Births and deaths in Kent - 2017

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.

Summary of findings
- During the year 2017 there were 17,467 births and 14,934 deaths in Kent. This resulted in a net gain of +2,533 people due to natural change.
- Maidstone saw the largest number of live births in 2017 with a total of 2,010. However, Dartford had the highest general fertility rate per 1,000 women aged 15-44 years of 73.3.
- Thanet had the greatest number of deaths with a total of 1,704 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 +731 people.
- Canterbury, Dover, Folkestone & Hythe (formerly Shepway) and Thanet have all seen a negative natural change in 2017 (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 2017**

In 2017 there were 17,467 registered births and 14,934 registered deaths in Kent, excluding Medway Unitary Authority. This resulted in a net increase in Kent’s resident population of +2,530 people from natural change alone.

The population in eight of the 12 Kent local authority districts all increased during 2017 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 1: Births, deaths and natural change in Kent in 2017**

<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>17,467</td>
<td>14,934</td>
<td>2,533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashford</td>
<td>1,571</td>
<td>1,078</td>
<td>493</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canterbury</td>
<td>1,347</td>
<td>1,668</td>
<td>-321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dartford</td>
<td>1,615</td>
<td>884</td>
<td>731</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dover</td>
<td>1,128</td>
<td>1,347</td>
<td>-219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folkestone &amp; Hythe</td>
<td>1,061</td>
<td>1,324</td>
<td>-263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gravesham</td>
<td>1,375</td>
<td>941</td>
<td>434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maidstone</td>
<td>2,010</td>
<td>1,524</td>
<td>486</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sevenoaks</td>
<td>1,228</td>
<td>1,085</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swale</td>
<td>1,814</td>
<td>1,313</td>
<td>501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thanet</td>
<td>1,606</td>
<td>1,704</td>
<td>-98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonbridge &amp; Malling</td>
<td>1,495</td>
<td>1,036</td>
<td>459</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunbridge Wells</td>
<td>1,217</td>
<td>1,030</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medway Unitary Authority</td>
<td>3,601</td>
<td>2,197</td>
<td>1,404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kent &amp; Medway</td>
<td>21,068</td>
<td>17,131</td>
<td>3,937</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Birth Summary Table 3: Live births by local authority 2017
Death Summary Table 3: Deaths by local authority 2017
Data presented by Strategic Business Development & Intelligence, 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 (formerly Shepway). 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 2017.

**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 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 2017 is 1.76. Therefore, if an area has a higher TFR than 1.76, 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 2017 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 2017**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Authority</th>
<th>GFR</th>
<th>TFR</th>
<th>CDR</th>
<th>SMR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England &amp; Wales</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East Region</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kent</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashford</td>
<td>69.2</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canterbury</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dartford</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dover</td>
<td>60.8</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folkestone &amp; Hythe</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graveshams</td>
<td>69.3</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maidstone</td>
<td>66.8</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sevenoaks</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swale</td>
<td>69.8</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thanet</td>
<td>68.5</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonbridge &amp; Malling</td>
<td>64.7</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunbridge Wells</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medway</td>
<td>66.2</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS), © Crown Copyright
Birth Summary Table 3: Live births by local authority 2017
Death Summary Table 3: Deaths by local authority 2017
Data presented by Strategic Business Development & Intelligence, Kent County Council
The General Fertility rate of GFR is higher in Kent than in England & Wales as a whole. As expected, Canterbury has the lowest GFR, where there were 38.1 births per 1,000 women aged 15 to 44 years. Dartford has the highest GFR for 2017 where there were 73.3 births per 1,000 women aged 15 to 44 years. See chart 2 and Map 1 for details.

Map 1: General Fertility Rate 2017
The TFR shows that women in Canterbury on average experience 1.38 live births compared to 1.89 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

**Chart 3: PFR or TFR Total Period fertility Rate 2017**

- Ashford: 2.10
- Sevenoaks: 2.09
- Bexley: 2.06
- Dartford: 2.03
- Gravesham: 2.02
- Swale: 2.00
- Maidstone: 1.96
- Medway UA: 1.93
- Tonbridge & Malling: 1.91
- Thanet: 1.89
- Dover: 1.84
- Tunbridge Wells: 1.84
- Folkestone & Hythe: 1.84
- Canterbury: 1.38

**Map 2: Total Period Fertility Rate 2017**

2017 Total Period Fertility Rate: Local Authority areas in Kent

- Ashford: 2.10
- Sevenoaks: 1.93
- Tunbridge Wells: 1.84
- Folkestone & Hythe: 1.84
- Canterbury: 1.38
- Dover: 1.84
- Thanet: 2.06

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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.
Thanet has the highest CDR which reflects the higher number of residents of pensionable age living in the area. There were 12.1 deaths per 1,000 resident population in Thanet during 2017. 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, half of the local authority districts in Kent have a higher SMR than that seen nationally. Despite having a fairly young age profile, Dartford has the highest SMR in Kent. 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 2017**

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 16 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 has begun to rise but it would appear to be at a slower rate than that seen between 2002 and 2012. 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 2017 figures have begun to rise again. 2017 saw the highest number of deaths for 16 years with 14,934. As a result, the population growth due to “Natural change” has now begun to fall since its high point in 2012, despite the 2017 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, death rates have fallen whilst birth rates have risen in Kent between 2002 and 2017.

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.
Births, deaths and natural change: 2002 to 2017 - Ashford

Birth Rates: 2002 to 2017 - Ashford

Death Rates: 2002 to 2017 - Ashford
Births, deaths and natural change: 2002 to 2017 - Canterbury

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Chart presented by Strategic Business Development & Intelligence, Kent County Council
Births, deaths and natural change: 2002 to 2017 - Folkestone & Hythe

Birth Rates: 2002 to 2017 - Folkestone & Hythe

Death Rates: 2002 to 2017 - Folkestone & Hythe
Births, deaths and natural change: 2002 to 2017 - Maidstone

Birth Rates: 2002 to 2017 - Maidstone

Death Rates: 2002 to 2017 - Maidstone
Births, deaths and natural change: 2002 to 2017 - Sevenoaks

Birth Rates: 2002 to 2017 - Sevenoaks

Death Rates: 2002 to 2017 - Sevenoaks
Births, deaths and natural change: 2002 to 2017 - Thanet

Birth Rates: 2002 to 2017 - Thanet

Death Rates: 2002 to 2017 - Thanet
Births, deaths and natural change: 2002 to 2017 - Tunbridge Wells

Birth Rates: 2002 to 2017 - Tunbridge Wells

Death Rates: 2002 to 2017 - Tunbridge Wells

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Births, deaths and natural change: 2002 to 2017 - Medway Unitary Authority

Birth Rates: 2002 to 2017 - Medway Unitary Authority

Death Rates: 2002 to 2017 - Medway Unitary Authority

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Chart presented by Strategic Business Development & Intelligence, Kent County Council
What do changing births and deaths mean for Kent?

Increasing births and decreasing deaths in Kent means that the County’s population is growing. Should the fertility rate continue to rise, and the mortality rate continue to decline as seen over than past 16 years (see charts 8 and 9), then 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).

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 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 aged 70 and over 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 several demographic factors that will have an impact on births and deaths in the future (migration, ethnicity, life expectancy etc.). It is important for effective service provision planning that the County Council continues to monitor how births and deaths are changing over time.

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-2019, when the data for the year 2018 will be published. For further information on the Office for National Statistics please visit www.statistics.gov.uk