GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

What’s the issue?

In order to improve health and reduce inequalities, it is important to understand the make-up of the local population and geographical area. Features within the geographical areas, such as rivers or the location of residential, commercial and industrial areas, or the way in which boundaries have been derived can influence health needs of the local population, and also their access to services.

What’s our situation?

The city and port of Hull lies on the banks of the river Humber and is positioned at the gateway to Europe. It is linked to the national motorway networks from the west via the M62 and to the south across the Humber Bridge via the M180. Hull is surrounded by the East Riding of Yorkshire a largely rural area containing a number of suburbs immediately adjacent to the city.

In November 2013, Hull was announced as the winner of the UK’s City of Culture 2017 [8]. Hull is also a Purple Flag city recognising excellence in the management of town and city centres at night.

In relation to the characteristics of Hull, one problem relatively unique to Hull is its tight geographical boundaries. Most cities such as Hull are relatively deprived, but most other local authority or NHS boundaries for that city cover some more affluent suburban areas. Hull has very few affluent suburbs within its boundaries, and it is estimated that around 2,500 people in Hull move to the ‘leafy suburbs’ in East Riding of Yorkshire just outside Hull’s boundary each year. The people that tend to move will often do so because of children and better schools, better quality and choice of housing, etc. The more aspirational, successful and motivated people tend will, on average, to have increased mobility. This also affects the employment and skills profile of Hull. Furthermore, owing to Hull's somewhat isolated location, people may be less likely to be influenced by positive health factors and changes occurring elsewhere in other geographical areas. Due to Hull’s high levels of deprivation and tight boundaries, Hull is often at the bottom of national league tables and among the ‘worst’ for various indicators for both health and the wider determinants of health. As a result, there are often negative comments made about Hull, which can influence attitudes, health and lifestyle. Within local qualitative research projects, there were certainly some residents that had a “what’s the point?” attitude with regard to their health and lifestyle changes [9], however, others felt that this was just an excuse “You can lead a healthy lifestyle anywhere, it's not the place – I staunchly defend Hull– it's about choices”[10].

Other geographical areas have been defined on the basis of Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) boundaries, and Sustainability and Transformational Plans (STPs) [11] have been produced for all 44 STP areas in England. Hull is included within the Humber, Coast and Vale (HCV) STP [3, 12], which includes five other local CCGs (see glossary (www.hullpublichealth.org/jsna2017.html#c82) for more information).

For more detailed information, see the JSNA Toolkit: Geographical Area report.

What are the strategic needs?

Most of the above factors are fixed and not amenable to change. However in the absence of altered boundaries, they reinforce the need for close and collaborative working with local geographic partners, particularly in the East Riding of Yorkshire, and areas included within the HCV STP.

The upside of Hull's tight boundaries is that access to central services in Hull City Centre is relatively good for the majority of the public, with good transport links radiating to and from the City Centre. Links such as bus routes are often less good between communities “around the edge” of Hull, which may be physically near to one another but not have easy access.

There has been significant recent investment in the city of Hull revealed within Hull’s City Plan as well as investment obtained prior to the start of 2017 linked with the UK City of Culture 2017 [8].
Further details about the City Plan, the City of Culture and its legacy, recent investment in the city and future investment plans for the city are given in the glossary (www.hullpublichealth.org/jsna2017.html#c81) for more information.

The local Humber, Coast and Vale “Start Well, Live Well and Age Well” STP [3] aims to move towards place-based provision of services (see the glossary (www.hullpublichealth.org/jsna2017.html#c81) for more information).

REFERENCES


