



## Rochester and Strood Branch

Interim Chair Linda Atkinson  
Interim Deputy Chair Gloria Stedman  
Interim Secretary Will Burvill  
Interim Treasurer Ted Atkinson  
Interim Campaign Manager Peter Smith

W: [REDACTED]  
Reform-RS.com

14 AUG 2025

Planning Department  
August 2025  
Medway Local Plan Consultation  
Medway Council  
Gun Wharf, Dock Road  
Chatham ME4 4TR

9

MEDWAY COUNCIL	
FILE REF	
14 AUG 2025	
TO:	
ACTION:	INITIALS

### Consultation Regulation 19 - Medway's Local Plan

As Interim Chair and Interim Secretary of Rochester and Strood Branch of Reform UK, we write to formally express our objections to the current version of the Medway Local Plan.

The proposed plan poses significant risks to the future of our communities, the quality of life for our residents, and the sustainability of our local services. While some aspects of the plan may appear beneficial at first glance, the reality is that it is fundamentally flawed and fails to adequately address the true needs of Medway.

#### 1 Government Housing Targets vs Local Needs

The plan's overwhelming reliance on central government housing targets—24,540 new homes by 2041—is a prime example of top-down planning that ignores the needs and concerns of local communities. This drive to meet national housing quotas disregards Medway's capacity to absorb such growth. The additional strain on our already stretched infrastructure, services, and environment will be devastating, and this plan fails to provide any clear or enforceable guarantees that the necessary supporting infrastructure will be delivered in tandem with this proposed growth.

#### 2 Infrastructure Promises – A Record of Broken Commitments

For years, we have witnessed promises of improved infrastructure to accompany new housing developments, yet in practice, these commitments have fallen short:

- Roads are increasingly congested

- GP surgeries are overburdened, and waiting times for medical appointments have become untenable
- Schools are already oversubscribed, and local families are struggling to secure places for their children
- Flooding risks are still being poorly managed, and mitigation measures seem more like afterthoughts
- Without concrete, enforceable commitments to build the necessary infrastructure—such as roads, schools, healthcare facilities, and flood protections—prior to the start of any new development, this plan is essentially asking residents to place their trust in unfulfilled promises

### **3 Overdevelopment of Rural and Suburban Areas**

We are particularly concerned about the overdevelopment of rural and suburban areas, notably the Hoo Peninsula. This area is already facing substantial pressures from insufficient services and poor transport links. The plan's suggestion that 30% of the new homes will be built in these rural locations does not constitute "sustainable growth"; it is suburban sprawl that threatens our countryside and the very character of Medway. This will degrade the quality of life for residents and put additional pressure on services that are already struggling to cope.

### **4 Environmental Concerns**

The plan speaks of "protecting the natural environment," but it lacks meaningful mechanisms for enforcement. Development in ecologically sensitive areas, such as near Darland Banks and the Medway Estuary, threatens to harm our local wildlife and natural habitats. Previous promises to protect the environment have proven hollow, and I am deeply concerned that without strict oversight, this plan will allow for irreversible environmental damage.

### **5 Lack of Transparency and Public Consultation**

The process surrounding this Local Plan has been rushed and lacks transparency. The consultation period is too short for such an important document that will shape the future of Medway for decades to come. The lack of meaningful engagement with residents since 2024 has created a feeling of alienation and disenfranchisement. Local residents should have more time and opportunities to fully scrutinise the plan and voice their concerns.

### **6 Cross-Border Developments – Who Benefits?**



The joint development proposals with Gravesham and Maidstone, such as the Lidsing Garden Community, risk overwhelming Medway with infrastructure demands, while the benefits—financial or otherwise—will accrue to developers and neighbouring councils. Medway residents are being asked to shoulder the burdens of these developments without receiving proportional benefits. This needs to be urgently reconsidered.

## **7 The Strain on Healthcare, Traffic, and Safety**

As outlined, NHS facilities are already under pressure in Medway, and this Local Plan does nothing to address the urgent need for expanded healthcare provision. Our roads are already at breaking point, and without robust investment in public transport and infrastructure upgrades, this plan guarantees a worsening of traffic congestion and environmental pollution, as well as an increased risk to public safety.

## **8 Housing Allocation – Prioritising Local Needs**

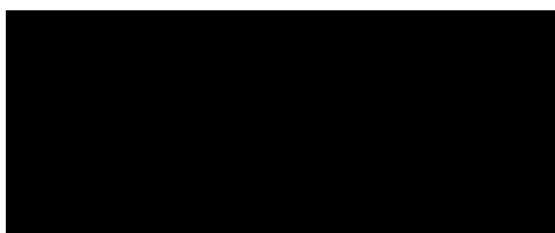
The allocation of new homes is concerning, as it seems to prioritise the needs of people from outside Medway—particularly London commuters—over those of local families. Additionally, we call for clarity regarding housing allocation to ensure that homes are reserved for local people—families, key workers, and others who contribute to the local economy. The plan should also ensure that housing does not contribute to illegal immigration or place further strain on local services.

## **Conclusion: A Plan that Fails Medway**

In conclusion, this Local Plan does not serve the best interests of Medway's residents. It places undue pressure on our infrastructure, threatens our environment, and risks undermining the quality of life for current and future generations. We urge Medway Council to reconsider the plan in its current form and put local control, accountability, and resident well-being at the heart of the decision-making process.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Yours sincerely



Linda Atkinson  
Interim Chair

William Burvill  
Interim Secretary

Rochester & Strood Branch Rochester & Strood Branch



Promoted by Linda Atkinson for Reform UK Party  
at Millbank Tower, 21-24 Millbank, London, SW1P 4QP