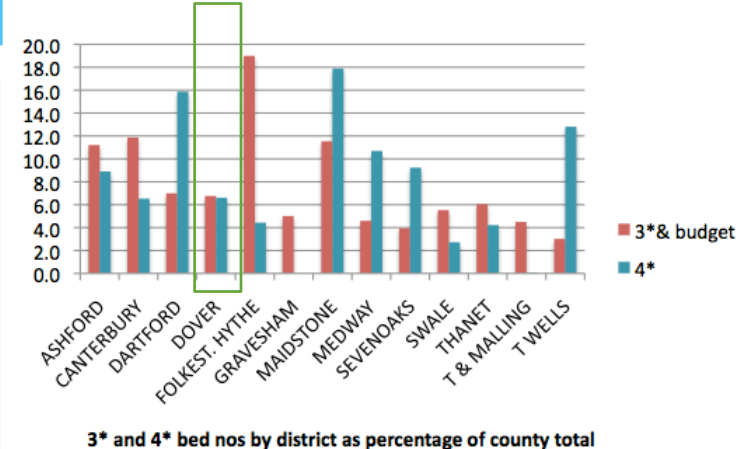
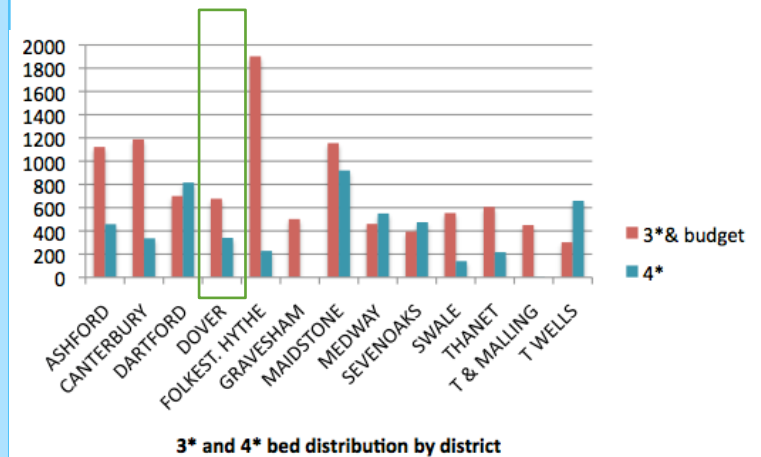


## 5.4a. District Dashboard Dover

**Dover** district (which includes Deal and Sandwich) comes somewhat below the midpoint for number of business bed-nights in the county, but in the top third for holiday nights. It has amongst the largest MICE capacity in the county, with total MICE capacity surpassed only by Maidstone and Sevenoaks. Dover District is also in the top third of districts for group provision, and for 3\*/budget hotel accommodation. Whilst Dover district's performance is mixed in terms of bed-nights, a high proportion of its staying visitors are in paid accommodation, at 68% - second only to Folkestone & Hythe. Airbnb provision is high, and has experienced a 561% growth (2016-19), with a predominance of entire home rentals. Three key areas of provision are centered around the coast (Deal to Kingsdown, St Margaret's at Cliffe, and, to a lesser extent, Dover - but more 'room only' here). The **rental demand** metric is midway across the districts.



9/13 for **BUSINESS NIGHTS**: 142,000 bed-nights = 5.7% of total for Kent  
3/13 for **HOLIDAY NIGHTS**: 875,000 bed-nights = 10.8% of total for Kent

13 **MICE-ready** accommodation establishments = 12.1% of county total  
Total **MICE capacity**: 1850 = 11.4% of county capacity within accommodation establishments

**Largest single MICE venue capacity**: 400



**Group tour-ready establishments**: 8 = 8.7% of Kent total

**Airbnb 833 ACTIVE RENTALS** with a **rental growth** of **561%** between 2016 (Q2) and 2019 (Q2). **Rental demand** 81 (6th /13)

Sources of data for district dashboards: Extrapolated from Destination Research 2018, Visit Kent Business Barometers, CCCU Accommodation Database audit and Airdna webpages (subscription to district level data).

## 5.4b. Dover (interview findings)



### Visitor Offer

The three historic 'character' towns of Dover, Sandwich and Deal are important elements of the district's visitor offer, with its strong emphasis on heritage and the natural environment, including Dover Castle (English Heritage), the White Cliffs (National Trust), and the Kent Downs AONB. Sandwich is unique as the location of three Open Championship golf courses, with the 149th Open returning to Sandwich in July 2021. Dover is an important gateway for an estimated 200,000 international cruise passengers per year.

Business and conference tourism are expected to form an increasingly significant element in the visitor economy offer, taking advantage of Dover's connectivity and strategic location.

### Key Drivers for the Visitor Economy

Dover's strategic location and connectivity is considered the main economic driver for the district, and this will be reinforced by the predicted preference for travelling to and from Europe by private car in the aftermath of COVID-19. The visitor economy is regarded as a catalyst for growth – a key sector for enabling Dover to capitalise on its international gateway position, and to build regeneration and future prosperity. Reflecting this, Dover District Council has developed its own *Tourism and Visitor Economy Strategy*, and prioritised the visitor economy and the accommodation sector as a key strategic pillar of its Corporate Plan and emerging Local Plan; within the Council, 'tourism' is now located within 'inward investment', to position it to deliver this goal. Demand for Dover as an accommodation, conference and meetings location is also driven by other key sectors which Dover District Council is promoting, particularly with its ambition to become a centre for new technology businesses, with developments such as the TechFort planned on the Western Heights in Dover, and the Discovery Park on the old Pfizer site near Sandwich.

### Drivers



#### Main:

**Connectivity** - international gateway position for ferry and cruise terminals, proximity to Eurotunnel, national walking and cycling routes, national motorway provision, high speed rail link to London (1 hour to central London).

**Policy** – visitor economy a catalyst for growth.

#### Supplementary:

**Visitor offer** – heritage and landscape – Cinque Port Towns, National Trust and English Heritage Properties, AONB, Open Golf.

#### Potential:

**Infrastructure projects** – TechFort, Dover.

**Connectivity** - Manston Airport Development.

## 5.4b. Dover (interview findings)

### Gaps in Provision

It will be important to improve the district's MICE offer for the business and conference market, in terms both of quality and quantity, in order to meet the growing demands of businesses Dover District Council wishes to attract, as well as those already based in Dover, and expand the training offer (the district currently struggles to provide quality accommodation for 5,000 industry delegates who take courses with the Dover-based Maritime Skills Academy every year).

Most of the MICE-related development opportunities are centred on Dover, where there is more need and space for regeneration-related development, as well as mixed-use sites, such as the Discovery Centre in Sandwich, and the hotel-led development of Dover's Waterfront. There are ambitions for further offers to be developed in spa hotel accommodation and golf tourism, as well as 'executive glamping', and high-end boutique hotels in the coastal and rural areas.

### Links to Key Planning and Policy Documents

**Corporate Plan 2020-2024** – main strategic document providing the framework for the delivery of services – delayed due to COVID crisis. Draft version available at: <https://www.dover.gov.uk/Corporate-Information/PDF/Corporate-Plan-2020-2024-unformatted-version.pdf>

**Dover District Local Plan 2020-2040** – consultation on the Local Plan postponed, provisionally to later in 2020 or early 2021. Updates on the progress of the Local Plan will be posted on <https://www.dover.gov.uk/Planning/Planning-Policy-and-Regeneration/New-District-Local-Plan/Home.aspx>

**Destination White Cliffs Country – Growth strategy for tourism and the visitor economy 2020-2030** (Consultation Draft November 2019) - <https://www.dover.gov.uk/Consultation/Tourism-Visitor-Economy-Strategy-Consultation/Destination-White-Cliffs-Country-Tourism-and-Visitor-Economy-Strategy-DDC-Consultation-Draft-November-2019.pdf>

**Heritage Strategy** - <https://www.kentdesign.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Dover-District-Councils-Heritage-Strategy.pdf>

### Priority gaps

4\* hotels with 100+ rooms – aspiration for 5\* in the future

MICE – particularly in Dover, and mixed use sites (e.g. Discovery Park, Dover Waterfront)

Spa hotel accommodation

Executive glamping/high end boutique hotels (coastal and rural)

### Support for inward investment:



#### Enabling environment:

The DDC DMO *White Cliffs Country's* new Industry digital data hub will facilitate data sharing between DDC and businesses, supporting collaboration with potential investors.



#### Joint ventures:

Scope for joint ventures where DDC is the landowner or part-landowner. More incentives and opportunities may come out of the new Local Plan.



#### Assisted zone:

Port of Dover proposals for Freeport status will bring tax and other benefits for businesses coming to the district.