



Research Methodology

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User Guide 5

SANDWELL TRENDS: Publications and Topic Pages

Sandwell Trends Local Intelligence System (LIS) is the first port of call for data, intelligence and analysis about the people and places in Sandwell.

The system is web-based, which hopefully means that most users will be familiar with how to navigate the site – however this series of user guides has been produced to help answer the more complex questions a user may have. The fifth in the series aims to provide the user with more detailed information on how to access the “intelligence” available on the system.

Getting Started

Sandwell Trends can be accessed from www.sandwelltrends.info, via Sandwell Council’s intranet homepage, or via the Research Sandwell website (www.researchsandwell.org.uk). The Sandwell trends home page offers the user the chance to log in to the system – for the majority of users, this is unnecessary, as all pages on the system can be viewed by any level of user. However, there are two main cases when logging in would be beneficial:

- if the user wants to be able to save queries (which could then be emailed to other interested parties)
- or if the user wants to create or contribute to “Topic Pages.”

If you think you would need a log in, then contact [Research Sandwell](#) who will provide you with the appropriate access level (this is currently restricted to Sandwell Council users).

Technical Bit

Just as a reminder, to use the system you’ll need to have JavaScript enabled and have the latest version of Adobe Flash installed to use the maps, charts or Benchmarking tools. [User Guide 1](#) gives more details.

So what’s first?

As described in [User Guide 1](#), the *Sandwell Trends publications* and *topic pages* form the “intelligence” element of Sandwell Trends.



The *Sandwell Trends publications* menu on the home page gives the user access to the wide range of reports that are produced by Research Sandwell. Simply click on the links on this menu, or use the *Publications* quick link at the top of the screen, to follow links to the following types of intelligence:

1. **Briefing Notes.** This is where data has been analysed to highlight issues of interest. Examples include *The Affordability of Housing*, *Indices of Deprivation 2007*, and *Perceptions of ASB*.
2. **Methodology.** This technical advice helps to explain what users may be seeing in the data they extract from the system, confidence they can have in data, and the background to the geographical areas used, for example.
3. **Fact Sheets.** The fact sheets produced by Research Sandwell summarise data in a concise format. Topics include *Participation in Higher Education* and *Disability and Impairment*.
4. **Summary Sheets.** These summarise documents produced by other organisations. Topics covered will be of interest to Sandwell officers.

When you click on one of the links above, you'll be taken to the appropriate page for that report type. From here, just click on the report title to open a pdf version of that report. You can also jump to other report types by clicking on the *Briefing*, *Facts*, *Methodology* or *Summary* buttons at the top left of the screen.

The other way to access intelligence from the home page is through the *Topic Pages* menu. Pages currently on the system include *Anti-Poverty*, *Unemployment*, *Customer Profiling* and *Sandwell in Brief* topic pages – simply click on the home page links to access each of these. Topic pages not shown on the homepage can be accessed via the *Search topic pages* box, or by clicking *Topic Pages* on the quick links at the top of the screen and selecting *All topic pages*. There are also two topic pages that provide more detailed facts and figures about Sandwell:

1. The *Sandwell in Brief* topic page provides detailed figures about the Borough, and can be accessed via the topic pages links, or from the *Sandwell in Brief* information box on the homepage – just click on *read more facts and figures*.
2. *Ward Profiles* provide key facts on the 24 Sandwell wards, and can be accessed by clicking on the ward map at the bottom left of the home page.

The aim of all of the topic pages is to provide a snapshot of current topics of interest. By accessing a topic page, the user can:

- Read some background commentary on the issue in question.
- Be signposted to data sources. This could be links to reports on the system, or to external websites where further information may be available.
- View charts or maps that may be of interest. These can be printed or exported as described in [User Guide 2](#).
- View data tables (an example can be found on the *Sandwell in Brief* topic page). These can be exported by right clicking on the table, and selecting *Export*. Then select *Export full screen* to save an image of the table to use in a report.



- Take part in discussion forums (users need to be logged in to post their views on an issue).
- Access other topic pages which may provide more detail on a particular aspect, or intelligence for another area of the Borough, for example.

When you access a topic page, maps and charts on the page draw on queries from the system (to ensure that the latest available data is displayed). This means that some topic pages may take a while to fully display – depending on the connection speed and browser type.

That wasn't what I wanted!

Accessed the wrong report or topic page? Simply return to the home page by clicking on the back button on your browser, or use the quick navigation links at the top of the screen.

How do I find out further information?

Further User Guides are available from the homepage of Sandwell Trends. These include:

- [Sandwell Trends – overview](#)
- [Interactive Tools - charts, maps and tables](#)
- [How do I find 2001 Census data?](#)
- [How do I use the Benchmarking tools?](#)
- [Getting the most from Maps](#)

Christine Wright, Principal Research Officer
Research Sandwell
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