



Community
Foundation

Northumberland's
Vital Issues
2017

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Introduction

In 2016 we published the second edition of Northumberland's **Vital Signs**, a community philanthropy guide that sought to assess the vitality of our communities and identify how philanthropy can make a difference in a range of areas critical to quality of life.

The research for this was referenced online rather than in a separate Vital Issues report. In 2017 we will be publishing Vital Signs North East, and so we have decided to update this 2016 report. This will bring it closer in line with two new reports covering Tees Valley, County Durham and Darlington commissioned for 2017.

Much of the evidence used is drawn from government and local government sources, and we are very grateful to local authorities, in particular, for continuing to make high quality data on local performance freely available, particularly ward-level and other lower-level data sets which are especially useful in identifying local patterns of need and opportunity.

We have used the most up to date information wherever possible, but in a small number of cases the data is slightly older, for instance anything that is based on the 2011 Census. Although the Census data is now six years old, we still believe it has a value because many of the aspects of life measured remain stable over time, and because it is available at a much smaller geographic level, allowing us to differentiate between communities and neighbourhoods. Wherever possible we have supplemented older data with other additional information to ensure that we are providing an accurate picture of the circumstances in 2017.

In addition to gathering statistical and qualitative data about Northumberland, we also took the opportunity during 2016 to discuss the content of an earlier draft of this report with people and organisations in the area to get their impressions on the key issues affecting people in the county. We are very grateful for their time and input, and they are listed in the 'Acknowledgements' section towards the back of this report.

The report is structured around ten key themes which cover the major aspects of everyday life. Each section concludes with suggestions for where philanthropic resources could helpfully be directed to address the issues identified.

In addition, while drawing together the report, a key theme emerged which cuts across and runs through the ten themed sections: **Inequality**. Northumberland scores well overall against many of the measures we have used for the purposes of this report. And yet it is impossible to overlook the fact that experiences can vary widely between those in the better off communities within the county and those in its more deprived areas. The contrast is sometimes obvious, for example if we compare South East Northumberland with many of the county's more prosperous rural areas. But it can be hidden too: there are neighbourhoods tucked away in prosperous market towns that have as high a level of deprivation as anywhere in the North East. But inequality is also felt at the individual level, for those in isolation who lack access to the services they need to play a part in community life, look after their families or just stay safe. Inequality, as has been well documented, is the enemy of a strong and prosperous community and as such tackling it will be a key task for local philanthropy.

Fairness and inequality

1.1 Overview

This theme is about equality and inequality in the broadest terms. This includes financial measures such as income levels, but also covers factors such as life expectancy and access to services.

1.2 Understanding poverty

It is useful to provide some definitions of poverty to contextualise the issues in Northumberland.

Absolute poverty is defined as a lack of sufficient resources to meet basic needs, usually taken to include food, clean water, shelter and clothing. Only those at the very margins of society are usually considered to fall into this category, for example people who are homeless. However, given the rise in the number and take-up of foodbanks, this assumption is no longer so robust. The Trussell Trust has reported a massive increase in the number of food parcels being issued, with an increase across the country of 919% between 2011-12 and 2016-17 (table 1). In the NE region, the increase in the same period was more than eight times as much, at 8309%

Table 1 – Trussell Trust 3-day emergency food supplies issued¹

		North East	England
2016-17	Adults	38,892	746,016
	Children	22,675	436,938
	Total	61,567	1,182,954
2011-12	Adults	519	82,679
	Children	222	46,018
	Total	741	128,697
Change	Adults	7494%	902%
	Children	10214%	949%
	Total	8309%	919%

There are around 14 foodbanks based across Northumberland². The example of West Northumberland Food Bank illustrates the challenges they face, even outside of those parts of the county where deprivation is most concentrated and visible. In 2013 - 2016 they have distributed to 685 households in hardship, including 77 homeless people, with half of recipients living in the deprived ward of Hexham East. The most telling data in these findings is the different reasons why people turn to the foodbank: low paid work; impact of benefit sanctions and delays and domestic violence and debt

Relative poverty means having low income or resources compared to the average, and reflects the local level of wealth – relative poverty in India is very different to relative poverty in New York. According to Full Fact³, relative poverty means that a person cannot afford an ordinary living pattern, i.e. they are excluded from the activities and opportunities that the average person enjoys. A household is in relative poverty (also called relative low income) if its income is below 60% of the median household income.

By contrast, **social exclusion** refers to the way in which individuals or communities are systematically excluded from accessing rights, services, or opportunities that are normally

available to people, and which are fundamental to social integration. The exclusion is usually caused by circumstances including unemployment, low income, race, religion, disability or ill health. The impact of the exclusion is often heightened by negative attitudes and social stigma, creating further barriers to access.

Severe and multiple disadvantage (SMD) occurs when someone faces multiple, often related and mutually reinforcing, issues which create a high degree of exclusion from society and lead to high levels of stigma. The four issues that are most often found together are offending, substance misuse, homelessness and mental health problems. A study by Lankelly Chase mapped the locations of people living with SMD in 2015. This shows a relatively low prevalence in Northumberland as a whole, although it is likely that the figure is higher in the county's most deprived neighbourhoods⁴.

1.3 Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015

The 2015 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) ranks local authorities across the country on their average multiple deprivation score and by the proportion of their neighbourhoods (Lower Layer Super Output Areas or LSOAs) that fall within the 10% most deprived in the country, and it is this latter rank that is recommended for judging local authority deprivation.

Table 2 (below) gives the scores and proportions of LSOAs for Northumberland. This places the county as a whole in the top 50% of similar areas in England in terms of levels of deprivation, but signals the existence of a number of very deprived neighbourhoods in the top 10%. These are concentrated in South East Northumberland.

Table 2 – IMD 2015 average scores⁵

Local Authority District name (2013)	IMD - Average score	IMD - Rank of average score (UK)	IMD - Proportion of LSOAs in most deprived 10% nationally	IMD - Rank of proportion of LSOAs in most deprived 10% nationally	NE rank	UK decile
Northumberland	20.52	136	0.07	116	11	4

The IMD average score is an aggregate of the seven domains of deprivation, made up of: 22.5% income, 22.5% employment, 13.5% education, 13.5% health, 9.3% crime, 9.3% barriers to housing and services, 9.3% living environment.

Each of the other domains are analysed in other sections of this report, but the focus here will first be on income.

1.4 Income

The ranking for income deprivation is the best in the North East, but is again in the top 50% nationally. And here again there are clearly significant concentrations of high income deprivation at neighbourhood level, reflected in a higher rank for LSOAs in the most deprived 10% nationally.

Table 3 – Income domain scores, IMD 2015⁶

Local Authority District name (2013)	Income - Average score	Income - Rank of average score	Income - Proportion of LSOAs in most deprived 10% nationally	Income - Rank of Proportion of LSOAs in most deprived 10% nationally	NE Rank	UK decile
Northumberland	0.137	132	0.1	91	12	3

The IMD 2015 also provides two additional analyses of income – the income deprivation affecting children index, and the income deprivation affecting older people index. The scores for Northumberland on these indices are given below.

Table 4 – Income deprivation affecting children index (IDACI), 2015⁷

Local Authority District name (2013)	IDACI - Average score	IDACI - Rank of average score	IDACI - Proportion of LSOAs in most deprived 10% nationally	IDACI - Rank of proportion of LSOAs in most deprived 10% nationally	NE Rank	UK decile
Northumberland	0.1	135	0.11	84	10	3

From this it can again be seen that against there are a significant number of neighbourhoods where there is a concentration of income deprivation affecting children. This includes some of the most deprived in the country. According to Northumberland County Council's analysis of these figures "*there are 22 LSOAs (11%) in Northumberland in the most deprived 10% of all LSOAs in England. These all fall in the south east of Northumberland, apart from one in Amble ward*"⁸.

In terms of income deprivation affecting older people, the picture is much better in terms of both overall levels of income deprivation and the number of neighbourhoods where it is very high:

Table 5 – Income deprivation affecting older people index (IDAOPI), 2015⁹

Local Authority District name (2013)	IDAOPI - Average score	IDAOPI - Rank of average score	IDAOPI - Proportion of LSOAs in most deprived 10% nationally	IDAOPI - Rank of proportion of LSOAs in most deprived 10% nationally	NE Rank	UK decile
Northumberland	0.13	175	.02	163	12	6

1.5 Indebtedness

Being on a low income often results in increased indebtedness, which can arise because of:

- A change in circumstances - if income drops, e.g. because someone loses their job or has their hours cut, they may be unable to keep up repayments on the debts they accrued previously, or if costs rise, e.g. utility bills.
- Lack of choice - most people on benefits or low income are unable to access cheaper debt, so are reliant on providers such as Brighthouse, who charge higher

initial prices for household items, and then offer payment plans at higher interest rates than regular retail schemes.

- A sudden crisis - having to find the money to pay for a funeral, a new boiler, or any other expected expense, which can affect anyone, but is harder when your options are limited.

A report by the Money Advice Service showed that 38,386 people in Northumberland are over-indebted, around 15% of the population¹⁰. The key causes in this region include:

- Application of sanctions to benefits (cuts to benefits imposed due to the recipient not keeping up with eligibility requirements)
- Being in a 'low pay – no pay' cycle with inconsistent employment patterns, reliant on slow benefits payments, and having no savings to provide financial resilience
- Having aspirations to keep up with others, especially among people with children who feel they should have the 'right' brands and technology, so have a tendency to live beyond their means.

There are ways to help address these issues, and reduce financial exclusion, including better signposting to services such as foodbanks, furniture recycling schemes, Citizens Advice and debt management services, and improving the support people get when they first take on a tenancy. A good example of a service supported by the Community Foundation in this area is Bliss Services Ltd in Blyth, which works with local people to minimise the use of high-interest doorstep lenders in the run up to Christmas. There is clearly a role for philanthropy in supporting work to reduce indebtedness and to help those it affects to manage their finances better.

1.6 Other major equality issues

- **Inequality:** looked at as a whole, Northumberland does not do too badly in terms of levels of deprivation. However average levels of deprivation can simply reflect the co-existence of very rich and very poor communities, rather than the overall prosperity of an area. Parts of Wylam and Blyth, for example, are counted amongst the 2% least and most deprived neighbourhoods in England. The IMD inequality score is designed to reveal the size of the gap between the richest and poorest neighbourhoods. An overall score of 128 against a national baseline of 100 places the county in the highest third of comparable areas for inequality.
- **Access to services** is an issue in rural areas of the County. This is captured by the IMD Geographical Barriers to Services data which shows that 7 of the 10 most deprived LSOAs in the country against this measure are in Northumberland.
- **Fuel poverty** which is higher in the NE region at 13.3% of households, compared to 11% average across England¹¹. Rural areas of Northumberland that are "off mains" are likely to be more effected by this issue due to high fuel costs particularly as housing stock may be in worse condition.
- **Identity**
The estimated proportion (per 1,000) of people aged 16-64 in Northumberland who receive Disability Living Allowance is higher than in the rest of England. For those people of pensionable age, there were 86.5 (per 1,000 pensionable population) receiving DLA, which is again higher than the rate for England (80.9). Given that disabled people are more likely to live in poverty, to be unemployed, and to be

unable to access services, leisure opportunities, and to engage in civic society, the higher rates imply a greater need for steps to address access issues.¹²

At the time of the 2011 Census 98.4% of the population of Northumberland were White. Given the lack of diversity in the county, the needs of minority communities may be harder to meet than in those parts of the North East where they are more prevalent.

Only 1.5% of people in the NE region identify as gay, bisexual or other, compared to 2.2% nationally¹³. The low level of self-identification as anything other than heterosexual may mean there is more stigma attached to those who are openly gay or bisexual.

Potential roles for philanthropy

- There is a heavy concentration of deprivation in South East Northumberland, but across the county there are smaller communities where deprivation of one type or another may be an issue. There are also communities of interest and identity that experience disadvantage. The Community Foundation's links to local groups can help ensure any hidden need is identified and philanthropic help targeted where it is most needed.
- There has been rapid growth in the number of foodbanks established, and in the numbers of people receiving emergency food parcels. There may well be a role for philanthropy in helping to ensure that these are able to continue where they are needed.
- There is a need to support work to address the high levels of indebtedness, by providing alternative sources of finance and encouraging people to access other services that provide low-cost or free food, furniture, etc.
- The low levels of diversity in the general population, together with high levels of disability, can lead to those who are perceived as different attracting negative attention and leading to hate crime. Philanthropic resources could be usefully focused on encouraging community cohesion and integration, particularly through community events to bring together different groups and encourage understanding.

Arts, heritage and culture

2.1. Overview

Northumberland has a rich history from the very earliest times and it is this historical context that contributes most significantly to the county's cultural appeal. It has an impressive range of heritage assets. These include more castles than any other English county, for example at Dunstanburgh, Berwick, Bamburgh, Alnwick and Warkworth. To this may be added the equally impressive Hexham Abbey, Lindisfarne Priory, Brinkburn Priory and Hadrian's Wall. There are also many stately homes and gardens, with Alnwick Gardens and Cragside being perhaps the best known. As impressive is the county's industrial heritage offer, with Woodhorn providing an outstanding example of how this can be developed. The latest development is The Sill National Landscape Discovery Centre.

The connection to tourism is strong with many towns and venues hosting a range of events and festivals many of which have enjoyed support from the Community Foundation. They include one-off events such as the Weeping Window poppies exhibition at Woodhorn, but also more regular events such as the Hexham Book Festival and the Berwick Film and Media Arts Festival. The Maltings, Queens Hall Arts Centre and Alnwick Playhouse bring performing arts, cinema and more to the county. While local employment in creative industries is low in the county its heritage sites are frequently used for film (Harry Potter), TV (ITV's Vera), performing arts and other events.

Northumberland's artistic assets include a great number of individual artists and musicians, and they underpin a rich tradition of community arts. There are a large number of artists' studios and galleries across the county with many taking part in The Art Tour run by Network Artists. Artists are attracted to the region by organisations like VARC (Visual Arts in Rural Communities) and Allendale Contemporary Arts. The latest addition to the contemporary art scene is Cheeseburn Sculpture, a new destination for contemporary sculpture. They have created the Gillian Dickinson North East Young Sculptor of the Year Award. Traditional music plays a big part in Northumberland life spearheaded in recent years by Kathryn Tickell and Magnetic North and celebrated at the Rothbury Traditional Music Festival.

Personal development through arts activity can be about building confidence, aspirations and skills. For communities it can be about creating and expressing shared collective identities, and enabling a diversity of voices to be heard within a community. The arts can also challenge and change perceptions, an important part of building community cohesion. While participatory arts groups tend to focus on urban areas, there is a case for their use in tackling the very different issues in the rural areas, like isolation and access.

2.2. Employment in creative industries

Here are over 155 commercial creative industries based in Northumberland. Nevertheless the proportion of employment in the creative industries sector remains modest. As table 6 below demonstrates Northumberland ranks relatively low for employment in the creative industries. However a major exception is medium-high and high tech, which covers computing, electronics and optics. It is possible that part of the reason for this is the proximity of Newcastle where there is a concentration of creative industries.

Table 6: Proportion of employment in the creative industries¹⁴

	UK	Northumberland	NE rank	UK decile
Creative industries	3.1	1.41	5	4

2.3. Participation

As suggested above Northumberland is very well endowed with arts, culture and heritage assets. However whilst these offer great scope for developing the county's offer as a tourist destination, the extent of local benefit is also dependent on the extent to which the people of Northumberland engage with them.

Is there a need to extend participation amongst those resident in the county? The best statistics we currently have on this cover the North East. These may give an indication of the situation in Northumberland, although it is worth considering that the last survey covering the county in 2009 found higher levels of participation here than for the region as a whole.

In the absence of hard data we can make a reasonable guess at the factors that will limit participation. As suggested above, accessing services is a major issue in rural parts of the county and problems relating to the county's geography and transport links are likely to pose barriers to access. This points to the importance of touring provision, which can also breathe life into smaller venues and community buildings across the area.

A second factor is deprivation, which as we have seen is concentrated in South East Northumberland. In 2012 the Bait Consortium led by Woodhorn Charitable Trust and comprising of Northumberland College, Northumberland County Council Public Health, Active Northumberland, Queens Hall Arts and Wansbeck CVA embarked on a ten year mission to increase participation in the arts in the south east of the county. Funded by Arts Council England, Northumberland County Council, Active Northumberland, The Ballinger Trust and Garfield Weston Foundation, it works not just to increase engagement but to create long term change, improve wellbeing and social capital, encourage creativity and ambition, develop skills and invest in resources. Bait works with hundreds of partners many of which are able to secure funding with its support to work with the most vulnerable and marginalised people in south east Northumberland. This project illustrates the strong contribution that arts engagement can make to community cohesion¹⁵.

Potential roles for philanthropy

- Investment in Northumberland's arts, culture and heritage assets has long been a focus of philanthropic activity, and should continue to be so.
- Philanthropic support for events and festivals that promote Northumberland's arts, culture and heritage is essential, and can be used to help ensure that local people are fully involved both as contributors and beneficiaries.
- Engagement in the arts is good both as an end in itself and as a vehicle for personal and community benefit. Philanthropic support for community arts projects that reach out into communities is an essential part of the funding mix.

Environment

3.1 Overview

Without doubt Northumberland is one of the best places in England for the quality of its environment. Its landscape is varied, ranging from the natural beauty of its coast and natural park to distinctive urban areas shaped by industrial development in the South East such as Blyth and Ashington.

In rural Northumberland there are the market towns of Morpeth, Hexham, Prudhoe, Berwick-upon-Tweed and Alnwick, each with their distinctive character whilst in the open space between small settlements and individual farmhouses predominate. Agriculture and forestry still shapes the landscape, but now tourism is also a major factor. However, rural Northumberland remains relatively underdeveloped, which has contributed both to the preservation of its distinctive appearance and also the diversity of its wildlife.

3.2 Comparing the Northumberland environment to other areas

Various composite scores are available which assess the quality and make-up of the environment and associated issues, each of which is discussed below.

The IMD Living Environment Deprivation Index¹⁶ gives a very general indication of the state of the environment. Care needs to be taken in using it within Northumberland since it combines two measures into a single score:

- an indoor measure based on how much housing lacks central heating/fails to meet the Decent Homes standard and
- an outdoor measure based on air quality and road traffic accidents resulting in injury to pedestrians or cyclists.

The overall measure tends to mask the extent of the area's problems. The indoor score is higher in the rural parts of the county and the outdoor score affects mostly the urban areas. The end result is a cancelling out that fails to identify where the focus of effort should be. In addition, the comparatively good score for Northumberland as a whole can obscure the fact that there is significant deprivation at neighbourhood level.

In rural Northumberland there are areas where the Living Environment Deprivation Index, Indoor Measure suggests there is a significant problem with 6 wards in the 10% most deprived in England: Norham and Islandshires; Humshaugh; South Tynedale; Haydon and Hadrian; Bamburgh and Bellingham. A further 6 include smaller areas (LSOAs) in the worst 10% nationally. It is significant that this measure identifies rural areas rather than urban for the quality of housing. The rural areas are generally less deprived than the urban areas for most other deprivation domains. This, together with the proximity of services and amenities are the main issues for countryside dwellers in Northumberland.

The general picture for the outdoor measure is good, as you would expect given the low population and rurality of the county. Only central Ashington falls into the 20% most deprived for this measure: it is not clear whether this is due to air quality, traffic accidents or both.

A further measure is provided by the GTPA Natural Environment and Natural Beauty Scores. The environment score takes into account housing density; road density; air quality; tranquillity; natural beauty; green space; and water quality. The natural beauty score takes into account local assets such as National Parks; Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; Heritage Coasts; 'Blue Flag' beaches; Ancient Woodland; Nature Reserves and Environmentally-Sensitive Areas. On each of these measures Northumberland excels, locating the county within the top 10% nationally¹⁷.

3.3. Biodiversity

One of the defining characteristics of Northumberland is its biodiversity. The County Council, Northumberland Wildlife Trust, DEFRA, Natural England, Environment Agency and Forestry Commission all have an interest in and responsibility for protecting vulnerable species and habitats in various ways. Many of these organisations provide opportunities for volunteering in some of this work. Northumberland has 6 main habitats as defined by the Northumberland Wildlife Trust: Coastal, Lowland, Rivers and Wetlands, Upland, Urban and Woodland

These are broken down into 24 areas like coastal heathland, reedbeds and sand dunes. There are also 22 species identified for special attention including bats, otters and water voles. Details can be found in the Northumberland Biodiversity Action Plan.¹⁸

A particular focus for action is the county's rivers. The Northumberland Rivers Trust, formed in 2011, has a catchment area approach that has the effect of covering most of the county in the context of environmental protection and development. This includes protecting endangered species, maintaining good fish stocks and habitats, all of which promotes biodiversity.

Philanthropy can continue to make a contribution to this effort by supporting civil society organisations that contribute to the above efforts or promote awareness of the issues and encourage local community involvement.

3.4. Vulnerability to climate change

Climate change is already having an effect. Two examples are the increased incidence of flash flooding and coastal erosion in Druridge Bay. The Northumberland Wildlife Trust is one example of an organisation that includes the effects of global warming in their approach to environmental issues. The trust has 60 nature reserves. Factors that increase vulnerability include:

- More extreme weather
- Flash flooding
- Moorland fires
- Sea level rise and coastal erosion
- Changes in the growing season and its impact on food production
- Changes in breeding and migration seasons
- Possible loss of farmland and unique habitats

The local economy can also be part of the global approach to climate change, for example by focusing on renewable energy production or purchasing sustainable produce that promotes sustainable farming practices. Civil society organisations have a role to play, particularly in education and working with local communities. Promoting sustainability can be part of the pursuit of wider issues such as tackling disadvantage. The county council has a climate change strategy and action plan.

This issue is particularly important to Northumberland with its long coastline, agricultural land, conservation locations and areas of natural beauty.

3.5. Transport

This is very much a live issue in the county's rural areas, and environmental concern focuses on alternatives to car use given the lack of public transport. Community transport is part of the solution and some civil society groups provide this service, often to address the problem of access to services. Walking and cycling is also an option, although there is perhaps a need to challenge the assumption that access to the countryside is easy for those that live there. Northumberland has many paths and cycleways, including the Pennine's Cycleway and the Hadrian's Cycleway. There are also coast and castle routes. Haltwhistle and Wooler are designated as cycle hubs which have cycle friendly accommodation and places to buy or hire bikes. From these two hubs there are 14 routes of varying difficulty. Kielder Water also has a 26 mile trail that encircles the reservoir.

3.6. Waste disposal

Official data from the county¹⁹ suggests that the level of recycling in Northumberland is around the national average, with a bias toward incineration rather than landfill for unrecycled waste. Comparison of the relative environmental benefits of landfill and incineration is far from simple. For example, incineration has the biggest global warming potential and landfill is the biggest water polluter. On a positive note fly tipping is much lower in Northumberland than elsewhere. However it is perhaps to be expected, if not welcomed, that there is a greater incidence of highway fly-tipping than elsewhere in the North East.

Potential roles for philanthropy

- Maintaining and enhancing the quality of the county's outstanding natural assets (including its biodiversity) emerges as a key priority for local philanthropy. This could include work to promote environmental understanding and assist community organisations in enabling the county to meet the challenge of climate change.
- Addressing the problem of poor transport links in rural areas in a sustainable way is an area where charitable funding could make a significant difference: supporting community transport and cycling are possible areas of activity.
- Issues relating to the quality of the indoor environment emerge as a priority in rural areas, and this may well link with work to address problems of fuel poverty.

Safety

4.1. Overview

In general Northumberland enjoys lower than average levels of crime. However residents' experience will vary widely between the different communities and neighbourhoods that make up the county. There is a clear rural and urban split, with the latter most blighted by crime. In addition there are some areas of concern around a reversal of the downward trend of recent years; in relation to the level of sexual and violent crime, and possible growth of hate crime and prevalence of hidden crimes such as domestic violence.

4.2. Crime rates

In table 7 we list the rate of offences for the major areas of crime in Northumberland, which with the exception of vehicle crime are given per 1,000 people. Overall the picture remains an encouraging one, with the total crime rate below the national average. However the trend of a steady decrease in recorded crime has now been reversed. This could partly reflect a range of benign factors such as better recording, but increased offending is likely to be a factor. A further concern is that sexual crime and possession of weapons is close to the national average, with violent crime showing a steady increase in 2016-2017.²⁰

Table 7: Offences per 1,000 population

	England and Wales	Northumberland
Burglary	3.37	1.7
Drugs	2.19	1.02
Robbery	.98	0.19
Sexual	1.9	1.88
Vehicle (per 1000 vehicles)	14.18	6.83
Violent	18.58	16.8
Weapons	.49	.38
Total	68.85	60.84
Long term change (2003/17)	-38.22	-22.51
Short term change (2016/17)	10.41	31.26

There are areas of Northumberland where crime is clearly a more serious issue than the county as a whole. We know from the Indices of Multiple Deprivation that 7 wards in the South East are worse than the national average: Hirst; Croft; Ashington Central; Newsham; Colledge; Cowpen and Isabella. In addition there are a number of neighbourhoods elsewhere in the South East and in Berwick that LSOA data shows have above average crime rates.²¹

Hate crime statistics are compiled by Northumbria Police in five categories - race, faith, sexual orientation, disability and transsexual - covering Northumberland and Tyne and Wear. They show an increase of 202% in recorded incidents from 2014 – 2016 that, whilst it may partly reflect the greater willingness of victims to come forward, is nonetheless disturbing. These figures pre-date Brexit which triggered a spike in hate crime in the Northumbria Police area. The voluntary sector is well placed to support the victims of hate crime, and indeed many are part of the localised safe reporting centre initiative.

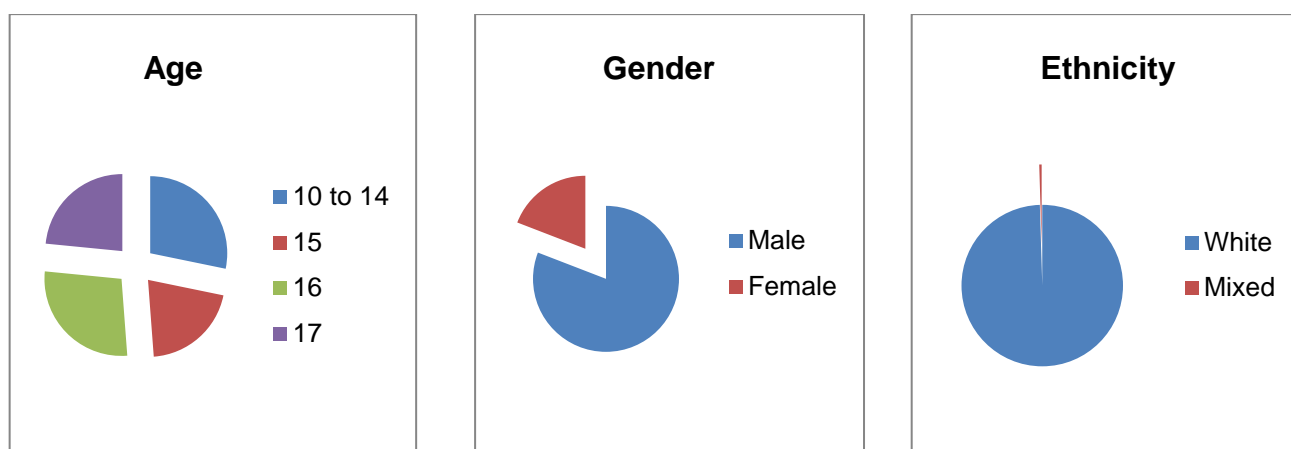
Domestic violence is a major area of “hidden crime”. A public information request to Northumbria Police led to the disclosure of over 7,000 such offences in Tyne & Wear and Northumberland in 2014. Support for victims in Northumberland's rural areas is harder to access, and so there may be significant underreporting.

It should be noted that there is clearly a greater awareness of crime related to the sexual exploitation of young people as a result of Operation Sanctuary. However, the extent to which this is a problem in Northumberland remains unclear.

Around 12% of offenders in Northumberland are predicted to go on to offend again, compared to just under 10% nationally.²² Civil society groups have a good history in supporting offenders after conviction. Perhaps this is an area that funding could target.

4.3 Young offenders

Statistics published by the Ministry of Justice/Youth Justice Board for England and Wales, and show the extent of the problem of youth offending in Northumberland²³. These show that in the year ending March 2015 the number of young people aged 10-17 receiving a “substantive outcome” (which includes anything from reprimand and final warning to going directly to Court) was 209. The charts below show their ages, gender and ethnicity:



Compared to the national figures the age profile of offenders is somewhat younger: 17 year olds are 23% of the total, compared to 33% nationally. The gender division is about the same, and the ethnicity figure is broadly as one might expect given the small size of the non-white population.

A review has recently been published by the Prison Reform Trust²⁴ lead by Lord Laming. The review found that children in care are 6 times more likely to be cautioned or convicted of a crime than other young people, and that half the children in youth custody came from foster or residential care despite only being 1% of the children in England. Lord Laming found that police were sometimes involved in situations that would normally be dealt with by parents. He said, for example, that the police had been called when a child “stole” food from the kitchen of his care home. This certainly suggests the need for care providers to develop better practice, but also underpins the case for advocacy and support for this type of ex-offender.

In July 2016 the published reoffending rate for Northumberland was 38.4%. This was slightly worse than the England and Wales average of 37.8%. However it does indicate that nearly 6/10 young people do not reoffend, which is a cause for optimism.²⁵

4.4 Anti-social behaviour

This embraces a range of activities that may, or may not be criminal but which cause harassment, alarm or distress. In the 12 months to June 2017 there were a total of 11,098 incidents of anti-social behaviour (ASB) in Northumberland²⁶. The prevalence of ASB is higher than in England as a whole, and concern about it is highest in South East Northumberland. The prevalence of ASB in neighbourhoods (LSOAs) varies massively from 1 to 455 per year, with urban areas across the county most affected²⁷. Early in 2017, a consultation by police highlighted the diversity of issues this covered from youth behaviour in Alwick, Berwick, Seghill and Prudhoe to “boy racing” in Ashington²⁸.

4.5 Perceptions of crime and policing

In general concern about crime in Northumberland is around the same as for Tyne & Wear, but at its highest in the South East of Northumberland. Given the widely varying crime levels across the county, it is likely that there will be wide variations in how concerned people are about crime between neighbourhoods across the county.

The evidence suggests the Northumbria Police area enjoy a high degree of public approval. The Crime Survey for England and Wales (albeit that it dates from 2013) revealed that:

- 67 percent of adults surveyed think that the police do an excellent/good job, which is greater than the figure across England and Wales of 61 percent.
- 65 percent of adults surveyed agree that the police deal with local concerns, which is greater than the England and Wales proportion of 60 percent.

In addition the Victim Satisfaction Survey (2014) showed that 90.5 percent of victims were satisfied with their experience which is greater than the figure across England and Wales of 85.0 percent.

Potential roles for philanthropy

Northumbria Police enjoy public confidence. The community and voluntary sector, with philanthropic support, can add value to their work either through working in partnership or providing complementary services.

Priorities for philanthropic support could include:

- Targeted activity in those areas across the county where crime is relatively high.
- Supporting activities that divert young people from anti-social behaviour and offending.
- Extending support to those at risk from hate crime, and the victims of domestic violence in isolated communities.
- Assisting those with previous convictions to integrate back into the local community.

Healthy Living

5.1. Overview

We regard mortality rates from circulatory disease as a major indicator of the health of local residents, and these are relatively good in Northumberland. In 2014 the rate was 69.5 per 100,000 residents, compared to a national average of 78.2. In addition the rate at which mortality rates were falling was nearly 9% faster than the national average.

However the local picture is perhaps more mixed than it first appears, and the county has significant health problems. In looking at the figures it must be remembered that there is a significant gap between rich and poor neighbourhoods. Therefore local problems can be “hidden” in generally positive county-wide statistics. If one looks more closely at the figures for circulatory disease, for example, it is apparent that the rate of circulatory disease is falling far more quickly in better off areas.

The IMD health and disability measure (2015), which measures the risk of premature death and the impairment of quality of life through poor physical or mental health, shows the size of the gap. The worst neighbourhood (LSOA) ranks 523 out of 34,703 whilst the best comes in at 30,091²⁹.

Public health and social care agencies are, of course, the key players in improving health across the county. With the continued pressure on health services, the boundary between statutory and voluntary services is becoming less clearly defined. The challenge increasingly is to be proactive in meeting local need whilst avoiding the use of philanthropic funds simply to compensate directly for lost state funding.

5.2 Life expectancy and the major causes of ill-health

For Northumberland in 2013/15, the life expectancy at birth for men was 79.2, and for women it was 82.6 years. The rate for females is somewhat worse than for the country as a whole.

There are some positive findings on the health of Northumberland. Infant mortality is lower than for England and Wales as a whole. We have seen above that the figures for circulatory disease in the county are good, and Northumberland isn't all that far off the national average for cancer mortality either: the rate is 145 per 100,000 compared to 144.4. There has been an increase in mortality over the 14 years from 1999 to 2014, but this is far lower than the regional and national figures³⁰. Long-term sickness in general is below the national average amongst the working population, although a higher percentage of working age people receives disability living allowance than in the country as a whole.

However, there are some areas of concern.

- **Health inequalities:** life expectancy is 9.5 years lower for men and 7.1 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Northumberland than in the least deprived areas.
- **Smoking related deaths** are higher than for England as a whole, although there has been a fall and good progress is being made in encouraging people to give up.
- **Problem drinking** appears to be more prevalent than elsewhere in the country as a whole. This includes those drinking significantly more than the safe limit, and those who binge drink. Levels of alcohol related hospital admissions in Northumberland are relatively high, and the rate for under-18s is a particular concern

- **Sexual health:** good progress has been made in reducing teenage pregnancy rates, and the level of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) remains relatively low. A recent increase in STIs may be just a blip, but shows the need for continued work in this area.
- **Lifestyle, obesity and diabetes** seem to be areas where action is definitely needed. The participation of those over 16 in sport is declining. Nearly 1 in 5 children aged 10-11 is obese, whilst nearly 70% of adults are overweight or obese. Rates of diabetes are amongst the highest in the country.
- **Road traffic casualties:** The rate of traffic accidents in Northumberland is significantly higher than the national average and 50% higher than the whole of the North East. The county has major through routes. This means that the volume of traffic is high and a high proportion of road users are non-residents (i.e. tourists). This is reinforced by the observation that the worst districts in the country are also rural holiday areas.
- **Suicide:** the rate of self-harm hospital stays is above the national average, and the mortality rate from suicide in Northumberland per 100,000 was 11.15, compared to a national figure of 8.1 in 2012-2014. The percentage change during 1999 -2014 was +19.4, compared to a drop of 15.2 nationally. This issue needs further investigation, in particular to find out what some of the underlying causes might be. Is there a difference between rates in urban and rural areas, for example? ³¹

Potential roles for philanthropy

- There is a good case for focusing attention on areas of high deprivation, to close the gap between the life chances of rich and poor within the county. General work on lifting people out of poverty is likely to impact on the health of the Northumberland population.
- Encouraging healthier lifestyles through providing opportunities to learn about healthy eating, take exercise or address harmful behaviours is an area where the local voluntary sector has established a good track record of achievement and could continue to be supported.
- Support for services for those contemplating self-harm emerges as a clear priority. However the provision of opportunities to socialise and engage in purposeful activity, both for those with mental health issues and people at risk of social isolation, is another way that philanthropy can help address the needs of those at risk.
- Support for alternatives to car use has emerged as an area of philanthropic investment in the county, and may help to do something in relation to the concerning statistics for road traffic casualties.
- Funding that enables civil society organisations to continue to add value to the work of health and social care agencies may also be considered a priority.

Work

6.1 Overview

The service sector is the dominant area of employment within Northumberland. This includes retail and tourism, but also the public sector. It should be noted, however, that the county's workforce is also highly dependent on employment opportunities located outside of the county, notably in Tyneside. This presents a challenge, in that a failure to maintain a balance between local and commuting-based employment could diminish the local economy and leave its prosperity largely at the mercy of wider regional developments.

The Northumberland Economic Strategy (2015) identified two key areas of need: firstly to extend employment opportunities to those excluded from the workforce and address the needs of those on low wages and secondly the importance of skilling up the workforce to meet the needs of employers. As we will see below, this is a response to some key deficiencies in the local labour market.

6.2 Patterns of employment

The percentage of jobs per employment sector within Northumberland is set out below.

Table 8 - % of workforce employed by each industry in Northumberland³²

Industry	Northumberland	Great Britain
Health	17.7	13.2
Manufacturing	12.2	8.2
Retail	11	9.9
Accommodation and food services	10.8	7.2
Education	10.3	9.2
Professional , scientific and technical	6.2	8.3
Construction	5.3	4.5
Arts, entertainment and recreation	5	4.4
Business administration and support services	4.4	8.8
Public administration and defence	3.4	4.4
Transport and storage	3	4.6
Wholesale	2.6	4
Motor trades	2	1.8
Mining, quarrying and utilities	1.9	1.3
Information and communication	1.73	4.2
Property	1.5	1.7
Financial and insurance	0.8	3.5
Agriculture	0.1	0.8

The continued importance of the public sector as an employer in Northumberland is highlighted by the proportion of the workforce in health, education and public administration and defence: 31.4% as opposed to 26.8% for the country as a whole. A major issue affecting the Northumberland workforce has been the impact of cuts in public expenditure since 2010. For example, the ONS annual civil service survey shows the number of civil servants as a percentage of the county workforce falling from 1.5% to .3% since 2010, whilst the number of people in permanent local authority employment fell from 9,414 in 2012 to 8,620 in 2017³³. With more cuts to come, a key challenge for the workforce is to make the transition into employment in other sectors: always assuming that jobs are there to be had.

Are there jobs available for those that want them? Job density is a general indication of the availability of local employment. A job density score is calculated by taking the total number of jobs in an area and dividing it by the working age population. The data includes jobs from employers, self-employed, HM Forces, and Government training schemes. In 2015 it was .66 compared to .83 for the UK as a whole, suggesting a significant lack of employment opportunities within the local economy. This may explain high rates of longer term unemployment, with Job Seeker's Allowance claims over 12 months standing at 2.8% in 2015, compared to 1.7% nationally³⁴.

A further issue is the quality of the jobs that local people are able to take up, for which a key indicator will be rates of pay. Compared to Great Britain as a whole, a larger proportion of the work force is employed in the lower skilled job categories. Consequently gross weekly earnings in Northumberland are £410.60, which is £116 less than for Great Britain. This raises the issue of in-work poverty. This has been a growing problem in recent years, and is something of an inconvenient truth for politicians – from all parties – who have hailed work as the best route out of poverty. While it remains the case that families with no work face the greatest risk of poverty, families where at least one adult is in work are now the largest group experiencing poverty in the UK.

6.3 Economic activity and unemployment

The economic activity rate refers to the percentage of the population, both employed and unemployed, that constitutes the labour market. The latest data on this for Northumberland, the North East and Great Britain is given below:

Table 9 - Economic activity rates, 2017³⁵

	All people aged 16-64:			
	Economic activity rate	Employment rate	% who are employees	% self employed
Northumberland	74.8	70.5	60.2	9.9
North East	75.4	69.8	62.2	7.2
GB	78	74.2	63.2	10.6

The data shows a relatively low rate of economic activity, largely accounted for by the large number of retired people resident in the county. Over time, the economic activity rate will be further affected by demographics. If jobs can be created there may be a challenge in attracting younger workers into the county to take them up. However, rates of employment and self-employment also reflect the circumstances of local communities: they are lowest in the South East of Northumberland. This points to the challenge of bringing those excluded from employment or self-employment into the labour market.

The proportion of people aged 16-59/64 (women/men) claiming Job Seekers Allowance or National Insurance Credits is 1.6%, compared to 1.1% nationally, placing the county in the worst 20% of comparable areas. Since 2010, the government has emphasised its desire to get as many people into work as possible, with changes to benefits and the welfare state designed to provide incentives for those with families to work rather than claim benefits, and to make it increasingly difficult for single people to claim, and survive on, benefits. A report by Northumberland Advice Network (2014) threw up the startling statistic that there had been 1.4 sanction referrals per JSA claimant during 2013-2014 and highlighted the problems this could present to individuals and families³⁶. This has particular implications for those neighbourhoods where suitable work is hard to find, and 42 out of 67 wards in Northumberland have higher than average number of people who would like to work but are unable to do so due to unemployment, sickness or disability, or caring responsibilities³⁷.

6.4 Young people

The number of young people aged 16-24 claiming benefits in Northumberland is markedly higher than for Great Britain as a whole³⁸ and the number of young people not in employment, education and training is also a concern. In total 5% of young people aged 16-18 were NEET in 2015 compared to 4.2% nationally, and the county ranked 38 out of 152 comparable areas³⁹.

There is clearly a role here for the community and voluntary sector – as a major provider of youth work - to support young people in partnership with others. As the Local Government Association stated in 2013:

“No one agency alone can tackle youth unemployment. It requires co-ordinated action from a range of organisations, including: policy makers; educators and training providers; employment support agencies; voluntary and community organisations; business representative organisations and businesses themselves.”

Potential roles for philanthropy

- There is clearly a link between philanthropic interventions designed to promote a more vibrant local economy and this theme. There are shared priorities around the creation of good quality local jobs; enhancing the employment skills of local people and enabling those excluded from work to access employment that could form the basis for cross sectoral partnerships.
- South East Northumberland is clearly a priority area for action, although there are a number of other neighbourhoods across the county where the figures for employment deprivation suggest a need for action. Support for organisations working to address unemployment in these areas would be valuable.
- The numbers of young people not in education, employment or training are a concern, so additional support could be provided to enable increased engagement, particularly to prevent young people becoming NEET. This could be linked to work with young people more generally to raise aspirations and encourage ownership of decision-making around life choices.
- Support for those both in low paid work and on benefits who experience hardship remains a priority, with support for foodbanks a clear priority.

Housing and homelessness

7.1 Overview

Housing shortages and homelessness have been big issues in England for several decades. Fortunately housing remains relatively affordable in Northumberland. However, factors including changes to benefit eligibility rules and the impact of private buy-to-let purchasers on the housing market have meant that the homes have become less affordable and available in many parts of the UK, including Northumberland. The extent of the homeless problem within the county is somewhat difficult to gauge, but is likely to be higher than official figures suggest and youth homelessness is a particular concern.

7.2 Dwelling stock and tenure

Dwelling stock is the term used to refer to self-contained living spaces in permanent buildings, of which there are 152,180 in Northumberland. The make-up of Northumberland's dwelling stock is pretty well in line with that for the UK as a whole.

Table 10 – Dwelling Stock, 2016

	% Northumberland	% UK
Local authority	5.6	6.8
Social landlords	11.5	10.5
Other public sector	<.1	.2
Private sector	83	82

Tenure refers to the arrangements by which people occupy their homes. Here data from the 2011 Census suggests there is a marked contrast with the rest of the North East, in that there is a higher rate of owner occupation compared to renting: the figure for owner occupation was 66% which is higher than both the North East and national rate. Around 32% of households were in the rental sector. Private renting was lower than for the UK, and in line with the regional figure. Social renting was higher than for the country as a whole, but significantly lower than elsewhere in the North East⁴⁰.

7.3 Average property prices

The NE region has not witnessed the sharp rises in property prices seen elsewhere in the country over recent years. Prices in Northumberland, whilst comparatively modest, have risen in the past ten years. However the mean price has increased by just 12.5% compared to 35% in the rest of England. However, house price alone does not provide a good indication of affordability, which is better assessed using a ratio of house prices to local earnings. Applying this measure reveals that the affordability of housing in Northumberland is falling at a higher rate than both in the rest of the North East and the country as a whole⁴¹.

7.4 Rental market

The amount rented property costs depends to a large extent on the landlord. Private registered providers (housing associations) and local authorities tend to be cheaper than private landlords. Table 11 shows the average rents in 2015 by landlord.

Table 11 - Average weekly rents by landlord, 2015

	Local authority ⁴²	Housing Association / Private registered provider ⁴³	Private landlord ⁴⁴
Northumberland	£69.57	£77.54	£116

There is anecdotal evidence that the condition of properties in the private rented sector is lower than in the social housing sector⁴⁵, and as noted above, the private rented sector is smaller in Northumberland than elsewhere in the UK. One of the barriers to entry into this sector for tenants can be the requirement to pay a bond and/or rent in advance, which is not affordable for many people, including a lot of young people. Programmes have been made available through which previously homeless people could be given the funds for a bond to enable them to access the private rental market.

7.5 Changes to housing and other benefits

Recent changes to eligibility criteria for housing benefit mean that many more people may find themselves unable to secure and maintain a tenancy because they face restrictions to the amount of rent that will be covered through housing benefit:

- single young people aged 18-21 are not eligible for any housing benefit;
- single people aged 22-35 can only get housing benefit to pay for a single room in shared accommodation or a bedsit;
- the introduction of the under-occupancy charge (“bedroom tax”) means that those with more bedrooms than deemed necessary are expected to pay a proportion of their rent themselves;
- the introduction of the benefits cap for those on Housing Benefit and Universal Credit means the total amount payable for all benefits per week is limited to £384.62/wk (or £257.69 for single people without children).

In addition, further issues are caused by:

- most benefits being subject to a freeze until 2020, meaning they will not increase in monetary terms during that time, further reducing the value of the benefits payable;
- the difficulties in rolling out Universal Credit, meaning that claimants wait a minimum of 6 weeks, and up to 12 weeks to receive any benefit, leaving them without any resources to pay rent in the meantime;
- people on Universal Credit receiving a single monthly payment and being expected to budget appropriately, including payment of rent and Council Tax;
- a lack of one-bedroom rental accommodation, meaning some people are locked into larger properties and face having to pay the bedroom tax, while others cannot find suitable accommodation in which to live;
- where new-build accommodation is being created, little is available for rent, with even housing associations only building properties for sale - most people on low incomes are unable to access the finance to buy;
- the number of housing advice and welfare advice agencies is reducing due to austerity cuts, leaving people with no sources of information and advice on issues such as benefit eligibility and their rights - where organisations do still exist their resources are stretched and they are not generally able to provide support to people who have already lost their housing.

As a result, more and more people will struggle to secure a tenancy, meet their monthly rent, and manage their housing costs, leaving them in danger of facing eviction and therefore vulnerable to homelessness.

7.6. Fuel poverty

Fuel poverty is higher than the national average in Northumberland. This reflects the higher cost of oil fired heating and the larger number of houses in the rural areas that have no central heating or insulation. Combined with the county's higher percentage of older people this clearly presents a problem.

7.7 Homelessness

The number of people officially recognised as homeless has fallen in recent years throughout the NE region. This is contrary to the national picture of rising homelessness, however organisations working in the homelessness field argue the recorded figures vastly underestimate the size of the problem due to the tight restrictions on who is counted as 'homeless'. Many people are not eligible to be assessed as homeless, for example anyone deemed to be intentionally homeless (e.g. because of failure to pay rent, or giving up a home where they reasonably could have lived) is excluded from the figures.

Table 12 – Northumberland Council actions in relation to homelessness applications, 2015-16⁴⁶

Decisions taken:	
Accepted as homeless and a priority need	5
Eligible but not accepted:	
Homeless and in priority need, but intentionally	12
Homeless but not in priority need	85
Not homeless	74

People who are not officially classed as homeless tend to find accommodation through informal routes. This means they are not supported with practical considerations like ensuring the property is in a fit condition, and that they have access to utilities and have appropriate furniture. Many also end up in shared accommodation, leaving them at risk of exploitation.

Figures from the Local Authority suggest around 56 young people identifying themselves as homeless sought their help in 2015⁴⁷. This may well be the "tip of the iceberg" of youth homelessness in the county. There is anecdotal evidence from elsewhere in the region that some young people, females in particular, end up in sex work and/or using sex to secure accommodation simply because they have no other source of income⁴⁸.

Your Homes North East produces an annual research report on homelessness in the North East. The findings of the 2015 research is summarised below:

- 41% of the people who approached responding local authorities as homeless in February 2015 were under the age of 25.
- Care leavers and offenders appeared to be the groups of young people who were most likely to ask for housing assistance.
- Young people were most likely to have been living with parents or step parents prior to approaching an agency, with "sofa surfing"/hidden homeless the second most likely option.
- The majority of young people became homeless because a parent/care giver or other relative was no longer willing to accommodate them.
- The most frequently identified need (beyond suitable housing) among young people was a lack of independent living skills, followed by not being in education, employment or training, mental health problems and lack of relationship skills.

- Assisting young people to remain in the private rented sector was the most frequently used prevention activity, followed by conciliation work (including home visits for family/friends threatening exclusion).
- The welfare reforms most frequently identified as affecting young people's likelihood of becoming homeless or accessing housing were removal of the spare room subsidy, sanctions and difficulties in accessing local welfare assistance.
- The lack of supply of suitable long term housing was widely reported to be the greatest difficulty facing young people.

7.8 Rough sleeping

Recent reports have indicated a massive increase in the number of people sleeping rough throughout the UK⁴⁹ and there are concerns that this figure will continue to increase with widespread cuts to housing support services traditionally provided or funded by local authorities. By its nature rough sleeping is hard to quantify, particularly in a largely rural county.

Potential roles for philanthropy

- Support for people around housing issues is a priority. The support provided by voluntary services is wide ranging and can include help with identifying housing options; advice on tenancy issues; guidance on clearing mortgage or rent arrears; benefits advice and the provision of mediation between family members.
- Helping people who are homeless but not eligible for support from statutory services has long been a key role for the voluntary sector. Help for young people, who may be at risk of exploitation if left homeless, is an area where philanthropy could make a significant difference.
- Increasing social housing stock by bringing unfit property back into use using charitable funds can help individuals and families whilst also contributing to the sustainability of local communities.
- The quality of housing stock, combined with higher bills, leaves many older people in rural areas at risk of fuel poverty. Providing activities in community buildings is a great way to address social isolation, but it has the added advantage of ensuring that home heating bills are kept manageable for those of limited means.

Learning

8.1. Overview

Northumberland is doing reasonably well in relation to this theme, although there are several areas for concern. As always we need to point to the considerable variance in educational attainment that exists between the poorest and better off communities within the county. The IMD Education Score reflects the level of attainment of both adults and children. The county as a whole does well. Within the region it is behind only North Tyneside, and levels of deprivation are lower than in England as a whole. However, at neighbourhood (LSOA) level there are wide variances. There are 23 neighbourhoods in the 10% most deprived in England - concentrated in South East Northumberland but with a few in the West and North – and 19 in the 10% least deprived. Closing this gap is a key challenge.

8.2. Pre-school provision

The percentage of the pre-school population attending funded early years provision is very high compared to both the NE region and UK.

Table 13: Percentage of 2, 3 and 4-year-olds benefitting from funded early education places, ⁵⁰2017

Age	Northumberland	North East	UK
2 yr olds	104	81	71
3 year olds	107	98	93
4 year olds	106	99	96

Note: percentages over 100% indicate that some non-eligible children are provided for

The quality of provision, as indicated by Ofsted ratings, is somewhat lower than for the region, being closer to the national average. Nonetheless 86% of provision is Outstanding or Good, with only 1% rated Inadequate.

Table 14 - Ofsted ratings of provision for 3-4 year olds, 2016⁵¹

	Ofsted inspection rating							
	Outstanding		Good		Satisfactory / Requires Improvement		Inadequate	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Northumberland	1239	19%	4374	67%	908	14%	54	1%
North East	14,270	24%	39,370	67%	4,650	8%	440	1%
England	276,520	23%	772,892	63%	145,867	12%	25,679	2%

8.3 Key stage 2 (ages 7-11)

Attainment at Key Stage 2 in reading, writing and maths is just higher than the national average. However, when the performance of children from poorer backgrounds is compared to that of their better-off peers the picture is considerably worse. Taking free school meal eligibility as an indicator, it can be seen that children from poor backgrounds are considerably less likely to reach the required standard in Northumberland than in the region or country as a whole.

Table 15 - Attainment of pupils at key stage 2 by free school meal eligibility, 2016⁵²

	Northumberland	North East	England
Pupils with free school meals			
% eligible for free school meals	13%	20%	16%
Number of pupils	442	5,590	90,680
% at the expected standard	32%	39%	36%
All other pupils			
Number of pupils	2875	22,280	490,378
% at the expected standard	59%	62%	57%
Gap in attainment	27%	23%	21%
All pupils			
Number of pupils	3322	27,870	581,058
% at the expected standard	56%	57%	54%

8.4 GCSE performance (key stage 4)

At age 16, levels of attainment are better than the UK average, but worse than for the region as a whole. Given what we know about Key Stage 2, it is interesting to speculate as to how much better the county might do if it could close the gap between young people from poorer backgrounds and their peers.

Table 16 - % of KS4 pupils achieving 5+ A*-C grades inc English and Maths GCSE, 2010-16⁵³

	2009/10	2015/16
Northumberland	54%	55%
North East	53%	56%
England	54%	54%

8.5 Absence from school

At both primary and secondary school the level of absence is generally either in line with, or better than, the regional and national picture.

Table 17 - Pupil absence from schools, 2014-15⁵⁴

	Northumberland	North East	England
Primary			
Absence	4.0%	4.2%	4.0%
Authorised absence	3.2%	3.2%	3.1%
Unauthorised absence	.8%	1.0%	0.9%
% pupils persistent absentees	1.7%	2.2%	2.1%
Secondary			
Absence	5.2%	5.6%	5.3%
Authorised absence	4.2%	4.1%	4.0%
Unauthorised absence	1.1%	1.5%	1.3%
% pupils persistent absentees	4.9%	5.9%	5.4%

The reasons for absence from school include illness (58% of absence) and family holidays (11%)⁵⁵, as well as truancy which may result from bullying, inability to cope with schoolwork, or undiagnosed emotional or behavioural disorders⁵⁶. In 2011, the government reported that much of the work children miss when they are off school is never made up, leaving them at a considerable disadvantage to their peers.

- Of pupils who miss more than 50% of school, only 3% manage to achieve five A* to Cs, including English and maths.
- Of pupils who miss between 10% and 20% of school, only 35% manage to achieve five A* to C GCSEs, including English and maths.

- Of pupils who miss less than 5% of school, 73% achieve 5 A* to Cs, including English and maths.

There is also a growing body of evidence that absenteeism from school is linked to poor educational achievement and an increased chance of ending up NEET (not in education, employment or training – see section 6 – Work)⁵⁷.

Again there are likely to be disparities between pupils from different backgrounds, hidden by this generally positive picture. The rate of overall absence for those pupils eligible for free school meals (8.4%) remains significantly higher than that for all pupils (5.8%).⁵⁸

8.6 Post-18 destinations

Table 18 suggests that the progression prospects for 18 year olds in Northumberland are not markedly different from those for their peers in the NE region or England.

Table 18 - Destinations at 18⁵⁹

	Northumberland	North East	England
Further education college or other provider	13%	12%	10%
Sixth form	2%	4%	3%
Apprenticeships	7%	7%	5%
UK higher education institution	58%	60%	58%
Top third of HEIs	19%	20%	26%
<i>Russell Group (incl. Ox. and Cam.)</i>	16%	17%	17%
Education / employment / training combination destination	1%	1%	1%
Destination not sustained	12%	8%	7%
Destination not sustained / recorded NEET	1%	2%	2%
Activity not captured in data	10%	7%	13%

However, it is notable that that a lower proportion of post-18 students from Northumberland go into higher education than for the region as a whole. In addition there is a difference in which institutions they go on to attend. Considerably less than the national average of young people progress to the top third of Higher Education Institutions and Russell Group universities. This is particularly true of those students from poorer backgrounds, of whom only 3% of whom go to the best universities⁶⁰.

Raising attainment for all the county's bright young people is one way to improve this situation. However, it is not the only factor: low aspirations, limited knowledge and advice and negative perceptions of elite / highly selective universities cause many well-qualified students from all backgrounds to rule-out applying to the best universities⁶¹. Could more be done to encourage them to do so?

8.7 Adults' skills

Across the North East as a whole, rates of adult literacy and numeracy are low compared to elsewhere in the UK. There is a lack of statistics on the Northumberland situation, but low skill levels are likely to be an issue that holds back the county's most deprived areas.

Below is data on levels of qualification in the county as at December 2016. This shows that the number of people without qualifications at NVQ level 2 (e.g. GCSE) and above is higher

than for both the region and the country, whilst the proportion of people with no qualifications is also relatively high.

Table 19 – Qualification levels of 16-64 year olds⁶²

	Northumberland	North East	Great Britain
NVQ4 And Above	32.7%	31.4%	38.2%
NVQ3 And Above	51.2%	52.3%	56.9%
NVQ2 And Above	72.5%	73.7%	74.3%
NVQ1 And Above	86.1%	85.3%	85.3%
Other Qualifications	4.9%	5.4%	6.6%
No Qualifications	9.1%	9.4%	8%

The nature and implications of this adult skills deficit are summarised in the Local Authority's *Northumberland Economic Strategy, 2015-2020* as follows:

“...a significant minority of people do not have the skills and qualifications they need to take advantage of opportunities locally or externally... Some people and some places are in danger of being left behind... in the south-east and remote rural communities, low levels of attainment and skills constrain business formation and deter investment and are reflected in areas of above-average unemployment, low pay and hidden poverty.”⁶³

Potential roles for philanthropy

- Closing the educational attainment gap between people from poor and better off communities emerges as a key priority. The voluntary sector has an important role to play in adding value to statutory provision and supporting both young people and adults with philanthropic support.
- Encouraging and supporting young people to have aspirations, overcome challenges and achieve their full potential as learners is an area where philanthropic funding could have an enormous positive impact on individual lives.
- Community and voluntary agencies can provide a “route back” for adults who have been failed by mainstream education. Free of the pressure to constantly demonstrate attainment, charitably funded services provide a great first step towards re-engaging with learning and becoming better qualified for employment.

Strong communities

9.1 Overview

The strength of a community is not an easy thing to measure. The strong communities section of this report focuses on the relationships people have with one another, the extent to which local people play an active role in society and the voluntary associations that help provide for a good quality of life. We will therefore use crime, electoral turnout, volunteering and the state of civil society organisations as the main focus of our analysis. First however, we will look at what is known about how local residents view their quality of life.

9.2 Self-perception

The Measuring National Wellbeing survey was released in 2015⁶⁴. It measures satisfaction with using the following questions:

- “Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?”
- “Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?”
- “Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?”
- “Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?”

Table 20: The 4 wellbeing measures – scale of 0 to 10⁶⁵

	England	Northumberland
Satisfaction	7.6	7.7
Worthwhile	7.8	7.8
Happiness	7.5	7.4
Anxiety	2.9	2.8

It is reasonable to conclude that Northumberland is generally content, although there will be variations at local level particularly where deprivation is an issue.

9.3 Crime

According to Dr E Wedlock, author of *Crime and Cohesive Communities*, “*local areas with a high sense of community, political trust and sense of belonging show significantly lower levels of all reported crime*”⁶⁶, making this a good starting point for looking at this issue.

An overall crime score can be calculated by looking at the average rates of a set of crimes per population. The score for Northumberland is given below:

Table 21 – crime scores, 2016⁶⁷

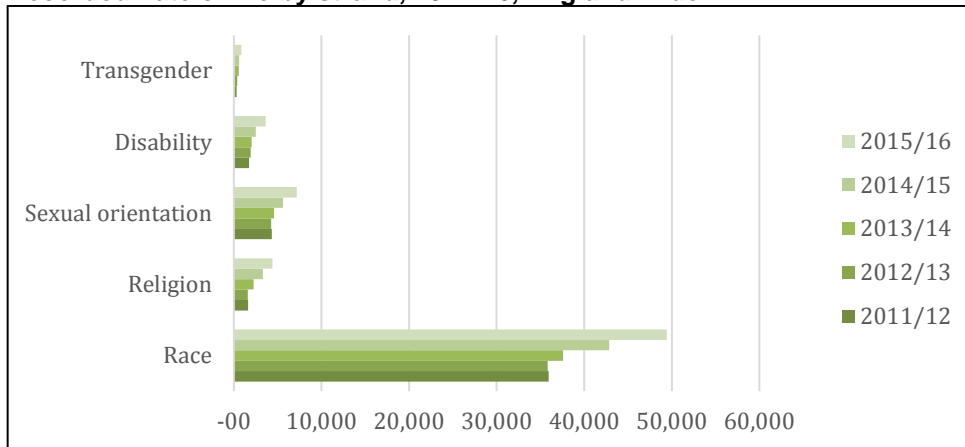
Area Name	Crime: score (2016)
Northumberland	90.63
North East	122.62
England & Wales	100

The score suggests that crime in Northumberland is lower than elsewhere in the NE region, and England and Wales as a whole (but see also section 4 – Safety). Following Dr Wedlock’s logic, this would suggest that there is a higher degree of cohesion in Northumberland than elsewhere. Of course, as we discovered in the Safety section of this report, the level of crime varies across the county and this may be indicative of a relative lack of community cohesion in some neighbourhoods.

Rising levels of recorded hate crime suggest an erosion of community cohesion, and this has unfortunately become increasingly common throughout the UK. Figures are not

available at a regional or local level, but the chart below gives the rates of growth across England since 2011. All strands of hate crime have expanded, with the biggest proportional increases in hate crimes against religious groups, and targeting people with disabilities and transgender people.

Recorded hate crime by strand, 2011-16, England-wide⁶⁸



There is no reason to believe that people living in Northumberland are more or less likely to perpetrate or suffer from a hate crime than anyone else. However, in a county where some of those targeted may live in isolation local support services provided by voluntary groups such as Safe Reporting Centres have an important role to play.

9.4 Civic engagement and volunteering

Voter turn-out is a good indicator of civic engagement, and so of the strength of a local community. Looking at the data for the 2015 General Election there is a clear distinction between different parts of the county, with low turnout in the South East of the county:

Table 22 – Voter turnout in General Election 2015

Constituency	Turnout (%)
Blyth Valley	60.1
Wansbeck	60.9
England	65.8
UK	66.1
Berwick on Tweed	69.6
Hexham	71.5

Unfortunately there are no figures for volunteering below regional level. As part of the national Taking Part survey⁶⁹ participants were asked whether they had engaged in any voluntary work in the previous year. In 2014-15, only 15.6% of NE respondents said they had, growing to 16.4% in 2015-16. (UK figures were 24.4% and 24.4%, respectively.) What does this tell us about Northumberland? The survey suggests that in rural areas volunteering may be higher than in urban neighbourhoods, so perhaps here volunteering may be nearer the national average. However the situation is very likely to be closer to the regional picture in deprived areas of the county: only 17.7% of those in the most deprived communities volunteer, compared to 29.6% of those in the least deprived areas.

9.5 Charity and community organisations

The recent Third Sector Trends Study⁷⁰ reported on the strength and sustainability of organisations across the NE region. It noted that many groups in Northumberland tended to be smaller with a strong local focus:

“In the predominantly rural county of Northumberland, 53% of TSOs work only at a very local level compared with only 22% in largely urban Tees Valley and 25% in Tyne and Wear.”

The figures in table 23 indicate that the financial situation of third sector organisations in the county is healthier than for the NE as a whole. The report suggests that this may be because the financial needs of the county’s smaller organisations may be relatively modest, making them more resilient when funds are tight.

Table 23 – Financial wellbeing of third sector organisations, 2016

	Northumberland	North East England
In a very strong position	7.7%	10.4%
In a strong position	17.6%	18.2%
In a stable position	45.1%	38.9%
In a weak position	17.6%	21.2%
Experiencing mixed fortunes	12.1%	11.3%

However the nature of the Northumberland community and voluntary sector may also restrict its capacity to access a wider pool of funding. As table 24 indicates there is a strong focus on local funding from grant-making trusts, with the public sector and national charitable funding featuring less prominently in the mix.

Table 24 – applications made to grant-making bodies and success rates

	Local grant-making foundations		Local public sector organisations		National grant-maker	
	Northumberland	NE	Northumberland	NE	Northumberland	NE
In the last two years, we made an application and were successful	57	54.6	36.3	42.6	25.5	36.7
In the last two years, we made an application but unsuccessfully	6.5	7.7	6.3	7.4	12	14.7
In the last two years, we did not make an application	36.5	37.7	57.4	50	62.5	49.6
Percentage success rate	90%	88%	86%	85%	68%	71%

This seems to go hand in hand with a lower degree of interest in funding strategies focused on cross-sectoral partnerships and contracting. Perhaps as a consequence of all this, the Northumberland third sector might best be characterised as financially stable rather than financially strong.

It is perhaps ending by mentioning the importance of community buildings, particularly in rural Northumberland, as a focus for community life. A good case study of capacity building within the community and voluntary sector is the work of local consortia for community buildings in North and West Northumberland supported by Community Action Northumberland. These incorporate 120 buildings with a value of over £40m, providing facilities for social, educational and recreational activities. A consortia approach is showing dividends in terms of the provision of advice, support and bulk purchasing and in enabling organisations to access funding for essential works.

Potential roles for philanthropy

There is evidence that the long-term key to increasing cohesion may lie in addressing deprivation and reducing inequality. However, there are also specific actions that can be taken with philanthropic support to support local communities:

- Organising community events and activities to improve local relationships and reduce misunderstanding, distrust and hate crime.
- Support those at risk of becoming the victims of hate crime.
- Encouraging an understanding of, and interest in, local and national democracy.
- Encouraging volunteering and engagement with local third sector organisations.
- Providing focused support to organisations to develop their capacity to access funding and develop new income streams.
- Developing new mechanisms to provide support for essential community and voluntary organisations.

Local economy

10.1 Overview

The Northumberland economy has great potential. Existing and new industries have great potential for development, building on the county's considerable advantages in areas such as quality of life and housing affordability. However there are considerable challenges to be overcome notably securing inward investment; improving transport and IT infrastructure; raising local entrepreneurialism and skill levels and ensuring that all local residents are able to participate in building local prosperity. Of course the fortunes of the county are closely tied to those of its near neighbours, to which many of its residents commute each day. Securing the county's future success will thus be key to the drive for regional prosperity and growth.

10.2 Productivity

The usual measure of business productivity is the Gross Value Added, which is the measure of the value of goods and services produced in an area, industry or sector of an economy.

Table 25 - Regional gross value added (income approach) at current basic prices, 2015⁷¹

Area	Gross Value Added (£m)	GVA per head (£)	Growth in GVA on year (%)	Growth in GVA per head on year (%)	Share of national GVA
Northumberland	5,029	15,951	1.7	1.9	.3%
North East	49,677	18,927	3.0	2.8	3.1%
England	1,433,164	26,159	3.0	2.1	88.7%
Great Britain	1,616,212	25,549	2.9	2.1	100.0%

Table 25 gives the GVA figures for Northumberland for 2015. It shows that the NE region contributed £49,677m to the UK economy in 2015, which was 3.1% of the national total. However, Northumberland was responsible for only 9.7% of this (0.3% out of 3.1%), and this is likely to diminish if the slow growth of the past year continues. This points to the challenge of creating higher value jobs, and developing the skilled workforce needed to fill them.

10.3 Employment by sector

The sector they are in, and hours worked can have a big influence on the terms and conditions an employee receives. Table 26 shows the split of public / private and full-time / part-time workers in Northumberland.

Table 26 - Employees by public / private sector⁷²

	Full time employees			Part time employees			Total employees		
	Public	Private	All	Public	Private	All	Public	Private	All
Northumberland	12%	51%	63%	7%	27%	34%	19%	81%	100%
UK	11%	58%	69%	7%	24%	31%	18%	82%	100%

More people work in the public sector in the NE region than the UK average, and Northumberland is no exception. If further austerity measures lead to the loss of these relatively good quality jobs, the impact is likely to be significant for the local economy.

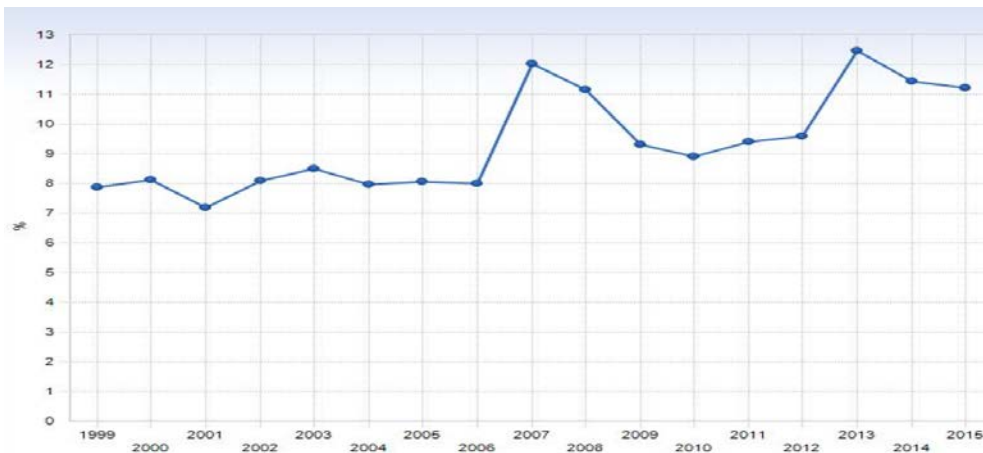
Much has been said about the need for the county to develop an economy that is less dependent on the public sector. In most parts of the UK, the proportion of people working in the public sector fell between 2010 and 2015, but in Northumberland the fall has been

relatively slow. This could mean that the continuing austerity cuts have a disproportionately high impact on the Northumberland economy in the future, as unemployment may increase, further curbing local spending power.

Table 27 – change in size of public sector employment⁷³

	% employees 2015	Change since 2010
Northumberland	31.3	-1.6
NE	33	-2.4
GB	26.8	-3.3

Is the private sector growing to take up the slack? The chart below⁷⁴ shows the rate of businesses registering for VAT per 100,000 of the population each year, which is an indicator of the level of entrepreneurship and of the health of the business population. It suggests that it is perhaps too early for optimism on this issue.



Injecting entrepreneurial dynamism into the economy, particularly within its small and medium size enterprises, has been identified as a key priority for Northumberland. The Federation of Small Businesses has highlighted the need to stimulate a more diverse business range, encouraging more start-up enterprises. Social enterprise is an area where considerable progress has been made in the county, and is likely to be a key component in developing a local entrepreneurial culture.

10.4 Industries

Table 28 shows the balance between the different industries that make up the Northumberland economy.

Table 28: % of all enterprises within industry⁷⁵

	GB	Northumberland	% Difference from GB
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	5.2	17.2	+11
Public administration and defence	.3	.8	-.5
Hotels and restaurants	5.8	8.5	+2.7
Motor trade	2.9	3	+.1
Retail	7.5	7.8	+.3
Production	5.7	5.8	+.1
Arts, entertainment and recreation	6.6	6.7	+.1
Construction	11	11.7	+.7
Transport and storage	3.7	3.1	-.6
Health	4.5	3.8	-.7
Business administration and support	8.3	6.7	-1.6
Education	1.6	1.3	-.3
Property	3.6	2.9	-.7
Professional, scientific and technical	18.3	13.8	-4.5
Wholesale	4	2.9	-1.1
Digital economy	8.6	4.2	-4.4
Finance and insurance	2.1	1	-1.1
Information and communications	8.3	3.8	-4.5

From this it can be seen that there is a challenge in terms of developing a more balanced local economy. Developing those higher-value, knowledge driven businesses at the bottom of the table is clearly important.

Potential roles for philanthropy

- Individual skill development is one of the keys to Northumberland's future prosperity. Encouraging young people to take an interest in business development, and subjects relevant to the knowledge economy, is vital. Philanthropy is already adding value to the work of partners in the public and private sectors on this.
- As the Northumberland economy changes some communities and individuals may be badly affected by the loss of public sector jobs. Philanthropy can support the people affected by supporting interventions that help people into new forms of employment or self-employment. Supporting social enterprise may be a particular focus for philanthropic intervention.

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Glossary

BME	Black and minority ethnic (used to refer to members of non-white communities in the UK)
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government. The Department for Communities and Local Government's job is to create great places to live and work, and to give more power to local people to shape what happens in their area.
DCMS	Department for Culture, Media and Sport. A governmental department responsible for protecting and promoting the UK's cultural and artistic heritage and helping businesses and communities to grow by investing in innovation.
Decile	When data is sorted by value it can be split into equal parts. If split into ten, each equal part is a decile (if split into four, each is a quartile). With scores, the first decile is the highest scoring 10% and the tenth is the lowest. Being in the first decile may be bad (if the score is for deprivation), or good (e.g. if it is for natural beauty).
Domain	One of the themes used to organise and report on data in the Index of Multiple Deprivation and similar datasets.
Fuel poverty	A household is considered to be in fuel poverty if they have required fuel costs that are above average (the national median level) and were they to spend that amount, they would be left with a residual income below the official <i>poverty</i> line.
IDACI	Income deprivation affecting children index – one of the additional indices created as part of the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015.
IDAOP	Income deprivation affecting older people index – one of the additional indices created as part of the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015.
IMD	See Index of Multiple Deprivation.
Index of Multiple Deprivation	A UK government quantitative study of deprived areas in English local councils. The 2015 version covers seven domains – income, employment, education, health, crime, barriers to housing and services, living environment which are reported on separately and combined into the overall IMD score and ranks.
LGBTQ	Abbreviation that stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Queer, and is used to designate a community of people whose sexual or gender identities can create shared political and social concerns.
LSOA	Lower Layer Super Output Area is a geographic area designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics in England and Wales.

	Each LSOA covers 4-6 output areas, and includes a population of around 1,500 people.
Poverty line	The Child Poverty Action Group sets the poverty line in the UK at 60 per cent of the median UK household income. In other words, if a household's income is less than 60 per cent of this average, CPAG considers them to be living in poverty.
Severe and multiple disadvantage	Severe and multiple disadvantage (SMD) occurs when someone faces multiple, often related and mutually reinforcing issues which create a high degree of exclusion from society and lead to high levels of stigma. The four issues that are most often found together are offending, substance misuse, homelessness and mental health problems.
SMD	See severe and multiple disadvantage.
Social exclusion	Social exclusion refers to the way in which individuals or communities are systematically excluded from accessing rights, services, or opportunities that are normally available to people, and which are fundamental to social integration

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