



STATE OF THE DISTRICT 2015

CHAPTER G: BUDGET AND INWARD INVESTMENT

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1. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

- Dover District Council, like others, is facing unprecedented challenges to its budget and services, as a result of Government cuts, falling income and increasing costs. Demand for local services continues to increase as a consequence of a growing, and ageing population, high expectations and continuing economic challenges. We have been successfully driving down costs and making savings but, to achieve a balanced budget, we will need to continue undertaking reviews of what we do, and how we do it, through our Delivering Effective Services / Delivering Digital Services programme.
- Dover District Council is the most participative of the East Kent authorities and is delivering shared services in a number of ways as a partner in: the Joint Waste Partnership; East Kent Services for Revenues and Benefits, ICT and Customer Services; East Kent Housing; East Kent HR & Payroll and East Kent Audit. We will continue to work with our partners to deliver these services as efficiently and effectively as possible for our residents.
- The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) is the Council's key financial planning tool and underpins the strategic approach to financial planning. Although the plan spans three years, it is reviewed at least annually, and is monitored during the year. It is part of the wider planning process and should be read in conjunction with other plans and strategies, in particular with the Corporate Plan and the Asset Management Plan.
- **The key features of the Medium Term Financial Plan 2015/16 – 2017/18 are:**
 - Prudent General Fund balances maintained in 2015/16;
 - Council Tax levels frozen at 2014/15 rates;
 - Revenue Support Grant reduced by 31.6% in 2015/16, and forecast to be reduced by a further 20.0% in 2016/17;
 - Fully financed 2015/16 capital programme but limited capital resources for the future;
 - Significant potential future years' volatility in the Council's main income streams from Council Tax, Business Rates, Revenue Support Grant, New Homes Bonus and Enterprise Zone Grant.
 - The General Fund revenue budget projects a £92k surplus in 2015/16 and forecasts projected deficits of £360k in 2016/17 and £728k in 2017/18. The General Fund Balance is forecast to remain above the £2m preferred level in 2015/16. The forecasts for future years show the General Fund Balance reduced to £1.47m by the end of 2017/18 if no action is taken to address the forecast deficits.
- Please see the Medium Term Financial Plan 2015/16 – 2017/18¹ for further information.

2. CHANGES IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE

- The coalition Government introduced two major and interlinked reforms: welfare reform and reform of local government finance. There has been significant uncertainty about the overall impact of these changes on service users and the Council but 2015/16 is expected to be a year of consolidation where the changes that have already been initiated continue to roll out or bed down.
- The new Conservative Government had only just been elected at the time of drafting this report and it is not clear how this will impact on future direction.

3. INCOME

- The Council's 'net requirement' is financed mainly by Government grant and Council Tax. Government grant of £6.7m is the largest single income stream for the Council, with the grant split between Revenue Support Grant (£2.5m) and Non-Domestic Rates Redistribution or Business Rates (£4.2m).
- Revenue Support Grant received for 2015/16 is being reduced by £1.2m (31.6%) from the 2014/15 level. Because Government grant is fixed and makes up a high proportion of DDC funding, any shortfall in grant not offset by savings or other income must be financed substantially from Council Tax or additional New Homes Bonus (if it is generated).
- The localisation of Non-Domestic Rates, in operation from 2013/14, has made this a volatile and complex area to forecast, with a range of interdependent factors, outside the control of the council.

¹ [Medium Term Financial Plan 2015/16 – 2017/18](#)

- The other main sources of income for the Council are: Development Management; Building Control; Licensing; Land Charges; Car Parking and Green Waste Subscription Service. These major fees and charges generate approximately £3.48m gross towards the General Fund budget.

4. COUNCIL TAX IN THE DOVER DISTRICT

a) Average Council Tax Bill 2015/16

- Council Tax Band D² is considered to be the average council tax band and, according to Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) figures, the average Band D council tax set by local authorities in England for 2015/16 will be £1,484, which is an increase of £16 or 1.1% on the 2014/15 figure of £1,468. In shire districts (which includes Dover) the average charged is £1,547 (+£21 or 1.1%).

b) Comparison of Council Tax charges across Kent 2015/16

Local authority	Average council tax for the authority excluding parish precepts (Band D)		Average council tax for the authority including parish precepts (Band D)		Average council tax for area of billing authority including parish precepts (Band D)		Average council tax per dwelling in the area including parish precepts
Ashford	145	0.00	175	1.16	1,482	1.89	1,235
Canterbury	189	1.99	01	1.92	1,509	1.98	1,167
Dartford	163	0.00	196	0.20	1,504	1.76	1,199
Dover	167	0.00	229	0.28	1,537	1.73	1,091
Gravesham	182	1.97	189	1.93	1,497	1.99	1,137
Maidstone	236	1.99	260	2.33	1,568	2.05	1,351
Sevenoaks	193	1.95	267	1.61	1,575	1.93	1,563
Shepway	241	-0.88	285	-0.91	1,593	1.46	1,165
Swale	160	0.00	181	0.40	1,489	1.80	1,058
Thanet	210	0.00	231	0.63	1,539	1.78	948
Tonbridge & Malling	188	1.99	231	1.95	1,539	1.99	1,421
Tunbridge Wells	159	1.99	205	3.44	1,513	2.19	1,377

Source: [DCLG - Council Tax levels set by local authorities in England: 2015/16](#) (Table 7)

Due to the Localisation of Council Tax support it is not possible to compare the average council tax per dwelling to earlier years.

- In 2015/16, the average council tax for the area of the billing authority for a Band 'D' property, including parish precepts, across Kent ranges from £1,593 in Shepway to £1,482 in Ashford. This compares to £1,537 in the Dover district.
- Shepway District Council has the highest average council tax charge (£241), followed by Maidstone Borough Council (£236) and Thanet District Council (£210) – the share for all three councils being over £200.

² **Band D council tax:** This is the council tax payable on a Band D dwelling occupied as a main residence by two adults, before any reductions due to discounts, exemptions or council tax benefit. This definition is widely regarded as a benchmark when comparing council tax levels in different areas or over time.

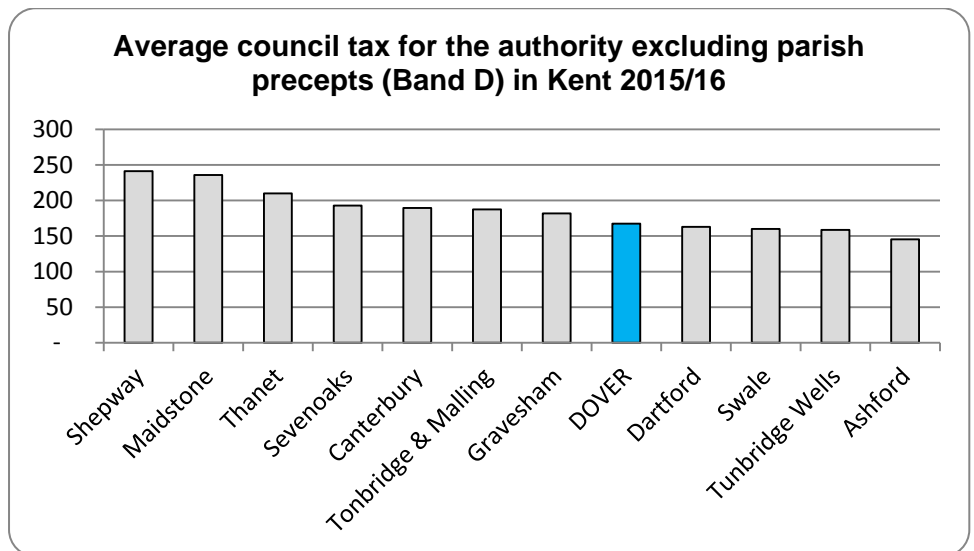
c) Council Tax for a dwelling occupied by 2 adults by band 2015-16

There are eight council tax bands ranging from Band A (for dwellings valued at less than £40,000 on 01 April 1991) to Band H (for dwellings valued at more than £320,000 on that date).

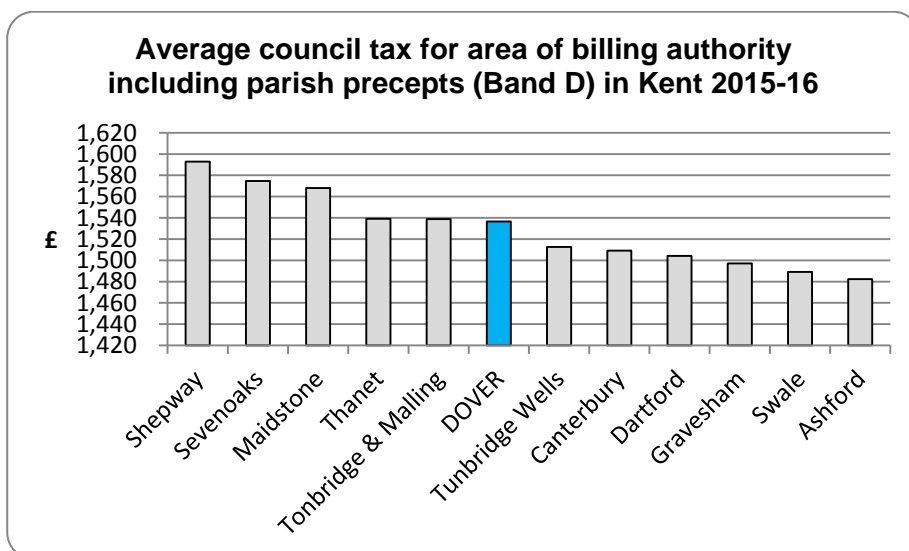
Local authority	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
Ashford	988	1,153	1,318	1,482	1,812	2,141	2,471	2,965
Canterbury	1,006	1,174	1,342	1,509	1,845	2,180	2,515	3,018
Dartford	1,003	1,170	1,337	1,504	1,838	2,173	2,507	3,008
Dover	1,024	1,195	1,366	1,537	1,878	2,219	2,561	3,073
Gravesham	998	1,164	1,331	1,497	1,830	2,162	2,495	2,994
Maidstone	1,045	1,220	1,394	1,568	1,916	2,265	2,613	3,136
Sevenoaks	1,050	1,225	1,400	1,575	1,925	2,274	2,624	3,149
Shepway	1,062	1,239	1,416	1,593	1,947	2,301	2,655	3,186
Swale	993	1,158	1,324	1,489	1,820	2,151	2,482	2,978
Thanet	1,026	1,197	1,368	1,539	1,881	2,223	2,565	3,078
Tonbridge & Malling	1,026	1,197	1,368	1,539	1,881	2,223	2,565	3,078
Tunbridge Wells	1,008	1,176	1,344	1,513	1,849	2,185	2,521	3,025

Source: [DCLG - Council Tax levels set by local authorities in England: 2015/16](#) (Table 8)

- Dover District Council has the fifth lowest council tax charge in Kent (£167) and the lowest council tax charge in East Kent.
- Shepway District Council has the highest average council tax charge (£241), followed by Maidstone Borough Council (£236) and Thanet District Council (£210) – the share for all three councils being over £200.



Source: [DCLG Live tables on Council Tax](#)



- Shepway also has the highest average council tax charge when precepts are added (£1,593); followed by Sevenoaks (£1,575); Maidstone (£1,568); Thanet and Tonbridge and Malling (both £1,539).
- Ashford has the lowest average council tax charge (£1,482).

d) Number of chargeable dwellings

- Total chargeable dwellings for 2015/16 (as at 01 December 2014) in the Dover district stood at 50,057.
- Of these, a high majority fall within the lower charging Bands A – C, with 35,711 chargeable dwellings within these bands (71.34%)³. Only 52 properties fall within the highest charging Band H (0.10%).
- These figures are stated before discounts, including the Single Person Discount and Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

e) Where your Council Tax goes

- Dover District Council, Kent County Council, The Police and Crime Commissioner for Kent and The Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority together deliver most of the local services in the district. Town and parish councils also provide some local services.
- The Council Tax you pay is collected by Dover District Council on behalf of all the above authorities. The total amount is then divided between these authorities:

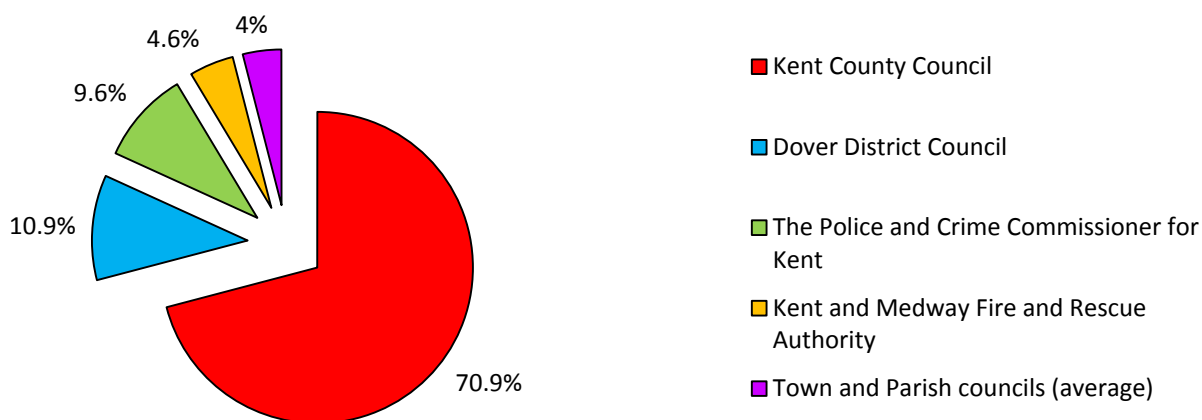
Joint Council Tax breakdown 2015/16 (excluding parish precepts)

Band	Kent County Council £	Dover District Council £	The Police and Crime Commissioner for Kent £	Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority £	Total Council Tax (excluding parish precepts) £
D	1,089.99	167.49	147.15	70.65	1,475.28

Source: [DDC Council Tax Information 2015/16](#)

- Dover District Council’s share of the total average bill for 2015/16 is 11.4%, which equates to £167.49 on a Band D property (this has not increased from last year).

Joint council tax percentage breakdown in Dover District 2015/16 (including Town and Parish Precept)



Source: [DDC Council Tax Information 2015/16](#)

For every £1 collected:

- Kent County Council receives 70.9p,
- Dover District Council 10.9p,
- Police and Crime Commissioner 9.6p,
- Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue 4.6p and
- Town and Parish Councils 4p.

f) Town and Parish Councils Precept

³ Source: DDC Finance Team
Leadership Support Team: State of the District 2015: Budget Funding and Investment

- All areas within Dover have parish or town councils and they also ask Dover District Council to collect their “precepts” to provide some local services.
- Town and parish council precept figures 2015/16 are available on the DDC website⁴:

Town and Parish Council Charges (Band D) 2015/16

Area	£	% Increase	Area	£	% Increase
Alkham	24.74	1.48%	Ringwould-with-Kingsdown	32.77	6.36%
Ash	60.58	2.11%	Ripple	29.34	1.03%
Aylesham	79.77	0.00%	River	38.87	-0.38%
Capel-le-Ferne	28.61	16.35%	St Margarets-at-Cliffe	50.84	0.49%
Deal	59.22	0.00%	Sandwich	80.73	3.43%
Denton-with-Wootton	67.88	22.06%	Sheperdswell-with-Coldred	49.04	1.68%
Dover	92.73	-1.94%	Sholden	50.03	0.00%
Eastry	62.31	1.98%	Staple	28.96	0.00%
Eythorne	46.99	0.00%	Stourmouth	54.05	2.68%
Goodnestone	36.2	3.61%	Sutton-by-Dover	34.03	5.00%
Great Mongeham	33.27	1.99%	Temple Ewell	37.22	0.13%
Guston	95.47	36.04%	Tilmanstone	43.73	-0.55%
Hougham-without	48.07	5.76%	Walmer	38.59	-1.13%
Langdon	54.8	6.06%	Whitfield	53.96	0.63%
Lydden	58.28	25.01%	Wingham	85.38	5.84%
Nonington	29.89	-0.86%	Woodnesborough	39.82	1.82%
Northbourne	35.91	1.38%	Worth	43.07	0.75%
Preston	53.37	0.00%	TOTAL /Average	61.28	1.07%

Source: [DDC Council Tax Information 2015/16](#)

Council Tax Charges for Band D properties across the Dover District 2015/16:

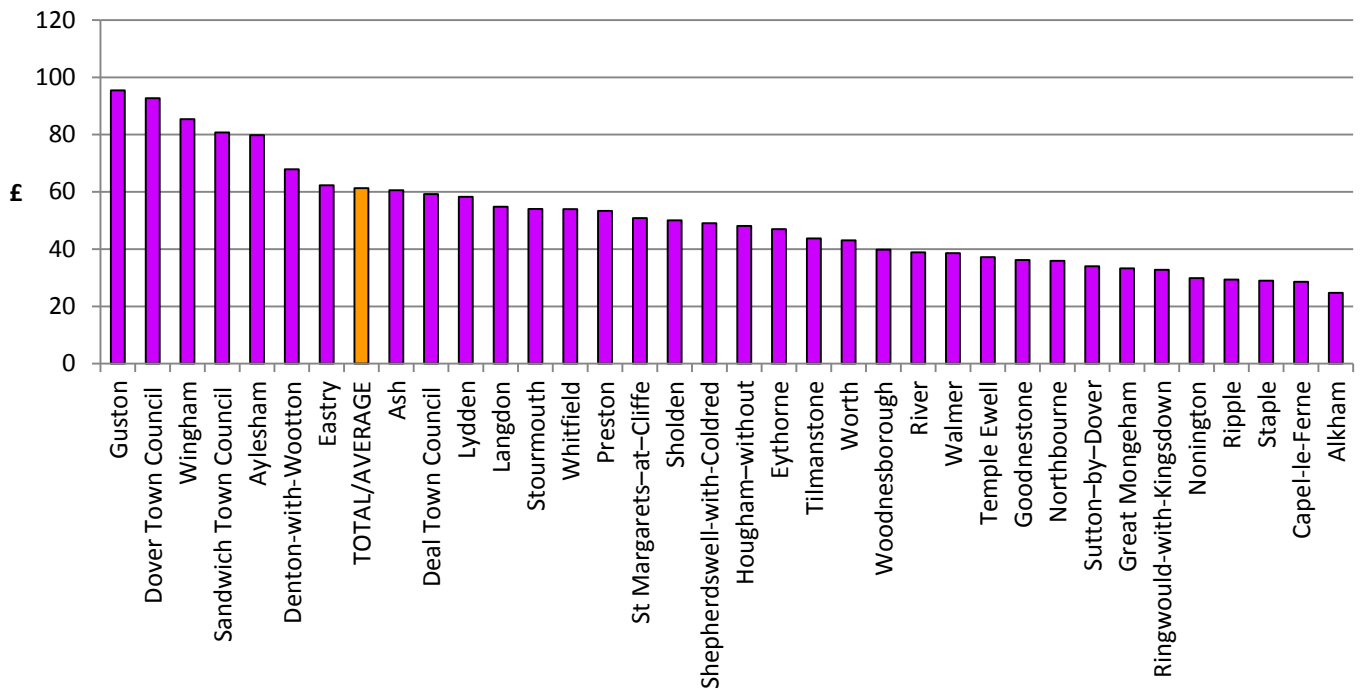
Town and Parish Councils	Band D
	£
Alkham	1,500.02
Ash	1,535.86
Aylesham	1,555.05
Capel-le-Ferne	1,503.89
Deal	1,534.50
Denton-with-Wootton	1,543.16
Dover	1,568.01
Eastry	1,537.59
Eythorne	1,522.27
Goodnestone	1,511.48
Great Mongeham	1,508.55
Guston	1,570.75
Hougham-without	1,523.35
Langdon	1,530.08
Lydden	1,533.56
Nonington	1,505.17
Northbourne	1,511.19
Preston	1,528.65

Town and Parish Councils	Band D
	£
Ringwould-with-Kingsdown	1,508.05
Ripple	1,504.62
River	1,514.15
St Margarets-at-Cliffe	1,526.12
Sandwich	1,556.01
Shepherdswell-with-Coldred	1,524.32
Sholden	1,525.31
Staple	1,504.24
Stourmouth	1,529.33
Sutton-by-Dover	1,509.31
Temple Ewell	1,512.50
Tilmanstone	1,519.01
Walmer	1,513.87
Whitfield	1,529.24
Wingham	1,560.66
Woodnesborough	1,515.10
Worth	1,518.35

Source: [DDC Council Tax Information 2015/16](#)

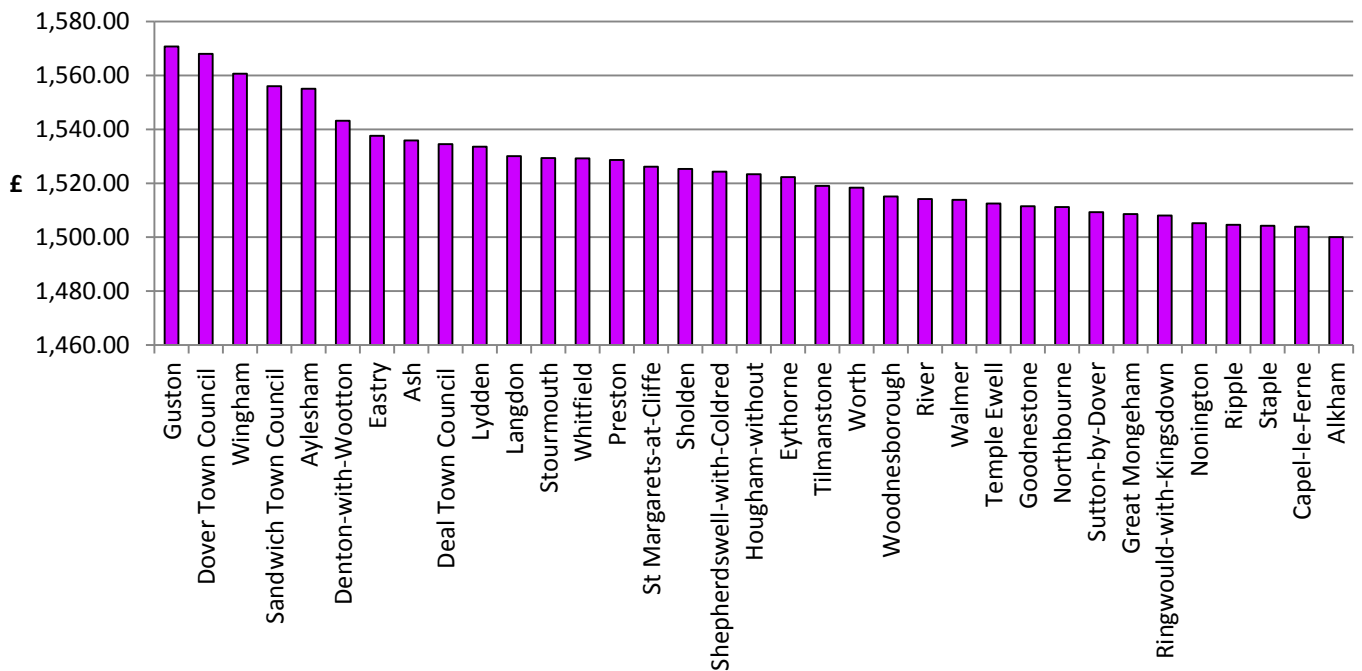
⁴ <http://www.dover.gov.uk/CouncilTax/Council-Tax-charges/Parish-council-charges-2015-16.aspx>
Leadership Support Team: State of the District 2015: Budget Funding and Investment

Town and Parish Council Charges (Band D) 2015/16



Source: [DDC Council Tax Information 2015/16](#)

Council Tax Charges for Band D properties across the Dover District 2015/16



- In the Dover district, the average council tax for Towns & Parishes in 2015/16 is £61.28 (Band D). This compares to £60.63 for last year (1.1% increase).
- Across England the average Band D Parish Precept is £54.12 (+3.3% from 2014/15).

Average Band D Parish Precept for England				
2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
£45.97	£47.74	£50.23	£52.37	£54.12
	(+3.9%)	(+5.2%)	(+4.3%)	(+3.3%)

[DCLG - Council Tax levels set by local authorities in England: 2015/16](#) (Table 5)

5. BUSINESS RATES

- **Business rates** - the commonly used term for non-domestic rates - are a property tax paid by occupants of non-domestic premises, including most commercial properties such as shops, offices, pubs, warehouses and factories.
- The basic rates bill of a property (a 'hereditament') is determined by multiplying its rateable value by the 'multiplier'. The multiplier is expressed in pence per pound of rateable value and is set by the Government.
- A property's rateable value is set by the Valuation Office Agency (an executive agency of HM Revenue and Customs) and normally re-assessed every five years', with the most recent revaluation coming into effect on 1 April 2010. However, the Growth and Infrastructure Act 2013 has delayed the 2015 revaluation until 2017 in England.
- From April 2013, the rates are partly pooled at central government level (and redistributed on a needs basis) and retained in part by billing authorities, under the Business Rates Retention Scheme introduced by the *Local Government Finance Act 2012*. Please see the Medium Term Financial Plan 2015/16 – 2017/18 for further information on localisation of Non-Domestic Rates.
- The 2014 Autumn Statement committed to discussing "options for longer-term administrative reform of business rates post-2017" and the coalition government published a paper, *Administration of business rates in England: interim findings*, in December 2014. However, since there has been a change in administration following the general election in May 2015 it is not clear how this will now progress.
- The levels of Council Tax, which local authorities set, within the overall constraints determined by central government, have increased modestly over recent years, compared to the increases in Business Rates directly set by central government themselves. Comparison of the increases between Council tax within the Dover district and the standard Business rates multiplier shows that over the period 2011/12 to 2015/16, the Government increased business rates at over double the rate (12.68%) than Council Tax has been increased by the council (5.38%)⁵.
- Business rates income in the Dover district is heavily concentrated at its largest sites, with 32% of its business rates income from the top 3 sites: Channel Tunnel, Discovery Park and Dover Harbour Board⁶.
- Various reliefs are available from full business rates liability, both mandatory and at the discretion of billing authorities. These include small business rate relief; mandatory relief for charities and Enterprise Zones.

a) Floorspace and rateable value

- In May 2012, the VOA released experimental statistics with estimates of numbers of hereditaments, total rateable values, total floorspace and average RV per metre squared across England and Wales (data as at 31 March 2012). These statistics have not yet updated since and a summary for the district is provided:

Dover District: Business floorspace by sector (thousands m²) 2012	
Retail	179
Office	95
Industrial	508
Other	79
Total	861

Source: VOA

- In 2012, the total business floorspace in the Dover district was 861,000m². This is the fourth lowest in Kent, ahead of Gravesham (682,000m²), Sevenoaks (793,000m² and Shepway (739,000m²).

Rateable value by sector £/m² 2012		
Dover District:		Kent
Retail	107	159
Office	66	113
Industrial	43	46
Other	61	67

- In 2012, rateable values in the Dover district were below the average for Kent in all sectors.

Source: VOA

Dover District: Rateable value over time							
	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012

⁵ Source: [Medium Term Financial Plan 2015/16 – 2017/18](#)

⁶ Source: [Medium Term Financial Plan 2015/16 – 2017/18](#)

Retail	70	70	68	88	90	105	107
Office	48	47	47	57	57	66	66
Industrial	23	23	24	30	31	37	43

Dover District: Number of Hereditaments by Sector 2012	
Retail	1010
Office	530
Industrial	740
Other	390
Total	2,670

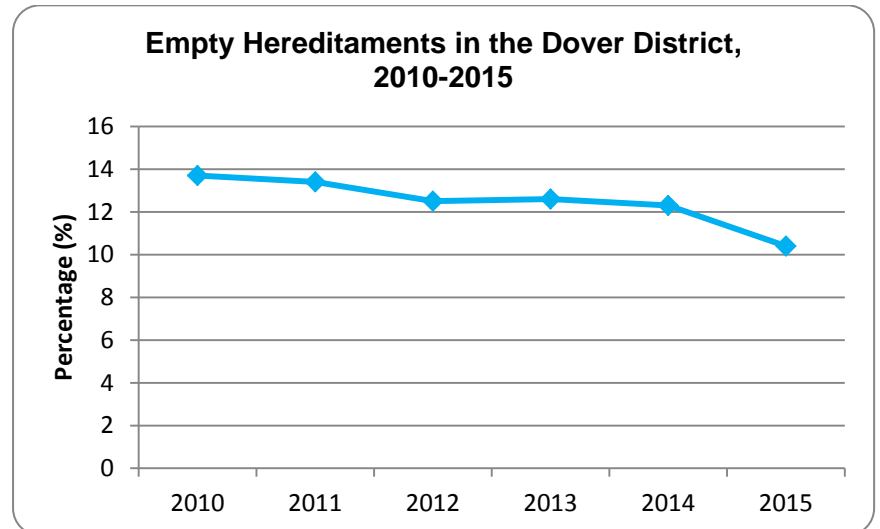
Source: VOA

- In 2012, there were 2,670 hereditaments in the Dover district. Of these, the highest proportion were for retail use (37.8%); industrial (27.7%); office (19.9%) and other (14.6%).

b) Empty Hereditaments

- The estimated percentage of empty hereditaments in the Dover district has decreased over the past two years.

Empty Hereditaments		
Year	Number	%
2010	468	13.7
2011	456	13.4
2012	428	12.5
2013	441	12.6
2014	458	12.3
2015	392	10.4

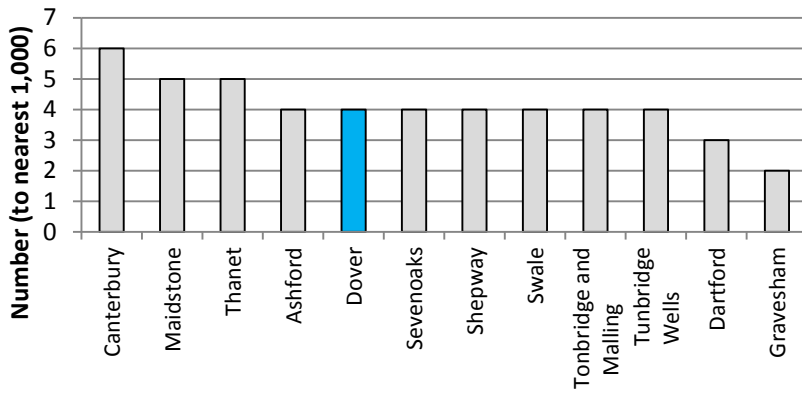


Source: DCLG NDR tables (2010-2013) and EK Services (2014-2015)

c) VOA Summary Statistics

- The VOA publishes summary counts of rateable properties (hereditaments), total rateable values and average rateable values twice a year.
- As at 31 March 2015, the 2010 local ratings lists shows that the Dover district has 4,000 hereditaments, with a rateable value of £89 million and an average rateable value being £24,000. This is lower than the average rateable value in Kent of £29,000; South East £32,000 and England £32,000.
- These summary statistics are not as detailed as the 2012 and it is not possible to make comparisons between them.

Hereditament Count in Kent, as at 31 March 2015



Source: VOA NDR Stock of Properties

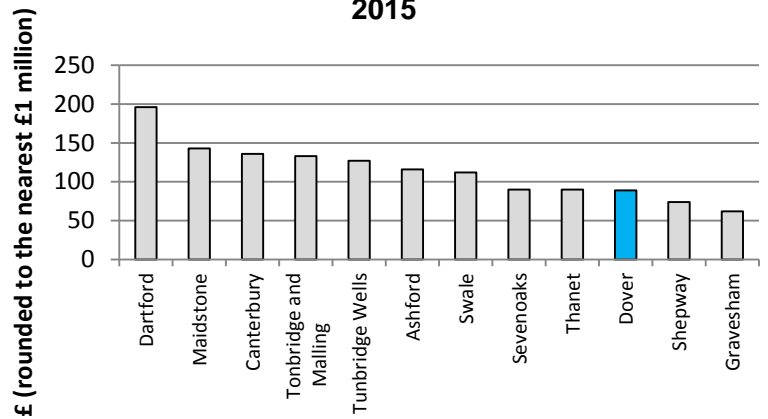
Hereditament Count

- As at 31 March 2015, the Dover district had equal third highest number of hereditaments in Kent with 4,000 rateable properties (rounded to the nearest 1,000).
- Canterbury had the highest number with 6,000 and Gravesham the lowest number with 2,000.

Total Rateable Value

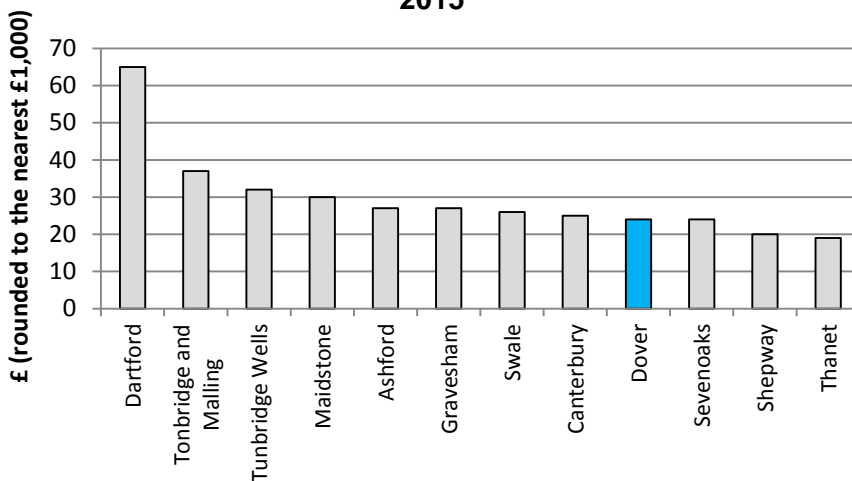
- As at 31 March 2015, the Dover district had the third lowest total rateable value in Kent with £89m. This is a fall from £90m (fifth lowest), as at September 2014.
- Gravesham had the lowest rateable value (£62m) and Dartford the highest (£196m).

Total Rateable Value in Kent, as at 31 March 2015



Source: VOA NDR Stock of Properties

Average Rateable Value in Kent, as at 31 March 2015



Source: VOA NDR Stock of Properties

Average Rateable Value

- As at 31 March 2015, the Dover district had the third lowest average rateable value in Kent with £24,000.
- Thanet had the lowest with £19,000 and Dartford the highest with £65,000.

d) Collection rates

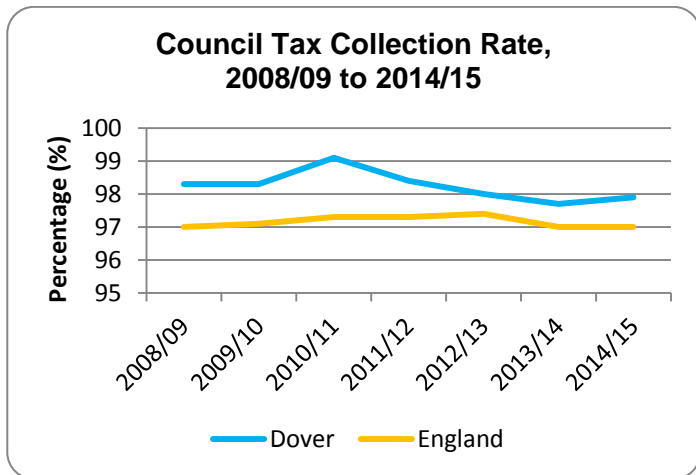
Council Tax	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Dover	98.3	98.3	99.1	98.4	98.0	97.7	97.9
England	97.0	97.1	97.3	97.3	97.4	97.0	97.0

Amount collected by 31 March as a % of amount collectable

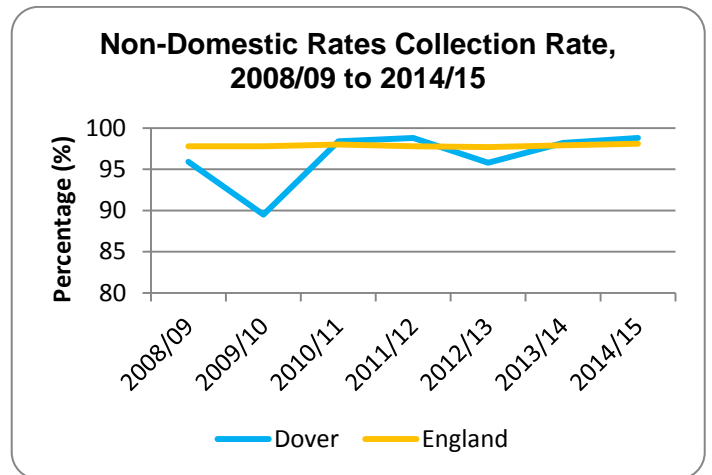
Non Domestic Rates	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Dover	95.9	89.5	98.4	98.8	95.8	98.2	98.8
England	97.8	97.8	98.0	97.8	97.7	97.9	98.1

Amount collected by 31 March as a % of net collectable debit

Over the past year, the collection rates for both Council Tax and Non-Domestic rates in the Dover district have improved and are both above the average for England.



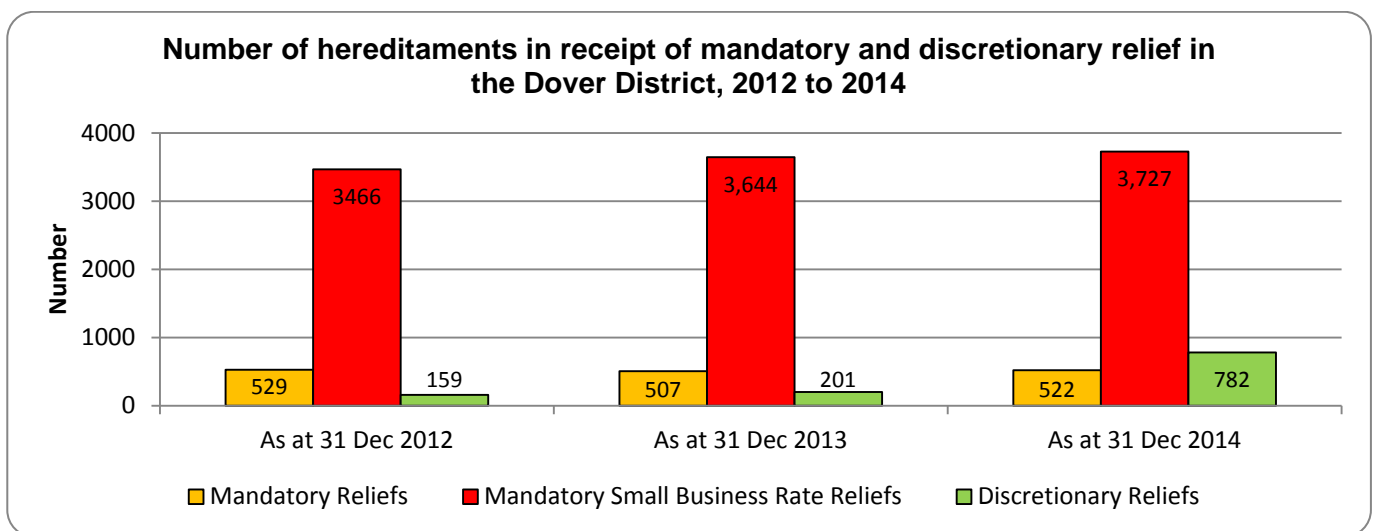
Source: DCLG Council Tax Statistics



Source: DCLG Council Tax Statistics

e) Support for Businesses

- In the Dover district, as at 31 December 2014, there were 1,377 hereditaments benefitting from the Small Business Rate Relief scheme through paying the lower multiplier and getting a discount (this is up from 1,257 in December 2013). In addition, 1,137 hereditaments were paying the lower multiplier and not getting a discount (this is up from 1,211 in December 2013).
- At the same time, there were 522 hereditaments in receipt of mandatory relief and 782 in receipt of discretionary relief (up from 201 in 2013). This figure includes 531 hereditaments benefitting from the new retail relief.



Number of hereditaments in receipt of mandatory and discretionary relief in the

Dover district⁷			
	As at 31 Dec 2012	As at 31 Dec 2013	As at 31 Dec 2014
Mandatory Reliefs (MR)⁸			
Charity	218	214	229
Rural village shop	16	17	16
Partly occupied	0	0	0
Empty premises	285	266	268
Community amateur sports clubs	10	10	9
Mandatory Reliefs Total (Number)	529	507	522
Mandatory Small Business Rate Relief (SBBR)			
Paying additional supplement	1177	1,176	1,213
Paying lower multiplier and receiving a discount	1159	1,257	1,377
<i>Of which</i>			
100% discount	852	921	1,009
0%-100% discount on sliding scale	307	336	368
Paying lower multiplier and not receiving a discount	1130	1,211	1,137
SBBR Total (Number)	3466	3,644	3,727
Discretionary Reliefs (DR)			
Charity	112	110	89
Non-profit making bodies	43	43	23
Rural village shop	0	0	0
Other small rural business	0	0	0
Community amateur sports clubs	0	0	0
Enterprise Zone discounts	4	48	138
S47 discounts	0	0	0
S31 new empty property relief	0	0	0
S31 long term empty relief	0	0	1
S31 retail relief	0	0	531
Discretionary Reliefs Total (Number)	159	201	782

Source: [DCLG National non-domestic rates collected by councils' collection](#): National non-domestic rates 2015 to 2016 supplementary tables (as at 31 December 2014); National non-domestic rates 2014 to 2015 supplementary tables (as at 31 December 2013); National non-domestic rates 2013 to 2014 supplementary tables (as at 31 December 2012). Additional information provided by EK Services.

6. DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

- Development contributions, including S106 receipts, have been received from five developments during financial year 2014-15:
 - Cannon Street, Deal
 - 59 The Marina, Deal
 - Land at Honeywood Parkway
 - Sholden (land North East of Sandwich Road (A258) and North West of Sholden New Road)
 - Whitfield Phase 1a
- The total monies raised from these projects amounts to £398,131, some of which was paid to Kent County Council, with £189,440 secured for DDC direct. This will be used to fund a range of infrastructure projects including children's play spaces, libraries, adult social services, public rights of way, affordable housing and public rights of way.
- The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a levy that local authorities can choose to charge on new developments in their area. The funds obtained must be used to help provide local or sub-regional infrastructure.

⁷ Some hereditaments may be entitled to more than one relief. Therefore, the total number of reliefs awarded to hereditaments may be greater than the total number of hereditaments in receipt of relief.

⁸ Excludes Small Business Rate Relief and Transitional Relief

- On 6th April 2011, the Council agreed in principle the need to prepare a Charging Schedule for the purposes of the CIL and an independent viability assessment was undertaken of the CIL rates proposed in our Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule. The Council has not yet introduced the Community Infrastructure Levy as it is currently monitoring the effectiveness of continuing to rely on planning obligations as a means of securing the infrastructure needed to support development.

7. NEW HOMES BONUS

- The Government introduced the New Homes Bonus to incentivise housing supply in April 2011 and has pledged cash for communities who allow new homes to be built in their area. The New Homes Bonus is based on the council tax of additional homes and those brought back into use, with a premium for affordable homes and paid for the following six years, with the council keeping 80% of the council tax raised. The grant awarded to Dover is as follows:

Dover District New Homes Bonus	2011-12 Year 1:	2012-13 Year 2:	2013-14 Year 3:	2014-15 Year 4:	2015-16 Year 5:
	£294,000	£449,000	£927,000	£1.307m	£1.571m

Source: [Medium Term Financial Plan 2015/16 – 2017/18](#)

8. WELFARE REFORM

There have been significant changes to the welfare system as a result of the Welfare Reform Act 2012. Many of the changes began in April 2013 but some will not be fully in place until 2017. The changes include the ways in which benefits are calculated and paid.

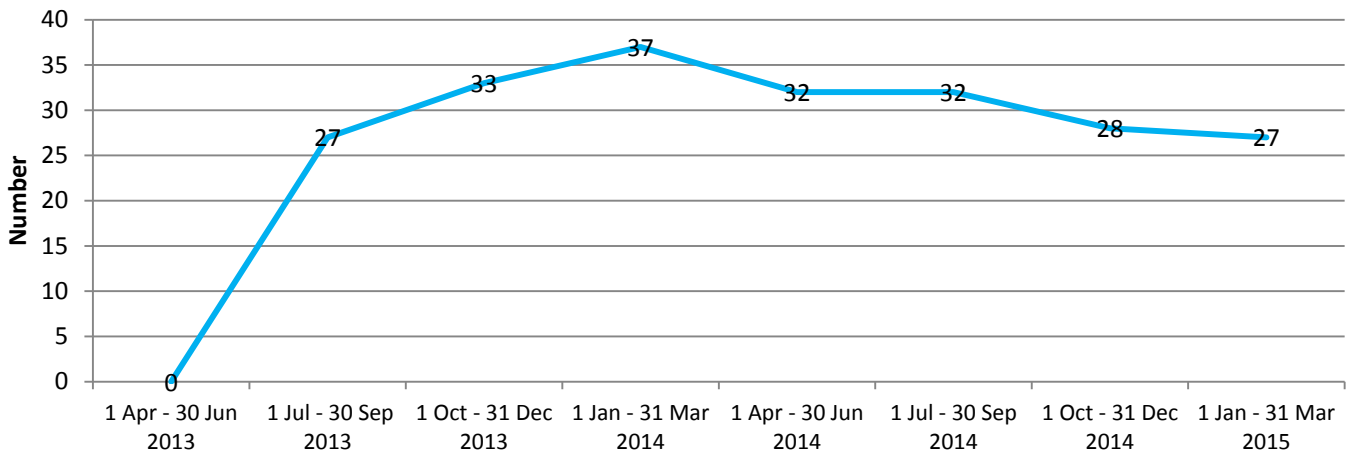
a) Localisation of support for Council Tax

- Prior to April 2012 the Government funded Council Tax benefit to provide those on low incomes with support towards the payment of their Council Tax bills. Council Tax benefit was abolished in April 2013 and replaced by local Council Tax Support Schemes. Government funding to the local scheme was reduced by 10% compared to its funding for Council Tax Benefit. Government directed that local schemes should not remove incentives to work and that pensioners were not to be disadvantaged by the changes.
- The key features of the scheme implemented by the East Kent authorities (Dover, Canterbury and Thanet) are:
 - Calculation of award for working age applicants meaning that claimants who weren't paying Council Tax are required to pay 6% of the bill;
 - Elimination of all empty property and of second homes discounts, in order to meet the costs of the higher discount to claimants.

b) Benefits Cap

- A weekly cap on Housing Benefit was introduced from April 2013. The cap is £500 per week for families with children and £350 per week for individuals. There are exemptions from the benefits cap.
- Local authorities are responsible for administering the cap for claimants in receipt of Housing Benefit until that claim is migrated to Universal Credit, at which time the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) will be responsible for making the reduction.
- If the total amount of benefits in payment (including Housing Benefit) exceeds £26k per annum then the excess is deducted from Housing Benefit by the local authority.

Number of households affected by the Benefit Cap in the Dover district, 2013/14 to 2014/15

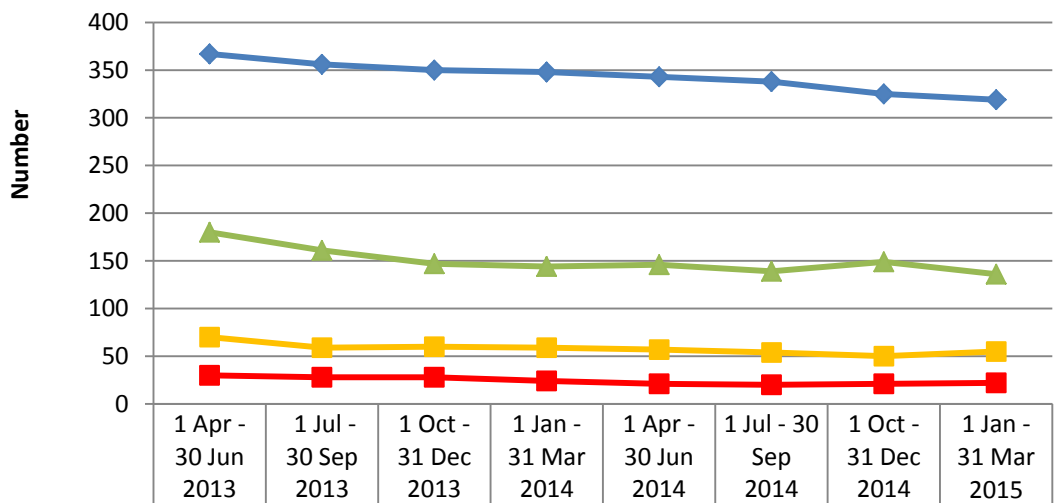


Source: East Kent Services

c) Social Sector Size Criteria

- The Social Sector Size Criteria, also known as the 'bedroom tax' applies to Housing Benefit claimants in social housing. Those claimants deemed to have one bedroom more than they require have their Housing Benefit reduced by 14%. Claimants with 2 excess bedrooms the reduction is 25%.
- East Kent Services have been working with East Kent Housing to identify affected tenants and proactively support property moves and transfers where possible and appropriate.

Number of households affected by Social Sector Size Criteria in the Dover district, 2013/14 to 2014/15

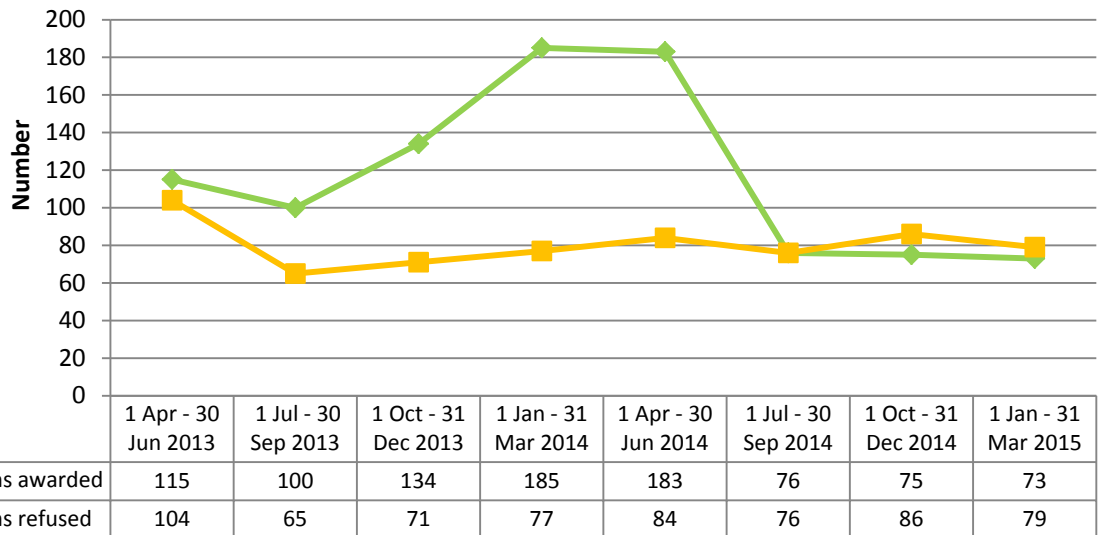


Source: East Kent Services

d) Discretionary Housing Payments

Councils have been given additional limited funding to make Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) in order to mitigate the financial impact of the welfare reforms on the more vulnerable claimants. DHPs are paid in addition to the normal Housing Benefit entitlement.

Discretionary Housing Payment applications decided in the Dover district, 2013/14 to 2014/15



Source: East Kent Services

- During 2013/14, a total of 534 DHP applications were awarded and 317 refused. The total amount of money awarded was £252,332.97
- During 2014/15, a total of 407 DHP applications were awarded and 325 refused. The total amount of money awarded was £216,047.95

Universal Credit

- Universal Credit (UC) is a new benefit for working age people that is being introduced gradually across the country as part of the government's welfare reform changes.
- Universal Credit will replace a number of existing benefits and tax credits: Income Support; Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance; Income-related Employment and Support Allowance; Housing Benefit; Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit. Housing Benefit will transfer to the Department for Work and Pensions, although Council Tax Support will stay with local authorities.
- Roll out of Universal Credit in the Dover district is expected from January 2016.

Summer Budget 2015

- The summer budget, announced in July 2015, announced several different measures that may have an impact on people receiving or wanting to apply for Housing Benefit and/ or Council Tax Support:
 - 4 year freeze to certain working age benefits including tax credits, local housing allowance rates and child benefit. This will come into effect in April 2016 and will apply to new and existing claimants.
 - Lowering the benefit cap from £26,000 to £20,000 for couples and lone parents and £13,400 for single claimants. This will apply to new and existing claimants and an announcement is expected soon confirming when this will come into effect.
 - Housing Benefit backdating restricted to a maximum of 4 weeks (currently 6 months) even if there is good cause for not claiming at the time. This will come into effect in April 2016 and will apply to new claimants.
 - Limit Child Tax Credits and Housing Benefit to account for a maximum of 2 children. This will come into effect for children born after April 2017 and will apply to new and existing claimants.
 - Reduced earnings level threshold for tax credit withdrawal. Gradually start to be withdrawn once family earnings go above £3,850 rather than the existing amount of £6,420. This will come into effect in April 2016 and will apply to new and existing claimants.

9. Inward Investment and External Funding

Dover District Council continues to pursue strategic opportunities to secure external funding for the district. As well as bidding for competitive funding streams from central government, the Council is actively involved in promoting inward investment into the district. This includes the Invest in Dover website www.investindover.gov.uk, social media, and attendance at the annual MIPIM UK exhibition alongside the Port of Dover and the Discovery Park Enterprise Zone.

a) Central Government Funding

- The Council has secured funding from a number of competitive central Government programmes during 2014/15. This has included:
 - Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Site Delivery Fund (£45,000) for an efficiency programme in planning, including a review of planning conditions, extending the use of planning performance agreements, and improving S106 processes.
 - £20,000 from DCLG to help set up two new Coastal Community Teams; for Dover, and Deal & Sandwich. These teams will bring together partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors to deliver a Local Economic Plan to drive growth in jobs and prosperity.
 - £10,000 from the Ministry of Defence (MOD) Community Covenant Scheme to host an event to help foster stronger links between the military (serving, veteran, cadet) communities and the local population. We are currently working with local groups to develop the event for Spring/Summer 2016 to coincide with the Kearsney Parks HLF project.
 - The Community Covenant Scheme, administered by Dover District Council, also secured funding to the value of £250,000 for local community groups across the district.

b) Heritage Lottery Fund – Kearsney Parks

- Dover District Council is working on its round two submission (development phase) to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the 'Parks for People' project at Russell Gardens and Kearsney Abbey.
- Following a successful round one application in 2014, development funding of £274,100 was awarded to DDC to develop the plans in detail. This includes a conservation plan, activity plan, along with planning permissions. The final submission will be made in February 2016 with a decision expected in June 2016. The Heritage Lottery Fund has ring-fenced £3.1 million for the project which is expected to start in autumn 2016.

c) Inward Investment Promotion

- Dover District Council continues to proactively promote the 'Enterprise Coast – Dover, Deal, Sandwich' as a great place to live, work and play. An inward investment website www.investindover.co.uk continues to develop as platform for potential investors, and local businesses, to find out more about key locations, financial incentives, and news and information for business. This is complemented by a Twitter feed (@InvestInDover) that has over 450 followers.
- Working in partnership with the Port of Dover and the Discovery Park Enterprise Zone, DDC exhibited at the MIPIM UK exhibition at London Olympia in October 2014 and will repeat the exercise this year from 21-23 October 2015. This provides an excellent showcase for the district at the most prominent investment and property exhibition in the UK.

d) Other funding bids

- Unsuccessful bid were also made to Kent County Council for two outdoor gyms in the district; one on Dover seafront, and one at the North Deal Playing Fields (£45,000).

e) Supporting community funding

- During the year, the Communication & Engagement team continued to support voluntary and community groups across the district with advice on funding applications. The team also managed the administration and delivery of the following funding programmes:
 - 'You Decide' (DDC & KCC): 29 projects supported (£34,500)
 - Community Covenant: 15 projects supported (£258,385)

- Save the Children: Eat Sleep learn & play (£60,000)
- The Community Safety Team received funding of £29,905.18 from the Police and Crime Commissioner and £2,049 from Kent Police for Community Safety work, and £58,622.25 from Kent County Council for early intervention work and work with troubled families.

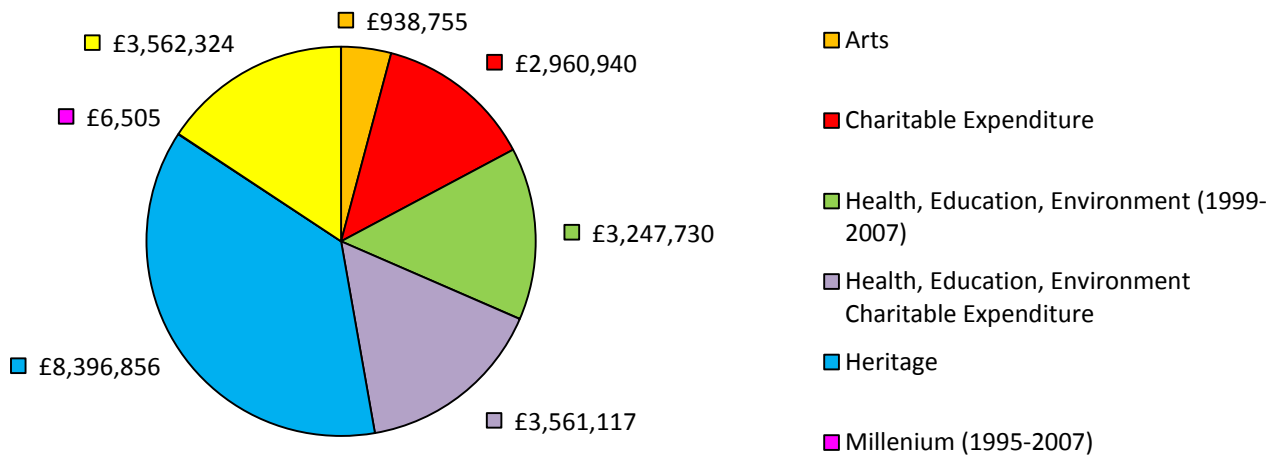
f) Additional DDC External Funding Received

Homes & Communities Agency		
2014-15	Empty Homes Projects	£49,500
Coalfield Regeneration Trust		
2011-12	Investing in community projects in the former coalfield wards, supported by the Community & Leisure Team. The Coalfield Regeneration Trust are taking the work in-house from 2015/16.	£103,500
2012-13		£ 95,580
2013-14		£ 23,750
2014-15		£ 75,000
Environment Agency		
2014-15	Kingsdown Timber Groyne Replacement	£520,350
DECC: Department for Energy & Climate Change		
2014-15	Green Deal Thermal Insulation grant (Dorlonco)	£150,000
2014-15	Cero Thermal Insulation funding (Dorlonco)	£5,455
Dover Town Council		
2014-15	Contribution to consultancy services to support the development of a business plan to identify options for Dover Town Hall.	£12,662
2014-15	Contribution to the purchase of digital projection equipment for the Silver Screen Cinema in Dover	£20,000
Cabinet Office		
2014-15	Grant for Individual Electoral Registration hardware	£23,644
Department for Communities & Local Government		
2014-15	Building Foundations for Growth funding for Discovery Park*	£5,729,000
2014-15	Disabled facilities grant funding	£483,994
2014-15	Neighbourhood Planning Grants	£25,000
2014-15	Site Delivery Fund Grant – Delivery of housing on the ground	£25,000
Developer Funding		
2014-15	Hillreed Homes for Aylesham Development	32,871.43
2014-15	Ward Homes for Aylesham Development	32,871.43
2014-15	Bond City for Dover Town Centre Redevelopment	99,113.74
'Up on the Downs' Landscape Project		
2014-15	Heritage Lottery Fund	£249,949
2014-15	National Trust	£50,000
2014-15	Kent Wildlife Trust	£25,000
2014-15	Kent County Council	£69,000
2014-15	Dover Town Council	£6,000
Local Government Association		
2014-15	LA Open Data Incentive Scheme - Toilets	£11,131

*DDC is acting as administrator for the Building Foundations for Growth funding for Discovery Park.

10. LOTTERY FUNDING RECEIVED IN THE DOVER DISTRICT

Breakdown of Dover District Lottery Grants Awarded by Good Cause, 1995 to 2014



Source: [DCMS Lottery Grants](#)

- Data from the Department for Culture, Media and Sports (DCMS) shows that, since 1995, there have been 597 lottery grants awarded for the Dover district, totalling **£22,674,227**.
- In 2014 lottery grants awarded for the Dover district totalled **£3,850,058**, broken down in to the following categories:
 - **Heritage:** £3,405,500
 - **Sport:** £104,371
 - **Arts:** £130,388
 - **Health, Education, Environment and Charitable Expenditure:** £209,799

Examples of projects receiving funding in 2014 include:

Recipient	Project Description	Amount	Date	Distributing body
Dover District Council	From Mills to Mawson - Uncovering the hidden heritage of Kearsney Abbey & Russell Gardens	£3,389,400	24/06/2014	Heritage Lottery Fund
Dover Arts Development Ltd	DMAG WW1	£78,900	13/05/2014	Arts Council England
Sandwich Town Cricket Club	Gazen Salts Community Sports Development project (GSCSDP)	£50,000	15/04/2014	Sport England
Samphire	This continuation project will provide advice and support to migrants, and identify volunteering opportunities to promote integration.	£129,792	06/01/2014	Big Lottery Fund
Workers of Art	Wise Words Festival	£15,000	18/08/2014	Arts Council England