

State of the Borough: Summary

Public Health Intelligence
Team

October 2024

State of the Borough: Summary

For further information please contact:

Public Health Intelligence Team at phintelligence@wirral.gov.uk

Contents

Introduction	3
Life Expectancy (LEx) (2020-22)	3
Population and Demographics	3
Create opportunities to get the best health outcomes from the economy and regeneration programmes	4
Strengthen health and care action to address differences in health outcomes	4
Ensure the best start in life for all children and young people	5
Create safe and healthy places for people to live that protect health and promote a good standard of living	5
Create a culture of health and wellbeing, listening to residents and working together	6
Protecting the health of people of Wirral from COVID-19, other infectious diseases and environmental hazards	6

Introduction

The State of the Borough paints a picture of Wirral using a range of statistics. Data is organised into themes, which can be explored via the [Wirral JSNA website](#) in an interactive way. The headings used in this report reflect the priorities of Wirral's Health and Wellbeing Board.

Life Expectancy (LEx) (2020-22)

- LEx for Wirral males in is 77.0 years (England males is 78.9 years)
- LEx for Wirral females in is 81.5 years (England females is 82.8 years)
- LEx for males decreased by -0.3 years compared to the previous year
- LEx for females stayed the same compared to the previous year
- Between 1995-97 and 2020-22, LEx at birth has increased by 3.9 years for males in Wirral, compared to 4.3 years for males in England. Therefore, although LEx has been increasing locally, it has been increasing in England at a greater rate, meaning that the LEx gap between men in England and Wirral has widened
- In the latest year (2020-22), the gap in LEx between males in Wirral and England is the widest it has ever been (1.9 years)
- Between 1995-97 and 2020-22, LEx at birth has increased by 2.5 years for females in Wirral, compared to 3.1 years for females in England. Therefore, although LEx has been increasing locally, it has been increasing in England at a greater rate, meaning that the LEx gap between women in England and Wirral has widened
- The gap in LEx between females in Wirral and England reduced in the latest year, however, (now 1.3 years, compared to a high of 1.6 years in 2018-20)
- LEx varies by Ward, with males in Birkenhead and Tranmere estimated to live 70.0 years whereas males in West Kirby and Thurstaston live 83.4 years (a gap of 13.4 years)
- LEx also varies by Ward for females, with those in Rock Ferry estimated to live 76.9 years, whereas females in Greasby, Frankby and Irby live 87.4 years (a gap of 10.5 years)
- The gap in LEx between the most deprived (top 10%) and least deprived (bottom 10%) deciles has increased from 11.0 years in 2013-15 to 11.2 years in 2020-22 (+0.2 years) for males in Wirral
- The gap in LEx between the most deprived (top 10%) and least deprived (bottom 10%) deciles has increased from 9.8 years in 2013-15 to 10.4 years in 2020-22 (+0.6 years) for females in Wirral

Population and Demographics

- The population of Wirral was 322,453 in 2022 (most recently available data)
- In terms of the age of the population of Wirral, 16.9% are aged under 15, 60.8% are aged 15-64 (working age) and 22.3% are aged over 65. This is an older population than the England average
- The population is forecast to increase by 4.1% to 336,300 by 2043. Older age groups will see the biggest increase, with the number of residents aged 65 plus expected to increase by 33.2% per cent. It is predicted that there will be more than 93,000 local people over 65 by 2043

- According to the 2021 Census, 7.6% of residents were from ethnic minority backgrounds, far lower than the 26.5% England average. Polish was the most frequently spoken non-English language according to the 2021 Census (0.3%)

Create opportunities to get the best health outcomes from the economy and regeneration programmes

- The largest business sectors in Wirral (in terms of the number of businesses) are those in the professional, scientific and technical (1,335), construction (1,245) and retail (895) sectors
- The sectors with the highest number of employees are health (24,00), education (10,600) and retail (9,950)
- Recent figures show that new businesses increased slightly from 1,380 in 2020 to 1,460 in 2021, whilst the number of businesses that ceased also rose slightly from 1,100 in 2020 to 1,295 in 2021
- The [Gross Value Added \(GVA\)](#) per head (i.e. the measure of the value of goods and services produced per by the population) in the borough over the last ten years (2012-2022) has increased from £13,254 to £18,858, but remains lower than both the North West (£29,232) and England (£33,976)
- The local employment rate in Wirral is 73.7% as of March 2024. This is a reduction from 75.4% in March of 2023.
- Of those currently in employment, 64% are working full time (30+ hours a week), with 36% working part time (less than 30 hours a week)
- Modelled unemployment figures for March 2024 show that the proportion of people unemployed is 4.3% of the working age population. Claimant counts of residents of working age have slowly decreased since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, with rates as of March 2024 roughly reflecting the modelled unemployment figure at 3.6%. This compares to a high of 6.8% in May 2020
- Claimant counts vary significantly by constituency. In Birkenhead constituency, the proportion of residents of working age claiming out-of-work benefits is 6.0% compared to 2.1% in both Wirral South and Wirral West (this does not include those out of work for health reasons)

Strengthen health and care action to address differences in health outcomes

- GP data shows that cancer is more prevalent in Wirral (4.6%) than in the North West (3.8%) and England (3.6%)
- GP data shows that COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disorder) is more prevalent in Wirral (2.6%) than in the North West (2.3%) and England (1.9%)
- GP data shows that CHD (Coronary Heart Disease) is more prevalent in Wirral (3.8%) than in the North West (3.4%) and England (3.0%)
- Data from the Active Lives Adult Survey show that, in 2022/23, 76.3% of adults in Wirral were overweight or obese – an increase from 59.4% in 2015/16 – and significantly higher than the England figure of 64.0%

- Wirral has a higher rate of premature death (deaths under 75 years of age from all causes) (432.2 directly standardised rate per 100,000) than the North West (424.1 directly standardised rate per 100,000) and England (355.3 directly standardised rate per 100,000)
- Wirral has a higher rate of premature death (deaths under 75 years of age) related to cancer (143.8 directly standardised rate per 100,000) than the North West (136.5 directly standardised rate per 100,000) and England (123.2 directly standardised rate per 100,000)
- Wirral has a higher rate of premature death (deaths under 75 years of age) related to all circulatory diseases (83.8 directly standardised rate per 100,000) than England (76.0 directly standardised rate per 100,000) but lower than the North West (93.4 directly standardised rate per 100,000)

Ensure the best start in life for all children and young people

- Infant mortality rates increased for the latest time period (2020-22) to the same level of the North West, and higher than England. In the previous 3 years, infant mortality rates were lower than both of these areas.
- Similarly, the proportion of low-birthweight babies has also shown a decrease, with 6.4% of babies born in Wirral of a low-birthweight, compared with 7.0% in the North West and 6.8% in England in 2021
- The National Childhood Measurement Programme (NCMP) data in 2021/22 show that 22.7% of Reception aged children (4 to 5 years) were overweight or obese, followed by 37.6% of children in Year 6. These are lower than the North West and England average
- Educational attainment (using average Attainment 8 scores at GCSE level) in Wirral shows that, in 2023, children eligible for free school meals (FSM) perform worse (32.4) than those not eligible (50.0), although the gap has narrowed in recent years
- The same pattern is also apparent for children with Special Education Needs (SEN), with non-SEN pupils (49.4) outperforming pupils with SEN support (34.8) in Wirral on average Attainment 8 scores in 2023
- In 2021/22 both measures of child poverty (absolute and relative low income) have shown an increase in Wirral compared to the previous year. There are large inequalities in child poverty by ward, however, with almost 1 in 4 (24.6%) children in Birkenhead and Tranmere living in absolute low income in 2021/22, compared to only 1 in 25 children (3.9%) in Clatterbridge
- The Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI, 2019) showed that 36.0% of children live in the 20% most deprived areas in England, primarily on the East side of the borough in Birkenhead and Wallasey constituency.

Create safe and healthy places for people to live that protect health and promote a good standard of living

- Almost 1 in 7 households in Wirral (15.2%) were estimated to live in fuel poverty in 2022, with large inequalities between wards - over 1 in 4 households in Seacombe ward (26.0%) compared to 1 in 12 in Greasby, Frankby and Irby ward (8.7%)
- The 2021 Census showed that 15.7% of people aged 65+ lived alone

- Data from the 2021 Census also showed that over a third of all households were owned outright (35.8%) followed by just under a third owned via a mortgage or loan (29.2%), whilst just under a fifth were privately rented (18.9%)
- The housing affordability ratio (how much greater house prices are compared to wages) has decreased in recent years and now stands at 5.80 for Wirral in 2023. This is lower than the England housing affordability ratio of 8.18 (meaning that housing is more affordable in Wirral compared to England)
- The average net income of households in Wirral was £30,337 in 2018, compared to £34,875 in England
- The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD, 2019) shows that 114,900 of the Wirral population (35.6% - or more than 1 in 3 people) lived in the 20% most deprived areas in England

Create a culture of health and wellbeing, listening to residents and working together

This priority has not been included within the State of the Borough as of yet. Wirral's Health and Wellbeing Insight Group are establishing an ongoing programme of community insight with local people linked to the strategy priorities, to measure impact, and influence ongoing action and strategy delivery which will then feed into the State of the Borough at a later date.

Protecting the health of people of Wirral from COVID-19, other infectious diseases and environmental hazards

- Immunisation coverage for children aged between 2 and 5 years old was higher than the North West and England average for all vaccinations: DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis), IPV (inactivated polio vaccine), Hib (haemophilus influenza B) - otherwise known as [the 6-in-1 vaccine](#), Meningitis C, Hib booster, PCV ([pneumococcal vaccine](#)) and MMR ([measles, mumps and rubella](#)) at 2 and 5 years old. The only exception to this is Flu, where Wirral has a higher coverage than the North West, but lower coverage than England. There has, in recent years, been a trend of decreasing uptake both locally and nationally
- First and second doses of HPV ([human papillomavirus](#)) vaccinations in females aged 12 to 13, and 13 to 14, were significantly affected during the COVID-19 pandemic, but are now beginning to recover to pre-pandemic levels. Most recent Wirral data, shows that first dose uptake is increasing (76.0% in 2022/23 compared to 68.7% in 2021/22), but second dose uptake is decreasing (64.6% in 2022/23 to 68.9% in 2021/22).

For further details please contact:

Public Health Intelligence Team at phintelligence@wirral.gov.uk