**Delivering Fair & Responsive Services 2022**

**Meeting Our Equality Duty**

Medway has a wide range of initiatives across all services that have contributed towards meeting our equality duty. This section includes examples of these.

## Equality Duty 1: Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment & victimisation.

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| Action | Description |
| Healthy Workplace Programme. | The Council’s priorities include supporting Medway’s residents to realise their potential. One way of achieving this is by supporting communities to be healthier and more active by using a settings-based approach. A range of advice and support is provided to local organisations through the Workplace Health Programme (WPH). The programme assists Medway businesses in the development of their own wellbeing initiatives which support their staff and foster healthy workplace environments. This includes initiatives to encourage physical activity, healthy eating, sensible drinking and stopping smoking. As part of the workplace wellbeing Bronze award, an organisation’s policy including equality and diversity are assessed. Where appropriate guidance is issued to eliminate discrimination and create a fairer society. An unforeseen impact of COVID19 to the WPH programme was its reduced ability to undertake bronze assessments face to face. With restrictions now lifted these can take place in person again but it has been decided to keep them online to increase the number which can be completed. A theme for the programme moving forward is aiding local business and their staff around the cost-of-living crisis. This includes signposting and raising awareness of tools and services which can assist as well as offering further support through the core programme offer for wellbeing related fall out. |
| Recruitment and Selection Framework | Medway Council recognises its duty to ensure all recruitment and selection procedures are open, transparent, and fair. The Recruitment and Selection Framework requires all staff with responsibility for recruitment and selection undertake training to ensure that all appointments are based on merit and according to the principles of our equality policy. |
| Grievance & Harassment Procedure | The Council is committed to providing a working environment where individuals are treated with fairness, dignity and respect and take all employee complaints seriously. This procedure allows employees to raise genuine workplace grievances and have them dealt with fairly, consistently, promptly, and objectively and aims to achieve an agreed resolution. |
| Council’s Disciplinary Policy | All employees of Medway Council are expected to maintain high standards of conduct. This procedure is designed to help and encourage employees to achieve and maintain standards of conduct and aims to ensure fairness, equity, and consistency in the management of employees. |
| Domestic Abuse Workplace Policy | The Council promotes the view that abuse against any individual is totally unacceptable and that every employee who is experiencing domestic abuse can raise the issue and be assured that the Council will support him or her. The Council will take seriously cases where its employees are perpetrators of domestic abuse and will investigate such cases as misconduct/gross misconduct in accordance with its [disciplinary procedure](http://just4you.medway.gov.uk/hr/hra-zofinformation/disciplinaryprocedure.aspx). |
| Learning and development policy | The Council aims to ensure that learning and development actions are aligned with the goals of the organisation as set out in the Council Plan.  People are a key driver for success.  The Council is committed to being an employer of choice and aims to demonstrate best practice in training and developing our people.  The Council seeks to develop its employees and Members, so they have the skills and knowledge to do their jobs effectively now and, in the future, to realise potential and continuously improve performance and service delivery. |
| Speak Up Policy (formerly known as Whistleblowing Policy) | Council employees, workers, those undertaking work for or on behalf of the council (including volunteers) and members of the public can raise concerns relating to unethical or unprofessional conduct within the council including malpractice and abuse or some policy or action which is contrary to the public interest via the council’s Speak Up Policy. The council has a Response Group made up of the Head of Human Resources, the Chief Finance Officer and the Chief Legal Officer which can triage and advise on complex or escalated queries. |
| Incorporating equalities into decision making | Equality is at the heart of our decision making. Guidance for Cabinet reports makes clear the requirement to comply with the Equality Act 2010. |
| Diversity Impact Assessments (DIAs) | Carrying out Diversity Impact Assessments (DIAs) and making sure decision makers consider the findings of DIAs, demonstrates compliance with our public sector equality duty. |
| Community Interpreting Service | The Council’s Community Interpreting Service supports customers whose first language is not English in gaining access to services. This covers not only council services, but extends across a range of public sector bodies, including, but not exclusively, teams within the NHS. |
| Disabled Workers’ and Carers Network | The Disabled Workers’ and Carers Network (DWCN) supports staff with all types of disabilities - for example: physical, sensory, mental health and learning difficulties, including hidden disabilities such as ME, epilepsy, diabetes and heart conditions. The DWCN is consulted on policies across the breadth of Medway’s activities and is consulted on relevant issues. |
| BAME Network | The BAME Network consists of a group of staff from across the council who meet regularly to network, share experiences, consult on policies, encourage and support each other and is consulted on a range of relevant issues. |
| LGBTQi Forum | The LGBTQi Forum aims to build a welcoming and friendly place for staff within this community to celebrate each person’s right to be individual and create positive relationships within the council, partner organisations and LGBTQi communities in Medway. The forum gives staff a support network and an opportunity to voice any concerns relating to personal, health, acceptance, and workplace issues. The forum is consulted on relevant issues. |
| Multi- Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) | Members of the public and professionals can contact Medway’s First Response service to report any safeguarding concerns they have about a child. The council has an online contact and referral form for reporting concerns. Once the form has been submitted it will be reviewed and appropriate action will be taken. Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) includes key partner agencies including Education, health professionals and the police, who work together to make sure children and young people receive the right support at the right time. |

## Equality Duty 2: Advance equality of opportunity

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| Action | Description |
| Medway Youth Council | Medway Youth Council is an independent body of young people aged 13-19, supported by Medway Council, to enable young people to influence decisions concerning them. |
| Reducing teenage pregnancy rates | High quality relationships and sex education is being supported through the development of the Medway Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) scheme of work, produced by the Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) Association for Medway schools and is highlighted nationally as best practice. Over 89% of Schools in Medway are signed up to deliver RSE through the PSHE curriculum and 63 schools are actively engaged in the PSHE network.  Contraceptive and sexual health services are available in several secondary schools, as well as Mid-Kent college. The ‘Get It’ free condom scheme has been integrated into wider sexual health services to increase accessibility. Emergency hormonal contraception is available at pharmacies free of charge for women under 30 years of age.  Sexual health nurses provide contraception and advice in youth settings. Targeted sexual health clinics for young people take place at the Hub in Clover Street, with the remainder being young person friendly. Specialist sexual health outreach nurses provide home visits to vulnerable young people, including looked after children (LAC) and young parents. |
| Local Offer | Medway's Local Offer is a one-stop shop for everything you need to know and services you might need to access that support children and young people with [Special Educational Needs and Disabilities](http://www.medway.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/specialeducationalneeds.aspx) (SEND). Our Local Offer has been developed with the help of local families. Inspectors looked at the support given to children and young people to help them reach their full potential and found that schools have ‘highly effective systems to identify and support pupils’ with special educational needs  A young person’s disability group was set up to help implement this work. There is a strong link with the Medway Parent Carer Forum, which is a group for parent’s carers who care for children with additional needs such as a disability. |
| Chlamydia Screening programme for 15–25-year-olds | Chlamydia screening is available through the following partner organisations in Medway:  • Most GP practices: including Marlowe Park Surgery which caters for a large percentage of the Eastern European community in Medway.  • Brompton Barracks.  • Marie Stopes.  • Most pharmacies provide both screening and treatment services.  • All Contraception and Sexual Health Clinics.  • Schools, further education, and higher education establishments in Medway through the Student Health outreach Nursing team.  • Youth services.  • The Looked After Children’s team.  The service provides full training, ongoing support, and performance monitoring to all these organisations. Outreach services and online access to screening are used to offer screening to those not routinely accessing other services.  Sexual health services are accessible to a broad range of people with targeted provision towards those who face additional risks of harm or barriers to accessing services. Home sampling kits reduce the need to attend clinics, clinics are delivered at a sauna used by gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men; and as part of after school young people’s contraceptive services. |
| Dementia Awareness | Medway Council actively supports the Medway Dementia Action Alliance (DAA) which comprises membership from local elected members, residents, businesses, and stakeholders from health and third sector organisations. In consort with the DAA the Public Health team utilise online resources and existing partnership working opportunities to increase capacity for the delivery of Dementia Friendly campaigns, including “champions” training for individuals and an accreditation process for organisations and workplaces to reach a recognised dementia friendly status. This has increased the accessibility and support for individuals living with or caring for those with Dementia. |
| Tobacco control | Local authorities are at the forefront of national efforts to achieve the government’s ambition of being smokefree by 2030. Medway brings together partners and champions that work collaborative towards achieving this. The team has continued to develop locally responsive approaches to reducing the burden of tobacco on individuals and the community. This has included supporting every smoker to quit, providing specialised services to reduce maternal smoking, supporting smoke-free workplaces, tackling the sale and supply of illicit tobacco, providing education concerning the harms of exposure to second-hand smoke and alternative nicotine delivery devices. In the absence of a new Tobacco Control Plan from the government, the Medway Tobacco Control Alliance’s focus has been to collectively drive down smoking prevalence and reduce the many health, social and economic costs of smoking by implementing ten high impact actions. These include prioritising health inequalities, promoting harm reduction and enabling young people to live smokefree.  In April 2022, the service saw the launch of its first e-cigarette pilot in collaboration with social housing. This project presented the opportunity to engage vulnerable clients from the most deprived communities. This included those who may not have previously had access to such support due to financial or other barriers.  Routine service provision was maintained during the Covid19 pandemic and continues during its recovery, with clients having access to face-to-face and remote support at a time that suits them. |
| Mental health promotion | Public mental health and mental health promotion have continued to remain a priority due to the impact of Covid19 and anticipated impact of the cost of living. Mental Health & Wellbeing training has continued via online and face to face delivery. The Men in Sheds project moved from virtual support back to face to face. The service contract was extended during 2022 and is now out to procurement with an enhanced service specification.  Additional investment was agreed for 2021/22 to the Mental Health Matters helpline. This has helped to ensure there was capacity to meet an anticipated increased demand because of the pandemic and resulting economic situation and this uplift continued for 2022/23. A new suicide prevention campaign for Medway was delivered in 2021. Business planning for 2022/23 focused on delivering against the action plans for both the Children and Young People and Adults Suicide Prevention Strategies 2021-2025, improving mental health support for those who are homeless and contributing to both the mental health transformation work taking place as a pilot in Medway/Swale and the county wide Livewell service. There has also been a focus on the physical health outcomes for people with Serious Mental Illness as they experience significant health inequalities and life expectancy. A new mental health promotion campaign will be launched early 2023 aimed at improving population wellbeing and targeting those at greatest risk of poor wellbeing.  The Kooth online counselling service offers children and young people free online access to counselling, advice, and wellbeing support within their local area outside of normal service hours. Support is offered to educational settings in a whole school approach around mental health promotion by working together to develop effective delivery of PSHE, which covers but is not limited to mental health, emotional resilience, stress, anxiety, and self-harm. |
| A Better Medway | This programme disseminates public health knowledge out into the community and targets recruitment to front line healthy lifestyle programmes. The focus of the service is where the greatest impact on reducing health inequalities can be made. It seeks to engage agencies working with hard to reach and vulnerable groups to try to ensure that all Medway residents have access to high quality advice about a range of health issues. A Better Medway has a strong social media presence with daily activity on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, engaging with residents on a range of public health messages. Since the COVID19 pandemic, the service has been forced to adapt, which it has done effectively. This year has also seen an even greater focus on communities that have been hardest hit by COVID19. Examples include a greater emphasis on uptake from under-represented groups on our NHS Health Check programme, prioritisation work within our stop smoking service and targeted work for tier two weight management service. The Healthy Way programme has been working collaboratively with several community and voluntary sector groups to reach residents who are underrepresented in weight services. |
| Health Visiting and Supporting Young and Vulnerable Parents | Health Visitors and School Nurses in Medway deliver the national Healthy Child Programme (HCP), which is the prevention and early intervention public health programme. This programme lies at the heart of the universal service for children and families and aims to:  • support parents at this crucial stage of life.  • promote child development.  • improve child health outcomes.  • support transitions through key life stages and into specialist health services.  • ensure that families at risk are identified at the earliest opportunity.  • offer additional support and packages of care to young and vulnerable families via a bespoke pathway.  Health visitors and School Nurses are part of the integrated Child Health service for Medway allowing more joined up working. This means families only have to tell their story once. The teams are now co-aligned to the four early help hubs to ensure better integration between health and social care. The 0-19 service focuses on providing families with a programme of screening, immunisation, health and development reviews, supplemented by advice around health, wellbeing, and parenting. Due to its universal reach, the HCP provides an invaluable opportunity to identify those families that need additional support and those children who are at risk of poor outcomes.  Health visiting and school nursing are universal services. This means that all families in Medway can access and obtain the services they need, regardless of circumstances, as part of the Healthy Child Programme.  A bespoke programme and package of care is available to vulnerable young families. The package includes up to 25 contacts with a professional and access to a range of specialist interventions and packages of care that can support their needs.  The service has a representative based in the Medway Safeguarding Hub (MASH). This representative ensures health is considered as part of all referrals into social care and links in all the other local health providers (GPs, Hospital, Mental Health etc).  The service now monitors geographical and demographic trends of those taking up the offer to ensure that no communities are unfairly disadvantaged. |
| Medway Adult and Community Learning Service Free Taster Sessions | Medway Adult Education hold regular free taster sessions to encourage people of all ages and abilities to learn new skills. |
| Community Hubs and Library Service | The development of community hubs is a key driver in increasing access to council and agency services. Community hubs and libraries offer free WiFi, PCs for public use, access to support services and groups alongside activities for all age groups. Currently the Council has six Community Hubs.  The Community Hub and Library Service provides a service to over 220 housebound residents throughout Medway. By working with volunteer couriers, books are delivered to these residents in their own home. Books are also delivered to over 20 Medway residential homes.  A joint arrangement with Kent County Council enables over a 100 Medway visually impaired residents to receive spoken word cd’s through the post.  The Mobile Library Service delivers books to isolated communities in Medway that do not have access to a Library nearby.  A whole range of free events and activities supporting residents to engage in a healthy lifestyle and avoid isolation are provided. |
| Medway College of Social Care | Medway College of Social Care (MCSC) is based within Medway Council and is managed by the Learning and Development Team, HR Services. MCSC supports social care providers and those working in social care with their training and development needs. MCSC works closely with a variety of Medway Council services to deliver training solutions for their service users. These include Direct Payments Service, SEN transport, Early Years and Shared Lives for example.  Additionally, they deliver training solutions to NHS Swale CCG Personal Health Budget team, local authorities, charities and other private and voluntary sectors.  The aim of MCSC is to support social care providers, to identify their learning and development needs, and to deliver accessible and flexible provision which meets these needs.  They provide support to independent social care providers (private and voluntary organisations), Personal Assistants working in peoples’ homes and informal (unpaid) carers. They are now supporting some children’s social care sector providers. |
| Stop Smoking Service | Medway Stop Smoking Service offer several free initiatives to support local people in their fight to kick the habit. Our stop smoking team can provide one-to-one advice and support. They recognise that every smoker is different and will work closely with each smoker to agree a date to quit smoking and prepare them for their stop smoking journey to give them the best chance to quit.  The service offers community-based sessions in both Gillingham and Strood and has a Smokefree Advice Centre in Chatham town centre that is open Monday to Saturday. Medway residents are also able to access Text to Quit support using a text messaging service as well as phone support. |
| ‘Get it’ condom distribution scheme | The “Get It” condom scheme is a free and confidential service for young people aged 13 – 24 years-old, offering access to sexual health advice and condoms in a range of non-clinical settings across Medway. It is delivered as part of the Integrated Sexual Health Service. As the service is primarily web based it has been largely unaffected by COVID19 related changes to services. Young people under 16 or other vulnerable young people are still required to register face to face with a professional. |
| Integrated Sexual Health Service | The Integrated Sexual Health Service opened in October 2016. It offers all forms of contraception, sexual health screens, treatments, and advice. The service is supplemented with satellite clinics at places such as healthy living centres, GP surgeries and some secondary schools, as well as self-managed care via the internet. There has been an increase in online and remote consultations which has made them easier to access for many people. Home sampling kits have simplified sexually transmitted infection (STI) testing.  Outreach work targets those who are at high risk included targeted services for young people, men who have sex with men, black and minority ethnic group communities. The service also engages with sex workers and attends the Ladies Night event. |
| Mpox | In 2022/23, the Integrated Sexual Health Service has responded to Mpox (previously known as Monkeypox) by providing targeted communication and vaccination clinics for groups identified by the UK Health and Security Agency. Most of this cohort are men who have sex with men (MSM). The service administered over 250 vaccinations and provided Saturday and pop-up clinics in the community. |
| METRO Stand Out Group | Stand Out is a free and confidential youth group and service for LGBTQ+ young people aged 16-25 in Medway. Commissioned by Public Health, it provides a safe space for LGBTQ+ young people to meet and receive support from youth workers and their peers. This includes a structured programme of activities on sexual and reproductive health, drugs and alcohol awareness, mental health and wellbeing, hate crime and bullying, support with employment, study and training, and healthy living. The groups also provide opportunities to connect and participate in cross-group events such as Pride, youth summits, social events, and creative arts projects. |
| Virtual Head Teacher | The Virtual Head Teacher oversees the education of looked after children ensuring each child/young person has a personal education plan to meet their individual needs. They also support care leavers on to higher education and employment. |
| Medway Fostering Services | Our foster carers are trained and supported to offer therapeutic care to children and young people from different backgrounds. They help children feel valued, reach their full potential, and recover from early adverse experiences.  The fostering service in Medway has been reviewed and refreshed with a new fee structure and improved support to carers and their families to ensure they have the tools they need to parent children in care and are rewarded for the good care provided to them. |
| Extra Care Scheme | Extra Care Housing is a type of sheltered housing that has a permanent care team in the building to meet the needs of the people that live there. It can help people over 55 to live independently in their own homes within a community setting.  It can help people who:   * may need to leave their home because of life changes or health problems. * have had an assessment and have identified a need for care. * want privacy and independence but need some help with day to day living.   Extra care housing offers self-contained apartments, communal spaces, support services and care staff that are always on site. |
| Parks and Open Spaces | The Council maintains parks and open spaces for the enjoyment of all. The estate covers 1900ha (equivalent to 13 Hyde Parks) and comprises 148 urban parks, two country parks and 48 countryside areas that are managed for their wildlife and conservation value. Medway has over 125 play areas, skate parks and multi-use games areas, offering a wide range of activities for children and teenagers. The Council works to maximise the use of Medway’s green spaces for sporting and other healthy activities throughout the year. |
| Walk2Count Challenge | The number of schools wanting to participate in the Walk2Count Challenge initiative, part of the national ‘Walk to School Week’ in May 2022, was the highest in 3 years. 20 schools in Medway participated which resulted in 13,722 green journeys taking place. The school ranking first this year was St Margaret’s at Troy Town Primary in Rochester, who had an overall 89% of pupils walking to school during the campaign. |
| Walk to School Month | A total of 12,015 walked journeys were made by the participating Medway schools as part of the ‘National Walk to School Month’ campaign in October 2022. Deanwood Primary School in Rainham won the ‘Hedgehog Hike’ primary school challenge, with 71% of their pupils walking during the event. |
| Walk on Wednesday (WOW) | 9 schools in Medway participated in the Active WOW (walk once a week) initiative in 2021/22 (September-July), with 2,799 children in Medway taking part. This resulted in a total of 65,170 active green journeys made by the participating Medway Schools. As a result of these active journeys, 24,950 cars were taken off the road. Medway performed fantastically again and was the overall best performing area across Kent and Bexley. |
| Walking Bus | The walking bus Initiative, in collaboration with the KM Charity Team, has seen new uptake again since the pandemic, with St Andrew’s Independent Primary School in Rochester joining the scheme for this academic year. |
| Bikeability | Since the start of the 2022-23 academic year, Bikeability Level 1 and 2 courses have been delivered to 277 children across Medway to date, designed to improve practical cycling skills. A further 248 primary school children are expected to receive Bikeability courses by the end of March 2023, in line with the available staff resource and course demand. |
| Home First Scheme | Patients are being provided with more health support outside of hospital than ever before.  We have worked closely with NHS Medway CCG to reduce patients’ length of stay in hospital by commissioning specialist health care outside of the hospital. Subsequently the waiting time on transfer of care has seen a significant reduction in Medway.   Patients who no longer need acute care but require some additional support at home are discharged under the Home First scheme. The scheme, which was trialled between April and October 2016 and has since been fully implemented across Medway, allows patients to continue their recovery in the comfort of their own home with the additional support they may need, such as preparing meals. Patients who have completed their medical treatment but are not fully fit to go home will have their care and reablement transferred to a specialist community facility. This subsequently frees up beds at Medway Maritime Hospital for those most in need of hospital care and ensures people are being supported throughout their care.  The ICRS was an integral part of the response to Covid19 and the lessons learnt have influenced the recommissioning of this service. |
| Medway Skills Board | The Council has established Medway Skills Board and skills development programme for residents. This skills board comprises of Officers’ and Members’ Boards. The Officers' Skills Board chaired by the Chief Executive meet regularly alongside the Members Board, overseeing the development and delivery of the Skills and Employability Plan. There is also an independently chaired skills stakeholder board.  The Skills & Employability Plan for Medway is for all people and all skill levels, it incorporates the 16-19 strategy. Delivery began in 2019 and the plan was refreshed in 2022. |
| Library Service | The Library Service provides a service to over 200 housebound residents throughout Medway. By working with volunteer couriers, books are delivered to these residents in their own home. Books are also delivered to over 15 Medway residential homes.  A joint arrangement with Kent County Council enables over a 100 Medway visually impaired residents to receive spoken word cd’s through the post.  The Mobile Library Service delivers books to isolated communities in Medway that do not have access to a Library nearby.  Libraries provide a whole range of stock for residents with additional needs, these include  • Large print  • Audio books  • eBooks with accessibility functions  • Clear Visions stock- books in grade 1 or grade 2 braille for young people  • ‘Quick reads’ stock for under-confident readers  • ‘Reading Well’ collections to support mental health  • Barrington Stokes stock for under- confident and dyslexic young people.  As well as this they also free Computer use and access to free Wi-Fi.  A whole range of free events and activities supporting residents to engage in a healthy lifestyle and avoid isolation are provided.  Libraries provide the public face of the Council in every Medway Community. |
| Free Health Checks | Eligible residents aged 40-74 can have a free NHS Health Check at the Smokefree Advice Centre in Chatham, a Dementia Friendly shop on Chatham High Street.  As people get older, they have a higher risk of developing health problems. The NHS Health Check aims to spot the early signs which may lead to kidney disease, heart disease, strokes, type two diabetes, and dementia. The initiative offers residents one to one consultations with fully trained staff, tailored advice, and ongoing support to help them make small changes to lead a healthier lifestyle.  By having a health check, residents can reduce their risk of developing serious health problems in the future. A health improvement co-ordinator will ask residents simple questions about their lifestyle and family history and check their weight, blood pressure and cholesterol levels. They will then receive instant results and personalised advice to address any health problems, as well as tips on how to improve their diet and signposting to lifestyle services such as Stop Smoking and Turning Point. Wider health messages have been included in the NHS Health Check template locally, such as raising awareness of flu and COVID19 vaccinations, to support residents to make informed choices about their health.  In addition to age, there are other demographics that increase risk of developing health conditions such as cardiovascular disease (CVD), including certain ethnicities and deprivation status. These health inequalities have been exacerbated by the Covid19 pandemic and to address this, a proportionate universalism (PU) approach is used to prioritise the most at-risk groups. Approaches to PU include targeted invitations, targeted marketing, and outreach work.  The NHS Health Check iOutreach Project has now resumed following the pandemic. The aim of this project is to take the service out into the different communities within Medway so that it is more accessible for those who may be less likely to take up an invitation from the GP Practice. Barriers to taking up an invitation include, but are not limited to, location and travel, language, and awareness of the programme. Residents have so far been offered information on Public Health Services, NHS Health Checks and blood pressure checks at their place of work, place of worship and within local community settings. |
| Medway Adult Education | Medway Adult Education has over 600 different courses available for all interests and abilities. Everyone is welcome. Hidden talents are discovered, new skills learnt, and valuable workplace and vocational qualifications achieved for career progression and personal development.  Medway Adult Education, run by Medway Council, has been rated as good by Ofsted (May 2018) and has maintained this overall good grade in academic year 18/19. Adults in Medway are provided with the support they need to learn new skills and find a job. Extra support is also provided for those living with dementia or a disability. This encourages people who may have previously felt isolated to sign-up to a course to learn a new skill and meet new people. Students who have recently been diagnosed with dementia or a physical disability ‘value their lessons’, as they help them to maintain and develop skills. |
| Military Covenant and Medway Council | Medway Council have made a commitment to supporting the armed forces community by signing up to the Armed Forces Covenant. Public Health plays an essential role in supporting this community.  Medway Council works closely with the Armed forces community supporting personnel based at Brompton Station and resident locally to improve their health and wellbeing. Action is taken to support civilian staff, veterans, families, and military personnel. Activities include Health Fairs and inputs at other events including Armed Forces Day. For example, The Public Health Team delivered a wide range of health interventions at the Armed Forces Day in June. A mini–Health Fair was delivered in November 2022, where over 300 soldiers were supported and provided with health information and educational stands.  The Public health team are looking to deliver Making Every Contact Count (MECC) Training to local Military Veterans.  There is regular contact and dialogue with the Ministry of Defence (MOD) to enable veterans to receive appropriate care and support when leaving the forces. |
| COVID19 Surveillance, Support and Vaccinations | It became clear early in the COVID19 pandemic that the impact of COVID19 was not spread evenly across the population. Medway was one of the first areas in the country to start asymptomatic testing of people for COVID19 and to use understanding of the population in Medway to target the promotion of this in the populations where we knew to be at the greatest risk (e.g., minority ethnic groups and deprived areas). Over 20 separate community groups worked with us to promote testing within specific population cohorts, including those from ethnic minority groups, people experiencing homelessness, those living in areas of deprivation, people experiencing social isolation, and organisations serving LGBTQ+ groups.  Asymptomatic testing commenced in December 2020 with 31,896 supervised tests being carried out during the first month. The testing programmed ended in March 2022 and saw of total of 160,873 people undertaking a supervised test.  The distribution of home test kits was introduced in April 2021 and remained in place until March 2022, during which time a total of 346,685 home test kits were provided to Medway residents. Priority was given to areas of deprivation and distribution pathways were set up and groups disproportionately impacted by COVID19. The Public Health testing team were able to support key workers to maintain frontline service provision to vulnerable residents by providing them with home test kits during periods of peak demand when they were unable to source test kits via their employers or from the national ordering system.  Both supervised testing and the distribution of home test kits have now ceased but ongoing surveillance is in place to ensure the system remains responsive to the needs of local people.  Vaccinations have been given out across Kent and Medway with 1.3 million second doses and 1.1 million first boosters administered. Medway Council continues to work closely with the Integrated Care Partnership on maximising the opportunity for residents to receive a vaccine. This involves investigating vaccine inequalities within the population, identifying at risk groups such as ethnic minority groups and those living in areas of deprivation. Once these have been identified, a targeted approach is implemented. This is done in collaboration with NHS colleagues, voluntary organisations, community leaders and communication from both Medway Council and the NHS. |

## Equality duty 3: Foster Good Relations

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| Action | Description |
| White Ribbon Town Standard | Re-accreditation of the White Ribbon Local Authorities award for 2019 was achieved in November 2019 in recognition of our continued commitment to support the White Ribbon Campaign (WRC). The WRC aims to engage men and boys and prevent Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). The White Ribbon Campaign was held as a standing agenda item across numerous partnership groups to ensure a sustained focus around VAWG.  This year the White Ribbon Campaign focused on domestic abuse and the FIFA World Cup, so Public Health alongside several partners including the police, substance misuse services, councillors, the mayor and her consort attended the Pentagon shopping centre to meet with members of the public and raise awareness of the campaign. We engaged with over 200 people on the day.  We continued our joint Kent and Medway 16 days of action Campaign to raise awareness of domestic abuse. This was focused on various community groups within the campaign to improve accessibility of services for victim/survivors (V/S). The campaign included webinars, a toolkit, social media assets and downloads for both professionals and V/S. The total content reach for the 16 days was 6 million, a 100% increase on last year.  The Kent and Medway Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) Steering group has worked with partners to conduct a full review of the MARAC process and has created a new MARAC model. This is due to go live next year and will work to significantly improve the response to high-risk victims as well as provide a more streamlined approach for professionals.  This past year, we have been working to improve services for victims who are experiencing domestic abuse and have co-occurring conditions. We worked closely with our colleagues across Substance Misuse (SM) Commissioning and front-line services, to strengthen referral pathways, relationships, and knowledge between SM and DA. This in turn has increased referrals between domestic abuse and substance misuse services. We also now have our commissioned domestic abuse provider attending the Blue Light Project which has attendance from a wide range of professionals and focuses on improving outcomes for those who are facing multiple disadvantage and barriers when accessing support services. |
| Active Medway Cycle Scheme | The Active Medway Cycle Scheme was the first in the country to design and pioneer a “let’s ride” programme aimed at including all levels of cycling, especially new cyclists. Routes are risk assessed. Approved routes must include a minimum of 90% of the ride on cycle paths, shared paths, cycle lanes, recognised cycling areas and National Cycle Network routes. The programme has been tailored to help build confidence in a participant’s ability to cycle. The programme also offers non-cyclists an opportunity to learn to cycle with an accredited British cycling coach through the “on your bike” programme. Additionally, our “Revival Bikes” programme has supplied over 20 recycled bicycles to families living in areas of deprivation and we are planning further targeted activity with underserved communities to encourage cycling as a means of transport and great way of being physically active. The cycling programmes were paused during COVID19 lockdown but have since returned to full capacity. The Cycle programmes align with our whole systems obesity approach priorities relating to promoting the benefits of physical activity and reducing sedentary behaviour. |
| Medway’s annual free festival and events programme | The festivals and events team directly produce one of the largest free outdoor events and festivals programme in the country reaching over 450,000 residents and visitors. The programme brings people together, celebrating Medway’s communities and heritage whilst supporting the local economy and putting Medway on the map. The 2022 events programme included:  Medway Pride  Festival of Chatham Reach  Fort Amherst Summer Proms  Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Celebrations  Sticks ‘n’ Stones Festival  Armed Forces Day  Love Chatham Carnival  Medway Fun Palace  Electric Medway  Welcome to Cloisterham  Medway Culture Club Carnival  Royal Engineers Corp Memorial  Rochester Christmas Markets  Rochester Dickensian Christmas  2022 also saw the culmination of ‘Make Waves’ Medway first Young Producers programme and ‘Events Uncovered’ Medway’s first free events management course for the community.  The refreshed approach to festivals and events showcases Medway’s creative producers, organisations, and businesses. It places our diverse communities at the heart of Medway’s cultural offer and ensure the festivals and events programme continues to positively impact on the wellbeing of our residents |
| Breast Feeding campaign. | Beside You is a campaign to normalise breastfeeding in Medway, support mums to initiate breastfeeding and continue for as long as the mother and baby wish. Breastfeeding rates in Medway are below the national average and more than two thirds of mums stop breastfeeding before their baby is six weeks old. The campaign hopes to normalise breastfeeding; help remove the concerns surrounding breastfeeding in public and provide support; motivation and information for mothers, family members, professionals, and venues in Medway.  Beside You was launched across Kent in January 2020 with the development of a new website. Beside You has a large social media presence. Its virtual content has been watched for 80,000 minutes since March 2020. Our page follows have increased from 4423 in December 2021 to 5010 as of December 2022 evidencing that the content has been supportive to breastfeeding mothers.  COVID19 has had an impact on breastfeeding support services across Medway. This has required the Beside You page to reach out to new parents virtually. This helped ensure new mums can continue to get the support they need to breastfeed for as long as they want to and overcome normal challenges with help from professionals.  Online content was created to answer common questions and cover topics of concern for mums during COVID19 and continues to be a well use resource for breastfeeding mothers and their families.  In 2022/23, the Beside You website content for families will be refreshed. This will include adding new menus to make it easier for families to access the information and support they need through those early days and weeks, which we know is essential in improving our continuation rates past 6-8 weeks. We continue to work with our partner organisations such as Medway Community Healthcare and Medway Foundation Trust to ensure the campaign remains relevant and reactive to what they are seeing in person with breastfeeding mums.  In the Summer of 2022, a Baby and Bump fair was run by Beside You Medway which saw over 170 people attend to find out more about breastfeeding, antenatal support, physical activity in pregnancy and introducing solids. Event feedback was extremely positive and was clear that more support for families in needed antenatally on a variety of subjects and we will continue to work with the infant feeding strategy group in the coming year about this.  As well as the messaging service on offer on Facebook, face to face peer support and Beside You Socials are run in the community to allow mums an opportunity to meet a professional or to get support from other mothers on their breastfeeding journeys. Beside You continues to promote face-to-face services such as Hello Baby.  Beside You is working closely with other teams such as the Healthy Pregnancy Team to ensure good signposting to the Beside You website and to the face to face services on offer in Medway such as Hello Baby. |
| Personal, Social, Health Education (PHSE) | High quality relationships and sex education are being supported through the development of the Medway RSE scheme of work, produced by the PSHE Association for Medway schools and is highlighted nationally as best practice. Over 89% of Schools in Medway are signed up to deliver RSE through the PSHE curriculum and 63 schools are actively engaged in the PSHE network.  The Medway RSE scheme of work has been updated to include key stage four materials and has been shared with all secondary schools in Medway. Covering topics from healthy relationships, puberty and consent to contraception, pornography and breaking up, these lessons will help you teach some of the most complex RSE topics safely and effectively, in an inclusive and differentiated way.  The primary scheme of work has been updated and the series of 13 lesson plans support pupils to recognise and develop positive, healthy relationships. And prepare them for the physical and emotional changes that take place as they grow, including those that happen during puberty.  PSHE for Parents is a pilot 10-week programme that provides parents and carers with the opportunity to learn about several PSHE topics, like puberty, online safety, mental health, and sexual health. The course is designed to increase parents’ knowledge and understanding of the core subject areas, while being supported to explore ways of discussing these topics with their children and families and they are provided with resource packs to guide important family conversations. The course has been delivered and evaluated. We have found that there is a need to change the delivery model to manage capacity as well making it accessible to a wider group of parents and carers. The course will now be delivered through a series of learning sessions that will be held within the community and open to parents from any school in that location to attend. The sessions will be on each of the topics covered in the ten-week programme and will be a mix of presentations, activities and an opportunity for question and answers. We will also be providing a number of online sessions, delivered in the evenings to allow greater access to parents and carers that may not be able to attend during the day due to work or childcare commitments. This work will begin early next year.  Contraceptive and sexual health services are available in several secondary schools plus Mid-Kent college. The ‘Get It’ free condom scheme has been integrated into wider sexual health services to increase accessibility. Emergency hormonal contraception is available at pharmacies free of charge for women under 30 years of age.  Sexual health nurses provide contraception and advice youth settings. Targeted sexual health clinics for young people take place at the Hub in Clover Street, with the remainder being young person friendly. Specialist sexual health outreach nurses provide home visits to vulnerable young people, including looked after children and young parents.  Face to face appointments are now available for all young people with a specialist service for young people aged up to 25 years. |
| Young Driver Education | Medway Council delivers a range of initiatives all year round to teach children and young people about road safety. Nationally, young drivers, those aged 24 and under, make up 25 per cent of all drivers killed or seriously injured, despite only making up eight per cent of licence holders.  During 2021, the Road Safety Team were gifted KCC’s Young Driver Course. The course comprises of 4 sessions and is designed for in-house school delivery, being teacher led.  Session 1 covers “driving and seeing”, to provide students with understanding as to crash causation. Session 2 covers “speed & force”, to give students an idea of how speed relates to stopping distance. Session 3 covers “impairment”, to discuss how alcohol and drugs can impact upon awareness and how impairment can affect driving. Session 4 discusses “impulse & control”, to help students appreciate potential risks and problems when driving.  The course has been offered to all secondary schools in Medway, 7 have expressed an interest and 2 confirmed bookings to date. |
| Road Safety Education | Officers from the Road Safety Team visit schools throughout the year to teach children pedestrian skills and make them aware of the potential dangers on the road. Officers also visit pre-schools and nurseries to introduce children to basic road safety skills, including the road environment, holding their grown-ups’ hand and to stop, look, listen and think.  During the 2021/22 academic year, Road Safety education has been delivered to 3,864 primary school children and 470 secondary school children. Scooter Skills sessions have been delivered to 270 children in Key Stage 1 over the same duration. Under 5’s education was delivered to 605 children. In addition to this, 85 primary schools received Transition and conspicuity lessons to deliver themselves. The team also delivered the Safety in Action Road Safety Session to 2,287 children. |
| ‘Tri For You’ Programme | The Medway Council public health team runs the Tier two Tri for You programmes for children and young people. These include TriMini for children aged 5–7-year-olds, TriClub for children aged 8–12-year-olds and FitFix for young people aged13-17-year-olds. These programmes support families to make changes in their lifestyle behaviour to improve their activity levels, while gaining knowledge and awareness about making healthier choices. Through the range of courses and sessions, families can learn how making small changes can lead to a healthier lifestyle and can share tips and advice for each other on how they have done this. Families are directed to various information sources that can support these changes, which include NHS Healthier Families and Sugar Smart. These consist of various activities and recipes, while encouraging a reduction in sugar consumption, which is very important for health improvement. These courses also aim to improve the self-confidence and esteem of the attendees as changes are made and maintained. |
| Air Quality Strategy | Air pollution is associated with several adverse health impacts. It is recognised as a contributing factor in the onset of heart disease and cancer. Additionally, air pollution particularly affects the most vulnerable in society: children and older people, and those with heart and lung conditions. There is also often a strong correlation with equalities issues because areas with poor air quality are also often the less affluent areas.  The annual health cost to society of the impacts of particulate matter alone in the UK is estimated to be around £16 billion. Medway Council is committed to reducing the exposure of people in Medway to poor air quality to improve health.  The impact of air quality upon health is unquestionable and has been a major driver in national and international attempts to reduce levels of air pollution. Pollutants such as NO2, ozone, benzene, sulphur dioxide (SO2) alongside PM10 and PM2.5 and other chemicals or compounds by both chronic and acute exposure are linked to increased mortality and morbidity. Through their association with the development of cardiovascular disease, lung cancer, aggravation of asthma and other allergic illnesses, reduced quality of life and contribution to low birthweight.  The distribution of harm from poor air quality is not even. Poor air quality is evidenced to impact those who reside in areas of deprivation to a greater extent and is also recognised as a contributor to widening health inequalities. In Medway rates of long-term illness, emergency hospital admissions and death are higher in those who are more disadvantaged. Health outcomes are not only worse in those who are the most disadvantaged; the inequalities follow a gradient and as such the response also needs to follow a gradient. This means that interventions and measures should be made available to all, with increasing effort needed for those who are increasingly disadvantaged.  Medway council takes action to protect its residents’ health from potential harm emanating from poor air quality in a variety of ways. This includes partnership work with colleagues in planning to mitigate potential for air quality related harm related to developments. As well as proactively through communication initiatives identified in the Medway Air Quality Communications Strategy. Such as undertaking targeted information campaigns to increase community awareness of means by which individuals can reduce their exposure and contributions to poor air quality or manage their long-term health conditions which may otherwise leave greater susceptibility to harm from poor air quality. Such initiatives underpin priority actions of the Joint Health and Wellbeing strategy (2018-2023) to encourage self-management of long-term conditions and shape the environment to make healthy choices easier.  The implementation of Medway’s Air Quality Communications strategy continues with the promotion of the air forecast alerts to vulnerable members of the community and promotion of the KentAir website, http://www.kentair.org.uk/, which advises people on the causes of air pollution and encourages individual and collective effort to change behaviours to help improve air quality. KentAir was refreshed in 2021 and contains a range of supporting information and tools to assist with increasing awareness.  A revamped Medway carshare scheme (Kent and Medway Journey Share) was developed in 2019, widening the links across Kent whilst also aiming to increase patronage for those living and working in Medway.  Medway is a sponsor of the KM Green School Awards. Public Health and the Environmental Protection Team are working in partnership with the KM Charity to promote initiatives within schools to improve air quality #CleanAirforSchools.  Medway also tackles air quality in the air quality management areas through the 2015 and 2022 air quality action plans that contain a range of measures aimed at reducing road transport emissions and improving public health. |
| Climate Change Action Plan | Responding to the Climate Emergency is a core Council value and is already embedded across several initiatives that contribute towards our Equality Duty, including the aforementioned:  • A revised Communication and Engagement Strategy has been published to support the delivery of the Climate Change Action Plan. It sets out the approach for engaging with Medway’s communities, residents, businesses, and schools.  • Medway Youth Council – a representative remains appointed to the board to ensure young people’s voices are heard.  • A Sustainable Warmth Officer was appointed to promote the sustainable warmth scheme and promote and support other energy saving grants to Medway’s residents.  • A programme of events was developed to support Great Big Green Week. This included a variety of activities focussed at young people including a webinar for schools to ensure that they know how to support young people's mental health when engaging them in climate change. Other activities throughout the week included:  Workshops with groups under-represented in climate action, to find out what barriers they face and how we can alleviate them to ensure inclusive engagement in future and improve our action plan. Two workshops were planned in partnership with the Disability Medway Network. A workshop was also planned with the Medway Deaf Club.  An Energy Cafe, to help people in Medway find support for their rising energy bills, find out about opportunities to make their homes more efficient, and sign up for grants. British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters were present to ensure that it was accessible to the deaf community. A feedback survey was created to support the future planning of similar events. The Energy Cafe allowed all attendees to find advice and support in person and sign up to discount schemes that may have found inaccessible to complete alone at home. The Sustainable Warmth Scheme was promoted, and Citizens Advice Bureau and Southern Water were also present.  • Two members of the Environmental Engagement Team completed an 8-week BSL course, to allow them to communicate with the deaf community while out promoting recycling at events. The Climate Response Engagement Officer attended a full-day Deaf Awareness Course, to learn about how events and activities can be made more inclusive.  • The Climate Response team attended a variety of events in Summer 2022, to promote the Climate Change Action Plan, and engage the wider community to hear their thoughts on the recent refresh. It is estimated that 1,275 people were spoken to across all of the events.  • The Climate Response team also continue to promote key messages via our Climate Change newsletter, social media and Medway Matters.  • 36 classes took part in a COP27 walk to school initiative (walking virtually to Edinburgh). The combined effort is estimated to have saved 4.96tCO2e.  • A Climate Change survey was issued during Summer 2022 to find out from the public what their priorities for climate action in Medway were. It was a chance to gather the ideas of the Medway community, to further strengthen the plan.  • Questions about climate change (now a core council value) were included in the annual staff survey.  • We improved how we communicate with staff on sustainable travel options by making benefits more available to staff on the intranet pages. A staff travel drop in session was hosted to explain options available to staff as part of Great Big Green Week.  • A Climate Change staff volunteering day was launched which allows staff to take a day's paid leave (or 2 half days) to carry out activities which directly support the climate change action plan. It can either be carried out individually or as a team. Examples of activities completed so far include gardening at Fort Amherst Community Garden and river clean-ups. |

# Delivering Fair & Responsive Services 2021

# Community & Workforce Equality Data

It is vital that we have a good understanding of who our customers are so we can deliver services that are targeted to meet their needs. This section contains information about the people who make up the rich and diverse Medway communities.

We have used the Census 2001 and 2011, English indices of deprivation 2019 produced by the Department for Communities and Local Government and the Office for National Statistics (ONS) mid-year population estimates for the UK in 2020 and the ONS’ sub national population projections for 2030 to get an up-to-date picture of what our communities look like and how they are changing. Most of this data still relates to the Census 2011, as this remains the most current dataset of actual rather than projected values. Data from Census 2021 will be published during Spring / Summer 2022.

## Medway Community: Key changes

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Change | Description |
| Population increased | Medway’s population increased by nearly 16,000 people from 263,925 in 2011 to 279,773 in 2021, a 6% increase.  (Census 2011, Census 2021) |
| Ageing population | Medway’s population profile is getting older.  The proportion of Medway’s population aged 0-18 has decreased from 26.6% in 2001, to 24.5% in 2011 and now 23.9% in 2021.  Similarly, the proportion of the population aged 19-64 has decreased to 59.6% in 2021, this is down from 61.5% in 2011 and 60.7% in 2001.  There has been a continued increase in the population aged 65 and over, up from 12.6% in 2001 to 14% in 2011 and now standing at 16.5% in 2021.  Medway’s average age is younger than Kent, the South-East and England & Wales. |
| More ethnically diverse | Medway has become more ethnically diverse since 2001. The population from non-white ethnic minority groups has increased from 5.4% in 2001 to 10.4% in 2011 and now stands at 15.7% in 2021.  Medway’s ethnic minority population is lower than England and Wales.  White British is still the largest ethnic group, 78.3% of the population; followed by White Other 6%, and Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh groups 5.9%.  Medway’s Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African population has more than doubled between 2011 and 2021. |
| Limiting long term illness increase | The percentage of people with a Limiting Long-Term Illness has increased from 16.4% in 2011 to 17.4% in 2021. The proportion of the population whose day-to-day activities are limited in some way is like England and Wales, 17.7%. |
| Unpaid carers decrease | The number of unpaid carers decreased from 9.5% in 2011 to 8.6% in 2021. |
| Continued increase in those stating no religion | Since 2001 there has been a 27-percentage point reduction in the number of residents identified themselves as Christian: 45% in 2021, 58% in 2011, and 72% in 2001.  The number of residents stating no religion has increased by an equivalent amount, with a 26-percentage point increase from 17% of the population in 2001, to 30% in 2011 before reaching 43% in 2021.  The proportions of residents stating their religion as Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Sikh, or other religion have stayed static between 2011 and 2021. The proportion of residents identifying as Muslim increased by 0.7 percentage points from 2% in 2011 to 2.7% in 2021. |
| Increase in deprivation | Medway is ranked 93rd most deprived Local Authority of 317 (1st being the most deprived) in England in the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation. This is a relatively more deprived than the 2015 index, when Medway was ranked 118th most deprived of 325. |

## Medway Community: Profile

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| --- | --- |
| Profile | Description |
| 5 urban areas | Medway is made up of five urban centres: Chatham, Gillingham, Rochester, Strood and Rainham. It also includes an extensive rural area on the Hoo Peninsula and the area of Cuxton and Halling to the west of M2. |
| Increasing population | Between the Census 2011 and Census 2021, the population has grown by 15,848 people, up to 279,773. This compares to the increase of 14,637 people between 2001 and 2011. |
| Includes areas of deprivation | Medway is ranked 93rd most deprived Local Authority of 317 (1st being the most deprived) in England in the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). This is a relatively worse position than the index in 2015, when Medway was ranked 118th most deprived of 326.  The main domains in the IMD where Medway is relatively more deprived than other areas are ‘crime’ (ranking 27 out of 317 Local Authorities in England), and ‘education, skills and training’ (which ranks 68 out of 317). |
| Around a third of households have dependent children | The proportion of households with dependent children has remained almost the same between the censuses – in 2011 32.3% of households had dependent children, compared to 32.2% in 2021.  The ONS classifies a dependent child as any person living in a household who is either: aged 0 to 15 years old, or aged 16 to 18, in full-time education and lives in a family with their parent(s) or grandparents(s). Therefore, a person over the age of 18 living with their parent(s)/grandparent(s) will not classify as a dependent child, even if they are still financially dependent. |
| Fewer unpaid carers | The number of unpaid carers decreased from 9.5% in 2011 to 8.6% in 2021. |
| More overcrowded households | In Medway, 66.8% of households are under-occupied, and 4.5% are overcrowded. Overcrowding is up slightly from 2011, and is also higher than other comparison areas, in particular wider Kent and the South East. |
| Increase in occupied households | As of 2011, there were 106,209 occupied households this increased by around 5% to 111,458 in 2021. |
| Significant decrease in economic activity | The proportion of Medway’s residents who are economically active has decreased significantly between 2011 and 2021, by 8 percentage points, while economic inactivity has increased.  In 2021, most residents aged 16 or over where economically active in (63.1%). Medway has a slightly higher percentage of economically active residents than Kent (60.2%), the South-East (62.2%) and England& Wales (60.6%).  There were 140,571 residents who were economically active in 2021; most economically active residents (excl. full-time students) were in paid employment for an individual or organisation as an employee (76.8%). However, 15.5% of residents (excl. full-time students) were self-employed (i.e., they own/operate their own business or professional practice, either by themselves or shared with a business partner).  A greater number and percentage of economically active residents are self-employed in 2021 than in 2011, the number of residents who are self-employed has increased by 29.2% in 10 years. Just 5.7% of Medway’s non-student residents were unemployed and either waiting to start a job or seeking employment at the time of the census.  In Medway, 36.9% of all residents aged 16 and over were economically inactive at the time of the 2021 census, up from 28.9% in the 2011. This change in percentage of economically inactive residents is mainly driven by an increase in the number and proportion of retired residents; in 2011 there were 24,738 retired residents in Medway, which composited 44.0% of all economically inactive residents, and this number has increased by 76.2% over the last 10 years to 43,599 residents. As of 2021, over half of all economically inactive residents were retired. Medway’s economic inactivity profile is broadly similar to other comparison areas. |
| More highly qualified | As of Census 2021 77.7% of Medway’s residents held a Level 1 qualification or above, this is slightly lower than Kent (79%), the South-East (82%) and England & Wales (79%).  Around a quarter (25.6%) of Medway residents held a Level 4 qualification and above, this is lower than Kent (30.5%), the South-East (35.8%) and England & Wales (33.8%).  Both the proportion of residents with a Level 1 or higher and Level 4 or higher qualification have increased since 2011. |
| Above average households’ own home | 64.7% of households owned their own home, either with a loan, mortgage or outright; this is a decrease of 3 percentage points since 2011. Medway’s level of ownership is still above the national average percentage of 61.6%. (Census 2021) |
| Increase of cars and vans available for use | The proportion of households with access to at least 1 car or van in households increased slightly from 78.1% in 2011 to 80.8% in 2021. |

## Medway Community: Sex and age

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Profile | Description |
| Sex | There has been a small change within Medway’s sex breakdown. Females accounted for 51% of Medway’s population in 2021, up from 50.4% in 2011. Males have decreased from 49.6% in 2011 to 49% in 2021.  The sex and age breakdown in Figure 1 below shows that there was a greater representation of males within the population than females up to the 35-39 age group. The positions then level out and reverses when females become the majority in all age groups aged 55 and over. The difference in proportion of females over males is more acute in the 75 and over age band. |
| Age | Medway’s population is slightly younger than the South East or England.  Medway’s population aged 18 and under increased from 64,724 in 2011 to 68,633 in 2020 (+6%). Despite this increase the overall proportion of the population aged 18 and under has remained static since 2011, reflecting the rapidly increasing older population.  In 2020 year, the population aged 19 to 64 was 165,236. Although higher than the 162,196 people in this age group in 2011, the proportion of the population in this age group has declined since 2011.  Medway’s population is ageing at a faster rate with more people now aged 65 and over since 2011. This age group accounted for 44,859 people in 2019. This is an increase of 20.2% since 2011 and 42.3% since 2001. |

Table 1 shows changes as a proportion of the population in each of the three age groups. The proportion of 0- to 18-year-olds has seen a slight decrease since 2011, whilst the rate of 19- to 64-year-olds has fallen and the population aged 65 and over group has continued to increase.

Table 1 Population by age group in 2001, 2011 and 2021

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Age group** | **Proportion population 2001** | **Proportion population 2011** | **Proportion population 2021** |
| 0-18 | 26.6% | 24.5% | 23.9% |
| 19-64 | 60.7% | 61.5% | 59.6% |
| 65 and over | 12.6% | 14.3% | 16.5% |

Source: Census 2001, Census 2011 and Census 2021

Table 2 shows Medway’s population over different age groups, and the split by sex for mid-year population estimates 2020. Also, Figure 1 shows the age and sex profile of Medway’s population in 2021 compared to 2011.

Table 2 – Proportion of the population by 5-year age bands and sex (Census 2021)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Age group** | **Men %** | **Women %** | **Total %** |
| **0-4** | 3.0 | 3.2 | 6.2 |
| **5-9** | 3.2 | 3.3 | 6.6 |
| **10-14** | 3.2 | 3.3 | 6.4 |
| **15-19** | 2.8 | 3.0 | 5.8 |
| **20-24** | 2.8 | 2.9 | 5.7 |
| **25-29** | 3.4 | 3.1 | 6.6 |
| **30-34** | 3.8 | 3.4 | 7.3 |
| **35-39** | 3.6 | 3.4 | 7.0 |
| **40-44** | 3.4 | 3.2 | 6.6 |
| **45-49** | 3.2 | 3.1 | 6.3 |
| **50-54** | 3.4 | 3.4 | 6.8 |
| **55-59** | 3.4 | 3.3 | 6.7 |
| **60-64** | 2.8 | 2.8 | 5.6 |
| **65-69** | 2.4 | 2.3 | 4.6 |
| **70-74** | 2.4 | 2.2 | 4.6 |
| **75-79** | 1.7 | 1.5 | 3.2 |
| **80-84** | 1.2 | 0.9 | 2.2 |
| **85-89** | 0.7 | 0.5 | 1.2 |
| **90+** | 0.5 | 0.2 | 0.6 |
| **Grand total** | 51.0 | 49.0 | 100.0 |

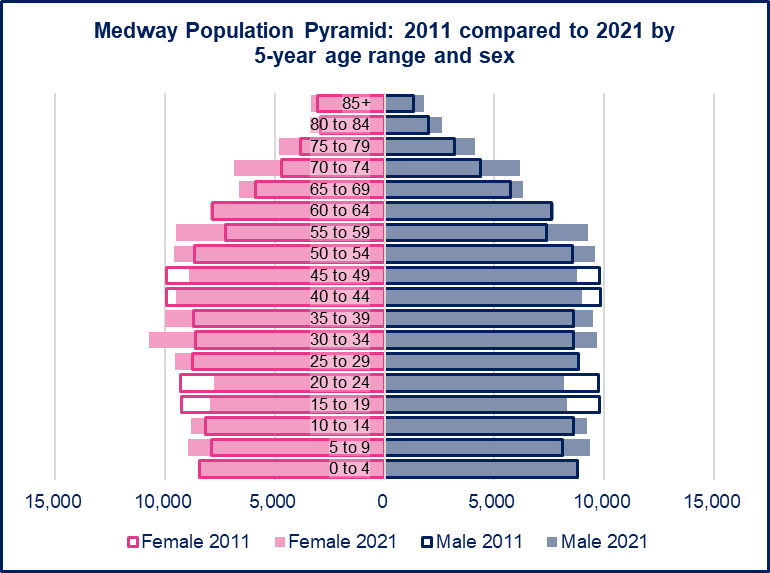


Figure 1 – Population count 2011 and 2021

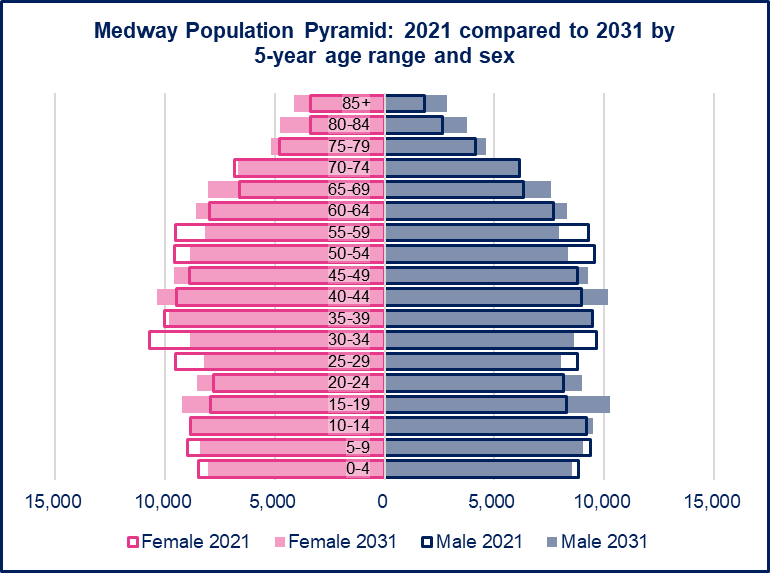
Sources: ONS mid-year population estimates 2020 and 2030

Figure 1 shows that since 2011: the population children aged 0 to 14 has increased; people aged 15 to 24 has reduced; over the same time period the number of young adults aged 25 to 39 has increased, whilst the number of adults aged 40 to 49 has reduced.

Overall, the number of adults aged over 50 has increased in every age group, except the 60 to 64 age group. Here the population has remained static as the post war baby boomers move into the 65 to 69 and 70 to 74 age groups; creating the notable increases in both the male and female populations in these age groups. The population over 75 has seen increases in each of the 5 year age brackets.

The median age of Medway residents is 39.2, lower than the England & Wales median age of 40.7 and the South-East, 41.3

Medway’s population is projected to still be growing in 2030 increasing to around 285,700 (Figure 2). There are projected to be notable increases in the 15 to 24 and 35 to 44 age groups, as well as those aged over 60. There are notable falls in the population aged 25 to 34 and 50 to 59.

Figure 2 - Population 2021 and 2031

Sources: Census 2021 and 2018 Sub-National Population Projections

## Medway Community: Sexual Orientation

Census 2021, for the first time, asked respondents aged 16 and over to provide details of their sexual orientation. As this was a voluntary question, a number of respondents chose not to answer, but non-answer responses were still counted as legitimate responses to the question, however the sexual orientation of these individuals cannot be assumed. Table 3 below shows the respondents.

Table 3 Sexual Orientation, Census 2021

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Sexual Orientation** | **Medway 2021** |
| **Straight or Heterosexual** | **201,694 (90.5%)** |
| **Gay or Lesbian** | **2,979 (1.3%)** |
| **Bisexual** | **2,528 (1.1%)** |
| **All other sexual orientations** | **674 (0.3%)** |
| **Not answered\*** | **14,881 (6.7%)** |

## Medway Community: Gender Reassignment

The Census 2021 was the first to ask respondents to provide details of their gender identity. The question asked was “Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?”. Respondents did not have to answer this question, as it was voluntary, though non-responses were considered legitimate responses to the question. Note that this question was only asked of individuals aged 16 and over.

Information on the numbers of people who may have reassigned their gender is not collected to enable a profile for Medway to be included in this report. Press for Change (the UK’s leading experts in transgender law) and the Gender Trust (an organisation supporting all those affected by gender identity issues) have produced statistical estimates of 25 per 100,000 population based on research into the numbers of people who have undergone gender reassignment procedures.

Based on the above estimate, Medway would expect to have around 70 residents who would have reassigned their gender or be undergoing the process of having their gender reassigned. Although this would be a very small section of the community it is important to remember that this section of the community can face significant obstacles in being accepted.

The profile of gender identity in Medway is very similar to other comparison areas. Around 19 in every 20 Medway residents responded that the gender they identify with is the same as at birth, and 5.3% chose not to answer the question. Nearly 1,100 Medway residents have a gender identity different from their registered sex at birth; about 0.5% of the population.

About half of these individuals chose not to disclose a specific identity, though 225 individuals identified as trans women, and 214 identified as trans men. 145 individuals identified as a different gender identity from the aforementioned.

## Medway Community: Marriage and Civil Partnership

Cohabiting couples account for 13% of the population compared with the England & Wales level of 11.6%. (Census 2021)

Medway ranks quite low both nationally and regionally in terms of the proportion of people who are married. Conversely, Medway ranks quite high for people whose marital status is divorced. In respect of single people who have never married, Medway’s proportion is the higher than both Kent and the South-East but is similar to England & Wales.

Despite the number of married people remaining virtually the same 97,510 (Census 2021) compared to 97,095 (Census 2011). The proportion of the population who are married has fallen from 46.1% in 2011 to 43.8% in 2021. Most marriages are for opposite sex couples (43.5% or 96,857), with 653 people (0.3%) in a same sex marriage.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Medway 2011** | **Medway 2021** | **Kent (excl. Medway) 2021 %** | **South East 2021 %** | **England & Wales 2021 %** |
| **Population aged 16 or over** | 210,511 | 222,756 | - | - | - |
| **Never married or registered as civil partners (single)** | 72,899 (34.6%) | 84,139 (37.8%) | 34.6% | 34.8% | 37.9% |
| **Married** | 97,095 (46.1%) | 97,510 (43.8%) | 46.6% | 47.4% | 44.4% |
| **Registered civil partnership** | 359 (0.2%) | 365  (0.2%) | 0.2% | 0.2% | 0.2% |
| **Separated, but still married/civil partners** | 6,608 (3.1%) | 5,949  (2.1%) | 2.3% | 2.1% | 2.2% |
| **Divorced, civil partnership dissolved** | 20,142 (9.6%) | 21,715 (9.7%) | 9.7% | 9.3% | 9.1% |
| **Widowed/surviving partner from civil partnership** | 13,408 (6.4%) | 13,081 (5.9%) | 6.5% | 6.1% | 6.1% |

There are 365 people living in a registered civil partnership, there is an almost even split between same sex (180 people) and opposite sex (185 people) partnerships (Census 2021).

Table 4 Legal partnership status, Census 2021

The number and proportion of people who have never married or registered as civil partners increased by 3.2 percentage points to 37.8% in 2021.

The number of people who are divorced or had their civil partnership dissolved increased between 2011 to 2021, but the proportion of the population remained static. The number of people who are separated, but still married/civil partners or widowed/surviving partner from civil partnership both saw falls in the number of people and the proportion of the population who were in these categories.

## Medway Community: Disability

Health

Census 2021 asked respondents how they considered their health, for Medway residents:

* 82.1% described themselves as being in good or very good health.
* 12.8% described themselves as in fair health.
* 5.1% described themselves as being in bad or very bad health.

Compared to England and Wales, Medway had slightly more people reporting good and very good health (+0.4 percentage points) and fewer in fair health (-0.3 percentage points) and bad or very bad health (-0.6 percentage points).

Carers

8.6% of residents provided unpaid care for someone with an illness or disability, a decrease of 0.9 percentage points compared to the 9.5% of residents in 2011. Similar changes were seen in England and Wales with the number of carers decreasing.

Potential reasons for this include coronavirus restrictions, fewer individuals sharing caring responsibilities with another person, higher deaths leading to reduced caring demand, and changes to wording between the 2011 and 2021 censuses.

Disability

Census 2021 asked people to assess whether their day-to-day activities were limited by long-term physical or mental health conditions or illnesses, those who felt their activities were limited are considered disabled. In 2021, 17.4% of Medway residents were considered as disabled; up 1 percentage point (or around 5,000 people) from the 2011 Census.

Medway’s proportion of residents with a disability is similar to England and Wales (17.7%).

**Limiting Long Term Illness (LLTI) (2021 Census)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Medway total number** | **Medway total %** |
| 48,572 | 17.4 |

Table 5 Disability/Limiting Long Term Illness (LLTI)

Source: Census 2011

## Medway Community: Ethnicity and National Identity

Medway has become more ethnically diverse since 2001.

In 2011 ethnic minority communities made up 10.4% of Medway’s population, up from 5.4% of the population in 2001. White communities (White British, White Irish, White Gypsy and Irish Traveller, White Roma and White Other) made up 84.3% of the population in 2011, down from 89.6% in 2011. Table 6 below shows the breakdown of Medway’s population by their ethnic group and how this has changed between 2011 and 2021.

Table 6 Medway’s population by their ethnic group

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ethnic Group** | **2011 Census %** | **2021 Census %** | **2011 Census No** |
| White | **89.6** | **84.3** | 235,747 |
| Mixed | **2.0** | **2.8** | 7,589 |
| Asian | **5.2** | **5.9** | 16,484 |
| Black | **2.5** | **5.6** | 15,723 |
| Other | **0.7** | **1.4** | 3,960 |
| All Groups | **100** | **100** | 279,773 |

Source: Census 2011 and 2021

When breaking down the ethnic groups further, the 2011 Census shows that White British represented the majority of the community (78.3%) with White Other being the second highest (6%), followed by Asian (5.9%).

Between 2011 and 2021 the White population has remained static in terms of numbers, however, there have been some significant changes within the groups that make up this population. White Other increasing from 3.4% of the population in 2011 to 6% in 2021, whilst White British fell from 85.5% to 78.3%.

The Asian, Mixed and other ethnic groups all saw increases in the number of people and as the proportion of the population living, all having seen a 0.7 percentage points from 2011 to 2021. Black communities saw a significant rise in the proportion of the population, increasing from 2.5% of the population in 2011 to 5.6% in 2021. Most of this change was driven by the Black African population increasing from 1.8% to 4%.

Table 7 shows that the ethnic minority population in Medway in 2011 and 2021 was greater than the South East, but smaller than England & Wales as a whole.

Table 7 Non-white ethnic minority population in Medway, South East and England

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Ethnic Minority**  **Population** | **2011 Census**  **%** | **2021 Census**  **%** |
| England & Wales | 14 | 18.3 |
| South East | 9.4 | 13.7 |
| **Medway** | **10.4** | **15.7** |

Source: Census 2011 and Census 2021

Between 2011 and 2021 there was an increase in Medway’s population born in the UK, however, the population born outside the UK has increased at a faster rate meaning the proportion of Medway’s population born in the UK fell. In 2021, 38,654 people living in Medway were born outside of the UK, up from 10.4% (27,336) of residents were born outside the UK in 2011. In terms of arrival in the UK, 35.8% of all those born outside the UK arrived, between 2011 and 2021, a further 31.9% between 2010 and 2001, and 32.2% arriving before 2001. The greatest increases were from populations from Africa, Europe and the Americas and Caribbean.

The most common languages, other than English, spoken in the Medway community are shown in Figure 3, where the top-ranking languages are in the largest font size. The same data is also shown in Table 8.

Below: Figure 3 and Table 8 Languages – other than English – most spoken in Medway (Census 2021)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Main Language Spoken** | **Number of speakers** |
| Romanian | 2064 |
| Polish | 1802 |
| Panjabi | 1623 |
| Bulgarian | 1325 |
| Lithuanian | 856 |
| Russian | 657 |
| Bengali | 570 |
| Portuguese | 533 |
| Slovak | 519 |
| Tamil | 513 |
| Turkish | 487 |
| Urdu | 470 |
| Nepelese | 385 |
| Spanish | 365 |
| Malayalam | 329 |
| Chinese | 323 |
| Latvian | 315 |
| Italian | 308 |
| French | 295 |
| Tagalog/Filipino | 262 |



## Medway Community: Religion and Belief

Christianity remains the largest religion or belief that Medway residents identify with. However, since 2001 there has been a 27-percentage point reduction in the number of residents identified themselves as Christian: 45% in 2021, 58% in 2011, and 72% in 2001.

The second largest group recorded is those stating that they have no religion. Having a 26-percentage point increase from 17% of the population in 2001, to 30% in 2011 before reaching 43% in 2021.

The proportions of residents stating their religion as Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Sikh, or other religion have stayed static between 2011 and 2021. The only other group to see a notable increase was those residents identifying as Muslim, having increased by 0.7 percentage points from 2% in 2011 to 2.7% in 2021.

Table 9 Religions in Medway

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Religion and Belief** | **2011**  **%** | **2021**  **%** | **2021**  **Number** |
| Christian | 57.8 | 45.1 | 126,097 |
| Buddhist | 0.4 | 0.4 | 999 |
| Hindu | 1 | 1.1 | 3,172 |
| Jewish | 0.1 | 0.1 | 217 |
| Muslim | 2 | 2.7 | 7,636 |
| Sikh | 1.5 | 1.6 | 4,363 |
| All Other religions | 0.5 | 0.6 | 1,705 |
| No religion | 29.9 | 43 | 120,309 |
| Religion not stated | 6.8 | 5.5 | 15,273 |
| **Total** | **100** | **100** | **279,771** |

## Medway Council workforce: Profile

The council is committed to providing equal opportunities and access to all, and its employment policies aim to ensure that no employee is discriminated against, either directly or indirectly, or victimised on the grounds of their race, disability, sex, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, marital or civil partnership status, any stage of gender reassignment or any other protected characteristic as stated under the under the Equality Act 2010.

The council’s commitment to equalities and its *Be Yourself at Work* campaign strives to enable employees to feel comfortable to be themselves at work. This is not only good for the employee, but it is accepted that those who can be themselves at work perform better. The council undertook an anonymous voluntary employee engagement survey in September 2022 and achieved a 58% response rate. There were questions about how engaged people felt within the organisation this showed an employee engagement level of 63% amongst those who responded. The survey included several questions relating to equalities and the culture of the council.

When asked whether respondents felt comfortable to be themselves at work without fear of discrimination, a positive 82% either agreed or strongly agreed that they could. discrimination.

Medway Council employs 2,741 people (as of 1 January 2023, excluding staff based in schools). The People directorate is the largest employing 1124 staff followed by the Place directorate employing 1055, the Business Support Department employing 562 staff.

Women represent 74% of the council workforce (excluding staff based in schools). In terms of ethnicity, most staff classify themselves as White (81%) with 13% Black, Asian and other Minority Ethnic, and 6% for whom the information is incomplete or has been refused.

## Medway Council workforce: Sex (non-schools’ staff)

Table 10 Medway Council – Sex

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sex – Jan 2023** | **Business Support Department** | **People directorate** | **Place directorate** | **Medway Council** | **Medway Community (Aged 16 to 64)** |
| Women | 71% | 84% | 64% | 74% | 51% |
| Men | 29% | 16% | 36% | 26% | 49% |
| Total | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

Source: Medway Council HR Services (data as of 1 January 2023) and Census 2021.

Males are underrepresented in the workforce with 26% compared to 49% in the community.

## Medway Council workforce: Disability (non-schools’ staff)

Table 11 Medway Council – disability

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Disability – Jan 2022** | **Business Support Department** | **People Directorate** | **Place Directorate** | **Medway Council** | **Medway Community (aged 20 to 64)** |
| Yes | 3.9% | 4.2% | 3.5% | 3.9% | 13.0% |
| No | 91.5% | 90.3% | 91.2% | 90.8% | 87.0% |
| Not Stated /Refused | 4.6% | 5.5% | 5.4% | 5.3% | 0.0% |
| Total | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

Source: Medway Council HR Services (data as of 1 January 2023) and Census 2011.

Table 11 displays the percentage of non-school based employees who have declared that they have a disability. These figures would appear to show that this minority are underrepresented within the council’s workforce when compared with the Medway community (the community figures are from age 20 as 2011 Census data about this characteristic is only available in 5-year age groups).

However, it should be noted that employees with disabilities may choose not to declare their disability to their employer for several reasons. This can be demonstrated within the results of the 2022 anonymous employee engagement survey. When asked to declare whether they had a disability, 20% of all respondents stated they had compared to 3.9% who had declared a disability on the HR system.

The council is continually striving to increase the percentage of disabled staff within the workforce and to encourage employees to declare their disability. The ‘*Be yourself at work’* campaign aims to encourage employees to complete their personal details on the HR selfserve4you system. Further initiatives are being arranged to raise awareness of why the council needs equalities data and details of this can be found in the final paragraph ‘Pro-active measures toward an inclusive workforce’.

The council is signed up to the ‘Disability Confident’ scheme which replaced the ‘Two Ticks Positive about Disability Scheme’ in 2016. Disability Confident aims to help employers make the most of the opportunities provided by employing disabled people. It is voluntary and has been developed by employers and disabled people’s representatives. More information about the scheme can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/disability-confident-how-to-sign-up-to-the-employer-scheme>

Working as a Disability Confident employer and displaying the Disability Confident symbol, reinforces the council’s commitment to those with disabilities and gives the council the opportunity to regularly review, build upon and celebrate best practice in the employment arena. In doing so, the council provides evidence that it meets a number of commitments.

**Medway Council workforce: Age**

The council has an ageing workforce. This is reflected in Table 11, which shows an increasing proportion of staff across the 30 to 59 age groups.

The council has regard to the age profile of its current staff and the under-representation of those within the 16-24 age range. Due to this, the council has agreed within its Age Discrimination Policy (July 2012) to reserve the right to take positive action measures to assist with its workforce planning to attract into its service younger people.

Table 12 Medway residents and Medway Council (non-school based staff)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Age Group | Medway Council Staff  (Jan 23)l | Medway Residents  (Aged 16 to 64, 2021)Residents |
| 16-19 | 1.99% | 5.8% |
| 20-24 | 5.10% | 5.7% |
| 25-29 | 8.60% | 6.6% |
| 30-34 | 8.60% | 7.3% |
| 35-39 | 11.97% | 7.0% |
| 40-44 | 12.01% | 6.6% |
| 45-49 | 12.32% | 6.3% |
| 50-54 | 13.43% | 6.8% |
| 55-59 | 12.77% | 6.7% |
| 60-64 | 9.53% | 5.6% |
| 65 and over | 3.68% | - |

Source: Medway Council workforce monitoring January 2023 and Census 2021

Some of the positive measures undertaken to increase this demographic include a graduate scheme and apprenticeships which could lead to permanent employment, as well as an internship programme for students.

## Medway Council workforce: Ethnicity

Table 13 Medway residents and Medway Council (non-school based staff) ethnicity structure

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Medway Residents  (Aged 16 to 64, 2021) | Medway Council Staff  (Jan 23) |
| White British, Irish, other | 84.3% | 82.93% |
| Multi ethnic | 2.8% | 1.29% |
| Asian or Asian British | 5.9% | 3.81% |
| Black or Black British | 5.6% | 7.45% |
| Other | 1.4% | 0.44% |
| Not Given or Refused | N/A | 4.08% |

Source: Census 2021 and Medway Council workforce monitoring January 2023

The table above shows that the White (British, Irish and other White) community is very similar in the council and in the community, and the Black ethnic group is slightly overrepresented among the council workforces. On the other hand, the Asian ethnic group is underrepresented among the council workforces.

## Other protected characteristics

Due to low declaration levels on the HR MyView system, data relating to the other protected characteristics such as sexual orientation and religion is not sufficient to enable any meaningful analysis. However, these figures are gradually increasing because of proactive measures that have been undertaken. These are highlighted in the section below.

## Medway Council Staff: Key differences compared with the Medway community profile.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Difference | Description |
| Less male staff | 26% of the workforce (non-school) are male compared to 49% of the community (taking into consideration males between 16 and 64). |
| More female staff | 74% of the workforce (non-school) are female compared to 51% of the community. |
| Disabilities underrepresented | Only 3.9% of the council’s non-school staff has reported a disability, and there are 13% of residents who have reported a disability. |
| Workforce is older | Percentages of council’s staff in age brackets from 16 to 24 are lower than in the community. The larger difference is in the age group 16-19, which includes 5.8% of the community, compared to only 1.99% of the council’s non-school-based staff. All other age brackets are over represented in council staff. We have only compared age bands from 16 up until the age of 64, as after 64 staff can decide whether to keep on working or not. |
| Differences in ethnic minorities being represented | While the white and multi-ethnic populations are very similar in both – council and community – environments, there are some significant differences when comparing Asian and Black ethnicities.  Black ethnic groups are slightly overrepresented among the council workforce, with 7.45% of Black workforce versus 5.6% of Black population in the Medway community. On the other hand, the Asian ethnic group is underrepresented, with Asian staff making up 3.81% of the council’s workforce compared to 5.9% of the community. |

## Proactive Measures toward an inclusive workforce

The council is taking pro-active measures toward building a supportive and inclusive workforce, some examples are as follows:

1 We use data from the annual employee survey to help inform policy and process changes and shape future equality related initiatives.

2 The **Medpay** performance related pay scheme, seeks to reward those who are actively engaged in equality work over and above their normal duties (providing all normal targets have been met).

3 The **Make a Difference** employee recognition awards scheme, through the Inclusion and Diversity Award recognises excellence in those who have demonstrated how they have improved the access, participation, achievements, or life chances for the communities we serve and for the employees of Medway Council.

4 Employees are offered a comprehensive training facility on equality and diversity via **e-learning**

5 Employees are offered support via the Disabled; Black; and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Questioning employee network groups.

6 In 2017 we became ‘Disability Confident’ – replacing the previous Positive About Disability scheme the Disability Confident scheme aims to help employers make the most of the opportunities provided by employing disabled people. It is voluntary and has been developed by employers and disabled people’s representatives.

7 We commit to working toward the principles of the **Mindful Employer Charter** for employers who are positive about mental health.