

Births and deaths in Kent - 2015

Related information

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Population data presents the latest population estimates and an analysis of annual change

Population forecasts presents the latest thinking about future population levels

2011 Census provides information of the characteristics of the population

NOTE: within this bulletin 'Kent' refers to the Kent County Council (KCC) area which excludes Medway

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This bulletin presents an analysis of the total number of live births and deaths in Kent and Kent districts during the year 2015. Birth and death rates are also presented to compare Kent with the regional and national average. A 2002 to 2015 time series is also presented.

Summary of findings

- During the year 2015 there were 17,297 births and 14,814 deaths in Kent. This resulted in a net gain of +2,486 people due to natural change.
- Maidstone saw the largest number of live births in 2015 with a total of 2,006. However, Thanet had the highest general fertility rate per 1,000 women aged 15-44 years of 70.0.
- Thanet had the greatest number of deaths with a total of 1,721 which was also the greatest number of deaths per 1,000 population.
- Maidstone experienced the greatest positive natural change in population (meaning there were more births than deaths) with a net gain of +565 people.
- Canterbury, Dover, Shepway and Thanet have all seen a negative natural change in 2015 (meaning there were more deaths than births).

Introduction

Every year the number of births and deaths that occur in England and Wales are collated and presented in a data series called "Vital Statistics" by the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

The change in population produced by these natural events is known as "natural change" and relates to the resident population. These figures alone do not

represent the total change in population as that depends on inward and outward migration as well as natural change. The ONS monitor both sets of data and use them to calculate their annual mid-year population estimates.

Total number of births and deaths

Tables 1, 2 and 3 show the total number of births, deaths and subsequent natural change that occurred during 2015, in each local authority district in Kent. Change between 2014 and 2015 plus the 5-year and 34-year average is also shown.

Table 1: Live Births 1981 to 2015

	1981	1986	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	1 year change	5 year average	34 year average
Kent	14,837	15,574	16,772	15,766	14,644	16,280	17,612	18,147	16,955	17,305	17,297	-8	17,463	16,067
Ashford	1,044	1,217	1,295	1,229	1,250	1,410	1,449	1,597	1,452	1,474	1,523	49	1,499	1,299
Canterbury	1,267	1,462	1,474	1,346	1,268	1,431	1,482	1,419	1,413	1,366	1,375	9	1,411	1,394
Dartford	972	1,076	1,171	1,118	1,073	1,199	1,469	1,560	1,442	1,494	1,500	6	1,493	1,199
Dover	1,219	1,296	1,371	1,150	1,078	1,139	1,170	1,257	1,150	1,170	1,130	-40	1,175	1,208
Gravesham	1,318	1,289	1,309	1,233	1,098	1,199	1,396	1,472	1,389	1,454	1,410	-44	1,424	1,267
Maidstone	1,638	1,591	1,783	1,635	1,557	1,712	1,982	2,040	1,875	1,979	2,006	27	1,976	1,720
Sevenoaks	1,313	1,276	1,295	1,240	1,195	1,304	1,345	1,383	1,212	1,298	1,300	2	1,308	1,272
Shepway	928	1,013	1,163	1,052	984	1,155	1,185	1,230	1,067	1,092	1,056	-36	1,126	1,079
Swale	1,515	1,558	1,652	1,591	1,430	1,588	1,708	1,777	1,683	1,771	1,707	-64	1,729	1,590
Thanet	1,312	1,447	1,568	1,432	1,285	1,482	1,692	1,654	1,615	1,586	1,677	91	1,645	1,478
Tonbridge & Malling	1,222	1,272	1,396	1,343	1,275	1,344	1,361	1,432	1,403	1,424	1,358	-66	1,396	1,331
Tunbridge Wells	1,089	1,077	1,295	1,397	1,151	1,317	1,373	1,326	1,254	1,197	1,255	58	1,281	1,230

Table 2: Deaths 1981 to 2015

	1981	1986	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	1 year change	5 year average	34 year average
Kent	15,616	15,750	15,123	15,242	14,047	13,523	13,434	13,595	13,988	14,014	14,811	797	13,968	14,641
Ashford	956	1,011	914	1,046	917	936	888	947	1,018	1,087	1,075	-12	1,003	974
Canterbury	1,865	1,939	1,767	1,762	1,630	1,567	1,481	1,507	1,478	1,562	1,628	66	1,531	1,712
Dartford	1,080	1,013	885	877	836	732	858	869	855	823	935	112	868	883
Dover	1,292	1,320	1,323	1,354	1,270	1,174	1,231	1,215	1,196	1,231	1,335	104	1,242	1,270
Gravesham	901	898	930	895	849	834	832	824	907	894	858	-36	863	892
Maidstone	1,408	1,406	1,361	1,373	1,324	1,319	1,307	1,364	1,442	1,431	1,441	10	1,397	1,371
Sevenoaks	1,150	1,117	1,089	1,112	993	963	997	1,020	1,049	1,002	1,102	100	1,034	1,049
Shepway	1,369	1,424	1,323	1,288	1,278	1,175	1,159	1,197	1,185	1,228	1,330	102	1,220	1,282
Swale	1,258	1,207	1,253	1,217	1,213	1,225	1,160	1,147	1,277	1,268	1,323	55	1,235	1,222
Thanet	2,145	2,173	2,070	2,106	1,818	1,753	1,689	1,651	1,644	1,652	1,721	69	1,671	1,935
Tonbridge & Malling	924	945	982	926	920	890	933	921	971	887	1,020	133	946	940
Tunbridge Wells	1,266	1,297	1,226	1,286	999	955	899	933	966	949	1,043	94	958	1,110

Table 3: Natural change 1981 to 2015

	1981	1986	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	1 year change	5 year average	34 year average
Kent	-779	-176	1,649	524	597	2,757	4,178	4,552	2,967	3,291	2,486	-805	3,495	1,425
Ashford	88	206	381	183	333	474	561	650	434	387	448	61	496	325
Canterbury	-598	-477	-293	-416	-362	-136	1	-88	-65	-196	-253	-57	-120	-318
Dartford	-108	63	286	241	237	467	611	691	587	671	565	-106	625	316
Dover	-73	-24	48	-204	-192	-35	-61	42	-46	-61	-205	-144	-66	-62
Gravesham	417	391	379	338	249	365	564	648	482	560	552	-8	561	375
Maidstone	230	185	422	262	233	393	675	676	433	548	565	17	579	348
Sevenoaks	163	159	206	128	202	341	348	363	163	296	198	-98	274	223
Shepway	-441	-411	-160	-236	-294	-20	26	33	-118	-136	-274	-138	-94	-204
Swale	257	351	399	374	217	363	548	630	406	503	384	-119	494	368
Thanet	-833	-726	-502	-674	-533	-271	3	3	-29	-66	-44	22	-27	-457
Tonbridge & Malling	298	327	414	417	355	454	428	511	432	537	338	-199	449	391
Tunbridge Wells	-177	-220	69	111	152	362	474	393	288	248	212	-36	323	120

Source: 2015 Births Summaries: Table 3 and 2013 Deaths Summaries: Table 3, Office for National Statistics (ONS), © Crown Copyright
Data presented by Strategic Business Development & Intelligence, Kent County Council

In 2015 there were 17,297 registered births and 14,811 registered deaths in Kent (the Kent County Council area). This resulted in Kent's population increasing by +2,486 people as a result of natural change alone.

Eight of the 12 Kent local authority districts all increased their natural population in 2015 as a result of more births than deaths. The four remaining districts saw a slight loss in population due to there being more registered deaths than births.

Natural change tends to be lower in East Kent districts such as Dover, Thanet and Shepway due to a higher proportion of elderly population. Despite very healthy birth rates in these areas, the actual number of births tends to be lower in these districts than in other Kent districts. In contrast, the number of deaths in these districts tends to be higher than in other Kent districts. The balance between the two leads to smaller natural change.

Mid and West Kent districts tend to have a younger age profile and for this reason the number of births in these districts (such as Ashford, Maidstone, Dartford and Tunbridge Wells) is typically much higher than the number of deaths leading to higher natural change.

Despite Canterbury having a large young population, the number of births in Canterbury is lower than would be expected for the population profile of the area (this is examined further in the next section on birth and death rates). This is because Canterbury's young population largely consists of students who are not likely to be bearing any children. The number of deaths is still quite high in Canterbury because of the older population profile of coastal resorts such as Herne Bay and Whitstable. The number of births is therefore low in relation to the number of deaths, resulting in negative change in 2015.

Since 1981 Kent has seen an average of 16,065 births, and 14,641 deaths each year. This gives an average natural change of an extra +1,425 people each year.

Over the past 34 years the number of deaths in Kent has been falling steadily. This follows the falling number of deaths throughout England and Wales and is a result of increased life expectancy. The number of births in Kent has fluctuated over the years, which is a characteristic of births in general and therefore not something which is unique to Kent. The number of births in Kent increased throughout the late 1980's and continued to increase until the mid-1990's when they started to fall gradually. Since the start of this decade the number of births has begun to increase again.

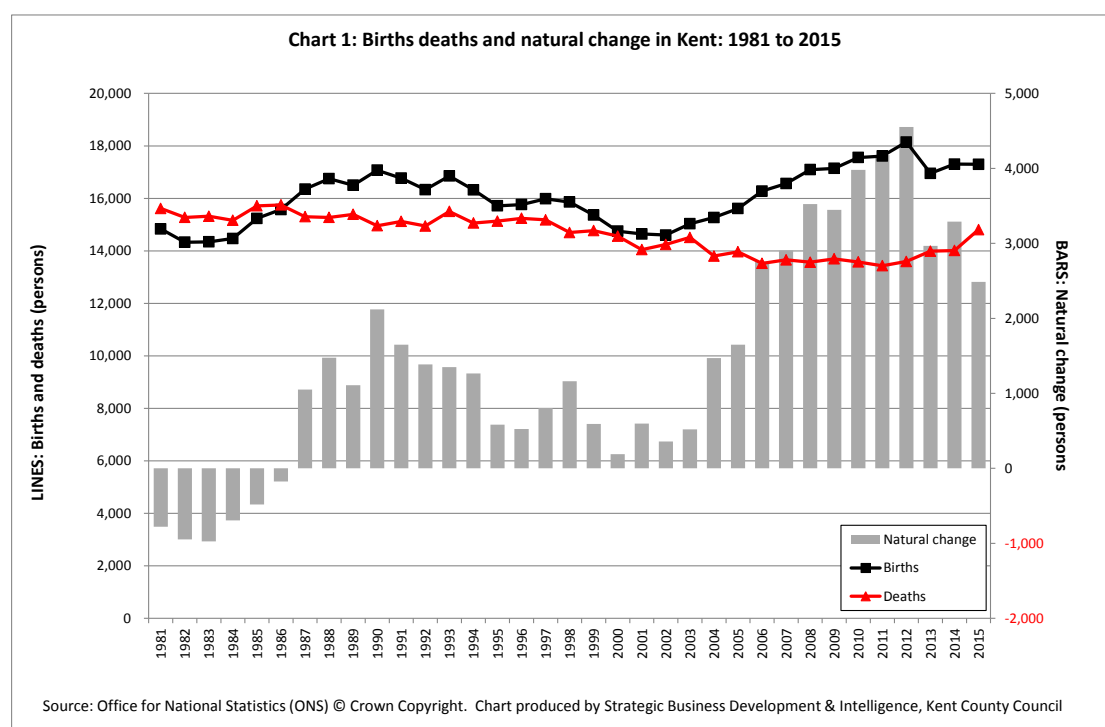
The net effect of fluctuating births and declining deaths is positive natural population change although the extent of this net gain depends on which cycle of births Kent is experiencing. For example, when births are low, net

natural change is low and when births are higher, net natural change tends to be higher.

Despite a slight increase in the number of deaths between 2014 and 2015, they continue to remain lower than they have been in the last 34 years whilst the number of births remains high. As a result we continue to see a positive net natural change in population in Kent

Please see Chart 1 and Tables 1 to 3 for more detail.

Data for the full time series in Excel format is available upon request.



Not all of the 12 Kent local authority districts follow the same pattern of change with births and deaths. There will be some districts experiencing an increase in the number of births whilst others see the numbers fall. Between 2014 and 2015 Dover, Gravesham, Shepway, Swale and Thanet experienced a decrease in the number of births.

Likewise, despite the number of deaths falling steadily for Kent as a whole, only two Kent districts saw a decrease in the number of deaths between 2014 and 2015. These districts were Ashford and Gravesham.

The numbers of births and deaths will be affected by the population profile and therefore it is sometimes better to look at birth and deaths rates. Rates put the number of births and deaths into context according to the population size and profile of an area. This is examined further in the next section.

Birth and death rates

So far we have only presented the total numbers of births and deaths. However, this does not take into account the varying population sizes of different areas. An area with a large population is naturally more likely to have a greater number of births and deaths making it difficult to compare with different areas. In order to overcome this, there are two preferred methods of measuring the numbers of births and deaths rather than looking at the total numbers.

For births there is the General Fertility Rate (GFR) and the Total Period Fertility Rate (TFR):

- The GFR denotes the number of live births per 1,000 women aged 15 to 44 years in a specific area.
- The TFR represents the average number of live children that women in that area would have if they experienced the age-specific fertility rates for the calendar year in question throughout their childbearing lifespan. The national TFR rate for England & Wales in 2011 is 1.93. Therefore, if an area has a higher TFR than 1.93, then there were more births than would be expected.

For deaths there is the Crude Death Rate (CDR) and the Standardised Mortality Ratio (SMR):

- The CDR is the number of observed deaths per 1,000 resident population in a specific area.
- The SMR is calculated as the number of observed deaths in an area, divided by the expected number of deaths of that area (if the area had the same population age and sex structure as England & Wales) multiplied by 100. The national SMR for England & Wales is 100. Therefore, if an area has a higher SMR than 100, then there were more deaths than would be expected.

Table 4 shows both sets of birth and death rates for England & Wales, the South East region, Kent and all local authority districts within Kent for the year 2015. These rates are presented separately in Charts 2 to 4.

Table 4: Birth and Death Rates 2015

Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS), © Crown Copyright

Birth Summary Table 3: Live births by local authority 2015

Death Summary Table 3: Deaths by local authority 2015

Data presented by Strategic Business Development & Intelligence, Kent County Council

Area	BIRTHS		DEATHS	
	GFR	TFR	CDR	SMR
Ashford	67.6	2.09	8.7	92
Canterbury	41.1	1.49	10.2	98
Dartford	69.8	1.96	9.0	113
Dover	61.3	1.91	11.8	105
Gravesham	68.6	2.02	8.1	93
Maidstone	66.4	1.98	8.8	93
Sevenoaks	65.2	2.06	9.3	87
Shepway	59.3	1.84	12.1	101
Swale	66.7	2.05	9.3	104
Thanet	70.0	2.13	12.3	107
Tonbridge & Malling	59.7	1.92	8.1	87
Tunbridge Wells	61.2	1.94	9.0	88
Kent	62.4	1.91	9.7	97
South East Region	61.7	1.86	9.1	92
England & Wales	62.3	1.82	9.2	100

GFR: General Fertility Rate: Live births per 1,000 women aged 15-44

TFR: Total Fertility Rate is 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

CDR: Crude Death Rate: Deaths (All Ages) per 1,000 resident population.

SMR: Standardised Mortality Ratio: Observed deaths as a % of expected deaths

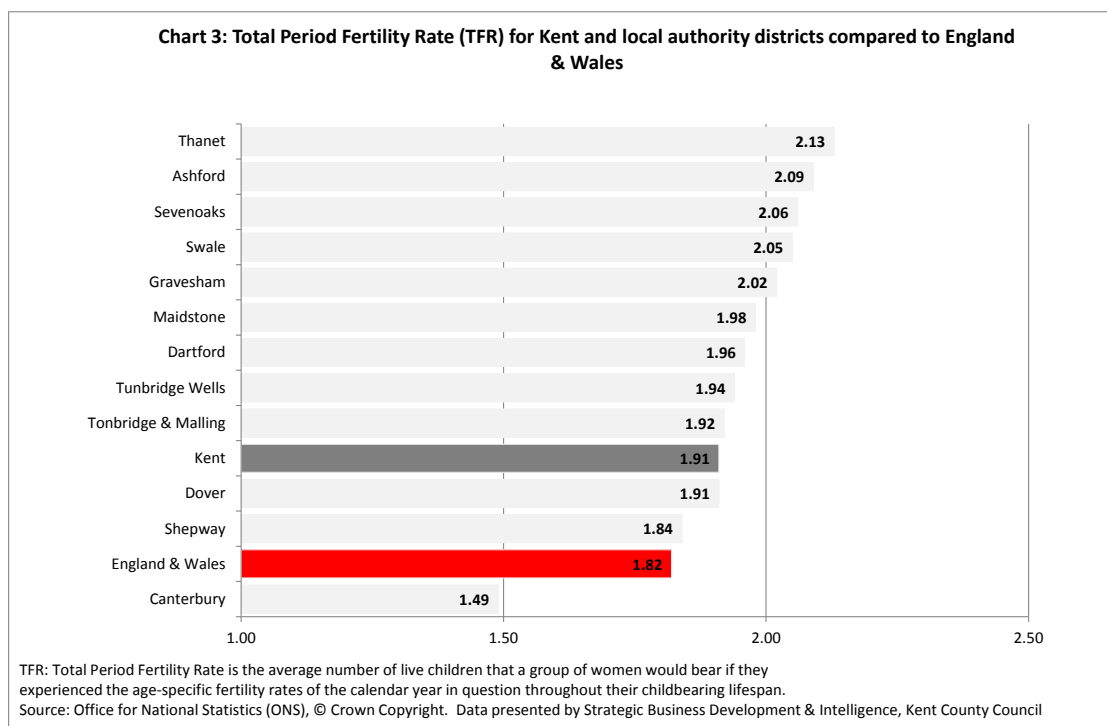
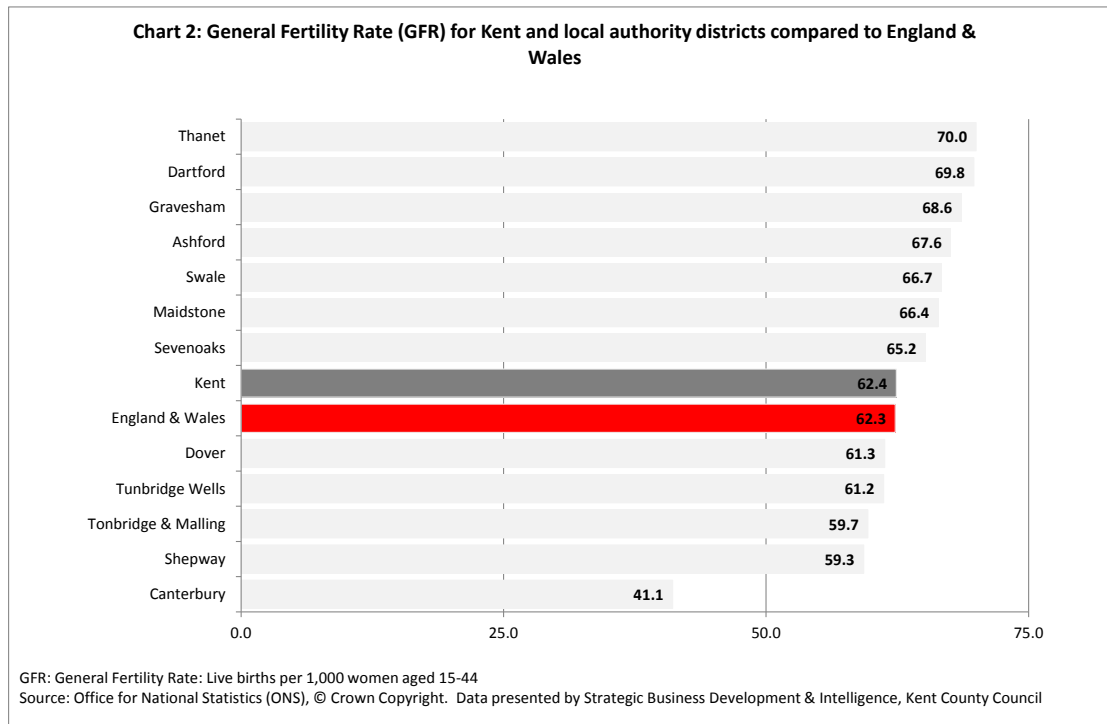
(where expected deaths = no. that would occur if the population of the area experienced age/sex mortality rates of E&W).

Out of all of the Kent districts in 2015 the highest birth rate (GFR) can be found in Thanet. Here there were 70.0 births per 1,000 women aged 15-44 years, which is equivalent to each female resident in Thanet aged 15-44 having 2.13 children. This is significantly higher than the national average.

In 2015 the lowest birth rate could be seen in Canterbury. The GFR shows that there were 41.1 births per 1,000 women aged 15-44 years compared to 62.3 births for England & Wales.

The TFR shows that women in Canterbury on average experience 1.49 live births compared to 1.82 live births in England & Wales. As explained earlier in this bulletin, Canterbury has a very large student population that contributes largely to the 15-44 year old age group. However, these students are not likely to be having children and therefore the age group 15-44 is artificially high compared to the actual number of births.

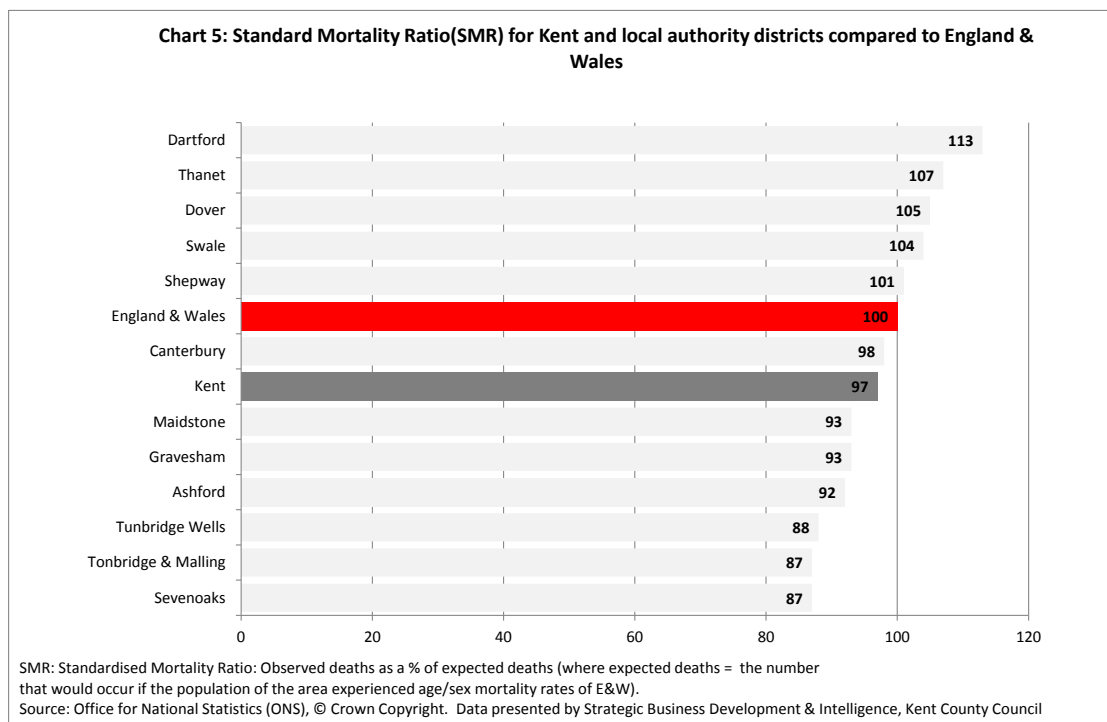
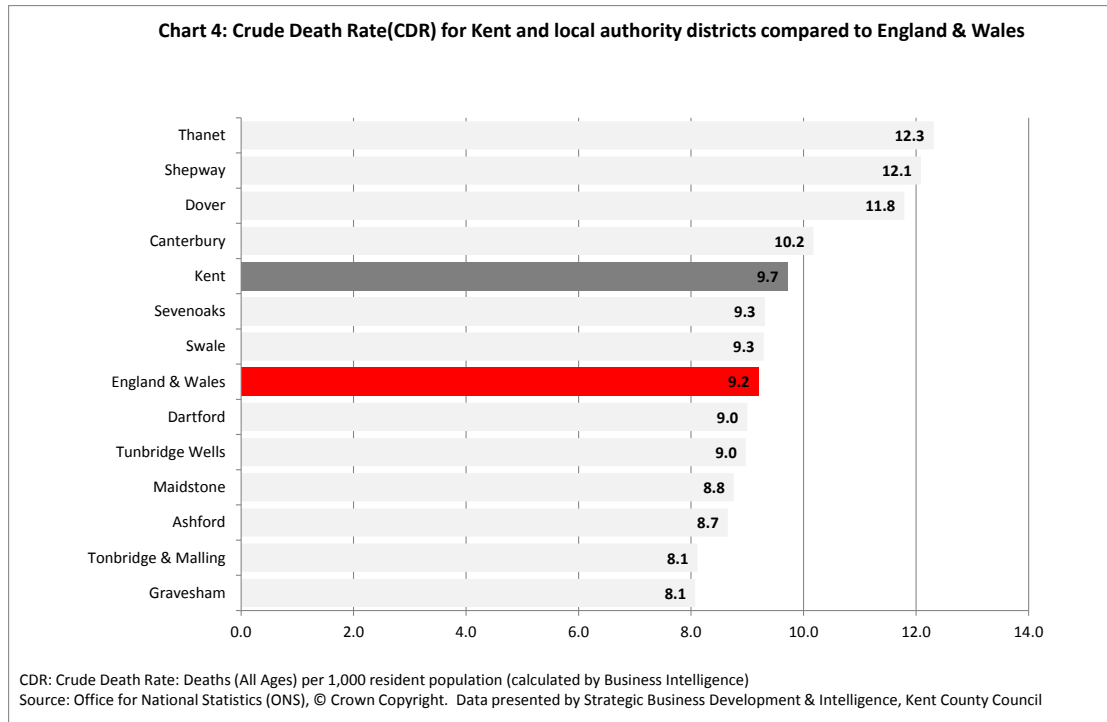
Charts 2 and 3 rank each Kent district according to the GFR and TFR in 2015



The highest death rate (CDR) for 2015 can be seen in Thanet where there were 12.3 deaths per 1,000 resident population. The SMR of 113 for Dartford indicates that the number of deaths in Dartford is higher than would be expected for the age profile of the area.

The lowest death rate (CDR) can be seen in Gravesham and Tonbridge & Malling where there were 8.1 deaths per 1,000 population. An SMR of 87.0 in Sevenoaks and Tonbridge & Malling indicates that the number of deaths there is lower than would be expected for the age profile of the area.

Charts 4 and 5 rank each Kent district according to the CDR and SMR in 2015.



Charts showing a time series of the TFR and SMR from 2002 to 2015 and charts showing the births deaths and natural change from 1981 to 2015 for

Kent and the local authority districts can be found on pages 10 to 22 in this bulletin.

What do changing births and deaths mean for Kent?

Increasing births and decreasing deaths in Kent means that the County's population is growing in size. Current Government projections estimate that the fertility rate will continue to rise and the mortality rate will continue to decline meaning that we can expect to see a continuation of increasing births and decreasing deaths in the future (although this will depend on the population numbers to which the rates are applied to).

Forecasts produced by Kent County Council explore this issue further. The latest available forecasts can be accessed on the [population forecasts](#) page of the Kent County Council website.

An increase in the number of births will place additional pressure on maternity units across the County. In time, it will also place pressure on early-years childcare provision and also schools. However, it is important to have an understanding now of what the County can expect to see in the coming years in order to plan services accordingly.

At a time when the post-war baby boomers are reaching retirement coupled with increased life expectancy and thus fewer deaths, the County's population is getting older with the ageing population expected to accelerate further in the coming years. An ageing population puts pressure on the Council's Social Care departments, along with hospital services. It also places pressure on the economy as the ratio of working age people to those of retirement age (the dependency ratio) reduces, meaning there are fewer people to support those of old age impacting on pensions and taxes. As the population continues to age, the number of deaths will undoubtedly increase in the future despite death rates falling.

There are a number of demographic factors that will have an impact on births and deaths in the future (migration, ethnicity, life expectancy etc.). It is important for service provision planning that the County Council continues to monitor how births and deaths are changing over time in order to plan services effectively.

This bulletin will be next updated in Mid-2017, when the data for the year 2016 will be published. For further information on the Office for National Statistics please visit www.statistics.gov.uk

