

West Northamptonshire Council: local authority assessment

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About West Northamptonshire Council

Demographics

West Northamptonshire is a unitary authority in the East Midlands, England. The area has a population of approximately 439,811 (Office National Statistics, 2024). Around 67% of residents live in urban areas, with Northampton as the largest settlement, while 33% reside in rural communities including market towns and villages. West Northamptonshire ranks 115th out of 151 upper-tier local authorities in the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), indicating relatively low overall deprivation. However, significant inequalities exist, particularly in parts of Northampton, where some neighbourhoods fall within the most deprived 10% nationally.

The population of West Northamptonshire grew by 13.5% between 2011 and 2021, making it one of the fastest-growing areas in the East Midlands. The median age is 41 years, slightly above the national average. People aged 65 and over make up 17.5% of the population, while 21.89% are aged 17 and under. People aged 18-64 account for 60.6%. Ethnically, the area is predominantly White (85.91%), with Asian (5.3%) and Black (4.9%) communities forming the largest minority groups. The proportion of residents born outside the UK has increased, with notable growth in communities from Romania and other non-EU European countries.

West Northamptonshire Council is part of the Northamptonshire Integrated Care System (ICS), which covers both West and North Northamptonshire. Delivery is structured around 9 Local Area Partnerships, with founding models in Northampton, Daventry, and South Northamptonshire.

Following the May 2025 local elections, West Northamptonshire Council is under the political control of Reform UK, which secured 42 of the 76 seats. The council leader is a Reform UK councillor. The remaining seats are held by Conservative (17), Labour (9), Liberal Democrat (6), and Independent (2) councillors. This marked a significant shift from previous Conservative dominance. The council operates under newly established electoral boundaries, and the political change has prompted adjustments to governance structures and committee memberships.

In 2021, Northamptonshire's local government was restructured following the financial collapse of the county council in 2018. To improve efficiency and accountability, the UK government replaced the county council and 7 district councils with 2 new unitary authorities: West Northamptonshire Council (covering Northampton, Daventry, and South Northamptonshire) and North Northamptonshire Council (covering Corby, Kettering, Wellingborough, and East Northamptonshire).

Financial facts

- In 2023/24, the local authority estimated its total budget would be **£589.122 million**. Its actual spend for that year was **£621.371 million**, which was **£32.249 million** more than planned.
- The local authority estimated that it would spend **£139.352 million** of its total budget on adult social care in 2023/24. Its actual spend was **£159.605 million**, which is **£20.253 million** more than planned.
- In 2023/24, **25.69%** of the budget was spent on adult social care.
- The local authority has raised the full adult social care precept for 2023/24, with a value of **2%**. Please note that the amount raised through ASC precept varies from local authority to local authority.
- Approximately **4905** people were accessing long-term adult social care support, and approximately **1385** people were accessing short-term adult social care support in 2023/24. Local authorities spend money on a range of adult social care services, including supporting individuals. No two care packages are the same and vary significantly in their intensity, duration, and cost.

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