


COMMUNITIES UNCOVERED

BIRMINGHAM & THE BLACK COUNTRY
2017/18

A photograph of two young boys in white martial arts uniforms (gi) practicing a move in a gym. They are both in a similar pose, with their right arms raised and bent, and their left hands near their faces. The boy on the left is looking down, while the boy on the right is looking towards the camera. In the background, other people in similar uniforms are visible, though out of focus. The floor is a blue and red mat. A white, torn-edge graphic overlay is positioned in the center-left, containing the text.

**THE VALUE OF
SOCIAL
INVESTMENT IN
YOUNG PEOPLE IS
OF PARAMOUNT
IMPORTANCE.**



**THE INEQUALITIES OF
CHILDHOOD CONTINUE
INTO ADULTHOOD, WITH A
RANGE OF INDICATORS
IDENTIFYING LOW HEALTH,
EDUCATION AND
EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES
FOR ADULTS.**

CONTENTS.

About Us	2
Foreword	3
Introduction	4
Regional Profile	5
The Heart of the Midlands	7
Children & Young People	9
Adults	11
Older People	13
Conclusions	15
Acknowledgements & References	17
How you can get involved	19

© First edition copyright 2018,
Heart of England Community Foundation. All rights reserved.

National Statistics Data © Crown Copyright & Database Right (2015)

ABOUT US.

Heart of England Community Foundation is an independent charity.

We're passionate about the West Midlands. We care unconditionally about the people and places here, no matter what area you live in. Recognising the challenges faced by our communities is vital to us, as well as understanding how to tackle these issues. We champion local giving, acting as a voice for our communities. We use our research and expertise to support grassroots projects, investing in fantastic ideas which enable our communities to thrive.

Promoting local philanthropy is at the core of everything we do. It underpins our values and enables us to be a dynamic force for good, collaborating with others to make the West Midlands a better place for everyone.

We nurture collaboration between local donors and the projects we support. This means our view of social action is unique. Filling the space between people with the resources to tackle local issues and people with the imagination and drive to change lives takes coordination and precision. That's where we come in.

Harnessing lasting partnerships with likeminded people we utilise social capital to build long term and short term funds which we invest in projects tackling local issues and making our communities better places to live, work and play.

The Institute for Community Research and Development (ICRD) at the University of Wolverhampton works with, in, and for, our local communities, drawing on a history of collaborative research across our faculties of Social Science, and Health, Education, and Well-being.

ICRD uses interdisciplinary expertise to affect positive change in local communities, increase knowledge, and shape local and national policy. ICRD undertakes pioneering community development studies that improve the life chance of individuals in the region, and works with our partnership networks to champion for change. Through the ICRD, the University has consolidated considerable experience of delivering evidence-based research-relevant projects and delivering a strategic ambition of having significant regional and national influence. Themes explored by the ICRD span social policy, sociology, economic regeneration, public policy, public sector reform, social welfare, community health and wellbeing, mental health and criminal justice.

ICRD is led by Professor Laura Caulfield, with senior researchers Dr Steve Iafrafi, Dr Angela Morgan, and Dr Stuart Connor. In 2018 our work includes: research on the effectiveness of an intervention with Birmingham Youth Offending Service; an evaluation of the Building Sustainable Change for Violence Against Women and Girls, funded by the Home Office and Wolverhampton City Council; research exploring the opportunities for women in prison involved in prison industries, Funded by the Ministry of Justice and London College of Fashion.

FOREWORD.

Increasingly across the West Midlands many people face complex issues affecting their lives. Commonly, the people who are most affected live in areas where levels of disadvantage are highest and poverty is felt the most. This makes it difficult for people to live healthy and happy lives whilst being part of a cohesive society.

We recognise that lots of people are affected by issues such as homelessness, unemployment, substance abuse, poor mental health, and relationship breakdowns to name just a few.

But what are the most pressing needs of local communities? And what part can we play in tackling these needs?

At Heart of England Community Foundation, we have been thinking about how we can play a greater role in tackling some of the biggest issues affecting communities in Birmingham and the Black Country. With our own limited resources, we want to direct our grant-making so that it helps unlock stubborn problems by providing solutions.

Our role is to develop and promote local giving across the West Midlands. The organisations we fund are often small charities or social enterprises with deep roots into local communities. We know that it is these organisations, often under extreme resource pressures, who are called on first when the communities on our doorstep are in need.

The organisations that we support have an established understanding of the people they support and the services that are needed. They constantly need new funding to help sustain these activities, for without them, many people would lack support and a place to go when times get tough.

This report aims to shine a light on the problems which are having the most pronounced impact on local people and communities. With this information we hope to be able to make more informed choices about our grant making, communicating these priorities to other funders, donors, philanthropists, businesses to harness more support.

This is an exciting development in the life of our charity. Our partnership with the University of Wolverhampton represents our serious commitment to expand our learning and data and achieve greater outcomes for local communities.

Ryan Boyce

Senior Manager - Development
Heart of England Community Foundation

 @rdb92



**shining a light on
the problems
having the most
pronounced impact
on local people.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.



it is important to be aware of the impacts of reduced government budgets and changes to welfare provision.

This report identifies areas of need and challenges facing Birmingham and the Black Country. With a legacy of some localities already struggling to adapt to a decline in traditional economies of manufacturing and industry, this report recognises a range of inequalities in areas such as health, education and income.

Importantly, this report argues that these inequalities are interlinked, with, for example, low incomes leading to low educational attainment, which in turn exacerbates low incomes. Recognising this context for the report, it is important to also be aware of the impacts of reduced government budgets and changes to welfare provision that can lead to greater demand and expectation being placed on the voluntary sector. This comes at a time when grant funding for the voluntary sector has not increased and smaller groups, that have previously relied on local government support, will have seen this support cut.

This means that the report is recognising ongoing cycles of inequality, with the data being presented in order to support strategic decisions on how best to break these cycles. Furthermore, bearing in mind the inter-connected nature of the problems, the report also allows there to be recognition of holistic and neighbourhood-based solutions.

It is with these objectives in mind that the evidence in this report is a basis to inform charitable spending in a way that addresses the root causes of local problems, thereby ensuring money is spent in the most effective and strategic manner.

In addition to the quantitative data, the report also takes account of meetings with local authority officers, councillors and managers from voluntary sector organisations as part of wide-ranging research during the last five years. The input from other research projects overlaps significantly with this report and is important in recognising the concerns and attitudes of key local policy makers as well as their understandings of the challenges faced in the region.

At the core of this report is evidence showing geographical variations in life experiences and opportunities. It is not just the case that the West Midlands has worse indicators than national averages, but that within Birmingham and the four Black Country local authority areas, there are similar variations. Whilst this report does not aim to examine indicators in ward level detail, it can be expected that health, education and income inequalities are even more pronounced in these geographies.

Dr. Steve Iafrati

Senior Lecturer - Social Policy
University of Wolverhampton

 @steve_iafrati

REGIONAL PROFILE.

Birmingham and the Black Country have a history of manufacturing and industry that have defined close knit communities and a strong sense of local identity.

However, these communities have evolved and developed over time, right from when the populations grew rapidly during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to today's increasingly post-industrial communities. In this respect, Birmingham and the Black Country are just as much about dynamic and changing communities as they are about tradition.



2.2
MILLION
PEOPLE
LIVE HERE
UP 4.3% SINCE
2011



34%
LOCAL
GOVERNMENT
SPENDING CUTS
SINCE 2010 IN
BIRMINGHAM



16%*
LOCAL
GOVERNMENT
SPENDING CUTS
SINCE 2010 IN
THE BLACK COUNTRY



£162k
AVERAGE
HOUSE PRICE
IN BIRMINGHAM
& THE BLACK
COUNTRY 42% BELOW
THE NATIONAL AVERAGE



1 in 4

**PEOPLE
IN BIRMINGHAM
ARE FROM A BLACK
& MINORITY ETHNIC
BACKGROUND**



4,800

**PEOPLE
RECOGNISED
AS HOMELESS
AND IN PRIORITY NEED
ACROSS BIRMINGHAM
AND THE BLACK COUNTRY**



£497

**MEDIAN
WEEKLY PAY
ACROSS THE
WEST MIDLANDS
£48 LESS THAN THE REST
OF ENGLAND**



75

**THE NUMBER
OF JOBS IN THE
WEST MIDLANDS
FOR EVERY
100 RESIDENTS**



68%**

**OF PEOPLE
ARE OVERWEIGHT
IN BIRMINGHAM
& THE BLACK COUNTRY
4% ABOVE THE NATIONAL
AVERAGE**



38%

**OF PEOPLE
IN BIRMINGHAM
ARE UNDER 24
YEARS OLD**



44%

**OF PEOPLE
IN DUDLEY ARE
OVER 45 YEARS OLD
AND 19% ARE OVER 65**



84**

**AVERAGE
LIFE EXPECTANCY
ACROSS
BIRMINGHAM &
THE BLACK COUNTRY
NATIONAL Av. IS 85**

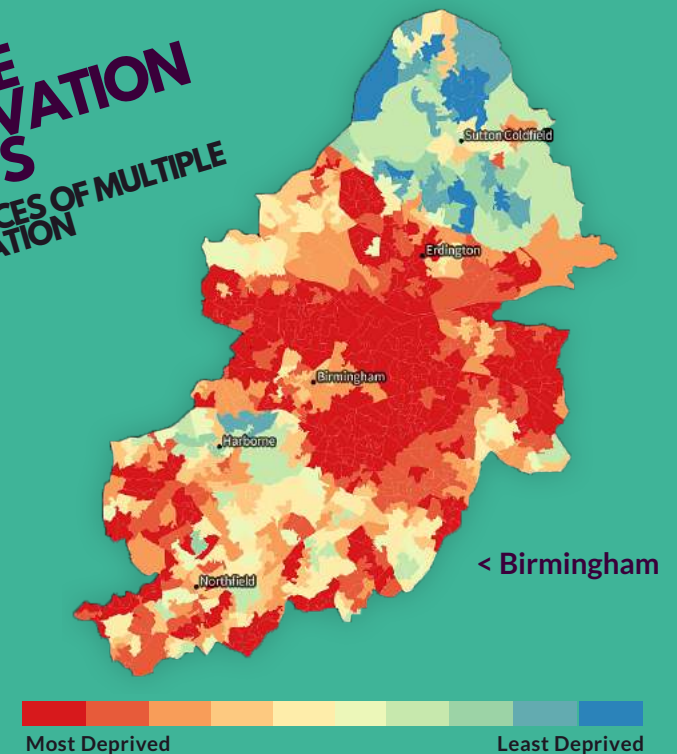
*Average aggregate figure for Black Country Local Authorities

** Average aggregate figure for Birmingham and Black Country combined

THE HEART OF THE MIDLANDS.

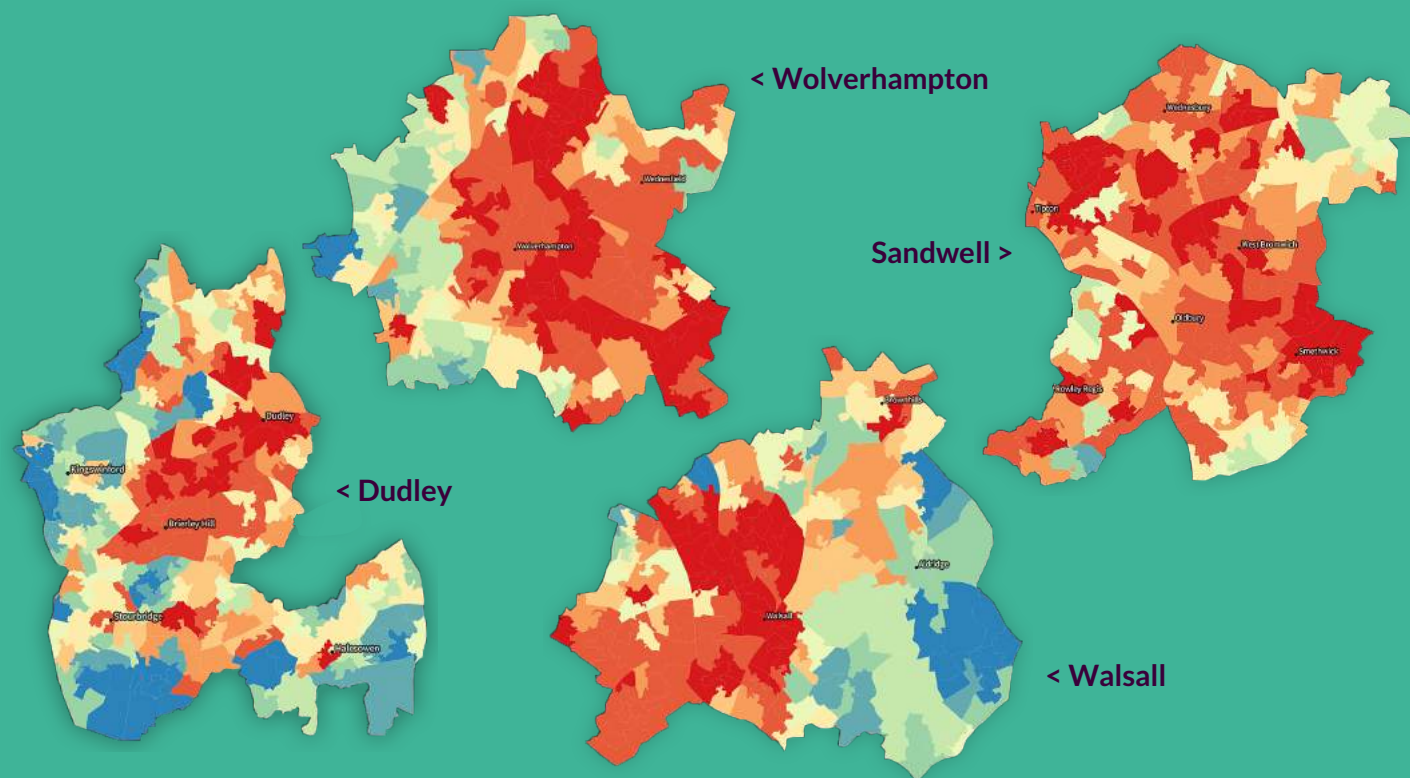
Birmingham and the Black Country is an area of rich history having been at the heart of Britain's economic development. From its role at the forefront of the Industrial Revolution, the region has a strong heritage of manufacturing and industry that has traditionally led to full employment and stable incomes, fueling local economic development. Whilst featuring a strong presence of manual work and working-class communities, the region historically enjoyed good prosperity and steady employment.

WHERE DEPRIVATION EXISTS
THE INDICES OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION



However, since the 1970s, the region has experienced the impact of a national decline in traditional economies as Britain moved towards a post-industrial economy characterised by fewer jobs in manufacturing and industry. Arguably, this economic shift has not been without challenges and, for some areas, there have been persistent signs of struggling to adapt to and benefit from new economies. Many neighbourhoods and parts of the region have experienced persistent cycles of unemployment, low skills and disadvantage that have hampered development.

Recognising the struggle of transition to a post-industrial economy, it is also important to be aware of the impact of the economic recession from 2008 onwards and the subsequent austerity. Evidence shows that areas of multiple deprivation have the least resilience to cope with economic shocks, such as recession and austerity. These are neighbourhoods with the lowest incomes, lowest skills and heaviest need for welfare. Furthermore, these are the communities where people are least geographically mobile due to limited resources and opportunities.



What are the Indices of Deprivation?

The Indices of Deprivation 2015, published by the Department for Communities and Local Government, provide a set of relative measures of deprivation for small areas (Lower-layer Super Output Areas) across England based on seven domains of deprivation. The data is derived from census information.

The domains were combined using the following weights to produce the overall Index of Multiple Deprivation:

- Income Deprivation
- Employment Deprivation
- Education, Skills and Training Deprivation
- Health Deprivation and Disability
- Crime
- Barriers to Housing and Services
- Living Environment Deprivation

The impact of recession and post-recession has been more significant on those on low incomes, of which there is a higher proportion in the West Midlands.

Between 2008 and 2014, food prices rose by 26%, public transport by 37% and domestic fuel by 45%. The importance of these price rises is that low income families spend approximately 45% of their income on these high inflation essentials, whilst higher income households spend 37% of their income on these products.

Welfare reform has also been felt more severely in the West Midlands than in areas such as the East, South-East and London where there has been higher levels of economic growth. In the West Midlands, it is estimated that welfare reforms have cost, on average, £490 per working age adult per year.

However, it is also important to bear in mind that elements of welfare reform will disproportionately fall on the poorest, and it is likely that this average figure masks a heavier burden on those on lowest incomes.

Relating this to experiences of the voluntary sector, amidst a gradual decline in grant funding during the last decade, there has been a rise in public sector work being contracted out. This means that voluntary sector organisations relying on grant funding will lose out whilst organisations providing contracted services will benefit.

Typically, smaller, community based projects such as unconstituted, more informal and 'below the radar' organisations are the ones most likely to lose income and impact due to these changes.

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

THE MOST DEPRIVED PARTS OF BIRMINGHAM & THE BLACK COUNTRY HAVE TWICE THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN WORKLESS HOUSEHOLDS.

The value of social investment in young people is of paramount importance. As well as being the future of Birmingham and the Black Country, young people are most able to break cycles of deprivation and will have the highest return on investment over time.

Looked after children

Children and young people with some of the most challenging outcomes are looked after children. In Wolverhampton and Dudley, the figures for looked after children are significantly

higher than national and regional averages, and whilst Wolverhampton has seen the highest levels, there has been a notable decline since 2016, although the figures remain very high. In contrast, Dudley is at least two-thirds above the national average.

Looked after children, on average, have worse health, employment and education outcomes and it is important to reflect on the support needed by these young people to achieve their

potential and live fulfilled lives.

Education

Children who grow-up in low income families are statistically less likely to achieve good GCSE results. In some areas of the Black Country less than 25% of boys achieve 5 GCSEs at A*- C including English and Maths. In all likelihood, over two-thirds of boys in these areas will not progress to study A-levels and above.

Looking at data relating to children as they grow up, by the time children in Sandwell and Wolverhampton start year one in primary school, they are already at a lower standard of development than regional and national averages. Whilst the rate for Birmingham, Dudley and Walsall is less pronounced, there is still notable room for improvement.

Worryingly for many young people, economic deprivation is something that continues beyond their sixteenth birthday. The region has a higher than average number of 16-18 year olds not in

education, employment or training (NEET). This is an issue that has been identified by local authorities as concerning given that it could have a long-term “scarring effect” on the region’s economy as well as the lives of young people and the communities they live in.

Problematically, the measurements of young people that are NEET vary and the exact figure is contested. Ernst and Young identify youth unemployment (albeit covering 16-24 year olds) at 15.5% in the West Midlands, with Birmingham and Wolverhampton having particularly high levels at 22.5% and 27% respectively.

ONLY
48%
OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN
SANDWELL
ACHIEVE 5 GCSE A* - C
QUALIFICATIONS.

Health

Continuing with a focus on young people and health, evidence suggests that young people in Birmingham and the Black Country are more likely than others to be obese.

Figures show that in Birmingham and the Black Country children aged four to five; just starting primary school, have a slightly higher than average rate of obesity. By the time children have reached the end of primary school at the age of ten to eleven, the rate of obesity has increased by more than half.

In Birmingham, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton, one in four children are obese, compared with less than one in five nationally. It might be expected that this increase will continue into adulthood.

There are additional concerns relating to substance misuse and the rate of self-harm amongst young people especially during teenage years and approaching adulthood.

Data shows that Birmingham and the Black Country are well above regional and national levels of hospital admissions for both of these serious health related concerns.

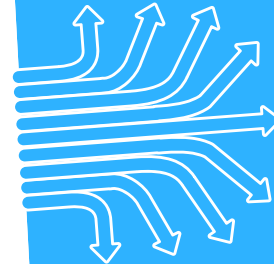
418

THE NUMBER OF
15-24 YEAR OLDS IN
DUDLEY ADMITTED
TO HOSPITAL DUE
TO SUBSTANCE
MISUSE IN 2015/16.

25%

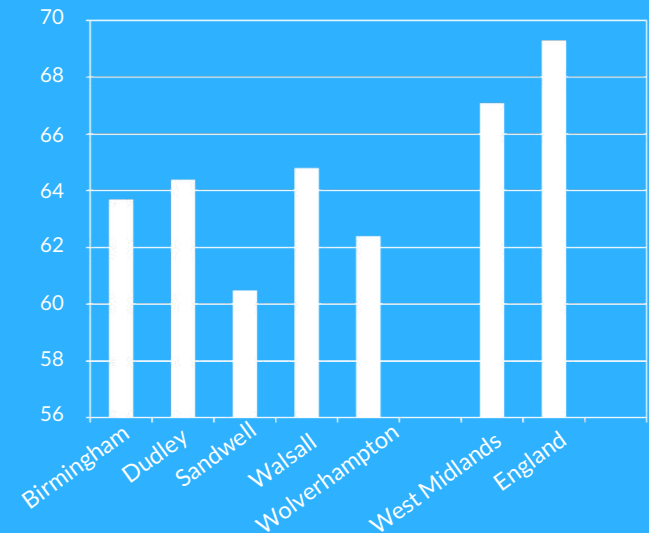
OF 10-11 YEAR
OLDS IN
WALSALL ARE
CLASSED AS
BEING OBESE.

The DATA



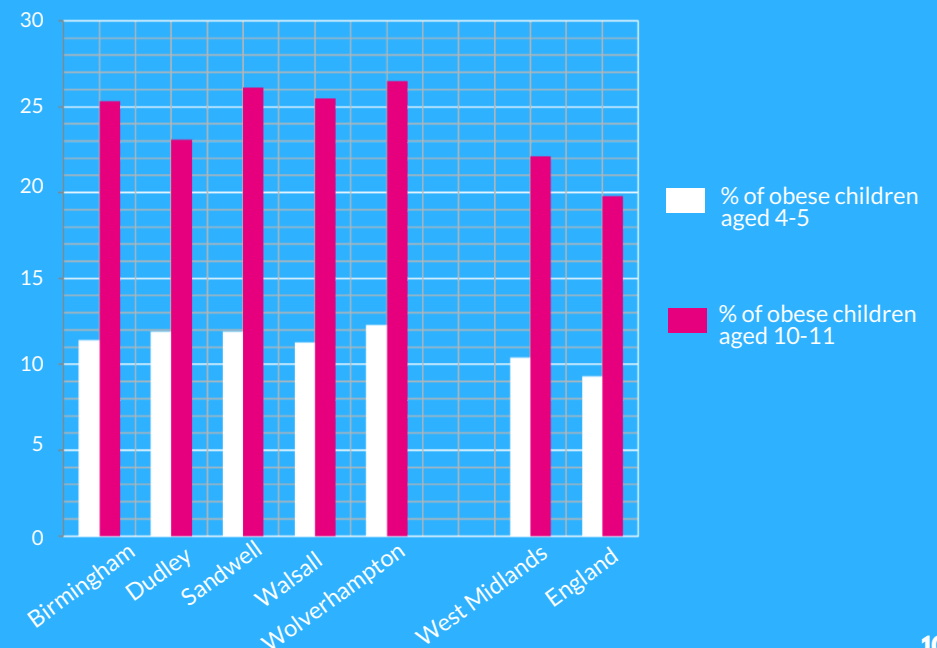
% of children achieving a good level of development at the end of reception (2016)

Source: Department for Education



% of obese children at ages 4-5 and 10-11 by local authority area (2016)

Source: National Health Service (NHS)



ADULTS

THE INEQUALITIES OF CHILDHOOD CONTINUE INTO ADULthood, WITH A RANGE OF INDICATORS IDENTIFYING LOW HEALTH, EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES FOR ADULTS.

The West Midlands has worse economic indicators than national averages. Evidence shows economic deprivation as a determinant of worse health and education outcomes.

Employment & Skills

Long term unemployment remains a persistent barrier to breaking cycles of poverty and disadvantage. Defined as being 27 weeks or more of continuous unemployment, the relationship between adult

unemployment, low income households, children underachieving academically, low skills and qualifications can be complex in the way that the cause and overlaps can be understood although correlations can be drawn.

Birmingham's long-term unemployment rate of 13.8 per thousand across a 16-64 population of 722,300 equates to 9,968 long-term unemployed in the city. The equivalent figures

for the Black Country are 1,832 in Dudley, 2,240 in Sandwell, 1,207 in Walsall and 1,991 in Wolverhampton. This means that there are 17,238 people in Birmingham and the Black Country that have been unemployed for 27 weeks or more.

At the root of enabling inclusive growth, we must recognise the assets required to attract investment and increase economic demand. One of the key determinants to this is the qualification level of local people. There is some concern regarding educational attainment across the region and is most pronounced in Sandwell and Wolverhampton, where up to 25% of the working age population have no formal qualifications.

9,900

ADULTS IN BIRMINGHAM HAVE BEEN UNEMPLOYED FOR MORE THAN 6 MONTHS.

Health

One of the important factors in adult health inequalities is that people living in lower income households and areas of multiple deprivation are more likely to experience worse health outcomes. The link between deprivation and poor health has long been recognised in publications such as the Black Report (1980), the Acheson Report (1998) and the Marmot Review (2010).

Dudley is identified as an area of concern for local health agencies given that only 46% of adults are physically active. A key cause for the demand on health services is excess weight, which can be linked to causal lifestyle factors such as a lack of exercise, smoking and poor diet. Nationally, 65% of adults are classified as being overweight or obese, with a West Midlands average of 67%. For the population of Birmingham and Wolverhampton, this is not such a problem, with their averages standing at 65% and 66% respectively.

However, Dudley, Sandwell and Walsall are all higher at approximately 70%.

Included within understandings of health should be mental health, with an estimated one-quarter of the West Midlands population experiencing a mental health problem at any one time. Whilst covering a wide range of factors, it is important to note that social and economic inequalities negatively affect experiences of mental health.

Most notably, women in the poorest neighbourhoods are three times more likely to experience common mental health issues such as anxiety and depression. Data suggests that those from the most disadvantaged and marginalised communities will feel the effects of mental health issues in a more pronounced way and this serves to perpetuate that the poorest communities will often be in need of support the most.

Homelessness

The problem of homelessness is most evident in Birmingham

20%
OF WORKING
AGE ADULTS IN
WOLVERHAMPTON
HAVE NO
QUALIFICATIONS.

where nearly 3,500 people are homeless and in priority need.

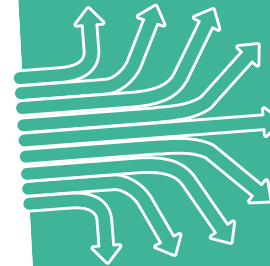
Whilst there has been some improvement in the rate, Birmingham still remains significantly higher than the national average.

This is important because it recognises the numbers of people who are homeless and in priority need, which is just over 4,800 across Birmingham and the Black Country, and the fact that these

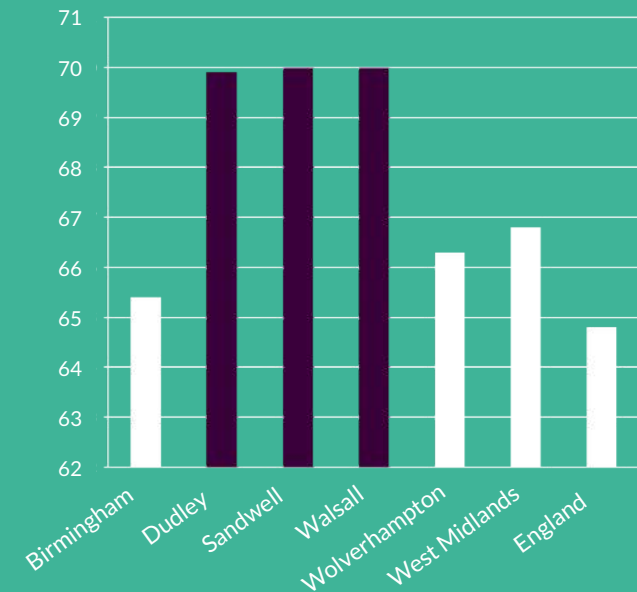
70%
OF ADULTS IN
SANDWELL &
WALSALL ARE
CLASSED AS
OVERWEIGHT.

4,800
PEOPLE ARE HOMELESS & IN
PRIORITY NEED ACROSS
BIRMINGHAM & THE BLACK
COUNTRY.

The DATA



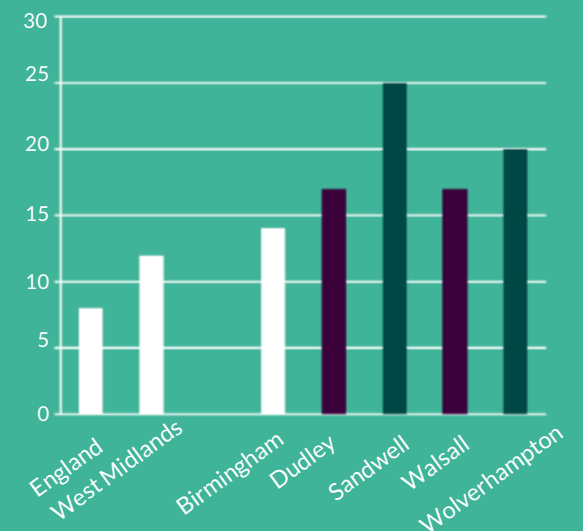
Excess weight in adults (%) (2013-15)
Source: Active People Survey, Sport England



people need supporting during the experience.

This figure also represents a large number of people experiencing changes that will impact on access to services such as child care, schools, health services and employment as well as exacerbating factors that lead to the person being priority.

% of working age adults with no formal qualifications (2016)
Source: Nomis



OLDER PEOPLE

SOME SOCIAL INDICATORS ARE DIFFICULT TO MEASURE, SUCH AS FEELINGS OF ISOLATION, HOWEVER EVIDENCE SUGGESTS THAT MANY OLDER PEOPLE PLACE AS MUCH VALUE ON SOCIAL INCLUSION AS THEY DO ON INCOME.

Older people experience a range of social, health and economic factors that can be specifically identified and, therefore, enable us to recognise distinct needs for older people.

Income

Despite the triple lock promise on pensions that has seen pensioners' incomes rise at a faster rate than benefits or average wages, it is important to recognise how austerity has led to a decline in services available to older people.

The ongoing impact of austerity and reduced government spending has seen reductions in the number of libraries, day centres and transport services for older people. Similarly, there have been cuts in social care, the majority of which is used by older people. As such, it is important to understand the role of public services used by older people and the ways in which changes might impact on older people.

In terms of financial outcomes for older people, it is important to remember that the triple lock on

pension increases may be reformed in the next few years to, possibly, be a double lock that will lead to lower levels of increase to state pensions. This will have the heaviest impact on people that are most reliant on state pensions, such as people that do not have private savings or independent incomes.

For an area such as the West Midlands where there are pronounced pockets of deprivation and lower than national average income, this will be a high number of older people.

Additionally people who have worked in low paid occupations are significantly less likely to have a private pension. This covers many people in the West Midlands because of the disproportionate number of people working in such sectors. Women, for example, are less likely to have private pensions because they tended to be employed in lower paid work and have fractured employment due to family commitments.

5%

OF PEOPLE OVER 65
IN WOLVERHAMPTON
HAVE A DEMENTIA
DIAGNOSIS.

Dementia

There is increasing awareness amongst policy makers of dementia and the implications it could have for social care funding in the future. Importantly, whilst this represents cost implications for local and central government and families, it should also be remembered that there is a human element to dementia care and statistics represent not only cost implications but might include people that have slipped through the social care net or whose dementia means that their care needs are not necessarily being met and problems are not being addressed sufficiently early.

The rate of hospital admissions for people with dementia diagnosis in Wolverhampton and Birmingham are noticeably between 10% - 15% above the national average.

Life Expectancy & Illness

Data shows that life expectancy for men aged 65+ in Sandwell live one and a half years fewer than the national average, whilst women are living just over one year less.

Importantly, the data does not represent the life expectancy of babies born at the current time, but instead represents current life expectancy and should be understood as being influenced by lifestyle factors and environmental factors.

With these factors in mind, it might also be considered that the data alludes not only to life expectancy but also to the quality of life, with some grounds to believe that shorter life expectancy will also mean a shorter “disease free life expectancy” as defined in the 2010 Marmot Review. The evidence therefore represents an accumulated impact of lifestyle factors such as smoking, diet, exercise and environmental factors that should be addressed with people in younger years.

The figures suggest deep and underlying issues for older people in Sandwell especially. Data for cancer related deaths, cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease and excess winter deaths point towards an altogether unhealthy older population. Walsall and Wolverhampton also suggest similar issues although not to the same extent. Birmingham and Dudley have high figures for respiratory disease related deaths which are often as a result of smoking.

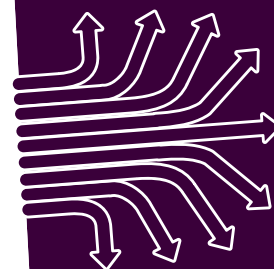
8.7%

OF ADULTS IN
WALSALL HAVE A
DIABETIC DIAGNOSIS
THIS EQUALS ALMOST
4,000 ADULTS ABOVE
THE NATIONAL
AVERAGE.

673

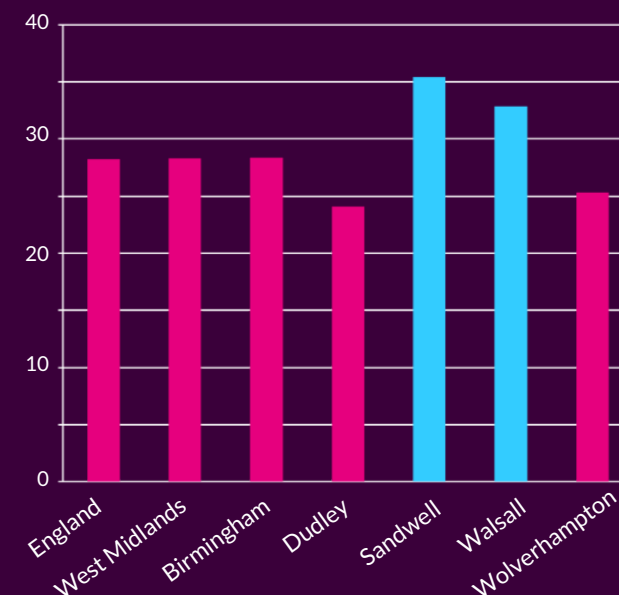
ADULTS OVER 65+ IN
SANDWELL WHO DIED
FROM
CARDIOVASCULAR
DISEASE BETWEEN
2013/15.

The DATA



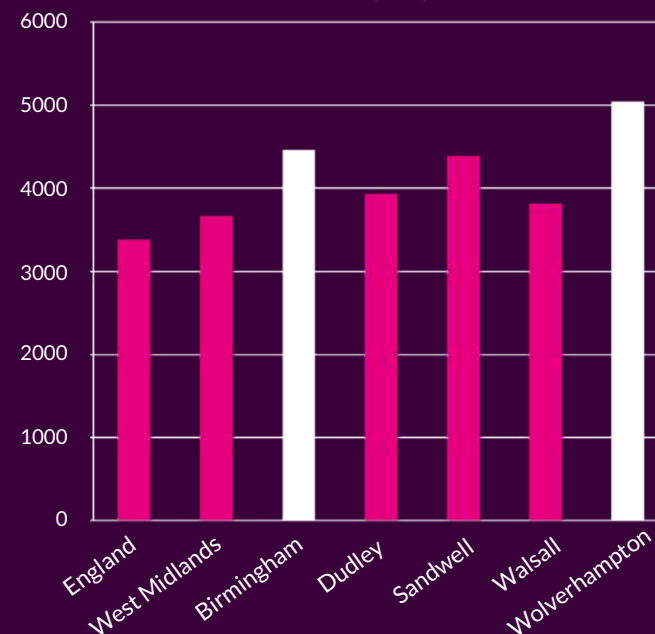
Excess winter deaths aged 85+ index (2012-2015) (Ratio)

Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS)



Emergency hospital admissions of people aged 65+ with dementia (2015-2016) (Rate per 100,000)

Source: National Health Service (NHS)



CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS.

Communities Uncovered provides an accessible way to identify areas of need and to begin to recognise the ways in which certain groups may need supporting and that certain cycles may need breaking.

The report did not set out to comprehensively map every area of concern in the West Midlands, to provide detailed analysis specific to individual wards or complement quantitative data with qualitative findings.

To do so would have produced a report of unmanageable complexity and would also have involved an unnecessarily lengthy period of research. Neither did the report set out to be an academic analysis of causes and effects in the context of policy development and implementation.

One of the outcomes of the report is to identify a range of indicators and challenges facing various geographical areas within Birmingham and the Black Country. With this information, it is possible for Heart of England to consider strategies for future funding, including which areas and themes to prioritise.

At the heart of this report is recognition that many of the issues and challenges facing Birmingham and the Black Country are interconnected. On one level, this highlights how tackling single issues will always have limited results, though it remains important for the quality of people's lives.

But secondly, it also recognises how the best way forward where possible is to address multiple issues and work in ways that break the links.

This report places Heart of England in a position where they are, firstly, able to strategically plan how funding is targeted at those in most need and, secondly, where there may be a necessity for further investigation in some of the issues identified in the report.

Need in this context should not solely be defined as economic indicators, but is instead about assets that will define the area's future and the ways in which people may experience isolation and exclusion.

As such, all people in the area will be affected by these factors, whether they are young or old, able bodied or disabled, working or unemployed.

This means that the Foundations is in a strategic position to allocate funding in a way that has maximum impact as well as, crucially, in a way that is based on investing in these area's future outcomes.

As such, the recommendations include themes and areas, though it remains the role of Heart of England to decide on the efficacy of applications to provide sustainable outcomes. The report will hopefully support Heart of England by informing how they might fund projects that address causes of problems and barriers to future improvements.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Support after school clubs and other extended learning activities for young people at risk of falling below average GCSE scores.

2. Support organisations in the voluntary sector and local communities to work with long term unemployed to identify and address barriers.

3. Work to support access to training opportunities for people in low paid work looking to improve employment opportunities.

4. Support organisations to enable learning opportunities for adults with no formal qualifications and/or poor levels of school outcomes.

5. Support projects to boost economically active rates, with particular attention to boosting women's involvement in the labour market primarily in Birmingham and secondarily in Sandwell.

6. Support for looked after children, especially in Dudley and Wolverhampton, to have opportunities to achieve positive social and economic outcomes.

7. Support young people who are NEET, especially work that improves economic opportunities and social / health factors. This might be concentrated mostly in Birmingham.

8. Work to support the health and social needs of teenage parents, especially in the four Black Country areas.

9. Targeted support for mothers, ante and post-natal, to achieve positive health outcomes for themselves and their babies.

10. Work to support learning for children prior to year one. This should be concentrated in neighbourhoods of multiple deprivation.

11. Support activities that sustainably address childhood obesity. This may be through healthy eating, sports clubs or other methods.

12. Ensure young people have access to mentoring, advice and guidance on all aspects of health and healthy lifestyles, including mental health.

13. Target key areas and neighbourhoods of multiple deprivation for projects supporting healthy lifestyle choices and addressing the causal factors of ill health.

14. Support for people with dementia to lead healthy lives should be prioritised in Wolverhampton and Birmingham as well as investigating people with dementia accessing support services to prevent hospital admissions.

15. Ensure BME communities are proportionately included in organisations and initiatives receiving funding. Furthermore, there should be recognition of other migrant groups and new arrivals that should be similarly recognised and supported.

16. Ensure support for projects and initiatives targeting young people and people in their twenties, especially in Birmingham and Sandwell.

17. Support projects and initiatives working with homeless people, especially in Birmingham.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & REFERENCES

We are especially grateful for the advice and strategic input of a number of key stakeholders into the report, namely:

Dr. Steve Iafrati - Report Author

Senior Lecturer - Social Policy, University of Wolverhampton

Helga Edström

Head of Local Intelligence West, Office for Civil Society

Austin Rodriguez

Commissioning Manager,
Adults Social Care and Health Directorate, Birmingham City Council

We are also thankful to officers from the following organisations for ensuring that local data is readily available:

Birmingham City Council
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Walsall Council
City of Wolverhampton Council
Public Health England
Department for Education
Nomis
National Health Service (NHS)
National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)
Office for National Statistics (ONS)
Public Health England

DATA SOURCES

2011 Census, Office for National Statistics (ONS)

'Austerity Uncovered', The Centre for Local Economic Strategies, 2014

'Inclusive Growth in the West Midlands: An agenda for the new Mayor', Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2017

'Making Ends Meet in Birmingham: Assessing the impact of the living wage and welfare reform', Padley and Valadez, Centre for Research in Social Policy, 2015

'The distribution of household income, consumption and savings: An OECD study, Office for National Statistics (ONS)

'The local impacts of welfare reform: An assessment of cumulative impacts and mitigations', Wilson, Morgan, Rahman & Vaid, Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion report for the Local Government Association, 2013

'The uneven impact of welfare reform: The financial losses to people and places', Beatty and Fothergill, Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research, Sheffield Hallam University, 2016

Active People Survey, Sport England

Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Office for National Statistics (ONS)

Demi Patsios, Improving Poverty and Social Exclusion Measures for Older People, March 2011

Department for Education (DofE)

Ernst and Young Foundation (2016): The employment landscape for young people in the UK. Challenges and opportunities.

Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership & Black Country Local Authorities (2014): Strategic housing needs s Study: Stage two report, prepared by Peter Brett Associates

Hospital Episode Statistics, Health and Social Care Information Centre, National Health Service (NHS)

Local Authority Interactive Tool

Local government revenue expenditure and financing statistics (outturn for 2009-10, budget for 2016-17) cited by Institute for Fiscal Studies

NCVO Annual Almanac

Newbigging and Parsonage (2017): Mental health in the West Midlands Combined Authority

National Health Service (NHS) Digital

Nomis

Office for National Statistics (ONS)

Office for National Statistics (ONS), Crime in England and Wales: Police Force Area Data Tables

Public Health England analysis of Office for National Statistics (ONS) mortality

Public Health England

Quality Management Analysis System, National Health Service (NHS)

Quality Outcomes Framework, NHS Digital

Resolution Foundation

Speech by Alex Brazier (Executive Director, Financial Stability and member of the Financial Policy Committee at the Bank of England) given to University of Liverpool's Institute for Risk and Uncertainty, 24th July 2017.

'The Homelessness Monitor: England 2017', Crisis, 2017

Professor Alasdair Rae, University of Sheffield Mapping (Ref pages 7 & 8) incl:

National Statistics Data © Crown Copyright & Database Right (2015)

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED?

Join us to tackle the big issues, affecting Birmingham and the Black Country.

Our Communities Uncovered Fund will support some of the key recommendations in this report. Over the next 12 months we will award funding to a range of projects to help unlock solutions to some of the problems identified.

We need support from individuals, businesses, trusts, foundations and other funders to work with us to help increase the impact of our work.





**WE ARE
COMMITTED
TO HELPING
REDUCE THE
SCARRING EFFECT
IMPACTING
GENERATIONS OF
PEOPLE IN THE
WEST MIDLANDS.**

LOCAL GIVING CHAMPIONS.



University of Wolverhampton
Institute for Community Research & Development
Wulfruna Street
Wolverhampton
WV1 1LY

t: +44 (0)1902 321000
e: enquiries@wlv.ac.uk

www.wlv.ac.uk

🐦 [wlv_uni](#)
f [uniwolverhampton](#)
📷 [wlvuni](#)



Heart of England Community Foundation
c/o PSA Group
Torrington Avenue
Coventry
CV4 9AP

t: +44 (0)24 7688 3264
e: marketing@heartofenglandcf.co.uk

www.heartofenglandcf.co.uk

🐦 HoECF
f HoECF
📷 [heartofenglandcf](#)

Registered Charity in England & Wales No: 1117345.
Registered Company Limited by Guarantee in England & Wales No. 5999452