

Quarter of children living in poverty

by Sam Lennon

slennon@thekmggroup.co.uk
@SamLennonKM

More than one in four children in Dover and Deal are on the breadline and seven out of 10 of these are in working families.

The shocking figure of 27.6% is the second worst out of all Kent's constituencies and above the county average of 22.7%.

The details, from a report from The Children's Society, shows that 5,580 out of the total 20,241 children in the Parliamentary constituency are in poverty.

The document, addressed to Dover and Deal MP Charlie Elphicke, adds that 3,862 of these poor children live in a home where at least one adult is in work.

The Autumn 2016 report, released in late December, says: "We are concerned that for too many families a move into work is not a move out of poverty."

"Nationally more than seven million children live in families facing a four-year freeze to their benefits and the cumulative changes to support will mean many families will lose out overall."

"This is despite positive changes such as the introduction of a national living wage."

The charity recommends that the government reverses its decision to introduce a four year benefit freeze.

It adds that the introduction of

CONCERN AT LACK OF PROTECTION FOR 16- TO 17-YEAR-OLDS

County-wide The Children's Society report says that 1,970 youngsters have been registered as being in need because of abuse and neglect.

The report says: "We are particularly concerned about the lack of protection for 16 and 17-year-olds who are much more likely to experience abuse and neglect than any other age group."

"Despite this they do not yet receive the same legal protection as younger children."

In addition the charity estimated that in 2014, 1,560 16 to 17-year-olds in the South East were presented as homeless.

The report says: "These teenagers are often at serious risk of harm and can be escaping homes troubled by substance abuse, violence or severe overcrowding."

Dover and Deal MP Charlie Elphicke said: "Every child should have the same opportunities in life, no matter where they come from. That's why ending child poverty is so important."

"As the report states, the Universal Credit benefits system being introduced by the government has real potential to transform lives for the better. "And it's also important that we

get help at the Dover and Kent frontline when it comes to looking after unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

"Kent is caring for a quarter of these vulnerable youngsters and this has a real impact on local resources. Other councils need to step up and do their bit."

The Children's Society has versions of its Autumn 2016 report with individual figures for every constituency in England and Wales and is addressed to each MP.

There are also versions for every police area and main local authority (county, unitary or metropolitan).

the new Universal Credit benefits system will have a profound impact on millions of children and families across the country.

In Dover an estimated 10,610 children will live in families getting UC. The Children's Society says that the new system has potential but the government has to ensure it supports families most in need.

The Children's Society also estimates that about 4,930 children in Dover live in families in unmanageable debt.

The report said: "Our research has found that about a third of families in problem debt say that they have cut back on food within the last month, with a similar proportion saying they cut back on heating and also on

clothes for their children in order to keep up repayments."

The charity recommends that the government should work with creditors and the free debt advice service to develop a breathing space scheme.

This would ensure that struggling families have interest and collections postponed to get them back on their feet.

Percentage of children in poverty per Kent constituency

(Percentages calculated from Children's Society figures)



Picture posed by model

South Thanet	28.1
Dover	27.6
North Thanet	26.4
Chatham & Aylesford	25.9
Folkestone & Hythe	24.8
Gravesham	22.8
Sittingbourne & Sheppey	22.4
Faversham & Mid Kent	21.8
Ashford	21.0
Canterbury	20.8
Gillingham & Rainham	20.6
Rochester & Strood	20.2
Dartford	20.0
Maidstone & The Weald	18.2
Tunbridge Wells	18.0
Sevenoaks	17.8
Tonbridge & Malling	17.5

YOUNG ASYLUM SEEKERS FACE INSECURE FUTURE BECAUSE OF LACK OF SUPPORT

A total of 660 unaccompanied young asylum seekers were in the care of South East local authorities at the end of March 2015 and The Children's Society says that these figures have increased significantly in some areas since summer 2015.

The 660 is the highest regional statistic in England outside London, where it is 1,190. The lowest is 10 in the North East.

The report says: "These are children fleeing

persecution, war and abuse from across the globe.

"There are also many other children in the region with an insecure immigration status that can see them cut off from support and leave them with an insecure future."

"If children within an insecure immigration status are within the UK care system we find that all too often immigration control is prioritised over their welfare and best

interests.

"These children experience low levels of support and an inadequate standard of living that can put them at risk of destitution, homelessness and exploitation."

The report adds that after legal aid cuts through the government's Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 many separated children have been left without the specialist legal advice to help

regularise their immigration status in the UK.

The Act led to the removal of funding in entire areas of civil law including immigration where a person is not detained at all asylum cases continue to be funded.

The Children's Society says that the government should reinstate all legal aid for all unaccompanied and separated children in their immigration cases.



Established 1994

NO DISCOUNTS! NO OFFERS! NO GIMMICKS!

We supply high end, state of the art products at very affordable prices

Established in 1994 Walmer Installations Ltd have been in business for nearly 22 years

How many companies can claim to have been in existence for so long and still be under the same ownership??

FENSA

Registered Company

Browse our website to find out more and view a selection of our work






MARLBOROUGH ROAD • DEAL • KENT CT14 9LE

Tel: 01304 380492

www.walmerinstallations.co.uk

Does someone rely on you due to illness, disability, frailty or addiction?

If so YOU are a CARER




Supporting Carers for 15 years

You may help with tasks such as shopping, meals, medication, appointments, washing and dressing, cleaning or finances, or by being a listening ear. Looking after each other is something we do. You may say I'm just a husband, a daughter, a wife, a brother.

We would say 'you're also a Carer.'



carerstrust
a Network Partner

Carers' Support

CANTERBURY, DOVER & THANET

Call us to find out about information and support available to you

Tel 01304 364637

E-mail support@carers-doverdistrict.org

www.carers-supportcdt.org.uk