Housing Need in Stockland Green

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The Pioneer Group
People. Housing. Community.

Stockland Green
Opportunity Housing & training
Part of The Pioneer Group

Birmingham City Council

Spring Housing Association

New Roots

NEIL MORLAND CO
HOUSING CONSULTANTS

A Housing Needs Assessment & Market Analysis of the Stockland Green electoral ward

Published September 2020

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Commissioned by The Pioneer Group on behalf Stockland Green Opportunity Housing & Training, Birmingham City Council, New Roots Ltd, & Spring Housing Association.

Acknowledgements: Thanks to Ifor Jones for his invaluable support and assistance. The author and commissioners are grateful to everyone who generously contributed time and/or materials.

Neil Morland & Co

Neil Morland & Co are housing consultants. Formed in 2011, we work throughout England, Scotland and Wales with national and local governments, housing associations, voluntary organisations and others, augmenting their role to ensure everyone has adequate housing. We provide expert advice that transforms how housing services and partnerships are able to meet the housing needs of communities.

Table of Contents

Chapter One – Introducing Stockland Green

"In the Frances Road area of Stockland Green, I will never forget meeting 70 residents in the street who were terrified in the community in which they had grown up: the rapid growth of houses in multiple occupation in their community; rising crime; antisocial behaviour; and rising drug crime. "One woman said, 'Jack, my great-great-great-grandparents bought the house in which I live. Now, I am afraid to go out at night.' Her young daughter added, 'If I want to go during the day down to Slade Road to get a bus, I won't go by myself. I ask my mum and dad to take me'."(Jack Dromey MP)[1]

1. Introduction

The anguish of Stockland Green residents, as expressed to sitting MP Dromey, provides a visceral, emotional core to this housing needs assessment of Stockland Green, one of seven wards in the Erdington constituency in the north west of the City of Birmingham. Stockland Green is an environment of pleasant tree-lined residential streets, a diverse area with no large estates of social housing, containing a beautiful park and a lively retail area. It borders Spaghetti Junction, the UK's largest traffic intersection, is largely residential, and contains no major retail or commercial centres. Despite these visible assets, however, the residents quoted above represent a large and growing cross section of the Stockland Green community who feel that their quality of life in their area is increasingly affected by matters beyond their control. This report explores the foundation of these strongly held perceptions through a robust and objective assessment of the local neighbourhood and housing market. Its findings are intended to generate a wide-ranging debate amongst stakeholders and residents as to the future development of Stockland Green

The report has been commissioned by a consortium led by the Pioneer Group, a major landlord of general needs properties in the nearby the Castle Vale Estate. The Pioneer Group is also a developer, and five years ago merged with the Stockland Green Opportunities – Housing and Training (SGHOT) to extend the geographical reach of its developing and community regeneration into Stockland Green alongside other areas adjoining Castle Vale. As landlord, developer and community organisation, the Pioneer Group sought an objective assessment of the socio-economic and housing market factors that might explain the concerns of local residents, and provide an evidence base to inform their strategic and operational response. Birmingham City Council (BCC) also supported this project in their role as strategic housing authority function with the intention of using its findings to inform future decisions on the deployment of operational resources and their private sector housing strategy. These two strategic funders were joined by two non-stock owning registered providers specialising in exempt accommodation, bringing to the project an understanding of the concomitant needs of the more transient but highly vulnerable population in the exempt HMO sector. Whilst acknowledging the fears of local residents, all of the commissioners' objectives clearly stated their wish for the project to explore of the housing needs of ***all*** Stockland Green residents, regardless of tenure, in the expectation that it would inform short, medium- and long-term strategies for of the area on behalf of a widely drawn conception of local community. In short, it is hoped this report will stimulate lively discussion between

[1] Jack Dromey – Birmingham Evening News 25 February 2020

all sectors and interested parties in the area, and provide an impetus for change – a new beginning for Stockland Green.

This housing needs and market analysis (HNA) of the Stockland Green Ward is structured around the three strategic areas of research set out in the original NM&Co proposal represented by these broad research questions:

- ***What are the housing needs of the Stockland Green population?***
- ***What is the current housing market of Stockland Green?***
- ***What support issues are raised by the socio-economic profile of Stockland Green?***

This report has sought answers to these questions by focussing first on establishing what wider forces influence the local socio-economic profile and housing market, and how do these forces conflate to make Stockland Green unique. To assist in this task, a series of more detailed research questions were agreed with the Pioneer Group as part of the project initiation, namely:

1) ***What legislative and policy changes appear most likely to have driven changes in the housing tenure profile?*** *(Chapter 1)*

2) ***What are the relevant trends emerging in relation to health, crime, and social deprivation in Stockland Green, Erdington and Birmingham?*** *(Chapters 2 and 3)*

3) ***Can relationships be established between changes in the housing tenure profile of Stockland Green Ward, and indicators relating to health, crime and social deprivation?*** *(Chapters 3 and 4)*

4) ***How does Birmingham's housing market relate to Erdington and Stockland Green?*** *(Chapter 4)*

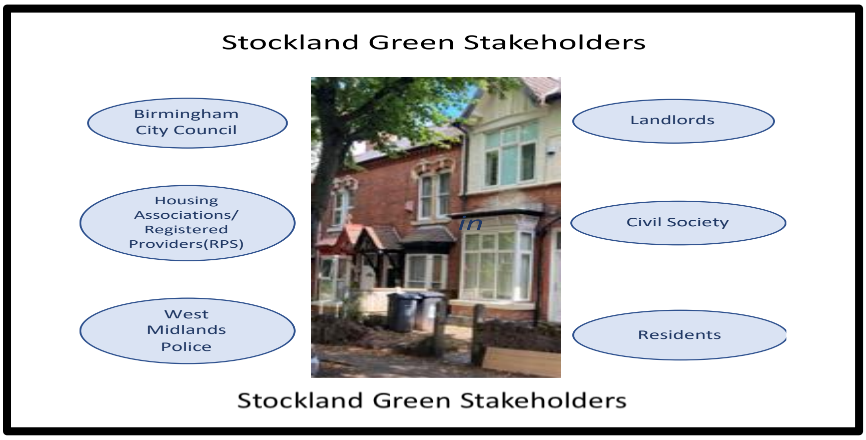
5) ***What changes have occurred to housing tenures at a local level over the last two years in the Stockland Green Ward, with particular attention to the Slade Road area?*** *(Chapter 4)*

6) ***What specific 'impact' factors are deducible from these relationships****? (Chapters 4 and 5)*

7) ***Where research demonstrates deteriorations in social order or community cohesion, what potential corrective actions are possible within the short/medium and long term? (****Chapter 5)*

2. Stakeholders

The conclusions drawn from this research this are of interest to a much wider group of stakeholders than those who funded the report, and the conclusions that close it must be widely accepted if the Stockland Green Ward is going to grow and prosper in the future. The list of stakeholders below is not exhaustive but reflects the need for involvement in local planning from a broad spectrum of public and private participants.



Given the breadth of the recommendations made in this report, it is vital that a mechanism is found for local community planning that will engage systematically and constructively with both local stakeholders and community, and the citywide institutions holding power over Stockland Greens' future regeneration.

Birmingham City Council
This report throws into sharp relief the connection between city-wide pressures and the local environment in Stockland Green, suggesting that BCC must lead and facilitate the process of shaping sustainable housing markets that meet needs and housing options both citywide and in areas such as Stockland Green. The problems exposed through this analysis will require coordinated action from a number of different Council agencies, all of which are critical stakeholders in the Stockland Green area and must be fully engaged in supporting and resourcing locally developed plans. Key teams within the City Council include:

⇒ *Housing Strategy*
The Housing Strategy Team is responsible to developing a holistic approach to managing the supply of and demand for housing in Birmingham, across all tenures. This will include liaising with the Regulator of Social Housing, the MHCLG, statutory agencies, private landlords, registered providers (both non stock holding exempt providers, stock owning registered providers), housing professional and trade bodies and authorities and agencies delivering best practice in the field.

⇒ *Housing Benefits*
Many of the problems raised in this report relate to the centrality of exempt accommodation in Stockland Green, phenomenon created by generous housing benefit regulations. How the system is administered in Birmingham is the subject of report recommendations.

⇒ *Private Sector Housing Team*
Birmingham's private sector team had a national reputation for excellent regulation prior to austerity measures implemented over the last ten years. Whilst the expertise remains, reductions in resources have affected their ability to intervene decisively and systematically in the private rented sector. Their role in driving up standards, addressing anti-social behaviour, and addressing bad landlord practices is the subject of report recommendations.

⇒ *Planning Department*
Though this report is housing led, it is clear that regeneration of any area must extend beyond residential consideration to the extent of community provision, industry, retail and leisure. A local plan for the area must be holistic and engage with Birmingham's overarching planning objectives.

⇒ *Community Safety Team*
Ensuring that the issues of crime and ASB in areas such as Stockland Green are in the forefront of local joint action by neighbourhood policing, housing teams and community groups and where appropriate considered at the statutory crime and disorder partnership.
⇒

Housing Associations/ Registered Housing Providers (RPs)
The Housing Association sector will be vital partners in creating a new beginning for Stockland Green. Currently, fifteen housing associations operating in Stockland Green, some, like the Pioneer Group being

involved in developing and managing new social housing and others being entirely devoted to providing exempt accommodation. All, regardless of their business model, have a stake in achieving a reasonable balance between tenure types in Stockland Green, and ensuring that their residents have access to sufficient support, training and community facilities to lead a happy and healthy life.

Housing associations need to apply to register as a social housing provider and must:

- Be English bodies;
- Be, or intend to be, providers of social housing in England; and
- Satisfy the criteria established by the Regulator.

Criteria for registration are based on an applicant's financial situation, its constitution and other arrangements for its management, which also form the basis for inspection and regulatory enforcement. Since 2008, profit making organisations can register as social housing providers, but this remains a relatively small proportion of the sector. Non-profit making organisations are also required to have within their objects the provision of social housing. In this report, the term abbreviation 'RP' is used to signal the non-local authority social housing sector.

West Midlands Police

High levels of crime in Stockland Green and the obvious distress of some community members makes the management and reduction of crime a high priority in this report. Strategies adopted by the WMP to tackle local crime, and their partnerships with other statutory agencies will be vital to creating change in the ward and are the subject of report recommendations. The local neighbourhood policing team in Stockland Green have been an ever-present force in Stockland Green over the last five years at the forefront of local action to promote better standards and practices by private landlords and exempt providers. Key has been their work in developing a live list of HMO properties in Slade and Frances Road and adjoining streets.

Landlords

With the private sector continuing to grow in Stockland Green, engagement with landlords is essential. Already there is active engagement between the BCC private sector team and registered landlords, but the exempt sector is not subject to mandatory registration, and many of its landlords do not participate in BCC activities. Their active engagement is an essential corollary to any future changes in the Stockland Green neighbourhood.

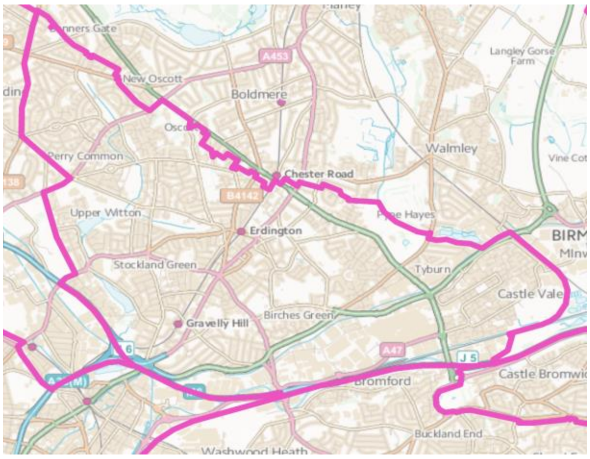
Community

Community encompasses all residents of Stockland Green, whether they be well established families, aspirational newcomers or the more transient residents of exempt accommodation. Already, a range of active community, faith and resident groups in Stockland Green sustain a remarkably positive community spirit. Emerging groups such as the Stockland Green Action Group will be critical to the success of future community planning, and must be supported by local agencies.

3. Erdington and Stockland Green

Erdington

Erdington Parliamentary Constituency is an area of 4720 square kilometres situated to the north-west of central Birmingham. The parliamentary seat has been held by Labour's Jack Dromey since 2011, who retained the seat in the 2019 election with 17,720 votes and a vote share of just over 50%. The constituency is more diverse at local level with mix of labour and conservative elected councillors. It is divided into seven ward areas, these being; Castle Vale, Erdington, Gravelly Hill, Kingstanding, Perry Common, Pype Hayes, and the object of this study, Stockland Green.



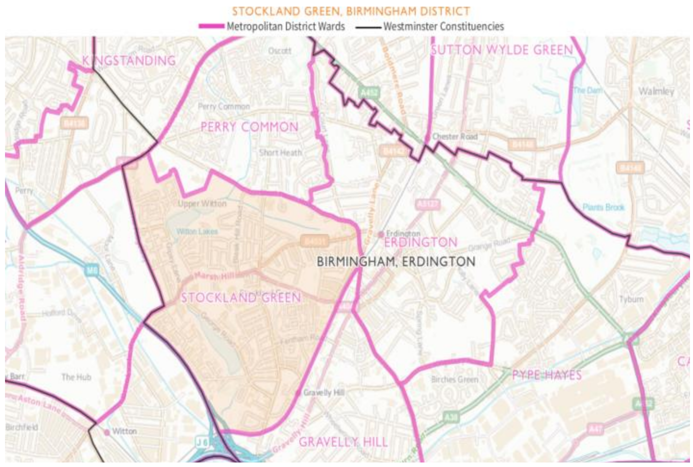
To the north of the constituency is the more affluent Royal Borough of Sutton Coldfield and to the east and west, the more disadvantaged constituencies of Perry Barr and Hodge Hill. Erdington shares many characteristics with its less affluent neighbours, for example, 95% of the constituency is built up areas, and only 4% designated as green space. At the same time, It shares some positive characteristics with Sutton Coldfield, most notable it's relatively high rates of employment compared to most Birmingham comparators. In terms of economy and labour, Erdington has a proud tradition of manufacturing, indeed one of its major landmarks is the Tim Tolkien designed Spitfire Island, which celebrates the role of Erdington in building the Spitfire at the Castle Bromwich site adjacent to what is now the Castle Vale Estate. Erdington retains these strong links to manufacturing industry, most notably to Jaguar Landrover (JLR) which occupies the old Spitfire site. Stockland Green is bordered on the south by areas of Gravelly Hill now are zoned by the city council as industrial areas and targeted for manufacturing growth.

The constituency is well served by radial road links to the rest of Birmingham and beyond, and is thirty minutes by bus to the city centre at rush hour.
It contains Spaghetti Junction, the major motorway intersection from which every point in the UK can be reached, indeed Stockland Green ward borders this iconic but dauntingly large urban landmark. Castle Vale Estate, once the largest social housing estate in Europe, sits in the north of the constituency though regeneration has much reduced its' size and notoriety. Gravelly Hill, Perry Barr and Perry Common wards are also dominated by social housing, most of it Council owned and managed.

Stockland Green

One of seven wards in Erdington, Stockland Green is classified as suburban by the city Council, and is one of two Erdington wards that directly adjoin Spaghetti junction on their southern borders. This has the effect of making Stockland Green highly accessible by car and road transportation, a location that acts as both a blessing and a blight. Spaghetti Junction makes the ward highly accessible to other parts of Birmingham and beyond, but is also locally perceived as blighting the development potential of some areas of the ward given the sheer weight of traffic with all its connotations of noise, danger and pollution. It is also served by the Birmingham and Fazeley Canal which branches to the north west and Perry Barr and north east to Castle Vale at Spaghetti Junction. Elsewhere in the ward, notably around Slade Road, the 'suburban' label seems anachronistic in an area apparently more in tune with the diverse inner city areas to its south than to the rest of the constituency.

Other Erdington wards such as Castle their very high proportion of social Vale and Perry Common are defined by housing estates which very much shape their geography and socio-economic profile. Stockland Green is less easy to categorise, being a mix of Victorian terraced housing, small estates and more limited new build. There is no discernible commercial or retail centre in Stockland Green, but smaller retail and industrial units are located mainly on the arterial route through the ward. Late night activity around some of these retail outlets has attracted resident complaints about anti-social behaviour.



Stockland Green has one major health facility in Highcroft Hospital, a large mental health facility, and is home to Stockland Green School, a secondary school serving 11-16-year olds, rated 'Good' by OFSTED. It is served by three churches, one of which, the Methodist Church, also provides a community café, meeting place and activities. Across the road, the Highcroft Community Centre is another popular community hub and social event space. There is one mosque in Stockland Green.

4. Research context

This housing needs analysis has been produced at a time of unprecedented economic and political uncertainty. It was commissioned just prior to the arrival of Covid-19 to the UK, and has been completed in large part during an equally unprecedented national lockdown. Even before, it might be said that the certainties of normal economic cycles had already dissolved in the face of the impending departure from the European Union, and the uncertainties around securing a trade deal with the EU. That aside, after his landslide victory in December 2019, the new Prime Minister promised no return to austerity, and a renewed focus on regional investment in the light of their new constituencies in the midlands and the north. This section flags the strategic political and economic issues that will have bearing on the future development of the Stockland Green neighbourhood.

(i) Economic and Political Context

The immediate effects of the Covid-19 pandemic have been dramatic. The UK formally locked down between the end of March and beginning of June, with entirely unprecedented reductions in economic activity.   ONS report that economic turnover in Quarter two of 2020 fell by over 20%, pitching the UK formally into recession. At the time of writing, the government's 'furlough' scheme continues to offset the potential for mass unemployment as a result of the pandemic, but the Bank of England predicts jobless numbers could rise as high as 2.5 million after the scheme ends in November. Further, the pandemic is far from over despite the gradual re-opening of the economy, with the possibility of a second wave of infections arising in the winter period and further local and national lock-downs being introduced as a result. Whatever actions are taken by central government, it seems likely that the UK will continue in recession for at least the next year.

Leaving the EU, or Brexit, creates another field of uncertainty in terms of the UK's economic performance over the short to medium term. Whilst the extent of economic impact will be determined by whether a deal on European trade is struck before January 2021, projections already suggest that even with a deal, the UK economy could shrink by as much as 7% as a result of leaving. Chapter Two portrays Birmingham as a city experiencing high levels of deprivation, but with a hitherto buoyant projection of economic growth. Whether this projection is realised must now depend on how well the UK as a whole manages the economic transition from being European to trading internationally without the protection of a large Bloc. Slower growth will mean Birmingham remains in a weaker position economically than most other areas of England.

For Erdington, the uncertainty created is even deeper, in that its constituents rely more heavily on manufacturing jobs in the motor industry and its satellite businesses. Currently Jaguar Landrover are committed to investing in their Castle Bromwich plant to produce a new generation of electric cars. Dunlop Aircraft Tyres is another local manufacturing institution. Both face an uncertain future as being in sectors profoundly affected first by loss of demand due to the pandemic, and second by supply chain disruption and cost increases due to Brexit. A collapse in this sector would be disastrous for Erdington and its surrounding areas. Birmingham's pre-pandemic economic profile is discussed in Chapter 2.

The pandemic also triggered two specifically housing based interventions which have indirect bearing on this study and its recommendations. The first was the accelerated programme of homeless interventions to reduce the spread of the disease among the vulnerable rough sleeping population, and the second, *a prisoner release programme* instigated in April 2020 to reduce the rate of infection in penal institutions. Whilst it is too early to measure the effect of either programme, both have accelerated demand for shared and exempt accommodation, and might well contribute to the further conversion of family homes to HMOs in Stockland Green.*(Chapter 4)*

Central government resourcing of neighbourhood renewal effectively ended with the 2011 Localism Act, which replaced centrally funded programmes with the community powers to develop local plans. Nonetheless, there has latterly been a greater focus on so-called *left-behind areas,* a term now widely used to describe areas that exhibit a combination of socio-economic deprivation and political exclusion in the wake of nearly ten years of austerity and the political upheaval associated with the Brexit vote. It's deployment marks out areas in which growth and social progress has either stalled or entered a reversal, and where, as a result, even greater inequalities are opening between their populations and those in more prosperous areas. Other characteristics of a left-behind area relate more closely to political exclusion, one prominent feature being that the population of left behind areas tend to be predominantly white, with a slower growing population and possibly a younger profile. The Local Trust[2] also attaches a broader range of community attributes to left-behind locations, namely the presence(or absence) of civic facilities, of community engagement and to levels of connectedness to commercial and employment centre. The concept of left behind areas is discussed in relation to Erdington and Stockland Green in Chapter Three.

These factors contextualise this study but are as yet unquantifiable, the impact of such profound and unpredictable events on national and local economy and society is difficult to predict. Indeed, this report is necessarily focussed on existing datasets, most of which do not reflect conditions in lockdown or the consequences of the lockdown for national life. Suffice to say, however, that any conclusions and recommendations must be considered in the light of the potential future impact of sharp falls in economic growth, disproportionate closures in the manufacturing industry and a legacy of housing demand for single persons accommodation driven by the pandemic. This suggests a need for

[2] Left Behind? Understanding Communities at the Edge, OCSI/The Local Trust(2019)

neighbourhood plans, the community right to challenge and a general power of competence for local authorities.

(ii) Supply-side issues

Birmingham City Council (BCC)'s 2017 development plan pledges development of 51,100 homes between 2011-2031, a programme that might be subject to review given the uncertain economic climate created by the pandemic. The 2018 decision to scrap the cap on local authority borrowing powers to build new housing provided a possible route to offsetting supply side losses of social housing, but was highly dependent on BCC being able and willing to use these new borrowing powers to build. The combined effect of the city's own strategic objectives and the loosening of local government restrictions on borrowing should be to increase the supply for new housing generally, and for social housing in particular. A positive supply-side outcome is again dependent on the local and national economy weathering the storm of COVID And Brexit effectively.

An alternative approach to local wealth building and creating inclusive economies whose benefits can be locked into cities and localities within them has emerged over the last decade promoted by think tanks such as CLES and taken forward by local authorities such as Preston City Council. The aim is to achieve social justice, build strong local economies and effective local services.

The *Housing and Planning Act 2016* introduced a range of measures to promote home-ownership and movement between tenures. Right to buy discounts were increased, and mandatory fixed-term tenancies introduced so that council tenants were automatically offered smaller tenancies if under-occupying at the end of their tenancy. In Birmingham, these measures might well augment the gradual loss of social rented housing demonstrated in Chapter 4 of this report. So far, this loss has been almost compensated by social housing built by the RP sector, meaning the extension of RTB to housing association properties could escalate the loss of necessary social housing lettings to Birmingham City Council. This will continue a process that has provided a major stimulus to the provision of private sector accommodation in Birmingham, particularly for lower income groups.

(iii) Demand pressures

Though austerity has ended according to the new Conservative administration, policies introduced as a result of austerity continue to create housing market pressures for those on benefits and low incomes. The *Local Housing Allowance(LHA)* was introduced in 2008 to introduce some parity between private and social housing rent levels through introducing a benefit calculation linked to the cheapest 50% of rents in any administrative area. Properties subject to LHA constraints range from a single room in a shared house for single claimants under the age of 35 (known as the Shared Accommodation Rate) to a property with a maximum of four bedrooms. In 2011, austerity measures further restricted the housing benefit levels restricted by changing the method of calculation to use only the cheapest 30% of rents in any administrative area to calculate the LHA, with a four year freeze on LHA introduced in April 2016. In only two of the 70 LHA areas in the UK have rents not increased in that period, creating a huge pressure for individuals to migrate to more affordable areas where the disparity between benefits and rents is less acute. In mainly London local authorities, the discrepancy between the LHA and local rents is so great that this restriction has led to ever more active campaigns by statutory to 'export' homeless applicants to cheaper areas rather than fund the gap between welfare benefits and market rents.*(Chapters 2,3, and 4)*

The austerity programme of the previous conservative administration also sought to reduce the pre-existing *benefit Cap* as part of the introduction of the new holistic benefit called Universal Credit. Part 8A of the **Housing Benefit Regulations 2006** provides for Housing Benefit to be reduced where a working age claimant's total income from welfare benefits exceeds the Cap set for that area and type of applicant by the new government. In 2006, the cap was set at a relatively generous level of £500, but austerity(again) has seen the cap frozen and then reduced. At the time of writing, the outside London benefit cap for single people was £257.69 and the London benefit cap £296.35. Given the much greater differential between London and out of London rents, the Benefit Cap has a disproportionate effect on housing applicants in the London area, creating incentives for local authorities to move those on benefits or low incomes to more affordable areas.(*Chapters 2, 3 and 4)*

The **Homeless Reduction Act 2017** shifted local authority focus toward preventing homelessness and the creative use of alternative housing options to reduce homelessness.   The Act represents the most fundamental revision of homelessness legislation since the 1977 Homeless Persons Act first placed local authorities under a duty to provide both temporary and permanent accommodation to those found to be (legally)homeless. It introduced:

- *A duty to assess* all applicants regardless of their priority need and to agree a housing plan.
- *A new prevention duty,* which requires local authorities to actively support applicants for 56 days to prevent their homelessness and in some circumstances to provide temporary accommodation whilst in the process.
- *A new relief duty,* which requires local authorities to take actions to relieve homelessness where the applicant falls into this category.
- *A duty to refer* – placed on all agencies working with potential housing applicants, it requires the housing authority to receive and respond to those referrals constructively.

The Act is progressive in placing local authorities under a duty to intervene earlier and prevent at-risk households being made homeless in the first place.   First, it widens the duties of local authorities to assist anybody whose housing is under threat, including large groups of single applicants who would not have received any assistance under the old legal regime. This facet of the legislation has accelerated demand for smaller units of accommodation and hostels nationally, and particularly in London and other large urban conurbations.   Specifically, the HRA has driven demand for single-person accommodation in the HMO and exempt accommodation sector, the only type of accommodation that is affordable given the restrictions on HB inherent in sub-market levels of Local Housing Allowance(LHA). In London and the South East, local authorities increasingly look to more affordable cities such as Birmingham to discharge their duties to assist. Meanwhile, Housing, health, and social care agencies in Birmingham also look to this HMO sector to discharge their duties to provide accommodation and support. The result is a burgeoning HMO sector in any Birmingham locality where houses are suitable for conversion to multi-occupancy, and house prices are relatively affordable. Second, the HRA confirms that bifurcation of duties to homeless people and rights to social housing, forcing local authorities to turn toward private sector solutions wherever possible.   This facet of the legislation has turned attention once more to discharging housing duties to the private sector, and for local authorities in high cost areas such as London and the South East, discharging to other, affordable housing markets such as Birmingham. *(Chapter 4)*

One general issue in terms of data collection is that the effects of these major national trends cannot be quantified as there is no way of deducing where HMO residents have come from, or whether they have self-referred or arrived at the HMO through a statutory agency. An inference can be made from the rapid increase in HMO stock, particularly in the exempt sector, and the exponential increase in HB claims. This is not the same, however, as having hard data on the origins of this new population, an issue that should be of interest not only to Birmingham City Council, but to the MHCLG and to local authorities everywhere. Data collection issues are highlighted in the conclusions and recommendations of this report. *(Chapter 5)*

(iv) Regulatory and Planning Framework

The broad regulatory framework for private sector enforcement is set out in the **Housing Act 2004** which set out includes broad ranging powers to regulate large houses in multiple occupation(HMOs), and to intervene actively in their management, to the extent of closing down HMOS which pose health and safety risks to their residents. In such circumstances, the responsibility for accommodating residents at short notice is likely to fall to the City Council, creating immediate, emergency demands on their already restricted housing supply. The **HMO Licensing Regulations 2018** significantly extended the licensing regime for HMOs by changing the definition of an HMO to any house with more than five people and two households, and introduced minimum room sizes for letting.

Birmingham City Council meets its licensing and regulatory obligations through a mandatory HMO licensing scheme and an active enforcement regime that includes both proactive inspections of HMO properties and responsive interventions where complaints are received from the community. Enforcement powers range from notices requiring structural changes to HMO premises, reductions in occupancy, or, in extreme cases, the closure of the HMO. In reality, the practical ability of Birmingham's private sector team to use its enforcement and regulatory powers to effect systematic change in the sector is constrained by resource cuts that have reduced the team to a third of its pre-austerity complement. Nonetheless, HMO registration is rigidly enforced, wide ranging support is offered to landlords, and enforcement action is still taken and publicised where serious breaches in health and safety or poor management are discovered. *(Chapter 4)*

Exempt accommodation was introduced in 1996, with the legal definition now being found in the Schedule 3 to the ***Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit (Consequential Provisions) Regulations 2006 (SI 2006/217).*** It is, in effect, shared accommodation that is not *commissioned* by a local authority housing or social care agency, and is funded through special housing benefit provision. For shared accommodation to be exempt, it must be provided by a not-for-profit Landlord, meaning a Council, housing association, registered charity or voluntary organisation, and must provide some care, support or supervision. Exempt status presupposes that landlords will pay additional costs relating to this type of accommodation and resident group, meaning that benefit levels are subject to a different cap to LHA, and residents are not subject to the benefits cap. To give an idea of the differential, the BCC housing benefit service will pay up to £235 per week on a room in exempt accommodation, and only £85 per week on non-exempt accommodation. Payment of benefits are direct to the landlord, rather than to the resident as in universal credit. The provision of support is both a prerequisite of exempt status, and vaguely defined as being required at a 'minimal' level.

The growth in *exempt accommodation* nationally has been fuelled by a combination of demand and supply side and regulatory factors. On the demand side, the HRA has increased the obligations placed on statutory housing agencies to secure accommodation for single people and austerity induced restrictions on LHA have driven both housing institutions and individuals to seek accommodation in low-rent areas. On the supply side, the availability of high rental yields for registered providers and other organisations and to the private landlords that supply such accommodation has made the conversion of single family homes or existing HMOs a highly profitable venture. For example, a six-bedroomed exempt HMO will generate more than **£73k per annum** in rental income, with no regulation of the amount of investment in either support or property management. With such large profit margins, commercial landlords with a portfolio of 100 properties could generate an annual profit of over **£17 million.** Finally, exempt accommodation is not only exempt from HB restrictions, but is also outside formal regulatory regime applied to mainstream HMOS in Birmingham since 2016. This exemption was introduced for social housing in the Housing Act 2004, but extended to for-profit Registered Providers of social housing in the **Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 (Consequential Provisions) Order 2010 (S.I. 2010/866)** Exempt accommodation providers are not required to join the HMO register, or to succumb to proactive inspections of their properties. Further, the HB service does not regulate the provision of support except where there are flagrant breaches of their regulations.

The combined result is an explosion of the exempt sector wherever house prices are relatively low and the housing profile lends itself to conversions. The city of Birmingham has seen the largest increases in exempt accommodation of any core city, concentrated in less expensive localities with, typically, a high proportion of larger street properties.*(Chapter 4)*

Given that Stockland Green's housing market is defined by its relatively high level of private sector ownership, the planning and enforcement framework is of particular interest. Currently, certain types of development do not require planning permission, being permitted by the Secretary of State under the **Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015**. Conversions into HMOs fall under this order, meaning that changes in housing tenure can be effected without intervention by the planning authority. This general permission can be rescinded through an Article 4 direction, a power already used by Manchester City Council to control the development of the HMO sector. The lack of similar restrictions on development could account for the relatively rapid growth in the exempt HMO sector in Birmingham in the last decade. Birmingham finally adopted a city-wide Article 4 direction relating to HMO's in 2019 and this has come into force from June 2020. It is possible to refine Article 4 directions to cover areas as small as a single ward, to deter landlords from building high concentrations of HMOS in single areas.

The **Localism Act 2011,** shifted the responsibility for local planning significantly toward communities rather than local authorities, and strengthened local planning and wider community empowerment through powers such as the Right To Challenge. Under previous Labour governments, neighbourhood renewal was centrally mediated – and funded – with a view of levelling up the perceived 'postcode' disadvantage experienced by the poorest communities. The Localism Act effectively dissolved 'macro' elements of neighbourhood renewal policies in favour of bottom-up planning. Under the Act, a neighbourhood can be designated an appropriate area by application to the planning authority, and If designated, the community can then exercise substantial influence over the scope and application of planning regulations in their determined neighbourhood area. Once such a plan has been agreed by the community and its partners, an application can be made under section 5 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, and the local authority has a duty to consider and determine it. The neighbourhood planning regime aligns with existing planning powers, such as those contained in the consolidating **Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) Order 2002** The RRO instituted a general power on local authorities to provide "assistance" "in any form" "to any person", to improve, repair, adapt or rebuild residential premises, and thus provides local authorities with a mechanism for intervening in the private sector housing market should it be deemed necessary.

(v) Birmingham City Council Strategies

The following plans and policies have a bearing on the future development and regeneration of Stockland Green area, and are referred to in this report.

Birmingham Development Plan

Birmingham Plan 2031 is the comprehensive outline planning document for the City of Birmingham, providing a framework for development for at least the next decade. It confirms a focus on the city centre, demonstrated by the private sector led regeneration of Birmingham's central area, most notable in the revamped New Street Station. The Commonwealth Games are due to take place in Birmingham in 2020, and whilst many events are slated for the central zone, there is work ongoing to make sure there is city wide benefit. In addition, the BDP identified zoned industrial areas ,and a network of subregional and local retail centres. Around Stockland Green, parts of Erdington constituency are zoned as industrial, with special attention to the need of major employers such as JLR. Slade Road is included on the list of vital local retail centres. In terms of housing, the plan commits to increasing the supply of all housing, including affordable housing, subject to periodic strategic housing market assessments.

The effect of the pandemic on the planning focus on radial growth from Birmingham's city centre is yet another site of new uncertainty. During lockdown, the announcement of the only recently opened John Lewis store in Birmingham was announced, suggesting a new fragility in city centre led growth. Were the possible shift toward remote working materialise in the Midlands, opportunities could arise for satellite areas such as Stockland Green.

Birmingham Strategic Housing Market Assessment
Targets for housing supply are set out in the most recent (2013) Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

Birmingham Homelessness Review
Birmingham's last homeless review was published in 2016, and demonstrated the growing mismatch between the demand for and supply of housing, particularly for lower income or benefit dependent households.

(vi) Local Plans

Stockland Green does not yet have a Ward Plan. Since the Pioneer Group moved into the locality it has driven efforts to create a more focussed and coordinated approach to community building in the area, and expects to complete a formal plan for the area in September 2020.

As part of the City Council's commitment to "Working Together in Birmingham's Neighbourhoods" the 69 wards have been asked to write ward plans setting out local priorities to cover the electoral cycle for 2018-22. Stockland Green ward is currently finalising its plan and considering this at the Ward Community Forum in September 2020. The plan identifies a priority around addressing the proliferation of HMOs and exempt provision around Slade Road.

In 2016, a Pioneer Group ward study suggested zoning very small areas according to key landmarks, such as Spaghetti Junction, Brookvale Park, and lower and upper Slade Road. The ideas put forward in that report remain valid now, in that even within the small ward area, there is diversity in terms of housing and community needs. The Pioneer Group have followed these pragmatic recommendations in their own developments, being actively involved in discussions to create a more inclusive and expansive community hub at the Methodist Church in the northern area of the ward, possible linked to a new housing development on the other side of Slade Road. Discussions have also been initiated with the West Midland Canal and River Trust on canal-side opportunities in the southern area of the ward.

Further recommendations on the shape of the ward plan are outside the scope of this report, but the idea of a more integrated and holistic approach to regeneration, and a case for special recognition of Stockland Green are highly relevant in the light of Stockland Green' unique housing needs and are considered in the conclusions.

5. Research methodology

Most of the research for this study was drawn from existing national statistical datasets in line with MHCLG guidance, drilling through broad national datasets to ward level. A layered approached to data-capture was followed meaning that data analysis moved through a strategic comparison of Birmingham with other core cities, to a more a detailed analysis of the social, economic and demographic profile of constituency and ward, and finally to a highly localised and contextualised analysis of the housing needs of Stockland Green Ward. As far as possible, all statistical information was drawn directly from Government open-data resources. This methodology located the Stockland Green ward profile in a city-wide context. Given that data was drawn from a wide range of dataset, it has not been possible to fully align the time period for statistical analysis, given differentials in the collation and release of government data. A 'best possible' approach has been taken, with the most recent data used wherever possible. A full list of data sources is listed in Appendix One.

A literature review was conducted to allow this report to be placed in the context of national, and local research. The many efforts nationally to address the problems of left-behind areas informed discussion both of the problems faced in Stockland Green and Erdington and the possible solutions. Much research and policy analysis has been devoted to the problems caused by the exponential growth in exempt supported housing provision. Though this housing needs analysis is broader in scope, the impact of exempt accommodation on Stockland Green's community is so great that previous studies of the growth of the exempt provision sector provided valuable context for the neighbourhood analysis. The work of Thea Raisbeck on behalf of Spring Housing was particularly helpful. Her thorough analysis of the exempt sector in Birmingham provided an informed basis for comments on the lack of support available to many residents of exempt accommodation. A full list of secondary sources are also included in Appendix One

Finally, local stakeholders were invited to provide qualitative input to the Stockland Green section and to augment statistical data if possible. Of particular note is the exceptional support received from Birmingham City Council, the Pioneer Group, and from the West Midlands Police in providing unpublished data of housing needs and supply and exempt accommodation provision, data on stock, history and development, and crime respectively. In terms of possible solutions, these stakeholders were hugely supportive of efforts to revitalise and regenerate the Stockland Green area, and were forthcoming in their recommendations for change. The BCC-led Private Rented Sector Group introduced stakeholders to this piece of research and their help and support provided invaluable insights into the Stockland Green ward. Cllr Josh Jones provided a welcome political perspective on the ward and its people, whilst Matt Smith of Birmingham's private sector team provided a very thoughtful perspective on the enforcement and regulatory issues raised by the growth of the exempt sector in Stockland Green. PC Helena McKeon not only provided valuable local data on local crime rates, but a fascinating perspective on the history of the area. My thanks to these and all participants who have given their time and thoughts to this project.

Chapter Two – Birmingham and the Core Cities

A comparative analysis of the major social, economic and housing indicators relating to the City of Birmingham and other English core cities.

Birmingham is of course intimately connected to the rest of the UK, and beyond; whatever happens nationally will affect health and prosperity of Birmingham, and whatever happens to the West Midlands and to Birmingham as a city will resonate in Erdington and Stockland Green. This narrative of ***connectivity*** between the nation, city and locality will become a familiar motif in this report, with subsequent chapters arguing that Stockland Green is unique precisely because it is disproportionately affected by structural changes in national housing tenures. This chapter focusses on those structural forces through comparative analysis of a broad range of socio-economic, health and housing indicators in Birmingham and the seven remaining English core cities.

Each section starts with a summary of the analysis, and follows with a more in-depth exploration of how common core city characteristics of relatively low growth, high inequality, and uneven spatial development manifest in Birmingham. By its close, you will have a clear perspective of the challenges shared by Birmingham with its fellow core cities, and the challenges faced by Birmingham alone.

1. Birmingham and its comparators

SUMMARY FACTS: What do core cities have in common?

- ***When compared to London, core cities all have significantly share lower levels of economic growth and productivity.***
- ***Core cities are generally poorer than the Capital, have less skilled and qualified workers and are broadly unhealthier.***
- ***Core cities are less resilient to economic shocks than London, falling into recession quicker and taking much longer to recover.***
- ***When compared to similar cities in other OECD countries, English core cities make a significantly smaller contribution to the national economy.***
- ***Core cities share a profile, but considerable variations exist between English core cities.***

Birmingham is one of the largest of the eleven regional centres known as the core cities, alongside Belfast, Bristol, Cardiff, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham, Sheffield.[3] Although no precise definition of a core city exists, all of the most populous and productive regional cities define themselves as core cities, and work together to redress their common the imbalance in growth, wealth and productivity between the core cities as a group and London.[4] A comparison of aggregated economic indicators from core cities against London and non-urban areas illustrates the harsh reality at the root of their concerns.

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[3] Glasgow joined the Core Cities Group early in 2020..

[4] The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development(OECD) use the definition of Functional Urban Areas with populations above 50k as their benchmark for core cities comparisons.

- *London contributed 28.1% of total gross domestic product (GDP) to the UK economy with only 18% of its population, while core cities generated 22.6% of the UK's GDP with 25% of the UK's population.*
- *Per Capita GDP is consistently lower in core cities than in London, but is about the same as the rest of the UK.*
- *Despite diversifying economies, core cities do not appear to have achieved economic resilience and have recovered from austerity and recession more slowly than London.*[5]
- *On average, workers in core cities are less well educated than in the rest of the UK and active businesses in core cities operate in less productive sectors than other businesses in the UK.*

Economic and labour market indicators such as the relatively slow growth rate, lower productivity and higher unemployment confirm a macro-level commonality between the UK's core cities:, all major regional population centres are disproportionately disadvantaged compared to the Capital and non-urban areas. Similarities between core cities are rooted in a number of convergent historical and policy characteristics, exemplified by the disproportionate impact of the decline of traditional manufacturing industries, the London-centric nature of policy making in the UK, and the lack of a clear regional framework for economic growth. When UK core cities are compared to European second cities, a similar disparity occurs in key economic and labour market indicators, in that:

- *Second-tier cities in most other OECD countries outperform the national average in terms of GDP per capita and GVA per capita.*[6]
- *In UK core cities, gross value added (GVA) per worker was just 86% of the UK average in 2016.*
- *In 2016 average GVA per worker in the second-tier cities of comparable economies was considerably higher than UK core cities, outstripping them by 30.4% in Australia, 30.3% in Germany, 26.1% in the Netherlands, 22.8% in France and 17.9% in Italy.*
- *Core cities have few statutory powers and less autonomy than their European counterparts.*

Comparative data in relation to economic cycles, that is the boom/recession/ recovery cycle also suggests that in relation both to London and European comparators, English core cities appear to fall deeper into recession and recover more slowly, meaning that over time their economies have failed to keep up either with London or with comparators overseas. This factor is particularly stark when viewing the contribution to the UK economy of the core cities as a group against London.

Beyond this economic common ground and the similarly detrimental effect of successive national government policies on urban centre, there is considerable divergence ***between*** core cities. Cities vary considerably in the size of their populations, and diverge in terms of national deprivation indicators, where only four core cities rank in the top ten percent of deprived areas. OECD suggests that though core cities have generally struggled with the symptoms of low rates of economic growth, each core city diverges insofar as this growth pattern has affected spatial and social development. Housing markets in particular diverge considerably in terms of prices to rent and buy, stock condition and housing tenure. The proposed OECD solution to this complexity is for a cohesive national policy to be developed for all core cities, with this strategic framework supplemented by place-based solutions.[7] Ultimately this report will ground just such a place-based solution for Stockland Green, having reference to its position in relation to Erdington constituency, the City of Birmingham, and the wider grouping of English core cities.

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[5] *The Economic Performance and Resilience of English Core Cities*, Cambridge Econometrics (2016)

[6] GVA is a recognised international measurement of productivity

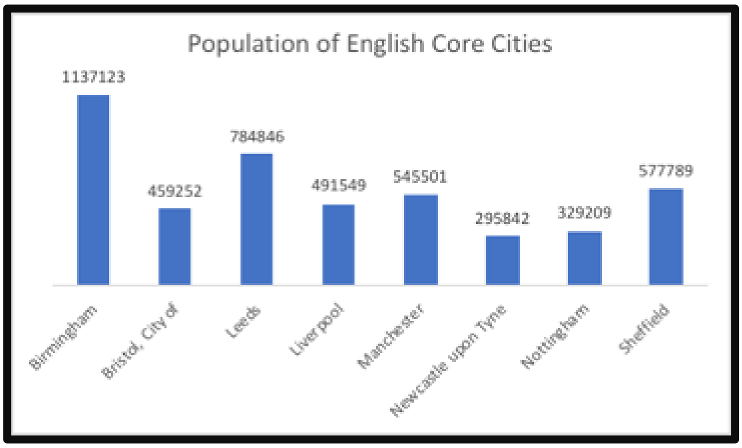
[7] OECD (2020), *Enhancing Productivity in UK Core Cities: Connecting Local and Regional Growth*, OECD Urban Policy Reviews, OECD Publishing, Paris, *https://doi.org/10.1787/9ef55ff7-en*.

2. City Demography

SUMMARY FACTS: How does Birmingham compare in demographic terms to other English core cities?

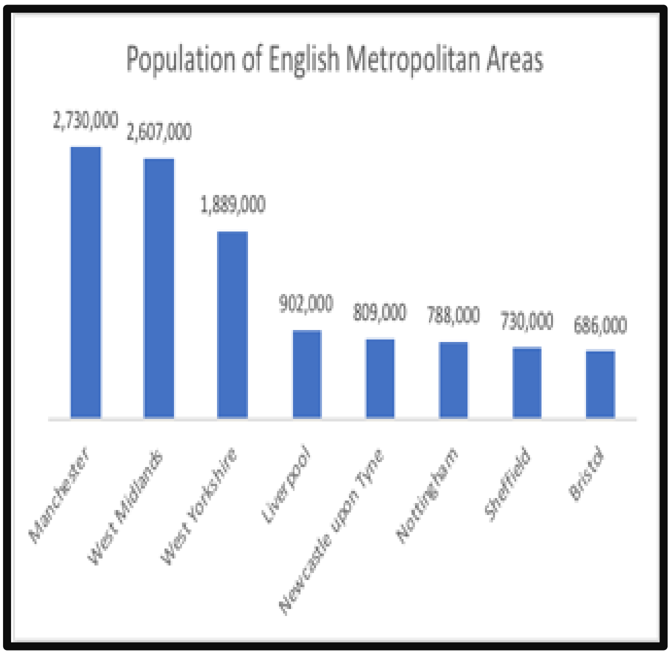
- ***Birmingham is the second largest urban conurbation in the UK in terms of population.***
- ***It is the largest core city to be a single, unitary administrative area.***
- ***It is exceptionally diverse, a demographic profile it shares with only with London.***
- ***It is one of the most deprived local authority areas of the UK; and***
- ***Contains numerous areas of extremely high social deprivation, of which Erdington is one.***

Figure 2.1



The first comparison must, of course, be size; core cities range from the large metropolitan area of Birmingham to the smallest regional centre, Newcastle upon Tyne. Figure 2.1 shows the total population per core city, and confirms that Birmingham is the largest core city if the definition of city is taken as the local authority area. The comparative statistics in the remainder of this Chapter refer to local authority areas.

Figure 2.2



This does not tell the whole story. Both Manchester and Leeds are comparable to Birmingham when measured by populations of the metropolitan area rather than local authority boundary. Even when the Birmingham metropole is taken to encompass adjoining urban boroughs, Figure 2.2 shows the Greater Manchester conurbation has a larger population. The large West Yorkshire conurbation with Leeds at its centre approaches both Birmingham and Manchester in size. However, the other large urban conurbations of similar size tend to be broken down into five or six separate unitary authorities. Birmingham is governed by one large metropolitan authority that covers much, though not all, of the surrounding metropolitan area.

In terms of gender, there is little significant variation between the populations of the core cities:

- The lowest proportion of women is 49.4% in Manchester.
- The highest proportion of women is 50.9% in Leeds.
- 50.5% of Birmingham's population are women, making it one of four core cities where women make up just over half of the population.

At a projected growth rate of 7.7% over the next ten years, the West Midlands will experience slightly higher population growth than England at a rate of 7.1%. However, growth projected in the city of Birmingham is considerably lower. The number of households in Birmingham is projected to increase by 4.7% to 2028, with growth rates much higher in surrounding non-metropolitan areas such as Warwickshire and even Sutton Coldfield. The highest rate of growth will be among adult only households of two or more people(6.1%), and the second highest area of growth being one person households, which are expected to increase by 5. 5.% to 142730, or 32% of the total number of Birmingham households.

In terms of ethnicity Birmingham is the most diverse of the core cities, indeed it has been described as a 'super-diverse' area;

- 57% of the population fell into the white/British category in the last census.
- 26% of Birmingham citizens are of Asian origin.
- 9% being of Birmingham citizens are of Afro-Caribbean origin, and the remainder into other ethnic origin.

In this respect, Birmingham perhaps more closely resembles the Greater London conurbation than other core cities; in London just under 45% of the population are of White/British origin, and just over 40% of residents are either Asian, Black, Mixed or Other ethnic group. Indeed, this profile fits the definition of a super-diverse area, that is of an area where there is a radical diversity not only between ethnic groups, but within then.[8] The next most diverse core city is Manchester, with a white British population of 66%, Asian ethnicities at 16%, Afro-Caribbean people at 8.6%. The least diverse core city is Liverpool, where 88.9% of the population fall into the white British category. In terms of local analysis, we will find that Erdington constituency is far more homogenous, but Stockland Green more closely reflects the super-diverse Birmingham profile.

The Indices of Multiple Deprivation(IMD) amalgamate various social and economic indicators to provide a general level of deprivation. The table overleaf shows that all of the core cities fall in the higher deciles of deprivation.

Decile*	Core City
Most Deprived (top 10%)	***Birmingham***, *Liverpool, Manchester, Nottingham*
3rd Most Deprived	*Leeds, Newcastle, Sheffield*
4th Most Deprived	*Bristol*

Birmingham is one of the four core cities that fall into the ***highest decile*** of deprivation. The four core cities in the top decile of deprivation have some of the highest concentrations of areas of extreme deprivation. Birmingham is believed to have the largest number of small areas of extreme deprivation amongst the core cities. It also has the highest number of small areas of deprivation within its boundaries and contains some of the most deprived wards in the United Kingdom.

The next sections provide a more in-depth analysis of the most relevant socio-economic and health indicators, many of which are components of the IMD, and contribute to the determination of Birmingham as a city with very high deprivation scores.

[8] Vertovec, Steven (2007). "Super-diversity and its implications". *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. **30** (6): 1024–1054.

3. Economy and Labour Market

SUMMARY FACTS: How does Birmingham compare to other core cities in terms of wealth and labour?

- ***Birmingham has the second largest economy in the UK when measured by GDP.***
- ***Per capita GDP is substantially lower than both the UK as a whole and the core city average.***
- ***Birmingham has a larger proportion of manufacturing industry than other core cities, a factor that creates a greater vulnerability to economic shocks than other core cities.***
- ***Birmingham has one of the lowest proportions of the population in the category of economically active at 73%.***
- ***It has a lower rate of worklessness than other core cities, but a higher number of benefit claimants, suggested that more workless people are trying and failing to join the labour force.***
- ***Birmingham's residents are relatively poorly equipped for the workplace, with only 69.3% of the work age population holding NVQ3 and above.***
- ***It has the highest proportion of people with no qualifications of any of the core cities, at 17.9% of the work age population.***
- ***Birmingham's median salaries are comparable to most core cities.***

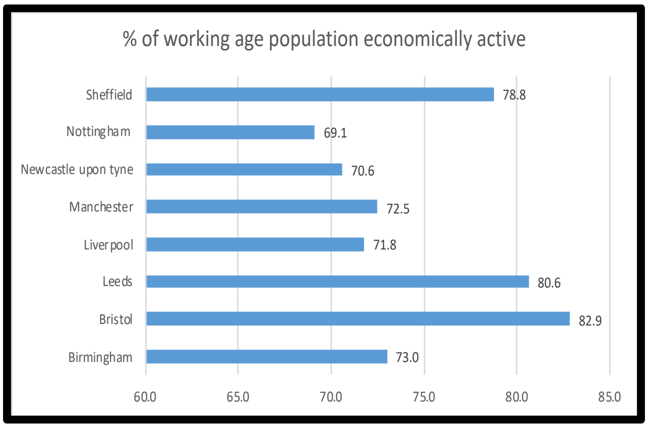
If judged by GDP alone, Birmingham's economy is the second largest city economy in the UK, with an estimated GDP of nearly £31.9 billion in 2018. In terms of economic growth in real terms, It is also the second best performing core city (+4.0%), which places it well above the core city average (+1.8%) and the UK (+1.4%). At the same time GDP per head is considerably lower than the UK as a whole and for the core cities. The table below shows how per capita GDP varies between the UK, the core city average, the highest core city output, and Birmingham.

GDP per Capita in 2018	UK	Core city average	Manchester	Birmingham
	32216	33179	44781	**27346**

This suggests that promising indicators in terms of economic growth have not yet translated into benefits for the population.

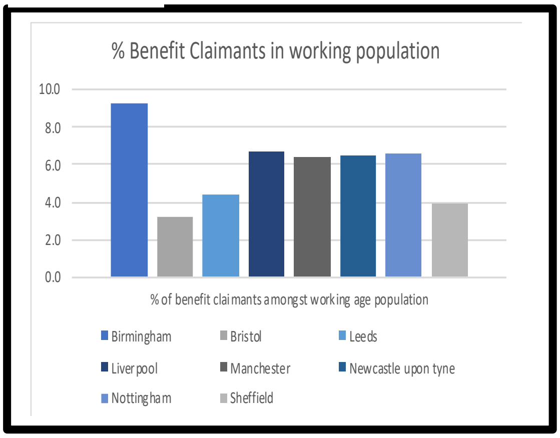
All core cities have lower proportions of economically active people than London. Birmingham has the highest number of economically active residents at 53,500, but this difference is largely accounted for by the difference in size of the city authorities of Manchester and Leeds. In terms of the proportion of economically active people, a key indicator of labour market health, Birmingham's 73% is broadly comparable to Manchester, Liverpool and Newcastle. Only Nottingham is considerably lower. *(Figure 2.3)*

Figure 2.3



At the end of 2018, Birmingham had just over 58,000 workless households, a higher number than any other core city. However, Birmingham has a lower rate of worklessness than its closest comparators amongst the core cities, Manchester and Liverpool. (*Figure 2.4*)

Figure 2.4



At the same time, figure 2.5 shows the number of benefit claimants in Birmingham was 49, 800, a higher percentage of the working age population than any other core city. This suggests a different profile of worklessness in Birmingham, a lower student population is one contributing factor. This disparity means proportionately more Birmingham residents are in the jobs market and unable to find suitable work.

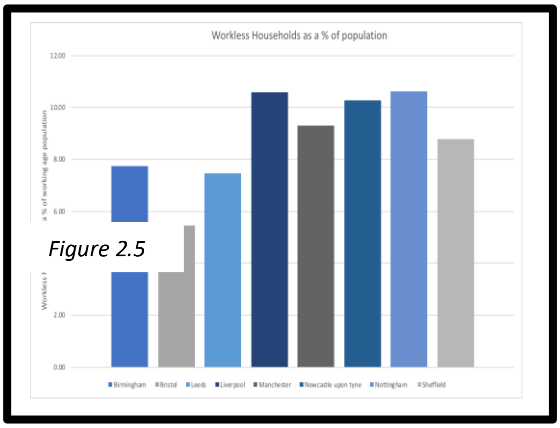
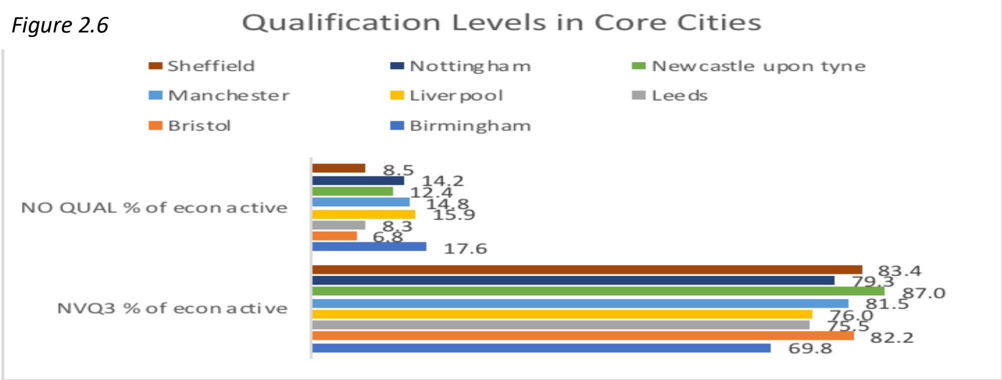


Figure 2.5

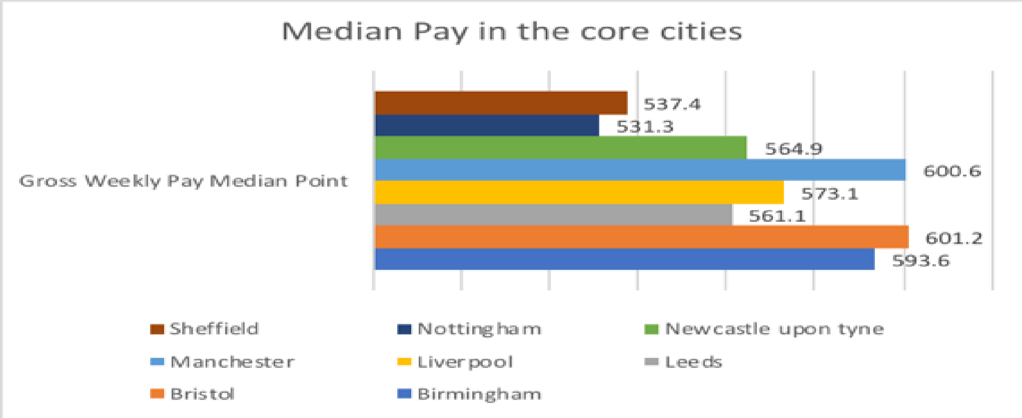
One explanation might also lie in the nature of the jobs available and in the nature of the workforce. Figure 2.6 shows that the qualification level in Birmingham appears lower than all other core cities. Only 69.8% of the working age population hold qualification at NVQ3 and above. At 17.6% of the working age population, Birmingham has the highest proportion of people with no qualifications at all.

Figure 2.6



The final labour market comparison places Birmingham at the mid-point in terms of median pay – at £592 per week - in comparison with other core cities.(*Figure 2.7 overleaf)* Manchester, the largest and most similar of the core cities has higher median pay levels, perhaps a reflection of the higher qualification levels demonstrated in the analysis above, and possibly an indication Manchester's more successful transition to a service economy.

Figure 2.7



In summary, it appears that despite Birmingham being at the lower end of economic and labour market performance on key indicators, there is much to be optimistic about. The economy is growing faster than other core cities, and that trend appears likely to continue if the proposed new high-speed rail link is completed. Any prediction in current times, however, is undermined by the as-yet unknown effect of the Covid 19 pandemic. The economic impact of the pandemic is likely to be felt hardest in those areas known to be hotspots for illness, and the West Midlands falls into this unfortunate category. If growth is attenuated across the region it is likely to have the most negative consequences for areas of existing high deprivation. Further, there is an additional fragility in Birmingham' reliance on a small group of large manufacturing employers, JLR, and Dunlop Aircraft Tyres being most clearly integral to Erdington and Stockland Green's employment markets. Demand for cars dropped to nearly zero during lockdown, and has yet to recover, whilst Brexit poses a threat both to lucrative European car markets and to the just-in-time manufacturing processes so dependent on free movement. The loss of any large manufacturer would send shock waves through the local economy, directly through the loss of jobs and indirectly, through the loss of the many satellite businesses that have developed to support them.

4. Public Health

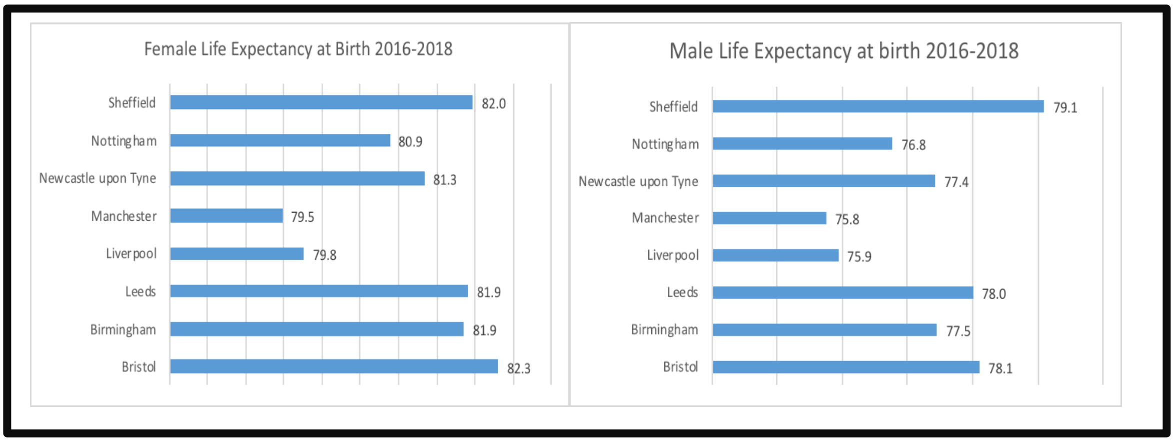
SUMMARY FACTS: How healthy is Birmingham's population compared to other core cities?

- ***Life expectancy in all core cities is lower than the English average.***
- ***All core cities score badly in terms of health inequality, life expectancy is around a decade lower in core cities than the highest decile in England by nearly a decade.***
- ***Birmingham is one of the cities in which life expectancy is getting worse.***

The primary public health indicator is the length of life a person can expect from birth. In 2018, the average life expectancy in England from birth was 79.6 for men and 83.2 for women. This follows a decade in which an unprecedented reversal in the trend toward higher life expectancies has occurred. Life average life expectancy has declined by just under one year.

This general trend masks significant regional and local variation. All of the core cities, even relatively wealthy Bristol, have average life expectancies at a lower level than the national average. Between the core cities, there are significant variations. Babies born in Birmingham in 2018 have higher expected lifespans than those in Manchester, Liverpool and Nottingham, but have lower expected lifespans than all other core cities. (*Figure 2.8)*

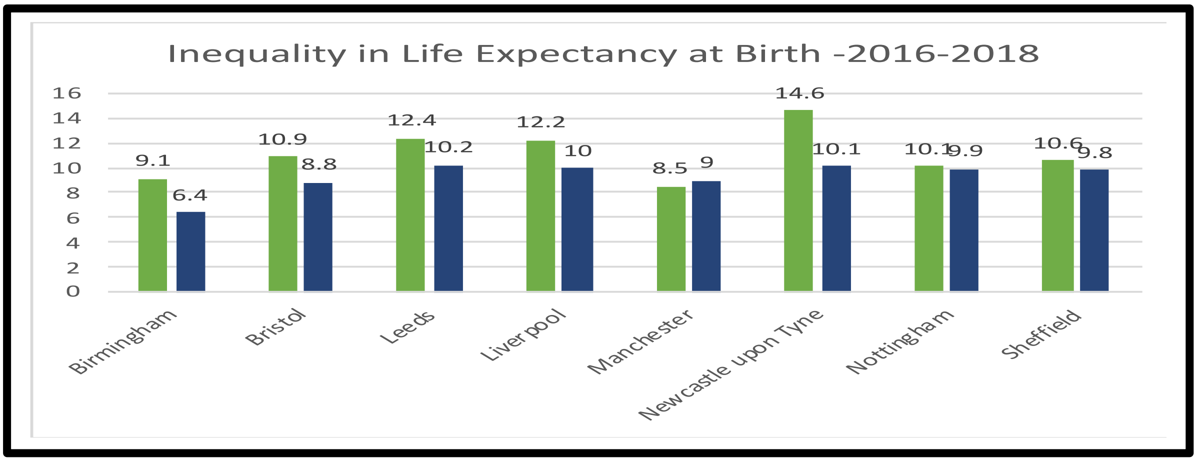
Figure 2.8



Reasons for the deterioration in life expectancy are suggested by Public Health England to be attributable to austerity policies and their specific effect on the poorest communities. The table below shows health inequality in life expectancy at birth, measured by the difference between each core city area and upper decile life expectancy in the UK.

Figure 2.9 demonstrates that all core cities are unhealthier than the English average, with Newcastle upon Tyne having the largest variation in male life expectancy at 14.6 years difference between the highest decile life expectancy and local life expectancy. In Birmingham, the gap is still a substantial 9.1 years for men, and 6.4 years for women. Average life expectancy has deteriorated over the last five years in all the core cities except Sheffield. Government analysis also identifies a clear correlation between life expectancy and deprivation at a small area level, suggesting a key area of investigation to be whether the distribution of generally lower life expectancy among small areas of the City of Birmingham.

Figure 2.9



5. Child Poverty

SUMMARY FACTS: Are Birmingham's children more likely to fall into poverty than children in other core cities?

- ***Child poverty is higher than the national average in all English core cities.***
- ***Child poverty rates have risen in all core cities in the last five years.***
- ***The rate of child poverty before and after housing costs is highest in Birmingham and Manchester compared to other core cities.***
- ***Birmingham has largest number of children in low income families, and the second highest percentage rate of children in low income families.***
- ***17.9% of Birmingham children live in workless households.***
- ***Birmingham has the highest number of children in temporary accommodation of any core city.***

As in our health profile of core cities, analysis suggests rates of child poverty have been rising over the last ten years after falling substantially before 2010.[9] Child poverty rates are calculated using a basket of deprivation indicators, that indicate poverty relative to mean income. The UK government sets the relative poverty line at 60 per cent of the median UK household income, meaning that if a household's income is less than 60 per cent of this average, they are considered to be living in relative poverty. Absolute poverty is where a household's income is less than 60 per cent of the median as it stood in 2011.

Figure 2.10

[9] Juliet Stone and Donald Hirsch, Indicators of Child Poverty 2017/2018, Loughborough University

Before housing costs are considered, Birmingham and Manchester have similarly high levels of child poverty to the Capital. Child poverty rates rise in all core cities once housing costs are factored, meaning that rent levels consume a larger proportion of disposable income in large urban conurbations. Among the core cities, Birmingham and Manchester have the highest rates of child poverty after housing costs. The rise in both relative and absolute poverty rates over the last five years is reflected in rising inequalities within city boundaries. Three wards in Birmingham have levels of child poverty above 60%, though none of these wards are in Erdington. (*Figure 2.10)*

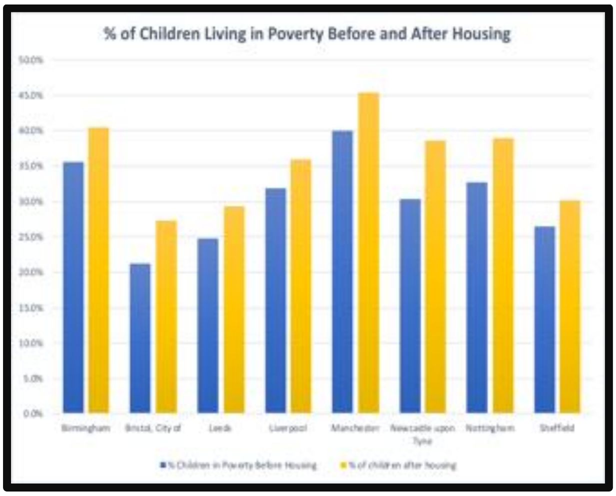


Figure 2.11

All core cities have high levels of child poverty, and a large number of children growing up in workless households. This is not only an indicator of economic poverty, but underscores the early marginalisation of poorer children who grow up without adults linked into or understanding labour markets. Worklessness and economic deprivation in the adult population have been linked to inter-generational disadvantage in labour markets, and a cyclical aspect to poverty. (*Figure 2.11)*

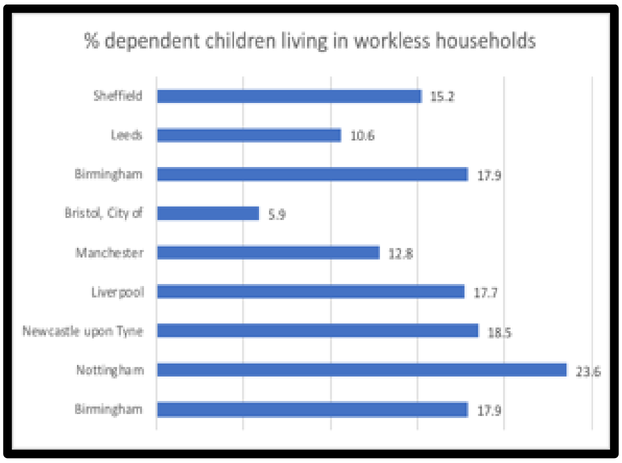
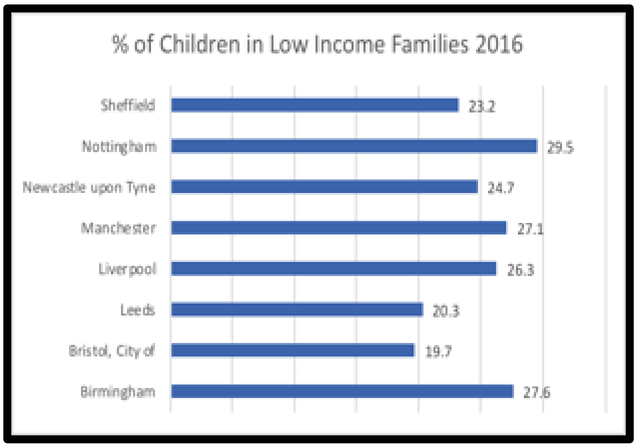
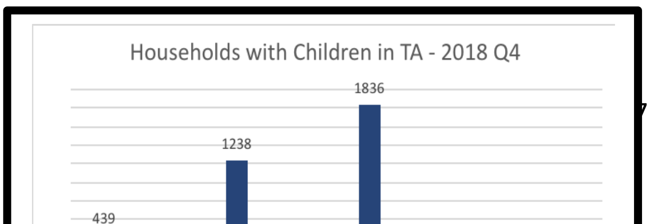


Figure 2.12



27.6% of all children in live in low income households, the second highest rate of compared to other core cities. Only Nottingham has a higher rate of low income families with children, while Manchester is the closes comparator on 27.1%. Given Birmingham's size, this rate translates to a huge number of nearly 71,000 children in Birmingham in low income families. Previously identified labour market factors such as the relatively low level of qualifications in the Birmingham workforce and relatively low median pay frames a generation of disadvantaged Birmingham children.(*Figure 2.12)*

Figure 2.13



A snapshot of figures from 2018 show that Birmingham had significantly higher numbers of children in temporary accommodation than other core cities, nearly 30% more than the next nearest

6. Crime

SUMMARY FACTS: Is crime higher in Birmingham than in other core cities?

- ***Birmingham has the highest number of crimes of any core city, but one of the lowest crime rates.***
- ***The proportion of violent crimes in Birmingham is the second highest of all of the core cities.***
- ***Birmingham has the second highest proportion of thefts of all the core cities.***

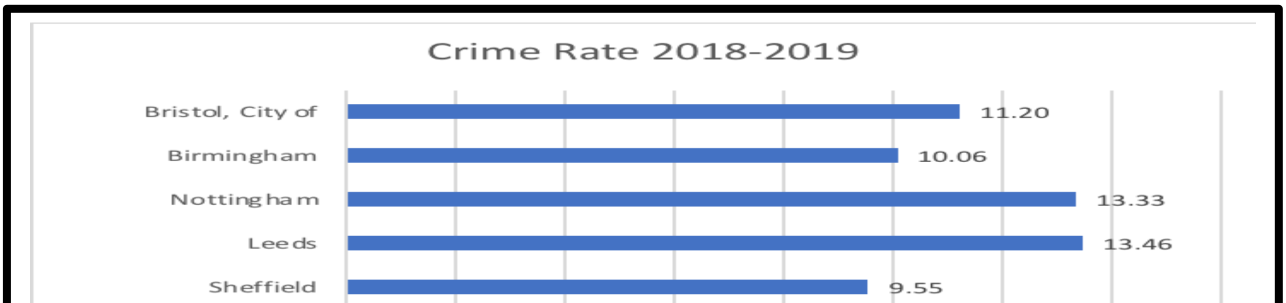
It is no surprise that core cities have the highest crime rates outside London, given that high crime and urban density show an absolute correlation in national statistical data.(*Figure 2.14)* Birmingham had the highest number of crimes in core cities in 2018-2019 due to the size of its population and geographic footprint.

Figure 2.14

	Total Recorded Crime	Violence against the person	Theft offences	Drug offences
Bristol, City of	51,893	15,475	19,260	1,058
Manchester	n/a due to data collection issues			
Liverpool	59,018	18,615	19,431	5,617
Nottingham	44,141	13,449	16,309	2,964
Sheffield	55,625	16,492	22,286	1,371
Birmingham	114,824	36,723	45,702	2,894
Leeds	106,216	37,020	37,917	2,634
Newcastle upon Tyne	39,492	11,173	14,150	1,275

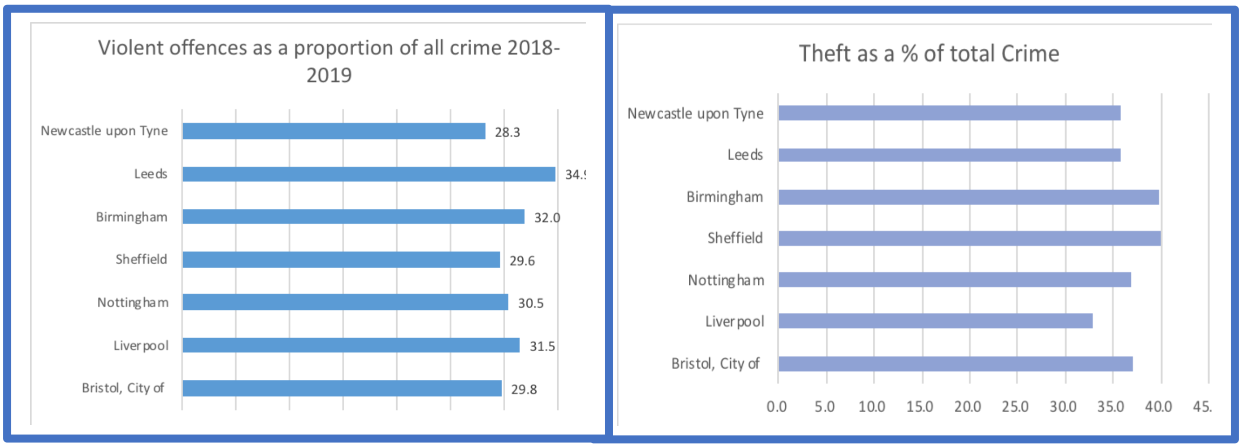
These numbers are a function of size, a quick calculation of crime rates and the distribution of types of crime reveals much similarity among the eight core cities.[10]

Figure 2.15



Broad comparison suggests that Leeds has the highest crime rate, and the highest proportion of violent crimes of any core city. *(Figure 2. 16)* Birmingham's crime rate is the second lowest of the core cities, but the proportion of violent crimes is the second highest. Birmingham also has one of the highest rates of thefts amongst the core cities.

Figure 2.16



Comparing core cities suggests that there is an obvious correlation between crime levels and population density, and some correlation between crime and deprivation levels at a meta-level. Given the strength of the connection between population densities, social disadvantage and crime, it is possible that Birmingham's lower crime rate is largely attributable to its geographic size and diversity, in that it has a much larger land footprint and includes more suburban locations.   Birmingham's lower crime rate is likely to mask significant hotspots within the city boundaries, linked to population density, deprivation and housing tenure. Crime is one area of statistical reporting where local data is absolutely necessary to understand the spread of crime and the impact on community.

7. Housing

SUMMARY FACTS: How does Birmingham's housing market compare to other core cities?

- ***Birmingham is the largest council landlord of any core city, but the proportion of social housing to all housing stock is lower than all core cities except for Bristol and Leeds.***
- ***House prices are comparable with Manchester and Leeds and are higher than all other core cities except for Bristol.***
- ***Rent levels are lower than Bristol and Manchester, comparable with Leeds, but higher than all other core cities.***
- ***Birmingham has a higher homeless acceptance rate than any other core city***
- ***Both Birmingham and Manchester have a significantly greater number of placements in temporary accommodation and a higher rate of placements proportionate to their populations.***
- ***Birmingham has a significantly higher number of HB claims for Exempt Accommodation, suggesting a buoyant market in the unregulated HMO sector.***

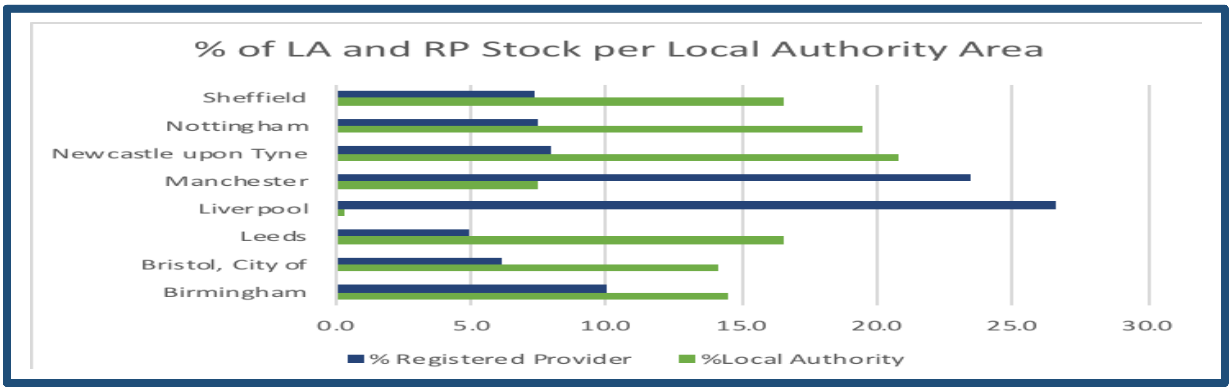
Birmingham's size as a city and local authority is reflected in the size of in the number of housing units, with nearly 200,000 more household units than Sheffield, the next largest single authority city. Birmingham's local authority housing stock remains the largest in England at nearly 63 thousand properties, though still a substantial reduction from its heyday of a landlord to more than 100 thousand local authority properties.

	All tenure types	Local-Authority[11]	Other Public Sector	Private Registered Provider	Privately owned
Birmingham	**432440**	**62610**	**1130**	**43410**	**325290**
Bristol, City of	195340	27480	500	11910	155450
Leeds	341990	56670	10	16740	268570
Liverpool	220520	680	0	58610	161230
Manchester	219890	16310	350	51550	151680
Newcastle upon Tyne	124690	25960	1000	9850	87880
Nottingham	134850	26210	20	10010	98610
Sheffield	242280	40200	80	17640	184370

Birmingham City Council is a large landlord on account of the size of the city. Historically, much development of council housing in the city was in radial suburbs on the outskirts of the city, one prime example being the Castle Vale estate, the largest council estate in Europe when it was completed in 1969. As a proportion of the housing stock as a whole, however, the level of social housing holding in Birmingham is lower than many core cities. Figure 2.17 overleaf shows that Sheffield, Nottingham, Newcastle and Leeds all have large LA holdings that form a greater percentage of housing stock than Birmingham. A key element of local comparison will concern how private sector and RSL tenures are locally distributed given this pattern of council housing development.

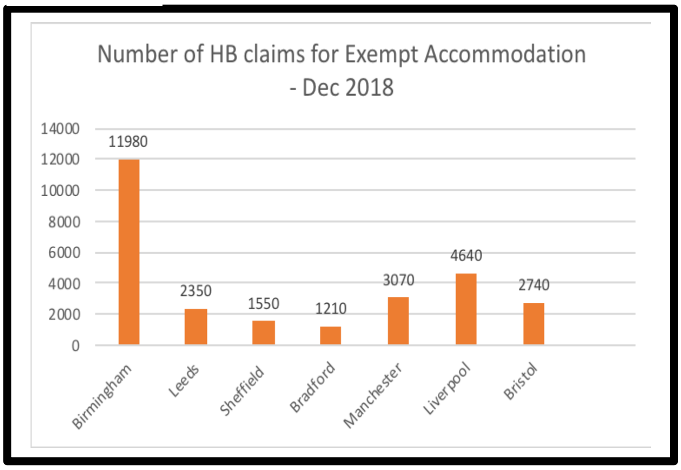
Figure 2.17

[11] incl. owned by other LAs



Outside of these large estates, there is a varied mix of housing tenures. 75% of housing stock in Birmingham is in private hands, be that in owner occupation or privately rented. However, according to the 2011 census. Birmingham has a lower level of private sector rented accommodation than all other core cities except Sheffield, with 17.9% private rented in 2011, compared to Manchester at 28%.[12] All core cities have a higher level of private rented accommodation than the UK as a whole, and for all core cities the private rented sector expanded rapidly between the two census points. From a comparatively low base, this expansion in Birmingham outstripped all core cities at 139.7%, made up of reductions in the proportion of both owner-occupation and social rented housing in the city. The English Housing Survey(2017) confirms that rapid growth in the private rented sector has continued in the last decade, with the number of households renting privately increasing from 2.6 million households to 4.7 million households between 2007 and 2017, an increase in the region of over 55%. Renters are more likely to be young, with three times as many 18-35-year olds renting privately compared to 20 years ago.

Figure 2.18



The private rented sector has expanded at all levels in Birmingham, but appears to have expanded with greatest rapidity in the unregulated HMO sector, defined as exempt accommodation under housing benefit regulations. Here the level of provision appears significantly higher than in other local authority areas, even when controlling for the size of the Birmingham conurbation.(*Figure 2.18)* Stockland Green is an area with high levels of private ownership and a vibrant private rented sector.

One area of consideration for this report will be how much that vibrancy is due to the rapid growth of the unregulated sector, given the common concerns of longer-term local residents.

In terms of house prices, values vary considerably, however. Average house prices in Birmingham are considerably lower than Bristol, but broadly on a par with Manchester and Leeds.*(Figure 2.19)* The three largest core cities all appear to be at the upper end of house prices values amongst the core cities. The profile of median rents varies slightly. *(Figures 2.20)* Bristol outstrips all of the core cities on housing cost indicators, but Manchester rent levels are significantly higher than both Birmingham and Leeds.

[12] Understanding the growth in the private rented sector – Core Cities Publications 2019

Figure 2.19

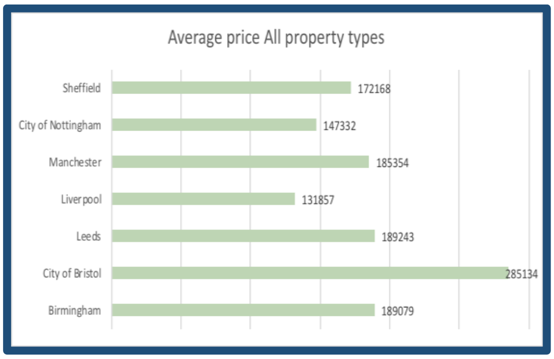
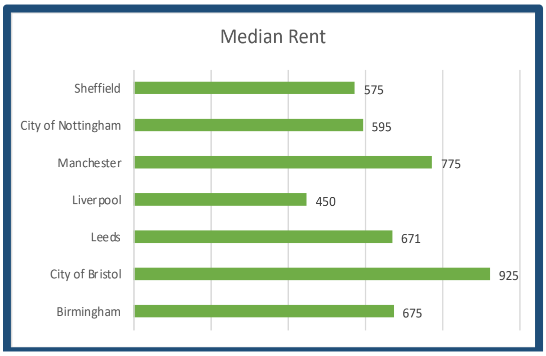


Figure 2.20



Indicators suggest that Birmingham has higher levels of housing need than most other core cities. In terms of homeless acceptances, figures from the last set of reliable nationwide data suggest that Birmingham had the highest rate of homeless acceptances of any core city. Given the relatively large population, this rate will translate into large numbers of homeless households, and a large proportion of single applicants with additional vulnerabilities.(*Figure 2.21)* The rate of temporary accommodation placements as a proportion of the population is higher in Manchester, with Birmingham in second place among the core cities. The size of the city of Birmingham means that the placement rate will again translate into large numbers of households awaiting more permanent housing solutions.*(Figure 2.22)*

Figure 2.21

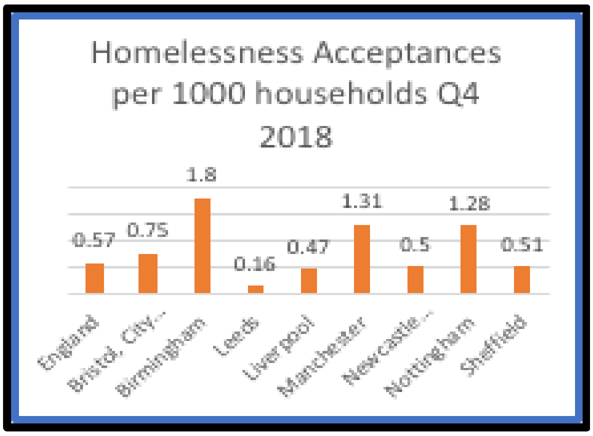
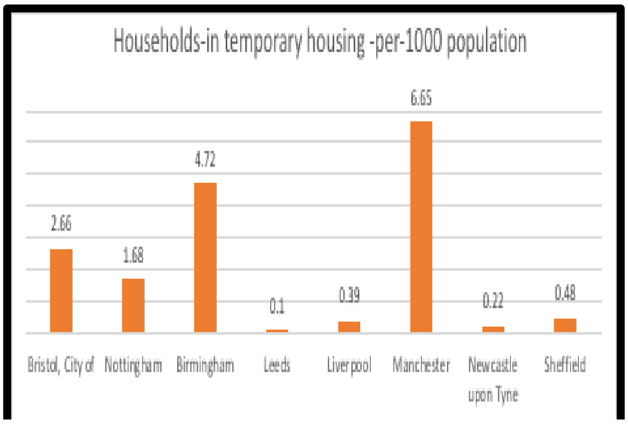


Figure 2.22



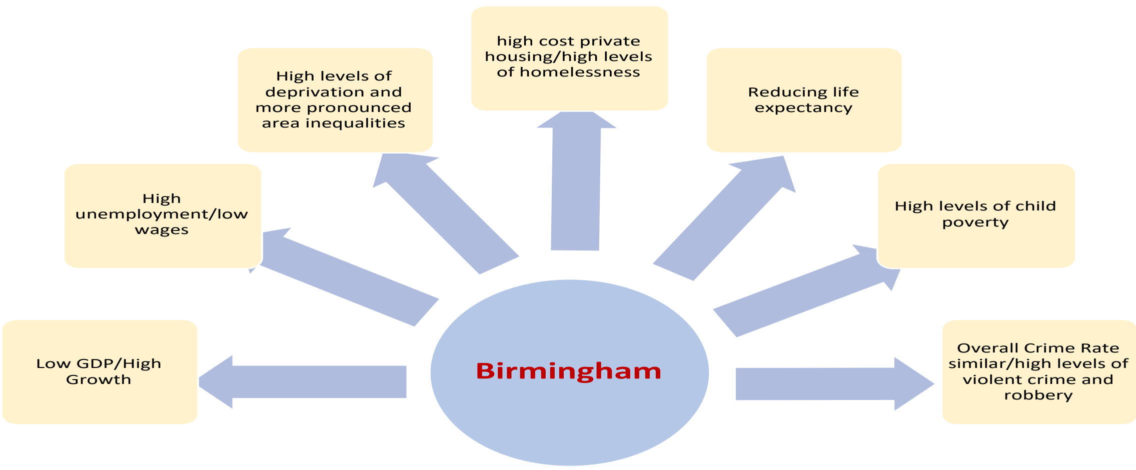
In term of housing need, therefore, it appears that on key indicators Birmingham has higher levels of unmet need than all other core cities other than Manchester. This might be related to the relatively high housing costs in terms of properties to both rent and buy, and a possible relationship with the relatively low levels of income and high levels of unemployment and worklessness apparent from the analysis of the economy in section 3 of this Chapter. Questions of needs and supply in Birmingham will be explored in more detail in Chapter 4.

Chapter Three – Life, work and survival in Erdington and Stockland Green

An exploration of the socio-economic profile of Erdington Parliamentary constituency and Stockland Green Ward compared to the City of Birmingham

1. Outline

The previous Chapter suggested that Birmingham's socio-economic profile is typical of a post-manufacturing centre, in that with other core cities, it shares lower levels of economic growth, and higher levels of unemployment, crime and deprivation across all indicators compared both with London and small urban or non-urban areas. Here's a quick reminder of how Birmingham looks in comparison to other core cities and the UK.



As a conurbation and local authority area, analysis so far has proved that Birmingham is relatively poor and deprived compared to other core cities. This section drills deeper into constituency and ward data to discover how the broad profile Birmingham as a city struggling to move beyond manufacturing decline manifests on a local level. Focussing on the socio-economic profile of constituency and ward, it compares Birmingham, Erdington constituency and Stockland Green ward and establishes through these analyses how the cultural and socio-economic 'super-diversity' characteristic of core cities plays out in the localities in question. The chapter creates a more granular picture of Stockland Green and its surrounding neighbourhoods and propose lines of enquiry in relation to the housing orientated analysis of Chapter 4. At the same time, it continues the narrative of ***connectivity*** by linking, where necessary, features and changes at city, constituency and ward level.

It is useful at this point to draw once more on the concept of a 'left-behind' area. The term has been widely used to describe areas that exhibit a combination of socio-economic deprivation and political exclusion in the wake of nearly ten years of austerity and the political upheaval associated with the Brexit vote. It's deployment tends to mark out areas that in which growth and social progress has either stalled or entered a reversal, and where, as a result, even greater inequalities are opening between their populations and even those in other socially deprived areas. Other characteristics of a left-behind area relate to characteristics that relate more closely to their political exclusion, one prominent feature is that the population of left behind areas tend to be predominantly white, with a slower growing population and possibly a younger profile. The Local Trust attaches a broader range of community attributes to left-behind locations, namely the presence(or absence) of civic facilities, of community engagement and to levels of connectedness to commercial and employment centre.

This section might perhaps be described as an enquiry into the extent to which Erdington is connected to the wider economy and social life of Birmingham, and the extent to which it is left behind. Profiling Stockland Green poses similar questions on a more granular local level. Both analyses set the scene for the core of this report, which aims for greater understanding of the connections between the housing market and the local community, and the possibilities for generating social change and stimulating economic activity through housing-based interventions.

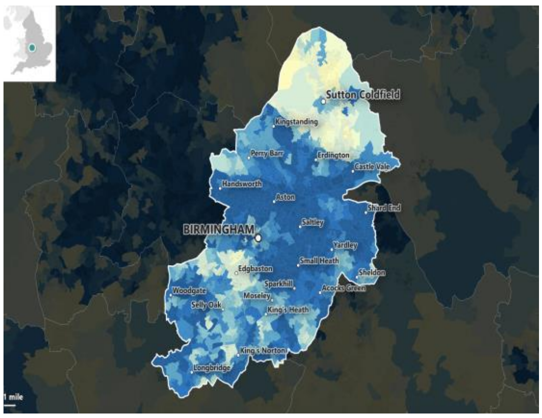
2. Erdington – Constituency Analysis

(i) Key comparisons- How does Erdington's population compare to the City of Birmingham?

The total population of Erdington constituency in 2018 was estimated as 104,071, or about 9% of Birmingham's population as a whole.   Demographically Erdington is a relatively young area compared to Birmingham as a whole, with a median age of 34 compared to 40. Only 13.5% of the Erdington population are over 65, compared to just under 19% of the Birmingham population as a whole. It is also significantly less diverse. Over 70% of Erdington's population is classified as white, compared to 57% of the total population of Birmingham The number of women is marginally higher than the number of men, but not in any statistically significant way; 50. 9% of the Erdington population are women.

Birmingham is ranked as one of the most deprived of core cities, being in the top 10% of most deprived areas in the UK according to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation. The core city analysis tells us that Birmingham has the highest number of small areas of deprivation of all core cities and contains many of the most deprived wards in the United Kingdom. However, its aggregated rank masks significant variations between areas within the city boundaries, so much so that the description of super-diversity is as relevant to socio-economic profiles as it is to cultural and ethnicity profiles. In Birmingham, the gaps between the most wealthy and poorest areas are extreme.

These chasms are well illustrated by looking at the relative deprivation ranking of Erdington constituency and neighbouring Sutton Coldfield,. Birmingham has two constituencies in the top 10 most deprived in England, Erdington ranks 5th nationwide on the IMD scale. In contrast, Sutton Coldfield is ranked on the IMD deprivation scale at 416th, placing it in the lowest decile for deprivation nationwide. This pattern is clear from the mapped areas of deprivation – Erdington forms part of a band of very deprived areas across the centre and north of Birmingham, with the darkest blue areas being the most deprived.



This stark contrast illustrates the huge diversity of wealth, income, health and opportunity existing in close proximity *within* Birmingham City, Erdington and Hodge Hill forming a thick band of deprivation to the north of the City Centre that stretches from east to west borders.   Suburban Sutton, with its very different history and composition perhaps more reflects the wealthy rural communities outside the Birmingham conurbation. In all, 60% of Erdington constituency contains levels of deprivation in the highest decile nationally, with 36 of 60 small areas categorised as highly deprived.   All the same, there is still an internal diversity to Erdington constituency, with areas becoming wealthier the closer they are to Sutton Coldfield.

(ii) Economy and Labour Market – How does Erdington's economy and labour market relate to the City of Birmingham?

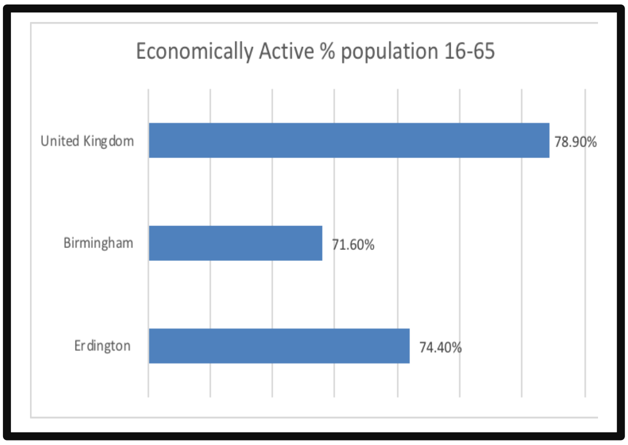
In the previous section, we identified Birmingham as a relatively low GDP producer, with relatively low wages, and low levels of skills and qualifications compared to other core cities. City-wide aggregates tend to mask sometimes substantial internal variations, however, and this section focusses on Erdington constituency to understand both how it compares to Birmingham, and the connections between local and city-wide economies.

Although GDP calculations cannot be broken down on a constituency basis, local indicators give a reasonably good indication of how the constituency relates to the wider city. Erdington is still the 3rd largest constituency for jobs in Birmingham, and has the highest proportion of manufacturing jobs of any constituency at 18%, more than twice the proportion of Birmingham as a whole(8%). At the same time, Erdington's local economy grew more slowly than Birmingham in the early part of this decade, with BCC projecting a 'subdued' rate of growth of 2.8% until 2025, well below the rest of Birmingham at 4.3%. Whatever the effects of the pandemic on the Birmingham economy, it seems like that Erdington will suffer disproportionately.

Labour market indicators are a good route to understanding the comparative strength of the constituency economy. In relation to employment, comparative analysis of the core cities suggested Birmingham experienced relatively high unemployment, low skill levels and low wages. The next section examines how Erdington compares.

The first area of analysis is of the economically active population in Erdington. Erdington has a lower economically active population than the UK, but a higher proportion than the city as a whole.(*Figure 3.1)* Given the previous conclusions on both deprivation and economic growth, this statistic appears superficially anomalous. However, a possible reason can be found in the composition of economically inactive groups. The classification of 'inactive' is wider than unemployed, including students and homemakers for example. Erdington appears to have significantly lower numbers of those groups when compared to Birmingham.

Figure 3.1



This factor will be significant when comparing the housing market in the next Chapter, particularly insofar as shared housing provision is concerned. Students tend to live in large HMOS of the type found in the southern sector of Stockland Green, but the area has not yet attracted a student population. Other factors, such as the proximity to the main universities, and the lack of commercial/cultural activity might predicate against these wealthier groups of relatively itinerant residents moving to Erdington. Economically active populations do, sometimes, correlate with wealth, however. In neighbouring Sutton Coldfield, 85% of the working age population are economically active, even *without* a notable HMO sector and student population.

The contrast between Erdington, Birmingham and the UK is very different when comparing unemployment levels, Erdington constituency area had an unemployment rate of 14.8%, nearly 6% higher than Birmingham City, and 11% higher than the UK as a whole in the year ending January 2020. In terms of labour market data, this is perhaps the starkest illustration of the very high levels of deprivation and social exclusion characteristic of large parts of Erdington. Unemployment is high despite there being relatively high numbers of jobs within the constituency, suggesting that a mismatch between the skills level of Erdington's population and the jobs available locally. (*Figure 3.2)*

Figure 3.2

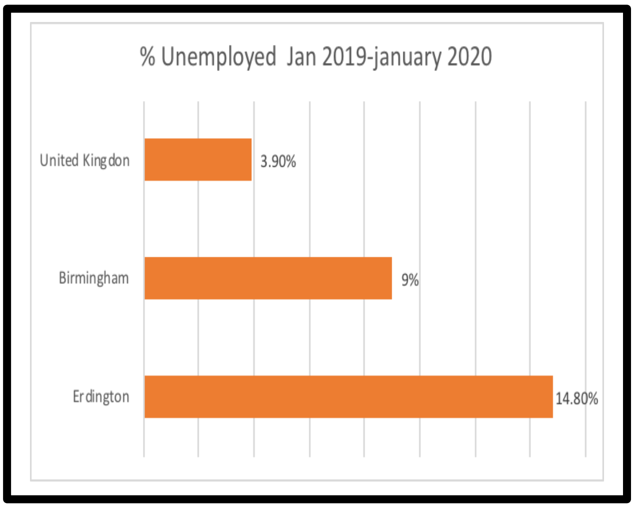
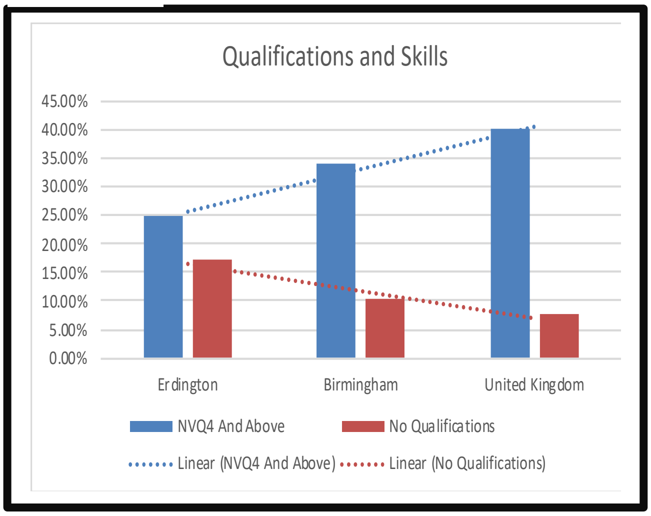


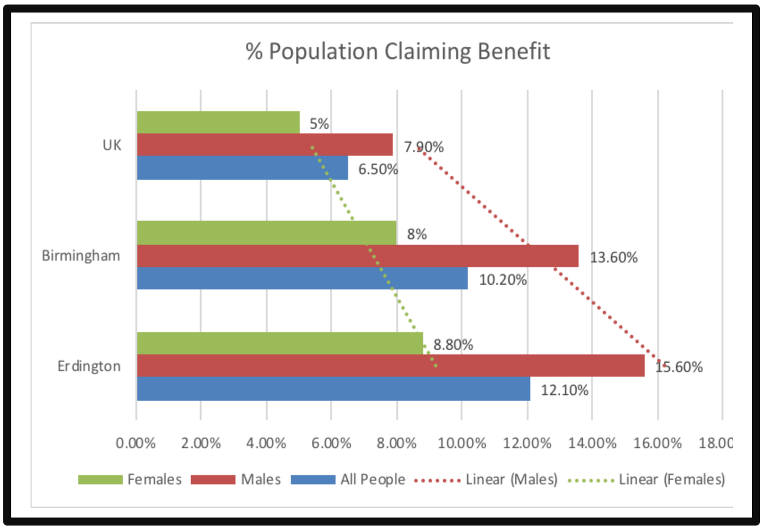
Figure 3.3



This statement appears to be borne out by analysis of the qualification levels of Erdington residents. Figure 3.3 illustrates how, when compared to both the UK as a whole and to Birmingham, Erdington has a much higher proportion of the working age population with no qualifications at all, and a much lower proportion of residents with NVQ4 and above. Birmingham is already well behind its core city comparators in terms of skills levels, and Erdington residents seem particularly disadvantaged on this indicator. The links between unemployment and low skills levels are in plain sight.

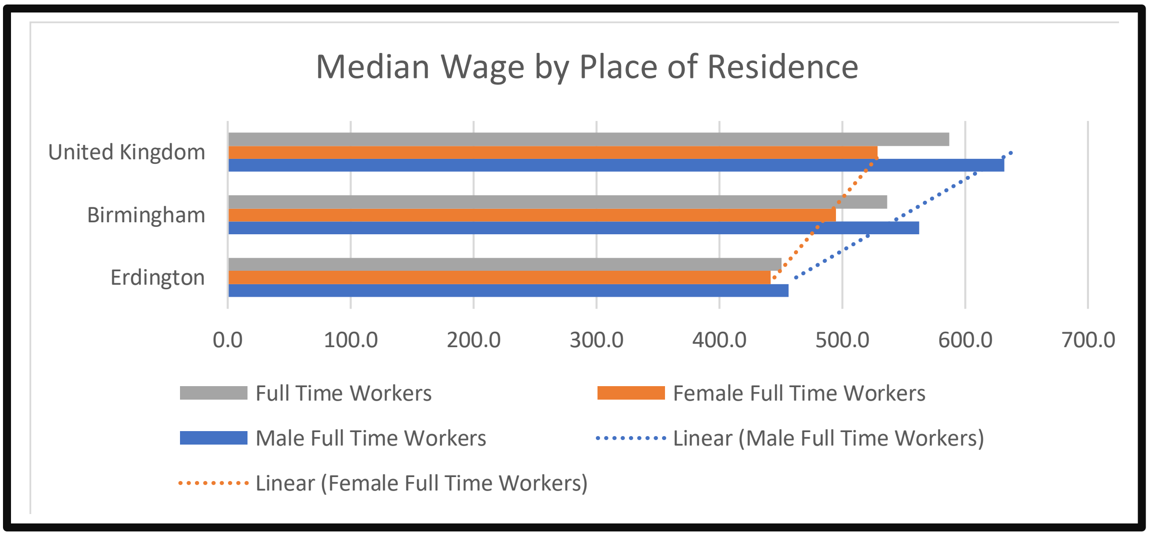
Similarly, a much larger proportion of Erdington's population is claiming benefits, with the difference most pronounced amongst the male unemployed. With a male unemployment rate of close to 16%, Erdington's working age population appears to be disproportionately affected by the low-growth nature of Erdington's economy, unable to participate in the constituency's diverse economy, and apparently less likely to travel out of the area to take advantage of opportunities elsewhere in the city. *(Figure 3.4)*

Figure 3.4



The final part of the labour market analysis concerns wages in Erdington. The levels of exclusion represented by employment and benefits data are again evident in a significantly lower median wage among Erdington residents compared both to Birmingham residents as a whole, and the UK as a whole. *(Figure 3.5)* The differentials between men and women in Erdington are significantly less pronounced than in Birmingham and the UK, suggesting that both men and women in Erdington are more likely to secure the lowest skilled and low paid employment. Differences in median pay accelerate more sharply amongst the male population, but the trend is clear; Erdington constituency lags behind the city and the nation in terms of economic inclusion.

Figure 3.5



To sum up, the following conclusions can be drawn from this analysis of the economy and labour market in Erdington constituency. Erdington has:

- Experienced lower levels of economic growth than Birmingham city.
- Significantly greater reliance on manufacturing industry than other parts of Birmingham.
- A lower proportion of economically active population than the UK, but a higher proportion than Birmingham. Demographic and Housing market factors are most likely to explain this anomaly.
- Higher levels of unemployment and benefit claimants than Birmingham and the UK.
- Higher numbers of people with no qualifications and lower numbers of people with NVQ4, and above.
- A much lower median wage than Birmingham and the UK.

Our core city comparison threw into sharp relief Birmingham's dubious ranking as one of the most deprived of all regional centres in terms of its economic and social profile. That analysis also suggested that average indicators taken from large conurbations were likely to obscure the great inequality existing ***between*** areas within the boundaries of each core city. This constituency based analysis appears to confirm Erdington's relative exclusion from the buoyant economic trajectory of Birmingham. When compared to Birmingham, Erdington's very high levels of unemployment and benefit underscore its position as an area of high absolute and relative economic exclusion.

(iii) Deprivation and Poverty - Where are the concentrations of poverty in Birmingham, and does this issue affect the Erdington constituency?

The core cities comparison confirmed that Birmingham had one of the highest rates of deprivation and child poverty in the UK, and illustrated that Erdington contains some of the most deprived small areas in the UK. This section explores how that deprivation is distributed across the city, and identifies Erdington's ranking in terms of poverty indicators.

Three Birmingham constituencies, including Erdington, rank amongst the twenty most deprived in England using the Indices of Multiple Deprivation as a measure. Erdington is ranked as the 5th most deprived constituency out of 533 in England. Again, the close proximity of wealth and poverty can be glimpsed through noting that wealthy and suburban Sutton Coldfield is in 418th place on the same ranking

Erdington's deprivation indicators reveal high levels of need across all classes and groups of residents, with poverty affecting all ethnicities and age groups. Further, the number of households in absolute and relative poverty has been increasing year on year since 2015 *(Figure 3.6).* In terms of child poverty, the number and % of children living in poverty before and after housing costs is well above the national average. In May 2019, 9394 children were living in poverty before housing costs were considered and 10878 after housing costs were calculated. Figure 3.7 below shows how these numbers translate into large proportions of Erdington children living in deprived households.

Figure 3.6

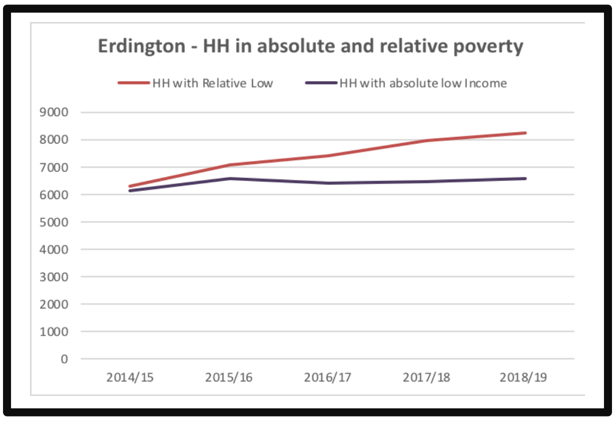
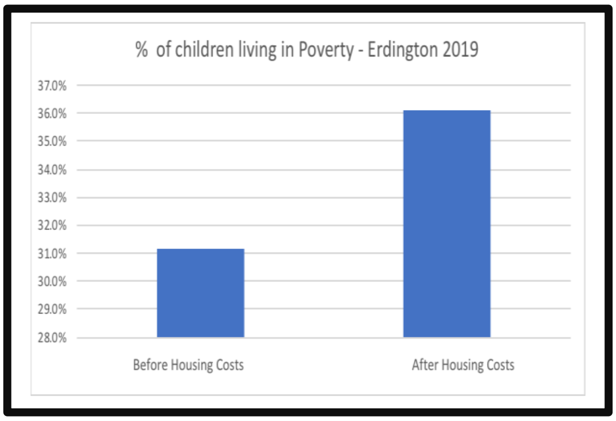
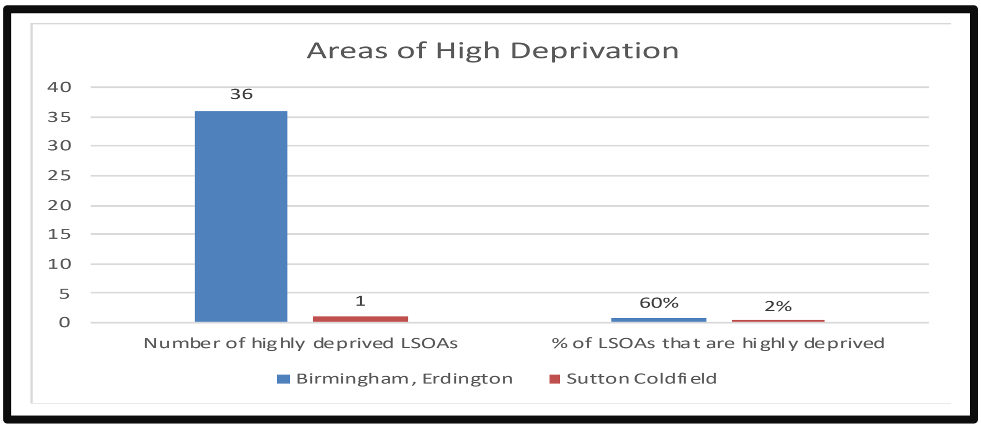


Figure 3.7



Deprivation is measured nationally by using small areas of equal population size, allowing accurate comparisons to be made between different administrative areas. In the case of Erdington constituency, we can see that of the 60 small areas within its boundaries, 36 are considered to be highly deprived. This is in sharp contrast to the neighbouring constituency of Sutton Coldfield, where only one small area is considered to be highly deprived. (*Figure 3.8)*

Figure 3.8



This data demonstrates clearly that Erdington is a highly deprived constituency, when compared to Birmingham and to England. Still, there is evidence to suggest that this profile is not consistent even within constituency boundaries, and that poverty and inequality are unequally distributed on geographical terms *even at a local level.* To demonstrate, the table below shows the deprivation score for Erdington wards with figures taken from PHE 2015 local calculation of deprivation.

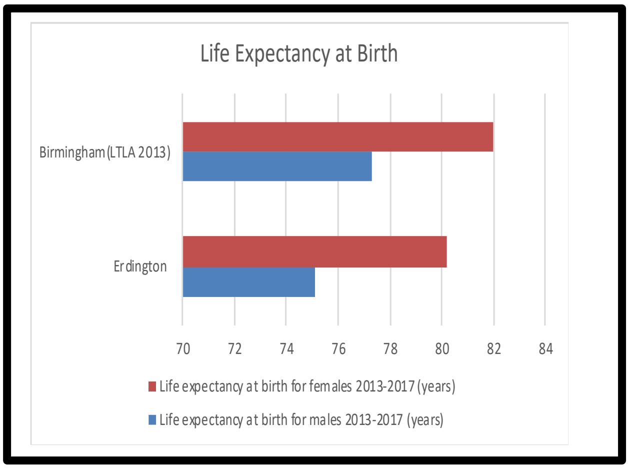
Ward	IMD Score
Castle Vale	***50.6***
Pype Hayes	***37.2***
Gravelly Hill	***50.7***
Erdington	***37.8***
Stockland Green	***43.5***
Kingstanding	***49.5***

Within the constituency boundaries, levels of deprivation in Pype Hayes and Erdington wards are on a par with the Birmingham average of 37.8[13], while Castle Vale, Gravelly Hill and Kingstanding are considerably higher. Stockland Green is almost a median point in terms of deprivation, higher than Birmingham as a whole but considerably lower than adjoining areas in the borough. Housing tenure appears to play a part in this profile, as local wards such as Castle Vale and Gravelly Hill have very high concentrations of social housing estates. This and other possible explanations are explored in the local analysis of Stockland Green below.

(iv) Healthy lives - How does life expectancy in Erdington compare with the Birmingham profile of a lower than average life expectancy?

Previous comparison of core cities has demonstrated that all have lower life expectancies than the national average, and that Birmingham has one of lowest life expectances of all the core cities. Health inequality between Birmingham and English areas with the most extended life expectancies runs at just over nine years, a gap that has been increasing over the last decade due to the uneven impact of national austerity policies. This section will address issues raised by the core cities analysis in relation to the health profile of Erdington Constituency, namely whether levels of economic exclusion and social deprivation have a noticeable effect on health and mortality.

Figure 3.9

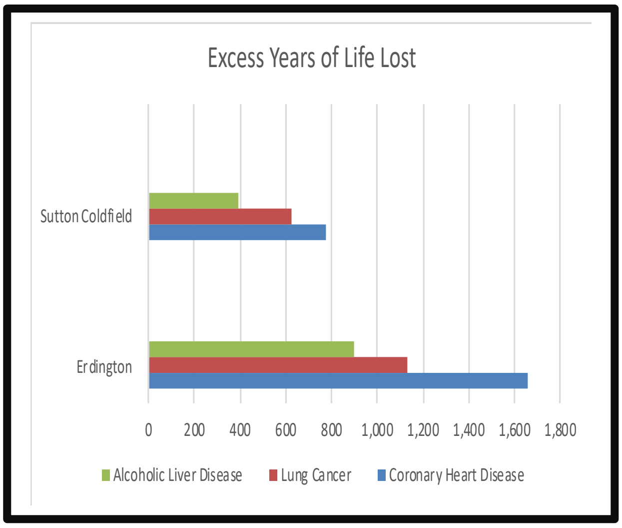


It appears that life expectancies in Erdington are lower than Birmingham city as a whole, marking the constituency as substantially less healthy than most areas in England, and suggestive, again, of areas of high deprivation in the locality. Life expectancy has been increasing in the last ten years in Erdington albeit by small increments. Nonetheless the constituency is still disadvantaged when set against the city average. Other primary health indicators confirm that Erdington is an area beset by health inequalities. For example, the City of Birmingham has one of the worst infant mortality rates in England, with a mortality rate of 7.9 deaths per 1000 births, set against the English average of 3.9 deaths per 1000 births. The rate in Erdington is even higher at 8.3 deaths per 1000 births.

[13] This average has been calculated from the ten Birmingham constituencies IMD data from 2015. Sutton Coldfield's IMD score at just over 13, is low enough to reduce the Birmingham average from 40 to 375.

Comparing health outcomes in Erdington constituency to its wealthier, suburban neighbour Sutton Coldfield highlights the inequalities identified in chapter two as characteristic of Birmingham. Life expectancy in Sutton Coldfield constituency has increased over the last 10 years to over 81 years for males – 75 in Erdington - and 83 years for females – 80 in Erdington. Infant mortality is at a lower rate of 6.9 deaths per thousand. Health indicators for excess years of life lost show Erdington's residents suffer from much higher rates of coronary heart disease, lung cancer and alcoholic liver disease than their neighbours in Sutton, in a stark indication of how deprivation curtails life expectancy.(*Figure3.10)*

Figure 3.10



(v) Crime – Is Erdington a high crime area, and how is crime distributed across the constituency?

Birmingham's crime rate appeared low in comparison to other core cities, a matter thought to relate to the size and diversity of the Birmingham local authority area, rather than an indication of significantly lower levels of criminal activity. Erdington constituency appears to cause around 13% of the crime in the city as a whole, slightly higher proportion than of its population.

Given the complexity of crime reporting, and the various different crime profiles possibly in any inner city are, the core cities analysis suggested that aggregated figures were not helpful in understanding how crime affects each locality, rather that it was the distribution of crime within a particular area most likely to reveal a relationship with housing tenure issues. Analysis of core city crime rates appeared to show that Birmingham had comparable levels of crime, with the caveat that its large size and the number of suburban neighbourhoods might obscure crime hotspots at a local level. This section attempts inquires how apparently unexceptional city wide crime rates translate to local patterns of criminal activity at constituency level?

For this analysis of Erdington constituency, the period of February 2019 to February 2020 was chosen as the period of analysis, being the last full year of crime activities unaffected by the COVID pandemic. During this period a total of 14, 120 crimes were committed in the constituency, the largest single group of offences being anti-social behaviour(ASB). Figure 3.11 breaks down Erdington's crime into categories. It suggests that the largest proportion of criminal activity relates to ASB and issues surrounding public order.

Figure 3.11

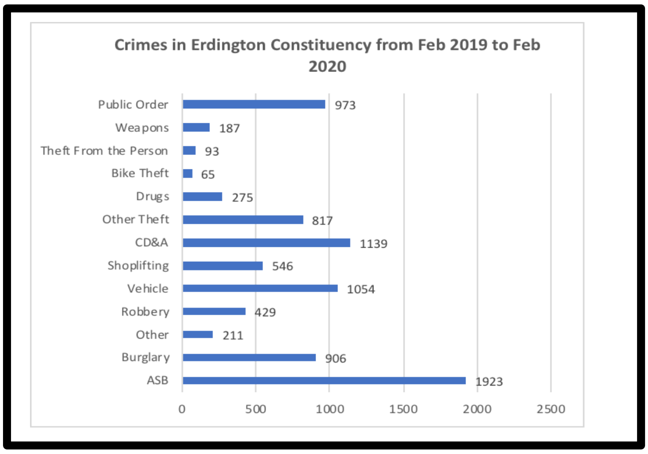
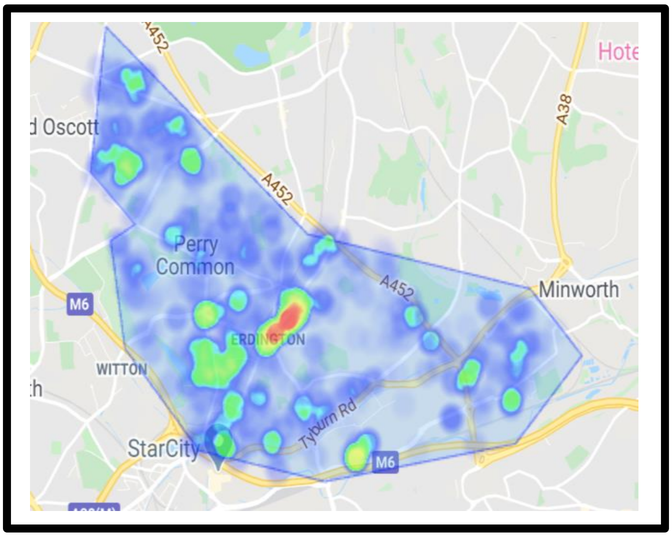


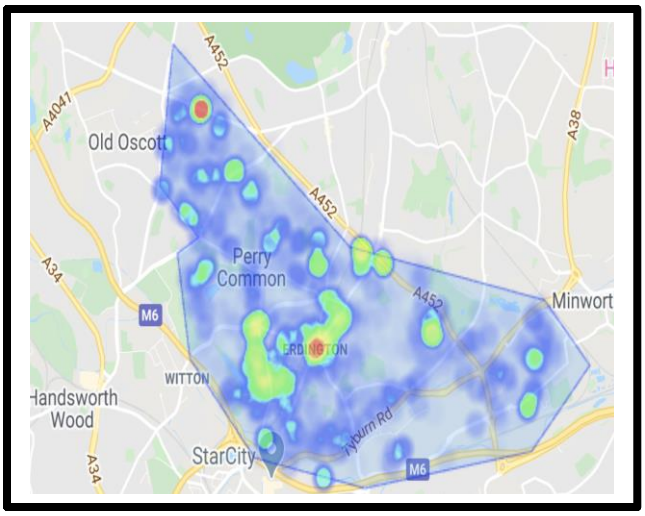
Figure 3.12



Mapping constituency crime provides a very clear visualisation of how problems are distributed in Erdington. Figure 3.12 maps all offences from the same period to the constituency area. The scale is blue to red for prevalence. Crime hotspots occur across the constituency but most frequently in the central area. The most obvious hotspot is around Slade Road, and in neighbouring streets. Crime prevalence thus appears connected to the major arterial route through the constituency, and its immediate environs.

The largest single group of crimes during this period in Erdington was ASB, with 1923 offences recorded in the year before pandemic restrictions were introduced in March 2020. (*Figure 3.13)* A further visualisation shows the clustering of ASB activity around Slade Road and in the Stockland Green constituency. Regardless of the higher levels of deprivation found in Castle Vale in the east and Kingstanding in the north-west, it is Stockland Green and specifically Slade Road that appears to attract this most pervasive of low level crimes. A similar geographical pattern occurs in relation to violent crimes and crimes against the person, street robberies, theft and public order offences.

Figure 3.13



The relationship between social and economic deprivation and crime is well established, and on that basis it might be expected that crime levels would map more closely with the most deprived wards of Castle Vale and Gravelly Hill. Instead it appears that Stockland Green emerges as the centre of criminal activity in Erdington, with that activity located in an even smaller area of the ward.

(vi) Left Behind? The Erdington Picture

Our core cities analysis marked Birmingham as a reluctant first amongst other UK core cities in terms of levels of economic exclusion, social deprivation and poor health. Erdington emerges from this more local analysis as an area of high deprivation even within Birmingham. Let’s summarise the economic and social indicators reviewed so far, namely that Erdington can be characterised as;

- A former manufacturing centre that still sustains a larger proportion of manufacturing industry than other areas of Birmingham.
- Having a lower growth rate economically than Birmingham City.
- A less diverse area than Birmingham as a whole, with nearly 80% of the population identifying as white British.

- An area of high unemployment, low skills and low qualifications in its labour market profile.
- An area of very high deprivation on the aggregated IMD indicator, with Erdington constituency one of the most deprived in England.
- Having generally lower life expectancy than Birmingham, and higher levels of deaths from preventable causes such as alcohol related illnesses,
- Containing a rising number of households living in absolute and relative poverty.
- Having one of the highest numbers of children living in poor households in Birmingham, and thus in England.
- A crime rate higher than Birmingham city, with most crimes occurring around Slade Road, the arterial route through the centre of the constituency.

This profile suggests an area in which the effects of de-industrialisation are clearly felt by its constituents in their relative exclusion from the labour market, lower incomes, poor health and income and fuel poverty. Thus, Erdington constituency broadly fits the profile of a '*left-behind'* area in that whilst some areas of the Birmingham economy are growing fast, Erdington is not. Deprivation levels are higher than the city as a whole, and a marginally younger and predominantly white citizenry appear to experience greater difficulty in accessing secure and well paid employment, perhaps due to the markedly lower qualifications levels in the constituency area. Even so, the wider definition of 'left behind' areas deployed by the Local Trust captures only Stockland Green, rather than other Erdington constituencies. This appears to be because even though deprivation levels are higher elsewhere, Stockland Green has little in the way of community facilities, and thus is considered less cohesive.

Even within constituency boundaries, this profile suggests significant variations in the deprivation profile of Erdington, and a possible connection between levels of deprivation and housing tenure, insofar as higher levels of deprivation accrue to areas with higher levels of social housing. As analysis moves to the Stockland Green ward and its community, the concept of 'left-behind' will inform both statistical analysis in the next section, and the housing focussed analysis of the next chapter.

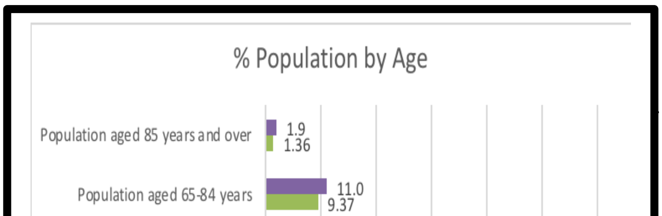
3. Stockland Green

(i) Key Comparisons – How does Stockland Green's demography compare to the city and constituency?

The final part of this locality analysis turns to the hyper-local ward area of Stockland Green. The intention is to reveal where Stockland Green falls in terms of its socio-economic profile in relation to Birmingham and Erdington, bearing in mind the concept of left-behind areas, The possibility must exist that the same 'super-diversity' observed within Birmingham and Erdington will exist between small areas nestling against each other within the ward boundaries. Erdington certainly contains areas of higher deprivation than Stockland Green, but it is still possible and indeed likely that Stockland Green is left behind in relation to Birmingham city.

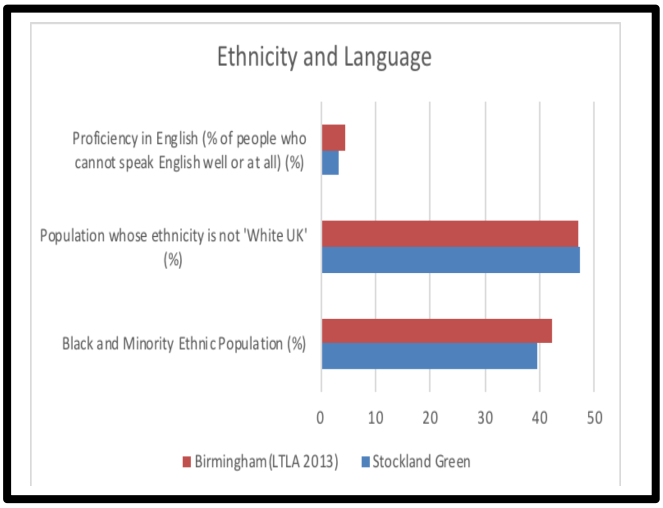
The first key area of inquiry is demography, and the comparison of the population profile with Birmingham and Erdington. The total population of the ward was 23,950 in 2017, or around 22 % of Erdington's population. Stockland Green closely fits the ***age*** profile of a left-behind area, in that it has a larger proportion of working age residents and a smaller elderly population than Birmingham city and Erdington. Although categorised as suburban, this profile is more suggestive of an inner-city neighbourhood, with all the attendant problems of exclusion, need and crime.

Figure 3.14



The 2011 census contains more detailed information on the age profile of Stockland Green set against Birmingham. It recorded just over 61% of Birmingham's residents as aged between 18 and 65, while nearly 65% of

Figure 3.15



Whilst Stockland Green has a similar age profile to Erdington, it differs in the ***ethnic*** profile of its population, which is more diverse than the constituency, and much more aligned with wider Birmingham. While in Erdington over 70% of the population identify as White/British. Figure 3.15 shows that in Stockland Green that proportion drops to around 55%. Again, in this aspect, Stockland Green appears more similar to the close, diverse , inner city neighbourhoods of Handsworth and Aston, than to suburban and majority-white Erdington.

Stockland Green has a higher level of deprivation than Birmingham on the IMD measure, being scored at 43.5 against a Birmingham average of 37.3, though a lower level than Erdington constituency.[14] On this measure, it seems certain that as regards employment, education, health, poverty and crime, the ward will be one of the most deprived in the UK, even though it may not rank amongst the highest in the league of Birmingham's many small areas of absolute and extreme deprivation. The detailed analyses below suggest that the reasons for Stockland Green's more diverse and varied profile are complex, but highly relevant to deciding on an integrated housing plan for the area.

(ii) Economy and Labour Market - How does Stockland Green's economic and labour market profile compare to the city and constituency?

In terms of economic and labour market information, it is more difficult to obtain accurate and recent data at a ward level, but there is a wealth of ward level data interpreted from the 2011 Census. It revealed that Stockland Green had a slightly higher proportion of its working population in employment compared to Birmingham, and a similar higher proportion of the local population classified as economically active.

Stockland Green Economic Activity Source: 2011 Census

[14] *Source: DCLG © Copyright 2015.*

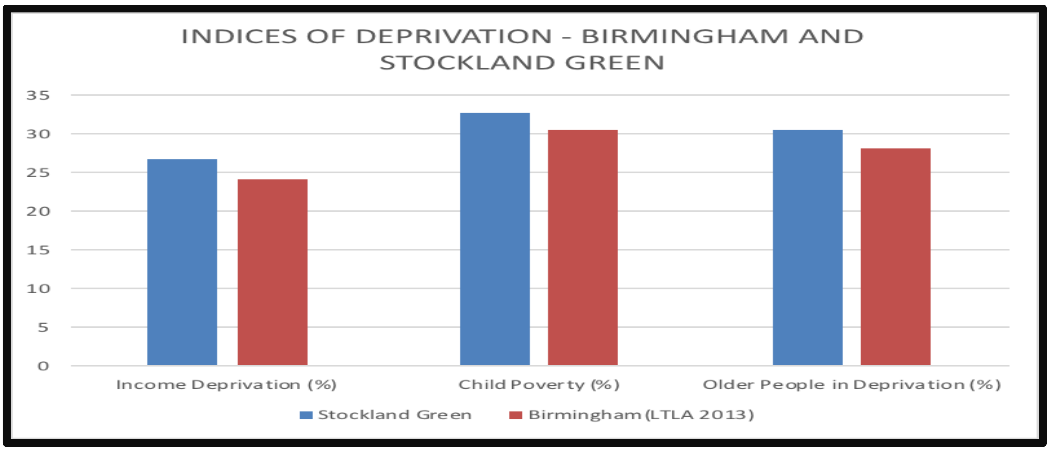
Economic Activity	Stockland Green No.	Stockland Green %	Birmingham %	England %
16-64 Population	14,346	-	-	-
Economically Active	10,589	73.8%	69.3%	77.0%
Employed	9,134	63.7%	60.0%	71.2%
Unemployed	1,455	10.1%	9.3%	5.8%
Economically inactive	3,727	26.0%	30.7%	23.0%

Compared to Erdington constituency, the census suggests that Stockland green has a broadly comparable population of economically active residents, to complement their slightly younger population. The most recent pre-pandemic figures(March 2020) suggest that the number of unemployed in Birmingham has remained stable at around 9% whilst Erdington and Stockland Green are approaching 13%. It seems that in Stockland Green, as in Erdington, the economically inactive population is disproportionately unemployed, rather than falling into categories such as full time student or housewife. Further, given that there are higher numbers of single households in Stockland Green, this tangentially points to a larger single population who are not choosing to remain outside the labour market, but are forced to do so through circumstance or vulnerability.

(iii) Deprivation and Poverty - Is Stockland Green an area of high deprivation?

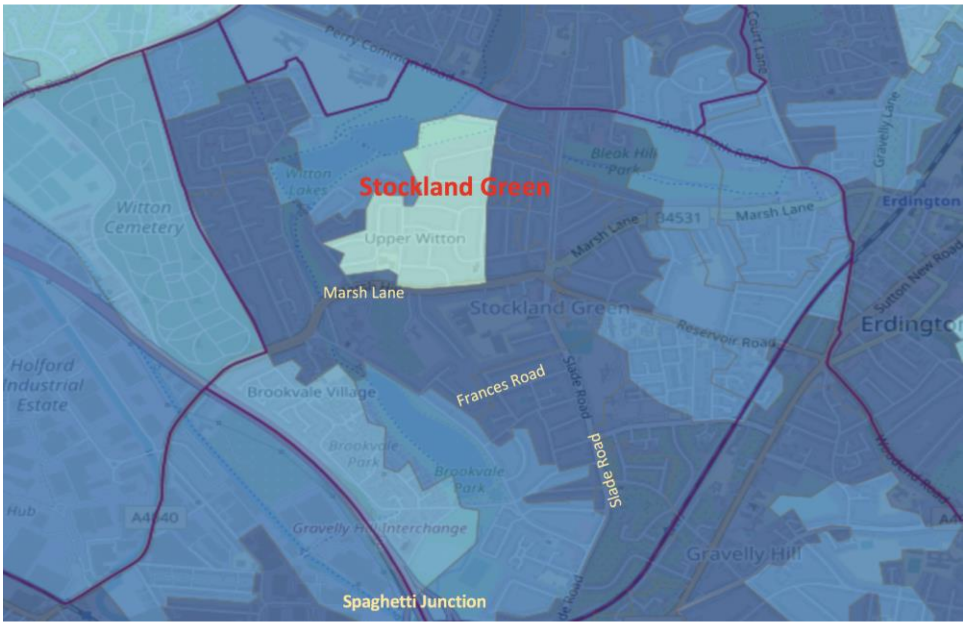
In terms of labour market data, therefore, it appears that Stockland Green is a deprived area compared to the Birmingham average, if not one of the most deprived. In fact, BCC lists Stockland Green as 26th out of 69 wards in its IMD ranking, with Castle Vale seeing the highest increase in deprivation between 2015 and 2019, and at 4th place in this ranking, the highest area of deprivation within Erdington constituency.[15] This table overleaf shows that though Stockland Green does not reach this very extreme level of deprivation, it is still contains greater deprivation than Birmingham in terms of the proportion of people living in income deprivation, that is at less than 60% of average income, in terms of the % of households with a child or children living in poverty, and households with an older person living in poverty. Compared with England as a whole, or with any of the wards in Sutton Coldfield to its north, Stockland Green must be considered a very deprived area on multiple indicators. *(Figure 3.16)* Only in relation to Erdington constituency, does Stockland Green have lower proportions of residents living in poverty in each category.

Figure 3.16



[15] BCC analysis of indices of deprivation 2019.

Even within Stockland Green, however, disadvantage is not evenly distributed. For the purposes of measuring deprivation, the ward is divided into smaller areas(LSOA). On the map below, the darker blue areas are the most deprived and the lighter blue and green areas the least. Stockland Green ward contains at least some areas more akin to the wider Birmingham profile of deprivation than of Erdington, yet there are also clearly defined tracts which align more closely with the definition of a left behind area. Areas of severe deprivation appear between Slade Road and Marsh Lane, along the two main routes through the ward from Spaghetti Junction, and the location of much privately rented accommodation in the ward area.

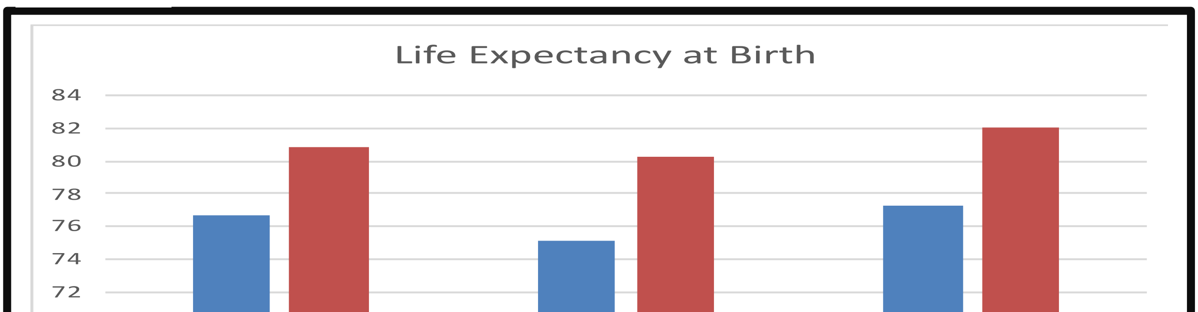


Deprivation in Stockland Green does not appear to be located exclusively in high concentrations of social housing, rather it appears to cluster around arterial roads in a ward renowned for its close transport links to other parts of the country. In Stockland Green, the links between deprivation and housing are thus more complex and less easily discernible than in wards containing large concentrations of social housing.

(iv) Healthy lives – Does the profile of deprivation and social exclusion found in Stockland Green affect the health of its citizens?

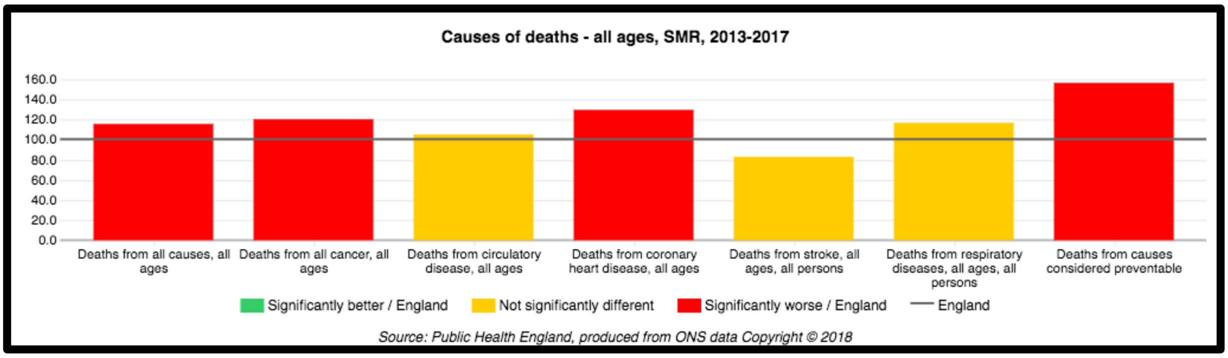
The profile of Stockland Green as having a weak labour market with high levels of unemployment, and equally striking profiles of deprivation against every indicator and age group suggests that this must have an effect on the health and welfare of its citizens. Our core city comparison confirmed that Birmingham city has a lower life expectancy from birth than most core cities, being 77.5 years for men and 81 years for women. Looking at its component areas it is perhaps not surprising that living in Stockland Green appears to affect the chances of its residents of a long and healthy life. The latest calculations for life expectancy show that Stockland Green residents, both men and women, have a life expectancy longer than the average Erdington resident but shorter than the average Birmingham resident. Stockland Green's residents can expect to live three years less than the average English person.

Figure 3.17



Moving to a broader analysis of causes of death, the chart below demonstrates that Stockland Green has significantly higher numbers of deaths from cancer, coronary heart disease and other diseases considered to be preventable. Deprivation in Stockland Green is deep enough to cause significantly worse life outcomes for its residents compared to England, but perhaps does not attract as much attention as other Birmingham wards due to surrounding areas of even more extreme poverty and disadvantage.

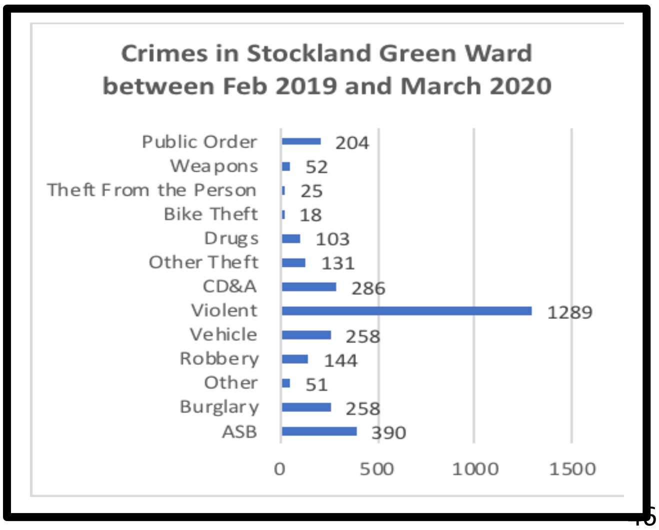
Figure 3.18



(v) Crime – Is Stockland Green a high crime area and how is crime distributed across the ward?

Analysis of crime in Erdington suggested that all the most severe crime hotspots occurred around the Slade Road arterial route through the constituency, concentrating criminal activity in Stockland Green ward. A total of 3260 crimes were committed in the ward from February 2019 to February 2020, 23% of all crime committed in Erdington constituency over the same period. Analysis of socio-economic indicators in Stockland Green so far suggested the level of deprivation is not as great in Stockland Green as ing other wards within the constituency, making the bunching of criminal activity in Stockland Green a striking anomaly.

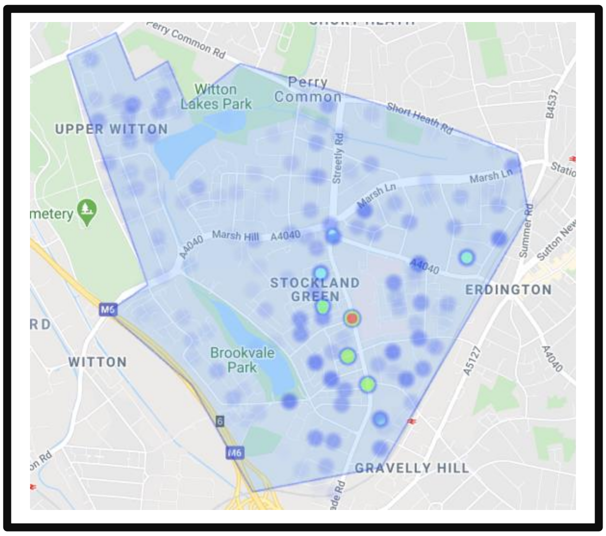
Figure 3.19



Turning to types of crime, violent crimes and offenses against the person are a category that ranges from minor infractions to serious assaults. These offences account for over one third of all Stockland Green crimes. The next largest crime group is ASB, with 390 offences recorded during the period, more than 10% of all crimes. The profile suggests that offences committed on the streets, that is public order offences, theft from the person, ASB and public order account for around one third of the remaining offences. Although there will be seasonal fluctuations in crime, an indication of scale is that in the relatively small Stockland Green area, roughly ten crimes a day are committed on the streets. Given that a proportion of violent crimes will also be street based, crime in Stockland Green appears to be a highly visible facet of ward life. *(Figure 3.19)*

Once again this visibility is not evenly distributed across the ward, a factor that perhaps reflects the concentration of deprivation around Slade Road and Frances Road. Crimes are concentrated in the Slade Road area, and in the streets surrounding it, as demonstrated in the maps below which show that all crimes, and specifically ASB occur mostly in this area.

All Crimes – Stockland Green Feb 2019-2020



ASB - Stockland Green Feb 2019-2020

The same geographical pattern is observable in violent crimes and public disorder, making clear the link between social deprivation and crime even on a hyper-local local level. The question posed by these maps is perhaps how this relates to population profiles and housing tenure, given that it is known that there are higher levels of deprivation observable in areas of social housing density, that is Castle Vale and Gravelly Hill.

(vi) Stuck in the Middle – The Stockland Green Picture

Analysis of socio-economic indicators at a constituency level saw Erdington constituency meet many of the criteria of a left behind area, in suffering relatively high unemployment, low wages and qualifications, and relatively poor health. It is also a less diverse population than Birmingham as a whole, with over 70% of its residents being of white origin, notably less than Birmingham as a whole. Nonetheless, analysis of Erdington suggested there was likely to be some variety in the distribution of these characteristics, particularly as the deprivation level of Erdington's wards showed significant divergence.

Stockland Green was not the most deprived ward in Erdington, this dubious honour accruing to the Castle Vale and Gravelly Hill ward areas with their very high concentrations of social housing estates. Further, there were other aspects of Stockland Green's profile that mark it out as atypical in relation to the Erdington constituency. Let's summarise the economic and social indicators reviewed so far, namely that Stockland Green can be characterised as:

- Holding around 22% of Erdington's population.
- Similar to Erdington in having a younger population profile than Birmingham as a whole, with proportionately more economically active residents.
- More diverse than Erdington and thus more similar to Birmingham city, with around 55% of the Stockland Green population identifying as BAME.
- Similarly, high levels of unemployment and benefit claimants to Erdington.
- High levels of deprivation concentrated around the Slade Road/Frances Road area
- Life expectancies of men and women in Stockland Green lower than Birmingham but higher than Erdington.
- High crime rates in relation to Erdington and Birmingham, much of it committed on the streets around Slade Road and Frances Road.

Stockland Green therefore experiences many of the problems of Erdington constituency and also fits the profile of a left behind area, ergo, it is riven with social disadvantage and economic exclusion. Geographically, the M6 and Spaghetti Junction effectively divides Stockland Green from the wider city, gaining it a 'suburban' label regardless of its many synergies with neighbourhoods to its south. In other ways, however, it is an outlier in Erdington, being more akin to Birmingham's inner city areas in its diverse culturally mixed population. Both Erdington and Stockland Green have lower life expectancy than the Birmingham average, but life expectancy in the small area of Stockland Green are higher than Erdington. One possible explanation is that statistically significant variations in life expectancy can arise between even small areas in close proximity and that within Stockland Green, deprivation is concentrated in a smaller proportion of the ward than in the constituency as a whole.

One of the most striking results of when analysing Erdington constituency and Stockland Green Ward together is the very high concentration of crime around Slade Road. This is not only the greatest concentration in Stockland Green ward but is the highest crime area in Erdington constituency, regardless of the fact that there are even higher levels of social deprivation in other wards, Castle Vale and Gravelly Hill being prime examples. This suggests there are factors beyond deprivation that cause such a radical bunching of street crime in so small an area. In many ways, therefore, Stockland Green is stuck in the middle. It is neither the most or least deprived of Erdington's neighbourhoods. Its geographic centrality and proximity to the main routes away or into the motorway system might have some limited bearing on its place as the epicentre of criminal activity in Erdington constituency.   Still, neither social or economic deprivation or physical location fully explains this apparently anomalous finding, ergo, that Stockland Green suffers disproportionately from street based and violent crimes.

The next section will draw on these analyses to frame a detailed examination of the housing market in Stockland Green and its relationship with the wider city.

Chapter Four – The Housing Market

An exploration of the housing market in Stockland Green ward, and its relationship with Erdington and the city of Birmingham.

1. Summary of context

These reviews of the socio-economic profiles of city, constituency and ward provide a rich contextual frame for the analysis of housing needs in Stockland Green. Birmingham emerges as one of the most deprived of the English core cities, trailing much of the UK on a range of economic, social and health indicators. Erdington is revealed to be one of the most deprived constituencies in Birmingham, fitting the profile of a left-behind area in terms of its relatively young and un-diverse demography, and relatively high levels of economic exclusion and social deprivation. Stockland Green is a small area located in a wide tract of the city closely associated with serious disadvantage and social exclusion. Even at ward level, however, Stockland Green presents a complex picture. It is undoubtedly an area containing significant levels of social and economic deprivation. It shares the slightly more youthful profile associated with a left-behind area but is dissimilar in being more diverse in culture and ethnic origin than Erdington constituency. The distribution of economic and social deprivation is not consistent even within the boundaries of this very small area. Finally, it has a significantly different profile to Birmingham and Erdington in terms of criminal activity. Slade Road and its immediate environs are hotspots for violent crime and anti-social behaviour, making Stockland Green one of the most crime-ridden areas of both constituency and city.

In this section, attention turns to the core subject of this report, that is the housing market and emerging housing needs in the Stockland Green area and its environs. It focusses on the following research questions:

⇒ *How does Birmingham's housing market relate to Erdington and Stockland Green?*
⇒ *What changes have occurred to housing tenures at a local level over the last two years in the Stockland Green Ward, with particular attention to the Slade Road area?*
⇒ *Can relationships be established between changes in the housing tenure profile of Stockland Green Ward, and indicators relating to health, crime and social deprivation?*
⇒ *What specific 'impact' factors are deducible from these relationships?*

To answer these questions, this Chapter begins with an analysis of the Birmingham housing market context. Whilst previous Chapters have focussed on comparative analysis, this section places greater emphasis on trends, thus providing a basis for future planning of regeneration and housing in the ward area. It is useful at this point to recap on the conclusions drawn from the comparative analysis of Birmingham and its ranking amongst English core cities. Chapter 2 concluded that:

- *Birmingham is the largest council landlord of any core city, but the proportion of social housing to all housing stock is lower than all core cities except for Bristol and Leeds.*
- *House prices are comparable with Manchester and Leeds and higher than all other core cities except for Bristol.*
- *Rent levels are lower than Bristol and Manchester, comparable with Leeds, but higher than all other core cities.*

- *Birmingham has a lower proportion of private rented housing than other core cities but is experiencing rapid growth, particularly in the exempt accommodation sector.*
- *Birmingham has a higher homeless acceptance rate than any other core city.*
- *Both Birmingham and Manchester have a significantly greater number of placements in temporary accommodation and a higher rate of placements proportionate to their populations.*

These conclusions frame the first sections' analysis of Birmingham's housing tenure and supply, market conditions and housing needs. The second part of the chapter focusses on relevant facets of Erdington's housing market, and then   The analyses local Stockland Green datasets and insights to build a richer, granular portrait of the housing market and neighbourhood characteristics of the ward, where possible connecting local phenomena to the policy and legislative context in Chapter 1, and the socio-economic analyses in Chapters 2 and 3. This analysis will frame the concluding Chapters consideration of the impact of changings in the housing market, and the possibilities of future development.

2. Birmingham Housing Market Trends

(i) Tenure

In 2016 there were just over 432,000 housing units in Birmingham, underscoring the size of the city as a conurbation and administrative area. Birmingham City Council remains the largest local authority landlord in England, with a housing stock of 62,610 council owned homes in 2018.   This large estate belies the fact that public sector and housing association ownership account for only around 25% of Birmingham's housing stock,. The city has a higher proportion of privately owned property than either Manchester or Leeds, the two most comparable local authorities.

In terms of trends, the number of housing units is steadily increasing, as demonstrated by Figure 4.1 Between 2010 and 20167, the total housing stock in Birmingham has increased from just under 423 thousand units to 432 thousand. The distribution of those units suggests that though the number of units is rising, affordable housing as a portion of that total is falling. Figure 4.2 below illustrates increases in private housing in the same period.

Figure 4.1

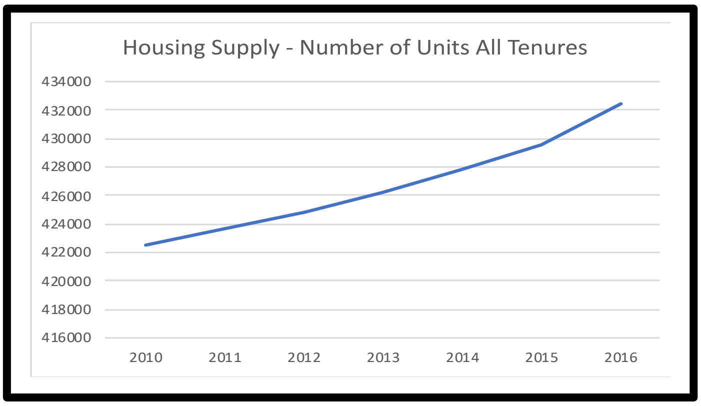
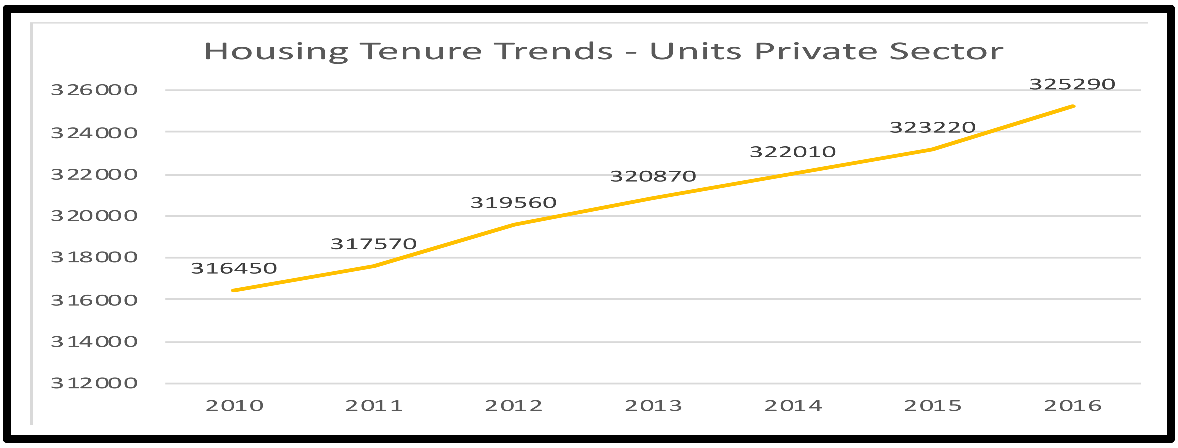


Figure 4.2



New housing completions dipped after the financial crash of 2008 but have risen steadily since 2013 from just under 1400 in 2014 to over 3000 in 2017/2018. The majority of these completions are of private sector units, not affordable housing. Indeed, growth across all housing tenures in Birmingham masks a significant shift in the nature of tenures of affordable housing. There has been a steady loss of local authority housing units, through regenerations scheme and notably the right-to-buy. *(Figure 4.3)* In effect some of the growth in private ownership can be attributed to the transfer of publicly owned local authority dwellings into private hands. Figure 4.3 illustrates a loss of around 2000 social housing units between 2010 and 2016. At the same time, this loss has been mitigated by increases in the level of stock owned and managed by housing associations/registered providers(RPs). Figure 4.4 illustrates the concomitant increase in social housing units held by housing associations is over 3000 units in the same period.

Figure 4.3

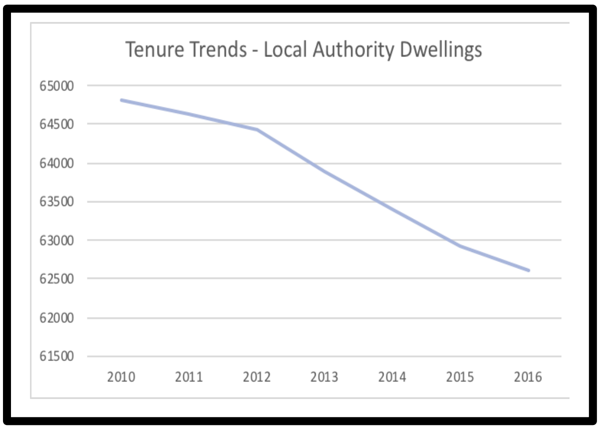
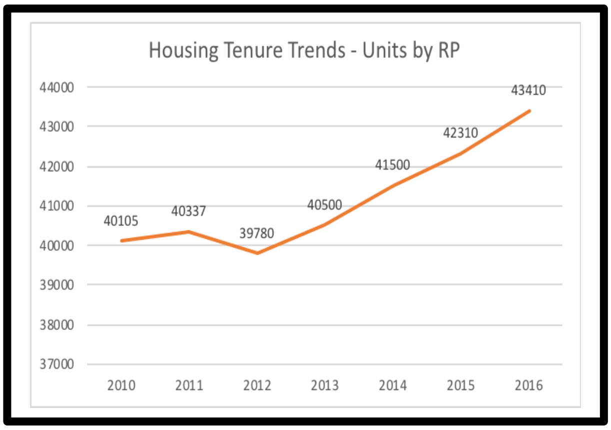


Figure 4.4



It is more difficult to determine accurate and up-to-date figures on private rentals, but the trend is undoubtedly upward. The 2011 Census found that the private rented sector in all core cities, including Birmingham, had increased as a proportion of privately-owned stock. Birmingham at that time had one of the lowest rates of privately rented stock at 17.9%

	Total Households	Owner Occupied	Social Rented	Private Rented
Birmingham	410,736	226,616 (55.2%)	99,592 (24.2%)	73,405 (17.9%)

The English Housing Survey conducted in 2017 estimated an increased in the national rate of private rentals of 68%. Government estimates of changes in stock tenure suggest that Birmingham's private rented sector increased to 22.17% of Birmingham's households between 2012 and 2018, reflecting a gradual expansion of the sector since the last census. Private sector tenants accounted for 28% of housing benefit claims in 2016.[16]

In summary, it appears that whilst the number of household units in Birmingham has grown over the last ten years, growth in new build completion, and accommodation available for rent tenure was largely confined to private markets. Some of that growth was a transfer between publicly and private ownership through the right to buy, with at least some of that property becoming part of the lower cost private rented market. The loss of local authority owned housing has been somewhat mitigated by new RP provision, but the prospect raised by the 2016 Housing Act is that housing association property might itself become part of the incremental transfer of public housing assets to private ownership.

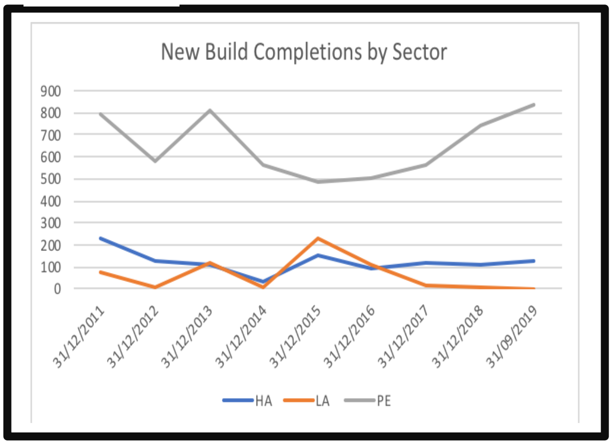
[16] Birmingham City Council Homeless Review 2016.

(ii) Supply

Birmingham City Councils' 2017 development plan sets out has ambitious plans to develop 51,100 homes between 2011-203, a target that will require 2850 homes to be built each year from now to 2031.[17] So challenging are the city's' housing needs that at least some of the that provision will need to be developed outside city boundaries. Performance against that target, however, has so far not delivered the number of homes required. Indeed, in terms of new-build completions, the effects of austerity policies are apparent in a sharp reduction of new homes for sale between the 2011 and 2014, and a gradual and limited recovery from 2014 onwards. Completions dropped from a high of 1100 completions in the year ending 2011, to a low of 600 at the end of 2014, and then increased incrementally to 970 by the year ending September 2019.

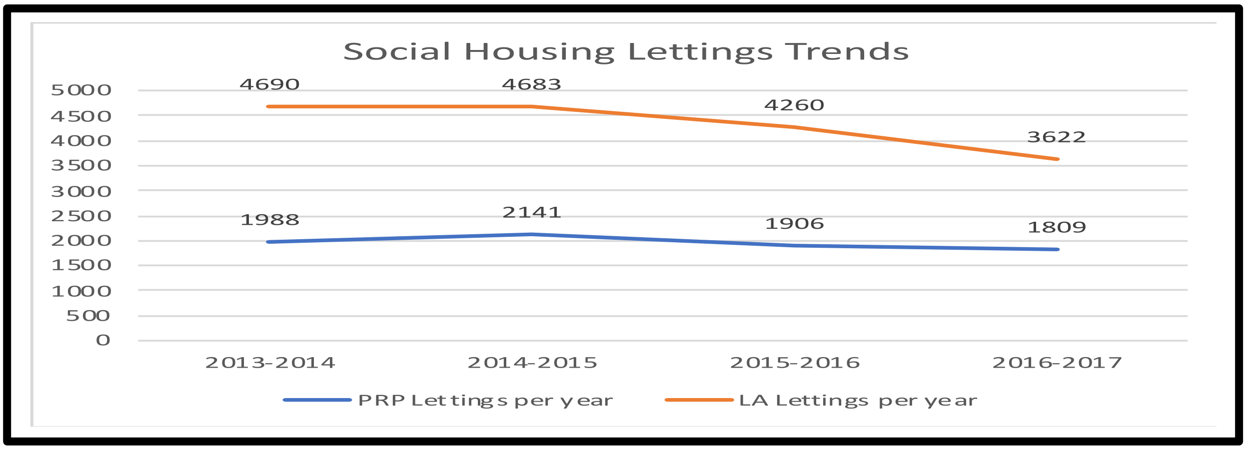
Again, sectoral analysis reveals that new build units are predominantly for private purchasers. Of the 970 completions in the year ending September 2019, only 130 were housing association properties, and 840 were private developments.(*Figure 4.5*[1]) In other words, sources of new supply are most constrained in sectors where demand for accommodation is greatest and rising. New build will not meet the needs of a very large number of young single people needing accommodation, or of larger families.

Figure 4.5



In Birmingham, the total supply of local authority lettings has been steadily falling year on year, reflecting the steady loss of stock through sales and regeneration. Housing Association/RP lettings have been more stable, falling only slightly over the same four year period. Nonetheless, the combined effect is of a net loss of affordable accommodation to all groups of housing applications, as demonstrated by Figure 4.6.

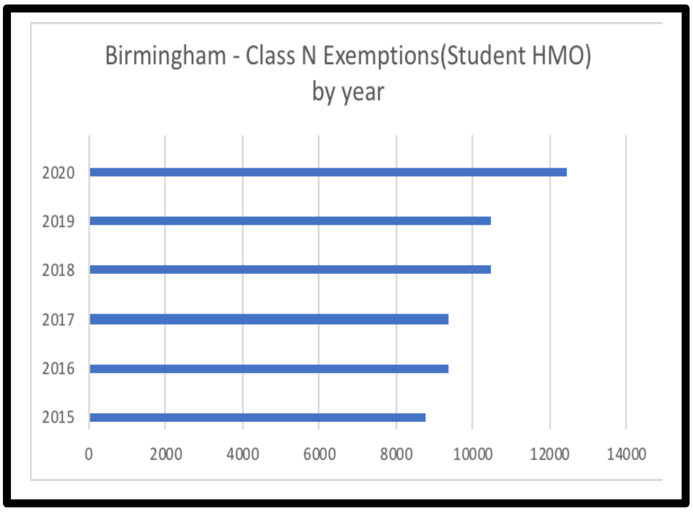
Figure 4.6



[17] Birmingham Development Plan 2017

Growth in the private rented sector includes growth in the use of shared accommodation, or houses of multiple occupation(HMOs). Birmingham's private rented sector has undoubtedly expanded at a faster rate than other core cities, but estimates made in 2018 do not capture the explosion in exempt accommodation now being tracked through housing benefit claims. Growth of the HMO sector has occurred largely as a result of changes in national government policy and the local application of housing benefit regulations introduced ***since*** the last census. Growth in HMOS has occurred in both the regulated and unregulated markets, with part of that steady growth has been the student market, as demonstrated in Figure 4.1 below.[18]

Figure 4.7



A greater part of the growth in shared accommodation can only be explained by runaway expansion of the unregulated or exempt sector. 155 providers are currently claiming housing benefit for exempt units, divided almost equally between RPs and other public or voluntary organisations as listed by benefit regulations. The scale and speed of expansion is unprecedented. The number of HB claims recorded at the end of 2018 for unregulated share accommodation was 11,500. By January 2020 the number of claims had increased to 18,000, or 63% according to the latest informal figures on housing benefit claims

(iii) Affordability

Average housing prices have increased year on year since 2011, as demonstrated by Figure 4.8. Despite Birmingham house prices being comparatively low, they remain unaffordable to many lower income groups in the city. The house price to earnings ratio rose from a low of 2.87 in 1997 to a high of 586 in 2008 immediately prior to the financial crash, dropping back only slightly to 5.33 in 2016. *(Figure 4.9)* Such a mismatch between local incomes and local house prices across the city underscores the City Council's conclusion that home ownership is unaffordable to lower income groups[19]. As an aside, BCC notes Birmingham as a 'mortgage repossession hotspot', with nearly twice the chance of repossession in Birmingham than nationally, a fact underscoring the difficulties of home-ownership for those on low incomes or in insecure occupations.

Figure 4.8

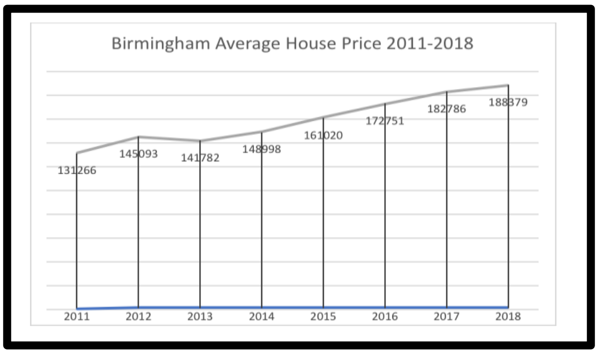
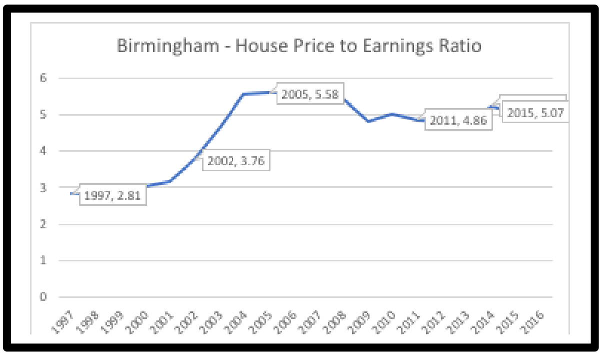


Figure 4.9



[18] FOI request 2017 – BCC.org
[19] In its most recent review of homelessness(2016)

In term of private rented sector accommodation, affordability remains a significant issue for those on lower incomes. The comparative exercise in chapter two suggested that private rents in Birmingham were amongst the lowest of the core cities. At the same time, for local residents, Birmingham's rents represented a greater proportion of their income, making the city one of the most expensive places to rent in the UK for local residents. According to the BCC Homeless Review, the ratio of rental costs to income in Birmingham is on a par with London, accounting for 47% of local incomes against 49% in London.[20] At the same time the Local Housing Allowance(LHA) is set at levels that are more likely to fully or mainly recompense local rents. This creates an incentive for public agencies with duties to assist with accommodation from higher rent agencies to explore Birmingham as a location for onward referral, thus exacerbating existing market pressures on rents. relationship between rental levels and housing benefit are explored below in relation to Stockland Green.

(iv) Housing Need

The final part of this analysis of city-wide housing markets focusses on demand for housing, across the city. So far, analyses of demographic indicators have suggested the Birmingham's population will continue to grow. Chapter two explained the population of Birmingham was projected to increase by 4.7% between 2018 and 2028, with the most rapid area of household growth being those with two or more adults(6.1%) and the second fastest increase among one-person households(5.5%). Analyses of socio-economic indicators confirmed Birmingham as one of the most socially deprived of all core cities, with higher levels of worklessness and lower median incomes than its closest comparators.

BCC's Strategic Housing Market Assessment(2013) suggested that the need for new homes stood at 80,000 units. This is in excess of targets set for new provision in the BDP, but encompasses the provision of single units of shared accommodation, and increased access to private sector rented property.

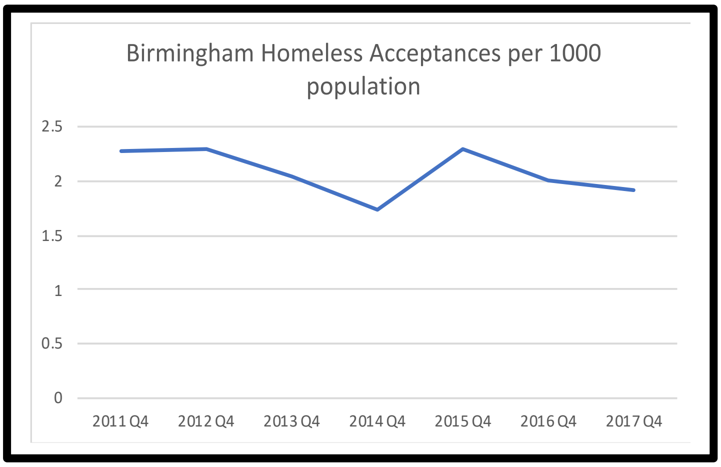
	Type of housing				
	Market Housing	Shared Ownership	Affordable Rent	Social rented	Total
1 bed	6,498	908	3,006	1,419	**11,831**
2 bed	11,982	991	9,325	2,434	**24,732**
3 bed	13,847	1,725	4,268	1,250	**21,090**
4+ bed	17,564	243	709	4,033	**22,549**
Total	**49,891**	**3,867**	**17,308**	**9,136**	**80,202**

The most recent BCC review of homelessness identified increasing supply-side pressures due to the local population growing at a faster rate than homes are being built. This study's' analysis has suggested that increased levels of new provision are concentrated on the home-ownership market, while new social housing for rent has not replaced stock lost through right-to-buy and regeneration. Owner occupation in Birmingham is limited to those who can afford homes costing in excess of five times their annual salary. These trends manifest in a much reduced set of housing options for low-income and benefit-dependent households, particularly in the younger, under-35 demographic and in larger households where the Benefits Cap severely constrains their ability to procure private rented sector accommodation.

[20] BCC Homelessness Review 2016

These stark facts underscore the high levels of housing need experienced in the Birmingham. Levels of homeless applications are consistently higher than all other core cities, and have been sustained at high levels throughout the last decade. *(Figure 4.10).* Birmingham's 2016 homeless review suggested as many as 20,000 households were either homeless, at risk of becoming homeless at any one time in the city.

Figure 4.10



Data relating to the new Act is more difficult to interpret due to issues with the consistency of collection amongst local authorities. Nonetheless, it is evident that Birmingham has seen increases in the numbers of people entering temporary accommodation post 2018. Even before the Homeless Reduction Act 2017 extended homeless duties, the trend was inexorably upwards, with end of year snapshots over the preceding decade recording sharp rises in the temporary accommodation(TA) population year-on-year,(*Figure 4.11)* and in the rate of households in TA in relation to the population.*(Figure 4.12)* Post HRA, BCC has sought to assist increasing numbers of single applicants in accessing the private sector.

Figure 4.11

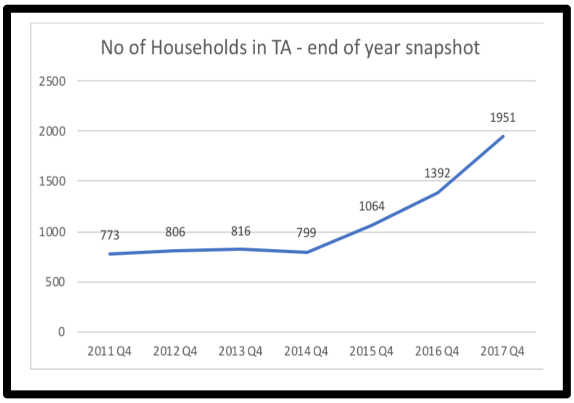
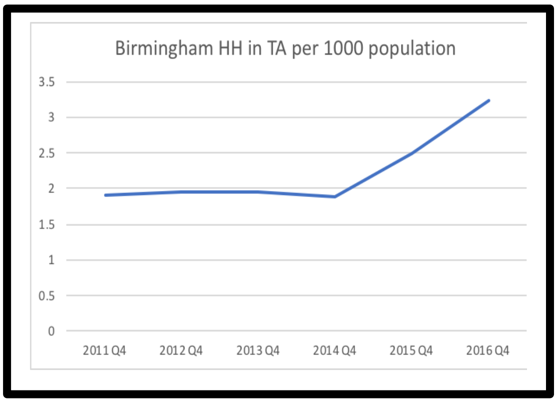
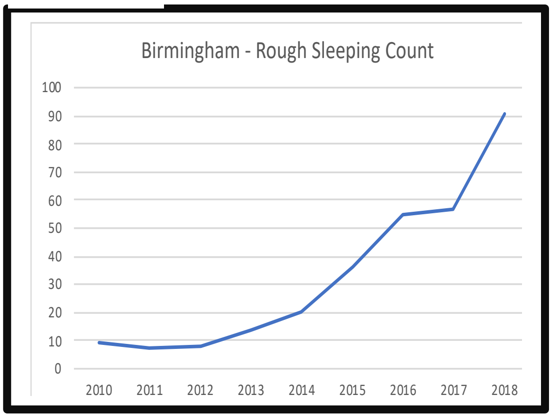


Figure 4.12



Lack of affordable and suitable accommodation at the very sharp end of housing provision, is contributing to rising numbers of vulnerable Birmingham residents taking to the streets. Rough sleeping has nearly trebled since 2011. (Figure X). Ironically, pandemic control measures have reduced rough sleeping to almost zero, the challenge now being to

Figure 4.13



3 Erdington and Stockland Green

Previous analysis of the socio-economic frame of both Erdington and Stockland Green confirmed both constituency and ward as part of an arc of social and economic disadvantage to the north of the city centre. Erdington was categorised as a 'left-behind' area, showing many of the symptoms of urban decline in high levels of worklessness and unemployment, lower wages, high levels of poverty and extreme poverty, and reduced mortality. Stockland Green as a sub-area showed many of the same characteristics albeit not to the same degree as neighbouring wards with high concentrations of social housing. It appeared that the diversity so characteristic of Birmingham, in terms of health, wealth and opportunity, were also manifest in Erdington and Stockland Green. This section turns to the housing market analysis to understand the similarities and differences between the city wide and local housing markets.

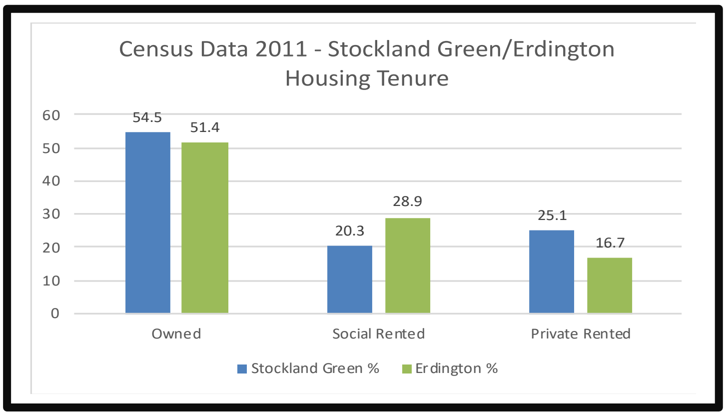
Local data has been gathered from a variety of sources, government datasets where possible, but also from Birmingham City Council sources, many of which are relate to local operations. As such, time series data is not always available. Where necessary, this section refers to city-wide trends to frame local phenomenon, and to understand the ways in which Erdington and Stockland Green might differ from other areas of the city.

(i) Tenure

First to tenure. Birmingham has a higher proportion of home owners than other core cities and a lower proportion of private renters according to census data and the more recent English Housing Survey. The situation in both Stockland Green and Erdington looks rather different. In terms of census data, constituency and ward have lower proportions of home owners than the city as a whole, Erdington is slightly lower with 54.5% of households being owner occupied against 55.2% across Birmingham, and Stockland Green considerably lower with 51.4% owner occupation. *(Figure 4.14)* Further variation occurs between the tenure profile of constituency and ward. Erdington has a significantly higher proportion of social rented housing (28.9%) against Stockland Green at 20.3%. This reflects the spatial distribution of social housing properties in Erdington being determined by the presence of large social housing estates such as Castle Vale.

Stockland Green, however, even ten years ago, had a substantially higher proportion of private rented sector housing than both Erdington and Birmingham. With over a quarter of properties in the private rented sector, this tenure profile almost certainly reflected the nature of Stockland Green's housing stock, that is large street properties that lent themselves to conversion to shared occupation.

Figure 4.14



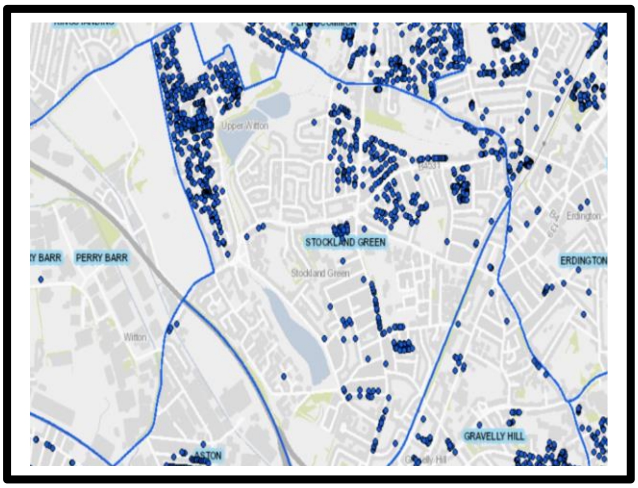
The growth in private rented sector accommodation across Birmingham reflects a pattern of demand in a city where home ownership is out of reach for a relatively large section of the population, and access to social housing has been falling year on year. Previous analysis has suggested that government growth estimates for private rented accommodation appear conservative given the known growth in both regulated and unregulated HMO sectors. This factor is particularly pertinent to Stockland Green in that when the last census was conducted, it was already an area where over 80% of its housing stock was in private hands, be that owner occupation or private rentals, compared to 68.1% in Erdington. With a stock profile that lends itself to conversion, growth in the private rental market was always likely to affect Stockland Green disproportionately.

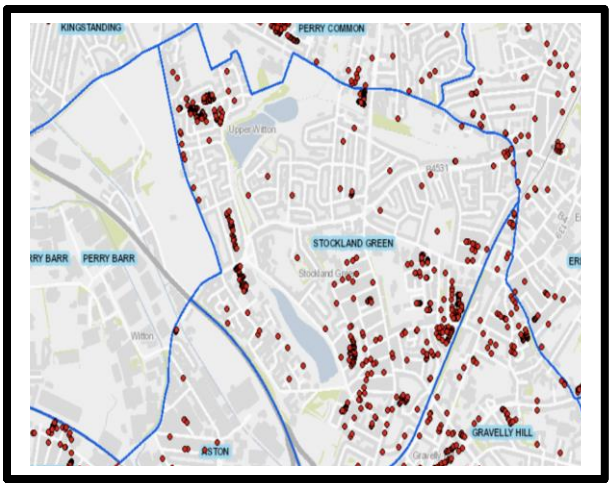
A slightly different profile also emerges between the composition of the social rented sector in Stockland Green, in that a higher proportion of social rented housing in Erdington constituency is local authority owned, whilst in Stockland Green, housing associations/RPs are more prevalent in social housing provision.

	Stockland Green %	Erdington %
Social Rented	20.3	28.9
Local Authority	12.9	17
Housing Association	7.4	11.9

Again, this is likely to reflect first the physical profile of housing in Stockland Green, being the lack of large social housing estates, and second the acquisition and development policies of local housing associations. This distribution is easier to see when mapped. The maps below illustrate the comparative distribution of stock in Stockland Green - blue dots are Council owned rented social housing and red housing association owned rented social housing. Stockland Green has relatively low concentrations of Council stock, and what there is in the north of the ward.

Around Slade Road, there are smatterings of both Council and Housing association stock, though nothing like the concentrations in the large estates visible in Gravelly Hill. The rest of the Stockland Green ward housing stock is either owner occupied or private rented.



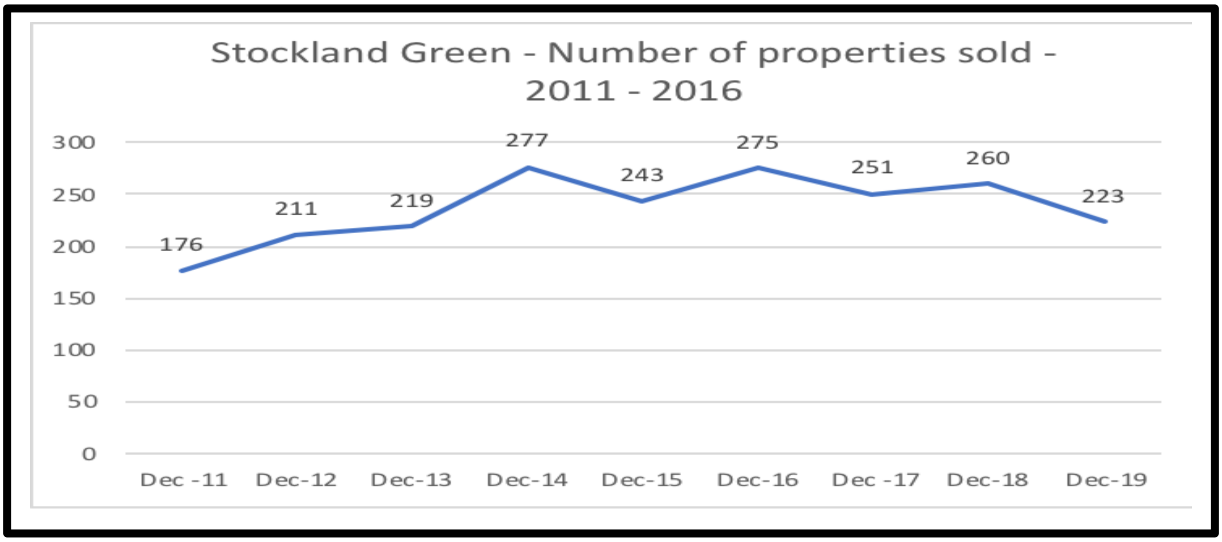


There are current 15 housing associations operating in Stockland Green, suggesting that a co-ordinated approach to development and expansion might be required when implementing any local plan for the area. Some housing associations operate in both the exempt market and the family housing market, a situation considered in more detail in the next chapter.

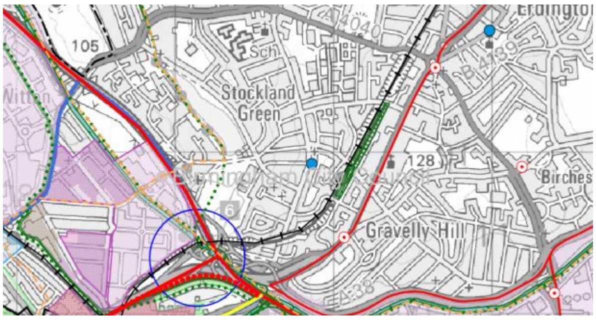
(ii) Supply

Both Erdington Constituency and Stockland Green Ward have experienced a buoyant housing market in recent years with a healthy turnover of housing sales and rising property prices in all categories. In Stockland Green, annual sales nearly doubled between 2011 and 2014, and though the turnover of properties on the private market has reduced since then, it has not yet dropped below 200 properties per annum for the ward area.

Figure 4.15



In planning terms, Stockland Green has not attracted any special zoning or regeneration priority from BCC. The map shows the prioritisation of the spaghetti junction interchange(blue) and the industrial development zones to the south of the ward, shaded pink. The absence of colour denotes Stockland Green as being very much subject to locally determined development priorities.

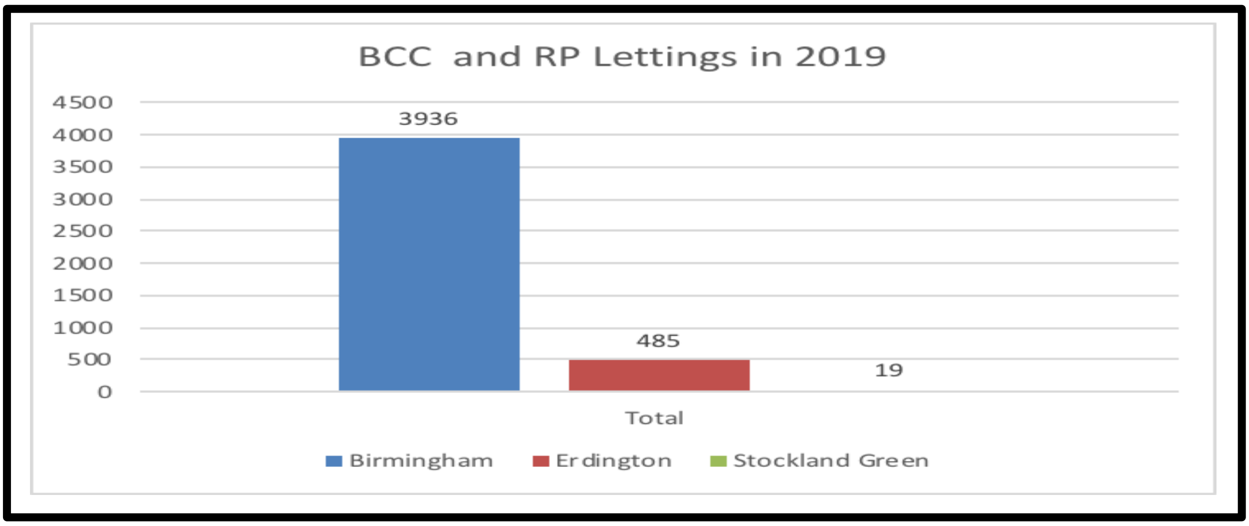


So far, new developments of family homes have been led by local housing associations. 14 new units of family accommodation are due for completion in 2021 at 411 Slade Road, to be let at Market Rent. In 2017, 14 new family homes were delivered on Copeley Hill and an unsightly brownfield site returned to residential use. Although not defined as a regeneration area, such developments are necessary if BCC is to meet its demanding housing construction targets. They are, in the context of a largely residential ward, the kind of initiatives that redress the increasingly rapid drift toward a homogenous private housing market of HMOs.

The delivery of small developments should, if sustained, have a positive effect on the neighbourhood, if only in giving a clear message to residents that local agencies and institutions are committed to change. What these developments cannot do, on any scale, is address the lack of affordable housing in the locality. Previous sections of this report have highlighted Stockland Green as a comparatively deprived area of the city, whilst analysis of the Birmingham housing market suggests that lettings of social housing are reducing year on year. This pattern is repeated at both constituency and ward level in that the number of lettings has also dropped, in Stockland Green to a negligible level of only 19 in the year 2019/2020.[21](*Figure 4.16)*

[21] BCC Internal Lettings Data

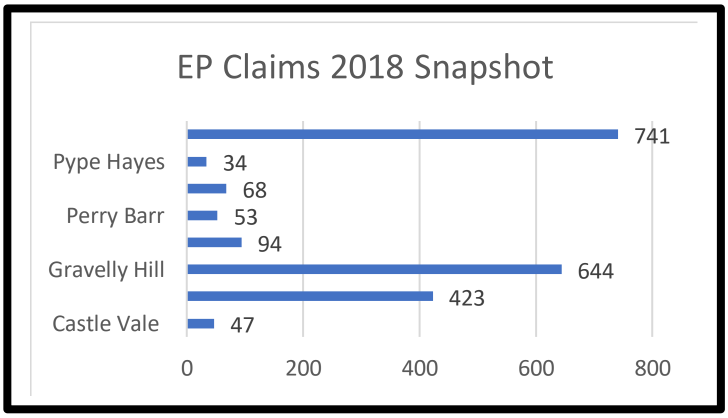
Figure 4.16



The final supply side issue relates to the growth of private rented sector accommodation locally, and in particular, the existence of HMOs and exempt accommodation in Stockland Green. Birmingham has run a mandatory HMO Licensing Scheme since 2015, which has the function of both regulating the HMO sector and driving sectoral improvement through co-produced quality standards, information sharing and landlord events. At present within the Stockland Green Ward there are 123 HMOs registered, with a maximum number of 829 bed spaces. In previous sections, Birmingham has been shown to have the highest number of exempt providers, that is HMOs with support that are excluded from the regulatory regime imposed on private sector providers. Government data does not currently record exempt providers, but they can be identified through the number of EP housing benefit claims that are submitted and approved. Claims in 2018 were broken down on a ward basis, with the results showing Stockland Green to have the highest number of exempt providers in Birmingham at 741 recorded claims, and Gravelly Hill to have the second highest in the city at 644.

Erdington Ward also scores in the top ten wards in Birmingham for exempt provision. The concentration of exempt provision in the constituency is thus centred on Stockland Green but radiates out from the Slade Road epicentre to adjoining wards. No ward breakdown has yet been possible of the newly calibrated figure of 18000 exempt providers in 2020.

Figure 4.17

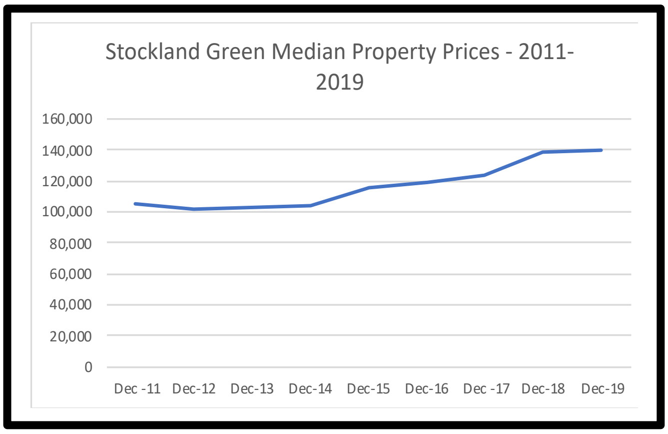


Certain inferences might be drawn from these supply side figures. The ward has not been prioritised for regeneration or development, and though new developments of rented housing have been successfully delivered in the ward, they are relatively small scale. The area started the decade with a significantly higher level of private sector accommodation than Birmingham and Erdington due in all likelihood to the prevalence of large houses suitable for conversion to HMOS. The ward is now clearly an outlier in the city in terms of the number of exempt providers, and also has a high number of regulated HMOS operating in the same residential streets. The exponential city-wide growth in exempt provision over the last two years is also likely to be concentrated in Stockland Green due to the availability of suitable properties. The fact that Stockland Green appears to enjoy a sustained buoyancy in its private housing market might well be due to the fact that a large proportion of residential sales might involve the conversion of family housing to shared accommodation.

(iii) Affordability

If the scarcity of a thing denotes its value, it is likely that the supply side pressures experienced across Birmingham will drive price inflation in private markets for property to buy and rent. In terms of sales, the house price to earnings ratio in Erdington stands at 6.1 against the Birmingham average ratio of 5.07. This means the average Erdington purchaser will have to find six times their salary to buy a property., a figure that is a function of both local property prices and the relatively low salaries received by Erdington residents. Indeed, house prices in Stockland Green have risen steadily over the last decade regardless of the economic downturn in 2011/2012, and the consequent stagnation in wages.

Figure 4.18



Properties in Birmingham had an overall average price of £204,975 over the last year, against an average of £138,856 in Stockland Green. This differential reduces substantially, however, if terraced properties, are used as a comparator The majority of sales in Birmingham during the last year were in fact terraced properties, which sold for an average of £178,490, against Stockland Green properties selling for an average price of £155,646. *(Figure 4.18)*

This means the differential between city wide prices when aggregated over all property types is 32% lower in Stockland Green, but only 20% in terraced houses, a factor possibly underscoring the robust sales profile of properties suitable for conversion in the ward.

In terms of private sector rents, Stockland Green is the most expensive of all the Erdington wards, However, in common with other Erdington wards, rental levels within the ward remain below the LHA, making private rentals possible for inward migrants to the area, as shown in the table below.

Constituency	WARD	Average PRS Rents 2018	LHA Average
Erdington	Erdington	£388	£ 525
	Gravelly Hill	£430	
	Kingstanding	£433	
	Pype Hayes	£405	
	Stockland Green	£468	

Whilst rental levels below the LHA might certainly stimulate some inward migration it has little effect on the exempt accommodation sector, which is run by a quite different housing benefit regime. Payments for exempt accommodation can rise as high as £230 per room, a situation introduced to compensate for the extra management costs associated with the provision of supported housing. This can be compared to the amounts payable in Birmingham for private sector general needs accommodation, set out in the table below.

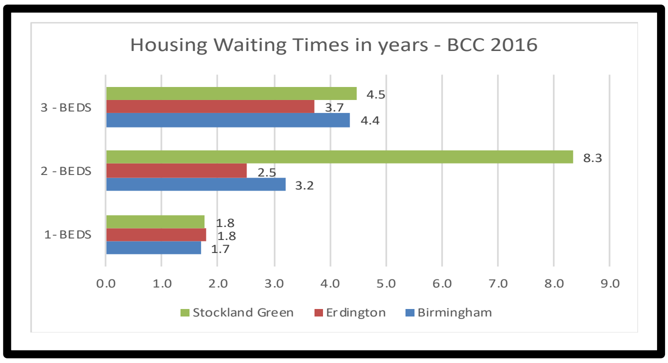
Number of bedrooms	LHA Weekly amount	LHA Monthly Amount
1 bedroom with shared facilities	£67.00	£291.13
1 bedroom self-contained	£120.82	£524.99
2 bedrooms	£143.84	£625.02
3 bedrooms	£155.34	£674.99
4 or more bedrooms	£195.62	£850.02

(iv) Housing Needs

The final part of this local housing market analysis concerns the level of housing need in Erdington and Stockland Green. Previous sections have established that accommodation is most needed at the affordable end of the housing market, particularly among younger people and amongst larger families. Affordability issues mean that home ownership is out of the question for many people falling into those categories. This is reflected in the latest figures published by BCC on levels of local housing need. The table below identifies the percentage of needs being met by social housing in the city, constituency and ward. Both Erdington and Stockland Green have larger proportions of housing applicants with unmet needs, with Stockland Green in particular having very high levels of unmet need for larger, family sized properties.

Percentage of Needs Met from Social Housing per Area – 2016						
	Bedroom Size					Total
Area	1	2	3	4	5+	
Birmingham	71.2%	41.9%	33.5%	6.6%	1.3%	38.6%
Erdington	42.6%	28.7%	22.6%	0.6%	0.0%	26.1%
Stockland Green	56.3%	12.0%	22.4%	4.7%	0.0%	23.5%

Figure 4.19



For social housing, those registering for social housing in either Erdington or Stockland Green there are extended waiting times, with a particular lack of smaller, two bedroomed, family accommodation in the ward area. For two and three beds, waiting times are much longer in Stockland Green than either Erdington or Birmingham. For larger than three bed properties, the wait is so long as to be indefinite and is therefore not included on this chart. (*Figure 4.19)*

Demand for private sector accommodation locally is not recorded, and in any case would not be meaningful in explaining the bare fact of private sector expansion in Stockland Green and the nature of that expansion. Seismic shifts in the city-wide economy, and labour market have, respectively, reduced wages in some sectors while attracting inward migration in others. In the housing market, the trend toward private sector housing as the dominant tenure has been driven by public policies which have reduced the level of social housing by design, and increasingly directed those on benefits and lower wages towards the private sector. these trends are driven by shifts in and are repeated across the core cities, and in London. The fact that Stockland Green is relatively affordable appears to increase its attractiveness to landlords dealing in the lower end of the housing market, and its accessibility no doubt recommends it to referral agencies and authorities in Birmingham and beyond.   Stockland Green, it seems, is meeting a level of housing need for shared accommodation that is generated far beyond its borders. At the same time, the loss of family housing to shared accommodation is perhaps discernible in the very high levels of unmet need for family sized accommodation, and the achingly long waiting times for secure and affordable social housing.

Whilst not much is centrally recorded about the occupants of exempt accommodation, anecdotally it is known that they will be referred from BCC central referrals, which finds accommodation for people with support needs who have engaged with statutory services. Highcroft, the large mental health facility in Stockland Green, is also known to place in local HMOs. However, many of Stockland Green's HMO residents are actively 'recruited' on discharge from prison or are referred by local authorities much further afield.   Residents of these HMOs will therefore not necessarily have any connection with the ward area or constituency. Their support needs will not always be thoroughly assessed before placement, and because each placement is determined on an individual level, it is not uncommon for exempt HMOs to contain groups of residents who are incompatible or who actually pose risks to each other. Further, the support offered through exempt accommodation only has to pass a test of 'minimal' for HB to be payable and the powers of the Housing Regulator are rarely used to intervene in RPs who are not providing adequate levels of support. Whilst the housing needs of this vulnerable client group might be met, it is less clear that their wider needs are assessed or recognised through an exempt accommodation placement. The concentrated HMO supply around the Slade Road area means, in effect, concentration of highly vulnerable residents, living in close proximity, and surviving, at times, with barely any support to live a safe and fulfilling life.

(v) Community

So far, quantitative analysis has revealed the extent to which the community of Stockland Green is diverse, in terms of both ethnicity and class, with members who are relatively transient occupants of exempt accommodation and members who are aspirational home-owners. Many members of this community have therefore been observers to and participants in the changes to Stockland Green. Indeed, the report started with the words of a longer-term resident of the area, regretting the way changes in housing tenure had caused such a deleterious effect on the locality that her grandchildren were afraid to visit. Community was also invoked in debate over the alignment of Stockland Green with 'left-behind' areas, in that one aspect of these areas has been identified as a lack of community services, or a focal point for community activity. The last word in this housing analysis will be given to the community and their concerns for a better future for their neighbourhood.

With such a strong connection established between rapid changes in housing tenure and the deterioration of some neighbourhoods, it is encouraging that the Stockland Green community is increasingly organised and engaged in determining how the ward should develop. It is also heartening to note that though there are concerns about the growth of HMOS locally, there is also a recognition that the residents of those houses are also part of the community.   Community concerns are wide-ranging, however, and reflect a broad understanding that the area has been neglected by local authorities in terms of development and maintenance. A recent qualitative survey of the area highlights that the proliferation of HMOS is only one issue undermining the ability of Stockland Green to regenerate. Others are:

⇒ *Poor maintenance of green space – Brookvale Park has the potential to be an outstanding public area, but has deteriorated through lack of investment, regular maintenance and supervision.*
⇒ *A belief that the location of Highcroft, the mental health facility, underscores the concentration of people with support needs in the ward.*
⇒ *A lack of retail facilities in the ward.*

On the positive side, participants in that research suggested that Stockland Green had historically been a strong community. There were many positives to be found in the area, the work of Highcroft Community Centre, for example, in providing excellent social activities for elderly people(though not young people!), the many green spaces, places of worship that extended the hand of friendship into communities, a diverse population that managed to communicate across cultural differences, excellent transport links, and numerous community events. Despite this level of social capital in the locality, it appeared, however, that engagement between the community and local stakeholders was fitful and uncoordinated, leaving many residents to believe that no one agency had a long term, embedded commitment to the area.

4. Summary

It is suggested that the following conclusions should be drawn from this analysis of the housing market conditions of Birmingham, Erdington and Stockland Green.

- *At a strategic level, the number of homes are increasing in Birmingham, but there appears to be a shift in tenure toward private sector renting. This is in line with other core cities, though Birmingham appears to be starting from a lower base of private sector stock, and accelerating at a faster level.*

- *Supply side factors are affecting the availability of affordable accommodation which is very limited and reducing annually. Although Birmingham has set ambitious targets for new build in the city of some 50,000 new units of accommodation, most of that new build will continue to be geared toward home ownership.*

- *Throughout the city there is a creeping transfer of publicly owned social housing to private hands through the Right to Buy and through regeneration schemes, that undermines the best efforts of the city council and local housing association providers to stop the emerging gaps in accommodation.*

- *Although rents are lower than elsewhere in England, Birmingham remains a city where access to housing is severely limited by affordability. Many residents are priced out of home ownership, with Erdington constituency having a significantly higher house-price to earnings ratio than the city average.*

- *It is clear that Birmingham is dealing with levels of housing need most often associated with London and the south east. The rate of homeless applications and the numbers and rate of placement into TA have increased over the last decade and remain high. There is particularly acute levels of demand amongst younger single people and larger families.*

- *These strategic factors frame the housing market in Stockland Green. At the last census Stockland Green was already host to a burgeoning private rented sector on account of its stock of larger, convertible street properties. There has been no active intervention in Stockland Green* *to promote the development of family accommodation despite high levels of need. The market, left to its own devices, appears to have been sustained by demand for convertible houses.*

- *The result has been a burgeoning HMO sector in both the regulated and unregulated side of the market. This is a city-wide phenomenon driven, again, by national movements in economy, law and policy. Birmingham is easily accessible, and rents that are ironically unaffordable to working Birmingham residents are more likely to be within LHA levels and thus attractive to referral agencies within and beyond the city boundaries.*

- *The very generous benefit regime attached to exempt provision has incentivised shifts even within the HMO sector to the provision under this particular model. This factor, combined with a stock profile of large and highly convertible houses have accelerated the general growth of the private rented sector in Stockland Green, but particularly in unregulated exempt provision. It is now host to the largest number of EPs of any ward in Birmingham, and the trend appears to be escalating rather than stabilising.*

The next, concluding Chapter, explores the impact of the changing profile of Stockland Green on its longer term residents, assesses what plans exist to address the problems faced by residents of the ward in all tenures, and sets out a series of recommendations for future debate.

Chapter Five – Uniqueness and Connectivity – conclusions

Conclusions on housing and community needs in Stockland Green by reference to previous chapters, and data gained directly from stakeholder participants

1. Introduction

A very high level summary of the first two chapters of this report might conclude that Stockland Green is a highly deprived ward, in a highly deprived constituency, in one of the poorest cities in the UK. Chapter 2 showed that Birmingham struggled more than most core cities to come to terms with the decline in manufacturing industry, and has lower levels of GDP than other core cities. Furthermore, Birmingham contained the highest number of small areas deprivation in England, higher levels of child poverty and lower and decreasing life expectancies than other core cities. Statistics, however, always belie the diversity of experience contained in a conurbation of this size. Chapter 2 also showed that Birmingham had, at the same time, cause for optimism in terms of its diversity, vitality and growth, with lower levels of worklessness and a faster rate of economic growth than other core cities. The new High Speed Rail Link promised to enhance Birmingham's economic potential, with BCC's own projections suggesting economic growth was likely to continue on a promising trajectory for the next decade.

This analysis therefore confirmed Birmingham as a city of great potential and sharp contrasts. Great dissimilarities existed within city boundaries, alongside areas of deep deprivation are some of the most prosperous constituencies in England. Erdington itself is a good example, in being one of the most deprived of English constituencies, bordering Sutton Coldfield, one of the healthiest and wealthiest. The life experiences of Birmingham's residents are not uniformly affected either by low per-capita GDP or by high rates of economic growth. In some geographical areas, characteristics such as expanding employment markets and rising incomes generate investment, facilitate development and ultimately cause gentrification. In others, the same forces that drive economic growth and house price inflation exacerbates exclusion amongst populations not skilled enough to participate in new labour markets. In these areas, economic growth has the indirect effect of drastically reducing housing options for those on low incomes and benefit.

It followed that the comparative analysis of Birmingham city suggested two separate but related narratives should be explored when considering the housing and community needs of the Stockland Green locality. Given the great contrasts existing within the city it is clear that city wide factors will combine with the particular physical, social and economic characteristics of any small area to create a narrative of ***uniqueness***, ergo Stockland Green must be treated as an individual and distinctive area. Yet what happens at a national and city-wide level undoubtedly shapes and forms the character and potential of the local, creating a narrative of ***connectivity.*** This concluding chapter negotiates these two narratives, asking first what are the distinctive local community and housing market characteristics of Stockland Green, and then how are these characteristics shaped and formed by national and city wide drivers of housing need?

2. Summary of economy, populations, health and deprivation

Erdington

Chapter three explained that Erdington constituency lies in an arc of deprivation to the north of central Birmingham that contains some of the poorest areas in England. Erdington:

- *Closely resembles a 'left-behind' area, being highly deprived on a range of socio-economic indicators, and a more homogenous mainly 'leave' voting, white and younger demographic.*
- *Sustained a larger proportion of manufacturing industry than other areas of the city and perhaps for this reason its economic growth rate was slower.*
- *Derives a high deprivation score from relatively high levels of unemployment, worklessness, low wage and relatively low skills levels, all of which are closely aligned with poorer health outcomes in terms of mortality and healthy life.*
- *Experiences significant variations in the deprivation profile of Erdington, and the ward analysis of deprivation revealed a possible connection between levels of deprivation and housing tenure.*
- *Has one of the highest numbers of children living in poverty, and a rising number of households living in absolute and relative poverty.*
- *Had the highest levels of deprivation in the constituency in Castle Vale and Gravelly Hill wards due to very high concentrations of social housing.*
- *Has a crime rate higher than Birmingham city, with most crimes occurring around Slade Road, the arterial route through the centre of the constituency, and the centre of Stockland Green ward. The location of crimes, therefore, seemed untethered to area of extreme deprivation elsewhere in Erdington constituency.*

Stockland Green

At a simplistic level, Stockland Green exhibited many of some characteristics as Erdington, in terms of relatively low employment, higher mortality and higher poverty levels than many other areas of Birmingham. Yet Stockland Green presented a more complex picture than other Erdington localities. Stockland Green:

- *Is less homogenous in terms of its demography, which resembled the diversity of inner city Birmingham, and though undoubtedly an area of extreme deprivation, contained large variations of deprivation and housing tenure within its very small area.*
- *Contains high levels of deprivation concentrated around the Slade Road/Frances Road area in the central area of the ward.*
- *Has a significantly higher crime rate than both Erdington and Birmingham, much of it committed on the streets around Slade Road and Frances Road.*
- *Is close to major transport routes of Spaghetti Junction and the round Birmingham bus, which might have some limited bearing on its place as the epicentre of criminal activity in Erdington constituency.*
- *Has such a high rate of street based and violent crimes that it cannot be explained by socio-economic factors.*

3. Summary of Housing market indicators

Birmingham's rapid economic growth has driven house price and rent inflation across the city. For residents in the more disadvantaged areas home ownership is out of reach, and the supply of social rented accommodation is falling year on year. This housing market profile has driven the expansion of the private rented sector in Birmingham which is growing at a faster rate than other core cities. Private sector growth is notable in all categories but appears particularly overheated in the exempt accommodation sector.

BIRMINGHAM HOUSING MARKET SUMMARY

TENURE
- Largest proportion of privately owned housing of core cities
- Lower proportion of private renting than other core cities, BUT…
- Private renting fastest growing sector

SUPPLY
- Increases in housing stock are expected to continue
- 50,000 new units projected by 2031
- Most units for private acquisition
- Supply of social housing is decreasing year on year
- Exponential Increase in exempt accommodation across the city

AFFORDABILITY
- House prices lower than other core cities BUT
- Price to Earnings ratio higher
- Private sector rents rising BUT
- A substantial element of PS growth sustained under LHA levels

HOUSING NEEDS
- Consistently high numbers of homeless applications
- Comparatively high numbers of households in Temporary Accommodation
- High levels of need across all size categories BUT
- Particularly high demand for single units, and larger family homes
- Greatest mismatch in supply and demand for smaller family unites

The housing market in Birmingham appears to have polarised around relatively high cost home ownership which is out of reach for those living in the most deprived areas, or suffering from other forms of housing vulnerability, and the lower end of the private rented sector which is either low cost or fundable from welfare or housing benefits.

4. Uniqueness

Divergent demographic, economic and social factors

This brings us to the core of this report, which is how these various, complex factors have affected the Stockland Green ward, ergo what unique features are observable? Broadly, Stockland Green exhibits many of the same characteristics as Erdington in terms of high levels of deprivation, high levels of unemployment and worklessness and lower median wages. Deeper analysis revealed that Stockland Green differed substantially, in that:

- *It is a more diverse ward than any other in Erdington, and that it has a younger age profile than both Erdington and Birmingham. Both factors could suggest a more transient element to the Stockland Green population than other areas of Erdington. We also know that Stockland Green has a higher proportion of single households than Erdington.*

- *It has a higher proportion of economically active people relative to Birmingham, but this aligns with higher unemployment, suggesting that a larger proportion of Stockland Green's population is excluded from the labour market either through a lack of skills or through vulnerabilities.*

Housing market exceptionality

Even at the last census it was clear that Stockland Green had a much higher level of private rented accommodation than Birmingham as a whole. This factor appeared to relate to the higher proportion of street properties in the stock profile of the ward. There are no large estates, with most accommodation being larger street properties, small Council estates, and small infill developments by the RP sector. The distribution of social housing is quite even across Stockland Green ward, and there is proportionately less of it. Around Slade Road, there are smatterings of both Council and RP stock, though nothing like the concentrations in the large estates in neighbouring Gravelly Hill and Castle Vale. The rest of the Stockland Green ward housing stock is either owner occupied or private rented.

Birmingham has experienced a rapid growth in the private rented sector in all markets. Rent levels in the private sector are unaffordable to those on average Birmingham wages but a larger number of properties fall within local LHA levels, meaning that it is easier for people on benefits to find affordable accommodation. This aspect of Birmingham's housing market makes it an attractive area for migration from areas where levels of benefit have failed to keep up with rents, that is London, the South East and growing portions of all core cities. Increasingly housing authorities in these areas will look elsewhere to procure accommodation for people to whom they owe a statutory duty.

Private sector growth in Stockland Green has been particularly inflated in the exempt accommodation sector, that is unregulated HMOs. Though a national phenomenon, this growth has been particularly rapid in Birmingham due to the relatively low housing prices, and a stock of highly convertible large terraces in inner city and suburban areas of the city. In Birmingham, Stockland Green is unique in experiencing a higher rate of exempt sector growth than any other area, to the point of singling out the central tract of the ward as quite unique in terms of the concentrations of unregulated HMOS.

Whilst not much is centrally recorded about the occupants of exempt accommodation, it is known that a large proportion are referred from agencies and institutions in Birmingham. These residents will include those who find Stockland Green through BCC central referrals agency, created to secure accommodation for people with support needs who have engaged with statutory housing and social care services. Highcroft, the large mental health facility in Stockland Green, is also known to place in local HMOs. At the same time, many of Stockland Green's HMO residents are actively 'recruited' on discharge from prison or are referred by local authorities much further afield. Residents of these HMOs will therefore not necessarily have any connection with the ward area or constituency. Their support needs will not always be thoroughly assessed before placement, and because each placement is determined on an individual level, it is not uncommon for exempt HMOs to contain groups of residents who are incompatible or who actually pose real risks to each other. Further, the support offered through exempt accommodation only has to pass a test of 'minimal' for HB to be payable and the powers of the Housing Regulator are rarely used to intervene in RPs who are not providing adequate levels of support. This means this concentration of a particular tenure barely masks a concentration of highly vulnerable residents, living in close proximity, and surviving, at times, without even the bare minimum of support needed to live a safe and fulfilling life.

Soaring Crime Levels

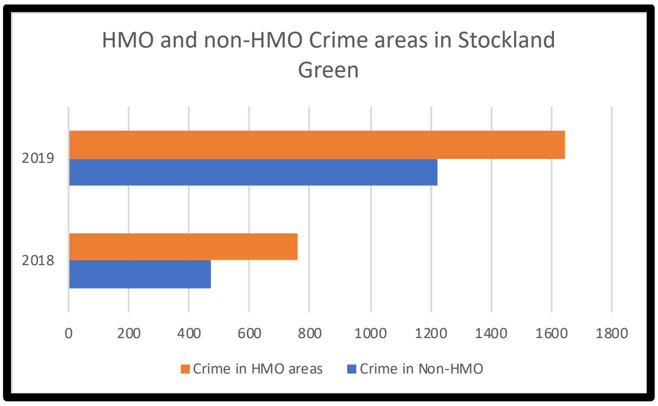
The outstanding feature of the socio-economic analysis of both Erdington and Stockland Green was high crime rates compared to the city. Close analysis showed that Erdington's crime rate was inflated by the very high concentration of crime in the immediate locality of Slade Road and adjoining streets in Stockland Green. This very small area formed a crime hotspot in Birmingham most notably for street crimes, violence and anti-social behaviour. It was an element of the Stockland Green profile so unique that direct confirmation was requested from the West Midlands police of the statistical profile and their views of its causes.

Their local records show the same striking results. From local data, a 14% increase in crime was recorded between 2018 and 2019 in the Stockland Green Ward, as Table XX illustrates.

Year	Burglary	Criminal Damage	Drugs	Robbery	Theft	Vehicle crime	Violence (sexual)	Violence
2018	395	291	114	111	401	144	114	1740
2019	301	362	127	166	388	178	68	2254

The total number of crimes in Stockland Green ward in 2019 was an astonishing 3844, put crudely there were more than 100 crimes reported each day in the small ward area. WMP analysed their informal statistics in relation to ward areas with a high concentration of HMOs and those without. As Figure 5.1 demonstrates, the results are similarly striking.

Figure 5.1



Finally, WMP selected a random group of 20 HMO properties in the vicinity of Slade Road, and analysed call-outs and crimes over a one month period. These were HMOs of any type and any landlord, so included RP managed exempt provision and private regulated HMOS and exempt provision. The results demonstrate the extraordinary impact of a concentration of HMO properties on crime. WMP report that a total of 215 calls for service were received from just 20 HMO properties, equating to around 18 calls a month. They were most frequently ASB(36), missing persons(12) and self-harm or other mental health crisis(18). In these twenty properties, recorded crimes were around 3 per month, mostly assault(20) and burglary(14). In the same time frame there were 29 arrest attempts, 4 repeat offenders and 2 standard licence recalls.

Mapped statistical evidence pointed clearly to a link between housing tenure and crime in Stockland Green, and WMP were adamant in their view that the high crime level in the ward was directly attributable to the growth in HMOs, the vulnerable nature of their residents, the apparent lack of support to those residents, and the lack of a consistent approach to inspection and regulation on the part of housing authorities. On the part of the WMP, there is no doubt that there is a close correlation between the growth of exempt accommodation in Stockland Green ward, and the very high levels of crime experienced by its residents.

5. Connectivity

Turning to the narrative of connectivity, the next section asks how these uniquely local Stockland Green conditions are driven by national and city wide phenomena. Chapter one set out the national context in terms of economic and policy drivers, and regulatory factors.   These will be considered in turn.

Economic Drivers

Nationally, austerity policies over the last decade have increased levels of inequality across the UK, leading to drastically reduced life chances in some areas, increasing mortality from preventable illnesses, lower life expectancy and higher levels of both absolute and relative poverty. Stockland Green is undoubtedly affected by these national movements in the distribution of wealth and opportunity, being amongst the most deprived wards in Birmingham.   Increasing inequality has had a direct impact on access to housing for those on lower incomes or benefits, as evidenced by the exponential increase in the house price to earnings ratio across Erdington constituency. Stockland Green's housing profile means this renders much of its private sector stock out of the reach of single family purchasers from the local area. The size of the houses available on the open market make them expensive to maintain and refurbish for single family households, and thus less attractive for local residents.   These same physical characteristics make Stockland Green's housing ripe for conversion to multi-occupation, and so it is that house prices have increased and been sustained in Stockland Green, shored up by national and city wide demand for shared accommodation. Yet there remains high levels of unmet housing needs among Stockland Green's longer term residents, many of whom are families priced out of the private market and facing many year's wait for social housing.

Law, Policy and Regulation

Changes in national legislation and policy have variably impacted upon Stockland Green's housing market. BCC has committing to increasing the supply of social housing through increased borrowing, but so far, Stockland Green is not an area where growth is prioritised. What developments of family sized housing have been completed in the ward, they have been are fairly small scale RP led developments for subsidised or market rents.   On the demand side, legislative changes have increased the obligations of local authorities to assist single people under the HRA 2017, indeed direct support to access the private sector is now integral to any assessment of housing need for any household. Restrictions in the LHA nationally have made Birmingham an attractive location for housing authorities and other institutions operating in higher cost housing areas, being one of the few areas in England where it is possible to procure accommodation below LHA levels to scale.

The exempt accommodation market has been driven by a combination of demand for shared accommodation, and the commercial opportunities created by the more generous HB regulations around this type of provision. Restrictions on housing benefit levels in general needs accommodation, including HMOs, have created an exponential increase in supply of exempt accommodation nationally. The difference in subsidy for a room in shared accommodation in Birmingham is marked, £85 per week for a regulated HMO and £235 per week in exempt accommodation. This has caused many landlords to shift toward exempt accommodation, and anecdotally has attracted new landlords into the market with less experience and commitment to the sector.

Exempt accommodation must be managed by a registered provider(RP) or voluntary sector organisation to comply with HB regulations, however, meaning the behaviours and strategies of the RP sector are integral to tenure changes in Stockland Green. Exempt accommodation is attractive to RPs as it offers a means of supplying accommodation with little upfront investment, fulfilling their social mission whilst at the same time creating cash-rich organisations. Various models of EA provision are possible with support being provided directly by some organisations, contracted in by others, and provided by landlord partners in others. As the level of support required is only minimal, it is for the RP to decide the level of investment attached to their portfolio of accommodation, and the level of control and monitoring they exercise over that support. The Housing Regulator will intervene where financial anomalies are uncovered in any RP, but has less power and inclination to challenge qualitative inquiry. Exempt accommodation, therefore, is a hugely profitable public endeavour that falls outside of any direct regulatory regime.

Local factors

Legislative changes have increased the demand for accommodation amongst single housing applicants, who can now expect their local authority to provide assistance through the HRA. Due to the explosion in the exempt accommodation sector, Birmingham has become a preferred location for local authorities in high cost areas, and for other statutory agencies with an obligation to provide emergency accommodation. Stockland Green's core issue, that is the growth of unregulated, exempt accommodation for vulnerable people concentrated in a very small geographical area is directly connected to these changes in the national benefit framework. At the same time, it appears that Birmingham's very high level of exempt accommodation cannot be entirely explained away by national factors. Anecdotal evidence suggests that Birmingham's Housing benefit service takes a less confrontational and more trusting approach to the resolution of HB claims for exempt accommodation. Further, claims processing is amongst the most efficient in England. Exempt providers favour Birmingham as a place where claims are rapidly processed and HB income is relatively easily accessed, meaning their income stream is reasonably certain in a business where resident turnover can be very high.

Other local factors, whilst not causing the increase in exempt accommodation, have been instrumental in creating a 'welcoming' environment for the less savoury end of the market. Whilst most RPs are committed to maintaining high standards in the sector, the level of profit has undoubtedly attracted those whose main priority is commercial gain. Exempt accommodation by its nature falls outside the formal and mandatory regulatory regime attached to general needs HMOs, meaning another route to driving higher standards is effectively closed. In any case, the local private sector team in Birmingham has itself been a victim of austerity, with resources reduced by some 75%. Their resources to regulate any part of the HMO sector are therefore much constrained. Powers in relation to example accommodation are limited to more labour-intensive actions against anti-social behaviour and health and safety compliance, meaning the efforts of BCCs PS team are so severely restricted to the most extreme cases as to have virtually no effect on growth in the sector.

In terms of connectivity, then, Stockland Green lies at the centre of a perfect storm. The nature of its housing stock makes it an attractive location for conversions into HMOs and exempt accommodation, while the nature of its population means that the private housing market is largely out of reach. This has caused an influx of younger, single, and more vulnerable residents to HMOs in the Slade Road area, where the landlords may or may not be providing adequate support. Further, the 'storm' is exacerbated by local factors, not least the lack of regulation of the exempt accommodation sector, and a relatively risk averse approach to benefit claim resolutions within that sector. Both factors feed growth in the unregulated HMO sector, which in turn sustains unaffordable house-prices, and drives more families to leave the area. In this way, a cycle is established through which progressively greater numbers of houses convert to exempt accommodation upon sale. This determines the environment for Stockland Green residents now, supported accommodation of variable quality proliferates, a fearful populace is plagued by mainly low-level street crime, and the threat of further deterioration encourages families to move from the area either toward more suitable and affordable accommodation or away from conditions that appear less than conducive to a happy and safe family life.

Chapter Six - Recommendations

Conclusions on housing and community needs in Stockland Green by reference to previous chapters, and data gained directly from stakeholder participants

"The experience of residents now and indeed in the months and recent years are crying out for something to be done. It's great to have lots of data mining and statistical analysis but here it's simple – in the last two years in this area crime has doubled and you can look at that any way which you like – for the residents we don't want a report, what we want is action, we want the vested interest around the table, these are the problems, names and faces"(Stockland Green Action Group Member)

It seems fitting to end this report with the words of the community, and their strongly expressed feeling that the quality of their environment and community has deteriorated *despite* previous analyses, expositions and plans. Certainly, this report has presented strong evidence of the catastrophic *and exceptional* impact of unregulated tenure change on Stockland Green, and in doing so supports the resident's robust demands for an integrated, multi-agency response. Its conclusions reflect the frustrations of residents in highlighting the need for an integrated plan for the ward, driven and owned by the community, and honed through debate amongst all stakeholder groups in Stockland Green. This section contains broad *draft* recommendations, a *suggested* outline vision and strategic objectives for Stockland Green, and a more detailed and exhaustive action plan *for discussion by interested agencies*. Together, they are intended to stimulate debate and provide a template for a phased approach to tackling the layered issues that have surfaced through this area analysis.

All recommendations, must therefore be considered as supporting the case for Stockland Green to be considered *'special'* in planning and investment terms. Work already underway with the local community suggests an appetite amongst residents for establishing a local forum with the necessary teeth to take direct action to remedy the immediate problems in the area, and to create a longer term vision for the area. The recently formed Stockland Green Action Group has growing support amongst residents, and appears active and robust enough to provide necessary medium through which a neighbourhood planning application can be made to the local authority.

The local authority already has substantial powers to intervene where housing conditions are unacceptable including declaration of renewal areas. The structures for such planning exist through the Localism Act 2011, the organ for fundamental changes in the way neighbourhood renewal might be generated. Powers that had been mediated by central government, and funded by neighbourhood renewal grants were delegated to communities through schedule one of the Act. A neighbourhood can be designated an appropriate area under the legislation by application to the planning authority, in this case Birmingham City Council. If designated, the community can then exercise substantial influence over planning regulations applied locally. A neighbourhood plan can be wide-ranging, with the potential for extensive powers to be delegated with a view to normalising the housing market. Once such a plan has been agreed by the community and its partners, an application can be made under section 5 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, and the local authority has a duty to consider and determine it.

A case for Stockland Green as a Neighbourhood Renewal Area

Throughout this report, concepts of ***uniqueness*** and ***connectivity*** have been used as a bridge between various different analyses, the idea being to identify the characteristics that make Stockland Green ward unique, and to understand how these characteristics are created by structural forces in the economy, society and housing market. The conclusion to this report showed that Stockland Green has experienced exceptionally rapid and steep levels of growth in the private rented sector compared to the nation, city and constituency, much of it driven by growth in the unregulated or 'exempt' HMO sector. The feelings of vulnerability expressed by residents at the beginning of this report have a solid, objective, factual basis in that this market attracts a transient population, with support needs that are often not met in a sector with variable management modules, and an equally inconsistent approach to providing care. The result is exceptionally high levels of crime and anti-social behaviour, and a deteriorating street scene.

The recommendations of this report derive from the idea that this unique set of circumstances, this 'perfect storm', requires an equally unique level of integration and cooperation between agencies, institutions and residents. In current city-wide plans there is little attention paid to the effects of rapid changes in housing tenure because the phenomenon is relatively recent, and the effects are concentrated, for now, in very small areas. Whilst the very serious deterioration in quality of life for Stockland Green residents is enough reason for this lack of attention to be rectified, there is also a very strong justification in using Stockland Green as a pilot area given these problems could just as easily occur elsewhere in the city. There is an opportunity here not just to address local problems, but for the City Council to develop a template and methodology for generating change at a hyper-local level. Stockland Green in effect becoming a pathfinder for local planning and enforcement in Birmingham. Whilst regeneration might be housing driven, and could well be led by the RP sector, it must also be holistic, comprehensive, and integrated into BCC's internal planning processes. The first strategic recommendation, therefore, is the Birmingham City Council recognise the exceptional nature of Stockland Green and work with residents to determine what concerted actions can be taken on an area basis in Stockland Green using a range of statutory duties and powers such as area renewal, a neighbourhood plan and better use of regulatory frameworks. The City Council's explicit support is necessary to:

- *Review regulatory and enforcement powers available under existing legislation, and develop a local enforcement regime that reflects the highly particular circumstances of Stockland Green's housing market, as presented in this report. Attention should focus on enforcement activity (remedy unfitness, to repair, demolish or close unfit dwellings), slum clearance and CPOs*.

- *Prioritise internal resources to support a range of low-level investments, and operational deployments across private sector housing, planning, street scene and community safety.*

- *Review longer term investment options, including the possibility of new social housing sites for family accommodation, new community facilities to tackle this established 'lack' in Stockland Green, and the possibility of promoting or subsidising new light industrial or retail/commercial development.*

Tenure

This core conclusion drives the recommendations from this report. Though private rented sector is growing across Birmingham, it is not necessarily meeting the needs of community in Stockland Green where there is a need for more family accommodation for both small and larger households. Here the unregulated HMO sector is growing unchecked, with deleterious effects on longer standing residents of Stockland Green. There has been no suggestion that Stockland Green should not provide a home for single people, indeed all participants have been keen to point out that residents of HMOs are part of the Stockland Green community too. However, the core contention of this report has been that shifts in tenure have been so rapid and uncoordinated that they have both removed housing stock suitable for families, and caused a concentration of highly vulnerable people with only variable access to support. This transition has caused problems for every resident group in the ward, more established residents and newer residents are similarly affected by rising street crime, indeed HMO residents are likely to be disproportionately victims of violence. It is the unbalanced and chaotic nature of this growth that means young families are priced out, and exempt accommodation residents struggle to sustain their independence without appropriate levels of support. *The second strategic recommendation is that in the medium to long term, the tenure balance must be reset, between HMO accommodation and family accommodation both owner- occupied and affordable, and between exempt HMO accommodation and regulated, general needs HMOS.* This underscores many of the objectives below, and detailed measures set out in the action plan.

The idea of a holistic, hyper-local approach to regeneration, which aims to redress the tenure imbalance currently destabilising the Stockland Green community requires a mutually agreed vision to frame a range of holistic actions. Rebalancing on this scale will require concerted action from statutory agencies and the regulated and unregulated HMIO sector, possibly structured around a voluntary charter that sets quality standards for exempt housing and support and includes a commitment to reduce the overall scale of exempt provision in Stockland Green..

The following are suggested as starting points in a discussion that must include all stakeholders and sections of the community in Stockland Green.

A Possible Vision for Stockland Green

The following vision is suggested as a starting point for stakeholder and community discussion.

> To build a sustainable and balanced housing market that meets community-defined housing needs and a strong, safe, cohesive and prosperous community in Stockland Green in which all residents are secure, healthy and able to access a range of life opportunities.

Some possible objectives for a Stockland Green Housing Renewal Area

Certain key themes emerged from the Housing Needs Assessment, all of which contributed to Stockland Green's **uniqueness,** these being:

- An imbalance between housing need and housing supply, in that local housing needs were unmet, and supply in the unregulated sector was growing exponentially
- A deteriorating street-scape due to increased crime, and possibly through neglectful street services
- A strong community and a will to change

The Housing Needs Assessment also demonstrated that the solutions to local issues lay both within the ward, and at city and national levels, underscoring the **connectivity** of Stockland Green's problems to much larger shifts in public policy, housing tenure and economic activity. This suggests

These objectives have been drafted in recognition of the need for action at national, citywide and local levels, and are used to group future initiatives in the action plan.

1) **Develop a long-term vision for Stockland Green –** *an integrated plan is needed that ties all stakeholders into a range of short, medium- and long-term actions.*

2) **Focus development policies on strategic targets –** *statutory agencies and local providers need to develop clear targets that underwrite the long-term objective of controlling shifts in tenure.*
3) **Develop and sustain consistent and focussed policies toward tenure balance across BCC and RP Sector -** *statutory agencies and local providers need to develop common policies that underwrite the long-term objective of controlling shifts in tenure.*
4) **Create best practise in local management in the RP sector –** *RPs must lead on the development of sustainable and transparent business models that ensure exempt accommodation provides excellent support and accommodation, and diversified business plans that reduce the over-dependence of some organisations on one income stream.*
5) **Extend regulatory powers to create robust framework for development of HMO sector –** *lack of regulation is a problem that must be tackled through local, voluntary measures and national changes in the HMO Regulatory regime.*
6) **Utilise existing regulatory powers to create safe and welcoming neighbourhoods –** *BCC planning does not appear to be using existing powers to request planning permission for change of use on smaller, private residential properties. All local powers should be directed toward the vision outline above. A city-wide Article 4 direction should be issued to require a change of use from private occupation to HMO.*
7) **Engage pro-actively with the Stockland Green Community and create opportunities to influence long terms strategy –** *the local community must be recognised as a substantial asset and strength in developing the ward long term.*
8) **Understand tenure shift on a city wide and small area level –** *date on private sector housing is relatively poor, and in terms of the exempt sector, is highly inconsistent. A local and national focus is needed on improving intelligence on the fastest growing form of housing tenure, the rented sector.*

Stakeholders

All of the Stakeholders identified in chapter one have a role to play in bringing about changes in the short, medium and long term. This means that the action plan arising from this report recognises the role of a hierarchy of stakeholders that runs from the MHCLG and the HCA as national housing regulator, through various branches of Birmingham City Council to local housing providers, and, of course residents. There is undoubtedly a resource issue raised by this level of complexity, nonetheless it must be said that BCC as the strategic housing and planning authority must take greater responsibility for supporting RPS and local agencies in constructing and delivering a Ward based plan. Without assistance from the Strategic Authority it is difficult to comprehend how local partners can interact constructively at the level needed with the various departments of the Council with an interest in Stockland Green. There are already guidelines on building neighbourhood plans in Birmingham issues by the Planning Department. Some early discussion is needed to understand the relative roles of local authority, RPS and civil society.

Action Plan

The action plan in Appendix Two sets out a range of possible actions to support delivery of this vision and objectives, to promote discussion at that forum.

A high-level policy round table has been organised drawing together all relevant stakeholders and agencies including representatives from within the community who have a stake or the power and capacity to address the findings of this study. The recommendations and objectives of this study will be reviewed with the intention of:

- *Refining and prioritising actions*

- *Finalising the study for publication*
- *Making the case for additional powers where necessary*
- *Ensuring that existing powers exercised through the relevant statutory agencies*
- *Developing a robust and supportive relationship recommendations lead to visible changes in Stockland Green and beyond.*

Appendix One: Sources

Unless referenced in the text all statistical data was drawn from the following sources.

Economic data

Birmingham City Council, Economic Output in Birmingham 2020 – Analysis of GDP and GVA
Nomis labour market data
https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/
BCC profile of Erdington Constituency Economy and Employment 2015.
NOMIS Constituency Profile. Employment data January 2019 – December 2019

Population data

ONS population estimates 2015-2019
https://www.ons.gov.uk/datasets/mid-year-pop-est/editions/time-series/versions/4
ONS Migration Data
https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/bulletins/householdprojectionsforengland/2018based#table-4e959ff5

Deprivation Data

English indices of Deprivation
https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019
NOMIS poverty data 2016-2018
https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/

Crime Data

ONS Annual Crime Data September 2019
https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/crimeinenglandandwales/latest
Ward analysis of crime data from UK Crime Stats.org at https://www.ukcrimestats.com/

Housing Data

Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government
https://opendatacommunities.org/data
ONS tenure estimates
https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/subnationaldwellingstockbytenureestimates

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Birmingham City Council Homeless Review 2016*.*

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Understanding the growth in the private rented sector – Core Cities Publications 2019

Vertovec, Steven (2007). ***"Super-diversity and its implications".*** *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. **30** (6): 1024–1054.

Appendix Two: Action Plan

This action plan has been produced for discussion at the Stockland Green Policy Symposium scheduled for the 16th October 2020.

Objective	Action	Lead	Short	Med	Long
	STRATEGY AND PLANNING				
Develop a long term vision for Stockland Green	**Build a 30-year Ward Plan**			✓	
	Map stakeholders	*Pioneer*	✓		
	Clarify Vision and objectives	*Pioneer*			
	Quantify problem and develop med/long term targets				
	⇒ Targets for tenure	*BCC/PSRP*	✓		
	⇒ Targets for new build	*BCC/PSRP*	✓		
	⇒ Targets for conversion	*BCC/PSRP*	✓		
	⇒ Targets for training and employability	*BCC/PSRP*	✓		
	Involve regulator and PSRP in targets for HMOS	*HCA/BCC/PSRP*	✓	✓	
	Explore possibility of one large Industry or retail attraction	*BCC/PIONEER*	✓		
	Identify potential sources of investment	*BCC/PSRP*	✓	✓	
	Propose and agree Stockland Green Exceptionalism	*BCC/Political Leaders*	✓		
	Development targets aligned with BCC planning and housing policies	*BCC/PSRP*	✓		
	Lead and develop an enhanced Community hub	*PIONEER?*	✓	✓	
	Engage housing/jobs/retail/community to support SG plan	*PLANNING/PS*	✓	✓	
	Engage schools/health/social care to support SG plan	*BCC/ALL*	✓	✓	
	Engage civic society to support SG plan	*BCC/ALL*	✓	✓	

Objective	Action	Lead	Short	Med	Long
	INCREASE AND REFOCUS NEW DEVELOPMENT				
Focus development policies on strategic targets	Reconversion of existing EP	*PSRP*		✓	✓
	Develop family homes	*BCC/PSRP*		✓	✓
	Increase number of bed-spaces in regulated HMOs	*BCC/PSRP*		✓	✓

	PARTNER COORDINATION				
Develop and sustain consistent and focussed policies in BCC and PSRP Sector	Establish local board governance - extend prs group	*ALL STAKEHOLDERS*	✓		
	BCC to move to a position where all local referrals to Exempt HMOS move through central hub and that referrals are formally dependent on registration requirements	*BCC*	✓	✓	
	PSRP information sharing should be enhanced through a city wide board of PSRP HMO providers	*LOCAL COMMITTEE? HA COORDINATION*	✓		
	BCC to actively coordinate internal partners to the SG Ward Plan in particular ensuring the Planning Department, Housing Benefit Team, housing and community safety teams are signed up to SG Ward objectives	*HOUSING STRATEGY TEAM*	✓	✓	
	PSRP SECTORAL IMPROVEMENT				
Create best practise in local management in the PSRP sector	Develop local voluntary standards and a resister of PSRPs	*PIONEER GROUP/SPRING HA/NEW ROOTS*		✓	✓
	Engage regulatory powers to promote balanced provision in any given GEOGRAPHICAL area – through an initial consultation with the HCA and discussion with local stakeholders	*BCC/SECTOR*		✓	✓
	Engage regulatory powers to promote balanced provision in any given PSRP – through an initial consultation with the HCA and Sector representatives	*HCA/BCC/SECTOR*		✓	
	Establish a Threshold for PSRP to enter the HMO market	*HCA*		✓	✓
	Increase transparency in the Exempt Accommodation sector by reducing available models of provision	*HCA/SECTOR*		✓	✓
	Develop and implement a common standard of support across the PSRP sector.	*HCA/SECTOR*		✓	
	Introduce voluntary agreement on referrals	*BCC/PARTNER AGENCIES*	✓		

	Integration of support and employment policies	*BCC/SECTOR*			
	REGULATION AND ENFORCMENT				
Extend regulatory powers to create robust framework for development of HMO sector	HCA to introduce standards for HMOS which include a threshold for the number of properties needed to enter the market, a requirement for balanced property portfolios, clarification of the models permitted in EP provision, and minimum standards of support and record keeping in all PSRP property	*HCA/SECTOR*		✓	✓
	HMO Regulations to incorporate mandatory registration of exempt providers	*MHCLG*		✓	✓
	HB Regulations to be amended to include higher minimum support standards, and lower benefit levels.	*MHCLG/DWP*		✓	✓
Utilise Existing regulatory powers to create safe and welcoming neighbourhoods	Requirement of planning permission for change of use - within bcc powers	*BCC/PLANNING AUTHORITY*	✓		
	Development of voluntary registration and code of practise	*BCC Private Sector Housing Team*	✓		
	Accelerate ASB Enforcement	*BCC Private Sector Team*	✓		
	Multi-agency enforcement on substandard properties	*BCC Private Sector Team/Community Safety/ WMP*	✓		
	Introduce Proactive inspection Regime for all HMOS in Stockland Green	*BCC Private Sector Team/Community Safety/ WMP*	✓		
	Street scape – develop rapid response cleaning, anti-fly tipping and graffiti removal	*BCC Street Scene Team*	✓	✓	
	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT				
Engage pro-actively with the Stockland Green Community and create opportunities to influence long terms strategy	Review mechanisms for engagement in terms inclusivity, reach and sustainability	*Pioneer/BCC*	✓	✓	✓

	Increase the level of Youth Activities	*Pioneer/BCC*	✓	✓	✓
	Identify BME representatives	*Pioneer/BCC*	✓		
	Establish standing forum of residents representatives	*Pioneer/BCC*	✓		
	Introduce Resident-led street inspections.	*Pioneer/BCC*	✓	✓	
	DATA AND INTELLIGENCE				
Understand Tenure Shift on a city wide and small area level	Improve national intelligence on private sector/HMO sector, to include central collection and collation of HMO data from small area to national level/national standards on collation of HB data/national standards on data on referrals	*MHCLG/BCC*	✓	✓	
	Undertake thorough analysis of 2021 census analysis, and use results to lobby for additional questions in English Housing Survey	*MHCLG/BCC*			✓
	City wide mapping of PSRP on small area and city levels on a quarterly basis	*BCC Housing/Housing Benefit Service*	✓	✓	✓
	Resident involvement in mapping spread locally	*Pioneer Group*	✓		