

Stockton-on-Tees

Area Assessment (Summary version)

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of local public services

Stockton-on-Tees at a glance

This independent assessment by six inspectorates sets out how well local public services are tackling the major issues in Stockton-on-Tees. It says how well they are delivering better results for local people and how likely these are to improve in future. If, and only if, our assessment shows that the following special circumstances are met in relation to a major issue, we use flags to highlight our judgements. We use a green flag to highlight where others can learn from outstanding achievements or improvements or an innovation that has very promising prospects of success. We use a red flag to highlight where we have significant concerns about results and future prospects that are not being tackled adequately. This means that local partners need to do something more or different to improve these prospects.

Green flags - exceptional performance or innovation that others can learn from

No green flags have been identified for Stockton-on-Tees

Red flags - significant concerns, action needed

No red flags have been identified for Stockton-on-Tees

The local area

Stockton-on-Tees is located at the heart of the Tees Valley in the North East of England. The area is within easy reach of city shopping and leisure facilities, the coast and rural North Yorkshire as well as being home to industrial areas. There is a mixture of urban centres, market towns and villages and an expanding University.

The population of the Borough is increasing and is now 191,500 (up from 175,000 in 1991), and this rise should continue to 219,100 in 2029 (and 221,100 in 2031). The Borough is a unique social and economic mix, with areas of severe disadvantage alongside areas of affluence.

Almost 5 per cent of the total population is from a black or minority ethnic community, but this too is expected to increase. Most of the people in Stockton who identify themselves as belonging to a minority ethnic group are of Asian/Asian British origin.

Stockton-on-Tees has a history of manufacturing industries. The petro-chemical industries have strong roots in the Borough.

As the traditional industries have changed, the partnership has invested in transforming the physical environment and growing a more varied economy.

Major financial, research and environmental companies now base themselves in the Borough, along with the growth of Durham University's Stockton campus.

The Borough forms part of the Tees Valley City Region, home to some 662,100 people living mainly around the lower Tees. It includes Stockton-on-Tees, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland, Darlington and Hartlepool.

Stockton-on-Tees's public services have agreed the following challenges that they need to tackle:

Economic Regeneration and Transport

Environment and Housing

Safer Communities

Children & Young People

Healthier Communities and Adults

The next section tells you how Stockton-on-Tees's public services are doing in each of their local priority areas.

How is Stockton-on-Tees doing?

Economic Regeneration and Transport

People can see the impact of regeneration in Stockton. High-quality improvements have been made to the towns of the Borough, especially Thornaby, Billingham, Yarm and Stockton Riverside. Significant government and private money has been secured to support high-profile projects. The improvements to the river are important to the wider region. The new footbridge over the Tees between Stockton and Thornaby and major arts and culture events demonstrate the improvements made.

The current economic recession poses significant threats to Stockton's economy. The potential loss of jobs at Corus and the risks to the petrochemical industry pose major challenges that could seriously weaken the economy of the Tees Valley. Stockton-on-Tees is part of a joint response to these difficulties. While part of a bigger problem, how well Stockton and its partners work together will have a significant impact on future improvements.

Fewer adults take part in voluntary activities in Stockton-on-Tees than elsewhere. Voluntary and community organisations have weaknesses. The Council has put arrangements in place to support them but it will take time to see the difference this is making.

Neighbourhood regeneration is progressing well. Stockton has a good track record. Many initiatives are now in place to support those in the community who most need support, improving skills and employment as a result. Inequalities persist, though the gap between the most and least deprived parts of the Borough is narrowing.

More people are using public transport and satisfaction with bus services is above average. Discretionary schemes have helped older and vulnerable people access transport. However people are less satisfied than in other areas with the quality of bus information. The Council continues to reduce the number of road networks needing repairs.

Environment and Housing

Public agencies have plans in place to use natural resources carefully so they meet national standards to do with sustainability. The area has made one of the largest cuts in carbon dioxide emissions in the country. People are producing fewer carbon emissions in their homes. Private industry still needs to do more to reduce how much carbon dioxide it makes.

The area is clean and the Partnership is improving the environment. The Council maintains the roads well. There is little derelict land. The River Tees is very important to Stockton's environment. It is clean and widely used for leisure. However, local residents are less satisfied with their local area than in other places.

The Council has invested in street cleaning and parks and open spaces in response to local people's priorities, but people still want to see further improvements.

People in Stockton-on-Tees produce more waste and recycle less than in other places. Stockton Council has invested in refuse collection and disposal in response to local community priorities. Residents are satisfied with the service. The area faces challenges with changing national priorities around waste disposal.

More people are moving to Stockton-on-Tees. Many more new houses are being built, although the recession could reduce the number. There are not enough low-cost homes available in the borough but the Council is taking action to ensure more are available. Demand for services from people on low incomes and those with particular needs is increasing. There are fewer homeless people, especially young people without somewhere to live. But some people have to stay too long in temporary accommodation. Demand for adaptations to properties is high and the Council has invested heavily to reduce waiting times.

Safer Communities

The area is becoming safer for local people. Crime has fallen and is lower than in similar areas in England.

Most areas of crime have shown lasting improvement including burglaries, violent crime, car crime and arson. Although the level is still too high, fewer young people are committing crimes.

In common with other areas, incidents of domestic violence have increased since 2007. The partnership's services cannot fully meet this increased demand. We will be looking at how well they respond to this in the coming

year.

Community safety continues to be a priority for local people but they believe the Council and police are dealing with their concerns. Crime is more of an issue for some communities in Stockton than others.

Overall, three-quarters of people in Stockton are satisfied with their area. Although this is worse than the national average, it is better than in places similar to Stockton. Fewer people than in many other places think that people from different backgrounds get on well together, or treat one another with respect in Stockton.

Children & Young People

The Children's Trust and Stockton Renaissance are doing well at improving the achievements and the well-being of children and young people.

Children do well at school. GCSE results have improved and are in line with national averages. More young people than before in the Borough are going on to higher education. But some groups perform less well. Two secondary schools do not perform well enough. More 16 to 18 year olds are not in education, employment or training compared to similar areas and nationally.

Teenage pregnancies rates are still too high and more children than in similar areas are overweight.

The Council ensures that children and young people are safe. Support for children in need is good. Families get help so they can cope with issues by themselves. Overall, outcomes for looked after children are good, supported by relatively stable care arrangements.

Healthier Communities and Adults

Health and support for people is variable. Death rates, including premature deaths from major illnesses, are above the national average. The gap has closed significantly for women but got worse for men in the area. Importantly, death rates from the 'big killer' diseases in Stockton (heart disease, strokes and cancer) have fallen faster than the national average but there is more to do to close the gap further (the public agencies have introduced plans recently). Stockton-on-Tees is good at getting people to give up smoking and to take physical activity. However, it is less good at tackling alcohol misuse and child obesity, though it is improving these services. Teenage pregnancies, which often lead to poor health, are increasing more than the partnership expected. They have now developed additional improvement plans.

CAA looks at how well local public services, working together, are meeting the needs of the people they serve. It's a joint assessment made by a group of independent watchdogs about the performance of local public services, and how likely they are to meet local priorities. From 9 December you will find the results of Comprehensive Area Assessment on the Oneplace website - <http://oneplace.direct.gov.uk/>



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