

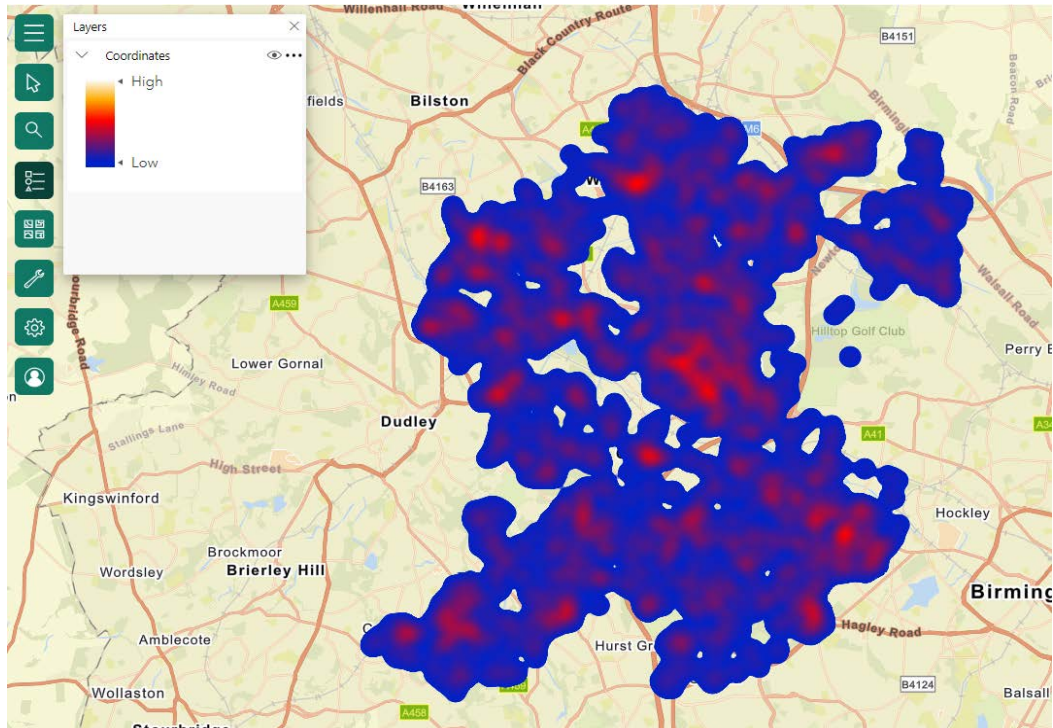
Additional Licensing and Article 4 – Evidence base

Datasets 1 – Anti Social Behaviour

To evidence criteria two, the council needs to demonstrate that the area within the proposed designation experiences persistent ASB, which is caused, in part, by private landlords failing to manage their properties (and their tenants) effectively. However, demonstrating the link between anti-social behaviour and private rental sector is not straightforward since there is no comprehensive source of information on whether a property is privately let, either divided into rental units or sub-let to tenants. There are a large number of councils who have carried out studies into ASB and the connection to the private rented sector (including Tower Hamlets, Lewisham, Cardiff, Birmingham, Oxford, York) and a paper published by the House of Commons Library “Anti-social neighbours living in private housing (England) – 27 August 2019” makes reference to the challenges posed by the PRS. The report states “The Home Affairs Select Committee’s 2004-05 inquiry into anti-social behaviour (ASB) noted that although the response to ASB was originally located in the context of social housing, “many nuisance neighbours are not social tenants but private tenants or owner-occupiers.”. The Northern Housing Consortium told the Committee that a “significant number of problems arise in the private sector that are ignored due to absentee landlords or landlords that do not have the skills or capacity to tackle the problems.” <http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN01012/SN01012.pdf>

For the purpose of this evaluation, the council reviewed all police reported anti-social behaviour incidents from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2023. The number of ASB incidents that resulted in an intervention by the police is shown below. They relate to ASB associated with both residential premises and in communal and public spaces. For example, the ASB data includes incidents investigated on a street corner that cannot be directly linked to a residential property.

It is important to note that ASB can be subject to recording issues and therefore results do not include all ASB incidents, for the purpose of this dataset only ASB incidents investigated by the police have been included.

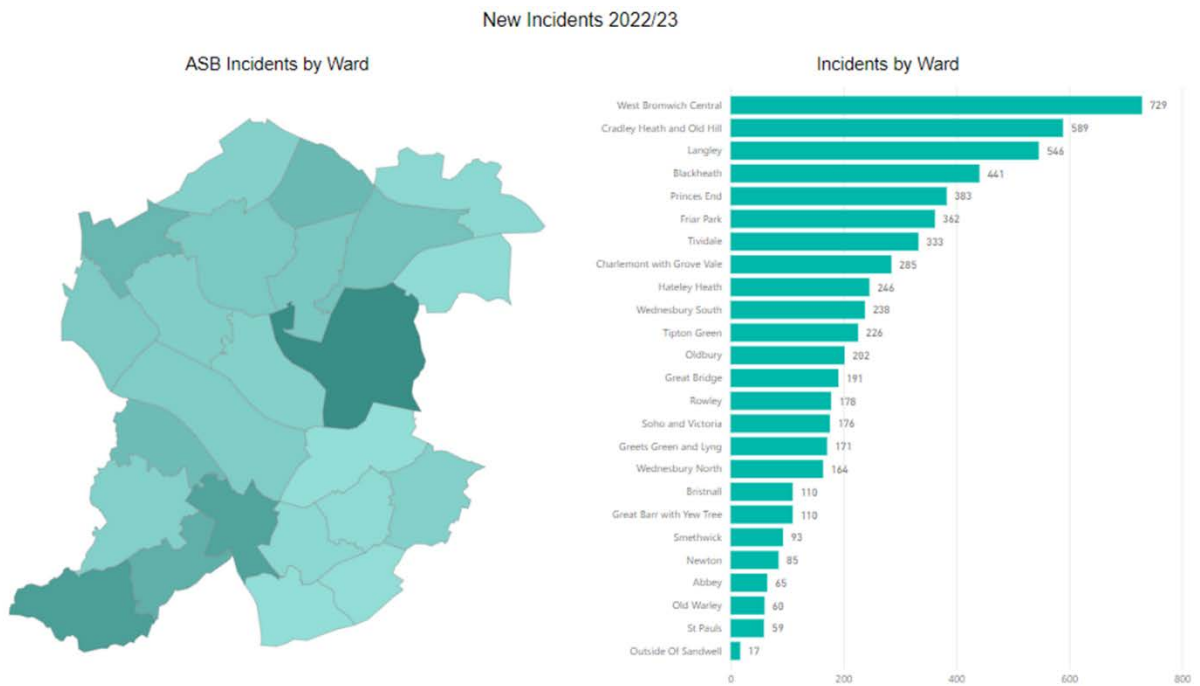


There were 5183 ASB incidents reported to the police in 2021/22 and 2022/23. The heatmap shows that incidents of ASB were reported across the borough with only a small number of areas with no reports – these tended to be larger open spaces. Areas of higher ASB reports can be attributed to areas of higher population density. The heat map shows the highest prevalence of ASB in the following areas:

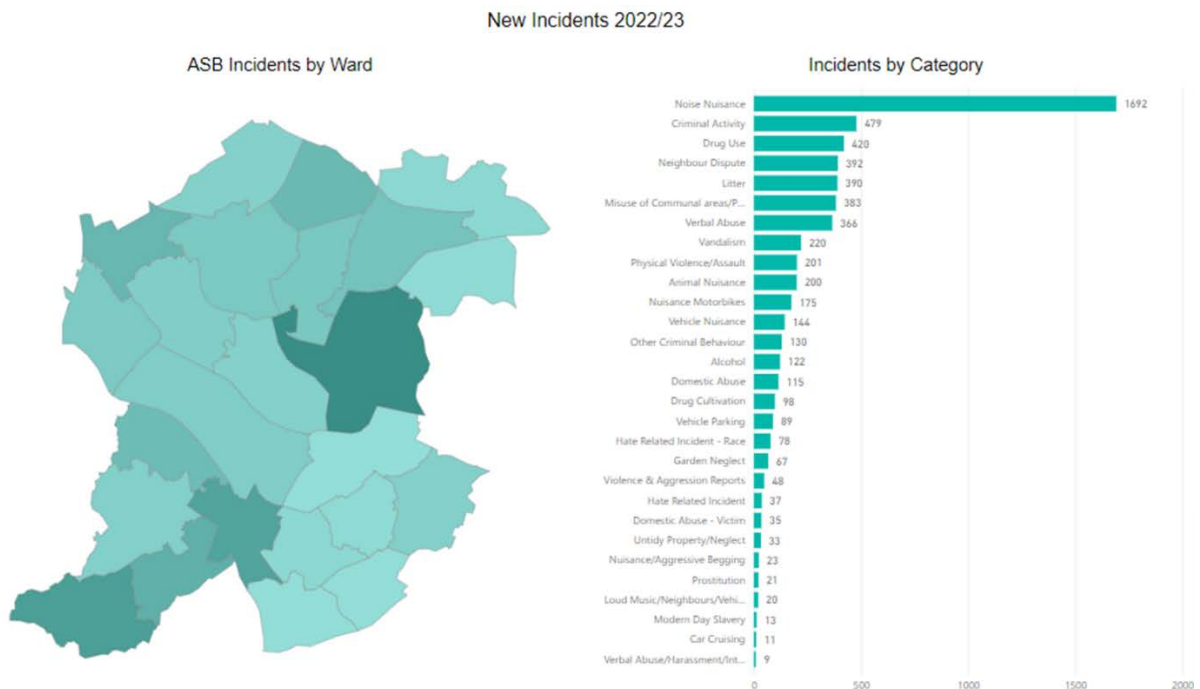
- Large proportions of West Bromwich
- Large proportions of Tipton
- Northern and eastern Smethwick
- Western Rowley
- Some areas of northern and central Oldbury
- Some areas of southern Wednesbury

In addition to police reported ASB data, the council holds data on ASB instances reported to the service. The charts below show the number of ASB incidents in each ward for 2022/23 and the nature of the issue:

Incidents by ward:



Incident type

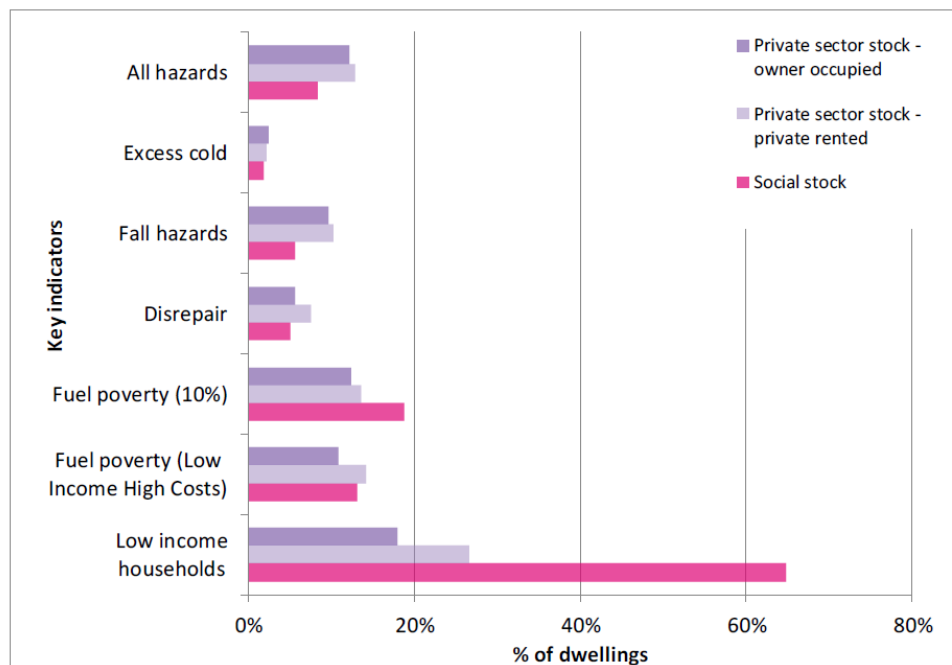


Similarly to the police data, ASB affects all wards and towns within Sandwell. The council data correlates with the police data in some areas and shows the highest proportion of cases are as follows:

- West Bromwich shows the highest concentration
- Rowley has the second highest concentration of ASB reports
- Tipton and Oldbury show similar levels
- Smethwick shows the second lowest proportion and Wednesbury receives the fewest reports

Dataset 2 – Housing Conditions

The 2018 BRE report estimated (through their Housing Stock Condition model database) that the private rented stock in Sandwell has higher levels of disrepair and fuel poverty (based on the ability of households to meet fuel costs) when compared to social housing and owner-occupied properties as detailed in the chart below:



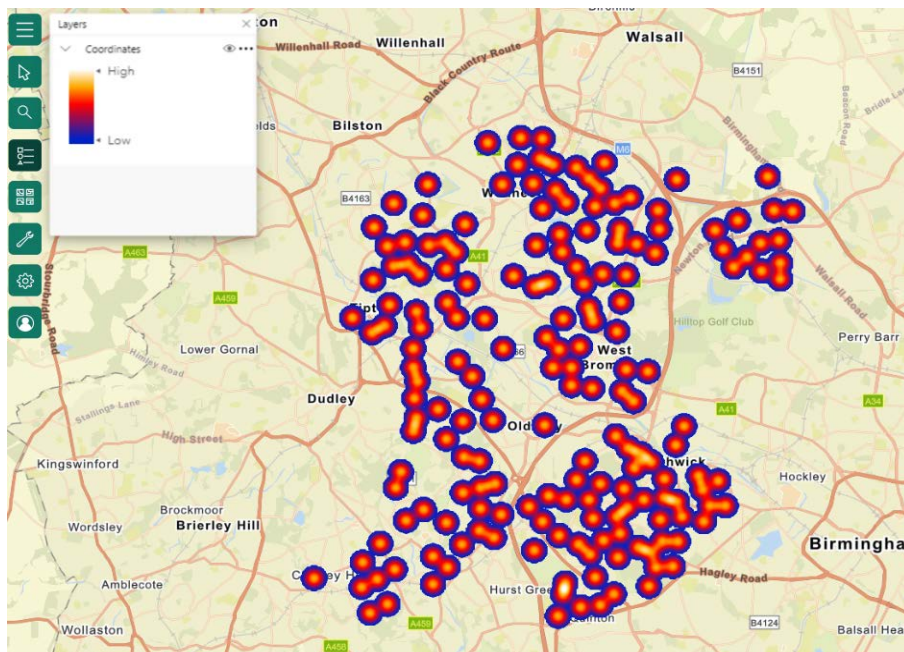
This analysis is further evidenced through the inspection and enforcement activity of the Council's Private Rented Sector and Housing Standards Team. The team provide advice, assistance, support and signposting services as well as direct intervention for private tenants, landlords and owners of empty properties. Many of these customers are vulnerable or economically inactive and often require some form of assistance to either maintain or remain in their homes.

The table below shows the level of complaints / enquires received by the Private Rented Sector and Housing Standards Team into private rented housing. The table also depicts that whilst enforcement action has been undertaken it has not considerably reduced the level of

complaints, thus suggesting a need to move to the more proactive approach associated with additional licensing

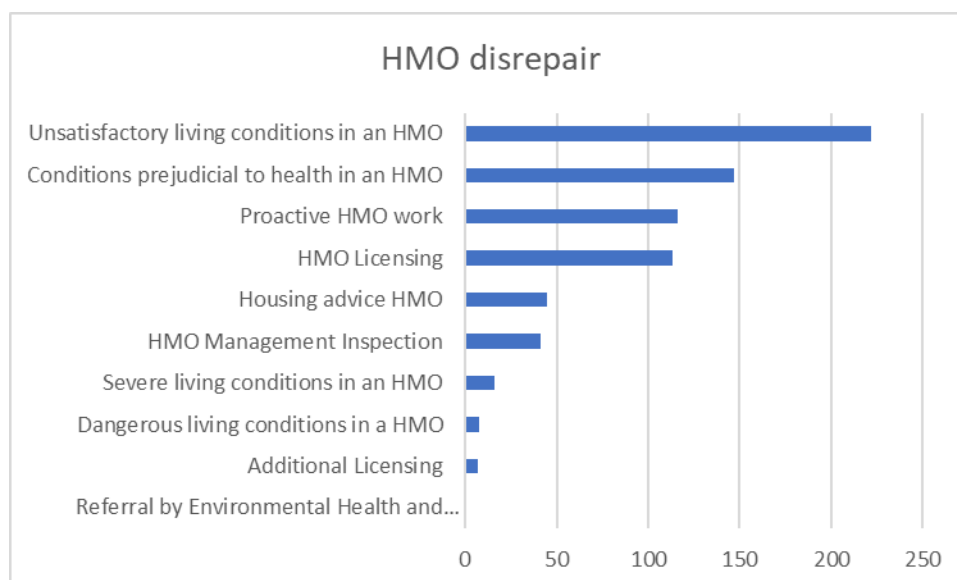
Year	Number of complaints / enquires received by HQT Triage system
2014/15	886
2015/16	810
2016/17	845
2017/18	887
2018/19	728
2019/20	866
2020/21	783*COVID impact
2021/22	859
2022/23	804

When we further break down complaints and enquiries received by the service, we supported 2252 cases with active intervention between 2013 and 2022. These interventions range from advice and guidance to enforcement including notices and civil penalties. The distribution of cases covered 180 of the 186 LSOAs within Sandwell and the map below shows where the largest volume of these cases were located:



The map shows a relatively even spread across Sandwell with all towns seeing some demand. The key exception would be the centre region of Oldbury where there are very few hotspots identified. This suggests that issues with disrepair in the PRS has an even geographic spread and affects all six towns.

The data can be further disaggregated to issues raised with HMO's. There were 716 cases raised for HMO's within the data show above. A summary of the reasons/ categories of casework can be seen in the chart below:



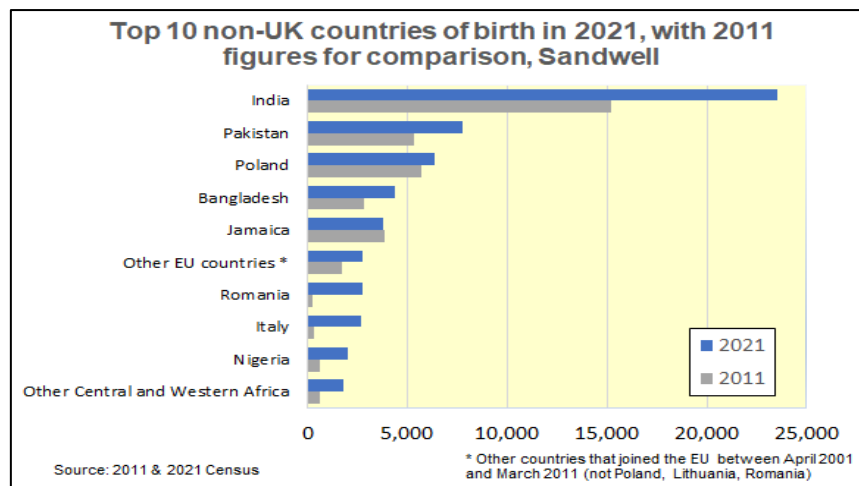
The chart shows that the main reasons for casework being logged was due to poor standards and when aggregated accounted for 55% of the caseload raised for HMO's.

Dataset 3 – Migration

In Sandwell, the 2021 Census found that almost one in four (23.6%) usual residents were born outside the UK compared to 15.9% in the 2011 census. The 2021 estimate compares with one in six nationally and this proportion puts the borough in the top 50 Local Authorities across England & Wales for this measure. In the last decade, this proportion has increased by 7.7%. The West Midlands is currently the 4th largest of all 12 UK regions for welcoming asylum seekers and refugees. Sandwell has been accommodating people through the Home Office's contracted dispersal programme for decades – most recent projects include the Afghanistan resettlement and Homes for Ukraine schemes. Sandwell has around 1,100 asylum seekers dispersed in the borough.

For the cohort of asylum seekers who have resettled in the past two and a half years, the most common country of origin was Iran with 31.1%, followed by Iraq with 19.8%. The remaining countries include Albania (9.3%), Afghanistan (7.1%), Syria (5.4%) Sudan (5.1%), El Salvador (4.5%), Eritrea (3.1%), India (2.3%) and Turkey (2.0%)

The table below gives some breakdown to migration in Sandwell and their country of origin:

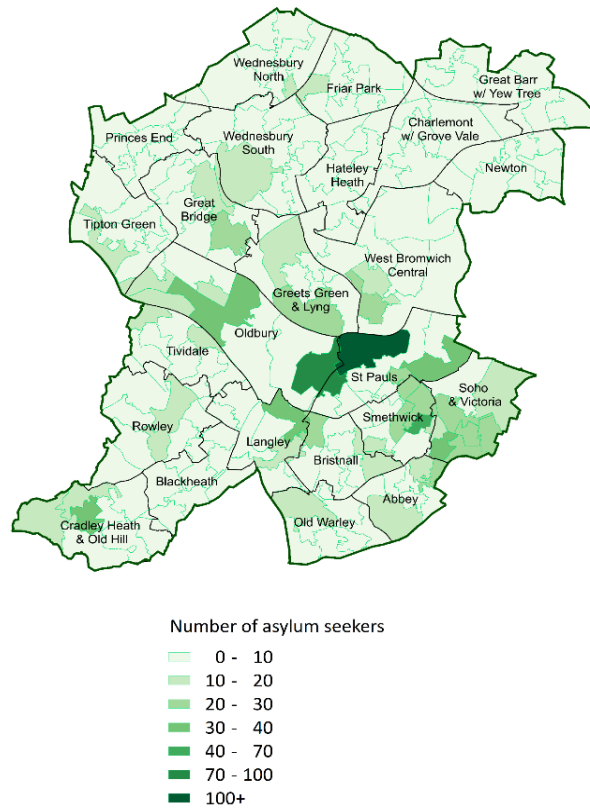


The chart shows that India remained the most common country of birth outside the UK in 2021 with 6.9% of the population. Relatively large proportions of Sandwell residents were born in Pakistan (2.3%) and Bangladesh (1.3%).

The number of people living in Sandwell who were born in Poland grew slightly at 0.1% since the previous census, from 1.8% in 2011 to 1.9% in 2021. Whereas the number born in Romania saw a fairly significant increase from 0.1% in 2011 to 0.8% in 2021.

13.9% of Sandwell residents owned a non-UK passport; the most common non-UK passport held was Polish (2.0% of the population).

Individuals and families seeking asylum in Sandwell are living across a number of wards within the Borough, most commonly in the areas of St. Pauls, Smethwick and Soho and Victoria. However, there are several wards within Sandwell where no asylum seekers are placed – including Great Barr, Newton, Princes End, Hateley Heath, Charlemont with Grove Vale and Blackheath. This suggests that there has been some disproportionate dispersal in the re-settlement of migrants in wards and towns in Sandwell. The map below shows dispersal in recent years:

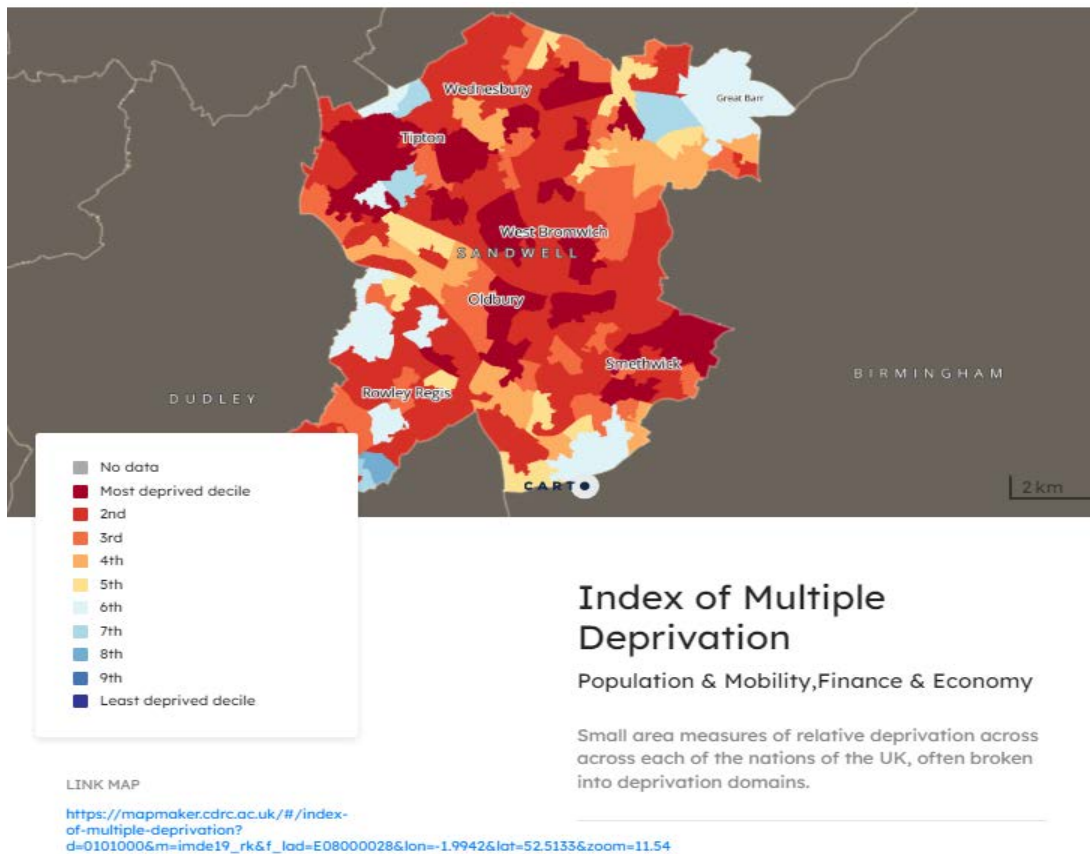


Dataset 4 – Deprivation

The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 shows Sandwell's average deprivation score as ranked 12th most deprived local authority in England, out of a total of 317. Previous IMD results for this measure show that Sandwell's position has declined slightly relative to other districts in England. Sandwell was 13th most deprived local authority in 2015.

Within the West Midlands conurbation there is a central corridor of severe deprivation that runs from Birmingham, through Sandwell, into Wolverhampton, parts of Walsall, and Dudley. The less deprived areas are around the extremities of the conurbation and within the adjoining district of Solihull.

Sandwell is the only metropolitan borough outside London that does not adjoin a Shire district. The levels of deprivation can be seen in the chart below:

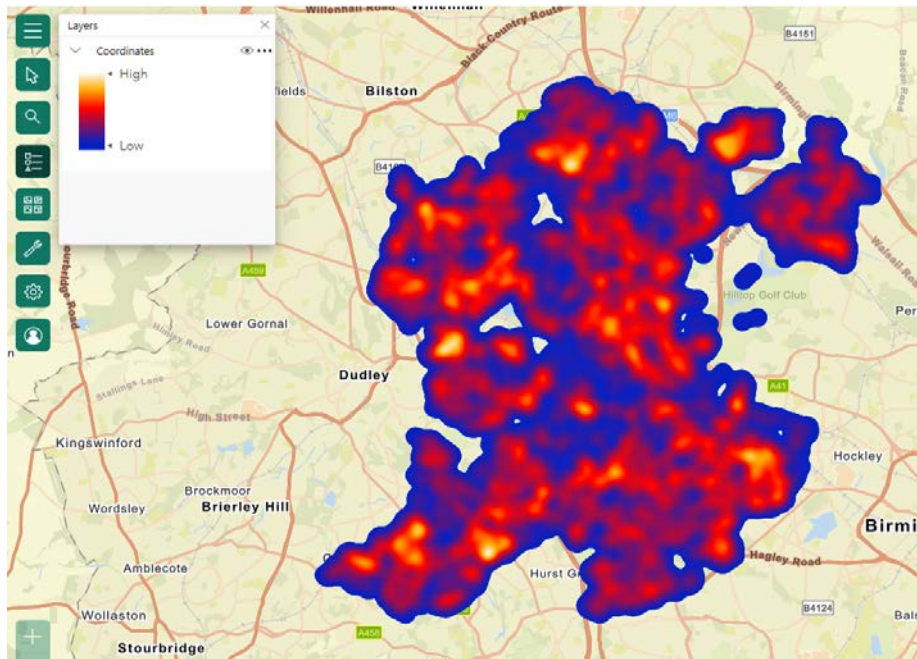


One in five of Sandwell's LSOAs fall into the most deprived 10% nationally in 2019. A further two-fifths fall into the most deprived 10-20%, so overall 60% of Sandwell's LSOAs fall within the worst 20% nationally, and 97% within the worst 60% nationally, clearly displaying the high levels of deprivation prevalent in large parts of Sandwell.

The BRE report suggested a direct correlation between deprivation and areas of high volume poor quality private rented accommodation.

Dataset 5 - Crime

Similarly to the police ASB data, the council reviewed all police reported crime incidents from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2023. The number of incidents that resulted in an intervention by the police is shown below. They relate to crime associated with both residential premises and in communal and public spaces. For example, the crime data includes incidents investigated on a street corner that cannot be directly linked to a residential or commercial property.



There were 85,744 incidents reported to the police in 2021/22 and 2022/23. The heatmap shows that incidents were reported across the borough with only a small number of areas with no/few reports – these tended to be larger open spaces. Areas of higher crime reports can be attributed to areas of higher population density. The heat map shows the highest prevalence of crime in the following areas:

- Large proportions of West Bromwich with a focus on the south eastern part of the town
- Large proportions of Tipton
- Eastern Smethwick
- Southern Rowley
- Some areas of northern and southern Oldbury
- Central Wednesbury

The highest proportion of reported crime type was “violence and sexual offences” which accounted for 44% of all reported crime. This compares to the second highest reason of “public order” accounting for 7884 cases or 9.19%. This comparison shows the significance of the gap between the highest and second highest reported crimes. The map below shows the distribution of “violence and sexual offences” correlates to the “all crimes” map.

