



WHITLEY WARD PROFILE

2025

Whitley Ward Profile

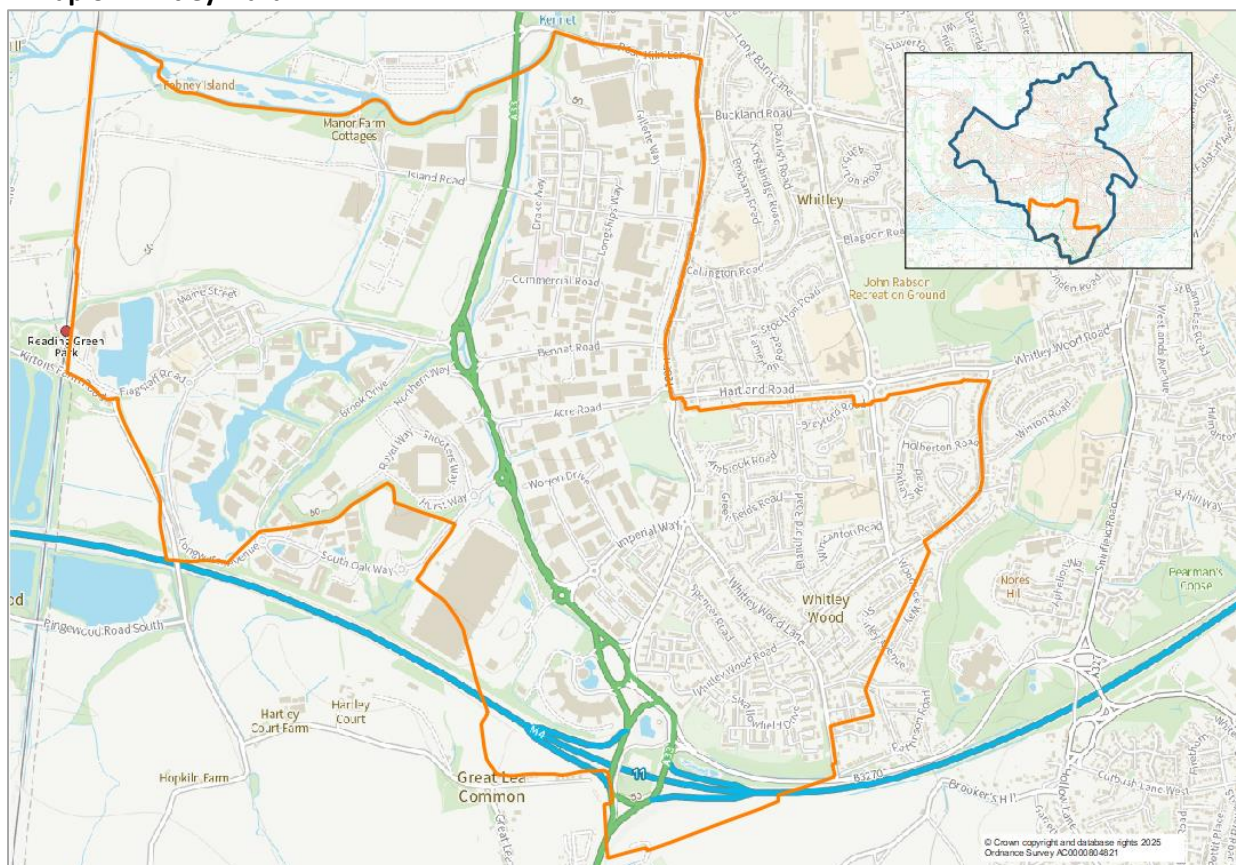
This profile presents data, information and intelligence about the health and health needs of people living in the Reading ward of Whitley. The profile highlights both the many opportunities for local people in Whitley alongside some of the challenges faced.

A range of people and organisations can use the Whitley profile. This includes health and social care commissioners who can use the information to help plan services and understand local needs; voluntary and community groups to ensure community needs and views are represented; by the public to help understand local needs and as a means of challenge and vehicle of accountability to local authorities and partner organisations.

This ward profiles provides a range of information around six areas:

- Who we are
- What we do
- How we live
- Health and health needs
- Community assets
- Voices, activities, and aspirations

A map of Whitley ward



Source: Public Health Intelligence Team, Reading Borough Council

Life in Whitley – top issues

A different view

Whitley is seen as a special place to live, a close-knit community, with diversity as its strength. It is a place characterised by:

- access to a range of community assets
- lots of local activities
- aspirations among young people and parents
- satisfaction with local area
- sense of neighbourhood belonging and people treated with respect
- ethnic diversity and complementary cultural influences
- people employed in a range of professions

Opportunities for challenge and change

Whitley, just like other areas, faces its challenges. However, these challenges present opportunities to change and improve outcomes. Some of these challenges include:

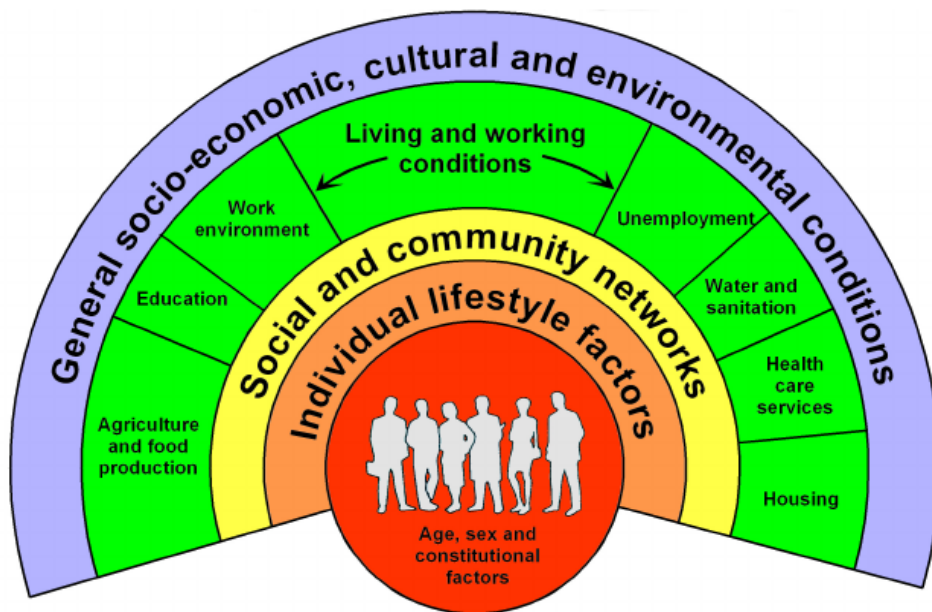
- poorer general health across all age groups
- health deprivation
- child poverty
- increasing crime rates
- increasing number of claimants aged 16-24
- participation in education (18-20 year olds)
- low satisfaction with Reading Borough Council
- local people feeling tired of being unfairly stereotyped

Whitley in context

The ward profile for Whitley should not be read in isolation. It needs to be understood, located and centred around the following:

- wider national, regional, and local structural issues (such as employment, housing, education)
- the [Council Plan 2025-28](#)
- health in all places: making every setting a health promoting space
- strengthening primary prevention: addressing risk factors early
- co-production with communities: involving people with lived experiences in designing solutions
- workplace interventions: supporting healthier working environments, particularly in lower paid sectors
- tackling the wider determinants of health and health inequalities (see diagram below)

The Wider Determinants of Health¹



Source: Dahlgren and Whitehead (1991)

¹ The wider determinants of health are a diverse range of social, economic, and environmental factors which influence people's physical and mental health, often leading to inequalities in health (unfair and avoidable differences in health outcomes across the population and between different groups).

Who we are

Understanding the population characteristics of an area is important when providing for both current and planning for future services. Different age groups, ethnic groups, and households have different health and social care needs and require and use services in different ways. This section of the profile explores who the people of Whitley are and includes a range of demographic information.

Population

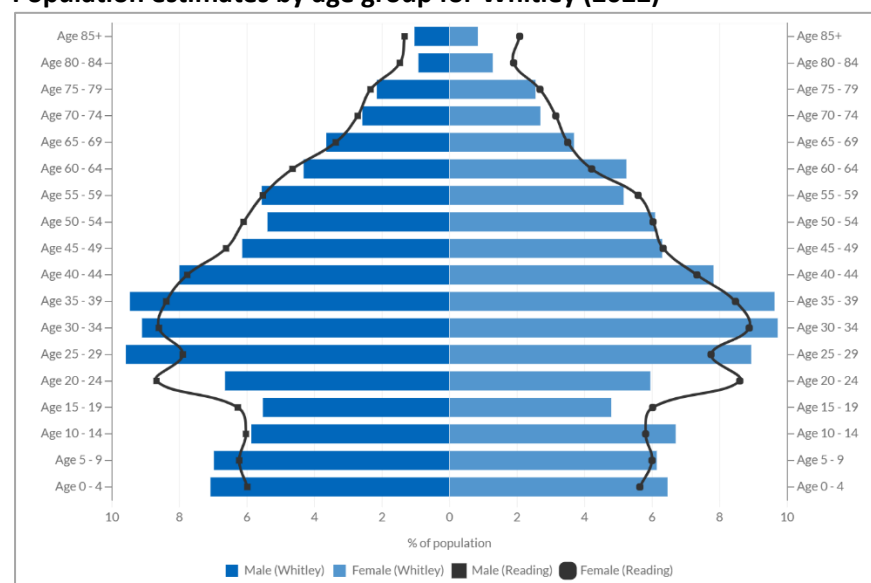
There were an estimated 11,478 people living in Whitley in 2022. Just over one fifth of the population were aged under 16, whilst 10.7% were aged 65 and over.

Population estimates for Whitley (2022)

Age group	Whitley		Reading		England %
	Number	%	Number	%	
0-15	2,384	20.8	33,150	19.0	18.5
16-64	7,868	68.6	120,222	68.8	62.9
65+	1,226	10.7	21,448	12.3	18.6
Total	11,478	100	174,820	100	100

Source: Office for National Statistics ([Population Estimates](#))

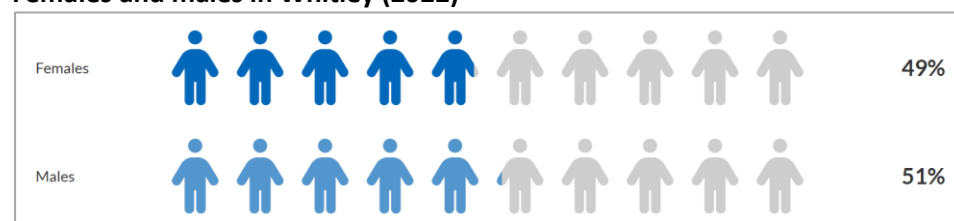
Population estimates by age group for Whitley (2022)



Source: Office for National Statistics ([Population Estimates](#))

There were an estimated 5,615 females and 5,863 males in Whitley in 2022. 49% of the population were female and 51% were male, similar to Reading.

Females and males in Whitley (2022)

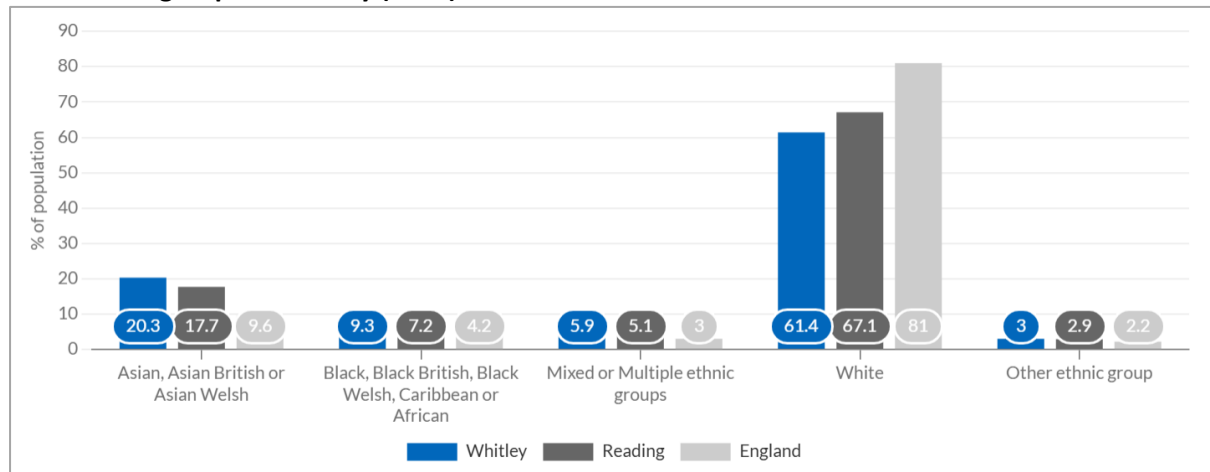


Source: Office for National Statistics ([Population Estimates](#))

Ethnicity

The way people describe their ethnic group is based on their culture, family background, identity, and is integral to what people do every day. Around 6 in 10 people (61.4%) in Whitley (7,067 people) were White based on the 2021 Census, with the largest minority ethnic group being Asian – 20.3%, 2,339 people. The proportion of non-White ethnic groups in Whitley was higher than Reading, 38.6% versus 32.9%.

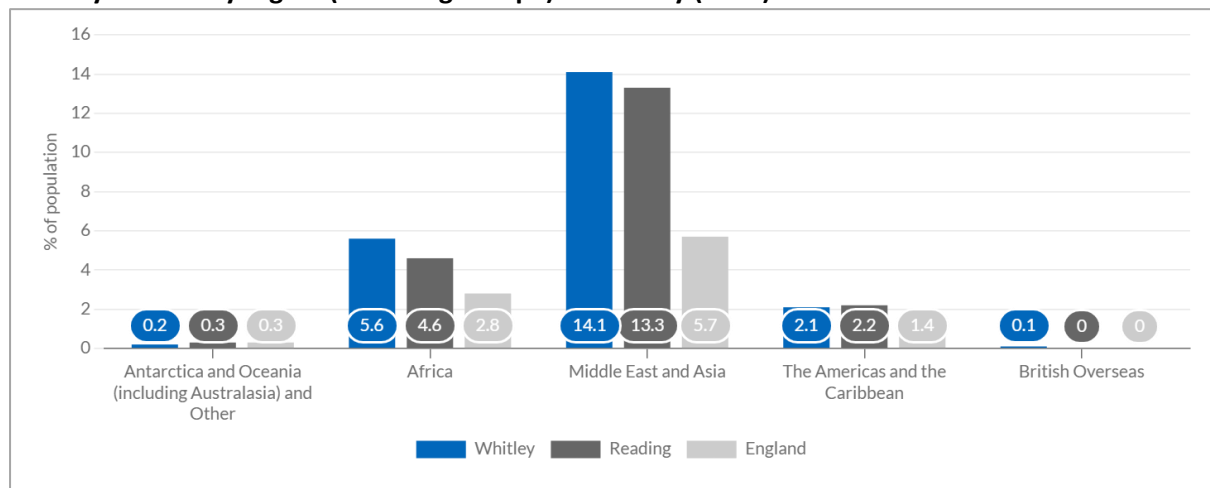
Main ethnic groups in Whitley (2021)



Source: Office for National Statistics ([NOMIS](#))

2 out of 3 people (67.0%) living in Whitley were born in the UK, which is 7,707 people, similar to the Reading proportion of 66.5%, whilst an additional 1,119 people (9.7%) were born in EU countries (Reading, 11.3%). Among people not born in the UK, the largest group were those born in the Middle East and Asia – 14.1%, 1,622 people.

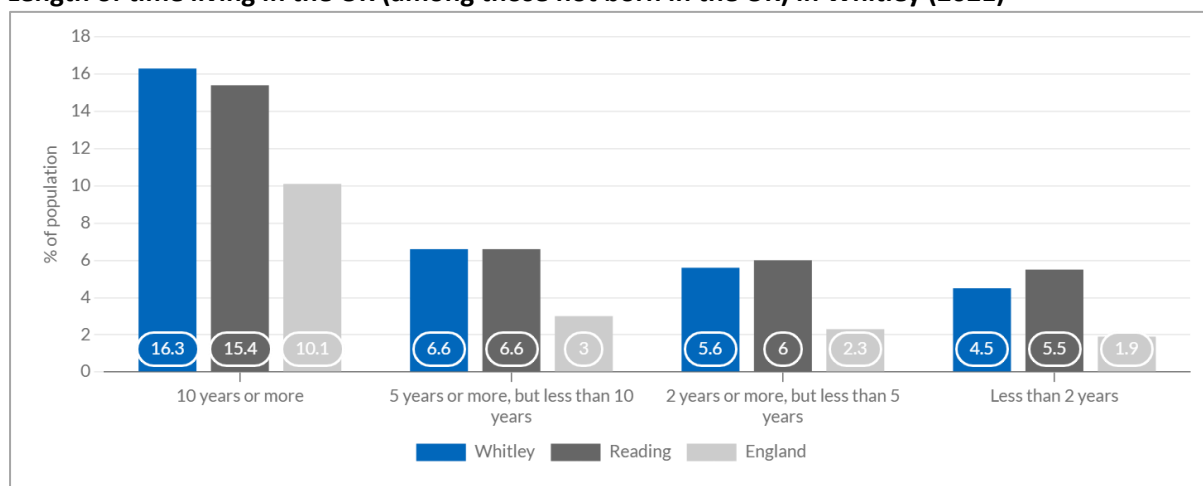
Country of birth by region (excluding Europe) in Whitley (2021)



Source: Office for National Statistics ([NOMIS](#))

Of the 3,800 people not born in the UK and living in Whitley, 520 people had been living in the ward for less than two years, 1,402 people had been living in the ward between 2 and up to 10 years, whilst 1,878 people had been living in Whitley for more than 10 years.

Length of time living in the UK (among those not born in the UK) in Whitley (2021)

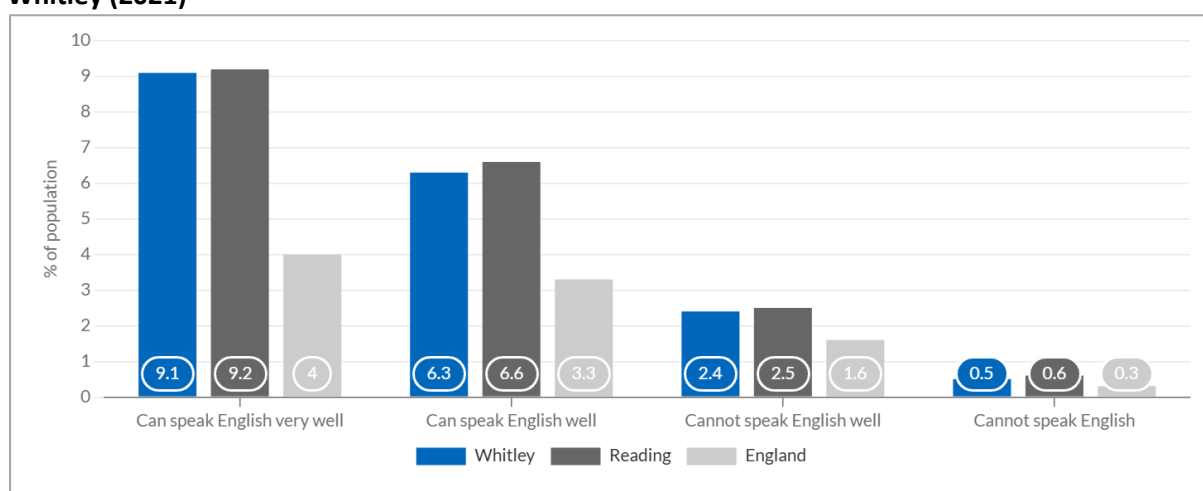


Source: Office for National Statistics ([NOMIS](#))

Language is a key defining characteristic of people's identity, and information on main languages spoken can help to plan and provide both statutory and voluntary services for local people. Among people aged three years and over in Whitley, English was the main language spoken by 9,012 people, which is 81.7% compared with 81.1% in Reading and 90.8% in England.

Among people in Whitley whose main spoken language was not English (2,022 people), 1,007 could speak English very well, 691 could speak English well, whilst 324 people could not English well or not at all.

How well people (aged 3 and over) can speak English where it is not the main language spoken in Whitley (2021)

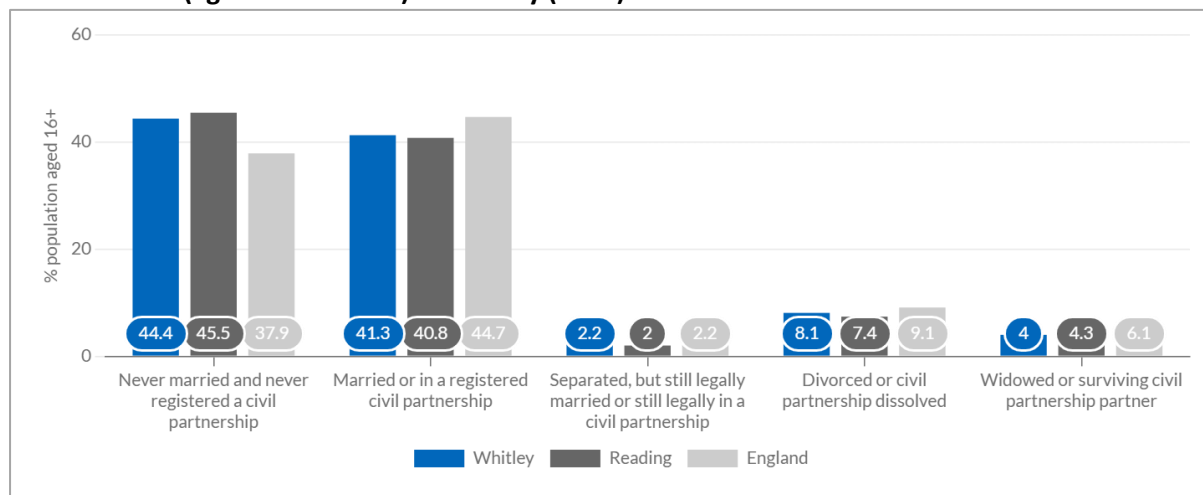


Source: Office for National Statistics ([NOMIS](#))

Marital status

Among people aged 16 and over in Whitley, 44.4% (4,029 people) had never married and never registered a civil partnership, whilst 3,744 people (41.3%) were married or in a registered civil partnership. A total of 365 people (4.0%) were widowed or surviving civil partnership partner in 2021.

Marital status (aged 16 and over) in Whitley (2021)

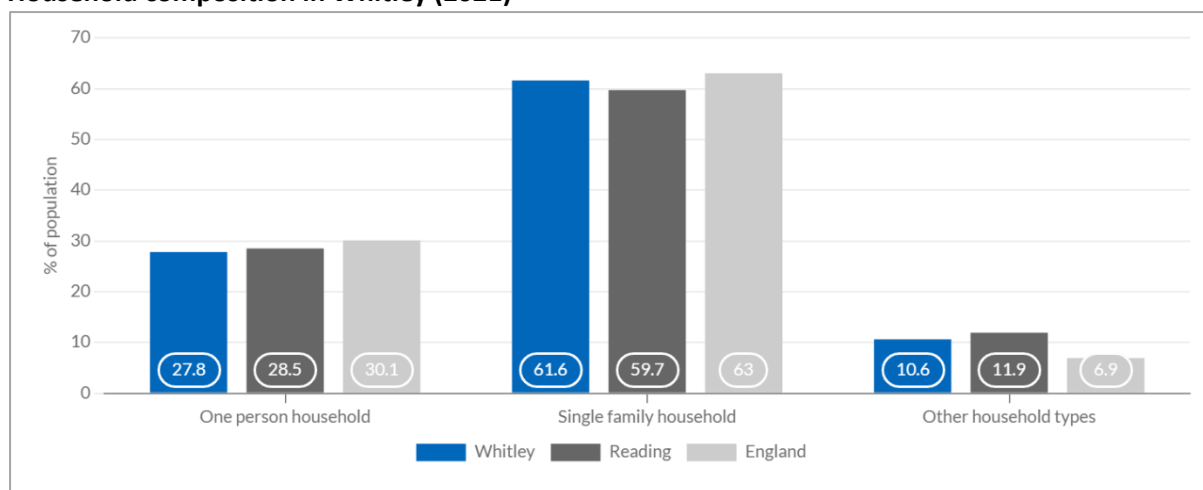


Source: Office for National Statistics ([NOMIS](#))

Households

Based on the 2021 Census, 27.8% of households in Whitley were one person households, 61.6% were single family households (couple with or without children, single parent with child(ren)), whilst the remaining 10.6% of households were classified as other types, such as multi-person households. 383 of the 1,255 one person households were comprised of an elderly person aged 66 years and over.

Household composition in Whitley (2021)



Source: Office for National Statistics ([NOMIS](#))

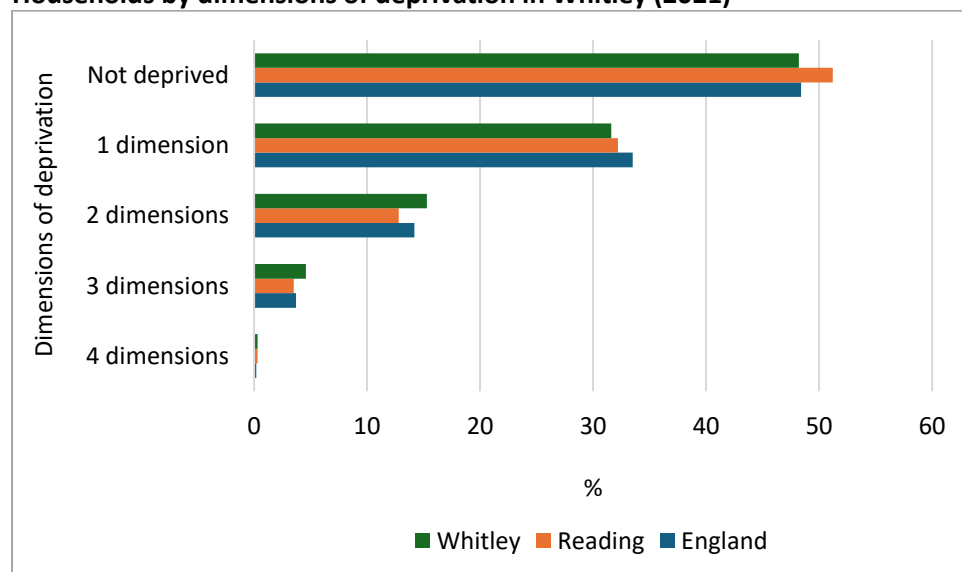
Among the different households in Whitley, nearly 7 out of 10 (67.0%, 3,025 households) did not contain any dependent children, whilst the remaining 3 households out of 10 (33.0%, 1,488) contained a dependent child aged between 0-18 years old ([NOMIS](#)). This compared with 69.3% and 30.7% in Reading. Among households with dependent children, 666 households (44.8%) contained children aged 0-4, 368 households (24.7%) contained children aged 5-9, 340 households (22.8%) contained children aged 10-15, whilst 114 households (7.7%) contained dependent children aged 16-18 years old in Whitley.

Deprivation

People living in the most deprived areas of England face the worst healthcare inequalities in relation to healthcare access, experience, and outcomes. Deprivation can affect people in many different ways, and measures of deprivation often explore its impact across multiple domains. The 2021 Census measure of deprivation is based on four household characteristics: education, employment, health, and housing.

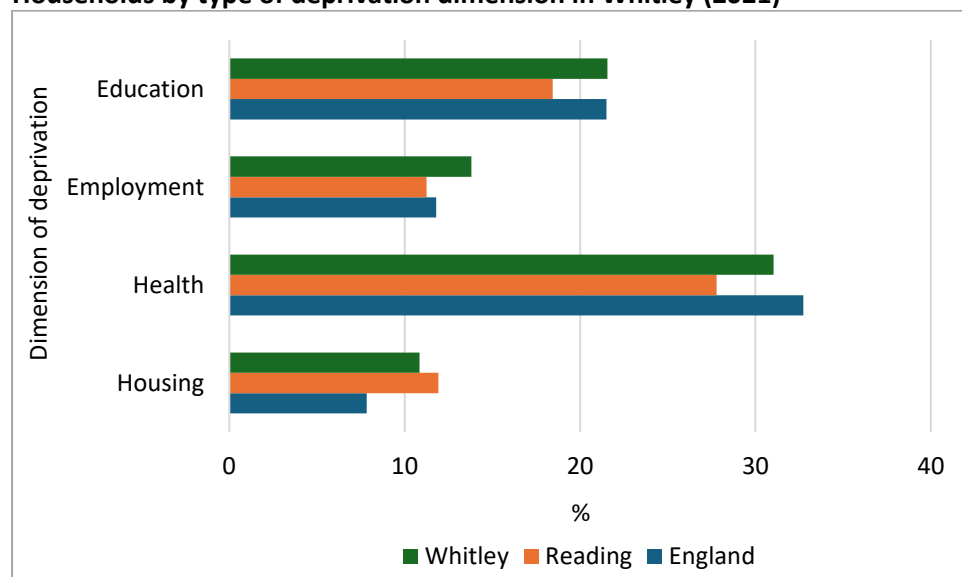
In Whitley, 48.2% of households were not deprived on any of the four dimensions of deprivation (2,174 households), whilst 51.8% were deprived on at least one of the four dimensions (2,337 households). Across the four different dimensions of deprivation, households in Whitley were most likely to be deprived on the health dimension (31.0% of households). This dimension looks at people experiencing poor health or those whose day-to-day activities are limited by long-term physical or mental health conditions or illnesses (and are considered disabled).

Households by dimensions of deprivation in Whitley (2021)



Source: Office for National Statistics ([NOMIS](#))

Households by type of deprivation dimension in Whitley (2021)



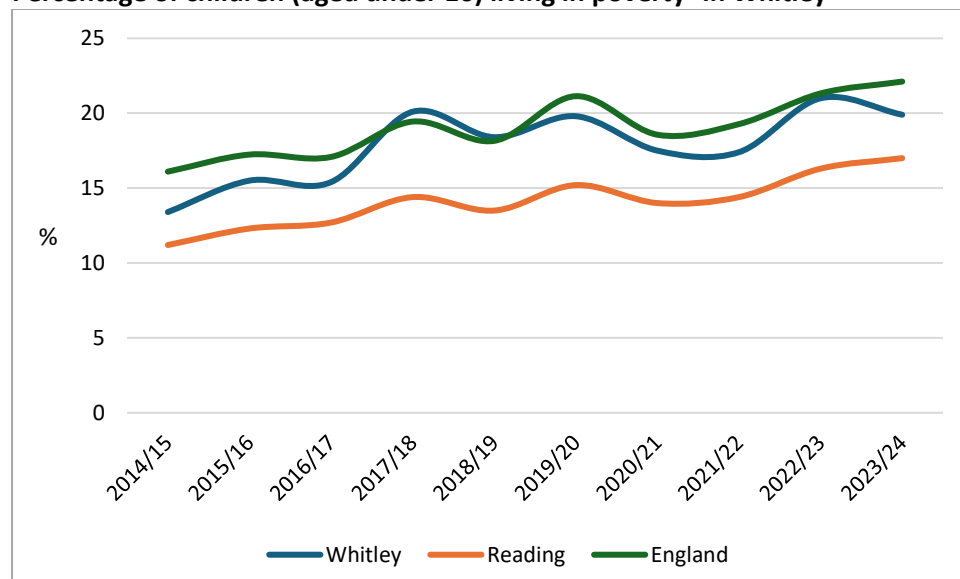
Source: Office for National Statistics ([Create a Custom Dataset](#))

Child poverty

Childhood poverty can lead to premature mortality and poor health outcomes for adults. Reducing the numbers of children who experience poverty should improve these adult health outcomes and increase healthy life expectancy. Children who live in poverty are also exposed to a range of risks that can have a serious impact on their mental health.

The percentage of children under 16 living in poverty in Whitley increased from 13.4% in 2014/15 to 19.9% in 2023/24. This is a relative increase of 48.5% in the percentage of children living in poverty in Whitley, which is similar to the increase seen across Reading (51.8%) but higher than the England increase (37.3%). During this time, the numbers of young children living in poverty in Whitley has increased from 304 to 478.

Percentage of children (aged under 16) living in poverty¹ in Whitley



Source: Department for Work and Pensions ([Children in Low Income Families](#))

1 Relative low income families

What we do

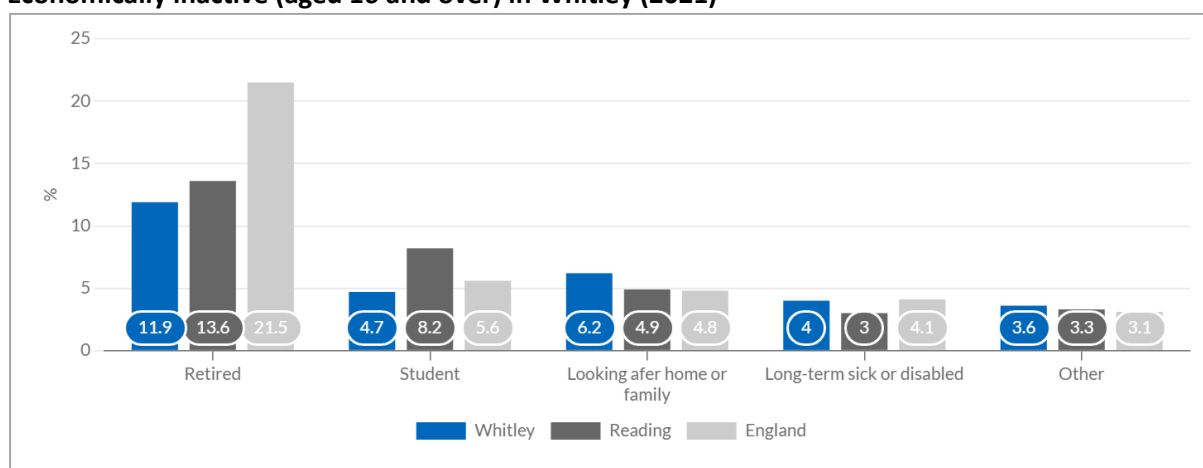
The success of a local economy is influenced by many factors such as a skilled and experienced workforce, quality of the infrastructure, natural resources, strong links with the wider economy, and the successful distribution of wealth. This section of the profile explores what the people of Whitley do and includes a range of information about employment and education.

Economic activity

Two thirds of people (67.6%) aged 16 and over in Whitley in 2021 were economically active, which is 6,137 people (compared with 63.6% in Reading and 58.6% in England). Economic activity is a measure of whether or not someone is actively participating in the labour market and includes both people working and those who are unemployed (but actively looking for work). 3.7% of people in Whitley were unemployed compared with 3.2% in Reading and 2.9% in England ([NOMIS](#)).

Of the 2,767 people aged 16 and over who were economically inactive in Whitley, people (excluding students) were most likely to be either retired, looking after the home or family, or long-term sick or disabled.

Economically inactive (aged 16 and over) in Whitley (2021)



Source: Office for National Statistics ([NOMIS](#))

Based on the 2021 Census, one third (33.1%) of people aged 16 and over in Whitley who were not in employment had never worked (1,046 people) compared with 28.3% in Reading and 25.6% in England ([NOMIS](#)).

In 2024, a Resident Engagement Project called 'Levelling up South Reading' ([Reading Welfare Rights](#)), which covers the wards of Whitley and Church, found that the main barriers to work among people aged 16 and over included: ill health, lack of suitable jobs, caring responsibilities, lack of suitable childcare options, and transport to work.

Socio-economic classification

NS-SEC (National Statistics Socio-economic classification) is a system that classifies people into a number of categories based on their occupation and employment conditions. It reflects, in large, the changing landscape of the labour market and the complexities of socio-economic status. Based on the 2021 Census, nearly 1 in 3 people (31.7%) in Whitley aged 16 and over were classified as being in managerial and professional occupations compared with 36.0% in Reading and 33.1% in England. On the other hand, 27.5% of people in Whitley were classified as being in semi-routine and routine occupations compared with 21.9% in Reading and 23.3% in England.

Socio-economic classification percentage (aged 16 and over) in Whitley (2021)

Classification	Whitley	Reading	England
Higher managerial/administrative/professional occupations	14.3	16.7	13.2
Lower managerial/administrative/professional occupations	17.4	19.3	19.9
Intermediate occupations	11.0	10.3	11.4
Small employers and own account workers	8.5	8.3	10.6
Lower supervisory and technical occupations	5.3	4.5	5.3
Semi-routine occupations	12.2	10.6	11.3
Routine occupations	15.3	11.3	12.0
Never worked and long-term unemployed	9.6	7.7	8.5
Full-time students	6.4	11.3	7.7
Total	100	100	100

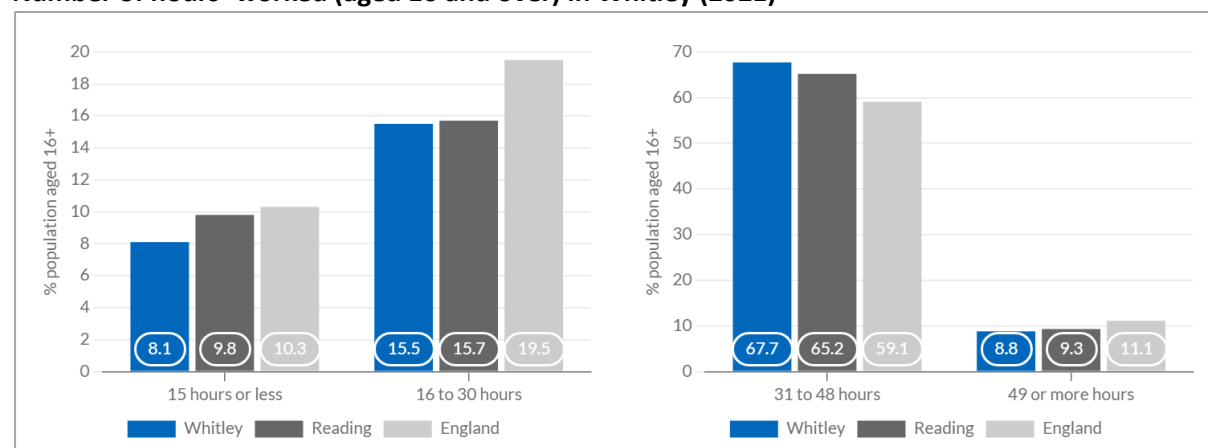
Source: Office for National Statistics ([NOMIS](#))

Based on the 2021 Census, the top five industries people aged 16 and over in Whitley were employed in were: the wholesale and retail trade (16.7%), information and communication (13.2%), health and social work activities (13.0%), education (7.9%), administrative and support services (6.9%). Between them, these five industries employed 3,414 people, 57.7% of employed people ([NOMIS](#)).

Working hours

Just under one quarter (23.5%) of people aged 16 and over who were in employment in Whitley in 2021 worked part-time, whilst the remaining three quarters (76.5%) worked full-time. The majority of people working part-time worked between 16-30 hours, whilst among those working full-time, the majority worked between 31-48 hours.

Number of hours¹ worked (aged 16 and over) in Whitley (2021)



Source: Office for National Statistics ([NOMIS](#))

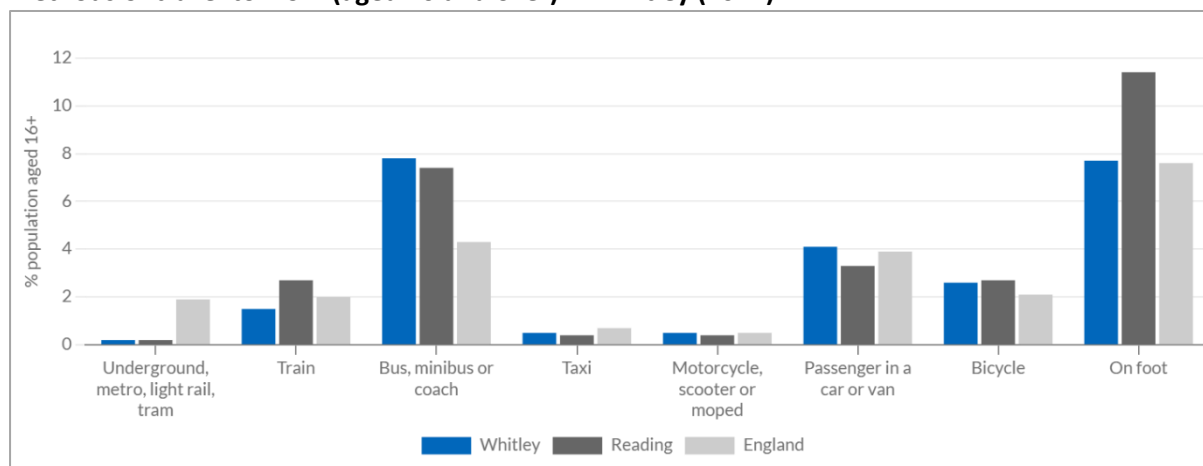
¹ Up to 30 hours (part-time); 31+ hours (full-time)

Getting to work

In Whitley, 35.7% of people aged 16 and over and in employment worked mainly from home (based on the 2021 Census), which is 2,112 people (Reading 39.3%, England 31.5%), whilst 38.6% (2,283 people) drove to work in a car or van (Reading 31.4%, England 44.5%). Among those who did not work from home or who drove to work, 7.8% took a bus, minibus or coach to work (461 people), 7.7% walked to work (453 people), 4.1% were a passenger in a car or van (243 people), whilst 2.6% (152 people) cycled to work.

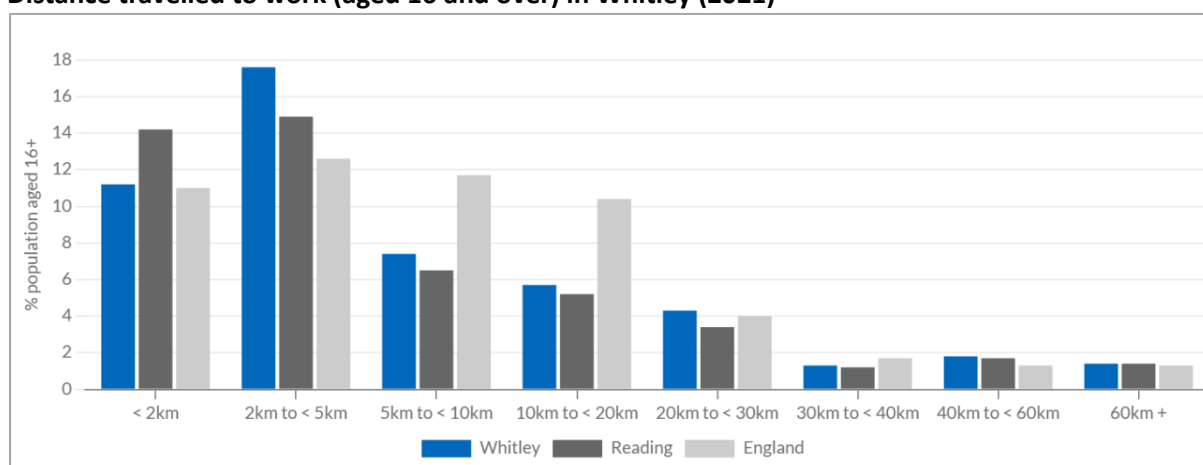
Among people aged 16 and over and in employment in Whitley, 11.2% had to travel less than two kilometres (1.2 miles) to work, whilst a further 17.6% had to travel between 2 and less than 5 kilometres to work (between 1.2 and 3 miles). Overall, one third (36.2%) of people in employment in Whitley had to travel less than 10 kilometres to work (6 miles) compared with 35.6% in Reading.

Methods of travel to work (aged 16 and over) in Whitley (2021)



Source: Office for National Statistics ([NOMIS](#))

Distance travelled to work (aged 16 and over) in Whitley (2021)



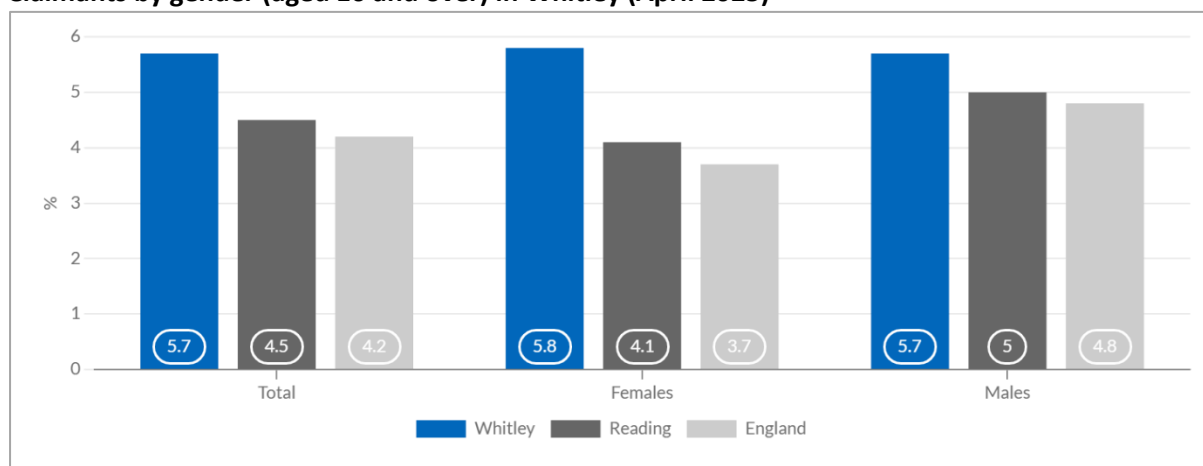
Source: Office for National Statistics ([NOMIS](#))

Financial support

At any point in time, and for many different reasons, someone may be working or not working, employed or unemployed. The claimant count looks at the number of people claiming benefit principally for the reason of being unemployed. In April 2025, 445 people aged 16 and over in Whitley were claiming financial support as a result of being unemployed – 225 were females and 230 were males. Overall, 5.7% of people in Whitley were claiming financial support compared with 4.5% in Reading and 4.2% in England.

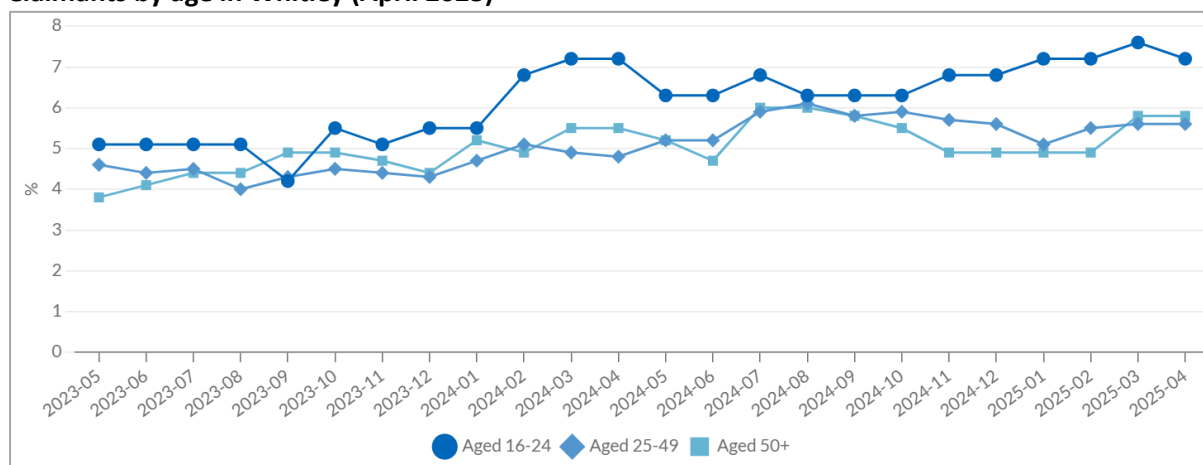
Over the past two years, the proportion of claimants aged 16-24 in Whitley has increased from 5.1% to 7.2%, from 4.6% to 5.6% among 25-49 year olds, and from 3.8% to 5.8% among people aged 50 and over.

Claimants by gender (aged 16 and over) in Whitley (April 2025)



Source: Office for National Statistics ([Claimant Count](#))

Claimants by age in Whitley (April 2025)



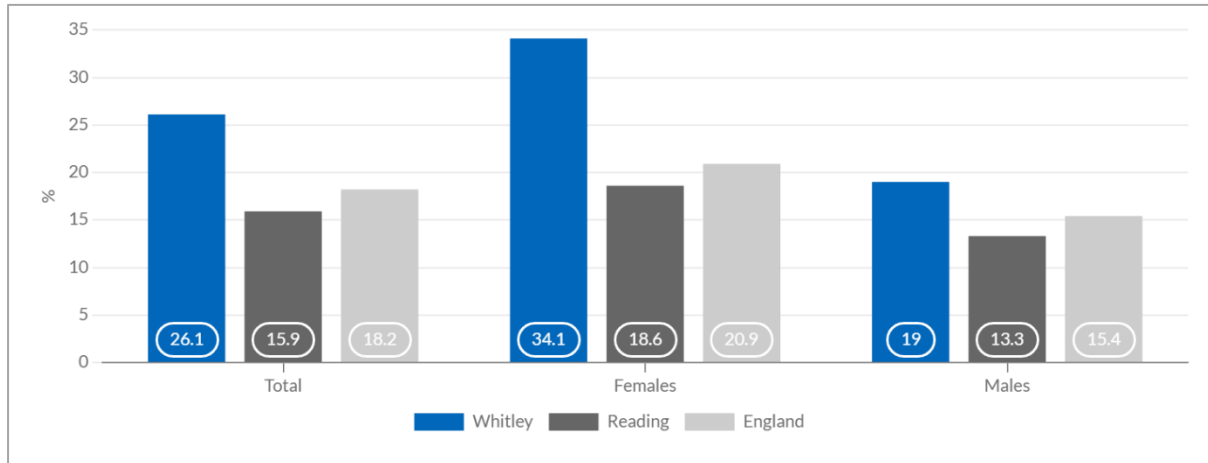
Source: Office for National Statistics ([Claimant Count](#))

Universal Credit is a single payment for each household to help with living costs for those on a low income or out of work. In March 2025, 1,903 people aged 16-65 in Whitley were claiming Universal Credit – 1,199 were females and 714 were males.

Over the past two years, the proportion of people aged 16-24 in Whitley claiming Universal Credit has increased from 15.1% to 17.8%, from 22.1% to 29.2% among 25-49 year olds, and from 18.1% to 26.4% among people aged 50 and over.

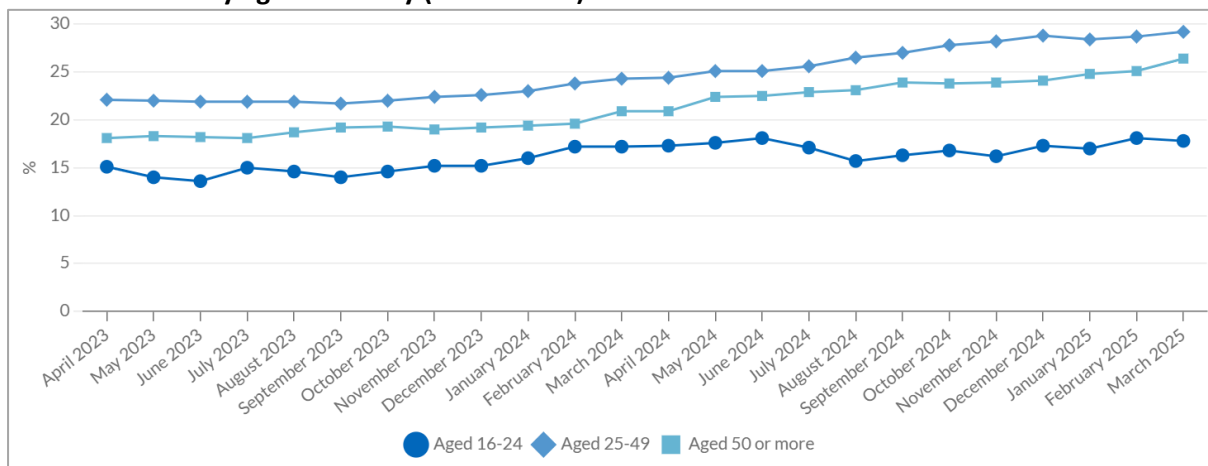
Overall, 6.9% of people aged 16-65 in Whitley had been on Universal Credit between 1-3 years compared with 4.2% in Reading and 4.9% in England, whilst 11.5% had been on Universal Credit for over three years compared with 7.0% in Reading and 8.0% in England.

People (aged 16-65) on Universal Credit in Whitley (March 2025)



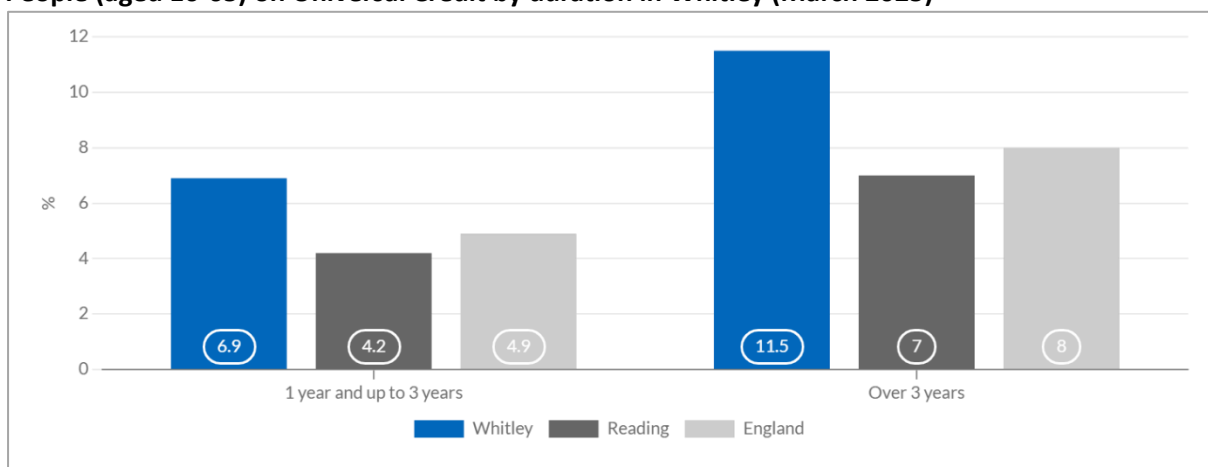
Source: Department for Work and Pensions ([Universal Credit](#))

Universal Credit by age in Whitley (March 2025)



Source: Department for Work and Pensions ([Universal Credit](#))

People (aged 16-65) on Universal Credit by duration in Whitley (March 2025)



Source: Department for Work and Pensions ([Universal Credit](#))

Education

Improving education and skills are central to promoting life-long learning opportunities and enhancing individual development, as well as employability. Good quality education remains one of the key drivers in reducing health inequalities – differences in health outcomes between people.

One fifth (20.7%) of the population of Whitley were schoolchildren and full-time students (2,220 people) compared with 23.5% in Reading and 20.4% in England in 2021. Excluding schoolchildren aged 5-15, 6.4% of adults aged 16 and over in Whitley were in full-time education compared with 11.3% in Reading and 7.7% in England. Across different age groups, participation in education was lower in Whitley. For instance, under half (47.5%) of adults aged 18-20 in Whitley were full-time students compared with 74.8% in Reading and 59.5% in England.

Full-time students in Whitley (2021)

Age	Whitley		Reading	England
	Number	%	%	%
16-17	251	90.0	93.2	93.0
18-20	162	47.5	74.8	59.5
21-24	75	11.8	35.6	24.8
25-29	44	4.0	6.3	5.5
30 and over	49	0.7	1.1	0.8
Total	581	6.4	11.3	7.7

Source: Office for National Statistics ([NOMIS](#))

In Whitley, people aged 16 and over were more likely to have Level 1 or Level 2 qualifications (1-4 or 5 or more GCSEs at A*-C or grade 9-4) compared with Reading, whilst they were less likely to have Level 3 qualifications (2 or more A levels) or Level 4 qualifications (degree or above). More than 1 in 5 people in Whitley (21.0%) had no formal qualifications (1,901 people) compared with 15.8% in Reading and 18.1% in England.

Highest level of qualification (aged 16 and over) in Whitley (2021)



Source: Office for National Statistics ([NOMIS](#))

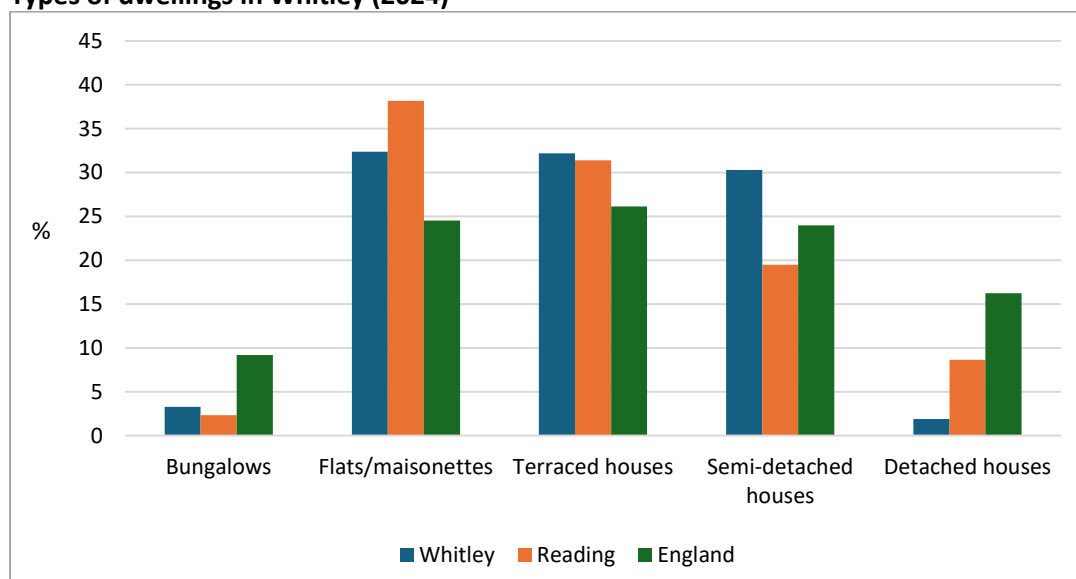
How we live

The health and wellbeing of people is influenced by many important factors. The types and quality of the houses in which people live, and the safety of the area in which people's everyday lives are lived and experienced, are some of the key drivers of these outcomes. This section of the profile explores how the people of Church live and includes a range of information about housing and crime.

Housing

Information on housing and households allows us to identify areas where people may be at risk of social exclusion, due to the type and condition of their housing or their household structure. There were an estimated 5,770 properties in Whitley in 2024. One third of properties (32.4%) were flats or maisonettes, whilst a further third (32.2%) were terraced houses. 30.3% were semi-detached properties.

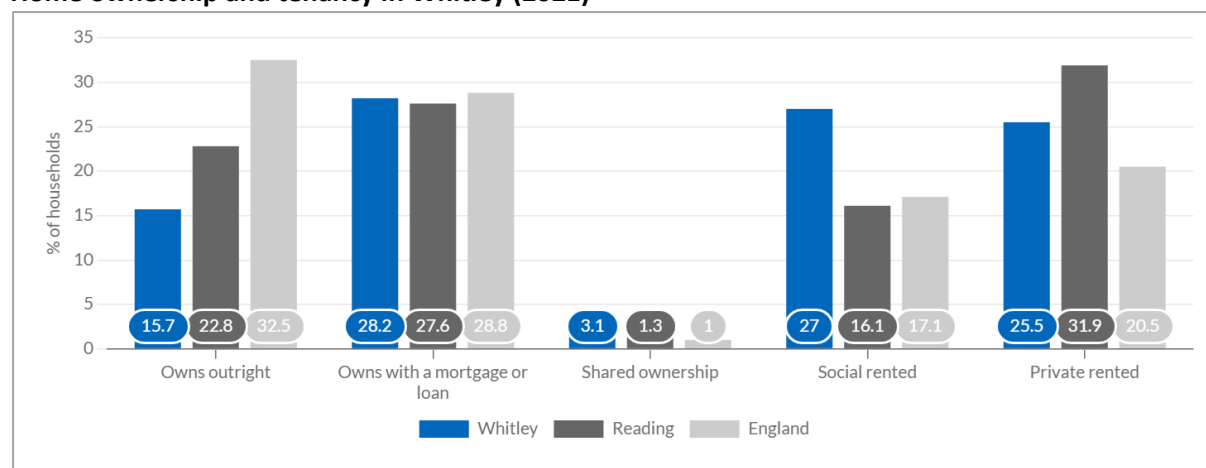
Types of dwellings in Whitley (2024)



Source: Valuation Office Agency ([Council Tax Statistics](#))

Based on the 2021 Census, 15.7% of households in Whitley owned their accommodation outright. Over half of households (52.5%) lived in rented accommodation, split between social and private rented accommodation compared with 48.0% in Reading and 37.6% in England.

Home ownership and tenancy in Whitley (2021)



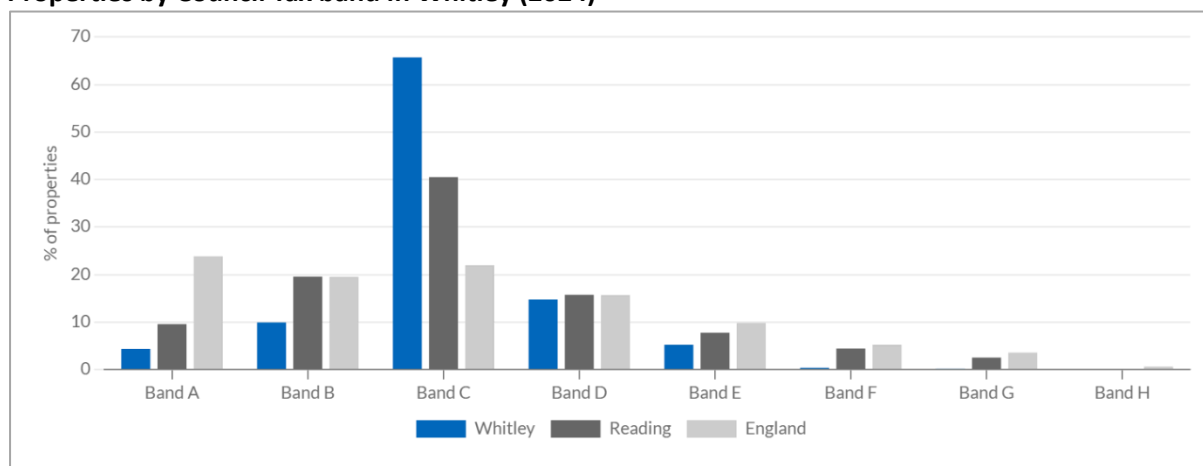
Source: Office for National Statistics ([NOMIS](#))

Council Tax

Council Tax was first introduced in 1993. The tax uses the relative value of homes to determine each household's contribution, with a higher level of tax being charged for homes in a higher band, with band A being the lowest and H being the highest.

In Whitley in 2024, the majority of properties (65.7%) were in Council Tax Band C (3,790 properties). This compares with 40.5% in Reading and 21.9% in England. Less than 1% of properties were in the three highest Council Tax Bands (F-H) compared with 7.0% in Reading and 9.3% in England.

Properties by Council Tax band in Whitley (2024)



Source: Valuation Office Agency ([Council Tax Statistics](#))

Overcrowding

Just under 1 in 10 households in Whitley (9.3%) were overcrowded in 2021, that is, had fewer rooms than required for everyone living in the accommodation. In Reading it was 10.1% and 6.4% in England. In regard to the numbers of bedrooms available, 8.1% of households in Whitley were overcrowded compared with 7.1% in Reading and 4.4% in England.

Household overcrowding in Whitley (2021)

Occupancy	Whitley		Reading %	England %
	Number	%		
Rooms				
Under-occupied	2,506	55.5	62.0	72.0
Ideal number	1,585	35.1	28.0	21.5
Overcrowded	421	9.3	10.1	6.4
Total	4,512	100	100	100
Bedrooms				
Under-occupied	2,305	51.1	57.5	68.8
Ideal number	1,843	40.8	35.5	26.8
Overcrowded	364	8.1	7.1	4.4
Total	4,512	100	100	100

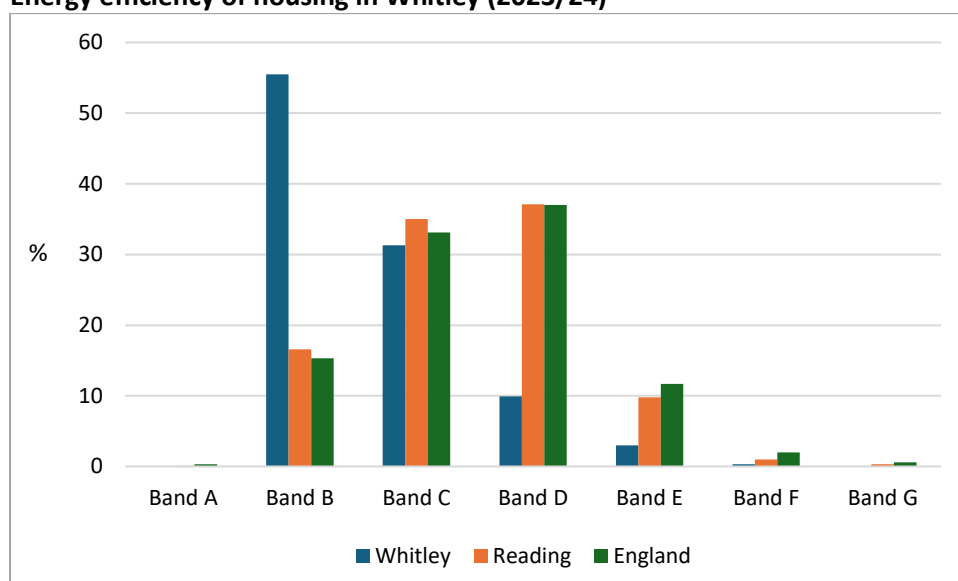
Source: Office for National Statistics ([NOMIS](#))

Quality of housing

Poor quality housing impacts people's health. Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) indicate the energy efficiency of dwellings and are based on information about a building's energy features, such as the building materials used, the heating systems, and insulation. EPCs typically range from 1-100, with Band A being the most efficient (92-100) and Band G (1-20) the least efficient.

Of the 3,007 properties assessed in Whitley in 2023/24, no properties fell into Band A (although across the whole of Reading, there were only 53). The majority (55.5%) of assessed properties in Whitley had an energy efficiency rating of Band B (81-91), whilst 98 assessed properties (3.3%) had energy efficiency ratings of Bands E, F or G (Reading 11.1%, England 14.2%).

Energy efficiency of housing in Whitley (2023/24)

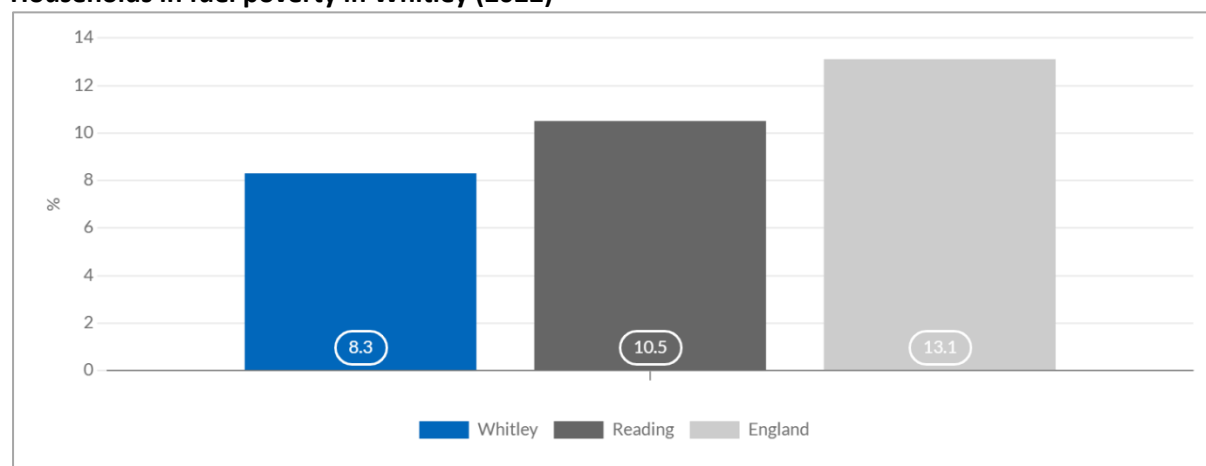


Source: Office for National Statistics ([Build a Custom Area Profile](#))

Fuel poverty

Fuel poverty refers to a situation where a household is unable to afford adequate heating. Living in cold homes is linked to poor health outcomes and an increased risk of morbidity and mortality for all age groups. Some of the key drivers of fuel poverty include low income, poor energy efficiency, and energy prices. In 2022, 8.3% of households in Whitley were experiencing fuel poverty, which was 429 households. This compares with 10.5% of households in Reading and 13.1% in England.

Households in fuel poverty in Whitley (2022)



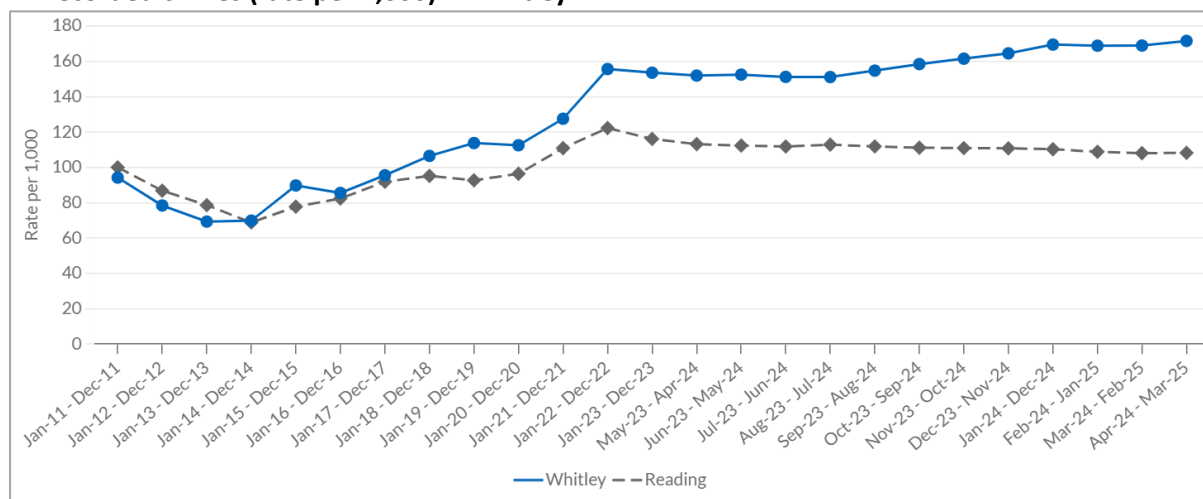
Source: Department for Energy Security and Net Zero ([Fuel Poverty](#))

Crime

The absence of a safe and secure place in which to live can have a dramatic impact on people's physical and emotional health and wellbeing, along with impacting their sense of belonging to and willingness and ability to engage with their local community.

Between April 2024 and March 2025, there were 1,897 recorded crimes in Whitley. The rate of recorded crimes continues to increase in Whitley, and since 2011, the rate has risen from 94.3 (per 1,000) to 171.6. The gap in the recorded crime rate between Whitley and Reading continues to widen.

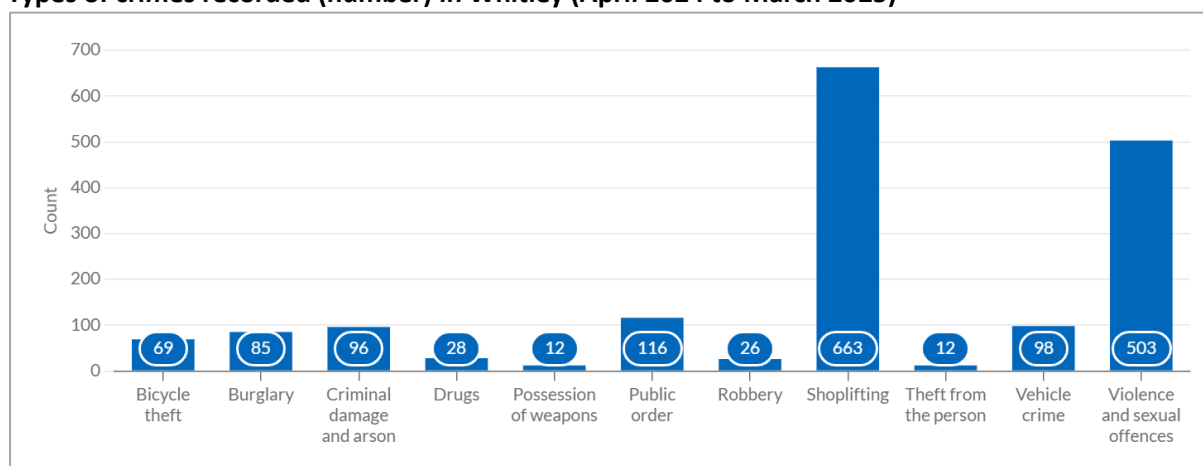
All recorded crimes (rate per 1,000) in Whitley



Source: data.police.uk ([Crime Statistics](#))

The five most common types of crime committed in Whitley between April 2024 to March 2025 were shoplifting (663 recorded crimes), violence and sexual offences (503), public order (116), vehicle crime (98), and criminal damage and arson (96). Violence and sexual offences, followed by shoplifting, were the most common types of crimes recorded across Reading.

Types of crimes recorded (number) in Whitley (April 2024 to March 2025)



Source: data.police.uk ([Crime Statistics](#))

Over the past two years (May 2023/April 2024 to April 2024/March 2025), rates of crime (per 1,000) have increased in Whitley among 6 of the 12 types of crime examined. Increases in crime rates were seen in bicycle theft, burglary, drugs, possession of weapons, robbery, and shoplifting. This compares with Reading where rates have increased among 4 of the 12 indicators.

Trends in recorded crimes in Whitley (May 2023/April 2024 to April 2024/March 2025)

Type of crime	Whitley	Reading
Bicycle theft	↑	↓
Burglary	↑	↓
Criminal damage and arson	↓	↓
Drugs	↑	↓
Possession of weapons	↑	↑
Public order	↓	↓
Robbery	↑	↑
Shoplifting	↑	↑
Theft from the person	↓	↑
Vehicle crime	↓	↓
Violence and sexual offences	↓	↓
Anti-social behaviour	↓	↓
All crime	↑	↓

Source: data.police.uk ([Crime Statistics](#))

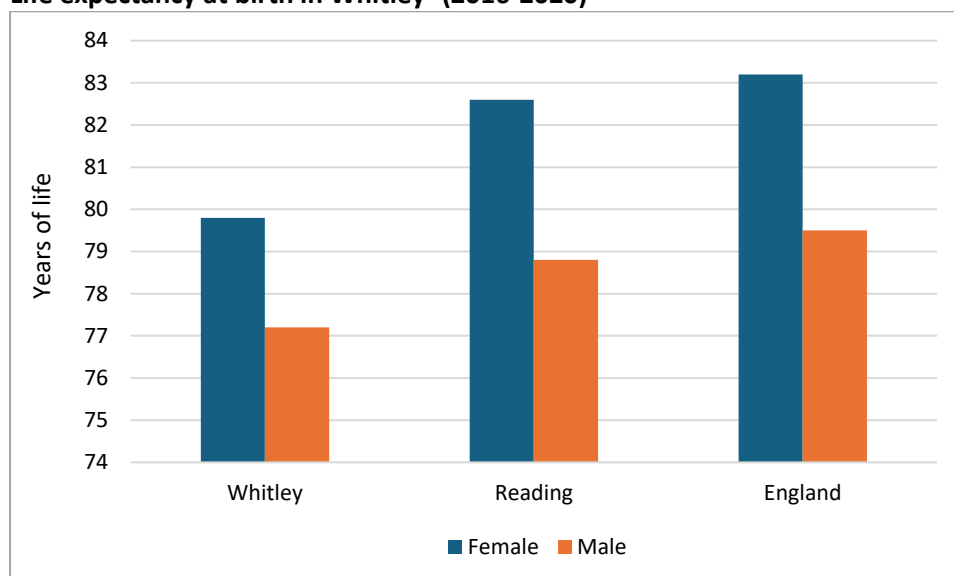
Health and health needs

This section of the profile looks at the health of people in Whitley and provides a summary of a number of high level indicators which can be used to help understand local health and health needs.

Life expectancy

Life expectancy is an estimate of the number of years someone may live and is an important measure of poor health and mortality. Life expectancy at birth in Whitley was 79.8 years for females and 77.2 years for males in 2016-2020, both of which were significantly lower than England.

Life expectancy at birth in Whitley¹ (2016-2020)



Source: Department of Health and Social Care ([Local health, public health data for small geographic areas](#))

¹ Based on the pre-2022 ward boundary for Whitley

Deaths

Deaths under the age of 75, or premature mortality, is a good indicator of the overall health of the population. Over a five year period, 207 people died prematurely in Whitley, which is an average of 41 people a year. The all-cause mortality ratio in Whitley was significantly higher than England, as were the ratios for premature deaths from cancer, circulatory disease, and deaths from causes considered preventable.

Premature mortality under the age of 75 in Whitley¹ (2016-2020)

Cause of death	Whitley		Reading SMR	England SMR
	Number	SMR ²		
All causes	207	146.1	111.1	100
Cancer	70	133.5	109.9	100
Circulatory disease	45	154.5	108.6	100
Preventable	108	169.9	109.1	100

Source: Department of Health and Social Care ([Local health, public health data for small geographic areas](#))

¹ Based on the pre-2022 ward boundary for Whitley

² Standardised Mortality Ratio (England = 100) – an SMR higher than 100 indicates higher deaths compared to England

Hospital admissions

Across a number of child and adult indicators, emergency admissions to hospital in Whitley were significantly higher than England. This was the case for young people aged 15-24 with injuries, hospital admissions for all causes, intentional self-harm, and for alcohol (broad).

Emergency hospital admissions in Whitley¹ (2016/17-2020/21)

Type of admission	Whitley	Reading	England
Emergency admissions (under 5s) ²	140.2	109.2	140.7
Injuries (under 5) ³	117.7	89.0	119.3
Injuries (under 15) ³	89.3	76.2	92.0
Injuries (15-24) ³	161.4	120.7	127.9
All causes (all ages)	128.5	97.5	100 ⁴
Intentional self-harm (all ages)	153.0	123.1	100
Hip fractures (65+)	99.2	89.3	100
Alcohol – broad (all ages) ⁵	114.7	93.4	100
Alcohol – narrow (all ages) ⁵	96.1	84.2	100

Source: Department of Health and Social Care ([Local health, public health data for small geographic areas](#))

¹ Based on the pre-2022 ward boundary for Whitley

² Crude rate per 1,000

³ Crude rate per 10,000

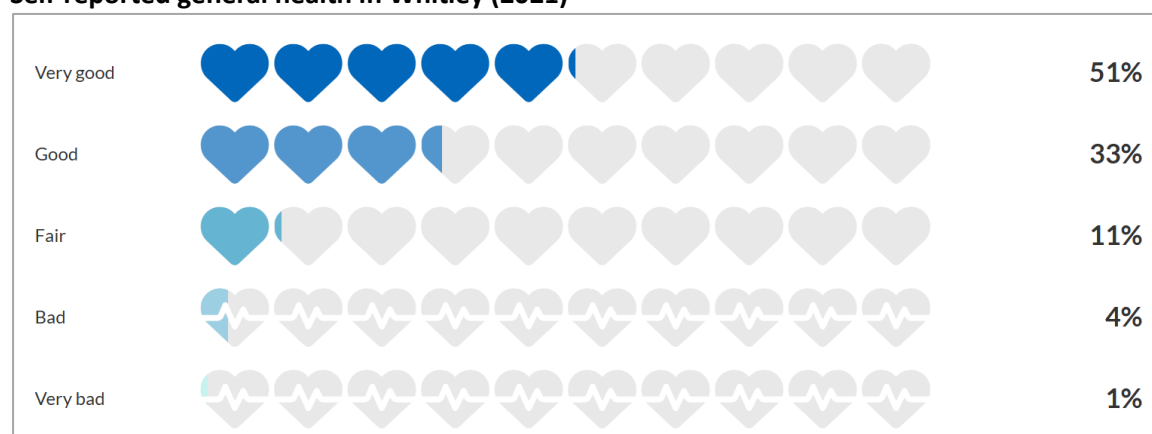
⁴ Standardised Admission Ratio (England = 100) – an SAR higher than 100 indicates higher admissions compared to England

⁵ Broad – primary or secondary diagnoses is for alcohol; Narrow – primary diagnosis is for alcohol

General health

Just over half (50.8%) of people in Whitley reported that their health was very good, whilst a further 32.8% reported that their health was good, based on the 2021 Census. In total, more than 8 out of 10 people (83.6%) reported that their health was very good or good in Whitley (9,617 people) compared with 85.6% in Reading and 82.2% in England. In contrast, 5.0% (574 people) reported that their health was either bad or very bad in Whitley compared with 3.7% in Reading and 5.2% in England.

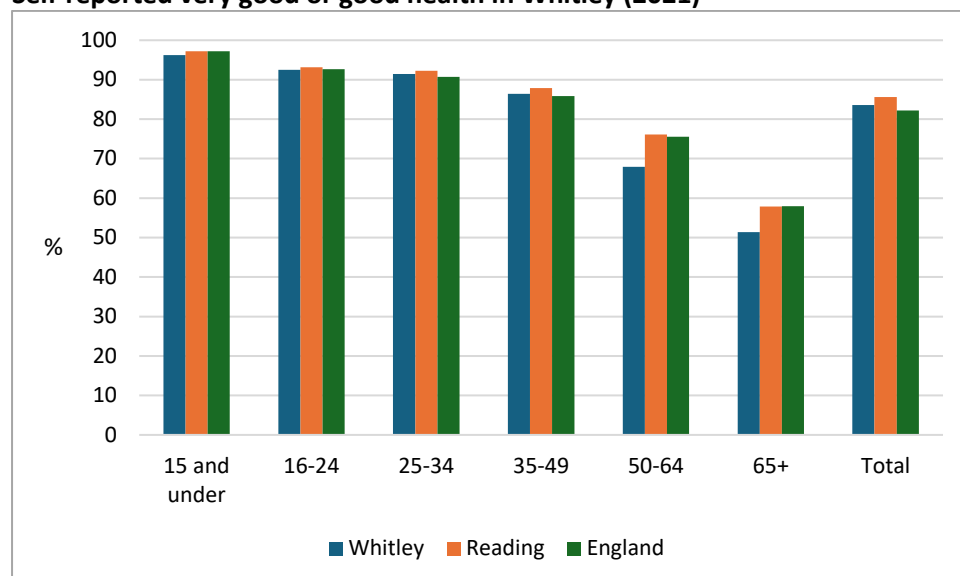
Self-reported general health in Whitley (2021)



Source: Office for National Statistics ([NOMIS](#))

Across all the different age groups in Whitley, the proportion of people who reported that their health was either very good or good was lower compared with Reading. Just over half of people aged 65 and over in Whitley (51.4%) reported that their health was either very good or good compared with Reading and England where it was 57.9% for both areas.

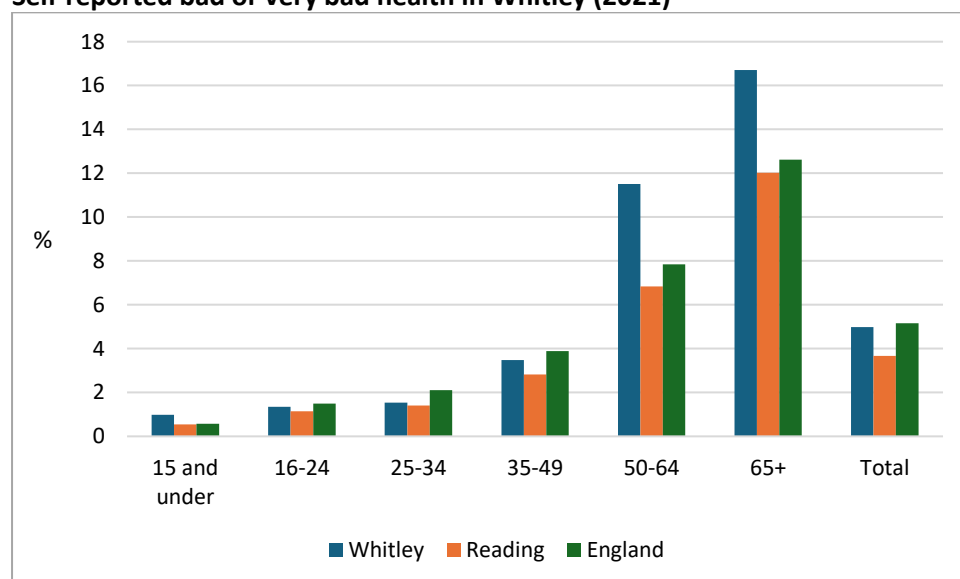
Self-reported very good or good health in Whitley (2021)



Source: Office for National Statistics ([Create a Custom Dataset](#))

Levels of reported bad or very bad health were higher in Whitley across the different age groups compared with Reading. This was particularly the case among those aged 50-64 and those aged 65 and over.

Self-reported bad or very bad health in Whitley (2021)



Source: Office for National Statistics ([Create a Custom Dataset](#))

Disability

Based on the 2010 Equality Act, 15.0% of people in Whitley (1,728 people) were disabled compared with 13.8% in Reading and 17.3% in England in 2021. Of those disabled, the day-to-day activities of 755 people were limited a lot, whilst the day-to-day activities of 973 people were limited a little.

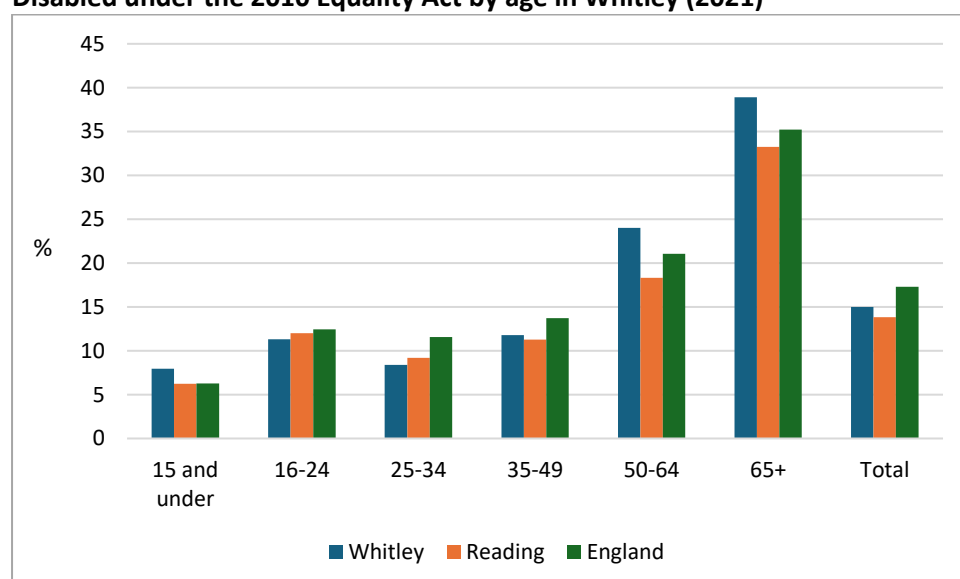
Disabled under the 2010 Equality Act in Whitley (2021)



Source: Office for National Statistics ([NOMIS](#))

Among the 1,728 people who were disabled in Whitley, levels of disability within the ward were higher than the proportions seen in Reading across all age groups, apart from those aged 16-34.

Disabled under the 2010 Equality Act by age in Whitley (2021)



Source: Office for National Statistics ([Create a Custom Dataset](#))

Whilst 15.0% of people in Whitley reported a disability, 85.0% did not. Among the 9,780 people who did not have a disability, 607 (6.2%) had a long term physical or mental health condition (although their day-to-day activities were not limited). This compared with 7.5% in Reading and 8.3% in England.

Chronic diseases

Information about a range of common chronic diseases such as asthma, diabetes, and coronary heart disease are collected by GPs on QOF Registers (Quality and Outcomes Framework). This information can be used to help understand and provide insights into the types of chronic conditions which people are likely to be experiencing. In Reading, this information is collected on the Connected Care System Insights tool.

In Whitley, the most common chronic condition recorded by GPs was hypertension, followed by depression, diabetes, asthma, and chronic kidney disease. Apart from dementia, the prevalence of chronic conditions recorded in Whitley were higher compared to Reading.

Chronic conditions recorded¹ on primary care registers in Whitley (June 2025)

Condition	Whitley		Reading
	Number	%	%
Hypertension	1,777	17.0	11.9
Depression	1,460	13.9	10.7
Diabetes	880	8.4	5.6
Asthma	612	5.8	4.7
Chronic kidney disease	392	3.7	2.7
Cancer	325	3.1	2.5
Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	269	2.6	1.1
Coronary heart disease	238	2.3	1.7
Atrial fibrillation	172	1.6	1.4
Stroke/transient ischaemic attack	167	1.6	1.2
Mental Health	131	1.3	1.0
Heart failure	129	1.2	0.9
Learning Disability	89	0.8	0.5
Rheumatoid arthritis	73	0.7	0.5
Epilepsy	71	0.7	0.5
Peripheral arterial disease	43	0.4	0.3
Dementia	41	0.4	0.6

Source: Connected Care System Insights

¹ Not all conditions will be recorded on primary care registers

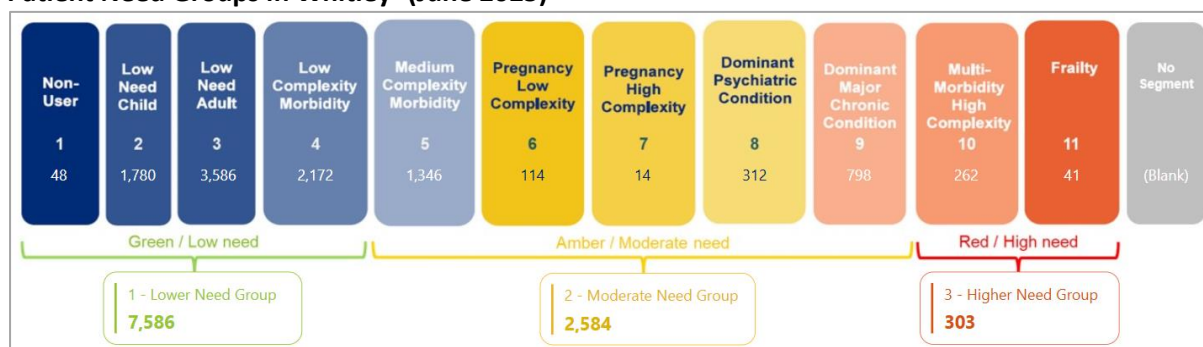
People in Whitley had an average of 1.5 chronic conditions compared with 1.2% in Reading. The GP registers also showed that 14.2% of people in Whitley were current smokers compared with 11.3% in Reading, whilst 3.2% of people in the ward had medium or high levels of alcohol consumption, compared with 3.9% across Reading.

Health needs

Connected Care provides health information about different groups or segments of people. Patient Need Groups, based on the [John Hopkins ACG Segmentation Model](#), classify people into 11 groups of need and can be used to help understand a population's health needs, develop clinical programming, understand patterns of care use and take targeted action to improve service use and costs.

In Whitley, 72.4% of people recorded on GP registers were classified into low need groups, 24.7% into moderate need groups, and 2.9% into high needs groups. In Reading, the corresponding proportions were 78.9%, 19.0% and 2.0%.

Patient Need Groups in Whitley¹ (June 2025)



Source: Connected Care System Insights

¹ The size of GP population registers and those resident in an area often differ

Patient Need Groups for different chronic conditions in Whitley are shown below. Using asthma as an example, the table shows that 2.9% of patients with low need had asthma, 12.5% with moderate need had asthma, whilst 23.1% with high need had asthma. The overall prevalence of asthma recorded on GP registers in Whitley was 5.8%. The table helps highlight how need varies between different types of chronic conditions.

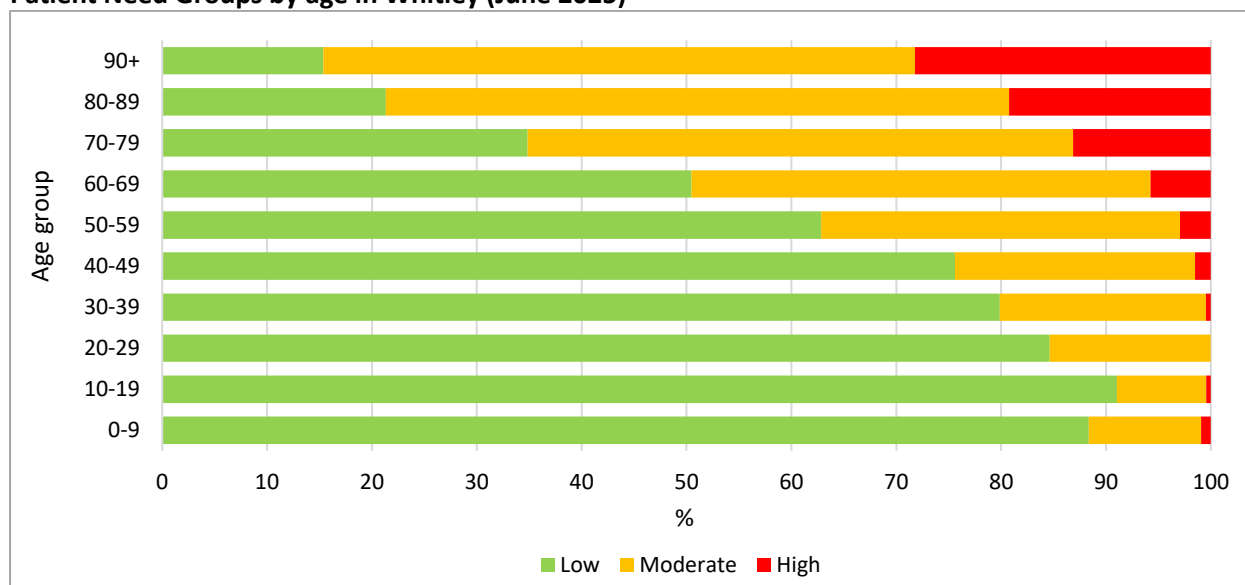
Patient Need Groups and chronic conditions recorded on primary care registers in Whitley (June 2025)

Condition	Patient Need Group			Population %
	Low	Moderate	High	
Asthma	2.9%	12.5%	23.1%	5.8%
Atrial fibrillation	0.3%	4.3%	14.2%	1.6%
Cancer	0.6%	7.4%	27.7%	3.1%
Chronic kidney disease	0.5%	10.6%	26.1%	3.7%
Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	0.2%	6.3%	28.1%	2.5%
Coronary heart disease	0.4%	5.1%	25.4%	2.3%
Dementia	0.0%	0.6%	7.9%	0.4%
Depression	7.6%	29.9%	36.6%	13.9%
Diabetes	2.3%	22.4%	40.9%	8.4%
Epilepsy	0.2%	1.9%	2.0%	0.7%
Heart failure	0.1%	2.9%	14.9%	1.2%
Hypertension	8.2%	37.4%	61.1%	17.0%
Learning Disability	0.4%	2.0%	2.0%	0.8%
Mental Health	0.0%	4.2%	5.0%	1.2%
Peripheral arterial disease	0.0%	0.9%	3.3%	0.3%
Rheumatoid arthritis	0.1%	2.3%	2.3%	0.7%
Stroke/transient ischaemic attack	0.2%	3.4%	20.1%	1.6%

Source: Connected Care System Insights

Patient need, as expected, increases with age. Among people aged under 20 in Whitley, for instance, around 90% were in low Patient Need Groups whilst less than 1% were in high need groups. On the other hand, 13.1% of 70-79 year olds were in high need groups, 19.2% of 80-89 year olds were in high need groups, whilst 28.2% of patients aged 90 and over were in high need groups.

Patient Need Groups by age in Whitley (June 2025)



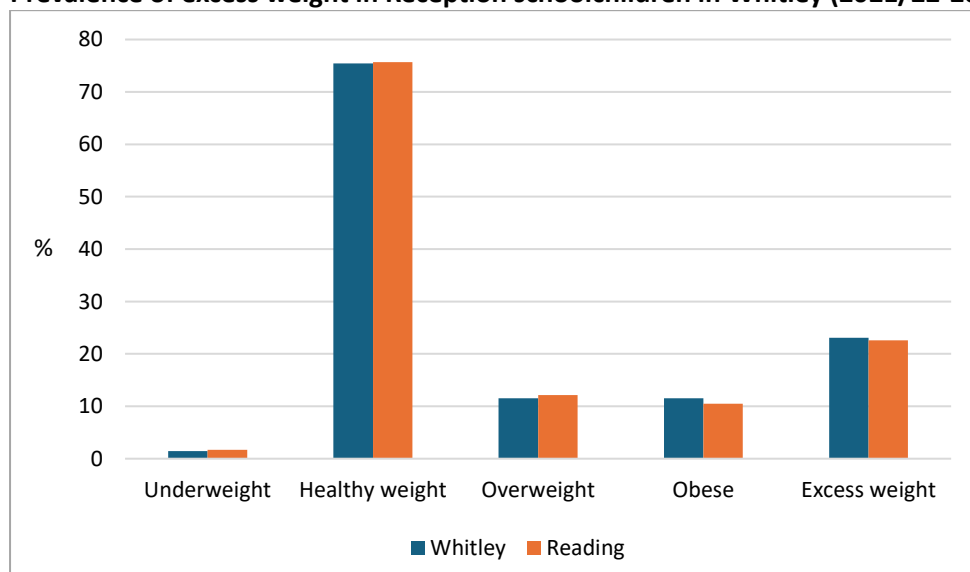
Source: Connected Care System Insights

Obesity and physical activity

The rise of childhood obesity and the implications of obesity persisting into adulthood are concerning. The health consequences of childhood obesity include increased blood lipids, glucose intolerance, Type 2 diabetes, hypertension, increases in liver enzymes associated with fatty liver, exacerbation of conditions such as asthma and psychological problems such as social isolation, low self-esteem, teasing and bullying.

Among Reception schoolchildren aged 4-5 in Whitley, 75.5% were recorded as having a healthy weight based on the annual National Child Measurement Programme. In Reading, it was 75.7%. In total, 23.1% of Reception schoolchildren in Whitley were recorded as being either overweight or obese ('excess weight') compared with 22.6% in Reading.

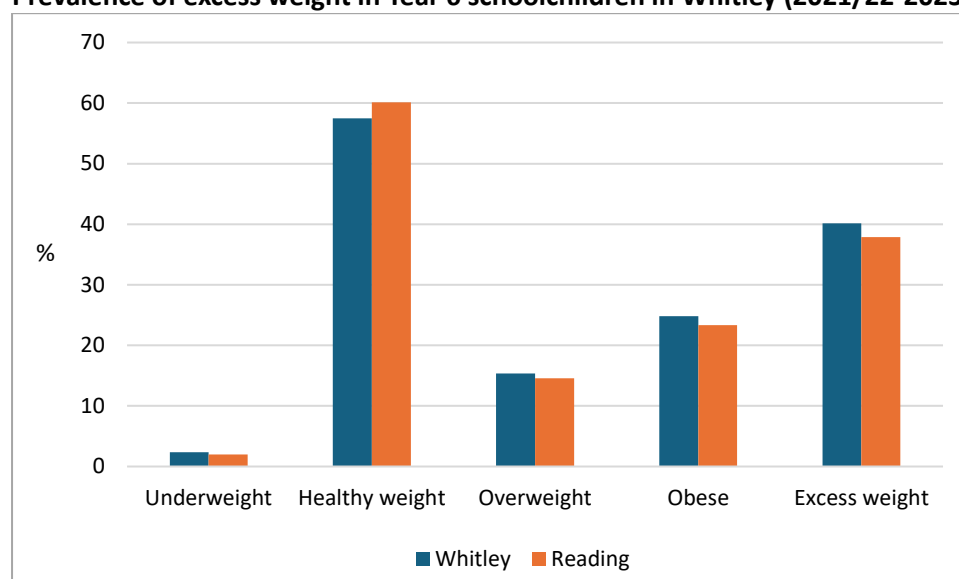
Prevalence of excess weight in Reception schoolchildren in Whitley (2021/22-2023/24)



Source: Public Health Intelligence Team, Reading Borough Council

Among Year 6 schoolchildren aged 10-11 in Whitley, 57.5% were recorded as having a healthy weight compared with 60.1% in Reading. In regard to excess weight, 40.2% of Year 6 schoolchildren in Whitley were recorded as being either overweight or obese compared with 37.9% in Reading.

Prevalence of excess weight in Year 6 schoolchildren in Whitley (2021/22-2023/24)



Source: Public Health Intelligence Team, Reading Borough Council

Based on figures for Reading ([Obesity, Physical Activity and Nutrition](#)), there were an estimated 3,159 adults aged 18 and over in Whitley who were overweight, and a further 2,297 who were obese in 2023/24. In total, 5,456 adults were estimated to be either overweight or obese Whitley, which is 6 out of 10 adults.

Physical inactivity is the 4th leading risk factor for mortality in the world accounting for 6% of deaths. People who have a physically active lifestyle have a 20-35% lower risk of cardiovascular disease, coronary heart disease and stroke compared to those who have a sedentary lifestyle. Regular physical activity is also associated with a reduced risk of diabetes, obesity, osteoporosis, colon and breast cancer, and with improved mental health. In older adults physical activity is associated with increased functional capacities.

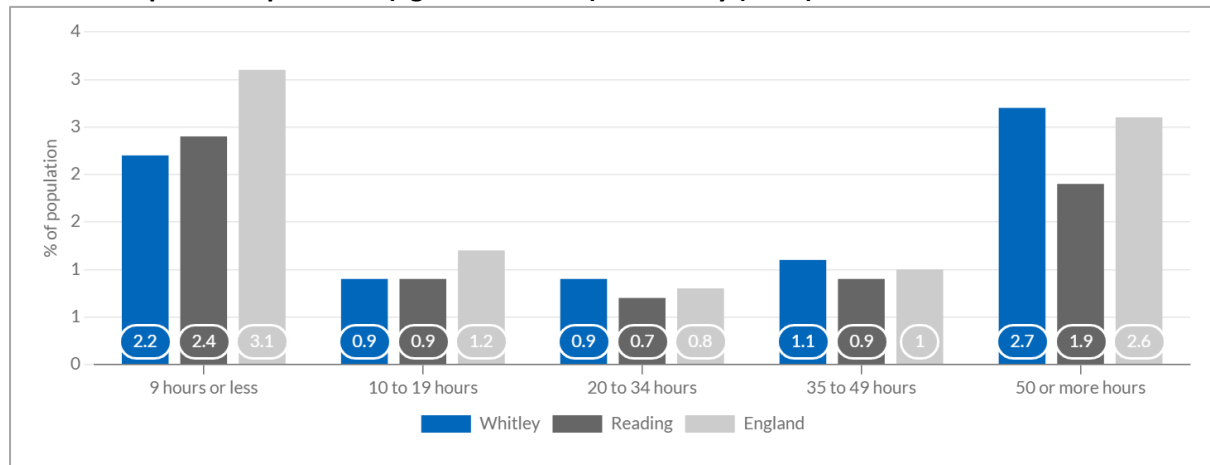
Based on figures for Reading ([Obesity, Physical Activity and Nutrition](#)), there were an estimated 6,368 adults aged 19 and over in Whitley who were physically active (around 73%), whilst 1,500 were estimated to be inactive (around 17%) in 2023/24.

Provision of unpaid care

A carer is anyone, including children and adults, who looks after a family member, partner or friend who needs help because of their illness, frailty, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction and cannot cope without their support. The care they give is unpaid. Unpaid carers who provide high levels of care for sick, or disabled relatives and friends, are more than twice as likely to suffer from poor health compared to people without caring responsibilities.

In Whitley, 847 people aged 5 and over (7.9%) provided unpaid care each week to family and friends in 2021 compared with 6.7% in Reading and 8.8% in England. People in Whitley were most likely to provide 50 hours or more of unpaid care a week.

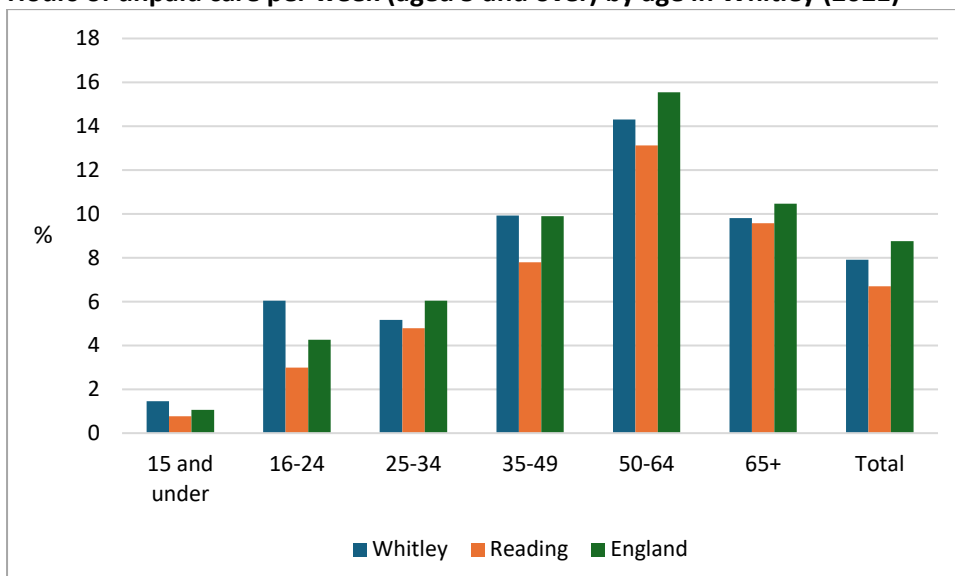
Hours of unpaid care per week (aged 5 and over) in Whitley (2021)



Source: Office for National Statistics ([NOMIS](#))

Among people who provided unpaid care to family and friends each week in Whitley, care was most likely to be provided by people aged 50-64 (14.3%). A total of 24 children aged 15 and under provided care each week across the ward (1.5%), whilst among older adults aged 65 and over, 118 (9.8%) provided care.

Hours of unpaid care per week (aged 5 and over) by age in Whitley (2021)



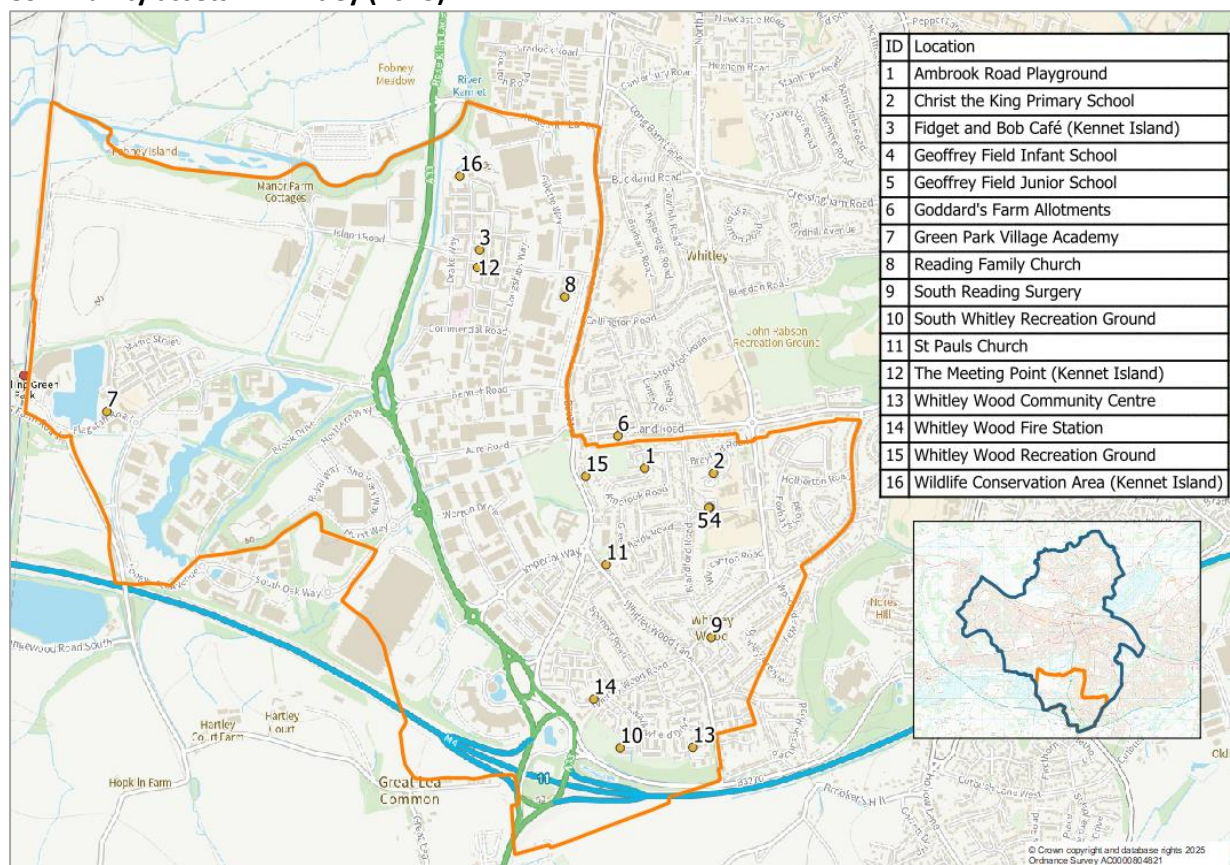
Source: Office for National Statistics ([NOMIS](#))

Community assets

The environments in which people live and work impact their physical and mental wellbeing in both positive and negative ways. Our environments can encourage or discourage how we interact with other people, influence people's health risk behaviours like diet and physical activity, can impact our motivation to act, as well as influencing our moods.

A list of key community assets in Whitley are shown in the map below.

Community assets in Whitley (2025)



Source: Public Health Intelligence Team, Reading Borough Council

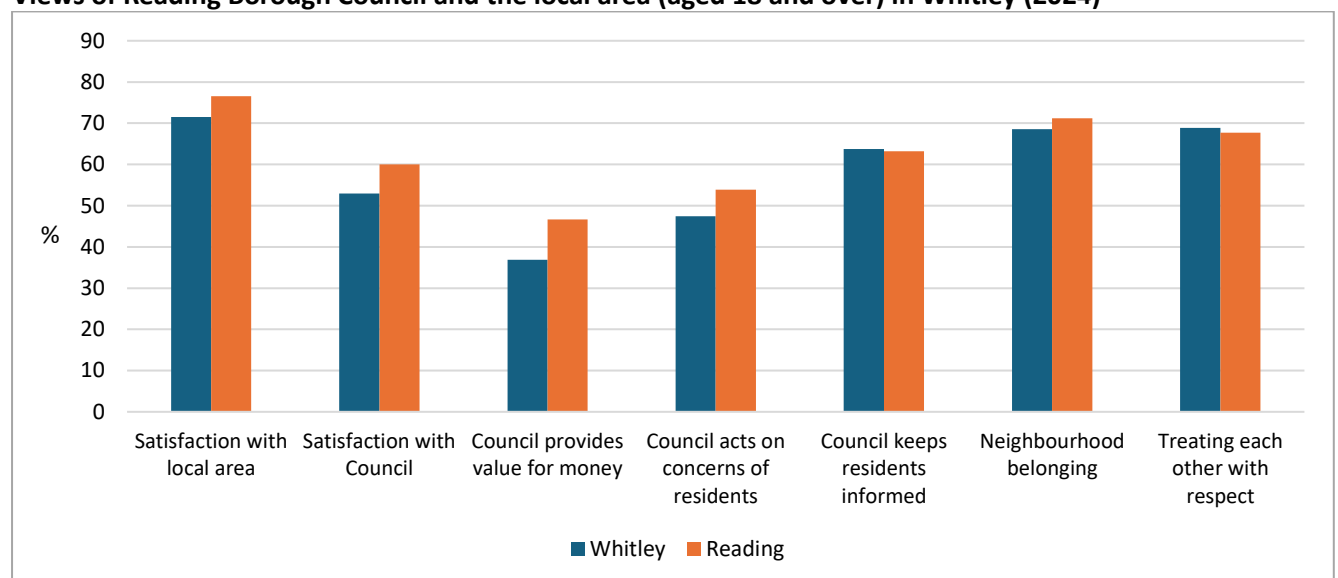
Voices, activities, and aspirations

Listening to the voice of the community is important. Improvements in health and wellbeing, targeting of services, increased engagement with marginalised groups, and an increased sense of being 'listened to' rather than being 'done to' can be achieved and improved by actively listening to people and involving them in decisions that affect their lives. This section of the profile explores the many voices of people in Whitley and highlights some of the day-to-day activities and aspirations that make up the daily lived experiences of local people.

Opportunities

The 2024 Residents Survey found that 7 out of 10 people (71.5%) aged 18 and over were satisfied with Whitley as a place to live compared with 76.5% for Reading overall. Whilst people living in Whitley tended not be too satisfied with the council, feelings of belonging to their neighbourhood and people being treated with respect were relatively high.

Views of Reading Borough Council and the local area (aged 18 and over) in Whitley (2024)



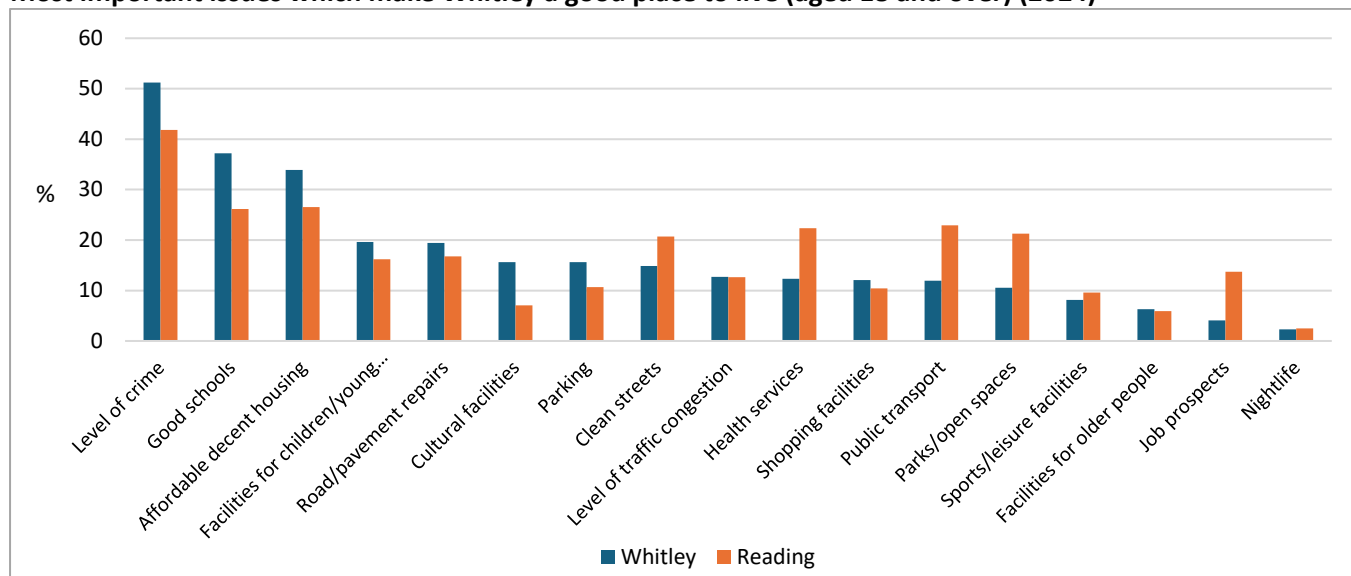
Source: 2024 Residents Survey, Reading Borough Council

The level of crime (51.2%), good schools (37.2%), and affordable decent housing (33.9%) were the three most important issues given by residents for helping make Whitley a good place to live.

The three most important issues which need improving in Whitley were the level of crime (45.5%), affordable decent housing (29.0%), and road and pavement repairs (28.7%).

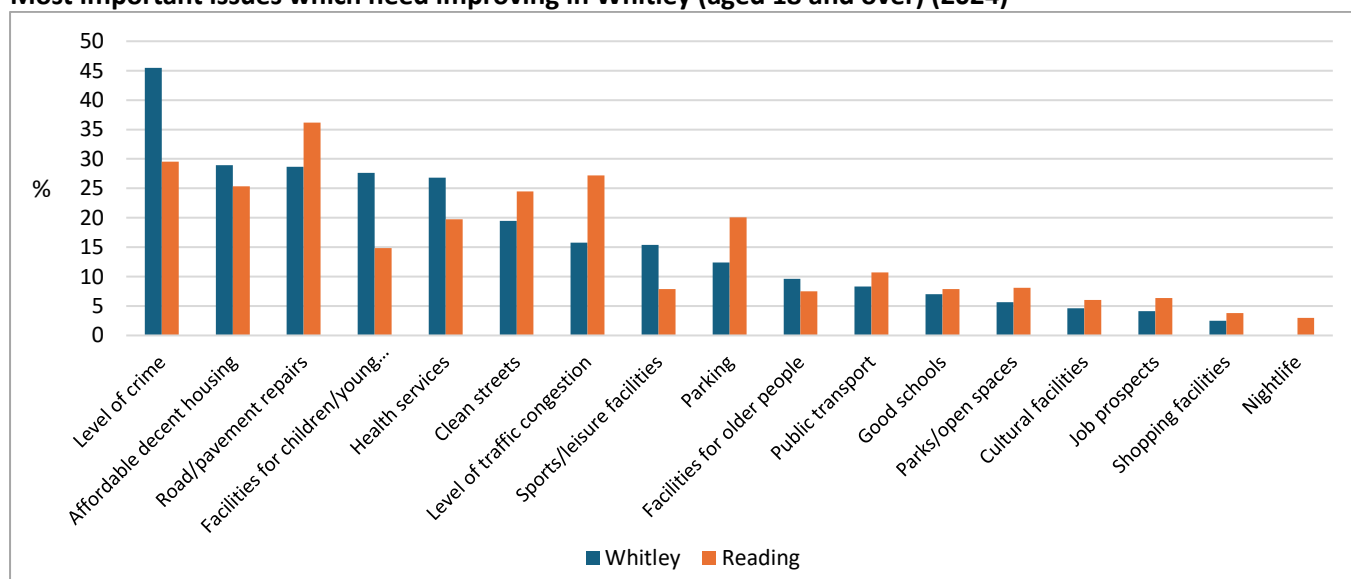
The Residents Survey highlights, in particular, the importance of crime and affordable housing as drivers of what makes Whitley both a good place to live in and also what needs improving most across the ward.

Most important issues which make Whitley a good place to live (aged 18 and over) (2024)



Source: 2024 Residents Survey, Reading Borough Council

Most important issues which need improving in Whitley (aged 18 and over) (2024)



Source: 2024 Residents Survey, Reading Borough Council

Local action

People living in Whitley actively participate in a wide range of activities aimed at promoting engagement, increasing life skills, and giving people an opportunity to 'get up and do something'. Some of these activities are outlined below:

- **Reading Seeds** – Creative Lives, in partnership with Reading Borough Council, are providing opportunities for people to get involved in creative activities where they live and to enhance community engagement ([Creative Lives](#)). 19 of the 32 creative projects are based in the two priority wards of Whitley and Church.

As Adele Barnett-Ward, Reading Borough Council's Lead Councillor for Leisure and Culture, said:

"Creative activities play a crucial role in fostering community connections and individual wellbeing. The Seed Funding for Creative Activities initiative is a fantastic opportunity for local groups and businesses to bring people together through imaginative projects. The benefits to people this money will bring is just fantastic and I'm really looking forward to hearing back and seeing the difference this funding makes."

- **South Reading Community Information Ambassadors** – Information Ambassadors are residents who help the community, ensuring people are aware, understand, and up to speed on the information, services and activities important to their health and wellbeing. The Ambassadors provide a range of information to local people in Whitley and Church to help them participate in a range of activities. Some recent examples include:
 - cooking healthy on a budget
 - community walks
 - community health champions
 - free health checks
 - career hubs
 - communication skills for refugees
 - computer and coffee clubs
 - digital skills programmes
 - creative theatre
 - male mentors for fatherless boys
 - nature nurture econet at the Cowsey
 - therapeutic gardening
 - dance, sweat, repeat
 - community parent and carer support group
- **Whitley Researchers** – The Whitley Researchers is a partnership between Whitley Community Development Association, local residents (in Whitley and Church) and the University of Reading. The programme involves local residents in conducting their own research, voicing their own needs and devising solutions to local issues ([Whitley Researchers](#)). Examples of work include:
 - A Welcome Home
 - Aspiration in Whitley
 - Way to Health
 - Working better with Whitley
 - Food4families

A different view

Top down assumptions about local communities, particularly those that are most disadvantaged, often miss the more relevant issues that impact on residents. Two examples from the Whitley community highlight the views of local people.

- **Aspirations in Whitley** – The [Aspiration in Whitley](#) project (2018) explored the aspirations of young people in the Whitley community (Whitley and Church) and considered the barriers they faced in realising their hopes and ambitions. It also explored how schools, families and the wider community could work better together to help young people reach their potential

and realise their aspirations. The report found widespread aspirations among young people and their parents, alongside a strong community spirit and a willingness to tackle local issues together.

As one community participant said:

“...Whitley, the community, has so much potential, so many people who want to make a difference, that anything is possible. People working together, people believing in each other and themselves is what will make the greatest difference. I think that is on the way to happening”.

- **Levelling up South Reading: A Resident Engagement Project (2024)** – The Engagement Project ([Reading Welfare Rights](#)) explored barriers to work among people aged 16 and over in the wards of Whitley and Church. Barriers to work were categorised into four themes: health, discrimination, education, and logistical barriers. The main recommendations of the work included:
 - **Health** – courses to help with confidence and self-esteem in the workplace; support for those on disability benefits to get into work if able
 - **Language and culture** – transitional courses for those new to the country and South Reading; more ESOL classes locally; protect residents from being discriminated against by employers
 - **Education and experience** – run careers and volunteering fairs in South Reading outside of working hours; hold training for residents in CV writing, interview skills and job searching
 - **Care** – promote affordable, wrap-around childcare for parents wanting to get back into work; support young carers into the workplace
 - **Geography and transport** – invest in a genuine local economy to create jobs in South Reading; investigate cheaper transport options for job seekers to central Reading

The Project found that many residents in South Reading felt out of touch with the Council and what they do, and highlighted the importance of meeting local people where they were and to recognise that Reading is not a ‘one size fits all town’. South Reading was seen as a special place, a close-knit community, with diversity as its strength. A key theme which emerged from the Project was that people were tired of the stereotypes about Whitley and Church, which they feel are unfair. As one person noted:

“South Reading has a lot to be proud of. It benefits from a lot of investment which doesn’t gain traction because we don’t treat people as individuals, and mark the neighbourhood as “deprived” – maybe we should reverse that, focus on the strengths and build on those and the good news stories”.