

Poverty JSNA

A Review of Poverty Across Cheshire East,
5 December 2022

Executive Summary

Please see the full report for more details and references

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Opening words

Whilst, we have learnt a lot from this review by looking at many different sources of information, it is the words of our residents that really bring home just how challenging experiencing poverty can be.

“Without the help of the food bank I would be very hungry and probably in hospital or a police cell by now.”¹

“The foodbank was there when we really needed it, it was an absolute lifeline...”²

[1] Middlewich food bank. Available from: <https://middlewichdistrict.foodbank.org.uk/about/> Accessed on: 29 October 2022,

[2] Willow Parish Food Friends. Available from: <https://wilmslowparish.co.uk/food-friends/> Accessed on: 29 October 2022

Introduction

- There is wide concern about more people experiencing poverty and rising costs of living across the United Kingdom, which is predicted to continue and worsen.
- Health and wellbeing are closely linked to the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age.
- Evidence shows that those living in more deprived areas experience shorter lives than those in less deprived areas, and that they spend more of their lives experiencing ill health.

What do we mean by poverty?

Poverty can be defined and described in the following ways:

- “Living in poor quality housing, being exposed to poor quality environmental conditions, poor quality work and unemployment, not being able to afford nutritious food and sufficient heating for example all impact on health. Poverty is also stressful. Coping with day-to-day shortages, facing inconveniences and adversity and perceptions of loss of status all affect physical and mental health in negative ways.”¹
- “When a person’s resources (mainly their material resources) are not sufficient to meet their minimum needs (including social participation).”²
- An individual is in **absolute poverty** if they are living in households with income below 60% of the 2010/11 median, uprated for inflation. By using an income threshold that is fixed in time, this measure looks at how living standards of low-income household are changing over time.³

[1] Institute of Health Equity, (2022), Health Equity in England: The Marmot Review 10 Years On, Available from: <https://www.health.org.uk/publications/reports/the-marmot-review-10-years-on>, Accessed on : 01 June 2022..

[2] Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Available from: <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/definition-poverty>. Accessed on : 01 June 2022.

[3] House of commons Library, Poverty in the UK: statistics, (13/04/2022), Available from: <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn07096/>, Accessed on: 01 June 2022.

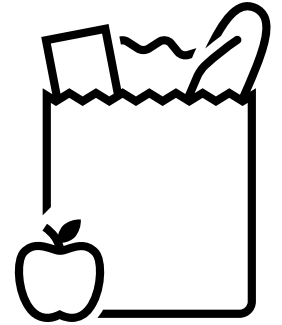
What were our recommendations
following this review?

Across Cheshire East we need to:

1. **Work together with people with lived experience** to improve our understanding of the current and emergent challenges and to work out solutions for these. This will be supported by the Cheshire East People's Panel project and learning from the Transfer of Care hubs (see full report for more information).
2. **Widely share our knowledge of services and community assets** available to support people experiencing poverty, including those online and those available in person.
3. **Encourage professionals to take a holistic approach** to consider the why and the wider implications for the individual.
4. Encourage as many people who work with our residents as possible to **signpost** them to the support available. For example, schools, employers and health and care professionals. We need to make sure they are equipped to do this.
5. Work to **reduce the stigma** associated with seeking support, where possible.
6. Ensure support and advice is **accessible** for people with disabilities, where there are language barriers, where people are not online or where they do not have transport. Our community engagement teams will be important in highlighting gaps to us.
7. Further **explore approaches to addressing the rising rates of long term unemployment.**
8. **Explore ways to reduce and address the challenges in housing provision** and are mindful of these challenges when developing approaches to address fuel poverty.

In supporting people with **food poverty** we need to:

- Develop approaches to address food poverty that consider supply, sustainability and transport issues and focusing on areas at greatest need.
- Note the good practice examples and our areas of increased need.



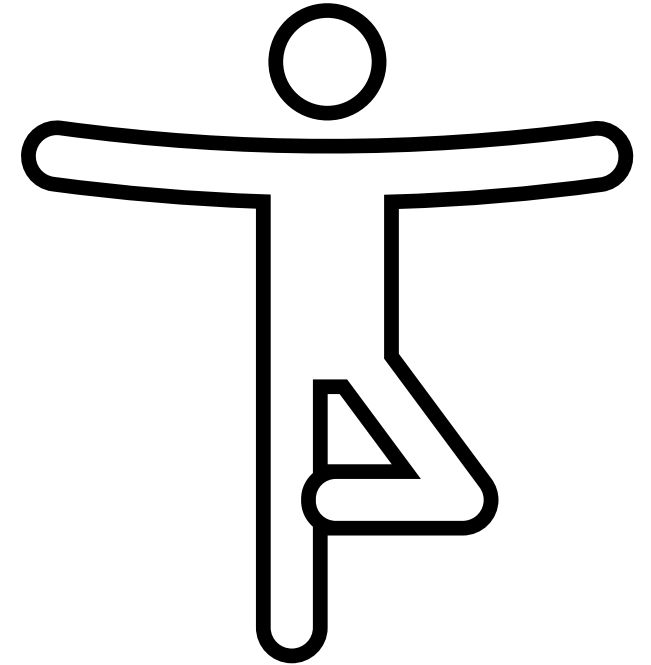
In supporting people with **fuel poverty** we need to:

- Implement actions from the cold homes audit (see full report for more details) to ensure our local approach is following the best practice guidance in supporting people experiencing cold homes.
- Note the good practice examples and our areas of increased need.
- Use the Cheshire and Merseyside fuel poverty dashboard to inform our approach.



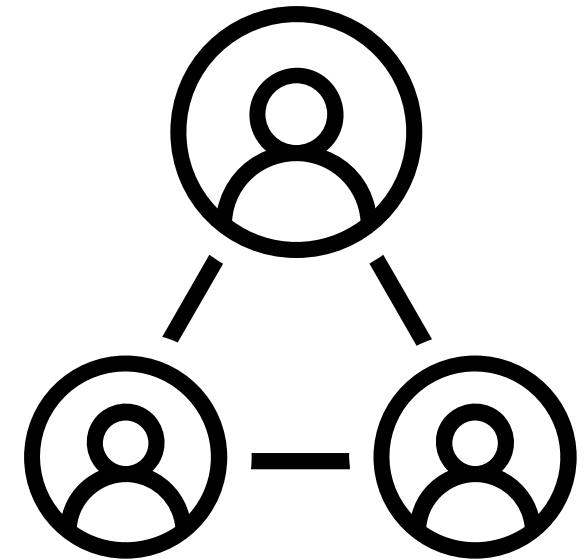
In supporting those experiencing poverty with their **health and wellbeing** we need to:

- Make sure we make the most of opportunities to **prevent illness** in deprived areas and particularly in Crewe. We need to promote signposting to support services across health and care including for support with transport, lifestyle change, NHS health checks, vaccination and cancer screening. We also need to make the most of schemes such as CORE20Plus5. (See full report for more details.)
- Explore ways of **supporting our areas with the highest patient GP ratios**, particularly in areas of deprivation.
- Make the most of, and **develop further, opportunities to walk or cycle safely** within deprived urban areas with low car ownership.



To support this, we also need to:

- **Advocate** for the needs of our residents experiencing poverty regionally and nationally.
- Consider the recommendations from the **Crewe JSNA**, once completed, as a key area of deprivation and poverty.
- Link in with local and regional **digital inclusion approaches**.
- **Link in with Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care System work** to address poverty.
- Identify a selection of **key measures** to monitor regularly so that we can see changes in the experience of poverty in relation to the support we provide and also external pressures, over time.



It is important to note:

- Whilst the review didn't highlight any differences in experience in relation to marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, and religion, the review did not specifically investigate these issues in detail.
- **Approaches to addressing poverty will be required in many areas across Cheshire East and not just in the most deprived areas**, and approaches should be tailored to meet this varied need appropriately.

What were the findings that led to these recommendations?

Experience of cost of living pressures, poverty and deprivation varies across Cheshire East

- Our most deprived areas in Cheshire East are seen within **Crewe and Macclesfield, but also** within smaller areas of **Congleton, Alsager and Handforth**¹.
- **People in households with disabilities, single parents, and single adults without children are more likely to experience poverty**², there is also regional evidence to suggest that people from certain ethnic groups are more likely to experience food insecurity².
- Across Cheshire East, many **food banks have seen an increase in demand. Decreases in food donations** have also been seen³. Food banks often support **young men and single parent households**⁴.
- The **condition of housing stock as well as access to affordable accommodation are challenges**. There are currently thousands of applications for social housing^{5,6}.
- Our residents with lived experience who use food banks tell us that experiencing food poverty is **extremely stressful and isolating**. People can be reluctant to seek support due to a sense of **stigma**⁷.

[1] Deprivation in Cheshire East, Available from: <https://cheshireeast.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=531d13bb1eb24f918c71259138dc000c>, Access on: 01 October 2022.

[2] Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) benefits statistics: February 2022, (25/02/2022), Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/dwp-benefits-statistics-february-2022/dwp-benefits-statistics-february-2022>, Accessed on : 01 June 2022

[3] Cheshire East Food Network Consultation First Draft June 2022

[4] Local Foodbanks in Cheshire East. Information from Email Correspondence: 10th August 2022

[5] BRE Integrated Dwelling Level Housing Stock Modelling and Database for Cheshire East Council, Published on: April 2019.

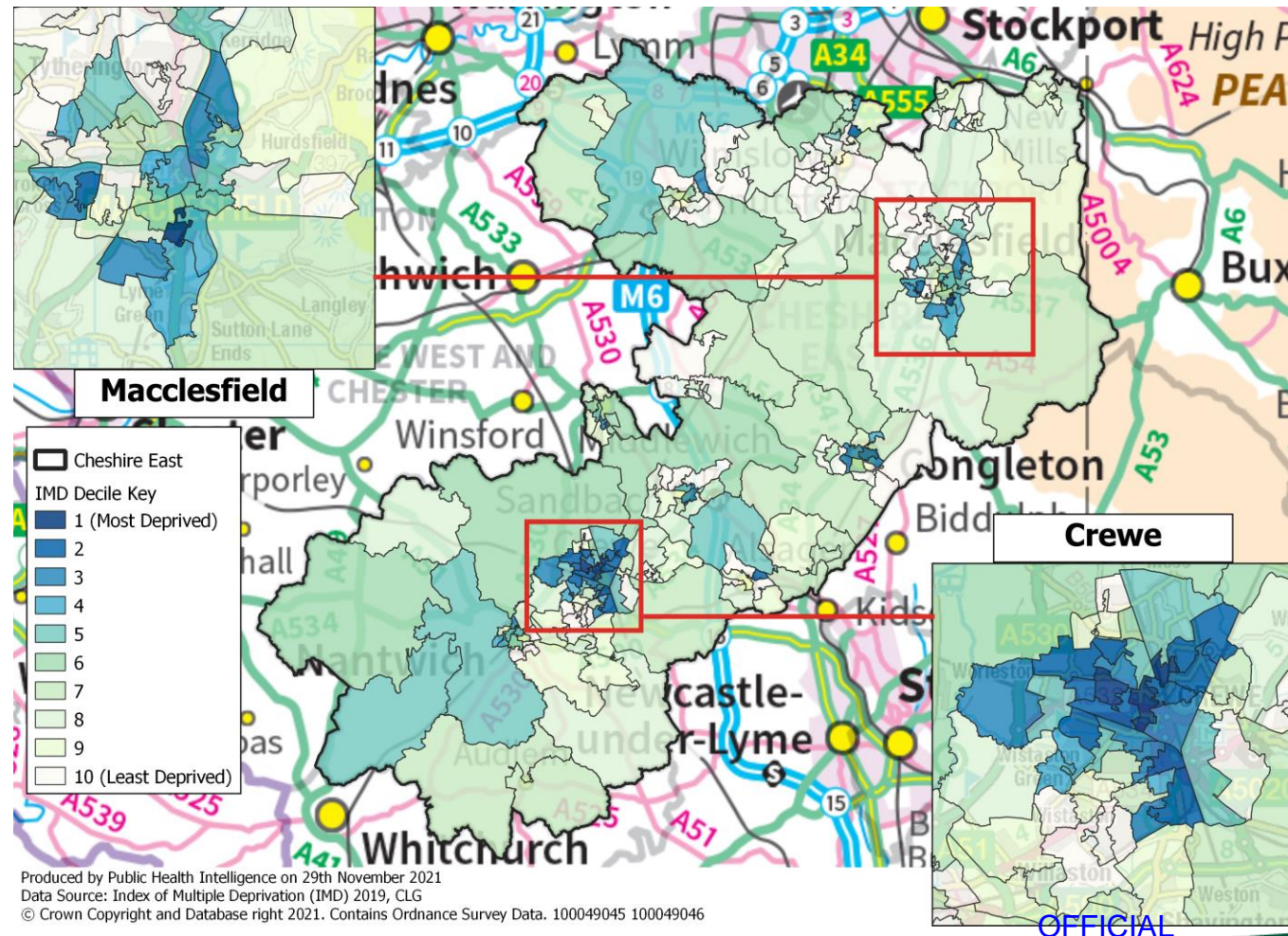
[6] Insights from Cheshire East Housing Team

[7] Middlewich Food bank, Available from: <https://middlewichdistrict.foodbank.org.uk/2021/10/21/gina-needed-the-foodbank-and-now-we-need-he>, Accessed on: 29 October 2022, [5] Cheshire Live News, Available from: <https://www.cheshire-live.co.uk/news/social-supermarket-opens-crewe-help-15287347>, Accessed on: 29 October 2022, [6] Nantwich food bank twitter page, Available from: <https://twitter.com/nantwichfb>

Accessed on: 29 October 2022, About Middlewich food bank, Available from: <https://middlewichdistrict.foodbank.org.uk/about/>, Accessed on: 29 October 2022

In our most deprived urban areas there are greater levels of all forms of poverty and also debt^{1,2}.

Cheshire East Deprivation Map IMD 2019¹



The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) combines information from the seven domains to produce an overall relative measure of deprivation^[1].

These domains include: The IMD includes domains relating to income, employment, socioeconomic status or class (often based on job type), education, housing and ownership of specific goods or items.

The dark blue areas are our most deprived areas.

[1] Deprivation in Cheshire East, Available from: <https://cheshireeast.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=531d13bb1eb24f918c71259138dc000c>, Access on: 01 October 2022.

[2] Cheshire East Council. Cheshire East Council Tax Arrears, 2019/20.

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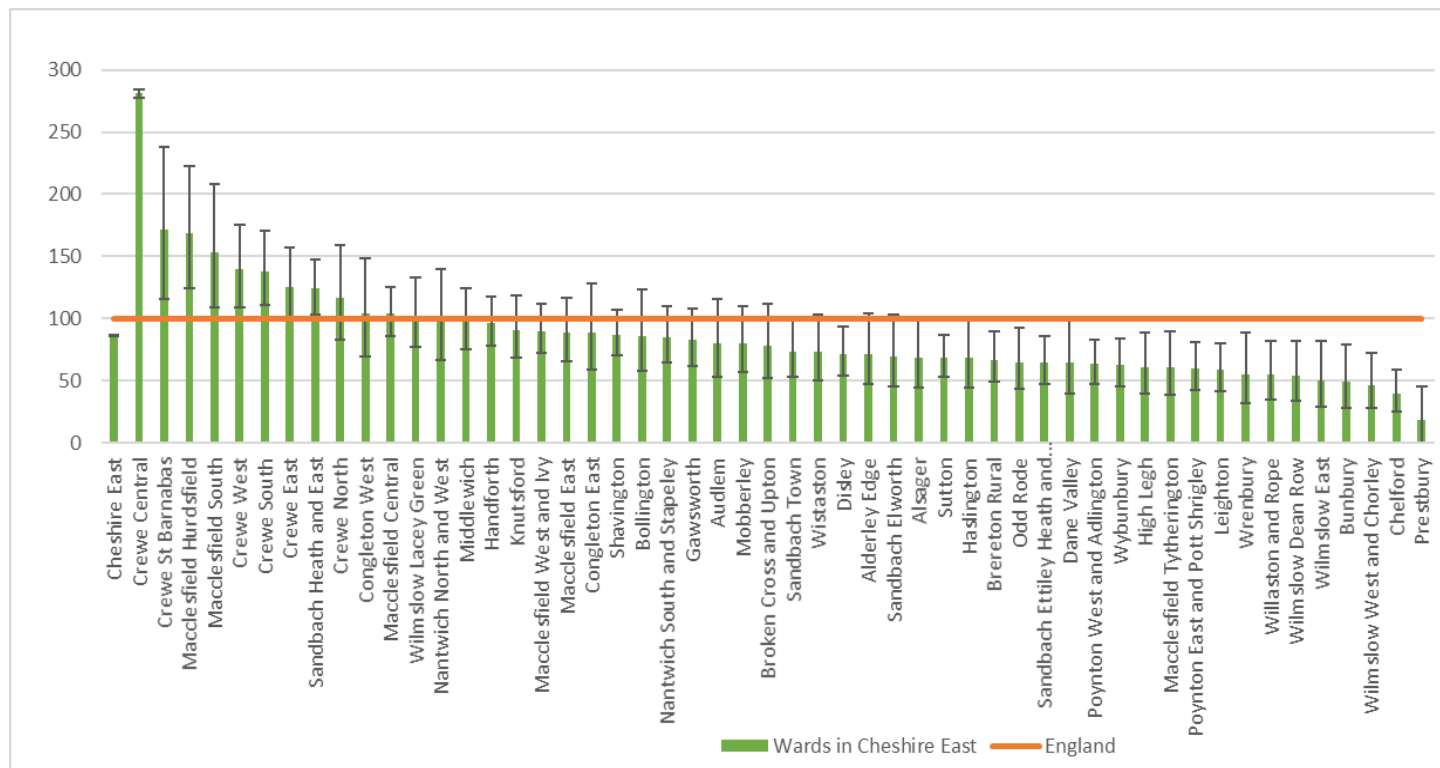
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There is evidence of worse health and wellbeing in some of our most deprived areas. Some of these areas experience higher numbers of deaths that could be preventable¹.

Under 75 Mortality ratio from causes considered preventable (including cardiovascular, cancer, respiratory, liver diseases), 2016-20

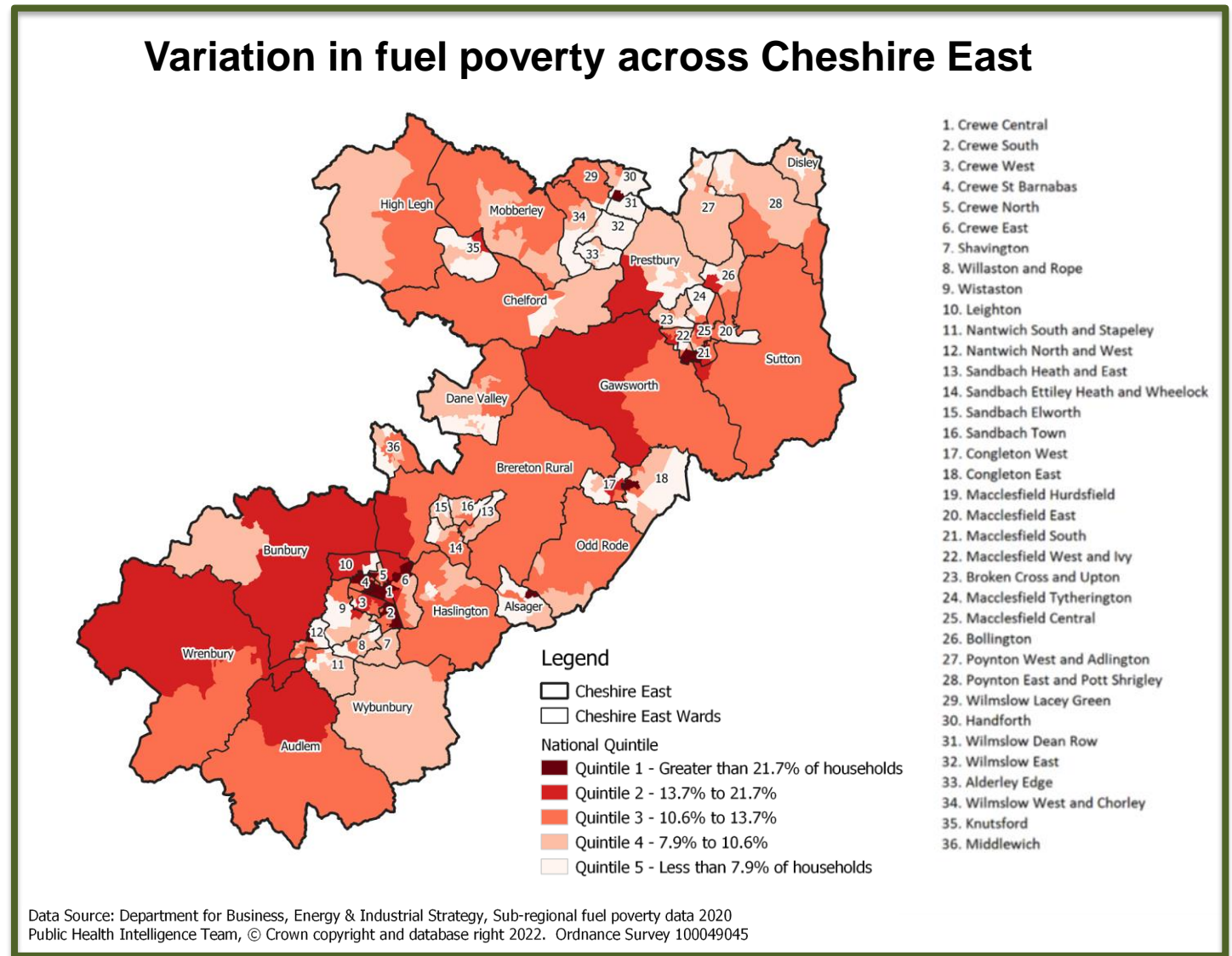


This graph shows us how people in certain wards in **Crewe and Macclesfield** are more likely to die before 75 years of age from conditions that may have been prevented.

1. Source: Office for Health Improvement & Disparities. Public Health Profiles. Available from: <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk> © Crown copyright 2022. Accessed on: 23 September 2022. Note: SMRs – are indirectly standardised ratios which are used for small numbers to explain outcome in comparison to England where England is always 100. In this case it is aggregated to 5 years at ward level due to small numbers at lower geographical area.

In our rural areas there are particular challenges around:

- Fuel poverty. (see map.)¹.
- Access to affordable housing.^{2,3}
- Variable levels of transport access.^{4,5}.



1. Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy. Sub-regional fuel poverty data 2020
2. BRE Integrated Dwelling Level Housing Stock Modelling and Database for Cheshire East Council, Published on: April 2019.
3. Insights from Cheshire East Housing Team
4. ONS Mid-2020 Population Q2 2020, Vehicle Licensing Statistics. Department for Transport and Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency
5. ONS Mid-2020 Population Estimates. CAB Local Service level data extracts.

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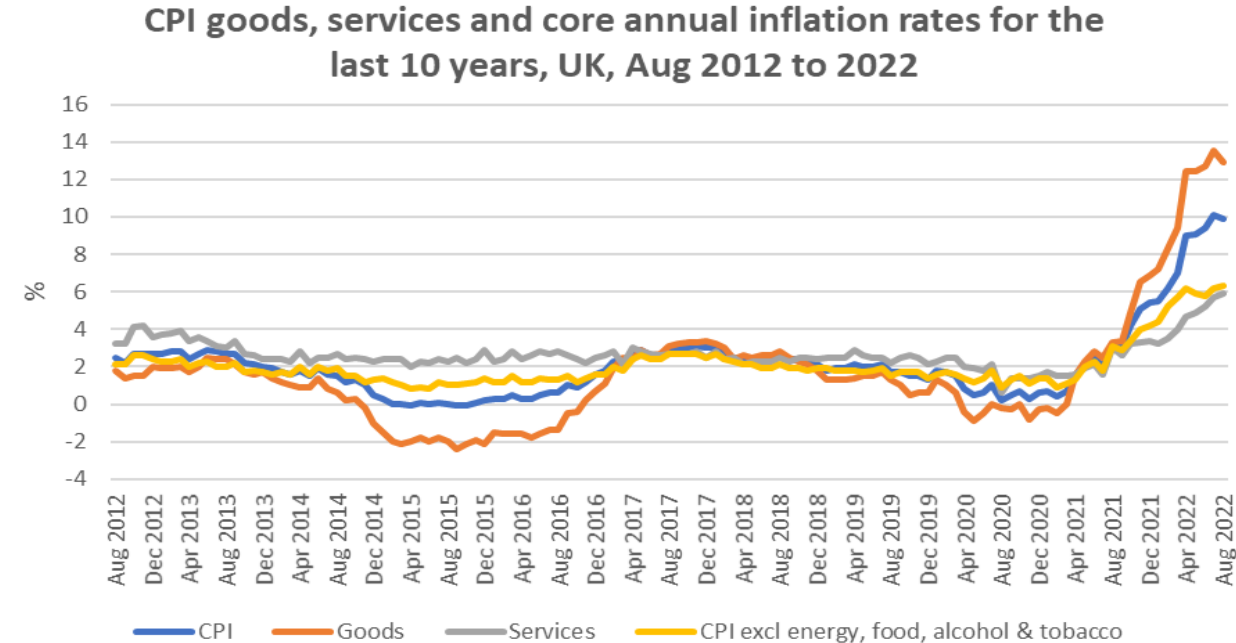
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There is also evidence of changing patterns in poverty.

- There are challenges within our less deprived areas, where there have been signs of increased demand for support¹.
- Long term unemployment rates are increasing across Cheshire East².
- It is likely that cost of living pressures and the experience of poverty will increase over the coming months.
- The projection from the Resolution foundation is that absolute poverty in the UK will rise by 1.3 million in 2022/23, including 500,000 children^{3,4}. This is the largest rise for some time. This could equate to over 9000 people, including over 3000 children in Cheshire East. However, the actual number is difficult to predict in view of changeable forecasts and variation across the country.



The graph above shows how there has been a significant increase in inflation rates for goods, and services over 2022⁵.

1. Citizens Advice Bureau Information Portal, Cheshire East

2. ONS Labour Statistics via CE Research and Consultation Team

3. Resolution Foundation, (24/03/2022), Inflation Nation putting spring statement into context, Available from <https://www.resolutionfoundation.org/publications/inflation-nation/>, Accessed on: 01 June 2022.

4. "An individual is in absolute poverty if they are living in households with income below 60% of the 2010/11 median, uprated for inflation. By using an income threshold that is fixed in time, this measure looks at how living standards of low-income household are changing over time", House of commons Library, Poverty in the UK: statistics, (13/04/2022), Available from: <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn07096/>, Accessed on: 01 June 2022.

5. Consumer price inflation, UK: August 2022, (05/10/2022), Available from:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/bulletins/consumerpriceinflation/august2022>, Accessed on: 01 October 2022.

New Government policies have been introduced to support with the Cost of Living Crisis including¹:

- More support available to poorer households.
- £400 non-repayable energy grant for all households, taken off energy bills in Autumn 2022.
- £650 payments for households receiving means-tested benefits. Pensioners will get an additional £300 and people receiving disability payments an additional £150.
- a £150 council tax rebate for households in council tax band A to D.
- a 5p cut to fuel duty.
- an increase to the amount someone can earn before National Insurance Contributions (NICs) are charged.
- Warm Homes Discount (for vulnerable homes) being increased from £140 to £150 and eligibility expanded by a third.
- Additional £500million to the Household Support Fund:
 - The Fund will also be extended from October to March 2023.
 - The Fund supports vulnerable households meet daily needs including food, clothing and utilities and is distributed via local Councils .
- An Energy Profits Levy to raise additional funding.

[1] Francis-Devine et al (2022) Rising cost of living. House of Commons Library. 17August 2022. Available from: <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9428/>, Accessed on: 23 August 2022

In addition, there is wide variety of local support for people experiencing poverty across Cheshire East detailed within the review and available on the LiveWell website.

However,

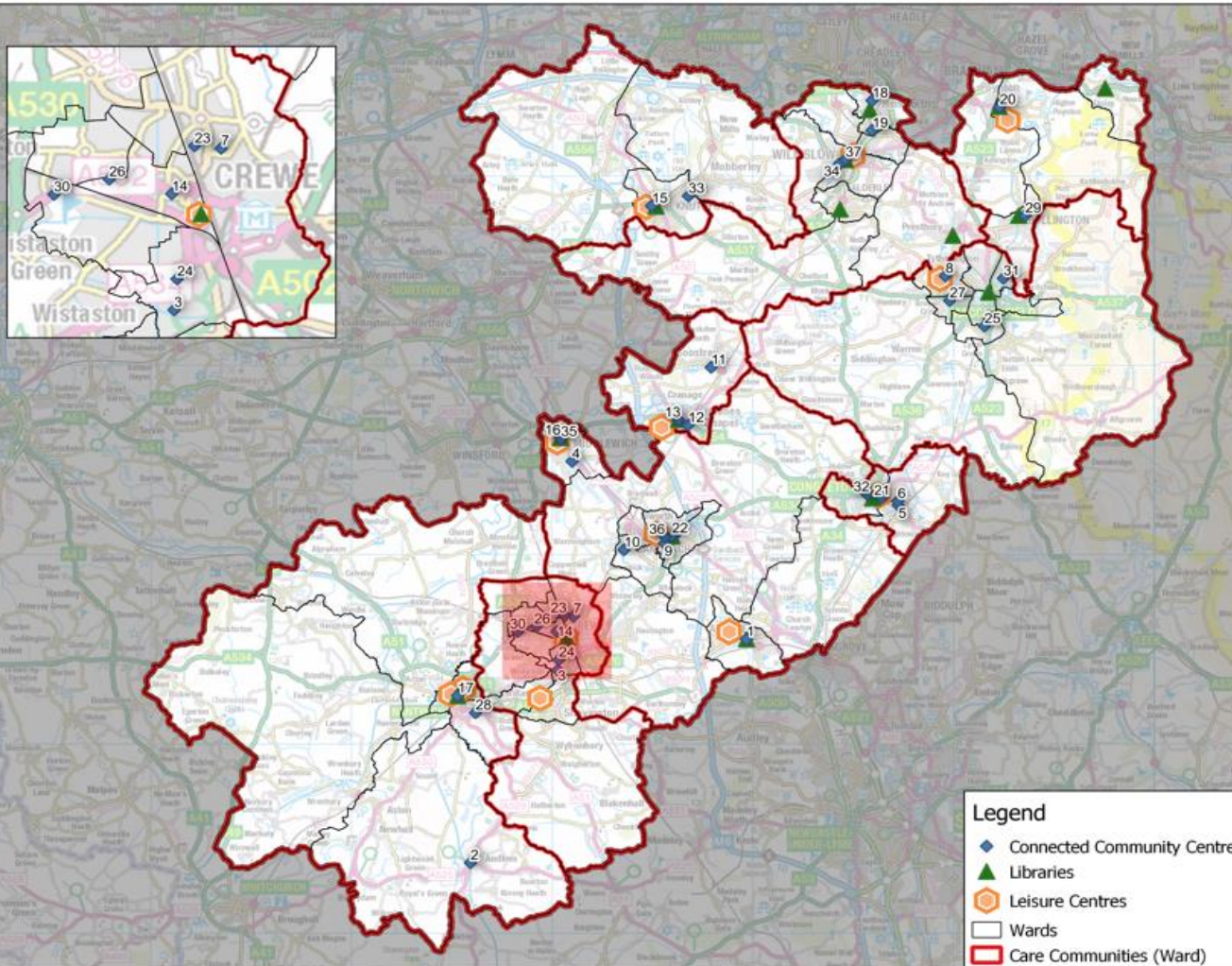
- The Citizen's Advice Bureau is a core component of this provision, who will find it difficult to meet the predicted increase in demand.
- Food banks are experiencing increasing demand and reduced donations.
- In general, support from volunteer and community organisations may be challenged by decreased donations and rising costs.
- Some of the information and advice is in digital form and therefore is not readily accessible to those not online.
- There are less places available in rural areas for face to face advice.

Care Community Services

There are a range of libraries, leisure centres and connected community centres to support people across Cheshire East.

However, not all venues will be able to provide the same services and most of these places are found within our more urban areas.

ID	Venue
1	Alsager Library
2	Audlem Community Hall
3	Belong
4	Booth Lane Methodist Church
5	Bromley Farm Trust
6	Bromley Farm Wellbeing Hub
7	Changing Lives Community Centre
8	Church of the Resurrection
9	Dane Housing Union Street Community Centre
10	Ettiley Heath Community Centre
11	Goostrey Village Hall
12	Holmes Chapel ESAR Community Centre
13	Holmes Chapel Library
14	Jubilee House (Wishing Well)
15	Knutsford Town Hall / Community Hospital
16	Middlewich Library
17	Nantwich Library
18	Oakmere Housing
19	Open Arms Community Centre
20	Poynton Civic Hall
21	Ruby's Fund
22	Sandbach Library
23	Sherbourne Bungalows
24	St Andrews Parish Hall
25	St Barnabas Church
26	St Barnabas Church (Barnies)
27	St Johns Church
28	Stapley Community Hall
29	The Bridgend Centre
30	The Georges Community Centre (Wishing Well)
31	The Green In The Corner Cafe
32	The Old Saw Mill
33	The Welcome Café
34	United Reformed Church Wilmslow
35	Victoria Hall
36	Wesley Centre
37	Wilmslow Library



Summary of gaps in support

Whilst a wide range of support is available, the following gaps exist including:

- A **shared understanding of the complete offer** by people working with residents across Cheshire East – this review has highlighted how much support is available but also that it can be quite challenge to know what is available.
- **Fewer support options for those that do not have means of transport, are not online, or both.**
- **Missed opportunities for prevention** in more deprived areas as shown by the rate of preventable deaths and also emergency admissions in some of these areas.
- There are fewer GPs per patient in one of our most deprived areas in Crewe.
- Potentially reduced provision from Voluntary Community and Faith Sector Enterprises in view of **decreased donations and rising costs.**
- A shared understanding of the support available to help with **transport.**

How we went about this review

- This review is one of our Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) deep dive reviews.
- It was completed by representatives from many different organisations across Cheshire East coming together to form a working group. This included representatives from Cheshire East Council, the NHS and our volunteer community.
- The working group used their experiences to agree
 - The questions that should be answered.
 - The information that should be gathered.
 - And the key messages and recommendations that should be formed from having looked at the information gathered.

What questions did this review aim to answer?

1. What is the experience of poverty in Cheshire East both now and in the future?
2. How does the experience of poverty differ across Cheshire East?
3. **What** is the impact of poverty on health and wellbeing in Cheshire East?
4. What interventions can be put in place to further support people in poverty?

What did this review cover?

To answer the review questions the working group agreed to review poverty in relation to a variety of different issues:

- **Overall all trends in poverty.**
- **Food poverty.**
- **Fuel poverty.**
- **Transport poverty.**
- **Debt.**
- **Employment and training opportunities.**
- **Housing.**
- **Health and wellbeing.**

Other areas originally identified to be included, that were unable to be covered due to capacity challenges were: economic development; poverty and safeguarding; and poverty and crime.

Final words

We need to help our residents to connect with our support so that in spite of a very challenging times, they do not feel alone and see a positive future ahead.

“We are a family of five. Me and my wife have three children aged between 6 and 16 and we’ve used the food bank for a few years. I care for my wife which is a full time responsibility. Her needs are very complex and even though she has care from her Doctors, I have to provide a lot of support for her. Given our situation, we rely on benefits but these don’t cover our living costs and the worry and anxiety of not being able to provide for our children is overwhelming. There’s no light at the end of the tunnel and I’m terrified about things getting worse.

Until recently, we at least could just about stay on top of bills. But now with the increase in costs we’re slowly getting behind on them and there doesn’t seem to be a way out.”

Local Lived Experience stories from Cheshire East Community Development Officers

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