



Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
October 2023





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National Context

Our society and our daily lives are changing at a rapid pace with increasing use of technology and digital innovation. At the same time the UK population is undergoing a massive shift and in the next 20 years one in four of us will be aged 65+. This transformation of the age structure is a testament to improvements in Public Health and Health Care and reflects better technologies and quality of care. People are living longer but not necessarily experiencing increased quality of life. Social isolation and loneliness are one of the greatest public health challenges and have associated issues of poor health and wellbeing. Growing demands, nationally and locally, mean that we need to respond differently to people's needs and take a more preventative approach.

Over the last decade life expectancy which has been steadily increasing since the 1840s has stalled and in 2020, the impacts of the Covid-19 Pandemic saw the largest drop in life expectancy, setting the national figures back ten years to 78.7 years for men and 82.7 years for women.

Nationally, the [population is growing](#) and by 2032 the population in England is predicted to grow to just over 61 million. We are also seeing a more diverse population and by 2031, ethnic populations will make up 15 per cent of the population in England. There is a trend towards more people living alone, and by 2032 11.3 million people are expected to be living on their own, more than 40 percent of all households. The number of people over 85 living on their own is expected to grow to 1.4 million. Within this picture of population growth, health inequalities persist so that men and women in the highest socio-economic class can, on average, expect to live just over seven years longer than those in the lowest socio-economic class, and more of those years will be disability free.

Sandwell Profile

Sandwell is a metropolitan borough which was formed in 1974 and is one of seven local authorities that make up the West Midlands and is also within the West Midlands Combined Authority, the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the Midlands Engine Strategy. Sandwell comprises six towns - Oldbury, Rowley Regis, Smethwick, Tipton, Wednesbury and West Bromwich. The borough is at the centre of the motorway network, has rail services and the Midland Metro including direct links to London and the cities of Birmingham and Wolverhampton with their own rail and coach links (including the future High Speed Two (HS2) railway)) and Birmingham Airport (over 130 direct scheduled destinations, over 250 further connections). West Bromwich town centre has seen some major redevelopment in recent years including education, office and retail developments. The new Midland Metropolitan Hospital is presently under construction. The borough hosts a wide variety of leisure activities including leisure centres, greenspace, a cinema, a theatre, museums, an art gallery and historic buildings and a wide variety of clubs, societies, bars and restaurants and is home to West Bromwich Albion football team.

Population growth: The growing and slowing areas.

In 2021 Sandwell had an estimated population of 341,835 residents (2021 Census). The population in Sandwell had been falling for several years, to a low of 284,594 in 2001, but has since increased. The population increased by 11.0%, 33,772 persons, between the 2011 and 2021 Censuses. The National Office for Statistics', 2018 Based Subnational Population Projections indicate that Sandwell's population will continue to rise to reach 363,954 by 2040. Although, these figures are to be rebased (early 2025), using the 2021 Census figures and are likely to change.

Since 2011, [Sandwell's population](#) has increased by 11.0%. However, there has been a large variation by town and ward, with almost all wards seeing an increase in population.

Towns

- Of the six towns, Smethwick saw the largest population growth, increasing by 16%. The smallest increase was in Rowley Regis Town at 7.0%.
- West Bromwich is Sandwell's largest town in terms of the number of residents (with a total population of 83,634 in 2021) and makes up 24.5% of Sandwell's total population. The smallest town is Wednesbury (population of 41,335, 12.1% of the borough's total).

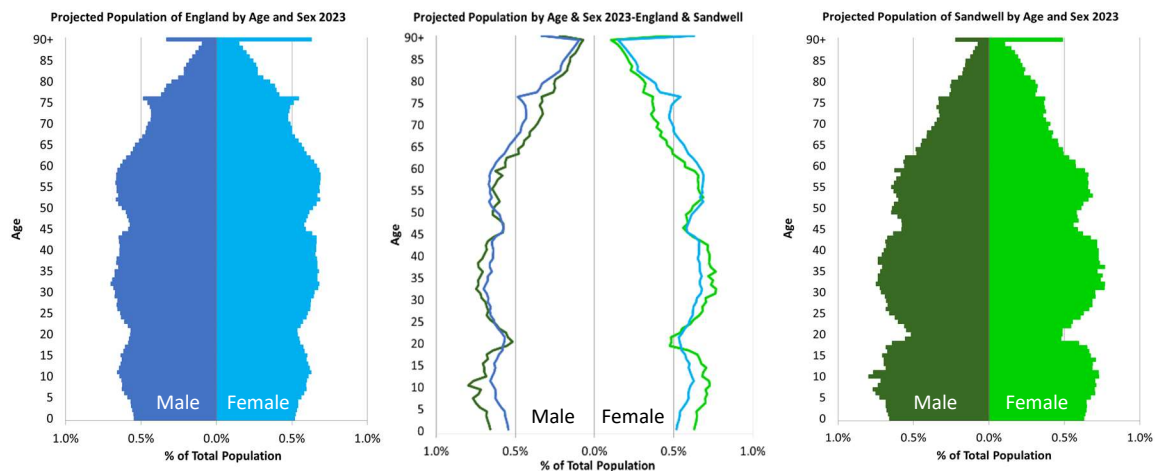
Wards

- Blackheath is the only ward to experience population decline (-1.9%).
- Friar Park and Bristnall only saw relatively small increases (1.3% and 3.0% respectively).
- Soho & Victoria, Greetings Green & Lyng, Wednesbury South and Tipton Green have increased by over 20% in terms of the number of residents - in Soho & Victoria this increase represents 4,590 more people (+30.5%).

England and Sandwell in 2023 and 10 years later (2033)

Sandwell has a similar population shape to the national picture, but the main difference is Sandwell has a higher proportion of 0-15 year olds, 25-40 year olds and less over 60s.

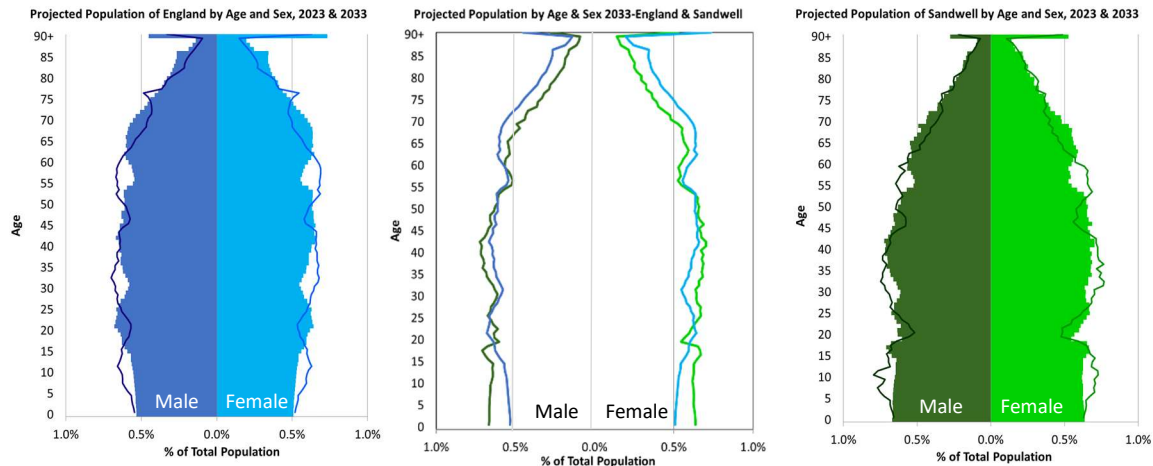
This may suggest Sandwell has more families, the balance of children to adult age groups is similar, whereby England overall increases steadily to 55yrs and then declines. The much smaller over 60s population could reflect moving out of Sandwell, but also we know that life expectancy in Sandwell is lower than the national average, 76.1 for men and 80.7 for women, compared to 84.7 and 83.1 nationally.



Source: ONS Sub-National Population Projections (2018 based)

Population pyramids showing relative population distribution by age and sex. In each chart the male figures are on the left, darker colour, and the female on the right, lighter colour. England: left panel, blue and Sandwell: right panel, green with a comparison in the centre panel.

In ten years from now, population estimates expect the number of children nationally and in Sandwell to decrease. The population pyramid for Sandwell still has more children and adults between 20 and 45 years of age, but the structure will balance out. Again, the over 60 years population will be lower than the national average, but the expectation would be more population in Sandwell's over 65 age group.



Source: ONS Sub-National Population Projections (2018 based)

Population pyramids showing relative population distribution by age and sex. In each chart the male figures are on the left, darker colour, and the female on the right, lighter colour. England: left panel, blue and Sandwell: right panel, green with a comparison in the centre panel. In the charts for England and Sandwell solid pyramids are 2033 population projections and lines are 2023 projections. The comparison 2033 projections (centre panel) compares England (Blue) and Sandwell (Green) with Males on the left and Females on the right

Population dynamics: Mapping the Old and the Young

Children

There will be significant impacts from these changes for people aged under 20 and more detail available in the JSNA chapter on [Healthy Start](#), the health inequalities indicators for the Best Start in Life and the proportion of early years outcomes linked to the qualifications section

The proportion of children who are under 5 in Sandwell is 6.48% and 5-15yrs is 15.69%.

Towns

- Smethwick town saw the largest increases in younger age groups, with a rise of 5.7% in under 20s, and 10% in those aged 20-64. Rowley Regis also saw one of the smallest increases, 1.4% in the under 20 years group.

Based on proportion of the population:

- Smethwick town is by far the youngest of the six towns, with the highest proportion of under 16s, 16-24s and 25-49s, and the lowest proportion of those aged 50-64, 65-74 and 75 & over, of all the towns. This equates 25.1% or 16,037 children 15 and under. Tipton has the second highest proportion at 22.9% or 10,099 children under 15.

Based on the size of the population:

- Although the population proportion is lower for children under 15, West Bromwich as a larger town has 17,406 children and Rowley Regis has 11205 children under 15 but only 20.8% and 20.9% of their population respectively.

Wards

- St. Pauls and Soho & Victoria both have a high proportion of under 16s and 16-24s compared to the Sandwell average. Both wards are also among the lowest in terms of the proportions in the older age groups. These wards have seen a large increase in the younger age groups, with a 10%

increase in the proportion aged under 20, and a 20% increase in the number aged 20-64 (the largest increase of all Sandwell wards for both of these age groups).

- Greets Green & Lyng ward has also seen a large increase in the younger age groups, with a 9% increase in the proportion aged under 20, and a 15.9% increase in the number aged 20-64 (the second largest increase of all Sandwell wards for both of these age groups).
- Charlemont with Grove Vale has a smaller proportion of under 16s than average (18.0% compared with 22% for the borough). This is the lowest proportion of all Sandwell wards.
- Blackheath ward has seen a fall in the proportion of under 20s (-2.3%). The ward has also seen a fall in the proportion aged 20-64 (-1.2%). These are the largest falls of all Sandwell wards.

Working age

The proportion of people of working age is likely to link in closely with economic activity and employment outcomes which are highlighted in the [Place](#) section of JSNA and in the Economy section below.

The proportion of Adults aged 16-64 in Sandwell are 63.3%

Town

Based on proportion of the population:

- Smethwick town has the highest proportion aged 16-64 of all the towns at 64.54% or 41,312 people. Tipton has the second highest proportion at 63.56% or 28,052 people.

Based on the size of the population:

- Although the population proportion is lower for adults, West Bromwich as a larger town has 53,080 adults and Rowley Regis has 33462, 63.5% and 62.3% of their population respectively.

Ward

- Old Warley, Charlemont with Grove Vale and Blackheath all have a low proportion of those aged 25 to 49 (31.4%, 31.6% and 31.6% respectively). In contrast, these wards all have a high proportion of those aged 65-74.
- Blackheath ward has seen a fall in the proportion of under 20s (-2.3%). The ward has also seen a fall in the proportion aged 20-64 (-1.2%). These are the largest falls of all Sandwell wards.
- Abbey ward has the highest proportion of 25-49 year olds in the borough (39.3%). This compares with a Sandwell average of 34.4%.
- One in five Blackheath and Bristnall residents are aged 50-64, compared with a Sandwell average of 17.9%. These are the highest of all Sandwell wards.

Older Age groups

Age is a critical factor for prevalence of disease and the aging population links in with health and healthy life expectancy in the Health Inequalities section and healthy aging profiles.

The proportion of Adults aged 65+ in Sandwell are 15.5%

Towns

- The 65 and over age group saw the smallest increases, ranging from 0.3% in Smethwick town to 1.6% in Tipton town.
- Rowley Regis has the highest proportion of those 65+ at 16.9% and 9082 people. West Bromwich has the second highest proportion at 15.7% but as a larger town had more people at 13,150 people aged 65+.

Wards

- The largest increases in the 65 & over age group have been in Wednesbury South, Rowley and Oldbury wards (+2.5%, 2% and 1.9% respectively).
- As mentioned, St. Pauls and Soho & Victoria have a younger age profile and one of the lowest older age profiles.
- Blackheath has high proportions of the older age groups, with 9.7% aged 65-74 and 9.5% aged 75 & over. These are all higher than the Borough average, and among the highest proportions of all Sandwell wards.
- As mentioned Old Warley, Charlemont with Grove Vale and Blackheath have a higher proportion 65-74 and all have a low proportion of those aged 25 to 49 (31.4%, 31.6% and 31.6% respectively).
- The three wards to the north of West Bromwich town (Newton, Charlemont with Grove Vale and Great Barr with Yew Tree) all have a higher prevalence of those aged 75 and over than average, and are among the top five of all Sandwell wards. Old Warley (at 8.9%) also has a high proportion of this age group.

Deprivation; the most deprived in a deeply deprived local authority

The English Indices of Deprivation 2019 is an official measure of deprivation. The indices proved a measure of relative deprivation for small areas and summaries for local authorities. The Index of multiple deprivation has strong links with Child Poverty, poor Health, poor levels of skills, childhood and adult obesity and lower levels of physical activity all of which have a significant influence on health inequalities.

In 2019 average [deprivation score for Sandwell](#) has declined slightly since 2015, falling one place to become the 12th most deprived local authority out of a total of 317 (where 1 is the most deprived). However, this does not necessarily mean that deprivation in the borough has declined – only that it has declined relative to other areas. Sandwell's neighbour Birmingham is among the 10 most deprived Local Authorities by average score (ranked 7th).

The main measures of deprivation:

- 1) IMD Deprivation: The Proportion of postcode areas (Lower Super Output Areas - LSOAs) which are within the most deprived in England based on 7 domains of deprivation which are combined to create a score.
- 2) Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI): The proportion of children 0-15 living in income deprived homes
- 3) Income Deprivation Affecting Older People index (IDAOI): those aged 60+ with Income deprivation
- 4) Fuel poverty: The proportion of households that cannot meet their energy needs at a reasonable cost

IMD deprivation

IMD in Sandwell is 34.9% compared to the England Average of 21.7%, which means that over one third of the population is the most deprived in England.

- Wednesbury and Tipton have the highest proportions of LSOAs in the top 20% of England for deprivation in Sandwell at 73% and 71% respectively. Oldbury is the lowest at 50%, but over twice that of England.

- Princes End in Tipton is the most relatively deprived ward in Sandwell. The next four most deprived wards are: Greets Green and Lyng, Friar Park and West Bromwich Central.
- Newton ward in West Bromwich is the least relatively deprived ward. With the next four least deprived wards being: Abbey, Great Barr with Yew Tree, Old Warley and Tividale.

Income Deprivation Affecting Children:

IDACI in Sandwell is 26.3 compared to the England Average of 17.1%, which means that over quarter of children in sandwell population are living in income deprived homes.

- Tipton and Wednesbury are the most income deprived affecting children at 31.2% and 27.2%.
- The wards where the highest proportions of children, aged 0 to 15, are living in income deprived families is greatest in Princes End (38.1%), followed by Soho and Victoria (32.2%) and Friar Park (31.5%). The least deprived wards, for this measure, are; Old Warley (17.8%), Newton (17.9%) and Abbey (18.8%). (Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI))

Income Deprivation Affecting Older People:

IDAOP in Sandwell is 26 compared to the England Average of 14.2%, which means that over quarter of older people in sandwell population are living in income deprived homes.

- Smethwick and Tipton were the most deprived towns at 34.7% and 28.2% respectively.
- The wards where the highest proportion of residents aged 60 or over experience income deprivation is greatest in Soho and Victoria (47.7%), followed by St. Pauls (37.0%) and Smethwick (35.7%). The least deprived wards are; Charlemont with Grove Vale (14.4%), Newton (14.8%) and Abbey (18.6%). (The Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index (IDAOP))

Fuel poverty

Fuel in Sandwell is 20.8 compared to the England Average of 13.2%, which means 1 in 5 are living in fuel deprivation.

- Tipton and Wednesbury had the highest proportion of fuel poverty at 37.7% and 23.9% respectively.

Unravelling Household Dynamics

Nationally there is a long-term shift towards single person households. There are 130,246 [households with residents in Sandwell](#), a rise of 7.2% since 2011. The average household size in Sandwell is 2.42, which is slightly above the England & Wales average of 2.4. In terms of household composition, in 2021, 38,042 households in Sandwell are made up of only one person.

In March 2021, Sandwell had 130,246 households (Census 2021). Of the households, 53.7% were in owner-occupation (England 61.3%), 26.6% were Social Rented (England 17.1%) and 18.6% were private rented (England 20.5%). In July 2023 the average house price in Sandwell was £202,810 compared to £308,633 for England (Land Registry, Crown Copyright 2023).

Largest and smallest households

Town

- The town with the largest number of households is West Bromwich with 31,959, followed by Rowley Regis (21,959), Smethwick (21,774) and Oldbury (21,622), which are a similar size. Tipton and Wednesbury have the smallest number of households with 17,080 and 15,867 households.



Ward

- The ward with the largest number of households is Soho & Victoria, with 6,277. The smallest is Bristnall, with 4,765.

Single Person Households

The trend towards single person households and the increasing population is expected to generate housing demand and conversely increased housing development and economic regeneration is expected to push population growth.

Town

- Tipton town has the highest proportion of single person households (non-pensioners) at 18.8%, followed by Oldbury 18.6%. The lowest proportions are in Rowley Regis 16.9% and West Bromwich 17.5%

Ward

- Of all wards, West Bromwich Central (25%), Oldbury (22.5%) and Langley (21.5%) have the greatest proportion of single person households (non-pensioners) while Great Barr with Yew Tree (13.2%) has the lowest proportion.

Lone Pensioner Households

Town

- The towns with the highest proportion of lone pensioner households are Rowley Regis (12.9%), Oldbury (12.1%) and West Bromwich (12.0%). Smethwick (9.1%) has the lowest proportion of lone pensioner households, then Tipton (11.0%), Wednesbury (12.9%).

Ward

- At 15.6%, Blackheath has a high proportion of lone pensioner households - the largest of all Sandwell wards. Newton and Old Warley are also in the top three. St. Pauls has the lowest proportion in the Borough (7.1%).

Lone Parents

- At 12.9%, Princes End ward has the highest proportion of lone parents (with dependent children) of all Sandwell wards, whilst the second highest are Soho & Victoria and Langley (both with 11.7%). Old Warley has the lowest proportion of lone parents (with dependent children) at 7.5%.
- At 6.9%, Newton has the highest proportion of Sandwell wards in terms of lone parents (with non-dependent children only).

Couple and other households

Town

- The proportion of households with couples does not vary greatly across the towns in Sandwell, Ranging from 38.9% in West Bromwich to 42.5% in Wednesbury.

Ward

- Tividale, Rowley and Wednesbury North wards have the largest proportions of couple households of all Sandwell wards (at 45.1%, 45.0% and 44.0% respectively).
- Cradley Heath & Old Hill has the lowest proportion (2.9%) of 'all other households' in Sandwell. This includes households made up of unrelated adults or more than one family.
- Smethwick town has a particularly high proportion of this type of household (18.1%).

Ethnic Background- understanding diversity in a multi-cultural Local authority

As a Local authority which is massively different in ethnic breakdown to the national average, Sandwell has large fluctuation in diversity and large pockets of ethnic groups within town with very little diversity.

The [ethnic makeup of Sandwell](#) has seen extensive changes since 2001. Just over half (52.0%) of Sandwell residents class themselves as being of White British origin compare with England & Wales averages of 74.4% and a further 5.2% are of Other White origin (which includes Irish and Gypsy Travellers). 42.8% of Sandwell's population are from other ethnic backgrounds. These Sandwell figures 7.3% and 18.3% respectively.

Towns

- With the exception of Smethwick, Sandwell towns have seen increases in the proportion of residents in all Minority Ethnic groups, and a contrasting decline in the White British group since 2011.
- Smethwick town has the highest proportion of residents from Minority Ethnic groups in Sandwell (that is, all ethnic groups other than White British). These groups make up 75.6% of the town's population, considerably higher than West Bromwich town which ranks second with 55.8% of its population from Minority Ethnic groups.

Ward

- Three of the four wards in Smethwick town have a high proportion of residents from Minority Ethnic Groups, with Soho & Victoria, St. Pauls and Smethwick wards ranked first, second and fourth for this indicator across all Sandwell wards. In Soho & Victoria 90.2% of residents are from groups other than White British.
- Soho & Victoria ward has the highest ranked proportions of people from the Pakistani, Chinese & Asian Other, Black African and Black Other groups, out of all wards in Sandwell. The largest of these groups is Pakistani residents, who make up 21.1% of the ward's population. Away from Smethwick town, Oldbury ward ranks third for the Pakistani community (13.9%).
- Across Sandwell, St. Pauls ward in Smethwick has the highest proportions of people from Bangladeshi groups (12.6%)
- Greets Green & Lyng has the second highest proportions of Bangladeshi and Arab residents (11% and 1.4% respectively). Wednesbury North ward also has a high proportion of residents from the Bangladeshi community (11%), ranking joint second on this indicator.
- Abbey ward ranks highest of all Sandwell wards in terms of population from Other White groups at 11.2%, whilst West Bromwich Central ward is ranked second (at 8.0% of residents). West Bromwich Central also ranks highest in terms of residents of Indian origin (25.6%)
- In contrast, Princes End has very low proportions of Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Chinese & Other Asian residents, ranking in the bottom three Sandwell wards for all four of these groups.
- At 8.0%, Newton in West Bromwich has the highest proportion of Black Caribbean residents of all Sandwell wards.

The age profile of Black and Minority Ethnic Groups varies across Sandwell:

- Older age groups are largely White, with over two thirds of those aged 50 to 64 and more than 80% of those aged 65 & over being of White origin. In particular, 78.7% of those aged 65 & over are White British. The next largest ethnic group of this age is those of Indian origin (9.0%).
- Over 30% of those aged under 25 are of Asian/Asian British origin. Mixed groups are also more prevalent among younger age groups - 8.6% of under 25s are of mixed/multiple ethnic origin.



- Those from Black groups are more prevalent among 35-49 year olds, with 9.5% of those aged 35-49 being from these groups.

Considering the age profile of the different ethnic groups, there are a few key points of note:

- 21.2% of those of "Other White" origin are aged 25 to 34, and 30.2% are aged 35 to 49, compared with 13.9% and 20.5% for all ethnic groups. This suggests recent migrants to this country are young working age.
- Two thirds of those of Mixed origin are aged under 25 (33.2% for all ethnic groups). 40.3% of those of Black/Black British origin are in this youngest age group.

The Economy: Qualifications to earnings.

Health and wealth go hand in hand, a cycle of poor health can lead to poor income and poor income can lead to poor health. A family's income influences: their housing conditions, the food they eat, the activities they can take part in, how they travel, the life choices they have and to some degree the hardships they face. Steep prices for housing, essential goods and services also impact on financial resources available. Financial status is listed as one of the major wider determinants of health which underpins differences in health across Sandwell. Low income is likely to limit options; families choose the cheaper foods, the lower quality housing and have to work in the jobs with poorer work hours/conditions. Members of the family may experience poor health and require absence from work, which reduces their income, restricting options further. Families may find themselves in meaningful employment, but the costs of living pull them under the poverty line.

A family cannot achieve economic prosperity if they do not have an income, ideally from meaningful employment. A company cannot provide meaningful employment if they cannot grow due to lack of capacity and staff absences. The impact in workplaces is a step further, by becoming healthy workplaces and by encouraging employees to be healthy, reduce stress and ill health; they can stimulate the growth and development impacting on productivity.

Qualification Level

Schools- Percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths in 2023 - all pupils in Sandwell was 56% (England, all schools 59%), Grade 4 or above in GCSE English and Maths in 2022 Sandwell 61.3% (England, all schools 68.8%) and the average grade for A levels were grade C in Sandwell, compared to grade B in England. (Department for Education)

Skill Levels- In Sandwell in 2021, 22.7% of people aged 16 and over had a level 4 or above (HND, Degree, Higher Degree level qualifications or equivalent) qualification, compared to 33.9% in England and 28.9% of people aged 16 and over had no qualifications, compared to 18.1% in England. (NOMIS)

Towns

- The towns with the highest proportion of residents with a qualification at level 4 or above are Smethwick (26.1%) and Oldbury (24.5%). The lowest proportions are in Wednesbury (18.9%) and Tipton (19.0%)

Wards

- Abbey has the greatest proportion of highly qualified residents, with 40.3% being qualified to level 4 or above. The two next highest wards have over one in five residents qualified to this level - Great Barr with Yew Tree and Old Warley. Smethwick town has the most highly qualified residents overall.
- Only 16.1% of residents in Friar Park are qualified to level 4 or above.



- The Sandwell ward with the largest proportion of residents with no qualifications is Greets Green & Lyng, at 33.8%. Friar Park also has a similar proportion of residents with no qualifications (33.3%).
- Abbey has the lowest proportion with no qualifications (19%)

Employment and Earnings - In Sandwell (Apr 22 to Mar 23) the Employment rate for residents aged 16-64 was 64.7%, equating to 142,000 people, compared to 75.5% in Great Britain and the Unemployment rate, for residents aged 16-64 was 6%, compared to 3.6% in Great Britain, equating to 9,100 people. The average (Median) gross weekly pay for Sandwell residents was £549.80 (Great Britain - £642.20) in 2022. (NOMIS)

Job and Business Levels- In Sandwell in 2021 there were 0.62 jobs per working age (aged 16-64) resident, compared to 0.85 for Great Britain. In Sandwell in 2023 there were 11,680 Local Units (Businesses). In 2021, there 124,000 employee jobs in Sandwell with 20,000 (16.1%) in Manufacturing, this was more than double the proportion in Great Britain (7.6%) and higher than the West Midlands at 10.4%. (NOMIS).

Employment vs welfare support – Economic activity profile.

A resident is considered economically active if employed, self-employed, unemployed but looking for work and able to start within two weeks, or a full-time student who also has a job. Across Sandwell, in 2021, 43.7% of residents were in full (32.5%) or part-time (12.2%) employment, 6.7% were self-employed, 4.5% were unemployed and 2.5% were full-time students. In England and Wales 55.5% of residents were employed and 2.8% unemployed.

For residents aged 16 & over.

Towns

- In 2021, the proportion of people in full time employment by town, ranges from the highest 35.2% in Rowley Regis and 34.8% in Oldbury, to the lowest 29.0% in Smethwick.
- Unemployment is highest in Smethwick (5.4%) and Tipton (5.3%) and lowest in Oldbury and Rowley Regis towns, both with 4.0% residents who are unemployed.
- The biggest proportions of self-employed residents are in Smethwick (7.2%) and Oldbury (7.1%)
- Smethwick town has the highest proportion of economically active full-time students at 3.6%. While the same town has the highest proportion of economically inactive students, 8.4%.

Wards

- Abbey ward in Smethwick, has a highest proportion of residents in full time employment (39.3%) of all Sandwell wards. The second highest is Oldbury ward (36.7%), whilst Tividale has the third highest proportion
- Soho & Victoria in Smethwick has the highest rate of unemployment of all Sandwell wards (6.2%) Princes End has the second high level of unemployment (6%).
- Unemployment is lowest in Old Warley (3.2%).
- Abbey, Charlemont with Grove Vale and Oldbury have the highest proportions of self-employment of all Sandwell wards (8.6%, 7.7% and 7.7% respectively).
- The three highest Sandwell wards in terms of economically active full-time students are all within Smethwick town - the highest being Soho & Victoria at 4.2%

Economically Inactive

Across Sandwell, economic inactivity was made up of 17.4% retired, 6.2% students, 6.4% looking after home and family, 7% long term sick or disabled and 2% others. In terms of economic inactivity for residents aged 16 or older:

Towns

- Rowley Regis town has the highest proportion of residents who have retired at 20.2%. The next three ranking towns have similar proportions; Wednesbury 18.8%, West Bromwich 18.6% and Oldbury 18.1%. The two towns with the lowest proportions are Tipton 16.2% and Smethwick 12.5%.
- The highest proportion of residents who are long-term sick or disabled is in Wednesbury 7.1% and the lowest proportion in Smethwick 5.1%.

Wards

- The highest proportion of retired residents are in Charlemont & Grove Vale (22.8%), Newton (22.7%) [both to the north of West Bromwich town], and Old Warley (22.7%). Soho & Victoria has the lowest proportion of all Sandwell wards at 9.2%.
- Wednesbury North has the highest proportion of residents in the Borough who are long-term sick or disabled (7.4%). Langley and Friar Park also have a high proportion at 7.2% and 7.1% respectively. The lowest proportion is in Abbey (3%).
- Soho & Victoria and St. Pauls have the highest proportion (12.5% and 11.8% respectively) of residents aged 16 & over who are looking after the home or family of all Sandwell wards.

The level of the economically active population in employment has varied in Sandwell from 70% in 2006 increasing to 75% in 2013 before falling back to 67.5% in 2017 and then increasing to 77.5% in late 2021; the Sandwell rate has always been lower than the rate for England which since 2020 has remained around 78.5%.

However, since late 2021, the Sandwell rate dropped dramatically to now stand at 68% on the latest NOMIS data. The pattern for the percentage of people in employment has shown a similar pattern showing a gradual upward trend for 2010 to the end of 2021 and then falling over the next two years.

Disability, Health, Carers and Disparity.

To identify disability in 2021, people were asked "Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?". If they answered yes, a further question "Do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?" was presented. This differs from the 2011 Census question used, in order to collect data that more closely aligned with the definition of disability in the Equality Act (2010).

For Sandwell overall 8.7% of residents indicated that they had a long-term mental health condition or illness which limited their day to day activities a lot, which compares with 7.3% for England.

Limitations in daily activity

Towns

- Wednesbury (10.1%), Tipton (9.6%), and Rowley Regis towns (9.1%) have the highest proportions of residents where their day-to-day activities are being limited a lot. Smethwick has the lowest proportion of residents at 7.1%.



- Towns with the highest proportions of residents where their day-to-day activities are being limited a little are Rowley Regis (10.4%), Wednesbury (10.1%), and Oldbury (9.3%).

Wards

- In terms of day-to-day activities being limited a lot, Wednesbury North and Friar Park both fare badly on this indicator, at 10.4%, and Blackheath is also poor (10.2%).
- Blackheath (11.1%), Cradley Heath & Old Hill (10.8%), Friar Park and Rowley (both 10.6%) had the highest proportion of residents whose activities are limited a little.
- Soho & Victoria, St. Pauls and Oldbury all fare well on these indicators.

Self-reported State of health

Residents were asked to assess their general state of health on a five-point scale: very good, good, fair, bad or very bad. Across Sandwell 6.6% of residents felt that their health was bad or very bad compared with 5.2% for England. Across the wards:

Towns

- The proportions of residents in towns with good or very good health, rank: From Smethwick (81.3%) through, Oldbury (79.5%), West Bromwich (79.3%), Rowley Regis (78.1%), Tipton (77.6%), to Wednesbury (76.8%).
- The towns where residents have self-reported health which is bad or very bad is highest in Tipton and Wednesbury both at 7.5%. Smethwick has the lowest proportion at 5.8%.
- Rowley Regis (25.7%), Wednesbury (25.3%) and Tipton (23.9%) towns have the highest proportions of residents who are long term sick or disabled.

Wards

Abbey ward is high in terms of those stating their level of health is good or very good - at 83.4% this is the highest of the Sandwell wards.

- Soho & Victoria (82.4%) and Oldbury (81.5%) also have a high proportion of residents with good or very good health.
- Blackheath ward is low in terms of those stating their level of health is good or very good - at 75.7% this is the lowest of all the Sandwell wards.
- At 8.1%, Friar Park is the worst of all Sandwell wards for those stating their level of health is bad or very bad.
- 7.7% of residents of Princes End and 7.6% in Cradley Heath & Old Hill also consider their health to be bad or very bad.
- Blackheath is highest of all Sandwell wards in terms of residents who are long-term sick or disabled (28.1%) compared with a Sandwell average of 22.8%.

Unpaid carers

A person is a provider of unpaid care if they look after or give help or support to family members, friends, neighbours or others because of long-term physical or mental ill health or disability, or problems related to old age. Almost one in ten Sandwell residents (9.3%) identified as providers of unpaid care compared with 8.8% in England.

Towns

- Proportions of people providing unpaid care is highest in Wednesbury town (10.2%), followed by Rowley Regis (10.0%), Tipton (9.7%), West Bromwich (9.3%), Oldbury (9.2%), and Smethwick (7.6%).

- Proportions of people providing 50 hours a week or more unpaid care, follows a similar town ranking, with the highest in Wednesbury (3.8%) and Tipton towns (3.8%), followed by Rowley Regis (3.4%), West Bromwich (3.1%), Oldbury (2.9%), and Smethwick (2.4%).

Wards

- Of all Sandwell wards, Blackheath has the highest proportion of residents providing unpaid care (10.8%). This is likely to be due to the age profile of the ward.
- At 6.7%, the proportion who provide unpaid care in Soho & Victoria is the lowest of all Sandwell wards.
- Princes End, Friar Park, and Great Bridge are the three highest Sandwell wards in terms of residents providing unpaid care for 50 hours a week or more.

Best Starts in live for Sandwell

Sandwell experiences a wide range of health inequalities and inequalities in the Social Determinants of health, the wider factors which influence the health of the population. When compared with the national rates, Sandwell experience poorer health outcomes across the life course from pregnancy, birth, growing up, working life and older age.

In 2008 Sir Michael Marmott produced [Fair Society Healthy Lives](#) which aimed to examine progress in addressing health inequalities in England The review came up with five policy objectives for a fairer healthier society:

- giving every child the best start in life
- enabling all people to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives
- ensuring a healthy standard of living for all
- creating fair employment and good work for all
- creating and developing healthy and sustainable places and communities

Key health inequalities for Sandwell are highlighted below.

Infant mortality

The **Infant Mortality** is the percentage of babies that die before the age of one per 1000 live births and the rate for Sandwell is higher than the national rate; 5.7/1000 of babies die before the age of one compared with the rate for England(3.9). The Sandwell rate has been higher than the national rate since 2001 and it reached a peak in 2016-2018 of 8.2 before falling back year on year to the current figure of 5.7.

School Readiness

The percentage of children achieving a good level of development at the end of reception is termed School Readiness and significantly fewer children in Sandwell (59.1%) are ready for school than either the region or nationally (West Midlands 63.7, England 65.2%)

Child Poverty

Children in low income families is a key measure of Child Poverty and more children (28.1%) live in low-income families in Sandwell than regionally or nationally (WM 21.4%, England 15.3%) (No trend data available).

Child Obesity

children aged 10-11 years are measured in Reception and Year 6 as part of the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP). The measurement of height and weight is entered into growth charts to calculate if they are healthy weight. There is concern about the rise of childhood obesity and the implications of obesity persisting into adulthood Childhood obesity is a key factor for lifetime health and wellbeing in in

terms of Healthy weight, fewer children in Sandwell (69.9%) have a healthy weight in reception than regionally or nationally (WM 75.0%, England 76.5%). From 2010/11 to 2014/15 Healthy weight in Sandwell in reception was much the same as the rate for England. However, from 2015/16 onwards the rates diverged and with an increasing gap from Sandwell to the England figure

In Sandwell more children (34.0%) are obese in Year 6 than regionally or nationally (WM 26.2%, England 23.4%). Since 2007/8 the Sandwell rate has been higher than the national rate and increased steadily from 2012/13. The most recent data rate for 2021/22 shows a marked increase to 34.0%.

Dental Health

Poor child dental health is a key predictor of child poverty and its impacts and more children (30.0%) show dental decay aged 5 in Sandwell than regionally or nationally (WM 23.8%, England 23.7%). From 2011/12 the Sandwell rate for dental decay was similar to the national rate. However, since 2018/19 the rate of dental decay for 5 year olds in Sandwell has been significantly higher than England.

Children in Care

All children, under 18 years of age who are looked after by the Local Authority are reported per 1000 and for Sandwell there are more who are looked after children (98/10,000) than regionally or nationally (WM 88, England 70).

Road traffic collisions

A major cause of deaths in children and comprise higher proportions of accidental deaths as children get older. In Sandwell more children (22.4%) are Killed/ Seriously Injured on the roads per 100,000 population than regionally or nationally (WM 16.1%, England 15.9%). The Sandwell rate has been higher than the national rate since 2008, and although the rate has been declining, it remains above the England rate.

Asthma admissions

This is the rate of emergency hospital admissions for asthma per 100,000 children aged under 19 and in Sandwell more children and young people (207.4/100,000) are admitted to hospital with asthma than regionally or nationally (WM 165.6, England 131.5).

Aging Well in Sandwell

Life Expectancy

Male Life expectancy is the average number of years a man would expect to live based on contemporary mortality rates. In Sandwell men (75.5 years) have lower life expectancy than regionally or nationally (WM 77.9, England 78.7). Male life expectancy for Sandwell has been increasing since 2001 and although always lower than the England figure the gap was closing up to 2011. In the last twelve years life expectancy has stayed much the same in Sandwell and 77 years and the most recent data shows that life expectancy has fallen at a greater rate than nationally.

Female life expectancy is the average number of years a woman would expect to live based on contemporary mortality rates. In Sandwell, women (80.4 years) have lower life expectancy than regionally or nationally (WM 82.1, England 82.8). Female life expectancy for Sandwell increased from 2001 and although always lower than the England figure the gap was closing up to 2009. In the last fourteen years female life expectancy stayed much the same in Sandwell and the most recent data shows that in 2018-20 life expectancy fell at a greater rate than nationally.

Cancer

The Percentage of cancers diagnosed at stages 1 and 2 is an important indicator for cancer screening as early diagnosis improves the prospects for treatment. In Sandwell fewer cancers (48.8%) diagnosed early than



regionally or nationally (WM 52.1%, England 52.3%). Since 2013 when 56.9% of cancers were diagnosed at Stages 1 and 2 in Sandwell, the local rate has been falling and is now significantly lower than the rate for England.

Preventable mortality

The under 75 mortality rate from causes considered preventable in Sandwell has a high preventable **mortality** rate (271.4/100,00) for people aged under 75 (WM 202.4, England 183.2). (No trend data available).

Healthy weight

Healthy Weight is an important health inequality as obesity is a complex concern, associated with reduced life expectancy and a risk factor for a range of chronic disease. In Sandwell more adults (69.7%) are considered overweight or obese than regionally or nationally (WM 67.2%, England 63.8%). The percentage of overweight or obese adults in Sandwell has remained relatively stable since 2015, although always higher than the national figure.

Physical Activity

Physical inactivity is the 4th leading risk factor for global mortality accounting for 6% of deaths globally. People who have a physically active lifestyle have a 20 to 35% lower risk of cardiovascular disease, coronary heart disease and stroke compared to those who have a sedentary lifestyle. In Sandwell fewer people (56.3%) are physically active than regionally or nationally (WM 63.4%, England 67.3%). The percentage of people that are physically active in Sandwell has shown no particular trend since 2015, a similar pattern as nationally.

Smoking

Smoking is the most important cause of preventable ill health and premature mortality in the UK. Smoking is a major risk factor for many diseases, such as lung cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and heart disease. In Sandwell more adults (21.0%) smoke than regionally or nationally (WM 13.4%, England 12.7%).

The Environment

Housing

The Census asks various questions relating to housing, including the type of accommodation people live in and its tenure. [In Sandwell](#), since 2011 the proportion of households in shared ownership accommodation or renting from the local authority has declined, whilst the proportion renting from other social landlords or private landlords has increased considerably.

In 2021, the proportion of owner occupied households in Sandwell was 53.7%, compared 61.6% in England and Wales; for households renting from the Council the proportion was 21.0% in Sandwell and 8.3% in England and Wales. Households rented from a social landlord was 5.6% in Sandwell and 8.7% in England and Wales, and the proportion of privately rented households in Sandwell was 16.7%, compared to 18.0% in England and Wales.

Privately Rented accommodation

Town

- Smethwick has the greatest proportion of privately rented households at 28.4%, the next highest ranked town is Oldbury with 18.5%. The lowest proportions of privately rented households are in Wednesbury (14.6%) and Rowley Regis (14.9%)



Ward

- Almost a third of households in Abbey ward are in private rented accommodation. Soho & Victoria and St. Pauls also have high levels of private renting, meaning that Smethwick town has the highest level of all six towns overall (28.4%).

Social housing

Town

Social rented households including council rented are proportionally higher in Tipton (35.6%) and Wednesbury (31.3%) and lowest in Smethwick (22.9%) and West Bromwich (25.9%).

Ward

- The highest proportion of households in social rented accommodation is in Princes End ward (43.9%). Friar Park had the second highest proportion at 37%. This includes properties rented either from the Council or housing associations.
- At 9.1%, Abbey has the lowest proportion in social rented accommodation of all Sandwell wards. Newton and Old Warley also have relatively low levels of social renting (at 13.2% and 16.5% respectively).

Privately owned

Town

- Owner occupation in households is proportionally higher in Oldbury (58.8%) and Rowley Regis towns (58.3%), and lowest in Smethwick (47.3%) and Tipton (47.4%)

Ward

- Newton has the highest (71.1%) level of owner occupation of all Sandwell wards. Also high are Old Warley (68.3%) and Great Barr with Yew Tree (66.4%).

Perception of Sandwell

The perceptions of local people about the place that they live were captured through the 2022 Residents' Survey:

Satisfaction with the Local area

Across Sandwell, 78.5% of survey respondents were very satisfied or satisfied with their local area. This local area satisfaction rate was highest in Wednesbury (80.6%) and lowest in West Bromwich (77.6%)

Community Identity

Across Sandwell, 80.4% of respondents felt that they belonged to their area fairly strongly or strongly. This sense of Community Identity varied from 81.5% in Smethwick to 85.6% in Oldbury

Feeling Safe at Night

More than half (51.1%) of respondents felt fairly or very safe after dark. This sense of feeling safe at night varied from 43.7% in West Bromwich to 55.4% in Smethwick.

Community Cohesion

Almost eight out of ten respondents (78.8%) agreed or tended to agree that their local areas was a place where people of different ethnic backgrounds get on well together. Rowley Regis received the highest proportion of positive responses, with 81.9% choosing 'definitely agree' or 'tend to agree',



while Wednesbury had the lowest proportion of positive responses, with 69.3%. The highest proportion of negative responses were in Wednesbury (17.3%), compared to a low of 7.1% in Rowley Regis