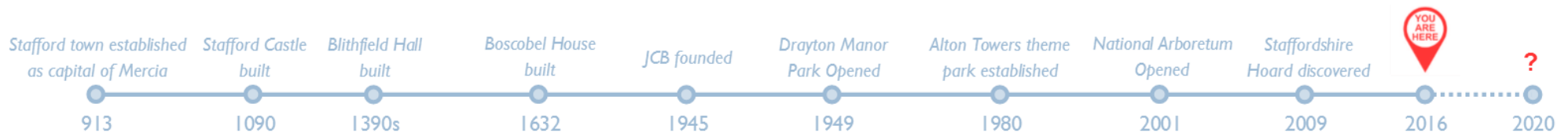
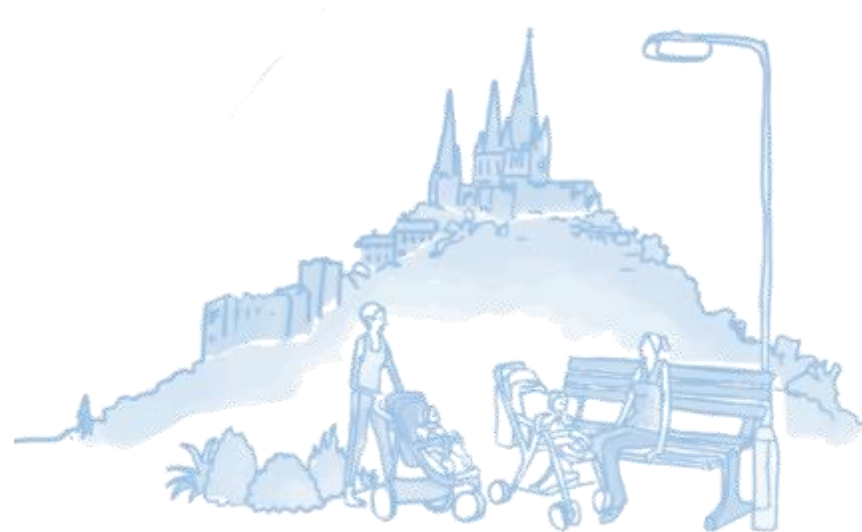


The Story of Staffordshire

2016

Executive Summary



Title	The Story of Staffordshire – Executive Summary
Description	The Story of Staffordshire explores our progress against our vision for becoming a county where everyone can prosper, be healthy and happy. It seeks to consider our challenges and opportunities, and what the future may look like for a number of key measures.
Date created	25 th October 2016 (version 3.0)
Produced by	Insight, Planning & Performance Team, Staffordshire County Council
	Additional copies of this report and relevant companion and supporting literature can be obtained from: http://www.staffordshireobservatory.org.uk
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The Story of Staffordshire – 2016

Foreword

Welcome to “The Story of Staffordshire 2016”. Staffordshire is a great place to live, work and invest in and has a proud history which makes us confident about our future. We have terrific opportunities for people to enjoy a good quality of life in safe and strong communities with low unemployment and better pay.

We are better placed in 2017 to weather any storm and take advantage of any opportunity. Last June Staffordshire voted to leave the EU in the referendum and we must take heed of that vote. There will be many changes in the years ahead and we must ensure the skills are in place for those future needs. We are an exporting county with links across the globe with bright hopes for the future. We must look at what we need here in Staffordshire, working with the local communities to ensure all have the opportunity to prosper, to be healthy and enjoy life to the full.

We want to see every child in Staffordshire attending a good or outstanding school, providing the opportunity to gain skills needed to land a high quality job and every family encouraged to live healthy, happy and productive lives.

We want to continue to see more people than ever in work with better paid jobs leading to an ever improving quality of life for local people through major investment programmes securing future growth and new better jobs.

We want to see Staffordshire's residents able to enjoy extended healthy years of life, in line with the improvements that medical science is making in life expectancy. We can only achieve this through partnership working across health, local authorities, the voluntary sector and the public at large.

The only way to achieve this is through community responsibility, working with public and private sector partners and our local communities, sharing and supporting each other to live fulfilling lives, with maximum independence and personal choice. Only then can we ensure that Staffordshire continues to have affordable, relevant and sensible public services in the future.

We all want to see a prosperous Staffordshire with a thriving economy creating wealth for all which enables us to all pay the taxes that we need for public services and those who really need our help.

Philip Atkins OBE

Leader, Staffordshire County Council

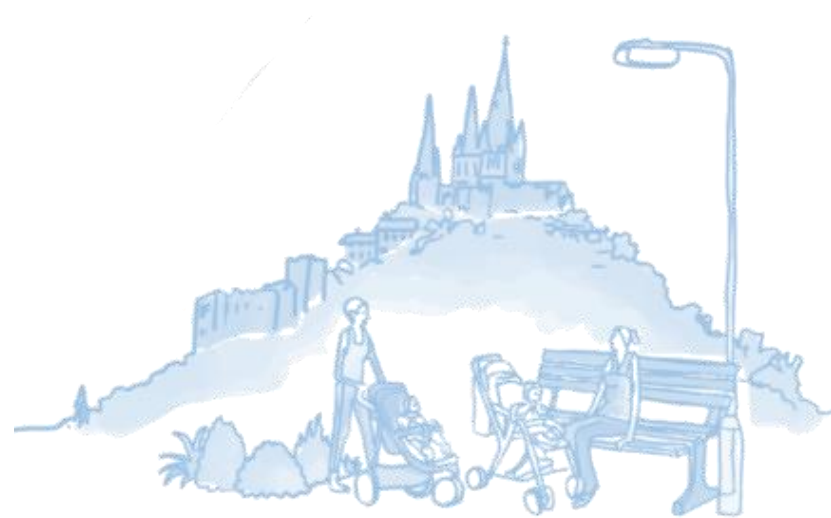
This year's edition of “The Story of Staffordshire” has a Brexit theme running through it, which reflects its place as the biggest story of the year. It combines the high level of analysis and insight on the social and economic health of Staffordshire that regular readers will expect, with a measure of additional analysis on what life outside the European Union may hold for our citizens.

As such, this publication represents the latest steps in Staffordshire County Council's efforts to keep up with, and, where possible, lead the debate on Brexit, making the most of the opportunities and avoiding the threats.

This year's publication is therefore deliberately aimed at a wider audience than previous editions. I hope that first time readers, particularly in sectors where we have not previously reached, will find it as useful as our more habitual audience have in planning their activities. I would certainly appreciate any feedback on your impressions and where you think that 2017's edition should focus.

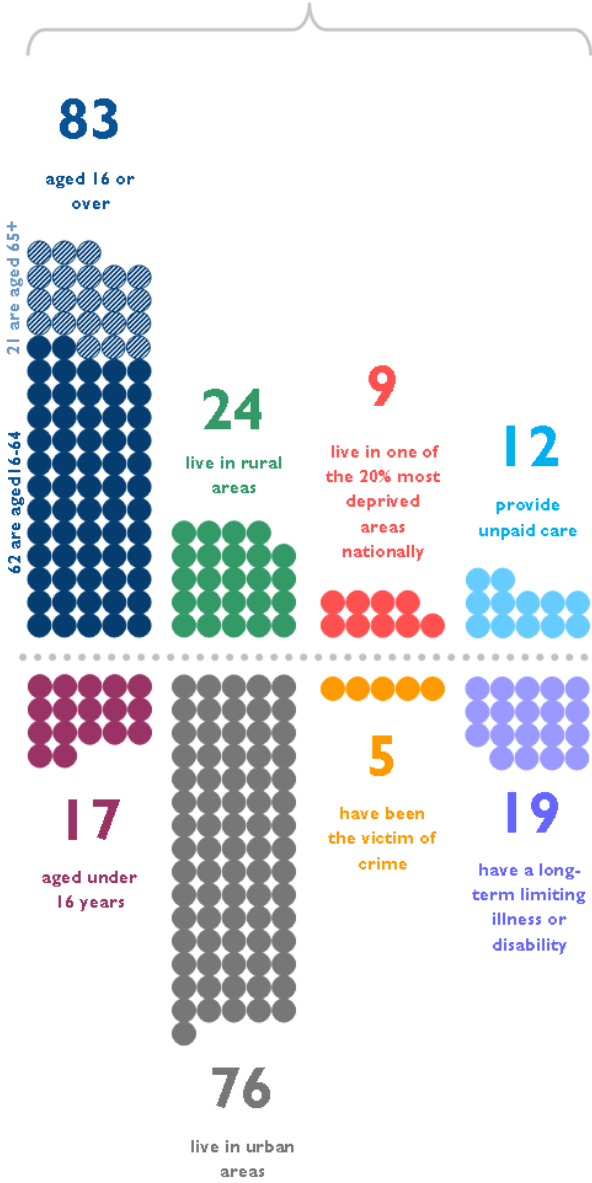
John Henderson CB

Chief Executive, Staffordshire County Council



Out of 100 people in Staffordshire...

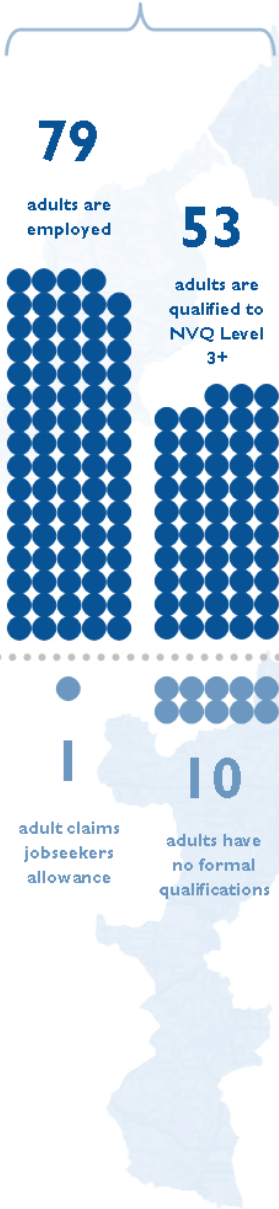
the total population



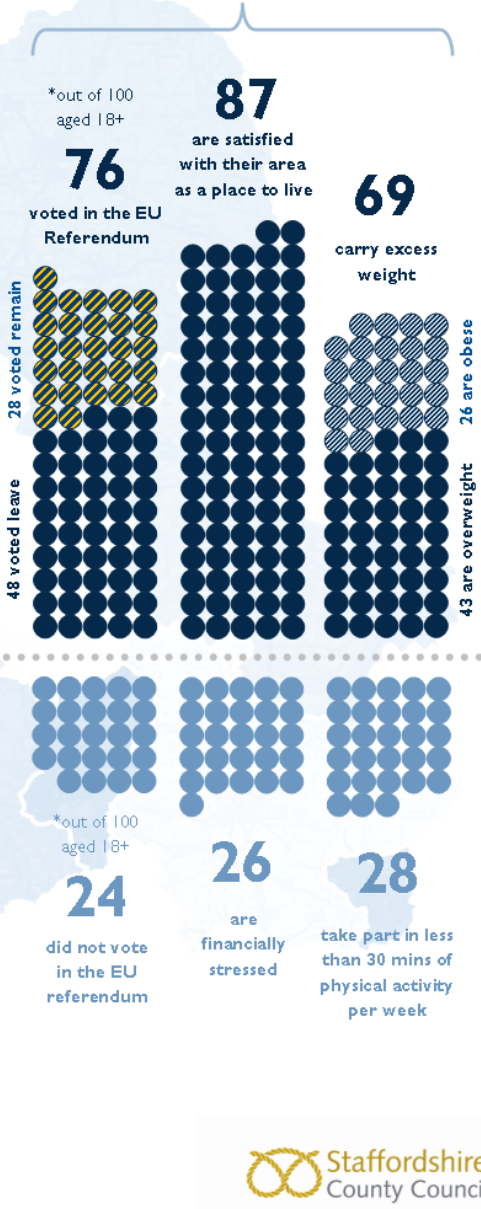
under 16



aged 16-64



aged 16+



Introduction

Each year the Story of Staffordshire explores our progress against our vision for becoming a county where everyone can prosper, be healthy and happy. It seeks to consider our challenges and opportunities, and what the future may look like for a number of key measures.

Arguably the most significant national change we have seen in the last 12 months is the result of the EU referendum. In this report we start to consider what the impact of 'Brexit' might be on Staffordshire, and ask some of the questions that we think will matter most to our county as we leave Europe.

The Story of Staffordshire focusses on the county as a whole. To accompany this report we have also produced Locality Profiles which provide detail at a district/borough level, presenting data at ward level to allow prioritisation and evidence-based business planning.

Key messages

- **The impact of Brexit:** The current position shows that the local economy has not been significantly affected by Brexit and we are largely seeing 'business as usual' in Staffordshire post-EU referendum. This may change once Article 50 is triggered, although given the timescales required to negotiate exit arrangements, we are unlikely to see any significant impact until at least 2020.
- **Supporting place-based planning:** There are a number of geographical locations in Staffordshire where families and communities face multiple issues, such as: unemployment or low incomes, low qualifications, poor housing, social isolation, ill-health (physical and/or mental) and poor quality of life. These areas require particular focus and an integrated partnership response.
- **Community resilience:** The demand on public sector funded services has increased considerably over the last decade. An ageing population means that these demands are likely to grow and become unsustainable in their present forms of delivery within the next 10 years. The relationship between citizen and state needs to change.

- **Education and employment:** Education and employment rates have improved but this has not been universal, especially amongst our most vulnerable communities. There are gaps in levels of adult skills and qualifications, and post-recession we are starting to see the proportion of our workforce employed in lower-paid industries increase.
- **Healthy ageing:** Life expectancy has increased but the number of years spent in good health has not. The number of years people spend in poor health towards the end of life in Staffordshire is 16 years for men and 21 for women. There is a 12 year gap in healthy life expectancy between the most deprived and least deprived communities.
- **Safer, happier and more supported:** While there are some geographical areas which experience above average levels of crime, the likelihood of being a victim of crime in Staffordshire remains low. Overall, residents report a good level of personal wellbeing and happiness. The number of children coming into contact with Children's Safeguarding services has seen a gradual increase with forecasts suggesting that this trend is likely to continue.

We have a number of pressing, known challenges in the county which are having an immediate impact on our families and communities. Therefore it is essential that we are able to create a balance, where we can consider and prepare ourselves for the future post-EU Staffordshire, whilst still retaining focus on the issues that matter most to our residents so that everyone has the opportunity to prosper, be healthy and happy.

How Staffordshire voted in the EU referendum:

Electorate: 653,314 Verified Ballots: 494,266 Turnout: 76%

Source: The Electoral Commission, EU referendum results

County  Results

37
(of 100 who voted)
Voted Remain



63
(of 100 who voted)
Voted Leave

Staffordshire Moorlands - 75% Turnout



Newcastle-under-Lyme - 74% Turnout



Stafford Borough - 78% Turnout



South Staffordshire - 78% Turnout



Cannock Chase - 71% Turnout



East Staffordshire - 74% Turnout



Lichfield District - 79% Turnout



Tamworth - 74% Turnout



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Brexit and Staffordshire

On 23rd June 2016 the United Kingdom electorate voted in favour of ending its membership of the European Union (EU). Staffordshire residents also voted in favour of leaving the EU. Of the 76% turnout, **63% voted leave, 37% remain.**

While the UK saw a short-term impact on the national economy in the immediate wake of the EU referendum, this calmed fairly quickly, and we are largely seeing **'business as usual'** in Staffordshire.

Given the Government's signalled intention to trigger Article 50¹ by March 2017, we are unlikely to see the impact of any major changes until 2020, though there remains a risk of market volatility during this time ("*Brexit turbulence*").

There are however a number of key questions we need to keep in view as the impact of Brexit nationally becomes better understood;

- Which geographies and key public service areas are likely to be affected by Brexit as an additional factor, and which will not be such a concern?
- Will re-negotiated trade deals and migration controls have any impact on the local workforce and economy?
- How can we ensure that our research and industry is able to thrive after EU grants end?
- What might be the result of a loss of investor confidence or slowing of the national or local economy?
- Will an end to some areas of EU legislation open up new opportunities for Staffordshire?

¹ Article 50 is the provision within the Lisbon Treaty which outlines the legal framework for a member state to terminate its membership of the European Union.

While it **might be possible to estimate** what some of the **impact of Brexit** might look like, it is important to remember that **this is entirely new territory**. The **UK will be the first** country to leave the EU and there will be **many unknowns** ahead.



In this section, we consider what some of the likely impacts of EU departure might be.

Economy - departure from the EU is likely to cause fluctuations in interest rates, inflation, and as a result, the cost of living. Early data suggests that while there has been a change in the value of the pound against some currencies, there has been little effect on the overall economy so far. However, once Article 50 is triggered, we may see a similar economic reaction to the referendum, and this is something we need to prepare for by studying post-referendum data as it becomes available.

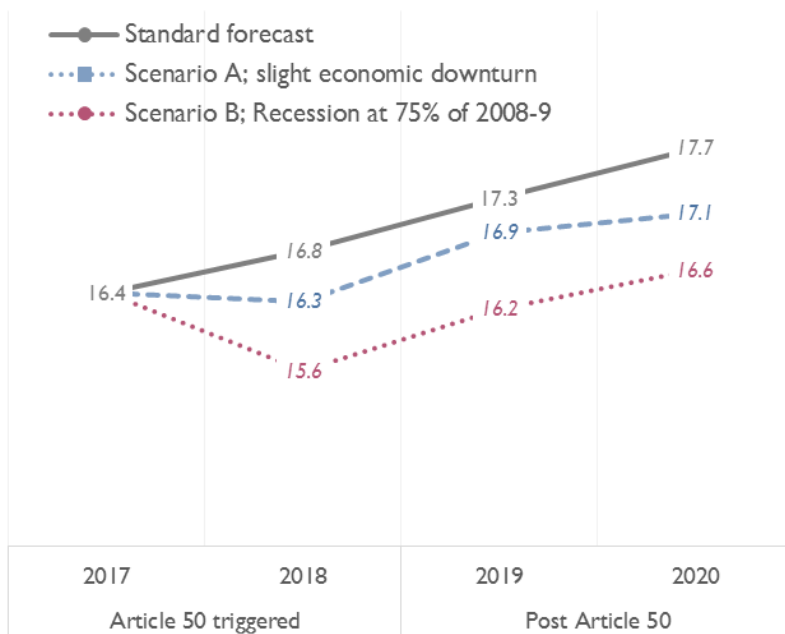
At present we do not know precisely what effect Brexit and any fall in the value of sterling might have on Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Gross Value Added (GVA). Recent economic projections published by KPMG (based on early data post-referendum) have revised GDP forecasts to reflect an expected 1.7% growth in GDP between 2015 and 2016, and 0.8% growth between 2016 and 2017.²

A local model has been developed to look at GVA through different scenarios based on data from the last recession. This shows that we may see a 3-7% reduction (equating to £0.6 to £1.1 billion) in our projected GVA between 2017 and 2020 (Figure 1).

² <https://home.kpmg.com/uk/en/home/insights/2016/09/economic-outlook-september-2016.html>

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Figure 1: Staffordshire GVA forecasts pre and post-Brexit
(figure in £ billions)



Model developed by Insight, Planning and Performance, Staffordshire County Council

Source, Office for National Statistics

Workforce - based on data from the 2011 Census around 13,700 Staffordshire residents were born in other EU nations – equating to 1.6% of the population - lower than West Midlands (2.4%) and England (3.7%).

The Census data also tells us that around 9,100 residents from other EU countries were in employment in Staffordshire, equivalent to 2.5% of our workforce, a lower proportion than both regionally (3.1%) and nationally (4.9%). Of the workforce, from other EU countries nationally 25% were working in 'distribution, hotels and restaurants', 20% in 'financial, real estate,

professional and administrative activities', 19% in 'public administration, education and health' and 12% in 'manufacturing'. However since then we have seen an increase in the number of migrants from other EU countries coming to Staffordshire.

During 2015/16 the total number of national insurance number (NINo)³ registrations to adult overseas nationals in Staffordshire was 4,900, which is an 18% increase from the previous year. The majority of these migrants were from other EU countries (4,300 people) and mainly from EU8 and EU2 countries.⁴ Around 40% of these migrants were resident in East Staffordshire where NINo registration rates during this period were higher than the England average.

Although a smaller proportion of the Staffordshire workforce are from other EU countries it is important that we start to gain an understanding of the skills that workers from other EU countries provide to each industry locally. We also need to consider how these skills gaps could be filled if the UK decides to opt out of free movement of labour within the EU.

Housing - While housing in Staffordshire tends to be overall more affordable than housing in the UK, if a recession or economic downturn follows Brexit, it is likely that construction will be one of the first industries to be affected. If this is a case, we might see a shortage in supply of new housing stock.

Crime - In the immediate aftermath of the EU membership referendum the UK saw an increase in some racially-motivated crimes. Locally Staffordshire Police also reported very small increases in numbers of hate crime. In order to maintain community cohesion, this is something that will need to be monitored and responded to rapidly throughout EU exit talks.

³ A national insurance number (NINo) is generally required by any overseas national (including students working part-time) looking to legally work or claim benefits or tax credits in the UK. This information therefore provides us with a proxy measure of migration for adult overseas nationals registering for a NINo.

⁴ EU8 countries: Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia; EU2 countries: Romania and Bulgaria

Staffordshire's population

Staffordshire has a resident population of 862,600.

There are 62,700 more people aged 65 now than 20 years ago. This trend is predicted to continue with Staffordshire seeing its older population grow faster than average (Figure 2).

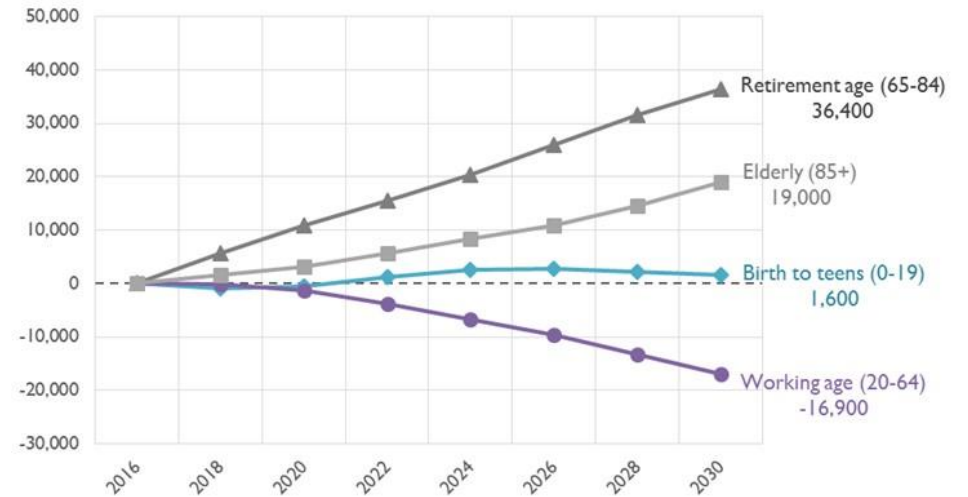
The **increase in older populations** is thought to be the **most significant factor** in the increasing **prevalence of rural isolation**.

These demographic changes mean there will be a reduction in the ratio of working age people to older people across Staffordshire which has implications for the economy and workforce as well as health and care services.

At present, there are approximately three working age adults to one pension age adult in Staffordshire, compared to four to one across England overall. This ratio has fallen from over five in 1985 to three in 2015 and is predicted to continue to fall to two by 2030.

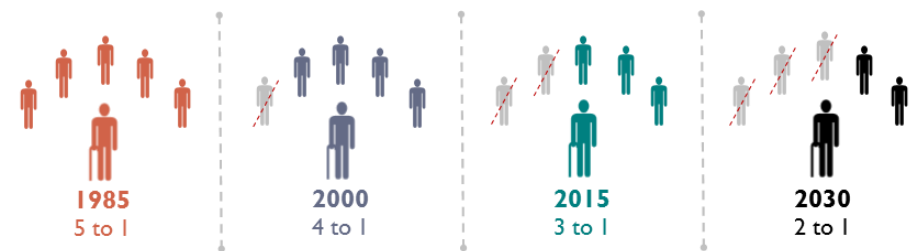
Staffordshire is a relatively affluent area but has notable pockets of high deprivation, particularly in urban areas and some hidden deprivation in remote rural areas.

Figure 2: Population projections in Staffordshire



Source: 2014-based population projections, Office for National Statistics, Crown copyright

Figure 3: Trends in dependency ratios for older people in Staffordshire



Source: Mid-year population estimates, Office for National Statistics, Crown copyright and 2014-based population projections, Office for National Statistics, Crown copyright

Supporting place-based planning

All of our **outcomes for our residents**, families and communities are **affected by a wide range** of social, demographic, environmental and economic **factors which are inextricably linked** (Figure 4). It is often the **same families and communities** that have poor outcomes.

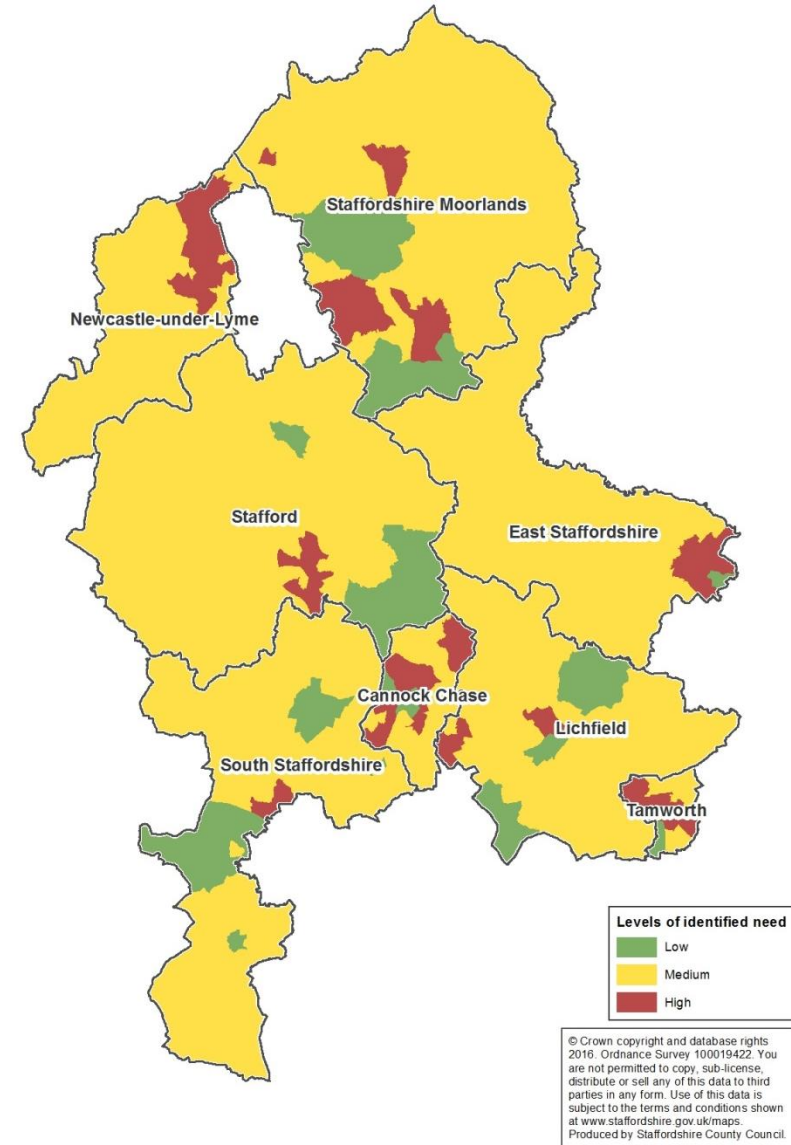
Figure 4: Wider determinants of health and wellbeing



Dahlgren and Whitehead (modified)

For us **to achieve our vision** for Staffordshire, particularly within the current financial climate, **we need to target** our efforts in a holistic way towards **those who experience the greatest levels of inequality and** who demonstrate the **highest levels of vulnerability**. Using a more evidence-based approach to planning interventions and support will have the greatest impact. In Staffordshire we have developed a ward level 'risk' index to identify areas which are most likely to be experiencing multiple inequalities and needs to support effective targeting of resources (Figure 5).

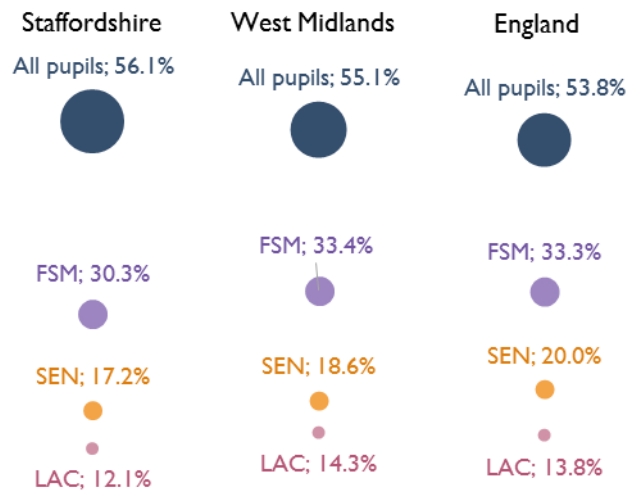
Figure 5: Levels of needs for Staffordshire wards



Bridging the skills and employment gap

Educational attainment has continued to improve in Staffordshire. However there remain key inequalities in academic attainment and levels of qualification, which are determined largely by socio-economic factors and the environment in which we live in.

Figure 6: The education gap in Staffordshire: achieving at least five GCSEs at grade A*-C incl. English and maths, 2014/15



Key: FSM – Children eligible for free school meals; SEN – children with special educational needs; LAC – children who are looked after

Source: Department for Education

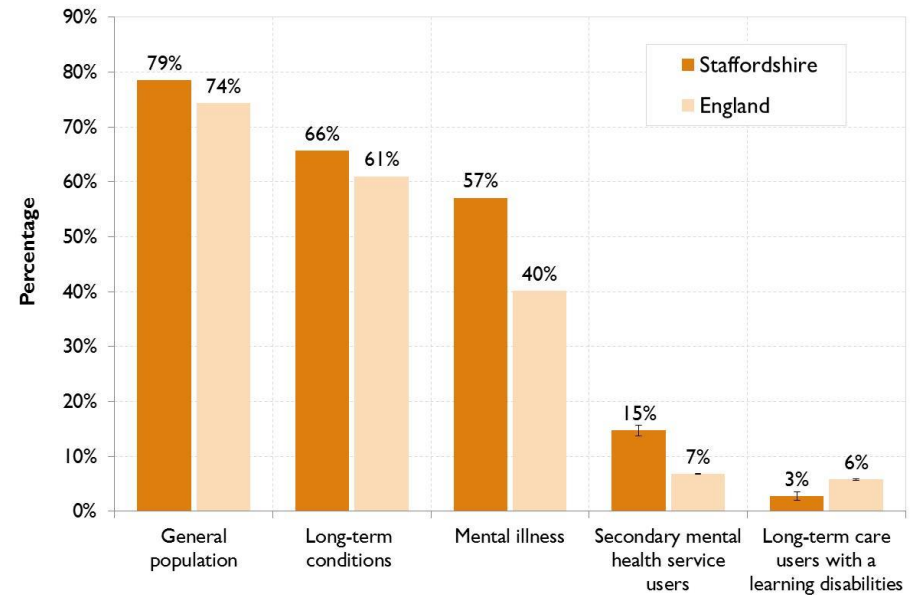
The proportion of **adults** of working age who are **qualified to at least NVQ level 3** (equivalent of A-levels) is **lower than the national level** and projections show that the gap between Staffordshire and England will widen over time. To enable our working-age population to upskill we need to consider how our digital and community capacity enablers may support residents with low levels of qualifications to easily access online or community learning opportunities.

Staffordshire has **made a good recovery** from the recession with **employment rates improving** and Jobseeker Allowance (JSA) claimant counts falling. This recovery has not been universal and some communities in Staffordshire still face barriers accessing employment - these will need to be tackled to reduce the impact of financial stress for families and residents within these areas.

only 3% of adults in Staffordshire **with learning disabilities** are **in paid employment**.



Figure 7: Comparison of employment rates. 2015/16

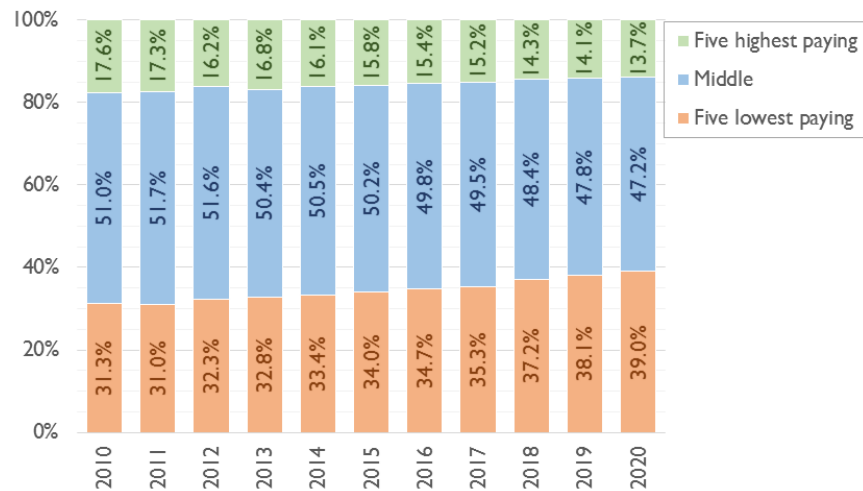


Source: NHS Digital Indicator Portal (<https://indicators.hscic.gov.uk/webview/>), Copyright © 2016, Health and Social Care Information Centre and Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF), England 2015-16, Copyright © 2016, Health and Social Care Information Centre.

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Employment - There was a steady growth in the number of jobs between 2008 and 2014 mainly in wholesale and retail, manufacturing and health and social work. If this continues through to 2020, there will be around 38,000 additional jobs in Staffordshire. However, these **projected increases** are likely to be in **lower-paying industries**. There is therefore a **need to upskill our residents** to both counter this shift in the workforce towards lower skilled, lower paying industries, and to attract new businesses within identified priority sectors to Staffordshire.

Figure 8: Distribution of employment based on median industry pay in Staffordshire



Source: Business Register and Employment Survey, Office for National Statistics (figures may not add due to rounding)

Many local businesses continue to report that the skills of our residents do not meet their needs. There is therefore a need to support the development of the range of skills to meet current and future business requirements.

Productivity - Staffordshire's £15.3 billion of Gross Value Added (GVA) in 2014 accounted for just over 13% of the total West Midlands regional GVA. This is the second highest proportion (behind Birmingham) amongst all 14 areas within the West Midlands Region, and more than one billion than the GVA generated by any other 'Shire' county in the West Midlands. However the 2014 GVA per head in Staffordshire was £17,787 which is lower than both the West Midlands average of £20,086 and the England average of £25,367.

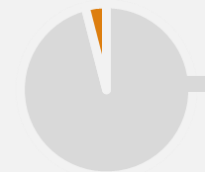


Around **a third** of all **GVA in Staffordshire** is **generated by two industries** out of eighteen; **Wholesale and Retail**, and **Manufacturing**

The creation and survival of new businesses is of crucial importance to the longer term sustainability and viability of the economy. The overall number of business start-ups in Staffordshire dipped sharply during the economic downturn. The rate has increased in recent years but remains below regional and national levels. Business survival rates in Staffordshire are similar to the national average.

only 4%

of businesses in the county employ **50 or more** people...



...however, **these 4%** of businesses provide

53%

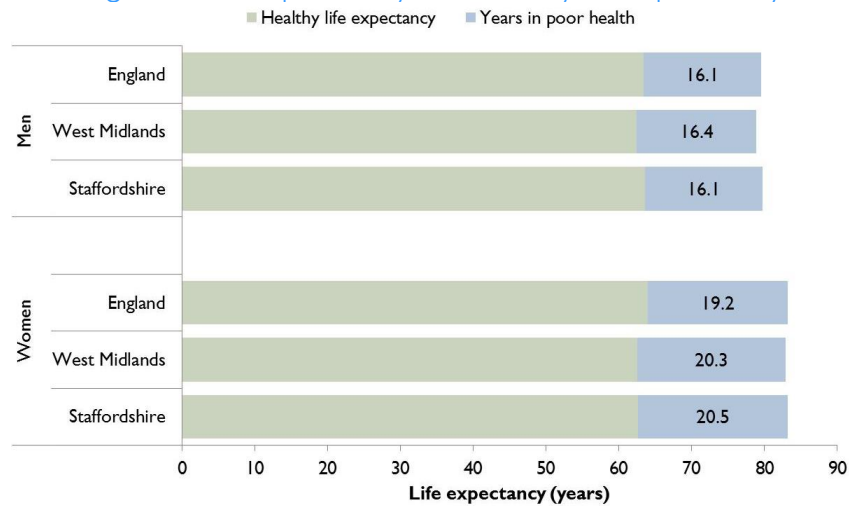
of **all employment**.



Healthy ageing

We have seen **increases in life expectancy** but these have not been matched by similar declines in ill-health. **Women live longer than men but they spend more of their lives in poor health.** There are also large inequalities in life expectancy (six year gap) and healthy life expectancy (twelve year gap) across Staffordshire

Figure 9: Life expectancy and healthy life expectancy, 2012-2014

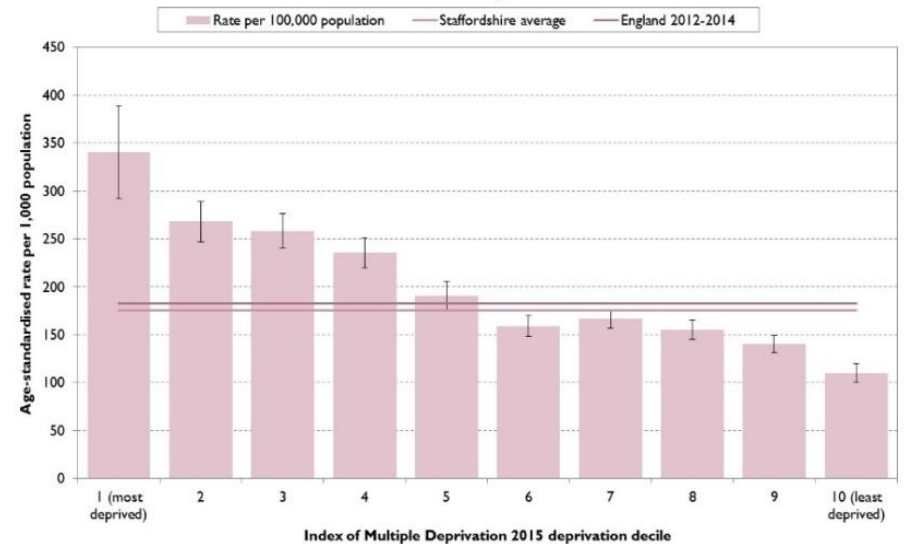


Source: Office for National Statistics, Crown copyright

Unhealthy lifestyles are a large contributor to **preventable ill-health**. Large numbers of our residents have excess weight, eat unhealthily and are inactive. Unhealthy lifestyles (such as smoking and childhood obesity) are more prevalent amongst our most vulnerable communities.

Preventable deaths rates in Staffordshire have fallen and are lower than England. However, not everyone is benefiting from these improvements with **people living in the most deprived communities twice as likely to die early** than those in the least deprived communities (Figure 10).

Figure 10: The preventable mortality gap in Staffordshire, 2010-2014



Source: Primary Care Mortality Database, Office for National Statistics, Mid-year population estimates, Office for National Statistics, Crown copyright, Public Health Outcome Framework, Public Health England, <http://www.phoutcomes.info/> and Indices of Deprivation 2015, Communities and Local Government, Crown Copyright 2015

40%

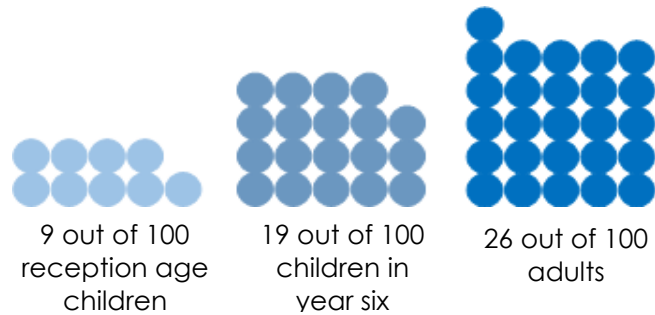
of ill-health
is preventable with healthier lifestyles.



People with the unhealthiest lifestyles tend to live in more deprived communities. Whilst the burden of ill-health from smoking appears to be improving the impact of poor diets, inactive lifestyles and excessive drinking remains considerable.

The Story of Staffordshire – 2016

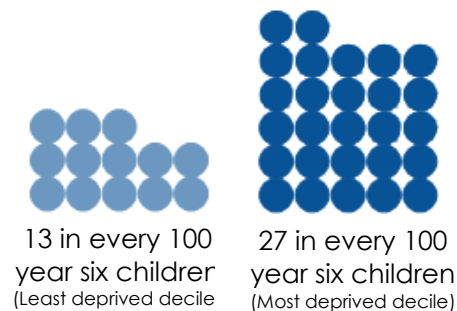
Figure 11: Obesity in the Staffordshire population



Source: Public Health Outcome Framework, Public Health England, <http://www.phoutcomes.info/>

- Staffordshire has higher alcohol-related admission rates than England
- Around seven in ten Staffordshire adults have excess weight and 26% are obese, both higher than England
- About three out of ten Staffordshire adults are physically inactive
- The proportion of children who are obese doubles between Reception (9%) and Year Six (19%) and increases further into adulthood (26%)
- Children from poorer families tend to have more obesity and excess weight and this is predominately due to the food they eat but also insufficient levels of physical activity (Figure 12)

Figure 12: Obesity by deprivation decile in Staffordshire, 2014/15



Source: National Child Measurement Programme data extracts

Staffordshire has a **high number of unpaid carers** which is predicted to increase. This will likely result in a significant '**care gap**' and a possible different approach will need to be taken to support current and future carers who are often older, in poor health and isolated themselves.

3,300

more people in Staffordshire will need to be **providing unpaid care** by **the year 2020** in order maintain current proportions of unpaid care provision.



An enhanced role of community capacity, and innovative use of technology could help to support those who provide care to improve their lives and maintain the independence of the person they care for, for longer.



Around **50%** of **mental health** problems are **established by age 14**, and **75% by age 24**.

Good mental health and wellbeing is important for our physical health, relationships, education, training, work and in achieving our potential. However **poor mental health is one of the biggest challenges** we face today with around one in four people experiencing a mental health problem during their life time and one in six during the year. There are some stark differences in outcomes between those with a mental illness and the general population in Staffordshire. Some of the inequalities include;

- **People with a severe mental illness** in Staffordshire are over **three times more likely to die early** than the general population.
- Around **two-fifths** of Staffordshire residents **with a serious mental illness smoke**. This is more than double rates seen in the general population.

The Story of Staffordshire – 2016

- Around **one in four** (26%) people who are **admitted to hospital** unexpectedly **have a mental health condition** and stay there longer than people without a mental health condition

Lack of social connections can be **very damaging to our health** and social connectivity can reduce the risk of mortality and the development of, or delay the onset of, certain diseases such as dementia. Lone pensioners are particularly at risk of loneliness and social isolation and the ageing population will see the number and percentage of lone pensioner households in Staffordshire increase.

Health and social care services will be under increasing strain due to rising numbers of older people with poor mental health, mild cognitive illness and dementia. **The increase in dementia** of 23% in Staffordshire **is the largest proportional increase** amongst any of our statistical neighbours.

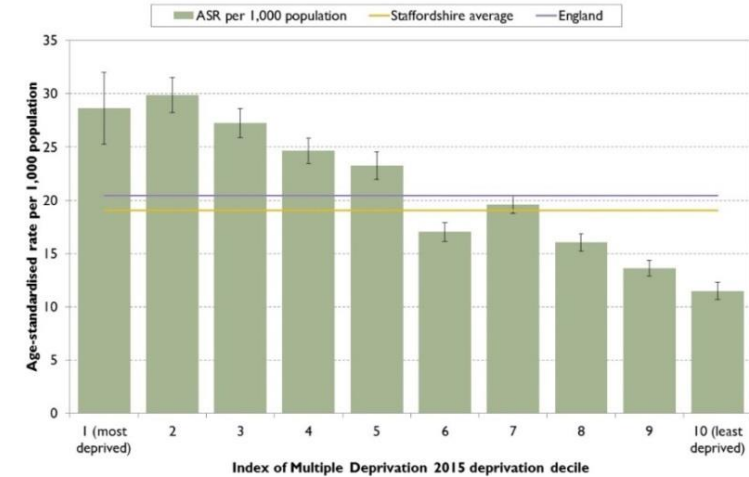
There are estimated to be **2,700 more** people aged 65 and over **suffering from dementia by 2020** than there were in 2015.



The **ageing population**, particularly in the very old age groups and the proportion of life spent in poor health, will have a **significant impact on the requirement for adult social care** and will place our social care system under extreme pressure. People in the most deprived areas of Staffordshire have more multiple conditions and are much higher users of Council-funded social care services (Figure 13).

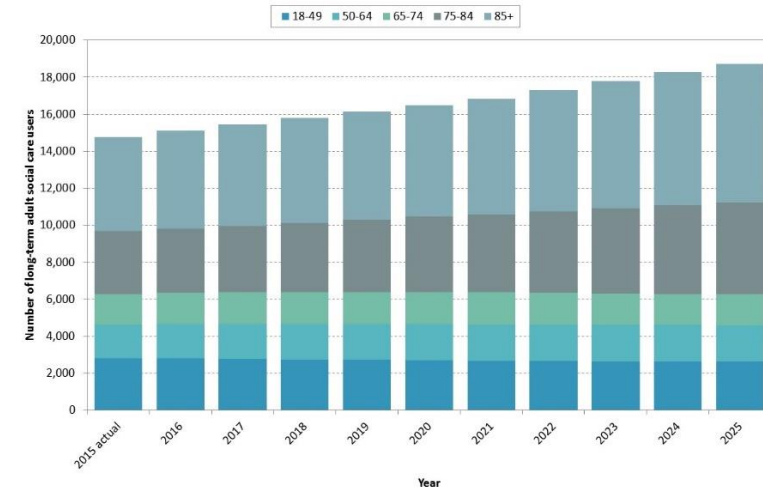
Based on population growth alone, the **number** of people **in Council-funded long-term care** in Staffordshire is expected to **increase by** around **1,700** by 2020. The **current model** for health and care is **not financially sustainable** to meet the predicted increase in older people with multiple long-term conditions or more complex needs.

Figure 13: Long-term adult social care by deprivation decile in Staffordshire, 2015/16



Source: Operational Intelligence and Performance Team, Staffordshire County Council, Office for National Statistics, Mid-year population estimates, Office for National Statistics, Crown copyright and Indices of Deprivation 2015, Communities and Local Government, Crown Copyright 2015

Figure 14: Projections for long-term adult social care in Staffordshire

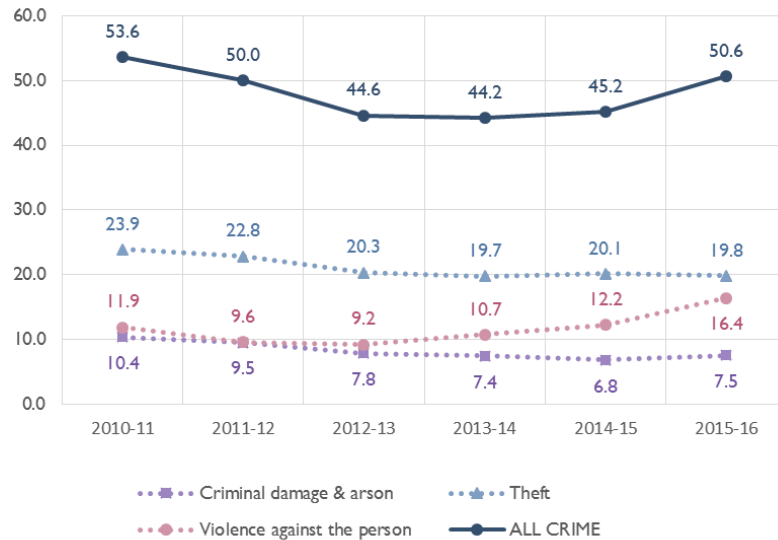


Source: Operational Intelligence and Performance Team, Staffordshire County Council and 2014-based population projections, Office for National Statistics, Crown copyright

Safer, happier and more supported

Safer communities - Staffordshire has **relatively low levels of crime** with residents generally **feeling safe**. During 2015/16 38,900 crimes were reported to Staffordshire Police, equating to a rate that is lower than the England average. However, when people become victims of crime it can have damaging and lasting impacts.

Figure 15: Trends in Staffordshire crime rates per 1,000 population



Source: Staffordshire Police

As well as ensuring we **support the victims** of crime it is **vital that we** get upstream to **tackle the root causes of criminal behaviour**. Analysis of the needs of offenders in Staffordshire has highlighted four key risk factors associated with offending behaviour; substance misuse, employment, education and training, mental health and accommodation. Targeting these risk factors offers us the best opportunity to **'break the cycle'** of offending behaviours.

Staffordshire, as in other parts of the country, faces the **emerging threats of modern slavery, child sexual exploitation, terrorism and serious organised crime**. Whilst the local frequency of these incidents may not be high, the potential impact and harm is great.

Cyber crime - as an ever growing number of people join the digital world, the risk of becoming the victim of online crime increases. Experimental figures from the 2016 national crime survey suggest that 51% of all fraud is committed digitally. Based on these estimates around **47,000 people in Staffordshire are at risk** of being the victim of either online fraud or a computer misuse related crime (such as hacking, ransomware and viruses).

Figure 16: Estimated number of cyber crime victims in Staffordshire



Source: 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

The Story of Staffordshire – 2016

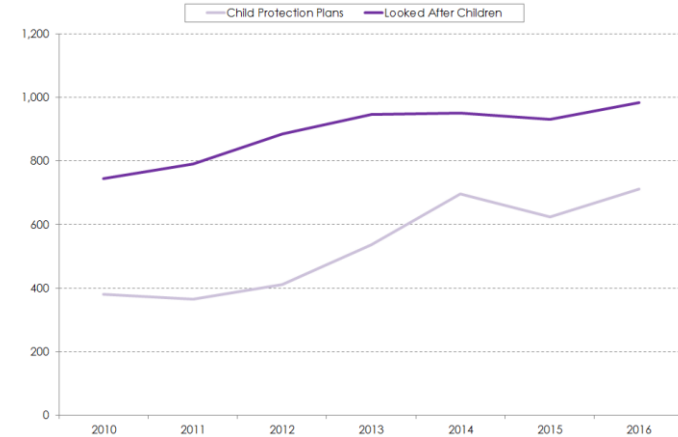
Domestic abuse is a key issue for our communities, due to its often hidden and long-term nature, which can lead to wide-ranging consequences. In 2015/16 there were 13,200 domestic crimes and incidents recorded in Staffordshire. Although rates of domestic abuse locally have increased it is nationally accepted that there is **significant under-reporting** of domestic abuse with the true scale of domestic abuse estimated as being as high as 44,000 cases per year. Analysis of data collected by domestic abuse support provided in Staffordshire highlights that **children were present** in the home for over three quarters of victims accessing their services.

Safeguarding children - Insight suggests that for every 100 children in Staffordshire the majority will be growing up in stable, loving households. However, out of 100 children:

- four would have been allocated a social worker; of these, one would be in care or be subject to a child protection plan.
- three would be receiving targeted, early help from Families First.
- 14 would be living in poverty
- 15 would have a disability or special educational needs
- two would experience living with parents where domestic abuse, substance misuse and mental health concerns impact on their daily lives.

Our safeguarding gateway (First Response) receives on average 750 calls per month. **Staffordshire has seen a gradual increase in children's safeguarding activity over recent years with forecasts suggesting that this trend is likely to continue** (Figure 17). Rates of children subject of a Child Protection Plan and Looked After Children are similar to the national averages. The most common reasons for a child becoming subject to a Child Protection Plan are neglect (around half of all cases per year) and/or emotional abuse (around a third of all cases per year).

Figure 17: Staffordshire children's safeguarding trends as at March (numbers)



Source: Local Authority Interactive Tool (LAIT) and Families First, Staffordshire County Council

Public perceptions of life in Staffordshire - Staffordshire is a **great place to live**, where most people enjoy a **good quality of life**. In March 2016, 87% of Staffordshire residents were **satisfied with their area as a place to live**. This is a slightly lower figure than in previous years but similar to the latest national average of 86%.

Data from the 2015/16 national wellbeing measures indicate that similar to England the majority of Staffordshire residents report **high levels of overall wellbeing**:

- 81% of people feel satisfied with their lives
- 75% of people feel happy
- 67% of people do not feel anxious
- 84% feel the things they do in their life are worthwhile

In conclusion ...

For the majority of our residents, Staffordshire is a great and a safe place to live. The county recovered well from the recession, without seeing some of the negative long term effects experienced elsewhere in the West Midlands. Instead we have benefited from new investment in our infrastructure and have welcomed new employers, as well as supporting expansion from existing businesses.

However, while we can see that employment has grown since the recession, a lot of this growth has happened in lower paid industries. There are also gaps in levels of adult skills and qualifications, which need to be addressed if Staffordshire is to continue to prosper and build on its position within the West Midlands and the wider UK economy.

Improving the county's skill levels needs to start in our schools. While most children achieve well (and in line with England) at Key Stage 4 (GCSEs), some inequalities remain, particularly for our most vulnerable children. These gaps in attainment can create a barrier for those who are already at risk of experiencing poor outcomes later in life.

Our ageing population continues to be one of the most important considerations in our planning. The number of working age adults per older person has declined substantially since 1985 with the number of people aged 65 and older in Staffordshire increasing more quickly than across England and the West Midlands. This has profound implications for both unpaid care provision and current approaches to service delivery which are likely to become unsustainable.

While overall life expectancy has increased, the number of years of life spent in good health has not. In addition, there is a large gap in healthy life expectancy between the most deprived and least deprived communities. Currently too many of our residents have excess weight, eat unhealthily and are inactive - we need to turn this around to improve quality of life and reduce demand for services.

With the challenge of our rapidly ageing population and ongoing financial pressures we need to target our efforts towards those who experience the highest levels of vulnerability. In some localities, challenges such as unemployment, low income, low qualifications, poor housing, social isolation, ill-health (physical and/or mental) and poor quality of life all co-exist. These areas require particular focus and an integrated partnership response in order to improve outcomes and address inequalities.

It is expected that there will be a degree of early economic uncertainty when Article 50 is triggered in 2017. It is estimated that the county may see some decline in employment as a result, although this is unlikely to be of the scale seen at the time of the last recession. Given that provisions in Article 50 set out a two-year exit strategy, it is unlikely that residents of Staffordshire will see any impact of Brexit until after 2020.

While we may not see any true impact of Brexit until our EU membership ends, there are a number of questions which we need to answer between now and 2020. There will need to be consideration of the effect that renegotiated trade arrangements and migration controls might have on the Staffordshire workforce and economy, and whether an end to some areas of EU legislation might present new opportunities for the county.

Simultaneously, we have a number of pressing, known challenges in the county which are having an immediate impact on our families and communities. Therefore it is essential that we are able to create a balance, where we can consider and prepare ourselves for the future post-EU Staffordshire, whilst still retaining focus on the issues that matter most to our residents so that everyone has the opportunity to prosper, be healthy and happy.

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