Mid Suffolk

State of the District Report 2024

This is the second 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.

Contents

Summary

- Mid Suffolk is a local authority district located in central Suffolk. Covering an area of 871 square kilometres, the district is predominantly rural in nature. Its main town is the historic market town of Stowmarket.
- In June 2022, Mid Suffolk had a population of 105,723, with a median age of 48.1 (compared with 41.8 in the East of England and 40.5 in England).
- Mid Suffolk's largest employment industries are employment industries are manufacturing (responsible for 12.8% of employment within the district in 2022), construction (also 12.8%) and health (9.0%).

Strengths

- Mid Suffolk falls within the least deprived third of local authority areas in England.[1] It has just two neighbourhoods (LSOAs)[2] within the 40% most deprived neighbourhoods in England, both of which are in Stowmarket.
- Residents in Mid Suffolk report high levels of local area satisfaction and pride. In 2023, 84% of respondents to the Mid Suffolk Resident Survey said they were satisfied with their local area as a place to live (compared with 74% across England) and 72% agreed they were proud to live in their local area (compared with 60% nationally).
- Mid Suffolk residents experience better-than average levels of life expectancy. Levels of self-reported personal wellbeing (life satisfaction, worthwhileness, happiness and anxiety) also outperform the national averages at the overall population level.
- Higher-than-average levels of home and car ownership are seen within the district, with 74.9% of households classified as owner-occupiers[3] and 90.2% having access to a car or van at Census 2021.
- Educational attainment by age 19 (for both Level 2 and 3 qualifications) is above the national and regional average.[4]
- Levels of participation in volunteering also compare well against nearby local authorities, with 30% of respondents to the 2023 Mid Suffolk Resident Survey saying they formally volunteered for a group, club or organisation at least once a month during the past 12 months.

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[1] Based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019.
[2] 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.
[3] Either owned outright or with a mortgage or loan, including shared ownership.
[4] Level 2 equates to five or more GCSEs at grades 9-4; Level 3 equates to two or more A levels or equivalent.

Challenges

- At the same time, a range of challenges are evident, many of which are shared at the county, regional or national level.

- Despite greenhouse gas emissions within the district having reduced by 36% between 2005 and 2021 - in line with the percentage decrease seen nationally (39%) - significant challenges remain in seeking to decarbonise the transport, agricultural, domestic and industry sectors.

- As a predominantly rural district, there are understandable barriers for some, related to the physical proximity of local services and employment centres. Furthermore, business growth, adult qualifications and workplace-based earnings (the earnings of those who work in the district) all fall below the regional and national averages.

- In recent decades, there has been a worsening of housing affordability nationally. While Mid Suffolk's housing stock comprises an above-average proportion of detached properties – which impacts its median price for all housing - median house prices increased 75% in the last decade, compared with 57% across England. Based on residence-based earnings, median house prices were 8.93 times median earnings in 2023, compared with 9.35 across the East of England and 8.26 across England.[5]

- Inflationary pressures have also impacted the rental market. Between October 2021 and April 2024, average monthly private rents in Mid Suffolk increased 21.5%, slightly above the percentage increase seen nationally during the same period.

- Although less prevalent than in many local authority areas, poverty and inequalities are felt within the district. In 2022/23, 1,945 children aged under 16 (11.5% of this age group) were considered to be living in relative low-income families before housing costs (compared with 13.8% in the East of England and 20.1% across the UK).[6] And during the 2022-23 financial year, 344 households in Mid Suffolk were assessed as being owed a statutory homelessness duty, an increase from 260 households in 2021-22.[7]

- And while many positive health and wellbeing outcomes are seen among Mid Suffolk's residents, these are not always felt evenly across society – with those living in urban areas, younger adults, single adult households, those in social rented accommodation, those not working (excluding retired), those who report being in poor health and those with a limiting long-term illness or health condition, all more likely to report lower-than-average levels of personal wellbeing.[8]

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[5] Residence-based earnings are the earnings of the people who live in the area, though they may work elsewhere.

[6] A household is said to be in relative low income if their equivalised income (adjusted for family size and composition) is below 60% of median income in the reference year.

[7] Based on those owed a prevention or relief duty following an initial assessments 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.

[8] Based on responses to the Mid Suffolk Resident Survey 2023.

105,723

Population
(June 2022)

Median age of **48.1** (compared with 41.8 in the East of England and 40.5 in England)

Largest employment industries

- manufacturing
- construction
- health

2022

Business growth, adult qualifications and workplace-based earnings all fall below the regional and national averages.

74.9% of households classified as owner-occupiers (Census 2021)

90.2% of households have access to a car or van (Census 2021)

Greenhouse gas emissions within the district reduced by 36% between 2005 and 2021

Mean life satisfaction score of 7.15 out of 10 (where 10 means completely satisfied) compared with 6.91 across England (2023)

Life expectancy Females **84.6 years** vs **82.8** in England
Males **81.1 years** vs **78.9** in England

84% ★★★★☆ of residents satisfied with their local area as a place to live (compared with 74% across England) and 72% agree they are proud to live in their local area (60% England)

2023

Median house prices are 8.93 times median annual resident earnings (in 2023)

Average monthly private rents increased 21.5% between October 2021 and April 2024

1,945 children aged under 16 (11.5% of this age group) living in relative low-income families before housing costs in 2022/23

Mid Suffolk District Council

Overview

Overview

- Mid Suffolk is a local authority district located in central Suffolk. It borders all four of Suffolk's other districts and boroughs[9], as well as the Norfolk districts of South Norfolk and Breckland to the north.

- The district is predominantly rural in nature, with 75% of its population classed as living in a rural area at the 2011 Census.[10] Its main town is the historic market town of Stowmarket.[11]

- Mid Suffolk falls within the least deprived third of local authority areas in England.[12] It has just two neighbourhoods (LSOAs)[13] within the 40% most deprived neighbourhoods in England, both of which are in Stowmarket.

Figure 1: Urban-rural classification of Mid Suffolk district (2011)
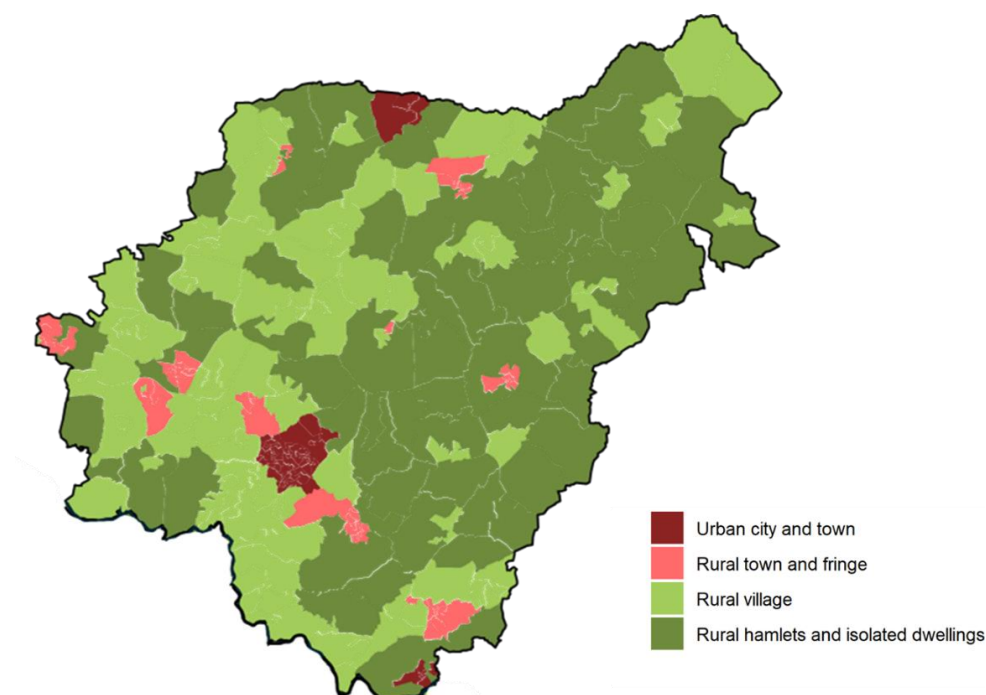
Source: Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra)

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

[10] The 2011 Rural Urban Classification defined areas as rural if they fell outside of areas forming settlements with populations of at least 10,000. Therefore, the Stowmarket area, plus areas counted as part of the Ipswich and Diss built-up areas, were classified as urban. With populations under 10,000, Needham Market and Eye were classified as rural.

[11] 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).

[12] Based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019.

[13] 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

- In June 2022, Mid Suffolk had a population of 105,723, an increase of 8.5% (from 97,432) since mid-2012. During the same period, the population increased by 4.9% across Suffolk, 8.2% across the East of England and 6.7% across England.

- Covering an area of 871 square kilometres, Mid Suffolk's population density therefore stood at 121 people per square kilometre (compared with 202 across Suffolk, 335 across the East of England and 438 across England).

- As shown by Figure 2, Mid Suffolk has an older-than-average population profile, with 25.3% of residents aged 65 years and over in June 2022, compared with 23.9% across Suffolk, 19.9% in the East of England and 18.6% in England.

- The median age of the population stood at 48.1 (compared with 45.4 in Suffolk, 41.8 in the East of England and 40.5 in England), up from 45.2 in mid-2012. Nationally, the median age increased from 39.5 to 40.5 during the same period.

- By 2043, the proportion of residents aged 65 years and over is expected to account for almost a third (32.4%) of all residents, well above the projected proportion for England (22.2%).

**Figure 2: Population by age (mid-year estimates 2022)**
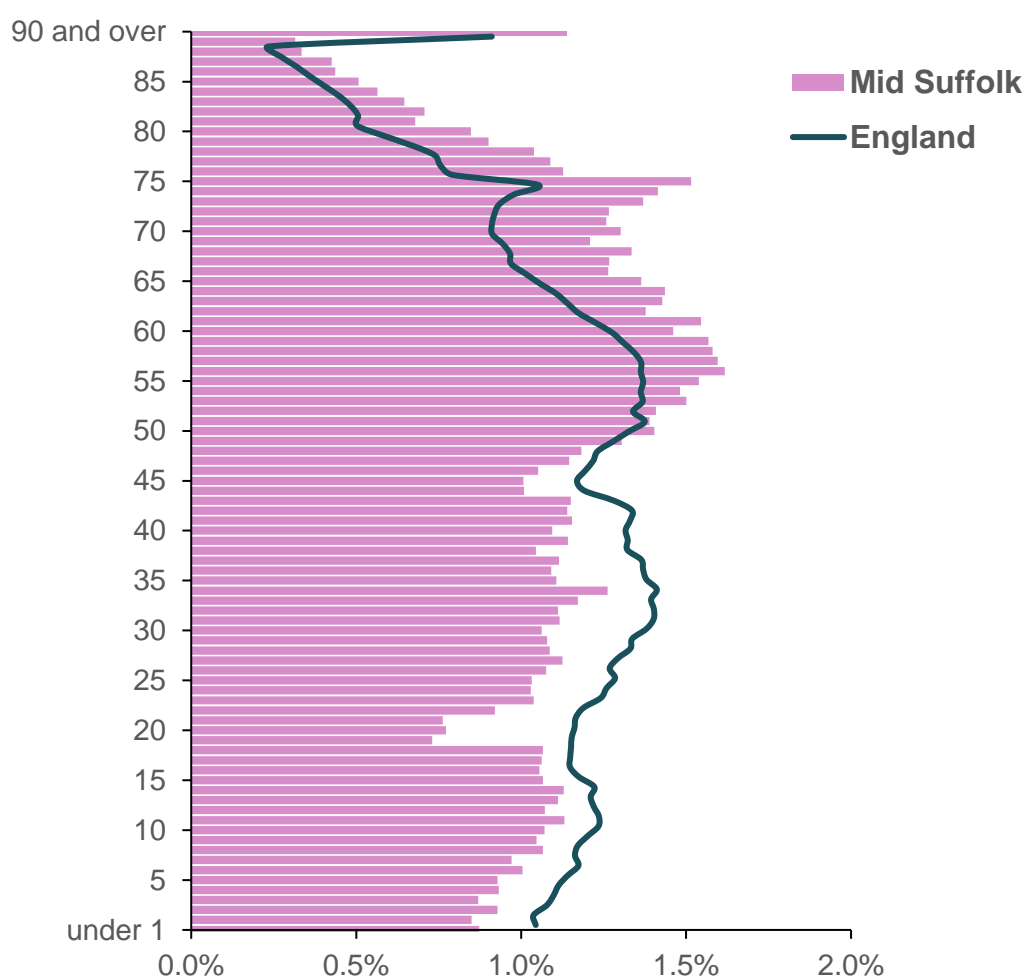
Source: Mid-year population estimates, Office for National Statistics (ONS)

Household dwellings

- At the latest Census (2021) there were 44,300 households in Mid Suffolk. Between 2011 and 2021, the number of households rose from 40,300, an increase of 9.9%. This was above both the percentage increases seen across Suffolk (7.3%) and England (6.2%).

- There were estimated to be 47,029 dwellings in Mid Suffolk as of March 2022 (up from 46,167 in 2021 and 41,918 in 2011).[14] Around 2.2% of these were vacant, based on an estimate of 1,034 vacant dwellings in October 2022, of which 323 were classed as long-term vacant.[15] In comparison, vacant dwellings comprised 2.7% of the dwelling stock in England in October 2022.

- Compared with the national average, Mid Suffolk has a much higher proportion of detached properties (47.0% compared with 22.9%) and properties with four of more bedrooms (29.6% compared with 21.1%). There is a correspondingly lower proportion of properties with only one or two bedrooms, linked to a lower proportion of flats (Figures 3 and 4).

Figure 3: Accommodation type (Census 2021)
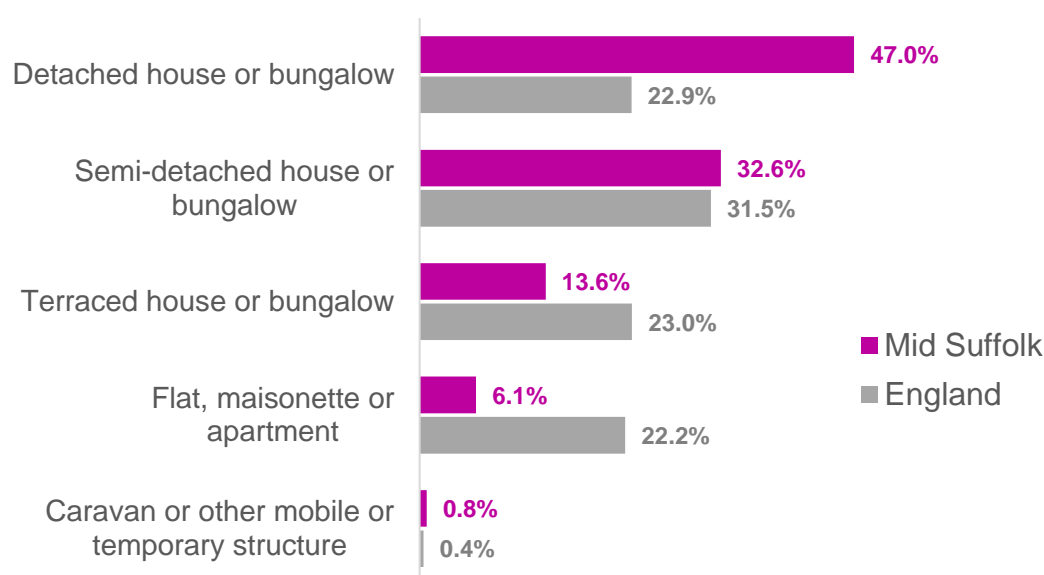
Source: Census 2021, Office for National Statistics (ONS)

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[14] It should be noted that dwelling stock estimates are consistently higher than other data about households (e.g. Census-based estimates), which is to be expected given that dwelling stock estimates include vacant dwellings. When vacant dwelling estimates are subtracted from dwelling stock estimates, the figures are more like other sources of household data, although even with vacant dwellings subtracted, dwelling stock estimates may include some dwellings that do not contain households.

[15] Vacant properties are defined as empty properties as classified for council tax purposes and include all empty properties liable for council tax and properties that are empty but receive a council tax exemption. Long-term vacant dwellings are defined as properties liable for council tax that have been empty for more than six months and that are not subject to Empty Homes Discount class D or empty due to specific flooding events.

Figure 4: Number of bedrooms (Census 2021)
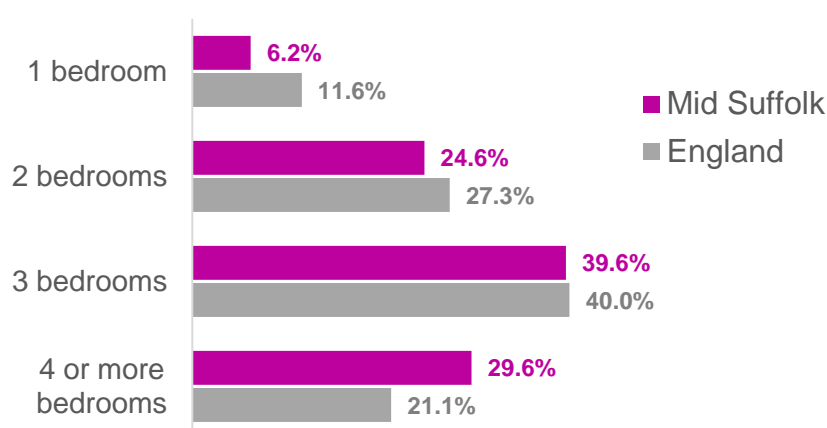
Source: Census 2021, Office for National Statistics (ONS)

Connectivity

- As a predominantly rural district, there are increased challenges related to the physical proximity of local services and employment centres. This is illustrated by Table 1, which shows the average minimum journey times to access a range of key local services by different modes of transport.[16]

Table 1: Average minimum journey times in minutes to 8 key services^ by mode of transport (2019)

	Mid Suffolk	**England**	*England – urban areas*	*England – rural areas*[17]
Public transport + walking	32.4	17.9	*15.3*	*30.1*
Cycle	28.6	15.6	*13.2*	*26.8*
Car	14.6	10.3	*9.5*	*14.0*
Walking[18]	55.2	28.0	*22.2*	*55.4*

Source: Journey time statistics (2019), Department for Transport (DfT)

^ Based on the average of minimum journey times to medium sized centres of employment (500-4999 jobs), primary schools, secondary schools, further education, GPs, hospitals, food stores and town centres.

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[16] Based on the average of minimum journey times to medium sized centres of employment (500-4999 jobs), primary schools, secondary schools, further education, GPs, hospitals, food stores and town centres.
[17] Based on the 2011 Rural Urban Classification which defined areas as rural if they fall outside of areas forming settlements with populations of at least 10,000.
[18] A maximum value of 120 minutes is used where journey times exceed 120 minutes. This means that for some service by mode combinations (particularly for walking and smaller destination sets), the average provided is lower than would actually be the case in reality.

- Travel habits and levels of car ownership in Mid Suffolk reflect the district's rural nature. In 2022, the proportion of adults in Mid Suffolk who walked at least once a week for the purpose of travel was 22.6%. This compared with 32.3% of adults across the East of England and 35.0% across England.[19] [20]

- Levels of car ownership in Mid Suffolk are above the regional and national averages, with 90.2% of households having access to a car or van and more than half (53.6%) having access to two or more cars or vans at Census 2021 (Table 2). As might be expected, lower levels of car ownership are seen in the district's towns.[21]

- The following household types in Mid Suffolk are less likely than average to have access to a car or van (% with access shown in brackets):
  - Single-person households aged 66 years and over (63.3%).[22]
  - Single-person households aged under 66 (84.0%).
  - Lone parents with dependent children (89.1%).[23]

Table 2: Car or van availability (Census 2021)

	Mid Suffolk	**East of England**	**England**
No cars or vans in household	9.8%	16.8%	23.5%
1 car or van in household	36.6%	41.6%	41.3%
2 cars or vans in household	36.1%	30.0%	26.1%
3 or more cars or vans in household	17.6%	11.6%	9.1%
NET: 1 or more cars or vans in household	90.2%	83.2%	76.5%
NET: 2 or more cars or vans in household	53.6%	41.6%	35.2%

Source: Census 2021, Office for National Statistics (ONS)

- Deploying broadband infrastructure in urban areas is typically easier and faster due to the density of premises. In May 2024, there was 97.2% superfast broadband coverage[24] across residential and business premises in Mid Suffolk, slightly below the average for England (98.2%). Gigabit-capable broadband – currently being rolled out across the country - stood at 52.8% coverage (up from 46.4% in May 2023), below the England total of 83.3%.

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[19] "Walking" refers to any continuous walk of over 10 minutes. "Travel" refers to walking in order to get from place-to-place, for example, commuting, visiting a friend, or going to the supermarket. It excludes walking for leisure, that is walking for the purpose of health, recreation, training or competition.

[20] Similar data is not published at local authority level for the proportion of adults who cycle for travel.

[21] The wards with the lowest proportion of car ownership were St. Peter's (73.9%), Chilton (84.2%) and Combs Ford (84.8%) (all of which are in Stowmarket), and Needham Market (85.7%).

[22] Car ownership in multiple-adult single-family households where all occupants were aged 66 years and over stood at 94.9%.

[23] The figure for lone parents with non-dependent children was 90.7%.

[24] Defined as the percentage of residential and business premises that have Superfast Broadband (greater than or equal to 30Mbit/s) coverage from fixed broadband.

Businesses

- In 2023, Mid Suffolk had 5,030 business enterprises.[25] An enterprise can be thought of as the overall business, made up of all the individual sites or workplaces (as opposed to a local unit, which is an individual site such as a factory or shop associated with an enterprise).

- Nine-in-ten of these (90.0%) were micro enterprises with between 0-9 employees, very slightly above the proportion of micro enterprises seen regionally and nationally (Table 3).

Table 3: Business enterprises by employment size band (2023)[26]

Employment sizeband	Mid Suffolk		East of England	England
	n	%	%	%
Micro (0-9 employees)	4,525	90.0%	89.6%	89.2%
0-4 employees	*3,990*	*79.3%*	*78.4%*	*77.9%*
5-9 employees	*535*	*10.6%*	*11.2%*	*11.3%*
Small (10-49 employees)	410	8.2%	8.5%	8.8%
Medium (50-249 employees)	80	1.6%	1.5%	1.6%
Large (250+ employees)	15	0.3%	0.4%	0.4%

Source: Inter Departmental Business Register

- Between 2015 and 2023, the number of enterprises in Mid Suffolk increased from 4,780 to 5,030 (Figure 5). This represents an increase of 5.2%, below the growth in enterprises seen during the same period across the East of England (10.9%) and England (12.0%).

Figure 5: Number of business enterprises in Mid Suffolk (2015 - 2023)
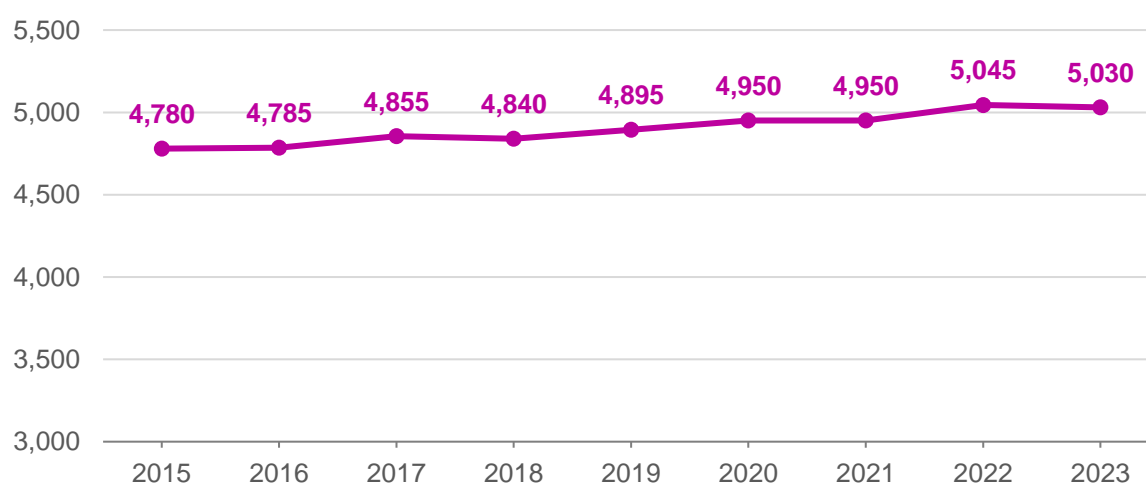
Source: Inter Departmental Business Register

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[25] Business counts are derived from the Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR), a comprehensive list of UK businesses used by government for statistical purposes. The two main sources of input are Value Added Tax (VAT) and Pay As You Earn (PAYE) records from HMRC. The IDBR covers around 2.7 million businesses in all sectors of the economy, but since the main two tax sources have thresholds, very small businesses operating below these will, in most cases, not be included.
[26] The table shows rounded counts.

- The largest increase in number of enterprises was seen in the construction industry (+195 enterprises). The agriculture, forestry and fishing (-80), professional, scientific and technical[27] (-40) and wholesale industries (-35) saw the largest absolute declines.
- Table 4 shows the number of enterprises in each industry in 2023, alongside levels of employment (the number of employees plus working owners) in 2022. The largest number of enterprises were in the construction (15.0%), agriculture, forestry and fishing (13.0%) and professional, scientific and technical industries (12.2%). However, the largest employment industries were manufacturing (responsible for 12.8% of employment), construction (also 12.8%) and health (9.0%).

Table 4: Mid Suffolk enterprises by industry (2023) and employment by industry (2022)[28]

	Enterprises (2023)		Employment (2022)[29]	
	n	%	n	%
Agriculture, forestry & fishing (A)	685	13.0%	2,500	6.4%
Mining, quarrying & utilities (B,D and E)	25	0.4%	600	1.5%
Manufacturing (C)	310	5.0%	5,000	12.8%
Construction (F)	820	15.0%	5,000	12.8%
Motor trades (Part G)	210	3.8%	1,250	3.2%
Wholesale (Part G)	180	2.9%	1,750	4.5%
Retail (Part G)	250	4.5%	2,500	6.4%
Transport & storage (inc postal) (H)	205	3.4%	3,000	7.7%
Accommodation & food services (I)	210	3.2%	2,250	5.8%
Information & communication (J)	225	4.2%	700	1.8%
Financial & insurance (K)	90	1.8%	250	0.6%
Property (L)	155	3.0%	500	1.3%
Professional, scientific & technical (M)	640	12.2%	2,250	5.8%
Business administration & support (N)	415	7.6%	2,500	6.4%
Public administration & defence (O)	85	1.7%	800	2.1%
Education (P)	80	1.2%	3,000	7.7%
Health (Q)	135	1.9%	3,500	9.0%
Arts, entertainment, recreation & other services (R,S,T and U)	305	5.5%	1,500	3.8%
TOTAL	**5,030**	**-**	**39,000**	**-**

Source: Inter Departmental Business Register; ONS Business Register and Employment Survey

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[27] The professional, scientific and technical industry includes legal and accounting activities, management consultancy activities, architectural and engineering activities, technical testing and analysis, scientific research and development, advertising and market research and veterinary activities.

[28] The table shows rounded counts. The level of rounding applied to employment figures varies by estimate. More information can be found at https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/articles/1103.aspx

[29] Employment includes employees plus the number of working owners. The Business Register and Employment Survey therefore includes self-employed workers 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.

Climate Change and Environment

Greenhouse gas emissions

- In 2021, Mid Suffolk accounted for 16.3% of greenhouse gas emissions[30] in Suffolk.

- Between 2005 and 2021, emissions fell from 1214.3 kilotonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (kt CO_2e) to 776.3 kt CO_2e, a reduction of 36%. This was slightly below the percentage decrease in emissions seen nationally (39%).

- The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated restrictions are seen in the 2020 data, with emissions then increasing in 2021.

Figure 6: Mid Suffolk total greenhouse gas emissions 2005-2021 (kt CO_2e)
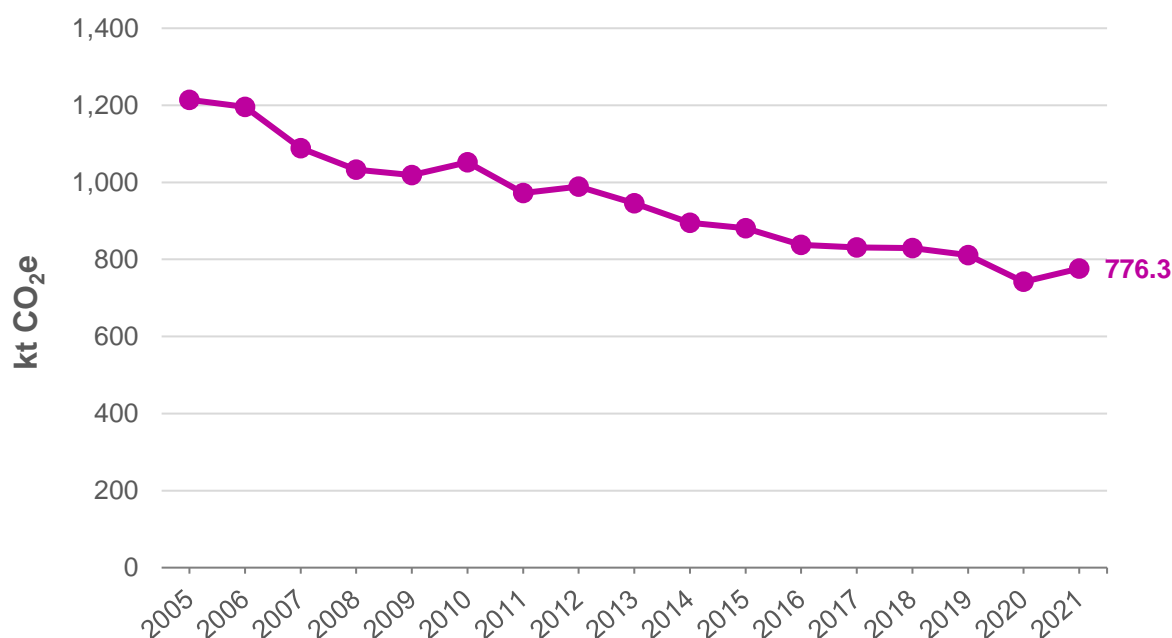
Source: UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero

- At 7.5 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent, greenhouse gas emissions per capita in Mid Suffolk were above the county, regional and national averages in 2021 (with per capita figures of 6.2 tonnes across Suffolk, 6.0 tonnes across the East of England and 5.5 tonnes across England).[31]

- Emissions from transport accounted for 36.0% of total greenhouse emissions (excluding net emissions from land use, land use change and forestry) in Mid Suffolk in 2021 (Table 5). Agriculture was the next highest contributor, responsible for 22.2% of emissions in the district, followed by domestic emissions (20.8% of the total).

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[30] The greenhouse gases covered by these statistics are carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide.

[31] The local authority areas with higher emissions per capita are 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: Percentage contribution to total greenhouse gas emissions by sector (excluding land use, land use change and forestry)[32] (2021)

	Mid Suffolk	East of England	England
Transport	36.0%	35.2%	30.5%
Agriculture	22.2%	10.8%	10.0%
Domestic	20.8%	25.6%	25.7%
Industry	17.0%	13.5%	19.7%
Public Sector	1.5%	3.6%	4.4%
Waste Management	1.3%	6.9%	5.0%
Commercial	1.2%	4.4%	4.9%

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

- Between 2005-21, the waste management[33] and domestic sectors saw the largest absolute decreases, by 112.9 kt CO2e and 100.9 kt CO2e respectively (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Greenhouse gas emissions by sector 2005-2021 (kt CO2e) (excluding land use, land use change and forestry)
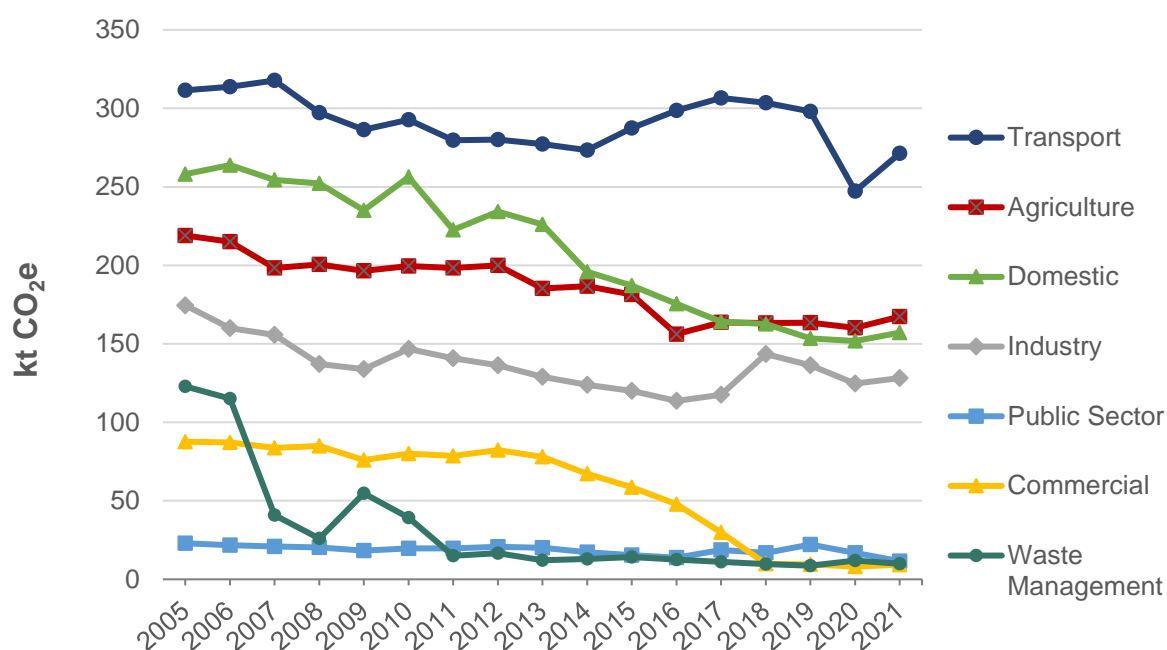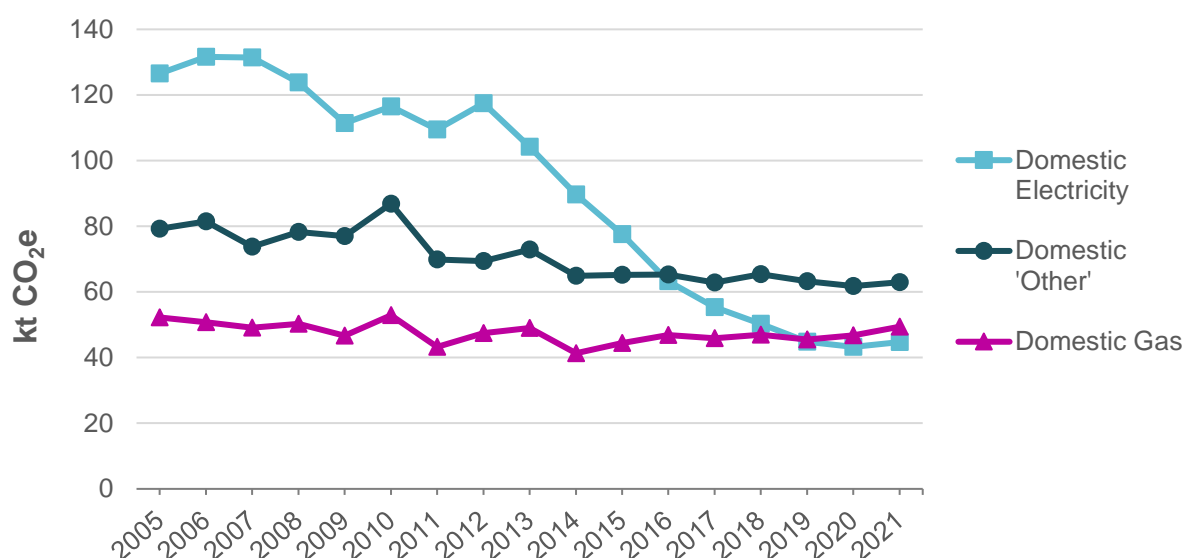

Source: UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero

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[32] The land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) sector consists of both emissions and removals from forest land, cropland, grassland, wetlands, settlements and harvested wood products. 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. For this reason, it is excluded from the calculations in Table 2. Within Mid Suffolk the LULUCF sector accounted for net emissions of 21.4 kt CO2e in 2021, which included net emissions of 40.5 kt CO2e from croplands and the net removal of 24.1 kt CO2e from forest land.

[33] Nationally, waste management sector emissions have fallen significantly over the past two decades, due to reductions in waste being landfilled.

- The largest relative (or percentage) changes were seen in the waste management and commercial sectors (reducing by 91.9% and 89.4% respectively, while emissions from and transport saw the lowest relative decline (falling 12.9%).
- The reduction in domestic (or residential) emissions[34] (from 258.0 to 157.1 kt CO2e) was driven in particular by a decline in emissions related to domestic electricity (Figure 8).
- This reflects supply-side emissions decreases resulting from changes in the mix of fuels being used for electricity generation (e.g. gas instead of coal), including the growth of renewables. At the same time, domestic demand for electricity has also reduced, due to factors including product energy efficiency regulations and energy-efficient lighting.

Figure 8: Domestic greenhouse gas emissions 2005-2021 by energy type (kt CO$_2$e)

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

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) and is valid for 10 years.
- Based on an analysis of EPC lodgements for a 10-year period, from Q2 2013 to Q1 2023, the median CO$_2$ emissions for all dwellings in Mid Suffolk was 3.4 tonnes per year, compared with 3.1 tonnes per year for England and the East of England (Table 6). However, except for detached houses, median emissions were below the national and regional average for individual dwelling types (semi-detached and terraced houses and flats and maisonettes).
- This is not unexpected given Mid Suffolk has a higher-than-average proportion of detached properties and larger properties with four of more bedrooms (and a lower proportion of

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[34] Domestic emissions here represent emissions from energy consumption in and around the home, but not activities by private individuals elsewhere, such as personal travel.

properties with only one bedroom given a lower proportion of flats).[35] Patterns are also influenced by the age of the housing stock, with newer-build properties bring more energy efficient (Table 8).

Table 6: Median estimated Carbon dioxide (CO$_2$) emissions of dwellings (tonnes per year), by property type (based on EPC data from Q2 2013 to Q1 2023)

	Detached	**Semi-detached**	**Terraced**	**Flat / maisonette**	**All dwellings**
Mid Suffolk	4.9	3.1	2.6	1.5	3.4
East of England	4.6	3.6	3.1	1.9	3.1
England	4.4	3.6	3.4	1.9	3.1

Source: Median estimated Carbon dioxide (CO$_2$) emissions (England and Wales, all records up to financial year ending March 2023), Office for National Statistics

Table 7: Percentage of dwellings with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band 'C' or above, by property type (based on EPCs lodged from Q2 2013 to Q1 2023)

	Detached	**Semi-detached**	**Terraced**	**Flat / maisonette**	**All dwellings**
Mid Suffolk	41.2%	46.9%	55.8%	75.9%	48.6%
East of England	39.3%	37.4%	46.3%	70.1%	48.3%
England	40.3%	35.4%	38.4%	66.9%	46.6%

Source: Dwellings with Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band C or above, Office for National Statistics

Table 8: Percentage of dwellings with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band 'C' or above, by property age (based on EPCs lodged from Q2 2013 to Q1 2023)

|	**Pre 1930**	**1930 to 1982**	**1983 to 2011**	**2012 onwards**	**All dwellings**
Mid Suffolk	6.5%	29.0%	52.3%	98.5%	48.6%
East of England	12.5%	33.9%	64.2%	96.4%	48.3%
England	16.7%	34.8%	67.2%	97.5%	46.6%

Source: Dwellings with Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band C or above, Office for National Statistics

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[35] As shown earlier in this report in Figures 3 and 4.

Clean electricity generation

- Clean energy is commonly used to refer to electricity that is generated by facilities that do not directly emit greenhouse gases during the generating process.[36]

- At the end of 2022, there were 4,434 sites in Mid Suffolk generating clean electricity. Of these, 4,366 were sites with solar photovoltaics (PV) installed - both ground-mounted solar farms and rooftop devices (commonly retrofitted to existing buildings) – and 68 were onshore wind sites.

- Between 2015 and 2022, the increase in sites (from 3,139 to 4,434) led to a growth in capacity, from 42.7 Megawatts (MW) to 48.7 MW. Despite this, renewable electricity generation remained relatively constant throughout this period. In 2022, the amount generated via solar and wind was 55,105 Megawatt hours (MWh) or 55.1 Gigawatt hours (GWh).[37] For context, the total estimated domestic and non-domestic electricity consumption in Mid Suffolk in 2022 was 444.2 GWh.

Figure 9: Number of clean energy sites in Mid Suffolk (2015-22)
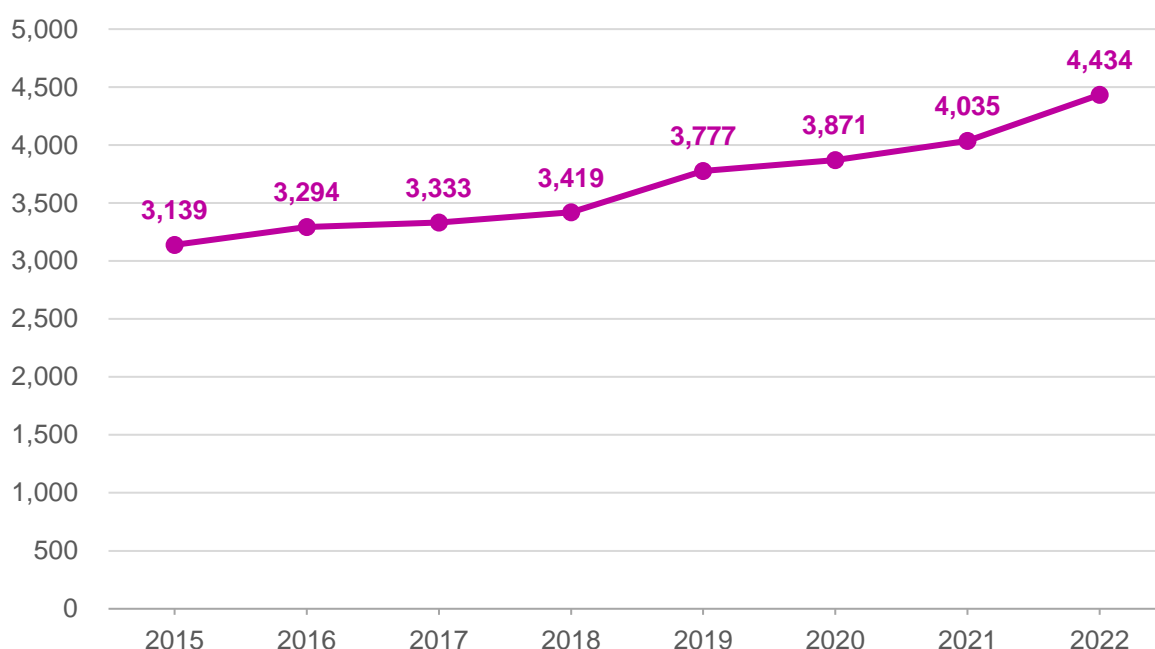
Source: Renewable electricity by local authority, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ)

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[36] The definition of clean energy differs from renewable energy, which also includes thermal fuels (solid biomass, biogases, and liquids) that are combusted to produce electricity, resulting in emissions at source. In addition to wind and solar sites, the Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ) include the following installations within their renewable electricity statistics for Mid Suffolk (2022 figures shown in brackets): Anaerobic Digestion (3 sites), Landfill Gas (4 sites), Municipal Solid Waste (incineration) (1 site), and Animal Biomass (1 site).

[37] The generated output from all renewable sites in Mid Suffolk is estimated to be far greater that this figure, based on a total capacity of 96.8 MW in 2022 once Anaerobic Digestion, Landfill Gas, Municipal Solid Waste and Animal Biomass sites are included. However, figures are not available for the total amount of electricity generated from all renewable sites in 2022, given data relating to individual sites has been suppressed to avoid disclosure. For more information, see the data published at:
https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/regional-renewable-statistics

Plug-in and electric cars

- At the end of September 2023, there were 1,708 plug-in cars registered to both private and company owners in Mid Suffolk (comprising 1,016 battery electric and 692 plug-in hybrid cars). This was around twice the number registered at the end of December 2021.

- With a total of 67,810 cars registered to owners in Mid Suffolk at the end of September 2023, plug-in cars therefore accounted for 2.5% of all cars registered in the district, of which battery electric cars accounted for 1.5%. In comparison, 2.1% of registered cars in the East of England and 2.8% in England were battery electric at the end of September 2023.

Figure 10: Number of plug-in cars registered to owners in Mid Suffolk at the end of the quarter, Q4 2009 – Q3 2023
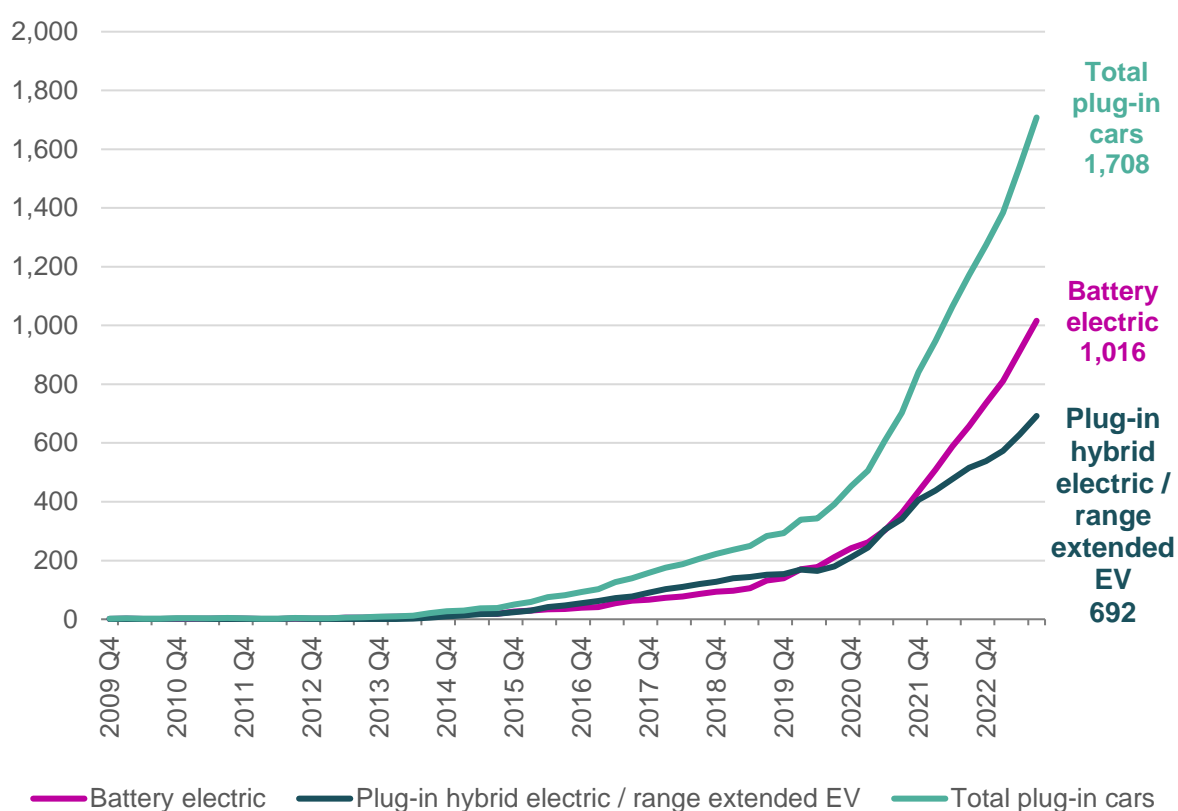
Source: Licensed plug-in vehicles (PiVs) at the end of the quarter, Department for Transport (DfT) and Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA)

- As of April 2024, Mid Suffolk had 72 publicly available electric vehicle charging points, including 8 rapid chargers.[38] This equated to 69.6 charging points per 100,000 population (compared with 76.6 per 100,000 across Suffolk, 64.1 per 100,000 across the East of England and 91.1 per 100,000 across England).

- Having increased from 29 in January 2023 (8.0% of Suffolk's 362 charging points at the time), this accounted for 12.3% of Suffolk's 585 charging points in April 2024.

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[38] 50kW and above

Figure 11: Number of publicly available electric vehicle charging points by Suffolk local authority district October 2019 – April 2024[39]
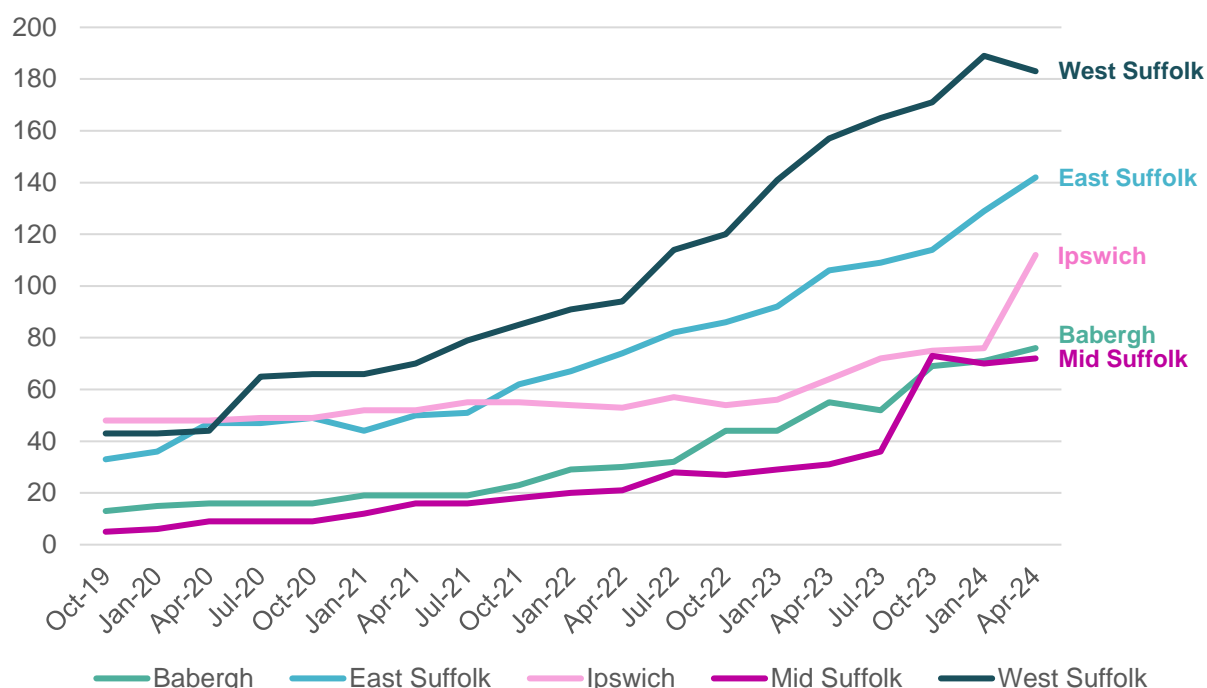
Source: Electric Vehicle Public Charging Infrastructure Statistics, Department for Transport (DfT)

Figure 12: Number of publicly available electric vehicle charging points per 100,000 population by Suffolk local authority district October 2019 – April 2024
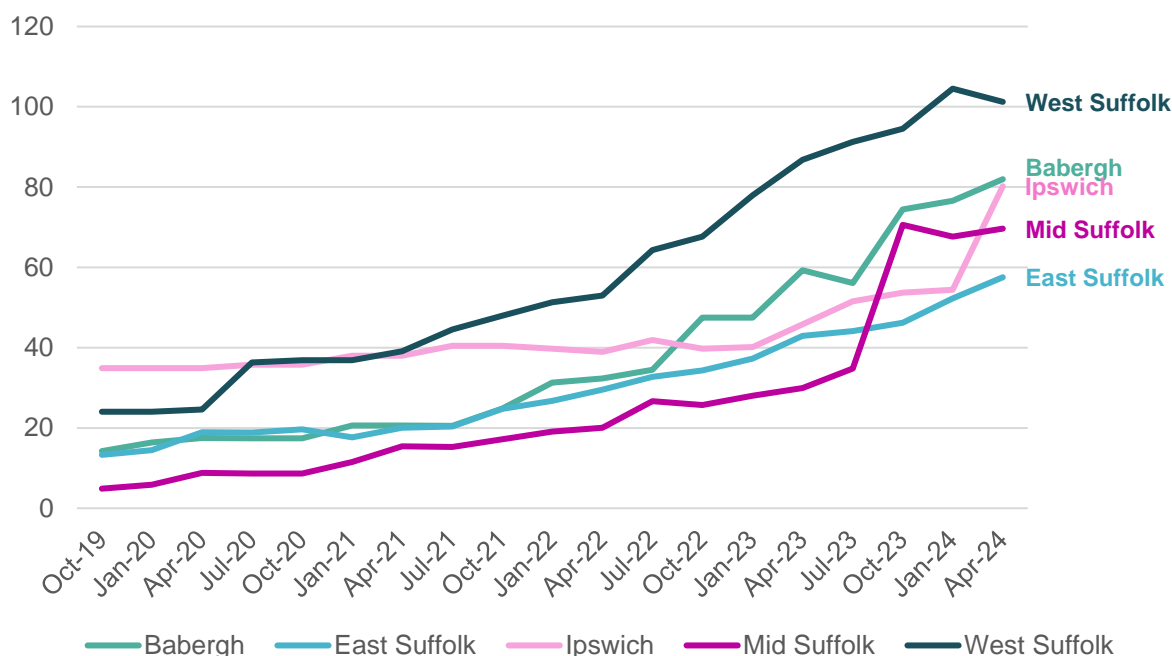
Source: Electric Vehicle Public Charging Infrastructure Statistics, Department for Transport (DfT)

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[39] Decommissioned charging devices are removed from the total number of available charging points. 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.

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.[40]

- In 2022/23, 347.5kg of household waste was collected (by the local authority) per person across Mid Suffolk and Babergh (both districts combined). This compared with 402.4kg per person across the East of England and 386.3kg per person across England.

- With the exception of 2020/21 and 2021/22 – where increased time at home and changed behaviours during the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in higher waste generation – collected household waste per person has remained broadly similar since 2011 in Mid Suffolk and Babergh. However, the 2022/23 figure of 347.5kg per person represents the lowest value since 2012/13.

- This reflects trends seen nationally - where the volume of collected waste per person has fallen below pre-pandemic levels - linked to factors including weather conditions in 2022 reducing plant growth, as well as increases in the cost of living reducing expenditure on food, and the home.[41]

Figure 13: Collected household waste per person (kg), 2010/11 – 2022/23
(Mid Suffolk and Babergh combined)
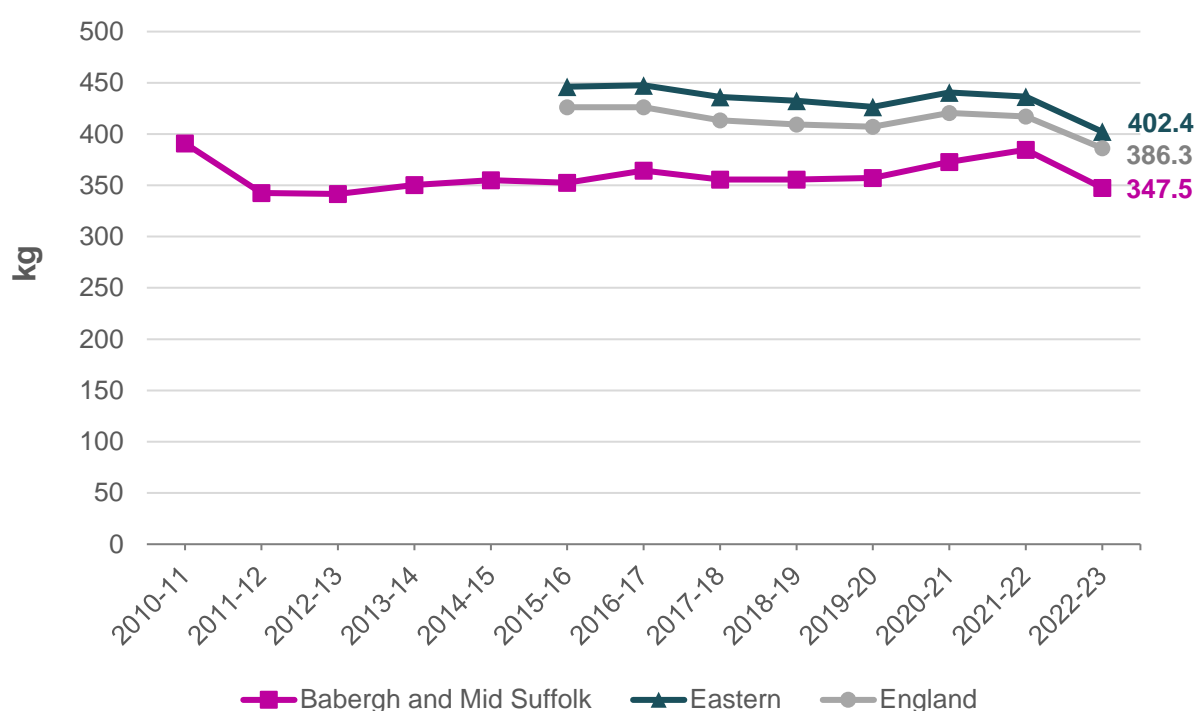
Source: Local Authority Collected Waste Statistics - Local Authority data, Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (Defra)

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[40] 'Household waste' also includes separately collected healthcare waste and asbestos.
[41] See https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-authority-collected-waste-management-annual-results/local-authority-collected-waste-management-annual-results-202223

- In 2022/23, the average 'household waste' recycling rate across England was 41.7%, a 0.8 percentage point decrease from 2021/22, with recycling rates ranging from 17.7% to 61.6% at the individual local authority level. Across the Eastern region, the average rate was 44.7%, down 1.6 percentage points from 2021/22.[42]
- Within Mid Suffolk and Babergh (both districts combined), the 'household waste' recycling rate was 39.0% in 2022/23, a decrease of 2.0 percentage points from 2021/22 (Figure 14).

Figure 14: Household waste recycling rates, 2001/02 – 2022/23
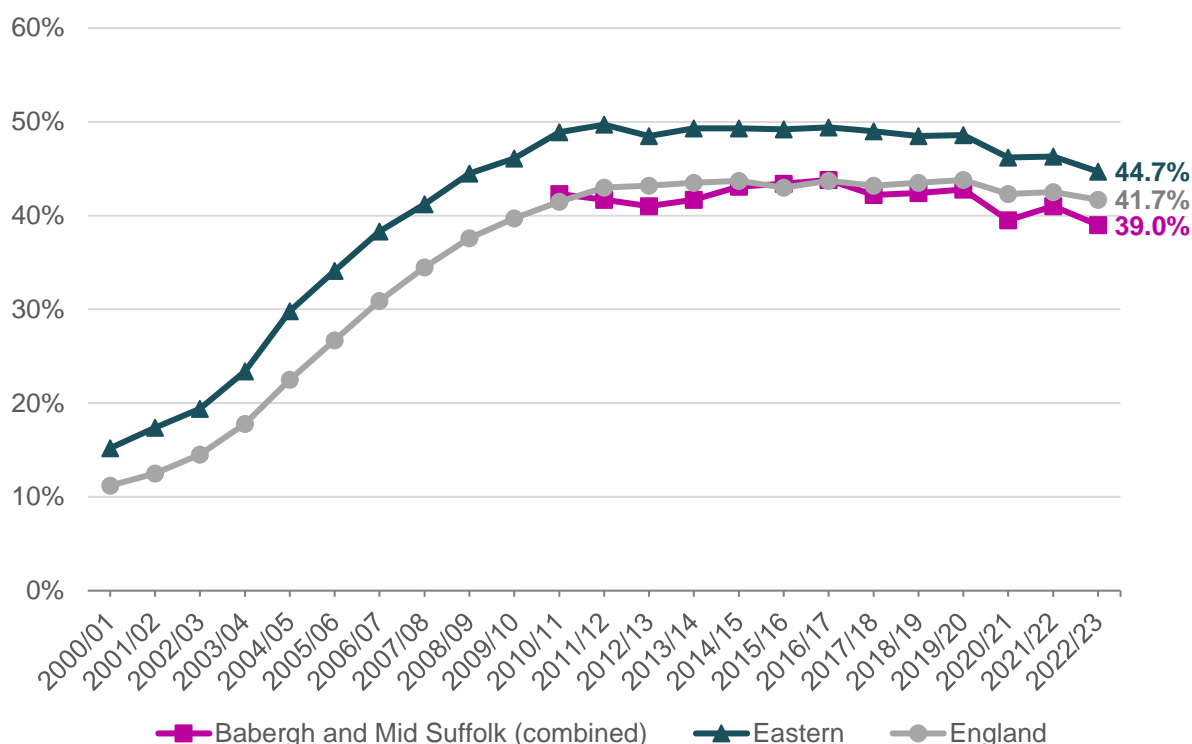*(Mid Suffolk and Babergh combined)*

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

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[42] '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.

Biodiversity

- Across Mid Suffolk, there are 36 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), six Local Nature Reserves, 208 County Wildlife Sites (covering 1,487 hectares) and 792 hectares of ancient woodland.

- A study conducted for Mid Suffolk District Council in 2021 calculated that, on average, tree canopy cover for wards in Mid Suffolk stood at 8.5%, ranging from 6.0% in Stow Thorney ward to 12.8% in Claydon & Barham ward.[43] This compared with a ward average of 16.3% for selected wards assessed across England between 2018-22 (14.6% for rural wards and 16.7% for urban wards).[44]

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[43] Available at: https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/documents/d/asset-library-54706/bmscanopyreportv4
[44] Based on a total of 6,135 wards assessed in England (4,904 urban wards and 1,231 rural wards) as part of a Forestry Commission UK canopy cover webmap project which aimed to assess the percentage tree canopy cover across wards in the UK (taken from the dataset published by the Forestry Commission on 5th April 2023).

Community strength and wellbeing

Local area perceptions

- The 2022 and 2023 Mid Suffolk Resident Surveys explored residents' views towards their local area. Comparisons are shown below against the results for England, taken from the Community Life Survey.[45]

- In 2023:
    - 84% of respondents said they were satisfied with their local area as a place to live, compared with 74% nationally.
    - 72% agreed they were proud to live in their local area. Nationally, 60% agreed this was the case.
    - 65% felt a strong sense of belonging to their local community, compared with 61% nationally.[46]

- Similar to the national picture, results showed a slight decline compared with 2022, with both local area satisfaction and sense of belonging declining by three percentage points in Mid Suffolk and two points nationally. The proportion who agreed they were proud to live in their local area fell by six percentage points, from 78% in 2022.[47]

- As shown by Table 9, residents in rural areas reported higher levels of satisfaction, pride and sense of belonging than those in urban areas.

Table 9: Local area perceptions (2023)

Measure	Mid Suffolk			England
	Total	**Urban**	**Rural**	
Local area satisfaction *(% satisfied)*	84%	80%	85%	74%
Proud to live in local area *(% agree)*	72%	58%	76%	60%
Sense of belonging to local community *(% very / fairly strongly belong)*	65%	53%	69%	61%

Source: Mid Suffolk Resident Survey 2023; Community Life Survey Oct-Dec 2023 quarterly release

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[45] The Mid Suffolk District Council Resident Survey is a sample survey designed to be representative of the adult (18+) population at the district level. It employs a 'push-to-web' methodology, whereby survey invites are sent to a randomly sampled selection of households, inviting household members to complete the survey online. Non-responding households are sent a follow-up paper questionnaire to boost response and enable participation among those not able or not wishing to take part online. A total of 1,821 residents completed the survey in 2023. Comparisons are shown against the Community Life Survey, a large-scale survey conducted in England on behalf of the Department for Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) which explores levels of community engagement, volunteering and social cohesion. The Community Life Survey and the Mid Suffolk Residents Survey both employ similar approaches to data collection, meaning the results to questions asked on both surveys can be compared. The Community Life Survey data for 2023 is taken from the October to December 2023 quarterly release published on 8 May 2024, based on c.97,500 responses.

[46] It should be noted that slightly different wording was used between surveys, with the Mid Suffolk Resident Survey asking about "your local community" and the Community Life Survey asking about "your immediate neighbourhood".

[47] This question was not asked previously on the Community Life Survey, so no benchmark is available prior to 2023.

Community safety

- In the 12 months to April 2024, the overall crime rate in Mid Suffolk was 36.2 incidents per 1,000 population, based on 3,761 recorded crimes. This compared with a rate of 60.2 per 1,000 across Suffolk and 72.0 per 1,000 across the East of England during the same period.

- Mid Suffolk's 2023 Resident Survey found that a significant majority of residents (94%) felt safe outside in their local area during the day, while 87% felt safe in local parks and open spaces during the day. Just under three-quarters (73%) said they felt safe in their local area after dark, although this fell to 49% of residents in urban areas, compared with 80% of those in rural settings.

Volunteering

- The Resident Survey also explored levels of formal volunteering among Mid Suffolk's residents, that is, how often in the previous 12 months they had given any unpaid help to any group(s), club(s) or organisation(s).

- National data from the Community Life Survey indicates that there has been a decline in levels of formal volunteering over the past decade and following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 15: Formal volunteering rates in England (2013/14 - 2023)
NOTE: chart shows contextual data for __England only__ and does not include data for Mid Suffolk
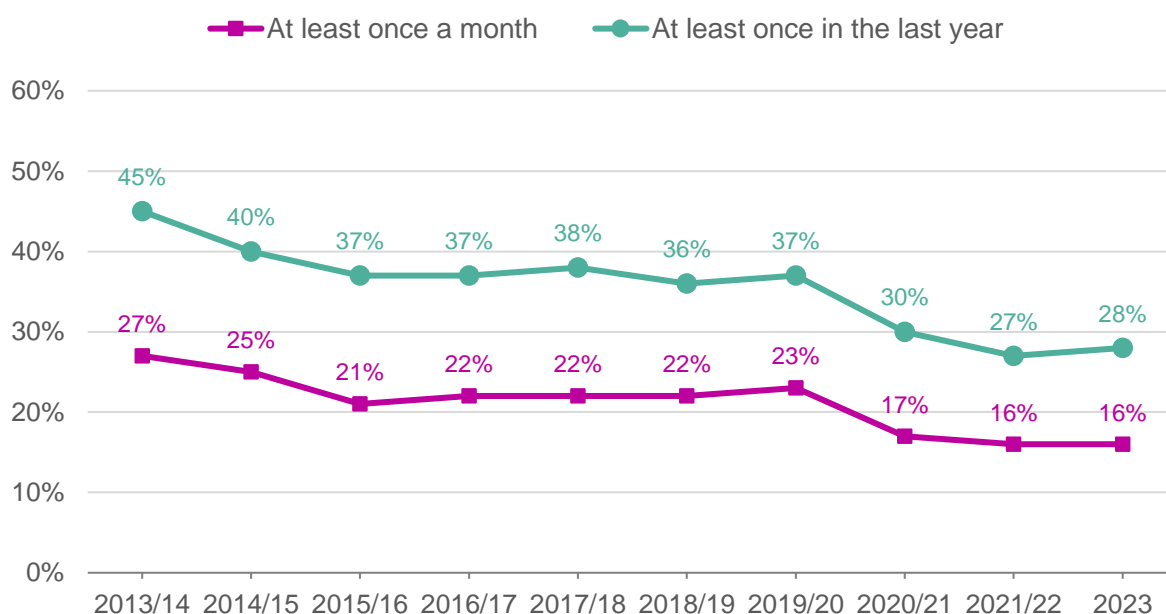
Source: Community Life Survey

- In 2023, 41% of respondents to the Mid Suffolk Resident Survey said they had formally volunteered for any group, club or organisation at least once in the past 12 months (up from 37% in 2022), with 30% having done so at least once a month in the previous 12 months (up from 27% in 2022).

- Mid Suffolk's Resident Survey asks about formal volunteering in a slightly different way to the Community Life Survey, meaning comparisons with the national data should be treated with some caution. Comparable data from districts in north and mid-Essex (collected via

the Essex Resident Survey 2023) and from Babergh in Suffolk are therefore included in Figure 16 for comparison. [48]

Figure 16: Formal volunteering rates in Mid Suffolk, Babergh and north and mid-Essex districts (2023)

Legend:
- At least once in the last year
- At least once a month

District	At least once in the last year	At least once a month
Babergh	44%	31%
Mid Suffolk	41%	30%
Uttlesford	41%	27%
Chelmsford	40%	27%
Maldon	38%	29%
Colchester	35%	26%
Braintree	35%	21%
Tendring	31%	20%
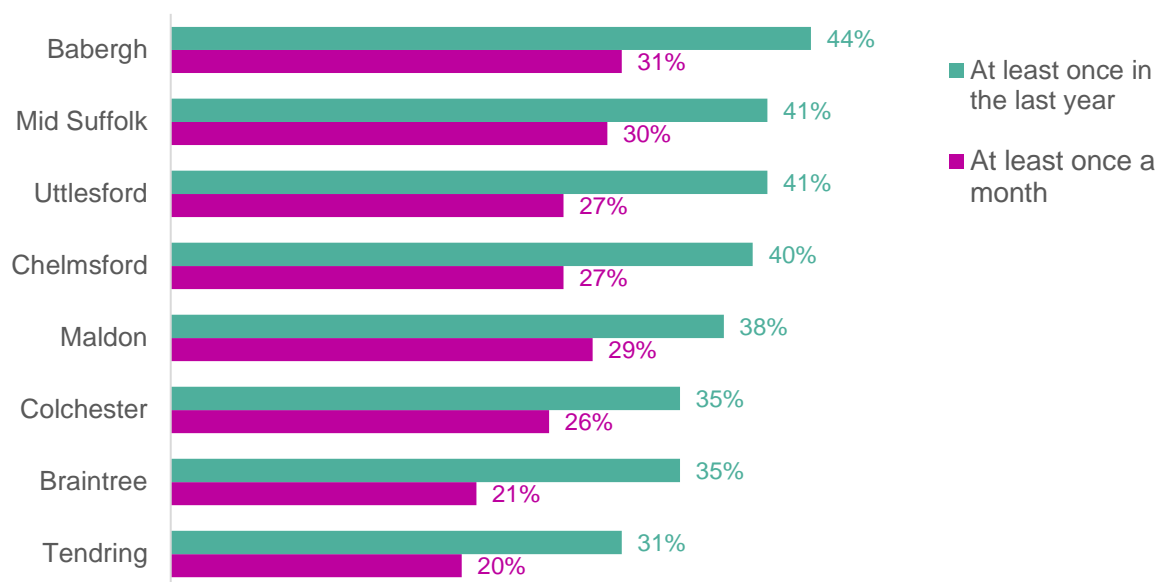
Source: Babergh and Mid Suffolk Resident Survey 2023; Essex Resident Survey 2023

Personal wellbeing

- Residents in Mid Suffolk report above-average levels of personal wellbeing. [49] Asked to rate their levels of life satisfaction, worthwhileness and happiness from 0-10 (where 10 means they feel completely satisfied / worthwhile / happy), respondents to the 2023 Resident Survey gave an average score of:
  - 7.15 for satisfaction with their life (compared with 6.91 across England).
  - 7.53 for feeling that the things they do in their life are worthwhile (7.10 across England).
  - 7.28 for how happy they felt yesterday (6.98 across England). [50]

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[48] Whilst both surveys use a single question with comparable response categories to ask how often in the past 12 months respondents have provided 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 (including an "Any other help" option). Both the Mid Suffolk Resident Survey and the Essex Resident Survey use a single question without these lead-in questions. These differences could impact on the way people respond, and therefore on comparability with the Community Life Survey results.

[49] Personal wellbeing scores for England are taken from the Active Lives Survey for the period November 2022 to November 2023. The Active Lives Survey, conducted on behalf of Sport England since 2015, gathers data on how adults aged 16 and over in England engage with sport and physical activity. The overall sample size is around 175,000 people for each survey. It employs a comparable approach to the Mid Suffolk Resident Survey, with respondents from a randomly selected sample of households across England invited to complete an online survey, with a paper questionnaire supplied with the second of three reminders.

[50] It should be noted that the Office for National also publish – on an annual basis – local authority-level estimates of personal wellbeing, derived from their Annual Population Survey (APS). The APS collects this

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- When asked about their levels of anxiety (again on a scale of 0-10 but where 10 means they feel completely anxious), residents reported lower than average anxiety (3.12 compared with 3.62 for England). Results for each of the four wellbeing measures remained broadly in line with the 2022 survey results.
- In line with national findings, a number of resident groups reported lower levels of wellbeing, including residents living in urban areas, younger adults, those in single adult households, those in social rented accommodation, those who are not working (excluding retired), those who report being in poor health and those with a limiting long-term illness or health condition.

Life expectancy

- For the period 2020 to 2022, life expectancy at birth – the average number of years a person would expect to live based on contemporary mortality rates[51] - exceeded the regional and national averages. By sex:
  - Female life expectancy in Mid Suffolk was 84.6 years (compared with 83.5 in the East of England and 82.8 across England). This ranked 44th highest out of 307 local authorities in England, with Kensington and Chelsea having the highest figure, at 86.3 years.
  - Male life expectancy in Mid Suffolk was 81.1 years (compared with 79.8 in the East of England and 78.9 across England). This ranked 43rd highest out of 307 local authorities in England, with the district of Hart in Hampshire having the highest figure, at 83.7 years.
- Figure 17 shows how life expectancy has changed since the period 2001 to 2003. It should be noted that coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic led to increased mortality in 2020 and 2021, and the impact of this is seen in life expectancy estimates for 2020 to 2022.[52]
- Life expectancy data from the period 2018 to 2020 looked at the difference in life expectancy at birth between the least and most deprived areas within an area. In Mid Suffolk, this stood at 5.7 years for males and 4.9 years for females.
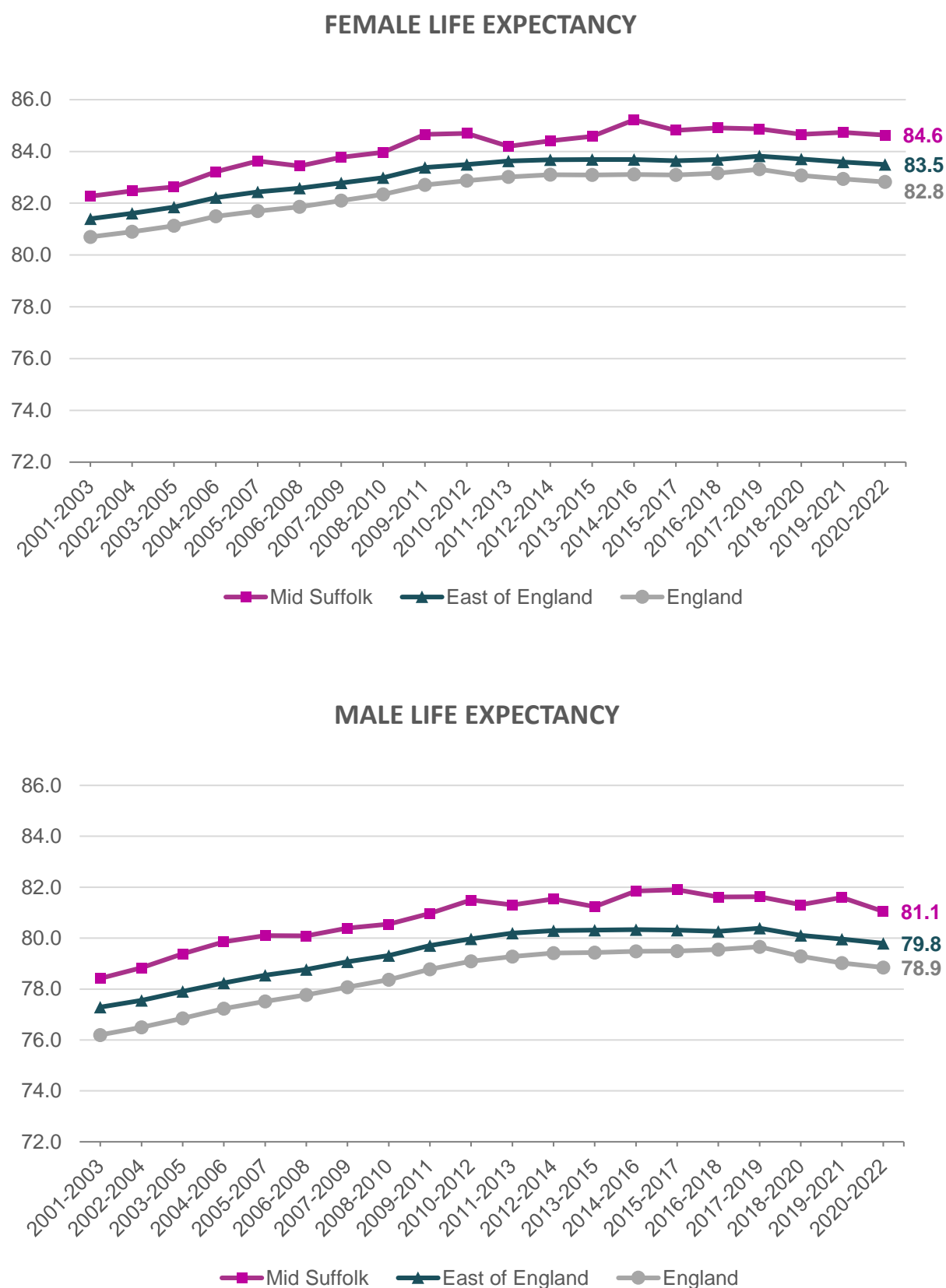
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information via an interviewer-administered face-to-face interview. In contrast, the Mid Suffolk Resident Survey and the Active Lives Survey both employ a web/postal self-completion survey. The presence of an interviewer has been shown to impact on how people respond, particularly for questions that might be deemed sensitive or personal, or where a particular response may be seen as socially desirable. As such, national and district-level (i.e. Mid Suffolk) personal wellbeing estimates provided by the APS will tend to be more positive compared with those delivered by the Mid Suffolk Resident Survey and Active Lives Survey. In addition, the larger sample size delivered by the Mid Suffolk Resident Survey means that confidence intervals (a range of values that describe the level of uncertainty around a survey estimate) are smaller than those for the APS estimates. For example, for 2022/23, the ONS estimate for life satisfaction in Mid Suffolk was a mean score of 7.95, based on a sample size of 80. Findings from the 2023 Mid Suffolk Resident Survey for life satisfaction were based on a sample size of 1,629 and an estimated effective sample size of around 1,090.

[51] 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.

[52] However, a fall in period life expectancy does not mean that a baby born in 2020 to 2022 will go on to live a shorter life than a baby born in 2017 to 2019; average lifespan will be determined by changes in mortality rates across their lifetime and if mortality rates improve, then period life expectancy will go back up.

Figure 17: Life expectancy at birth by sex (2001-2003 to 2020-2022)

FEMALE LIFE EXPECTANCY

Mid Suffolk: 84.6
East of England: 83.5
England: 82.8

Legend: Mid Suffolk · East of England · England

MALE LIFE EXPECTANCY

Mid Suffolk: 81.1
East of England: 79.8
England: 78.9

Legend: Mid Suffolk · East of England · England

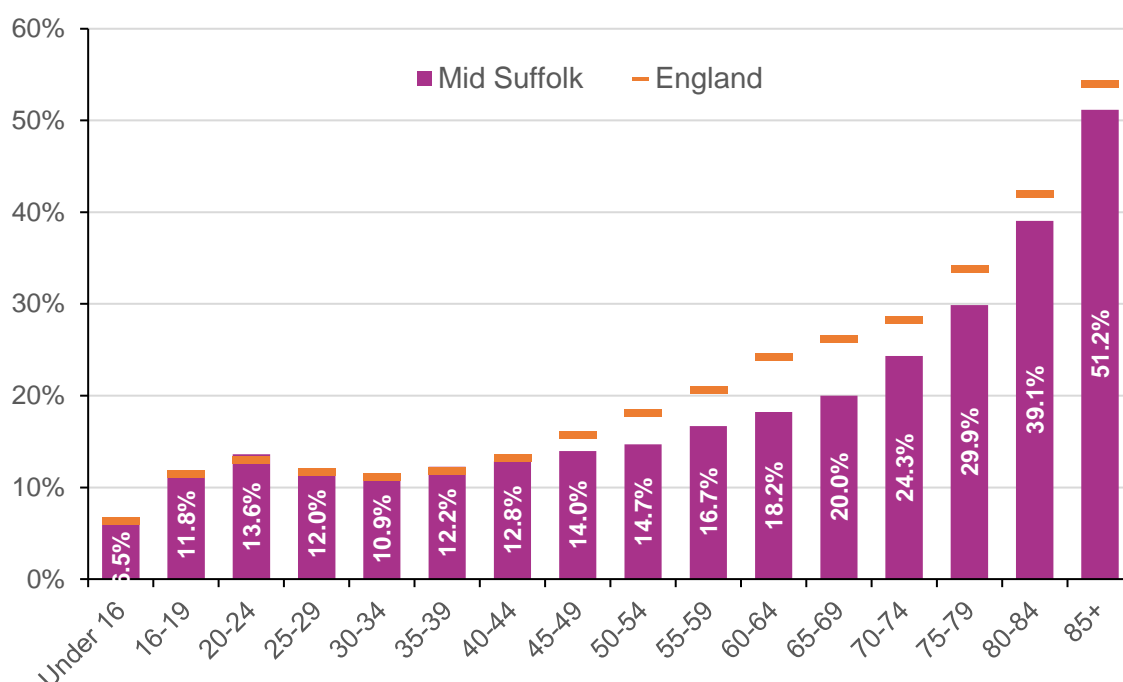Source: Office for National Statistics

Disability prevalence

- Census 2021 collected self-reported levels of disability, whereby people who assessed their day-to-day activities as limited by long-term physical or mental health conditions or illnesses either 'a little' or 'a lot' were considered disabled.[53]

- At the total level, 17.1% of Mid Suffolk residents of all ages were classed as disabled in 2021, with 6.4% indicating their day-to-day activities were limited 'a lot'. This compared with 16.6% across the East of England (6.6% whose activities were limited 'a lot') and 17.3% across England (7.3% whose activities were limited 'a lot'). However, Mid Suffolk's older-than-average population should be noted in making these comparisons.

- Figure 18 shows the prevalence of disability among Mid Suffolk residents by age. Comparisons are shown with the national (England) average. These show that while the prevalence of disability among those aged under 50 broadly mirrored the national figures, disability prevalence for each age band over 50 was at least 2.8 percentage points below the national average. The largest gaps were seen at ages 60-64 and 65-69, at 6.0 and 6.2 percentage points below the national comparator.

Figure 18: Disability prevalence: percentage of people whose activities were limited 'a little' or 'a lot', by banded age (Census 2021)


Source: Census 2021, Office for National Statistics

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[53] On Census Day (21 March 2021), people were asked "Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?". If they answered "yes", a further question "Do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?" was asked. The response options were: "yes, a lot", "yes, a little" and "not at all". In line with the Equality Act (2010), people who assessed their day-to-day activities as limited by long-term physical or mental health conditions or illnesses were considered disabled. Those who stated that they had a condition that did not limit their day-to-day activities or had no condition, were considered non-disabled.

Overweight prevalence

- In 2022/23, 66.2% of adults in Mid Suffolk were classed as overweight or living with obesity[54], broadly in line with regional and national data (64.8% across the East of England and 64.0% across England).

- The proportion of Year 6 children (aged 10 to 11 years) classed as overweight or living with obesity was below the regional and national average in 2022/23 (30.8% compared with 34.2% across the East of England and 36.6% in England). Since 2007, prevalence has increased broadly in line with the trajectory seen nationally and regionally (Figure 19).

Figure 19: Proportion of Year 6 children (aged 10 to 11 years) classified as overweight or living with obesity (2007/08 – 2022/23)[55]
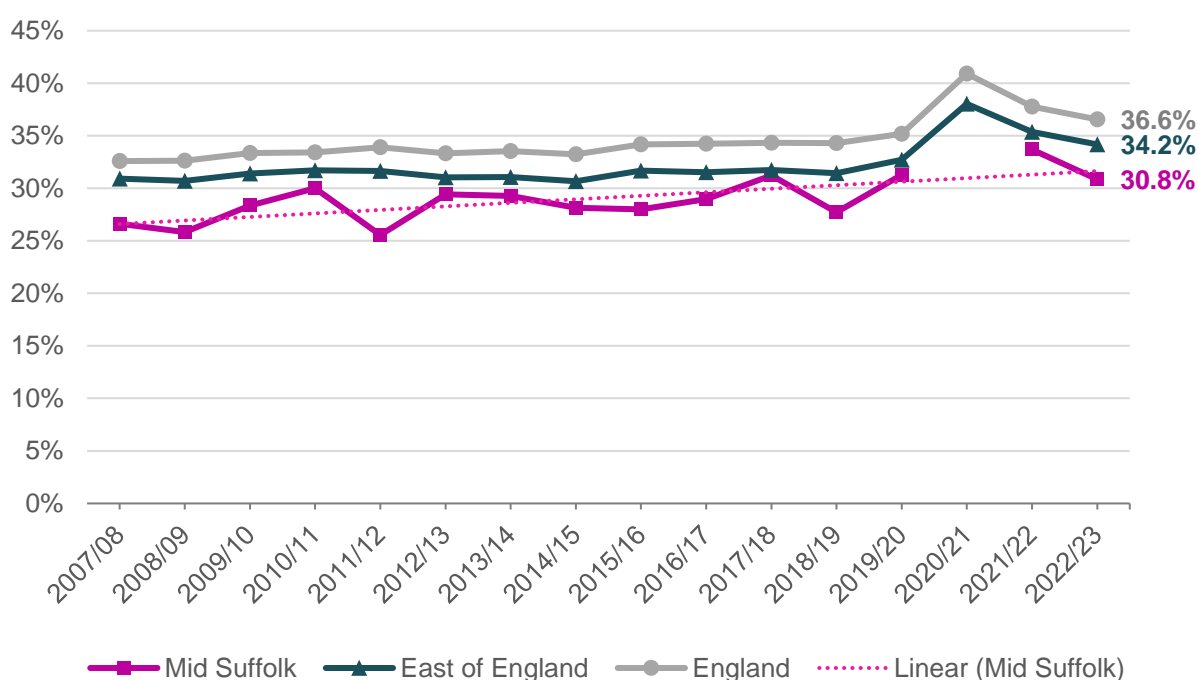
Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, using National Child Measurement Programme

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[54] 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.
[55] The National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) collects height and weight measurements of children primarily in mainstream state-maintained schools in England. Local authority and region geographies are derived from the postcode of child residency. The start of the 2020/21 NCMP data collection was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic response. In March 2021 local authorities were asked to collect a representative 10% sample of data because it was not feasible to expect a full NCMP collection so late into the academic year. This sample has enabled national and regional estimates of children's weight status (including obesity prevalence) for 2020 to 2021 and contributes towards assessing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on children's physical health. Due to the reduced data collection in this period, local authority data is not available.

Physical activity

- 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 very vigorous intensity activity (such as sprinting or stair climbing); or a combination of moderate, vigorous and very vigorous intensity activity.[56]

- Figure 20 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 67.1% in 2022/23), Mid Suffolk has seen a greater improvement.[57] In 2022/23, 68.7% of adults aged 19+ were classed as 'physically active', in line with the proportions seen across the East of England (67.7%) and England (67.1%).

Figure 20: Proportion of 'physically active' adults aged 19+ (2015/16 – 2022/23) [58]
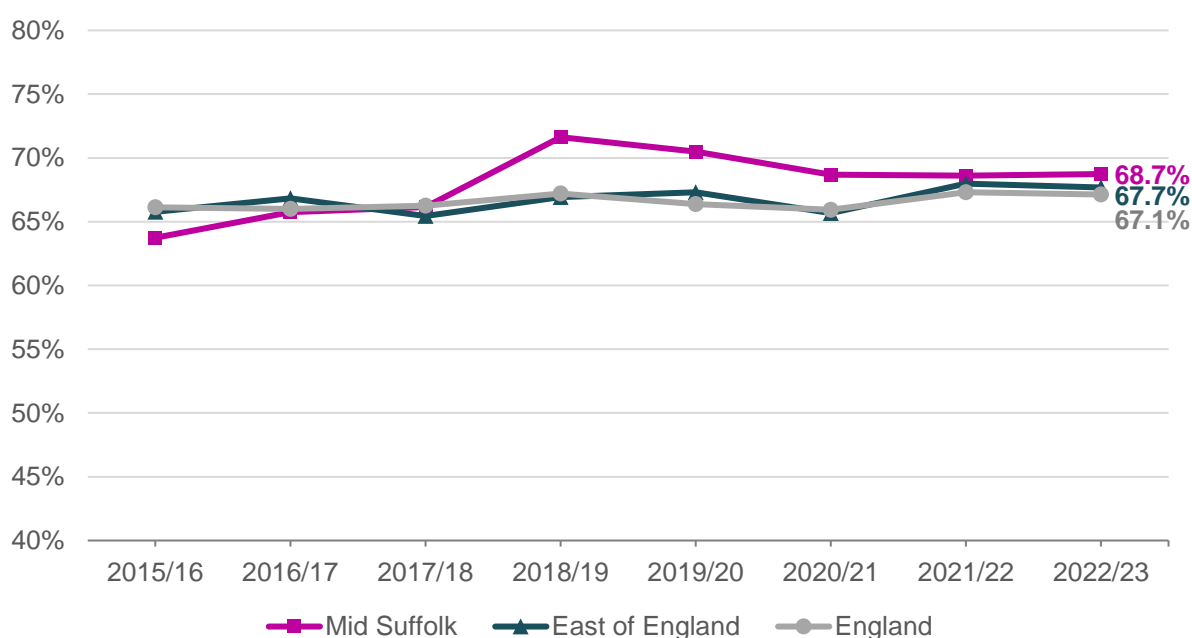
Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID), based on data from the Active Lives Survey

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

[57] 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 between 2015/16 and 2022/23 suggests that the level of physical active adults in Mid Suffolk has improved over time above the national average.

[58] 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' - at 21.8% in Mid Suffolk in 2022/23, in line with the East of England (21.5%) and England (22.6%).[59]
- 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 2022/23, 48.8% 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), in line with the figures for the East of England (48.3%) and England (47.0%).

GP-to-patient ratios

- The funding of GP practices is complex and depends on various factors, including the expected clinical need and characteristics of the patient population. GP practices with a high proportion of people aged 65 years and over tend to have fewer patients per staff member. Less populated areas also tend to have fewer patients per GP compared with more urban areas.[60]
- In March 2024, there was one full-time equivalent (FTE) GP (including GPs in training and locums) for every 1,801 patients registered at GP surgeries in Mid Suffolk.[61] This compared with one GP (FTE) for every 1,858 patients registered across the East of England and one for every 1,699 patients registered across England.[62] Individual surgery ratios in Mid Suffolk ranged from between one GP (FTE) per 1,307 and one per 2,742 patients.
- Excluding GPs in training, there was one fully qualified GP (FTE) for every 2,222 patients registered at GP surgeries in Mid Suffolk. This compared with one fully-qualified GP (FTE) for every 2,430 patients registered across the East of England and one for every 2,295 patients registered across England. Individual surgery ratios in Mid Suffolk ranged from between one fully-qualified GP (FTE) per 1,598 and one per 3,714 patients.

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[59] 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 9.5% of adults aged 19 and over.

[60] Office for National Statistics (2022) Trends in patient-to-staff numbers at GP practices in England, available at: https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthcaresystem/articles/trendsinpatienttostaffnumbersatgppracticesinengland/2022

[61] Based on analysis of practice-level staffing and patient data published by NHS Digital. Given NHS/health boundaries do not mirror local government authority boundaries, surgeries were identified as being in Mid Suffolk based on postcode. It should be noted that while the analysis includes surgeries within Mid Suffolk, these may serve some residents who live outside of the district. Similarly, some residents within the district may be registered at surgeries outside of the district.

[62] Based on published workforce tables at regional and national level. Within these, there were 9,661 (FTE) GPs in training in England in March 2024, of which 925 (FTE) were not classified by location. Therefore, while they were included in the calculations of the GP (FTE) to patient ratio for England, they were not included in the calculations for region. This means that the region (East of England) ratio - and potentially the district-level calculation for Mid Suffolk – may slightly underestimate the number of trainee GPs working in the area. This does not affect the ratios based on fully qualified GPs only.

Resilience

Qualifications

- Figures 21 and 22 show educational attainment by age 19 for each of the following:
  - Level 2: five or more GCSEs grades 9-4 or an equivalent qualification
  - Level 3: two or more A levels or an equivalent qualification
- Age is based on age during the academic year, so if the learner is 19 in 2022/23 they will have turned 19 between 1st September 2022 and 31st August 2023. Most level 3 qualifications are achieved by age 18, meaning the 2022/23 age 19 cohort will have sat exams and received assessments in summer 2022.
- Local authority district figures are calculated based on where the pupil was learning at academic age 15 (rather than the home address of the learner). Figures are shown for state schools only.
- The cancellation of summer 2020 and 2021 exams and the alternate method of awarding grades affected pupil attainment statistics unlike previous years. The resulting increases in attainment at age 16 affect the level 2 statistics at age 19 for 2022/23. Behavioural changes at a school and pupil level will also likely have had some impact on attainment which should be borne in mind when making time-series comparisons.
- Figure 21 shows that the proportion of learners who were at a Mid Suffolk school aged 15 and who achieved five or more GCSEs at grades 9-4 by age 19, has exceeded the regional and national averages since 2016/17. In 2022/23, 88.6% had done so by age 19, 3.2 percentage points above the East of England average and 4.3 points above the England average.

Figure 21: Proportion of state school learners attaining full level 2 (five or more GCSEs at grades 9-4) by age 19 (academic years 2016/17 – 2022/23)
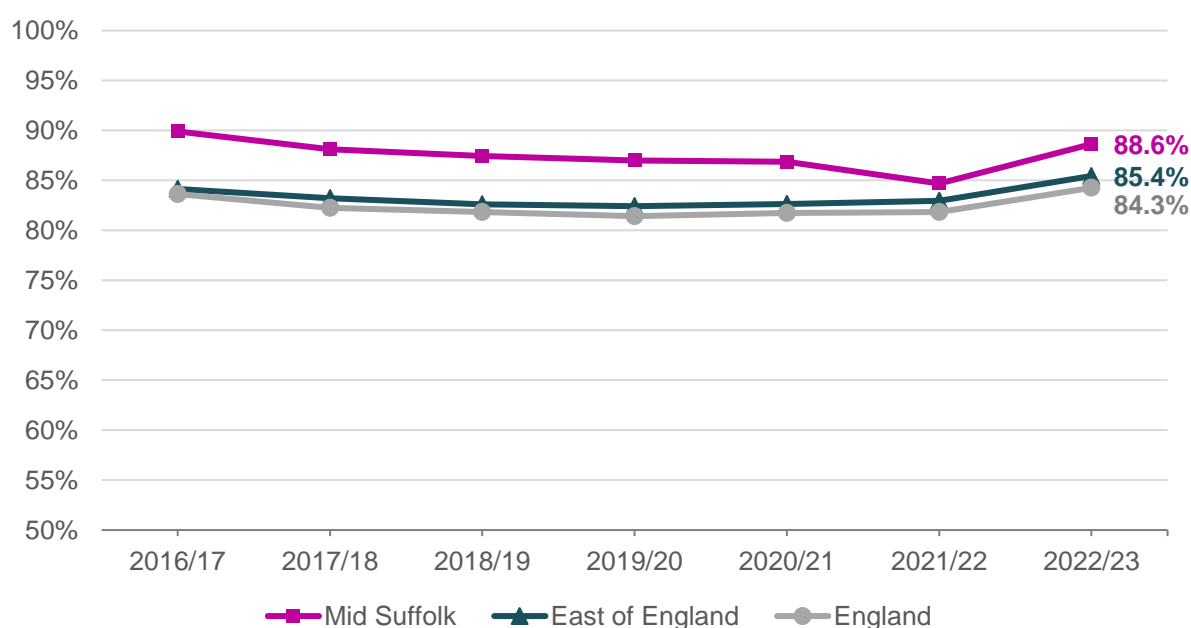
Source: Department for Education

- With the exception of 2021/22, the proportion of learners who were at a Mid Suffolk school aged 15 and who achieved two or more A levels (or equivalent) by age 19 also exceeded the regional and national averages. In 2022/23, the figure was 62.6%, compared with 59.9% in the East of England and 58.8% across England.

Figure 22: Proportion of state school learners attaining full level 3 (two or more A levels or equivalent) by age 19 (academic years 2016/17 – 2022/23)
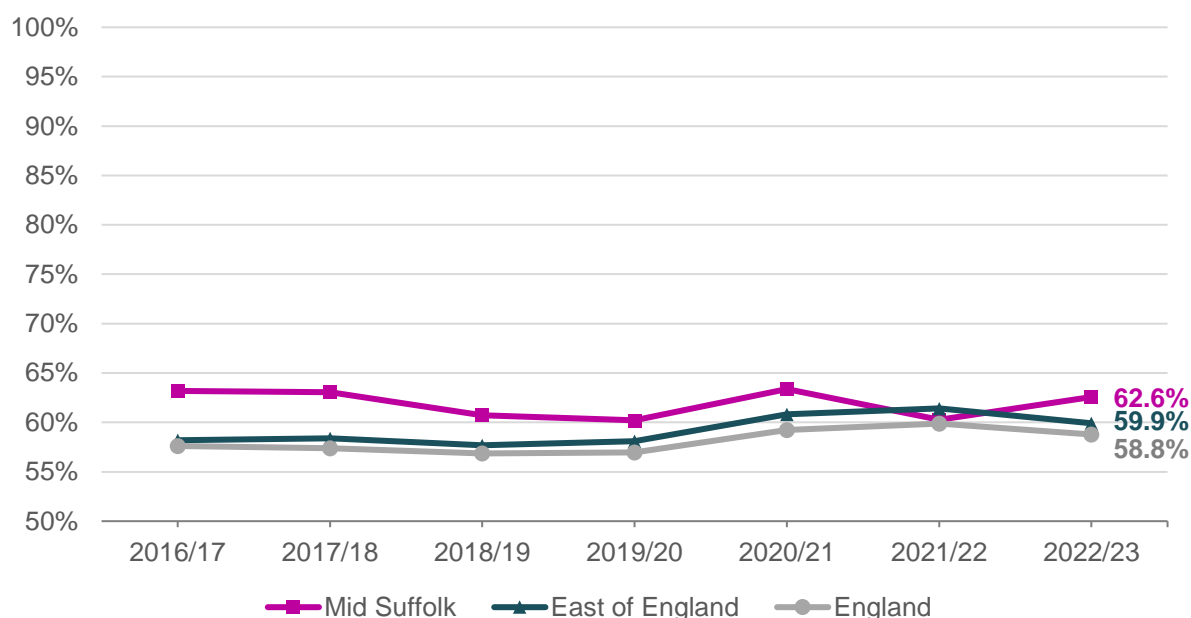

Source: Department for Education

- At Census 2021, 32.7% of 16 to 64-year-olds in Mid Suffolk had a level 4 qualification (e.g. degree, NVQ level 4) or above (Table 5). This was below the proportion seen in both the East of England (34.8%) and England (37.1%). As shown by Figure 4, this was driven by a lower proportion of 16 to 49-year-olds with a level 4 qualification or above; the proportion of 50 to 64-year-olds in Mid Suffolk with a level 4 qualification or above was in line with the national average.
- At the same time, a lesser proportion of working age residents in Mid Suffolk had no qualifications: 9.4% of 16 to 64-year-olds, compared with 11.7% across the East of England and 12.4% across England.

Table 10: Highest level of qualification held by 16 to 64-year-olds (Census 2021)

	Mid Suffolk	East of England	England
No qualifications	9.4%	11.7%	12.4%
Level 1 and entry level qualifications	11.4%	11.1%	9.9%
Level 2 qualifications: 5 or more GCSEs (A* to C or 9 to 4) / NVQ level 2	17.3%	16.3%	14.8%
Level 3 qualifications: 2 or more A levels / NVQ level 3	22.4%	19.6%	19.5%
Level 4 qualifications or above: degree / NVQ level 4 tor above	32.7%	34.8%	37.1%
Other: apprenticeships, vocational or work-related or other qualifications (level not stated/unknown)	6.9%	6.5%	6.3%

Figure 4: Proportion with a Level 4 qualification or above by age group (Census 2021)
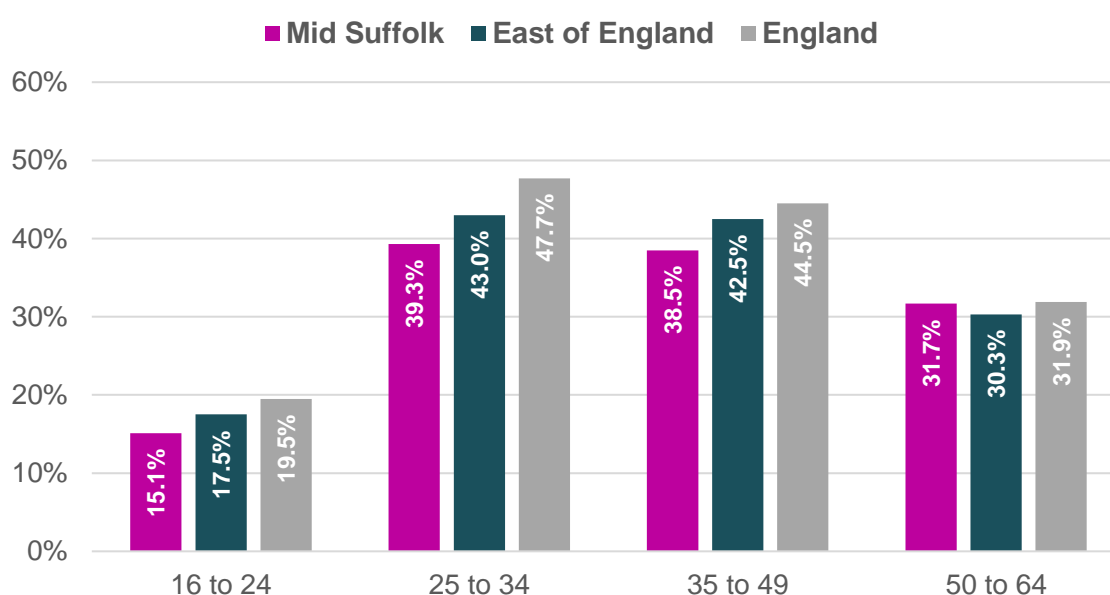
Source: Census 2021, Office for National Statistics (ONS)

Earnings

- Figures 24 and 25 shows the median gross annual full-time individual earnings[63], for residence-based earnings (the earnings of the people who live in the area, though they may work elsewhere) and for workplace-based earnings (the earnings of those who work in the district, though they may live elsewhere).

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[63] 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).

- Figure 24 shows that, while median residence-based earnings in Mid Suffolk were below the national figure for much of the past 20 years, the gap has closed to within £400 in 2023 (£34,728 in Mid Suffolk and £35,100 across England).

Figure 24: Residence-based gross annual full-time earnings (median) (2002-2023)
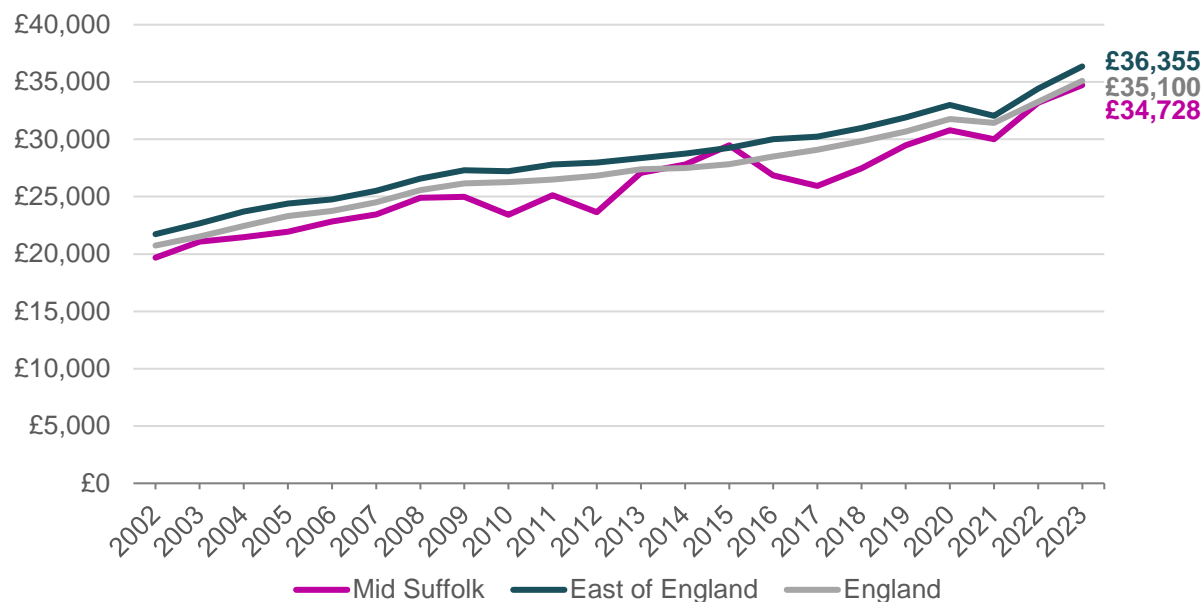
Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS)

- Median workplace-based earnings in Mid Suffolk have also tracked below the regional and national figures for most of the past 20 years. In 2023, median workplace-based earnings stood at £31,592, around £3,500 below the regional and national figures (£34,833 and £35,106 respectively).
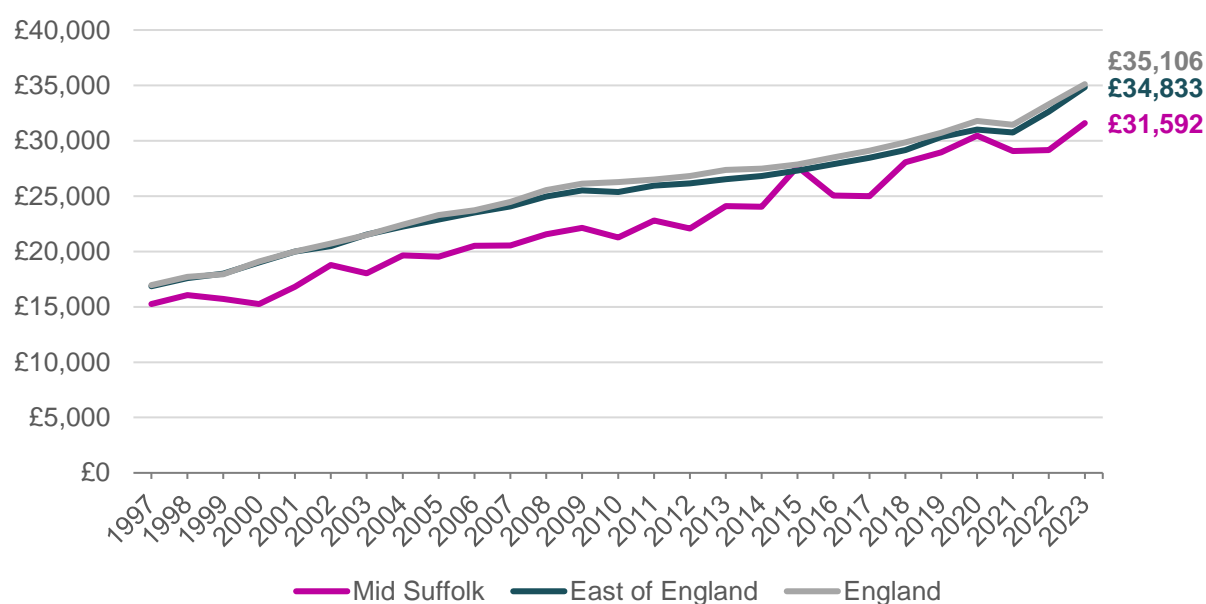
**Figure 25: Workplace-based gross annual full-time earnings (median) (2002-2023)**

Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS)

Gross disposable income

- Gross disposable household income (GDHI) is the amount of money that all the individuals in the household sector have available for spending or saving after they have paid direct and indirect taxes and received any direct benefits. GDHI is a concept that is seen to reflect the "material welfare" of the household sector.[64]

- Figure 26 shows GDHI per person (including children and retired people) for Mid Suffolk, alongside the East of England and England. Since 2005, GDHI per person in Mid Suffolk has grown at a slower rate than regionally or nationally. In 2021, the gap was around a thousand pounds, with GDHI per person standing at £21,265 in Mid Suffolk, £22,337 in the East of England and £22,213 in England.

Figure 26: Gross disposable household income (GDHI) per person (1997-2021)[65]
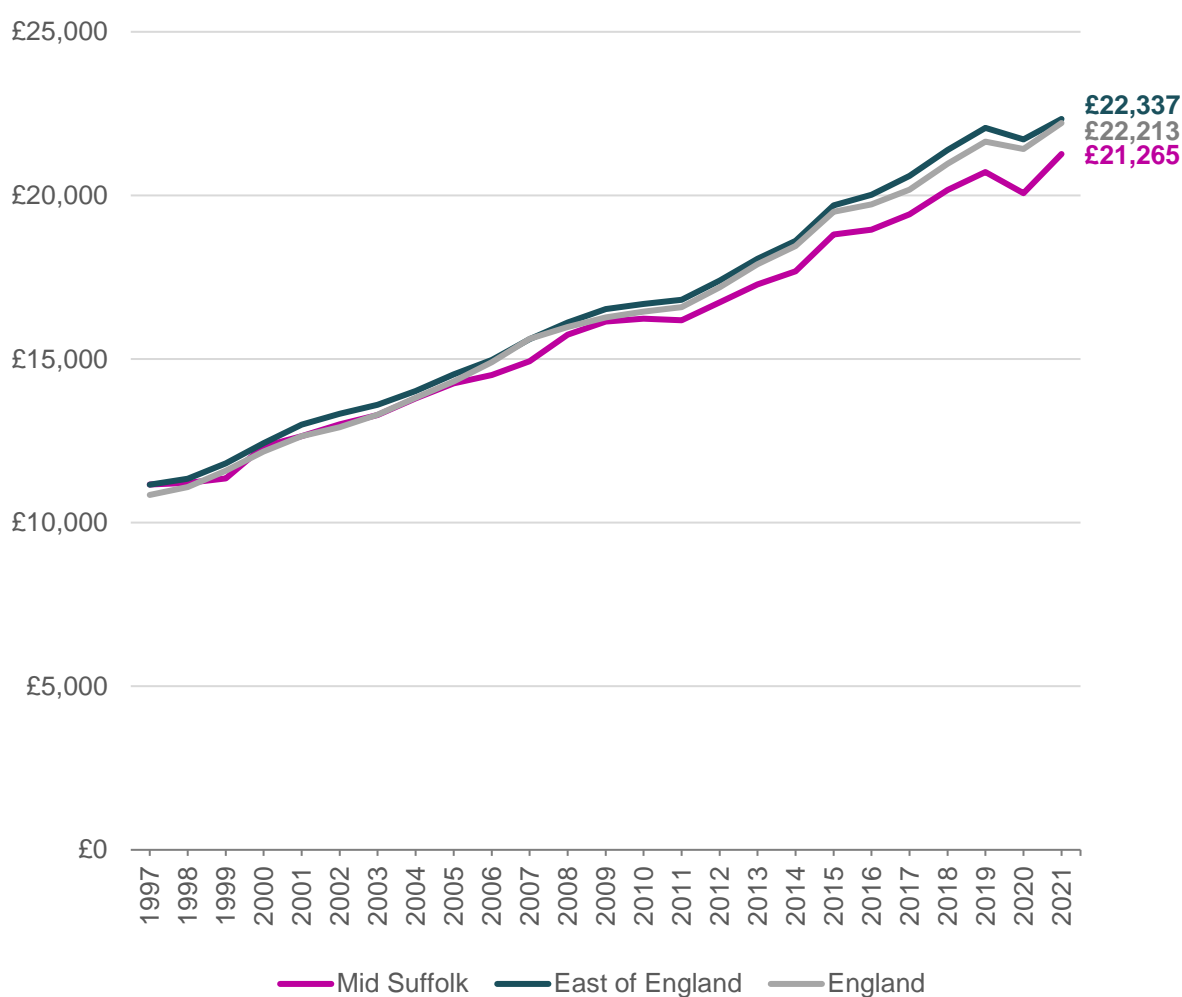
Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS)

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[64] The household sector includes residents of traditional households, as well as those living in communal establishments.

[65] Gross Disposable Household Income (or GDHI) estimates are produced at current prices, which means the effect of inflation has not been removed.

Home ownership

- A higher proportion of households in Mid Suffolk own their home outright (43.2%) than across both Suffolk (38.6%) and England (32.5%). A further 31.7% own their home but have a mortgage/loan or shared ownership (Table 11).

- While a lower proportion of households rent privately in Mid Suffolk (13.8%) compared with Suffolk (18.9%) or England (20.6%), this equates to just over 6,000 private-rented households in the district.

Table 11: Household tenure (Census 2021)

Tenure	Mid Suffolk	Suffolk	East of England	England
Owned outright	43.2%	38.6%	34.6%	32.5%
Owns with a mortgage or loan or shared ownership	31.7%	27.5%	31.6%	29.8%
Social-rented	11.3%	15.0%	15.5%	17.1%
Private-rented or lives rent free	13.8%	18.9%	18.3%	20.6%

Source: Census 2021, Office for National Statistics (ONS)

Property prices

- Mid Suffolk's median property prices for detached, semi-detached and terraced houses for the twelve months to September 2023 were in line with the median figures across England (Table 12). However, at £310,000, the median property price for all house types was above the national figure, linked to a higher proportion of detached properties in the district.[66]

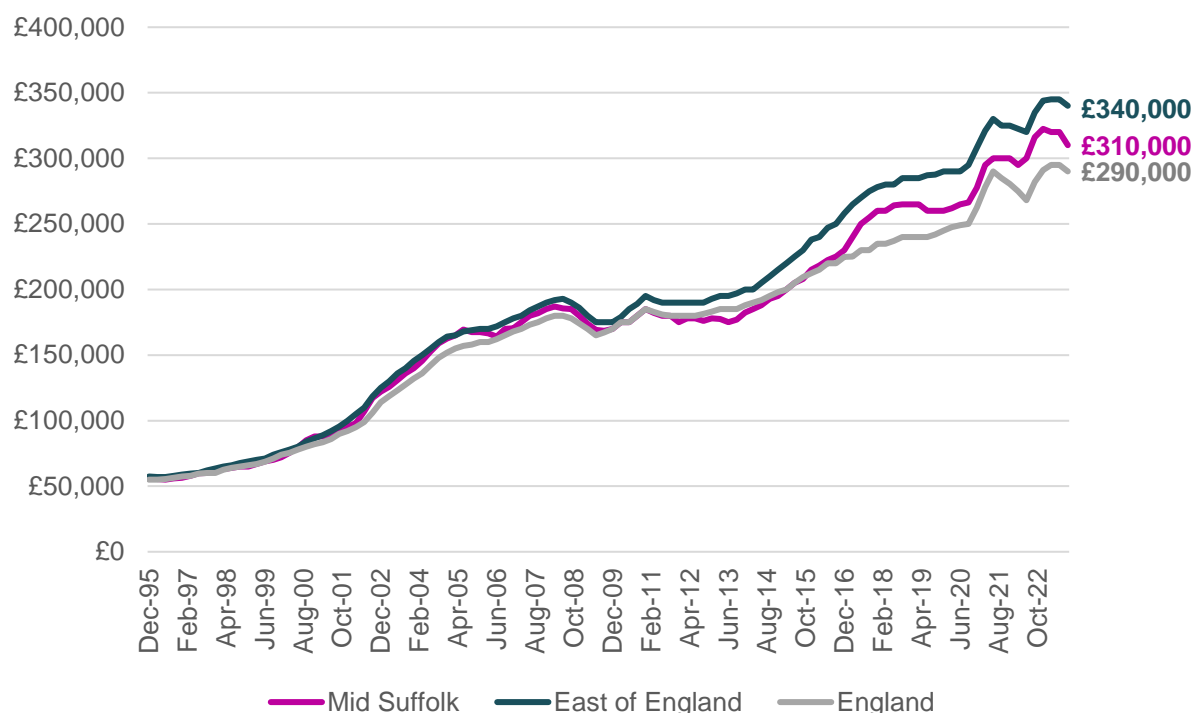**Table 12: Median property prices (12 months ending September 2023)**

Property type	Mid Suffolk	Suffolk	East of England	England
All house types	£310,000	£285,000	£340,000	£290,000
Detached houses	£444,000	£423,500	£478,000	£440,000
Semi-detached houses	£275,000	£275,000	£350,000	£273,000
Terraced houses	£232,000	£230,000	£305,000	£237,500
Flats or maisonettes	£145,000	£150,000	£205,650	£230,000

Source: ONS House Price Statistics for Small Areas

- Median property prices in Mid Suffolk have tracked below the regional East of England median for over a decade (Figure 27), although median property prices have grown a similar proportion in each area since March 2013 (+75% in Mid Suffolk and +74% in the East of England, compared with +57% across England). Despite rapid fluctuations during and following the COVID-19 pandemic, median property prices have continued their longer-term upward trajectory, although there is some variation seen by property type (Figure 28).

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[66] The House Price Statistics for Small Areas data used here are not mix adjusted, so price variations may be a combination of true price changes and differences in the mix of housing types and trends.

Figure 27: Median property prices (12 months ending December 1995 to 12 months ending March 2023)

Source: ONS House Price Statistics for Small Areas

Figure 28: Median property prices in Mid Suffolk by property type (12 months ending December 1995 to 12 months ending March 2023)
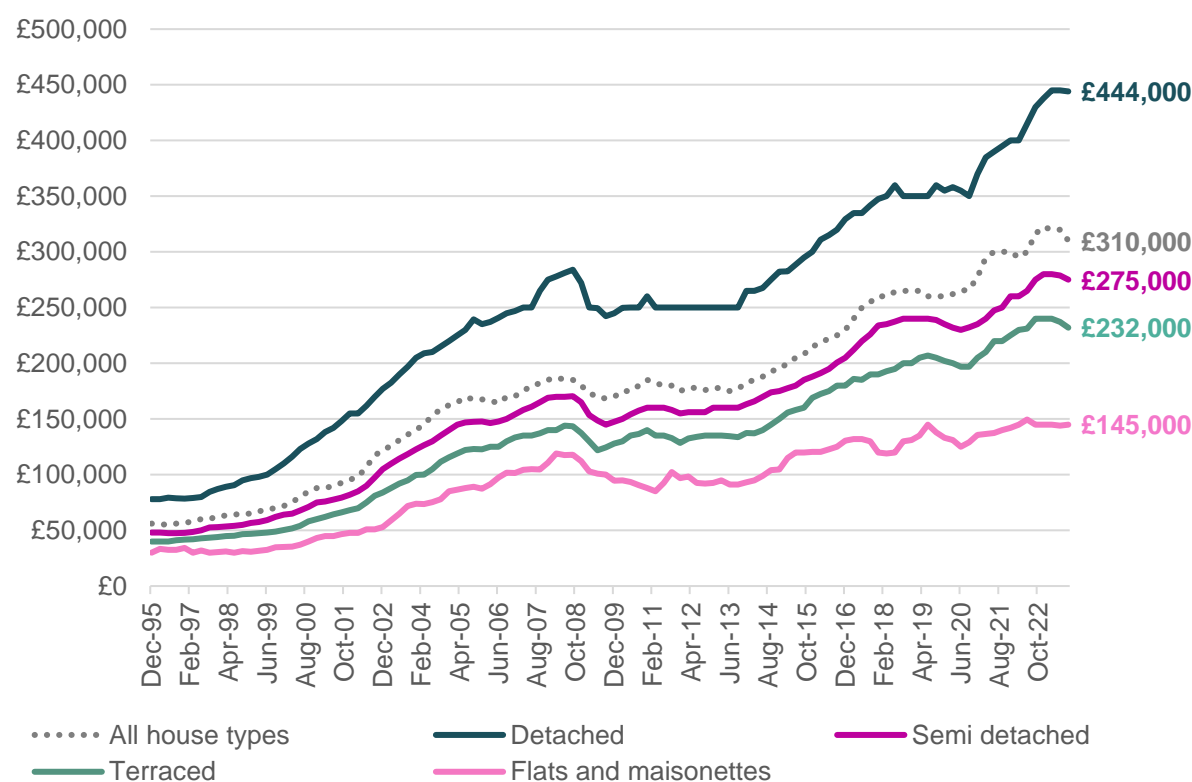
Source: ONS House Price Statistics for Small Areas

Housing affordability

- Housing affordability ratios are calculated by dividing median house prices by median gross annual full-time earnings[67] to create a ratio. A larger number reflects a less affordable area.

- In Mid Suffolk, based on residence-based earnings (the earnings of the people who live in the area, though they may work elsewhere) median house prices were 8.93 times median earnings in 2023, compared with 9.35 across the East of England and 8.26 across England (Figure 29). Since 2019, the residence-based housing affordability ratio in Mid Suffolk has tended to track the regional figure.

Figure 29: Ratio of house price to residence-based earnings (median) (2002-2023)
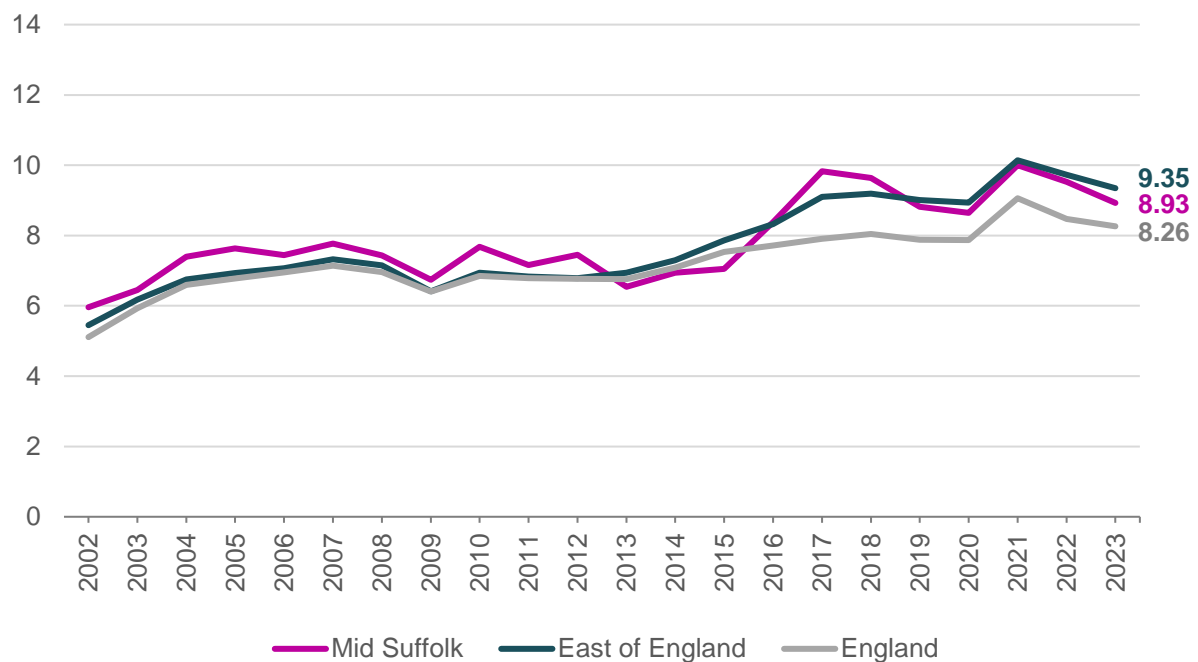
Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS)

- When based on workplace-based earnings (the earnings of those who work in the district, though they may live elsewhere) house prices were 9.81 times earnings in 2023, similar to the East of England (9.76) but above the ratio for England (8.26).

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[67] 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).

Rental costs

- Between January 2020 and October 2021 (which included the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated restrictions), average private rents in Mid Suffolk increased just 1.3%, from £716 to £725 per month. Since October 2021, the average private rent increased 21.5% to £881 in April 2024 (Figure 30), slightly above the percentage increase of 18.6% seen nationally during the same period.

- This is highlighted by Figure 31, which shows the annual inflation rates for average private rents in Mid Suffolk, the East of England and England, with annual inflation having peaked at 9.7% in October 2022.

Figure 30: Average monthly private rent (January 2015 – April 2024)
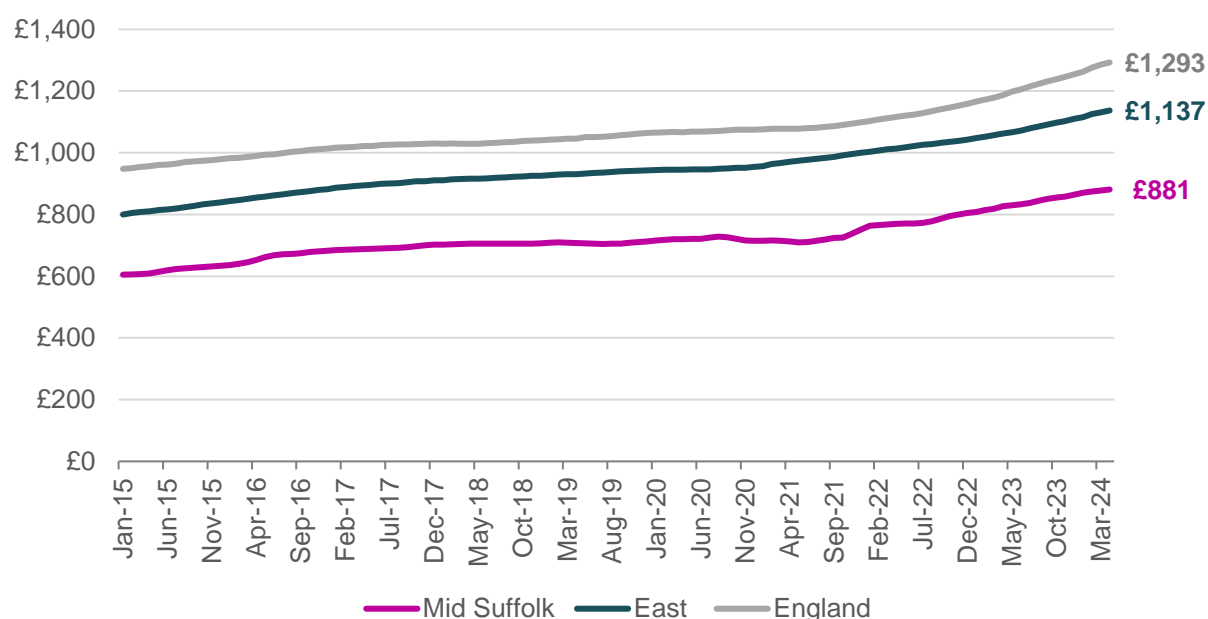
Figure 31: Average monthly private rent annual inflation (January 2016 – April 2024)
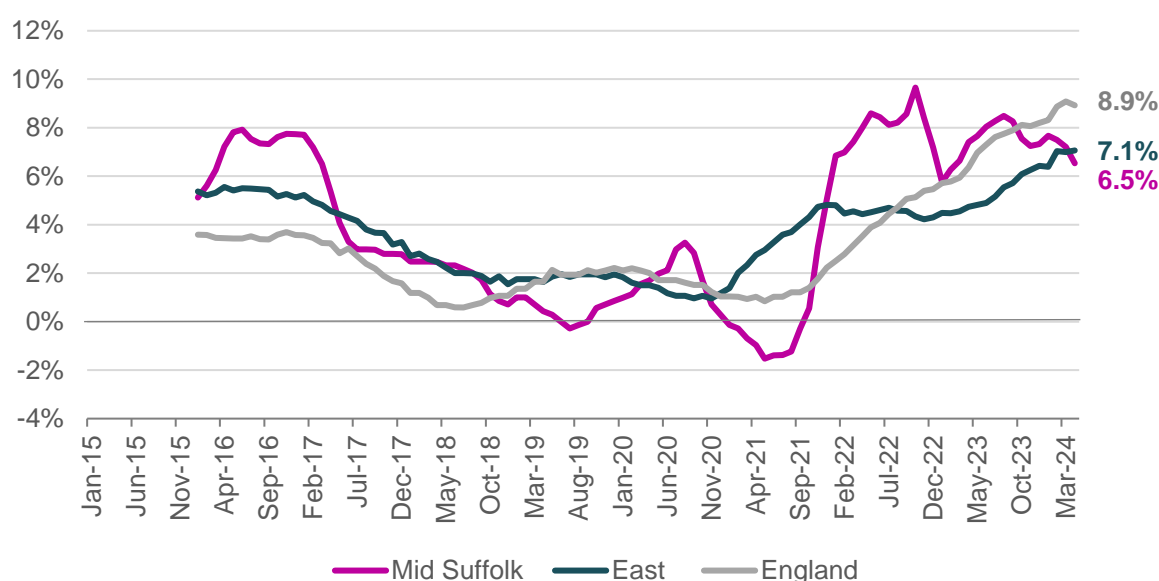
Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS)

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).[68] 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).
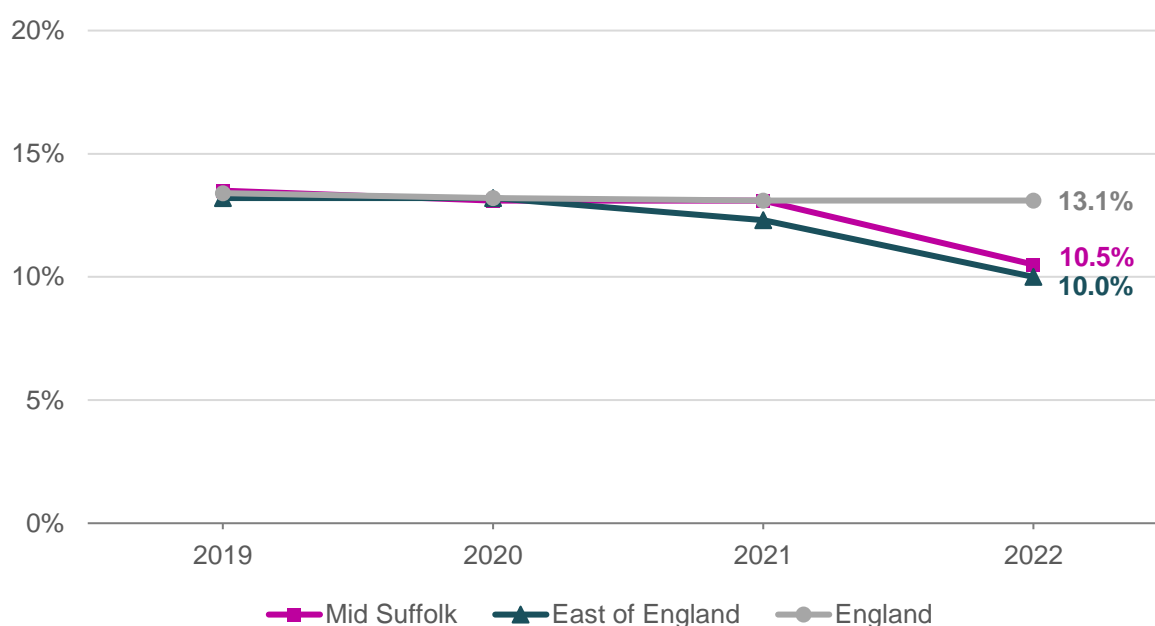
- Based on the latest available data, 4,770 or 10.5% of households in Mid Suffolk were classed as being in fuel poverty in 2022.[69] This represented a decrease – also seen regionally - since 2021, where 5,876 households (13.1%) were classed as being fuel poor.

Figure 32: Proportion of households in fuel poverty (2019-2022)

Source: Department for Energy Security and Net Zero

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[68] 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.

[69] 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

- A household is said to be in relative low income if their equivalised income[70] 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.

- In 2022/23, 1,945 children aged under 16 (11.5% of this age group) were considered to be living in relative low-income families before housing costs in Mid Suffolk. This compared with 13.8% in the East of England and 20.1% across the United Kingdom.[71]

- A lower number (1,571 or 9.3%) were considered to be living in absolute low-income families before housing costs (compared with 11.0% in the East of England and 15.9% across the United Kingdom).

Homelessness

- During the 2022-23 financial year, there were 344 households in Mid Suffolk assessed as being owed a statutory homelessness duty[72], including 136 with dependent children. This represented an increase from 260 households in 2021-22.

- Of the 344 households in Mid Suffolk assessed as being owed a homelessness duty, 239 were threatened with homelessness (compared with 185 in 2021-22) and 105 were already homeless (75 in 2021-22).

- The total number of households in Mid Suffolk owed a homelessness duty equated to 7.4 households per thousand, below the rates for both the East of England (10.9 per 1,000) and England (12.4 per 1,000).

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[70] Equivalisation adjusts incomes for family size and composition, taking an adult couple with no children as the reference point.

[71] The statistics are a measure of children and cannot be used to obtain the number of low-income families. Due to the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on these statistics, the Department for Work and Pensions advise caution when using the data for financial year ending 2023, particularly when making comparisons with previous years. Therefore, figures are only shown here for 2022/23. An alternative measure of children living in poverty is also produced by the Centre for Research in Social Policy at Loughborough University (for the End Child Poverty Coalition), which calculates rates after housing costs. The latest available data at the time of publication was for 2021/22 where it was estimated that in 2021/22, 3,972 or 20.1% of children in Mid Suffolk aged 0-15 were living in relative poverty, after housing costs.

[72] Based on those owed a prevention or relief duty following an initial assessments 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.

Data sources

Theme	Section	Measure	Source	Organisation
Overview	Setting	Rural/urban classification	2011 Rural Urban Classification	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs
		Deprivation	Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
	Population	Population by age / population density	Mid-year population estimates (mid-2022)	Office for National Statistics
		Population projections	2018-based subnational population projections for England	Office for National Statistics
	Household dwellings	Number of households	Census 2021	Office for National Statistics
		Number of dwellings / vacant dwellings	Live tables on dwelling stock (including vacants)	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
		Accommodation type / number of bedrooms	Census 2021	Office for National Statistics
	Connectivity	Journey times to key services	Journey time statistics (2019)	Department for Transport
		Walking for travel	Participation in walking and cycling (local authority rates): Proportion of adults who walk, by purpose, frequency, and local authority, England, November 2015 to November 2022	Department for Transport
		Household car/van ownership	Census 2021	Office for National Statistics
		Broadband coverage	Local broadband information	thinkbroadband
	Businesses	Number of enterprises (by size and industry)	Inter Departmental Business Register (IDBR) (2015-2023)	Office for National Statistics (data sourced via NOMIS)
		Employment by industry	ONS Business Register and Employment Survey (2022)	Office for National Statistics (data sourced via NOMIS)

Theme	Section	Measure	Source	Organisation
Climate change and environment	Greenhouse gas emissions	Territorial greenhouse gas emissions estimates	UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics (2005-2021)	Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
	Domestic energy efficiency	CO_2 emissions for dwellings	Median estimated Carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions (England and Wales, all records up to financial year ending March 2023)	Office for National Statistics
		Energy Performance Certificate ratings	Dwellings with Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band C or above, England and Wales, all records up to financial year ending March 2023	Office for National Statistics
	Renewable electricity generation	Number of renewable electricity generating sites / capacity and generation	Regional renewable statistics: Renewable electricity by local authority (2014-2022)	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 2009 - Q3 2023)	Department for Transport / Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency
		Electric vehicle charging points	Electric vehicle charging device statistics (April 2024)	Department for Transport / Zapmap
	Household waste and recycling	Collected household waste per person / household waste recycling rates	Local Authority Collected Waste Statistics - Local Authority data (2022-23)	Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs
	Biodiversity	Wildlife sites and biodiversity designations	Compiled from Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service data, Ramsar Sites Information Service data and internal GIS data (June 2023, updated April 2024)	Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service, Ramsar Sites Information Service, Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils
		Tree canopy cover (district)	Treeconomics tree canopy cover assessment of Babergh and Mid Suffolk (2021)	Treeconomics / Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils
		Tree canopy cover (national)	UK ward canopy cover, March 2023 dataset (data collected 2018-22)	Forestry Commission

Theme	Section	Measure	Source	Organisation
Community strength and wellbeing	Local area perceptions	Local area satisfaction, pride and belonging (district results)	Babergh and Mid Suffolk Resident Survey 2022 and 2023	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils
		Local area satisfaction and belonging (national results)	Community Life Survey 2023	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
	Community safety and crime	Overall crime rate	Number / rate of crimes 12 month rolling count (May 2023 – April 2024)	data.police.uk (data sourced via Suffolk Observatory)
		Perceptions of safety during the day/after dark	Babergh and Mid Suffolk Resident Survey 2023	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils
	Volunteering	Formal volunteering (district results)	Babergh and Mid Suffolk Resident Survey 2023	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils
		Formal volunteering (national results)	Community Life Survey (2023/14 – 2023)	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
		Formal volunteering (Essex district results)	Essex Resident Survey 2023	Essex County Council
	Personal wellbeing	Self-reported personal wellbeing (district results)	Babergh and Mid Suffolk Resident Survey 2023	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils
		Self-reported personal wellbeing (national results)	Active Lives Survey (Nov 2022 – Nov 2023)	Sport England
	Life expectancy	Life expectancy	Life expectancy for local areas in England, Northern Ireland and Wales: between 2001 to 2003 and 2020 to 2022	Office for National Statistics
		Life expectancy inequality	Slope index of inequality (2018-2020)	Office for Health Improvements and Disparities (data sourced via OHID Fingertips public health data)
	Disability	Disabled in line with the Equality Act (2010)	Census 2021	Office for National Statistics
	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 Improvement (data sourced via OHID Fingertips Obesity Profile)

Theme	Section	Measure	Source	Organisation
		Prevalence of Year 6 children classified as overweight or obese	National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) 2022/2023	NHS England (data sourced via OHID 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 Improvement (data sourced via OHID Fingertips Physical Activity Profile)
		Proportion of physically active children aged 5-16	Active Lives Children and Young People Survey 2022/23	Sport England (data sourced via OHID Fingertips Physical Activity Profile)
	GP-to-patient ratios	GP-to-patients ratios	General Practice Workforce data (March 2024)	NHS Digital
Resilience	Qualifications	Educational attainment by age 19	Level 2 and 3 attainment by age 19 (academic year 2022/23)	Department for Education
		Highest level of qualification (16 to 64-year-olds)	Census 2021	Office for National Statistics
	Earnings	Residence-based and gross annual full-time individual earnings (median)	House price to residence-based earnings ratio (2002-2023)	Office for National Statistics
		Workplace-based and gross annual full-time individual earnings (median)	House price to workplace-based earnings ratio (2002-2023)	Office for National Statistics
	Gross disposable income	Gross disposable household income (GDHI) per head	Regional gross disposable household income (GDHI): all ITL regions (1997-2021)	Office for National Statistics
	Home ownership	Household tenure	Census 2021	Office for National Statistics
	Property prices	Median property prices	House Price Statistics for Small Areas (HPSSAs) median price paid for administrative geographies (year ending Dec-95 to Sep-23)	Office for National Statistics
	Housing affordability	Ratio of house price to residence-based earnings (median)	House price to residence-based earnings ratio (2002-2023)	Office for National Statistics

Theme	Section	Measure	Source	Organisation
		Ratio of house price to workplace-based earnings (median)	House price to workplace-based earnings ratio (2002-2023)	Office for National Statistics
	Rental costs	Average monthly private rent	Average private rent price and annual inflation, local authorities in England and Wales and Broad Rental Market Areas in Scotland, January 2015 to April 2024	Office for National Statistics
	Fuel poverty	Home heating	Census 2021	Office for National Statistics
		Fuel poverty	Sub-regional fuel poverty 2024 (2022 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 2023	Department for Work and Pensions
	Homelessness	Number of households assessed as homeless	Statutory homelessness: detailed local authority-level tables (April 2022 - March 2023)	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities