and inclusion both amongst its workforce (officers and members) and within the community, and the positive measures that have been taken to remove barriers, improve access to services and increase customer satisfaction.

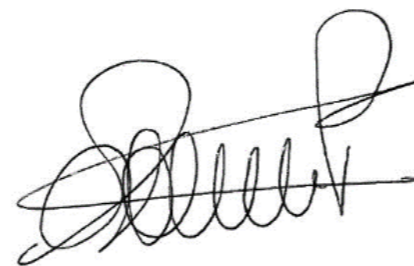
We hope that you find this document useful and informative. Further information, including the council's related Equality and Diversity Policy, can be found at: <https://folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/your-council/policies-plans-and-documents/equality-and-diversity>

Alternatively you can contact us at: policy@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

Yours sincerely,



Clr Jenny Hollingsbee
Deputy Leader of the Council and
Cabinet Member for Communities



Dr Susan Priest
Chief Executive



Section 1

Our Achievements and Engagement Activities

Introduction: The council has undertaken numerous projects throughout 2021/22 against the backdrop of recovery from the pandemic.

This section looks in more detail at some of the engagement activities we conducted over the year to promote equality, diversity and inclusion. Our achievements are fully detailed in [2021-22 Annual Performance Report: 'A snapshot of our year'](#)

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Folkestone & Hythe Housing Service

The new in-house housing landlord service was introduced in October 2020 and 2021/22 was spent embedding and developing the service. Key areas of work included:

- The development and launch of the new Strategic Tenants Advisory Panel – a group of council tenants from a wide variety of backgrounds, including people with disabilities and from different ethnic background. The panel works with senior officers at a strategic level to scrutinise performance and to hold the landlord to account.
- A private Facebook group just for council tenants and leaseholders has been set up to facilitate agile 2-way communication.
- A Tenant Engagement Strategy has been developed and the associated Action Plan to ensure tenant engagement work develops and increases.
- A manager from the Housing Team is a standing member of the council’s District Vulnerability Panel, ensuring that any concerns about vulnerable or potentially vulnerable tenants can be promptly raised in a multi- disciplinary setting.
- A re-launch and strengthening of the Independent Living Forum, where tenant representatives of the sheltered (elderly) housing service meet to discuss issues relevant to them.
- Increasing the frequency of printed publications that are sent by post to all tenants from twice a year to quarterly.
- The engagement and involvement of council tenants from all backgrounds is encouraged and enabled by the provision of multiple contact methods including online, by telephone and in person via home visit.
- Staff have access to professional translation and interpretation services.

We have continued to work on delivering homes that meet the needs of our changing population and during the 2021/22 year we have:

- Delivered a total of 44 new affordable homes with partners for rent and shared ownership continuing to boost the supply of much needed homes in the district.
- 298 hospital admissions prevented or hospital discharges accelerated as a result of Private Sector Housing Team and partner intervention.

- Brought 44 long term empty homes within the district back into use.
- Improved 287 private sector homes for local people as a result of enforcement action and the provision of the Disabled Facilities Grant, Winter Warmth and Home Safe loans.
- Awarded a total of 68 disabled facilities grants to support those with disabilities adapt their own homes
- We have invested over £570,000 on disabled aids and adaptations to our council housing stock to help council tenants with disabilities live safely and comfortably in their homes. The following major and minor disabled adaptations work was undertaken during year:

Major Works		Minor Works	
Job Type	Number of Jobs	Job Type	Number of Jobs
FFS/Bathroom Refurbs	40	Grab Rail, Handrails etc.	139
Door Widenings & New Doors (internal & external)	10	Kitchen & Bathroom Alterations	34
Groundwork (ramps, paths, driveways, patios etc.)	32	Door Widenings & New Doors (internal & external)	13
Kitchen Refurb Works	1	Groundwork (ramps, paths, driveways, patios, fencing, permissions etc.)	27
Stairlifts	23	Galvanised Rails Only	22
Whole House Refurb Works	4		

The Council has continued to implement its Homelessness Prevention Strategy, working closely with our local partners, including the Rainbow Centre and Porchlight, to deliver a range of services to prevent vulnerable people from becoming rough sleepers and, where people are already rough sleepers, provide services to support them to access accommodation and help move to a more settled way of life. The services include:

01 Our Achievements and Engagement Activities

- The provision of outreach services to identify and verify people rough sleeping in the district.
- The provision of emergency accommodation to help people move away from the street.
- Sign-posting to mental health and other support services.
- Support to assist people to access long-term accommodation both within the social and private housing sectors.
- Support services to prevent tenancy breakdown and a potential return to the streets.
- The provision of accommodation services for the most entrenched rough sleepers, including intensive housing support.
- Joint working with other services, in particular the Rainbow Centre and Porchlight, in scoping the development of all year-round accommodation for rough sleepers, pending their move on into secure housing, with the provision of emergency pods for immediate access.

The council provides funding to the Rainbow Centre in Sandgate Road, Folkestone, to enable them to provide a range of support services to vulnerable people with a history of rough sleeping or who are living in insecure accommodation. People assisted through the service during the year are then being helped into longer term accommodation.

The council also supports the Rainbow Centre to deliver the Winter Shelter project, providing emergency accommodation to vulnerable homeless people during the winter months. A total of 29 people were supported through the project over the winter period until the end of June 2022, with a further Winter Shelter for 2022/23 ongoing.

Engagement with local Armed Forces Community

The Folkestone & Hythe District has a long tradition of cooperation between its civilian community and the local armed forces. In 2021/22, engagement activities were still affected by the pandemic but we continued to support the local armed forces community.

In December 2021, the council held an event at Westenhanger Castle for the re-signing of the Armed Forces Covenant 10 years after we were the first district council in the country to sign it. The event was attended by 45 invited guests including Lord Lieutenant of Kent, Chair of Kent County Council, Mayors and representatives from the military and veteran communities.

The council has various armed forces personnel within its workforce, including veterans, a Cadet Forces Adult Volunteer, and military spouses. We were awarded the Defence Employers Recognition Scheme Gold Award in March 2021, the highest award for being a forces friendly employer. The Armed Forces Champion and Armed Forces Lead Officer attended the Gold Award ceremony at The Hon Artillery Company, London on 17th November 2021.

The Folkestone 'Armed Forces Veterans Support' monthly drop-ins recommenced in July 2021 after being suspended due to the pandemic. A new drop-in started at the Folkestone Nepalese Community Centre in November 2021. The importance of the Drop-ins are demonstrated by feedback from one veteran:

"Just thought I'd give you an update on my situation. I got my job back as Groundsman in Hythe which lead me to getting a job with London Stadium. After a season almost two I moved upwards and got a job with West Ham united as Groundsman. My ending up on the street and walking into your drop in was the beginning of my wake up call to never give up. I got help I turned my life around and I haven't looked back. I now live in London to be close to my work however I'm often down in Hythe to visit my friends and watch the odd football match. I see it as home even though I come from Glasgow, Hythe is where my heart is "

Support has been provided to the Gurkha veteran community in Cheriton who were able to open their own community centre in October 2021. The Council in partnership with Kent Coast Volunteering and Kent County Council supported the delivery of the new Folkestone Nepalese Community Centre. The centre is run by the Folkestone Nepalese Community (FNC), a charitable incorporated organisation and includes welfare support office, a meeting room, event and socialising spaces, and an IT room. The council has supported the project through its ward grant scheme and some funding towards core costs. Support and advice was offered throughout, while the Local Area Officers also helped with redecorating the interior of the centre.

The council's lead Armed Forces officer has attended a range of meetings, briefings and events throughout the year, including Kent & Medway Armed Forces Lead Officer meetings, Unit Welfare Officer meetings and the Kent & Medway Civilian Military Partnership board meetings and attended the virtual Kent & Medway Armed Forces Covenant Conference in October 2021 and the Armed Forces Champions Conference in February 2022.

01 Our Achievements and Engagement Activities

Engagement with the wider community

During the period 1st April 2021 – 31st March 2022, there were new pieces of work that helped support communities re-engage back into society and seek ongoing help as a result of the pandemic. Using Contain Outbreak Management Funding, some key organisations were grant funded to deliver a range of projects. Some grants provided ongoing support to address winter needs from Nov 2021 to March 2022, while others were more Summer based projects and projects with schools. These are listed below:

Organisation	Name of Project
Citizens Advice Bureau	Covid Recovery Support
Shepway Sports Trust 3	Active Sports
Folkestone Sports Centre Trust	Active Hawkinge
Age UK South Kent Coast	Covid Recovery, Impact of Covid and Winter Pressures facing Older People in our community
Age UK Hythe	Winter Grants
Rainbow Centre	Healthy Food Support
Spectrum Arts	Hummingbird Life Hub
Folkestone Youth Project	Community Embrace and Lift
Leas Lift Lockout	Leas Lift Lockout Community Project
SpaceHive – using KCCs Crowd Fund Platform	Crowd Funding Kent -To enable grass roots organisations to crowd fund for their project ideas. Workshops for project creators and various rounds of funding have been delivered in the District

The council hosted the annual ‘Meet the Funders’ event in person on 4th November 2021. The event attracted over 60 attendees who had the opportunity to hear from funders including the National Lottery, Kent Community Foundation and CrowdFund Kent and then have a 15-minute face to face meeting to discuss their project funding needs.

Our community networking events recommenced face to face in March 2022. The first event held at the Folkestone Nepalese Community Centre was on the topic of ‘All about Volunteering’ and 25 participants attended the event, and over 85% rated the event ‘good’ or ‘very good’ across all the evaluation criteria.

Two half-day training sessions were delivered online: ‘Setting Up Your Group’ in May 2021 (13 attendees), and ‘Running Your Group’ 9th February 2022 (10 attendees) with very positive feedback received on both sessions.

The council facilitated the establishment of the District Food Network. The Network is chaired by Sarah Montgomery from The Rainbow Centre. The group meets once every two months and has supported delivery of the Community Fridge, the Hythe Pantry and other food related projects. The group also produced the ‘Food Resources in Folkestone & Hythe’ guide.

In July 2021, the White Cliffs Community Rail Partnership (a partnership with Dover District Council) organised a successful event marking the 60th Anniversary of the electrification of the south coast railway, re-enacting the 1961 event which saw mayors from towns along the route join the train and celebrate at the end of the line. All our mayors joined the train from Westenhanger to Sandwich where we had a presentation and afternoon tea.

We attended two information sharing events at Romney Marsh Community hub aimed at older people within the community, one on 29th October 2021 and one on 28th March 2022.

Annual Grant Funding

The council has continued to support charities, the voluntary and the community sector through grants. Kent County Council worked with the District Council to distribute RECONNECT funding across a range of themes aiming to reconnect young people back into society following the pandemic.

Our Local Children’s Partnership Group (LCPG) distributed over £50,000 of funding towards local community projects for young people, and delivery by funded organisations was adapted around Covid-19 restrictions to ensure the LCPG priorities below could continue to be addressed:

- Raising aspiration and educational attainment, and extending employment opportunities.
- Creating Safe and Resilient Communities.
- Enhancing communication skills as a foundation for life.

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During 2021/22, 190 Ward Grants, totalling over £89,000, have benefitted local charities and community groups, further enhancing the council's involvement with local communities, and assisted with the delivery of efficient and effective projects and services to ward areas.

In 2021-22 annual grant funding was renewed by the council for the following community organisations, many of which adjusted their activities to deliver online services when the coronavirus lockdown occurred:

- **Shepway Sports Trust:** To provide accessible sports and play-based facilities and activities within the district, focusing on reducing health inequalities and engaging children and young people in order to encourage health lifestyles as well as reduced anti-social behaviour. Following the coronavirus pandemic new ways to reconnect with young people to take part in sports activities were successfully developed (including the RECONNECT programme) and with the opening of the new urban skate park at F51 in March 2022.
- **Folkestone Sports Centre Trust:** To provide accessible sports and wellbeing facilities and activities for all age groups within the district. The Trust continues to recover from the pandemic but is developing exciting new programmes including sky walk (a new high ropes project and refurbishing ski slope facilities).
- **Active Sport Kent (previously known as the Kent County Sports Partnership):** To improve access to sports clubs and coaching activities across the district. The partnership ran conferences and webinars and provided support and guidance to sports clubs and leisure providers on how to access funding and deliver alternative online provision where the pandemic was still impacting delivery.
- **Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB):** To deliver debt, legal, housing and consumer advice on the council's behalf and working closely with council teams. The CAB was extremely busy addressing problems of hardship and dealing with residents adversely affected by the pandemic (e.g. through job losses or furlough).
- **Academy FM:** To support a community radio station which promotes the district, works with young people, aids community interaction and raises awareness of local issues and activities. The station continued to promote local initiatives, including promotion of the community hubs for support and advice.
- **Red Zebra:** To support the running of volunteer networking sessions across the district to increase volunteering, support the voluntary and community sector as well as improve health and wellbeing. Red Zebra delivered a number of these sessions online.

- **Folkestone Quarterhouse:** To deliver a programme of visual, performance and musical arts, educational and performance activities to families, schools and hard to reach groups in the district. Although the Quarter House was closed due to the pandemic, Creative Folkestone were able to deliver online services including projects with schools and other organisations. The range of online projects increased and other events took place in the community as services returned back to normal.

In December 2021 the council also agreed to join the Crowdfund Kent scheme that was launched previously by Kent County Council in February 2021 to contribute match funding to local projects that participate via the Spacehive Crowdfunding platform. In early 2022, the details were agreed and a partnership was established with Kent County Council. The Spring 2022 round closed at the end of April 2022 and the district council's contributions were agreed in May/June so will feature in next year's report covering the 2022/23 year.

Kent Reconnect Funding

As part of the recovery from the C-19 global pandemic, Kent County Council provided Reconnect funding based on a number of themes to enable young people to reconnect back into society. As a result during Summer 2021, the Reconnect Programme allocated £2.5m to Local Children's Partnership Groups (LCPGs) to fund three rounds of locality grants.

The £2.5m was allocated to LCPGs based on child population numbers and indices of deprivation. The district was allocated **£164,580** and the spend against each round of funding is provided below. Because of delivery timescales, the project wasn't managed strictly against financial years but against the whole project timeline (June 2021 – August 2022).

The three rounds of Reconnect funding bids resulted in allocations as below and projects delivered covering the period April 1st 2021 – Summer 2022 are described.

- **Round 1 (June 2021) – summer provision for 2021 £45,796**
- **Round 2 (October 2021) – on-going provision until summer 2022 £58,747**
- **Round 3 (February/March 2022) – summer provision for 2022 £60,037**

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The Reconnect grants covered many projects including outdoor activities, building resilience, reading projects etc.

It is important to note that Folkestone and Hythe District will have benefited from Countywide Reconnect funded projects, for example, the Anxiety Based School Avoidance Programme, the A for Attendance Programme as well as additional services commissioned through Reconnect, such as the You Are Not Alone service.

In addition some themes relating to reconnecting young people back into society had their own ring fenced funding and a sports based theme was one example of this, and the council was allocated £31,599. The Reconnect leisure centre grants ran from February 2022 – August 2022 so a part of the financial year for this report was covered by these.

The district still benefits from the Early Help grants that the Folkestone & Hythe LCPG manage. Funding panels review bids received and the below are the projects funded during 2021/22. The funds allocated for our District total £55,840 and were awarded to the following projects:

Grant	Organisation	Programme	Programme Description
Early Help Grant 2021/22	Rising Sun Domestic Violence and Abuse Service	All About Me	Provide a 10-week trauma-informed one-to-one programme (or occasionally small group mentoring) for 26 children/young people aged 5 to 11 and their parents who have been affected by domestic abuse.
Early Help Grant 2021/22	Shepway Sports Trust	Fit and Fed Programme	Providing free holiday activities and lunches for 77 vulnerable children. The children will also have the opportunity to access the first ever multi-storey indoor skatepark in the world when it opens in Folkestone in 2021
Early Help Grant 2021/22	Skill Horizons	Be Part of the Solution	Project engaging 90 pupils in year 6 (with up to 400 family members indirectly) facing the transition from Primary to Secondary School. The project will be working with each group once a week over 12 weeks that is designed to develop long term positive emotional health and wellbeing through outdoor learning.
Early Help Grant 2021/22	Excelsior Safeguarding Community Interest Company	Need to Know - Josh's Story	Transition support for Year 6 primary school children to reduce adolescent risk, develop consequential thinking and support positive choices

Grant	Organisation	Programme	Programme Description
Early Help Grant 2021/22	Woodpecker Wood Community Interest Company	Where education meets the outdoors	Project supporting the most vulnerable young people not in education, employment or training (known as NEET) (18 from the district aged 16 - 19 years) were helped through a process of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - raising self-esteem and confidence - developing team working and work-related skills - accrediting them with a range of appropriate qualifications - improving their functionality with English and Maths qualifications - moving them into a sustained destination - increasing the aspirations of young people unable to access further education opportunities

Folkestone & Hythe Community Safety Partnership (F&H CSP)

During 2021-22 the statutory F&H CSP have continued to meet progress key activity including the administration of Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) funding to deliver projects to vulnerable and diverse communities across the district. These included:

- Urban Pastors – continuing to carry out night time sweeps of key locations to address Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and any support needed for vulnerable people they may have come across.
- Aspire – ongoing engagement and support to homeless individuals and liaising with appropriate agencies.
- Ring door bells to support victims of Domestic Abuse.
- Collaborative working with Kent Police's Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) to support the police with the provision of knife wands (to detect people who may be carrying concealed weapons) for premises such as pubs.
- Safety in the Night time Economy – Collaboratively working with Kent Police by attending over 20 night-time venues during the evening on Saturday 27 November 2021 and giving out hundreds of 'spiking prevention' beer mats along with safety advice and information to those running the venues as well as their patrons.
- Folkestone Collective: A project providing landlord liaison/Accommodation Support for prison releases as well as work experience development opportunities for ex-offenders.

The CSP continues to ensure training is provided to key partners and agencies on issues such as PREVENT, knife crime and inputs to consultation documents e.g. the Kent and Medway Gangs' Strategy.

The Community Safety Unit (CSU) has also continued to help to deliver a number of successes - such as implementing closure orders on premises where antisocial or criminal behaviour is taking place, tracing missing persons and tackling homelessness - through the close partnership working that these meetings enable.

01 Our Achievements and Engagement Activities

The Community Safety Unit (CSU) weekly meeting saw an increase in partnership engagement and attendance, as the online meetings allowed more partners to attend with between 30-40 people from different agencies attending regularly. The CSU meetings have helped to deliver a number of successes - such as implementing closure orders on premises where antisocial or criminal behaviour is taking place, tracing missing persons and tackling homelessness - through the close partnership working that these meetings enable.

Napier Barracks

The Use of Napier Barracks continues and partner agencies worked with the managing agents to deal with issues such as littering and anti-social behaviour. The site is largely settled and ongoing education continues. Outbreaks of infectious diseases are well controlled and non-governmental organisation groups provide a range of activities on site.

In November 2021 additional pressure from the use of two hotels to house Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Minors (UASC) was managed. The work to ensure young people were safe and occupied with activities was key.

Community Hubs

The three community hubs based at: **Folkestone**: run by Age UK South Kent Coast; **Hythe**: run by Age UK Hythe & Lyminge; and **Romney Marsh**: run by the Romney Marsh Community Hub have continued to provide support to people within the district in a variety of ways, including:

- Hosting partner agencies and events; for example, digital inclusion events, drop-in sessions by Council welfare officers to assist vulnerable people fill in Household Support Fund forms, Dementia Cafes, etc
- Assisting in the development of a community fridge as part of the District Food Network
- Helping with work to support Ukrainian refugees, including collecting and distributing donations, hosting drop-in sessions, and distributing mobile phones and SIM cards on behalf of the council
- Giving food and fuel vouchers and other support to vulnerable people through the Contain Outbreak Management fund (COMF).

In 2021/22, the community hubs dealt with:

Over 2,000 shopping requests

Over 16,000 welfare calls

Over 45,000 incoming calls and emails from residents

Over 500 prescription collections

Over 8,000 requests for information and advice

Section 2

Understanding our Customers

Introduction

In this section we look at the council itself, how we are filling our statutory duties and how we are targeting our services to the particular needs of our residents.

02 Understanding our Customers

Equality Impact Assessments

Under the Equality Act 2010 there is no longer a requirement to produce Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs). However, the council believes it is good practice to have an EIA framework in place in order to fully consider any potential equality implications prior to making decisions. As such, the council is committed to ensuring that EIAs are completed when the council introduces or significantly revises a policy or service and that they are carried out in the correct manner, including, for example, appropriate consultation with affected parties.

EIAs are most often conducted when a new or significantly revised policy or service is set to be considered by elected Members, normally at Cabinet Committee stage. Further information, including copies of reports and associated EIAs, can be found at: <https://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/moderngov/uuCoverPage.aspx?bcr=1>

During 2021-22 the council completed the following EIAs:

- **Folkestone and Hythe Community Safety Partnership – Partnership plan 21-24**
- **Safeguarding Policy**
- **General Fund Revenue Budget 2022/23**

In addition, all reports that are submitted to council Committees or the Corporate Leadership Team require comments on equality implications from the officer leading on equality and diversity. This further ensures that potential implications are considered prior to making decisions.

Understanding Our Customers through Consultation

Consultation provides an important means of understanding the needs of service users and local residents. It also allows the council to assess what impact decisions will have on different groups.

The following public consultations were undertaken during 2021-22:

- **Core Strategy Review Main Modifications**
- **Proposals for parking controls to be introduced in the East Cliff Gardens, The Durlocks, Wear Bay Road area, Folkestone.**
- **Proposals for the extension of controlled parking zone G1 to include Seagrave Road etc.**
- **Proposals for parking controls to be introduced in Seawall, Dymchurch**
- **New Dog Control Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) 2022-2025**
- **Renewal of the Anti-social behaviour (ASB) Public Spaces Protection Order 2022-2025**

Improving our Customer Experience

Customer Service Excellence

In September 2021, we successfully retained the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) accreditation. The accreditation is a government standard developed to offer a practical tool for driving customer-focused change within organisations. The independent assessor continues to be impressed with our commitment to deliver excellent customer service and awarded us with a further 2 'compliance plus scores as part of his inspection. The overall number of compliance pluses awarded for the three year period (2019-21) is 17, which is the highest number we have been awarded since first achieving the standard back in 2013.

The additional two compliance plus scores were awarded for:

- Increasing use of real time analytics to fully understand the needs and expectations of customers. Work by the Welfare team has been seen as being leading edge and the council has been approached to help other authorities gain a better understanding of their own customers. The adaptation of policies and procedures (and the development of new ones where needed) to make sure customer needs were properly identified and met where possible.
- The staff survey showed that people wanted to feel more appreciated and valued and a range of initiatives have been put in place to help with that including 121 meetings between the Chief Executive and managers (not just her direct reports), improved communications from the senior team to staff to celebrate success and to thank people, additional leave approved this year between Christmas and New Year as a thank you to staff for success in external awards.

Examples of feedback from the independent assessor highlighted the following positive aspects of our services:

- *“Specific work done to identify vulnerability and what this means for service provision”*
- *“Staff going above and beyond what could be expected”*
- *“Strong partnership working to support residents”*

02 Understanding our Customers

Improving our Customer Experience (continued)

Web Chat Service:

We have various mechanisms to support customers to access services and information, including the customer access point, telephone appointments, translation and British Sign language service on request and a visiting officer service for council tax and benefits.

Our Web Chat service continues to be a popular way to contact us and in 2021-22, 89.65% of customers who rated the service stated they were happy with the service they received.

Feedback for the web chat service is continually monitored and reflects how useful many of our customers find this service.

Some examples of feedback received, includes:

- *"Awesome help and advice. Right on point and very straight forward, helped me immensely :-)"*
- *"Both people I spoke to were very helpful and courteous. I appreciate this chat facility, because being partially deaf I find the telephone very difficult to use"*
- *"Always helpful and very quick response, all my issues have been resolved quickly"*
- *"I do find the "chat" is very helpful. It is as helpful as actually speaking to someone and a lot easier to make contact than on the phone. I am normally a bit of a dinosaur when it comes to modern technology, but I have been very pleased with how easy this was, not really knowing what was going to happen when I first clicked on chat"*
- *"Really good and so perfect speaking to a real person. Very helpful and got my problem resolved immediately. Thank you for providing this service."*
- *"Great having chat options.... !! quick fast and accessible..."*
- *"It is made it for me. I am not very good with technical things and texting"*
- *"Helpful advice thank you. Love using live chat as I dont really like talking on phones"*
- *"Excellent rapid and understanding response to my request. Thank you."*

My Account and Website Accessibility:

We have continued to develop our online services and the systems development team have reviewed the look and feel of MyAccount. When it was launched in August 2020 it was primarily designed for viewing on computers. Data that shows the ways customers interact when using MyAccount was reviewed, and this showed that most

customers were using a type of mobile device e.g. Phone or tablet. MyAccount was rebuilt to be "mobile first" to reflect our customer's needs. In addition, following feedback, the customer journey was improved and links from the MyAccount now take them directly to a relevant form and not to a website page. The waste functionality has also been improved and a report made for missed bins now goes directly to Veolia for them to action without the need for any human interaction, this has improved and sped up requests made by customers. Online forms are continuing to be developed and as at 31/03/22 there were 165 available to our customers. The take up of MyAccount continues to be positive and at the end of March 2022 58.04% of households had signed up.

The website platform functionality has been reviewed and is going to be replaced in 22/23.2023. This will provide more functionality when building the content and enable us to make further improvements to meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).

Welfare Team:

The work on identifying vulnerable customers has grown since 2019 and led to the creation of a dedicated welfare team trained to support customers and signpost them appropriately.

During 2021/22 the Council has been administering different Government funding streams to maximise and target support to the most vulnerable qualifying residents. The Council received 492 applications for discretionary housing payments and made 393 awards during the year to a value of £288,890. On top of this the team also received 697 applications for Financial Support Payments (for Council Tax) and made 493 awards, supporting residents with £246,771 in awards.

The Council also administered the NHS Test and Trace (self-isolation) payment scheme, paying £231,000 (462 awards from 597 applications) in the standard scheme and £175,500 (345 awards from 925 applications) from the discretionary scheme to support working residents on low income who were unable to work due to self-isolation rules.

In October 2021 Government allocated additional funding to Councils to support vulnerable households under a new scheme called the Household Support Fund. This funding was for the purpose of supporting households who would otherwise struggle to buy food or pay essential utility bills or meet other essential living costs or housing costs. Eligible spend included food, energy and water payment support. It also included essentials linked to energy and water such as sanitary products, warm clothing, soap, blankets, boiler service/repair and purchase of equipment including..

02 Understanding our Customers

Improving our Customer Experience (continued)

Welfare Team (continued):

...fridges, freezers, ovens, etc. The funding had to be used by 31 March 2022 and at least 50% of the funding must have been used for vulnerable households with children.

The Council received funding of £171,358.62 from Kent County Council. Following the positive work that the Council carried out in allocating funds the Council also received an additional £50,000 of funding that was spent to support even more residents in the district. The breakdown of this support is listed below:

Household Support Fund split by Household Composition			
	Households with children	Households without children	Total
Spend	£167,459	£53,900	£221,359
Volumes	893	526	1,419

Folkestone Community Works:

The Folkestone Community Works programme area has continued operating throughout the Covid pandemic to address issues faced by the most vulnerable in the district by funding projects that are working to improve access to services and opportunities for businesses and residents within the Central and East Folkestone wards.

During the year, the council developed funded projects providing professional support for residents who decided their route to economic independence was through self-employment, or had a need to supplement their income by creating a 'table top' businesses by using a skill or hobby to generate additional income. The easy access to e-commerce through Ebay and other social media platforms has opened the door to everyone. This support helps residents to work through their ideas and understand how they could make it a reality by demystifying the process.

In addition, the council has continued to fund support for existing businesses through 1-2-1 advice and grants to navigate and adapt to the unusual and changing environment they are operating within, with the aim to retain and increase the number of employees

Folkestone Safe Haven:

The [Folkestone Mental Health Safe Haven](#) continues to provide an important service within the district to support people who are struggling with their mental health. Established in 2019/20, the Folkestone Mental Health Safe Haven was started in collaboration with the Roger De Hann Charitable Trust who worked with the council to help establish a connection with the Rainbow Centre to ensure the Haven has a permanent base within Folkestone town centre for people to access ongoing advice and support. The service operates 365 days a year and opening times are Mon – Fri 18.00- 23.00 and weekends and bank holidays 12.00 – 23.00.

The services of the Folkestone Mental Health Safe Haven are heavily promoted with multi-agency partners through the Folkestone & Hythe Community Safety Partnership and Community Safety Unit. Posters are displayed on the council's website and shared via social media channels. Details of the service are also cascaded to the community hubs so they can help signpost people to these services.

Developing Our Staff

All staff are required to undertake specific equality and diversity e-learning on a regular basis. We also provide safeguarding training to ensure staff know how to support vulnerable people, and we deliver training on preventing extremism, which gives our staff an understanding of radicalisation and who can be drawn into it.

We support staff in understanding people with different support requirements and currently have staff and Councillors trained as Dementia Friends. We now have 46 Mental Health First Aiders (9% of our workforce) so that we can better support those customers struggling due to the pandemic or other pressures they may be under. In other areas we ensure staff get the additional training they need to understand customer groups (e.g. specialist training on mental health in the Revenues and Benefits team and hoarding in the Housing team).

In addition, we run a Management Development Programme on an ongoing basis and offer formal management qualifications that enable our middle managers and team leaders to understand how to further equality and diversity in the workplace and how best to work well with people from a variety of backgrounds. Recognising the demographic profile of our staff we offer a range of flexible development opportunities and put on shorter courses or split over different days to enable part-time staff to attend. We also avoid running training during school holidays to give our staff who are parents the best chance of being able to attend. We record our training and staff briefings to ensure everyone has the opportunity to access this information.

Section 3

Understanding Our Workforce

Introduction

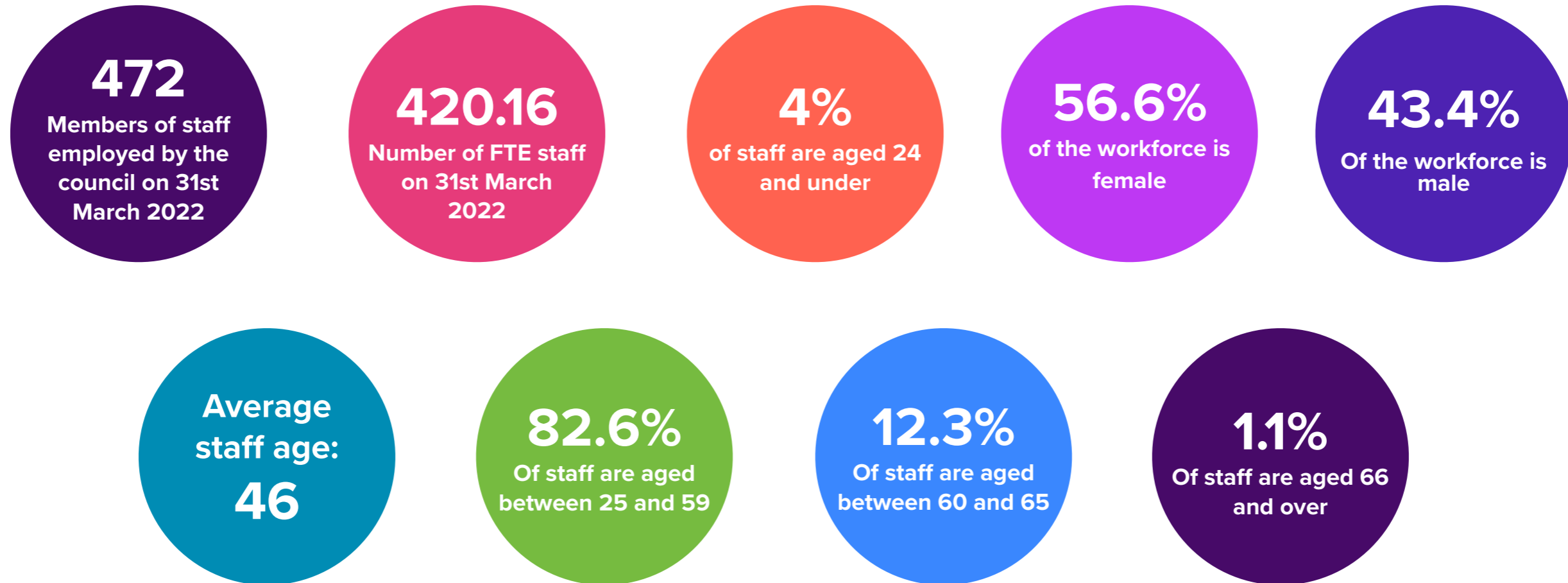
In this section we provide a brief overview of the characteristics of our own workforce.

On 31st March 2022 there were 472 members of staff employed by Folkestone & Hythe District Council. The number of full time equivalent staff was 420.16. Looking at the 2021/22 year as a whole, the average headcount was 461 and the average number of full time equivalent staff was 413.56.

03 Understanding Our Workforce

Folkestone & Hythe District Council - Workforce Profile

All figures used in the workforce profile below are as at 31st March 2022 and include staff the council directly employs.



Number of staff by age and sex:

Age	16-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60	Total
Female	2	19	58	66	90	32	267
Male	5	23	31	49	66	31	205
Total	7	42	89	115	156	63	472

03 Understanding our Workforce

Ethnicity and Disability

- 4% of the council's workforce have declared a disability.
- 87.1% of the council's workforce have indicated that they are from white ethnic backgrounds and 6.3% from black and minority ethnic groups. The remaining 6.6% have not declared their ethnicity.

Working Hours and Pay Grade

- 24.8% of the council's workforce are part-time and are contracted to work 36 hours per week or under.
- Analysis shows a correlation between sex and working hours. 75.2% of part-time staff are female. Further analysis of sex, working hours and pay can be found on the gender pay gap reporting section of the council's website: <https://folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/reducing-the-gender-pay-gap>

Turnover

- 49 people left the council's employment during 2021/22. This represents a crude staff turnover rate of 10.63%. The 'crude' turnover figure includes reasons such as redundancy (including voluntary redundancy) and those engaged on a casual, seasonal or short-term basis to, for example, provide maternity cover or support the annual electoral registration canvass. The voluntary turnover rate, which counts resignations only, was 8.46%

Staff Grievances

- There were no staff grievances raised relating to equality in 2021/22.

Year	Total	Equality Related
2015/16	0	0
2016/17	1	0
2017/18	1	0
2018/19	1	0
2019/20	1	0
2020/21	1	1
2021/22	0	0

Policies and Practices

The council is committed to promoting equality and diversity through its employment policies and practices.

- Our robust recruitment processes and associated manager training ensure that employment and promotion practices are fair, non-discriminatory and support equality of opportunity.
- Our job evaluation process ensures we pay our staff fairly and equally through assigning the same pay grade to roles of equal value.
- The council has a People Strategy in place to support our smarter, agile, working culture. Working flexibly is encouraged and supported, with the majority of staff having the ability to work flexible hours and in a range of locations including from home. The council's agile working framework was launched in June 2021 alongside a set of principles to better enable flexible working approaches.
- Prior to recruiting externally, or seeking candidates for promotion, if a post is full-time we carefully consider whether it could be undertaken on a part-time or job share basis.
- Working part-time can impact on the ability to attend training courses, which may then impact on career progression. We therefore consider our training programmes carefully and offer a range of flexible development opportunities. When considering our training courses we increase accessibility by putting on shorter courses, split the training over different days, or record sessions so they can be viewed at any time.
- If members of staff have concerns these can be raised with managers, or formally through the council's whistleblowing or grievance procedures. Management training takes place to support equality, diversity and inclusion, and to ensure that any concerns are acted upon swiftly and appropriately.
- All staff undertake specific equality and diversity training when they first join the council and then on a regular basis thereafter. We also have a range of initiatives and learning and development activities aimed at furthering equality, diversity and inclusion. Further information on these can be found in the Developing Our Staff section.

Section 4

Understanding our Communities

Introduction

This section provides a brief overview of the characteristics of the district's population and draws comparisons with Kent and the wider South East. We outline the age profile of the district, the proportion of males and females in each age group, and how the population is likely to change over the coming years. We then go on to look at the ethnicity, religion and health of our communities. We finish by considering the economic profile of the district, including employment rates, income and deprivation.

04 Understanding our Communities

Age and Sex:

Overview

In the graph below, blue shows the proportion of males in each age group and peach females. The blocked sections show the Kent average for each age group.

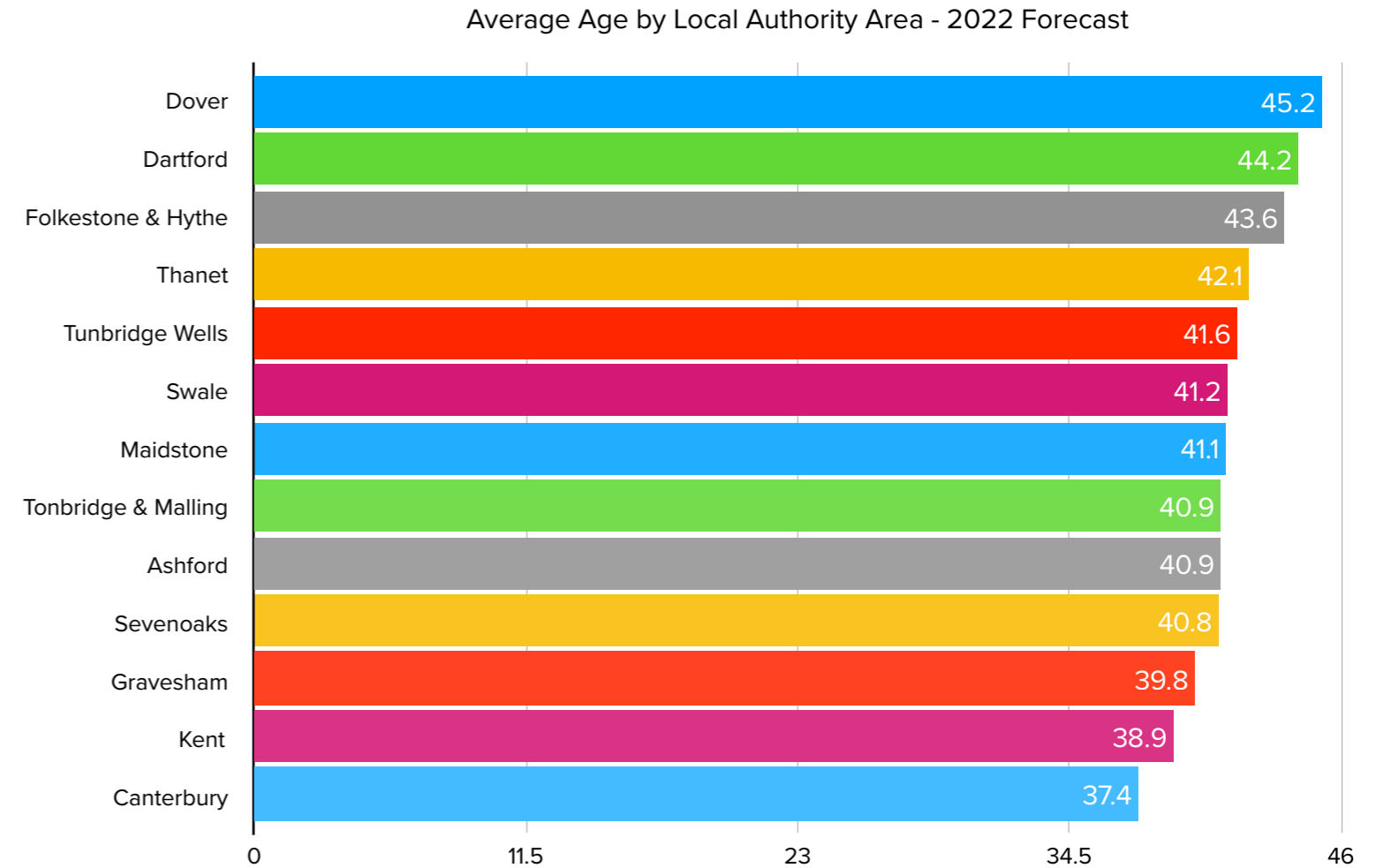


Source: KCC District Profile/ ONS, 2020 mid-year population estimates

There is a lower proportion of residents aged under 45 when compared to Kent overall. The district has a larger percentage of residents aged over 45.

The male to female ratio changes with age. There are more males under the age of 55 than there are females. From age 50 + there are more females than males.

Then average Folkestone & Hythe resident is 43.6 years old, which is the third highest in the County when compared to other local authority areas. The graph below shows the lowest average age to be in Canterbury at 37.4 years old.



Source: KCC Interactive Population Forecast Toolkit - 2021

43.6 years old

The age of the average Folkestone & Hythe Resident

37.4 years old

The average age of a Canterbury Resident. The lowest out of all Kent local authority areas

04 Understanding our Communities

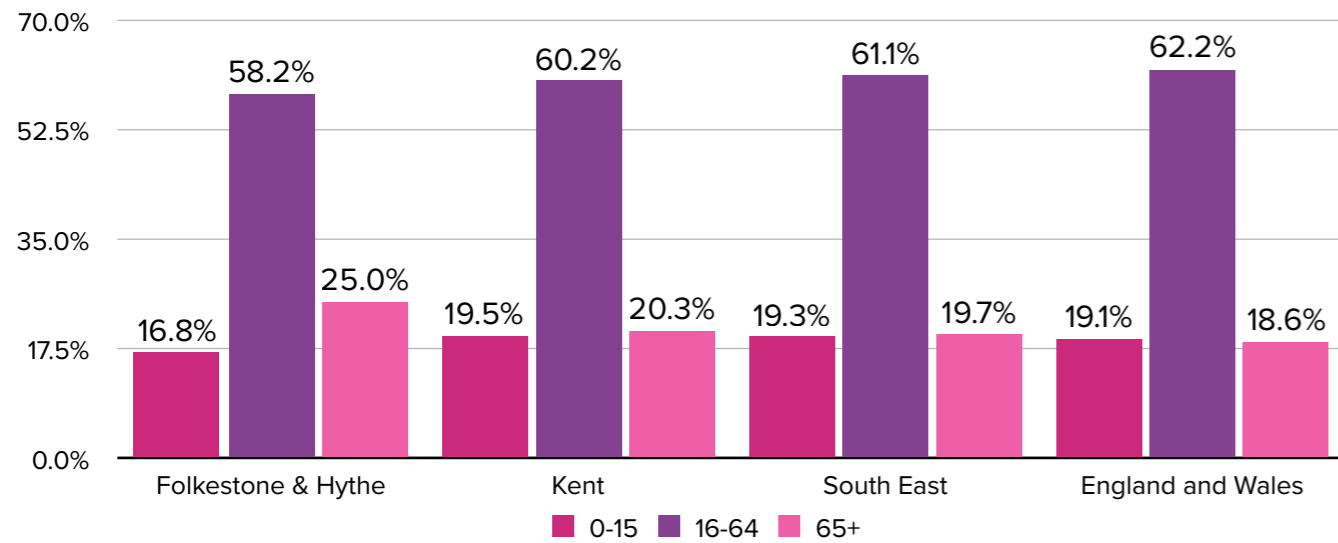
Age and Sex (continued):

The average male living in the Folkestone & Hythe district (at 43.6 years) is younger than the average female (45.6 years).

In comparison with regional and national figures, Folkestone & Hythe has:

- A lower than average proportion of residents aged under 15
- A lower than average proportion of residents of 'working age' between 16 and 64
- A higher than average proportion of residents aged 65 and over

Population by age group - Mid Year 2020 Population Estimates



Source: KCC District Profile / ONS, 2020 mid-year population estimates

Children and Young Adults:

Age group	No.	% of Folkestone & Hythe population	% of Kent overall*
0-3 – Early Years Children	4,100	3.5%	5.9%
4-10 – Primary Age Children	8,400	7.3%	5.9%
11-18 – Secondary age children	9,900	8.6%	6%

Source: KCC Interactive Population Forecast Toolkit - 2021

Working Age' Population (16-64):

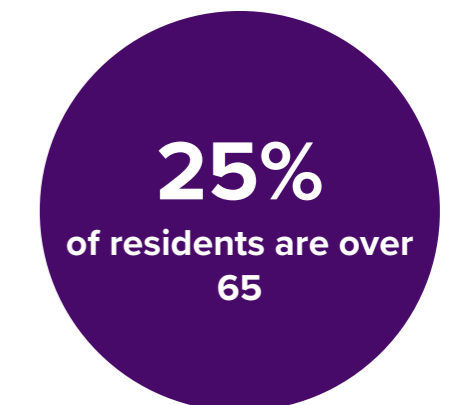
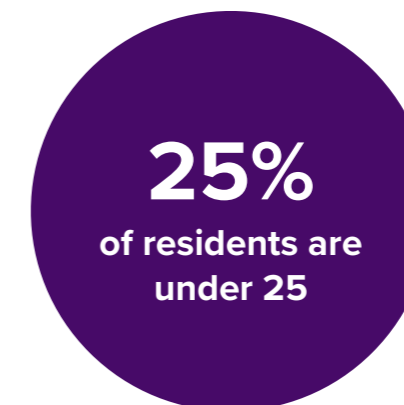
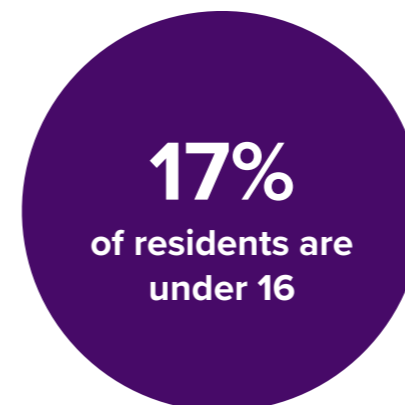
Folkestone & Hythe	Number	%
16-64	64,280	58.4 % of Folkestone & Hythe residents are 16-64
Female	32,567	57.8% of females in the district are 16-64
Male	31,713	59.0% of males in the district are 16-64

Source: ONS, 2021 mid-year population estimates

Older Population:

Age Group	Number	% of Folkestone & Hythe Population
65-69	7,300	6.3%
70-74	7,600	6.6%
75-79	6,600	5.7%
80-84	3,800	3.3%
85-89	2,400	2%
90 and over	1,600	1.3%

Source: KCC Interactive Population Forecast Toolkit - 2021



04 Understanding our Communities

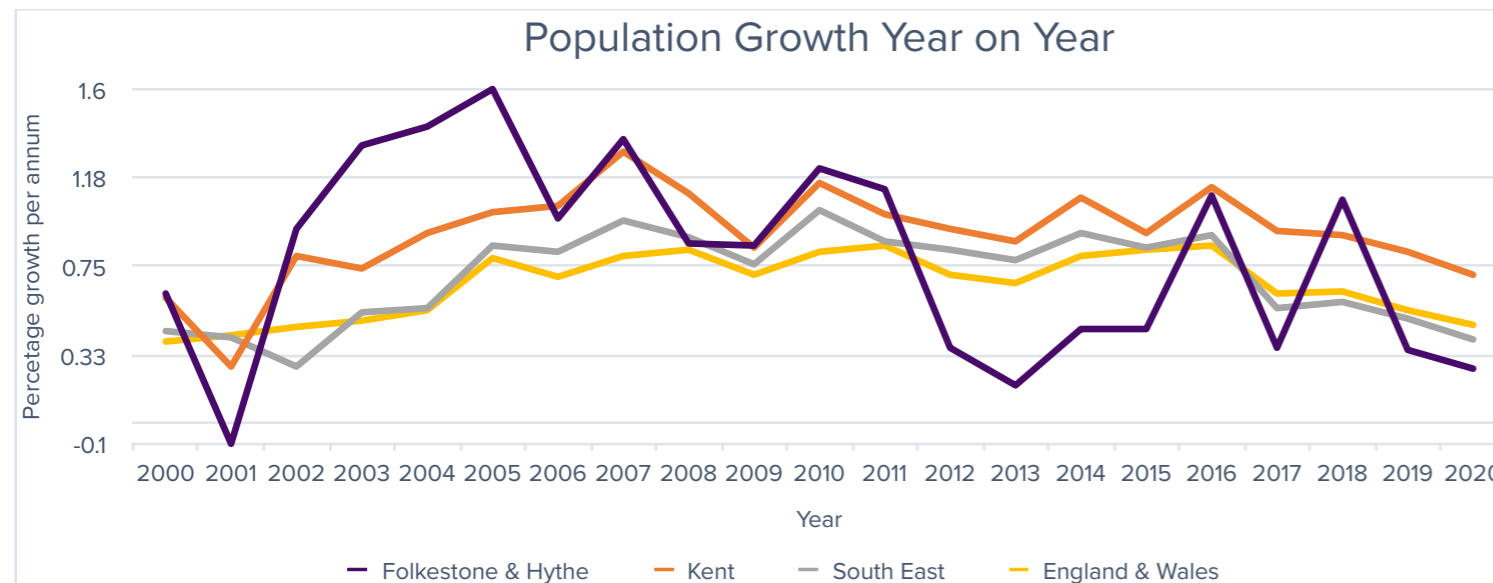
Population Changes and Forecasts

Historical Population Growth

The most recent population figures based on 2021 KCC housing led forecasts estimate that the population of Folkestone & Hythe to be 114,400. This accounts for 7% of the total population within the Kent County Council area.

In 2012 the population of Folkestone & Hythe stood at 108,600. In the ten-year period between 2012 and 2022, Folkestone & Hythe's population grew by 5.3%. This is, however, below regional and national averages.

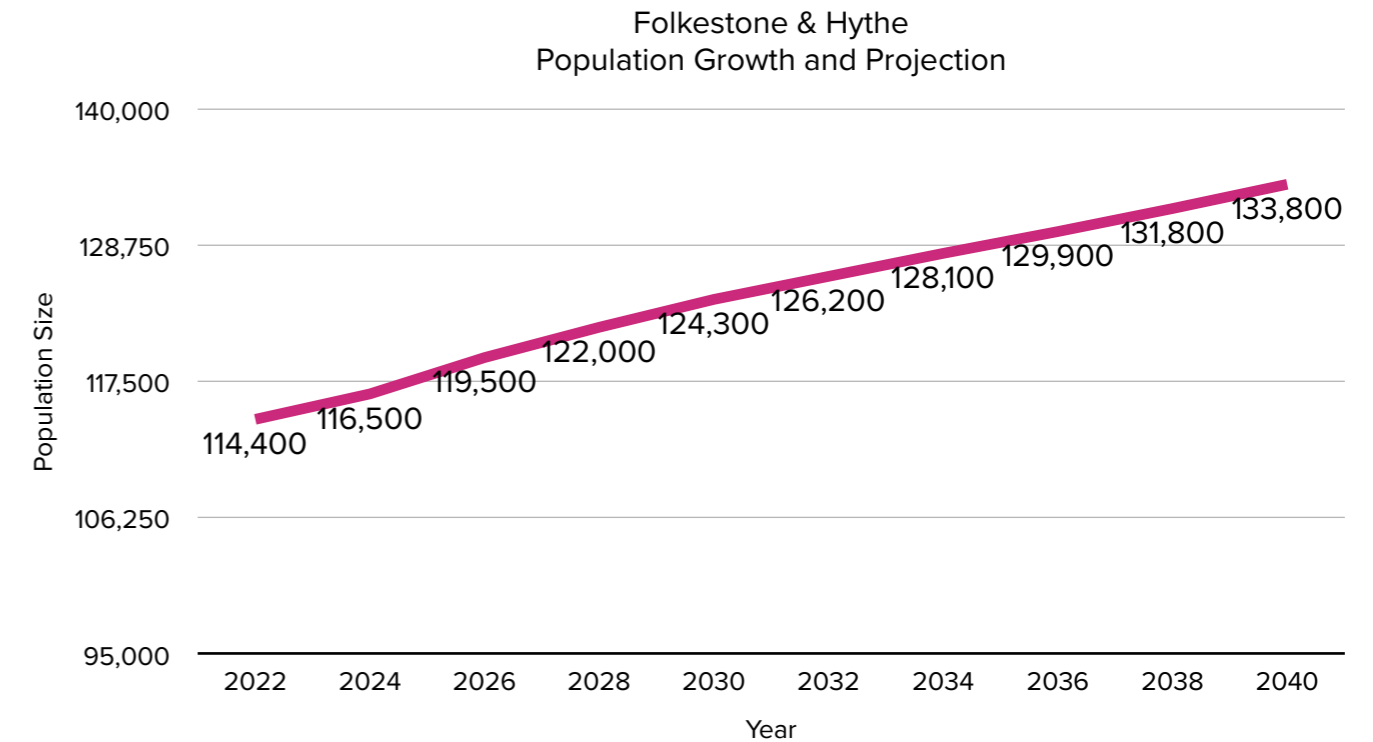
Over the last 10 years (2010-2020) population growth across the south east has risen more quickly averaging 0.74% per annum in comparison to England and Wales, which averaged 0.72% per annum. Kent experiences higher annual growth in comparison, averaging a population increase of 0.97% per annum over the same time period. As a smaller geographical area, population growth in Folkestone & Hythe is much more sporadic, with localised factors a major contributory factor. The most recent data shows an estimated population increase of 0.52% between 2021 and 2022.



Source: KCC Interactive mid-year population estimate toolkit 2021 (2000-2020 period)

Population Growth Forecasts

Folkestone & Hythe's population is forecast to rise by nearly 16.9% over the next 18 years, reaching an estimated 133,800 by 2040, while Kent as a whole is expected to grow by 18.1% over the same period. Estimates, however, do not take into account any future developments in the district.



Source: KCC Interactive Population Forecast Toolkit - 2021

Population Changes

Historically, Folkestone & Hythe's population growth has varied between different age brackets. In the 20 year period between 2000 and 2020 the most significant population growth was amongst those aged between 45 and 70, with residents in this age bracket increasing by 39.3%. The number of residents aged under 45, however has remained largely the same over this period, increasing by only 0.73%.

When considering residents over the age of 65 specifically, between 2000 and 2020 there was an increase of 45%, from 19,300 to 28,000 people. It is forecasted that this will increase by a further 14,400 over the subsequent 20 years, a rise of 50.8%. Conversely, the number of residents of 'working age' (between the ages of 16 and 64) are forecast to rise by 9.3% and those under the age of 15 are expected to shrink by 0.52%.

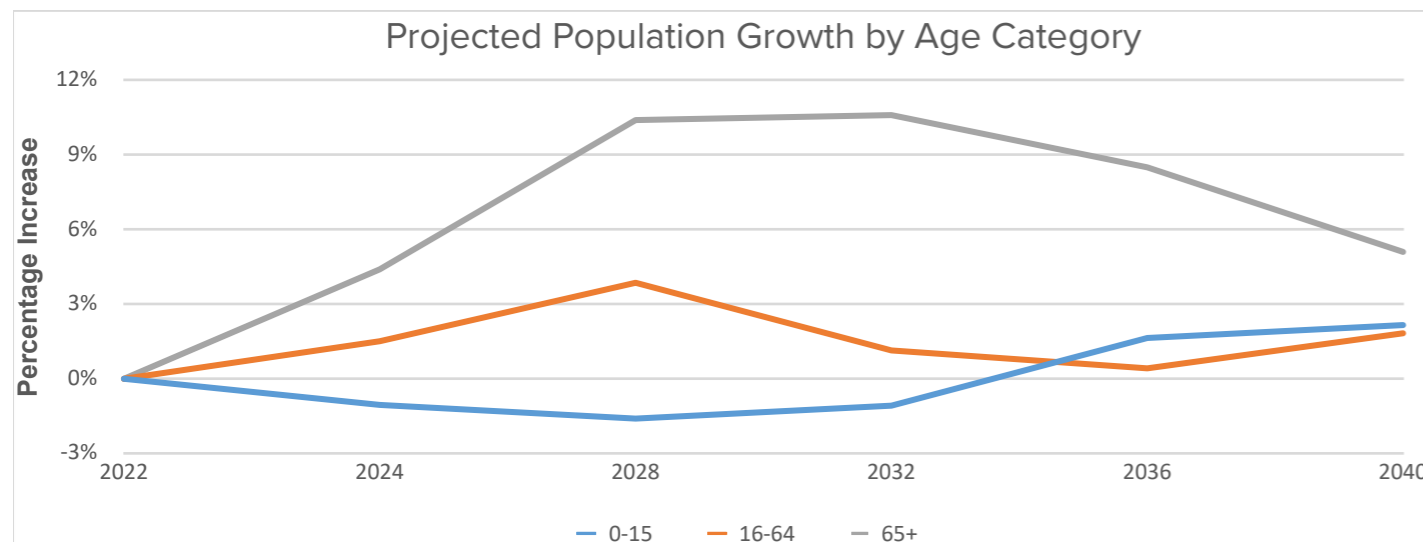
04 Understanding our Communities

Population Changes

Current Population Projections: Folkestone and Hythe (2022-2040):

Year	Total Population	Age Group		
		0-15	16-64	65 and over
2022	114,400	18,900	66,200	29,300
2024	116,500	18,700	67,200	30,600
2028	122,000	18,400	69,800	33,800
2032	126,200	18,200	70,600	37,400
2036	129,900	18,500	70,900	40,600
2040	133,800	18,900	72,200	42,700

Source: KCC Interactive Population Forecast Toolkit - 2021

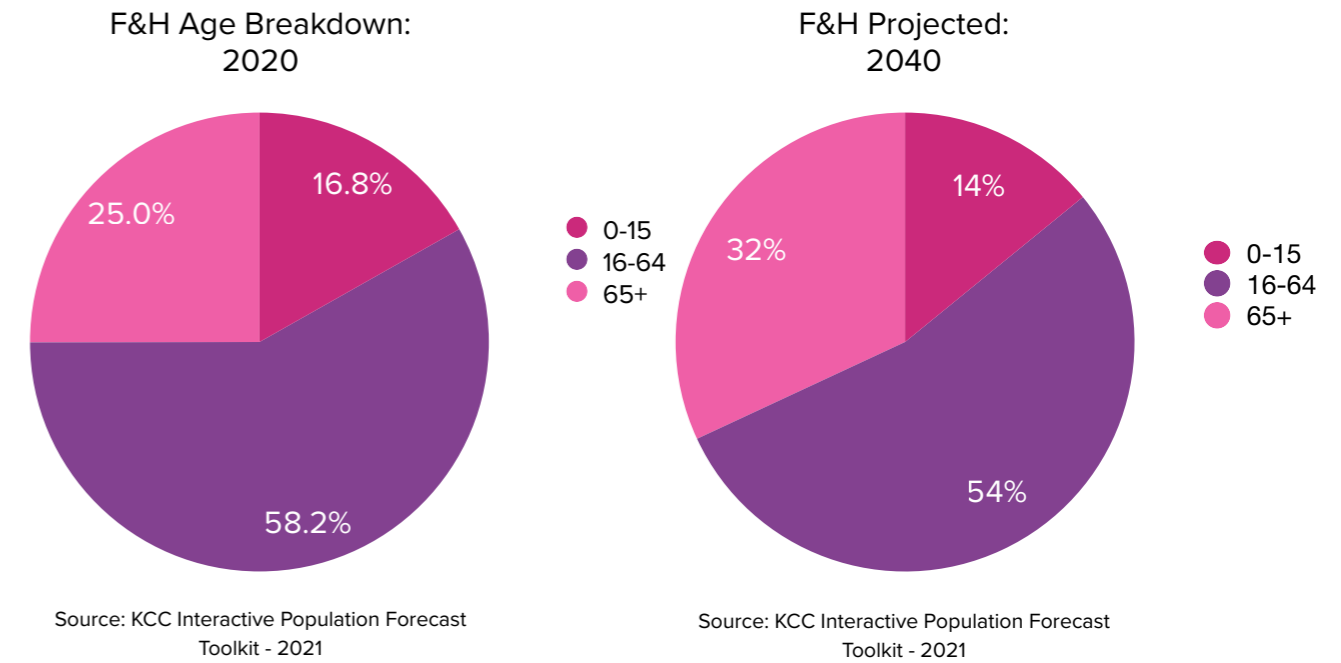


Source: KCC Interactive Population Forecast Toolkit - 2021

Residents over the age of 65 currently account for 25% of Folkestone & Hythe's population. By 2040 this is expected to have increased by 6.9% a more significant increase than the 5.7% anticipated across Kent.

The concept of an 'ageing population' is, of course, not solely confined to the Folkestone & Hythe district and the Office for National Statistics (ONS) forecast continued growth in the proportion of the population aged over 65 across the UK. However, future estimates for Folkestone & Hythe, particularly relating to a proportion

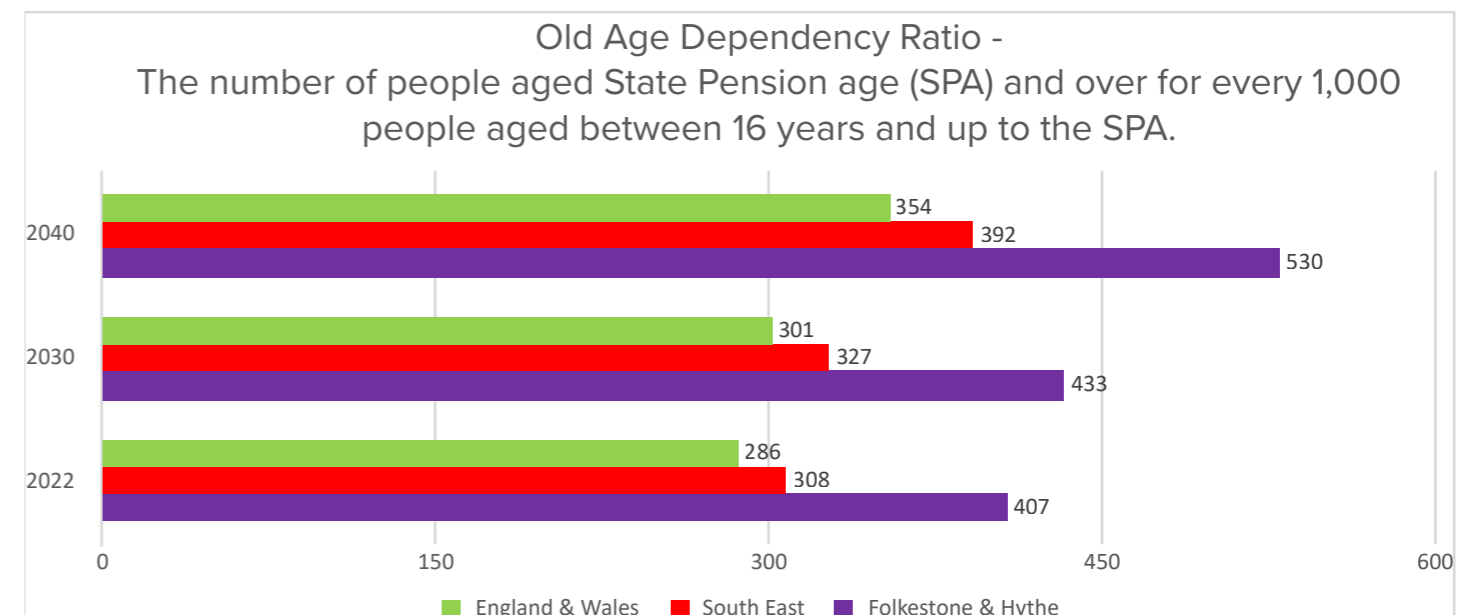
of the population over the age of 85, are notable rising from 3,900 in 2020 to 7,000 by 2039.



Source: KCC Interactive Population Forecast Toolkit - 2021

Source: KCC Interactive Population Forecast Toolkit - 2021

The graph below shows that the number of people aged state pension age (SPA) and over for every thousand people aged 16 years up to the SPA (known as the Dependency Ratio) is projected to grow significantly faster for Folkestone & Hythe from 407 in 2022 to 530 in 2040 than for the South East region and England & Wales.



Source: Census 2021 – Sub national aging tool

04 Understanding our Communities

Population: Household Composition

The 2021 census reported 48,338 households in the Folkestone & Hythe district.

66.6% of households lived in accommodation that was owned (either outright, with a mortgage, or part-owned through a shared ownership scheme), 10.8% lived in homes that were social rented (including through F&HDC) and 22.5% lived in homes that were privately rented. The remaining percentage lived under other arrangements.

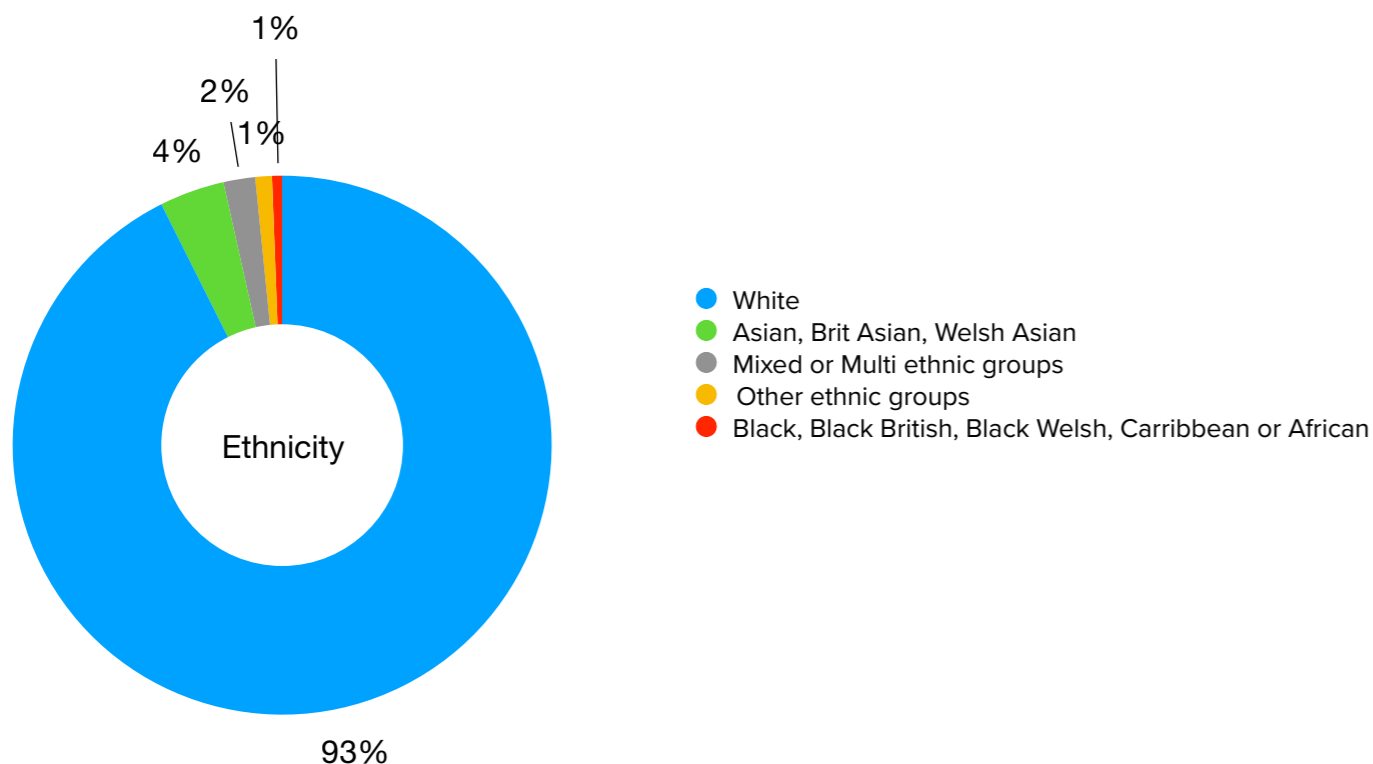
Nearly 70% of all households in the district were composed of one or two people.

Of the 48,338 households in the district, a third were one-person households. 45% of those that lived on their own were aged over 65.

The majority (61.8%) were single family households. The 2021 census classified these by the “type of family” (married, same-sex civil partnership or cohabiting couple family, or lone parent), by the number of dependent children, or recorded that all occupants were over the age of 65. 32.5% of households were one person households and 5.7% were classed as other household types. Source: 2021 Census.

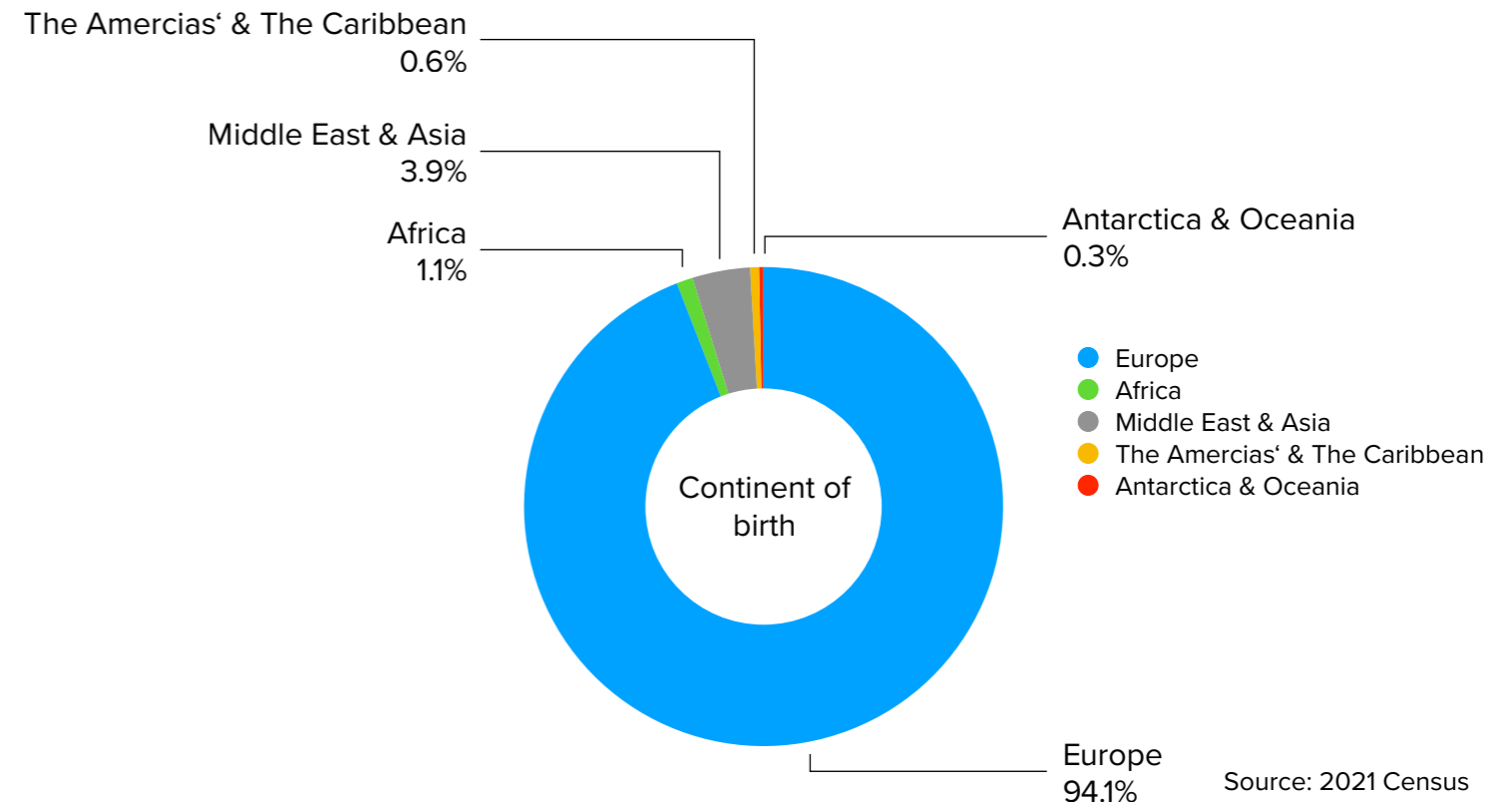
Ethnicity

The 2021 census shows that 92.6% of Folkestone & Hythe’s population are from white ethnic backgrounds followed by Asian, British Asian or Asian Welsh (3.9%), Mixed or multiple ethnic groups (1.9%), Other ethnic groups (1.0%) and Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African (0.6%), as defined by census category.



10.5% of Folkestone & Hythe residents were born outside the UK. 7% of those born outside the UK have been resident in the UK for over 10 years. The chart below shows the continent of birth for the district’s residents:

Folkestone & Hythe Residents: Continent of Birth



2.3% of households in Folkestone & Hythe do not contain any people that have English as their main language. This is lower than the national average (7.1%). Source: 2021 census

In 2021/22 a total of **1,657** households approached the council as homeless and made applications under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996. 1,345 (92%) applicants stated they were from white ethnic backgrounds and 25 (2%) from Asian ethnic backgrounds, 1% were from Black ethnic backgrounds, 2% from mixed ethnicity backgrounds and 16% did not state their ethnicity.

On 31st March 2022, there were 1,464 applications on the housing waiting list. Of these, 1,345 (92%) stated they were from white ethnic backgrounds, 25 (2%) from Asian ethnic backgrounds, 18 (1%) from Black ethnic backgrounds, 34 (2%) from mixed ethnicity backgrounds, 2 (0.1%) from Arab backgrounds and 41 (16%) did not state their ethnicity.

04 Understanding our Communities

A total of 308 applicants were housed in 2021/22. Of those housed, 288 (94%) were from white ethnic backgrounds and 7 (2%) from Asian backgrounds, 2 (0.6%) from black backgrounds, 1 (0.4%) from an Arab background. 4 (1%) were mixed ethnicity and 6 (2%) declared no ethnicity.

Religion

Of all residents in the district, the largest proportion (48%) declared that they were Christian in their religion. However, a significant proportion (41.8%) declared that they had no religion. Other faiths were less represented in the district population: 1.5% of residents declared that they were Hindu, 2% Buddhist, 1% Muslim and 0.1% Jewish.'

Source: 2021 Census

Health

Overview

5.9% of Folkestone & Hythe residents describe their health as bad or very bad. This is slightly higher than the national average (England & Wales: 5.4%).

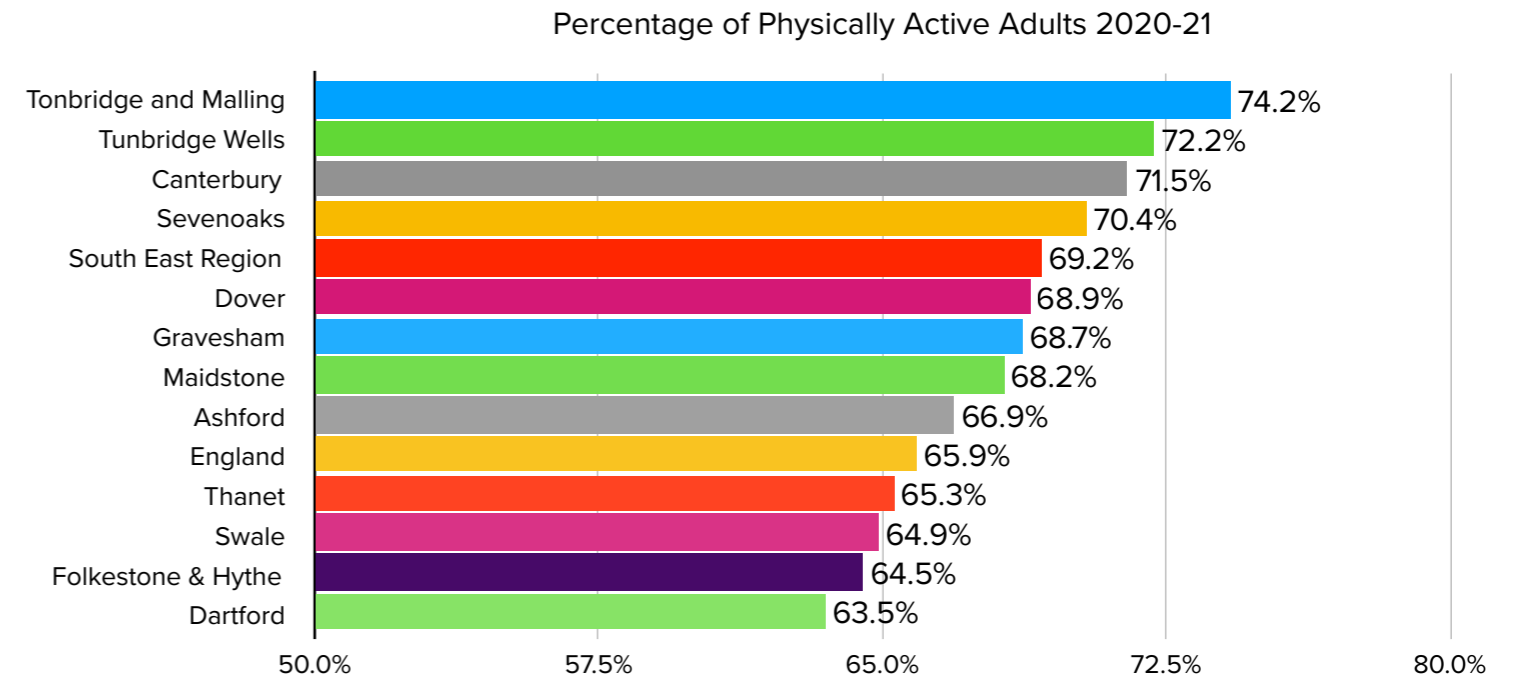
Over 20% of those that live in the district indicated that their day-to-day activities are limited by a long-term health problem or disability. This is higher than Kent (16.9%), south east (15.1%), and national (England: 17.2%) comparisons.

Source: 2021 Census

The data on physical fitness, obesity, alcohol-related hospital admissions, self-harm and smoking prevalence set out on, were sourced from the latest Public Health England's - Public Health Outcomes Framework:

Physical Fitness

In 2020-21 64.5% of Folkestone & Hythe adults were classed as 'physically active' below the English national average. The following graph sets out how Folkestone & Hythe compares with other Kent Local Authority areas:

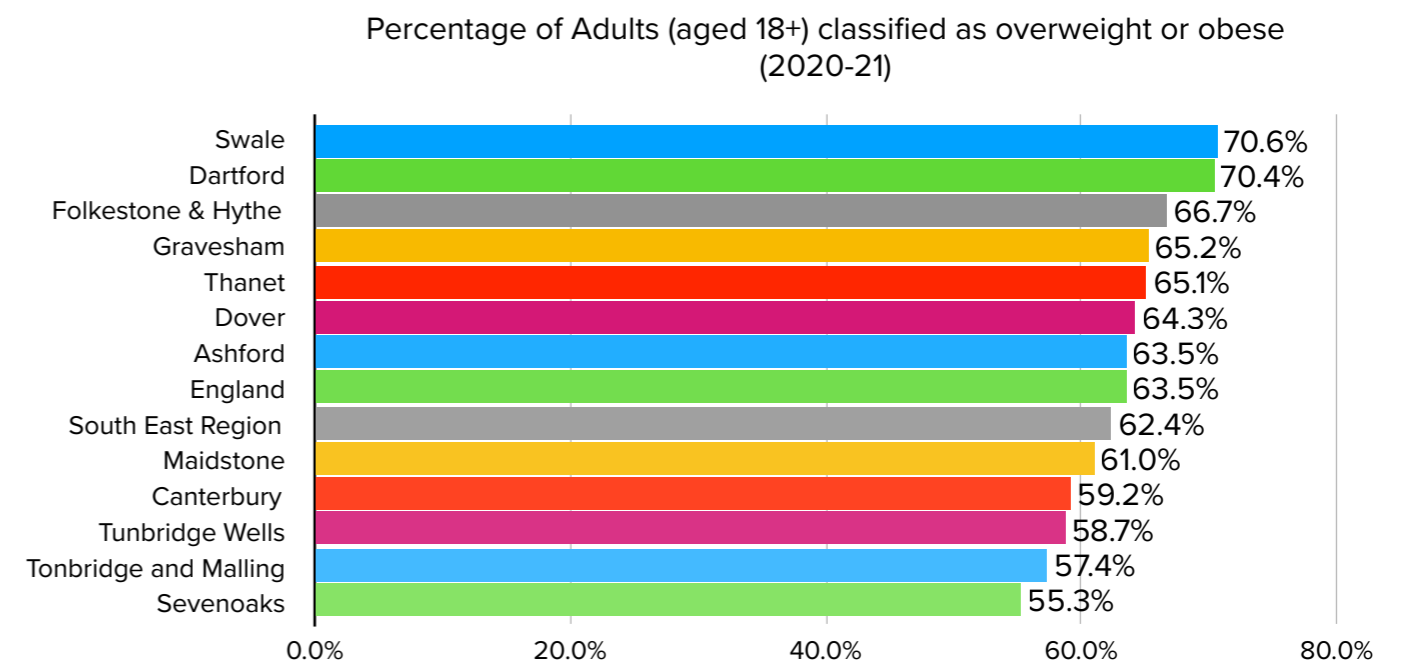


Source: Public Health England: Public Health Outcomes Framework

Obesity

In 2020-21, 66.7% of adults in the district were classified as overweight and the latest data from 2019/20 shows 35.9% of 10-11 year olds (Year 6 school age) were classified as obese. Both figures are above the South East and national averages.

The following graphs set out how Folkestone & Hythe compares with other Kent Local Authority areas for obesity in both adults and Year 6 school age children:

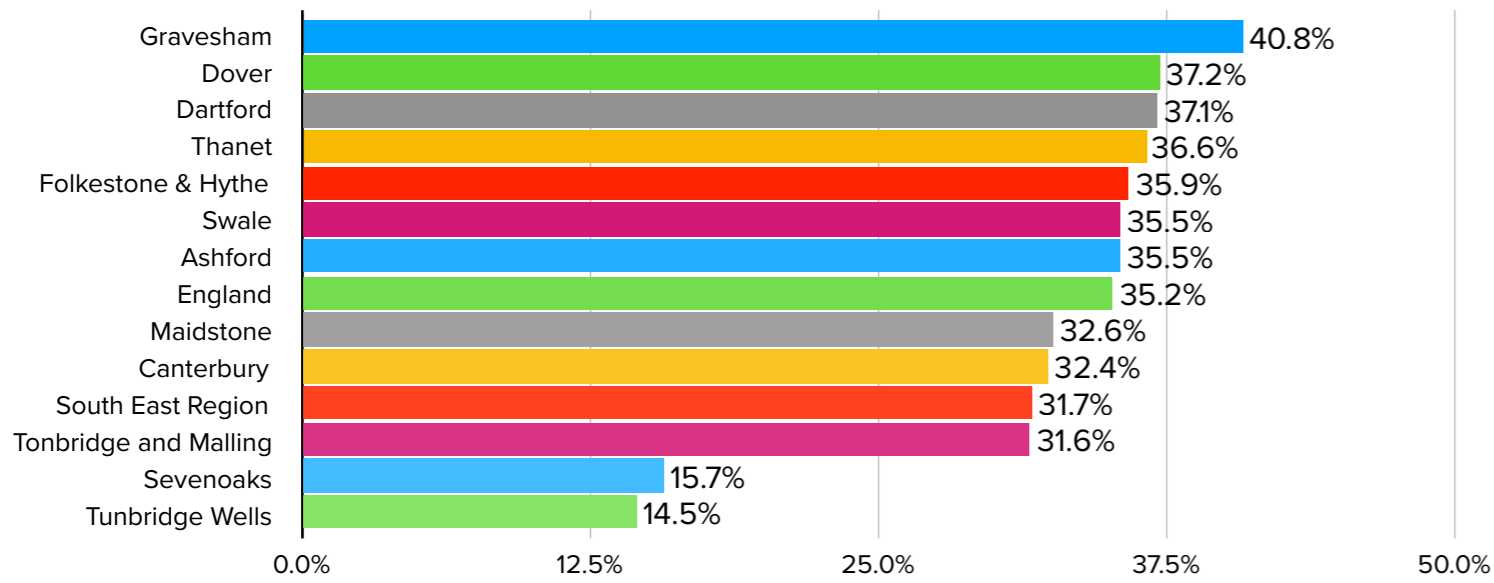


Source: Public Health England: Public Health Outcomes Framework

04 Understanding our Communities

Obesity (Continued)

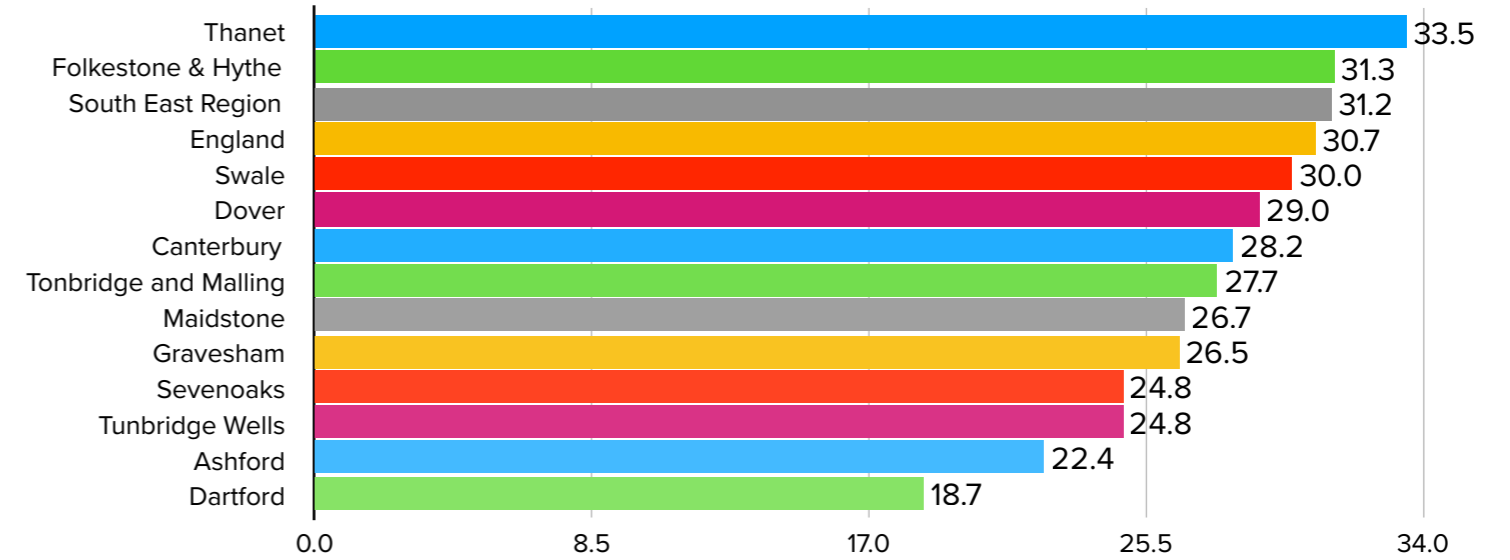
Prevalence of overweight Year 6 children (Including obesity) (2019-20)



Source: Public Health England: Public Health Outcomes Framework

However, the rate of alcohol-specific hospital stays among under 18s in the district is above the average across England with 31.3 per 100,000 recorded, compared with 30.7 per 100,000 nationally. The graph below sets out how Folkestone & Hythe compares with other Kent Local Authority areas:

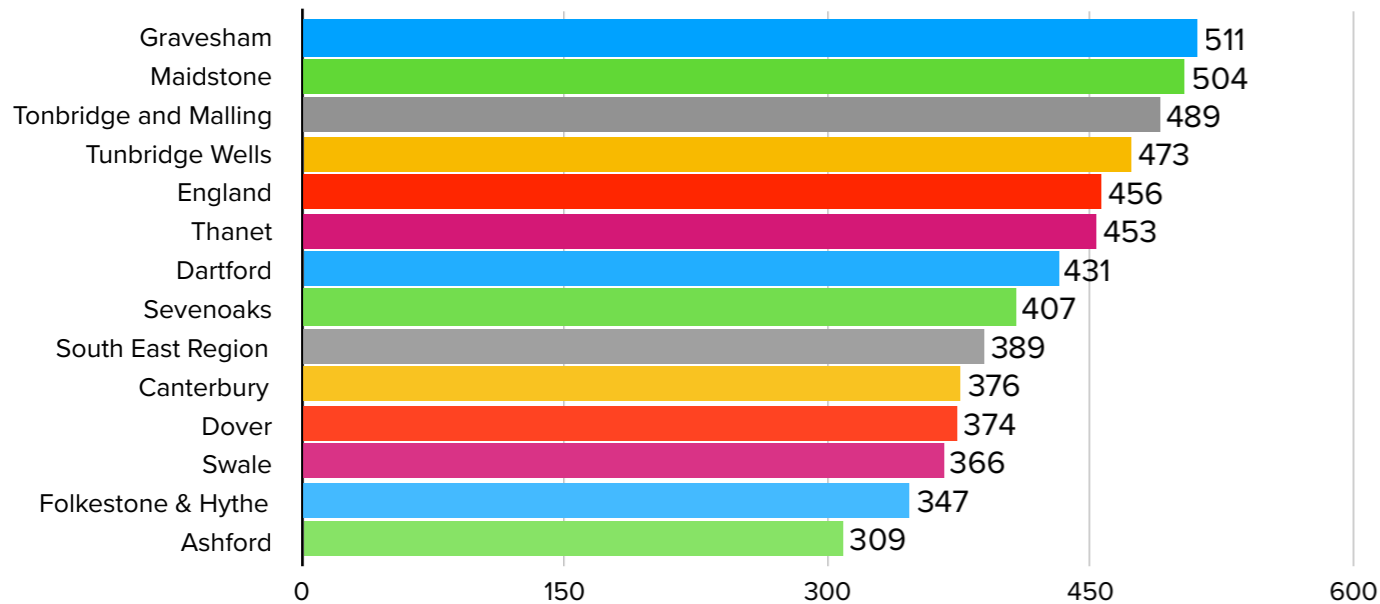
Hospital Stays for alcohol specific conditions per 100,000 - Under 18s (2017-19)



Alcohol-related hospital admissions

The rate of alcohol-related harm hospital admissions for adults is better than the average across England with 347 per 100,000 recorded in the district during 2020-21, compared with 456 per 100,000 in nationally.

Alcohol Related Harm - Hospital admissions per 100,000 (2020-21)

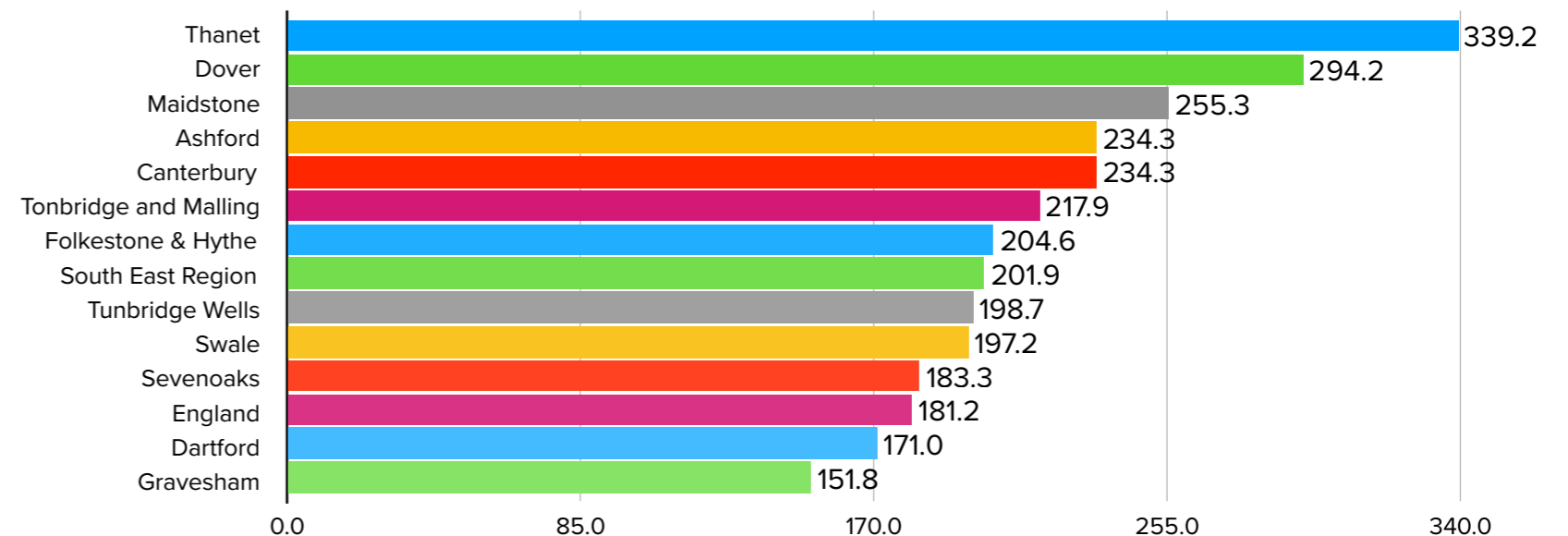


Source: Public Health England: Public Health Outcomes Framework

Emergency Hospital Admissions for intentional Self-Harm

The number of emergency hospital admissions for intentional self-harm in the district in 2020/21 was 204.6 per 100,000, which is above both the regional and national average. The graph below sets out how Folkestone & Hythe compares with other Kent Local Authority areas

Emergency Hospital Admissions for intentional Self-Harm per 100,000 (2020-21)



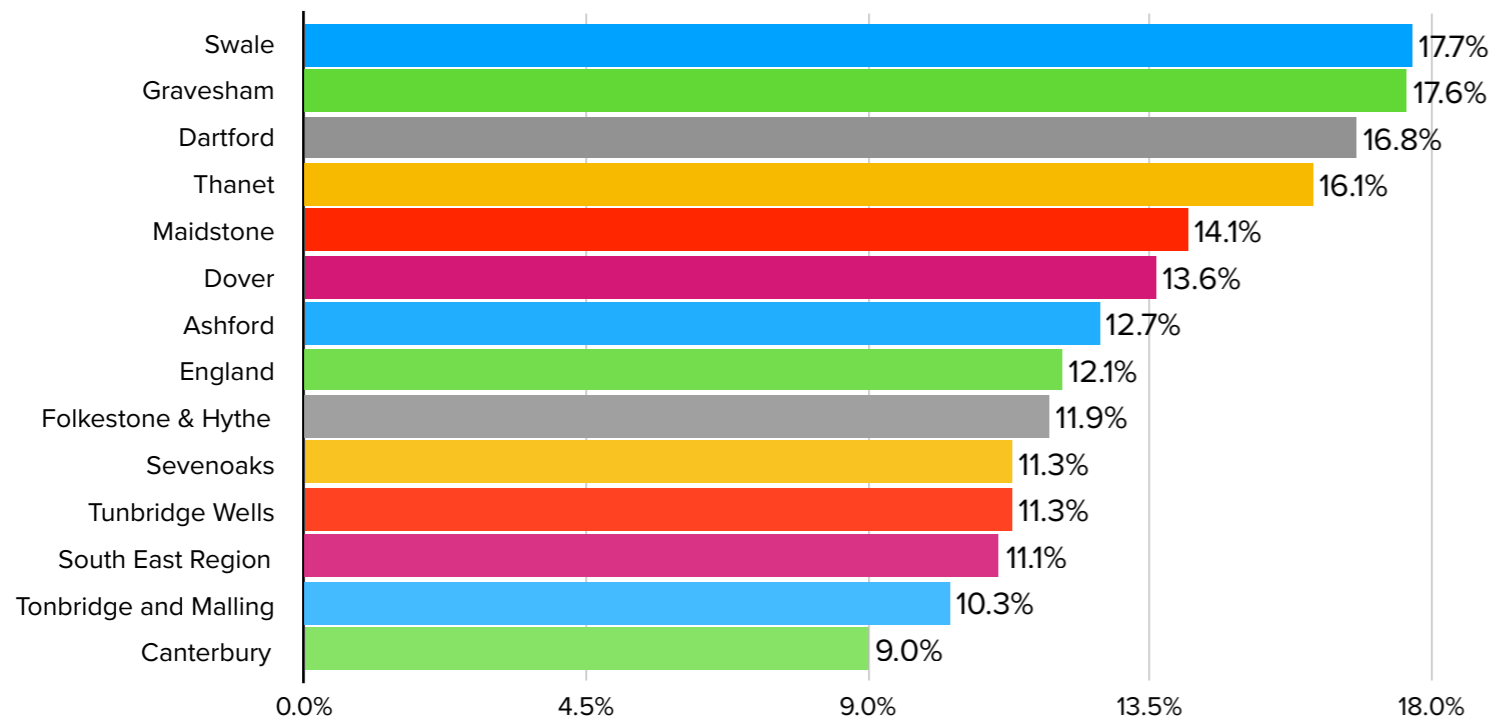
Source: Public Health England: Public Health Outcomes Framework

04 Understanding our Communities

Smoking

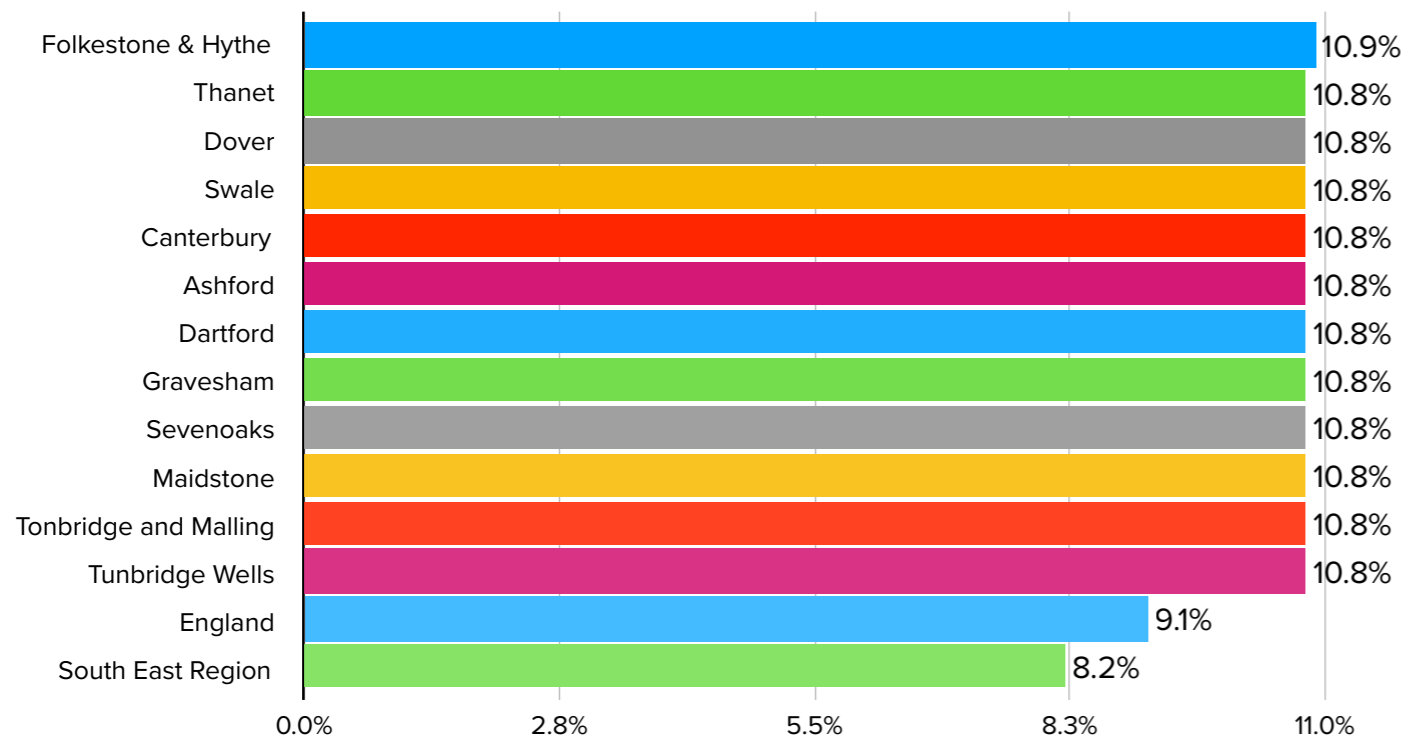
11.9% of those over the age of 18 are smokers. However, those smoking at the time of delivery (a determinant of child health) is significantly worse than average.

Smoking Prevalence in Adults (18+) 2020



Source: Public Health England: Public Health Outcomes Framework

Smoking status at time of delivery (2021-22)

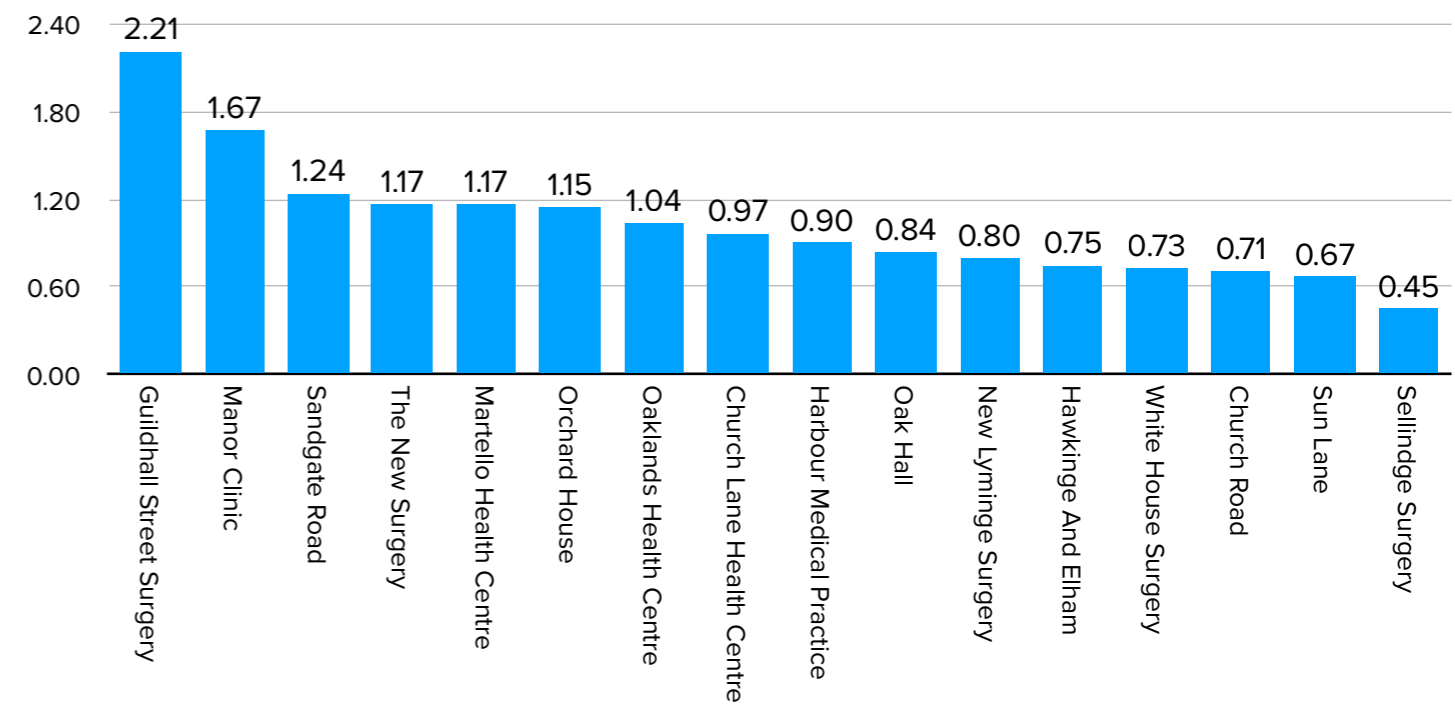


Source: Public Health England: Public Health Outcomes Framework

Mental Health and Suicide

The prevalence of mental health conditions in 2021-22 by GP practice in the graph below shows Guildhall Street Surgery (Folkestone) as recording the highest prevalence (2.21%) and Sellindge Surgery recording the lowest (0.45%) on the register of their patients:

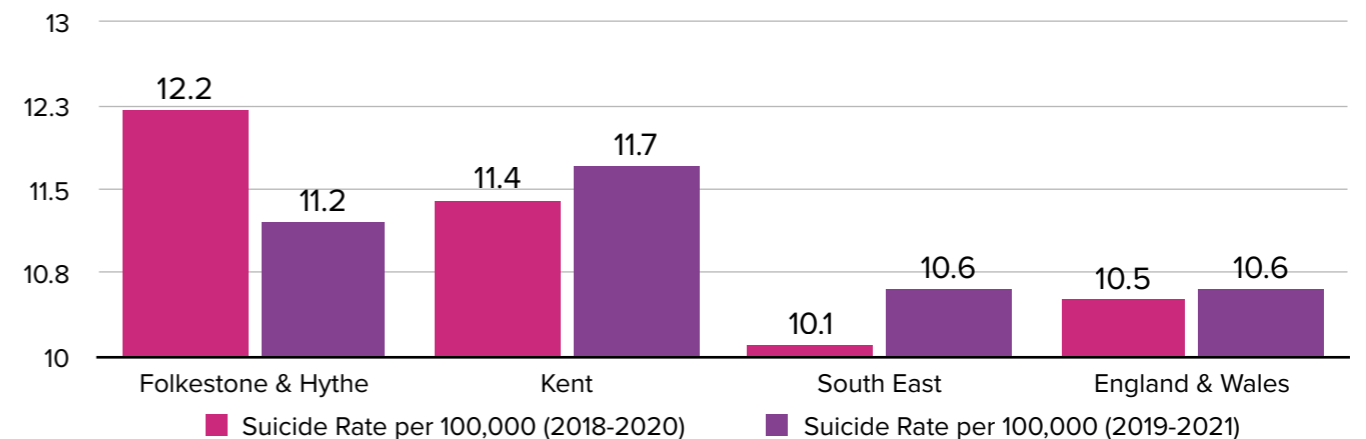
Recorded Prevalance of Mental Health Conditions by GP Practice
% of patients recorded on GP QOF registers as having a mental health condition- 2021-22



Source: NHS Digital: Quality of Outcomes Framework (2021-22)

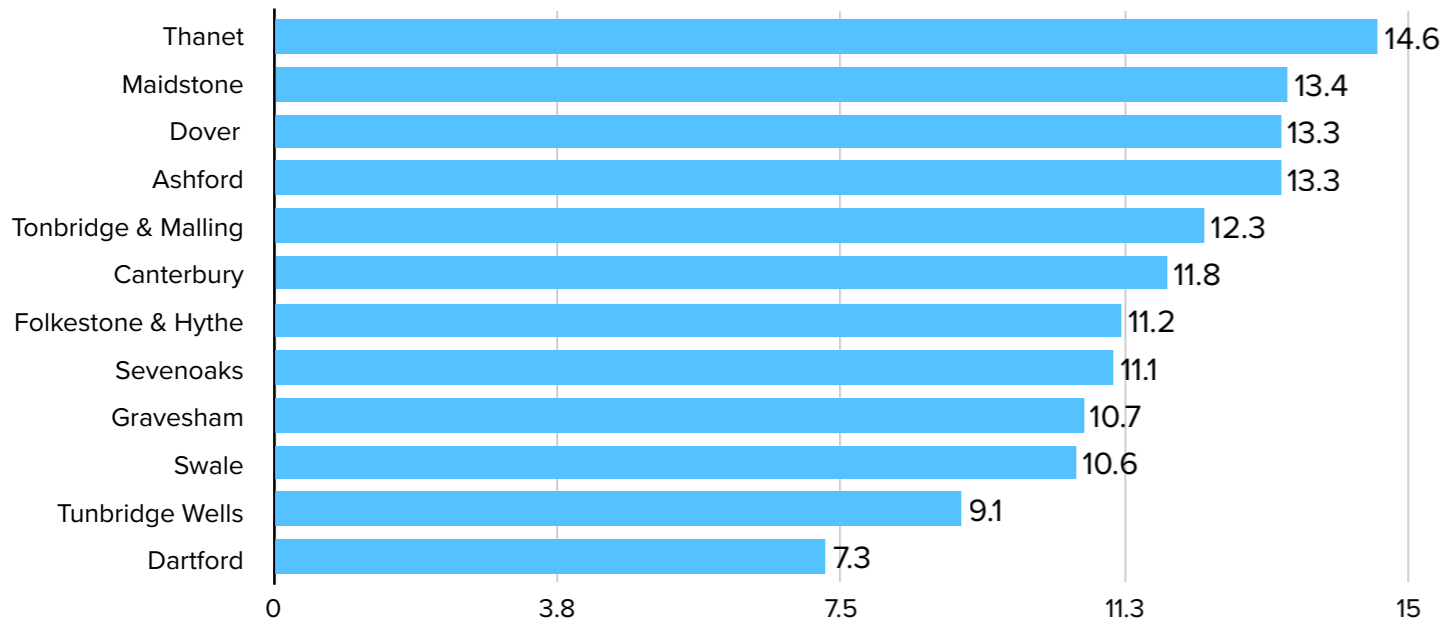
The suicide rate in the district is above the average for Kent, the South East and England & Wales as a whole. Data for the period from 2019 to 2021 recorded by the ONS shows the rate at 11.2 per 100,000 of the population, the seventh highest amongst the Kent districts. The rate across Kent overall was 11.7, 10.6 in the South East and 10.6 nationally (England & Wales).

Suicide Rate per 100,000 Folkestone & Hythe vs County, Regional and National



04 Understanding our Communities

Suicides per 100,000 of population by Kent Local Authority Area (2019-21)

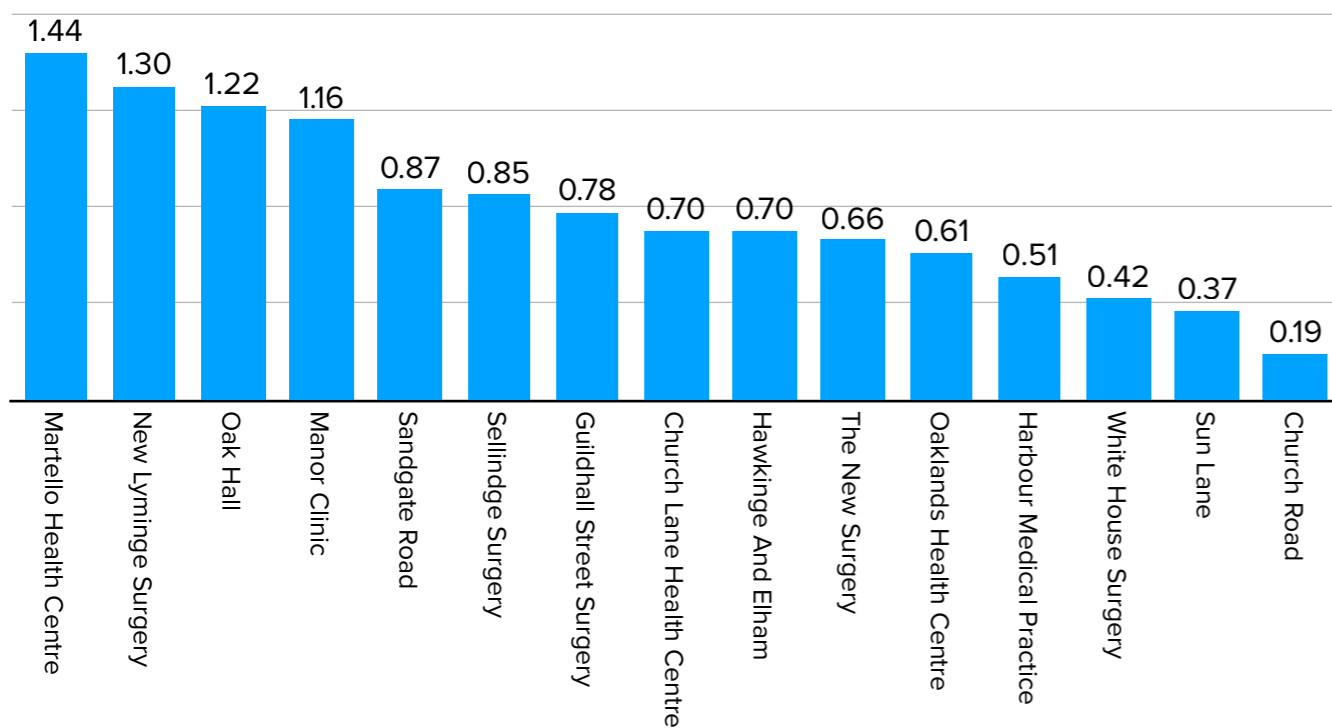


Source: ONS Suicides in England and Wales by Local Authority (2022)

Learning Disabilities

The latest figures recorded in 2021/22 on the prevalence of learning disabilities by GP practice show a variance across the district with the highest at Martello Health Centre in Dymchurch (1.44%) and the lowest at Church Road Surgery in Lyminge (0.19%).

Recorded prevalence of learning disabilities by GP Practice
% of patients recorded on GP QOF registers as having a learning disability - 2021-22

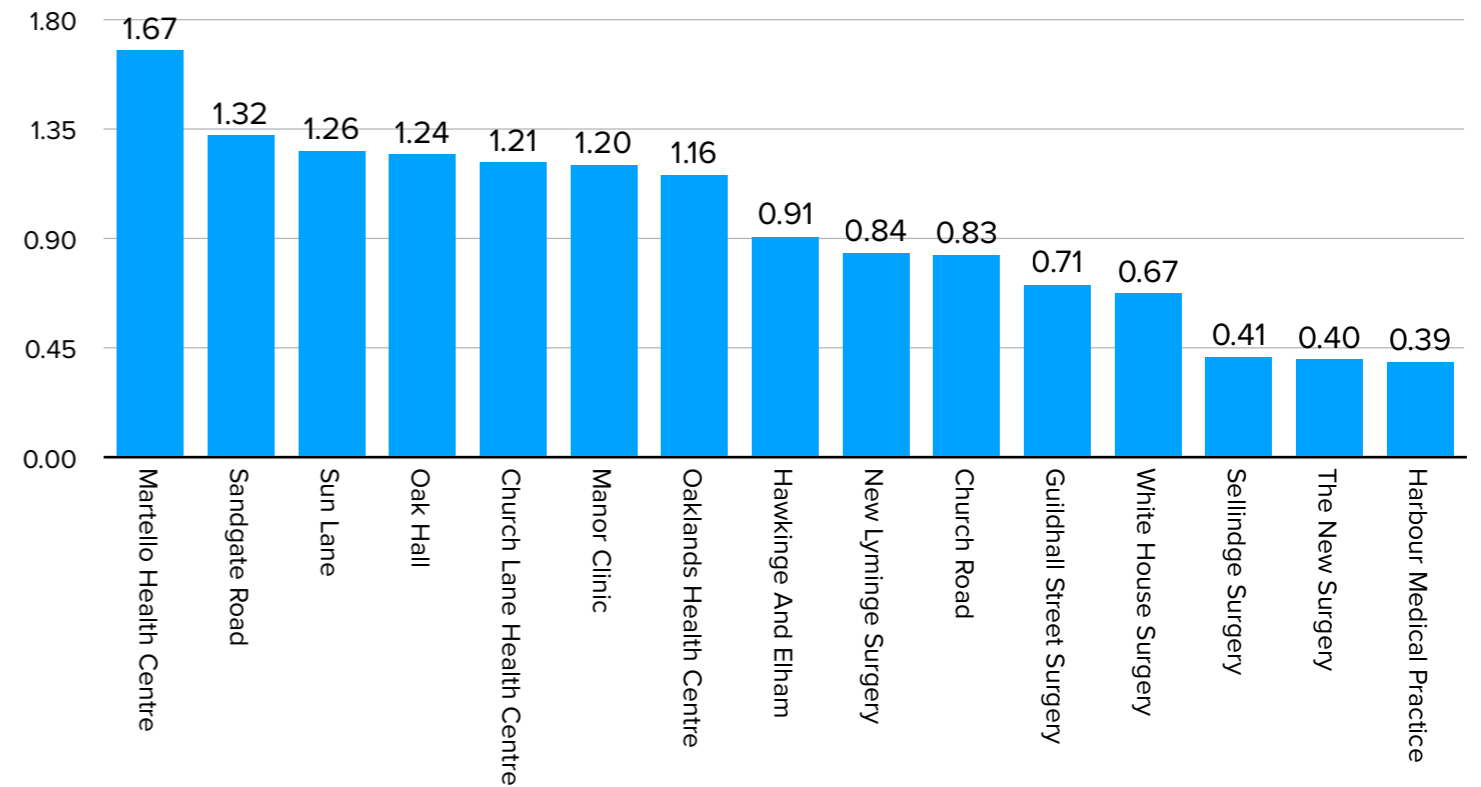


Source: NHS Digital: Quality of Outcomes Framework (2021-22)

Dementia

The latest data recorded in 2021-22 for prevalence of dementia by GP surgeries shows a variance across the district with the highest number being recorded at Martello Health Centre in Dymchurch (1.67%) and the lowest at the Harbour Medical Practice in Folkestone (0.39%).

Recorded dementia prevalence by GP Practice
% of patients recorded on GP QOF registers as having a dementia 2021-22



Source: NHS Digital: Quality of Outcomes Framework (2021-22)

Births & Deaths

In the recent past there have generally been more deaths per year in the district than births. This trend has continued with the latest figures from 2021 showing 978 live births and 1,287 deaths. This is in contrast with the picture for Kent as a whole, where the live birth rate is higher than the death rate.

Source: ONS, Births in England and Wales: Summary Tables, 2021

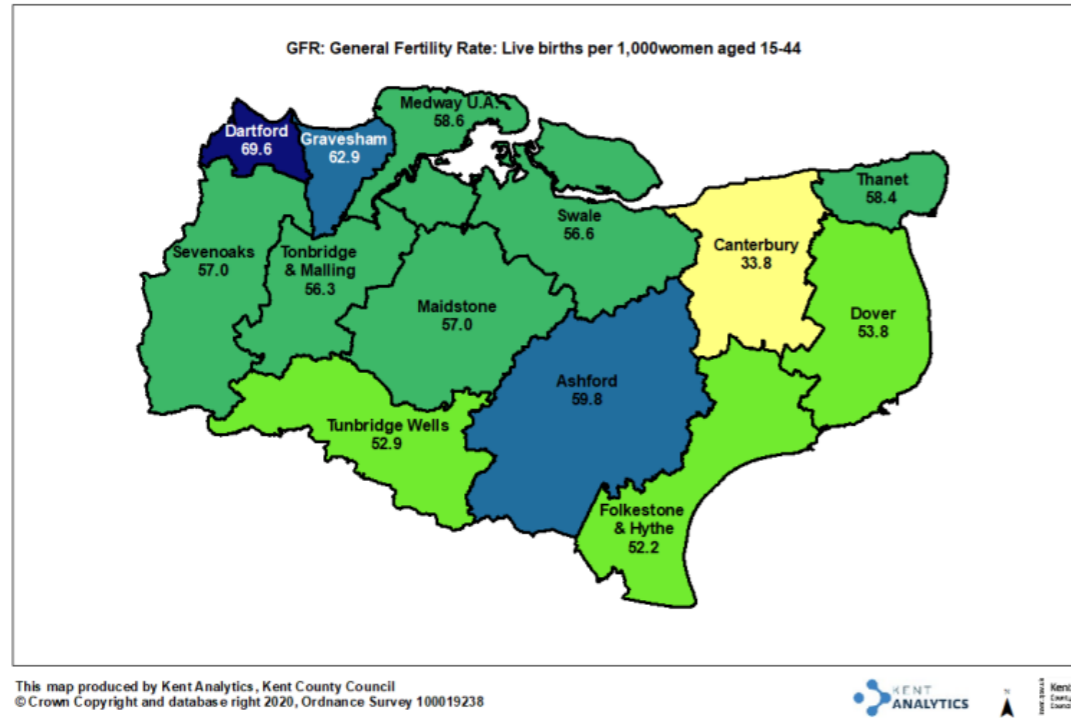
ONS: Deaths registered monthly in England and Wales, 2021

04 Understanding our Communities

General Fertility Rates

The General Fertility Rate (GFR) is the number of live births per 1,000 females aged between 15 and 44.

2020 General Fertility Rate: Local Authority Areas in Kent



In 2020 the GFR for Folkestone & Hythe was measured at 52.2. This is the second lowest rate when compared with other Kent local authority areas in the County (see the map above).

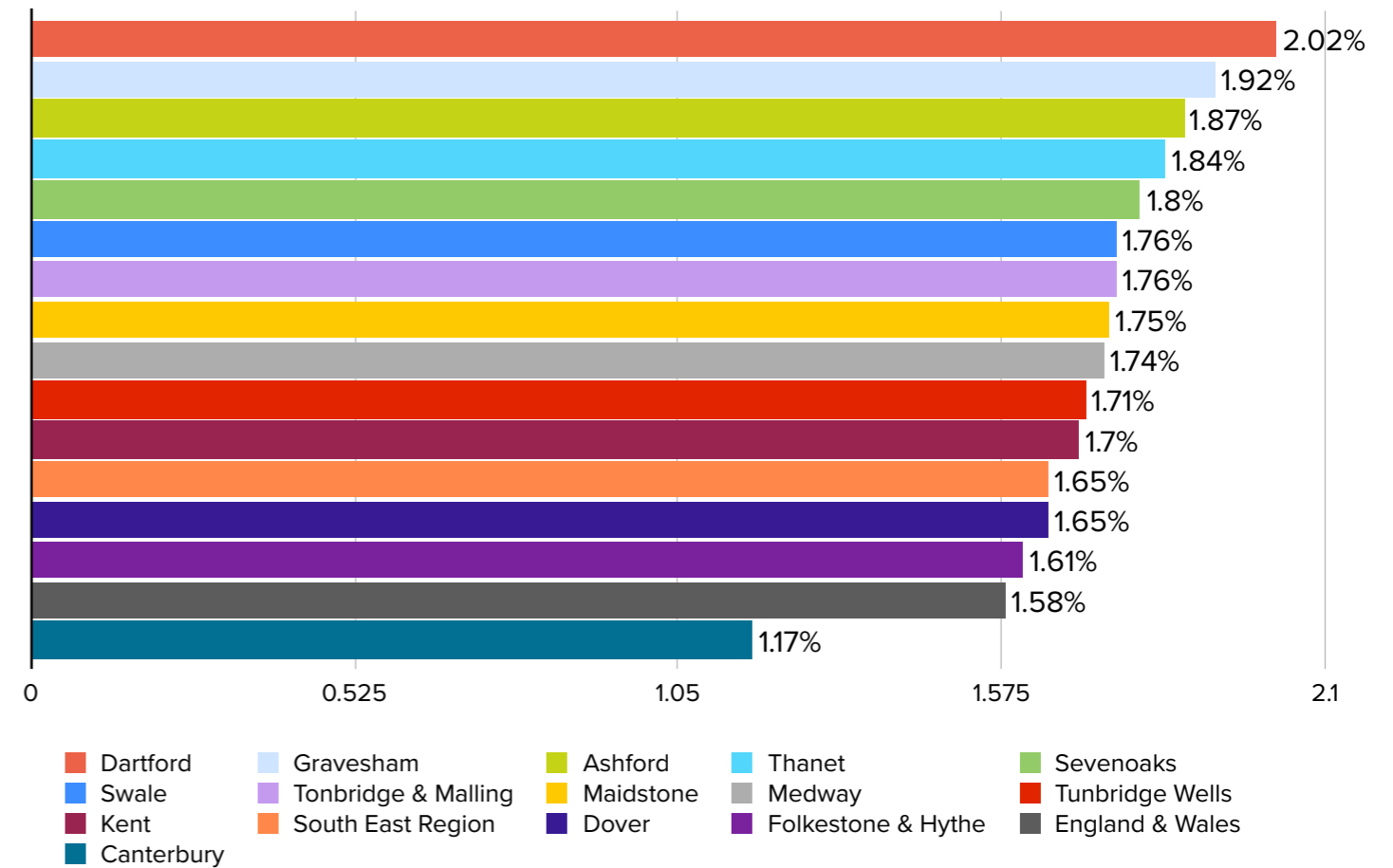
Source: KCC Strategic Commissioning Statistical Bulletin – Births & Deaths in Kent 2020

Total Fertility Rates

The total fertility rate is defined as 'the average number of live children that a group of women would bear if they experienced the age-specific fertility rates of the calendar year throughout their childbearing lifespan'.

Folkestone & Hythe has the second lowest total fertility rates (1.61) in 2020 compared with East Kent local authority areas. The following graph shows the total period fertility rate for the district to be below the Kent (1.70) and South East Region (1.65) averages, but above average for England and Wales (1.58).

TFR Total Period Fertility Rate 2020

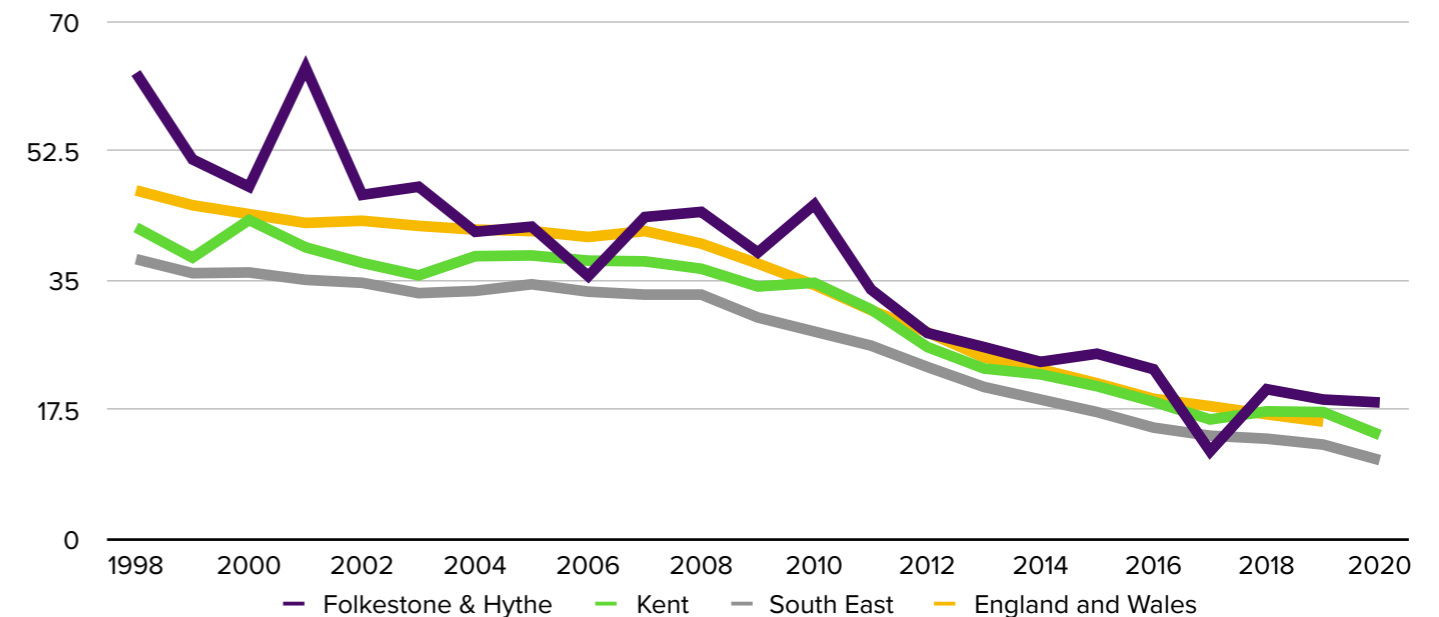


Source: KCC Strategic Commissioning Statistical Bulletin – Births & Deaths in Kent 2020

Teenage Pregnancies:

Under 18 conception rate – An Historical Comparison:

Under 18 Conceptions (Per 1,000 population) 1998-2020

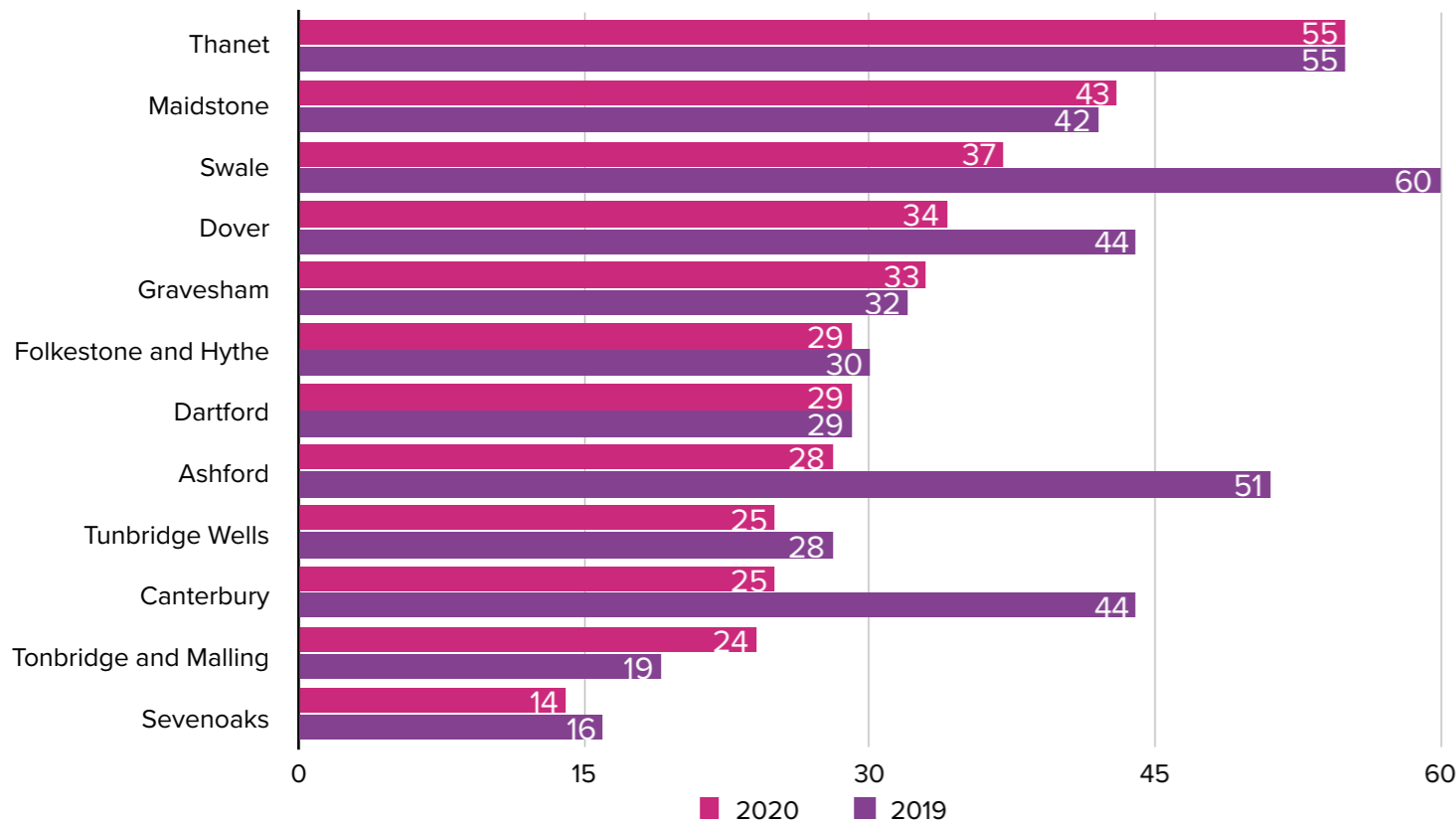


Source: ONS Conception Statistics 2020

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Teenage Conceptions: A Kent Comparison

Number of under 18 conceptions by Kent local authority area in 2019 vs 2020



Source: ONS Conception Statistics 2020

The latest ONS data on conceptions from 2020 in the above graph shows all Kent local authorities ranked from highest to lowest in terms of under 18 conceptions. Thanet was recorded as having the highest number in 2019 and 2020 with 55 conceptions. Folkestone & Hythe, previously recorded a total of 30 conceptions in 2019, which decreased slightly to 29 in 2020. Sevenoaks recorded the lowest number within the County in 2020.

Life Expectancy

The latest available data from the 2018-2020 period shows the average life expectancy of a Folkestone & Hythe resident to be similar to the national average:

	Folkestone & Hythe	Kent	South East	England
Female	82.9	83.2	84.1	83.1
Male	78.3	79.6	80.5	79.6

Source: ONS: Life expectancies for local areas of the UK: Between 2001-03 and 2018-20

At the age of 65 years, the average female in the Folkestone & Hythe District lives for a further 21.3 years, with the average male living for a further 18.6 years.

Source: ONS: Life expectancies for local areas of the UK: Between 2001-03 and 2018-20

Disability Benefits

11.5% of Folkestone & Hythe residents claim disability benefits, defined as including Disability Living Allowance / Personal Independence Payments or Attendance Allowance. Across all Kent authorities, Thanet (at 12.2%) has the highest percentage of disability benefit claimants. The table below shows the proportion of each age bracket claiming disability benefits and how this compares with county, regional and national figures.

	Folkestone & Hythe	Kent	South East	England & Wales
Overall	11.5%	8.6 %	7.2%	8.7%
0-15	7.2%	6.1%	4.7%	4.8%
16-64	8.3%	6.0%	4.9%	6.1%
65+	21.5%	18.5%	16.2%	20.8%
Young People (24 and under)	7.5%	6.0%	4.6%	4.7%

Source: KCC District Profile/ DWP, February 2022

There are a number of reasons why people may claim disability benefit and people may claim for more than one condition. Looking at why people in Folkestone & Hythe district claimed the benefit, figures show that 63.5% of disability benefit claimants in the district claim due to a physical disability, and in addition 17.5% of the total also claimed for a mental health condition, and 14.7% of the total due to a learning difficulty.

People Providing Unpaid Care

Age Range	Percentage
65 and over	24.8%
16-64	72.9%
0-15	2.3%

04 Understanding our Communities

Percentage of age groups claiming carers allowance

Age Range	Folkestone & Hythe	Kent	Great Britain
16-24	0.9%	0.7%	0.7%
25-64	3.6%	3.0%	2.8%
65 and over	2.5%	2.2%	2.7%

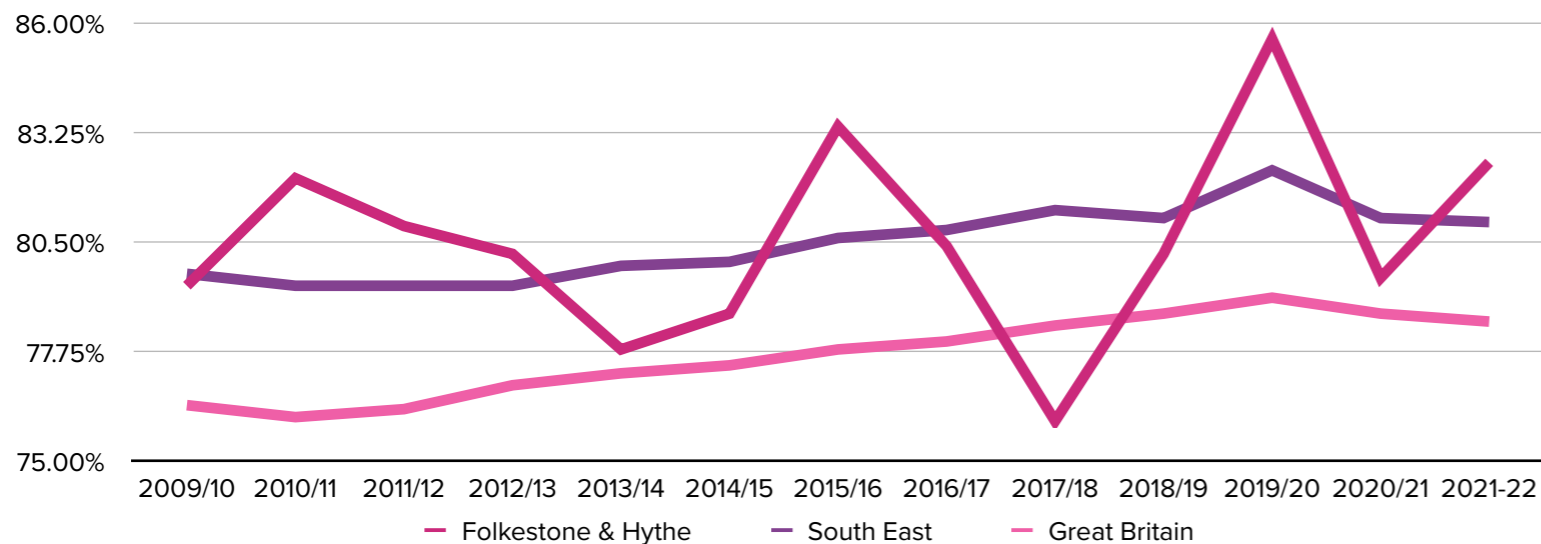
Source: KCC District Profile/ DWP Longitudinal Study, February 2022

Economic Profile

Labour Supply & Economic Activity

In 2021-22, 82.5% of those aged between 16 and 64 were 'economically active', defined as 'either in employment or unemployed and available for and actively seeking work' compared with 79.6% in 2020-21.

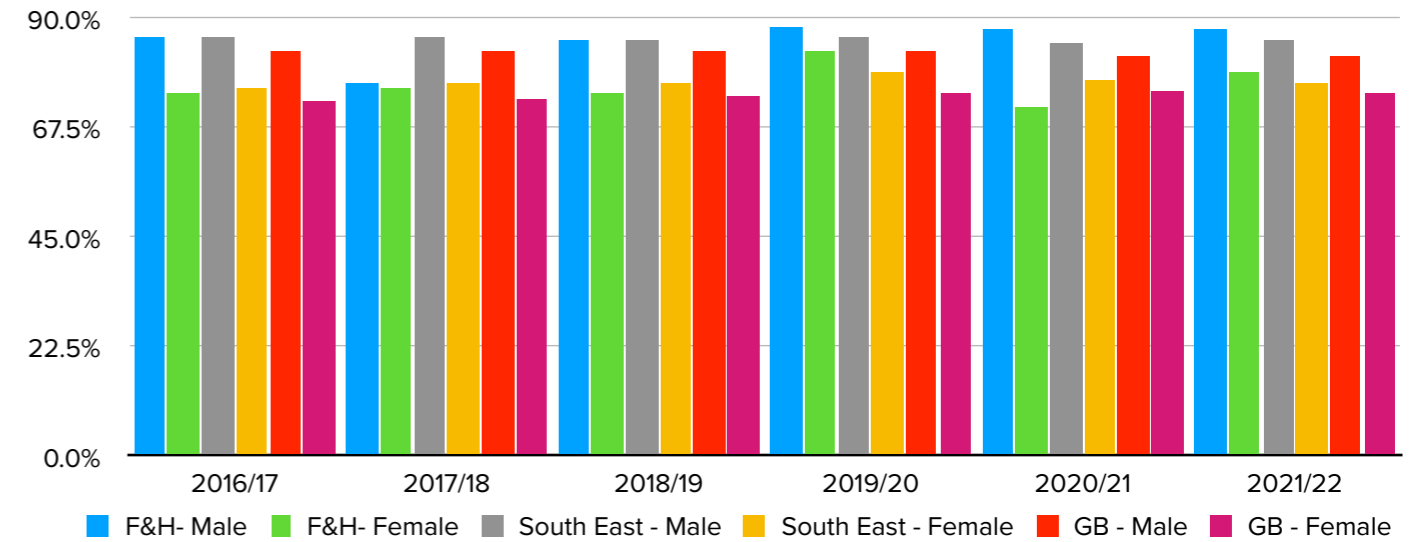
Economically Active Population
2019/10-2021/22



Source: NOMIS

There has historically been some differential between the proportion of economically active men and women. In 2016/17 for example, 85.9% of males were economically active in comparison to 74.8% of females. In 2021-22, both the proportion of economically active females increased slightly to 78.7% and the proportion of economically active males increased to 87.5%. The following graph shows the trend for the previous five years:

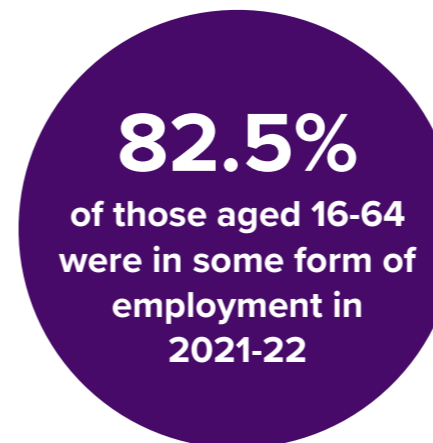
Percentage of Economically Active Males and Females



Source: NOMIS

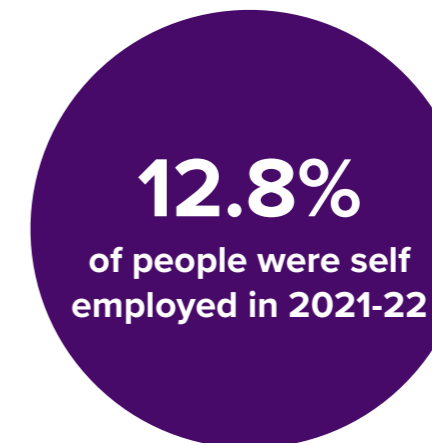
In 2021/22, 82.5% of those aged 16-64 were in some form of employment. The majority of people aged 16-64 who were classed as employees increased from 65.5% in 2020/21 to 67.1% in 2021/22. The number of those classed as self-employed has decreased from a high of 20.8% in 2019/20 to 11.9% in 2020/21 as a likely result of the pandemic. In 2021-22, the figure has increased slightly to 12.8%.

The proportion of residents classed as 'economically inactive' has shown a decrease this year. In 2021/22 17.5% of those aged 16-64 were unavailable to work because of family commitments, retirement or study, or unable to work through sickness or disability compared with 19.5% in 2020/21. The figure for 2021/22 is now below the average when compared to the south east (19%), and below the average for Great Britain as whole (21.5%).



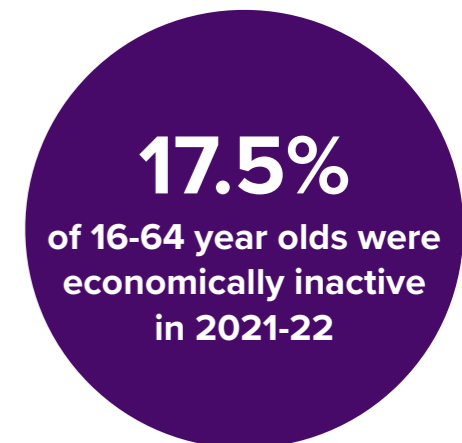
82.5%
of those aged 16-64
were in some form of
employment in
2021-22

Source: NOMIS



12.8%
of people were self
employed in
2021-22

Source: NOMIS



17.5%
of 16-64 year olds were
economically inactive
in 2021-22

Source: NOMIS

04 Understanding our Communities

Employment by Occupation: Proportion of those in Employment in 2022

	Folkestone & Hythe	South East	Great Britain
Soc 2010 major group 1-3	51.8%	55.9%	51.4%
1 Managers, directors and senior officials	11.8%	12.7%	10.3%
2 Professional occupations	21.0%	27.1%	25.8%
3 Associate professional & technical	16.1%	15.8%	15.0%
Soc 2010 major group 4-5	17.0%	18.0%	18.7%
4 Administrative & secretarial	#	10.1%	10.1%
5 Skilled trades occupations	#	7.9%	8.6%
Soc 2010 major group 6-7	16.4%	13.6%	14.6%
6 Caring, leisure and Other Service occupations	#	7.7%	7.9%
7 Sales and customer service occs	#	5.8%	6.6%
Soc 2010 major group 8-9	14.8%	12.5%	15.3%
8 Process plant & machine operatives	!	4.2%	5.7%
9 Elementary occupations	#	8.2%	9.6%

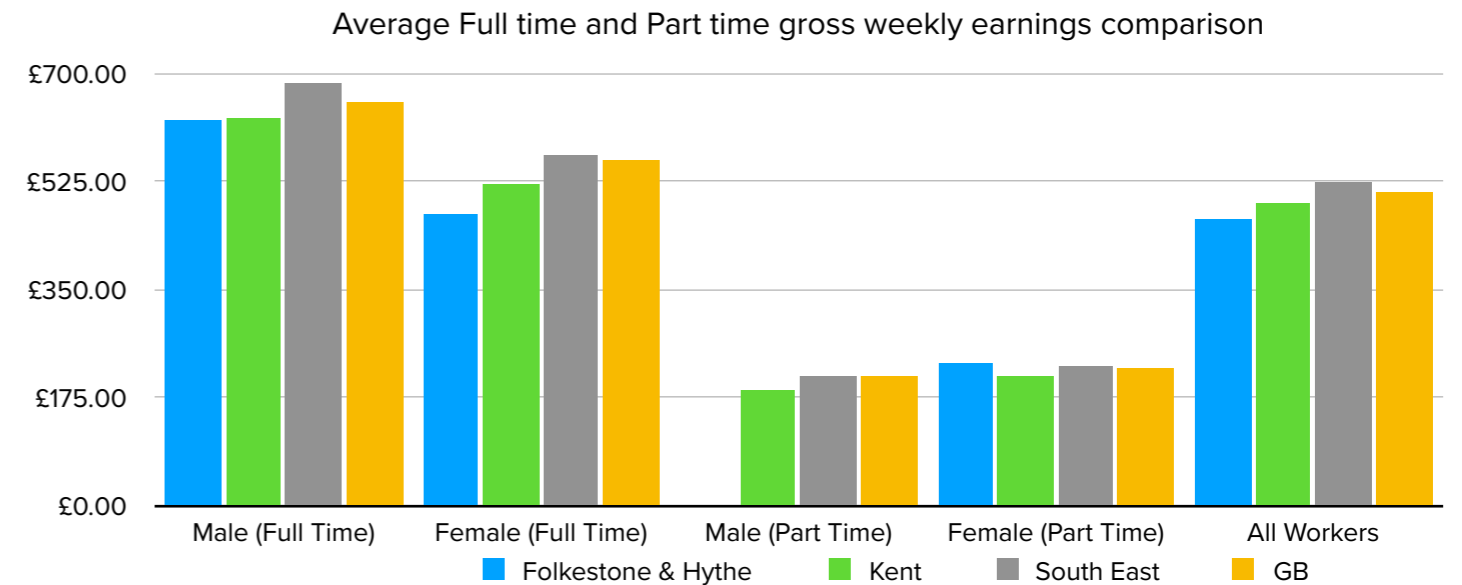
Source: NOMIS

Earnings and Income

The average gross earnings for a Folkestone & Hythe resident are £563.80 per week which is lower than those for the average Kent resident (£631.50 per week), the south east (£646 per week) and Great Britain as a whole (£599.50 per week).

Source: NOMIS, Annual Survey of Hours & Earnings, 2021

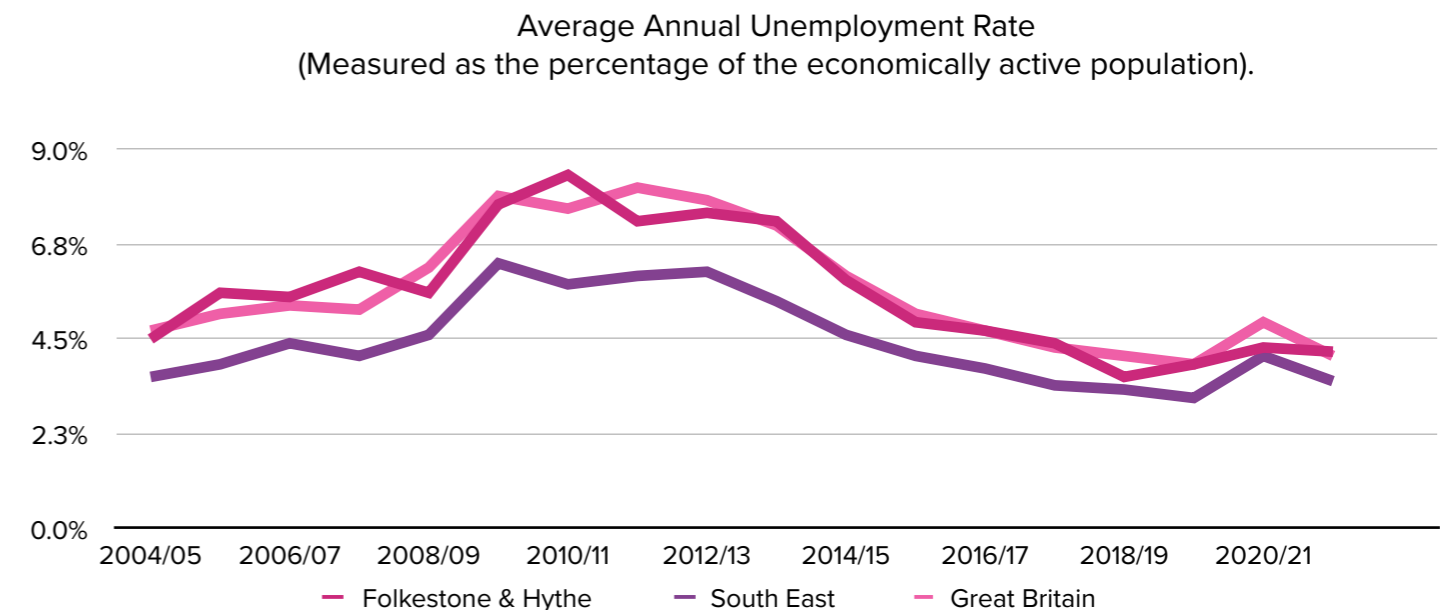
There are, however, variations between the earnings of men and women, and those in full time and part time employment. The graph below sets out these earnings:



Source: NOMIS, Annual Survey of Hours & Earnings, 2021

Unemployment and Working Age Benefits

The unemployment rate in the district has decreased slightly from 4.3% in 2020/21 to 4.2% in 2021/22.



Source: NOMIS

04 Understanding our Communities

Unemployment and Working Age Benefits (continued)

The 'claimant count' is the proportion of those aged 16-64 claiming benefits principally for the reason of being unemployed. At the end of 2021-22 the claimant count recorded a decrease within the district from 7.3% in March 2021 to 4.7% in March 2022. The current count is still higher in comparison to the south east (3.2%) and national average (4.1%). Local, regional and national averages have all shown decreases as a likely result of the COVID 19 restrictions being lifted.

When we consider claimant count by age, there appears to be a higher claimant count amongst 18-21 year olds

Age Range	Folkestone & Hythe	South East	Great Britain
18-24	3.9%	2.9%	3.6%
(of which 18-21)	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%
25-49	6.3%	3.5%	4.6%
50+	6.9%	3.5%	4.7%

Source: NOMIS 2022

Deprivation

Folkestone & Hythe is a diverse district. Not dissimilar to other local authority areas in East Kent, it has areas that are within the most deprived 10% of England and areas that are within the least deprived 10%.

Source: Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government (MHCLG), 2019

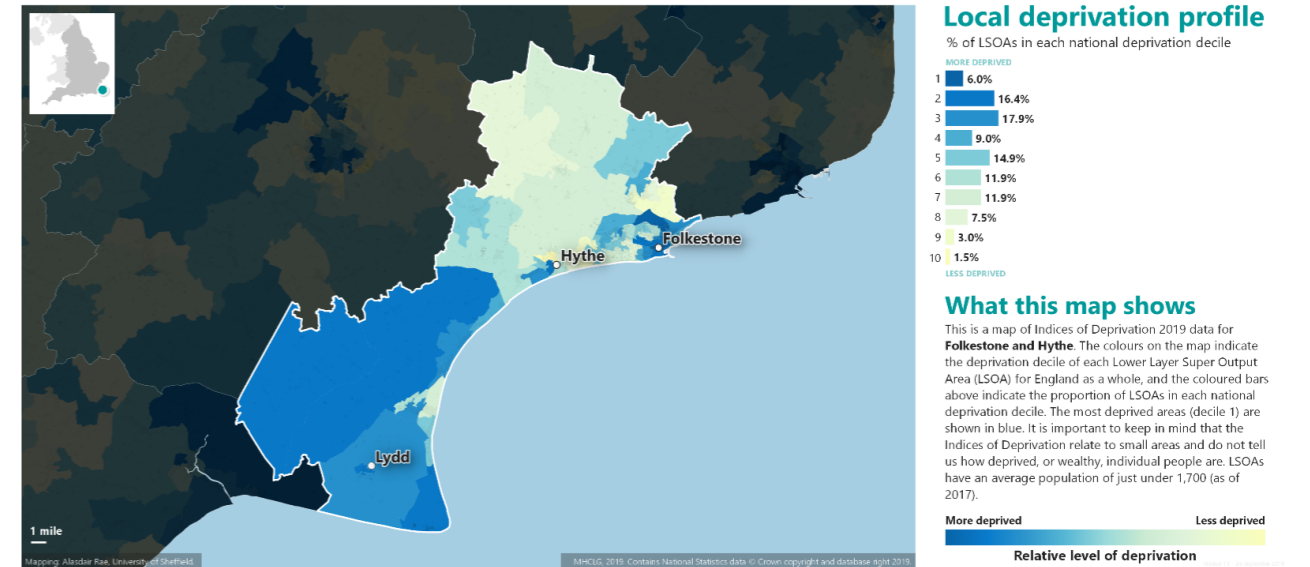
The map below shows the latest indices of multiple deprivation (2019) based on combined data from income, employment, education, skills and training, health deprivation and disability, crime, barriers to housing and services as well as living environment deprivation. The darkest blue areas show the worst deprivation. Data is split into areas generated by the Office for National Statistics based on population size called Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) rather than by electoral ward.

LSOA Definition: Lower-Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are small areas designed to be of a similar population size, with an average of approximately 1,500 residents or 650 households. There are 32,844 Lower-layer LSOAs in England. LSOAs are a standard statistical geography produced by the Office for National Statistics for the reporting of small area statistics.

English Indices of Deprivation 2019

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

FOLKESTONE AND HYPHE



Above: Map of Folkestone & Hythe showing a 2019 profile of deprivation. Darker coloured areas on the map represent the more deprived areas and lighter coloured areas least deprived.

The table below shows how Folkestone & Hythe compares to other Kent local authority areas in an Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD):

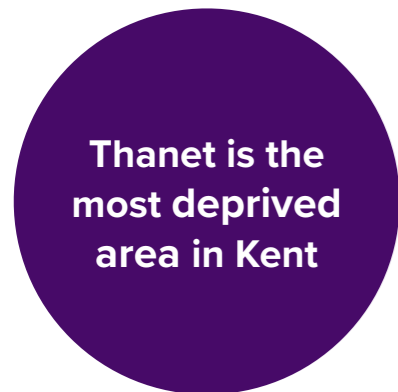
Local Authority	IMD - Rank of average score* (Out of 317 local authorities in England)	Ranking for Deprivation in Kent
Thanet	30	1
Swale	56	2
Folkestone & Hythe	90	3
Dover	113	4
Gravesham	123	5
Dartford	154	6
Ashford	158	7
Canterbury	179	8
Maidstone	185	9
Tonbridge and Malling	234	10
Sevenoaks	251	11
Tunbridge Wells	274	12

Source: Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government (MHCLG), 2019

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Table Notes

***IMD - Rank of average score:** The average score summary measure is calculated by averaging the Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA) scores in each larger area after they have been population weighted. The resultant scores for the larger areas are then ranked, where the rank of 1 (most deprived) is given to the area with the highest score.



Source: MHCLG 2019



Source: : MHCLG 2019



Source: MHCLG 2019

Seven Domains of Deprivation:

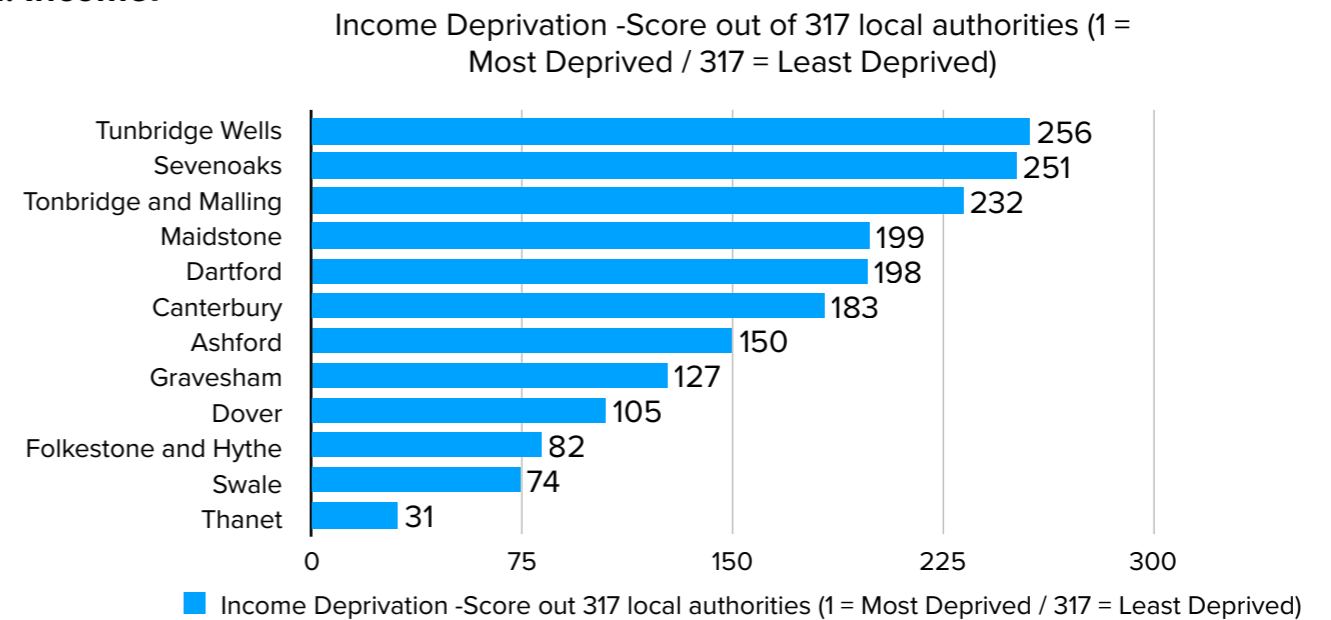
The rank of average score provided to an area is calculated using an area's individual scores across the seven Domains of Deprivation (DoDs):

1. Income
2. Employment
3. Education
4. Health
5. Crime
6. Barriers to housing and services
7. Living environment

Each of the above domains is based on a suite of indicators that are used to calculate an overall ranking for each local authority area.

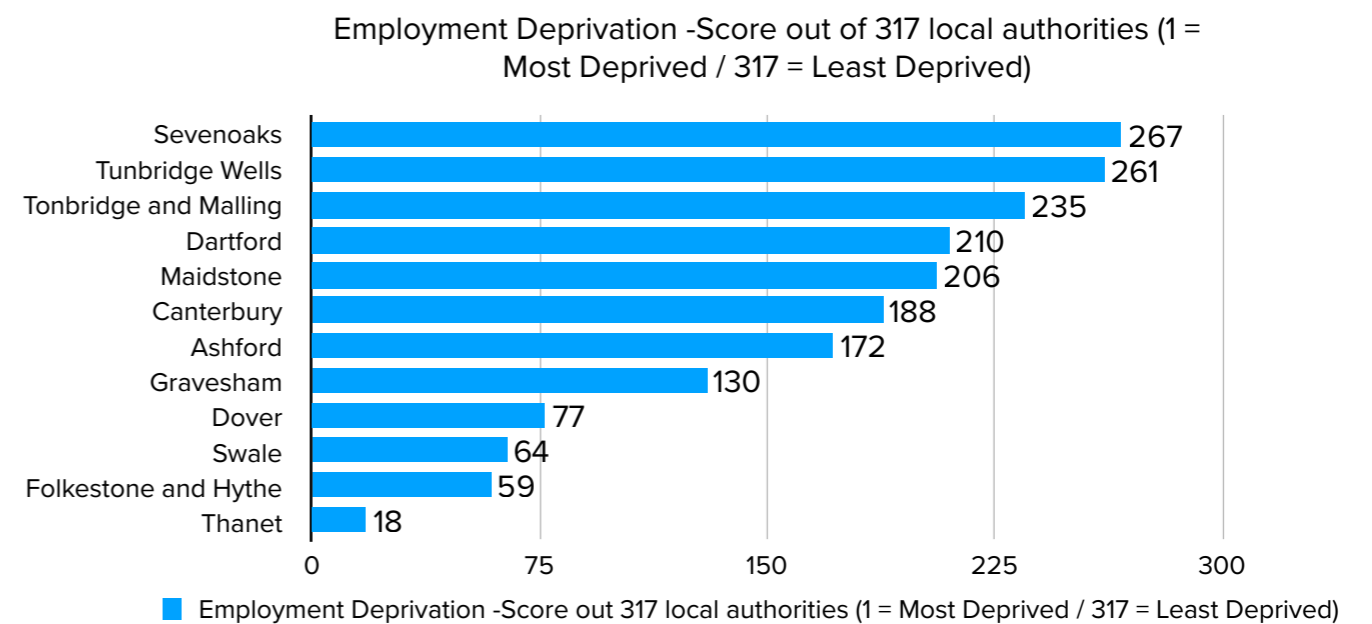
The following graphs show how the district compares with other Kent local authority areas on the Seven DoDs, where the ranking of 1 is classed as 'most deprived' and 317 'least deprived'.

1. Income:



The above graph shows Tunbridge Wells to be the least income deprived and Thanet to be the most income deprived. Folkestone & Hythe is ranked as the third most deprived for income out of the twelve Kent local authority areas.

2. Employment:

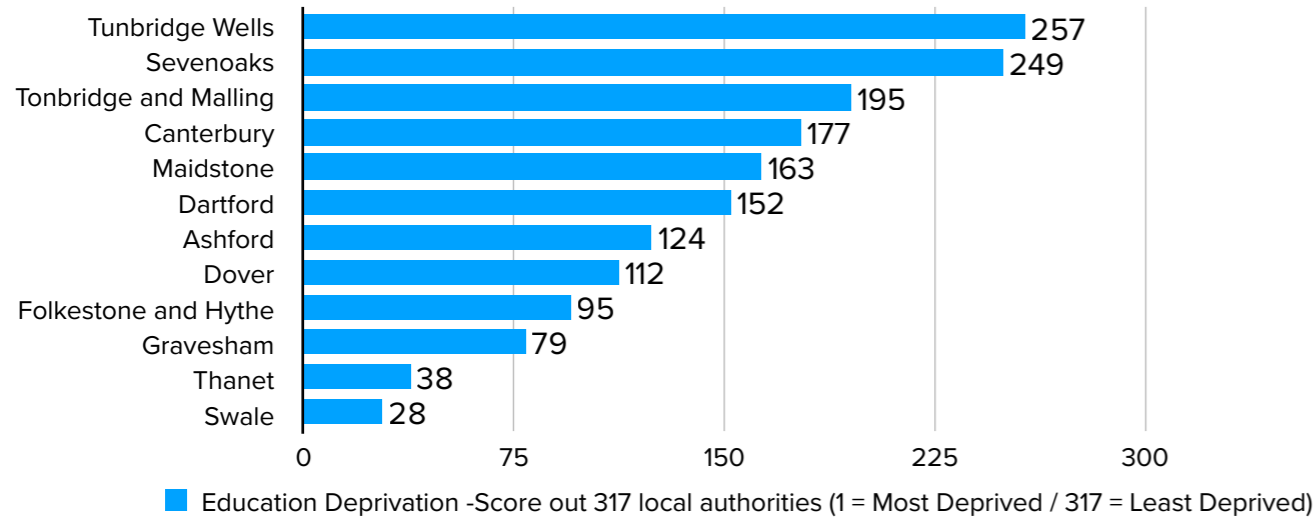


The above graph shows Sevenoaks to be the least employment deprived and Thanet to be the most employment deprived. Folkestone & Hythe is ranked as the second most deprived for employment out of the twelve Kent local authority areas.

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3. Education:

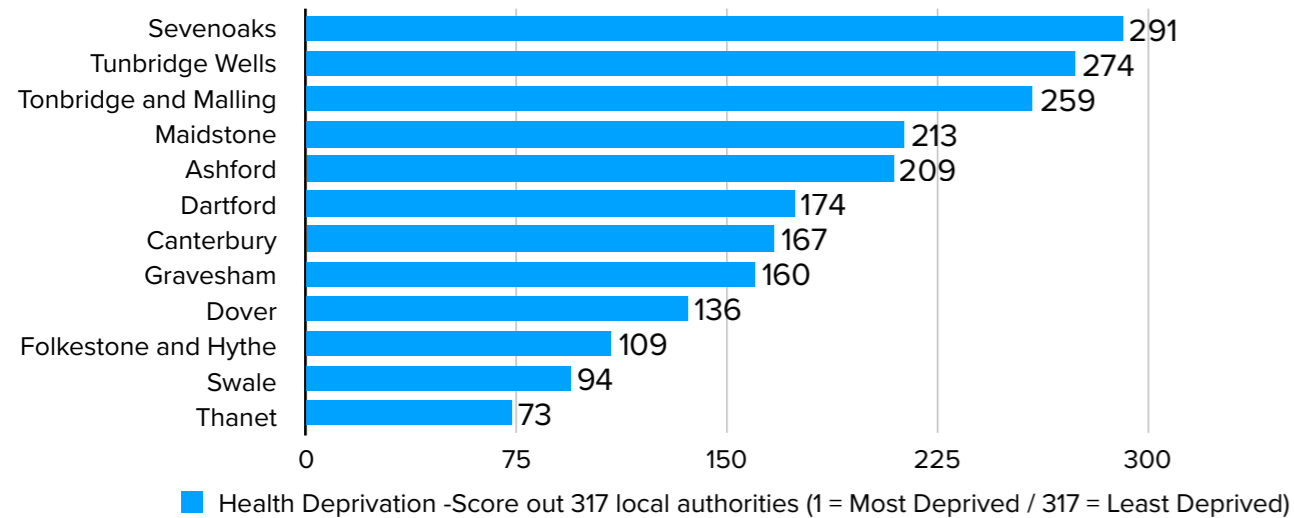
Education Deprivation -Score out of 317 local authorities (1 = Most Deprived / 317 = Least Deprived)



The above graph shows Tunbridge Wells to be the least education deprived and Swale to be the most education deprived. Folkestone & Hythe is ranked as the fourth most deprived for education out of the twelve Kent local authority areas.

4. Health:

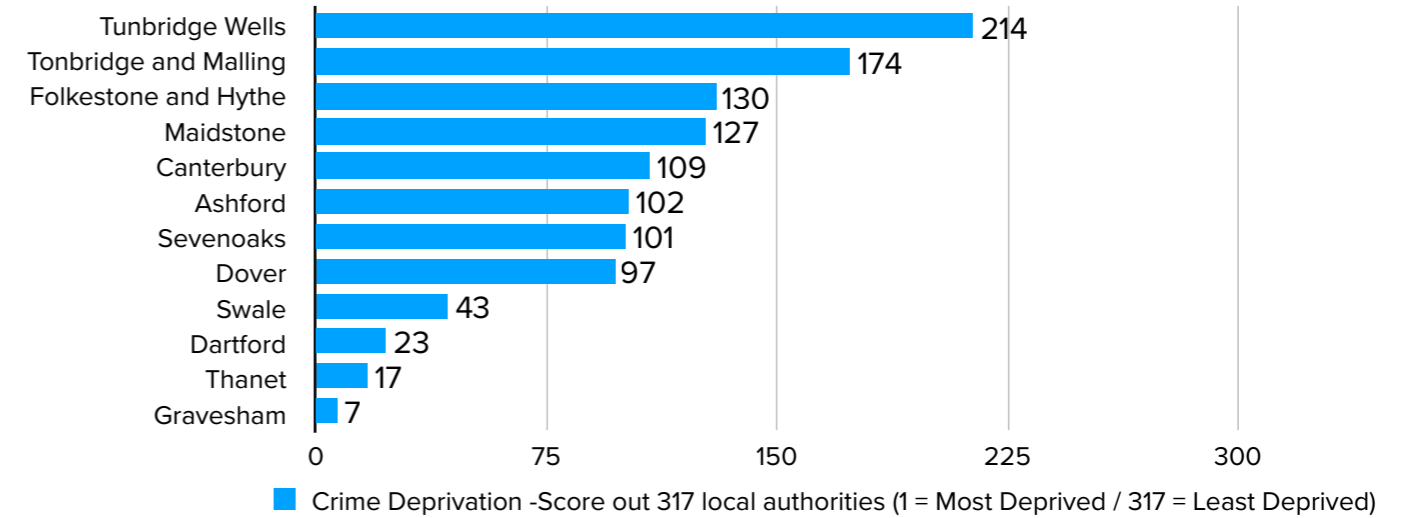
Health Deprivation -Score out of 317 local authorities (1 = Most Deprived / 317 = Least Deprived)



The above graph shows Sevenoaks to be the least health deprived and Thanet to be the most health deprived. Folkestone & Hythe is ranked as the third most deprived for health out of the twelve Kent local authority areas.

5. Crime:

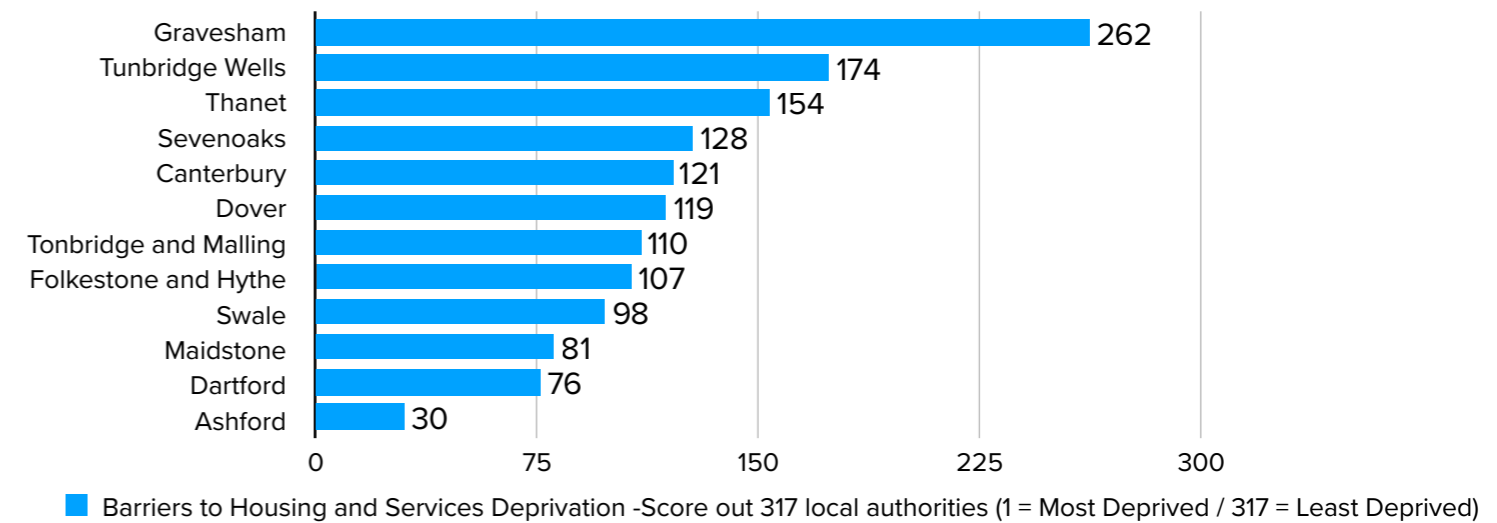
Crime Deprivation -Score out of 317 local authorities (1 = Most Deprived / 317 = Least Deprived)



The above graph shows Tunbridge Wells to be the least crime deprived and Gravesham to be the most crime deprived. Folkestone & Hythe is ranked as the third least deprived for crime out of the twelve Kent local authority areas.

6. Barriers to Housing Services

Barriers to Housing and Services Deprivation -Score out of 317 local authorities (1 = Most Deprived / 317 = Least Deprived)

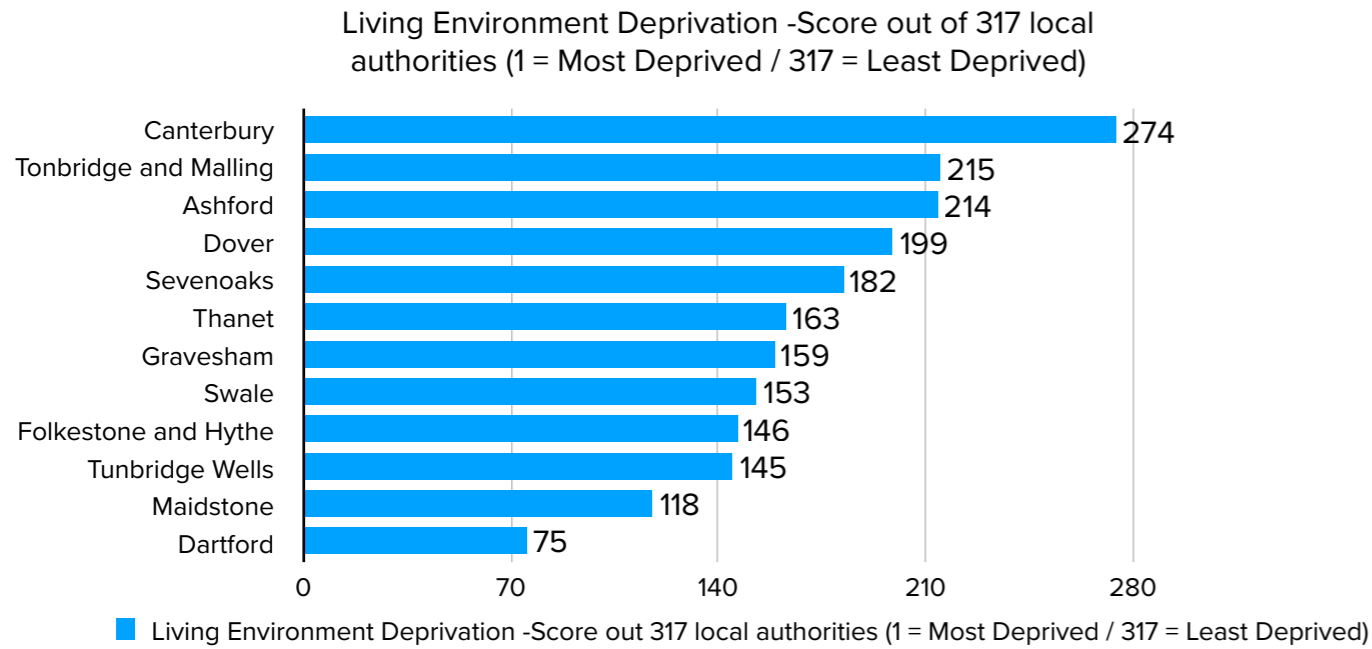


The above graph shows Gravesham to be the least deprived in relation to barriers to housing and services and Ashford to be the most deprived in this area. Folkestone & Hythe is ranked as the fifth most deprived for barriers to housing and services out of the twelve Kent local authority areas.

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Seven Domains of Deprivation (continued):

7. Living Environment:



The above graph shows Canterbury to be the least deprived in relation to Living Environment and Dartford to be the most deprived in this area. Folkestone & Hythe is ranked as the fourth most deprived for living environment out of the twelve Kent local authority areas.

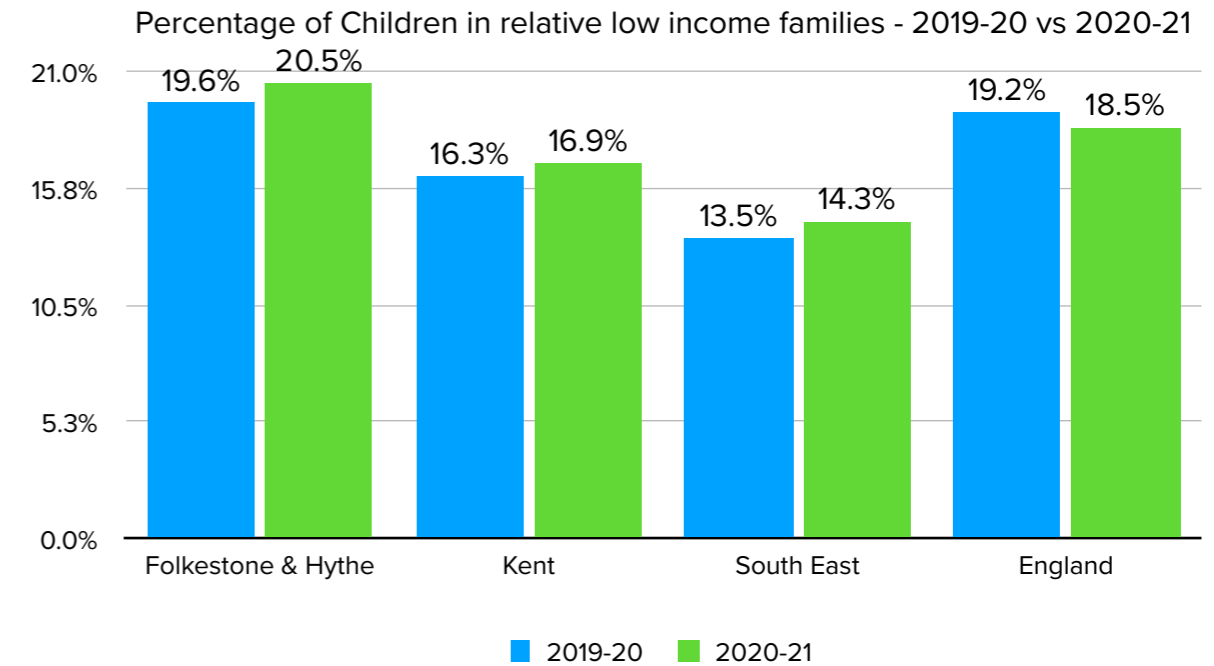
Child Poverty:

Child poverty figures show the proportion of children living in relative low income families.

Relative low income is defined as a family in low income before housing costs in the reference year.

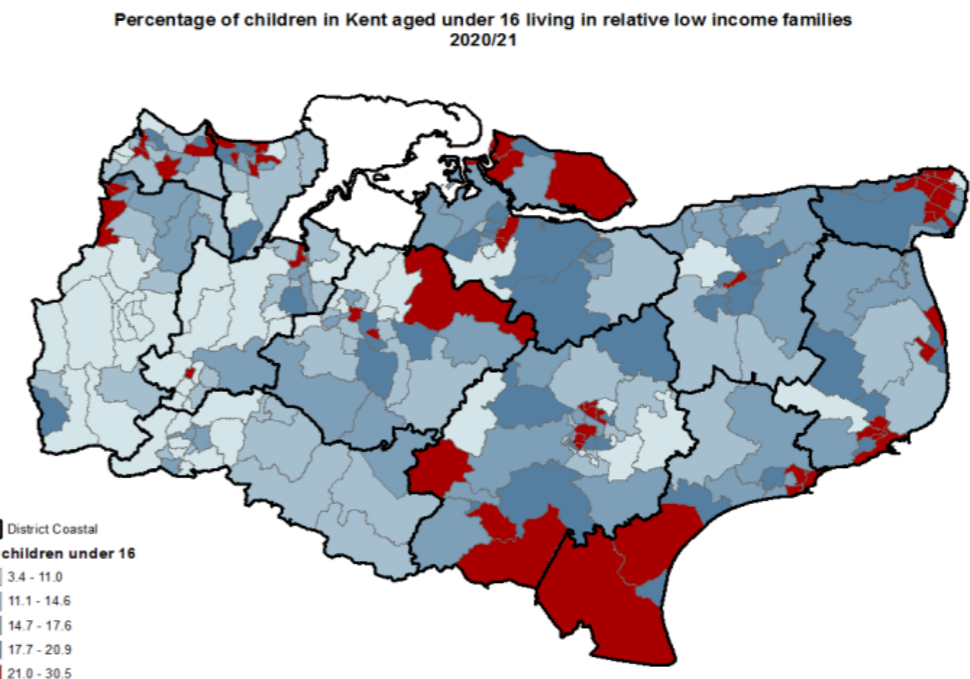
The latest data from 2020/21 shows that 20.5% of children are in relative low income families in Folkestone & Hythe and this is “significantly worse” than the average across Kent and the South East.

The following graph provides a comparison between the 2019/20 and 2020/21 years.



Source: Table 11b KCC Strategic Commissioning Statistical Bulletin 2022 – Children in Poverty

The heat map below shows the percentage of children living in relative low income families across Kent wards in 2020/21. In Folkestone & Hythe, the map shows the highest proportion of children living in relative low income families (shaded in dark red) to be situated in the Folkestone Central, East and Harbour wards as well in the Romney Marsh and Walland and Denge Marsh wards in the western part of the district.



Source: DWP Stat Xplore; ONS SAPE
Map produced by Kent Analytics, Kent County Council
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Data Sources:

The most up-to-date data at the time of publication has been utilised when compiling this demographic and socio-economic information. Further information can be found at the following sources:

General:

The 2021 district profile, published by Kent County Council's Strategic Business Development & Intelligence Unit on 26th October 2022, contains data from the ONS mid- 2020 population estimates as well as the 2011 census:

[Area profiles - Kent County Council](#)

Population:

Census 2021 (Interactive Maps) - [Census Maps - Census 2021 data interactive, ONS](#)

KCC Interactive mid-year population estimate toolkit: provides access to population estimates by gender and single year of age for all 12 Kent local authority districts and Kent County as a whole back to 2000: https://www.kent.gov.uk/__data/assets/excel_doc/0009/12879/Interactive-mid-year-population-estimates-toolkit.xlsm

KCC Housing Led Forecasts Interactive population toolkit (2021): https://www.kent.gov.uk/__data/assets/excel_doc/0019/12880/Interactive-population-forecast-toolkit.xlsm

ONS: Births in England and Wales: Summary Tables (2021) <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/livebirths/datasets/birthsummarytables>

ONS: Deaths Registered monthly in England and Wales (2021) <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/datasets/monthlyfiguresondeathsregisteredbyareaofusualresidence>

ONS: Conception Statistics – England and Wales (2019) <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/conceptionandfertilityrates/datasets/conceptionstatisticsenglandandwalesreferencetables>

ONS: Life expectancy for local areas of the UK: between 2001 to 2003 and 2018 to 2020 [Life expectancy for local areas of the UK - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

KCC Births and Deaths in Kent - 2020 https://www.kent.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/13827/Births-and-deaths-bulletin.pdf

Labour market profiles of the district are constantly updated by the ONS National Online Manpower Information System (NOMIS): <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157318/printable.aspx>

NOMIS: annual survey of hours and earnings (2021) <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/datasets/asher>

Health:

Public Health England's [-Public Health Outcomes Framework \(Folkestone & Hythe\) - at a glance summary \(phe.org.uk\)](#)

KCC Strategic Commissioning Statistical Bulletin 2022 – Children Poverty:

[Children in Poverty 2022 \(kent.gov.uk\)](#)

[Suicides in England and Wales by local authority \(2022\) - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

[Quality and Outcomes Framework, 2021-22 - NHS Digital](#)

Deprivation: Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) - English indices of multiple deprivation 2019

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

Section 5

Compliments, Feedback and Complaints

Introduction

In this section we provide an outline of the comments we have received from customers relating to equality and diversity matters.

The council records compliments, feedback and complaints received from customers. These are categorised, analysed and reported on so that improvements can be made to services.

Further information can be found at: <https://folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/your-council/council-information/make-a-complaint-or-compliment>

05 Compliments, Feedback and Complaints

Compliments, Feedback and Complaints - Overview in 2021-22:

During 2021-22 the council received 364 complaints and 190 compliments. Of the 364 complaints received:



Stage One complaints are investigated and responded to by the complaints investigator or the specialist of the relevant service area. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response their complaint will be progressed to Stage Two, where it is investigated by the senior officer of the service area to which the complaint relates.

Of the 364 complaints received, two were related to equality and diversity issues. The nature of the complaints related to:



Parking permit process discriminates against those who do not have access to a computer



Online services not being usable due a disability

Section 6

Equality Objectives

Introduction

In this Annual Equality and Diversity Report we have given an overview of the issues affecting the district, the policies and procedures the council has in place and the work we are doing, on our own and with our partners to address these issues.

The Equality and Diversity Policy (2021-25) guides this work and has an associated action plan. The final section provides an update on these actions.

06 Equality Objectives

	Action	Lead Function	Deadline	2021-22 update
1.	Ensuring Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are completed where they are required (i.e. where the council introduces a new policy or service, or where there is a significant revision to an existing policy or service) and that they are carried out in the correct manner (e.g. with appropriate consultation with affected parties).	Performance and Improvement Specialist	Ongoing	EIAs are documented as part of the service planning process annually and managers complete EIAs when a policy or service is introduced or revised. The EIAs undertaken during the year have been documented in section 2 of this report.
2.	To introduce a dedicated complaints report that will focus on equality related issues that arise under the council's corporate complaints policy and will reported to the Corporate Leadership Team on a six month basis to assist with identifying and addressing any equality related issues within a council service.	Case Management	Ongoing	The dedicated complaints report now also includes specific reference to any complaints regarding equality related issues. These are easily identifiable for reporting purposes on the council's internal IT platform. Any complaints regarding this are considered accordingly and the necessary steps taken regarding improvements, changes in policies/procedures etc.
3.	Involving services users and local communities (including people with protected characteristics) in the design of council services. All managers undertaking stage 2 EIA exercise will consult appropriately and publish the results.	All Service Leads All Service Leads	Ongoing As required	Housing Online is due to be launched in January 2023. This will sit within our Corporate MyAccount platform and will enable tenants to self-serve. A wide range of tenants are currently testing the test build and their feedback will be taken into account before the build is finalised No Stage 2 EIAs required to be completed during the year.
4.	Routinely publishing the result of consultation exercises on the council website and disaggregating the results (where possible) for different equality groups.	All Service Leads	As required	During the year, the council undertook the following public consultations to encourage local people to have their say helping to assess what impact proposed decisions will have on different groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Strategy Review Main Modifications • Proposals for parking controls to be introduced in the East Cliff Gardens, The Durlocks, Wear Bay Road area, Folkestone. • Proposals for the extension of controlled parking zone G1 to include Seagrave Road etc. • Proposals for parking controls to be introduced in Seawall, Dymchurch • New Dog Control Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) 2022-2025 • Renewal of the Anti-social behaviour (ASB) Public Spaces Protection Order 2022-2022

06 Equality Objectives

	Action	Lead Function	Deadline	2021-22 update
5.	Run training for staff on the particular issues faced by minority and vulnerable groups to support them to deliver appropriate services to ALL customers (e.g. Dementia awareness).	Organisational Development	Ongoing	<p>Our focus this year has been on mental health and how it impacts staff and customers. This includes: men's mental health; self-harm awareness, post-natal depression awareness, schizophrenia awareness and understanding phobias for the Revenues and Benefits team, and hoarding training for those in Housing.</p> <p>We now have 46 Mental Health First Aiders (9% of our workforce) so that we can better support those customers struggling due to the pandemic or other pressures they may be under.</p> <p>We have also had training on gender identity and menopause, understanding & supporting customers with serious illnesses.</p>
6.	To ensure councillors and staff receive regular updates on Prevent, Safeguarding vulnerable people and partnership working as part of the council's wider role.	<p>Community Safety Specialist</p> <p>Health, Wellbeing & Partnerships Senior Specialist</p>	Ongoing	<p>This work has been undertaken in various ways including councillor meetings to look at PREVENT and safeguarding.</p> <p>The Safeguarding policy reviews allows members to also receive updates. Information is cascaded to key staff. Management meetings and staff briefings have also allowed for sharing of information.</p>

06 Equality Objectives

	Action	Lead Function	Deadline	2021-22 update
7	Equality and diversity training is part of our induction and for all staff to undertake a mandatory refresh e-learning module every 3 years.	Organisational Development	Ongoing	We continue to require regular equality diversity and inclusion training (EDI). As at November 2022, 87% of staff were up to date with their EDI e-learning. In January we will be pushing for further completion.
8.	Increase options for customers to connect and transact with us online to help focus resources on supporting customers who are not able to go online as defined within the council's Customer Access Strategy.	All Service Leads	Ongoing	<p>As above, Housing Online. This will alleviate resource pressures to ensure that those who are more vulnerable or have more complex enquiries can contact us easily via other methods.</p> <p>Customers are encouraged and supported to sign up and transact with us through the MyAccount online service. Up to March 2022 30,143 of residents had signed up for this service. Customers can also contact us through our web chat service. Customers are supported to use the self-serve tablets if required in the Customer Access Point.</p>

06 Equality Objectives

	Action	Lead Function	Deadline	2021-22 Update
9.	Produce a 'Resident Involvement Strategy', ensuring that involved residents reflect the diversity of the council's tenants and leaseholders.	Housing Operations Lead Specialist	March 2021	The Tenant Engagement Strategy was updated in May 2022, detailing the particulars of engagement activity including, amongst other things, the set up of the Strategic Tenants Advisory Panel (STAP) as well as other forums, groups and tenant champions.
10.	We will continue to evaluate our resourcing strategies, maximise accessible development opportunities, and promote flexible working approaches to support equality and diversity in our workforce.	Human Resources	Ongoing	<p>The council's agile working framework was launched in June 2021 alongside a set of principles to better enable flexible working approaches.</p> <p>The council's People Strategy was also launched in 2021 to support a culture that, amongst other things, supports smarter agile & flexible working. The review and development of our recruitment and retention strategies is also a theme within our People Strategy.</p> <p>Recording of training sessions has advanced accessibility as they can be viewed at any time. The development of hybrid training sessions in 2022/23 will further advance this.</p> <p>Planning for specific management training on recruitment and selection strategies and practices took place in 2021/22 and was delivered in May 2022.</p>



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