



**WIRRAL  
INTELLIGENCE  
SERVICE**

# Wirral Population and Demographics

Wirral Intelligence Service

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# Wirral Population and Demographics

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## Introduction

### Understanding the data

This report is mainly sourced from nationally published datasets. New data is being published all the time, at different times of this year, at different frequencies - sometimes with a lag of 18 months or more.

### Impact of the COVID pandemic

A further caveat on understanding the data is the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. This has affected the availability of some datasets (some collections were paused, delayed, or altered) and where data is available, it has been difficult to interpret trends (particularly in terms of health and the economy). Pandemic restrictions were in place from late March 2020, with most measures eased by spring/summer 2021.

Pandemic restrictions timeline	
First national lockdown	Mar to Jun 2020
Minimal lockdown restrictions	Jul to Sep 2020
Reimposing restrictions	Sep to Oct 2020
Second national lockdown	Nov 2020
Reintroducing a tiered system	Dec 2020
Third national lockdown	Jan to Mar 2021
Leaving lockdown	Mar to Jul 2021

Source: Wirral Intelligence Service, 2024

Moreover, the 2021 Census took place in a unique context. The actual census day (21st March 2021) occurred when the UK was still in the 3rd national lockdown which began on the 6th of January 2021. The lockdown will likely have various impacts on the census results, particularly on groups who may have changed their residence during lockdown, such as students (many of whom were studying remotely) and employees in the hardest hit sectors, such as retail, arts and hospitality. This doesn't mean that the Census is inaccurate as such, but rather that the period in time captured will have aspects unique to the pandemic (some of which were likely to be temporary as society returned back to normal).

### State of the Borough

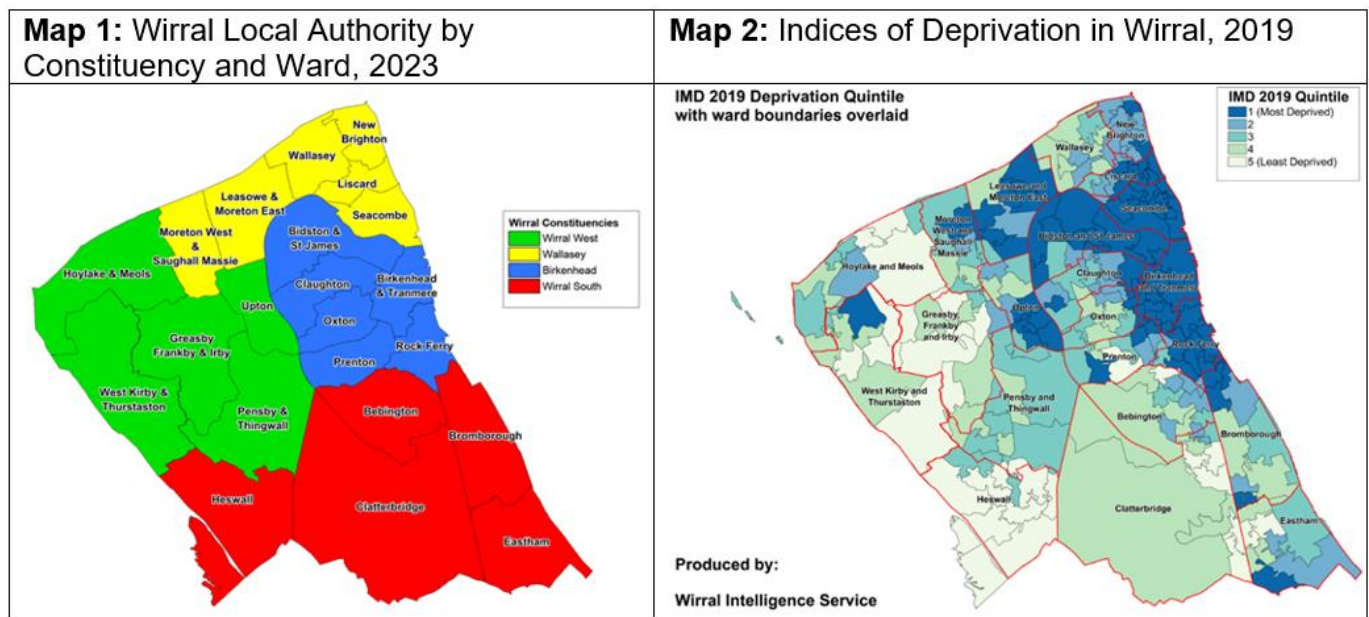
The State of the Borough paints a picture of Wirral using a range of statistics. It provides the most commonly requested open-source information and data about Wirral's population, children and young people, health and wellbeing, mortality, economy and business, transport, housing and the environment, and crime and safety of residents. Data can be explored in an interactive way. For more information, please visit the dedicated State of the Borough webpage on the Wirral Intelligence Service website.

## About Wirral

A peninsula some 15 miles long and 7 miles wide, Wirral is bound by the River Dee to the west, River Mersey to the east and the Irish Sea to the north. It is one of the largest metropolitan boroughs in England with an estimated population of 320,200 (Census 2021). Wirral has 50 miles of rural walking routes, cycle areas and beaches, 24 miles of coastline and many quality parks and green spaces – the authority has 30 Green Flags and almost 46% of Wirral Local Authority is designated as green belt.

Compared to Liverpool City Region partners, and England as a whole, the borough also has a relatively higher older population and low proportion of people in their twenties and thirties. The inequalities in life expectancy at birth sees both male and female residents continuing to compare poorly against the England average, with a large gap in life expectancy between wards in the east and west of Wirral.

The [2019 Indices of Deprivation](#) ranked Wirral as the 77<sup>th</sup> most deprived authority (of 317 authorities) in England. The Indices show that just over 35% of the Wirral population (115,500 people) live in areas classified as being in the 20% most deprived areas in England; over 83,000 of those residents living in the 10% most deprived. For more information, please visit the dedicated Indices of Deprivation page on the Wirral Intelligence Service website.



Source: Wirral Intelligence Service

Sub region	Merseyside
Region	North West

Parliamentary constituencies	Birkenhead Wallasey Wirral South Wirral West
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Local Enterprise Partnership	Liverpool City Region
Combined Authority	Liverpool City Region
Health and Care Partnership	Cheshire and Merseyside Health and Care Partnership
Health and Care Board	NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board (ICB)

## Wirral – Key facts

Measure	Value	Period
Area size	60.3 square miles 156.3 square kilometres	2023
Extent of green belt land	45.5%	2022/2023
<sup>1</sup> Resident population (total)	320,200	2021
<sup>1</sup> Population (aged under 18)	65,564 (20.5%)	2021
<sup>1</sup> Population (aged 65+)	70,392 (22.0%)	2021
<sup>1</sup> BME population	24,232 (7.6%)	2021
<sup>1</sup> Households – total	143,300	2021
<sup>1</sup> Households – single person	49,688 (34.7%)	2021
<sup>1</sup> Households with dependent children	23,392 (16.3%)	2021
<sup>2</sup> Properties subject to Council Tax	151,020	2023
<sup>3</sup> Average house price	£206,881	2023
<sup>4</sup> Private rental cost (2 bedroom) average	£600 per month	2022/23
<sup>5</sup> Businesses	8,770 enterprises	2023
<sup>6</sup> Total jobs (in area)	120,000	2021
<sup>7</sup> Average resident earnings (full time/gross)	£34,948	2023

Source:

- 1) [Census 2021](#) via Office for National Statistics
- 2) [Council Tax: stock of properties](#), 2023
- 3) [Land Registry](#), 2023
- 4) Office for National Statistics, [Private rental market summary statistics in England](#), 2023
- 5) Office for National Statistics, [UK Business: activity, size and location](#), 2023
- 6) NOMIS, [Jobs Density](#), 2023
- 7) NOMIS, [Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings – Resident Analysis](#), 2023

## Population and Households

### Population Size and Age Profile

#### Wirral

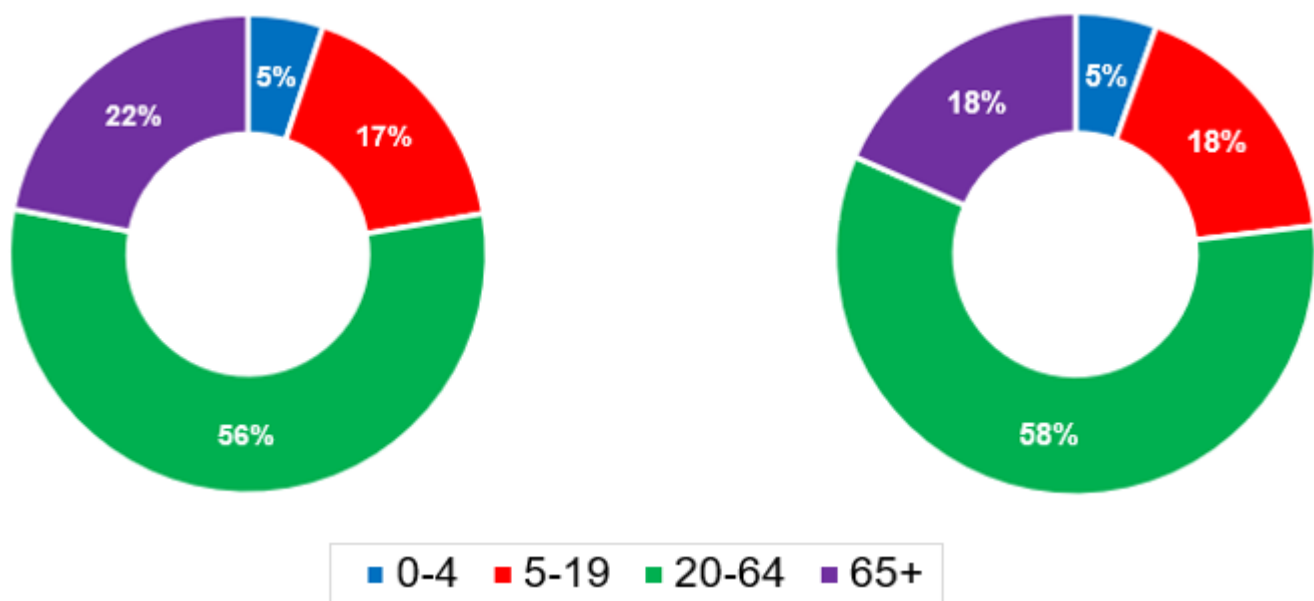
The latest estimate (Census 2021) put Wirral's population at 320,200 people. By sex, there are 165,125 women and 155,075 men. The slightly higher number of women is mostly due to women living longer than men.

Wirral's population increased by +0.1% since 2011. This is a smaller population change than the North West (+5.2%) and England (+6.6%) during the same period.

Between the last two Censuses, the average (median) age of Wirral increased by two years, from 42 to 44 years of age. The median age is the age of the person in the middle of the age spectrum, meaning that one half of the group is younger than that person and the other half is older. Wirral had a higher average (median) age than the North West as a whole in 2021 (40 years) and a higher average (median) age than England (40 years).

This is because, as **Figure 1** shows, Wirral had a higher proportion of older population aged 65+ and a lower proportion of working age people compared to England in 2021. Older people aged 65+ made up 22.0% of the population in Wirral in 2021 (n=70,392). This compares to 18.5% in England and 18.8% in the North-West.

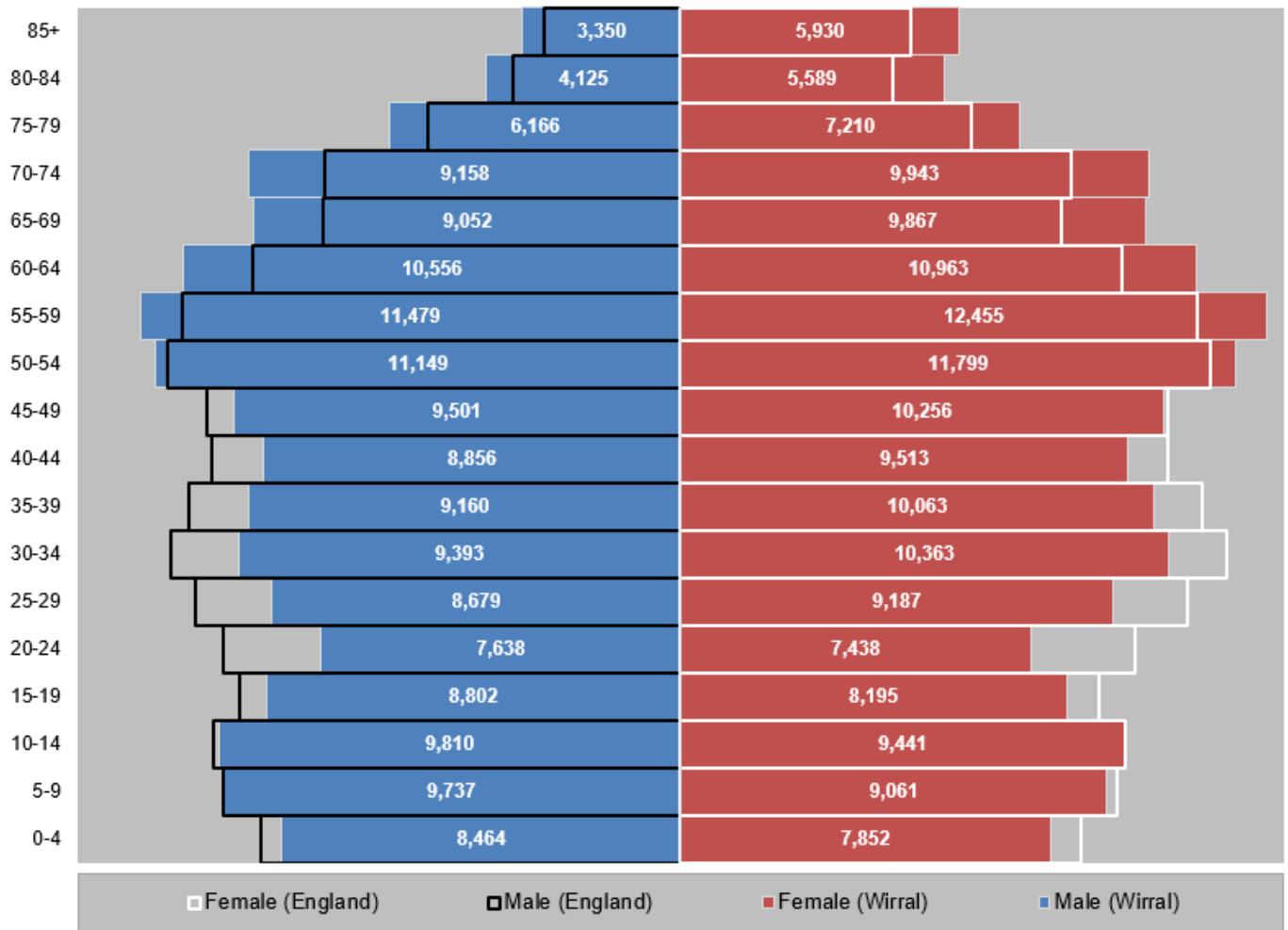
**Figure 1:** Age breakdown of population, Wirral (left) and England (right), 2021



Source: [Census 2021](#), via Office for National Statistics (ONS)

The estimated number of residents of Wirral by five year age band are shown in **Figure 2** below. The number of people aged 65 to 74 years rose by around 6,700 (an increase of 21.4%), while the number of residents between 35 and 49 years fell by around 8,900 (13.4% decrease).

**Figure 2:** Wirral and England population pyramid, by 5-year age group and gender, 2021



Source: [Census 2021](#), via Office for National Statistics (ONS)

### Ward

There are significant variations in age demographics within Wirral. For example, the Birkenhead and Tranmere Ward only had 11.9% of their population estimated to be aged 65+. The proportion of older people (65+) living in Heswall, however, was much greater, with almost 1 in 3 residents aged 65+ (32.8%). More information can be found in **Table 1**.

**Table 1: Population by Area (Ward, Constituency, Wirral) and Age Group, 2021**

Area	0-15		16-64		65+		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
<b>Birkenhead Constituency</b>	<b>17,633</b>	<b>19.5%</b>	<b>56,571</b>	<b>62.7%</b>	<b>16,071</b>	<b>17.8%</b>	<b>90,275</b>
Bidston and St James	3,683	23.5%	9,723	61.9%	2,289	14.6%	15,695
Birkenhead and Tranmere	3,527	21.6%	10,836	66.5%	1,935	11.9%	16,298
Claughton	2,415	16.4%	8,992	61.2%	3,280	22.3%	14,687
Oxton	2,024	14.8%	8,276	60.5%	3,387	24.7%	13,687
Prenton	2,673	18.3%	8,944	61.4%	2,958	20.3%	14,575
Rock Ferry	3,311	21.6%	9,800	63.9%	2,222	14.5%	15,333
<b>Wallasey Constituency</b>	<b>16,360</b>	<b>18.5%</b>	<b>54,104</b>	<b>61.2%</b>	<b>17,978</b>	<b>20.3%</b>	<b>88,442</b>
Leasowe and Moreton East	3,221	21.3%	9,107	60.2%	2,803	18.5%	15,131
Liscard	2,874	18.5%	9,621	62.0%	3,015	19.4%	15,510
Moreton West and Saughall Massie	2,202	16.0%	8,227	59.7%	3,345	24.3%	13,774
New Brighton	2,202	15.0%	9,144	62.4%	3,298	22.5%	14,644
Seacombe	3,511	23.6%	9,357	62.8%	2,039	13.7%	14,907
Wallasey	2,350	16.2%	8,648	59.7%	3,478	24.0%	14,476
<b>Wirral South Constituency</b>	<b>12,422</b>	<b>17.1%</b>	<b>42,197</b>	<b>58.2%</b>	<b>17,941</b>	<b>24.7%</b>	<b>72,560</b>
Bebington	2,741	18.0%	9,137	60.1%	3,337	21.9%	15,215
Bromborough	3,109	18.9%	10,424	63.3%	2,929	17.8%	16,462
Clatterbridge	2,147	15.6%	7,613	55.2%	4,021	29.2%	13,781
Eastham	2,486	17.8%	8,117	58.3%	3,329	23.9%	13,932
Heswall	1,939	14.7%	6,906	52.4%	4,325	32.8%	13,170
<b>Wirral West Constituency</b>	<b>11,670</b>	<b>16.9%</b>	<b>38,845</b>	<b>56.4%</b>	<b>18,402</b>	<b>26.7%</b>	<b>68,917</b>
Greasby, Frankby and Irby	2,244	15.9%	7,804	55.3%	4,062	28.8%	14,110
Hoylake and Meols	2,058	15.9%	7,349	56.6%	3,572	27.5%	12,979
Pensby and Thingwall	2,023	15.7%	7,189	55.7%	3,699	28.6%	12,911
Upton	3,236	19.8%	9,603	58.6%	3,537	21.6%	16,376
West Kirby and Thurstaston	2,109	16.8%	6,900	55.0%	3,532	28.2%	12,541
<b>Wirral Total</b>	<b>58,085</b>	<b>18.1%</b>	<b>191,717</b>	<b>59.9%</b>	<b>70,392</b>	<b>22.0%</b>	<b>320,194</b>

Source: Census 2021 via [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk).

## Components of Population Change

### Country of Birth

In Wirral, an estimated 17,400 residents (1 in 20) were born outside of the UK. In Wirral, the top country of birth outside of the UK in 2021 remained Ireland, as was the case in 2011 (although by a smaller margin than in 2011). The next most common countries were Poland, India, China (including Hong Kong), Germany and Romania.

<sup>1</sup>As of 9th January 2024, 565 visas had been issued in the Wirral Local Authority under the Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme, with 462 arrivals in the UK.

<sup>1</sup> Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities via <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ukraine-sponsorship-scheme-visa-data-by-country-upper-and-lower-tier-local-authority>, January 2024



## Births and Fertility

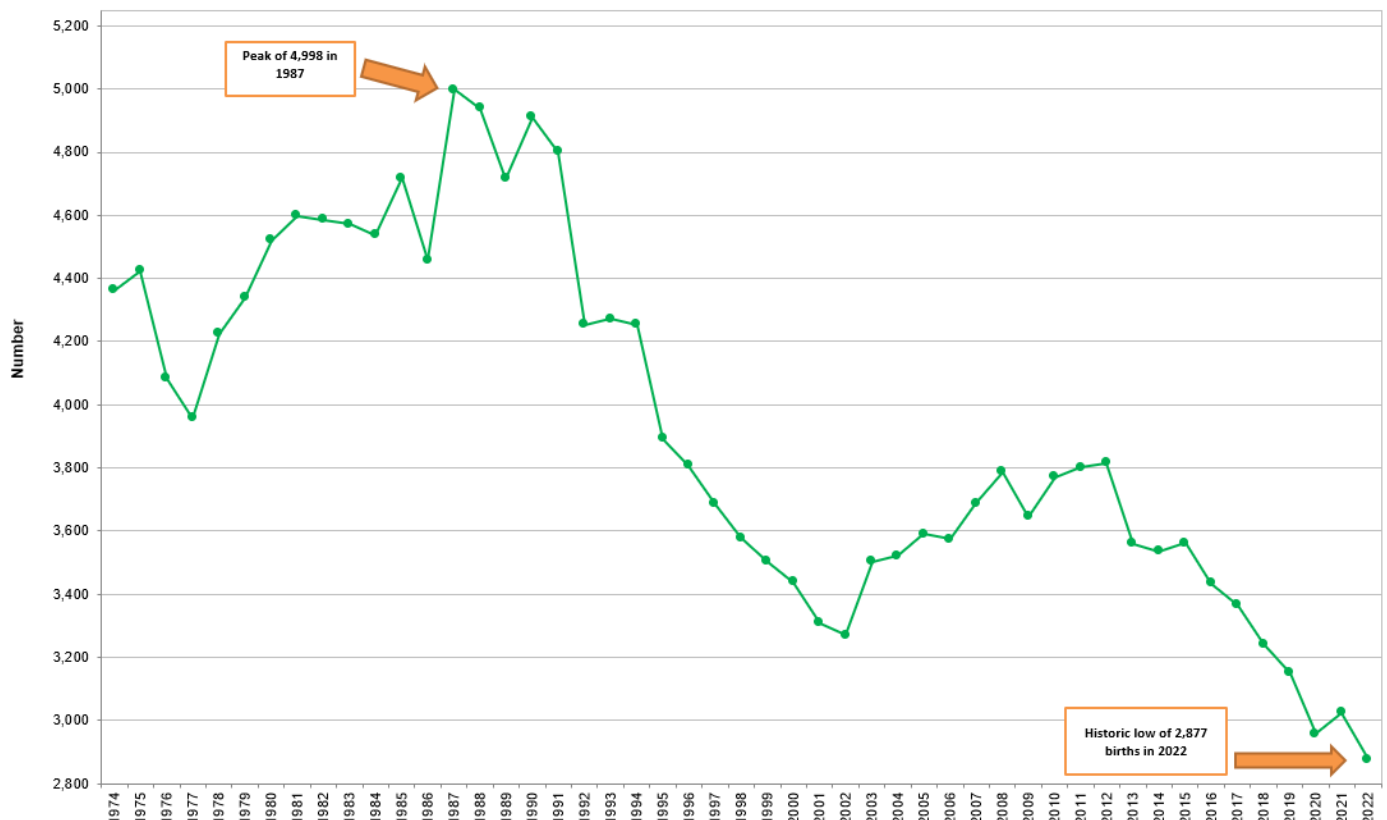
There were 2,877 births in Wirral in 2022 (the latest year for which data is available). This is the lowest number of births since Wirral was formed as a Metropolitan Borough in 1974.

**Figure 3** below shows the long-term trend in the number of births in Wirral from 1974 to 2022. Historical births data indicates that the number of births may continue to fall for the next few years, before potentially rising again.

If historical patterns are repeated, the next climb in births may start in around 2027 (as the cohort of women born during the last peak of 2005-2012 start to reach childbearing years in numbers). Any future climb may be less pronounced than the previous peak (2007-2012), just as that peak was smaller than the previous peak in the late 1980s to early 1990s.

There are various reasons for this such as women having fewer children and the age of mothers increasing. This means the historical 20-25 cyclical peaks observed in births may become less noticeable in the future than was the case in the past.

**Figure 3:** Trend in number of live births in Wirral, 1974-2022

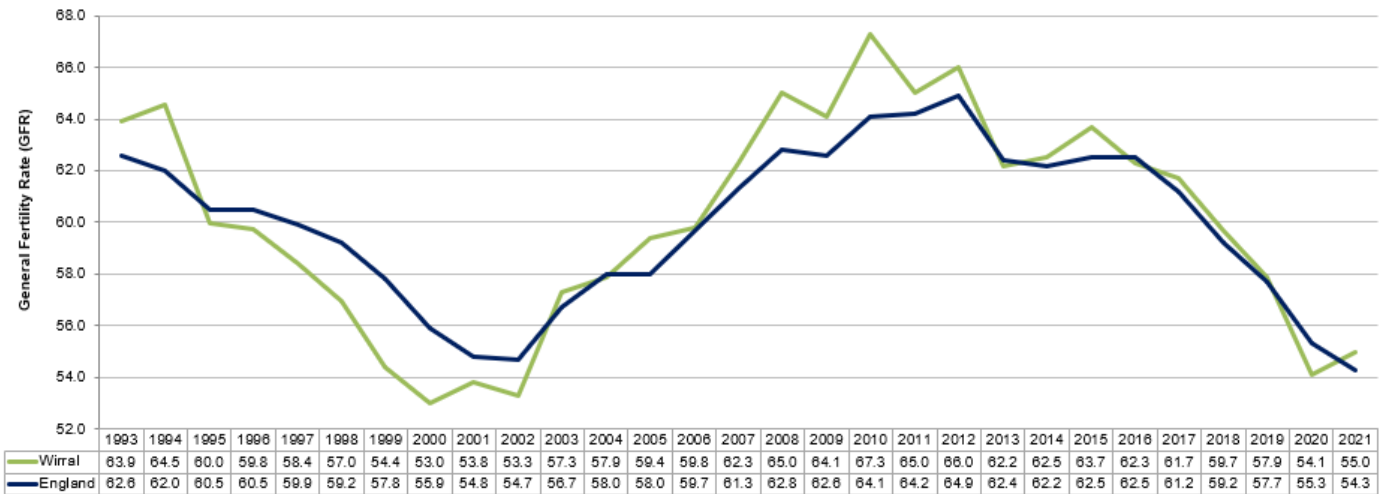


Source: [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](#).

The general fertility rate in Wirral (the number of births per 1,000 women aged 15-44) has broadly followed the same trend as England over time. As **Figure 4** shows, the general fertility rate in Wirral and England has been falling for the last 5 time period (from 2015 onwards). In Wirral, however, there was a slight increase in the most recent time period (2021). The general fertility rate in Wirral was slightly higher than the England average in 2021, with 55.0 births per 1,000 females aged 15-44 (compared to 54.3 births per 1,000 females aged 15-44 in England).

Fertility rates are yet to become available for 2022 (unlike like births), as these are reliant on the mid-year-2022 populations, which, as of January 2024, are yet to be released by the Office for National Statistics.

**Figure 4: Trend in Birth and Fertility Rates, Wirral and England, 1993 to 2021**



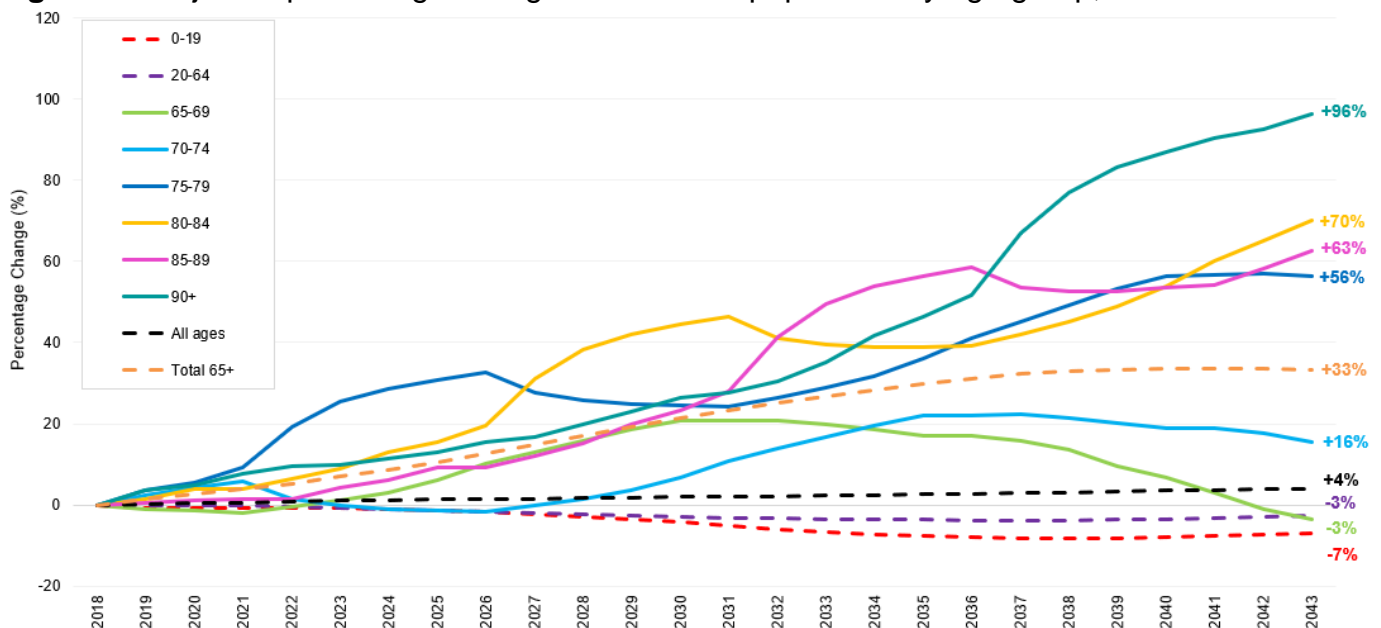
Source: [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](#).

## Population Projections

The latest population projections, produced by the Office for National Statistics in 2018, show that the population of Wirral is projected to increase by just 4%, from 323,200 in 2018 to 336,300 in 2043.

The overall increase hides large variations between age groups, however. For example, the number of people aged 90+ is estimated to increase from 3,400 in 2018 to 6,700 in 2043, an increase of 96%. This has profound implications for health and social care, given that older people are the largest users of health and social care services. At the same time, the number of children aged 0-19 is projected to decrease in Wirral by -7% between 2018 and 2043. **Figure 5** below shows the percentage changes in population by age band.

**Figure 5: Projected percentage change in the Wirral population by age group, 2018-2043**



Source: [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](#), 2018

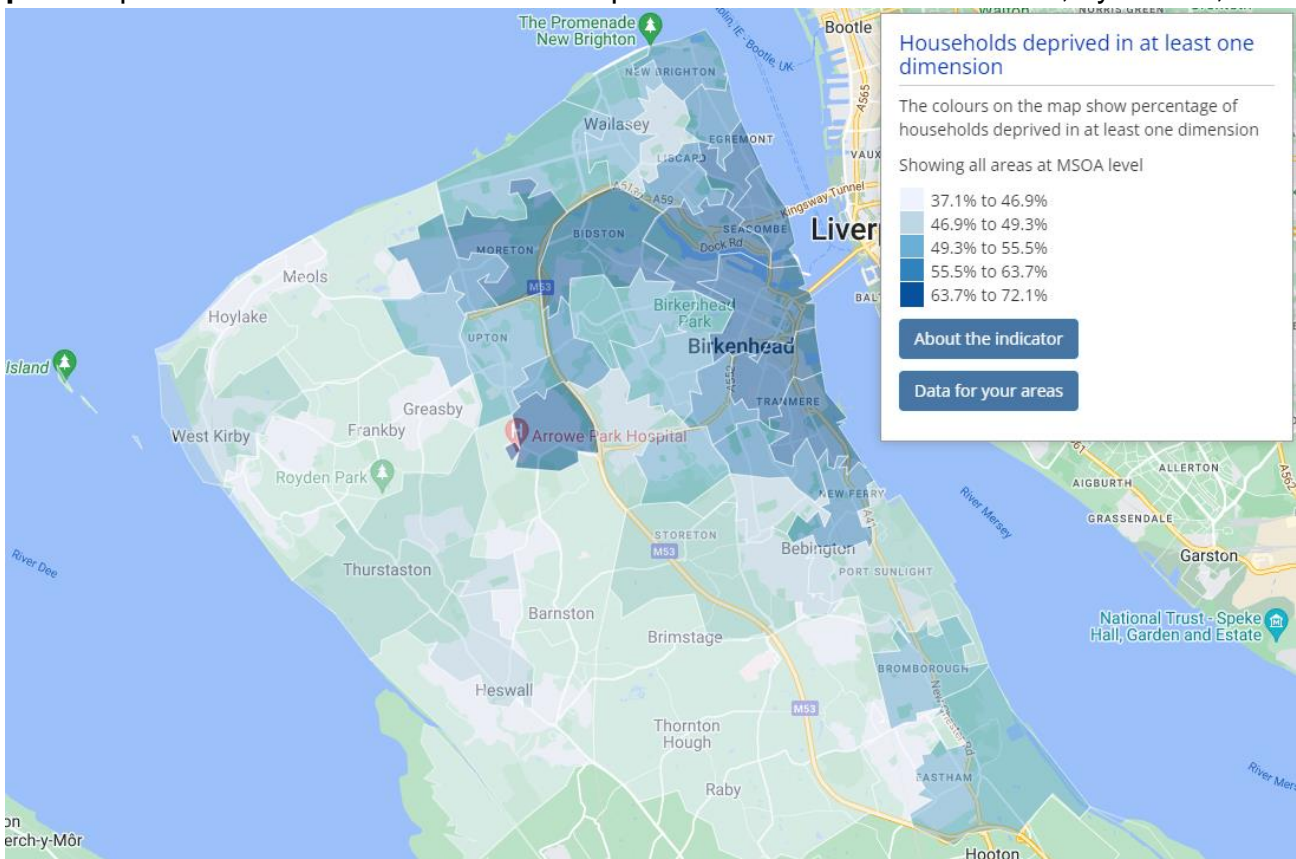
## Household Deprivation

The deprivation information from the Census is different to the classification of deprivation as calculated by the [Index of Multiple Deprivation](#) (last calculated in 2019). In the 2021 Census, households were considered to be deprived if they met one or more of the following four dimensions of deprivation:

1. Employment: where any member of a household, who is not a full-time student, is either unemployed or long-term sick
2. Education: no person in the household has at least five or more GCSE passes (grade A\* to C or grade 4 and above) or equivalent qualifications, and no person aged 16 to 18 years is a full-time student
3. Health and disability: any person in the household has general health that is “bad” or “very bad” or is identified as disabled
4. Housing: the household’s accommodation is either overcrowded, with an occupancy rating of negative 1 or less (implying that it has one fewer room or bedroom required for the number of occupants), or is in a shared dwelling, or has no central heating

In Wirral, 54.3% of households (77,722) were deprived in at least one dimension or measure of household deprivation. This compares to England and Wales where 51.7% (or 12.8 million people) were deprived in at least one dimension or measure of household deprivation; this number has decreased since 2011, when it was 57.6% (13.5 million).

**Map 3:** Proportion of households that were deprived in at least one dimension, by MSOA, 2021



**Source:** Census 2021 via [Office for National Statistics](#) and Local Insight

In Wirral, the five MSOAs (Middle Super Output Areas) with the highest deprivation rates were:

- Birkenhead Central: 72.1%
- Seacombe: 71.1%
- Tranmere: 68.1%
- Bidston Hill: 67.4%
- Leasowe South and Moreton East: 66.7%

By contrast, the five MSOAs with the lowest deprivation rates were:

- Gayton and Lower Heswall: 37.1%
- Caldy and Newton: 39.2%
- Poulton, Raby Mere and Thornton Hough: 41.8%
- Great Meols: 45.5%
- Bromborough South: 45.6%

## Household size

There were 143,252 households with at least one usual resident in Wirral on Census Day (21st March 2021). This was an increase of almost 3,000 (+1.9%) from 140,583 households in 2011.

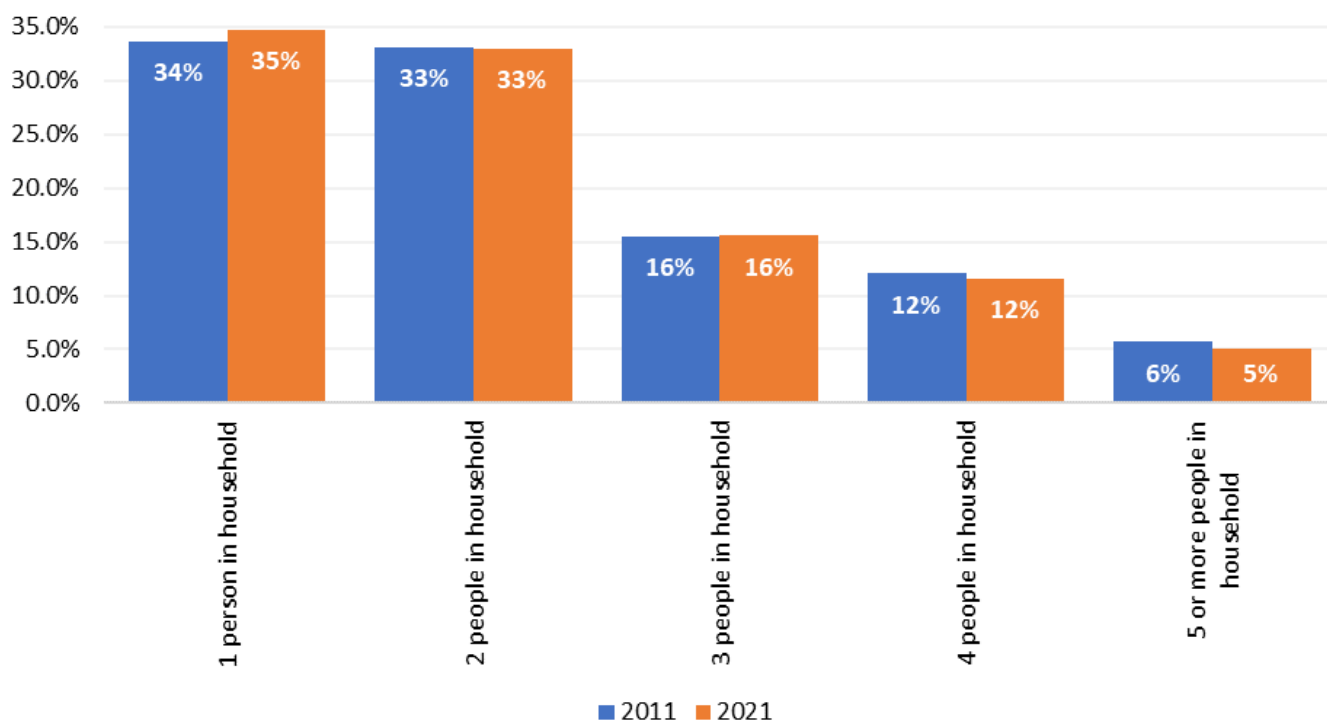
There were 317,403 usual residents (99.1%) who lived in households. The remaining 2,796 usual residents (0.9%) lived in communal establishments.

Dividing the overall number of usual residents in households by the overall number of households gives the average household size. For Wirral, in 2021, this was 2.2 residents per household (2.4 residents per household in England and 2.3 residents per household in Wales).

In Wirral, 34.7% of residents lived in a one person household, followed by 33.0% living in a two person household, 15.6% living in a three person household and 11.6% living in a four person household. The remaining 5.1% lived in a household containing five or more people. This information is summarised in **Figure 6**. Of the 309 local authorities in England, Wirral ranks 22<sup>nd</sup> highest for the proportion of residents living in one person households.

For the regions in England, the largest households on average were in London (2.5 residents per household) and the smallest households were in the North East (2.2 residents per household). The local authorities in England with the highest average household size were Newham, Slough and Redbridge (all 3.0 residents per household). The local authorities in England with the lowest average household size were the City of London (1.7 residents per household) and North Norfolk (2.1 residents per household).

**Figure 6:** Household sizes, 2011 and 2021, Wirral



**Source:** Census 2021 via [Office for National Statistics](#) and Census 2011 via [NOMIS](#)

## Household composition

Responses to the census are used to calculate household composition, which refers to the relationship between household members. For example, a household might consist of a family, of unrelated adults living together, or it might just be one person living alone.

Across Wirral, the data show that 61.2% of households (87,738) were single family households, 34.7% (49,689) were one person households and 4.1% (5,828) were other household types, including households where multiple families lived together and households where unrelated adults lived together. This is similar to 2011, when 61.0% were single family households, 33.7% were one person households and 5.4% were other household types.

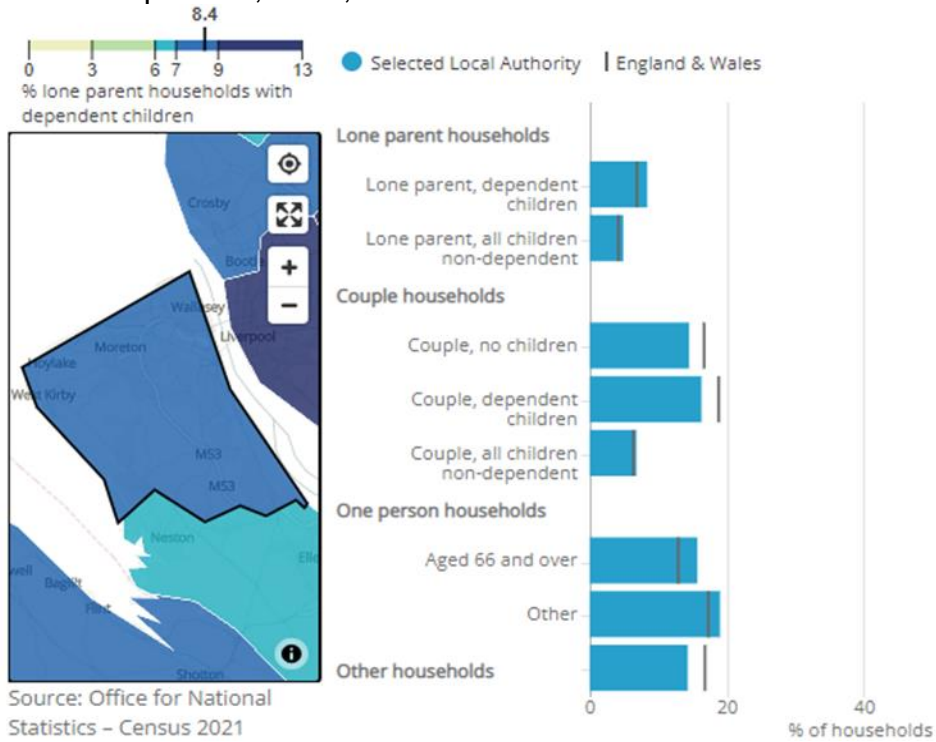
The most common types of single family household included those with a married or civil partnership couple with dependent children (16,789, 11.7% of all households) and those where all residents were aged 66 years and over (13,828, 9.7%). The greatest increase was for single family households with a cohabiting couple with non-dependent children, a household type that increased by 46.2% across the past decade, from 733 (0.5%) in 2011 to 1,072 (0.7%) in 2021.

There were 22,478 one person households with residents aged 66 years or over (15.7% of all households). The remaining 27,211 (19.0%) one person households in 2021 were for younger people.

Finally, for other household types, there were 2,635 households (1.8%) in which multiple families lived together with dependent children. There were 3,193 (2.2%) other types of multiple-family households in 2021, such as, for example, full-time students. The information can be visualised in

**Figure 7.**

**Figure 7: Household composition, 2021, Wirral**



Source: Census 2021 via [Office for National Statistics](https://www.ons.gov.uk)

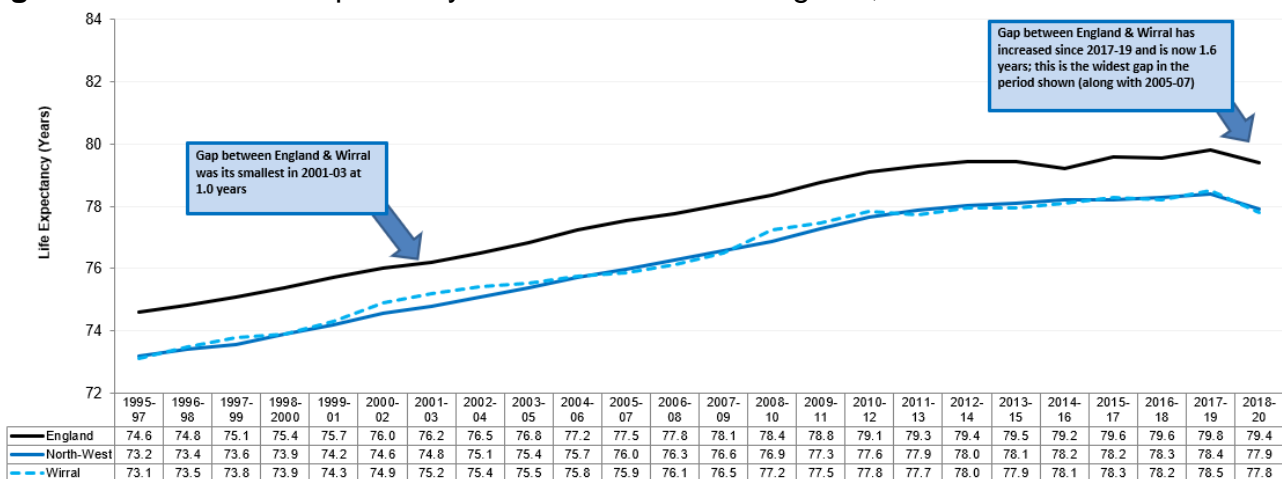
## Life Expectancy

Life expectancy is a key Public Health indicator, as it is often judged to be a good marker of the health of the overall population. Over the last two decades, life expectancy at birth has increased by 3.9 years for males in Wirral, compared to 4.0 years for males in England.

So, although there have been increases locally, similar national increases nationally mean that the gap between England and Wirral remains.

This gap between Wirral and England has remained broadly stable over the last two decades, it was 1.5 years in 1995-97 and it was 1.6 years in 2018-20. This is the widest the gap has ever been (along with 2005-07). The gap was the shortest in 2001-03 (1.0 years). See **Figure 8** below.

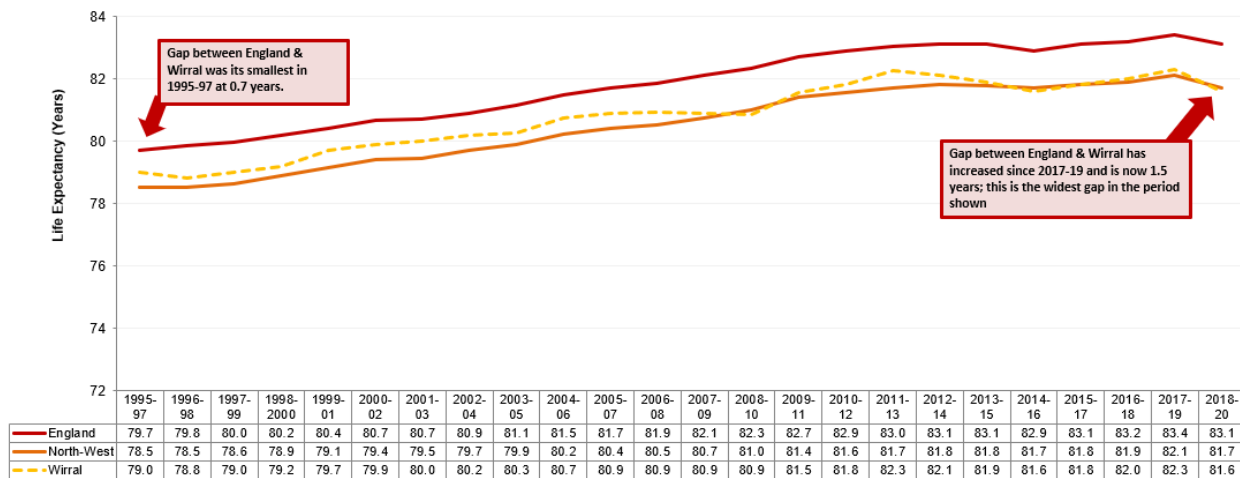
**Figure 8: Trend in life expectancy at birth for males in England, North West & Wirral**



Source: [Public Health Outcomes Framework, 2022](https://www.phe.gov.uk)

**Figure 9** below shows a similar pattern for female life expectancy. Over the past 20 years, there has been a 2.4 year increase in female life expectancy in Wirral, and 2.9 year increase for females in England. This means that although life expectancy has improved overall, the gap between England and Wirral has widened during that time.

**Figure 9:** Trend in life Expectancy at birth for females in England, North West & Wirral



Source: [Public Health Outcomes Framework, 2022](#)

## Healthy Life Expectancy

Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE) is produced by the Office for National Statistics and is an estimate of the number of years a person can expect to spend in ‘very good’ or ‘good’ health. It is calculated using mortality data and self-reported health status data from the Annual Population Survey.

In 2018-20, HLE in Wirral was 60.8 years for men and 63.1 years for women, compared to 63.1 years for men and 63.9 years for women in England (**Table 2**). When comparing HLE to LEx it shows that, in Wirral, males spend approximately 78.1% of their life in ‘good’ health and 21.8% (or 17.0 years) in less than good health. Women in Wirral are estimated to spend 77.3% of their life in ‘good’ health and 22.7% (or 18.5 years) in less than good health.

In 2018-20, male HLE in Wirral decreased from 60.9 to 60.8 years (-0.1 years). There was also a decrease observed nationally (by the same amount); this means the gap between male HLE in Wirral and England has remained the same at 2.3 years.

For Wirral females, HLE for 2018-20 also decreased from 63.9 to 63.1 years (-0.8 years). In contrast HLE for females nationally increased by 0.4 years (63.5 to 63.9 years); this means the gap between female HLE in Wirral and England has increased to 0.8 years. Previously, women in Wirral had a greater HLE than in England.

**Table 2:** Life Expectancy, Healthy Life Expectancy and proportion of life spent in good health in Wirral, North West, England, by sex, 2018-20

Area	Life Expectancy, Males (Years)	Healthy Life Expectancy, Males (Years)	Proportion of life spent in 'good' health, Males	Life Expectancy, Females (Years)	Healthy Life Expectancy, Females (Years)	Proportion of life spent in 'good' health, Females
Wirral	77.8	60.8	78.1%	81.6	63.1	77.3%
North West	77.9	61.5	78.9%	81.7	62.4	76.4%
England	79.4	63.1	79.5%	83.1	63.9	76.9%

Source: [Office for National Statistics, 2022](#)

### Disability Free Life Expectancy

Disability Free Life Expectancy (DfLE) is the number of years a person could be expected to live free from limiting and persistent disease and/or illness. In 2018-20, DfLE in Wirral was 60.9 years for males and 59.0 years for females, compared to 62.4 and 60.9 years respectively in England (**Table 3**). This means that males in Wirral are likely to spend 60.9 years of their total life expectancy of 77.8 years 'disability free'. This equates to 78.3% of their life spent 'disability-free'. Women, however, are estimated to spend only 72.3% of their life 'disability-free' (59.0 'disability free' years of their total 81.6 years of life expectancy).

**Table 3:** Life Expectancy, Disability Free Life Expectancy and proportion of life spent 'disability free' in Wirral, North West and England, by sex, 2018-20

Area	Life Expectancy, Males (Years)	Disability Free Life Expectancy, Males (Years)	Proportion of life spent 'disability-free', Males	Life Expectancy, Females (Years)	Disability Free Life Expectancy, Females (Years)	Proportion of life spent 'disability-free', Females
Wirral	77.8	60.9	78.3%	81.6	59.0	72.3%
North West	77.9	60.2	77.3%	81.7	59.1	72.3%
England	79.4	62.4	78.6%	83.1	60.9	73.3%

Source: [Office for National Statistics, 2022](#)

## Ethnicity and Language

### Ethnicity

Since 1991, the Census for England and Wales has included a question about ethnic group. The ethnic group question has two stages. Firstly, a person identifies through one of the following five high-level ethnic groups:

- "Asian, Asian British, Asian Welsh"
- "Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African"
- "Mixed or Multiple"
- "White"
- "Other ethnic group"



Secondly, a person identifies through one of the 19 available response options (within the above 5 groups).

"White" remained the largest high-level ethnic group in Wirral; 95.2% (n=304,692) of residents identified this way in 2021, a decrease from 97.0% (~310,000) in 2011. Within the "White" ethnic group, 295,967 residents in Wirral identified their ethnic group as "English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British" – 92.4% of the total population. "White: Other White" was the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest detailed ethnic group in Wirral with 5,910 residents identifying this way (1.8%).

In 2021, there was a new response option for "Roma" within the high-level "White" ethnic group. Overall, 0.04% (n=128) of residents identified this way. A further breakdown of all ethnic groups can be found in **Table 4** below.

**Table 4:** Ethnic groups in Wirral, 2021 Census (number and percentage)

<b>Ethnic Group</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>White</b>	<b>304,692</b>	<b>95.2%</b>
White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	295,967	92.4%
White: Irish	2,641	0.8%
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	46	0.0%
White: Roma	128	0.0%
White: Other White	5,910	1.8%
<b>Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups</b>	<b>4,930</b>	<b>1.5%</b>
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian	1,605	0.5%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black African	973	0.3%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean	1,054	0.3%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: Other Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	1,298	0.4%
<b>Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh</b>	<b>7,302</b>	<b>2.3%</b>
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Bangladeshi	1,319	0.4%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Chinese	1,847	0.6%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Indian	1,933	0.6%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Pakistani	364	0.1%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Other Asian	1,839	0.6%
<b>Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African</b>	<b>1,389</b>	<b>0.4%</b>
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: African	854	0.3%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: Caribbean	330	0.1%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: Other Black	205	0.1%
<b>Other ethnic group</b>	<b>1,886</b>	<b>0.6%</b>
Other ethnic group: Arab	585	0.2%
Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group	1,301	0.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>320,199</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: [Census 2021](#), via Office for National Statistics

## Language

In Wirral, 97.7% of all usual residents aged 3 years and over (~303,000 out of ~311,000) had English as a main language. This compares to 91.1% in England. This is a percentage decrease compared with 2011, when 98.4% (~304,000) in Wirral had English as a main language.

**Table 5** shows that Polish remained the most common main language in both Wirral and England for those who do not have English as a main language, accounting for 0.31% (~1,000) of usual residents in Wirral and 1.08% (~591,000) of usual residents in England.

In 2021, Romanian moved into the top 10 main languages in both Wirral and England, excluding English. This was the largest increase over the decade. In total, 0.2% of people in Wirral (~600) listed Romanian as their main language, up from 0.02% (~80) in 2011.

**Table 5:** The percentage of population by main language spoken, excluding “English” in Wirral and England, 2021

Wirral		England	
Language	%	Language	%
Polish	0.31%	Polish	1.08%
Romanian	0.20%	Romanian	0.85%
All other Chinese	0.14%	Panjabi	0.53%
Bengali (with Sylheti and Chatgaya)	0.14%	Urdu	0.49%
Tamil	0.12%	Portuguese	0.40%
Arabic	0.11%	Spanish	0.39%
Malayalam	0.09%	Arabic	0.36%
Cantonese Chinese	0.09%	Bengali (with Sylheti and Chatgaya)	0.36%
Spanish	0.09%	Gujarati	0.34%
Hungarian	0.07%	Italian	0.29%

Source: [Census 2021](#), via Office for National Statistics

## British Sign Language

In addition to spoken languages, British Sign Language (BSL) was the main language of ~130 (0.04%) usual residents aged three years and over in Wirral. This is a 16.7% increase of almost 20 people since 2011 (~110, 0.03%).

## Sexual Orientation

The question on sexual orientation was new for Census 2021. Data was previously collected from the Annual Population Survey (APS) but including the question on the Census enables a much more detailed understanding of sexual orientation in England and Wales.

The question was voluntary and was only asked of people aged 16 years and over. People were asked “Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?”. The different sexual orientations that people could choose from included:

- straight or heterosexual
- gay or lesbian
- bisexual
- other sexual orientation

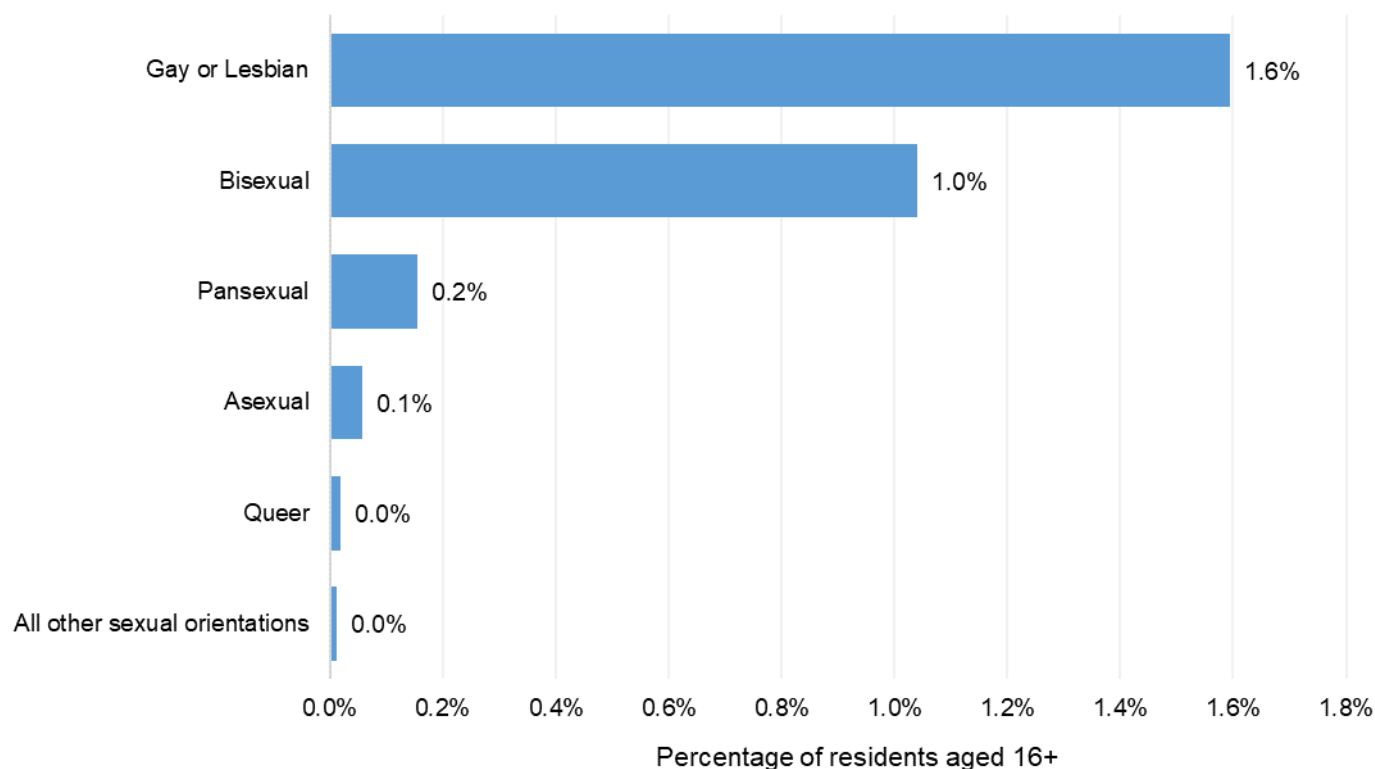
**Table 6** shows that, in total, 245,148 adults aged (16+) answered the question (93.5%) in Wirral, with 90.7% identifying as straight or heterosexual. Therefore, 2.9% of Wirral adults identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual or other (LGB+). For a detailed breakdown of these sexualities in Wirral adults, please see **Figure 10**. In England, on the other hand, 92.5% answered the question on sexuality, with 89.4% identifying as straight or heterosexual and 3.1% identifying as LGB+.

**Table 6:** Estimates of sexuality in Wirral (adults aged 16+), 2021

Sexual Orientation	Number	Percentage
Straight or Heterosexual	237,607	90.7%
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Other (LGB+)	7,541	2.9%
Not answered	16,956	6.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>262,104</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: [Census 2021](#), via Office for National Statistics

**Figure 10:** Estimates of detailed sexuality in Wirral (adults aged 16+), 2021 (straight or heterosexual not included)



Source: [Census 2021](#), via Office for National Statistics

## Health and Disability

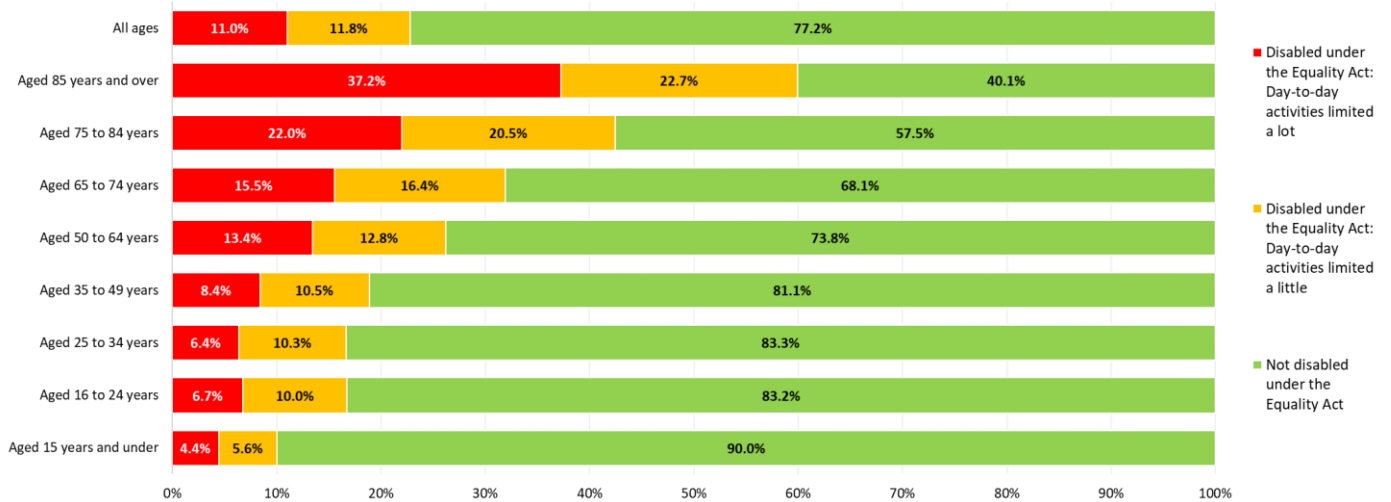
As **Figure 11** shows, up to the age of 49, fewer than 20% of Wirral residents reported that their activities were limited either ‘a lot’ or ‘a little’. This rises sharply, however, in residents older than 50, so that by the age of 85+, the opposite is then true and the majority (60%) report that their activities are limited (either a lot or a little) by an illness or disability.

Overall, one in five (23% or 73,100 people) Wirral residents reported that their day-to-day activities were limited in some way by an illness or disability.

In numbers, the age band with the highest number of people reporting any limiting of their day-to-day activities, was 50-64 year olds (17,900). Around 26% report their day to day activities are limited in this age group, a large group of the population.

By contrast, there are only 5,600 people aged 85+ who reported their day-to-day activities were limited, but that was 60% of all people aged 85+ in Wirral (this group is relatively small, as many people do not live to reach this age group).

**Figure 11:** Prevalence of long-term health problem or disability by age in Wirral



Source: [Census 2021](#), via Office for National Statistics

## Contact Details

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