

The Community
Wellbeing Index
November 2023
Update



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The Community Wellbeing Index November 2023 Update

Data within the Community Wellbeing Index was refreshed in November 2023, providing an up-to-date view of wellbeing across communities throughout the UK. This is the third time that the Index has been refreshed since its creation, and we plan to continue refreshing the data every year.

The measures making up the Index have largely remained the same. We have updated some indicators, mainly where new data sources have been identified. This document has been produced to enable users of the Index to understand all of the measures and data sources that are included, along with the methodology applied for each.



People

Education and Learning

The availability of good, accessible, affordable services to help all ages make the most of education and learning opportunities.

Access to educational services: Equal access to education helps communities to grow and prosper together.

The indicator includes:

- Count of schools
- Distance to nearest non-independent and special educational needs (SEN) school
- Distance to nearest non-independent and SEN schools which is rated good by Ofsted (1,2)
- Distance to nearest adult education facility (m)
- Distance to nearest library (m)

Further detail - Distance is measured from the outer boundary of the locale to each of the nearest educational facilities, with a value of 0 if contained within the community. Ofsted ratings are only considered for England. These are not available for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

Source - Geolytix Education pack, © OpenStreetMap contributors

School quality: Communities should benefit from equal access to quality education.

The indicator includes:

- School quality

Further detail - A measure of the Ofsted ratings across schools within and around the community. Firstly, a score is assigned according to the strength of the rating received. Outstanding = 1.00, Good = 0.75, Requires Improvement = 0.40 and Inadequate = 0.10.

In the instance of there being five or more schools within the community, the average Ofsted score of all schools within the community is taken. In instances where there are less than five schools present, the Ofsted rating of all schools within the community is considered and averaged with that of the next nearest school, up to a distance of 10km away. This is repeated until Ofsted ratings for five schools have been included in the calculation, unless there is a distance of more than 10km between them. In instances where there are no schools present within the community, the Ofsted rating of the nearest school is calculated (irrespective of distance to the community) and averaged with that of the next nearest four schools following the 10km rule.

Ofsted ratings are only considered for England. These are not available for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

Source - Geolytix Education pack

Health

Access to good-quality public, voluntary and social care services that promote physical and mental health in the community.

Access to health services: Access to health services is beneficial to the wellbeing of the community as a whole.

The indicator includes:

- Distance to nearest GP (m)
- Distance to nearest hospital (m)
- Distance to nearest mental health service (m)
- Distance to nearest pharmacy (m)

Further detail - Distance is measured from the outer boundary of the locale to each of the nearest health services, with a value of 0 if contained within the community.

Source - Geolytix Points of Interest (POI) pack

Prescription rates: Long-term health issues reduce wellbeing and can limit opportunities for social interaction.

The indicator includes:

- GP prescription rates for hypertension and heart failure
- GP prescription rates for diabetes
- GP prescription rates for antidepressants
- GP prescription rates for obesity
- GP prescription rates for dementia

Further detail - The % of drugs prescribed in relation to total patients, for GPs within the community. In the case of no GP within the community, the nearest two are selected.

Source - NHS UK

Economy, Work and Employment

Services and infrastructure in place to promote a sustainable, ethical, inclusive economy that meets the needs of local people.

Hours worked: Long hours worked can lead to a poor work-life balance.

The indicator includes:

- Hours worked (<=49)

Further detail - Proportion of workers in the community working 49 or more hours per week.

Source - Census 2023 England, all other nations Census 2011, ONS

Free school meals: A high number of children taking free school meals indicates a larger number of low-income families.

The indicator includes:

- Free school meals rate

Further detail - Proportion of children at schools within the community taking free school meals. Scotland is calculated separately, as children in primary school years 1 - 3 receive free school meals through a Scottish government initiative.

The average free school meal rates across all schools within a community are considered. In instances where there are less than five schools present, the free school meal rates of all schools within the community are calculated and averaged with that of the next nearest school, up to a distance of 10km away. This is repeated until an average of free school meal rates for five schools has been considered, unless there is a distance of more than 10km between them. In instances where there are no schools present within a community, the free school meal rate of the nearest school is calculated (irrespective of distance to the community) and averaged with that of the next nearest four schools following the 10km rule.

Source - Geolytix Education Pack

Unemployment: High unemployment rates in the community indicate a less prosperous economy.

The indicator includes:

- % adults claiming Universal Credit

Further detail - Proportion of adults within the community claiming Universal Credit, dependant on their location.

Source - Claimant Count, ONS

Distance to the nearest shop: Shops provide a vital service to meet the needs of local people.

The indicator includes:

- Distance to the nearest food or convenience store (m)

Further detail - Distance is measured from the outer boundary of the locale to the nearest shop, with a value of 0 if contained within the community.

Source - Geolytix Retail Points

Distance to the nearest post office: Post offices provide a vital service to meet the needs of local people.

The indicator includes:

- Distance to the nearest post office (m)

Further detail - Distance is measured from the outer boundary of the locale to the nearest post office, with a value of 0 if contained within the community.

Source - © OpenStreetMap contributors

Presence of Co-ops / Social Enterprises: Co-ops and social enterprises provide an example of people coming together to meet local needs in their community.

The indicator includes:

- The number of co-ops, social enterprises, community organisations and community interest companies present within each community.

Further detail - Figures are scaled per 10,000 population of each community.

Source - Co-operatives UK, Social Enterprise UK, Locality, Plunkett Foundation and Companies House

Place

Culture, Heritage and Leisure

Access to affordable and inclusive cultural and leisure activities, services and amenities which celebrate the diverse histories of people in the community.

Places of worship: Places of worship facilitate community socialising and can give a strong sense of social cohesion, culture and heritage.

The indicator includes:

- Distance to the nearest place of worship (m)

Further detail - Distance is measured from the outer boundary of the locale to the nearest place of worship, with a value of 0 if contained within the community.

Source - © OpenStreetMap contributors

Areas for leisure: Accessible leisure facilities are important for community spirit and wellbeing.

The indicator includes:

- Distance to nearest leisure facility (m)
- Distance to nearest grass pitch (m)
- Distance to nearest sports hall (m)
- Distance to nearest swimming pool (m)

Further detail - Distance is measured from the outer boundary of the locale to the nearest leisure facilities, with a value of 0 if contained within the community.

Source - © OpenStreetMap contributors

Museums, art galleries, music halls, theatres: These promote cultural and leisure activities, which in turn support local heritage.

The indicator includes:

- Distance to nearest museum (m)
- Distance to nearest art gallery (m)
- Distance to nearest theatre (m)
- Distance to nearest music hall (m)

Further detail - Distance is measured from the outer boundary of the locale to each of the nearest venues, with a value of 0 if contained within the community.

Source - © OpenStreetMap contributors

The number of listed buildings: Protected historical or important buildings within an area can help connect a community to its heritage.

The indicator includes:

- Count of listed buildings

Further detail - Count of listed buildings that are present within the community.

Source - © OpenStreetMap contributors

Transport, Mobility and Connectivity

Access to affordable and sustainable transport and communication networks for everyone, especially those with disabilities.

Communication - Internet: People with a poor internet connection may feel disconnected from their own community and from others.

The indicator includes:

- Average internet speed
- Maximum internet speed
- Count of total connections per 10,000 population

Further detail - Various measures of internet connectivity are considered, including the average and maximum speeds, and total connections across the community. Whilst high speeds may be available, connection counts show actual take-up of services.

Source - Ofcom

Public transport: Buses and rail are key public transport facilities. Communities with poor transport links may feel isolated and disconnected from other communities.

The indicator includes:

- Count of bus stops per 10,000 population
- Distance to major rail station (>1,000,000 annual passengers)
- Distance to any rail station
- Traffic counts of buses

Further detail - Distance is measured from the outer boundary of the locale to the nearest rail stations, with a value of 0 if contained within the community. Figures around the traffic count of buses are unavailable for Northern Ireland.

Source - Geolytix Transport pack

Housing, Space and Environment

Affordable, secure, quality housing, a safe and clean surrounding environment, and well-kept, accessible and inclusive public spaces for people of all ages.

Overcrowding: A higher count of people per room suggests overcrowding within the community and a lack of suitably sized accommodation.

The indicator includes:

- Overcrowding

Further detail - Proportion of households within the community that have more than one person per room.

Source - Census 2023 England, all other nations Census 2011, ONS

Public green space: Green space encourages leisure activities and a sense of wellbeing.

The indicator includes:

- % public green space

Further detail - The proportion of land within the community given over to publicly accessible green space.

Source - Ordnance Survey, Geolytix Physical Geography pack

Public space: Spaces open to all are important in bringing people together.

The indicator includes:

- Distance to nearest community centre (m)
- Distance to nearest playground (m)

Further detail - Distance is measured from the outer boundary of the locale to the nearest public spaces, with a value of 0 if contained within the community.

Source - Ordnance Survey, Geolytix Physical Geography pack

Traffic pollution: Noise and air pollution have negative implications for wellbeing.

The indicator includes:

- HGV traffic
- Total traffic count

Further detail - The maximum count of both HGV and total traffic going through the community. High counts of traffic will result in higher levels of pollution.

Source - Office for Transport

Air quality: Poor air quality can lead to health problems.

The indicator includes:

- The count of certain gases in the air

Further detail - The count of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂), Sulphur Dioxide (SO₂) and Particulate Matter (PM₁₀) within the air.

Source - Consumer Data Research Centre

Relationships

Relationships and Trust

The state of family, social and community relationships and the impact of any breakdown in trust on issues like crime.

Social spaces: Places for socialising help to bring people together.

The indicator includes:

- Distance to nearest pub (m)
- Distance to nearest café (m)
- Distance to nearest community centre (m)
- Distance to nearest playground (m)

Further detail - Distance is measured from the outer boundary of the locale to each of the nearest social spaces, with a value of 0 if contained within the community.

Source - © OpenStreetMap contributors

Presence of young children: The presence of babies, pre-school and primary school aged children encourages a closer link to the community.

The indicator includes:

- % of young children (aged <14)

Further detail - Proportion of children aged 14 and under within the community.

Source - Census 2023 England, all other nations Census 2011, ONS

One-person household aged 65+: Older people living alone may feel isolated.

The indicator includes:

- One-person households aged 65+

Further detail - Proportion of households with sole occupants, aged 65 and over within the community.

Source - Census 2023 England, all other nations Census 2011, ONS

Household churn: A higher number of houses being sold suggests that people are not staying within the area, weakening community bonds.

The indicator includes:

- Proportion of houses sold

Further detail - Proportion of houses that have changed ownership in the community over the previous three years.

Source - Land Registry

Long-term health status: Poor health can limit community interaction and social activity.

The indicator includes:

- Long-term illness

Further detail - Proportion of the population that are suffering from long-term illness and disability, categorised as 'day-to-day activities limited a lot'.

Source - Census 2023 England, all other nations Census 2011, ONS

Crime in the community: A high level of crime can erode trust within a community.

The indicator includes:

- Crime in the community per 10,000 population

Further detail - Total crime counts in the community, per 10,000 population. Crime data for Scotland has not been updated as part of the refresh due to the unavailability of up-to-date figures.

Crime data for Greater Manchester is incomplete, as this is not currently available from Greater Manchester Police. Any crime figures that appear within the Index for the Greater Manchester area are predominantly those that have been reported by other police forces.

Source - data.police.uk, IMD Scotland

Crime in the town centre: Even if the community itself has low crime rates, there may be a low sense of safety if the nearest town centre is a crime hotspot.

The indicator includes:

- Crime in the town centre

Further detail - Total crime counts in the nearest city centre, large town centre, major city centre, major urban centre or town centre.

This is restricted to the nearest centre within 20km. If there is no centre within 20km of the locale, the indicator has been assigned a weight of zero for the community. Figures around crime in the town centre are not available for Scotland. Crime data for Greater Manchester is incomplete, as this is not currently available from Greater Manchester Police. Any crime figures that appear within the Index for the Greater Manchester area are predominantly those that have been reported by other police forces.

Source - data.police.uk, Geolytix Retail Places

Neighbourhood Watch: The presence of Neighbourhood Watch schemes within a community promote 'neighbourliness'.

The indicator includes:

- The number of Neighbourhood Watch supporters within each community.

Further detail - The number of Neighbourhood Watch supporters within each community, scaled per 10,000 population.

Source - Neighbourhood Watch

Equality

Equal and fair opportunities for everyone, regardless of ethnicity, religion, colour, age, ability, sexuality, gender, income, etc. Services and infrastructure in place to promote equality, equity and fairness.

House price gap: Large differences in house prices suggest inequality within a community.

The indicator includes:

- The Inter Quartile Range (IQR) of the price for all residential properties sold over the previous three years

Further detail - The Inter Quartile Range (IQR) of the price for all residential properties sold over the previous three years. The IQR is used to avoid skews for particularly cheap and expensive properties. Figures are unavailable for Northern Ireland and Scotland.

Source - Land Registry

Independent schools: A stronger presence of independent schools may have a negative impact on educational equality.

The indicator includes:

- Distance to nearest independent school (m)

Further detail - Distance is measured from the outer boundary of the locale to the nearest independent school, with a value of 0 if contained within the community. This is weighted separately for London and the South East due to a much higher supply in those two regions.

Source - Geolytix Education pack

Qualifications: A disparity in types of qualifications may produce inconsistent job opportunities and earning potential within a community.

The indicator includes:

- Degree-level qualifications versus no qualifications

Further detail - The absolute difference between the proportion of the population that have a degree-level qualification against the proportion of the population with no qualifications. A large score represents a less equal community.

Source - Census 2023 England, all other nations Census 2011, ONS

Voice and Participation

Democratic governance and decision-making mechanisms in place to allow people to express themselves and take either individual or collective action to improve the local community and beyond.

Voter turnout: High voter turnout suggests more political engagement within the community.

The indicator includes:

- General election turnout
- Local election turnout

Further detail - The proportion of people within the community who have voted in both general and local elections. As these are at larger geographical areas (Wards and Parliament Constituencies), counts are apportioned to Output Areas. Using the British Census Survey, an Index is then applied, based on the age, ethnicity and region of the Output Area. Results are reaggregated to the communities within our Community Wellbeing Index. Communities without a local election in the past four years are assigned a weight of zero for that variable. Figures around local election turnout are unavailable for Northern Ireland.

Source - Electoral Commission, British Census Survey

Co-op member engagement: Choosing which local causes to fund indicates people want to effect change within the local area.

The indicator includes:

- Co-op member engagement

Further detail - The proportion of Co-op members within the community that have selected a cause through the Local Community Fund within the past year. Communities with 5 or less total members are assigned a weight of zero.

Source - Co-op

Signing of petitions: When people sign petitions, it suggests that they feel they have a voice, and can take action to improve the local community.

The indicator includes:

- Signing of petitions per 1,000 people

Further detail - The proportion of people within the community signing petitions. As these are at Parliament Constituency level, counts are apportioned to Output Areas. Using the British Census Survey, an Index is then applied, based on the age, ethnicity and region of the Output Area. Results are reaggregated to the communities within our Community Wellbeing Index.

Source - Government Petitions, British Census Survey

Co-operative Group Limited

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