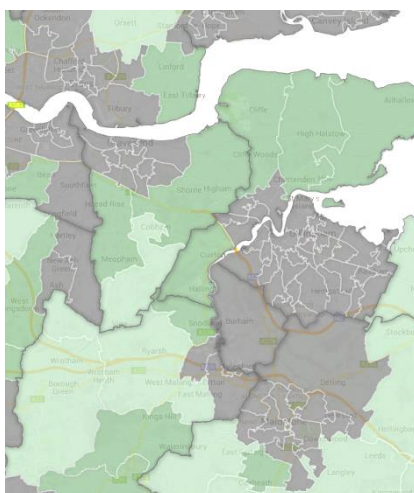


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# North Kent Strategic Housing and Economic Needs Assessment

## Baseline Report

March 2015



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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report represents the first stage in the development of a comprehensive evidence base to support local planning activities for the Gravesham and Medway local authority areas within the framework of the North Kent Strategic Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (SHENA). Ultimately, this will include Strategic Housing Market Assessment, Employment Land Review, Retail Needs Assessment and Viability Assessments of key local policies for each of the local authority areas. This work is being carried out jointly for Gravesham and Medway because of a range of shared experiences and interests between two authorities which also have a degree of interdependence in housing and employment markets.
- 1.2 Both Gravesham and Medway sit within wider Kent and wider South East of England contexts. They are also inevitably influenced by London. There are strong regional connections through the motorway network and rails networks. These factors influence business location, labour market and housing markets. There has been progress on targeted regeneration schemes, and both Gravesham and Medway benefit from relationships to the wider regional economy. There has been marked growth in residential values in the last year.
- 1.3 Despite sitting within a dynamic economic context, both Gravesham and Medway have experienced greater economic challenges than some neighbouring areas, and market values across a range of domains trend lower than nearby areas. In retail terms locations of main settlements on the Thames Estuary mean that there are some characteristics of coastal communities, with something of a 180 degree catchment creating more challenges than faced by other centres. Economic restructuring away from traditional manufacturing and distribution industries and divestment of military facilities has had a long term impact. The post 2008 recession had marked impacts locally, and the return of values to pre-recession values has been slow. Socio-economic characteristics do display some concentrations of deprivation.
- 1.4 It is important to state at the outset that, there are also some distinctions between Gravesham and Medway. Gravesham is a smaller local authority area, with a smaller population and employment base than Medway. It has a stronger relationship with neighbours to its west, including London. Medway is a larger local authority area, with a number of town centres and has a generally stronger relationship with Kent communities to the south and south east.
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- 1.5 Although there are differences, Gravesham and Medway will in the future be influenced by some potentially significant regional changes. These include:
- Major residential development at Ebbsfleet backed by a new development corporation;
  - Residential market displacement from London, as value increases ripple through outer London;
  - Proposals for a major leisure destination at Paramount Park in Gravesham, with a significant boost to local employment;
  - On-going town centre development goals for Gravesend, Chatham, Rochester and Gillingham;
  - Waterfront regeneration proposals, with attendant cost challenges;
  - The potential for new Thames Crossings, with options for locations to the east or west of the North Kent area.
- 1.6 Within this context, the objectives of the SHENA include the following:
- Providing a basis for Local Plan progress, including Medway Local Plan Reg 18 consultation and evolution of the Gravesham Site Allocations and Development Management DPD;
  - Employing the latest data;
  - Capture fundamentals of sub-regional and local market shifts through and since the recession;
  - Informing strategic thinking for one of the South East's key growth areas;
  - Providing a basis for key decisions on the scale and nature of growth;
  - More widely, this process will provide a framework for meeting the duty to cooperate among neighbouring local authorities.
- 1.7 This project is tasked with understanding a diverse range of potential growth requirements, which will be influenced and guided by a large range of social, economic, market and population characteristics. To establish a robust baseline for policy development it is critical that each workstream is based on a thorough, common understanding of the North Kent area.
- 1.8 This report draws together baseline information which will act as a foundation and reference for subsequent workstreams, enabling each to draw on common datasets and a shared understanding of North Kent's drivers and challenges. This information has also been used to prepare a strategic strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis
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in order to guide the subsequent work stages. This will be a key tool in developing policy responses that are tailored to local needs and opportunities.





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## 2. North Kent Population

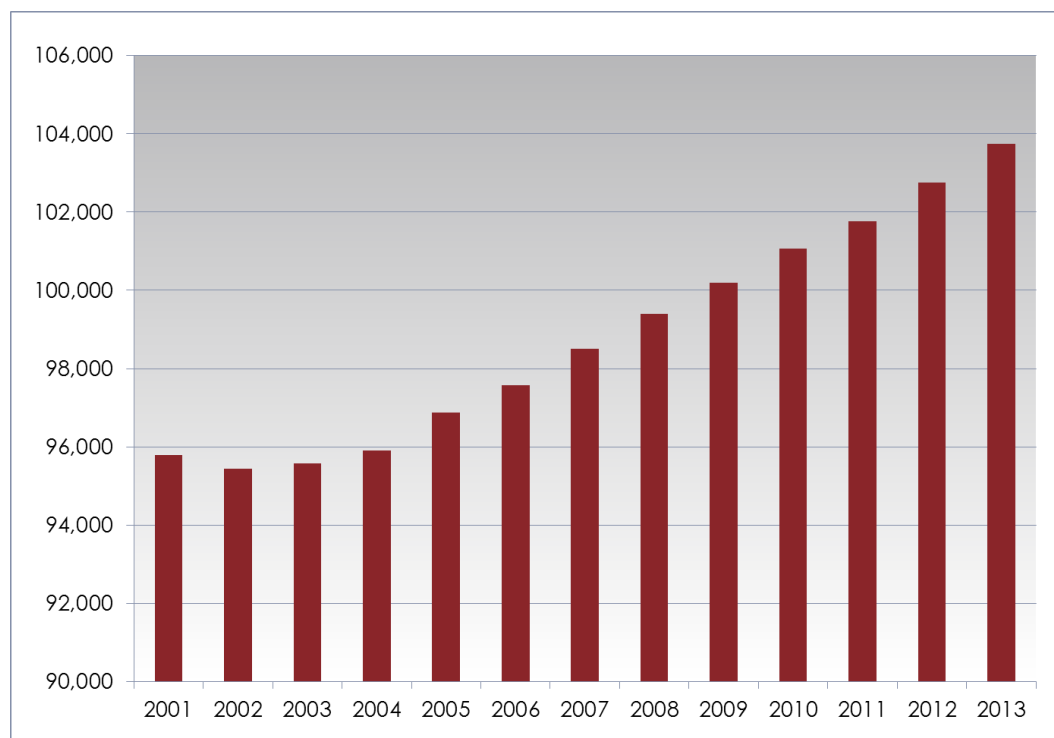
- 2.1 The demography of an area (i.e. population, household size, age structure) impacts strongly on the housing market and the type and quantity of housing required, the economic market and the employment/skills levels and occupation types present, and the retail spend patterns and needs.
- 2.2 This section examines the demography of Gravesham and Medway, comparing this with neighbouring authorities from the wider North Kent and Kent areas where relevant, as well as benchmarking against regional and national trends. Reviewing these key population drivers helps to develop a full understanding of how the housing market in Gravesham and Medway operates. This also contributes to the definition of the functional housing market area which will be undertaken in the Strategic Housing Market Area (SHMA) technical work stream.
- 2.3 This review of demographic trends establishes the baseline population position, including the structure and size of the current population. This data is sourced directly from the 2011 Census, which provides the most recent and robust count of population, with comparison made between the 2001 and 2011 Census data for certain variables. The 2013 mid-year population estimates are also used in a supplementary manner, providing an update to the Census data, however this data is not as robust. The components of recent population change are considered in order to understand how the population is likely to change in the future, and the population's ethnic composition is analysed, which is important for understanding the population influence on housing stock requirements.
- 2.4 Migration trends are analysed to understand the movement of people into and out of Gravesham and Medway, as are travel to work flows which indicate daily movements for employment. This analysis will feed specifically into the definition of the functional housing market area for the SHMA (along with other market focussed analysis such as house price levels and house price change) and the functional economic market area for the Employment Land Study (ELS).

### Current Population

- 2.5 The latest 2011 Census recorded a population of 101,720 people in Gravesham and 263,925 people in Medway. The latest ONS 2013 mid-year population estimates update these figures to 103,700 people in Gravesham (an increase of 1,980 people – 2%) and 271,100 people in Medway (an increase of 7,175 people – 3%).

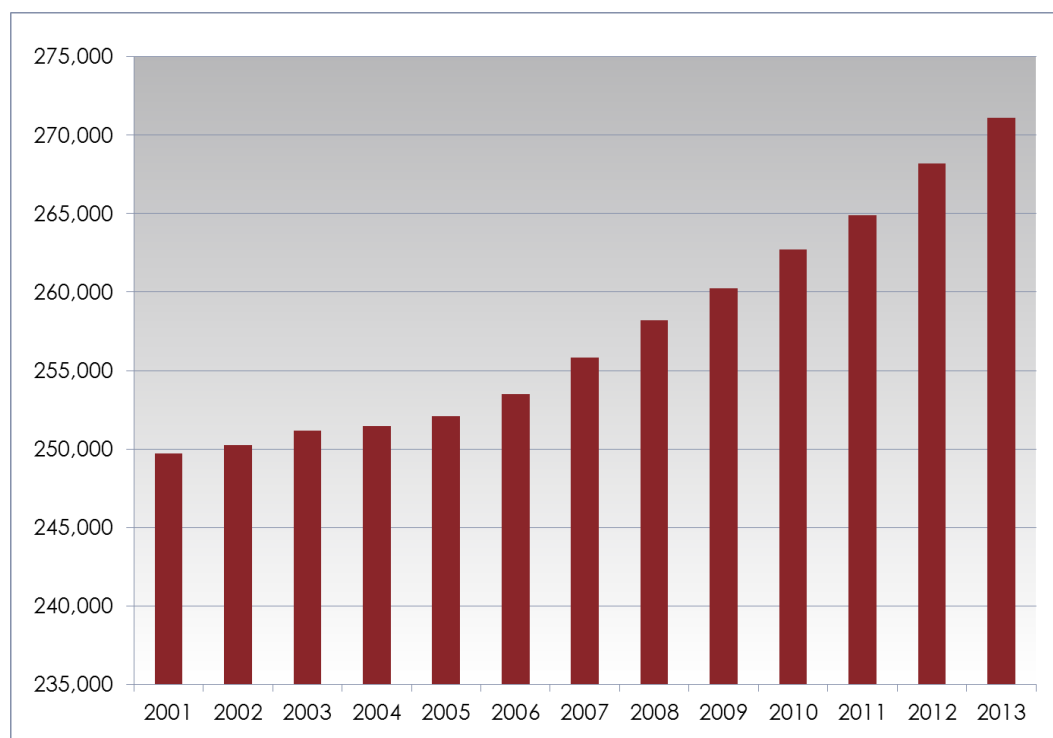
- 2.6 Figure 1 below shows this population change for Gravesham from 2001 to 2013, based on the mid-year population estimate. It suggests a long term growth trend, with gradual stepped increase over the last ten years following the plateau in population change between 2001 and 2004.

**Figure 1 - Gravesham Population Change (2001 - 2013)**



Source: ONS, 2001 & 2013

- 2.7 Figure 2 below shows this population change for Medway from 2001 to 2013, based on the mid-year population estimate. As with Gravesham, it suggests a trend of long term growth, which has shown greater annual increase over the second half of the period (from 2006-07 onwards).
- 2.8 The 2001 and 2011 Census population figures and 2013 mid-year estimate update figures are shown in Table 1 for Gravesham, Medway and comparator local, regional and national areas. This indicates that whilst population growth rates from 2001-13 have been very similar for Gravesham and Medway (8% and 9% respectively), this is relatively suppressed compared to the growth observed at the regional level for Kent (12%) and for neighbouring local authority areas (ranging from 13% growth in Swale to 17% growth in Dartford).

**Figure 2 - Medway Population Change (2001 - 2013)**

Source: ONS, 2001 & 2013

**Table 1 – 2001, 2011 & 2013 Population Figures**

	2001 Population	2011 Population	2013 Population	2001 – 2013 change
<b>Gravesham</b>	95,712	101,720	103,700	7,988 (8%)
<b>Medway</b>	249,488	263,925	271,100	21,612 (9%)
<b>Dartford</b>	85,906	97,365	100,600	14,694 (17%)
<b>Swale</b>	122,808	135,835	139,200	16,392 (13%)
<b>Maidstone</b>	138,945	155,143	159,300	20,355 (15%)
<b>Tonbridge &amp; Malling</b>	107,566	120,805	123,000	15,434 (14%)
<b>Kent</b>	1,329,719	1,463,740	1,493,500	163,781 (12%)
<b>South East</b>	8,000,645	8,634,750	8,792,600	791,955 (10%)
<b>England</b>	49,138,831	53,012,456	53,865,800	4,726,969 (10%)

Source: Census 2001, Census 2011 & ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates 2013

## Age Structure

### Gravesham

- 2.9 Gravesham has a growing population, which increased by 8% (103,800 people) in total over the 12 year period from 2001 – 2013. Table 2 and Figure 3 show the population from the 2001 and 2011 Census and 2013 mid-year population estimates, highlighting the age specific changes over the period.

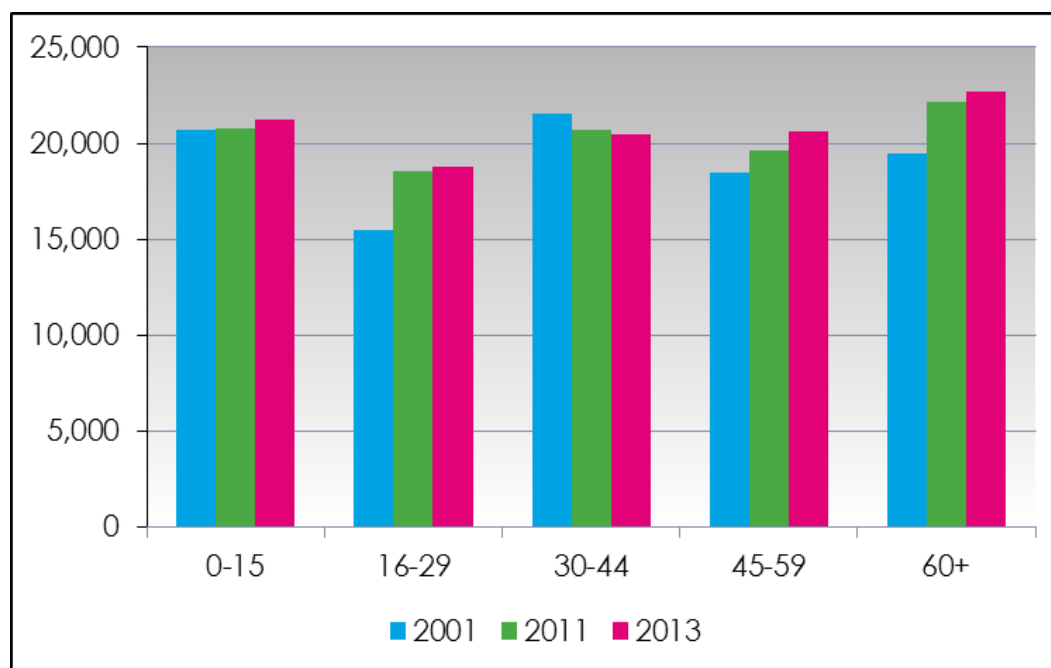
- 2.10 The 16% increase in the 60+ age cohort is the second highest proportional change over the period. This reflects the ageing nature of the Gravesham population. The low 3% growth level in the 0-15 age cohort further supports the ageing nature of the population, which reflects a regional and national ageing trend.

**Table 2 - Gravesham Population Age Distribution (2001 - 2013)**

Age	2001	2011	2013	% Change (2001-2013)
0-15	20,681	20,756	21,200	3%
16-29	15,487	18,538	18,800	21%
30-44	21,574	20,673	20,500	-5%
45-59	18,473	19,589	20,600	12%
60+	19,497	22,164	22,700	16%
<b>Total</b>	<b>95,712</b>	<b>101,720</b>	<b>103,800</b>	<b>8%</b>

Source: Census 2001, Census 2011 & ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates 2013

**Figure 3 - Gravesham Population Age Distribution (2001 - 2013)**

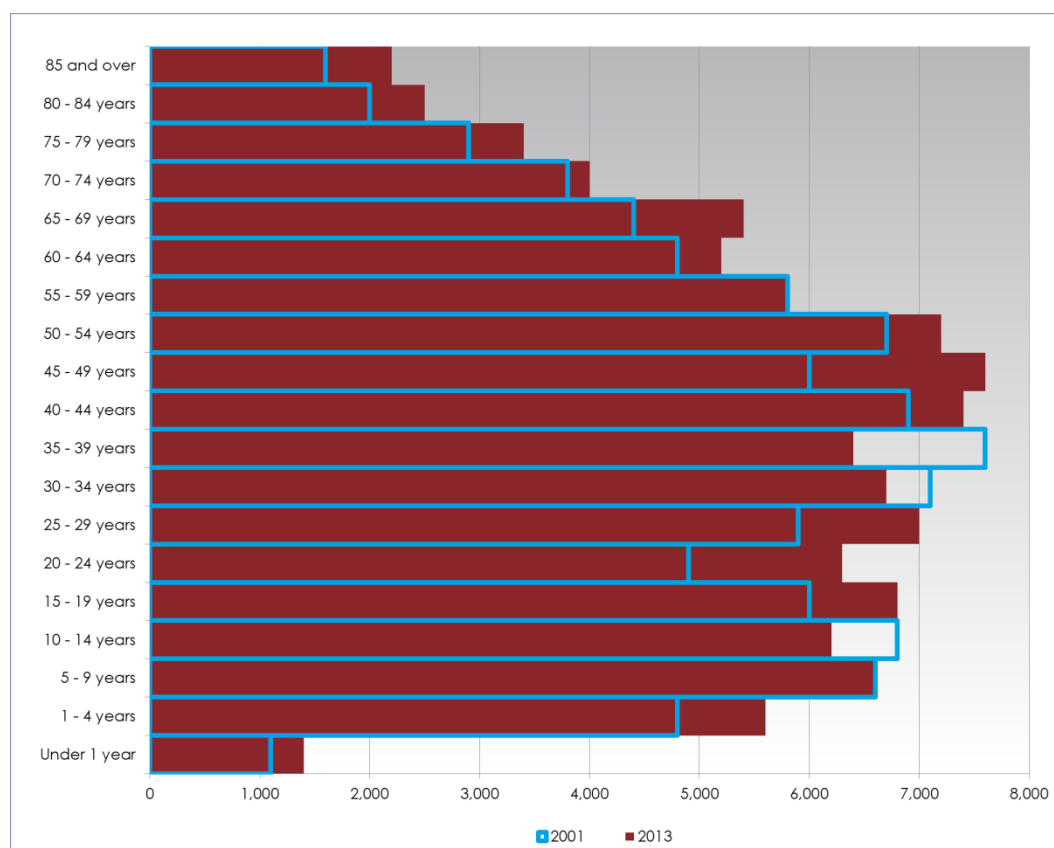


Source: Census 2001, Census 2011 & ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates 2013

- 2.11 The more interesting age-specific characteristic of the Gravesham population is the actual and proportional reduction in the 30-44 age cohort, reducing by 5% (1,074 people) over the 12 year period. This is shown most clearly in the 2001 & 2013 population pyramid in Figure 4, with substantial population reduction in the 30-34 and 35-39 age groups. There is also a reduction in the population of the 10-14 age group between 2001 and 2013, which represents the children of those in the reduced working age cohorts (however this is not captured as overall reduction in the 0-15 cohort because of increases in the other parts of this group).

- 2.12 This pattern is considered to reflect the influence of labour migration on Gravesham's population where young, mobile, working age groups are moving out of the area for employment reasons, supported by the net export impact of domestic migration shown in the components of change analysis. However, the components of change analysis also identifies a recent reversal in the net export trend of domestic migration in the past two years, suggesting that over the current Census period changes in this labour migration trend could be observed.
- 2.13 The reduction in the 30-44 age cohort has housing implications for the types of stock and stock size which may be required, as well as economic implications for local working, the area's skills and occupation levels, and the ability to secure local economic growth.

**Figure 4 - Gravesham Population Pyramid (2001 & 2013)**



Source: Census 2001 & ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates 2013

#### Medway

- 2.14 Like Gravesham, Medway also has a growing population, which increased by 9% (271,100 people) in total over the 12 year period from 2001 – 2013. Table 3 and Figure 5 show the population levels from the 2001 and 2011 Census and 2013 mid-year population estimates, highlighting the age specific changes over the period.

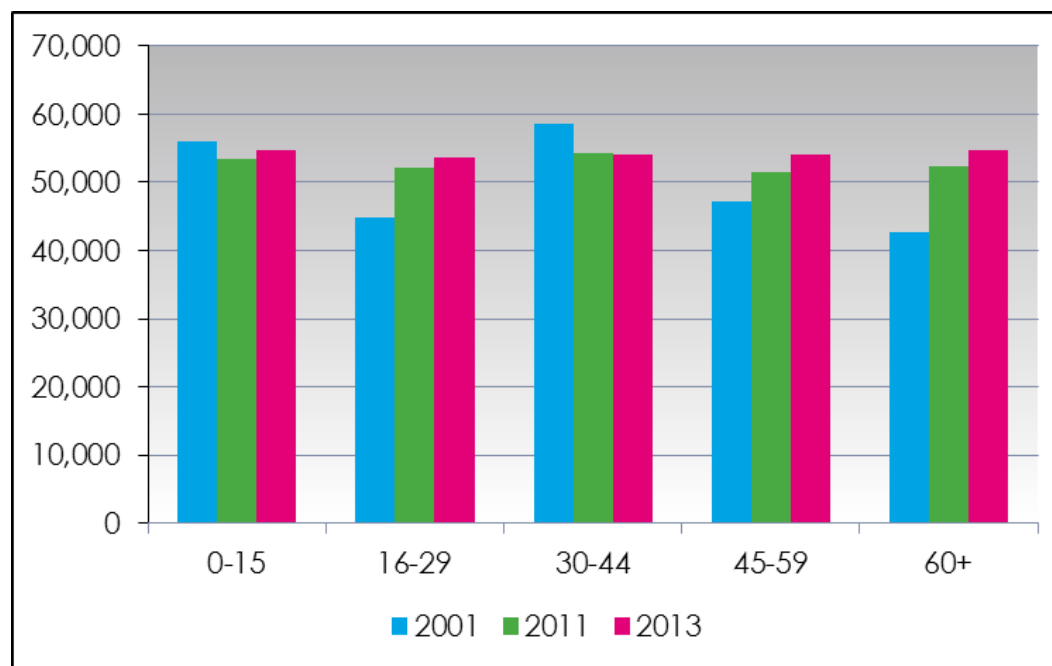
- 2.15 The 28% increase in the 60+ age cohort is the highest proportional change over the period. This reflects the ageing nature of the Medway population, which is a slightly more pronounced trend than is evident in Gravesham. The low 2% growth level in the 0-15 age cohort further emphasises the ageing nature of the population, which as already mentioned reflects a regional and national trend.

**Table 3 - Medway Population Age Distribution (2001 - 2013)**

Age	2001	2011	2013	% Change (2001-2013)
0-15	56,020	53,414	54,700	-2%
16-29	44,820	52,195	53,600	20%
30-44	58,695	54,321	54,000	-8%
45-59	47,248	51,536	54,000	14%
60+	42,705	52,459	54,800	28%
<b>Total</b>	<b>249,488</b>	<b>263,925</b>	<b>271,100</b>	<b>9%</b>

Source: Census 2001, Census 2011 & ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates 2013

**Figure 5 - Medway Population Age Distribution (2001 - 2013)**



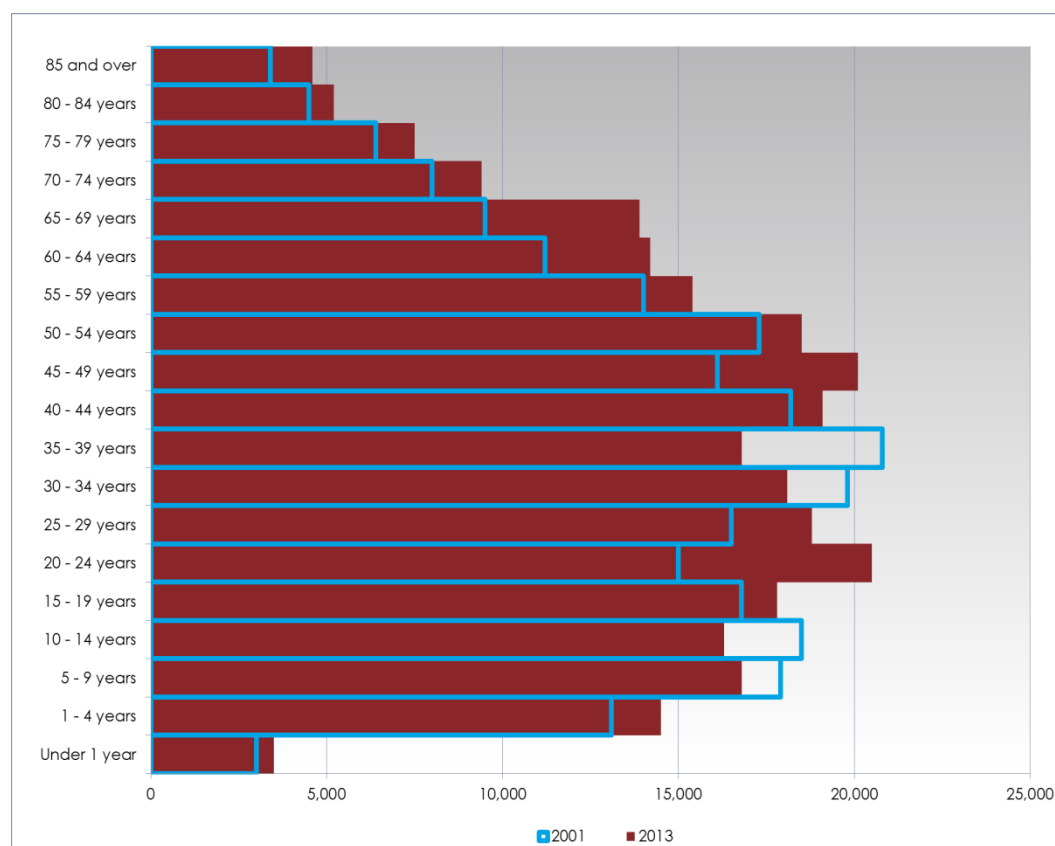
Source: Census 2001, Census 2011 & ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates 2013

- 2.16 There was an 8% reduction in the 30-44 age cohort over the 12 year period from 2001 – 2013, which was a reduction of 4,695 people. This reduction is shown very clearly in Figure 6, along with an associated reduction in children from 5-14 years who are considered to be the children of the 'missing' section of the working age population. The reduction in these children is captured by the 2% reduction in the 0-15 age cohort shown in Table 3.
- 2.17 As already suggested in relation to the same trend in Gravesham's population, the pattern shows how labour migration is influencing population change in Medway and corresponds with the net negative contribution of domestic migration to Medway shown in the earlier

components of change analysis. However the reversal of this trend resulting in domestic migration becoming a net importer in the past 3 years analysed suggests that there could be changes in the labour migration trend over the current Census period.

- 2.18 The reduction in the 30-44 age cohort has housing implications for the types of stock and stock size which may be required, as well as economic implications for local working, the area's skills and occupation levels, and the ability to secure local economic growth.

**Figure 6 - Medway Population Pyramid (2001 & 2013)**



Source: Census 2001 & ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates 2013

## Ethnicity

- 2.19 Table 4 and Figure 7 show the ethnic composition of Gravesham and Medway compared with neighbouring local authority areas and sub-regional, regional and national comparators. Gravesham exhibits the most ethnic diversity of all the comparator areas, as shown by its 83% proportion of white population, which is the smallest across all areas, and the 10% proportion of Asian/Asian British population, which is the largest across all areas. Gravesham shows most similarity with the national composition for England and the composition for the neighbouring authority Dartford.

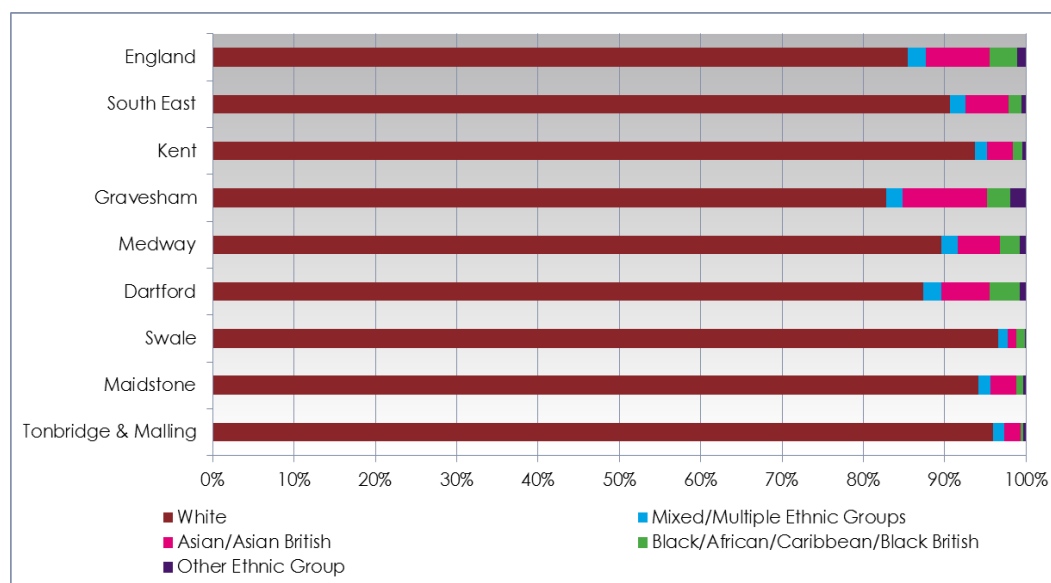
2.20 The ethnic composition of Medway exhibits slightly less ethnic diversity than Gravesham, although it still has significant diversity when compared with Kent, and neighbouring authorities Maidstone, Tonbridge and Malling and Swale. It has a proportion of 90% of white population and 5% Asian/Asian British population, therefore showing most similarity with neighbouring Dartford and the overall South East region.

**Table 4 - Ethnic Composition of Population (2011)**

	White	Mixed/ Multiple Ethnic Groups	Asian/Asian British	Black/African /Caribbean/ Black British	Other Ethnic Group	Total
England	85%	2%	8%	3%	1%	100%
South East	91%	2%	5%	2%	1%	100%
Kent	94%	2%	3%	1%	0%	100%
<b>Gravesham</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Medway</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Dartford	87%	2%	6%	4%	1%	100%
Swale	97%	1%	1%	1%	0%	100%
Maidstone	94%	2%	3%	1%	0%	100%
Tonbridge & Malling	96%	1%	2%	0%	0%	100%

Source: Census 2011

**Figure 7 - Ethnic Composition of Population (2011)**



Source: Census 2011

2.21 Consideration of the ethnic composition shown in the 2001 Census helps to understand the trends in ethnic composition over time. According to the 2001 Census data, 90% of Gravesham's population was white, 8% was Asian/Asian British and each of the remaining ethnic groups constituted 1%. For Medway 95% of the population was white, 3% was Asian/Asian British and each of the remaining ethnic groups constituted 1%. This shows that



ethnic diversity in both authorities has substantially increased over the ten year period from 2001 – 2011, particularly for the Asian and Black population groups.

- 2.22 The greater level of ethnic diversity in Gravesham is supported by the influence of international migration from 2001 – 2013 identified in the components of change analysis, which contributes to 69% of population growth over this period. Whereas, the 35% influence on population growth in Medway from 2001 – 2013 consolidated its lesser level of diversity compared with Gravesham.

## Components of Change

- 2.23 Gross population change at a national level occurs as a result of two factors; a difference between the number of births and deaths, and a difference between the number of people migrating into and out of the country (net migration). The components of change which contribute to the growth in Gravesham's population over the period from 2001 – 2013 are shown below in Table 5 and Figure 8, and those which contribute to Medway's growth are shown below in Table 6 and Figure 9.

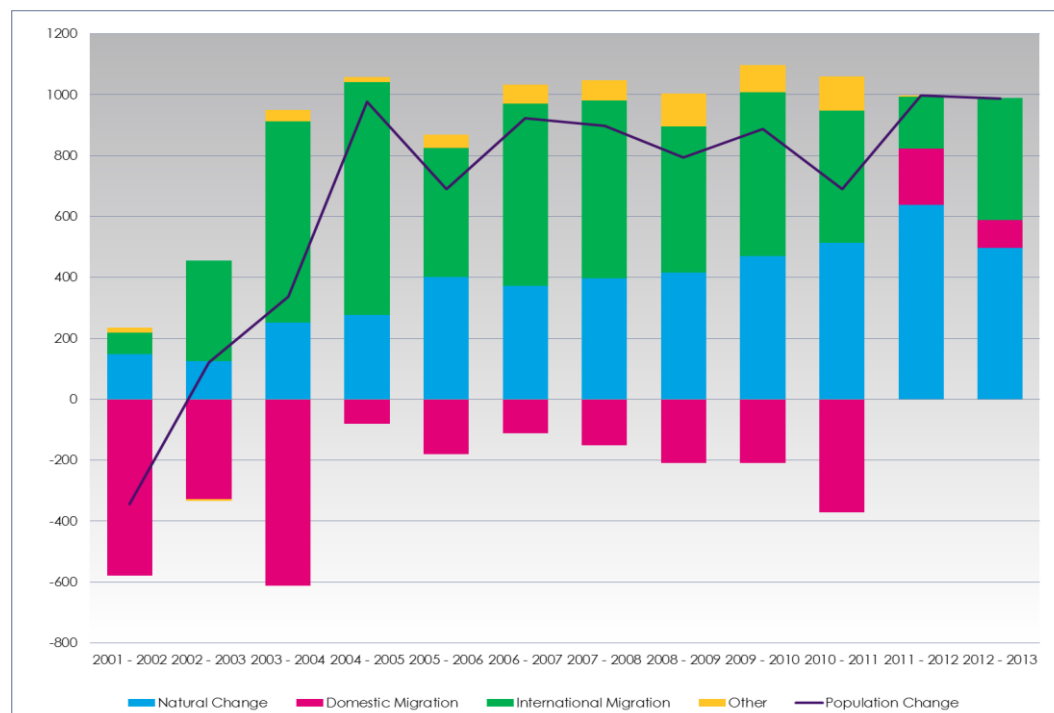
### Gravesham

- 2.24 International migration was the most significant contributor to population growth over the period, accounting for 5,457 more residents in Gravesham, 69% of the 7,961 population growth. It is evident from Figure 8 that this contribution has varied in scale over the 12 years, fluctuating from a low of +70 people from 2001 – 2002 to a high of +766 people from 2004 – 2005, however it has always resulted in net population gain.
- 2.25 Natural change contributed to 57% of total population growth in Gravesham over the period, with the number of births outweighing the number of deaths by 4,508. The net positive contribution from this component gradually increased from 2006 to 2012, but contributed less people between 2013-13 than in the previous year. Positive natural change is considered to be indicative of a relatively young population structure.
- 2.26 Domestic migration is the only component which had a negative influence on the population over the period, however its contribution has changed over the last two years. From 2001 – 2011 it accounted for a net loss of 2,826 people, but from 2011 – 2013 it accounted for a net gain of 275 people.

**Table 5 - Gravesham Components of Population Change (2001 - 2013)**

	2001 - 2013	
	Number	%
<b>Natural Change</b>	4508	57%
<b>Domestic Migration</b>	-2551	-32%
<b>International Migration</b>	5457	69%
<b>Other</b>	547	7%
<b>Population Change</b>	7,961	100%

Source: Census 2001, Census 2011 & ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates 2013

**Figure 8 - Gravesham Components of Population Change (2001 - 2013)**

Source: Census 2001, Census 2011 & ONS Mid Year Population Estimates 2013

### Medway

- 2.27 Natural change was the most significant contributor to population growth over the period (70% of total growth), with the number of births outweighing the number of deaths by 14,897. The net population increase resulting from natural change has gradually increased over the period, although the net increase from 2012-13 was slightly lower than it had been in the previous year. As for Gravesham, the positive contribution of natural change emphasises a relatively young age structure for Medway.
- 2.28 International migration accounted for 7,403 more residents in Medway over the 12 year period, 35% of the 21,401 population growth. As was the case for Gravesham, Figure 9 shows significant variation in its annual net contribution, fluctuating from a net reduction of 89 people from 2001-2002 to net increase of 2,063 people from 2006-2007.

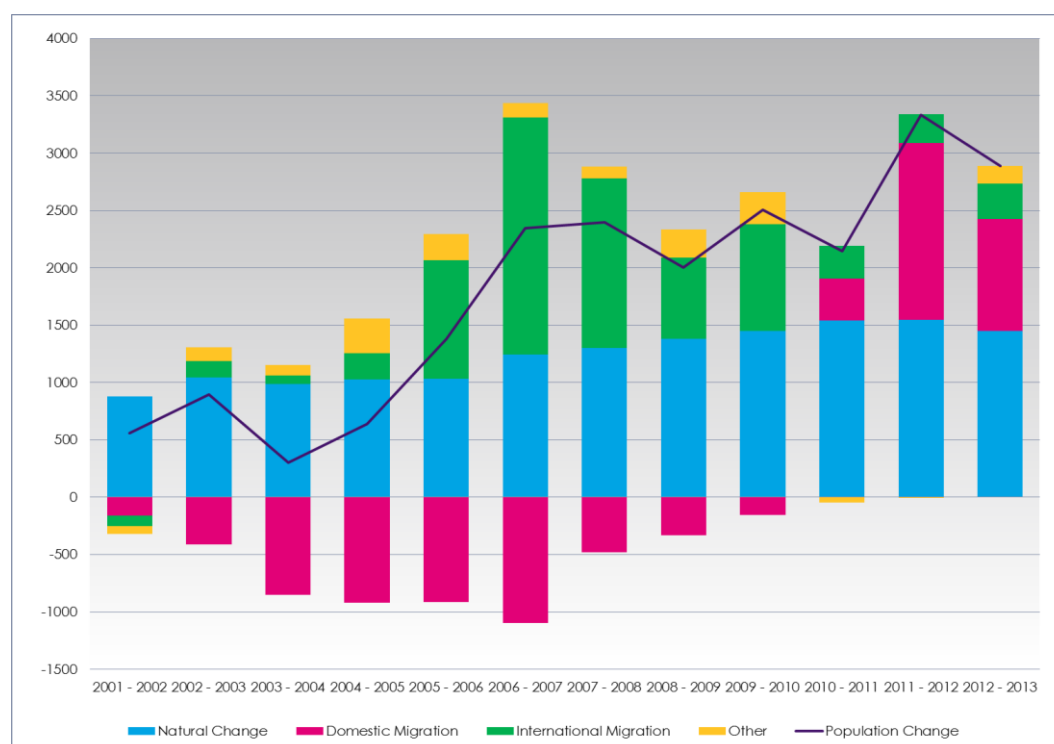
- 2.29 Domestic migration has had an overall negative contribution to population change over the period, accounting for a net loss of 2,439 people. However, a reversal in this trend has been observed for the past 3 years, contributing a net increase of 369 people from 2010-2011, 1,543 people from 2011-2012 and 973 people from 2012-2013.

**Table 6- Medway Components of Population Change (2001 - 2013)**

	2001 - 2013	
	Number	%
<b>Natural Change</b>	14897	70%
<b>Domestic Migration</b>	-2439	-11%
<b>International Migration</b>	7403	35%
<b>Other</b>	1540	7%
<b>Population Change</b>	21401	100%

Source: Census 2001, Census 2011 & ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates 2013

**Figure 9 - Medway Components of Population Change (2001 - 2013)**



Source: Census 2001, Census 2011 & ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates 2013

## Migration Trends

### Gravesham

- 2.30 Based on the 2013 internal migration flows **into Gravesham**, the strongest relationship is exhibited with Dartford, Medway and Bexley. Approximately 35% of those moving to the Borough came from these three locations, as shown in Table 7. The top five contributing

authorities (with the addition of Greenwich and Sevenoaks) constitute 45% of the total new residents moving into Gravesham.

**Table 7 - Flows Into Gravesham (2013)**

Area	Number of People	% of New Residents
<b>Dartford</b>	<b>829.5</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>Medway</b>	<b>423.0</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>Bexley</b>	<b>370.7</b>	<b>8%</b>
Greenwich	229.5	5%
Sevenoaks	217.7	5%
Lewisham	155.2	3%
Swale	93.1	2%
Tonbridge and Malling	90.6	2%
Canterbury	85.6	2%
Bromley	84.4	2%

Source: ONS 2013

- 2.31 The 2013 internal migration flows **out of Gravesham** reveal the strongest relationship with Medway and Dartford. Approximately 29% of those moving out from the Borough came from these two locations, as shown in Table 8. The top five destination authorities (with the addition of Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Malling and Maidstone) constitute 41% of the total outward moves out from Gravesham.

**Table 8 - Flows Out of Gravesham (2013)**

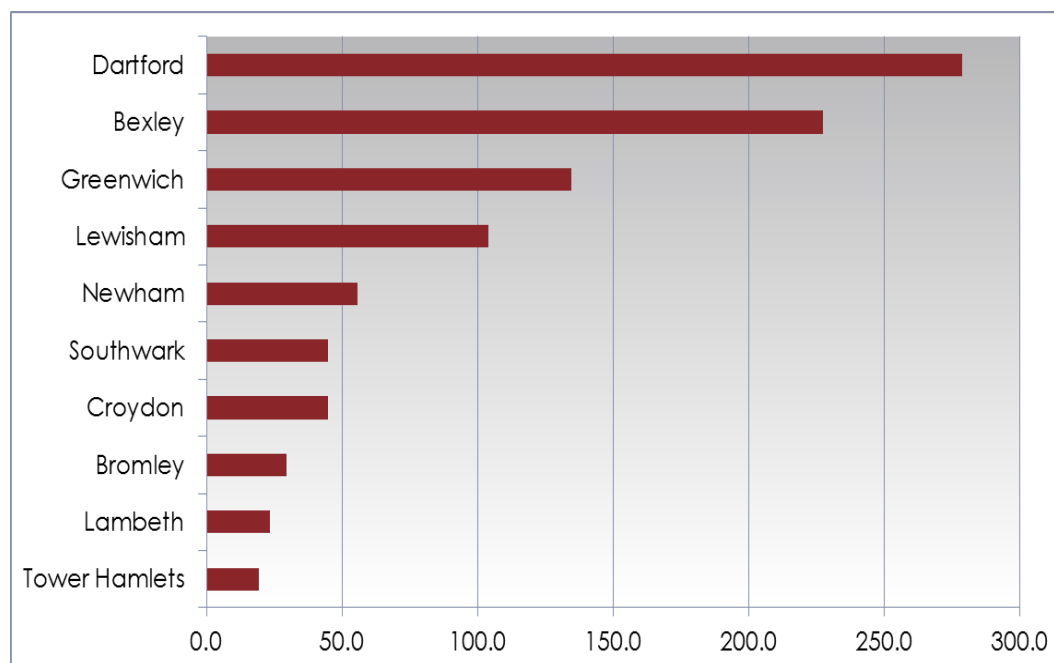
Area	Number of People	% of Outward Moves
<b>Medway</b>	<b>737.4</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>Dartford</b>	<b>550.7</b>	<b>12%</b>
Sevenoaks	225.5	5%
Tonbridge and Malling	166.4	4%
Maidstone	153.8	3%
Bexley	143.4	3%
Canterbury	109.9	2%
Swale	97.7	2%
Greenwich	94.8	2%
Thanet	62.7	1%

Source: ONS 2013

- 2.32 Figure 10 and Figure 11 show the net migration gains and losses for Gravesham in 2013. Nine of the top ten authorities from which residents are moving to Gravesham are London Boroughs. This reflects Gravesham's relationship with London (particularly East London and South London), contributed to by the transport accessibility and commuting links that facilitate working in London and living in Gravesham. House price change and affordability pressures are likely to be contributing to this trend of internal migration from London to Gravesham, which will be explored in later analysis.

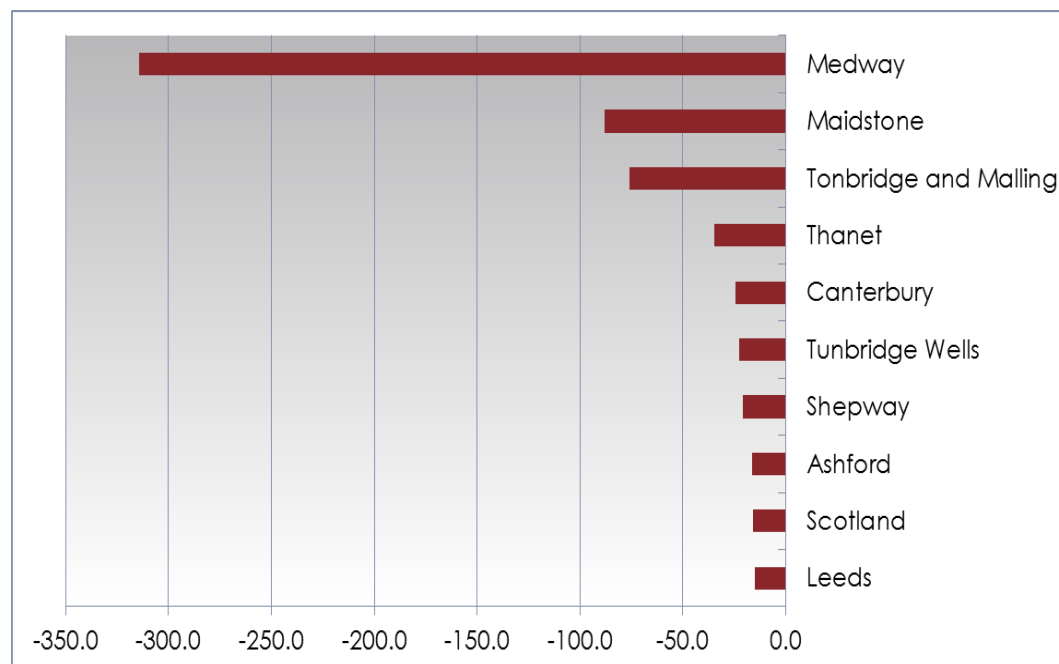
- 2.33 Neighbouring authority Dartford was the top contributor to net migration gain in Gravesham in 2013, demonstrating the strong connections between these two authorities in population terms.

**Figure 10 - Net Gravesham Migration Gains (2013)**



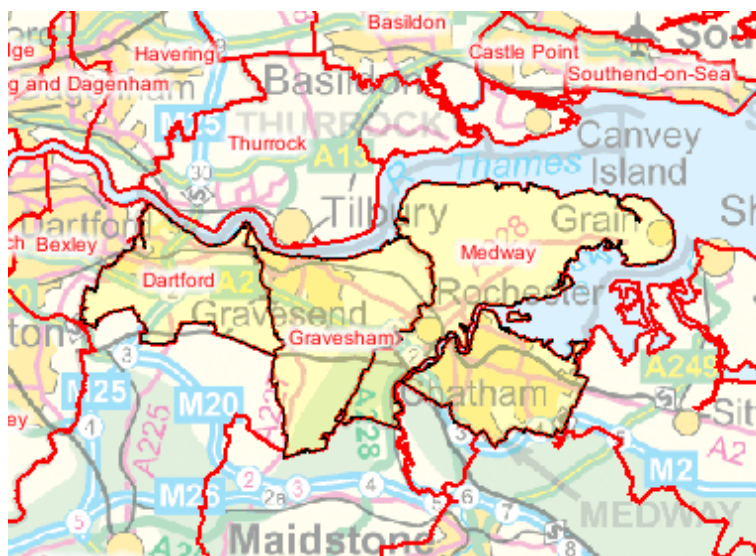
Source: ONS 2013

- 2.34 There is significant variation in the pattern of net migration loss from Gravesham, compared with that for net gains. None of the top ten net out migration destinations are London Boroughs, with the top eight being other nearby authorities within Kent (constituting a total loss of 597 people in 2013). This suggests that moves from Gravesham most commonly stay within the locality.
- 2.35 By far the most substantial net loss in 2013 was to Medway, with a loss of 314 people compared to the second highest loss of 88 people to Maidstone.
- 2.36 Consideration of the significance of London Boroughs contributing to net gains in Gravesham in combination with the significance of other Kent authorities in receiving net losses from Gravesham, shows that recent movement occurs eastwards, with Gravesham receiving new residents from London and residents also leaving Gravesham and moving further eastwards and dispersing to other authorities in the Kent region.

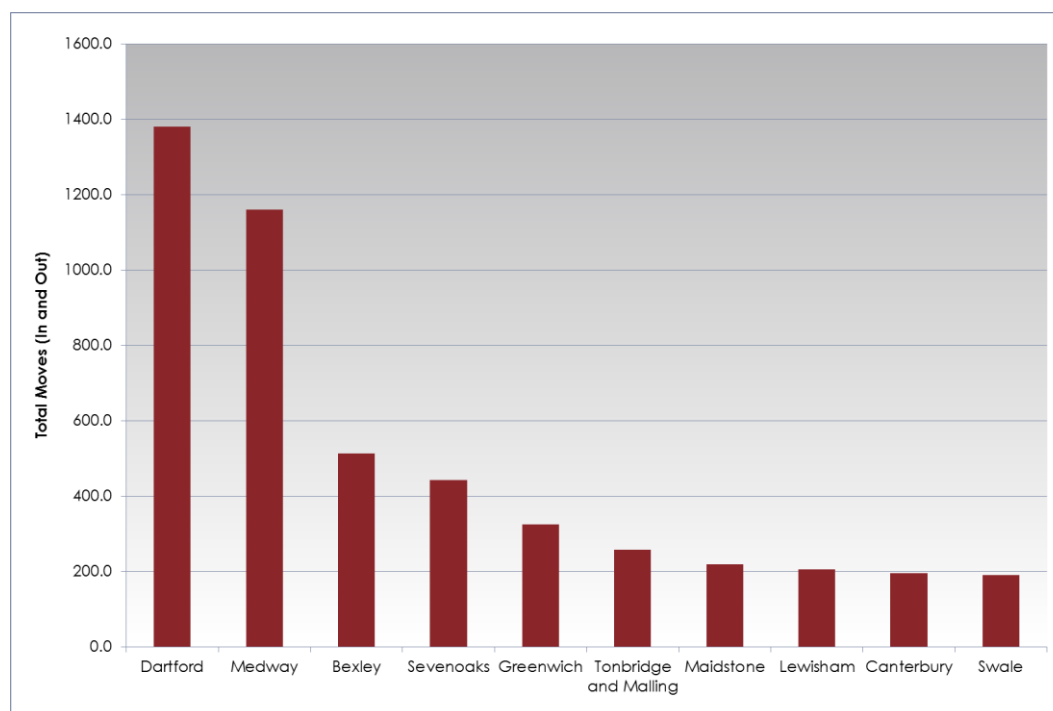
**Figure 11 - Net Gravesham Migration Losses (2013)**

Source: ONS 2013

- 2.37 The relative scale of aggregate flows, shown below in Figure 13, provides greater clarity in understanding the flows occurring between Gravesham and its 'providing' and 'receiving' authorities, helping to show Gravesham's strongest links.
- 2.38 This demonstrates the significance of the relationship of Gravesham with Dartford and Medway, substantially above the links with other nearby Kent authorities and London Boroughs. This three authority migration area is shown below in Figure 12.

**Figure 12 - Gravesham: Strongest Aggregate Migration Flow Area**

Source: Nomis 2015

**Figure 13 - Aggregate Gravesham Migration Flows (2013)**

Source: ONS 2013

### Medway

- 2.39 Based on the 2013 internal migration flows **into Medway**, the strongest relationship is exhibited with Maidstone, Swale and Gravesham. Approximately 20% of those moving to the authority came from these three locations, as shown in Table 9. The top five contributing authorities (with the addition of Tonbridge and Malling and Bexley) constitute 29% of the total new residents moving into Medway.
- 2.40 Compared with Gravesham, this analysis of flows into Medway shows a more evenly distributed level of contribution from a wider range of authorities. This is supported by the fact that the top ten contributing authorities to Gravesham contribute 56% of new residents, whereas the top ten contributing authorities to Medway contribute 42% of new residents.
- 2.41 The 2013 internal migration flows **out of Medway** reveal the strongest relationship with Maidstone, Swale and Tonbridge and Malling. Approximately 25% of those moving from the authority came from these three locations, as shown in Table 10. The top five contributing authorities (with the addition of Gravesham and Canterbury) constitute 33% of the total outward moves out from Medway.

**Table 9 - Flows into Medway (2013)**

Area	Number of People	% of New Residents
<b>Maidstone</b>	<b>883.8</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b>Swale</b>	<b>752.4</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>Gravesham</b>	<b>737.4</b>	<b>6%</b>
Tonbridge and Malling	593.7	5%
Bexley	485.9	4%
Greenwich	369.2	3%
Lewisham	335.8	3%
Dartford	326.1	3%
Canterbury	285.8	2%
Bromley	279.0	2%

Source: ONS 2013

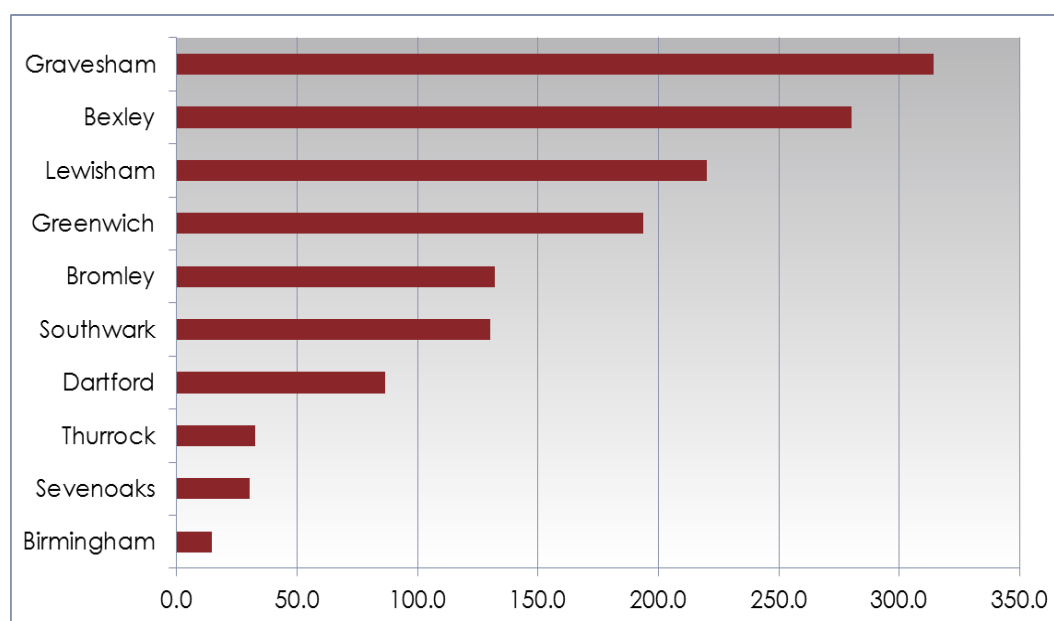
**Table 10 - Flows out of Medway (2013)**

Area	Number of People	% of Outward Moves
<b>Maidstone</b>	<b>982.8</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>Swale</b>	<b>911.0</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>Tonbridge and Malling</b>	<b>697.8</b>	<b>7%</b>
Gravesham	423.0	4%
Canterbury	381.1	4%
Thanet	264.8	2%
Dartford	239.7	2%
Bexley	205.7	2%
Ashford	189.6	2%
Greenwich	175.5	2%

Source: ONS 2013

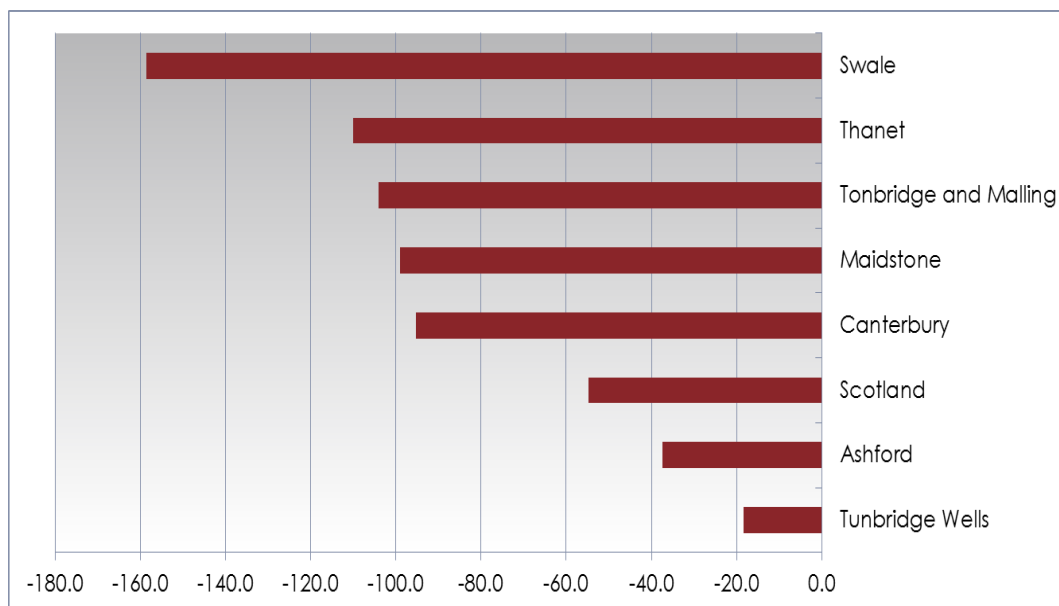
- 2.42 Figure 14 and Figure 15 show the net migration gains and losses for Medway in 2013. Five of the top ten authorities from which residents are moving to Medway are London Boroughs, and four of the top ten are nearby Kent authorities. This reveals the relationship of Medway with both London and Kent, reflecting the contribution of London house price change and affordability pressures to the internal migration trend from London to Medway, which will be explored in later analysis, and the fluidity of settlement across authority boundaries in the Kent region.



**Figure 14 - Net Medway Migration Gains (2013)**

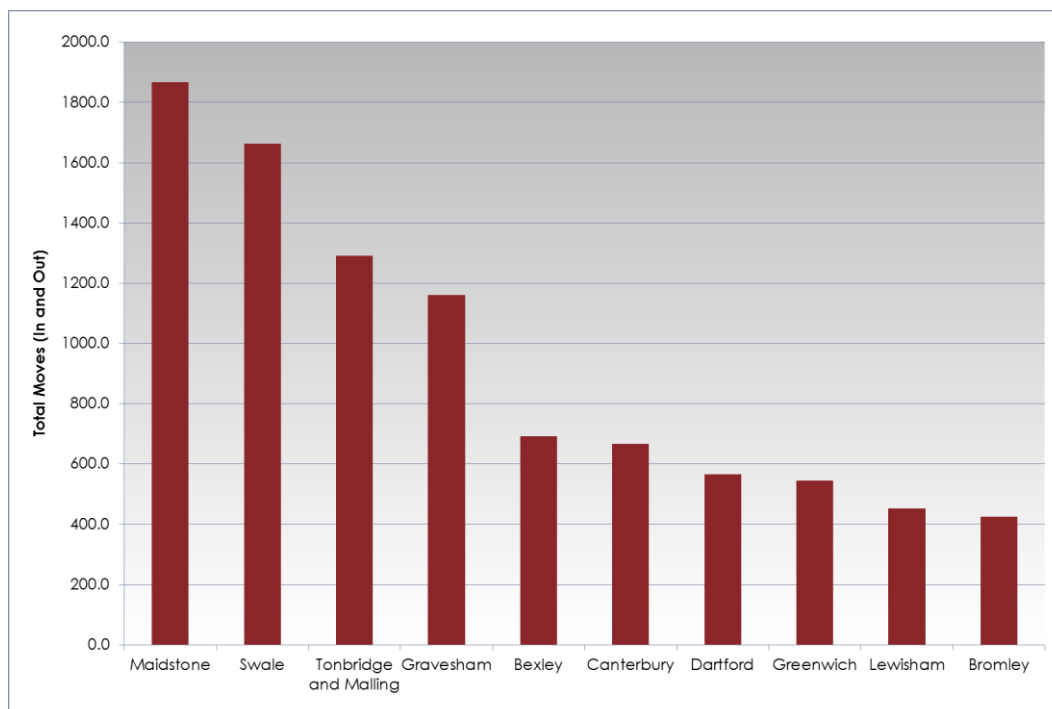
Source: ONS 2013

- 2.43 There is significant variation in the pattern of net migration loss from Medway, compared with that for net gains. None of the top ten net out migration destinations are London Boroughs, with all except the eighth (Scotland) being nearby authorities in the Kent region (constituting a total loss of 578 people in 2013). This suggests that as for Gravesham, moves from Medway most commonly stay within the locality.
- 2.44 The most substantial net loss in 2013 was to Swale, with a loss of 159 people, closely followed by losses between 110 and 95 people for Thanet, Tonbridge and Malling, Maidstone and Canterbury.
- 2.45 The analysis of Medway's net migration gains and losses suggests that Medway has a closer local relationship with authorities within the Kent region than Gravesham. Although there is a relationship with London evident in net migration gains, this is not as pronounced as the strength of the relationship between Gravesham and London, which is reinforced by Gravesham's stronger transport links with the capital.

**Figure 15 - Net Medway Migration Losses (2013)**

Source: ONS 2013

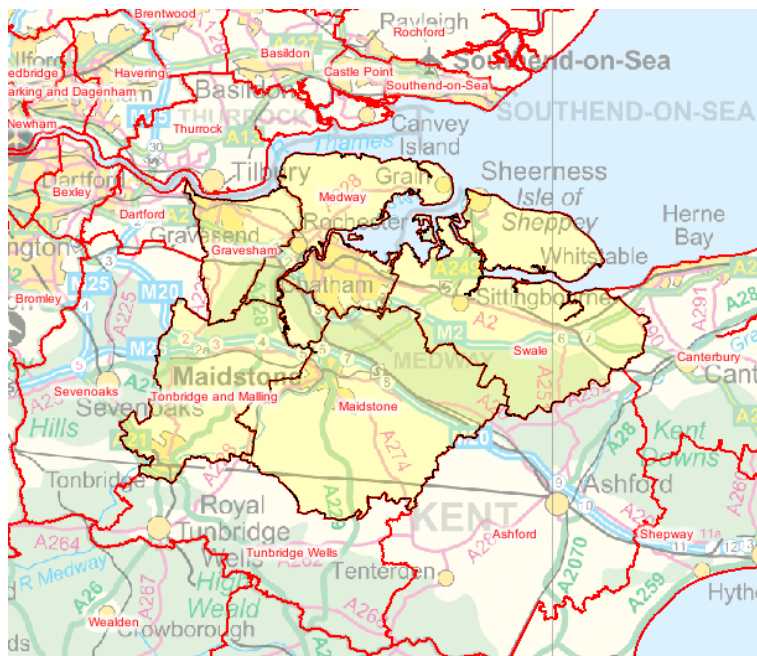
- 2.46 The relative scale of aggregate flows, shown below in Figure 16, provides greater clarity in understanding the flows occurring between Medway and its 'providing' and 'receiving' authorities, helping to show Medway's strongest links.

**Figure 16 - Aggregate Medway Migration Flows (2013)**

Source: ONS 2013

- 2.47 This shows the significance of the relationship of Medway with Maidstone, Swale, Tonbridge and Malling and Gravesham, above the links with London Boroughs and other nearby Kent authorities. This five authority migration area is shown below in Figure 17.

**Figure 17 - Medway: Strongest Aggregate Migration Flow Area**



Source: ONS 2013

- 2.48 The total in and out flows for both Gravesham and Medway, and the resultant net flow for each authority in 2013, are shown below in Table 11. When compared against the total 2013 total population figures for Gravesham and Medway the net flow figures equate to 0.1% of total population for Gravesham and 0.4% of total population for Medway, showing similarity despite the variation in actual numbers.

**Table 11 - Gravesham and Medway Total and Net Flows (2013)**

	Total Inflow	Total Outflow	Net Flow
<b>Gravesham</b>	4,537	4,445	92
<b>Medway</b>	11,639	10,666	973

Source: ONS 2013

## Economic Activity

- 2.49 The economic activity levels for Gravesham, Medway and comparator areas are shown below in Table 12 and Figure 18.
- 2.50 The total economic activity levels shown are similar to all other comparator areas. The lowest proportion of economic activity is for Swale (69%) and the highest proportion is for

Dartford (75%), showing a difference of only 6%. Both Gravesham and Medway have 71% of the population who are economically active, and they exhibit a very similar economic activity profile across all sub-categories. Dartford shows most variation from the typical profile for these areas.

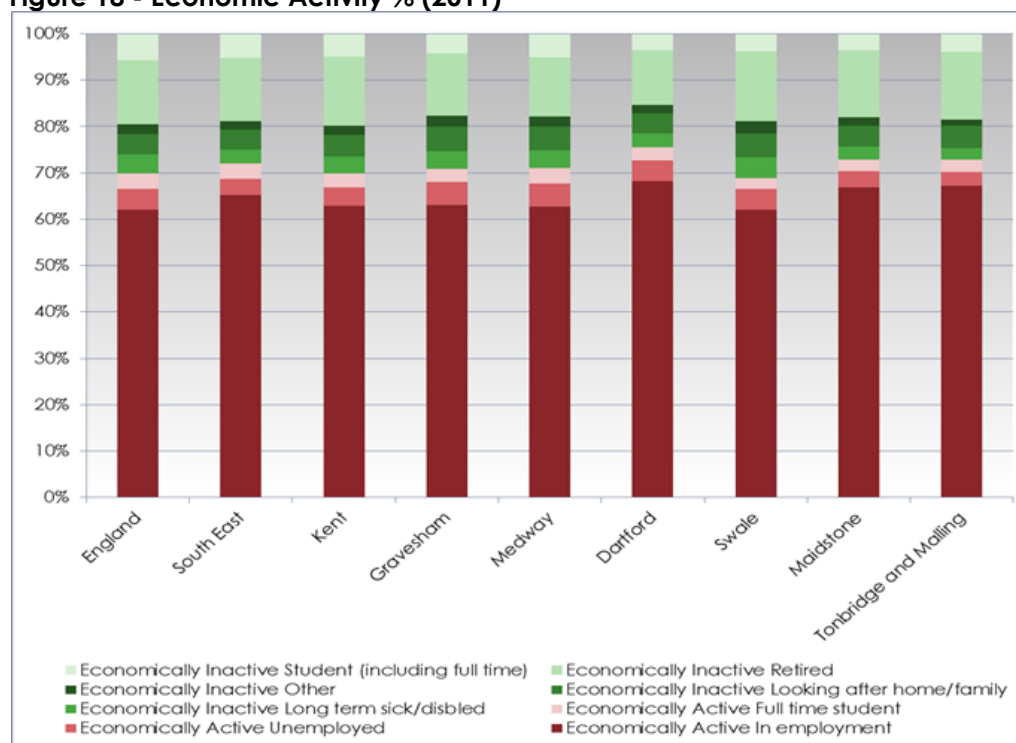
- 2.51 The proportion of the population who is economically active and in employment is the largest across all comparator areas, and the proportion of the population who is economically inactive and retired is the second largest across all areas.

**Table 12 - Economic Activity % (2011)**

	Economically Active			Economically Inactive				
	In employment	Unemployed	Full time student	Long term sick/disabled	Looking after home/family	Other	Retired	Student (including full time)
<b>England</b>	62%	4%	3%	4%	4%	2%	14%	6%
<b>South East</b>	65%	3%	3%	3%	4%	2%	14%	5%
<b>Kent</b>	63%	4%	3%	4%	5%	2%	15%	5%
<b>Gravesham</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Medway</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Dartford</b>	68%	4%	3%	3%	4%	2%	12%	4%
<b>Swale</b>	62%	5%	2%	4%	5%	3%	15%	4%
<b>Maidstone</b>	67%	3%	3%	3%	4%	2%	14%	4%
<b>Tonbridge and Malling</b>	67%	3%	3%	2%	5%	1%	14%	4%

Source: Census 2011

**Figure 18 - Economic Activity % (2011)**



Source: Census 2011

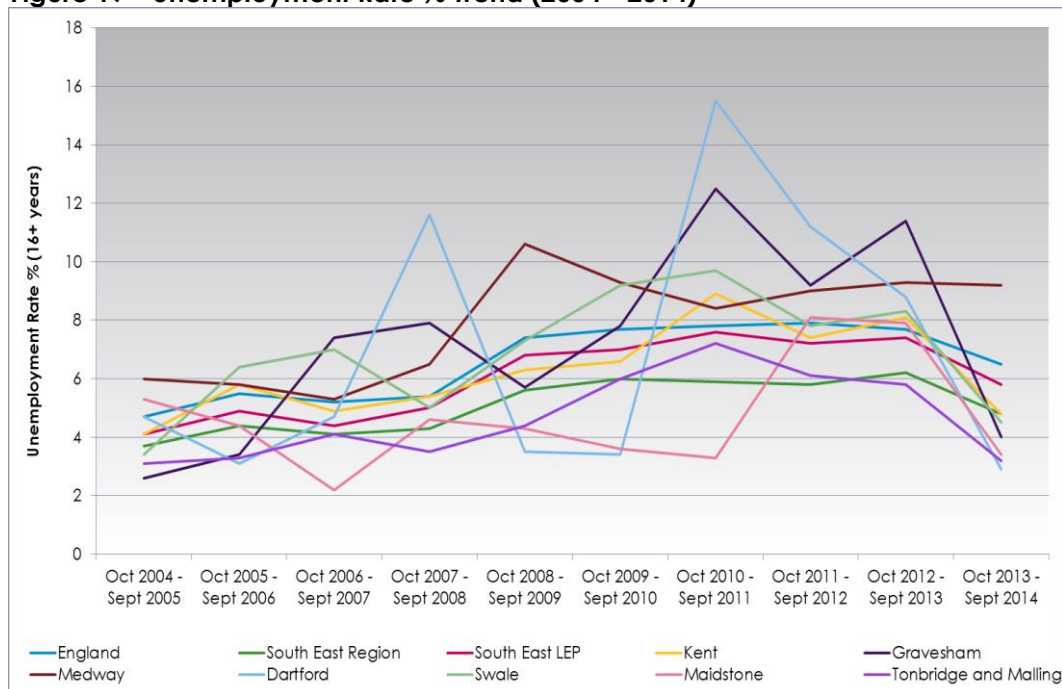
- 2.52 Gravesham and Medway have the same proportion of economically active population who are in employment, at 63%. This is similar to Swale (61%), and the Kent, South East and England proportions (62%, 63% and 65% respectively). However, other neighbouring authorities perform slightly better. Maidstone and Tonbridge and Malling have 67% of their economically active population in employment, and this increases to 68% for Dartford, which is the highest across all areas.
- 2.53 5% of the economically active population are unemployed in both Gravesham and Medway, which is the same as the proportion for Swale, and 1-2% higher than the proportion across other comparator areas.
- 2.54 Gravesham and Medway have a very similar proportion of economically inactive population who are retired, at 14% and 13% respectively. This is similar to the 14% and 15% proportions for the other comparator areas, with the exception of Dartford which has a slightly lower 12% of economically inactive population who are retired.
- 2.55 Gravesham and Medway have the same proportion of economically inactive population who are looking after home/family, at 5%. This is similar to all other comparator areas which have either 4% or 5% in this sub-category.
- 2.56 The economically active and inactive student populations are very similar across areas, so whilst this sub-category of Gravesham and Medway's populations will be considered specifically in relation to housing requirement and economic impact in the technical work streams, they do not show levels which are extraordinary in the context of the wider Kent and South East comparators, or in the national context.

## Unemployment

- 2.57 To consider unemployment levels in Gravesham and Medway, benchmarked against comparator areas, unemployment rates for those aged 16+ are analysed over the ten year period from 2004 – 2014.
- 2.58 As shown below in Figure 19, there is significant variation in the unemployment trends for different areas from 2004 – 2014. The trends for Gravesham and Medway have tracked very differently over the period. Gravesham started at a 2.6% unemployment level in 2004 and by 2014 this has increased to 4%. However, this masks substantial fluctuations with peaks of 7.4% in 2006, 7.9% in 2007, 12.5% in 2010 and 11.4% in 2012. Medway started at a significantly higher 6% unemployment level in 2004 which has increased to 9.2% by 2014. Its trajectory also fluctuated, falling to a low of 5.3% in 2006 and a peak of 10.6% in 2008.

- 2.59 In 2004 Gravesham had the lowest unemployment rate (2.6%) of all areas compared, with Tonbridge and Malling the next lowest (3.1%). By 2014 Gravesham had the fourth lowest unemployment rate (4%) with Maidstone (3.4%), Tonbridge and Malling (3.2%) and Dartford (2.9%) below it.
- 2.60 In 2004 Medway had the highest unemployment rate (6%) of all areas compared here, with Maidstone the next highest (5.3%). By 2014 Medway again had the highest unemployment rate (9.2%), significantly above the other areas, with England the next highest at 6.5%.
- 2.61 Of the ten authorities analysed here, only Dartford and Maidstone showed an overall reduction in their unemployment rate when comparing the 2004 and 2014 levels, of 1.8% and 1.9% respectively. England, the South East region, the South East LEP, Gravesham and Swale showed an increase of 1-2%, Kent and Tonbridge and Malling showing an increase of less than 1%, however Medway showed the largest increase of 3.2%.
- 2.62 Across the wider Kent and South East there was an increase in unemployment likely driven by the economic recession, and whilst the majority of areas are now exhibiting a decreasing trend in unemployment, very few (with the exception of Maidstone and Tonbridge and Malling) have recovered to pre-recession levels.

**Figure 19 - Unemployment Rate % Trend (2004 - 2014)**

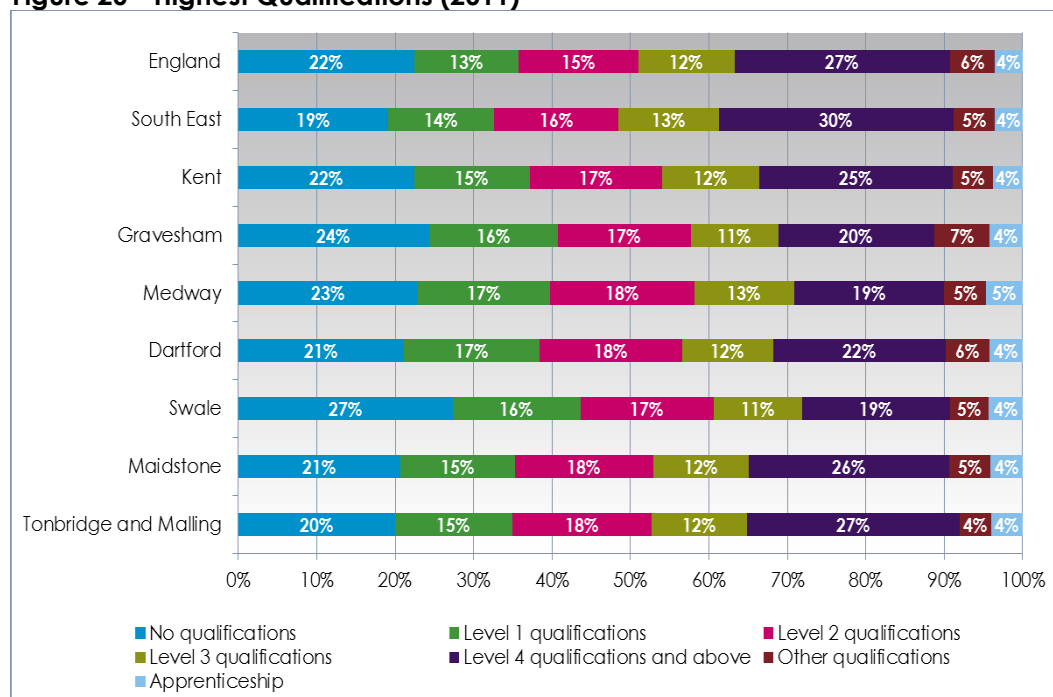


Source: APS 2015

## Qualification Levels

- 2.63 The skills profile of the District will be critical in attracting and supporting future economic growth, with businesses seeking locations with an available pool of suitably skilled labour.
- 2.64 Figure 20 shows the skill profiles for Gravesham and Medway in 2011 compared with the local, regional and national benchmark areas. This identifies general comparability in the qualifications profiles for all areas, with some more fine grained variation in exact proportions. There is very close alignment between the qualifications profiles for Gravesham and Medway, with only 1-2% variations in any given qualification category.
- 2.65 When comparing the Gravesham and Medway proportions to the wider Kent area there is a slightly higher proportion of no and lower qualifications (level 1 and 2) for Gravesham and Medway (both with 58% of the 16+ population) than Kent (54%). Kent has 37% of the 16+ population with level 3 and 4+ qualifications, compared to 31% for Gravesham and 32% for Medway. The national level of 3 and 4+ qualifications is 40%, which is significantly higher than Gravesham and Medway.

**Figure 20 - Highest Qualifications (2011)**



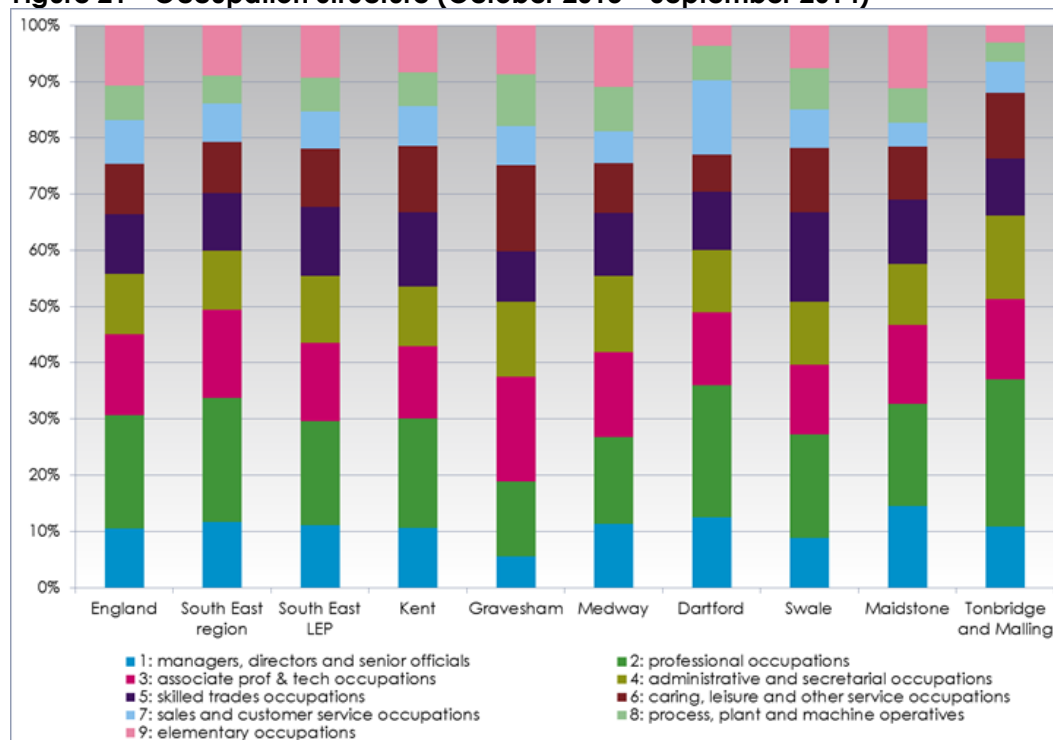
Source: Census 2011

- 2.66 Qualifications levels can be reflective of the occupational engagement of the population in a place. The occupational structure relates to the jobs people do and is always changing.

## Occupation Structure

- 2.67 The occupational structure of Gravesham, Medway and comparator areas is shown below in Figure 21. Similarity in the occupation structure across all areas is evident, however there are fine grained variations within this.
- 2.68 Gravesham shows a low proportion of managerial and professional occupations, with a total of 18.9% compared to the proportion of 26.5% for Medway, and proportions ranging from 27.2% (Swale) to 37% (Tonbridge and Malling). The occupation structure profile for Medway is more aligned with the other comparator areas than the profile for Gravesham.
- 2.69 The most varied profile across all comparator areas appears to be for Tonbridge and Malling, which shows the highest proportion of managerial and professional occupations and a significantly lower proportion of sales, process and elementary occupations, with a total of 12% for these three levels compared to a range of 21.4% (Kent) up to 24.8% (Gravesham) across the comparator areas.
- 2.70 The highest proportion of the Gravesham workforce are engaged in associate, professional and technical occupations (18.6%), whereas the highest proportion of the Medway workforce are engaged in professional occupations (15.3%), closely followed by associate, professional and technical occupations (15%).

**Figure 21 - Occupation Structure (October 2013 – September 2014)**



Source: APS 2015



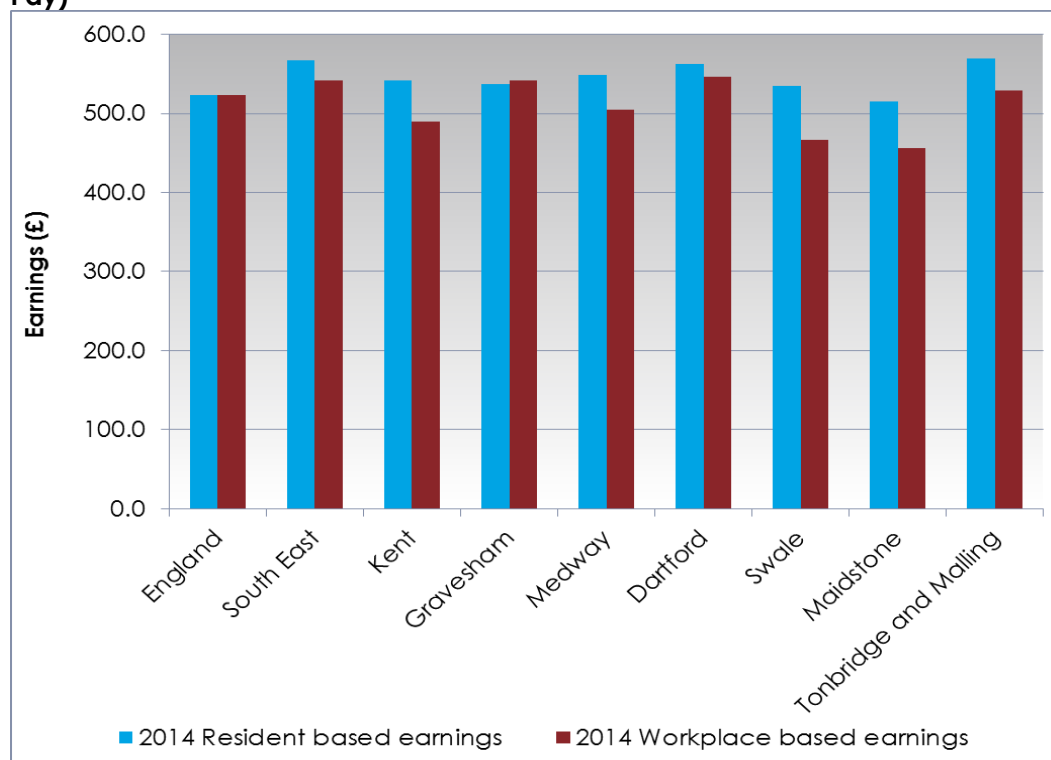
## Earnings

- 2.71 Data from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) provides information about the levels, distribution and make-up of earnings and hours worked for employees in all industries and occupations<sup>1</sup>.
- 2.72 The residence based earnings data from ASHE provides detail of the earnings of employees who live in an area, whereas the workplace based earnings data provides detail of the earnings of employees who are working in an area.

### Median Gross Weekly Earnings

- 2.73 Figure 22 compares residence based and workplace based earnings in 2014 for Gravesham, Medway and local, regional and national comparator areas, based on **median gross weekly pay**.

**Figure 22 - 2014 Residence based and Workplace based Earnings (Median Gross Weekly Pay)**



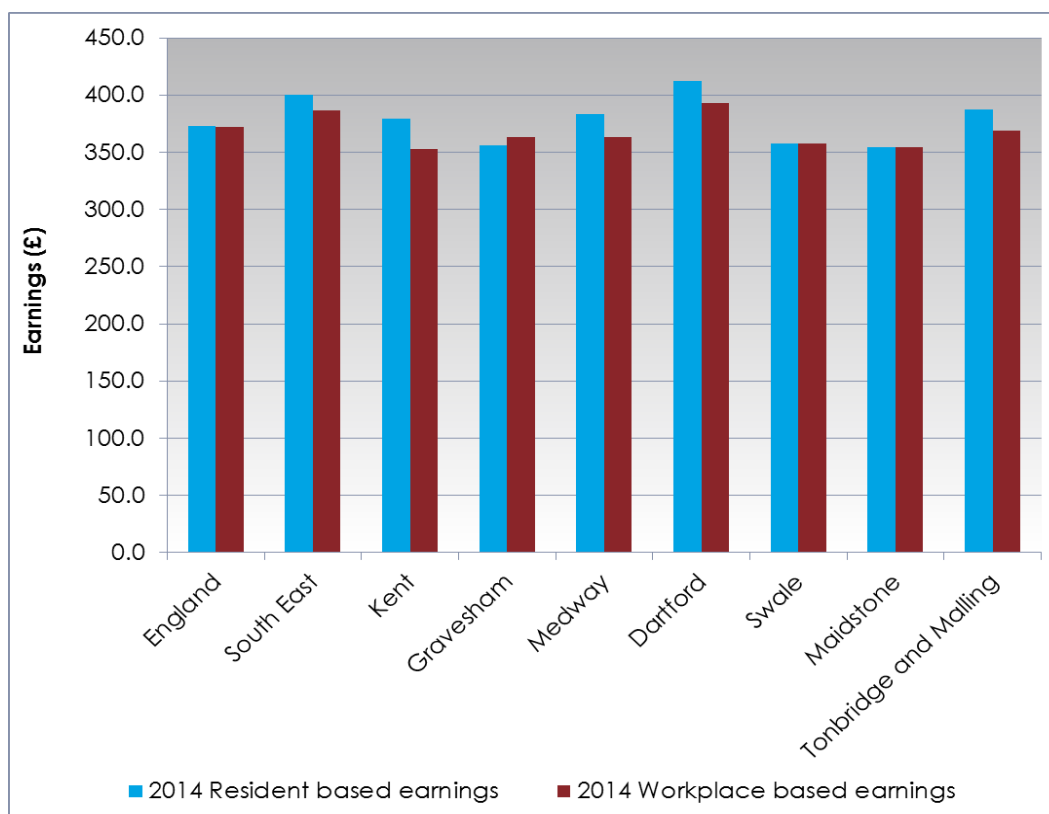
Source: ASHE 2015

<sup>1</sup> Source: ONS – Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings

- 
- 2.74 For both residence based and workplace based median earnings, Gravesham and Medway are mid-placed within the range exhibited across all areas.
- 2.75 For Gravesham the **residence based median earnings** are £537. For Medway the residence based median earnings are £549. This compares with resident based median earnings of £542 for Kent, £567 for the South East and £524 for England. Gravesham has lower residence based median earnings than Medway, which indicates that those who reside in Gravesham earn less than those who reside in Medway, at the median level.
- 2.76 For Gravesham the **workplace based median earnings** are £542. For Medway the workplace based median earnings are £505. This compares with workplace based median earnings of £490 in Kent, £541 in the South East and £523 in England. Gravesham has higher workplace based median earnings than Medway, which indicates that those who are employed in Gravesham earn more than those who are employed in Medway, at the median level.
- 2.77 Gravesham has a difference of £5 between its residence based median earnings (£537) and workplace based median earnings (£542). This shows very little difference in the median earnings of those who reside in Gravesham and those who are employed within the District.
- 2.78 Medway has a difference of £44 between its residence based median earnings (£549) and workplace based median earnings (£505). This shows that those who reside in Medway have significantly higher median weekly pay than those who are employed in the Authority.

### Lower Quartile Gross Weekly Earnings

- 2.79 Figure 23 compares residence based and workplace based earnings in 2014 for Gravesham, Medway and local, regional and national comparators, based on **lower quartile gross weekly pay**.

**Figure 23 - 2014 Resident and Household based Earnings (Lower Quartile Gross Weekly Pay)**

Source: ASHE 2015

- 2.80 For residence based LQ earnings Gravesham has the second lowest figure, whereas Medway is towards the upper end of the range across comparator areas. For workplace based LQ earnings both Gravesham and Medway are mid-placed within the range exhibited across all areas.
- 2.81 For Gravesham the **residence based LQ earnings** are £356. For Medway the residence based median earnings are £383. This compares with residence based median earnings of £379 for Kent, £400 for the South East and £373 for England. Gravesham has lower residence based LQ earnings than Medway, which indicates that those who reside in Gravesham earn less than those who reside in Medway, at the lower quartile level.
- 2.82 For Gravesham the **workplace based LQ earnings** are £363. For Medway the workplace based LQ earnings are also £363. This compares with workplace based LQ earnings of £353 in Kent, £386 in the South East and £372 in England. Gravesham and Medway have the same workplace based LQ earnings, which indicates that those who are employed in Gravesham earn the same as those employed in Medway, at the lower quartile level.

- 2.83 Gravesham has a difference of £7 between its residence based LQ earnings (£356) and workplace based LQ earnings (£363). This shows very little difference in the LQ earnings of those who reside in Gravesham and those who are employed within the District.
- 2.84 Medway has a difference of £20 between its residence based LQ earnings (£383) and workplace based LQ earnings (£363). This shows that those who reside in Medway have higher LQ weekly pay than those who are employed in the Authority.

## Income

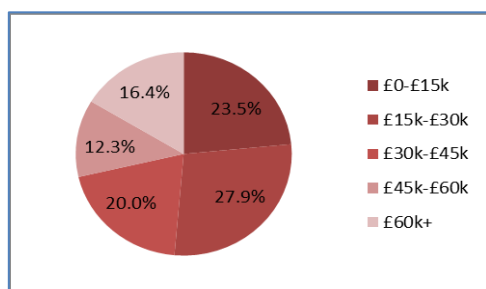
- 2.85 The 2013 upper quartile, median, mean, median and lower quartile household income levels for Gravesham and Medway are very similar, as are the profiles of mean income composition, shown in Table 13, Figure 24 and Figure 25.

**Table 13 - Gravesham and Medway Household Income Stats (2013)**

	Gravesham	Medway
<b>Mean Income</b>	£36,761	£36,906
<b>Median Income</b>	£29,162	£29,550
<b>Modal Band</b>	£10,000 - £15,000	£10,000 - £15,000
<b>Upper Quartile Income</b>	£48,890	£49,193
<b>Lower Quartile Income</b>	£15,708	£15,964

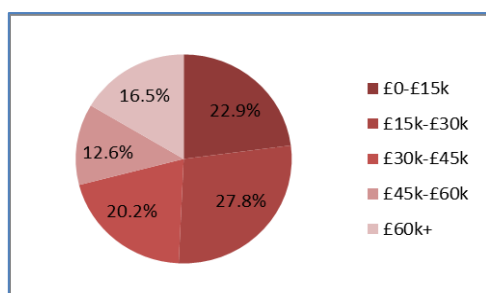
Source: CACI 2013

**Figure 24 - Gravesham Mean Income Composition (2013)**



Source: CACI 2013

**Figure 25 - Medway Mean Income Composition (2013)**

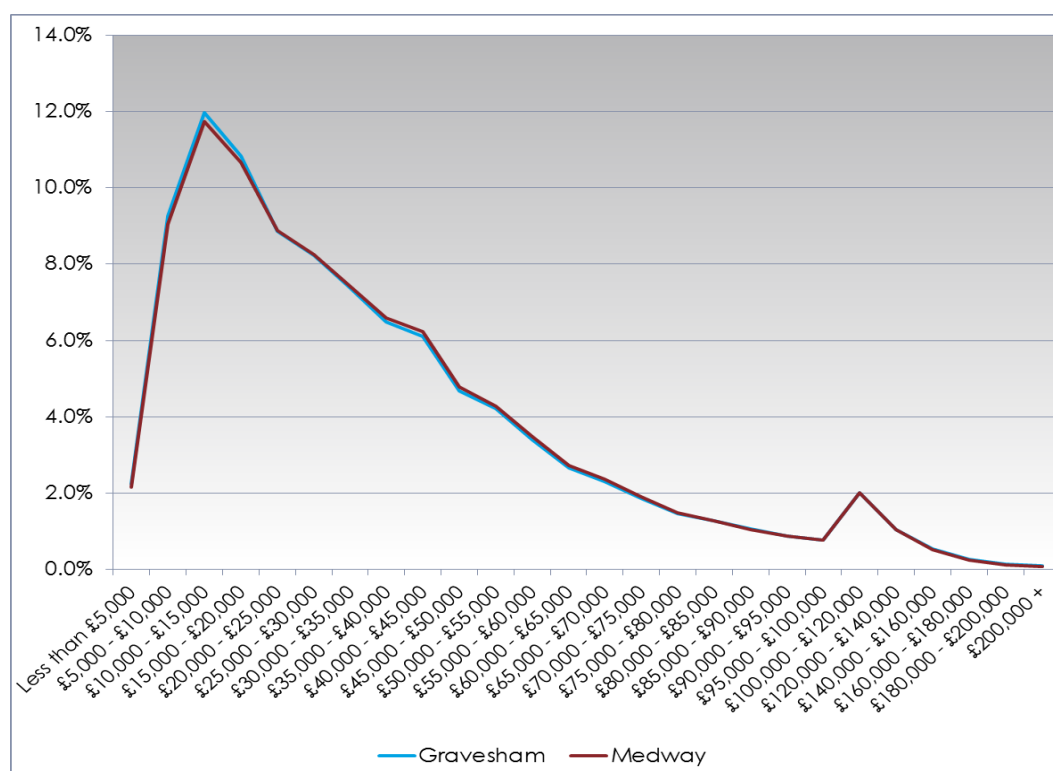


Source: CACI 2013

2.86 Figure 26 shows the 2013 income distributions for Gravesham and Medway, in £5,000 increments. The distributions show an almost identical relationship across the income scale.

2.87 The majority of households in Gravesham and Medway have an income towards the lower end of the income spectrum, with 34.3% and 33.6% of households respectively having incomes below £20,000 per annum, 51.4% and 50.7% respectively having incomes below £30,000 per annum, and 65.3% and 64.8% respectively having incomes below £40,000 per annum.

**Figure 26 - Household Income Distribution for Gravesham and Medway (2013)**



Source: ASHE 2015

## Travel To Work Flows

2.88 Figure 27 shows the relevant South East section of the 2001 United Kingdom Travel To Work Areas (TTWAs) map. Interestingly, this identifies Gravesend as being within the London TTWA, whereas Medway is within the Maidstone & North Kent TTWA.

2.89 The latest Travel To Work data from the 2011 Census has now been released, so is incorporated into the analysis within this section, however ONS have not yet published an updated TTWA map.

- 2.90 ONS identifies that the current criteria for defining TTWAs is "that generally at least 75% of an area's resident workforce work in the area and at least 75% of the people who work in the area also live in the area. The working area must have a population of at least 3,500. However, for areas with a working population in excess of 25,000, self-containment rates as low as 66.7% are accepted"
- 2.91 Self-containment can be identified as being either demand side or supply side. Demand side self-containment is defined as the number of people living and working in an area divided by the number of jobs in the area. Supply side self-containment is defined as the number of people who live and work in an area divided by the number of residents in the area<sup>2</sup>

**Figure 27 - 2001 ONS Travel To Work Areas: South East Focus**



Source: ONS 2007

### Gravesham In-Commuting

- 2.92 **In-commuting**; location of usual residence and place of work statistics from the 2011 Census show that of those who are working within the Gravesham local authority area in 2011, 56% (12,990) live within Gravesham. This demonstrates a fairly weak demand side self-

<sup>2</sup> Source: 2001 Based Travel To Work Areas Methodology – Steve Bond (ONS) & Mike Coombes (CURDS), 24 September 2007

containment level. In simpler terms, this means there is a relatively moderate proportion of jobs within Gravesham which are undertaken by those who live outside the District.

- 2.93 This demand side self-containment analysis uses data on in-commuting by the Gravesham workforce, as shown for the top ten contributing authorities in Table 14. 14% of the Gravesham workforce comes from Medway, and 8% of the workforce comes from Dartford.

**Table 14 - Travel To Work Profile: Gravesham Workforce Composition (In-Commuting)**

Workplace	Place of Usual Residence	Number of In-Commuters	% of Workforce
Gravesham	Gravesham	12,990	56%
Gravesham	Medway	3,185	14%
Gravesham	Dartford	1,929	8%
Gravesham	Sevenoaks	666	3%
Gravesham	Bexley	586	3%
Gravesham	Maidstone	569	2%
Gravesham	Tonbridge and Malling	520	2%
Gravesham	Swale	423	2%
Gravesham	Bromley	192	1%
Gravesham	Greenwich	178	1%

Source: Census 2011

### Gravesham Out-Commuting

- 2.94 **Out-commuting;** location of usual residence and place of work statistics from the 2011 Census show that of those residents who are economically active (in employment) in 2011, 34% (12,990) work within the local authority area. This demonstrates a low supply side self-containment rate, weaker than the level for demand side self-containment. In simpler terms this means that there is a low proportion of employed Gravesham residents who remain within the authority to work. This reflects high levels of out commuting.
- 2.95 This supply side self-containment analysis uses data on out-commuting by Gravesham residents, as shown for the top ten contributing authorities in Table 15. A further 17% (6,710) of residents work in neighbouring Dartford, 6% work in Westminster (2,497) and Medway (2,389) and 5% (1,864) work in Bexley.

**Table 15 - TTW Profile: Proportion of Gravesham Residents (Out-Commuting)**

Place of Usual Residence	Workplace	Number of Out-Commuters	% of Residents
<b>Gravesham</b>	Gravesham	12,990	34%
<b>Gravesham</b>	Dartford	6,710	17%
<b>Gravesham</b>	Westminster, City of London	2,497	6%
<b>Gravesham</b>	Medway	2,389	6%
<b>Gravesham</b>	Bexley	1,864	5%
<b>Gravesham</b>	Sevenoaks	1,148	3%
<b>Gravesham</b>	Tonbridge and Malling	1,138	3%
<b>Gravesham</b>	Maidstone	901	2%
<b>Gravesham</b>	Greenwich	831	2%
<b>Gravesham</b>	Bromley	735	2%

Source: Census 2011

## Gravesham Commuting Flows

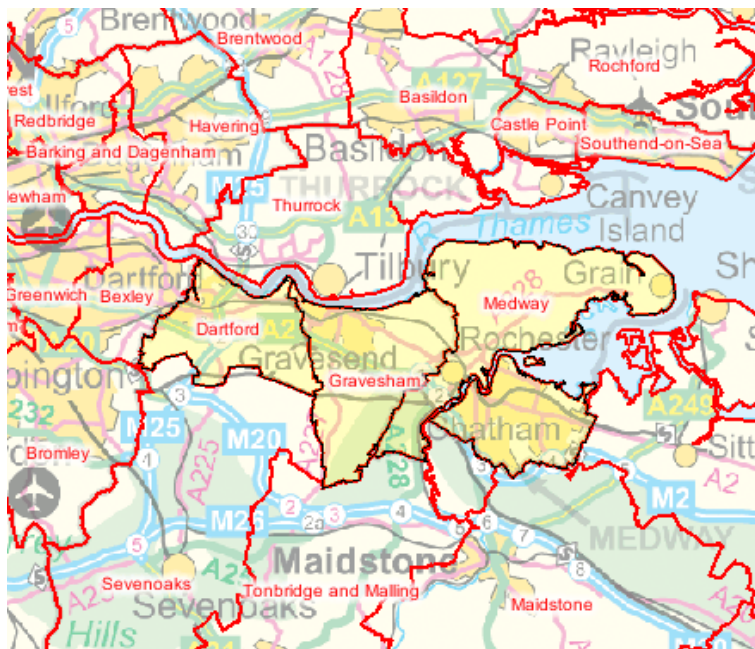
- 2.96 Considering the in and out commuting patterns for Gravesham, Table 16 brings together these flows to identify the top ten total aggregated commuting flows for Gravesham. Based on these figures, Gravesham is shown to have the strongest connections with Dartford, Medway, Westminster and Bexley, beyond itself (see Figure 28).

**Table 16 - Gravesham Aggregate Commuting Flows (2011)**

Authority	In	Out	Total Flow
<b>Gravesham</b>	12,990	12,990	<b>25,980</b>
<b>Dartford</b>	1,929	6,710	<b>8,639</b>
<b>Medway</b>	3,185	2,389	<b>5,574</b>
<b>Westminster, City of London</b>	2	2,497	<b>2,499</b>
<b>Bexley</b>	586	1,864	<b>2,450</b>
<b>Sevenoaks</b>	666	1,148	<b>1,814</b>
<b>Tonbridge and Malling</b>	520	1,138	<b>1,658</b>
<b>Maidstone</b>	569	901	<b>1,470</b>
<b>Greenwich</b>	178	831	<b>1,009</b>
<b>Bromley</b>	192	735	<b>927</b>

Source: Census 2011



**Figure 28 - Gravesham: Strongest Aggregate TTW Flow Area**

Source: Nomis 2015

### Medway In-Commuting

- 2.97 **In-commuting**; location of usual residence and place of work statistics from the 2011 Census show that of those who are working within the Medway local authority area in 2011, 70% (53,629) live within Medway. This demonstrates a fairly strong demand side self-containment level. In simpler terms this means there is a relatively small proportion of jobs within Medway which are undertaken by those who live outside the Authority.
- 2.98 This demand side self-containment analysis uses data on in-commuting by the Medway workforce, as shown for the top ten contributing authorities in Table 17. A further 6% of the Medway workforce is resident in Swale, and 5% of the workforce is resident in Maidstone. Gravesham makes up only 3% of the Medway workforce, along with 3% from Tonbridge and Malling, showing a much less significant in-commuting influence to Medway than Medway makes to Gravesham (identified above).

**Table 17 - Travel To Work Profile: Medway Workforce Composition (In-Commuting)**

Workplace	Place of Usual Residence	Number of In-Commuters	% of Workforce
Medway	Medway	53,629	70%
Medway	Swale	4,751	6%
Medway	Maidstone	4,165	5%
Medway	Tonbridge and Malling	2,523	3%
Medway	Gravesham	2,389	3%
Medway	Canterbury	1,099	1%
Medway	Dartford	811	1%
Medway	Ashford	681	1%
Medway	Bexley	481	1%
Medway	Sevenoaks	434	1%

Source: Census 2011

### Medway Out-Commuting

- 2.99 **Out-commuting**; location of usual residence and place of work statistics from the 2011 Census show that of those residents who are economically active (in employment) in 2011, 51% (53,629) work within the Medway local authority area. This demonstrates a relatively low supply side self-containment rate, much weaker than the level for demand side self-containment. In simpler terms this means there is a relatively low proportion of employed Medway residents who remain within the authority to work, reflective of high levels of out commuting. However, There is still a lower rate of out commuting than for Gravesham.
- 2.100 This supply side self-containment analysis uses data on out-commuting by Medway residents, as shown for the top ten contributing authorities in Table 18. A further 7% (7,578) of residents work in Maidstone, 6% work in Tonbridge and Malling (6,354) and 5% work in Westminster (5,037). Only 3% of Gravesham residents work in Medway, showing a less significant out-commuting influence of Gravesham on Medway than Medway on Gravesham.

**Table 18 - TTW Profile: Proportion of Medway Residents (Out-Commuting)**

Place of Usual Residence	Workplace	Number of Out-Commuters	% of Residents
Medway	Medway	53,629	51%
Medway	Maidstone	7,578	7%
Medway	Tonbridge and Malling	6,354	6%
Medway	Westminster, City of London	5,037	5%
Medway	Swale	4,201	4%
Medway	Dartford	3,977	4%
Medway	Gravesham	3,185	3%
Medway	Bexley	1,652	2%
Medway	Tower Hamlets	1,325	1%
Medway	Bromley	1,219	1%

Source: Census 2011

## Medway Commuting Flows

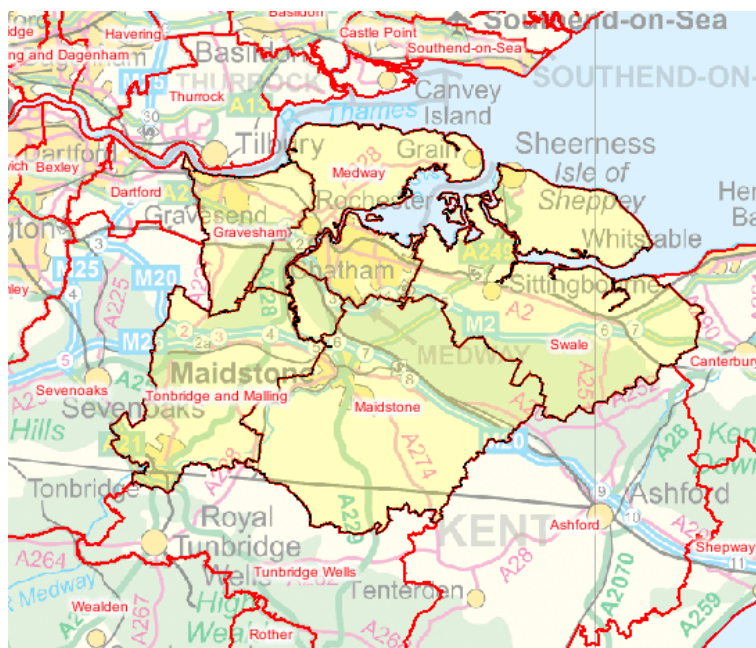
- 2.101 Considering the in and out commuting patterns for Medway, Table 19 brings together these flows to identify the top ten total aggregated commuting flows for Medway. Based on these figures, Medway is shown to have the strongest connections with Maidstone, Swale, Tonbridge and Malling and Gravesham.

**Table 19 - Medway Aggregate Commuting Flows (2011)**

	In	Out	Total Flow
<b>Medway</b>	53,629	53,629	<b>107,258</b>
<b>Maidstone</b>	4,165	7,578	<b>11,743</b>
<b>Swale</b>	4,751	4,201	<b>8,952</b>
<b>Tonbridge and Malling</b>	2,523	6,354	<b>8,877</b>
<b>Gravesham</b>	2,389	3,185	<b>5,574</b>
<b>Dartford</b>	811	3,977	<b>4,788</b>
<b>Bexley</b>	481	1,652	<b>2,133</b>
<b>Canterbury</b>	1,099	719	<b>1,818</b>
<b>Bromley</b>	313	1,219	<b>1,532</b>
<b>Sevenoaks</b>	434	1,039	<b>1,473</b>

Source: Census 2011

**Figure 29 - Medway: Strongest Aggregate TTW Flow Area**



Source: Nomis 2015

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## Key Findings

2.102 This analysis of the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of Gravesham and Medway, within the context of wider comparator areas, has considered current population levels, age structure, ethnicity, components of change, migration trends, economic activity, unemployment, qualification levels, occupation structure, earnings, income and travel to work flows. This has identified a number of key trends for Gravesham and Medway, which are as follows:

- For **Gravesham** there was a population of 95,712 in 2001, 101,720 in 2011 and 103,700 in 2013. This shows **8% population growth** over the 12 year period from 2001 – 2013, increasing by 7,988 people.
- For **Medway** there was a population of 249,488 in 2001, 263,925 in 2011 and 271,100 in 2013. This shows **9% population growth** over the 12 year period from 2001 – 2013, increasing by 21,612 people.
- The age profile from 2001 – 2013 for **Gravesham** reflects the ageing nature of the population (with 16% growth in the 60+ age cohort). The more interesting age specific trend is the **reduction in the 30-44 working age group** (5% reduction) which is likely to be caused by outward labour migration.
- The age profile from 2001 – 2013 for **Medway** also reflects the ageing nature of the population (with 28% growth in the 60+ age cohort). Again, the more interesting age specific trend is the **reduction in the 30-44 age group** (8% reduction), and the 0-15 age group (2% reduction) which represents the children of the 30-44 age group.
- The 'missing' 30-39 age group in the 2011 population age distribution will have potential housing implications in **Gravesham and Medway**, such as driving the demand for small and larger units and resulting in potentially less demand for standard family sized units i.e. 3 bedrooms.
- Ethnic diversity in **Gravesham and Medway** has increased between the 2001 and 2011 Censuses, supported by the influence of international migration to population growth in both authorities. This increasing diversity could have housing implications, particularly affecting size requirements considering the propensity for the multi-generational households for certain ethnic minority groups.
- Population growth from 2001 – 2013 for both **Gravesham and Medway** was driven by natural change (fertility exceeding mortality) and inward international migration. For **Gravesham** international migration was the most significant contributor to population growth (contributing 5,457), whereas for **Medway** natural change was the most significant contributor to population growth (contributing 14,897).
- Domestic migration has had an overall negative contribution to population change for both **Gravesham and Medway** (-2,551 for Gravesham and -2,439 for Medway), however over the past 2-3 years domestic migration became a positive net contributor for both authorities.

- Considering the aggregated 2013 migration flows **Gravesham** shows the strongest links in terms of inward and outward population flows with Dartford (1,380 total moves) and Medway (1,160 total moves).
- **Medway** has the strongest links in terms of inward and outward population flows with Maidstone (1,867 total moves), Swale (1,663 total moves), Tonbridge and Malling (1,292 total moves) and Gravesham (1,160 total moves).
- 2011 economic activity profiles for **Gravesham and Medway** are almost identical, both with 71% economically active. These profiles are comparable with those across the local, regional and national comparator areas
- Whilst the student population will be an important population group for consideration throughout this project, particularly for Medway, both authorities exhibit fairly low proportions of students (4% and 5% respectively). It will be important to consider how best to capture the housing and retail impacts of the student population, considering that their presence captured in the Census data is not substantial.
- There is significant variation in the unemployment rate for **Gravesham and Medway** across the ten year period from 2004 – 2014. In 2014 **Gravesham** had one of the lowest rates across all comparators (4%) and **Medway** had the highest rate across all comparators (9.2%). This is set within the context of considerable fluctuation in unemployment rate trajectories and levels across all comparator areas. Despite signs of reducing unemployment rates in recent years reflecting economic recovery, very few areas have returned to pre-recession unemployment levels.
- The skills profiles for **Gravesham and Medway**, in terms of qualifications held, are very closely aligned with each other. They have a slightly lower proportion of higher level qualifications compared with the average for Kent. Considering this in line with occupation levels, there could be some challenges in relation to 'local' working, with potential impacts on the ability to secure local economic growth.
- **Gravesham** has a mean resident income level of £36,761 compared to a mean resident income level of £36,906 in **Medway**. However, for Lower Quartile incomes, which is relevant to affordable housing considerations, **Gravesham** has a LQ income level of £29,162, compared to a LQ income level of £29,550 in **Medway**.
- Consideration of the aggregated travel to work flows suggests that **Gravesham** has the strongest connections with **Dartford, Medway, Westminster and Bexley**, and **Medway** has the strongest connections with **Maidstone, Swale, Tonbridge and Malling and Gravesham**. These indications will be vital in contributing to the definition of the wider Housing Market Area and functional Economic Market Area.



### 3. North Kent Future Population and Households

- 3.1 This brief section considers the potential futures for population and households in Gravesham and Medway, by analysing the latest population and household projections published by CLG.
- 3.2 An introduction to the different projections for population and household levels being considered as part of this analysis, along with a brief description of the assumptions they use to project population and household change, is shown below in Table 20. Whilst the 2010 based Sub-national Population Projections (SNPP) is included within the table and used in this baseline analysis to provide context of the population trend over time, this projection data will not be used in the modelling work in the SHMA technical work stream as it is considered out-dated for this purpose.

**Table 20 - National Population and Household Projection Features**

Projection	Features
<b>2010 based SNPP</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used demographic trends from 2005 to 2010</li> <li>Long-term projection from 2010 to 2035</li> <li>Included improved migration assumptions making use of administrative data sources to better assign student populations and international migrants to local authorities.</li> <li><b>Average annual population growth</b> between 2012 and 2035 = 757 for Gravesham and 2,057 for Medway</li> </ul>
<b>2012 based SNPP</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used demographic trends from 2007 to 2012</li> <li>Long-term projection from 2012 to 2037</li> <li>Included improved migration and natural change assumptions taken from the 2011 Census.</li> <li><b>Average annual population growth</b> between 2012 and 2035 = 809 for Gravesham and 2,370 for Medway</li> </ul>
<b>2008 based Household Projection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used the 2008-based population projections as a base</li> <li>Household formation rates trended from 1971, 1981, 1991 and 2001 Censuses and Labour Force Survey data.</li> <li>Long-term projection from 2008 to 2033</li> <li><b>Average annual household growth</b> between 2013 and 2033 = 250 for Gravesham and 500 for Medway</li> </ul>
<b>2011 based Interim Household Projection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used the interim 2011-based population projections as a base</li> <li>Household formation rates trended from 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001 and 2011 Censuses and Labour Force Survey data which resulted in lower household formation rates than the 2008-based household projections.</li> <li>Short-term projection from 2011 to 2021</li> <li><b>Average annual household growth</b> between 2011 and 2021 = 444 for Gravesham and 1,222 for Medway</li> </ul>
<b>2012 based Household Projection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses the 2012 based SNPP as the population projection base</li> <li>Household formation rates trended from 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001 and 2011 Censuses and Labour Force Survey data which resulted in lower household formation rates than the 2008-based household projections.</li> <li>Long term projection from 2012 to 2037</li> <li><b>Average annual household growth</b> between 2012 and 2037 = 440 for Gravesham and 1,280 for Medway</li> </ul>

Source: CLG Live Tables and ONS SNPP



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## Population Projections

- 3.3 Population projections provide a basis through which to understand future population change. The two latest full population projections available from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) are; the 2010-based SNPP and the 2012-based SNPP. Both projections use different assumptions on fertility, mortality and migration based on trends from the previous five/six years and start from a different base population. The 2012 SNPP was published in May 2014 and takes into account 2011 Census data making it a much more reliable basis for projections – notwithstanding local factors which may have affected past trends and therefore future projections.
- 3.4 The SNPPs are not forecasts and do not take any account of future government policies, changing economic circumstances or the capacity of an area to accommodate the change in population. They provide an indication of the future size and structure of the population if recent demographic trends continue. Projections become increasingly uncertain the further they are carried forward, and particularly so for smaller geographic areas such as local authority areas.
- 3.5 As shown in Table 21, the latest 2012 based SNPP forecast a population of 122,900 people by 2037 in Gravesham, an increase of 19.6% (20,100 people), and a population of 326,800 by 2037 in Medway, an increase of 21.8% (58,600). In 2012 Gravesham and Medway make up 6.9% and 18.1% of the Kent population respectively. In 2037 Gravesham retains the same proportion of the forecast Kent population at 6.9%, and Medway shows a very insignificant increase in the proportion of the forecast Kent population at 18.3% (0.2% increase).
- 3.6 Figure 30 and Figure 31 provide a comparison between the latest official population projections from the ONS, the 2012 based SNPP, and the previous 2010 based SNPP, for Gravesham and Medway respectively. This analysis will be particularly useful for the calculation of Objectively Assessed Need as part of the SHMA technical work stream, which uses population and household projections to inform a base forecasting scenario.
- 3.7 It is evident for both Gravesham and Medway that the 2010 based projection (based on estimates about population growth built up from the 2001 Census) underestimates both the base population in 2012 and then projects that forward with a more depressed growth trajectory over the years to 2035. The 2012 based SNPP (based on estimates about population change built up from the more recent 2011 Census) shows that the populations of Gravesham and Medway are projected to grow at a much faster rate than previously assumed – this is confirmed by Table 20 which shows average annual population growth of
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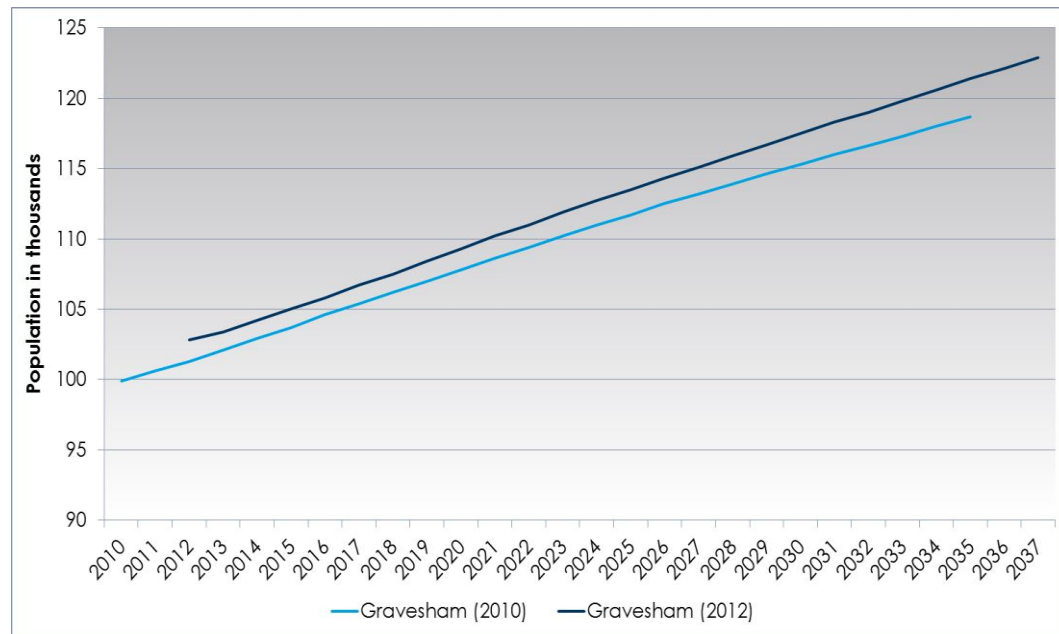


757 and 2,057 for Gravesham and Medway for the 2010 based SNPP and 809 and 2,370 for Medway for the 2012 based SNPP, an increase of 52 people a year for Gravesham and 313 people a year for Medway.

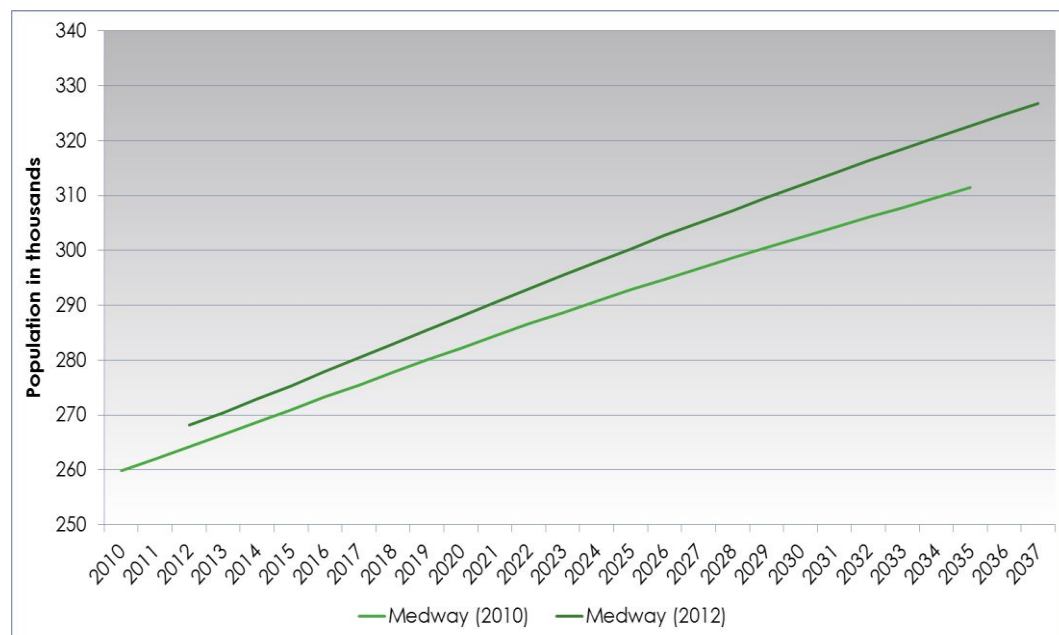
**Table 21 - 2012 based SNPP forecasts for Gravesham and Medway Population**

Year	Gravesham	Medway	Kent
2012	102,800	268,200	1,480,200
2013	103,400	270,400	1,490,700
2014	104,200	272,900	1,502,700
2015	105,000	275,300	1,515,200
2016	105,800	277,900	1,528,300
2017	106,700	280,400	1,541,300
2018	107,500	282,900	1,554,600
2019	108,400	285,500	1,567,900
2020	109,300	288,000	1,581,300
2021	110,200	290,500	1,594,800
2022	111,000	293,000	1,608,300
2023	111,900	295,500	1,621,700
2024	112,700	297,900	1,635,000
2025	113,500	300,300	1,648,000
2026	114,300	302,700	1,660,900
2027	115,100	305,000	1,673,500
2028	115,900	307,300	1,686,000
2029	116,700	309,600	1,698,200
2030	117,500	311,900	1,710,100
2031	118,300	314,100	1,721,800
2032	119,000	316,300	1,733,300
2033	119,800	318,400	1,744,500
2034	120,600	320,600	1,755,500
2035	121,400	322,700	1,766,400
2036	122,100	348,800	1,777,100
2037	122,900	326,800	1,787,600

Source: CLG Live Tables and ONS SNPP

**Figure 30 - Comparison of 2010 and 2012 based SNPP for Gravesham**

Source: ONS SNPP 2010 & 2012

**Figure 31 - Comparison of 2010 and 2012 based SNPP for Medway**

Source: ONS SNPP 2010 & 2012

## Household Projections

- 3.8 Household projections provide quantitative and qualitative assumptions about how the population will form households over the future period, and establish a basis through which to understand how that population change affects household formation. They contain assumptions by age and sex about how household formation will change over time, which

are built up through analysis of the Census and Labour Force Survey. The latest household projections published by the CLG are the 2012 based household projections which were released at a headline level in March 2015. These projections are considered here alongside the 2008 based household projections and the 2011 based interim household projections, see Table 20.

- 3.9 As shown in Table 22 below, the latest 2012 based household projections forecast a total of 52,100 households by 2037 in Gravesham, an increase of 27% (11,100 households), and a total of 139,900 households by 2037 in Medway, an increase of 29% (31,700 households). In 2012 Gravesham and Medway made up 7% and 18% of the total number of households in Kent respectively, and in 2037 the same proportions are forecast to remain.

**Table 22 - 2012 based Household Projections for Gravesham and Medway**

Year	Gravesham	Medway	Kent
2012	41,000	108,200	614,000
2013	41,400	109,400	620,300
2014	41,800	110,800	627,300
2015	42,300	112,100	634,500
2016	42,700	113,600	642,000
2017	43,200	115,000	649,400
2018	43,700	116,400	656,900
2019	44,100	117,800	664,400
2020	44,600	119,100	671,700
2021	45,000	120,500	679,100
2022	45,500	121,800	686,500
2023	46,000	123,100	693,700
2024	46,400	124,300	701,100
2025	46,800	125,500	708,300
2026	47,300	126,800	715,600
2027	47,700	128,000	722,900
2028	48,200	129,200	730,200
2029	48,600	130,500	737,300
2030	49,100	131,700	744,400
2031	49,500	132,900	751,500
2032	49,900	134,100	758,400
2033	50,400	135,300	765,100
2034	50,800	136,500	771,800
2035	51,200	137,600	778,500
2036	51,600	138,800	785,200
2037	52,100	139,900	791,900

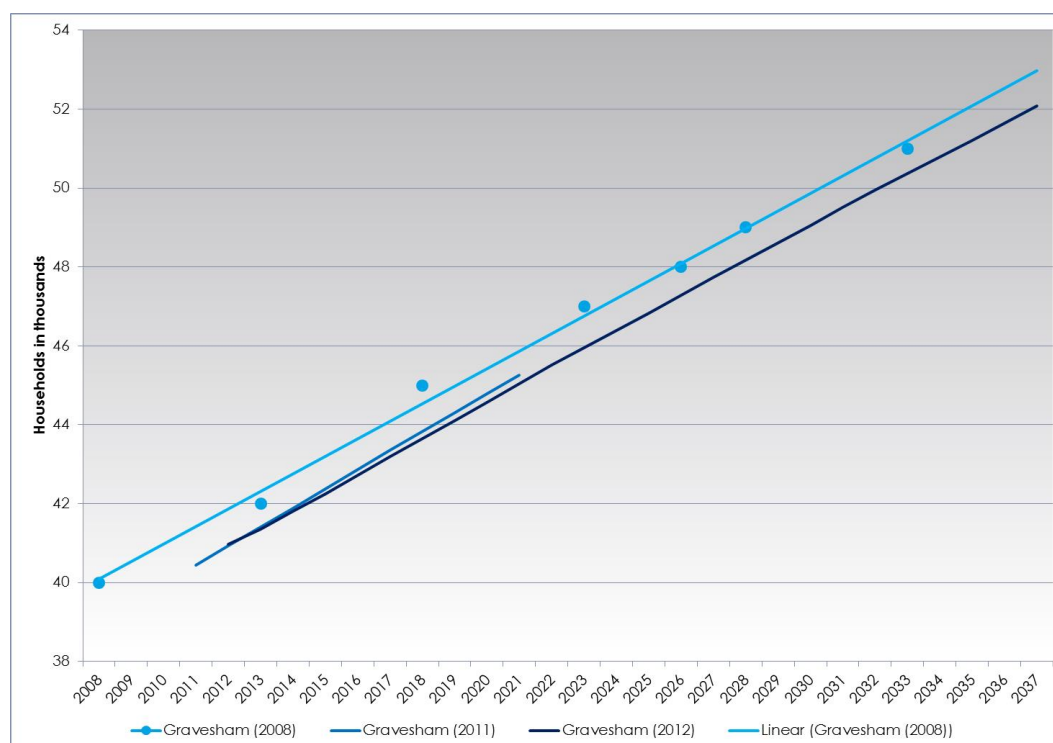
Source: CLG Household Projections 2008, 2011 & 2012

- 3.10 Figure 32 provides a comparison between the 2008, 2011 interim and 2012 based household projections for Gravesham over the period from 2008 – 2037 (with variation in the dates covered by different forecasts). This shows that the 2008 based household projections

suggest a greater number of households throughout the period from 2008 – 2033 than is forecast from the 2011 and 2012 based projections.

- 3.11 Whilst the 2011 and 2012 based projections show a very similar if not identical number of households in 2012, the latest 2012 based projections show a slightly depressed growth trajectory. The variations in these housing number forecasts can be explained by the assumptions of population growth (i.e. migration levels) and household formation on which they are based. This will be explored in full detail in the SHMA technical work stream of this project, reflecting on the differing impact of population growth and household formation on the projected number of households.
- 3.12 In brief, the divergence between longer term and more recent household formation trends impacts the number of households which are projected to form (i.e. the recession has potentially reduced the number of smaller households, increased shared renting etc.). A reliance on more recent household formation trends within the context of the economic downturn has the effect of suppressing household growth, and does not necessarily incorporate how household formation can be impacted by returning economic confidence.

**Figure 32 - Comparison of 2008, 2011 and 2012 based Household Projections for Gravesham**

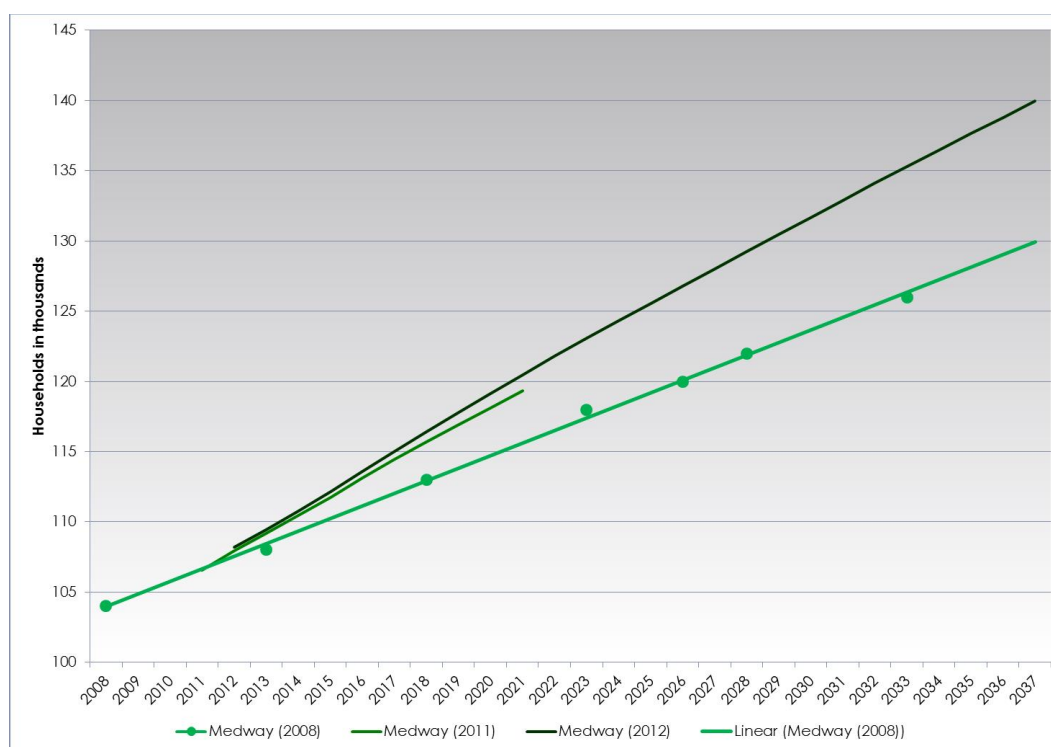


Source: ONS 2008, 2011 & 2012

N.B. A linear trend line has been applied to the 2008 based household projections due to the intervals in which projection figures are provided meaning that single year household figures cannot be plotted.

- 3.13 Figure 33 provides the same comparison between the 2008, 2011 interim and 2012 based household projections for Medway over the period from 2008 – 2037 (with variation in the dates covered by different forecasts).
- 3.14 The 2011 and 2012 based projections show a very similar, if not identical number of households in 2012, however it is the 2011 growth trajectory which is slightly depressed compared to the trajectory for 2012.
- 3.15 Interestingly, the 2008 based projection trajectory is significantly depressed compared to the trajectories for the 2011 and 2012 based projections, with the difference in trajectories increasing to approximately 10,000 by 2037. This suggests variation in population growth assumptions and household formation rates and their resultant impact for Medway, compared with Gravesham, which will be explored in detail in the SHMA technical work stream of this project.

**Figure 33 - Comparison of 2008, 2011 and 2012 based Household Projections for Medway**



Source: ONS 2008, 2011 & 2012

N.B. A linear trend line has been applied to the 2008 based household projections due to the intervals in which projection figures are provided meaning that single year household figures cannot be plotted.

## Key Findings

3.16 This analysis population and household projections has identified the following:

- Significant population and household growth is forecast over the next 20 years for both **Gravesham and Medway**.
- Based on the latest 2012 SNPP for **Gravesham** there are forecast to be 122,900 people (19.6% increase)
- Based on the latest 2012 SNPP for **Medway** there are forecast to be 326,800 people (21.8% increase)
- Based on the latest 2012 based household projections for **Gravesham** there are forecast to be 52,100 households (27% increase)
- Based on the latest 2012 based household projections for **Medway** there are forecast to be 139,900 households (29% increase)
- These levels of population and household growth will have significant implications for the housing, employment and retail requirements for both authorities.

## 4. North Kent Housing Context

- 4.1 In order to consider the current housing market context for North Kent it is important to understand the housing stock profiles and supply trends in Gravesham and Medway benchmarked against the data from other Kent local authorities as well as regional and national comparators where relevant. This understanding will inform the SHMA and Viability Assessment elements of the technical work stream of this project in particular.
- 4.2 The most up to date information available is used to create a profile of the current housing stock across the two authorities. This relies mostly on the 2011 Census data because it is the most comprehensive and robust recent dataset available, more so than post 2011 estimates and updates. The distribution of population across households and household spaces is established, as is the change in overall number of dwellings between the two Census periods. The mix of housing in terms of tenure and type is considered and benchmarked against a range of comparators. Quality and quantity of the housing stock, and overcrowding and under-occupancy levels are also assessed.
- 4.3 It is also crucial to understand the residential market values across the Gravesham and Medway local authority areas, which is particularly relevant to the Viability assessment of the SHNEA project.

### Households and Household Spaces

- 4.4 According to the 2011 Census, Gravesham has a population of 101,720 people across 41,699 households. These households are housed in 41,744 household spaces. Medway has a population of 263,925 people across 110,107 households. These households are housed in 110,263 household spaces.

**Table 23 - Population, Households and Household Spaces (2011)**

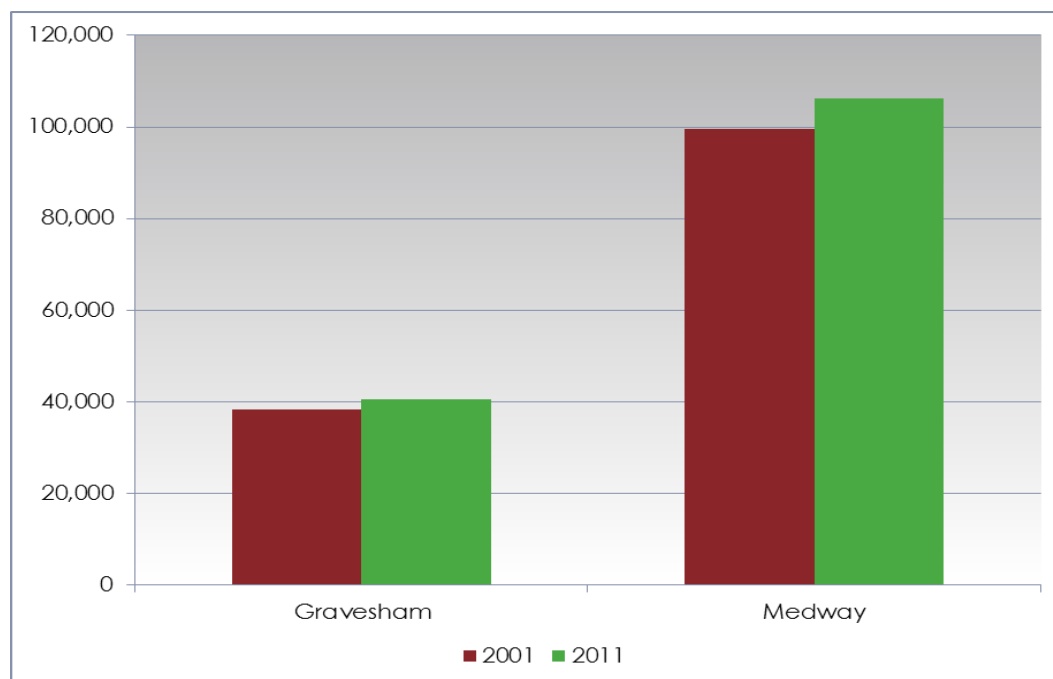
Area	Population	All Households	All Household Spaces
England	53,012,456	22,976,066	23,044,097
South East	8,634,750	3,694,388	3,704,173
Kent	1,463,740	633,329	634,800
<b>Gravesham</b>	<b>101,720</b>	<b>41,699</b>	<b>41,744</b>
<b>Medway</b>	<b>263,925</b>	<b>110,107</b>	<b>110,263</b>
Dartford	97,365	41,220	41,250
Swale	135,835	57,989	58,053
Maidstone	155,143	65,526	65,673
Tonbridge and Malling	120,805	49,972	49,984

Source: Census 2011

## Change in Dwelling Stock

- 4.5 Change in Gravesham and Medway's dwelling stock is shown below in Figure 34. The total number of dwellings in Gravesham has increased from 38,261 in 2001 to 40,431 in 2011. This is an increase of 2,170 dwellings, equating to a 6% increase over the ten year period. For Medway the total number of dwellings has increased from 99,569 in 2001 to 106,209 in 2011. This is an increase of 6,640 dwellings, equating to a 7% increase over the ten year period.

**Figure 34 - Change in Total Number of Dwellings in Gravesham and Medway (2001 - 2011)**



Source: Census 2001 & 2011

## Stock Typology

- 4.6 There is general comparability evident in the profile of dwelling types across all areas, although this masks some finer grain variation in individual profiles for Gravesham and Medway compared with each other, and with the local Kent authorities and the sub-regional, regional and national comparators.
- 4.7 As shown in Table 24 and
- 4.8 Figure 35, Gravesham, Medway and Dartford have a significantly lower proportion of detached stock than comparator areas, with 16%, 14% and 13% respectively. These proportions are approximately 6% - 15% lower than comparator area levels, where the South East region reaches a proportion 28%, followed by 27% for Tonbridge and Malling.

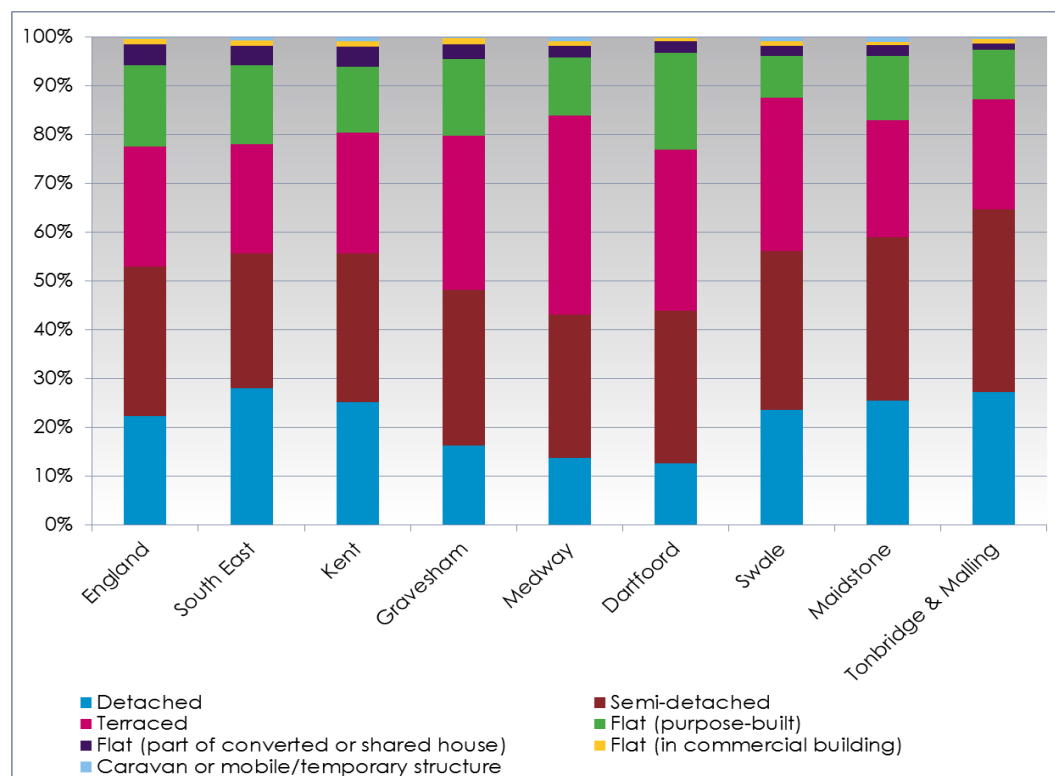


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- 4.9 Medway shows the highest proportion of terraced stock (41%) compared to other areas. This proportion is 8% above the 33% in Dartford, and 9% above the 32% for Gravesham and Swale. These four authorities (Medway, Dartford, Gravesham and Swale) have a significantly higher proportion than comparator areas which range from 25% in Kent to 22% in the South East.
- 4.10 The other stock type to highlight, where significant variation is exhibited, is purpose built flatted stock. Kent, Maidstone, Medway, Tonbridge and Malling and Swale show similar levels of this stock type, with 13%, 13%, 12%, 10% and 9% respectively. This is substantially lower than the proportions for the other areas; Dartford, England, the South East and Gravesham, with 20%, 17%, 16% and 16% respectively. Gravesham has a higher proportion of terraced stock than Medway.
- 4.11 The key characteristics of the dwelling stock type in Gravesham within the context of the wider Kent area are as follows:
- Lower proportion of detached stock (16%);
  - Similar proportion of semi-detached stock (32%);
  - High proportion of terraced stock (32%);
  - Generally high proportion of purpose built flatted stock (16%);
  - Comparable proportion of converted/shared house flatted stock (3%);
  - Same proportion of commercial building flatted stock (1%); and
  - Similar proportion of caravan or mobile/temporary structure stock (0%)
- 4.12 The key characteristics of the dwelling stock type in Medway within the context of the wider Kent area are as follows:
- Low proportion of detached stock (14%);
  - Generally similar proportion of semi-detached stock (29%);
  - Very high proportion of terraced stock (41%);
  - Low proportion of purpose built flatted stock (12%);
  - Comparable proportion of converted/shared house flatted stock (2%);
  - Same proportion of commercial building flatted stock (1%); and
  - Similar proportion of caravan or mobile/temporary structure stock (1%)
-

**Table 24 - Proportion of Dwelling Stock by Type (2011)**

Area	Detached	Semi-Detached	Terraced	Flats			Caravan or Other
				In purpose built block	Part of converted or shared house	In commercial building	
England	22%	31%	24%	17%	4%	1%	0%
South East	28%	28%	22%	16%	4%	1%	1%
Kent	25%	31%	25%	13%	4%	1%	1%
<b>Gravesham</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Medway</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>
Dartford	13%	31%	33%	20%	2%	1%	0%
Swale	24%	33%	32%	9%	2%	1%	1%
Maidstone	25%	33%	24%	13%	2%	1%	1%
Tonbridge & Malling	27%	37%	23%	10%	1%	1%	0%

Source: Census 2011

**Figure 35 - Proportion of Dwelling Stock by Type (2011)**

Source: Census 2011

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## Stock Size

- 4.13 The size of stock for Gravesham and Medway, benchmarked against sizes for comparator areas, can be analysed in relation to the number of bedrooms, data on which is provided in the 2011 Census<sup>3</sup>, as shown below in Table 25 and Figure 36.
- 4.14 The stock profile by number of bedrooms shows similarity across all areas, and there is a strong similarity between the Gravesham and Medway profiles, with variation in any of the bedroom number categories by no more than 2%.
- 4.15 The bedroom number category showing the most substantial variation across areas is 3 bedrooms, ranging from 39% of stock for the South East region up to 49% of stock in Medway. Gravesham and Swale are alongside Medway at the higher end of the scale for the proportion of 3 bedroom stock, both with 3 bedroom stock accounting for 47% of their stock profile.
- 4.16 The key characteristics of the dwelling size by number of bedrooms in Gravesham within the context of the wider Kent area are as follows:
- Similar proportion of 1 bedroom stock (12%);
  - Similar proportion of 2 bedroom stock (24%);
  - High proportion of 3 bedroom stock (47%);
  - Similar proportion of 4 bedroom stock – same as Medway (13%); and
  - Similar proportion of 5+ bedroom stock (4%)
- 4.17 The key characteristics of the dwelling size by number of bedrooms in Medway within the context of the wider Kent area are as follows:
- Similar proportion of 1 bedroom stock (10%);
  - Similar proportion of 2 bedroom stock (25%);
  - High proportion of 3 bedroom stock (49%);
  - Similar proportion of 4 bedroom stock – same as Gravesham (13%); and
- 

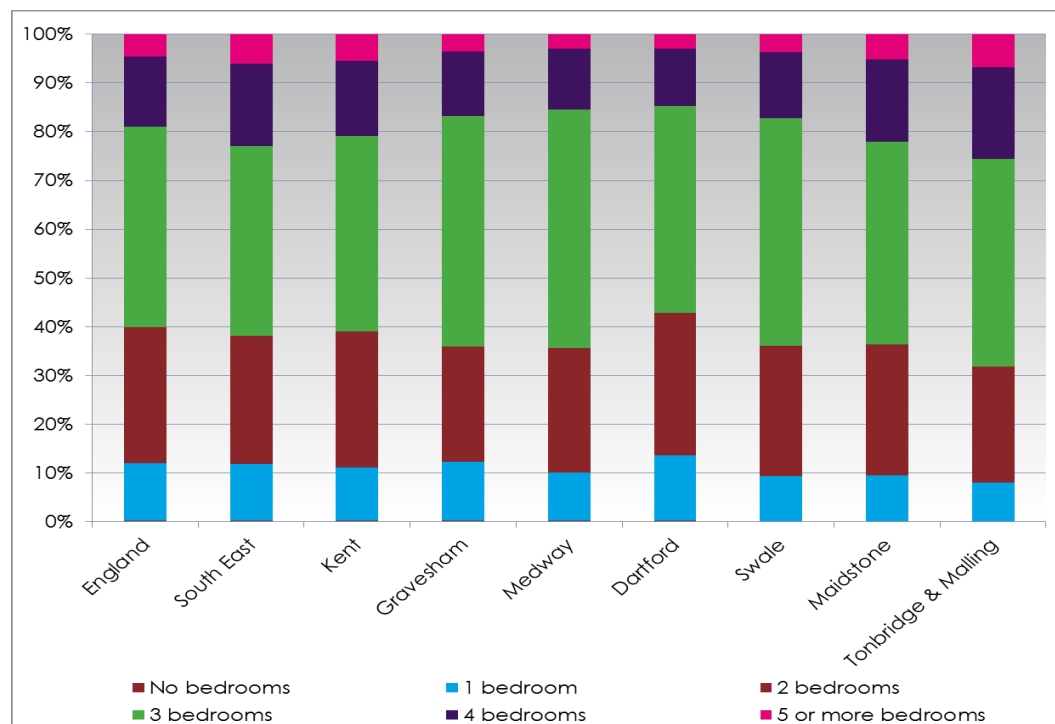
<sup>3</sup> Note: The Census 2011 provides the following definition of bedrooms - A bedroom is defined as any room that was intended to be used as a bedroom when the property was built, or any room that has been permanently converted for use as a bedroom. It also includes all rooms intended for use as a bedroom even if not being used as a bedroom at the time of the census. Bedsits and studio flats are counted as having one bedroom.

- Similar proportion of 5+ bedroom stock (3%)

**Table 25 - Proportion of Housing Stock by Number of Bedrooms (2011)**

Area	No bedrooms	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	4 bedrooms	5+bedrooms
England	0%	12%	28%	41%	14%	5%
South East	0%	12%	26%	39%	17%	6%
Kent	0%	11%	28%	40%	15%	5%
<b>Gravesham</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Medway</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>3%</b>
Dartford	0%	13%	29%	42%	12%	3%
Swale	0%	9%	27%	47%	13%	4%
Maidstone	0%	9%	27%	42%	17%	5%
Tonbridge & Malling	0%	8%	24%	43%	19%	7%

Source: Census 2011

**Figure 36 - Proportion of Housing Stock by Number of Bedrooms (2011)**

Source: Census 2011

4.18 Figure 37 below, shows image examples of the stock types currently present within Gravesham and Medway.

**Figure 37 - Housing Stock in Gravesham and Medway**

Union House, Gravesend



Admirals Way, Gravesend



Lamorna Avenue, Gravesend



Walderslade, Chatham



High Street, Gillingham



Cedar Road, Strood

**Source: Zoopla 2015**

## Stock Tenure

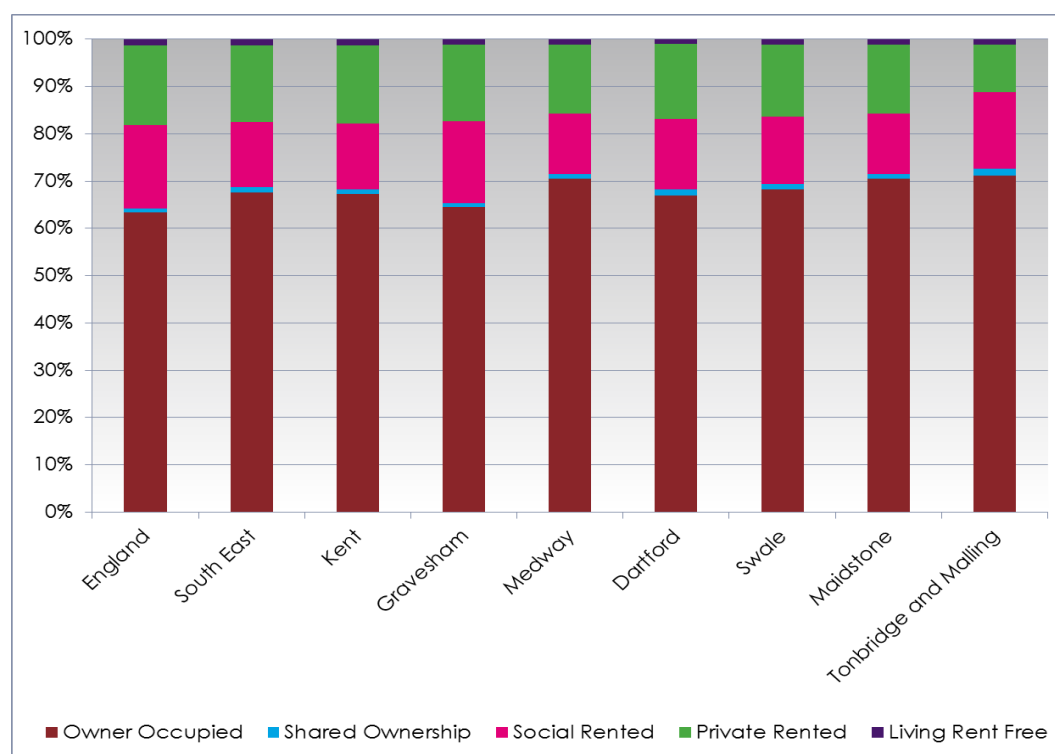
- 4.19 The analysis of stock profile by tenure shows similarity across all areas, also with similarity between the Gravesham and Medway profiles. However, there are some tenure types where the two authorities exhibit variation, see Table 26 and Figure 38 below.
- 4.20 The proportion of owner occupied tenure across all areas ranges from 63% at the national level to 71% for Tonbridge and Malling. Gravesham sits at the lower end of this scale with 65% of its stock in owner occupation, whereas Medway is at the higher end of the scale with a proportion of 70% owner occupation (5% greater than for Gravesham).

- 4.21 Social rented is the other tenure where most variation across areas is observed, ranging from 13% in Medway and Maidstone to 18% in England, with Gravesham having a proportion of 17%
- 4.22 For the private rented tenure the proportion of stock in Tonbridge and Malling (10%) is significantly lower than the proportions for other areas, which are clustered between 15-17%. The proportions for Gravesham and Medway of 16% and 15% sit within a comparable range to all areas with the exception of Tonbridge and Malling.

**Table 26 - Proportion of Housing Stock by Tenure (2011)**

Area	Owner Occupied	Shared Ownership	Social Rented	Private Rented	Living Rent Free
England	63%	1%	18%	17%	1%
South East	68%	1%	14%	16%	1%
Kent	67%	1%	14%	17%	1%
<b>Gravesham</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Medway</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>1%</b>
Dartford	67%	1%	15%	16%	1%
Swale	68%	1%	14%	15%	1%
Maidstone	70%	1%	13%	15%	1%
Tonbridge & Malling	71%	1%	16%	10%	1%

Source: Census 2011

**Figure 38 - Proportion of Housing Stock by Tenure (2011)**

Source: Census 2011

4.23 The key characteristics of the stock profile by tenure in Gravesham within the context of the wider Kent area are as follows:

- High proportion of owner occupied stock (70%);
- Same proportion of shared ownership stock (1%);
- Similar proportion of social rented stock (17%);
- Similar proportion of private rented stock (16%); and
- Same proportion of living rent free stock (1%)

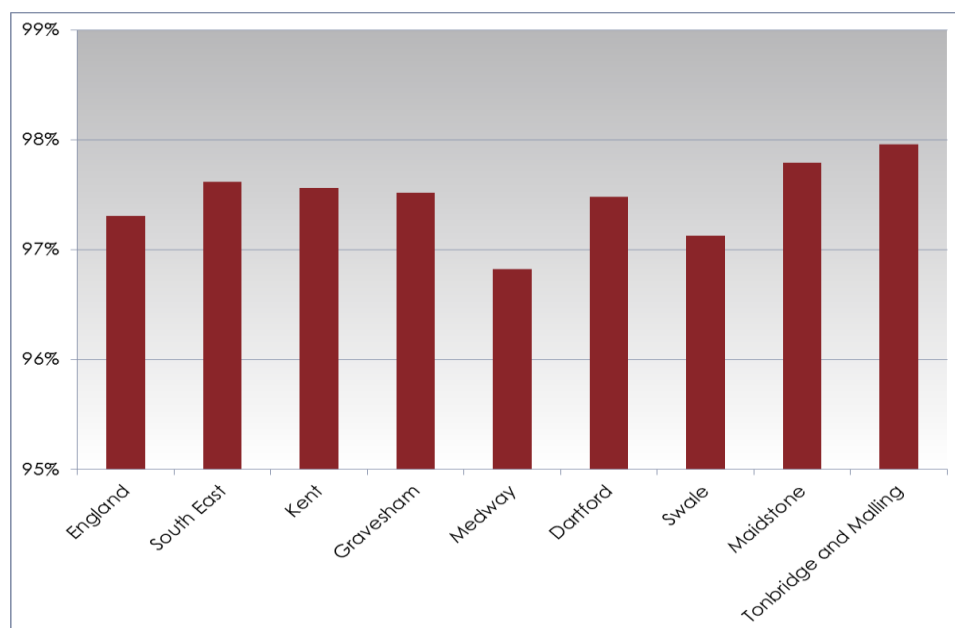
4.24 The key characteristics of the stock profile by tenure in Medway within the context of the wider Kent area are as follows:

- Mid-range proportion of owner occupied stock (65%);
- Same proportion of shared ownership stock (1%);
- Low proportion of social rented stock (13%);
- Similar proportion of private rented stock (15%); and
- Same proportion of living rent free stock (1%)

### Stock Quality

4.25 The quality of the housing stock in Gravesham and Medway, and its relationship to quality in the wider area, can be considered using the proportion of households that have central heating as a very basic proxy to indicate the availability of modern facilities. Although not a perfect measure for all quality aspects, it is considered a standard indicator.

4.26 As shown below in Figure 39, by this measure the overall quality of stock across all areas considered is high. For Gravesham, 97.5% of households have central heating, sitting in the middle of the range across all areas. For Medway, 96.8% of households have central heating, which is the lowest proportion across all areas. However, there is very little significance in the variation between the highest and lowest proportions, a range from 96.8 – 98% which equates to 1.1% difference. No obvious concerns with basic stock quality across the comparator areas are raised from this analysis.

**Figure 39 - Households with Central Heating (2011)**

Source: Census 2011

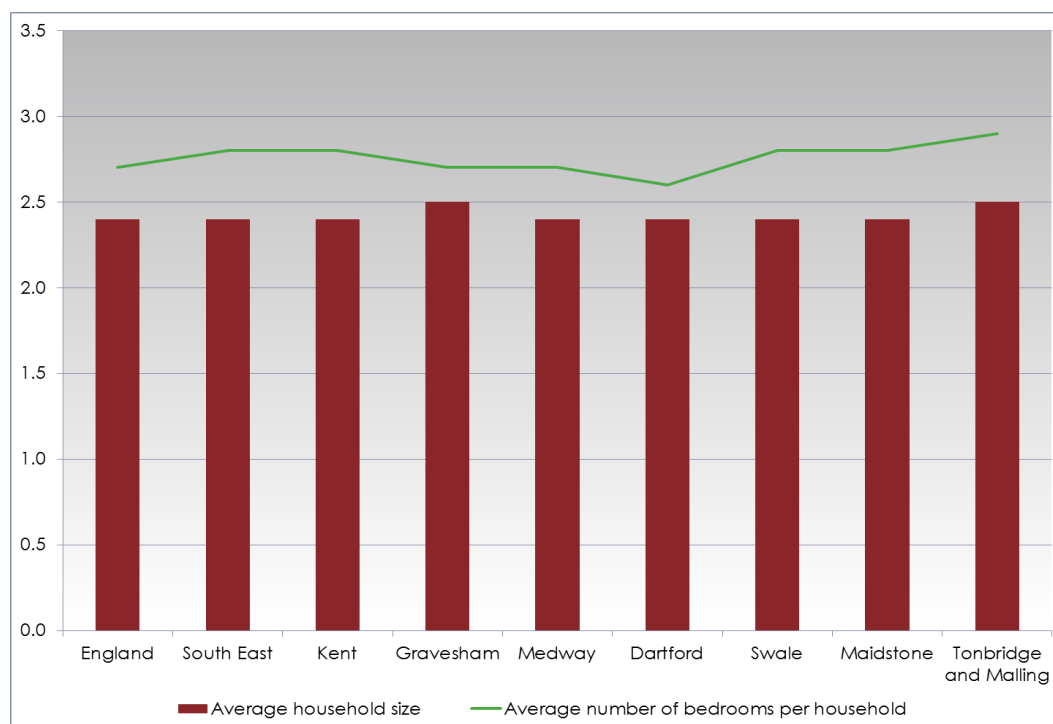
## Overcrowding and Under-Occupancy

- 4.27 Occupancy ratings provide a measure of whether a household's accommodation is either overcrowded or under occupied. There are two measures of occupancy rating, one based on the number of rooms in a household's accommodation, and one based on the number of bedrooms. The ages of the household members and their relationships to each other are used to derive the number of rooms/bedrooms they require, based on a standard formula. The number of rooms/bedrooms required is subtracted from the number of rooms/bedrooms in the household's accommodation to obtain the occupancy rating. An occupancy rating of -1 implies that a household has one fewer room/bedroom than required, whereas +1 implies that they have one more room/bedroom than the standard requirement.
- 4.28 Figure 40 provides a comparison between the average number of bedrooms and average number of people per household in Gravesham, Medway and comparator areas. There is similarity among all areas in both variables, with the average number of bedrooms being greater than the average household size, with the level of variation exhibited being very insignificant.
- 4.29 Gravesham and Tonbridge and Malling have the highest average household size of 2.5, very marginally higher than the average size of 2.4 for all other areas. Tonbridge and Malling has the highest average number of bedrooms per household (2.9), followed by the



South East, Kent, Swale and Maidstone (all 2.8), England, Gravesham and Medway (all 2.7) and Dartford (2.6).

**Figure 40 - Average Household Size and Number of Bedrooms (2011)**



Source: Census 2011

- 4.30 Occupancy rating data based on the number of bedrooms is shown below in the table alongside average household size and average number of bedrooms per household.

**Table 27 - Occupancy Rating and Average Household Size (2011)**

	Occupancy rating (bedrooms) of -1 or less	Average Household Size (persons per household)	Average Number of Bedrooms per Household
England	5%	2.4	2.7
South East	4%	2.4	2.8
Kent	3%	2.4	2.8
<b>Gravesham</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>2.7</b>
<b>Medway</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>2.7</b>
Dartford	5%	2.4	2.6
Swale	3%	2.4	2.8
Maidstone	3%	2.4	2.8
Tonbridge & Malling	3%	2.5	2.9

Source: Census 2011

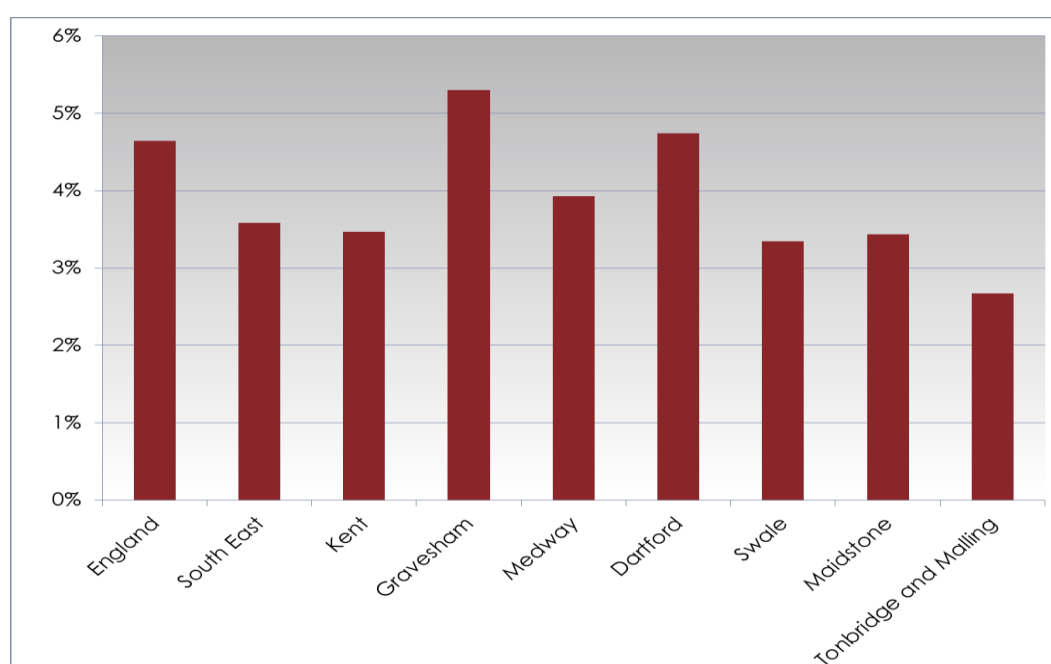
### Overcrowding

- 4.31 Overcrowding is considered specifically below in Figure 41, showing the occupancy rating (bedrooms) of -1 or less, which identifies where there are at least one too fewer bedrooms than required for a household based on its size.

4.32 The occupancy rating<sup>4</sup> for Gravesham is approximately 5%, meaning that 5% of households in the Borough are at least one bedroom too short and therefore considered to be overcrowded. This compares with an occupancy rating of approximately 4% for Medway, meaning that 4% of households in the Authority are at least one bedroom too short and therefore considered to be overcrowded.

4.33 The 5% occupancy rating for Gravesham, along with the rating for England, is the highest across all comparator areas, but it is only 2% higher than the lowest ratings of 3% for Kent, Swale, Maidstone and Tonbridge and Malling. The 4% occupancy rating is the same as the rating for the South East region.

**Figure 41 - Occupancy Rating (bedrooms) of -1 or Less**



Source: Census 2011

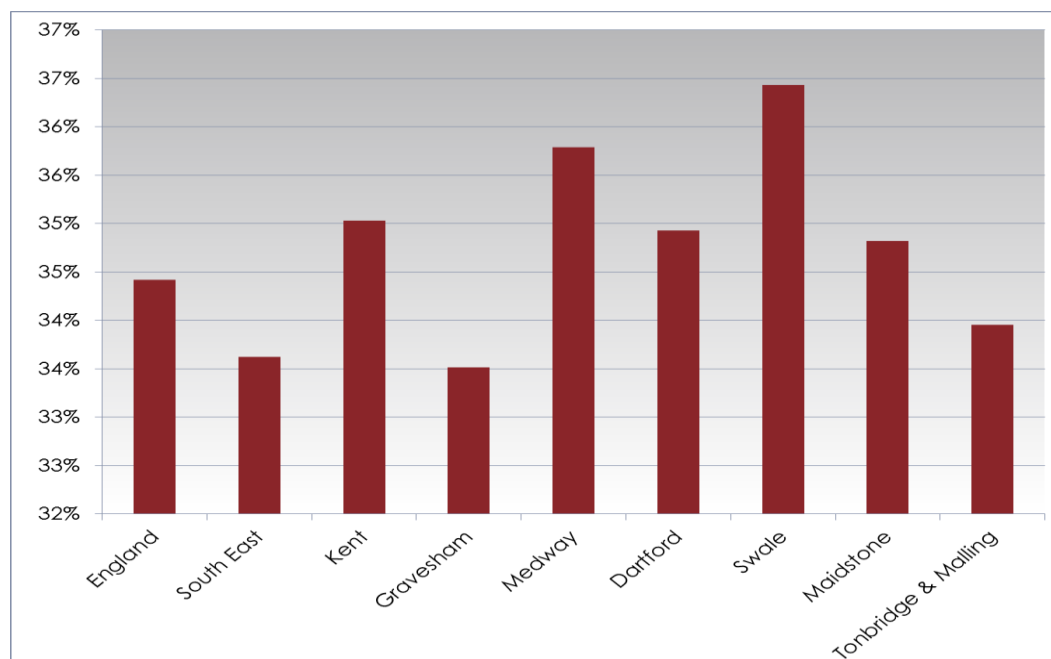
4.34 This occupancy rating analysis suggests there is no significant issue with overcrowding in either Gravesham or Medway, and may be reflective of the ageing nature of their populations (and the populations of the comparator areas) which increases the propensity for elderly person single or couple households in the stock with more than 1 bedroom. It highlights the importance of considering the impact of welfare reforms and the bedroom tax, which could affect these households if within the social rented sector.

<sup>4</sup> It is important to note that the occupancy rating figures here do not make allowance for hidden households, which may not be captured by this statistic.

## Under-occupancy

- 4.35 Figure 42 shows the occupancy rating (bedrooms) of +1 or more, which identifies under-occupancy, where there is at least one more bedroom than required for a household based on its size.
- 4.36 This occupancy rating<sup>5</sup> for Gravesham is approximately 33.5%, meaning that 33.5% of households in the Borough have at least one too many bedrooms and are therefore considered to be under-occupied. This compares with an occupancy rating of approximately 35.8% for Medway, which means that 35.8% of households in the authority have at least one too many bedrooms and are therefore considered to be under-occupied.
- 4.37 The level of under-occupancy for Medway is the second highest across all comparator areas, with only Swale showing a higher proportion of households with one too many bedrooms (36.4%). The level of under-occupancy for Gravesham is the lowest across all comparator areas, just below the regional level of 33.6%. Gravesham exhibits under-occupancy below the Kent level (35%), whereas the level for Medway is higher than for Kent.

**Figure 42 - Occupancy Rating (bedrooms) of +1 or More**



Source: Census 2011

<sup>5</sup> It is important to note that the occupancy rating figures here do not make allowance for hidden households, which may not be captured by this statistic.

- 
- 4.38 This occupancy rating analysis suggests that there is a relatively substantial prevalence of under-occupancy in Gravesham and Medway. This is quite likely to be contributed to by older person single households or couple households living in family sized stock, reflecting the ageing nature of the population in both authorities. When considering this under-occupancy in combination with the evidence of some levels of overcrowding, it indicates a mis-alignment of stock use, with some smaller households occupying larger units with more bedrooms than they need, which would be better suited to larger households that are occupying stock that does not have enough bedrooms to meet their needs.
- 4.39 By incentivising those households which are under-occupying dwellings to downsize into a smaller home with the appropriate number of bedrooms for their needs, this can free up larger stock giving the opportunity for overcrowded households to move into a larger, more appropriately sized home. This can help to address issues of overcrowding without relying solely on the delivery of new larger units.

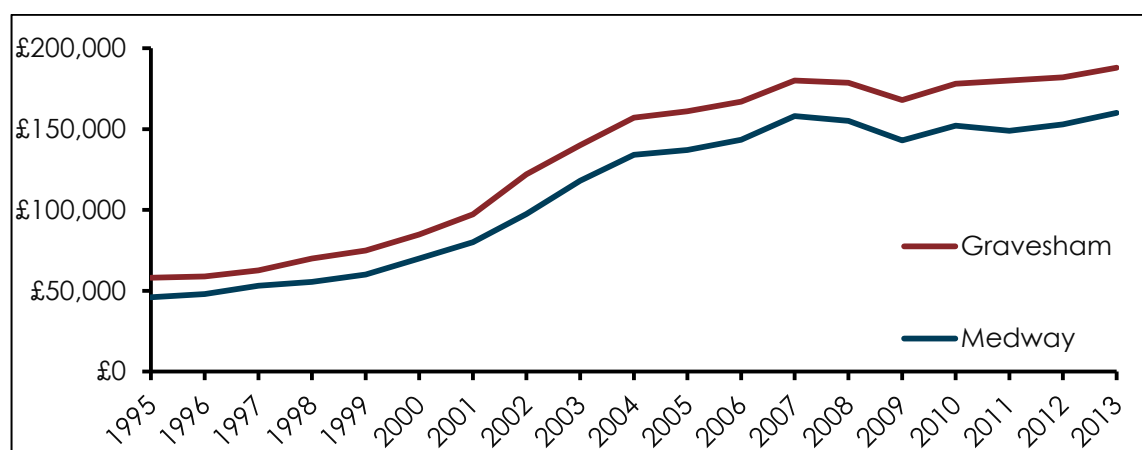
## Residential Market

- 4.40 The following section underpins the residential property market characteristics across the two North Kent local authorities.

### Owner Occupier Sector

- 4.41 At November 2014, the average house price in Gravesham stood at £242,000, which is 20% above the average price for Medway at £193,000. At the same point, the average value for Kent was £248,000; 2.5% above values for Gravesham and 19.75% above those for Medway.

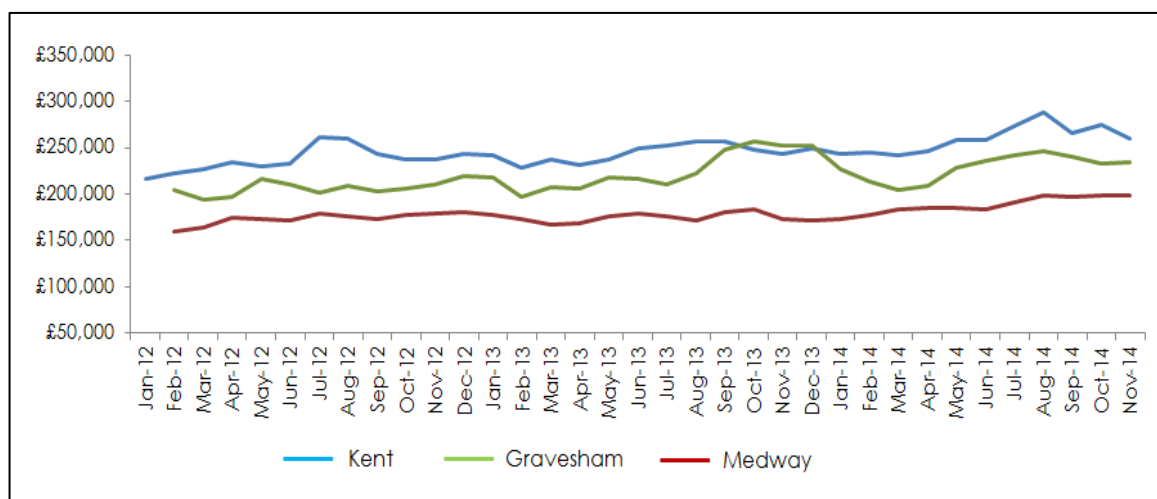
**Figure 43 - Median House Prices, Medway and Gravesham 1995 - 2013**



Source: ONS 2013

- 4.42 Figure 43 above shows price growth in both Medway and Gravesham since 1995. It shows that whilst both areas experienced a dip in values during the recession years, house prices have since recovered to pre-recession levels. It also shows that values in Gravesham have remained consistently above those in Medway, with both areas following similar patterns of growth.
- 4.43 Figure 44 below details more recent value trends, between January 2012 and November 2014. It shows that residential values in the two areas have largely remained below the average for Kent, apart from a peak in Gravesham values in mid-2013. In terms of price increase, despite fluctuations, both areas have followed similar patterns with price increases of c. 19.5% in the 23 months between January 2012 and November 2014.

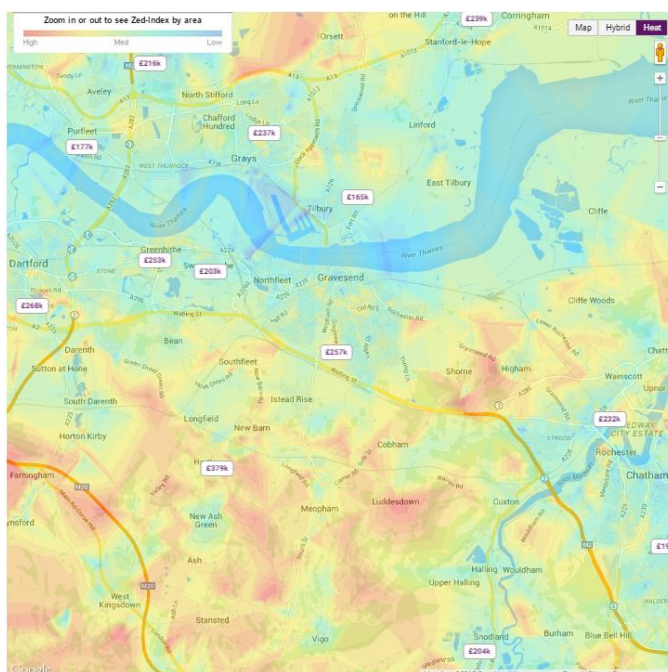
**Figure 44 - Average Residential Values in Medway, Gravesham and Kent, Jan 2012 – Nov 2014**



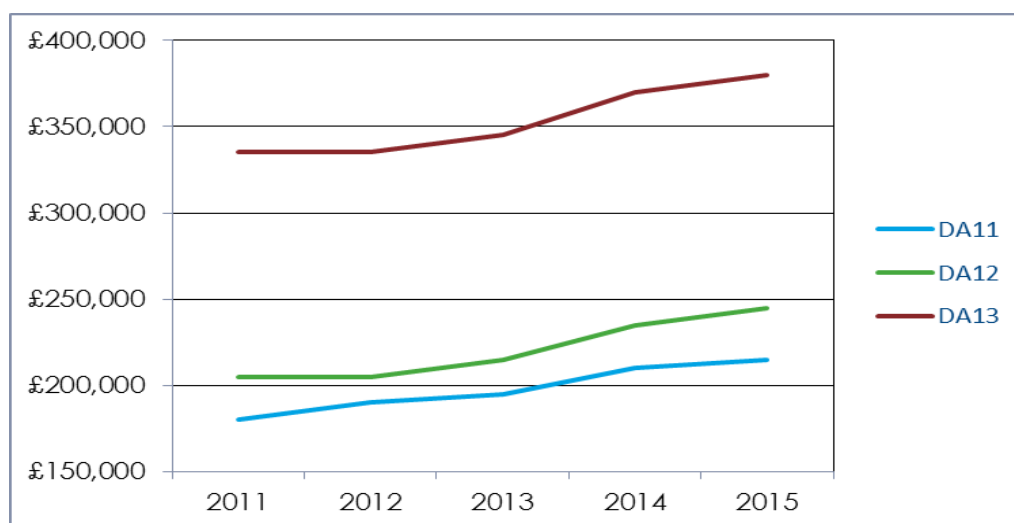
Source: GVA / Land Registry 2015

- 4.44 Figure 45 below provides a general indication of property values in Gravesham and the surrounding area, based on Zoopla's Zed Index, which provides an average property value based on current Zoopla estimates for that area. As such, it does not relate specifically to either asking or sale prices but provides a good indication of house price variation across the District and in neighbouring areas.
- 4.45 It identifies that the highest values are within the south and rural east of the Borough, and lowest values are to the north around Gravesend and the River Thames.

**Figure 45 - Gravesham Property Value Heat Map**



Source: Zoopla

**Figure 46 - Value Trends in Gravesham by Postcode, 2011 - 2015**

Source: Zoopla

- 4.46 This trend is correlated by Figure 46 above, which shows that values within the DA13 postcode, which covers areas in the rural south east of the Borough, are significantly higher than average values in the DA11 and DA12 postcodes, which covers Gravesend to the north of the Borough. Both postcode areas have however followed similar patterns of value increase.
- 4.47 It shows that values in the D13 postcode are higher than those in the DA11 and DA12 postcodes across all property types. Detached properties within the DA13 postcode were the most valuable at c. £440,000, followed by detached properties in the DA12 postcode at c. £360,000. The lowest value properties in all postcodes were flats.
- 4.48 Table 28 below shows average values over the past 12 months for different types of properties within the DA11, DA12 and DA13 postcodes. It shows that values in the D13 postcode are higher than those in the DA11 and DA12 postcodes across all property types. Detached properties within the DA13 postcode were the most valuable at c. £440,000, followed by detached properties in the DA12 postcode at c. £360,000. The lowest value properties in all postcodes were flats.

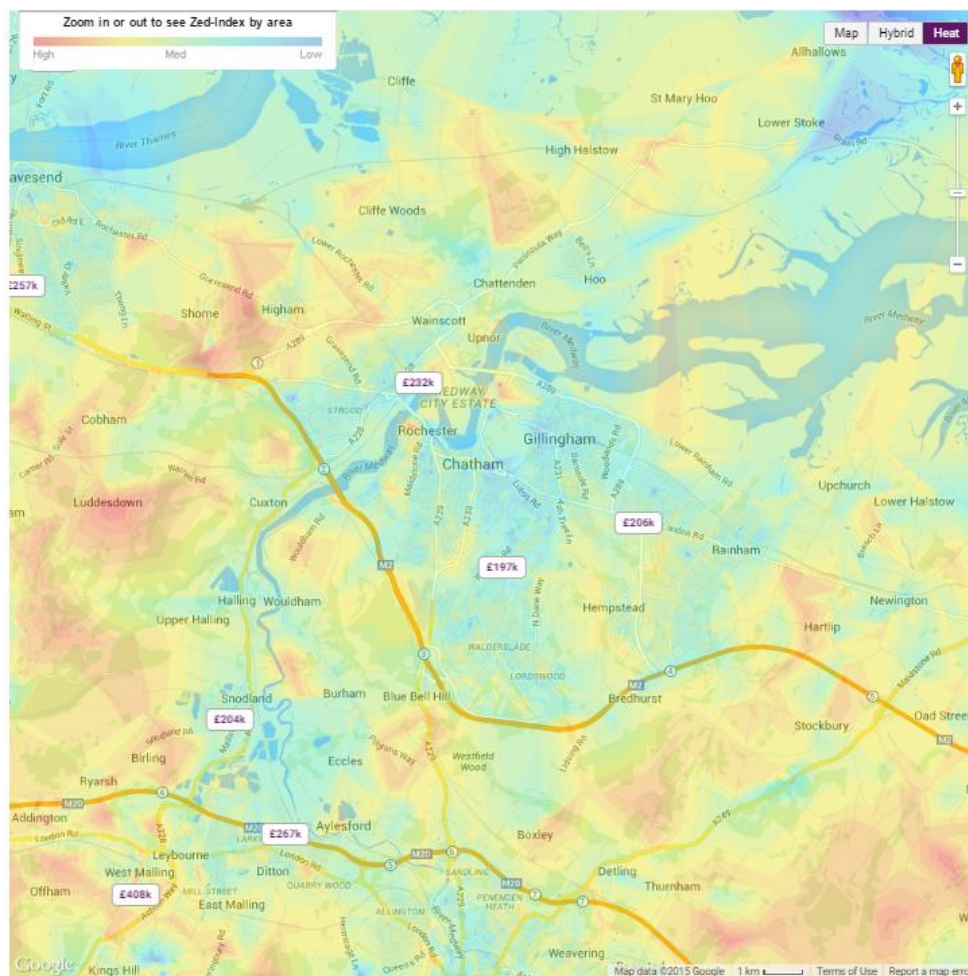


**Table 28 - Average Values D11, D12 and D13 Postcodes, Past 12 Months**

	DA11	DA12	DA13
Detached	£350,000	£360,000	£440,000
Semi-detached	£230,000	£240,000	£290,000
Terraced	£200,000	£200,000	£230,000
Flats	£130,000	£120,000	£170,000
<b>ALL</b>	<b>£200,000</b>	<b>£222,461</b>	<b>£350,000</b>

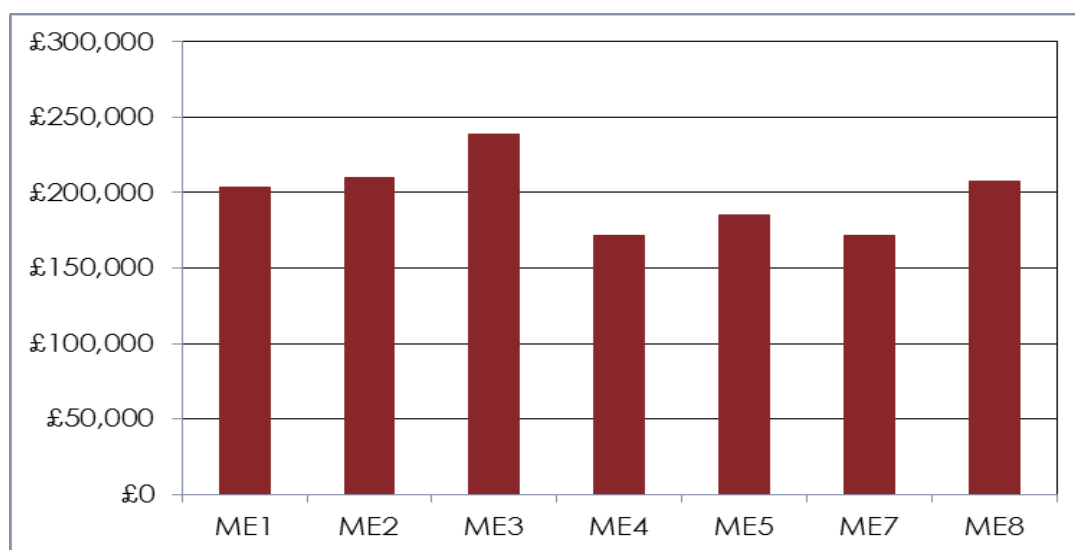
Source: Zoopla

- 4.49 Figure 47 below identifies the lowest values in Medway around Chatham and Gillingham and the surrounding areas. There are some areas of higher value in the rural communities north of the River Medway but overall, Figure 47 shows fewer areas of high value when compared to similar analysis for Gravesham illustrated in Figure 45.

**Figure 47 - Medway Residential Values Heat Map**

Source: Zoopla



**Figure 48 - Medway Values by Postcode, Past 12 Months**

Source: Zoopla

**Table 29 - Medway Postcode Key**

postcode	Post town	covers
ME1	Rochester	Rocester, Burham, Wouldham
ME2	Rochester	Stroody,, Halling, Cuxton, Frindsbury
ME3	Rochester	Rural, Hoo St Wertburgh
ME4	Chatham	Chatham
ME5	Chatham	Walderslade, Bluebell Hill, Lordswood Luton
ME7	Gillingham	Gillingham, Rainham, Hempstead
ME8	Gillingham	Rainham, Twydall

Source: Zoopla

4.50 Figure 48 above shows the average residential values over the past 12 months for all of Medway's postcodes. It identifies the highest value in the ME3 postcode, which encompasses the rural Isle of Grain. The second highest values were achieved in ME2, which encompasses the rural communities of Halling and Cuxton. The lowest values were achieved in ME4 (Chatham) and ME7 (Gillingham). This correlates with the areas of high and low values identified in Figure 47 and suggests that, like Gravesham, higher residential values are achieved in rural rather than urban areas.

4.51 Table 30 below shows values for various Medway postcodes by property type over the past 12 months. It shows that for all postcodes, detached properties achieved the highest prices. Interestingly, whilst ME3 achieved the highest overall residential values, ME1 achieved higher or equivalent values for the different property types. Flats achieved the lowest values across all postcodes. In ME4 (Chatham) however, flats achieved on average the same value as terraced houses. Flats in ME4 were also the most valuable across all postcodes for

that property type. This indicates that there is a strong demand for and / or a better quality of flatted stock within the Chatham area, compared to other locations in Medway.

**Table 30 - Residential Property Values by Type and Postcode, Medway, Past 12 Months**

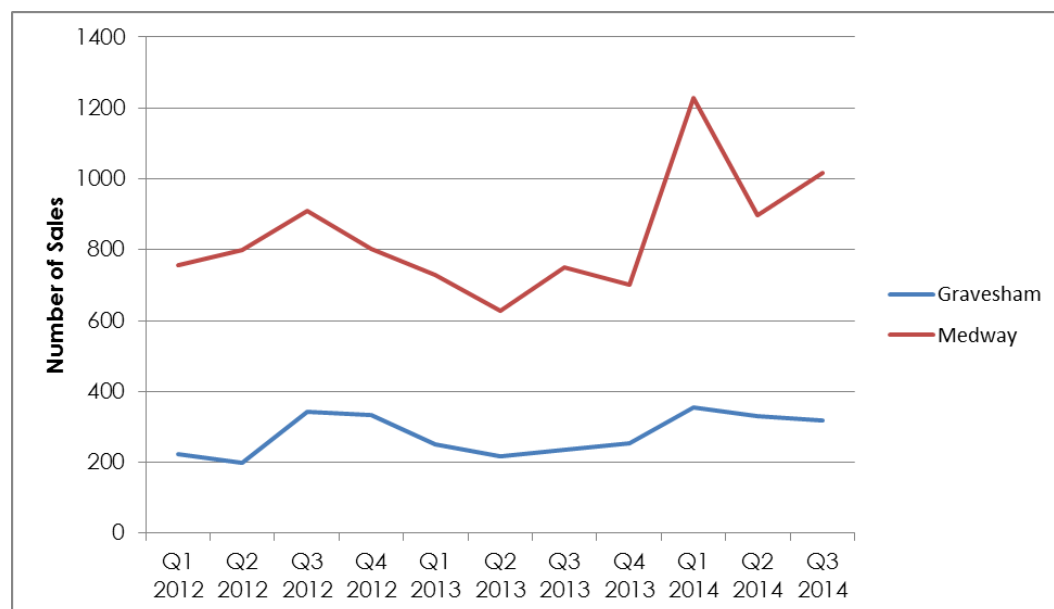
	ME1	ME4	ME3	ME7
Detached	£360,000	£310,000	£340,000	£310,000
Semi-detached	£230,000	£220,000	£230,000	£200,000
Terraced	£190,000	£150,000	£190,000	£150,000
Flats	£140,000	£150,000	£130,000	£130,000
<b>All</b>	<b>£200,000</b>	<b>£170,000</b>	<b>£240,000</b>	<b>£170,000</b>

Source: Zoopla

## Transactions

- 4.52 Figure 49 below shows the number residential transactions across both Medway and Gravesham between Q1 2012 and Q3 2014. It shows that whilst transaction levels have fluctuated in both authorities, Medway experienced a peak in Q1 2014 at over 1,200 units. 2014 levels then continued to remain above 2013, suggesting a recent increase in demand in the authority.

**Figure 49 - Number of Residential Sales, Gravesham and Medway, Q1 2012 - Q3 2014**



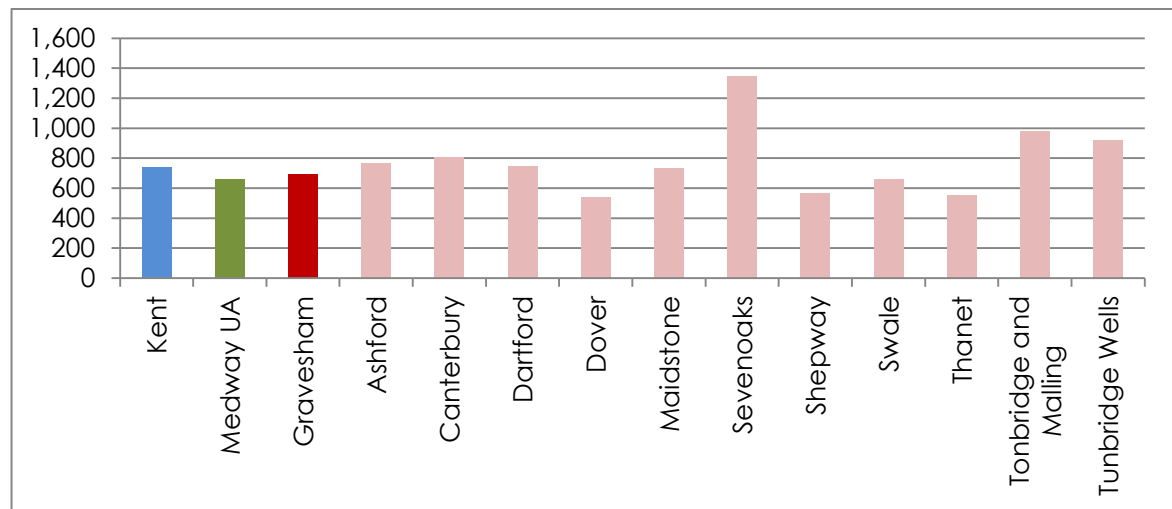
Source: GVA / Land registry 2015

## Private Rents

- 4.53 Figure 50 below shows that rental values in Medway and Gravesham are below the average for the county of Kent, and are lower than the neighbouring boroughs of Dartford

and Maidstone. It also shows that, as with residential sales values, private rental values in Gravesham are higher than in Medway.

**Figure 50: Rental Values**



Source: Zoopla

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## Key Findings

4.54 This analysis of this housing stock has identified a number key housing trends for Gravesham and Medway, which are as follows:

- Based on comparison of the 2001 and 2011 Census data, **Gravesham** has experienced population growth of 6,300 people and stock growth of 2,170 dwellings (6%) over the ten year period
- Based on comparison of the 2001 and 2011 Census data, **Medway** has experienced population growth of 15,200 people and stock growth of 6,640 dwellings (7%) over the ten year period
- **Medway** has a higher proportion of terraced stock in the authority than Gravesham, and the local, regional and national comparator areas, particularly compared to the average levels in Kent and the South East.
- **Medway** has a similar proportion of purpose built flatted stock to other areas. However, this is less than the proportion for **Gravesham**, which is similar to the regional and national levels.
- For both **Gravesham and Medway** there is a lower proportion of detached stock than in local, regional and national comparator areas. Stock profiles for both authorities show the highest proportions for semi-detached stock and terraced stock.
- **Gravesham and Medway** show strong alignment in the size profile of stock by bedroom number, with almost half of their stock having 3 bedrooms (47% and 49% respectively). This is substantially higher than the proportions for Kent (40%), the South East (39%) and England (41%)
- There is general similarity of tenure structure across all comparator areas, however when comparing **Gravesham and Medway** there is variation in the proportion of owner occupation (65% in Gravesham and 70% in Medway) and social renting (17% in Gravesham and 13% in Medway).
- There is some evidence of overcrowding in both **Gravesham and Medway**, however this is within 2% of the occupancy ratings across all comparator areas and does not suggests a serious overcrowding issue. **Gravesham** has 5.3% of households which are at least one bedroom too short and **Medway** has 3.9% of households which are at least one bedroom too short. This overcrowding is likely to be most challenging in urban areas of the authorities, where there is more evidence of bedroom shortage than in rural areas
- There is evidence of under-occupancy in both Gravesham and Medway. Gravesham has 33.5% of households with at least one too many bedrooms and Medway has 35.8% of households with at least one too many bedrooms.
- Both local authorities have a weak residential market and both areas face challenges in terms of development viability, particularly on complex sites.

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## Strengths

- Gravesham and Medway provide an important housing resource for the wider Kent and South East London market. There is a variety of housing types on offer, and prices, in the main, remain relatively affordable when compared with London and Kent locations. Both local employment and access to jobs in other areas underpin the market.
- There is significant population and household growth forecast for both Gravesham and Medway over the next 10-25 years which will underpin housing market growth. Much of this growth is locally driven.

## Weaknesses

- The range of housing types could be broader. There is a relatively high concentration of terraced homes in the market.
- The private market is somewhat dominated by: lower value urban terraced stock, higher value village stock and newer waterfront flats aimed at smaller households. The supply of larger, mid-market family homes is relatively less available than in other communities.
- Values remain relatively modest compared to other nearby locations, and recent post-recession value growth has lagged behind other areas. This has constrained market driven development, and presents challenges in terms of securing development contributions.

## Opportunities

- Opportunities are presented by the potential for value growth, as rising prices and demand continues to ripple out from London.
- Investment in housing for market segments where demand is rising could result.

## Threats

- There has been a reduction in the proportion of people in the 30-39 year age groups and their children (5-14 years) from 2001-11 in Gravesham and Medway. This may reflect the impact of recession as families moved in search of jobs. It may also be a reflection of a perceived lack of new housing for this group.
- Development of a significant amount of new housing at Ebbsfleet may represent competition for Gravesham in particular given shared proximity to the Dartford and Bexley markets.



## 5. North Kent Economy

- 5.1 North Kent sits within the wider South East Economy and is also influenced by the London economy. There are strong regional connections through the motorway network and rail networks as well as waterfront logistics sites. These factors influence business location and the labour market in a positive way. There are some wider factors that local economic development needs to be considered within.
- 5.2 Over the long term there has been economic restructuring away from traditional manufacturing and distribution industries, and divestment of military facilities has had a long term impact. Local socio-economic characteristics do display some concentrations of deprivation. There is a significant difference in the scale of the economies of Gravesham and Medway. Medway's Gross Value Added output in 2014 was approx three times more than Gravesham. Between 2001 and 2014 Medway grew by 5% and Gravesham by 1%.
- 5.3 Over the last decade there has been continued agglomeration of the office market in London. This has continued through the recession, with business and financial services, ICT and creative industries still focusing on central London. There have been rising office rents in recent years at the centre and fringe locations. During this period, office take-up across Gravesham and Medway has been negligible in regional terms. There is robust sub-regional competition in the office market, with Dartford, Maidstone and Kings Hill playing distinct roles in the market place. Office technologies and changing working practices are increasing employee to floorspace densities generally, although this process is more pronounced in central city locations.
- 5.4 There is rising demand for logistics space in the Thames Estuary Corridor. Growth is being driven by the Channel Tunnel, investment in Thames Ports and the intersection of the M25 with radial motorways. The QE2 crossing draws a concentration of logistics facilities. UK manufacturing continues to consolidate and focus on the highest value added parts of the market.
- 5.5 The following review highlights how some of these factors are reflected in the nature of local employment sectors, the stock of businesses and the operations of the industrial and office markets.

## Sectoral Composition of the Gravesham and Medway Economy

### Employment by Industry 2011

5.6 The table below provides a list of industries by broad sectors and the percentage of employment in each of these industries in 2011. This shows broad similarities in the distribution of employment by major sector at a number of scales and across local authority areas.

**Table 31 – 2011 Proportion of Employment by Industry (%)**

	England	South East region	Kent	Gravesham	Medway	Dartford	Swale	Maidstone	Tonbridge and Malling
O-Q Public admin education & health	28.2	27.7	28.7	<b>24.5</b>	<b>28.1</b>	26.0	27.5	28.4	26.4
G,I Distribution, hotels & restaurants	21.5	20.6	21.2	<b>23.3</b>	<b>21.9</b>	21.8	20.9	20.9	20.1
K-N Banking finance & insurance etc	17.5	18.6	17.9	<b>16.7</b>	<b>16.1</b>	18.6	14.7	17.9	21.4
F Construction	7.7	8.0	9.7	<b>11.9</b>	<b>10.9</b>	10.8	10.6	10.6	9.5
H,J Transport & Communication	9.1	10.7	8.6	<b>9.4</b>	<b>8.8</b>	10.1	8.5	8.2	8.7
C Manufacturing	8.8	7.2	6.7	<b>7.5</b>	<b>7.6</b>	6.5	10.3	6.6	6.8
R-U Other services	5.0	5.1	4.8	<b>4.4</b>	<b>4.3</b>	4.4	4.3	4.5	4.8
B,D,E Energy & water	1.5	1.4	1.5	<b>1.6</b>	<b>2.1</b>	1.6	1.7	1.6	1.6
A Agriculture and Fishing	0.8	0.7	1.0	<b>0.8</b>	<b>0.4</b>	0.2	1.5	1.4	0.7

Source: Census 2011

5.7 For Gravesham the key employment sectors as follows:

- Public administration, education and health (24.5%);
- Distribution, hotels and restaurants (23.3%);
- Banking, finance and insurance etc. (16.7%); and
- Construction (11.9%)

5.8 For Medway the key employment industries and their proportion are as follows:

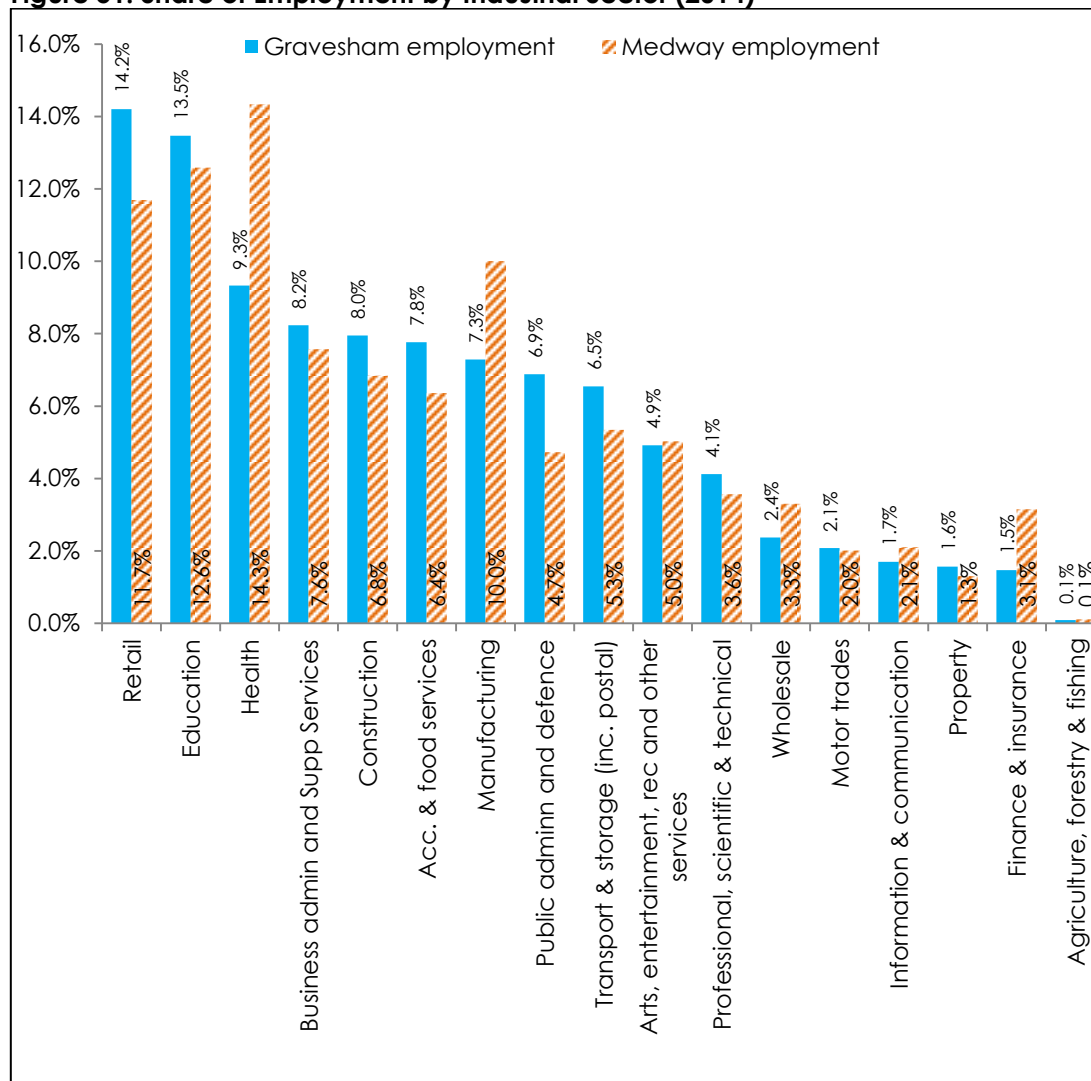


- Public administration, education and health (28.1%);
- Distribution, hotels and restaurants (21.9%);
- Banking, finance and insurance etc. (16.1%); and
- Construction (10.9%)

- 5.9 Gravesham shows relative strength in the distribution, hotels and restaurants industries (23.3%) compared with Medway (21.9%) and the local, regional and national comparators. It also shows some relative strength in the construction industry (11.9%) compared to Medway (10.9%) and the local, regional and national comparator areas (ranging from 8% in the South East to 10.9% in Medway). There is relative weakness in the public administration, education and health industries (24.5%) compared with Medway (28.1%) and the local, regional and national comparators (ranging from 26% in Dartford to 28.4% in Maidstone).
- 5.10 Medway shows some relative strength in the energy and water industries (2.1%) compared with Gravesham (1.6%) and the local, regional and national comparators (ranging from 1.4% in the South East to 1.7% in Swale).

### **Employment by Sector 2014**

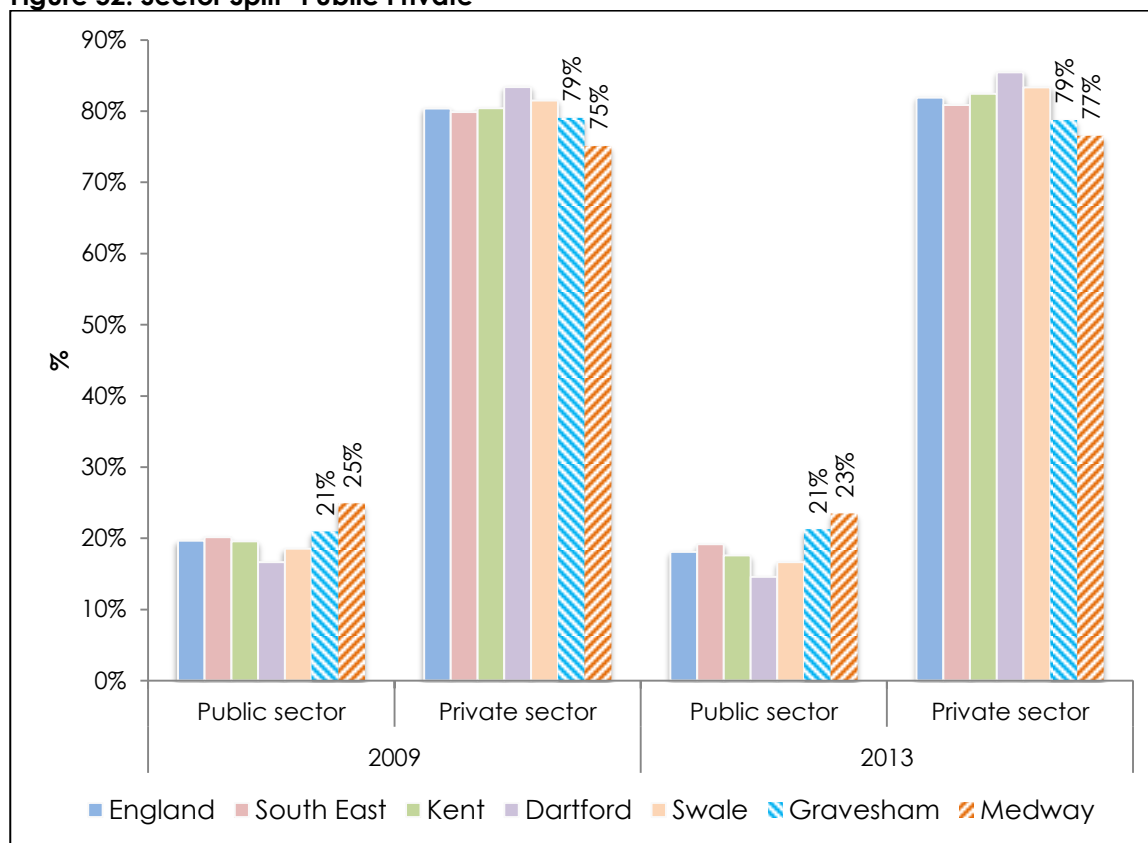
- 5.11 Figure 51 shows the sectoral distribution of employment for Medway and Gravesham. The top three employment sectors in the two local authority areas are retail, education and health. Gravesham has a higher representation of employment in retail, construction, food services, public administration, defence, and transport and storage than Medway. Medway has a higher proportion of employment in health and manufacturing than Gravesham.
- 5.12 Both Medway and Gravesham have experienced the impact of wider de-industrialisation with a marked decline in manufacturing in recent years. Finance, IT and other businesses are significantly under-represented in both the local authorities. There are high levels of jobs in public administration etc. which could expose the local economy to the effects of reduction in spending.
- 5.13 Gravesham has seen a decline in the wholesale and retail sectors. However, its employment in professional services and the finance sector has increased in the borough. In the past decade Medway has seen a decline in wholesale and retail, which are a high employment sector for the district. It has also experienced a decline in the high-value sector of professional and other private sector services.

**Figure 51: Share of Employment by Industrial Sector (2014)**

Source: NOMIS, ONS

### Sector Structure- Public Private

- 5.14 Figure 52 shows the sectoral split between public and private sector employment for Medway and Gravesham and other comparator locations. Both local authorities have higher public sector employment than their neighbours.
- 5.15 There has been a 2% decline in public sector employment in Medway in 2013 compared to 2009. Whereas, Medway's public sector employment proportion has remained the same at 21% in 2013 compared to 2009.

**Figure 52: Sector Split- Public Private**

Source: NOMIS, ONS

### Location Quotient Analysis – Sector Specialisation

- 5.16 The Location Quotients (LQs) analysis for employment sectors measures the concentration (or specialism) in a particular area against a comparator for the employment sector.
- 5.17 LQs provide a simple yet powerful tool to compare places and employment activity. A LQ of 1 shows that employment in a sector is proportionately the same as the benchmark geography (i.e., there is no specialisms), a LQ greater than 1 shows the sector is proportionately more strongly represented in the two local authorities (i.e. there is a specialisation), and a LQ less than 1 shows a sector is under represented.
- 5.18 Table 32 and Table 33 identify the sectors within both Gravesham and Medway that have comparative strength against wider benchmark locations. A gradient of colour scale has been used to define the strength of specialism, with pink being very strong to strong, blue being strong to moderate and white being low to very low.

### Gravesham- Sector Specialisms

5.19 Gravesham's sector specialisms are inclined towards manufacturing and logistics activities; when compared to the regional and national context, Gravesham has common sectoral strengths in the following sectors:

- Manufacturing activities like: manufacture of cement, lime and plaster; and manufacture of basic precious and non-ferrous metals;
- Transport and Logistics: Freight Rail transport; and Sea and coastal passenger transport
- Renting and leasing of personal and household goods

5.20 Following is a summary of the sector specialism in Gravesham in relation to the wider comparator areas:

- **Sector specialisms in Gravesham compared to Kent:** Very high strength in Mining and Quarrying; Manufacture of refined petroleum products; Manufacture of cement, lime and plaster; Manufacture of basic precious and non-ferrous metals. The district also has a high strength in Research and Experimental development on social science and humanities; Renting and leasing of personal households and goods; Inland Freight and Water Transport; Freight Rail transport.
- **Sector specialisms in Gravesham compared to the South East:** Manufacture of refined petroleum products; Manufacture of cement, lime and plaster; Manufacture of basic precious and other non-ferrous metal; Mining and Quarrying; Inland Freight and Water Transport; Freight Rail transport; Research and Experimental development on social science and humanities; Renting and leasing of personal households and goods.
- **Sector specialisms in Gravesham compared to England:** Inland Freight and Water Transport; Manufacture of refined petroleum products; Manufacture of cement, lime and plaster; Manufacture of articles of paper and paperboard; Manufacture of articles of concrete, cement and plaster; Freight Rail transport; Renting and leasing of personal and household goods

**Table 32: Gravesham- Location Quotient Analysis (2013)**

	Gravesham to Kent	Gravesham to South East	Gravesham to England
081 : Quarrying of stone, sand and clay	1.9	3.1	3.4
<b>089 : Mining and quarrying n.e.c.</b>	16.9	7.5	3.1
<b>141 : Manufacture of wearing apparel, except fur apparel</b>	3.8	1.6	0.7
<b>172 : Manufacture of articles of paper and paperboard</b>	6.0	7.7	10.6
<b>192 : Manufacture of refined petroleum products</b>	12.7	22.3	28.2
233 : Manufacture of clay building materials	1.2	0.8	0.9
<b>235 : Manufacture of cement, lime and plaster</b>	21.1	15.8	15.8
236 : Manufacture of articles of concrete, cement and plaster	2.8	4.0	6.2

	Gravesham to Kent	Gravesham to South East	Gravesham to England
<b>244 : Manufacture of basic precious and other non-ferrous metals</b>	14.9	26.8	6.9
255 : Forging, pressing, stamping and roll-forming of metal; powder metallurgy	2.6	1.8	1.0
259 : Manufacture of other fabricated metal products	2.0	1.7	1.2
321 : Manufacture of jewellery, bijouterie and related articles	2.7	2.2	3.0
325 : Manufacture of medical and dental instruments and supplies	3.9	3.9	4.4
329 : Other manufacturing	1.0	0.8	0.8
332 : Installation of industrial machinery and equipment	2.3	0.9	0.8
431 : Demolition and site preparation	2.5	2.4	3.1
432 : Electrical, plumbing and other construction installation activities	1.4	1.6	2.2
433 : Building completion and finishing	1.5	1.6	2.3
439 : Other specialised construction activities n.e.c.	1.5	1.4	2.2
479 : Retail trade not in stores, stalls or markets	1.5	1.9	2.0
<b>492 : Freight rail transport</b>	11.2	11.7	7.8
493 : Other passenger land transport	2.3	1.8	1.7
<b>501 : Sea and coastal passenger water transport</b>	1.5	3.0	8.8
<b>504 : Inland freight water transport</b>	14.0	9.3	40.7
522 : Support activities for transportation	2.6	2.4	3.5
582 : Software publishing	2.3	2.9	1.9
639 : Other information service activities	4.8	4.1	1.8
<b>722 : Research and experimental development on social sciences and humanities</b>	11.2	9.1	3.9
750 : Veterinary activities	1.3	1.5	1.9
<b>772 : Renting and leasing of personal and household goods</b>	11.8	8.4	9.6
773 : Renting and leasing of other machinery, equipment and tangible goods	2.2	2.2	3.0
823 : Organisation of conventions and trade shows	2.3	2.6	1.7
843 : Compulsory social security activities	2.8	1.8	1.4
852 : Primary education	1.7	1.5	2.0
873 : Residential care activities for the elderly and disabled	1.5	1.7	2.4
952 : Repair of personal and household goods	2.9	2.6	4.4

Source: ONS

### Medway- Sector Specialisms

- 5.21 Medway's economy has a specialism in manufacturing activities. When compared to the regional and national context it has sector specialisms in activities such as- manufacture of steam generators; and manufacture of general purpose machinery. Medway also shows specialisms in support activities for other mining and quarrying.
- 5.22 The following is a summary of the sector specialism in Medway in relation to the wider comparator areas:

- **Sector specialisms in Medway compared to Kent:** Manufacture of steam generators, except central heating hot water boilers Manufacture of general purpose machinery; Manufacture of instruments and appliances for measuring, testing and navigation; watches and clocks Manufacture of computers and peripheral equipment Manufacture of gas; distribution of gaseous fuels through mains.
- **Sector Specialism in Medway compared to the South East:** Support activities for other mining and quarrying; weaving of textiles; manufacture of steam generators, except central heating hot water boilers.
- **Sector specialism in Medway compared to England:** Manufacture of instruments and appliances for measuring, testing and navigation; watches and clocks; Support activities for other mining and quarrying; Manufacture of grain mill products, starches and starch products; Manufacture of irradiation, electro-medical and electrotherapeutic equipment; Manufacture of general purpose machinery.

**Table 33: Medway- Location Quotient Analysis (2013)**

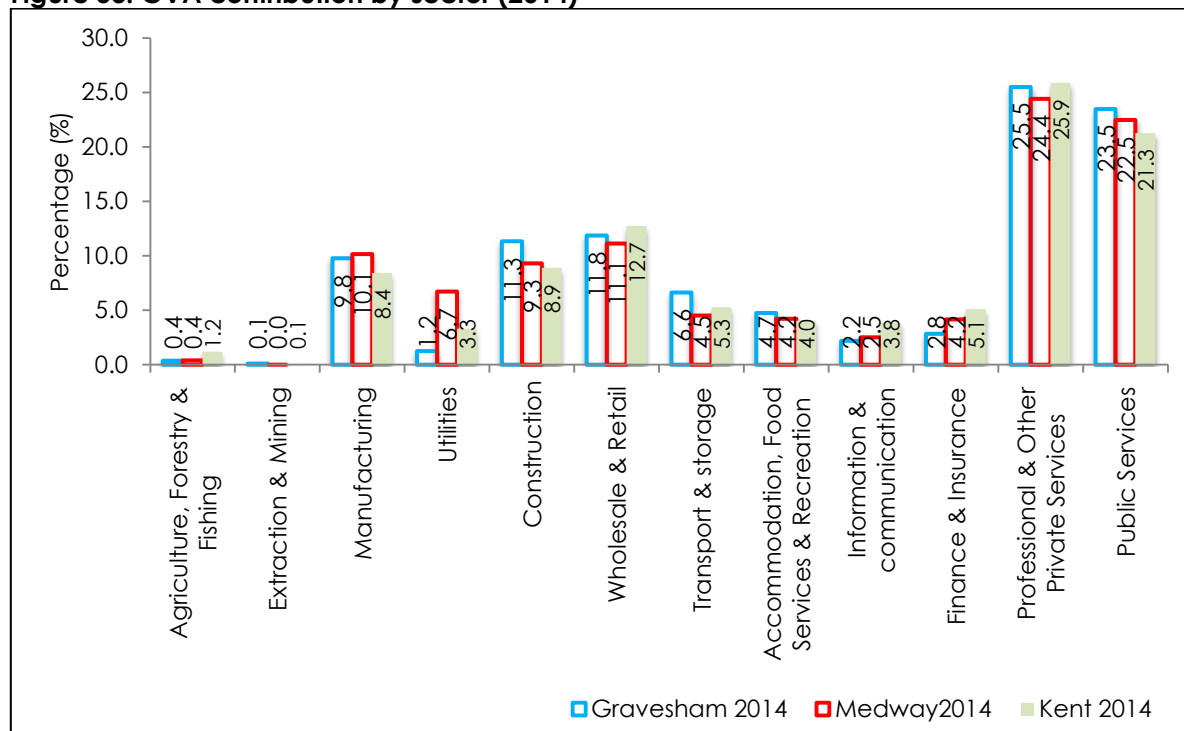
	Medway to Kent	Medway to South East	Medway to England
<b>099 : Support activities for other mining and quarrying</b>	-	15.5	5.0
<b>106 : Manufacture of grain mill products, starches and starch products</b>	-	4.7	4.9
<b>132 : Weaving of textiles</b>	-	13.5	1.3
<b>133 : Finishing of textiles</b>	3.3	3.0	0.7
151 : Tanning and dressing of leather; manufacture of luggage, handbags, saddlery and harness; dressing and dyeing of fur	2.2	1.4	0.4
172 : Manufacture of articles of paper and paperboard	1.6	2.1	2.9
221 : Manufacture of rubber products	2.0	1.3	0.5
<b>241 : Manufacture of basic iron and steel and of ferro-alloys</b>	4.4	4.3	2.8
244 : Manufacture of basic precious and other non-ferrous metals	1.5	2.7	0.7
<b>245 : Casting of metals</b>	3.2	1.9	1.9
<b>253 : Manufacture of steam generators, except central heating hot water boilers</b>	60.7	11.4	2.0
259 : Manufacture of other fabricated metal products	2.6	2.2	1.5
<b>262 : Manufacture of computers and peripheral equipment</b>	9.0	3.4	1.9
263 : Manufacture of communication equipment	1.6	1.5	2.3
<b>265 : Manufacture of instruments and appliances for measuring, testing and navigation; watches and clocks</b>	10.0	5.6	8.2
<b>266 : Manufacture of irradiation, electromedical and electrotherapeutic equipment</b>	3.3	4.6	4.8
<b>281 : Manufacture of general purpose machinery</b>	18.8	7.0	4.8
<b>309 : Manufacture of transport equipment n.e.c.</b>	50.6	5.7	2.8
310 : Manufacture of furniture	2.7	1.8	1.4
332 : Installation of industrial machinery and equipment	2.6	1.1	0.9
351 : Electric power generation, transmission and distribution	1.8	2.8	2.3
<b>352 : Manufacture of gas; distribution of gaseous fuels through mains</b>	6.3	6.3	1.7
381 : Waste collection	1.8	1.5	2.1
382 : Waste treatment and disposal	1.7	1.8	2.1
383 : Materials recovery	1.0	1.1	2.1
390 : Remediation activities and other waste management services	1.3	1.9	3.2

	Medway to Kent	Medway to South East	Medway to England
421 : Construction of roads and railways	1.7	2.1	2.3
433 : Building completion and finishing	1.4	1.5	2.1
473 : Retail sale of automotive fuel in specialised stores	1.5	1.6	2.5
491 : Passenger rail transport, interurban	0.7	1.4	2.1
503 : Inland passenger water transport	1.3	2.8	2.5
504 : Inland freight water transport	0.8	0.5	2.3
531 : Postal activities under universal service obligation	3.2	2.6	3.1
582 : Software publishing	2.1	2.7	1.8
641 : Monetary intermediation	2.8	2.5	1.2
722 : Research and experimental development on social sciences and humanities	2.3	1.9	0.8
773 : Renting and leasing of other machinery, equipment and tangible goods	1.7	1.7	2.2
801 : Private security activities	1.9	2.3	1.3
822 : Activities of call centres	3.1	4.0	2.5
855 : Other education	2.0	1.6	1.7
942 : Activities of trade unions	3.0	2.0	0.4

Source: ONS

### Gross Value Added Contribution by Sector

- 5.23 Figure 53 shows the contribution to GVA by broad industrial sectors for Medway, Gravesham and Kent. There are similarities in the sectoral distribution across Medway and Gravesham. The top two economic sectors in Medway and Gravesham measured by Gross Value added are professional services (24% and 25% respectively) and public services (22% and 23% respectively). The next most significant sector is wholesale and retail (11% and 12% respectively). The two districts also show strength in the manufacturing sector when compared with the regional average.
- 5.24 Gravesham shows particular strength in construction (11%) and transport and storage (6.6%) compared to Medway and the region. Medway has a stronger utility sector at (7%) in relation to Gravesham and Kent. Both authorities have a low share of productivity relating to finance and insurance, and the ICT sector compared to Kent.

**Figure 53: GVA contribution by sector (2014)**

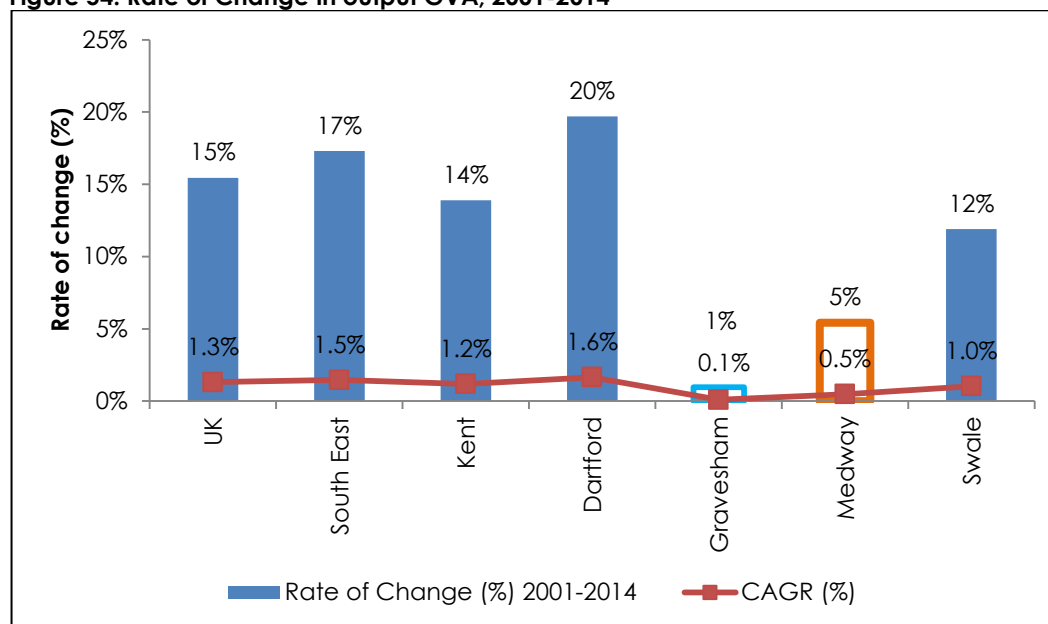
Source: Experian

## Economic Output

### Total Output-Gross Value Added (GVA)

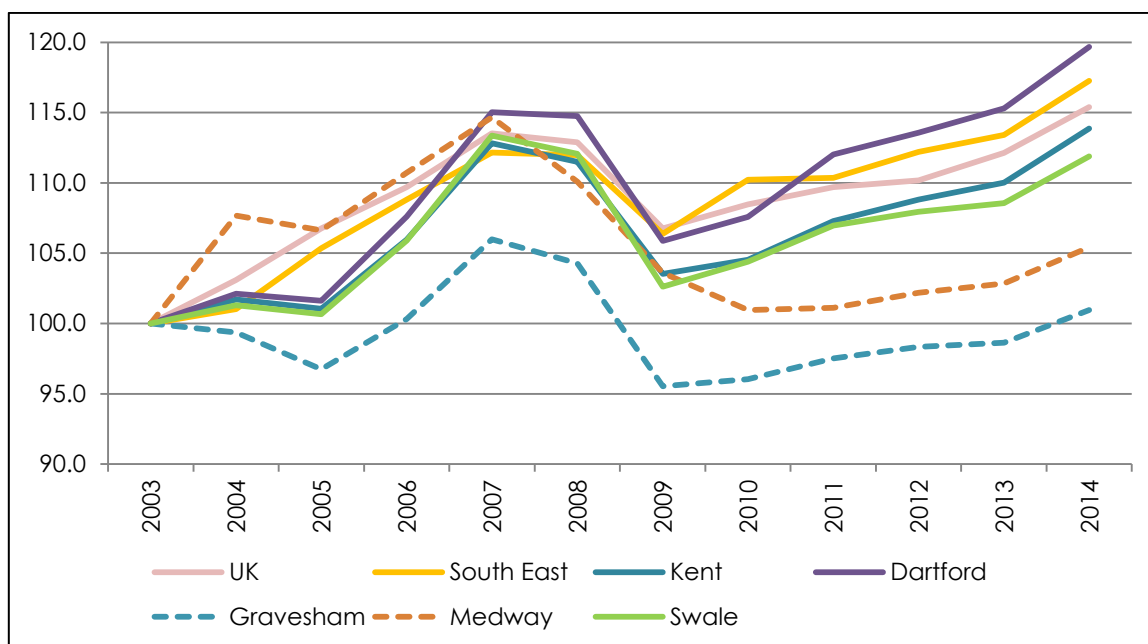
- 5.25 Medway and Gravesham have different scales of economic output. Medway's Gross Value Added (GVA) levels in 2014 were almost three times the size of that for Gravesham. Figure 54 examines the change in economic output as measured by Gross Value Added (GVA) in Medway and Gravesham against the local and regional comparators between 2003 and 2014. Both local authority areas have lower rates of GVA growth than neighbouring authorities and wider context areas.
- 5.26 Medway has seen the second lowest growth in the GVA output of 5% and a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 0.5%. Gravesham has seen the lowest growth rate among the benchmarks in the last decade at 1% and an annual growth rate of 0.1%.



**Figure 54: Rate of Change in output GVA, 2001-2014**

Source: Experian

- 5.27 The difference in growth trends for the economies of Gravesham and Medway is shown in the figure below. It shows that Kent's economy has seen a significant decline during the recession of 2008 to 2010 by 6%, more than UK's average of 4% decline. Both Gravesham and Medway were impacted significantly during this period. Both saw a sharp decline of c. 8% during 2008 to 2010 and remained below regional and national levels.
- 5.28 The figure below shows that post 2010, the economy has started to pick up but the output levels still have not recovered to the pre-recession levels in both the local authorities. Growth rates post-2010 are relatively low for Gravesham and Medway.
- 5.29 The highest growth rate between 2010 and 2014 has been observed in Dartford (11%) followed by Swale (7%). Medway and Gravesham's growth rate post-recession has been at 4% and 5% respectively.

**Figure 55: Output (GVA) - Change to Base Year (2001-2014)**

Source: Experian

### GVA Output per Head

- 5.30 Despite the difference in the overall scale of the economic output between the local authority areas, GVA per head is more similar, reflecting similarities in the structure of the local economy. Both Medway and Gravesham have low levels of GVA per capita which are below neighbouring context locations of £15,414 and £13,093 respectively in 2013, lowest among all benchmarks.

**Table 34: GVA per head (£)**

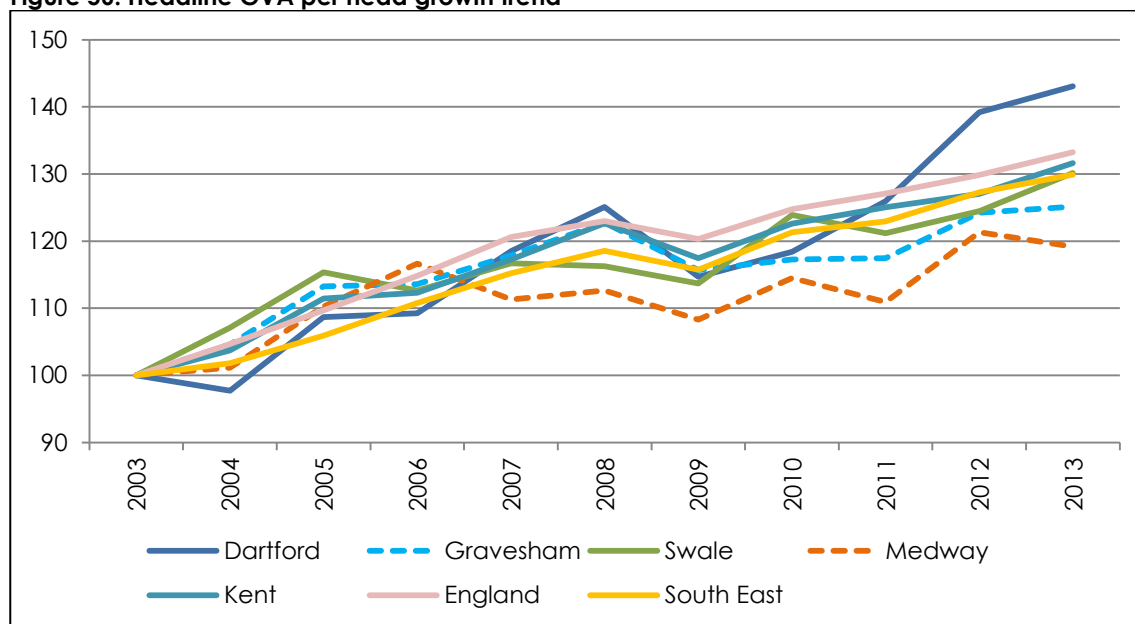
	England	South East	Kent	Dartford	Swale	Medway	Gravesham
2013	24,091	25,843	19,835	29,928	16,787	15,414	13,093

Source: Kent County Council,

- 5.31 Figure 56 shows the headline GVA trends for the two local authorities and the benchmark areas over the past 10 years. Again, both the local authorities show a lower performance against the comparators. Medway has seen the lowest growth rate at 19%, and Gravesham the second-lowest growth rate at 25%.
- 5.32 During the recession Gravesham was hit the hardest with 4% decline in its GVA output per head value during 2008 and 2010; similarly, Medway also experienced a slow growth rate of 2%.

- 5.33 Post-recession Gravesham has grown at 7%, while Medway has experienced a lowest rate of 4%, significantly below Dartford (21%) and Gravesham.

**Figure 56: Headline GVA per head growth trend**



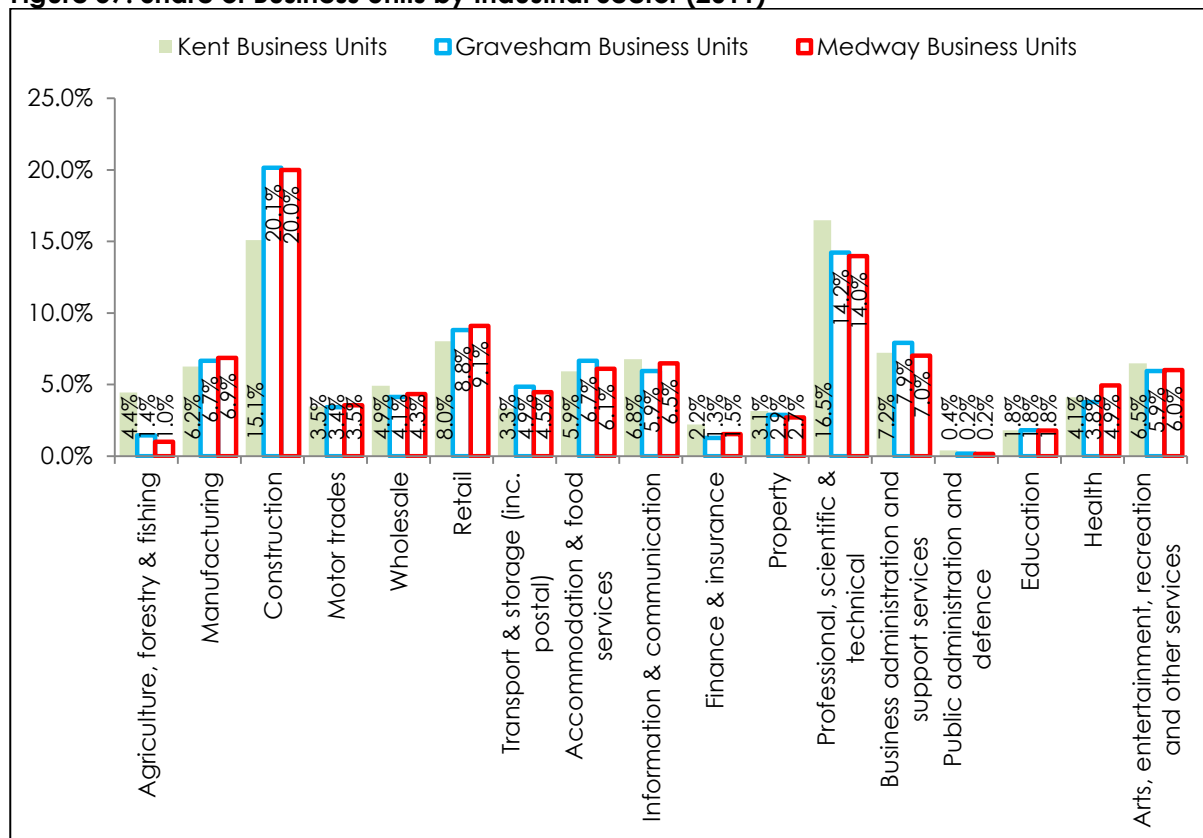
Source: Kent County Council

## The Stock of Businesses

- 5.34 This section reviews business stock and sizes, business survival rates and growth rates to provide a context to business demography for Medway and Gravesham.

### Business Units by Sector

- 5.35 This section considers the distribution of businesses across sectoral classifications. While the two local authority area economies differ in scale there are strong parallels in terms of the role of different sectors. Construction and professional, scientific and technical services have a strong representation in each of the local authority areas. Both then have similar distributions among retail, business administration and manufacturing.
- 5.36 Figure 51 shows further proportional breakdown of these business units according to the sectors. It shows that construction (20%) and professional and technical services (14%) by far have the maximum share of business units by proportion in Medway and Gravesham. This is followed by retail, business admin and production.

**Figure 57: Share of Business Units by Industrial Sector (2011)**

Source: Census, 2011

### Business Size Bands

- 5.37 Gravesham and Medway have a similar distribution of employment among small business size categories. These are also similar to wider context areas. While still having a small proportion of employers, Dartford does have a high proportion of larger employers.

**Table 35: Business Units by Size, 2013**

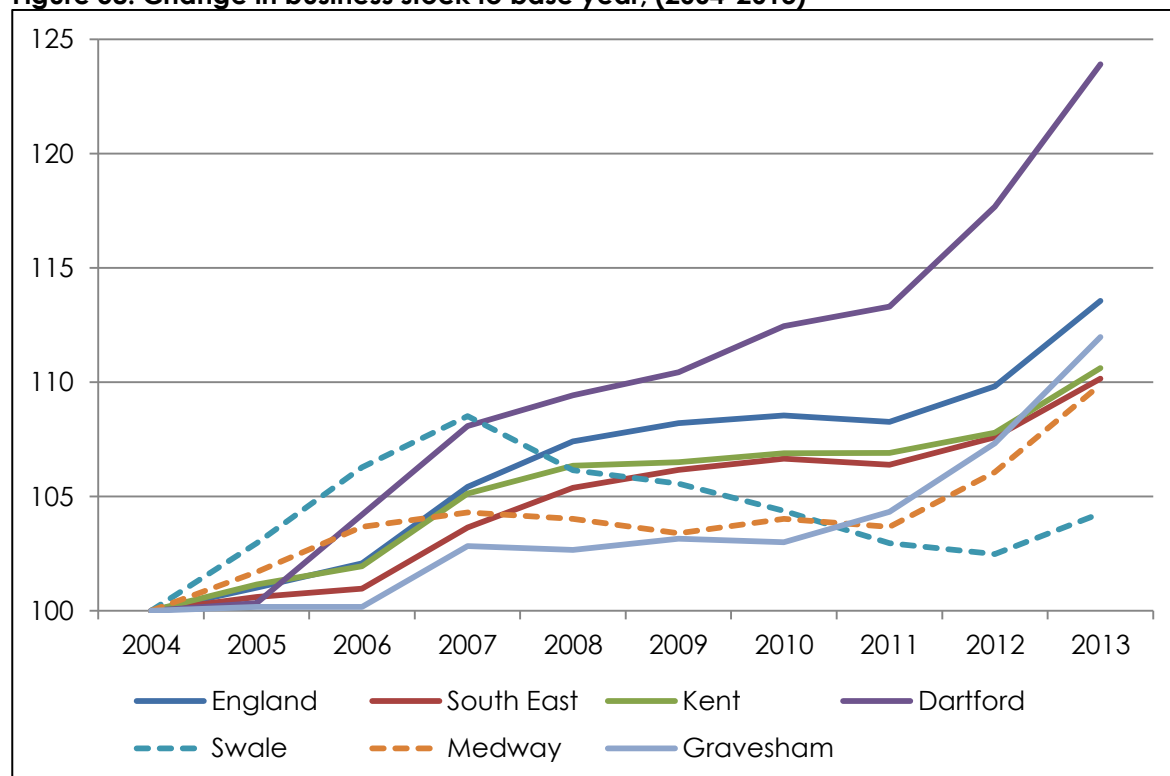
	England	South East	Kent County	Dartford	Swale	Medway	Gravesham
Micro (0 to 9)	83%	84%	83%	78%	82%	82%	86%
Small (10 to 49)	14%	13%	13%	17%	14%	14%	11%
Medium-sized (50 to 249)	3%	3%	3%	4%	3%	3%	3%
Large (250+)		0.38%	0.35%	0.75%	0.42%	0.37%	0.31%
<b>Micro (breakdown)</b>							
Micro A (1-4 employees)	82.7%	83.9%	82.6%	81.1%	82.2%	81.7%	81.9%
Micro B (5-10 employees)	17.3%	16.1%	17.4%	18.9%	17.8%	18.3%	18.1%

Source: ONS, 2013

### Change in Number of Businesses

- 5.38 Figure 58 shows the change in number of businesses in Gravesham and Medway. Both the local authorities have shown lower business growth trends in the last decade than comparator areas. There has been a pick-up in business growth trends post 2011 but there still remains a significant difference between the best performing comparator –Dartford and the two local authorities considered here.

**Figure 58: Change in business stock to base year, (2004-2013)**



Source: ONS

- 5.39 From 2004 to 2006 business growth trends were relatively strong in Medway. However, the business landscape changed notably in the area post 2006/07, suffering stagnation and later a decline during the recession of 2008-2010. During this period Medway's business growth rate plunged to the second-lowest level among all comparators. Post-2010, there has been an improvement in the business growth rates in Medway.

## Business Survival Rates

- 5.40 The change in business stock discussed above reflects the survival rates of the new businesses starting in the two districts, which are shown in Table 36.
- 5.41 The data shows the early impacts of recession significantly reducing the one and two year survival of businesses started in 2008 and 2009. Medway and Gravesham's business survival rates tend to be below comparators. However, the 2-year business survival rate has improved after 2011, showing signs of recovery from the recession.

**Table 36: Business Survival Rates (%)**

Base Year-2008		Percent (%)				
		1 Year	2 Year	3 Year	4 Year	5 Year
England	2008	92.1	73.9	57.9	48.8	41.2
	2009	90.9	73.9	59.7	48.9	..
	2010	86.8	72.5	57.1	..	..
	2011	93.1	75.5	..	..	..
	2012	91.1	..	..	..	..
South East	2008	93.2	76.6	61.4	52.1	44.3
	2009	91.6	75.7	61.9	51.2	..
	2010	87.9	74.5	59.5	..	..
	2011	93.6	77.2	..	..	..
	2012	91.1	..	..	..	..
Kent	2008	94.0	76.0	60.5	50.7	42.3
	2009	91.8	75.2	60.3	49.1	..
	2010	88.2	74.5	58.4	..	..
	2011	92.4	76.1	..	..	..
	2012	90.0	..	..	..	..
Dartford	2008	92.2	74.0	59.7	49.4	40.3
	2009	92.0	72.0	54.7	45.3	..
	2010	85.7	68.8	49.4	..	..
	2011	95.3	77.9	..	..	..
	2012	91.7	..	..	..	..
Swale	2008	93.6	71.3	55.3	46.8	39.4
	2009	91.0	75.3	57.3	46.1	..
	2010	88.5	75.6	62.8	..	..
	2011	94.7	73.7	..	..	..
	2012	92.1	..	..	..	..
Medway	2008	93.9	73.9	56.7	48.3	40.0
	2009	93.2	75.7	61.5	48.6	..
	2010	91.3	77.9	61.7	..	..
	2011	95.4	76.0	..	..	..
	2012	91.5	..	..	..	..

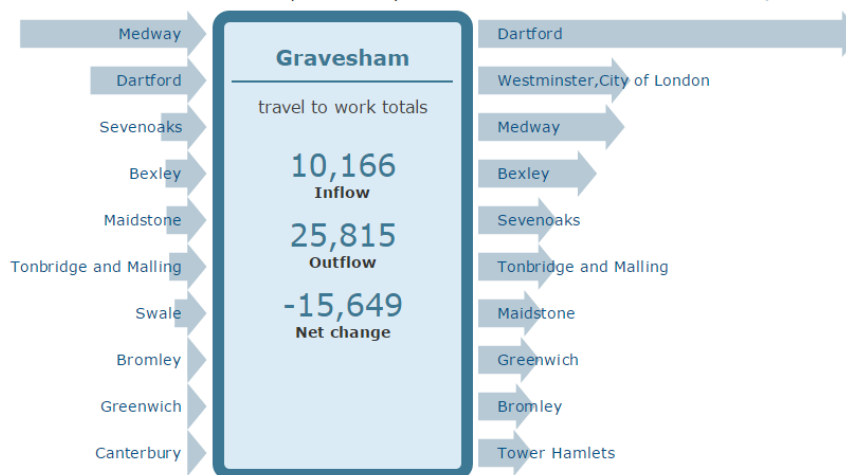
Base Year-2008		Percent (%)				
		1 Year	2 Year	3 Year	4 Year	5 Year
Gravesham	2008	96.0	72.0	60.0	46.7	38.7
	2009	93.9	77.3	60.6	48.5	..
	2010	91.7	73.3	56.7	..	..
	2011	95.1	77.8	..	..	..
	2012	91.8	..	..	..	..

Source: ONS, Business Demography

## Labour Market Roles

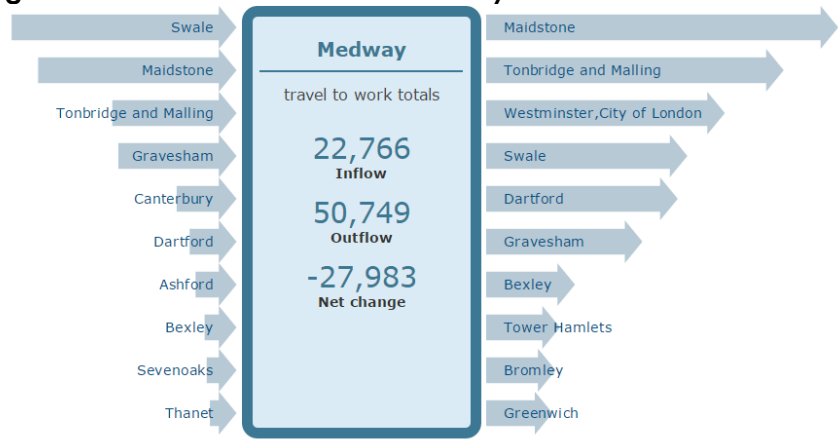
- 5.42 Both Gravesham and Medway are well integrated into the wider labour market, as both exporters and importers of workers. According to the 2011 Census there were 47,639 people in employment in Gravesham and 126,689 in employment in Medway. Employment locally draws in a significant number of workers.
- 5.43 While Gravesham has a significant proportion of residents working locally, it also had 10,100 in-commuting workers. The most significant sources were the neighbouring authorities of Medway and Dartford. At the same time it exported a significant number of workers to Dartford, as well as Medway and Westminster.

**Figure 59: Travel to Work Profile-Gravesham**



- 5.44 In 2011, Medway had 22,700 in-commuting workers. The main sources are Swale, Maidstone, Tonbridge and Malling. At the same time it exported a significant number of workers to neighbouring Maidstone and Tonbridge and Malling as well as Westminster.

Figure 60: Travel to Work Profile-Medway



Source: ONS, 2011



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## The Industrial Property Market

- 5.45 The sector specialisms identified above underpin the industrial property market across these two North Kent local authorities.
- 5.46 Figure 61 below shows image examples of the industrial stock types currently present within Gravesham and Medway.

**Figure 61 - Gravesham and Medway Industrial Stock Images**



Clifton Marine Parade, Gravesend



Dering Way,



Mill Road, Gravesend



Conquest Estate,



Riverside Estate,



Gillingham Business Park

*Source: CoStar 2015*

## Existing Stock

- 5.47 According to CoStar Suite, there are 104 existing industrial buildings in Gravesham, equating to c. 2,072,000 sq ft. Of this a significant proportion (44%) is located within 1 mile of Gravesend train station. Other key industrial locations include; Kimberley Clark Paper Mill (22.4ha); Swanscombe Peninsula Riverside (29.8ha) and Springhead Enterprise Park (16.8ha).

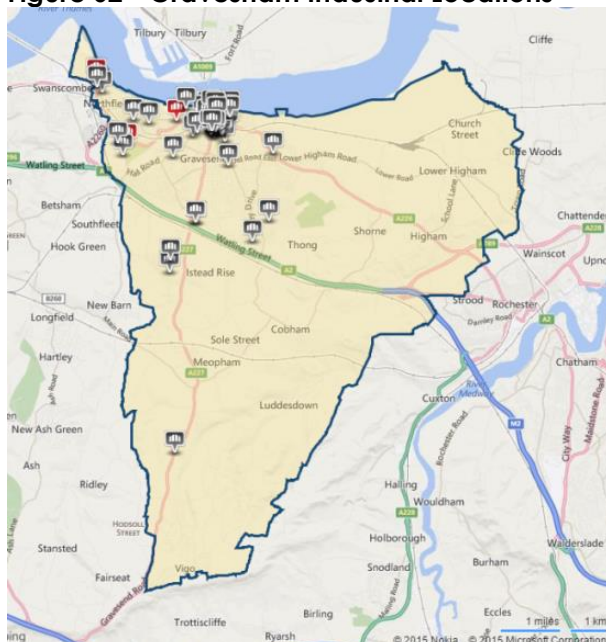
**Table 37 - Gravesham Industrial Floor Space**

	Industrial Buildings		Floor Space (sq ft)	
	number	% of total	Sq ft	% of total
<b>Gravesham TOTAL</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2,072,000</b>	<b>100%</b>
Gravesend TC	44	42%	878,000	42%

Source: CoStar 2015

- 5.48 Figure 62 below shows that the majority of the industrial stock in Gravesham is located in the urban, northern areas of the Borough.
- 5.49 Figure 87 Gravesham Industrial Locations shows that the majority of the industrial stock in Gravesham is located in the more urban, northern areas of the Borough in areas that had a more industrial, distribution and extraction focus historically.

**Figure 62 - Gravesham Industrial Locations**



Source: CoStar 2015

- 5.50 Similar analysis for Medway reveals that there are 316 existing industrial buildings in the Authority, equating to c. 7,700,000 sq ft. Table 38 - Medway Industrial Space below shows that the Medway City Estate has the largest share of Industrial space, followed by Gillingham, both in terms of building numbers and floor space (sq ft).

**Table 38 - Medway Industrial Space**

	Industrial Buildings		Floor Space (sq ft)	
	number	% of total	Sq ft	% of total
<b>Medway TOTAL</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>7,677,000</b>	<b>100%</b>
Medway City Estate	134	42%	2,602,000	34%
Gillingham	51	16%	1,858,000	24%
Strood	49	16%	989,000	13%

Source: CoStar 2015

- 5.51 Figure 63 below shows that industrial space in Medway is clustered around the Medway River Estate, with some other locations on the Isle of Grain and to the south of the Authority.
- 5.52 The market in Medway mainly comprises SMEs together with some major occupiers at Chatham Maritime. The market has a significant quantum of industrial floorspace on Isle of Grain.

**Figure 63- Medway Industrial Locations**

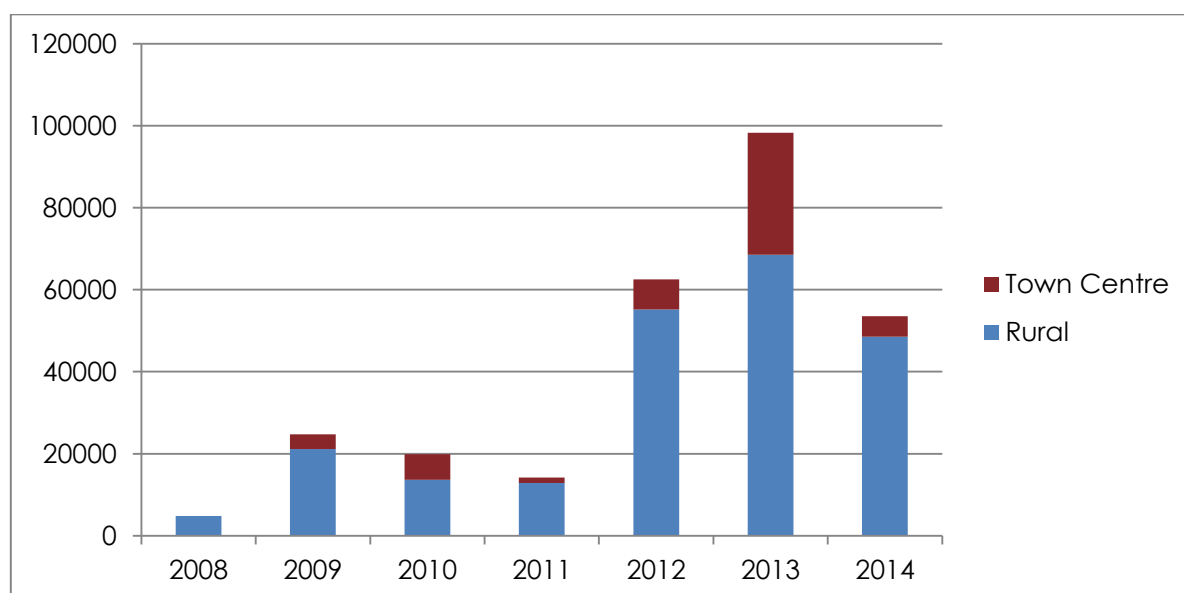


Source: CoStar 2015

## Industrial Market - Lettings

- 5.53 Our desk-top research, utilising the Focus database, concludes that approximately 278,000 sq ft of industrial accommodation was let in 65 deals within the Gravesham Borough between January 2008 and December 2014. This equates to an annual average take up rate of c. 39,800 sq ft.
- 5.54 The figure below summarises letting activity year by year. It shows that that letting activity in Gravesham increased significantly between 2012 and 2014, peaking in 2013 at c. 98,000 sq ft of floor space. In 2014 leasing activity fell to c. 54,000 sq ft, but still remained significantly above pre-2012 levels. It shows that the majority of industrial letting activity was in rural rather than town centre locations.

**Figure 64 - Gravesham Industrial Letting Activity, 2008 – 2014 (total floor space, sq ft)**



Source: CoStar 2015

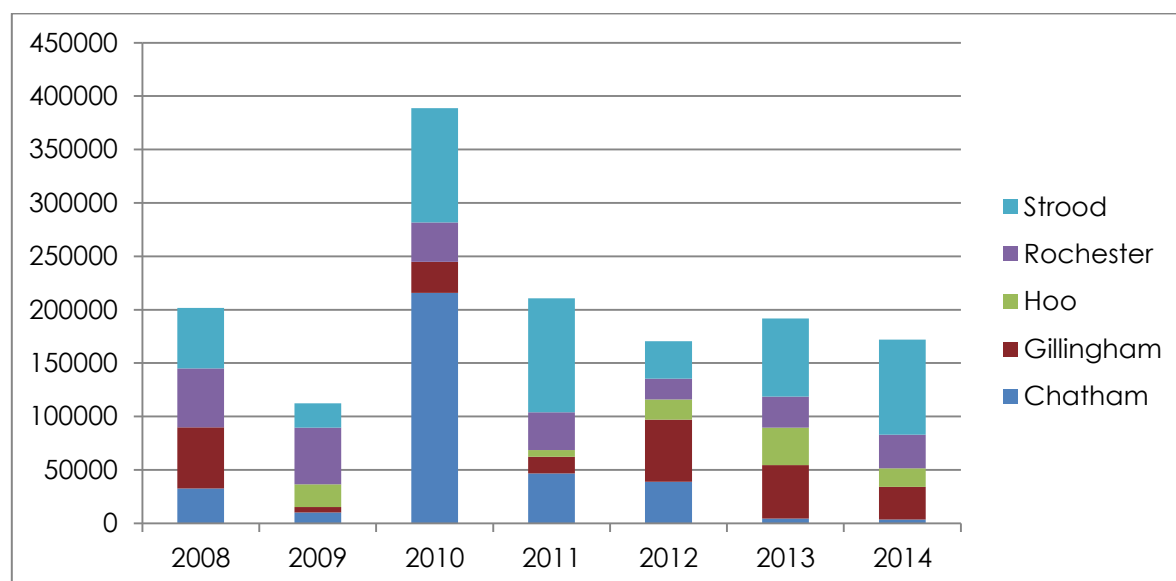
- 5.55 The table below summarises industrial take-up in terms of size band and location (rural or town centre) since January 2008. It shows that the largest proportion of take up was for units under 2,000 sq ft (46%) followed by the units of between 2,000 and 5,000 sq ft (31%). This trend was consistent across rural and town centre locations and suggests a higher demand for this size band, although it may also be indicative of stock profile.

**Table 39 - Gravesham Industrial Take-up by Size Band and Location (2008 – 2015)**

Size Group (sq ft)	Total % breakdown	Size Group by Location	
		Rural	Town Centre
<2000	46%	43%	57%
2000-5000	31%	29%	36%
5001-10,000	12%	16%	0%
<10000	11%	12%	7%

Source: CoStar 2015

- 5.56 Similar analysis for Medway concludes that approximately 1,400,000 sq ft of industrial accommodation was let in 331 deals within the Authority area between January 2008 and December 2014. This equates to an annual average take up rate of c. 214,000 sq ft.
- 5.57 Figure 65 below summarises letting activity year by year since 2008. It shows that letting activity in Medway peaked in 2010 at c. 390,000 sq ft. Activity has since dropped but remains stable. For most years Strood experienced the greatest proportion of leasing activity, accounting for the Medway City Estate.

**Figure 65 - Medway Industrial Letting Activity, 2008-2014 (total floor space, sq ft)**

Source: CoStar 2015

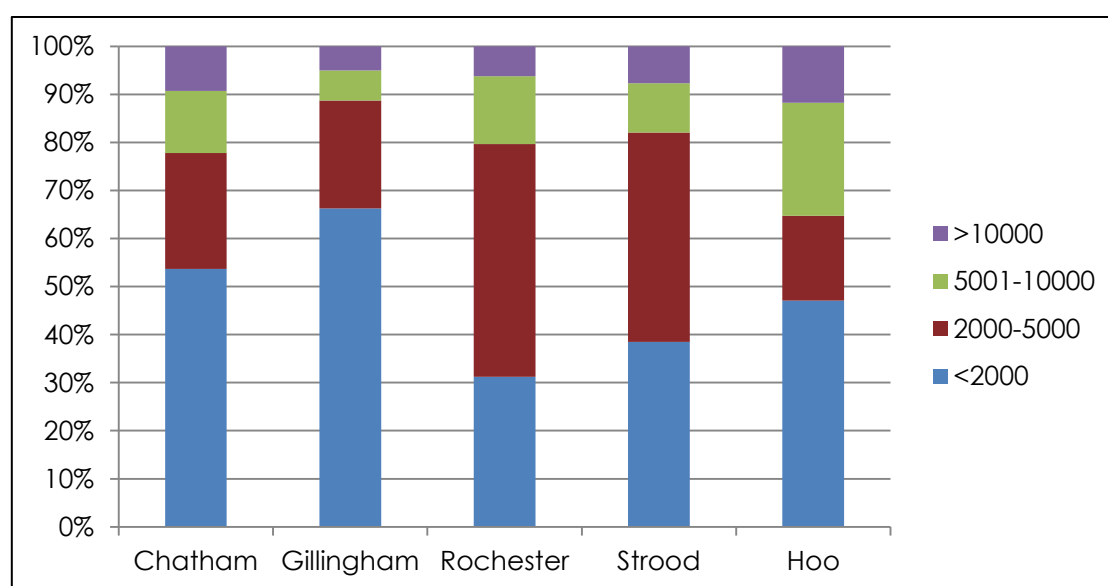
- 5.58 The table below summarises office take-up in terms of size band between January 2008 and December 2014. The table shows that, as with Gravesham, the majority of take up was for smaller space under 2,000 sq ft (47%) followed by 2,000 – 5,000 (35%). Again, this may be indicative of demand in the area, as well as available stock.

**Table 40 - Medway Industrial Take -up by Size Band (2008 - 2014)**

Size Group (sq ft)	Total % breakdown
<2000	47%
2001-5000	35%
5001-10,000	11%
>10,000	7%

Source: CoStar 2015

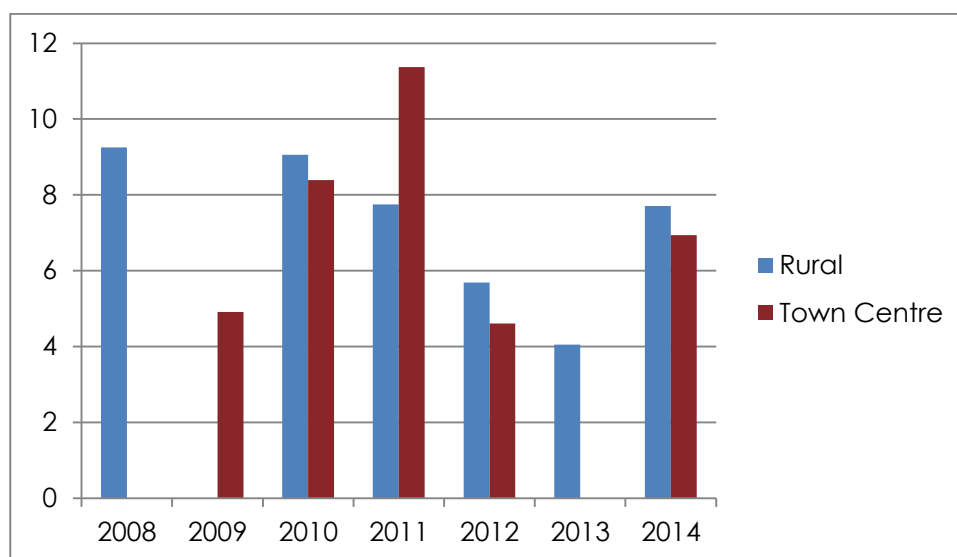
- 5.59 Figure 66 below shows that the highest proportion of small units let (less than 2,000 sq ft) was in Gillingham and Chatham whilst the highest proportion of units let between 2,000 – 5,000 sq ft was in Rochester and Strood.

**Figure 66 - Industrial Take-up by Size Band and Medway Town, 2008 - 2014**

Source: CoStar 2015

## Industrial Market - Achieved Rents

- 5.60 Figure 67 below shows the average achieved industrial rents in Gravesham between January 2008 and December 2014. It shows that town centre rents peaked in 2011 at £11 per sq ft, declining to c. £5 per sq ft in 2012. Rural rents peaked at c. £9 per sq ft in 2010 and experienced a low of £4 per sq ft in 2013. Average rents in rural locations were higher than in town centre locations in all years apart from 2011 and 2009, where there is no available data on achieved rents in rural locations. This suggests a potential greater demand for industrial stock in rural locations.

**Figure 67 - Gravesham Industrial Rents by Location (£ per sq ft), 2008 - 2014**

Source: CoStar 2015

5.61 Table 41 below shows the average rents achieved in Gravesham since 2008, according to size band and location. It shows that higher rents were achieved for smaller units of less than 2,000 sq ft. Again this implies that there is potentially more demand for smaller units within the Gravesham industrial market.

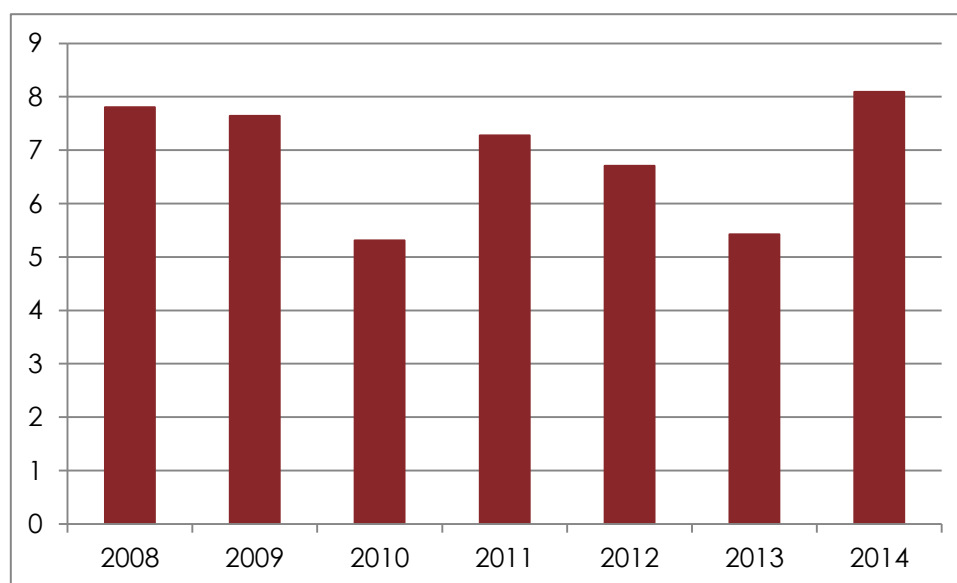
5.62 It should be noted however that information on achieved rents is not available for every transaction. So, for example, whilst transactions occurred within the 5,001 – 10,000 sq ft size group, we do not have information on what rents were achieved. This could potentially skew results.

**Table 41 - Gravesham Average Industrial Rent by Size Band and Location**

Size Group (sq ft)	Rural	TC
<2,000	£8	£9
2,001-5,000	£5	£4
5,001-10,000	-	-
<10,000	£4	-
<b>Average:</b>	<b>£7</b>	<b>£7</b>

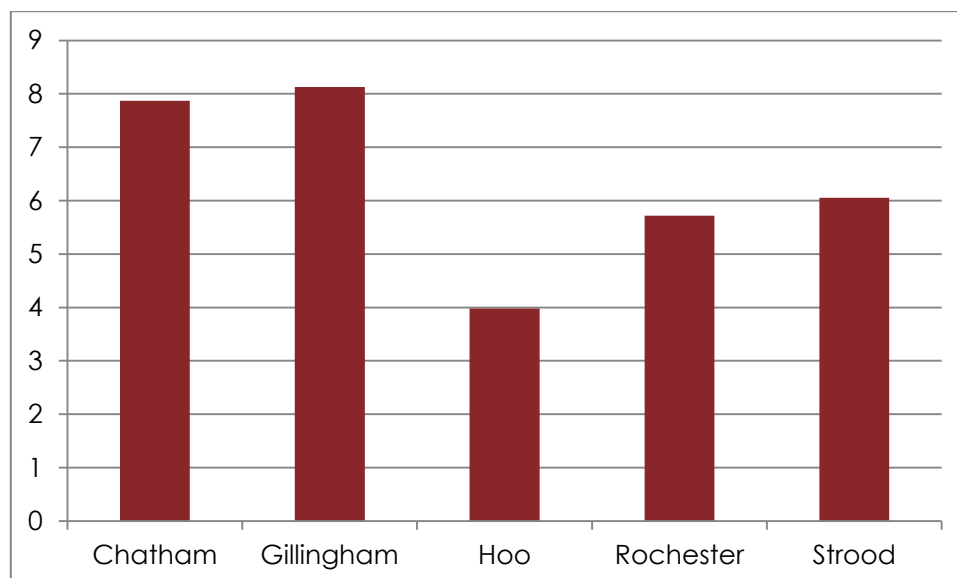
Source: CoStar, 2015

5.63 Figure 72 below shows the achieved annual average industrial rents in Medway between January 2008 and December 2014.

**Figure 68 - Average Annual Industrial Rents (£ psf), Medway 2008 - 2014**

Source: CoStar 2015

- 5.64 In terms of location, Figure 69 below shows that Gillingham received the highest average rent between 2008 and 2014, Followed closely by Chatham. Hoo received the lowest average rent, although it should be noted that this is based on a limited number of deals.

**Figure 69 - Average Industrial Rents (£ psf), Medway Towns 2008 – 2014**

Source: CoStar 2015

- 5.65 Table 42 below shows achieved annual average industrial rents in Medway since 2008, according to size band. It shows that highest rents were achieved smaller units under 2,000 sq ft, followed by units in the size band 2,000 – 5,000 sq ft. This again provides an indication



that demand is higher for smaller rather than larger units in the Medway industrial market and echoes similar analysis in Gravesham.

**Table 42 - Medway Average Industrial Rent by Size and Location (2008 – 2015)**

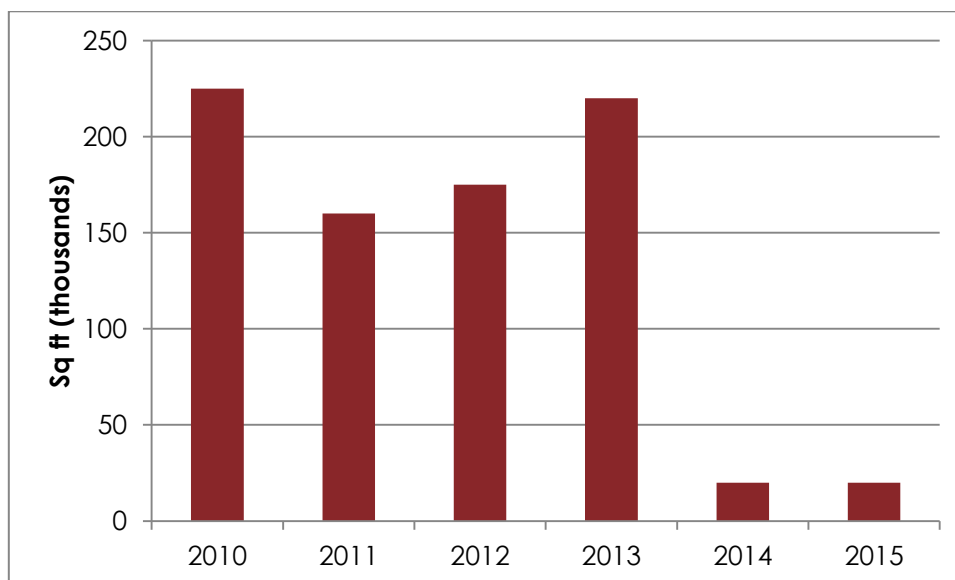
Size Group (sq ft)	Medway Av rent
<2,000	£8
2,000-5,000	£6
5,001-10,000	£4
<10,000	£4
<b>Average:</b>	<b>£7</b>

Source: CoStar 2015

### Industrial Market - Vacant Supply

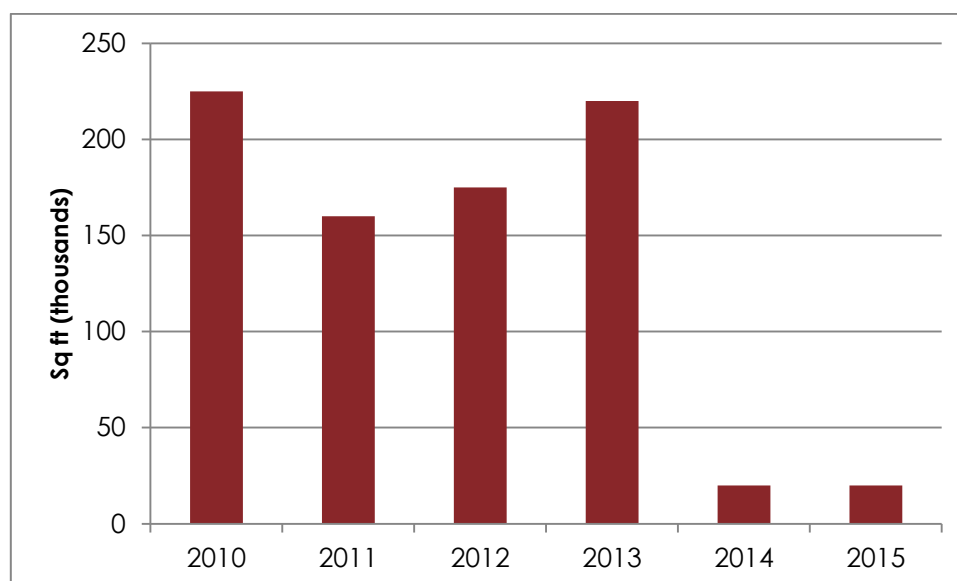
- 5.66 Figure 70 below shows that available floors space in Gravesham has fallen significantly since 2013.

**Figure 70 - Available Industrial Floor Space, Gravesham 2010 - 2015**



Source: CoStar 2015

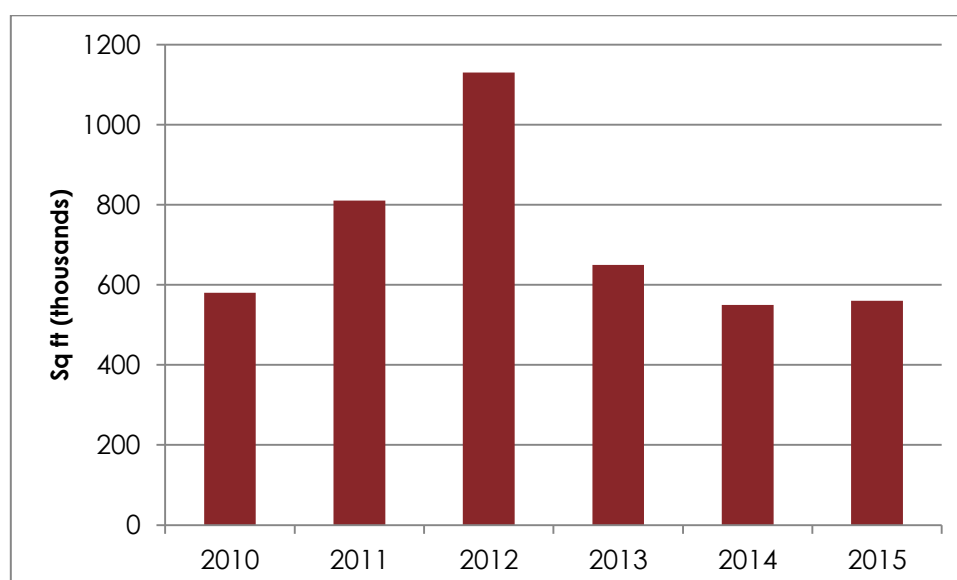
- 5.67 This trend has also been seen in the quantity of vacant floorspace, which fell from c. 130,000 sq ft in 2012 to c. 35,000 sq ft in 2013 and has remained low since.

**Figure 71 - Gravesham Industrial Vacant Floor Space, 2010 - 2015**

Source: CoStar 2015

5.68 This decline in available and vacant floor space correlates with an increase in Gravesham industrial occupancy rates over the past 4 years. Since a low in 2010 / 2011, occupancy rates have risen to 90% in 2015 (CoStar, 2015). All supply indicators suggest that there has been an increase in demand for industrial space over recent years.

5.69 Figure 72 below shows that available floor space in Medway peaked in 2012 at c. 1,100,00 sq ft. It has since fallen and stands at 550,000 sq ft in 2015.

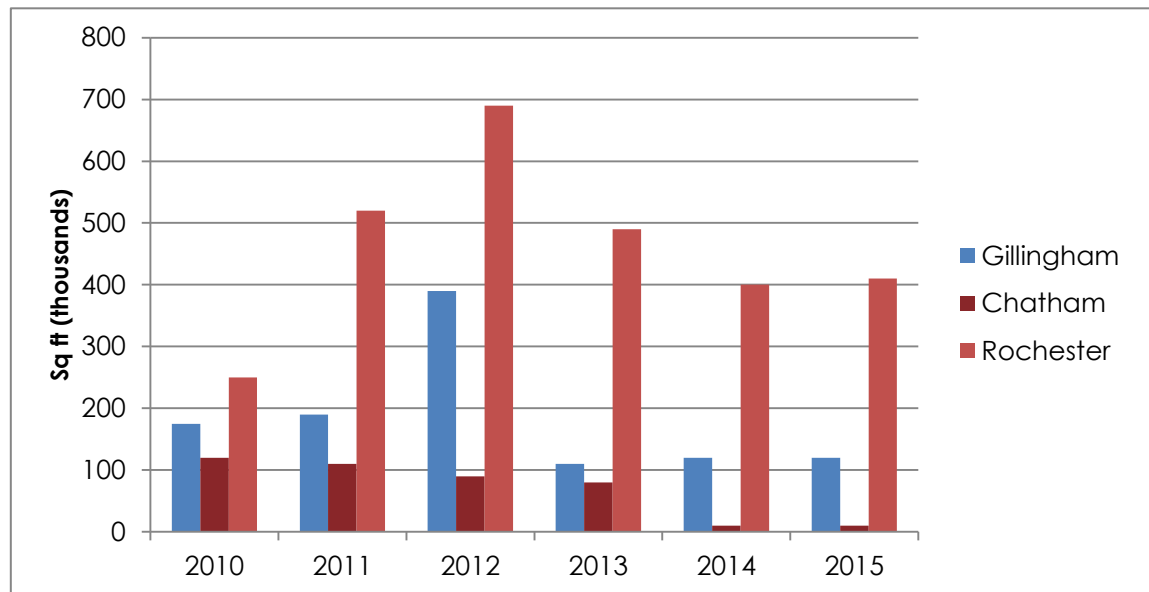
**Figure 72 - Available Industrial Floor Space, Medway, 2010 – 2015**

Source: CoStar 2015

5.70 Figure 73 below shows that patterns of available floors space in Gillingham and Rochester follow the overall Medway trend by peaking in 2012. Chatham however has seen a decline

in available floor space since a peak in 2010. Unlike the other two areas, Gillingham has seen a slight increase in available floor space each year since 2013.

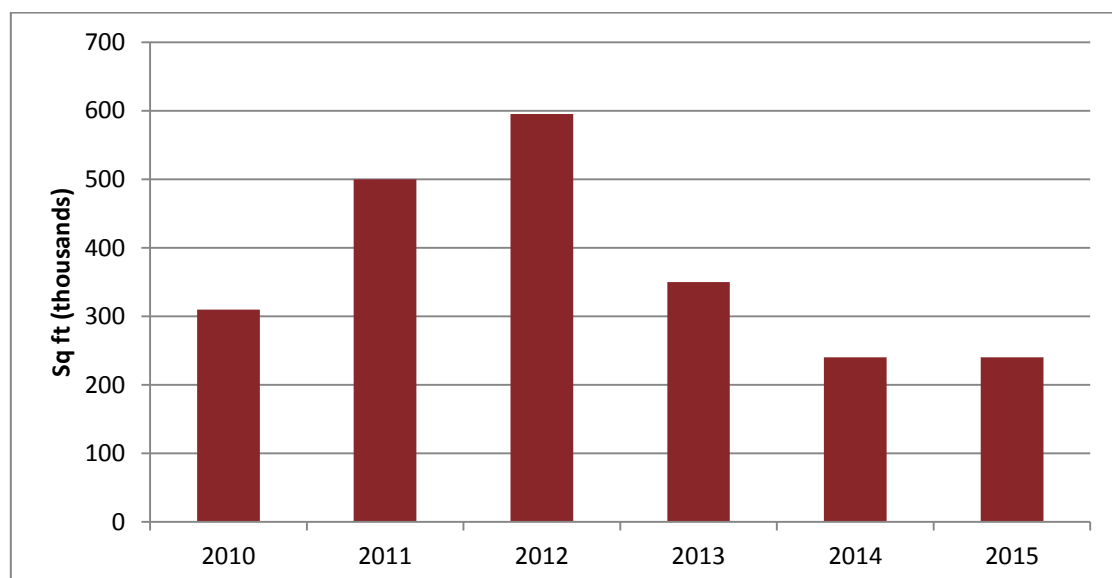
**Figure 73- Available Industrial Floor Space by Medway Town, 2010 - 2015**



Source: CoStar 2015

- 5.71 Vacant floors space in Medway has followed similar trends as to available floor space, as demonstrated in Figure 74 below. This is a possible indication of a recent increase in demand in the Medway industrial property market.

**Figure 74 - Vacant Industrial Floor Space, Medway 2010-2015**



Source: CoStar 2015

## Industrial Market - Time on the market

- 5.72 Figure 75 shows the average number of months that industrial space in Gravesham spent on the market between 2008 and 2015. It shows a decrease in marketing time between 2013 and 2014. This correlates with other indicators that suggest a recent increase in demand for industrial floor space in the Gravesham Borough.

**Figure 75 - Average Number of Months on Market, Industrial Space, Gravesham 2008 - 2014**



Source: CoStar 2015

- 5.73 Table 43 below shows that, on average, rural industrial space let more quickly than town centre space between 2008 and 2014. Again this suggests a potential higher demand for industrial property in rural locations. On average properties within the smallest band (<2,000 sq ft) let quicker, although the difference between letting times between size group in rural stock is marginal. This however correlates with other indications that the greatest demand in the area is for smaller size industrial stock.

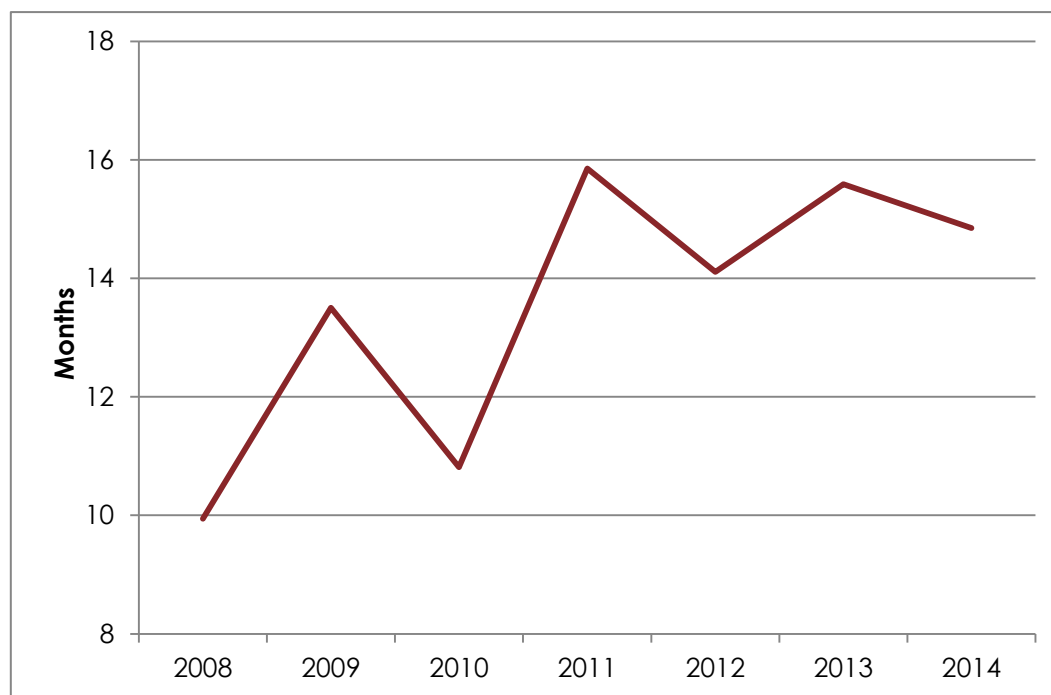
**Table 43 - Average number of days on the market, Gravesham Industrial Floor Space, 2008 - 2014**

Size Group (sq ft)	Average number days of market	
	Rural	TC
<2000	300	371
2000-5000	395	545
5001-10,000	372	-
<10,000	339	622
<b>Average:</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>450</b>

Source: CoStar 2015

- 5.74 Figure 76 below shows the average number of months that industrial space in Medway spent on the market between 2008 and 2014. It shows that marketing time increased significantly between 2010 and 2011 and has since remained high.

**Figure 76 - Average Number of Months on the Market, Industrial Property Medway 2008 – 2014**



Source: CoStar 2015

- 5.75 Table 44 below shows on average, industrial units in Medway between 2,000 to 5,000 sq ft let the quickest, followed by units under 2,000 sq ft. Whilst the difference is not significant, again it implies that the greatest demand in the Medway industrial market is for smaller units.

**Table 44 - Medway Industrial Space - average number of days on the market (2008 - 2015)**

Size Group (sq ft)	Average number days of market
<2000	410
2000-5000	398
5001-10,000	463
>10,000	483
<b>Average:</b>	<b>340</b>

Source: CoStar 2015

## Permitted Development

- 5.76 Table 45 below outlines the pipeline supply of industrial stock in Gravesham (sq ft) at various stages of the development pipeline.

**Table 45- Gravesham Industrial Pipeline (sq ft)**

Opportunity Areas	Sites	B1	B2	B8	Total
Northfleet Embankment & Swanscombe Peninsula East Opportunity Area	Northfleet Cement Works Regeneration Area Key Site	13,230	13,230	13,230	39,690
	Northfleet Embankment East Regeneration Area Key Site	0	4,070	79,410	83,480
Gravesend Riverside East & North East Gravesend Opportunity Area	North East Gravesend Regeneration Area Key Site	1,330	3,000	6,240	10,570
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>14,560</b>	<b>20,300</b>	<b>98,880</b>	<b>39,690</b>

5.77 Table 46 below outlines the pipeline supply of industrial stock in Medway (sq ft) at various stages of the development pipeline. It shows a potential supply of c. 620,000 sq ft of c. 240,000 sq ft is under construction.

**Table 46 - Medway Industrial Pipeline (sq ft)**

Scheme	Development	Status	B2	B8	Mixed B	Total
Former Cement Works Ochester	Redrow Home	Under Construction	1,000	1,000		2,000
Bailey Drive, Gillingham	Henry Schein	Under Construction	9,801			9,801
Kingsnorth Industrial Estate Rochester	Goodman	Under Construction	115,129	115,120		230,249
Temple Park Rochester	Helvig	Not Started		3,150	13,000	16,150
Chatham Docks Gillingham	Peel Land & Property	Not Started			40,516	40,516
Neptune Close Rochester	Veetee Rice LTd	Not Started	1,622	1,443		3,065
Between Knight Road And Roman Way Strood	Lafarge Cement	Not Started			7,100	7,100
Grain Road Grain	National Grid	Not Started	150,000	164,685		314,685
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>277,552</b>	<b>285,398</b>	<b>60,616</b>	<b>623,566</b>

## The Commercial Office Market

- 5.78 The following section underpins the commercial property market characteristics in Medway and Gravesham.
- 5.79 Figure 77 below shows image examples of the industrial stock types currently present within Gravesham and Medway.

**Figure 77 - Gravesham and Medway Office Stock Images**



Joynes House, Gravesend



Apex House, Gravesend



Clifton Marine Parade, Gravesend



Victory House, Chatham



Gillingham Business Park



Gun Wharf, Chatham

*Source: CoStar 2015*

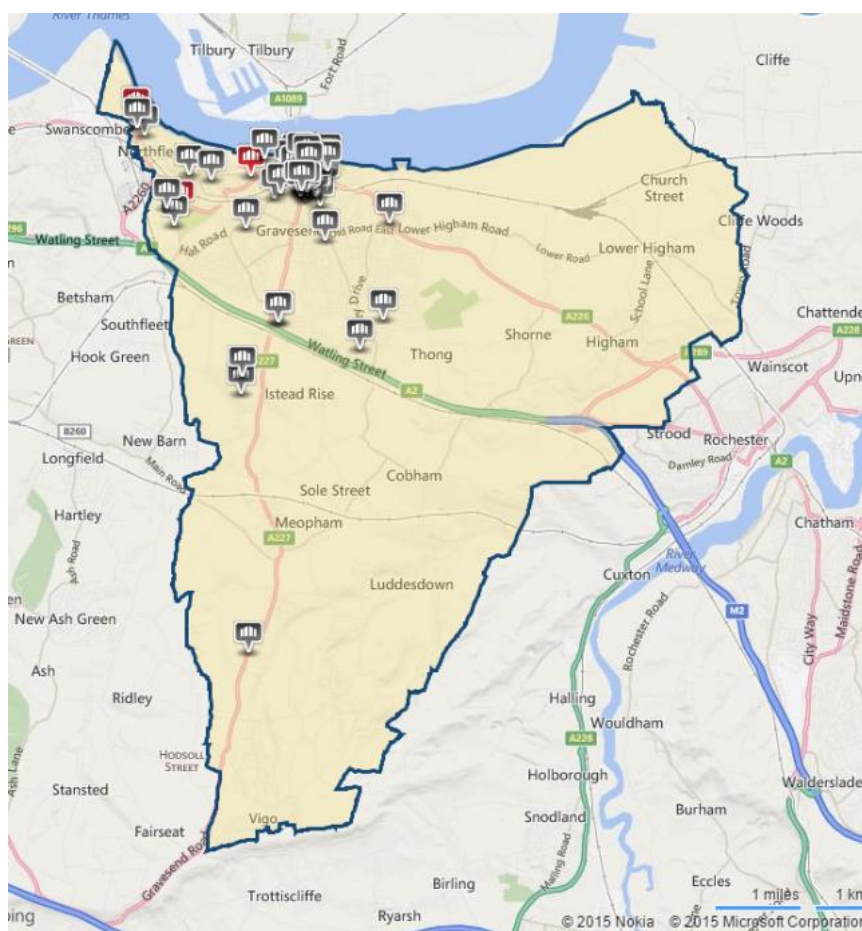
- 5.80 According to CoStar Suite, there are 97 existing office buildings in Gravesham Borough, equating to c. 510,000 sq ft of floor space. Table 47 below shows that office space is highly

concentrated within Gravesend town centre, which comprises 82% of the Borough's office buildings and 85% of floorspace. Other key office locations include Apex House, Northfleet (0.2ha) and Springhead Enterprise Park (16.8ha).

**Table 47 – Gravesham Office Supply by Location**

	Office Buildings		Floor Space (sq ft)	
	number	% of total	Sq ft	% of total
<b>Gravesham TOTAL</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>510,000</b>	<b>100%</b>
Gravesend TC	80	82%	435,000	85%

**Figure 78 - Gravesham Office Locations**



Source: CoStar 2015

- 5.81 Similar Analysis in Medway concludes that there are 232 existing office buildings in Medway, equating to c. 2,565,000 sq ft. Office space is concentrated in the Medway Towns of Chatham, Gillingham, Rochester and Strood, which together comprise c. 80% of the the area's office buildings and floor space. Table 48 below shows that Chatham has the largest share of office space, followed by Gillingham, both in terms of building number and floor space (sq ft).

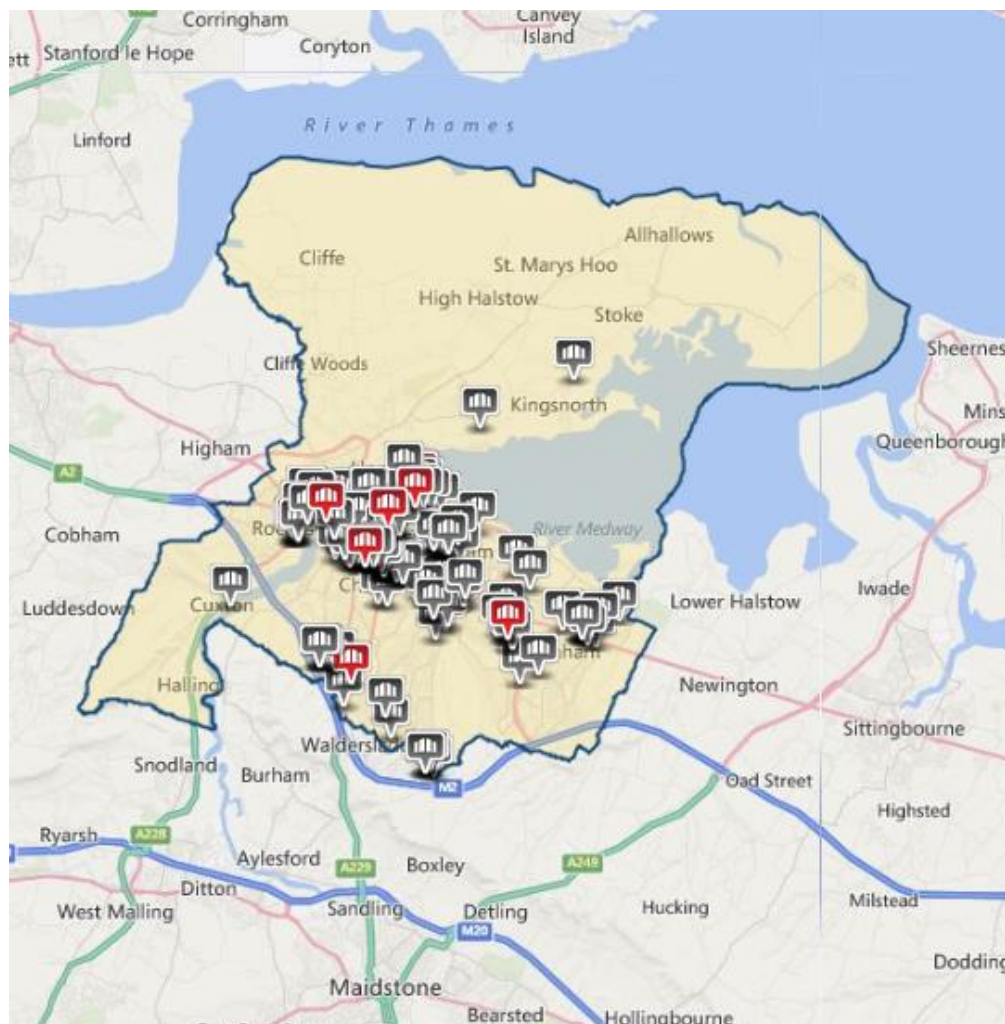


**Table 48 - Medway Office Supply by Location**

	Office Buildings		Floor Space (sq ft)	
	Number	% of total	Sq ft	% of total
<b>Medway TOTAL</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2,565,000</b>	<b>100%</b>
Chatham	96	41%	1,534,000	60%
Gillingham	58	25%	385,765	15%
Rochester	15	6%	29,320	1%
Strood	16	7%	69,083	3%

Source: CoStar 2015

- 5.82 Key office locations include: Chatham Maritime (58ha), Gillingham Business Park (56ha) and Medway City Estate (99ha).

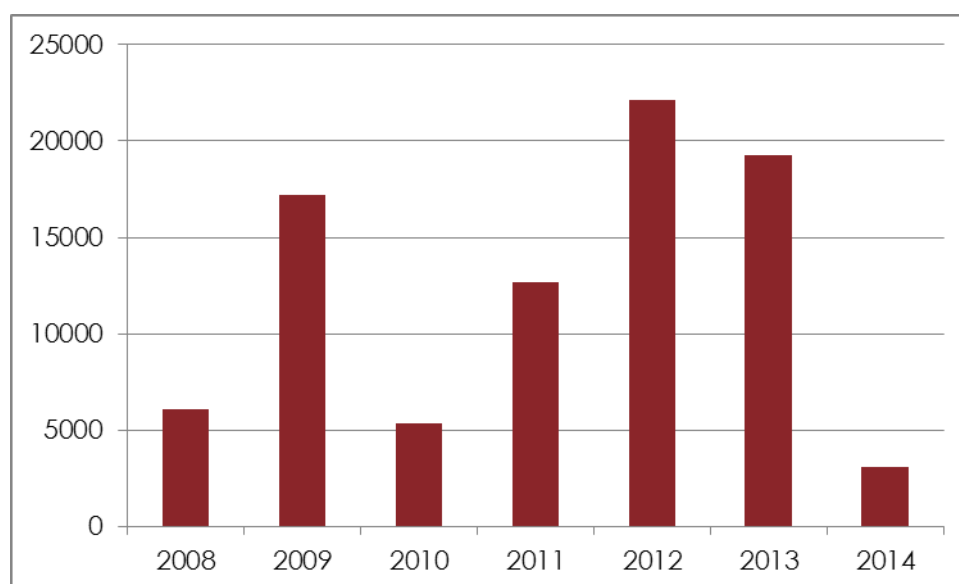
**Figure 79 - Medway Office Locations**

Source: CoStar 2015

## Office Letting Activity

- 5.83 Our desk-top research, utilising the Focus database, concludes that approximately 85,700 sq ft of office accommodation has been let in 59 deals within the Gravesham Borough since January 2008. This equates to an annual take up rate of c. 12,000 sq ft.
- 5.84 Figure 80 - Office Leasing Activity, Gravesham 2010 – 2015 below summarises letting activity year by year. It shows that that letting activity in Gravesham peaked in 2012 at c. 22,000 sq ft of floor space. It also shows a significant decline in lettings in 2014 to c. 3,000 sq ft. This is c. 19,000 sq ft below the 2012 peak, and c. 9,000 sq ft below the annual average. This recent decline in letting activity is a possible indication of a lack of supply and / or a lack of demand.

**Figure 80 - Office Leasing Activity, Gravesham 2010 – 2015 (total sq ft)**



Source: CoStar 2015

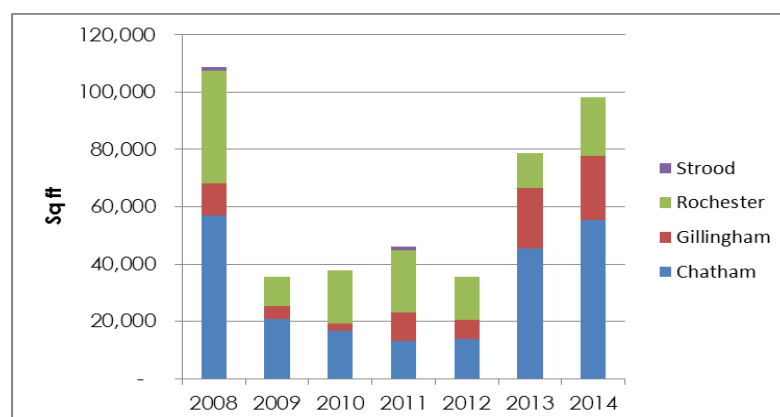
- 5.85 Table 49 below summarises office take-up in terms of size band and location (rural or town centre) between January 2008 and December 2014. It shows that the majority of take up across Gravesham was for smaller stock of less than 1,000 sq ft (65%).

**Table 49 - Gravesham Office Take Up by Size and Location, 2008 - 2014**

Size Group (sq ft)	Total % breakdown	Size Group by Location	
		Rural	TC
<500	34%	57%	19%
500-1000	31%	36%	29%
1001-2500	20%	7%	29%
2501-5000	11%	0%	19%
<5000	3%	0%	5%

Source: CoStar 2015

- 5.86 When analysed in terms of location however, Table 49 above shows that smaller size brackets dominated take up in rural locations. Within town centre locations, the majority of take up was for units of over 1,000 sq ft (53%).
- 5.87 This provides a possible indication in terms of office demand in the area; that smaller stock is in higher demand, although there is some demand for larger stock within town centre locations. It could also, however, be a reflection of the type of available office space in different locations.
- 5.88 Undertaking a similar desktop exercise for Medway concludes that approximately 440,000 sq ft (41,000 sq m) of office accommodation was let in c. 184 deals within the Medway Borough between January 2008 and December 2014. This equates to an annual take up rate of c. 63,000 sq ft.
- 5.89 Figure 74 below summarises letting activity year by year. It shows that letting activity in Medway peaked in 2008 at 109,000 sq ft. Activity then fell between the years 2009 to 2012 before rising again in 2013. In 2014 leasing activity stood at c. 98,000 sq ft. For most years, the highest proportion of letting activity was in Chatham, apart from between 2011 and 2013 where Rochester had the highest proportion of activity.

**Figure 81 - Office Letting Activity, Medway 2008 - 2014**

Source: CoStar 2015

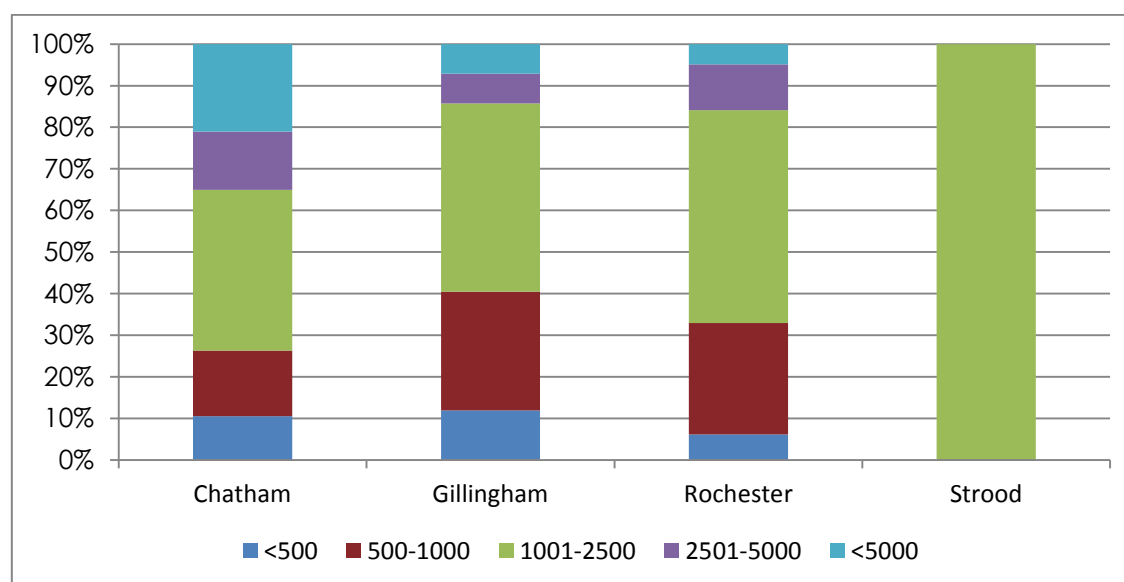
**Table 50 - Medway Office Take-up by size band (2008 - 2015)**

Size Group (sq ft)	Total % breakdown
<500	10%
500-1000	28%
1001-2500	48%
2501-5000	5%
<5000	10%

Source: CoStar 2015

5.90 Table 51 above summarises office take-up in terms of size band in Medway since January 2008. The table shows that, unlike Gravesham, the majority of take up was for space over 1,000 sq ft (63%), with the largest proportion of take up in the size band 1,001-2,500 sq ft. This suggests that the greatest demand for office space in the area is for units over 1,000 sq ft. Again however it may also be reflective of the type of stock available.

5.91 Figure 82 below summarises office take-up in terms of size band according to the key office locations in the Medway authority are. It shows that, in line with overall trends, most take-up was for office space over 1,000 sq ft with the largest proportion of take up in the size band 1,001-2,500 sq ft. Whilst Table 50 shows that only 15% of lettings across the Medway region were for office space of over 2,500 sq ft, c. 35% of lettings in Chatham were in this size bracket.

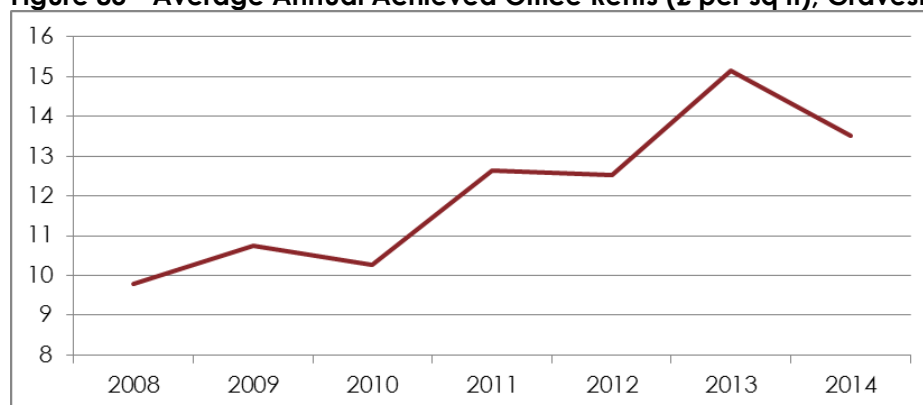
**Figure 82 - Medway Office Take-up by size and location**

Source: CoStar 2015

## Achieved Rents

- 5.92 Figure 83 below shows average annual achieved rents (£ per sq ft) in the Gravesham Borough since between January 2008 and December 2014. It shows that rents grew from c. £10 per sq ft in 2008 to c. £15 per sq ft in 2013. Rents have since declined to c. £13 per sq ft in 2014.
- 5.93 Whilst this provides a potential indication of supply and demand patterns over the years, it is difficult to draw conclusions as values achieved will largely depend upon unit size, specification, locations and quality of accommodation as well as the type of occupier looking for accommodation.

**Figure 83 - Average Annual Achieved Office Rents (£ per sq ft), Gravesham (2008 - 2014)**



Source: CoStar 2015

- 5.94 Table 51 below shows the average rents achieved in Gravesham since 2008, according to size band and location. It shows that significantly higher rents were achieved for smaller units under 500 sq ft. It also shows that, on average, significantly higher rents were achieved in rural areas, where the vast majority of the stock is smaller. Again, this provides an indication that demand is higher for smaller rather than larger units in the Gravesham office market.

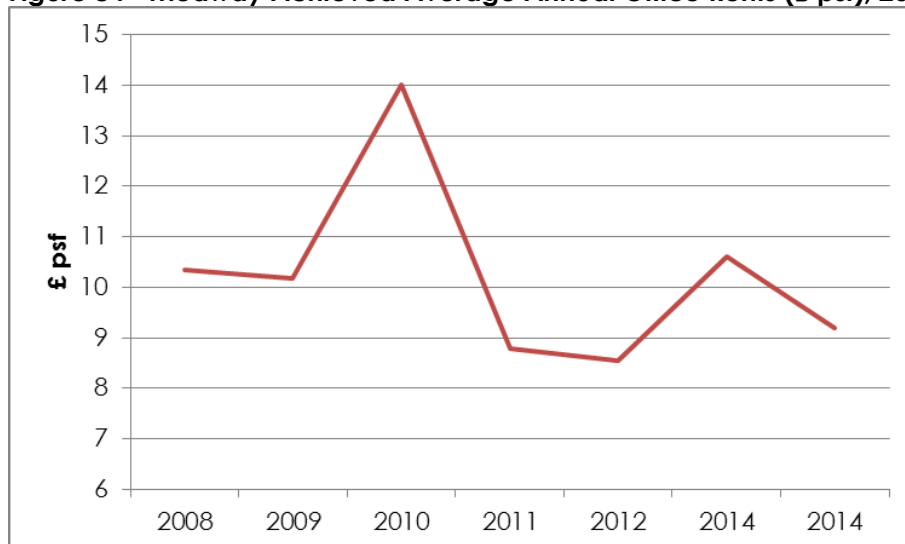
**Table 51 - Gravesham Average Office Rent by Size Band and Location , 2008 - 2015**

Size Group (sq ft)	All Areas	Rural	TC
<500	£17	£18	£22
500-1000	£12	£15	£9
1001-2500	£6	-	£5
2501-5000	£6	-	£9
<5000	£5	-	-
<b>Average:</b>	<b>£11</b>	<b>£17</b>	<b>£10</b>

Source: CoStar 2015

- 5.95 Figure 84 below shows average annual achieved rents (£ per sq ft) in Medway between January 2008 and December 2014. It shows that rents have peaked in 2010 at £14 per sq ft. At 2014 the average annual achieved rent was just over £9 per sq ft.

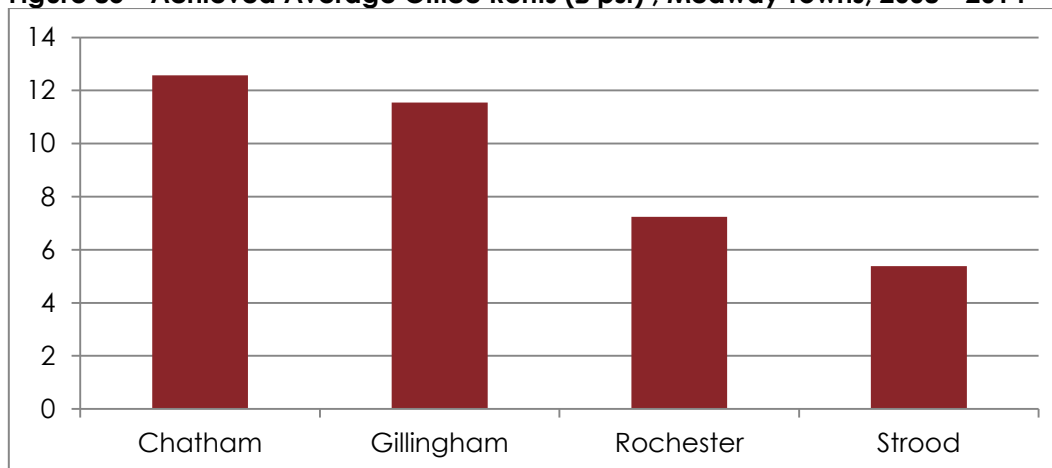
**Figure 84 - Medway Achieved Average Annual Office Rents (£ psf), 2008 - 2014**



Source: CoStar 2015

- 5.96 In terms of locations within the Authority, Figure 85 below shows that Chatham achieved the highest average rents between January 2008 and December 2014 at c. £13 psft, and that Strood achieved lowest at c. £5 per sq ft. This suggests that office accommodation in Chatham is in greatest demand, followed by Gillingham. It may also be a consequence of difference in stock quality.

**Figure 85 - Achieved Average Office Rents (£ psf) , Medway Towns, 2008 - 2014**



Source: CoStar 2015

- 5.97 Table 52 below shows the average rents achieved in Medway since 2008, according to size band. It shows that significantly higher rents were achieved for smaller units less than 500 sq ft. Rents were also higher for units between over 2,500 sq ft.

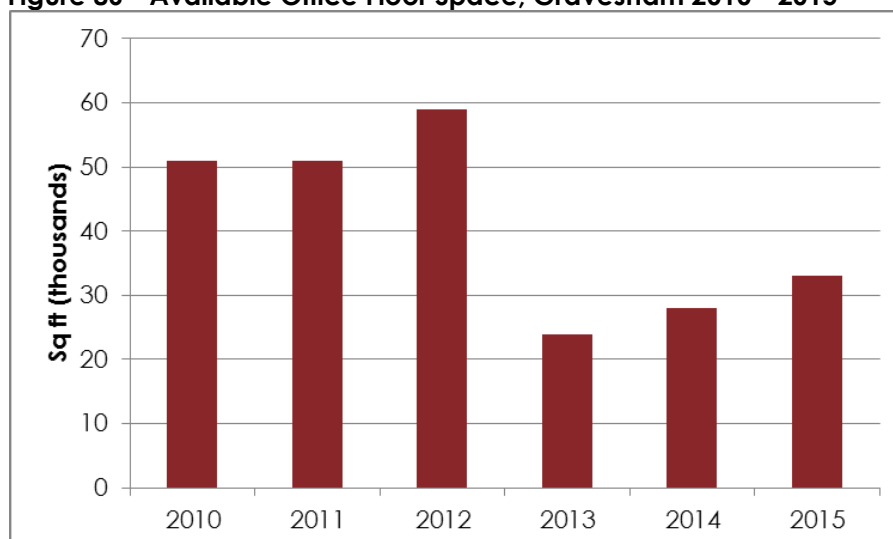
**Table 52- Average Medway Office Rent by Size Band, 2008 - 2015**

Size Group (sq ft)	Medway Av rent
<500	£21
500-1000	£9
1001-2500	£8
2501-5000	£12
<5000	£12
<b>Average:</b>	<b>£10</b>

Source: CoStar 2015

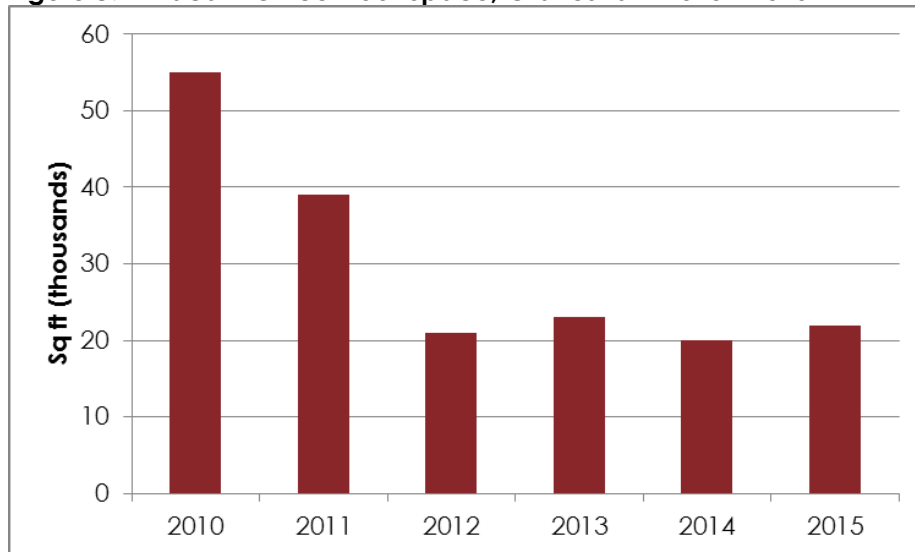
## Vacant Supply

- 5.98 Figure 86 below shows that available floors space in Gravesham fell significantly between 2012 and 2013. Since 2013 the amount of available space has been gradually increasing. The amount of current available space stands at just over 30,000 sq ft.

**Figure 86 - Available Office Floor Space, Gravesham 2010 - 2015**

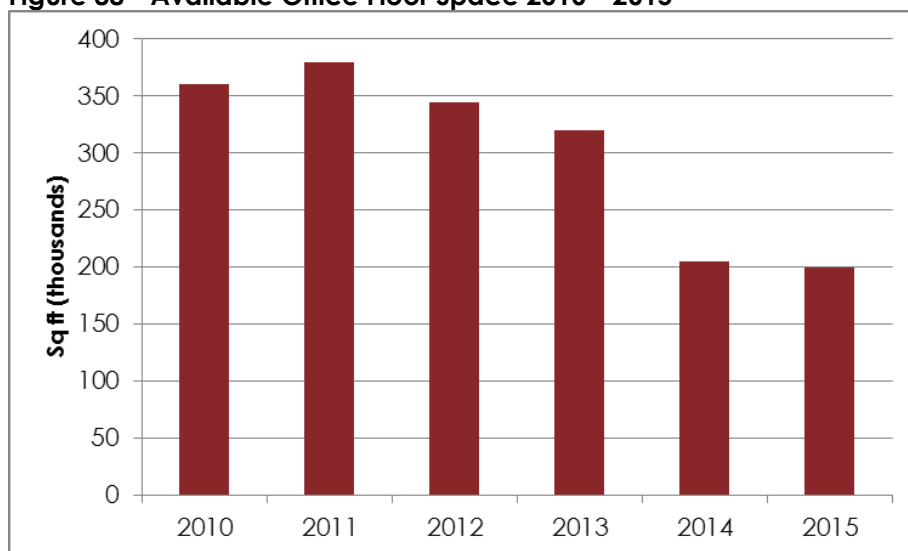
Source: CoStar 2015

- 5.99 In terms of vacant floor space, Figure 87 below shows that the amount has fallen since 2010 and remained low since 2012. There has however been a slight increase in 2015 and the current level of vacant floor space stands at c. 22,000 sq ft.

**Figure 87 - Vacant Office Floor Space, Gravesham 2010 - 2015**

Source: CoStar 2015

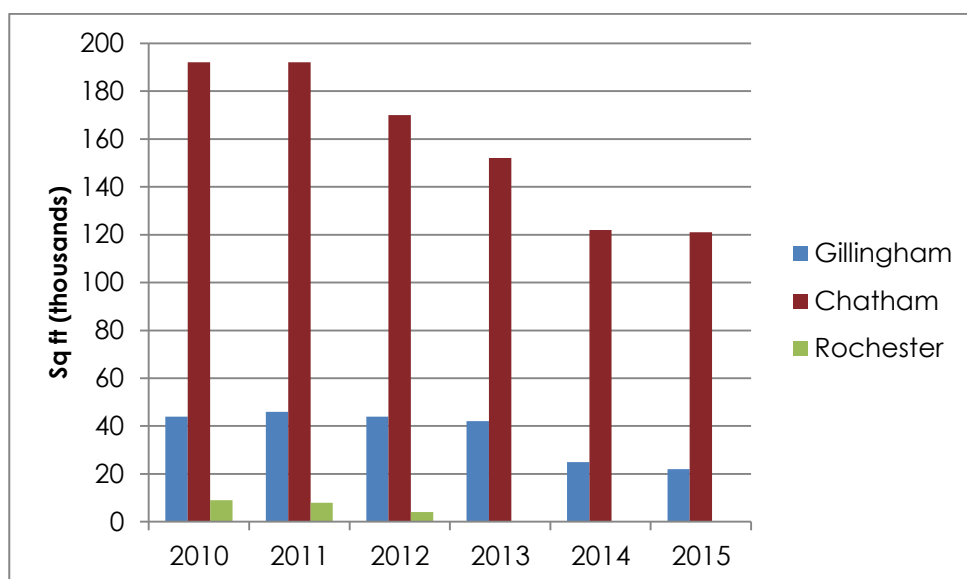
5.100 Figure 88 below shows that available floor space in Medway fell significantly from its peak in 2011 of 380,000 sq ft to c. 200,000 in 2014 – 2015 (a decline of c. 180,000 sq ft).

**Figure 88 - Available Office Floor Space 2010 - 2015**

Source: CoStar 2015

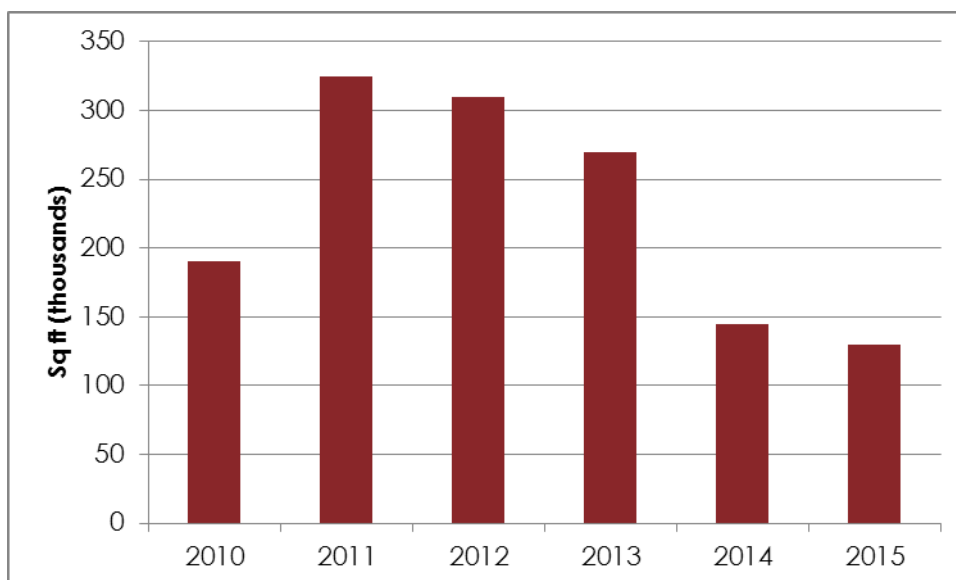
5.101 Figure 89 below shows that the decline in available floor space was experienced in all of Medway's submarkets. Of significant note, there has been no available space in Rochester since 2013.



**Figure 89 - Available Office Floor Space, Medway Towns, 2010 - 2015**

Source: CoStar 2015

5.102 The quantity of vacant floor space has followed the same trend, as demonstrated in Figure 90 below, and currently stands at c. 125,000 sq ft. A decline in available and vacant floors space provides a possible indication of a recent increase in demand in the Medway office market.

**Figure 90 - Vacant Office Floor Space, Medway 2010 - 2015**

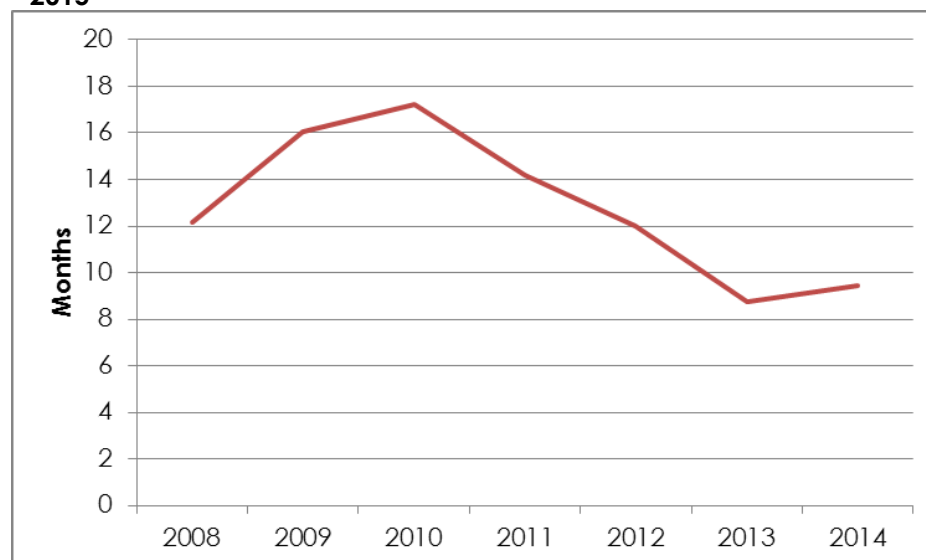
Source: CoStar 2015

### Time on the market

5.103 Figure 91 below shows the average annual number of months that office space in Gravesham has spent on the market between 2010 and 2014. It shows that between 2010

and 2013 there has been a significant decline in the average number of months that office space spent on the market. Between 2013 and 2014 however there has been a slight increase.

**Figure 91 - Average Number of Months spend on the Market, Office Space, Gravesham 2010 - 2015**



Source: CoStar 2015

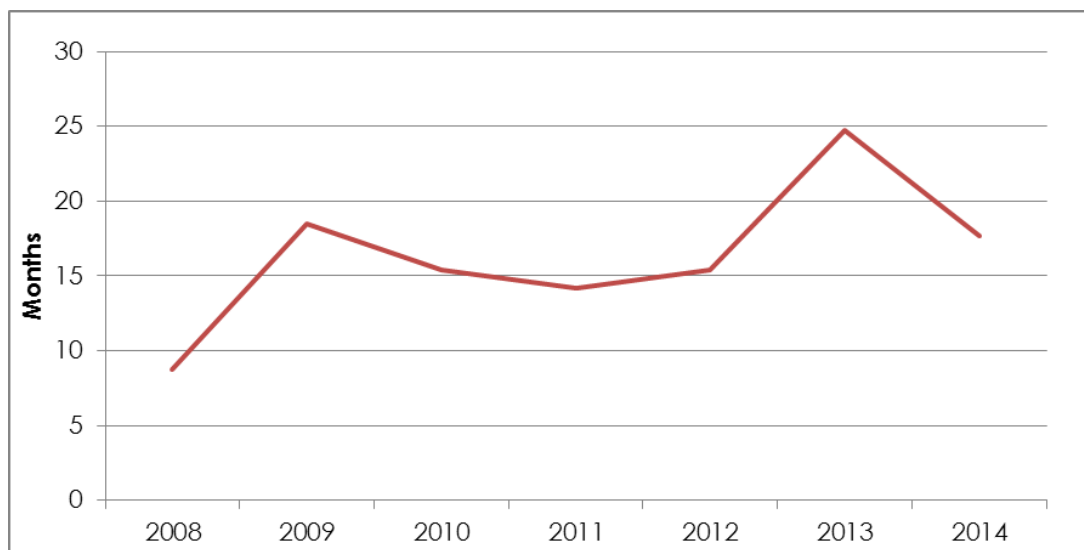
- 5.104 In terms of location, Table 53 below shows that on average town centre office space let more quickly than rural office space in Gravesham. In particular town centre offices in the size band 500 – 1000 sq ft were quickest to let at 61 days on average. Properties in size bands above 2,500 sq ft took the longest to let. Again this indicates that the greatest demand in the Gravesham office market is for smaller units.

**Table 53 - Average Number of Days on the Market, Gravesham Offices, 2008 - 2015**

Size Group (sq ft)	Average number days of market	
	Rural	TC
<500	577	135
500-1000	192	61
1001-2500	346	377
2501-5000	-	678
<5000	-	809
<b>Average:</b>	<b>411</b>	<b>361</b>

Source: CoStar 2015

- 5.105 Figure 92 below shows the average annual (median) number of months that office space in Medway spent on the market since 2010. It shows a sharp increase in marketing time between 2012 and 2013, from c. 15 to 25 months. Marketing time has since declined, but remains high at 18 months.

**Figure 92 - Average Number of Months on the Market, Office Space, Medway 2008 - 2015**

Source: CoStar 2015

5.106 In terms of size band, Table 54 below shows that units over 2,500 sq ft took longer to lease in the Medway office market. This echoes similar analysis in Gravesham.

**Table 54 - Average Number of Days on the Market, Medway Offices, 2010 - 2015**

Size Group (sq ft)	Average number days of market
<500	378
500-1000	458
1001-2500	513
2501-5000	705
<5000	599
<b>Average:</b>	<b>513</b>

Source: CoStar 2015

## Permitted Development

5.107 Table 55 below outlines the pipeline supply of offices in Gravesham (sq ft) at various stages of the development pipeline. Whilst it shows a potential supply of 60,000 B1 space, no new space is currently under construction or has been recently constructed.

**Table 55 - Gravesham Office Pipeline (sq ft)**

Opportunity Areas	Sites	B1a	B1c	B1	Total
Northfleet Embankment & Swanscombe Peninsula East Opportunity Area	Northfleet Cement Works Regeneration Area Key Site	6,300	0	13,230	19,530
	Northfleet Embankment East Regeneration Area Key Site	0	4,070	0	4,070
Gravesend Riverside East & North East Gravesend Opportunity Area	Canal Basin Regeneration Area Key Site	360	4,300	0	4,660
	North East Gravesend Regeneration Area Key Site	0	0	1,330	1,330
Gravesend Town Centre Opportunity Area	Heritage Quarter Key Site	300	0	0	300
	Other Sites	5,370	0	0	5,370
Ebbsfleet (Gravesham) Opportunity Area	Springhead Quarter Key Site	5,000	0	0	5,000
	Northfleet Rise Key Site	15,000	0	0	15,000
Rest of Urban Area (Key sites in the Urban Area not covered by Opportunity Area Policies)	Land at Coldharbour Road Key Site	2,810	2,250	0	5,060
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>35,140</b>	<b>10,620</b>	<b>14,560</b>	<b>60,320</b>

5.108 The table below outlines the pipeline supply of offices in Medway (sq ft) at various stages. It shows a potential supply of 247,000 B1 space, of which c. 26,000 sq ft is under construction.

**Table 56 - Medway Office Pipeline (sq ft)**

Scheme	Development	Status	B1	Mixed B	Total
Horsted Centre Chatham	Countryside Properties	Under Construction	2,500	-	2,500
Former Cement Works Ochester	Redrow Home	Under Construction	1,000	-	1,000
Bailey Drive, Gillingham	Henry Schein	Under Construction	2,043	-	2,043
Kingsnorth Industrial Estate Rochester	Goodman	Under Construction	20,752	-	20,752
Temple Park Rochester	Helvig	Not Started	-	13,000	13,000
Rochester Riverside Rochester	SEEDA & Medway	Not Started	2,000		12,000

Scheme	Development	Status	B1	Mixed B	Total
Chatham Docks Gillingham	Peel Land & Property	Not Started	-	40,516	40,516
Neptune Close Rochester	Veetee Rice LTd	Not Started	528	-	528
Between Knight Road And Roman Way Strood	Lafarge Cement	Not Started	3,200	7,100	10,300
Grain Road Grain	National Grid	Not Started	50,065	-	150,065
<b>Total</b>			<b>76,545</b>	<b>60,616</b>	<b>247,161</b>

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## Summary

5.109 The following key points can be made about the economy across Medway and Gravesham:

- Both local economies have significant employment in public admin education & health, Distribution, hotels & restaurants, Banking finance & insurance etc., Construction, Transport & Communication;
- Gravesham has sector specialisms in manufacturing activities like: manufacture of cement, lime and plaster; and manufacture of basic precious and non-ferrous metals; Transport and Logistics: Freight Rail transport; and Sea and coastal passenger transport;
- The highest proportion of take up of industrial space in Gravesham is for smaller units (sub 2,000 sq ft). Smaller units also have higher rents and quicker letting times, indicating higher demand;
- Medway's economy has specialism in manufacturing activities. When compared to the regional and national context it has common sector specialisms in activities such as- manufacture of steam generators; and manufacture of general purpose machinery.
- The office market in Medway is relatively weak, with a shortage of good quality stock identified as a major barrier to growth and investment;
- Gravesham's economy is smaller and has grown more slowly than Medway's over the last decade. However, Medway has been challenged by higher unemployment rates;
- Both local authority areas saw the impact of recession in terms of business formation and survival rates. There have been improvements in the recent years;
- Across both boroughs, vacant and available industrial and office floor space has fallen over recent years; occupancy rates have risen;
- GVA per head is relatively modest compared with comparator areas;
- These are weaker roles for higher value sectors that drive growth to regional levels such as business and professional services.

### Strengths

- A strong position on regional highway and rail networks and established distribution roles;
- Defined logistics and manufacturing locations;
- Proximity to the largest concentration of population in the UK and proximity to London, which is expected to grow by 1.5 million people in coming decades;

### Weaknesses

- The economic base has been focussed on lower value, less knowledge intensive activity, which is a weak foundation for economic growth;
- There are generally lower skills levels in the local workforce than competing areas;

- 
- The rate of economic growth has been slow in Gravesham in particular;
  - The unemployment rate has been relatively high in Medway;
  - There is a relatively low number of the largest employers;
  - Historically there have been low levels of business start-up and survival rates.

### Opportunities

- Initial forecasts suggest Gravesham is expected to added 4,800 jobs and Medway add 15,600 jobs by 2031.
- A strategic location and regional logistics growth could lead to increased local employment;
- Price pressures in London and close to a decade of slow growth in suburban office locations could lead to an increase in local demand for office space;
- A growing London commuter population could lead to an increase in local start-up activity;
- A growing student population could lead to an increase in start-up activity;
- There is strong local interest in supporting wider South East Growth Sectors;
- Repositioning of waterfront and town centre regeneration sites could underpin new employment quarters.
- There is a major potential investment at Paramount Park within Gravesham, which could increase local employment and have local supply chain and employment multiplier effects.
- An additional Thames Crossing linking North Kent to South Essex would enhance logistics positioning and increase the labour-market catchment for Medway and Gravesham;

### Threats

- The greatest threat is of lower performance than neighbours, with growth in office employment staying in London or being captured by centres at Maidstone, Ebbsfleet and Dartford and logistics seeking locations closer to London's population and continued contraction of the manufacturing base.





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## 6. North Kent Retail and Town Centres

- 6.1 The retail sector has been undergoing some profound changes over the last decade. These have and will continue to influence retailing in the Gravesham and Medway local authority areas.
- 6.2 There has been a continued growth of retail mega-centres which has challenged the comparison retail role of traditional town centres. Locations such as Bluewater and Lakeside as suburban drive to destinations and Stratford as a major urban centres provide a range of retail, leisure and dining activities in a highly managed environment. This has significant appeal to weekend and seasonal shoppers looking for one stop destinations. Internet retailing has created a new challenge to traditional shops, leading to increased shopping from home and direct deliveries. There has been a shift in consumer behaviour away from weekly visits to large supermarkets to more frequent top up purchasing and Metro scaled stores. The recession starting in 2008 and restrained income growth since has reduced consumer confidence and spending, something that has only recently relaxed. These factors have led to a constrained retail development environment.
- 6.3 However, there are also a number of positive factors for retailing and town centres. The population is continuing to grow and overall consumption per head is remaining at long term levels. There is increasing demand for local services, whether traditional convenience retail or click and collect that place internet orders for collection at local outlets. The role of the traditional high street is also changing, with a greater demand for resident services, leisure, community activities and local workspaces.
- 6.4 The relative influence of this range of factors will ultimately affect the future role and relative position in the sub-regional retail hierarchy of Gravesend and Rochester, Chatham and Gillingham. However, there are also some clear distinctions in the the retail contexts for Gravesend and Medway.
- 6.5 Gravesend is the single largest town centre and shopping location for Gravesham. It has a shopping population of 69,000. It faces competition from Dartford, Bluewater and Lakeside and also the Medway Towns. This may underlie the fact that comparison retail provision is below average for size of centre.
- 6.6 Medway has town centres in Rochester and Chatham. This is supported by a network of the District Centres of Strood and Gillingham. Chatham is main retail centre in Medway with a shopping population of 97,000 people. Retail provision is in line with expectations given size and affluence of the catchment population. This relatively stronger performance may
-

reflect both a larger local population, a greater critical mass of retail and relative distance from the very largest shopping destinations. Maidstone is the nearest large competing town centre.

## Gravesend Town Centre Health Check

6.7 Gravesham's Core Strategy (2014) defines Gravesend as a 'Town Centre' within its hierarchy of centres. Local policy states that Gravesend Town Centre is the preferred location for new retail, leisure and entertainment facilities. It is the highest-order centre in the Borough. Gravesend is situated approximately 15 km to the east of Dartford and 15km north west of Chatham.

6.8 Gravesend town centre comprises a number of distinct areas:

- The core shopping area is situated around New Road, which contains a number of department stores and larger clothing retailers, as well as two shopping centres – the Thamesgate Centre and St Georges Square Shopping Centre.
- The southern area of the town centre has an important civic function, being the home of the borough council offices and Woodville Halls Theatre;
- There is a cluster of independent retailers in the vicinity of Windmill Street and Stone Street, linking the civic area to the core shopping area;
- The Heritage Quarter links the core shopping area to the riverfront, to the north of the town centre, and is focussed on the historic High Street. The area is the subject of a recently-approved planning application for significant redevelopment which, if implemented, will help to reconnect the town centre to the river, and introduce a new residential community into the town centre. The development will also include a new leisure Quarter, an extension to the existing St George's Centre, and a re-landscaped riverside area at St Andrew's Gardens. The planning permission has been the subject of a legal challenge by a local residents' group to the Council's decision-making process; a High Court Judge ruled in favour of the Council in March 2015.

6.9 The primary shopping frontage Gravesend TC comprises of the following:

- Eastwards from 64-65 New Road;
- 2-10 Darnley Road, 3-6 Barrack Row and Garrick Street;
- St George's Shopping Centre;
- 72-84 New Road and the Thamesgate Shopping Centre;
- 2-6 Railway Place, 160-181 and 3A-36 Windmill Street;
- 1-15 and 2-18 Manor Road;
- 178-192 and 204-194 Parrock Street;

- 1-24 and 2-38 Queen Street;
- 2-9 Brewhouse Yard;
- 43-83 and 35-3A High Street



Gravesend Town Centre

### Diversity of Uses

- 6.10 The Experian Goad category report for Gravesend (March 2014) identifies a total of 84,100 sq.m of ground floor floorspace for retail trade and service units (retail, leisure and financial and business services combined), comprising 470 units. Table 57 below sets out the composition of the number of units in Gravesend.

**Table 57: Gravesend Town Centre Composition of Units**

	Number of Units	% of Total	UK Average (%)	Variance (%)
Convenience	35	7.45	8.38	-0.93
Comparison	125	26.6	32.53	-5.93
Service	226	48.08	47.5	+0.58
Vacant	84	17.87	11.43	+6.44
TOTAL	470	100	100	-

Source: Experian Goad Category Report (May 2014)

- 6.11 Gravesend's proportion of convenience goods units is slightly below the UK average. The main convenience goods offer in Gravesend town centre comprises Tesco Metro and Iceland supermarkets. This convenience goods offer is supplemented by a selection of smaller retailers including bakers, butchers, grocers and a small specialist European supermarket.
- 6.12 Gravesend's proportion of comparison goods retail units is below the national average. However, there is an above average proportion of multiple comparison retailers within the town centre, and an above average proportion of hardware and household goods stores, with the centre housing 10 units. The majority of comparison stores are evenly situated

throughout the primary shopping frontage, and overall are in line with what we would expect from a centre the size of Gravesend. The majority of multiple retailers are located within New Road or St. George's Shopping Centre.

- 6.13 The overall proportion of service units in Gravesend is slightly above the national average. There is a below average proportion of cafes, bars and restaurants. There is an above average proportion of financial and business services within the centre, including 26 property services and 15 financial services.
- 6.14 The cultural offer within Gravesend is only partially recorded by Experian Goad Reports, but is important to consider as such services play an important role in the overall vitality and viability of a centre. A site visit and Gravesend's category report reveals that the centre has a limited cultural offer, comprising of the Woodville theatre, which has also recently begun offering film screenings. The location of Gravesham Borough Council's main offices within the town centre can also be expected to act as a footfall generator within the centre.
- 6.15 A full six days a week indoor market is open Monday to Saturday with an adjacent outdoor Market on Saturdays located off Queen Street. The market is housed in an impressive, historic building, although the structure is in need of repair and refurbishment. At the time of the site visit the market was very quiet, but nevertheless forms an important asset for the town centre. Investment into the market hall could potentially draw more business and increase footfall around the area.

### Retailer Representation

- 6.16 The Experian Goad report identified that there were 95 multiple retailers in Gravesend (20% of retail units). Experian define multiple retailers as being part of a network of nine or more outlets.
- 6.17 The majority of the national multiple retailers present in the town are located on New Road, or in the two shopping centres (St George's and Thamesgate), both of which are also accessed from New Road. The Tesco Metro at 72-73 New Road functions as the main supermarket in the town centre. For an in-centre supermarket, the store is reasonably well sized, with a net sales area of 1,925 sq.m. The store stocks a generally good range of groceries, supplemented with a limited non-food offer. Whilst it has benefited from a recent programme of investment to modernise the retail floorspace, the store is trades from a rather dated unit, albeit one which is well integrated with the wider town centre offer. We would expect this store to mostly function as a basket / top up shopping destination.

- 6.18 Other multiple retailers present include Primark, New Look, BHS, Debenhams, Argos and Carphone Warehouse. The three department stores (Primark, Debenhams and BHS – all of which are located on New Road) are important contributors to the vitality and viability of the centres, although with the possible exception of Primark, are trading from relatively small units. The town's Marks & Spencer store, occupying a prominent, centrally-located site in New Road, ceased trading in September 2014, with the company's closest store now sited in Bluewater. The letting of this site to a quality retailer which will positively impact on town centre footfall is a particularly significant consideration.
- 6.19 Independent retailers are present throughout the town centre (with a particularly prominent presence on Windmill Street and High Street) and provide a range of shops and services. The independent stores generally occupy smaller shop units and are of a reasonable quality, with some lower quality units in more peripheral parts of the centre.

### Vacancies

- 6.20 Table 58 below indicates that as of March 2014 (when the Experian Goad survey was completed), there were 84 vacant units in Gravesend, equating to a vacancy rate of 17.87%. This lies considerably above the national average of 11.43% and represents a cause for concern. Furthermore, the 2014 Experian Goad Category report indicates that 12.87% of floorspace in Gravesend is vacant compared to a national average of 9.32%, suggesting that the type of floorspace currently vacant in the town centre is not in a format which is suitable for many operators' needs. It should be noted that the closure of the M&S store will have further increased the amount of vacant floorspace in the town centre – although, with some modernisation, this store has a good-sized floorplate and may be attractive to other national retailers.

**Table 58: Vacancy Rates in Gravesend by Unit and Floorspace**

Vacant Units	% of Total Units	UK Average (%)	Vacant Floorspace (sqm)	% of Total Floorspace	UK Average (%)
84	17.87	11.43	10,823	12.87	9.32

*Source: Experian Goad Category Report March 2014*

- 6.21 GVA undertook a site survey in January 2015 which enabled the Experian Goad data to be updated. The survey highlighted that the number of vacant retail units within the town centre has increased further to approximately 90 vacant units (equivalent to 19.14% of all units in the centre). Vacant units that have been newly occupied since March 2014 are shown in Table 59. Most of the vacant units which have been let subsequent to the Experian Goad survey are, unusually, in the more secondary parts of the town centre; there appears to have been little retailer demand for prime retail space in the town centre.

- 6.22 There is significant clustering of vacant units in a number of locations throughout the town centre. Concentrations of vacant units currently exist at Berkeley Crescent (including Milton Road opposite), almost the full extent of Harmer Street (although not all units in this street are given over to retail use), and —most notably —within St. George's Shopping Centre, which forms part of the primary shopping area. The vacancy rate in the town centre represents cause for concern, with almost 1 in 5 units in the centre vacant, and a clustering of vacant units within a relatively prominent position in the town centre.

**Table 59: Re-occupied units in Gravesend since March 2014**

Retail Fascia	Address	Retail Category
Gym	7 Barrack Row	Leisure Service
Charity Shop	4 Thamesgate Shopping Centre	Comparison
Homesafe Security	20 Wrotham Road	Comparison
Take away	168 Parrock Street	Leisure Service
Newsagents	157 Parrock Street	Convenience
Take away	1 Queen Street	Leisure Service
Deli	34 Queen Street	Convenience
Café	32 Queen Street	Leisure Service
Charity Shop	75 New Road	Comparison

Source: GVA On-site Survey January 2015

### Environmental Quality

- 6.23 Much of Gravesend's primary shopping area is pedestrianised which makes for a safe and pleasant shopping environment. The public realm throughout New Road is of a reasonably high standard, with planted trees and bench seating provided. The paving is uniform and well-kept. St George's Shopping Centre, which is accessed from New Road, suffers from a dated shopping environment, and is in considerable need of modernisation and refreshing in order to improve its physical appearance and increase its attractiveness as a retail location. Pedestrian footfall in St George's Shopping Centre was observed to be extremely limited during our visits to the centre.
- 6.24 The pedestrianised High Street's public realm is also of a reasonable standard. However, there is certainly potential to turn this street into a much higher-quality, aesthetically pleasing retail area. Town Pier Square at the end of the High Street provides views on to the River Thames, and is an important asset to the town centre, albeit one which is currently insufficiently capitalised on. The High Street area forms part of the 'Heritage Quarter' attractive environment, including the historic market building. The environment in this area is



compromised by a number of poor-grade retail units and hot- food takeaways interspersed with the more specialised retail outlets.

6.25 The planning application for the redevelopment of the Heritage Quarter will, if implemented, address many of the current deficiencies of this part of the town centre. The redevelopment scheme, promoted by Edinburgh House, proposes comprehensive redevelopment of the area, in three distinct quarters:

- Eastern Quarter – new leisure and retail uses, including creation of a piazza around a new Market Square, a 50-bedroom hotel, and residential development;
- Western Quarter – retail and residential space, with St. George's Church as a focal point. A key element in this quarter is the expansion of St. George's Shopping Centre, to provide new, larger retail units, facilitated by moving the existing car parking to a new underground facility. The quarter will also include apartments and community facilities;
- St. Andrew's Gardens – redevelopment of the riverside gardens to provide new public open space, creation of a riverside walkway and traffic calming measures, to assist in connecting the town centre back to the river.

6.26 The redevelopment of the Heritage Quarter will enable a number of the town centre's assets – most particularly the riverfront – to be capitalised on, and we would expect the vitality and viability of the centre as a whole to benefit from the scheme.

**Figure 93: Extract from Gravesham Heritage Quarter development brochure**



6.27 Architecturally, there are a number of impressive buildings within the town centre, a legacy of its maritime heritage, and the aforementioned Heritage Quarter is particularly significant

in this respect. Harmer Street, whilst not particularly active in terms of retail activity, is an especially attractive street, uniformly lined with four-storey Victorian terraces. The street offers significant potential to be a major asset for Gravesham, but requires substantial investment in the property stock, as its ground floor level it currently looks very run down./

- 6.28 The southern part of the town centre is given over to civic uses and the town's railway station. Whilst the buildings in this part of the centre are not of such strong environmental quality, there is an attractive public plaza in front of the Council offices on Windmill Street. The Council may wish to investigate scope for 'pop up' uses such as festivals, street food, open-air film screenings during summer months, and similar uses, in order to help generate footfall and broaden the appeal of the town centre.
- 6.29 Across much of the town centre, shop facades are rather low in quality, with much of the signage and facades being dated and in need of refurbishment. In particular, the units around Berkeley Crescent and Harmer Street appear to have been subject to neglect, and considerable improvements could be made to this area. Indeed, the eastern end of the town centre in general suffers from poor levels of vitality and viability, with low grade retail uses, high levels of vacancy, and low levels of pedestrian activity.
- 6.30 The pedestrian environment in the environs of the railway station would benefit from some improvement, including better wayfinding to lead visitors into the town centre.

### Accessibility

- 6.31 There is a large amount of car parking available within Gravesend town centre. Space for approximately 900 cars is located off Parrock Street, and a further 250 spaces are available adjacent to the train station. A 120 space car park and 80 space car park is located behind the High Street to the north of the market. Space for c. 90 cars is provided north of Church Street behind St George's Shopping Centre.
- 6.32 Bus stops are located throughout Gravesend town centre, with services connecting Gravesend to Dartford, Chatham, Sevenoaks and other local surrounding residential areas. There is also a high frequency bus link to Bluewater, which can be considered to be Gravesend's closest main competing comparison goods shopping destination.
- 6.33 Gravesend train station is located to the south of New Road. Trains provide regular services to the Medway towns, Faversham, Sittingbourne, the Kent Coast and London; the town also benefits from High Speed train services into London St Pancras.

### Out of Centre Retail Provision



- 6.34 Located just outside the town centre boundary is a large Asda supermarket. Situated to the west of Iceland on New Road, the Asda has a net sales area of 5,760 sq.m. The store is open 24 hours a day and includes a post office, café, pharmacy, opticians, deli, bakery and fishmongers, with approximately 75% of floorspace devoted to the sale of food and 25% to the sale of non-food products. The store has 22 manned tills and 16 self-service tills, and features an associated car park. Somewhat unusually, and owing to the location of the store at the foot of an escarpment, the only method of access on foot from the town centre is via a pedestrian escalator from New Road. Vehicular access is via the Imperial Business/Retail Park. Whilst closely located to the town centre, the lack of easy access between the store and the rest of the centre as a result of the topographical differences means it largely functions as a standalone store.
- 6.35 Adjacent to the Asda store (and also outside the town centre boundary) is the Imperial Business and Retail Park. This features larger DIY, carpet, food and electricals stores such as Halfords, Pets at Home, B&Q and Dreams Beds, as well as a Pizza Hut restaurant and a bowling alley. Most of the retail offer at this location is comparison goods and 'bulky goods' in nature (i.e. large items such as furniture that cannot readily be sold from town centres), but some units are occupied by retailers typically located in town centres, e.g. 99p Stores, and one unit is occupied by a Lidl supermarket. For the reasons as summarised above, there is only limited scope for this development to be integrated with the town centre offer.
- 6.36 Elsewhere in Gravesend, located approximately 4km to the south west of Gravesend is a Sainsbury's superstore at Pepper Hill. This large store includes c.650 car park spaces, a petrol station, deli, bakery, fishmonger, butcher, hot food counter and an extensive clothing and non-food range. The store has been reconfigured and extended in recent years. There is also a large Morrisons store (net sales area c. 2,800 sq.m) located on Coldharbour Road, 3km to the immediate south of Gravesend town centre. Both stores can be expected to serve the extensive, largely residential areas of Gravesend and Northfleet.

### Summary of performance of Gravesend town centre

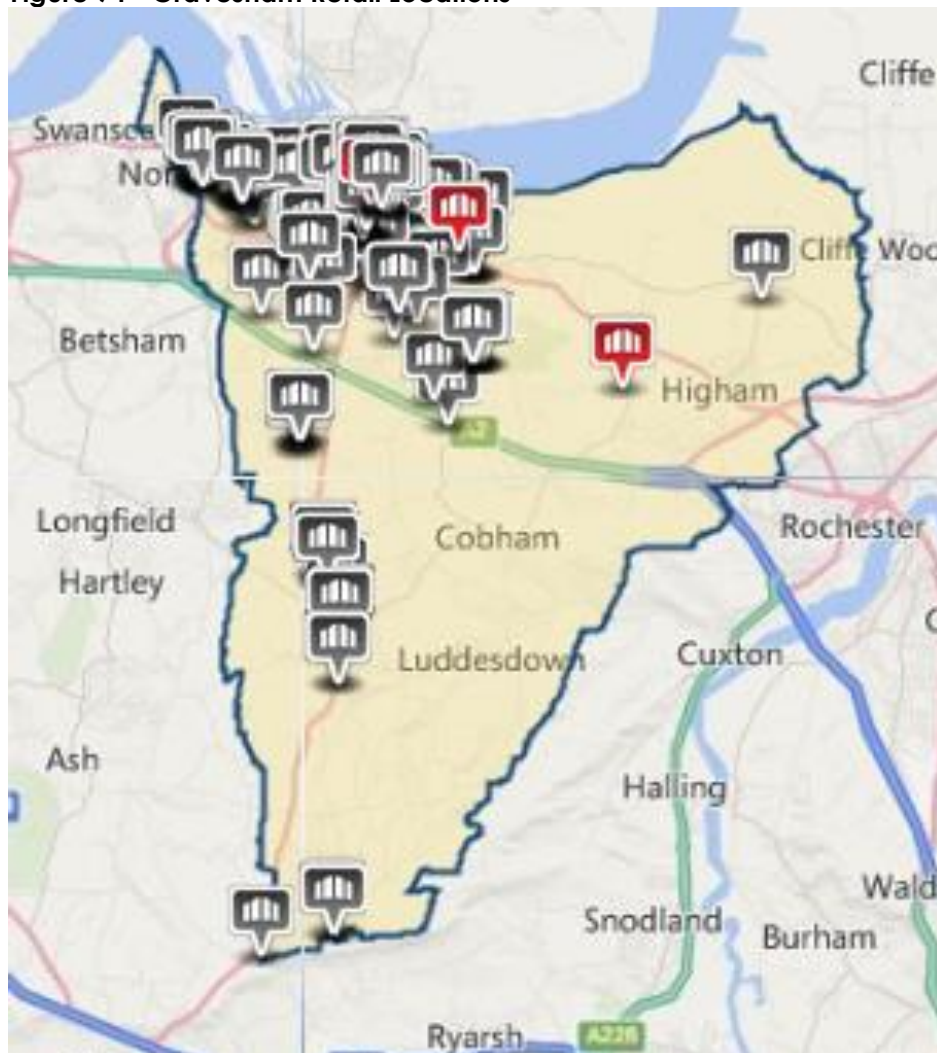
- 6.37 Our assessment of the vitality and viability of Gravesend town centre has identified that:
- Gravesend town centre suffers from a reasonable level of vitality and viability. There are a good range of 'anchor' stores, despite the recent loss of Marks & Spencer, and the town centre is able to meet most day-to-day shopping needs. The centre includes a reasonably-sized supermarket (plus a further large store on the edge of the town centre, albeit with poor connectivity), and the range of certain types of services is reasonable.

- It is clear from our analysis that the middle to higher-end shopping function of the centre seems to be in decline, and we would expect that the retail offer of the town centre will more likely to err towards the lower-order end of the market in the coming years. The proximity of Bluewater, when considered alongside the wider trends in the retail sector (in terms of polarisation of many comparison goods retailers towards larger / high profile shopping destinations), is a factor in this. The frequent public transport connections to Bluewater confirm that – as the recent closure of M&S has demonstrated – that retailers may not require representation in both centres, particularly if attractive retail property stock is not available.
- The commercial leisure offer in the centre is currently for the most part underwhelming and requires strengthening in order to add vibrancy to the centre and increase dwell time. This shortfall will, in part, be met through the Gravesend Heritage Quarter development however.
- The vacancy rate is a cause for concern, with almost 1 in 5 units in the centre currently vacant, including large parts of the pedestrianised St George's Shopping Centre. The setting of this development at the heart of the town centre provides an important opportunity for reconfiguration and modernisation. Securing a quality retailer to replace the vacated M&S should also be a priority.
- Vacancy rates in secondary areas of the town centre, particularly the eastern end of the centre, are also problematic. These areas have very low levels of pedestrian activity, and a limited retail / town centre function.
- The environmental quality of the centre is, for the most part, reasonably strong, and both New Road and High Street contain a number of architecturally impressive buildings. The market building is also an important asset, albeit one which appearing in need of investment. The overall environmental quality of the centre is undermined by poor quality urban form in the vicinity of the railway station, and the two shopping centres – with St George's Shopping Centre in particular requiring significant modernisation.
- The waterfront and pier are important assets which the town centre is currently failing to capitalise on. The Gravesend Heritage Quarter redevelopment will considerably enhance the scope for improvement in this respect, but the quality of the retail offer along High Street could also be improved.
- Currently therefore, Gravesend town centre is doing a reasonable job of meeting local shopping needs – but as the highest order centre in the Borough, and a 'destination' centre, it is clearly underperforming. However, the investment proposed by the Gravesend Heritage Quarter development offers the chance for the town to redefine itself, through broadening the diversity of uses and introducing a new residential community into the town centre.

## Gravesham- Retail Market Overview

- 6.38 The following section underpins the retail property market characteristics of Gravesham.
- 6.39 According to CoStar Suite, there are 416 existing retail buildings in Gravesham Borough, equating to c. 2,072,000 sq ft of retail floor space. Of this, 40% of retail floors space is located in Gravesend town centre, the principle retail location in the Borough. Other local retail is located in smaller towns (Istead Rise, Meopham).
- 6.40 Gravesend has a shopping population of 69,000 (PROMIS). Key competitors include Bluewater in Dartford and Medway town centres.

**Figure 94 - Gravesham Retail Locations**

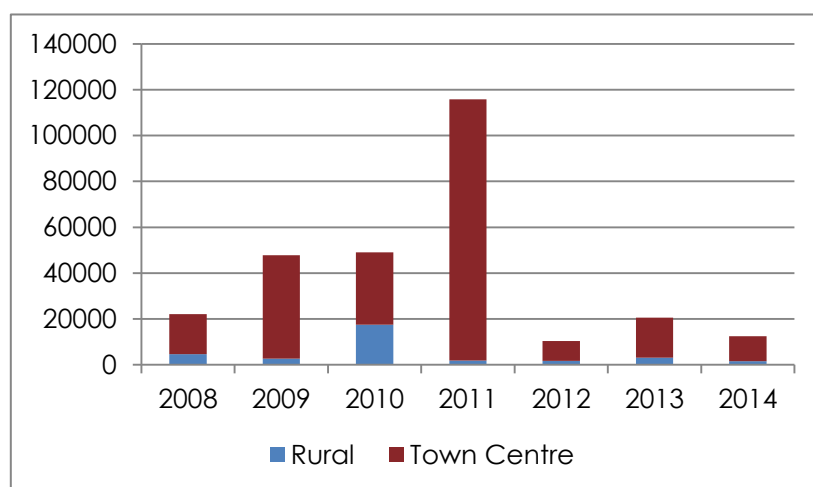


Source: CoStar 2015

## Retail Letting Activity

- 6.41 Our desktop research, utilising the Focus database, concludes that approximately 278,000 sq ft of retail space has been let in 112 deals within Gravesham Borough between Jan 2008 and December 2014. This equates to an annual take up rate of c. 40,000 sq ft. It should be noted however that results are skewed by an unusually high number of large deals in 2011, which puts that year's retail letting activity significantly above the other years and distorts the annual average.

**Figure 95 - Gravesham Letting Activity, Retail Space, 2008 – 2014 (sq ft)**



Source: CoStar 2015

- 6.42 Figure 95 above summarises letting activity year by year. It shows that recent annual letting activity has been below the pre 2011 peak. In 2014 leasing activity stood at 12,500 sq ft.
- 6.43 below summarises retail take-up in terms of size band and location (rural or town centre) between January 2008 to December 2014 in the Gravesham Borough. The highest proportion of retail stock let was in the 500 – 1,000 sq ft size bracket. This was particularly significant amongst rural stock where this size group accounted for 53% of letting activity. The proportion of stock let within the other size brackets was fairly evenly distributed, in both rural and town centre locations.

**Table 60 - Gravesham Retail Letting Activity by Size Band, 2008 - 2015**

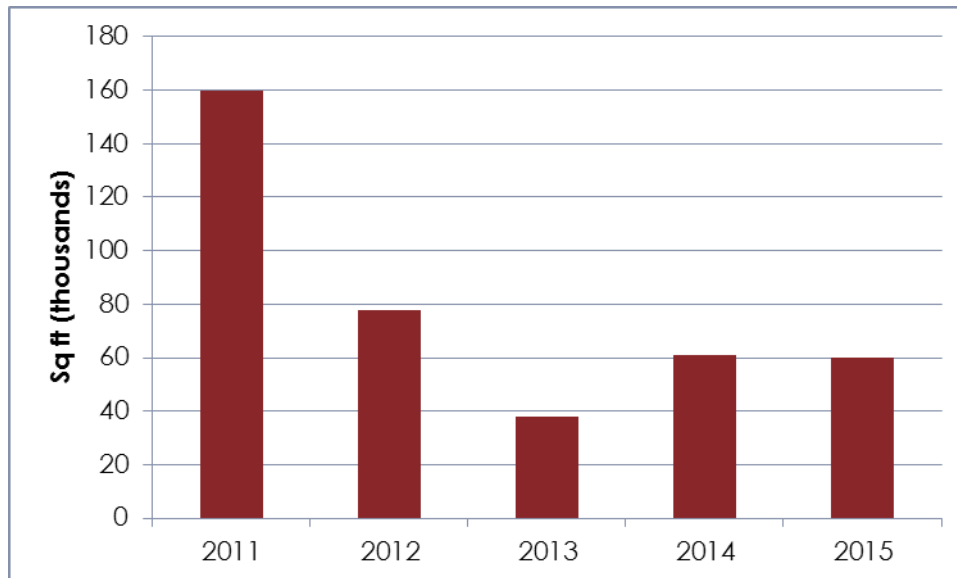
Size Group (sq ft)	Total % breakdown	Size Group by Location	
		Rural	TC
<500	23%	16%	25%
500-1000	37%	53%	33%
1001-2500	21%	16%	22%
>2500	20%	16%	20%

Source: CoStar 2015

## Supply

- 6.44 Figure 96 below shows that available retail floor space in Gravesham peaked in 2011 at c. 160,000 sq ft. It has since remained at less than half its peak figure, currently standing at c. 60,000 sq ft.

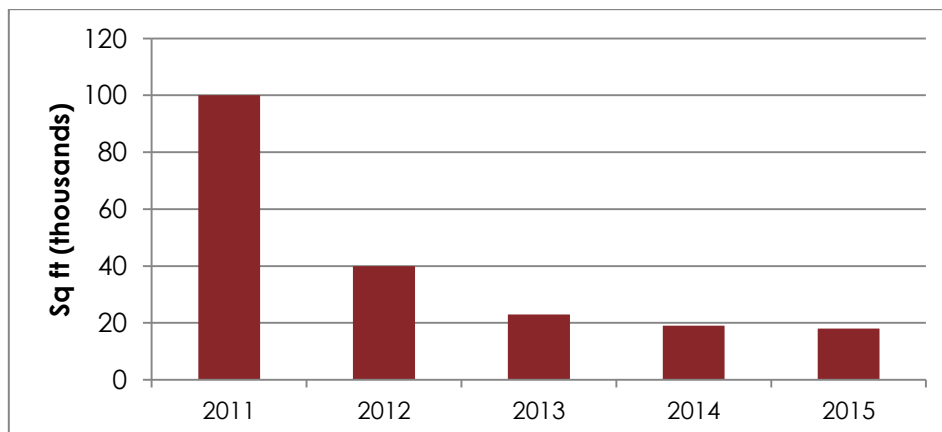
**Figure 96 - Available Retail Floor Space, Gravesham 2011 - 2015**



Source: CoStar 2015

- 6.45 The quantity of vacant floor space has followed the same trend, as demonstrated in Figure 97 below, and currently stands at just under 20,000 sq ft.

**Figure 97 - Vacant Retail Floor Space, Gravesham 2011 - 2015**



Source: CoStar 2015

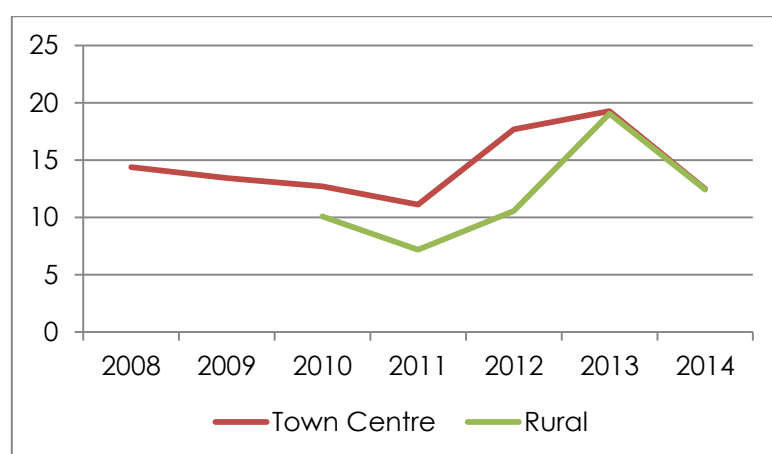
- 6.46 The decrease in vacant and available floor space correlates with a steady increase in occupancy rates since 2012. According CoStar Suite, occupancy rates currently stand at c. 99%. A fall in vacancy and available floor space, combined with an increase in occupancy

rates suggests a strong demand for retail floor space in Gravesham over the recent years. The recent exist of Marks and Spencer in Gravesend however is likely to have an impact upon this trend.

## Rental Values

- 6.47 Figure 98 below shows retail rents achieved in Gravesham between January 2008 and December 2014. It shows that on average, higher retail rents are achieved in town centre rather than rural locations. Retail rents in both locations peaked in 2013 at £19 per sq ft and have since fallen to £12 psf in 2014.

**Figure 98 - Gravesham Average Annual Retail Rents, 2008 - 2014**



Source: CoStar 2015

- 6.48 Table 61 below shows the average rents achieved in Gravesham between January 2008 and December 2014 according to size band and location. It reiterates that achieved rents are on average higher in town centre locations. The highest rents in town centre locations were achieved on smaller units of less than 500 sq ft, whilst the highest rents in rural areas were achieved on larger units over 2,500 sq ft. We note however that this is based on one deal over 2,500 sq ft that achieved £20.12 p sft in 2013.

**Table 61- Average Gravesham Retail Rents by Size Band and Location, 2008 - 2015**

Size Group (sq ft)	Rural	TC
<500	£16	£24
500-1000	£10	£11
1001-2500	£7	£12
>2500	£20	£11
<b>Average:</b>	<b>£11</b>	<b>£15</b>

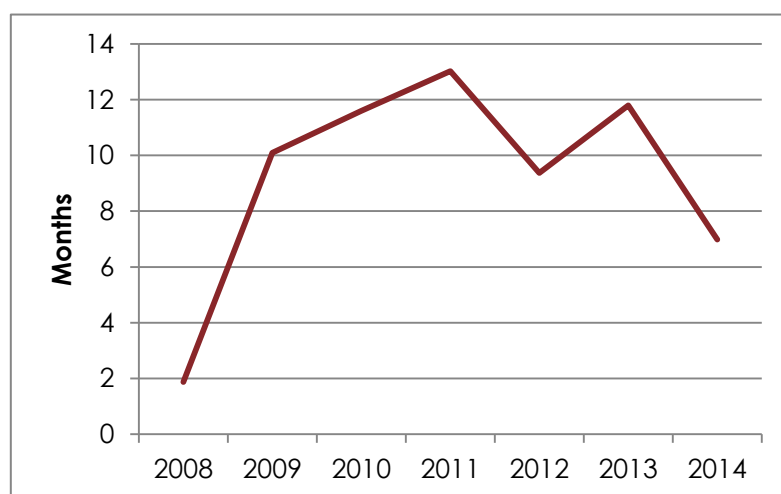
Source: CoStar 2015

- 6.49 PROMIS (2015) report rent Prime Rents of £40 ITZA in Gravesend, Gravesham's retail centre. This has not changed since mid-2013 and remains below the average level of prime rent reported by PROMIS for small towns.

### Time on the Market

- 6.50 Figure 99 below shows the average number of months that retail space in Gravesham spent on the market between January 2008 and December 2014. It shows that marketing time has increased sharply from 2008 to 2009, from 2 to 10 months. In 2014 marketing time fell to 7 months.

**Figure 99- Average Number of Months on the Market, Retail Space, Gravesham 2008 - 2014**



Source: CoStar 2015

**Table 62: Average Number of Days on the Market, Gravesham Retail 2008 - 2015**

Size Group (sq ft)	Average number days of market	
	Rural	TC
<500		289
500-1000	321	302
1001-2500	365	380
<2500	476	346
<b>Average:</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>324</b>

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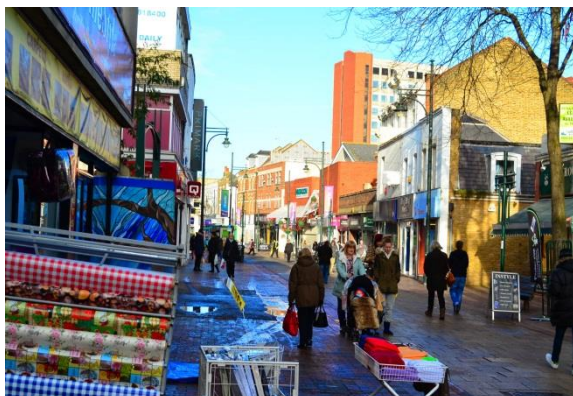
## Chatham Town Centre Health Check

### Introduction and scope of health check assessment

- 6.1 In this section we set out our appraisal of the vitality and viability of Chatham town centre, the highest-order centre in the District, and largest in terms of retail floorspace. The adopted Local Plan defines Chatham as a 'main/city centre', and policy directs 'major comparison goods floorspace' proposals towards the centre in the first instance. The performance of the five district centres (Strood, Rochester, Gillingham, Rainham and Hempstead Valley) in Medway are considered separately in the following section.
- 6.2 For each centre, we undertake an appraisal of the current 'vitality and viability' of the town centre, set against a range of key indicators as defined by the NPPG. Our assessments have regard to data provided by Experian Goad's 'Category Reports' and land use survey maps, and are supplemented by our own visits to the centre and desktop research. We have also had regard to findings of a household telephone survey of users in each of the six centres, undertaken by NEMS Market Research in support of this study.
- 6.3 Our health check assessments (and subsequent analysis) refer to different types of retail and leisure floorspace, as follows:
- **'Convenience'** goods refers to food shopping – including supermarkets, and specialist stores such as bakers, greengrocers, off licences and so on;
  - **'Comparison'** goods refers to non-food shopping – including fashion, home furnishings, electrical items, DIY goods, books and music
  - **'Services'** uses refers to commercial leisure services such as restaurants and cafes, as well as retail services such as hairdressers, beauty salons, banks, building societies and estate agents. Non-retail uses such as cinemas and arts centres are not included in Experian Goad's analysis, but are accounted for qualitatively through our own analysis.
- 6.4 Chatham is the largest of the Medway towns. The town centre has a mixture of established national retailers and smaller specialist retailers, particularly towards the western end of the centre along the attractive High Street which links Chatham and Rochester town centres. The focus of retail activity is the pedestrianised High Street and the Pentagon Shopping Centre. The eastern end of the town centre is bookended by the junction of The Brook and the A2 New Road (which links Chatham with the other Medway towns); a large Tesco foodstore occupies a prominent position at this junction, however this store is to cease trading in April 2015.



- 6.5 Chatham also has a tourism role, a legacy of its maritime heritage, with the Historic Dockyard remaining an important visitor attraction. However, there is little evidence that the town centre itself fulfils much of a tourism role.



### Diversity of Uses

- 6.6 The Experian Goad category report for Chatham (September 2013) identifies a total of approximately 109,000 sq. m. of ground floor floorspace for retail trade and service units (retail, leisure and financial and business services combined), comprising 408 units. Chatham is the largest centre in Medway in terms of its retail floorspace. The floorspace figures derived from Experian Goad only use the footprints of the units and therefore only provide an indicative floorspace figure. Table below sets out the composition of the number of units in Chatham.
- 6.7 The convenience goods offer in Chatham is currently anchored by the large Tesco foodstore at The Brook, at the eastern end of the town centre. It was announced in January 2015 that Tesco would close its branch in Chatham as a result of unprofitability, and the closure of this store means that the convenience goods function of the town centre will be unusually limited: the remaining offer is restricted to a Sainsbury's store in the Pentagon Centre and an Iceland store on the High Street. The Sainsbury's store is a small, dated store which is of an unsuitable size and in an unsuitable location – hidden away at the rear of the Pentagon Centre in an area of very low footfall – to act as the principal supermarket serving the town centre. Principally this store is catered towards basket-shopping only, and does not contain a sufficient range of goods to function as a main food shopping destination for most residents. Whilst attempts have been made to modernise the store, it also suffers from a somewhat dated internal and external appearance.

**Table 63: Chatham town centre Composition of Units**

	Number of Units	% of Total	UK Average (%)	Variance (%)
Convenience	27	6.62	8.38	-1.76
Comparison	127	31.13	32.53	-1.40
Service	195	47.30	47.35	-0.05
Vacant	59	14.46	11.43	+3.03
TOTAL	408	100	100	-

Source: Experian Goad Category Report (September 2013)

- 6.8 The convenience goods offer is supplemented by a limited number of other retailers, including a food and wine shop, four small grocers, a convenience store, European foods convenience store, delicatessen and two butchers.
- 6.9 Chatham's proportion of comparison goods units sits slightly below the UK national average, however, provides a relatively broad retail offer including a range of multiple and independent retailers and this slight shortfall is not – in numerical terms at least – an area of concern. There are no major gaps in the comparison goods offer in the town centre, indicating that the centre is able to meet most residents' day-to-day shopping needs.
- 6.10 When considering the mix of comparison goods retail units, there is a good level of provision of ladies and menswear clothing (as well as clothing in general). Other sectors which are well-represented include telephones and accessories (e.g. mobile phone shops), vehicle and motor sales, hardware and household goods and charity shops. Sport, camping and leisure goods, as well as newsagents and stationers also account for a high proportion of occupied comparison goods retail units.
- 6.11 The total proportion of service units in Chatham is in line with the national average. Whilst there is a below average proportion of retail and leisure services (this includes cafes, restaurants, hairdressers, beauty salons and so on), there is an above average proportion of financial and business services (most notably estate agents and banks/building societies).

### Retailer representation

- 6.12 The Experian Goad report identifies 125 multiple retailers in Chatham (31% of retail units). Key multiple retailers include the three previously mentioned food stores (Tesco, Sainsbury's and Iceland), and the High Street has three important clothing / department store anchor stores at varying points along it – TK Maxx at the western end, Primark in the centre, and Debenhams to the east. Despite being only a relatively short distance from the 'core' of the town centre (which we consider to be Primark / entrance to the Pentagon), the

Debenhams store feels somewhat off-pitch, and sits in proximity to a number of discount / poor quality secondary retail outlets. Nevertheless the store is an important addition to the overall retail offer of the town centre.

- 6.13 Other key retailers present in the centre include Argos, Boots, W H Smith (although this store is also due to cease trading shortly), Wilko, Dorothy Perkins/Burton, New Look, Carphone Warehouse, O2, Superdrug, Vodafone and Waterstones. Independent retailers are present throughout the town centre along the High Street and provide a range of shops and services. Unusually, the national retailers and independent retailers are fairly evenly interspersed along much of the High Street, with the exception of the Pentagon Centre and immediately adjacent properties, which are almost entirely given over to national multiple retailers.
- 6.14 Most of the independent retailers (and indeed some of the national multiple retailers) are of poor quality however, with many selling cheap clothing, discount household goods, and so on. Whilst it has to be remembered that a town centre must respond to its local demographic, a number of these units do serve to bring down the overall appearance of the centre and lend it a 'down at heel' feel in parts.

### Vacancies

- 6.15 Table below shows that as of September 2013 (when the Experian Goad Survey was completed) there were 59 vacant units in Chatham, equating to a vacancy rate of 14.46%. This is over 3 percentage points above the national average of 11.43%. The 2013 Experian Goad Category report shows that 10.83% of floorspace in Chatham is vacant, compared to a national average of 9.32%.

**Table 64: Vacancy Rates in Chatham by Unit and Floorspace**

Vacant Units	% of Total Units	UK Average (%)	Vacant Floorspace (sq.m)	% of Total Floorspace	UK Average (%)
59	14.46	11.43	11,789	10.83	9.32

*Source: Experian Goad Category Report September 2013*

- 6.16 GVA undertook a site survey in January 2015 which enabled the Experian Goad data to be updated. The survey highlighted that the number of vacant retail units had increased by eight from 59 to 67; the vacancy rate has therefore increased to further above the national average, and this clearly represents an area of concern. Of the 59 original vacant units, ten have been reoccupied as illustrated in Table 65 below. Additional vacant units currently exist at 2-2A Railway Street, and 105, 223, 241, 262, 269, 270-272 and 288-290 Chatham High

Street. However, there are no areas within the centre where a significant clustering of vacant units is occurring.

- 6.17 The Trafalgar Shopping Centre, which occupies a prominent position towards the eastern end of the High Street, closed in its entirety in 2013; we understand that prior to this the centre had very high vacancy levels. The centre also included an indoor market. Whilst the centre had a poor internal and external appearance, and evidently had become run down and no longer fit for purpose, its location means that it forms a prime redevelopment opportunity within the town centre. In its current form, the site acts as something of an eyesore, and securing a future use for the site should be considered a priority.

**Table 65: Re-occupied units in Chatham since September 2013**

Retail Fascia	Address	Retail Category
Art Gallery	64-66 Chatham High Street	Comparison
Restaurant	72 Chatham High Street	Leisure
Internet Café	90 Chatham High Street	Leisure
Restaurant	98-100 Chatham High Street	Leisure
Charity Shop	120 Chatham High Street	Comparison
Grocer	179 Chatham High Street	convenience
Dream	180 Chatham High Street	-

*Source: GVA On-site Survey January 2015*

### Environmental Quality

- 6.18 There is evidence of investment in creating an attractive public realm in Chatham town centre. The pedestrianised High Street is of good quality, featuring intermittent planting and suitably-located public seating. While these improvements to the High Street have made a positive contribution to the overall environment, some of the physical fabric of the buildings, and in particular the shop fronts, along the High Street, is of poor quality, and compromises the overall environmental quality of the town centre. Throughout the town centre, the majority of shop frontages and building facades are in a declining state of repair and neglected.
- 6.19 Chatham benefits from a covered, pedestrianised shopping centre in the form of the Pentagon Centre, which occupies a prominent position on the High Street and contains a number of the town centre's main comparison goods stores, as well as the aforementioned Sainsbury's, and a large multi-storey car park to the rear. The Pentagon is functional and well-maintained, but suffers from a very dated internal appearance, and many of the retail units within the centre appear too small to be fit for purpose for modern retailers – and

consequently, as mentioned above, there are a large number of vacant units in the centre. and a number of poor-quality units occupying other units within the centre.

### Accessibility

- 6.20 Chatham benefits from a good level of accessibility. There are several large car parks surrounding the centre, the majority of which are Council-operated facilities. The largest car parks are multi-storey car parks attached to the Pentagon Centre (330 spaces above Sainsbury's, and a further 520 spaces accessed via Solomon Road. There are additional multi-storey car parks at Cross Street (500 spaces) and Rhode Street (280 spaces), as well as a large number of surface car parking facilities to the rear of the High Street, on Medway Street, and adjacent to Gala Bingo. In total we estimate that there are approximately 2,700 car parking around the town centre, which is considered ample provision to meet the needs of users of and visitors to the centre, particularly given that – as we set out below – the centre is also readily accessible by public transport.
- 6.21 Chatham Waterfront bus station is situated in close proximity to the retail area on Waterfront Way. The station is a relatively new addition to the town centre; it opened in 2011 and benefits from a contemporary, efficient design, including having living roofs on each of the bus shelters. The bus station replaced the previous facility, which was incorporated into the Pentagon Centre and suffered from a poor user environment. The closure of the Pentagon bus station affords an opportunity for the future development of this area, but no plans have yet come forward of this nature. The bus station offers frequent bus services to local residential areas and other Medway towns, with the 700/701 service also linking the centre with Bluewater every 30 minutes during the daytime.
- 6.22 The town's railway station is also in close proximity to the town centre, accessed via Railway Street, and benefits from being located on the High Speed One line, with half-hourly direct connections to London via Gravesend and Ebbsfleet. Services extend eastwards to link the town to Ramsgate, Sittingbourne and Faversham. Local stopping services run to and from London Charing Cross and London Victoria via Bromley. Pedestrian linkages between the railway station and the town centre would benefit from enhancement. Including improved wayfinding, and enhanced paving and streetscape.

### Out of Centre Retail Provision

- 6.23 Horsted Retail Park is located on Maidstone Road, the main radial route into Chatham from the south and close to junction 3 of the M2, provides a number of large retail warehouse-format stores, together with directly adjacent surface car parking. The site is currently occupied by PC World, Curry's, Homebase, Toys 'R' Us and Pets Mart, and therefore is

predominantly 'bulky goods' in nature, with limited scope to directly compete with the town centre. The purpose built retail park is a considerable distance from any town centre, but is likely to draw trade from residents in the Chatham, Rochester and Walderslade areas. A short distance further south along Maidstone Road is a large (4,861 sq.m net) Asda foodstore, which offers a range of facilities including clothing, a pharmacy, hot food counters, and click & collect facilities.

- 6.24 Elsewhere in the Chatham area, there is a 2,268 sq.m Morrisons foodstore on Princes Avenue at Walderslade. The store caters to the needs of the surrounding predominantly residential area. The majority of the store is given over to convenience goods uses, including hot food counters.

### Summary of performance of Chatham town centre

- 6.25 We have undertaken an assessment of the vitality and viability of Chatham town centre, based on published information and our own visits to the centre in January 2015. Our assessment has identified that:

- The diversity of uses is, on paper, reasonable, and the centre is currently able to provide for residents' day to day shopping needs to a reasonable extent. This ability will however be compromised by the closure of the Tesco store in April 2015, which will leave the town centre without a supermarket which is capable of meeting residents' larger food shopping needs. The only remaining supermarkets in the centre – Sainsbury's and Iceland – are of sufficient size to only perform a 'top up' shopping function, and the Sainsbury's in particular is a poor quality, dated store. The comparison goods shopping offer is acceptable, but is generally quite downmarket, with discount / charity shops interspersed with national retailers along much of the duration of the primary shopping area.
- There is a below average proportion of retail services in the centre, such as cafes, restaurants, hair and beauty facilities, and so on. As many comparison goods retailers are increasingly concentrating their activities in larger centres, these retail services will become increasingly important to the long-term vitality and viability of centres.
- The retail offer in the town is anchored by a TK Maxx store to the western edge of the town centre and Tesco store to the east. Once the Tesco store closes, the Debenhams store on the High Street will form the eastern-most 'anchor' store, although this in itself feels slightly detached from the prime retail offer in the town. The focus of the retail activity is the Primark store and Pentagon Shopping Centre. The shopping centre itself however benefits from a dated internal appearance, and many of the units are too small and consequently are struggling to be let. The Council should work with the relevant owners of the shopping centre to secure investment and modernisation of the Pentagon Centre at the soonest opportunity. The introduction of an enhanced commercial leisure offer within the centre may be particularly beneficial.



- The town centre has a vacancy rate which is above the national average, and the highest of all of the Medway towns. There are also signs that the vacancy rate has increased in recent months, and can be expected to further increase once Tesco and WH Smith vacate their units in the town centre. It is of particular concern that a number of the vacant units are in the prime retail pitch – within and adjacent to the Pentagon Centre. This reflects that the property stock of the town centre is not attractive to many retailers in its current form, and consequently demand for retail representation is low. Recent lettings of vacant units have been to generally poor-quality or temporary retailers.
- The environmental quality of the rest of the centre, whilst generally reasonable, could also benefit from improvement. The pedestrianised High Street is pleasant and well-maintained but investment is needed to bring a number of the buildings, and in particular shop fronts, up to an acceptable quality. As mentioned above, the dated feel of the Pentagon Centre is likely to further hinder operator interest in this part of the centre.
- The centre benefits from a good level of accessibility, from both public and private transport. The provision of a new bus interchange represents a positive investment, and has improved the physical fabric of this part of the town centre, but the wider spin-off regeneration benefits for the town centre have, to date, been relatively limited.
- There is little in the way of out-of-centre floorspace which can be expected to directly compete with the town centre for expenditure.

## Medway District Centres Health Checks

- 6.26 In this section we set out our appraisal of the vitality and viability of the five district centres in Medway — Strood, Rochester, Gillingham, Rainham and Hempstead Valley. Our assessment follows the same structure as that of Chatham set out in the previous section.

### Strood District Centre

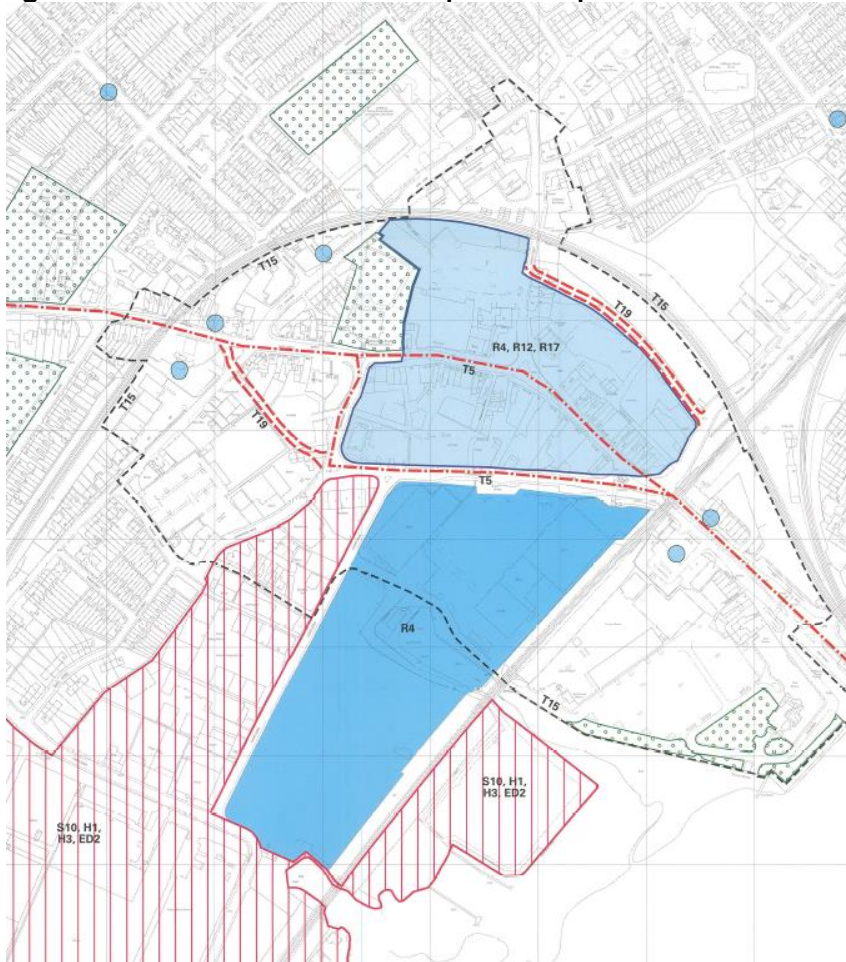
- 6.27 Strood is a small district centre on the western side of the River Medway, separated from the other Medway towns but readily accessible by road and public transport connections.



6.28 The Proposals Map inset for Strood, accompanying the Local Plan (2003) identifies that the Core Retail Area in Strood is comprised of (Figure 100):

- Between 143/118A and 65/46 High Street
- Units to the south of Friary Place
- To the north of Commercial Road
- Newark Yard

**Figure 100: Strood Town Centre Proposals Map Insert Extract**



### Diversity of Uses

6.29 The Experian Goad category report for Strood (September 2013) identifies a total of approximately 46,400 sq. m. of ground floor floorspace for retail trade and service units (retail, leisure and financial and business services combined), comprising 155 units. Table 7.1 sets out the composition of the units in Strood.



**Table 66: Strood district centre composition of units**

	Number of Units	% of Total	UK Average (%)	Variance (%)
Convenience	11	7.10	8.38	-1.28
Comparison	44	28.39	32.53	-4.14
Service	81	52.26	47.35	+4.91
Vacant	19	12.26	11.43	+0.83
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>-</b>

*Source: Experian Good Category Report (September 2013)*

- 6.30 The main convenience goods offer in Strood town centre includes Asda, Aldi and Iceland foodstores. The Aldi store is a recent addition to the centre, whilst the Asda is a small-format store, converted from what was previously a branch of Netto. Whilst not within the town centre boundary, there is a small Tesco to the south of the town centre on Cuxton Road, and a large Morrisons store (3,251 sq.m net) to the south-east of the centre on Knight Road. However, neither of these stores benefit from having particularly strong linkages to the town centre retail offer. Taken as a whole however, is the centre can be considered well provided for in terms of supermarkets relative to its overall size (we would expect that it also meets many of the convenience goods shopping needs of residents in Rochester, as well as its own immediate catchment). The convenience goods offer is supplemented by a limited number of other retailers including a convenience store, greengrocer, bakery, and butcher.
- 6.31 Strood's proportion of comparison goods retail units sits below the UK national average. The centre provides a reasonably broad retail offer including a range of multiple, as well as independent retailers. Vehicle and motor sales, hardware and household goods, DIY and home improvement, as well as charity shops account for the highest proportion of occupied comparison goods retail units. Of the total proportion of comparison goods retail units, there is an evident shortage of ladies and menswear clothing shops, as well as children's and infants wear – although as these retailers increasingly focus their trading in larger/higher-order centres, this trend is not surprising. The range of comparison goods stores is likely to be sufficient to meet day-to-day shopping needs.
- 6.32 The total proportion of service units in Strood is noticeably above the national average and, along with convenience goods, services uses can be considered the principal function of the centre. Whilst there is an above average proportion of retail services and financial and business services (most notably property services and banks), there is a below average proportion of leisure services (most notably cafes and restaurants).
- 6.33 There is a small market held every Tuesday and Saturday from 12-3 in the Commercial Road car park, located off the High Street. The market is a fairly informal setup but nevertheless

appears well-supported and adds to the diversity of uses within the centre, although its operational hours are limited.

### Retailer Representation

- 6.34 The Experian Goad report identified 59 multiple retailers currently trading in Strood (38% of retail units). It should be noted that the Experian Goad boundary of the centre extends beyond the Local Plan-defined boundary, to also include the Strood Retail Park, Tesco and Morrisons stores.
- 6.35 Key multiple retailers include the five previously mentioned foodstores, as well as, within the town centre, operators such as Wilko, Sports Direct and Boots (the former appears to act as an important 'anchor' store), as well as Greggs bakers, Subway, and a range of banks and building societies. The Strood Retail Park consists entirely of national operators, occupying larger-floorplate units than are generally available in the town centre. Current occupiers include Matalan, Next and B&Q, and Poundland are shortly expected to open in the former Paul Simon unit. We discuss the role and function of the retail park in further detail below.

### Vacancies

- 6.36 Table 67 shows that as of September 2013 (when the Experian Goad Survey was completed) there were 19 vacant units in Strood, equating to a vacancy rate of 12.26%. This is marginally above the national average of 11.43%. The 2013 Experian Goad Category report indicates that 4.78% of floorspace in Strood is vacant compared to a national average of 9.32%, suggesting that most of the vacant units in the centre are relatively restricted in size, which in turn can often limit their attractiveness to many operators

**Table 67: Vacancy Rates in Strood by Unit and Floorspace**

Vacant Units	% of Total Units	UK Average (%)	Vacant Floorspace (sqm)	% of Total Floorspace	UK Average (%)
19	12.26	11.43	2,220	4.78	9.32

*Source: Experian Goad Category Report September 2013*

- 6.37 GVA undertook a site survey in January 2015 which enabled the Experian Goad data to be updated. The survey highlighted that the number of vacant retail units had increased by one (additional vacant unit is located at 139 Strood High Street) from 19 to 20. Of the 19 original vacant units, three have been reoccupied as illustrated in Table 68. The fact that two of the vacant units have been re-let as charity shops is indicative of the fact that there appears to be low demand for premises in Strood. There is a significant clustering of vacant units occurring which spans units 7A, 5A and 3A Cuxton Road, and 2, 4, 8, and 14 London Road, on the north-western edge of the town centre. This parade of units is located outside

the Local Plan-defined town centre boundary and is separated from the retail core offer by the busy Cuxton Road / London Road junction, and consequently feels somewhat detached from the rest of the retail offer.

**Table 68: Re-occupied units in Strood since September 2013**

Retail Fascia	Address	Retail Category
Cake Shop	14 Strood High Street	Comparison
Charity Shop	60-68 Strood High Street	Comparison
Charity Shop	127 Strood High Street	Comparison

*Source: GVA On-site Survey January 2015*

### Environmental Quality

- 6.38 Strood does not benefit from the historic character of the other centres in the district, and appears to have suffered from a lack of investment in the public realm. The result is a poor quality public realm throughout, and a centre that feels 'tired' in character as a whole.
- 6.39 The bisection of the centre by two major roads (the A2 and A228) means the centre suffers from a poor environmental quality. The dominance of cars discourages pedestrian movement, resulting in a poor pedestrian environment, not aided by poor quality pedestrian footways and crossings. In addition, noise disruption impacts the overall character of the area and effects visitors' ability to enjoy and experience the town centre.
- 6.40 Connectivity between the different retail elements within and surrounding the centre (the High Street, retail park, market, Tesco and Morrisons foodstores) is therefore very disjointed, resulting in a retail environment that is lacking cohesion and not clearly navigable. The disjointed nature of the town centre has created a poor quality streetscape, and an area which lacks a sense of place and identity. The presence of the retail park could, perhaps unusually, actually benefit the overall vitality and viability of the town centre, if suitable measures were put in place to better link the site to the 'historic' retail core. The retail park contains retailers which would not, under normal circumstances, trade in a centre as small as Strood, and therefore their presence should be capitalised on through development of enhanced linkages,
- 6.41 A particular issue can be observed when arriving at Strood town centre from the Rochester Bridge / Strood railway station – as many visitors to the centre are likely to do. The presence of barriers and lack of clear signposting means that, almost by default, the visitor to centre is led towards the retail park rather than the 'historic' town centre. The navigability of this part of the centre is particularly poor and the Council may wish to investigate whether

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additional measures can be put in place to better guide visitors towards the town centre (including removal of barriers and introduction of improved crossing facilities).

- 6.42 Clearly the heavy infrastructure which runs through the centre cannot be altered or removed, but efforts to 'knit together' the centre (an action previously identified in the Strood Town Centre Masterplan) should be considered a priority.

### Accessibility

- 6.43 Strood has good accessibility by public transport and private car. The station, located on Station Road to the north-east of the town centre, is slightly detached from the town centre, and is poorly signposted/ uninviting to walk to and from. Strood is the terminus of the Medway Valley Line serving the town, linking the town to Maidstone and Tonbridge. The centre also has direct connections to London (including High Speed services), Dartford, Gravesend, and other Medway centres. The A2 runs through the centre of the town, and eastwards to Rochester, and whilst this ensures the centre is accessible, it does also mean congestion through the centre, to the detriment of the overall environmental quality. Car parking facilities are well provisioned for throughout the town centre. The area is also well served by local transport, with buses linking Strood with the rest of the Medway towns and surrounding residential areas in Strood.

### Out of Centre Retail Provision

- 6.44 As previously identified, Strood Retail Park is adjacent to the town centre boundary (as defined by the Local Plan), offering a number of retail warehouse-format units and large surface car park (with free car parking). Occupiers at the site currently include B&Q, Next, Argos, Brantano, KFC and Matalan, with Poundland expected to move into the former Paul Simon unit which ceased trading in 2014. The retail park is owned by Ropemaker Properties, who have recently submitted a planning application (MC/14/3317) for the B&Q store (which currently occupies a large unit on the eastern side of the retail park) for the 'construction of a replacement building to provide three retail units (class A1) and a gym (Class D2), removal of existing slip road, alterations to car park and other associated works (demolition existing unit)'. At the time of preparation of our study, this application is undetermined, but if approved can be expected to introduce a number of new retailers into Strood. This affirms the need for linkages with the town centre to be improved – to enable the vitality and viability of the rest of the town centre to benefit from the planned investment. The parade of units which house the current B&Q and Next stores appears tired and dated, whilst investment has been made in recent years in modernising the western terrace (anchored by Matalan).

6.45 As noted above, there are two supermarkets outside the defined town centre but within relatively easy walking distance from the centre. The Morrisons store on Knight Road is the largest foodstore serving Strood, and is a modern store with a strong range of fresh food counters. The store appeared busy and well supported at the time of our visit. The Tesco store on Cuxton Road suffers from a dated external and internal appearance. The store functions as a small supermarket, with a limited but the nevertheless reasonable product range, almost entirely devoted to convenience goods. The store was only moderately busy at the time of our visit, with the car park approximately one-third of the car park full. There was little evidence observed of 'linked trips' taking place between either the Morrisons or Tesco store and the town centre.

### Summary of performance of Strood district centre

6.46 Our assessment of Strood town centre has identified that:

- The town centre has a very strong convenience goods function, with three supermarkets within the defined town centre boundary, and a further two supermarkets outside the boundary but within a short walking distance, albeit with poor linkages to the town centre offer. The supermarkets, along with the Wilko store, act as the 'anchor' stores in the town centre.
- The comparison offer is largely pitched towards meeting day to day shopping needs, and is generally of a fairly low grade with limited choice in any one category. The focus of the offer in the centre is more orientated towards convenience goods and services.
- The vacancy rate in the centre is above the UK average, and has marginally increased in recent months. Much of the vacant floorspace stock is small units, mostly in secondary areas of the centre, for where demand for premises cannot be expected to be strong.
- The environmental quality of the centre is poor. The bisection of the centre by major roads interrupts pedestrian flow and means no sense of a cohesive town centre is achieved. Linkages between the different 'components' of the centre – the 'historic' centre, the Strood Retail Park, and the Tesco and Morrisons supermarkets,, needs to be improved as a priority.
- The presence of Strood Retail Park in such close proximity to the town centre could be better realised, in order to benefit the wider vitality and viability of the centre.

### Rochester District Centre

6.47 Rochester is a picturesque, historic town. To a greater extent than the other centres in Medway, it has dual functions as both a centre serving local residents, and also a tourism centre, with Rochester Cathedral and the imposing adjacent Castle both important attractions in this respect. Indeed the presence of the castle, cathedral and a number of other historic buildings such as Eastgates House, lend the centre a charming, historic feel. It

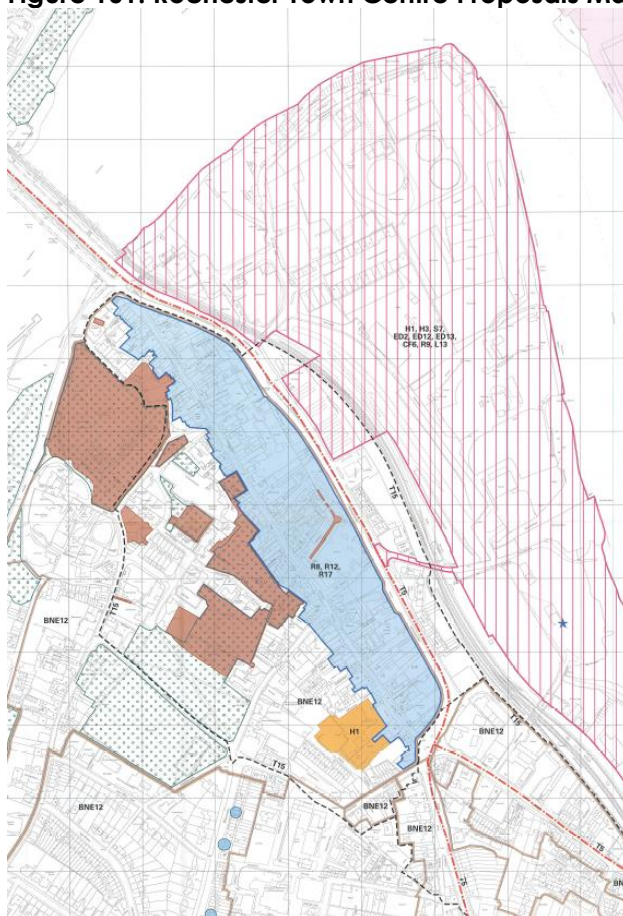
is evident that the character of the town has been protected and enhanced to remain in keeping with the town's historic character.



6.48 The Proposals Map inset for Rochester, accompanying The Local Plan (2003), identifies that the Core Retail Area in Rochester is comprised of (Figure 101):

- Both sides of the high street from numbers 4 and 15 to the northwest down to numbers 198 and 177 to the south east
- All units along Almon Place, Blue Boar Lane, La Providence, North Gate and Bull Lane

**Figure 101: Rochester Town Centre Proposals Map Inset Extract**





## Diversity of Uses

- 6.49 The Experian Goad category report for Rochester (September 2013) identifies a total of approximately 29,200 sq. m. of ground floor floorspace for retail trade and service units (retail, leisure and financial and business services combined), comprising 190 units<sup>6</sup>. Table 69 sets out the composition of the number of units in Rochester.

**Table 69: Rochester District Centre Composition of Units**

	Number of Units	% of Total	UK Average (%)	Variance (%)
Convenience	13	6.84	8.38	-1.54
Comparison	59	31.05	32.53	-1.48
Service	102	53.68	47.88	+5.8
Vacant	16	8.42	11.43	-3.01
TOTAL	190	100	100	-

Source: Experian Goad Category Report (September 2013)

- 6.50 The convenience goods offer in Rochester is limited. Castle Food and Wine Grocer, located off the Rochester High Street, acts as the main convenience store, but is only of sufficient size to cater predominantly for 'top up' shopping needs. This convenience goods offer is supplemented by a limited number of other specialist retailers, including two confectioners and two delicatessens. Residents in the Rochester area are therefore only likely to use the convenience shopping facilities in the town centre to supplement food shopping trips elsewhere.
- 6.51 Rochester's proportion of comparison goods units sits slightly below the UK national average. The centre is notable for the relative lack of the national retailers, and a large number of independent specialist shops. The more specialist / niche nature of the retail offer contributes to the unique feel of the town centre, and should be seen as an asset to its vitality and viability.
- 6.52 One area of concern is the high proportion of charity shops (nearly double the national average), many of which occupy fairly prominent positions within the centre, in the environs of the castle and cathedral. Second hand goods and books also account for a high proportion of occupied comparison goods retail units, as well as antique shops, crafts, gifts, china and glass shops. There are a small number of upscale fashion boutiques scattered

<sup>6</sup> The floorspace figures derived from Experian Goad use only the footprints of the units and therefore only provide an indicative floorspace figure.

throughout the centre, but little in the way of more general clothing stores. The centre also has a number of more specialist retail outlets such as galleries.

- 6.53 There is an above average proportion of financial and business services (most notably property services and banks), as well as an above average proportion of leisure services (most notably cafes, public houses and restaurants), which enable Rochester to have a strong food and drink scene both during the daytime and the evening, and also likely capitalising on the heritage attractions in the town centre. At the time of our visit to the centre it was encouraging to note a new restaurant under construction in a prominent position on the High Street opposite the castle, as well as more specialist outlets such as a gelateria recently opened in the town centre.

### Retailer Representation

- 6.54 The Experian Goad report identified 19 multiple retailers in Rochester (12% of retail units). This is a low proportion which confirms the retail offer of the town is principally focused on independent specialist / boutique retailers. Multiple retailers present in the centre include Barclay's, Natwest, Pizza Express, Lloyd's Bank, Subway, Holland & Barrett and Costa. As noted above, independent retailers are present throughout the district centre and provide a range of shops, as well as services including galleries, cafes, pubs and restaurants.

### Vacancies

- 6.55 Table 70 indicates that as of September 2013 (when the Experian Goad Survey was completed) there were 16 vacant units in Rochester, equating to a vacancy rate of 8.42%. This is below the national average of 11.43%. The 2013 Experian Goad Category report indicates that 5.79% of floorspace in Rochester is vacant compared to a national average of 9.32%. These figures imply that Rochester does not suffer from particularly high levels of retail vacancy.

**Table 70: Vacancy rates in Rochester, by unit and floorspace**

Vacant Units	% of Total Units	UK Average (%)	Vacant Floorspace (sqm)	% of Total Floorspace	UK Average (%)
16	8.42	11.43	1,690	5.79	9.32

*Source: Experian Goad Category Report September 2013*

- 6.56 GVA undertook a site survey in January 2015 which enabled the Experian Goad data to be updated. The survey highlighted that the number of vacant retail units had increased by four from 16 to 20. Of the 14 original vacant units, two have been reoccupied as illustrated in Table 71. Additional vacant units currently exist at 44, 125, 137A and 148 Rochester High



Street, however, there are no areas within the district centre where a significant clustering of vacant units is occurring.

**Table 71: Re-occupied units in Rochester since September 2013**

Retail Fascia	Address	Retail Category
Florist	68 Rochester High Street	Comparison
Estate Agent	143 Rochester High Street	Financial and Business Services

*Source: GVA On-site Survey January 2015*

### Environmental Quality

- 6.57 Rochester benefits from a particularly strong environmental quality, and this, along with its heritage attraction and specialist retail mix, are the key contributors to its overall good levels of vitality and viability. The historic character of the town has evidently been protected and enhanced over the years. The centre is designated as a Conservation Area in its entirety and features many traditional Georgian and Victorian buildings which have been preserved. Both the cathedral and the castle sit prominently within the town centre, and linkages between these important assets and the wider offer of the town centre is good.
- 6.58 The public realm is well maintained, and is uniform throughout the centre, which enables a sense of place to be clearly established. The pedestrian environment is clean and well-kept, and the shop frontages and building facades are for the most part in good repair, contributing to the overall aesthetic of the town centre. A public market serves the community three days a week (Tuesday/Thursday/ Saturday) and is situated in the, contributing to the town centre environment. There is also a monthly farmer's market.
- 6.59 There are some areas for improvement in environmental quality however. In particular, whilst the immediate environs of the railway station are pleasant, there is a need for improvements to the A2 crossing at Star Hill, and there is a prominent office building at the junction of the Star Hill and Eastgate which creative a negative initial impression. Some of the peripheral parts of the centre would also benefit from an element of smartening up. However, overall we consider the environmental quality of the centre to be strong, and a positive asset to the wider vitality and viability of the centre.

### Accessibility

- 6.60 The centre benefits from a good level of accessibility, owing to its proximity to the A2, and its accessibility by a range of public transport options. The A2 provides an important

connection which links London with Dover. Rochester Station is located at the end of Rochester High Street, providing train services operated by SouthEastern from London Charing Cross (via Dartford) (typical journey time 60-65 minutes) and Victoria (typical journey time 45-60 minutes). The Javelin high speed service operates every 30 minutes between Rochester and London St Pancras with a journey time of 35 minutes, and, along with local services, also provides direct connections to Gravesham, Strood, Chatham and Gillingham. Local buses also link Rochester with the rest of the Medway towns, with routes to Maidstone, Bluewater (Greenhithe) and West Malling. The main car parks in the centre are located to the east of the centre, on the western and eastern sides of the A2 Corporation Street. These car parks appear well utilised, and given Rochester's importance as a tourism destination, should be protected.

### Out of Centre Retail Provision

- 6.61 There is no out-of-centre retail directly serving Rochester, however, retail warehouse-format floorspace is located in Strood, and is easily accessible via the Rochester Bridge.

### Summary of performance of Rochester district centre

- 6.62 We have undertaken a comprehensive review of the current performance of Rochester district centre. This has identified that:
- The centre currently benefits from positive levels of vitality and viability. The retail mix of the centre is generally strong, and the focus of the retail offer towards boutique / specialism comparison goods retailing (e.g. upmarket clothing, antiques, books) lends the centre something of a unique feel.
  - The castle, cathedral and other heritage assets in the centre are evidently important factors in its overall vitality and viability. They help to frame the overall attractiveness and historical feel of the centre, and are well integrated with the rest of the retail and leisure offer through strong public realm connections. They also are clearly important to attracting visitors to the centre, and mean the centre has an important tourist function, and Rochester is largely unique amongst the Medway towns in this respect.
  - The supporting range of cafes, restaurants and pubs ensure that the centre benefits from an active leisure scene both during the day and evening. We have observed a number of recent and planned openings within this sector in the town centre, which will further add to the range and breadth of the offer in this respect.
  - The environmental quality of the centre is, for the most part, particularly strong, with the pedestrianized nature of the High Street, the setting of the town centre in a Conservation Area, and the generally good public realm all contributing positively in this respect. Some improvements could be made to the environmental quality of the centre in the vicinity of the A2 / Eastgate junction. The centre is also highly accessible,

although the relocation of Rochester train station does represent a slight compromise in this respect.

### Gillingham District Centre

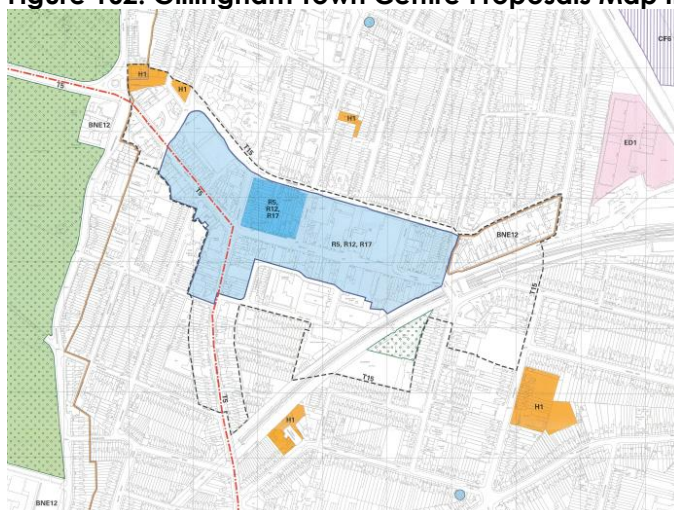
6.63 Medway's Local Plan (2003) defines Gillingham as a 'District Centre' within its hierarchy of centres. Gillingham is situated approximately three km to the north east of Chatham.



6.64 The Proposals Map inset for Gillingham, accompanying the Local Plan (2003), identifies that the Core Retail Area in Gillingham is comprised of:

- Up to 29 and 32 High Street adjoining Britton Street to the west and up to 170 and 191 High Street to the east;
- The south side of Jeffery Street until Victoria Street;
- Both sides of Canterbury Street from the church and Barclay's Bank until 21-25 Canterbury Street and 46 Canterbury Street.

**Figure 102: Gillingham Town Centre Proposals Map Inset Extract**



Diversity of uses

- 6.65 The Experian Goad category report for Gillingham (May 2014) identifies approximately 43,900 sq.m of ground floor floorspace for retail and service units (retail, leisure and financial and business services combined), comprising 235 units.
- 6.66 Table 72 sets out the composition of the units in Gillingham.

**Table 72: Gillingham District Centre Composition of Units**

	Number of Units	% of Total	UK Average (%)	Variance (%)
Convenience	25	10.64	8.38	+2.26
Comparison	61	25.96	32.53	-6.57
Service	124	52.76	47.5	+5.26
Vacant	25	10.64	11.43	-0.79
TOTAL	235	100	100	-

*Source: Experian Goad Category Report (May 2014)*

- 6.67 Gillingham's proportion of convenience goods units is slightly above the UK average. The main convenience goods offer in Gillingham comprises Co-op, Nisa Extra and Aldi supermarkets. This convenience goods offer is supplemented by a selection of smaller retailers including bakeries, butchers, grocers and delicatessens.
- 6.68 The Co-op supermarket located on Jeffery Street, behind the High Street, functions as the main supermarket in the town centre. It is a fairly large supermarket (1284sq.m net sales area), and contains a deli and a bakery. There are six trolley tills, and basement parking for approximately 140 cars. The store suffers from a dated external and internal appearance, and access from the High Street is via an unattractive alleyway. As such, the store is relatively poorly integrated with the wider town centre offer.
- 6.69 The Aldi store is located just outside the core retail area to the east of the high street and Gillingham train station. The store is poorly integrated with the wider town centre offer, with limited scope for 'linked trips', and we expect this foodstore to largely function as a standalone development.
- 6.70 Gillingham's proportion of comparison goods retail units is some way below the national average. There is also a below average proportion of multiple comparison retailers within the centre. The majority of comparison stores are evenly distributed throughout the Core Retail Area. The offer is orientated towards day-to-day rather than specialist comparison goods shopping.
- 6.71 The overall proportion of service units in Gillingham is above the national average, and there is a particular concentration of services activities on Skinner Street, which runs

perpendicular to the High Street and includes restaurants, hot food take-aways, barbers, nightclubs and dental surgeries. The proportion of leisure services (which includes restaurants, cafes, bars and cinemas) is in line with the UK average, however there is an above average proportion of fast food takeaways, and a below average proportion of restaurants and pubs. Services units account for 124 units in the centre – double the number of comparison goods units. This confirms that, along with having an important convenience goods function, the principle role and function of Gillingham is one of a centre which meets local residents' retail services needs.

6.72 Regular markets are held every Monday and Saturday between 9am and 4.30pm on the pedestrianised High Street, which adds to the diversity of uses and can be expected to enhance footfall.

6.73 The centre has a very limited cultural offer. However, for a centre of this size within close proximity to Chatham town centre and the Chatham Dockside development, this is largely to be expected.

### Retailer Representation

6.74 The Experian Goad report identified that there were 62 multiple retailers in Gillingham (26% of retail units). The majority of Gillingham's multiple retailer units are located around the High Street. Multiple retailers present include Sports Direct, Boots, Wilkinson, WH Smith and New Look. However, none of these stores particularly act as 'anchor' retailers; that role is arguably fulfilled by the Co-Op foodstore which, as we have identified above, suffers from a dated appearance and poor connectivity with the rest of the town centre.

6.75 Independent retailers are present throughout the town centre and provide a range of shops and services. The independent stores generally occupy smaller shop units and are of a mid-low quality.

6.76 As we have identified above, the town centre has an important retail service function. Key services retailers present in the centre include hairdressers, beauty salons, dry cleaners, and shoe repairers. These are principally located on the High Street and Skinner Street.

### 6.77 Vacancies

6.78 Table 73 indicates that as of May 2014 (when the Experian Goad survey was completed), there were 25 vacant units in Gillingham, equating to a vacancy rate of 10.64%. This lies slightly below the national average of 11.43%. Furthermore, the 2014 Experian Goad

Category report indicates that 8.51% of floorspace in Gillingham is vacant compared to a national average of 9.32%.

**Table 73: Vacancy Rates in Gillingham by Unit and Floorspace**

Vacant Units	% of Total Units	UK Average (%)	Vacant Floorspace (sqm)	% of Total Floorspace	UK Average (%)
25	10.64	11.43	3,735	8.51	9.32

Source: Experian Goad Category Report May 2014

- 6.79 GVA undertook a site survey in January 2015 which enabled the Experian Goad data to be updated. The survey highlighted that the number of vacant retail units has remained the same. Vacant units that have been newly occupied since May 2014 are shown in Table 74. One unit has become newly vacant within the Core Retail Area at 48 High Street, previously an interior decorator shop. Small groupings of vacant units exist around the Brompton Road/Marlborough Road junction and northern side of Skinner Street, adjacent to the High Street.

**Table 74: Re-occupied units in Gillingham since May 2014**

Retail Fascia	Address	Retail Category
Dentist	76-78 High Street	Service

Source: GVA On-site Survey January 2015

### Environmental Quality

- 6.80 The centre does not appear to have benefited from significant investment or regeneration in recent years. Shop facades are rather low in quality, with much of the signage being dated and in need of refurbishment.
- 6.81 The public realm throughout the Core Retail Area is of a reasonable standard. Public seating is situated intermittently along the entire stretch of the High Street, and planted trees add to the environmental quality.
- 6.82 Paving is generally well-kept and consistent, with very little litter present during GVA's site visit. The pedestrianised High Street also creates a relaxed, safe retail environment. Whilst the overall appearance of the centre can generally be considered little more than functional, with the exception of a need for shop fronts to be upgraded, there are no major issues in respect of the environmental quality of the centre.

### Accessibility

- 6.83 Car parking provision for approximately 140 vehicles is provided below the Co-op supermarket, and a further 90 car parking spaces are provided off Jeffery Street behind the

High Street. Approximately 150 spaces are provided to the south of the railway line off Balmoral Road. The level of car parking provision serving the centre can be considered to be adequate.

- 6.84 There are six bus stops within the town centre, located on King Street, Victoria Street, Jeffery Street and Skinner Street. Bus services connect Gillingham with Chatham, Rainham, Hempstead Valley and other local surrounding residential areas. Gillingham train station is located at the eastern end of the High Street. Trains provide regular services to Chatham, Rochester, London and the Kent coast, including High Speed connections to St Pancras.

### Out of Centre Retail Provision

- 6.85 Located approximately three km to the south east of Gillingham is the Gillingham Retail Park which comprises 10,112 sq.m of open consented retail space. It forms a substantial part of one of Medway's principle out-of-town retail pitches, and includes stores occupied by B&Q, Dreams Beds and Pets at Home. One of the units on the retail park also operates as an Iceland supermarket. Adjacent to the retail park, on the opposite side of Courteney Road, is a Tesco Extra foodstore (net sales area of c.3,000 sq.m). The store is open 24 hours a day and features a café, pharmacy, opticians, deli, bakery and fishmongers, with approximately 70% food and 30% non-food products on offer. The store also features an on-site petrol station. To the south of the Tesco store is a branch of Dobbies Garden Centre. This concentration of retailing activity acts as a significant out-of-centre shopping destination, and whilst most of the uses are 'bulky goods' in nature, the occupation of some of the units by operators who typically locate in town centres (such as Iceland) suggests there may be some direct competition with the surrounding network of town centres, including Gillingham.

### Summary of performance of Gillingham district centre

- 6.86 Our health check analysis of Gillingham town centre has identified that:
- The town centre performs a functional role in meeting local convenience shopping and services needs. It is 'getting by' perfectly adequately, but does not display any particularly positive (nor indeed overly negative) indicators of vitality and viability.
  - The size of the centre and range of the retail offer means it that it only performs a limited function as a comparison goods shopping destination. Nevertheless the presence of multiple retailers such as Boots and Wilkinson ensures that day-to-day shopping needs can be reasonably be met. The presence of a number of supermarkets and a range of retail services provide an important contribution to the centre's vitality and viability.



- The 'anchor' store within the centre is the Co-Op supermarket. However the ability for this store to contribute to the wider vitality and viability of the centre is compromised by location to the rear of the High Street with uninviting pedestrian access and a dated external and internal appearance which may put off some shoppers. The Aldi store to the east of the town centre is a modern store with a more agreeable shopping environment, but its disconnection from the pedestrianised High Street means it offers only limited opportunity to contribute to the wider vitality and viability of the centre.
- The vacancy rate in the town centre is marginally below the UK average but, with one in ten units in the centre, requires close monitoring.
- The environmental quality of the centre is satisfactory, but largely functional. As with other centres in the District, there is a need to improve in the physical appearance of a number of units in the Core Retail Area, particularly in terms of improving shop fronts.
- Current provision in terms of car parking and access by public transport is satisfactory.

### Rainham District Centre

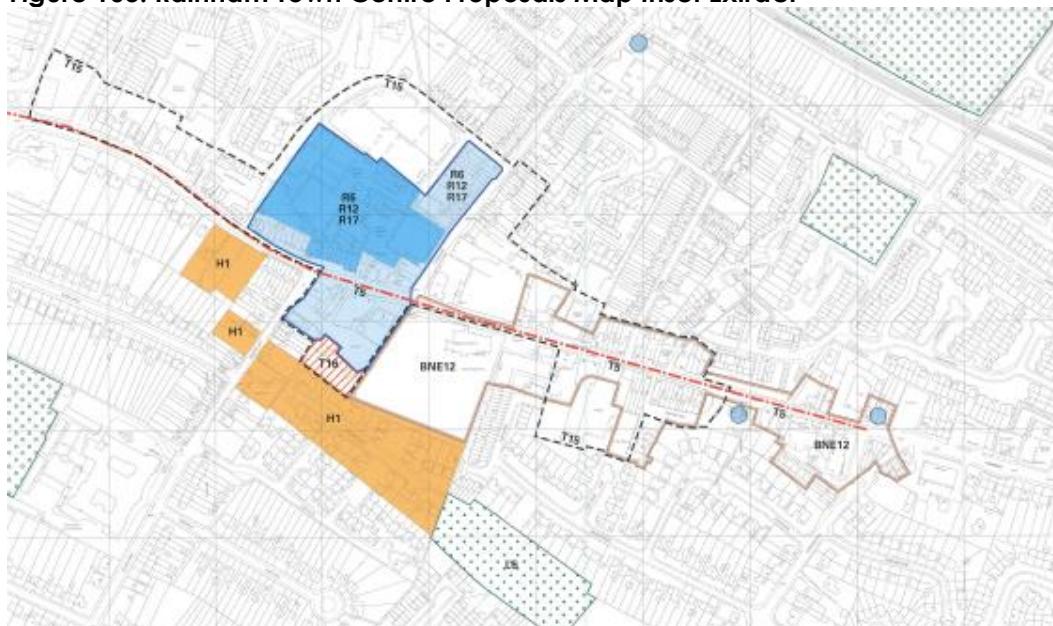
6.87 Medway's Local Plan (2003) defines Rainham as a 'District Centre'. Rainham is situated approximately seven km to the east of Chatham. The town centre is focused on the junction of the A2 (High Street) and Station Road, with much of the retail offer accounted for by the pedestrianised Rainham Shopping Centre.



6.88 The Proposals Map inset for Rainham, accompanying the Local Plan (2003), identifies that the Core Retail Area in Rainham is comprised of:

- From 49-51 High Street northwards along Longley Road;
- The units on the south side of High Street (70-88);
- The units on the west side of Station Road up to 35 Station Road; and
- The Rainham Shopping Centre



**Figure 103: Rainham Town Centre Proposals Map Inset Extract**

### Diversity of Uses

- 6.89 The Experian Goad category report for Rainham (June 2014) identifies approximately 21,100 sq.m of ground floor floorspace for retail trade and service units (retail, leisure and financial and business services combined), comprising 139 units. Rainham is therefore one of the smaller centres in the District. Table 75 sets out the composition of the units in Rainham.

**Table 75: Rainham District Centre Composition of Units**

	Number of Units	% of Total	UK Average (%)	Variance (%)
Convenience	13	9.35	8.38	+0.97
Comparison	42	30.22	32.53	-2.31
Service	75	53.96	47.5	+6.46
Vacant	9	6.47	11.43	-4.96
TOTAL	139	100	100	-

Source: Experian Goad Category Report (June 2014)

- 6.90 Rainham's proportion of convenience goods units is slightly above the UK average. The main convenience goods offer in Rainham comprises a Tesco Metro supermarket situated within Rainham Shopping Centre. This convenience goods offer is supplemented by a selection of smaller retailers including a Premier convenience store, Iceland (also within Rainham Shopping Centre), butchers and bakers.
- 6.91 The Tesco Metro supermarket functions as the main supermarket in the town centre. At approximately 1,390 sq.m net sales area, it is an average sized supermarket containing 15 tills, a deli and a butcher. The size of the store means it is able to cater for both some main

and also top-up shopping trips. A car park for approximately 230 cars is located directly to the north of Rainham Shopping Centre. The store is centrally located within the town centre, however, it is housed within a unit that, in common with the rest of the shopping centre, suffers from a dated appearance.

- 6.92 Rainham's proportion of comparison goods retail units is below the national average. There is also a below average proportion of multiple comparison retailers within the centre. Generally the comparison goods offer is pitched towards the discount / value end of the market.
- 6.93 The overall proportion of service units in Rainham is above the national average, confirming that, in common with Gillingham, Rainham principally focuses as a convenience shopping and services centre. The proportion of retail services is considerably above the national average. In particular, there is a high concentration of health and beauty uses (19 units). The proportion of leisure services is below the national average. However, there is an above average proportion of betting offices (3 units) and, most particularly, fast food restaurants (9 units). The presence of a Costa coffee shop on the High Street adds to the diversity of uses within the centre.
- 6.94 There are no cultural facilities within Rainham town centre; this is simply a function of the small size of the centre, rather than representing a particular shortfall in the centre's offer.
- 6.95 There are no street markets held in Rainham town centre, as there is no space within the centre which is well-suited to accommodating these uses.

### Retailer Representation

- 6.96 The Experian Goad report identified that there were 41 multiple retailers in Rainham (30% of retail units). Multiple retailers present include Tesco, Costa, Boots, Wilkinson, Shoe Zone and Card Factory, the majority of which trade from Rainham Shopping Centre.
- 6.97 Independent retailers are present throughout the town centre and provide a range of shops and services. In general, the independent stores occupy smaller shop units along the High Street and Station Road. The quality of some of the units is poor.

### Vacancies

- 6.98 Table 76 indicates that as of June 2014 (when the Experian Goad survey was undertaken), there were nine vacant units in Rainham, equating to a vacancy rate of 6.47%. This lies below the national average of 11.43%. The 2014 Experian Goad Category report indicates

that 3.79% of floorspace in Rainham is vacant compared to a national average of 9.32%, indicating that there are no large vacant units within the centre.

**Table 76: Vacancy Rates in Rainham by Unit and Floorspace**

Vacant Units	% of Total Units	UK Average (%)	Vacant Floorspace (sqm)	% of Total Floorspace	UK Average (%)
9	6.47	11.43	8,600	3.79	9.32

*Source: Experian Goad Category Report June 2014*

- 6.99 GVA undertook a site survey to Rainham town centre in January 2015 which enabled the Experian Goad data to be updated. Our survey identified that the number of vacant retail units within the town centre has decreased subsequent to the Experian Goad survey. Vacant units that have been newly occupied since June 2014 are shown below in **Table 7.12**. One unit has become newly vacant within the town centre boundary at 142 High Street, previously a grill restaurant. Two of the vacant units have been occupied by take-aways, further adding to an already high number of this type of uses within the centre. A small cluster of three vacant units is currently present at the eastern end of the High Street. Elsewhere, there is no significant clustering of vacant units within the centre.

**Table 77: Re-occupied units in Rainham since June 2014**

Retail Fascia	Address	Retail Category
Take away	55 High Street	Leisure Service
Take away	65-67A High Street	Leisure Service
Carpet shop	Unit B, Rainham Shopping Centre	Comparison
Hairdresser	Unit B, Rainham Shopping Centre	Retail Service
Shoe Repairs	16 Station Road	Retail Service
Hairdresser	14 Station Road	Retail Service

*Source: GVA On-site Survey January 2015*

- 6.100 As the table above suggests, although six previously vacant units have now been re-occupied, the quality of retailer occupying the previously vacant units is generally low.

### Environmental Quality

- 6.101 Rainham's pedestrianised shopping centre, High Street and Station Road provides the centre's primary retail location. The centre as a whole does not appear to have benefited from significant investment or regeneration in recent years and the shopping centre, whilst functional, is rather dated in appearance. Shop facades are rather low in quality, with

much of the signage being dated and in need of refurbishment. This is particularly apparent on Station Road.

- 6.102 The public realm throughout the Core Retail Area is of a reasonably low standard. Public seating and green landscaping is in place intermittently within the shopping centre, but is lacking throughout the rest of the town centre. Paving is generally well-kept and consistent, with very little litter present during our site visit. However, the town centre's public realm is of a fairly poor standard, with narrow pavements restricting pedestrian movements on the High Street and Station Road.

### Accessibility

- 6.103 The majority of parking space is provided by two car parks, one off Longley Road (approximately 230 spaces), and one off Orchard Street behind the southern side of the High Street (c. 100 spaces). Very limited on-street parking is provided on Station Road. The amount of car parking which is available for users of the centre can be considered sufficient.
- 6.104 There are four bus stops within the centre located on the High Street and Station Road. Bus services connect Rainham with Chatham, Gillingham, Hempstead Valley and other local surrounding residential areas. Rainham train station is located to the north of the town centre along Station Road. Trains provide regular services to Chatham, Rochester, London and the wider Kent area.

### Out of Centre Retail Provision

- 6.105 The closest out-of-centre retail facilities are located at Gillingham Retail Park, which is located approximately 2km to the west of Rainham. As identified in our health check for Gillingham, this facility comprises a range of bulky and non-bulky retail warehouses including a large B&Q store, a Tesco Extra foodstore and Dobbies Garden Centre.

### Summary

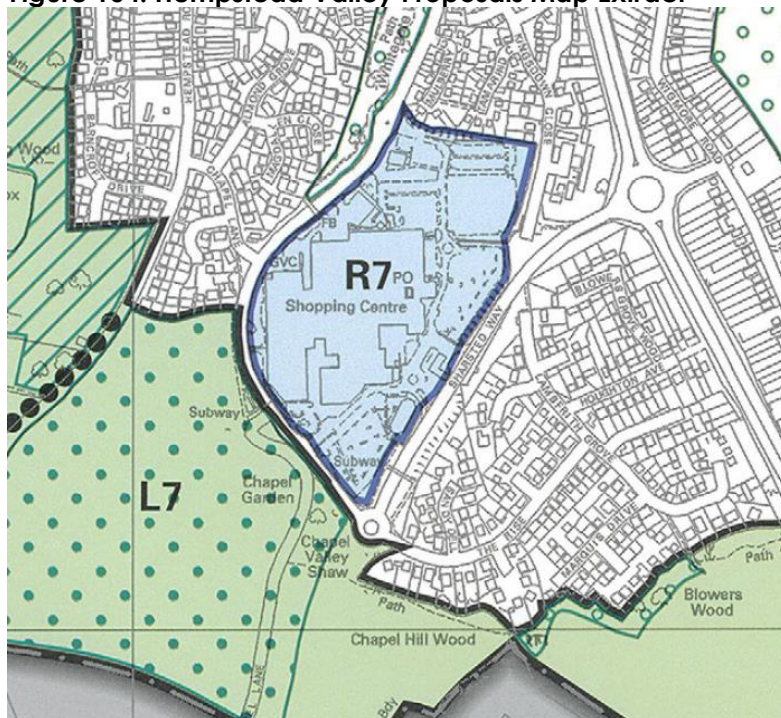
- 6.106 Our assessment of Rainham town centre has identified that:
- Rainham is one of the smallest of the Medway District Centres, and fulfils a role and function which is principally catered towards meeting local convenience goods and services needs, coupled with some limited day-to-day comparison goods shopping facilities.
  - The retail offer is anchored by the Tesco Metro store in Rainham Shopping Centre. Whilst this store is relatively dated it offers a reasonable selection of products to meet top-up and some main shopping needs.

- Elsewhere in the centre, most of the retail offer is pitched at the discount / value end of the market. The centre has an important service function, but there is an over-concentration of certain types of retail services, particularly hot food takeaways, within the centre.
- Whilst there are a handful of multiple retailers present in the centre, the majority of the offer is given over to the independent retail sector. This provides a diverse town centre but many retailers are trading from poor quality premises which are in need of improvements to their visual appearance.
- The vacancy rate is below the UK average, and most of the vacant floorspace in the centre is small units in relatively secondary parts of the centre. Whilst a number of previously vacant units in the centre have recently been let, the lettings have been to generally poor quality retailers. This is reflective of the relatively limited demand which is likely to exist for the centre.
- The environmental quality of the centre is functional, and whilst there are no major areas of concern, the upgrading of the physical appearance of a number of the units, particularly on Station Road, would be beneficial. The ability for significant other types of environmental improvement is constrained by the busy High Street.

### **Hempstead Valley District Centre**

- 6.107 Hempstead Valley district centre is unique amongst the Medway centres in that it compromises, in its entirety, a purpose-built indoor shopping centre. Although a district centre in retailing terms the relative shortage of non-retail facilities means that Hempstead Valley functions in a different way to the 'traditional' district centres of Strood, Gillingham and Rainham.
- 6.108 Medway's Local Plan (2003) defines Hempstead Valley as a 'District Centre' within its hierarchy of centres. Hempstead Valley is situated approximately six km to the south west of Rainham, and 6.5 km to the south east of Chatham, and is somewhat detached from the other Medway centres which all lie to the north of the District. It is located 1.5km north of the M2 motorway. It lies to the south of two large suburban residential areas of Hempstead and Wigmore.
- 6.109 The Proposals Map accompanying the Local Plan (2003) identifies that the Core Retail Area for Hempstead Valley covers the full extent of the shopping centre, including the petrol station, access roads and associated car parks. The centre is currently undergoing a partial redevelopment, involving the demolition of a former McDonald's restaurant and car showroom on land adjacent to the main shopping centre building, and creation of a terrace of six units. A second phase of the redevelopment, planned to take place during 2015, will involve the redevelopment of the southern part of the centre, in an area currently occupied by a food court.



**Figure 104: Hempstead Valley Proposals Map Extract**

### Diversity of Uses

6.110 The Experian Goad category report for Hempstead Valley (November 2012) identifies approximately 27,200 sq.m of ground floor floorspace for retail and service units (retail, leisure and financial and business services combined), comprising 59 units. Table 78 sets out the composition of the units in Hempstead Valley.

**Table 78: Hempstead Valley District Centre Composition of Units**

	Number of Units	% of Total	UK Average (%)	Variance (%)
Convenience	4	6.78	8.38	-1.6
Comparison	34	57.63	32.53	+25.1
Service	15	25.42	47.35	-21.93
Vacant	6	10.17	11.43	-1.26
TOTAL	59	100	100	-

Source: Experian Goad Category Report (November 2012)

6.111 Hempstead Valley's proportion of convenience goods units is slightly below the UK average. The main convenience goods offer in Hempstead Valley comprises a large Sainsbury's supermarket. The other units include a confectionary store, health food store and chocolate shop. A farmer's market adds to the diversity of convenience goods uses, and is currently held once a month.

- 6.112 Hempstead Valley's proportion of comparison goods retail units is well above the national average. There is a particular concentration of mobile phone shops (6 units) and ladieswear shops (6 units) within the shopping centre.
- 6.113 The overall proportion of service units in Hempstead Valley is well below the national average; for example, there is just one bank located in the centre. Three fast food restaurants are currently in the centre (Burger King, KFC and Subway), and there also coffee shops operated by Costa and BB's Coffee. There is an opportunity to improve the quality of the restaurant offer within Hempstead Valley, however we expect the planned improvements to the centre which are expected to be completed this year to rectify this current qualitative shortfall.
- 6.114 Hempstead Valley has an absence of any cultural or entertainment uses, and operates solely as a retail location.

### Retailer Representation

- 6.115 The Experian Goad report identified that there were 50 multiple retailers in Hempstead Valley (85% of retail units). Unusually for a centre at this level in the retail hierarchy, the comparison goods offer of the centre therefore almost entirely consists of national multiple retailers. Multiple retailers present include Sainsbury's, Marks & Spencer, BHS, Argos, Boots, WH Smith, New Look, Clarks and Vodafone. The Sainsbury's and M&S stores can be considered the 'anchor' stores and it is noteworthy that Hempstead Valley is the only centre in Medway to include a M&S store. The store also includes a food hall and customer café.
- 6.116 The Sainsbury's supermarket is a large supermarket which features a café, bakery, fishmonger, butcher, deli, hot food counter and clothing. There are 16 self-service tills and 28 serviced tills. Underneath the supermarket lies a large basement car park with approximately 400 spaces. There is also a standalone petrol station.
- 6.117 The improvements to the centre which are currently underway result in a number of new operators taking space at the centre. We understand that confirmed tenants for the new external terrace include restaurant operators Frankie & Benny's and Nando's, and sandwich shop Subway (who we understand to be relocating as their existing site will be redeveloped). A number of these type of restaurant operators are currently under-represented in Medway, and their letting is evidence of the attractiveness of modern-format retail space, which is largely absent from the District's 'traditional' centres. One of the units is also to be occupied by a building society, therefore improving local residents' access to these types of facilities.

6.118 A number of non-multiple retailers occupy the smaller units within the shopping area.

### Vacancies

6.119 Table 79 shows that as of November 2012 (when the most recent Experian Goad survey was completed), there were six vacant units in Hempstead Valley, equating to a vacancy rate of 10.17%. This lies below the national average of 11.43%. Furthermore, the 2012 Experian Goad Category report indicates that 5.06% of floorspace in Hempstead Valley is vacant compared to a national average of 9.32%, suggesting that most of the vacant units in the centre are towards the smaller end of the scale.

**Table 79: Vacancy Rates in Hempstead Valley by Unit and Floorspace**

Vacant Units	% of Total Units	UK Average (%)	Vacant Floorspace (sqm)	% of Total Floorspace	UK Average (%)
6	10.17	11.43	1,375	5.06	9.32

*Source: Experian Goad Category Report November 2012*

6.120 GVA undertook a site survey in January 2015 which enabled the Experian Goad data to be updated. The survey highlighted that the number of vacant retail units within the shopping centre has decreased subsequent to the Experian Goad survey. Vacant units that have been newly occupied since November 2012 are shown below in Table 80. Three of the four vacant units have been occupied by national retailers, which is a further indication that Hempstead Valley remains an attractive retail location for national operators.

**Table 80: Re-occupied units in Hempstead Valley since November 2012**

Retail Fascia	Address	Retail Category
Clintons	Unit 42	Comparison
Thomas Cook	Unit 38	Retail Service
Vision Express	Unit 39	Retail Service
Under Construction	Freestanding unit	Leisure Service

*Source: GVA On-site Survey January 2015*

### Environmental Quality

6.121 As we have identified, Hempstead Valley is a purpose-built district centre. The centre in its current state does not appear to have benefited from significant investment or regeneration in recent years. However, plans to redevelop and regenerate the district centre are underway which are expected to result in improvements to both the diversity of uses in the centre, and also the physical appearance of the centre.

6.122 The indoor shopping area is clean and tidy. Its pedestrianised nature offers a pleasant, safe shopping environment. The public realm throughout the existing shopping area is of a



reasonably dated, functional standard. Public seating and minimal green landscaping is in place intermittently within the shopping centre. We would expect the planned improvements to the centre to result in an upgraded environmental quality in the centre.

### Accessibility

- 6.123 There is ample parking space provided within Hempstead Valley. Three radial car parks provide approximately 600, 400 and 300 car park spaces respectively. In addition, the basement car park underneath Sainsbury's provides a further c.400 spaces.
- 6.124 There are two bus stops serving the centre, located outside the main shopping centre entrance. Hempstead Valley acts as a hub for a number of local bus services and it also provides Medway's connection to the National Express coach network (by virtue of its location close to the motorway). Local bus services provide connections with Rainham, Gillingham, Chatham town centre and local residential areas. However, the facilities supporting these functions have been identified as needing to be improved. It is understood that improvements to the bus station are due to come forward as part of the wider redevelopment of the centre which is currently underway.

### Out of Centre Retail Provision

- 6.125 There is no out of centre retail provision within the immediate area which can be expected to directly compete with Hempstead Valley for expenditure. The aforementioned facilities at Gillingham Retail Park are the closest retail warehouse-format stores in the local area, which are approximately 3km from the centre.

### Summary

- 6.126 Our analysis of Hempstead Valley has identified that:
- Hempstead Valley has a different role and function to that of the other district centres in Medway, a reflection of its purpose-built nature. The centre is 35 years old and in parts is beginning to show its age. However the programme of improvement works which have recently commenced should succeed in bringing new vitality to the centre, including diversification of its offer to include more uses which will encourage 'dwell time' within the centre.
  - The centre has two strong anchor stores in Sainsbury's and Marks & Spencer, and both stores generally remain fit for purpose as a result of modernisation of the units which the operators have undertaken. The M&S store is the only full-line branch of the company in the District, likely in part to be a reflection of the poorer quality of the retail property stock in the historic centres.
  - The rest of the offer is principally given over to national retailers, with a strong tenant mix for the size of the centre, and a good diversity of uses which enable the shopping

needs of the surrounding residential population to be met. The presence of a large Sainsbury's and the M&S are likely to extend the catchment area of the centre across a wider catchment area than the other district centres.

- Other services and facilities are more limited, although the redevelopment works will improve the offer of the centre somewhat. Notwithstanding this, the range of retail services, such as banks, building societies, hair & beauty and so on remains, for the most part, limited.
- The attraction of restaurant operators such as Frankie & Benny's and Nando's to the centre is a positive reflection of its vitality and viability and will likely further enhance the attraction of the centre.
- Overall, it is clear that Hempstead Valley is 'punching above its weight' for what might typically be expected for a 'district' centre. It scores positively against the majority of our health check criteria, and the improvements to the centre which are currently underway will help address some (but not all) of the qualitative shortfalls in the offer of the centre. It is possible that the attractiveness of this centre as a retail destination does, however, come at the expense of some of the other centres in Medway.

## Medway- Retail Market Overview

6.127 According to CoStar, Medway has 464 existing retail buildings in the area equating to c. 3,712,000 sq ft of retail floor space. Retail space is apportioned between the key Medway towns as shown in Table 81 below. Whilst both Chatham and Gillingham have similar proportion of retail buildings, Chatham, as Medway's main retail centre, has the largest proportion of retail floor space at c. 1,756,000 sq ft. Promis report that of this floorspace c. 1m sq ft is in the town centre and 325,000 sq ft is in the Pentagon Shopping Centre.

**Table 81 - Medway Retail Supply by Location**

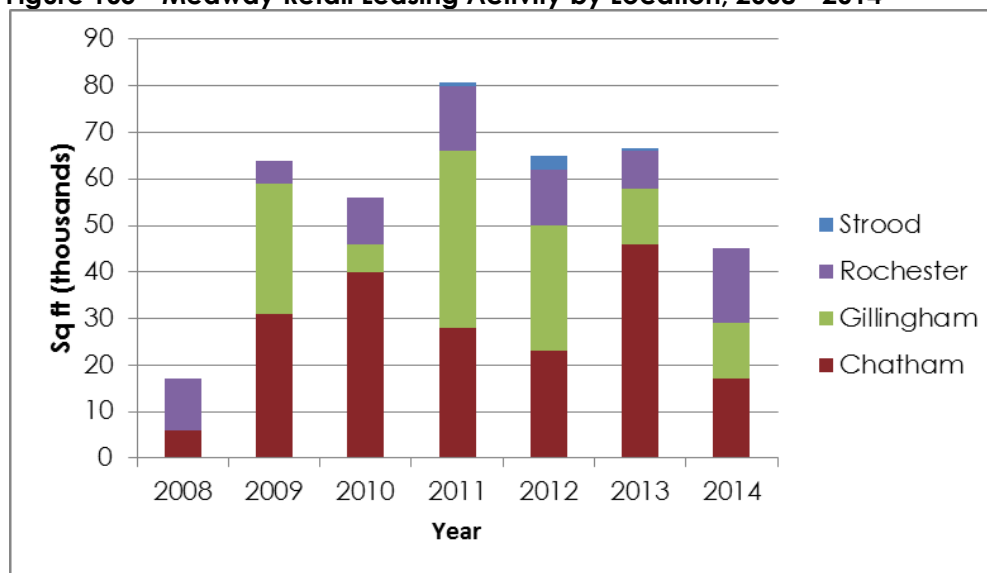
	Retail Buildings		Floor Space (sq ft)	
	number	% of total	Sq ft	% of total
<b>Medway TOTAL</b>	464	<b>100%</b>	3,711,684	<b>100%</b>
Chatham	166	<b>36%</b>	1,755,769	<b>47%</b>
Gillingham	168	<b>36%</b>	1,245,186	<b>34%</b>
Rochester	116	<b>25%</b>	572,583	<b>15%</b>

Source: CoStar 2015

## Retail Letting Activity

6.128 Our desktop research suggests that in Medway approximately 394,000 sq ft of retail space accommodation has been let in c. 259 deals between January 2008 and December 2014. This equates to an annual take up rate of c. 56,000 sq ft.

**Figure 105 - Medway Retail Leasing Activity by Location, 2008 - 2014**



Source: CoStar 2015

6.129 Figure 105 summarises letting activity year by year. It shows that that leasing activity in Medway peaked in 2011 at just over 80,000 sq ft. In 2014 leasing activity stood at c. 45,000 sq ft.

6.130 In terms of locations within Medway Figure 105 above shows that whilst in most years in Chatham had the highest proportion of leasing activity, Gillingham experienced more leasing activity in the year 2011 and 2012.

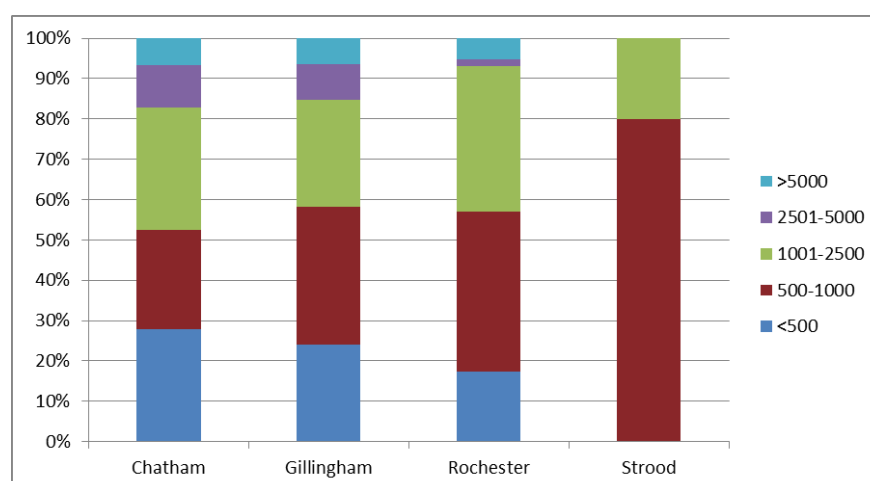
6.131 Table 82 below summarises retail take-up in terms of size band between January 2008 and December 2014. It shows that the majority of take up was for stock under 2,500 sq ft (86%). The size band 500 - 1,000 sq ft had the largest proportion of take up (32%), closely followed by the band 1,000 – 2,500 sq ft (30%).

**Table 82 - Medway Retail Take-up by Size Band, 2008 - 2014**

Size Group (sq ft)	Total % breakdown
<500	24%
500-1000	32%
1001-2500	30%
2501-5000	8%
>5000	6%

Source: CoStar 2015

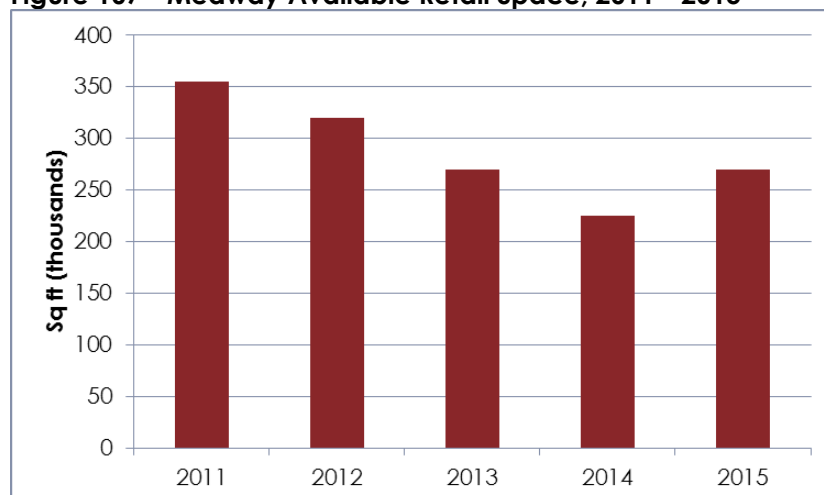
6.132 Figure 106 below summarises Medway retail take-up in terms of size band according to Medway's key retail locations. It shows that, in line with overall trends, most letting activity across all areas was in the size band 500 – 1,000 sq ft, followed by 1,000 – 2,500 sq ft. Chatham had the highest proportion of lettings in the 2,500 sq ft + size bracket at c. 15%, followed closely by Gillingham.

**Figure 106: Retail Take-up by Size Band and Location, Medway Towns, 2008 - 2014**

Source: CoStar 2015

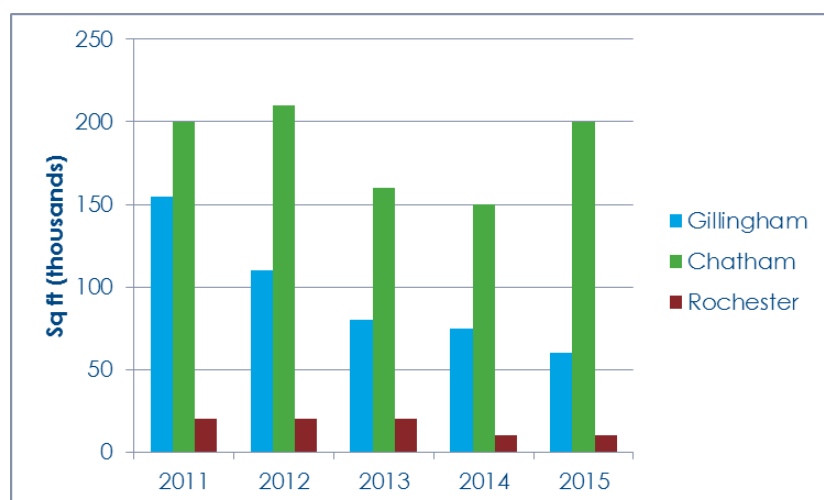
## Supply

6.133 Figure 107 below shows that there has been a gradual decline in available floor space in Medway between 2011 and 2014. So far in 2015 however there has been an increase in floors space available.

**Figure 107 - Medway Available Retail Space, 2011 - 2015**

Source: CoStar 2015

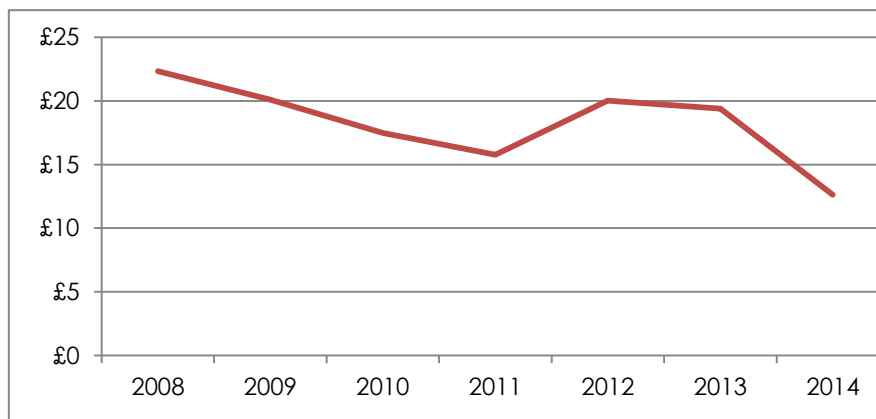
6.134 Figure 108 below, which analyses available floor space in terms of Medway's key retail locations, shows that the recent increase in available floor space has been led by Chatham; the only area to have experienced an increase in available floor space between 2014 and 2015. Chatham has consistently had the largest amount of available floors space, which may be expected as Medway's largest retail market.

**Figure 108 - Medway Available Retail Space by Key Town, 2011 - 2015**

Source: CoStar 2015

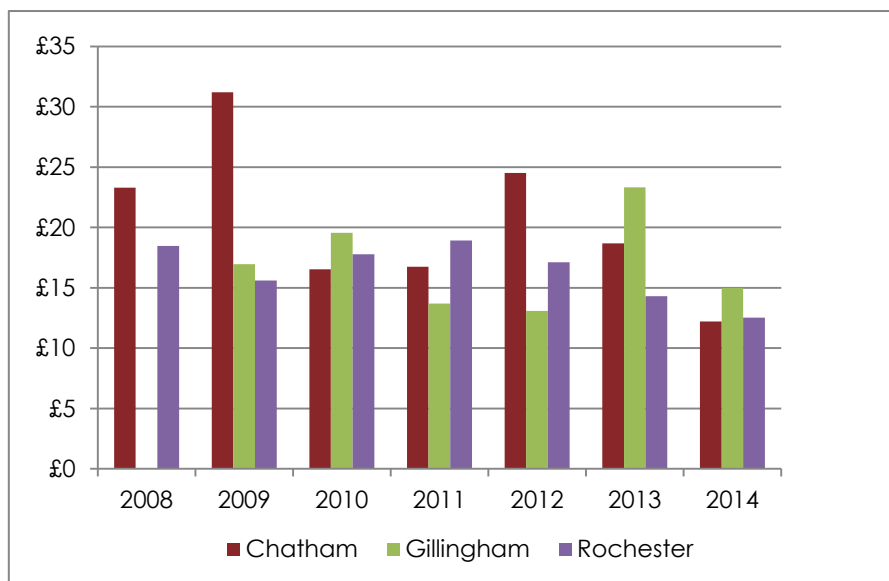
## Rental Values

6.135 Figure 109 below shows that achieved average rents in Medway gradually declined between 2008 and 2011 before rising in 2012. 2014 saw a drop in average rents from c. £19 per sq ft to c. £13 per sq ft.

**Figure 109 - Medway Average Annual Retail Rents, 2008 – 2014 (£ per sq ft)**

Source: CoStar 2015

6.136 In terms of location, Figure 110 below shows that Chatham has tended to achieve the highest average rents since 2008, followed by Gillingham.

**Figure 110 - Average Achieved Rent by Location, Medway, 2008 – 2014 (£ per sq ft)**

Source: CoStar 2015

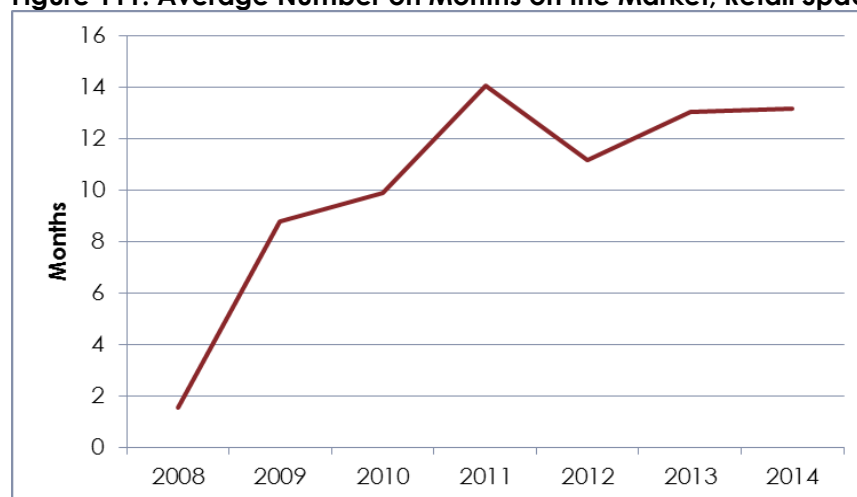
6.137 The table below shows the average rents achieved in Medway between January 2008 and December 2014, according to size band. It shows that on average, significantly higher rents were achieved on smaller units under 500 sq ft. The lowest rents were achieved on units over 5,000 sq ft.

**Table 83 - Average Achieved Retail Rents by Size Band, Medway 2008 - 2014**

Size Group (sq ft)	All Areas
<500	£29
500-1000	£16
1001-2500	£15
2501-5000	£13
> 5000	£9
<b>Average:</b>	<b>18</b>

### Time on the Market

6.138 Figure below shows the average number of months that retail space in Medway spent on the market between 2008 and 2014. It shows a steady increase between 2008 and 2011, before a dip in 2012. Marketing time has since increased, and in 2014 stood at c. 13 months.

**Figure 111: Average Number on Months on the Market, Retail Space, Medway**

Source: CoStar 2015

6.139 In terms of unit size, Table 84 below shows that units of less than 500 sq ft took the least time to let in the Medway retail market, followed by units in the size band 500 – 1,000 sq ft. This implies that the greatest demand is for properties in this size bracket.

**Table 84 - Average Number of Days on the Market, Medway Retail 2008 - 2015**

Size Group (sq ft)	Average number days of market
<500	271
500-1000	371
1001-2500	441
2501-5000	426
<5000	504
<b>Average:</b>	<b>375</b>

Source: CoStar 2015

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## Summary

6.140 The below table sets out our SWOT analysis of the town centres in Gravesham and Medway, informed by the findings of our health check assessments and property market analysis of the centres undertaken in January 2015. Further analysis of the performance of the individual town centres in Gravesham and Medway is provided in the Retail and Commercial Leisure Assessment (RCLA) which forms a separate component of the wider SHENA.

### Strengths

- Historic character of many centres, large number of attractive buildings/assets
- Most centres effectively meeting local / day to day shopping needs
- Rochester town centre has an important tourism and evening economy function
- Relatively limited out-of-centre non-food floorspace which competes with town centres
- Good connections to and between centres, particularly through public transport (HS1)
- Established town centres
- Critical mass and distance from competition in Medway

### Weakness

- Downmarket / value retail offering in many centres
- Property stock in some centres is poor and appears neglected
- High vacancy rates in some centres (Gravesend has 1 in 5 units vacant; also high in Chatham and Strood)
- Poor quality / limited convenience goods provision in some centres (Chatham, Gillingham, Rochester)
- Poor quality urban environment in many centres (notably Strood, parts of Gillingham)
- Key retail attractors not in the highest order centres (e.g. M&S at Hempstead Valley)
- Limited leisure offer in many centres
- A limited scale and range of offer in Gravesham
- Absence at upper end of the market in Medway

### Opportunities

- Significant growth in spending expected in the area, which town centres will need to capitalise on
- Leisure sector is a major growth area and many centres under-represented in provision



- 
- Town centres can capitalise on changing shopping patterns – e.g. embracing click & collect, free wi-fi
  - Historic character of many centres is an asset which can be further capitalised on – especially Chatham, Rochester and Gravesend
  - Heritage Quarter redevelopment in Gravesend will introduce residential community into town centre – this is considered a significant opportunity for many of the other centres, especially Chatham
  - Chatham Maritime and Dockside – scope for better integration to support existing town centres.
  - Significant population growth in the last decade likely to increase demand for retail.
  - The ethnic diversity within the population in Gravesham and the significant student population in Medway present opportunities to cater for population specific retail market.

### Threats

- Changing shopping patterns means demand for new floorspace may be limited. Retailers want larger stores in fewer centres.
- Bluewater is likely to meet many retailers' needs for representation in the area (e.g. close of Gravesend M&S) – future expansion / diversification of this may reduce demand / lead to further displacement of retailers.
- Closure of Tesco in Chatham could have implications for wider 'health' of town centre



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## 7. Conclusion

- 7.1 This document provides a baseline analysis across population, housing, economic and retail domains. It is intended to provide a compendium of information which can be relied upon for the next stages in the preparation of the North Kent Strategic Housing and Economic Needs Assessment. At the same time it does draw out some key themes, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats within each of the domains.
- 7.2 The overall picture emerging is of two local authority areas that have a number of strong relationships and interdependencies, and some shared challenges.
- 7.3 Housing markets show overlap, travel to work patterns intersect and economic sectoral emphasis show similarities between Gravesham and Medway. The value profiles across property classes are generally lower than those found in Outer London. However, there are some important distinctions. Gravesham has a smaller economy, stronger commute relationship with London and also a town centre which has to compete more directly with Bluewater, Lakeside, Dartford and London to the east. Medway has a larger economy, higher gross value added performance indicators and perhaps a more self-contained town centre performance. It generally has a stronger relationship with local authorities to the east and south within Kent, including Swale Maidstone, Tonbridge and Malling and Sevenoaks.
- 7.4 The next step will involve confirmation of findings and emerging themes with Council officers. This will also be an opportunity to review aspirations and policy responses to these conditions which have been previously identified, and potential refinements this latest assessment of conditions may suggest.
- 7.5 At the same time, forecasting of future demand across housing, employment and retail domains will begin in earnest, alongside definition of appropriate development typologies for use in establishing viability thresholds for contributions.