



Authority Monitoring Report





Place Making & Health



In this Section:

- *Planning for Healthy and Inclusive Communities*
- *Design Quality of Development*
- *Residential Space Standards*
- *Open Spaces, Sport and Community facilities*

Place Making and Health

This chapter reports on the monitoring indicators of the following Local Plan Healthy Communities and Place Making Policies:

- **SP2: Planning for Healthy and Inclusive Communities**
- **PM1: Achieving High Quality Design, Place Making and provision of Design Codes**
- **PM2: Quality of Residential Accommodation**
- **PM3: Providing Open Space**
- **PM4: Sports Provision**
- **PM5: Protection of Open Space, Sports Facilities and Local Green Space**
- **PM6: Community Facilities and Services**

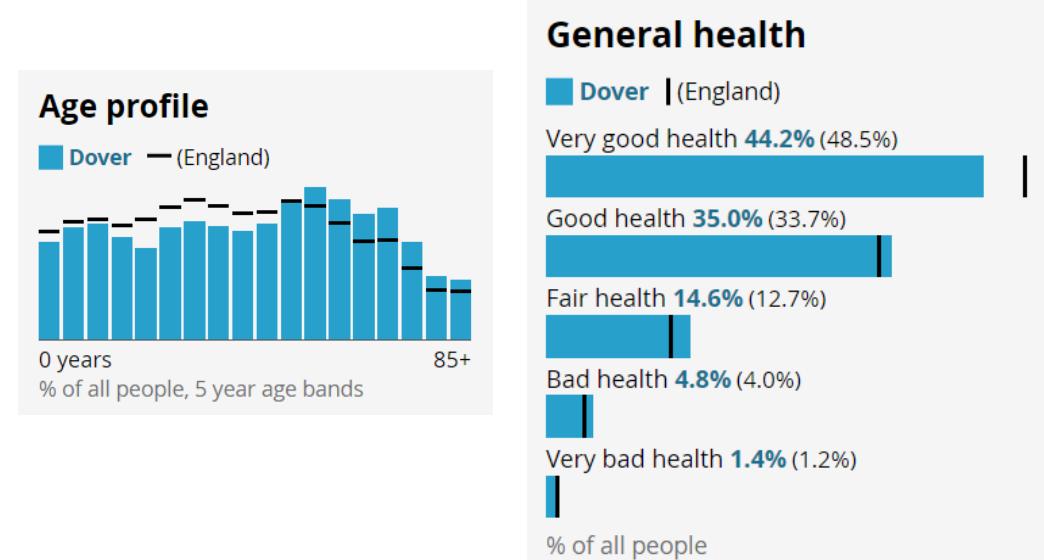
Planning for Healthy and Inclusive Communities

This section highlights data relevant to policies SP2, PM1 and PM2 using the most recent census (2021) and local authority data (2024/2025).

Some charts and graphs showing the census data are shown in Figure 1 (below)¹. These demonstrate a mixed picture of health in the district.

- Overall life expectancy at birth grew during the period 2002 to 2022
- The district has one of the highest upper middle-age populations In Kent
- The district's 'General Health' measures lower than the national average, and a higher percentage of residents live with a disability as described by the Equality Act (2010).
- Deprivation has increased slightly. Much of the deprivation in the district is concentrated in pockets within urban centres.

Figure 1 – Demographic Data showing the Age Profile and General Health, within Dover district



¹ The full data can be found in the [appendices to the Local Plan](#), and the [Office for National Statistics website](#).

Design quality of new development

Policies SP2, PM1 and PM2 of the Local Plan seek to address some of the challenges of health and deprivation highlighted above through improving design standards of new homes and places.

Percentage change in crime levels

Crime levels in the district have risen slightly in its urban centres of Dover, Deal and Sandwich, and are largely stable in its rural centres. This comes from Kent Police data on the preceding single year and three-year period to date as of September 2025. More information can be found on the [Kent Police Website](#).

Effective place making and improvements in housing quality using Policies PM1 and PM2 can help correct this trend, by improving the quality housing, increasing natural surveillance to promote safety in the built environment, and building valued community assets and facilities to reduce anti-social behaviour and vandalism.

Design Code Production

Policy PM1 sets out a number of design criteria which must be taken into account when considering all new proposals in the district. This includes consideration of public and private spaces and how inclusive, safe and accessible they are, taking into account local character and provision of open

spaces and nature for sport, play and recreation, utilising public transport. This is applied to all new developments.

The council has also committed to creating a 'Design Code' for areas within the district. A Design Code is a planning document that sets out specific design requirements for new development and will assist the aims of policies SP2, PM1 and PM2. More information about this project and its progress can be found on our [Dover Design Code Project website](#).

Policy PM1 also sets out requirements for where major schemes will be referred to a Design Review Panel. More information is available on our [Design and Design Review webpage](#).

The following applications held in-person Design Review Panels at pre-application stage between April 2024 and March 2025:

- Discovery Park, Ramsgate Road, Sandwich CT13 9ND – Residential phase Reserved Matters applications² (25/00459 and 25/00460)
- Land West of Aylesham Road and South of Spinney Lane, Aylesham (25/00133)
- Land South of Whistlers Forstal, Coombe Lane, Ash (25/00645)

² These applications also held online follow-up meetings

Quality of Residential Accommodation

The evidence that good quality housing is critical to health and wellbeing is well established, and the Covid-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of adequate space in homes and gardens. Improved housing can increase life expectancy, prevent disease and poverty and improve quality of life.

Furthermore, given that people are living longer and the proportion of older people in the population is increasing, the need to provide flexible accommodation over time is critical.

To improve the quality of new homes in the district, Policy PM2 requires all new residential development to have suitable living conditions, with regards to factors including the size and layout of internal spaces, light and ventilation, and to ensure there is sufficient housing stock that meets the needs of residents with accessibility needs.

The policy requires all new homes built to meet the **Nationally Described Space Standards** (this sets out minimum room sizes and other factors such as storage) and the homes must be built in accordance with **Building**

Regulation part M4(2). This means that all the homes are 'Accessible and Adaptable' which includes step free access to the home and parking areas, ground floor WCs and wider doorways, and enables future adaptions to be made for accessibility and functionality if required.

On sites of 20 or more homes, in addition to the M4(2) units, 5% of all homes must meet the **Building Regulation M4(3)** –

'Wheelchair User Homes'. These homes will be provided in the Affordable Housing element of the development rather than the market homes, to accord with national guidance.

The policy applied to planning consents from adoption of the Local Plan in late October 2024, and those secured from that date up to 31st March 2025 are reported below.

- Forty-six M4(2) standard homes were secured by condition
- Three M4(3) standard homes were secured

Density of new housing

Another requirement of Policy PM1 is in relation to built form and the density of new residential development. It encourages appropriate densities of between 30 to 50 dwellings per hectare, and higher density is encouraged around sustainable and accessible locations.

The average density of new residential development in the district is measured by dividing the net units by the net site area (discounting communal use areas like schools, amenity greenspaces and distributor/arterial roads).

Table 1 – Average density of extant development sites

Category	Density (dpha)
All extant sites >50 dwellings (all of district)	38.1
Smaller Villages & Hamlets	21.3
Larger Villages	17.4
Local Service Centres	22.8
Rural Service Centres	42.2
District Centres	36.1
Secondary Regional Centre	62.7

The above table shows average density on all extant sites of over 50 dwellings (yet to be built) across the district which is within the range set by PM1. The table also includes the average density figures for all extant permissions in each tier of settlement in our Settlement Hierarchy, regardless of site size.

Broadly, they demonstrate that new development in the district is less dense in rural settings (Smaller Villages, Larger Villages and Local Centres), and denser in the larger rural, district and regional centres where service provision can support this level of development.

This is in accordance with the aim of PM1 to encourage higher density around sustainable locations and ensure that new development is sensitive to the character and built form of existing development.

Open Space, Sports and Community Facilities

Policies PM3, PM4, PM5 and PM6 of the Local Plan require sites for new homes, mainly on major sites of 10 or more units, to be supported by local infrastructure, such as open space, play, sports and community facilities.

These are secured through the developer contributions process (S106 legal agreements) and for most large sites, delivery of open space such as Children's Equipped Play Space, Accessible Greenspace and/or Allotments is required on-site.

However, there may be circumstances where the council seeks financial contributions towards an existing facility or service in the area, such as for a nearby play area, sports ground or community centre. All information on financial contributions secured through this process from new developments and how it will be spent, can be found in the most recent [Infrastructure Funding Statement](#).

With regards to the loss of existing provision, the policies resist any loss of these services unless evidence is provided. Data from planning applications on these types of spaces and gains and losses will be included in next year's AMR.