Southampton
Strategic Assessment

Population size and structure

Last updated July 2025

Contents

1. Southampton's population size and structure

Understanding the size and structure of Southampton's population and how it is changing is vital in estimating population need and for the planning and commissioning of services across the city. Data on Southampton's population comes from a range of sources, using different methodologies for estimating the size and structure of the population and how this is projected to change in the future. These are summarised below, whilst links to the data and visualisation tools can be found in the resources section at the end of this page.
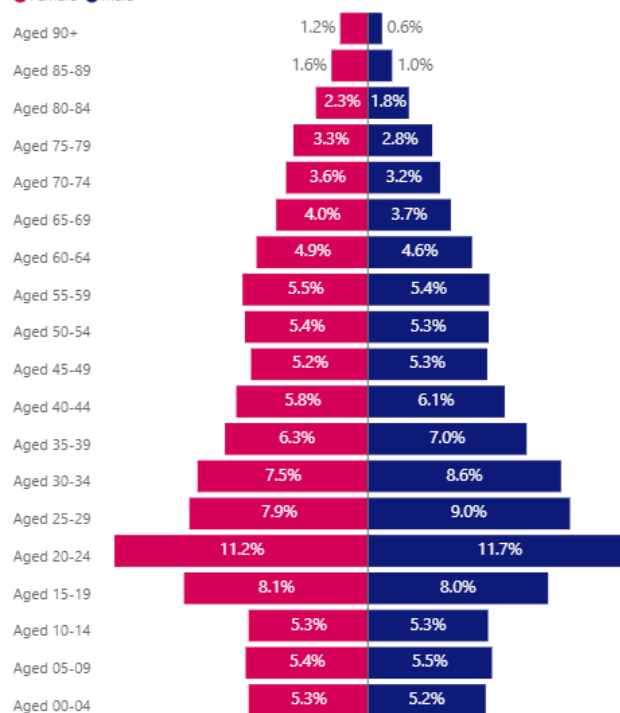
[Population dashboard](#)

2. Resident population estimates

The Small Area Population Forecasts (SAPF) are produced annually by Hampshire County Council and estimate the size of the local resident population for Hampshire districts as well as Portsmouth and Southampton. These estimates are considered to provide the most robust local estimate of the current and future resident population as they take account of natural change (births and deaths), internal and international migration and known and planned dwelling completions. They also include future dwellings supply based on residential planning applications.

Percentage of population by sex for Southampton 2023

Source: HCC SAPF 2023 -based

● Female ● Male

Age	Female	Male
Aged 90+	1.2%	0.6%
Aged 85-89	1.6%	1.0%
Aged 80-84	2.3%	1.8%
Aged 75-79	3.3%	2.8%
Aged 70-74	3.6%	3.2%
Aged 65-69	4.0%	3.7%
Aged 60-64	4.9%	4.6%
Aged 55-59	5.5%	5.4%
Aged 50-54	5.4%	5.3%
Aged 45-49	5.2%	5.3%
Aged 40-44	5.8%	6.1%
Aged 35-39	6.3%	7.0%
Aged 30-34	7.5%	8.6%
Aged 25-29	7.9%	9.0%
Aged 20-24	11.2%	11.7%
Aged 15-19	8.1%	8.0%
Aged 10-14	5.3%	5.3%
Aged 05-09	5.4%	5.5%
Aged 00-04	5.3%	5.2%

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In May 2023, there was a ward boundary review, which has resulted in an additional ward being added, covering Banister & Polygon. This gives Southampton 17 wards. Other ward boundaries have changed to accommodate this new ward and Bitterne has been renamed Thornhill.

Data presented in this page, where possible, are to these new ward boundaries and totals are a sum of the male and female population of the wards.

Detailed SAPF data, wards map and methodology can be found in the Population dashboard or in the resources section the end of the page.

A summary of the main points is provided below:

- In 2023, the resident population of Southampton was estimated to be 264,957, of which 129,721 (49.0%) were female and 135,236 (51.0%) were male
- Children between the ages 0 to 5 make up 6.3% (16,808) of the population, which is similar to the England average of 6.5% (MYE 2022)
- 18.6% (49,155) of Southampton's resident population is aged between 16 and 24 years compared to just 10.6% in England. This is largely due to Southampton being a university city and home to approximately 37,800 students
- 14.5% of the population are aged 65 and over (38,472 people) which is lower than the national average of 18.6%
- Bargate ward has a population of 19,242 people or 7.3% of Southampton's total population
- The new ward of Banister & Polygon has a population of 17,851 people or 6.7% of Southampton's total population
- The smallest ward, in population terms, is Harefield with a population of 13,611 people or 5.1% of Southampton's population
- Swaythling (34.4%), Bargate (32.6%) and Banister & Polygon (32.1%) have the largest populations aged 16 to 24 years reflecting the large student population in Southampton
- The overall resident population is projected to increase by 7.5% between from 264,957 in2023 to 284,924 in 2030
- The number of dwellings is forecast to increase from 109,226 in 2023 to 115,944 in 2030; an increase of 6.2% (6,718 extra dwellings)
- The largest growth in dwellings is predicted to be in the new ward boundaries is Bargate (3,465 extra dwellings; 43.3%), followed by Banister and Polygon (557 extra dwellings; 7.8%) and Bitterne Park (473 extra dwellings; 7.0%)
- The smallest growth in dwellings is predicted to be in Coxford (14 extra dwellings 0.2%) between 2023 and 2030

More information can be found in the population dashboard and resources section below.

[Population dashboard](#)

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3.   Mid-Year Population Estimates (MYE)

Alternative resident population estimates are produced by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). These are known as the ONS Mid-Year population estimates (MYE) and are useful as they provide comparable trend data across the whole country. These estimates are produced annually and are calculated by rolling forward the previous Census results (currently 2021), taking into account natural change (births and deaths) and internal and international migration between 1 July and 30 June each year.

In July 2024, the Office for National Statistics released a rebased population estimate based on 2021 Census data. This data set takes the MYE from 2011 to 2023 and readjusts it to include changes seen since the previous Census in 2011.

The latest MYE (2023) suggests that Southampton's population is 256,110 residents of which 127,997 (49.98%) were male and 128,113 (50.02%) were female. It also shows that the resident population of the city is estimated to have grown by 8.6% since 2011; that is an extra 20,240 people. The population estimate tool includes rebased mid-year estimates from mid-2011 to mid-2023.

More information on the ONS MYE can be found in the population estimate tool below and the resources section.

ONS - Analysis of population estimates tool for UK - 2011 to 2023
Population dashboard

4.   Subnational population projections (SNPP)

These projections take the mid-2018 population estimates, published on 26 June 2019, as their starting point and project the population to 2043. The projected local authority populations for each year are calculated by ageing on the population from the previous year, applying local fertility and mortality rates to calculate the number of projected births and deaths, and then adjusting for migration into and out of each local authority.

The latest SNPP data runs from 2018 to 2043 and suggests that Southampton's population is estimated to be 270,834 in 2043 an increase of 7.1% or 18,038 people. More details can be found in the population change section and is the dashboard below and resources section.

Population dashboard

5. GP registered population

An alternative source of population data comes from GP practice registers; these provide the number of patients registered with a Southampton GP practice. The registered population differs from the resident population as a person can be registered with a Southampton GP practice but live outside the city, or may live in the city, but be registered with a GP practice outside of Southampton. For this reason, the registered population can be quite different to the resident populations. However, this information is particularly useful for the planning of health services.

NHS England collates the registered population at GP surgery and Primary Care Network (PCN). The data is available by age and gender and is released monthly. In July 2025, there were 335,877 people registered at a Southampton GP, of which 162,232 (48.3%) were female and 173,645 (51.7%) were male.

More information on GP surgeries and PCN is available in the population dashboard in the resources section below.

6. Resources

6.1   Population Power BI dashboard

The dashboard presents a range of population data to provide intelligence on Southampton's resident and GP registered population to help drive strategic decision making. Data in this dashboard is compiled from a range of publicly available sources. Including Small Area Population Forecasts (SAPF), Mid-Year Population Estimates (MYE), Subnational Population Projections (SNPP) and GP Registered Populations. Please note that SAPF figures in the dashboard are the sum of all Lower Level Super Output Areas (LSOA) and may not be the same as other published figures.

- [Population dashboard](#)

6.2   Hampshire County Council Small Area Population Forecasts (SAPF)

The Small Area Population Forecasts (SAPF) are produced by Hampshire County Council and cover Hampshire, the local districts, Portsmouth and Southampton. These figures are based on natural change (births and deaths), internal and international migration and known dwelling completions. They also include future dwellings supply based on residential planning applications. The SAPF data is available for Local Authorities, wards and Lower Level Super Output Areas (LSOA), allowing the creation of defined smaller areas or community data.

- [Hampshire County Council Small Area Population Forecasts](#)

6.3   ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates (MYE) 2023

The Mid-Year Population Estimates (MYE) are produced by the Office for National Statistics and provide comparable resident population data across the whole country by quinary (5 year) and single age year bands. The estimates are calculated by rolling forward the 2021 Census results, taking into account natural change (births and deaths) and internal and international migration between 1 July and 30 June each year. Data is produced annually and is available at various geographies including local authorities. Data for sub-city wards and Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) for mid-2023, will be available in early 2025.

- ONS - Population estimates for England and Wales: mid-2023
- ONS - Estimates of the population for England and Wales 2011 to 2023
- ONS - Analysis of population estimates tool for UK - 2011 to 2023

6.4   ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates (MYE) 2022 for small areas

The Mid-Year Population Estimates (MYE) are produced by the Office for National Statistics and provide comparable resident population data across the whole country by quinary (5 year) and single age year bands. Data for small areas including sub-city wards and Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) for mid-2021 and mid-2022 is available below.

- ONS - Population estimates by output areas, electoral, health and other geographies, England and Wales: mid-2021 and mid-2022

6.5   ONS - Subnational population projections (SNPP)

The projections take the mid-2018 population estimates, published on 26 June 2019, as their starting point and project the population to 2043. The projected local authority populations for each year are calculated by ageing on the population from the previous year, applying local fertility and mortality rates to calculate the number of projected births and deaths, and then adjusting for migration into and out of each local authority.

- Subnational Population Projections (SNPP)

6.6   Patients registered at a GP practice

NHS Digital collates the registered population at GP practice, Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) level. The data is available by age and gender and is released monthly.

- NHS Digital - Patients registered at a GP practice

6.7 Census 2021 interactive dashboard

Users can access a range of Census data across different topic areas including population, education, identity, housing, health and work. With the ability to view benchmarking between Southampton and ONS comparators and mapping of data by Census geographies, such as lower layer super output areas (LSOA) a neighbourhood of around 1,500 residents.

- [Census 2021 dashboard](#)

6.8   NOMIS – 2021 Census data

The 2021 Census was taken on 21st March 2021. The data from this census are available in several hundred separate datasets (or tables), covering the whole range of population characteristics and subject areas. These data tables can be queried through the Census NOMIS website. Data from the 2001 and 2011 Census is also available on Nomis. A link to NOMIS is provided below.

- NOMIS - ONS 2021 Census data

6.9   ONS – 2021 Census

The census takes place every 10 years. It gives us a picture of all the people and households in England and Wales.

- ONS – 2021 Census