Mid Suffolk

State of the District Report 2025

This is the third annual State of the District report produced by Mid Suffolk District Council. It tells the story of our district through data and insight, providing commentary on the strengths and challenges within Mid Suffolk and how these are changing over time.

The Suffolk Observatory

Curated by The Suffolk Office of Data & Analytics (SODA), The Suffolk Observatory provides access to a wealth of population and local area data and reports at county, district and ward level across a range of themes including population, housing, economy, crime, environment and deprivation.

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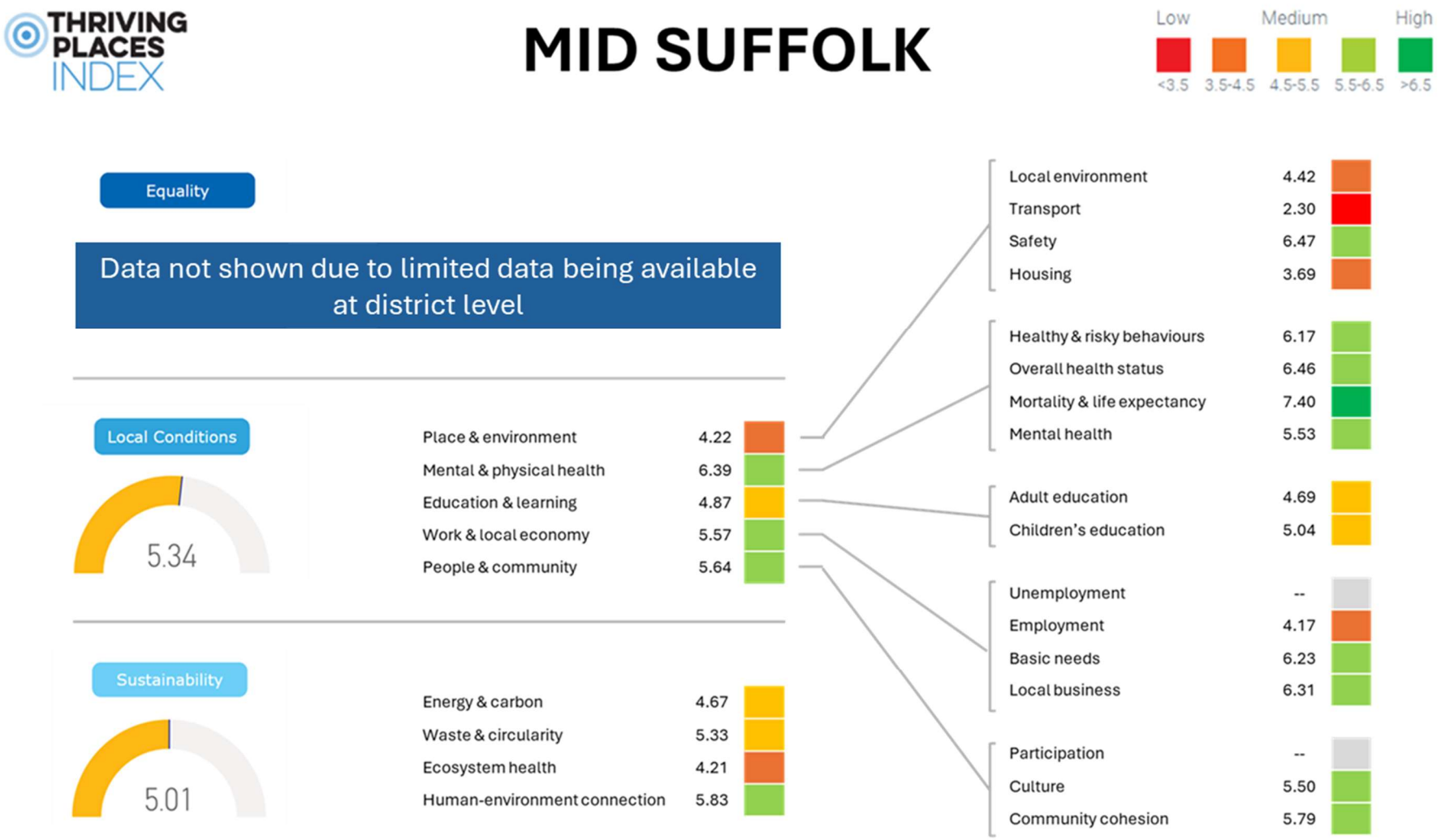
Contents

Introduction

- The Mid Suffolk State of the District Report 2024[1] highlighted a range of strengths and challenges in the district, many of which reflect its predominantly rural nature. These included:
    - An older-than-average population
    - High levels of local area satisfaction and pride
    - Better-than average levels of life expectancy and personal wellbeing
    - Higher-than-average levels of home and car ownership
    - Challenges related to the proximity of local services and employment centres
    - Significant challenges – shared nationally - in decarbonising the transport, domestic, industry and agricultural sectors, to meet Net Zero targets
    - Business growth, adult qualifications and workplace-based earnings (the earnings of those who work in the district) below regional and national averages
    - Housing affordability, aligned to a worsening of affordability nationally in recent decades
- Similar findings have been highlighted elsewhere, including the Thriving Places Index, produced by the Centre for Thriving Places.[2]
- The Thriving Places Index (TPI) shows how local authority areas compare to the rest of England on key factors that support the wellbeing of current and future generations. It is based on the broader Thriving Places Framework which has three headline domains: Local Conditions, Equality[3] and Sustainability, each comprised of a number of domains and subdomains.
- The score for each domain or subdomain is derived from one or more indicators that are available at the local authority level or can be calculated at that level.[4] Figure 1 summarises Mid Suffolk's position on the TPI in 2024, with scores for each of its domains and subdomains shown on a 0-10 scale, with 5 representing the average national score for the current year and a higher score indicating better relative performance.[5]
- The 2024 TPI highlighted scores for Mid Suffolk above the national average for the 'Mental and physical health', Work and local economy', 'People and community' and 'Human-environment connection' domains.[6]
- It highlighted scores below the national average for 'Place and environment' - related to transport, housing and (to a lesser extent) local environment – and 'Ecosystem health'.

[1] Available at: https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/w/the-mid-suffolk-plan
[2] https://www.centreforthrivingplaces.org/
[3] Data is not shown within this report for the Equality domain given limitations in the number of indicators that were available at district level for this domain.
[4] The TPI uses data from sources like the Office for National Statistics, Fingertips Public Health Data, the Understanding Society Survey, and the Index of Multiple Deprivation. It uses data that is available at the local authority level or can be calculated at that level. It also focuses on indicators that are current and can be updated regularly.
[5] Full details of the indicators and methodology used by the Thriving Places Index are available at: https://www.centreforthrivingplaces.org/thriving-places-index/about-the-thriving-places-index/
[6] The score for the human-environment connection domain is based on a single indicator – the percentage of adults that have visited 'green and natural spaces' in the past 2 weeks (using modelled estimates).

Figure 1: Thriving Places Index – Mid Suffolk district (2024)



- Table 1 – based on an analysis of the 2024 TPI scores conducted by Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils - describes the specific indicators which drive below average domain scores in Mid Suffolk.[7]

Table 1: Summary of TPI domains below the national average (2024)

TPI domain	TPI sub-domain	Commentary – key drivers of below-average scores
Place and environment	Transport	The TPI assesses the transport subdomain based on average journey times by public transport or walking to schools, food shops and GPs, and the percentage of adults walking or cycling for travel at least three days per week. As a predominantly rural district, there are understandable challenges related to the physical proximity of local services and employment centres. Travel habits and (above average) levels of car ownership in Mid Suffolk reflect the district's more rural nature.[8]
	Housing	The lower TPI score for housing is driven by housing affordability and the proportion of homes that fail to meet the Decent Homes Standard. Housing affordability has previously been highlighted as a challenge within Mid Suffolk. The 2023 data used by the TPI found that, based on workplace-based earnings (the earnings of those who work in the district), median house prices were 9.81 times median earnings in 2023, in line with the ratio of 9.76 seen across the East of England but above the ratio for England (8.26). Updated affordability ratios are discussed later within this report. Except for social-rented properties, Mid Suffolk has a higher-than-average proportion of 'non-decent homes' compared with the national average. Mid Suffolk's rural setting and associated (i.e. older and less energy efficient) housing stock is noted in relation to this.[9]
	Local environment	The lower TPI score for the local environment subdomain likely reflects lower-than-average scores in Mid Suffolk for: • The average distance (in metres) to the nearest park, public garden or playing field, which was 689m in Mid Suffolk in 2020, compared with 385m across England.

[7] The full dataset used in compiling the Thriving Places Index is not published by the Centre for Thriving Places, meaning any further analysis of the TPI is dependent on being able to access the source data. As such, it is not always possible to display or comment on the underlying data used by the Centre for Thriving Places to derive the TPI scores, particularly where these are based on recalculated or modelled data or where the data source or time period used for the analysis is unclear.

[8] Connectivity (based on average journey times to key services), travel habits and levels of car ownership, were discussed in the Connectivity section of the 2024 Mid Suffolk State of the District Report.

[9] For a dwelling to be considered 'decent' under the Decent Homes Standard, it must: a) meet the statutory minimum standard for housing (the Housing Health and Safety Rating System, since April 2006) - homes which contain a Category 1 hazard under the HHSRS are considered non-decent; b) provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort; c) be in a reasonable state of repair, and; d) have reasonably modern facilities and services. Commentary on the 2022-23 English Housing Survey results note that "Households living in villages and hamlets were about twice as likely to be in a non-decent home than those living in urban areas or towns and fringe areas. This is partially driven by homes in more rural areas tending to be older… older houses tend to be less energy efficient, have higher levels of disrepair, and are more likely to have serious hazards." Indeed, based on housing stock figures published by the Valuation Office Agency, around 20% of Mid Suffolk's housing stock was built prior to 1900, compared with 15% across England.

TPI domain	TPI sub-domain	Commentary – key drivers of below-average scores
		• The proportion that had access to a wood of at least 2ha within 500m of their home in 2020.[10]
Ecosystem health		The score for the ecosystem health domain was based on the following two indicators: • The proportion of all land that was non-developed (natural land use, agricultural, gardens, green spaces, water etc) in the previous year that is now developed. In Mid Suffolk, analysis of figures published by MHCLG suggest that the amount of undeveloped land fell by 0.13% between 2021 and 2022, compared with 0.09% across England. • The percentage of land in the area which is under tree cover - estimated at 8.5% by a Friends of the Earth study, compared with 12.8% across England.[11]

- The 2025 State of the District Report updates selected key measures from the 2024 report to show how these are changing, and draws on newly published data and evidence, including recently updated population projections.

[10] Although it has not been possible to access the raw data at local authority level, Figure 2.3.2 in the Woodland Trust's State of the UK's Woods and Trees 2021 report suggests that Mid Suffolk would fall below the 16.0% of people in England who had access to a wood of at least 2ha within 500m of their home in 2020.

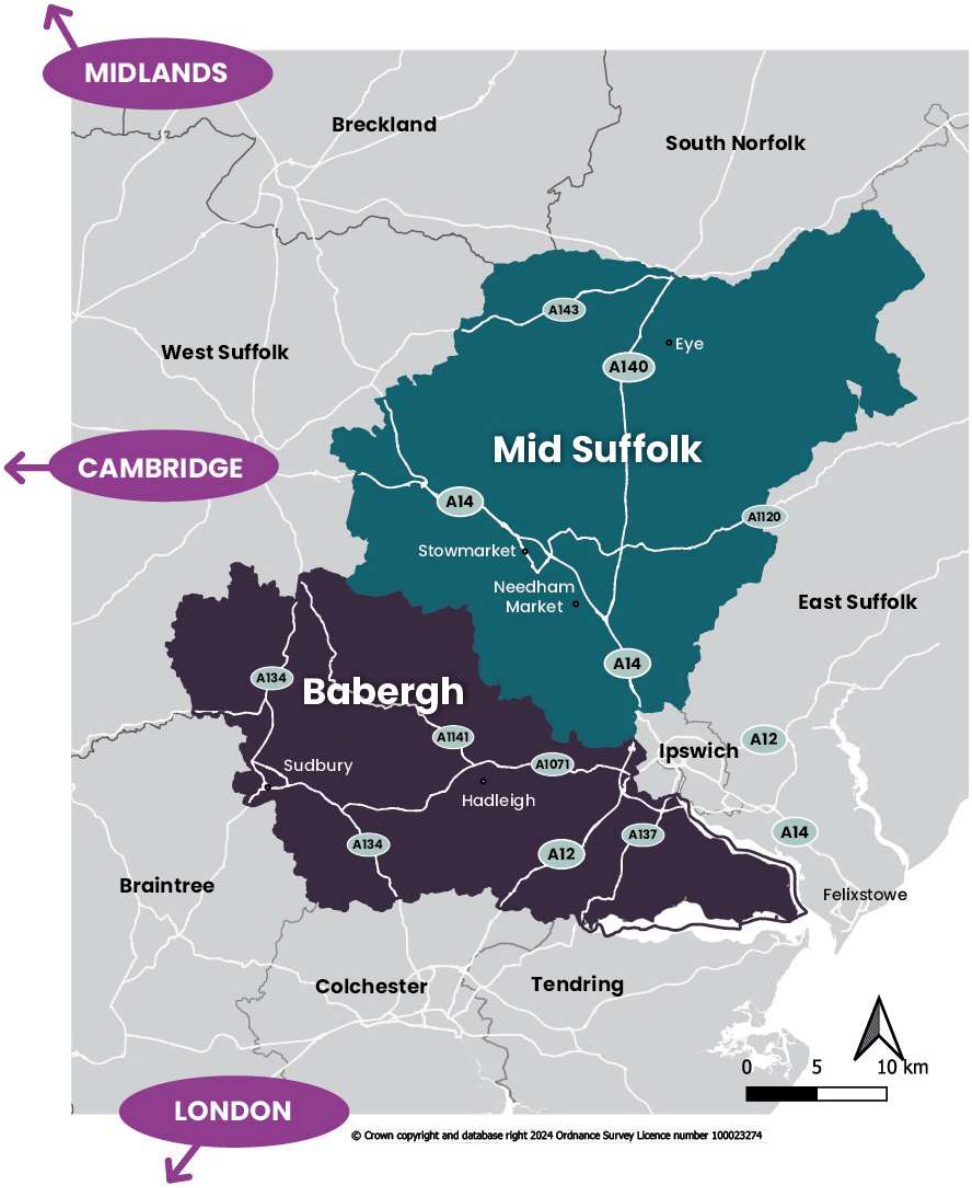
[11] Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council commissioned their own tree canopy survey in 2021. While this used a different methodology to the Friends of the Earth study, it also found that levels of tree cover in Mid Suffolk were below the national average (it found that on average, canopy cover sat at 8.5%, below the comparable average for England – based on the methodology used - of 16%). The rural setting of Mid Suffolk is suggested as one of the main reasons for this low canopy cover.

Setting and Population

Setting

- Mid Suffolk is a local authority district located in central Suffolk. It borders all four of Suffolk's other districts and boroughs[12], as well as the Norfolk districts of South Norfolk and Breckland to the north (Figure 2). Its main town is the historic market town of Stowmarket.[13]

Figure 2: Mid Suffolk location map



[12] West Suffolk, East Suffolk and Babergh districts, and the borough of Ipswich.

[13] At the 2021 Census, Stowmarket had a population of 21,535, based on built-up area classification. Built-up areas (BUAs) are derived from a process that uses satellite imagery to recognise the boundaries of built-up area development and identify individual built-up area settlements (equating to cities, towns, and villages).

- The district is predominantly rural in nature, with 73.5% of its population classed as living in a rural area, based on an analysis of Census 2021 data.[14] Over a third (35.7%) live more than 30 minutes away (by road travel) from a 'major town or city', defined as a built-up area with a population of 75,000 or more.
- Mid Suffolk is rich in heritage assets, with 3,465 listed buildings, 31 conservation areas and 36 scheduled monuments.[15]
- Its largest employment industries are manufacturing and construction (each responsible for 12.5% and 11.2% of employment in 2023), followed by health (responsible for 10.0% of employment) and transport and storage (responsible for 7.5% of employment).[16] Agriculture also represents an important sector, being responsible for 5.6% of employment.[17]
- Based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019, Mid Suffolk falls within the least deprived third of local authority areas in England. It has just two neighbourhoods (LSOAs)[18] within the 40% most deprived neighbourhoods in England, both of which are in Stowmarket.

English Indices of Deprivation

An updated release of the Indices of Deprivation is expected in late 2025. This will review, update, enhance and develop the English Indices of Deprivation from its most recent release in 2019.

This iteration will also include collaboration with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) to improve how deprivation in rural areas can be measured using small area administrative data.

[14] The Rural-Urban Classification User Guide provides a high-level summary of the 2021 Rural Urban Classification methodology. Available at: https://geoportal.statistics.gov.uk/documents/c8e8e6db38e04cb8937569d74bce277a/about

[15] Listed buildings are buildings of special architectural or historic interest and are legally protected. Conservation Areas are areas of special architectural or historical interest whose character and appearance are worth protecting or enhancing. This "specialness" is judged against local and regional criteria, rather than national importance, as is the case with listing. Scheduled monuments are sites, structures and buildings of historic, architectural, traditional, artistic or archaeological interest given legal protection by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979).

[16] Percentages are based on rounded estimates. Employment includes employees plus the number of working owners. Self-employed workers are therefore included as long as they are registered for VAT or Pay-As-You-Earn (PAYE) schemes. Self-employed people not registered for these, along with HM Forces and Government Supported trainees are excluded. Working owners are typically sole traders, sole proprietors or partners who receive drawings or a share of the profits.

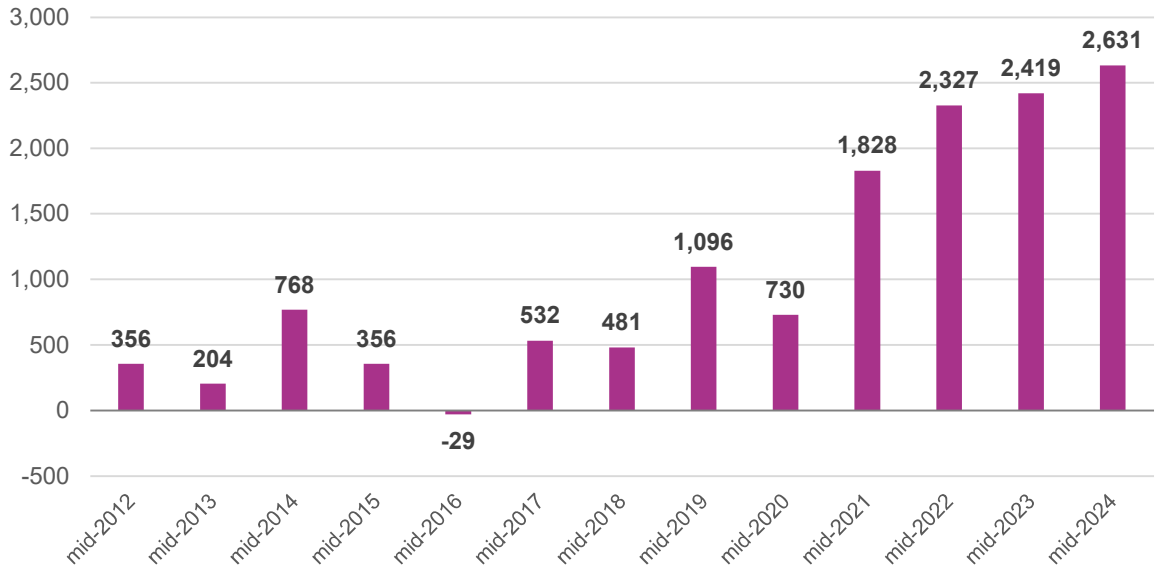
[17] Nationally the Agriculture, forestry and fishing sector is responsible for 1.2% of employment in England.

[18] Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are geographic areas which comprise between 400 and 1,200 households and have a usually resident population between 1,000 and 3,000 persons.

Population growth

- In June 2024, Mid Suffolk had an estimated population of 110,775. This represented an increase of 14.1% (up 13,699 persons from 97,076) since mid-2011. During the same period, the estimated population increased by 7.7% across Suffolk[19], 12.2% across the East of England and 10.4% across England.
- Over the period mid-2011 to mid-2020, the population grew by an estimated 4,494 persons. Since 2020, the rate of growth increased where, between mid-2020 and mid-2024, Mid Suffolk's population grew by an estimated 9,205 persons. Figure 3 shows the annual net changes in population since 2011.[20]

Figure 3: Annual net population change (Mid Suffolk mid-2012 to mid-2024 estimates)



Office for National Statistics (ONS): mid-year population estimates (mid-2024)

- Figure 4 and Table 2 show the mid-2024 population in Mid Suffolk by age against the mid-2011 population. Compared with 2011, there were an additional 3,000 persons in the 25-34 age category in 2024, an increase of a third. As the 2011 population has aged – alongside changes resulting from migration and natural change – the number of residents in the 35-49 age category has declined by 1,350 with the number in the 50-64 age category increasing by around 3,500. During the same period, the number of residents aged 65 and over increased by more than 40%, resulting in an additional 8,661 residents in this age group in 2024, compared with 2011.

[19] Rates of population growth between mid-2011 and mid-2024 varied between Suffolk's five districts and borough, with lower rates of growth seen in East Suffolk (4.1%) and Ipswich (4.9%), and higher rates in West Suffolk (9.9%), Babergh (10.4%) and Mid Suffolk (14.1%).

[20] It is noted by the Office for National Statistics that population estimates for the years immediately following a census year tend to be more accurate than those immediately prior to a census year.

Figure 4: Population in Mid Suffolk (mid-2024) by age

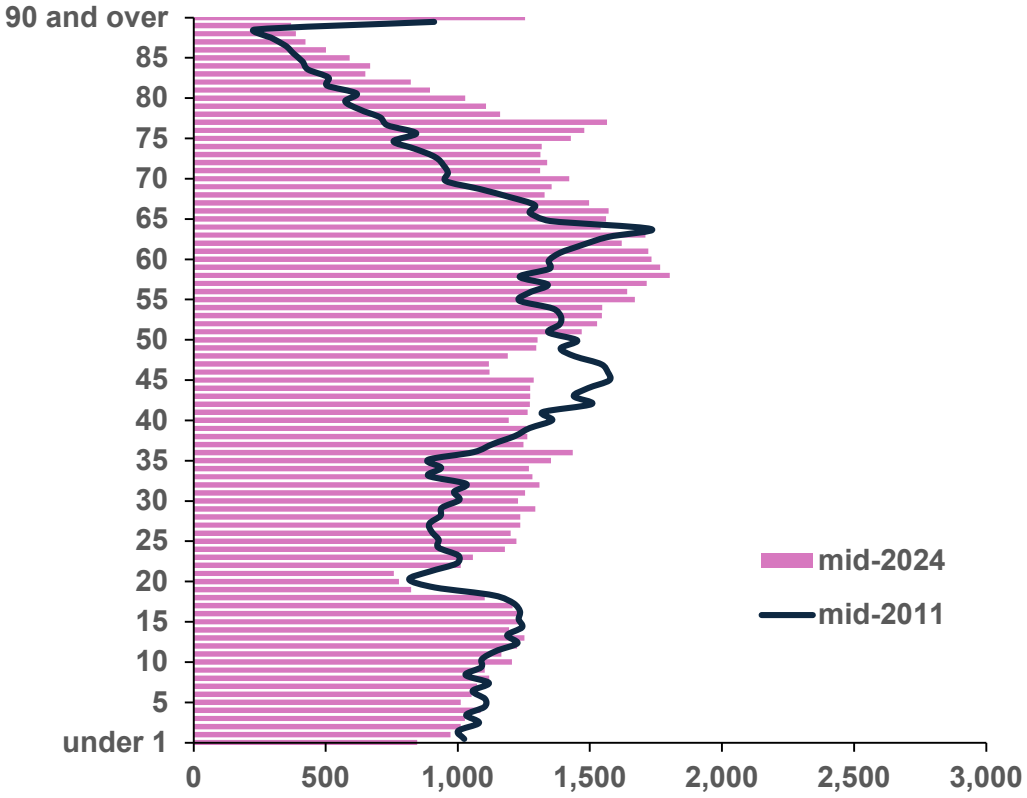


Table 2: Population change in Mid Suffolk (mid-2011 to mid-2024) by banded age

Age band	Mid-2011	Mid-2024	Absolute change (2011 to 2024)	% change (2011 to 2024)
0-15	17,751 (18%)	17,577 (16%)	-174	-1.0%
16-24	9,130 (9%)	9,146 (8%)	+16	+0.2%
25-34	9,443 (10%)	12,535 (11%)	+3,092	+32.7%
35-49	20,204 (21%)	18,854 (17%)	-1,350	-6.7%
50-64	20,861 (21%)	24,315 (22%)	+3,454	+16.6%
65-79	14,475 (15%)	20,756 (19%)	+6,281	+43.4%
80 and over	5,212 (5%)	7,592 (7%)	+2,380	+45.7%
Total	**97,076**	**110,775**	**+13,699**	**+14.1%**

Office for National Statistics (ONS): mid-year population estimates (mid-2024)

Population projections

- The 2022-based subnational population projections (published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in June 2025) provide statistics on the potential future size and age structure of the population in England for local authorities and health geographies.
- Taking the mid-2022 population estimates as the starting point, the projected local authority populations for each year are calculated by ageing on the population from the previous year, applying local fertility and mortality rates to calculate the number of projected births and deaths, and then adjusting for migration into and out of each local authority. Projections have been produced for a 25-year period, to 2047.

Interpreting subnational population projections

Projected population change is the result of assumptions about future births, deaths and migration, sometimes known as components of population change. For each local authority in England, ONS collect data on components of change to project these trends forward. It should be noted that:

- Subnational population projections are not forecasts and do not attempt to predict potential changes in international migration. There is uncertainty over future directions and levels of international migration.
- The data used for the subnational projections may not necessarily capture the entire local context in which population change occurs. At the local level, population change is influenced by many factors not considered in the projections, such as economic development and housing policies.
- Demographic behaviour used to develop assumptions for projections is inherently uncertain and so projections become increasingly uncertain the further they are carried forward. This is particularly so for smaller geographical areas.

Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS)

- The population in Mid Suffolk is projected to increase from 105,726 people in 2022 to 131,400 people in 2047, an increase of 24.3% or 25,674 people (Table 3). This is above the national (England) average of 14.5%.
- Over the same period, the population of Suffolk is projected to increase by 13.1% (100,527 people), from 768,719 in 2022 to 869,246 in 2047. Projections vary between Suffolk's five districts and borough, with the population projected to decrease by 0.1% in Ipswich and increase by 12.2% in East Suffolk, 15.1% in West Suffolk and 18.5% in Babergh.

Table 3: Projected population in Mid Suffolk to 2047 (2022-based)

Year	Projected population	Projected increase from 2022	
		Number	%
2022 (base year)	105,726	-	-
2032	118,492	12,766	12.1%
2037	123,368	17,642	16.7%
2042	127,587	21,861	20.7%
2047	131,400	25,674	24.3%

Office for National Statistics (ONS): 2022-based subnational population projections

- Figure 5 and Table 4 shows the projected 2047 population by age against the 2022 base year. Overall, the number of residents aged 0-24 is expected to remain broadly similar to the 2022 base-year.
- Increases are projected, to differing degrees, across the other age groups, including the 35-49 age group, which is projected to grow by around 40% (6,973 persons). Most notably, the number of people aged 80 and over is projected to more than double, from 6,980 in 2022 to 14,937 in 2047 (an increase of 7,957).

Figure 5: Projected population in Mid Suffolk in 2047 (2022-based) by age

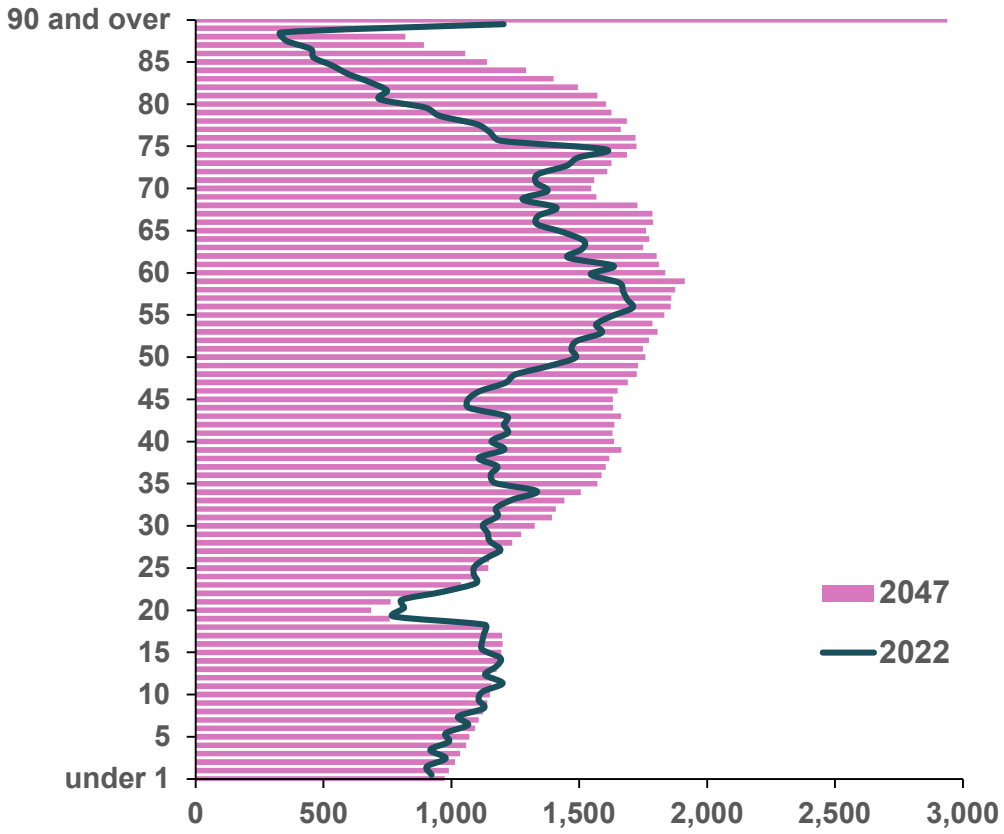


Table 4: Projected population in Mid Suffolk (2022-based) by banded age (2022-2047)

Age band	2022 (base year)	2047 population projections	Absolute change (2022 to 2047)	% change (2022 to 2047)
0-15	16,957 (16%)	17,649 (13%)	+692	+4.1%
16-24	8,929 (8%)	8,788 (7%)	-141	-1.6%
25-34	11,762 (11%)	13,083 (10%)	+1,321	+11.2%
35-49	17,700 (17%)	24,673 (19%)	+6,973	+39.4%
50-64	23,609 (22%)	27,191 (21%)	+3,582	+15.2%
65-79	19,789 (19%)	25,085 (19%)	+5,296	+26.8%
80 and over	6,980 (7%)	14,937 (11%)	+7,957	+114.0%
Total	**105,726**	**131,400**	**+25,674**	**+24.3%**

Office for National Statistics (ONS): 2022-based subnational population projections

An ageing population

An ageing population presents a complex set of economic, public service and societal challenges and opportunities.

Economically, it places increased pressure on public finances due to rising costs in pensions, healthcare and social care provision, alongside a reduction in the relative size of the working population and the associated tax base. Potential skills shortages may occur in key sectors.

Public services can expect heightened demand for health and social care, lifetime[21] or accessible housing, age-friendly transport, and wellbeing initiatives that support older adults in maintaining independence and quality of life.

At the same time, an ageing population presents a range of societal benefits, including increased civic participation (e.g. volunteering, mentoring, and community leadership), the retention of experience and knowledge in workplaces through longer working lives and part-time work, and the growth of new markets for products and services tailored to older adults. An ageing population also creates both a demand and increased opportunity for providing care for family members.

Further reading: Ageing Well in Suffolk - Suffolk Annual Public Health Report 2024. Available at: https://www.healthysuffolk.org.uk/jsna/annual-public-health-reports/annual-public-health-report-2024

[21] Lifetime housing refers to properties designed and built to be easily adaptable to the changing needs of individuals and families throughout their lives, supporting people as they age or experience changes in mobility or health.

Climate Change and Environment

Climate change and Net Zero

- The Met Office report that general climate change trends projected over UK land for the 21st century show "an increased chance of warmer, wetter winters and hotter, drier summers along with an increase in the frequency and intensity of extremes."[22] Indeed, the frequency of days reaching a 28°C threshold has increased nearly everywhere across the UK, with the frequency of 'hot days' highest across East Anglia and South East England.[23]
- Risks posed by climate change include: [24]
    - Increased risks to health, wellbeing and productivity from high temperatures.
    - Increased coastal area, river and localised surface flooding.
    - Water shortages.
    - Damage to ecosystems and biodiversity loss.
    - Changes in seasonality, decreased crop yields and food insecurity.
    - Conflict and climate-related migration.
    - Higher incidence of damage to buildings and infrastructure caused by extreme weather events.
    - Restricted access to finance, investment and insurance.
- Suffolk's six councils[25] each declared a climate emergency in 2019, where they committed to investigate ways in which they could reduce their own greenhouse gas emissions, as well as supporting the Suffolk-wide aspiration of the county achieving net zero emissions by 2030.[26]

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils' Carbon Reduction Management Plan

In 2019, Mid Suffolk District Council together with Babergh District Council declared a climate emergency. This included the ambition for the councils to achieve net zero emissions by 2030 across its estates and operations.

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils' Carbon Reduction Management Plan highlights the steps the councils are taking to combat climate change and reports on the councils' progress towards achieving net zero carbon emissions.

Further reading: Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils' Carbon Reduction Management Plan. Available at: https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/combatting-climate-change

[22] Met Office (2022) UK Climate Projections: Headline Findings. Available at: https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/binaries/content/assets/metofficegovuk/pdf/research/ukcp/ukcp18_headline_findings_v4_aug22.pdf

[23] See for example, Kendon et al (2025) State of the UK Climate in 2024. Available at: https://rmets.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/joc.70010

[24] Taken from the Met Office (https://weather.metoffice.gov.uk/climate-change/effects-of-climate-change) and HM Government (2022) UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2022 (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/61e54d8f8fa8f505985ef3c7/climate-change-risk-assessment-2022.pdf)

[25] Suffolk County Council and Suffolk's five district and borough councils.

[26] https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/planning-waste-and-environment/climate-action/suffolk-climate-emergency-plan

- During the same year, the UK Government amended the Climate Change Act 2008 by introducing a target for at least a 100% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (compared to 1990 levels) in the UK by 2050, otherwise known as a net zero target.[27] Before this amendment, the UK had a long-term emissions reduction target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2050, compared to 1990 levels, set by the original 2008 Act.

The Balanced Pathway

The Climate Change Committee (CCC) was established under the Climate Change Act 2008 and advises the UK and devolved governments on reducing emissions and adapting to the impacts of climate change.

The Balanced Pathway represents the Climate Change Committee's assessment of the UK's best path to reach Net Zero by 2050, based on the latest evidence and data.[28] The pathway is based on:

- The roll-out of electric and low-carbon technologies
- Reductions in demand for high-carbon activities

It suggests that most emissions can be eliminated to almost completely decarbonise the majority of sectors. However, it notes that some emissions are expected to remain in sectors with no credible way to completely decarbonise by 2050 (with agriculture and aviation forming the main sources of residual emissions). The pathway therefore recognises the need for greenhouse gas removals through land use sinks[29] and engineered removals[30] alongside emissions reductions.

The CCC note that emissions reductions to date have been driven by strong progress in decarbonising the electricity supply through the phase-out of coal and the growth in renewables; going forward, emissions reductions will need to speed up quickly in most other sectors, including surface transport, buildings, and agriculture and land use, alongside continued progress in the electricity sector.

Greenhouse gas emissions

- The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero publish annual estimates of greenhouse gas emissions produced within each local authority area.[31] The greenhouse gases covered by these statistics are carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide.

[27] Net zero (as opposed to absolute zero where no emissions are created) recognises that some emissions can remain if they are offset e.g. by removal from the atmosphere.
[28] See the Seventh Carbon Budget, published in February 2025 by the Climate Change Committee. Available at: https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/the-seventh-carbon-budget/
[29] Woodland creation, peatland restoration, and other land use changes can build the UK's land use sinks by enabling them to sequester more CO_2 and reducing emissions that come from land use.
[30] Emerging technologies to actively remove greenhouse gases from the atmosphere and their long-term storage, mostly underground. Examples include bioenergy with carbon capture and storage (BECCS) and direct air capture and storage (DACCS).
[31] In the statistics most emissions are allocated to sectors and locations based on the point where the emission occurred, other than for emissions related to energy supply and waste. Energy supply emissions, e.g. from power stations, are allocated on an "end-user" basis where emissions are distributed to sectors and locations

- Readers should note the following, which means that the data reported below supersedes the historic emissions data included in previous State of the District reports:

  In the production of the 2023 estimates, new data were introduced, together with some improvements to the underlying methodology. To ensure that the data for 2005 to 2022 are consistent with the data now available for 2023, the estimates for these years have been revised to incorporate both the new data and the improvements in the underlying methodology. For some local authority areas, these revisions have resulted in noticeable changes to the emissions estimates in the earlier years for some sectors. [32]

- In 2023 (the latest year for which estimates are available at local authority level), Mid Suffolk accounted for 17.7% of greenhouse gas emissions in Suffolk. Per capita emissions were above the county and regional averages at 6.6 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent per person (compared with 5.2 tonnes per person across Suffolk, 5.4 tonnes per person across the East of England and 4.8 tonnes per person across England) (Table 5).
- Local authority areas with higher emissions per capita are generally a mixture of those with large industrial sites and those with relatively low populations compared to the size of the area or the activities that take place there that produce emissions. The latter group are often in more rural areas. Conversely, the areas with the lowest emissions per capita are typically built-up areas with high resident populations.

Table 5: Suffolk district and borough greenhouse gas emissions (2023)

Local Authority	Total emissions (kt CO_2e)	% of Suffolk's total emissions	Population ('000s, mid-year estimate)	Per Capita Emissions (tCO_2e)	Area (km^2)	Emissions per km^2 (kt CO_2e)
Babergh	479.2	11.9%	95.9	5.0	611.6	0.8
East Suffolk	1,195.9	29.7%	247.1	4.8	1,294.8	0.9
Ipswich	406.7	10.1%	139.4	2.9	40.3	10.1
Mid Suffolk	713.6	17.7%	108.0	6.6	871.1	0.8
West Suffolk	1,237.3	30.7%	186.1	6.6	1,034.7	1.2
Suffolk Total	**4,032.7**	**-**	**776.4**	**5.2**	**3,852.5**	**1.0**

Source: UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero

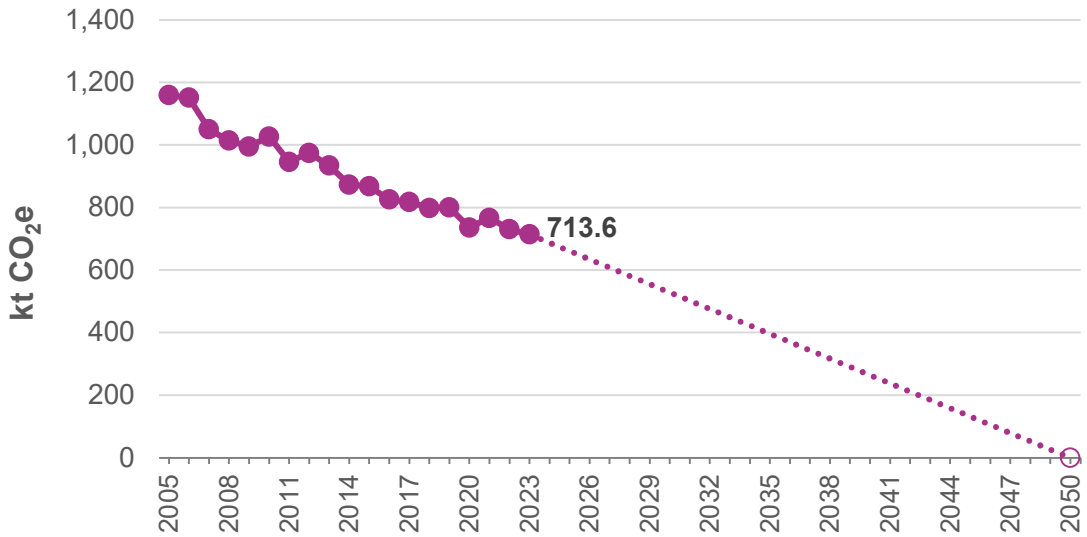
- Between 2005 and 2023, greenhouse gas emissions in Mid Suffolk fell from 1,159.5 kilotonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (kt CO_2e) to 713.6 kt CO_2e, a reduction of 445.9 kt CO_2e (or 38%) (Figure 6). This was below the percentage decrease in emissions seen nationally and across Suffolk (both of which saw a 46% reduction over this period) but in line with the percentage decrease seen across the East of England (39%).

based on where the "end-use" of the energy occurred. Emissions from waste have been spatially distributed using an approach analogous to the fuel end-user basis, distributing UK total emissions from waste proportionally to the waste arising in each local authority, rather than to the location of waste management facilities. Given emissions from the production of goods are assigned to where the production takes place, emissions from the production of goods which are imported are excluded.

[32] Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (2025), UK local and regional greenhouse gas emissions statistics, 2005-2023. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/686538ace6c3cc924228943a/2023-local-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-statistics-statistical-release.pdf

Figure 6: Mid Suffolk total greenhouse gas emissions 2005-2023 (kt CO_2e)

Chart shows straight-line path from 2023 to Net Zero by 2050

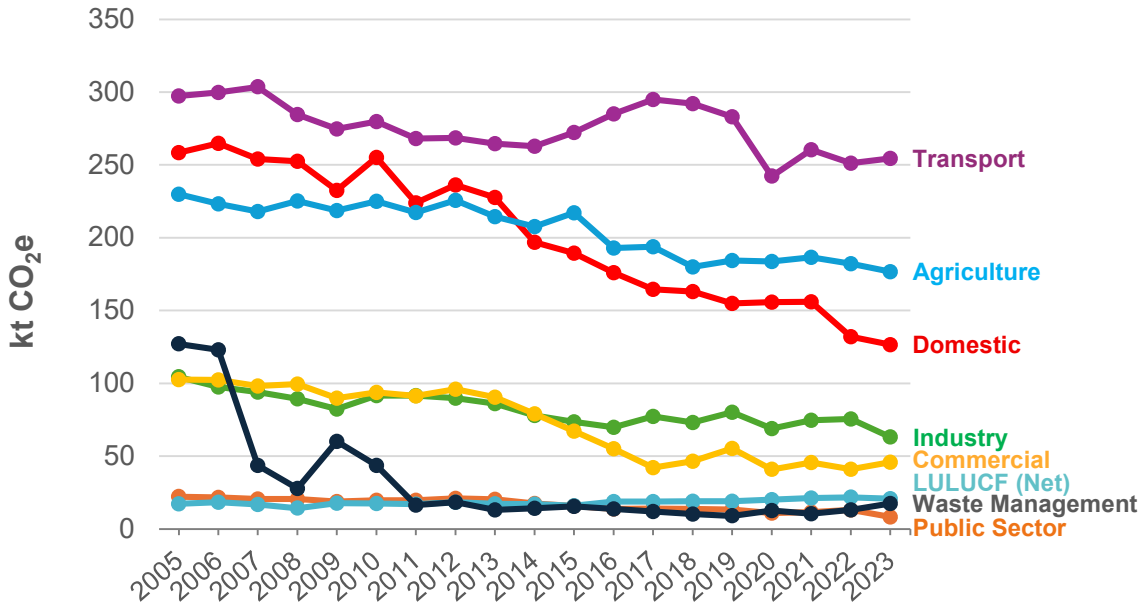


Source: UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero

- By sector, emissions have fallen by around half in the domestic, commercial sectors and industry sectors, driven by supply-side emissions decreases resulting from phasing out coal for electricity generation, including the growth of renewables. Nationally, waste management sector emissions have fallen significantly over the past two decades due to reductions in waste being landfilled. At the same time, emissions in sectors such as agriculture and transport have reduced to a lesser extent (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Mid Suffolk greenhouse gas emissions by sector 2005-2023 (kt CO_2e)

Chart excludes land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) sector



Source: UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero

- Transport accounts for 36% of total greenhouse gas emissions in Mid Suffolk, with the majority of road transport emissions (167.9 kt CO_2e of 245.4 kt CO_2e) from A road traffic. In this respect, it is noted that a quantity of Mid Suffolk's greenhouse gas emissions will be the result of traffic passing through the district on roads such as the A14, as opposed to within-district travel.
- The land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) sector consists of both emissions and removals from forest land, cropland, grassland, wetlands and settlements. It is the only sector that includes emission removals and therefore can show a net removal of greenhouse gases or a net contribution to emissions. In Mid Suffolk, the LULUCF sector accounted for overall net emissions of 20.8 kt CO_2e in 2023, although included in this were net removals of 23.4 kt CO_2e from forest land and 12.6 kt CO_2e from grassland.

Plug-in and electric cars

Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Mandate

In January 2024, the government introduced a zero emission vehicle (ZEV) mandate for car manufacturers, intended to provide greater certainty to manufacturers, and provide a greater range of electric vehicle (EV) options to consumers. The mandate specifies the minimum proportion of car manufacturers' sales that must be zero-emission vehicles. This will increase from 22% in 2024 to 80% by 2030, and 100% in 2035.

In April 2025 the government confirmed an end to the sale of new pure petrol or diesel cars in 2030. It also set an end to new pure petrol-diesel vans in 2035, and that the sale of hybrid cars would be permitted between 2030 and 2035.[33]

- At the end of December 2024, there were 2,571 plug-in cars registered to both private and company owners in Mid Suffolk (comprising 1,533 battery electric and 1,038 plug-in hybrid[34] cars). This was around twice the number registered at the end of December 2022.
- With a total of 68,804 cars registered to owners in Mid Suffolk at the end of December 2024, plug-in cars therefore accounted for 3.7% of all cars registered in the district, of

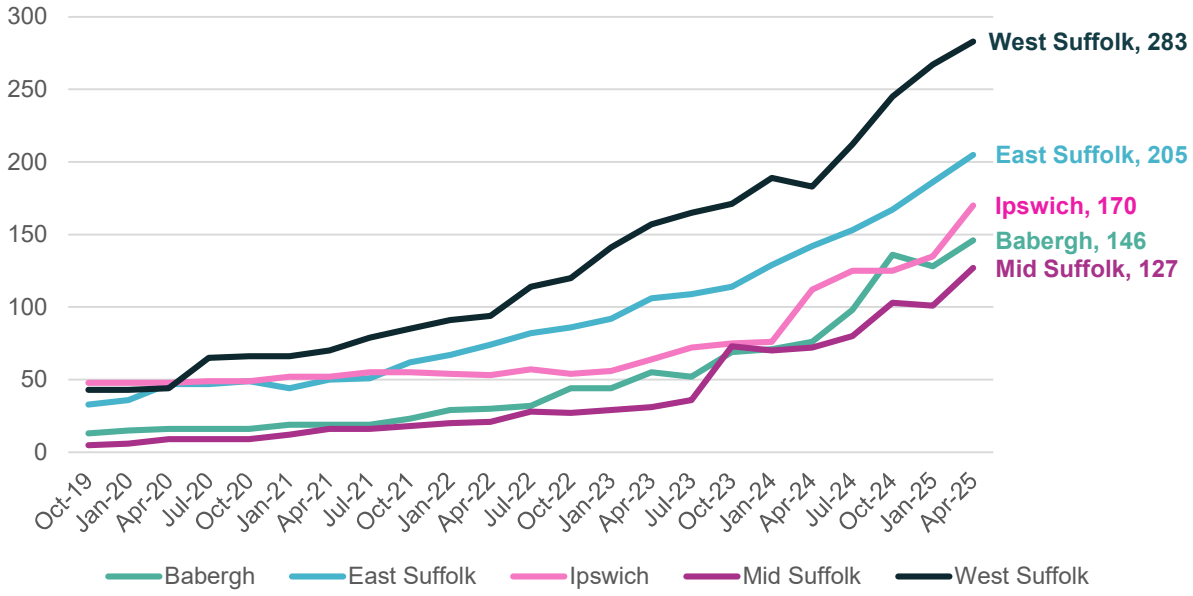
[33] Information taken from a House of Commons Library research briefing on Electric vehicles and infrastructure published in June 2025: https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-7480/
The briefing notes that full battery electric or hydrogen fuel cell vehicles are classified as zero emissions vehicles on the basis that they produce zero carbon emissions at the tailpipe, stating that: "The total greenhouse gas emissions from an EV are known as its "lifecycle emissions". These combine the emissions from manufacturing the vehicle (which tend to be higher than manufacturing internal-combustion vehicles), powering the vehicle through its life (which tend to be lower than powering internal-combustion vehicles), and decommissioning the batteries at the end of their life. Calculations of lifecycle emissions vary based on the methodology and assumptions used. The International Energy Agency's lifecycle emission comparisons calculates that in the UK, a medium sized EV has higher manufacturing emissions that an internal-combustion engine equivalent, but the lower emissions from powering the EV mean its cumulative emissions are lower after 3 years of use. There are various other environmental considerations related to EVs, including the use of critical minerals in batteries, which have challenges with sustainable extraction, and how best to recycle or reuse batteries."

[34] This figure also includes range-extended electric vehicles (with 28 such vehicles registered in Mid Suffolk) which are plug-in electric vehicles that employ a small petrol or diesel combustion engine to serve as a generator to top up the battery when it runs low.

which battery electric cars accounted for 2.2%. In comparison, 3.5% of registered cars in the East of England and 4.0% in England were battery electric at the end of December 2024.

- A 'Suffolk: EV Ready' report, commissioned to support Suffolk County Council's EV Strategy 2023-2028, provided projections on electric vehicle (EV) car ownership.[35] This suggested that by 2025, the uptake of EVs (including plug-in hybrids) would amount to 4,911 EV cars owned by residents across Mid Suffolk, amounting to 8% of total vehicle ownership.[36] By 2030, this was forecasted to increase to 19,906 EVs owned, amounting to 30% of all vehicle ownership.
- As of April 2025, Mid Suffolk had 127 publicly available electric vehicle charging points, including 9 rapid chargers (Figure 8). This was four times the number in April 2023 (31). This equated to 120.1 charging points per 100,000 population, compared with 121.1 per 100,000 across Suffolk, 91.1 per 100,000 across the East of England and 115.4 per 100,000 across England (Figure 9).

Figure 8: Number of publicly available electric vehicle charging points by Suffolk local authority district (October 2019 – April 2025)[37]

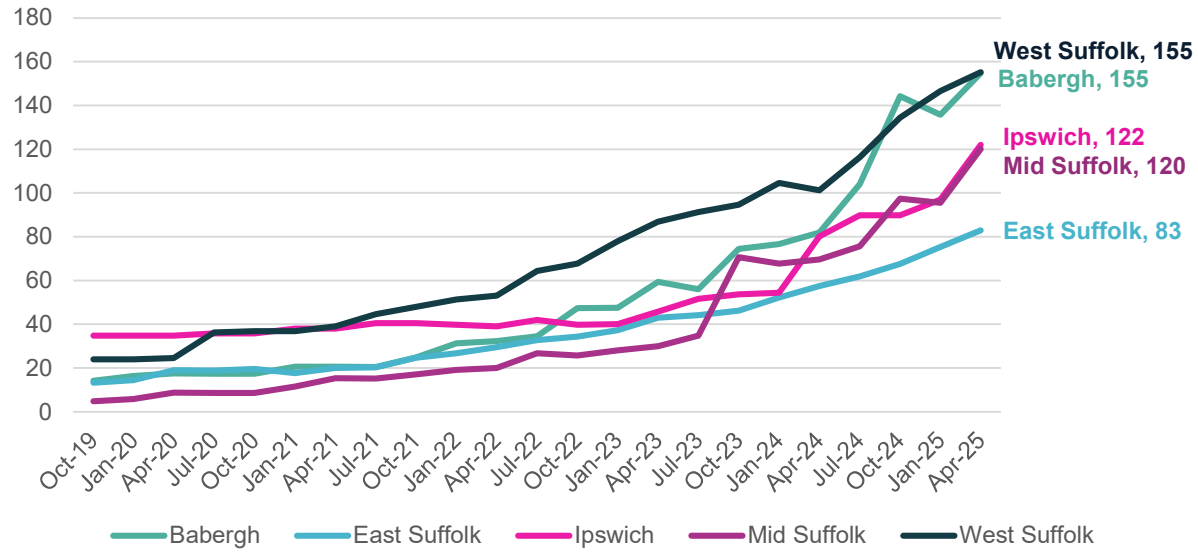


[35] In 2022, the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership commissioned WSP to assess the current provision, future demand, and requirements for electric vehicle charging infrastructure in Suffolk.

[36] In its 2024 inquiry into EV strategy, the House of Lords Environment and Climate Change Committee said that progress is not happening fast enough and demand for electric cars is being constrained due to their upfront cost, inadequate charging infrastructure and general consumer scepticism. Available at: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld5804/ldselect/ldenvcl/51/5103.htm#_idTextAnchor001

[37] Decommissioned charging devices are also removed from the total number. An increase in devices between two points in time therefore reflects the net increase in that period rather than the number of installations in that period.

Figure 9: Number of publicly available electric vehicle charging points per 100,000 population by Suffolk local authority district (October 2019 – April 2025)



Source: Electric Vehicle Public Charging Infrastructure Statistics, Department for Transport (DfT)

Domestic energy efficiency

- An Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) is needed whenever a property is built, sold or rented. An EPC contains information about a property's energy use, typical energy costs, and recommendations about how to reduce energy use and save money. It gives a property an energy efficiency rating from 'A' (most efficient) to a 'G' (least efficient).[38]
- During 2024, the Building Research Establishment (BRE) - on behalf of Suffolk's county, district and borough councils - undertook a series of modelling exercises on Suffolk's private sector housing stock, which included modelled estimates of EPC ratings for each district and borough.[39]
- BRE's estimates showed that around one-in-five privately-owned dwellings[40] in Mid Suffolk (21%) had the lowest EPC ratings of F or G, with just over three-quarters (77%) having an EPC rating below band C (Table 6).

[38] While EPCs display various metrics about a building's energy performance, the headline metric serves as the primary indicator of its overall energy efficiency. For domestic buildings, the Energy Efficiency Rating (EER) is the headline metric, calculated using modelled energy costs per square metre based on standardised heating patterns, temperatures, and fixed fuel price assumptions.
However, there are recognised flaws; the EER is based on assumptions about fuel costs, which can rapidly become outdated as relative fuel prices fluctuate and lead to unintended outcomes. For instance, installing a heat pump could reduce the EER due to the higher relative cost of electricity compared to gas, despite heat pumps being an efficient low-carbon heating solution.
Recognising concerns that the current EPC metrics may not provide a sufficiently rounded picture of performance, the government consulted in early 2025 on a number of proposed Reforms to the Energy Performance of Buildings Framework (see https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/reforms-to-the-energy-performance-of-buildings-regime/reforms-to-the-energy-performance-of-buildings-regime).
[39] Full report available at: https://www.suffolkobservatory.info/housing/housing-conditions/
[40] This includes both owner-occupied and privately rented properties. It excludes housing owned by the local authority or a housing association.

Table 6: Percentage of private sector stock by EPC rating band by Suffolk local authority (modelled estimates)[41]

EPC rating band	Babergh	East Suffolk	Ipswich	Mid Suffolk	West Suffolk	Suffolk TOTAL
A	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	**0.0%**
B	0.9%	0.6%	0.9%	1.4%	1.7%	**1.1%**
C	19.2%	16.7%	19.3%	21.7%	25.7%	**20.5%**
D	41.8%	49.1%	51.3%	34.9%	43.3%	**44.1%**
E	20.9%	21.9%	24.9%	21.4%	18.5%	**21.5%**
F	13.2%	8.7%	3.0%	15.7%	8.6%	**9.8%**
G	4.0%	3.0%	0.5%	4.9%	2.3%	**2.9%**

Source: Building Research Establishment (BRE), 2024

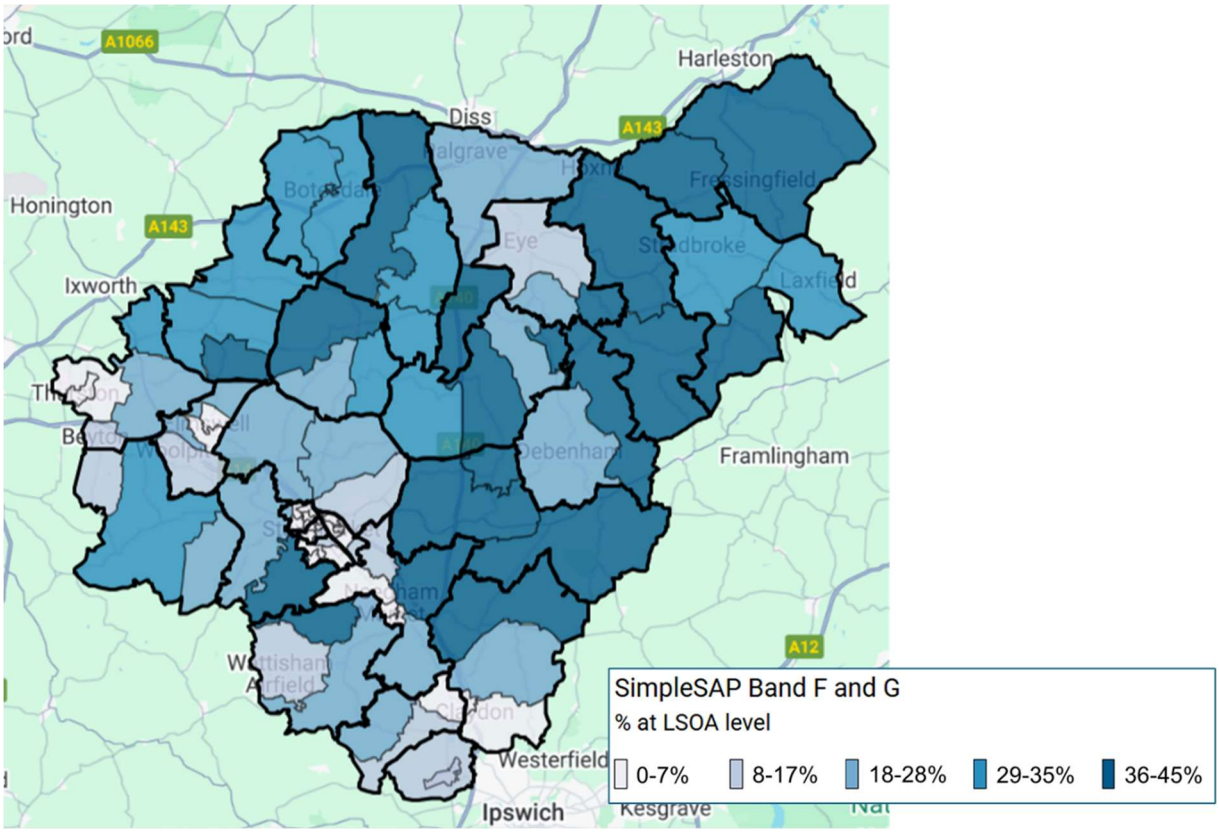
- BRE also estimated that 16% of private sector dwellings in Mid Suffolk (12% across Suffolk) are required to spend more than 10% of their income on fuel to maintain an adequate level of warmth.[42] Related to this, BRE note the rural nature of large areas of Suffolk that have the potential for older, larger and detached houses that are difficult and/or more expensive to heat.
- Indeed, at Census 2021, almost half of all Mid Suffolk households (47%) lived in a detached property (compared with 23% across England) and 30% of households had 4 or more bedrooms. Nearly one-in-three households relied on oil as a single source of heating. Additionally, a higher-than-average proportion of Mid Suffolk's housing stock was built prior to 1900 (around 19% compared with 15% nationally).[43]
- Figure 10 shows, by locality, the proportion of the housing stock in Mid Suffolk with an EPC rating of F or G, with higher proportions observed in more rural areas.

[41] The data reported by BRE are based on modelled results. This approach was taken, as opposed to using lodged EPC rating data since EPC records do not cover the whole stock (64% of the stock in Suffolk is covered and EPC ratings are modelled for the remaining stock).

[42] An adequate level of warmth is usually defined as 21°C for the main living area, and 18°C for other occupied rooms. This broad definition of fuel costs also includes modelled spending on water heating, lights, appliances, and cooking.

[43] Valuation Office Agency, Council Tax: stock of properties, 2024.

Figure 10: Percentage of housing stock with a modelled EPC rating band of F or G in Mid Suffolk by Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA)[44] (modelled estimates)



Source: Building Research Establishment (BRE)

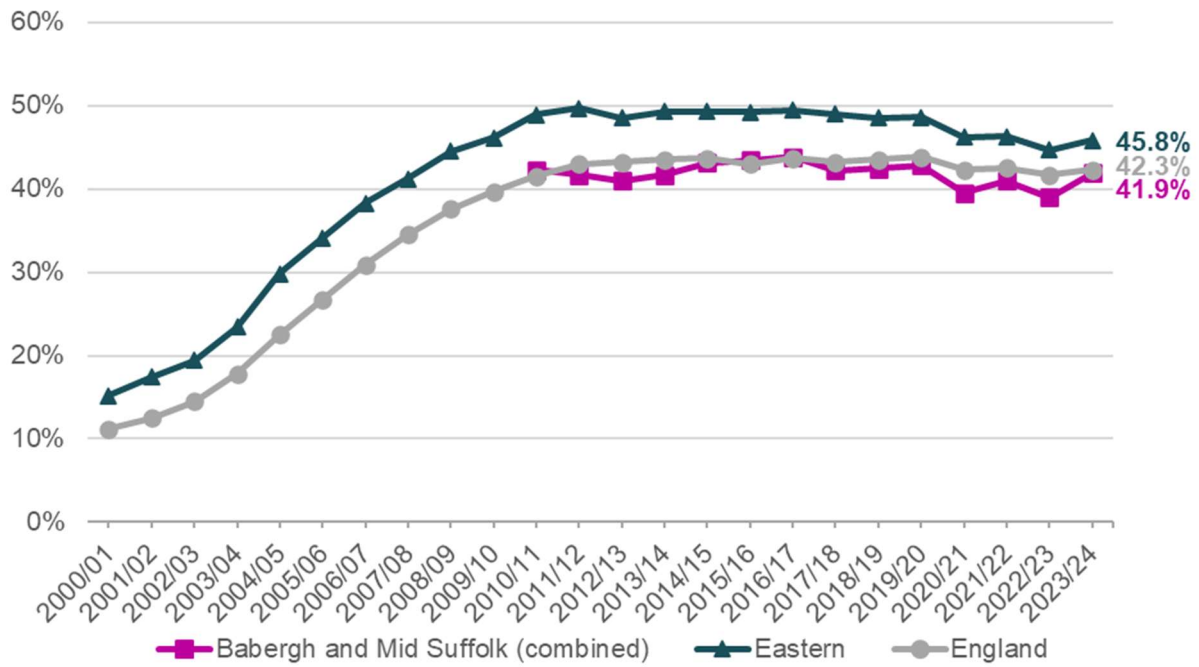
Household waste and recycling

- 'Household waste' is a measure of local authority collected waste from households, as well as from street bins, street sweepings, gully-emptying, parks and grounds waste, soil, and compost-like output.
- In 2023/24, the average 'household waste' recycling rate (the percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting) across England was 42.3%, a 0.6 percentage point increase from 2022/23. Significant variation was seen at the individual local authority level, ranging from 15.8% to 62.9%.
- Within Babergh and Mid Suffolk (both districts combined), the 'household waste' recycling rate stood at 41.9% in 2023/24, an increase of 2.9 percentage points from 2022/23 (Figure 11). This was below the average rate of 45.8% seen across the Eastern region.[45]

[44] Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are geographic areas which comprise between 400 and 1,200 households and have a usually resident population between 1,000 and 3,000 persons.

[45] 'Household waste' recycling is often similar in adjacent authorities. However, at a regional level, there is considerable variation across authorities, influenced by how heavily populated an area is, the kind of housing present, and the level of other organic or garden waste collected. As an example, in built-up areas with a higher proportion of flats, residents may find it difficult or be unwilling to store waste for recycling; and will not be producing garden waste for collection. This will reduce recycling rates for these authorities. Similarly, authorities with higher recycling rates are likely to be advantaged by good householder response to recycling schemes and a higher tonnage of organic or garden waste being collected.

Figure 11: Household waste recycling rates, 2001/02 – 2023/24
(Babergh and Mid Suffolk combined)



Source: Local Authority Collected Waste Statistics - Local Authority data, Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (Defra)

Introduction of 'Better Recycling' in England

By 31 March 2026, local authorities will be required to collect the same waste streams from all households in England, namely:

- residual (non-recyclable) waste
- food waste
- paper and card
- all other dry recyclable materials (plastic, metal and glass)

The Better Recycling legislation aims to make items collected for recycling consistent across the country and improve national recycling rates which have not increased for some years. This was formerly known as 'Simpler Recycling'. It supports the government's ambition to recycle 65% of municipal waste by 2035 and will play a critical role in delivering emissions savings for the waste sector.

Furthermore, Better Recycling aims to ensure there is more recycled material in the products we buy, and that high quality recycled material can be sourced domestically, enabling packaging circularity in the UK.

Source: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)

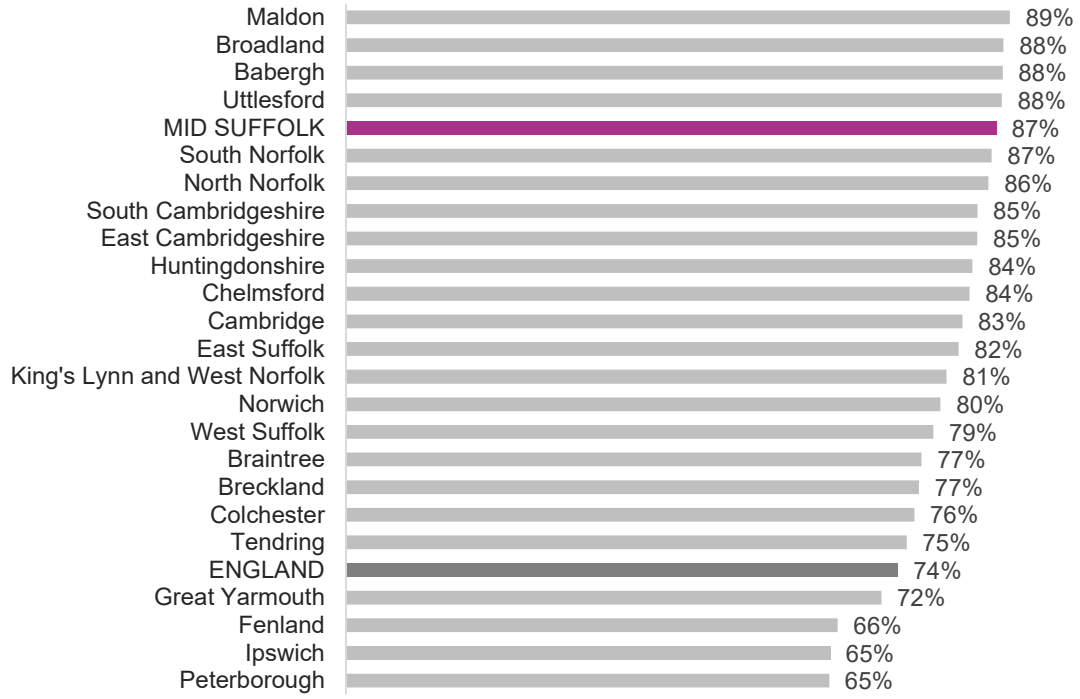
Further information: https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/future-changes-to-bin-collections

Community strength and wellbeing

Local area perceptions

- The Community Life Survey is a nationally representative annual survey of adults in England that tracks the latest trends and developments across areas that are key to encouraging social action and empowering communities. In 2023/24, the survey sample was boosted to produce meaningful estimates at the local authority level for the first time.[46]
- The 2023/24 survey found that a high proportion - 87% of residents in Mid Suffolk - were very or fairly satisfied with their local area as a place to live. This was similar to the levels of local area satisfaction recorded by the Mid Suffolk Resident Survey in 2022 (87%) and 2023 (84%).[47]
- Figure 12 shows how local area satisfaction in Mid Suffolk compares with the results from nearby districts – all local authority districts in East Anglia (which covers the upper-tier authorities of Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough) and those in north and mid-Essex (Tendring, Colchester, Braintree, Uttlesford, Chelmsford and Maldon districts).

Figure 12: Percentage of residents very or fairly satisfied with their local area as a place to live - comparison of neighbouring local authority districts (2023/24)



Source: Community Life Survey 2023/24

[46] The Community Life Survey is a self-completion (online and paper) survey, conducted on behalf of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). Fieldwork for the 2023/24 survey took place during the period October 2023 to March 2024, with 176,876 respondents completing the survey nationally and 480 in Mid Suffolk. Further details about the 2023/24 Community Life Survey, including published data, are available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/community-life-survey-202324-annual-publication

[47] Local area satisfaction is asked about using a five-point response scale (Very satisfied - Fairly satisfied - Neither / nor - Fairly dissatisfied - Very dissatisfied). The Mid Suffolk Resident Survey – undertaken in 2022 and 2023 – employs a comparable methodology to the Community Life Survey, albeit with c.1,700 surveys completed per wave. The next Resident Survey is being conducted in summer 2025.

- Residents were also asked about their satisfaction with green and natural spaces and the attractiveness of the local area; 83% were very or fairly satisfied with local green and natural spaces (compared with 76% nationally and a highest 'near neighbour' score of 88%), and 72% considered their local area to be very or somewhat attractive (compared with 57% nationally and a highest 'near neighbour' score of 84%).[48]

Volunteering and civic engagement

- The Community Life Survey collected information about levels of volunteering, both formally and informally. Although previous State of the District reports have reported on levels of formal volunteering collected through the Mid Suffolk Resident Survey, the approach used by the Community Life Survey differs, meaning comparisons between the two surveys are not valid for this measure.[49]

Community Life Survey definitions of volunteering

The Community Life Survey collects information on volunteering activity, whereby:

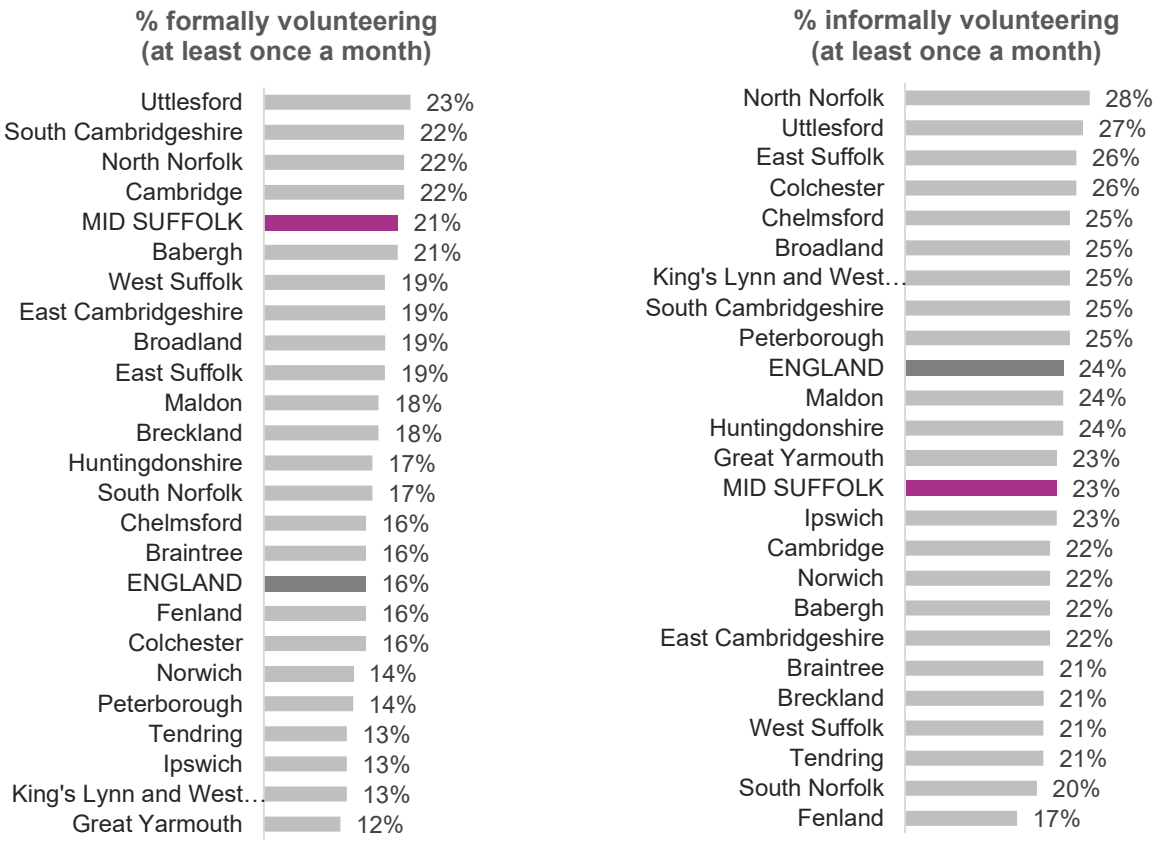
- **Formal volunteering** refers to those who have given unpaid help to groups or clubs, for example, leading a group, administrative support, mutual aid groups or befriending or mentoring people.
- **Informal volunteering** is defined as giving unpaid help to individuals who are not a relative. For example, babysitting or caring for children, keeping in touch with someone who has difficulty getting out and about, or helping someone with their household tasks such as cleaning, laundry or shopping.
- **Any volunteering** means participation in any formal or informal volunteering.

- As shown by Figure 13, 21% of residents had formally volunteered on a regular basis (at least once a month) in the last 12 months, and a similar proportion (23%) had done so informally. Overall, 33% had regularly volunteered either formally or informally. Results were above the England average and towards the top of the comparison group for levels of formal volunteering but more closely aligned with the England average for informal volunteering.

[48] Questions were again asked using a 5-point response scale.

[49] Whilst both surveys use a single question with comparable response categories to ask how often in the past 12 months respondents have formally volunteered by providing help to a group, club or organisation, the Community Life Survey includes a series of lead-in questions which prompt the respondent with a list of groups/organisations, as well as a range of ways in which they may have helped. The 2022 and 2023 Resident Survey used a single question without these lead-in questions. The differences in the way the questions are asked on the two survey appears to impact on the way people respond. Therefore, findings from the two surveys are not directly comparable.

Figure 13: Percentage of residents formally and informally volunteering on a regular basis (at least once a month) in the last 12 months - comparison of neighbouring local authority districts (2023/24)



Source: Community Life Survey 2023/24

- The Community Life Survey also explored levels of civic engagement.

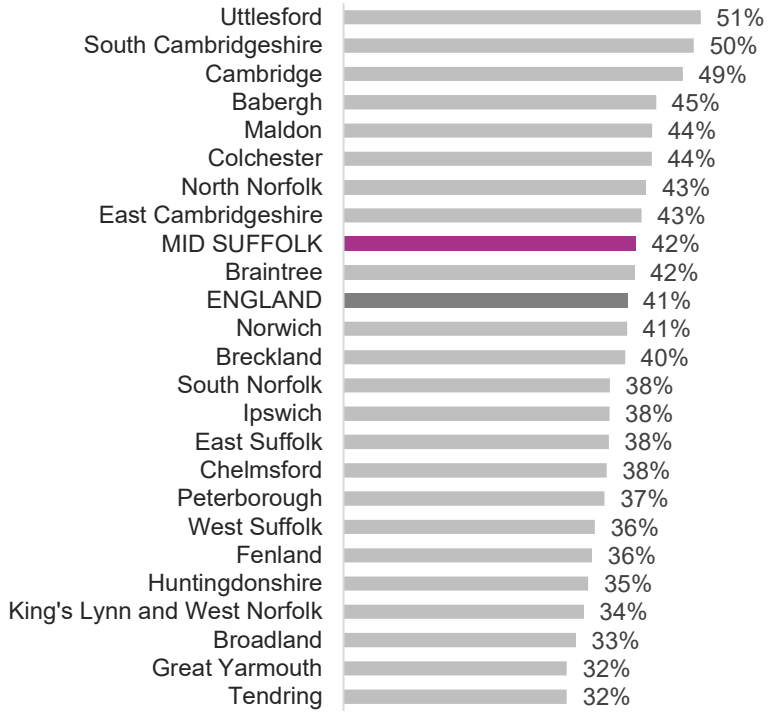
Civic engagement

Civic engagement is defined by the Community Life Survey as involvement in any civic participation, consultation, or activism at least once in the last 12 months, whereby:

- **Civic participation** is defined as engagement in democratic processes, both in person and online, including contacting a local official (e.g. a local councillor or MP), signing a petition, or attending a public rally (excludes voting).
- **Civic consultation** is defined as taking part in a consultation about local services or problems in the local area through completing a questionnaire, attending a public meeting or being involved in a face-to-face or online group.
- **Civic activism** is defined as involvement in local community roles such as being a local councillor, school governor, volunteer special constable or magistrate or in decision making groups in the local area, such as a tenants' association or groups set up to either regenerate a local area or address issues such as crime.

- It found that 33% of residents had engaged in any civic participation activity at least once in the last 12 months (compared to 33% nationally), 23% had taken part in any civic consultation activities (compared with 18% nationally) and 9% had been involved in any civic activism (8% nationally).
- Overall, 42% had taken part in any civic engagement in the previous 12 months, in line with the national proportion (41%) (Figure 14).

Figure 14: Percentage of residents who took part in any civic engagement in the previous 12 months - comparison of neighbouring local authority districts (2023/24)



Source: Community Life Survey 2023/24

Life expectancy

- Based on data for the period 2021 to 2023, life expectancy at birth in Mid Suffolk – the average number of years a person would expect to live based on contemporary mortality rates[50] - exceeded the regional and national averages (as has been the case historically).
    - Female life expectancy in Mid Suffolk was calculated at 85.1 years (compared with 83.6 in the East of England and 83.1 across England), within the top 10% of local authority districts in England.
    - Male life expectancy in Mid Suffolk was calculated at 80.8 years (compared with 80.0 in the East of England and 79.1 across England).[51]

[50] Figures reflect mortality among those living in an area in each time period, rather than what will be experienced throughout life among those born in the area. The figures are not therefore the number of years a baby born in the area could actually expect to live, both because the mortality rates of the area are likely to change in the future and because many of those born in the area will live elsewhere for at least some part of their lives.

[51] Male life expectancy in Mid Suffolk ranked 71st out of 294 local authority districts for which data could be calculated (with data unavailable for the City of London and the Isles of Scilly). Hart district in Hampshire had

- Differences in life expectancy between the least and most deprived areas within Mid Suffolk were calculated at just 1.0 years for males and 0.4 years for females.

Health behaviours

People's health behaviours are an important factor in determining health outcomes. They are often influenced by a range of social, economic, and environmental factors. Smoking, poor diet, physical inactivity and harmful alcohol consumption are leading risk factors that drive preventable ill health and premature mortality in England.

Behavioural risks to health are more common in some cohorts of the population compared to others and health risks are often concentrated in the most disadvantaged groups.

Source and further reading: Suffolk JSNA Health Inequalities Profile (2025). Available at: https://www.healthysuffolk.org.uk/asset-library/JSNA/Health-inequalities-profile-2025.pdf

Overweight prevalence

- In 2023/24, 71.3% of adults in Mid Suffolk were classed as overweight or living with obesity[52], compared with 65.9% across the East of England and 64.5% across England. This represents an increase from 65.5% in 2015/16, reflecting an increase in prevalence seen nationally during the same period.
- The proportion of Year 6 children (aged 10 to 11 years) classed as overweight or living with obesity was similar to the national average in 2023/24 (35.1% compared with 33.2% across the East of England and 35.8% in England). Since 2007/08, prevalence has increased by several percentage points in Mid Suffolk, from 26.6%.

Physical activity

- Regular physical activity is associated with a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease, coronary heart disease, stroke, diabetes, obesity, osteoporosis and colon/breast cancer and with improved mental health. In older adults, physical activity is associated with increased functional capacities.[53]
- The UK Chief Medical Officer currently recommends that adults should accumulate at least 150 minutes (2½ hours) of moderate intensity activity (such as brisk walking or cycling); or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity (such as running); or even shorter durations of

the highest male life expectancy nationally at 83.4 years. Female life expectancy in Mid Suffolk was ranked 27th nationally, with the highest figure seen in Kensington and Chealsea (86.5 years).

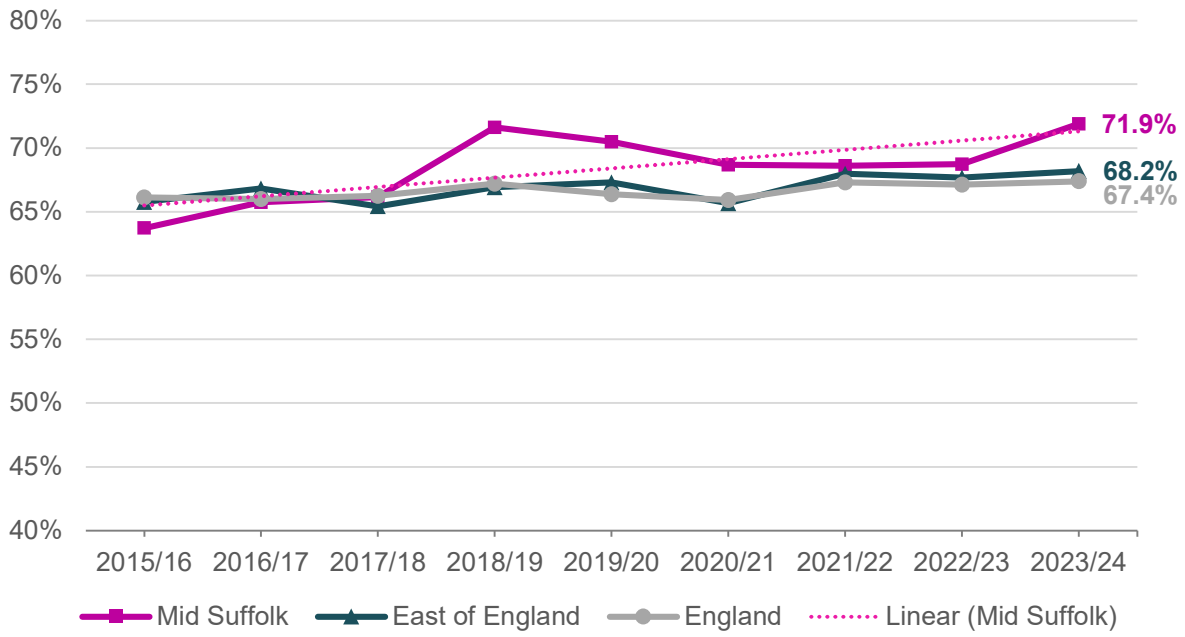
[52] Calculated from adjusted self-reported height and weight variables, and based on age-standardised data. Adults are defined as obese if their body mass index (BMI) is greater than or equal to 25kg/m². Age-standardised proportions (ASPs) allow for fairer comparison between populations over time and across geographies, as they account for differences in the population size and age structure. Where Mid Suffolk's population is older than the national average, this allows for a fairer comparison against the national result.

[53] Information from Department for Health and Social Care, Fingertips Public Health Profiles.

very vigorous intensity activity (such as sprinting or stair climbing); or a combination of moderate, vigorous and very vigorous intensity activity.[54]

- Figure 15 shows the percentage of 'physically active' adults aged 19 and over who were active at moderate intensity for at least 150 minutes per week. The data suggests that, whilst there has been a moderate increase nationally in the proportion of physically active adults since 2015/16 (from 66.1% to 67.4% in 2023/24), Mid Suffolk has seen greater improvement.[55] In 2023/24, 71.9% of adults aged 19+ were classed as 'physically active', compared with 68.2% across the East of England and 67.4% across England as a whole.

Figure 15: Proportion of 'physically active' adults aged 19+ (2015/16 – 2023/24) [56]



Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID), based on data from the Active Lives Survey

[54] See https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/physical-activity-guidelines-uk-chief-medical-officers-report

[55] It is noted that the year-on-year data for Mid Suffolk appears more variable than both the regional or national data, which - given the data are survey-based - are based on results from a much larger sample than local authority results (which for Mid Suffolk are based on c.500 respondents per annum). However, the longer-term trend suggests that the level of physical active adults in Mid Suffolk has improved at a greater rate than the national average.

[56] Sport England publishes a similar indicator using Active Lives Adult Survey data. The current Active Lives Adult Survey data reported by Sport England classifies adults as 16 and over, whereas the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) recommendation is based on those aged 19 and over. Sport England's reported data also excludes gardening activity, which the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) include in this indicator, in accordance with CMO recommendations. The (broad) activities included in the estimates are grouped as sporting activities, fitness activities, cycling for leisure and sport, cycling for travel, walking for leisure, walking for travel, creative or artistic dance and gardening. The number of minutes presented is the moderate intensity equivalent minutes of activity, which consists of moderate activity plus double the number of vigorous minutes of activity.

- The percentage of adults aged 19 and over who were not active at moderate intensity for at least 30 minutes per week – classed as 'physically inactive' - stood at 16.6% in Mid Suffolk in 2023/24, compared with 20.3% across the East of England and 22.0% across England.[57]
- It is recommended that children and young people (5 to 18 years) are physically active for an average of at least 60 minutes per day across the week. In 2023/24, 45.2% of children in Mid Suffolk aged 5 to 16 were classed as physically active (that is, doing an average of at least 60 minutes moderate to vigorous intensity activity per day across the week), just below the figures for the East of England (49.8%) and England (47.8%). However, it is noted that local authority estimates can fluctuate year-on-year where these are based on relatively small sample sizes where the data is survey-derived.[58]

Smoking

- Data from the Office for National Statistics (via their Annual Population Survey) for the period 2021-23 suggests that around one-in-ten adults (aged 18+) in Mid Suffolk (10.5%) were current smokers, just below the proportions seen regionally and nationally (12.5% across the East of England and 12.4% across England).
- Data from NHS England's GP Patient Surveys in 2022/23 suggests similar proportions, with 11.0% of adults (aged 18+) classified as a regular or occasional smoker, compared with 12.5% across the East of England and 13.6% across England. Furthermore, it indicates a downward trend in smoking prevalence, also seen nationally, with 14.2% having been classified as a regular or occasional smoker in 2014/15.

Nutrition

- The Department of Health and Social Care highlight that "Healthy eating is associated with decreased risk of overweight and obesity and chronic diseases… [however] there is a large gap between nutrition recommendations and what the data shows we actually eat." For example, in England, the Health Survey for England reports that less than a third of adults currently meet the 'five a day' target for fruit and vegetables."
- Alternative data collected via Sport England's Active Lives Survey suggests that, in 2023/24, 35.9% of adults in Mid Suffolk met the 5-a-day fruit and vegetable recommendation, compared with 32.2% of adults across the East of England and 31.3% across England.[59] As shown by Figure 16, the proportion meeting the 5-a-day recommendation has declined nationally, regionally and locally since 2020/21.[60]

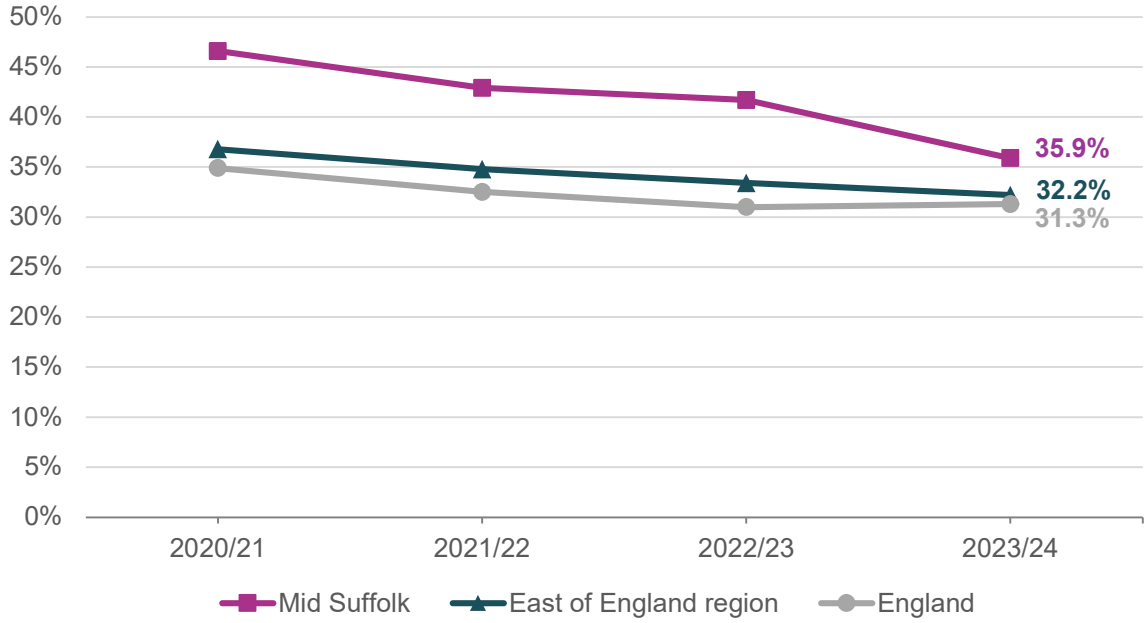
[57] As well as those classed as 'physically active' and 'physically inactive', adults who were active at moderate intensity for between 30-149 minutes per week were classed as 'fairly active'. This group accounted for the remaining 11.5% of adults aged 19 and over.

[58] Time-series data is therefore not shown for this measure, with survey estimates unavailable for some years.

[59] The 5 A Day campaign is based on advice from the World Health Organization (WHO), which recommends eating a minimum of 400g of fruit and vegetables a day to lower the risk of serious health problems, such as heart disease, stroke and some types of cancer. The Active Lives Survey records fruit and vegetable consumption using a single question, asking respondents "How many portions of fruit and vegetables did you eat yesterday?".

[60] Estimates collected by the Active Lives Survey prior to 2020/21 are not comparable with current estimates due to a change in the questions used to collect the 5-a-day information. Current estimates are more closely

Figure 16: Proportion of adults (aged 16+) meeting the '5-a-day' fruit and vegetable consumption recommendations (2020/21 – 2023/24)



Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID), based on data from the Active Lives Survey

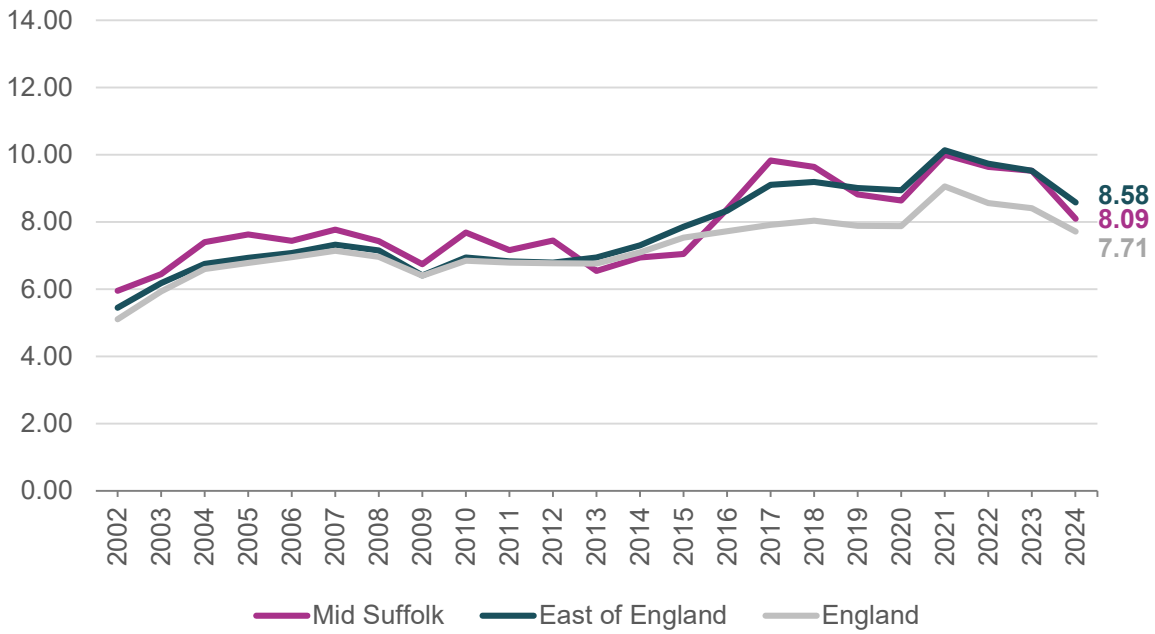
aligned with data collected through other national surveys, including the Health Survey for England (HSE) and the National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS), despite methodological differences between each survey.

Resilience

Housing affordability

- Housing affordability ratios are calculated by dividing median house prices by median gross annual full-time earnings[61] to create a ratio. A larger number reflects a less affordable area. Ratios are calculated based on:
    - Residence-based earnings - the earnings of the people who live in the area, though they may work elsewhere.
    - Workplace-based earnings - the earnings of those who work in the district, though they may live elsewhere.
- In Mid Suffolk, based on residence-based earnings, median house prices were 8.09 times median earnings in 2024, compared with 8.58 across the East of England and 7.71 across England.
- Nationally, house sale prices have become more affordable since 2021, returning to pre-pandemic levels of affordability in 2024. In Mid Suffolk, the residence-based affordability ratio has mirrored this trend, falling from a peak of 10.00 in 2021 to below the level seen in 2016 (8.38) (Figure 17).[62] This was a result of both a fall in median house prices and an increase in median earnings between 2023 and 2024.

Figure 17: Ratio of house price to residence-based earnings (median) (2002-2024)



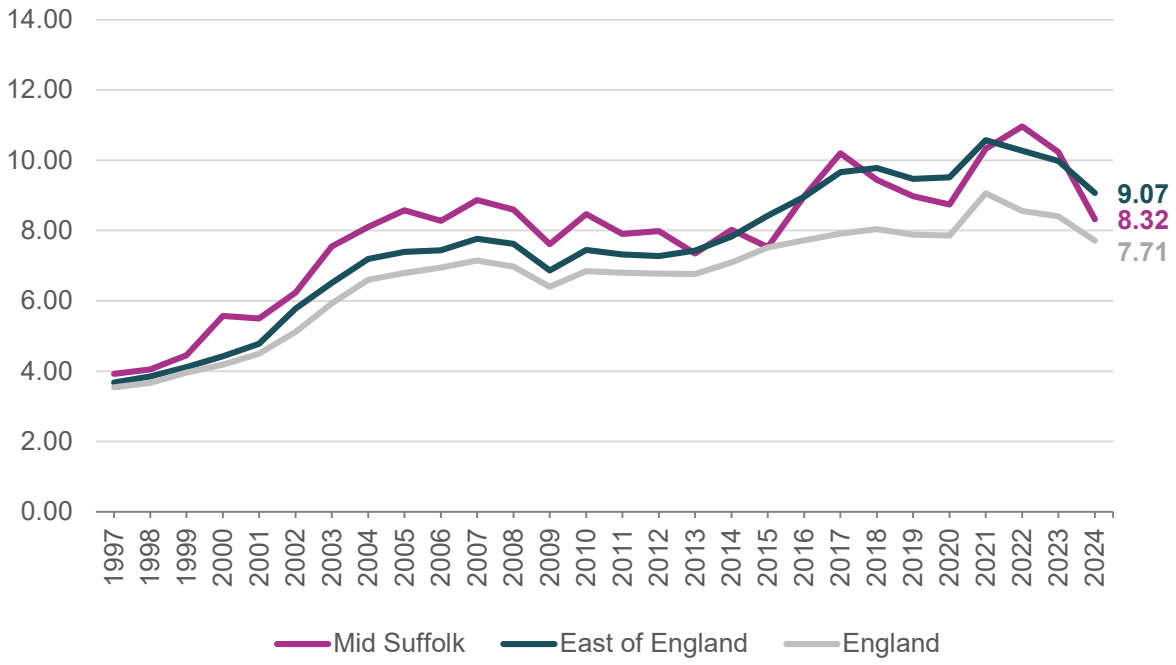
Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS)

[61] Gross earnings refer to that remuneration received by employees in return for employment before any benefits are added or tax deductions are made (including National Insurance contributions).

[62] The 2022 and 2023 ratios discussed here may vary from those included in previous State of the District reports. This results from affordability ratio statistics being revised annually – affecting previously published data for recent years - to reflect revisions to the house price statistics and earnings data, including where there can be a lag in the registration of property transactions.

- When based on workplace-based earnings (the earnings of those who work in the district, though they may live elsewhere) median house prices in Mid Suffolk were 8.32 times median earnings in 2024, compared with 9.07 across the East of England (Figure 18).

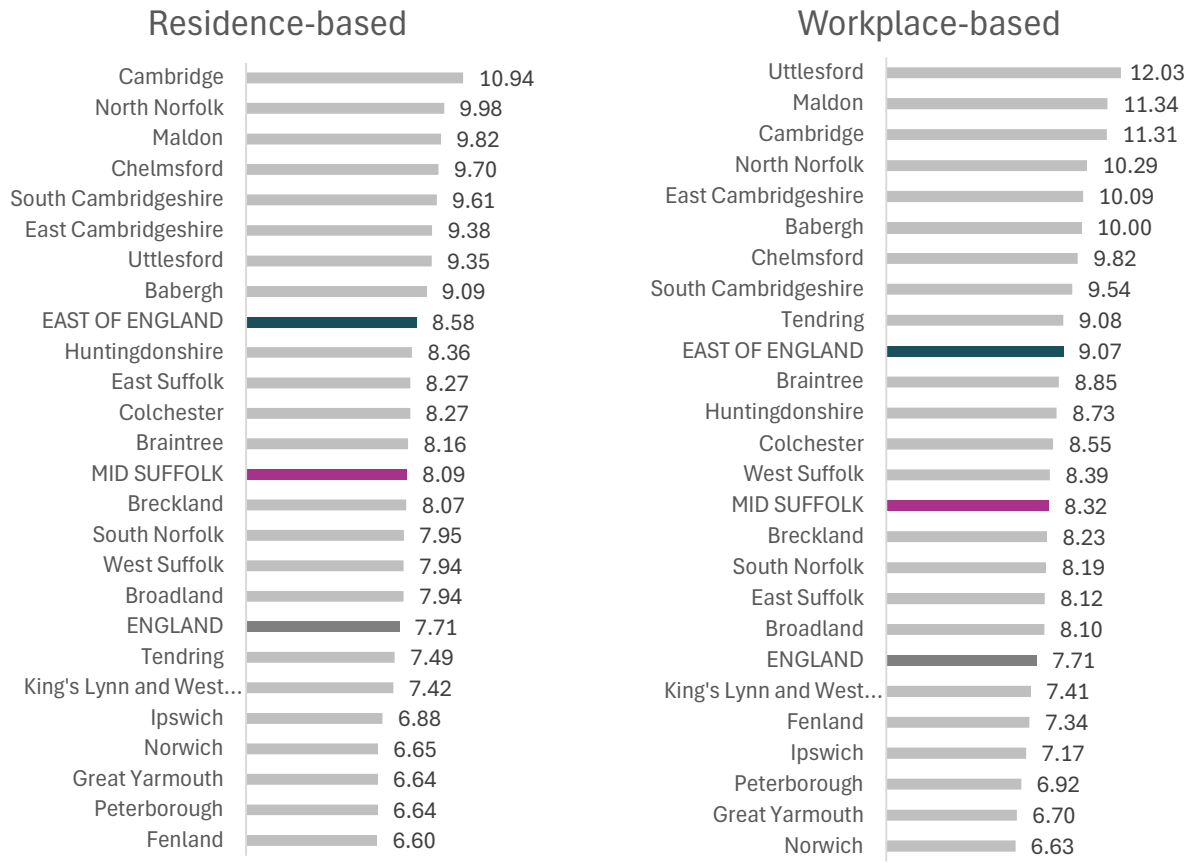
Figure 18: Ratio of house price to workplace-based earnings (median) (2002-2024)



Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS)

- To better understand Mid Suffolk's position relative to its neighbouring districts, median housing affordability ratios are shown in Figure 19 against all local authority districts in East Anglia (which covers the upper-tier authorities of Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough) and those in north and mid-Essex (Tendring, Colchester, Braintree, Uttlesford, Chelmsford and Maldon districts). It should be noted that the East of England figure shown covers a wider region than just the neighbouring authorities included in the chart.

Figure 19: Ratio of house price to residence-based and workplace-based earnings (median) - comparison of neighbouring local authority districts (2024)



Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS)

National Planning Policy Framework and the Joint Local Plan

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils formally adopted Part One of their Joint Local Plan – the blueprint for the districts' future development until 2037 – in November 2023. A Local Plan is prepared by a local planning authority and includes policies to tackle key social, economic and environmental issues – providing a framework to guide future planning decisions, alongside national policy and Neighbourhood Plans.

When the plan was adopted, it set out annual housing requirements of 535 new homes each year in Mid Suffolk, based on the Government's housing formula. In December 2024, the Government announced new housing requirements for every district and borough council in the country, as part of its new National Planning Policy Framework. These increased the requirement in Mid Suffolk to 734 homes a year (up 37%).

Following this, Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils are proceeding with a full Joint Local Plan review, to ensure the new requirements can be met in future years.

Further information: https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/joint-local-plan

Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Authority Monitoring Report

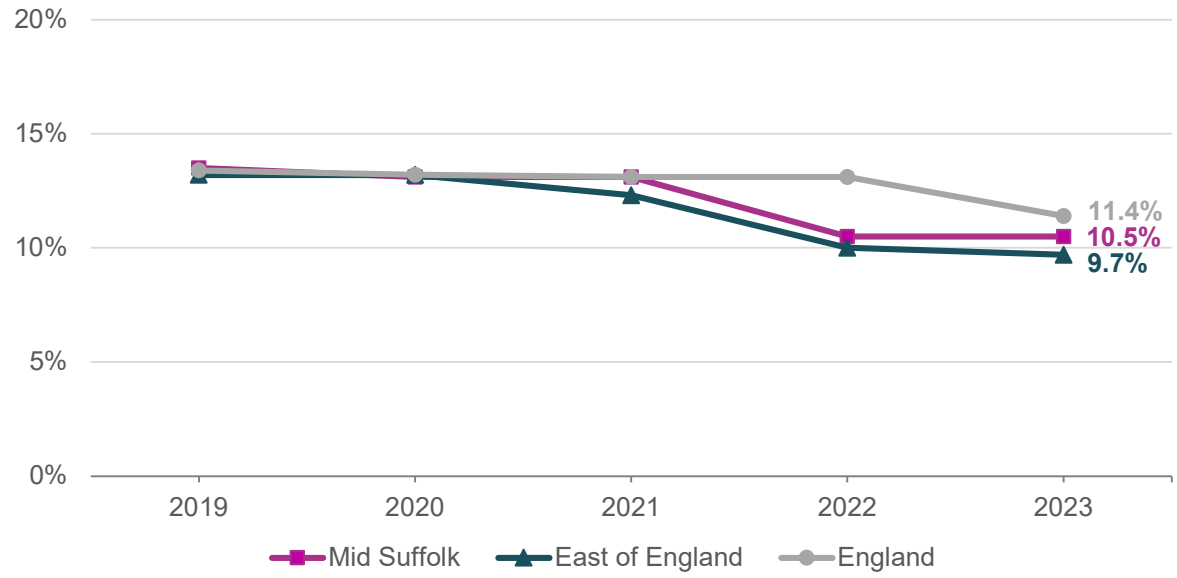
Babergh and Mid Suffolk's annual Joint Authority Monitoring Report reports on key indicators - including the number of housing completions - and the progress made towards delivery against the targets set out in Local Plan documents.

Further information: https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/w/annual-monitoring-report-and-housing-land-supply-position-statement

Fuel poverty

- Census 2021 found that a lower-than-average proportion of properties in Mid Suffolk used mains gas as a single source of heating (42.1% compared with 61.9% in Suffolk and 74.0% across England as a whole).[63] Instead, a much higher proportion use oil as a single source of heating (30.3% compared with 13.2% in Suffolk and 3.2% in England), with electric heating the third most common type of heating (used by 9.0% of households as a single source of heating).
- Based on the latest available data, 4,810 or 10.5% of households in Mid Suffolk were classed as being in fuel poverty in 2022.[64] This remains in line with the figure seen in 2022 and slightly above the regional (East of England) average of 9.7% (Figure 20).

Figure 20: Proportion of households in fuel poverty (2019-2023)



Source: Department for Energy Security and Net Zero

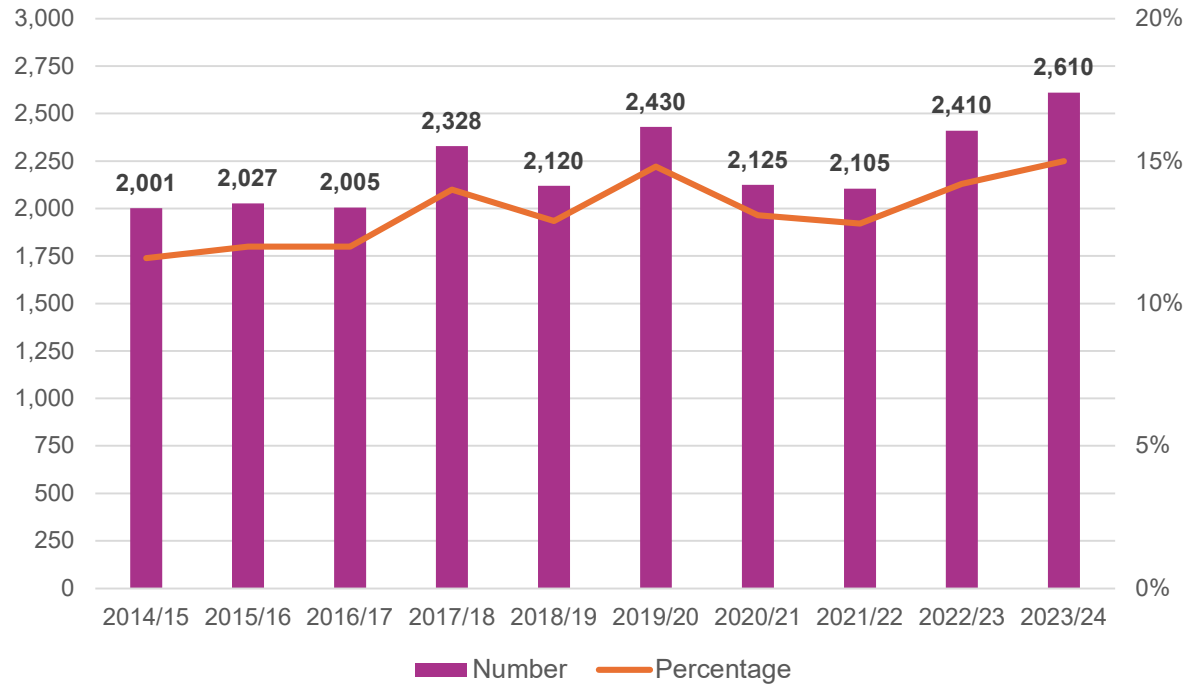
[63] Census 2021 separately classified households that had two or more types of central heating, however these were not broken down by energy type. Therefore, some of these households (11.8% in Mid Suffolk) could have had gas central heating also.

[64] Fuel poverty in England is measured using the Low Income Low Energy Efficiency (LILEE) indicator. Under this indicator, a household is considered to be fuel poor if they are living in a property with a fuel poverty energy efficiency rating of band D or below and when they spend the required amount to heat their home, they are left with a residual income below the official poverty line. As such, there are 3 important elements in determining whether a household is fuel poor: household income, household energy requirements and fuel prices.

Children in low-income families

- ***Revisions to the methodology used to estimate the number of children in low-income families means the time-series data presented below supersedes the data included in previous State of the District reports.***
- A household is said to be in relative low income if their equivalised income (before housing costs) is below 60% of median income in the reference year, while they are in absolute low income if their equivalised income is below 60% of the 2010/11 median income adjusted for inflation.[65]
- In 2023/24, 2,610 children aged under 16 (15.0% of this age group) were considered to be living in relative low-income families in Mid Suffolk. This compared with 17.8% in the East of England and 21.8% across the United Kingdom.
- A lower number (2,184 or 12.6%) were considered to be living in absolute low-income families before housing costs (compared with 15.2% in the East of England and 18.7% across the United Kingdom).
- Figure 21 shows how the number and proportion of children living in relative low-income families in Mid Suffolk has changed over time (from 11.6% / 2,001 in 2014/15), reflecting the upward trend seen nationally and regionally.

Figure 21: Number and percentage of children aged under 16 living in relative low-income families in Mid Suffolk (2014/15 to 2023/24)



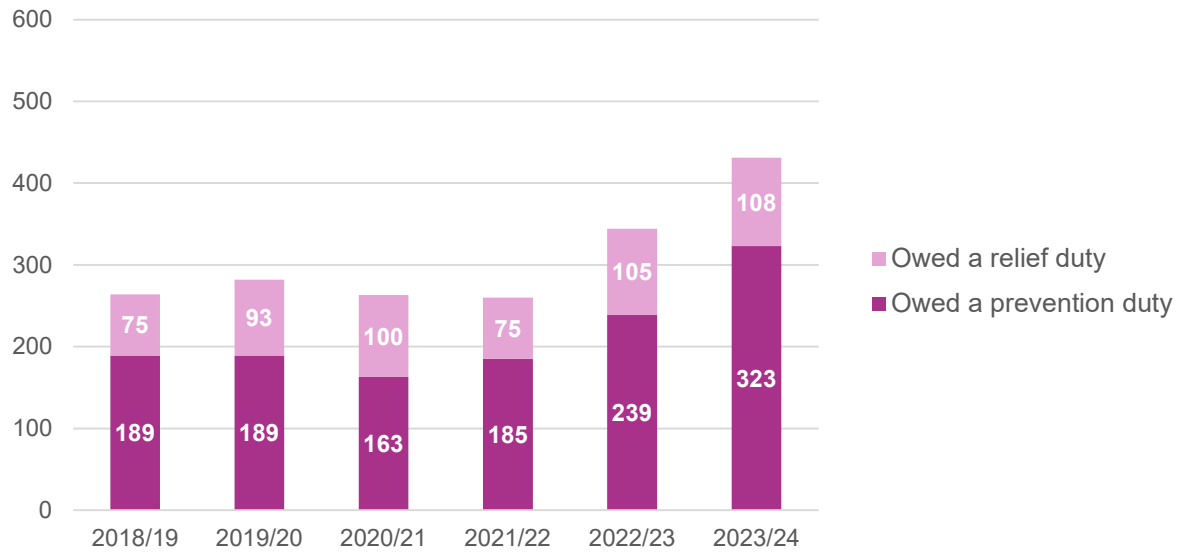
Source: Department for Work and Pensions

[65] Equivalised income is income Before Housing Costs (BHC) and includes contributions from earnings, state support and pensions. Equivalisation adjusts incomes for family size and composition; taking an adult couple with no children as the reference point.

Homelessness

- During the 2023/24 financial year, there were 431 households in Mid Suffolk assessed as being owed a statutory homelessness duty, including 170 with dependent children. This represented an increase from 344 households in 2022/23 and 260 households in 2021-22 (Figure 22).
- Figures are based on those owed a prevention or relief duty following an initial assessment of statutory homelessness duties owed. Prevention duties include any activities aimed at preventing a household threatened with homelessness within 56 days from becoming homeless. Relief duties are owed to households that are already homeless and require help to secure settled accommodation.
- Of the 484 households in Mid Suffolk assessed as being owed a homelessness duty, 323 were threatened with homelessness and therefore owed a prevention duty (compared with 239 in 2022/23); 108 were already homeless and therefore owed a relief duty (compared to 105 in 2022-23).
- The total number of households in Mid Suffolk owed a homelessness duty in 2023/24 equated to 9.2 households per thousand (up from 7.4 per 1,000 in 2022/23), below the rate for the East of England (11.8 per 1,000) and the all-England average (13.4 per 1,000).

Figure 22: Number of households in Mid Suffolk assessed as being owed a statutory homeless duty (2018/19 to 2023/24)



Data sources

Theme	Section	Measure	Source	Organisation
Setting and Population	Setting	Rural/urban classification	2021 Census Rural Urban Classification	Office for National Statistics
		Heritage assets	Designated assets, protected areas and the built environment dataset, 2024 (part of Heritage Counts)	Historic England
		Employment by industry	ONS Business Register and Employment Survey (2023)	Office for National Statistics (data sourced via NOMIS)
		Deprivation	Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
	Population	Population estimates	Mid-year population estimates (mid-2023)	Office for National Statistics
		Population projections	2022-based subnational population projections for England	Office for National Statistics
Climate change and environment	Greenhouse gas emissions	Territorial greenhouse gas emissions estimates	UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics (2005-2023)	Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
	Plug-in and electric vehicles	Plug-in vehicles	Licensed plug-in vehicles at the end of the quarter by body type, fuel type, keepership and upper and lower tier local authority (Q4 2024)	Department for Transport / Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency
		Electric vehicle charging points	Electric vehicle charging device statistics (to April 2025)	Department for Transport
	Domestic energy efficiency	Private sector housing stock modelled EPC rating bands	BRE Housing Stock Modelling Report (2024)	Building Research Establishment
	Household waste and recycling	Household waste recycling rates	Local Authority Collected Waste Statistics - Local Authority data (2001/02 – 2023/24)	Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs
Community strength and wellbeing	Local area perceptions	Local area satisfaction, satisfaction with green spaces, attractiveness of the local area	Community Life Survey (2023/24)	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
	Volunteering and civic engagement	Formal and informal volunteering	Community Life Survey (2023/24)	Department for Culture, Media and Sport

Theme	Section	Measure	Source	Organisation
		Civic engagement	Community Life Survey (2023/24)	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
	Life expectancy	Life expectancy	Life expectancy at birth (2021-23 data)	Office for National Statistics (via Fingertips Public Health Profiles)
		Life expectancy inequality	Inequality in life expectancy at birth (2021-23 data)	Office for Health Improvements and Disparities (via Fingertips Public Health Profiles)
	Overweight prevalence	Proportion of adults classified as overweight or obese	Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID), based on data from the Active Lives Survey (Sport England)	Office for Health Improvements and Disparities (via Fingertips Obesity Profile)
		Prevalence of Year 6 children classified as overweight or obese	National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP)	NHS England (via Fingertips Obesity Profile)
	Physical activity	Proportion of physically active and physically inactive adults aged 19+	Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID), based on data from the Active Lives Survey (Sport England)	Office for Health Improvements and Disparities (via Fingertips Physical Activity Profile)
		Proportion of physically active children aged 5-16	Active Lives Children and Young People Survey (Sport England)	Sport England (via Fingertips Physical Activity Profile)
	Nutrition	Proportion of adults meeting the 5-a-day fruit and vegetable recommendation	Active Lives Survey (Sport England)	Office for Health Improvements and Disparities (via Fingertips Public Health Profiles)
	Smoking	Smoking prevalence in adults	Smoking Prevalence in adults (3-year range), based on data from the Annual Population Survey (Office for National Statistics) and the proportion of adults classified as a regular or occasional smoker from NHS England's GP Patient Survey 2022/23	Office for Health Improvements and Disparities (data sourced via Fingertips Public Health Profiles)

Theme	Section	Measure	Source	Organisation
Resilience	Housing affordability	Ratio of house price to residence-based earnings (median)	House price to residence-based earnings ratio (2002-2024)	Office for National Statistics
		Ratio of house price to workplace-based earnings (median)	House price to workplace-based earnings ratio (2002-2024)	Office for National Statistics
	Fuel poverty	Home heating	Census 2021	Office for National Statistics
		Fuel poverty	Sub-regional fuel poverty (2019-2023 data)	Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
	Children in low-income families	Children in relative and absolute low-income families	Children in Low Income Families: local area statistics, United Kingdom, financial years ending (FYE) 2015 to 2024	Department for Work and Pensions
	Homelessness	Number of households assessed as homeless	Statutory homelessness: detailed local authority-level tables (2018/19 to 2023/24)	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
	Homelessness	Number of households assessed as homeless	Statutory homelessness: detailed local authority-level tables (2018/19 to 2023/24)	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government