

READING SOCIAL EXCLUSION ANALYSIS 2025

















CONTENTS

INDEX OF INDICATORS & DIRECTION OF TRAVEL	3
INTRODUCTION	7
What is social exclusion	7
Development of the Social Exclusion Analysis.....	7
TYPES OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION.....	9
1. FINANCIAL EXCLUSION & POVERTY	9
GENERAL DEPRIVATION IN READING	11
Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019.....	11
2021 Census deprivation dimensions	13
Hyper-local need measure.....	14
Social Mobility Index.....	15
Household Support Fund	16
INCOME & EMPLOYMENT	17
Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019: Income domain	17
Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019: Employment domain.....	19
Economic activity and employment rates	20
Median pay	20
Income distribution	21
Gross disposable household income.....	21
Living wage	22
SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS.....	22
Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019: Education, skills and training domain.....	24
Occupation profile	24
Working age qualifications	24
19 year olds gaining level 2 and 3 qualifications.....	26
NEETS (Not in Education, Employment or Training).....	26
2. ACCESS TO HOUSING	27
Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019: Barriers to housing and services domain	27
Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019: Living environment domain	28
Homelessness	29
House prices.....	31
Housing tenure.....	32
Housing conditions	32

Reading Social Exclusion Analysis 2025

3. FUEL POVERTY	34
4. FOOD POVERTY	36
5. ACCESS TO SAFE ENVIRONMENT	37
Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019: Crime domain.....	37
Crime rates	38
Community safety	38
6. HEALTH	39
Census overview	39
Causes of death in Reading	40
Life expectancy and health inequalities	40
Lifestyle factors.....	44
Child health	44
Wellbeing	45
7. DIGITAL EXCLUSION	46
Digital Exclusion Risk Index	46
.....	46
ONS analysis	47
Reading surveys	48
8. SOCIAL ISOLATION & LONELINESS	50
FACTORS AFFECTING SOCIAL EXCLUSION	51
9. AGE	51
READING AGE PROFILE	51
CHILD POVERTY	52
Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019: Index of income deprivation affecting children.....	52
Children in low-income families local measure	52
End Child Poverty local measure	56
Pupil premium	56
Free school meals	57
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	57
YOUTH OFFENDING	58
OLDER PEOPLE	60
Census overview	60
Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019: Index of income deprivation affecting older people	60
Winter mortality index.....	60
Benefits claimants	62
10. ETHNICITY	64
Census overview	64
Migration and country of birth	64
Ethnicity in schools	66
Free school meals	67
Job Seekers Allowance claimant count	69
11. DISABILITY	70
Census overview	70
Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019: Health deprivation and disability domain	71
Benefits claimants	73

INDEX OF INDICATORS & DIRECTION OF TRAVEL





















Indicator	Year/ time period	Reading	South East	England	Reading previous performance	Performance since previous period
FINANCIAL EXCLUSION & POVERTY						
GENERAL DEPRIVATION						
Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)	2019	141st most deprived of 317 LAs	n/a	n/a	142nd most deprived (2015)	
IMD - LSOAs in most 10% deprived	2019	5	n/a	n/a	2 (2015)	
INCOME & EMPLOYMENT						
IMD: Income domain	2019	140 th most deprived of 317 LAs; 3 LSOAs in 10% most deprived	n/a	n/a	121 st most deprived (2015); 5 LSOAs in 10% most deprived	
IMD: Employment domain	2019	200 th most deprived of 317 LAs; 1 LSOA in most deprived 10%	n/a	n/a	128 th most deprived; 2 LSOAs in most deprived 10% (2015)	
Economic activity rate	2024/25	84.2%	82.3%	78.8%	89.9% (2023/24)	
Employment rate	2024/25	83.0%	79.6%	75.7%	87.6% (2023/34)	
Claimant count rate (JSA/ Universal Credit)	Dec 2024	4.5%	5.1%	4.3%	4.0% (Dec 2023)	
Median pay residents (annual pay - gross)	2024	£40,988	£40,339	£37,617	£36,544 (2023)	
Median pay workforce (annual pay - gross)	2024	£45,618	£39,038	£37,630	£39,689 (2023)	
Gross disposable household income	2021	£22,434	£24,623	£22,213	£23,745 (2020)	
Number of jobs paid less than the living wage (£11.44)	2024	9.9%	12.9%	15.9%	3.8% (2023)	
SKILLS & QUALIFICATIONS						
IMD: Education, skills and training domain	2019	135 th most deprived of 317 LAs; 9 LSOAs most deprived 10%; 4 in most deprived 5%	n/a	n/a	77 th most deprived of 326 LAs; 9 LSOAs most deprived 10% (2015); 3 in most deprived 5%	Improved at Reading level, but small areas more deprived
% with no qualifications	2021	15.8%	19.1%	18.1%	17.4% (2011)	
% 19 year olds gaining level 2 qualifications	2023	82%	85%	84%	76% (2022)	
% 19 year olds gaining level 3 qualifications	2023	59%	60%	59%	62% (2022)	
% NEETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training)	2024	2.9%	6.8%	5.3%	3.1% (2023)	
ACCESS TO HOUSING						
IMD: Barriers to housing and services domain	2019	43 rd most deprived of 317 LAs; 9 LSOAs in most deprived 10%; 1 in most deprived 5%	n/a	n/a	52 nd most deprived of 326 LAs; 2 LSOAs in most deprived 10% (2015)	

Reading Social Exclusion Analysis 2025

Indicator	Year/ time period	Reading	South East	England	Reading previous performance	Performance since previous period
IMD: Living environment domain	2019	119th most deprived of 317 LAs; 6 LSOAs in most deprived 10%	n/a	n/a	49th most deprived of 326 LAs; 19 LSOAs in most deprived 10%; 10 in most deprived 5%	↑
Number of homelessness presentations	2023/24	2,322	n/a	n/a	1,930 (2022/23)	↓
Median house prices	2023	£350,000	£385,000	£290,000	£332,000 (2022)	↓
Overcrowded households (occupancy rating of rooms -1 or less)	2021	10.1%	5.6%	6.4%	13.6 (2011)	↑
Non-decent homes	2024	11.5%	n/a	15.1%	13.9% (2023)	↑
FUEL POVERTY						
Percentage in fuel poverty	2020	11%	8.6%	13.2%	10.3% (2019)	↓
Readifood food parcels	2023/24	144 parcels per week	n/a	n/a	180 parcels per week (2022/23)	↑
CRIME/ACCESS TO SAFE ENVIRONMENT						
IMD: Crime	2019	108 most deprived of 317 LAs; 6 LSOAs in most deprived 10%	n/a	n/a	71st most deprived of 326 LAs; 6 LSOAs in most deprived 10%, 3 in most deprived 5%	↑
Violent crime rate per 1000 population	2023/24	102.3	69 (Thames Valley)	90	112 (2022/23)	↑
% that think Reading is a safe place	2024	50%	n/a	n/a	44.8% (2023)	↑
% reporting that crime has increased in their neighbourhood	2024	36%	n/a	n/a	32.5%	↓
HEALTH						
% reporting good or very good health	2021	85.6%	84%	82,2%	85.5% (2011)	↑
Life expectancy - Female	2021-23	83.2	84.1	83.1	82.7 (2020-22)	↑
Life expectancy - Male	2021-23	78.8	80.3	79.1	78 (2020-22)	↑
Healthy life expectancy at birth - Female	2021-23	64.9	64.4	61.9	65.1 (2020-22)	↑
Healthy life expectancy at birth - Male	2021-23	63.5	63.3	61.3	63.7 (2020-22)	↓
Inequality ¹ in life expectancy at birth - Female	2018-20	7.8	6.0	7.9	8.3 (2017-19)	↑
Inequality in life expectancy at birth - Male	2018-20	6.8	7.9	9.7	7.0 (2017-19)	↑
Smoking prevalence in adults	2023	11.8%	10.6%	11.6%	14.4% (2022)	↑
Adults classified as obese	2023/24	25.9%	24.6	26.5%	28.2% (2022/23)	↑
5 year olds with experience of visually obvious dental decay	2021/22	32.9%	21.2%	23.7%	30.6% (2018/19)	↓
Low birth weight of term babies (no per 1000 live births)	2022	4.1	2.6	2.9	4.2 (2021)	↓

¹ between LSOAs in the most deprived and least deprived deprivation deciles

Reading Social Exclusion Analysis 2025

Indicator	Year/ time period	Reading	South East	England	Reading previous performance	Performance since previous period
Infant mortality rate (no per 1000 live births)	2021-23	4.9	3.3	4.5	4.1 (2020-22)	
Average rating for 'Anxiety'	2022/23	3.2	3.3	3.2	3.4 (2021/22)	
Average rating for 'Feeling life is worthwhile'	2022/23	7.8	7.8	7.7	7.5 (2021/22)	
Average rating for 'Happiness'	2022/23	7.4	7.4	7.4	7.4 (2021/22)	
Average rating for 'Life satisfaction'	2022/23	7.4	7.5	7.4	7.3 (2021/22)	
LONELINESS & SOCIAL ISOLATION						
Percentage who felt strongly they belong to their immediate neighbourhood	2024	72%	n/a	n/a	70% (2023)	
AGE						
CHILD POVERTY						
IMD: Income deprivation affecting children index	2019	133 rd most deprived of 317 LAs; 4 LSOAs in 10% most deprived, 1 LSOA in 5%	n/a	n/a	82 nd most deprived of 326 LAs; 6 LSOAs in 10% most deprived, 1 LSOA in 5%	
Children in low-income families	2023/24	17%	n/a	22% (UK)	16% (2022/23)	
Children in low-income lone parent families	2023/24	51.9%	53.7%	53.3% (uk)	51.7% (2022/23)	
End Child Poverty local measure (% children in poverty)	2022/23	29.7%	25%	30% (UK)	28.1% (2021/22)	
Pupils eligible for pupil premium - primary	2024/25	22.8%	20%	24.8%	23.6% (2023/24)	
Pupils eligible for pupil premium - secondary	2024/25	23.7%	21.2%	27.6%	23.3% (2023/24)	
Pupils eligible for free school meals	2023/24	14.9%	14.9%	19.3%	14.4% (2022/23)	
Educational attainment - foundation stage	2023/24	65.7%	68.7%	66.2%	63.3% (2022/23)	
Educational attainment - key stage 2	2023/24	60%	61%	61%	57% (2022/23)	
Educational attainment - attainment 8 score	2023/24	48.8	47.2	46.1	50.1 (2022/23)	
Youth offending rate (per 100,000 first time entrants)	2023/24	230	166	161	156 (2022/23)	
OLDER PEOPLE						
IMD: Income deprivation affecting older people index	2019	66 th most deprived out of 317 LAs; 14 in most deprived 10%; 4 in most deprived 5%	n/a	n/a	81 st most deprived out of 326 LAs; 14 LSOAs in most deprived 10%; 6 in most deprived 5% (2015)	
Winter mortality index (ratio of the difference in mortality during winter months compared to non winter months)	2021/22	8.5%	8.6%	8.1%	33.7% (2020/21)	
Pension Credit claimants over 65	Aug 2024	13.4%	n/a	10.7%	13.2% (Aug 2023)	
JSA claimants over 50	Jan 2025	0.4%	n/a	0.3%	0.4% (Jan 2024)	

Reading Social Exclusion Analysis 2025

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Year/ time period</i>	<i>Reading</i>	<i>South East</i>	<i>England</i>	<i>Reading previous performance</i>	<i>Performance since previous period</i>
ETHNICITY						
% BME in primary schools	2024/25	67%	n/a	39%	66% (2023/24)	n/a
% BME in secondary schools	2024/25	69%	n/a	39%	68% (2023/24)	n/a
JSA - BME claimants	Dec 2024	22%	14.9%	9.8%	14.3% (Dec 2023)	n/a
DISABILITY						
IMD: Health deprivation and disability domain	2019	137 th most deprived out of 317 LAs; 1 LSOA in most deprived 10%	n/a	n/a	109th most deprived out of 326 LAs	←
Disability Living Allowance claimants	Dec 2024	1.9%	n/a	2.1%	1.8% (Dec 2020)	↓

INTRODUCTION

What is social exclusion

Social ‘exclusion’ describes a state in which individuals are unable to participate fully in economic, social, political and cultural life². Social ‘inclusion’ is the process of increasing participation.

Poverty, or lack of access to material resources, including income, employment, land and housing, is a key reason for social exclusion. Millions of people in the UK are struggling to meet their needs, many from working families. Poverty impacts on the quality of family life, parenting, child development, physical and mental health, education and learning, and the economy as a whole.

However, participation may be hindered when people are unable to access services such as education and health care, and when people cannot exercise their voice or interact with each other, and when their rights and dignity are not accorded equal respect and protection. Factors such as age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, religion, migration status, socio-economic status, place of residence, sexual orientation and gender identity can all contribute towards social exclusion. Age, disability, ethnicity and place of residence are considered in this analysis as data is available for these.

Development of the Social Exclusion Analysis

The Council first produced a **Poverty Needs Analysis** in 2014 to support the development of its then Tackling Poverty Strategy and action plan³. The Poverty Needs Analysis was subsequently revised annually to help inform the development of the Council’s Corporate Plan and to provide context for work across the Council to help tackle poverty in Reading.

The document has now been expanded to provide a more holistic view of social exclusion more widely, including data on digital exclusion and loneliness and social isolation, as well as poverty and general deprivation.

This document therefore provides an overview of the key social exclusion-related data for Reading, and is structured broadly according to the following themes:

Types of social exclusion

1. Financial exclusion & poverty
2. Access to housing
3. Fuel poverty
4. Food poverty
5. Crime/ access to safe environment
6. Health
7. Digital exclusion
8. Social isolation & loneliness

² United Nations - <https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/rwss/2016/chapter1.pdf>

³ for further information, see report to Policy Committee at www.reading.gov.uk/article/8872/Policy-Committee-02-NOV-2015

Reading Social Exclusion Analysis 2025

Factors affecting social exclusion

9. Age
10. Ethnicity
11. Disability

The 'summary of indicators and direction of travel' at the start of this document lists the key indicators and shows whether they have improved or declined since the previous period. Contextual data is also included in the document, which does not have a clear 'direction of travel' but which helps to provide a more detailed picture of Reading.

TYPES OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION

1. FINANCIAL EXCLUSION & POVERTY

Recent significant reform of our national welfare system, the covid pandemic and the current cost of living crisis all mean that millions of low-income households are going without essentials.

Nearly a quarter (24%) of the UK population lived in poverty⁴ 20 years ago and by 2004 this had fallen to 20%. Since then the proportion has risen again slightly and stands at 21% before housing costs in 2023/24, more than 1 in 5 people, and 17% after housing costs. This is a similar proportion to the previous year⁵.

11% of individuals in the UK lived in a food insecure household in 2023/4, which was the same proportion as for 2022/3. However, household food insecurity has increased for those in low income⁶.

In 2022/23, 6 million people (4 in 10 of those in (relative) poverty) were in very deep poverty, with an average income that was 57% below the poverty line⁷.

In 2022, around 3.8 million people experienced destitution, where people cannot afford to meet their most basic physical needs to stay warm, dry, clean and fed, including around one million children. These figures have more than doubled since 2017⁸.

In 2018, the Social Metrics Commission created a new measure which incorporates the depth, persistence and lived experience of poverty and includes debt repayment, disability and childcare costs. According to this measure, 16 million people in the UK are living in poverty. 5.2 million are children, 9.2 million are working-age adults and 1.5 million are pension-age adults. On his measure, 24% (nearly one in four) people in the UK are now judged to be in poverty.⁹

Poverty trends amongst different populations

However, the overall trend masks large variations in the fortunes of different groups, particularly pensioners and certain types of families with children who have traditionally been most at risk.

The picture compared to 2022/23 is one of stability: **child poverty** rose slightly, pensioner poverty and working-age adult poverty stayed the same. Poverty for all 3 groups has returned to around pre-pandemic levels, rising after average incomes recovered after the

⁴ 60% of the UK average (median) net equivalised household income

⁵ Households below average income 2023/24

⁶ Households below average income 2023/24

⁷ UK Poverty 2025, Joseph Rowntree Foundation

⁸ UK Poverty 2025, Joseph Rowntree Foundation (Destitution in the UK report)

⁹ A New Measure of Poverty for the UK, Social Metrics Commission, 2024; the measure is a hybrid between the traditional absolute and relative approaches

Reading Social Exclusion Analysis 2025

pandemic, at the same time as a range of temporary coronavirus-related support was withdrawn¹⁰.

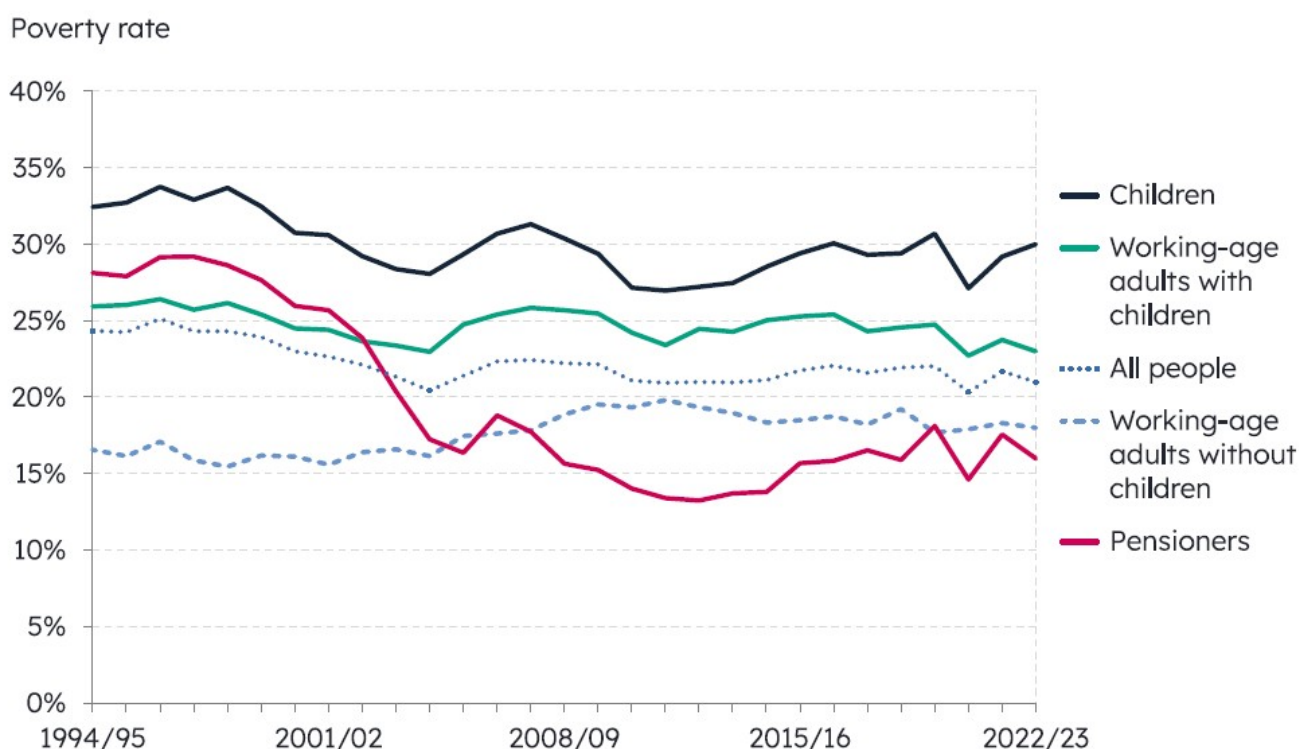
Compared to the overall population, children are more likely to live in low-income households, and larger families with 3 or more children have consistently faced a higher rate of poverty. 23% of children were in relative low income (before housing costs) in 2023/24, up slightly from 22% the previous year¹¹.

Families with children also face additional challenges if childcare responsibilities limit their ability to undertake well-paid and high-quality work, which is often the case for **lone-parent families and families with younger children** (as well as for larger families); 44% of children in lone-parent families were in poverty in 2022/23, as were 36% of children in families where the youngest child was aged under 5.

Poverty amongst **pensioners** was 16% in 2023/24, similar to the previous year, and down from 18% in 2021/22. The percentage of working-age adults in relative low income remained at the same level as in 2023/24 at 15%¹².

Poverty rates are very high for **some minority ethnic groups**, as well as **disabled people** who face additional costs associated with disability and ill-health, as well as barriers to work.

Overall UK poverty rates



Source: Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2025) UK Poverty 2025

¹⁰ UK Poverty 2025, Joseph Rowntree Foundation

¹¹ Households Below Average Income 2023/24, DWP; relative poverty

¹² Households Below Average Income 2023/24, DWP; relative poverty

GENERAL DEPRIVATION IN READING

Reading is the fourth largest urban area in the South-East and is a UK top ten retail destination with a thriving night-time economy, serving a population that extends beyond the Borough's boundaries. There has been a huge structural shift from the town's origins of beer, bulbs and biscuits to a compact service economy specialising in business services. Strategically located as a major transport hub and in close proximity to Heathrow, Reading is now home to the largest concentration of ICT corporations in the UK and is the service and financial centre of the Thames Valley and beyond.

However, the pace of change has been rapid and there is a clear mismatch between outstanding economic success and the level of benefits to local people, most dramatically illustrated by a comparison of the skills and earnings of the workforce with those of the resident population.

Equally graphic is the scale of the gap between Reading's most and least prosperous neighbourhoods. Reading has, within a small geographic area, some of the most affluent and the most deprived neighbourhoods in the whole of the Thames Valley, which are often masked by statistics at borough and even ward levels.

Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019

The most comprehensive and widely adopted overall measure of deprivation is the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), which was updated in 2019 and replaces the previous 2015 index. The overall IMD combines indicators across 7 domains: income, employment, health, education skills and training, barriers to housing and services, living environment, and crime; and 2 supplementary indices - the index of income deprivation affecting children and the index of income deprivation affecting older people. For each of these there are separate scores.

According to the overall IMD, **Reading as a whole is ranked the 141st¹³ most deprived** out of 317 local authorities in the country, a slight increase in deprivation relative to other LAs since 2015, when Reading was 142nd¹⁴ most deprived (though this doesn't necessarily mean an increase in overall deprivation).

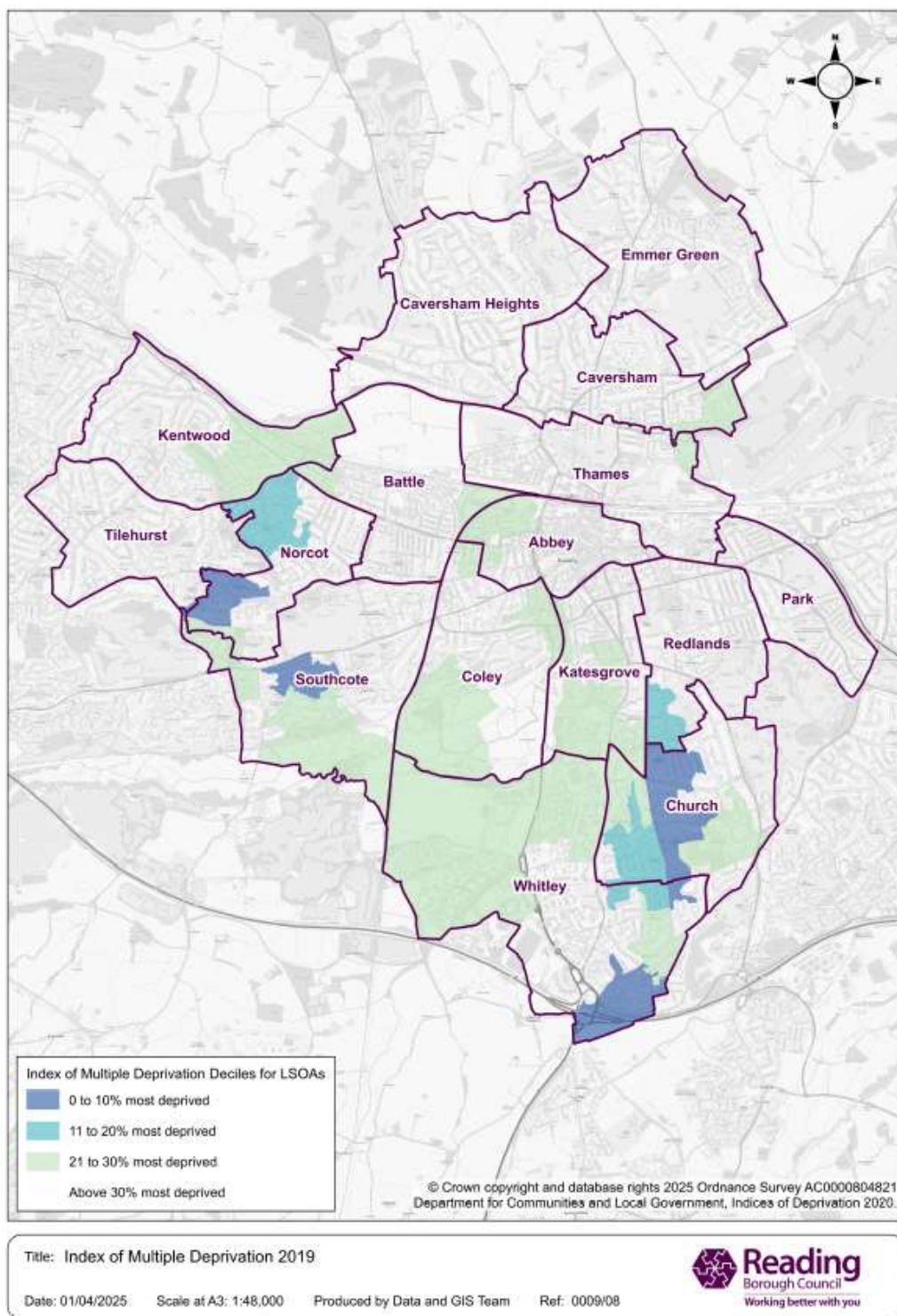
There are now 5 LSOAs within the most deprived 10% (see map), compared with 2 in 2015. This suggests that relative deprivation has increased in certain small areas within Reading.

This demonstrates how Reading exhibits marked extremes at a more refined locality level and, in this respect, is very different from any other local authority in the South East region. The following map shows the areas within Reading that have the highest levels of deprivation according to the IMD, predominantly in the south of the Borough but also in the west.

¹³ Rank of average score

¹⁴ IMD 2015 recast to 2019 local authority district level boundaries, to enable more consistent comparison

Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 (most deprived LSOAs¹⁵)



Source: Department for Communities and Local Government 2019

¹⁵ Lower Super Output Areas are Census areas of around 650 households

2021 Census deprivation dimensions

This dataset classifies households in England and Wales by four dimensions of deprivation:

- Employment
- Education
- Health
- Housing

The table below shows that Reading has a slightly higher percentage of households deprived on all 4 dimensions (0.3%) than nationally (0.2%), but also a high percentage not deprived on any dimension (52% compared with 48% nationally). Fewer households are deprived than in 2011.

<i>Deprivation dimensions</i>	<i>% Reading households</i>	<i>Reading 2011</i>	<i>England 2021</i>
Deprived on 4 dimensions	0.3%	0.5%	0.2%
Deprived on 3 dimensions	3.5%	4.6%	3.7%
Deprived on 2 dimensions	12.8%	16.4%	14.2%
Deprived on 1 dimension	32.2%	32.5%	33.5%
Deprived on 0 dimensions	51.2%	45.9%	48.4%

Source: 2011 Census, Office for National Statistics

Deprivation Dimensions by Ward

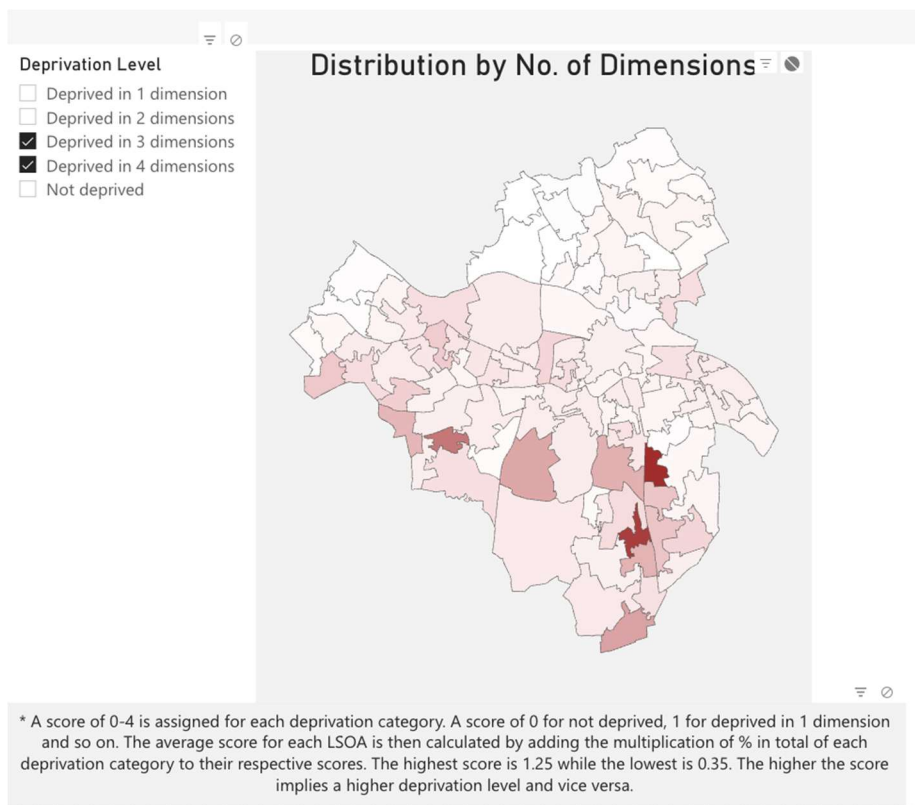
<i>2022 ward</i>	<i>Household is not deprived in any dimension</i>		<i>Household is deprived in one dimension</i>		<i>Household is deprived in two dimensions</i>		<i>Household is deprived in three dimensions</i>		<i>Household is deprived in four dimensions</i>	
	<i>number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>number</i>	<i>%</i>
Abbey	2,484	52.2	1,564	32.8	550	11.5	148	3.1	17	0.4
Battle	2,091	48.3	1,441	33.3	623	14.4	157	3.6	14	0.3
Caversham	2,661	57.0	1,391	29.8	502	10.7	110	2.4	8	0.2
Caversham Heights	2,325	64.2	1,034	28.5	241	6.7	23	0.6	0	0.0
Church	1,581	37.5	1,524	36.2	827	19.6	258	6.1	21	0.5
Coley	2,358	51.0	1,461	31.6	601	13.0	182	3.9	19	0.4
Emmer Green	2,223	58.6	1,203	31.7	313	8.3	49	1.3	3	0.1
Katesgrove	2,361	50.9	1,446	31.2	638	13.8	176	3.8	19	0.4
Kentwood	1,851	53.1	1,180	33.8	370	10.6	84	2.4	4	0.1
Norcot	2,098	45.7	1,550	33.8	716	15.6	206	4.5	16	0.3
Park	1,970	51.6	1,263	33.1	466	12.2	112	2.9	10	0.3
Redlands	2,404	52.3	1,457	31.7	550	12.0	163	3.5	19	0.4
Southcote	2,088	45.7	1,544	33.8	707	15.5	217	4.8	12	0.3
Thames	2,086	59.2	968	27.5	355	10.1	110	3.1	4	0.1
Tilehurst	1,928	49.0	1,320	33.5	533	13.5	145	3.7	11	0.3
Whitley	2,174	48.2	1,425	31.6	692	15.3	208	4.6	12	0.3

Source: Census 2021, Office for National Statistics

Reading Social Exclusion Analysis 2025

In comparison with the IMD, the Census deprivation dimensions data for Reading suggests that a number of additional areas are deprived, particularly Abbey and (part of) Caversham ward, New Town area and parts of Tilehurst, Whitley and Southcote (see map). This is likely to be due to the fact that the IMD includes a higher weighting for social housing, which tends to hide those who are poor but not in social housing.

Census deprivation dimensions



Source: Census 2021, Office for National Statistics

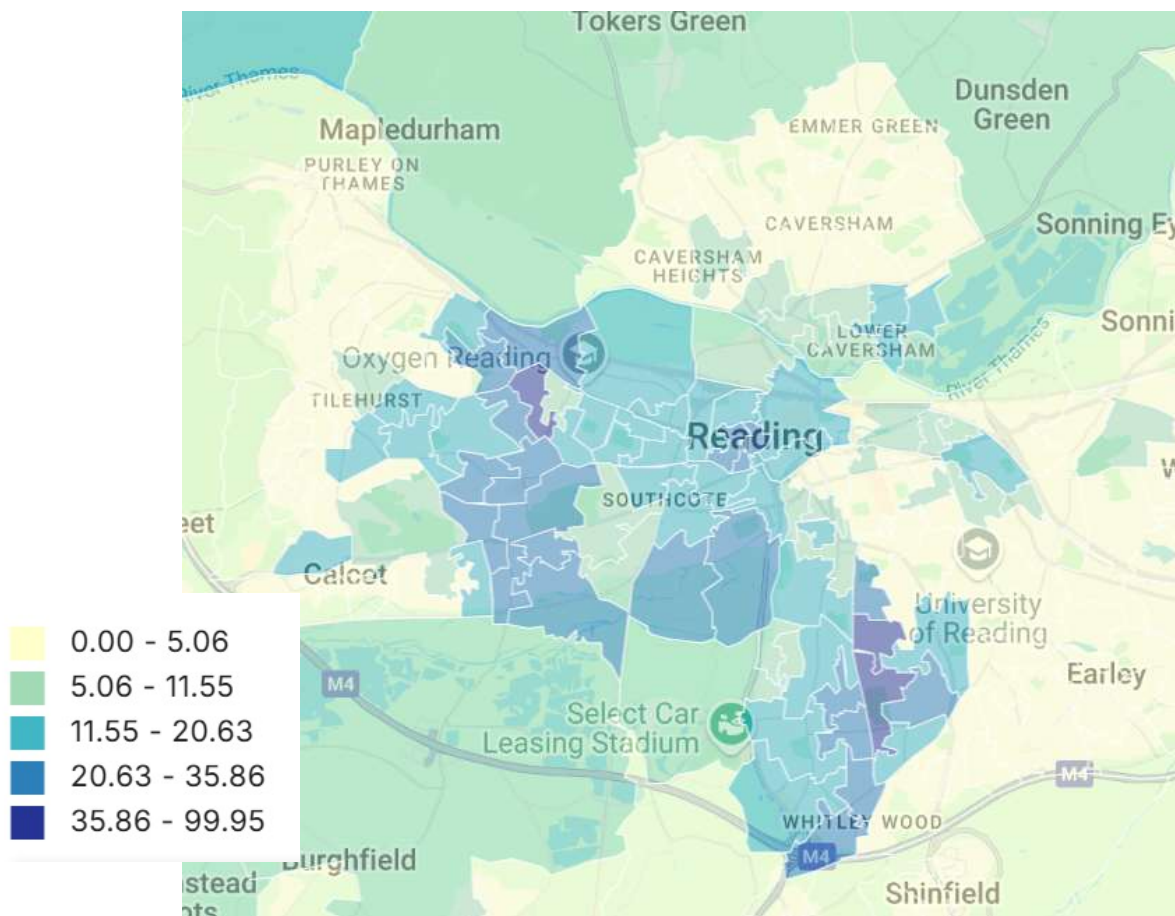
Hyper-local need measure

The Hyper-local Need measure is designed to provide a quantitative means of assessing socio-economic inequalities at a small area level, in relation to the government's five mission objectives:

- Kickstart economic growth;
- Make Britain a clean energy superpower;
- Take back our streets;
- Break down barriers to opportunity;
- Build an NHS fit for the future.

Each mission has been interpreted as a 'dimension' - a composite index made up of relevant indicators. On the overall measure, the areas with the highest score largely match those suggested by the Index of Multiple Deprivation.

Hyper-local need measure (overall score) at LSOA level



Source: OCSI 2024

Social Mobility Index

Social mobility is about ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to build a good life for themselves regardless of their family background. The Social Mobility Commission (SMC) reports to Government by setting out and implementing a long-term vision for monitoring social mobility outcomes in their annual report. In 2022, a new Social Mobility Index for measuring mobility in the UK was published and in the 2024 report, SMC have developed four composite indices at local authority level, as in the table below, with each allocated a score (group) from 1-5, 5 being ‘most favourable’:

Social Mobility Index 2024

Measure	Reading Classification
Promising prospects	Middle group (3)
Conditions of childhood	Favourable group (4)
Labour market opportunities for young people	Favourable group (4)
Innovation and growth	Favourable group (4)
Promising prospects	Middle group (3)
Conditions of childhood	Favourable group (4)

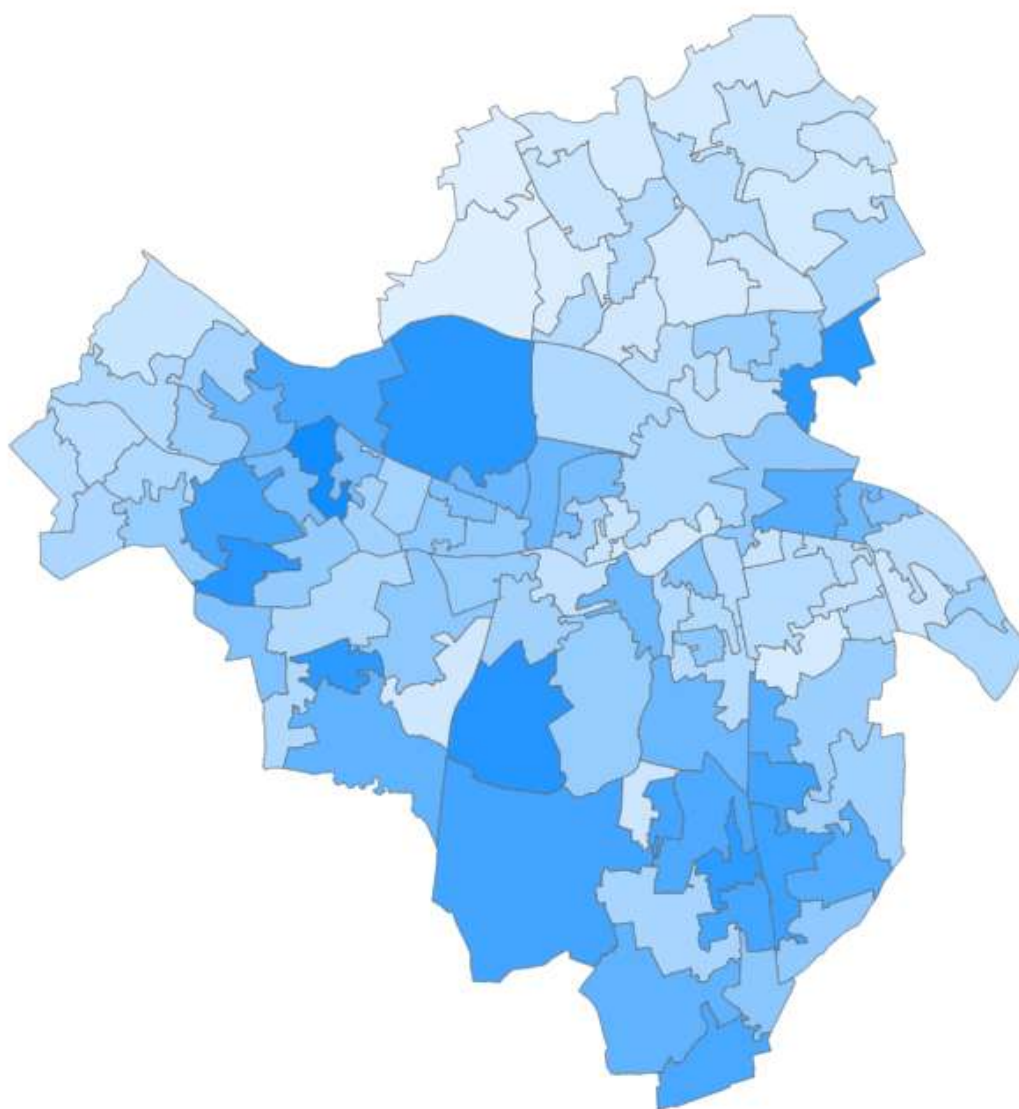
Source: State of the Nation 2024: Social Mobility in Great Britain, Social Mobility Commission

Household Support Fund

The Household Support Fund is a government grant allocated by the Department of Work and Pensions to councils in England. In September 2024, Reading received £1,130,648 to help residents in need, including low-income families, care leavers, and pensioners. The grant helps families and vulnerable individuals who may struggle to pay for basic living costs, such as energy and water, food, wider essentials such as clothing and housing costs. A total of 4,362 vouchers have been issued, predominantly in the darker blue areas in the map below.

Number of vouchers issues by LSOA

Darker blue = higher number of vouchers



Source: Reading Borough Council 2025

INCOME & EMPLOYMENT

The evidence is clear that the main root causes of poverty are worklessness and low earnings.

Unemployment rates have generally been falling since 2011, reaching a record low in 2019. This was followed by a rise due to covid-19 in 2020, falling back to pre-pandemic levels by 2022, and rising again to 4.3% in Aug - Oct 2024¹⁶.

However, **in-work poverty** is a significant issue; there has been a large rise in the proportion of poor households where someone is in work. Around two-thirds (68%) of working-age adults in poverty live in a household where at least one adult is in work, the highest proportion since records began in 1996/97. The poverty rate for part-time workers was nearly triple that for full-time workers (22% compared with 8%), and part-time self-employed workers were more than twice as likely to be in poverty as employees (23% compared with 10%)¹⁷.

Over the last couple of decades, the slow creep upward of the rate of workers in poverty suggests that work is becoming less effective as a route out of poverty.

Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019: Income domain

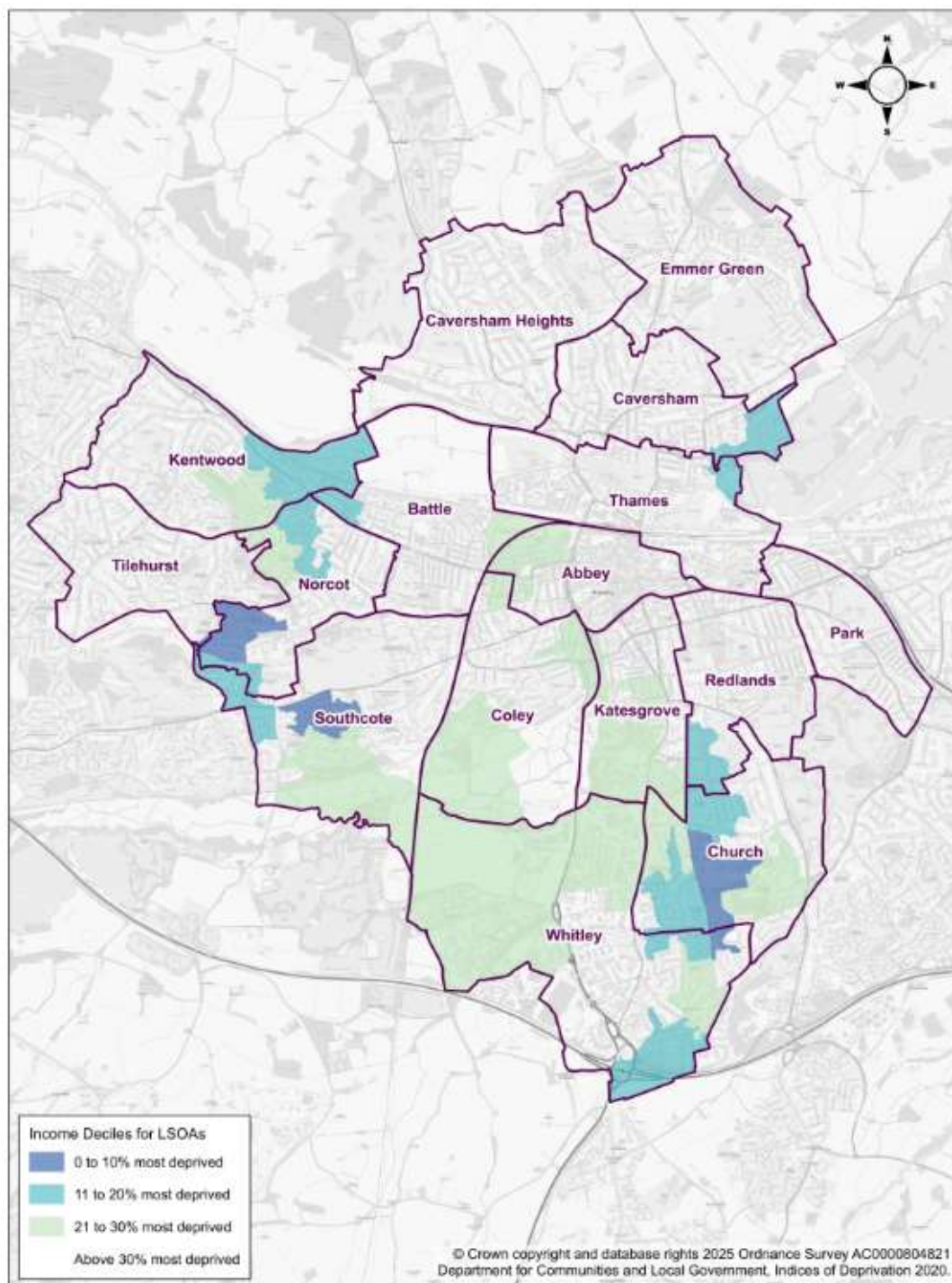
The IMD income domain measures the proportion of the population experiencing deprivation relating to low income. The definition of low income used includes both those people that are out-of-work, and those that are in work but who have low earnings (and who satisfy the respective means tests).

Reading ranks 140th out of 317 local authorities nationally on the IMD income domain, compared with 121st in 2015, indicating that income deprivation has decreased. **3 LSOAs fall within the most 10% deprived nationally** (5 in 2015).

¹⁶ *Office for National Statistics*

¹⁷ *UK Poverty 2025, Joseph Rowntree Foundation; relative poverty*

Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019: Income domain



Title: Income Domain
Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019

Date: 19/03/2025 Scale at A3: 1:48,000 Produced by Data and GIS Team Ref: 0009/01

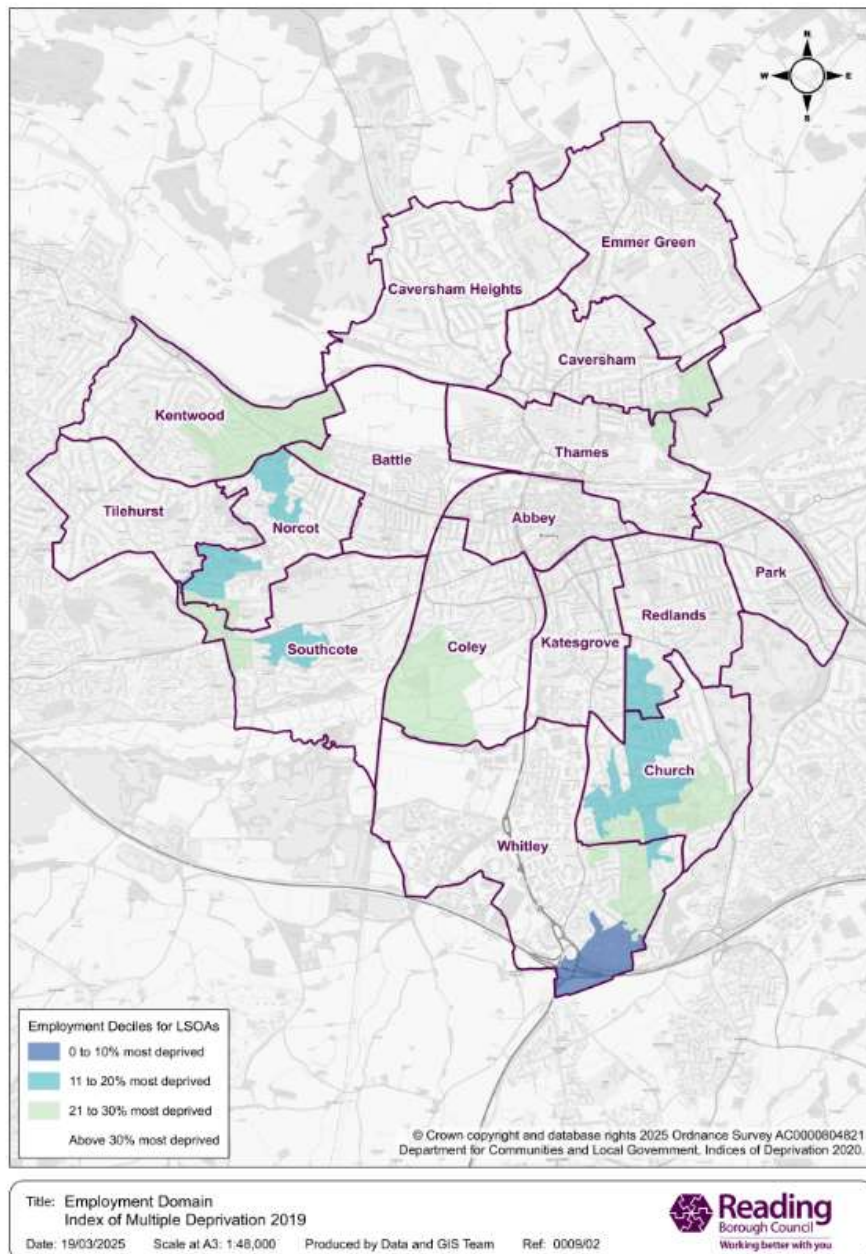


Source: Department for Communities and Local Government 2019

Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019: Employment domain

Reading ranks 200th out of 317 local authorities nationally on the IMD employment domain, which measures the proportion of the working-age population in an area involuntarily excluded from the labour market. This compares with 128th in 2015, indicating that relative deprivation has decreased. **One Lower Super Output Area falls within the most 10% deprived nationally (2 in 2015)¹⁸.**

Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019: Employment domain



Source: Department for Communities and Local Government 2019

¹⁸ IMD 2015 recast to 2019 local authority district level boundaries, to enable more consistent comparison

Economic activity and employment rates

Economic activity and employment rates in Reading have both declined since the previous year, but are still relatively high.

	2024/25			2023/24
	Reading	South East	England	Reading
Economic activity rate - aged 16-64	84.2	82.3	78.8	89.9
Employment rate - aged 16-64	83.0	79.6	75.7	87.6
% aged 16-64 who are employees	75.6	69.8	66.2	80.6
% aged 16-64 who are self employed	7.4	9.6	9.3	7.0
Unemployment rate - aged 16-64	1.5	3.3	4.0	2.6
Unemployment rate - aged 16+	1.6	3.2	3.9	2.7
% who are economically inactive - aged 16-64	15.8	17.7	21.2	10.1
% of economically inactive who want a job	17.1	15.8	17.5	15.8
% of economically inactive who do not want a job	82.9	84.2	82.5	84.2

Source: Annual Population Survey, NOMIS, 2024/25

Claimant count¹⁹

The claimant count rate (proportion of working age population claiming JSA or Universal Credit) has generally been increasing since 2015 (with a peak due to Covid in 2020), reaching 4.5% in Dec 24. The current rate is higher than the national average, but lower than the regional figure.

Claimant count	Reading count	Reading %	South-East %	England %
Dec 2024	5,395	4.5	5.1	4.3
Dec 2023	4,725	4.0	3.4	3.8
Dec 2022	4,275	3.6	2.8	3.7
Dec 2021	4,955	4.1	2.9	4.4
Dec 2020	6,825	6.4	3.2	6.3

Source: NOMIS

Median pay

Median earnings for residents in Reading are generally higher than the national average. **Earnings for the Reading workforce are significantly higher than for residents**, which clearly demonstrates the mismatch between outstanding economic success and the level of benefits to local people in Reading.

¹⁹ The overall claimant count rate includes those claiming both Job Seekers Allowance and Universal Credit, however this dataset is not available for long term unemployment and claimants with children for which the JSA claimant rate is still used

Reading Social Exclusion Analysis 2025

		Weekly pay - gross £	Weekly pay - basic £	Hourly pay - gross £	Annual pay - gross £
Reading 2024	Residents	£775.90	£766.60	£20.37	£40,988
	Workforce	£861.30	£834.40	£22.51	£45,618
Reading 2023	Residents	£725.10	£669.80	£18.19	£36,544
	Workforce	£778.20	£757.50	£21.07	£39,689
South East 2024	Residents	£779.20	£748.80	£20.22	£40,339
	Workforce	£754.10	£718.70	£19.42	£39,038
England 2024	Residents	£732.00	£697.70	£18.83	£37,617
	Workforce	£732.10	£698.40	£18.83	£37,630

Source: Annual survey of hours and earnings (full time workers); NOMIS

Income distribution

Annual estimates of earnings for residents full time employees - gross weekly pay

Percentile	Reading 2024 £	Reading 2023 £	South East £	England £
10	479.8	448.7	728.3	689.9
20	531.1	489.4	445.2	434.4
25	558.7	518.6	507.9	493.3
30	592.9	549.4	540.7	520.7
40	665.1	600.1	574.9	551.4
60	923.2	810.3	646.0	615.2
70	1,065.1	953.6	825.2	777.9
75	1,156.2	1,032.7	943.2	885.8
80	1,274.9	1,179.8	1,012.8	954.8
90	n/a	n/a	1,108.9	1,035.9

Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) 2021. Office for National Statistics

Gross disposable household income

Average income per person after taxes and direct benefits

	2021	2020	2019
Reading	£22,434	£23,745	£23,833
South East	£24,623	£23,911	£24,335
England	£22,213	£21,414	£21,644

Source: Office for National Statistics

Living wage

The percentage of jobs paid less than the living wage had been decreasing in Reading until 2023, then has risen again in 2024. Both nationally and in the South East, the proportion rose again in 2023.

Estimated number of jobs paid less than the living wage

	<i>Number of jobs</i>	<i>% of jobs 2024²⁰</i> <i>(£11.44)</i>	<i>% of jobs 2023</i> <i>(£10.90)</i>	<i>% of jobs 2022</i> <i>(£9.90)</i>	<i>% of jobs 2021</i> <i>(£9.50)</i>	<i>% of jobs 2020</i> <i>(£9.30)</i>
Reading	11,000	9.9%	3.8%	5.7%	9.3%	12.5%
South East	519,000	12.9%	10.2%	9.5%	12.7%	16.8%
England	3,835,000	15.9%	13.1%	12.5%	17.1%	20.3%

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

SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS

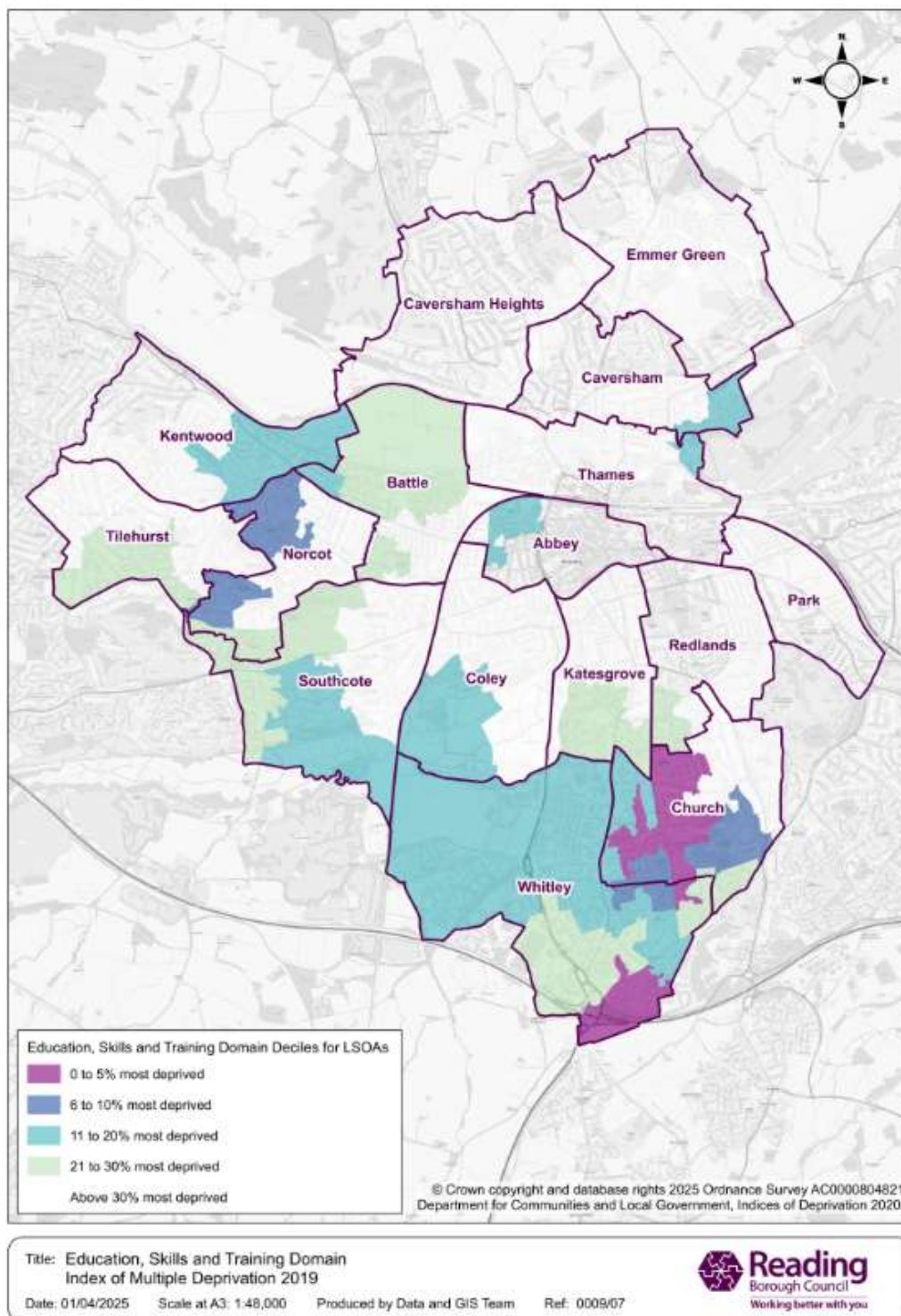
A primary cause of poverty is the lack of opportunities for those with low skills and low qualifications. Low levels of skill also act as a significant brake on the ability of Reading to fulfil its economic potential.

Despite an unemployment rate well below the national average, Reading continues to have pockets of structural unemployment in a predominantly high growth economy. The high employment rate also masks a far more serious and widespread issue of low income amongst the employed.

In general, the quality of educational provision in Reading is considered in line with the England average.

²⁰ Provisional

Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019: Education, skills and training domain



Source: Department for Communities and Local Government 2019

Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019: Education, skills and training domain

Reading ranks 135th out of 317 local authorities nationally on the IMD Education, Skills and Training domain, which relates to children and young people, and adult skills. 9 LSOAs fall within the 10% most deprived (9 in 2015), and 4 in the most deprived 5% in South Reading (3 in 2015).

On the adult skills sub-domain, 6 LSOAs fall within the 10% most deprived nationally (6 in 2015), with 3 LSOAs within the 5% most deprived (3 in 2015). On the children and young people's sub-domain, 13 LSOAs fall within the 10% most deprived nationally (7 in 2015), with 9 within the 5% most deprived (6 in 2015).

Occupation profile

Percentage of working population aged 16 -74 by occupation type

Occupation type	Reading		South East	England
	2021	2011	2021	2021
1. Managers, directors and senior officials	10.6	9.0	14.9	12.9
2. Professional occupations	25.6	24.5	21.2	20.3
3. Associate professional and technical occupations	13.5	13.5	14.3	13.3
4. Administrative and secretarial occupations	7.9	10.0	9.4	9.3
5. Skilled trades occupations	7.8	9.0	10.0	10.2
6. Caring, leisure and other service occupations	9.1	8.5	9.1	9.3
7. Sales and customer service occupations	7.6	9.0	6.8	7.5
8. Process, plant and machine operatives	5.7	5.1	5.6	6.9
9. Elementary occupations	12.2	11.4	8.8	10.5

Source: 2021 Census, Office for National Statistics

Just over a quarter of Reading residents (25.6%) are employed in professional occupations, higher than the national and regional averages and an increase since 2011. Managers, directors and senior officials and caring and leisure and other service occupations have also increased. Administrative and secretarial occupations and skilled trades occupations have decreased, and are lower than both the national and regional figures. Sales and customer service occupations have also decreased.

Working age qualifications

According to the Census, the percentage of residents with no qualifications decreased from 17.4% to 15.8% between 2011 and 2021 (*see map*). This mirrors the national picture. The proportion of residents achieving apprenticeship and level 3 and 4 qualifications has increased. A higher proportion of Reading residents have a level 4 qualification than both England and the South East.

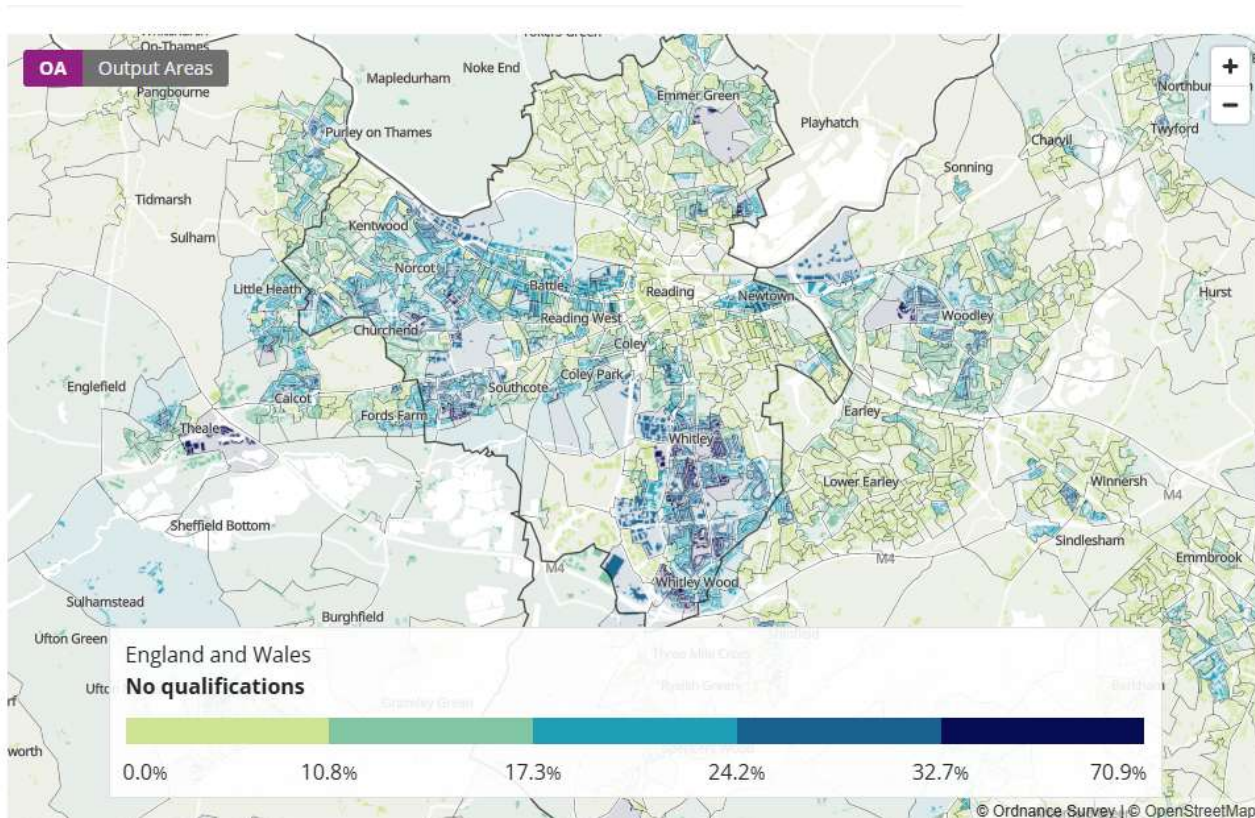
Reading Social Exclusion Analysis 2025

Percentage of people aged 16 - 74 achieving qualifications

	Reading		South East	England
	2021	2011	2021	2021
No qualifications	15.8	17.4	15.4	18.1
Highest level of qualification:				
Level 1 qualifications	9.1	12.2	9.8	9.7
Level 2 qualifications	10.7	12.3	13.9	13.3
Apprenticeship	4.1	2.5	5.1	5.3
Level 3 qualifications	16.8	13.4	17.4	16.9
Level 4 qualifications and above	40.4	34.8	35.8	33.9
Other qualifications	3.0	7.4	2.7	2.8

Source 2021 Census, Office for National Statistics

Percentage of residents aged 16+ with no qualifications



Source: 2021 Census, Office for National Statistics

19 year olds gaining level 2 and 3 qualifications

82% of young people aged 19 have gained a level 2 qualification; this is higher than the previous year, but lower than both the national and regional averages.

At level 3, Reading's performance is lower than the previous year, and lower than the regional average, and significantly lower than both regional and national averages for those eligible for free school meals. Fewer of those eligible for free school meals achieve either level 2 or 3 qualifications at age 19.

Percentage of 19 year olds gaining level 2 and 3 qualifications

		Level 2		Level 3	
		All	Eligible for free school meals	All	Eligible for free school meals
2023	Reading	82%	58%	59%	25%
	SE	85%	62%	60%	32%
	England	84%	67%	59%	38%
2022	Reading	76%	44%	62%	23%
	SE	83%	58%	61%	32%
	England	82%	63%	60%	58%
2021	Reading	75%	49%	60%	31%
	SE	82%	58%	60%	30%
	England	82%	63%	59%	38%

Source: Department for Education

NEETS (Not in Education, Employment or Training)

% combined NEET/not known

	2024	2023	2022	2021
Reading	2.9%	3.1%	2.5%	4.9%
South-East	6.8%	6.9%	5.4%	6.4%
England	5.3%	5.2%	4.7%	5.5%

Source: gov.uk, combined NEET/Not Known

The percentage of 16-17 year olds who are NEET is lower than the previous year at 2.9%. This is lower than both the regional and national figures.

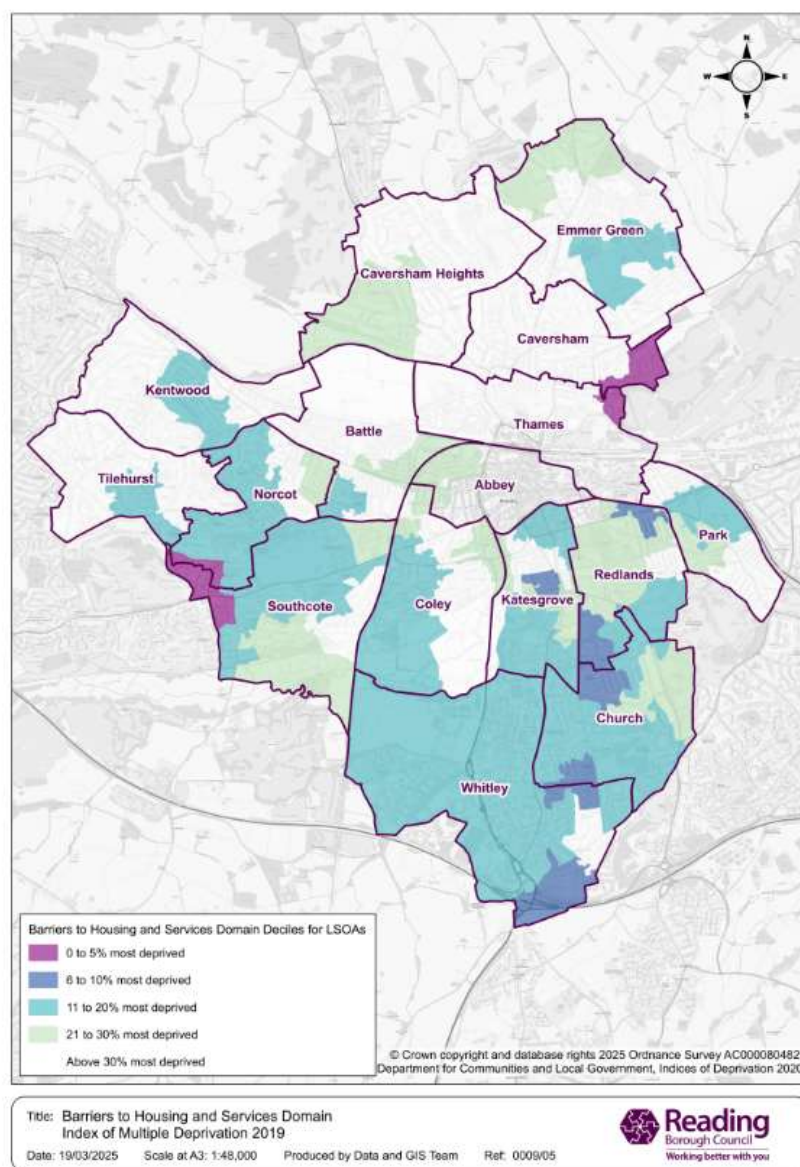
2. ACCESS TO HOUSING

Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019: Barriers to housing and services domain

Reading ranks 43rd out of 317 local authorities nationally on the IMD barriers to housing and services domain, which measures the physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services. A total of 9 LSOAs now fall within the 10% most deprived nationally (1 in 2015).

On the 'wider barriers' sub-domain (which looks at issues relating to access to housing such as affordability), there are 16 LSOAs in the most deprived 10%, compared with only 4 in 2015. In terms of the 'geographical barriers' sub-domain, Reading is relatively un-deprived.

Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019: Barriers to housing and services domain



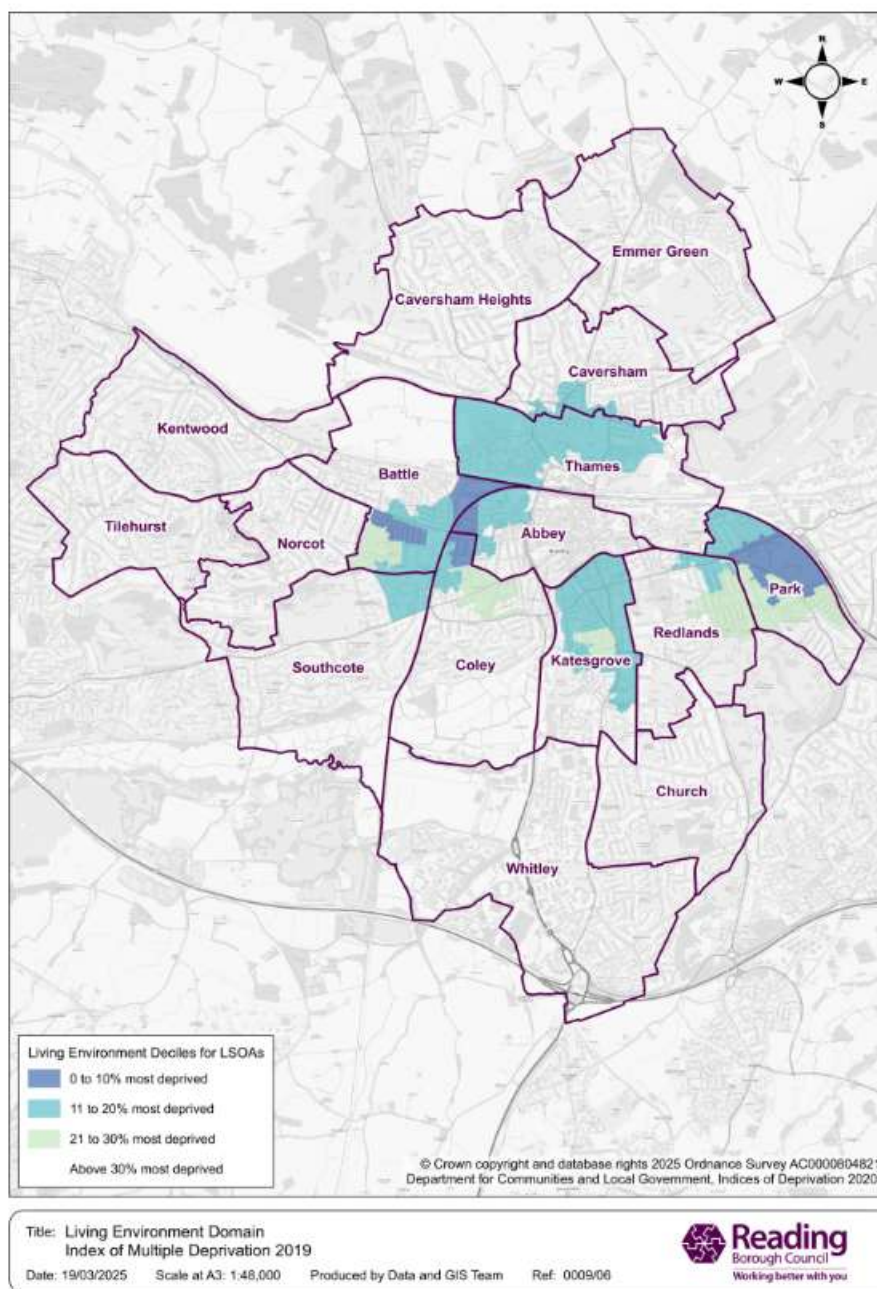
Source: Department for Communities and Local Government 2019

Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019: Living environment domain

Reading ranks 119th out of 317 local authorities nationally on the IMD living environment domain, which measures the quality of the local environment, including the quality of housing, air quality and road traffic accidents. No Lower Super Output Areas fall within the 5% most deprived nationally (compared with 3 in 2015).

The 'living environment' domain is made up of 'outdoor' (quality of housing) and 'indoor' (air quality and road traffic accidents) sub-domains. Reading has no LSOAs in the most deprived 5% on either of these (compared with 9 and 1 respectively according to the 2015 index).

Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019: Living environment domain



Source: Department for Communities and Local Government 2019

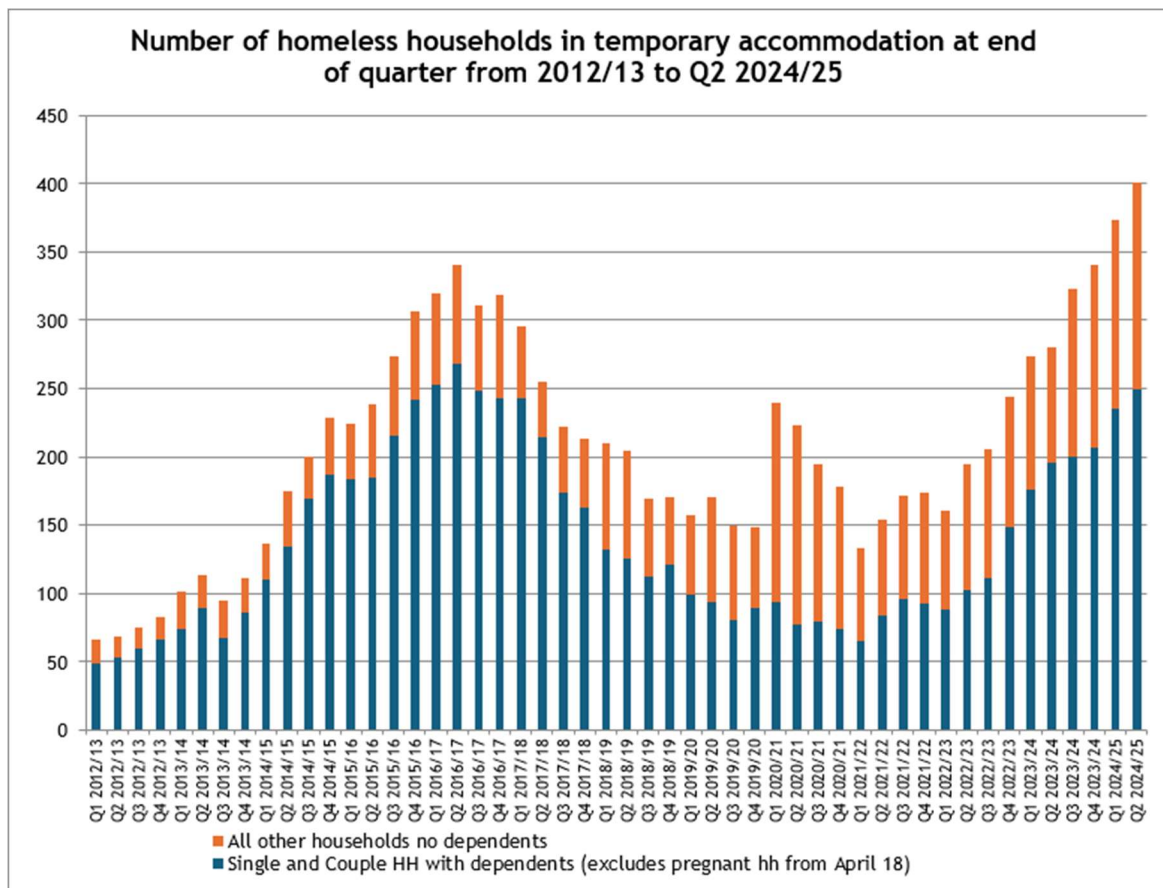
Homelessness

Due a range of economic factors, including the cost of living increase, affordable accommodation in the private rented sector is scarce. Evictions from the private sector are high and the Homelessness Prevention Team are having to utilise temporary accommodation for households that are unable to secure their own affordable accommodation. There are fewer opportunities for the local authority to secure an alternative home, resulting in the increase in the number of households in some form of temporary accommodation. A notable positive is the increase in the number of prevention approaches, rather than in crisis relief approaches, which has been maintained since Q1 2023/2024. This was as a result of change in practice and allows more time for prevention work to be carried out.

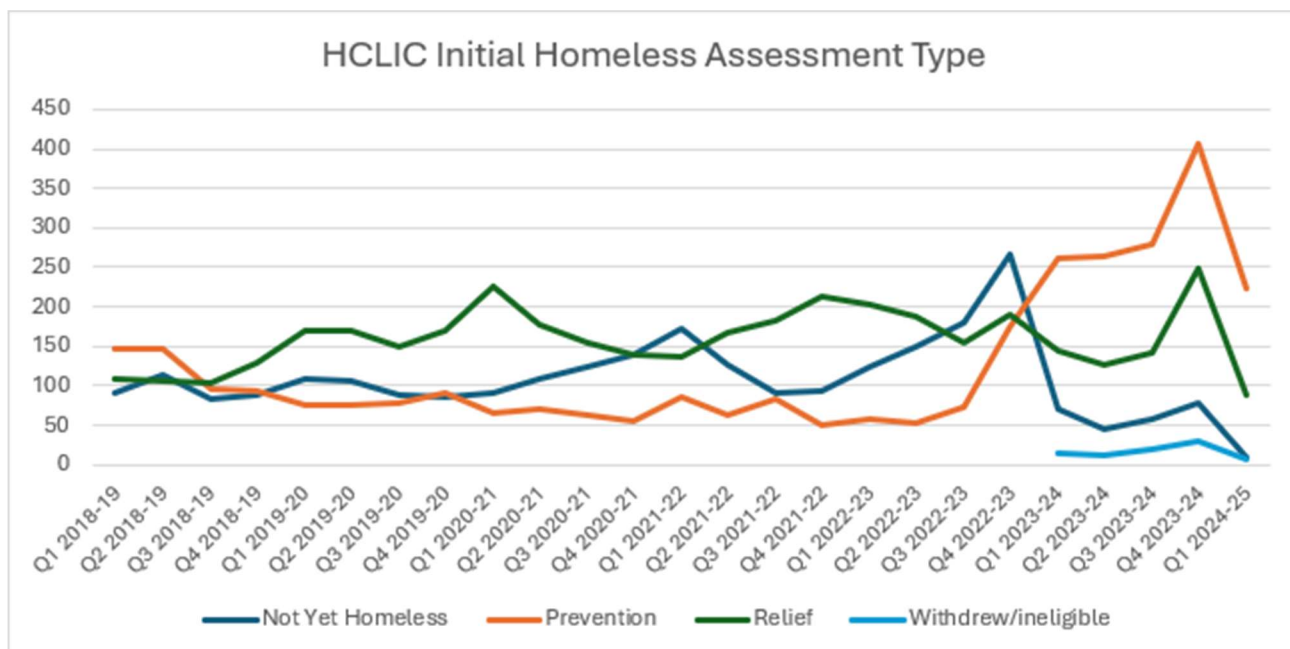
<i>No of homeless presentations</i>	<i>2024/25</i>	<i>2023/24</i>	<i>2022/23</i>	<i>2021/22</i>	<i>2020/21</i>	<i>2019/20</i>	<i>2018/19</i>
April	125	129	120	135	140	132	75
May	250	201	160	122	135	110	164
June	194	193	156	158	121	172	125
July	176	156	109	134	130	120	124
August	176	233	146	115	108	113	130
September	179	185	163	141	111	113	107
October	191	188	130	118	145	146	99
November	189	209	171	124	131	144	108
December	148	169	106	118	79	78	77
January	189	271	213	97	126	111	75
February		214	235	140	107	98	127
March		174	221	137	120	135	99
Total	1817	2322	1930	1539	1453	1472	1310

Source: Reading Borough Council

Reading Social Exclusion Analysis 2025



Source: Reading Borough Council²¹



Source: Reading Borough Council^{22,23}

²¹ Note there is a spike in single homeless in Q1 20/21 due to the “Everyone In” scheme when the first Covid lockdown was implemented.

²² HCLIC = Homelessness Case Level Information Collection

²³ Note there is a spike in single homeless in Q1 20/21 due to the “Everyone In” scheme when the first lockdown was implemented

House prices

Reading's continued success has further increased demand for housing, resulting in higher than national average prices, with the **median house price now around 3 times higher in 2023 than 2013**. Because of this, the property market has become increasingly inaccessible to those on low incomes, due to the shortage of affordable housing.

House prices					
		<i>Median house price of...</i>			
	<i>Median house price</i>	<i>detached houses</i>	<i>semi-detached houses</i>	<i>terraced houses</i>	<i>flats/maisonettes</i>
Reading	£350,000	£696,757	£464,765	£356,364	£241,424
England	£290,000	£554,793	£333,749	£316,656	£317,057

Source: LG Inform Plus, 2023 Q1 (rolling)

Median house prices by ward²⁴

Within Reading, median house prices in June 2023 ranged significantly from £290,000 in Minster to £652,500 in Mapledurham, over twice as much. House prices in all wards increased between June 2022 and June 2023, except for Mapledurham.

	<i>Year ending June 2023</i>	<i>Year ending March 2023</i>	<i>Year ending Dec 2022</i>	<i>Year ending Sep 2022</i>	<i>Year ending June 2022</i>
Abbey	313,250	310,000	310,000	300,000	300,000
Battle	300,000	305,700	299,500	285,000	276,500
Caversham	395,000	388,500	380,000	363,500	362,975
Church	360,000	359,000	359,000	350,000	344,750
Katesgrove	315,000	310,000	300,000	292,000	290,000
Kentwood	360,000	350,000	331,750	320,000	318,000
Mapledurham	652,500	742,250	750,000	750,000	732,500
Minster	290,000	285,000	265,000	255,000	256,000
Norcot	321,000	311,250	290,000	282,500	290,000
Park	315,000	318,000	315,000	303,000	292,757
Peppard	470,000	465,000	445,000	427,500	425,000
Redlands	305,000	312,000	302,000	282,500	292,250
Southcote	375,000	360,000	350,000	335,000	330,000
Thames	615,000	615,000	591,500	565,000	551,750
Tilehurst	375,500	380,000	360,000	326,500	320,000
Whitley	350,000	350,000	350,000	335,000	315,000

Source: ONS, HPSSA Dataset 37

²⁴ Pre-2022 wards

Housing tenure

Just over half of households (50.4%) in Reading are either owned with a mortgage or outright, a lower proportion than in the South East (65.7%) or England (61.3%). Almost a third of households (31.9%) live in private rented accommodation, a much higher proportion than regionally or nationally.

Within Reading, Whitley, Norcot and Southcote have the highest proportions of households in socially rented accommodation, and Abbey, Katesgrove and Redlands the highest proportion in private rented (see map??).

Percentage of households by housing tenure

	<i>Owned</i>	<i>Shared ownership</i>	<i>Social rented</i>	<i>Private rented</i>	<i>Lives rent free</i>
Reading	50.4	1.3	16.1	31.9	0.2
Abbey	20.1	2.0	10.9	67.0	0.1
Battle	41.9	1.8	11.2	45.0	0.0
Caversham	64.2	1.3	12.8	21.7	0.1
Caversham Heights	85.7	0.3	4.8	9.1	0.1
Church	46.2	0.9	36.0	16.6	0.3
Coley	44.2	1.4	19.9	34.3	0.2
Emmer Green	80.4	1.2	5.8	12.5	0.0
Katesgrove	31.5	1.3	14.2	52.9	0.1
Kentwood	72.2	0.5	9.7	17.5	0.2
Norcot	49.9	2.4	23.4	24.1	0.3
Park	47.9	1.0	5.9	45.1	0.0
Redlands	34.5	0.4	13.0	51.9	0.2
Southcote	53.5	0.9	25.7	19.5	0.4
Thames	37.2	1.6	18.6	42.5	0.1
Tilehurst	71.3	0.2	13.9	14.3	0.3
Whitley	43.9	3.1	27.0	25.5	0.4
South East	65.7	1.4	13.6	19.2	0.1
England	61.3	1.0	17.1	20.5	0.1

Source: Census 2021, Office for National Statistics

Housing conditions

Overcrowding and central heating

The 2021 Census provides a measure of under-occupancy and over-crowding. An occupancy rating of -1 means that there is one room too few for the number of people living in the household. **Reading has a higher proportion of households with an occupancy rating of -1, with a rating of -2 and with no central heating than either the South East or England**

Within Reading, Abbey has the highest proportion of households with no central heating. Church and Park wards have the highest proportion of households with an occupancy rating of -2 or less (i.e. very overcrowded).

Reading Social Exclusion Analysis 2025

Central heating and occupancy rating

	% No central heating	Occupancy rating of -1	Occupancy rating of -2 or less
Reading	2.1	8.4	1.7
Abbey	4.4	14.3	2.3
Battle	2.7	10.2	2.6
Caversham	1.9	5.5	0.9
Caversham Heights	0.7	1.5	0.2
Church	1.6	11.2	3.2
Coley	2.7	9.6	1.7
Emmer Green	0.4	2.9	0.3
Katesgrove	3.5	12.6	2.4
Kentwood	1.2	4.4	0.9
Norcot	1.7	7.5	1.6
Park	2.2	9.2	3.1
Redlands	2.7	13.5	1.9
Southcote	1.7	9.1	1.4
Thames	2.4	6.2	1.2
Tilehurst	1.2	5.0	0.9
Whitley	1.7	7.6	1.8
South East	1.3	4.9	0.7
England	1.5	5.3	1.1

Source: Census 2021, Office for National Statistics

Non-decent²⁵ homes

	2020	2019
Reading	11.5%	13.9%
England	15.1%	16.7%

Source: English Housing Survey: local authority housing stock condition modelling, Dept for levelling Up, Housing and communities

²⁵ according to the Decent Homes Standard

3. FUEL POVERTY

Fuel poverty in England is measured using the ‘low income, high costs’ indicator, which considers a household to be fuel poor if:

- they have required fuel costs that are above average (the national median level);
- were they to spend that amount, they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line.

According to Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC), Reading has seen an increase in the number of households considered fuel poor from 10.3% in 2019 to 11% in 2020, although this is still below the national figure. Rates of fuel poverty tend to be above average for households living in the private-rented sector, in multiple occupations and in pre-1919 terraced housing.

Percentage of households in fuel poverty (estimated)

	<i>Reading Fuel poor households</i>	<i>Reading % fuel poor</i>	<i>SE % fuel poor</i>	<i>England % fuel poor</i>
2020	7,498	11%	8.6%	13.2%
2019	6,999	10.3%	7.5%	13.4%
2018	6,056	9.0%	7.9%	10.3%
2017	7,290	10.9%	8.7%	10.9%
2016	7,904	11.9%	9.0%	11.1%
2015	9,085	13.9%	9.4%	11.0%
2014	7,002	10.8%	8.3%	10.6%

Source: Department for Energy and Climate Change

Fuel poverty by ward

Modelled estimates of the proportion of households in fuel poverty

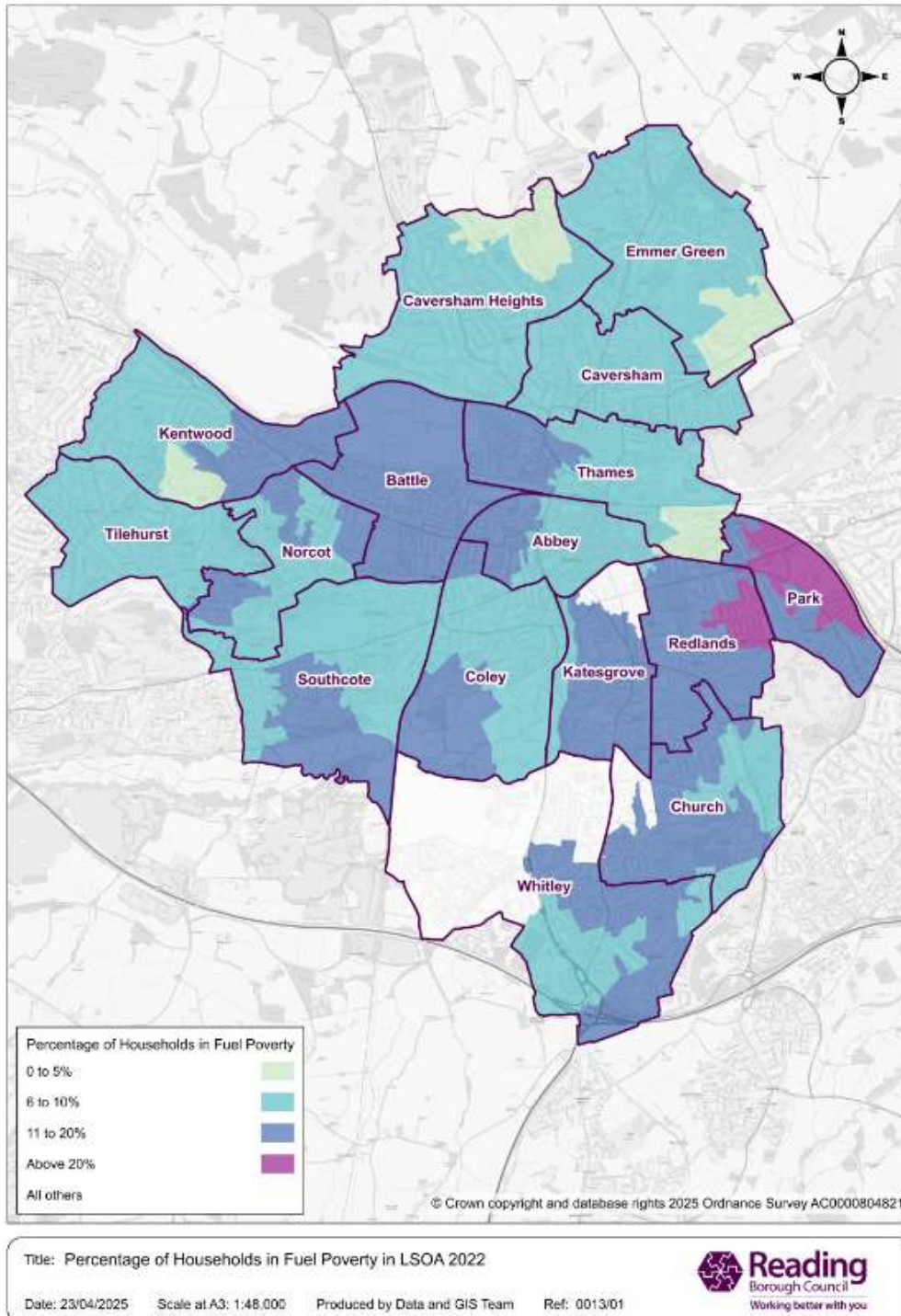
Area	Count	Value
England	3,158,206	13.2
Reading	7,498	11.0
Abbey	724	10.6
Battle	647	13.3
Caversham	374	8.1
Church	553	15.4
Katesgrove	651	14.3
Kentwood	364	9.0
Mapledurham	64	5.0
Minster	397	8.1
Norcot	461	9.9
Park	671	16.1
Peppard	237	5.7
Redlands	684	17.5
Southcote	374	9.6
Thames	225	5.7
Tilehurst	283	7.0
Whitley	789	16.4

Source: Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy 2020 (pre-2022 wards)

Reading Social Exclusion Analysis 2025

This shows that highest levels of fuel poverty can be found in Redlands, Whitley and Park, partly reflecting the high student population in some wards.

Households in fuel poverty



Source: Department for Energy and Climate Change 2022

4. FOOD POVERTY

11% of individuals in the UK lived in a food insecure household in 2023/4, a similar proportion to 2022/3. However, household food insecurity has increased for those in low income²⁶. 4.2% live in a household that had accessed a food bank within the 12 months prior to being interviewed, up from 3.4% last year²⁷. According to the Trussell Trust, close to 3 million parcels were provided by food banks in the Trussell community in 2024/25. Provision sharply has risen over the last 5 years and is two and a half times the level seen a decade ago.

In Reading, **Readifood** provide emergency food parcels to families and individuals across greater Reading and has seen unprecedented growth in demand over the past few years, due to welfare reform changes and the cost of living crisis.

- Readifood distributed 7,476 parcels between Nov 2023 - Nov 2024, and almost 9,355 between Nov 2022 - Nov 2023. This equates to over 140 parcels per week.
- The majority of food parcels are delivered to RG1, RG2 and RG30.
- Readifood works with around 100 local agencies that make referrals for food parcels.

²⁶ *Households Below Average Income 2023/24*

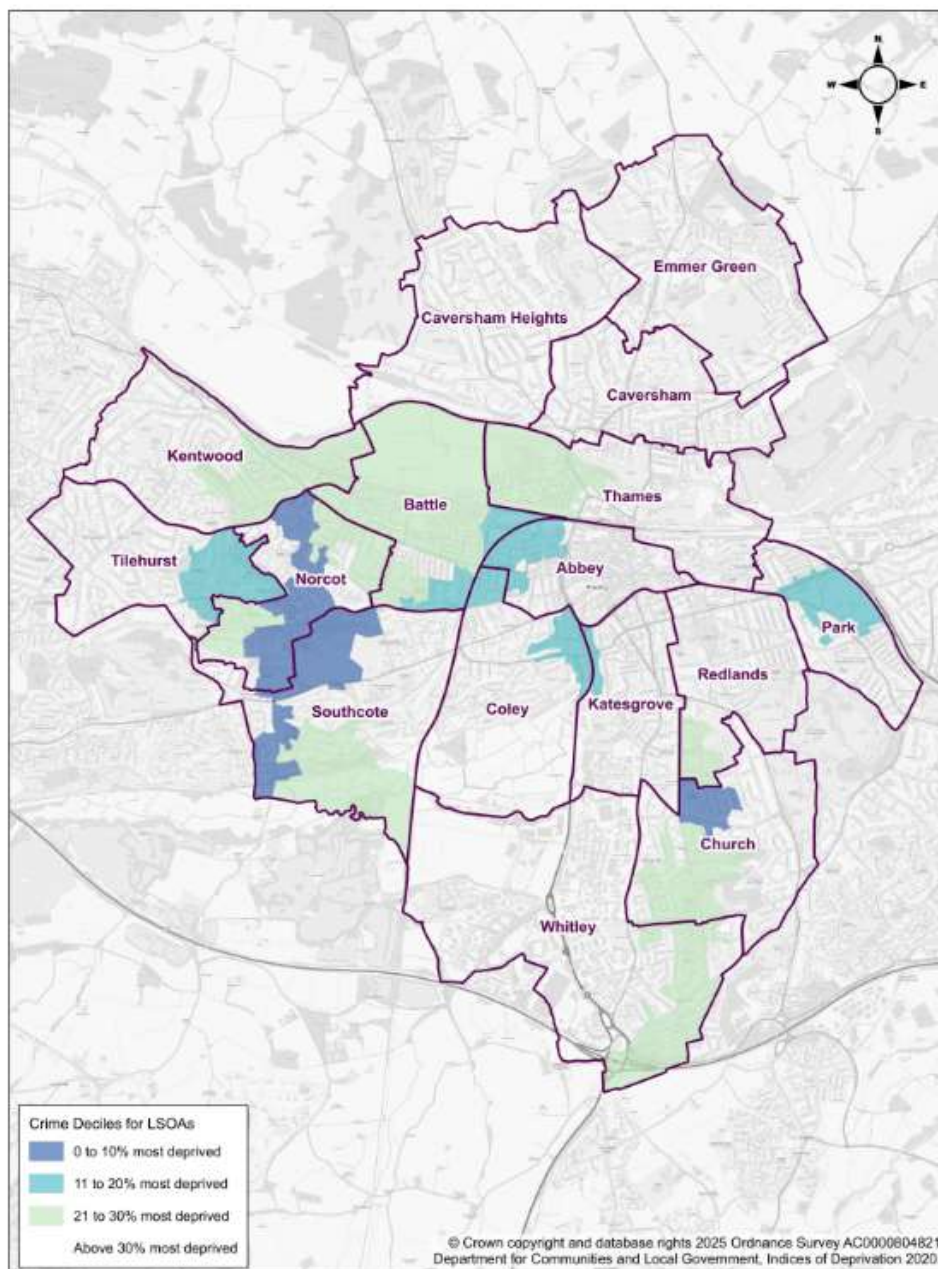
²⁷ *Family Resources Survey*

5. ACCESS TO SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019: Crime domain

Reading ranks 108th out of 317 local authorities nationally on the IMD crime domain. A total of 6 Lower Super Output Areas fall within the 10% most deprived nationally (6 also in 2015).

Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015: Crime domain



Title: Crime Domain
Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019

Date: 19/03/2025 Scale at A3: 1:48,000 Produced by Data and GIS Team Ref: 0009/04



Source: Department for Communities and Local Government 2019

Crime rates

Crime and the fear of crime have become more significant issues as Reading's evening economy has grown over recent years. However, Reading has a fairly average crime rate (102 crimes per 1000 population), when compared to our most similar group of Community Safety Partnerships; this is higher than the national average but lower than in 2022/23.

Crime rates

<i>Value per 1000 population</i>	<i>Reading 23/24</i>	<i>Reading 22/23</i>	<i>Thames Valley 23/24</i>	<i>England & Wales 23/24</i>
Total crime	102.3	112	69	90
Violent offences	36	40	26	33
Sexual offences	3.4	4	2	3
Robbery	1.2	1	1	1
Theft offences	38.9	40	24	30
Criminal damage and arson	7.6	9	6	8
Drug offences	3.4	3	2	3
Possession of weapons offences	0.9	1	1	1
Public order offences	9.2	13	6	8
Miscellaneous	1.8	2	1	2

Source: Office for National Statistics

Community safety

According to the Council's **Community Safety Survey 2024**, 50% of respondents think Reading is a safe place (a 5.2% improvement on 2023).

However, 36% residents reported that crime has increased in their neighbourhood (a 3.5% increase on the previous year), highlighting that feelings of safety do not necessarily align with perceptions of crime.

6. HEALTH

Deprivation can influence behavioural choices that are known to impact on the health of adults and children such as breastfeeding, eating habits and participation in sports and exercise. The adverse impact of unemployment, for example, on the physical and mental health of individuals in terms of higher risk of depression and increased morbidity is well documented.

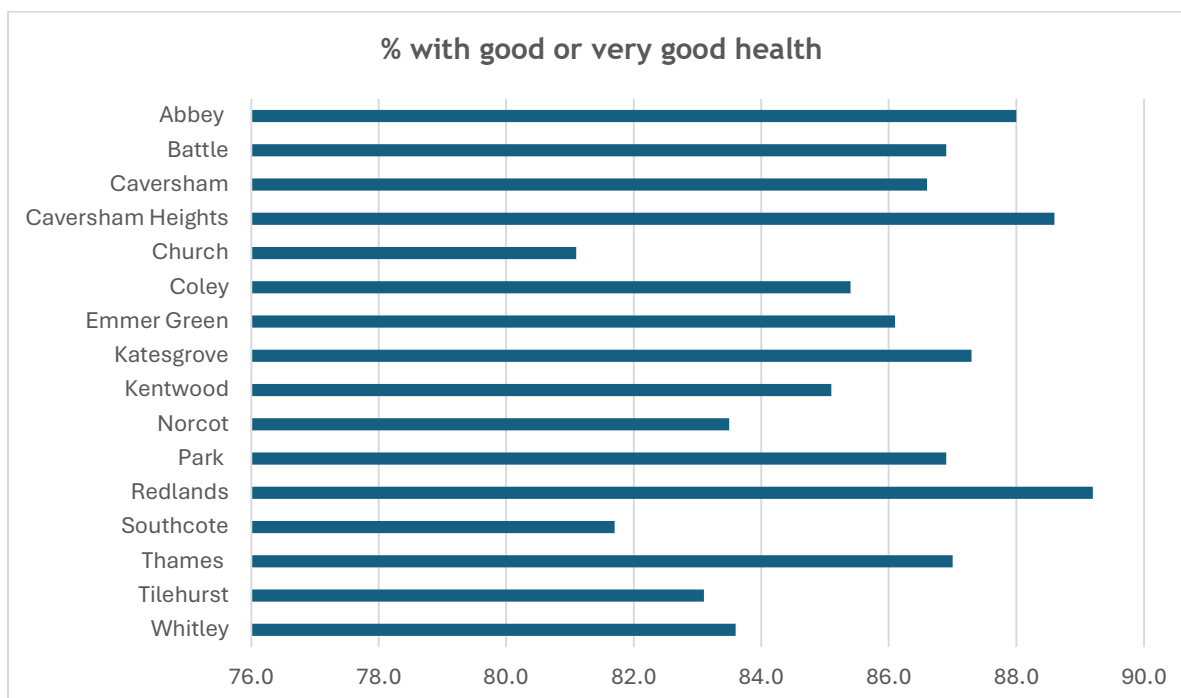
Census overview

Proportion of population reporting good or very good health

The 2021 Census shows that, on average, a **higher percentage of Reading residents report good or very good health** than in the South East or nationally, and a higher percentage than in 2021.

	<i>Reading 2021%</i>	<i>Reading 2011 %</i>	<i>South East 2021 %</i>	<i>England 2021 %</i>
Very good health	51.2	50.2	50	48.5
Good health	34.4	35.3	34	33.7
Fair health	10.7	10.8	11.8	12.7
Bad health	2.9	2.9	3.3	4.0
Very bad health	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.2

Source: 2021 Census, Office for National Statistics



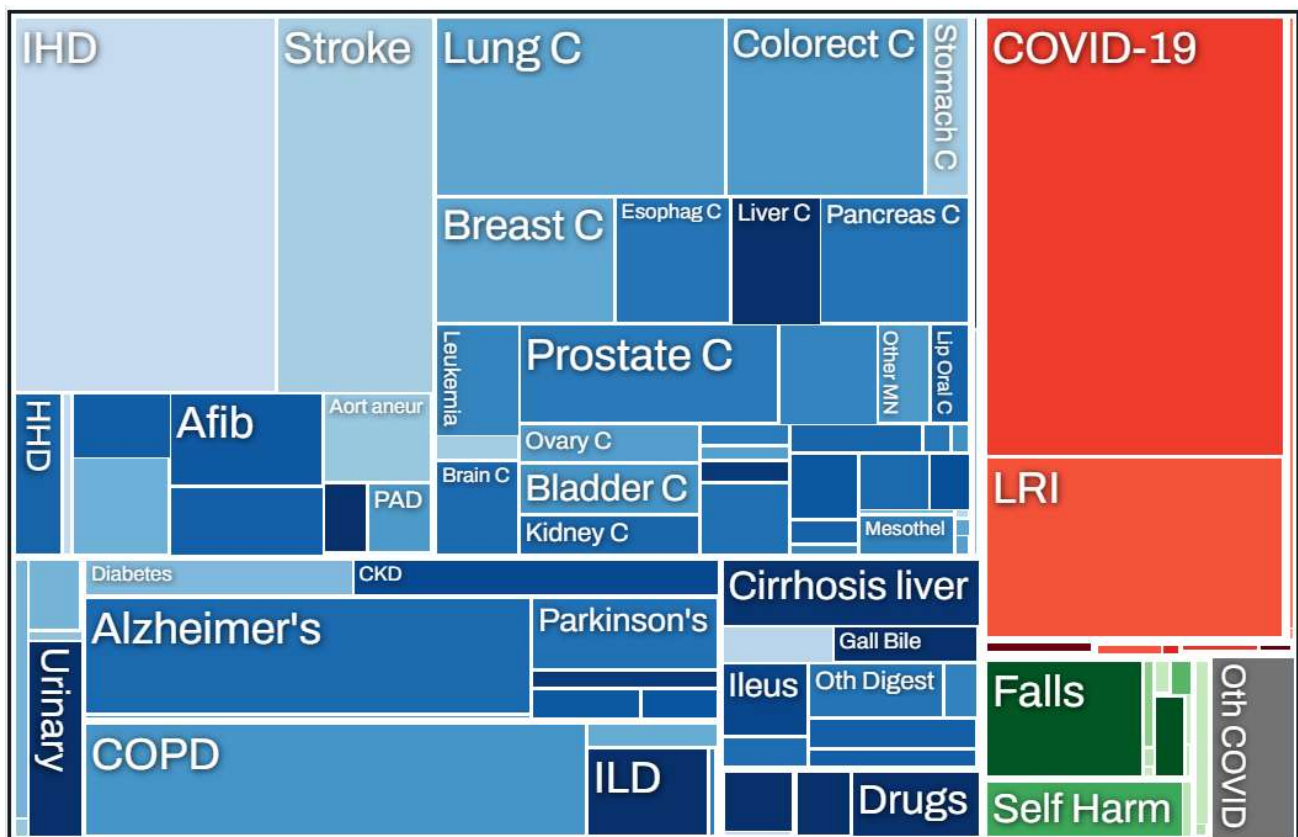
Source: 2021 Census, Office for National Statistics

However, there are geographical differences within Reading. The highest proportion of residents with good or very good health is in Redlands, Caversham Heights and Abbey. In Redlands, this may be due to the higher number of young people, particularly students.

Causes of death in Reading

The Global Burden of Disease Tool looks at the impact different diseases and conditions have upon health and wellbeing. In Reading, cancers, circulatory diseases, respiratory diseases, mental health and musculoskeletal diseases are the main contributors to poor health.

Causes of death in Reading



Source: Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation; all ages; 2021

Life expectancy and health inequalities

Life expectancy is a way of expressing general population health. Currently, life expectancy in Reading is below the national average for males. Over the last several years, life expectancy has stalled locally, as it has nationally.

Healthy life expectancy is the average number of years a person can expect to live in good health²⁸. In Reading, women’s healthy life expectancy ranks 25th out of 151 local authorities and men’s ranks 41st (healthy life expectancy for both men and women is highest in Wokingham).

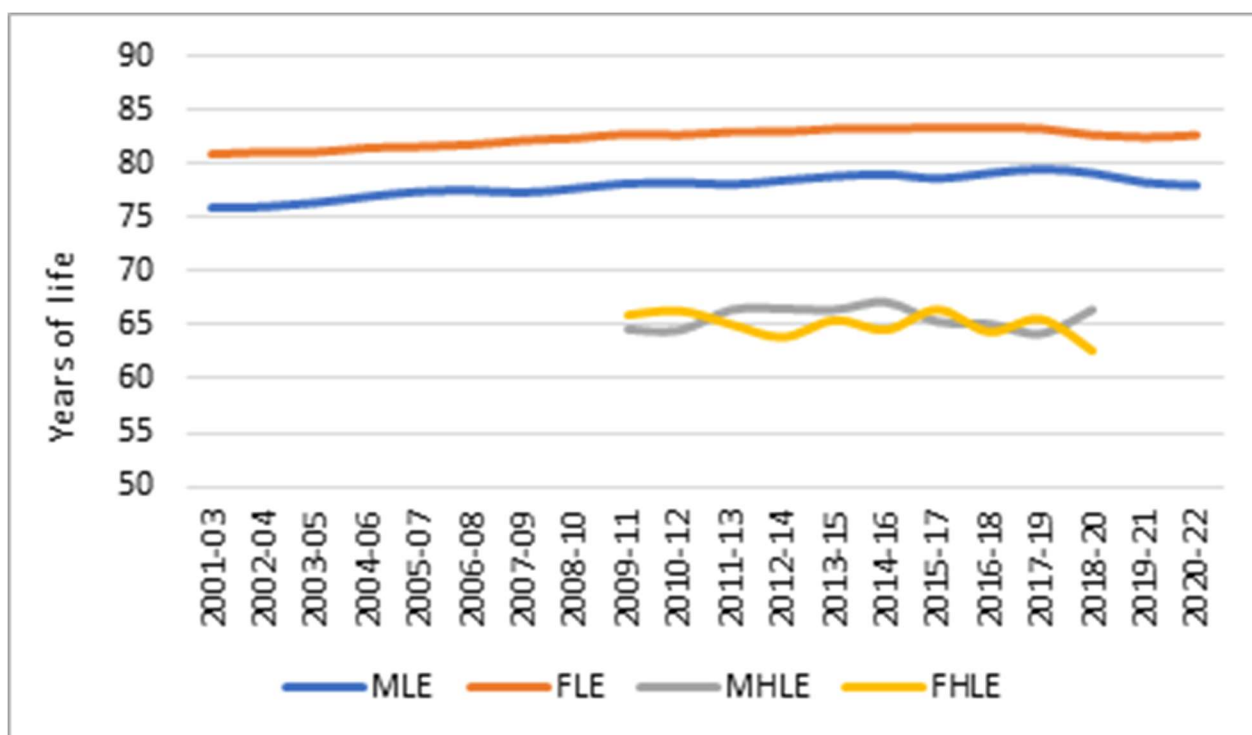
²⁸ Self-assessed good or very good health

Reading Social Exclusion Analysis 2025

Life expectancy and healthy life expectancy

	Life expectancy at birth (females)	Life expectancy at birth (males)	Healthy life expectancy at birth (females)	Healthy life expectancy at birth (males)
Reading 2021-23	83.2	78.8	64.9	63.5
Reading 2020-22	82.7	78.0	65.1	63.7
Reading 2019-21	82.5	78.3	65.7	63.7
Reading 2018-20	82.3	79.0	66.4	62.6
South East	84.1	80.3	64.4	63.5
England	83.1	79.1	61.9	61.5

Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities. Public health profiles.



Source: Department of Health and Social Care, Public Health Outcomes Framework

MLE = Male life expectancy FLE = Female life expectancy

MHLE = Male healthy life expectancy FHLE = Female healthy life expectancy

Analysis of life expectancy at sub-local authority level shows that **health inequality within the borough is considerable**. For example at ward level, a boy born to parents living in Mapledurham ward (highest life expectancy) can expect to live around nine years longer than a boy born at the same time to parents in Minster ward (lowest life expectancy).

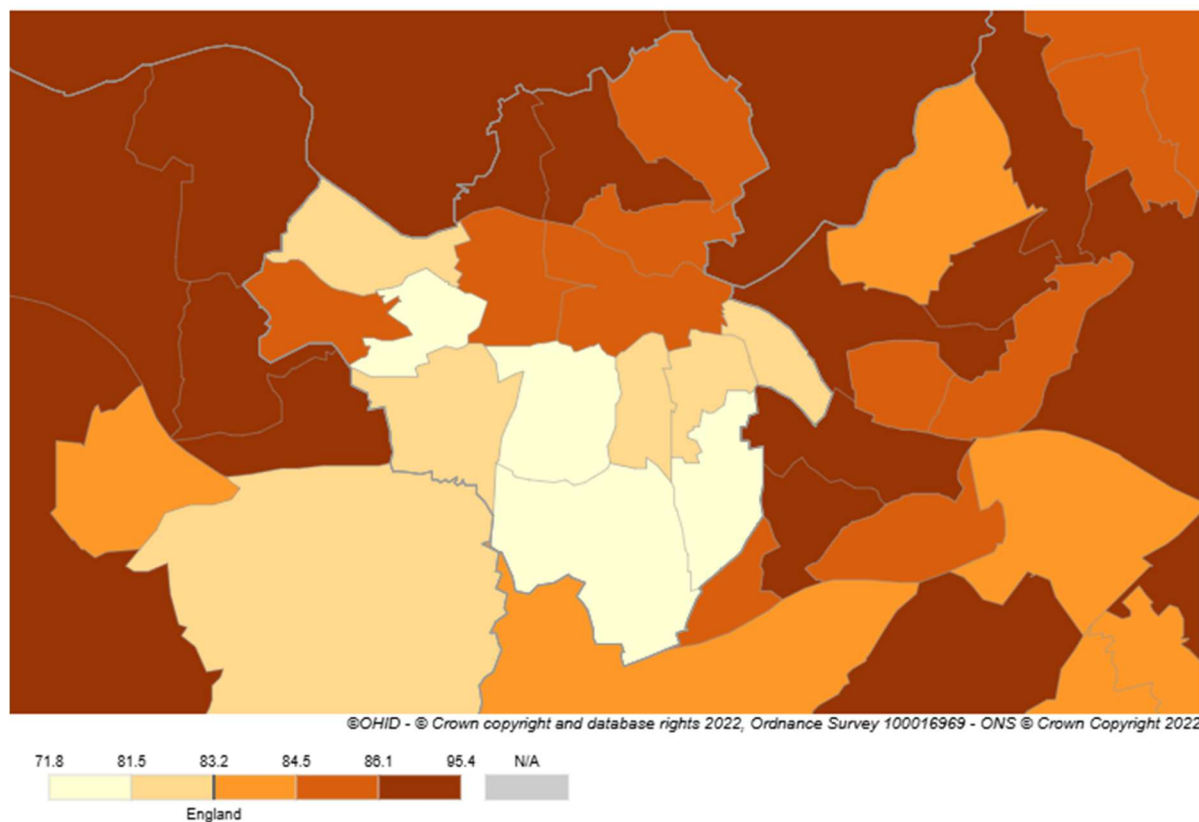
Reading Social Exclusion Analysis 2025

Life expectancy by ward

	<i>Life expectancy at birth (years) females</i>	<i>Life expectancy at birth (years) males</i>
Reading	82.6	78.8
Abbey	85.2	79.4
Battle	84.8	76.6
Caversham	84.9	80.7
Church	80.8	77.1
Katesgrove	81.7	77.8
Kentwood	81.5	76.9
Mapledurham	88.6	84.4
Minster	77.7	75.1
Norcot	79.9	76.9
Park	82.4	80.1
Peppard	84.9	80.7
Redlands	81.9	77.3
Southcote	82.5	80.0
Thames	87.6	81.3
Tilehurst	84.6	81.1
Whitley	79.8	77.2

Source: Office for Health Improvement & Disparities, 2016-20 (Pre-2022 wards)

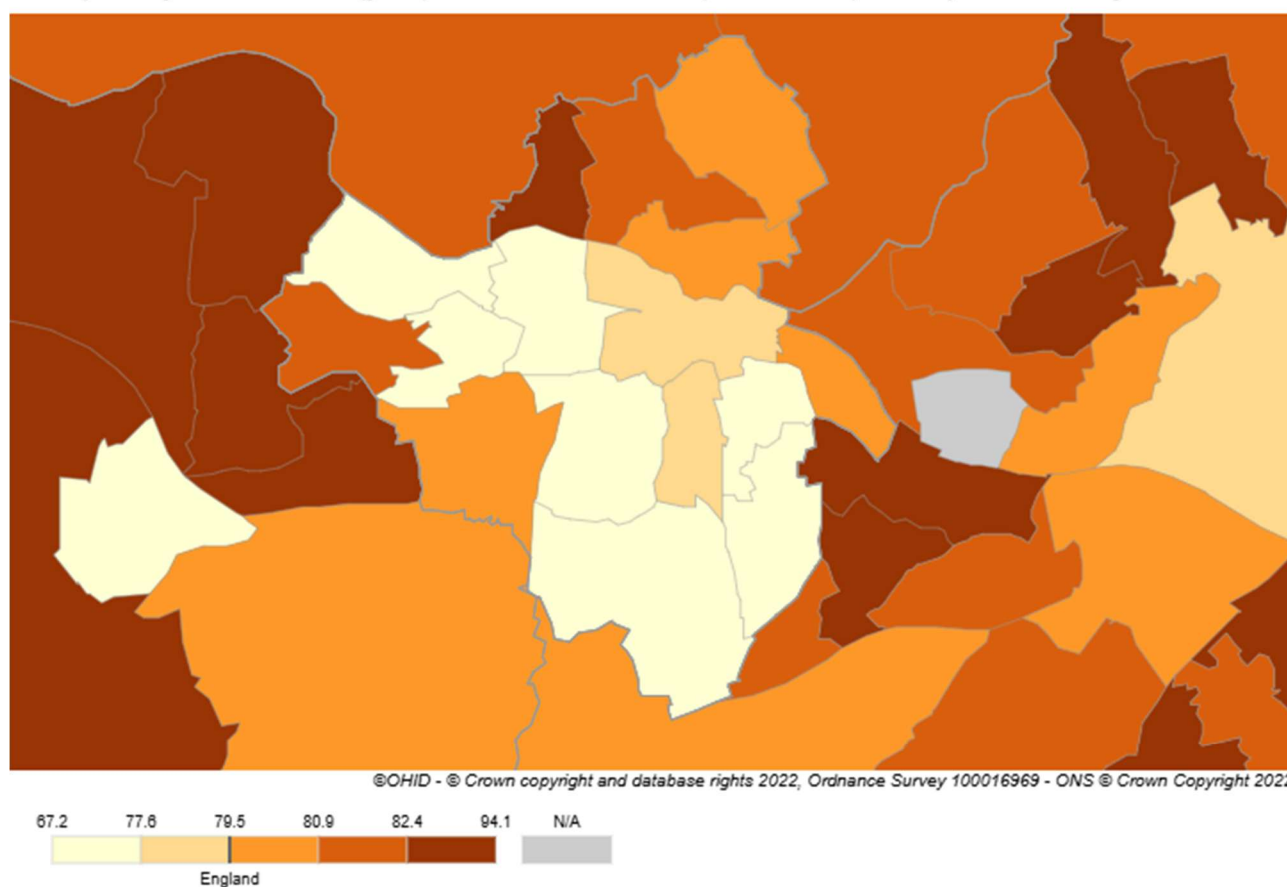
Life expectancy for females (years) by ward 2016-20



- Source: The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities analysis of ONS death registration data and mid-year population estimates.

Reading Social Exclusion Analysis 2025

Life expectancy for males (years) by ward 2016-20



- Source: The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities analysis of ONS death registration data and mid-year population estimates.

Inequality in life expectancy and deprivation

	<i>Inequality in life expectancy at birth (years)</i>	
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
Reading 2018-20	6.8	7.8
Reading 2017-19	7.0	8.3
Reading 2016-18	8.0	7.2
South East	7.9	6.0
England	9.7	7.9

Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, fingertips

The inequality in life expectancy measure how much life expectancy varies with deprivation. For men, there is an **6.8 year difference** and for women a **7.8 year difference** between the LSOAs in the most deprived and least deprived deprivation deciles. This is an improvement for men since 2016-18 but there is still a significant disparity.

Lifestyle factors

Deprivation and poverty can influence behavioural choices that are known to impact on the health of adults and children such as breastfeeding, eating habits and participation in sports and exercise.

	Reading (most recent)	Reading (previous period)	England
Smoking prevalence in adults (2023)	11.8%	14.4%	11.6%
% adults classified as obese (2023/24)	25.9%	28.2%	26.5%

Source: *fingertips*, Office for Health Improvement and Disparities

Child health

Children living in income-deprived families are prone to significantly worse health outcomes, both during childhood and later in life. Poor parental health combined with financial hardship has an inevitable effect on the wellbeing of children.

	Reading (most recent)	Reading (previous period)	England
% of 5 year olds with experience of visually obvious dental decay (2021/22)	32.9%	30.6%	23.7%
Low birth weight of term babies (no per 1000 live births) (2022)	4.1	4.2	2.9
Infant mortality rate (no per 1000 live births) (2021-23)	4.9	4.5	4.1

Source: *fingertips*, Office for Health Improvement and Disparities

Prevalence of obesity in children by ward

	Reception children* (%)	Year 6 children (%)
Reading	10.1	23.1
Abbey	9.2	22.9
Battle	10.0	27.4
Caversham	8.8	20.3
Church	12.5	24.6
Katesgrove	12.7	28.3
Kentwood	7.0	25.0
Mapledurham	n/a	n/a
Minster	11.7	26.5
Norcot	10.1	24.2
Park	10.7	21.7
Peppard	7.4	16.2
Redlands	10.9	20.0
Southcote	10.9	24.7
Thames	6.3	13.5
Tilehurst	9.0	23.3
Whitley	12.0	28.0
England	9.6	22.7

Source: Dept of Health & Social Care, *fingertips* 2021/22 - 2023/24; ONS

Wellbeing

This indicator shows the average rating of those that experienced the following feelings of wellbeing yesterday (where 0 is low levels of the feeling and 10 is high levels), for adults aged 16 years and over. Levels in Reading are similar to the South East and England.

	<i>Anxiety</i>	<i>Feeling life is worthwhile</i>	<i>Happiness</i>	<i>Life satisfaction</i>
Reading	3.2	7.8	7.4	7.4
South East	3.3	7.8	7.4	7.5
England	3.2	7.7	7.4	7.4

Source: Office for National Statistics 2022-23

7. DIGITAL EXCLUSION

Someone is digitally excluded if they lack internet access and/or have low levels of digital literacy and skills.

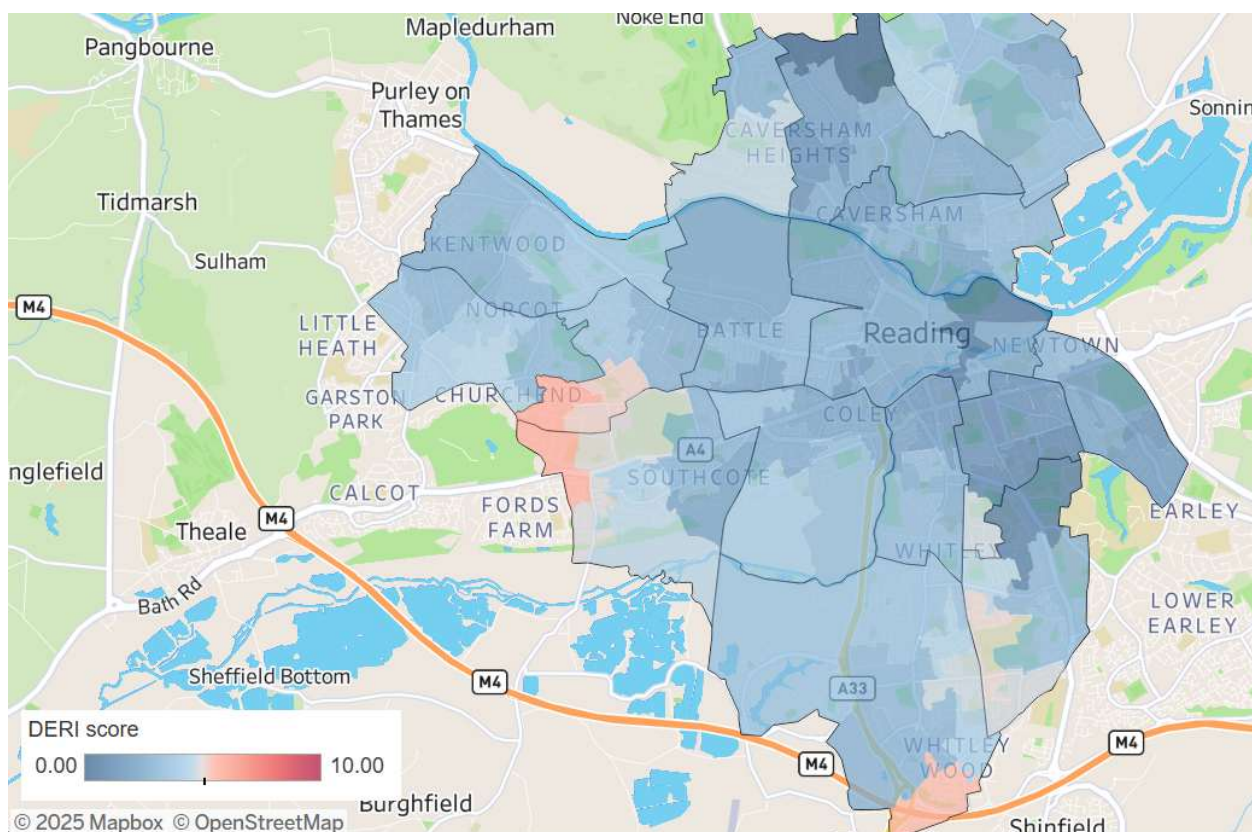
Age is the characteristic that is most likely to identify digital exclusion, with 40% of the UK population aged 70+ digitally excluded (compared with 10% for all ages).

Other characteristics that can also increase the likelihood of being digitally excluded include:

- living alone (30% excluded)
- having a condition that limits or impairs their use of communications services (23% excluded)
- being financially vulnerable (20% excluded)²⁹

Digital Exclusion Risk Index

The DERI brings together a broad set of indicators to create an overall DERI score for each LSOA in England and Wales, based on three component scores of demography, deprivation and broadband. 0 is low risk, 10 high risk.



Source: Greater Manchester Office of Data Analytics, Greater Manchester Combined Authority 2024

²⁹ Source: Ofcom 2020, <http://www.broadbanduk.org/2020/06/02/ofcom-publishes-digital-exclusion-analysis>

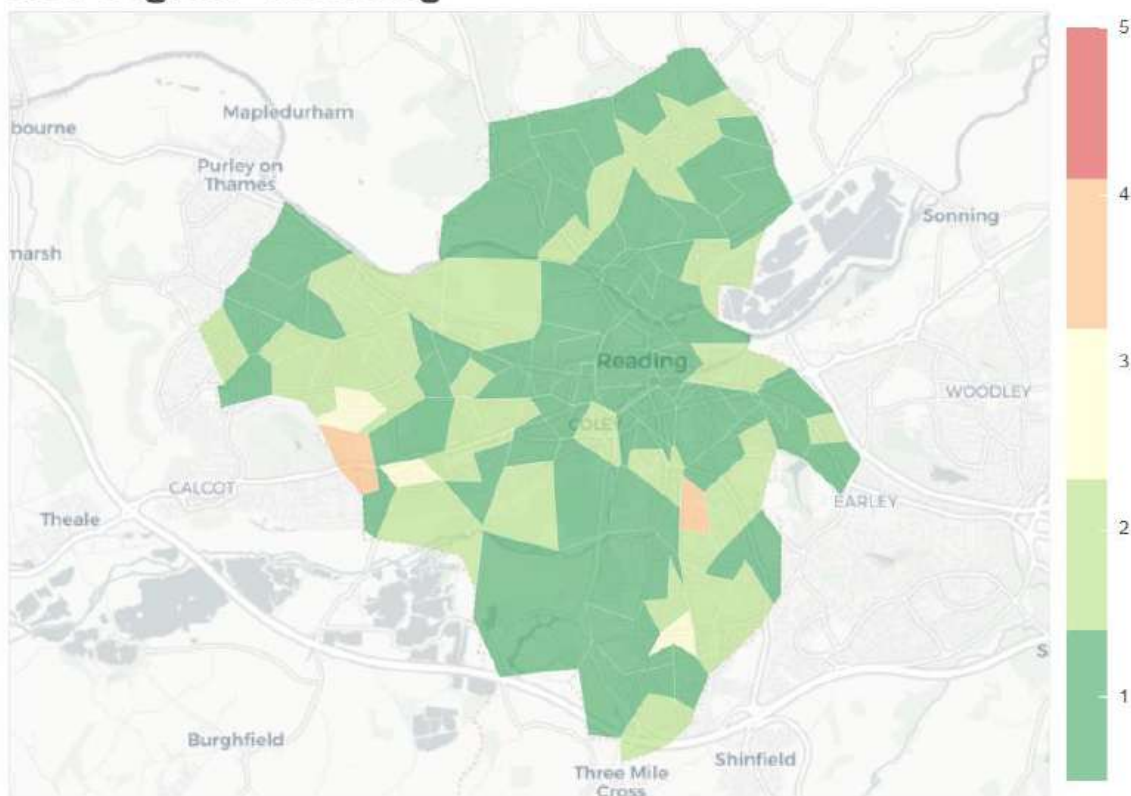
ONS analysis

As part of preparations for the 2021 Census, ONS produced a ‘hard-to-count (HtC) index’, including a ‘digital’ domain, which measures the likelihood of residents completing their Census 2021 questionnaire online. This uses information about driving licence applications (online or on paper), broadband uptake and median age group. Every Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) in the country is assigned a separate score which is then ranked.

The table shows the proportion of all LSOAs nationally which fall into each of 5 categories. This indicates that overall, Reading is relatively digitally included, but **there are 2 LSOAs within the most excluded 10% in the country** (orange areas shown in the map - Hexham Rd area and Southcote/Aldi area).

	% LSOAs in 40% most included	% LSOAs in 60% most excluded	% LSOAs in 20% most excluded	% LSOAs in 10% most excluded	% LSOAs in 2% most excluded
Reading	58%	37%	3%	2%	0%

HtC Digital - Reading



© [OpenStreetMap](#) contributors, © [CartoDB](#)

Source: Office for National Statistics 2021

Reading Social Exclusion Analysis 2025

Reading surveys

RBC Covid survey

In November 2020, the Council carried out a survey with its online Citizens' Panel to see how residents felt about service changes during the Covid lockdowns, their priorities for recovery and what support they thought they would need in the future.

26.3% of respondents said that they were highly likely or likely to need support with using online services, despite them being online to complete the survey. This need was apparent across all ages and other demographic factors.

Whitley Researchers survey³⁰

In 2021, the Whitley Researchers³¹, in collaboration with University of Reading, surveyed 70 residents, predominantly from South Reading, about their online engagement.

- Just over half (55%) of the respondents were less than familiar with all (or all but one) of seven common online activities (finding out information, emails, social media, shopping and bookings, attending online meet-ups, banking, and filling in forms).
- Almost half struggled with filling in forms online for official bodies.
- The most important barrier to digital inclusion was lack of knowhow.
- The second barrier was lack of adequate equipment - around 40% of respondents to this survey complained of unreliable Wi-Fi coverage and slow internet.
- A third of those interviewed resisted using the internet, much of this linked to a lack of confidence in being able to get things done online, but also because they wanted to keep interpersonal connections live.
- Older people, those with fewer qualifications, those in poor health and those already disconnected from others tended to be more digitally excluded.

RBC Sheltered Housing survey

In Autumn 2020, 213 sheltered housing residents were surveyed on their digital access.

- 38% of participants have access to the internet.
 - 40% of participants with access to the internet only use a phone
 - 11% of participants with access to the internet only use a laptop
 - 5% of participants with access to the internet only use a tablet
 - 38% of participants with access to the internet use a phone and a laptop or tablet
 - 2% of participants with access to the internet use a laptop and tablet
 - 4% did not answer this question
- Barriers found to using the internet
 - Lack of support and skills - 37 participants mentioned
 - Not interested - 32 participants mentioned
 - No broadband - 9 participants mentioned
 - Too expensive - 7 participants mentioned
 - No equipment - 1 participant mentioned
 - Capacity Issues - 15 participants mentioned

³⁰ <https://research.reading.ac.uk/community-based-research/participatory-research-in-whitley/>

³¹ The Whitley Community Development Agency's Whitley Researchers are a group of local people trained by University of Reading to carry out research with their own local community and to co-produce the methodology with participants.

Reading Social Exclusion Analysis 2025

- 30% of participants responded that they would access the internet more if they had support using it and/or free access to equipment (of these participants 57% do not have access to the internet).

RBC voluntary and community sector partner survey

In 2020, we asked our voluntary sector partners for feedback on the needs their service users presented in terms of online services.

The main obstacles faced by service users in accessing online services were reported as

- not having the equipment or access to the equipment to go online
- not having the skills or ability to use the technology independently
- not having access to the internet including not having an email address in the case of some one with a learning disability.

8. SOCIAL ISOLATION & LONELINESS

Loneliness is often associated with social isolation, but people can feel lonely even when in a relationship or when surrounded by others. Loneliness affects people of all ages and from all backgrounds, affecting our health and wellbeing and damaging our ability to connect with others.

Chronic loneliness in the UK rose during the 2020-2021 Covid 19 winter lockdowns. In 2020, the prevalence of chronic loneliness was 6.0% in 2020, rising to 7.1% in 2022³².

Percentage of adults who feel lonely often/always or most of the time

	2019/20
Reading	20.39%
South East	20.83%
England	22.26%

Source: Active Lives Survey, Sport England

Percentage who felt strongly they belong to their immediate neighbourhood

	2024	2023	2022	2021
Reading	72%	70%	69%	76%

Source: Reading Borough Council residents survey

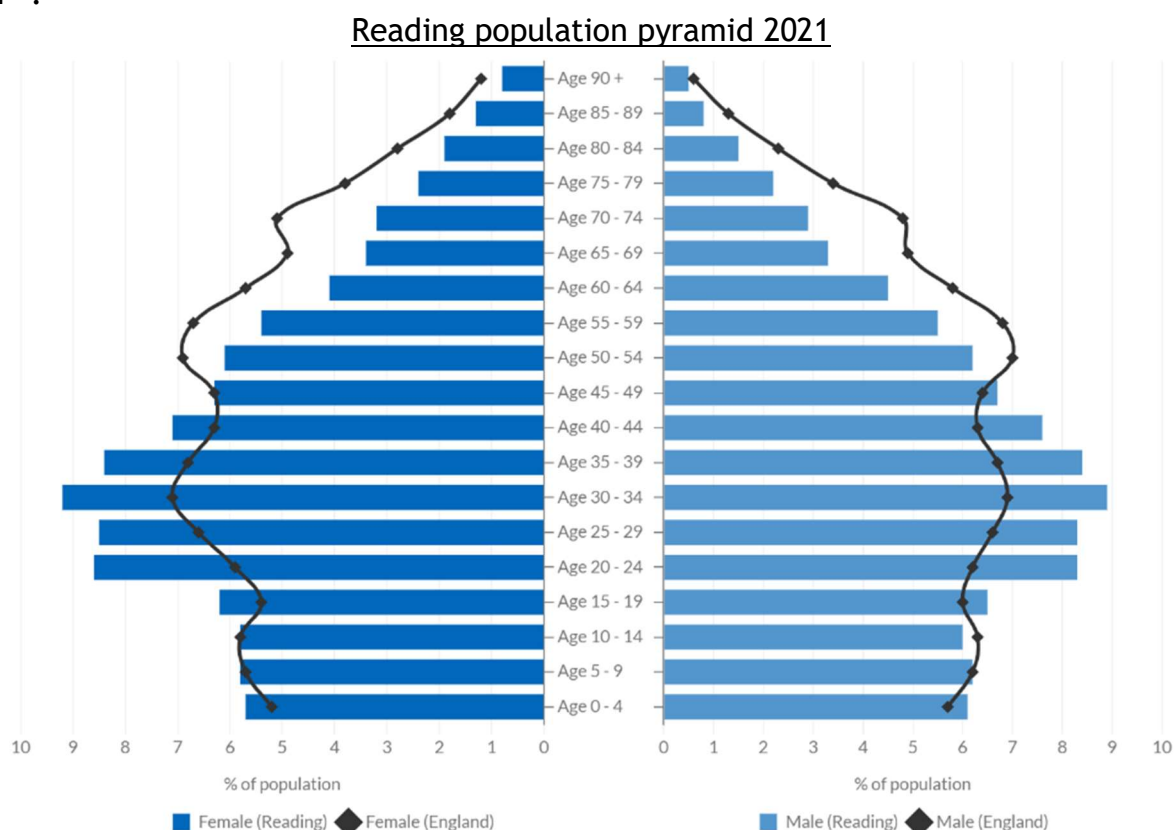
³² The State of Loneliness 2023, Campaign to End Loneliness

FACTORS AFFECTING SOCIAL EXCLUSION

9. AGE

READING AGE PROFILE

Currently 178,196 residents³³ are estimated to live within the Reading borough boundary, with 19% aged between 0-15; 68.8% of working age (16-64); 12.2% above working age. Reading has a generally younger population, however the town is seeing a ‘greying’ trend, with the proportion of older people aged 65+ having increased by 17.2% between 2011 and 2021³⁴.



Source: Office for National Statistics Census 2021

Age	2023		
	2023	2023	2011
0-4	10,464	5.9%	7.7%
5-9	10,700	6.0%	5.5%
10-19	21,958	12.3%	11.4%
20-39	60,067	33.7%	36.7%
40-59	45,313	25.4%	23.2%
60-79	23,690	13.3%	12.1%
80+	6,004	3.4%	3.5%
Total	178,196	100%	100%

Source: Office for National Statistics mid-yr estimates 2023; ONS Census 2021

³³ Office for National Statistics mid year estimates for 2023

³⁴ Office for National Statistics Census

CHILD POVERTY

Compared to the overall population, children are more likely to live in low-income households. Larger families with 3 or more children have consistently faced a higher rate of poverty. 23% of children were in relative low income (before housing costs) in 2023/24, up slightly from 22% the previous year.

Families with children also face additional challenges if childcare responsibilities limit their ability to undertake well-paid and high-quality work, which is often the case for lone-parent families and families with younger children (and for larger families); 44% of children in lone-parent families were in poverty in 2022/23, as were 36% of children in families where the youngest child was aged under 5³⁵.

Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019: Index of income deprivation affecting children

On the index of income deprivation affecting children, Reading ranking 133rd out of 317 local authorities. Only 4 LSOAs fall within the most deprived 10%, compared with 6 in 2015. One LSOA falls within the most deprived 5% (though a different area than in 2015).

Children in low-income families local measure

This indicator measures the number and percentage of children aged 0-15 years who are living in households with below 60% median income, before housing costs. 'Relative poverty' can be a more useful measure than 'absolute poverty' as it compares a household's income with the current incomes of other households within the UK.

On this measure, Reading is below the national level with almost 1 in 6 children, or 17%, in poverty, a slight increase since 2022/23.

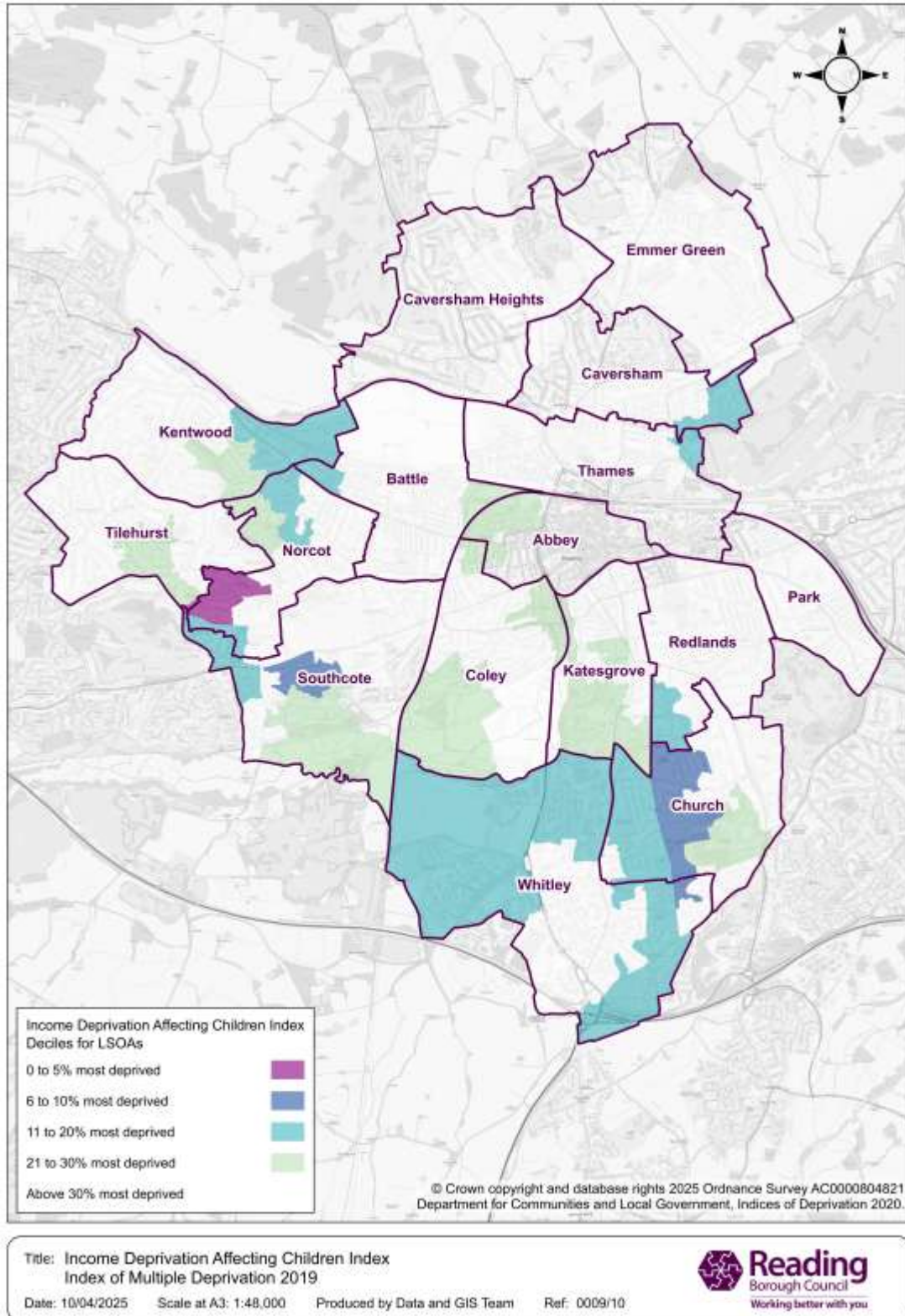
Child poverty

Year	No in Reading	% Reading	% UK
2023/24	5,760	17%	22%
2022/23	5,465	16%	21%
2021/22	4,722	14%	19%
2020/21	4,675	14%	18%
2019/20	4,935	15%	19%
2018/19	4,982	15%	18%
2017/18	4,854	14%	18%
2016/17	4,676	14%	17%
2015/16	3,839	12%	16%
2014/15	3,491	11%	16%

Source: Dept for Work and Pensions

³⁵ Households below average income 2023/24, Dept for Work and Pensions; relative poverty

Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019: Index of income deprivation affecting children



Source: Department for Communities and Local Government 2019

Reading Social Exclusion Analysis 2025

Child poverty by ward

Ward ³⁶	No	%
Abbey	256	16.5%
Battle	523	20.6%
Caversham	242	10.3%
Caversham Heights	84	4.2%
Church	679	24.9%
Coley	474	22.1%
Emmer Green	134	7.5%
Katesgrove	328	16.6%
Kentwood	295	15.6%
Norcot	602	22.8%
Park	394	18.1%
Redlands	271	15.5%
Southcote	504	23.2%
Thames	210	15.9%
Tilehurst	299	14.9%
Whitley	478	19.9%

Source: Dept for Work and Pensions 2023/24

This shows the highest numbers of children in poverty are in Church, Norcot, and Battle wards.

Lone parent families

Just over half (51.9%) of children in poverty live in lone parent families in Reading, a slightly lower proportion than both the national and regional figures, with the proportion increasing over recent years. Lone parents claiming key benefits tend to be in areas with higher levels of child poverty.

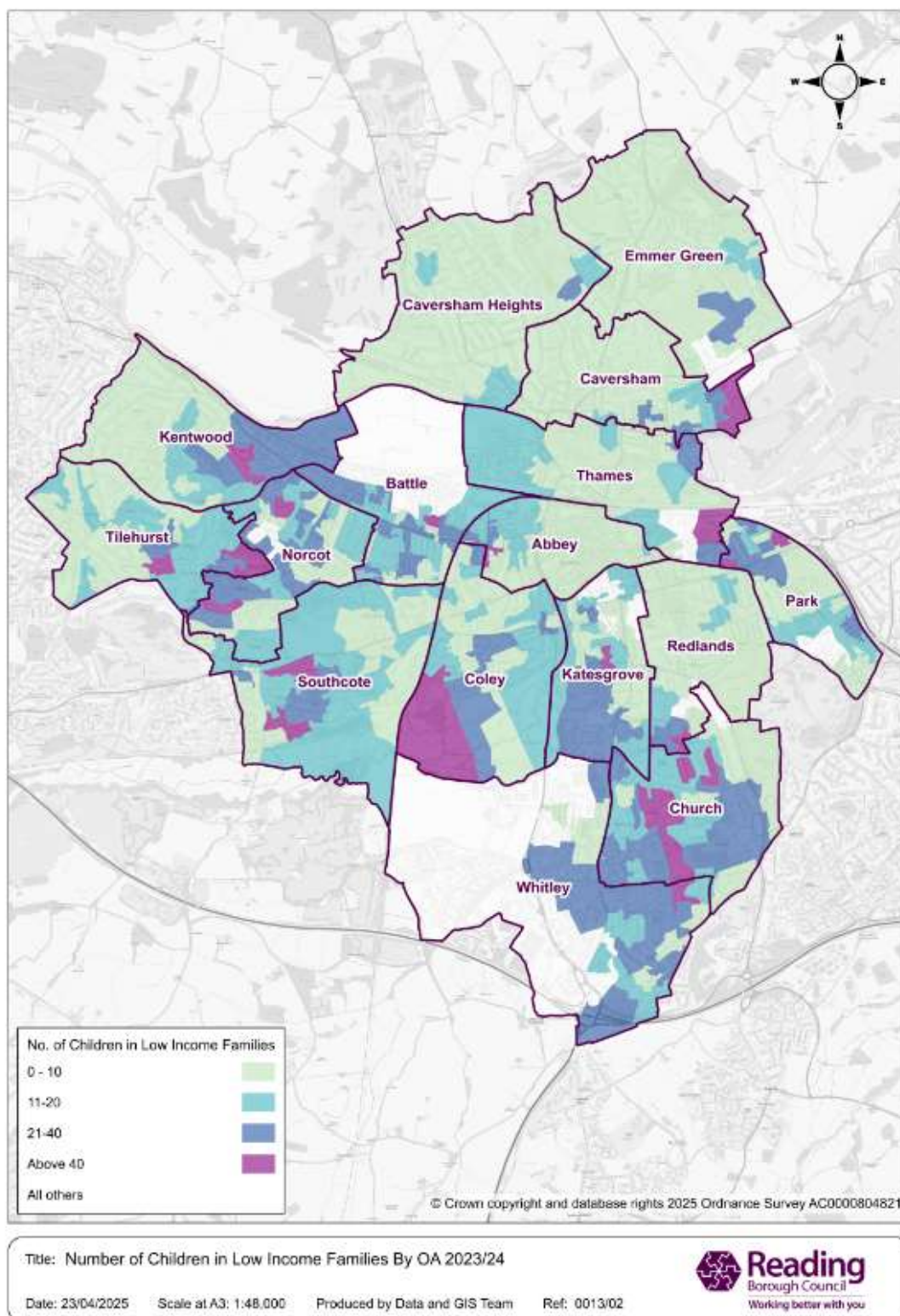
Children in poverty in lone parent families

	2023/24		2022/23		2021/22	
	Couple	Lone parent	Couple	Lone parent	Couple	Lone parent
Reading	48.1%	51.9%	48.3%	51.7%	53.6%	46.4%
South East	46.3%	53.7%	45.8%	54.2%	52.0%	48.0%
England	46.7%	53.3%	47.1%	52.9%	50.9%	49.1%

Source: Dept for Work and Pensions

³⁶ Reading ward boundaries changed in April 2022, therefore comparisons over time can't be made

Child poverty by Census Output Area³⁷



Source: Dept for Work and Pensions 2023/24

³⁷ Census Output Areas are the smallest unit for which Census data is published, containing approx. 125 households

End Child Poverty local measure

The End Child Poverty coalition has published a set of local child poverty figures which use the DWP ‘children in low income families’ local indicators (the number and percentage of children aged 0-15 years who are living in households with below 60% median income before housing costs) combined with information about housing costs at the local level to estimate poverty rates after housing costs (AHC). This enables a more accurate comparison of what households across the UK have available to spend on food, utilities, clothing and leisure, than looking at income alone, given the disparity of rents in different parts of the UK.

On this measure, almost 30% of children are in poverty in Reading after housing costs, similar to the national average and higher than the previous year, contrary to the national trend.

Percentage of children in poverty

	<i>Reading No</i>	<i>Reading %</i>	<i>SE %</i>	<i>UK %</i>
2022/23	11266	29.7%	25%	30%
2021/22	10568	28.1%	25%	31%
2020/21	8942	27.1%	24%	31%
2019/20	9098	26.9%	24%	30%
2018/19	9463	27.9%	25%	30%
2017/18	9567	28.4%	25%	30%
2016/17	9783	29.3%	26%	30%

Source: Centre for Social Research, Loughborough University

Pupil premium

The pupil premium is additional funding given to schools so that they can support their disadvantaged pupils, including children adopted from care, looked after children and service children, in order to close the attainment gap between these pupils and their peers. It is allocated to schools to work with pupils who have been registered for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

22.8% pupils are eligible for pupil premium in Reading primary schools (3,049 pupils) and 23.7% in secondary schools (2,007 pupils), higher than the South East, but lower than the national figure. The percentage for primary schools has decreased slightly since the previous year, against the national trend.

Pupil premium rates

	<i>2024/25³⁸</i>		<i>2023/24</i>	
	<i>primary</i>	<i>secondary</i>	<i>primary</i>	<i>secondary</i>
Reading	22.8%	23.7%	23.6%	23.3%
South East	20%	21.2%	19.7%	20.8%
England	24.8%	27.6%	24.7%	27.3%

Source: Department for Education

³⁸ to Dec 2024

Free school meals

Those in receipt of free school meals tend to do less well in terms of educational attainment. Reading has a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals to the South East, but lower than the national figure. The proportion has increased to 14.9% from 14.4% in 2022/23, following the national trend. The proportion of infant aged pupils eligible is higher than for all schools, but is lower in Reading than both the regional and national figures, and has decreased since the previous year.

Percentage of pupils eligible for and claiming free school meals

	2023/24		2022/23	
	All pupils	Infants	All pupils	Infants
Reading	14.9%	18.8%	14.4%	19.8%
South East	14.9%	19.1%	14.2%	19.3%
England	19.3%	19.2%	18.6%	19.4%

Source: Dept for Education

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Attainment and free school meals

	Foundation Stage % achieving at least the expected standard in all Early Learning Goals		Key Stage 2 % achieving expected level in Reading, Writing and Maths		GCSEs Average Attainment 8 score	
	All	Eligible for FSM	All	Eligible for FSM	All	Eligible for FSM
2023/24						
Reading	65.7	54.2	60	41	48.8	30.3
South East	68.7	48.5	61	40	47.2	32.1
England	66.2	49.9	61	46	46.1	34.7
2022/23						
Reading	63.3	51.4	57	37	50.1	31.0
South East	68.7	48.5	60	38	47.4	32.1
England	66.2	49.9	60	44	46.4	34.9
2021/22						
Reading	62.0	52.2	55	33	52.0	33.0
South East	66.2	46.0	59	37	50.1	34.2
England	63.4	47.1	59	42	48.9	37.0

Source: Department for Education

The link between poverty and poor educational outcomes is well documented. Children who grow up in poverty face serious disadvantage and consequently struggle to thrive and achieve, often resulting in their own children also living in poverty and facing similar barriers, creating a cycle of intergenerational poverty. Low educational achievement, amongst other factors, can increase the risk that families will not have the resources for a decent standard of living, negatively impacting on their own children's life chances. In terms of the number achieving at least 5 A*-C GCSE grades, there is a 28% gap between children receiving free school meals and their wealthier peers³⁹.

³⁹ www.endchildpoverty.org.uk

Reading Social Exclusion Analysis 2025

Analysis of GCSE results across England in 2018 found that it could take over 70 years for poorer pupils to catch up with their peers in terms of exam performance. The educational disruption as a result of Covid has further exacerbated already existing inequalities. In 2023/24, 26% of the poorest pupils got good passes in English and maths GCSEs, compared with 46% of their peers.⁴⁰

In 2023/24, GCSE results (average attainment 8 score) in Reading were above the national and regional averages for all pupils, but below both for those receiving free school meals.

GCSE attainment

	Average Attainment 8 scores	Progress 8 scores	% achieving a strong grade 9-5 pass in Eng & maths	% achieving a strong grade 9-4 pass in Eng & maths	% achieving English Baccalaureate ⁴¹	% achieving English Baccalaureate
2023/24						
Reading	48.8	-0.02	50.3	66.7	25.9	31.9
South East	47.2	-0.02	48.6	67.4	20.2	27.2
England	46.1	-0.03	46.2	65.4	18.1	25.4
2022/23						
Reading	50.1	0.03	50	66	25.9	31.1
South East	47.4	-0.02	47.8	67.5	18.7	25.7
England	46.4	-0.03	45.5	65.4	17.1	24.3
2021/22						
Reading	52	-0.09	51.4	67.2	28.6	33.5
South East	50.1	-0.03	52.1	70.9	22.4	28.6
England	48.9	-0.03	50	69	20.4	26.9

Source: Department for Education

YOUTH OFFENDING

Nationally there has been an historic trend of a reduction of first time entrants (FTEs) to the youth justice system over the last 12 years. Performance data for the most recently available 12 month period demonstrates a 48% increase in the rate of children entering the Youth Justice System for the first time in Reading, when compared with the equivalent period in the previous year. With a rate of 230 children per 100,000 of the 10-17 population, the rate continues to be significantly higher than all comparator groups.

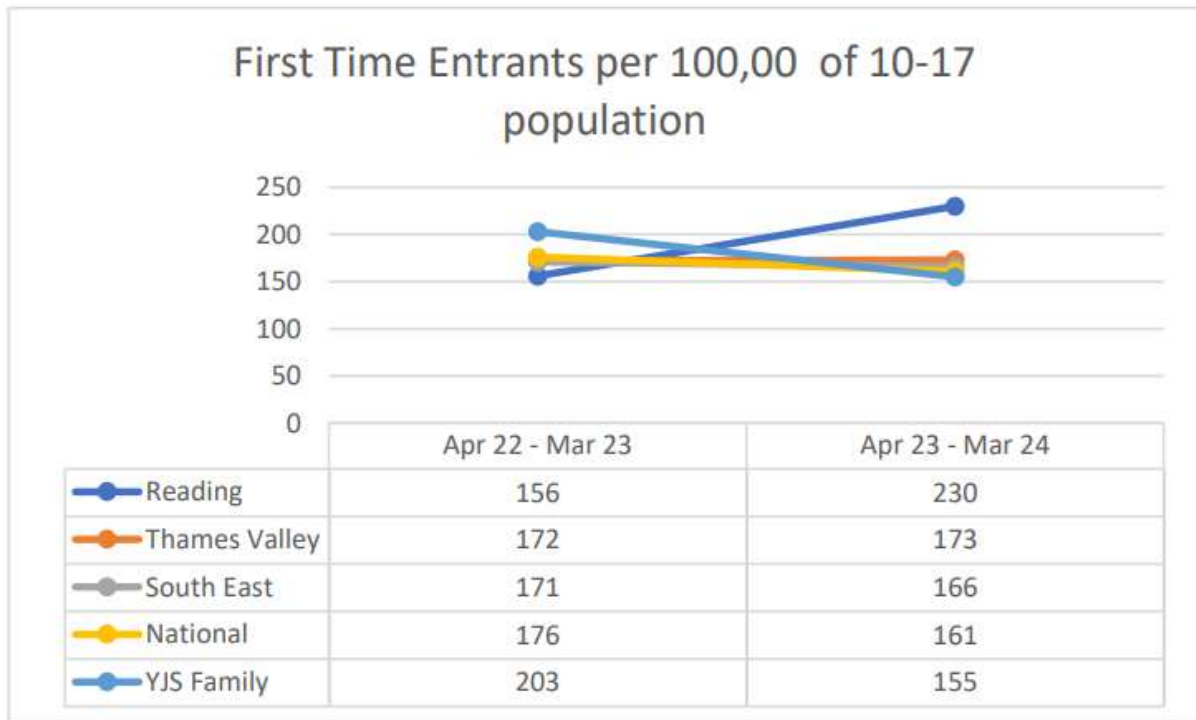
The rate of children reoffending has increased to 35.6% in the period most recently available for tracking this data, from 29% in the previous 12 month period. This represents a 6% increase, and whilst it coincides with notable increases in reoffending rates for most other comparator groups, it represents a sharper increase and places Reading's reoffending rate higher than all comparator groups.

⁴⁰ Dept for Education

⁴¹ including a strong grade 9-5 pass in Eng & maths

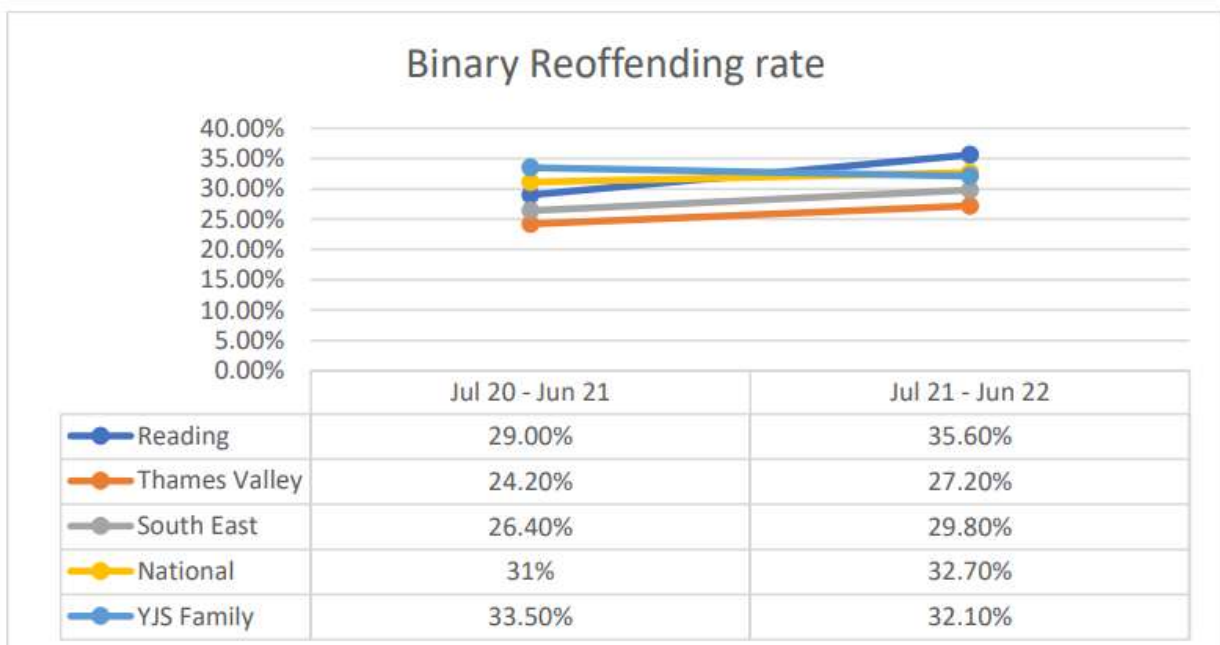
Reading Social Exclusion Analysis 2025

First time entrants



Source: Reading Youth Justice Plan 2024/25

Re-offending rate



Source: Reading Youth Justice Plan 2024/25

OLDER PEOPLE

Pensioners were once much more likely to be in poverty than either children or working-age adults. After the pensioner poverty rate fell dramatically in the mid to late 1990s, driven by increasing income from private pensions and increases in benefits, it has edged up ever since and now stands at 16% in 2023/24, down 2% from the previous year.⁴²

Census overview

Residents in older age bands

	Number	%
Total	174,224	100.0
Aged 65 to 69 years	5,844	3.4
Aged 70 to 74 years	5,302	3.0
Aged 75 to 79 years	4,006	2.3
Aged 80 to 84 years	2,931	1.7
Aged 85 years and over	2,895	1.7
All residents 65+	20,978	12.1

Source: Office for National Statistics, Census 2021

Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019: Index of income deprivation affecting older people

Reading ranks 66th on this indicator out of 317 local authorities, with 14 LSOAs in the 10% most deprived (14 also in 2015), and 4 in the 5% most deprived (6 in 2015) (see map).

Winter mortality index

The winter mortality index is the ratio of the difference between average mortality during winter months (December to March) compared to the average in the non-winter months (the preceding August to November and following April to July).

The index was significantly lower in 2021/22 than any other winter since the series began in 1991/92 (except in 2019/20), due to the larger number of deaths in the non-winter months.

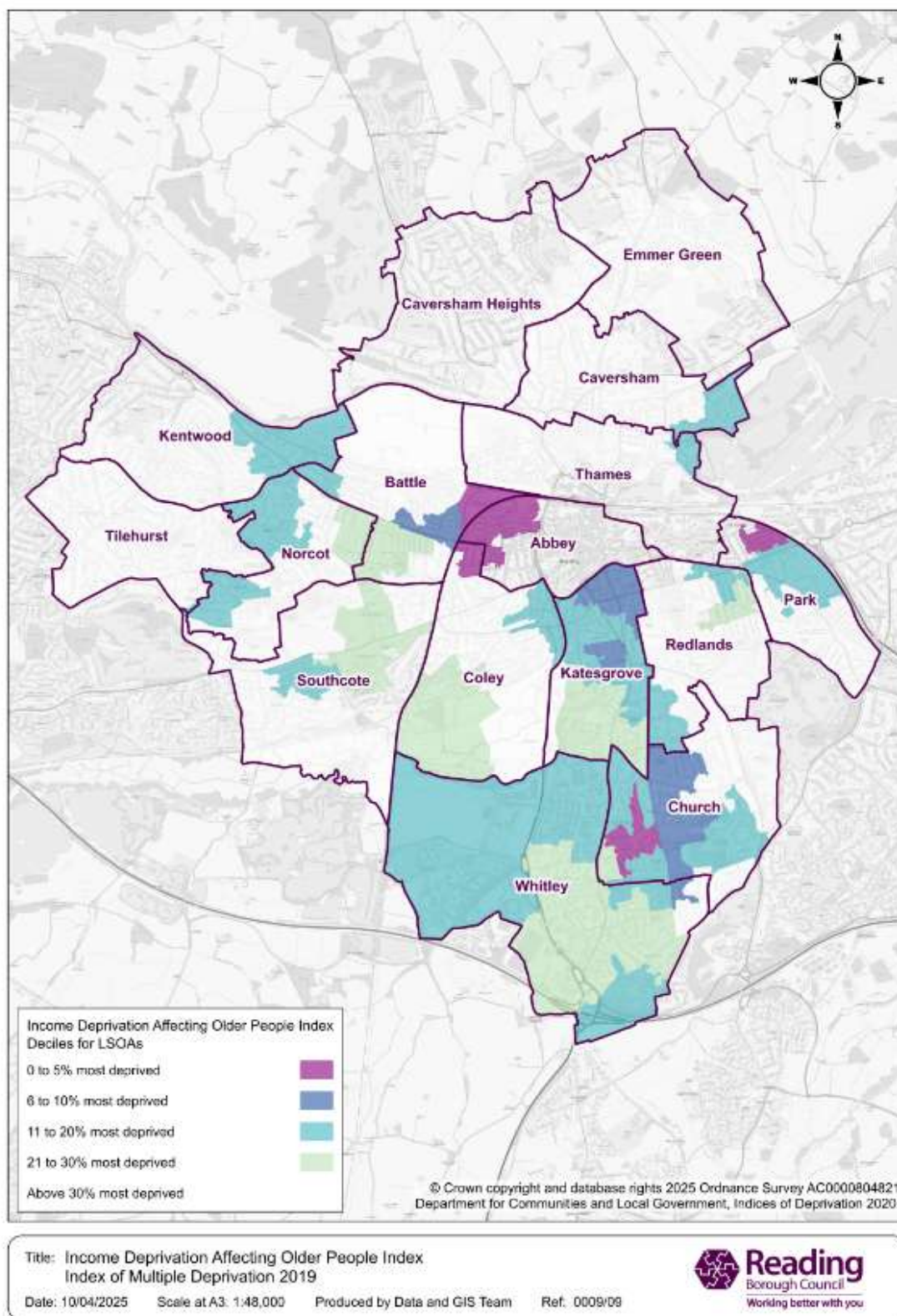
	21/22 ⁴³	20/21	19/20	18/19	17/18
Reading	8.5%	35.7%	6.6%	17%	28.5%
SE	8.6%	47.6%	5.7%	14.3%	30.2%
England	8.1%	36.2%	5.3%	15.1%	30.1%

Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, based on Office for National Statistics data

⁴² Households Below Average Income, Dept for Work and Pensions; relative poverty

⁴³ Aug - July each

Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019: Index of income deprivation affecting older people



Source: Department for Communities and Local Government 2019

Reading Social Exclusion Analysis 2025

Benefits claimants

The proportion of people aged 65 and over in Reading claiming Pension Credit is higher than the national average, and similar to the previous period. However, the proportion of 65+ claiming other benefits is lower than the national average.

Benefit claimants over 65

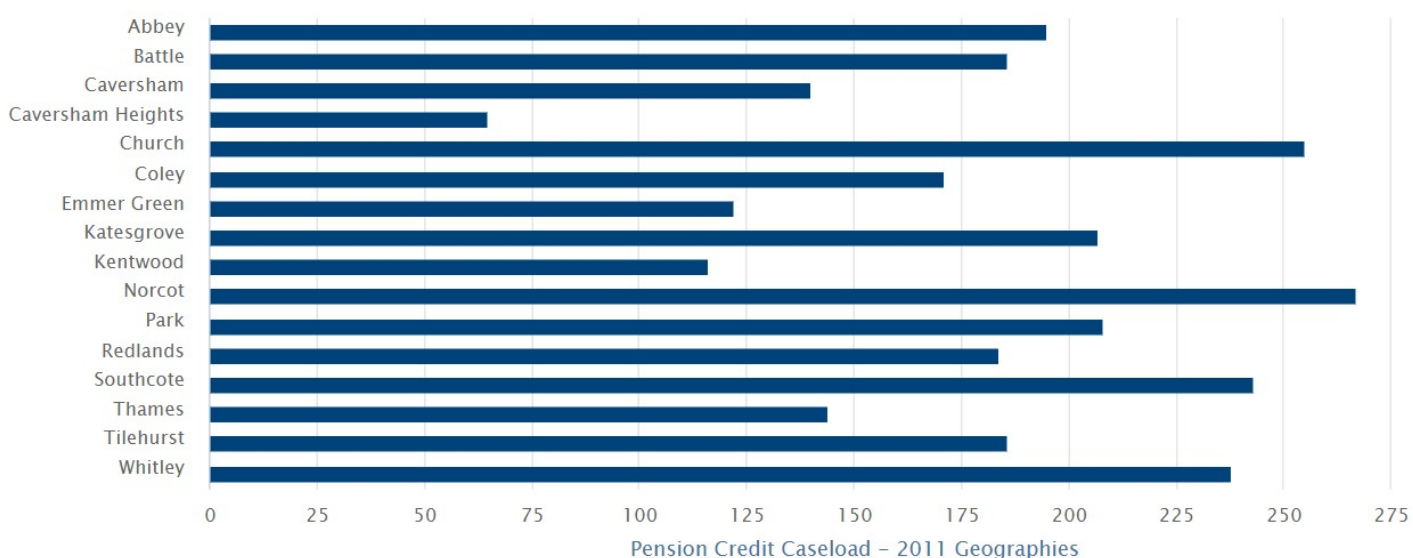
	Reading			England	
	Aug 2024	Aug 2023	Aug 2022	Aug 2024	
Benefit	No claimants	Rate ⁴⁴	Rate ⁴⁵	Rate ⁴⁶	Rate
Pension Credit	2922	13.4%	13.2%	13.3%	10.7%
Attendance Allowance	2589	11.9%	11%	11.9%	14%
Disability Living Allowance (65+)	540	2.5%	2.7%	2.9%	3.2%
Incapacity Benefit / Severe Disablement (65+)	12	0.6%	0.10%	0.11%	0.8%

Source: Stat-Xplore; Office for National Statistics 2023 & 2022 mid-year estimates

Pension credit

The chart below shows the distribution of Reading's 2,922 Pension Credit claimants in Aug 2024 by ward.

Pension credit claimants by ward



Source: Stat-xplore, Dept for Work & Pensions, Aug 2024

⁴⁴ Rate of 65+ population, ONS 2023 mid-year estimates

⁴⁵ Rate of 65+ population, ONS 2023 mid-year estimates

⁴⁶ Rate of 65+ population, ONS 2022 mid-year estimates

Reading Social Exclusion Analysis 2025

JSA claimants

The rate for JSA claimants in Reading over 50 is slightly higher than the national average.

JSA rate - claimants over 50

	<i>Jan 25</i>	<i>Jan 24</i>	<i>Jan 23</i>
Reading	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%
England	0.3%	0.3%	0.4%

Source: NOMIS

10. ETHNICITY

Children from minority ethnic communities face a particularly high risk of growing up in poverty. Risks of poverty are highest for those from Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Black African communities, but are also above average for those from Caribbean, Indian and Chinese communities.

Census overview

Reading's population has increased in ethnic diversity. At the last Census in 2021, **46.5% of the population belonged to Minority Ethnic communities** (including 'other White'), up from 35% in 2011, and the joint second highest proportion in the South East (with Oxford), after Slough. All ethnic groups have increased since 2011 apart from British, Irish and Black Caribbean.

Ethnicity

	Reading 2021	Reading 2011	England 2021
White British	53.5%	65.3%	73.5%
Other White	13.7%	9.5%	7.5%
Mixed	5.1%	4%	3%
Indian	6.2%	4.2%	3.3%
Pakistani	4.8%	4.5%	2.8%
Other Asian	6.7%	4.9%	3.5%
Black Caribbean	1.9%	2.1%	1.1%
Black African	4.4%	3.9%	2.6%
Black other	4.5%	4.5%	2.9%
Chinese	1.5%	1%	0.8%
Other ethnic group	2.8%	1%	2.2%

Source: 2021 Census, Office for National Statistics

Migration and country of birth

International migration is a key driver of population growth in Reading, and the number of people coming to live in Reading is considerably higher than for neighbouring boroughs. Consequently, Reading has a higher proportion of residents born outside of the UK than either the South East or the UK, with 34% born outside of the UK in 2021⁴⁷.

Those coming to Reading from outside the UK are likely to be mostly working-age people, with the largest numbers born in Poland, India, Pakistan, and Romania, and they are more likely to be resident in areas near the town centre.

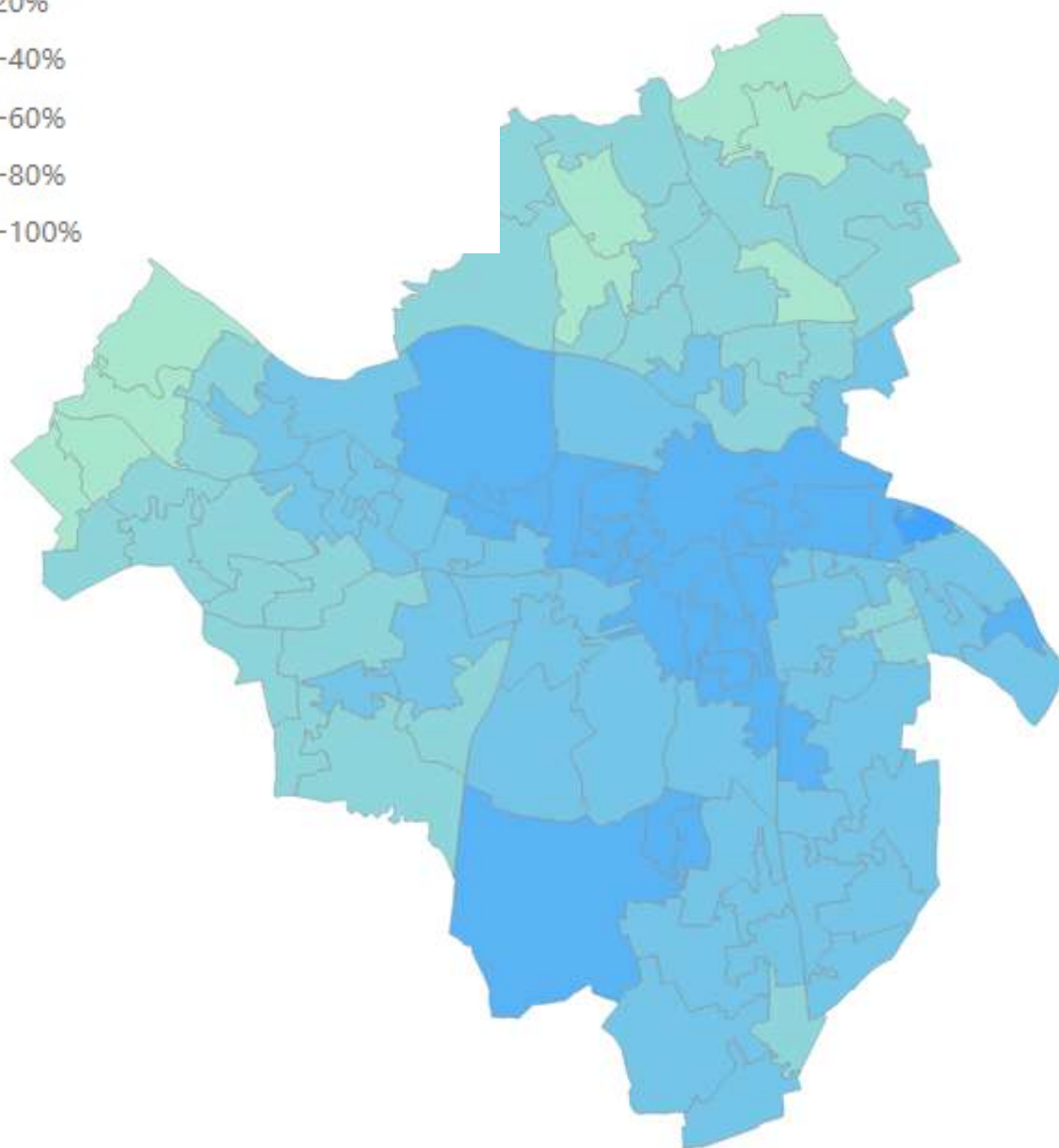
⁴⁷ Census 2021, Office for National Statistics

Reading Social Exclusion Analysis 2025

% Residents from Minority Ethnic Communities⁴⁸ by LSOA

% from Ethnic Minority Communities

- 0-20%
- 21-40%
- 41-60%
- 61-80%
- 81-100%



Source: 2021 Census, Office for National Statistics

⁴⁸ Non-White British

Reading Social Exclusion Analysis 2025

Country of birth

<i>Top 10 countries in Reading</i>	<i>Reading Number</i>	<i>Reading %</i>	<i>England and Wales %</i>
India	7,762	4.5	1.6
Poland	4,948	2.8	1.3
Pakistan	3,546	2.0	1.1
Romania	3,231	1.9	0.9
Italy	1,466	0.8	0.5
Ghana	1,439	0.8	0.2
Hong Kong	1,330	0.8	0.2
Ireland	1,313	0.8	0.6
China	1,269	0.7	0.3
Portugal	1,105	0.6	0.3

Source: 2021 Census, Office for National Statistics

Ethnicity in schools

67% of primary school children and 69% of secondary school children are from Minority Ethnic (ME) communities, higher than the national average and an increase on the previous year.

Percentage of BME pupils in schools

	<i>Reading</i>				<i>England</i>
	<i>2024/25</i>	<i>2023/24</i>	<i>2022/23</i>	<i>2021/22</i>	<i>2024/25</i>
% ME primary	67%	66%	64%	62%	39%
% ME secondary	69%	68%	65%	62%	39%

Source: Dept for Education

Ethnicity in schools

	<i>% primary</i>	<i>% secondary</i>
White British	32.7%	30.7%
ME	67.3%	69.3%
White	43.7%	41.2%
Mixed/multiple group	12.3%	10.5%
Asian	29.1%	33.4%
Black	9.6%	9.7%
Other ethnic origin	2.7%	2.2%
Unclassified	2.7%	2.9%

Source: Dept for Education, 2024/25

Reading Social Exclusion Analysis 2025

Ethnicity and attainment

		<i>White</i>	<i>Mixed/ multiple group</i>	<i>Asian</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>Any other ethnic group</i>	<i>All pupils</i>
2023/24							
Key Stage 2 - % achieving expected standard in reading, writing & maths	Reading	56%	54%	72%	55%	59%	60%
	England	60%	64%	69%	62%	60%	61%
GCSE - Average Attainment 8 score	Reading	43.9	43.5	60.8	42.2	55.1	48.8
	England	44.7	46.9	53.5	46.8	49	46.1
2022/23							
Key Stage 2 - % achieving expected standard in reading, writing & maths	Reading	55%	50%	64%	54%	71%	57%
	England	59%	62%	67%	60%	57%	60%
GCSE - Average Attainment 8 score	Reading	45.7	43.5	62.1	41.8	43.3	50.1
	England	45.2	46.9	53.5	46.8	48.8	46.4
2021/22							
Key Stage 2 - % achieving expected standard in reading, writing & maths	Reading	53%	51%	69%	46%	55%	55%
	England	58%	61%	67%	60%	57%	59%
GCSE - Average Attainment 8 score	Reading	48.5	44.1	61.7	47.1	54.5	50.2
	England	47.9	49.5	55	48.9	51	48.9

Source: Department for Education

The table above highlights that, in Reading, attainment at both key stage 2 and GCSE level by young people from Asian communities is higher than that of their peers, reflecting the national picture.

Free school meals

A higher proportion of mixed/multiple ethnic group children are eligible for free school meals than White British children, but a lower proportion of Asian and Chinese children. The proportion eligible has increased since 2019/20 for all groups, except for Chinese children.

Research shows that nationally White children who are eligible for free school meals are consistently the lowest performing group in the country, and the difference between their educational performances and that of their less-deprived White peers is larger than for any other ethnic group. The gap exists at age five and widens as children get older⁴⁹.

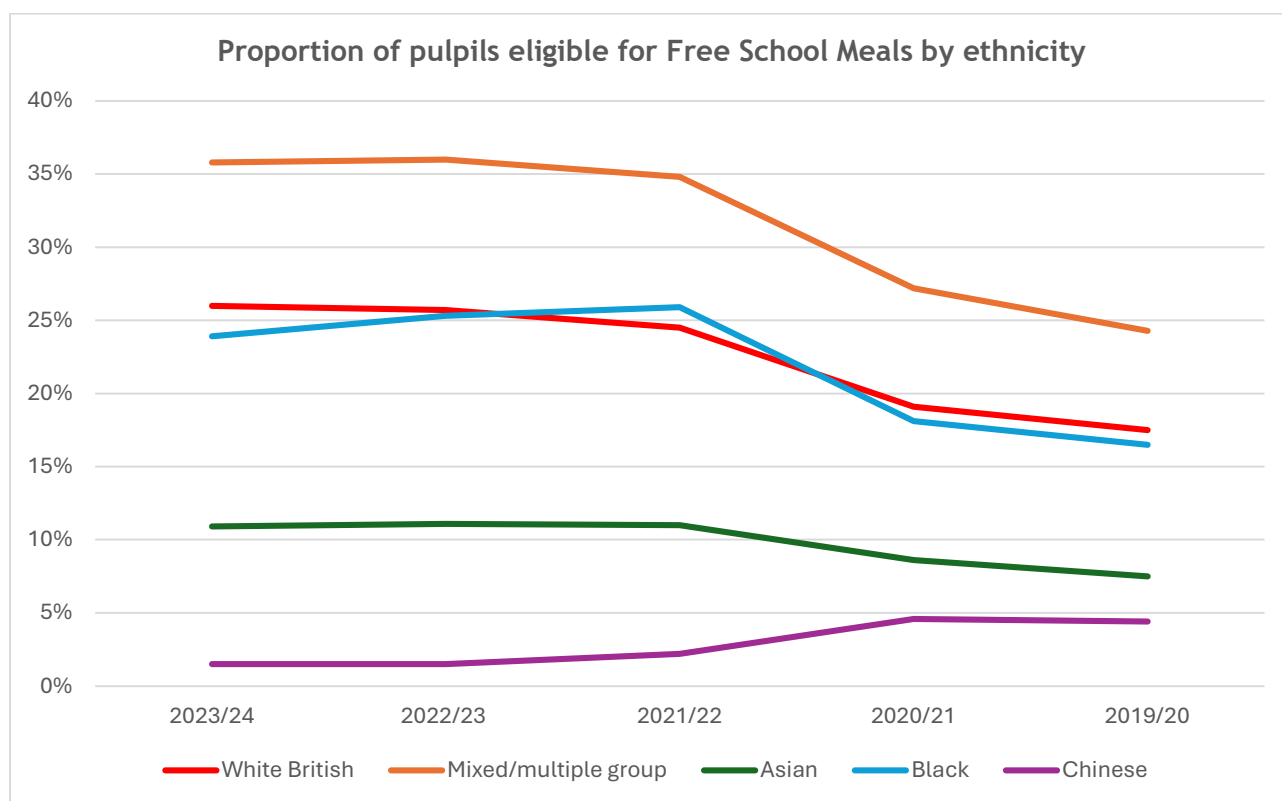
⁴⁹ the Government's Education Committee, 'Underachievement in Education by White Working Class Children'

Reading Social Exclusion Analysis 2025

Eligibility for free school meals by ethnic group

	Reading 2023/24	Reading 2022/23	Reading 2021/22	Reading 2020/21	Reading 2019/20	England 2023/24
White British	26.0%	25.7%	24.5%	19.1%	17.5%	23.8%
Mixed/multiple group	35.8%	36%	34.8%	27.2%	24.3%	31.3%
Asian	10.9%	11.1%	11.0%	8.6%	7.5%	19.6%
Black	23.9%	25.3%	25.9%	18.1%	16.5%	33.5%
Chinese	1.5%	1.5%	2.2%	4.6%	4.4%	7.5%

Source: Department for Education



Source: Department for Education

Job Seekers Allowance claimant count⁵⁰

In Dec 2024, 51% JSA claimants were White and 22% claimants were from BME groups. This compares with 14.9% BME claimants in the South East and 9.8% in England.

JSA claimants by ethnic group

<i>Ethnicity</i>	<i>Dec 2024</i>		<i>Dec 2023</i>	
	<i>No claimants</i>	<i>% claimants</i>	<i>No claimants</i>	<i>% claimants</i>
White	150	50.8%	180	64.3%
Total minority ethnic communities	65	22.0%	40	14.3%
Mixed/multiple group	5	1.7%	5	1.8%
Asian or Asian British	35	11.9%	20	7.1%
Black or Black British	20	6.8%	15	5.4%
Chinese or Other	5	1.7%	0	0.0%
Prefer not to say	65	22.0%	40	14.3%
Unknown	15	5.1%	20	7.1%

Source: NOMIS

⁵⁰ JSA is no longer a full count of those claiming unemployment related benefits, however a breakdown of the Claimant Count (which would give a fuller picture) by ethnicity isn't available.

11. DISABILITY

There are 16 million disabled people in the UK, nearly 1 in 4 people (24%) - and almost 4 in 10 families contained at least one person who was disabled. Disabled people face a higher risk of poverty and have done so for at least the last 20 years. This is driven partly by the additional costs associated with disability and ill-health, and partly by the barriers to work that disabled people face.

Currently, 30% of disabled people are in poverty nationally (excluding disability benefits), 10% higher than the rate for people who were not disabled. This rate that has remained broadly constant since 2013/14. However, the proportion of disabled working-age adults in work increased from 42% in 2010/11 to 53% in 2022/23, while poverty rates remained steady over that period⁵¹.

Census overview

Both the rates of limited activity and long term illness, and provision of unpaid care in Reading are below the average for England. The disability rate has increased slightly since 2011, while the proportion providing unpaid care has decreased.

Disability

	<i>Reading 2021 %</i>	<i>Reading 2011 %</i>	<i>England 2021 %</i>
Disabled under the Equality Act:	13.8	13	17.3
Day-to-day activities limited a lot	5.1	5.7	7.3
Day-to-day activities limited a little	8.7	7.3	10.0
Not disabled under the Equality Act:	86.2	87.1	82.7
Has long term physical or mental health condition but day-to-day activities are not limited	6.5	n/a	6.8
No long term physical or mental health conditions	79.7	n/a	75.9

Source: 2021 Census, Office for National Statistics

Unpaid care

	<i>Reading 2021 %</i>	<i>Reading 2011 %</i>	<i>England 2021 %</i>
Provides no unpaid care	93.3	92.1	91.2
Provides 19 hours or less unpaid care a week	3.3	5.2	4.3
Provides 20 to 49 hours unpaid care a week	1.5	1.1	1.8
Provides 50 or more hours unpaid care a week	1.9	1.7	2.6

Source: 2021 Census, Office for National Statistics

⁵¹ Households Below Average Income, DWP, 2023/24; relative poverty

Reading Social Exclusion Analysis 2025

Disability by ward

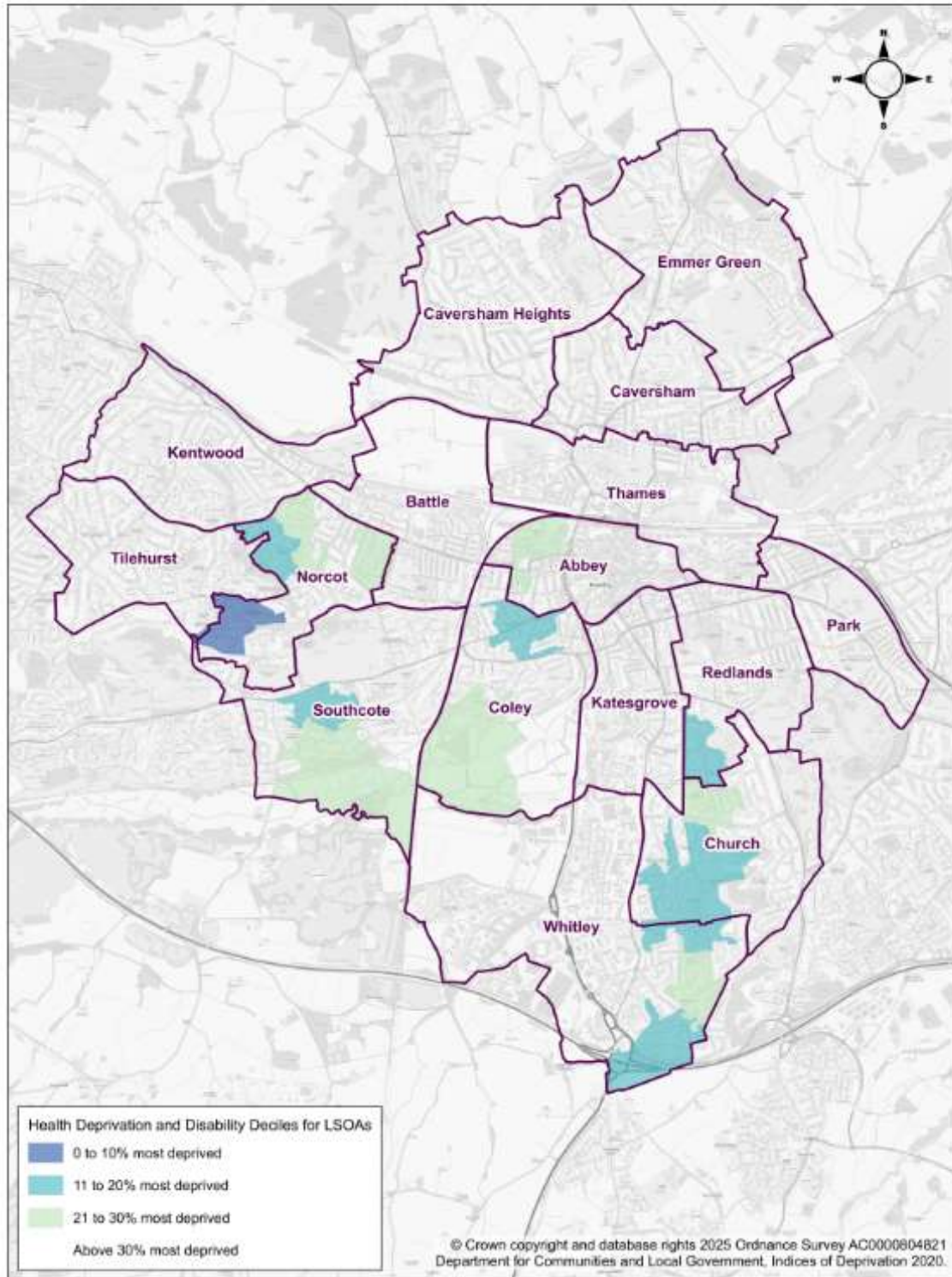
Ward	Day to day activities limited...		
	A lot	A little	Not at all
Reading	5.1	8.7	86.2
Abbey	3.4	7.3	89.3
Battle	4.2	7.7	88.2
Caversham	4.7	9.3	86.0
Caversham Heights	3.9	8.3	87.8
Church	3.4	10.1	83.0
Coley	4.2	8.3	85.9
Emmer Green	4.7	8.6	86.4
Katesgrove	3.9	7.6	88.6
Kentwood	6.9	9.0	85.0
Norcot	5.8	9.7	83.8
Park	5.0	8.1	87.3
Redlands	3.8	9.3	86.9
Southcote	5.9	9.6	83.6
Thames	6.5	8.3	87.4
Tilehurst	4.6	9.2	84.9
Whitley	3.8	8.5	85.0

Source: 2021 Census, Office for National Statistics

Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019: Health deprivation and disability domain

Reading ranks 137th most deprived out of 317 LAs on this domain, with 1 LSOA in most deprived 10%, compared with none in 2015. This domain measures rates of poor health, early mortality and disability and covers the entire age range, though areas high on this index tend to be those with a higher proportion of older residents.

Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019: Health deprivation and disability domain



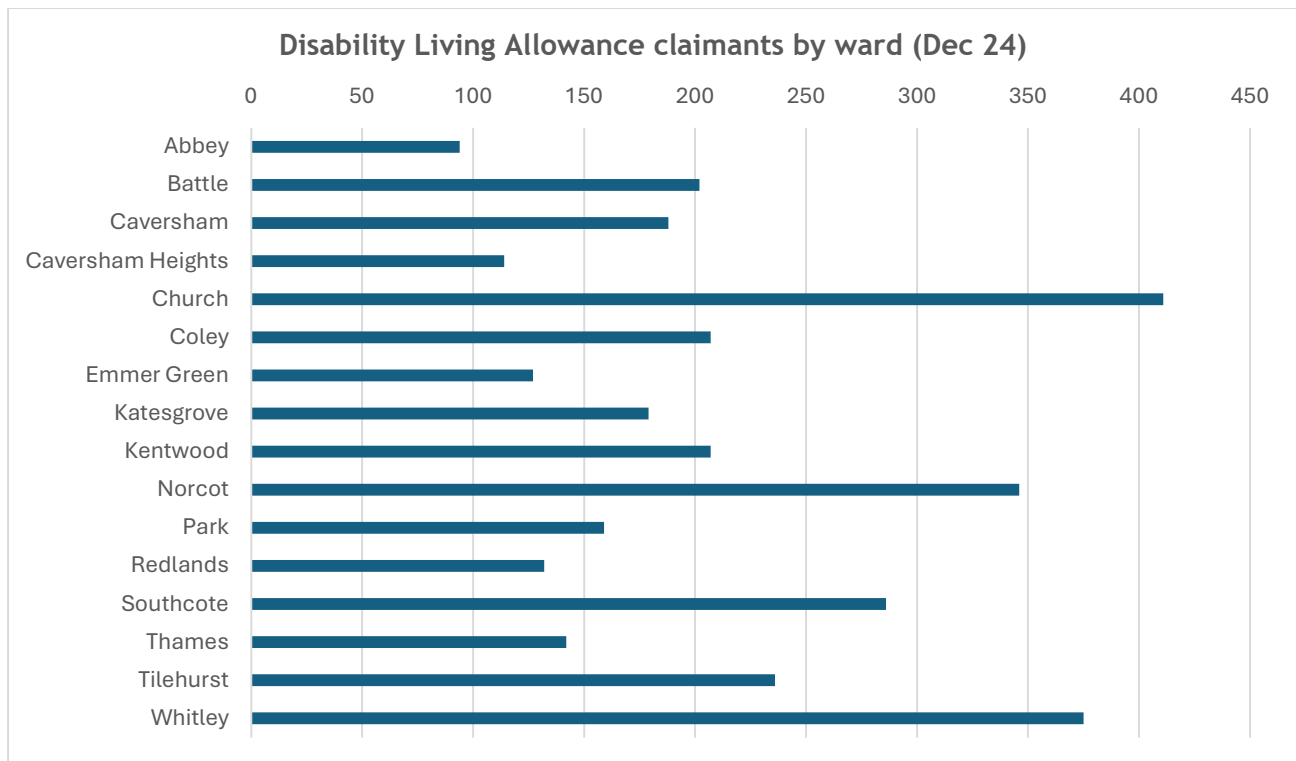
Title: Health Deprivation and Disability Domain
Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019
Date: 19/03/2025 Scale at A3: 1:48,000 Produced by Data and GIS Team Ref: 0009/03

Source: Department for Communities and Local Government 2019

Benefits claimants

In Dec 2024, 3,405 people in Reading were claiming Disability Living Allowance, 1.9% of the population⁵² (slightly lower than the England average at 2.1%), up slightly from 1.8% the previous year. Their distribution is shown in the following chart.

43 people were claiming Incapacity Benefit or Severe Disablement Allowance in Dec 2024, 0.02% of the population.



Source: Stat-xplore/ Dept for Work & Pensions

⁵² Based on ONS population projections mid 2023