

Birthweight

Low birth weight (under 2,500 grams) is associated with an increased risk of infant mortality, developmental problems in childhood and poorer health in later life. A large proportion of babies will be born under 2,500 grams because they are preterm births (born before 37 weeks of pregnancy). Whether they are born prematurely or at full term, the risk of low birth weight is related to:

- smoking while pregnant
- substance and alcohol misuse
- pregnancy health and nutrition
- pregnancy-related complications
- a mother's young age

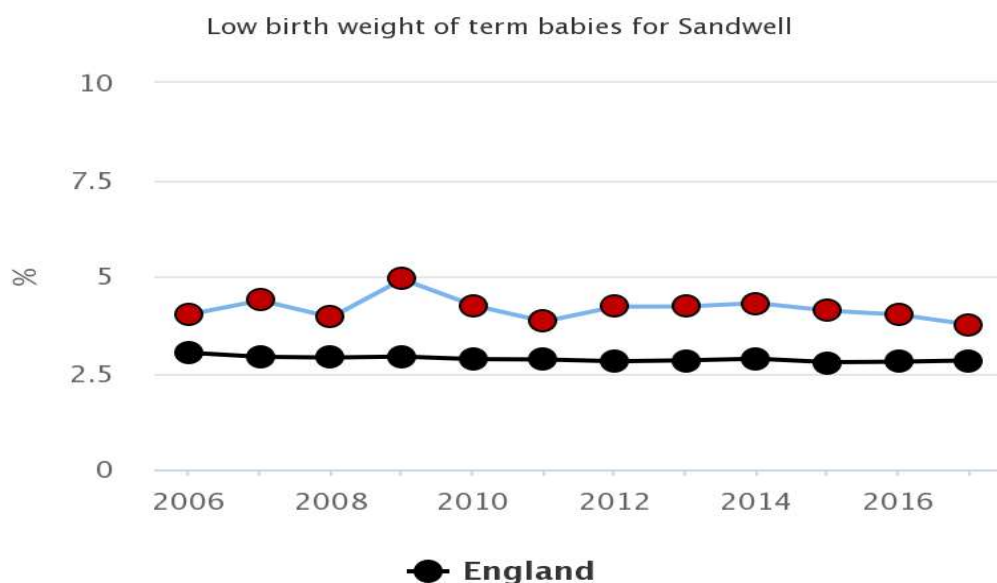
At a population level, a high proportion of low birth weight babies is primarily related to poorer antenatal maternal health.

Low Birth Weight – full term

Live births with a recorded birth weight under 2500g and a gestational age of at least 37 complete weeks as a percentage of all live births with recorded birth weight and a gestational age of at least 37 complete weeks.

- No significant change in the trend for the past 5 years
- Still significantly higher than England
- Similar rates to the West Midlands
- 2017 Sandwell 3.74%; England 2.82%; West Midlands 3.10%

Figure 1.12:



Source: Public Health England Profiles

Low Birth Weight – all babies

All births (live and still births) with a recorded birth weight under 2500g as a percentage of all live births with stated birth weight.

- No significant change in the trend for the past 5 years
- Still significantly higher than England and West Midlands
- 2017 Sandwell 8.7%; England 7.4%; West Midlands 8.4%

Very low birth weight of all babies

- No significant change in the trend for the past 5 years
- Still significantly higher than England
- 2017 Sandwell 1.4%; England 1.14%; West Midlands 1.49%