



Using data to identify loneliness

Dan King, Service Lead – Intelligence & Strategic Analysis
Sarah Weld, Public Health Consultant

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Overview

Identifying people who are lonely – the role of data in planning and targeting action.

- **What is loneliness?**
- **Risk factors for loneliness**
- **National and local prevalence**
- **Who is lonely in Southampton – what can data tell us?**
- **How can the data be used**
- **Examples from other areas**

What is loneliness?

- **Loneliness can be defined as a subjective, unwelcome feeling of lack or loss of companionship. It happens when we have a mismatch between the quantity and quality of social relationships that we have, and those that we want (Perlman and Peplau, 1981).**
- **Whilst it has a social aspect, it is defined by the individual's emotional state. As such, loneliness can be felt even when surrounded by other people. Loneliness can be felt by people of all ages, but as we get older, risk factors that might lead to loneliness begin to increase and converge.**

Loneliness and social isolation

- There are important distinctions between loneliness and social isolation.
- While social isolation is an objective state – defined in terms of the quantity of social relationships and contacts – loneliness is a subjective experience. Loneliness is a negative emotion associated with a perceived gap between the quality and quantity of relationships that we have and those we want.
- **In this way loneliness is deeply personal – its causes, consequences and indeed its very existence are impossible to determine without reference to the individual and their own values, needs, wishes and feelings.**
- This has important implications for how we use data to describe loneliness.

How many people in Southampton are lonely?



14.6%

29,552

aged 16+



15.9%

5,482

aged 65+

Risk factors

Personal	Wider Society
Age Poor health Sensory loss Loss of mobility Lower income Bereavement Retirement Becoming a carer	Lack of public transport Physical environment (e.g.no public toilets or benches) Housing Fear of crime High population turnover Demographics Technological changes

Groups at particular risk of isolation and loneliness

- **Mothers of young children**
- **Children and young people who do not conform to local norms of appearance, language or behaviour**
- **Young people and adults who care for others**
- **Teenage mothers**
- **Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people**
- **People in ethnic minority groups**
- **People with long-term conditions and disability**
- **Young people NEET**
- **People who are unemployed**
- **Working-age men**
- **People who suffer from addiction**
- **Homeless people**

Southampton Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

The Southampton Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) provides a comprehensive assessment of needs in the city.

Data includes information about many risk factors for loneliness and the needs of at risk groups.

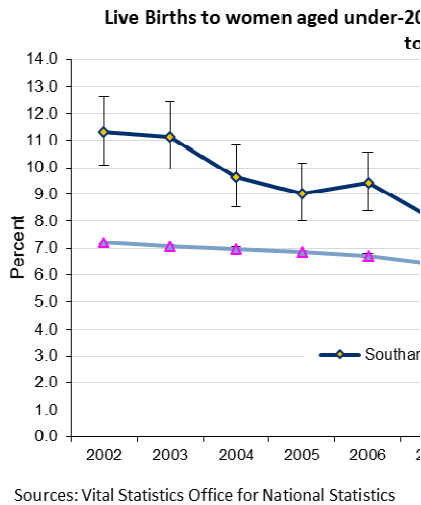
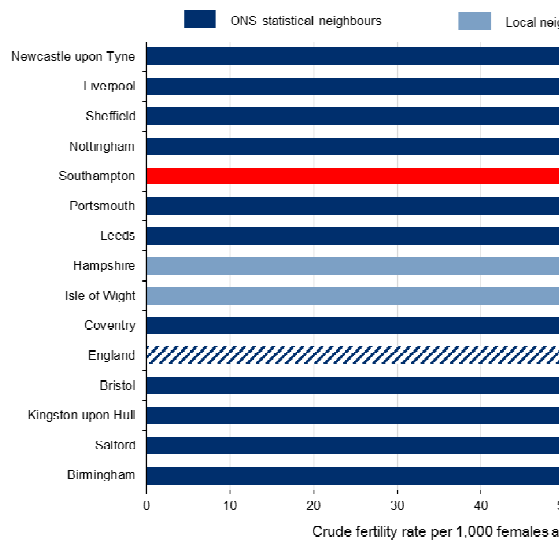


Local Data – Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)

JSNA assesses need by:

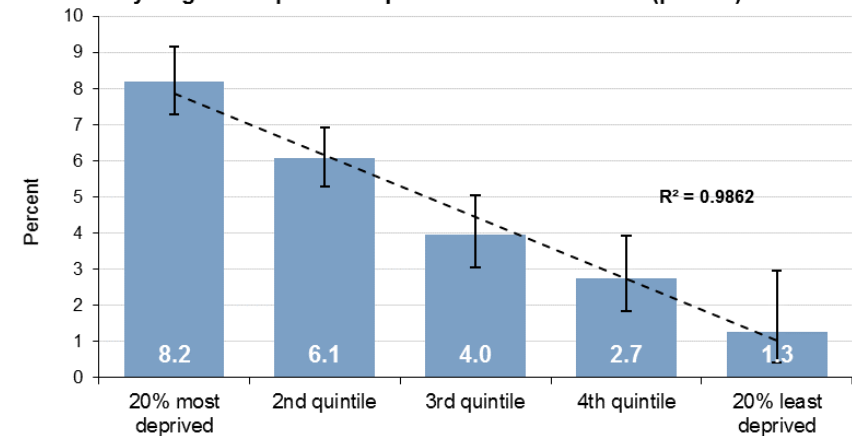
- Benchmarking against statistical neighbours
- Analysing trends over time
- Deep dive of needs/inequalities within the city (geographical, population groups, deprivation etc)

General fertility rates: 2013 Southampton and ONS comparators



Sources: Vital Statistics Office for National Statistics

Teenage (aged 13-19) maternities at time of booking - Analysis by England deprivation quintile: 2012/13-2014/15 (pooled)

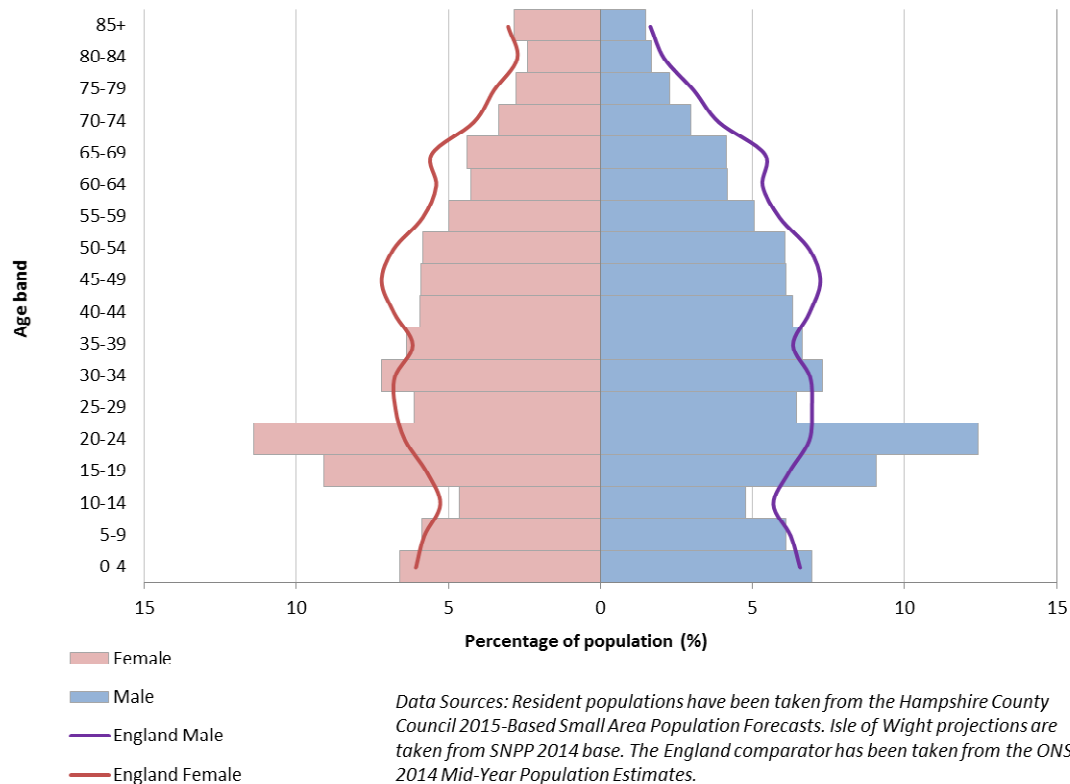




Source: UHS midwifery database: Southampton CCG

What does the JSNA tell us?

- JSNA includes a range of data on risk factors and demographics.....

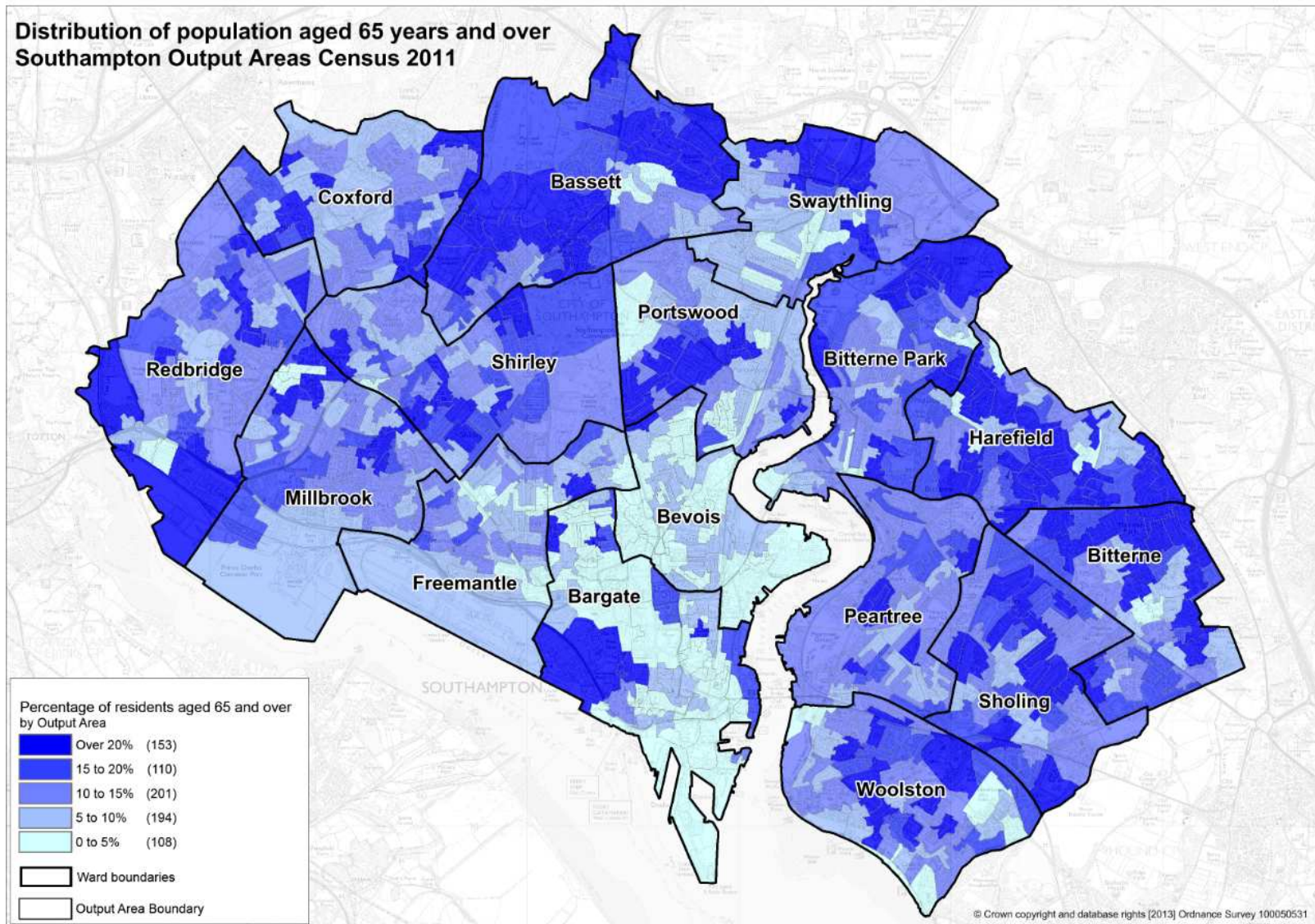
Population pyramid for Southampton LA - 2015 resident population



34,557  **65+** 
 people aged 65+ live in the city,
 and this is expected to increase
 by 12% by 2022, to 38,711

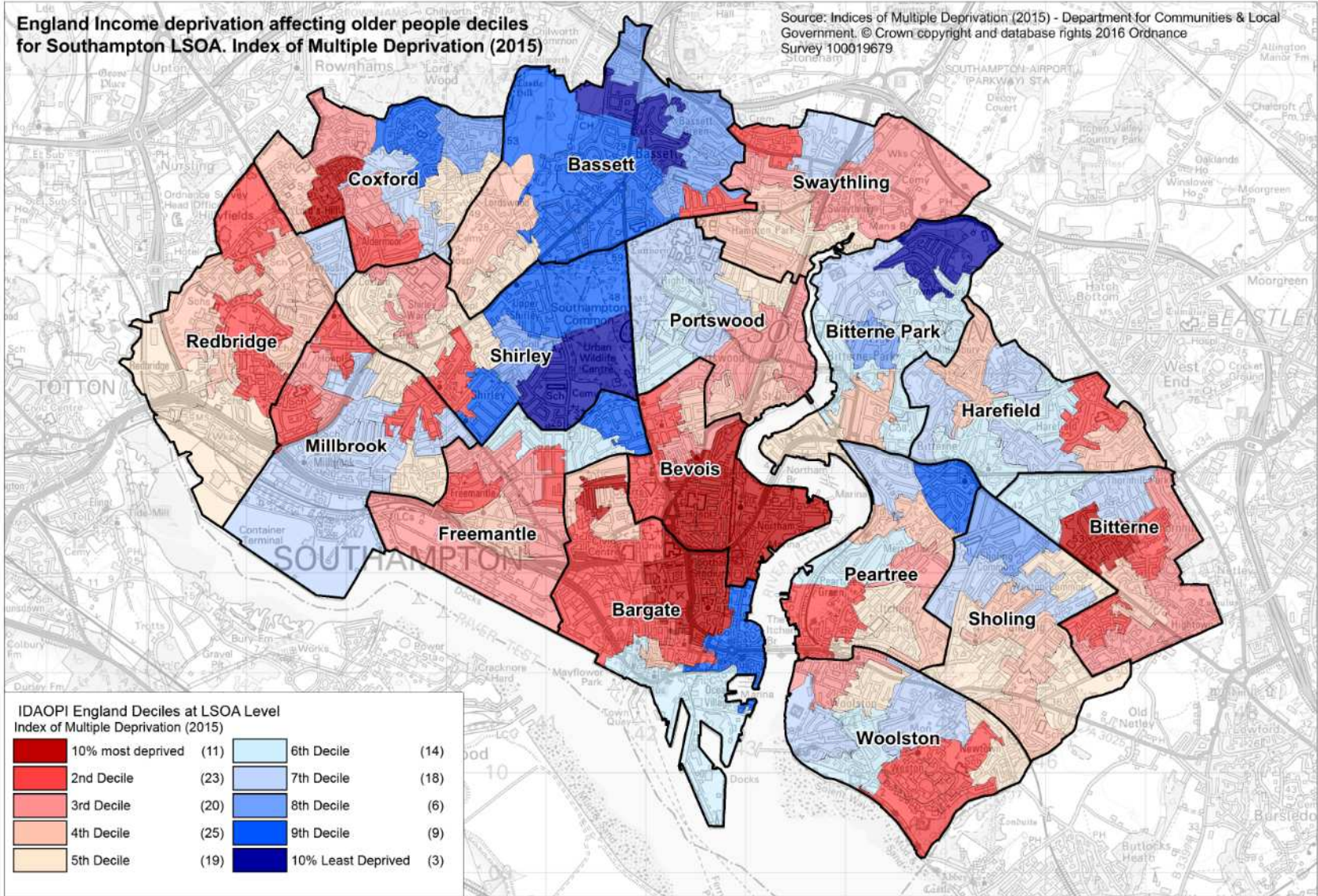
We can map the over 65 population so we know where they live in the city

What does the JSNA tell us?

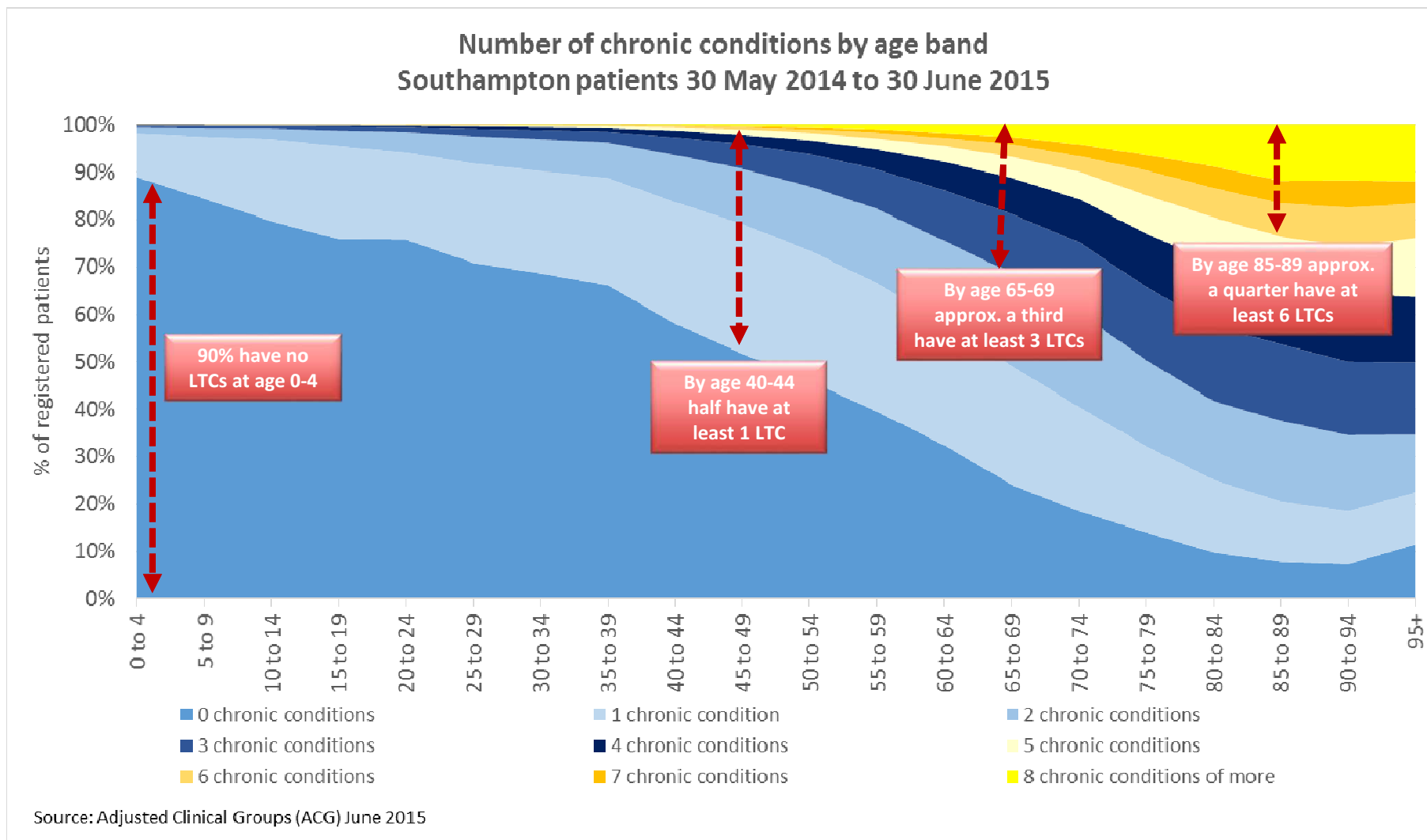


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What does the JSNA tell us?



What does the JSNA tell us?



Assessing loneliness in Southampton

- **The JSNA acknowledges social isolation and loneliness, but there is a gap around data specifically measuring this issue.....**
- **Social isolation and loneliness analysis planned for 2016/17**
- **How we can identify need? What are the potential sources of information?**
- **Early stages - further investigation is required and any ideas are welcome!**

Benchmarking prevalence - 2016 City Survey

Comparing Southampton to England to understand if loneliness is a particular issue for the city...

- **Nationally**, loneliness is measured in the *ONS Opinions and Lifestyle Survey*
- **Locally**, the *City Survey* asked residents questions about social isolation, including the extent to which they felt lonely in their daily life.....
- Similar methodology and therefore comparable results

- **1 in 7** (14.6%) of residents aged 16+ in Southampton say they *feel lonely in their daily life*
- **6 in 10** (59.2%) report *not feeling lonely at all*

Benchmarking prevalence - 2016 City Survey

Proportion of people reporting high levels of loneliness in their daily lives (score of 6-10)

	All Residents	Working Age (16-64)	65-79	Over 80's	65+
Southampton *	14.6%	14.6%			15.9%
England **	15.4%	14.8%	14.5%	29.2%	

* Source: Southampton City Council City Survey 2016

** Source: ONS Opinions and Lifestyle Survey 2014/15 - as quoted in Measuring National Well-being: Insights into Loneliness, 2015



29,552
aged 16+



5,482
aged 65+

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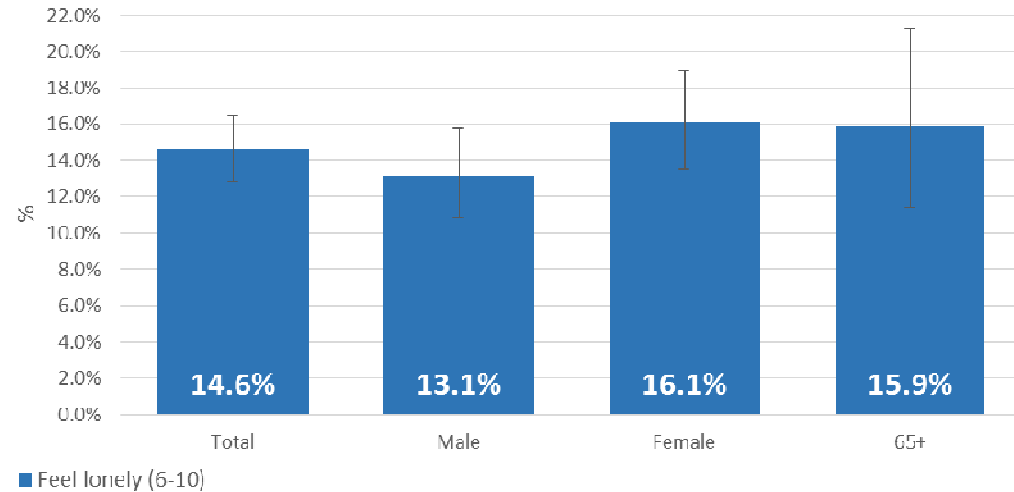


SOUTHAMPTON
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Who is lonely in Southampton?

2016 Southampton City Survey

Proportion of residents reporting feeling lonely in their daily life: Southampton City Survey 2016



Other groups which are more susceptible to feeling lonely are:

- BME residents (22%)
- Those who are unemployed (24%)
- Residents with a disability (20%)
- Those for whom English is not their first language (24%)
- Residents who are in poor health (35%)

Who is lonely in Southampton?

Evidence suggests that there are many factors that contribute to loneliness; some we can measure using routine data.....

- Age (HCC SAPF / ONS MYPE)
- Lone households (Census)
- Marital status (Census)
- Prevalence of multiple health conditions
- Households without private transport (Census)
- Low income households (Census)
- Unpaid carers
- Lone parents

Possible to map many of these indicators, but individually they do not robustly identify people who are lonely.....

How do we *combine* this data and *weight* it appropriately?

Age UK Loneliness maps

Age UK have mapped the *relative risk* of loneliness across 32,844 neighbourhoods (LSOAs) in England

They have used the *English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ELSA)* to identify significant risk factors for those reporting being lonely in their daily life.

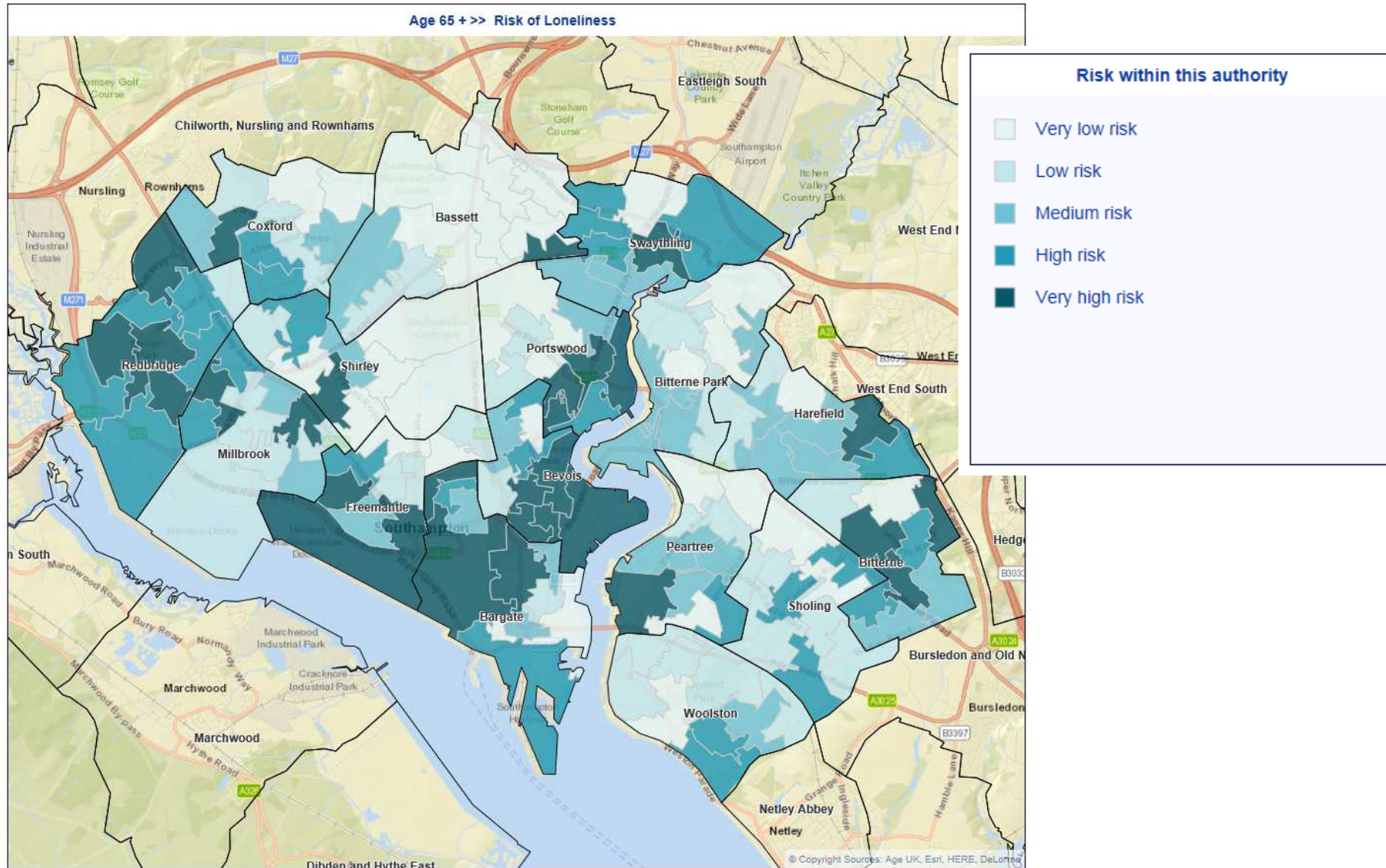
Developed a model based on the 2011 Census figures:

- Age
- Marital status (divorced or separated)
- Self-reported health status (poor health)
- Household size (one-person households)
- These four factors predict around 20% of the loneliness observed amongst older people 65+

Loneliness risk is *relative* to all the neighbourhoods in the local authority

Possible to rank neighbourhoods in England

Age UK Loneliness map - Southampton



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Age UK Loneliness maps - Limitations

There are a number of limitations to these maps:

- Not all factors associated with loneliness are available at neighbourhood level – and so not included; may *introduce bias*
- Maps only show the *risk of loneliness* and not the actual prevalence of loneliness
- Analysis was based on ELSA and so only applied to over 65's; loneliness in *younger age groups* is not considered

Further work is needed using local knowledge to understand what these maps mean for Southampton....

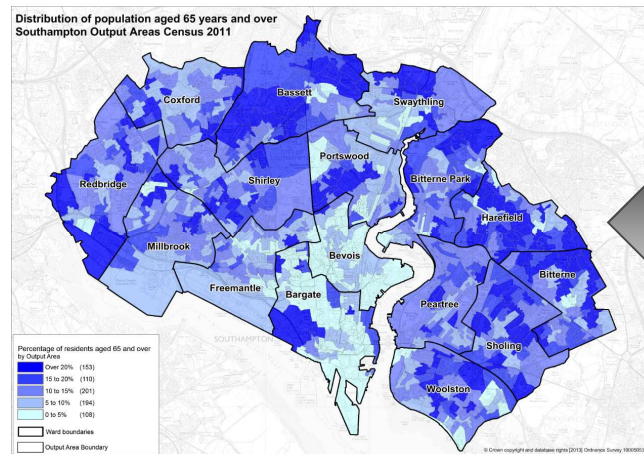
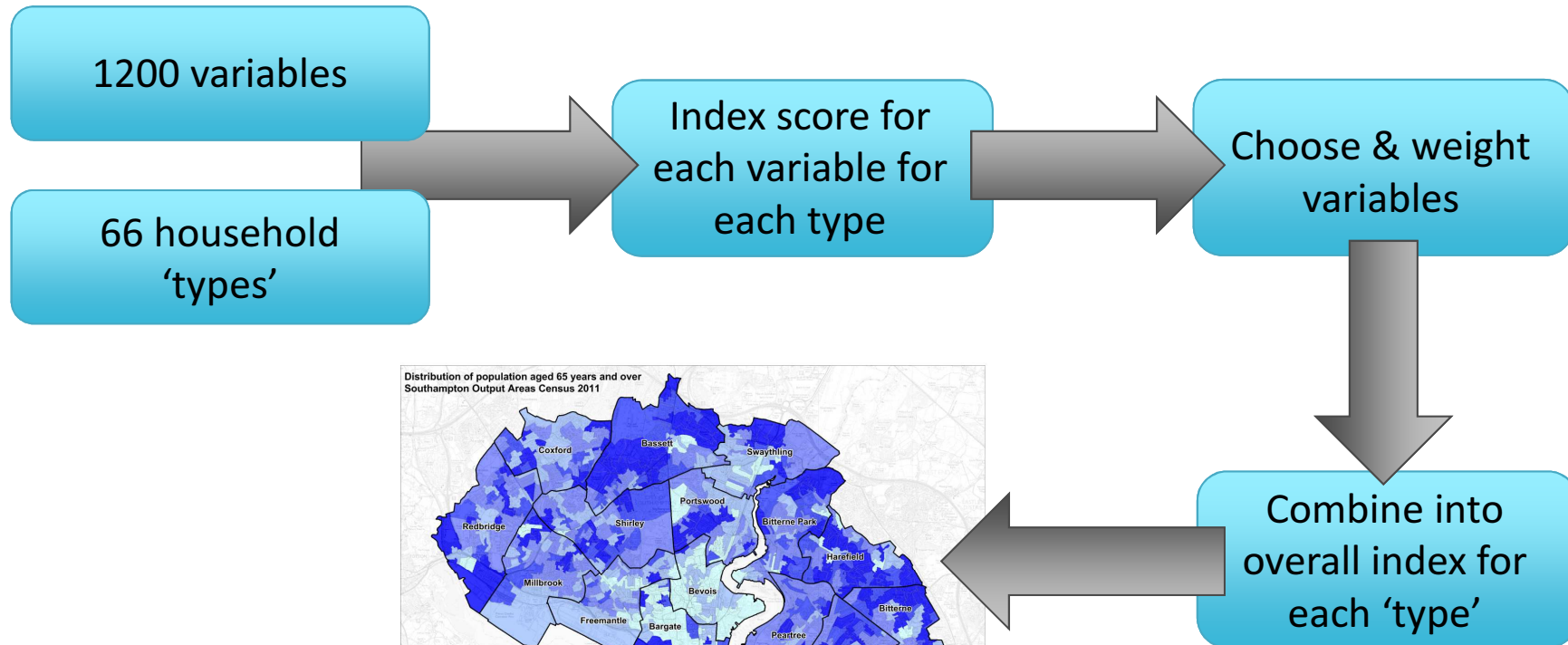
Local Social Isolation Indexes – Best Practice

There are a number of examples of local social isolation indexes created by local authorities:

- Examples include.....Essex, Gloucestershire, Barnet, Kent & Medway, Somerset, Dorset.....
- Used segmentation data – such as MOSAIC – to identify neighbourhoods which have a higher likelihood of having individuals that are socially isolated based on a range of chosen risk factors

Local Social Isolation Indexes – Best Practice

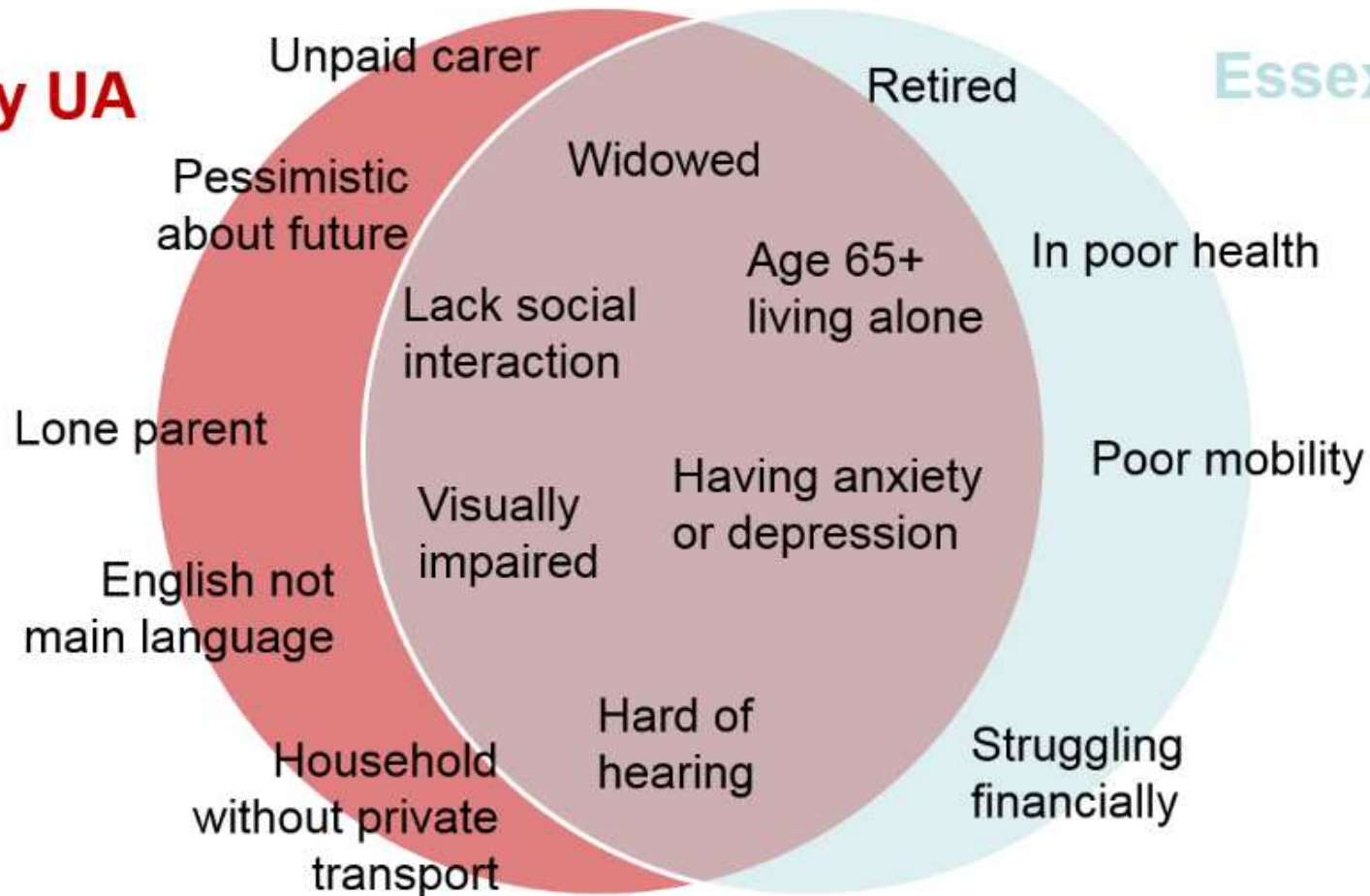
MOSAIC



MOSAIC variables used by Medway & Essex

Medway UA

Essex CC



MOSAIC local index limitations

- Decisions on which variables to use and how to weight them may be somewhat arbitrary
- Some MOSIAC variables can be quite old
- Resulting scores are relative and not absolute
- Results are not 'falsifiable' and the margin for error is unknown
- We can't use this index to monitor change over time

Next Steps.....



dan.king@southampton.gov.uk
sarah.weld@southampton.gov.uk