

Greater Essex Area Profile

North-East Essex Unitary Authority

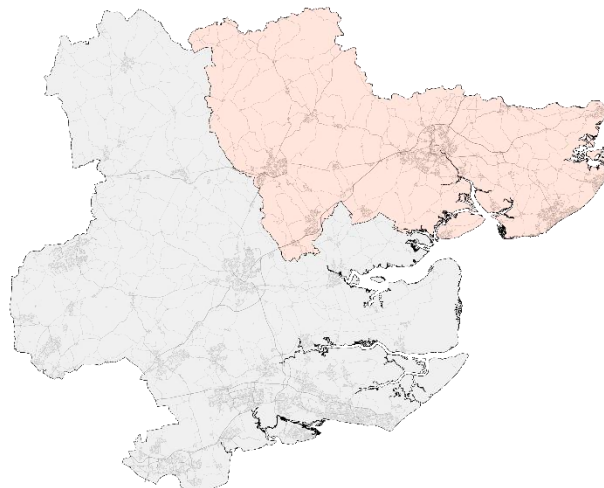
Public Health Intelligence
Research & Citizen Insight
Policy Unit

North-East Essex Unitary Area Profile

This profile gives a high-level picture of the health of a new North-East Essex Unitary Authority, made up of the current Tendring, Colchester, and Braintree districts.

The report looks at demographics, mortality, disease prevalence, early years, and socioeconomic factors.

Area profiles are updated annually by Essex County Councils Public Health Intelligence team. The PHI team have also produced a comprehensive [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\)](#) suite of dashboards, which covers the topics in this report and the wider determinants of health. These dashboards are regularly updated and are the best source of local health data.



Demographic characteristics

North-East Essex UA area is home to c.496k residents (26.5% of the Greater Essex population). The population is projected to grow by 9% in the years to 2040, with the fastest growth being seen amongst the 65+ age group. The area is less ethnically diverse than England as a whole.

The health of the population

Life expectancy in North-East Essex UA is 82 years for females and 79 years for males, broadly similar to figures for England as a whole. Rates of preventable mortality and infant mortality are similar to England, but preventable mortality varies across the patch. Tendring has consistently higher levels of preventable mortality compared to other areas.

Inequalities

There are inequalities within the area. Women born in the most deprived parts of North-East Essex die 4.2 years earlier than in the least deprived areas. For men the gap is 4.6 years. Deprivation in North-East Essex is high and concentrated in Tendring and Colchester. There are areas of very high and persistent deprivation, including Jaywick – the most deprived area in England. There is a high demand for housing in North-East Essex, and the median house price is circa 8 times the median salary. The ratio of house prices to salary is relatively low compared to the rest of Greater Essex.

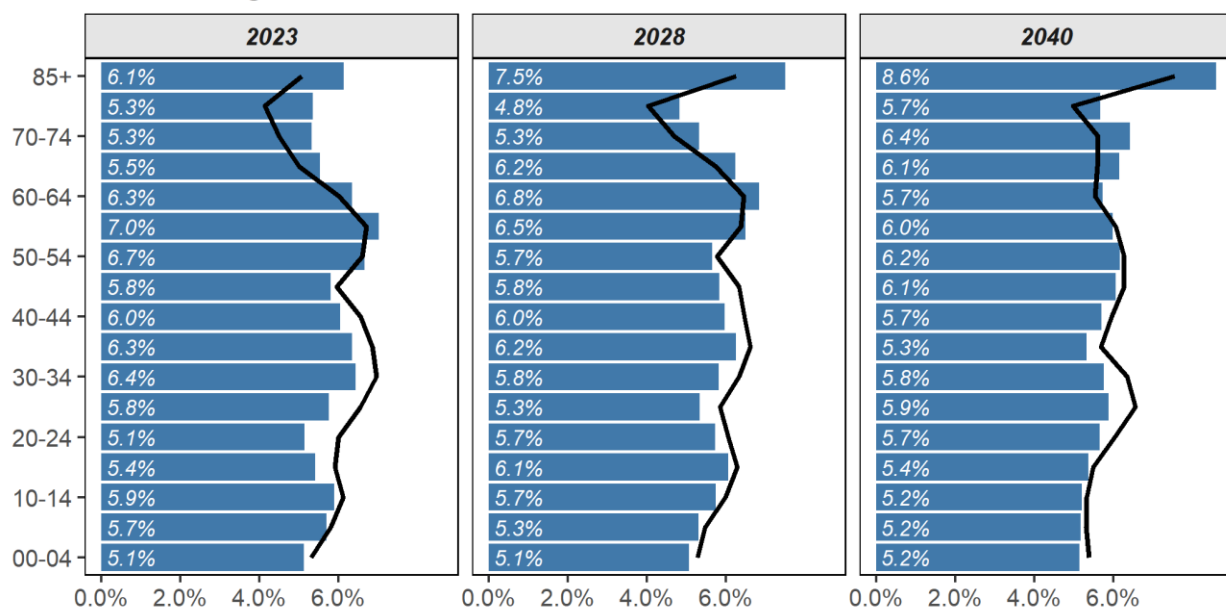
Demographic characteristics

North-East Essex has a population of 496,270 according to the latest 2023 ONS population estimates. This is 26.5% of the Greater Essex population. The population is set to increase to 525,862 and 557,989 in 2028 and 2040.

88,475 (17.8%) residents are aged 0-15, 297,868 (60.0%) are age 16-64, and 109,935 (22.2%) are age 65+.

Current & future population structure

Black line is England



The **median age in North-East Essex is 43**, higher than the England median age (40). There is a roughly equal sex split with females making up 51.3% of North-East Essex residents.

61,900 (12.5%) of residents in North-East Essex identify as an ethnicity other than White British. This is lower than England, where 26.5% identify as an ethnicity other than White British. 96.0% of residents speak English as their main language.

After English, the three most common languages spoken in North-East Essex are 'Any other European languages' (6,210, 1.3%), Polish (2,890, 0.6%), and 'Any other South Asian languages' (1,710, 0.4%).

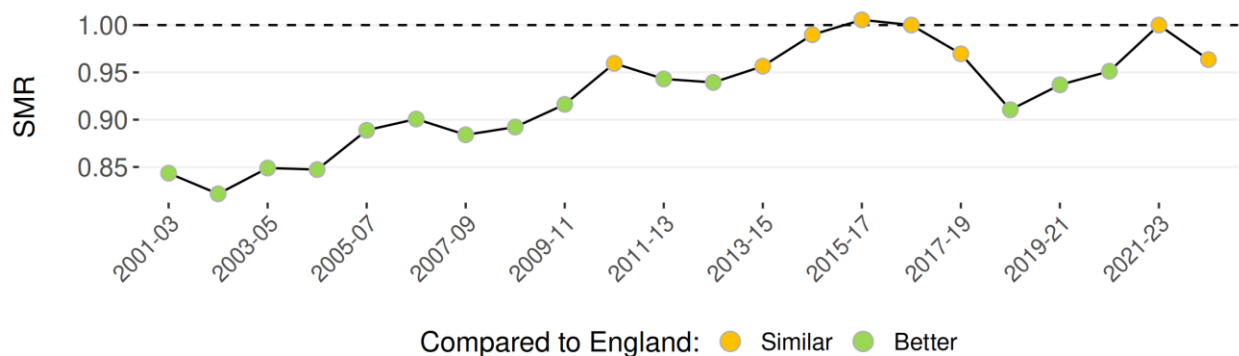
Mortality

Mortality is an important measure of the health of an area. Some key indicators are preventable mortality rates, suicide rates, and child mortality.

The charts below show the standardised mortality rate (SMR) for preventable deaths in North-East Essex. The SMR shows if North-East Essex sees more or fewer preventable deaths than we would expect, based on England's overall rates. SMRs account for differences in the age and sex profile of the local population to make this a fair comparison. A SMR greater than 1 means that preventable deaths are higher than expected, and lower than 1 means preventable deaths are lower than expected. If the preventable mortality rate is significantly higher than England, the point is shown in red. Mortality rates which are lower or similar to England may still represent important public health issues – for example if there has been year on year increases locally which haven't been seen nationally.

Standardised preventable mortality rates, residents aged under 75

Values above 1 indicate higher than expected mortality

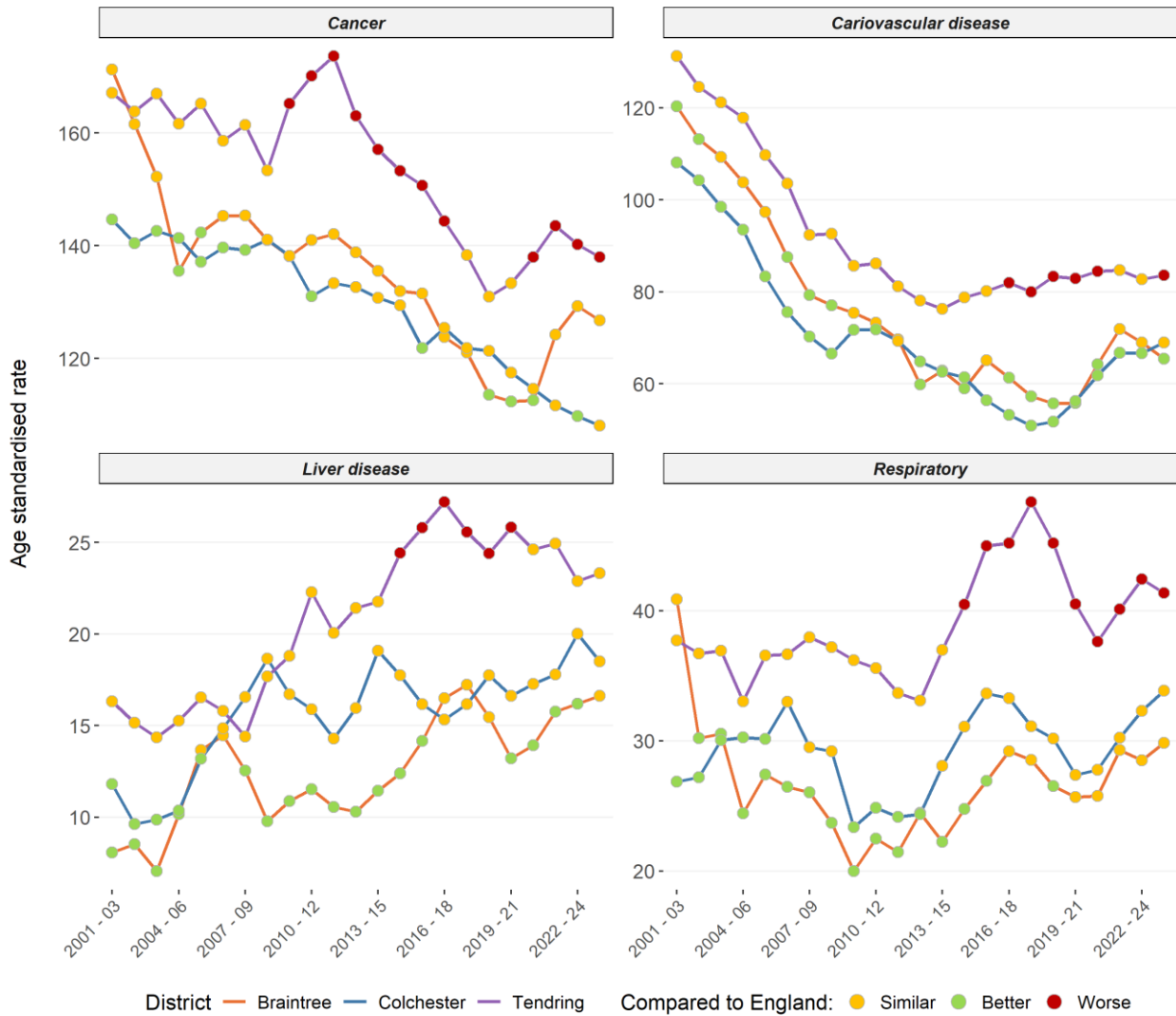


Compared to England, North-East Essex has a similar level of preventable mortality. Preventable deaths can be grouped into four main causes – deaths which are considered preventable due to cancer, circulatory disease, liver disease, or respiratory disease. Trends in preventable mortality are shown on the next page, split by the cause of death and current LTLA.

Preventable mortality is consistently highest in Tendring, with the latest preventable mortality rates for cancer, cardiovascular disease, and respiratory disease all significantly higher than England.

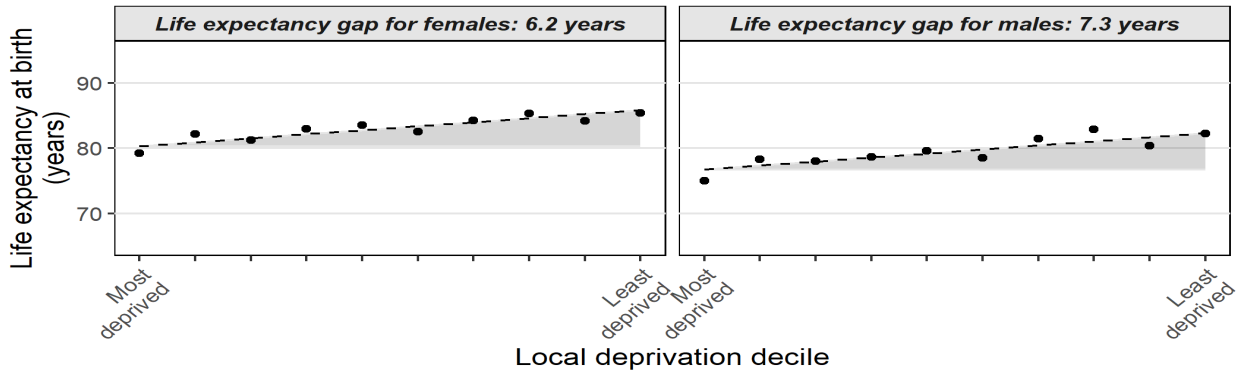
Braintree and Colchester have both seen increases in preventable mortality in recent years, with a notable exception of preventable cancer mortality in Colchester which is continuing to decline.

Preventable mortality rates per 100,000 residents aged under 75



Preventable mortality is concentrated in deprived areas. People living in the most deprived parts of North-East Essex die roughly 7 years earlier than people living in the least deprived areas.

Inequality in life expectancy within North-East Essex



In the chart above the area is split into 10 groups based on their index of multiple deprivation decile. Life expectancy is calculated for each area. If there is no inequality then the dotted line on the chart will be flat. The chart shows that life expectancy generally increases as deprivation decreases.

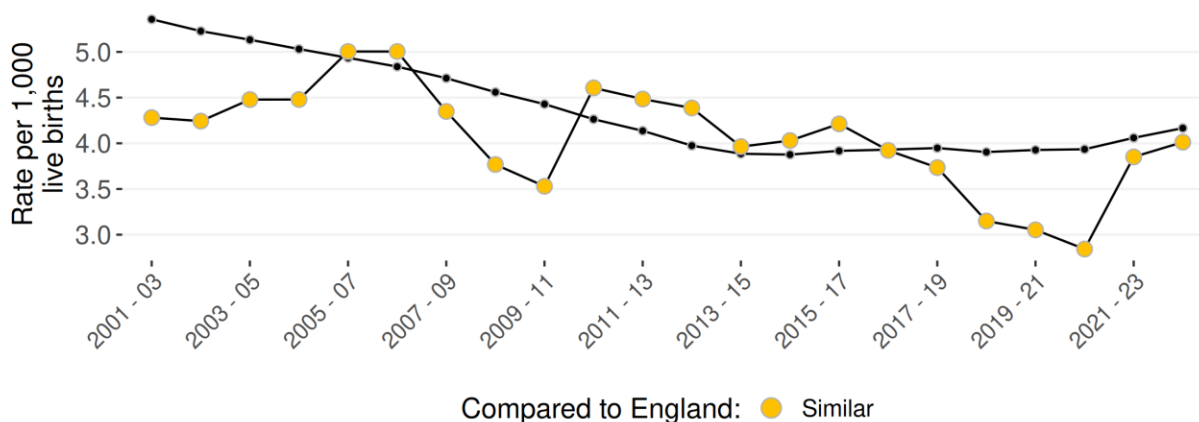
Infant mortality is influenced by the ‘upstream determinants’ of health such as social, economic, and environmental conditions. Infant mortality can be thought of as an indicator of the general health of an area.

Similarly suicide is high level indicator of the mental health of an area. The drivers of suicide are complex and can vary person to person. Some of the nationally recognised risk factors for suicide include poor mental health, loneliness and isolation, history of self-harm, and (in adults) long term unemployment. There is also a link to physical health and distressing events, such as being recently diagnosed with a terminal illness.

The charts below show infant mortality and suicide rates in North-East Essex:

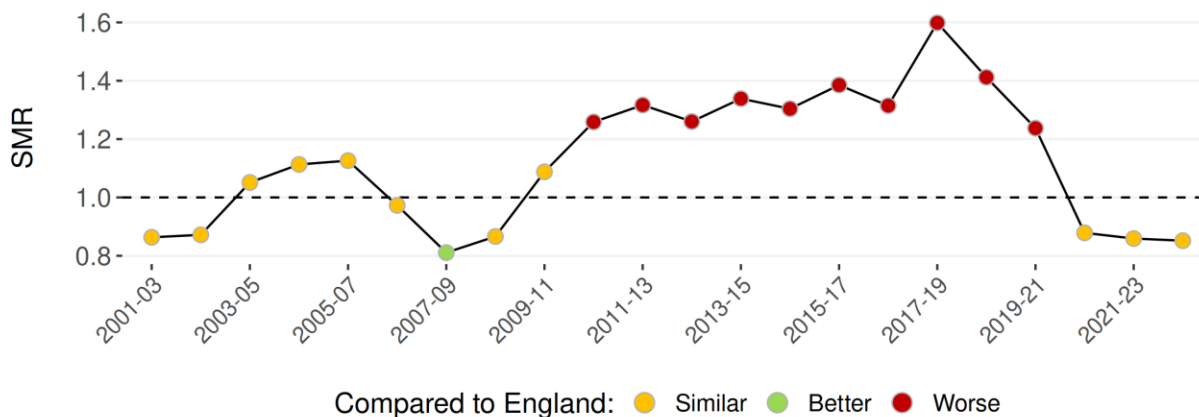
Infant mortality rate

Black line is England



Standardised suicide mortality rates

Values above 1 indicate higher than expected mortality



Disease prevalence and hospital activity

GPs maintain registers of their patients who have been diagnosed with certain conditions. This data can be used to estimate the disease prevalence of some common conditions in North-East Essex (table below). North-East Essex has lower estimated prevalence for Osteoporosis. Estimated prevalence is higher for Asthma, COPD, and Rheumatoid Arthritis.

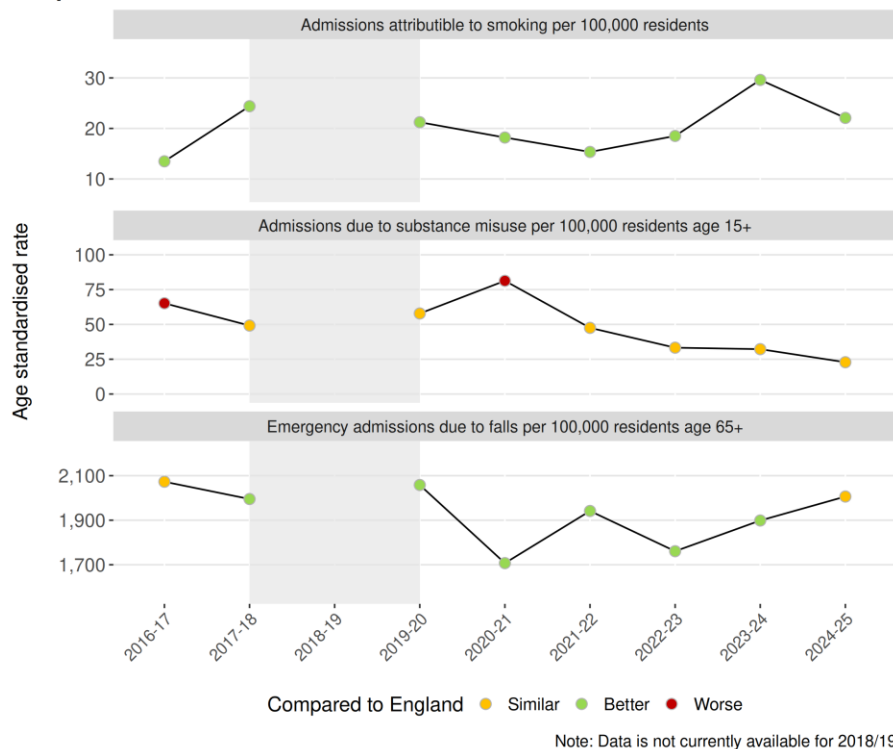
The prevalences in the table above are based on people who have been diagnosed with each condition. This will miss people who have the condition but haven't been diagnosed, so the true prevalence is likely higher than the figures in the table.

Condition	Residents diagnosed	North-East Essex %	England %
Asthma	36,533	7.3%	6.6%

Condition	Residents diagnosed	North-East Essex %	England %
COPD	10,920	2.1%	1.9%
Osteoporosis	1,853	0.8%	1.2%
Rheumatoid Arthritis	4,130	0.9%	0.8%

Hospital admissions due to smoking, substance misuse, and (in older people) falls are largely preventable. Older people who fall usually present to hospitals as emergency admissions, which are typically more expensive compared to other admissions. Public health interventions such as smoking cessation, drug and alcohol services, and strength and balance programmes can all help to reduce demand on health care services. The charts below show admission rates for these three causes in North-East Essex:

Hospital admission rates in North-East Essex



Early years

A child's early years can have a lifelong impact on their health behaviours and outcomes in later life. Some indicators in this area include childhood obesity, admissions to hospital due to injuries, oral health, the proportion of children who are living in poverty, and educational attainment and attendance.

- The proportion of **year 6 children in North-East Essex who are overweight or obese between 2022/23 - 24/25 is 34.4%**, similar to the England proportion

(36.2%). Since 2008/09 - 10/11 the proportion of children who are overweight or obese has **increased by 3.8%** (compared to 3.1% in England).

- **9.7% of North-East Essex 5 year olds have visually obvious dental decay in 2023/24**, similar to England (22.4%). Since 2007/08 the proportion has **decreased by 10.8%** (compared to 8.5% in England).
- There are **15,255 (16.4%) children living in absolute poverty** in North-East Essex in 2024/25 (defined as households with a total income below 60% of the 2011 median income, adjusted for inflation). This is similar to England (19.8% of children live in absolute poverty). Since 2021/22 the proportion of children living in absolute poverty in North-East Essex has increased by 0.2%.

Socioeconomic

The area a person lives in, their employment, and their financial situation all influence health. This section looks at affordability of housing, average weekly earnings, and violent crimes in North-East Essex.

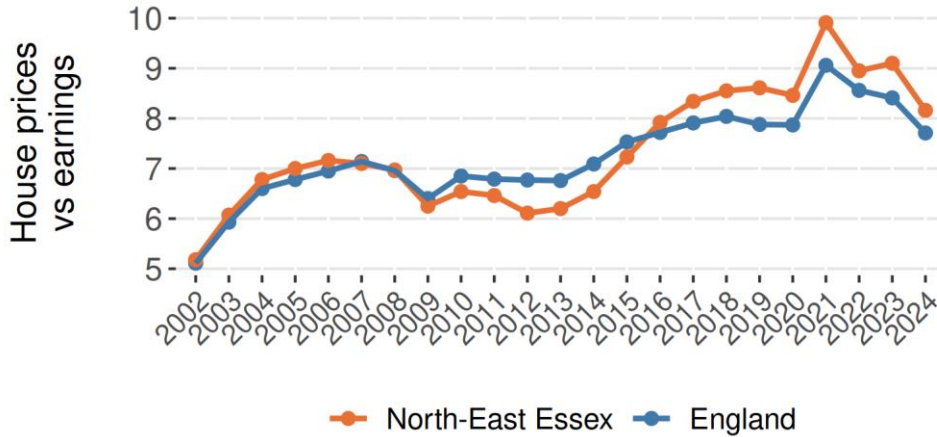
Median weekly earnings have increased by £204 between 2011 and 2025 in North-East Essex. Over the same period median earnings for England increased by £242. In 2025 the median gross weekly earnings in North-East Essex was £607, compared to £632 for England.

The chart below shows the ratio of median house prices to median gross annual earnings. This is a indicator of housing affordability – a value of 2 for example means that the median house price is twice the median income. The higher this ratio is, the less affordable houses are. In 2024 the median North-East Essex house price in 2024 was £320,000 and the median annual gross income was £38,703, giving an affordability ratio of 8.2. England's affordability ratio was 7.7 – **houses in North-East Essex are less affordable compared to England.**

Since 2014 the housing affordability ratio in North-East Essex has increased by 24.8%, faster than England (over the same period England's ratio increased by 8.7%).

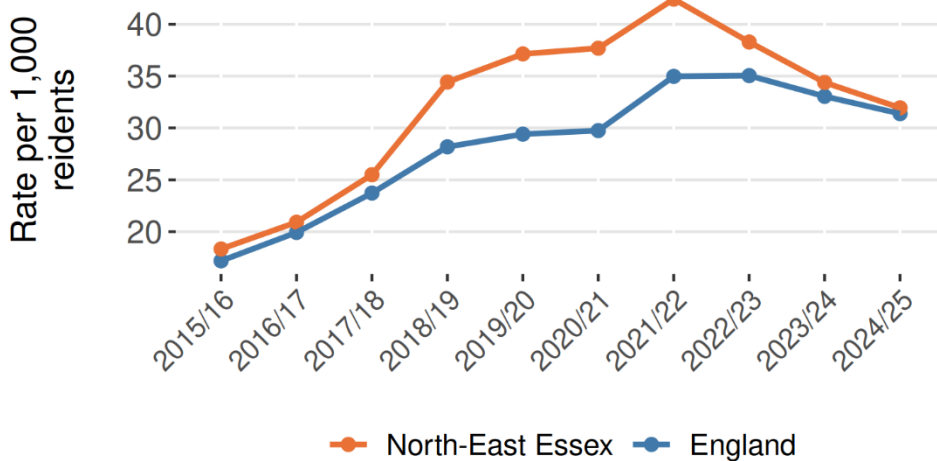
Housing affordability ratio

Higher values indicate lower affordability



Violent crime rates have been increasing across England – this is due to a combination of an increase in the number of crimes, and improvements in crime reporting. In 2024/25 the violent crime rate in North-East Essex was 31.936, similar to the England rate (31.375). The chart below shows how the violent crime rate has changed over time.

Violent crime rate



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