



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE
& PETERBOROUGH**
COMBINED AUTHORITY

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Tackling Inequality

State of the Region Q1 2026/27



State of the Region Overview

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough State of the Region 2026 provides a comprehensive, evidence-based assessment of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's current economic, social, and environmental landscape. By analysing the most up-to-date data and insights from across the region, this report serves as a resource and evidence base for stakeholders, policymakers, and community leaders to understand the area's opportunities, priorities, and pathways for growth and prosperity.

The comprehensive analysis was structured with more than 140 distinct indicators across eight key themes. The resulting holistic approach reflects stakeholders' commitment to capturing a detailed and nuanced picture of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough region's current status and future prospects. The themes and data were selected and refined, through a process of continuous engagement with core stakeholders, ensuring they resonate with local priorities that leveraged relevant data sources.

An interactive publicly accessible data portal containing all the raw data, with interactive charts and maps can be opened from this website link [State of The Region Data Portal](#).

Technical notes

This report includes a set of Combined Authority comparator peers to enable meaningful comparison with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough region. West of England, West Yorkshire, and South Yorkshire were selected as comparators using a consistent methodology based on similarities in population size, urban–rural composition, and geographic area. These characteristics were assessed and ranked to identify the authorities that most closely resemble C&P, forming a peer group for analysis.

Where confidence intervals were reported by the data provider, for each period, a statistical comparison between Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, including the region's constituent local authority areas, and England was conducted, by deriving standard errors from the published 95% confidence intervals. This used the following equation, where SE = standard error, UCL = upper confidence limit and LCL = lower confidence limit:

$$SE = \frac{UCL - LCL}{2 \times 1.96}$$

The standard error of the difference was calculated assuming independent estimates. A two-sided z-test determined whether the difference was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). Estimates were classified as statistically higher, statistically lower, or statistically similar to England based on the sign and significance of the difference.

Therefore, results labelled higher, lower, or similar to England have been checked using statistical tests, since statistical tests help us confirm whether a difference is real or just due to chance. This means that we tested whether differences between Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and England were meaningful rather than random, so that decisions are based on reliable evidence.

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Tackling Inequality

This chapter examines inequality through the sub-themes of hardship, and economic, health, and childhood inequality. The findings unveil disparities across incomes, employment, and life expectancy amongst several other headline metrics that together underscore the need for targeted policy intervention.

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (C&P) region has a complex landscape of socioeconomic inequalities with significant variations throughout different areas of the region, according to the insights reported in this Tackling Inequality domain. For example, the C&P region's average income inequality ratio¹ of 3.1 similar to England's 3.0, meaning the top 20% of earners in C&P earned at least 3.1 times the amount of the bottom 20% of earners in C&P. In Cambridge, income inequality was much higher though at 4.2, while in Fenland it was considerably lower than England overall, at 2.6. Gender pay disparities were also evident. While the median gender pay gap² in C&P of 9% exceeded that of England's gender pay gap of 7.6%, there were further inequalities within C&P. For instance, Fenland's gender pay gap was 13.8% in 2025, almost double the pay gap of England.

Fuel poverty³ affected 9.2% of households in the C&P region in 2023, below the England rate of 11.4%, yet with significant local variations ranging from 2.9% to 22.7% at the LSOA level. Food bank usage⁴ has increased sizably in recent years, rising from 25 food parcels per 1,000 people in 2018 to a peak of 42 in both 2023 and 2024, before a slight decline in 2025 in line with the national trend. Levels have remained consistently above the England average across the period, with the exception of South Cambridgeshire. This increase has been particularly pronounced among children, where demand has grown faster than for adults and indicates rising household cost pressures, since around 2020.

Life expectancy⁵ disparities between the most and least deprived C&P areas averaged around four years. Cambridge showed the largest disparity of up to nearly 9 years for females. In Peterborough, for males, the disparity was almost 8 years, whilst much lower in South Cambridgeshire at 1.4 years. Overall, 68% of LSOAs in the C&P region had a Health Deprivation and Disability Domain rank in the bottom half (least deprived) of LSOAs in England, but areas of high deprivation exist, especially in Fenland and Peterborough⁶. Fenland and Peterborough had the highest rate of premature mortality in C&P in 2024 and were both above England's rate. In 2022-24, the infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)⁷ in the C&P region ranged between 2.7 in Huntingdonshire and 7.4 in Peterborough, compared to the rate for England of 4.2. Nonetheless, the C&P region contrasts favourably to national figures across a number of areas. For instance, in 2023-24, childhood obesity rates in Year 6 children⁸ were 20.2% in C&P compared to England's higher rate of 22.2%. However, there is variance across smaller geographies in C&P, with areas of high obesity, such as MSOAs in Fenland (up to 34.6% in Year 6 children).

¹ ONS, 2022. Admin-based income statistics, data for individuals, England and Wales. [\[Link to source\]](#)

² ONS, 2025. Gender pay gap. [\[Link to source\]](#)

³ DESNZ, 2024. Fuel poverty statistics. [\[Link to source\]](#)

⁴ Trussel Trust, 2025. End of Year Stats. [\[Link to source\]](#)

⁵ OHID, 2025. Public Health Profiles: Life Expectancy Inequality. [\[Link to source\]](#)

⁶ MHCLG, 2025. English indices of deprivation 2025. [\[Link to source\]](#)

⁷ OHID, 2025. Public Health Profiles: Infant Mortality Rate. [\[Link to source\]](#)

⁸ OHID, 2025. Public Health Profiles: Obesity. [\[Link to source\]](#)

Summary of key findings

Metric	Section	Findings
Income Equality	1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Across the C&P region, in 2018, the average income inequality ratio was 3.1, meaning the top 20% of earners earned at least 3.1 times the amount of the bottom 20%. This was similar to the average across England, which was 3.0.
Gender Pay Gap	1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The median gender pay gap for local authorities within C&P was 9.0% (greater disparity for women compared to men) in 2025, which was higher than England's gender pay gap of 7.6%. The gender pay gap was highest in Fenland at 13.8%, which is the first time since 2017 that the highest has not been in South Cambridgeshire.
Low & Unskilled Employment Rate	1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low and unskilled work in C&P had a downward trend between 2014 and 2024, despite increasing to 3.5% in 2024 from 3.1% the previous year. In 2014, the rate was 4.5%, one per cent higher than the most recent rate.
Long-term Conditions	1.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2024, the employment rate gap between those with and those without a health condition or illness lasting more than 12 months was 13.8% in C&P, higher than England's 11.8%. Peterborough was the only local authority area that had an increase as of 2024 on 2014, at 4.1% higher.
Employment Access	1.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The average score for employment access in C&P was 1.55, lower than England's score of 1.89 and indicating that C&P residents were more likely to travel further to work on average. Cambridge and Peterborough had many more people who worked within 10km of their home compared to those who travelled further than 10km to work.
Fuel Poverty Rate	2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Across the C&P region as of 2023, 9.2% of households were in fuel poverty, which was below the England rate of 11.4%. Fenland had the highest fuel poverty rate at 10.4%.
Food Parcels	2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food parcels per 1,000 people show a sustained rise in food parcel distribution across C&P from 2018 to 2025, with levels consistently higher than the England average, aside from South Cambridgeshire. Cambridge consistently recorded the highest rates across the region, with particularly extreme values for children.
Inequality in Life Expectancy	3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cambridge had the largest inequality in life expectancy years, locally, in every year for females.
Health Deprivation	3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall, 68% of LSOAs in the C&P region had a Health Deprivation and Disability Domain rank in the bottom half (least deprived) of LSOAs in England, but areas of high deprivation exist, especially in Fenland and Peterborough. By local authority area, Fenland had the highest rank (most deprived) at 68 and Peterborough had the second highest at 89.
Premature Mortality Rate	3.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fenland (378 per 100,000 people) and Peterborough (372 per 100,000 people) had the highest rate of premature mortality in C&P in 2024 and were higher than England (329 per 100,000 people).



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Cambridgeshire had the lowest rate and East Cambridgeshire, Cambridge and Huntingdonshire were all lower than England’s rate.
Infant Mortality Rate	4.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2022-24, the infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births) in the C&P region ranged between 2.7, in Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire, and 7.4 in Peterborough, compared to the rate for England of 4.2. • Peterborough was the only local authority area in the region with a statistically higher infant mortality rate compared to England.
Children in Low Income Families	4.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2024, 32.1% of children in Peterborough and 26.1% of children in Fenland were in relatively low-income families. • In comparison, only 9.3% of children in South Cambridgeshire were in relative low income.
Childhood Obesity	4.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2024-25, childhood obesity rates in Year 6 children were 20.2% in C&P compared to England’s rate of 22.3%, and in reception-aged children were 8.2% in C&P compared to England’s rate of 10.5%. • However, at smaller geographies there are areas of high obesity, such as MSOAs in Fenland (up to 34.6% in Year 6 children).
Young Carers	4.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2021, all local authority areas in the C&P region had a comparable or lower percentage of young carers, aged 5-24, than England’s 2.5%, except Fenland (2.9%). • Both Peterborough (5.3%) and Fenland (5.2%) were above the England average (4.6%) for the percentage of young carers aged 18-24.

1 Economic inequality

1.1 Income Equality

ONS data for admin-based income statistics for England and Wales⁹ included data for experimental gross and net individual income statistics using administrative data from Pay-As-You-Earn, Self-Assessment and benefit systems. The income equality metric measures the difference between the lowest and highest earners within a region. It was calculated by dividing the average income of the 80th percentile of workers by the average income of the 20th percentile of workers. The 80th percentile was the value below which 80% of the working-age population earned, and the 20th percentile was the value below which 20% of the working-age population earned. The indicator was calculated as the ratio of the annual net (post-tax) income of the 80th percentile of earnings to that of the 20th percentile.

Figure 1-1 charts the net inequality ratio for each local authority area in C&P using the net individual income dataset with the 80:20 ratio. Across the C&P region, the average income inequality ratio was around 3.1, meaning that the top 20% of earners earned at least 3.1 times the amount of the bottom 20%. This was similar to the average across England, which was 3.0. Overall, most local authority areas in the C&P region had an income inequality ratio that was below the average for England, since Fenland (2.6), Peterborough (2.8), Huntingdonshire (2.8) and East Cambridgeshire (2.9) had ratios below 3.0. Fenland had a particularly low ratio whilst Cambridge had the highest income inequality ratio at 4.2.

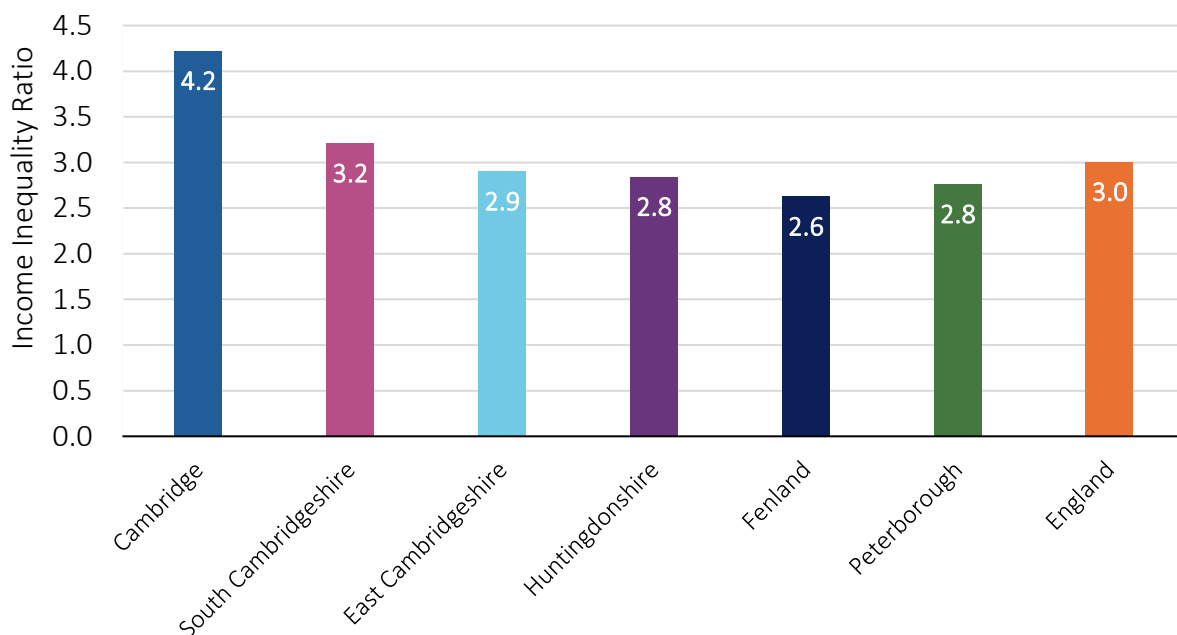


Figure 1-1: Income Inequality (Ratio) by Local Authority Area and England in 2018

1.2 Gender Pay Gap

Gender pay gap¹⁰ was calculated as the difference between average hourly earnings of men and women as a proportion of average hourly earnings of men, excluding overtime. For example, 4% denotes that women earn 4% less, on average, than men, while -4% shows the opposite. The measure used median wages, the amount below which 50% of values lie, when calculating the gender pay gap. It should be noted that the data is for full-time jobs only and does

⁹ ONS, 2022. Admin-based income statistics, data for individuals, England and Wales. [\[Link to source\]](#)

¹⁰ ONS, 2025. Gender pay gap. [\[Link to source\]](#)



not cover the self-employed. The 2025 values are provisional and may be subject to revision at a later date.

Figure 1-2 plots the median gender pay gap for each local authority area in the C&P region between 2017 and 2025. As a whole, the gender pay gap for C&P was 9% in 2025, considerably higher than England's gender pay gap of 7.6%. The gender pay gap was highest in Fenland at 13.8%, which is the first time since 2017 that the highest has not been in South Cambridgeshire. The second highest was seen in East Cambridgeshire with 11%. The lowest disparity of 8.5% was seen in both South Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

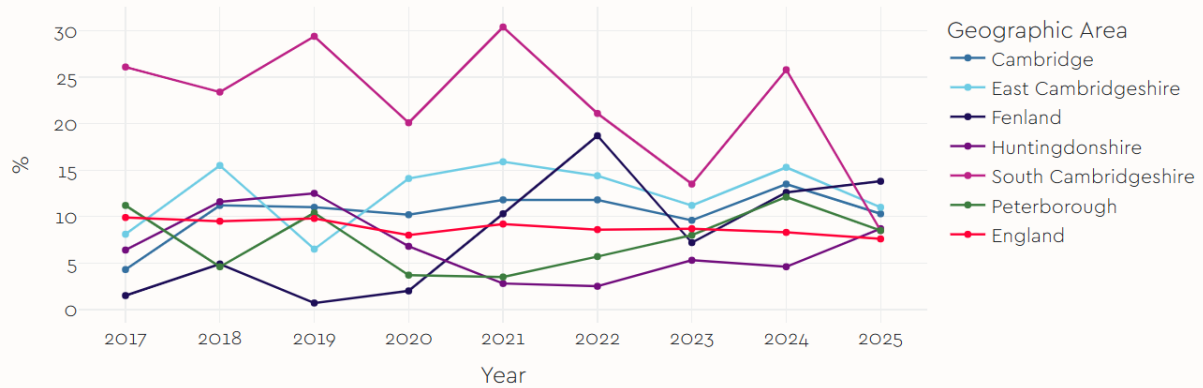


Figure 1-2: Gender Pay Gap (%) by Local Authority Area & England and by Year

1.3 Low & Unskilled Employment Rate

A person is defined as low or unskilled if they do not hold an RQF-regulated qualification. This dataset contains the proportion of the total population aged 16-64, and separately for males and females, who were in employment but did not hold an RQF-regulated qualification¹¹. Since RQF estimates replaced NVQ estimates in 2022, the data prior to 2022 pertains to the analogous NVQ qualifications framework, with the employment rate relating to the proportion of people not holding an NVQ-regulated qualification.

The Annual Population Survey is based on a sample survey, and sampling variability increases substantially at smaller geographies, such that standard errors and confidence intervals at local authority level are often large enough that ONS does not routinely publish them. This is because they may be disclosive or unreliable for detailed breakdowns, such as qualifications or skill levels. For these reasons, national and regional trends provide a more robust basis for interpretation than local estimates, and local figures should be treated as indicative rather than precise measures. Note that for some areas, there were data gaps in the data release, due to being statistically unreliable.

The interpretation of the employment rate amongst both the low-skilled and unskilled workers depends upon the wider economy. A healthy economy supports a low unemployment rate across all skill levels with support mechanisms, such as education and training to help workers transition from low-skilled to higher-skilled jobs. A higher employment rate of low-skilled and unskilled workers can highlight that people without advanced qualifications have still found employment. However, it could also show that there is a lack of upskilling and economic transformation.

Figure 1-3 plots the available data for the C&P region from 2014 to 2024. It shows that across the C&P region, 3.5% of those in employment, aged 16-64, held no RQF-regulated

¹¹ ONS, 2025. Annual Population Survey. [\[Link to source\]](#)



qualifications in 2024, slightly up from 3.1% in 2023, yet down from the rate of 4.5% in 2014. Similar changes are observed at a national level as the percentage of those aged 16-64 in employment with no RQF-regulated qualifications rose to 3.6% in 2024, up marginally from 3.3% in 2023 but fell from 4.9% in 2014.

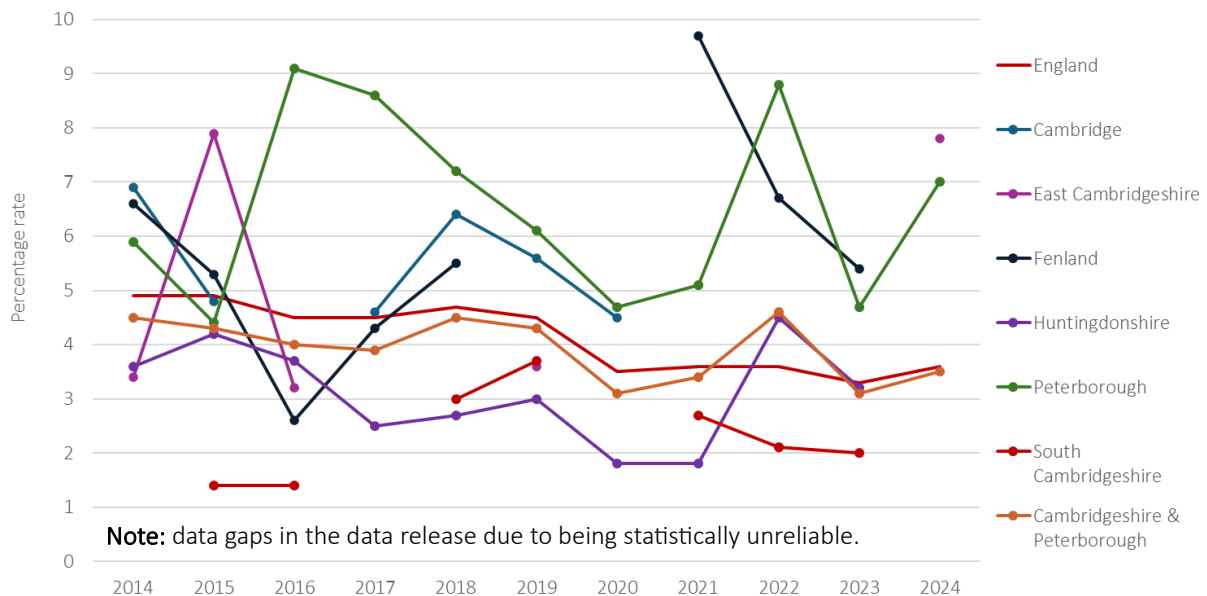


Figure 1-3: Low & Unskilled Employment Rate (%) by Local Authority Area & England and by Year

Where data was available, the lowest rate across the local authority areas in C&P was generally South Cambridgeshire, most recently at 2% in 2023, with the highest rate in East Cambridgeshire at 7.8% in 2024. The data suggests that the level of low and unskilled work has largely declined across the C&P region, similarly to England overall.

1.4 Long-term Conditions

The long-term conditions data compares the difference in employment rate between those with and those without a health condition or illness lasting more than 12 months. The ONS published data on the percentage of the population aged 16+ who were in employment and who identified as having a long-term health condition¹². This indicator was calculated by subtracting the percentage of people with a long-term health condition who were employed from the percentage of the total employed population, both covering the population aged 16+. As such, an overall employment rate of 80% and a long-term condition employment rate of 40% would result in a percentage point difference (employment gap) of 40%. It is important to note that is not possible to disaggregate the data by age. This needs to be considered when interpreting the data as long term conditions are often associated with older age, yet this remains obscured in the available data.

The Annual Population Survey is based on a sample survey, and sampling variability increases substantially at smaller geographies such that standard errors and confidence intervals at local authority level are often large enough that ONS does not routinely publish them. This is because they may be disclosive or unreliable for detailed breakdowns. For these reasons, national and regional trends provide a more robust basis for interpretation than local estimates, and local figures should be treated as indicative rather than precise measures.

Figure 1-4 plots the gap between the employment rate of those with a long-term health condition and the overall employment rate, both aged 16+, in the C&P region from 2015 to

¹² ONS, 2025. Annual Population Survey. [\[Link to source\]](#)

2024. None of the areas had a long-term condition employment rate equal to the overall employment rate, suggesting a gap between the two populations. In 2024, the gap in C&P was 13.8%, higher than England’s 11.8%. While the rate for England dropped slightly between 2023 and 2024 (albeit by just 0.1%), C&P’s rate grew by one percentage point. However, across C&P’s local authority areas, Peterborough was the only local authority area that had an increase in 2024 on 2014 (at 4.1% higher), reaching 14.1% in 2024. Nonetheless, both Huntingdonshire and Cambridge had a rate higher than Peterborough in 2024, 15.1% and 15% respectively. East Cambridgeshire had the lowest rate of 5.2%, with a notably sharp drop from 19.7% in the previous year of 2023. Fenland had the second lowest rate of 12.9%, yet considerably higher than East Cambridgeshire.

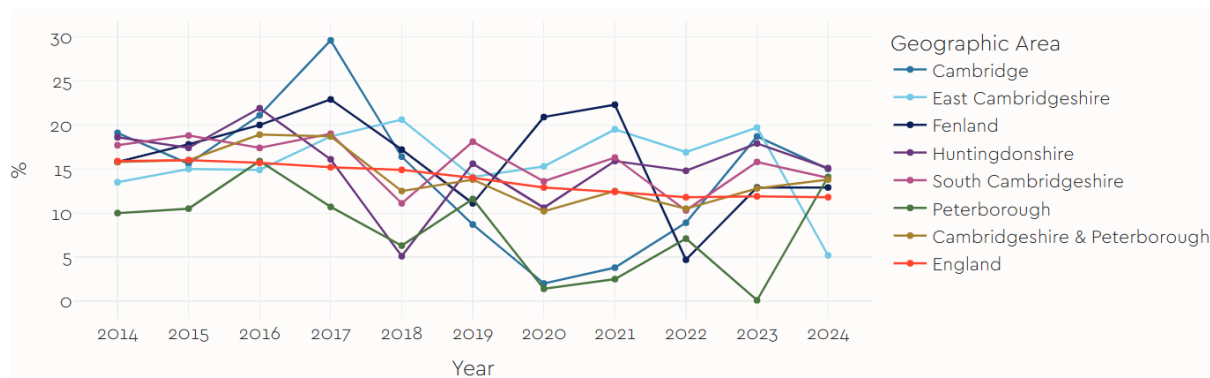


Figure 1-4: Employment Rate Gap (%) between those with and those without a Long-Term Health Condition (aged 16+) by Local Authority Area & England and by Year

1.5 Employment Access

The 2021 Census captured the distance travelled to work by gathering home and work addresses of those employed in the UK. Distances were measured in a straight line between the two addresses. The statistics were then aggregated into two categories of distance less than and greater than 10 km. The employment access¹³ indicator represents the ratio between the population counts within each of these two categories, so that a ratio of 2 denotes that two-times as many people worked within 10 km of their homes as worked more than 10 km from their homes. Note that these categories did not account for home or offshore working. The data aims to provide a better understanding of the working patterns within the C&P region and the impact of job availability within each area on travel. It focuses on the distance travelled to work, but not the skills needed and availability of the population.

Figure 1-5 charts the employment access inequality ratio at the latest reading, in 2021. The average score for C&P of 1.55 was lower than England’s score of 1.89, indicating that C&P residents were more likely to travel 10km or more to work. C&P’s overall score masked significant variation within the C&P region. The data shows that four times as many people in Cambridge worked within 10km of their home compared to those who travelled further than 10km to work. This was closely followed by Peterborough, with a ratio of 3, indicating that three times as many people in Peterborough worked within 10km of their home, compared to those who travelled more than 10km to work. This contrasted with East Cambridgeshire (0.8), Huntingdonshire (0.96), Fenland (1.03) and South Cambridgeshire (1.09).

¹³ DESNZ, 2025. Sub-regional fuel poverty data 2025 (2023 data). [\[Link to source\]](#)



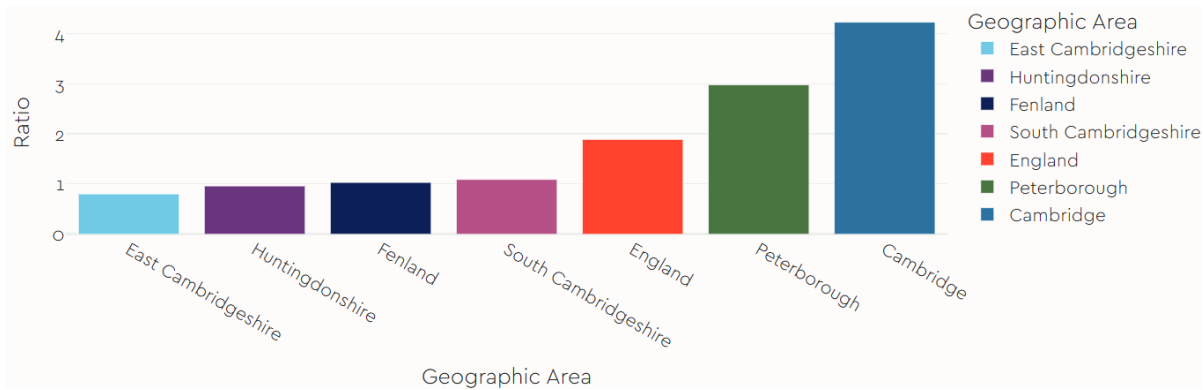


Figure 1-5: Employment Access Inequality (Ratio) by Local Authority Area & England in 2021

In C&P, patterns of commuting vary across the region according to the data. Urban areas such as Cambridge and Peterborough tend to have a higher proportion of residents working within shorter distances of their homes, while in rural parts, a greater share of the population travels over 10km to work as reflected in a ratio below 1. Although this trend may be linked to increased travel time and costs, it's important to note that commuting behaviours are shaped by a range of factors, including local employment opportunities, transport infrastructure, and individual preferences.

2 Hardship

2.1 Fuel Poverty Rate

Fuel poverty¹⁴ concerns the inability of households to afford adequate heating and energy services to maintain a comfortable and healthy living environment. Fuel poverty in England is measured using the Low-Income Energy Efficiency (LILEE) fuel poverty metric, which considers a household to be fuel poor if:

- It is living in a property with an energy efficiency rating of band D, E, F or G
- Its disposable income would be below the poverty line

It should be noted that fuel poverty was measured based on required energy bills rather than actual spending to ensure that households that were actively reducing their energy bills by not heating their homes (e.g. to limit costs) were not overlooked.

Combined Authority Assessment: According to the data, across the C&P region, 35,000 households were in fuel poverty as of 2023, representing 9.2% of all C&P's households. As plotted in [Figure 2-1](#), the proportion of households in fuel poverty in C&P was lower than the comparator combined authority areas with South Yorkshire Combined Authority's rate of 15%, and West Yorkshire Combined Authority's rate of 14.6% sizeably higher, whilst West of England Combined Authority's rate of 9.4% was marginally higher. However, all three combined authority comparator areas, along with C&P and England, had a drop in their fuel poverty rate in 2023 from the previous year of 2022.

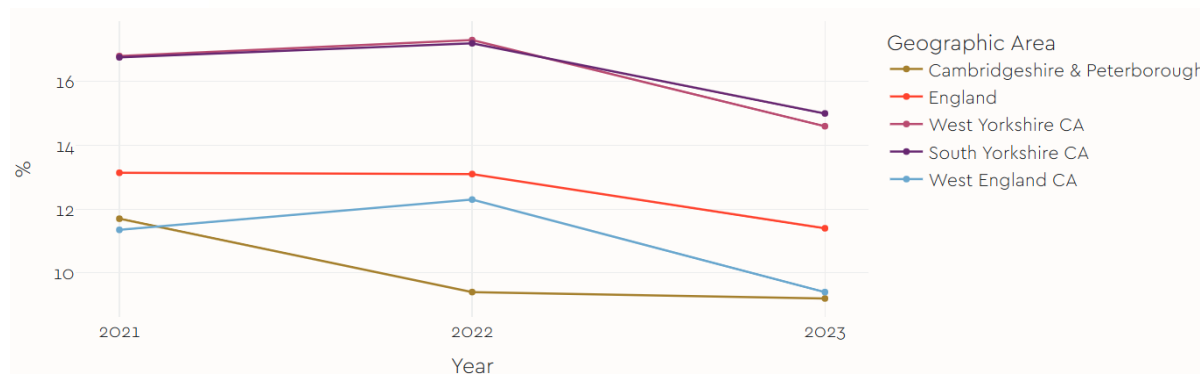


Figure 2-1: Proportion of all Households in Fuel Poverty (%) by Combined Authority Area & England and by Year

¹⁴ DESNZ, 2025. Sub-regional fuel poverty data 2025 (2023 data). [\[Link to source\]](#)



Local Authority Assessment: Figure 2-2 plots the percentage of households that were in fuel poverty by local authority area in C&P. It shows that in 2023, Fenland had the highest fuel poverty rate at 10.4 %, though it was below England’s rate of 11.4%. East Cambridgeshire had the second highest percentage of households in fuel poverty, at 10.1%. South Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire both had the lowest fuel poverty rate in the C&P region at 8.4%. Cambridge was the only other local authority area in C&P that had an increase in the fuel poverty rate in 2023, reaching 9.2% from 8.9% the previous year.

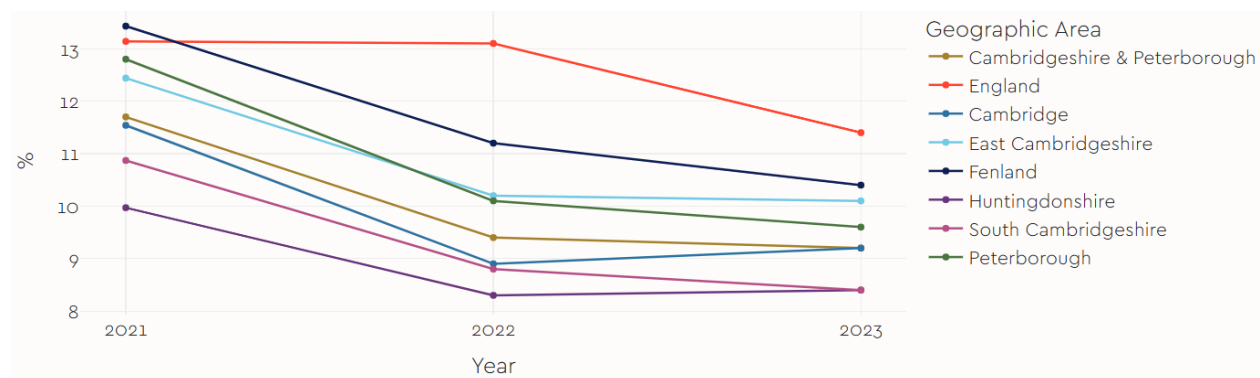


Figure 2-2: Proportion of all Households in Fuel Poverty (%) by Local Authority Area & England and by Year

Figure 2-3 maps the fuel poverty data in 2023 by LSOA in C&P. The map shows that the majority of LSOAs in the C&P region had a fuel poverty rate between 7% and 11% across all households. As might be expected, there is a spatial pattern similarity with the areas with a high proportion of EPC ratings above a C. There were some LSOAs within which the proportion of households in fuel poverty was significantly above the average of 9.2% across the C&P region, the highest of which was 22.7%.

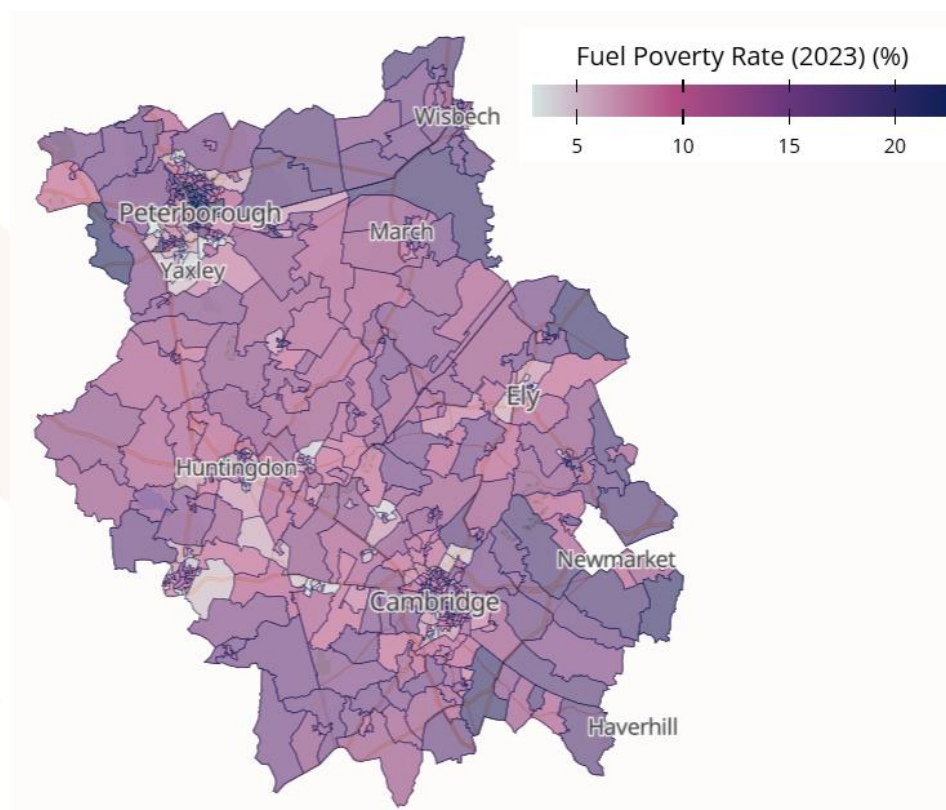


Figure 2-3: Fuel Poverty Rate (%) by C&P LSOA in 2023

The two LSOAs with a fuel poverty rate above 20% were located in central Peterborough. It is also interesting to note that there were some LSOAs in the C&P region with a particularly low fuel poverty



rating. These were located in the outer areas of Peterborough and Cambridge, with several LSOAs, for example, around Orton Wistow and Cambourne, having a fuel poverty rating of 3% or less.

2.2 Food Parcels

Food banks provide emergency food assistance to individuals and families experiencing financial hardship and are unable to afford an adequate supply of food. The Trussell Trust, as an anti-poverty charity and community of food banks, releases annual statistics reporting the number of food parcels that it delivers and the number of food banks within each local authority area¹⁵. The number of food parcels per 1,000 people was calculated by dividing the number of food parcels distributed within the C&P local authority areas by the number of people within the corresponding local authority area.

Note that, whilst the Trussell Trust is the largest chain of food banks in the UK, there are over 1,000 independent food banks in the UK, whose data is not included in this metric. The Trussell Trust advises against directly comparing between local authority areas since there are several other factors that could drive variation in the data. A food parcel constitutes a three- or seven-day supply of food for one person, being either an adult or a child. Both sizes of food parcel are included in the data. A family of four would receive four food parcels each time they visit the food bank. Also note that the number of in 2025 food parcels were matched to mid-2024 population estimates and will be revised upon the release of mid-2025 population estimates.

The data of the number of food parcels per 1,000 people is plotted in Figure 2-4. The data shows a sustained rise in food parcel distribution across C&P from 2018 to 2025, with levels consistently higher than the England average, aside from South Cambridgeshire. Total food parcel rates for the combined C&P area rose steadily from 25 per 1,000 people in 2018 to a peak of 42 in 2023 and 2024, before a slight decline in 2025, which mirrors England's pattern.

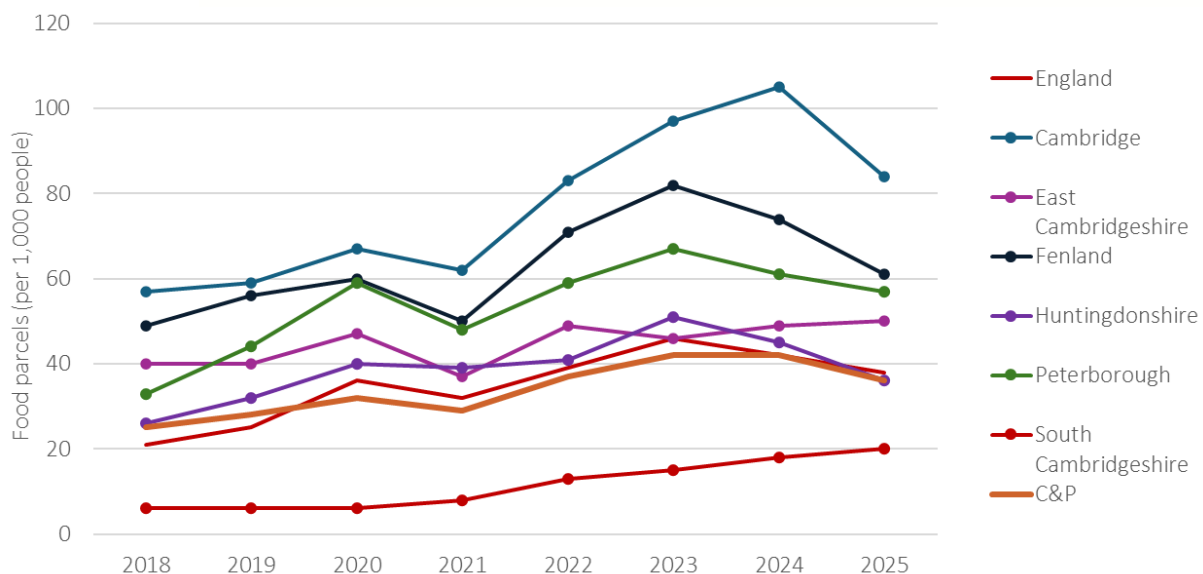


Figure 2-4: Food Parcels (Count per 1,000 people) by Local Authority Area & England and by Year

Figure 2-5 and Figure 2-6 chart the number of food parcels per 1,000 people subset into adults (aged 16+) and children (aged 0 to 15). The most striking pattern is the disproportionate increase in food parcels for children, which grew faster and to a higher magnitude than those for adults. This suggests intensifying child poverty and household insecurity, particularly from 2020 onward, when pandemic-related pressures first sharply escalated need.

Cambridge consistently records the highest rates across the area, with particularly extreme values for children. By 2024, Cambridge reached 251 parcels per 1,000 children, three times

¹⁵ Trussell Trust, 2025. End of Year Stats. [\[Link to source\]](#)



the national average, before falling slightly in 2025 but remaining elevated. Fenland, Huntingdonshire and Peterborough also show persistently high need, especially for children, where all three areas peak in 2023 at levels with Fenland and Peterborough far above both C&P and England overall. This contrasts starkly with South Cambridgeshire, which remains the lowest need district throughout, though even here child parcel rates nearly quadruple between 2018 and 2025.

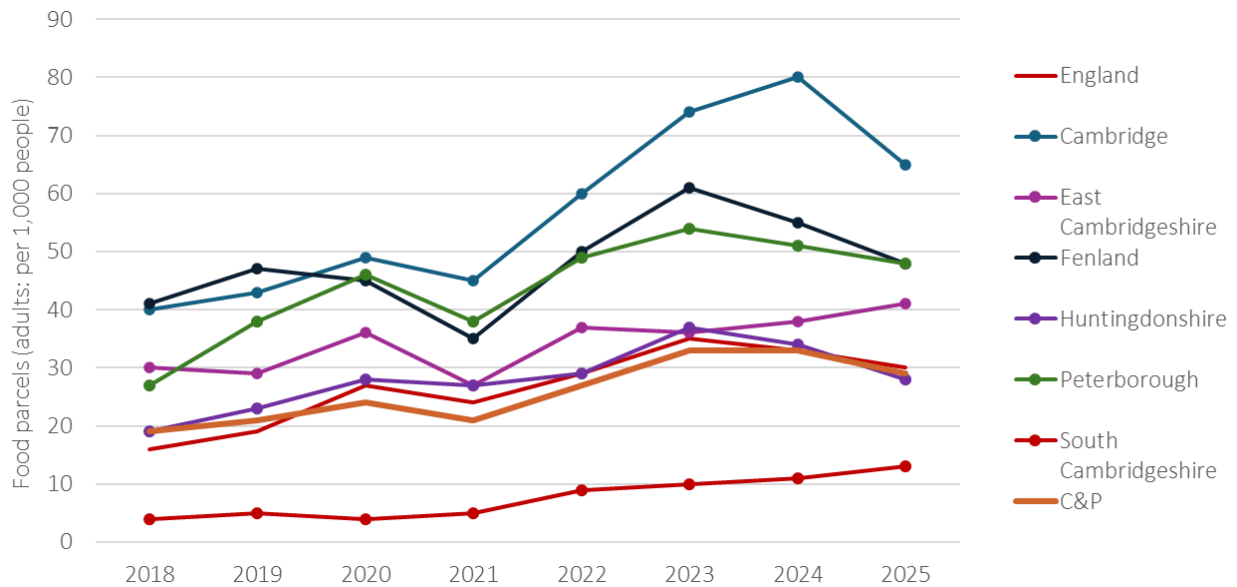


Figure 2-5: Food Parcels Distributed to Adults (Count per 1,000 adult population) by Local Authority Area & England and by Year

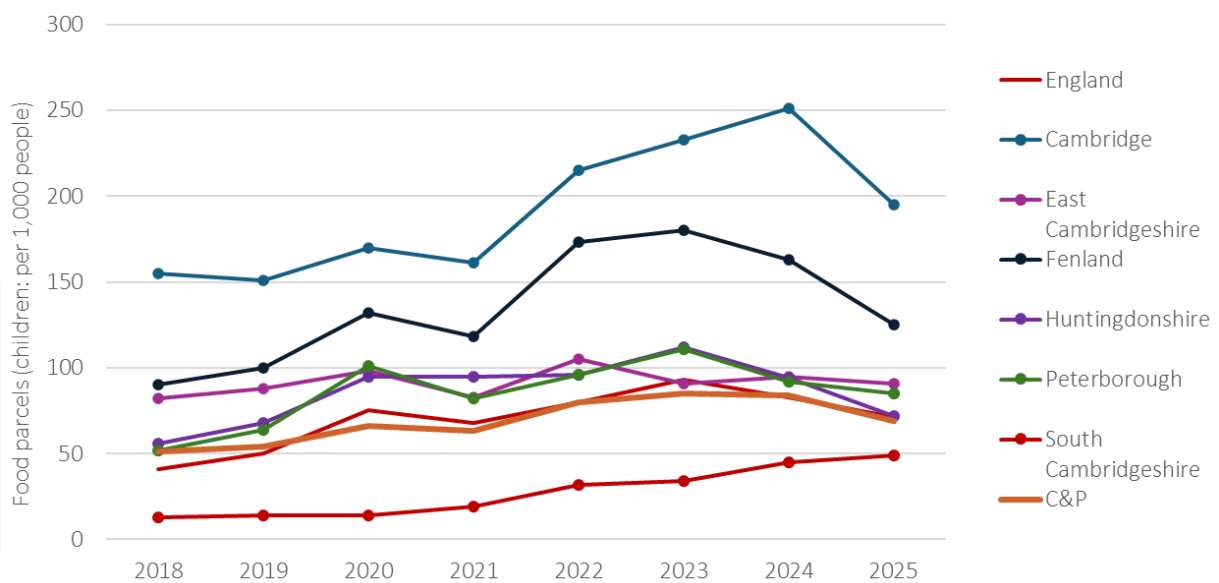


Figure 2-6: Food Parcels Distributed to Children (Count per 1,000 child population) by Local Authority Area & England and by Year

3 Health Inequality

3.1 Inequality in Life Expectancy

Inequality in life expectancy at 65¹⁶, is a measure of how life expectancy compares between the most and least deprived areas across local areas. It measures how much life expectancy varies with deprivation, that is, the relationship between life expectancy and deprivation across all deprivation deciles. Life expectancy at 65 represents the average number of years a person would expect to live based on contemporary mortality rates in relation to the age-specific mortality rates for each area. Higher values denote greater inequality.

Although the inequality in life expectancy for England and for regions is available, they should not be considered as comparators to local authority area figures. England, by considering the full range of deprivation and mortality across the whole country, is not a suitable benchmark for local authority areas, which consider the range of deprivation and mortality within much smaller geographies.

Figure 3-1 and Figure 3-2 plot the estimated number of years for males and females separately.

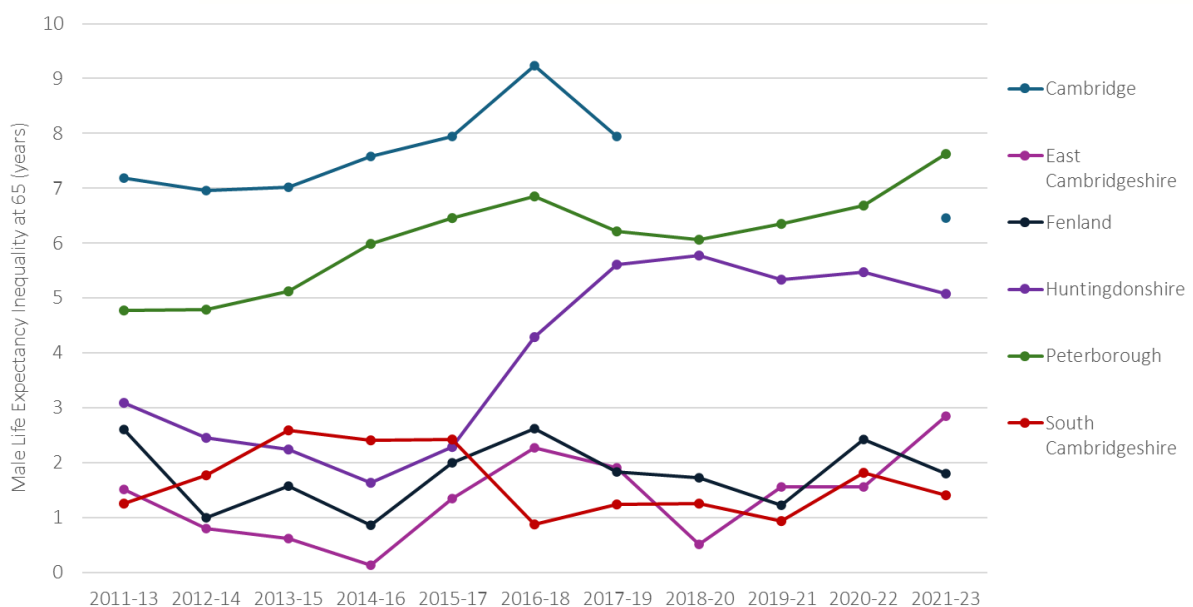


Figure 3-1: Male Inequality in Life Expectancy at 65 (Years) by Local Authority Area & England and by Year

¹⁶ OHID, 2025. Public Health Profiles: Inequality in life expectancy at 65. [\[Link to source\]](#)



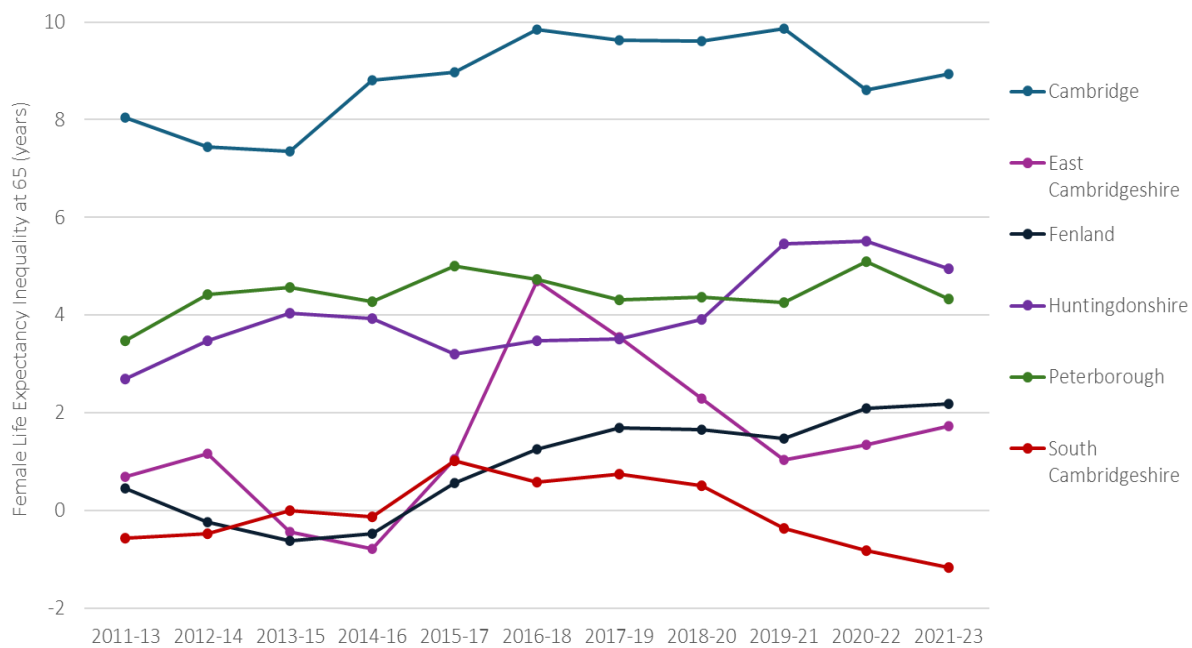


Figure 3-2: Female Inequality in Life Expectancy at 65 (Years) by Local Authority Area & England and by Year

Cambridge had the largest inequality in life expectancy years, locally, in every year for females, a consistent pattern across time. Females in the least deprived areas of Cambridge were expected to live around 9 years longer than females in the most deprived areas of Cambridge. For males, in recent years, there was a grouping of lower life expectancy inequality with East Cambridgeshire, Fenland and South Cambridgeshire having the least disparity in life expectancy in the C&P region. Notably, for females, the same grouping existed, yet South Cambridgeshire’s values moved into negative territory in the last three years of data. Most recently, South Cambridgeshire had a life expectancy inequality of minus 1.2 years. While confidence intervals overlap between districts (not shown for brevity) meaning differences are not statistically significant in many years, the long-term pattern still indicates higher inequality in Cambridge and Peterborough compared with the region’s other districts.

3.2 Health Deprivation

The Indices of Deprivation¹⁷ provided a set of relative measures of deprivation for all LSOAs within England, based on seven domains of deprivation. The Health Deprivation and Disability Domain measured the risk of premature death and the impairment of quality of life through poor physical or mental health. Each LSOA was assigned a score, which was then ranked across all LSOAs in England. A rank of 1 indicated that the LSOA was the most deprived LSOA in England, whilst the rank of 33,755 was assigned to the least deprived LSOA. Therefore, the higher the rank represented by a lower number, the more deprived the LSOA was. Whilst the Indices of Deprivation assigned scores to each LSOA in England, the scores may be aggregated to a local authority level. The analysis, by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government, produced a weighted average Health Deprivation and Disability Domain score of LSOAs within a local authority, according to its population, where 1 is the most deprived local authority and 296 is the least.

It is important to note that inequalities in health outcomes can be masked in areas that are affluent on average but contain small pockets of significant deprivation. In such locations, poorer outcomes experienced by disadvantaged communities may be diluted when data are

¹⁷ MHCLG, 2025. English indices of deprivation 2025. [\[Link to source\]](#)



aggregated at neighbourhood or city level, giving an impression of overall good health that does not reflect the lived reality for all residents. This issue is particularly relevant in Cambridge, where high levels of prosperity and strong average outcomes can conceal marked disparities between wards and even within them. As a result, communities facing higher levels of deprivation may experience worse access to services, poorer health outcomes and reduced life expectancy, despite living alongside some of the most advantaged populations. This highlights the importance of using more granular data and place-based intelligence to identify need and target interventions effectively.

Figure 3-3 charts the Health Deprivation and Disability Domain rank by local authority area in C&P. Fenland had the highest rank at 68, whilst Peterborough had the second highest at 89. South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge had the lowest average ranks out of C&P's local authority areas with 283 and 258, respectively. South Cambridgeshire had a particularly low; only 13 ranks above the least deprived local authority area across all of England.

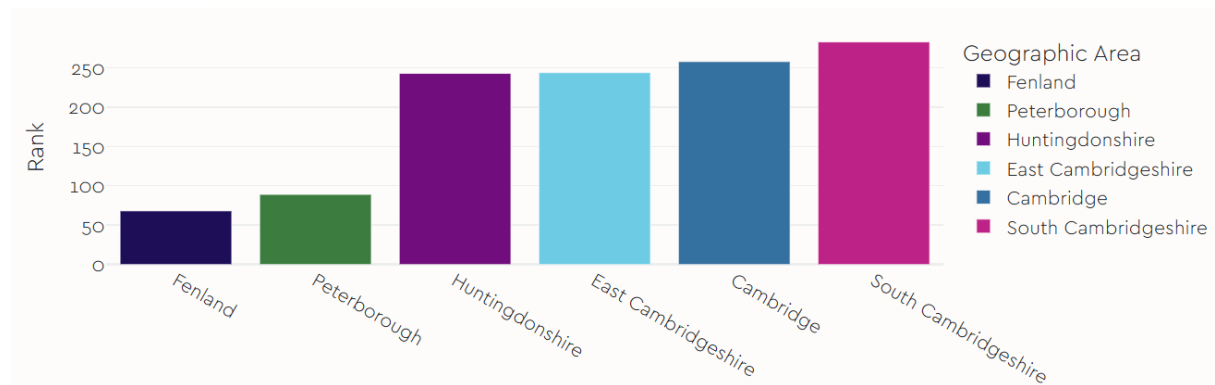


Figure 3-3: Health Deprivation and Disability Domain Rank of Average Score by Local Authority Area in 2025

Figure 3-4 maps the spatial distribution of ranks across all LSOAs in C&P. Overall, the majority of the LSOAs in the C&P region had a particularly low Health Deprivation and Disability Domain rank, with 68% having a rank in the bottom half (least deprived) of LSOAs in England. Most of these LSOAs are located in the southern areas of the region in South Cambridgeshire, East Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire and Cambridge. Significant areas of high deprivation can be seen across Peterborough and Fenland, which had the highest ranking deprived LSOA in C&P in the south of Wisbech. While Cambridge had some LSOAs with high deprivation, it also had the lowest ranking LSOA in the west of Cambridge at 33,753.

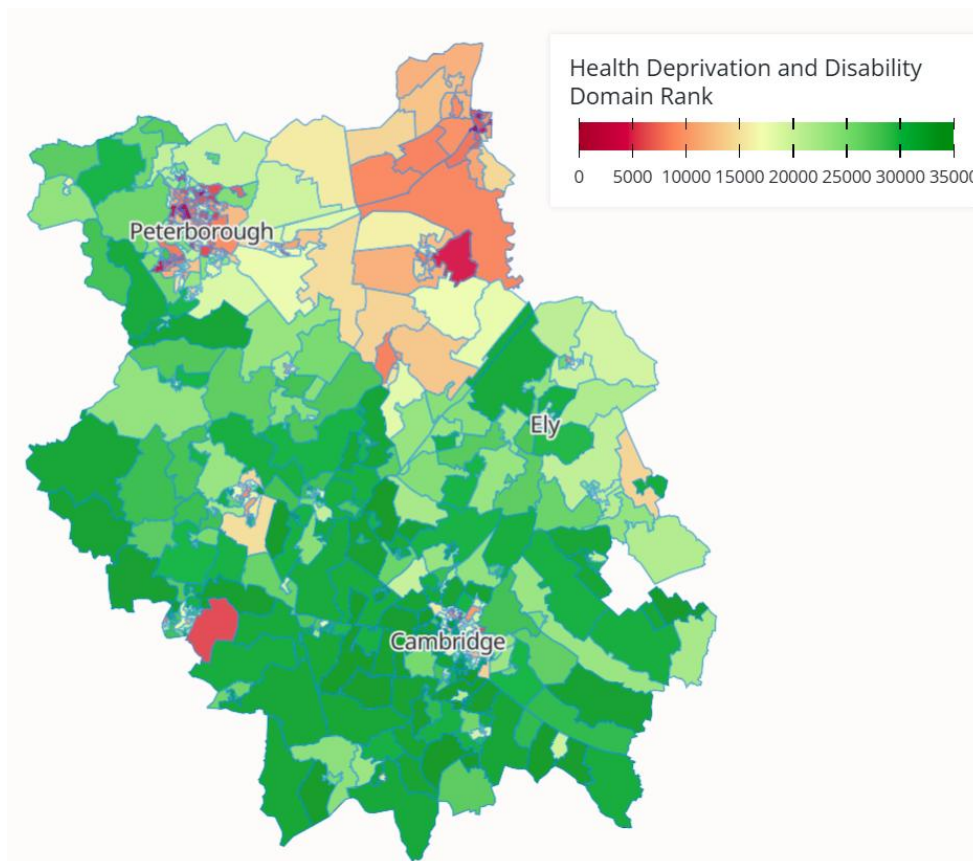


Figure 3-4: Health Deprivation and Disability Domain Rank by C&P LSOA in 2025

3.3 Premature Mortality Rate

Premature mortality¹⁸ was defined as any death under the age of 75, which is positively correlated with other determinants of health. The dataset provided the age-standardised rate of premature deaths per 100,000 of the under-75 population. Age-standardised means that the overall premature mortality rate was not affected by a higher number of deaths from an age group with a higher number of people of a particular age. Therefore, age standardisation adjusts for differences in the age distribution of populations to allow for fair comparisons.

Figure 3-5 plots the estimated premature mortality rate for C&P’s local authority areas between 2001-03 and 2022-24 on a three-year rolling average basis. It illustrates that the premature mortality rate for four of C&P’s local authority areas was mostly better than that of England for this whole period. Most recently, in 2022-24, South Cambridgeshire had the lowest rate of 238 per 100,000 population under 75 years of age, followed by East Cambridgeshire (256) and Huntingdonshire (297), which along with Cambridge (299), were all lower than England’s rate of 338. Additionally, both Fenland and Peterborough consistently had the highest levels of premature mortality in the C&P region and above that of England at 398 and 391 respectively in 2022-24.

¹⁸ OHID, 2025. Public Health Profiles. Indicator: Under 75 Mortality Rate from All Causes. [\[Link to source\]](#)

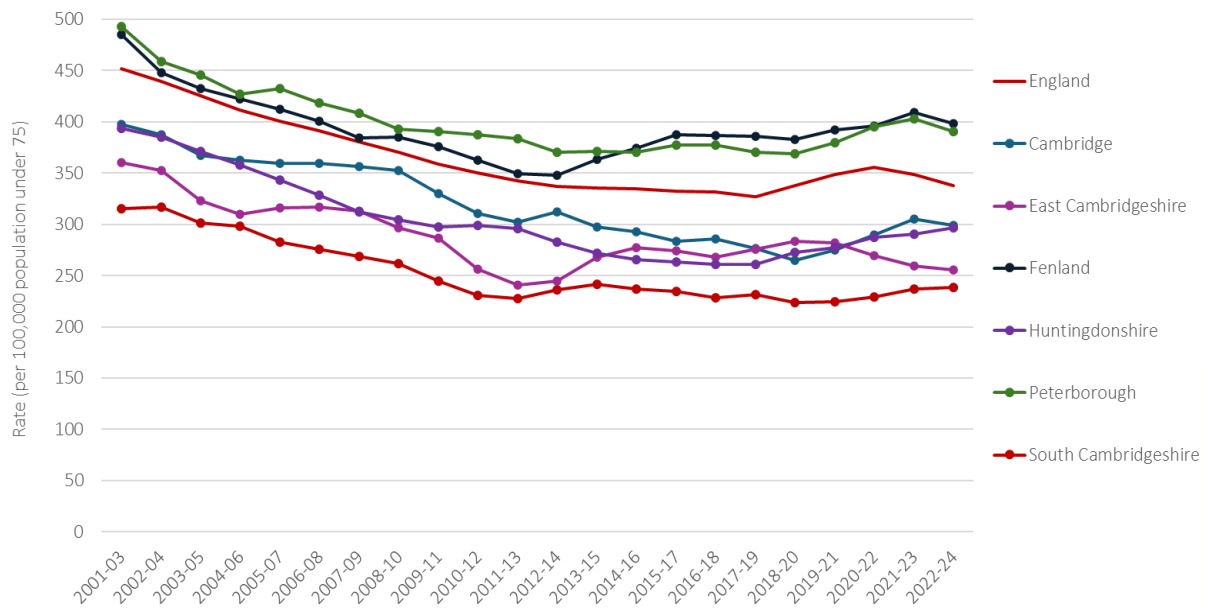


Figure 3-5: Premature Mortality Rate (per 100,000 population under 75) by Local Authority Area & England and by Year

The data were plotted for females and males separately, in Figure 3-6 and in Figure 3-7, which shows that the premature mortality rate was higher for males than it was for females in all years and local authority areas. In 2022-24, the highest disparity between females and males was seen in Fenland and Peterborough, both with a difference of 166 (more males than females per 100,000 population under 75), and the lowest was in East Cambridgeshire with 89. The plots also show that the same groupings across the local authority areas for all premature mortality also generally existed for both males and females, separately. That is, Peterborough and Fenland generally had the highest rate and above England in most years.

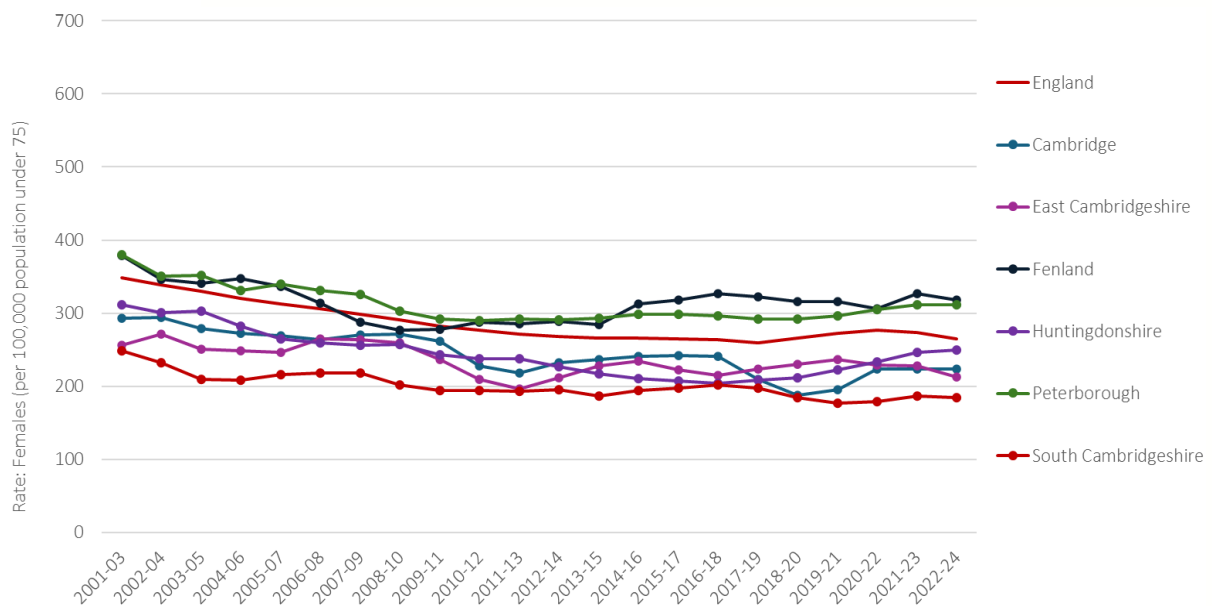


Figure 3-6: Premature Mortality Rate for Females (per 100,000 population under 75) by Local Authority Area & England and by Year

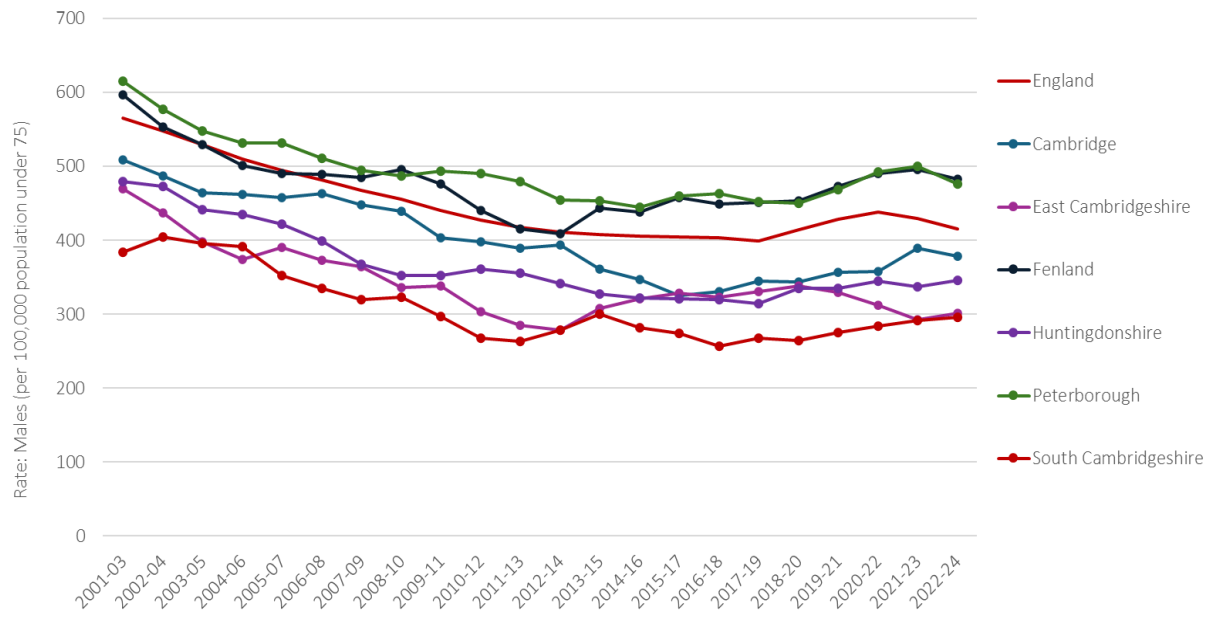


Figure 3-7: Premature Mortality Rate for Males (per 100,000 population under 75) by Local Authority Area & England and by Year

4 Childhood Inequality

4.1 Infant Mortality Rate

Infant mortality provides an indication of the general health of an entire population. The infant mortality rate¹⁹ is defined as the number of deaths of children under 1 year of age, per 1,000 live births. Figure 4-1 plots the infant mortality rate for each local authority area in the C&P region. It should be noted that each data point covered two-year periods and therefore no single year data is presented.

Table 4-1 contains the infant mortality rate for each local authority area in the region compared to England for the period 2022-24. The confidence intervals, show in brackets, are notably wide given the small numbers of infant deaths, which also makes it not possible to discern recent trends. However, whereas Peterborough had a statistically significantly higher rate than England (worse), the remaining local authority areas had a statistically similar rate to England.

Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire had the lowest infant mortality rate at 2.7 deaths per 1,000 live births, followed by East Cambridgeshire, which had 3.2. Peterborough had a significantly a higher rate of 7.4 deaths per 1,000 live births, which was over double that of the lowest local authority area.

Area	Infant Mortality Rate (per 1,000)	Compared to England
Cambridge	4.5 (2.6, 7.3)	Statistically similar
East Cambridgeshire	3.2 (1.4, 6.3)	Statistically similar
Fenland	4.9 (2.8, 8.1)	Statistically similar
Huntingdonshire	2.7 (1.5, 4.6)	Statistically similar
Peterborough	7.4 (5.6, 9.6)	Statistically higher
South Cambridgeshire	2.7 (1.5, 4.7)	Statistically similar
England	4.2 (4.1, 4.3)	-

Table 4-1: Infant Mortality Rate (per 1,000) by Local Authority Area & England in 2022-24. Note: The main number is the best estimate whilst the numbers in brackets show the likely range within which the true value falls, known as the lower and upper limits

A visual inspection of the plotted data indicates that there has been an upward trend in the infant mortality rate for the past three (rolling three-year average) periods in Cambridge, East Cambridgeshire, South Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

¹⁹ OHID, 2025. Public Health Profiles: Infant Mortality Rate. [\[Link to source\]](#)



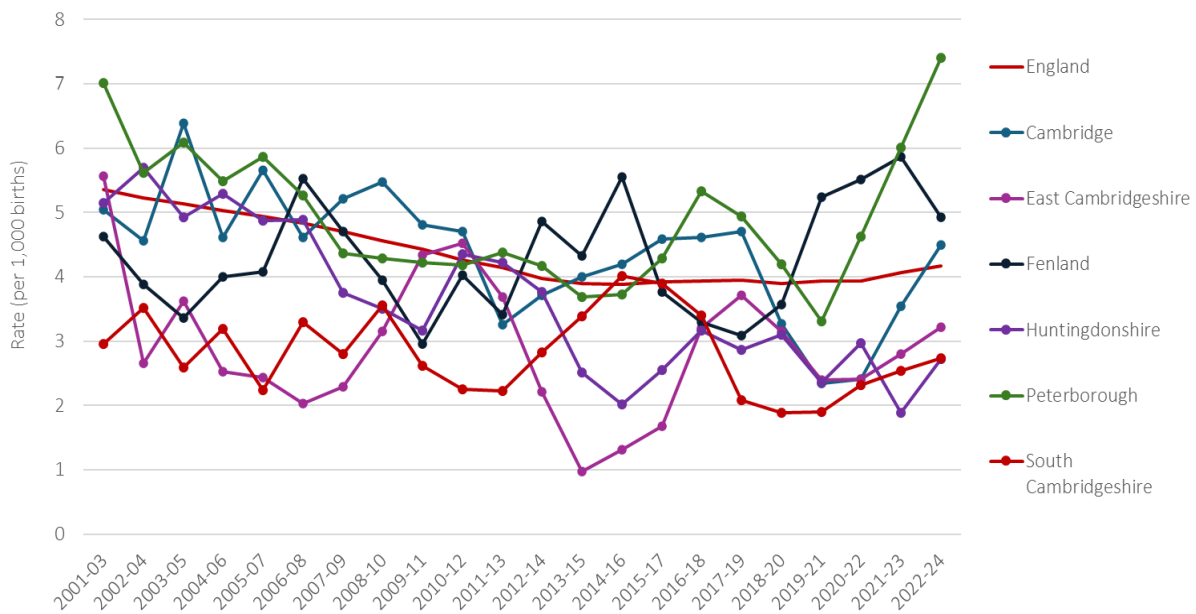


Figure 4-1: Infant Mortality Rate (per 1,000 live births) by Local Authority Area & England and by Year

4.2 Children In Low Income Families

This indicator provides insight into the number of children in the C&P region living in low-income families. Data supplied by the Department for Work and Pensions²⁰ calculated the percentage of children aged under 16 living in families with relatively low income in each local authority area. A low-income family was defined as a single parent, married or cohabiting couple living with any dependent children with an income 60% below the median income in that year.

Figure 4-2 plots the percentage of children in relatively low-income families for the C&P region from 2015 to 2024 by local authority area. The data shows that in every year of data, Peterborough and Fenland had the greatest proportions of children in relatively low-income families compared to the other local authority areas in the C&P region, and above the rate for the United Kingdom overall. In 2024, 32.1% (16,000 in total) of children in Peterborough and 26.1% (4,700 in total) of children in Fenland were in relatively low-income families. In comparison, only 9.3% (3,100 in total) of children in South Cambridgeshire were in relatively low-income families, the lowest of all C&P's local authority areas. Furthermore, South Cambridgeshire had the lowest rate of children in low-income families, locally, in each of the last eight years of data.

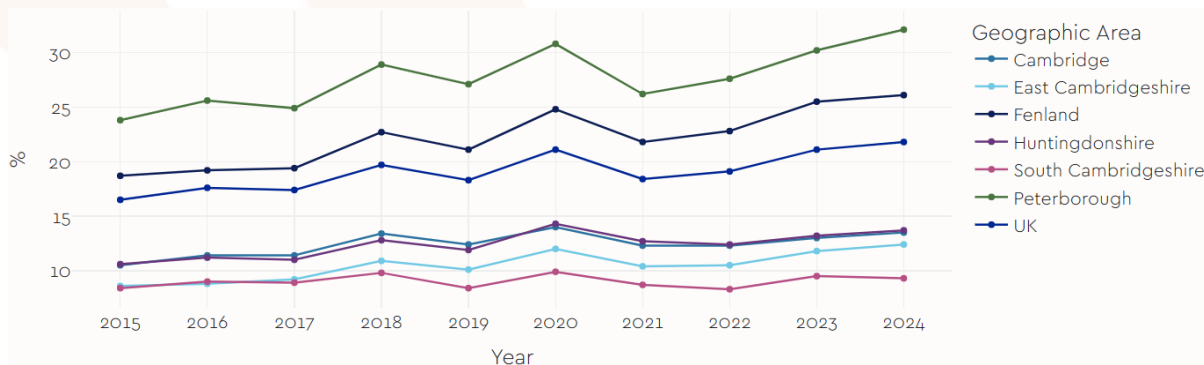


Figure 4-2: Children in Low Income Families (%) by Local Authority Area & United Kingdom and by Year

²⁰ DWP, 2025. Children in low income families: local area statistics. [\[Link to source\]](#)



Over the full time series of the data, the percentage of children in relatively low-income families increased from 23.8% (10,200 in total) to 32.1% (16,000 in total) in Peterborough and from 18.7% (3,200 in total) to 26.1% (4,700 in total) in Fenland. Elsewhere, South Cambridgeshire had the lowest increase between 2015 and 2024, rising from 8.4% (2,500 in total) in 2015 to 9.3% (3,100 in total) in 2024.

4.3 Childhood Obesity

Children who remain obese later into childhood face a higher risk of obesity-related health issues in adulthood. Overweight and obesity are defined as having a BMI above the 85th and 95th centiles of 1990 values, respectively. Data was collected from mainstream state schools in England for two age groups: Reception (ages 4–5) and Year 6 (ages 10–11), showing the percentage of obese children by local area²¹. Due to COVID-19 school closures, data collection ceased in March 2020, reducing measurements to 75% of previous years. Participation dropped in 2020–21, leading to suppression of unreliable local data, though national figures were still published.

Year 6

Table 4-2 contains the percentage of Year 6 children classified as obese by local authority area in 2024-25. Childhood obesity rates across C&P are below the national average overall, but mask significant variation between local areas. While most districts, including Cambridge, South Cambridgeshire, East Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire, have rates that are statistically lower than England, there are notably higher levels in parts of the region. Fenland and Peterborough stand out, with obesity rates significantly above the national average and more than double those seen in Cambridge, highlighting spatial inequalities across the region.

Area	Obesity (Percentage of Year 6 children)	Compared to England
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough	20.2 (19.4, 21.0)	Statistically lower
Cambridge	12.7 (10.8, 14.8)	Statistically lower
East Cambridgeshire	15.5 (13.3, 18.2)	Statistically lower
Fenland	26.4 (23.6, 28.9)	Statistically higher
Huntingdonshire	17.7 (16.1, 19.6)	Statistically lower
Peterborough	26.7 (25.1, 28.2)	Statistically higher
South Cambridgeshire	14.8 (13.3, 16.6)	Statistically lower
England	22.2 (22.1, 22.4)	-

²¹ OHID, 2025. Public Health Profiles: Obesity. [\[Link to source\]](#)



Table 4-2: Year 6 Children Classified as Obese (%) by Local Authority Area & England in 2024-25. Note: The main number is the best estimate whilst the numbers in brackets show the likely range within which the true value falls, known as the lower and upper limits

Figure 4-3 plots the data of the percentage of children classified as obese in Year 6 by local authority area in C&P, noting the data gap in the 2020-21 period. Data shows that the prevalence of obesity in Year 6 increased over time. In 2006-07, the prevalence was 15.9% in C&P, below the England rate of 17.5%. The C&P rate increased to 20.2% in 2024-25, though it remained below the England rate of 22.2%. However, the favourable comparison to England masks the variance across smaller geographies in C&P where obesity amongst children is much higher, such as MSOAs in Fenland (up to 34.6% in Wisbech North). This compared to the lowest rate amongst C&P's MSOAs, of 4.8% in West Chesterton (Cambridge). Peterborough and Fenland both had the highest rates of obesity in Year 6, with 26.7% and 26.4%, respectively in 2024-25. Cambridge, meanwhile, had the lowest rate at 12.7%.

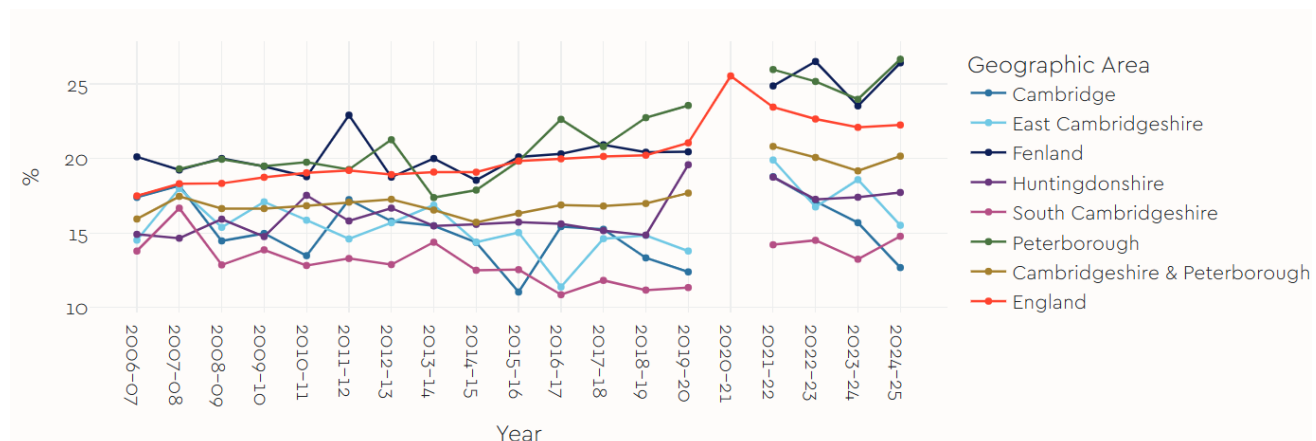


Figure 4-3: Year 6 Obesity Prevalence (%) by Local Authority Area & England and by Year

Reception

Table 4-3 contains the percentage of Year 6 children classified as obese by local authority area in 2024-25. Obesity rates among Reception-aged children in C&P are lower than the national average overall, with most areas performing better than England. Cambridge, South Cambridgeshire, and East Cambridgeshire have notably low rates, while Huntingdonshire is also below the national average. However, this positive overall picture is less consistent than for older children, with Fenland and Peterborough showing rates that are broadly in line with England rather than significantly lower. This suggests emerging inequalities are already present at an early age, though they are less pronounced than those observed at Year 6.

Area	Obesity (Percentage of Reception children)	Compared to England
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough	8.7 (8.2, 9.4)	Statistically lower
Cambridge	5.2 (4.0, 7.0)	Statistically lower
East Cambridgeshire	6.5 (5.3, 8.7)	Statistically lower
Fenland	9.3 (7.8, 11.5)	Statistically similar

Huntingdonshire	9.0 (7.7, 10.4)	Statistically lower
Peterborough	11.3 (10.2, 12.6)	Statistically similar
South Cambridgeshire	6.9 (5.7, 8.2)	Statistically lower
England	10.5 (10.4, 10.6)	-

Table 4-3: Reception Children Classified as Obese (%) by Local Authority Area & England in 2024-25. Note: The main number is the best estimate whilst the numbers in brackets show the likely range within which the true value falls, known as the lower and upper limits

Figure 4-4 plots data of the percentage of children classified as obese in Reception by local authority area, by year. In 2006-07, the prevalence of obesity among Reception-aged children in the C&P region was 8.2%, lower than the England rate of 9.9%. In 2024-25, the prevalence increased to 8.7% in C&P compared to England’s higher rate of 10.5%, where an increase was also seen from 2006-07. In the latest data covering 2024-25, obesity rates amongst reception aged children were only above England’s rate in Peterborough (11.3%). Cambridge had the lowest rate across C&P’s local authority areas, at 5.2%, followed by East Cambridgeshire (6.5%) South Cambridgeshire (6.9%).

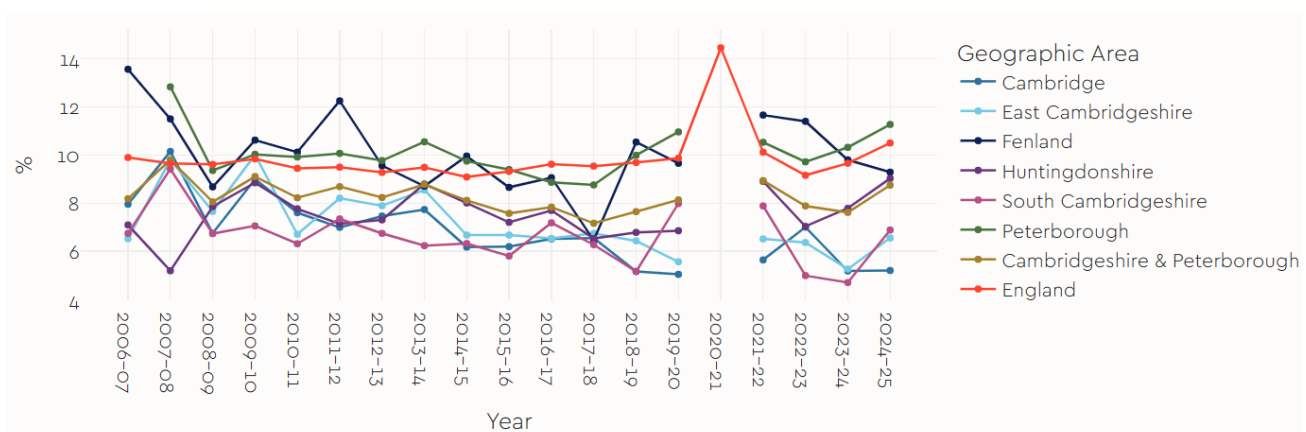


Figure 4-4: Reception Obesity Prevalence (%) by Local Authority Area & England and by Year

Figure 4-5 shows trends in Reception-aged childhood overweight and obesity across local authority areas over time, revealing consistent spatial inequalities. Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire maintain lower levels across most measures, while Fenland and Peterborough exhibit higher and more variable rates, particularly for more severe obesity. The contrast becomes more pronounced at higher severity levels, indicating that inequalities in childhood health outcomes persist and deepen across the region.

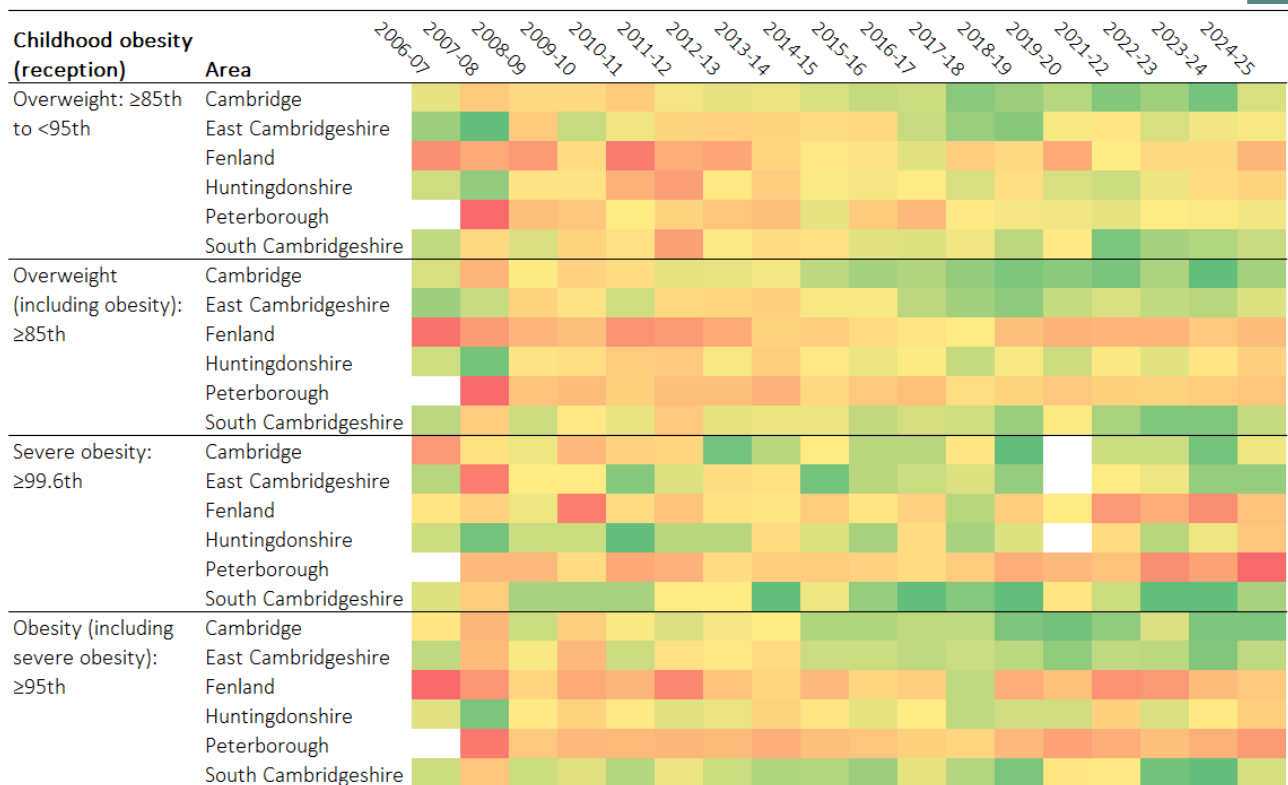


Figure 4-5: Heatmap of Childhood Overweight and Obesity Trends (Reception age) by Severity and Local Authority Area. Note: white spaces denote missing data

Figure 4-6 shows trends in childhood overweight and obesity among Year 6 children across local authority areas over time, highlighting more pronounced and persistent inequalities than seen at younger ages. Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire consistently exhibit lower levels across most measures, while Fenland and Peterborough show higher and more variable rates, particularly for severe obesity. These differences become clearer over time and are most evident in the more extreme categories, suggesting that inequalities in childhood health outcomes widen as children get older and become increasingly entrenched across the region.

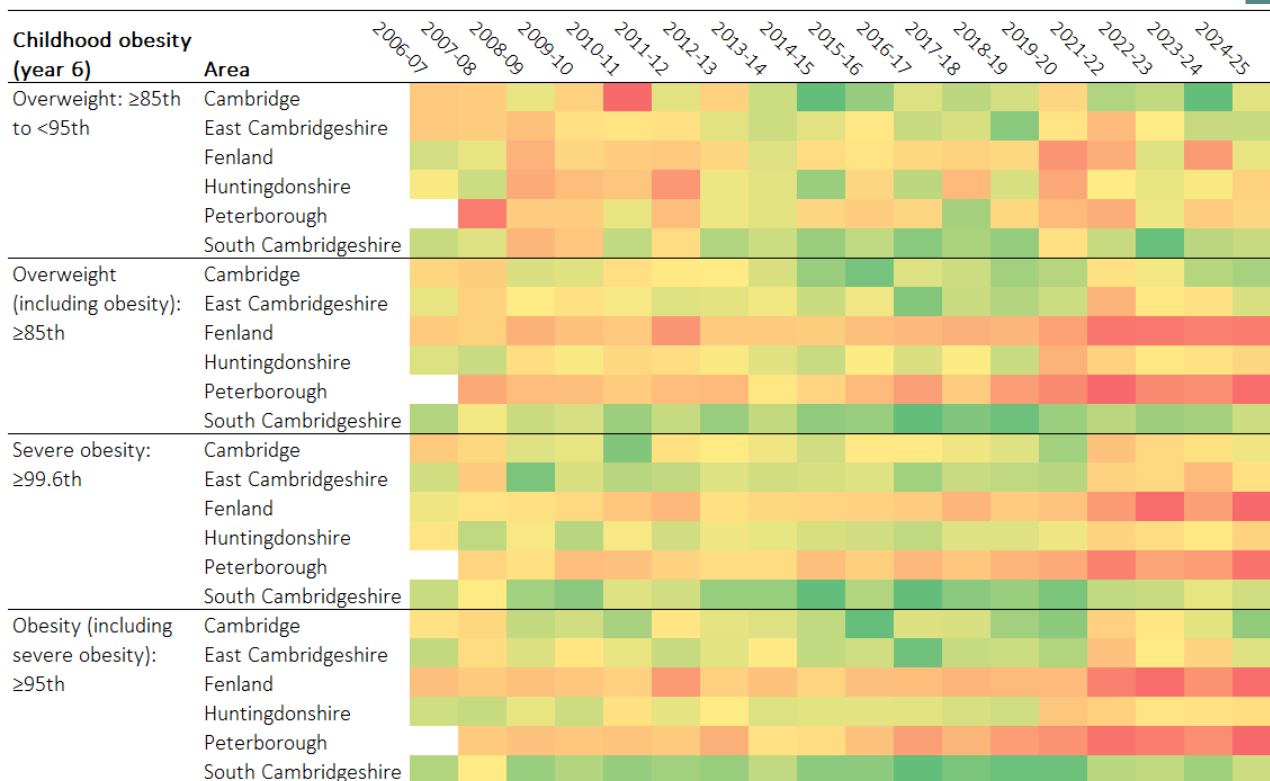


Figure 4-6: Heatmap of Childhood Overweight and Obesity Trends (Year 6) by Severity and Local Authority Area. Note: white spaces denote missing data

4.4 Young Carers

A young carer is a person aged 25 or under who cares for another person who, due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction, is not able to fully support themselves. Data for this indicator was gathered as part of the 2021 Census²². The dataset provides the count of young carers, aggregated in age groups of 5-17 years old, 18-24 years old and 5-24 years old, as a percentage of the total population count in the corresponding age group.

Figure 4-7, Figure 4-8 and Figure 4-9 chart the data on young carers by age group as at the 2021 census. The data is aggregated by local authority area, alongside the rate for England. Considering carers aged 5-24, all local authorities in the C&P region had a comparable or lower percentage of young carers than England (2.5%), except Fenland (2.9%). South Cambridgeshire had a rate of 1.9%, the lowest in the C&P region.

Young carers in the age range 5-17 were most prominent in Fenland, continuing to have the highest rate in young carers across the C&P region, at 1.8%, compared to England’s rate of 1.4%. The proportion of young carers in the age range 18-24 was highest in Peterborough at 5.3% followed closely by Fenland at 5.2%. Both Peterborough and Fenland were therefore above the rate of England (4.6%). Cambridge had the lowest percentage of young carers in this age range at 3.3%.

²² ONS, 2023. Unpaid care by age, sex and deprivation, England. [\[Link to source\]](#)



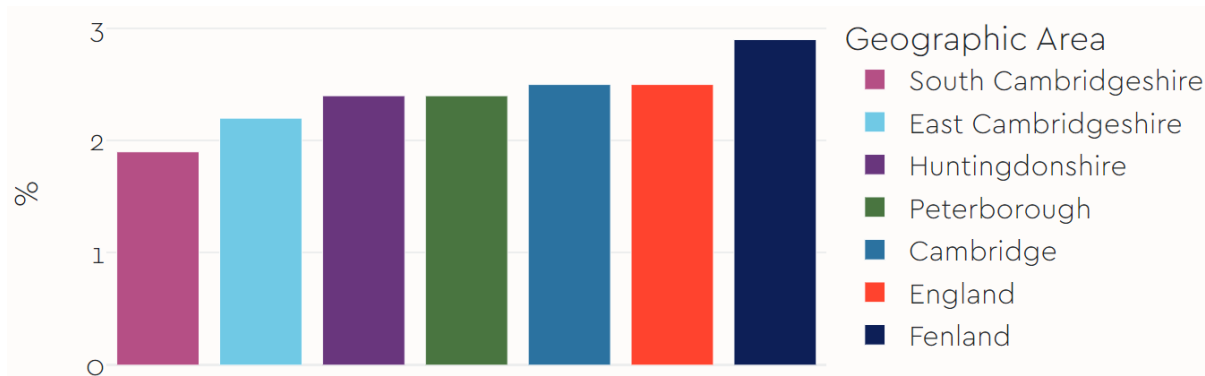


Figure 4-7: Young Carers Aged 5-24 (%) by Local Authority Area and England in 2021

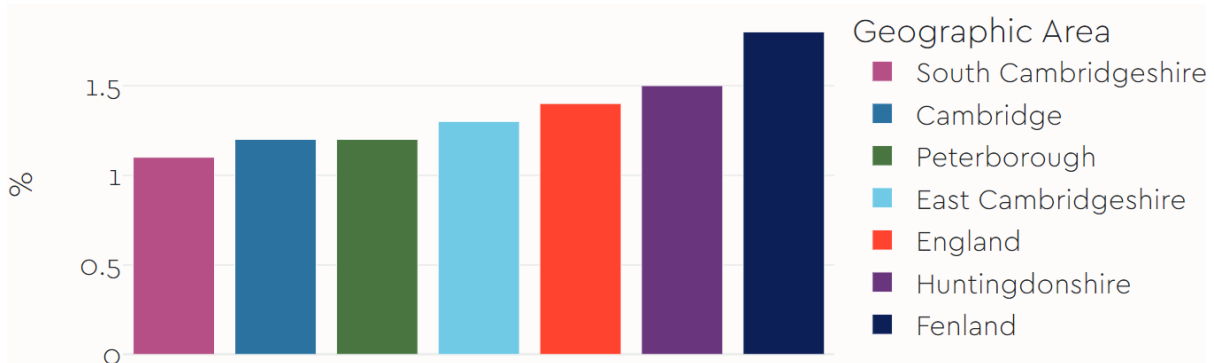


Figure 4-8: Young Carers Aged 5-17 (%) by Local Authority Area and England in 2021

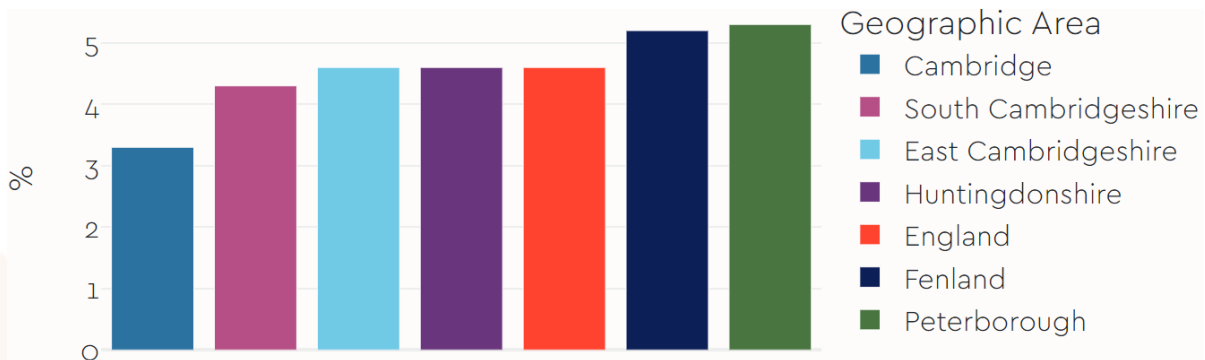


Figure 4-9: Young Carers Aged 18-24 (%) by Local Authority Area and England in 2021