



**WIRRAL
INTELLIGENCE
SERVICE**

JSNA: Children & Young People Population & Demographics

**Wirral Intelligence
Service**

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JSNA: Children & Young People Population & Demographics

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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 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 or go to <https://www.wirralintelligenceservice.org/>

| Version Number | Date | Authors |
|----------------|--------------|--|
| 1.0 | January 2020 | Sarah Kinsella – Wirral Intelligence Service |

Key findings

- Children and young people aged 0-19 make up just under one in four (23%) of Wirral residents (74,142 in 2018) and is projected to increase very slightly by 2.6% by 2028
- Information on the ethnicity of school children in Wirral indicates that 93% of children in Wirral are White; the largest BAME groups are Asian/Asian British (3%) and Mixed ethnicity (3%)
- The number of births in Wirral in 2018 was 3,242 the lowest number since Wirral was formed as a metropolitan Borough in 1974; historical trends indicate these decreases could continue until the late 2020s (a 6% decrease by 2030 is predicted by ONS)
- The general fertility rate has also been decreasing in England overall (last 3 time periods)
- The number of women of child-bearing age (15-44 years) is projected to decrease in Wirral and this is likely to have an impact on the number of future maternities (unless there is significant inward migration)
- The largest number of births in both Wirral and England in 2018 occurred in women aged between 30 and 34, which marks a change on previous years when the most common age was between 25 and 29
- The Borough still has a slightly higher proportion of births to younger mothers (aged <20), and a lower proportion of births to older mothers (aged 35+), than England (likely to be due to births to younger mothers being more prevalent in areas of deprivation)
- Wirral has a much lower percentage of births to mothers born outside the UK compared to England overall (8% in Wirral compared to 29% in England). The largest group of foreign-born mothers in Wirral were those born in EU Accession countries (e.g. Poland)
- There is a large disparity in the birth rate between the west and east of Wirral (higher rates in the east). This is likely to result in significantly more demand for services and support for families in the east of Wirral, as deprivation is far more prevalent in the east of the borough
- One in every 10 babies born in Rock Ferry result is of low birthweight (11%), compared to just one in every 25 births in Eastham and Claughton (4%)
- The 2019 IDACI (Income Deprivation Index Affecting Children Index) shows that deprivation affecting children is concentrated in the North and East of Wirral, with small pockets in other areas of Wirral
- Child poverty data shows that the proportion of children living in low income households ranged from 4% in Heswall, to 46% in Bidston & St. James ward
- In 2018/19, around one in four Wirral primary school aged children, one in 6 secondary school aged children and almost half (1 in 2) children attending special school were eligible for Free School Meals
- There were 835 Looked After Children in Wirral as of 2018. This equates to a rate of 123 per 10,000 children, which is almost double the England rate (64 per 10,000). As of October 2019, for Wirral this is now 822 looked after children and a rate of 121.6/10,000.
- Estimates suggest there may be around 1,235 young people aged 16-24 Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual (LGB) in Wirral
- The Child Bereavement Network estimates that there are around 1,450 children and young people aged 5-16 who were bereaved of a parent or sibling at some point in their childhood

Wirral JSNA: - Children & Young People Population & Demographics

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What do we know?

Why is this important?

Intelligence on the key demographics for children and young people in Wirral are important to the effective planning and commissioning of services which are required and appropriate to needs in Wirral.

Facts, figures and trends

Population

As of 2018, there were 71,240 children and young people (aged 0-19 years) in Wirral, making up less than one in four (22.9%) of the total. See **table 1** below.

Table 1: Number of children and young people aged 0-18, in Wirral, by single year (2019)

| Age | Males | Females | All |
|-------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 0 | 1,744 | 1,591 | 3,335 |
| 1 | 1,857 | 1,649 | 3,506 |
| 2 | 1,910 | 1,789 | 3,699 |
| 3 | 1,861 | 1,775 | 3,636 |
| 4 | 2,018 | 1,857 | 3,875 |
| 5 | 1,937 | 1,910 | 3,847 |
| 6 | 2,239 | 1,985 | 4,224 |
| 7 | 1,999 | 1,921 | 3,920 |
| 8 | 1,954 | 1,921 | 3,875 |
| 9 | 1,926 | 1,930 | 3,856 |
| 10 | 1,971 | 1,953 | 3,924 |
| 11 | 2,075 | 1,842 | 3,917 |
| 12 | 1,966 | 1,872 | 3,838 |
| 13 | 1,851 | 1,829 | 3,680 |
| 14 | 1,906 | 1,786 | 3,692 |
| 15 | 1,872 | 1,717 | 3,589 |
| 16 | 1,789 | 1,767 | 3,556 |
| 17 | 1,838 | 1,769 | 3,607 |
| 18 | 1,855 | 1,809 | 3,664 |
| 19 | 1,566 | 1,336 | 2,902 |
| Total | 38,134 | 36,008 | 74,142 |

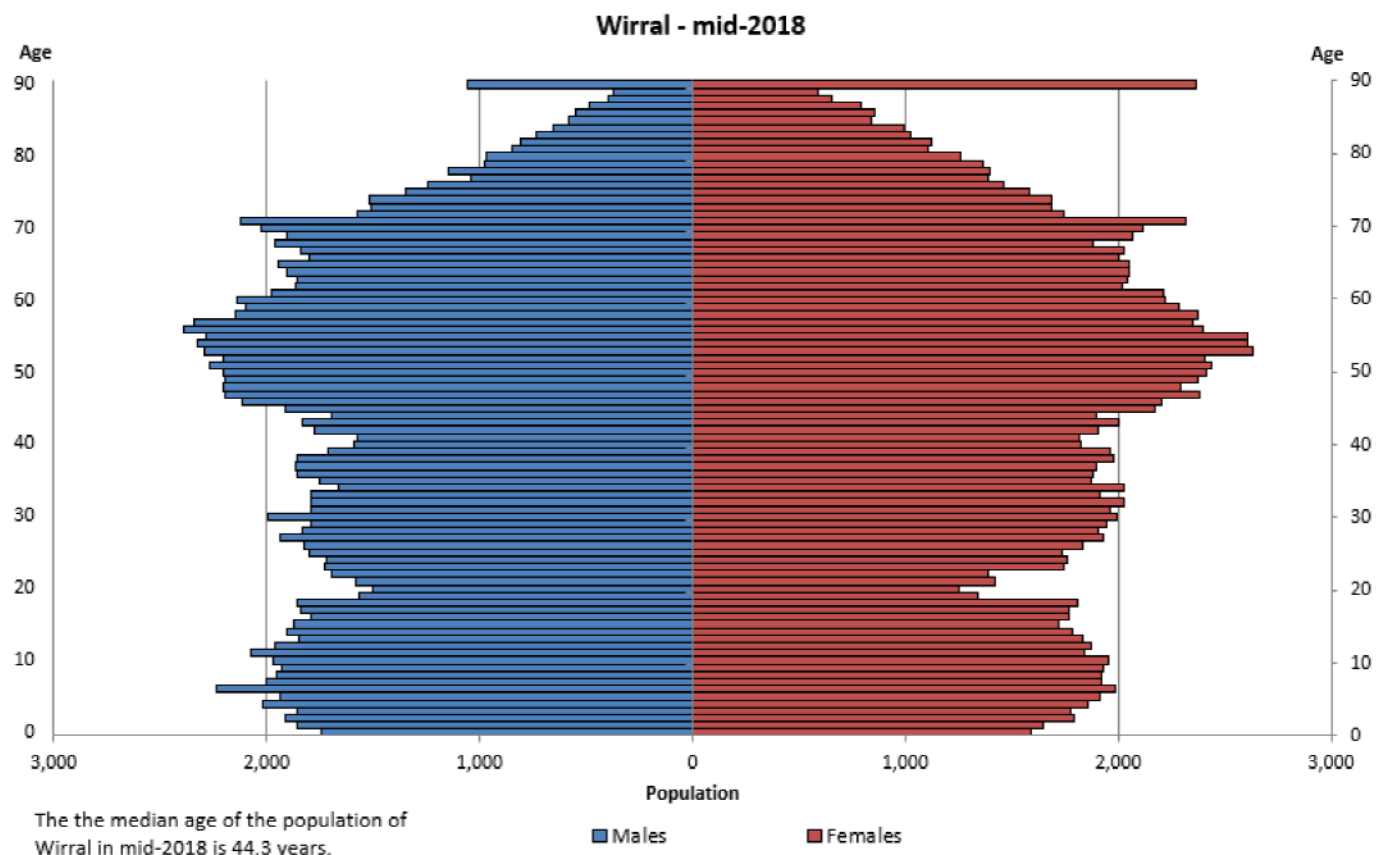
Source: Mid-2018 population estimates, ONS (2019)

In the overall population (all ages) in Wirral, females slightly outnumber males, but the reverse is the case in those aged 0-18 (51.4% versus 48.6%). There are around 2,100 more male than female children in Wirral. This trend is also a national one (more male children than female children), the reasons for this are unclear.

As boys are more likely to suffer from a range of developmental conditions such as autism and [Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder \(ADHD\)](#) and are more likely to be excluded from school or come into contact with the Youth Justice System, this is worth noting.

The population pyramid below for all ages, shows the proportion of children and young people in Wirral compared to the population overall.

Figure 1: Population pyramid for Wirral



Source: Mid-2018 population estimates, ONS (2019)

Figure 1 shows that the population of Wirral is weighted toward older age groups, with a large percentage of the population aged between 45 and 69. This gives our local pyramid a shape typical of developed countries (i.e. not a pyramid shape). The number of children and young people by 5-year (quinary) age band is in the **table 2** below.

Table 2: Number of children and young people in Wirral by 5-year (quinary) age band, Mid-2018

| Age Group | Males | Females | All |
|-------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 0-4 | 9,390 | 8,661 | 18,051 |
| 5-9 | 10,055 | 9,667 | 19,722 |
| 10-14 | 9,769 | 9,282 | 19,051 |
| 15-19 | 8,920 | 8,398 | 17,318 |
| Total 0-19 | 38,134 | 36,008 | 74,142 |

Source: Mid-2018 population estimates, ONS (2019)

Population projections

Table 3 below, shows the projections for future numbers of children and young people in Wirral and the likely percentage change in this population.

Although population projections have been updated nationally in 2018, they have not yet been released for smaller areas such as local authorities or CCGs. Therefore, the 2016 based projections below are still the most current available for Wirral.

Overall, the population aged 0-19 is projected to increase very slightly by 2.6%, compared to a slightly smaller increase of 2% in the overall population of Wirral during the same period.

Table 3: Population projections for children and young people in Wirral (Mid 2016-Mid 2028)

| Age Group | 2018 | 2020 | 2022 | 2024 | 2026 | 2028 | % change 2014 to 2028 |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| 0-4 | 18,300 | 18,300 | 18,400 | 18,300 | 18,200 | 18,000 | -3.7% |
| 5-9 | 19,700 | 19,700 | 19,200 | 19,000 | 19,100 | 19,100 | -0.5% |
| 10-14 | 18,900 | 19,500 | 20,100 | 20,200 | 20,000 | 19,500 | +9.9% |
| 15-19 | 17,100 | 17,000 | 17,600 | 18,200 | 18,700 | 19,100 | +5.1% |
| Total 0-19 | 74,000 | 74,500 | 75,300 | 75,700 | 76,000 | 75,700 | +2.6% |
| All ages | 322,600 | 323,900 | 325,400 | 326,700 | 327,900 | 329,000 | +2.0% |

Source: Mid-2016 population estimates, ONS (2017)

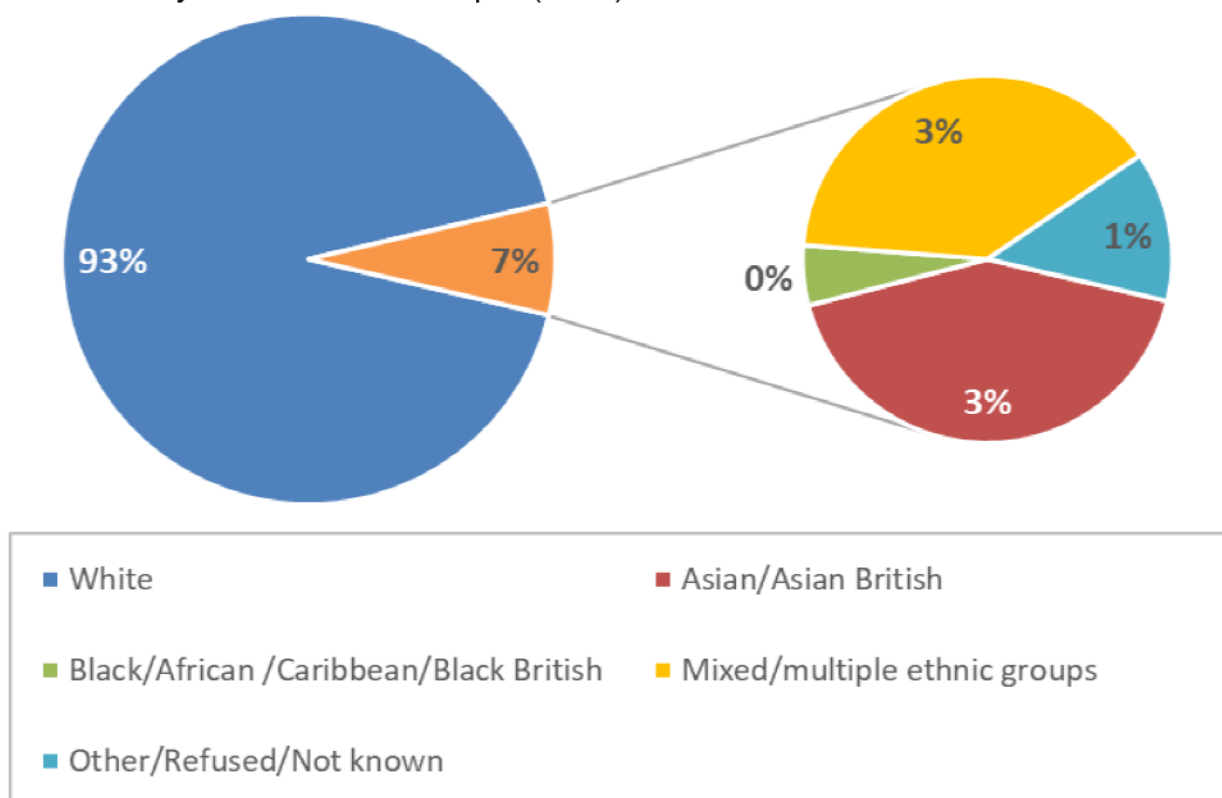
To summarise the table:

- the number of children aged 0-4 is projected to decrease by 3.7% by 2026
- the population aged 10-14 is projected to increase by almost 10% by 2026
- the population aged 15-19 is projected to increase by 5.1% by 2026

Ethnicity of Wirral children

Every year, Wirral Council undertakes a School Census, data from which provides the demographic profile of the local school-aged population. **Figure 2** below shows the five broad ethnic groupings and indicates that BAME groups now make up 7% of Wirral's total school population. It should be noted however, that when using the more detailed 18 category ethnic groupings, the largest ethnic group in Wirral is 'White Other' (part of the 'White' group) which comprises 1.75% of all Wirral school children. The total proportion of pupils who are White British (White minus White Other, Irish Traveller & Gypsy and White Irish) is 90.6%. This indicates that the BAME population in Wirral has increased compared to previous years. For further information on the spoken languages of Wirral School pupils and attainment by ethnicity, please see the [Wirral BAME section of the JSNA](#).

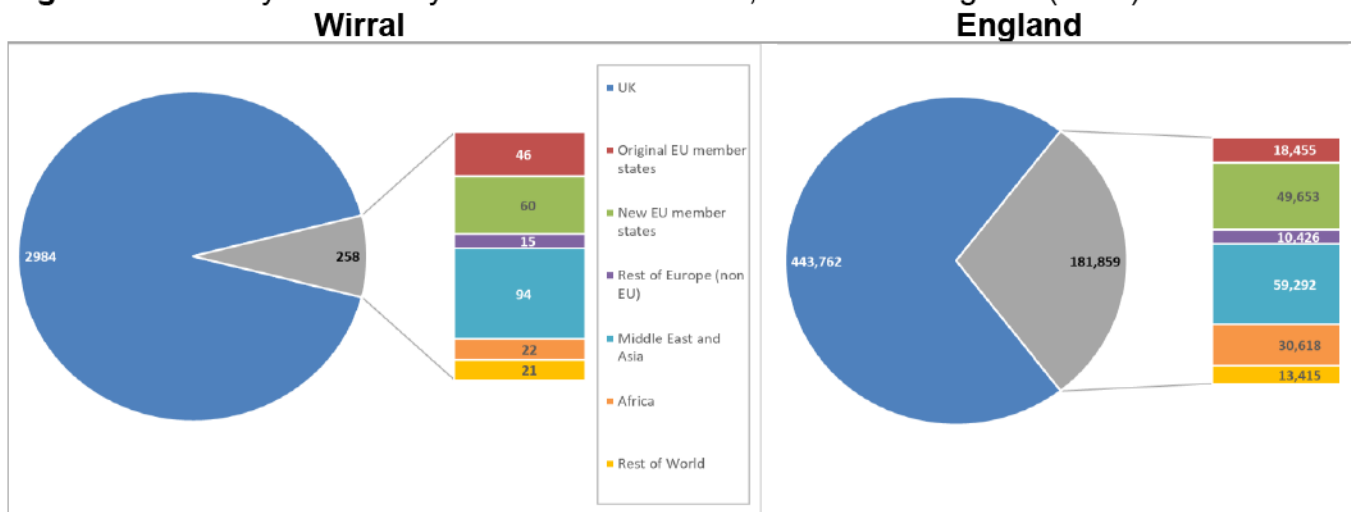
Figure 2: Ethnicity of Wirral School Pupils (2019)



Source: Wirral School Census (2019)

Country of origin of mothers who give birth in Wirral also gives us some further indication of the proportion of children in Wirral of ethnicities other than White British.

Figure 3: Births by the country of birth of the mother, Wirral and England (2018)



Source: ONS, 2019

New EU countries refer to those who joined post-2004 such as Poland, Czech Republic, Romania and Lithuania etc. Original EU members refer to the original core group of members such as France, Germany, Spain, the Netherlands etc....

As the chart in **figure 3** shows, Wirral differs significantly to the UK overall on the proportion of non-UK born mothers who gave birth in 2018. In Wirral, the percentage who were non-UK born was 8%, compared to 29% in England overall. These figures are slight increases on previous years (in 2015, Wirral was 6% and England was 28%).

As the chart also shows, the majority of foreign-born mothers in Wirral were from Europe (106 mothers in total from EU, new EU and non-EU countries), followed by the Middle East and Asia (94 mothers). This is a similar pattern than in the UK overall, where the largest group of non-UK mothers were also from Europe.

Births

Table 4 below shows the projected number of births in Wirral and England, to 2028.

Table 4: Projected births and percentage change, Wirral and England (2018 to 2028)

| | 2020 | 2022 | 2024 | 2026 | 2028 | 2030 | % change 2016- 2026 |
|---------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---------------------|
| Wirral | 3,400 | 3,400 | 3,300 | 3,300 | 3,200 | 3,200 | -6% |

Source: ONS 2016-based Subnational Population Projections, ONS (2018)

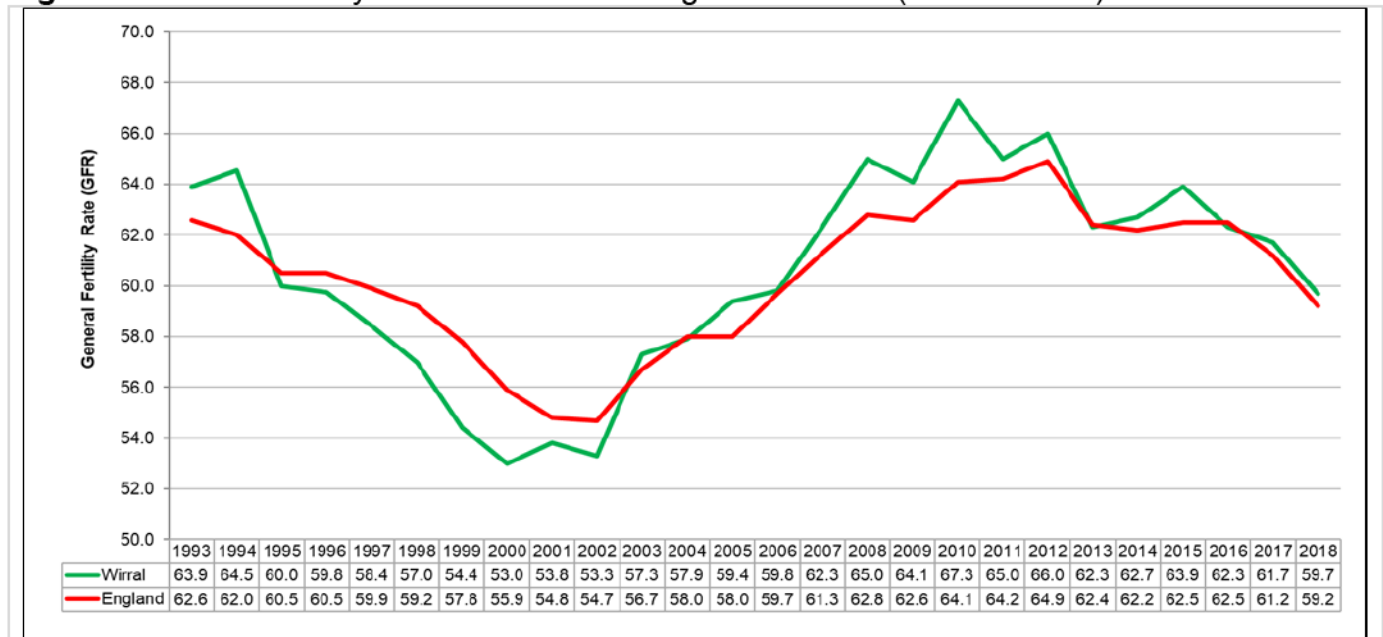
As the table shows, births are projected to decrease by 6% in Wirral by 2028. However, there is some evidence that this decrease is occurring sooner than ONS predictions, as the number of births recorded by ONS in Wirral in 2018 was 3,242, the lowest since Wirral was formed as a metropolitan borough in 1974 and already much lower than the prediction

Fertility rates

Fertility rates refer to the number of live births relative to the number of women in the population (the general fertility rate is per 1,000 females aged 15-44 years). As **figure 4** shows, the rise in fertility rates which was observed in both Wirral and England & Wales from around 2002 onwards, halted and showed a large drop in 2013.

The most recent time period showed a continued decline in both England and Wirral. The population of women of child-bearing age (15-44 years) is projected to decrease in Wirral over the coming years and this is likely to have an impact on the number of births in the future.

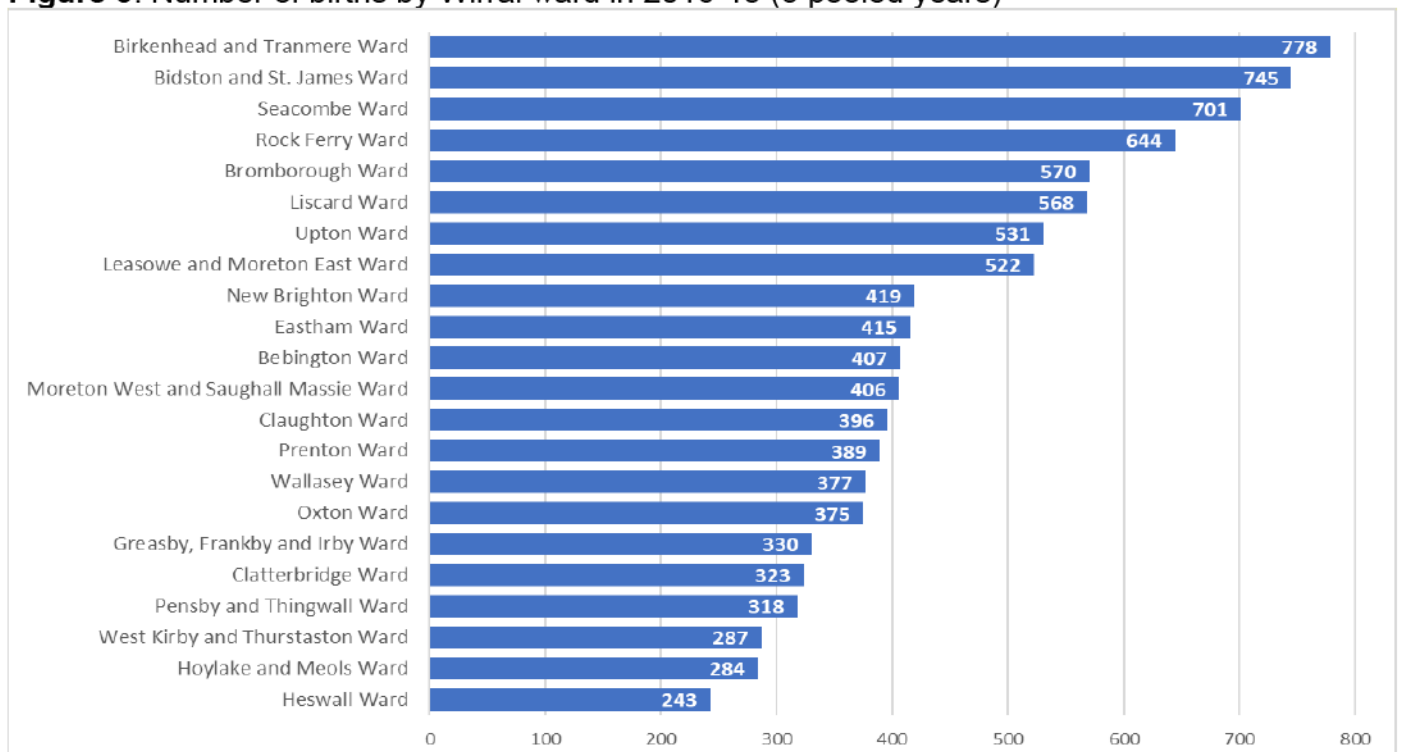
Figure 4: General fertility rate for Wirral and England & Wales (1993 to 2018)



Source: ONS, 2019

The following charts and maps show fertility rates by geography and highlight that fertility rates in Wirral vary widely across the Borough, with higher rates in the more disadvantaged wards, compared to the more affluent west of Wirral. This is likely to impact on the provision of health and social care services as deprivation is linked to a number of infant health issues such as low birth weight, higher rates of hospital admissions, reduced breastfeeding, learning disability and smoking in pregnancy rates. Lower rates in parts of Oxtou and Wallasey are likely to be because these wards are more affluent than the surrounding wards.

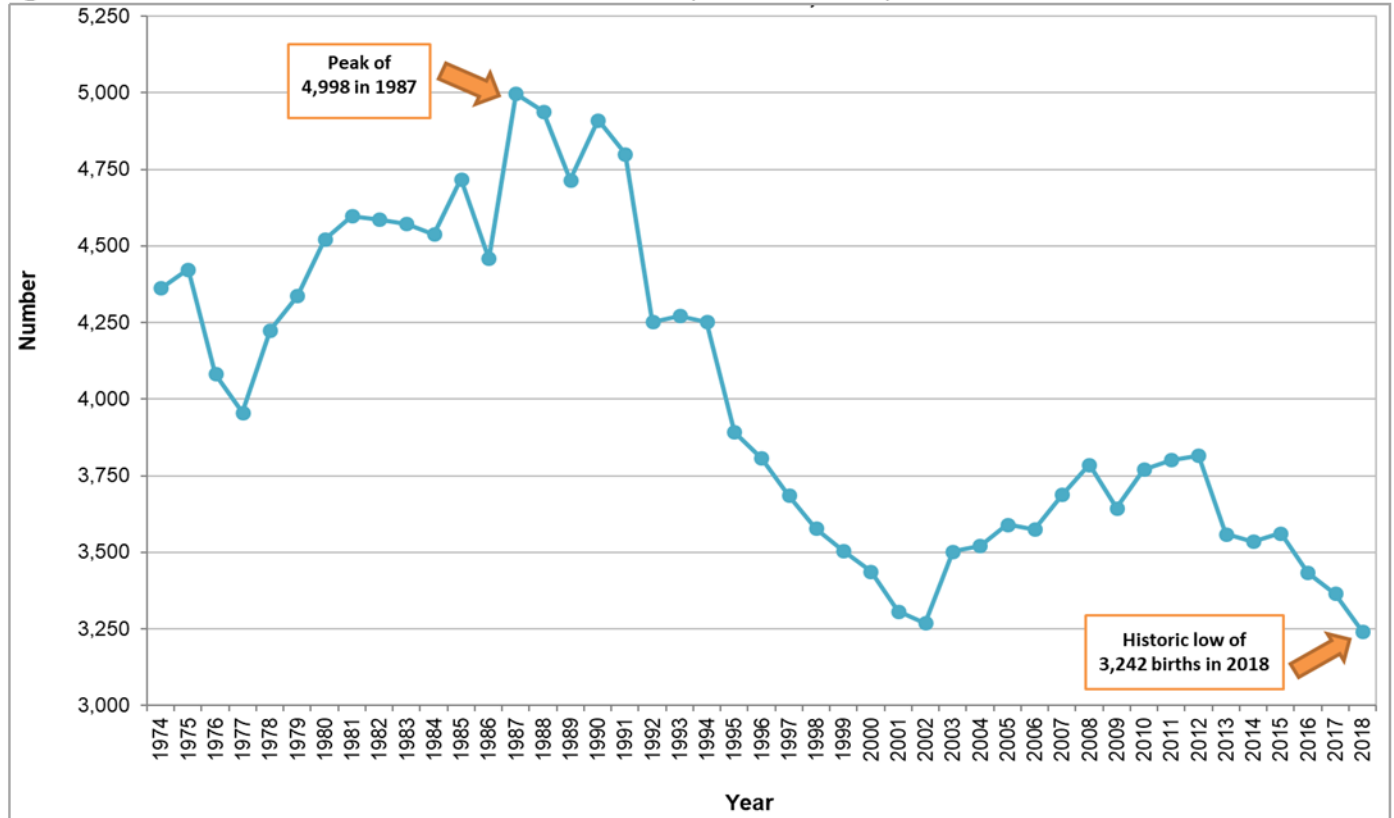
Figure 5: Number of births by Wirral ward in 2016-18 (3 pooled years)



Source: ONS, 2019

As **figure 5** shows, the four most deprived wards in Wirral had the highest number of births in 2016-18. This is a trend which has been consistent for many years, so health and social care services will probably already be aware that they have a large proportion of new mothers and children from areas of deprivation with significant health and social care needs. The total number of births in Wirral in 2018 was 3,242. The historical trend in the number of live births in Wirral from 1981 to 2018 is shown in **figure 6** below.

Figure 6: Trend in number of live births in Wirral (1974 to 2018)



Source: NHS Digital, 2019

There were 3,242 births in Wirral in 2018 (the latest year for which data is available). This is the lowest number of births since Wirral was formed as a Metropolitan Borough in 1974.

Figure 6 shows this long-term trend and indicates that the number of births may continue to fall for around the next 10 years, before rising again. If historical patterns are repeated, the next climb in births may start in the late 2020s (as the cohort of women born during the peak of 2003-2012 start to reach childbearing years in numbers).

Any future climb may be less pronounced than the previous peak (2003-2012), just as that peak was smaller than the previous peak in the late 1980s to early 1990s.

There are various reasons for this such as women having fewer children, the average age of mothers increasing and no significant inward migration. This means the historical 20-25 cyclical peaks observed in births may become less noticeable in the future than was the case in the past.

Age of mothers is a factor in determining need for health and social care, as children born to both younger and older mothers have more health issues. **Table 5** shows births by age of the mother in 2018 and suggests that the largest number of births in both Wirral and England in 2018 occurred in women aged between 30 and 34.

This is a change on previous years when the most common age was between 25 and 29. ONS have hypothesised that this trend of births at later ages is due to several factors, including greater participation in higher education, delaying marriage and/or partnership foundation, wanting a longer career before starting a family and labour market uncertainty and threat of unemployment.

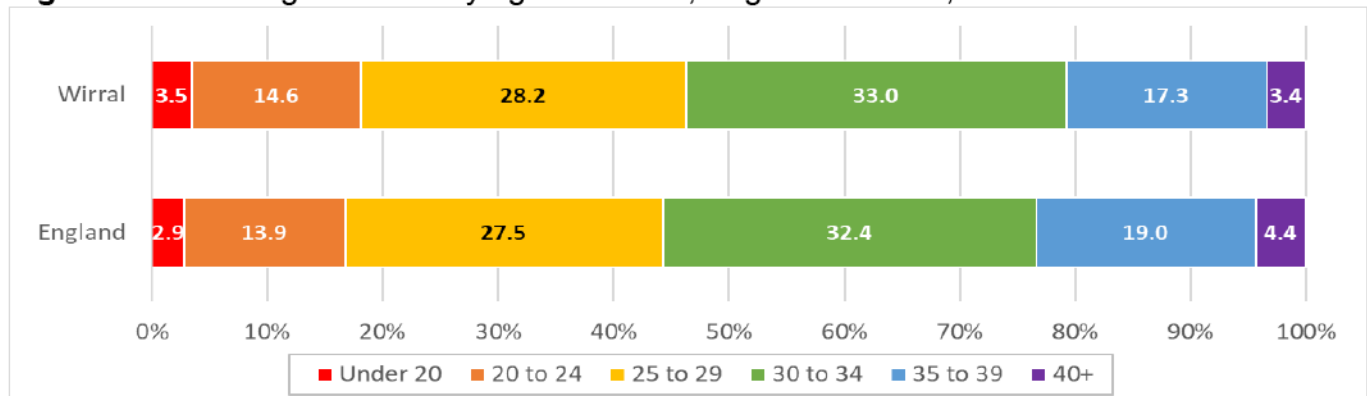
Table 5: Number of live births by age of mother, England & Wirral, 2018

| | | <20 | 20-24 | 25-29 | 30-34 | 35-39 | 40+ | Total |
|----------------|------------|--------|--------|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|
| England | No. | 18,976 | 91,095 | 180,858 | 212,707 | 124,567 | 28,865 | 657,076 |
| | % | 2.9 | 13.9 | 27.5 | 32.4 | 19.0 | 4.4 | 100% |
| Wirral | No. | 114 | 473 | 913 | 1,070 | 561 | 111 | 3,242 |
| | % | 3.5 | 14.6 | 28.2 | 33.0 | 17.3 | 3.4 | 100% |

Source: ONS, 2019

This data on age at birth is shown visually in **figure 7** below.

Figure 7: Percentage of births by age of mother, England & Wirral, 2018



Source: ONS, 2019

As both the **table 5** and **figure 7** show, Wirral has a higher proportion of births to younger mothers compared to England, and unlike England, there are still more births to those aged under 20 than there are among women aged over 40 in Wirral.

In England, this has not been the case for several years and births in the over 40s outstrip births to the under 20s by a considerable margin.

National data shows that mothers in more deprived areas tend to be younger, and this is likely to be the reason for the differences between Wirral and England (Wirral has significant areas of deprivation and these areas have the highest birth rates).

Low birthweight

Low birthweight is an important cause of childhood morbidity, a major factor in infant mortality and has serious consequences for health in later life, e.g. children of a low birthweight are more likely to have health and cognitive impairments (e.g. learning disabilities) compared to average birthweight babies.

Low birthweight shows a pattern consistent with many health issues, in that it is a source of health inequality because it is more common in deprived areas and can be a 'bell-weather' for maternal health in general.

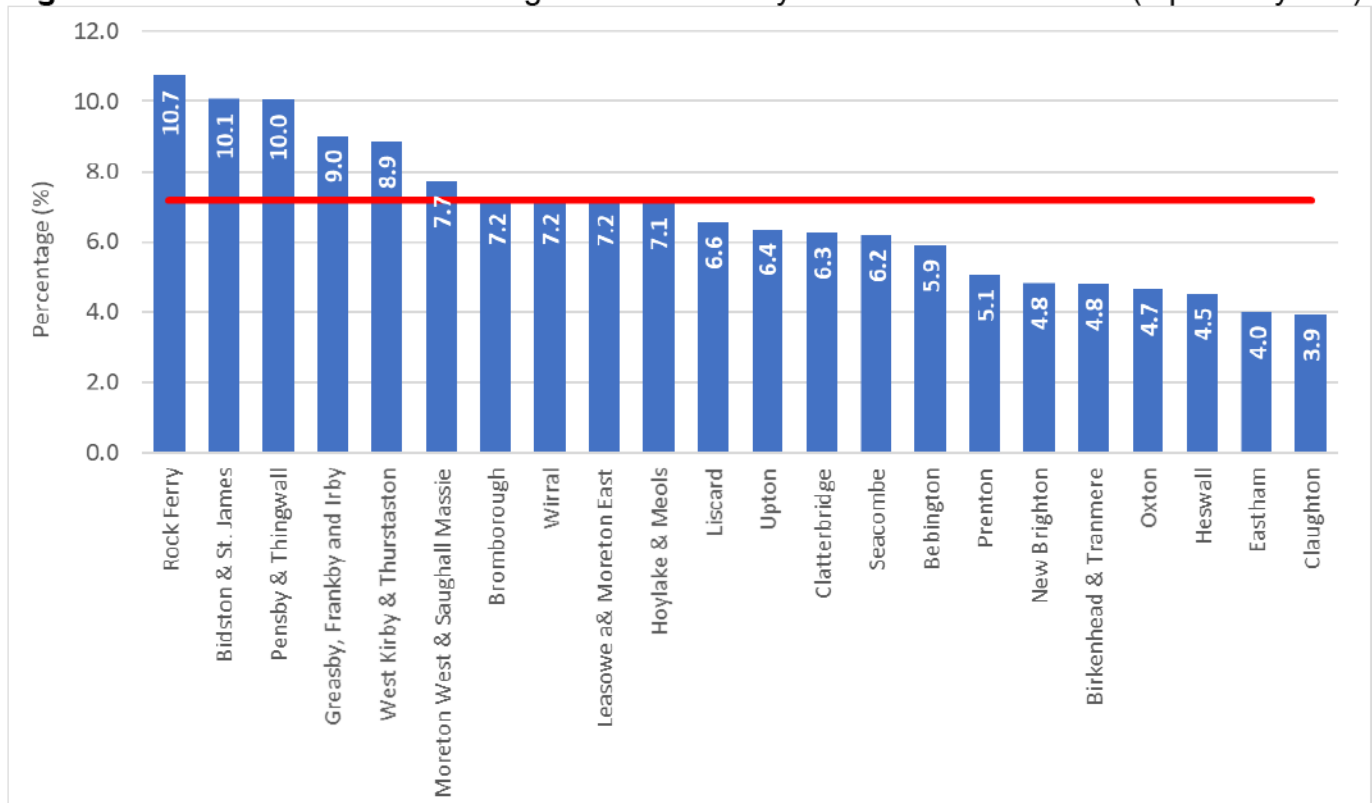
Low birthweight can be classed as births in babies of at least 37 weeks gestation or more, in which the baby weighs less than 2,500grams (which is roughly 5lb 4oz), or this can be applied to all babies weighing less than this amount.

In numbers, there were 217 babies born (all gestations) in Wirral in 2016-18, who were classed as being of low birthweight (<2,500grams). The overall percentage of 7.2% of babies being of low birth weight in Wirral hides considerable inequalities, however.

Figure 8 below shows that inequality by Wirral ward. It should be noted that the figures below relate to ALL births, not just term babies (37+ weeks), due to this marker being absent from our local ONS data.

As **figure 8** shows, more than one in every 10 babies born in Rock Ferry (10.7%) is low birthweight, compared to just one in every 25 births in Eastham and Claughton wards (4% and 3.9% respectively).

Figure 8: Prevalence of low birthweight of all babies by Wirral ward in 2016-18 (3 pooled years)



Source: ONS, 2019

Note: Wirral average shown by red line. Figures are for all babies, born at any gestation

Sexuality

The most recent estimate of the size of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual (LGB) population in the UK comes from the 2017 Annual Population Survey (APS).

Table 6 below shows the results of the APS; the percentage of the population by their identified sexual identity have been extrapolated to the Wirral population (aged 16+ as the Annual Population Survey is only conducted among those aged 16+).

This is a crude way of estimating likely populations which does not take into account local variation, but in the absence of more robust local data, remains the best way of estimating sexuality by age band in Wirral.

Table 6: Estimates of sexuality in Wirral by gender and age band

| Gender | Age band | % who identify as LGB (Nationally) | Total 16+ population in Wirral | Estimated LGB in Wirral |
|--------------|----------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Male | 16-24 | 3.7 | 15,281 | 565 |
| Male | 25-34 | 3.6 | 18,235 | 656 |
| Male | 35-49 | 2.2 | 28,152 | 619 |
| Male | 50-64 | 1.9 | 32,326 | 614 |
| Male | 65+ | 0.8 | 31,427 | 251 |
| Female | 16-24 | 4.7 | 14,254 | 670 |
| Female | 25-34 | 2.3 | 19,255 | 443 |
| Female | 35-49 | 1.6 | 30,465 | 487 |
| Female | 50-64 | 1.3 | 35,043 | 456 |
| Female | 65+ | 0.6 | 38,384 | 230 |
| Total | | | 262,822 | 4,993 |

Source: [ONS Annual Population Survey for 2017](#) and [2018 Mid-Year Estimates](#)

As **Table 6** shows, the estimates indicate that there may be around 5,000 people in Wirral who identify as LGB, of which 1,235 are likely to be young people aged 16-24. Younger people were more likely than older people to report being bisexual than gay or lesbian.

Life expectancy at birth

Life expectancy at birth indicates the number of years a baby born in an area can expect to live if they experience the mortality rates of that area for the whole of their life. It is not a guide to the remaining expectation of life at a later age, e.g. if life expectancy at birth in a particular area is 80 years, it does not follow that people aged 70 living in that area can expect to live for a further 10 years. It is, however, a general guide to the health of the population and inequalities in an area.

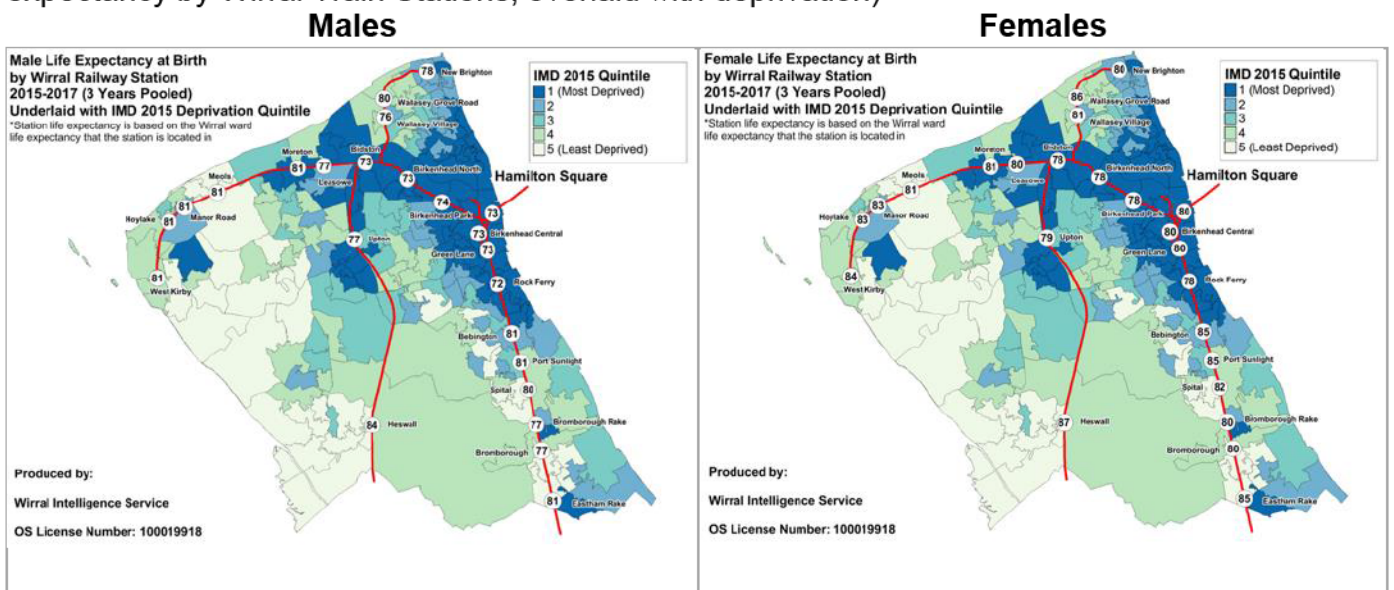
Table 7: Life Expectancy at Birth by gender, Wirral, 2015-17

| Time period | Males | Females |
|-------------|-------|---------|
| 2015-17 | 78.3 | 81.8 |

Source: ONS, 2019

Note: Confidence Intervals for male life expectancy are 77.9 (LCL) and 78.6 (UCL). Confidence Intervals for female life expectancy are 81.4 (LCL) and 82.1 (UCL)

Map 1 and 2: Inequality in male and female life expectancy in Wirral, 2015-17 (as shown by life expectancy by Wirral Train Stations, overlaid with deprivation)



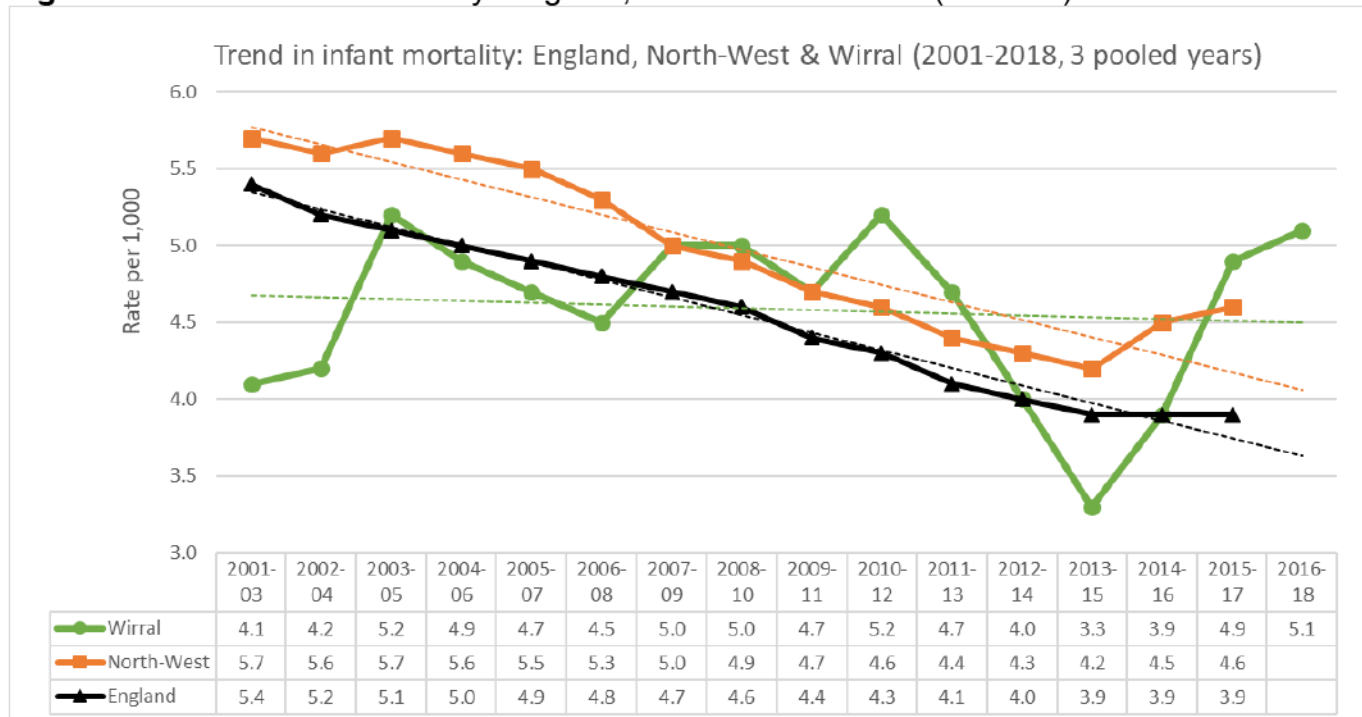
Source: ONS, 2019

Darker colours on **maps 1 & 2** denote more acute deprivation, lighter colours indicate lower deprivation (more affluent areas). It can be seen that broadly speaking, life expectancy is lower in the East, more deprived side of Wirral compared to the more affluent West.

Infant Mortality

Infant mortality is the rate of deaths in infants aged under 1 year per 1,000 live births and is an important indicator of the general health of the entire population. It reflects the relationship between causes of infant mortality and upstream determinants of population health such as economic, social and environmental conditions. Rates are shown as 3 years pooled to smooth out large fluctuations which are characteristic of small datasets (infant mortality numbers are small per year).

Figure 9: Trend in infant mortality: England, North-West & Wirral (2001-18)



Source: PHE, 2019

Note: Trendline shown by dotted line. 2016-18 figures for Wirral are provisional

As the chart in **figure 9** above shows, in 2016-18, infant mortality in Wirral increased for the third consecutive time period. Unfortunately, figures have not yet been published for England or the North-West overall, so we cannot compare local trends with national ones at the time of writing. The North-West overall showed an increase in line with Wirral for 2015-17, while England has shown a levelling out, with the same rate for the last 3 time periods for which data is available.

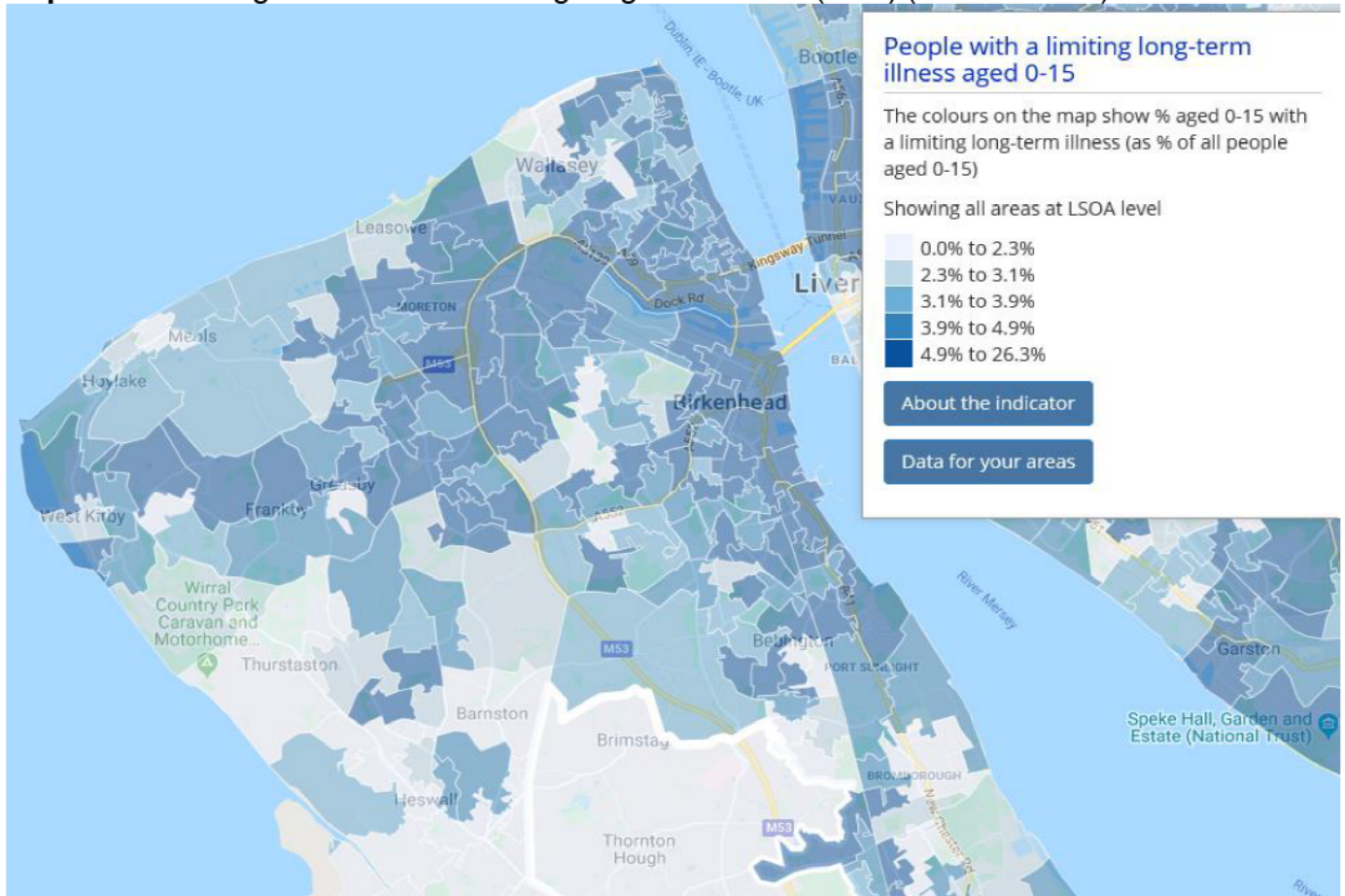
The rate in Wirral shows more fluctuation than both England and the North-West even though 3 pooled year rates have been used, but this is characteristic of smaller numbers (for reference, the total number of infant deaths in the 3 year pooled period of 2016-18 was 51 for Wirral). Wirral had a much lower rate of infant mortality than both England and the North-West in 2001-03, it now appears to have a much higher rate (in 2015-17), how Wirral compares to regional and national figures for the 2016-18 period remains to be seen.

Disability

Data on disability (at all ages) is rarely definitive or perfect. The **map 3** below shows the proportion of residents aged 0-15 with a limiting long-term illness (LLTI) according to the 2011

Census. People responded to a question which asked whether or not they (or their child) had a long-term illness, health problem or disability which limited their (or their child's) daily activities.

Map 3: Children aged 0-15 with a limiting long-term illness (LLTI) (Census 2011)



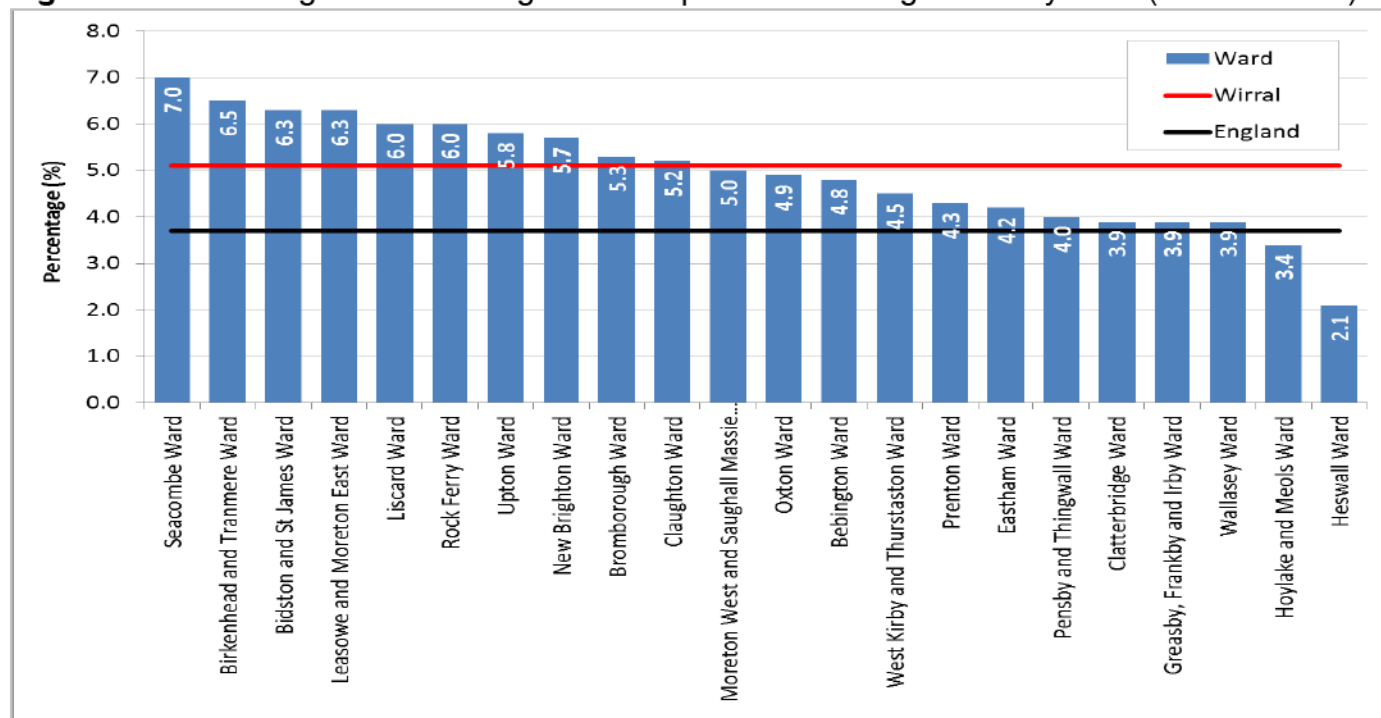
Source: Local Insight, 2019

The total number of children and young people aged 0-15 reported as having a limiting long-term illness (LLTI) in Wirral in 2011 was 3,040, although as this data is from the Census, it is now quite out of date. The percentage of children and young people aged 0-15 who were reported as having a LLTI by Wirral ward are shown in **figure 10** below.

As **figure 10** and **map 3** show, LLTI (or disability) in children and young people broadly corresponds with deprivation, with the most affluent wards having the lowest proportion of children with a LLTI - and the most deprived wards having the highest rates. As the chart also shows, Wirral overall has a much higher rate of children with LLTI than England overall (5.1% compared to 3.7% in England).

Rates in Wirral do seem however, to be in line with national estimates produced by The Family Resources Survey 2007/08, which estimated that nationally between 4% and 7% of young people would have a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity and experience significant difficulty with day-to-day activities (although these estimates are fairly dated now).

Figure 10: Percentage of children aged 0-15 reported as having a LLTI by ward (Census 2011)



Source: Local Insight, 2017 (Census 2011)

Income and Unemployment

Youth people not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET)

Young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET), are at greater risk of a range of negative outcomes, including poor health, depression and early parenthood. Increasing the participation of young people in learning and employment not only makes a lasting difference to individual lives but is also central to improving social mobility and reducing inequalities.

To support more young people to study and gain the skills and qualifications that lead to sustainable jobs and reduce the risk of young people becoming NEET, legislation was included in 2013 to raise the participation age as contained within the Education and Skills Act 2008. This required that from 2013 all young people remain in some form of education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17.

From September 2016 DfE relaxed the requirement on authorities to track academic age 18-year-olds. LAs are now only required to track and submit information about young people up to the end of the academic year in which they have their 18th birthday i.e. academic age 16 and 17-year-olds.

In **table 8** below it shows the number and percentage of young people in Wirral aged 16-17, who were NEET in 2016 and 2017. In actual numbers, this equalled a reduction from 390 young people in 2016, to 350 in 2017.

Table 8: NEET in Wirral, North-West & England, 2016-17

| | Wirral Number | Wirral % | North-West | England |
|------|---------------|----------|------------|---------|
| 2016 | 390 | 5.3% | 6.6% | 6.0% |
| 2017 | 350 | 4.9% | 6.5% | 6.0% |

Source: Department for Education, 2019

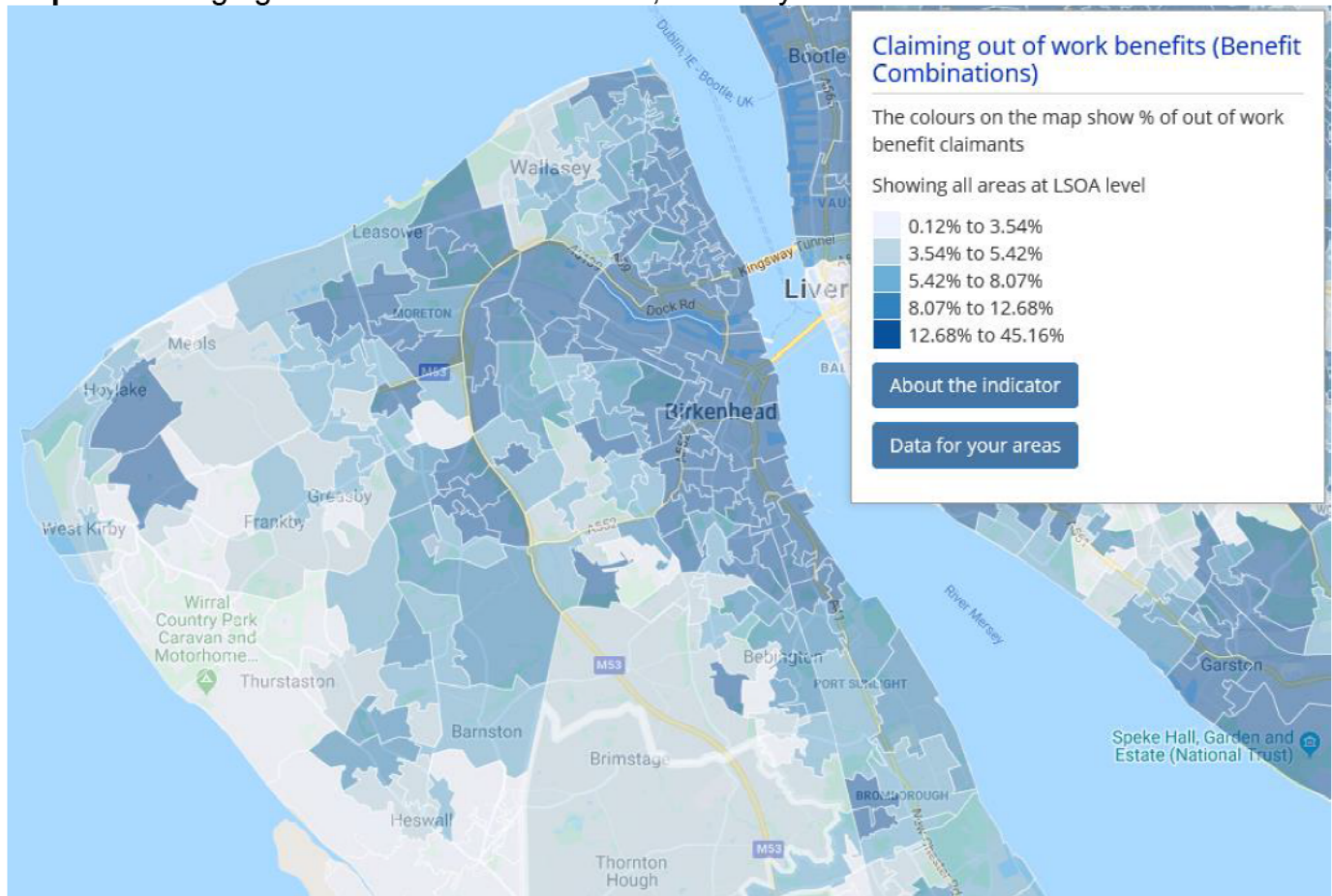
As the table shows, Wirral has a lower rate of young people aged 16-17 NEET than both the North-West region and England overall.

Benefits

In total, there were 24,196 people claiming working age benefits in Wirral (as of November 2018), which is 12.5% of the working age population of Wirral (compared to the England average of 8.3%).

As **map 4** below shows, there are huge variations in Wirral, with a much higher percentage of benefit claimants in the east of Wirral (e.g. over one in four or 26.5% of the working age population in Birkenhead & Tranmere compared to around 30 or 3.5% in Heswall). See *child poverty* section further down, for the number of children in Wirral living in out of work households.

Map 4: Working age benefit claimants in Wirral, February 2019



Source: Local Insight, 2019

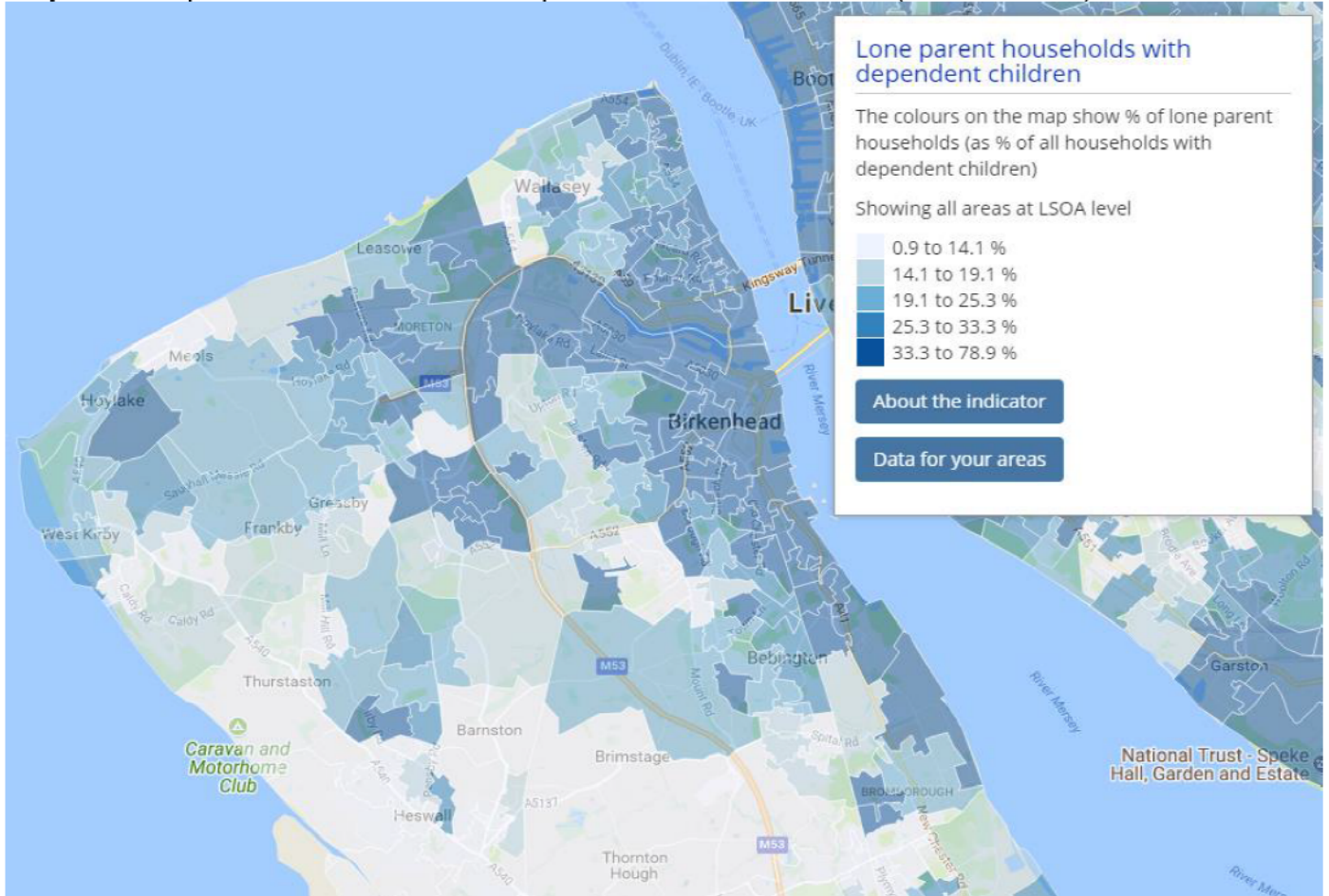
Note: Out of work benefits are defined as being on at least one of the following benefits: Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), Incapacity Benefit (IB), Severe Disablement Allowance (SDA), Income Support (IS) where Carer's Allowance (CA) not also in payment, Pension Credit (PC) where Carer's Allowance (CA) and Universal Credit (UC) conditionality regime is one of Searching for Work, Preparing for Work or Planning for Work. The categories of this field are mutually exclusive and therefore can be summed without double counting. Claimants may or may not be additionally in receipt of other benefits not listed here.

Lone parent families

There were 12,735 lone parent families with dependent children according to the Census in Wirral in 2011. Obviously, this data is now relatively old, but it still provides an indication of how Wirral compares to other areas as the comparative distribution is unlikely to have changed (given that it is a long standing trend that lone parent families tend to be concentrated in areas of deprivation – as **map 5** shows).

Wirral is no exception to this general rule. In 2011, there was a much higher proportion of lone parent families in Wirral compared to England (32.1% in Wirral, compared to 24.5% of all household in England) [8].

Map 5: Lone parent households with dependent children in Wirral (Census 2011)



Source: Local Insight, 2019

Adult Skill levels

The **table 9** below shows the level of adult skills in Wirral in 2018, compared to the North-West and Great Britain overall.

Table 9: Level of qualifications in Wirral, NW and England in 2018

| Qualification level | Wirral Number | Wirral % | North-West % | Great Britain % |
|----------------------|---------------|----------|--------------|-----------------|
| NVQ4 and above | 67,000 | 35.1 | 35.5 | 39.3 |
| NVQ3 and above | 102,500 | 53.7 | 55.1 | 57.8 |
| NVQ2 and above | 140,200 | 73.5 | 74.1 | 74.9 |
| NVQ1 and above | 163,600 | 85.7 | 84.8 | 85.4 |
| Other qualifications | 10,000 | 5.2 | 6.1 | 6.8 |
| No qualifications | 17,200 | 9.0 | 9.1 | 7.8 |

Source: NOMIS, 2019

Notes: Table shows the total number of people who are qualified at a particular level and above, so data in this table are not additive. Separate figures for each NVQ level are available in the full Annual Population Survey data set. Trade apprenticeships are split 50/50 between NVQ level 2 and 3.

NVQ 1 is equivalent to fewer than 5 GCSEs at grades A-C, foundation GNVQ

NVQ 2 is equivalent 5+ GCSEs at grades A-C, intermediate GNVQ

NVQ 3 is equivalent to 2+ A levels or advanced GNVQ

NVQ 4 is equivalent to HND, Degree and Higher Degree level qualifications or equivalent.

There are approximately 17,200 people of working age in Wirral with no qualifications, or 9.0% of the working age population according to the ONS Annual Population Survey. This is higher than the England average of 7.8% of the working population who have no qualifications (but lower than the North-West overall).

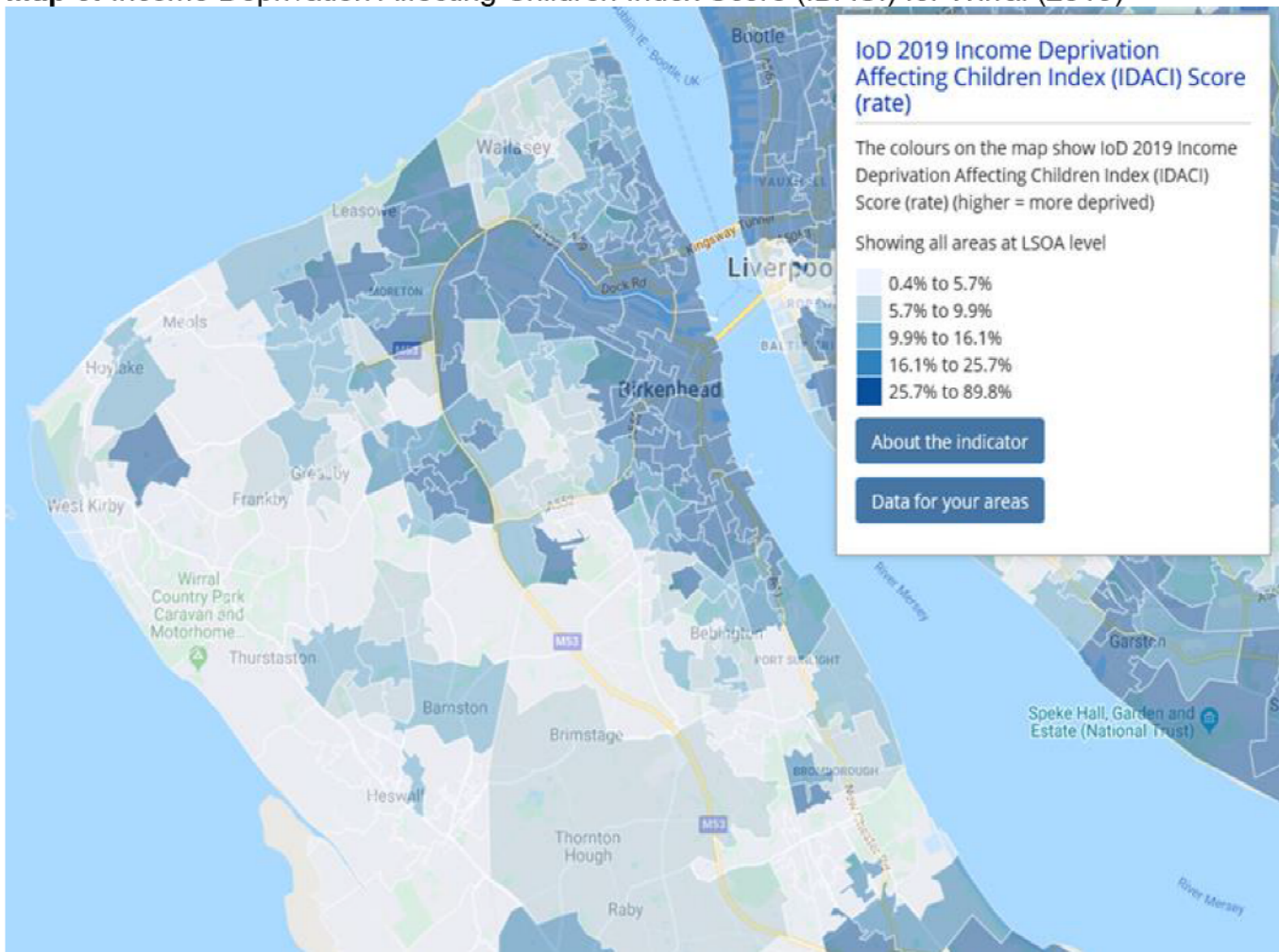
Social Circumstances

Deprivation (Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index or IDACI)

The 2019 Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) is produced by the Department for Communities and Local Government and is a supplementary index to the overall IMD (Index of Multiple Deprivation). It measures the proportion or percentage of children under the age of 16 in an area living in income deprived households. The definition of low income used includes both those people that are out-of-work, and those that are in work but who have low earnings (and who satisfy the respective means tests). The IDACI is calculated at lower super output area level (LSOA). The **map 6** (below) and **table 10** (next page) shows results by geography (map shows LSOA results); the table shows results by ward and ranks each ward in Wirral by the IDACI.

Map 6 below shows the geographical distribution by LSOA. The 2019 Index is currently the most recently available Indices of Deprivation and was released in October 2019.

Map 6: Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index Score (IDACI) for Wirral (2019)



Source: Local Insight, 2019

As **map 6** shows, the highest proportions of children living in income deprived families are in the east of Wirral in Birkenhead and Wallasey constituency areas.

There are some pockets in the West and South of Wirral, notably in Upton ward (Woodchurch), around the Acre Lane area of Bromborough and the Gilroy Road area of West Kirby.

Table 10: Percentage of children living in income deprived families, by Ward (2019)

| Ward | % living in income deprived families | Ward Rank |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------|
| Bidston and St. James Ward | 45.9 | 1 |
| Birkenhead and Tranmere Ward | 41.7 | 2 |
| Rock Ferry Ward | 41.6 | 3 |
| Seacombe Ward | 41.5 | 4 |
| Leasowe and Moreton East Ward | 29.8 | 5 |
| Upton Ward | 25.9 | 6 |
| Liscard Ward | 25.2 | 7 |
| New Brighton Ward | 20.3 | 8 |
| Bromborough Ward | 20.0 | 9 |
| Cloughton Ward | 19.9 | 10 |
| Moreton West & Saughall Massie Ward | 17.8 | 11 |
| Prenton Ward | 13.8 | 12 |
| Oxton Ward | 12.9 | 13 |
| Bebington Ward | 11.5 | 14 |
| Eastham Ward | 11.5 | 15 |
| Wallasey Ward | 9.6 | 16 |
| Pensby & Thingwall Ward | 8.6 | 17 |
| West Kirby & Thurstaston Ward | 6.2 | 18 |
| Greasby, Frankby & Irby Ward | 5.8 | 19 |
| Hoylake & Meols Ward | 5.7 | 20 |
| Clatterbridge Ward | 5.6 | 21 |
| Heswall Ward | 4.1 | 22 |
| England | 17.5 | |
| Wirral | 21.8 | |

Source: Local Insight, 2019

See [Child and Family Poverty](#) chapter for more details.

Children in 'out of work' households, are defined as dependent children living in families where all adults are in receipt of Income Support or income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (IS/JSA).

Table 11: Number and percentage of children living in out of work households in Wirral, 2017

| | Number | Percentage |
|---------|-----------|------------|
| Wirral | 11,541 | 19.1% |
| England | 1,439,793 | 13.5% |

Source: Local Insight, 2019

As **table 11** shows, Wirral has a much higher proportion of children classified as living in out of work households than England overall. Almost one in four children in Wirral live in a household classed as out of work, compared to 1 in 7 in England overall.

Fuel Poverty

Fuel poverty is said to occur when in order to heat its home to an adequate standard of warmth a household needs to spend more than 10% of its income on total fuel use. The number of households living in fuel poverty locally according to this definition in 2016 was 19,037 or 10.3% of all Wirral households, compared to 11.1% of all households in England (Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (2018)).

Housing

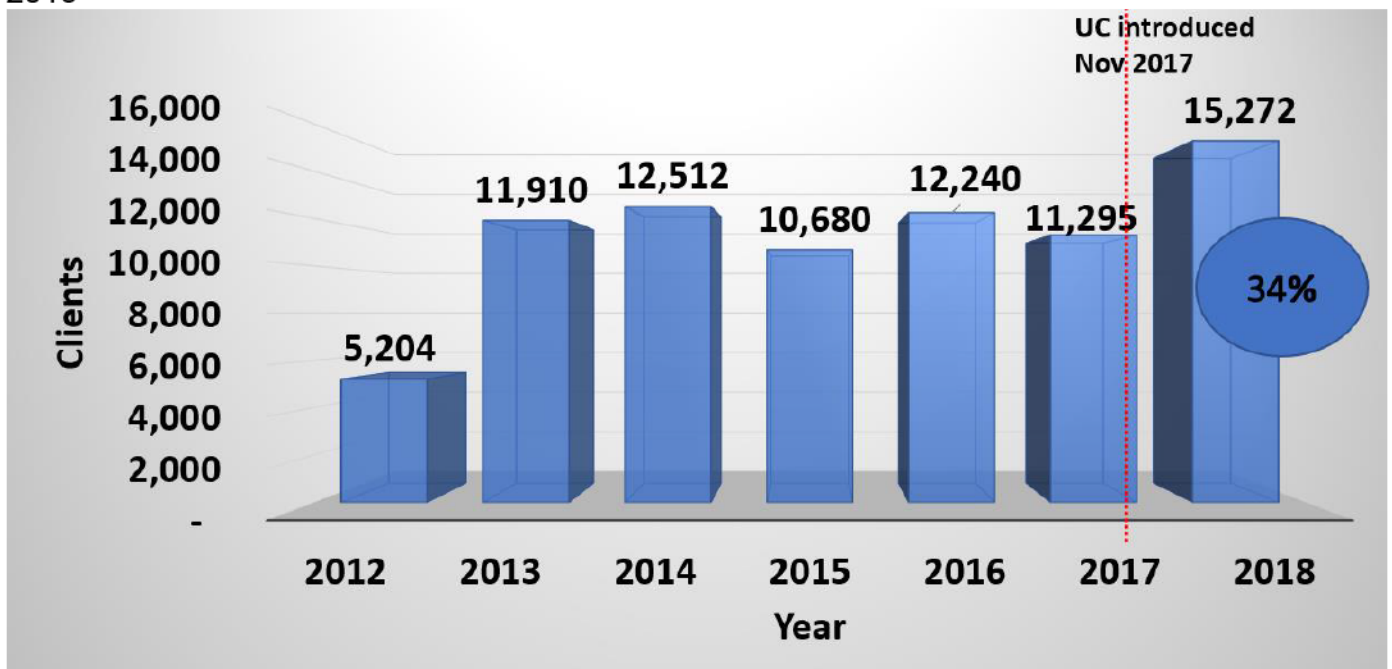
The effect of poor housing, fuel poverty and overcrowding on children is important, e.g. their attainment at school can suffer from lack of study space, poor sleep and concentration caused by overcrowding, respiratory illnesses and poor nutrition (due to inadequate thermal insulation of houses and inadequate food preparation and cooking facilities) to name but a few.

In Wirral in 2017, an estimated 13.1% (19,037) of households were classed as being in fuel poverty. This is slightly less than the Liverpool City Region average of 14.3% however it is higher than the England average of 11.1%. The highest fuel poverty LSOA in Wirral is Birkenhead West with 27.5% of households who are fuel poor. A fuel poor household is defined as one which needs to spend more than 10% of its income on all fuel use and to heat its home to an adequate standard of warmth).

Food banks

There are several organisations largest operator of foodbanks in Wirral is the Trussell Trust, but there are other foodbanks operated by various churches and charitable organisations. Information on total number of foodbanks, the number of people using them, the reasons for using them and total number of food parcels issued is not collected or collated by any official body. Below is information supplied by Wirral Foodbank (part of the Trussell Trust) on the number of people using their foodbanks in Wirral between 2012 and 2018.

Figure 11: Number of clients supplied with food parcels by Wirral Foodbank between 2012 and 2018



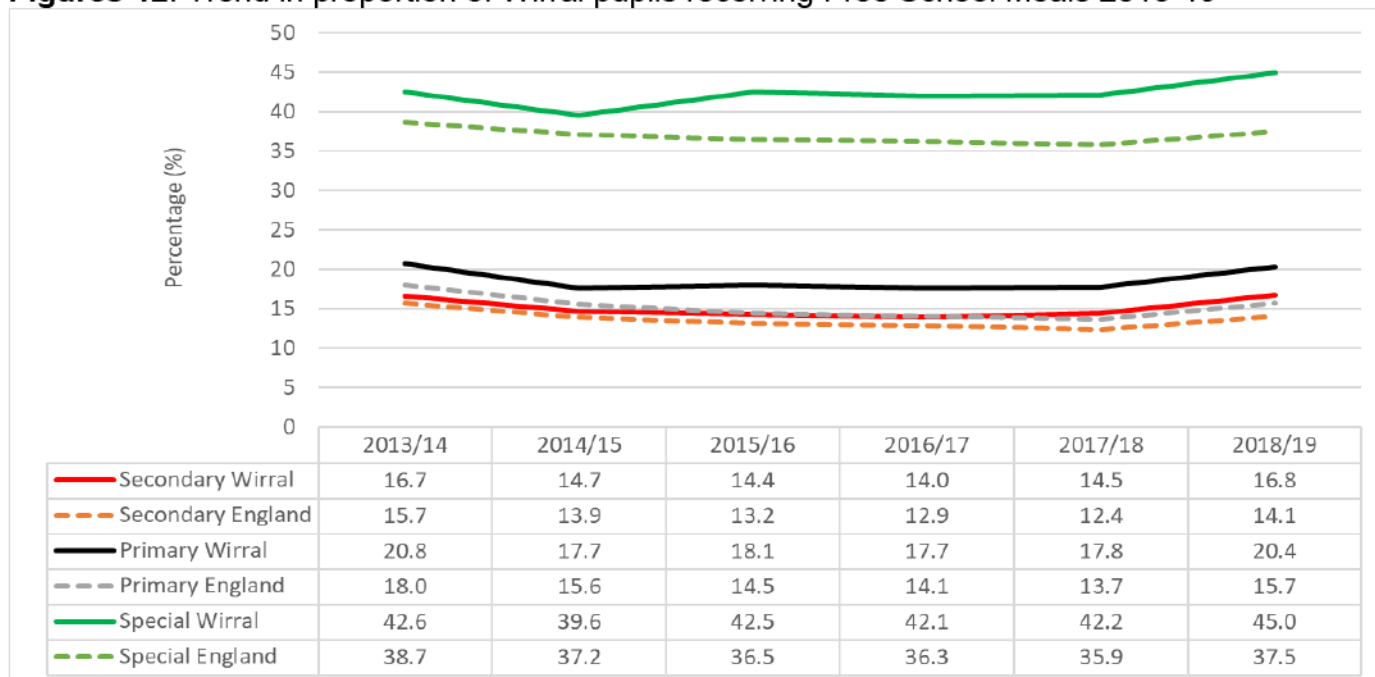
Source: Wirral Foodbank, 2019

As the information in **figure 11** on Wirral foodbanks run by the Trussell Trust shows, in 2018, food parcels were provided to feed a total of 15,272 people (30% or 4,731 were for children). Benefit delays were the most common reason for visiting one of The Trussell Trusts Wirral foodbanks. This is in line with national information which also indicates the most common reason for using foodbanks is benefit delays (the introduction of Universal Credit is shown on the chart as it is associated with increased use of foodbanks due to the average delay in receiving the new payment of around 7 weeks). Figures for the whole of 2019 are not yet available, but figures for January to October show an increase of 14% on the same period in 2018.

Free school meals (FSM)

Around one in five primary school pupils in Wirral receive FSM (20.4%) as highlighted in **figure 12** below, and this compares to around one in six at secondary schools in Wirral (16.8%). The highest rate of pupils receiving FSM are in those attending special schools, where almost half (45.0%) received free school meals in 2018/19, a figure that was considerably higher than the equivalent figure for England (which was 37.5%). In fact, in all categories of school, there was a higher proportion of pupils eligible for FSMs compared to England overall. The charts below show the trend in the proportion of primary (left) and secondary school pupils who received FSMs between 2013 and 2019.

Figures 12: Trend in proportion of Wirral pupils receiving Free School Meals 2013-19



Source: LG Inform, 2019

In actual numbers, there were just under 10,000 children (as of October 2019), who were eligible for free school meals in Wirral.

Vulnerable Groups

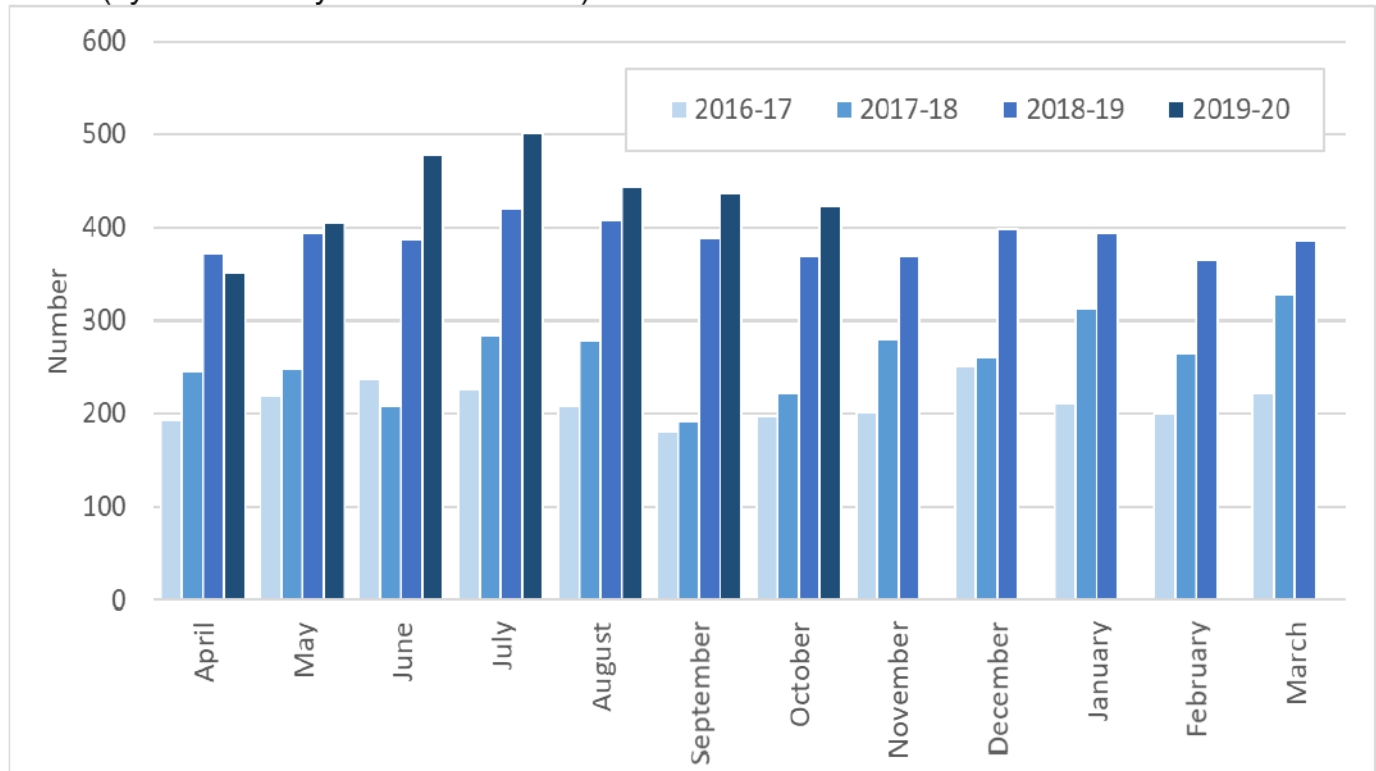
Domestic Abuse

Each year in the UK, 130,000 children are estimated to live in homes where high-risk domestic abuse is prevalent [4]. Domestic abuse, parental substance misuse and poor mental health have been identified as the three most important factors affecting parenting capacity; they were also recurring themes in a 2013 systematic analysis of neglect and serious case reviews (SCRs) in England (2003-11) [5].

Further evidence suggests that the impact on children extends beyond the immediate abuse and into adulthood [6]. Evidence shows an association between Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and problems in adulthood, specifically; substance misuse; poor mental health; involvement in violence; early unplanned pregnancy; incarceration; unemployment in adulthood; vulnerability to CSE and a greater risk of exposing any children they may have in the future to ACEs can all be linked back to past experience of domestic abuse as a child [5].

The number of domestic abuse cases in Wirral which were reported to Merseyside Police (by month and year) are shown in **figure 13** below. This will not be all cases, as many cases will not be reported to the police, but it does give an indication of trend over time.

Figure 13: Number of cases of Domestic Abuse reported to Merseyside Police taking place in Wirral (by month and year of occurrence)



Source: Merseyside Police, 2019

As the chart above shows, the number of incidents of reported domestic abuse appears to be growing over time in Wirral, with each of the financial years shown displaying an increase on the previous year, from 2,550 in 2016/17 to 4,659 in 2018/19. Reasons for this are unclear but may indicate an increased willingness to report issues and greater awareness and recognition of domestic abuse. For more information, please see the [Domestic Abuse section of the Wirral JSNA](#).

Young carers

According to the 2011 Census, 748 young people aged 0-15 identified themselves as an unpaid carer, as did a further 2,092 young carers/young adult carers aged between 16-24. Of these, 350 reported that they were delivering 50 or more hours of unpaid care per week. There was an increase between the 2001 and 2011 Census of 2% in the number of young carers. See [Young Carers](#) section for more details and information.

Children at risk of CSE (Child Sexual Exploitation)

There is a specific page in our Wirral JSNA for CSE. Please [check this section](#) for more information on this topic though more updates are anticipated.

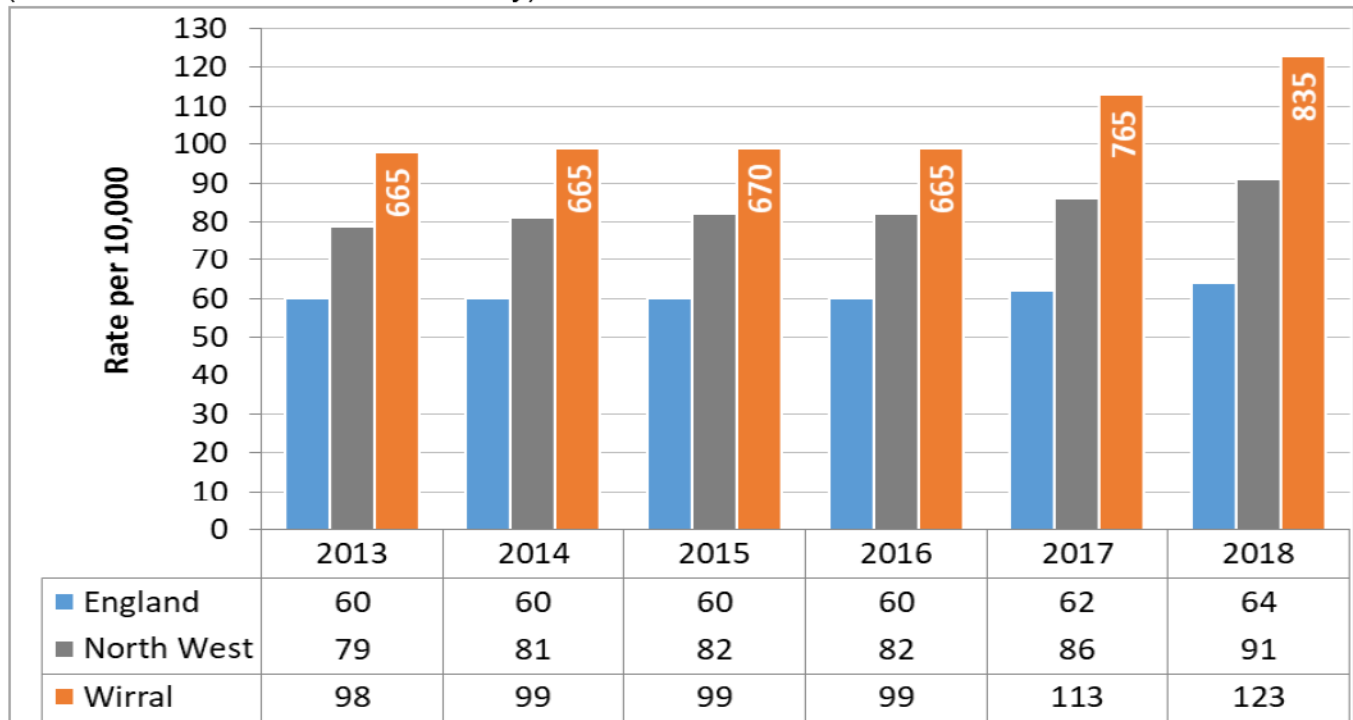
Looked After Children

Published comparative data for 2018, suggests there were 835 Looked After Children (LAC) in Wirral. This was a rate of 123 per 10,000, which is much higher than in England overall where the rate is 64 per 10,000.

This overall rate hides huge inequalities in rates of LAC however, with more deprived wards such as Bidston & St, James ward, experiencing rates of 351 per 10,000, compared to a rate of 4.4 per 10,000 in Heswall ward (for 2018 data).

Figure 14 below shows the trend in LAC in England, the North West and Wirral between 2013 and 2018. It shows that whilst there were increases in the rate in England (+6%) and the North West (+15%) between 2013 and 2018, the rate of increase was much steeper in Wirral (+25%).

Figure 14: Trend in rate of Looked After Children in England, North West and Wirral, 2013-2018 (actual number shown for Wirral only)



Source: [Public Health England Fingertips Tool, 2019](#)

Local data up to October 2019 sees the overall number of Wirral children looked after fall to 822 from 835 and the rate per 10,000 population reduce from 123.0 to 121.6. For more information then please go to [This is Wirral: Children and Young People section](#) on the [Wirral Intelligence Service website](#).

Bereaved children

Most young people will have been bereaved of someone close to them (a parent, sibling, grandparent, friend, and teacher) by the time they are 16. Many will cope well with their loss, but almost all will need some kind of support. The Child Bereavement Network report research which highlights the views of children and young people themselves, who reported that the following things can help:

- Having the death acknowledged
- Being given age-appropriate information about what has happened and what is going to happen
- Having the chance to express their feelings and thoughts about the death
- Being helped to remember
- Taking part in opportunities to say goodbye and commemorate the person who has died
- Knowing they are not to blame for what has happened
- Meeting other children and young people who have been bereaved.

[The Child Bereavement Network estimates](#) that each year in Wirral, around 140 parents are likely to die leaving around 240 children aged 0-17 [3]. They also estimate that the current school-aged population of children and young people aged 5-16 who have been bereaved of a parent or sibling at some point in their childhood is around 1,450.

Further information

Public England produce a range of publicly available data (Fingertips profiles include vulnerable children, injuries, obesity, vaccinations and immunisations, complex needs and mental health for example, there are many more), information, reports, tools and resources on child and maternal health in [one easily accessible hub](#). It helps users find and use the information and evidence they need to improve decision making as part of the planning or commissioning process. The data is regularly updated as new releases become available.

This is Wirral is a collected set of evidence about Wirral. It includes information about the Wirral population including their current and future health and wellbeing needs and the borough including information about the economy, housing, environment and transport.

<https://www.wirralintelligenceservice.org/this-is-wirral/>

References

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[3] Child Bereavement Trust Atlas. Available at:

<http://www.childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk/research/local-statistics.aspx>

[4] Domestic Abuse chapter of the Wirral JSNA. Available at:

http://info.wirral.nhs.uk/document_uploads/JSNA%202016/Wirral%20Domestic%20Abuse%20Needs%20Assessment%20-%20Final%20Draft%2020%2011%202015.pdf

[5] Brandon, M., Bailey, S., Belderson, P. and Larsson, B. (2013). *Neglect and Serious Case Reviews* [online]. London: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. Available at: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/research-reports/neglect-serious-case-reviews-report.pdf>

[6] Bellis, M. A., Lowey, H., Leckenby, N., Hughes, K. and Harrison, D. (2014). Adverse childhood experiences: retrospective study to determine their impact on adult health behaviours and outcomes in a UK population. *Journal of Public Health*, Vol. 36, No. 1, pp. 81-91. Available at: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23587573>

[7] Public Health Outcomes Framework

[8] Local Insight: available at: <http://wirral.communityinsight.org/>

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