

# Appendix A - Electoral Review Working Group

## BRIEFING NOTE

Date: 10 September 2019

**Purpose:** This briefing note is to provide the Working Group with an estimated 2025 electorate forecast.

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### 1. Background

- 1.1. The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 established the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) and it has a responsibility to undertake reviews of the electoral arrangements of local authorities: the number of councillors, the names, number and boundaries of wards, and the number of councillors to be elected to each.
- 1.2. Medway Council was informed by the LGBCE that they will undertake a review starting in 2019 as a result of identifying poor electoral equality in one or more wards that are unlikely to be corrected by foreseeable changes to the electorate.
- 1.3. The LGBCE require a range of information from the council and we are obliged to provide it. This will range from the current electorate, a forecast of the local government electorate in 2025, a copy of the electoral register, various maps, lists of community organisations, the latest external auditors letter and peer review outcome amongst other items.

### 2. Advice and analysis

- 2.1. This briefing note focuses on the calculation of the Medway local government electorate in 2025 it will;
  - Detail the requirements set out by the LGBCE guidance
  - Explain the methodology set out by the LGBCE and the Medway Council approach to use of the methodology
  - Explain the considerations used by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in producing their sub national population projections
  - Provide a calculation for the Medway electorate in 2025
  - Make recommendations for housing development within Medway.

### 3. Requirements set out by the LGBCE

- 3.1. The LGBCE has a statutory duty to ensure that all its reviews are based on robust forecasts of future electorates. It sets out guidance (Electoral Forecasting – User Guidance) to ensure that local authorities prepare forecasts that are robust.

- 3.2. The LGBCE will challenge forecasts provided and may reject forecasts which it believes are not robust. For example, those that overestimate the electorate based on planning permissions, without taking into account completion and occupation timescales.
- 3.3. The council is expected to submit an electoral forecast for six years ahead of the review start date, for Medway this is a forecast for 2025.
- 3.4. The Electoral Forecasting – User Guidance sets out requirements of the data used when determining the future electorate. As such forecasts should;
  - be prepared using information which has been published. This can be by the local authority, its local partners, or regional and national agencies
  - make use of available sources of information about housing e.g. the electoral register, the Local Land and Property Gazetteer
  - take into account housing change from planning that will come to fruition during the forecast period i.e. development of new housing and demolition of existing housing that will be completed and occupied up until 2025
  - use more than one year of data when assessing the ratio of the adult population to the electorate; to avoid single years which may be unrepresentative of registration trends within the local authority
  - make use of existing administrative geographies i.e. local authority boundary, ward boundaries, parishes and polling districts

#### 4. LGBCE Electorate Forecast methodology

- 4.1. The electorate forecast requires electoral statistics and forecasts at polling district level; requiring the interpretation of authority-level and ward-level demographic, electorate and development characteristics.
- 4.2. The electoral forecasting methodology used is summarised in the flowchart in Appendix 1.
- 4.3. The LGBCE provide a population forecasting tool which is based on the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Subnational Population Projections (2014). The LGBCE guidance recommends the use of their forecasting tool, however, the council can use its own forecast or challenge the LGCBE forecasts with additional information.
- 4.4. Medway Council uses the ONS mid-year estimates and sub-national population projections in its functions including Planning. Therefore, it would be consistent with the council's existing approach to population forecasting to use the ONS based forecast provided by the LGBCE, as the base for the 2025 forecast. The council can then enhance this with its knowledge of future housing developments.

- 4.5. To determine the initial future electorate forecast the Electoral Services Team provided three years of electoral registration data (2016, 2017, 2018) to determine an average electorate ratio; 88.7%.

<b>Electoral Register Year</b>	<b>Ratio (Electorate to adult population)</b>
2016	88.5%
2017	88.2%
2018	89.4%
Average	88.7%

- 4.6. The initial future electorate forecast can be calculated using the following approach:

ONS 2025 Adult population x electorate ratio

This approach gives the council an initial future electorate forecast of 211,825 in 2025.

- 4.7. The next stage is to consider future housing development taking account new developments and movement within existing housing stock. The LGBCE view is that;

“In some areas, population change is highly associated with housing development. However, in most areas, most population movement triggered by new housing development will be local and within, rather than into, the local housing market.”

- 4.8. When determining the future housing development to be used the following needs to be considered;

- identification of future housing development
- windfall sites
- housing occupancy
- vacancy rates

- 4.9. The identification of future housing development should use the known housing sites to make a site by site assessment of the likelihood of development, constraints, the housing market and rate of development of individual sites. Blanket assumptions that all properties with planning permission will be developed in the 6 year forecasting period are viewed as being unrealistic. The LGBCE state that the “inclusion of a site which does not even have a planning permission will require justification”.

- 4.10. Windfall sites should not be considered; these are unexpected developments and therefore it would not be possible to spatially locate them to enable the electoral forecast.

- 4.11. Housing occupancy will reflect the likelihood of electors in a property. This can be done by assessing the electorate in occupation after a new development has been completed or by assuming an average number of electors per polling district.
- 4.12. The council has opted to use an average number of electors per polling district.
- 4.13. Vacancy rates also need to be determined as houses completed towards the end of the forecast period which will not have their first occupiers by the end of the period.
- 4.14. The council has opted to use the unoccupied residential building rate from the 2011 Census; this will be used to assume that 3.7% of properties will be unoccupied.
- 4.15. To start the process of forecasting additional electorate change the association between housing development and population change needs to be determined. This is achieved by comparing past housing completions and the changes seen in electoral registration at ward level.
- 4.16. The ward level associations have been determined using the number of completions recorded by Planning between 2014/15 and 2017/18 with the change in electorate between the 2015 and 2018 registers. These timeframes allow for completion and occupation of premises.
- 4.17. The identification of wards with a link took the following process;
- A Medway level average was calculated for both completions and electorate change.
  - To create a common comparator each ward value was divided by the respective average to create indexes for completions and electorate change. A ward with a value the same as the Medway average would have a value of 100.
  - These indexes were combined and divided by 2 (reflecting that there are two inputs) to create a final index value.
  - Any ward with a variation greater than 10% of the average i.e. a final index value of 110 or more, was deemed to be a ward whose electorate change was related to housing development.
- 4.18. The following wards were identified as having electorate change related to housing development; Cuxton and Halling, Gillingham North, Gillingham South, Peninsula, River and Strood Rural.

- 4.19. For wards where there is a relationship between electorate change and housing development the following approach is taken to determine the future additional electorate;

New housing addition = the net number of new dwellings expected in the next six years.

Convert this new housing addition to electors:

Additional electors = New housing addition x factor for vacant dwellings x electorate per dwelling factor

Complete the area forecast:

Initial future electorate forecast + Additional electors from new housing

- 4.20. For wards where there was not a link identified, future housing development was constrained by the housing development that had taken place in the previous 6 years. For these wards the following approach is taken;

New housing addition = net new dwellings expected in the next six years – net new dwellings created in the last six years.

(This may produce a negative number)

Convert this new housing addition to electors:

Additional electors from new housing = Number of new dwellings x electors per dwelling

Complete the area forecast:

Initial future electorate forecast + Additional electors from new housing

- 4.21. In some polling districts this resulted in a negative electorate figure, reflecting the internal movement of the population.

- 4.22. The resulting electorate figure is dependent on the assumed level of future development.

5. Summary of the Office for National Statistics Sub National Population Projections

- 5.1. The subnational population projections are not forecasts and do not attempt to predict the impact that future government or local policies, changing economic circumstances or other factors might have on demographic behaviour.

- 5.2. The subnational population projections take the mid-year population estimates as their starting point. The projected local authority population for each year is then initially calculated by ageing on the population for the previous year, then applying local fertility and mortality rates to calculate the number of projected births and deaths before adjusting for migration into and out of each local authority.
- 5.3. The assumed levels of fertility, mortality and migration for each local authority are derived from observed values during the previous 5 or 6 years. The projections are then constrained to the national population projections for England.
- 5.4. These components of change (natural change, internal migration and international migration) will reflect local trends including migration to Medway from London.
- 5.5. It should be noted that recent trends have been for reducing birth rates and lower migration as such the ONS has been revising its population projections downwards. For example the 2014 projections estimated a total population of 285,200 in 2018, the revised 2016 projections estimated a population of 281,500 in 2018 and the annually produced mid-year estimate for 2018 returned a population of around 278,000.
- 5.6. The slowing population growth can be seen in the changes to the mid-year estimates. Charts showing the year on year changes, from 2009 to 2018, and single year comparisons for 2017 and 2018 can be found in Appendix 2.

## 6. Housing development and impact on future electorate

- 6.1. Electorate figure rationale: committed development and preferred site allocation with planning consent.  

All sites have planning permission. The degree of certainty that these sites will actually be developed is high. Details of all these sites are in the public domain.
- 6.2. The future housing development was assigned to a polling district and used to calculate a future electorate.
- 6.3. The table below, in 6.4, outlines the results of those calculations.

6.4.

	Number of new homes	Additional electorate	2025 electorate	2025 electorate (North)	2025 electorate (South)
	6,513	7,961	219,786	55,487	164,299

6.5. The difference between the current electorate and the future electorate is shown in the table in 6.6. Whilst overall population size is smaller wards to the north of the river are proportionately more likely to see the fastest levels of growth in the electorate.

6.6.

	1 December 2018 electorate	2025 electorate	Difference	% difference
Total electorate	200,267	219,786	+19,519	+9.7%
Electorate north	49,713	55,487	+5,774	+11.6%
Electorate south	150,554	164,299	+13,745	+9.1%

6.7. The change by polling district and ward is shown in Appendix 3

6.8. Based on the 2018 register the current ratio of councillors to electorate is 1:3641. For illustrative purposes a range of councillor number scenarios with their councillor to electorate ratio have been calculated in the table in 6.9.

6.9.

2025 electorate	48 councillors	51 councillors	55 councillors	59 councillors	62 councillors
219,786	4579	4310	3996	3725	3545

6.10. Guidance from the LGBCE, as previously stated in 4.8, reads:

The identification of future housing development should use the known housing sites to make a site by site assessment of the likelihood of development, constraints, the housing market and rate of development of individual sites. Blanket assumptions that all properties with planning permission will be developed in the 6 year forecasting period are viewed as being unrealistic. The LGBCE state that the “inclusion of a site which does not even have a planning permission will require justification”.

6.11. Officers recommend using 219,786 for the future, 2025, electorate forecast.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1. It is recommended that members of the working group:
- Note the contents of this briefing note and the methodology used for calculating the future electorate based upon the LGBCE methodology and future housing developments.
  - Agree 219,786 as the future electorate forecast as part of Medway Council's submission to the LGBCE.

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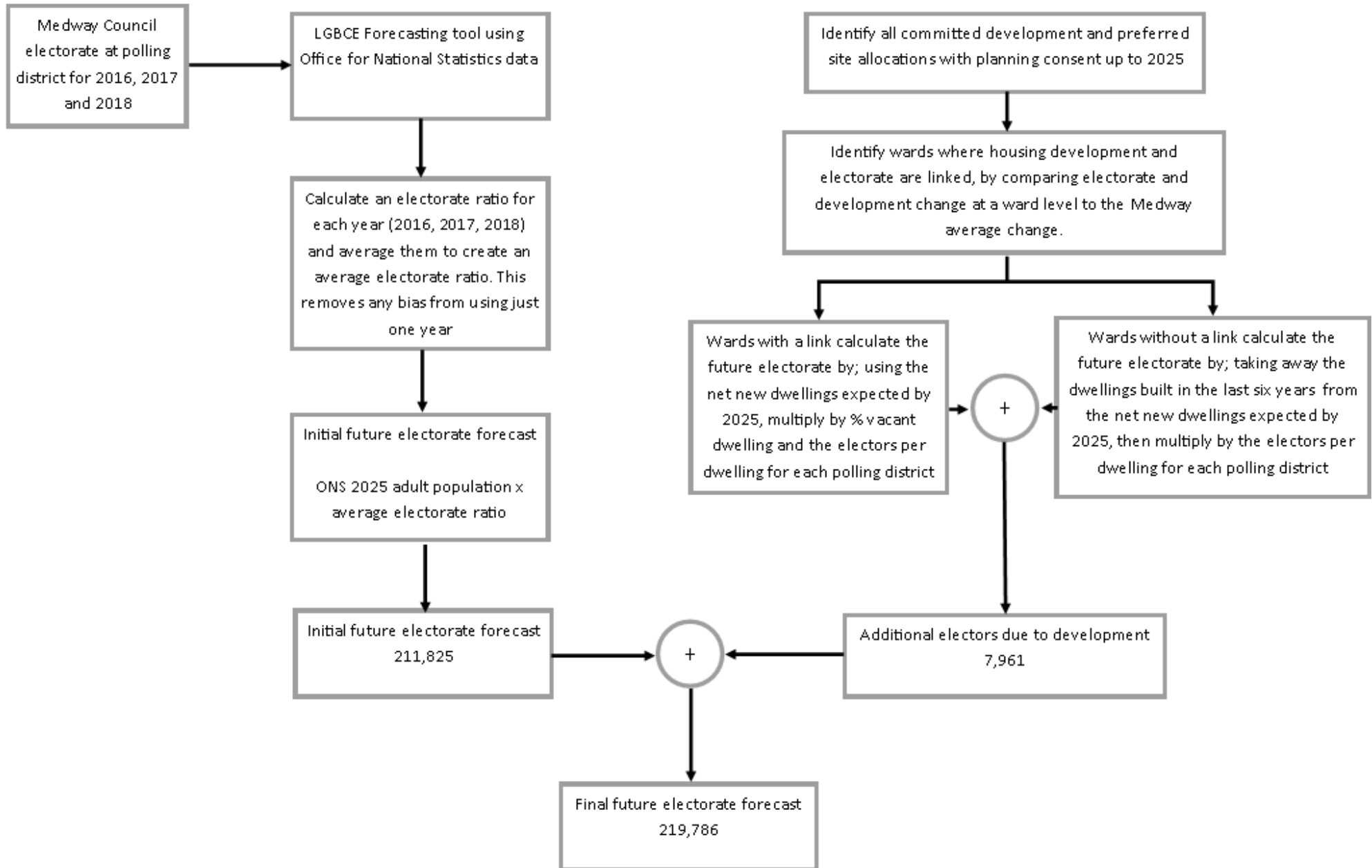


# Future electorate forecasting flowchart

The LGBCE tool and additional dwellings  
processes run concurrently

## LGBCE Tool

## Additional dwellings



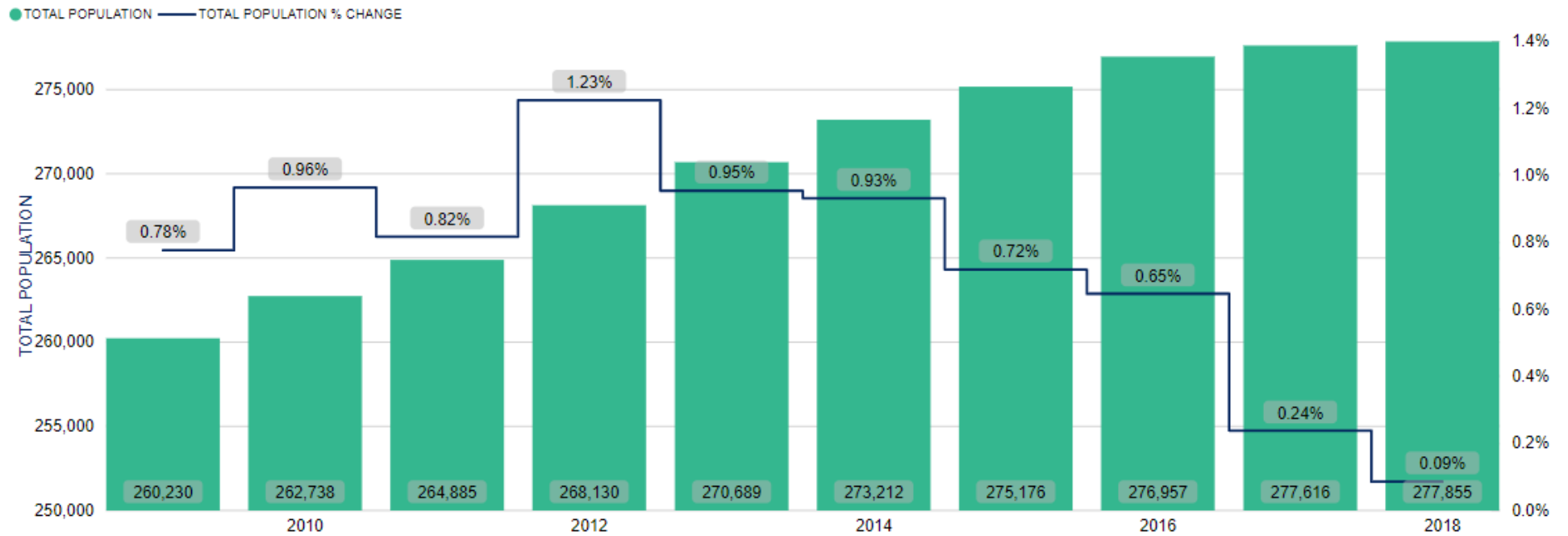


## Appendix 2

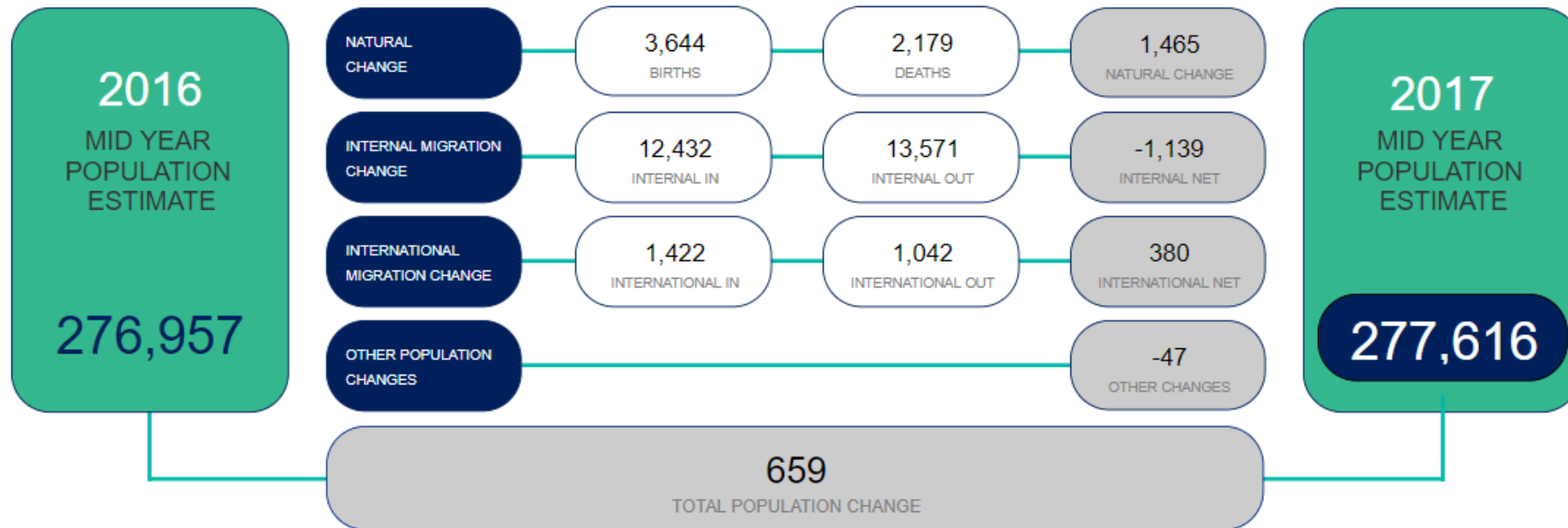
## ONS Mid-Year Estimates

### % CHANGE OF POPULATION YEAR ON YEAR

The following chart shows the population of Medway and the percentage change year on year



## Appendix 2



## Appendix 3

## Current and forecast electorate by existing ward and polling district

Ward	2018 Electorate	2025 Electorate	Actual difference	% Difference
Chatham Central	11054	11611	557	5.0
Cuxton & Halling	5074	5316	242	4.8
Gillingham North	11897	12877	980	8.2
Gillingham South	11391	12175	784	6.9
Hempstead & Wigmore	6584	7047	463	7.0
Lordswood & Capstone	7033	7383	350	5.0
Luton & Wayfield	10022	10913	891	8.9
Peninsula	11372	13592	2220	19.5
Princes Park	7653	7976	323	4.2
Rainham Central	10000	10557	557	5.6
Rainham North	7134	8301	1167	16.4
Rainham South	10347	11003	656	6.3
River	6767	10631	3864	57.1
Rochester East	7664	8155	491	6.4
Rochester South and Horsted	10336	10898	562	5.4
Rochester West	7752	8514	762	9.8
Strood North	10469	11043	574	5.5
Strood Rural	11579	12974	1395	12.1
Strood South	11219	12562	1343	12.0
Twydall	10341	10850	509	4.9
Walderslade	7312	7772	460	6.3
Watling	7267	7637	370	5.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>200267</b>	<b>219786</b>	<b>19519</b>	<b>9.7</b>

### Appendix 3

Existing Ward	Existing polling district	Electorate 2018	Electorate 2025	Difference
Chatham Central	CCC1	3571	3751	180
Chatham Central	CCC2	2018	2107	89
Chatham Central	CCC3	4171	4441	270
Chatham Central	CCC4	1294	1312	18
Cuxton & Halling	RCH1	2135	2284	149
Cuxton & Halling	RCH2	871	817	-54
Cuxton & Halling	RCH3	1684	1807	123
Cuxton & Halling	RCH4	384	408	24
Gillingham North	GGN1	2527	2926	399
Gillingham North	GGN2	2231	2455	224
Gillingham North	GGN3	3493	3663	170
Gillingham North	GGN4	3646	3833	187
Gillingham South	GGS1	2546	2716	170
Gillingham South	GGS2	1835	1949	114
Gillingham South	GGS3	3043	3250	207
Gillingham South	GGS4	3967	4260	293
Hempstead & Wigmore	GHW1	4463	4809	346
Hempstead & Wigmore	GHW2	2121	2237	116
Lordswood & Capstone	CLC1	3423	3555	132
Lordswood & Capstone	CLC2	3309	3517	208
Lordswood & Capstone	CLC3	301	312	11
Luton & Wayfield	CLW1	2824	3345	521
Luton & Wayfield	CLW2	2580	2721	141
Luton & Wayfield	CLW3	1555	1663	108
Luton & Wayfield	CLW4	3063	3184	121

### Appendix 3

Existing Ward	Existing polling district	Electorate 2018	Electorate 2025	Difference
Peninsula	RP1	161	172	11
Peninsula	RP2	1494	1748	254
Peninsula	RP3	2812	3683	871
Peninsula	RP4	2681	3289	608
Peninsula	RP5	632	725	93
Peninsula	RP6	203	221	18
Peninsula	RP7	813	876	63
Peninsula	RP8	1347	1587	240
Peninsula	RP9	1229	1293	64
Princes Park	CPP1	3039	3140	101
Princes Park	CPP2	4389	4600	211
Princes Park	CPP3	225	236	11
Rainham Central	GRC1	3944	4129	185
Rainham Central	GRC2	2667	2824	157
Rainham Central	GRC3	3389	3604	215
Rainham North	GRN1	2015	2006	-9
Rainham North	GRN2	2716	3559	843
Rainham North	GRN3	521	545	24
Rainham North	GRN4	1882	2191	309
Rainham South	GRS1	3347	3549	202
Rainham South	GRS2	2003	2175	172
Rainham South	GRS3	3644	3873	229
Rainham South	GRS4	1353	1406	53

### Appendix 3

Existing Ward	Existing polling district	Electorate 2018	Electorate 2025	Difference
River	RR1	2768	4512	1744
River	RR2	1824	2332	508
River	RR3	1183	2454	1271
River	RR4	992	1332	340
Rochester East	RRE1	1486	1495	9
Rochester East	RRE2	2483	2721	238
Rochester East	RRE3	3695	3939	244
Rochester South and Horsted	RRS1	2117	2158	41
Rochester South and Horsted	RRS2	2031	2171	140
Rochester South and Horsted	RRS3	3041	3247	206
Rochester South and Horsted	RRS4	3147	3321	174
Rochester West	RRW1	673	833	160
Rochester West	RRW2	2460	2719	259
Rochester West	RRW3	1493	1603	110
Rochester West	RRW4	790	846	56
Rochester West	RRW5	2336	2513	177
Strood North	RSN1	3012	3203	191
Strood North	RSN2	1602	1577	-25
Strood North	RSN3	2724	2846	122
Strood North	RSN4	1629	1579	-50
Strood North	RSN5	1502	1837	335



### Appendix 3

Existing Ward	Existing polling district	Electorate 2018	Electorate 2025	Difference
Strood Rural	RSR1	2079	2255	176
Strood Rural	RSR2	2219	2710	491
Strood Rural	RSR3	1489	1879	390
Strood Rural	RSR4	790	838	48
Strood Rural	RSR5	630	671	41
Strood Rural	RSR6	1246	1324	78
Strood Rural	RSR7	1485	1597	112
Strood Rural	RSR8	1641	1701	60
Strood South	RSS1	3369	3637	268
Strood South	RSS2	2528	2668	140
Strood South	RSS3	1585	1715	130
Strood South	RSS4	2065	2768	703
Strood South	RSS5	1672	1774	102
Twydall	GT1	3131	3218	87
Twydall	GT2	4143	4389	246
Twydall	GT3	3067	3243	176
Walderslade	CW1	4148	4419	271
Walderslade	CW2	3164	3353	189
Watling	GW1	1716	1833	117
Watling	GW2	2551	2700	149
Watling	GW3	3000	3104	104