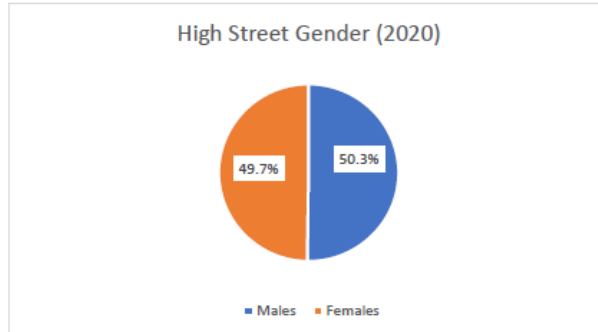
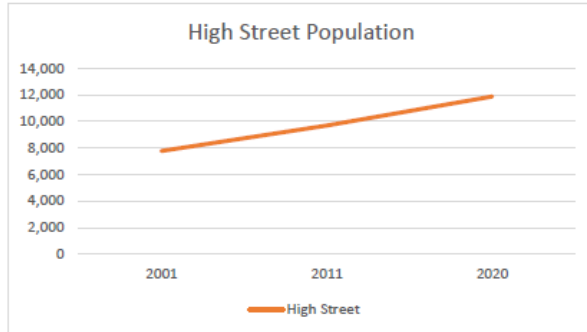


Extracts relating to Safety in the Town Centre from the
'Town Centre Strategy Data Pack'.

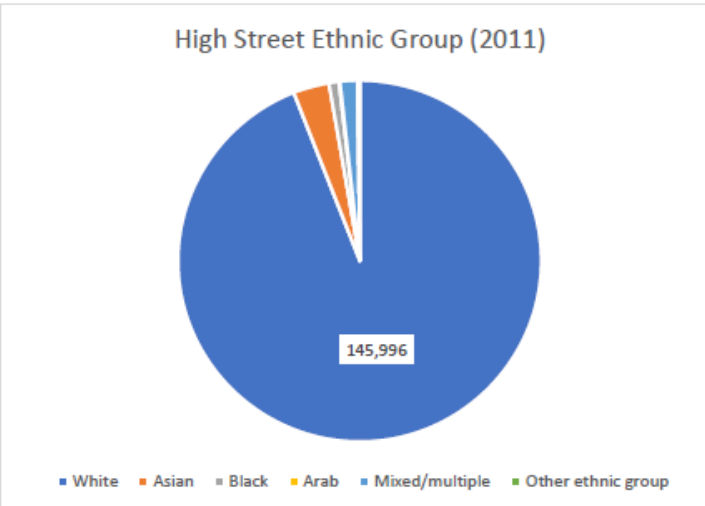


High Street Population

Area	2001	2011	2020	Population Density /km ² [2020]	Annual Population Change % [2011 → 2020]
Maidstone	138,948	155,143	173,132	440.2	1.2
High Street	7,773	9,690	11,852	6157	2.2



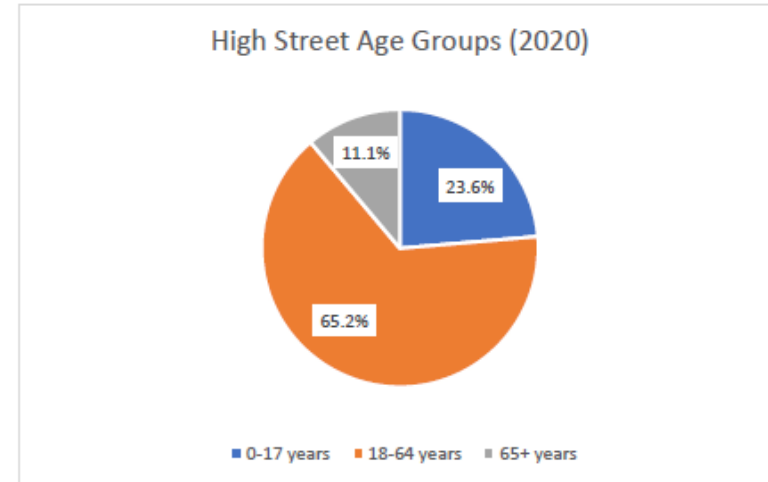
Ethnic Group	Count
White	145,996
Asian	4,943
Black	1,380
Arab	140
Mixed/multiple	2,345
Other ethnic group	339



Religion	Count
Christian	97,578
Muslim	1,685
Hindu	1,492
Sikh	176
Jewish	163
Buddhist	901
Other religion	612
No religion	41,493

Age Group	Count
0-17 years	2,802
18-64 years	7,731
65+ years	1,319

Age Distribution	Count
0-9 years	1,694
10-19 years	1,339
20-29 years	1,916
30-39 years	2,229
40-49 years	1,601
50-59 years	1,317
60-69 years	799
70-79 years	554
80+ years	404



Results from the Resident Survey 2022

I want Maidstone town centre to be...

We received 77 comments from events and 214 were received through the Council's engagement platform, a total of 291 comments. The top twelve themes are listed in the table below and examples of comments are shown.

Theme	Total
Crime & Safety	112
Shops	107
Lovely, Nice & Thriving	55
Cleanliness	51
Leisure Services	36
Parking	23
Active Travel	20
Roads & Traffic	17
River Medway	16
Other	13
County Town	11
Planning & Development	9

a town centre which is clean, bright and welcoming. I want it to have a better variety of shops, less mobile shops, less e-cigarette shops

Free parking to encourage visitor to town - move market to Town Centre

An enjoyable shopping experience. There are too many empty shops.

Much, much more beautiful. We are in a very special location on the river, with some lovely old buildings and a few nice new ones (the Millennium Bridge), but there are a lot of supremely ugly things that really ruin it.

A safe place for leisure, culture and shopping with more arts facilities and easy access for all ages

In answer to 'I want Maidstone Town Centre to be.....'

more green orientated, with a few trees to sit under and relax. Less eating facilities.

Brought into the 21st Century with a clear central area, perhaps a water feature instead of the decrepit queens monument, modern shops, properly pedestrianised Earl Street and above all to feel safe and clean and welcoming with better control over ant-social groups

Worthy of being the county town. At present Maidstone is not a town you would go to willingly . Shops are closed down, the whole town has a run down air . Police presence is non existent and the area around Brenchley gardens is definitely a no go area.

Greener, it would be great to have better access for walking and cycling. I would like more independent shops and restaurants. I would like it to have bio diverse planting and be somewhere that leads in becoming climate neutral.

Clean and safe, and a pleasure to walk around. I would love there to be unique shops. A place to amble around rather than rush in and out of.

Clean, safe and enjoyable to wander round. Residents and visitors to have a sense of responsibility to their surroundings and other people. No litter, scooters (including mobility scooters) travelling at more than walking pace. In a nutshell, a place for residents to have pride in.

A safe place to go at night

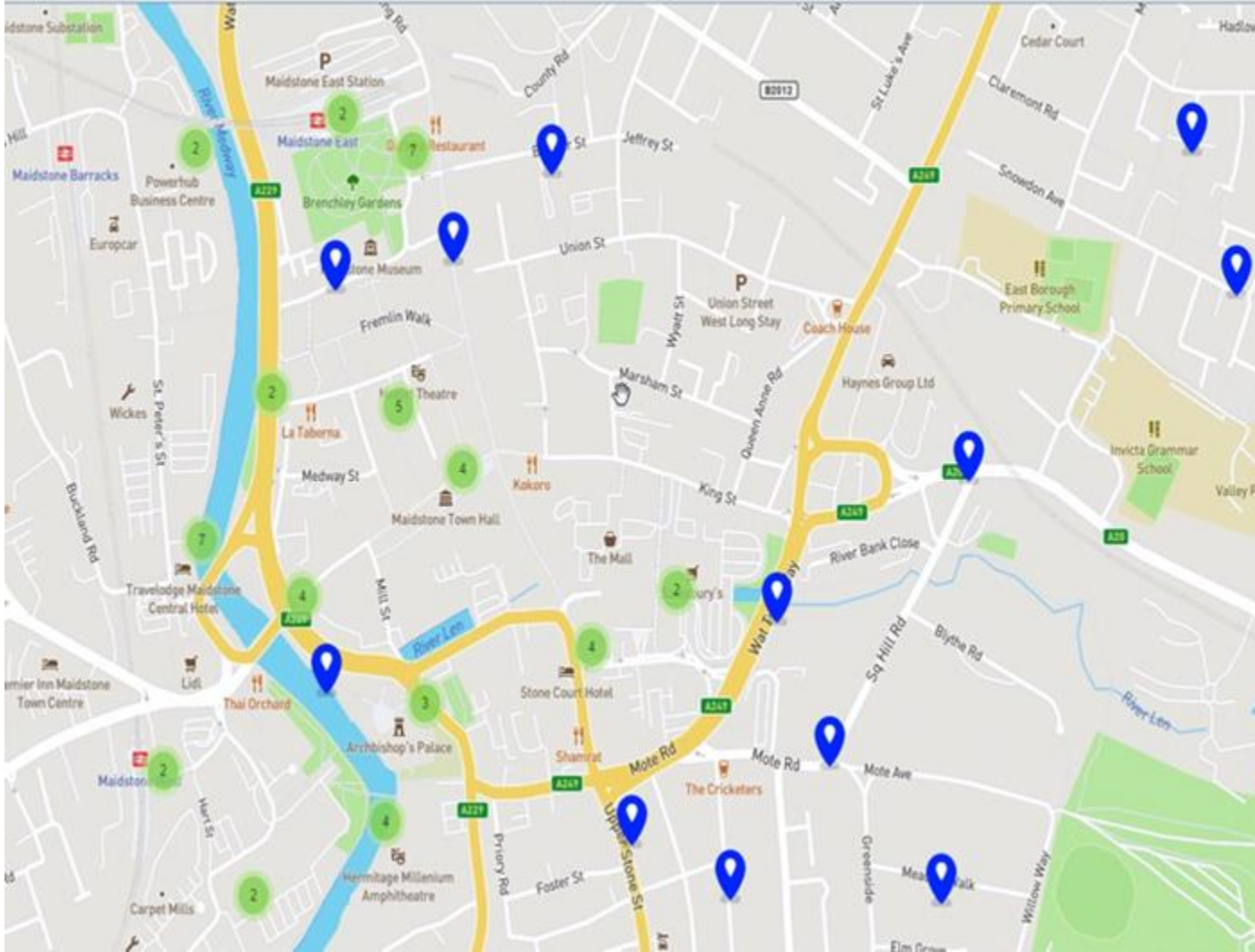
A place where communities come together to celebrate events safely.

a place that sets a good example for dealing with climate change and biodiversity issues by investing in nature and understanding that it is important for human health
Stop over mowing verges and green spaces and let the flowers grow!

A safe place for leisure, culture and shopping with more arts facilities and easy access for all ages

A place which creates a unique offering of shopping, lifestyle, housing and a destination where people want to gather in a safe, clean and vibrant environment which builds on the borough's eclectic mix of public artworks.

Where do you want to see change



There are in total 63 pins on the map, located in Maidstone urban area.

Most comments are found by the riverside as well the high street.

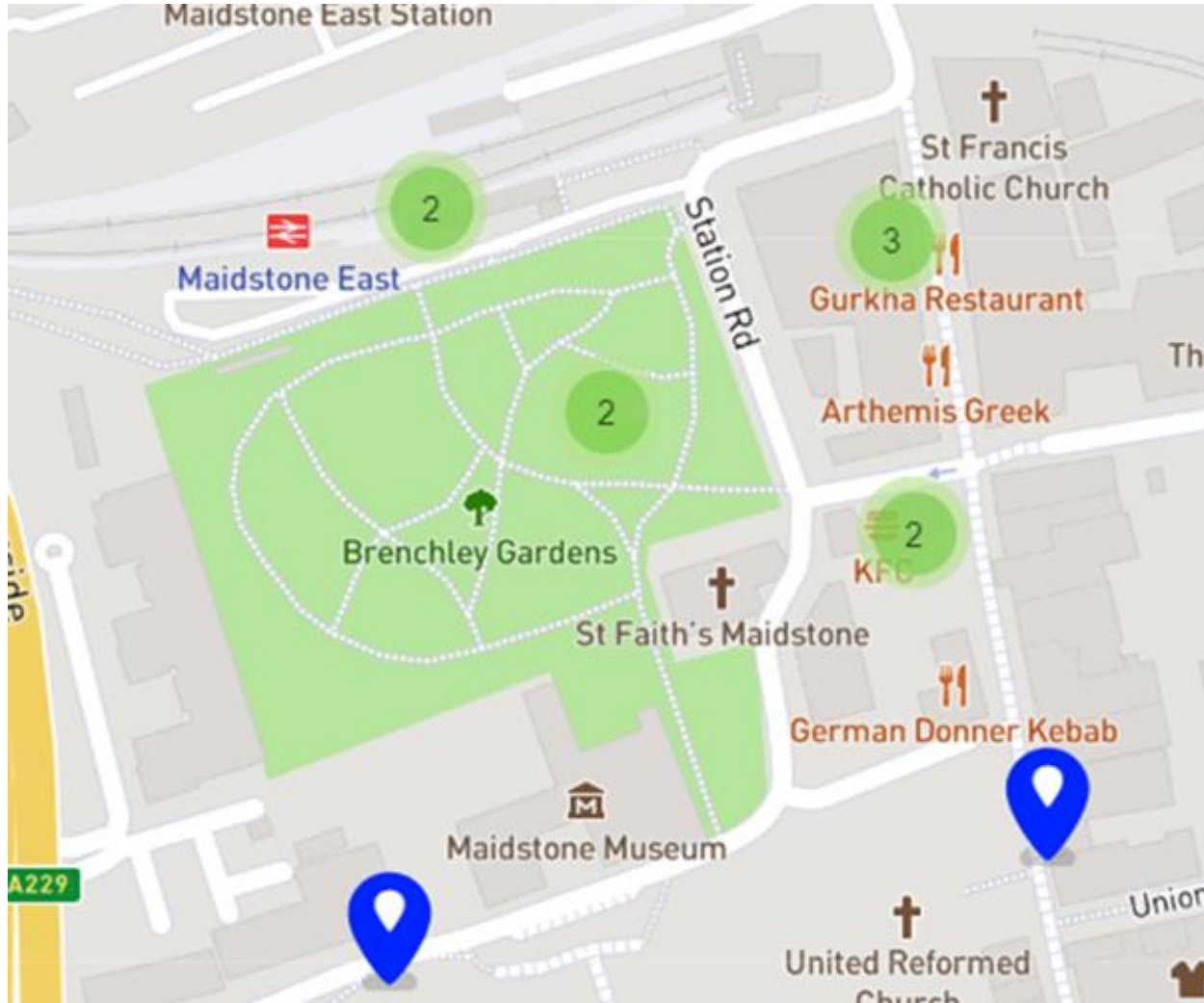
The next slides will be zooming in on key locations and addressing the main themes.

The Riverside



- In total there are 11 comments from residents related to the River Medway.
- Main points that were addressed:
- increasing the number of cafes, theatres and bars nearby. Also, introducing activities near the river, such as kayaking, row boats and paddleboarding.
- Enhance street scenery by the river- 3 comments stated that more attractive buildings should be placed by the river, rather than the Travel Lodge.
- Also increase access to the river – by adding in a secure footbridge to cross the A229 from Fremlin Walk to the other side.
- 1 comment suggested adding barriers near the river for safety purposes.

Brenchley Gardens and Maidstone East



In total, there are 3 comments related to Maidstone East.

Main themes include:

making trains more reliable and affordable.

Delivering faster trains to London, particularly the finance areas such as cannon street and London Bridge to attract businesses.

Increasing the safety of the path between Maidstone Barracks and Maidstone East.

In total, there are 3 comments related to Brenchley Gardens.

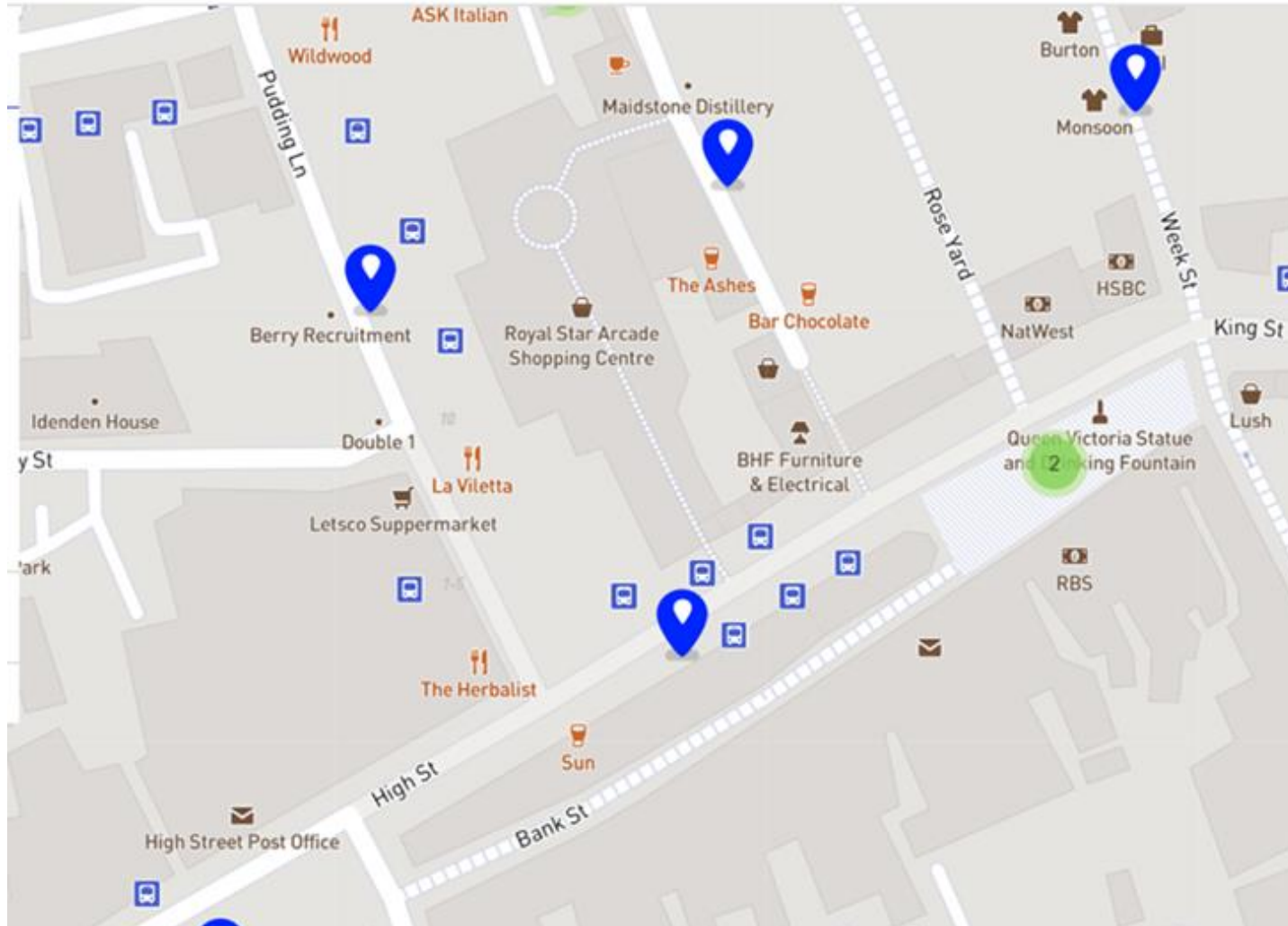
Main themes include:

Increasing safety

Making it a more pleasant place to visit.

Opening the area up, making it more friendly to children.

The High Street and Week Street



In total there are 12 comments-
main themes include:

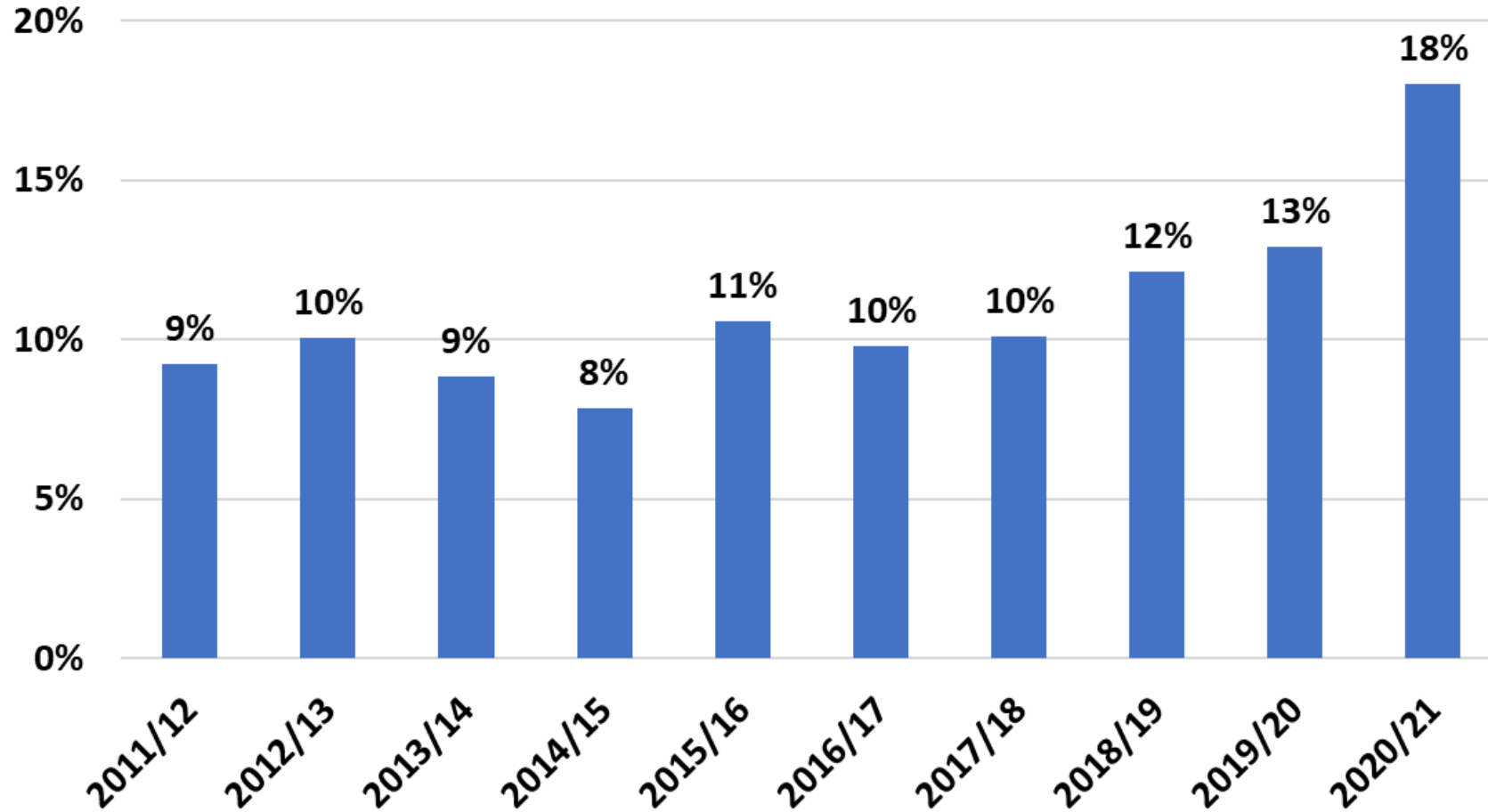
Support local restaurants, rather
than bringing in more fast food
chains.

Cleaner buildings to make it more
attractive.

Restricting cars driving through.

Increasing the safety of the high
street.

Vacant Retail Units



- Between 2016- 2021 the percentage of vacant retail units in the town centre has increased year on year.
- The 2020/21 figure of 18% is the highest it has been since we began recording this data.
- Jan- July 2022 the figure improved to 16%
- In 2019 there were 4 vacant units in Lockmeadow, there is currently only 1

Community Safety Survey 2021:

Location	Count
Town centre	371
Brenchley Gardens	74
Week Street	65
High Street/Bank Street	49
Shepway	42
Lower Stone Street/ Knightrider Street	37
Train Stations	34
Parkwood	32
Tovil	25
Mote Park & Surrounding roads	21
Staplehurst	18

Unsafe Places

Survey respondents were provided with a free text box and were asked to tell us about any areas in the borough where they feel unsafe.

The most common place where respondents said they felt unsafe was the town centre. The top twelve responses are shown.

There were 638 comments that gave a location (many respondents mentioned more than one location).

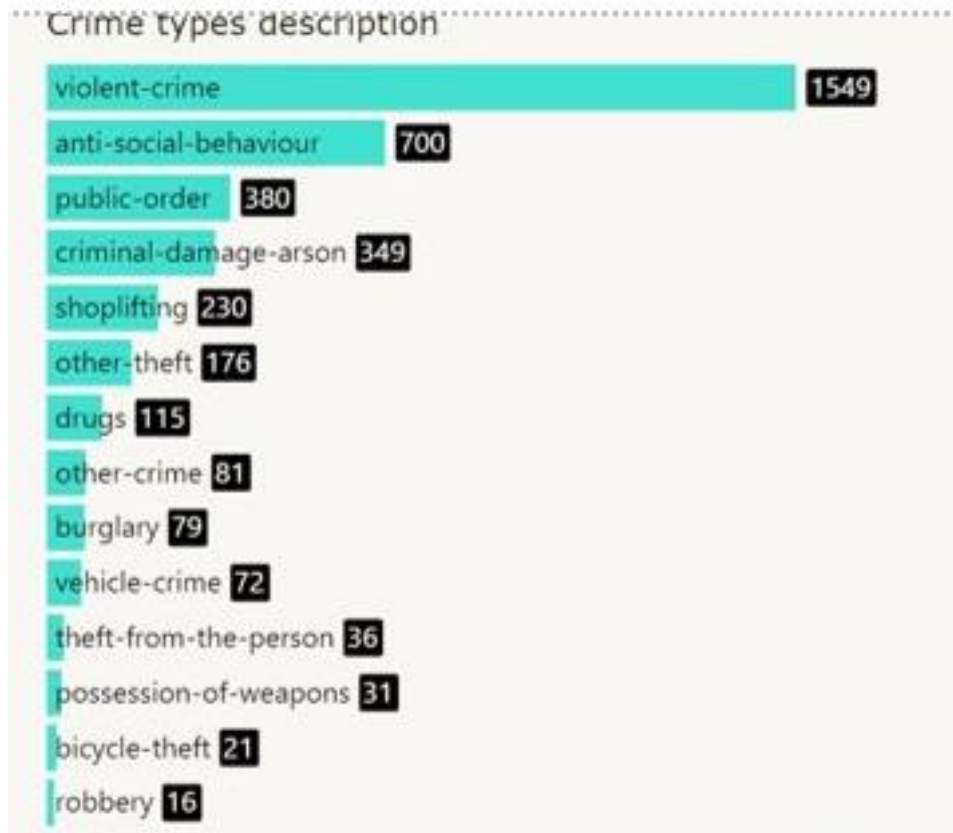
Overall, **almost three in five respondents to this question mentioned the town centre as a place in Maidstone that they feel unsafe.**

Maidstone: High Street Ward crime between 2018- 2021:

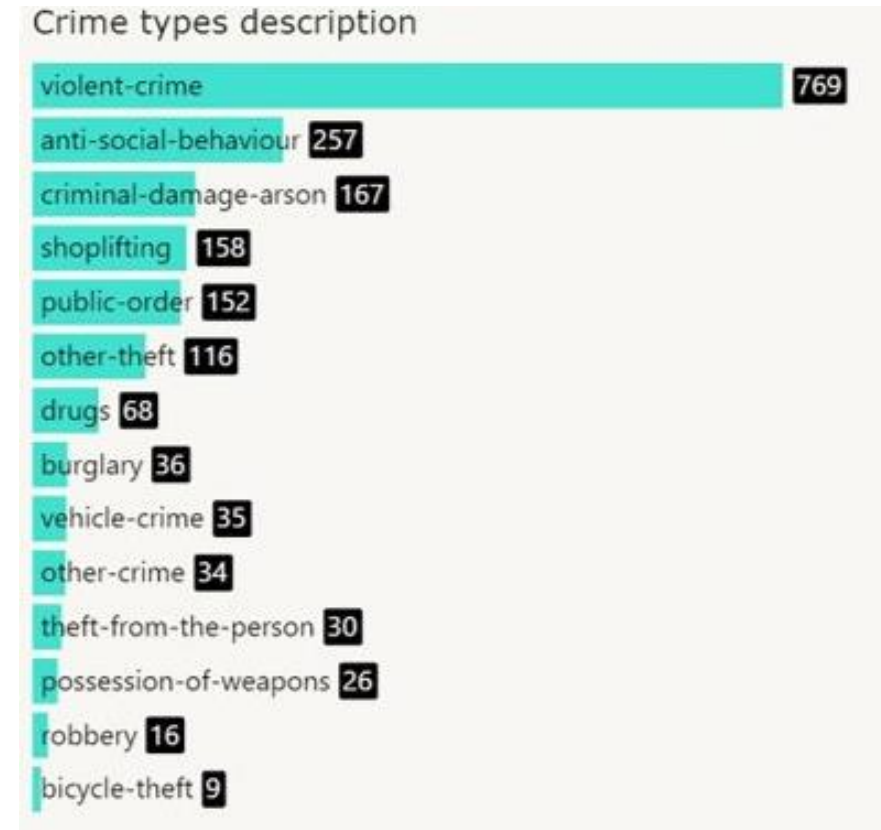
Maidstone High Street Ward					
	2018	2019	2020	2021*	Total
VAP	1490	1537	1419	840	5286
- Homicide	0	2	0	0	2
- Stalking & Harassment	252	275	370	257	1154
- With Injury	480	508	381	231	1600
- Without Injury	758	752	668	352	2530
Criminal Damage	325	308	311	190	1134
- Vehicle	101	105	76	52	334
- Dwelling/residential	50	74	83	34	241
- Other building/business	59	35	45	36	175
- Other	99	86	104	65	354
- Arson	16	8	3	3	30
Public Order	495	349	329	173	1346
ASB	682	690	945	458	2775
- COVID19	0	0	167	96	263
* Jan-Jul 2021 Only					

Incidents of Crime in the High Street

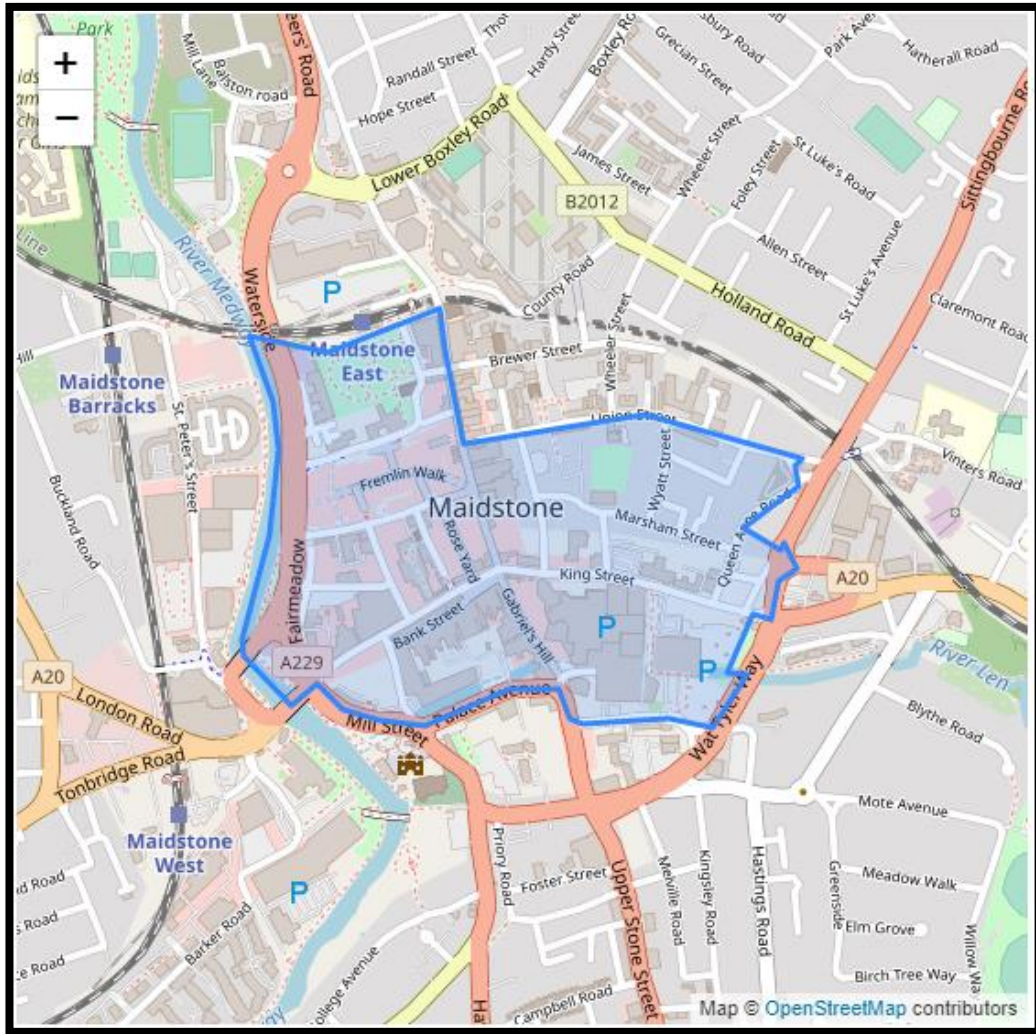
January- December 2021:



January – June 2022:



LSOA 004F sits in Maidstone's High Street Ward:



- Crime (VAWG, Neighbourhood and NTE) accounts for 14% (2017-19) and 10% (2021) of the borough's crimes in these categories. It also accounts for 15% (2017-19) and 11% (2021) of the boroughs ASB.

Offences for 2017 to 2021 (excluding 2020):				
Type	VAWG	Neighbourhood	NTE	ASB Incidents
No.	675	2238	2128	1874
Ranking	1 st	3 rd	1 st	3 rd

- In 2021, a Youth Safety Survey and a Community Safety Survey both highlighted the Town Centre as an area where fear of crime is very prevalent, with Brenchley Gardens and the area of Week Street by KFC and McDonalds, both within 004F highlighted as “no go areas” due to the behaviour and criminality associated with them. 78% of respondents to the Community Safety Survey feel that the Town Centre is unsafe or very unsafe at night.

Comments from Town Centre PSPO 2020 about visiting the Town Centre

The town should be improved for all people. It has a feeling of withering on the vine.

I hardly go up to Maidstone town centre any more due to the cost of parking and the constant traffic congestion, If we do need to go to shops we generally go up to Blue Water where it's free parking and everything is under cover

Jubilee Square has become the place the drug addicts and drunks frequent, this area is intimidating when children are present

I live almost half way between Ashford and Maidstone (even though under MBC. Would rather visit and do use High Street and facilities there rather than use Ashford!

Getting expensive to park considering shop are closing in the town centre, Not making the most out of the medway river walks or markets. Used to love to go to the markets in Maidstone, not now, it's a shame.

Every aspect of the town centre continues to deteriorate. It is designed to attract the worst kind of people and little policing to prevent trouble. Many opportunities missed to build an environment around the river to attract decent people from the town of all ages.

Generally, I have seen an improvement in street cleanliness and general behaviour in the town.

I actively avoid the town centre in the hours of darkness and at weekends. At times it can be intimidating

always had a positive experience in Maidstone town centre.

Town Centre Task Force

Launched in June 2022, below lists the focus areas:

- Protecting people from harm and improving the culture within DTE and NTE
- Identifying vulnerability and providing protection/support where necessary
- Identifying and tackling crime hot spots and trends
- Building resilience through participation, empowerment and partnership with Town Centre stakeholders

Safer Streets 4- Bid Highlights

- Repurposing of Brenchley Gardens Toilet Block – Youth Outreach/Mini Police Station
- VAWG Safety: Alarms, Cup Covers, Hollie Guard, Self Defence Seminar and classes
- Youth Workers for the lost hours
- Bystander Training
- New Night Time Economy – Culture Setting Initiative (Best Bar None)
- Safer Maidstone Media Campaign
- CCTV for Brewer Street Cemetery and Trinity Gardens
- Funding for NTE Volunteers and equipment