Related information

The Population and Census web page contains more information which you may find useful.

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 calendar year 2018. Birth and death rates are also presented to compare Kent with the regional and national average. A 2002 to 2018 time series is also presented.

Summary of findings

• During the year 2018 there were 17,062 births and 15,507 deaths in Kent. This resulted in a net increase of +1,555 people due to natural change.

• Maidstone saw the largest number of live births in 2018 with a total of 2,078. However, Dartford had the highest general fertility rate per 1,000 women aged 15-44 years of 74.4.

• Thanet had the greatest number of deaths with a total of 1,805 which was also the greatest number of deaths per 1,000 population (Crude Death Rate).

• Dartford experienced the greatest positive natural change in population (meaning there were more births than deaths) with a net gain of +755 people.

• Canterbury, Dover, Folkestone & Hythe and Thanet have all seen a negative natural change in 2018 (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 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. Please note that the births and deaths data for the Mid-year population estimates are counted from 1st July to 30th June. The figures presented here are for the calendar year (1st January to 31st December) so there will be differences between the two.

**Total number of births and deaths during 2018**

In 2018 there were 17,062 registered births and 15,507 registered deaths in Kent, excluding Medway Unitary Authority. This resulted in a net increase in Kent’s resident population of +1,555 people from natural change alone.

The population in eight of the 12 Kent local authority districts all increased during 2018 due to natural change. The four remaining districts saw a slight loss in resident population due to there being more registered deaths than births.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Authority</th>
<th>Births</th>
<th>Deaths</th>
<th>Natural Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kent</td>
<td>17,062</td>
<td>15,507</td>
<td>1,555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashford</td>
<td>1,460</td>
<td>1,179</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canterbury</td>
<td>1,305</td>
<td>1,684</td>
<td>-379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dartford</td>
<td>1,668</td>
<td>913</td>
<td>755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dover</td>
<td>1,052</td>
<td>1,318</td>
<td>-266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folkestone &amp; Hythe</td>
<td>984</td>
<td>1,319</td>
<td>-335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gravesham</td>
<td>1,311</td>
<td>941</td>
<td>370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maidstone</td>
<td>2,078</td>
<td>1,601</td>
<td>477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sevenoaks</td>
<td>1,260</td>
<td>1,144</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swale</td>
<td>1,743</td>
<td>1,337</td>
<td>406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thanet</td>
<td>1,533</td>
<td>1,805</td>
<td>-272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonbridge &amp; Malling</td>
<td>1,493</td>
<td>1,162</td>
<td>331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunbridge Wells</td>
<td>1,175</td>
<td>1,104</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medway Unitary Authority</td>
<td>3,475</td>
<td>2,329</td>
<td>1,146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kent &amp; Medway</td>
<td>20,537</td>
<td>17,836</td>
<td>2,701</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS), © Crown Copyright
Birth Summary Table 2: Live births by local authority 2018
Death Summary Table 3: Deaths by local authority 2018
Data presented by Strategic Commissioning - Analytics, Kent County Council

Increase in population due to natural change tends to be lower in East Kent districts such as Dover, Thanet and Folkestone & Hythe. 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. Due to a higher proportion of elderly population, the number of deaths in these districts tends to be higher than in other Kent districts. Therefore, the balance between the two leads to smaller population increase and even a reduction in resident population due to 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 population growth due to 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 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 population change in 2018.

**Birth and death rates**

We know that the numbers of births and deaths will be affected by the population profile of an area which makes it difficult to compare with different areas. In addition, areas with similar profiles will be difficult to compare due to the difference in the total overall population. For comparison it is sometimes better to look at birth and death rates. Rates put the number of births and deaths into context according to the population size and profile of an area.

There are four 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 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 2018 is 1.70. Therefore, if an area has a higher TFR than 1.70, 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 2 shows the 2018 birth and death rates for England & Wales, the South East region, Kent and all local authority districts and Medway Unitary Authority.

### Table 2: Birth and Death Rates 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Authority</th>
<th>BIRTHS</th>
<th>DEATHS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GFR</td>
<td>TFR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England &amp; Wales</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>1.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East Region</td>
<td>58.7</td>
<td>1.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kent</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>1.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashford</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>1.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canterbury</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>1.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dartford</td>
<td>74.4</td>
<td>2.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dover</td>
<td>56.7</td>
<td>1.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folkestone &amp; Hythe</td>
<td>56.5</td>
<td>1.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gravesham</td>
<td>66.3</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maidstone</td>
<td>68.4</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sevenoaks</td>
<td>63.8</td>
<td>1.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swale</td>
<td>66.4</td>
<td>1.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thanet</td>
<td>65.7</td>
<td>1.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonbridge &amp; Malling</td>
<td>64.4</td>
<td>1.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunbridge Wells</td>
<td>58.6</td>
<td>1.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medway</td>
<td>64.1</td>
<td>1.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS), © Crown Copyright
Birth Summary Table 2: Live births by local authority 2018
Death Summary Table 3: Deaths by local authority 2018
Data presented by Strategic Commissioning - Analytics, Kent County Council
The General Fertility rate or GFR is higher in Kent than in England & Wales as a whole. As expected, Canterbury has the lowest GFR, where there were 38.5 births per 1,000 women aged 15 to 44 years. Dartford has the highest GFR for 2017 where there were 74.4 births per 1,000 women aged 15 to 44 years.

See chart 2 and Map 1 for details.

Map 1: General Fertility Rate 2018

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The TFR shows that women in Canterbury on average experience 1.32 live births compared to 1.70 in England & Wales. As explained earlier in this bulletin, Canterbury has a very large student population that contributes largely to the population aged 15 to 44. These students are not likely to be having children and therefore the population is artificially high compared to the number of live births.

See chart 3 and Map 2 for details.

**Map 2: Total Fertility Rate 2018**

**Chart 3: TFR Total Period Fertility Rate 2018**

PFR or TFR: Total Period 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 in question throughout their childbearing lifespan.


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Thanet has the highest CDR which reflects the higher number of residents over pensionable age living in the area. There were 12.7 deaths per 1,000 resident population in Thanet during 2018. The top three areas with high CDR are all coastal districts which traditionally have a higher number of older population than the rest of Kent. The lowest CDR are seen in the areas where there is a younger population.

See chart 4 and Map 3 for details
Kent has a lower Standardised Mortality ratio than England and Wales. However, four of the local authority districts in Kent and Medway Unitary Authority have a higher SMR than that seen nationally. All districts with a SMR higher than 100 would appear to have a higher death rate than would be expected for the age profile for the area.

See chart 5 and Map 4 for details.
Time series between 2002 and 2018

Charts 6 and 7 present the numbers of births, deaths and subsequent natural change in Kent and England & Wales. The pattern of births, deaths and natural change in Kent and England & Wales over the past 17 years is similar.

In 2002 there were 14,604 live births in Kent. The number of births rose each year up to 2012 when there was a baby boom of 18,147. In 2013 the number of births fell to 16,955, below the 2008 level. Between 2014 and 2017 the number of live births had begun to rise albeit at a slower rate than that seen between 2002 and 2012. The number of births during 2018 is the lowest since 2013. In contrast, the number of deaths in Kent has declined slightly and then begun to increase again over the years. In 2002 there were 14,245 recorded deaths. The number of deaths fell each year up to 2011 when there were at their lowest of 13,434. However, between 2012 and 2018 figures have begun to rise again. 2018 saw the highest number of deaths for 17 years with
15,507. As a result, the population growth due to “Natural change” has now begun to fall since its high point in 2012, despite the 2018 figure being higher than the 2002 figure.

As mentioned earlier, rates put the number of births and deaths into context according to the population size and profile of an area. Charts 8 and 9 show that despite annual fluctuations in both rates in Kent, the death rate has begun to rise since 2012 whilst the birth rate has fallen.

The pattern of births, deaths and natural change plus birth and death rates varies considerably amongst Kent’s local authority districts and Medway Unitary authority as presented on pages 11 to 23. Further information on population change is presented in the “Migration in Kent” and “What’s causing Kent’s population growth?” bulletins. This bulletin will be next updated in Mid-2020, when the data for the year 2019 will be published. For further information on the Office for National Statistics please visit www.statistics.gov.uk
Births, deaths and natural change: 2002 to 2018 - Ashford

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Chart presented by Strategic Commissioning - Analytics, Kent County Council

Birth Rates: 2002 to 2018 - Ashford

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Chart presented by Strategic Commissioning - Analytics, Kent County Council

Death Rates: 2002 to 2018 - Ashford

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Chart presented by Strategic Commissioning - Analytics, Kent County Council
Births, deaths and natural change: 2002 to 2018 - Canterbury

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Chart presented by Strategic Commissioning - Analytics, Kent County Council

Birth Rates: 2002 to 2018 - Canterbury

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Chart presented by Strategic Commissioning - Analytics, Kent County Council

Death Rates: 2002 to 2018 - Canterbury

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Births, deaths and natural change: 2002 to 2018 - Dover

Birth Rates: 2002 to 2018 - Dover

Death Rates: 2002 to 2018 - Dover

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Chart presented by Strategic Commissioning - Analytics, Kent County Council
Births, deaths and natural change: 2002 to 2018 - Folkestone & Hythe

Birth Rates: 2002 to 2018 - Folkestone & Hythe

Death Rates: 2002 to 2018 - Folkestone & Hythe
Births, deaths and natural change: 2002 to 2018 - Swale

Birth Rates: 2002 to 2018 - Swale

Death Rates: 2002 to 2018 - Swale
Births, deaths and natural change: 2002 to 2018 - Thanet

Birth Rates: 2002 to 2018 - Thanet

Death Rates: 2002 to 2018 - Thanet
Births, deaths and natural change: 2002 to 2018 - Tonbridge & Malling

Birth Rates: 2002 to 2018 - Tonbridge & Malling

Death Rates: 2002 to 2018 - Tonbridge & Malling
Births, deaths and natural change: 2002 to 2018 - Tunbridge Wells

Birth Rates: 2002 to 2018 - Tunbridge Wells

Death Rates: 2002 to 2018 - Tunbridge Wells

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Births, deaths and natural change: 2002 to 2018 - Medway Unitary Authority

Birth Rates: 2002 to 2018 - Medway Unitary Authority

Death Rates: 2002 to 2018 - Medway Unitary Authority