



Mid Suffolk

State of the District Report 2023

This is the first State of the District report produced by Mid Suffolk District Council. It tells the story of our district through data and insight – including from Census 2021 - across a range of themes spanning the economy, the environment, resident health and wellbeing, community issues and housing.

The State of the District report will be updated on an annual basis to provide continued commentary on the strengths and challenges within Mid Suffolk and how these are changing over time.

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Summary

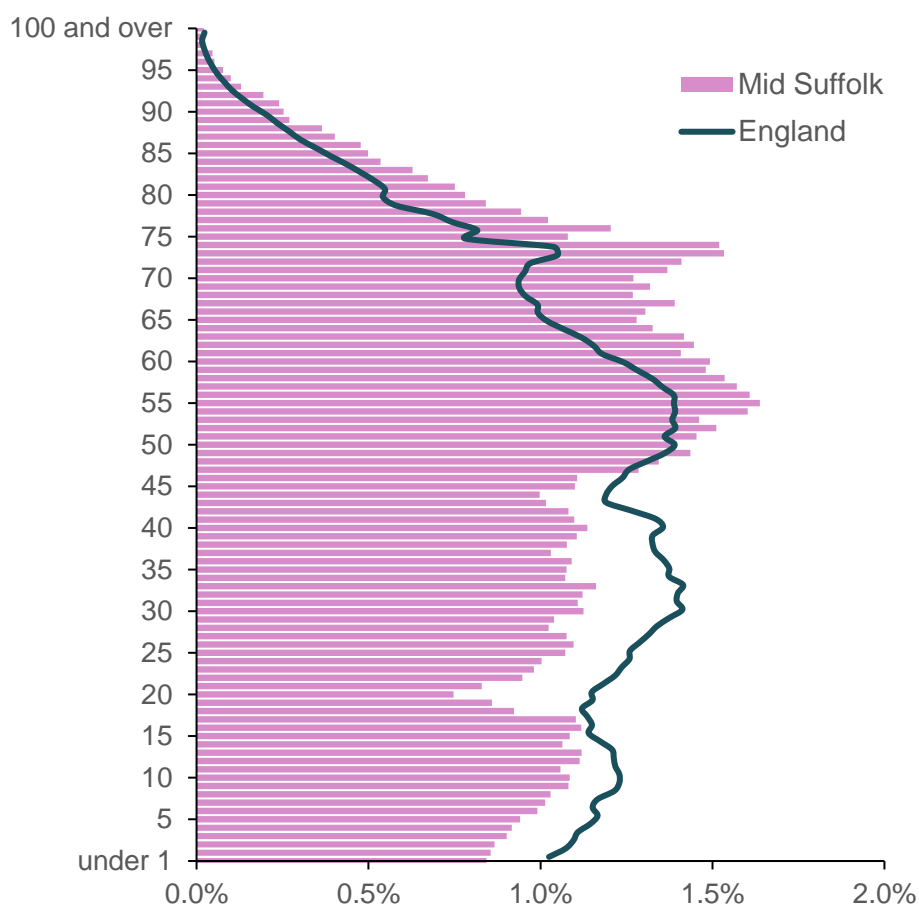


People

Population

- At the latest Census in March 2021, Mid Suffolk had 102,700¹ residents, an increase of 6.2% (from 96,700) since 2011.
- Mid Suffolk has an older population than the England average (Figure 1), with 25.3% of its residents aged 65 years and over (compared with 18.4% in England and 19.6% in the East of England).
- Over the next twenty years, the total number of residents aged 15-64 and children aged under 15 is expected to remain relatively stable, with population growth (to around 116,000 by 2043) driven primarily by an increase in the number of people aged 65-plus.
- By 2043, the 65-plus population is expected to account for almost a third (32.4%) of all residents, well above the projected proportion for England (22.2%).

Figure 1: Population by age (Census 2021)



¹ Rounded to the nearest 100 people.

Population by ward

The Mid Suffolk district is divided into 26 electoral wards

- At Census 2021, Chilton was Mid Suffolk's most populated ward with 6,977 people, followed by Elmswell & Woolpit (6,533).
- The least populated wards were Bramford with 2,646 people, Onehouse with 2,665 and Hoxne & Worlingworth with 2,699.
- All wards apart from Stow Thorney and Blakenham had a higher proportion of residents aged 65-plus than the England average of 18.4%, with several wards having nearly a third of residents in this age group.
- Stow Thorney (24.4%) and Chilton (19.0%) wards (both Stowmarket) and Blakenham (18.0%) had the highest proportions of children aged 0-15 (Table 1).

Table 1: Ward populations by age (Census 2021)

Electoral Ward	Ward population	Persons aged 0-15 (%)	Persons aged 16-64 (%)	Persons aged 65+ (%)
England average		18.6	63.0	18.4
East of England average		18.7	61.6	19.6
Mid Suffolk average		16.0	58.7	25.3
Bacton	2,784	13.8	56.0	30.3
Battisford & Ringshall	3,656	15.5	64.4	20.1
Blakenham	3,571	18.0	65.6	16.4
Bramford	2,646	14.4	53.9	31.7
Chilton	6,977	19.0	60.2	20.8
Claydon & Barham	5,841	15.6	58.6	25.9
Combs Ford	5,591	15.9	63.1	21.1
Debenham	3,279	16.2	55.3	28.5
Elmswell & Woolpit	6,533	16.9	57.2	25.9
Eye	2,905	14.9	54.3	30.8
Fressingfield	2,811	12.8	55.2	31.9
Gislingham	3,228	14.7	58.4	26.8
Haughley, Stowupland & Wetherden	5,752	15.8	57.2	27.0
Hoxne & Worlingworth	2,699	14.4	55.2	30.4
Mendlesham	2,973	15.8	56.5	27.7
Needham Market	5,980	13.2	59.4	27.4
Onehouse	2,665	14.5	58.3	27.2
Palgrave	2,918	14.1	57.0	28.9
Rattlesden	3,126	16.3	56.9	26.8
Rickinghall	2,903	14.6	54.4	31.0
St Peter's	3,122	12.8	59.6	27.5
Stonham	2,820	14.1	60.7	25.2
Stow Thorney	5,851	24.4	66.8	8.9

Electoral Ward	Ward population	Persons aged 0-15 (%)	Persons aged 16-64 (%)	Persons aged 65+ (%)
Stradbroke & Laxfield	3,045	14.8	55.0	30.2
Thurston	5,881	16.2	57.5	26.3
Walsham-le-Willows	3,128	15.3	57.5	27.2

Households, deprivation and digital exclusion

- Between 2011 and 2021, the number of households in Mid Suffolk rose from 40,300 to 44,300, an increase of 9.9%. This was above both the percentage increases seen across Suffolk (7.3%) and England (6.2%).
- Household numbers are expected to increase further by around 18% by 2043 (compared with around 13% across Suffolk).
- Of the 44,300 households in Mid Suffolk on Census Day, 27.0% were single-person households (with 14.3% single-persons aged 66 and over). This compared with 31.2% of households across Suffolk (with 14.8% single-persons aged 66 and over) and 30.1% across England (with 12.8% single-persons aged 66 and over).
- Mid Suffolk falls within the least deprived third of local authority areas in England.² It has just two neighbourhoods (LSOAs)³ within the 40% most deprived neighbourhoods in England. However, as a mainly rural district, Mid Suffolk faces a number of geographical barriers related to the physical proximity of local services and employment centres.
- In June 2023, there was 96.8% superfast broadband coverage⁴ in Mid Suffolk, similar to the average for England (97.9%). Gigabit-capable broadband coverage stood at 46.6%, below the England figure of 77.1%.
- Not all residents access or are confident using the internet. One-in-ten retired residents (9%) do not have access, increasing to 16% of residents aged 75 and over. Internet access and confidence is also lower among those with self-reported poor health or disabilities and those living in social rented properties.

² Based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019.

³ Lower Layer Super Output Area.

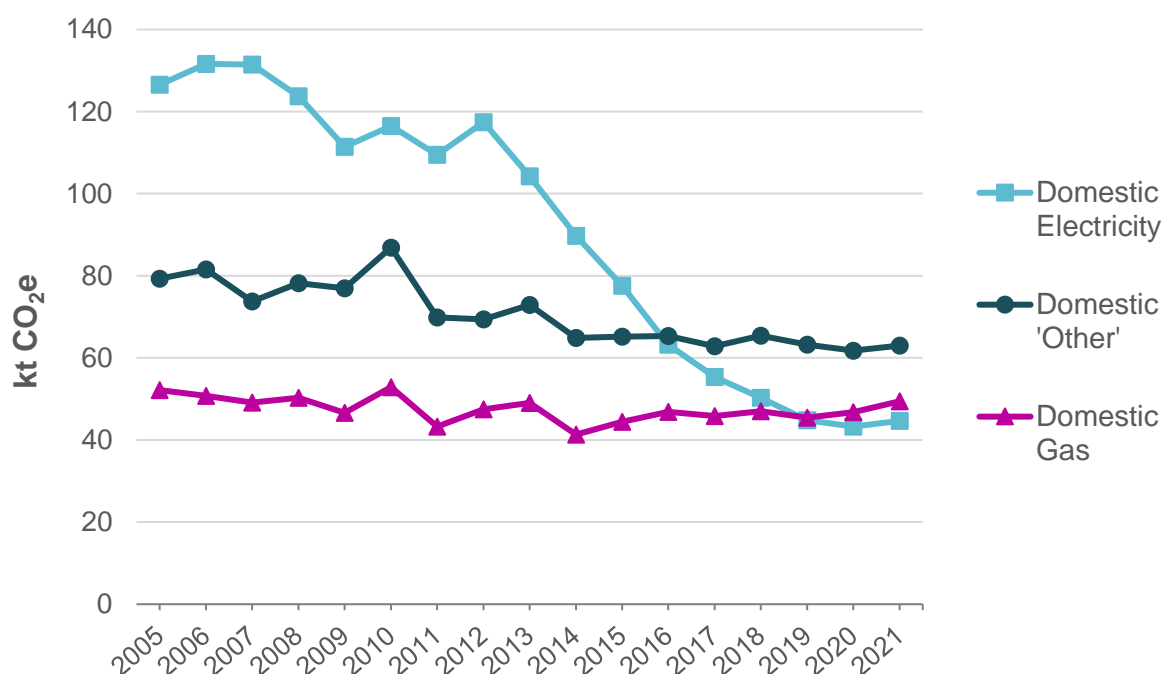
⁴ Defined as the percentage of residential and business premises that have Superfast Broadband (greater than or equal to 30Mbit/s) coverage from fixed broadband.

Environment and Biodiversity

Greenhouse gas emissions

- In 2021, Mid Suffolk accounted for 16.3% of greenhouse gas emissions⁵ in Suffolk.
- Between 2005 and 2021, emissions fell from 1214.3 kilotonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (kt CO₂e) to 776.3 kt CO₂e, a reduction of 36%. This was slightly below the percentage decrease in emissions seen nationally (39%).
- Domestic (or residential) emissions⁶ reduced from 258.0 to 157.1 kilotonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent during the same period, driven in particular by a decline in emissions related to domestic electricity (Figure 2).⁷

Figure 2: Domestic greenhouse gas emissions 2005-2021 by energy type (kt CO₂e)



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

⁵ The greenhouse gases covered by these statistics are carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide.

⁶ Domestic emissions here represent emissions from energy consumption in and around the home, but not activities by private individuals elsewhere, such as personal travel.

⁷ Supply-side emissions decreases have resulted from changes in the mix of fuels being used for electricity generation (e.g. gas instead of coal), including the growth of renewables. At the same time, domestic demand for electricity has also reduced, due to factors including product energy efficiency regulations and energy-efficient lighting.

- At 7.5 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent, greenhouse gas emissions per capita in Mid Suffolk were above the county, regional and national averages in 2021 (with per capita figures of 6.2 tonnes across Suffolk, 6.0 tonnes across the East of England and 5.5 tonnes across England).⁸
- Emissions from transport accounted for 36.0% of total greenhouse emissions (excluding net emissions from land use, land use change and forestry) in Mid Suffolk in 2021 (Table 2). Agriculture was the next highest contributor, responsible for 22.2% of emissions in the district, followed by domestic emissions (20.8% of the total).

Table 2: Percentage contribution to total greenhouse gas emissions by sector (excluding land use, land use change and forestry)⁹ (2021)

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

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

- By the end of 2022, there were 1,273 plug-in cars registered to owners in Mid Suffolk (comprising 736 battery electric, 514 plug-in hybrid and 23 range extended electric cars).¹⁰ As of April 2023, Mid Suffolk had 31 publicly available electric vehicle charging points, including 4 rapid chargers.

Biodiversity

- Across Mid Suffolk, there are 36 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), six Local Nature Reserves, 208 County Wildlife Sites (covering 1,490 hectares) and 792 hectares of ancient woodland.

⁸ The local authority areas with higher emissions per capita are a mixture of those with large industrial sites and those with relatively low populations compared to the size of the area or the activities that take place there that produce emissions. The latter group are often in more rural areas. Conversely, the areas with the lowest emissions per capita are typically built-up areas with high resident populations.

⁹ The land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) sector consists of both emissions and removals from forest land, cropland, grassland, wetlands, settlements and harvested wood products. It is the only sector that includes emission removals and therefore can show a net removal of greenhouse gases or a net contribution to emissions. For this reason, it is excluded from the calculations in Table 2.

¹⁰ Range extended electric vehicles are additionally equipped with a small internal combustion engine to charge the vehicle's battery.

- On average, tree canopy cover for wards in Mid Suffolk stands at 8.5%, compared with a ward average of 16.3% for selected wards assessed across England (14.6% for rural wards and 16.7% for urban wards).¹¹
- The Council manages 94 hectares of amenity grass and in 2023 is managing over 8.6 hectares of this as wildflower meadow. This provides habitat and food for pollinators and helps to reduce rainwater run-off and extremes of temperature, therefore increasing climate change resilience.

¹¹ Based on a total of 6,135 wards assessed in England (4,904 urban wards and 1,231 rural wards) as part of a Forestry Commission UK canopy cover webmap project which aimed to assess the percentage tree canopy cover across wards in the UK (taken from the dataset published by the Forestry Commission on 5th April 2023).

Economy

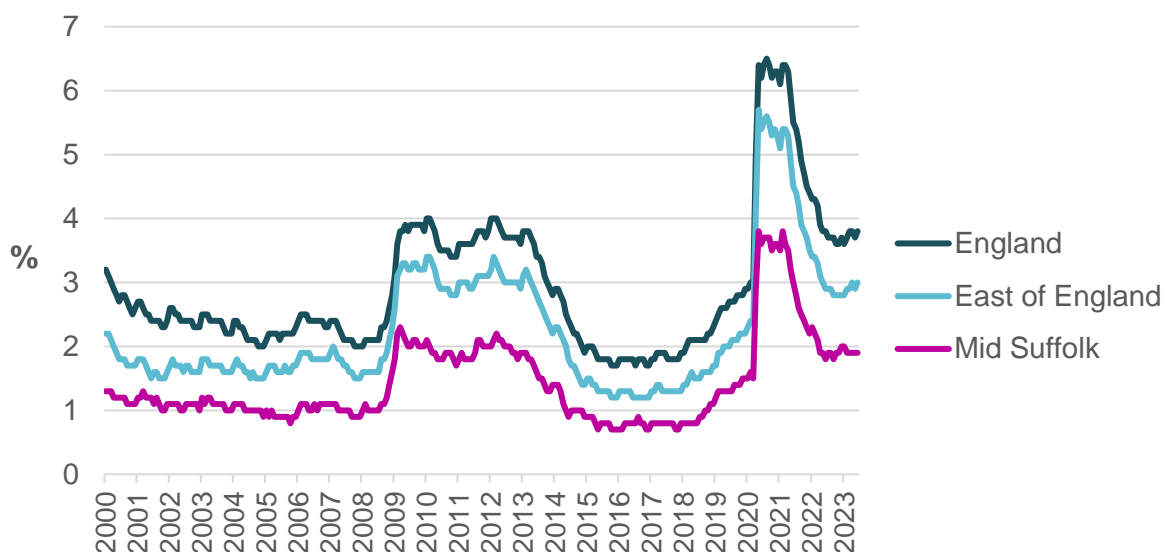
Economic activity

- In the 12 months to December 2022, 81.6% of 16 to 64-year-olds in Mid Suffolk were economically active (that is they were either in employment or unemployed), compared with 80.6% across the East of England and 78.7% across England.
- Reasons for not being economically active include long-term or temporary sickness, looking after the home, being a student and taking early retirement.

Out-of-work benefits

- The proportion of Mid Suffolk residents claiming out-of-work benefits has historically been below both the regional and national averages (Figure 3). In June 2023, 1.9% of those aged 16-64 in Mid Suffolk claimed out-of-work benefits, compared with 3.0% across the East of England and 3.8% across England.
- By age, 3.4% of those aged 18-24, 2.1% of those aged 25-49 and 1.3% of those aged 50-64 were claiming out-of-work benefits in Mid Suffolk in June 2023.

Figure 3: Proportion of residents aged 16-64 claiming out-of-work benefits (January 2000 - June 2023)



Source: ONS Claimant count

Employment sectors, pay and productivity

- With 49,000 jobs within the district, Mid Suffolk has a jobs density of 0.81, which compares to 0.84 across the East of England and 0.86 in England (based on 2021 data). A jobs density of 1.0 would mean there was one job for every resident aged 16-64 within each geography.¹²

¹² A high jobs density would represent an employment centre, where people commute to for work. A low jobs density would represent an area with fewer jobs, where people would commute from for work.

- A similar proportion of employee jobs¹³ in Mid Suffolk (67.6%) are full-time (31+ hours per week) when compared to the East of England (66.9%) and England (68.4%).
- Most employee jobs are within the private sector; just 9.8% of employee jobs in Mid Suffolk were in the public sector in 2021, compared with 17.0% across the East of England and England.
- The top three employment sectors in Mid Suffolk are wholesale and retail (accounting for 13.5% of employee jobs in 2021), manufacturing (also 13.5%), and construction (12.2%), with the share for manufacturing and construction significantly above the national and regional averages.¹⁴
- Transportation and storage is also an important employment sector for Mid Suffolk, accounting for 8.1% of all employee jobs in 2021, compared with 5.5% in the East of England and 5.2% in England (Table 3).

Table 3: Employee jobs by industry (2021)

% is a proportion of total employees excluding farm-based agriculture

	Mid Suffolk	East of England	England
B: Mining and Quarrying	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
C: Manufacturing	13.5%	7.3%	7.5%
D: Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air Conditioning Supply	0.1%	0.2%	0.4%
E: Water Supply; Sewerage, Waste Management and Remediation Activities	0.9%	0.7%	0.7%
F: Construction	12.2%	5.9%	4.8%
G: Wholesale and Retail Trade	13.5%	15.2%	14.5%
H: Transportation and Storage	8.1%	5.5%	5.2%
I: Accommodation and Food Service Activities	5.4%	6.9%	7.5%
J: Information and Communication	2.7%	4.1%	4.7%
K: Financial and Insurance Activities	1.1%	2.1%	3.7%
L: Real Estate Activities	0.9%	1.7%	1.9%
M: Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	6.8%	9.2%	9.3%
N: Administrative and Support Service Activities	8.1%	11.8%	9.0%
O: Public Administration and Defence	3.4%	3.4%	4.3%
P: Education	8.1%	9.5%	8.8%
Q: Human Health and Social Work Activities	8.1%	12.2%	13.4%
R: Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	2.2%	2.2%	2.3%
S: Other Service Activities	1.9%	1.8%	1.9%

Source: ONS Business Register and Employment Survey

¹³ The number of jobs held by employees. Employee jobs excludes self-employed, government-supported trainees and HM Forces, so this count will be smaller than the total jobs figure. In 2021, Mid Suffolk had 37,000 employee jobs.

¹⁴ Percentages are a proportion of total employee jobs excluding farm-based agriculture.

- Productivity in Mid Suffolk – measured as gross value added (GVA) per hour worked¹⁵ – falls below the county, regional and national averages, at £33.50 in Mid Suffolk compared with £35.10 across Suffolk, £35.90 in the East of England and £38.90 in England (based on 2021 data).
- Median earnings for full-time employees working in Mid Suffolk are below the regional and national averages, with the gap widest for female workers (Table 4).

Table 4: Median earnings in pounds for employees working in the area (2022)¹⁶

	Mid Suffolk	East of England	England
Gross Weekly Pay			
Full-Time Workers	£ 619.80	£ 632.40	£ 645.60
Male Full-Time Workers	£ 675.10	£ 679.80	£ 689.90
Female Full-Time Workers	£ 536.40	£ 567.00	£ 584.50
Hourly Pay - Excluding Overtime			
Full-Time Workers	£ 14.79	£ 15.73	£ 16.41
Male Full-Time Workers	£ 15.14	£ 16.40	£ 17.03
Female Full-Time Workers	£ 12.86	£ 14.68	£ 15.44

Source: ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings

Qualifications

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

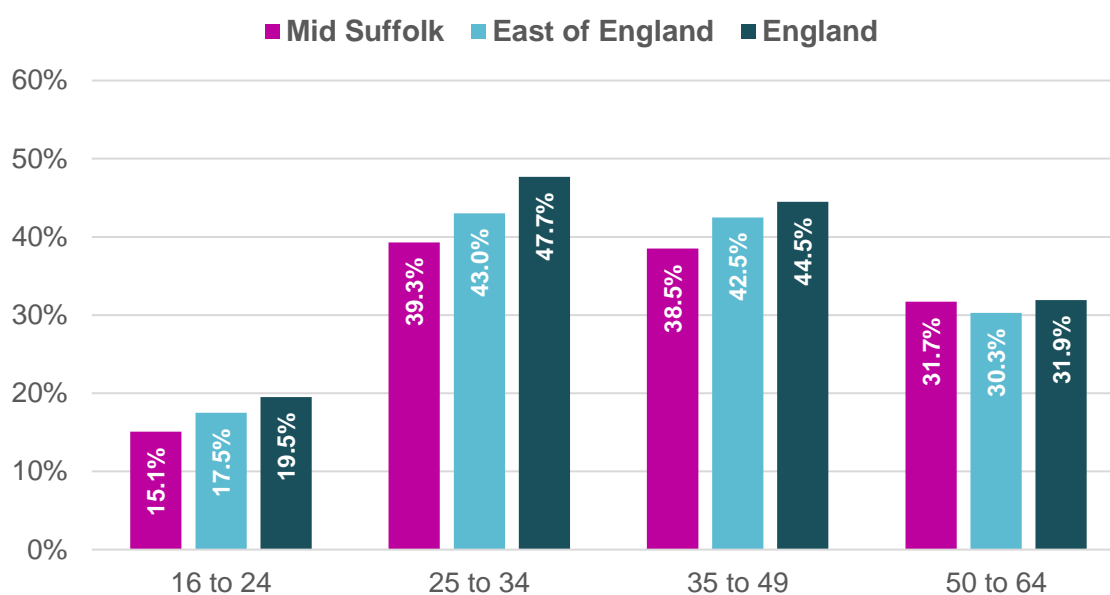
¹⁵ Gross Value Added (GVA) measures the contribution to the economy of each individual producer, industry or sector; it is the value of the amount of goods and services that have been produced, less the cost of all inputs and raw materials that are directly attributable to that production.

¹⁶ Full-time is defined as working more than 30 paid hours per week. In interpreting differences in pay between males and females and across different geographies, it should be noted that the figures do not show differences in rates of pay for comparable jobs, given they are affected by factors such as the proportion of employees in different occupations and sectors (for example, where a higher proportion of females work in occupations such as administration and caring, which tend to offer lower salaries). It should also be noted that the gross weekly pay figures are affected by both hourly rates of pay and the number of hours worked or paid for. Therefore, the hourly pay figures remove the impact of hours worked (for example, where males work, on average, more hours per week than females).

Table 5: Highest level of qualification held by 16 to 64-year-olds (Census 2021)

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

Figure 4: Proportion with a Level 4 qualification or above by age group (Census 2021)



Occupation types

- Census 2021 collected information about the occupations of those who were in employment (both as employees and self-employed) (Table 6).¹⁷
- Compared with the regional and national figures, a higher-than-average proportion of Mid Suffolk's working residents were employed as managers, directors or senior officials (14.8% versus 12.9% nationally) or in skilled trade occupations (13.1% compared with 10.2% nationally).

¹⁷ Census 2021 took place during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, a period of unparalleled and rapid change; the national lockdown, associated guidance and furlough measures will have affected the labour market topic.

- A lower-than-average proportion were employed in professional occupations (17.9% versus 20.3% nationally) or in the lower occupational groups 8-9 (15.7% compared with 17.4% nationally).

Table 6: Standard Occupational Classification (SOC 2020) of residents aged 16 years and over in employment (Census 2021)

	Mid Suffolk	East of England	England
SOC 2020 Major Group 1-3	46.2%	46.6%	46.4%
1. Managers, directors and senior officials	14.8%	13.7%	12.9%
2. Professional occupations	17.9%	19.6%	20.3%
3. Associate professional and technical occupations	13.5%	13.3%	13.3%
SOC 2020 Major Group 4-5	23.0%	20.5%	19.4%
4. Administrative and secretarial occupations	9.9%	9.8%	9.3%
5. Skilled trades occupations	13.1%	10.7%	10.2%
SOC 2020 Major Group 6-7	15.1%	16.1%	16.7%
6. Caring, leisure and other service occupations	8.7%	9.1%	9.3%
7. Sales and customer service occupations	6.5%	7.0%	7.5%
SOC 2020 Major Group 8-9	15.7%	16.8%	17.4%
8. Process, plant and machine operatives	6.8%	6.9%	6.9%
9. Elementary occupations	8.8%	9.9%	10.5%

- By ward, Battisford & Ringshall (54.6%), Rattlesden (53.4%) and Stonham (52.6%) wards had the highest proportions of working residents employed in the higher occupational groups 1-3. In contrast, fewer than 40% of working residents in Combs Ford and St Peter's wards were employed in in occupation groups 1-3, with over 20% in each (21.9% in Combs Ford and 21.1% in St Peter's) employed in the lower occupation groups 8-9.

Health and Wellbeing

Life expectancy

- Life expectancy at birth exceeds the national, regional and county averages for both females (84.8 years) and males (81.4 years).
- The difference in life expectancy at birth between the least and most deprived areas in Mid Suffolk is 5.7 years for males and 4.9 years for females. This compares with a difference of 9.7 years for males and 7.9 years for females seen nationally.
- A lesser proportion of people aged under 75 in Mid Suffolk die from cardiovascular diseases, respiratory diseases, or cancers than regional and England averages.
- Infant mortality rates in Mid Suffolk are below both the regional and national averages. For the period 2019-2021, Mid Suffolk's infant (under one year old) mortality rate was 2.8 per 1,000 live births, compared with 3.4 across the East of England and 3.9 in England.

Health and risk behaviours

- At the last Census, half of Mid Suffolk residents reported being in 'very good health' (49.7%) and 35.1% reported being in 'good health', based on age-standardised data.¹⁸ This was above the national average, where 47.5% of people in England reported 'very good health' and 34.2% 'good health'.
- Certain health behaviours in Mid Suffolk are better than the national average. For example, 11.7% of adults smoke, compared with 12.9% regionally and 13.0% nationally, while 42.9% of adults meet the recommended '5-a-day' fruit and vegetable target, above the regional (34.8%) and national (32.5%) figures.
- However, the proportion of adults (69.2%) classified as overweight or obese¹⁹ is above the regional and national proportions (63.9% across the East of England and 63.8% across England), although the prevalence of overweight (including obesity) among Year 6 children in Mid Suffolk is lower (33.7% compared with 35.4% regionally and 37.8% in England).
- Levels of physical activity are similar to the England average, with 25.3% of adults in Mid Suffolk classified as physically inactive²⁰ in the 12 months to November 2022, based on findings from the Active Lives Survey. This compares to 25.3% of adults who are physically inactive across the East of England and 25.8% across England.

¹⁸ Age-standardised proportions (ASPs) allow for fairer comparison between populations over time and across geographies, as they account for differences in the population size and age structure. Where Mid Suffolk's population is older than the national average, this allows for a fairer comparison against the national result.

¹⁹ Based on age-standardised data.

²⁰ Physical inactivity is defined within the Active Lives Survey as doing less than 30 minutes of activity per week.

Mental health and wellbeing

- Residents in Mid Suffolk report above-average levels of personal wellbeing. Asked to rate their levels of life satisfaction, worthwhileness and happiness from 0-10 (where 10 means they feel completely satisfied / worthwhile / happy), respondents to the 2022 Residents Survey gave an average score of:
 - 7.24 for satisfaction with their life (compared with 6.85 across England)
 - 7.53 for feeling that the things they do in their life are worthwhile (7.15 across England)
 - 7.38 for how happy they felt yesterday (6.98 across England)
- When asked about their levels of anxiety (again on a scale of 0-10 but where 10 means they feel completely anxious), residents reported lower than average anxiety (3.08 compared with 3.71 for England).
- People living in rural parts of Mid Suffolk tend to report higher levels of personal wellbeing than those in urban areas (Table 7).
- In line with national findings, a number of resident groups tend to report lower levels of wellbeing, including younger adults, those in single adult households, those in social rented accommodation, those who are not working (excluding retired), those who report being in poor health and those with a limiting long-term illness or health condition.

Table 7: Personal wellbeing (2022 Mid Suffolk Residents Survey)

Mean score out of 10	Mid Suffolk total	Urban areas	Rural areas
Satisfaction with life	7.24	6.92	7.35
Things you do in life are worthwhile	7.53	7.23	7.63
Happiness	7.38	6.99	7.51
Anxiety	3.08	3.36	2.99

- In 2021/22, Mid Suffolk's rate of emergency hospital admissions for intentional self-harm was slightly higher than regional average but similar to the national average, at 169.4 per 100,000 people compared with 145.0 per 100,000 in the East of England and 163.9 per 100,000 across England.
- Mid Suffolk's suicide rate during the period 2019-21 was 10.6 per 100,000 people per year, similar to the rate across the East of England (9.8 per 100,000) and England (10.4 per 100,000).

Community

Local area and community

- The 2022 Mid Suffolk Residents Survey found that most residents were satisfied with their local area as a place to live (87% were satisfied compared with 76% nationally and 78% in the East of England). Just over three-quarters (78%) agreed they were proud to live in their local area.
- Residents in rural areas reported higher levels of satisfaction and pride than those in urban areas: 41% of those in rural areas were 'very satisfied' with their local area (compared with 23% of those in urban areas) and 81% were proud to live in their local area (compared with 70% in urban areas).
- Seven-in-ten (68%) felt a strong sense of belonging to their local community (compared with 63% nationally and across the East of England), with residents living in rural areas also far more likely to feel a sense of belonging than those living in urban areas (71% versus 58%).
- Most residents said they chat to their neighbours, more than just to say hello, at least once a month (83%); this compares well with national and regional averages (both 72%).
- Almost two-thirds (62%) agreed that people in their local area work together to improve it; 51% of those in urban areas agreed this was the case, compared with 65% of those in rural areas.

Access to services

- As part of the Residents Survey, just over half of residents (54%) agreed they can access a range of activities in their local community spaces, with slightly higher agreement amongst residents living in urban areas (60% compared with 53% in rural areas).
- Around two-thirds agreed that they can access local sport and leisure facilities (64% overall, rising to 83% in urban areas) and that they have opportunities to participate in sport and leisure in the local area (58% overall, rising to 74% in urban areas).
- When asked about the services within their local area:
 - Around six-in-ten residents living in rural areas said they live within a 15-20 minute walk from a grocery store (60%), primary school (58%), or park (56%), with responses higher among urban residents (94%, 89% and 93% respectively).
 - A third of all residents (34%) said they have a GP or health centre within a 15-20 minute walk from their home (64% in urban areas compared with 24% of those in rural areas).
 - Most urban residents said they have a chemist (73%) or Post Office (69%) within a 15-20 minute walk from their home; however, this reduces to 34% and 49% for those living in rural parts of Mid Suffolk.

Cost of living and poverty

- Based on the latest available data, 5,876 or 13.1% of households in Mid Suffolk were classed as being in fuel poverty in 2021.²¹ Whilst below the Suffolk average (14.1%), this was above the average across the East of England (12.3%) and in line with the England average (13.1%).
- At least three-in-ten households in Mid Suffolk use oil heating, with the high upfront capital needed to purchase heating oil making it potentially difficult for lower-income households to heat their homes.²²
- It was estimated that in 2021/22, 3,972 or 20.1% of children in Mid Suffolk aged 0-15 were living in poverty, after housing costs.²³ This compared with 23.6% in the East of England and 30.8% in England.
- In June 2023, 5,754 people claimed Universal Credit²⁴ in Mid Suffolk – equivalent to 9.5% of people aged 16-65 - with claims more prevalent among females (11.7% compared with 7.2% of males aged 16-65). Nationally, 14.6% of people in England aged 16-65 were claiming Universal Credit in the same period.
- Our partners are seeing the cost-of-living effects on the community. For example, the number of people in Mid Suffolk helped with debt enquiries by the Citizens Advice service²⁵ rose from 137 cases in June 2021 to 276 cases in June 2022 and 419 cases in June 2023.

Community safety and crime

- In the 12 months to April 2023, the overall crime rate in Mid Suffolk was 40.5 incidents per 1,000 population, based on 4,211 recorded crimes. This compares with a rate of 67.5 per 1,000 across Suffolk, 76.9 per 1,000 across the East of England and 84.4 per 1,000 across England during the same period.
- Mid Suffolk's 2022 Residents Survey found that a significant majority of residents (96%) feel safe outside during the day, while 89% feel safe in local parks and open spaces. Three-quarters (77%) said they feel safe after dark (67% of residents in urban areas, compared with 80% of those in rural settings).

²¹ A household is considered to be fuel poor if: they are living in a home with an energy efficiency rating below band C and were they to spend the required amount on fuel costs for the home, they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line.

²² Although the average price of heating oil has fallen month-on-month since October 2022, consumers have been exposed to historically high costs during 2022 and early 2023. The national average cost of heating oil peaked at £1,109 per 1,000 litres in June 2022, whilst the cost in October 2022 (£1,016 per 1,000 litres) was almost double the October 2019 cost and £400 more than in October 2021.

²³ Defined as the percentage of children in households below 60% median income after housing costs.

²⁴ Universal Credit is a single payment to help with living costs for those on a low income or out of work. It replaces six benefits, commonly referred to as the legacy benefits: Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance; Income-related Employment and Support Allowance; Income Support; Working Tax Credit; Child Tax Credit; Housing Benefit.

²⁵ The Citizens Advice (CA) service are a network of independent charities offering confidential, impartial advice online, over the phone and in person, for free.

Housing

Heating

- Of the 44,300 households in Mid Suffolk, most have central heating (99.0%). A lower-than-average proportion of properties in Mid Suffolk use mains gas as a single source of heating (42.1% compared with 61.9% in Suffolk and 74.0% across England as a whole).²⁶
- Instead, a much higher proportion use oil as a single source of heating (30.3% compared with 13.2% in Suffolk and 3.2% in England), with over 60% of households using oil in the following wards: Bacton (63.1%), Walsham-le-Willows (63.0%) and Stonham (61.1%).
- Electric heating is the third most common type of heating, used by 9.0% of households as a single source of heating, similar to the Suffolk and England averages.

Housing costs

- Mid Suffolk's median property price (£305,000 in the twelve months to December 2022) is above the median prices for Suffolk and England (Table 8), although this is driven predominantly by a higher-than-average proportion of detached properties in the district; with median prices for detached, semi-detached and terraced houses all in line with the national average.

Table 8: Median property prices (12 months ending December 2022)

Property type	Mid Suffolk	Suffolk	England
All house types	£ 305,000	£ 285,000	£ 286,000
Detached houses	£ 435,000	£ 420,000	£ 435,500
Semi-detached houses	£ 270,000	£ 275,000	£ 270,000
Terraced houses	£ 230,000	£ 228,000	£ 235,000
Flats or maisonettes	£ 142,500	£ 150,000	£ 230,000

Source: ONS House Price Statistics for Small Areas

- Housing affordability ratios are calculated by dividing (median) house prices by (median) gross annual full-time earnings²⁷ to create a ratio. A larger number reflects a less affordable area.
 - In Mid Suffolk, based on workplace-based earnings (the earnings of those who work in the district, though they may live elsewhere) house prices were 10.28 times earnings in 2022, compared with 8.91 across Suffolk and 10.08 across the East of England.

²⁶ Census 2021 separately classified households that had two or more types of central heating, however these were not broken down by energy type. Therefore, some of these households (11.8% in Mid Suffolk) could have had gas central heating also.

²⁷ Gross earnings refer to that remuneration received by employees in return for employment before any benefits are added or tax deductions are made (including National Insurance contributions).

- Looking at residence-based earnings (the earnings of the people who live in the area, though they may work elsewhere) house prices were 9.15 times earnings in 2022, compared with 8.93 across Suffolk and 9.55 across the East of England.
- Private rental costs for properties in Mid Suffolk are slightly above the Suffolk average for one, two and three-bedroom properties (based on median monthly rent) (Table 9).

Table 9: Median monthly private rented costs (1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023)

Rental type	Mid Suffolk	Suffolk	England
1 Bedroom	£ 600	£ 560	£ 725
2 Bedrooms	£ 775	£ 750	£ 800
3 Bedrooms	£ 925	£ 900	£ 900
4 Bedrooms or more	£ 1,250	£ 1,350	£ 1,500

Source: ONS Private rental market summary statistics in England

Tenure

- A higher proportion of households in Mid Suffolk own their home outright (43.2%) than across both Suffolk (38.6%) and England (32.5%). A further 31.7% own their home but have a mortgage/loan or shared ownership (Table 10).
- While a lower proportion of households rent privately in Mid Suffolk (13.8%) compared with Suffolk (18.9%) or England (20.6%), this equates to just over 6,000 private-rented households in the district.

Table 10: Household tenure (Census 2021)

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

Number of bedrooms and occupancy

- Compared with the national average, Mid Suffolk has a higher proportion of properties with four or more bedrooms (29.6% compared with 21.1%) and a much lower proportion of properties with only one bedroom - given a lower proportion of flats (Figure 5).
- Occupancy ratings indicate whether a household's accommodation is overcrowded, ideally occupied or under-occupied. This is calculated by comparing the number of bedrooms the household requires (based on its occupants, including the age and sex of any children) to the number of available bedrooms.
- Nearly half of households in Mid Suffolk (48.1%) have at least two bedrooms more than required, compared with 35.6% across England.

- Around one-in-six (17.0%) have the ideal number of bedrooms needed for the household, below the England average (Figure 6). Around 600 households in the district (1.4%) are classified as being overcrowded (having fewer bedrooms than required).

Figure 5: Number of bedrooms (Census 2021)

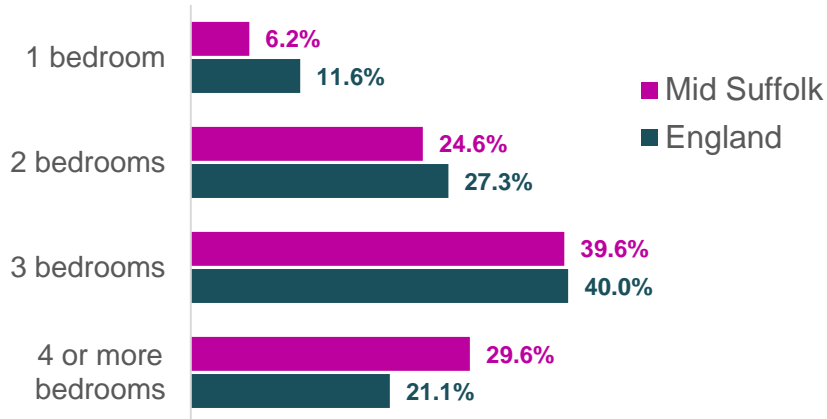
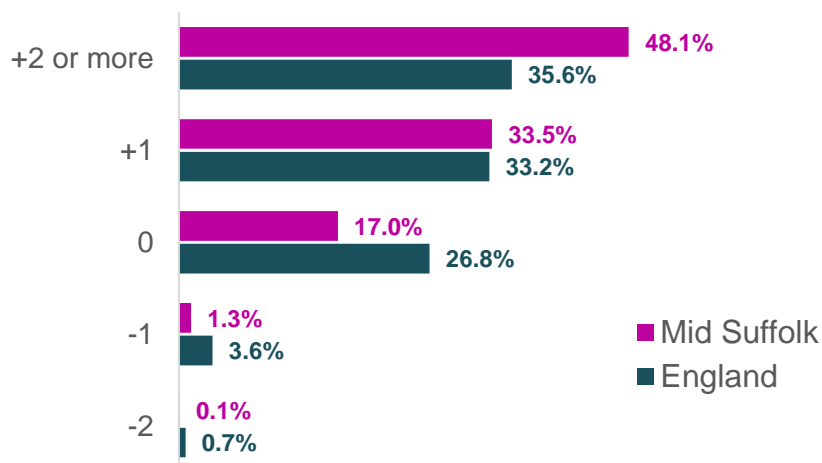


Figure 6: Occupancy rating for bedrooms (Census 2021)



Homelessness

- During the 2021-22 financial year, there were 259 households in Mid Suffolk assessed as homeless²⁸, including 100 with dependent children. This was equivalent to 1.6 households per thousand, which was lower than the rates for the East of England (5.1 per 1,000) and England (6.1 per 1,000).

²⁸ Based on those owed a prevention or relief duty following an initial assessments of statutory homelessness duties owed.

Data sources

Theme	Section	Measure	Source	Organisation
People	Population	Population by age	Census 2021	Office for National Statistics
		Population projections	2018-based subnational population projections for England	Office for National Statistics
	Population by ward	Population by ward and age	Census 2021	Office for National Statistics
	Households, deprivation and digital exclusion	Number of households / household composition	Census 2021	Office for National Statistics
		Household projections	2018-based household projections for England	Office for National Statistics
		Deprivation	Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
		Broadband coverage	Local broadband information	thinkbroadband
Internet usage and confidence	Babergh and Mid Suffolk Residents Survey 2022	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils		
Environment and Biodiversity	Emissions	Territorial greenhouse gas emissions estimates	UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics (2005-2021)	Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
		Plug-in vehicles	Licensed plug-in vehicles at the end of the quarter by body type, fuel type, keepership and upper and lower tier local authority (Q4 2022)	Department for Transport / Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency
		Electric vehicle charging points	Electric vehicle charging device statistics (April 2023)	Department for Transport
	Biodiversity	Wildlife sites and biodiversity designations	Compiled from Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service data, Ramsar Sites Information Service data and internal GIS data (June 2023)	Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service, Ramsar Sites Information Service, Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils
		Tree canopy cover (district)	Treeconomics tree canopy cover assessment of Babergh and Mid Suffolk (2021)	Treeconomics / Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils
		Tree canopy cover (national)	UK ward canopy cover, March 2023 dataset (data collected 2018-22)	Forestry Commission
		Amenity grass managed as wildflower meadow	Internal data	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils

Theme	Section	Measure	Source	Organisation	
Economy	Economic activity	Economic activity	Annual Population Survey (2022)	Office for National Statistics (data sourced via NOMIS)	
	Out-of-work benefits	Out-of-work benefits claimants	Claimant count	Office for National Statistics (data sourced via NOMIS)	
	Employment sectors, pay and productivity	Jobs density	Jobs density (2021)	Jobs density (2021)	Office for National Statistics (data sourced via NOMIS)
		Employee jobs by full/part-time	ONS Business Register and Employment Survey (2021)	ONS Business Register and Employment Survey (2021)	Office for National Statistics (data sourced via NOMIS)
		Employee jobs by sector	ONS Business Register and Employment Survey (2021)	ONS Business Register and Employment Survey (2021)	Office for National Statistics
		Employee jobs by industry	ONS Business Register and Employment Survey (2021)	ONS Business Register and Employment Survey (2021)	Office for National Statistics (data sourced via NOMIS)
		Labour productivity	Subregional productivity: labour productivity indices by local authority district (2004-2021)	Subregional productivity: labour productivity indices by local authority district (2004-2021)	Office for National Statistics
		Median earnings (workplace-based)	Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (2022)	Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (2022)	Office for National Statistics (data sourced via NOMIS)
	Qualifications	Highest level of qualification (16 to 64-year-olds)	Census 2021	Office for National Statistics	
Occupation types	Occupational classification of residents in employment	Census 2021	Office for National Statistics		
Health and Wellbeing	Life expectancy	Life expectancy	Life expectancy data by sex, age and area (2018-2020)	Office for National Statistics	
		Life expectancy inequality	Slope index of inequality (2018-2020)	Office for Health Improvements and Disparities (data sourced via OHID Fingertips public health data)	
		Deaths from cardiovascular diseases, respiratory diseases, or cancers	Under 75 mortality rates from cardiovascular diseases / respiratory diseases / cancer (2021)	Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (based on Office for National Statistics source data)	

Theme	Section	Measure	Source	Organisation
		Infant mortality rates	Infant deaths under 1 year of age per 1,000 live births (2019-2021)	Office for National Statistics (data sourced via OHID Fingertips public health data)
	Health and risk behaviours	Self-reported health	Census 2021	Office for National Statistics
		Proportion of adults that smoke	Annual Population Survey (2021)	Office for National Statistics (data sourced via OHID Fingertips public health data)
		Proportion of adults meet the recommended '5-a-day' fruit and vegetable target	Active Lives Survey 2021/22	Sport England (data sourced via OHID Fingertips public health data)
		Proportion of adults classified as overweight or obese	Active Lives Survey 2021/22	Sport England (data sourced via OHID Fingertips public health data)
		Prevalence of overweight (including obesity) children in Year 6	National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) 2021/2022	NHS Digital (data sourced via OHID Fingertips public health data)
		Levels of physical activity among adults	Active Lives Survey 2021/22	Sport England
	Mental health and wellbeing	Self-reported personal wellbeing (district results)	Babergh and Mid Suffolk Residents Survey 2022	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils
		Self-reported personal wellbeing (national results)	Community Life Survey 2021/22	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
		Emergency hospital admissions for intentional self-harm	Emergency hospital admissions for intentional self-harm (age standardised rate, all ages) (2021/22)	Office for Health Improvements and Disparities from data from NHS Digital Hospital Episode Statistics
		Suicide rate	Age-standardised mortality rate from suicide and injury of undetermined intent (2019-2021)	Office for National Statistics (data sourced via OHID Fingertips public health data)

Theme	Section	Measure	Source	Organisation
Community	Local area and community	Local area satisfaction and pride, community strength and belonging (district results)	Babergh and Mid Suffolk Residents Survey 2022	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils
		Local area satisfaction and pride, community strength and belonging (national results)	Community Life Survey 2021/22	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
	Access to services	Access to services – resident perceptions	Babergh and Mid Suffolk Residents Survey 2022	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils
	Cost of living and poverty	Fuel poverty	Sub-regional fuel poverty 2023 (2021 data)	Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
		Home heating – use of oil	Census 2021	Office for National Statistics
		Heating oil average price	RPI: Ave price - Heating oil, per 1000 litres (Source dataset: Consumer price inflation time series dataset)	Office for National Statistics
		Children living in poverty after housing costs	Local child poverty indicators – estimates of rates, after housing costs (2021/22)	Centre for Research in Social Policy at Loughborough University (produced for the End Child Poverty Coalition)
		Universal Credit claims	People aged 16-65 on Universal Credit (June 2023)	Department for Work and Pensions (data sourced via Suffolk Observatory)
		Number of people helped with debt enquiries by the Citizens Advice service	Suffolk cost of living dashboard	Citizens Advice (CA) Mid Suffolk / Suffolk County Council Public Health & Communities team
	Community safety and crime	Overall crime rate	Number / rate of crimes 12 month rolling count (May 2022 – April 2023)	data.police.uk (data sourced via Suffolk Observatory)
		Perceptions of safety during the day/after dark	Babergh and Mid Suffolk Residents Survey 2022	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils

Theme	Section	Measure	Source	Organisation
Housing	Heating	Home heating	Census 2021	Office for National Statistics
	Housing costs	Median property prices	House price statistics for small areas (HPSSAs) (year ending Dec 1995 to year ending Dec 2022)	Office for National Statistics
		Housing affordability ratio (workplace-based earnings)	House price to workplace-based earnings ratio (year ending September 2002 to year ending September 2022)	Office for National Statistics
		Housing affordability ratio (residence-based earnings)	House price to residence-based earnings ratio (year ending September 2002 to year ending September 2022)	Office for National Statistics
		Median private rental costs	Private rental market statistics (1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023)	Office for National Statistics
	Tenure	Household tenure	Census 2021	Office for National Statistics
	Number of bedrooms and occupancy	Number of bedrooms	Census 2021	Office for National Statistics
		Occupancy rating for bedrooms	Census 2021	Office for National Statistics
	Homelessness	Number of households assessed as homeless	Statutory homelessness: detailed local authority-level tables (April 2021 - March 2022)	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities