

Solihull Fuel Poverty 2015

This briefing note sets out the extent of fuel poverty in Solihull in 2015, based on Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) statistics published in June 2017.

At a national level fuel poverty is modelled using data from the English Housing Survey. This is an annual national survey of people's housing circumstances and the condition and energy efficiency of housing in England.

As well as publishing data on fuel poverty for England as a whole, the DECC also produces a set of sub-regional statistics. This data complements the data for England by estimating the number and proportion of fuel poor households at smaller geographical areas; Local Authority, Parliamentary Constituency and Lower Super Output Area.

Overview

Fuel poverty is measured statistically using the Low Income High Costs definition, under which a household is considered to be in fuel poverty if:

- they have required fuel costs that are above average (the national median spend on fuel);
- were they to spend that amount they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line.

Whether or not a household is affected by fuel poverty is largely determined by the following three factors:

- The energy efficiency of the property (affected by age of property, heating system, insulation);
- The cost of energy (including access to low cost tariffs)
- The household income (affected by household structure, age and employment status).

National Fuel Poverty Trends

Based on the Low Income High Costs definition it is estimated that there were 2.38 million fuel poor households in England in 2015, equating to 10.6% of all households.

2015 is the second year in which the number of fuel poor households in England has increased since 2009. However, the DECC data still shows that there were around 70,000 fewer fuel poor households in England in 2015 than in 2009.

Fuel Poor Households in England 2015		
	Fuel Poor Households (000s)	% all households
2003	2.41	11.6%
2004	2.44	11.6%
2005	2.39	11.3%
2006	2.28	10.7%
2007	2.38	11.1%

2008	2.51	11.7%
2009	2.57	11.9%
2010	2.49	11.5%
2011	2.43	11.1%
2012	2.36	10.8%
2013	2.35	10.4%
2014	2.38	10.6%
2015	2.50	11.0%
Source: DECC		

Breakdown of National Fuel Poverty Statistics

At a national level only the fuel poverty statistics are broken down by a range of housing and household characteristics that highlight a range of fuel poverty risk factors.

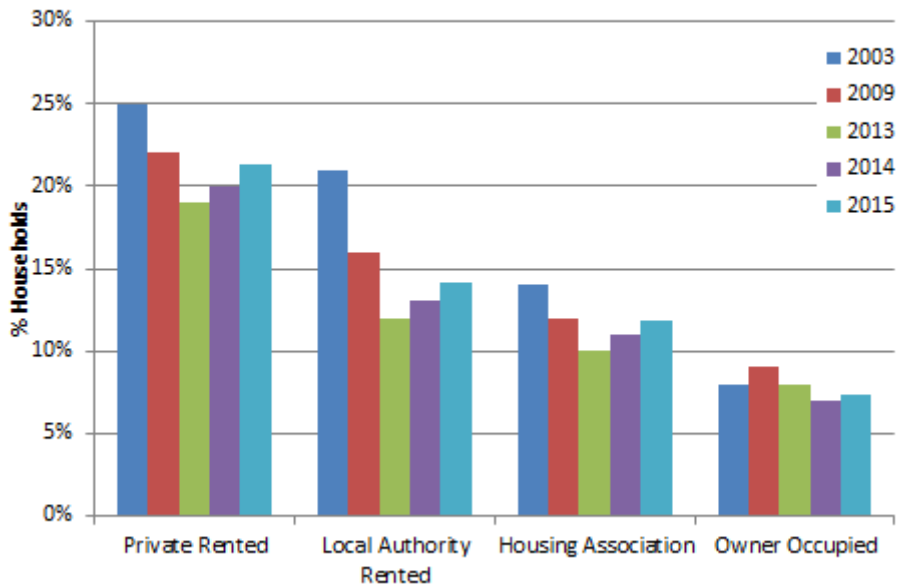
The likelihood of being fuel poor markedly increases for households living in homes that are not very energy efficient. Household energy efficiency is typically measured using the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) to give a numerical value of between 1 and 100 with homes then being rated A to G dependent on their score. Homes in band A have a numerical rating of between 92 and 100 and homes in Band G have a numerical rating of between 1 and 20.

In 2015 26% of households in England living in a property with an F/G SAP rating were in fuel poverty as opposed to just 3% of households living in properties with SAP ratings of A to C.

Fuel Poverty in England in 2015 by Energy Efficiency of Home		
SAP Rating	Fuel Poor Households (000s)	% Households
A/B/C	194	2.6%
D	1,385	12.8%
E	665	19.2%
F/G	258	25.6%
Source: DECC		

Despite improvements in the rented sector over recent years, households living in privately rented accommodation typically have the highest fuel poverty rates while owner occupied households have the lowest, a pattern that has been consistent since 2003. All types of rented accommodation (private, Local Authority and Housing Association) have recorded increases in the percentage of fuel poor households in both 2014 and 2015.

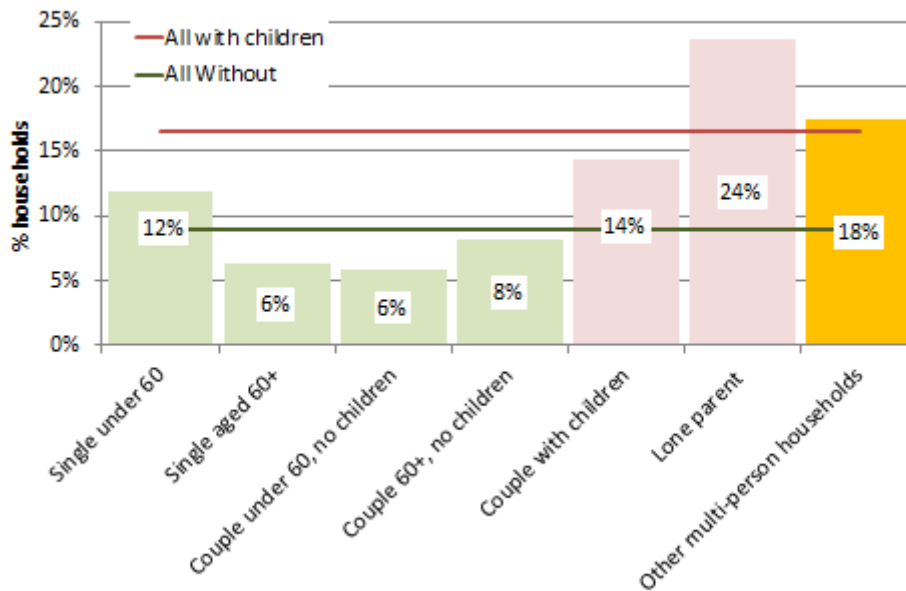
Fuel Poverty Rates in England by Household Tenure



Source: DECC

In terms of household structure, those with dependent children are more than twice as likely to be in fuel poverty than those without (16.5% compared to 8.9%) with Lone parents most at risk (24% in fuel poverty).

Fuel Poverty Rates in England 2015 by Household Type



Source: DECC

Linked to this is the fact that the risk of fuel poverty rises with size of household – 8.8% of one person households in England are fuel poor, rising to 13.7% among those with three people and to 24.1% among those with five or more occupants.

On an age basis fuel poverty is most prevalent where the oldest person in the household is aged 16-24 years (27.6%).

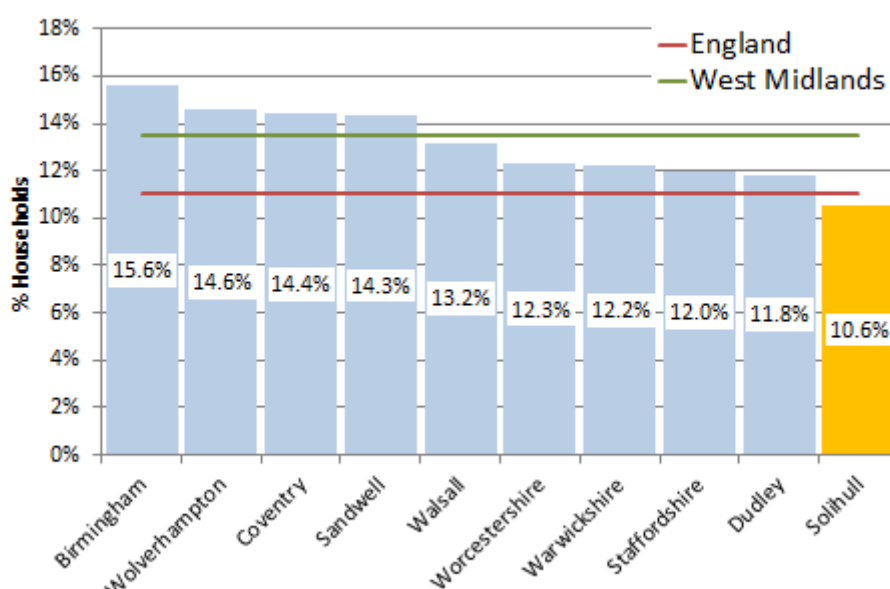
Fuel Poverty in England by Age of Oldest Member of Household		
Age	Households 000s	% Households
Age 16-24	148	27.6%
Age 25-34	350	11.9%
Age 35-49	800	13.2%
Age 50-59	509	11.9%
Age 60-74	352	6.6%
Age 75+	343	9.7%
Source: DECC		

Unemployed households have the highest rates of fuel poverty across all economic activity groups. This pattern has similarly been consistent since 2003, with around 34% of all unemployed households, but less than 9% of working households in fuel poverty over this time.

Fuel Poverty in Solihull

It is estimated that there were 9,261 fuel poor households in Solihull in 2015, equating to 10.6% of all households in the borough. This is slightly below the England average (11%) and well below that for the West Midlands region (13.5%). Solihull had the lowest fuel poverty rate among neighbouring West Midlands upper tier Local Authorities.

Proportion of Households in Fuel Poverty 2015



Source: DECC

Like England as a whole the number and proportion of fuel poor households in Solihull increased between 2014 and 2015 (+1,344 households, +17%). This is the first annual increase since records began in 2011, with the estimated number of households in fuel poverty falling in each year to 2014.

Fuel Poverty – Low Income High Cost Indicator				
	Solihull Households in Fuel Poverty	% of Households		
		Solihull	England	West Midlands
2011	9,909	11.6%	11.1%	13.8%
2012	9,015	10.7%	10.8%	15.2%
2013	8,733	10.1%	10.4%	13.9%
2014	7,917	9.1%	10.6%	12.1%
2015	9,261	10.6%	11.0%	13.5%
Source: DECC				

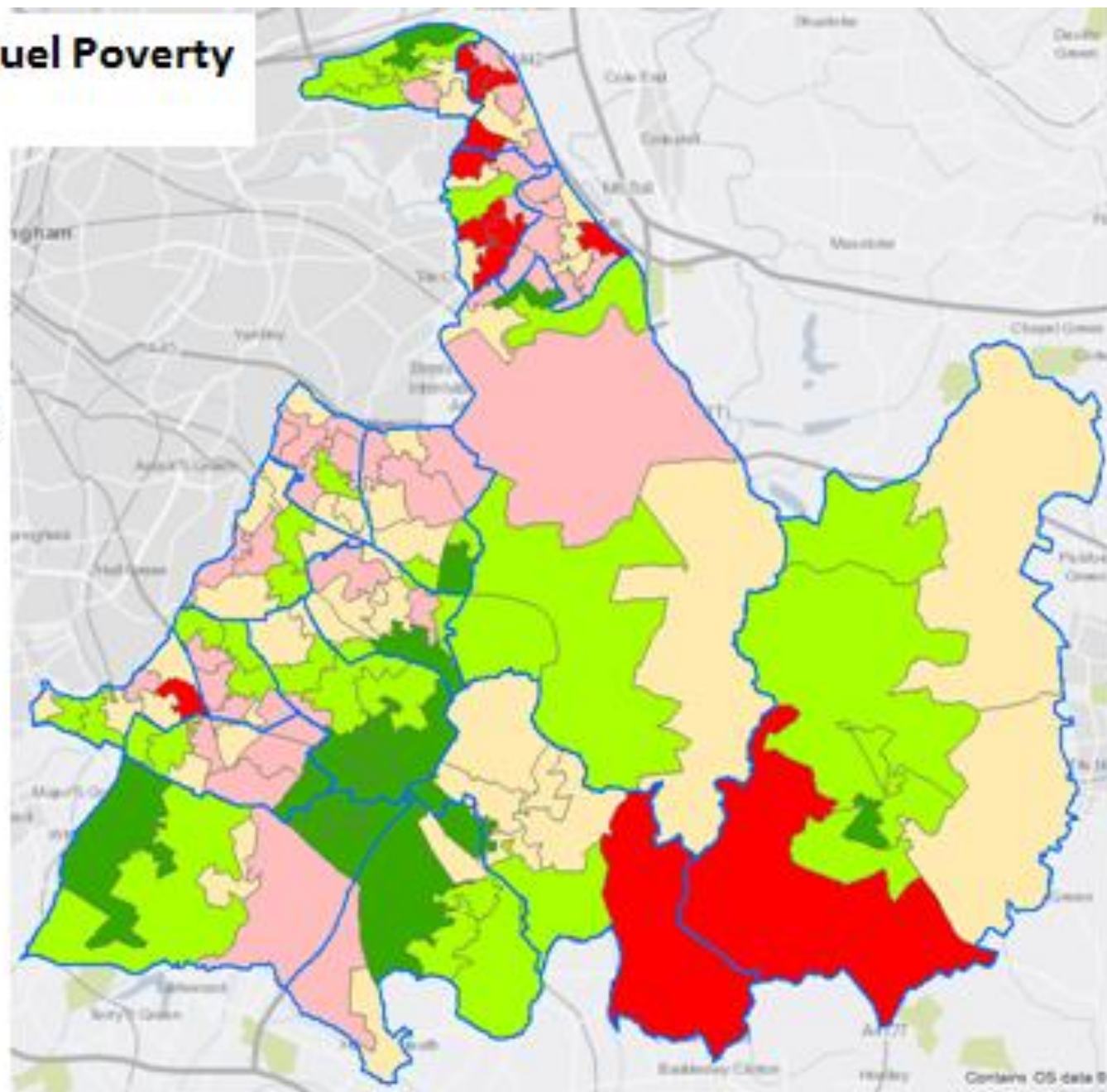
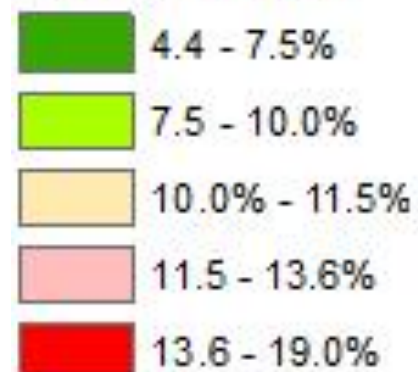
At a local neighbourhood level the proportion of households in fuel poverty ranges from 4% to 19%. There is a small relationship between deprivation and fuel poverty, as shown by the fact that the proportion of households in fuel poverty is higher in the North Solihull regeneration area (12.4%) than in the rest of the borough (10.1%).

However, as the map overpage shows there are significant clusters in the south of the borough with relatively high rates, particularly in the three Shirley wards, as well as Lyndon, Elmdon and Silhill. This is likely to reflect factors such as rates of private renting and older less fuel efficient properties.

Solihull LSOA Neighbourhoods with Highest Rates of Fuel Poverty 2015		
LSOA	Ward	% Households
Chadwick End	Meriden	19.0%
Windy Arbor	Chelmsley Wood	15.1%
Bennett's Well	Kingshurst & Fordbridge	15.0%
Shirley Park	Shirley West	14.9%
Yorkswood	Kingshurst & Fordbridge	14.9%
The Trees	Smith's Wood	14.7%
The Cars West	Smith's Wood	14.5%
The Birds North	Smith's Wood	14.2%
St Anne's	Kingshurst & Fordbridge	14.1%
Hatchford	Kingshurst & Fordbridge	14.0%
The Rivers	Smith's Wood	13.9%
The Cars East	Smith's Wood	13.6%
Source: DECC		

Households in Fuel Poverty 2015

% Households



Source: DECC

Contains OS data ©