

Mid Kent Mind

we support | we educate | we make a difference

Strategy 2025 – 2028





Forward

As we present Mid Kent Mind's Strategy for 2025–2028, we do so with a deep sense of purpose and renewed commitment to the communities we serve. The past few years have brought unprecedented challenges to mental health services across the UK. Nationally, the demand for support has surged, driven by the long-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, economic uncertainty, and growing social isolation.

Locally, in Mid Kent, we have seen these pressures reflected in rising referrals, increasing complexity of need, and a growing urgency for early intervention and accessible support.

Despite these challenges, we remain steadfast in our belief that everyone deserves the opportunity to thrive. Our strategy for 2025–2028 sets out a bold and compassionate vision for the next three years. It builds on our proud legacy of community-based mental health support, while embracing innovation, inclusivity, and collaboration.

We know that the mental health landscape is evolving. National policy is increasingly focused on prevention, integration with physical health, and tackling inequalities.

Locally, we are working closely with partners across health, education, and the voluntary sector to ensure that no one falls through the gaps. But we also recognise the stark realities: funding remains uncertain, workforce pressures are growing, and stigma still prevents too many people from seeking help.

This strategy is our response. It outlines how we will:

- Expand our reach to underserved communities,
- Strengthen our youth and adult services,
- Invest in digital and face-to-face support,
- Champion lived experience at every level of our work.

We are immensely proud of our team, volunteers, and supporters who make our mission possible every day. Together, we will continue to adapt, listen, and lead with compassion.

Donal Watkin, Chair of Trustees

Henu Cummins, CEO

Who we are

We work alongside Mind, the national mental health charity, and are proud to be part of their network of over 100 local Minds across England and Wales.

As an independent, local charity, our work focuses on delivering life-changing support to people living in Maidstone, Ashford and Swale. Drawing on the strength of the Mind network and using our own expert knowledge, we work independently to meet the needs of our area.

**During 2024 – 2025 we supported 7,157 individuals
who collectively made 14,695 attendances
across our range of services.**



Who we are

We are a local, independent, mental health and wellbeing charity providing a safe environment for individuals where everyone is valued. We improve the lives of those in our community by building their resilience and giving them hope for a better future.

Our vision is for a community where all individuals are accepted, included and supported to thrive.

Values



Listening

We are compassionate.
We respond to the needs of local people and take action



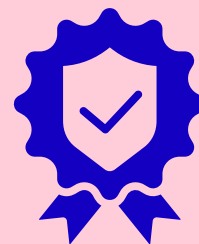
Inclusivity

We give people a sense of belonging
and all our services are accessible.



Resilience

We are a resilient organisation, and
we empower our beneficiaries to
build their own resilience. We
support people's voice.



Integrity

We are trustworthy mental health
experts committed to delivering
effective services that promote
lasting well-being.

Where we work

We serve a growing population covering the Kent communities of Maidstone, Ashford and Swale including urban and rural areas and wards with particularly high deprivation.

Across these communities there is a wide range of cultures and ethnic groups. From this diversity stems a variety of needs, experiences and barriers to accessing mental health support that we strive to break through.



**“I don’t know what I would do without
Mid Kent Mind’s support.”**

Maidstone



Maidstone is the largest urban town in Kent. It has very high numbers of children with special educational needs and disabilities including moderate learning difficulties, physical disability, severe learning difficulties and social and emotional health difficulties and is within the top three ranking in Kent, per need. Evidence suggests those experiencing SEND are at a higher risk of developing mental health problems.

The Regimental Headquarters, 36 Engineer Regiment have been based in Maidstone since 1959. The current barracks on Invicta Park is due to close in 2029. Maidstone is also the home of the Queen's Gurkhas Engineers. Military personnel and veterans can often face unique risks and challenges to their mental health and many feel increased stigma around accessing support.

Population: 184,200

Female: 50.7%

Male: 49.3%

23.7% are aged 0-19 years

Prison population: 700

Ethnicity

4.7% Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh

2.1% Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African

2.3% Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups

89.8% White

1.2% Other ethnic groups

Ashford



At 58,000 hectares, Ashford is Kent's largest district. Five wards are within the most 20% deprived in Kent.

Ashford is the area most affected by slow broadband access. The expansive rural economy is disadvantaged by poor broadband speed as well as inadequate mobile phone networks affecting local businesses and those working from home. Additional factors such as little or no regular public transport, combined with slow broadband access, can result in people having limited access to mental health support.

Population: 138,300

Female: 51.3%

Male: 48.7%

24.1% are aged 0-19 years

Prison population: 530

Ethnicity

5.8% Asian, Asian British, Asian Welsh

2.6% Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African

2.2% Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups

88.1% White

1.4% Other ethnic groups

Swale



According to the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index, Sheerness ward is the most deprived area in Kent; 54% of children are living in income deprived families. There is a strong correlation between deprivation and mental health problems however, research indicates that people who live in deprived areas are less likely to access support which compounds and worsens mental health problems.

Swale has the highest number of identified young carers in Kent and Medway. When compared to their peers, young carers are more likely to report feeling unhappy with their lives and as they get older, young carers report worsening mental health.

Population: 155,900

Female: 50.5%

Male: 49.5%

24.1% are aged 0-19 years

Prison population: 3,050

Ethnicity

1.5% Asian, Asian British, Asian Welsh

2.3% Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African

1.81% Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups

93.8% White

0.5% Other ethnic groups

Strategic goals



Strategic goals

Impact

By increasing our reach and levels of engagement, we ensure that more people in our community can access vital mental health and wellbeing support. We are committed to breaking down barriers, fostering understanding and extending our services to those who need it most.

Our commitments:

1. Enhance brand awareness and digital presence – making our services more visible and more accessible, for everyone, across urban and rural communities.
2. Engage with underserved populations – listening to community needs and building connections through direct outreach.
3. Use data-driven insights – developing targeted messaging and personalised communication to improve engagement.
4. Launch brand awareness campaigns – working with partners to challenge stigma and promote mental health education.



Strategic goals

Service Quality

We are committed to continuously improving our services to ensure the highest standards of mental health support. By adopting practices, evaluating our impact, and embracing innovation we will meet the diverse needs of our community.

Our commitments:

1. Strengthen service quality – building on the Mind Quality Mark to enhance internal processes and standards.
2. Deliver impactful mental health support – using data and best practices to measure effectiveness and improve outcomes.
3. Champion the voices of our communities – advocating for mental health at local, regional, and national levels.



Strategic goals

Organisational Development

Strong infrastructure and continuous improvement are essential for delivering high-quality mental health services. By investing in technology, AI and organisational development, we enhance efficiency, innovation, and service delivery.

Our commitments:

1. Invest in modern, secure technology – upgrading hardware, software, and networks to support seamless operations.
2. Strengthen cybersecurity – implementing advanced measures to protect data and ensure service continuity.
3. Maximise the potential of our internal CRM system – using data-driven insights to improve efficiency and outcomes.
4. Harness the power of AI to enhance mental health support across Mid Kent by improving service accessibility, personalising client engagement and streamlining internal operations.



Strategic goals

Our People

Our people are our greatest asset. By prioritising their wellbeing and development, we create a resilient, compassionate and effective organisation capable of delivering exceptional mental health support.

Our commitments:

1. Recruit and retain a diverse, skilled workforce – ensuring we have the right people to deliver high-quality support.
2. Invest in learning and development – providing training, shared learning, and career growth opportunities.
3. Champion workplace wellbeing – fostering a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment where employees can thrive.



Strategic goals

Collaboration

Collaboration strengthens our ability to deliver impactful services and expand support for our communities. By building meaningful partnerships, we create a network of trust and seamless pathways to the right support.

Our commitments:

1. Expand peer support networks – empowering ambassadors and advocates with lived experience to support others.
2. Strengthen local collaborations and stake holder relationships – working with businesses, charities, and public sector organisations to improve service reach.
3. Develop wider partnerships – exploring Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) opportunities to enhance resources and impact.
4. Explore strategic collaborations – assessing potential partnerships and strategic alignments with other organisations.



Strategic goals

Sustainability

We are committed to long-term sustainability – ensuring financial stability, environmental responsibility and operational resilience. By adopting forward-thinking strategies, we will safeguard our future and continue delivering vital mental health services.

Our commitments:

1. Diversify funding sources – reducing reliance on single income streams to maintain financial independence.
2. Develop marketable services and products – creating sustainable revenue streams to support long-term growth.
3. Enhance operational efficiency and effectiveness – streamlining internal processes, particularly funding pipelines and bid management demonstrating transparency, accountability, and value for money.
4. Adopt environmentally responsible practices – implementing green initiatives within our offices and operations.





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