

Easton

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History of the area

Like Ashley, and Lawrence Hill Easton displays all the signs characterising a deprived inner city area. This profile concentrates on Easton ward. However, some of the area usually referred to as Easton (such as Stapleton Road) is in Lawrence Hill ward. Easton ward also includes Redfield.

Overall assessment

The 1998 index of local deprivation is available for sub ward areas and is useful for seeing what patterns of deprivation are like at a fine level as figures are available across the country. The index is based on 5 variables from the 1991 Census and needs to be treated with care. 8% of Easton's Enumeration Districts are in the top 10% for England whilst 20% of its EDs are in the top 10% for Bristol.

As Council Tax is available for small areas within wards, it is possible to see what patterns are like within the ward sized areas. Easton has the 12th highest rate of Council Tax Benefit in Bristol. The highest of 41%, a median ED of 27% and a low of 18%. The variation in council tax rates is one of the lowest in the city.

The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2000 is the most up-to-date source of comparative information on deprivation in all of England's 8,414 wards. Devised by Oxford University on behalf of the DETR, it is one of the most widely used tools to target resources on deprived areas. Easton is ranked 1043 in England. This is not within the top 10% of English wards. It is ranked 9th in Bristol.

Rationale

All of the deprived areas in these profiles have received regeneration funding in the past. The following paragraph outlines some of the main schemes that have been in operation and the ones that are currently running. Details of these schemes have been kept to a bare minimum - further information is available from the Regeneration Division. Parts of Easton ward have received regeneration funding in the past. The renewal area in Easton has injected a significant of money into the private housing stock. Easton also receives SRB2 funding. Parts of Easton are in the New Deal for Communities area and the Education Action Zone area. There is also a Sure Start programme which is centred on Easton.

Guidance for the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal suggests that indices of deprivation as well as local conditions need to be taken into account when choosing areas. Easton is one of Bristol's more deprived wards. The area has been covered by several regeneration schemes in the past, such as the renewal area and the inner city lifeline scheme. Although these schemes have led to improvements, they have not been able to deliver a substantial and sustainable change in outcomes for the area. The area still has significant community safety problems especially violent crime and racial harrassment.

This section tries to summarise what the area is like based on the quantitative information in this section of the profile. Easton is a deprived ward on the edge of the inner city. Many of the problems that Easton has are shared with other inner city areas particularly around crime and community safety. Easton has a relatively large proportion of owner occupied housing that, because of its age, requires substantial investment.

Income and work

Information on incomes levels in ward sized areas is not available from any source - a draft income question was dropped from the 2001 Census. The Income domain score in the IMD gives some idea of the number of people whose incomes are so low that they qualify for means tested benefits. Easton has a relatively average level of income deprivation with the figure standing at 34% and is outside of the top 10% in England.

HM Treasury studies have found that employment is the most effective way out of deprivation. The index of multiple deprivation gives a better idea of the extent of worklessness than simply looking at JSA figures gives. 15% of Easton's population are work deprived, ranked 1,708th out of English wards.

A proxy measure for unemployment is the number of people who qualify for Job Seeker's Allowance. The number of people who qualify for JSA is now much lower because of people are increasingly being offered places on New Deal programmes. Easton has an unemployment rate of about 6.6% the third highest rate in the city and 1.6x higher than the city average.

Economic inactivity is a useful measure as it enables takes into account people who are not in the labour market. Data is from the 1991 Census. NB People who are unemployed are classified as economically active. The percentage of people who are economically inactive for Easton ward (less the NDC area) is lower than the city average. The total percentage of people who are 16+ and economically inactive is 34.2% (City: 38.3%). The percentage in the Other inactive category is 10.7% (City: 11.5%).

The type of jobs that people are employed in is an important as whether they are employed. Employment by sector is relevant to regeneration as some sectors are more vulnerable to job losses. For instance the other services sector incorporates banking, insurance and finance jobs and these have experienced stronger growth over the past decade than manufacturing. The data is from the 1991 Census and although out of date, is broadly comparable between wards and across the city. The main differences with the city employment structure between Easton and the city are slightly higher percentages of people involved in manufacturing, energy and water and transport. Detailed figures follow. Agriculture, forestry and fishing 0.3% (City: 0.3%), Energy and water 2.3% (City: 1.4%), Manufacturing: mining, metal and other 18.3% (City: 16.7%), Construction 4.9% (City: 7.3%), Transport, distribution and catering 30.8% (City: 27.7%), Other services 43.3% (City: 45.6%).

VAT registrations by ward give some idea of the amount of economic activity going on in an area. It is not a perfect measure - VAT registration may not be at a different place to which people work. Small firms are not required to register for VAT. Easton has 195 VAT registered businesses that employ 1-49 employees.

Major non-housing redevelopments are monitored as part of the development control process. The sites that are included on the database are all large - 0.1 ha minimum. Figures are for developments since 1996. (Figures on housing developments are in the housing section). There was one major industrial redevelopment in Easton between 1996 and 2000

Education

Education is one of the domains within the 2000 Index of Multiple Deprivation. The overall score gives an indication of how much education and skills levels contribute to deprivation

in the area. The ranks for most wards in Bristol tend to be high which suggests that, compared with other factors which contribute to deprivation, education is a particularly severe problem in Bristol. Easton has an education domain ranking of 361, placing it well within the top 10% of English wards. Easton's education figures are relatively high compared to other inner city areas, though it is not as high as outer estate areas.

Most figures for Education are based on schools within the area - only university entrance and KS2 data is based on residents rather than the figures of schools in the area. Easton has 1 nursery school; The Limes Nursery, 1 primary school; Whitehall County Primary. The secondary school in Easton ward St George Community College is within the NDC area.

Higher rates of unauthorised absence are linked to lower rates of educational attainment and higher rates of youth offending. The figures used are for primary schools as data from secondary schools is much more difficult to relate to neighbourhood areas. The number of unauthorised absences in Easton are close to the city average 1.6% compared with 1.2%

Attainment at Key Stage 2 (approx 11 years old) for 2000 is available by ED. The following figures show the percentage of pupils who got Level 4+. Attainment figures for the percentage of pupils getting level 4 or greater at Key Stage 2 for Easton (less the NDC area English L4+ 53% (42% lower), Maths L4+ 42% (70% lower) Science L4+ 72% (18% lower)

Accurate and up-to-date data based on residents won't be available until after the GCSE exams in summer 2001. The figures that follow are based on schools which students in the area are likely to go to. St George Community College is in the NDC area, however, many students who live in the Easton area go to this school or to Fairfield. Educational attainment at St George is low compared with the Bristol average. Attainment at Fairfield is around the national average and better than the Bristol average.

Literacy and numeracy rates quoted are based on modelled data from the Basic Skills Unit which used 1991 Census data to predict rates. Figures were calculated for people of working age. National literacy and numeracy issues were picked up by the Moser report which recommended that poor literacy and numeracy should be halved by 2008. Easton has poor literacy and numeracy figures that are around the national average. 14% of people in Easton have poor literacy 20% of people have poor numeracy.

Comparisons of the number of people who go to university aged 17 - 19 give some indication of the number of people who will go on to get a higher level qualification. University is not the only route to higher education. People may choose to get a job when leavin school or college and go to university later. 3.8% of 17 - 19 year olds entered university in 1997 & 1998. This is lower than that Bristol average.

There is little comparable and reliable data about skills levels at a neighbourhood level in Bristol. The figures used are from the 1991 census and relate to higher qualifications. These figures tie in with current educational attainment figures and are therefore likely to be still broadly accurate. The proportion of people in Easton (less NDC) who have a higher qualification is similar to the city average. 17.2% of men had a higher qualification (City: 17.3%).10.6% of women had a higher qualification (City: 14%).

Crime

Fear of crime is a significant issue as it may lead to people changing the way that they behave - in particular older people may become extremely reluctant to go out after dark. The percentage of families worried about attack and burglary in Easton is above the city average.

Crime in Bristol is higher than the English and regional average. It is similar to the rate for other large cities such as Leeds and Manchester. Easton's level of crime is around the city average though certain sorts of crime are much more common. Crimes are particularly concentrated in the north of the ward. Burglary, vehicle crime and robbery are all higher than the city average and are thought to be related, in part at least, to drug related crime. There are also problems around drug dealing and related violent crime. Racial harassment is also a particular problem.

Violence against the person includes a range of crimes ranging from assault, racially aggravated assault, domestic violence through to crimes such as threats to kill, wounding and murder. Easton has a violence against the person rate per 100,000 of 1896. This compares with a Bristol rate of 1284 (48% different) and an England rate of 956 (98% different)..

The number of sexual offences is relatively small so small changes in areas figure have a relatively large effect on how much higher or lower it is than comparator rates. Easton has a sexual offences rate per 100,000 of 100. This compares with a Bristol rate of 82 (22% different) and an England rate of 70 (43% different)..

Rates for robbery (muggings) tend to be higher in city centres and the areas which are immediately around them. Figures for robbery include theft of mobile phones. Easton has a Robbery rate per 100,000 of 805. This compares with a Bristol rate of 357 (125% different) and an England rate of 134 (501% different)..

Burglary is one of the areas where the Government have set a floor target. Although none of the targeted areas currently has a burglary rate which is greater than 2.5 x the national rate if, as the Government plan, the national rate falls by 25% by 2008, Knowle West's current rate would be above the floor target. Easton has a Burglary rate per 100,000 of 3029. This compares with a Bristol rate of 3280 (-8% different) and an England rate of 1851 (64% different)..

The majority of crimes categorised as theft are stealing or attempting to steal cars or shoplifting. Crimes are recorded from where the vehicle is stolen or the location of the shop, which tends to be in the city centre itself rather than just outside the city centre or outer estates. This helps explain why rates for this category of crime appear to be lower for priority areas. Easton has a Theft rate per 100,000 of 7726. This compares with a Bristol rate of 8021 (-4% different) and an England rate of 4241 (82% different)..

Fraud and forgery tends to be more common in wards where there are a larger number of commercial premises. The outer estates are therefore likely to have a lower rate. Easton has a Fraud & Forgery rate per 100,000 of 356. This compares with a Bristol rate of 539 (-34% different) and an England rate of 543 (-34% different)..

Criminal damage rates in Knowle West are particularly high. Criminal damage tends to be higher in areas where there are relatively large number of young people. Easton has a

Criminal Damage rate per 100,000 of 1782. This compares with a Bristol rate of 1886 (-6% different) and an England rate of 1673 (7% different)..

Drug offences relate to possession and supply of controlled substances. All three areas have high rates for drug offences. Easton has a Drug Offences rate per 100,000 of 143. This compares with a Bristol rate of 203 (-30% different) and an England rate of 256 (-44% different)..

Other offences cover a wide range of crimes. It includes things like failing to comply with a court order and firearms offences. Easton has a Other offences rate per 100,000 of 121. This compares with a Bristol rate of 126 (-4% different) and an England rate of 121 (0% different)..

The total number of crimes in an area gives an overall picture of the extent of recorded crime. Areas which have very low populations compared to the number of commercial premises that they have tend to have much higher rates. Easton has a total crime rate per 100,000 of 15958. This compares with a Bristol rate of 15778 (1% different) and an England rate of 9847 (62% different)..

Health

Health is one of the least strong domains within the Index of Multiple Deprivation. Taking Bristol as a whole, ill-health is less of a contributory factor to deprivation than employment, income, housing and education. Easton is ranked the 18th highest ward in the city and 2265 in England for the health domain of the multiple deprivation and is not featured in the top 10% of wards in this category in England.

The number of primary care facilities in an area is an indication of how easy it is for people to access health care. It is worth bearing in mind that some health facilities might be just outside wards and therefore relatively accessible to local people even though they are not counted in the total for their area. There are no GPs, dentists, Pharmacists or Opticians in Easton ward at present.

Low birth weight is defined as babies who weigh less than 2.5 kg at birth. About 10% of babies weigh less than this at birth, however higher rates of low birth weight can indicate problems with maternal health. Low birth weight is correlated with maternal smoking. On average, 70.4 out of 1000 live births in Easton are low birth weight, ranking Easton 21st in Bristol, however, infant mortality rates are significantly higher.

Standardised mortality ratios take into account the differences in age structure between areas and compare the death rates including those for premature death. Figures are presented as an index where 100 equals the Avon average, 200 equals twice the average rate and 50 equals half the average rate. Figures for specific diseases don't tend to work well for small areas. Easton's SMR for all causes for people who die aged under 65 is 144 the fourth highest rate in the city. The rate is significantly high - the lower limit is 117.

Government Response To The Health Select Committee's Second Report On The Tobacco Industry and The Health Risks Of Smoking states that "Smoking is the major cause of health inequalities." The figures quoted from the Citizen's Panel are difficult to reconcile with other sources of data, however it does allow data from different wards to be compared. The figures are based on relatively small samples and therefore need to be treated with caution. 34% of people in Lawrence Hill smoke, the 4th highest in the city

Reducing teenage conceptions is one of the Government's Public Service Agreement targets. The annual number of teenage conceptions, particularly for girls under 16, is low so figures don't work well for small areas. Instead, data has been used for PCG areas. Teenage conceptions for all girls aged between 11 and 15 is 50% higher than the Avon average for the Bristol inner PCG. Teenage conceptions for all girls aged under 19 are 2.25x higher than the Avon average.

Mental health is difficult to measure. There is still considerable stigma attached to mental illnesses which can lead to prejudice. In addition, it is linked to some of the most extreme forms of social exclusion such as rough sleeping and imprisonment. Suicides and deliberate self harm are not representative of mental health as a whole but are one way in which variations can be mapped. Bristol Inner has an SMR for suicide and deliberate self harm of 171. The rate is significantly high - the lower confidence limit is 106. Avon average = 100

Housing

Results from the 2001 House condition survey are expected June/July 2001. The data included is from a private house condition survey undertaken in the mid 1990s. PSA targets for house disrepair only apply to public sector housing. Easton had the highest number of homes that were unfit in 1995. 29.3% of all homes surveyed were unfit

Estimates of tenure for ward sized areas are only available from the Census. Changes in housing policy mean that the mix and proportion of social housing will have changed. However, broad comparisons with the city are still possible. Owned outright or buying: 74.5% (City: 63.6%); Rented privately or with a job: 12.6% (City: 10.5%); Rented from housing association: 3.6% (City: 3.7%); Rented from local authority: 9.2% (City: 22.1%);

House prices in Bristol have risen sharply over the past two years. Data is based on postcode information from HM Land registry which have been allocated to wards. Easton average house prices are as follows: Av Detached £107,616; Av Semi det. £64,680; Av Terraced £54,957; Av Flat £40,427; Av overall £54, 936

Housing developments are monitored as part of the development control process. The figures relate to developments for 1997/98 through to 1999/00. There were 24 house completions in Easton between 1997 and 2000. The largest single number of completions was for Bloy Street, part of the Easton Renewal area.

The following data relates to public sector housing. Void rates for council homes have been used to indicate areas with hard to let properties. Void rates in Bristol as a whole are low and voids may be as a result of improvement programmes. Easton has a relatively low percentage of voids - 1.7% on 31 March 2001. The vast majority of these were on offer or had been accepted.. Housing management data is available for housing areas. Comparisons between areas reflect the different characteristics of the neighbourhoods that they are made up of. The percentage of tenancies in arrears in Easton is the highest in the city. The amount of money owed per property is the second highest.

Environment

The physical environment and natural environment in deprived areas can be very varied. However, the environment in deprived areas tends to be badly maintained and at greater risk of being damaged. Easton generally has a below average quality of life; the number

and size of green open spaces are lower on average than that of the city. Pollution levels are also above the city's average.

Data from the citizen's panel gives an indication of car use and other forms of transport in ward areas. Overall, Bristol has high car usage figures. If one mode of transport in an area is well-used this tends to be reflected in lower usage figures for other modes. Easton has a relatively low percentage of people who drive regularly and one of the highest percentages of people who never drive. Use of public transport is above the city average as is the number of people who use cycling facilities

Communities of interest

Black and ethnic minorities suffer from widespread discrimination. For instance similarly aged, similarly qualified black people are at least twice as likely to be unemployed than white people. Black and ethnic minority communities also suffer from hate crimes. About 27% of people in Easton ward (less the NDC area) were from an ethnic minority background at the time of the last census. This is considerably higher than the national average and is similar to the ethnic composition of Ashley

Disabled people live in all wards in the city and are one of the most socially excluded groups. There is evidence (eg the number of people who qualify for severe disabled living allowance) to show that there is a higher proportion of disabled people live in wards which are deprived. Disabled people may also find it more costly and more inconvenient to live in deprived areas - access to shops and other services tends to be more difficult. Evidence on the number of disabled people in Easton is difficult to interpret. It is likely that there are fewer disabled people in Easton than the city average. Rates of benefits that specifically target disabled people are lower than the city average. Rates of incapacity benefit are high. However, this may be as a result of people transferring from unemployment benefit to incapacity benefit in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Data from the citizen's panel is that the number of people with a long term limiting illness is low.

Young people have distinctive views. They are much more likely to be both victims and perpetrators of crime. The proportion of young people compared with the rest of the population tends to be higher in deprived areas. Easton has a relatively high proportion of younger people, 25% compared to a city average of 22%, the 10th highest in the city.

Older people are more likely to be disabled. Pensioners who are reliant on state benefits have very low incomes - 39% of all income support claimants in Bristol are pensioners. Easton has a relatively low proportion of older people - 17% of people are aged 65 + the 8th lowest figure in the city.

Women are likely to experience discrimination in the workplace and this is reflected in lower average incomes for women. However detailed information about discrimination is not available at a neighbourhood level. Information is available about domestic violence and this tends to be correlated with deprivation. Easton has a relatively high percentage of domestic incidents compared with the city average. The Childcare and early years partnership has set a target of an additional 16 childcare places in Easton
There is relatively little data on how the experiences of gay and lesbian people who live in deprived areas differ across the city. People who are gay and lesbian are discriminated against in the job market and are also subject to homophobic attacks. The majority of attacks occur in the city centre or in the Old Market area of the city. There is very little data on the experiences of gay and lesbian people in Lockleaze. However, there is no evidence to suggest that their experiences in Easton will be any different to other areas of

the city - they may suffer discrimination in the job market as well as be the victims of homophobic attacks