

# **JSNA: Child and Family Poverty**

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**Wirral Intelligence Service**

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**January 2019**

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## JSNA: Child and Family Poverty

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### Background to JSNA – Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

#### What is a JSNA?

A Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, better known as a JSNA, is intended to be a systematic review of the health and wellbeing needs of the local population, informing local priorities, policies and strategies that in turn informs local commissioning priorities that will improve health and wellbeing outcomes and reduce inequalities throughout the Borough.

#### Who is involved?

Information from Council, NHS and other partners is collected and collated to inform the JSNA and this reflects the important role that all organisations and sectors have (statutory, voluntary, community and faith) in improving the health and wellbeing of Wirral's residents.

#### About this document

This JSNA section looks to contain the most relevant information on the topic and provides an overview of those related key aspects

#### How can you help?

If you have ideas or any suggestions about these issues or topics then please email us at [wirralintelligenceservice@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:wirralintelligenceservice@wirral.gov.uk) or go to <https://www.wirralintelligenceservice.org/>

Version Number	Date	Authors
1.0	March 2018	Hannah Cotgrave & John Highton – Wirral Intelligence Service
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### Content overview

<b>Abstract</b>	Summary of local and national child and family poverty information
<b>Intended or potential audience</b>	<b>External</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wirral Council Partners – across sectors</li><li>• Wirral Health and Wellbeing Board</li></ul> <b>Internal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Range of Senior Management Teams</li><li>• Colleagues and those leading on work to alleviate poverty impacts</li></ul>
<b>Links with other topic areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Children and Young People</a>, <a href="#">Unemployment</a>, <a href="#">Worklessness and Health</a>, <a href="#">Economy</a>, <a href="#">Health Profiles</a>, <a href="#">Special Educational Needs and Disabilities</a>, <a href="#">Housing</a> plus see <a href="#">Wirral Intelligence Service website</a> for more content</li></ul>

## Key findings

- The published data (up to August 2016) suggests that 12,920 children in Wirral are living in poverty (up to age of 20 years) which is a reduction from 16,665 in 2011 (HMRC, 2018)
- This equates to 18.9% of all children in Wirral living in low income families, a reduction from 23.8% in 2011 (HMRC, 2018)
- With 15 Wirral wards having a lower percentage of children living in low income families than the Wirral average (18.9%) and 13 Wirral Wards are lower than the England average (17.0%)
- For England, that 2016 average is 17.0%, is an increase from 16.6% in 2015 though a reduction from 20.1% in 2011
- All Wirral Wards (22) have seen a drop in the number and percentage of children living in poverty between 2011 and 2016
- Yet there are very high concentrations of childhood poverty within Bidston and St. James, Birkenhead and Tranmere, Seacombe and Rock Ferry with at least 1 in 3 children living in poverty. These areas correlate strongly with other known deprivation markers
- Heswall, Greasby, Frankby and Irby, Clatterbridge and Hoylake and Meols are all close to or below 5%, or less than 1 in 20 children living in low income families in 2016
- This 1 in 20 figure, or approximately 5%, for children living in low income families of affluent areas of Wirral compares to around 40%, or 8 in 20 children in Bidston St. James, Birkenhead and Tranmere, Seacombe living in low income families (HMRC, 2018)
- 2016 data suggests that Bidston and St James ward has 38.6% of the children's population living in poverty compared to Heswall at 3.4%, or over 10x greater number of children living in low income families
- Campaign to End Poverty data suggests that applying housing costs to poverty calculations in turn highlights the actual and potential impact of in-work poverty happening to Wirral families
- The key driver for child and family poverty is lack of sufficient income from parental employment, which restricts the amount of earnings a household has. This is not just about worklessness, but also working insufficient hours and/or low pay (HM Government, 2014)
- For poor children growing up to be poor adults, the main driver is poor child educational outcomes, primarily through the influence on future employment outcomes and earnings
- 2016 data sees that the number of Wirral Lower Super Output Areas with more than 50% of children in low income families fall to 1 (Birkenhead East Float) though this still equates to 1 in 2 living in childhood poverty in the most disadvantaged areas (HMRC, 2018)
- The highest ranked 10 Wirral Lower Super Output Areas for highest levels of children living in poverty have 5 areas within Bidston and St. James ward. (HMRC, 2018)
- Birkenhead East Float is the number 1 most employment deprived Lower Super Output Area in England in 2015, out of 32,844 Lower Super Output Areas (IMD, 2015)
- The number of households with 3+ children will drop nationally and locally but Wirral will still have the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest number in Cheshire & Merseyside
- Wirral has a higher level of Lone Parent families than North West and England which can be linked to lost income for woman and children, as well as higher rates of worklessness
- Average attainment for Wirral Children with and without access to Free School Meals (FSM) is high but a gap of 14 points exists between FSM (50) and non-FSM (36) and this could be more pronounced in less affluent areas of the borough
- Adult qualification levels compare favourably with other parts of Cheshire & Merseyside but still 8% of Wirral working-age adults have no qualification (NOMIS, 2016)

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## What do we know?

## Why is this important?

It is recognised that poverty is damaging to children, families and entire communities and that actions should be addressed through a clear strategy and targeted intervention. Tackling child and family poverty is critical to wider efforts with partners to deliver long-term objectives for prosperity and a better quality of life for all in Wirral.

In order to address child and family poverty it is important to understand the extent and nature of Wirral needs, also what resources are available to tackle poverty issues.

The 2014 Government Review, [\*An evidence review of the drivers of child poverty for families in poverty now and for poor children growing up to be poor adults\*](#), highlights the key considerations for those who are experiencing poverty now and those who might experience poverty as adults.

The main factor is **lack of sufficient income from parental employment**, which restricts the amount of earnings a household has. This is not just about worklessness, but also **working insufficient hours and/or low pay**.

This in turn is often caused by:

- **Long-term worklessness**, increasing difficulties in returning to work, including skill loss, employer bias and changes in attitudes to work
- **Low parental qualifications** limiting an adult's level of wages
- **Parental ill health** or family instability which can both reduce the number of parents whose earnings contribute to income, and may also mean the remaining parent is more restricted in terms of employment due to caring responsibilities either for the child or the disabled family member
- **Family size**, with larger families requiring higher levels of income to avoid poverty. It can also restrict parental employment due to caring responsibilities
- **Drug & alcohol dependency**, although only a small number of children are affected, the effects for these parents and children are profound
- Research also shows that **the experience of poverty** in itself affects your chances of being poor in the future, with those who are poor for longer being less likely to exit poverty

For those poor children growing up to be poor adults, the factors making some poor children more likely to become poor adults are:

- The main driver for future poverty is **poor child educational outcomes**, primarily through the influence on future employment outcomes and earnings
- **Childhood poverty** itself also appears to have an effect on future poverty largely through its impact on educational attainment

There are a range of other factors that influence the child's educational attainment, mainly involving parental characteristics. Primary amongst these are:

- **Parental qualifications,**
- **Parental health,**
- **Child health,**
- **The home environment** (made up of the home learning environment and parental behaviours), and
- **Child non-cognitive skills** (including aspirations).

The review suggests that not all children who are affected by the factors illustrated will be in poverty as adults. Equally some children who are not in poverty in childhood will be in poverty as adults. However the risks of adult poverty are much higher for children affected by these factors.

The [Child poverty outcomes models: An international review](#) (National Children's Bureau, 2012) recognised that even after taking account for country and regional differences, there is a core set of factors that underlie child poverty in developed countries. These are the various circumstances and stressors experienced by children or their family members that tend to co-occur with or exacerbate existing child poverty. The factors include:

- Unemployment and economic inactivity
- In-work poverty
- Lone parenthood
- Low parental educational attainment
- Teenage parenthood
- Lack of affordable and accessible childcare
- Lack of qualifications among young people
- Poor health
- Problem behaviour
- Abuse and neglect
- Residence in deprived neighbourhoods or in substandard housing.

Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) (2012) suggest that joblessness is the most important cause of family poverty in developed countries: the incidence of poverty is six times higher among workless families than families with someone in employment. However, recent research by the [Child Poverty Action Group \(2018\)](#) reports that parents working full time on the minimum wage are not earning enough for an acceptable standard of living which should also be considered.

The 2014 Government Review also concludes there are a number of underpinning aspects seen time and time again. They focused on thirteen family and child characteristics as can be seen in Figure 1 and Figure 2 below. These factors play key roles in causing longer spells of poverty, have high influence over the effects seen and add to a fairly complex picture, consisting of a number of inter-related factors (see review [here](#)).

**Figure 1: Poverty: Key Factors from HM Government Evidence Review, 2014**

## How? Evidence Poverty: Key factors

*Table 1: Relative influence of factors on length of child poverty spell*

Factor	Certainty	Strength	Coverage
Long-term Worklessness & Low Earnings	High	High	High
Parental Qualifications	High	High	High
Family Instability	High	Medium	Medium
Family Size	High	Medium	Medium
Parental Ill Health and Disability	Medium	Medium	Medium
Drug & Alcohol Dependency	High	High	Low
Child Ill Health	Medium	Low	Low
Housing	Low	Low	Medium
Debt	Low	Low	Medium
Neighbourhood	Low	Low	Medium
Educational Attainment	N/A	N/A	N/A
Non-Cognitive Development	N/A	N/A	N/A
Home Learning Environment	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source and Notes: see below

**Figure 2: Poverty: Key Factors from HM Government Evidence Review, 2014**

## How? Evidence Poor children growing up to be poor adults

*Table 2: Relative influence of factors on future poverty*

Factor	Certainty	Strength	Coverage
Educational Attainment	High	High	High
Parental Qualifications	High	Medium	High
Childhood Poverty	Medium	Medium	High
Home Learning Environment	Medium	Medium	High
Non-Cognitive Development	Medium	Medium	High
Parental Ill Health and Disability	Medium	Medium	Medium
Child Ill Health	High	Medium	Low
Long-term Worklessness & Low Earnings	Medium	Low	High
Family Size	Medium	Low	Medium
Neighbourhood	Medium	Low	Medium
Family Instability	Medium	Low	Medium
Drug & Alcohol Dependency	Low	High	Low
Housing	Low	Low	Medium
Debt	Low	Low	Medium

Source: [HM Government \(2014\)](#)

Notes: Definitions for Figure 1 & 2

**Certainty** – DOES IT HAVE AN EFFECT? Does the analysis identify a significant relationship between the factor and the risk of staying in poverty as a child or becoming a poor adult? Is there a causal relationship and a clear consensus in the literature?

**Strength** – HOW BIG IS THE EFFECT? How strongly is the factor related to poverty and how direct is the influence?

**Coverage** – HOW MANY ARE AFFECTED? A certain and strongly influential factor may only affect

When thinking about these factors, it is important to note that they may come before poverty, co-occur with poverty or come after poverty. So they could be 'causes', 'correlate to' or be 'effects' of poverty. It is generally not helpful only to frame these factors only as 'causes' of poverty, suggesting that by reducing the numbers of say lone parenthood then child poverty rates would subsequently reduce. While lone parenthood, as a 'cause' may make individuals particularly vulnerable to poverty (i.e. due to high unemployment and low educational attainment), it also could be an 'effect' in that poverty undermines people's marriage prospects so predicated them to not marrying.

Further, the strong link between poverty and family structure may be due to an outside factor that drives both the likelihood of marrying and the likelihood of being in poverty, such as poor health. It seems more helpful to think about these factors in so far as they help to frame the policy responses to reducing child poverty.

An effective approach to child poverty needs to demonstrate an understanding of the various economic, social and demographic factors related to child poverty and what policies and programmes can influence these factors.

From the range of academic and institutional evidence the review suggests that looking at children likely to be stuck in poverty for longer is important as those children affected suffer the worst outcomes and are at greatest risk of becoming poor adults.

- The key factor for child poverty now is **parental worklessness and low earnings**.
- The other main factors include **low parental qualifications, parental ill health, family instability and family size**.

There are a range of factors increasing the risk of a poor child growing up as a poor adult.

- The most influential factor is child **educational attainment**.
- Other main factors (all of which act to some extent through educational attainment) are: **low parental qualifications, parental ill health, child ill health, the home environment, children's non-cognitive skills and childhood poverty** itself.

This JSNA section goes onto to consider our local story of need in relation to some of these factors and how local partners continue to develop joint approaches to tackling both causes and consequences of childhood poverty and its legacy.

## Facts, figures and trends (Wirral and beyond)

### Measuring Child Poverty

There is extensive debate about the way in which child poverty is, or should be, measured. However, the use of household income to measure poverty, as in the Children in Low-Income Families Local Measure, is the most universally accepted method and provides us with statistics about levels of child poverty in England, Liverpool City Region and Wirral.

### Children in Low-Income Families Local Measure

This shows the proportion of children living in families in receipt of out-of-work (means-tested) benefits or in receipt of tax credits where their reported income is less than 60 per cent of UK median income. This information is compiled annually on the basis of a snapshot of data taken on August 31<sup>st</sup> each year. The data is always provided with a lag of 2 years. The data is provided by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and can be found here: (Under "Official statistics – other" at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/personal-tax-credits-statistics>)

On 6<sup>th</sup> December 2018, HMRC released the 2016 data for the “Children in Low-Income Families Local Measure”. This is the formal title of the revised Child Poverty measure which was previously National Indicator 116. The proportion of children in poverty is calculated as:

$$\frac{\text{Number of children in families in receipt of either out of work benefits, or tax credits where their reported income is less than 60\% median income}}{\text{Total number of children in the area}}$$

For consistency, the figures cited within this briefing are for ‘All Children’ in the borough. HMRC also provides figures for the number and percentage of children under 16.

### **Use of Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) 2015**

An alternative to the HMRC data is the use of the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) which is provided as part of the Indices of Multiple Deprivation. IDACI and Child Poverty data correlate significantly. However, there are some notable differences between the two:

- Whilst both measures are based on parental income and the receipt of welfare benefits and tax credits, the IDACI measure only observes a 0-16 age range compared to 0-19 for the relative Child Poverty measure.
- Furthermore IDACI is published every 3 years in line with the IMD whilst the Child Poverty measure is produced annually. IDACI Figures were updated in 2015.
- [Maps outlining the relative values of the last published IDACI \(2015\) and other related content](#) and in [Appendix Two](#)

### **Households Below Average Income (HBAI)**

The latest [Households Below Average Income \(HBAI\) report](#) (for 2016/17 data) presents information on living standards in the United Kingdom. It provides annual estimates on the number and percentage of people living in low-income households. Figures are also provided for children, pensioners, working-age adults and individuals living in a family where someone is disabled.

Most of the figures in the report come from the Family Resources Survey (FRS), a representative survey of around 20,000 households in the United Kingdom. Surveys gather information from a sample rather than from the whole population. The sample is designed carefully to allow for this, and to be as accurate as possible given practical limitations such as time and cost constraints. Unless otherwise stated, the changes in low-income measures over time that are discussed in the text are statistically significant. [The latest report and data \(2016/17\) is available here.](#)

The 2018 report (based on data to 2016/17) intimates that nationally:

- The average (median) real terms household income Before Housing Costs (BHC), at £494 per week; this is a rise of around £35 per week since 2011/12
- The average household income After Housing Costs (AHC) has also increased by this amount since 2011/12 at £425 per week. Income inequality decreased between 2015/16 and 2016/17 but this decrease was not statistically significant
- The percentage of individuals in relative low income has been decreasing gradually since 2008/09, but has remained broadly stable between 2015/16 and 2016/17

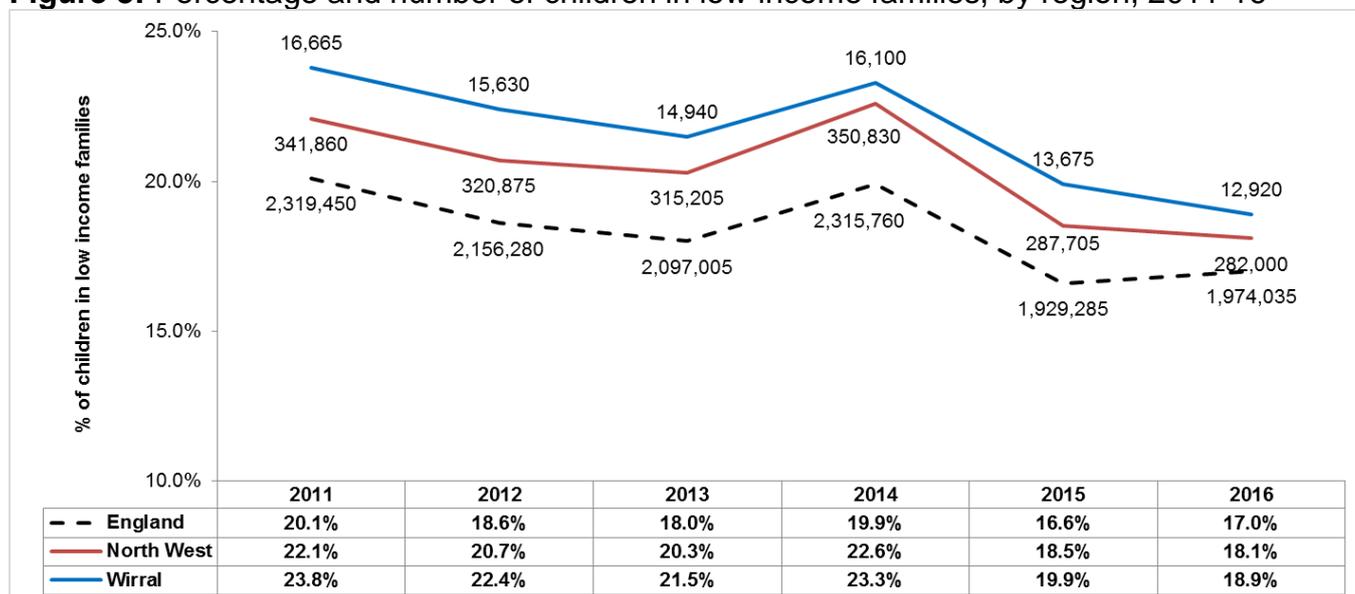
- The percentage of children in relative and absolute low-income households decreased slightly 2013/14, as did the combined low income and material deprivation and severe low income and material deprivation figures for children
- The percentage of working-age adults in low-income households in remained stabled between 2015/16 and 2016/17

### Comparing Local, Regional and National data

Using the Government measure of *children in low-income families*, we can see from Figure 3 below, that the North West region is consistently above the national average between 2011 and 2016. Wirral's rate of children in low income families is still higher than both, North West and England, over the same time period.

All areas appear to follow a similar trend however; decreasing between 2011-13 before peaking in 2014 then decreasing to their lowest rates of the period in 2016.

**Figure 3:** Percentage and number of children in low-income families, by region, 2011-16



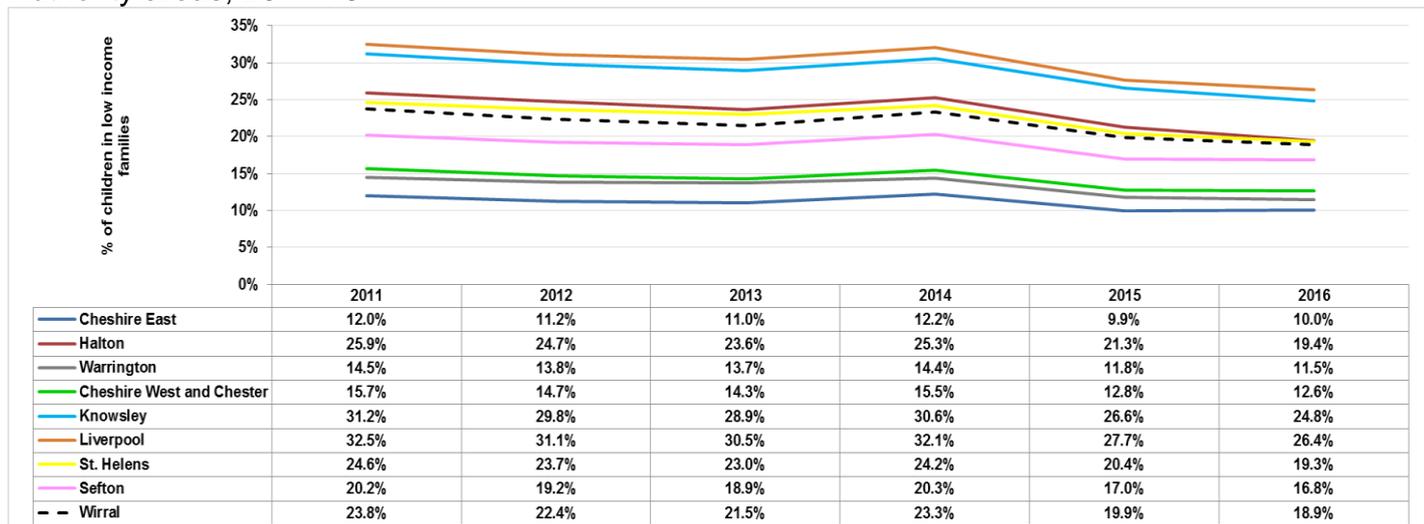
Source: [Children in low income families local measure: HMRC 2018](#)

Note: Figure 3 has been charted using the % of children in poverty; however the actual number of children is also reported to enhance the data

## Cheshire and Merseyside area

Figure 4 provides an overview for the Cheshire and Merseyside area (by local authority) that highlights Wirral's proportion of children in low income families compared to these areas. All areas appear to follow the same trend as that seen nationally; decreasing annually until a peak in 2014 then decreasing to their lowest rate within the period in 2015 and then 2016.

**Figure 4:** Percentage of children in low-income families, by Cheshire and Merseyside Local Authority areas, 2011-16



Source: [Children in low income families local measure: HMRC 2018](#)

Table 1 shows Wirral's last 6 years percentage of children in low income families compared to other Cheshire and Merseyside local authority areas, North West region Local Authorities and England.

Wirral has seen a 22.5% reduction in numbers of children in low income families between 2011 and 2016. Wirral has seen a comparable reduction to other Cheshire and Merseyside LAs, but greater than both North West and England. This is positive to see a reducing figure but the overall population percentage remains above both North West and England average.

**Table 1:** Number of children in low-income families and percentage change, by local authority, North West and England, 2011-16

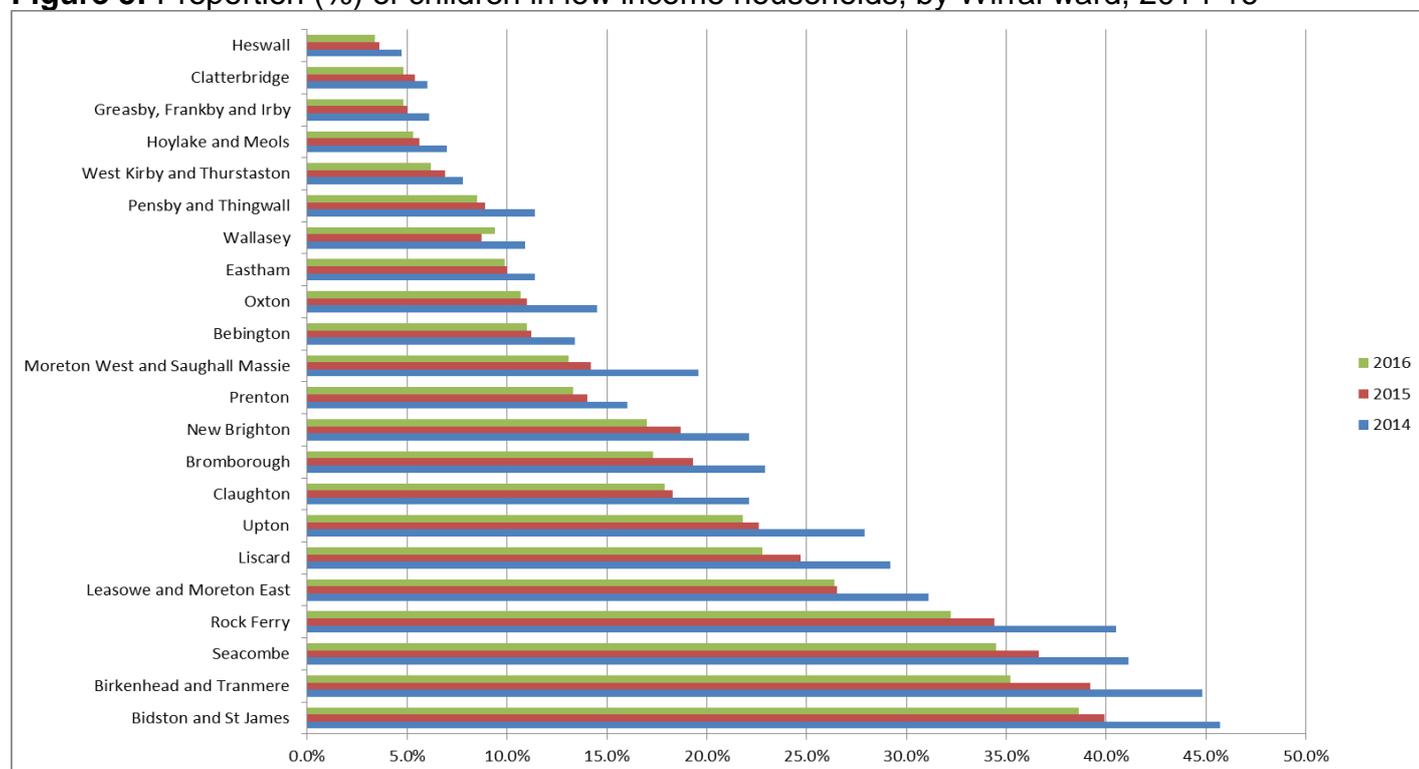
Area	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	+/- 2011 to 2016
Warrington	6,555	6,270	6,190	6,470	5,270	5,105	-22.1%
Halton	7,570	7,190	6,895	7,385	6,180	5,630	-25.6%
St. Helens	9,420	9,035	8,770	9,225	7,710	7,260	-22.9%
Cheshire East	9,225	8,610	8,335	9,205	7,315	7,320	-20.7%
Cheshire West and Chester	10,940	10,220	9,900	10,640	8,710	8,455	-22.7%
Knowsley	11,140	10,605	10,205	10,755	9,285	8,660	-22.3%
Sefton	11,350	10,705	10,460	11,090	9,210	9,025	-20.5%
<b>Wirral</b>	<b>16,665</b>	<b>15,630</b>	<b>14,940</b>	<b>16,100</b>	<b>13,675</b>	<b>12,920</b>	<b>-22.5%</b>
Liverpool	30,405	29,040	28,595	30,230	26,160	25,145	-17.3%
<b>North West</b>	<b>341,855</b>	<b>320,870</b>	<b>315,205</b>	<b>350,830</b>	<b>287,705</b>	<b>282,000</b>	<b>-17.5%</b>
<b>England</b>	<b>2,319,450</b>	<b>2,156,285</b>	<b>2,097,005</b>	<b>2,315,760</b>	<b>1,929,285</b>	<b>1,974,035</b>	<b>-14.9%</b>

Source: [Children in low income families local measure: HMRC 2018](#)

## Wirral Wards

When considering the borough and region-wide averages, the Child Poverty rate differs marginally from the national rate. However when the data is examined at ward-level and below, relative concentrations of poverty and deprivation become more apparent.

**Figure 5:** Proportion (%) of children in low income households, by Wirral ward, 2014-16



Source: [Children in low income families local measure: HMRC 2018](#)

Figure 5 shows that all wards in Wirral follow a similar pattern; a peak in 2014 with a substantial decrease in 2015 and then a further decrease again in 2016. The chart also shows the substantial difference between the wards with the highest and lowest proportions of children living in low income housing; Bidston St James Ward had the highest proportions in all three years, with Heswall ward having the lowest proportions over the same period.

Table 2 shows the proportion and number of children living in low income households from 2011 to 2016. This shows that in 2016, Bidston St James ward had 38.6% of children (n=1,705) living in low income families, compared to 3.4% in Heswall (n=70).

Table 2 also shows that the ward that experienced the largest relative change was Wallasey; a reduction of 47.2% (n=170 from 360 to 170) in the number of children between 2011 and 2016. The ward with the smallest relative change was Pensby & Thingwall; a 7.3% decrease in the number of children living in low income households between 2011 and 2016 (or n=20 from 275 to 255). Furthermore, three Wards saw an increase in numbers between 2015 and 2016, Leasowe & Moreton East, New Brighton and Pensby & Thingwall, even though all three saw reduced numbers between 2011 and 2016.

The proportion of all Wirral children living in low income households in 2016 was 18.9%; Table 2 shows that 7 of 22 wards were above this threshold; Bidston St James, Birkenhead & Tranmere, Seacombe, Rock Ferry, Leasowe & Moreton East, Liscard and Upton. These concentrations follow established patterns of deprivation with higher levels of poverty experienced in the Birkenhead and Wallasey Parliamentary Constituencies and less in the more affluent areas of Wirral South and Wirral West.

**Table 2:** Proportion and number of children living in low income households, with proportional change, by Wirral ward, 2011-2016

Area	2011 (%)	2012 (%)	2013 (%)	2014 (%)	2015 (%)	2016 (%)	2011 (n)	2012 (n)	2013 (n)	2014 (n)	2015 (n)	2016 (n)	+/- 2011 to 2016
Bidston and St James	50.0%	46.1%	43.5%	45.7%	39.9%	38.6%	2,080	1,920	1,870	1,965	1,750	1,705	-18.0%
Birkenhead and Tranmere	46.7%	44.6%	43.2%	44.8%	39.2%	35.2%	1,990	1,925	1,875	1,925	1,715	1,575	-20.9%
Seacombe	43.2%	40.4%	39.9%	41.1%	36.6%	34.5%	1,825	1,715	1,695	1,780	1,570	1,505	-17.5%
Rock Ferry	41.9%	38.4%	37.5%	40.5%	34.4%	32.2%	1,645	1,525	1,465	1,595	1,370	1,250	-24.0%
Leasowe and Moreton East	32.3%	32.0%	30.3%	31.1%	26.5%	26.4%	1,150	1,140	1,080	1,125	955	965	-16.1%
Liscard	31.0%	29.0%	27.2%	29.2%	24.7%	22.8%	1,110	1,030	975	1,035	885	815	-26.6%
Upton	26.1%	26.8%	25.2%	27.9%	22.6%	21.8%	940	965	910	1,035	855	815	-13.3%
Bromborough	22.8%	22.2%	21.0%	22.9%	19.3%	17.9%	725	715	690	770	650	530	-26.9%
New Brighton	21.6%	19.7%	18.7%	22.1%	18.7%	17.3%	680	605	565	670	565	590	-13.2%
Claughton	23.1%	20.3%	20.0%	22.1%	18.3%	17.0%	740	635	615	680	545	500	-32.4%
Moreton West and Saughall Massie	17.9%	17.5%	17.1%	19.6%	14.2%	13.3%	515	505	505	565	400	395	-23.3%
Prenton	16.2%	15.4%	13.7%	16.0%	14.0%	13.1%	470	455	415	490	420	365	-22.3%
Bebington	14.6%	14.5%	13.1%	13.4%	11.2%	11.0%	510	495	445	450	375	360	-29.4%
Oxton	15.7%	13.9%	13.4%	14.5%	11.0%	10.7%	415	360	340	355	265	255	-38.6%
Eastham	12.6%	12.5%	11.3%	11.4%	10.0%	9.9%	370	365	325	325	290	290	-21.6%
Pensby and Thingwall	11.5%	11.7%	10.9%	11.4%	8.9%	9.4%	275	280	255	265	205	255	-7.3%
Wallasey	12.4%	9.3%	8.7%	10.9%	8.7%	8.5%	360	265	245	300	235	190	-47.2%
West Kirby and Thurstaston	8.7%	7.4%	7.6%	7.8%	6.9%	6.2%	225	190	190	190	160	140	-37.8%
Hoylake and Meols	8.3%	7.1%	6.2%	7.0%	5.6%	5.3%	215	175	155	165	130	120	-44.2%
Clatterbridge	5.8%	5.0%	4.5%	6.0%	5.4%	4.8%	155	130	120	150	135	115	-25.8%
Greasby, Frankby and Irby	6.2%	5.1%	4.6%	6.1%	5.0%	4.8%	160	130	115	150	120	120	-25.0%
Heswall	4.3%	3.8%	3.9%	4.7%	3.6%	3.4%	110	95	95	110	80	70	-36.4%

Source: [Children in low income families local measure: HMRC 2018](#)

Notes: All dependent children aged less than 20 years old

### Wirral Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs)

Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) data is also provided for Wirral's 206 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) [\[Click here for an explanation of Lower Super Output Areas\]](#). Overall 70 of 206 LSOAs (35.0% of the total) have child poverty levels that are above the Wirral average of 18.9% of children living in low income families from the 2016 data.

In 2014 figures there were 10 LSOAs that had more than 50% of children in those areas living in low income families.

Data for 2015 sees this number of LSOAs above 50%, or 1 in 2 children living in low income families, reduce to 3 LSOAs all in Bidston & St. James ward.

However, 2016 data for children in low income families sees the number of LSOAs fall to only 1 above the 50% mark, Birkenhead East Float in Bidston & St. James ward.

Table 3 below provides a list of 20 of 206 Wirral LSOAs ranked highest for children living in low income families using 2016 figures and compared to both 2015 and 2014 data.

Of the highest ranked 10 Wirral LSOAs for children living in low income families, 5 are within Bidston and St. James ward. [The full list can be viewed here on the Wirral Intelligence Service website.](#)

**Table 3:** Comparison of children in low income families by proportion and rank (local and national), by Wirral LSOAs, 2014 - 2016

Wirral LSOA Name	Wirral Ward	2014		2015		2016		2016
		% of children in low income families	Local rank	% of children in low income families	Local rank	% of children in low income families	Local rank	England Rank
Birkenhead East Float	Bidston & St. James Ward	66.0%	1	57.7%	1	54.7%	1	26
Bidston St James East	Bidston & St. James Ward	56.7%	3	51.8%	3	49.2%	2	107
Lower Tranmere	Rock Ferry Ward	52.9%	8	43.3%	11	47.7%	3	143
Birkenhead West	Bidston & St. James Ward	57.2%	2	56.6%	2	46.6%	4	191
Seacombe St Pauls	Seacombe Ward	51.9%	10	46.0%	7	46.5%	5	196
Bidston Moss	Bidston & St. James Ward	52.5%	9	43.6%	10	46.2%	6	213
Seacombe Ferry	Seacombe Ward	53.6%	7	48.9%	5	45.2%	7	272
Birkenhead Central	Birkenhead & Tranmere Ward	56.3%	4	48.9%	4	44.1%	8	361
Beechwood North	Bidston & St. James Ward	47.9%	13	42.1%	15	43.9%	9	376
Tranmere Woodward	Rock Ferry Ward	55.3%	6	47.4%	6	42.4%	10	535
Higher Tranmere	Rock Ferry Ward	47.0%	18	42.4%	14	41.6%	11	629
Woodchurch North	Upton Ward	47.5%	16	39.3%	21	41.5%	12	638
Seacombe Library	Seacombe Ward	44.8%	23	38.2%	24	41.3%	13	686
Egremont Central	Liscard Ward	56.0%	5	44.1%	9	41.1%	14	707
Bidston Hill North	Bidston & St. James Ward	47.8%	14	42.7%	13	40.3%	15	813
Leasowe Central	Leasowe & Moreton East Ward	43.0%	29	40.3%	19	40.1%	16	844
Tranmere Lairds	Birkenhead & Tranmere Ward	46.3%	20	40.6%	17	40.1%	16	847
Moreton North	Leasowe & Moreton East Ward	44.7%	24	33.5%	37	39.3%	18	983
Tranmere Esplanade	Rock Ferry Ward	48.1%	12	38.4%	22	37.8%	19	1289
Unnamed LSOA	Bidston & St. James Ward	48.5%	11	41.9%	16	37.7%	20	1324

Source: [Children in low income families local measure: HMRC 2018](#)

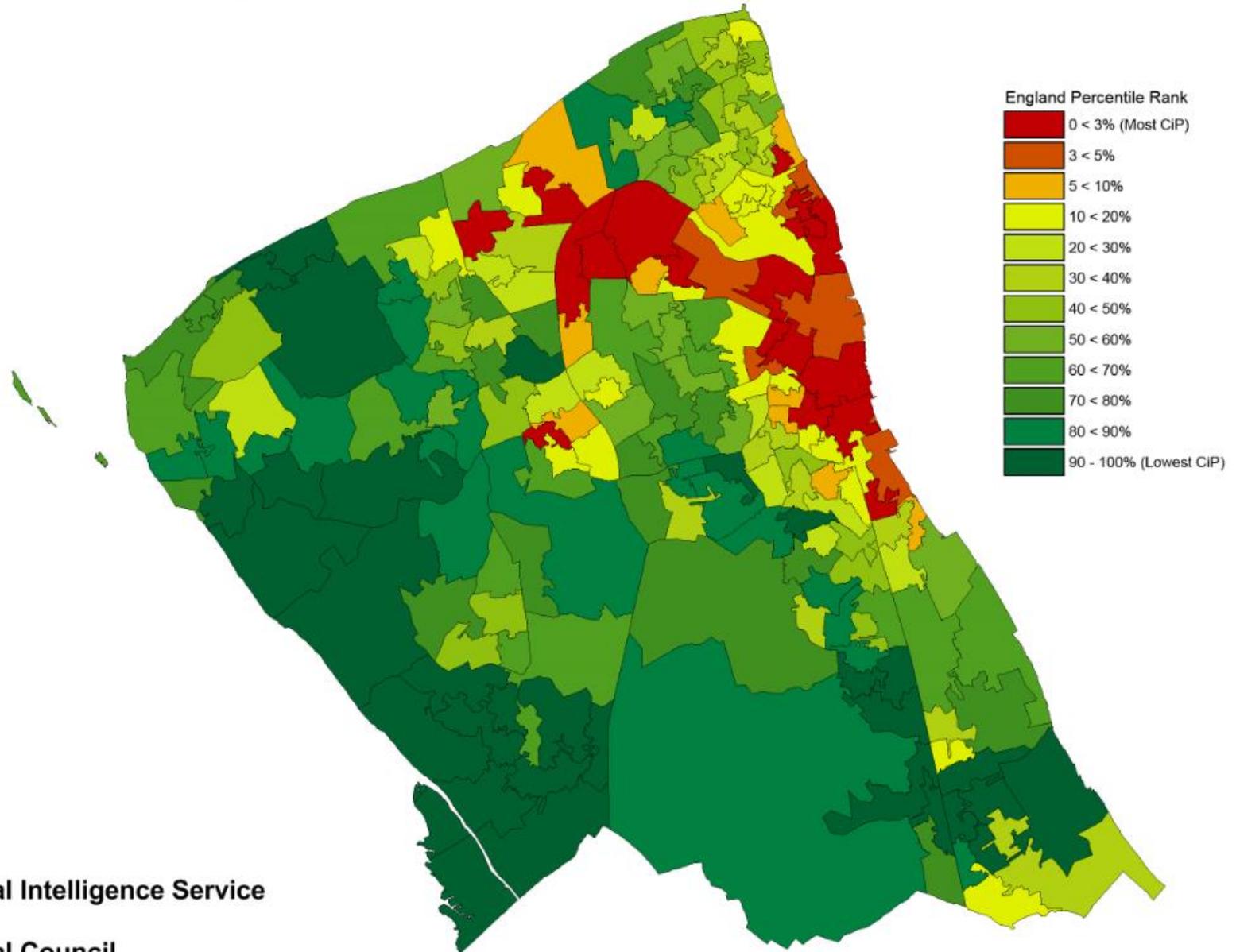
**Notes:**

[Full list of data can be viewed here](#) and [previous chapters here](#)

Some LSOA names have changed over time and due to their ward base they can seem to be from different ward areas – please see map of LSOAs

Map 1 below highlights the concentrations of Child Poverty. The ranges correspond to each LSOA's 2016 position in the England percentile ranking.

**Map 1:** Wirral LSOAs in relation to the England Percentile Rank for Child Poverty, 2016



**Wirral Intelligence Service**

**Wirral Council**

Source: [Children in low income families local measure: 2015, HMRC 2018](#)

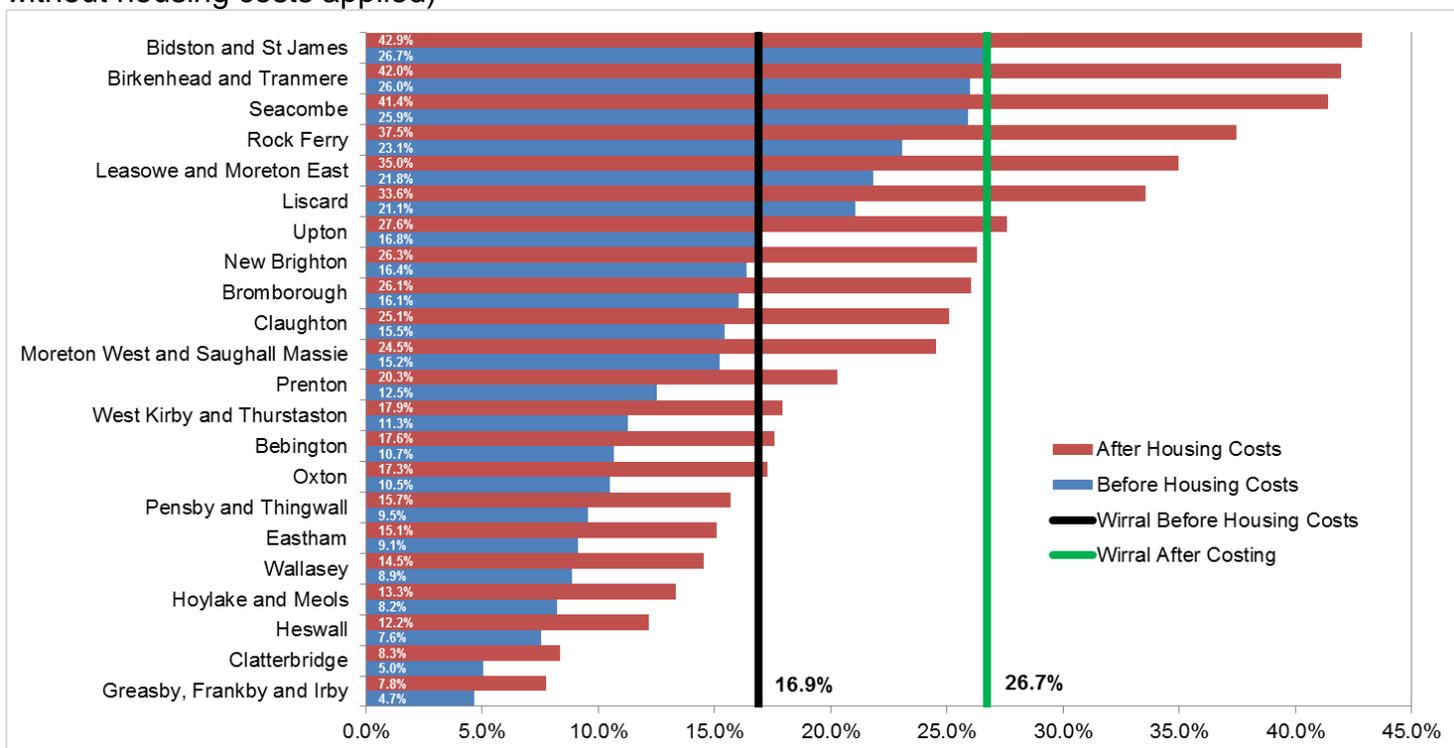
### Alternate ward-based Figures

The [Campaign to End Child Poverty](#) released the latest Child Poverty Map of the UK in January 2018. It suggests that in areas where child poverty is high more than half of children are living in poverty, compared to 1 in 10 where levels of child poverty are lower.

The figures, compiled by Loughborough University, are based on official benefit and HMRC tax credit data and have been updated from the 2014 release. The difference to official HMRC figures is that this approach attempts to take account of adjustments to reflect unemployment rates and the risks of child poverty for families both in and out of work.

Using this methodology (viewed [here](#)) highlights potential discrepancies to using just the 'children in low-income families' local measure. The differences highlight an increased number of living in poverty with parent(s) in work.

**Figure 6:** End Child Poverty estimates: Comparison of Wirral Wards for 2015 data (with and without housing costs applied)



Source: [End Child Poverty Data \(2018\)](#)

Notes: Methodology can be viewed [here](#) – also this is the latest available data

Figure 6 shows that Bidston St James ward, again, has the highest proportions of child poverty, however, from these calculations Greasby, Frankby & Irby ward has the lowest; this was Heswall ward when using HRMC statistics.

## What are we expecting to achieve? (Targets)

### Targets

The previous Child Poverty Act (2010) was the Government's approach to eradicating child poverty by 2020. The provisions of the act placed a duty on the Secretary of State to ensure less than 10% of children nationally are considered to live in relative poverty by 2020, as per the 'Children in Low-Income Families' measure. A green paper on Improving Life Chances has been discussed by Central Government more recently, but as yet has not materialised.

Wirral continues to participate in various working groups with colleagues from across the Liverpool City Region. Their Child Poverty and Life Chances strategy was re-launched in January 2016 [View 2015 – 2018 Strategy](#).

The Liverpool City Region Child Poverty and Life Chances Strategy outlined two strategic aims to addressing and alleviating Poverty in the sub region:

- Aim 1 - Ensure the best possible start in life for children/young people to improve their life chances
- Aim 2 - Maximise Family Income

More recently [Wirral Councils Plan: A 2020 Vision](#) was published in June 2015 and it sets out a series of 20 pledges which the council and its partners will work to achieve by 2020, focusing on three key themes:

- protecting the most vulnerable
- driving economic growth
- improving the local environment

The plan set out what areas the council and partners would prioritise over the five years.

Improving Life Chances was selected as one of the pledge areas to address child poverty. [An Improving Life Chances Strategy](#) was developed informed through the views of key stakeholders and the local community. This has been refreshed on an annual basis. Key priorities in the strategy are:

Priority 1: Support people into sustainable employment

Priority 2: Improve life chances for children and young people

Priority 3: Help families to become financially resilient

Priority 4: Tackle the immediate impacts of poverty

These priorities were delivered through community pilots in areas selected due to high levels of child poverty; Seacombe, Bidston and St James and Beechwood.

Each area set up a working group and established an action plan through consultation with the community. These pilots have now been fully evaluated. The evaluation highlighted that the pilots were achieving real results in engaging communities and increasing volunteering, there was limited impact on poverty apart from relieving the immediate impact of poverty, through the provision of food/support with energy costs etc.

It has been agreed that the work achieved to date by the community pilots should be taken forward within the [new Wirral Together approach](#) and that other priority actions will be taken forward in other appropriate pledges, such as the [Growth Pledge](#).

## What are we achieving? (Performance)

### Comparison to National Performance

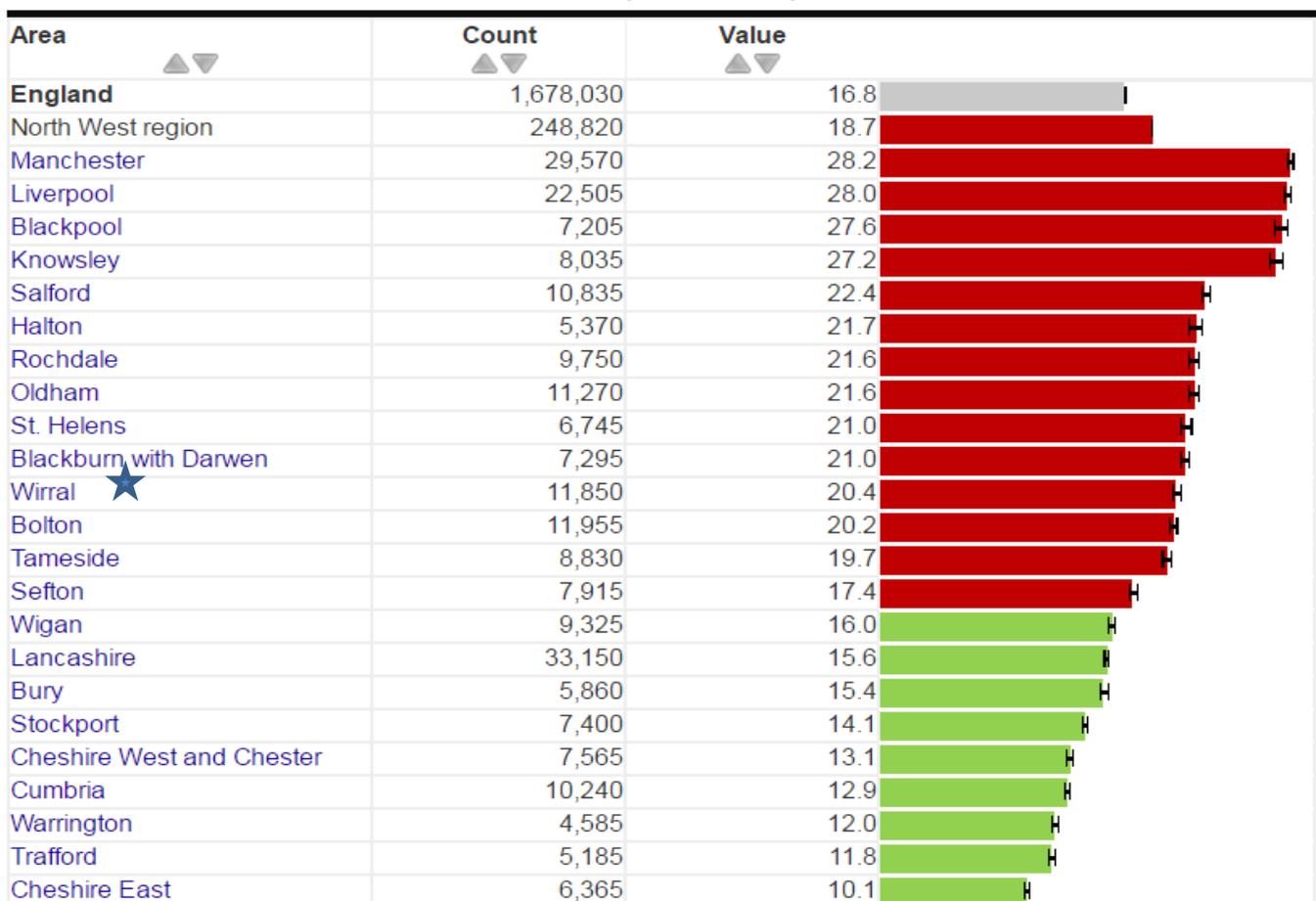
Child poverty is an important issue for public health. Inclusion of this indicator emphasises its importance. The Marmot Review (2010) suggested there is evidence that childhood poverty leads to premature mortality and poor health outcomes for adults. Reducing the numbers of children who experience poverty should improve these adult health outcomes and increase healthy life expectancy. ["A New Approach to Child Poverty: Tackling the Causes of Disadvantage and Transforming Families Lives"](#) set out the Government's approach to tackling poverty from the 2010 Parliament and up to 2020. This strategy met the requirements set out in the [Child Poverty Act 2010](#), focused on improving the life chances of the most disadvantaged children.

Children in poverty are reported at both under 16 and under 20 within the Public Health Outcomes Framework (PHOF) for England. The PHOF can be accessed [here](#). The indicators are based upon the percentage of dependent children aged under 16 or 20 in relative poverty (living in households where income is less than 60 per cent of median household income before housing costs) in Wirral and in comparison to other areas.

In Figure 7 below are the North West Local Authority comparative results for children in poverty as noted in low-income families. In Wirral 2015 figures were at 20.4% (down from 23.9% in 2014) for under 16s in poverty but this is above both North West and England figures of 18.7% and 16.8% respectively.

**Figure 7: Children in poverty (Under 16s) up to 2015\***

#### 1.01ii - Children in low income families (under 16s) 2015



Source: HM Revenue and Customs (Personal Tax Credits: Related Statistics - Child Poverty Statistics)

Source: [Public Health Outcomes Framework, 2018](#)

The details for Under 20s children in poverty, in Figure 8, shows it improving for Wirral now at 19.9% in 2015 when it had increased to 23.3% for 2014 from 21.5% in 2013.

The pattern of increases then decreases continues with North West regions at 18.5% (2015) when 22.6% in 2014 (previously 20.3% in 2013) and England lower at 16.6%, but 19.9% in 2014 (18.0% in 2013).

In both Under 16s and 20s then Wirral's performance is improving but remains worse than other parts of the region and country.

**Figure 8: Children in poverty (Under 20s) up to 2015\***

**1.01i - Children in low income families (all dependent children under 20) 2015**

Area	Count	Value
England	1,929,285	16.6
North West region	287,705	18.5
Manchester	34,190	28.5
Liverpool	26,160	27.7
Blackpool	8,235	26.8
Knowsley	9,285	26.6
Burnley	4,760	22.6
Salford	12,305	22.2
Oldham	13,240	21.8
Rochdale	11,485	21.7
Halton	6,180	21.3
Blackburn with Darwen	8,615	21.2
St. Helens	7,710	20.4
Bolton	13,955	20.2
Wirral	13,675	19.9
Tameside	10,140	19.4
Hyndburn	3,805	19.2
Preston	5,950	18.7
Barrow-in-Furness	2,510	18.0
Sefton	9,210	17.0
Pendle	3,785	16.9
Rossendale	2,580	16.8
Lancaster	4,285	16.0
Wigan	10,685	15.7
Bury	6,805	15.4
Copeland	1,980	15.0
Wyre	2,915	14.9
West Lancashire	3,245	14.3
Allerdale	2,530	13.9
Stockport	8,415	13.8
Carlisle	2,880	13.4
Cheshire West and Chester	8,710	12.8
Trafford	6,055	11.8
Warrington	5,270	11.8
Chorley	2,550	11.2
South Ribble	2,440	10.7
Fylde	1,360	10.3
Cheshire East	7,315	9.9
Eden	745	8.0
South Lakeland	1,155	6.8
Ribble Valley	595	5.6

Source: HM Revenue and Customs (Personal Tax Credits: Related Statistics - Child Poverty Statistics)

Source: [Public Health Outcomes Framework, 2018](#)

**Notes:** \* Latest available data. Definition - The percentage of dependent children aged under 16 and/or under 20 in relative poverty (living in households where income is less than 60 per cent of median household income before housing costs) Full definition details [here](#)

In Figure 9 (Under 16s) and Figure 10 (Under 20s) we see the continued reduction of children living in low income families though the proportion of Wirral children and young people remains greater than both North West and England and the percentage drop for Wirral between 2014 and 2015 is lower than that experienced across North West and England.

**Figure 9:** Children in low income families (all dependent children under 16) Wirral and England (2015)



Source: [Public Health Outcomes Framework, 2018](#)

**Figure 10:** Children in low income families (all dependent children under 20) Wirral and England (2015)



Source: [Public Health Outcomes Framework, 2018](#)

## Wirral Performance

In order to ensure the Council and its partners are delivering against the priorities set out in the Wirral Plan, we regularly measure our performance. We compare this to previous performance and that of other areas. This helps us to understand how well we are meeting the needs of our customers and fulfilling their expectations. Regularly reviewing partnership performance helps to:

- focus on the Wirral Plan
- set targets for improvement
- identify and address areas of under performance
- plan for the future
- ensure we deliver value for money
- be accountable to our customers and stakeholders
- demonstrate transparency and good governance

The latest performance reports for Improving Life Chances Strategy and Delivery Group are [here](#) and other related performance reports [here](#). Although the actions from the strategy are being delivered through other pledge areas, the Steering Group will continue to provide an update on an annual basis.

## Local Impacts of Child Poverty

In order to consider local impacts of childhood poverty and children living in low income families the following section highlights information in relation to some of the main factors highlighted in Figure 1 and Figure 2 (page 8) as having the greatest bearing on child and subsequent adult poverty.

### Indices of Deprivation

The Indices of Deprivation (also known as the Index of Multiple Deprivation or IMD) is a measure of relative deprivation at a small area level covering all 32,844 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in England.

In other words, it measures how deprived an area is compared to all other areas of England. It is an important tool to identify disadvantaged areas so that policy makers can target limited resources where they are most needed.

The IMD was first calculated in 2000 and has been re-calculated every 2-3 years since (2002, 2004, 2007 and 2010). [A briefing on the previous IMDs and how they related to Wirral is available on the Wirral JSNA site.](#)

The 2015 update is broadly comparable to the 2010, 2007 and 2004 Indices (but not the 2002 and 2000 Indices, due to significant differences in calculation). It is common to describe how deprived areas are by saying whether they fall into among the most deprived 10% or 20% of areas in England (although there is no definitive cut-off at which an area is described as 'deprived').

Deprivation covers a broad range of issues and refers to unmet need caused by a lack of resources of all kinds, not just financial resources. The IMD attempts to capture deprivation in its broadest sense, using seven distinct 'domains'. [View Appendix One for Wirral's overall IMD 2015](#)

[See Wirral Intelligence Service website – Indices of Deprivation 2015 for full details](#)

#### Income deprivation

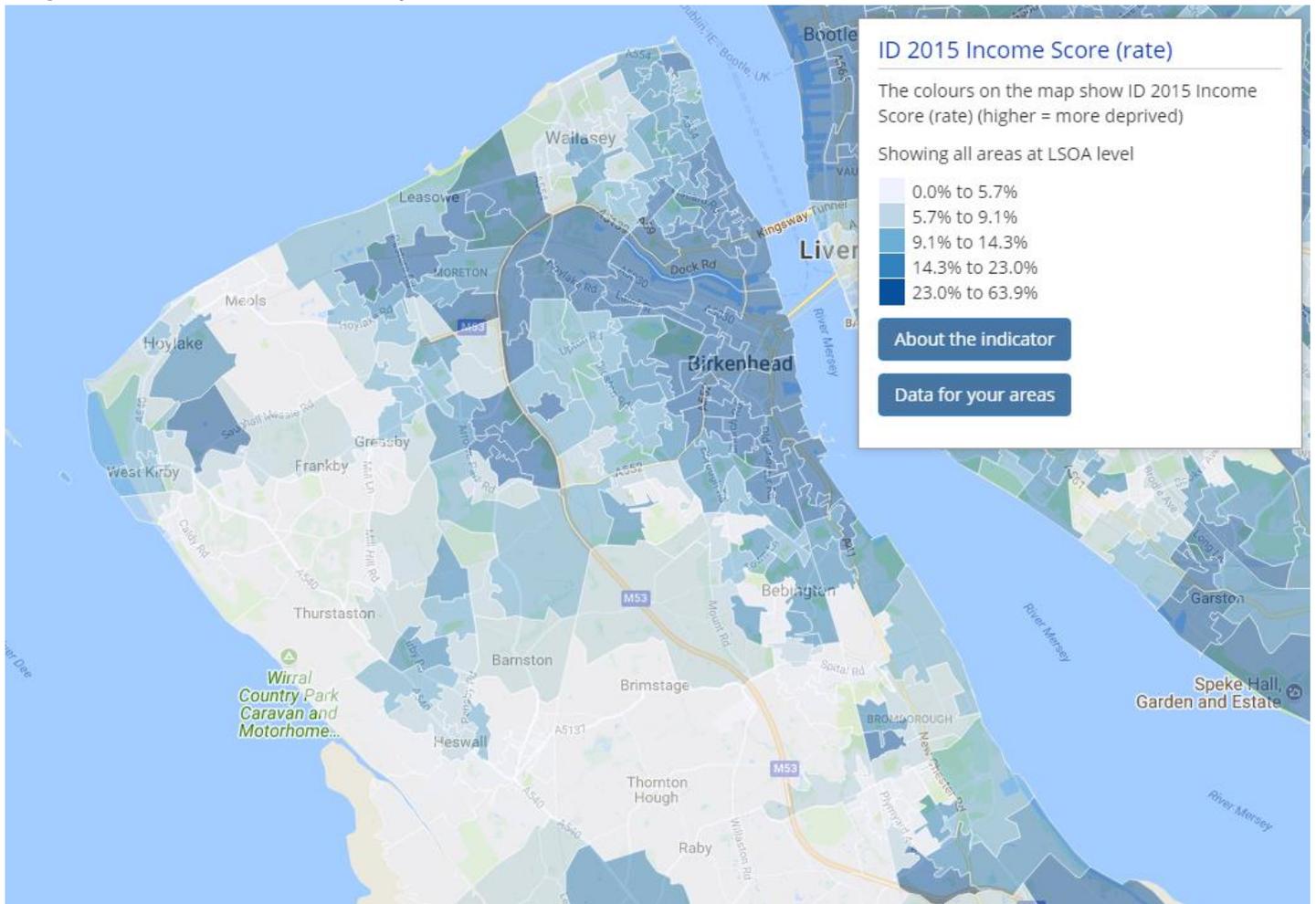
Income deprivation is a measure of families being on very low incomes whether they are in or out-of-work. So for example, a rate of 59% in Birkenhead East Float indicates that 59% of residents in that LSOA are income deprived.

Map 2 highlights the 60 areas of Wirral (out of a total of 206) Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) ranked as being amongst the 20% most Income deprived areas in England on the 2015 Indices of Multiple Deprivation.

There were 109 LSOAs in England in 2015 where more than half the population (50%) of the area was classed as living in income deprivation.

Wirral had 7 LSOAs where more than 50% of residents were classed as being income deprived (Table 4). Those LSOAs that are classified as being the more deprived areas in England are shown in the darkest colour; the least deprived areas are shown in the lightest colours (Map 2).

**Map 2: Income domain rate, by Wirral LSOA, IMD 2015**



Source: [Local Insight, 2018](#)

**Note:** This domain is calculated using families who fall into the following categories: Income based ESA claimants; Jobseeker’s Allowance claimants; Pension Credits claimants; Child or Working Tax Credits claimants (not already claiming one of the above benefits) whose income (excluding housing benefit) is below 60% of the median before housing costs and Asylum seekers in receipt of subsistence support, accommodation or both. Performance on this domain is so poor, it negatively affects the overall performance of Wirral on the whole IMD.

**Table 4: Ten most deprived LSOAs in Wirral on the Income domain of the IMD (2015)**

LSOA code	LSOA name	Overall IMD Rank (1= most deprived)	Income Score (rate)	Income Rank (1 = most deprived)
E01007133	Birkenhead East Float	133	59%	9
E01007122	Bidston St James East	36	58%	10
E01007274	Seacombe Ferry	100	56%	21
E01007293	Lower Tranmere	108	54%	36
E01007127	Birkenhead West	56	51%	87
E01007124	Beechwood North	346	50%	102
E01007289	Tranmere Woodward	270	50%	107
E01007123	Bidston St James West	460	49%	128
E01007220	Egremont Central	288	48%	137
E01007128	Birkenhead Central	94	48%	153

Source: [English Indices of Deprivation 2015](#)

## Employment – Indices of Deprivation

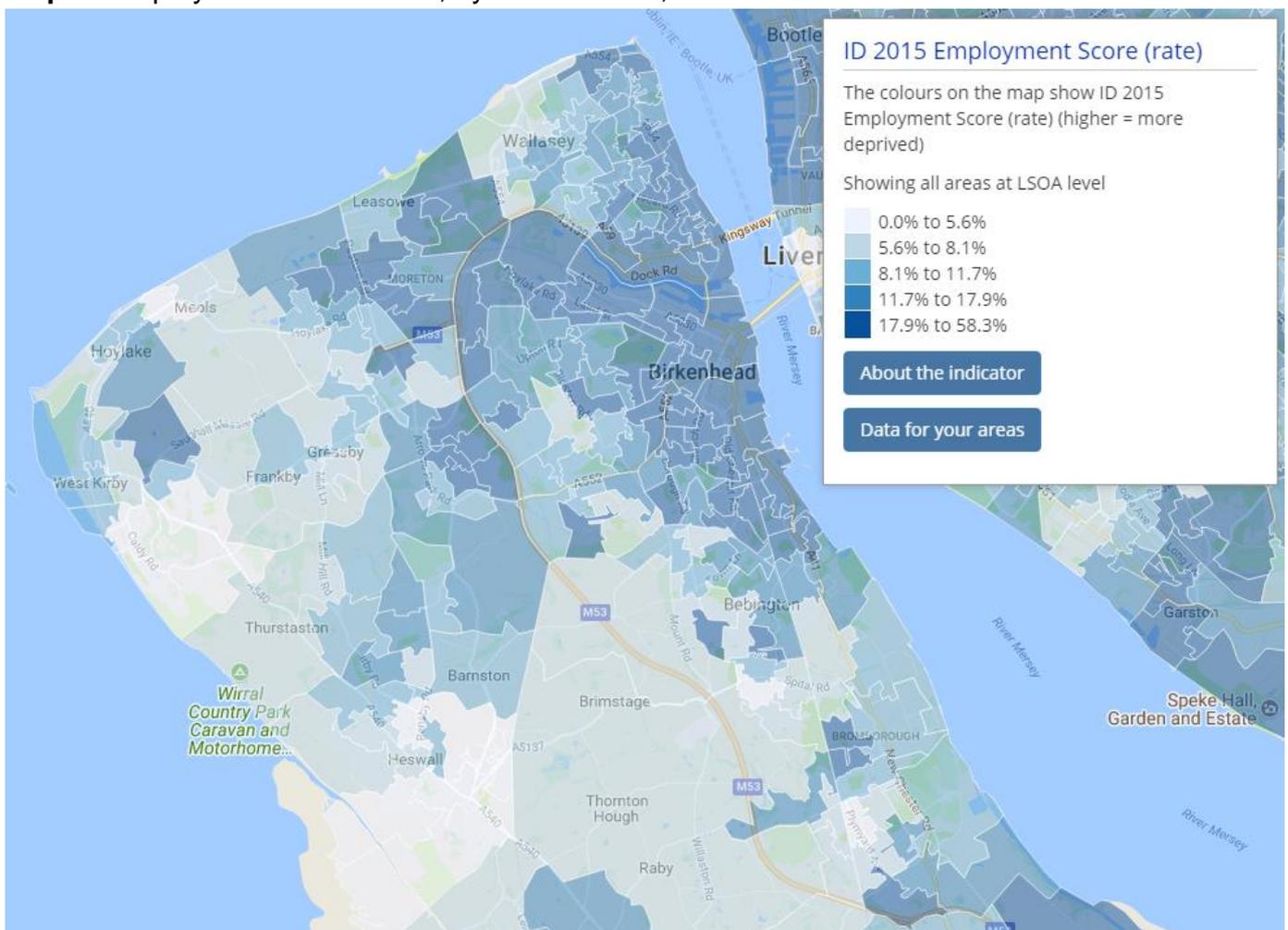
The Employment domain of the Indices of Deprivation (IMD) measures involuntary exclusion of working age people from the labour market, i.e. those who would like to work but are unable to do so. Worklessness is regarded as a deprivation in its own right because participation in the labour market brings a number of other social and psychological benefits.

Map 3 below shows the distribution of this domain (by England rank) in Wirral. The darkest coloured areas are the 20% most deprived of areas nationally for this measure.

Like the Income domain, the Employment Domain Score is actually a rate or proportion. So for example, in Birkenhead East Float, 58% of residents in these areas are employment deprived. This LSOA was also the most deprived area in Wirral on the previous (2010) IMD and has actually worsened to 58% as seen in table 5 (its rate was 51% of residents were Employment Deprived in 2010). **Birkenhead East Float was actually the number 1 most employment deprived LSOA in England in 2015, out of 32,844 LSOAs.**

Wirral has 75 LSOAs which fall into this category (ranked 0 to 6,569), so slightly more than one in three of all LSOAs in the borough are classed as being employment deprived (75 of 206). Performance on this domain is so poor, it negatively affects the overall performance of Wirral on the whole IMD.

**Map 3:** Employment domain rate, by Wirral LSOA, IMD 2015



Source: [Local Insight, 2018](#)

Note: This domain is calculated by summing the following seven indicators: Jobseeker's Allowance claimants (both contribution-based and income based); Incapacity Benefit claimants aged 18-59/64; Severe Disablement Allowance claimants aged 18-59/64; Employment & Support Allowance claimants aged 18-59/64 and Carers Allowance claimants.

**Table 5:** Ten most deprived LSOAs in Wirral on the Employment domain of the IMD (2015)

LSOA code	LSOA name	Overall IMD Rank (1 = most deprived)	Employment Score (rate)	Employment Rank (1 = most deprived)
E01007133	Birkenhead East Float	133	58%	1
E01007122	Bidston St James East	36	46%	28
E01007293	Lower Tranmere	108	46%	29
E01007274	Seacombe Ferry	100	45%	35
E01007129	Birkenhead South	96	44%	45
E01007128	Birkenhead Central	94	44%	53
E01007126	Hamilton Square	294	42%	73
E01007207	Moreton North	410	40%	109
E01007289	Tranmere Woodward	270	40%	111
E01007127	Birkenhead West	56	40%	135

Source: [English Indices of Deprivation 2015](#)

## Qualifications / Educational Attainment

A key consideration for both child and adult poverty relates to both parental and child qualifications in both cases being prime indicators to future child and family poverty issues.

### Adult Qualifications

Table 6 shows that Wirral compares favourably to both North West and England; 86.9% of adults having achieved at least NVQ Level 1 compared to 84.8% and 85.5% respectively. Wirral also has the second highest proportion of adults attaining at least NVQ Level 1 in the Cheshire & Merseyside area (falling just below Cheshire East). However those with qualifications other than NVQ highlight are in greater numbers elsewhere with Wirral (5.2%) below North West (5.7%) and England (6.7%) respectively.

**Table 6:** Qualification levels by local authorities, North West and England, 2016

Area	% with NVQ Levels 1-4	% with other qualifications	% with no qualifications
Cheshire East	88.8%	5.3%	5.9%
Cheshire West and Chester	86.3%	4.3%	9.4%
Halton	82.9%	6.7%	10.4%
Knowsley	81.0%	5.0%	14.1%
Liverpool	77.3%	6.9%	15.8%
St. Helens	82.5%	6.0%	11.4%
Warrington	86.3%	7.2%	6.6%
<b>Wirral</b>	<b>86.9%</b>	<b>5.2%</b>	<b>8.0%</b>
<b>North West</b>	<b>84.8%</b>	<b>5.7%</b>	<b>9.5%</b>
<b>England</b>	<b>85.5%</b>	<b>6.7%</b>	<b>7.8%</b>

Source: [NOMIS](#), 2018

### Education Attainment in Children

There are a range of factors that increase the risk of a poor child growing up to be a poor adult. But the most influential factor is child educational attainment. Adelman et al (2003) found that, of children with parents without qualifications, only 7 per cent had not experienced poverty, while 32 per cent had experienced persistent poverty. By contrast, of children with parents who were qualified above A-level standard, 34 per cent were never in poverty and only 4 per cent experienced persistent poverty.

**Table 7:** Proportion of children achieving a “Good Level of Development” by Free School Meal (FSM) status, by local authorities, North West and England, 2013-17

Area	Good Level of Development (FSM)					Good Level of Development (Non-FSM)				
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Cheshire East	36%	42%	49%	48%	52%	59%	64%	70%	73%	73%
Cheshire West & Chester	31%	44%	50%	50%	57%	56%	64%	71%	74%	72%
Knowsley	44%	50%	50%	56%	54%	61%	65%	65%	69%	72%
Liverpool	37%	43%	46%	46%	50%	56%	58%	61%	64%	65%
Sefton	32%	40%	48%	56%	57%	56%	62%	69%	73%	73%
St Helens	43%	44%	50%	51%	49%	62%	67%	68%	70%	71%
Warrington	18%	38%	47%	52%	53%	49%	63%	71%	74%	74%
<b>Wirral</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>74%</b>
<b>North West</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>71%</b>
<b>England</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>73%</b>

Source: [Local Authority Interactive Tool](#), Department for Education (DfE), February 2018

Table 7 shows the difference in proportions of children achieving a “Good Level of Development” (GLD) by Free School Meal (FSM) status. As can be seen in all areas, those who are not eligible for free school meals are more likely to have a GLD than those who are eligible. Wirral has a higher proportion of children **not** eligible for free school meals than both North West and England, however this does not appear to be the case for in children eligible for free school meals; Wirral’s proportion achieving GLD is lower than both North West and England, and is joint second lowest local authority in Cheshire & Merseyside.

**Table 8:** Average Attainment 8 score by local authorities, North West & England, 2016-17

Area	Average Attainment 8 score (FSM)		Average Attainment 8 score (non-FSM)	
	2016	2017	2016	2017
Cheshire East	37.2	32.8	52.8	50.3
Cheshire West and Chester	35.9	31.5	53.0	48.3
Knowsley	32.3	32.4	42.4	39.7
Liverpool	37.4	35.0	50.8	47.1
Sefton	37.7	32.3	51.0	47.4
St Helens	37.8	33.6	50.9	45.6
Warrington	36.7	32.2	51.4	48.4
<b>Wirral</b>	<b>37.8</b>	<b>36.4</b>	<b>54.2</b>	<b>50.3</b>
<b>North West</b>	<b>38.0</b>	<b>34.4</b>	<b>51.5</b>	<b>47.6</b>
<b>England</b>	<b>39.1</b>	<b>35.1</b>	<b>51.8</b>	<b>48.2</b>

Source: [Local Authority Interactive Tool](#), Department for Education (DfE), February 2018

Attainment 8 measures the average achievement of pupils in up to 9 qualifications and is part of the new secondary school accountability system implemented in 2016. For more information please see the gov.uk website [here](#).

Table 8 shows the average scores per pupil based on Free School Meal (FMS) status. Again, there is a stark contrast in all areas between the scores achieved by those eligible and **not** eligible for Free School Meals; in Wirral the difference in score is 13.9. However, Wirral compares favourably to other local authorities, the North West and England, in average scores for both cohorts of pupils.

## Family Size

Smith and Middleton cite research by Adelman et al (2003, BHPS 1991–99) which found that the greater the number of children in a household, the greater their chances of experiencing persistent poverty. Compared with an only child, a child living in a household with three or more children is over three times more likely to experience persistent poverty.

**Table 9:** Projected proportion of households by number of dependent children, Cheshire & Merseyside, 2014 and 2035

Area	Households in 2014 (%)				Households in 2039			
	With no children	With one child	With two children	With 3+ children	With no children	With one child	With two children	With 3+ children
Cheshire East	72.8%	12.8%	10.9%	3.5%	73.8%	13.9%	9.8%	2.5%
Cheshire West and Chester	72.9%	12.9%	10.6%	3.6%	72.5%	15.1%	9.9%	2.5%
Halton	69.4%	15.2%	10.9%	4.5%	71.9%	15.4%	9.2%	3.6%
Warrington	69.8%	14.6%	11.7%	3.9%	71.4%	15.8%	9.8%	3.0%
Knowsley	68.7%	16.3%	10.4%	4.5%	68.0%	19.7%	9.0%	3.3%
Liverpool	74.9%	13.1%	8.4%	3.6%	74.3%	15.3%	7.8%	2.7%
Sefton	73.3%	13.2%	9.7%	3.9%	73.4%	15.5%	8.3%	2.8%
St. Helens	71.5%	14.6%	10.1%	3.8%	72.3%	16.1%	8.9%	2.7%
<b>Wirral</b>	<b>71.9%</b>	<b>13.6%</b>	<b>10.2%</b>	<b>4.3%</b>	<b>73.2%</b>	<b>14.9%</b>	<b>8.8%</b>	<b>3.2%</b>
<b>England</b>	<b>71.2%</b>	<b>13.3%</b>	<b>10.8%</b>	<b>4.8%</b>	<b>73.0%</b>	<b>13.7%</b>	<b>9.3%</b>	<b>4.0%</b>

Source: Table 424, Household Projections, 2014-based live tables, [Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government](#)

As Table 9 shows, Wirral is suggested to have the third highest proportion of households with 3+ children in Cheshire & Merseyside in 2014 and still by 2039 (2014 – 4.5% Halton, 4.5% Knowsley and 4.3% Wirral then 2039 - 3.6% Halton, 3.3% Knowsley and 3.2% Wirral). However, estimates do suggest that the proportion of households with 3+ children will decrease, nationally and locally, during this time period. Wirral's proportion decreases from 4.3% to 3.2% (-1.1%), compared to a national decrease of 0.8%. This is also apparent for households with 2 children; decreasing from 10.2% in 2014 to 8.8% in 2039.

## Ill-Health

A key aspect related to household poverty relates to ill-health; for both children and parents. Table 10 shows the households by the number of residents with a long-term health condition (LTC) and/or disability.

**Table 10:** Households with dependent children by number of residents with LTC and/or disability, Cheshire & Merseyside, North West and England, 2011

Area	All households with dependent children	No person with a long-term health condition or disability	One person with a long-term health condition or disability	2+ person with a long-term health condition or disability
		%	%	%
Cheshire East	44,466	83.3%	13.6%	3.1%
Cheshire West and Chester	39,075	81.0%	15.0%	3.9%
Halton	16,659	76.3%	18.3%	5.4%
Knowsley	19,610	72.4%	20.9%	6.7%
Liverpool	53,650	72.9%	20.8%	6.3%
Sefton	32,220	76.5%	18.3%	5.1%
St. Helens	22,020	76.9%	17.8%	5.3%
Warrington	26,277	82.6%	13.9%	3.4%
<b>Wirral</b>	<b>39,630</b>	<b>75.5%</b>	<b>18.6%</b>	<b>5.9%</b>
<b>North West</b>	<b>867,266</b>	<b>77.3%</b>	<b>17.4%</b>	<b>5.2%</b>
<b>England</b>	<b>6,423,941</b>	<b>79.5%</b>	<b>15.9%</b>	<b>4.7%</b>

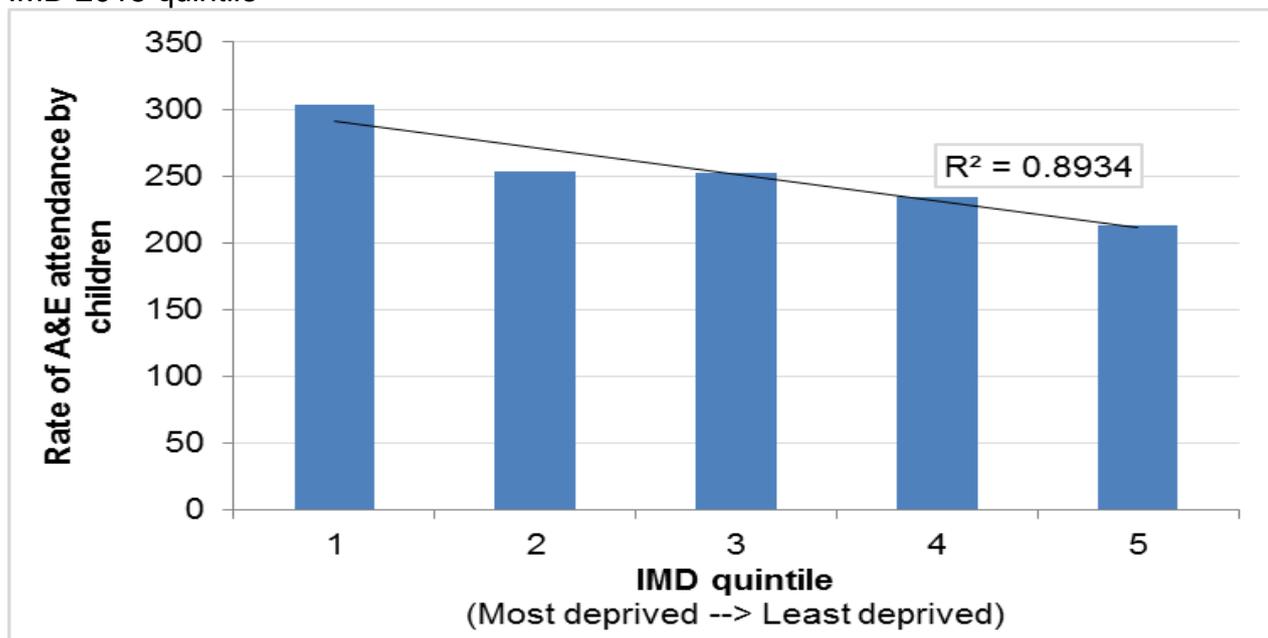
Source: Census 2011, via [NOMIS](#), 2018

Table 10 shows that Wirral has a lower proportion of households where there is no person with an LTC or disability in comparison to North West and England. This therefore means that it has a higher proportion of households where at least one person has an LTC or disability (22.6% combined). Table 10 shows that in around 6% of households (or more than 1 in 20), there are at least 2 people who have an LTC or disability.

### Child Health

In addition to the above table, it has been possible to analyse child attendances at A&E. Rates per 1,000 0-18 year olds have been correlated against Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015 (IMD) quintile.

**Figure 11:** Rate of child (0-18 years) attendances at Accident & Emergency (2016/17) against IMD 2015 quintile



Source: [IMD 2015, Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government](#) and Hospital Episode Summary data 2016/17

As Figure 11 shows, there is a very strong negative correlation between deprivation and high A&E attendance rates in children.

Although correlation does not mean that deprivation is the sole cause for higher rates of A&E attendance, it does mean that there is a strong relationship between the two factors.

For example, it is known that other factors such as proximity to services can also be a factor in higher A&E usage, and that where deprivation and proximity to services co-exist (i.e. Woodchurch Area is both close to A&E and has higher levels of deprivation) this results in extremely high rates of A&E usage.

## Drug & Alcohol Dependency

Impacts from parental drug and/or alcohol use are difficult to measure; impacts could pertain to expenditure on such, difficulties in those affected obtaining and maintaining employment, and the physical and/or mental implications on children. However, international research, though varying in strength and direction, shows that there is a relationship between alcohol/drug use and income ([HM Government, 2014](#)).

**Table 11a:** Proportion of drug and alcohol treatment clients with dependent children, Wirral, 2015-2017

Client cohort	% of people in service who live with children		
	2015	2016	2017
Opiate	24.7%	24.1%	22.8%
Non-opiate	22.4%	16.0%	19.7%
Alcohol	20.2%	18.9%	17.0%
Alcohol and non-opiate	19.1%	14.0%	13.5%

Source: Diagnostic Outcomes Monitoring Executive Summary (DOMES) reports 2015, 2016 and 2017, [NDTMS](#), 2018

Table 11a shows that the highest proportion of clients actively in treatment who live with children are being treated for opiate use. However, this proportion has decreased from 24.7% to 22.8% over the last 3 calendar years. The proportion of those living with children being treated for non-opiate use appears to fluctuate over the same period, but is still consistently lower than opiate use clients. Proportions of alcohol and alcohol & opiate clients who live with children have also decreased between 2015 and 2017.

**Table 11b:** Proportion of clients starting drug and alcohol treatment who live with dependent children, Wirral, 2015-2017

Client cohort	% clients starting new treatment journeys who live with children			2017 national average
	2015	2016	2017	
Opiate	14.0%	11.1%	10.3%	13.4%
Non-opiate	16.9%	16.0%	21.3%	23.7%
Alcohol	18.6%	18.4%	18.5%	23.3%
Alcohol and non-opiate	15.6%	12.2%	14.5%	21.0%

Source: Diagnostic Outcomes Monitoring Executive Summary (DOMES) reports 2015, 2016 and 2017, [NDTMS](#), 2018

Table 11b shows the proportion of clients starting **new** treatment journeys in each year who live with children. This means that they were not active in treatment before 1<sup>st</sup> January of each year.

Similar to figures presented in Table 11a, the proportions of clients being treated for opiate use has decreased annually and is now below the 2017 national average. In fact all four categories are below national average though non-opiate clients have increased to 21.3% just below national average of 23.7%.

## Housing and Home Learning Environment and Family Stability

### Housing Status

The importance of the Home Learning Environment is highlighted by Sylva et al (2004) who claim that what parents do with their children is more important than who parents are and Feinstein (1999) suggesting that parental interest in their child's education has four times more influence on attainment by the age of 16 than socio-economic background. At this point in time it is difficult to gather data on those aspects key within a positive home environment. With the stability of the home address possibly playing a part in the home environment outcomes.

### Household Composition

Although evidence does not suggest family breakdown causes child poverty, there are associations with lost income for woman and children, as well as higher rates of worklessness in lone parent families ([HM Government, 2014](#)).

**Table 12:** Lone parent households as a proportion of all households, Cheshire & Merseyside, North West and England, 2011

Area	All households	Households with dependent children		Lone Parent Households (with dependent children)	
	(n)	(n)	%	(n)	%
Cheshire East	159,441	44,466	27.9%	9,367	5.9%
Cheshire West and Chester	141,442	39,075	27.6%	9,071	6.4%
Halton	53,312	16,659	31.2%	5,377	10.1%
Knowsley	61,323	19,610	32.0%	7,327	11.9%
Liverpool	206,515	53,650	26.0%	21,164	10.2%
Sefton	117,930	32,220	27.3%	9,216	7.8%
St. Helens	75,736	22,020	29.1%	6,456	8.5%
Warrington	85,140	26,277	30.9%	6,220	7.3%
<b>Wirral</b>	140,583	39,630	28.2%	12,735	9.1%
<b>North West</b>	3,009,549	867,266	28.8%	242,754	8.1%
<b>England</b>	22,063,368	6,423,941	29.1%	1,573,255	7.1%

Source: Census 2011, via [NOMIS](#), 2018

Table 12 shows that in 2011 Wirral had a higher rate of lone parent households than both the North West and England; 9.1% compared to 8.1% and 7.1% respectively. In terms of Cheshire & Merseyside local authorities, Wirral has the 4<sup>th</sup> largest proportion of lone parent households. In terms of households with dependent children, lone parents make up around 32% (12,735 of 39,630 households or 1 in 3).

## Fuel Poverty

Fuel poverty in England is now measured using the Low Income High Costs (LIHC) indicator. ([View LIHC indicator and how a household is considered to be fuel poor](#)).

In table 13 below are the Wirral Wards (and comparator) percentages of households considered to be in fuel poverty. Again the areas of Seacombe, Bidston St James and Birkenhead and Tranmere have the highest ward levels for fuel poverty households at 19.5%, 19.0% and 18.3% respectively. This is considerably higher than Wirral (13.1%) and England (11.1%).

**Table 13:** Wirral households in Fuel Poverty with comparators (2016 as latest data)

Wards	Percentage (%)
Seacombe	19.5
Bidston St James	19.0
Birkenhead and Tranmere	18.3
Liscard	17.9
Rock Ferry	17.0
Leasowe and Moreton East	14.6
Bromborough	14.0
New Brighton	13.3
Prenton	13.1
Upton	12.6
Moreton West and Saughall Massie	12.5
Claughton	11.9
Eastham	11.3
Bebington	10.9
Wallasey	10.3
Oxton	9.8
West Kirby and Thurstaston	9.8
Hoylake and Meols	9.7
Pensby and Thingwall	9.7
Clatterbridge	9.6
Heswall	9.3
Greasby, Frankby and Irby	9.0
Birkenhead Constituency	15.1
Wallasey Constituency	14.8
Wirral South Constituency	11.1
Wirral West Constituency	10.3
Wirral Local Authority	13.1
England	11.1

**Source:** Wirral Intelligence Service using [Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy](#) data (2018)

**Notes:**

- 2016 data is the latest published in 2018 by Department for Energy and Climate Change
- Also available is Wirral's Home Energy Conservation report for 2017. The Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) 1995 requires Local Authorities to identify practicable and cost-effective measures likely to result in significant energy reduction in all residential accommodation in their area. [View Wirral's latest 2017 report](#)
- [Full list as proportion of households experiencing fuel poverty by LSOAs and Wards](#)
- [Full list as households experiencing fuel poverty presented as LSOAs and Ward](#)

**Table 14a:** Fuel Poverty proportion (%) of households by lower super output area and Ward (2016)

LSOA Name	Ward Name	Estimated number of households	Estimated number of fuel poor households	Proportion of households fuel poor (%)
Birkenhead West	Birkenhead and Tranmere	695	191	27.5
Bidston St James West	Bidston and St James	756	186	24.6
Tranmere North	Birkenhead and Tranmere	740	180	24.3
Bidston Moss	Bidston and St James	710	166	23.4
Tranmere Woodward	Rock Ferry	686	159	23.2
Egremont North	Liscard	677	150	22.2
Birkenhead West Float	Bidston and St James	1,124	244	21.7
Poulton South	Seacombe	807	175	21.7
Seacombe Library	Seacombe	682	148	21.7
Seacombe St Pauls	Seacombe	692	149	21.5
Leasowe Central	Leasowe and Moreton East	700	150	21.4
Liscard South	Liscard	683	146	21.4
West Tranmere	Birkenhead and Tranmere	746	158	21.2
Bidston St James East	Bidston and St James	748	157	21.0
Egremont Promenade South	Liscard	807	168	20.8
Egerton North	Birkenhead and Tranmere	636	132	20.8
Town Hall	Seacombe	672	138	20.5
Liscard Central	Liscard	819	167	20.4
Seacombe Docks	Seacombe	844	171	20.3
Birkenhead South	Claughton	784	159	20.3
Woodchurch East	Upton	664	135	20.3
Tranmere Well Lane	Rock Ferry	840	170	20.2

**Source:** Wirral Intelligence Service using [Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy](#) data (2018)

**Notes:**

- Table show all those LSOAs at or above 20% which equates to 22 of 206 LSOAs
- 2016 data is the latest published in 2018 by Department for Energy and Climate Change
- Also available is Wirral's Home Energy Conservation report for 2017. The Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) 1995 requires Local Authorities to identify practicable and cost-effective measures likely to result in significant energy reduction in all residential accommodation in their area. [View Wirral's latest 2017 report](#)
- [Full list as proportion of households experiencing fuel poverty by LSOAs and Wards](#)
- [Full list as households experiencing fuel poverty presented as LSOAs and Ward](#)

As stated above the proportion of households in fuel poverty for Wirral is 13.1% (2016 data) while for the whole of England the average is 11.1%. This is lower when compared to the LSOA data provided in tables 14a and 14b. This suggests that the proportion of local households experiencing fuel poverty ranged from a high of 27.5% in Birkenhead West LSOA (Birkenhead & Tranmere Ward), to 5.8% in Wallasey Harrison Park LSOA (Wallasey Ward).

There is a small geographic distance between these two distinct parts of Wirral demonstrating the contrast between different parts of the borough. Levels of fuel poverty by LSOA can also be seen in the Map 4 below which show similar trends for fuel poverty as those of deprivation and child poverty, with high levels concentrated in certain wards and LSOAs of Wirral.

**Table 14b:** Fuel Poverty by estimated number of fuel poor households by lower super output area and Ward (2016)

LSOA Name	Ward Name	Estimated number of households	Estimated number of fuel poor households	Proportion of households fuel poor (%)
Birkenhead West Float	Bidston and St James	1,124	244	21.7
Birkenhead West	Birkenhead and Tranmere	695	191	27.5
Bidston St James West	Bidston and St James	756	186	24.6
Tranmere North	Birkenhead and Tranmere	740	180	24.3
Tranmere Lairds	Birkenhead and Tranmere	946	176	18.6
Poulton South	Seacombe	807	175	21.7
Seacombe Docks	Seacombe	844	171	20.3
Tranmere Well Lane	Rock Ferry	840	170	20.2
Egremont Promenade South	Liscard	807	168	20.8

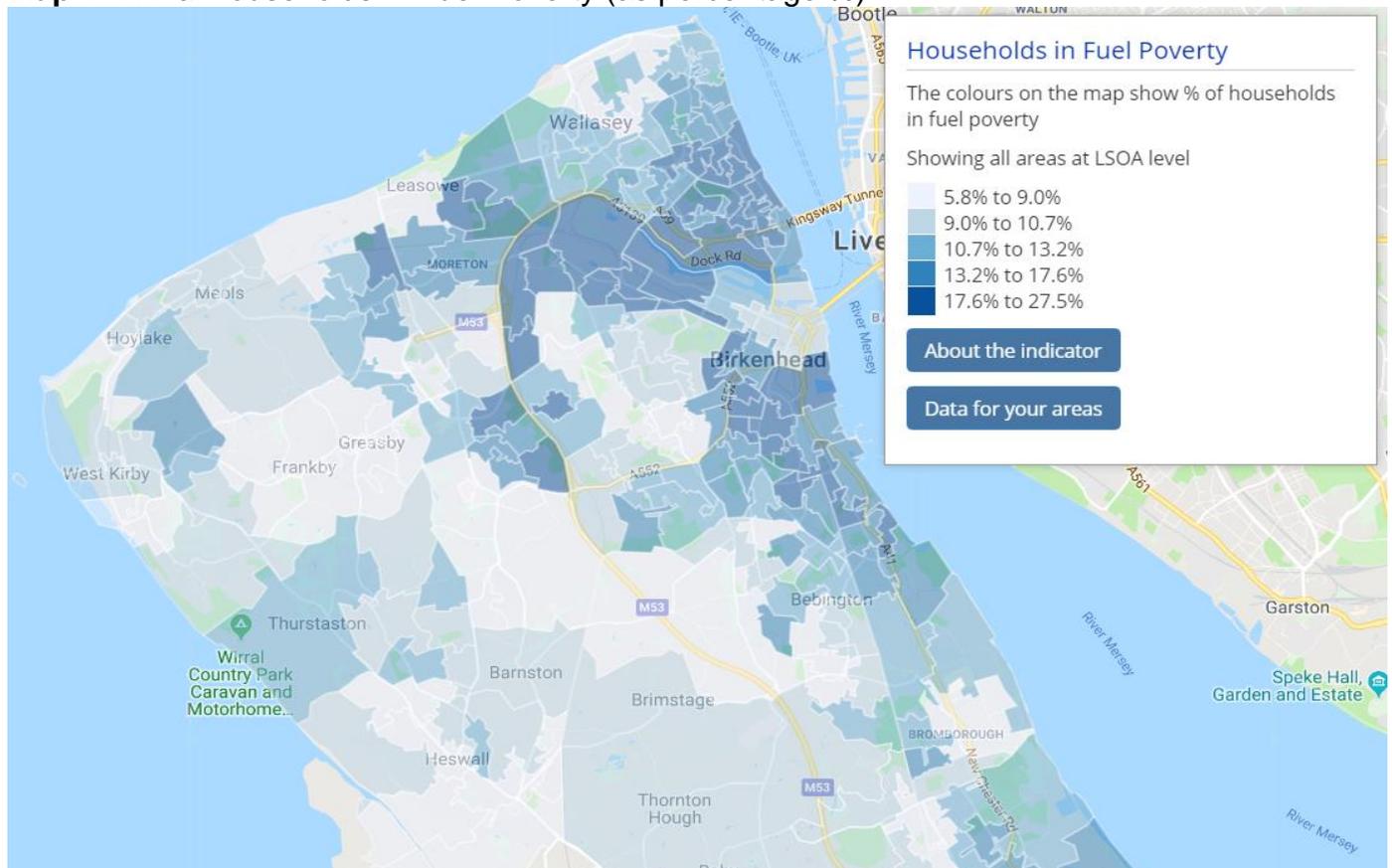
**Source:** Wirral Intelligence Service using [Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy](#) data (2018)

**Notes:**

- 2016 data is the latest published in 2018 by Department for Energy and Climate Change
- Also available is Wirral's Home Energy Conservation report for 2017. The Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) 1995 requires Local Authorities to identify practicable and cost-effective measures likely to result in significant energy reduction in all residential accommodation in their area. [View Wirral's latest 2017 report](#)
- [Full list as proportion of households experiencing fuel poverty by LSOAs and Wards](#)
- [Full list as households experiencing fuel poverty presented as LSOAs and Ward](#)

In Map 4 below are all Wirral's 206 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) with those households considered to be experiencing fuel poverty.

**Map 4:** Wirral households in Fuel Poverty (as percentage %)



**Source:** [Local Insight, 2018](#) (as "Households in Fuel Poverty, 2018" in the Wider Determinants section)

## What is this telling us?

In isolation, the data suggests that the level of child poverty within the borough and nationally is falling. However, poverty is complex. The use of household income to measure poverty is the most universally accepted method, however it is still only provides insight into one factor.

The key driver for child and family poverty is lack of sufficient income from parental employment, which restricts the amount of earnings a household has. This is not just about worklessness, but also working insufficient hours and/or low pay (HM Government, 2014).

For poor children growing up to be poor adults, the main driver is poor child educational outcomes, primarily through the influence on future employment outcomes and earnings (HM Government, 2014).

In both cases Wirral has both overt and underlying issues relating to employment, family income and areas of low educational attainment for both children and adults that must be addressed if the borough, the ward and the output area performance is to be improved.

Poverty is multi-factorial with some aspects preceding poverty, some co-occurring with poverty and some coming after poverty. So they could be 'causes', 'correlate to' or be 'effects' of poverty.

By developing plans and actions that consider all three aspects together then improved local outcomes could be achieved.

## Relevant and related National and local strategies

### **The Liverpool City Region Child Poverty and Life Chances Commission**

This was re-launched (on Friday, 29 January 2016) alongside a new strategy setting out how it would address this issue the three years to 2018.

The Commission, chaired by Frank Field MP, with representatives from the local authorities across the Liverpool City Region, police, health, private and public sectors, education and transport, advise City Region Leaders and the Mayor on approaches to tackling child poverty. Access the latest strategy [here](#)

Previous National Strategy (2011 onwards) [here](#)

### **Wirral's Child and Family Poverty Group**

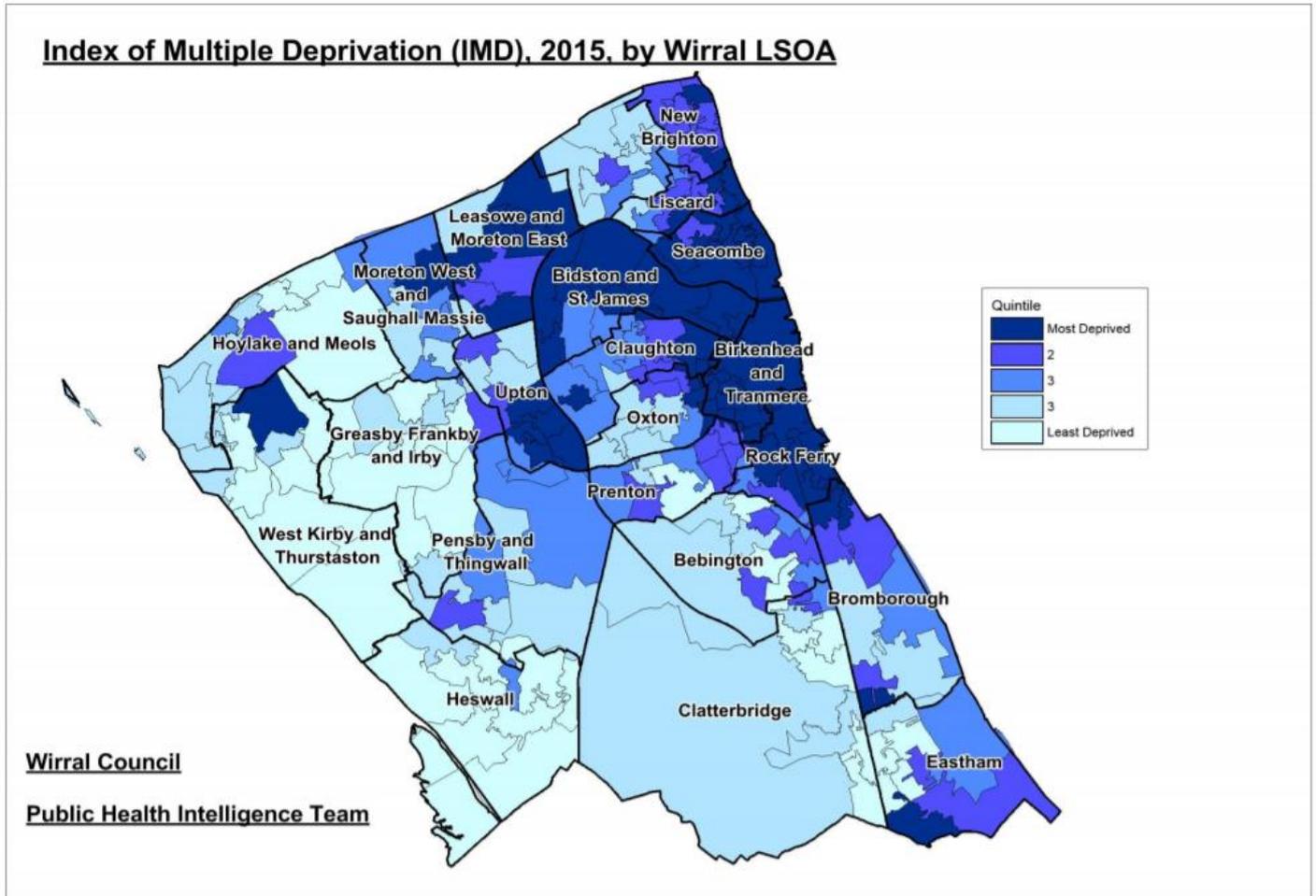
Wirral's Child and Family Poverty Group take a leading role in developing local approaches and thinking to improve outcomes for children and families and are leading the development of the latest collaborative response to child and family poverty.

[Wirral Improving Life Chances Strategy](#), as part of Wirral Plan: A 2020 Vision, for reducing Child and Family Poverty was developed and revised annually and as previously discussed, the actions are now incorporated into other pledge areas.

Wirral Plan: A 2020 Vision can be accessed [here](#)

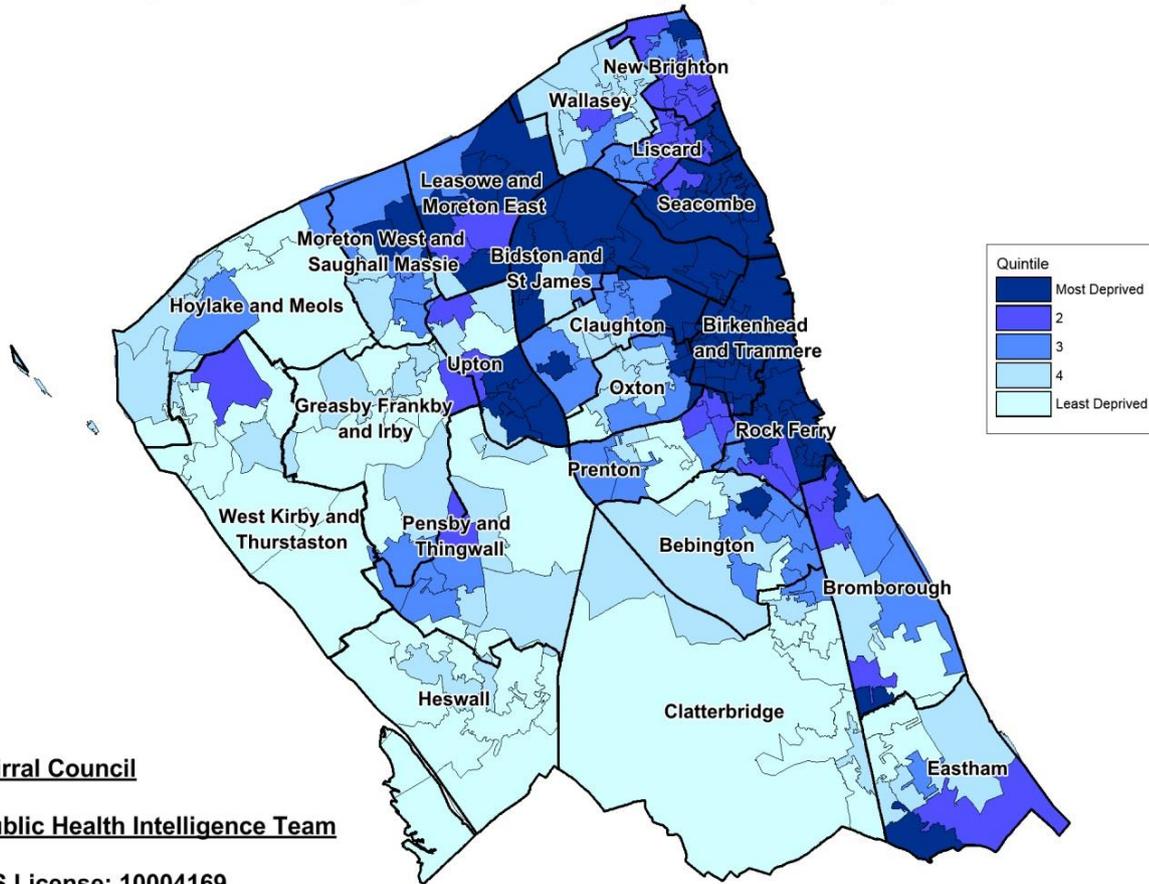
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Source: [Produced by Wirral Intelligence Service using IMD 2015 data](#)

**Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI), 2015, by Wirral LSOA**



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