

**2024/25  
AUTHORITY  
MONITORING  
REPORT**

**JUNE 2026  
PLANNING SERVICES**

**DARTFORD**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# 2024/25 AUTHORITY MONITORING REPORT

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) is the 18<sup>th</sup> produced by Dartford Borough Council and covers the period between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025. It reviews how the Dartford Plan to 2037 is being implemented across the Borough, including Ebbsfleet Garden City. This report is structured around three themes; wellbeing of communities, infrastructure and economic investment and green and attractive environment.

Overall, the report indicates that Dartford performed reasonably strongly during the monitoring period. Positive results were recorded in several areas including housing delivery (including affordable housing), brownfield land development, town centre performance, business growth and transport/ public realm improvements. However, there are also areas of weaker performance, most notably for community floorspace delivery, Housing Delivery Test Performance, Gypsy and Traveller pitch provision and completed applicable Biodiversity Net Gain schemes during the monitoring year.

### *Key Headlines*

- 817 net homes delivered during 2024/25, with Dartford Borough Council also demonstrating a 5.84-year deliverable housing land supply.
- 215 affordable homes occupied during the monitoring year, with cumulative delivery since the start of the plan period representing 30% of all housing delivery.
- Strong performance in housing quality indicators; 84% of dwellings provided two bedrooms or more, 100% met the Nationally Described Space Standards, and 83.1% are expected to meet M4(2) accessible housing standards, with a further 2.4% meeting M4(3).
- Delivery of housing on Brownfield land remained high, with 99% of homes completed during the year on previously developed land.
- 41 residential completions in Central Dartford, a net gain of 89 sqm. of Use Class E floorspace, a net gain of 209 sqm. of Use Class F floorspace, and a core frontage vacancy rate of 2%, improving from the previous year.
- Despite a net loss of 875sqm. in B2/B8 floorspace, cumulative employment floorspace delivery since 2021/22 remains well above target at 335,153 sqm.
- Business counts in the Borough have increased to 4,730 enterprises and 5,645 local units.
- All completed residential schemes met the 110 litres per person per day water efficiency standard, 68.2% of EPC standards achieved an A-C rating, and numerous works to the River Darent corridor and flood resilience have continued.
- Some key challenges remain. This includes a net loss of 213 sqm. of education, healthcare and major community use floorspace, under-delivery against the Housing Delivery Test (90%), no new Gypsy and Traveller pitches delivered, and no completed developments completed achieving 10% Biodiversity Net Gain.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

Section 35 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires every local planning authority to report on the implementation of the local development scheme and the extent to which the policies set out in local development documents are being achieved. This information is contained in the AMR.

This is the 18th AMR produced by Dartford Borough Council. It monitors the period between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025.

This report monitors development covering the entire Borough, including Ebbsfleet Garden City, which sits within the boundaries of both Dartford and Gravesham Borough Councils. The Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC), set up by the Government in 2015, has planning authority to manage development applications in Ebbsfleet within their boundaries but it does not have plan-making powers. As such, Dartford's Local Plan applies in the EDC area within Dartford. Inclusion of Ebbsfleet in the AMR also means some outputs derive from applications that were not determined by Dartford Borough Council.

Regulation 34 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 sets out the contents that the AMR must include. The minimum inclusions for the report are as follows:

- The title of any local plans or supplementary planning documents, including the timetable set by the Local Development Scheme and the stage the document has reached in its preparation (see section 3);
- A statement of any local plan or supplementary planning document that has been adopted within the review period; (see section 3)
- Reasons why any policies are not being implemented and the steps that will be taken to ensure the policy is implemented (not applicable);
- Numbers of net additional dwellings and/or net additional affordable dwellings; if specified by policy in a local plan, this must be stated for the time period in review and since the policy was first adopted (see section 4);
- Details of any neighbourhood development plans/orders(see Stone Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2035);
- Information as specified in Regulation 62(4) of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (see Dartford Infrastructure Funding Statement); and
- Details of what cooperative action the authority has taken with other local planning authority and county council prescribed person/body under Section 33A of the Act, during the time period in review (see section 3).

This report is structured as follows:

- Section 3: Dartford's Local Plan and Context
- Section 4: Monitoring indicators set out in the Local Plan
- Sections 5-7: Data monitoring and aggregate outcomes of Local Plan policies

### 3. LOCAL PLAN CONTEXT

Dartford is situated in the northwest of the Kent County, bordering Greater London. The Borough is the smallest of 12 districts in Kent, (7,600 hectares) but is the most densely populated with 17.2 persons per hectare (significantly higher than the Kent average of 4.6 persons per hectare).

The key social and economic characteristics of Dartford Borough include:

- A rapidly growing population needing new local infrastructure, particularly for health and education.
- A population profile that includes a high percentage of children and young adults who will require sufficient educational, employment and leisure opportunities, and access to housing, to meet needs for the future.
- A sizeable labour workforce with high employment rates but a limited choice of local high order/professional local job opportunities.
- High levels of mobility that puts pressure on public transport and creates traffic/ congestion in the Borough contributing to pollution levels.

For a more detailed overview of the Borough, refer to pages 9-20 of the Dartford Plan to 2037.

#### *Statutory Development Plan*

Dartford's statutory development plan relevant to the reporting period is made up of:

- The Dartford Plan to 2037 (2024)
- The Stone Neighbourhood Plan (July 2022), prepared by Stone Parish Council
- Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2025)

#### *Other Planning and Infrastructure Policy*

The Council adopted its Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule in April 2014. The Charging Schedule set out the types of development liable for CIL and the rates payable. Rates are updated annually through indexation. Details of developer contributions received through both CIL and Section 106 Agreements are reported annually in Dartford's Infrastructure Funding Statement (2025). The statement also sets out what the developer contributions have been used for and, where they remain unspent, what infrastructure is intended to be delivered using the contributions.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) add useful guidance for the consideration of planning applications. The Development Plan is also supported by the following SPDs:

- Dartford Parking Standards SPD (2012)
- Dartford Northern Gateway SPD (2012)
- Dartford Housing Windfall SPD (2014)
- Dartford Town Centre Framework SPD (2018)

### *Future Policy Production*

There is no requirement for Dartford to conduct a shorter-term review of the Dartford Plan e.g. to meet housing or traveller's needs.

At the time of publication (June 2026), the Government has introduced new plan-making regulations for England, including the introduction of Supplementary Plans. These will replace SPDs under the reformed system. Supplementary Plans will form part of the development plan and have the same weight as a Local Plan for the purposes of decision-making. However, they will be subject to more formal requirements, including a minimum of one consultation period for a period of no less than 6 weeks, inclusion in the Local Plan timetable, and independent examination.<sup>1</sup>

Existing adopted SPDs will continue to remain relevant until they are superseded or until Dartford Borough Council adopts a Local Plan under the new plan-making system. The final adoption date for new SPDs is set for 30<sup>th</sup> June 2026, to ensure any advanced emerging SPDs can be adopted. For Dartford, this means that future policy guidance published after the transitional period, will need to be considered either through the emerging Local Plan, a Supplementary Plan, or other non-statutory guidance where applicable. The Council will keep planning policy webpages up to date with the latest information on policy preparation and public consultations.

The Council have commenced a Vision and Masterplan for Dartford Town Centre to plan for and deliver regeneration. This work will include evidence that will inform the production of potential new Design Codes.

SPDs may be revised or introduced, depending on changes as to how supplementary policy is produced. Dartford are currently finalising three new SPDs, proposed to be introduced in June 2026:

- **Guidance for Planning Applications for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) SPD.** This focuses on the issues to be taken into account when considering planning applications or enforcement of unlawful HMOs.
- **Darent Riverside and Flood Management SPD.** This sets out the Councils guidance in relation to development along the River Darent, as well as the application of flood risk sequential test in Dartford.
- **Settlements and Sustainable Locations SPD.** This confirms how sustainable transport for locations in the Borough is considered, and the extent of settlements shown on the existing policies map.

### *Cooperation with Neighbouring Councils and Prescribed Bodies*

The Inspector's Report for The Dartford Plan to 2037 concluded that Dartford had undertaken significant cooperative activity with public bodies. This remains ongoing, including inputting to adjoining Local Plans actively proceeding.

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<sup>1</sup> MHCLG, Plan-making regulations explainer, 2025

## 4. MONITORING FRAMEWORK

The monitoring framework applied to this report has been set out in the Dartford Plan to 2037. This framework can be found in Section 6, Table 12 of the Dartford Plan and have been based around 14 strategic objectives, which are grouped under three themes:

- Objectives for the wellbeing of communities (W1-W5)
- Objectives for the wellbeing of infrastructure and economic investment (I1-I4)
- Objectives for a green and attractive environment (G1-G5)

Each strategic indicator contains at least one primary indicator.

Additional sources of data on local development and demographic change include:

- Other publications by Dartford Borough Council, including Residential Needs Assessments and Retail and Leisure Studies
- Kent County Council's Population and Census Information
- Kent County Council's Population and Census Information
- National data sets, including NOMIS Labour Market Statistics and Office for National Statistics census information

## 5. POLICY MONITORING: WELLBEING OF COMMUNITIES



In order to deliver the Dartford Local Plan vision, planning decisions in the Borough will pursue the following objectives for social development:

### Objectives for wellbeing of communities:

- W1** Achieving cohesive, safe, walkable and attractive neighbourhoods, with a real sense of place and vitality that reflects the area's heritage and potential, and whose residents enjoy a choice of homes suited to their needs and easy access to local everyday facilities, including education and healthcare.
- W2** Improving health and wellbeing, and air quality arising from congestion, through reducing the need to travel by private vehicle, particularly by retaining and providing jobs, services, shops, community facilities and open space at suitable locations close to residential areas and where good public transport services are within easy walking distance.
- W3** Providing well-designed new housing that is genuinely mixed, affordable and of varied tenure, sustainable, and promotes healthy living, to secure the quality of life of residents and the ability for them to continue residing at their home or within the Borough.
- W4** Realising whole lifetime residential accommodation options and facilities, with accessible types and designs of living environments catering for people as their circumstances change.
- W5** Encouraging development that provides a wide range of opportunities for residents to enjoy good quality cultural, art, leisure and sports pursuits.

## W1: ACHIEVEMENT OF COHESIVE, SAFE, WALKABLE, AND ATTRACTIVE NEIGHBOURHOODS

**Table 1: Primary indicator outcomes**

| Primary Indicator   | Target  | Monitoring Performance  |
|---|---|---|
| <b>Gain or loss of education, healthcare, and major community use facilities</b>  | Net Gain during the monitoring year   |  A net loss of 213m <sup>2</sup> was recorded during the monitoring year |
| <b>Cumulative performance in delivery against a supply rate of approximately 22,000sqm per annum Use Class C1, E and Class F floorspace and applicable sui generis development.</b> | 22,000 sqm. per annum, totalling to 88,000 sqm. since the start of the Plan Period. |  Cumulative delivery since 2021/22 is 38,064sqm                          |

A total of 444 sqm. for new education, healthcare, and major community use facility floorspace was provided during the monitoring year. There was a loss of 657 sqm. floorspace in the three categories.

This results in a net loss of 213 sqm. Most notably, there was a loss of 309 sqm. due to the change of use of a Nursing home to Dwellinghouse.

**Table 2** below provides a breakdown of net change for C1, E, F and applicable SG classes during the monitoring period.

**Table 2: Net change of use C1, E, F and applicable SG provision based on completions (2024/25)**

| Type  | Gain(m <sup>2</sup> ) | Loss(m <sup>2</sup> ) | Net Change(m <sup>2</sup> ) |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>C1 (Hotels, boarding and guest houses)</b> | 0                     | 0                     | 0                           |
| <b>E</b>                                      | 406                   | 1,357.9               | -951.9                      |
| <b>F</b>                                      | 353                   | 139                   | 214                         |
| <b>SG</b>                                     | 91                    | 0                     | 91                          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                  | 850                   | -1,496.9              | -646.9                      |

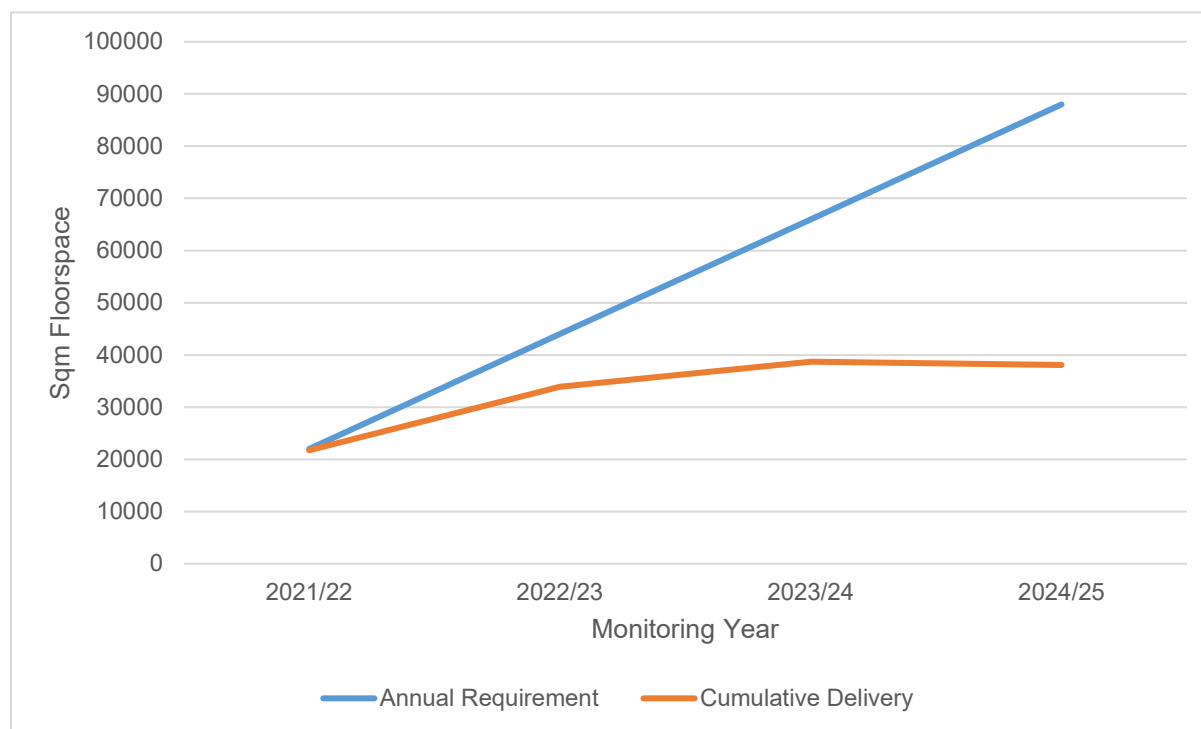
Source: Dartford Borough Council

### Past Trends

Policy S4, Criterion 6 sets out the desirability for providing an average rate of 22,000sqm. of new commercial, business and services uses, and community and learning uses (including offices, health facilities and schools) per annum.

**Figure 1** shows the cumulative performance in delivery of Use Class C1, E, F and applicable Sui Generis (SG) floorspace since the beginning of the Plan Period (April 2021). It shows that cumulative delivery has steadily risen over the past three years, though this recent monitoring year has recorded a small decline.





Cumulative delivery since 2021/22 is recorded to be 38,064sqm, currently underdelivering against the annual requirement of 22,000sqm per annum.

**Figure 1: Gain and Loss of C1, E, F and applicable SG development (2021-2025)**

Source: Dartford Borough Council

## W1: DELIVERY OF SUITABLE TYPES OF DWELLINGS

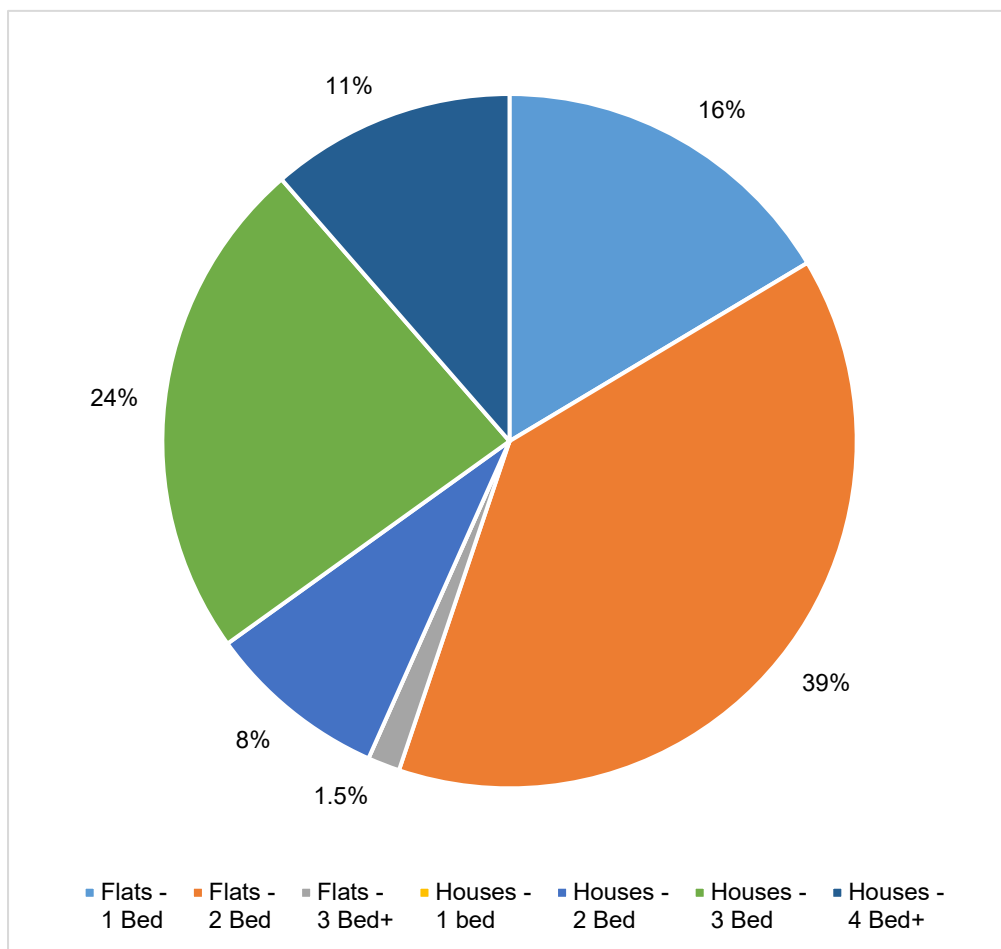
Table 3: Primary indicator outcomes

| Primary Indicator   | Target | Monitoring Performance   |
|---|--------|--|
| Percentage of dwellings constructed within the year that are Two bedrooms or more   | 51%    |  84%                          |
| Percentage of dwellings constructed within the year that are compliant with Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS)   | 100%   |  100%                         |
| Percentage of dwellings constructed within the year on major developments (or in Central Dartford on developments over 100 dwellings) that provide three bedrooms or more | N/A    |  38.2%                        |
| Number of custom/self-build completions   | N/A    |  4 (net gain of 1 dwelling) |

*Borough Wide Delivery*

A total of 3,131 dwellings were constructed during the monitoring year across all developments, including those that have only recorded partial completions during the monitoring year. Of these dwellings, 2,614 (84%) will provide two bedrooms or more. The ratio of houses to flats was 43:57.

**Figure 2** provides a breakdown of dwelling type and size provided on all sites<sup>1</sup>. The most prominent dwelling type and size is 2-bedroom flats (39%), followed by 3-bedroom houses (24%), and then 1-bedroom flats (16%).

**Figure 2: Type and size of dwellings constructed/under construction (2024/25)**

Source: Dartford Borough Council

Across the Borough, all dwellings that were constructed achieved NDSS (100%), an increase from last year's achievement of 96.1%.

### *Major Developments Delivery*

When looking at dwellings constructed within the year on major developments (or in Central Dartford on developments over 100 dwellings), 1,132 dwellings are recorded to provide 3 bedrooms or more, this equates to 38.2%.


### *Number of Custom/Self-build Completions*

There were nil applications described as wholly custom or self-build. Nevertheless, 4 dwellings were completed which are regarded as custom or self-build (for the purposes of CIL). The granting of any relief is not automatic and must be applied for before development commences, using the relevant forms.

During this monitoring year, four self-build schemes identified through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) were completed, delivering a net gain of one dwelling.

## W2: IMPROVED AIR QUALITY

Table 4: Primary indicator outcomes

| Primary Indicator  | Target  | Monitoring Performance   |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Data from the air quality monitors within the AQMAs</b> | All three areas to be compliant with air quality objectives |  Two out of three areas have been recorded to be compliant with air quality objectives for a period of at least 2 years |

The Annual Status Report (ASR) for air quality is an annual report produced as part of the Council's local air quality management responsibilities. The purpose of the ASR is to report the reduction of air pollutant emission concentrations, and to identify new or changing sources of emissions. The most recent ASR can be requested on the Dartford Borough Council website.

The new Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) was published in March 2023. This report outlines the actions Dartford Borough Council will take to improve air quality in the Borough between 2023 and 2028. It is anticipated that further measures will be implemented to ensure concentrations of NO<sub>2</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> across the Borough, specifically within existing Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA), are reduced to and remain below all UK air quality objectives.



Dartford Borough has a total of three declared air quality management areas, located in the following areas:

- A282 Tunnel Approach
- London Road
- Dartford Town Centre and Approach Roads

All areas but London Road have been recorded to be compliant with air quality objectives for at least a period of 2 years. The ASR states that road closures and diversions away from London Road has influenced the pollution levels in this AQMA.

## W2: REDUCED NEED TO TRAVEL

Table 5: Primary indicator outcomes

| Primary Indicator                                     | Target                          | Monitoring Performance  |
|---|---------------------------------|---|
| Vacancy rates within District Centres                 | 0-5%                            |  Longfield – 0%<br>Dartford West – 8%<br>Temple Hill Square – 5%<br>Dartford East – 11%<br>Hawley Road/Lowfield Street – 5%<br>High Street Swanscombe – 5% |
| Progress in completing new District and Local Centres | All three new centres completed |  Three planned new centres at Ebbsfleet are yet to be constructed  |

*Vacancy Rates within District Centres*

**Table 6** highlights the mix of uses for each of the District Centres within the Borough, including vacancy rates, using the new Use Classes Order.

Vacancy rates have stayed consistent with the previous monitoring year. The highest and lowest vacancy rates were recorded at Dartford East (11%) and Longfield (0%). Vacancy rates across the six District Centres were recorded as follows:

- Longfield – 0%
- Dartford West – 8%
- Temple Hill Square – 5%
- Dartford East – 11%
- Hawley Road/Lowfield Street – 5%
- High Street Swanscombe – 5%

Table 6: Use Classes in District Centres (2025)

| Use Class                                | Longfield | Dartford West | Temple Hill Square | Dartford East | Hawley Road/ Lowfield Street | High Street Swanscombe |
|--|-----------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>E</b>                                 | 71%       | 41%           | 76%                | 57%           | 42%                          | 60%                    |
| <b>SG</b>                                | 20%       | 35%           | 10%                | 18%           | 42%                          | 14%                    |
| <b>B2, B8 and associated SG</b>          | 0%        | 0%            | 0%                 | 0%            | 0%                           | 0%                     |
| <b>Residential (C1,C2,C2a,C3 and C4)</b> | 7%        | 13%           | 0%                 | 11%           | 0%                           | 19%                    |
| <b>F.1</b>                               | 2%        | 3%            | 9%                 | 3%            | 0%                           | 2%                     |
| <b>F.2</b>                               | 0%        | 0%            | 0%                 | 0%            | 11%                          | 0%                     |
| <b>VACANT</b>                            | 0%        | 8%            | 5%                 | 11%           | 5%                           | 5%                     |

Source: Dartford Borough Council






### *New District and Local Centre Progress*

Currently all three planned new centres at Ebbsfleet Garden City are yet to be constructed. These will be provided at the following locations:

- Ebbsfleet Central (District Centre)
- Alkerden (District Centre)
- Ashmere (Local Centre)

## W3: PROVISION OF SUFFICIENT HOUSING

Table 7: Primary indicator outcomes

| Primary Indicator   | Target        | Monitoring Performance  |                               |
|---|---------------|---|-------------------------------|
| <b>Five Year Deliverable Housing Land Supply Statement</b>      | 5-year supply |  | 5.84-year supply demonstrated |
| <b>Housing Delivery Test</b>                                    | 95%           |  | 90% (2024)                    |
| <b>Residential permissions for the year</b>                     | N/A           |  | 42 permissions                |
| <b>Residential Completions for the year</b>                     | 790           |  | 817 net homes                 |
| <b>Percentage of homes delivered on sites under one hectare</b> | N/A           |  | 8.4%                          |

*Five Year Deliverable Housing Land Supply Statement*

Dartford Borough Council's latest deliverable housing land supply calculation was produced in December 2025<sup>2</sup> and covers the whole of the Borough (including Ebbsfleet). Under national policy, Local Planning Authorities should demonstrate deliverable land with the capacity to yield sufficient housing to meet their requirement need over a minimum of five years.

Dartford's Local Plan, forms the basis for the target level of supply required. New homes are required to be delivered at an average rate of 790 per annum, totalling 12,640 homes from April 2021 to March 2037 inclusive<sup>3</sup>. Applying national policy and best practice on the definition and justification of deliverable sites, and following consultation, this statement confirms a deliverable housing land supply for Dartford of 5.84 years.

There is solid ground for confidence that Dartford's planned housing supply will continue to be delivered, due to:

- The Borough's location in Kent and adjoining London and Essex, continues to drive economic development and housing demand. Excellent transport accessibility through national road and rail links is complemented by infrastructure investment plans (now confirmed as including the Lower Thames Crossing which will grow highway capacity and alleviate resilience issues at the Dartford Crossing).
- The new local plan was found 'sound' and adopted in 2024 updating housing strategy to meet need and expand land supply, with a suite of strategic allocations, identified new residential sites, and large broad locations for regeneration. It noted the predominance of the housing supply is allocated and well advanced towards delivery, with a large stock of planning permissions.

<sup>2</sup> Dartford Borough Council, 5 Year Deliverable Housing Supply, 2025

<sup>3</sup> Dartford Borough Council, The Dartford Plan to 2037, 2024

- The Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC) brings government funding support, targeted interventions and new infrastructure that promotes and backs large scale house building. The main residential area (formally Eastern Quarry) is expected to provide over 5000 dwellings over the plan period, with different component areas in delivery and new housing outlets commencing. The flagship new 'city centre' Ebbsfleet Central mixed-use development at the international station is programmed to complete the process of gaining planning permission in winter 2025/26.

Therefore, the total capacity of sites under construction will, over time, deliver a large volume of new homes more than sufficient to meet need.

### *Housing Delivery Test*

Local Planning Authorities have an important role in planning for and demonstrating a sufficient supply of housing in their area. The Housing Delivery Test (HDT), published annually by central government, is a percentage calculation of the number of net homes delivered against the number of homes required over a rolling three-year period in each local borough. Full details of the method used for the HDT are specified in the Housing Delivery Test measurement rule book<sup>4</sup>

The HDT outcome for 2024 was 90% (calculated by Government in December 2024). As a result, Dartford Borough Council was required to prepare a Housing Action Plan (2025)<sup>5</sup> which considers causes of under-delivery and identifies actions that can help increase housing delivery in future years.

### *Residential permissions and completions for the year*

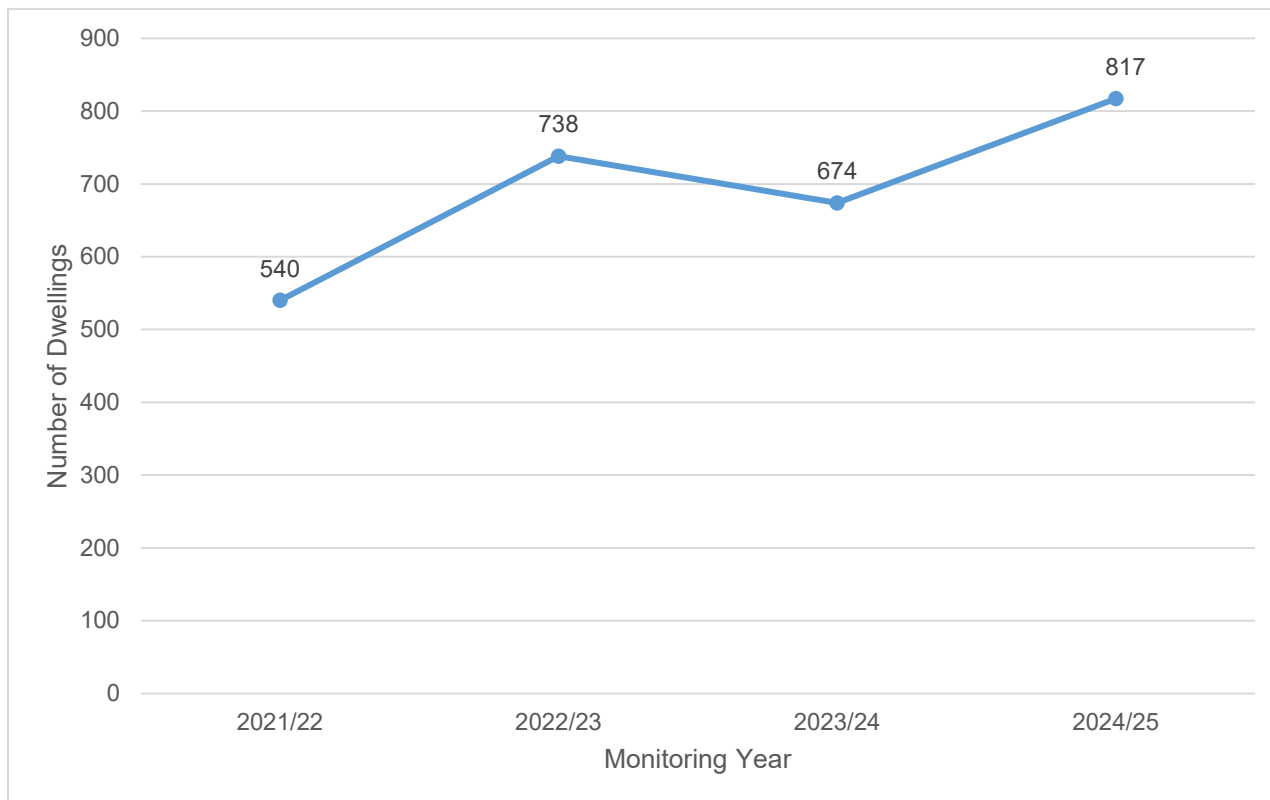
During the monitoring year, a total of 42 applications were permitted for development. These applications will result in a net gain of 461 dwellings, with some units already under construction.

The number of net dwellings delivered in 2024/25 was 817. This is an increase from the previous year's delivery of 674. **Figure 3** shows the annual rate of housing delivery in Dartford since the start of the plan period.

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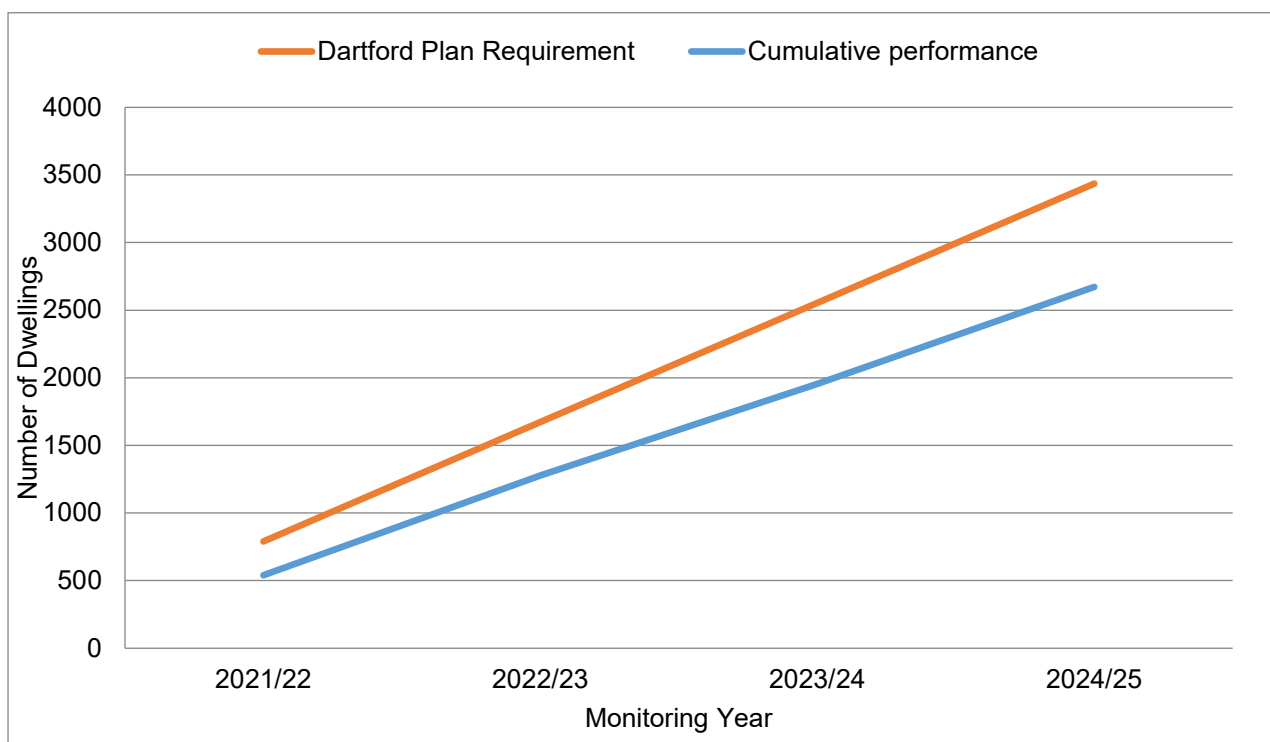
<sup>4</sup> Housing Delivery Test measurement rule book (2018)

<sup>5</sup> Dartford Borough Council, Housing Delivery Test Action Plan, 2025

**Figure 3: Annual rate of housing delivery (2021/22-2024/25)**

Source: Dartford Borough Council

**Figure 4** shows the cumulative delivery of housing against the Dartford Plan policy range (phasing up to 12,640 new homes and the annual needs-based target). The level of completions illustrates aggregate supply by 2024/25 is currently below the Dartford Plan requirement.

**Figure 4: Cumulative housing delivery against Dartford Plan requirement**

Source: Dartford Borough Council


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*Percentage of homes delivered on sites under one hectare*

Of the 817 net homes delivered during the monitoring year, 69 of these were delivered on sites under one hectare. This was recorded on a total of 18 sites. This equates to 8.4% of homes delivered during the year.

## W3: DELIVERY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Table 8: Primary indicator outcomes

| Primary Indicator  | Target | Monitoring Performance  |
|--|--------|---|
| Percentage of dwellings in the year completed/transferred for affordable housing occupation, out of applicable sites | 30%    |  215 affordable housing units (30% of the total housing supply delivered over the Local Plan Period) |

*Affordable Completions*

Within the monitoring year 215 dwellings that meet the current NPPF definition of 'affordable' were transferred and occupied; 202 of these were constructed and occupied within the monitoring year and 13 were already constructed and occupied within a previous monitoring year<sup>6</sup>.

Within the monitoring year, a total of 764 units were delivered on applicable M7 (Affordable Housing) sites of 15 units or more. These were delivered across twelve different sites. All sites will or have been completed over multiple monitoring years with affordable provision either yet to come, already occupied or to be occupied on a neighbouring scheme. This presents difficulties in comparing this year's affordable housing occupations to this year's overall housing completions on applicable sites. If the data limitations of annual counts are set aside, the total for the monitoring period would equate to 28%, an increase from the previous year's total of 19%, and slightly below the 30% target.

*Affordable Housing Tenure*

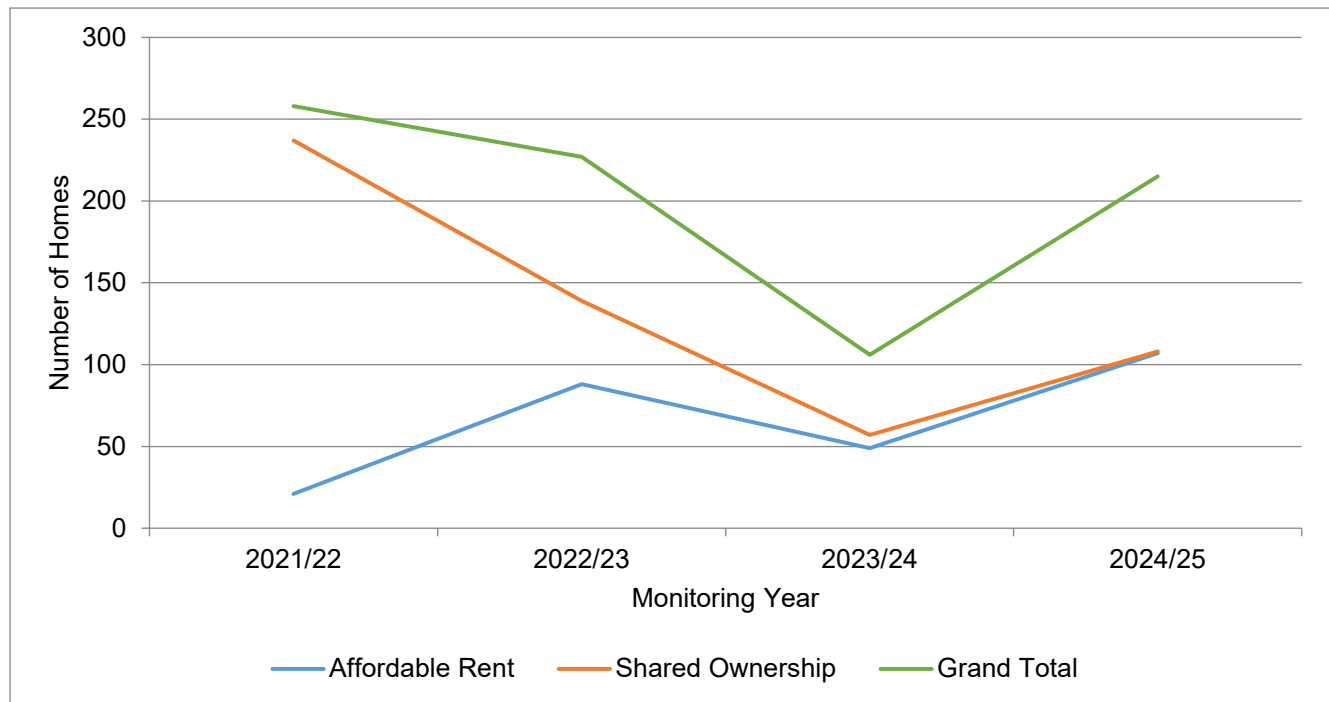
Since the beginning of the Local Plan Period (April 2021), 806 units have been delivered and occupied. Cumulatively, this represents 30% of all delivery, although this understates policy performance as it includes small sites where affordable housing requirements do not apply consistent with government and local policy.

**Figure 5** shows the annual affordable delivery through new builds since the start of the Plan Period, reflecting total affordable delivery as well as delivery by tenure type.

The tenure breakdown recorded for 2024/25 is as follows:

- 108 shared ownership (an intermediate tenure), and
- 107 affordable rental units

<sup>6</sup> Some discrepancies between affordable housing and residential completion data may arise due to the time lag between housing completion and affordable housing transfer.

**Figure 5: Affordable housing delivery by tenure (2021/22-2024/25)**

Source: Dartford Borough Council

## W3: PROVISION OF GYPSY AND TRAVELLER AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE PITCHES

Table 9: Primary indicator outcomes



| Primary Indicator  | Target  | Monitoring Performance   |
|--|---|--|
| <b>New pitches/plots granted permission in the year</b>                            | Gain  |  No new pitches/plots were granted permission during the monitoring year. |
| <b>Five-year traveller pitch and travelling showpeople plot supply and context</b> | Table 8 of the Dartford Plan to 2037 identifies a total need of 55 pitches from 2019 to 2025 <sup>7</sup> . |  Cumulative delivery between 2019/20 and 2023/24 was 37 pitches.          |

Table 8 of the Dartford Plan to 2037 identifies a total need for 55 Gypsy and Traveller pitches between 2019-2024 and 83 pitches by 2035.


The above need figures, reflecting the Dartford Plan to 2037 (adopted 2024), is based on the new December 2023 national definition, which is wider than previously for planning.

Cumulative delivery between 2019/20 and 2024/25 was 37 pitches. There were no new pitches completed during the 2024/25 monitoring year. This results in an unmet need of 18 pitches for the 2019-2024 period, and a residual need of 46 pitches by 2035.

<sup>7</sup> The need figure in the Dartford Plan to 2037 is based on the definition announced in December 2023, which is broader than previous figures.

## W4: PROVISION OF WHOLE OF LIFETIME RESIDENTIAL HOMES

Table 10: Primary indicator outcomes

| Primary Indicator  | Target | Monitoring Performance  |
|--|--------|---|
| Percentage of dwellings constructed not meeting Building Regulations Category M4(2) requirements | 0-5%   |  16.9% |




There are non-mandatory development standards for new homes to assist those with mobility issues, which are covered in the Government's Approved Document M statutory guidance. Under Policy M8 of the Dartford Plan, all new dwellings are expected to meet the M4(2): Category 2 - accessible and adaptable standards and a limited proportion of dwellings to meet the requirement M4(3): Category 3 - Wheelchair User Dwellings is sought on sites of 100 or more dwellings. Only where it can be robustly demonstrated why it is not possible to contribute to these requirements will applicable developments be exempted.

A total of 3,131 dwellings were recorded to be delivered on sites that recorded completions during the monitoring year<sup>8</sup>. Of these, 2,601 dwellings are expected to comply with M4(2) accessible and adaptable standards (83.1%). A further 75 dwellings are expected to meet the M4(3) wheelchair use standards (2.4%).

<sup>8</sup> This figure represents the total number of dwellings across whole sites, including those that have only recorded partial completions during the monitoring year.

## W5: PROVISION OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR CULTURE, ART, LEISURE AND SPORTS

Table 11: Primary indicator outcomes

| Primary Indicator   | Target                | Monitoring Performance  |
|---|-----------------------|---|
| <b>New Use Class F permissions/completions</b>                        | Net gain              |  Net gain of 214m <sup>2</sup>               |
| <b>New other applicable major development permissions/completions</b> | Net gain              |  None  |
| <b>Applications refused involving the loss of facilities</b>          | No loss of facilities |  No applications for the loss of facilities. |

*New Use Class F Permissions and Completions*

A total floorspace of 353 sqm. for new development related to culture, art, leisure and sports uses was provided during the monitoring year. There was a loss of 139 sqm. floorspace.

This results in a net gain of 214 sqm. Most notably, there was a gain of 209 sqm. due to the change of use of a day centre to a place of worship along with ancillary community and educational uses.

**Table 12** below provides a breakdown of net change for completions related to Use Class F and other applicable major developments during the monitoring period.

There were no permissions during the monitoring year which relate to the provision of opportunities for culture, art, leisure and sports

**Table 12: Net change of Use Class F and applicable major development provision based on completions (2024/25)**

| Type                                       | Gain(m <sup>2</sup> ) | Loss(m <sup>2</sup> ) | Net Change(m <sup>2</sup> ) |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>F.1</b>                                 | 209                   | 139                   | 70                          |
| <b>F.2</b>                                 | 144                   | 0                     | 144                         |
| <b>Other applicable major developments</b> | 0                     | 0                     | 0                           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                               | 353                   | -139                  | 214                         |

Source: Dartford Borough Council

*Applications Refused Involving the Loss of Facilities*

During the monitoring year, no applications which involved the loss of facilities related to culture, arts, leisure and sports were recorded.

## SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE: WELLBEING OF COMMUNITIES

Overall, Dartford performed well, with several indicators meeting targets or showing positive progress.



## Community facilities

**-213 sqm**

Net loss in education, healthcare and major community-use floorspace; below cumulative delivery requirement.



## Housing delivery

**817 net homes delivered**

Up from 674 last year; 5.84-year deliverable housing land supply maintained.



## Housing Delivery Test

**90%**

2024 HDT result required preparation of a Housing Action Plan.



## Dwelling mix &amp; space

**84% 2 bed+ | 100% NDSS**

84% provide two or more bedrooms; 100% met Nationally Described Space Standards.



## Major developments

**38.2% 3 bed+**

Dwellings providing three or more bedrooms; four self-build schemes completed.



## Air quality

**2 of 3 AQMAs compliant**

Objectives met for at least two years in two of the Borough's three Air Quality Management Areas.



## District centres

**Stable vacancies**

Vacancy rates broadly stable; three planned Ebbsfleet centres are yet to be built.



## Affordable housing

**215 homes Occupied**

Affordable homes occupied, equivalent to 30% of total delivery over the Local Plan period.



## Gypsy &amp; Traveller pitches

**None provided**

No new pitches delivered; unmet need of 18 pitches for 2019–2024 and residual need of 46 by 2035.



## Accessible housing

**83.1% M4(2) | 2.4% M4(3)**

83.1% expected to meet M4(2), with a further 2.4% expected to meet M4(3).



## Culture, art, leisure &amp; sport

**+214 sqm**

Net gain in provision; no applications involving the loss of such facilities were refused.

## 6. POLICY MONITORING: INFRASTRUCTURE AND ECONOMIC INVESTMENT

In order to deliver the Dartford Local Plan vision, planning decisions in the Borough will pursue the following objectives for economic development:

### Objectives for infrastructure and economic investment:

- I1** Continuing urban regeneration through optimising the re-use of accessible and suitable brownfield land primarily within the north of the Borough to meet future local housing and employment needs, and delivering new infrastructure for travel, schools/skills, health, and other local services.
- I2** Facilitating a range of upgrades to the transport network, and a choice of sustainable and active travel options, with rapid and reliable public transport linking existing neighbourhoods and developments to key destinations and facilities, together with a high quality and comprehensive walking and cycling network.
- I3** Achieving a vibrant Dartford Town Centre with an attractive public realm in an enjoyable and accessible environment, new residential communities, improved connections and services, and a flourishing day and evening economy with an enticing cultural, retail and leisure offer.
- I4** Retaining a prosperous economy with a good choice of jobs per resident, increasing high quality, accessible, local employment opportunities, maintaining a diverse supply of premises and supporting existing business needs, with Ebbsfleet providing a productive mix of new commercial, community and residential activities.

## I1: BROWNFIELD DEVELOPMENT

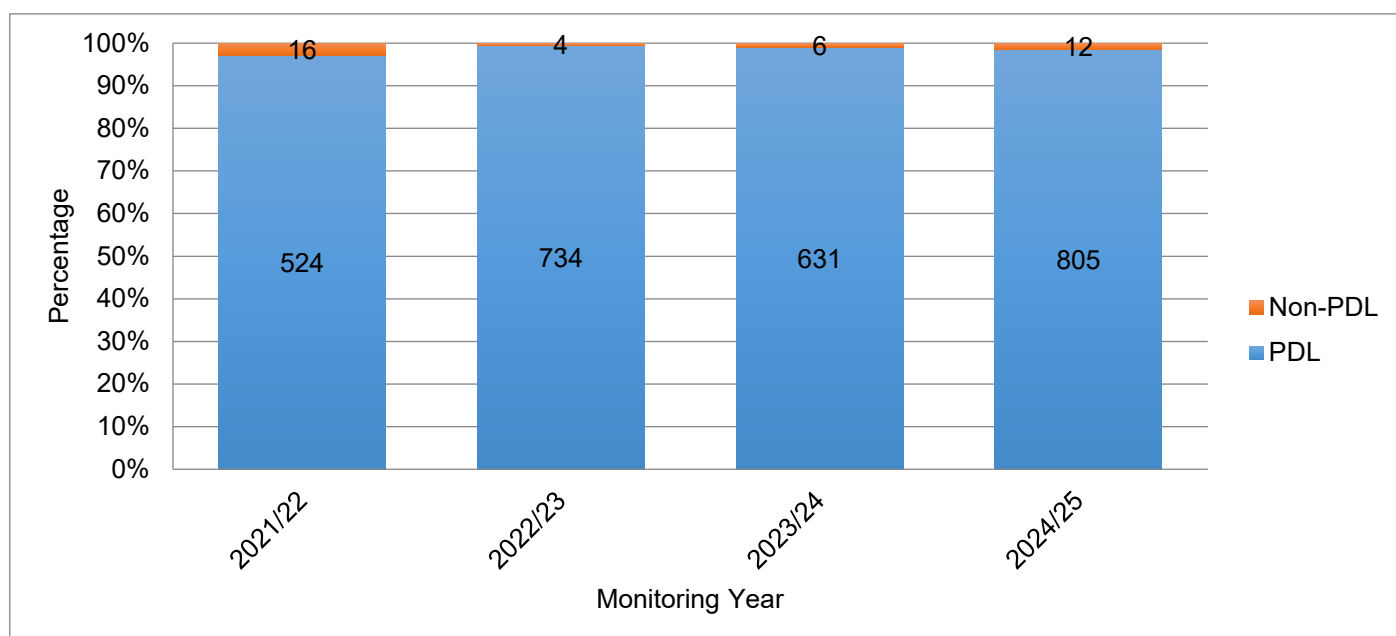
Table 13: Primary indicator outcomes

| Primary Indicator   | Target | Monitoring Performance                   |
|---|--------|--|
| Percentage of new dwellings built on brownfield land over the plan period | 80%    | <span style="color: green;">●</span> 99% |

During the monitoring year, 805 of the 817 net completed units were on previously developed land or partially previously developed land. This includes conversions or changes of use. This equates to 99% of completions within the monitoring year.

The total proportion of new dwellings on brownfield land in the Plan Period 2021-2025 is 98.6%. The yearly proportion is set out in **Figure 6** below. This shows that the percentage of new dwellings on brownfield land has remained consistently high over the plan period, with the target of 80% being achieved in all years.


Figure 6 - proportion of new dwellings on Previously Developed Land (PDL) (2021/22-2024/25)



Source: Dartford Borough Council

## 12: IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW, OR ENHANCEMENTS TO, THE CYCLE/PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

**Table 14: Primary indicator outcomes**

| Primary Indicator   | Target                               | Monitoring Performance   |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|
| Implementation of new, or enhancements to, the cycle/pedestrian network | Provision during the monitoring year |  One scheme provided cycle/pedestrian pathways and public realm |

One application during the monitoring year was recorded to provide/improve cycle/pedestrian pathways, this was located within the East of Lowfield Street allocation. This included enhanced permeability of the site and the provision of a fully accessible public realm. This has been achieved both through the creation of a Green Link connecting Lowfield Street to Central Park, and through the creation of a pedestrian axis which links the entirety of the Lowfield Street development in a north-south direction<sup>9</sup>.



**Figure 7 – Public realm delivered at Development East of Lowfield Street**



<sup>9</sup> For more information see planning reference 19/00600/FUL

## I2: IMPROVEMENTS TO TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

Table 15: Primary indicator outcomes

| Primary Indicator   | Target  | Monitoring Performance  |
|---|---|---|
| <b>Fastrack usage data and network improvements</b>   | An increase in patronage and delivery of improvements |  No data is available for this monitoring period<br>Introduction of electric buses and a new shuttle service, known as the F route |
| <b>Highways project delivery including The Strategic Transport Infrastructure annual report</b> | Completion of five STIPS projects                     |  Three of the five complete<br>Two under construction  |

In November 2024, public transport operator Go-Ahead took over the Fastrack Service contract from Arriva. As a result, usage data is not available for this monitoring year but will be reported on in future Authority Monitoring Reports.

Since April 2025, electric buses have been introduced to the Fastrack service, with diesel buses anticipated to be gradually phased out.

A new shuttle service, known as the F route, was also introduced in April 2025. This links Ingress Park to Bluewater, allowing passengers to transfer onto Fastrack B route until the Galley Hill diversion situation has been resolved.

#### *Highways project delivery including STIPS annual report*

The Strategic Transport Infrastructure Programme (STIP) (formerly Kent Thameside Strategic Transport Programme) is a long-term package of transport improvements designed to primarily support major development in Dartford and Gravesham

**Table 16** provides an overview of the five strategic projects that fall within the Dartford Borough.

Kent County Council project expected spending of £3.3 million on further STIPs schemes in Dartford<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> Kent County Council, Infrastructure Funding Statement, 2025








**Table 16: Progress of STIP projects**

| <b>Project</b>                                     | <b>Description</b>  | <b>Status</b>  |
|--|---|--|
| A2 Bean Interchange (led by Highways England)      | Modification of junctions and changes to merge and diverge lanes to improve access between the A2 Trunk Road and development sites to the north.  | Complete   |
| A2 Ebbsfleet Interchange (led by Highways England) | Enlarge and signalise A2/B259 roundabouts, dualling of connecting link road and link road to A2 Pepperhill Junction.  | Works completed in May 2022 and junction is now fully open to traffic  |
| A226 London Road/St Clements Way                   | Enlargement of existing roundabout to improve capacity and relieve congestion point on local strategic road network.  | Complete   |
| Dartford Town Centre improvements                  | Overarching aim of regenerating town centre through transport and public realm improvements. These include: improved connectivity and safety for pedestrians and cyclists, improved reliability of journey time for cars into the town centre, incorporation of Urban Traffic Management Control and better integration of buses. | Phase 1 complete<br>Phase 1a complete<br>Phase 2a complete<br>Phase 2B complete<br>Phase 3 at procurement stage<br>Phase 3a under construction<br>Phase 4 ready to commence construction |
| Area-wide urban traffic management and control     | Introduction of signal control at junctions, variable message signs, CCTV and real-time information to regulate and manage traffic on local road network.   | In construction  |

Source: Dartford Borough Council

## I3: ACHIEVEMENT OF A VIBRANT DARTFORD TOWN CENTRE

Table 17: Primary indicator outcomes

| Primary Indicator   | Target                                   | Monitoring Performance   |
|---|--|--|
| Number of completed residential units within Central Dartford   | N/A                                      |  41   |
| Net gain in Use Class E floorspace within Dartford Town Centre  | Net gain                                 |  Net gain of 89 sqm.  |
| Net gain in Use Class F floorspace within Dartford Town Centre  | Net gain                                 |  Net gain of 209 sqm.   |
| Vacancy rates of Core Frontage  | 0-5%                                     |  2%   |
| Progress on new visitor uses, i.e. new leisure, culture and hotel facilities  | Provision of new visitor uses            |  One completion for the change of use of day centre to place of worship   |
| Property market information on rents within Dartford Town Centre  | Consistent/improvement town centre rents |  £400 per m <sup>2</sup> , remaining consistent over the past 4 years  |
| Completed development and/or projects within the monitoring year that provided new or enhanced public realm or green infrastructure in Central Dartford | N/A                                      |  At East of Lowfield Street, enhanced permeability of the site and a fully accessible public realm was delivered<br><br>In 2023, Dartford Borough Council delivered a new public realm scheme to the existing area known as One Bell Corner located on Dartford High Street.<br><br>An interactive artwork will be unveiled in tribute of Len Goodman this July |

*Number of Completed Residential Units within Central Dartford*

During the monitoring year, a total of 41 residential units were completed within Central Dartford. Most notably, 35 completions were recorded at the East of Lowfield Street allocation<sup>11</sup>, with more completions expected in the next monitoring period.

<sup>11</sup> Planning reference: 19/00600/FUL

### *Net gain in Use Class E floorspace within Dartford Town Centre*

A total floorspace of 298 sqm. for Use Class E was provided within the Dartford Town Centre during the monitoring year. There was a loss of 209 sqm. floorspace.

This results in a net gain of 89 sqm. Most notably, there was a gain of 298 sqm. due to the change of use to create two Café/Restaurants.

**Table 18** below provides a breakdown of net change for completions related to Use Class E during the monitoring period.

**Table 18: Net change of Use Class E provision within Dartford Town Centre based on completions (2024/25)**

| Type | Gain(m <sup>2</sup> ) | Loss(m <sup>2</sup> ) | Net Change(m <sup>2</sup> ) |
|------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| E    | 298                   | 209                   | 89                          |

### *Net gain in Use Class F floorspace within Dartford Town Centre*

One application related to Use Class F was recorded within Dartford Town Centre. A total floorspace of 209 sqm. for Use Class F was provided during the monitoring year. There was no loss of Use Class F floorspace.

This results in a net gain of 209 sqm. This related to the change of use of a day centre (Class E) to place of worship along with ancillary community and educational uses (mixed use).

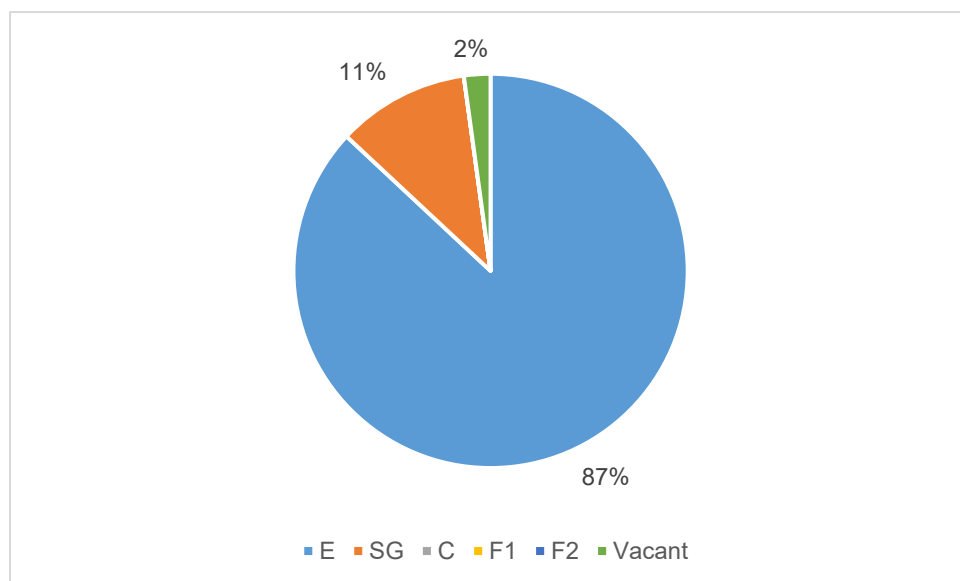
**Table 19** below provides a breakdown of net change for completions related to Use Class E during the monitoring period.

**Table 19: Net change of Use Class E provision within Dartford Town Centre based on completions (2024/25)**

| Type         | Gain(m <sup>2</sup> ) | Loss(m <sup>2</sup> ) | Net Change(m <sup>2</sup> ) |
|--------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| F.1          | 209                   | 0                     | 209                         |
| F.2          | 0                     | 0                     | 0                           |
| <b>Total</b> | 0                     | 0                     | 209                         |

### *Vacancy rates of Core Frontage*

Under the new Dartford Plan to 2037, the primary shopping area is now referred to as Core Frontage (defined as 2-64 High Street). The current mix of uses in these areas is set out in **Figure 8**.

**Figure 8: Core Frontage Use Classes (2025)**

Source: Dartford Borough Council

The vacancy rate in the Town Centre's Core Frontage is 2% (1 units), down from 5% last monitoring year. 87% of units are actively in Class E use. Within the former A1 uses, the majority are comparison retail with an even split of essential goods and services. 11% (5 units) were recorded to be operating under Sui Generis Use.

25 out of 29 units in the Priory Shopping Centre were recorded to be operating under Use Class E. 4 units were recorded as vacant (14%)

25 out of 36 units in the Orchards shopping centre were recorded as Use Class E (69%). 7 were recorded as vacant (19%), with the remaining units being SG (6%), F.1 (3%) and F.2 (3%) respectively.

#### *Progress on new visitor uses, i.e. new leisure, culture and hotel facilities*

One application was completed during the monitoring year relating to new visitor uses within Dartford Town Centre. This was for the change of use of day centre to place of worship along with ancillary community and educational uses, delivering 209 sqm. of floorspace.

#### *Property market information on rents within Dartford Town Centre*

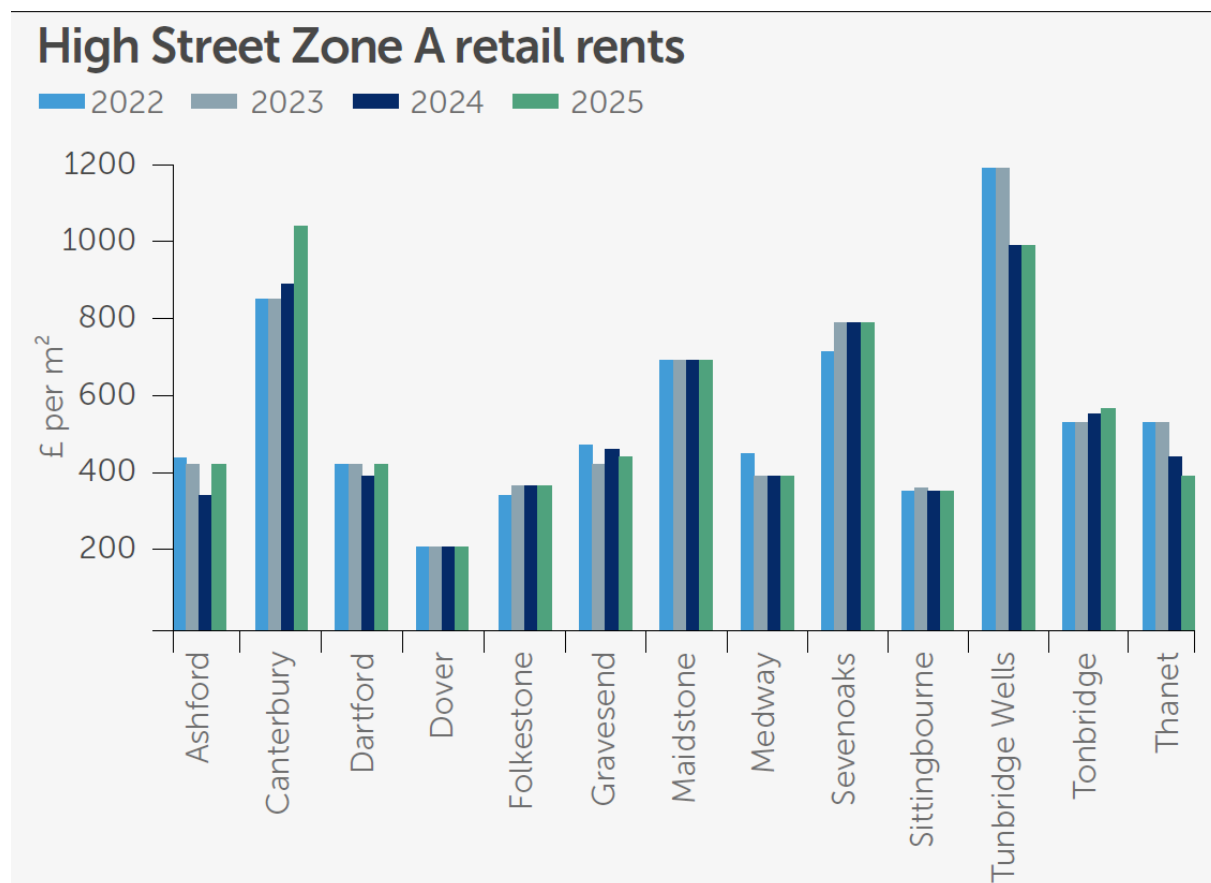
**Figure 9** shows retail rent prices per m<sup>2</sup> across high street zones in Kent. Retail rents in Dartford have remained relatively consistent over the past 4 years, averaging around £400 per m<sup>2</sup>. This is recorded to be the joint 6<sup>th</sup> highest across Kent.

Canterbury recorded the highest retail rent (over £1,000 per m<sup>2</sup>) whilst Dover recorded the lowest (£200 per m<sup>2</sup>).

Across Kent, as the high street continues to move towards a new style of retail experience, many Kent high streets have seen a lot of brand movement. More artisanal businesses have also been moving in across Kent, though some seaside towns have suffered<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> Kent Property Market Report 2025-26

Figure 9: Kent High Street Retail Rents



Source: Cradick Retail

*Completed development and/or projects within the monitoring year that provided new or enhanced public realm or green infrastructure in Central Dartford*

One application in Central Dartford was recorded to provide a new public realm, located on the east of Lowfield Street allocation. This included enhanced permeability of the site and the provision of a fully accessible public realm. This has been achieved both through the creation of a Green Link connecting Lowfield Street to Central Park, and through the creation of a pedestrian Axis which links the entirety of the Lowfield Street development in a north-south direction<sup>13</sup>.

In 2023, Dartford Borough Council delivered a new public realm scheme to the existing area known as One Bell Corner located on Dartford High Street. This involved the unveiling of a new sculpture of Mick Jagger and Keith Richards as well as spaces to sit, socialise and enjoy the surroundings<sup>14</sup>.

Dartford Borough Council will also be unveiling an interactive artwork in tribute of Len Goodman this July. The artwork will encourage visitors to dance while reminding them of some of Len's best quips<sup>15</sup>. This will be installed outside the Goodman Dance Academy in Market Street, which Len Goodman first opened in 1973.




<sup>13</sup> For more information see planning reference 19/00600/FUL

<sup>14</sup> Dartford Borough Council, 2023

<sup>15</sup> Dartford Borough Council, Toe-tapping tribute to Len Goodman to be unveiled in Dartford, 2026

## I4: RETAINING A PROSPEROUS ECONOMY WITH A GOOD CHOICE OF JOBS

Table 20: Primary indicator outcomes

| Primary Indicator  | Target   | Monitoring Performance   |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Cumulative performance in delivery against a supply rate of approximately 25,000sqm per annum Use Class B2/B8 floorspace and applicable sui generis development</b> | 25,000 sqm. per annum, totalling to 100,000 sqm. |  335,153 sqm. delivered since the beginning of the Plan Period |
| <b>Property market information on commercial rents</b>   | N/A  |  High values of employment have been maintained                |
| <b>Nomis data on number of businesses</b>  | N/A  |  4,730 enterprises<br>5,645 local units                        |

*Cumulative performance in B2/B8 Delivery*

A total floorspace of 2,533 sqm. for new development related to B2/B8 and applicable sui generis use was provided during the monitoring year. There was a loss of 3,408 sqm. floorspace. This includes one application for the change of use from B8 to B2, the only provision of B2/B8 recorded during the monitoring year. This results in a net loss of 875 sqm.

**Table 21** below provides a breakdown of net change for completions related to Use Class E during the monitoring period.

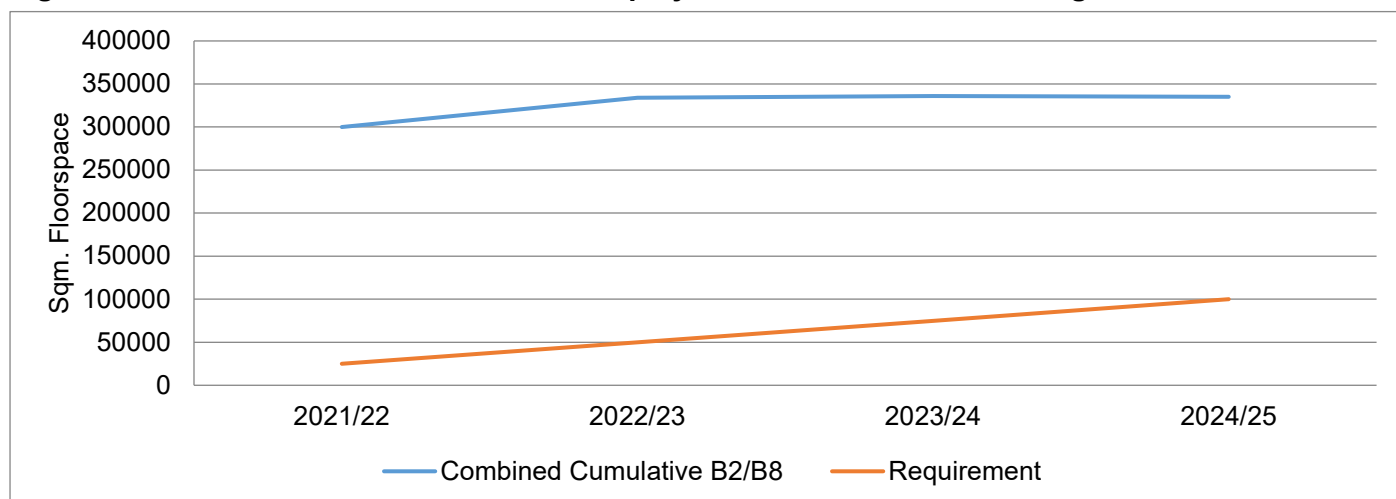
**Table 21: Net change of Use Class B provision and applicable sui generis development based on completions (2024/25)**

| Type                             | Gain(m <sup>2</sup> ) | Loss(m <sup>2</sup> ) | Net Change(m <sup>2</sup> ) |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Industrial (B2)</b>           | 0                     | -2,533                | -2,533                      |
| <b>(Storage distribution) B8</b> | or 2,533              | -875                  | 1,658                       |
| <b>Total</b>                     | 2,533                 | -3,408                | -875                        |

Source: Dartford Borough Council

Policy S4 of the Dartford Plan to 2037 sets out a target of 25,000 sqm. per annum on average of industrial/distribution development (projecting forward to 2036/37, this would total a potential 400,000 sqm.).

**Figure 10** displays the cumulative net changes since the start of the Plan Period (April 2021). It shows that even though cumulative B2/B8 delivery has slightly declined in the past year, cumulative delivery is above the requirement set out in the Dartford Plan. Since the start of the Plan Period, Dartford has delivered a total of 335,153 sqm.

**Figure 10 – Cumulative Gain and Loss of employment use in Dartford Borough since 2021/22**

Source: Dartford Borough Council

### *Property market information on commercial rents*

The 2025/26 Kent Property Market Report<sup>16</sup> outlines the rent for a variety of use types across Kent. Overall, Dartford is maintaining or increasing rent across categories, including distribution and industrial premises.

The report shows that high values in Dartford for employment have been maintained, driving the provision of new business accommodation.

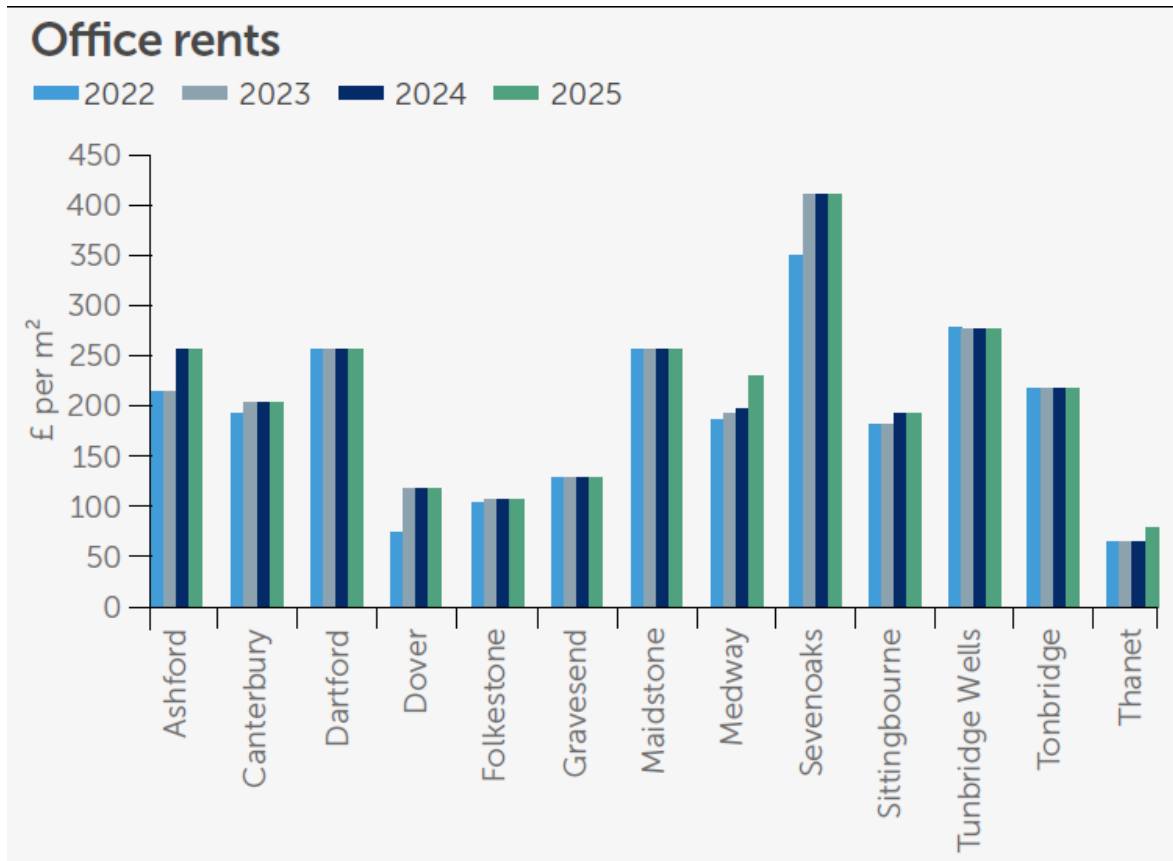
In the past monitoring year, office rent has remained consistent to previous monitoring years, at £250 per sqm. **Figure 11** highlights this change

Rent at Crossways business park has increased by around £50 per m<sup>2</sup>, remaining stable since 2022, as shown in **Figure 12**.

Local industrial and distribution rent has slightly increased since 2022, with Dartford recording the joint highest rates across the Kent County. The overall excess level of rent locally above elsewhere has also increased in comparison. **Figure 13** shows this trend.

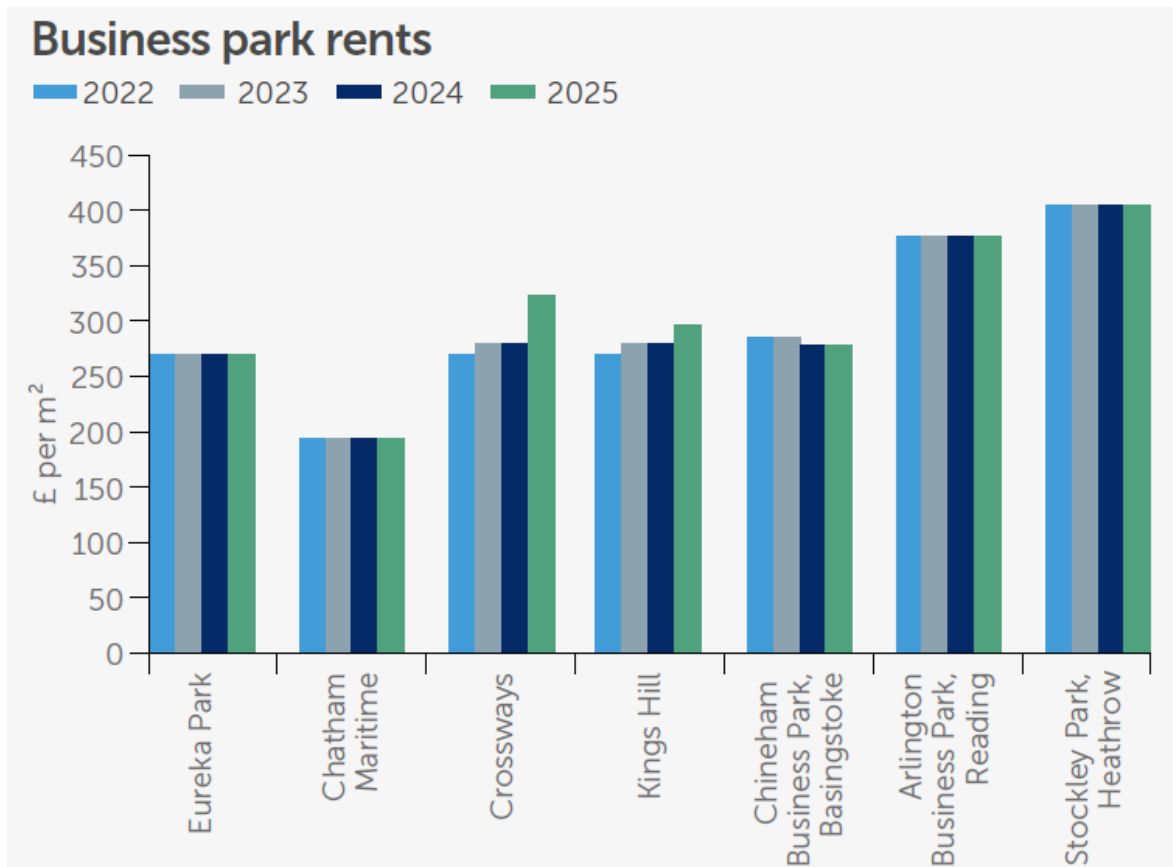
<sup>16</sup> Kent County Council & Caxtons, Kent Property Market Report, 2025

Figure 11: Kent office Rents between 2022-2025



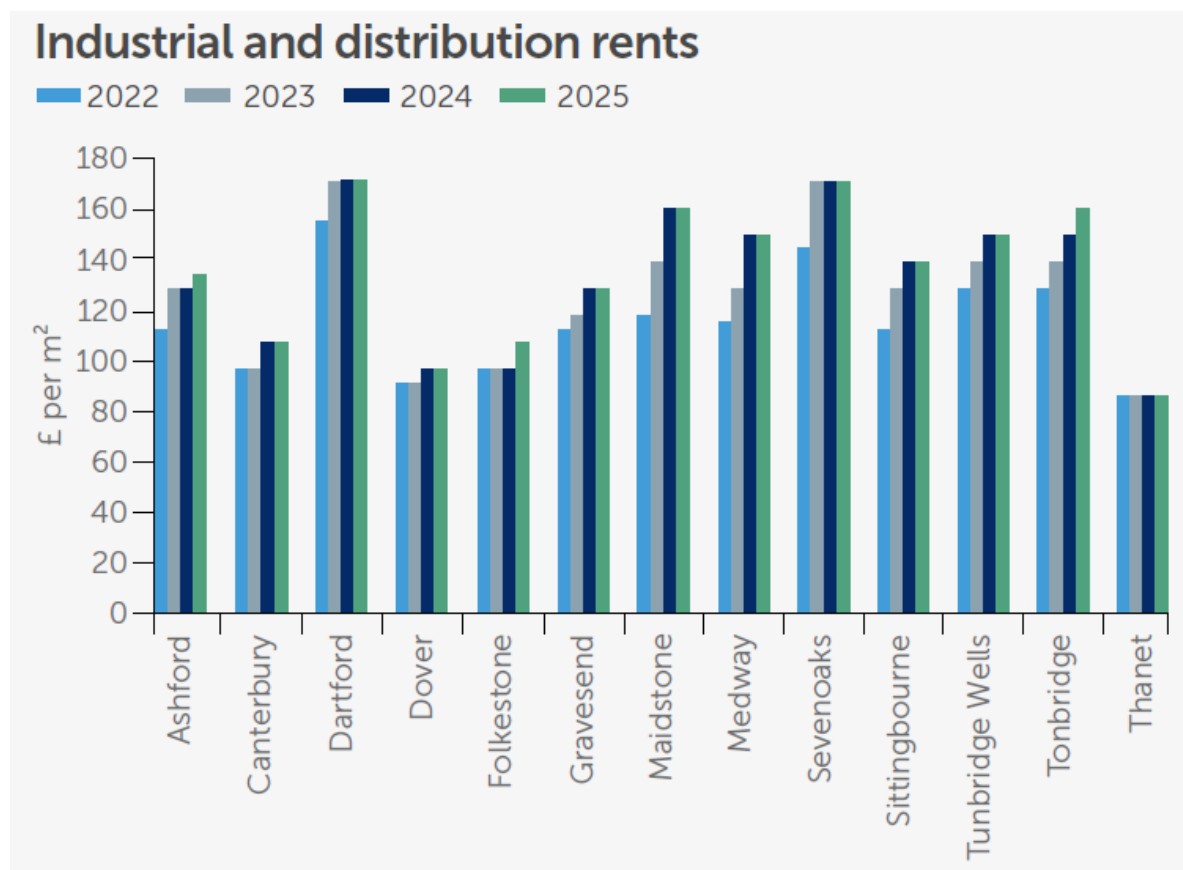
Source: Caxtons. Presented by Kent County Council

Figure 12: Kent Business Park Rents between 2022-2025



Source: Caxtons. Presented by Kent County Council

Figure 13: Kent Industrial and Distribution Rents between 2022-2025



Source: Caxtons. Presented by Kent County Council

#### Nomis data on number of businesses

UK Business Counts data is published annually by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). This is based on output from the VAT and PAYE administrative systems<sup>17</sup>.

As of March 2025, there was a total of 4,730 enterprises recorded to be operating in the Dartford Borough<sup>18</sup>. This has increased from 4,600 the previous year, the biggest increase recorded across Kent.

When considering local units, 5,645 units are recorded to be operating in Dartford Borough.

Of these businesses, 1,045 are within the construction sector, followed by 605 businesses in the professional, scientific and support services sectors and 395 business in the Business administration and support services sector<sup>16</sup>.

Based on employee sizeband (number of employees), Dartford businesses are predominately made up of 4,230 micro businesses (0-9 employees), followed by 385 small businesses (10-49 employees). 90 medium businesses (50-249 employees) and 25 large businesses (250+ employees) also operate in the Borough.

**Table 22** provides a full breakdown of Dartford Business Counts.

<sup>17</sup> An Enterprise is the smallest combination of legal units (generally based on VAT and/or PAYE records) which has a certain degree of autonomy within an Enterprise Group. An individual site (for example a factory or shop) in an enterprise is called a local unit.

<sup>18</sup>ONS & Kent County Council, UK Business Counts 2025

Table 22: Dartford Business Counts (2025) by Enterprises and Local Units

|                    | Dartford Numbers | Dartford (%) | South East (%) |
|--------------------|------------------|--------------|----------------|
| <b>Enterprises</b> |                  |              |                |
| Micro (0-9)        | 4,230            | 89.4         | 89.6           |
| Small (10-49)      | 390              | 8.2          | 8.4            |
| Medium (50-249)    | 90               | 1.9          | 1.6            |
| Large (250+)       | 25               | 0.5          | 0.4            |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>4,730</b>     |              |                |
| <b>Local Units</b> |                  |              |                |
| Micro (0-9)        | 4,650            | 82.4         | 85.1           |
| Small (10-49)      | 755              | 13.4         | 12.1           |
| Medium (50-249)    | 215              | 3.8          | 2.5            |
| Large (250+)       | 30               | 0.5          | 0.4            |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>5,645</b>     |              |                |

Source: Inter Departmental Business Register (ONS). Presented by NOMIS

## SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE: INFRASTRUCTURE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Strong outcomes were recorded in brownfield land delivery, town centre performance, transport/public realm improvements and the wider economy.



## Brownfield land delivery

## 99% of new dwellings on PDL

99% of new dwellings completed on previously developed land in-year; 98.6% across the plan period.



## Cycle &amp; pedestrian network

## 1 scheme completed

East of Lowfield Street development delivered improved permeability, a Green Link to Central Park and an accessible public realm.



## Fastrack improvements

## Electric Buses and new F route

Usage data unavailable; electric buses and the new F route shuttle service were introduced in 2025.



## Strategic transport

## 3 of 5 STIP projects complete

Three STIP projects complete and two under construction.



## Dartford Town Centre

## 41 net homes delivered

41 residential completions; net gains of 89 sqm Use Class E and 209 sqm Use Class F floorspace.



## Core Frontage

## 2% vacancy rate

Vacancy rate down from 5%; retail rents broadly stable at around £400 per sqm.



## Public realm

## Ongoing improvements

Public realm improvements continued at East of Lowfield Street and One Bell Corner.



## Employment floorspace

## -875 sqm

Net loss in 2024/25, but cumulative B2/B8 delivery remains above plan requirement at 335,153 sqm.



## Commercial rents

## Stable / rising

Commercial rents remained stable or increased across key sectors, supporting demand for business accommodation.



## Business activity

## 4,730 enterprises & 5,645 local units

4,730 enterprises and 5,645 local units recorded in March 2025; largest annual enterprise increase across Kent.

## 7. POLICY MONITORING: GREEN AND ATTRACTIVE ENVIRONMENT


In order to deliver the Dartford Local Plan vision, planning decisions in the Borough will pursue the following objectives for environmental development:

### Objectives for a green and attractive environment:

- G1** Protecting Green Belt land to maintain a distinct and enduring open environment for the Borough and the positive setting of Dartford's villages and rural heritage assets, retaining overall countryside character and openness of the Green Belt.
- G2** Securing quality and sustainable built design, public streets, and good open and amenity space provision in new development, and recognising and respecting heritage and green assets so that Dartford's historic environments and new neighbourhoods are enjoyed by current and future generations.
- G3** Ensuring the Borough is able to adapt to the effects of climate change and contributes towards reducing Dartford's carbon footprint through an increase in the proportion of water efficient buildings, the uptake of domestic and small scale renewable energy, and promoting environmental resilience, new greenspace and tree planting.
- G4** Promoting sustainable local environments and habitats, achieving biodiversity net gain and active and healthy living, at new developments and through greenspace and landscape protection and provision, enhancing the Green Grid of footpaths, public rights of way, cycle routes, wildlife corridors, rivers and countryside links.
- G5** Acting to ensure no increase in flood risk in the Borough, and creating attractive and accessible riversides, encouraging sensitive recreation and travel on and alongside the Rivers Thames, Darent and Ebbsfleet.

## G1: APPROPRIATE GREEN BELT DEVELOPMENT/GREEN BELT RETENTION

Table 23: Primary indicator outcomes

| Primary Indicator  | Target | Monitoring Performance  |
|--|--------|---|
| Type of development refused in the year in the Green Belt, including on appeal | N/A    |  The majority of development refused in the Green Belt was for householder works (5 refusals) and new/replacement dwellings (5 refusals). |

During the monitoring year, there were 41 determinations made by Dartford Borough Council in relation to proposals situated on land in part or in whole within the Green Belt. **Table 24** below lists the nature of the 41 determined applications (this does not include submission of details, removal of conditions, tree submissions or lawful development certificates).

Table 24: Applications within the Green Belt (2024/25)

| Development Application   | Consents  | Refusals  |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| Major development (>10 dwellings or 1,000m <sup>2</sup> floorspace)   | 0         | 0         |
| New dwellings (replacement of dwelling)   | 1         | 5         |
| Householder works (extensions, conversion of garage into rooms, windows, summerhouses, boundary treatments, fences) | 20        | 5         |
| Change of use (Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation)  | 0         | 1         |
| Change of use (buildings to storage & offices, barn to residential)   | 0         | 2         |
| Community/non-residential development (replacement office building, garages)  | 4         | 1         |
| Prior approvals   | 0         | 0         |
| Agricultural (agricultural storage)   | 2         | 0         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>27</b> | <b>14</b> |

Source: Dartford Borough Council


Across all developments there were 14 refusals, with the majority being related to householder works and new/replacement dwellings.

As shown in Table 24, one application resulted in new dwellings within the Green Belt. This involved the demolition of a garage and erection of a 3-bedroom dwellinghouse.

Of the 25 householder applications that were received, 20 were consented. This may be due to the scale of the work and work being related to existing dwellings.

## G2: PROVISION OF SUSTAINABLE AND HIGH QUALITY BUILDING DESIGN

Table 25: Primary indicator outcomes

| Primary Indicator  | Target | Monitoring Performance  |
|--|--------|---|
| <b>Exemplar or best developments completed in the year in terms of new architecture, innovative or sustainable design or outstanding greenspace/ecology/energy or water provision/management</b> | N/A    |  No relevant applications during the monitoring year. |

During the monitoring year there were no completions that are considered to be exemplar or best developments in terms of new architecture, innovative or sustainable design or outstanding greenspace/ecology/energy or water provision/management.

## G2: ENABLING THE ENJOYMENT OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Table 26: Primary indicator outcomes

| Primary Indicator                        | Target                         | Monitoring Performance  |
|--|--------------------------------|---|
| Change in the Buildings at Risk register | Removal of sites from register |  No changes |

The Buildings at risk register is a register managed by Historic England of buildings that are listed and have been assessed and found to be at risk. Two sites are located within Dartford:




- Palaeolithic sites near Baker's Hole – High Vulnerability
- Roman enclosure south east of Vagniacae, Southfleet - High Vulnerability

Since the last monitoring period, there has been no changes to the Buildings at Risk register for sites located in Dartford.

SAVE's Buildings at Risk register also highlights historic buildings that are currently vacant and whose future is uncertain. Within Dartford, one site is found on the register. This is located at 45 high street, Dartford. This is a Grade II listed building from the 18<sup>th</sup> century and has been on the register since June 2008.

## G3: ADAPTING TO CLIMATE CHANGE AND REDUCING DARTFORD'S CARBON FOOTPRINT

Table 27: Primary indicator outcomes

| Primary Indicator  | Target   | Monitoring Performance   |   |
|--|--|--|---|
| <b>Percentage of residential developments not completed to the higher water standards of 110 litres per person per day</b> | 0%   |  | 0%  |
| <b>Non-residential completions that achieved BREEAM Excellent standard</b>   | All over 1,000 sqm. are required to achieve excellent standard |  | No applicable non-residential schemes completed   |
| <b>A-C rating trends in Energy Performance Certification</b>   | Improvement from previous monitoring year                      |  | 68.2% of all certificates achieved a rating of A, B or C, a slight increase from the previous monitoring year |

#### *Percentage of residential developments not completed to the higher water standards of 110 litres per person per day*

Water efficiency is an issue of growing importance in South East England. Policy M3 of the Dartford Plan requires all new residential dwellings to achieve 110 litres per person per day in accordance with Part G2 of the Building Regulations 2015.

It is possible to achieve this in a number of ways, including installing water efficiency fittings within converted buildings or through incorporating water conserving planting into landscaping plans. Therefore, monitoring is not restricted to new build dwellings and will apply to all homes created.

Overall, within the Borough, 100% of applications completed during the monitoring year achieved the higher water standards of 110 litres per person per day.

#### *Non-residential completions that achieved BREEAM Excellent standard*

BREEAM is an established method assessing, rating, and certifying the sustainability of buildings. BREEAM is an assessment undertaken by independent licensed assessors using scientifically-based sustainability metrics and indices which cover a range of environmental issues. Its categories evaluate energy and water use, health and wellbeing, pollution, transport, materials, waste, ecology and management processes. Buildings are rated and certified on a scale of 'Pass', 'Good', 'Very Good', 'Excellent' and 'Outstanding'.

In order to achieve carbon reductions, improved energy performance, and water preservation, non-residential development over 1,000 sqm. is required to achieve BREEAM excellent standard as specified in the Dartford Plan to 2037.

There were no applicable non-residential schemes completed within the monitoring year that meet the threshold of Policy M3 to achieve a BREEAM rating of Excellent.

### A-C rating trends in Energy Performance Certification

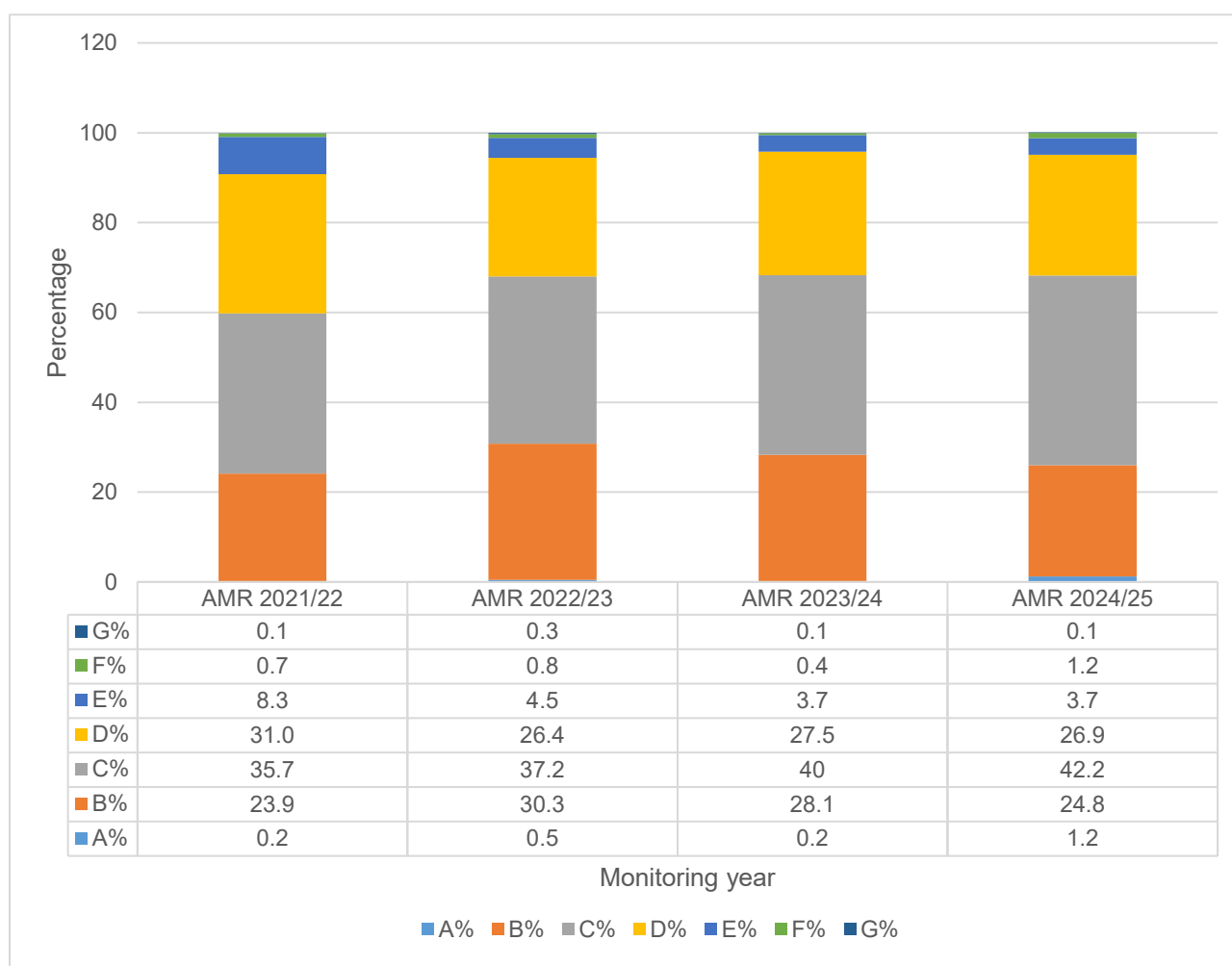
Data on the energy efficiency of the current stock of buildings provide a snapshot of the changing efficiency of stock and is heavily made up of older buildings, not just new builds.

Data from Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) for the 2024/25 monitoring year for domestic buildings in Dartford are presented in **Figure 14** below. This demonstrates the past trends energy performance ratings obtained from certificate lodgements from each year.

The most commonly achieved energy performance rating in Dartford was category C (42.4%), followed closely by category D and B (26.9% and 24.8% retrospectively). 68.2% of all certificates achieved a rating of A, B or C.

This monitoring year saw a stable proportion of properties on the market with category E ratings. There was also a slight decrease in the proportion of property on the market with category B and D ratings, with a slight rise in the number of category A, C and F ratings. Ratings in lowest performing rating of G remained relatively stable.




**Figure 14: Percentages of energy efficiency ratings for domestic dwellings (2021/22-2024/25)**



Source: DLUHC

## G4: PROMOTION OF SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENTS AND HABITATS AND PROVISION OF BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

**Table 28: Primary indicator outcomes**

| Primary Indicator  | Target   | Monitoring Performance   |  |
|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Improvements at Borough Open Space and Protected Local Green Spaces land</b>              | Improvements during the monitoring year        |  | No improvements during the monitoring year |
| <b>Developments achieving 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)</b>                                | All applicable developments to achieve 10% BNG |  | No applicable developments achieved 10%    |
| <b>Mitigations/contributions for North Kent internationally important biodiversity sites</b> | N/A  |  | £3,922.26 SAMMS tariff payment received    |

### *Improvements at Borough Open Space and Protected Local Green Spaces land*

During the monitoring year, there were developments/improvements at Borough Open Space and Protected Local Green Spaces.

It is expected that residential allocations such as St James Lane Pit and Stone Lodge will near completion in the upcoming monitoring years, meaning that associated provision of new Borough Open Spaces will also be delivered.

### *Developments achieving 10% Biodiversity net gain*

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is an approach to developments which ensures that habitats for wildlife are left in a measurably better state that they were before the development<sup>19</sup>.

From 12<sup>th</sup> February 2024, achieving 10% BNG became mandatory for new planning applications for major development<sup>20</sup> (unless exempt) made under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990<sup>21</sup>. BNG for smaller sites came into effect on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2024.

As a result, there are currently very few applications that are BNG applicable. During the monitoring year, no developments that were completed achieved 10% BNG.

### *Mitigations/contributions for North Kent internationally important biodiversity sites*

Policy M14 (criterion 2) of the Dartford Plan sets requirements for residential planning applications in the relevant parts of the Borough. This is necessary to ensure developments comply with national Habitat Regulations.

Following screening and appropriate assessment, all residential developments located within 6km of the North Kent SPAs and Ramsar sites, must implement one of the three options for mitigation measures to ensure that there are no likely significant effects on the protected features of those sites. More detail on the screening requirements, zones, residential thresholds, tariff fees, the uses covered by “residential

<sup>19</sup> Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, Understanding biodiversity net gain, 2023

<sup>20</sup> Major development includes residential developments with 10 or more dwellings, or where the site area is greater than 0.5 hectares.

<sup>21</sup> Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, BNG launch date confirmed, 2024

developments”, and a template form for HRA Screening and Appropriate Assessment, is set out in the Council’s ‘Habitats Regulations Assessment – Guidance for Developers’ supporting document.


During the monitoring year, Dartford Borough Council received a total of £3,922.26 Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS) tariff payment. **Table 29** below provides a breakdown of the SAMMS tariff received.

**Table 29: SAMMS Tariff payments received (2024/25)**

| Site Name                       | SAMMS Payment Received |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| St James Lane Pit (Stone Pit 2) | £1,015.20              |
| Alkerden Parcel 5B              | £2,907.06              |

## G5: CREATION OF ATTRACTIVE AND ACCESSIBLE RIVERSIDES

Table 30: Primary indicator outcomes

| Primary Indicator   | Target   | Monitoring Performance  |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Delivery of public realm or open space along the river corridors, or known improvements to river water quality or flow</b> | Delivery/improvement along the river corridors |  Ongoing river corridor management and partnership working to deliver litter removal, vegetation management, bank stabilisation and fish passage improvements to enhance water quality, flow and biodiversity |



Water quality/flow improvements in Dartford Borough are typically delivered from Spring until Autumn whilst river levels are accessible and it is possible to safely enter the river. Work is carried out by Dartford Borough Council alongside the help of volunteers every 6 weeks. Actions include:

- Litter picking the river, clearing any stuck debris to improve river flow, and improve sediment movement so that it doesn't silt up again, by shuffling in areas to ensure the exposed gravel base is still there.
- Ensuring the berms are still working effectively and add to the, in areas created faggott (Stick bundles) to help preserve the riverbank in areas where erosion is taking.
- Removing vegetation that is congesting the river, and instruct any tree works to ensure that dappled light and areas remain open to enable the aquatic plants to flourish creating a healthier ecosystem.

Dartford Borough Council are also working with partners to help improve fish passage along the River Darent. Work includes modifying the bank buffer zones, to leave more 'wild areas' to promote areas for wildlife and bank stabilisation. Work is also carried out with partners for invasive species control.

## G5: ACTION PREVENTING FLOOD RISK

Table 31: Primary indicator outcomes

| Primary Indicator  | Target | Monitoring Performance   |
|--|--------|--|
| <b>Developments refused due to flooding issues</b>                                 | N/A    |  One development refused   |
| <b>Progress on flood defence delivery or strategic flood risk evidence actions</b> | N/A    |  The Lower River Darent Riverside Strategy was published in February 2024 and sets out steps and options to manage increasing flood risk and coordinate development. This will primarily be achieved through nature-based approaches where feasible. |

*Developments refused due to flooding issues*

During the monitoring year, one development was refused due to flooding issues.

The reason for refusal was due to the application not being accompanied with a Flood Risk Assessment, and it was not demonstrated that the site is safe from all types of flooding, now, and for the lifetime of the development, taking into account the effects of climate change; and that it does not materially displace flood water or worsen flood risk elsewhere contrary to Policy M4 of The Dartford Local Plan to 2037<sup>22</sup>.

*Progress on flood defence delivery or strategic flood risk evidence actions*

In February 2024, Dartford Borough Council published the Lower Darent Riverside Strategy, an award winning and practical strategy to secure sustainable development along the River Darent. It extends to the confluence of the Darent with the River Thames. Dartford has seen the second highest rate of residential growth in the country, and is located in the Thames Estuary, where current flood defences protecting London and surrounding areas are ageing and face big challenges from climate change.

The riverside strategy sets out steps and options for an attractive, joined up approach to the riverside and surrounding areas to manage increasing flood risk and coordinate development. Management of increasing flood risk due to climate change is proposed through nature-based approaches where feasible, and flood defence treatments that encourage the community to interact with the river.

Dartford Borough Council has already improved sections of riverside walkway in the town centre as part of its wider regeneration activities and is also focused on enhanced management of key natural riverside environments including the Dartford Marshes area, beside the River Thames, and at Central Park.

The council has agreed to further enhance the planning status of the strategy and is working up funded proposals to deliver exemplary riverside strategy projects.

<sup>22</sup> See planning application 24/00715/FUL

## SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE: GREEN AND ATTRACTIVE ENVIRONMENT

Positive progress was recorded across water efficiency, historic environment stability, river corridor management and flood resilience.



## Green Belt

**Robustly applied**

Refusals primarily related to inappropriate householder works and new or replacement dwellings.



## Historic environment

**No change to register**

No changes were recorded on the Buildings at Risk Register during the monitoring year.



## Water efficiency

**100% met target**

All completed residential developments met the higher water efficiency standard of 110 litres per person per day.



## BREEAM Excellent

**0 completed**

No non-residential schemes were completed that triggered the BREEAM Excellent requirement.



## Energy performance

**68.2% A-C rating**

Energy Performance Certificates achieved an A-C rating, indicating a generally improving profile.



## Biodiversity Net Gain

**0 completed**

No completed developments achieved mandatory 10% BNG, reflecting the recent introduction of the requirement.



## SAMMS contributions

**£3,922.26**

Secured through SAMMS tariff contributions to mitigate impacts on internationally designated habitats.



## River corridor

**Ongoing improvements**

Partnership working supported improvements to water quality, biodiversity and flood resilience.



## Flood risk

**1 refusal**

One development was refused on flood risk grounds during the monitoring year.