

Vital Signs

2018



Vital Signs MK is an annual publication designed to round up the most current research on the communities of Milton Keynes and present it in an easy-to-read format. Vital Signs categories help us to highlight our strengths and point to the challenges that we face in Milton Keynes. Inevitably, there are areas that overlap and affect one another. This report asks how can we can all work together to support, inspire and lead our local communities.

To download this year's Vital Signs Report, as well as an extended version with many more statistics and links to all of the sources of the original research visit, mkcommunityfoundation.co.uk.





Disadvantage and Poverty

Last year, we highlighted the growing number of local working families who are living in poverty despite our thriving economy. This year, we are able to provide an update on some of the issues surrounding child poverty and homelessness that were highlighted. Defining poverty* is not straightforward, as there is no single measure. Broadly speaking, poverty is when one's resources do not meet one's minimum needs.

Vital Thinking

Last year, Vital Signs introduced the growing trend of the working poor. How has the voluntary and community sector responded to this? Is pooling our resources across all sectors and working in partnership the most positive way we can help to make a difference? What are the issues surrounding disadvantage and poverty that we can affect?

Vital Action

One of the projects MK Community Foundation supported this year was MK Community Fridge. This funding enabled their project co-ordinator to dedicate additional staff time to the project that has increased food collections, organised 6 outdoor community events and run a regular pop-up cafe. In their first year of operation they diverted more than 15 tonnes of quality food to the people of Milton Keynes. Their ethos focusses on reducing food waste and building community bonds, rather than food poverty, this approach helps reduce the stigma that may be present around sharing food with the growing number of people who are struggling financially.



Vital Statistics

Increase in **rough sleeping** count since last years report (actual figure is 48 from 38)

26%



40%



Child poverty in some wards in MK reaches as high as 40%



1 in 110 people in Milton Keynes are **homeless**, compared with 1 in 206 in England

1 in 110



Private rent prices are **rising 26% faster** than the average household income.

26%



1/3



Approximately one third of rough sleepers counted in MK are **under 25**



1 in 4



Children live below the **poverty line** (last year this was 1 in 5)



*Within this report several different measures of poverty are used, for original sources, please refer to the Vital Signs Long Report.



Education

When we say Education, we mean the teaching and learning of knowledge and new skills. We often think of schools and Universities, and although these formal education settings do make up a large proportion of education across the UK, there are also lots of other routes to learning – apprenticeships, vocational training, skills clubs, and community learning, all play an important part.

Vital Thinking

Although changes to the curriculum mean that creative subjects are sometimes less available in primary and secondary schools and the uptake at GCSE and A Level is relatively low, creative learning and the confidence gained through engagement in arts activity provide skills that underpin so much of what we do in all areas of life. How else can we continue to ensure our young people are still exposed to and are able to develop these vital creative skills?

Vital Action

Last year, MK Community Foundation supported the MK Cultural Education Partnership (led by the Arts & Heritage Alliance) to run a 7-month action research project that encouraged MK schools to be more creative and allow young people to take the lead. The project, delivered by MK Gallery Learning Team, worked with 10 schools in Milton Keynes and 5 arts providers to bring the arts to children in our community.



Vital Statistics



5

In KS5, students eligible for free school meals (FSM) have an average **points score of 26.05**, 5 points lower than other pupils



28

MK Schools are signed up to Artsmark*. **This is higher than Buckinghamshire and good for the region**



7%

Of FSM students go into selective higher education **by age 19**

Of children eligible for free school meals (FSM) **achieve a good standard at foundation stage**, an improvement on the past 2 years.



64%



20%

In KS2, 38% of FSM students are performing at expected standard, compared to 58% of all pupils, **a difference of 20%**



2%

Of the population in Milton Keynes **have trade apprenticeships**



£108m

Only **£108million** of the £1.9billion available in the apprenticeship levy has been used



*Artsmark - Arts Council England accreditation, which supports schools to develop their arts provision



Diversity

Under equality and diversity legislation in the UK, there are nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, race (including ethnic or national origin, colour, or nationality), religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity.

Vital Thinking

There are many characteristics that make a population/ community diverse. Previously, we focussed on data around race and ethnicity. This year, we have included some of the less visible characteristics, such as the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) community. Much of this data is at regional and national level; therefore, while we can make some inferences about the local population from this, it will be limited in helping us understand any specific challenges, needs, or even strengths at a local level. Who is responsible for collecting this data locally? What effect will Britain's exit from the European Union and the presence of a new University have on our diversity?

Vital Action

Last year, MK Community Foundation supported Q:alliance, a charity that provide support and information for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) people who live and work in Milton Keynes. Their youth group offers 13 to 19-year-olds a safe space when they are questioning or dealing with their sexuality or gender identity, where they are able to be themselves and access support for many issues that they may face.



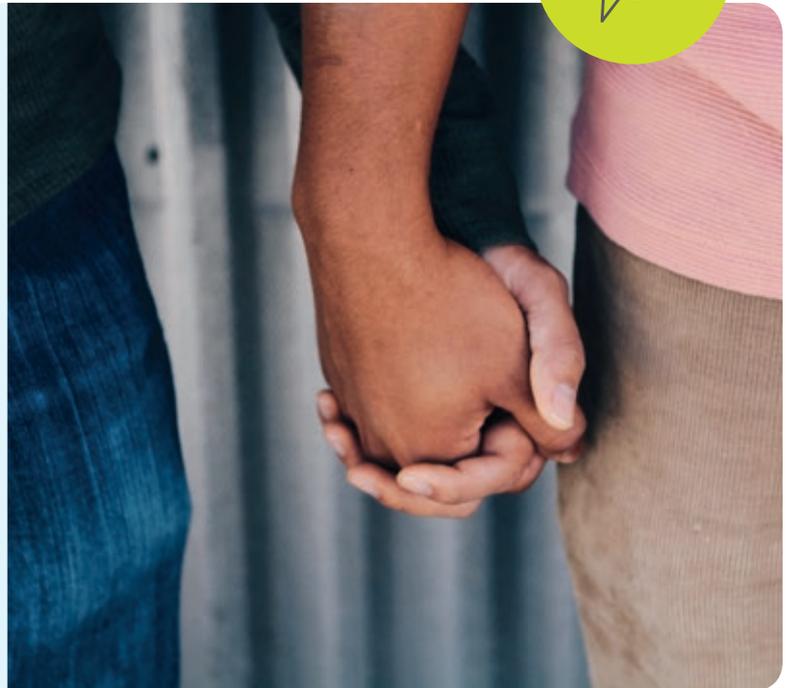
Vital Voice

Peter Kingham - Q:alliance

"Q:alliance works hard to build good relationships with strategic partners in Milton Keynes. Since Brexit we have seen attitudes change towards diverse communities which has led to a rise in negative behaviour towards LGBTQ+ people (and other minority groups). This has fuelled our mission to support, represent and inform our community who live, work and play in Milton Keynes.

The new University will provide great opportunities for young people in Milton Keynes. Cultural shifts mean young people are more likely to stay at home when studying and this gives an opportunity for us to represent a demographic that Milton Keynes has lacked, as it is very possible it will bring an increase in LGBT young people. It could influence a whole new social scene. Exciting times ahead.

Data is vital for us to demonstrate the need amongst our community to power holders and stakeholders, and support Milton Keynes to be a safe space for anyone whatever their gender identity or sexual orientation."



Vital Statistics

54

People have been settled in Milton Keynes under the **Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme** in the period of 2016-2017



45%

Of primary school pupils are minority ethnic compared to **29% in England**

13%

Population of Milton Keynes that are **65 and over**. This is lower than the UK average of 18%

68.2

General Fertility Rate in 2016, **higher than the national and regional average** (per 1,000 women aged between 15 and 44)

1.9%

Of people surveyed in the South East identified as **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or "Other"** (4% didn't know or declined to answer)

1 in 4

Pupils in state funded schools whose **first language is known or believed to be other than English**

Trans people in England, Scotland and Wales have **experienced a hate crime in the last 12 months**. Local data on gender variance is not available

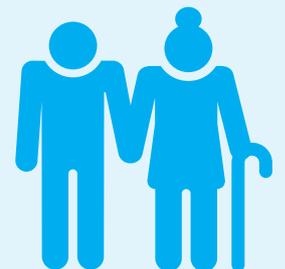
2 in 5

-0.55

Net internal migration, showing that despite our expanding population, more people within the UK **are leaving Milton Keynes than moving here**

44%

Predicted rise of **people ages 65 and over** between 2015 and 2026





Economy

Put simply, the economy includes the production and consumption of goods and services, and the supply of money in the local area. When we talk about the economy, we mean the local labour market, businesses, and *worklessness here in Milton Keynes.

Vital Thinking

There appears to be an employment gap in the city, as although there are more jobs than people, many jobs advertised are specialised and we still have a large number of people who are unemployed or living in workless households. Is this the result of a skills gap, or are there other underlying issues that the data does not show? What more can be done to support more people to gain the skills, confidence, and aspiration they need to get in to work?

Vital Action

This Year, MK Community Foundation supported GirlsCode MK, a volunteer organisation who aim to get more girls and women into programming and *STEM careers. They organise regular workshops and meetups for women and provide a friendly and supportive learning environment. They currently run various workshops including GirlsCode MK – a fortnightly meetup for all levels.



Vital Statistics

11%

Of workers are **employed in the Education sector**, the largest employment sector in MK

155

Jobs advertised for **Programming and Software development** in June 2018

14%

Amount of jobs paid below the **Living Wage Foundation Living Wage** in MK

People in MK are **employed**

136,000

People in MK claiming **Job Seekers Allowance** in June 2018

2151

The median weekly wage for residents in MK is £576, compared to £602 for people working in MK, **a difference of £26 a week**. Both are higher than the national median (£552)

78%

Of **working age population** are **employed** compared to 75% in the rest of England

1.2

Jobs available per person in the working age population in MK (15 -64 Years old)

£26

Turnover of the **39 cultural and creative organisations** who are members of Arts and Heritage Alliance in 2016/17

£23m

*Median - The middle value of a set of data when the figures are written in order

*worklessness - This definition includes people who are unemployed and people who are economically inactive.

*STEM - Science, Technology Engineering and Maths

What's been achieved since we last published our Vital Signs Report?

Vital Thinking Events

Since last year's Vital Signs Report, we have held 2 Vital Thinking events around Mental Health and Disadvantage and Poverty. Thank you to everyone who attended.

Mental Health Update

As a result of the Mental Health Vital thinking event, we have recently commissioned a piece of research from the Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Transformation Fund, to assess the landscape of the current voluntary sector provision for children and young people experiencing poor mental health.

MK YiS - MK Youth Information Service

MK Community Foundation have awarded Milton Keynes Youth Information Service (YiS) a large strategic grant of **£120,000**. The grant, which will be awarded over 2 years, will be used to fund vital resources for their free youth counselling service. Open to any young person between the ages of 11 and 21 years, the sessions help young people work through a range of issues including anxiety, depression, anger, family problems and many more.

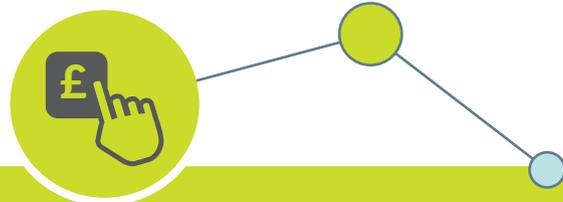
Disadvantage and Poverty Update

Last year, we raised **£10,000** towards our Surviving Winter Campaign that supports some of the most disadvantaged people throughout winter. As heating bills are ever increasing, it can be difficult for some people, especially the elderly, to stay warm and safe within their own homes, and difficulties may be faced with saving enough money for food and other necessities.

We are currently exploring partnerships to help deliver much needed support to those who need it most.

We are also working with the Homelessness Partnership, who are working together to relieve hardship and distress among homeless people and among those in need who are living in adverse housing conditions in Milton Keynes and the surrounding areas.

MK Community Foundation would like to thank Global Challenges Local Solutions (GCLS) for their support in facilitating the Disadvantage and Poverty Vital Thinking event.



Our total support to the community between April 2017 and March 2018 was **over £1.9 million**.

To see all the grants that we have awarded over the past year visit, www.mkcommunityfoundation.co.uk/news-events/grants-we-have-awarded.

Looking Ahead

We are always exploring new opportunities for partnership, investigating our options for supporting positive change in our community, including encouraging others to pursue collaborations and joined up strategic programmes. To this end, MK Community Foundation will continue our series of Vital Thinking events.

What issues are the most pressing? If you have any ideas about what we can do as a community to address these issues, please get in touch.

What is MK Community Foundation?

MK Community Foundation is an independent charity working for and at the heart of the city for over 30 years. Our Vital Signs publishing programme is intended to inform, to spark discussion and to support our work to develop philanthropy in the community. Vital Signs also helps us to support local charities and community groups by enabling us to offer a better informed and more proactive grant making and property subsidy programme. With the help of local people and businesses in the last financial year, we were able to offer over £1.9 million of support to local community groups and charities, making MK a more vibrant place for all of us to work and live. Vital Signs helps us to ensure that our support is focused on genuine need in the community.

To help us to award grants for important charitable projects across MK you can donate online at www.mkcommunityfoundation.co.uk or call us on 01908 690276 to find out more.

Join the conversation

Get involved and have your say on the findings in this Vital Signs report



Tweet your #vitalsignsMK thoughts to @MKComFoundation



Send an email to giving@mkcommunityfoundation.co.uk



Send a letter to **MK Community Foundation, Acorn House, 381 Midsummer Boulevard, MK9 3HP**



Call us on **01908 690276** – We'd love to talk more about Vital Signs with you.



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