

A map of the South East of England showing the proposed CTRL route in pink. The map includes London, the M25, M20, M2, and M26 motorways, and cities like Southend-on-Sea, Rochester, Maidstone, Canterbury, Dover, and Brighton. The CTRL route starts near London, passes through Sevenoaks, Maidstone, and Canterbury, ending at Dover.

Gravesham Borough: Key Statistics Report 2007

Introduction

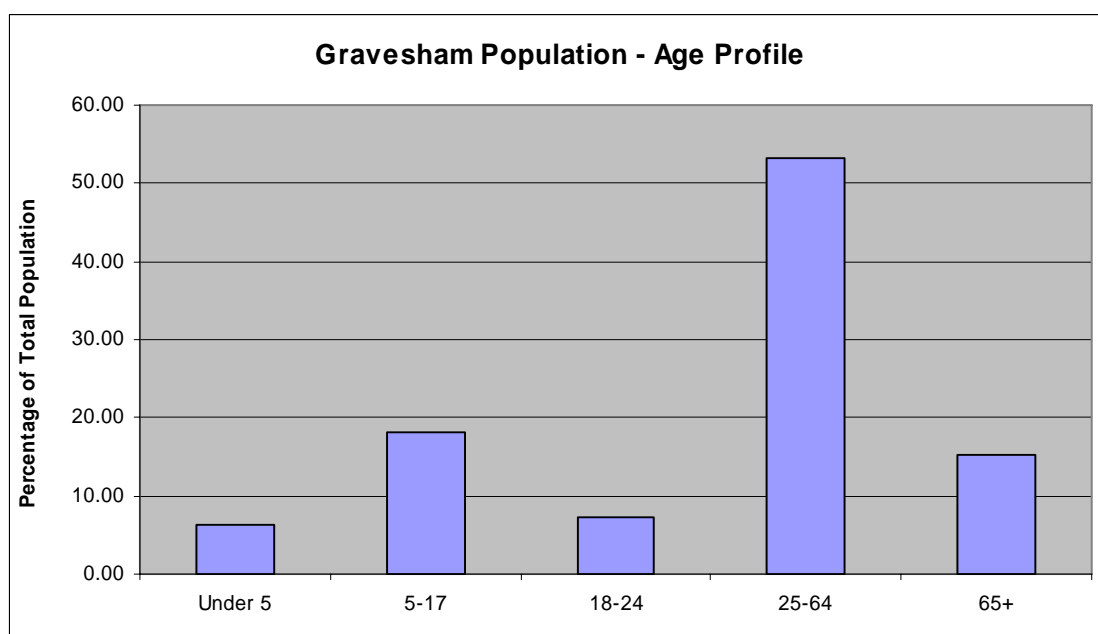
Gravesham Borough has an excellent track record in regeneration and social cohesion which has been recognised by two prestigious national awards. Providing a high quality place for the people of Gravesham to live, work and enjoy is at the heart of the Borough's plans to meet the Government's ambitious aims for the Thames Gateway.

This document provides a statistical snapshot of Gravesham, giving key statistics for the Borough's population and business environment.

A Summary of the Data

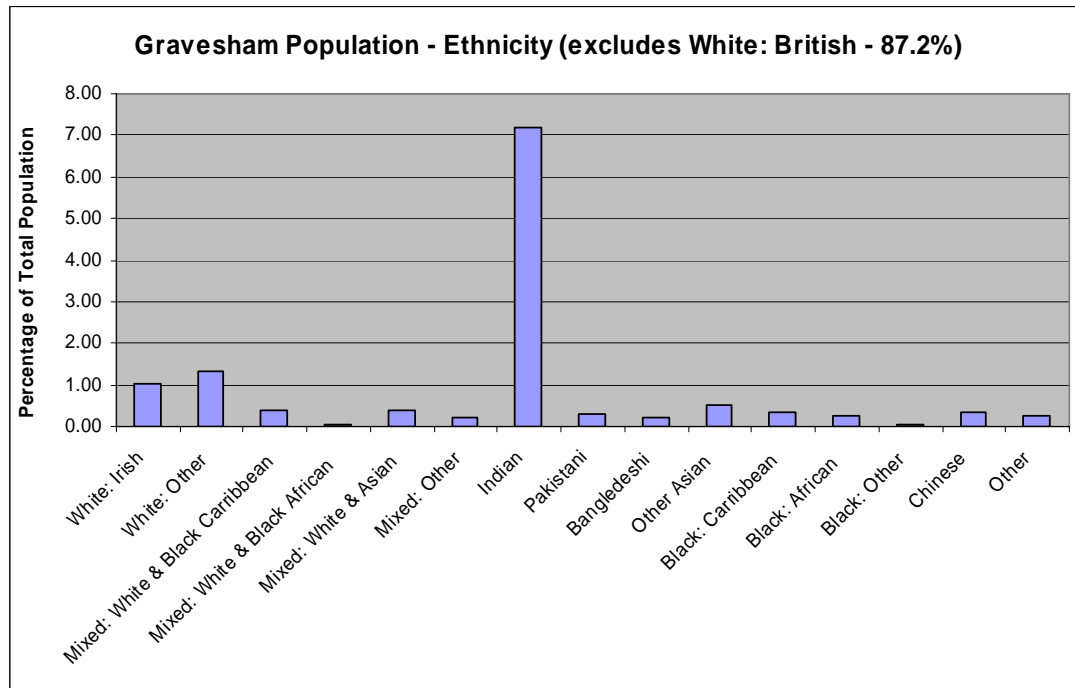
Demographics

- Gravesham's resident population was 95717 at the time of the last census (2001). This is a 2.6% increase since 1991.
- 51% of the population is female, which reflects the gender split across the South East of England and nationally, however it is marginally lower than the rest of the County of Kent.
- Gravesham's population density (almost 10 people per hectare) is 3 times higher than the national figure.
- The population density reflects the geography of the Borough, which has a large urban core to the north.
- Gravesham has a relatively young population with 40% of the population below 30.
- As the graph shows, 60% of Gravesham's population is of working age (18-65)
- The percentage of the population over the national retirement age (65) is below the national, regional and county averages.

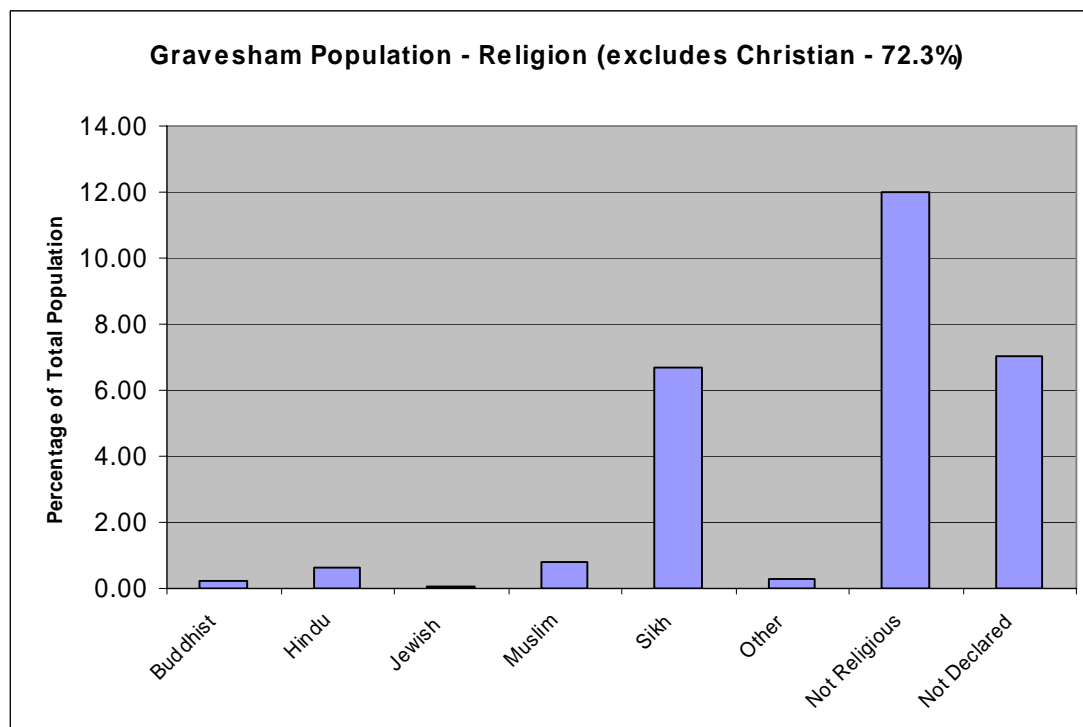


Ethnicity & Religion

- Compared to the South East region and the County of Kent, Gravesham has a large ethnic population with 12.8% of residents describing themselves as 'non-white'.
- The largest ethnic community is Indian, at 7.2% of the population it is over 3 times greater than the proportion nationally

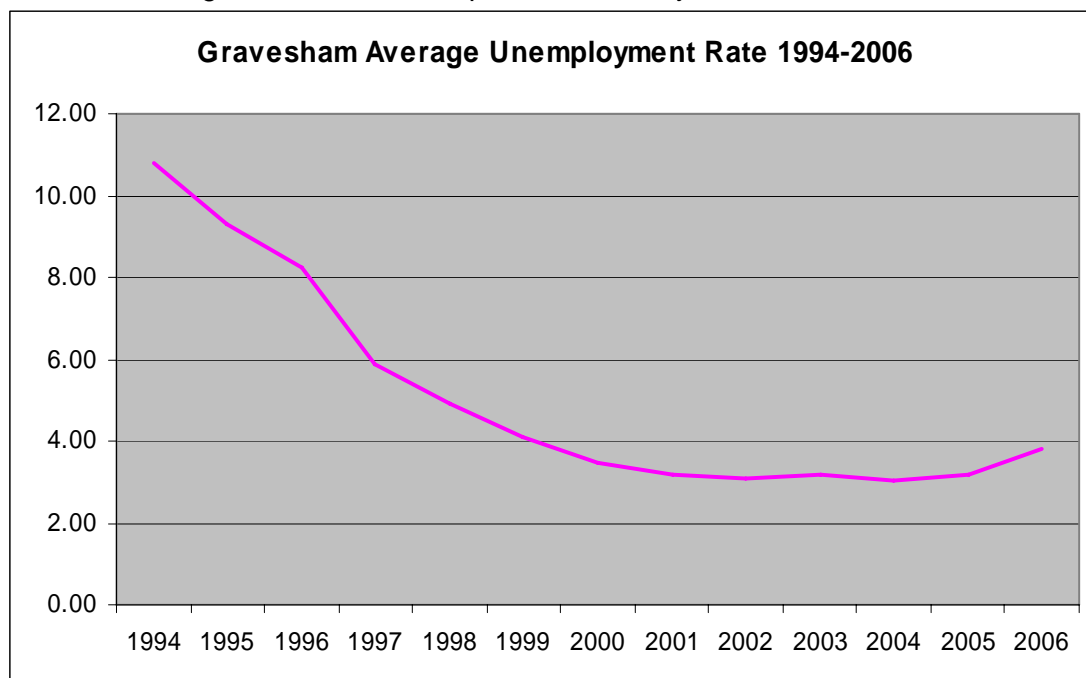


- The non-British white population is largely made up of people from other European states.
- 72.3% of residents stating they are Christian and the Sikhs are the second largest religious group in the Borough at 6.7% of the population.

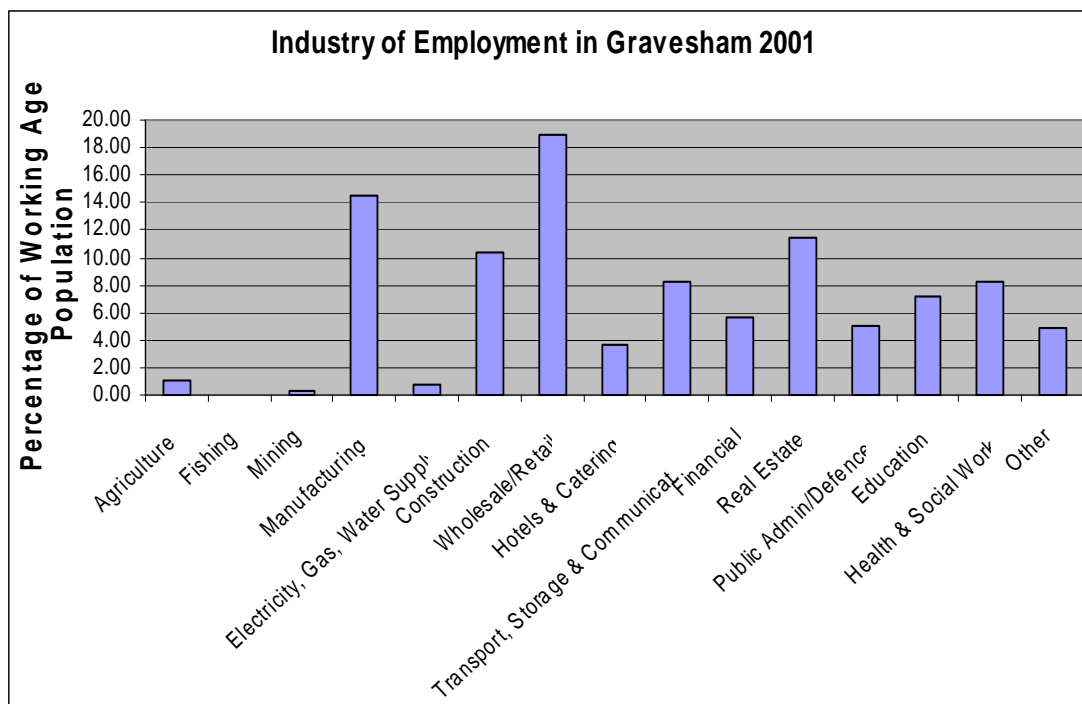


Labour Force

- The Gravesham economy has a job density of 0.61, i.e. there is approximately one job for just over every two residents. This is well below the job densities for the country as a whole, the South East Region and the County of Kent.
- This low job density reflects the trend in Gravesham to commute out of the Borough to work, largely induced by its strategic location close to London.
- Labour force qualifications (i.e. qualifications amongst economically active residents) are also significantly lower than the national/regional figures.
- 45% of the population is qualified to level 3 or above whilst only 25% is qualified to level 4 or above
- This low skill level is largely caused by a traditional reliance on semi-low skilled production/manufacturing jobs that were once prevalent in the Borough (paper manufacture, cement manufacture, power generation, engineering)
- Economic activity levels are higher than for the nation as a whole. They lag behind the South East Region and Kent for those aged between 25 and 49, however economic activity compares more favourably in the 16-19 and 50+ cohorts.
- Unemployment has steadily fallen in Gravesham during the past decade
- In 1994 the unemployment rate was 10.8%, however by 2006 it had fallen to 3.8%, having reached its lowest point in 2004 at just over 3%.



- Between 2004 and 2005 unemployment has continued to fall and is generally below the national rate.
- High unemployment rates in the early 1990's reflect structural shifts in the economy as a result of recession in the late 1980's. Many of the traditional industries rationalised production or ceased altogether, causing large redundancies. Recent increases reflect a small number of large scale redundancies.
- 78% of Gravesham employees work full time, a level which is slightly higher than England, the South East and Kent
- 19% of Gravesham's population is employed in the retail sector, making it the largest employment sector



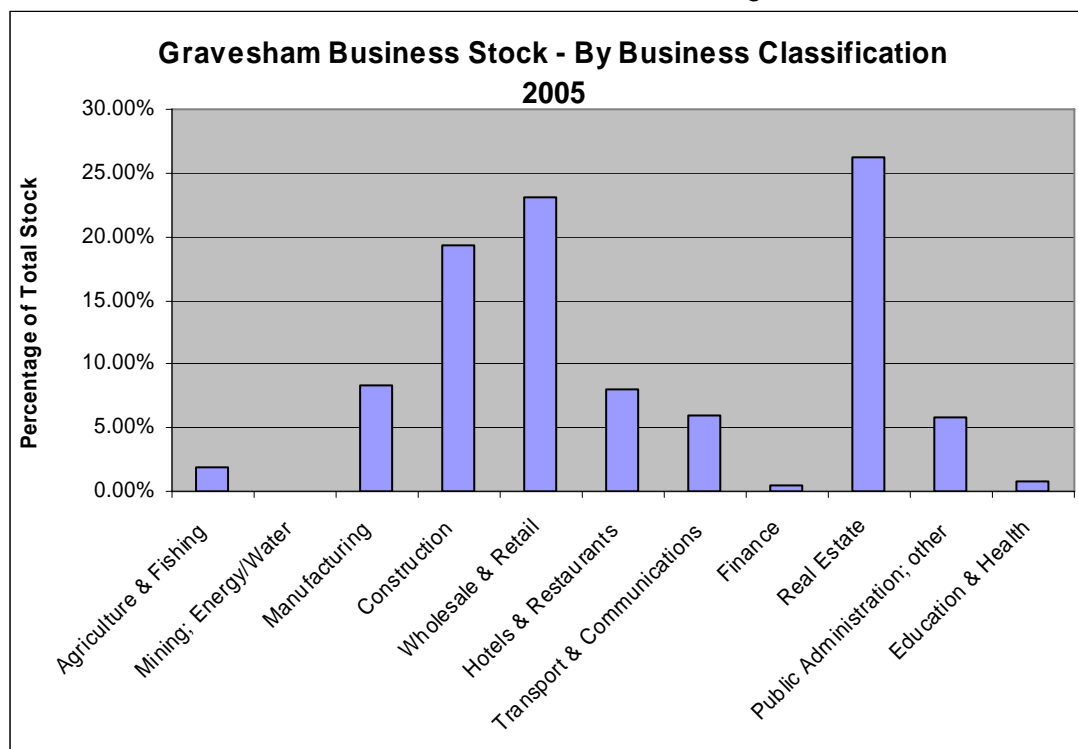
- Manufacturing was the second biggest employer, with real estate third
- These distributions reflect the national and county averages.
- The growth and regeneration of Gravesham is likely to see other sectors emerge as major employers, such as construction, finance and the public sector.
- The top three occupations in Gravesham were (in order): Skilled Trades (15.4%); Elementary (13%); Administration (11%)



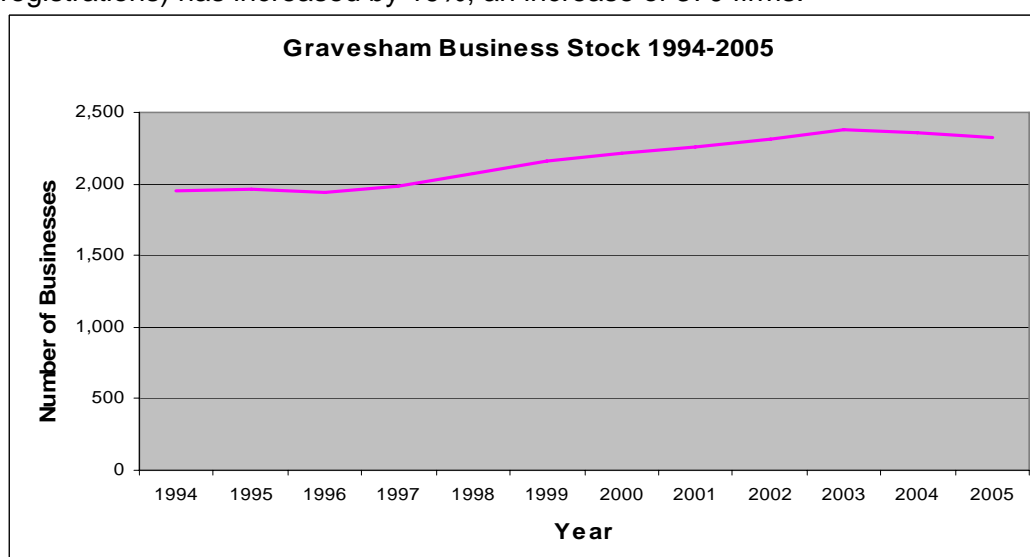
- This is a diverse range and shows as many people employed in high level managerial posts as low level/low skill occupations

Business/Economy

- The total stock of VAT registered businesses in the Borough at the end of 2004 was 2,325. This provides an under-estimate of the gross business stock as a number of firms will have a turnover below the VAT registration threshold.



- The largest stock of business was in the real estate sector (610 firms), followed by retail (535) and construction (450)
- This pattern is to be expected as traditionally these sectors tend to encompass a large number of small firms rather than be dominated by one or two large firms or bodies, as tends to happen in the finance sector (for example).
- This business profile is largely reflective of national/county figures, whereas regional figures show a higher importance for public administration.
- Over the past decade the business stock in Gravesham (as measured by VAT registrations) has increased by 19%, an increase of 370 firms.



- The biggest growth sectors have been real estate, construction and hotels/restaurants
- Contractions in stock have been witnessed in both the agricultural and retail sectors
- These expansions and contractions are reflected on a national, regional and county level.
- Of the 3,151 firms in the Borough including those not VAT registered, 40 have more than 100 employees. This breakdown shows the importance of small to medium size enterprises (SMEs) to the Borough and justifies the efforts made by the Council and its partners to support and develop new SMEs.
- The main retail centre for the Borough is in Gravesend Town Centre, which has 1,089,132 ft² of shop floorspace alongside 554,645 ft² of business/office space.

Conclusions

- Overall, Gravesham Borough enjoys close to full employment (in economic terms), however this presents a number of challenges as the unemployed now are a 'harder to reach' element who experience significant barriers to finding a job.
- The improvement of workforce skills is a key priority in Gravesham as better skills will enable residents to access the jobs created by the regeneration of the Borough.
- Major business developments will open up new employment sectors and diversify the business stock, whilst also presenting new firms with opportunities to exploit increased markets and access new supply chains.
- Work is already underway to ensure businesses are equipped with the knowledge and skills they will need to make the most of the new opportunities presented to them. This has taken the form of intensive business support programmes, a loan fund targeted at businesses which traditionally cannot access funds, and the provision of small, affordable workspaces
- Over the next 20 years the Borough will witness significant changes which, if managed successfully, will provide huge benefits to the residents of Gravesham. It is a priority for the Council and its partners to ensure that residents and businesses have the skills and information to contribute to, and benefit from, the growth agenda.

