

IDENTIFYING NEEDS AND TARGETING RESOURCES

Neath Port Talbot has a total population of 135,332 (2003 mid-year estimate, Office for National Statistics (ONS)), of which just over half are female. The county borough is made up of 42 wards of different sizes and characteristics.

The population has been declining slowly since 1991, although recently has seen an upturn with quite a significant number of people migrating into the area.

Statistical information to aid in identifying areas of greatest need in Neath Port Talbot is available from the Census of Population 2001, and from other sources. The following sections give a brief overview of the statistical information available on the level of health, economic activity, transport, crime, amenities, education and the environment in the county borough. In addition some information is given about Welsh speaking and Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities. It highlights areas or wards with particularly high or low levels, and targets sections of the community that could require greater resources or funding.

Health:

The most recent information on the health of the population has been collated into a comprehensive health, social care and well-being needs assessment published in 2004.

This needs assessment reveals an

aging population with a falling birth rate. Life expectancy is amongst the worst in the UK and the death rates for some specific causes such as coronary heart disease and cancer of the mouth and throat are high. The county borough has above average death rates for respiratory disease and cancer. In the long term these conditions are largely preventable and it is prevention rather than cure, which is going to improve overall health of the population. The county borough has the second most obese population in Wales, which has implications for the development of diabetes, coronary heart disease, arthritis and cancers, coupled with a loss of quality of life.

The following figures on the health of the population in Neath Port Talbot have been taken from the 2001 Census, conducted by ONS. In this, people were asked varying questions on their health, including whether they have a limiting long-term illness, disability or health problem, which limits their day-to-day activities.

29.4% of Neath Port Talbot's population have a limiting long-term illness (the second highest in Wales), with 24.1% of people of working age with a limiting long-term illness.

Table 1 summarises the top ten wards with the highest percentage of people that have a problem with their health. Gwynfi has by far the highest proportion, followed closely by Sandfields West and Cymmer.

Table 1 - Health

Ward	Percentage with a limiting long-term illness, disability or health problem
Gwynfi	37.2
Sandfields West	36.4
Cymmer	36.4
Sandfields East	36.2
Glyncorrwg	33.9
Onllwyn	32.9
Ystalyfera	32.7
Neath North	32.6
Neath East	32.1
Pelenna	31.9

The Census also asked people to provide some idea on how they perceived their health, rating it as good, fairly good or poor. Across the county borough, 59.7% of the population describe themselves as being in good health, 24% in fairly good health and 16.4% in poor health. The top ten wards with the highest percentages of people who rate their health as poor are the same as those listed in Table 1. Cymmer, Sandfields West and Gwynfi are the top three.

A total of 18,923 people provide unpaid care, i.e. looking after, giving help or support to family members, friends, neighbours or others because of long-term physical or mental ill health, disability or problems relating to old age. Neath Port Talbot ranks highest in England and Wales in terms of the percentage of the population

providing unpaid care. Of those providing unpaid care, 56.1% provide care for 1-19 hours per week, 14% for 20-49 hours per week and 29.9% for 50 or more hours per week.

In examining how numbers of people providing unpaid care varies across wards, Trebanos, Rhos and Crynant have by far the highest percentages of people providing at least one hour per week of unpaid care, with just over 16% of the population in each case providing such a service.

Economic activity:

The economic activity of the population of Neath Port Talbot was also addressed by the 2001 Census, and people were asked to classify themselves according to their level of economic activity; this included whether they were employed, self-

Table 2 - Unemployment

Top ten wards		Worst ten wards	
Ward	Percentage of unemployed	Ward	Percentage of unemployed
Pelenna	1.7	Cymmer	5.7
Coedffranc West	1.9	Seven Sisters	5.5
Bryn-coch North	2.0	Gwynfi	5.2
Cimla	2.4	Neath East	5.2
Allt-wen	2.6	Aberdulais	5.2
Baglan	2.6	Onllwyn	5.0
Tonna	2.8	Briton Ferry	5.0
Bryn-coch South	3.0	Godre'r Graig	4.9
Rhos	3.0	Tai-bach	4.8
Coedffranc North	3.1	Blaengwrach	4.8

employed, unemployed or retired. Table 2 targets the top ten worst and best areas in terms of unemployment figures in the county borough.

34.9% of people aged 16-74 are in full-time employment with some 11% in part-time employment. 4.7% are self-employed, 3.9% unemployed and 1.7% are students.

Of the economically inactive, 35.7% are retired, 15.6% are looking after the family home, and 31% are permanently sick or disabled. Of the unemployed people, 32.7% are aged 16-24, 14.9% aged 50 or over, and 10.2% have never worked.

Crime:

Crime figures are recorded by South Wales Police. They collect data on various crimes reported on a monthly basis by district. Districts have slightly different boundaries to wards, and are generally smaller. Chart 1 shows that the overall level of crime has decreased between April 2003 and April 2004, with the total number of crimes peaking in May 2003.

A breakdown of the percentage of crimes reported in each district shows that Neath, Port Talbot and Sandfields are the top three districts with consistent and comparatively high levels of crime between April 2003 and April 2004; these results are summarised in Table 3. Districts

that have particularly low levels of crime include Abercregan, Abergarwed, Dyffryn Rhondda,

Gellinudd, Lonlas, Lower Cwmtwrch, Rhos, Rhyddings, Velindre and Ynysmeudwy.

Chart 1 - Total number of crimes

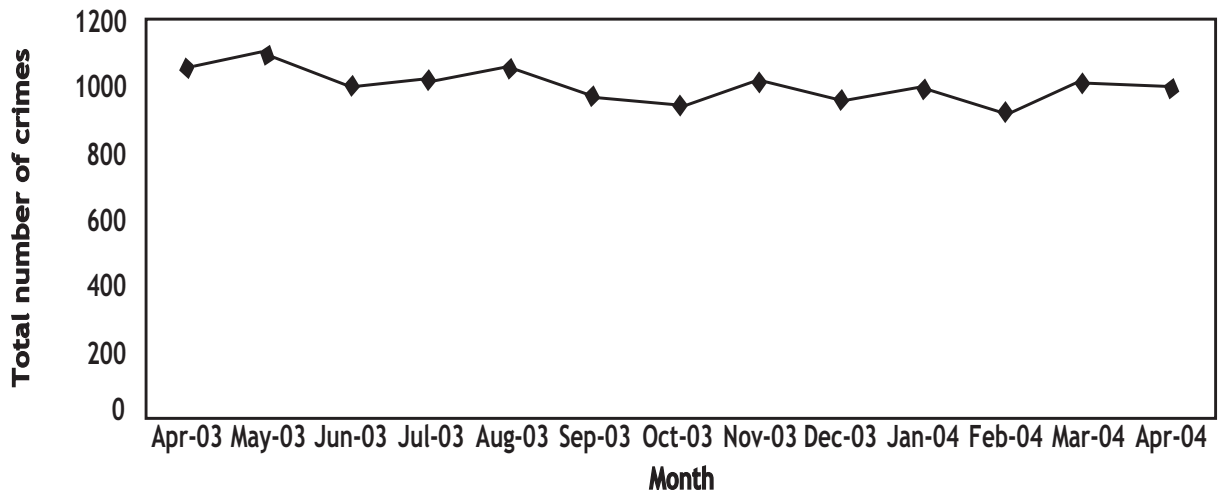


Table 3 - Crime

	Percentage of crimes in Neath	Percentage of crimes in Port Talbot	Percentage of crimes in Sandfields
April 03	12.8	10.2	11.7
May 03	15.0	11.2	10.0
June 03	16.7	11.2	9.6
July 03	15.6	11.8	8.8
August 03	17.2	10.8	11.2
September 03	15.6	12.3	11.3
October 03	15.3	11.0	8.3
November 03	15.3	12.6	7.4
December 03	17.3	13.6	8.5
January 04	14.6	10.6	5.7
February 04	14.4	13.4	7.3
March 04	16.6	12.6	5.9
April 04	15.1	10.6	9.0

Housing and amenities:

The level of amenities available to the population of Neath Port Talbot was assessed as part of the 2001 Census. In particular, people were questioned on whether they had sole use of a bath/shower and toilet, and if they had access to central heating. Identifying wards that lack such amenities could help target areas that are more prone to poverty.

Most of the wards in Neath Port Talbot had very small percentages associated with not having sole use of a bath/shower and toilet, with all but two falling below 1%. Neath North and Cadoxton had the highest percentages of people who lacked this amenity, falling just over 1%. The proportion of people with no access to central heating was much more variable across wards. Bryn-coch, Pelenna and Cadoxton are amongst the wards with the lowest percentage of people with no central heating, while Tai-bach, Aberavon and Gwynfi have the highest figures.

Tenure:

Of the 57,610 households in Neath Port Talbot, 71.3% are owner occupied and 28.7% rented. Of those rented, 57.7% are from the County Borough Council, 12.9% are rented from other social landlords and 29.4% are privately rented or are rent free.

Education:

The main source of information available on the performance of schools in Neath Port Talbot is derived from the Schools Census. This is an annual survey that collects information on a variety of sources

such as class sizes and number of teachers.

Out of the 22 local authorities in Wales, Neath Port Talbot ranks eleventh in having the lowest pupil-teacher ratio across all schools, i.e. nursery, primary, secondary, special and independent schools, with an average of 16.5 pupils per teacher. The county borough ranks slightly higher with regard to its average class size in secondary schools, and lies in sixteenth place with an average of 21.1 pupils in a class.

An examination of how the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals varies across each of the 22 local authorities shows Neath Port Talbot's high ranking, lying fifth from the top. This reflects the significant levels of poverty in the county borough. Table 4 shows the top ten highest and lowest percentages of pupils entitled to free school meals across Wales' 22 local authorities.

Table 4 - Percentage of school children entitled to free school meals

Lowest ten authorities		Highest ten authorities	
Local Authority	Percentage	Local Authority	Percentage
Powys	9.6	Merthyr Tydfil	27.1
Monmouthshire	9.9	Rhondda Cynon Taff	24.5
Flintshire	11.4	Blaenau Gwent	23.6
Vale of Glamorgan	11.4	Cardiff	21.0
Ceredigion	11.6	Neath Port Talbot	21.0
Gwynedd	12.8	Newport	20.9
Denbighshire	13.0	Swansea	20.8
Wrexham	13.9	Caerphilly	19.6
Conwy	14.3	Torfaen	18.9
Pembrokeshire	14.8	Bridgend	18.7

Examination results for the 2002 to 2003 academic year show that Neath Port Talbot is quite successful in the percentage of pupils achieving five or more GCSE's (grades A* to G). Boys rank 16, with 81% achieving this target, and girls rank 11 with 89%. The county borough ties in first place with Gwynedd and Isle of Anglesey for having the lowest percentage of girls that achieve no GCSE's, GNVQ's or entry-level qualifications. Just 1% of the population leave school with no qualifications. The percentage for boys is slightly higher, reaching just 4%.

Environment:

The quality of the environment can be measured on a variety of different scales. This section examines the quality of the water in the area compared to other local authorities in Wales. Recycling is also considered, along with the travel to

work patterns of the population in each ward.

The Environment Agency collects information on a range of issues associated with the environment including the chemical and biological quality of river water. In 2002, Neath Port Talbot ranked 14th, with just over 80% of its river lengths being of good chemical quality. With regard to biological water quality, the county borough was 11th with almost 75% of river lengths being of good quality.

Neath Port Talbot was unable to meet the 2003/04 target of achieving at least 15% recycling/composting. Actual performance for 2003/04 was a combined recycling/composting performance of 10%. However, we are on course to meet the 15% target during 2004/05, due to increased recycling initiatives, including the operation of the Materials Recovery and Energy Centre.

Transport:

The travel to work patterns of the population aged between 16 and 74 were considered during the 2001 Census, and people were questioned on their usual method of getting to work. A summary for the county borough of all 16-74 year olds in employment is shown in Table 6 below.

Use of public transport is particularly high in Briton Ferry West, Pelenna and Sandfields West, and very poor in Cwmllynfell, where only 2.4% of the population use this method of getting to work. Over one fifth of the population in Neath East and

Neath North get to work on foot, compared to just 2.8% in Rhos. Over 50% of the population in each ward travel to work by car or van, and this figure is particularly high in Rhos, Bryn-coch South and Cwmllynfell.

More than 30% of households in Neath Port Talbot are without a car or van, the fifth highest ranking in Wales in this category.

The wards with the greatest number of households without a car or van are Neath North (45.2%), Gwynfi (44.5%), Neath East (43.2%), Sandfields West (42.6%), Cymmer (41.9%), and Glyncorrwg (41.4%).

Table 5 - Travel to work

Method of travel to work	Percentage
Work from home	6.6
Public transport	5.9
Motorcycle, moped or scooter	1.0
Drive a car or van	63.9
Passenger in a car or van	10.6
Bicycle	1.3
On foot	9.6

Welsh speaking communities:

According to the 2001 Census, 18% of the population were able to speak Welsh. The communities of the Upper Swansea Valley remain a stronghold for the Welsh language, with wards such as Cwmllynfell and Lower Brynamman having a Welsh speaking population of 68.2% and 68.1% respectively. Other wards across Neath Port Talbot with a high percentage of Welsh speakers include Crynant (29.7%), Seven Sisters (25.63%), Glynnneath (23.1%), Pelenna (21.7%) and Bryn and Cwmavon (20.1%).

Black and minority ethnic (BME) communities:

At the time of the 2001 Census there were 1,448 people from BME groups living in 501 households. People from BME backgrounds constituted 1.1% of the total resident population and 0.9% of the resident households in the area. The largest BME groups in terms of the number of households were as follows:

Asian or Asian British:
Indian

Chinese or Other Ethnic Group:
Chinese

Mixed:
White and Black Caribbean

Black or Black British:
Black Caribbean

These 4 BME groups accounted for 272 households, which contained 695 people and they accounted for 54% of BME households and 48% of BME people in Neath Port Talbot. The

number of BME households increased by 6.2% between 1991 and 2001. However, the BME population is very dispersed with no ward containing more than 40 resident BME households and they can be predominantly located in the urban areas of Neath and Port Talbot.