

March 2024

KMEP Kent
& Medway
Economic
Partnership



**Kent & Medway
Economic
Framework**

Available at www.kmep.org.uk

KMEF Implementation Plan (July 2024 version)

&

KMEF data dashboards

Action Areas	Activities	Outcomes Targeted	Progress to date	Next key milestone
<p>1. Developing an enhanced place-based innovation partnership</p>	<p>Set up Innovation Partnership working across Kent & Medway, with a formal link to KMEP.</p>	<p>Greater connectivity between innovation hubs/ clusters, research institutes, universities, and FE colleges across Kent & Medway. Increased R&D spend and innovation, particularly for SMEs.</p> <p>Engage with the development of cluster initiatives e.g. Creative Opportunity Zones concept.</p>	<p>National Exemplar of best practice (Connected Innovation) coming to KMEP on 11 July.</p> <p>We've engaged with Innovate UK on how to best to position Kent & Medway.</p>	<p>Meeting of Innovate UK, HEIs, Research Clusters and key business leads to propose an innovation partnership - By Nov KMEP.</p>
	<p>Commission feasibility work for cluster development potential in Kent & Medway, recognising the importance of long-term sustainability and resilience as opposed to reliance on transient funding.</p>	<p>KMEP and partners have a clear understanding of existing and potential innovation clusters across Kent & Medway.</p>	<p>Reviewed existing data sets. The top 10 sectors by employee jobs in 2022 were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowledge Economy (111,000 jobs - 14.9%) - Health (98,000 jobs - 13.2%) - Tourism (78,000 jobs - 10.5%) - Retail (73,000 jobs - 9.8%) - Education (73,000 jobs - 9.8%) - Business administration & support (72,000 jobs - 9.7%) - Life Science (66,000 jobs - 8.9%) - Accommodation & food services (55,000 jobs - 7.4%) - Construction (51,000 jobs - 6.9%) - Professional, scientific & technical (47,000 jobs - 6.3%) <p>NB - We recognise sector size does not constitute cluster strength.</p> <p>DBT have developed a tool to identify existing innovation clusters, this includes an interactive map: https://www.innovationclusters.dsit.gov.uk/</p>	<p>Met Innovate UK, which identifies Kent and Medway clusters as 1) Agri-food and 2) Life Sciences.</p> <p>Conversation in parallel with innovation partnership development about which sectors to focus efforts on cluster development and marketing - By Nov KMEP.</p> <p>Meet with DBT on their innovation clusters work to ensure that growth clusters within Kent & Medway are correctly identified. Meeting to take place by Nov KMEP.</p>
<p>2. Focusing support to business on measures that will increase long-term productivity resilience and the adoption of new ideas</p>	<p>Work with KCC, Medway, KEDOG, and Growth Hub colleagues to produce a gap analysis of existing business support provision.</p>	<p>Understanding existing business support provision and current gaps.</p>	<p>Met with Kent Economic Development Officers Group (KEDOG) to discuss business support. Information on existing schemes being collated.</p>	<p>Analysis to go to the September KMEP meeting, alongside details of any new Government programmes - By Sept KMEP.</p>
	<p>Explore the development of a low carbon business support scheme - link this with the developing work at KCC to map future energy requirements.</p>	<p>SMEs have a better understanding of the long term cost and environmental benefits of moving to low carbon processes/ energy generation.</p>	<p>Rob Robinson (KCC) is developing some options for potential future activity informed by LoCASE best practice.</p>	<p>Options for future activity to be shared with Economy team for consideration in terms of next steps by the end of July.</p>

Action Areas	Activities	Outcomes Targeted	Progress to date	Next key milestone
2. Focusing support to business on measures that will increase long-term productivity resilience and the adoption of new ideas	Made Smarter Adoption Programme - engage with South East programme planning to ensure active participation from Kent & Medway with and relay any feedback from businesses that participate from March 2025.	Best practice from the Made Smarter Adoption Programme is understood to inform any follow-on activity or future programmes which focus on adopting new ideas.	Initial discussions with Surrey CC who will lead the SE programme in 25-26 as a pilot to launch in March 2025.	Meeting on 29 July with other SE Councils to agree an approach for the SE and ensure that Kent & Medway is able to benefit.
	Engage with County and Regional Chambers of Commerce to gain a better understanding of business needs and requirements, as well as emerging ideas and opportunities.	A closer relationship between County and Regional Chambers of Commerce and KMEP, and a knowledge of the ideas that can make a real change.	Chamber, FSB and IoD are fully engaged with BAB. Contact has been made with the East Kent Chamber of Commerce to strengthen local connections.	Continued engagement with BAB and strengthened membership to properly reflect local priorities and activity are noted and considered.
	Engage with the Universities' Advisory Boards to gain a better understanding of emerging new research ideas, and how these can be marketed to businesses.	A closer relationship between universities and KMEP/BAB, and a knowledge of the ideas that can be commercialised.	Engagement is planned with University Advisory Boards from the Summer onwards - as part of the wider discussions related to the development of an Innovation Partnership.	Seek a formal approach to engagement with University Advisory Boards, in parallel to the development of an Innovation Partnership. By Nov KMEP .
3. Attracting and welcoming investors to Kent and Medway	The 'Brand Kent' commission, currently out to tender, has expected outcomes that support this action area - with targeted outputs of 20 new to county investments secured, 20 businesses retained through grow on space, 750 new jobs created from new to county businesses, 500 jobs retained from businesses supported to stay in county, the facilitation of access to flexible workspace for London-based employees & an increase in residents who are working in skilled roles out of county.	A successful inward investment commission that delivers on the expected outputs and attracts and retains a significant number of businesses and jobs into Kent & Medway. Information on investment success to be available on a KMEP, county, unitary, sub-county regions and district basis.	The Commission is currently going through procurement	Awarding visitor economy and inward investment contract - Due summer 2024 .
	Look at trends from previous inward investment enquiries to establish a better understanding the effective communication channels.	More effective enquiry routes for inward investment opportunities to inform the Brand Kent commission and any associated work. Trend analysis to be available on a KMEP, county, unitary, sub-county regions and district basis.	The Commission is currently going through procurement	Intention is to ask new inward investment contractor to come to a future KMEP to set out their plans to attract investors to Kent and Medway

Action Areas	Activities	Outcomes Targeted	Progress to date	Next key milestone
3. Attracting and welcoming investors to Kent and Medway	Explore the potential to establish a Kent Investors Network and fund - such as the Enterprise Investment Scheme - to support local businesses with finance.	Establish the appetite amongst KMEP and wider partners for a Investors Network - this could be county-wide or split into sub-county areas.	Had conversations with Kent & Medway Business Fund team to discuss the concept of a Kent Investors Network and the opportunities/ barriers that this represents.	Test this concept with Higher Education Institutions and collate best practice from elsewhere (including network and fund structure) by September 2024 .
	Consolidation and regular updating of marketing tools to support new investment into the county e.g. the Kent Property Market Report, Kent Investment Prospectus, Kent commercial property database etc.	A useful suite of digital marketing tools created that can be used to inform a wide range of audiences about the investment opportunity across the county.	Meeting arranged with Kent Property Market report author for July 24.	Kent Property Market report to be launched in Autumn 2024 .
4. Supporting the conditions for growth	Review existing routes to access finance for businesses e.g. the Growth Hub, and the Kent & Medway Business Fund, Create South East and gap analysis of what is not available in Kent & Medway.	A comprehensive overview of existing routes to finance for businesses produced and any gaps in this provision followed up on as a future activity.	Met with Kent Economic Development Officers Group (KEDOG) to discuss access to finance. Information on existing schemes being collated.	Analysis to go to the September KMEP meeting, alongside details of any new Government programmes - By Sept KMEP .
	KMEP to consider how to tailor the Growing Places Fund (GPF) to support the conditions for growth, potentially by supporting workspace, mixed-use, housing, commercial and town centre development projects. No Use Empty is an exemplar project.	Growing Places Fund money is utilised effectively to fund projects that support the conditions for growth.	SELEP Transition Agreement being drafted by Essex Legal Services. Once completed, the new GPF arrangements can be agreed by Kent County Council, Medway Council, and KMEP.	A new GPF call for projects expected between Jan-March 2025 .
	Build an evidence base of business and investor demand for different types of workspace.	A developed evidence base of workspace demand that can inform future work.	Information on the need for Creative Workspace available at: https://www.southeastlep.com/app/uploads/2023/07/SECEN-Workspace-Strategic-Plan-FINAL-for-web.pdf	Meeting arranged with Kent Property Market report author for July 24 to discuss workspace demand.
	Strategic engagement with senior civil servants across Government departments to outline the growth opportunity and barriers to that growth across Kent & Medway - differentiating this area from the pervasive 'London and the South East' descriptor.	Civil servants understand the activity, issues, and unique growth opportunities within Kent & Medway, including work being undertaken through the Implementation Plan, to inform the development of future policy and funding.	Civil servants unable to meet during pre-election period.	Letters will be sent to new Ministers, Civil Servants, and new Kent & Medway MPs post-election by the Chair - setting out priorities and seeking their engagement with KMEP - By Sept KMEP .

Action Areas	Activities	Outcomes Targeted	Progress to date	Next key milestone
4. Supporting the conditions for growth	Business Advisory Board (BAB) minutes to be circulated to Council Leaders and CEOs following each meeting.	KMEP board better informed of market conditions.	BAB minutes circulated. New standing agenda item giving verbal BAB feedback to KMEP.	Ongoing action.

DATA DASHBOARD (1)

Note: A red rating indicates a greater vulnerability compared to other Kent & Medway local authorities
Blank cell indicates data is missing or unavailable – last updated April 2024

Industry Sectors selected to generate score: Agriculture, forestry & fishing (A); Mining, quarrying & utilities (B,D and E); Manufacturing ©; Construction (F); Motor trades (Part G); Wholesale (Part G); Retail (Part G); Transport & storage (inc postal) (H); Accommodation & food services (I); Information & communication (J); Financial & insurance (K); Property (L); Professional, scientific & technical (M); Business administration & support (N); Public administration & defense (O); Education (P); Health (Q); Arts, entertainment, recreation & other services (R,S,T and U)

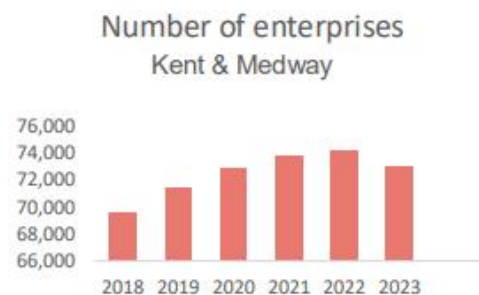
	Economically Active	Employment rate	Self employment	No qualifications	Business births to deaths	Employee job change (all industries)	% Employee jobs in vulnerable sectors	% Vulnerable sector enterprises	Annual Average Claimant Count unemployed	Universal Credit claimants	Overall Score
Ashford	0.12	0.09	1.61	2.25	0.93	-0.38	0.83	-0.64	-0.13	-0.04	4.65
Canterbury	1.92	1.40	2.00	0.39	-0.42	0.49	-1.33	0.73	-0.13	-0.23	4.80
Dartford	-0.68	-0.79	-1.36		0.83	-1.97	-0.05	0.00	-0.35	-0.25	-4.62
Dover	1.05	0.78	1.13	0.35	0.10	-0.24	-1.02	-2.26	0.39	0.76	1.05
Folkestone and Hythe	-1.00	-0.90	0.28	-0.11	0.14	-0.90	-0.41	0.00	0.69	0.46	-1.75
Gravesham	-0.94	-0.88	-1.72	0.59	-0.98	-0.09	-0.70	1.01	0.54	0.67	-2.51
Maidstone	-1.39	-1.03	-0.26		0.32	0.16	0.28	-0.51	-0.35	-0.36	-3.14
Sevenoaks	0.71	0.57	2.92	-0.91	0.07	1.62	-0.07	-1.86	-0.95	-1.18	0.94
Swale	-0.86	-0.79	1.05	0.79	0.05	-0.24	0.74	-0.80	0.32	0.65	0.89
Thanet	-0.68	0.29	1.69	1.15	-1.26	0.34	0.50	0.92	1.95	2.14	7.04
Tonbridge and Malling	0.81	0.28	-0.41	-0.48	0.61	-1.42	1.25	-0.67	-0.95	-0.95	-1.93
Tunbridge Wells	0.67	1.51	1.34	-0.21	0.28	0.49	-0.47	0.67	-0.72	-0.91	2.64
Medway	-1.02	-0.81	-0.34	-0.08	0.89	-0.19	-0.16	0.00	0.46	0.58	-0.66

Source: Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

DATA DASHBOARD (2)

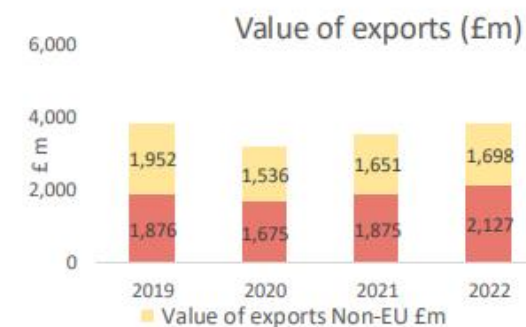
Number of enterprises in 2023	73,045
1-year change	-1,165
1 year % change	-1.6%
5 year change	+3,385
5-year % change	+4.9%

Source: ONS UK Business Counts



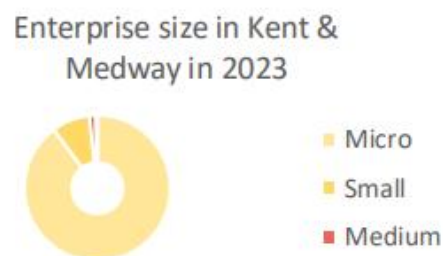
Total Value of Exports (£m)	
Kent & Medway	
2021	£3,526
2022	£3,825

Regional Trade in Goods (ITL3 level)
Source: HMRC



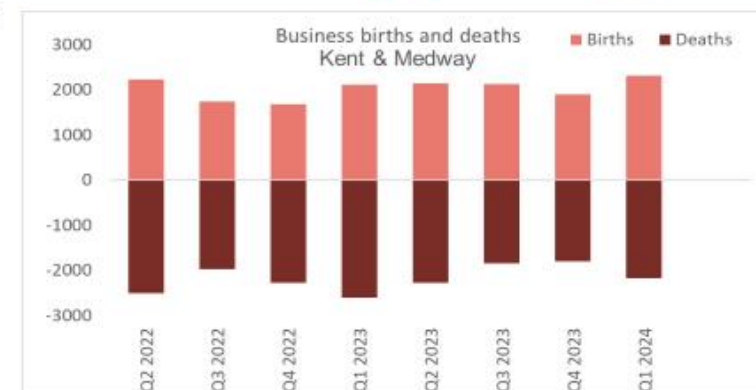
Enterprise size	Number	Percentage
Micro	65,585	89.8%
Small	6,180	8.5%
Medium	1,045	1.4%
Large	235	0.3%

Source: ONS UK Business Counts



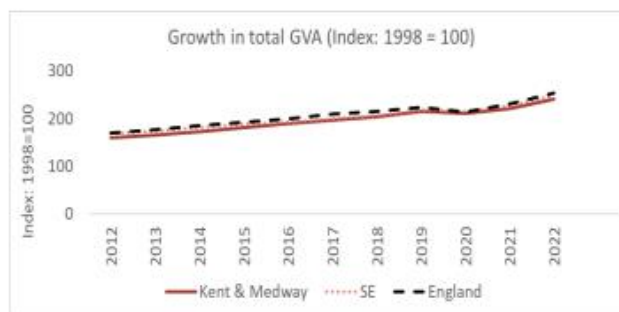
Business Births and Deaths	Births	Deaths
Kent & Medway		
2022 Q2	2225	-2500
2024 Q1	2115	-2180

Source: ONS



GVA	
Kent & Medway	2022
Total GVA (£m)	£50,691
GVA per head	£27,022

Source: ONS



Widening opportunities and unlocking talent

Action Areas	Activities	Outcomes Targeted	Employment Taskforce Feedback
<p>5: Embedding the Local Skills Improvement Plan at the heart of a closer relationship between employers, further education and other skills providers to meet current and future skills needs</p>	<p>The Employment Task Force (ETF) to remain the core forum for skills activity.</p> <p>Formal two-way communications channel established between KMEP and the ETF. Agree a formal approach to establishing this link at the next ETF.</p> <p>A standing agenda item at the Business Advisory Board meeting to be skills sector issues. This intelligence on economic market conditions to be fed through to the ETF.</p> <p>Regular briefings on the work of the LSIP to KMEP & BAB.</p>	<p>Clear two-way strategic communications link established between Kent & Medway's business boards, regional business boards, and the Employment Task Force to ensure that decisions on targeted investments and activities on skills are meeting business needs.</p>	<p>ETF agreed to establish a formal link with KMEP, and a two-way communications channel.</p> <p>Simon Cook will provide a verbal update to KMEP on progress against this ambition.</p> <p>Two meetings of the Employment Taskforce will have taken place.</p> <p>The meeting on 21 May 24 concentrated on: 1) Lower Thames Crossing Skills Strategy 2) Post 16 Education (Numbers of Apprenticeships, skills, supporting NEETs and long term vulnerable unemployed).</p>
<p>6: Investing in Kent and Medway's skills infrastructure to harness the potential of the long-term transformational trends we have identified and support the growth of our sectoral strengths</p>	<p>KMEP to request that the ETF advise of any capital needs with respect to skills infrastructure and use this information to inform work on prioritising potential projects. Project Pipeline to be produced.</p> <p>Two way communication channel established between the sector groups and KMEP/ETF.</p>	<p>A clear understanding of potential skills infrastructure capital projects that could be funded in future.</p> <p>Business intelligence fed back from sector groups to the universities, Further Education Colleges, and ETF, so they can tailor their investment plans, curriculum plans, T-Levels, Apprenticeships, etc to private sector need.</p>	<p>An ETF meeting is planned for 9 July.</p> <p>Minutes of the ETF are circulated with the KMEP papers.</p>
<p>7: Collaborating to make the most effective use of skills budgets, focused on Kent and Medway's shared priorities</p>	<p>The ETF focuses on making the most effective use of skills budgets. The formal two-way communication channel established between KMEP and ETF will provide KMEP with oversight of their work.</p>	<p>Clear two-way strategic communications link established to ensure that funding is most effectively used by partner agencies.</p>	
<p>8: Flexibility to focus on Kent and Medway's shared priorities</p>	<p>A formal two-way communication channel established between KMEP and ETF.</p> <p>Data Dashboard to be produced that includes skills and employment data that can be used by both KMEP and the ETF and easily compared to national averages.</p> <p>Consideration on whether to use some LEP transition funding on Emsi Burning Glass to help inform decision-making.</p>	<p>The feedback from ETF to KMEP will enable organisations to focus on shared skill priorities.</p> <p>A comprehensive and regularly updated skills and employment data dashboard – compared to national averages - to inform decision-making and the targeting of group activity.</p>	

DATA DASHBOARD (3)

Qualifications of population aged 16-64

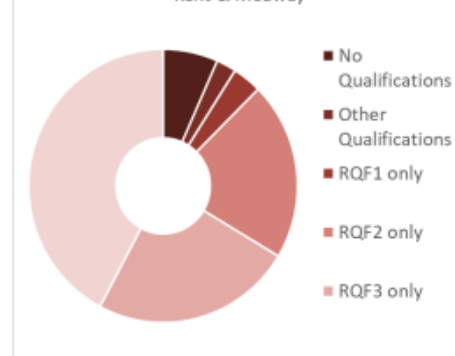
16-64

(RQF = Regulated Qualifications Framework)

	Jan-Dec 2023
Kent & Medway	
No Qualifications	6.6%
Other Qualifications	2.4%
RQF1 only	3.5%
RQF2 only	21.1%
RQF3 only	24.2%
RQF4+	42.2%

Source: Annual Population Survey

% of people aged 16-64 by qualification in Kent & Medway

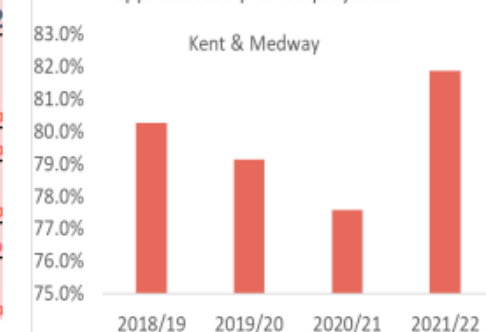


16-18 destination measures

Kent & Medway Percentage	2020/21	2021/22
Sustained education, apprenticeship or employment	77.6%	81.9%
Education	46.5%	47.9%
Sustained employment destination	25.5%	27.5%
Apprenticeship	5.6%	6.4%
Education or employment not sustained	17.0%	13.2%

Source: Department for Education

Percentage sustained education, apprenticeship or employment



Kent & Medway apprenticeship starts

	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Starts (number)	9,950	10,100	11,240	11,180
Starts (per 10,000 pop)	54.0	54.6	60.5	59.6

Source: Department for Education

Number of apprenticeship starts in Kent & Medway



Kent & Medway apprenticeship achievements

	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Achievements (number)	4,290	4,780	4,210	4,960
Achievements (per 10,000 pop)	23.3	25.9	22.7	26.4

Source: Department for Education

Number of apprenticeship achievements in Kent & Medway



Qualifications of population aged 16 and above who are economically active (excluding full-time students)

Kent & Medway	In employment	% of all in employment	Unemployed	% of all unemployed
Total	841,098	100%	39,905	100%
No qualifications	71,390	8.5%	6,096	15.3%
Level 1 and entry level qualifications	87,331	10.4%	6,396	16.0%
Level 2 qualifications	126,789	15.1%	7,474	18.7%
Apprenticeship	43,044	5.1%	1,706	4.3%
Level 3 qualifications	177,972	21.2%	6,911	17.3%
Level 4 qualifications or above	317,263	37.7%	10,388	26.0%
Other qualifications	17,309	2.1%	934	2.3%

Source: Annual Population Survey

Securing resilient infrastructure for planned, sustainable growth

July 2024 version

Action Areas	Activities	Outcomes Targeted	Progress to date	Next key milestone
9: Maximising the benefit of international connectivity	Engage with groups working on Entry-Exit System (EES), TAP (A20) & Operation Brock to: 1) ensure strategic communications are aligned 2) to utilise Kent & Medway's business voice to sense-check and 3) document social and economic issues and impact, and report these to the DfT and central government.	Establish effective two-way communications channels with partners on EES, TAP (A20), and Operation Brock. Ensuring the voice of business is heard during issues and gridlock, and during the development of plans.	BAB briefed by Getlink/Channel Tunnel on their EES plans. Matthew Arnold and David Milham invited to join KRF groups. Letters sent out to the Business Networks on 8 July 24 on Operation Brock deployment.	Operation Brock and EES to feature in letter to the new government on key issues facing Kent & Medway. The KMEP Operation Brock report to be sent to the new Roads Minister as well - By Sept KMEP.
	Develop a case for re-introduction of European cross-border funding	The UK to rejoin EU cooperation programmes for 2028-2035 programming period.	Conversation had with DLUHC civil servants, who will be briefing new Ministers on options post-election. British Embassy in Belgium has asked for a briefing on this from the Short Straits Committee officer.	This may be an issue that we wish to raise in a list of issues sent to new Ministers and MPs. KMEP to be consulted on key issues to raise with Government in July.
	Engage with Kent County Council and groups working on their 'Dover Access Improvements' Levelling Up Fund (Round 2) Project Bid to ensure strategic communications are aligned.	Establish effective two-way communications channels with Kent County Council and partners to ensure the voice of business is heard during developments.	Issue raised with Lee Burchill, KCC Major Capital Programme Manager.	Meeting to discuss strategic communications planned for July.
	Engage with the Port of Dover and groups working on their Ferry (Freight, Car, Coach), Cargo and Cruise operations to ensure strategic communications are aligned and to utilise Kent & Medway's business voice.	Establish effective two-way communications channels with the Port of Dover and partners and groups working on their Ferry, Cargo and Cruise operations. Ensuring the voice of business is heard during any current and future development of plans.	The CEO of the Port of Dover was invited to attend BAB in June to provide businesses with an update, but regrettably was unable to attend due to prior commitments. He has been invited to present later in the year.	Conversation to take place with Port of Dover in the summer to discuss how best to align communications – recognising they liaise predominately via the KRF.
	Engage with groups working on the new Manston Airport – potential Freight and Commercial Flights - to ensure strategic communications are aligned and to utilize Kent & Medway's business voice in the development of plans.	Establish effective two-way communications channels with partners and groups working on the new Manston Airport. Ensuring the voice of business is heard during the development of plans.	A judicial review into the plans for Manston to restart flights was not upheld. Owners RiverOak are now eager to begin its redevelopment into an air cargo hub. RiverOak said the development will last 18 months and employ 650 people, but once up and running there will be around 2,500 direct jobs at Manston. The hope of the owners is that flights may resume within four years.	Contact to be made with RiverOak after the summer to understand in more depth their plans and timelines for development.

Securing resilient infrastructure for planned, sustainable growth

July 2024 version

Action Areas	Activities	Outcomes Targeted	Progress to date	Next key milestone
9: Maximising the benefit of international connectivity	Investigate reasons, and develop an evidence base, for HS1 underutilisation and for international rail services no longer stopping in Kent.	Increased utilisation of HS1 and international rail services returning to Kent.	Public Interest Case has been produced and will be presented to KMEP on 11 th July.	KMEP to agree whether to send the Public Interest Case to new Government and to agree the style/content of a letter to go to the new Rail Minister - At July KMEP.
	Investigate opportunity to collaborate more effectively with the Short Straits Committee and Pas-de-Calais on international trade by including any potential linking up with their domestic rail services.	Increased collaboration with continental partners to promote international trade.	<p>Members of Shorts Straits Committee have met to discuss the KMEF Implementation Plan and how best to increase international trade (this includes partners from France, Belgium and the Netherlands).</p> <p>Presentations have been given to the British Embassies in Belgium and the Netherlands on the Implementation Plan, and conversations begun on how to increase cross-border trade.</p>	<p>Action from the committee was for all partners to develop international trade action plans.</p> <p>Kent is hosting the Short Straits Committee in Feb 25, and action plans will be in place by then.</p>
	Two-way engagement with the Local Transport Plan 5 (LTP5) and Road Investment Strategy (RIS) to ensure projects/developments are understood by business.	Businesses are well-informed about planned infrastructure developments.	Proposed plan is for LTP5 to go to public consultation between 17 July to 8 October.	<p>LTP5 is being presented to BAB on 3 Sept. Information will be sent to KMEP. KCC's Transport Team will analyse responses received..</p> <p>It is envisaged LTP5 will then go to KCC's full council for adoption at end of the calendar year.</p>
	<p>Engage with National Highways and Kent County Council on their strategy and secure agreement that Brenley Corner and A2 Dueling, both, continue within National Highways RIS strategy.</p> <p>Engage with National Highways on other key transport junctions to press for their inclusion.</p>	Removal of key transport bottlenecks in the county to allow better flow of international trade.	<p>Correspondence was sent to National Highways re: Brenley Corner and A2 Dover Access being included in the RIS strategy. In short, National Highways say:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Over 30 schemes are being considered by National Highways and DfT for development in the Road Investment Strategy 3 (RIS3) pipeline or beyond. - A2 Brenley Corner and A2 Dover Access are 2 of these 30 schemes. - Earliest these schemes can be considered for construction is as part of RIS4 beyond 2030. - Re: A2 Brenley Corner, National Highways had a short list of 3 options. Each of these was evaluated against a range of criteria including strategic fit, value for money, affordability, deliverability, environment, and stakeholder views. - All 3 options had positive impact on improving journey times but showed poor value for money. - Re: A2 Dover Access, the shortlisted options also showed journey time improvements, but poor VfM. <p>(continued - PTO)</p>	KCC Officers to engage with National Highways on junctions' business case.

Securing resilient infrastructure for planned, sustainable growth

July 2024 version

Action Areas	Activities	Outcomes Targeted	Progress to date	Next key milestone
<p>9: Maximising the benefit of international connectivity</p>	<p>Engage with National Highways and Kent County Council on their strategy and secure agreement that Brenley Corner and A2 Dueling, both, continue within National Highways RIS strategy.</p> <p>Engage with National Highways on other key transport junctions to press for their inclusion.</p>	<p>Removal of key transport bottlenecks in the county to allow better flow of international trade.</p>	<p>(Continued..)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Highways submitted these options to DfT in summer 2023. - In October 2023, the Government made an announcement regarding funding for several transport projects, including A2 Brenley Corner.. - The announcement stated that funding for these projects was subject to a viable business case. - In response Nat. Highways is reviewing the information they have, with the aim of undertaking further analysis of the junction to evaluate the existing identified options' ability to address the problem. - This assessment may lead to new options being identified and will include reviewing traffic modelling, affordability, deliverability, and environment assessments, as well as the value for money of the identified options. - Engagement with stakeholders will happen in due course. - As has always been the case, all the schemes in the pipeline programme remain uncommitted, with no guarantee they'll be taken forward into construction. The final decision rests with the Government. 	<p>KCC Officers to engage with National Highways on junctions' business case.</p>
	<p>Engage with National Highways and Kent County Council on the Lower Thames Crossing.</p>	<p>Removal of key transport bottlenecks in the county to allow better flow of international trade.</p>	<p>The Secretary of State for Transport was due to make a decision on the Lower Thames Crossing planning application on 20th June 24, but this had to be postponed due to the election.</p>	<p>The LTC planning decision is now expected to happen on 4 Oct 24.</p>
	<p>Explore improving Active Travel (Walking and Cycling) connectivity across Kent and Medway and across international borders.</p>	<p>Better Active Travel links to international air, coach, rail, ferry and cruise travel for Kent and Medway.</p>	<p>Meeting scheduled with Active Travel teams for the summer.</p>	<p>Meeting to discuss connectivity in Aug 24.</p>
	<p>Work with partners to explore the delivery of rail freight improvements across the network.</p>	<p>Reduced pressure on the Kent & Medway road network as a higher proportion of freight is moved to rail.</p>	<p>The freight industry needs to reinvest in freight sidings for Sheerness Dock.</p> <p>Network Rail have some money for low cost interventions to increase freight on the network.</p> <p>Proposal led by Getlink for more freight to go through Channel Tunnel. More info at: https://www.newcivilengineer.com/latest/progress-made-on-42m-plan-to-convert-rail-route-from-channel-tunnel-to-wembley-for-freight-08-08-2023 (Continued... PTO)</p>	<p>KMEP to consider if this should be an issue raised in the letter to the new Government – July 24.</p>

Securing resilient infrastructure for planned, sustainable growth

July 2024 version

Action Areas	Activities	Outcomes Targeted	Progress to date	Next key milestone
9: Maximising the benefit of international connectivity	Work with partners to explore the delivery of rail freight improvements across the network.	Reduced pressure on the Kent & Medway road network as a higher proportion of freight is moved to rail.	<p>(Continued...) The Getlink proposal would see freight taken off the road and onto rail between the Midlands and the EU.</p> <p>KCC transport team is working with Getlink and TfSE on seeking endorsement for the proposal by Network Rail, as NR would have to pay for the civil works to change the gauge clearance. It would cost circa £42m.</p>	KMEP to consider if this should be an issue raised in the letter to the new Government – July 24
10: Understanding our infrastructure needs and developing new solutions	Utilise the voice of business to shape and influence future developments to support a more efficient planning system.	<p>A more efficient and well-resourced planning system to support accelerated growth in Kent & Medway.</p> <p>Utilisation of existing resources such as the Creative Estuary Cultural Planning Toolkit.</p>	Initial discussions have taken place, including with the Thematic Leads and developer group Chairs on this issue. With a view that this issue needs to collectively be brought to the new Government's attention.	Attend a meeting of the Kent Joint Planners and develop key messages to take back to Government on the planning system by Sept KMEP .
	Engage with business representatives on the prioritisation of infrastructure projects following the development of an Infrastructure Mapping Platform. Project Pipeline.	A prioritised pipeline of infrastructure projects across Kent & Medway.	The Infrastructure Mapping Platform is in the process of being developed.	The IMP is expected to be rolled out across the breadth of Kent and Medway in early 2025 .
	Engage with Kent County Council and Chief Planners on Nutrient Neutrality to ensure that communications are shared with the development community.	Developers are informed about the proposed mitigation strategy.	We've engaged with relevant boroughs and districts on the issue, and are working to assist turning ABC's action plan into a strategic document at their request. Recently attended ABC's Strategic Delivery Board where potential options for mitigating the impact of regulations were discussed.	<p>Finalise ABC's action plan and continue discussions with partners about the mitigation strategy and use of funds. A short update to go to KMEP in Sept.</p> <p>The issue to be included in the letter of key issues to the new Government.</p>
	Work with KEDOG to make representations to Government to inform the development of future capital funding streams. Project Pipeline.	Government funding streams released to support prioritised pipeline of projects.	Medway Council Officers have a meeting with civil servants on future capital funding design set for shortly after election.	Letter to be sent to the new Government setting out the successful use of past capital funding streams, and a willingness to work with the Government on future design.

Securing resilient infrastructure for planned, sustainable growth

July 2024 version

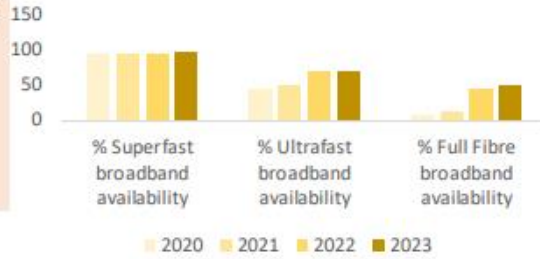
Action Areas	Activities	Outcomes Targeted	Progress to date	Next key milestone
<p>11: Ensuring that Kent and Medway’s digital infrastructure meets the dynamic evolution of business need and technology development</p>	<p>Officers to meet with Building Digital UK to understand the current status of Project Gigabit and present this back to KMEP. Liaise with the Thames Estuary Growth Board (TEGB) on ongoing developments related to this.</p>	<p>More visibility of Project Gigabit and wider digital infrastructure development plans so business can be better informed of the current approach.</p>	<p>Meeting has been scheduled with KCC Digital Team.</p>	<p>Update on current status of Project Gigabit to be provided to KMEP - By Nov KMEP</p>
<p>12: Supporting Kent and Medway’s energy potential</p>	<p>Work with the Strategic Energy Officer at KCC to establish a working group to inform and advise on planned work to map the future energy requirements for Kent & Medway.</p>	<p>A clearer understanding of the future energy needs and requirements for Kent & Medway to inform energy infrastructure and growth developments. Support the communication and adoption of new energy sources by business.</p>	<p>New Strategic Energy Officer recruited at KCC. He is working to establish regular engagement with UKPN.</p> <p>We have engaged with the Uni of Kent and HS1 team on the concept of a new private wire to transmit electricity from renewable energy sources to significant electricity users in Ashford and Folkestone areas.</p> <p>Connections have been made with DESNZ officials and some private sector energy businesses.</p>	<p>Invite UKPN analytics team to a future Kent Planning Policy Forum (KPPF) meeting, as UKPN interested in local plan data helping them forecast future energy needs - By Sept KMEP</p> <p>A summary paper on Kent’s current and future energy requirements and options for meeting these - By Jan KMEP</p> <p>Meeting planned with Strategic Energy Officer to discuss working group composition for Sept.</p>

Securing resilient infrastructure for planned, sustainable growth

DATA DASHBOARDS (4)

Broad band availability	% Superfast broadband availability	% Ultrafast broadband availability	% Full Fibre broadband availability
2020	93.9%	43.9%	7.8%
2021	93.9%	48.8%	13.4%
2022	95.2%	68.6%	44.6%
2023	95.6%	70.1%	49.2%

Broadband availability in Kent & Medway



Modelled staff Status

Hybrid working

Working from home

Working at workspace

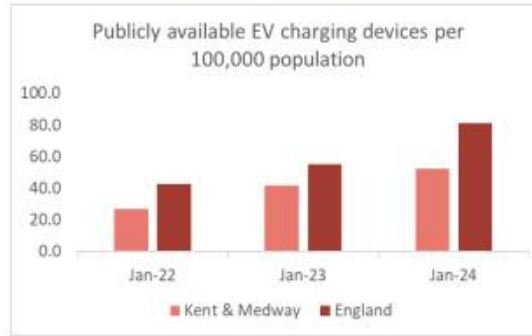
Kent & Medway

Nov 2023



Source: OFCOM - Connected Nations

EV charging	Kent & Medway	England
Jan 2022	26.6	42.3
Jan 2023	41.7	55.1
Jan 2024	52.5	81.2

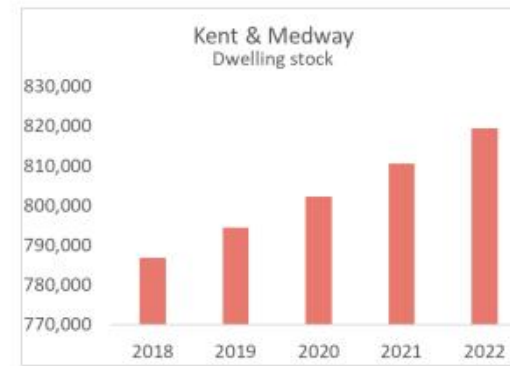


Source: DFT

Total Value of Imports (£m)	
Kent & Medway	
2021	£7,924
2022	£9,769



	2022	5 year change	5 year % change
Kent & Medway Dwelling Stock	819,498	+41,454	+5.4%
South East	4,067,349	+202,945	+5.3%
England	25,160,404	+1,175,097	+4.9%



Regional Trade in Goods (ITL3 level)
Source: HMRC

Source: DLUHC Table LT 125

Placing economic opportunity at the centre of community wellbeing and prosperity

July 2024 version

Action Areas	Activities	Outcomes Targeted	Progress to date	Next Key Milestone
13: Ensuring that everyone who wants a job can find work	Engage with the ETF on careers guidance and advice and understand the current situation with respect to Careers Hubs.	An understanding of the current funding landscape for the delivery of careers advice and guidance.	Request has been sent to ETF	A meeting to be set up between KMEP Thematic Leads and ETF representatives – Summer 24
	Engage with the ETF on Volunteer / Voluntary Opportunities, guidance and advice and understand the current situation with respect to Volunteer Hubs/Services.	An understanding of the current funding landscape for the delivery of volunteer / voluntary opportunity, training, advice and guidance services.	Request has been sent to ETF	A meeting to be set up between KMEP Thematic Leads and ETF representatives – Summer 24
	Connect with KEDOG to understand best practice from districts on UKSPF projects that address employability and economic inactivity.	A comprehensive overview of relevant UKSPF projects that have been delivered to inform best practice and potential future delivery.	KEDOG has been made aware of the activity, and have sent through details on their UKSPF projects.	Comprehensive overview to be completed by Sept KMEP .
	Connect with KEDOG to understand best practice from Districts and Medway on Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) projects and NFU proposals that address rural diversification, as well as employment, skills, training and education.	A comprehensive overview of relevant REPF projects that have been / are been delivered to inform best practice and potential future delivery.	KEDOG has been made aware of the activity.	Information from KEDOG on these projects to be sent to Implementation Plan team – summer 2024 .
	Meet with DWP to understand existing programmes and the delivery landscape.	Clear understanding of the existing DWP delivery landscape to inform future initiatives.	New Government expected to bring in new initiatives, so this work paused until after King’s Speech on 17 th July.	Thematic Lead conversations with DWP to take place in autumn 2024 .
	Engage the strategic partnership for health and work to better understand reasons for growing number of economically inactive people with a health condition (physical and mental health).	Better understanding by businesses as to what provisions can help this cohort enter/re-enter the workplace.	The Strategic Partnership is in formation (see next row).	Initial Strategic Partnership meeting expected in autumn 24 .
14: Developing a strategic partnership for health and the economy	Establish the Strategic Partnership for Health and Economy that will take specific responsibility for the oversight of the work and health strategy to be developed.	An established Strategic Partnership for Health and Economy, informed by a new Work and Health Strategy to guide the activity of the partnership.	Draft Terms of Reference produced and to be considered by KMEP on 11 July 24.	Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) meeting on 27 August. If ICP & KMEP agree terms of reference, the Strategic Partnership can be established in autumn 2024 .
	Engage with Kent Recruitment Bureaus and Careers & Employability Services to gain a better understanding of emerging ideas and opportunities; especially related to ways to address unemployment and youth unemployment.	A closer relationship between Recruitment Bureaus and Careers & Employability Services and KMEP, and a knowledge of the ideas that can make a real change.	The draft terms of reference suggest the strategic partnership’s membership contains recruitment bureaus.	Subject to ToR approval, key recruitment agencies will be approached re: joining strategic partnership.

Placing economic opportunity at the centre of community wellbeing and prosperity

July 2024 version

Action Areas	Activities	Outcomes Targeted	Progress to date	Next Key Milestone
<p>15: Building links between anchors of growth, key investments and community opportunity</p>	<p>Work with the South East Major Projects Group and other anchor institutions to boost local supply chain and skills development opportunities in line with strategic needs.</p> <p>Engage with major public procurers with a view to seeking commitment to greater local procurement and providing valuable local procurement training resources</p>	<p>An increase in local procurement and opportunities for local suppliers to engage in major projects.</p> <p>Increase in employment of local residents.</p>	<p>We've engaged with the Chair and officer leads for the Major Projects Group and will attend on an ad-hoc basis moving forward.</p> <p>Discussions with partners has raised the issue of a lack of strategic engagement with local suppliers to locally procure so this will be the initial activity as opposed to commissioning training resources.</p>	<p>Bring together major public sector procurers to discuss current commitments to local procurement by November '24.</p>
<p>16: Embedding economic opportunity at the centre of local regeneration</p>	<p>Capture current delivery through Town Deals, High Streets Fund, UKSPF, REPF, LUF, Future High Streets Fund and look at what is required for those projects to achieve the maximum benefits.</p> <p>Engage KEDOG, the District, Medway and Kent County Council Officers on their priority local regeneration projects.</p> <p>Engage with the active travel and public transport teams to understand which initiatives and projects are underway in the town centres to support employment opportunities and drive footfall.</p>	<p>A clear understanding of the current delivery landscape for projects focussing on embedding economic opportunity at the centre of local regeneration.</p>	<p>KEDOG have been contacted and have started to provide information on existing funds, and priority local regeneration projects.</p> <p>Meeting scheduled with Active Travel teams for the summer.</p>	<p>Discussion scheduled with KEDOG over the summer.</p>

DATA DASHBOARDS (5)

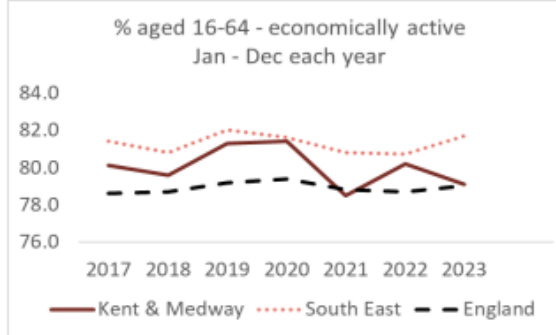
Economic Activity (aged 16-64)

Kent & Medway 2023

% Economically active 79.1%

% Economically inactive 20.9%

Source: ONS Annual Population Survey



Earnings Kent

Resident Workplace

Full-time weekly earnings 2023

696.3 651.6

1-year change (£ per week)

25.5 46.6

1 year % change

+3.8% +7.7%

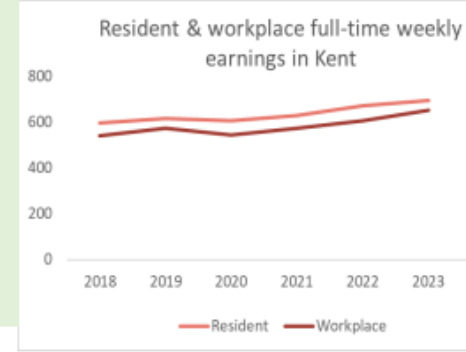
5 year change (£ per week)

98 110.6

5-year % change

+16.4% +20.4%

Source: ASHE ONS

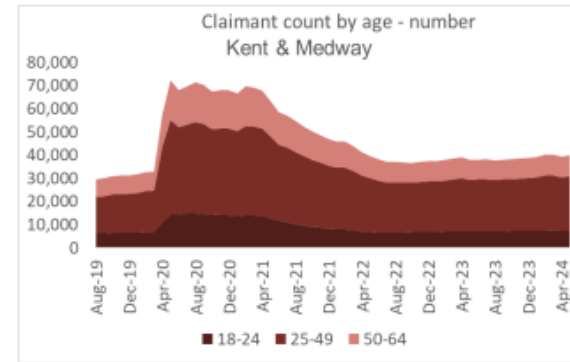


Claimant Count by age

Kent and Medway

Age Group	May 2024	% Rate	% of all claimants
18-24	7,415	5.4%	18.6%
25-49	23,445	4.0%	58.7%
50-64	9,005	2.4%	22.6%

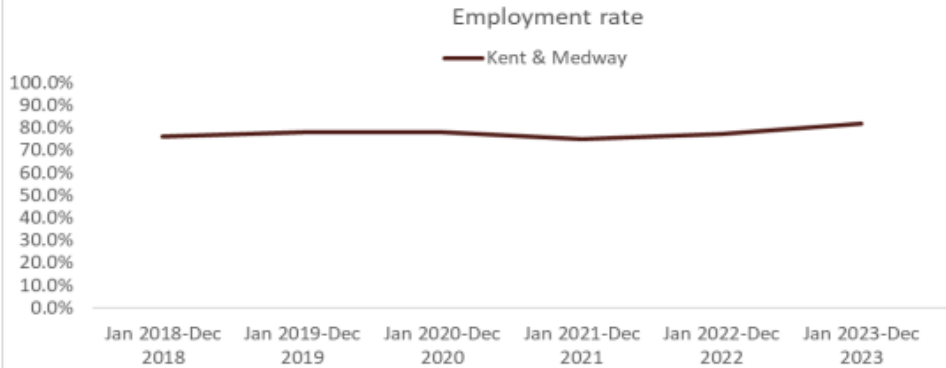
Source: ONS Claimant Count



Employment Rate

Jan 2023 – Dec 2023

Kent	81.5%
Medway	84.1%
Kent & Medway	81.9%
South East	86.1%
Great Britain	86.3%



Source: ONS Annual Population Survey

Earnings Medway

Resident Workplace

Full-time weekly earnings 2023

683.4 646.5

1-year change (£ per week)

78.1 35.5

1 year % change

+12.9% +5.8%

5 year change (£ per week)

94.9 109.9

5-year % change

+16.1% +20.5%

Source: ASHE ONS



Creating diverse, distinctive and vibrant places

Action Areas	Activities	Outcomes Targeted	Progress to date	Next key milestone
<p>17: Growing Kent and Medway’s dynamic creative and cultural economy</p>	<p>Supporting the South East Creative Economy Network to deliver its priorities as outlined in their statement of intent, e.g. creative opportunity zones.</p> <p>Supporting the work of Creative Kent and Creative Medway.</p> <p>Work with the Create South East project on finalising its outputs through to 2025, delivering a project legacy, and potentially submitting a bid for a project extension.</p> <p>Build on the relationship with Arts Council England (ACE) and the National Heritage Lottery Fund (NHLF) to support the creative sector, and best position Kent and Medway for future bidding rounds.</p> <p>Recognise and target Arts Council England’s identified ‘Priority Places’ within Kent and Medway for intervention.</p> <p>Supporting existing initiatives and groups such as Margate Creative Land Trust, Thames Estuary Production Corridor, and Creative Estuary to increase workspace development.</p>	<p>Establishment of Creative Opportunity Zone (COZ) pilot.</p> <p>Successful delivery of cohort outputs for the Create South East project.</p> <p>Increase in investment from ACE and NHLF into the area.</p> <p>Increased access to finance and organisations are supported to develop IP and new income streams. Unlocking existing R&D and start-up funding for creative industries - including seeking a new relationship between HEIs and research institutions to access research funding.</p> <p>Develop a project pipeline for workspace projects, focussed on COZ areas, to deliver high growth.</p>	<p>Creative Opportunity Zones (COZ) concept paper published and sub-group of SECEN established to take this initiative forward.</p> <p>Create South East delivery is ongoing and discussions are underway with partners and external organisations on legacy.</p> <p>Initial discussions have taken place with ACE and contacts are being established with NHLF.</p>	<p>Develop a pilot COZ proposal within Kent & Medway and seek support from wider partners, including ACE, by Nov 2024.</p> <p>Establish legacy arrangements for Create South East by Autumn 2024 and explore potential for support/ follow-on funding from DCMS.</p> <p>Discussion to have taken place with ACE and NHLF and commitments to engage/ fund initiatives sought by Sept 2024.</p>
<p>18: Supporting our network of innovative and creative places</p>	<p>Convening a meeting with the High Street lead officers to discuss what their USPs are, and how we can best work together to support places. Seek out national best practice and engage with partners such as the High Street Task Force to better understand current trends, with a view to hosting an event later in the year.</p> <p>Engaging KEDOG (Kent and Medway Economic Development Officers Group) and the team developing the Infrastructure Mapping Platform to understand creative and cultural infrastructure opportunities, across Kent and Medway (including the in the ACE recognised priority places). Project Pipeline.</p>	<p>A coherent shared approach to promoting the USPs for our vibrant, diverse and distinctive places.</p> <p>Hosting the best practice event.</p> <p>Clear awareness of the cultural and creative project pipeline and the USPs for all locations in Kent and Medway, including the recognised ‘Priority Places’.</p>	<p>KEDOG have been contacted and have started to provide information on existing USPs for their places. The Infrastructure Mapping Team have also been engaged on this as part of the future development of the platform.</p>	<p>Convene a meeting with High Street lead officers and the High Street Task Force by Sept 2024.</p>

Creating diverse, distinctive and vibrant places

Action Areas	Activities	Outcomes Targeted	Progress to date	Next key milestone
<p>19: Developing Kent's rural economy</p>	<p>The Kent Rural Partnership (KRP) to remain the core forum for rural economy activity.</p> <p>Formal two-way communications channel established between KMEP and the KRP. Agree a formal approach to establishing this link at the next KRP.</p> <p>Explore with the KRP the feasibility of re-establishing a rural community council for Kent and Medway.</p> <p>Enhance the relationship with the NFU.</p> <p>Connect with KEDOG to understand best practice from Districts and Medway on Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) projects and NFU proposals that address rural diversification.</p>	<p>Clear two-way strategic communications link established between KMEP and the Kent Rural Partnership to ensure that decisions on targeted investments and activities are meeting business needs.</p> <p>Increased investment from Defra and other government agencies on rural initiatives.</p>	<p>Two-way strategic communications link between KRP and KMEP has now been established and the KRP ToR has been updated to reflect the KMEF ambitions.</p>	<p>Ongoing regular communication between KMEP & KRP and development of a list of focussed actions to support the rural economy by KRP by Nov 2024.</p>
<p>20: Valuing the natural and historic environment</p>	<p>Engage with the Local Nature Partnership developing the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.</p> <p>Ensure that the Brand Kent commission successfully highlights our unique natural, historic, coastal assets, and engages with key strategic partners, such as National Trust, English Heritage, AONB, and Kent Downs National Landscape.</p>	<p>The published local nature recovery strategy has appropriate link to the K&M Economic Framework.</p> <p>Enhanced perception of Kent and Medway as a great place to visit, live, work and play.</p>	<p>Engagement on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy has taken place including mapping of the priorities against KMEF.</p>	<p>Further feedback on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy to be provided by Aug 2024.</p>
<p>21: Developing the visitor economy</p>	<p>Delivery of the 'Brand Kent' commission, currently out to tender, that has expected outcomes that support this action area.</p> <p>Promote the development of priority sectors in support of this tourism & visitor economy ambition e.g. hotels, hospitality, evening economy, events & activity, experience, food & drink, viticulture, local produce, walking & cycling, inward investment, etc</p> <p>Investigate, identify and support related inward investment and funding opportunities into tourism and the visitor economy.</p>	<p>Successful delivery against the KPIs - 5% annual increase in visitor numbers and spend in the county, 5% annual increase in overnight visitor stays in the county, 400 visitor economy businesses supported and promoted, secure new out of county travel trade/ tour operator itineraries in Kent & Medway (measured by overnight stays), 5% increase in jobs in the visitor economy sector in Kent & Medway.</p> <p>Establish distinct and vibrant offers, that may be at a sub-county geography.</p>	<p>The Commission is currently going through procurement process.</p>	<p>Awarding the visitor economy and investment contract.</p>

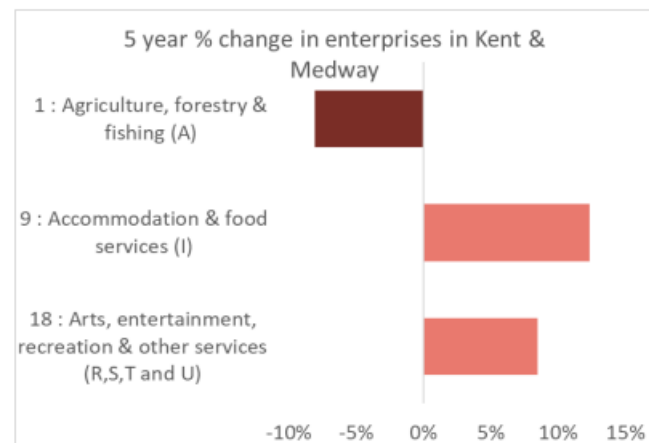
DATA DASHBOARDS (6)

Enterprise by Industry

5 year % change in enterprises in Kent & Medway

	2018	2023	% of all enterprises 2023	5 year change	5 year % change
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	2,355	2,165	3.0%	-190	-8.1%
Accommodation & food services	3,975	4,465	6.1%	+490	+12.3%
Arts, entertainment, recreation & other services	4,110	4,460	6.1%	+350	+8.5%

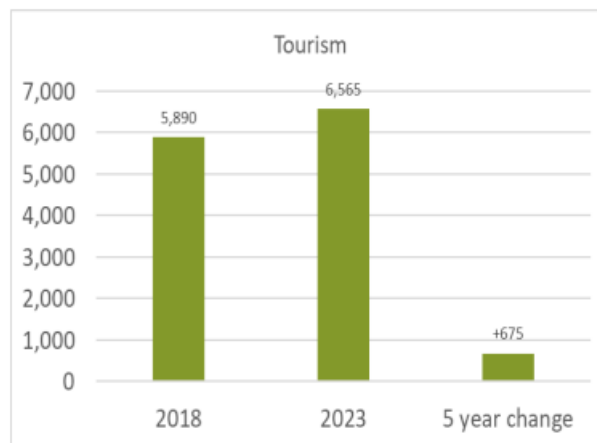
Source: UK Business Counts



Non-standard industries Kent and Medway

	2018	2023	5 year change
Tourism	5,890	6,565	+675

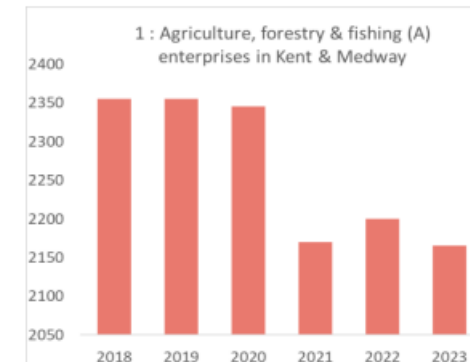
Source: UK Business Counts



Agriculture, forestry & fishing enterprises in Kent & Medway

Year	Number	% of all enterprises
2019	2,355	3.3%
2020	2,345	3.2%
2021	2,170	2.9%
2022	2,200	3.0%
2023	2,165	3.0%

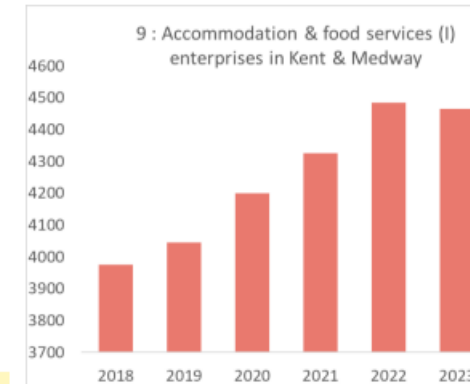
Source: UK Business Counts



Accommodation & food services enterprises in Kent & Medway

Year	Number	% of all enterprises
2019	4,045	5.7%
2020	4,200	5.8%
2021	4,325	5.9%
2022	4,485	6.0%
2023	4,465	6.1%

Source: UK Business Counts



Arts, entertainment, recreation & other services enterprises in Kent & Medway

Year	Number	% of all enterprises
2019	4,155	5.8%
2020	4,185	5.7%
2021	4,180	5.7%
2022	4,285	5.8%
2023	4,460	6.1%

Source: UK Business Counts

