



# Highlights

SOUTH EAST  
ENGLAND  
Regional Assembly



COUNCILS AND  
COMMUNITIES  
IN PARTNERSHIP

**Life in the South East**  
A review of 2006

## INTRODUCTION

The South East England Regional Assembly is a partnership between the region's councils and community representatives. One of the Assembly's responsibilities is to make plans at a regional level and, to help with this, the Assembly tracks how the region is performing against key targets covering topics such as transport, housing, environment and the economy.

This leaflet shows how well the South East is doing against current targets. In future, targets will be closely related to the South East Plan, the Assembly's 20 year planning strategy for the future of the region.

### OVERVIEW

In total the Assembly measures the region's performance against 99 targets. This year, the region is improving on 37. There are 29 where there is insufficient or no comparable data, 18 where there has been little or no change, two with no data and 13 where trends are unfavourable.

For more information visit [www.southeast-ra.gov.uk](http://www.southeast-ra.gov.uk) for a copy of the full monitoring report or contact the Regional Assembly on 01483 555 200 or email [secretariat@southeast-ra.gov.uk](mailto:secretariat@southeast-ra.gov.uk)



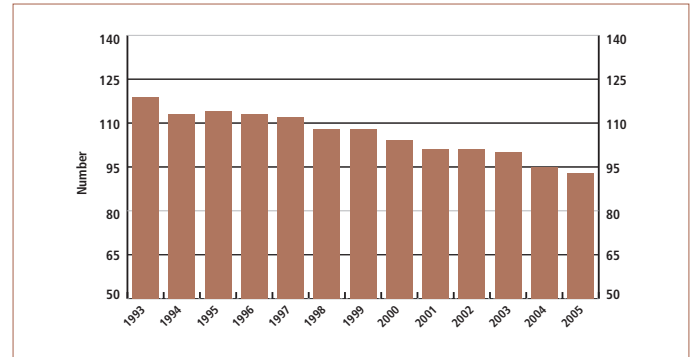
## QUALITY OF LIFE IN TOWN AND COUNTRY

**A good quality of life means ensuring that the economy, society and the environment develop in harmony. Targets reflect the desire for urban renaissance in the South East that will improve quality of life in urban areas and protect the countryside. Urban renaissance also encompasses making better use of land and energy and increasing the sense of community in urban areas throughout the South East. In 2006:**

- More building took place on brownfield land (land that has been developed before), reducing the amount of greenfield land used for development. In 2006, 68% of commercial and leisure

development was built on previously developed land, up from 55% in 2005.

- The percentage of people satisfied with their local area as a place to live remains high at 88%, unchanged from 2005.
- Overall, the proportion of rural households with access to key services remains unchanged from 2004, although there are some individual variations. For example, fewer rural residents now live within four kilometres of a bank or building society but more live within four kilometres of a cash point.
- Deaths caused by circulatory disease, cancer, coronary heart disease accident and suicide in the South East continue to be lower than the national average.



**Mortality from all causes (1993-2005)**

Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS)

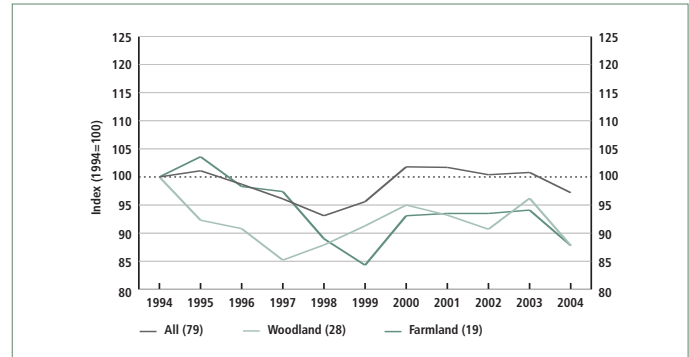


## ENVIRONMENT AND THE ECONOMY

**The effective protection of the environment and prudent use of natural resources are important to maintain quality of life in the region. A high quality environment also is essential to the future prosperity of the South East as it attracts business, which means we have jobs and a successful economy. The South East has a successful economy and wants to build on that and share benefits across the whole population.**

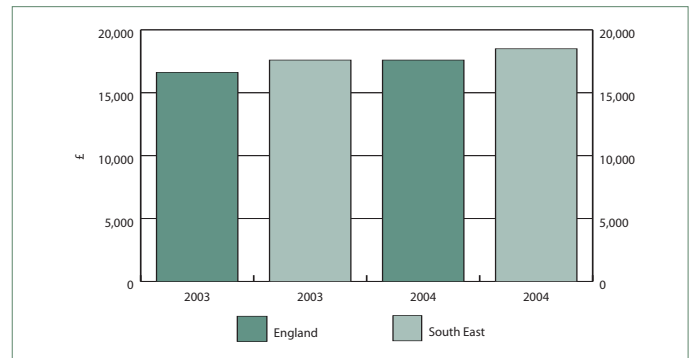
- Sites of special scientific interest improved in condition – 79.6% were in a favourable or unfavourable recovering condition, compared to 72.48% in 2005.

- There was however a fall in the population of wild birds. In the South East, between 1994 and 2004, farmland and woodland bird populations fell by 12%.
- The economy of the South East continues to outperform England as a whole. Value added per person rose to £18,496 in 2004 from £17,565 in 2003. The number of jobs increased 2.87% between 2004 and 2005 and the South East maintains a high skills profile.
- However the number of people claiming unemployment benefits for more than a year increased by 42% between 2005 and 2006.



**Population of wild birds (1994-2004)**

Source: Department For Rural Affairs (Defra), British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)



**Gross value added per head**

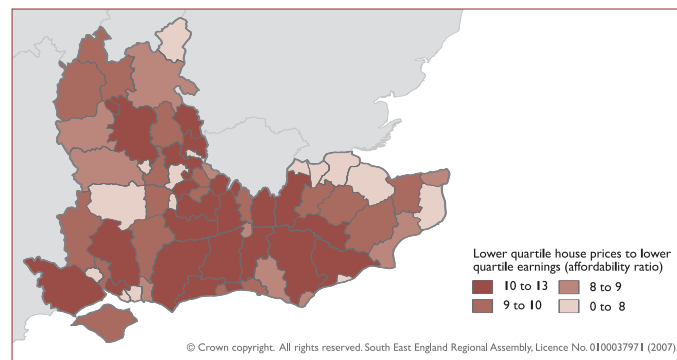
Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS)

## HOUSING

**The South East is around 90% undeveloped, but to maintain our attractive environment it is important to make sure new homes use previously developed (brownfield) land wherever possible. As the population grows there is a need to build new homes and a particular need to make a decent home affordable for everyone in the region.**

- In 2005, the number of new homes completed in the region was 33,300. Over the last five years, the South East has delivered almost 144,000 homes, or an average of just under 28,800 a year.
- The number of homes built on previously developed (brownfield) land increased to 79% in 2006, up from 76% in 2005.

- More affordable homes were built with grant-funding, reaching 7,000 in 2005/06 compared to 6,700 in 2004/05.
- Affordability remains a problem across the region. Prices range from six times average salary in coastal Kent to more than 12 times average salary in Surrey.



**The gap between the lowest 25% of house prices and the lowest 25% of salaries. The pale areas have homes that are up to 8 times more than salaries. The dark areas have homes that are up to 13 times more than salaries.**

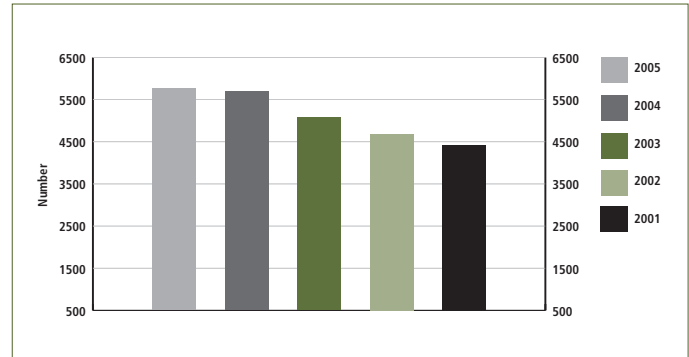
Source: CLG-National Statistics (Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings)



## TRANSPORT

**As the most populated region in the UK with a strong economy and access to Europe via our ports and airports, the South East has high levels of traffic and congestion.**

- The car continues to be the preferred method of transport – 54% of all travel and 75% of travel to work.
- Traffic is increasing – by 18.5% in the 10 years to 2005, but the rate of increase has been slowing down since 1992.
- The number of people killed or seriously injured on South East roads fell to 5,129 for the five year period 2001 – 2005. This compares to 5,710 people in 1998 – 2003.



**Killed and seriously injured all casualties on all roads in the South East (2001-2005)**

Source: National Travel Survey, Department for Transport



## WATER, WASTE, ENERGY AND MINERALS

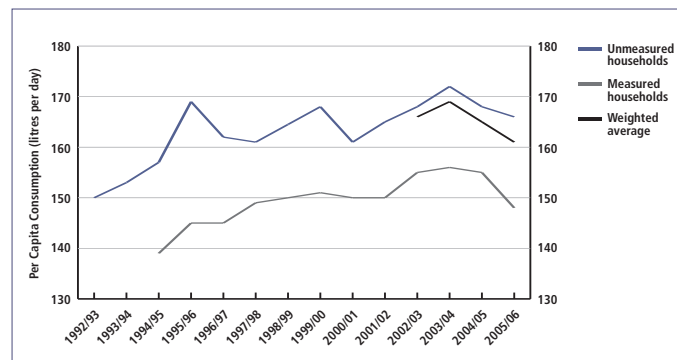
**Sustainable development in the South East depends on a number of key factors – planning for flood risk, using water efficiently and protecting its quality, recycling, reducing waste and finding new sources of energy. It also includes how we manage our need to dig for minerals as building materials and to what extent we can recycle such materials.**

■ The quality of rivers and beaches in the region improved. The chemical and biological quality of rivers in the South East is good and all 79 bathing beaches in the region meet the EC bathing water directive.

■ Water consumption per person reduced – down to 166 litres per person per day in unmetered households and 148 per person in metered households.

■ Overall, 30% of the South East's household rubbish was recycled in 2005/6, an increase from 23% in 2003/4. However as the total amount of rubbish we produce increased, there was also an increase in rubbish buried in landfill sites.

■ Recycled building materials (aggregates) are reducing the amount of new sand and gravel we need to extract from the ground in the South East. In 2005 31% of building aggregates used in the region were recycled, up from 19% in 2000.



**Daily consumption of water by measured and unmeasured households (South East) (1994-2006)**

Source: Environment Agency



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