










Fenland Profile

Patterns of economic activity and nature of economy	Overall employment rate (aged 16-64)	 Average (64.3%) and increasing green
	Average employee earnings (workplace)	 Low (£416) but increasing amber
	Jobs density	 Low (0.59) and falling red
Entrepreneurial culture	Level of self employment	 Average (15%) and improving green
	New business registrations per 10,000 adults	 Low (38) but improving red
Skills levels and aspirations	16-19 year olds who are not in education, employment or training	 High (6.7%) but stable red
	Population aged 19-59/64 qualified to at least level 2 or higher	 Low (55.1%) and falling red
Patterns of unemployment and deprivation	People aged 16-64 on out of work benefits	 Average (12.7%) but decreasing green
Housing affordability	Ratio of median house price to median earnings	 Low (5.9) and improving green

Key Issues

- Basic and intermediate skills levels are very poor and very few residents are qualified to degree level or above
- Low business density, high dependence on lower value manufacturing and processing industries, and low average employee earnings
- Low ratio of total jobs to resident working age population (jobs density)
- High proportions of incapacity benefit claimants and Jobseeker's Allowance claimants
- Low levels of resident satisfaction and one of the higher crime levels in Cambridgeshire

ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW	Cambridge City			East Cambridgeshire			Fenland			Huntingdonshire			South Cambridgeshire		
	Performance against Cambridgeshire average	Performance against national average	Direction of travel	Performance against Cambridgeshire average	Performance against national average	Direction of travel	Performance against Cambridgeshire average	Performance against national average	Direction of travel	Performance against Cambridgeshire average	Performance against national average	Direction of travel	Performance against Cambridgeshire average	Performance against national average	Direction of travel
PEOPLE															
Overall employment rate (aged 16-74)	Worse	Worse	↑	Better	Better	→	Worse	Worse	↑	Better	Better	↓	Better	Better	↑
People aged 16-64 on out of work benefits	Better	Better	↓	Better	Better	→	Worse	Worse	↑	Worse	Worse	↓	Better	Better	→
Proportion of population aged 19-59/64 qualified to at least level 2 or higher	Better	Better	↑	Better	Better	↑	Worse	Worse	↓	Worse	Worse	↓	Better	Better	↑
Proportion of population aged 19-59/64 qualified to at least level 4 or higher	Better	Better	↑	Better	Better	↓	Worse	Worse	↑	Worse	Worse	↑	Better	Better	↓
5+ A*-C grades at GCSE inc English and Maths	Worse	Worse	↓	Worse	Worse	↓	Worse	Worse	↑	Worse	Worse	↓	Better	Better	↑
BUSINESS															
New business registration rate (2011)	Better	Worse	↑	Better	Worse	↑	Worse	Worse	↑	Better	Worse	↑	Better	Better	↑
Percentage of small businesses in an area showing employment growth (discontinued) (2008)	Better	Better	→	Better	Better	→	Worse	Worse	→	Worse	Worse	→	Worse	Worse	→
Labour productivity (2010)	Worse	Worse	↓	Worse	Worse	↑	Worse	Worse	↑	Worse	Better	↑	Better	Better	↑
Jobs density (2011)	Better	Better	↑	Worse	Worse	↑	Worse	Worse	↓	Worse	Worse	↓	Better	Better	↓
Median earnings of employees in the area (2012)	Better	Better	↑	Worse	Worse	↓	Worse	Worse	↑	Worse	Worse	↓	Better	Better	↑
PLACE															
CO2 emissions per head (2009)	Better	Better	↑	Worse	Worse	↑	Worse	Worse	↑	Worse	Worse	↑	Worse	Worse	↑
Housing affordability	Worse	Worse	↓	Worse	Worse	↑	Better	Better	↑	Better	Better	↓	Worse	Worse	↑
GVA per capita (2010)	Better	Better	↓	Worse	Worse	↑	Worse	Worse	↑	Worse	Worse	↑	Better	Better	↑
Place Survey results	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW	Forest Heath			St Edmundsbury			North Hertfordshire			Uttlesford		
	Performance against Cambridgeshire average	Performance against national average	Direction of travel	Performance against Cambridgeshire average	Performance against national average	Direction of travel	Performance against Cambridgeshire average	Performance against national average	Direction of travel	Performance against Cambridgeshire average	Performance against national average	Direction of travel
PEOPLE												
Overall employment rate (aged 16-74)	Better	Better	↑	Better	Better	↓	Better	Better	↓	Better	Better	↑
People aged 16-64 on out of work benefits	Better	Better	↓	Better	Better	↑	Worse	Worse	↓	Better	Better	↑
Proportion of population aged 19-59/64 qualified to at least level 2 or higher	Worse	Worse	↑	Better	Better	↑	Better	Better	↑	Better	Better	↑
Proportion of population aged 19-59/64 qualified to at least level 4 or higher	Worse	Worse	↑	Worse	Worse	↑	Better	Better	↑	Worse	Worse	↓
5+ A*-C grades at GCSE inc English and Maths	Worse	Worse	↓	Worse	Worse	↑	Better	Better	↑	Better	Better	↑
BUSINESS												
New business registration rate (2011)	Worse	Worse	↑	Worse	Worse	↑	Better	Better	↑	Better	Better	↑
Percentage of small businesses in an area showing employment growth (discontinued) (2008)	Better	Worse	→	Better	Worse	→	Worse	Worse	→	Better	Better	→
Labour productivity (2010)	Worse	Worse	↑	Worse	Worse	↑	Worse	Worse	↑	Worse	Worse	↑
Jobs density (2011)	Worse	Worse	↓	Worse	Worse	↓	Worse	Worse	→	Worse	Worse	↑
Median earnings of employees in the area (2012)	Worse	Worse	↓	Worse	Worse	↓	Worse	Worse	↑	Worse	Better	↑
PLACE												
CO2 emissions per head (2009)	Better	Worse	↑	Worse	Worse	↓	Better	Better	↑	Worse	Worse	↑
Housing affordability	Worse	Worse	↓	Worse	Worse	↑	Worse	Worse	↑	Worse	Worse	↓
GVA per capita (2010)	Worse	Worse	↓	Worse	Worse	↑	Worse	Worse	↑	Worse	Worse	↓
Place Survey results	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

KEY	
	Better than average
	Similar to average
	Worse than average
↑→↓	Direction of travel

Fenland SWOT

Strengths

Strengths in higher value industries relating to technical testing and machinery manufacture.

Low dependence on public sector employment in the workplace population.

Lowest income disparity for male and female full-time workers in the Cambridgeshire.

Housing and land is relatively affordable compared with the rest of Greater Cambridge.

Weaknesses

Generally low levels of prosperity, low resident satisfaction and relatively high crime rate.

Large Gypsy/Traveller population living with severe economic disadvantage and social exclusion, but with the potential to make a positive contribution to the economy through self employment opportunities.

Low business density and low employment growth among local businesses, particularly since the recession.

Basic and intermediate level skills are poor and a small proportion of residents are qualified to degree level or above.

Poor accessibility of jobs by public transport and high levels of traffic congestion impact on business productivity and CO2 emissions.

High proportion of incapacity-benefit claimants and relatively high numbers of unemployed people. The impact of the recession in Fenland suggests the economy may lack resilience.

Opportunities

Significant 'workless' population that could potentially make a positive contribution to the economy, given the right opportunities and skills.

High self employment figures indicate there may be a number of very small businesses sitting below the VAT/PAYE threshold, suggesting an entrepreneurial culture.

A large net increase in business floorspace, the majority allocated to general industry and storage and distribution purposes.

Increased availability of next generation broadband access, which could have a positive impact on future business competitiveness and potential inward investment.

Growing renewable energy infrastructure may provide supply chain opportunities for local business.

Threats

Ageing population may increase pressure on services and reduce levels of economic activity.

Dependence on manufacturing, processing and construction – a relatively lower value economy compared with Greater Cambridge and nationally.

Migrant workers returning home may cause difficulties for some industries, particularly those reliant on seasonal labour.

Low attainment levels of young people in education.

Evidence of skills shortages of local businesses in managerial, professional and skilled workers.

A high proportion of long established businesses and low birth rate of new enterprises could indicate low 'business churn', a lack of competition and restricted innovation.

Over-representation of 18-24 year olds among the unemployed.

Labour market, prosperity and crime

A relatively small, ageing population

- Fenland is the third least populous of the Greater Cambridge districts with a population of around 95,000 residents.
- Around 62% of the population is estimated to be of working age, a lower proportion than seen regionally or nationally.

High level of out commuting

- Half of Fenland's residents commute out of the district to work.
- Fenland attracts about 12% of its workers from King's Lynn and West Norfolk.

High dependence on seasonal migrant workers in agricultural industry, many of whom are working below their potential

- Fenland attracts a relatively high number of migrant workers (particularly into the agricultural sector) but it is likely that the turnover of this population is high with many short term residencies.
- Research suggests that in some sectors, businesses would not be able to function to full capacity if migrant workers were not available – the largest employers of migrant workers in agriculture and horticulture are thought to be based around Ely and Wisbech (WLRI 2005).

Gypsy/Traveller population living with severe economic disadvantage and social exclusion

- The 2011 Census showed that there are around 1,500 people in Cambridgeshire who identify themselves as having a Gypsy or Irish Traveller ethnic origin. The majority of Traveller sites are based in Fenland and South Cambridgeshire.
- Most Gypsies/Travellers prefer self-employment, in such occupations as farm and land work.
- A decline in traditional farm work and increased competition from cheaper immigrant labour means Gypsies/Travellers find it increasingly difficult to make a living from traditional occupations, contributing to severe economic disadvantage and social exclusion.

Gender disparities among full-time workers less pronounced than elsewhere in the county

- In 2012, full-time female workers resident in Fenland earned on average 15% less than men. This disparity is the lowest in the county and is lower than the national average.

Generally low levels of prosperity and low resident satisfaction

- The average weekly pay of residents, at £424.50, is significantly lower than the national average of £512.70 and the county average of £551 and fell (counter to local, regional and national trends) from 2011 to 2012.
- One in three households in Fenland has an income below £20,000. [Map 1]
- The 2008 Place Survey recorded that 75% of Fenland residents were satisfied with their local area as a place to live, the lowest across Greater Cambridge, below the national average of 80% and lower than many of their 'statistical neighbours'.

Relatively high crime levels

- Cambridgeshire Police collate data for the county's Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships.
 - Across Cambridgeshire Fenland has the second highest crime rate per 1,000 people, although this has been falling since 2009/10. In terms of total crime numbers, Fenland lies behind Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire.
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Skills levels, education and skills demand

Basic and intermediate level skills are poor and inequalities with the south are increasing

- Over 13% of the population aged 19-59/64 have no qualifications, more than twice the proportion across Cambridgeshire as a whole and 4 percentage points higher than seen nationally.
- The most common level of qualification residents aged 19-59/64 has achieved is to NVQ level 1.
- The proportions qualified to NVQ levels 2 and 3 (GCSE and A level) are at least 10 percentage points lower than the national average.
- Despite a recent increase, the proportion of residents qualified to NVQ level 2 has remained fairly stable since 2002, contrasting with a steady increase in the south and west of the county, suggesting that skills inequalities across the county are increasing.

Very few residents are qualified to degree level or above

- NVQ level 4+ is generally recognised as the skill level required to drive innovation and leadership within the economy and to enable businesses to compete globally.
- Only 21% of residents, almost half the county proportion, are qualified to NVQ level 4 or above. On this measure, Fenland ranks 11th lowest of all local authorities in the country, while Cambridge City ranks 11th highest.
- 2005/06 Learning and Skills Council figures showed Fenland to have the third lowest percentage of learners (8%) in the region entering Higher Education.

Low attainment and attendance levels of young people in education

- The proportion of 16 to 19 year olds who are not in education, employment or training is highest in Fenland (7%) and Cambridge City (6%).
- Of those in education, the proportion of 15 year olds studying in Fenland reaching level 2 (GCSE) or level 3 (A level) by age 19 is significantly below average. The proportion of pupils studying in Fenland achieving 5+ GCSEs graded A*-C including Maths and English is also below average.
- Fenland's cohort of young people who were 19 in 2007 was ranked forty-eighth out of forty-eight districts in the East of England for the percentage that had achieved level 2 by the age of 16. By the time they were 19, Fenland's ranking had improved one place to forty-seventh.

Low accessibility of education

- Accessibility data collected by the DfT suggests that ease of access to both secondary and further education is lowest in East Cambridgeshire, Fenland, South Cambridgeshire and Forest Heath.
- The rural nature of the district is a significant barrier to individuals of low income accessing available training and employment.
- Most of the out-commuting for learning seems to be to counties to the north of Cambridgeshire, suggesting movement out from Fenland. It is currently unclear whether young people who travel out of an area to study are more likely to drop out than people who do not.

Evidence of skills shortages in managerial, professional and skilled workers

[from Fenland 2009 Business Survey (225 responses)]

- 30% of respondents experienced difficulty in recruiting skilled manual workers.
 - Many respondents also encountered problems in recruiting managerial, professional, clerical and semi-skilled workers.
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Patterns of unemployment and deprivation

High unemployment rate compared to the rest of Greater Cambridgeshire and high rates of benefit claimants

- Nearly 13% of the district's resident population aged 16-64 is on some form of out-of-work benefit.
- The proportion of working age residents claiming Employment and Support Allowance/Incapacity Benefit (ESA/IB) is nearly 1 percentage point higher than the national average at 6.8%, 3 percentage points higher than Huntingdonshire, which is the next highest district.
- Until 2010 ESA/IB claimant numbers were rising in Fenland; this has since declined in the last two years.
- At 4.8% of the resident population aged 16-74 unemployed, this rate is lower than seen nationally but higher than other Greater Cambridge districts and the regional average. This figure, combined with the high rate of economic inactivity suggests there is a large amount of unused capacity within Fenland's economy.

The impact of the recession on Fenland suggests the Fenland economy may lack resilience

- Since the onset of the recession, Fenland is the only Cambridgeshire district to have seen an equivalent rise in the Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimant rate to that occurring nationally.
- The highest increases in JSA claimant rates between 2007 and 2009 were concentrated in the areas with the highest rates, notably Fenland, Huntingdon North and King's Hedges along with parts of St Neots and Littleport. Between 2011 and 2013, however, the claimant rate fell in areas around Whittlesey, although the rate continued to rise in other areas, notably in and around Wisbech. [Map 3]

Over-representation of 18-24 year olds among the unemployed

- Younger claimants, aged 18-24, are over-represented within the JSA claimant population, particularly in Fenland, given that the resident age profile is older than average.

High levels of education, skills and training deprivation and pockets of nationally significant deprivation

- Fenland is the only Greater Cambridge district to contain a large number of small areas among the most deprived in national terms. These are mainly located in Wisbech, with one in March.
- One in four of Fenland's wards are among the most deprived national 20% in terms of education, skills and training. [Map 2]

Risk of fuel poverty an issue in rural areas

- Fuel poverty is influenced by three factors: low incomes, high fuel costs and thermal efficiency of the housing stock. Fenland contains the most fuel poor areas within the sub-region (DECC 2010).
 - Rural areas of the district are more fuel poor than the country as a whole. More than 30% of households in parts of Roman Bank and Elm and Christchurch wards are in fuel poverty.
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Nature of the economy

Low value economy compared with Greater Cambridge

- Around 47% of the district's residents and workers are employed in 'high value' occupations, significantly below the national average and for across Greater Cambridge as a whole. The majority of 'high value' employment is in skilled trades occupations.
- Fenland has by far the county's lowest proportion of knowledge intensive workers at 5%.
- Fenland has the lowest proportion of workers in public sector employment in Greater Cambridge, with just 16% of workers in this sector.
- Median earnings of full-time employees in Fenland are the lowest across Greater Cambridge. Earnings amongst workers are similar to those amongst residents.
- The East of England Forecasting Model estimates that labour productivity and GVA per capita (a measure of general prosperity) in Fenland are amongst the lowest of all Greater Cambridge districts and significantly lower than the figures for the UK.

Dependence on manufacturing, processing and construction

Strengths in technical testing and machinery manufacture

- Fenland has more than twice the national proportion of businesses in agriculture, forestry and fishing.
- Dominant business sectors include construction, agriculture, forestry and fishing, and retail.
- The dominant employment sectors are manufacturing, followed by business administration and support services, retail and health.
- Fenland has a very high share of employment in food processing, construction based manufacturing and other manufacturing activities, mainly lower down the value chain. Other significant niches include food wholesale and camping, reflecting the importance of the agricultural industry and the rural nature of the district. Higher value activity includes technical testing and machinery manufacture.
- Hi-tech employment accounts for around 1.8% of all Fenland jobs.

Fenland has low business and jobs densities and low employment growth among businesses

- In 2012 there were 3,675 local units in VAT and/or PAYE based enterprises in Fenland, and there were around 35,000 jobs in 2011.
- A higher than average proportion of these businesses sit in the 0-9 employment bracket and business turnover is lowest in Fenland of all Greater Cambridge districts.
- A low business density may restrict effective knowledge flow between people and firms and may limit economic growth. Fenland's business density in 2012 was the lowest in Greater Cambridge.
- Fenland has a jobs density (the ratio of total jobs to working age residents) of 0.59 meaning that the district's labour demand is not as high as its available workforce. Comparing figures from 2003 and 2011, there was no change in the total number of jobs and a fall in the jobs density.
- The proportion of enterprises with employment less than 50 showing employment growth in 2008 was lower in Fenland than any other Greater Cambridge district and lower than the national figure.

High proportion of long established businesses and low birth rate of new enterprises could indicate low 'business churn', a lack of competition and restricted innovation

- Both Fenland and East Cambridgeshire have a higher than average proportion of long established businesses.
- Both these districts have a low birth rate of new enterprises per 100 active enterprises, which is significantly lower than the national rate. The same pattern appears when enterprise births are measured against resident population; the birth rate per 10,000 adult residents is 38 in Fenland, compared with 50 in Cambridgeshire and 54 nationally.
- Business Link start up patterns also showed a relatively small number of new businesses created between 2007 and 2010.

Self employment figures suggest significant numbers of very small businesses

- Around 15% of Fenland's residents are self employed – a slightly lower proportion than seen nationally but the third highest proportion seen among Cambridgeshire districts.
- Given enterprise birth rates are significantly lower than the national average, this figure suggests that the majority of self employment may be accounted for by businesses sitting below the VAT/PAYE threshold.

Business development, infrastructure and housing

Poor accessibility of jobs

- Like many other rural counties, accessibility of jobs by public transport, cycling or walking is relatively low across Cambridgeshire but lowest within East Cambridgeshire and Fenland.

High levels of traffic congestion impact on business productivity and road accident rates

- Some areas of Fenland's rural roads saw a substantial growth in traffic between 2001 and 2011, traffic grew by 30% on the B1093 at Doddington-Benwick and 24% on the A47 at Thorney Toll. However, there was no increase in traffic on the the C85 at Carters Bridge.
- On the county principal road network (A roads), after the A428 (40%), the highest growth over the past ten years has occurred on the A47 (27%), the A141 (26%), and the A142 (25%), all in Fenland.
- Above average traffic density on rural roads is a significant factor in Cambridgeshire's high per capita casualty rate.

Large net increase in business floorspace, the majority in general industry and storage and distribution

- Between 1999 and 2012, Fenland had the third highest net increase in business floorspace of the Cambridgeshire districts, equivalent to Huntingdonshire.
- The vast majority of that increase was in B2 (general industry) and B8 (storage and distribution) floorspace with a very small net increase in B1a (office) space.

High proportion of warehouse and factory space and low proportion of office space

- In 2008, Fenland had one of the highest proportions of warehouse and factory space across all Greater Cambridge districts with nearly 80% of all business floorspace allocated for these uses, nearly 20% more than the proportion seen nationally.
- Fenland had the lowest proportion of business space allocated for offices of all Greater Cambridge districts at 6%, under half the proportion seen across the East of England.

Net reduction in retail and office floorspace in town centres could impact negatively on town centre vitality

- Over the last twelve years, town centres in all districts have seen small reductions in office space. However, Fenland is the only district to have also seen a net reduction in retail floorspace in the town centres.
- All additional retail floorspace built in Fenland between 1999 and 2012 was completed outside town centre areas and retail commitments in 2012 suggest that out-of-town retail floorspace in Fenland overall will increase in future.

Growing renewable energy infrastructure but high carbon emissions per head

- Over half (90 MW) of renewable energy capacity installed in Cambridgeshire since 1999 is located in Fenland – particularly due to the large number of wind turbines installed (61 in all).
- Fenland has one of the highest levels of CO2 emissions per head among Greater Cambridge districts, however emissions have fallen steadily since 2007.

Increased availability of next generation broadband access

- Outside of Wisbech, nearly all Fenland wards are at risk of not receiving next generation broadband access through likely future market rollout. However Cambridgeshire County Council has received a grant to provide high speed broadband access throughout the county, with the aim of delivering 100% broadband coverage by 2015, with a minimum 90% being superfast broadband.

Relatively affordable housing compared with the rest of the sub-region

- Fenland is the least expensive area in the sub-region, with an average house price in Aug 2012 to Jan 2013 of £148,364, followed by Forest Heath, with an average house price of £186,625.
- Seven of the ten most affordable wards in the sub-region are in Fenland – Manea and Bassenhally are the two most affordable wards in Fenland, where the lower quartile house price is around 6.5 times the lower quartile income.

Recent fall in housing completions

- Like most other districts Fenland saw a significant fall in the number of dwellings completed from 2008 to 2010, but net dwelling completions has since stabilised at 200-300 per year.
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Future prospects

Increase in employment

- The East of England Forecasting Model forecasts that, compared with the rest of Cambridgeshire, Fenland will see the fourth highest total increase in employment between 2011 and 2031.

Increase in GVA

- GVA growth forecasts suggest Fenland will have the second highest rate of growth among Cambridgeshire districts between 2011 and 2031.

Employment demand in associate technical and professional occupations

- Occupational forecasts for Cambridgeshire based on the East of England Forecasting Model estimate that over the next five years expansion demand is likely to be strongest in:
 - Caring personal service occupations
 - Managers and senior officials
 - Associate technical and professional occupations
 - Professional occupations
 - Sales and customer service occupations
- All other occupations are projected to experience very little, or negative, expansion demand.

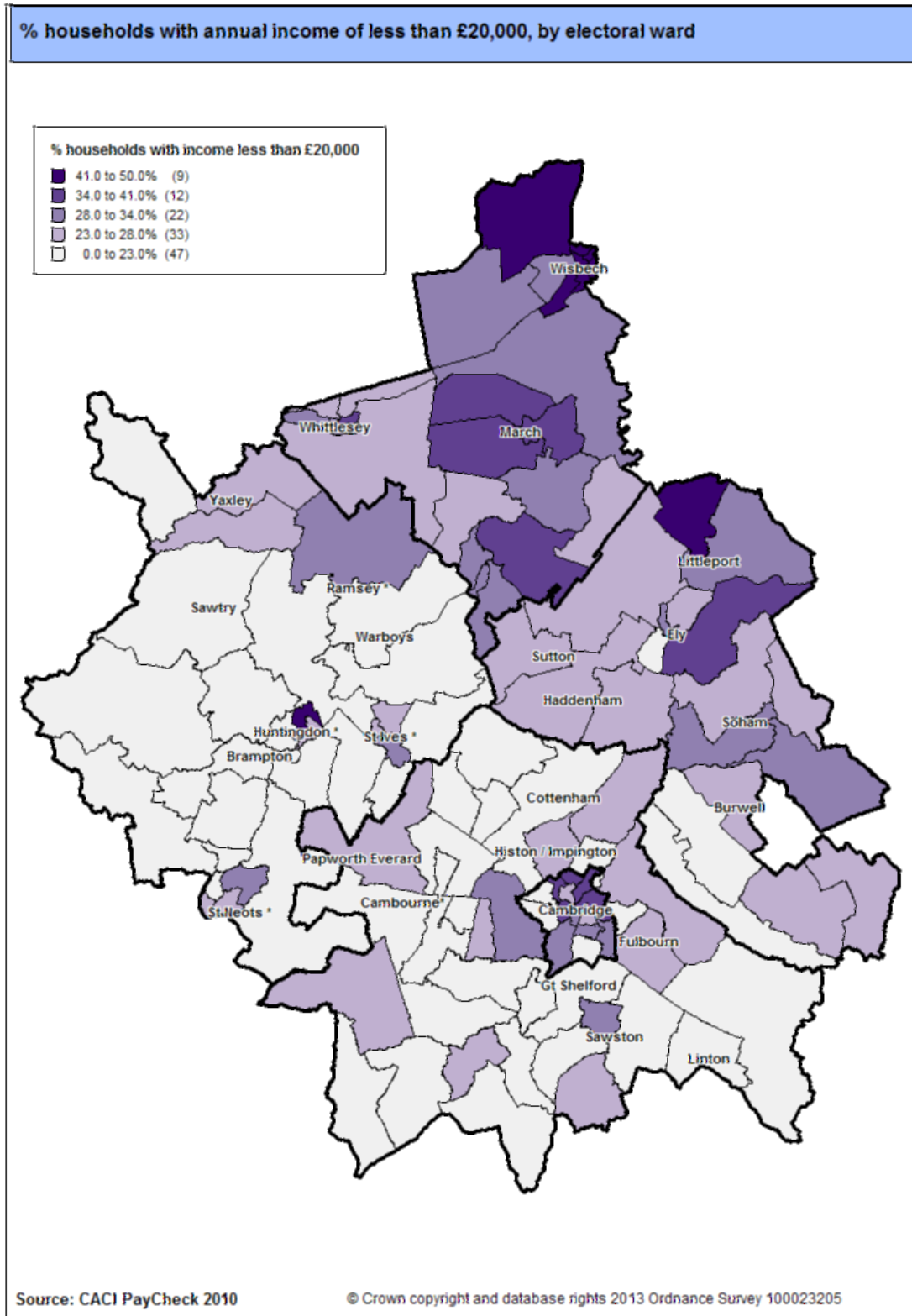
Gradually ageing population

- By 2031 forecasts suggest the district will experience a large increase in the population aged 65 and over.
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Appendices

Map 1: % of households with an annual income of less than £20,000 by ward

Source: CACI PayCheck 2010



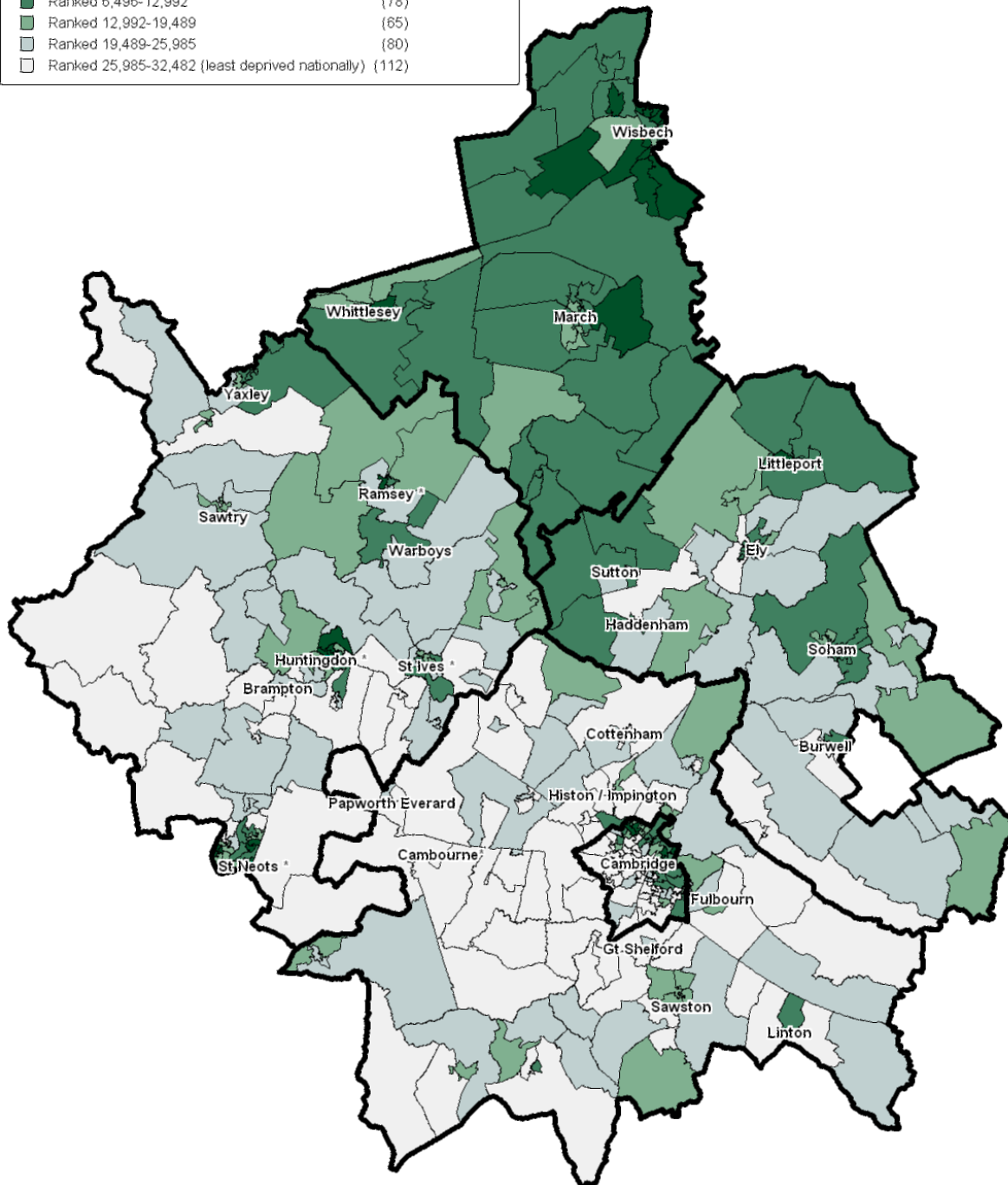
Map 2: Education, Skills and Training Deprivation

Source: CLG ID2010

Indices of Deprivation 2010: Education, Skills & Training Deprivation

Education, Skills & Training Deprivation National Ranks

Ranked 1-6,496 (most deprived nationally)	(30)
Ranked 6,496-12,992	(78)
Ranked 12,992-19,489	(65)
Ranked 19,489-25,985	(80)
Ranked 25,985-32,482 (least deprived nationally)	(112)

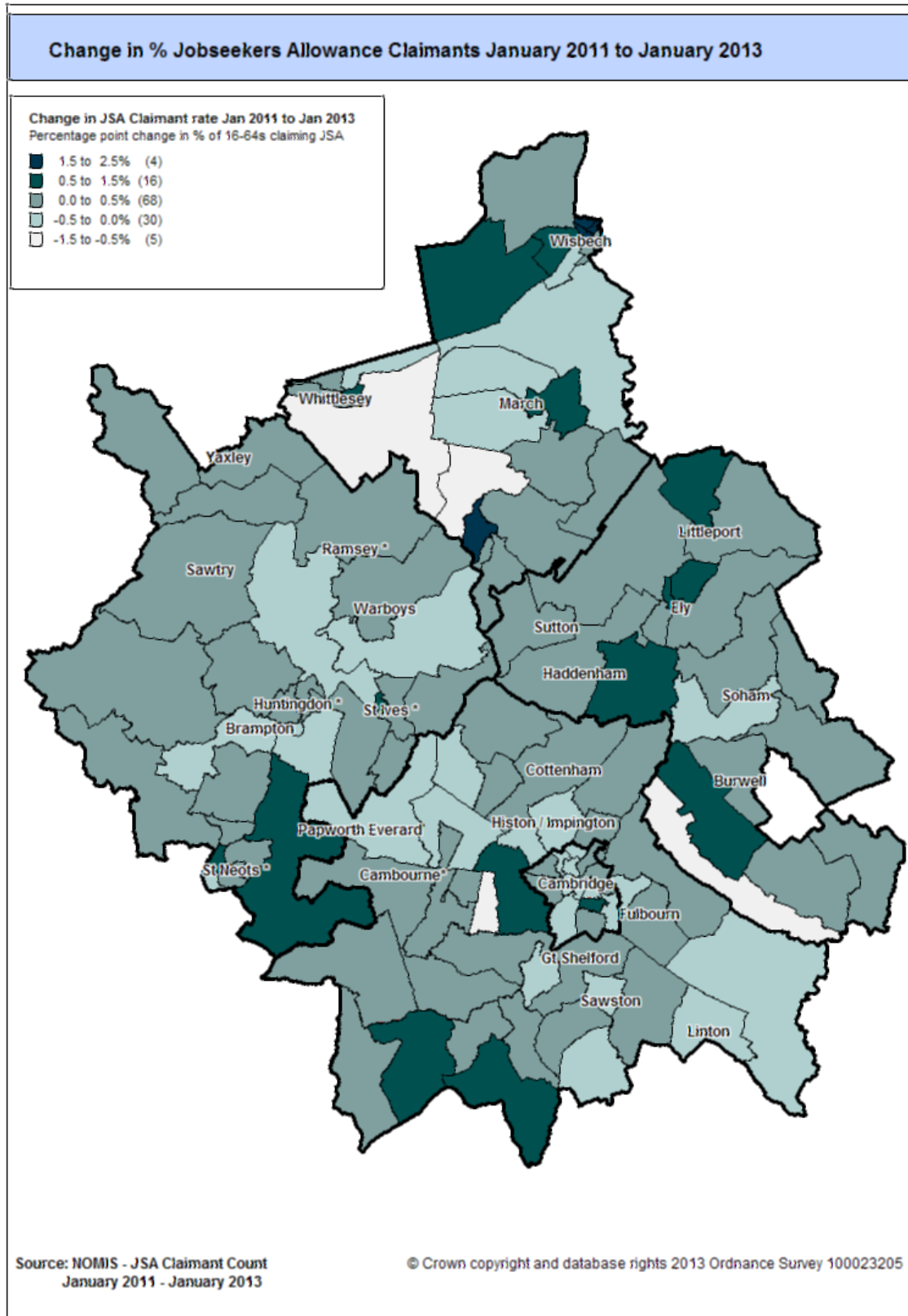


Source: CLG Indices of Deprivation 2010

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Map 3: Percentage point change in the JSA claimant rate, by ward, –January 2011-2013

Source: Nomis - JSA Claimant Count, –January 2011-2013



Map 4: Lower quartile house price to lower quartile income ratio by ward, April 2012 – March 2013

Source: Hometrack

