



# **State of the District Report - Summary (West Berkshire's JSNA) 2025**

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# Introduction

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- A Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) is a process through which we assess the current and future health, care and wellbeing needs of the local population to inform and guide the planning and commissioning of health, wellbeing and social care services within a local authority area.
- A JSNA is:
  - Joint – it is owned by, and for the benefit of, all Health and Wellbeing Board partners
  - Strategic – it is high level, identifying the key priorities for the area
  - Needs assessment – it outlines the health and wellbeing needs of residents.
- The current West Berkshire JSNA is not a single product, but a range of resources hosted on the [West Berkshire Observatory](#).
- A recent Local Government Association review of the West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board identified the desire to focus on a small number of priorities.
- To support this process, this rapid JSNA report has been produced using data and intelligence that is readily available. It is a concise and not exhaustive report, aimed at being a starting point for conversations.
- This JSNA does not include mapping of assets, services that already exist to meet that need, or experiences of service users or providers.



# Population & Demography

Total population - **165,112** (2024)



Population **increased** 5% between 2011 and 2021 - the largest increase was in **over-65s**, at **34%**.

**1 in 8** people are from an **ethnic minority** group



2% projected **population growth** from 2025 to 2040, driven by a 27% increase in **over-65s**. Equates to approximately **9,000** people



**1%** of adults identify as **gay/lesbian** and **1%** as **bisexual**



**General fertility rate fell by 27%** over the last decade - more than the 20% decline seen nationally



In 2023, all-cause **mortality** was **1,469**

Accurate estimates of the **current and projected future number of residents and their characteristics** are fundamental to anticipating the scale of need for services. Here we outline the essential facts of West Berkshire's population.

# Building Blocks of Life



**1,492** West Berkshire residents (1% of the population) live in an area that is among the 20% **most deprived** areas of England



**11%** of children under the age of 16 are living in **poverty**, and **9%** households are experiencing **fuel poverty**



**17%** of assessed properties have the **lowest energy efficiency ratings** (bands E, F and G)



**Nearly a third** of West Berkshire households (31%) live in **rented** accommodation



Between June 2023 and April 2025, **crime rates** increased in **7 categories\***



There are **126 fast food outlets** (7.7 per 10,000 people), **498** premises licensed to sell **alcohol** (0.7 per square kilometre) and **18 gambling premises** recorded (1.1 per 10,000 people)



**1.7%** of people are living in areas at the highest risk of **food insecurity**



**1 in 20** deaths among adults aged 30 and over were attributable to fine particulate matter (**air pollution**)

Healthcare services are important, but the building blocks of life – the **built and natural environment, communities, social institutions and infrastructure** – are just as important, if not more so, for creating the conditions for living healthy lives.

\*bicycle theft, criminal damage and arson, drugs, public order, robbery, shoplifting, and anti-social behaviour

# Start Well



**Over a quarter** of women (26%) are **obese during pregnancy**

**2 out of 5** babies were **not breastfed** at 6-8 weeks old



The **infant mortality rate** was the **second highest** compared to our 15 statistical neighbours



More than **one in five** (21.0%) children starting primary school were **overweight or obese**. By the end of primary school (year 6) this had increased to nearly **one in three** (32.9%; 2023/24)



Nearly **a third** (33.2%) of all pupils and **over half** (59.5%) eligible for **free school meals** did not achieve a **good level of development\*** by the end of Reception



Estimated **6,400** children aged 8-16yrs with a **mental health disorder** (2023)

**2.6%** of primary school pupils and **2.5%** of secondary school pupils had **social, emotional and mental health needs** (2022/23)



**Over 1 in 7** pupils (15.2%) received **special educational needs** (SEN) support without an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)



**54.1 per 10,000** children on **Child Protection Plans** - higher than the South East and England (37.7 and 41.6 per 10,000; 2024)

The evidence is clear - the period of life from **conception to early adulthood** is crucial for an individual's health and wellbeing. The presence of disease or risk factors during this time can affect the rest of a person's life – and early preventative interventions can lead to benefits that accumulate over time.

\*achieving the expected level of development in five key areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) profile: Communication and Language, Physical Development, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Literacy, and Mathematics.



# Live Well



**Cancers** account for **over a 6<sup>th</sup>** (17.3%) of the overall burden of disease across all age groups



In recent time periods, **deprivation inequality** in **life expectancy** has been **increasing** for females (after a period of decreasing inequality)



Women can expect to **live longer** than men (84.6 years vs 81.3) but live a longer proportion of time **in poor health** (19% vs 17%)



Over the last decade, the number of **years spent in poor health** in has increased by about **2 years** for both males and females (2011-13 - 2021-23)



People with a **serious mental illness** are over **5 times** more likely to die under the age of 75 than those without - the **8<sup>th</sup>** highest rate in England



**Ethnicity**, being **born outside the UK**, **socioeconomic status** and **deprivation** level, explain **almost all** of the difference in West Berkshire's premature mortality compared the local authority with the lowest rate of premature mortality



The number of people living with **hypertension** is predicted to increase by 8.6% from 26,000 people to **28,000** people by 2047



**6 out of 10** adults (18 yrs+) were classed as **overweight or obese** in West Berkshire, equivalent to around **77,980 people**

The freedoms of adult life give opportunities for **careers, child-raising, community activities and social life**, but all of these have **associated risks to health**. Behaviours and experiences sustained over a long period can have a significant effect on the risk of developing long term conditions, and premature death.

# Age Well



People aged 65 years and over had an average of **4 long term conditions** (2025)

**Life expectancy at age 65** is **significantly higher** than for England (2021-23)



There was a gap of **3.1 years** in life expectancy at 65 between males living the **most and least deprived** areas in 2021-23; for females, the gap was **4.4 years**



An estimated **2,400** people aged 65 years and over with **dementia** (7.3%, 2025): the recorded prevalence of dementia has increased by **53%** since 2012/13



**Over half** (51.1%) of residents aged 65 and over had **hypertension** (2025), putting them at higher risk of heart disease and stroke



**95** emergency hospital admissions for **hip fractures** in people aged 65+ in 2023/24. The rate has increased by **21%** in the last two years, in contrast to the national decrease



By 2035, it is estimated that **28,000** people aged 65+ will suffer from **2 or more health conditions**, **7,000** will suffer from **4 or more health conditions**



**Well over half** (58%) of **adult social care users** aged 65+ and **70%** of **adult carers** did not have as much **social contact** as they would have liked (2023/24)

Age is the **biggest risk factor for most causes of death and disease**, and delaying and managing age-related decline is an important area of focus.