

The housing registers in Kent: 2021 to 2022

This data is collected and published in June 2023 by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) through the Local Authority Housing Statistics (LAHS) returns

NOTE: within this bulletin “Kent” refers to the Kent County Council area which excludes Medway

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[Facts and figures about Kent](#)

This bulletin presents information on households that were on the housing register in Kent during the financial year 2021 to 2022.

Summary

- At 31st March 2022 there were 16,001 households on the housing registers of the local authorities in Kent, compared to 15,368 one year ago (+633, 4%).
- Of the households on the housing registers in Kent 7,139 required a 1 bed property, 4,372 required 2 bed properties, 3,323 required 3 bed properties and 1,167 required a property with more than 3 bedrooms.
- 11,264 households (70.4%) of all households on the registers were classified as being in a “reasonable preference” category. These households were either homeless; or owed a duty by the local authority or were living in unsatisfactory conditions or needed to move on medical grounds.
- Over half of households in the reasonable preference category were living in unsatisfactory housing conditions, and more than a quarter needed to move on medical grounds.

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Introduction

Housing Registers, also known as housing waiting lists, are lists of households waiting to be housed, and are generally managed by the local authority in partnership with local Housing Associations (HAs). However, a few local authorities do not operate in this way. Although some Kent local authorities no longer own any housing stock of their own, they work in co-operation with local Housing Associations (HAs) and Private Registered Providers (PRP).

In general people over sixteen years of age who already live within the local authority area and are not subject to immigration control are able to apply to join the housing register.

Residents from outside the local authority area can also join the register but, in most cases, they will be awarded less priority. All applicants will be assessed and if successful will be placed in a band depending on their assessed level of housing need.

Following assessment, any available properties in all the participating authorities and associations will be advertised on a regular basis and applicants will be able to express an interest (this is called 'bidding'). Although there is no longer a legal requirement to keep waiting lists, many local authorities have chosen to do so in order to keep abreast of housing need, demand and to plan for appropriate measures on affordable housing for the future.

Many local authorities have in place a 'Choice Based' Lettings Scheme (CBL), all Kent local authorities operate this system. A Choice Based Lettings Scheme is the Government's preferred way to allocate Council properties and those of partner Registered Social Landlords. This type of scheme allows applicants to decide for themselves which, if any, homes to express an interest in.

Anyone requiring social housing needs to contact the local authority where they live or HA or PRP to register their requirements and situation. Where local authorities and HAs operate a common register of household requirements individual situations will be considered along with other applicants on the list. However, HAs are independent bodies and can keep their own waiting lists.

Information in this bulletin has been collected and published by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) formerly known as the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) through the annual Local Authority Housing Statistics (LAHS). Some imputation is undertaken to take account of missing data in order to provide regional and national aggregates.

Households on housing registers as at 31 March 2022

As at 31 March 2022, there were 16,001 households on the housing registers of the twelve local authorities in Kent. There were 3,743 households on the Medway Unitary Authority housing register. This brings the total for Kent & Medway combined to 19,744.

Of the twelve local authorities in Kent, Canterbury had the highest number of households on their register with 2,809, which accounts for 17.6% of the Kent total. Sevenoaks had the lowest number of households on their register with 754, which accounts for 4.7% of the Kent total.

Of the 16,001 households on housing registers in Kent 44.6% required a 1 bed property, 27.3% required 2 bed properties, 20.8% required 3 bed properties and 7.3% required a property with more than 3 bedrooms.

The proportion of households in need of a one-bedroom property was highest in Ashford at 54.3%. Gravesham had the highest proportion of households needing a two-bedroom property (36.1%) and needing a property with more than 3 bedrooms (13.7%). Dartford had the highest proportion of households needing a three-bedroom property (34.8%).

See table 1 and table 2 for details.

Table 1: Households by bedroom requirement on housing registers: 2021 to 2022

Area	Total households	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	4 or more bedrooms
England	1,214,657	564,243	331,521	202,881	62,222
Kent	16,001	7,139	4,372	3,323	1,167
Ashford	1,294	702	250	261	81
Canterbury	2,809	1,429	821	444	115
Dartford	1,029	264	352	358	55
Dover	1,481	796	403	225	57
Folkestone & Hythe	1,394	685	386	231	92
Gravesham	1,030	300	372	217	141
Maidstone	891	364	134	306	87
Sevenoaks	754	307	257	131	59
Swale	1,397	534	411	272	180
Thanet	1,551	748	304	370	129
Tonbridge & Malling	1,410	668	384	245	113
Tunbridge Wells	961	342	298	263	58
Medway	3,743	1,600	1,120	706	317

Table 2: Proportion of households by bedroom requirement on housing registers: 2021 to 2022

Area	Total households	% 1 bedroom	% 2 bedrooms	% 3 bedrooms	% 4 or more bedrooms
England	1,214,657	46.5%	27.3%	16.7%	5.1%
Kent	16,001	44.6%	27.3%	20.8%	7.3%
Ashford	1,294	54.3%	19.3%	20.2%	6.3%
Canterbury	2,809	50.9%	29.2%	15.8%	4.1%
Dartford	1,029	25.7%	34.2%	34.8%	5.3%
Dover	1,481	53.7%	27.2%	15.2%	3.8%
Folkestone & Hythe	1,394	49.1%	27.7%	16.6%	6.6%
Gravesham	1,030	29.1%	36.1%	21.1%	13.7%
Maidstone	891	40.9%	15.0%	34.3%	9.8%
Sevenoaks	754	40.7%	34.1%	17.4%	7.8%
Swale	1,397	38.2%	29.4%	19.5%	12.9%
Thanet	1,551	48.2%	19.6%	23.9%	8.3%
Tonbridge & Malling	1,410	47.4%	27.2%	17.4%	8.0%
Tunbridge Wells	961	35.6%	31.0%	27.4%	6.0%
Medway	3,743	42.7%	29.9%	18.9%	8.5%

Households in the reasonable preference category

Local authorities will assess each application for a place on the housing register and place certain households in a “reasonable preference category” This means that they will be placed higher up the register and so will be housed more quickly than those who do not qualify for this category. It is possible for a single household to fall into more than one of the criteria listed in the reasonable preference category. The criteria for the reasonable preference category include:

- Homeless households
- Households who are owed a duty by the local authority to which they are applying
- Households who are occupying insanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions
- Households who need to move on medical or welfare grounds
- Households whose failure to move would cause hardship to themselves or to others

There are two additional preference groups: -

- Households in reasonable preference groups with urgent housing needs
- Households in reasonable preference groups with member of the Armed Forces community.

On the 31 March 2022 there were 11,264 households within the reasonable preference category in Kent. This accounts for 70.4% of all households on the housing registers in Kent and is considerably higher than the proportion seen in England as a whole (46.2%).

The proportion of households in this category varies across the local authorities within Kent. Maidstone had 891 households on the register and 100% are in the reasonable preference category. Sevenoaks had the lowest proportion and number of households within the reasonable preference category with 26.9% or 203 households.

Canterbury had the highest number of households within the reasonable preference category with 1,979. This accounts for 70.5% of all households on their register. See table 3 for details

Table 3: Households within reasonable preference category

Area	Total households	Reasonable preference households	% Reasonable preference households
England	1,214,657	561,451	46.2%
Kent	16,001	11,264	70.4%
Ashford	1,294	1,255	97.0%
Canterbury	2,809	1,979	70.5%
Dartford	1,029	843	81.9%
Dover	1,481	633	42.7%
Folkestone & Hythe	1,394	720	51.6%
Gravesham	1,030	845	82.0%
Maidstone	891	891	100.0%
Sevenoaks	754	203	26.9%
Swale	1,397	1,271	91.0%
Thanet	1,551	946	61.0%
Tonbridge & Malling	1,410	954	67.7%
Tunbridge Wells	961	724	75.3%
Medway	3,743	619	16.5%

In Kent, more than half of households granted reasonable preference were living in unsatisfactory housing conditions. (51.9%, 5,842 households). It is worth remembering that is possible for a single household to fall into more than one of the criteria listed in the reasonable preference category.

Eleven of the twelve local authorities in Kent have a majority of households granted reasonable preference due to this reason. Canterbury is the only one that does not.

Households with reasonable preference due to medical or welfare grounds account for the 2nd largest proportion of Kent households on housing registers (28.0%). Sevenoaks had the highest proportion of households with reasonable preference due to medical or welfare grounds (62.1%) and Canterbury had the highest number of households with reasonable preference due to medical or welfare grounds. (657).

Households with reasonable preference due to homelessness account for the 3rd largest proportion of Kent households on housing registers (15.4%). Dover had the highest proportion of households with reasonable preference due to homelessness (47.7%) and Canterbury had the highest number of households with reasonable preference due to homelessness (602). See table 4 and table 5 for details.

Table 4: Households in reasonable preference category on Local Authorities' housing registers as at 31 March 2022

Area	Total households	Homeless	Owed a duty	Unsatisfactory housing conditions	Medical or welfare grounds,	Failure to move would cause hardship (to themselves or to others).	Households with urgent housing needs	Members of the Armed Forces community
England	561,451	79,037	85,161	252,319	131,446	22,532	54,330	2,285
Kent	11,264	1,731	1,057	5,842	3,156	132	1,098	39
Ashford	1,255	121	58	1,040	332	18	94	1
Canterbury	1,979	602	22	602	657	96	148	.
Dartford	843	81	93	591	78	1	35	3
Dover	633	302	0	411	220	0	113	0
Folkestone & Hythe	720	113	113	251	185	0	59	2
Gravesham	845	78	51	569	147	0	534	13
Maidstone	891	9	262	359	163	4	0	.
Sevenoaks	203	0	90	166	126	9	28	0
Swale	1,271	0	184	569	514	4	58	0
Thanet	946	140	57	452	227	0	1	1
Tonbridge & Malling	954	176	54	446	278	0	19	19
Tunbridge Wells	724	109	73	386	229	0	9	0
Medway	619	270	145	36	167	1	124	0

Table 5: Proportion of households in reasonable preference category on Local Authorities' housing registers at 31 March 2022

Area	Total households	% homeless	% owed a duty	% unsatisfactory housing conditions	% medical or welfare grounds,	% failure to move would cause hardship (to themselves or to others).	% households with urgent housing needs	% members of the Armed Forces community
England	561,451	14.1%	15.2%	44.9%	23.4%	4.0%	9.7%	0.4%
Kent	11,264	15.4%	9.4%	51.9%	28.0%	1.2%	9.7%	0.3%
Ashford	1,255	9.6%	4.6%	82.9%	26.5%	1.4%	7.5%	0.1%
Canterbury	1,979	30.4%	1.1%	30.4%	33.2%	4.9%	7.5%	-
Dartford	843	9.6%	11.0%	70.1%	9.3%	0.1%	4.2%	0.4%
Dover	633	47.7%	0.0%	64.9%	34.8%	0.0%	17.9%	0.0%
Folkestone & Hythe	720	15.7%	15.7%	34.9%	25.7%	0.0%	8.2%	0.3%
Gravesham	845	9.2%	6.0%	67.3%	17.4%	0.0%	63.2%	1.5%
Maidstone	891	1.0%	29.4%	40.3%	18.3%	0.4%	0.0%	-
Sevenoaks	203	0.0%	44.3%	81.8%	62.1%	4.4%	13.8%	0.0%
Swale	1,271	0.0%	14.5%	44.8%	40.4%	0.3%	4.6%	0.0%
Thanet	946	14.8%	6.0%	47.8%	24.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
Tonbridge & Malling	954	18.4%	5.7%	46.8%	29.1%	0.0%	2.0%	2.0%
Tunbridge Wells	724	15.1%	10.1%	53.3%	31.6%	0.0%	1.2%	0.0%
Medway	619	43.6%	23.4%	5.8%	27.0%	0.2%	20.0%	0.0%

Households on the housing register: 2013 – 2022

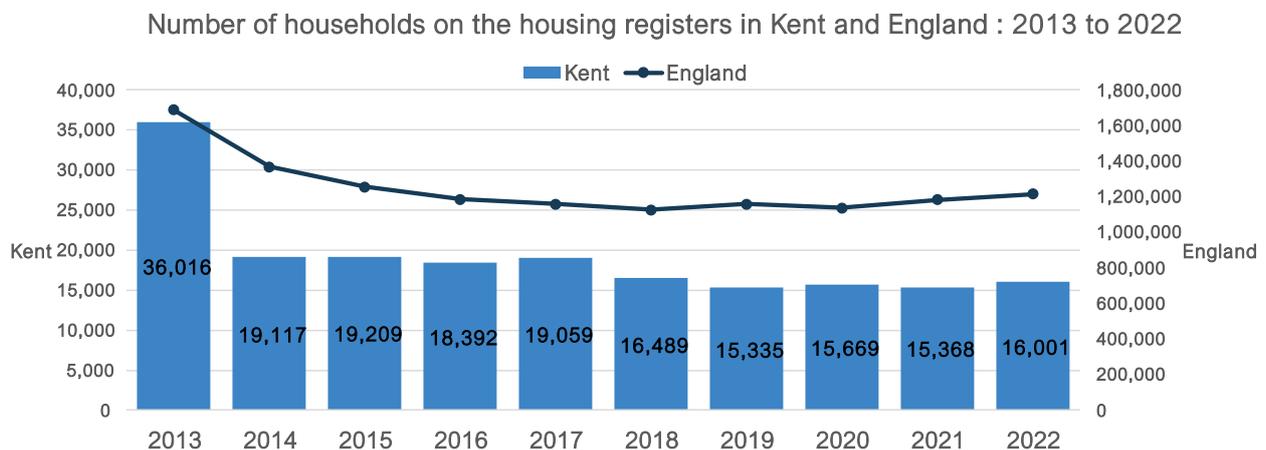
Up to 2013 the total number of people on local authority housing registers throughout England was steadily increasing, when changes to legislation from the Localism Act 2011 took effect. This act allowed local authorities to set their own rules about who can apply to be on a housing register or waiting list.

One of the changes meant that a household could only apply to one local authority. As a result of these changes there was a significant drop in the number of people on all local authority waiting lists.

The number of households on the housing register in Kent steadily increased from 2001 to 2013 when the highest number of households occurred (36,016). As a result of the changes mentioned above, there was a marked fall in households on the housing register in Kent in 2014.

Between 2014 and 2017 the number remained steady until 2017 when there was another drop between 2019 to 2021 with a slight increase in the last year. As at 31 March 2022, there were 16,001 households on the housing registers of the local authorities in Kent. This is the highest number of households on the housing register since 2018.

Chart 1: Number of households on local authority housing waiting lists at 31 March 2022



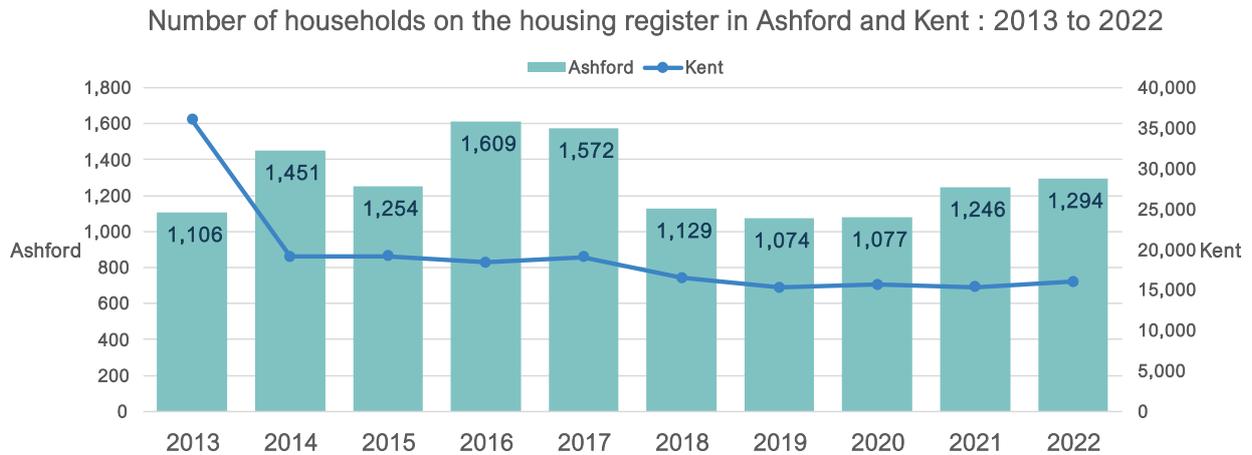
The number of households on the housing register within each of the twelve local authority districts in Kent, and in Medway Unitary authority has fluctuated over the past ten years. All but one local authority, Ashford, had fewer households on the housing register in 2022 compared with 2013. The number of households for each year between 2013 and 2022 for the Kent local authorities and Medway are presented in Table 6 and Charts 2 to 14.

Table 6: Time series of households on housing registers: 2013 to 2022

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
England	1,687,899	1,369,273	1,256,574	1,184,750	1,158,034	1,126,173	1,159,833	1,137,234	1,183,103	1,214,657
Kent	36,016	19,117	19,209	18,392	19,059	16,489	15,335	15,669	15,368	16,001
Ashford	1,106	1,451	1,254	1,609	1,572	1,129	1,074	1,077	1,246	1,294
Canterbury	4,708	1,734	2,269	2,595	2,709	2,314	1,983	2,268	2,547	2,809
Dartford	2,807	666	850	963	1,064	1,134	785	829	962	1,029
Dover	2,408	2,061	2,194	2,076	1,939	1,603	1,300	1,417	1,681	1,481
Folkestone & Hythe	3,101	2,857	2,592	1,768	1,454	1,028	1,209	1,150	1,170	1,394
Gravesham	2,854	2,083	3,156	3,276	3,629	2,399	1,595	1,906	1,196	1,030
Maidstone	3,151	1,288	1,460	785	719	618	776	851	840	891
Sevenoaks	2,022	551	715	633	803	755	484	655	838	754
Swale	3,640	3,652	827	1,119	1,085	1,102	1,407	1,313	1,213	1,397
Thanet	6,176	634	1,443	1,518	2,156	2,423	2,593	2,032	1,607	1,551
Tonbridge & Malling	1,773	1,036	1,346	1,062	989	1,148	1,242	1,242	1,171	1,410
Tunbridge Wells	2,270	1,104	1,103	988	940	836	887	929	897	961
Medway	19,407	18,773	19,320	20,651	19,905	9,303	4,419	3,216	3,026	3,743

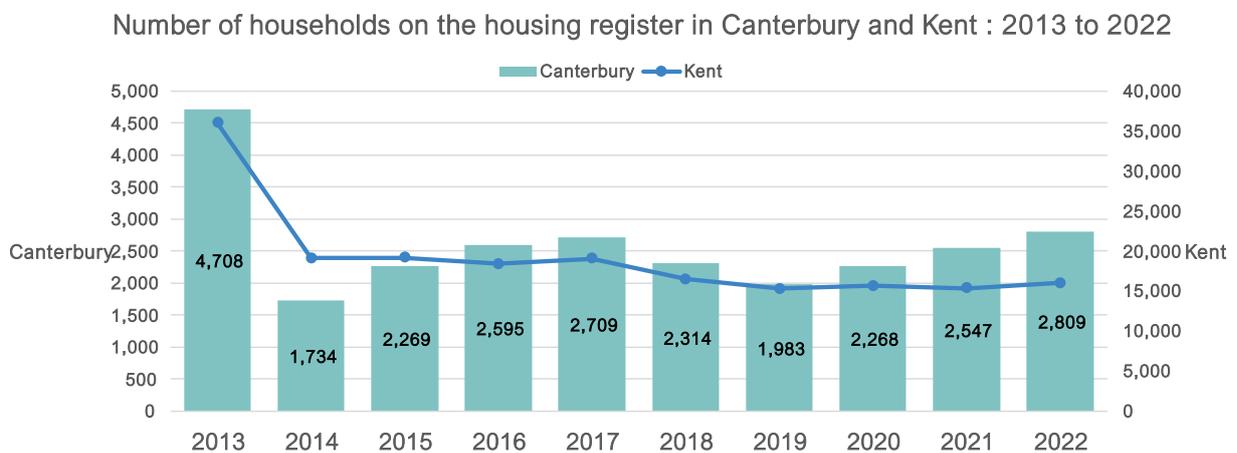
Data for Dover in 2013 and Tonbridge & Malling in 2020 are imputed by DLUHC. these data should not be seen as an estimate for the individual authority but is given on an authority basis to allow custom totals to be constructed. Source: Live Table 600 Numbers of households on local authorities' housing waiting lists, by district: England 1987-2022, DLUHC.

Chart 2: Number of households on Ashford housing register 2013 to 2022



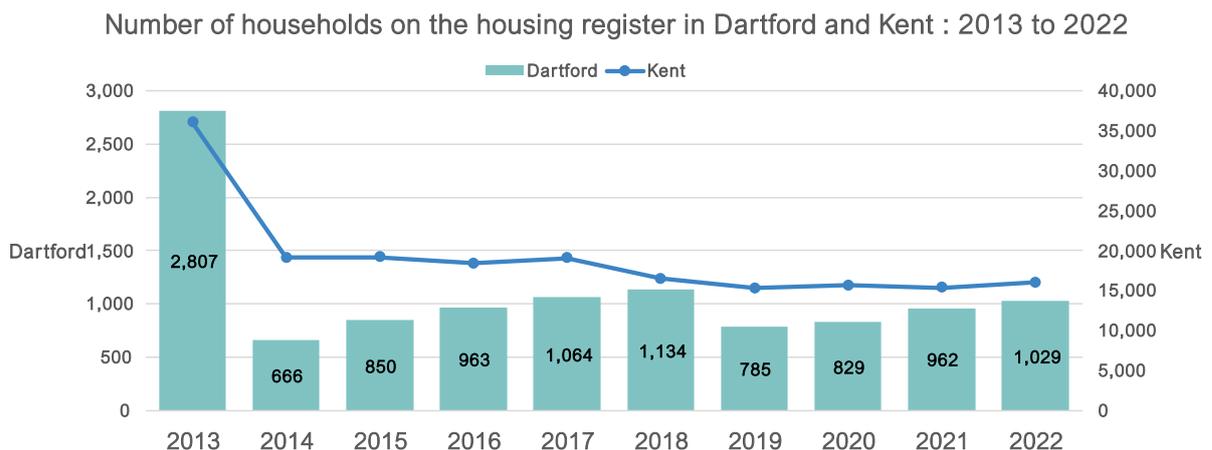
Source: DLUHC: Local Authority Housing Statistics data returns, England 2012-22: released June 2023: Chart presented by Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

Chart 3: Number of households on Canterbury housing register at 2013 to 2022



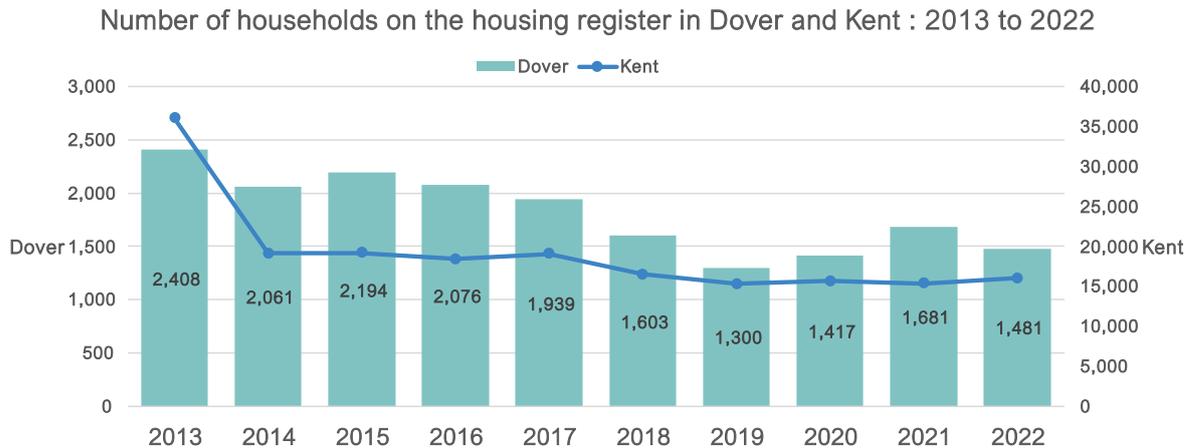
Source: DLUHC: Local Authority Housing Statistics data returns, England 2012-22: released June 2023: Chart presented by Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

Chart 4: Number of households Dartford housing register: 2013 to 2022



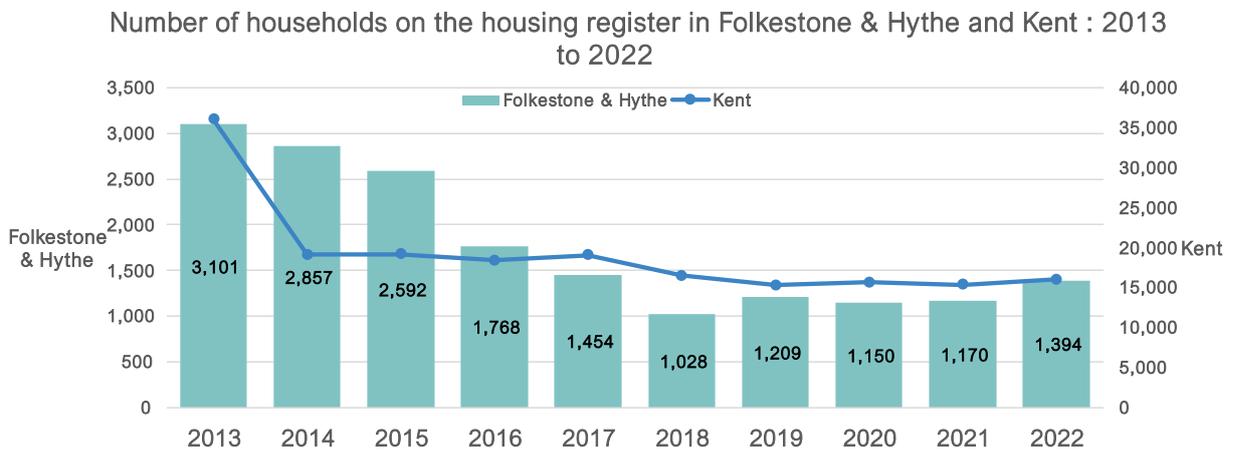
Source: DLUHC: Local Authority Housing Statistics data returns, England 2012-22: released June 2023: Chart presented by Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

Chart 5: Number of households Dover housing register: 2013 to 2022



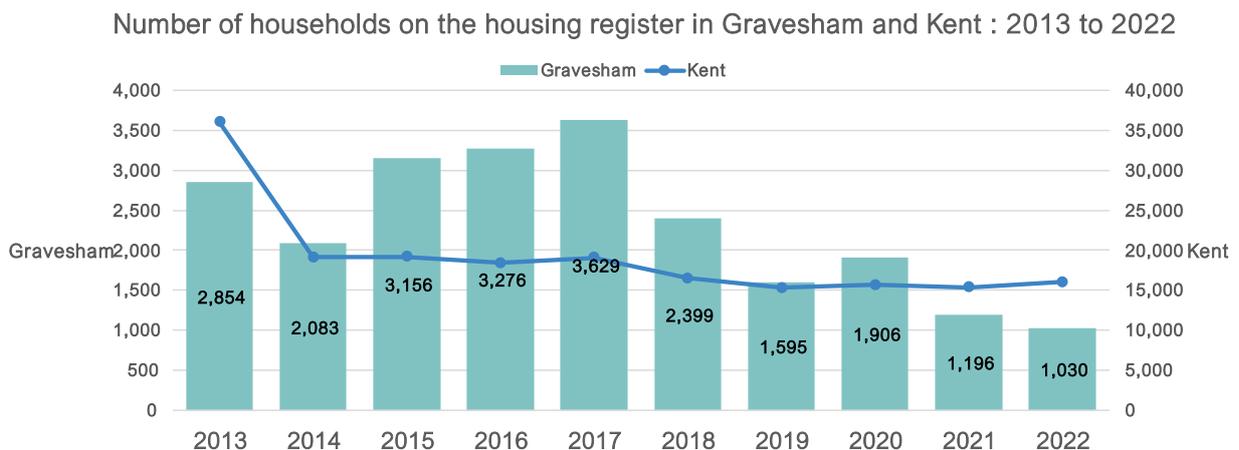
Source: DLUHC: Local Authority Housing Statistics data returns, England 2012-22: released June 2023: Chart presented by Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

Chart 6: Number of households Folkestone & Hythe housing register: 2013 to 2022



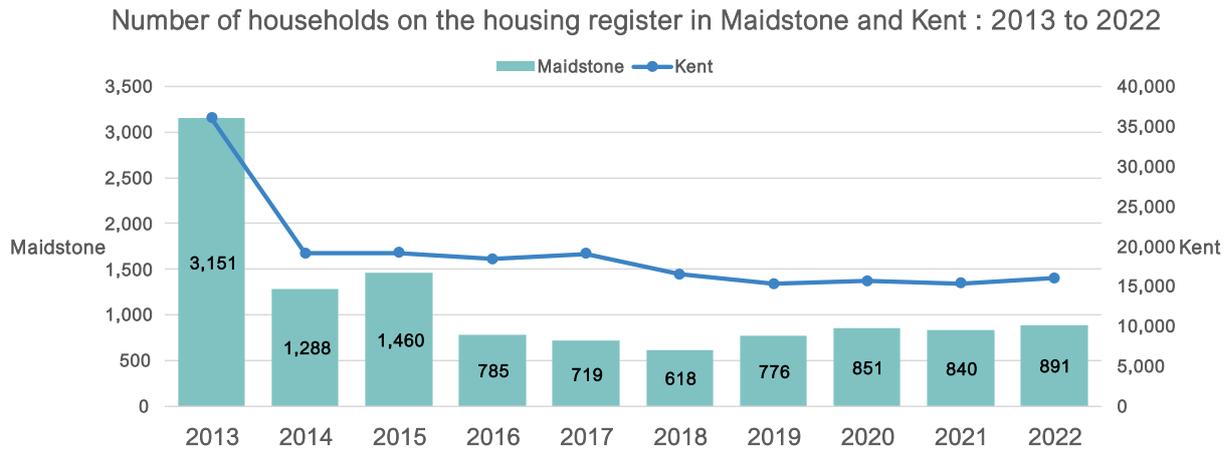
Source: DLUHC: Local Authority Housing Statistics data returns, England 2012-22: released June 2023: Chart presented by Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

Chart 7: Number of households Gravesham housing register: 2013 to 2022



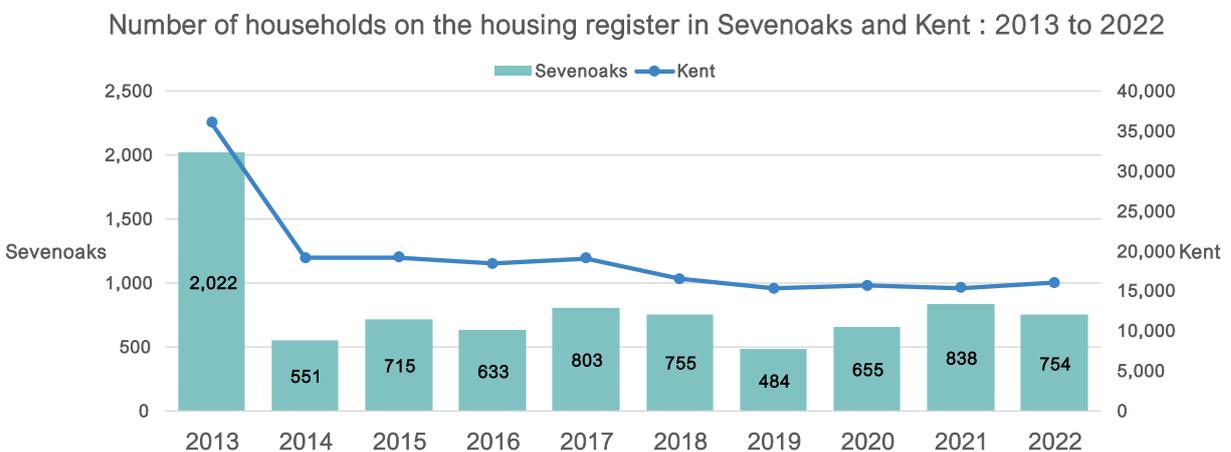
Source: DLUHC: Local Authority Housing Statistics data returns, England 2012-22: released June 2023: Chart presented by Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

Chart 9: Number of households Maidstone housing register at 31 March 2022



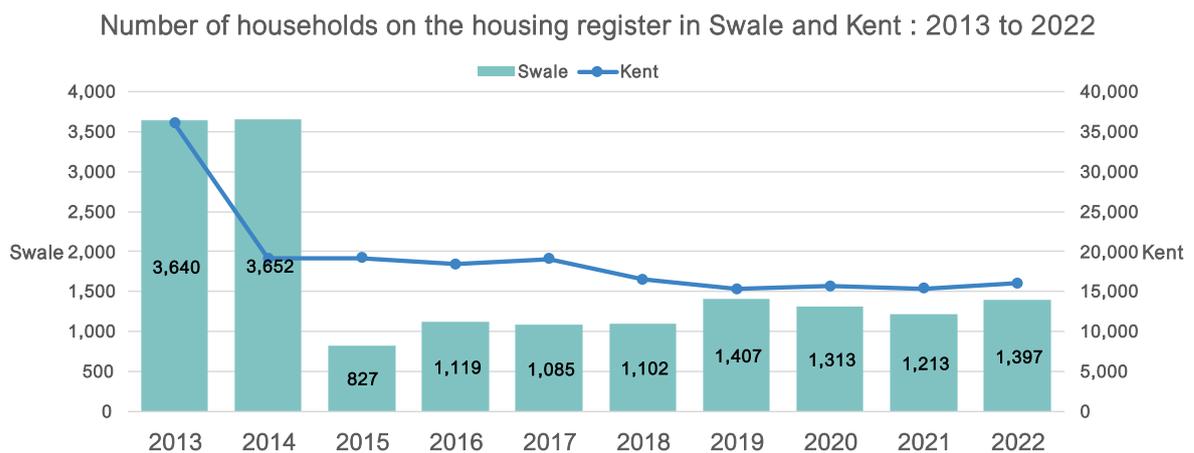
Source: DLUHC: Local Authority Housing Statistics data returns, England 2012-22: released June 2023: Chart presented by Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

Chart 10: Number of households Sevenoaks housing register at 31 March 2022



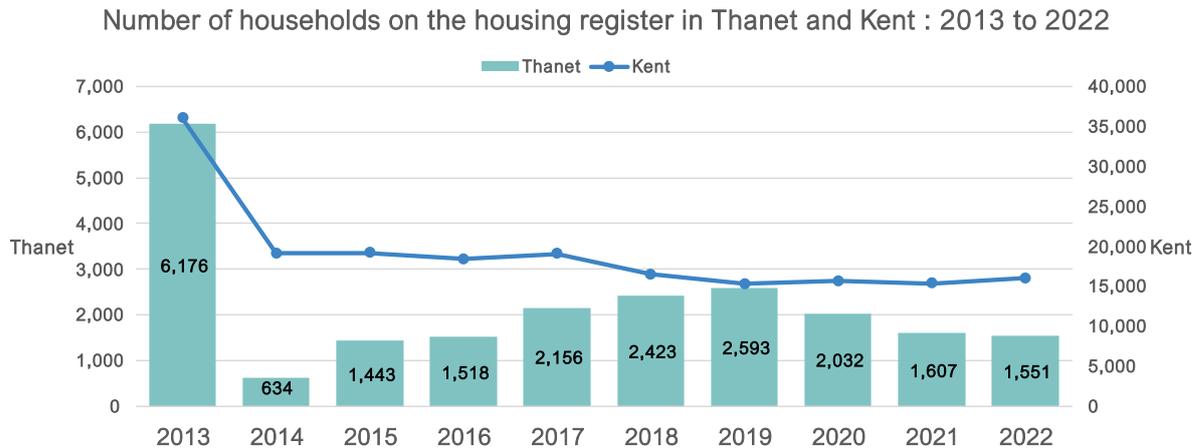
Source: DLUHC: Local Authority Housing Statistics data returns, England 2012-22: released June 2023: Chart presented by Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

Chart 11: Number of households Swale housing register at 31 March 2022



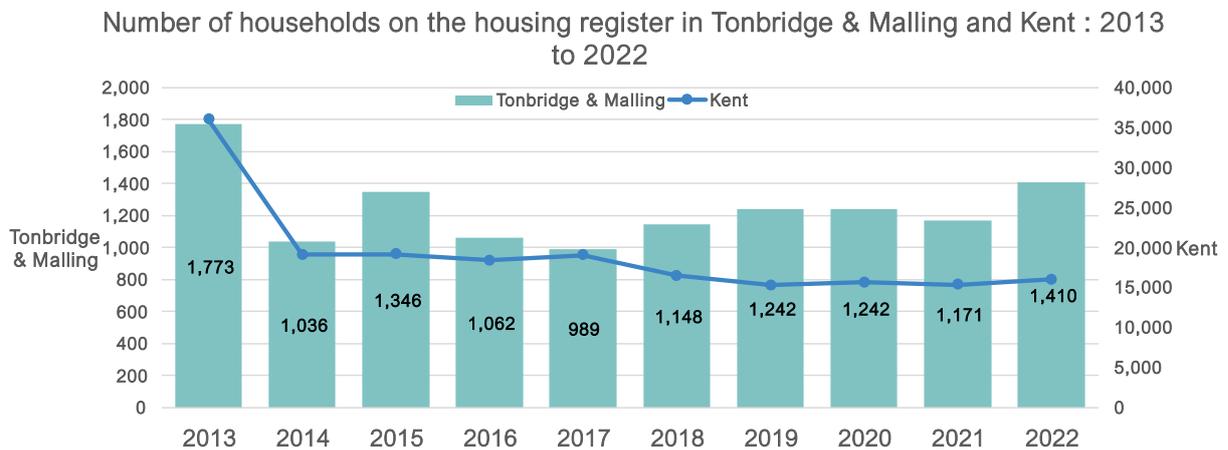
Source: DLUHC: Local Authority Housing Statistics data returns, England 2012-22: released June 2023: Chart presented by Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

Chart 12: Number of households Thanet housing register at 31 March 2022



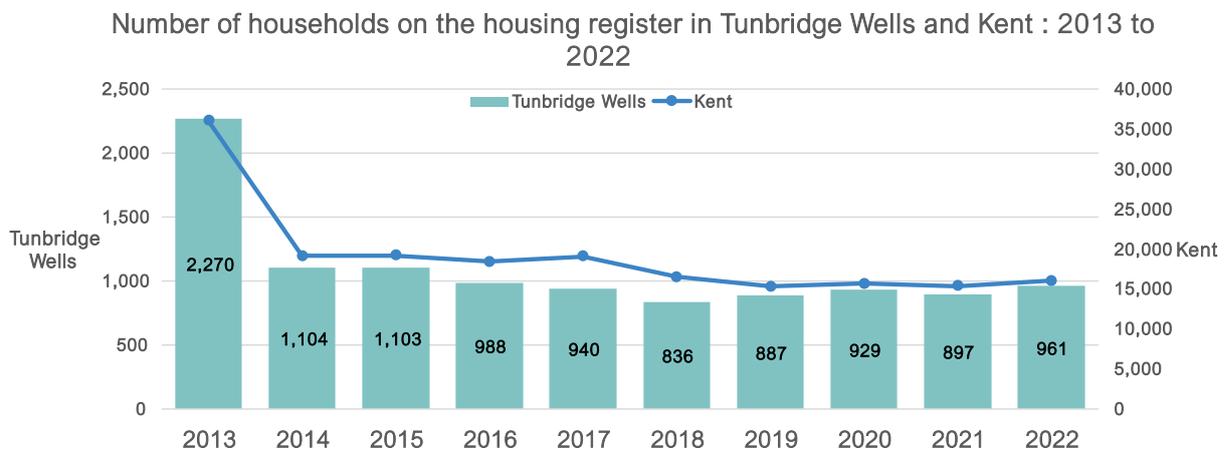
Source: DLUHC: Local Authority Housing Statistics data returns, England 2012-22: released June 2023: Chart presented by Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

Chart 13: Number of households Tonbridge & Malling housing register at 31 March 2022



Source: DLUHC: Local Authority Housing Statistics data returns, England 2012-22: released June 2023: Chart presented by Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

Chart 14: Number of households Tunbridge Wells housing register at 31 March 2022



Source: DLUHC: Local Authority Housing Statistics data returns, England 2012-22: released June 2023: Chart presented by Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

Related documents

Further information related to social housing can be found via the following links.

The [Deprivation & Poverty](#) webpage contains further information on homelessness.

- Topics include: -
- Indices of Deprivation
- Poverty
- Homelessness
- Unemployment and benefits

The [Housing Statistics](#) webpage contains more information on housing.

- Topics include: -
- New housing
- House and land prices
- Housing stock