

Child Poverty in Somerset

An Assessment of Need

2010

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Introduction

Child poverty – its causes and consequences – corrodes life chances and is at the heart of social injustice. The new Coalition Government has renewed the commitment to end child poverty by 2020, and the Child Poverty Act 2010, which received Royal Assent on 25th March 2010, compels action to be taken by government at national and local levels.

Significant progress has been made nationally in tackling child poverty over the last decade. However, it is clear that further action is needed if the 2020 vision and target eradicating child poverty are to be met. Achieving this goal is likely to be further complicated by the current national economic situation and the impact of the announcements made in relation to public finances, outlined in Chancellor George Osborne's Budget of 22nd June 2010 and, later, in the October Comprehensive Spending Review. However, Government plans to use some of the savings from withdrawing Child Benefit from families with a higher rate taxpayer to fund significant above indexation increases in the Child Tax Credit, so it is better targeted on low income families, 'will ensure the Spending Review will have no measurable impact on child poverty in the next two years'. Nonetheless, these are hard times for families, and for those working to tackle child poverty in their communities. The Government's longer term strategy for tackling child poverty will be set out by the end of March 2011, and will take into account the conclusions of the Frank Field MP review into poverty and life chances (published in December 2010).

Since the former (Labour) Government first announced its plan for tackling child poverty in 1999, there has been substantial research examining both the causes of child poverty and what is effective in tackling it. The prevailing view has long been that the principal cause of child poverty is income-related. However, it is increasingly understood and recognised that having parents in work is no guarantee. Indeed, there is a growing awareness of the existence of 'in work' poverty.

What is known is that children growing up in poverty are likely to have limited life chances in adulthood, and this disadvantage is likely to transmit itself to their children, thus perpetuating a cycle of child poverty.

There is now recognition that what is needed is a multi-faceted response, reflected in the four building blocks of the national strategy:

1. Increasing employment and raising incomes so more parents are in work that pays;
2. Improving financial and material support for families so support is responsive to families' situations;
3. Improving poor children's life chances so poverty in childhood does not translate into poor outcomes;
4. Tackling deprivation in communities so that the child's environment supports them to thrive.

Introducing sufficient interventions across all four of these building blocks requires effective multi-agency collaboration and commitment from all those involved – making child poverty 'everybody's business'.

While Somerset appears at first glance to be a prosperous county with a high quality of life, evidence indicates that there are significant pockets of poverty, deprivation and need within its local communities.

This assessment of need seeks to achieve three specific things:

1. To provide the evidence and context for developing the Local Authority's strategic approach to tackling child poverty;
2. To give a greater understanding of the distribution and drivers of child poverty in Somerset, and how this varies across localised areas;
3. To build on existing understanding of local levels and concentrations of deprivation and make the links between child poverty and other factors.

The Child Poverty Bill 2009

The Bill aims to end child poverty by 2020. It sets out the duties of Local Authorities and its partners to produce joint local child poverty strategies and to undertake joint needs assessment. There is an expectation that the needs analysis will feature in the local Sustainable Community Strategy.

The Child Poverty Act

- Established a UK wide definition of four income targets.
- Required Government to publish a UK child poverty strategy within one year of royal assent.
- Required the Government to publish annual progress reports.
- Established a Child Poverty Commission.
- Placed duties on Local Authorities and partners to co-operate in tackling child poverty.

The Act establishes the key objectives and main policy areas for strategy. Local Authorities will need to ask themselves the following fundamental questions around goals set for meeting the 2020 income targets and minimising socio-economic disadvantage for children in undertaking its local needs analysis and strategy:

- Consider what action is needed in each local area to meet targets and minimise social disadvantage; and to assess what progress needs to be made by 2014;
- The LA will need to assess which groups are at most risk of poverty and disadvantage; and consider the impact of policy measures for each group.

Furthermore, the Act sets out a number of duties on Local Authorities and their partners:

- To cooperate to carry out a child poverty needs assessment and to produce a local child poverty strategy.
- A duty to reduce child poverty when preparing or revising their sustainable communities policy.
- To take note of guidance issued by the Government on how these duties should be performed.

The following are named as statutory partners in the Act:

- The district authorities who deliver key services including housing benefits and secure local accommodation
- The police, youth offending teams and the probation service
- Transport authorities
- Primary Care Trusts and Strategic Health Authorities
- Jobcentre Plus

However, the Local Authority may include other relevant partners as it sees fit.

In September 2010, the coalition Government confirmed that, in line with its decentralisation and localism agenda, it would not provide statutory guidance to which Local Authorities and their partners must have regard in responding to the opportunities presented by Part 2 of the Child Poverty Act. Instead a guide was published, designed to provide non-statutory information and guidance to assist Local Authorities, their named and unnamed partners, and others locally with an interest in and influence over tackling child poverty to understand more about how they might respond to the Part 2 duties while allowing them the flexibility to act in a way that best suits local circumstances.

Supporting Documents / Sources

A number of key documents and sources have supported and informed the development of this assessment of need, and should be considered in conjunction with this assessment of need. Deserving of specific mention, and further reading, are:

Somerset Children and Young People's Needs Assessment (2010)

In July 2010, a refreshed Somerset Children and Young People's Needs Assessment was published. It aimed to provide a comprehensive overview of the needs of children and young people within Somerset, and to identify key issues and areas for development as part of informing Somerset Children and Young People's Plan priorities and activities. It is important that this be considered alongside this Child Poverty Needs Assessment as it specifically seeks to determine the wellbeing of children across the five Every Child Matters outcomes.

http://www.six.somerset.gov.uk/somersetchildrenstrust/content_view.asp?did=23686

Somerset County Council's Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (March 2010)

The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment seeks to provide a detailed assessment of all childcare provision within the county, identifying gaps in provision, determining the needs of parents and planning to address those gaps.

<http://www.somerset.gov.uk/irj/public/services/directory/service?rid=/wpccontent/Sites/SCC/Web%20Pages/Services/Services/CYP/Childcare%20Sufficiency%20Assessment>

Local Authority Health Profiles (2010)

Health profiles are produced by the Association of Public Health Observatories on behalf of the Department of Health. They are designed to provide useful, accessible summaries of the health of local people to assist in prioritising and planning services.

www.healthprofiles.info

The State of the Somerset Economy: An Economic Profile (June 2010)

Ekosgen was appointed to prepare an economic baseline for Somerset to provide the basis for the county's Local Economic Assessment. This work involved an extensive review of relevant data and economic intelligence at a range of spatial levels, as well as a number of local and thematic workshops to understand more fully issues that might be relevant to specific localities or sectors. The result is the "State of the Somerset Economy" report, which has clear linkages with the Child Poverty Needs Assessment. *(Available on request)*

Somerset Economic Digest (October 2009)

This report aims to act as an economic reference guide to the county of Somerset. The digest is compiled in order to aid policy creation and inform decision-makers within Somerset and the South West region. It describes the current position and trends, and helps set the context in which evidence-based policy can be developed.

www.somerset.gov.uk/economy

Somerset Local Area Profile (October 2009)

The Local Area Profile was produced in support of the Somerset Young Persons Substance Misuse Needs Assessment 2009. A series of national and local datasets were selected in order to provide a picture of the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the Somerset population. The primary objective was to identify any hotspot areas where young people are experiencing multiple forms of deprivation, including social exclusion. *(Available on request)*

Somerset Intelligence Network (SINe)

SINe provides a network for people to share data and intelligence across organisations, build good practice and work collaboratively together on data, research and consultation projects to the benefit of its members and the wider communities of Somerset.

<http://www.sine.org.uk/welcome/>

Office for National Statistics: A Profile of Child Poverty (September 2010)

The profile identifies the headline measures along with signposting to contextual variables which can be also used to understand child poverty in a broader sense. *(Available on request or via the ONS website).*

Background

Defining Child Poverty

A challenge is that child poverty is both hard to define and understand, with a wide range of possible data sources available, though not always available with regional, Local Authority or small area breakdowns. Broadly speaking, child poverty has meant growing up in a household with low income.

Relative Poverty: The official Government measure of child poverty is defined as children living in a family with an income less than 60% of the national median (average), after taking into account household size and composition.

Material Deprivation: less than 70% of the median income calculated by a combination of material deprivation and low income.

Persistent poverty: living in relative poverty for three out of four years.

Absolute poverty: living in families below a certain income threshold or the number of households unable to afford certain basic goods and services.

However, child poverty is considered a subjective topic. It is relative; being not just about having income and resources, but also about having a good quality of life including health, education, housing and wellbeing.

“Poverty is not just about low income. Other factors include access to high quality health care and social services child care – an important enabler of parental employment – family support, decent housing and transport and the quality of local amenities including cultural and leisure facilities’.

The National Children’s Plan

The likelihood of a child being in poverty can be related to key characteristics of their household, family, parent(s), and the job or jobs that their parent(s) do.

National research and evidence suggests that at particular risk of poverty are:

- Children in large families (4+ children);
- Children residing in rented accommodation;
- Children whose parents have few, or no, academic qualifications;
- Disabled children;
- Children with disabled parents;
- Asylum seekers;
- Ethnic minority children;
- Traveller and Gypsy children;
- Young people leaving care.

www.childpovertytoolkit.org.uk

In contrast, children whose parents are well qualified and working – particularly in higher-level occupations and working full-time – are less likely to be in poverty, especially if both parents are working.

Living with poverty

Children's experiences: the impact of poverty in childhood

A review of evidence from children reveals that the experience of poverty in childhood can be highly damaging and the effects of poverty are both pervasive and disruptive. Poverty permeates every facet of children's lives from economic and material disadvantages, through social and relational constraints and exclusions, to the personal and more hidden aspects of poverty associated with shame, sadness and the fear of difference and stigma.

Key areas of concern identified by children are:

- Economic deprivation: children were anxious about the adequacy of income coming into their households and were afraid there would not be enough money for them and for their family's needs;
- Material deprivation: children lacked important childhood possessions, like toys, bicycles and games, and they also expressed concerns about being short of essentials and everyday items, like food, towels, bedding and clothing;
- Social deprivation: poverty restricted children's chances to make and sustain friendships, and reduced their opportunities for shared social activities due to the costs of attending social events, inadequate and expensive transport provision and the expense of hosting social occasions within their own homes;
- School deprivation: children experienced restricted opportunities at school, largely through an inability to pay for resources such as study guides and exam materials, and restricted social opportunities through an inability to pay for school trips and other social activities. Inability to pay for compulsory items, such as uniforms, could also lead to conflict with teachers and disciplinary action;
- Visible signs of poverty and difference: a lack of the same material goods and clothes as their peers, and an inability to take part in the same social and leisure activities meant that children experienced bullying and were fearful of stigma and social isolation.
- Family pressures: children showed keen insight into the challenges and demands that poverty generated for their parents and anxiety about inadequate household income, household debt and their parents' wellbeing and working conditions. They also often tried to moderate their own needs in response to their parents' financial difficulties.
- Tensions with parents: conflicts sometimes arose with parents who were under severe financial pressure, or who sometimes had to work long hours or rely on childcare that children did not enjoy.
- Additional responsibilities: children in low-income working families were often taking on additional responsibilities in the home, including housework and caring responsibilities, or engaged in paid work themselves to ease financial pressures at home and to gain access to their own money;
- Poor quality housing: this affected children's health and wellbeing and meant that children had difficulties sleeping, studying or playing at home;
- Homelessness: children experienced considerable anxiety about the quality of their temporary accommodation, including a lack of privacy and no space for play. This affected their health, their school lives and their social participation;
- Poor neighbourhoods: deprived neighbourhoods created particular problems for children who described them as insecure and sometimes dangerous. They experienced a lack of safe space for play and a dearth of local and low-cost leisure facilities;
- Living in rural areas meant that disadvantaged children lacked social opportunities for shared play, were reliant on inadequate and costly public transport, and were unable to meet the high costs of participation. This meant that children often felt confined within their local environments.

Overall, children identified a wide range of issues related to poverty and social exclusion.

However, they were not passive 'victims' of poverty: many employed coping strategies such as taking jobs so they could contribute financially to their families, taking on caring duties so parents

could work, and restricting financial demands (for example, not telling parents about school trips) to ease financial pressures within the home.

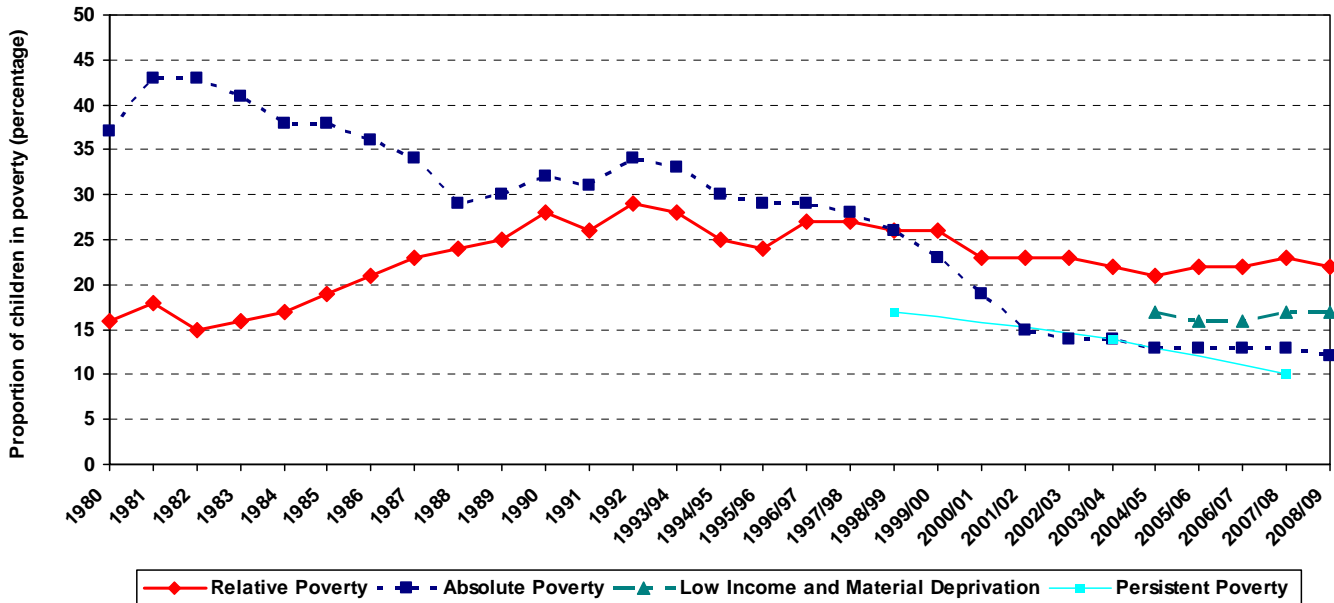
Parents' experiences: the impact of poverty on family life

A review of low-income parents' accounts of their lives reveals the challenges of managing family life under conditions of poverty and deprivation. The evidence highlights the pressure that disadvantage brings, making family life at times difficult and uncertain. A family's experiences of poverty are not isolated from other factors in their lives, and complex social, cultural and economic processes and divisions create particular challenges. Family equilibrium can be easily destabilised or undermined by external and internal shocks such as unemployment, sickness, disability and family upheaval. These events create circumstances of change and uncertainty for all families, but the added pressures and restrictions of poverty leave deprived families highly vulnerable to instability, homelessness, debt and social exclusion. Parenting under economic pressure can be particularly difficult and although parents strive to protect their children and put them first, this is often at great personal cost particularly for women. Evidence from parents reveals key tensions within low-income families as parents try to balance conflicting demands within the restrictions of a low income. These are summarised below:

- The challenge of meeting their own needs and meeting children's needs: families were often doing without everyday necessities like food, clothing, fuel and social activities. Parents, especially mothers, also often went without so that they could try and ensure their children's needs were met.
- The challenge of balancing the costs of meeting everyday needs against the costs of meeting social imperatives, such as participation in cultural norms and expectations at times of special celebration, like Christmas, Eid and Ramadan.
- There were difficult decisions to be made about buying essential goods or saving for future expenditure. Trying to make money stretch and avoid debt was taxing. For many families even vigilance and strict budgeting could not make their money go far enough, and the everyday demands of sustaining family life coupled with the sudden appearance of extra needs could result in severe financial problems and debt.
- Families had little access to affordable credit, and accessing expensive credit had to be balanced against going without essentials.
- Money for supervised play and leisure activities for children was difficult to find, but the alternative when children lived in degraded neighbourhoods was that their opportunities for play were in dangerous or unsuitable environments.
- Work can be an essential strategy for reducing family poverty, but parents had a range of concerns about employment, including the costs and availability of childcare, time poverty and travel costs.
- Employment could also be unpredictable, demanding and inflexible. This created tension for parents between taking on unstable employment and the desire to provide security and stability in family life.
- Working parents were often torn between doing the right thing for their children and satisfying the needs of their employers. Sustaining work and care was extremely challenging. For some, work meant long hours in low-income employment and this affected their family life and spending time with their children.
- For families in hardship, adequate, reliable and secure welfare support was a critical issue. Many low-income families struggled to negotiate the benefits system and late and missed payments or over-payments could exacerbate stress and financial strain

Source: Living with poverty: A review of the literature on children's and families' experiences of poverty, DWP Research Report No 594 (2009)

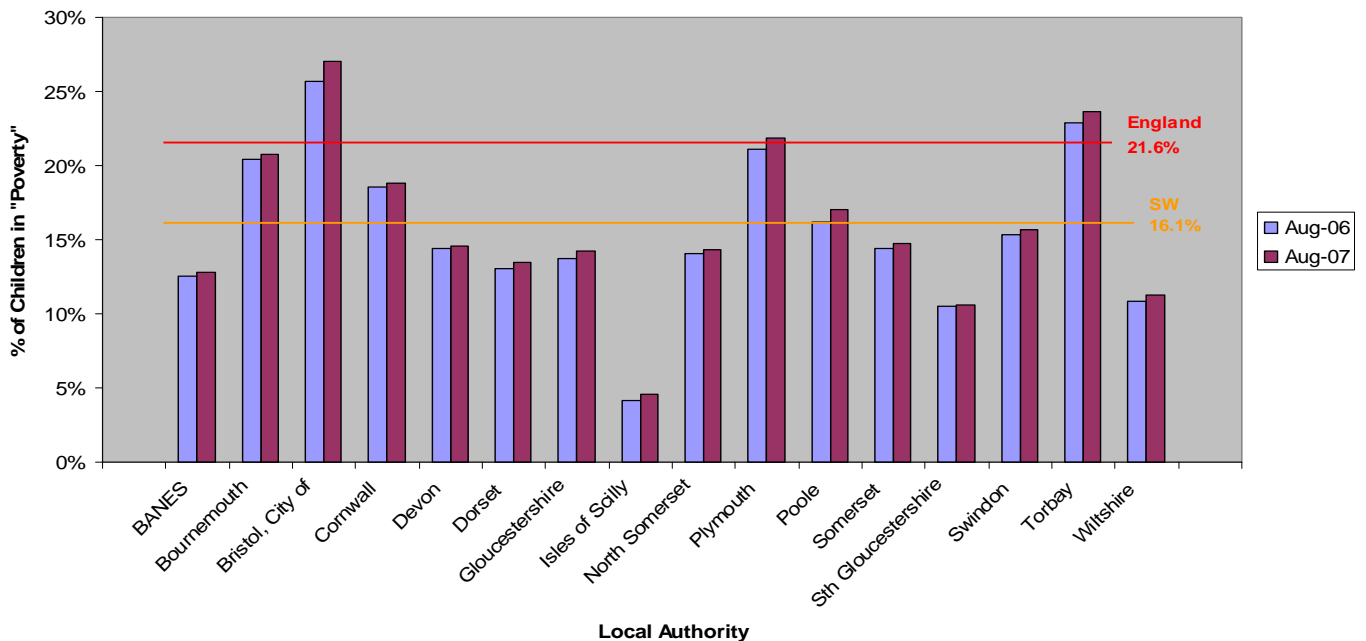
National Trends and Prevalence



Source: Households below average income 2008/09

Child Poverty in the South West (2006 / 2007)

% of Children in "Poverty" - SW



Source: Child Poverty Unit

Regional Summary

- The South West has relatively stable levels of children living in households with less than 60% contemporary median household income for the period 1994/95 to 2008/09;
- The peak for the South West was 24% in 1997/98-1999/00, and the lowest proportion was 17% which has stayed roughly stable since 2003/04-2005/06 (before housing costs);
- 11.6% of children lived in workless households according to the APS in January-December 2008;
- 5.6% of 16-18 year olds were recorded as NEET in 2009; the second lowest regional rate nationally.

Source: A Profile of Child Poverty (September 2010), ONS

Local Context

The county of Somerset is well known for its countryside, agriculture, food and tourism. Covering 3,452 square kilometers (1,333 square miles), it is home to roughly 10% of the South West's population. The county has a population of 523,471: 268,795 females and 254,676 males (2009 mid-year population estimates, ONS). Divided into five districts, Somerset is the third most rural county in England, with over 50% of its population living in communities of less than 3,000 people. The settlement pattern is one of dispersal.

Based on 2008 mid-year estimates, Somerset's overall population density is 1.52 people per hectare. The national average is 3.95 per hectare and the regional average is 2.19. Of the Districts, West Somerset is the most sparsely populated with density of less than 0.5 hectare. The more densely populated areas can be found along the major transport corridors and around the more influential settlements. Low population densities create a challenge for economic growth as it is difficult to manage growth in a sustainable fashion and access to services (as well as jobs or training) can be a barrier to economic activity.

Only about a third of the population live in the county's four largest towns: Taunton (63,536); Yeovil (42,140); Bridgwater (36,892) and Frome (24,150). The total population of Somerset is predicted to show a 7% increase between 2001 and 2011, with the number of people aged under 20 expected to decrease by 0.6% over the same period. Somerset has a small proportion of non-white residents – only 3.3% compared to a national average of 11.8% (2007). Mendip is the most diverse of the five districts, and West Somerset the least ethnically diverse.

Somerset is home to approximately 117,809 children and young people aged 18 and under, accounting for 22.5% of the total county population (2009 mid-year population estimates).

As of January 2010, Somerset had 267 schools, including 220 primary schools, 9 middle schools, 30 secondary schools and 8 special schools. There are 9 resource bases for severe and complex speech and language needs, 5 for hearing, 2 for autism, 2 for generic SEN. In addition there are 13 Pupil Referral Units, including a Virtual Classroom and 4 Link Education Centres.

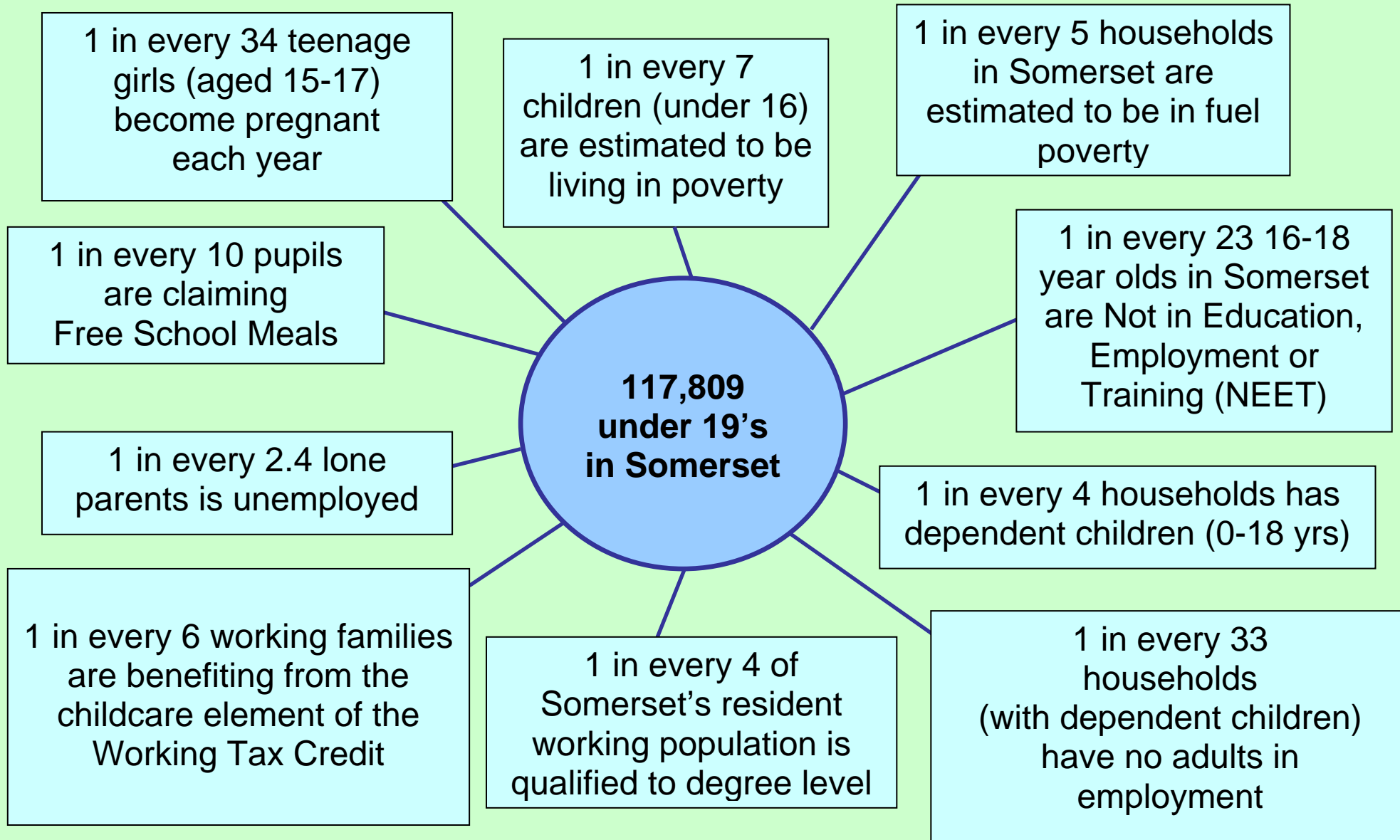
As of January 2010, there were 67,134 pupils on roll at Somerset schools. The number of pupils of primary school age in Somerset has been decreasing annually from a peak in 1998. Forecasts issued in 2007 show a further fall equivalent to about 26 classes of 30 pupils in 2010. There are now signs of a modest recovery of primary aged pupils for 2011 and beyond.

Narrowing the gap between the performance of pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and their peers is a key priority. The 2009/10 School Census revealed that 9,965 pupils receive School Action (action to meet learning difficulties in school). During the same time period, 2,315 were in receipt of School Action Plus support – where their special educational needs cannot be met through School Action. The number of children with SEN Statements (2009/10) stood at 955 and is falling. This places the total number of children and young people with SEN status at 13,235.

On average, there are approximately 420 Children Looked After and in recent months, numbers subject to Child Protection Plans have significantly increased. Based on May 2010 data, Somerset figures (rate of 27.5 per 10,000 population) remain lower than the national average (31.0) but are now higher than that of our statistical neighbours (26.0). There are roughly 245 foster carer households, caring for 75% of children in care.

There are 5 colleges delivering post-16 provision within Somerset. Although there is no university in the county, Somerset County Council recognises the development of higher education in Somerset is of great importance to the county's future economic well being and to the life opportunities of Somerset's residents, and champions the Somerset University Project as part of its commitment to raising aspirations. The number of young people in Somerset that progress on to higher education is in line with the national average but there are significant variations within the county. Wards with the greatest level of deprivation have the lowest rate of participation.

Child Poverty in Somerset – Setting the Context



1. Deprivation in Somerset

Whilst deprivation levels are low in Somerset when compared to England, there are over 14,700 children living in poverty.

	Local Number per year	Local Value	England Average
Somerset	14,731	15.1%	22.4%
Mendip	3,044	14.2%	
Sedgemoor	3,566	17.1%	
South Somerset	3,927	13.3%	
Taunton Deane	3,037	15.0%	
West Somerset	1,159	21.5%	

Table X: % of children living in families receiving means tested benefits (2007)

Source: Health Profiles 2010

Index of Multiple Deprivation

Output Areas are clusters of adjacent postcodes with similar population sizes and as socially similar as possible. Lower Super Output Areas have a mean average population of 1,500 (minimum 1,000) and consist of 4-6 adjacent Output Areas within the boundaries of an electoral ward.

Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) were first used for the 2004 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). Every LSOA in England was ranked from 1 (most deprived) to 32,482 (least deprived). The position of an LSOA on the IMD was based on indicator scores in seven specific domains:

1. Income;
2. Employment;
3. Health, Deprivation and Disability;
4. Education, Skills and Training;
5. Barriers to Housing and Services;
6. Crime;
7. Living Environment.

The IMD was last updated in 2007. All LSOAs in the top 30% most deprived on the IMD 2007 are considered to be areas of deprivation.

Each Local Authority district can be assigned an average score derived from the seven measures. This can then be rank-ordered nationally and regionally. The table below shows the rankings for each Somerset district whereby a lower ranking indicates a higher level of deprivation.

	Regional Rank	National Rank
Mendip	29	217
Sedgemoor	18	169
South Somerset	32	237
Taunton Deane	25	204
West Somerset	8	106
Out of	45	354

Table X: Index of Multiple Deprivation – Somerset Districts by Rank

Source: www.localfutures.com

There are 327 LSOAs in Somerset. Of these, 41 fall within the top 30% most deprived areas in England. 14 of these are also within the top 20% most deprived LSOAs. 2 areas fall within the top 10% most deprived LSOAs in England: Sedgemoor (Bridgwater Sydenham Central), and Taunton Deane (Taunton Halcon North).

Source: English Indices of Deprivation, 2007

Sedgemoor District has the highest number of IMD 30% LSOAs of all five Districts. The highest concentration of disadvantaged LSOAs in Somerset is around Bridgwater. 13 (57%) of the 23 LSOAs in Bridgwater are within the IMD top 30% most disadvantaged.

In contrast, 100 LSOAs in Somerset (30.6% of the total) are in the top 30% *least* deprived areas in England. Of these LSOAs, 50 are in the top 20% and 13 are in the top 10%.

It should be noted that 22 of West Somerset's 23 LSOAs are within the 50% most deprived areas nationally, and 5 are within the top 30% most deprived.

The most disadvantaged areas in Somerset are in and around urban areas. Bridgwater has 13 LSOAs within the 30% most deprived in England, Taunton and Yeovil have 6 each, and Glastonbury, Chard, Highbridge and Watchet have 2 each.

Source: SCC Childcare Sufficiency Assessment - March 2010

The highest concentration of disadvantaged Lower Super Output Areas in Somerset is around Bridgwater, where 57% are within the Index of Multiple Deprivation's top 30% most disadvantaged nationally.

	Number of LSOAs in Local Service Area	Number of LSOAs in IMD Top 30%	Number of LSOAs in IMD Top 20%	Number of LSOAs in IMD Top 10%	Percentage of LSOAs in IMD Top 30%
East Mendip	37*	2	1	0	5.4%
West Mendip	30*	2	1	0	6.7%
North Sedgemoor	27	2	1	1	7.4%
South Sedgemoor	41	13	3	1	31.7%
South Somerset East	52*	6	3	0	11.5%
South Somerset West	51*	2	0	0	3.9%
Taunton Deane	49	8	2	1	16.3%
Wellington, Wiveliscombe & West Somerset	40	6	1	0	21.7%
SOMERSET	327	41	14	2	12.5%

Table X: Deprived LSOAs in Somerset by Local Service Area

Source: DCLG, Indices of Deprivation 2007

* = LSOAs split between two Local Service Areas – rounded to whole number

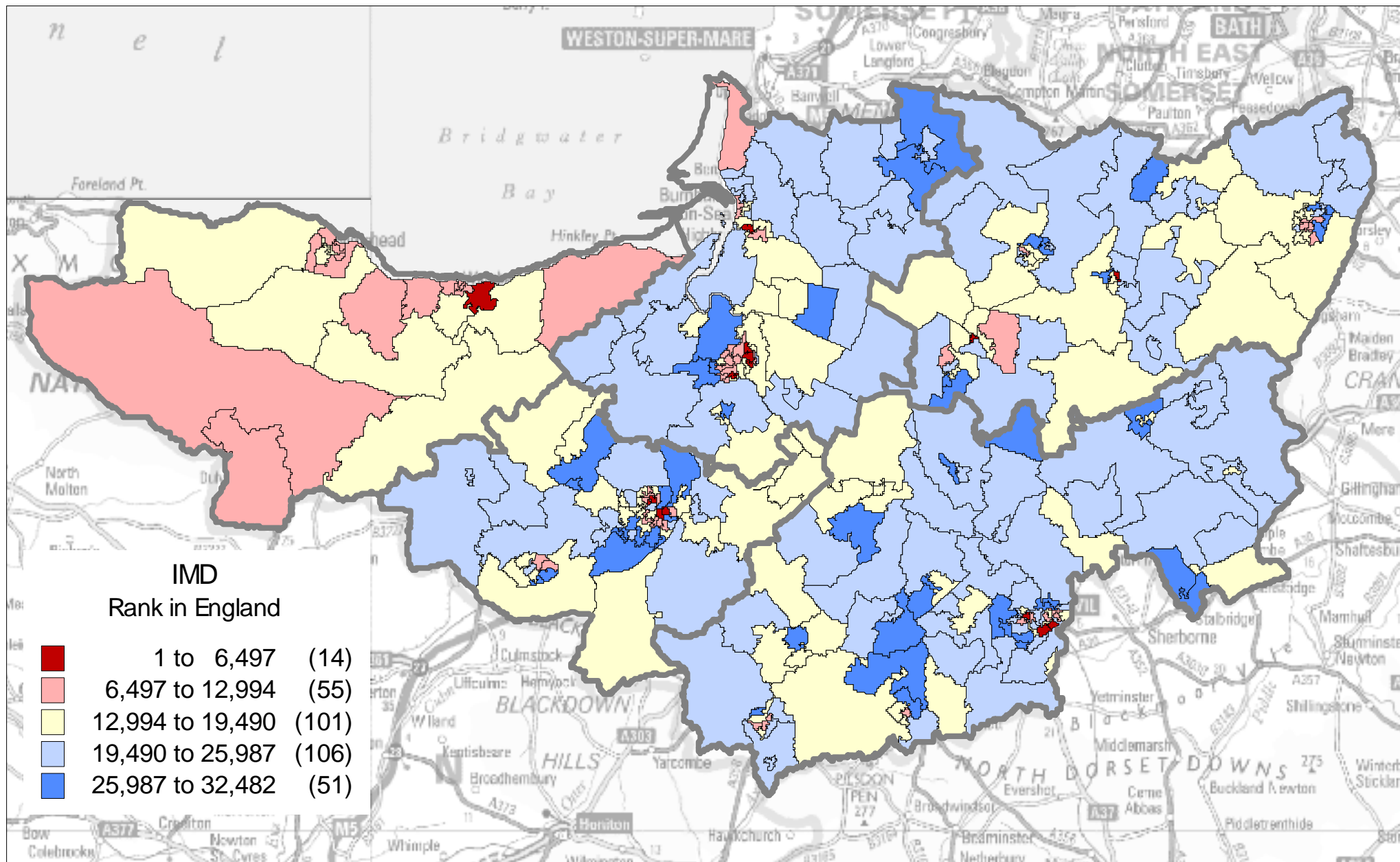
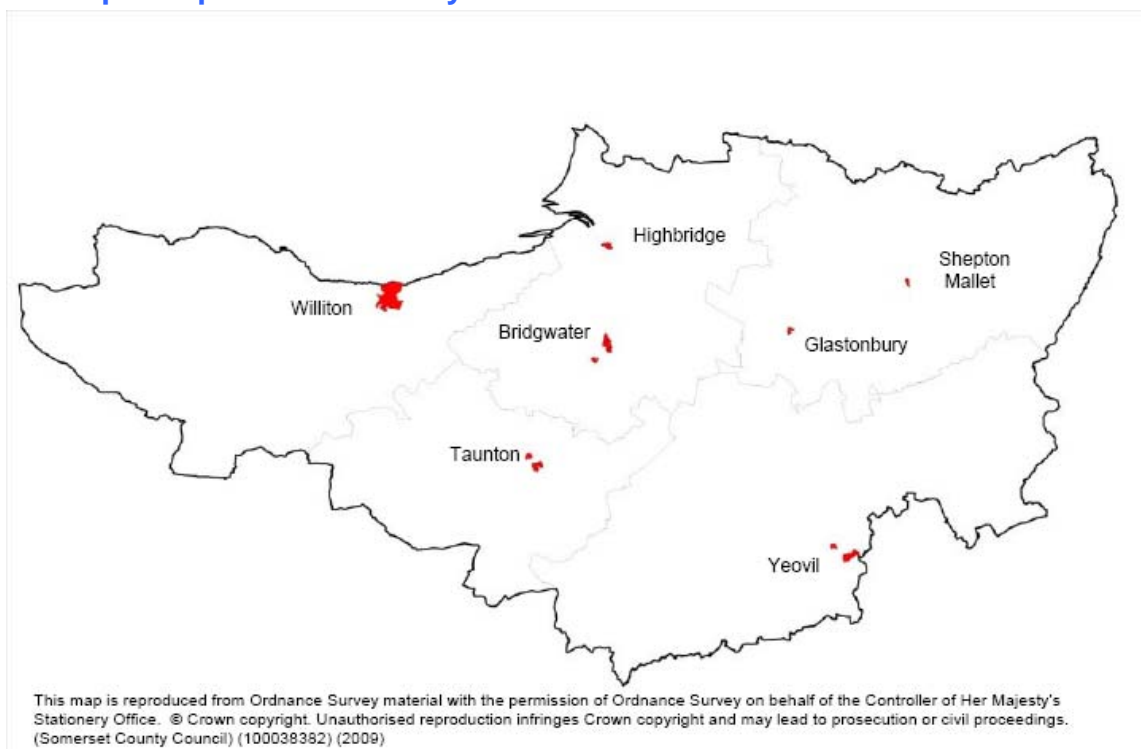


Figure X: Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007 – LSOA Level
Source: Indices of Deprivation 2007, DCLG

Index of Multiple Deprivation: Priority Areas



The 14 LSOAs within Somerset which are ranked amongst the 20% most deprived in the country together contained 21,735 people living in 8,512 households. They tend to be in relatively urban areas with a high population density, and the population is younger than the county average. Where these priority areas differ from the rest of Somerset is in terms of income, education/skills/training, and employment deprivation. The official statistics which define deprivation are supported by the perception of those who live in these areas: they are less satisfied with, and have less involvement in, their local area, whilst feeling less safe and more concerned about social cohesion.

LSOA code	Ward	IMD Rank (out of 32,482)	National Quintile						
			Income	Employment	Health	Education/ Skills/ Training	Barriers to housing & services	Crime	Living Environment
E01029046	Glastonbury St Benedicts	4805	1	1	1	3	3	2	1
E01029062	Shepton East	6227	1	1	2	1	4	1	2
E01029100	Bridgwater Hamp	4754	1	1	2	1	5	2	2
E01029106	Bridgwater Sydenham	1890	1	1	1	1	5	1	1
E01029107	Bridgwater Sydenham	5326	1	1	2	1	5	3	2
E01029109	Bridgwater Sydenham	4975	1	1	2	1	4	2	2
E01029132	Highbridge	3255	1	1	1	1	3	3	1
E01029234	Yeovil Central	5289	2	1	1	3	4	1	1
E01029239	Yeovil East	5357	2	1	2	1	5	1	1
E01029247	Yeovil West	5268	1	2	2	1	5	2	1
E01029292	Taunton Halcon	4260	1	1	1	1	3	2	3
E01029293	Taunton Halcon	2706	1	1	1	1	3	2	4
E01029297	Taunton Pyrland	4402	1	1	1	1	4	1	3
E01029344	Williton	5555	1	1	1	1	2	3	4

Source: ONS/IMD 2007

The individual LSOAs which define the priority areas can be examined by where they rank in relation to all 32,482 LSOAs in England for each of the domains which comprise the overall IMD. The table on the previous page notes in which national quintile they appear within each domain, where 1 represents the most deprived 20% and 5 represents the least deprived 20% in the country.

Each of the five Somerset districts is represented here by at least one LSOA. 10 of the 14 LSOAs are located within one of the three largest towns of Somerset (Taunton, Yeovil and Bridgwater). Three are in the single ward of Bridgwater Sydenham.

Domain	Priority Areas	Somerset
Income	85	5
Employment	93	8
Health and Disability	57	3
Education, Skills & Training	86	11
Barriers to housing & services	0	25
Crime	36	6
Living Environment	44	7

Table X: % of people living in 20% most deprived LSOAs in county for each IMD domain

Source: ONS/IMD 2007

More than eight out of ten people in the priority areas live in one of the worst LSOAs for Income, Employment and Education/Skills/Training deprivation. However, nobody lives in an area which experiences notable barriers to housing and services. This issue is more prevalent in the relatively rural parts of the county, such as on Exmoor or the Blackdown Hills.

About a third of households in the priority areas have dependent children – above the county and regional averages.

What especially stands out is the fact that of these households, about one in three are lone parent families, compared with a proportion of around one in five for Somerset and the South West as a whole. The national average is also lower.

		Priority Areas	Somerset	South West	England
With dependent children	Number	2,669	57,631	569,572	6,388,261
	%	31.4	27.4%	27.3%	29.5%
With dependent children and Lone Parent	Number	928	10,769	113,037	1,399,939
	%	10.9	5.1	5.4	6.5

Source: NHS 2010

A far greater proportion of people in priority areas live in a place facing income deprivation affecting children than in one where older people face such problems.

Income deprivation affecting....	Priority Areas	Somerset	South West	England
Children under 16 % living in 20% most deprived parts of England	85	5	8	20
Older People % living in 20% most deprived parts of England	45	2	8	20

Almost two in five members of the Priority Areas population have no access to either car or van; more than double the county and regional averages. This could be related to income deprivation, but may also be related to a perception that private transport is not such a priority, especially in an urban environment where there is greater accessibility to services.

	Priority Areas	Somerset	South West	England
No access to a car or van	39	18	17	24

Source: Census 2001

The Priority Areas are also characterised by the relatively high proportion of its residents claiming out-of-work benefits. Almost one in four people of working age receive at least one such benefit.

Furthermore, one in ten 16-19 year olds are neither in education, employment or training. This is also well above the Somerset average.

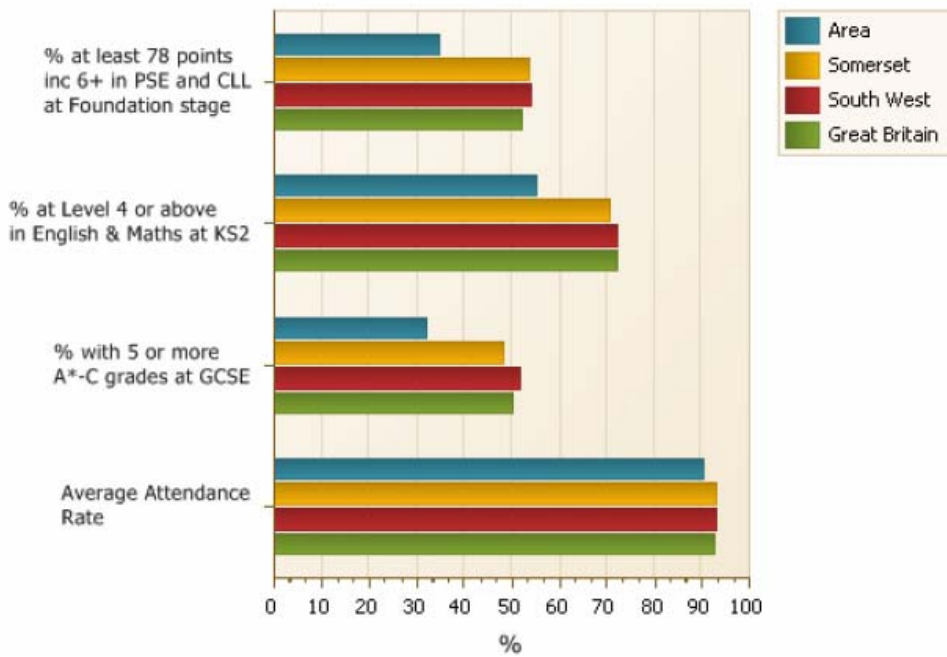
	Priority Areas	Somerset	South West	England
% claiming out-of-work benefits	23.5	10.1	n/a	n/a
% 16-19 year olds NEET	10.0	3.7	5.7	6.7

Source: NOMIS February 2010, Connexions December 2009

The table overleaf illustrates the considerable variance in educational achievement amongst children in the Priority Areas and those across the county, region and England.

Around one in three students had at least 5 GCSE passes at A* - C, including English and Maths, compared with almost half for Somerset as a whole. At Key Stage 2 there was a similar (15 point) difference in Level 4 attainment between the Priority Area pupils and those in the whole county, and the gap was wider still for achievement by young children at the Early Years Foundation Stage.

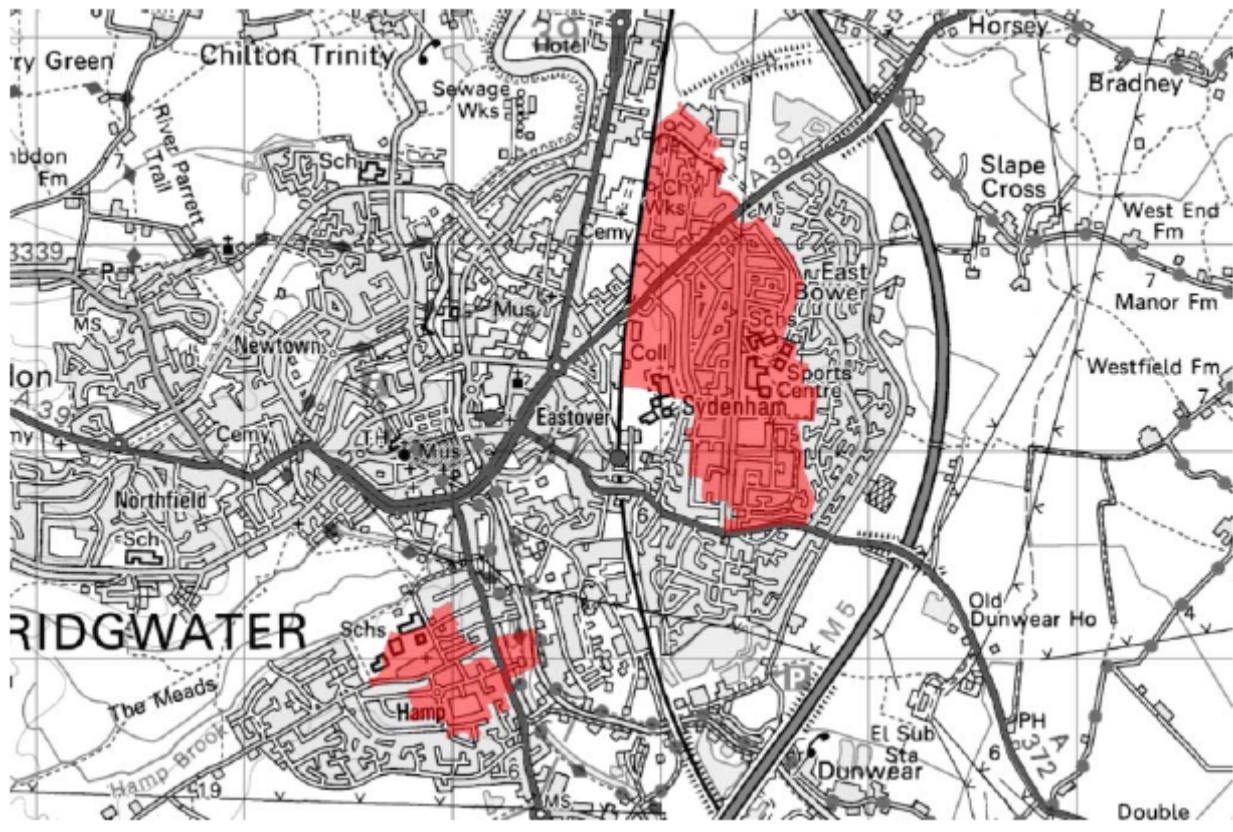
Source: SINE Community Profile: Priority Areas Report 2010



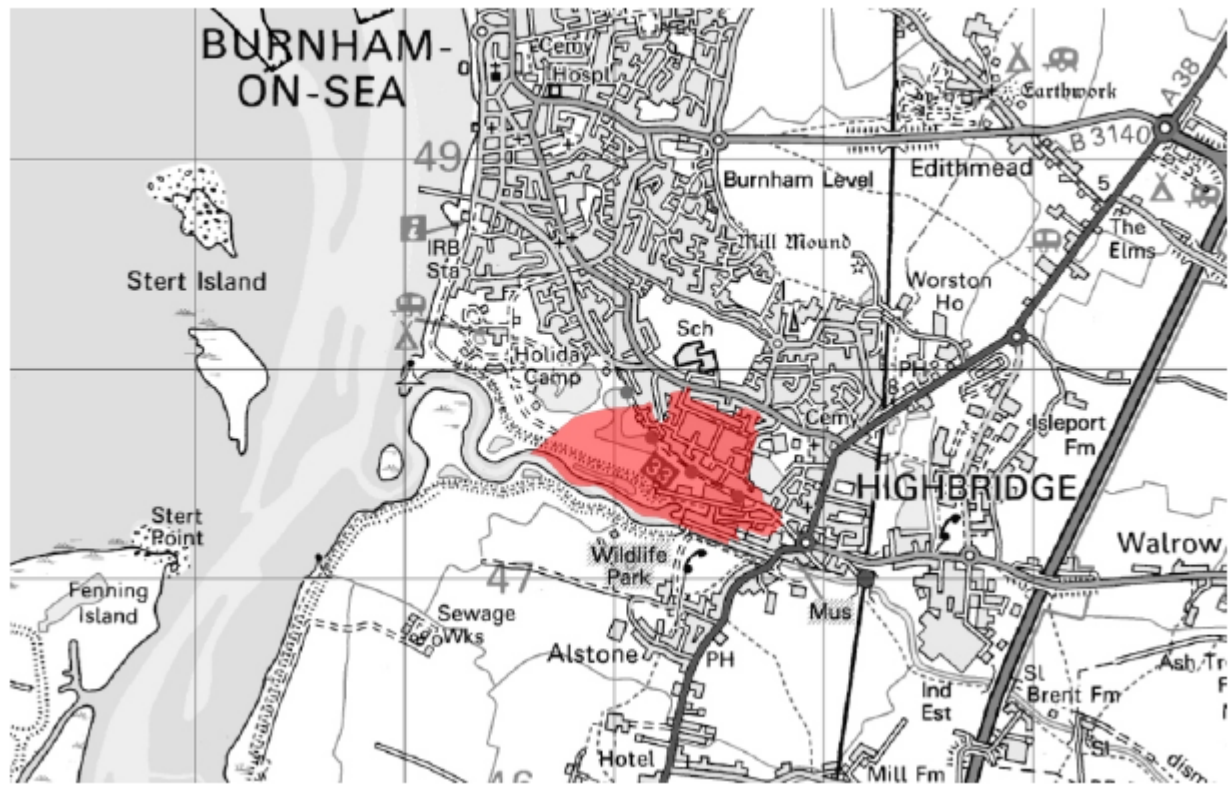
Source: Somerset County Council 2008-9

Detailed Maps of Priority Areas

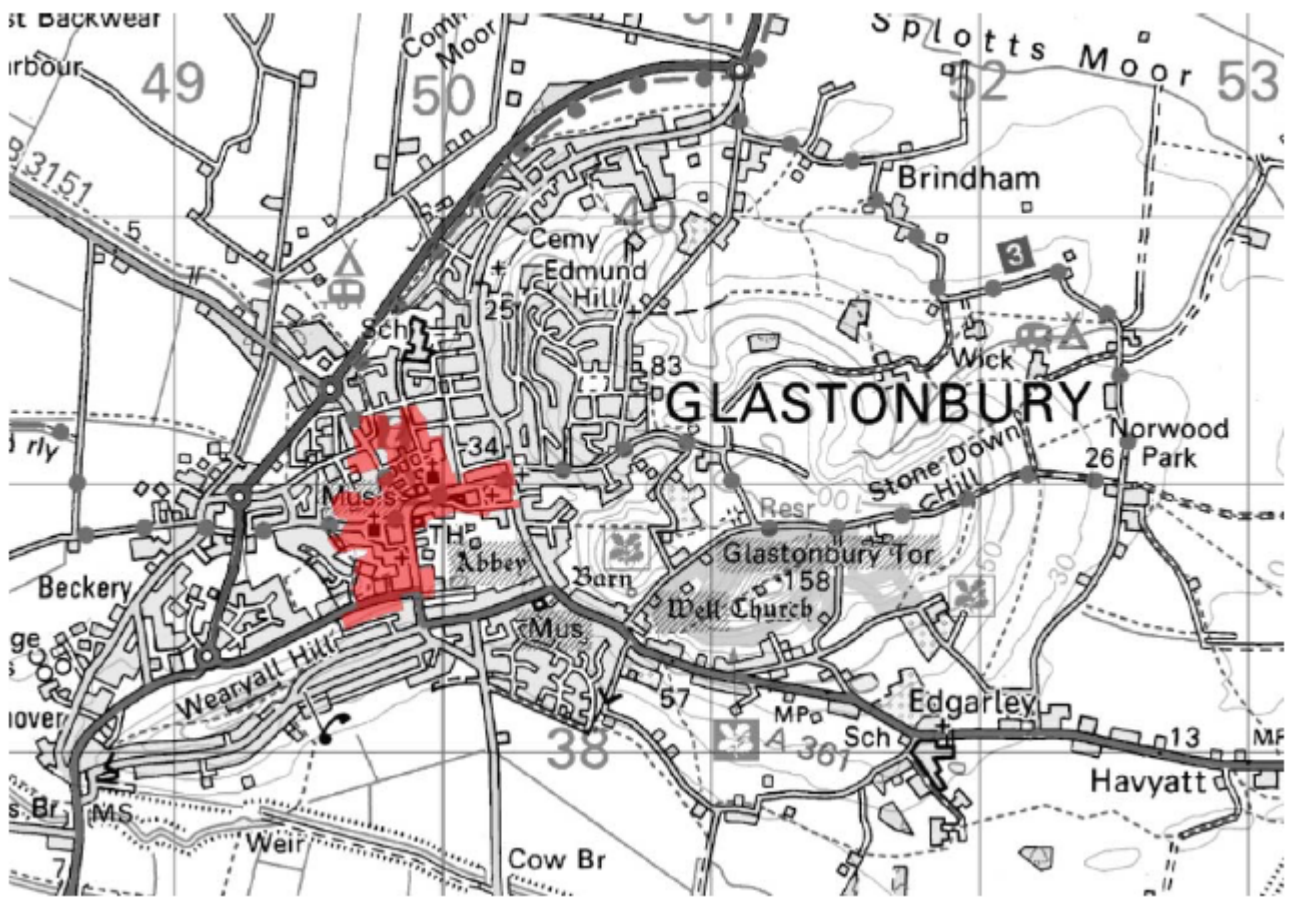
Bridgwater



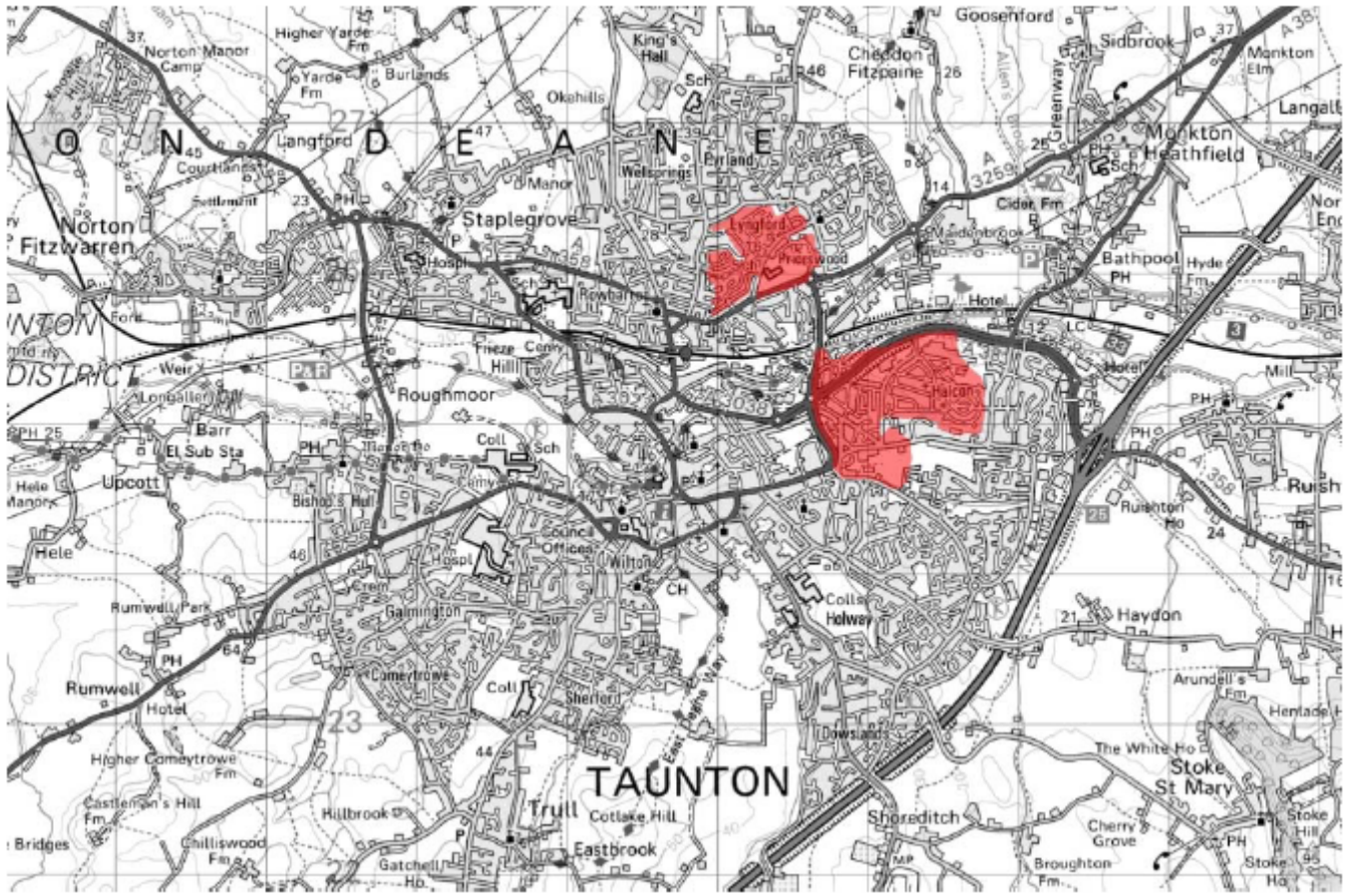
Highbridge



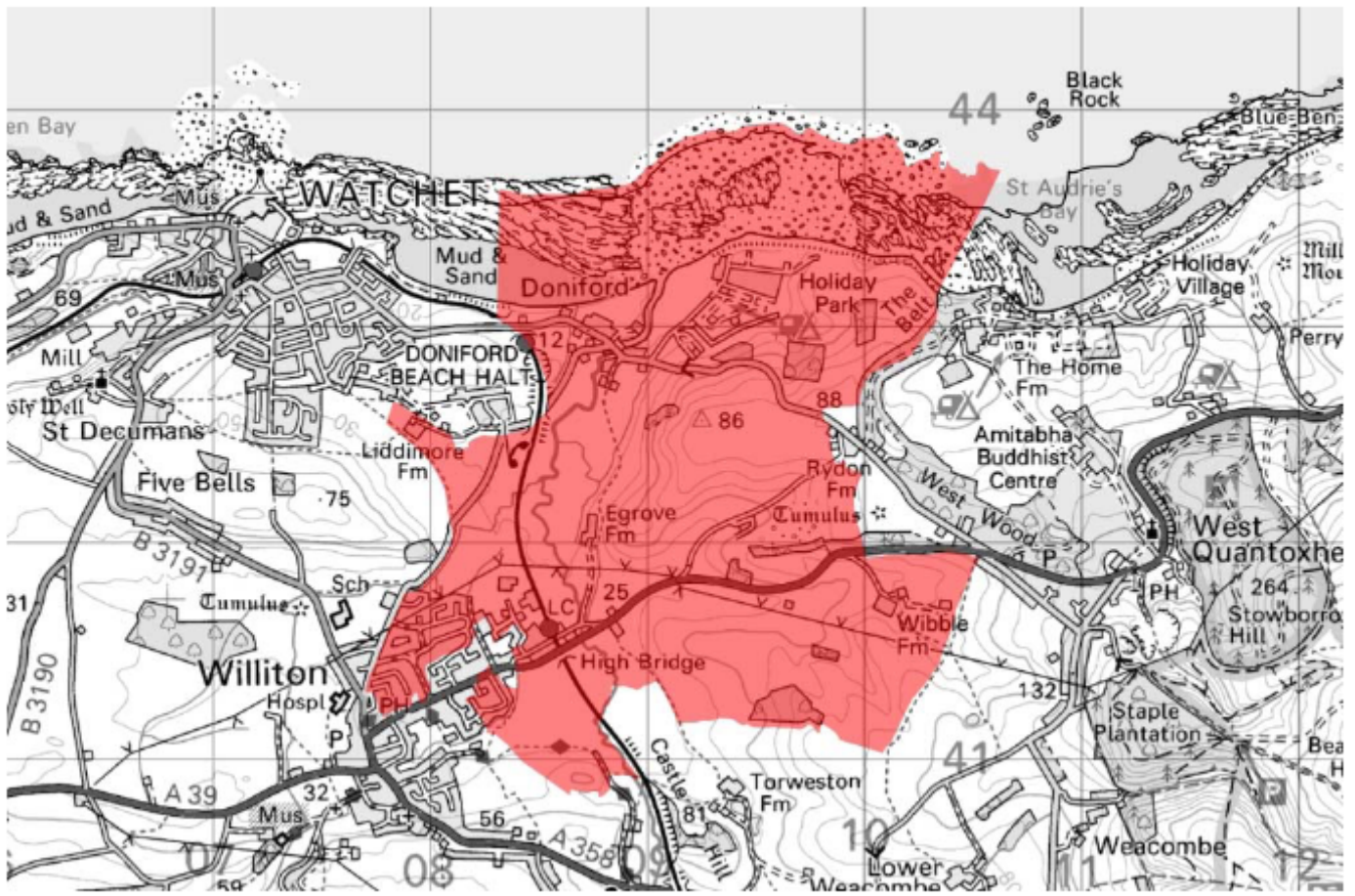
Glastonbury



Taunton



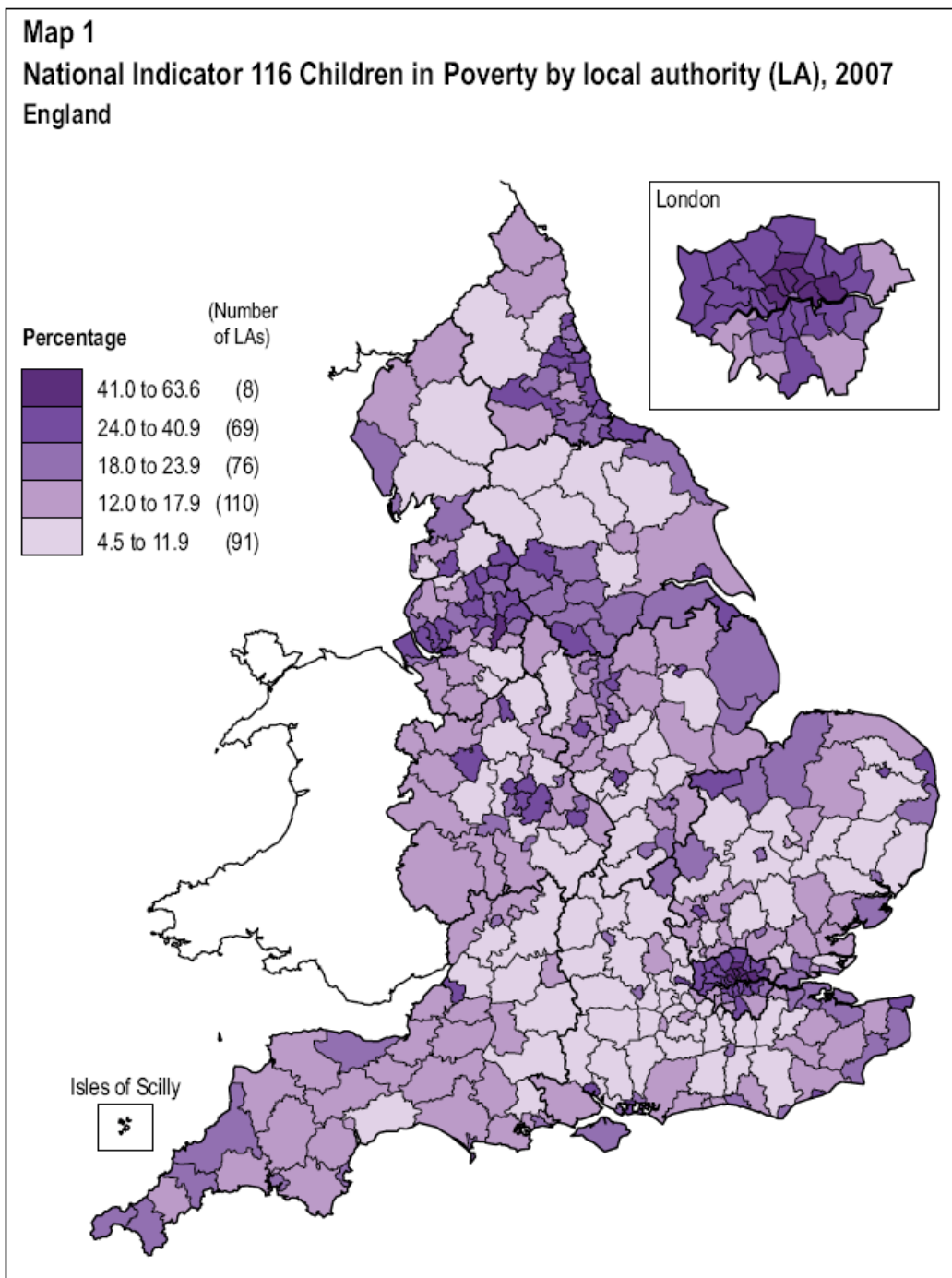
Williton



Proportion of children in poverty in Somerset (NI 116)

National Indicators (NI) are measures which have been used to assess the performance of Local Authorities and their partners across a range of services. The indicator for child poverty is NI 116, measuring the proportion of children in poverty. It is established by calculating the number of children in families in receipt of either out of work benefits, or in receipt of tax credits where their reported income is less than 60% median income, by the total number of children in the area. Previously the indicator measured the number of children living in families who claimed out of work benefits. Covering both in-work and out-of-work families, the revised indicator gives a more comprehensive measure of the level of child poverty.

The map below shows NI 116 by Local Authority based on 2007 data. Concentrations of proportions of children in poverty above 40% can be seen around London and cities in the North East, North West and West Midlands.



Source: DWP/HMRC/DfE via www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats

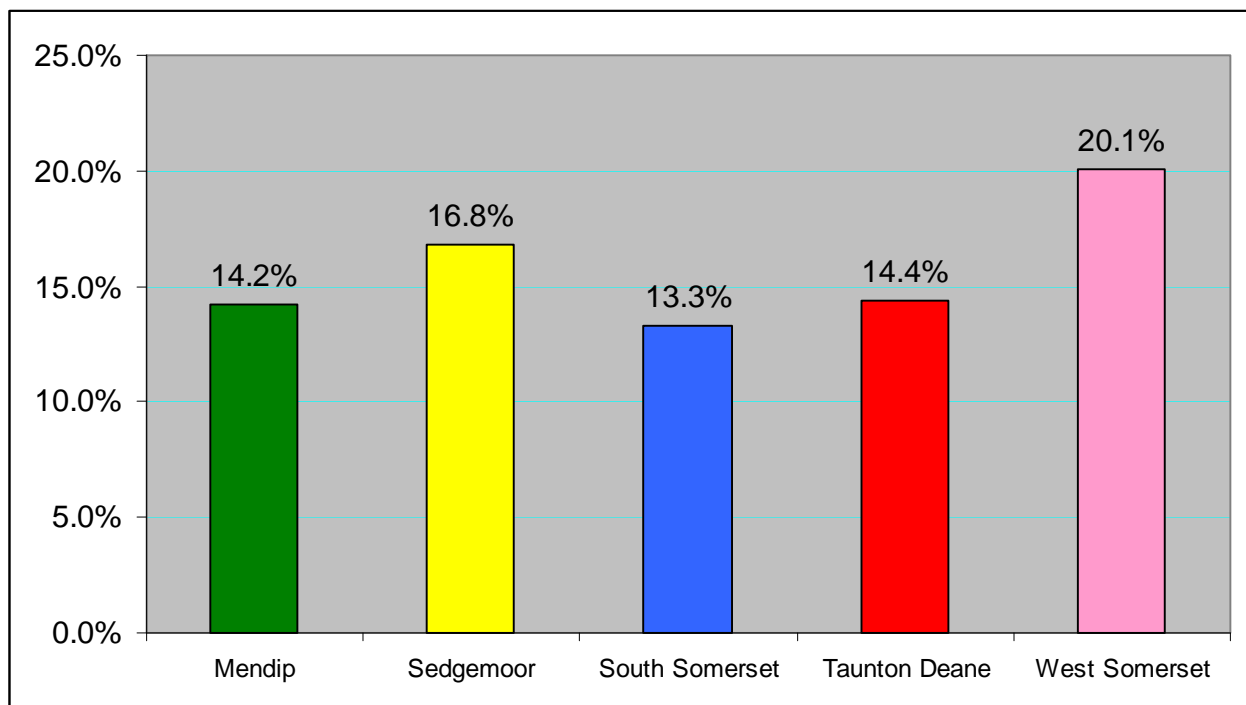
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Latest 2008 data from the Department for Work and Pensions indicated that 14.8% of children (under 16) were living in poverty within Somerset; below the England average of 21.6% and the South West average of 16.5%. The statistical neighbour average stood at 15.3%.

At district level, as shown in the graph below, rates were highest within rural West Somerset (20.1%) and within Sedgemoor (16.8%). South Somerset had the lowest percentage of children living in poverty (13.3%). *However, when considered in terms of actual numbers, this presents a different picture, where South Somerset has the highest number of children (under 16) in poverty (3,720) and West Somerset the fewest (at 995).*

At ward level, the table overleaf seeks to highlight (in amber) those wards where the proportion of children in poverty (aged under 16) is greater than the Somerset average and (in red) where the proportion of children in poverty (aged under 16) exceeds the England average. Clusters can be found within Frome, Glastonbury, Bridgwater, Highbridge, Woolavington, Chard, Yeovil, Taunton, Wellington, Alcombe, Carhampton and Withycombe, and Watchet. Bridgwater Sydenham has the highest rate of all Somerset wards, with 37.3% of under 16s living in poverty.

2008 Department for Work and Pensions data indicated that 14.8% of children (under 16) were living in poverty in Somerset, with rates highest in rural West Somerset and Sedgemoor.



Percentage of children in poverty (District level) 2008
Source: HM Revenue & Customs (Snapshot as at 31st August 2008)
http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/child_poverty.htm

	% of children in poverty (2008)	
	Under 16	All children <i>(all dependent children under 20)</i>
England	21.6%	20.9%
South West	16.5%	15.8%
Somerset	14.8%	14.2%
Mendip	14.2%	13.5%
Ammerdown	16.0%	16.1%
Ashwick, Chilcompton and Stratton	8.1%	7.9%
Beckington and Selwood	8.4%	8.9%
Butleigh and Baltonsborough	5.3%	6.4%
Chewton Mendip and Ston Easton	5.7%	4.8%
Coleford and Holcombe	9.9%	9.6%
Cranmore, Doultong and Nunney	8.3%	7.6%
Creech	8.9%	8.4%
Croscombe and Pilton	6.8%	6.2%
Frome Berkley Down	12.1%	11.1%
Frome College	10.0%	9.0%
Frome Keyford	21.6%	21.0%
Frome Market	25.1%	24.1%
Frome Oakfield	19.3%	18.7%
Frome Park	14.7%	13.7%
Glastonbury St Benedict's	24.9%	25.1%
Glastonbury St Edmund's	28.1%	26.0%
Glastonbury St John's	20.9%	21.5%
Glastonbury St Mary's	12.3%	12.5%
Moor	11.0%	10.7%
Postlebury	12.6%	11.5%
Rode and Norton St Philip	7.1%	7.0%
Rodney and Westbury	10.8%	9.8%
St Cuthbert Out North	7.9%	7.7%
Shepton East	19.8%	18.8%
Shepton West	12.8%	11.3%
Street North	19.2%	18.8%
Street South	14.8%	14.4%
Street West	6.3%	6.0%
The Pennards and Ditchat	7.8%	7.3%
Wells Central	14.4%	13.0%
Wells St Cuthbert's	15.1%	13.2%
Wells St Thomas'	11.9%	11.9%
Wookey and St Cuthbert Out West	13.8%	12.4%
Sedgemoor	16.8%	16.0%
Axbridge	11.0%	10.1%
Axe Vale	4.6%	4.3%
Berrow	12.5%	12.7%
Brent North	9.7%	9.2%
Bridgwater Bower	15.2%	14.3%
Bridgwater Eastover	22.7%	22.0%
Bridgwater Hamp	32.8%	30.9%
Bridgwater Quantock	13.0%	12.2%
Bridgwater Sydenham	37.3%	35.5%

Bridgwater Victoria	26.8%	27.1%
Burnham North	7.0%	6.6%
Burnham South	14.4%	14.9%
Cannington and Quantocks	10.1%	10.1%
Cheddar and Shipham	7.0%	6.4%
East Poldens	9.9%	9.9%
Highbridge	25.9%	24.5%
Huntspill and Pawlett	11.6%	11.6%
King's Isle	14.5%	13.5%
Knoll	5.7%	5.5%
North Petherton	8.5%	8.5%
Puriton	10.1%	9.0%
Sandford	7.3%	7.1%
Wedmore and Mark	7.4%	6.9%
West Poldens	9.1%	8.5%
Woolavington	25.7%	25.6%
South Somerset	13.3%	12.6%
Blackdown	4.2%	3.7%
Blackmoor Vale	12.9%	12.3%
Bruton	14.3%	13.8%
Brympton	7.8%	7.5%
Burrow Hill	14.5%	12.8%
Camelot	11.6%	10.6%
Cary	11.5%	10.5%
Chard Avishayes	18.2%	17.7%
Chard Combe	16.8%	15.1%
Chard Crimchard	12.1%	11.7%
Chard Holyrood	24.1%	23.8%
Chard Jocelyn	18.4%	17.7%
Coker	11.7%	11.2%
Crewkerne	15.5%	14.2%
Curry Rivel	11.2%	10.7%
Eggwood	5.0%	4.9%
Hamdon	11.4%	10.8%
Ilminster	15.5%	14.9%
Islemoor	11.2%	11.1%
Ivelchester	5.8%	5.9%
Langport and Huish	12.6%	11.1%
Martock	11.6%	10.5%
Milborne Port	12.2%	11.8%
Neroche	8.3%	8.1%
Northstone	9.1%	8.1%
Parrett	12.1%	11.0%
St Michael's	13.7%	13.2%
South Petherton	13.0%	12.6%
Tatworth and Forton	8.2%	7.8%
Tower	8.7%	8.5%
Turn Hill	7.7%	7.6%
Wessex	10.1%	9.7%
Wincanton	12.1%	11.9%
Windwhistle	14.4%	13.9%
Yeovil Central	17.6%	16.8%

Yeovil East	23.3%	22.5%
Yeovil South	10.0%	9.3%
Yeovil West	21.3%	20.2%
Yeovil Without	9.2%	8.6%
Taunton Deane	14.4%	13.8%
Bishop's Hull	14.1%	13.8%
Bishop's Lydeard	6.3%	6.6%
Blackdown	9.5%	8.8%
Bradford-on-Tone	8.3%	8.4%
Comeytrowe	8.7%	8.0%
Milverton and North Deane	6.9%	7.1%
Monument	5.8%	5.2%
Neroche	6.2%	5.7%
North Curry and Stoke St Gregory	8.3%	7.8%
Norton Fitzwarren	13.9%	13.3%
Ruishton and Creech	4.7%	4.5%
Staplegrove	12.3%	12.0%
Taunton Blackbrook and Holway	18.0%	17.2%
Taunton Eastgate	13.2%	12.5%
Taunton Fairwater	9.0%	9.5%
Taunton Halcon	34.6%	33.1%
Taunton Killams and Mountfield	9.3%	9.8%
Taunton Lyngford	23.4%	21.8%
Taunton Manor and Wilton	7.0%	6.2%
Taunton Pyrland and Rowbarton	22.2%	21.6%
Trull	2.9%	5.1%
Wellington East	18.8%	17.3%
Wellington North	19.5%	18.7%
Wellington Rockwell Green and West	13.4%	13.4%
West Monkton	9.7%	9.2%
Wiveliscombe and West Deane	12.5%	11.3%
West Somerset	20.1%	19.5%
Alcombe East	33.7%	33.1%
Alcombe West	14.1%	14.9%
Aville Vale	11.5%	10.5%
Brompton Ralph and Haddon	4.5%	4.2%
Carhampton and Withycombe	23.9%	23.1%
Crowcombe and Stogumber	19.0%	18.3%
Dulverton and Brushford	17.1%	16.2%
Dunster	16.9%	16.6%
Exmoor	14.0%	15.9%
Minehead North	19.7%	18.7%
Minehead South	18.1%	17.5%
Old Cleeve	19.8%	19.0%
Porlock and District	18.1%	18.0%
Quantock Vale	15.0%	16.2%
Quarme	15.8%	16.6%
Watchet	23.2%	22.3%
Williton	6.5%	8.0%

Proportion of children in poverty (ward level) 2008

Source: HM Revenue & Customs (Snapshot as at 31st August 2008)

http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/child_poverty.htm

Take up of Tax Credits – NI 118

Parents in work for over 16 hours per week are able to claim up to 80% of their registered childcare costs through the childcare element of the Working Tax Credit. The amount covered tapers off as the level of income increases. The purpose of this tax credit is to enable lower income families to work. Whilst the uptake of the childcare element of the working tax credit is lower in Somerset than nationally, it has increased in line with the national average. Work is ongoing to increase the uptake of the childcare element of the working tax credit through employers, schools, Children's Centres and childcare providers.

Authority	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
England	14.48 %	15.85 %	16.95 %	17.76 %	18.0%
Cornwall	12.32 %	13.58 %	14.62 %	15.66 %	15.9%
Devon	11.88 %	13.16 %	14.61 %	15.52 %	16.1%
Dorset	11.98 %	13.24 %	14.33 %	15.26 %	15.5%
East Sussex	13.33 %	14.50 %	15.77 %	16.67 %	17.1%
Gloucestershire	16.34 %	16.94 %	17.51 %	17.96 %	18.3%
Herefordshire	14.55 %	15.74 %	16.90 %	17.90 %	18.3%
Norfolk	10.33 %	11.52 %	12.76 %	13.47 %	13.7%
Shropshire	13.77 %	15.26 %	16.84 %	17.46 %	18.3%
Somerset	12.85 %	14.13 %	15.52 %	16.27 %	16.2%
Suffolk	10.85 %	12.06 %	12.79 %	13.72 %	14.1%
Wiltshire	14.92 %	16.01 %	17.25 %	18.48 %	18.7%

Source: HM Revenue and Customs

The Government acknowledged in 2002/03 that only approximately 75% of eligible families were claiming Working Tax Credit (WTC). In Somerset this may well be an underestimate, not only because the take-up of benefits is generally lower within rural areas, but also because of the county's higher than average number of people who are self-employed. While people who are self-employed are not prevented from claiming WTC, it is generally accepted that the process is more complicated.

Child Wellbeing Index

Wellbeing is generally understood as the quality of people's lives. It is a dynamic state that is enhanced when people can fulfil their personal and social goals. It is understood both in relation to objective measures (such as household income, educational resources and health status) and subjective indicators (such as happiness, perceptions of quality of life and life satisfaction). International comparisons indicate that wellbeing is negatively associated with income inequality and positive associated with spending on family benefits and services. There is no direct association between poor child wellbeing and the prevalence of single parent households. There is a close association between childhood wellbeing and positive family relationships.

The Child Wellbeing Index, published by the Department of Communities and Local Government in January 2009, represents the first attempt to create a small area index exclusively for children in England. Child wellbeing is generally represented by how children are doing in a number of different domains in their life. Produced at Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) level, it is made up of seven domains and based on the approach, structure and methodology that were used in the construction of the IMD (Index of Multiple Deprivation) 2007. However, this is an index of child wellbeing rather than an index of deprivation mainly because it contains variables that are not strictly related to deprivation.

Each of the Local Authorities and 32,482 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in England have assigned a score and rank for the Child Wellbeing Index and seven domain indices.

The Regional Picture

The South East region has the greatest proportion (34%) of its LSOAs amongst the 20% in England with the highest child wellbeing. The region with the lowest proportion is London (9%).

	Number of LSOAs in the best 20% of LSOAs in England	Number of LSOAs in the region	% of LSOAs in best quintile
East Midlands	553	2,732	20%
East of England	1,047	3,550	29%
London	426	4,765	9%
North East	178	1,656	11%
North West	731	4,459	16%
South East	1,825	5,319	34%
South West	701	3,226	22%
West Midlands	592	3,482	17%
Yorkshire & The Humber	443	3,293	13%
Total	6,496	32,482	20%

Conversely, London has the highest proportions of its LSOAs (34%) within the 20% in England with the lowest child wellbeing. The regions with the lowest proportion are the South East and the East of England (both 8%). The South West closely follows, with a proportion of 9%.

	Number of LSOAs in the worst 20% of LSOAs in England	Number of LSOAs in the region	% of LSOAs in worst quintile
East Midlands	413	2,732	15%
East of England	288	3,550	8%
London	1,598	4,765	34%
North East	429	1,656	26%
North West	1,240	4,459	28%
South East	438	5,319	8%
South West	293	3,226	9%
West Midlands	885	3,482	25%
Yorkshire & The Humber	912	3,293	28%
Total	6,496	32,482	20%

At the Local Authority level, Somerset ranks highly for all of the Child Wellbeing Index domains:

	Somerset Rank (Out of 149)
Child Wellbeing Index	37
Domains:	
• Material Wellbeing	30
• Health and Disability	41
• Education	56
• Crime	27
• Housing	68
• Environment	63
• Children in Need	30

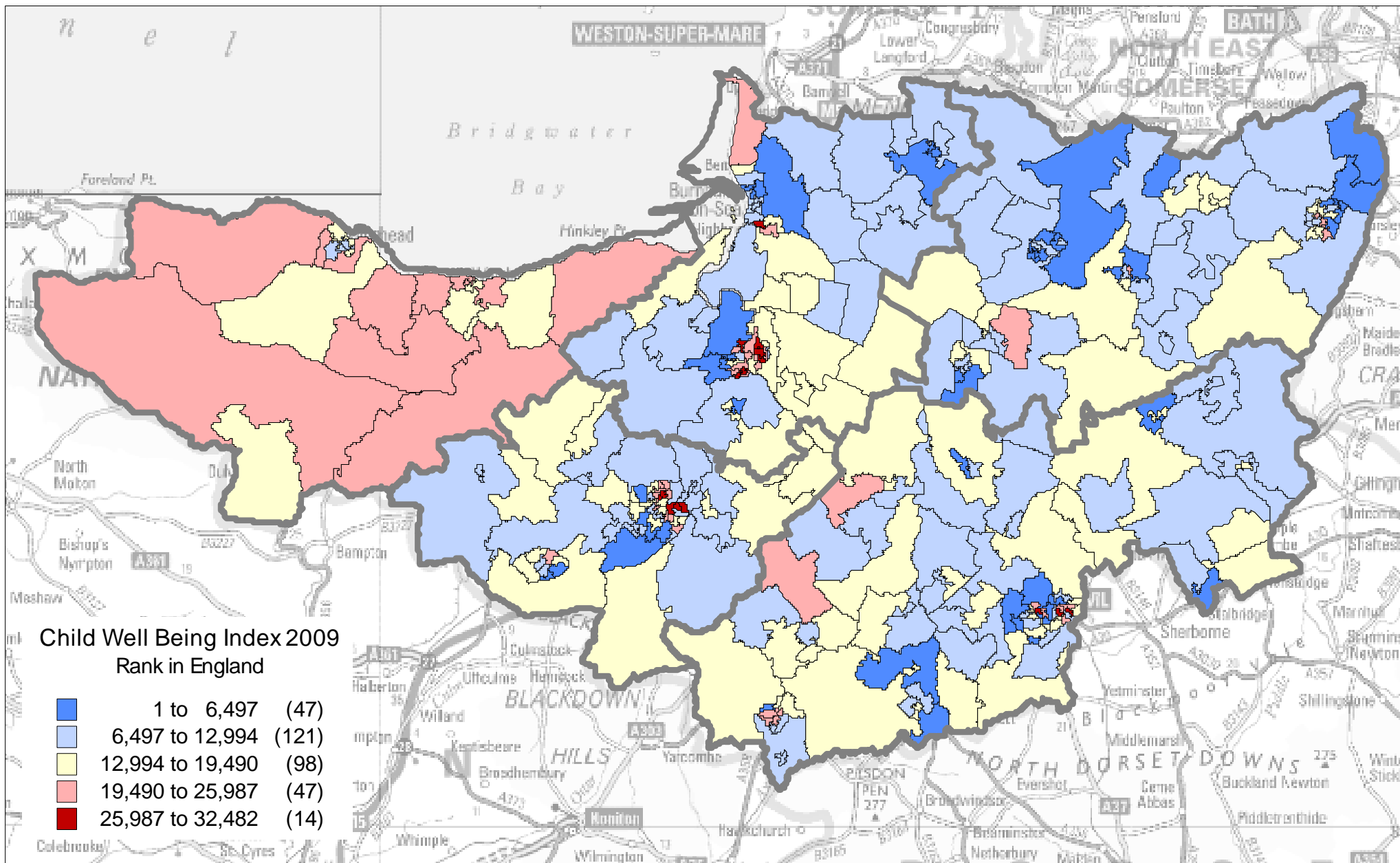
Child Wellbeing Index (Somerset Rank)
Source: Child Wellbeing Index 2009, DCLG

In the overall Child Wellbeing Index, Somerset ranks as the 37th highest Local Authority in the country out of 149 for child wellbeing.

	Mendip	Sedgemoor	South Somerset	Taunton Deane	West Somerset
Child Wellbeing Index (out of 354)	95	182	146	158	220
Domains:					
• Material Wellbeing	131	175	112	142	235
• Health and Disability	32	163	151	253	147
• Education	121	218	188	162	192
• Crime	155	142	149	101	42
• Housing	201	254	210	179	316
• Environment	94	185	127	226	227
• Children in Need	121	179	125	142	240

Child Wellbeing Index (District Rank)
Source: Child Wellbeing Index 2009, DCLG

However, the Local Authority average scores and ranks mask some significant variations in levels of child wellbeing across Somerset's local areas. There are two areas in particular that perform poorly for child wellbeing in Somerset: Sedgemoor 008C (Bridgwater Sydenham Central), which ranks amongst the lowest 4% in England, and Taunton Deane 004A (Taunton Lyngford Central), which ranks amongst the lowest 10%. In total, 14 areas rank amongst the 20% lowest in England for child wellbeing. These areas are located within Bridgwater, Taunton, Yeovil and Highbridge.



Child Wellbeing Index 2009 – LSOA Level
Source: Child Wellbeing Index 2009, DCLG

Children in Need

According to Local Authority Records, on 31st March 2010, there were a total of 3,387 Children in Need in Somerset. This figure included 432 Children Looked After (CLA) and 271 children that were the subject of a Child Protection Plan.

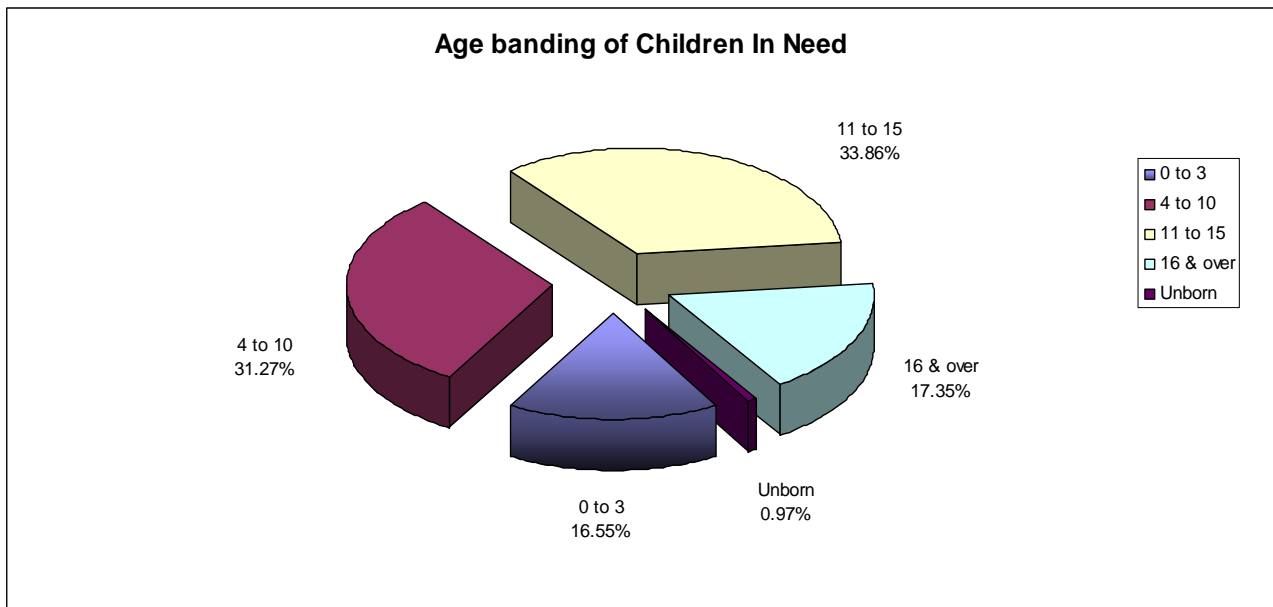
Children in Need are classified by a primary need code. According to the 2010 snapshot, by far the largest majority of children (44% / 1,489) had been classified as 'Children in Need' due to experiences of 'Abuse or Neglect'.

Need Code	Description	Number	% of Children in Need
N0	Need code yet to be determined	122	3.6%
N1	Abuse or neglect	1,489	44.0%
N2	Child's disability	559	16.5%
N3	Parental illness or disability	331	9.8%
N4	Family in acute stress	364	10.7%
N5	Family dysfunction	406	12.0%
N6	Socially unacceptable behaviour	43	1.3%
N7	Low income	0	0.0%
N8	Absent parenting	22	0.6%
N9	Cases other than Children in Need*	51	1.5%

*This code is used for children who are referred and assessed as being in need, where the original need has been met but they are still receiving support.

Ethnic Origin	Mendip	Sedgemoor	South Somerset	Taunton & West Somerset	Other	Total
White - British	481	552	600	606	329	2568
White - Other European	8	7	17	12	1	45
Mixed - Other Mixed Background	5	5	3	4	2	19
White - Other Cultural Background	5	1	1	3	2	12
Black/Black British - African	3	0	8	0	0	11
Mixed - White & Black Caribbean	5	3	0	2	1	11
White - Irish	2	0	3	1	4	10
Mixed - White & Asian	2	0	2	5	0	9
Any other ethnic group	2	3	2	0	0	7
Mixed - White & Black African	2	0	2	1	1	6
Asian/Asian British - Other Asian	4	0	0	1	0	5
Chinese	0	1	3	0	0	4
Asian/Asian British - Bangladeshi	2	1	0	0	0	3
Asian/Asian British - Indian	1	0	0	2	0	3
Black/Black British - Caribbean	0	0	1	1	0	2
Black/Black British - Other Black	0	0	1	0	0	1
Traveller/Romany/Gypsy	0	0	1	0	0	1
Not Supplied / Refused	23	29	34	68	23	177
Total	545	602	678	706	363	2894

As the table above serves to show, 89% of Children in Need in Somerset are 'White British', 2% 'White Other', 2% 'Mixed' and 1% 'Asian/Asian British'.



The majority of children in need within Somerset fall within the 11-15 age band, followed by those aged 4-10.

Free School Meals

Children and young people eligible for free school meals are often used as a proxy measure for deprivation or low family income. Free school meals are offered to children of families who are in receipt of one of the following support payments:

- Income Support (IS);
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- Employment Support Allowance (Income Related) (ESA(IR));
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit;
- Child Tax Credit (CTC) providing they do not also receive Working Tax Credit (WTC) and have an annual income as assessed by the Inland Revenue of less than £16,190.

Half of all the children in primary and nursery schools in England who are eligible for free school meals are concentrated in a fifth of the schools.

Source: <http://www.poverty.org.uk/19/index.shtml>

Within Somerset

10.29% (6,715 out of 67,134 pupils on the school roll) of Somerset's pupils are claiming Free School Meals (AY 2009/10) compared to 8.65% the previous academic year.

This is the highest percentage claiming as of 2003/04 academic year, across all schools. It is believed that more pupils are eligible for free school meals but have not made a claim and are therefore not counted in the statistic.

Academic Year	Primary		Middle & Secondary		Special		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
2003/04	3,942	10.38	2,712	8.54	138	28.05	6,792	9.67
2004/05	3,599	9.57	2,623	8.31	115	24.84	6,337	9.10
2005/06	2,943	8.00	2,498	7.96	97	23.83	5,538	8.08
2006/07	2,931	8.12	2,430	7.86	106	26.11	5,467	8.11
2007/08	2,939	8.17	2,245	7.43	103	25.50	5,287	7.94
2008/09	3,193	9.00	2,368	7.95	116	28.09	5,677	8.65
2009/10	3,875	10.95	2,714	9.22	126	30.96	6,715	10.29

Notes:

1. The above data excludes pupils in PRUs;
2. The figures for primary schools include pupils in nursery classes;
3. Dually registered pupils are recorded at their main registered base only;
4. Figures for secondary and special schools *exclude* pupils in Years 12 and above;
5. Pupils recorded in the DCSF School Census as being eligible for FSM includes only those pupils who have actually indicated that they wish to receive a free meal. It is widely believed that other pupils would be eligible if they were to make a claim.

Number and % of Pupils Eligible and Claiming Free School Meals (2003/04 – 2009/10)

Source: DFES/DCSF PLASC/School Census January 2004 – 2010

One fifth of Somerset pupils claiming Free School Meals are located in just 4% of Somerset schools

Analysis of levels of poverty alongside take-up of free schools meals within Somerset suggest that there may be a significant number of children eligible for free school meals who are not claiming them.

For each school catchment area, the percentage of postcodes in the lowest deciles of the Mosaic (Experian) wealth / poverty score was determined. From this, it was possible to estimate how many pupils in the school might be eligible for free school meals. This was then compared to records of how many pupils in each school were already claiming free school meals, in order to highlight where there was low take-up. If a school had a high proportion of postcodes in impoverished areas, there should have been an equally high proportion of children in the school having free meals. However, one complicating factor is that many families in the poorest areas would be claiming Working Tax Credit, which means the family is then not eligible for Free School Meals, making direct correlations difficult.

This analysis implied that approximately two thirds of schools had pupils which were eligible for free school meals but were not claiming them, and that there are potentially many thousands more children who might also be eligible.

Deprivation and Health

Poor health outcomes are one of the consequences of a low income. Even at a young age, health inequalities by class or income are obvious.

Nationally, babies born to parents from manual social backgrounds were more likely to have a low birth weight; around 7.5% of babies in this class had low birth weights in 2007 compared to around 6% of babies from non-manual social backgrounds. However, the rates in 2007 were lower than those in 2002 with the manual class showing a greater improvement in the rates than the non-manual, closing this gap slightly. The reason this matters is that low birth-weight is linked to high infant mortality – two-thirds of all deaths among babies under the age of 12 months were among those with a low birth weight.

Infant mortality rates were down by a fifth on a decade ago. In 2007, around five infants per 1,000 live births died before the age of one in social classes 5-8. The figure for social classes 1-4 was around four per 1,000. This means that infant deaths were 50% more common among those from manual backgrounds as those from non-manual backgrounds.

Source: Monitoring poverty and social exclusion 2009, Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Since 1995, Somerset has averaged 34 perinatal deaths each year, ranging from 29 (2002) to 45 (1997). Somerset has a perinatal mortality rate (6.4 per 1,000 births in 2004-06) below both the South West rate of 6.9 and the national rate of 8.0.

Since 1995, Somerset has averaged 22 infant deaths a year, ranging from 17 (2006) to 26 (2001). The county has an infant mortality rate (4.3 per 1,000 live births 2004-06) very similar to that of the South West (4.4) and below that of the national rate (5.0).

Source: Strategy to Reduce Health and Social Inequalities in Somerset (2010-2015)

The following key messages have been sourced from the Somerset Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (October 2008), and establish some of the links between deprivation and health:

- As with many other health conditions, dental decay tends to be more severe in children experiencing higher levels of deprivation. The most recent Somerset dental survey was for five year old children in 2008. The results of this survey show the mean number of teeth affected by decay to be 1.15, close to the national average for decayed, missing or filled teeth. The average figures hide variations in decay levels across Somerset ranging from 0.98 (Taunton Deane) to 1.64 (West Somerset). Similarly, the proportion of five year old children with no experience of dental decay ranges from 71% in Taunton Deane to 58% in West Somerset.
- Towns with the highest numbers of drug users accessing treatment services correspond with the areas of highest deprivation.
- Indicators of social deprivation, such as unemployment and homelessness, are associated with higher levels of mental ill health.
- Areas with higher smoking prevalence broadly relates to communities where more people are classified as being within routine and manual working groups. This also relates to areas where people are likely to be living in relative deprivation.
- Deaths from cardiovascular disease (under the age of 75 years) in Somerset shows a strong association with income deprivation, with the most deprived quintile of wards experiencing deaths 47% higher when compared with wards in the rest of the county.
- Breast screening appears to increase as deprivation decreases.
- Poor sexual health is linked to discrimination, poverty and deprivation. The most vulnerable groups in society experience the poorest sexual health.
- There is a suggestion of a gradient across the deprivation quintiles for most (but not all) health conditions. The clearest gradients are for CHD (Coronary Heart Disease) and Diabetes:

Condition	Quintile 1 (most deprived)	Quintile 2	Quintile 3	Quintile 4	Quintile 5 (least deprived)
	<i>Rates per 1,000</i>				
Hypertension	147.4	157.2	151.5	149.7	141.4
Asthma	60.7	65.2	59.5	64.7	63.2
COPD *	18.4	16.7	14.1	13.1	13.4
Mental Health	7.2	6.8	6.1	5.5	5.6
Thyroid	32.6	30.0	30.0	29.2	26.9
Heart failure	10.0	11.3	8.9	9.1	10.2
Stroke (TIA)	21.7	21.7	21.6	20.5	18.6
CHD	44.5	40.9	39.3	37.6	36.2
Atrial Fibrillation	17.7	18.2	17.7	18.8	17.0
Dementia	3.9	5.3	4.7	3.9	4.4
Epilepsy (18+ yrs)	9.6	8.0	8.4	7.1	6.5
Diabetes (17+ yrs)	49.5	46.3	45.0	43.8	40.6
Chronic Kidney Disease (18+ yrs)	40.6	42.1	44.6	43.0	28.7

Learning Disabilities (18+ yrs)	4.4	5.1	2.3	2.5	2.9
Obesity (16+ yrs)	100.6	81.8	82.9	83.9	69.8

- *Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease*

Admissions by disease group

For the top 10 groups, the rates per 1,000 across deprivation quintiles are shown below. In general, the highest rate is found in the most deprived quintile:

ICD (International Classification of Diseases)	Quintile 1 (most deprived)	Quintile 2	Quintile 3	Quintile 4	Quintile 5 (least deprived)
Symptoms and signs	31.0	24.5	21.4	21.5	21.5
Digestive	25.0	23.6	22.5	21.4	22.6
Malignant Neoplasms	19.9	20.4	16.6	21.3	18.6
Pregnancy	30.1	24.1	21.4	22.9	21.7
Musculoskeletal	17.0	16.2	14.3	13.3	15.3
Other Factors	24.3	21.2	20.5	20.9	21.5
Circulatory	15.0	12.8	11.2	11.1	11.5
Injury & poisoning	17.4	15.9	13.8	14.3	13.1
Genitourinary	12.3	11.5	9.9	10.9	10.8
Respiratory	14.0	10.9	9.4	9.7	9.7

In addition, the risk of problematic substance misuse is particularly high for vulnerable young people and those at highest risk are likely to be concentrated in areas experiencing high levels of deprivation.

Life expectancy at birth

	Males		Females	
	At birth	At age 65	At birth	At age 65
United Kingdom	77.9	17.8	82.0	20.4
England	78.3	18.0	82.3	20.6
South West	79.2	18.6	83.3	21.3
Somerset	79.4	18.7	83.5	21.5
Mendip	79.8	19.2	83.6	21.6
Sedgemoor	78.5	18.2	83.4	21.4
South Somerset	80.0	18.9	84.0	21.7
Taunton Deane	78.9	18.3	82.5	20.6
West Somerset	79.8	19.7	84.0	22.6

Life expectancy at birth and at age 65 (2007-2009)

Source: Office for National Statistics, October 2010

Life expectancy figures nationally, regionally and at local area level are presented above.

Female life expectancy (at birth) in the county ranges from 82.5 (Taunton Deane) to 84 (South Somerset and West Somerset). All districts are above the England average and all bar Taunton Deane are above the South West average. Male life expectancy in Somerset ranges from 78.5 (Sedgemoor) to 80 (South Somerset). At a District level, all areas are above the England average of 78.3. However Taunton Deane and Sedgemoor score below the South West regional average of 79.2.

There is a strong association with life expectancy and deprivation. The association is stronger in men than it is for women:

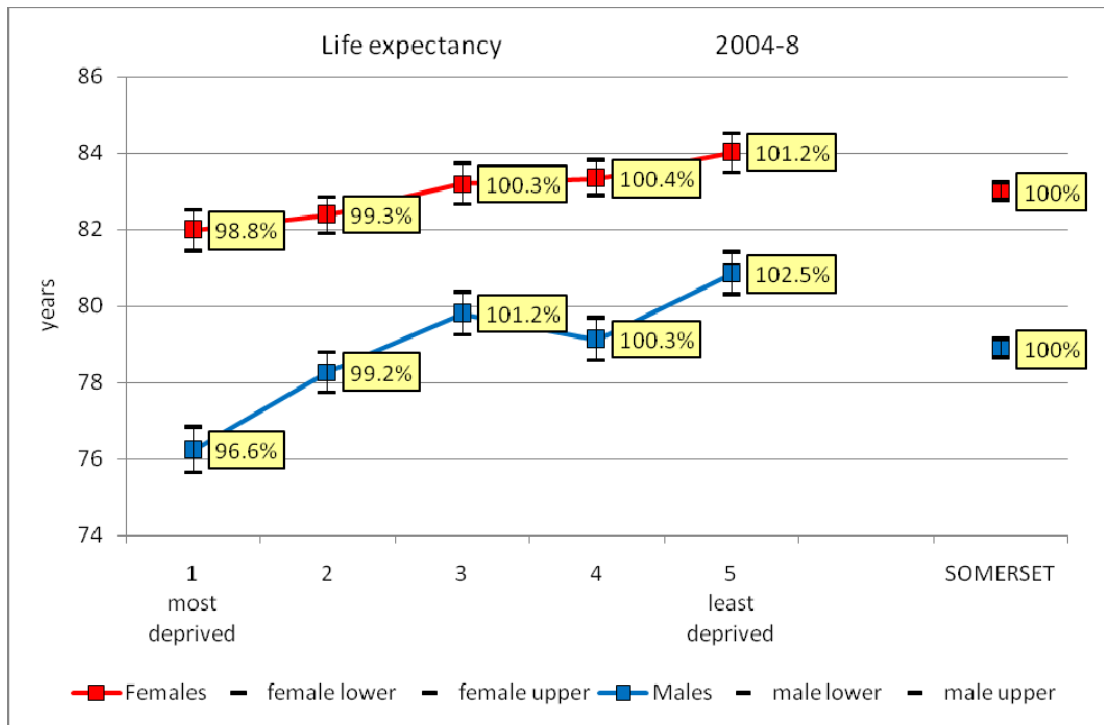


Figure X: Life expectancy at birth by deprivation quintile
Source: Health and Social Inequalities in Somerset Report 2010

2. Somerset Household Information

Based on 2001 Census data, there are 210,587 households within Somerset – the majority of which are to be found in South Somerset.

	All households
England	20,451,427
South West	2,085,984
Somerset	210,587
Mendip	42,881
Sedgemoor	44,432
South Somerset	63,679
Taunton Deane	43,880
West Somerset	15,625

All households
Source: Census (2001)

Of these Somerset households, 27.4% have dependent children (aged 0 -18).

	Households with Dependent Children: All ages	
	Count	Percentage
England	6,023,856	29.45%
South West	569,670	27.31%
Somerset	57,632	27.37%
Mendip	12,493	29.13%
Sedgemoor	12,478	28.08%
South Somerset	17,313	27.15%
Taunton Deane	11,952	27.24%
West Somerset	3,396	21.73%

Households with Dependent Children (all ages)
Source: Census (2001)

Lone Parents

Children of lone parents are at greater risk of living in poverty than children in couple families. Before housing costs over a third (35%; 50% after housing costs) of children living in lone parent families are poor, compared with less than a fifth (18%) of children in couple families. Lone parents often face the greatest need for childcare if they are unable to access work.

Taunton Deane has the highest proportion of lone parent households and West Somerset has the lowest. 88% of lone parent households in Somerset are headed by a woman.

At the 2001 Census, lone parents in Somerset were broadly more likely to be in work than the national average. This was particularly true of female lone parents; where over twice as many were in part time employment than the national average. Somerset has more male lone parents (12%) than the national average (9.5%). Male lone parents in the county are also more likely to be in full or part-time employment than was the case nationally.

	Lone Parent Households: with dependent children	
	Count	Percentage
England	-	-
South West	-	-
Somerset	10,739	5.10%
Mendip	2,399	5.59%
Sedgemoor	2,291	5.16%
South Somerset	2,857	4.48%
Taunton Deane	2,522	5.75%
West Somerset	670	4.29%

Lone Parent Households: with dependent children
Source: Census (2001)

	Mendip	Sedgemoor	South Somerset	Taunton Deane	West Somerset	Somerset
Total Male Lone Parent Households	307	253	359	288	99	1,306 (12%)
Male Lone Parent in FT employment	182 (59%)	161 (64%)	250 (70%)	170 (59%)	48 (49%)	811 (62%)
Male Lone Parent in PT employment	28 (9%)	28 (11%)	30 (8%)	21 (7%)	9 (9%)	116 (9%)
Male Lone Parent unemployed	116 (38%)	64 (25%)	79 (22%)	97 (34%)	42 (42%)	379 (29%)
Total Female Lone Parent Households	2,092	2,038	2,498	2,234	571	9,433 (88%)
Female Lone Parent in FT employment	471 (23%)	363 (18%)	574 (23%)	555 (25%)	117 (20%)	2,080 (22%)
Female Lone Parent in PT employment	713 (34%)	673 (33%)	937 (38%)	794 (36%)	189 (33%)	3,306 (35%)
Female Lone Parent unemployed	908 (43%)	1,002 (49%)	987 (39%)	885 (39%)	265 (47%)	4,047 (43%)

Lone Parent Households and Employment

Source: Census (2001)

At the 2001 Census, there were 57,632 households with dependent children of all ages of which 10,739 (18.6%) were lone parent households. The table above indicates that an average of 41.2% of lone parents are unemployed.

	Children in IS / JSA families <i>(Number of children in receipt of Income Support of income-based Jobseekers Allowance)</i>	
	Couple	Lone Parent
England	421,560	1,339,430
South West	26,845	92,135
Somerset	2,560	7,805
Mendip	445	1,650
Sedgemoor	695	1,890
South Somerset	705	1,895
Taunton Deane	480	1,780
West Somerset	235	595

Children in Income Support/Jobseekers Allowance Families

Source: HM Revenue & Customs (Snapshot 31st August 2007)

3. Housing in Somerset

Access to adequate housing is an important element of a strategy to address child poverty. Housing issues including poor property condition, overcrowding, living in temporary accommodation and housing related debt can all act as contributing factors to high levels of child poverty.

Affordable housing continues to be one of Somerset's biggest challenges. The 2009 Comprehensive Area Assessment for Somerset highlighted housing as a significant concern for the county, revealing that 'there is a serious shortage of homes which Somerset people can afford'. The rises in house prices over the last few years have made it difficult for first time buyers and for those on low incomes to afford property. Current economic conditions increase the likelihood that existing homeowners will have economic difficulties.

In the Local Future's 'State of the County' Audit (undertaken in 2010), housing was considered in terms of affordability (assessed on the basis of the ratio between average earnings and average house prices), tenure and condition.

It highlights that housing in Somerset is not very affordable, ranking 43rd out of 49 sub regions in England and Wales (1st being the most affordable).

Average house prices

Between April and June 2010, Somerset's average house price was £212,400 – below the South West average of £225,700 and England's average of £234,500.

Average prices in the Districts ranged from £199,000 in Sedgemoor to £227,100 in West Somerset.

Despite house prices being relatively low in Somerset there is still an issue of affordability, especially for first-time buyers. The ratio of entry-level house prices to earnings is high (7.7 to 1 in Somerset, compared to 6.3 to 1 in England).

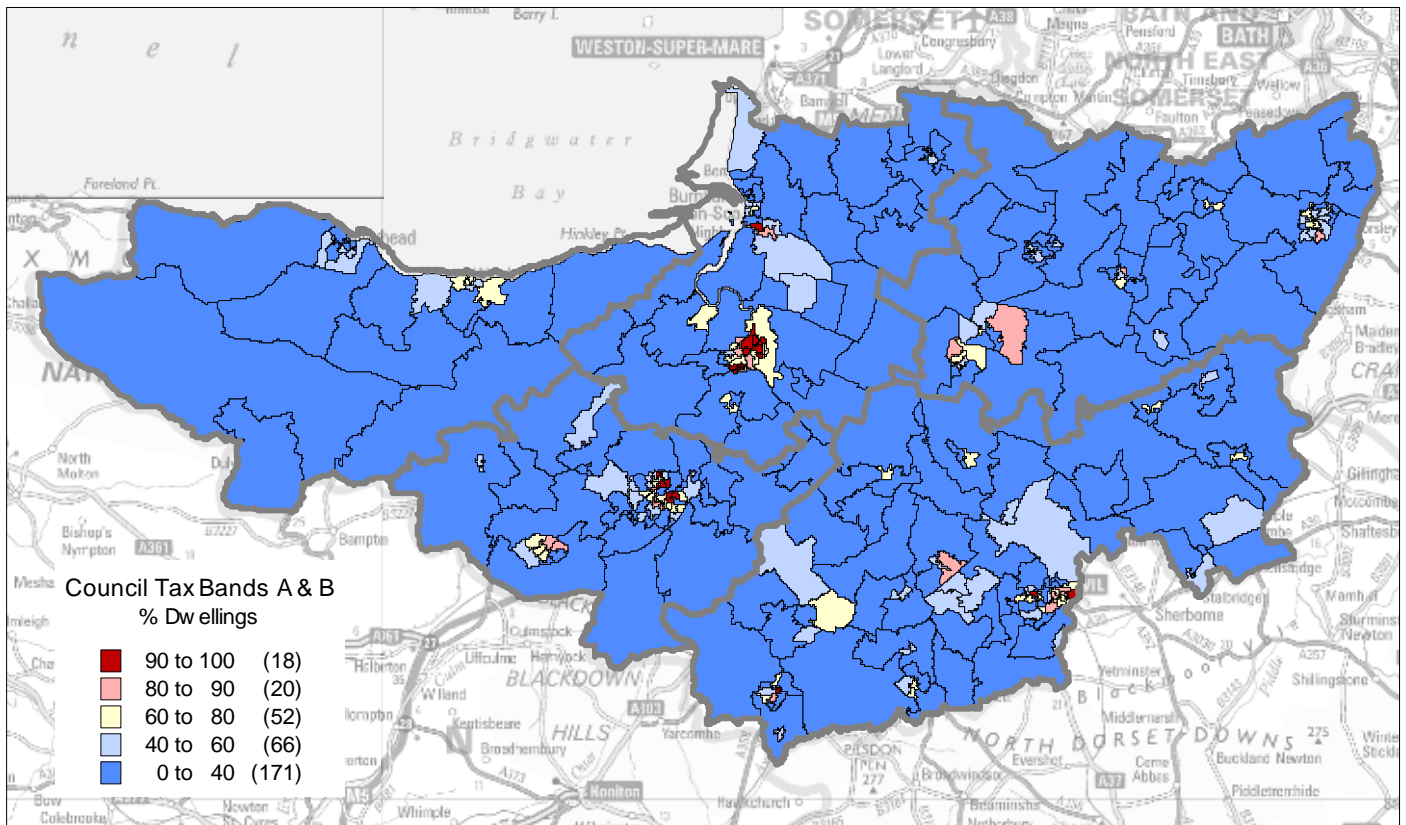
Source: Somerset: Our County 2010, Somerset Intelligence Network

Council Tax Valuation Banding

Studies have shown that Council Tax Valuation Banding can be used as a marker for socio-economic status, and health and lifestyle outcomes. One study has demonstrated that people living in the lower level Council Tax Bands A and B are less likely to live in owner-occupied homes and more likely to experience multiple forms of deprivation compared to those living in higher Council Tax Bands (Beale et al. 2000). Another study by Fone et al. (2006) has demonstrated significant trends in odds ratios across the Council Tax Valuation Banding categories for a range of health outcomes; most marked for smoking and mental and physical health status.

In 2007, 43.5% of dwellings in Somerset were in Council Tax Bands A and B, which is similar to the regional and national average. Analysis at the small area level, however, reveals that there is considerable variation in levels of Council Tax Band A and B dwellings across the county (see figure overleaf).

There are 18 LSOAs within the county where over 90% of the dwellings are in the lower Council Tax Bands. The majority of these areas are located within the main urban settlements of Bridgwater, Taunton and Yeovil.



% of Somerset Dwellings in Council Tax Bands A & B (LSOAs)

Source: Local Area Profile for the Young People's Substance Misuse Needs Assessment, 2009

March 2008	Mendip	Sedgemoor	South Somerset	Taunton Deane	West Somerset	England
Total Number of Dwellings (count)	47,148	49,282	71,083	47,661	17,194	22,481,264
Council Tax Band A Dwellings (%)	13.95	24.47	13.69	14.33	15.69	25.04
Council Tax Band B Dwellings (%)	26.05	22.86	29.73	31.26	21.83	19.44
Council Tax Band C Dwellings (%)	24.43	20.80	21.03	19.21	21.27	21.69
Council Tax Band D Dwellings (%)	14.54	14.81	14.66	14.35	19.40	15.26
Council Tax Band E Dwellings (%)	11.21	9.32	12.13	11.05	10.42	9.46
Council Tax Band F Dwellings (%)	6.21	4.91	6.17	6.62	7.35	5.00
Council Tax Band G Dwellings (%)	3.35	2.72	2.36	2.99	3.82	3.54
Council Tax Band H Dwellings (%)	0.25	0.12	0.23	0.19	0.23	0.56

District Dwellings by Council Tax Band (March 2008)

Source: ONS Neighbourhood Statistics

Social Housing

Children growing up in social housing (either Local Authority or housing associations) face a high risk of being poor. 49% of children in Local Authority accommodation are poor before housing costs, rising to 58% after housing costs. Poor children in social housing are also a large proportion of all poor children. Though the numbers in private rented accommodation are smaller, these children also face a high risk of poverty. Source: www.childpovertytoolkit.org.uk

	All households	Social Rented	Social Rented from Council	Social Rented: Other Social Rented
England	20,451,427	3,940,728	2,702,482	1,238,246
South West	2,085,984	282,265	161,444	120,821
Somerset	210,587	29,100	15,702	13,398
Mendip	42,881	17,220	334	5,249
Sedgemoor	44,432	17,992	278	5,549
South Somerset	63,679	24,631	315	8,853
Taunton Deane	43,880	16,708	223	7,221
West Somerset	15,625	4,023	51	2,228

Households in Social Rented Accommodation

Source: Census (2001)

The implications of the rise in households renting properties on childcare are dependent on the cost of renting versus the cost of a mortgage and how this affects the disposable income of the household. The recent economic downturn has meant an increase in the rental market as fewer mortgages are being approved. It also means that families may be 'trapped' in unsuitable accommodation by negative equity until the housing market recovers.

Source: Childcare Sufficiency Statement

Fuel Poverty

Fuel poverty occurs when a household needs to spend 10% or more of their income on fuel to meet satisfactory temperature standards and pay for other energy services, such as key meters. Between 2003 and 2006, fuel poverty grew by a factor of 3.3 in the social housing sector and 2.1 among owner-occupiers with a mortgage. As energy costs are predicted to rise continuously, the proportion of households in fuel poverty will increase. Improving local fuel resilience goes along with sustainable construction of all new builds to reduce fuel poverty.

The overlap between Fuel Poverty and other forms of deprivation

Income poverty

- In 2005 in England, most of the 1.5 million households in fuel poverty were also in income poverty. This means that policies to reduce income poverty would have a direct impact on most households in fuel poverty.

Deprivation of area

- Whilst households in deprived areas of England are more likely to be in fuel poverty than households in other areas, the differences are only slight (in 2005, 8% in deprived areas compared with 7% in areas of average deprivation), and the vast majority of households in deprived areas are not in fuel poverty.

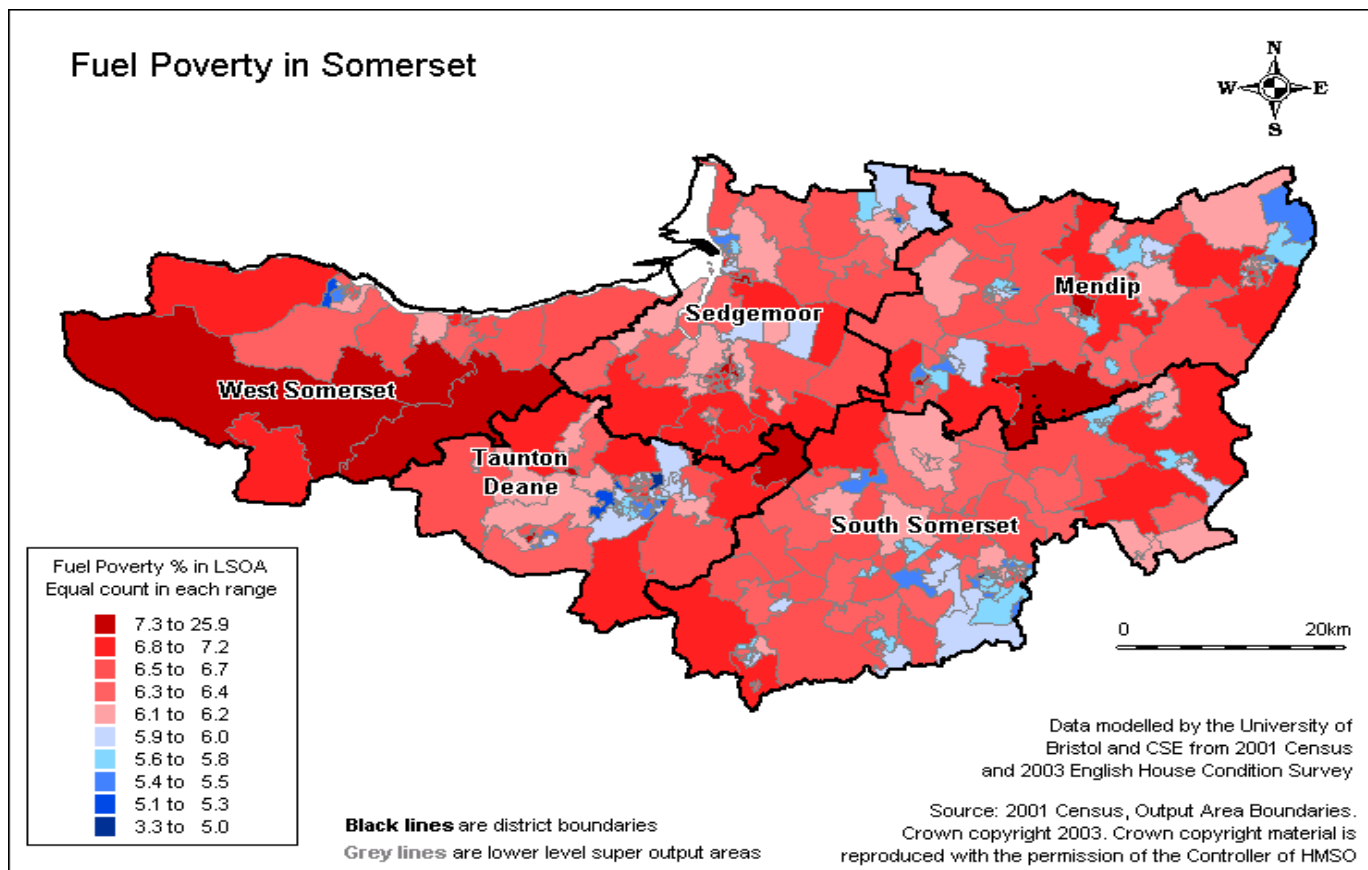
Single-person households

- Single-person households in England are much more likely to be in fuel poverty than couples or larger families, their risk being twice as high as the next highest household type, lone parents (in 2005, 15% compared with 7%).

Rural households

- Among those in income poverty, those in rural areas are much more likely to be in fuel poverty than those in either urban or suburban areas (in 2005, 44% in rural compared with 28% in suburban and 26% in urban). Analysis suggests that the reason for this is that they tend to live in larger and less fuel-efficient properties.

Source: Cold and Poor: An analysis of the link between fuel poverty and low income, New Policy Institute, 2008



Fuel Poverty in Somerset

Source: www.fuelpovertyindicator.org.uk

The map of Somerset on the previous page shows areas of lower fuel poverty in blue, such as Weston-super-Mare (top), Frome (right), Yeovil (bottom) and Taunton (left). West Somerset – which is largely off the gas network and contains many solid-walled ‘hard to heat’ homes – shows up in dark red indicating a higher rate of fuel poverty. Around 3 in 5 households are not connected to mains gas.

	No. fuel poor households	% of households fuel poor	No. households
Somerset	24,370	11.8%	206,563
Mendip	5,841	12.9%	45,313
Sedgemoor	5,601	11.9%	46,972
South Somerset	8,295	12.2%	68,020
Taunton Deane	4,633	10.0%	46,258
West Somerset	2,859	18.1%	15,793

Number of fuel poor households

Source: Department of Energy and Climate Change 2006

4. Working and Earning Patterns in Somerset

Exploration of working and earning patterns are fundamental when considering child poverty, as these are vital to the county's prosperity. Where large numbers of parents have few skills and qualifications, or where jobs are insecure and poorly paid, families are likely to be trapped in lives of low income and minimal hope. Higher levels of employment, coupled with higher-quality jobs, are therefore required to reduce the incidence of workless households and in-work poverty, both of which contribute significantly to the risk of child poverty.

Employment profile

The first results from the new Business Register Employment Survey (BRES) have been released by ONS for 2009.

In Somerset, the highest proportion of employees were in health (14.3%), Manufacturing (13.6%) and Retail (13.2%) industries. The Transport and Storage (including Postal) sector saw the greatest rise in employee numbers compared to the previous year (a 29% year-on-year increase), while the Property industry saw the biggest fall in employee numbers (a 38% year-on-year decrease).

Around 1 in 5 of Somerset's workforce is employed in the public sector. Taunton Deane has the largest proportion of its residents working in this sector (30.5%), followed by West Somerset (23.5%), South Somerset (13.2%), Sedgemoor (12.9%) and Mendip (9.7%). The total number of public sector employees in Somerset fell by 1.6% compared to the previous year, while the private sector saw a 0.6% decrease in employee numbers.

Reference Year 2009, Thousands

Broad Industry Group	Full-time Employees	Part-time Employees	Total Employees	Total Employment
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	0.1	-	0.2	0.3
Mining, Quarrying and Utilities	3.1	0.1	3.2	3.3
Manufacturing	25.4	3.3	28.7	29.7
Construction	9.4	1.3	10.7	13.5
Motor Trades	4.0	0.6	4.7	5.5
Wholesale	7.2	1.9	9.1	10.1
Retail	11.6	16.2	27.8	30.2
Transport and Storage (incl. Postal)	6.7	2.6	9.3	10.3
Accommodation and Food Services	6.1	10.0	16.1	17.5
Information and Communication	3.5	0.6	4.1	4.5
Finance and Insurance	2.1	0.7	2.8	2.9
Property	1.2	0.8	2.1	2.6
Professional, Scientific and Technical	7.1	3.1	10.2	12.1
Business Administration and Support Services	9.6	3.2	12.8	13.6
Education	8.7	10.9	19.6	19.8
Health	15.6	14.5	30.1	30.9
Public Admin	6.9	3.1	10.0	10.0
Other	5.1	4.1	9.3	10.2

Source: Office for National Statistics

Earnings

The Annual Survey of Hours and Earning (ASHE) for 2010 has been published by ONS.

The figures suggest that the gap between average earnings in Somerset and average UK earnings has closed slightly since the 2009 survey. The average weekly salary of Somerset residents was up 4.7% in 2010 to £446.20, compared with a UK-wide rise of only 1.4%, to £487.60.

Median gross full time annual pay among Somerset residents is £24,476. This is below the median for the UK (£25,879), but in line with the South West figure (£24,466).

Median gross full-time annual pay for Somerset resident men remains higher than for women, as is the case nationally.

Median gross full time annual pay among Somerset resident men is £27,339. This is below the median for the UK (£28,091), but is above the South West average (£26,792). However, median gross full time annual pay among Somerset resident women stands at £19,500, below both the UK (£22,490) and South West (£20,632) average.

Median gross part time annual pay among Somerset residents is £8,086. This is also below the median for both the UK (£8,519) and the South West (£8,702).

Source: ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) 2010

Employment rates

In the year between July 2008 and June 2009, 78.7% of Somerset's working age population was in employment. This is higher than the employment rate for both the South West (77.3%) and England (73.4%).

Access to employment is not equal and there are groups in society who face sometimes significant disadvantages in accessing jobs and skills. The employment rate for young people aged 16-24 (70%), women (77%), people with disabilities (46%) and the low skilled (70%) in Somerset all lag behind that for the working age population (79%).

Source: Sub-regional Employment and Skills Analysis 2010

Despite these high levels of employment, Somerset is a low wage county. Furthermore, the healthy picture of employment rates is undermined by the proportion of people working in low wage sectors of the economy.

Employment by sector

The table below shows Somerset has a greater proportion of the working population in traditionally lower paid sectors than average and few people in the higher paid, higher qualified areas.

	Somerset (numbers)	Somerset (percentage)	South West (percentage)	England (percentage)
Managers and senior officials	22,000	11.6%	14.9%	15.6%
Professional occupations	23,700	12.5%	13.9%	14.9%
Assoc. professional and technical	26,800	14.1%	16.7%	16.7%
Administrative and secretarial	25,500	13.4%	12.3%	12.4%
Skilled trades occupations	11,900	6.3%	4.9%	4.3%
Personal service occupations	24,100	12.7%	11.1%	10.5%
Sales and customer service occupations	21,800	11.5%	9.9%	9.0%
Process plant and machine operatives	8,700	4.6%	4.2%	4.8%
Elementary occupations	25,100	13.2%	12.1%	11.8%

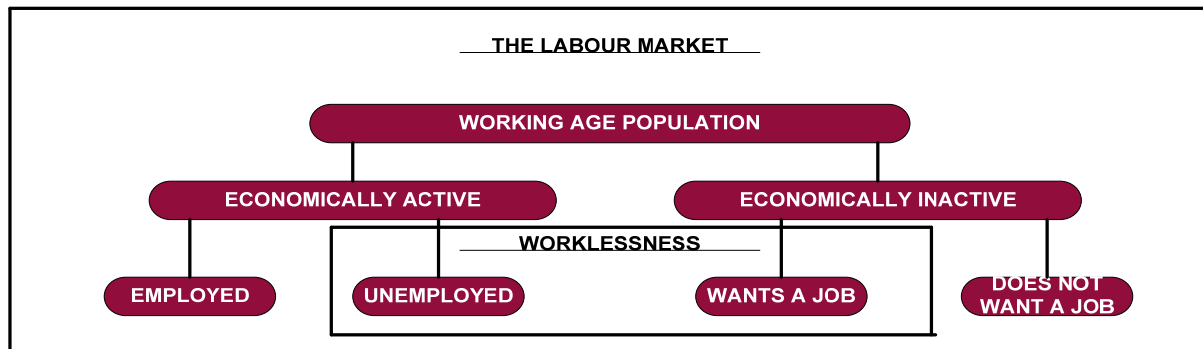
Part time employment

Like most sub-regions across the South West, the proportion of people who work part-time in Somerset (28.1%) is significantly higher than that for England as a whole (24%) (July 2008 - June 2009).

The number of females who work part time is greater than their male counterparts across the board. In 2007 in the South West, 11% of men worked part time compared to 45% of women.

Source: Sub-regional Employment and Skills Analysis 2010

Worklessness



High levels of worklessness are associated with adverse social and economic outcomes and can therefore be used to indicate one aspect of deprivation in an area. Worklessness is difficult to define, but is often researched in terms of the unemployed and economically inactive. The unemployed population ‘are people who are without a job, want a job, have actively sought work in the last four weeks and are available to start work in the next two weeks or are out of work, have found a job and are waiting to start it in the next two weeks’. The economically inactive population are ‘those without a job who have not actively sought work in the last four weeks, and/or are not available to start work in the next two weeks’.

In September 2010, the Office for National Statistics released a statistical bulletin, ‘Work and worklessness among households 2010’, which identified the following national headlines:

For the three months to June 2010:

- The percentage of households where no adults work was 19.2%, up 0.6 percentage points from a year earlier.
- Lone parent households with dependent children had the highest percentage of workless households at 39.7%, followed by one-person households at 36.8%.
- Of the Government Offices regions of England and countries of the UK, the North East had the highest percentage of workless households at 24.3%, while the South East had the lowest at 14.2%.
- There were 5.4 million people, aged 16-64, living in workless households, up 26,000 from a year earlier.
- The percentage of children in workless households was 16.1%, down 0.6 percentage points from a year earlier, while the number was 1.9 million, down 62,000 from a year earlier.

Based on this information, no one works in almost 1 out of 5 households across the UK.

Government Office Region	Working households	Households containing both working and workless members	Workless households	Total
Percent				
United Kingdom	51.3	32.6	16.1	100.0
Great Britain	51.3	32.6	16.1	100.0
England	50.6	33.5	15.9	100.0
North East	50.8	30.5	18.8	100.0
North West	51.2	32.3	16.5	100.0
Yorkshire and the Humber	52.5	28.3	19.2	100.0
East Midlands	51.8	32.6	15.5	100.0
West Midlands	47.2	33.2	19.6	100.0
East of England	53.9	34.9	11.2	100.0
London	38.0	39.6	22.4	100.0
Inner London	34.7	36.2	29.1	100.0
Outer London	40.0	41.7	18.3	100.0
South East	55.9	34.7	9.5	100.0
South West	59.8	29.0	11.2	100.0
Wales	52.8	26.2	21.1	100.0
Scotland	57.9	26.8	15.3	100.0
Northern Ireland	52.4	31.4	16.2	100.0
Government Office Region	Working households	Households containing both working and workless members	Workless households	Total
Thousands				
United Kingdom	5,921	3,754	1,857	11,532
Great Britain	5,730	3,640	1,798	11,168
England	4,898	3,245	1,539	9,682
North East	216	130	80	426
North West	645	406	208	1,258
Yorkshire and the Humber	497	268	182	946
East Midlands	429	270	128	827
West Midlands	497	349	207	1,053
East of England	552	357	114	1,023
London	619	645	365	1,628
Inner London	216	225	181	623
Outer London	403	419	184	1,006
South East	887	551	150	1,589
South West	557	270	104	932
Wales	298	148	119	565
Scotland	534	247	141	921
Northern Ireland	190	114	59	364

Children (under 16) living in households by region and combined economic activity status of household members (April – June 2010)

Source: Labour Force Survey household datasets

Although Somerset performs well compared to the South West and nationally on unemployment and economic activity rates, there are distinct variations on economic (in)activity rates:

- Although four of the five Somerset Districts had higher economic activity rates than nationally, West Somerset's was lower (76.6% compared to an average of 79%);
- On the male / female split, in most areas female economic inactivity is much higher than male economic inactivity. However, in Taunton Deane it is virtually identical, and in West Somerset, more males than females are economically inactive. A third of males of working age in West Somerset are economically inactive.
- Of those people who are economically inactive in Somerset, 74.3% do not want a job. Of those that do, the largest groups are those on long term sick or those who are looking after a family/home.
- Unemployment is rising. In common with other parts of the UK, unemployment in Somerset has risen since mid-2008. Although unemployment rates in four of the five Districts remain relatively low, Sedgemoor has a rate of 10.9% compared to 7.1% nationally.

- Long-term unemployment as a proportion of all unemployment (November 2009) was below regional and national averages in all of the five Districts. However, there is evidence of increasing long-term unemployment (*often referred to as a hardening of unemployment*) since the end of 2008.
- Those in lower skilled occupations are more likely to be JSA claimants than those in higher skilled occupations.

Source: Worklessness Policy Theme Summary

Children in Workless Households

Nationally:

- Around 1.8 million children were living in workless households in the UK in 2008, a lower figure than for any time in the previous decade and down by a fifth since 1998.
- The majority of these children (around 1.2 million) lived in lone parent households.
- Around half of all children in lone parent households live in workless households, compared to only one in fifteen children in couple households.

Source: Monitoring Poverty and Social Exclusion 2009, Joseph Rowntree Foundation Trust

	Children (under 16)					
	Working Households		Mixed Households		Workless Households	
	Thousands	%	Thousands	%	Thousands	%
United Kingdom						
England	4,921	50.7%	3,188	32.9%	1,589	16.4%
South West	527	58.9%	263	29.3%	106	11.8%
Somerset	44	55.9%	27	33.7%	8	10.5%
Mendip	9	47.5%	9	49.5%	*	*
Sedgemoor	12	61.5%	4	18.3%	4	20.2%
South Somerset	10	49.6%	9	43.1%	2	7.3%
Taunton Deane	11	65.0%	4	22.5%	2	12.5%
West Somerset	1	68.6%	*	*	*	*

Children living in households by combined economic activity status of household members (January – December 2009)

Source: Annual Population Survey Household Datasets (ONS)

Notes

Households including at least one person aged 16-64

* = Sample size too small to provide an estimate

Estimates shaded grey have $RSE \geq 20$ and are not considered reliable for practical purposes

Unemployment

Unemployment is an important determinate of poverty and a good proxy indicator of poverty/deprivation.

Unemployment rates in Somerset – as identified in the table below using data from the ONS Annual Population Survey 2008/09 – stood at 5.8% of the county's economically active population. This is largely in line with the regional average, but below the national average of 7.4%.

At district level Sedgemoor and Taunton Deane have the highest rates of unemployment (at 7% and 5.8% respectively). West Somerset has the lowest at 3.9%.

However, paid work is not, on its own, a guarantee of being free of poverty. In 2008/09, 61% of income-poor children in the country were in households where one or more parent was in work. Low wages, part-time work and not having two adults in work in a couple household all increase the risk of poverty.

Self-employment

The South West has the highest rate of self-employment of all the English regions and devolved administrations. There are also higher than average numbers of people who are self-employed within the county.

As with small businesses, self-employment can contribute to a dynamic economy and labour market. However, it can also indicate an economy where there are few opportunities in larger, perhaps more productive, firms. Rural areas tend to have the highest rates of self-employment, and urban areas the lowest. Self-employment brings with it considerable uncertainty of income.

10.3% of people of working age are self-employed in Somerset, compared with a national average of 9.1%

	Somerset (numbers)	Somerset (percentage)	South West (percentage)	Great Britain (percentage)
All people				
Economically active*	268,700	82.4	81.6	78.9
In employment*	253,100	77.5	76.6	72.9
Employees*	214,700	66.9	65.2	63.4
Self-employed*	36,700	10.3	11.0	9.1
Unemployed ^o	15,600	5.8	5.9	7.4
	Somerset (numbers)	Somerset (percentage)	South West (percentage)	Great Britain (percentage)
Males				
Economically active*	139,600	84.2	85.0	83.2
In employment*	129,400	78.2	79.2	76.3
Employees*	103,800	63.7	63.9	63.1
Self-employed*	24,800	14.2	14.7	12.7
Unemployed ^o	10,200	7.3	6.7	8.2
	Somerset (numbers)	Somerset (percentage)	South West (percentage)	Great Britain (percentage)
Females				
Economically active*	129,100	80.5	77.9	74.2
In employment*	123,700	76.8	73.8	69.2
Employees*	110,800	70.4	66.6	63.6
Self-employed*	11,900	5.9	6.8	5.2
Unemployed ^o	5,400	4.2	5.0	6.4

Notes

* numbers are for those aged 16 and over; % are for those of working age (16 – 59/64);

^o numbers and percentage are for those aged 16 and over. % is a proportion of economically active.

Based on 2001 Census data, 26.43% of Somerset's population were classed as long-term unemployed, with the highest proportion to be found within the West Somerset District.

	Aged 16-24	Aged 50+	Who have never worked	Who are long-term unemployed
Somerset	25.61	22.63	4.95	26.43
Mendip	24.67	22.15	4.60	26.59
Sedgemoor	26.48	20.62	5.52	26.48
South Somerset	27.34	24.10	4.31	24.99
Taunton Deane	26.37	21.27	5.22	26.32
West Somerset	18.38	28.26	5.62	30.59

% of unemployed people (aged 16-74)

Source: Census 2001

	Households with no adults in employment: with dependent children	
	Count	Percentage
England	988,329	4.83%
South West	72,417	3.47%
Somerset	6,429	3.05%
Mendip	1,409	3.29%
Sedgemoor	1,638	3.69%
South Somerset	1,535	2.41%
Taunton Deane	1,361	3.1%
West Somerset	486	3.11%

Households with no adults in employment (with dependent children)

Source: Census (2001)

Fewer households in Somerset that contain dependent children have no adults in employment than is the case both regionally and nationally.

5. Skills and Qualifications in Somerset

Education provides one of the principle routes for escaping intergenerational poverty. It provides a child with the skills and confidence to navigate through life, offers greater chances for sustainable employment opportunities and helps give children a more equal start in life.

Children should be given the opportunity to develop their full potential and make a success of their lives for themselves and their families. They should have the best possible start in life and not be disadvantaged by family circumstance.

Qualifications

Somerset has a lower proportion of graduates than the rest of the country

Only 26.2% of the population in Somerset is qualified to degree level or above ('high skills'), compared with 29.9% of the population of Great Britain (2009). At a district level, the highest concentration of the resident working population with NVQ4 and above is found in Taunton Deane (29.3%). West Somerset performs especially poorly on this measure (20.3%).

The lower proportion of graduates in the county is a matter for concern given the increasing emphasis on developing high skill jobs within the UK economy. The prospect of student debt associated with going to university may serve as a disincentive to those considering going on to higher education. Ofsted's Tellus 4 (2009) survey revealed that just 52% of young people surveyed in Somerset think they will go on to university/higher education in the future, compared with 62% nationally.

In contrast, by national standards, Somerset has a higher than average proportion of the resident working population qualified at NVQ2 and below.

The occupational structure in Somerset varies from the Regional and National averages in the following respect:

Higher than average employment in:

- Administrative and secretarial occupations;
- Skilled trades occupations;
- Personal service occupations;
- Sales and customer service occupations;
- Process, plan and machine operatives;
- Elementary occupations.

Lower than average employment in:

- Managers and senior officials;
- Professional occupations;
- Associate professional and tech occupations.

Source: Sub-Regional Employment and Skills Analysis 2010: Somerset (February 2010)

Qualifications (January – December 2009)

	Somerset (numbers)	Somerset (percentage)	South West (percentage)	Great Britain (percentage)
NVQ4 and above	83,900	26.2%	29.1%	29.9%
NVQ3 and above	157,900	49.4%	51.3%	49.3%
NVQ2 and above	219,500	68.6%	68.8%	65.4%
NVQ1 and above	271,300	84.8%	84.1%	78.9%
Other qualifications	21,800	6.8%	7.2%	8.8%
No qualifications	26,900	8.4%	8.7%	12.3%

	Mendip (percentage)	South Somerset (percentage)	Sedgemoor (percentage)	Taunton Deane (percentage)	West Somerset (percentage)
NVQ4 and above	22.7	26.3	28.2	29.3	20.3
NVQ3 and above	47.2	52.1	48.3	48.5	50.1
NVQ2 and above	64.0	74.7	61.3	69.5	76.4
NVQ1 and above	81.3	87.0	82.9	85.3	90.6
Other qualifications	6.2	5.7	8.8	8.2	!
No qualifications	12.5	7.3	8.3	6.5	7.2

Notes

NVQ4 and above: e.g. HND, Degree and Higher Degree level qualifications or equivalent;

NVQ3 and above: e.g. 2 or more A levels, advanced GNVQ, NVQ 3, 2 or more higher or advanced higher qualifications (Scotland) or equivalent;

NVQ2 and above: e.g. 5 or more GCSEs at grades A-C, intermediate GNVQ, NVQ 2, intermediate 2 national qualification (Scotland) or equivalent;

NVQ1 and above: e.g. fewer than 5 GCSEs at grades A-C, foundation GNVQ, NVQ1, intermediate 1 national qualification (Scotland) or equivalent;

Other qualifications: includes foreign qualifications and some professional qualifications;

No qualifications: No formal qualifications held.

! Estimate and confidence interval not available since the group sample size is zero or disclosive (0-2).

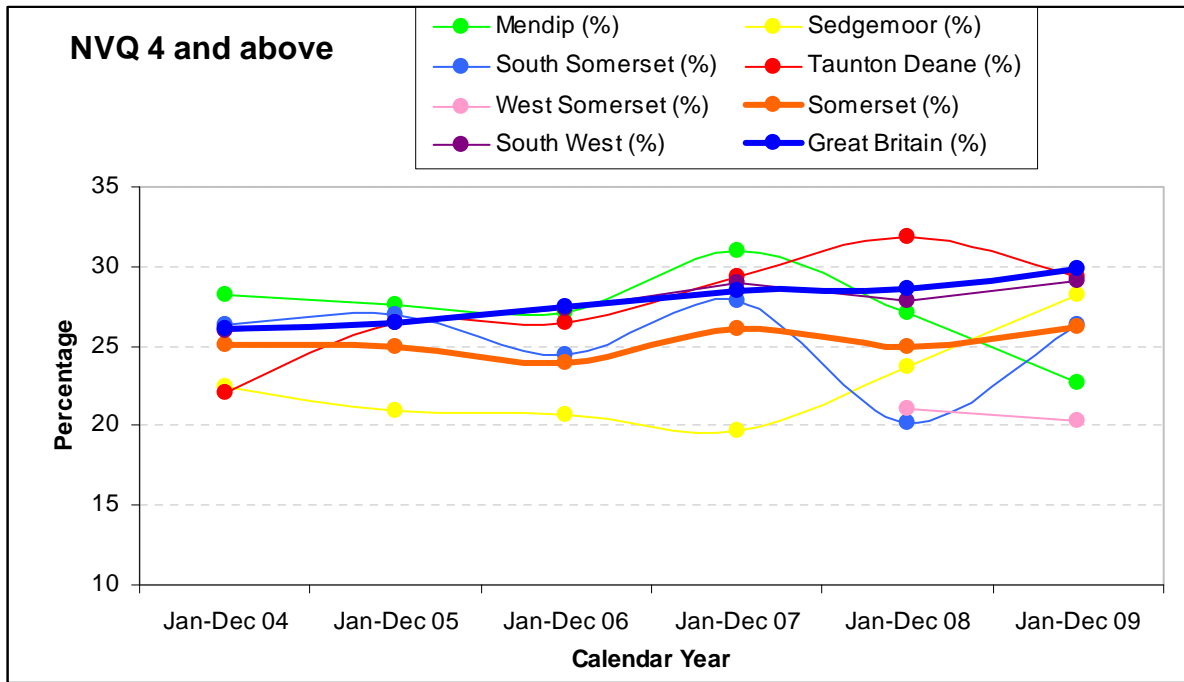
Qualifications in Somerset

Source: ONS Crown Copyright Reserved [from Nomis on 18 August 2010]

	Mendip	Sedgemoor	South Somerset	Taunton Deane	West Somerset	Somerset	South West	Great Britain
Percentage (%)								
Jan-Dec 2004	28.2	22.4	26.3	22.1	-	25.1	26	26.1
Jan-Dec 2005	27.6	20.9	26.9	26.4	-	24.9	26.4	26.5
Jan-Dec 2006	27.1	20.7	24.5	26.4	-	23.9	27.3	27.4
Jan-Dec 2007	31	19.7	27.8	29.3	-	26.1	29	28.5
Jan-Dec 2008	27.1	23.7	20.2	31.9	21.1	24.9	27.9	28.6
Jan-Dec 2009	22.7	28.2	26.3	29.3	20.3	26.2	29.1	29.9

NVQ4 and above (2004 – 2009)

Source: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1967128607/report.aspx>



Somerset has a lower proportion of people qualified to at least Level 4 (26.2%) than in the South West (29.1%) or England (29.9%). The Leitch Review of Skills in 2006 recommended that 40% of economically active people should be educated to degree level (Level 4) or above by 2020.

Illiteracy

An annual United Nations Survey found that more than one in five adults in the UK were functionally illiterate (*UN's Human Development Index, 2000*). The independent think tank, Employment Policy Institute, has indicated that illiteracy rates would rise in tandem with the increasing availability of low-skilled jobs.

A 2003 'Skills for Life' national survey served as the most comprehensive survey of its day seeking to explicitly measure adult basic skills for a representative sample across England. It is to be updated during 2010. Commissioned by the Department for Education and Skills between June 2002 and May 2003, BMRB interviewed 8,730 randomly selected adults aged 16-65 in England.

Key findings from its analysis included the fact that:

- Local deprivation is correlated with both literacy and numeracy, with poor literacy and numeracy skills found in the most deprived areas.
- There is strong evidence that participation on a basic numeracy or mathematics course for non-graduates has a positive effect on earnings.
- The group least likely to attend an English or basis mathematics course are people that hold few or no qualifications. The estimated returns for this group appear to be much higher, at around 24% for a maths course and 12% for an English course when looking at earnings three or more years after attending the course.
- The greatest influence on adult literacy and numeracy comes from an individual's educational background, with those holding degrees being on average one literacy and numeracy level higher than those with no qualifications when controlling for other background characteristics;
- Parental participation in post-16 education also appears to be a strong determinant of adult skills, with adults having up to one quarter of a level higher literacy or numeracy if one parent stayed on in education at 16 rather than just having the most educated parent complete secondary school;

- Ethnicity has a very strong effect. Being in a Black or South Asian group is strongly correlated with poorer literacy skills, in particular for women. The size of the effects are surprising given we are controlling for other factors such as education and having English as a first language.
- English Not First Language (ENFL) speakers are half a level below first language speakers, though ENFL respondents who self-report poor English speaking skills are an additional 1 level lower. However, ENFL status had little effect on numeracy skills;
- Having children present in the household is significantly correlated with male literacy, but surprisingly has no effect for women.

<http://rwp.excellencegateway.org.uk/readwriteplus/Research>

58% of people in West Somerset have literacy skills below level 2 (equivalent to GCSE A* - C) and 82% have numeracy skills below level 2.

Source: West Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy 2007-2010

Educational attainment

Raising levels of educational attainment has been a central plank of national policy for the past decade. Whilst the academic performance of children and young people in Somerset continues to improve overall, over recent years it has done so at rates below the national average, making it a key priority for Somerset, and one that features in the County Council's County Plan and the County's Children and Young People's Plan.

Key headlines 2009/10 AY:

- Data reveals that there has been an increase in the number achieving at least 78 points across the **Early Years Foundation Stage**.
- At **Key Stage 2** the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4+ in both English and Maths has improved from 70.9% to 74.2%.
- At **GCSE/Key Stage 4**, 53.8% of pupils achieved 5 or more A*-C grades (including English and Maths) – an increase of 4.8% when compared to 2008/09 and the highest result Somerset has had. The result places Somerset marginally above the England average.

For full details of attainment at Key Stage levels within schools, please refer to Somerset's Children and Young People's Needs Assessment (2010).

Narrowing the Gap in Somerset:

- At the Early Years Foundation Stage, the percentage difference between the median and the lowest performing 20% has again narrowed to 29.6% from 30.7% in 2009.
- For long-term Children in Care (based on provisional 2010 data):
 - At Key Stage 1, the percentage of Children in Care achieving expected levels (Level 2+) in writing and maths has improved significantly in recent years and currently stands at 57.1% and 71.4% respectively, representing an increase of 19.6% and 21.4% on 2009 results.
 - There has been an 8.2% improvement in the number of children in care achieving a Level 4+ in Maths at the end of Key Stage 2 (61.5%). However, the percentage achieving expected levels in English fell by 14.8% to 38.5%.
 - The percentage of Children in Care achieving 5+ A*-C grades has fallen by 17.3% to 7.0%.
 - The percentage of Children in Care permanently excluded has fallen markedly since 2007 to 0.5%. This brings Somerset in line with the levels reported nationally and by statistical neighbours.
 - The percentage of Children in Care missing 25+ days of schooling has risen by 8.4% since 2008 and remains a concern for the Local Authority.

- Across all levels, pupils not eligible for free school meals perform better than those eligible for free school meals.
- Nationally, in relation to Special Educational Needs:
 - The number of pupils with SEN are increasing, whilst the numbers of pupils with Statements of SEN are decreasing.
 - Boys were two and a half times more likely than girls to have Statements at primary school and nearly three times more likely to have Statements at secondary school.
 - Black pupils were the most likely to have SEN at primary schools and SEN with Statements at secondary schools. Chinese pupils were least likely to have SEN at both primary and secondary schools.
 - Pupils with SEN were much more likely to be eligible for free school meals than those without SEN.
 - Pupils whose first language was other than English were more likely to have SEN without Statements compared to pupils whose first language was English. However, Statements of SEN were more likely to be found among pupils whose first language was English compared to those whose first language was other than English.
 - Pupils with SEN were less likely to be identified as being Gifted and Talented than those without SEN.

6. Vulnerable Groups

Teenage Parents

Teenage parents and their children are at increased risk of poverty. Poverty is a complex issue with a diverse range of factors affecting family circumstance, including capacity to work, health, caring responsibilities and deprivation. Teenage parent families, by their nature, have at least one parent under the age of 18 with responsibility for a dependent child who is likely to be under 5 years. These families are at increased risk of the biggest causes of poverty (worklessness and low pay) whilst under fives make up 44% of all children in poverty. As a result, children of teenage mothers have a 63% increased risk of being born into poverty compared to babies born to mothers in their twenties.

Poverty, like teenage pregnancy, follows intergenerational cycles with children born into poverty at increased risk of teenage pregnancy, especially for young women living in workless households when aged 11 - 15

The majority of teenage parents and their children live in deprived areas and often exhibit multiple risk factors for poverty, experiencing poor health, social and economic outcomes and inter-generational patterns of deprivation. Teenagers who become pregnant are more likely to drop out of school, missing a key phase of their education, leading to low educational attainment and no or low-paying, insecure jobs without training. Young mothers are also more likely to be lone parents with their children raised in a home with one income, and often living in sub-standard housing or temporary accommodation. All these factors mean teenage mothers and their children need support to find a way out from what is often a low-income community to begin with, with inter-generational families of teenage parents.

Key Statistics

- Teenage mothers are 20% more likely to have no qualifications at age 30 than mothers giving birth aged 24 or over;
- It is estimated that 70% of teenage mothers aged 16-19 are not in education, training or employment; and 70% of mothers aged 16-19 claim Income Support;
- At age 30, teenage mothers are 22% more likely to be living in poverty than mothers giving birth aged 24 or over, and are much less likely to be employed or living with a partner;
- Teenage mothers are more likely to partner with men who are poorly qualified and more likely to experience unemployment.

Reductions in births to mothers under 18 and prevention of under 18 conceptions reduces the number of children born into poverty. Reducing the birth rate to teenage parents by 20% would prevent 50,000 children being born into poverty.

Low educational attainment is strongly associated with higher rates of teenage pregnancy, even after accounting for deprivation. The signs of disengagement from school are often evidence long before a pregnancy occurs. Prevention strategies should put measures in place to identify those young women who are losing interest at school and help them to identify a KS4 learning package that engages them.

Stopping families from falling into poverty by providing support for teenage parents to increase their employability through access to education, employment and training (EET). Paid employment is the single more important factor in reducing the risk of poverty. Reducing barriers to EET is key to this, in particular ensuring the availability of rolling and introductory programmes of study which have flexible hours and take account of the demands of caring for a child, paid childcare which is flexible, non-judgemental, as well as accessible transport etc. A lead professional who can help broker arrangements with schools/colleges can make the difference in encouraging young mothers back into EET.

Measures to address repeated cycles of teenage pregnancy by challenging cultural norms of the inevitability of teenage parenthood and raising aspirations for employment against young people, families and communities. Addressing cultural resistance, in some deprived communities, to young mothers going to college and using formal childcare is also important.

Reducing health inequalities is integral to sustaining all of these measures.

Source: Teenage Pregnancy Unit (September 2010)

The UK has the highest rate of teenage conceptions in Western Europe and one of the highest rates of teenage conceptions in the developed world. Teenage pregnancy was identified as a social and health issue for England in the 1999 Teenage Pregnancy Report. Within Somerset, the ambitious, centrally-imposed target for reducing the under 18 conception rate by 50% across 10 years has not been achieved, reflecting the national position. However, latest provisional data (Quarter 3, 2009) shows that the rolling quarterly average stands at 29.4, below both the regional and national average.

2005-07 aggregated ward data released by the Office for National Statistics shows Taunton Deane's Lyngford ward as having the highest teenage conception rate in Somerset at 83.0 per 1,000 girls under 18.

Area of usual residence	2005-07			2006-08			% change in rate
	No.	Rate	% leading to abortion	No.	Rate	% leading to abortion	98/00 - 06/08
England	119,272	41.2	49	126,081	41.1	49	-9.4
South West	9,961	34.3	49	10,038	34.6	50	-8.3
Somerset	1,069	33.3	47	1096	34.1	47	-10.1
Mendip	217	29	47	224	29.4	50	-2.3
Sedgemoor	233	35.4	47	243	37	43	-22.8
South Somerset	331	34.3	47	347	36.2	46	1.4
Taunton Deane	235	35.3	48	231	34.7	50	-13.5
West Somerset	53	30.1	43	51	29.7	45	-18.7

Rate of under 18 Conceptions (per 1,000 females aged 15-17)

Source: Office of National Statistics

Mendip	Sedgemoor	South Somerset	Taunton Deane	West Somerset
Frome Welshmill (6) Rate: 65.4	Bridgwater, Victoria (2) Rate: 81.8	Yeovil East (5) Rate 66.8	Lyngford (1) Rate 83.0	Minehead, Alcombe East (8) Rate 62.1
Glastonbury St Benedict's (15) Rate: 53.9	Bridgwater, Sydenham (4) Rate: 72.8	Yeovil Central (7) Rate: 64.2	Taunton Eastgate (3) Rate: 78.8	Minehead North Ward (20) Rate: 49.6
Stratton (16) Rate: 53.6	Highbridge Ward (9) Rate: 62.0	Yeovil West Ward (12) Rate: 56.9	Pyrland and Rowbarton (10) Rate: 59.0	
Frome Keyford (17) Rate: 52.3	Bridgwater, Quantock (21) Rate: 49.1	Ilminster Ward (13) Rate: 55.9	Halcon (11) Rate: 57.4	
Shepton East (23) Rate: 47.9	Bridgwater, Hamp (24) Rate: 47.8	Yeovil South (18) Rate: 52.0	Blackbrook and Holway (14) Rate: 54.2	
St Cuthbert (Out) North & West Ward (25) Rate: 46.5		Chard Combe Ward (22) Rate: 48.8	Taunton, Fairwater (19) Rate: 50.2	

Wards with the highest rates of under 18 conceptions 2005-2007 (Top 25)

Source: Office of National Statistics (ONS)

Under-18 Hospital Deliveries – estimated rates per thousand to March 2009			
District	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Mendip	11.3	17.0	14.3
Sedgemoor	13.3	17.7	23.2
South Somerset	16.3	18.6	18.3
Taunton Deane	16.2	18.6	20.2
West Somerset	13.6	26.1	8.8
SOMERSET	14.4	18.5	18.3
Local Service Team	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
East Mendip	13.06	19.08	16.5
West Mendip	11.52	14.82	13.0
North Sedgemoor	9.94	8.88	11.9
South Sedgemoor	16.94	23.05	31.1
South Somerset (East)	20.21	20.22	24.1
South Somerset (West)	14.20	16.88	11.6
Taunton	18.06	20.41	24.6
West Somerset, Wellington & Wiveliscombe	14.59	20.50	10.2

Under 16 Hospital Deliveries – estimated rates per thousand to March 2009			
District	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Mendip	2.6	3.9	3.5
Sedgemoor	0.9	3.8	4.7
South Somerset	2.2	3.6	2.6
Taunton Deane	1.8	2.8	2.4
West Somerset	1.8	0.0	1.8
SOMERSET	1.9	3.4	3.2
Local Service Team	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
East Mendip	1.64	4.05	3.5
West Mendip	4.05	3.81	3.4
North Sedgemoor	1.24	0.00	2.5
South Sedgemoor	0.76	6.12	6.2
South Somerset (East)	1.89	3.80	4.4
South Somerset (West)	2.76	3.47	0.7
Taunton	1.94	2.65	3.4
West Somerset, Wellington & Wiveliscombe	1.74	1.71	0.8

Under 18 and Under 16 Hospital Deliveries to March 2009

Source:

Disabled Children and Children with Disabled Parents / Young Carers

Studies have consistently found a relationship between measures of deprivation and both the birth incidence and overall prevalence of childhood disability. There is a two-way relationship between disability and poverty in childhood: poorer children are more likely to be born or to become disabled, and disabled children are among the most likely to experience poverty.

Families coping with a disabled child or adult need extra financial support because coping with disability and illness generates extra cost. The research evidence shows that parents with a disabled child or adult in the household are at high risk of poverty and experience substantial barriers to employment.

There is a well established link between deprivation and the birth incidence of children with Cerebral Palsy. This is a particularly significant group for care services as many of the most profoundly disabled children have Cerebral Palsy. Along with Autistic Spectrum Disorders it is the most frequent diagnosis of disabled children on Somerset County Council caseloads, and the number is steadily rising.

Although the prevalence of disability is clearly related to deprivation this may appear less obvious in the demand for services – research suggests that middle class families are better at seeking out and obtaining service.

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) is a benefit for people who become disabled before the age of 65, and is payable to those who need help with personal care and/or getting around. As at August 2009, almost 2,300 claimants of DLA in Somerset were aged under 16. This figure indicates the number of children with disabilities. These children are widely spread across the county.

	Claimants aged under 16
	Count
Mendip	560
Sedgemoor	500
South Somerset	640
Taunton Deane	430
West Somerset	160
Total	2,290

Disability Living Allowance: Under 16 Claimants (August 2009)

The main reason why the poverty rate for disabled people is so high is that relatively few disabled people work: 60% of adults aged 25 to retirement with a work-limiting disability are currently not working compared with only 15% of their non-disabled counterparts. However, many of those who are not working say that they want to work, but have not been able to find a job: 20% of disabled adults aged 25 to retirement are not working, but say they want to.

Source: Disabled People, Poverty and The Labour Market

Children's Centre	Number of children with a disability (Social Care Caseload)	Under 5's with disabled parent(s)
Alcombe	15	-
Bishops Lydeard	11	-
Burnham	11	-
Castle Cary	2	2
Chard	25	4
Cheddar	11	-
Chilcompton	4	-
Coker	15	-
Coleford	12	2
Creech St Michael	20	1
Crewkerne	9	2
Dulverton	3	-
Eastover	11	-
Frome	10	4
Glastonbury	12	1
Halcon	20	5
Hamp	14	2
Highbridge	15	1
Hollies	25	1
Ilchester	16	-
Ilminster	13	1
Langport	7	1
Lyngford	21	5
Mudford	17	3
Nether Stowey	6	-
Norton Fitzwarren	18	-
Shepton Mallet	10	2
Street	20	2
Sydenham	18	-
The Bridge	22	5
Trull and South Taunton	22	1
Victoria	17	2
Watchet	11	1
Wellington	17	1
Wells	12	1
Williton	6	-
Wincanton	11	2
Wiveliscombe	7	-
Woolavington	11	-
Yeovil	6	4
Yeovil West	23	4
Totals	556	60

Disabilities by Children's Centre (February 2009)

Source: SWIFT, February 2009

Young Carers

Figures published by the BBC in November 2010 suggest that there are four times more young carers in the UK than are officially recognised. One in 12 of the 4,029 schoolchildren asked by the BBC said they had caring responsibilities – such as dressing, washing or bathing family members. If the survey reflects the UK as a whole, it would mean there are about 700,000 young carers in the UK. The 2001 Census, though, identified only 175,000 young carers.

A total of 4,029 pupils from 10 UK secondary schools responded to a questionnaire designed by academics at the University of Nottingham. The questions asked about both the levels of responsibility young people had in the home, and the types of caring activity they undertook. Of those who responded, 337 (8%) said they had carried out "personal care" of someone in their home either "a lot of the time" or "some of the time" over the previous month.

Source: [BBC Online](#) 16 November 2010

In 2001 there were approximately 15,656 young carers under the age of 20 living in the South West. Whilst no Somerset specific figures are available, it is estimated that there may be 1,565 young carers in Somerset aged less than 20 years.

The Somerset Young Carers Project's main aim is to support young carers to allow them to be a child first and a carer second. The priority is where the caring role is having a detrimental impact on the child or young person's development (e.g. difficulties at school, emotional difficulties, social isolation) and to those children and young people who are sole (primary) carers in the household for 5 main carer types:

- Disability;
- Long term ill health;
- Mental ill health;
- Problems relating to drug/alcohol abuse;
- Diagnosed as HIV and/or experiencing illness relating to AIDS.

Since April 2003, the team has had approximately 900 referrals. Referrals are received from Social Workers, Community Psychiatric Nurses, Schools, Health Visitors or the young carer themselves.

The Somerset Young Carers Project is currently working with 397 young carers.

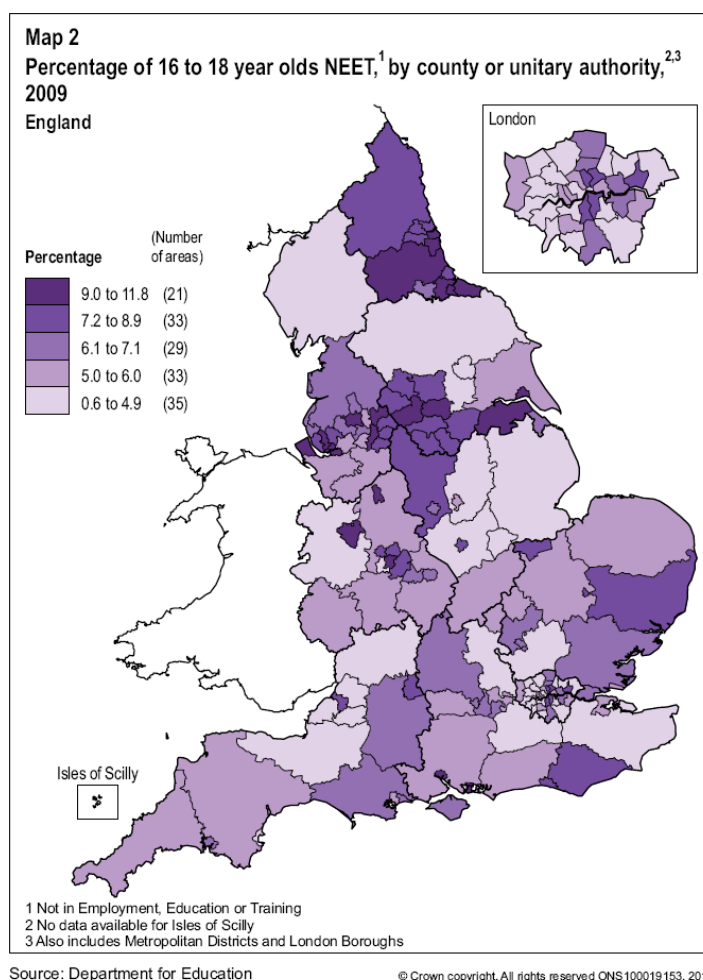
Source: Appraisal of carer services in Somerset (Final Report), July 2010

NEETs

The ability of young people to make a successful transition from school to Further Education, employment or training has been identified as being a crucial safeguard against social exclusion in later life.

The rising number of NEETs has an obvious impact on the economy, especially during a recession. Research by the London School of Economics shows that the average NEET will cost the taxpayer £97,000 during their lifetime. Furthermore, people who are long-term unemployed or have never worked are two to three times more likely to have poor health than those in work. This is according to the Government-led Health, Work and Wellbeing initiative.

Some of the measures explored so far may count young people aged 16 to 18 as 'workless' by definition, but who are actually in further education. Local Authorities are often not concerned with counting those in education at this age as they are likely to be workless through choice. A useful way to measure worklessness in young people is to look at those who are 'Not in Employment, Education or Training' (NEET).

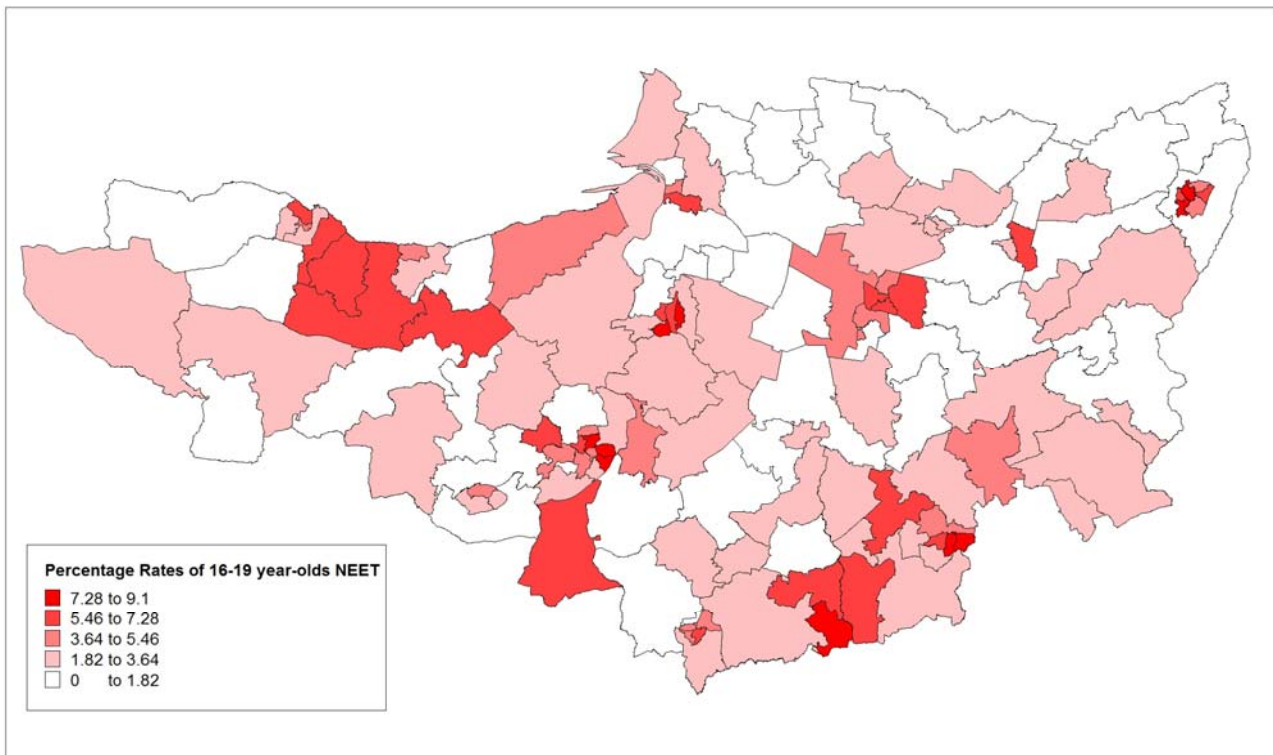


The map on the previous page shows the spatial distribution of 16 to 18 year olds NEET in England. The highest levels of NEET are generally seen in the areas where there are higher proportions of children living in poverty. Compared to other English regions, the South West is noteworthy for its combination of low volume and proportion of young people categorised as NEET. Over the last few years, Somerset has generally followed the wider regional and national trends, with NEET numbers remaining consistently below regional and national averages.

There has been a national rise in NEETs as a result of rising unemployment due to the current economic conditions. The Somerset NEET outturn for 2009/10 has increased slightly to 4.4%, but remains one of the lowest rates in the country.

In terms of geographical profile, the ward with the highest rate of 16-19 year olds NEETs (*as at November 2010*) was Taunton Halcon. Rates are generally highest within the county's urban settlements, as might be expected. Bridgwater Sydenham had the highest number of young people (aged 16-19) NEET (44).

Percentage Rates of 16-19 year-olds Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) by Ward



Figures have been calculated using NEET data from Connexions (Nov 2010) and GP Population Data 2009

NEET continues to be a priority, especially for vulnerable groups (Care Leavers, Young Offenders, and Teenage Parents).

Gypsy and Traveller Children

The poverty experienced by some Gypsy and Traveller children involves the deprivation of customary activities (such as attending school), living conditions and basic amenities.

It is clear that many Gypsy and Traveller children are 'poor' in multiple and different ways. Some are undeniably financially poor. Alongside this, a spatial element to social exclusion is key for many in these communities. This can involve a lack of secure accommodation, safety and access to services. Access to secure stopping places has always been an issue for many Gypsy and Traveller families. There are continuing inequalities of access and inclusion in regards to education and training for Gypsy and Traveller children of all ages. Contributory factors include racist harassment or bullying, exclusions from school and self-exclusions. Gypsies and Travellers also have numerous problems accessing health care, particularly registering with a GP.

The poverty experienced by some Gypsy and Traveller children involves the deprivation of customary activities (such as attending school), living conditions and basic amenities. There are continuing inequalities of access and inclusion for children of all ages. This includes numerous problems accessing health care, particularly registering with a General Practitioner. There has been a marked increase in the number of Gypsy and Traveller caravans in the county – the majority of this increase has been seen in Mendip where caravan numbers have increase by some 50% over the past year.

Traveller economies are largely characterised by family-based, self-employed activities, and are flexible, adaptable and opportunistic in relation to gaps and opportunities in mainstream economic markets.

At the end of May 2010, the CLG (Communities and Local Government) released the number of Gypsy and Traveller caravans in Somerset following the count in January. The number of caravans in the county has increased by 16% since the last count in July 2009 (445 to 516). The majority of this increase has been seen in Mendip where caravan numbers have increased by 50% (156 to 234).

The rate of caravans per population is far higher in Mendip than the national and regional average.

District	Number of Caravans (January 2010)	Rate per population
England	18,355	0.04
South West	2,587	0.05
Somerset	516	0.10
Mendip	234	0.20
Sedgemoor	80	0.07
South Somerset	51	0.03
Taunton Deane	141	0.13
West Somerset	10	0.03

Gypsy and Traveller Caravans in Somerset (January 2010)

Source: SInePost (July 2010)

The table overleaf records the number of recorded travellers in Somerset schools over 4 years to 2008/09. Although it suggests that there has been a significant increase in the total figures over this time period, this is in part attributable to better referral rates by schools to the county's Traveller Education Service.

As is common nationally, analysis of the issues faced by Traveller children and young people in Somerset reveals that their progress between key stages is less than the Somerset average,

their end of key stage attainment is markedly lower than the Somerset average, there is lower than average representation on Gifted and Talented registers, attendance is lower than average and fixed term exclusions are higher.

School Year		Total Number of Recorded Travellers in Somerset Schools
2005-06	GYPSY	231
	NT *	56
	IRISH	8
	CIRCUS	7
	SHOW	50
	ALL	352
2006-07	GYPSY	310
	NT	89
	IRISH	31
	CIRCUS	10
	SHOW	54
	ALL	494
2007-08	GYPSY	332
	NT	103
	IRISH	38
	CIRCUS	7
	SHOW	42
	FESTIVAL	4
	ALL	526
2008-09	GYPSY	373
	NT	108
	IRISH	36
	CIRCUS	16
	SHOW	35
	FESTIVAL	4
	ALL	572

* NT = New Age Traveller

Total Number of Recorded Travellers in Somerset Schools

Care Leavers

Just as children and young people taken into care are likely to have experienced a range of disadvantages, such as poor health; poverty; absent, limited, or inappropriate parenting, so too are young people leaving care likely to face multiple disadvantages, including poverty.

Care leavers are expected to be self-sufficient at an earlier age than the general population. Living alone in unsuitable housing with little money, support, or likelihood of improvement often leads to isolation. The majority of care leavers move to temporary accommodation, involving additional moves in the future and making it difficult to establish a stable and secure pattern of living. A significant number of care leavers are homeless within months of leaving care.

Young people who have been in care are 60 times more likely to become homeless than other young people.

NCH (2000) Factfile 2000, National Children's Bureau

Care leavers are more likely than other young people to be unemployed and the majority of care leavers live on or near the poverty line. Increases in youth unemployment and restrictions to benefits have affected all young people living independently – for care leavers, with limited, if any, family support, the transition to independence can be extremely difficult without some form of financial assistance.

Based on NI 148, 71.1% of care leavers in Somerset were in education, employment or training (2009/10); an improvement of 14.7% when compared to the previous year and higher than the national average (62.1%)

A key focus for Somerset is ensuring that care leavers are placed in suitable accommodation in order to improve their life chances.

The percentage of care leavers aged 19 living in suitable accommodation stood at 97.4% for 2009/10 (an 8.3% improvement when compared to 2008/09 and above national and regional averages).

	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Somerset	88.6%	93.1%	89.1%	97.4%
National Average	87.3%	88.4%	89.6%	90.3%
South West Average	90.3%	90.4%	91.6%	89.4%
Stat Neighbour Average	91.3%	93.8%	90.3%	89.7%

At the time of writing, benchmarking data detailing the national average and that of the county's statistical neighbours was not yet available. A joint commissioning project is underway focused on further improving accommodation and support for 16/17 year old homeless young people and care leavers.

Children in large families

The UK has one of the highest poverty rates for children in large families compared with other countries. The proportion of large families has declined over the last 60 years, with only a third of children living in a family with three or more dependent children and only 10% in a family with four or more children.

Parents of children in large families are less likely to be working; more likely to come from ethnic minorities; more likely to have had their first child at a young age; more likely to be less educated and have a young child. All these characteristics are associated with a higher risk of poverty. However, larger families have a higher risk of child poverty independent of these factors.

Source: http://www.childpovertysolutions.org.uk/ChildPovertySolutions_GroupsAtRisk.aspx

Large families have greater incidence of hardship, lower employment, younger children and higher representation in minority ethnic groups as compared with small families. The results point to the importance of large family status, particularly in relation to the higher likelihood of being in hardship and the respondent not working 16 or more hours per week. Large family status remains an important predictor of these outcomes even when a range of factors are controlled for – in particular age of respondent, age of youngest child, housing tenure, ethnicity and family type (and others).

Looking at the large family population in isolation there are clear differences according to family type, employment status and family size. Lone parent large families have less education, are more often headed by a Black respondent, and experience more hardship, compared with couple large families. Large families in which at least one person worked 16 or more hours per week were more likely to be: older, White, have older children, be headed by a couple, have more education, have a driving license and access to a car. Large families with four or more children experience a greater level of hardship than large families with three children, and they also report a higher level of barriers to work. Similarly, children from families with four or more children are significantly more likely to have a special educational need or have been contacted by the police, controlling for age and gender.

Source: Characteristics of Large Families, Maxine Willitts & Kirby Swales (April 2003)

Nationally, families with three or more children were more likely to live in low-income households in 2008/09 (31% compared with 19% for one child families). The table below provides some detail around children in large families (i.e. 4 or more dependent children) within Somerset, in relation to those families in receipt of income support/Jobseekers Allowance:

	Children in families in receipt of Child Tax Credit (<60% median income) or Income Support/Jobseekers Allowance				% of children in poverty
	1 child	2 children	3 children	4 or more children	All children
England	514,555	761,495	552,040	513,885	20.9%
South West	39,520	57,055	38,510	31,760	15.8%
Somerset	3,545	5,095	3,700	2,990	14.2%
Mendip	770	1,045	725	580	13.5%
Sedgemoor	800	1,270	1,065	700	16.0%
South Somerset	930	1,345	970	875	12.6%
Taunton Deane	785	1,025	670	625	13.8%
West Somerset	260	410	275	210	19.5%

Children in families in receipt of Child Tax Credit

Source: HM Revenue and Customs (Snapshot as at 31st August 2008)

Ethnic Minorities

Children from minority ethnic groups are significantly overrepresented among poor children. All minority groups have higher rates of poverty than the average and compared to the white majority, according to the standard measure adopted by the Government for monitoring child poverty (living in a household with income adjusted for family size which is below 60 per cent of the median, without deducting housing costs).

The number of children and young people from minority ethnic groups has more than doubled over the last 7 years, rising at a rate of about 300 pupils per year. This increase has continued over 2009/10, although at a slightly slower rate (approximately 180 additional children and young people). The total figure is now 3,648. The true figure is likely to be slightly higher than this as some children and young people from minority ethnic groups are recorded as White British.

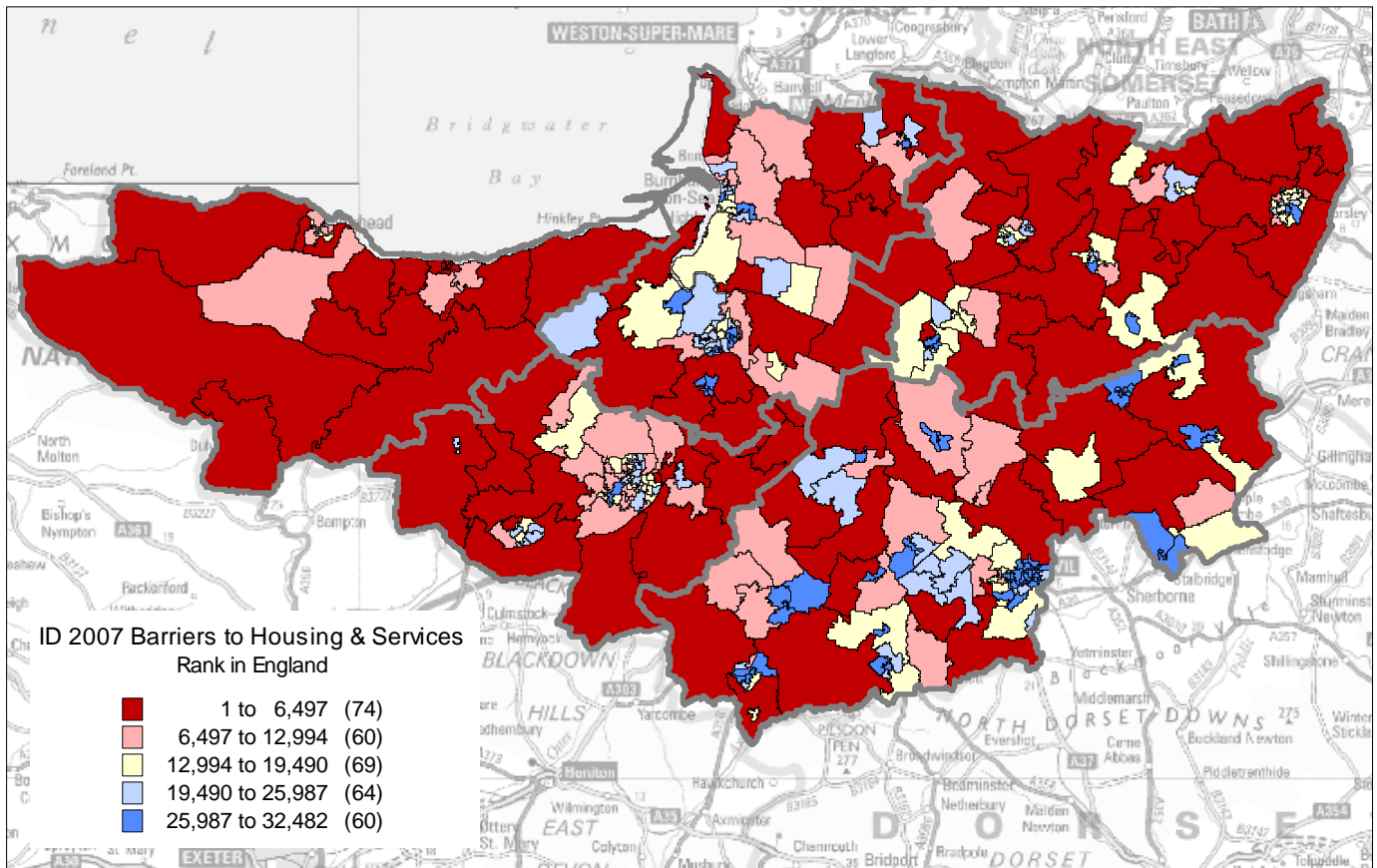
For the overall school population, the percentage from minority ethnic groups is now 5.48%. For Years 7-11 the figure is 4.84%, whilst for years Reception – 6 it is 5.93% (Reception alone is 6.12%). The Reception figure is slightly lower than last year, which suggests that the minority ethnic population in Somerset is stabilising at between 6 and 6.5%, but the overall number will continue to rise as the primary age population moves into the secondary age range.

Somerset's minority ethnic population is made up of many small groups, rather than one large one, but the 'White – Other' group is the largest (2.06% of the total school population), although this comprises children and young people from many different national backgrounds. Groups that are increasing in size include: Bangladeshi, Indian and most 'Mixed' (dual or multiple heritage) groups.

The Localities with the largest populations from minority ethnic groups are South Somerset East (7.2%), Taunton (6.9%) and East Mendip (6.2%). However, there are higher than Somerset average numbers of specific minority ethnic groups in several other localities. For example: North Sedgemoor (Bangladeshi children and young people); South Sedgemoor ('Mixed' White and Black Caribbean and Gypsy Roma children and young people); South Somerset West ('Mixed' White and Asian, 'Mixed' White and Black Caribbean and Gypsy Roma children and young people).

For an ethnicity breakdown by school year group (as per January 2010 School Census), please refer to page 63 of the Somerset Children and Young People's Needs Assessment 2010.

Access to Services



ID 2007 Barriers to Housing and Services

Source: Local Area Profile for the YP Substance Misuse Needs Assessment, 2009

Locality

Somerset has a low population density (1.44 persons per hectare) and much of the county can be characterised as rural. The problems faced by rural communities are increasingly well documented. Rural policy, and studies of factors creating deprivation, includes issues of isolation and access to services. The Index of Multiple Deprivation (2007) identified that access to services was a particular issue for many communities in Somerset and across the South West. The majority of the county has low levels of access to services. Key services are vital to sustaining the quality of life in rural areas.

According to the IMD 2007, six areas within West Somerset rank amongst the top 1% most deprived in England in terms of access to housing and key local services, while a total of 47 areas in Somerset rank within the top 10% most deprived for this domain.

Source: Local Area Profile for the YP Substance Misuse Needs Assessment, 2009

The Department for Transport published its core accessibility indicators for 2009. The indicators provide a number of measures of access by public transport, walking, cycling and car to seven service types (employment; primary school; secondary school; further education; GP; Hospital; food store; town centre).

Service	Shortest time to reach a service in Somerset (Minutes)		
	Walking / Public Transport	Cycle	Car
Employment	92.5	98.2	80.1
Primary School	94.5	98.5	46.2
Secondary School	74.6	95.1	45.7
Further Education	80.2	97.6	54.0
GP	83.4	97.5	56.4
Hospital	76.8	96.5	36.7
Food Store	90.5	97.8	51.3
Town Centre	47.1	80.4	28.4

Core Accessibility Indicators by LSOA 2009

Source: Department for Transport

	BDR	BNK	CAR	CRS	CYC	DSB	NR	OTH	PSB	TRN	TXI	WLK	Total
Total	388	395	16,968	2,939	1,969	9,095	557	67	829	3	454	33,470	67,134

Pupils' usual mode of travel to school

Source: School Census (January 2010)

Notes / Key

BDR Boarder (non-applicable)

BNK Bus (type not known)

CAR Car/van

CYC Cycle

DSB Dedicated School Bus

NR Not recorded

OTH Other

PSB Public Service Bus

TRN Train

TXI Taxi

WLK Walk (includes roller skates, scooter and skateboard)

In rural areas, the catchment area for pre-school may be very large and the child population is small. Groups are reliant on the majority of children in the area regularly accessing childcare. Childminders are more sustainable in rural areas as their overheads are lower.

The other issue regarding location is where there is financial deprivation. In disadvantaged areas with relatively high levels of unemployment, families will neither need nor be able to afford childcare. Yet often children from disadvantaged areas would benefit most from accessing quality childcare. Addressing both these issues is an ongoing challenge, with Children's Centres and the extended Nursery Education Funding programme for the most disadvantaged 2 year olds and their families helping families to achieve more.

The cost of Rural Living

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation has collated existing national data and local case studies to come up with figures illustrating how much more rural households need to earn to achieve the same minimum living standards as urban equivalents.

Key Findings:

- The research found that although some things could be cheaper for rural households than for urban households (e.g. leisure activities for primary school children), this was unusual. Most household requirements were the same for rural as for urban families. However, there were critical differences that meant, overall, all rural households faced additional costs (see Table overleaf). For example, a family with two children in a village requires nearly £60 a week more to achieve the same minimum living standard as an urban family, adding 15% to the budget.

	Rural Town	Village	Hamlet
Pensioner couple	£2.26 1%	£43.00 19%	£48.08 22%
Single working-age adult without children	£15.98 9%	£31.92 18%	£41.37 24%
Working-age couple with two children	£46.67 12%	£59.52 15%	£72.20 18%
Lone parent with one child	£21.98 9%	£33.65 14%	£36.81 16%

* Based on April 2010 prices

Additional weekly rural costs for four illustrative household types, compared with UK Minimum Income Standard:
Cash difference and rural cost as % increase on corresponding urban budget
(excluding household costs and childcare)

Source: A Minimum Income Standard for Rural Households (November 2010)

Full and summary reports are available at:

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/minimum-income-rural-households>

Rural Schools

Somerset has a much higher than average proportion of rural schools than is the average either nationally or regionally:

	Percentage of rural schools		
	England	South West	Somerset
LA Maintained Primary	30.7%	51.5%	69.1%
LA Maintained Secondary	17.1%	29.8%	46.2%

Percentage of rural schools

Source: School Capacity 2009/10, Department for Education

Transport and access to local amenities

The Local Futures Audit assesses an area's accessibility using a connectivity score based on the concentration of, and proximity to, transport hubs such as motorway junctions, airports, ports and mainline railway stations.

Somerset has below average levels of connectivity ranking 43rd out of 53 sub-regions.

Using our composite measure, Somerset has an overall connectivity score of 11.31, which is well below the national average of 100, but not too dissimilar from the South West regional score of 23.09.

Somerset records a relatively low congestion with only 64.30 journeys per sq km, compared to 156 per sq km in Great Britain.

The proportion of people who use public transport is very low (2.52% compared to 14.81% nationally), whereas the proportion of people who travel to work by foot or cycle is above the national average.

The average journey time is also relatively low – 17.40 minutes compared to 20.32 minutes nationally.

The Audit sheds some light on commuting patterns in Somerset. The proportion of jobs filled by non-residents and the proportion of residents commuting outside the county is, in both cases, below the national average indicating that Somerset is a relatively self-contained labour market.

Out of the five districts, Taunton Deane is the best connected, ranked 251 out of 408. It is also the only district to have a net gain of commuters that is above the national average. Mendip on the other hand has the lowest connectivity score and the smallest proportion of people who travel to work by public transport of all the districts in the sub-region.

Source: The State of Somerset (February 2010)

Owing to the rural characteristic of Somerset, it is likely that young people will have significantly increased odds of experiencing transport as a barrier or constraint than similar young people who do not live in rural areas.

It appears that strategies to ensure the availability of a transport infrastructure that enables young people to participate in learning (and other activities) should examine closely the availability of transport in rural areas, in particular as there appears to be a greater level of need in such areas. Financial support to cover the cost of transport needs to be targeted at those young people most in need.

Local Amenities

The Local Futures Audit considers local amenities through a combination of indicators, including the density of national heritage sites and listed buildings, the availability of cultural amenities (such as cinemas, theatres and libraries), and employment in hotels and restaurants.

Somerset scores averagely on local amenities ranking 36th out of 53 sub regions.

Somerset has a relatively low provision of local amenities compared to other sub-regions with a local amenities score of 83.73, which is below both the regional and national average.

The number of national heritage sites is very low, at only 16.82 sites per sq km compared to a national average of 65.37. The number of cultural amenities (cinemas, museums, theatres, cultural heritage sites) is also lower than the average, but there are more listed buildings per 1,000 sq km.

The proportion of people employed in hotels and restaurants mirrors the sub-regional level and is above the national average. This suggests that the leisure and tourism industry is important in the county.

Within the sub-region, Taunton Deane is the only district to have a local amenities index above the national average. It also has good access to services, compared to the other districts and a large density of cultural amenities.

Mendip has the lowest level amenities score and West Somerset has the poorest access to services.

Childcare

Affordability

Childcare is recognised as good value by most people who use it. Costs are a barrier for families on lower incomes, and lone parents particularly. For families on lower incomes, without the support of the childcare element of the working tax credit, childcare is unaffordable. Promoting the take-up is an ongoing target for Somerset County Council.

Quality

A higher number of settings achieved 'Good' or 'Outstanding' Ofsted outcomes in Somerset than the national average. However, there were slightly more 'inadequate' outcomes. Quality of provision is critical to improving outcomes for children and remains an ongoing priority.

Demand

The most common reason for using childcare was to enable parents to access work. Demand for childcare is highest for children aged 3-4 and drops as children get older. Affordability was the most commonly expressed barrier to accessing childcare. Increasing the take-up of the childcare element of the working tax credit is critical, particularly in the most disadvantaged areas of Somerset if formal childcare is to be affordable.

Supply vs. Demand

Somerset has sufficient childcare to meet demand across the county and each Local Service Area (currently). There are some localised shortages of childcare (childminders, full day care, NEF places), but in many of our more rural areas only childminders would be sustainable.

Where significant shortages have been identified, work has been planned to address the local need, whether by offering start-up grants for childminders in each area or a new building planned to deliver full day care. In all cases, the sustainability of any new provision has been considered.

Nursery Education Funding in Somerset

Under Section 7(1) of the Childcare Act 2006, all children are entitled to a number of hours of free nursery education for 38 weeks per year from the term after the child turns 3 until they start school. In Somerset, this is known as Nursery Education Funded (NEF) entitlement. Because Somerset was a pathfinder authority, 3-4 year olds are entitled to 15 hours per week as opposed to 12 ½ hours in other areas. The entitlement can be accessed through any provider registered with Somerset County Council.

Provided Type	Number of providers
Childminder	12
Independent	15
Local Authority	20
Private	114
Voluntary	181
Total	342

Providers delivering NEF places in Somerset (January 2010)
Source: SCC Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (March 2010)

Children who had not accessed Nursery Education Funding in Somerset were identified through school entry rolls in September 2009. There were 186 children who had not accessed NEF. A letter was sent to the families of these children to see whether they were aware of their NEF entitlement, and to establish what their reasons were for not accessing NEF.

A concern regarding the ethnicity data is that 19% of parents not accessing NEF are from a BME background. This is more than double the percentage of the population as a whole who are of BME backgrounds.

During the last refresh of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, it was also noted that the uptake of NEF by looked after children was lower than that of their peers. This was investigated and it was determined that the reasons for non-take up were more to do with the ages of the children (terms at which they became eligible for NEF) and the need to settle children in a stable environment associated with the reasons they became looked after. In short, take-up of NEF by looked after children is as high as could reasonably be expected.

Children's Centres

Children's Centres are part of the national Change for Children and Every Child Matters agendas. These Centres serve children under 5 and families by delivering integrated services, which include:

- Integrated early years education and childcare;
- Family support and learning;
- Outreach to isolated and vulnerable families;
- Child and Family health services;
- Information and advice;
- Links to Job Centre Plus, Adult Learning and other specialists.

This is the Children's Centre core offer.

Children's Centres support the County Council in achieving accessible and responsive services across Somerset. The location of each Children's Centre was selected in consultation with the local community and most have been co-located on schools sites, or on land adjacent to school sites. Each Children's Centre is designated to deliver services to a reach of around 800 children aged 0-5, although they are open to all children, not just those within their reach. This means a parent could access services through a Children's Centre near to their place of work if it was more convenient.

Somerset now has 41 Children's Centres delivering services countywide, representing all phases of the Children's Centre delivery programme.

As part of the Government's aim to eradicate child poverty by 2020, Somerset was successful in a bid to run a new pilot aimed at helping parents get into work. The pilot runs from January 2009 to March 2011 in Watchet, Williton and Chard. Parents have access to JobcentrePlus Personal Advisers in Children's Centres to help them access work focussed services which include job hunting, benefit advice and training, boosting self confidence and employability skills. The adviser working as part of the children's centre team will provide opportunities for parents to access support in a trusted, safe environment and will explore the most effective way to engage with families and enable them to move closer to employment. The pilot will create opportunities to work more closely with community based providers, employers, debt counselling services, Citizens' Advice Bureau and other partners.

Extended Schools

The Government's extended schools agenda challenges schools to redefine the services offered and their part in the community. All schools were expected to provide the 5 key elements of the core offer of extended services by 2010, as required by their local community:

- Childcare in all primary and special schools;
 - Varied menu of activities outside the classroom, including study support, sports and music clubs;
 - Parenting support, by involving parents with their child's learning;
 - Swift and easy access to targeted and specialist services;
 - Community access to facilities including adult and family learning, ICT and sports facilities.
- Schools are not expected to provide these services alone, or even to deliver them on site; rather to work in partnership with other schools and third parties and signposting to existing services where appropriate.

As of September 2010 there is no longer the requirement to collect and submit data to support the National Indicator for Extended Schools, the target of having 99% of schools providing Extended Services nationally has been reached nationally.

As of July 2010, 100% of schools within Somerset were providing the full core offer of provision for children, above the national and regional average.

Healthy Schools: Schools within areas of multiple deprivation affecting children

Healthy Schools is a national priority. Within Somerset, 100% of schools are engaged in the National Healthy Schools programme and, as of July 2010, 97% of schools had achieved National Healthy Schools Status (NHSS), exceeding the March 2011 target of 85%. To attain the status, the school must be able to evidence that they meet 41 criteria grouped under the four themes of Personal, Social, Health and Economic Wellbeing education (PSHEe): Healthy Eating, Physical Activity and Emotional Health and Wellbeing.

Since September 2008, Somerset has been participating in the NHS South West Healthy Schools Plus (HS+) pilot, which seeks to tackle some of the most pressing issues and reduce health inequalities. As of July 2010, 49% of schools were engaged in the programme. The overall South West target is for 50% of all schools to be working at Healthy Schools Plus level by March 2011.

Of the 138 schools recruited in the 3 cohorts of Healthy Schools Plus, 13 (9.4%) have an average of 60% of pupils living within the lowest 3 deciles of poverty (Experian).

School Name	% of children in lowest 3 deciles of poverty
Halcon	97.2%
Sedgemoor Manor Junior	75%
Arch Bishop Cramner	73.8%
Sedgemoor Manor Infants	73.4%
St John Wellington	72.7%
Westover Green	70%
Holway Park	63.2%
Manor Court	59.4%
Barwick and Stoford	54%
Avishayes	46.5%
Pen Mill	43.2%
Vallis First	43%
Shepton Mallet Infants	40%

Source: Somerset Healthy Schools Programme Outcomes for Children and Young people 2009/10 Report

Child Poverty in Somerset – Key Messages

Deprivation in Somerset

- Whilst deprivation levels are low when compared to England, there are estimated to be over 14,700 children living in poverty.
- 14 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are ranked amongst the 20% most deprived in the country. These tend to be in relatively urban areas. Within these priority areas:
 - There is a higher proportion of lone parent families;
 - There is a greater proportion of residents facing income deprivation affecting children;
 - There is reduced access to private transport;
 - There is a higher proportion of residents claiming out of work benefits;
 - There is reduced educational attainment.
- 2008 Department for Work and Pensions data indicated that 14.8% of children (under 16) were living in poverty, with rates highest in rural West Somerset and Sedgemoor.
- Take-up of the childcare element of the Working Tax Credit in Somerset stands at 16.2% (below the national average of 18%).
- In the overall Child Wellbeing Index, Somerset ranks as the 37th highest Local Authority in the country (out of 149) for child wellbeing, although, at a local level, Sedgemoor's Bridgwater Central and Taunton's Lyngford Central perform particularly poorly.
- Based on Local Authority records, as of 31st March 2010 there were 3,381 'Children in Need' in Somerset. 44% of these had been classified as 'Children in Need' due to experiences of abuse or neglect.
- 10.29% of Somerset's pupils on the 2009/10 school roll are claiming Free School Meals (often used as a proxy measure for deprivation or low family income), compared to 8.65% the previous year. It is widely believed that more pupils are eligible but have not made a claim.

Household and Housing Information

- Taunton Deane has the highest proportion of lone parent households and West Somerset the lowest. 88% of lone parent households in the county are headed by a woman, although Somerset has more male lone parents than the national average. An average of 41.2% of lone parents are unemployed.
- Affordable housing is one of Somerset's biggest challenges. Somerset ranked 43rd out of 49 sub-regions in England and Wales in terms of affordability (1st being the most affordable).
- There are 18 LSOAs within the county where over 90% of dwellings are in the lower Council Tax Bands (used as a marker for socio-economic status). The majority of these areas are located within the main urban settlements of Bridgwater, Taunton and Yeovil.
- Rates of fuel poverty are particularly high in West Somerset, which is largely off the gas network and contains many solid-walled, 'hard to heat' homes.

Working and Earning Patterns

- Median gross full time annual pay in Somerset is below the national average, and the pay gap between men and women in full-time employment is more pronounced within the county than is the case nationally.
- More people of working age are in employment in Somerset than national and regional averages. However, this healthy picture is undermined by the greater proportion of people working in low wage sectors of the economy and lower proportion in higher paid, higher qualified areas.
- Somerset has slightly higher levels of part-time working than nationally. Levels are highest in Taunton Deane and West Somerset.
- Unemployment rates in Somerset are below the national average. At a district level, Sedgemoor and Taunton Deane have the highest rates of unemployment and West Somerset the lowest.

- It is estimated that 20% of children (aged under 16) in South Somerset are living in workless households – above national and regional averages.
- Of those people who are economically inactive in Somerset, 74.3% do not want a job. Of those that do, the largest groups are those on long term sick or those who are looking after a family/home.
- 10.3% of people of working age are self-employed in Somerset, compared with a national average of 9.1%.

Skills and Qualifications

- Only 25% of Somerset's population is qualified to degree level or above ('high skills') compared with 29% of the population of Great Britain (2008). In contrast, Somerset has a higher than average proportion of its resident working population qualified at NVQ2 and below.
- Educational attainment in the county is increasing, but over recent years at rates below the national average.

Vulnerable Groups

- **Teenage Parents:** The rate of under 18 conceptions in Somerset is falling, and is significantly lower than national and regional averages (based on latest ONS data for Quarter 2 (2009) data). 2005-07 aggregated ward data shows Taunton Deane's Lyngford ward as having the highest teenage conception rate in Somerset.
- **Disabled Children/Children with Disabled Parents:** There were 2,290 under-16 Disability Living Allowance claimants (August 2009). The Somerset Young Carers Project is currently working with 397 young carers.
- **NEETs:** There has been a national rise in NEETs as a result of rising youth unemployment due to the current economic conditions. The Somerset NEET outturn for 2009/10 increased slightly to 4.4% but remains one of the lowest rates in the country. As of July 2009, the largest number of NEETs were situated within Taunton's Halcon ward.
- **Gypsy/Traveller Children:** 572 recorded travellers were registered in Somerset schools (2008/09 AY). This is an increase in previous numbers, but may be in part attributable to better referral rates by schools to the county's Traveller Education Service. The number of caravans in the county has increased by 16% since July 2009. The majority of this increase has been seen in Mendip where caravan numbers have increased by 50%.
- **Care Leavers:** 71.1% of care leavers in Somerset were in education, employment and training (2009/10) – an improvement of 14.7% when compared to the previous year. The percentage of care leavers aged 19 living in suitable accommodation stood at 97.4% for 2009/10 – an 8.3% improvement when compared to 2008/09.

Access to Services

- The Index of Multiple Deprivation (2007) identified that access to services was a particular issue for many communities in Somerset. 6 areas within West Somerset rank amongst the top 1% most deprived in England in terms of access to housing and key local services, while a total of 47 areas in Somerset rank within the top 10% most deprived for this domain.
- Mendip has the lowest level provision of local amenities score in Somerset and West Somerset has the poorest access to services.
- Somerset has below average levels of transport connectivity, ranking 43rd out of 53 sub-regions.
- 100% of schools within Somerset were providing the full core offer of extended school provision for children (July 2010), above the national and regional average.
- There are 41 Children's Centres county-wide offering services to children under 5 and their families.

Key Messages by Area

Mendip

- Glastonbury St Benedicts and Shepton East ranked amongst the 20% most deprived Lower Super Output Areas in the country (IMD 2007);
- 14.2% of children (under 16) in Mendip are living in poverty. However, at ward level, rates are above the national average in parts of Frome and Glastonbury;
- 12.5% of the working age population in Mendip have no qualifications – the highest proportion of all Somerset districts;
- Mendip has the lowest level provision of local amenities score in Somerset (which is already below national and regional averages);
- Frome Welshmill and Glastonbury St Benedicts are the Mendip wards with the highest teenage conception rates;
- The rate of gypsy and traveller caravans per population is far higher in Mendip than national and regional averages.

Sedgemoor

- The highest concentration of deprived Lower Super Output Areas in Somerset is around Bridgwater, where 57% are within the top 30% most disadvantaged nationally;
- 16.8% of children (under 16) in Sedgemoor are living in poverty. However, at ward level, rates are above the national average in parts of Bridgwater, Highbridge and Woolavington;
- Bridgwater Sydenham has the highest rate of children living in poverty of all Somerset wards, with 37.3% of under 16s living in poverty (equating to 1 in 3);
- Bridgwater Sydenham Central is amongst the lowest 4% in England for levels of child wellbeing;
- Sedgemoor is the most affordable place to live in Somerset;
- Unemployment rates are highest within Sedgemoor;
- Bridgwater Victoria, Bridgwater Sydenham and Highbridge are the Sedgemoor wards with the highest teenage conception rates.

South Somerset

- Yeovil Central, East and West are ranked amongst the 20% most deprived Lower Super Output Areas in the country (IMD 2007);
- Whilst South Somerset has the lowest percentage of children (under 16) living in poverty (13.3%), it has the highest *number* of children in poverty (3,720);
- At ward level, rates of children living in poverty are above the national average in Chard Holyrood and Yeovil East;
- Parts of Yeovil are ranked amongst the lowest 20% in England for child wellbeing;
- Yeovil East, Yeovil Central and Yeovil West are the South Somerset wards with the highest teenage conception rates;
- South Somerset East has the largest population of minority ethnic groups in Somerset.

Taunton Deane & West Somerset

- Taunton Halcon North falls within the top 10% most deprived Lower Super Output Areas in England;
- Whilst West Somerset has the highest percentage of children (under 16) living in poverty (20.1%), it has the lowest *number* of children in poverty (995);
- At ward level, rates of children living in poverty are above the national average in Taunton (Halcon; Lyngford; Pyrland & Rowbarton), Alcombe East, Carhampton & Withycombe, and Watchet.
- Parts of Taunton and Highbridge are ranked amongst the lowest 20% in England for child wellbeing;
- Taunton Deane has the highest proportion of lone parent households, and West Somerset has the lowest;
- West Somerset has a higher rate of fuel poverty;
- Unemployment rates are high in Taunton Deane, but lowest in West Somerset;
- Taunton Deane's Lyngford ward has the highest teenage conception rate in Somerset at 83.0 per 1,000 girls aged 15-17.

For further information, please contact:

The Performance and Management Information Team
Children and Young People's Directorate
Somerset County Council
County Hall, Taunton
Somerset, TA1 4DY

Email: PMIT@somerset.gov.uk