

Business births, deaths & survival rates

The 2023 Business Demography dataset was published by ONS in November 2024. Revised methodology means that data is only available from 2016.

NOTE: The term “Kent” refers to the Kent County Council area and excludes Medway.

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[Kent Facts & Figures](#)

The Business Demography dataset is published annually by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and is based on information from VAT and PAYE administrative systems. This dataset provides information about the births and deaths of businesses and their survival rates. It also provides a count of the number of enterprises which were active throughout the year.

Summary

- In 2023 there were 7,240 enterprise births in Kent, (75 more than in 2022), and 7,155 enterprise deaths (450 fewer than 2022).
- The enterprise birth rate in Kent was 10.5% (South East 9.9%, GB 11.1%) and the enterprise death rate was 10.4% (South East 9.8%, GB 10.8%).
- In 2023 93.4% of Kent businesses had survived their first year of trading (formed in 2022), 54.7% had survived three years (formed in 2020) and 44.1% had survived for five years (formed in 2018).
- 4.8% of enterprises in Kent with 10 or more employees were high growth enterprises (seen at least 20% employee growth each year for the previous three-year period). In the South East this was 4.9% and nationally 4.8%.

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Introduction

Business Demography is an annual dataset produced by the Office for National Statistics from an extract taken from the Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR). The publication focuses on changes to the registered business population, that is, those businesses registered at Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) for Value Added Tax (VAT) and/or Pay-As-You-Earn (PAYE) and at Companies House.

As well as information on business births (start-ups), business deaths (closures) and survival rates of businesses at local authority district level, the data also provide information on the number of businesses which have shown high employee growth over the last three years.

In 2022 changes were made to how the data was produced. It was found that the number of multiple business registrations at a single postcode on the Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR) had increased, affecting the number of births, deaths, and survival rates. For the years 2016 to 2022, businesses that had neither VAT nor PAYE, but did have a live company number, were removed from the figures. They were removed because they can misrepresent business birth and death figures. This adjustment was only made to data from 2016 onwards. It is therefore not comparable with data previously released for earlier years.

The Office for National Statistics produces two sources of business survey data. In addition to the Business Demography dataset there is also the UK business: activity, size, and location data set. This is also based on VAT/PAYE data and is covered in a separate bulletin entitled “UK Business Counts” published on our [Economy webpages](#).

There are differences between these two data sets. Although both products are extracts from the IDBR the Business Demography data set returns a higher count of active businesses. It counts all business activity taking place during the whole financial year. Enterprises may have been formed and then closed within the time period but if they have been active during any part of the year they would have been counted as an active enterprise.

The UK Business Counts data set counts businesses at a fixed point in time, usually during March and so provides a snapshot of businesses at that point in time.

Data is available from 2016 and the latest data is for 2023. The Business Demography dataset uses the term “enterprises.” For the purposes of this bulletin enterprises and businesses should be taken as referring to the same thing. All data is rounded to the nearest 5 at source.

Enterprise births

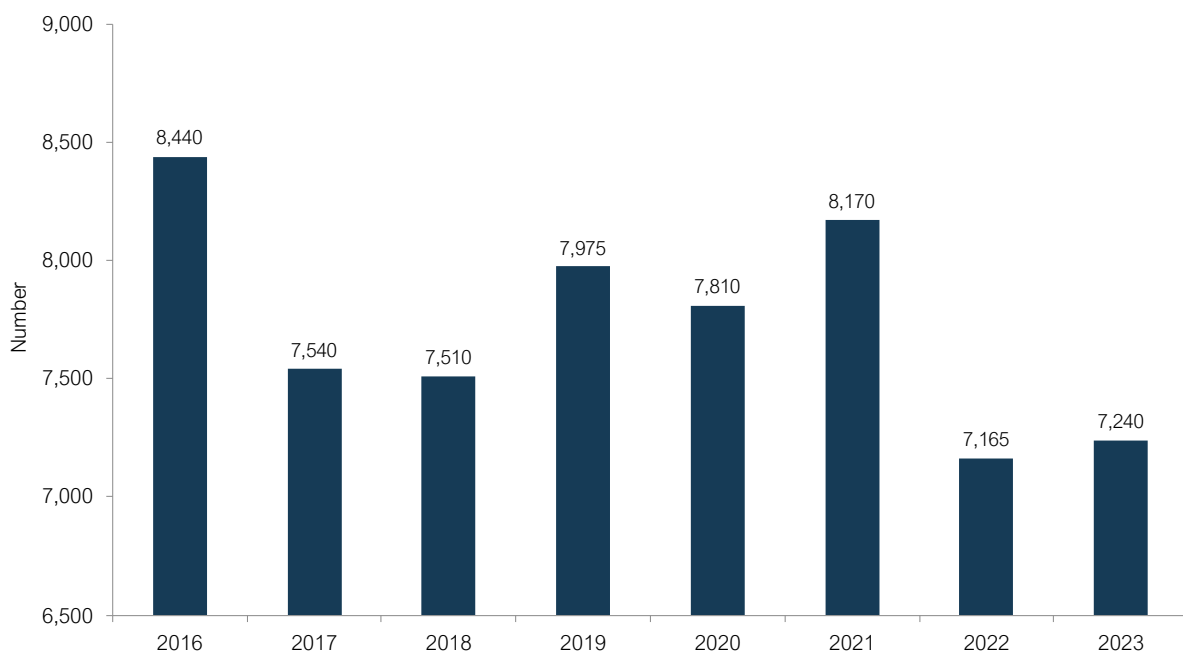
The number of enterprise births for the Kent Districts and Medway is available from 2016-2023.

Between 2016 and 2023, Kent saw the number of enterprise births fall by 14.2% (1,200 fewer births in 2023 compared to 2016). This is shown in chart 1. 2023 saw a slight increase in the number of enterprise births over the previous year, however they remain low compared to previous years.

Chart 1 shows enterprise births from 2016 until 2023. 2016 had the highest number of births (8,440) and 2022 had the least. The full timeseries of enterprise births can be found in tables 13 and 14 in the annex at the end of this bulletin.

Chart 1: Enterprise births in Kent from 2016

Enterprise births in Kent 2016 to 2023



Source: Office for National Statistics
Prepared by: Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

In 2023 there were 7,240 enterprise births in Kent. This was slightly more than the previous year (75 more enterprise births, +1.0%).

Half of Kent's districts saw an increase in enterprise births over the previous year. The biggest increase was in Sevenoaks where there were 55 more enterprise births than seen

in 2022. Gravesham saw the biggest decrease in enterprises births with 40 fewer than the previous year.

Table 1 shows the count of births of new enterprises, the enterprise birth rate in 2023, the change between 2018 and 2023, and the change between 2022 and 2023. Enterprise birth rates are calculated as enterprise births as a percentage of total active enterprises.

Table 1: Count of births of new enterprises

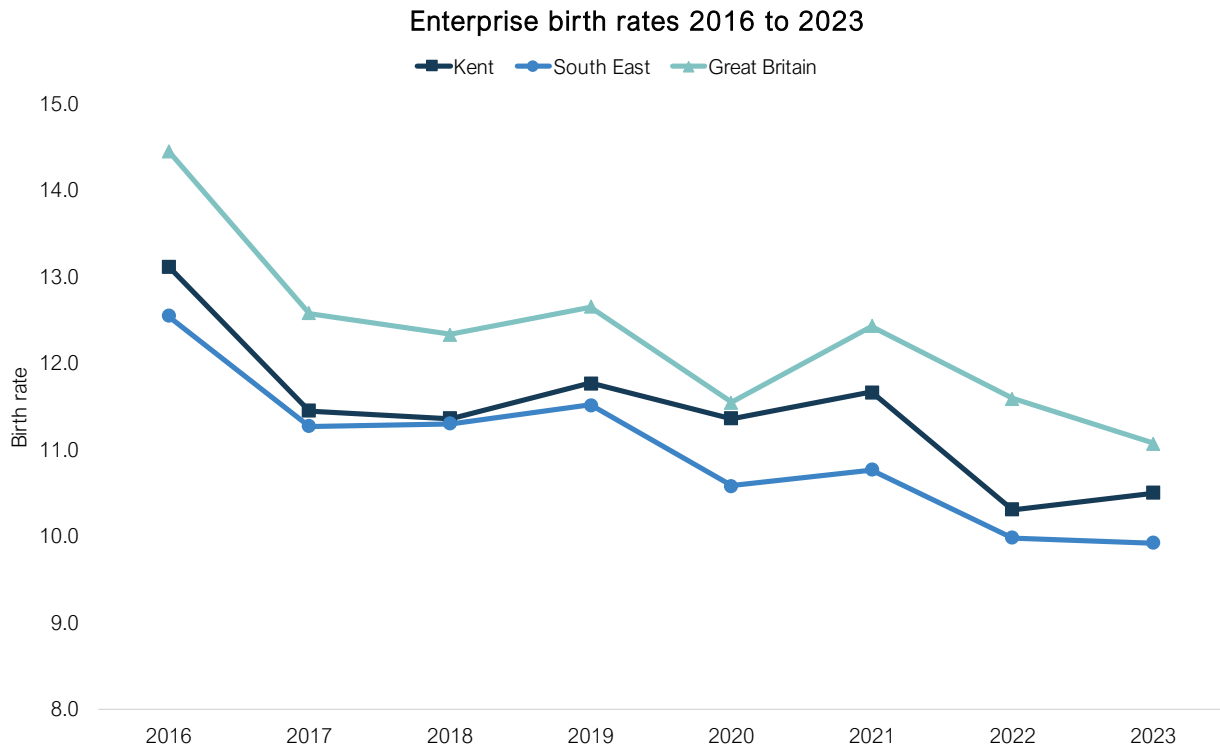
Births Of New Enterprises 2023	Number	Birth rate (%)	Number change 2018-23	% change 2018-23	Number change 2022-23	% change 2022-23
Ashford	675	10.7	-70	-9.4%	25	3.8%
Canterbury	615	10.2	15	2.5%	-35	-5.4%
Dartford	630	12.2	-40	-6.0%	-25	-3.8%
Dover	440	11.4	50	12.8%	50	12.8%
Folkestone & Hythe	425	10.7	-20	-4.5%	-10	-2.3%
Gravesham	535	11.8	-40	-7.0%	-40	-7.0%
Maidstone	875	10.0	10	1.2%	-15	-1.7%
Sevenoaks	640	9.3	-115	-15.2%	55	9.4%
Swale	560	10.3	-15	-2.6%	-5	-0.9%
Thanet	605	12.2	90	17.5%	35	6.1%
Tonbridge & Malling	650	9.9	-30	-4.4%	5	0.8%
Tunbridge Wells	590	9.2	-105	-15.1%	35	6.3%
Kent	7,240	10.5	-270	-3.6%	75	1.0%
Medway	1,240	12.4	-15	-1.2%	-45	-3.5%
Kent & Medway	8,480	10.7	-285	-3.3%	30	0.4%
South East	42,955	9.9	-6,585	-13.3%	-1,205	-2.7%
England	281,860	11.1	-29,720	-9.5%	-18,720	-6.2%
England & Wales	292,380	11.1	-31,085	-9.6%	-20,290	-6.5%
Great Britain	310,655	11.1	-32,430	-9.5%	-20,885	-6.3%
United Kingdom	316,025	11.0	-32,605	-9.4%	-20,900	-6.2%

Source: ONS Business Demography

Presented by: Kent Analytics Kent County Council

Overall in Kent, the South East and Great Britain, enterprise birth rates have fallen since 2016 despite a slight increase in 2019 and 2021. While Kent saw a slight increase in the enterprise birth rate in 2023, in the South East and Great Britain it is at its lowest level since 2016.

Chart 2 and Table 2 (Enterprise birth rates in Kent, the South East & Great Britain) show the new enterprise birth rates decreasing over the years from 2016 to 2023.

Chart 2: New enterprise birth rates


Source: Office for National Statistics
Prepared by: Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

Table 2: Enterprise birth rates in Kent, the South East & Great Britain

Enterprise birth rates	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Kent	13.1	11.5	11.4	11.8	11.4	11.7	10.3	10.5
South East	12.6	11.3	11.3	11.5	10.6	10.8	10.0	9.9
Great Britain	14.5	12.6	12.3	12.7	11.5	12.4	11.6	11.1

Source: ONS Business Demography
Presented by: Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

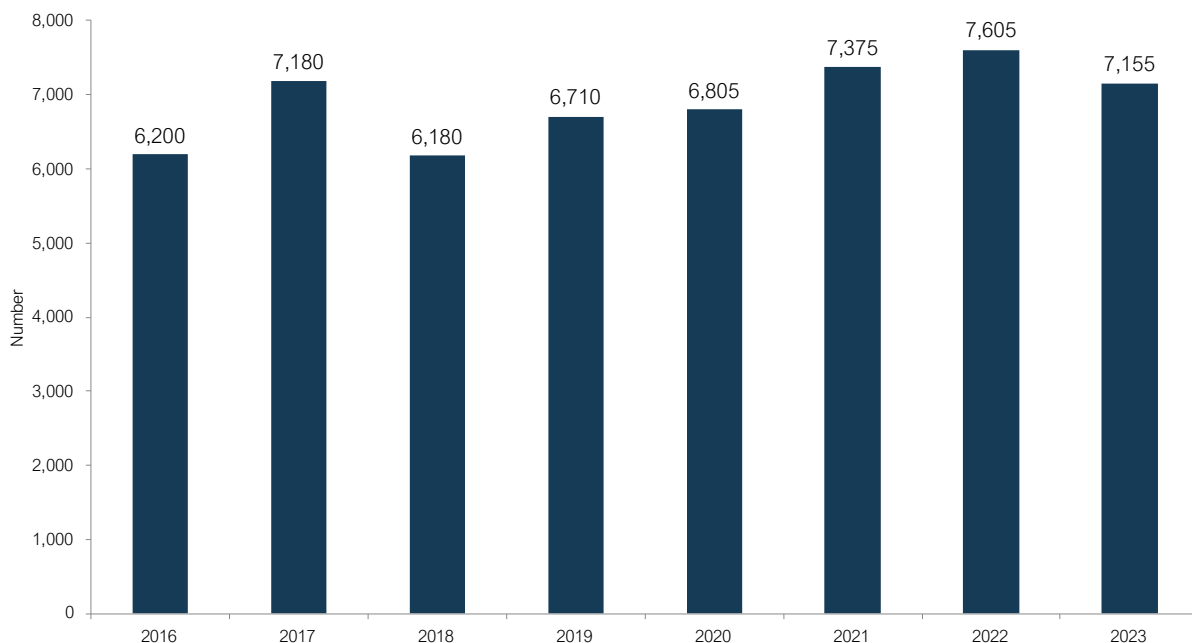
Enterprise deaths

There were fewer enterprise deaths in Kent in 2023 than seen in the previous year. In 2023 Kent saw 7,155 enterprise deaths resulting in an overall death rate of 10.4%. The death rate is calculated as the number of deaths as a proportion of total active businesses.

Chart 3 shows enterprise deaths in Kent from 2016 to 2023. The number of deaths has been gradually increasing since 2018 and 2022 saw the highest number of deaths in the 8-year period. A full timeseries of enterprises deaths can be found in tables 15 and 16 in the annex at the end of this bulletin.

Chart 3: Enterprise Deaths in Kent from 2016

Enterprise deaths in Kent 2016 to 2023



Source: Office for National Statistics
Prepared by: Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

There were fewer enterprise deaths in 2023 than the previous year in nine Kent local authorities. Maidstone (+155), Thanet (+10) and Tonbridge & Malling (+55) were the only three districts to see enterprise deaths increase.

Overall Maidstone saw the highest number of enterprise deaths (1,115) equivalent to a death rate of 12.8%. The fewest enterprise deaths were seen in Dover (385) but Sevenoaks had the lowest enterprise death rate (8.8%).

Table 3 shows the number and rate of enterprise deaths in Kent districts along with the five-year and one-year change.

Table 3: Count of deaths of enterprises

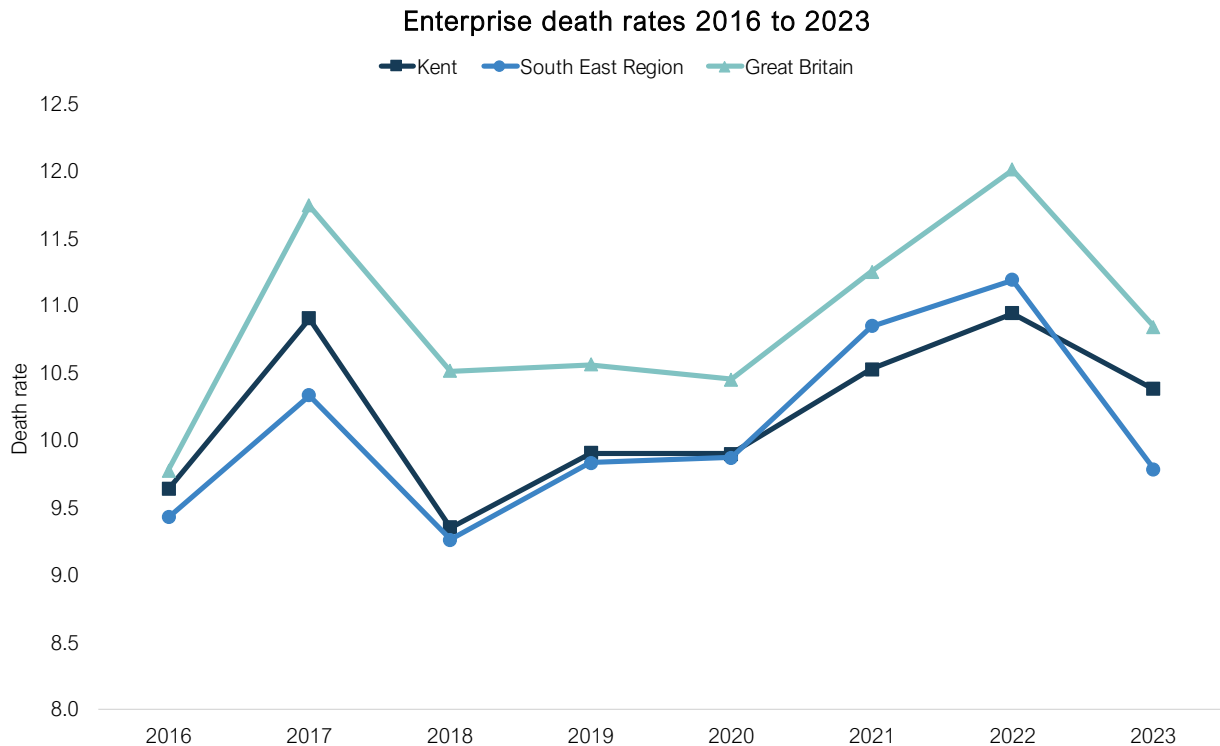
Count Of Enterprise Deaths 2023	Number	Death rate	Number change 2018-23	% change 2018-23	Number change 2022-23	% change 2022-23
Ashford	605	9.6	95	18.6%	-90	-12.9%
Canterbury	610	10.1	100	19.6%	-10	-1.6%
Dartford	580	11.3	75	14.9%	-165	-22.1%
Dover	385	10.0	50	14.9%	-65	-14.4%
Folkestone & Hythe	425	10.7	40	10.4%	-70	-14.1%
Gravesham	505	11.2	-5	-1.0%	-90	-15.1%
Maidstone	1,115	12.8	385	52.7%	155	16.1%
Sevenoaks	610	8.8	15	2.5%	-35	-5.4%
Swale	490	9.0	15	3.2%	-90	-15.5%
Thanet	550	11.1	110	25.0%	10	1.9%
Tonbridge & Malling	685	10.4	130	23.4%	55	8.7%
Tunbridge Wells	595	9.2	-35	-5.6%	-55	-8.5%
Kent	7,155	10.4	975	15.8%	-450	-5.9%
Medway	1,150	11.5	30	2.7%	-160	-12.2%
Kent & Medway	8,305	10.5	1,005	13.8%	-610	-6.8%
South East	42,345	9.8	1,760	4.3%	-7,150	-14.4%
England	275,585	10.9	9,815	3.7%	-36,150	-11.6%
England & Wales	286,885	10.9	11,785	4.3%	-36,765	-11.4%
Great Britain	304,180	10.8	11,710	4.0%	-39,345	-11.5%
United Kingdom	309,290	10.8	12,715	4.3%	-39,405	-11.3%

Source: ONS Business Demography

Presented by: Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

Chart 4 and Table 4 show enterprise death rates in Kent, South East and Britain from 2016 to 2023. They show a sharp spike in deaths in 2017 which dropped down in 2018 before gradually increasing through to 2022 at which point they were at their highest level since 2016. In 2023 the death rate fell in each of the areas.

Overall, enterprises death rates in 2023 in Kent, the South East and Great Britain are higher than they were in 2016, however the death rate in Kent (10.4%) is currently lower than seen in Great Britain (10.8%) but higher than the South East region (9.8%).

Chart 4: Enterprise death rates


Source: Office for National Statistics
Prepared by: Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

Table 4: Enterprise death rates in Kent, the South East & Great Britain

Enterprise death rates	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Kent	9.6	10.9	9.4	9.9	9.9	10.5	10.9	10.4
South East	9.4	10.3	9.3	9.8	9.9	10.8	11.2	9.8
Great Britain	9.8	11.7	10.5	10.6	10.5	11.3	12.0	10.8

Source: ONS Business Demography
Presented by: Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

Table 5 (overleaf) shows the ratio of business births to deaths, over the period 2016 to 2023. A ratio of births to deaths above 1.0 means that there were more enterprise births than deaths.

In Kent, the ratio of enterprises births increased from 0.94 in 2022 to 1.01 in 2023 meaning there were fewer enterprise deaths than births in the county in 2023.

Within Kent, nine districts saw a higher ratio of births to deaths in 2023 than in 2022 meaning there were fewer births to deaths than seen the previous year.

Three districts (Maidstone 0.78, Tonbridge & Malling 0.95, and Tunbridge Wells 0.99) had ratios below one meaning the number of enterprise deaths exceeded the number of enterprise births in 2023.

Dover and Swale had the best ratio of births to deaths (1.14) in 2023. Thanet is the only one of the Kent authorities never to have seen more enterprise deaths than births in the last eight years.

Table 5: Ratio of enterprise births to deaths

Ratio of business births to deaths	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Ashford	1.45	1.01	1.46	1.16	1.05	0.87	0.94	1.12
Canterbury	1.38	0.99	1.18	1.21	1.09	1.24	1.05	1.01
Dartford	1.63	1.06	1.33	1.64	0.98	0.92	0.88	1.09
Dover	1.38	1.00	1.16	1.21	1.46	1.12	0.87	1.14
Folkestone & Hythe	1.59	0.87	1.16	1.04	1.15	1.10	0.88	1.00
Gravesham	1.59	1.11	1.13	1.23	1.14	1.10	0.97	1.06
Maidstone	1.21	1.17	1.18	1.28	1.54	1.39	0.93	0.78
Sevenoaks	1.30	1.07	1.27	1.01	0.93	1.03	0.91	1.05
Swale	1.49	1.03	1.21	1.16	1.08	1.15	0.97	1.14
Thanet	1.25	1.12	1.17	1.17	1.24	1.48	1.06	1.10
Tonbridge & Malling	1.43	1.09	1.23	1.18	1.21	0.97	1.02	0.95
Tunbridge Wells	1.02	1.02	1.10	0.98	1.06	1.08	0.85	0.99
Kent	1.36	1.05	1.22	1.19	1.15	1.11	0.94	1.01
Medway	1.45	1.04	1.12	1.37	1.38	0.87	0.98	1.08
Kent & Medway	1.37	1.05	1.20	1.21	1.18	1.06	0.95	1.02
South East	1.33	1.09	1.22	1.17	1.07	0.99	0.89	1.01
England	1.51	1.07	1.17	1.20	1.12	1.11	0.96	1.02
England & Wales	1.50	1.07	1.18	1.20	1.12	1.11	0.97	1.02
Great Britain	1.48	1.07	1.17	1.20	1.10	1.10	0.97	1.02
United Kingdom	1.48	1.08	1.18	1.20	1.11	1.11	0.97	1.02

A ratio less than 1 indicates that the number of deaths is greater than the number of births

Source: ONS Business Demography

Presented by: Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

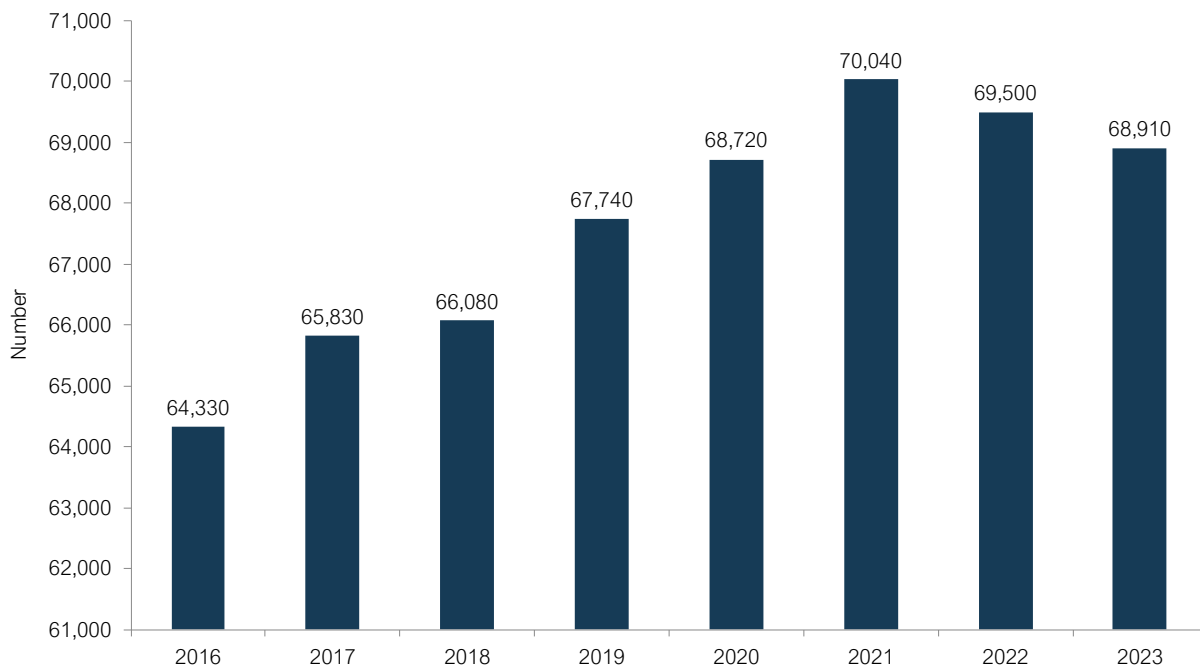
Stock of active enterprises

During 2023 Kent had 68,910 enterprises active at some point during the year, 590 fewer than the previous year. This equates to a 0.8% decrease over the previous year. The stock of enterprises fell by 1.9% nationally and 2.2% in the South East region.

Chart 5 shows active enterprises in Kent from 2016 to 2023. The number gradually increases from 2016 (64,330) until 2021 (70,040) when it takes a slight dip in 2022 (69,500) and 2023 (68,910). A full timeseries of the number of active enterprises can be found in table 17 in the annex at the end of this bulletin.

Chart 5: Active Enterprises in Kent

Count of active enterprises in Kent 2016 to 2023



Source: Office for National Statistics
Prepared by: Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

Maidstone had the highest number of active enterprises in the county in 2023 (8,730) although this was 100 fewer than seen the previous year. Dover had the fewest number of active enterprises.

Two districts saw the number of active enterprises increase over the previous year. Thanet saw an increase of 70 active enterprises (+1.4%) and Tonbridge & Malling had 20 more (+0.3%).

Dartford saw the biggest fall in number of active enterprises (-125).

Table 6 shows the number of active enterprises in Kent districts in 2023 and the one-year and five-year change.

Table 6: Count of active enterprises

Count Of Active Enterprises 2023	Number	Number change 2018-23	% change 2018-23	Number change 2022-23	% change 2022-23
Ashford	6,320	4,302	68.8%	-45	-0.7%
Canterbury	6,040	-215	-3.8%	-5	-0.1%
Dartford	5,150	-515	-10.5%	-125	-2.4%
Dover	3,865	-1,055	-29.6%	-15	-0.4%
Folkestone & Hythe	3,960	400	10.3%	-110	-2.7%
Gravesham	4,525	625	14.3%	-110	-2.4%
Maidstone	8,730	4,355	55.8%	-100	-1.1%
Sevenoaks	6,910	-900	-12.7%	-70	-1.0%
Swale	5,430	-1,645	-31.9%	-40	-0.7%
Thanet	4,970	-190	-4.4%	70	1.4%
Tonbridge & Malling	6,565	2,290	36.7%	20	0.3%
Tunbridge Wells	6,445	200	2.9%	-60	-0.9%
Kent	68,910	62,070	93.9%	-590	-0.8%
Medway	10,000	-56,080	-588.1%	-130	-1.3%
Kent & Medway	78,910	69,375	91.7%	-720	-0.9%
South East	432,615	357,000	81.5%	-9,680	-2.2%
England	2,531,480	2,093,290	83.6%	-49,600	-1.9%
England & Wales	2,633,695	129,775	5.0%	-51,905	-1.9%
Great Britain	2,805,590	201,070	7.2%	-54,350	-1.9%
United Kingdom	2,870,295	89,350	3.1%	-54,390	-1.9%

Source: ONS Business Demography

Presented by: Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

Enterprise survival rates

Survival rate data looks at the annual survival rates for newly born businesses for the first 5 years of their existence. So, it is possible to look at survival rates for each of the first five years of a newly created business. One-year, three-year and five-year enterprise survival rates are presented here.

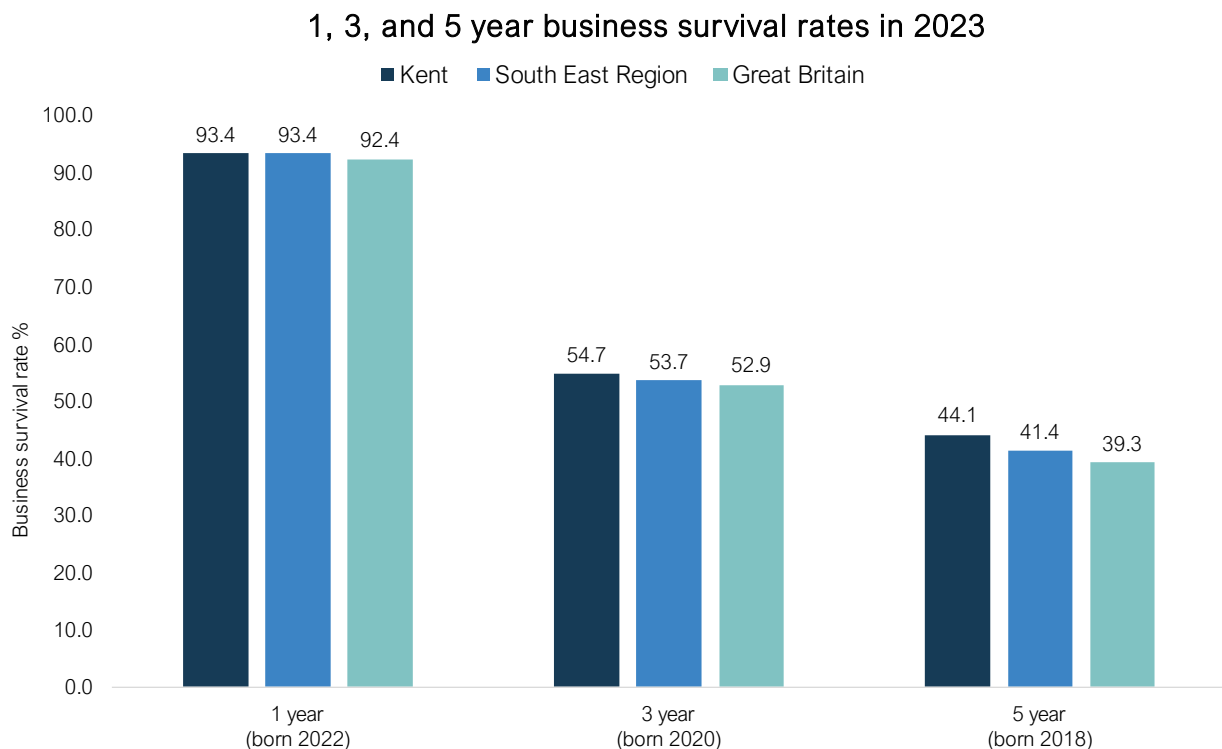
93.4% of businesses formed in 2022 in Kent survived to 2023. This was equal to the regional rate and above the national (92.4%) one-year survival rates.

In 2023 Kent also had a higher three-year survival rate (54.7%) than was seen both nationally (52.9%) and regionally (53.7%). These businesses would have been formed in 2020.

The five-year survival rate of Kent businesses born in 2018 was 44.1%. This is higher than the regional average of 41.4% and the national average of 39.3%.

Chart 6 and Table 7 overleaf show the one, three and five-year business survival rates in Kent, the South East and Great Britain.

Chart 6: One, three, and five-year survival rates



Source: Office for National Statistics
Prepared by: Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

Table 7: One, three, and five-year survival rates

2023 survival rates	1 year (born 2022)	3 year (born 2020)	5 year (born 2018)
Kent	93.4	54.7	44.1
South East Region	93.4	53.7	41.4
Great Britain	92.4	52.9	39.3

Source: ONS Business Demography

Presented by: Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

One-year survival rates

In 2023 one-year business survival rates in Kent (93.4%) were slightly lower than seen the previous year (94.2%). This was higher than the rate for Great Britain as a whole (92.4%). The South East and Great Britain have also seen one-year survival rates fall since the previous year.

Within Kent, nine districts saw lower one-year survival rates in 2023 than the previous year. Ashford (94.6%), Tonbridge & Malling (95.3%), and Tunbridge Wells (94.6%) all saw one-year survival rates increase.

Dartford saw the lowest one-year survival rates in 2023 and largest reduction, falling from 93.8% in 2022 to 89.3% in 2023. The highest one-year survival rate was seen in Tonbridge & Malling (95.3%).

Table 8 shows the one-year survival rates in Kent districts from 2017 to 2023.

Table 8: One-year survival rates

1 year survival rates	2017 (born 2016)	2018 (born 2017)	2019 (born 2018)	2020 (born 2019)	2021 (born 2020)	2022 (born 2021)	2023 (born 2022)
Ashford	91.9	94.2	96.0	95.5	95.7	93.0	94.6
Canterbury	93.8	94.3	95.8	96.1	95.8	94.8	93.8
Dartford	94.5	92.1	97.0	96.0	89.9	93.8	89.3
Dover	93.4	93.7	96.2	95.3	92.6	93.0	91.0
Folkestone & Hythe	92.8	93.1	95.5	95.0	95.3	95.6	94.3
Gravesham	92.7	92.7	95.7	92.2	93.2	94.1	93.0
Maidstone	93.0	93.7	94.8	93.9	93.8	94.1	92.7
Sevenoaks	95.4	95.0	96.0	97.2	93.9	94.3	94.0
Swale	94.9	93.0	96.5	93.2	92.7	95.2	94.7
Thanet	92.2	94.6	96.1	92.6	92.9	94.7	93.9
Tonbridge & Malling	95.2	94.9	94.1	95.0	95.3	94.0	95.3
Tunbridge Wells	97.4	95.0	95.0	94.3	93.0	94.0	94.6
Kent	94.0	93.9	95.7	94.7	93.7	94.2	93.4
Medway	93.8	92.5	95.2	94.5	93.6	94.4	93.0
Kent & Medway	93.9	93.7	95.6	94.7	93.6	94.2	93.4
South East	95.0	94.4	95.3	94.9	90.9	94.0	93.4
England	95.3	93.8	94.8	94.7	92.9	93.5	92.4
England & Wales	95.3	93.8	94.8	94.7	92.9	93.4	92.4
Great Britain	95.3	93.8	94.8	94.7	92.9	93.4	92.4
United Kingdom	95.2	93.7	94.8	94.6	92.9	93.4	92.3

Source: ONS Business Demography

Presented by: Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

Three-year survival rates

54.7% of enterprises born in 2020 in Kent survived the three years to 2023, however this has fallen from 60.3% in the previous year. The proportion of Kent enterprises surviving three years following their birth has decreased since 2021 and is the lowest rate seen over the last five years. Despite this, the three-year business survival rate for Kent in 2023 is higher than the regional rate (53.7%) and the national rate (GB 52.9%). These are businesses that would have been formed in 2020.

Within Kent, three-year survival rates in 2023 varied between 45.6% in Dartford to 62.2% in Canterbury.

All Kent districts saw three-year survival rates fall over the previous year. The biggest reduction was in Dover where survival rate fell from 62.4% in 2022 to 48.4% in 2023.

Table 9: Three-year survival rates

3 year survival rates	2019 (born 2016)	2020 (born 2017)	2021 (born 2018)	2022 (born 2019)	2023 (born 2020)
Ashford	57.0	60.4	59.1	60.5	55.0
Canterbury	56.9	64.8	59.2	63.6	62.2
Dartford	54.5	61.4	64.2	46.6	45.6
Dover	48.4	58.2	65.4	62.4	48.4
Folkestone & Hythe	54.1	58.6	60.7	61.3	59.3
Gravesham	54.7	57.7	62.6	57.8	54.7
Maidstone	59.7	61.1	67.6	62.4	50.9
Sevenoaks	63.4	65.2	60.9	63.8	59.1
Swale	57.4	58.8	64.3	61.5	54.5
Thanet	54.3	60.4	58.3	60.3	58.9
Tonbridge & Malling	64.4	62.5	62.5	61.7	52.0
Tunbridge Wells	64.2	66.9	60.4	65.9	61.7
Kent	57.9	61.6	62.2	60.3	54.7
Medway	52.9	58.9	61.8	50.2	45.4
Kent & Medway	57.2	61.2	62.1	58.7	53.3
South East	60.0	61.4	60.6	58.4	53.7
England	53.6	55.9	57.5	55.9	52.8
England & Wales	53.7	55.9	57.4	55.8	52.7
Great Britain	54.0	56.0	57.5	55.9	52.9
United Kingdom	54.1	56.1	57.6	55.9	53.0

Source: ONS Business Demography

Presented by: Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

Five-year survival rates

At 44.1% five-year business survival rates in Kent were above the national rate in 2023 (GB 39.3%) and the regional rate (41.4%). These businesses would have been formed in 2018.

Within Kent, five-year business survival rates in 2023 ranged from 40.9% in Ashford to 48.0% in Gravesham. Three districts (Dover, Gravesham, and Swale) saw five-year survival rates higher than the previous year, while Dartford saw rates remain the same. The remaining Kent local authorities saw five-year survival rates fall.

Table 10: Five-year survival rates

5 year survival rates	2021 (born in 2016)	2022 (born in 2017)	2023 (born in 2018)
Ashford	41.3	44.6	40.9
Canterbury	40.3	49.2	44.2
Dartford	37.2	43.3	43.3
Dover	35.2	41.8	47.4
Folkestone & Hythe	36.0	44.8	44.3
Gravesham	38.0	39.8	48.0
Maidstone	44.6	46.3	45.7
Sevenoaks	43.8	46.8	41.6
Swale	41.9	43.0	45.2
Thanet	39.7	44.1	41.7
Tonbridge & Malling	43.8	45.6	44.1
Tunbridge Wells	45.0	51.1	42.4
Kent	41.0	45.3	44.1
Medway	39.1	42.7	41.8
Kent & Medway	40.7	44.9	43.8
South East	43.2	43.9	41.4
England	38.0	39.4	39.4
England & Wales	38.1	39.4	39.3
Great Britain	38.2	39.4	39.3
United Kingdom	38.4	39.6	39.4

Source: ONS Business Demography

Presented by: Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

High Growth Enterprises

A high growth enterprise is defined as a business with ten or more employees which has seen at least 20% employee growth each year for the previous three-year period. These data are shown as the number of enterprises and as a proportion of all active enterprises with 10 or more employees in the area. Data is available from 2016.

In Kent there were 300 enterprises that were classed as high growth in 2023, which is an increase on 2022. These accounted for 4.8% of all enterprises with 10 or more employees in the county.

Within Kent, two districts saw a fall in the number of high growth enterprises over the previous year, seven saw the number increase, and three saw no change.

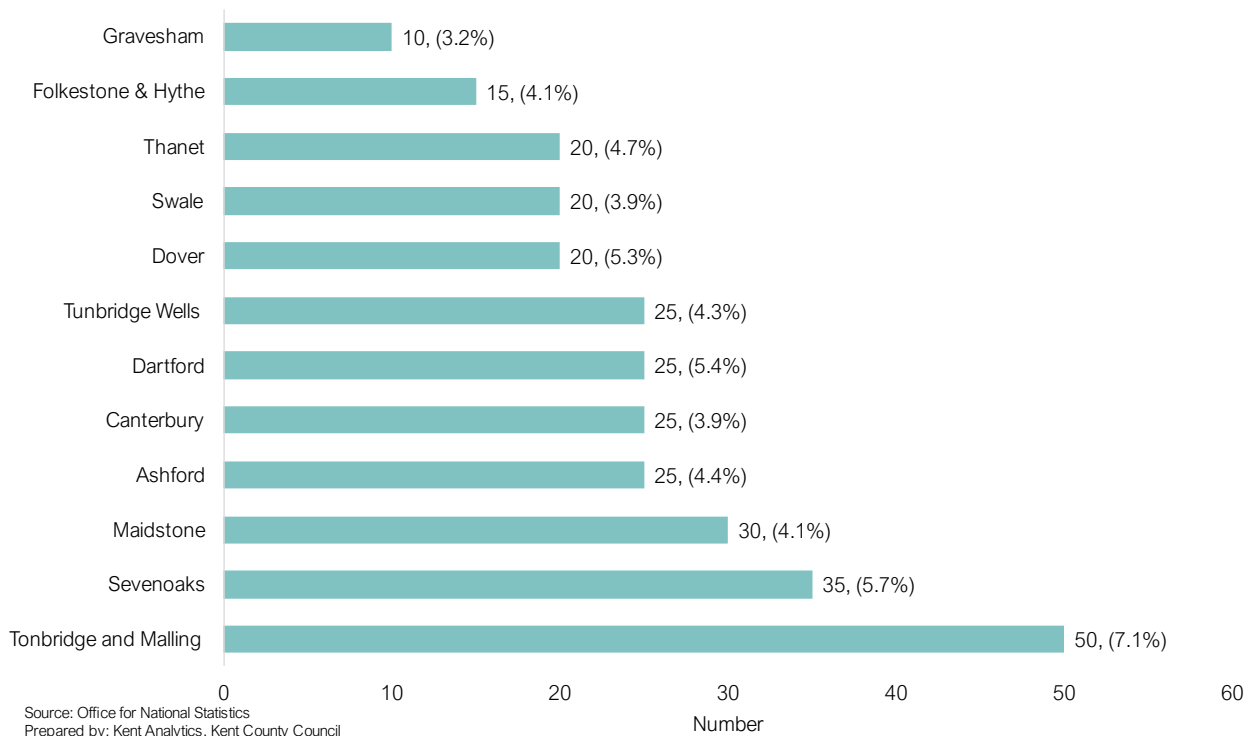
Tonbridge & Malling had the highest number and proportion of high growth enterprises in 2023 with 50 high growth enterprises accounting for 7.1% of active enterprises in the

area with 10 or more employees. Gravesham had the lowest proportion of high growth enterprises with 3.2%.

Chart 7 shows the number and percentage of High growth enterprises in Kent.

Chart 7: High growth enterprises in Kent districts

Number & percentage of high growth enterprises in Kent districts, 2023



Tables 11 and 12 show the number and percentage of high growth enterprises since 2016.

Table 11: Count of high growth enterprises

Count of high growth enterprises	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Ashford	25	20	30	20	20	20	25	25
Canterbury	20	30	20	25	25	20	25	25
Dartford	25	25	20	15	20	15	20	25
Dover	10	15	15	10	15	10	15	20
Folkestone & Hythe	10	15	15	20	15	15	10	15
Gravesham	15	5	10	10	20	20	20	10
Maidstone	40	45	40	30	25	20	25	30
Sevenoaks	30	35	30	35	25	25	30	35
Swale	15	20	25	15	20	20	25	20
Thanet	20	20	20	20	15	10	15	20
Tonbridge & Malling	25	30	35	35	30	25	30	50
Tunbridge Wells	30	30	35	25	15	15	25	25
Kent	265	290	295	260	245	215	265	300
Medway	35	30	35	30	35	30	35	40
Kent & Medway	300	320	330	290	280	245	300	340
South East	1,985	1,915	2,025	1,840	1,710	1,470	1,680	2,035
England	11,885	11,495	12,185	11,035	10,575	9,505	10,190	12,225
England & Wales	12,390	11,990	12,700	11,490	11,015	9,900	10,590	12,685
Great Britain	13,295	12,835	13,605	12,295	11,760	10,500	11,260	13,510
United Kingdom	13,630	13,120	13,925	12,560	12,045	10,695	11,485	13,750

Source: ONS Business Demography

Presented by: Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

Table 12: Percentage of high growth enterprises

Percentage of high growth enterprises	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Ashford	4.9%	3.9%	5.8%	3.7%	3.7%	3.7%	4.5%	4.4%
Canterbury	3.6%	5.3%	3.5%	4.3%	4.3%	3.4%	4.0%	3.9%
Dartford	5.7%	5.9%	4.7%	3.5%	4.7%	3.4%	4.4%	5.4%
Dover	2.9%	4.4%	4.3%	2.8%	4.3%	2.8%	4.0%	5.3%
Folkestone & Hythe	2.8%	4.2%	4.1%	5.4%	4.3%	4.1%	2.6%	4.1%
Gravesham	4.8%	1.6%	3.1%	3.1%	6.3%	5.6%	5.5%	3.2%
Maidstone	5.5%	6.1%	5.5%	4.1%	3.5%	2.8%	3.4%	4.1%
Sevenoaks	5.1%	5.7%	5.0%	5.7%	4.2%	4.2%	4.8%	5.7%
Swale	3.2%	4.2%	5.2%	3.1%	4.1%	3.9%	4.7%	3.9%
Thanet	4.9%	5.1%	5.0%	4.9%	3.8%	2.5%	3.4%	4.7%
Tonbridge & Malling	4.4%	4.9%	5.6%	5.6%	4.7%	3.7%	4.5%	7.1%
Tunbridge Wells	4.9%	5.0%	5.8%	4.3%	2.8%	2.8%	4.3%	4.3%
Kent	4.5%	4.9%	4.9%	4.3%	4.1%	3.5%	4.2%	4.8%
Medway	4.6%	3.8%	4.5%	3.9%	4.5%	3.8%	4.2%	4.8%
Kent & Medway	4.5%	4.8%	4.9%	4.3%	4.2%	3.6%	4.2%	4.8%
South East	5.1%	4.9%	5.1%	4.6%	4.3%	3.7%	4.1%	4.9%
England	5.0%	4.8%	5.1%	4.6%	4.4%	3.9%	4.1%	4.9%
England & Wales	5.0%	4.8%	5.0%	4.5%	4.4%	3.9%	4.0%	4.8%
Great Britain	5.0%	4.8%	5.0%	4.5%	4.4%	3.8%	4.0%	4.8%
United Kingdom	5.0%	4.7%	5.0%	4.5%	4.4%	3.8%	3.9%	4.7%

Source: ONS Business Demography

Presented by: Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

Annex

Table 13: Count of new enterprise births

Count Of Births Of New Enterprises	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Ashford	860	695	745	785	700	715	650	675
Canterbury	720	610	600	645	595	670	650	615
Dartford	725	635	670	880	745	650	655	630
Dover	455	395	390	425	475	430	390	440
Folkestone & Hythe	555	435	445	400	430	450	435	425
Gravesham	685	615	575	640	585	590	575	535
Maidstone	930	950	865	985	1,120	1,265	890	875
Sevenoaks	765	705	755	705	660	705	585	640
Swale	680	570	575	585	550	620	565	560
Thanet	580	555	515	605	560	660	570	605
Tonbridge And Malling	730	680	680	705	750	750	645	650
Tunbridge Wells	755	695	695	615	640	665	555	590
Kent	8,440	7,540	7,510	7,975	7,810	8,170	7,165	7,240
Medway	1,445	1,265	1,255	1,455	1,475	1,425	1,285	1,240
Kent & Medway	9,885	8,805	8,765	9,430	9,285	9,595	8,450	8,480
South East Region	53,875	49,175	49,540	51,560	47,685	48,375	44,160	42,955
England	358,680	318,240	311,580	325,355	299,115	324,485	300,580	281,860
England And Wales	370,435	330,480	323,465	337,100	310,500	338,430	312,670	292,380
Great Britain	391,875	350,325	343,085	357,780	327,350	357,340	331,540	310,655
United Kingdom	397,540	356,895	348,630	363,825	333,020	363,995	336,925	316,025

Source: ONS Business Demography

Presented by: Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

Table 14: New enterprise birth rate

New Enterprise Birth Rate	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Ashford	14.4	11.2	11.9	12.1	10.7	10.8	10.2	10.7
Canterbury	12.7	10.7	10.6	11.2	10.2	11.3	10.8	10.2
Dartford	15.8	13.1	13.6	16.5	13.4	12.1	12.4	12.2
Dover	13.0	11.1	11.0	11.6	12.5	11.1	10.1	11.4
Folkestone & Hythe	14.2	10.9	11.4	10.3	10.9	11.1	10.7	10.7
Gravesham	16.3	14.1	13.1	14.1	12.7	12.7	12.4	11.8
Maidstone	12.2	12.2	11.1	12.2	13.4	14.2	10.1	10.0
Sevenoaks	10.9	10.1	10.7	9.8	9.3	9.9	8.4	9.3
Swale	13.5	11.1	11.1	11.1	10.3	11.4	10.3	10.3
Thanet	13.9	13.0	12.0	13.5	12.3	13.9	11.6	12.2
Tonbridge And Malling	12.3	11.0	10.9	11.0	11.4	11.2	9.9	9.9
Tunbridge Wells	11.1	10.2	10.2	9.3	9.7	10.0	8.5	9.2
Kent	13.1	11.5	11.4	11.8	11.4	11.7	10.3	10.5
Medway	15.6	13.2	13.2	14.8	14.4	13.5	12.7	12.4
Kent & Medway	13.4	11.7	11.6	12.2	11.8	11.9	10.6	10.7
South East	12.6	11.3	11.3	11.5	10.6	10.8	10.0	9.9
England	14.7	12.7	12.4	12.8	11.7	12.5	11.6	11.1
England And Wales	14.6	12.7	12.4	12.7	11.7	12.5	11.6	11.1
Great Britain	14.5	12.6	12.3	12.7	11.5	12.4	11.6	11.1
United Kingdom	14.4	12.5	12.3	12.6	11.5	12.4	11.5	11.0

Source: ONS Business Demography

Presented by: Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

Table 15: Count of enterprise deaths

Count of enterprises deaths	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Ashford	595	685	510	675	665	825	695	605
Canterbury	520	615	510	535	545	540	620	610
Dartford	445	600	505	535	760	710	745	580
Dover	330	395	335	350	325	385	450	385
Folkestone & Hythe	350	500	385	385	375	410	495	425
Gravesham	430	555	510	520	515	535	595	505
Maidstone	770	815	730	770	725	910	960	1,115
Sevenoaks	590	660	595	695	710	685	645	610
Swale	455	555	475	505	510	540	580	490
Thanet	465	495	440	515	450	445	540	550
Tonbridge And Malling	510	625	555	595	620	775	630	685
Tunbridge Wells	740	680	630	630	605	615	650	595
Kent	6,200	7,180	6,180	6,710	6,805	7,375	7,605	7,155
Medway	1,000	1,215	1,120	1,060	1,070	1,640	1,310	1,150
Kent & Medway	7,200	8,395	7,300	7,770	7,875	9,015	8,915	8,305
South East Region	40,465	45,070	40,585	44,030	44,470	48,715	49,495	42,345
England	238,100	297,975	265,770	270,015	267,890	291,455	311,735	275,585
England And Wales	247,190	308,405	275,100	280,395	278,075	303,695	323,650	286,885
Great Britain	265,095	327,195	292,470	298,705	296,345	323,480	343,525	304,180
United Kingdom	269,015	331,450	296,575	303,495	300,475	328,495	348,695	309,290

Source: ONS Business Demography

Presented by: Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

Table 16: Enterprise death rates

Enterprise death rates	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Ashford	9.9	11.0	8.2	10.4	10.2	12.5	10.9	9.6
Canterbury	9.2	10.8	9.0	9.3	9.4	9.1	10.3	10.1
Dartford	9.7	12.4	10.3	10.0	13.7	13.3	14.1	11.3
Dover	9.4	11.1	9.4	9.6	8.6	9.9	11.6	10.0
Folkestone & Hythe	9.0	12.6	9.9	9.9	9.5	10.1	12.2	10.7
Gravesham	10.3	12.7	11.7	11.5	11.2	11.5	12.8	11.2
Maidstone	10.1	10.4	9.3	9.6	8.7	10.2	10.9	12.8
Sevenoaks	8.4	9.5	8.4	9.7	10.0	9.6	9.2	8.8
Swale	9.1	10.9	9.2	9.6	9.6	9.9	10.6	9.0
Thanet	11.2	11.6	10.3	11.5	9.9	9.3	11.0	11.1
Tonbridge And Malling	8.6	10.1	8.9	9.3	9.4	11.5	9.6	10.4
Tunbridge Wells	10.9	9.9	9.2	9.5	9.2	9.3	10.0	9.2
Kent	9.6	10.9	9.4	9.9	9.9	10.5	10.9	10.4
Medway	10.8	12.7	11.7	10.8	10.4	15.5	12.9	11.5
Kent & Medway	9.8	11.1	9.7	10.0	10.0	11.2	11.2	10.5
South East Region	9.4	10.3	9.3	9.8	9.9	10.8	11.2	9.8
England	9.8	11.9	10.6	10.6	10.5	11.2	12.1	10.9
England And Wales	9.7	11.8	10.6	10.6	10.5	11.3	12.1	10.9
Great Britain	9.8	11.7	10.5	10.6	10.5	11.3	12.0	10.8
United Kingdom	9.7	11.7	10.4	10.5	10.4	11.2	11.9	10.8

Source: ONS Business Demography

Presented by: Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

Table 17: Number of active enterprises

Active enterprises	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Ashford	5,985	6,215	6,255	6,505	6,550	6,605	6,365	6,320
Canterbury	5,660	5,710	5,665	5,780	5,820	5,955	6,045	6,040
Dartford	4,590	4,835	4,920	5,325	5,545	5,355	5,275	5,150
Dover	3,500	3,560	3,560	3,660	3,785	3,875	3,880	3,865
Folkestone & Hythe	3,900	3,980	3,900	3,900	3,930	4,040	4,070	3,960
Gravesham	4,190	4,355	4,375	4,535	4,590	4,635	4,635	4,525
Maidstone	7,600	7,805	7,810	8,045	8,360	8,885	8,830	8,730
Sevenoaks	7,000	6,960	7,075	7,195	7,095	7,110	6,980	6,910
Swale	5,025	5,115	5,160	5,265	5,320	5,460	5,470	5,430
Thanet	4,165	4,270	4,275	4,490	4,535	4,760	4,900	4,970
Tonbridge And Malling	5,925	6,180	6,245	6,420	6,580	6,725	6,545	6,565
Tunbridge Wells	6,790	6,845	6,840	6,620	6,610	6,635	6,505	6,445
Kent	64,330	65,830	66,080	67,740	68,720	70,040	69,500	68,910
Medway	9,280	9,595	9,535	9,810	10,265	10,560	10,130	10,000
Kent & Medway	73,610	75,425	75,615	77,550	78,985	80,600	79,630	78,910
South East Region	429,170	436,135	438,190	447,655	450,380	449,130	442,295	432,615
England	2,439,260	2,509,540	2,503,920	2,547,030	2,556,250	2,592,840	2,581,080	2,531,480
England And Wales	2,536,200	2,609,155	2,604,520	2,648,645	2,658,340	2,698,655	2,685,600	2,633,695
Great Britain	2,711,040	2,785,515	2,780,945	2,827,385	2,834,790	2,875,005	2,859,940	2,805,590
United Kingdom	2,767,770	2,844,705	2,841,025	2,889,115	2,897,115	2,939,675	2,924,685	2,870,295

Source: ONS Business Demography

Presented by: Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

Related documents

More information on businesses in Kent can be found in the [Economy and Employment](#) section of our [Facts & Figures](#) webpages.