



**Isle of Wight
Council**

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Healthy Lives

Lifestyle risk factors for adults

October 2024

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1 Introduction

Our behaviours, personal circumstances and illnesses hugely affect our life expectancy and health. Influences on our health are particularly important before birth and during early childhood. These influences and risk factors continue to accumulate, and their effects build as we move into adulthood. Preventing exposure to these risk factors and reducing inequalities in how these risk factors are distributed among our population, can have a positive impact on our health.

Local public health teams work to both prevent and reduce people's exposures to risk factors across all stages of life. We commission services which help people reduce their risk factors (for example, smoking). We also work alongside other organisations to provide people with the support they need to make healthy decisions and prevent exposure to negative risk factors in the first place.

This chapter focuses on:

- the risk factors, causes and protective factors which influence our health
- the health inequalities which are evident and
- the potential impact COVID-19 has had.

Data in this written summary is correct as of August 2024. The data in this report can be explored further by smaller geographies in the JSNA Healthy Lives data report¹. The data report will be updated continuously, as new data becomes available.

The health outcomes of our population, and how these impact different population groups, are discussed in more detail in the accompanying JSNA reports².

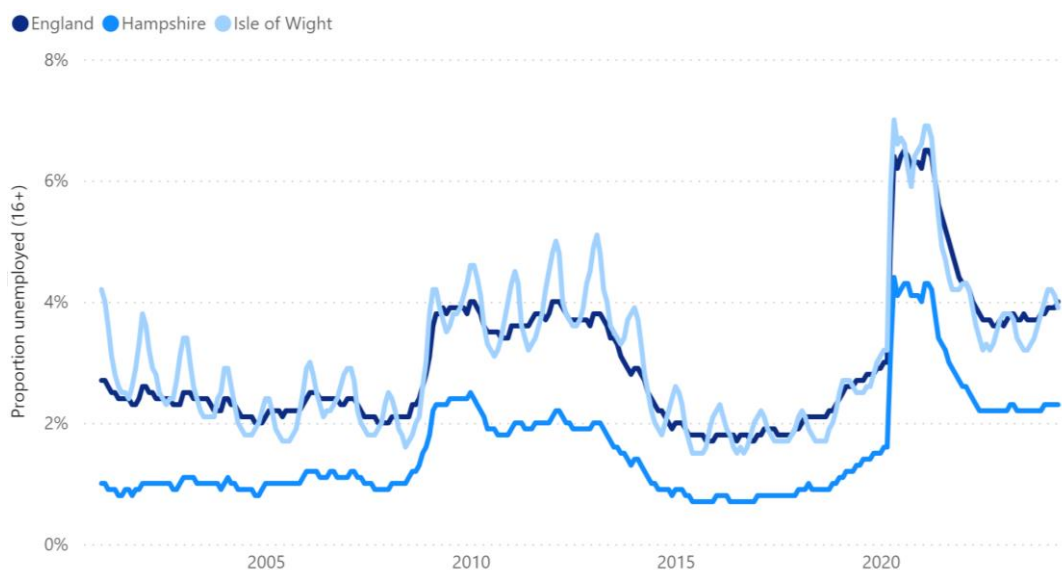
¹ [JSNA Healthy Lives data report](#)

² [JSNA reports](#)

2 Unemployment

Work is typically good for an individual's physical and mental health and wellbeing, and access to local employment and good working conditions can influence the health of a community³. In England the proportion of adults claiming Universal Credit has declined after a sharp increase during the COVID-19 pandemic, to 4% in May 2024. The rate on the Isle of Wight was comparable to England, at 3.9% in May 2024.

Figure 1 – Proportion of people claiming Universal Credit, 2001 to 2024



Nationally and locally, there are inequalities in employment rates between men and women (men have higher employment rates), age groups (those aged 25 to 49 have higher rates than those aged 16 to 24 or those aged 50 to 64), and disability (those without a disability have higher rates than those with a disability). At a national level people from White ethnic groups have higher rates of employment than those from ethnic minority groups.

Poorer quality employment can impact on health and wellbeing⁴. One example of this is zero-hour contracts. While these types of contracts can provide flexibility for employees to choose when they work, they have also been associated with poorer mental health. The South East region has 2.8% of people in employment on a zero-hours contract in 2024. Similar to national trends, this has been increasing in recent years, although there has been a slight decrease since 2023. Applying this percentage to the Isle of Wight working age population, this suggests approximately 2,300 people are currently working on a zero-

³ ["Is work good for your health and wellbeing?"](#)

⁴ [What the quality of work means for our health | The Health Foundation](#)

hours contract on the Island. Nationally, the proportion of people on zero-hours contracts is higher in females, and 16- to 24-year-olds.

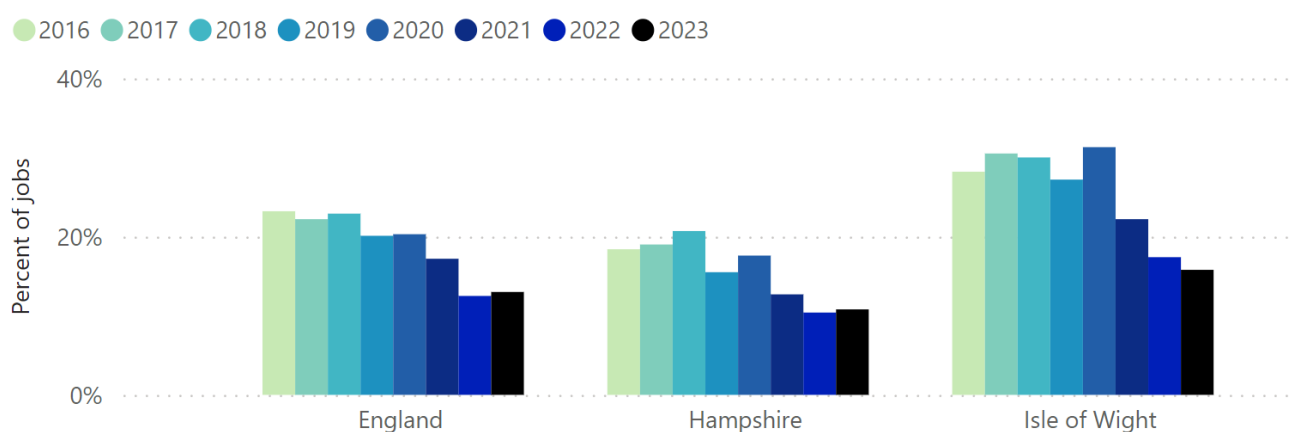
The pandemic had a significant impact on employment. During the first lockdown, all non-essential businesses were instructed to close. Those working in food service, accommodation, arts and entertainment were most affected. The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) provided economic support by enabling workers to be furloughed. National data suggests that young working age people were most likely to be furloughed instead of working throughout the pandemic⁵.

⁵ [Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme statistics: July 2020 - GOV.UK](#)

3 Low pay and poverty

A 'living wage' can be defined as a job which pays enough to meet the local cost of living – this is different from the National Living Wage set by the government. The proportion of jobs where the pay is lower than living wage has decreased between 2016 and 2023 nationally from 23.2% to 13%⁶. The same pattern has been shown on the Isle of Wight (from 28.2% in 2016 to 15.8% in 2023). In 2023, women are more likely to be working in roles that pay lower than the living wage nationally (15.7% compared with 10.4% for men).

Figure 2 – Proportion of jobs paying lower than living wage, 2016 to 2023



There are a number of different ways of defining and measuring poverty and low income, and no single definition is universally accepted. The headline indicators currently used in the UK are:

- An individual is in relative poverty (or relative low income) if they are living in a household with income below 60% of median household income in that year. This measure essentially looks at inequality between low- and middle-income households⁷.
- An individual is in absolute poverty (or absolute low income) if they are living in households with income below 60% of the 2010/11 median, uprated for inflation. By using an income threshold that is fixed in time, this measure looks at how living standards of low-income households are changing over time⁸.

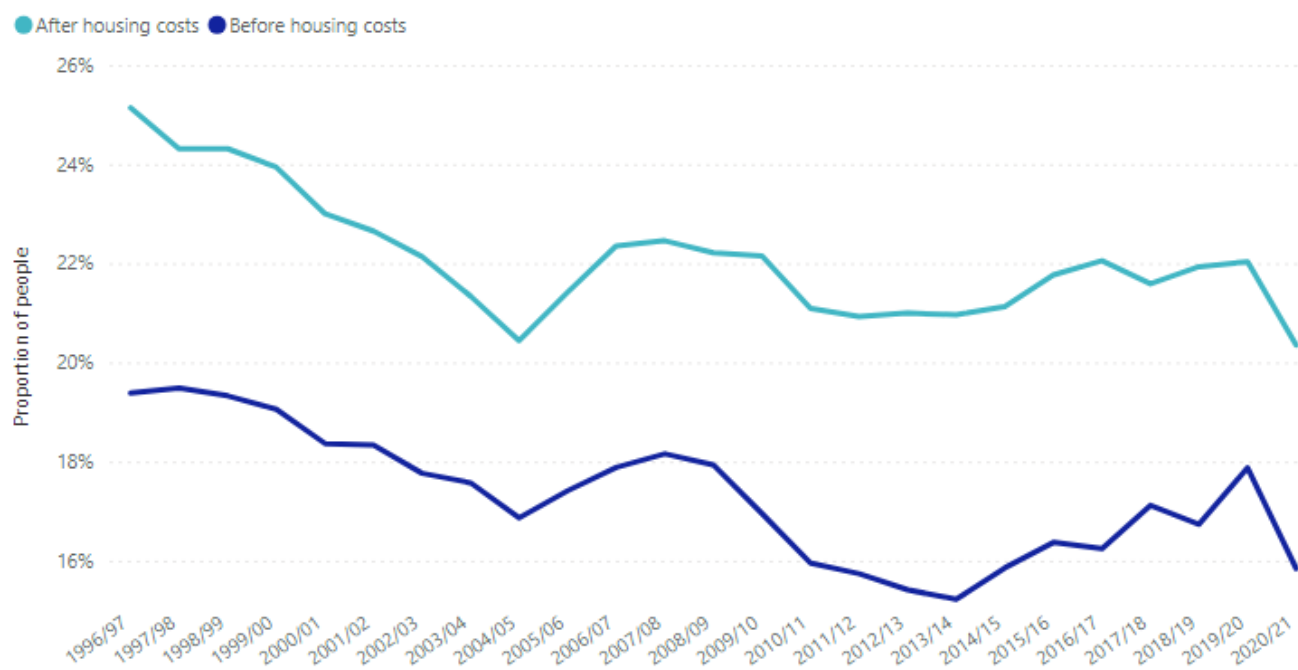
⁶ [Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings \(ASHE\) – Estimates of the number and proportion of employee jobs with hourly pay below the living wage, by work geography, local authority and parliamentary constituency, UK: April 2020 and April 2021 - Office for National Statistics](#)

⁷ Household income from all sources: earnings, benefits, state and private pensions, investments and any other income. As larger households are likely to need a higher level of income to achieve the same quality of life as a smaller household, these household incomes are 'equivalised' to adjust for household size and composition.

⁸ The base year from which inflation is calculated is 2010/11, and inflation is now calculated using Consumer Prices Index (CPI). Editions of this data before 2014/15 used Retail Prices Index (RPI) which shows a higher rate of inflation, and therefore moving to CPI reduces the number of individuals counted as living in absolute low income.

These measures can be presented before and after housing costs (BHC and AHC). Nationally the proportion of individuals living in relative poverty has remained relatively stable since 1994/95, standing at 20.3% (AHC) in 2020/21. The proportion of children living in relative poverty in the UK has also remained relatively stable since 1994/95 and is now at 27% (AHC) in 2020/21, representing around 3.9 million children⁹.

Figure 3 – Proportion of individuals living in relative poverty, UK, 1996/97-2020/21



There were differences between different demographic groups in the population in terms of relative poverty. Higher proportions of those living in socially rented housing (46%, AHC) and private rented (33%, AHC) were living in relative poverty in 2019/20, compared with those living in a house with a mortgage (11%, AHC) or owned outright (15%, AHC). Households with a disabled person in the family were also more likely to live in relative poverty (31% compared with 19%, AHC). There were also large differences in relative low income by ethnic group over the years 2017/18 to 2019/20, with those from non-White ethnic groups more likely to be living in relative poverty.

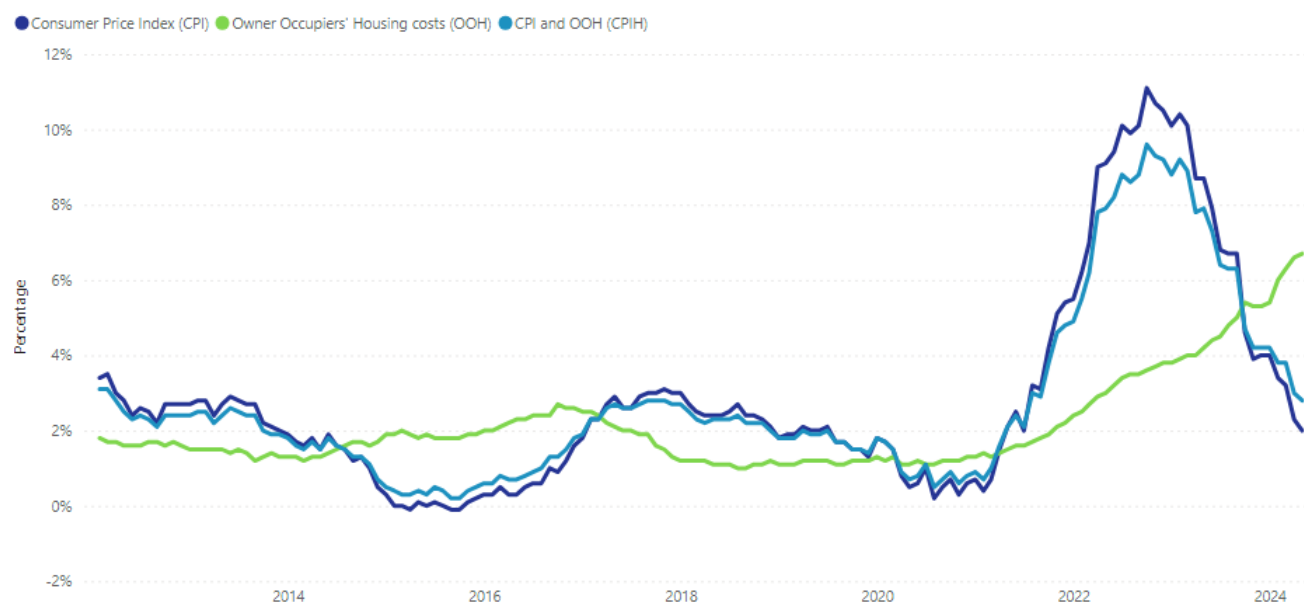
It should be noted that the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis are yet to be fully included in any of these figures.

⁹ [Households below average income: for financial years ending 1995 to 2021 - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/households-below-average-income-for-financial-years-ending-1995-to-2021)

4 Cost of living

The increasing cost of living has been covered widely in the media and data has shown that in 2022 there have been sharp increases in the costs of everyday essentials and fuel. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) and associated measures the OOH (Owner Occupier's Housing costs) and CPIH (the measure which includes CPI and OOH) reflect these increases in prices¹⁰.

Figure 4 – CPI, OOH and CPIH, 2012 to 2024



The factors which have contributed the most to the increase in CPI are housing and household services (which includes energy costs), transport, and food and non-alcoholic beverages.

Household are calculated to be living in fuel poverty when the energy efficiency rating of their home is in bands D, E, F or G and when their income after housing costs is below the poverty line. It is therefore driven by three factors: energy costs, energy efficiency of the home and income. Cold homes have been linked to an increased risk of developing a wide range of health conditions, including asthma, arthritis and pneumonia, as well as unintentional injury¹¹. There are higher numbers of households with lower energy ratings on the Isle of Wight. The majority of homes with low energy ratings are owner-occupied and likely to be older buildings¹². Data on the proportion of households in fuel poverty can be found in the Healthy Places report¹³.

¹⁰ [Consumer price inflation, UK - Office for National Statistics](#)

¹¹ https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/documents/Fuel_poverty_health_inequalities.pdf

¹² <https://epc.opendatacommunities.org/domestic/search>

¹³ [JSNA Healthy Places JSNA report](#)

As of July 2022, the cost of living began increasing and it was estimated that 17% of UK households experienced 'serious financial difficulties' by October 2022. By May 2023, this had reduced to 14%, although this is still higher than it had been at the start of 2020 (11%)¹⁴. Groups who were more likely to be in 'serious financial difficulties' include single parents and social renters. This impacts on the decisions people make about the quality of food they eat, the heating they chose to use, and how they can spend any disposable income.

¹⁴ [The 'new normal'?](#)

5 Gambling

Gambling can impact on the health and wellbeing of individuals, families, communities and society in terms of resources (e.g. money and debt), physical and mental health and relationships.

Estimates suggest around 46% of the population in the South East have gambled in the previous year, however, this estimate includes the National Lottery and one-off sporting events, such as the Grand National, which many people participate in without gambling throughout the remainder of the year. Gambling is more common amongst men, and in less deprived populations. The Health Survey for England (2021) shows that 50% of the population in the least deprived quintile had gambled in the last 12 months, compared to 46% of those in the most deprived quintile¹⁵.

Problem gambling or at-risk gambling is difficult to quantify and there are different methods for establishing if someone is participating in risky gambling. Estimates from the Health Survey for England 2021 suggest that 0.3% of the population are problem gamblers, which is more common amongst men than women. This equates to 3,427 people on the Isle of Wight, although this may be an underestimate¹⁶.

Figure 5 – Proportions of people gambling applied to the Isle of Wight population

	Total %	Isle of Wight
Non-problem gambler	97.2	138,444
Low risk gambler	1.9	2,706
Medium risk gambler	0.6	855
Problem gambler	0.3	427

No significant differences in problem gambling were reported between socioeconomic groups, however, a higher rate of problem gambling was reported in people from ethnic minority groups (8.1% compared with 2.0% for white ethnic groups)¹⁷.

¹⁵ [Health Survey for England, 2021 part 1 - NHS England Digital](#)

¹⁶ [Health Survey for England, 2021: Data tables - NHS England Digital](#)

¹⁷ [Annual GB Treatment And Support Survey - GambleAware](#)

6 Serious violence

In July 2019, the Government announced it would bring forward legislation introducing a new Serious Violence Duty. The duty makes clear that violence as is not limited to physical violence against the person. It provides that, for the purpose of the Duty, violence includes domestic abuse, sexual offences, violence against property, and threats of violence, but does not include terrorism.

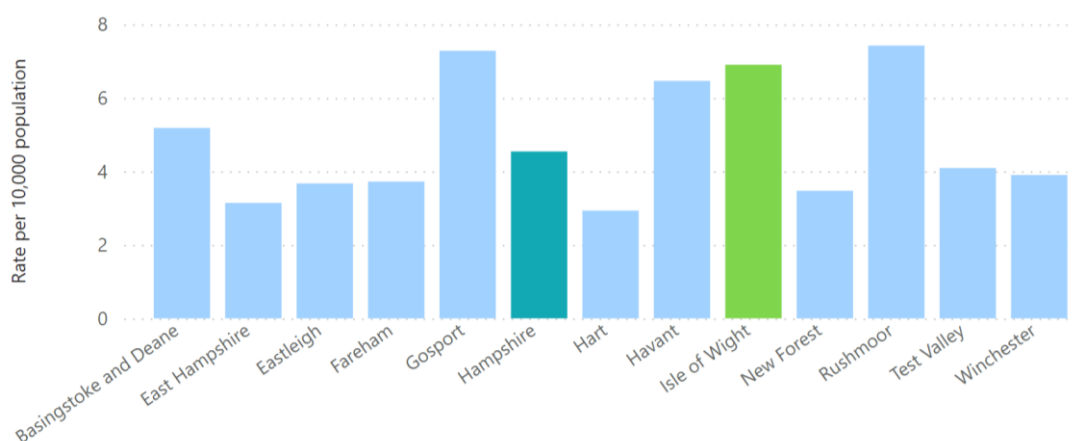
Serious violence impacts physical and emotional health and can cause serious impacts on the health, social and economic outcomes of individuals, communities and societies. An individual's involvement in serious violence increases risks of health harming behaviours, such as higher risk of future violence and reduced prospects in employment, education and wellbeing.

There is no one reason to explain why some people or populations are vulnerable to violence. Instead, there are a range of factors which increase the risk of being involved in violence. These are grouped into four categories (Society, Community, Relationship and Individual):

- Society: economic inequality, gender inequality, cultural norms supporting violence, high firearm availability, weak economic safety nets
- Community: Poverty, high unemployment, high crime levels, local illicit drug trade
- Relationship: poor parenting practices, marital discord or violent conflict, delinquent peers
- Individual: child maltreatment, alcohol consumption or drug use, poor educational attainment, fear of crime and concerns over social status

When looking at these risk factors, the Isle of Wight has a high risk of violence offences, 6.9 per 10,000 population in 2016/17-2022/23.

Figure 6 – Most serious violence offences per 10,000 population, 2016/17-2022/23



Using the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary definition of serious violence, there were 757 serious violence crimes across the Isle of Wight between October 2016 and September 2024. Analysis of the hotspots of serious violence crimes suggests that urban areas have a higher crime rate compared to the rural areas of the Island. Despite an increasing trend in serious violence crimes during the years leading up to the pandemic, serious violence crime offences have decreased every year since 2020/21. There was a 12% decrease in 2023/24 from 2022/23. Knife-enabled crime on the Island has increased every year since the pandemic, with a 10% increase from 2022/23 to 2023/24. A similar trend was seen nationally with a 4% increase in knife-enabled crimes for the year ending September 2024 compared to the previous year¹⁸.

Victims of serious violence on the Island are most commonly males and aged between 15 and 25, with roughly 71% of all victims being male and 24% being aged between 15 and 25. This trend is seen at a national level, with males and adults aged 16 to 24 being the most common victim of serious violence¹⁹.

¹⁸ [Crime in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics](#)

¹⁹ [The nature of violent crime: appendix tables - Office for National Statistics](#)

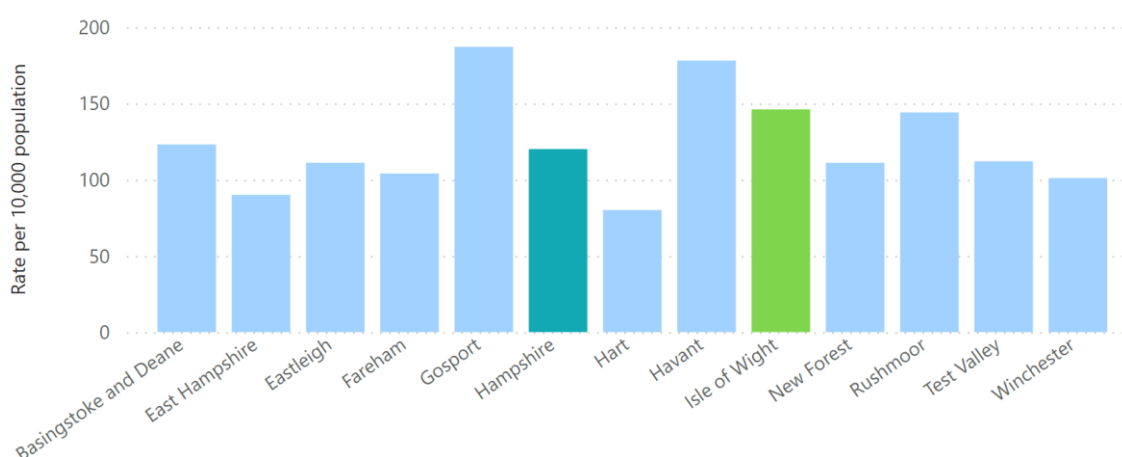
7 People affected by domestic abuse

In 2021, the government published the Domestic Abuse Act. The act created a statutory definition of domestic abuse defining domestic abuse where both persons involved are “each aged over 16 and are personally connected to each other, and the behaviour is abusive”. Behaviour is recognised as abusive if it is an incident or pattern of any of the following: physical, sexual, economic, psychological, emotional or any other abuse or violent, threatening, controlling or coercive behaviour²⁰.

Domestic abuse-related crime within the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary area has seen an increase from 2016/17 to 2022/23, from 83.5 per 10,000 population to 122 per 10,000 population. However, the 2022/23 figure is lower than in 2021/22 (137 per 10,000 population). This trend is also evident at a national level and can be partly attributed to improved recording by the police alongside increased reporting by victims²¹. The decrease between 2021/22 and 2022/23 can be primarily attributed to changes in crime counting rules in which now the maximum number of crimes that can be recorded in an incident which contains more than one type of crime is now one (previously two). On the Isle of Wight, domestic abuse flagged crime is more likely to occur in urban areas than rural areas and is correlated with deprivation, with higher rates of domestic abuse flagged crime in the most deprived deciles. The most common relationship between the offender and victim in domestic abuse flagged crimes is heterosexual ex-partners followed by current heterosexual partners.

The distribution of domestic abuse-related crimes across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight and an analysis of the risk factors suggests that Havant, Rushmoor, Gosport and the Isle of Wight are areas of higher risk for increased domestic abuse.

Figure 7 – Domestic abuse offences, 2022/23



²⁰ [Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#)

²¹ [Domestic abuse in England and Wales overview - Office for National Statistics](#)

The challenges of providing a comprehensive picture of the true extent of domestic violence in a geographical area are recognised nationally. On the Island, an estimated 4,080 females and 1,780 males aged 16+ experienced domestic abuse in the last year. Around 3,600 children aged under 18 have been exposed to domestic abuse between adults in their homes during their childhood on the Island. These are figures derived from applying national statistics on crime rates to the population of the Island²². This means that we are assuming that the Island is not significantly different to the rest of the UK in terms of patterns and rates of domestic abuse and violence. In reality, it may be better, or worse, but sufficient research has been conducted into domestic violence and abuse such that we may safely generalise some of the findings to our local population.

By comparing the total number of victims derived from the national statistics and the number of victims recorded by the police, we can hypothesise the gap between these figures and highlight the under-reporting of domestic abuse incidents. An estimated 4,460 individuals aged 16+ (3,120 females and 1,340 males) on the Island who report to experience any form of domestic abuse a year, are not reported to the police. Only an estimated 25% of people aged 16+ on the Island who are estimated to be subjected to domestic abuse have their experiences recorded as a crime by the police.

National research indicates that 12% of under 11s and 18% of 11- to 17-year-olds had been exposed to domestic violence between adults in their childhood²³. If these percentages are applied to the Isle of Wight's population, it suggests that around 1,600 under 11s and 1,900 children and young people aged 11 to 17 have experienced domestic abuse between adults in their homes – 2,500 children and young people in total.

Women and girls are disproportionately affected by domestic violence and abuse, with women and girls accounting for 65% of the victims of DA-flagged crime in Hampshire and on the Isle of Wight. In addition, there are other risk factors nationally associated with increased domestic violence²⁴. These include:

- Age: Risk is higher in the younger age groups. For women, the highest risk age groups are 16 to 19 and 35 to 44. For men, the highest risk age groups are 16 to 19 and 20 to 24.
- Having a disability: Women with a disability were more than three times as likely to be experience domestic abuse (12.4% compared to 4% without a disability), and men were more than two times as likely (7% compared to 2.6% without a disability).
- Being divorced or separated: 16% of women and 7.6% of men who were separated, and 11.2% of divorced/legally dissolved partnership women and 6.4% of men,

²² [Domestic abuse prevalence and victim characteristics - Office for National Statistics](#)

²³ [Child abuse and neglect in the UK today | NSPCC](#)

²⁴ [Domestic abuse prevalence and victim characteristics - Office for National Statistics](#)

compared to 3.2% (women) and 1.6% (men) of married respondents had experienced domestic violence.

- **Employment status:** This is closely associated with long term illness/disability (above). 15.4% of women who were classed as long-term sick/temporarily sick/ill experienced domestic abuse, and 6.9% of men. Those who are retired are the least likely to report experiencing domestic abuse (3.1% of women and 1.4% of men). Women who are unemployed are slightly less likely to experience domestic abuse (5.3%) than those who are in employment (6%), whereas the inverse is the case in men. Within unemployed men, 5.2% reported experiencing domestic abuse, compared to 3.3% of employed men.
- **Sexuality/sexual identity:** 21.9% of bisexual women and 7.3% of lesbian women, compared to 5.1% of heterosexual women, had experienced domestic abuse in the previous year. An increased risk is also seen in gay and bisexual men (7.9% and 8.4% compared to 2.9% of heterosexual men). The extent of under-reporting may be higher than for people in heterosexual relationships, since coming forward will require the victim to disclose their sexuality to police or other authorities. Additionally, fear of being involuntarily 'outed' may in itself provide a means for an abuser to exert control. There may also be underreporting by heterosexual men due to stigma.
- **Gender:** Those who are transgender are more than three times more likely to experience domestic abuse than those who are cisgender (15.1% compared to 4.4%).