

Cambridge State of the City report 2022

Introduction

Cambridge is an economically successful city, with a rapidly-growing cluster of knowledge-based industries often connected to the city's ancient and world-leading University. Cambridge is relatively prosperous overall, ranking amongst the least deprived third of all local authorities in the country (based on its average score in the Indices of Deprivation¹). However, not everyone in the city shares in its prosperity and there are marked inequalities between different places and groups of people in the city.

Cambridge covers a relatively small urban area (measuring 3 miles by 5 miles), that has seen rapid housing and population growth² over the past ten years. The Census 2021 recorded a usual resident population of 145,700 people in March 2021, with the number of homes reaching 56,000.

The population of Cambridge has increased by 17.6%, and the number of homes by 14% over the past ten years, as new communities have been established around the fringes of the city. It is forecast that population and housing growth will continue at a similar rate over the next few years.

The city's population is characterised by considerable migration and churn, with around 15,000³ people moving to and leaving the city each year from within the UK. This can in part be attributed to the nearly 20,000 full time students that are present in the city attending our world class university colleges.

Cambridge has a relatively youthful population with a median age of 30.2⁴ years, with a fifth of people aged 17 to 24. Older people and children make up a smaller proportion of the city's population than the national average.

Cambridge is a place of diversity, with over fifty languages spoken in the city. According to Census 2011, just over one in ten residents were EU born nationals, nearly two thirds of births in the city are to non-UK born mothers and nearly one in five residents first language at home is a language other than English⁵. People from around the world are attracted to study and work in Cambridge, with international students making up just over a third⁶ of all higher education places in the city.

¹ [Indices of Deprivation 2015 and 2019 \(communities.gov.uk\)](https://communities.gov.uk)

² [Cambridgeshire Insight – Population – Local Population Estimates and Forecasts](#)

³ [Internal migration: by local authority and region, age and sex - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk)

⁴ [top ten youthful local authorities](#)

⁵ Local data on migrants [The Migration Observatory Local Data Guide \(ox.ac.uk\)](https://ox.ac.uk)

⁶ [The Migration Observatory Local Data Guide \(ox.ac.uk\)](https://ox.ac.uk)

Human, social and knowledge capital

Human capital - The health and skills of the population

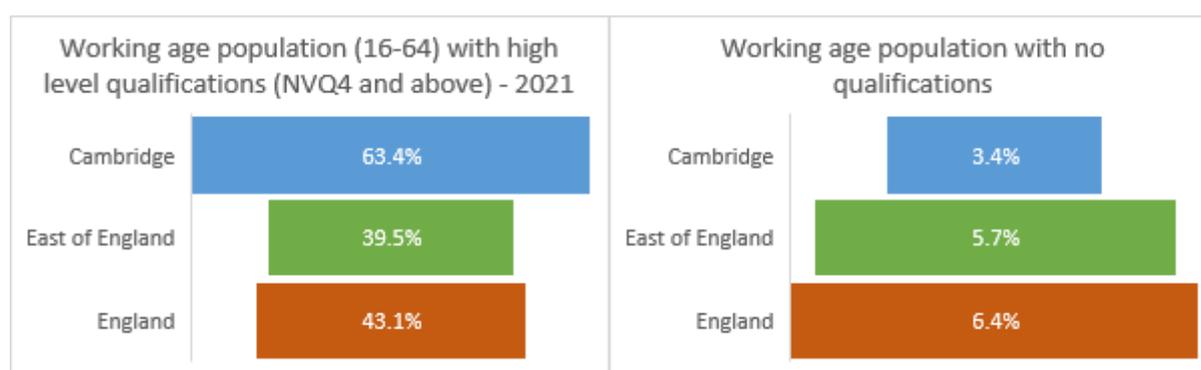
Social norms - Trust, social norms and community cohesiveness

Knowledge capital - accumulated 'best practices' and 'ways of doing things'

Education and skills

Cambridge has one of the highest skilled workforces in the country, with 63.4% of working people having qualifications of NVQ Level 4 and above, compared to the national average of 43.1%. Only 3.4% of residents in Cambridge have no qualifications, compared to 6.4% of people nationally.

However, while the Cambridge population is more qualified than the national average, social mobility is an issue. Cambridge ranks 275th out of 324 local authorities across England and Wales in the Social Mobility Index. Social mobility is particularly low for young people from poorer backgrounds in the city, with Cambridge having the fifth lowest score of any local authority for youth social mobility⁷.



Health and well-being

Overall, Cambridge has better than average health and wellbeing outcomes. Average life expectancy at birth was slightly higher in Cambridge (80.9 years for men and 84.9 years for women) than the England average (79.4 years for men and 83.1 years for women) in 2019⁸. According to ONS Wellbeing Scores⁹, residents in the city have high levels of life satisfaction and happiness, low levels of anxiety and feel that life is worthwhile.

Obesity levels in Cambridge are lower than the national average. In Year 6, 26.5% of children are classified as overweight, better than the average for England (32.5%). Estimated levels of excess weight and obesity in adults (aged 18+) and physically active adults (aged 19+) are also better than the England average.

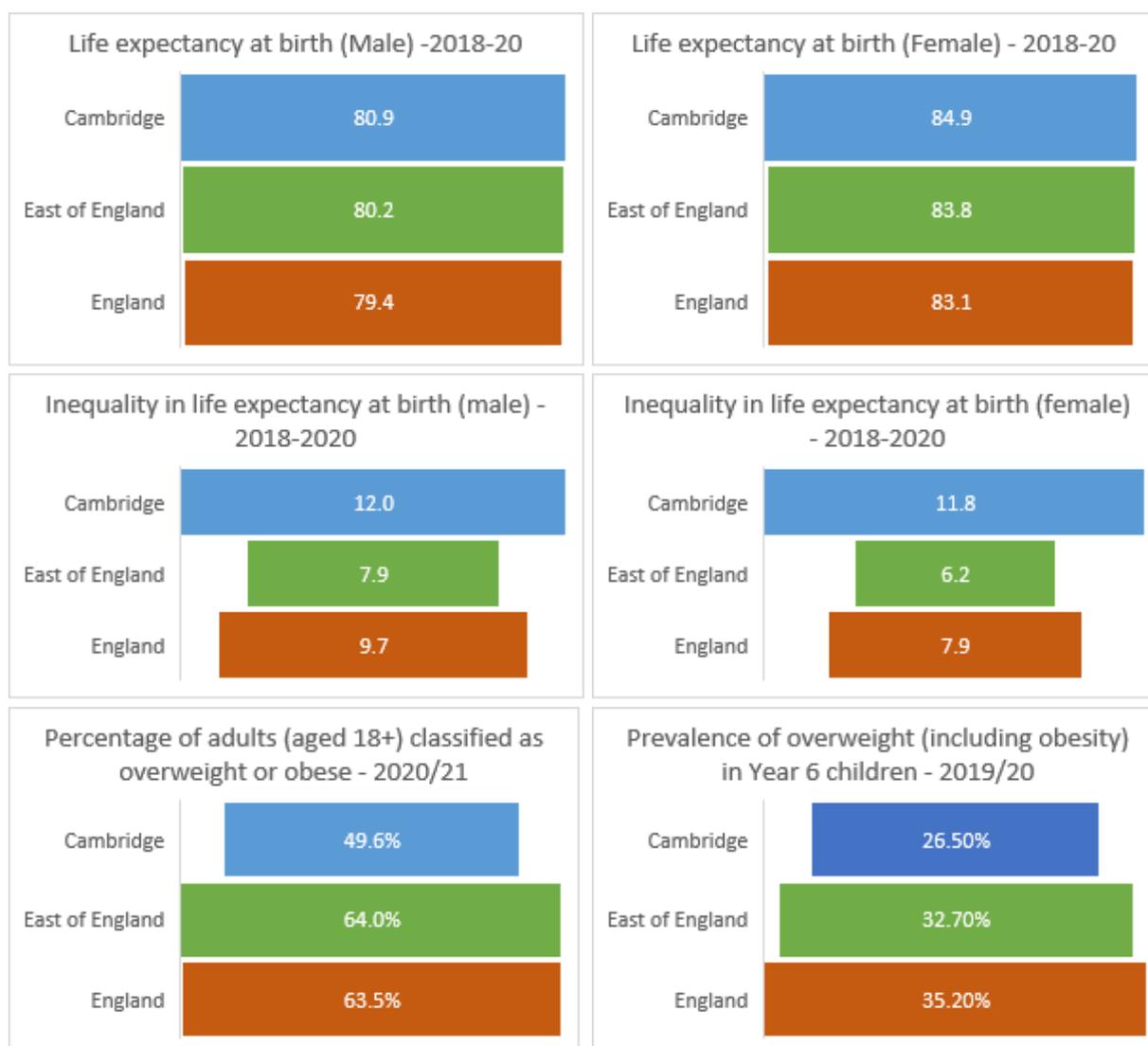
⁷ [Social_Mobility_Index.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

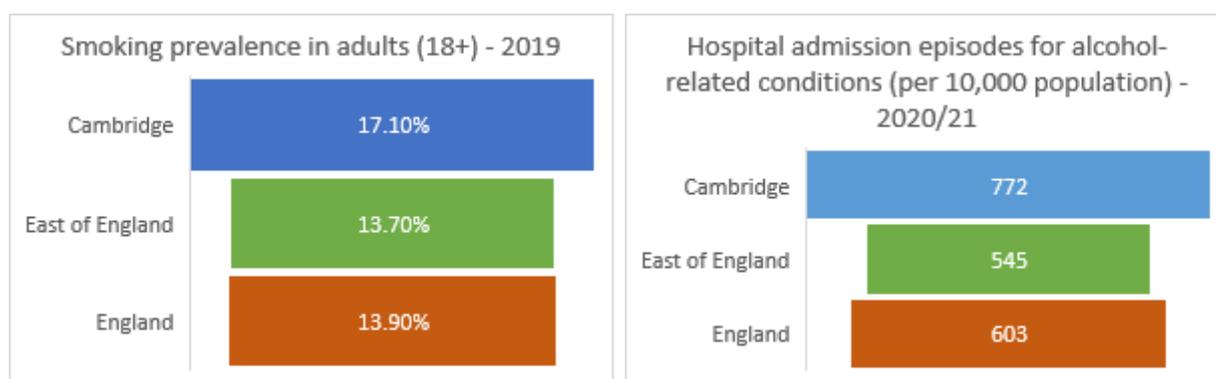
⁸ PHE Local Authority Health Profile [E07000008 \(phe.org.uk\)](https://phe.org.uk)

⁹ [measuring-wellbeing-inequalities-in-britain-march2017.pdf \(wordpress.com\)](https://wordpress.com)

However, on other key health indicators Cambridge performs worse than the national average. The rates for smoking prevalence, alcohol-related harm hospital admissions, self-harm hospital admissions, new sexually transmitted infections, new cases of tuberculosis and serious road accidents are worse than the England average.

There are also significant health inequalities between different places in Cambridge. Average life expectancy at birth for men living in the most deprived areas in the city is 12 years lower than for men living in the least deprived areas of the city, with a similar life expectancy gap of 11.8 years for women. This gap is significantly greater than the national and East of England averages for both men and women.

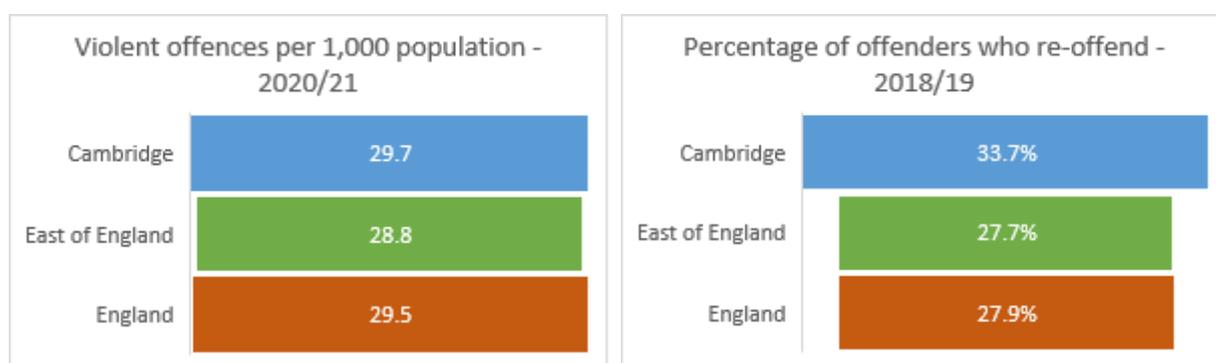




Crime

Overall, recorded crime rates in Cambridge are comparable to the national average. Last year, total recorded crime decreased by -2%¹⁰ compared to the previous year. The number of violent offences in the city (29.7 per 1,000 population) is similar to the national average (29.5%) and the rate of violent sexual offences is the same as nationally (3.3 per 1,000 population).

However, some places in Cambridge, such as the city centre experience higher levels of crime, especially violence and theft, and cycle theft is a significant issue in the city. Re-offending rates are also higher in Cambridge (33.7%) than the England average (27.9%)

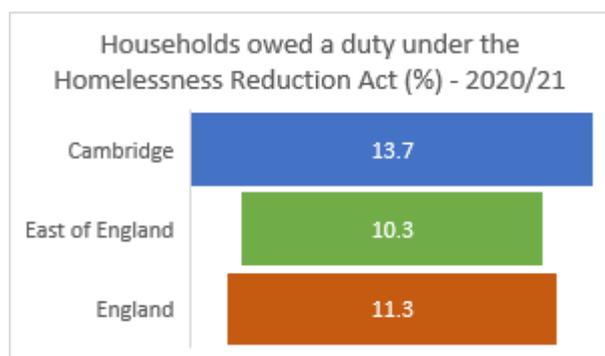


Homelessness

Levels of homelessness are higher in Cambridge than the national average, with 13.7% of households owed a duty under the Homelessness Prevention Act compared to an average of 11.7% in England. In 2021/22, 396 households in the city were prevented or relieved from homelessness, but the number of individuals verified as sleeping rough during the same period was 271¹¹, which was worse than the England average.

¹⁰ [Recorded crime data by Community Safety Partnership area - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk)

¹¹ 2021 Council Annual Report [Corporate plan 2022-27: our priorities for Cambridge - Cambridge City Council](#)



Economic, Physical and Institutional Capital

Physical capital - infrastructure, homes, machines and equipment, and ICT

Institutional capital - The quality and reliability of governance

Business and innovation

Overall, Cambridge has a strong, successful economy, driven by a combination of its world-renowned Universities and a globally significant cluster of hi-tech and bio-technology businesses. In the wider Greater Cambridge sub-region there are over 5,000 knowledge intensive companies with more than 61,000 employees and a combined revenue of over £15.5bn¹².

Cambridge is also an attractive tourist destination, with people from around the world visiting the city's historic centre. 7.6 million people in total visited the area annually pre-Covid, generating over £2 billion for the local economy¹³. Whilst the tourism sector was heavily affected by Covid-related travel restrictions in the past year, Cambridge was the tenth most popular international travel destination in 2020 in the UK, with 450,000 international visitors¹⁴ in 2020.

The city is a centre for innovation and is a leader in the number of patent applications submitted (308 per 100,000 population). According to Oxford Economics forecasts, productivity growth in the city has been 24% ahead of the national average and is now close to the London average. The gross value added per hour worked was £34 in 2019.

The number of business start-ups in 2020 in Cambridge was the same as the national average (53.6 per 10,000 population)¹⁵, while the number of business closures in the city (43.6 per 10,000 population) was lower than the UK average (47.2).

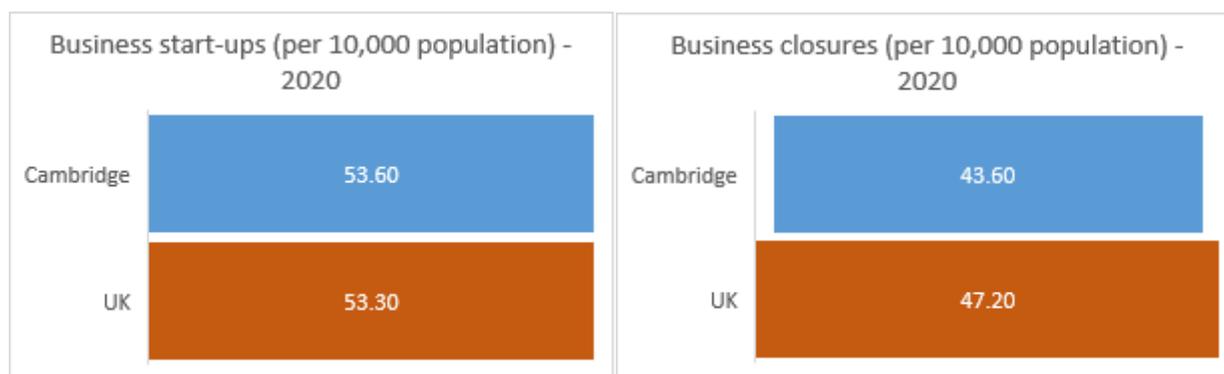
¹² University of Cambridge, September 2019, Cambridge Innovation in Numbers

https://www.cam.ac.uk/sites/www.cam.ac.uk/files/inner-images/innovation_in_numbers_sep_2019.pdf?ucam-flow=business-and-enterprise

¹³ [Home - Visit Cambridge](#)

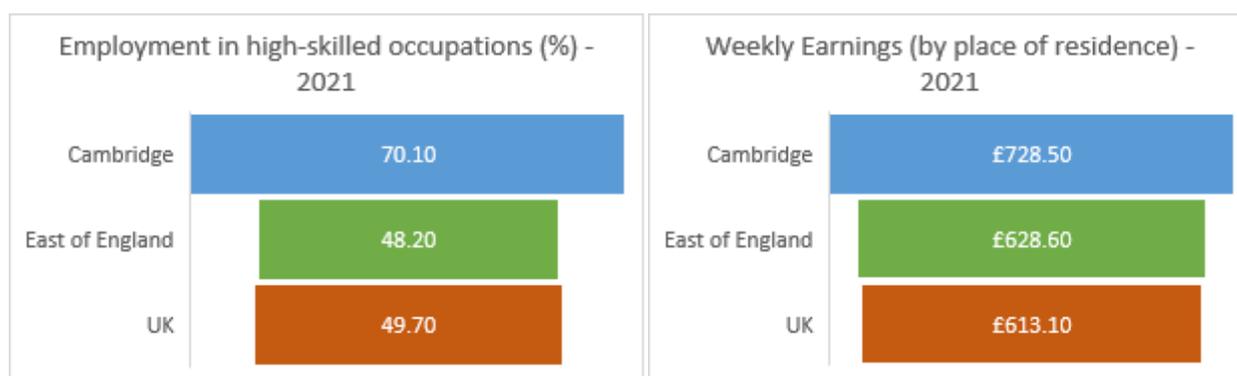
¹⁴ [UK tourism statistics \(finder.com\)](#)

¹⁵ [City Monitor | Centre for Cities](#)

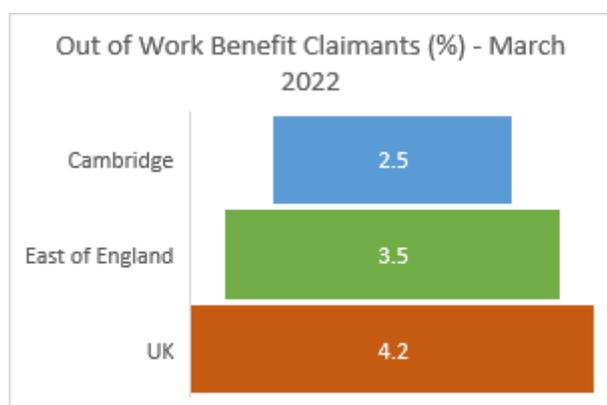


Jobs, employment and earnings

Cambridge is an attractive place for people to work and has a high proportion of good, well-paid jobs in professional, scientific and technical activities, and the information and communication technology sectors. In 2021, just over 70% of jobs were in high-skilled occupations (Standard Occupational Assessment Groups 1-3: Managers, Directors and Senior Officials; Professional Occupations; Associate Professional and Technical).¹⁶ Average earnings are higher for Cambridge residents (£728.5) than the UK average (£613.10).



A high proportion of the working age population (those aged 16-64) are employed in Cambridge (80.5%) and only 2.5% of people in Cambridge are claiming out of work benefits (2.5%) compared to the national average.



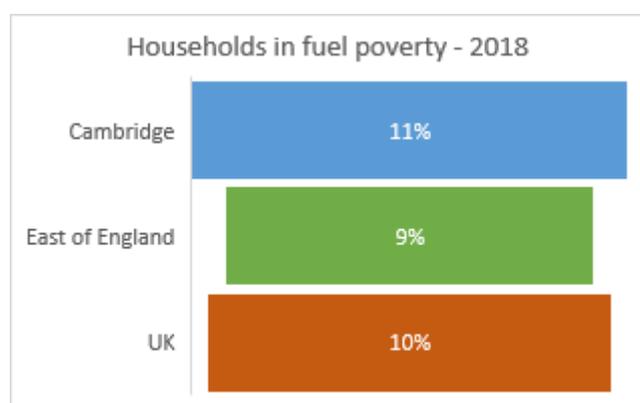
¹⁶ [Labour Market Profile - Nomis - Official Labour Market Statistics \(nomisweb.co.uk\)](https://nomisweb.co.uk)

Inequality and poverty

While the Cambridge economy is successful and the city is prosperous overall, there is significant inequality in the city. In 2017, Cambridge was identified as the most unequal city in the UK by the Centre for Citiesⁱ, using a measure which takes into account data on wages, pensions, benefits and other income. In 2019, the Nuffield Foundations English Atlas of Inequality¹⁷, ranked Cambridge as the 36th most unequal of all English local authorities, based on the income range of communities.

There are a number of affluent communities in the city, with 26 out of 78 of small areas (Lower Super Output Areas consisting of about 600 households) falling within the 20% most wealthy areas in the country in the income domain of the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). However, there are also concentrations of deprivation, with 3 of Cambridge's LSOAs (2 in Abbey ward and 1 in Kings Hedges ward) in the most deprived 20% of LSOAs in the country in the IMD¹⁸ in 2019.

A significant proportion of people in the city are on low incomes and are currently struggling. In 2020/21, 9% of working age households were claiming Council Tax Support and the fuel poverty rate in Cambridge (11% of households) is higher than the national average (10%). Average weekly earnings for the lowest 10% of earners were £162 per week in 2018, which is 3.5 times less than the average for all Cambridge employees (£555 per week)ⁱⁱ.



Housing, affordability and cost of living

The attractiveness of Cambridge as a place to live has led to a high cost of living for residents. The average house price in the city is £440,600, ranking second in the UK 20 City Index. Lower quartile prices are 13.9 times greater than lower quartile incomes in Cambridge, which can make it difficult for low-income residents and key workers to afford homes in the city. These households often

¹⁷ [English Atlas of Inequality challenges assumptions of rich and poor areas - Nuffield Foundation](#)

¹⁸ [Indices of Deprivation 2015 and 2019 \(communities.gov.uk\)](#)

have to find accommodation outside of the city itself, leading people to commute significant distances to work in Cambridge and contributing to congestion at peak times¹⁹.

Cambridge has a high proportion of private-rented accommodation, with the latest estimates suggesting that 42%²⁰ of all households in the city live in private-rented homes. Private sector rents in the city across all property sizes are the highest in the Eastern region and considerably above the England average. Renting accommodation in the private sector has particularly become less affordable for lower income households and key workers, with lower quartile monthly private rents in Cambridge increasing significantly from £563 in 2014 to £950 in 2018.

Natural and environmental capital

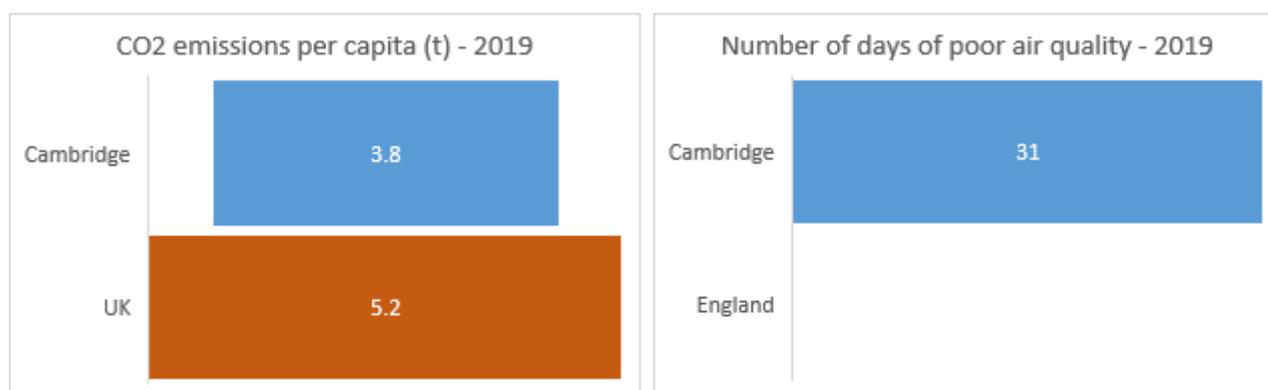
Natural capital - Environmental stocks and systems that generate benefits for people (including ecosystems, raw materials and a stable climate)

Cambridge is the local authority with the most sustainable growth over time, according to the Grant Thornton Sustainable Growth Index.²¹

Between 2005 and 2019, per capita greenhouse gas emissions in Cambridge fell from 6.7 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent per person to 3.8 tonnes per person. This was significantly below the UK average of 5.2 tonnes per person in 2019. During the same period, total greenhouse gas emissions in the city fell by 41%, despite the city's population increasing significantly in this time.

However, much of this reduction was a result of national investment in greener energy sources. Greenhouse gas emissions will need to reduce at a much faster rate if Cambridge is to reach net zero carbon by 2030 and contribute its fair share to global emissions reductions targets.

In 2019, there were 31 days of poor air quality in Cambridge. However, over the past two years (2020 and 2021) none of our air quality monitoring points exceeded the NO₂ legal limit.



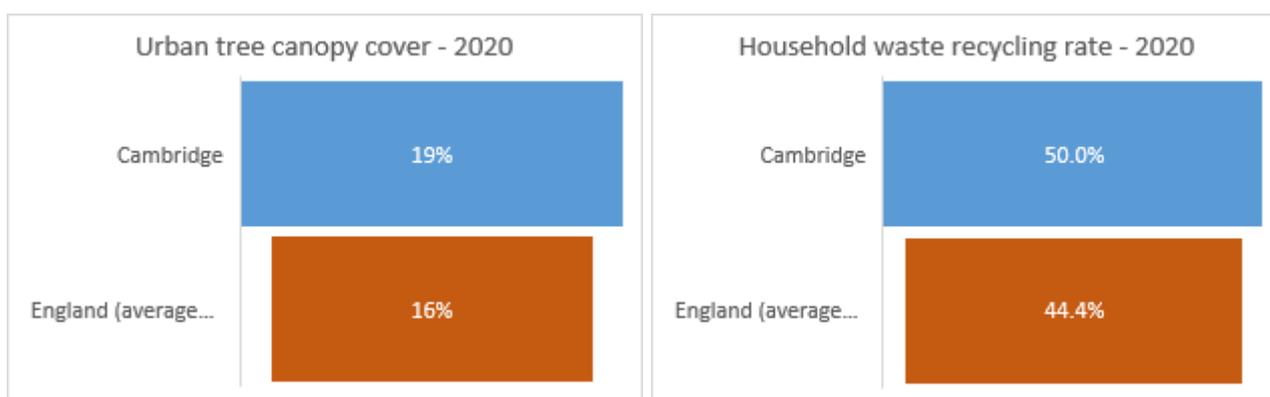
¹⁹Winter Edition 2021 [cambridge---thriving-on-innovation.pdf \(savills.co.uk\)](https://www.savills.co.uk/cambridge---thriving-on-innovation.pdf)

²⁰Page 14, Rental Opportunities, [cambridge---thriving-on-innovation.pdf \(savills.co.uk\)](https://www.savills.co.uk/cambridge---thriving-on-innovation.pdf)

²¹[Grant Thornton | Sustainable Growth Index](https://www.grantthornton.com/insights/sustainable-growth-index)

The proportion of insect-friendly wildflower meadows and long grass areas in Cambridge increased to 1.12% and in 2020 the tree canopy cover was 19% of the city's area, which was higher than the average tree canopy cover across 283 towns and cities in England (16%).

Just over 50% of household waste was diverted from landfill in 2021 and just over 52, 000 tonnes of materials for recycling collected.



Interpreting the data

The data in this report is generally given for Cambridge as a whole. We are conscious that the average for the place can mask variations between different parts of the city, or between different demographic groups.

We would hope in future iterations of this kind of report to be able to interrogate further, where the data allows, to understand more of those nuances, to better inform interventions and policy responses.

ⁱ Centre for Cities, 2017, Cities Outlook 2017

ⁱⁱ Office for National Statistics (ONS), 2018, Annual Survey of Household Earnings