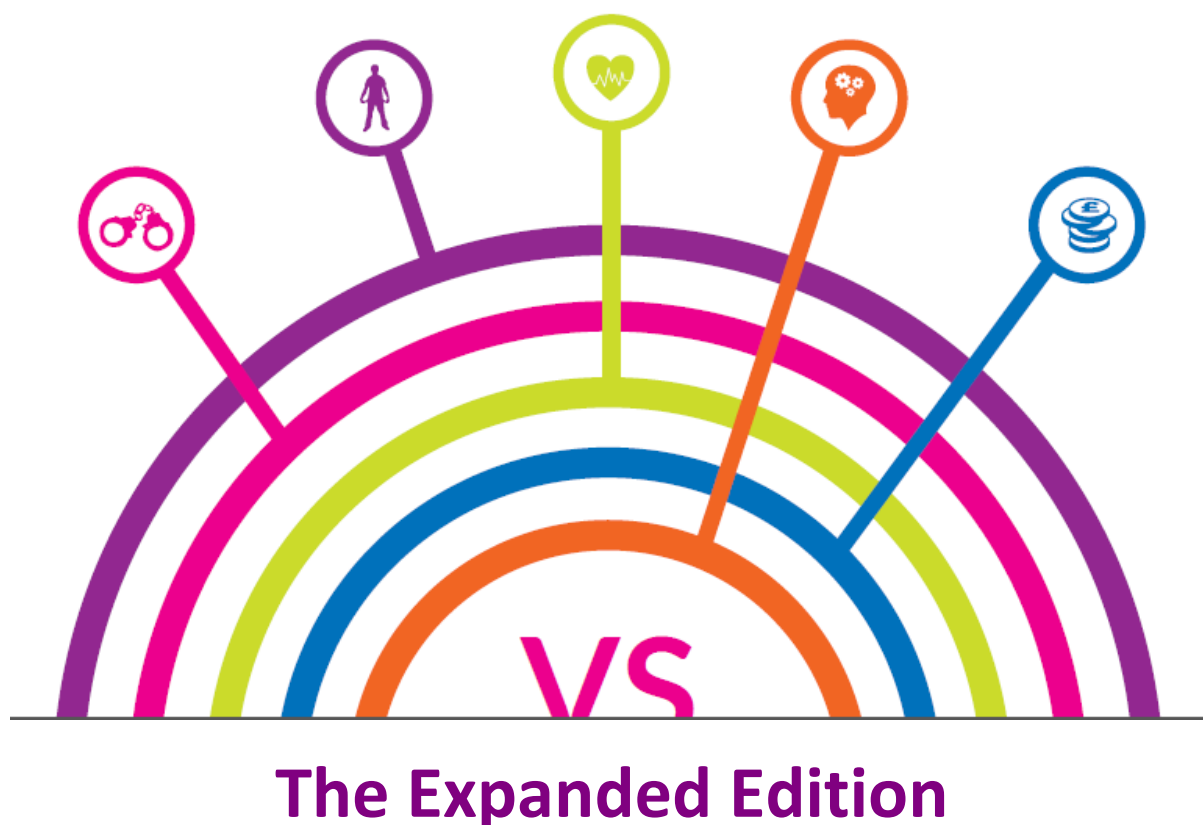


# Vital Signs 2017



## What is Vital Signs?

We live in the information age, yet despite so many of us having easy access to the internet, the information most useful to us is not always easy to access or even to identify. Anyone wishing to know more about the current state of their community will need to locate and collate a wide variety of research, published by a diverse range of organisations, each written with a different audience in mind.

Vital Signs seeks to provide a single, easily accessible and understandable source of relevant data, measuring the qualities and challenges of our society at a local level. Vital Signs is a kind of health check, illustrating where we can find our strengths and weaknesses as a community; highlighting where we excel and can be proud of our achievements, as well as where we have great need and where future attention and resources should be focused.

In 2013, Milton Keynes was one of a handful of the Community Foundations in Britain to pilot Vital Signs in our country for the first time. Other communities around the nation have subsequently launched their Vital Signs reports and the aspiration is that over the next few years, the whole of the UK will be included in the Vital Signs project. Every three years, each Vital Signs locality publishes a full report, including a wide range of themes, with interim update reports published in interim years, focusing on selected themes or recent developments. This year's 2017 Vital Signs MK report is our first update report since the full report published in 2016, and this year we have given mental health in Milton Keynes a special focus.

## Methodology

We wanted to ensure that the content of Vital Signs would be as reliable and as current as possible. To achieve that, the team at the Community Foundation reviewed every bit of research we could get our hands on. We scoured the impressive library of data available through Milton Keynes Council, the reporting of the Health Service and Thames Valley Police, we poured through the results of air and water quality testing and we looked in painstaking detail at other independent and reliable sources of research, such as the Office for National Statistics. We examined new independent research from respected organisations like The Joseph Rowntree Foundation and CentreForCities, as well as the annual reporting from local service providers, both public and voluntary. We also utilised the vast networks and databases of Place Analytics to make sure we had the widest reach possible in gathering relevant and reliable data on Milton Keynes in 2017.

With regard to this year's special spotlight on mental health in Milton Keynes, we have also conducted investigative interviews with a number of local professionals in the mental health field, as well as others who have been involved in local initiatives to address mental health problems in Milton Keynes.

So with the results of all of the research conducted on Milton Keynes over the past decade, our task was then to bring all of those elements together and package them in a way that would be accessible, informative and thought-provoking.

To achieve that, we've created two Vital Signs reports. A summary document in magazine format has been produced for distribution around Milton Keynes. The document you are presently reading is the expanded version of the Vital Signs report. This free download report presents a more comprehensive review of the research, pointing out where it all comes from and indicating which organisations and reports were the sources of the data so you can read the original research for yourself. (Please note that some of the data was obtained through Place Analytics, which is a paid subscription service compiling data from a range of reputable sources. References to their portal have been omitted, everything else comes from the sources specified throughout this report.) This Vital Signs Full Report also provides details of our consultations with several local professionals working in the field of mental health, or working in roles that include some mental health remit, offering a fuller picture of the local environment as it pertains to this issue.

## How to Use Vital Signs

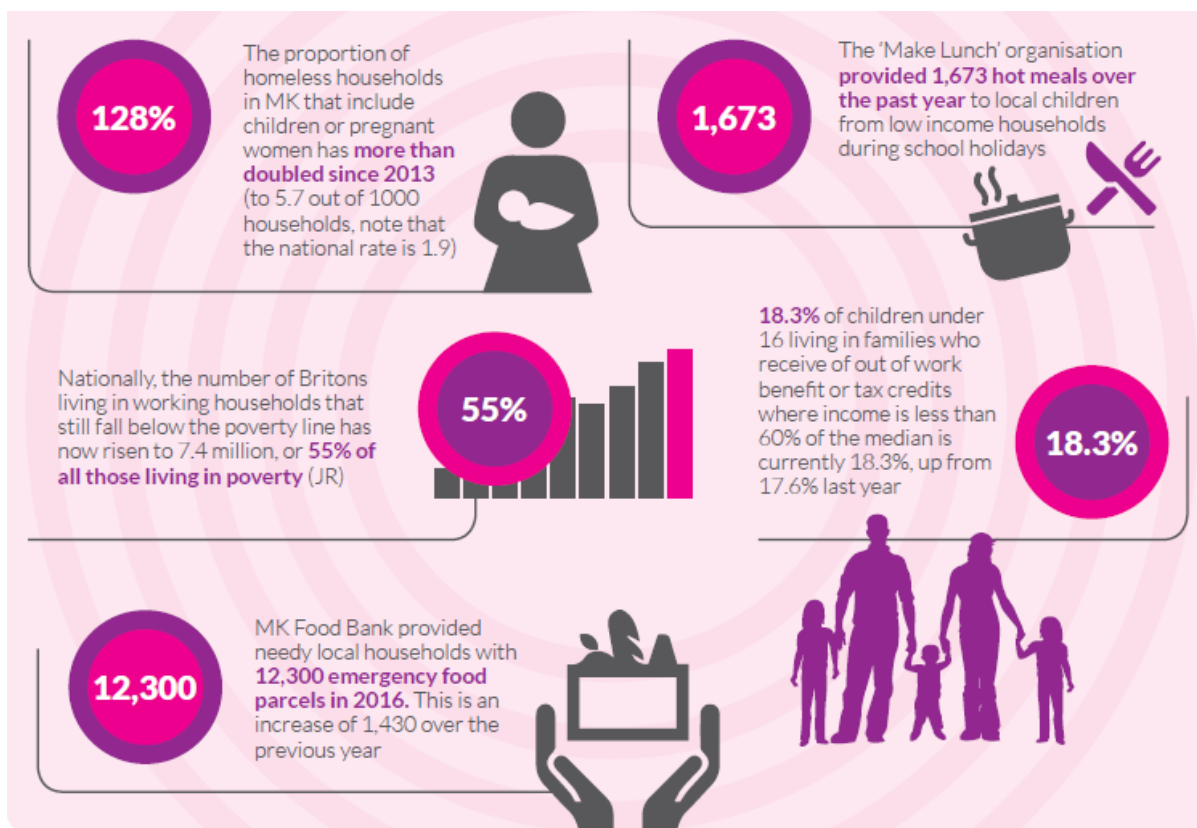
We hope that Vital Signs MK will be useful for organisations working in the voluntary sector, as well as our wider community. We believe that promoting a deeper and more meaningful understanding of our shared community and the challenges we face can inspire the civic pride, leadership, informed debate and community action that will lead to a brighter future for all of us who call Milton Keynes our home.

For those of us who operate in the voluntary / community and public sectors, it is hoped that Vital Signs will help point the way towards how we can best allocate our limited resources to deliver the largest, and most needed, impact on the lives of those who live in Milton Keynes.

## Themes:

1. Disadvantage and Poverty
2. Health and Wellbeing
3. Mental Health Focus
4. Crime and Safety
5. Economy

## Theme 1: Disadvantage and Poverty



**Theme definition** - Despite our city's record of great economic success, poverty and income inequality continue to grow in Milton Keynes, affecting greater and greater numbers of local working families who are living in poverty despite our thriving local economy.

**Overview** – In this, the fifth year of publishing Vital Signs MK, it has become well established that despite the city's record of economic success, poverty remains a continuing and growing problem in Milton Keynes, affecting more and more local families who are not benefitting from the thriving local economy. The indicators for the theme of poverty are, almost without exception, all moving in the wrong direction. In the list of most deprived local authorities, Milton Keynes is climbing the ranks, a growing number of areas within the city are classed amongst the most deprived in the country, and child poverty remains stubbornly at an unacceptably high level. At the same time, we see a concentration of wealth at the upper end of the income scale in Milton Keynes that is unusual in its scale.

## Findings On....

### What is poverty?

Poverty is defined by government as having a household income that is below 60% of the median income, after housing costs for the relevant household size.

High housing costs impact levels of poverty. When you take into account all costs associated with housing, the child poverty rate in Milton Keynes is estimated at 25%. (2014, *Child Poverty Action Group*)

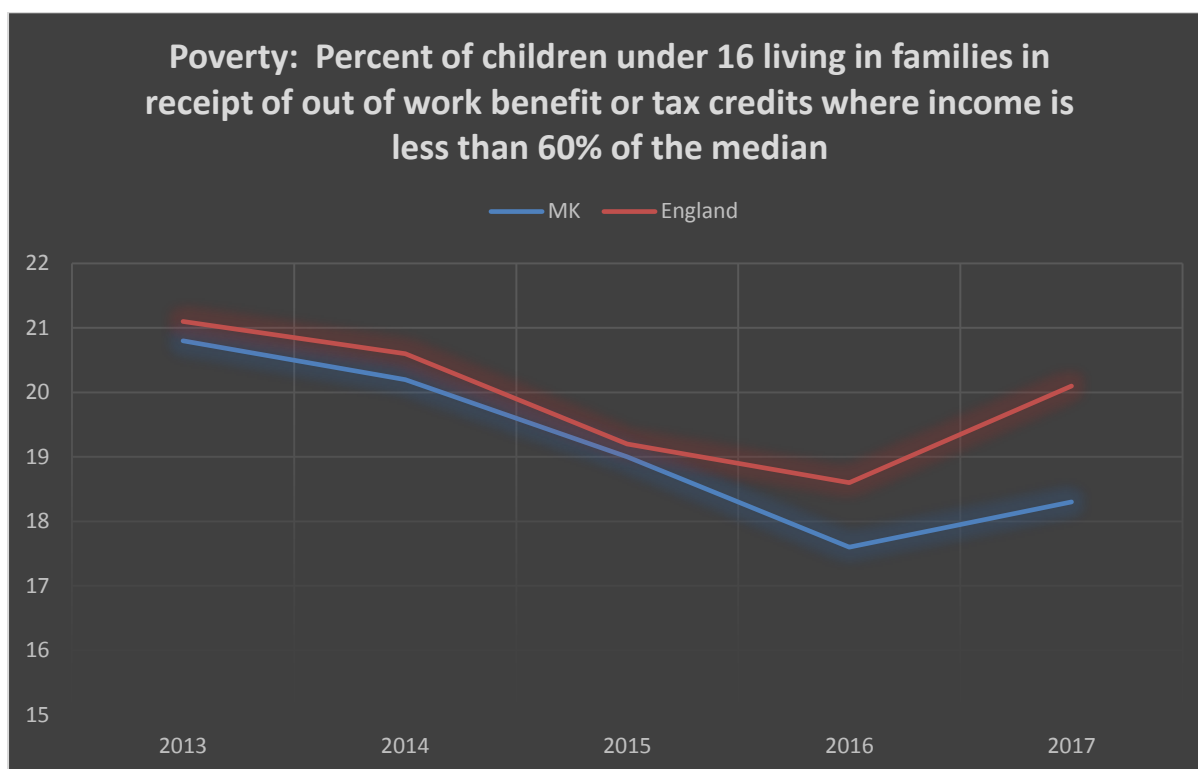
16.7% of people aged 60 and over in Milton Keynes are affected by 'income deprivation.' *Communities and Local Government Index of Multiple Deprivation*

Full time work is no longer a guarantee that the worker will not have to live in poverty. Nationally, 1.5 million children are in poverty because their working parents' wages are insufficient to secure a basic standard of living. The risk of living in 'absolute poverty' for working families has also increased over the past ten years. The percentage of working people in full-time jobs who earn 'low pay' is 20.5% and rising (the OECD average is 17.1%). *State of the Nation 2015 Social Mobility and Child Poverty in Great Britain, Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission*

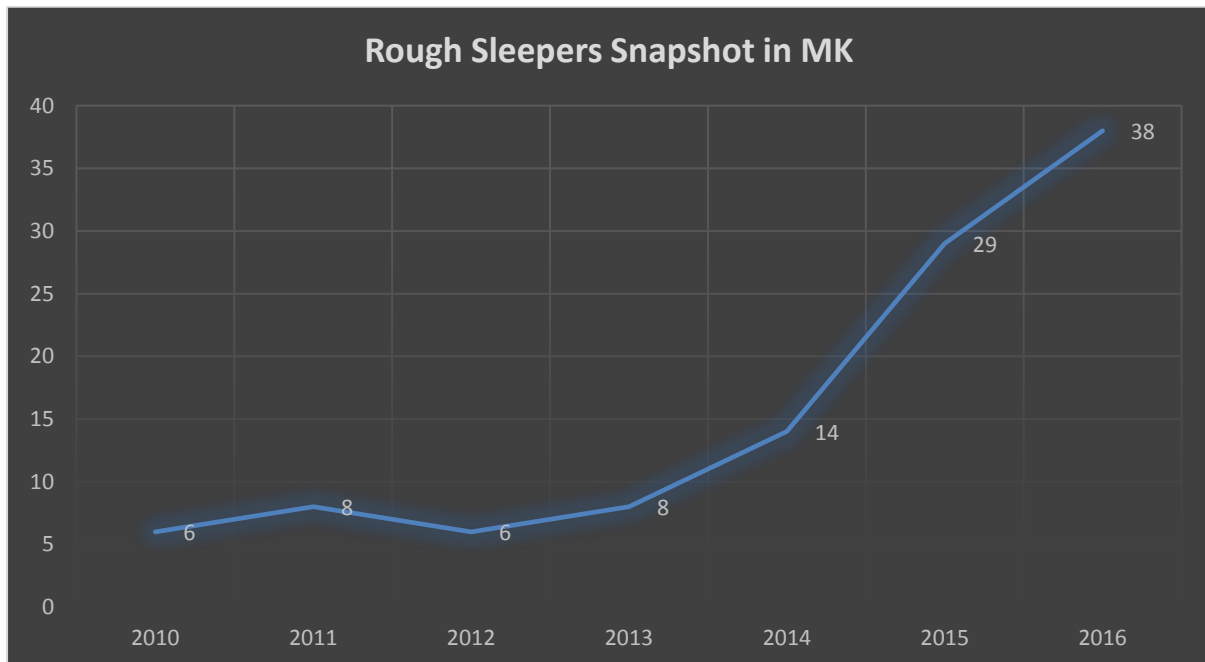
A recent study by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation examines 'destitution', a form of extreme poverty in which people have little to no income and cannot afford the absolute essentials: food, staying warm and dry, keeping clean. Their research estimates that between 1.5% and 2.1% of households in Milton Keynes are currently destitute. *Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 'Destitution in the UK', pub April 2016*

### Changes to Disadvantage and Poverty in MK

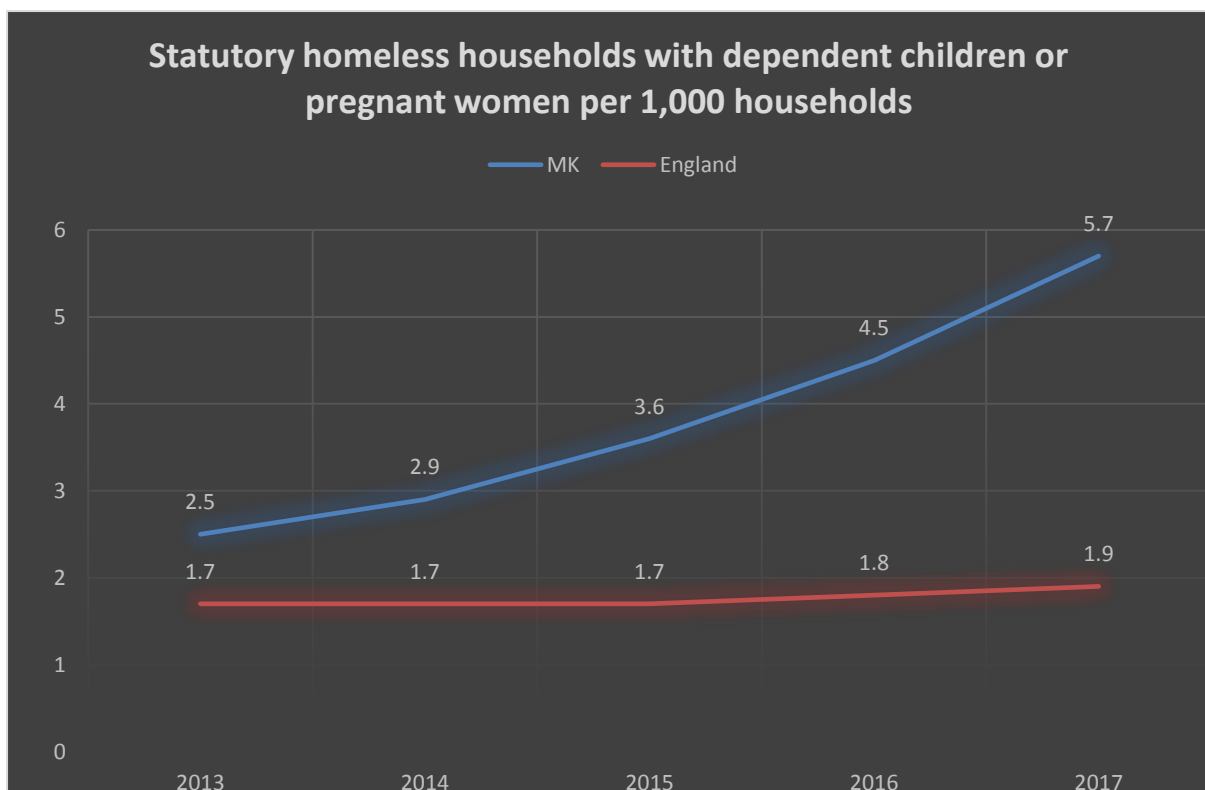
<b>128%</b>	The proportion of homeless households in MK that include children or pregnant women has more than doubled since 2013 (to 5.7 out of 1000 households, note that the national rate is 1.9)
<b>The Working Poor</b>	Nationally, the number of Britons living in working households that fall below the poverty line has risen to 7.4 million, or 55% of all those living in poverty (JR)
<b>12,300 Emergency food parcels</b>	MK Food Bank provided needy local households with 12,300 emergency food parcels in 2016. This is an increase of 1,430 over the previous year.
<b>1,673 meals</b>	The 'Make Lunch' organisation provided 1,673 hot meals over the past year to local children from low income households during school holidays
<b>18.3% of children are living in poverty</b>	Poverty: Percent of children under 16 living in families who receive of out of work benefit or tax credits where income is less than 60% of the median is currently 18.3%, up from 17.6% last year



Since the release of our first Vital Signs MK in 2013, we have reported on poverty statistics using government data showing how Milton Keynes scores on the Index of Multiple Deprivation. Since the most recent IMD figures were released in 2015, to get a more current picture, we are using a different metric and applying it to the past five years to show the trend that emerges. This metric is used by Public Health England for their reporting. After some encouraging movement over the past few years, we can see child poverty changing course and taking an upswing over the past year, now heading in the wrong direction.



Official street counts and estimates of rough sleeping in Milton Keynes show a snapshot of the number of rough sleepers counted on the streets on any one night in a chosen week, taken each year during the period from 1 October to 30 November.



**Vital Action** - Citizens Advice is an independent charity that offers free and confidential support to help people overcome a range of problems, including helping those who have significant financial difficulties to better manage their finances and their debts. Milton Keynes Citizens Advice recently launched a new 'home visiting' service that offers debt and money management advice to people who live in the most deprived areas of MK, to people who otherwise would have been far less likely or able to access their city centre premises.

**Vital Thinking** - What are the key factors that create and sustain poverty in our society? Which of those key factors fall inside the influence of local people and local government? What is the best way for us to work together to mitigate those factors and reduce poverty in our community?

## Additional Sources of Data

Homelessness stats for MK from Gov.uk

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/593685/ROUGH\\_Sleeping\\_Autumn\\_2016\\_Final\\_Tables.xls](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/593685/ROUGH_Sleeping_Autumn_2016_Final_Tables.xls)

In-work poverty research from Joseph Rowntree Foundation

<https://www.jrf.org.uk/press/work-poverty-hits-record-high-housing-crisis-fuels-insecurity>

Public Health England's Child Health Profiles

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/child-health-profiles-2016-published-by-public-health-england>

Living Standards 'squeeze' research from Joseph Rowntree Foundation

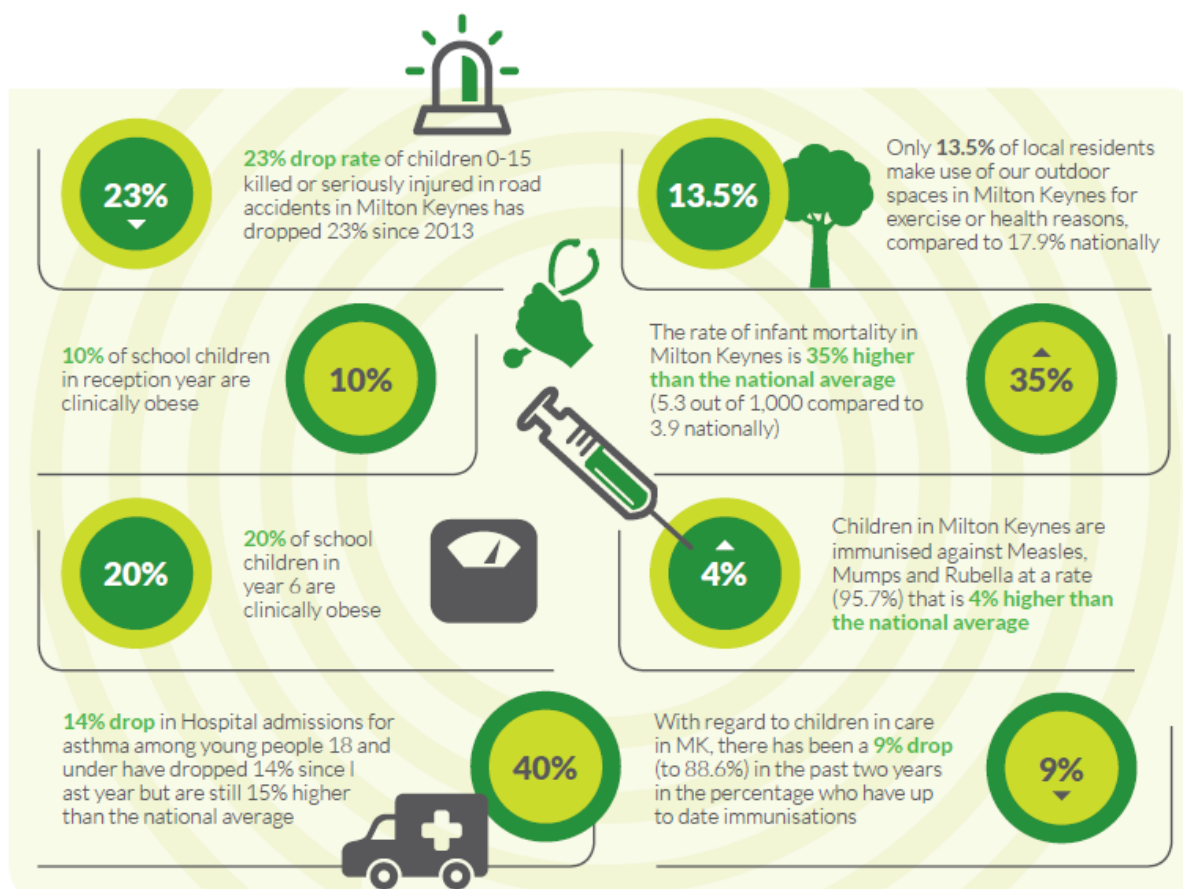
<https://www.jrf.org.uk/press/living-standards-squeeze-tightens-despite-pay-rises-and-tax-cuts>

Public Health England's MK Health Profile 2016

<http://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles>



## Theme 2: Health and Wellbeing



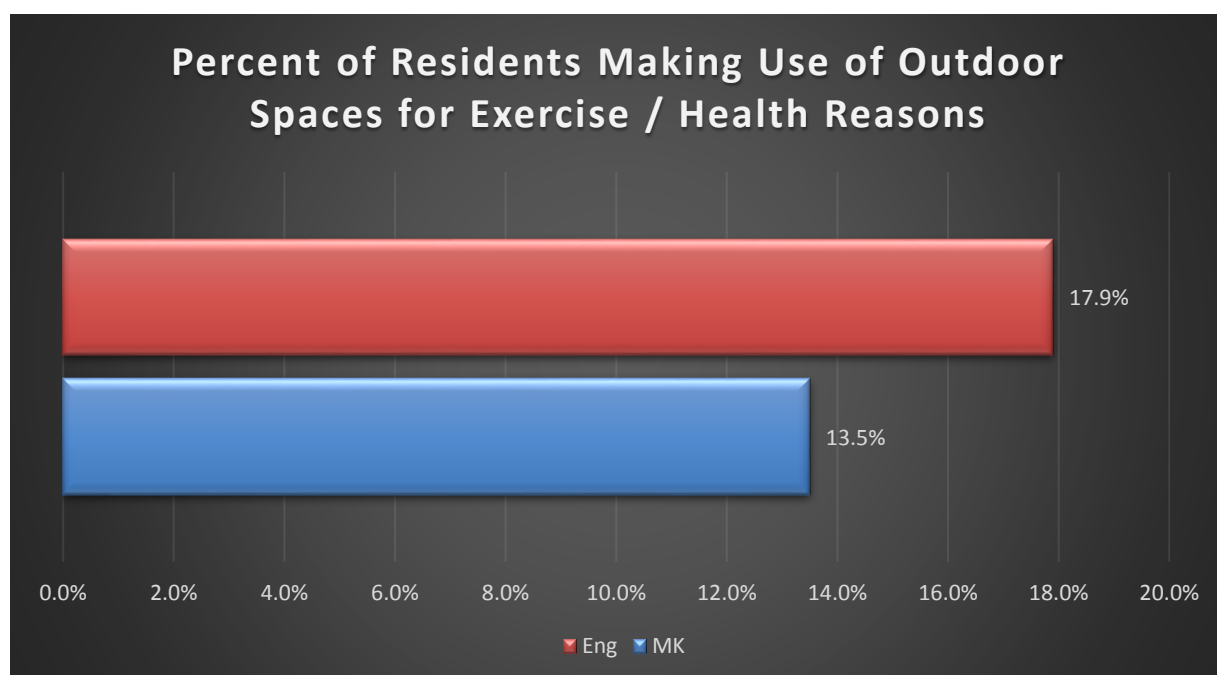
**Theme definition** - With many improving indicators, there are reasons to feel positively regarding our progress toward better public health, although there are still serious areas of concern, including incidence of obesity, asthma and infant mortality.

**Overview** – The latest statistics from Public Health England show some encouraging indicators for Milton Keynes. Reported rates for early detection of cancer has increased significantly, modest but steady reductions in smoking rates have been measured and the percent of adults in MK who are overweight or obese has declined almost six percent in the past five years. On the other hand, childhood obesity and excess winter deaths in Milton Keynes are increasing and we are spending less time getting exercise outdoors than most of the country. Other data give us indications that disadvantaged people in MK are not always accessing health care and support at the same rates as the wider population. For example, the proportion of children in Milton Keynes receiving key immunisations is at 95.7%, but for children in care, that rate is only 88.6%.

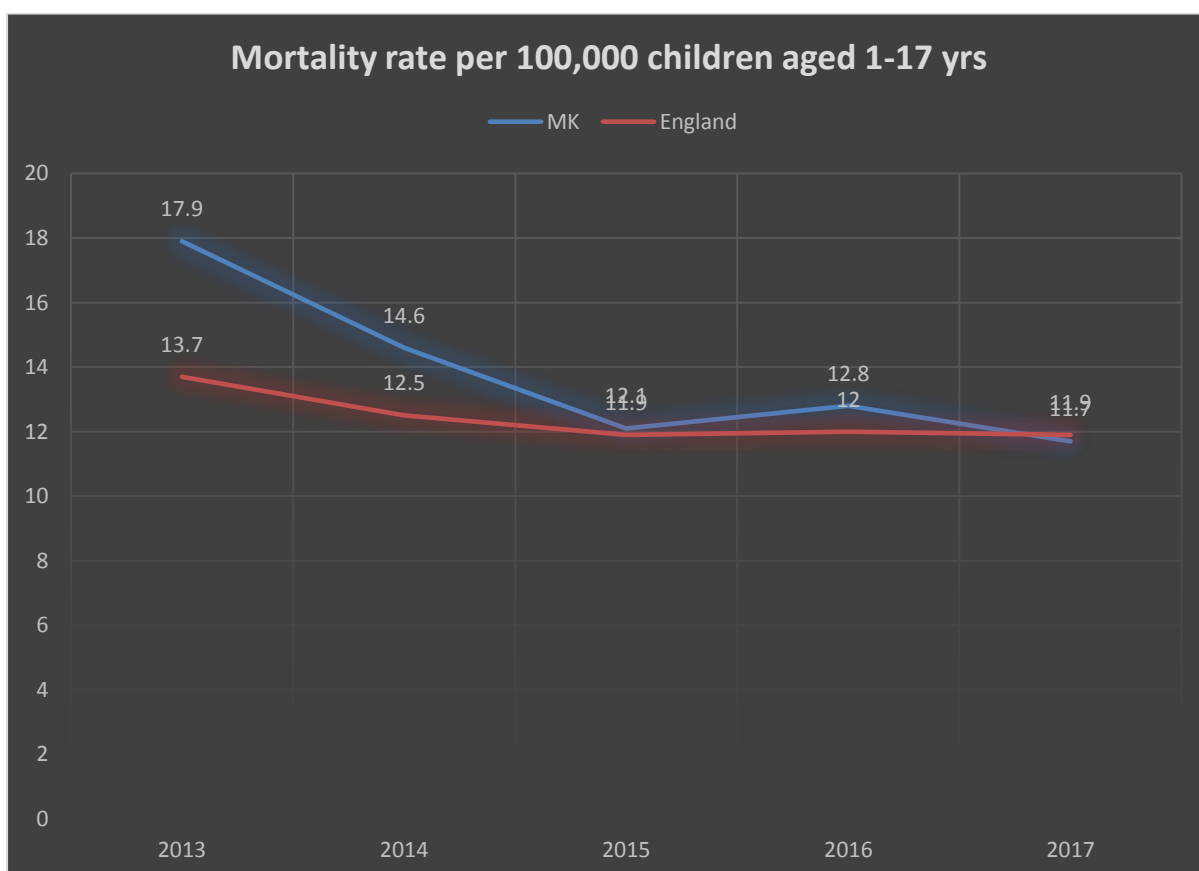
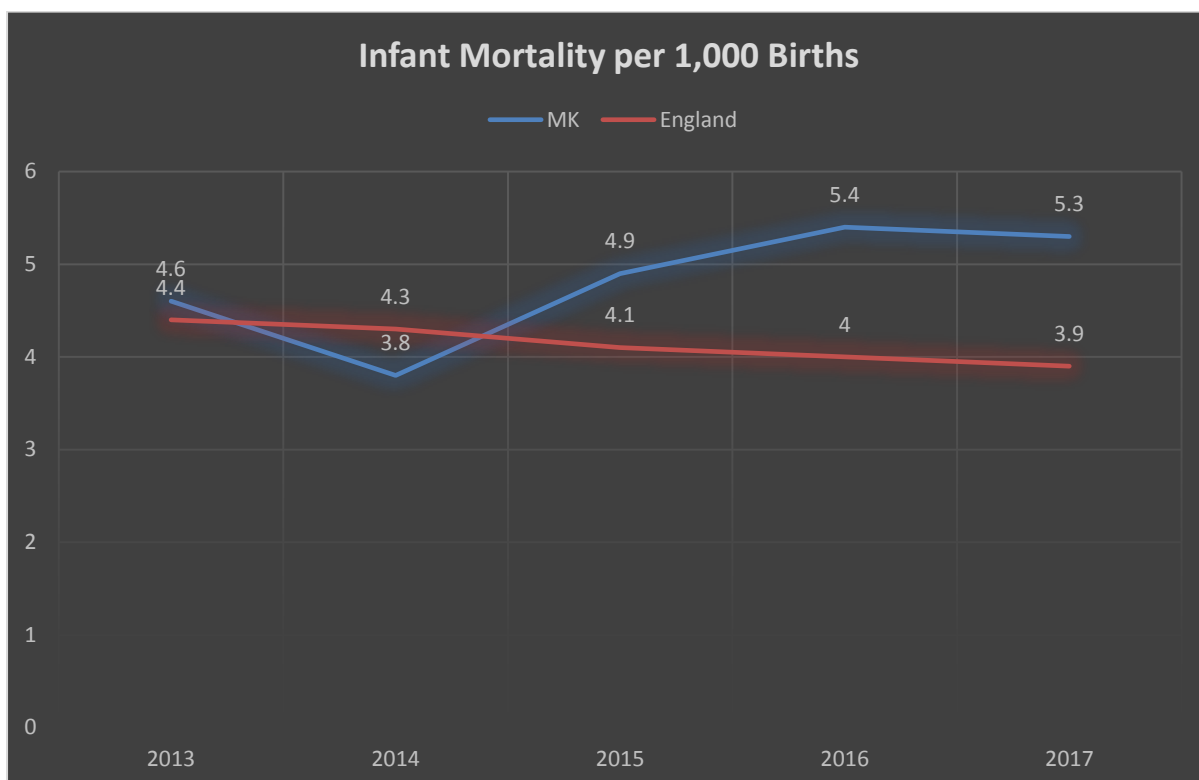
## Findings On....

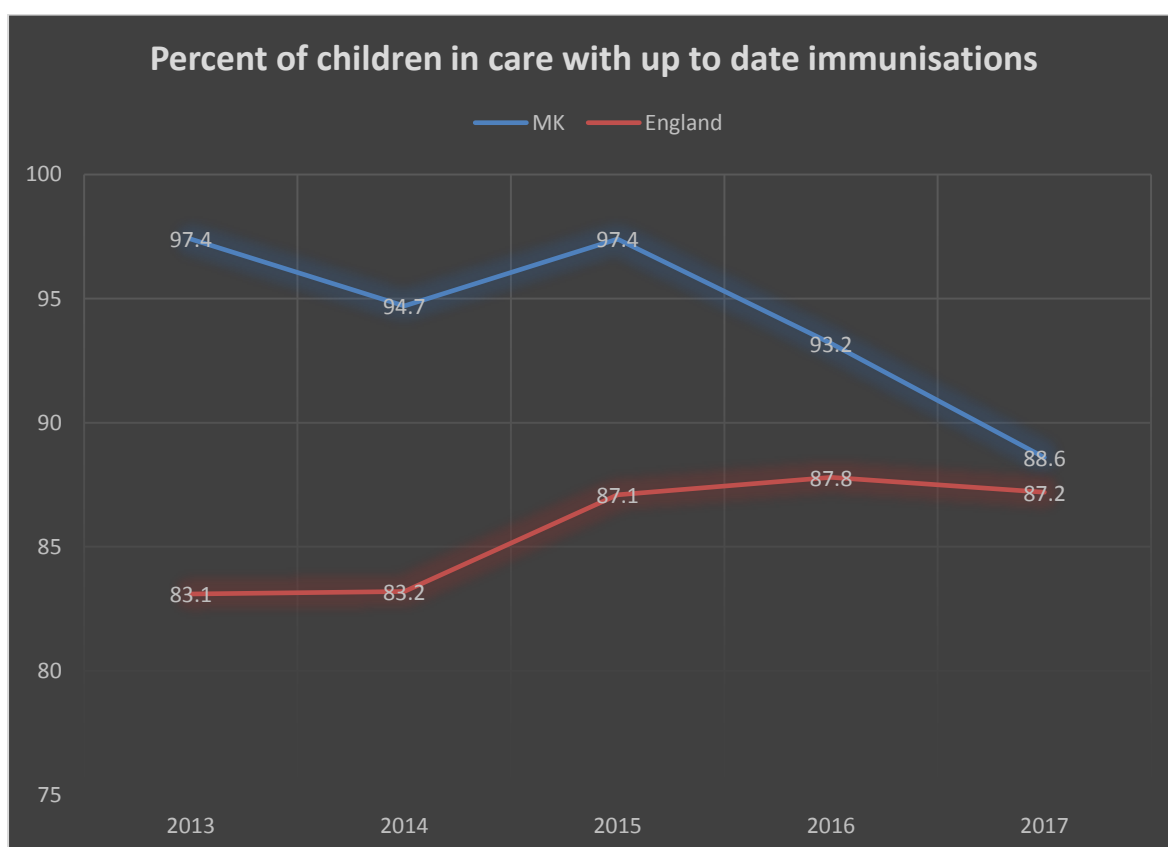
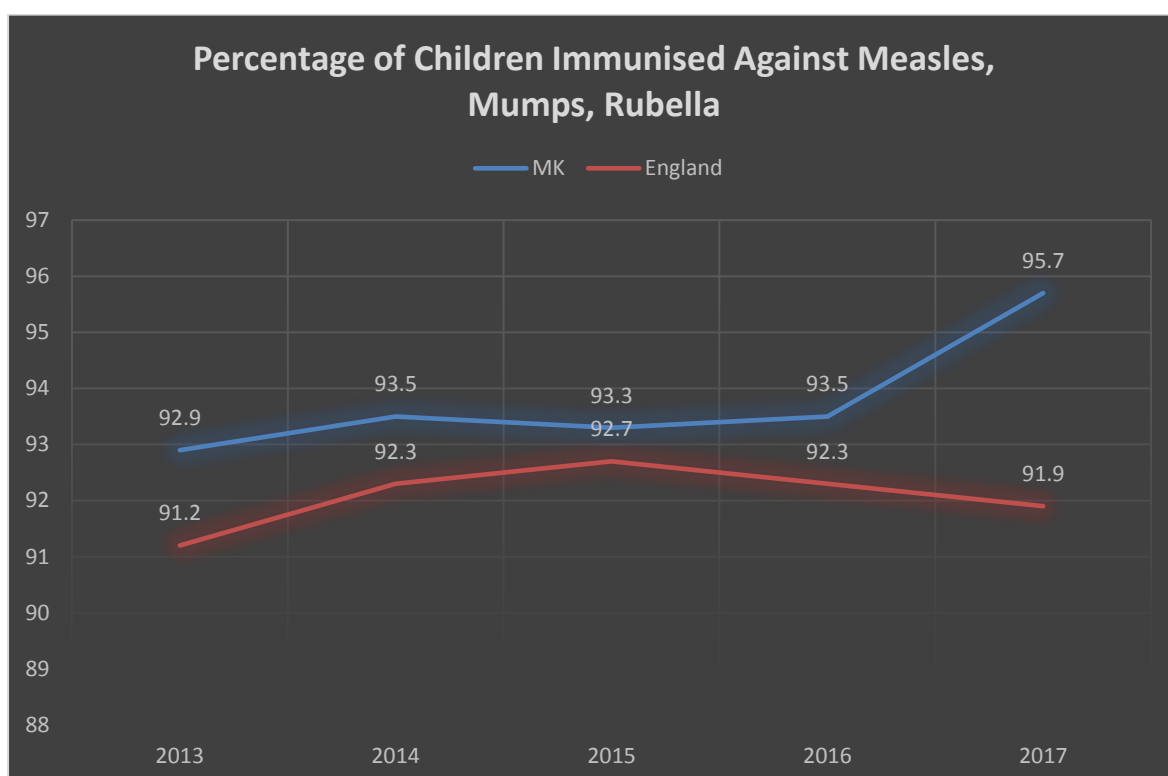
### Our Changing Health

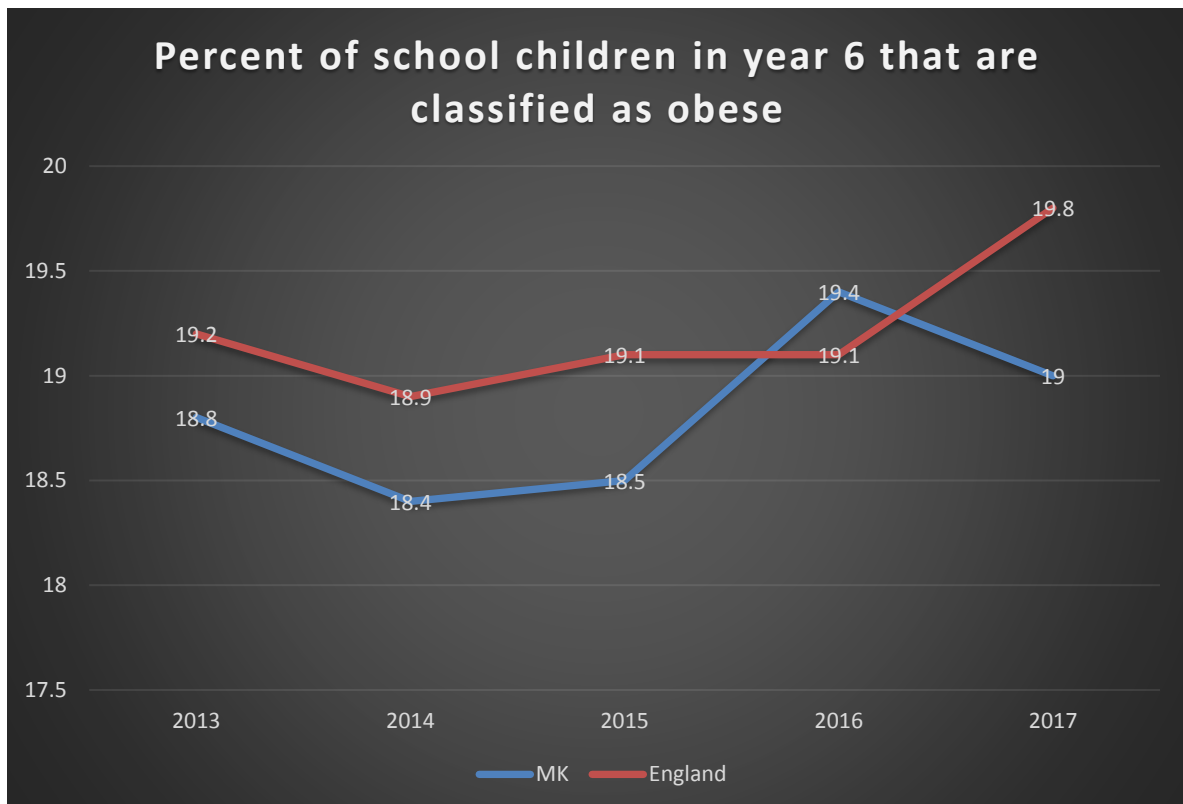
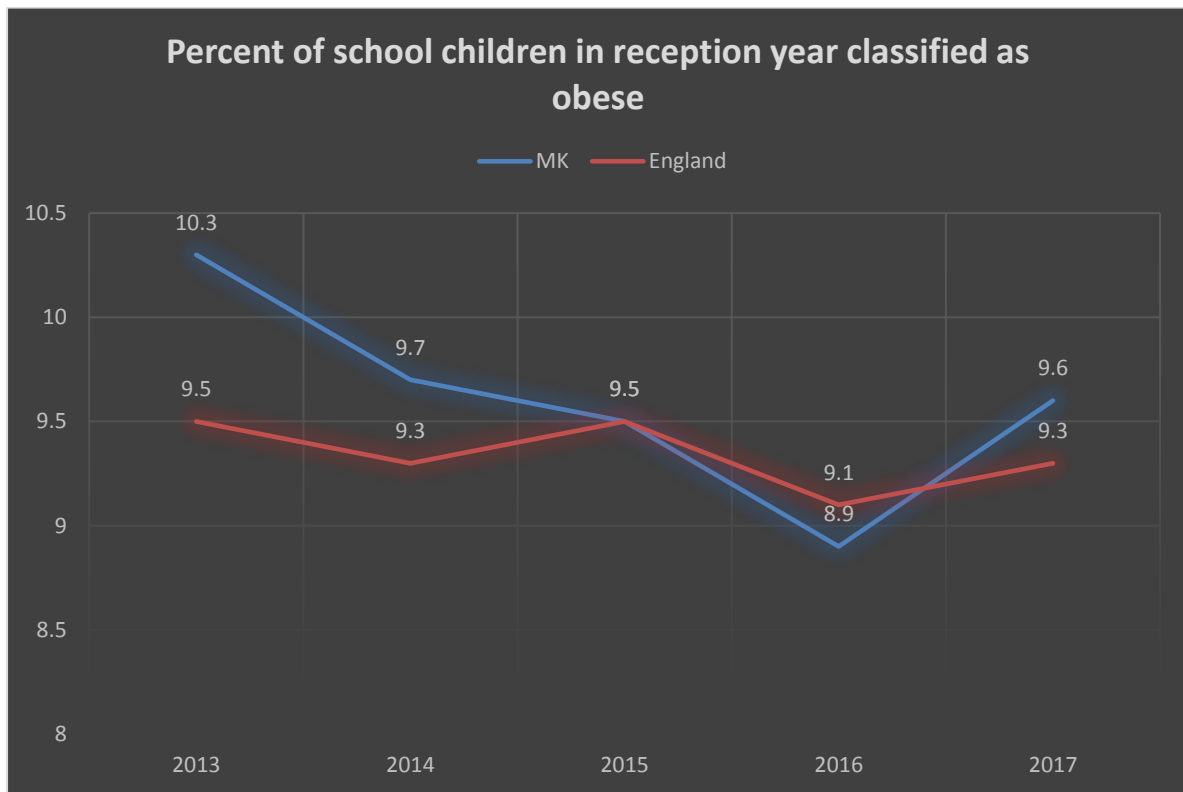
<b>13.5%</b>	Only 13.5% of local residents make use of our outdoor spaces in Milton Keynes for exercise or health reasons, compared to 17.9% nationally
<b>35%</b>	The rate of infant mortality in Milton Keynes is 35% higher than the national average (5.3 out of 1,000 compared to 3.9 nationally)
<b>4%</b>	Children in Milton Keynes are immunised against Measles, Mumps and Rubella at a rate (95.7%) that is 4% higher than the national average
<b>9%</b>	With regard to children in care in MK, there has been a 9% drop (to 88.6%) in the past two years in the percentage who have up to date immunisations
<b>23% drop</b>	Rate of children 0-15 killed or seriously injured in road accidents in Milton Keynes has dropped 23% since 2013
<b>10%</b>	School children in reception year are clinically obese
<b>20%</b>	School children in year 6 are clinically obese
<b>14% drop</b>	Hospital admissions for asthma among young people 18 and under have dropped 14% since last year but are still 15% higher than the national average

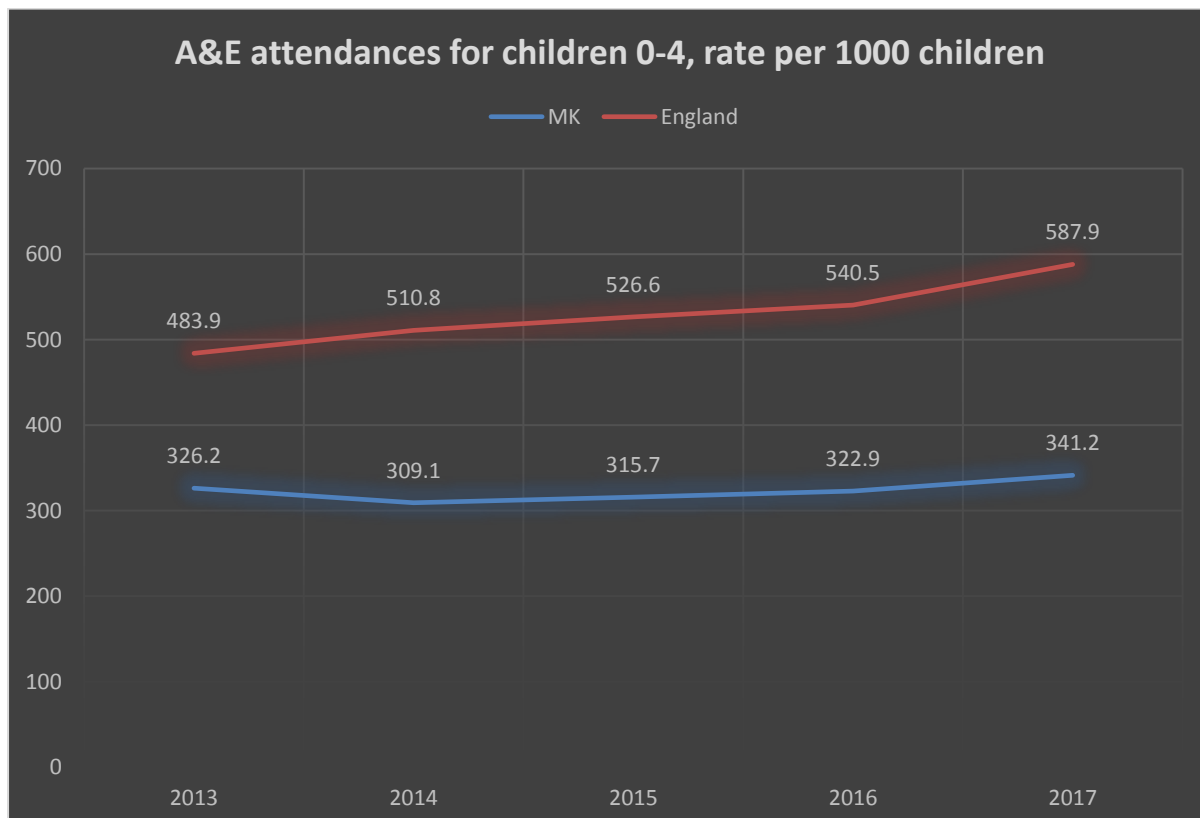
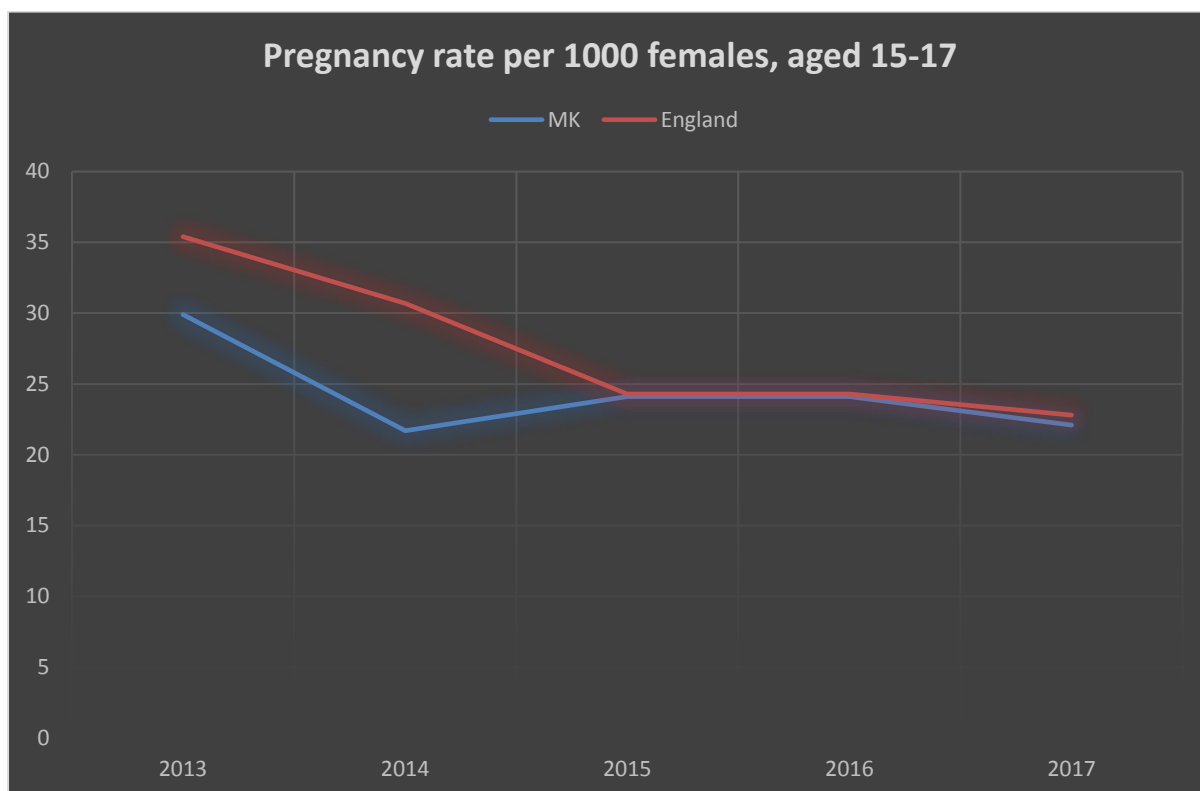


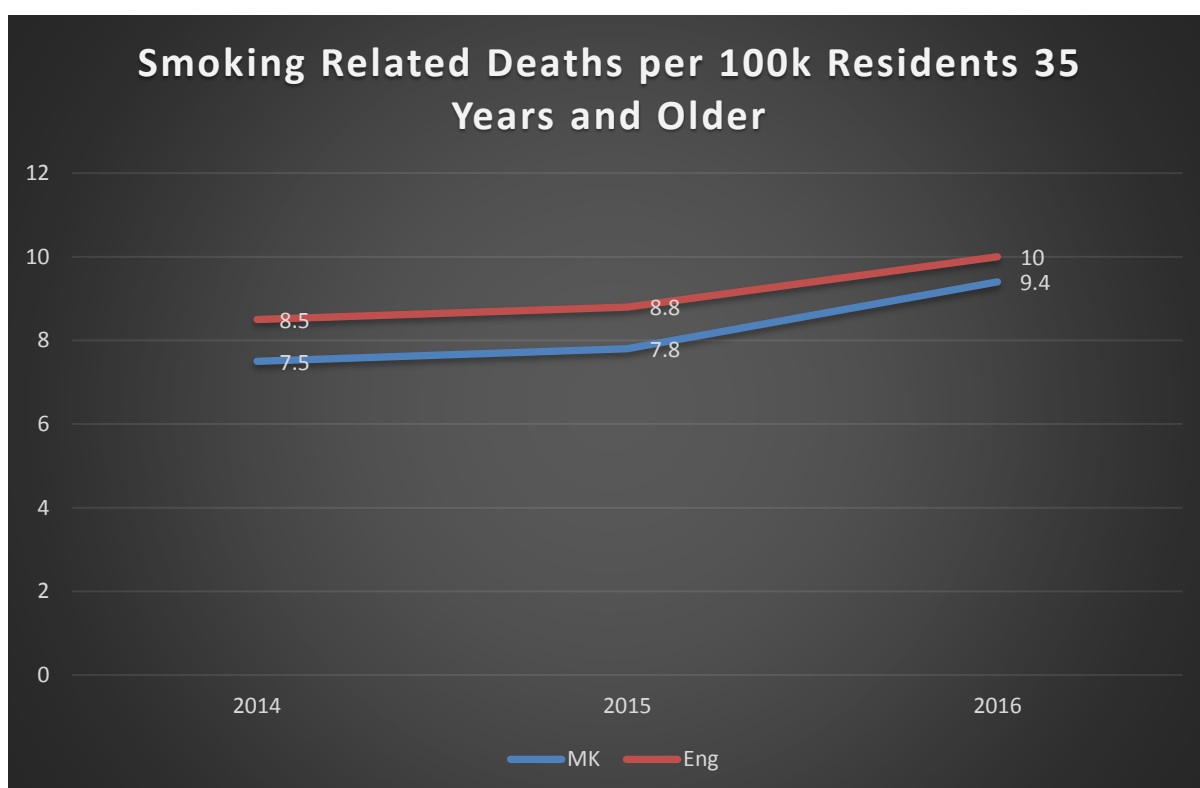
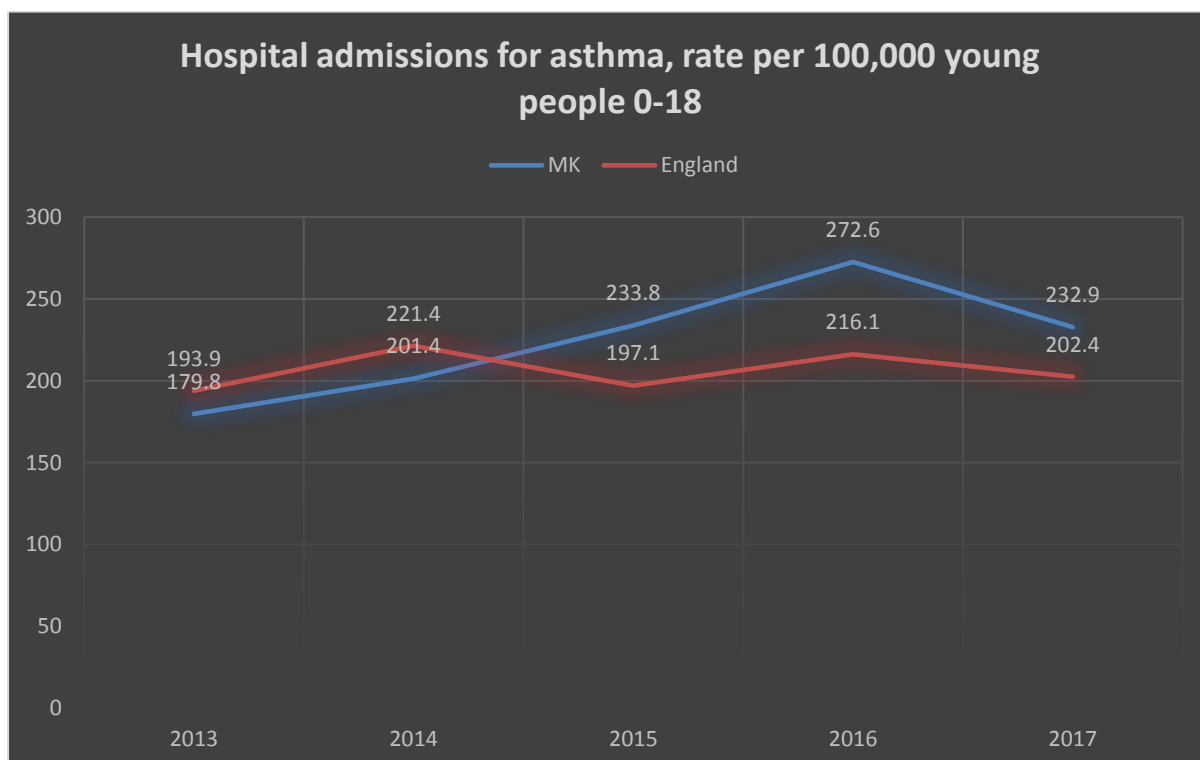
Despite our extensive and popular outdoor spaces in Milton Keynes, our residents make less use of the outdoors for exercise than most people living in other parts of the country.

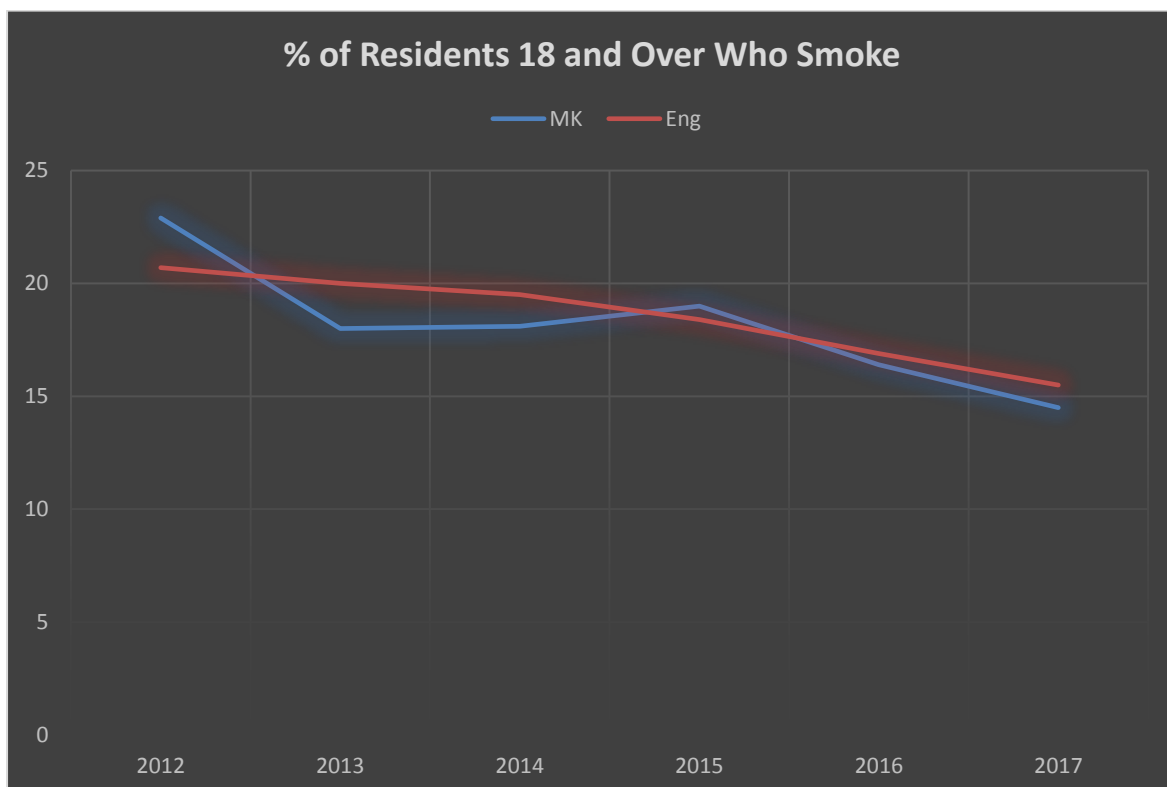
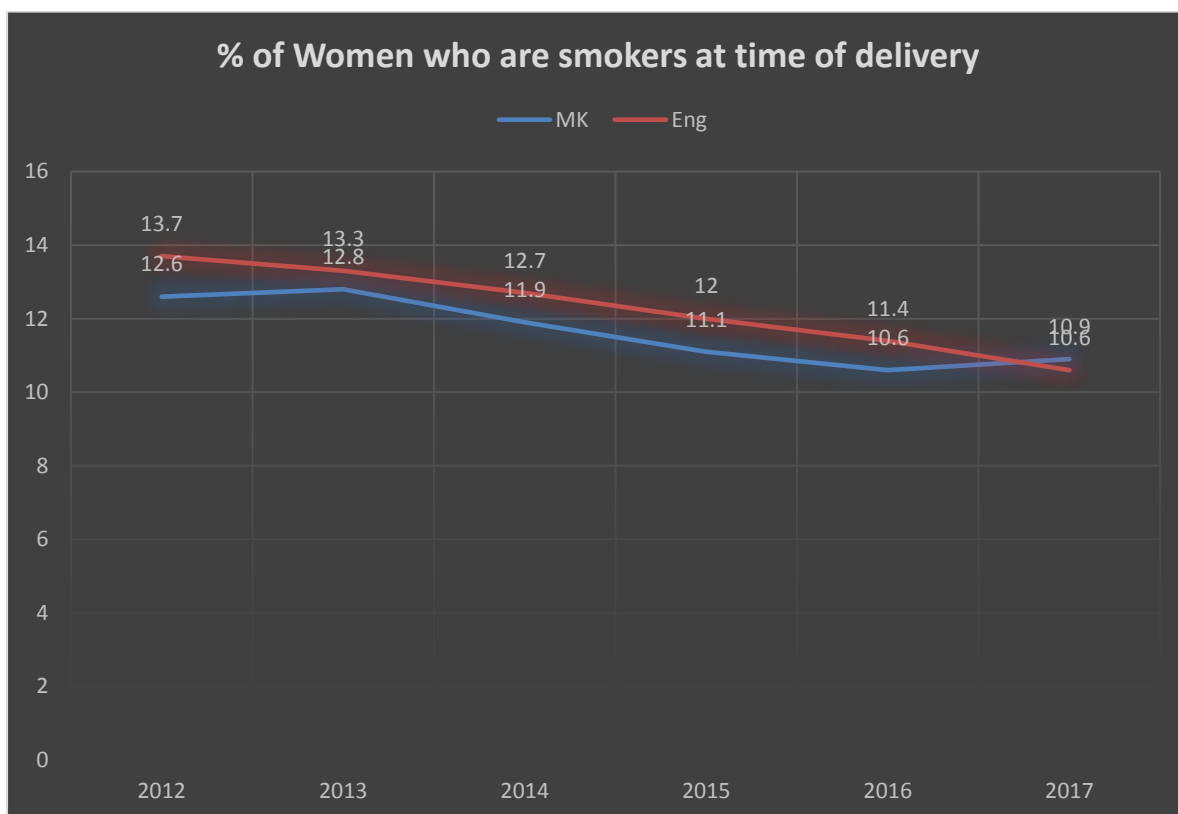




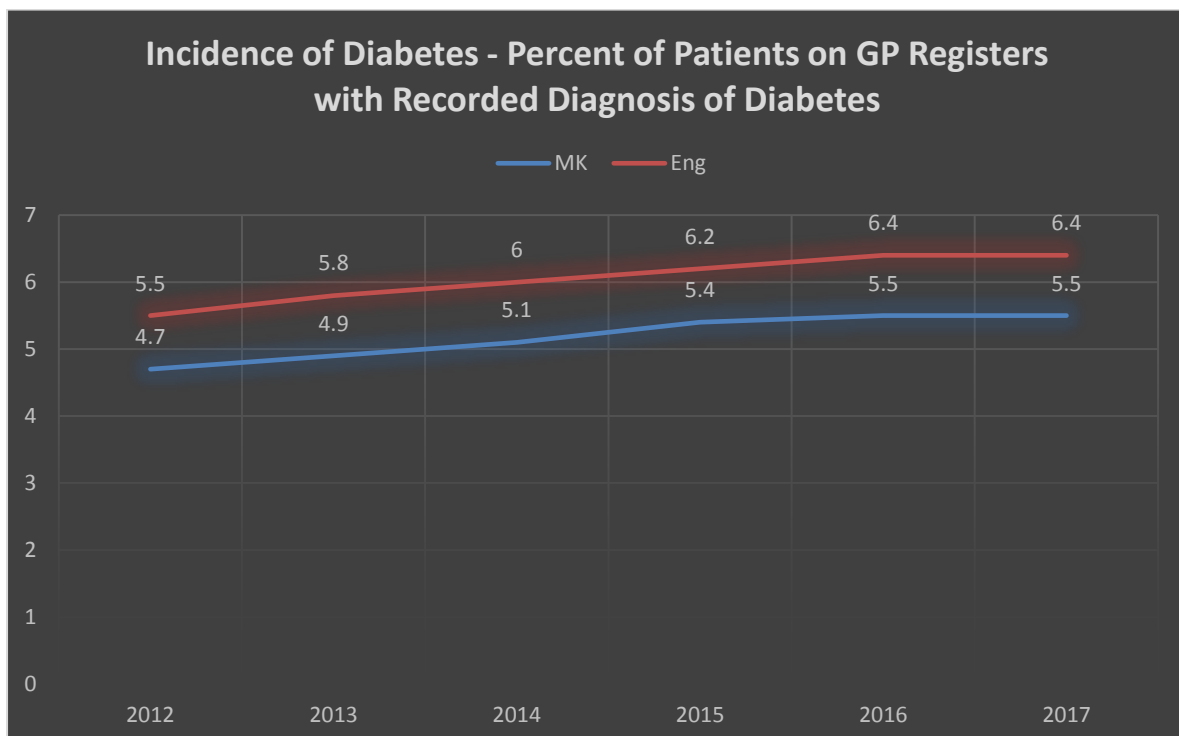
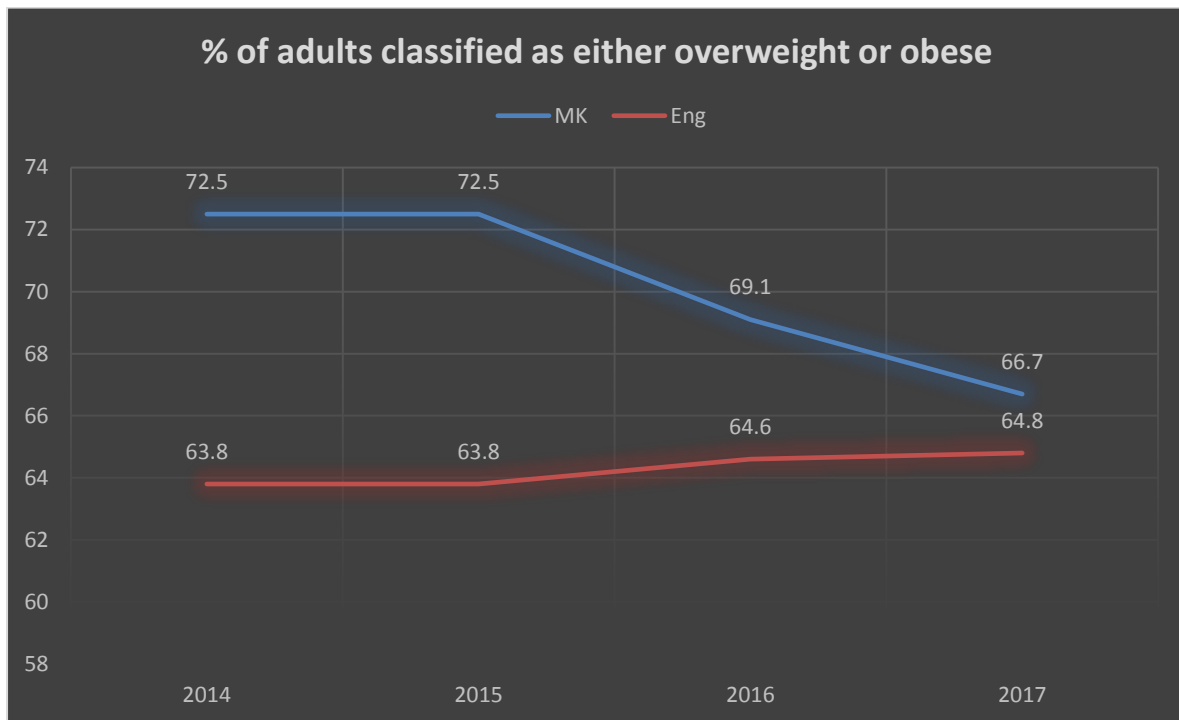




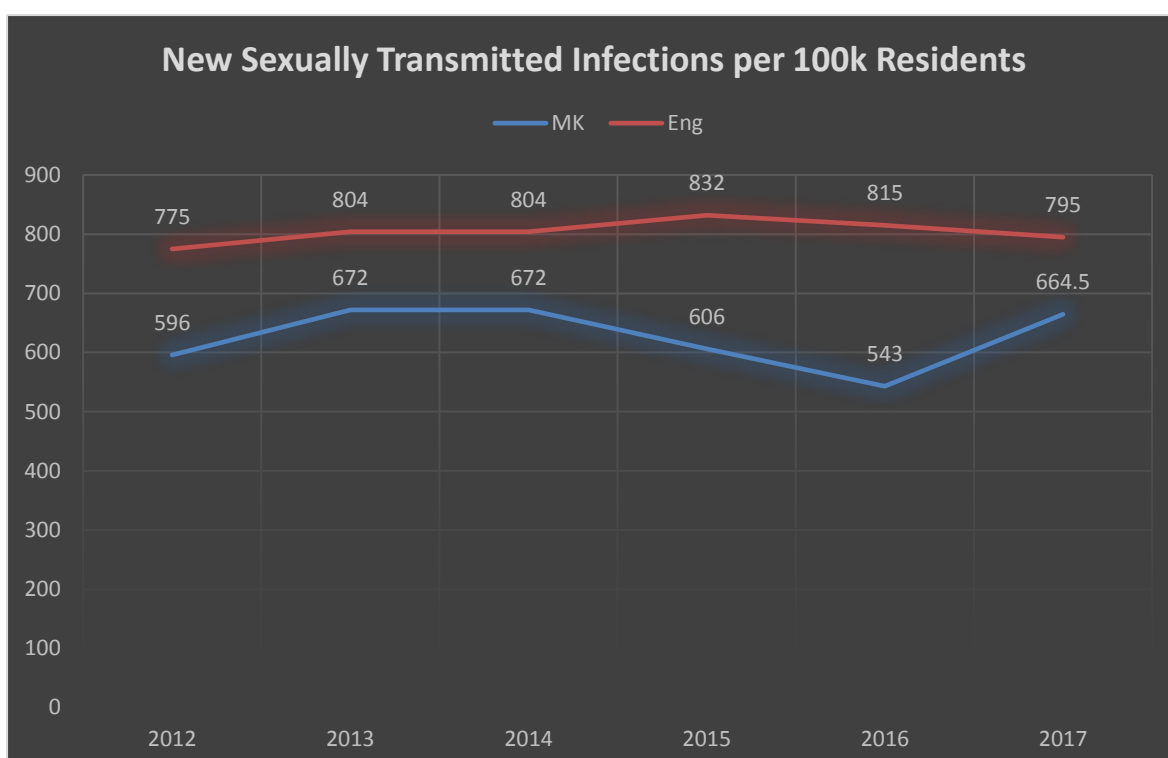
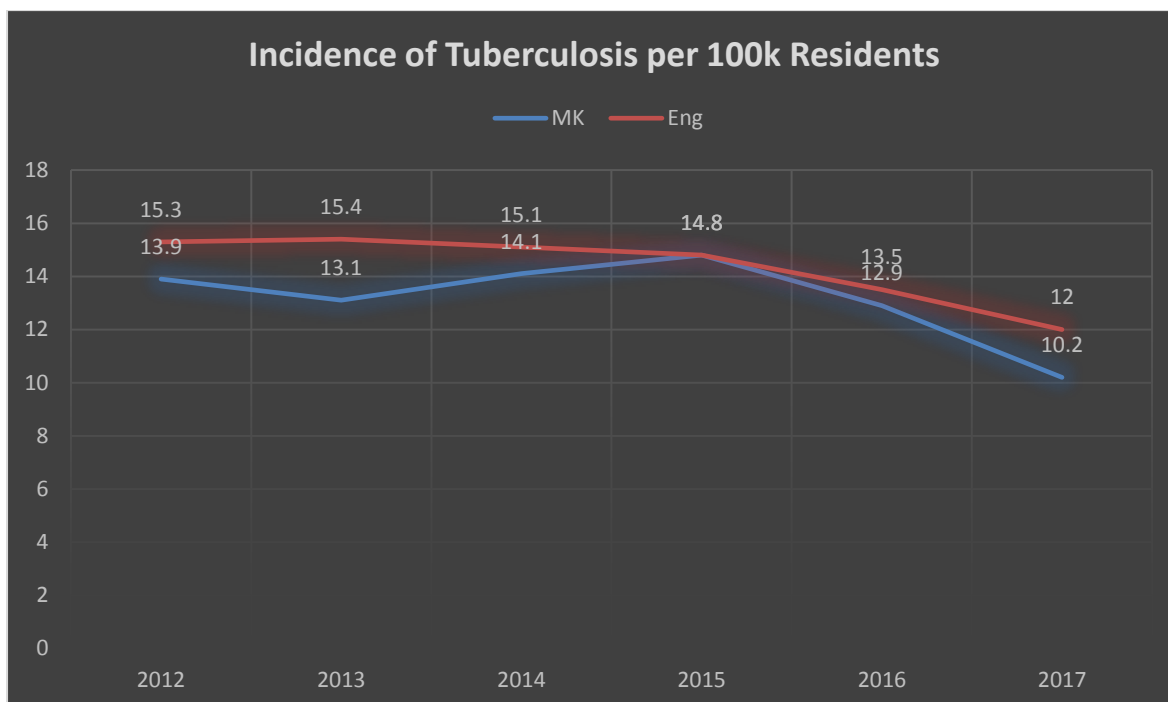


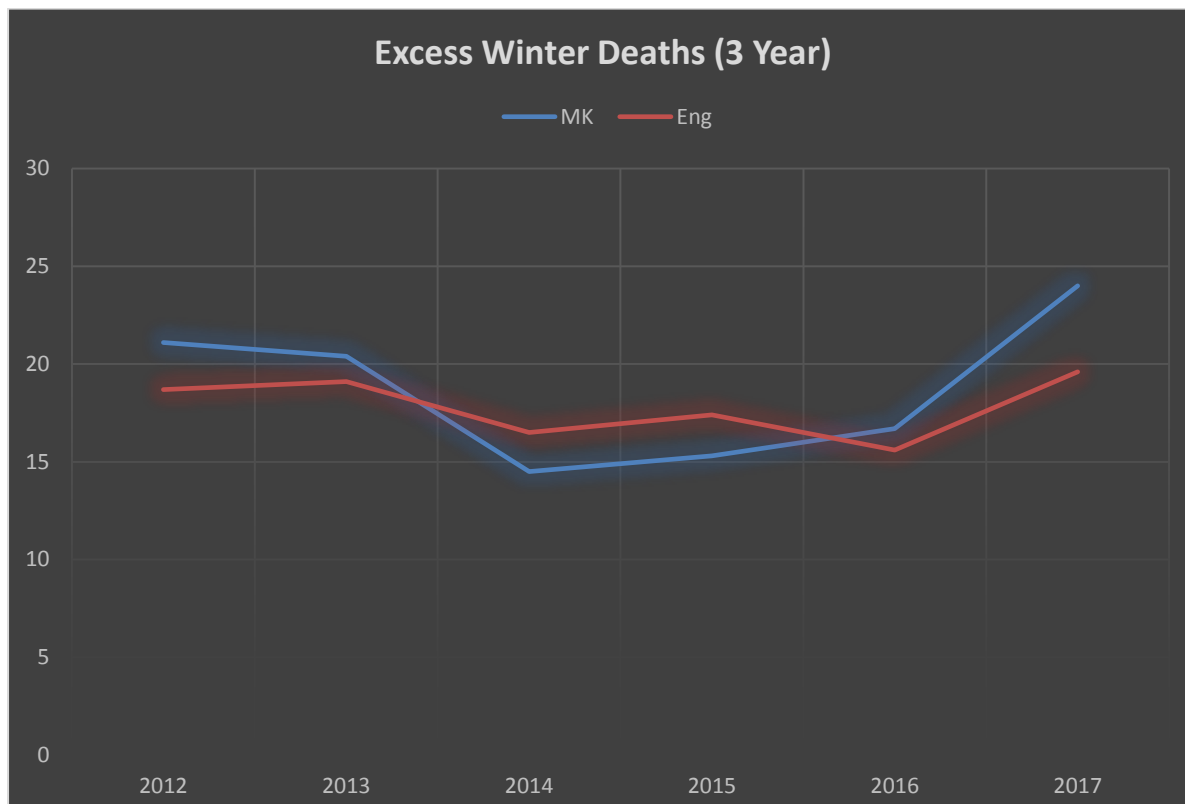
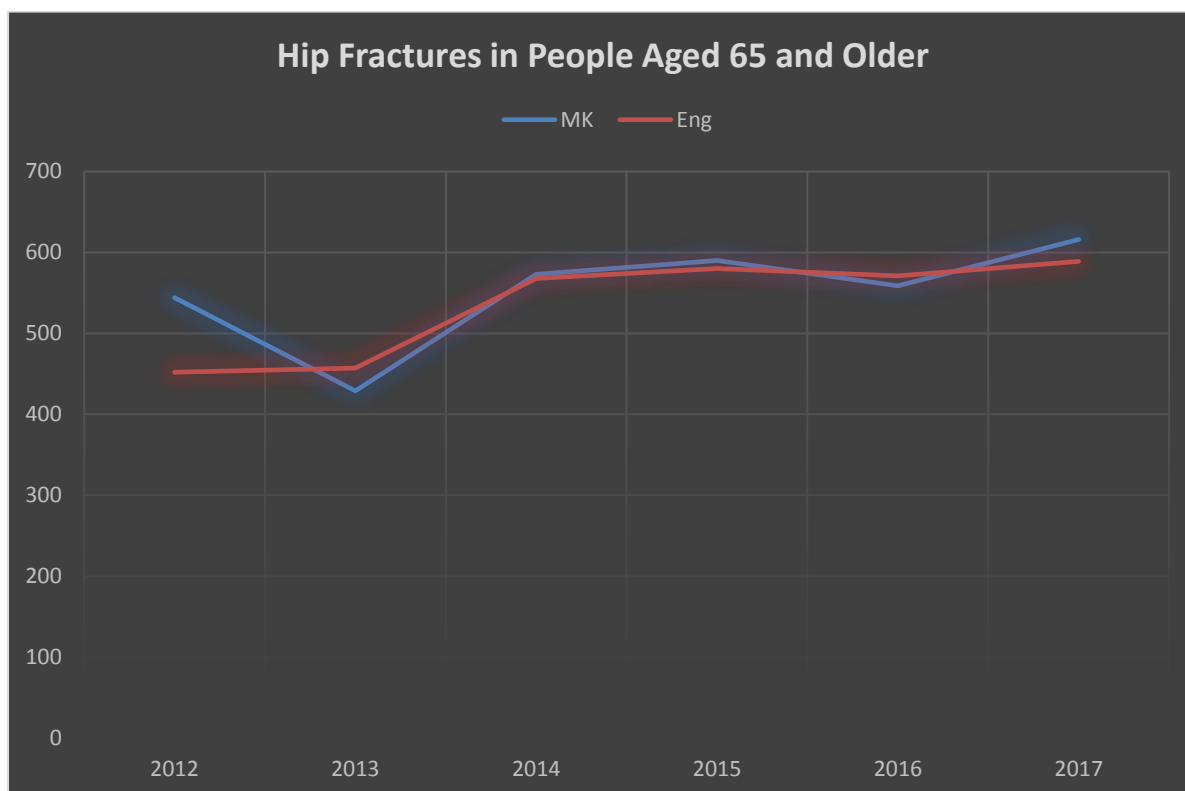


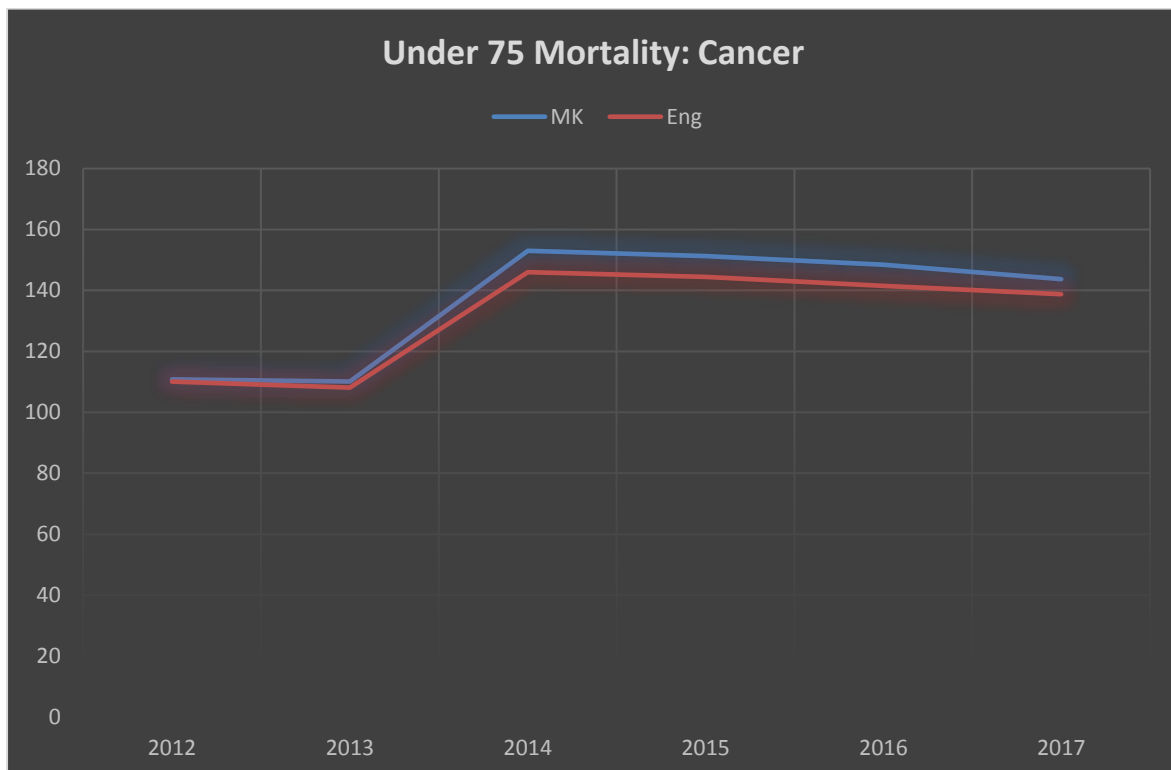
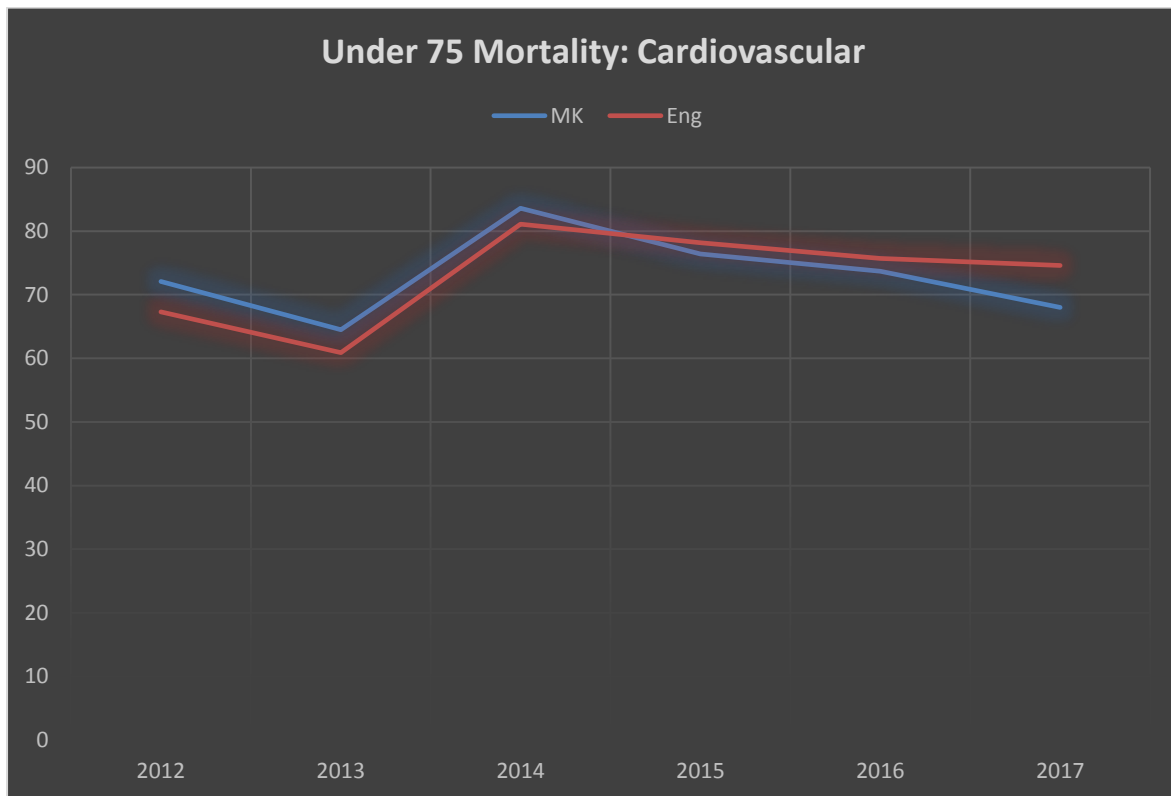


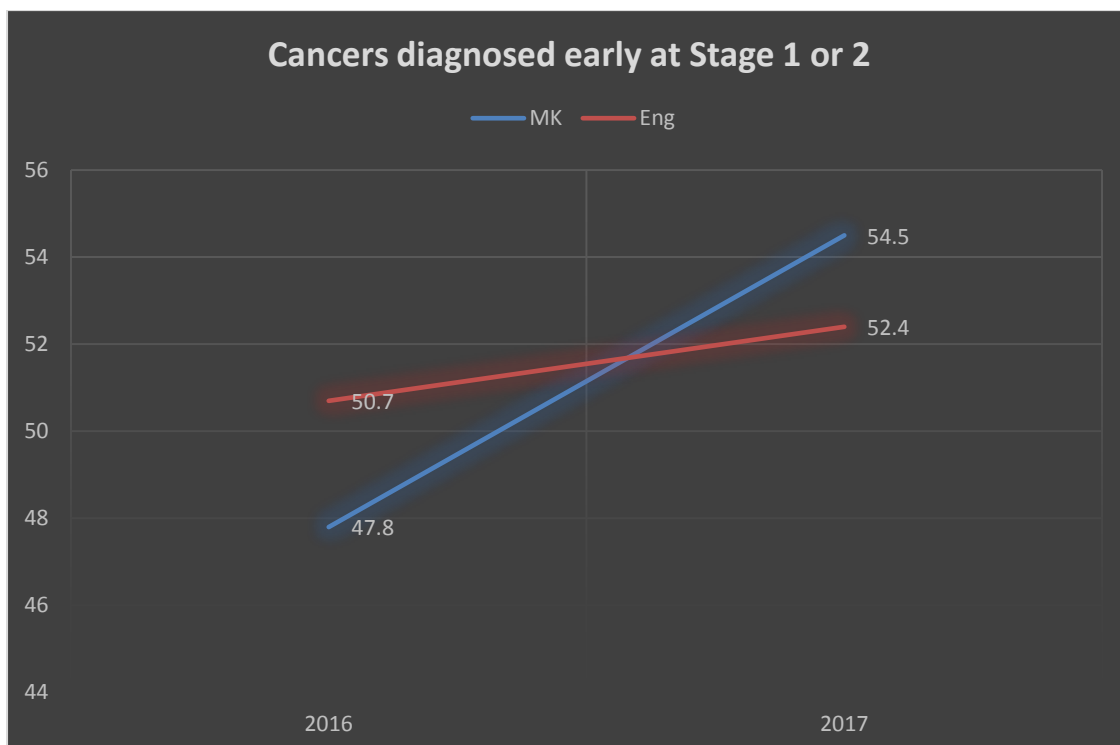
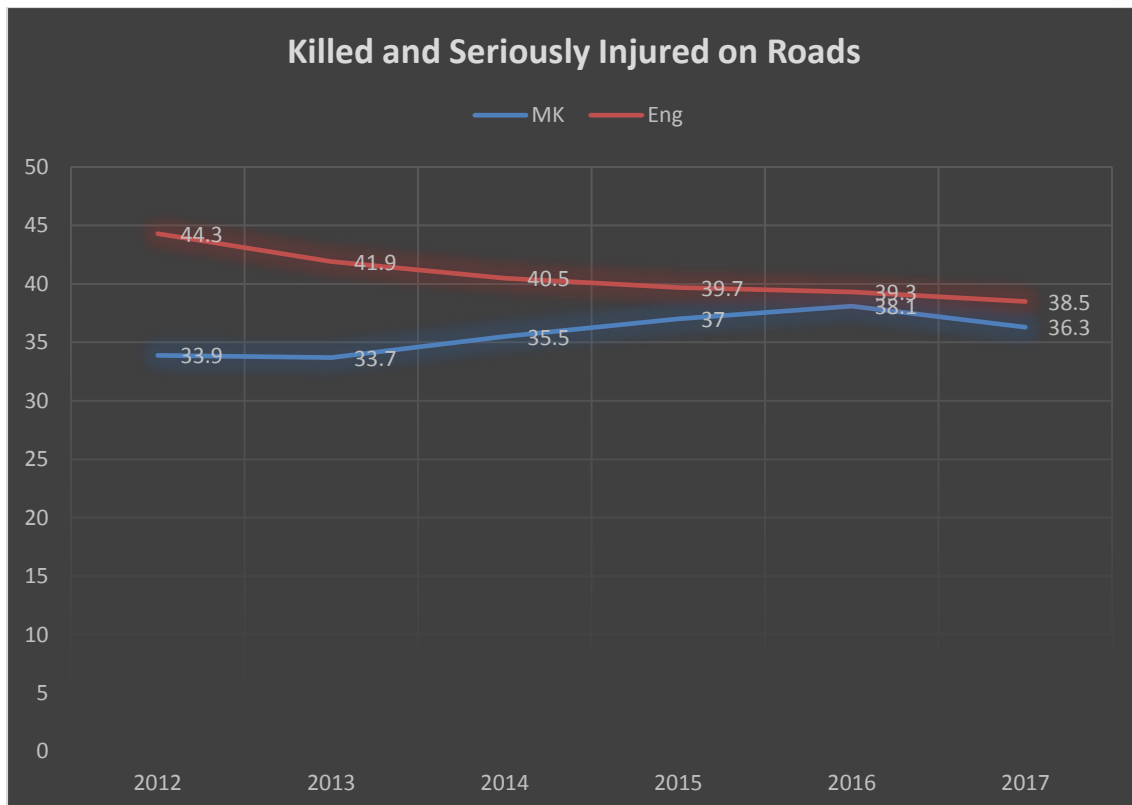


Public health officials have reported to us that with the increased focus on the identification and diagnosis of diabetes, the modest increases seen may be an indicator of this concerted effort.









**Vital Action** – Age UK Milton Keynes works with a range of lunch clubs for older people across our city. In addition to providing a hot meal, these clubs offer a wide range of services including various social activities, visiting guest speakers and organised outings to various places of interest. Many of the members of these lunch clubs live alone and this weekly meeting is their only opportunity to enjoy a freshly cooked meal and to enjoy one another's company, addressing some of the isolation that is common amongst older people.

**Vital Thinking** - With such a wealth of green parks, woods and other public outdoor spaces in Milton Keynes, why do local people not access them more for exercise and other outdoor activities? Is this tied to our heavier reliance on cars for transportation in Milton Keynes?

## Sources of Health Data

Public Health England's Child Health Profile 2016

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/child-health-profiles-2016-published-by-public-health-england>

Public Health England's MK Health Profile 2016

<http://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles>

Office of National Statistics data on smoking 2016

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthandlifeexpectancies/bulletins/adultsmokinghabitsingreatbritain/2016>

MK Council Health and Wellbeing Strategies

<https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/health-and-wellbeing-board/health-and-wellbeing-strategies-and-the-jsna/key-reviews-and-reports>

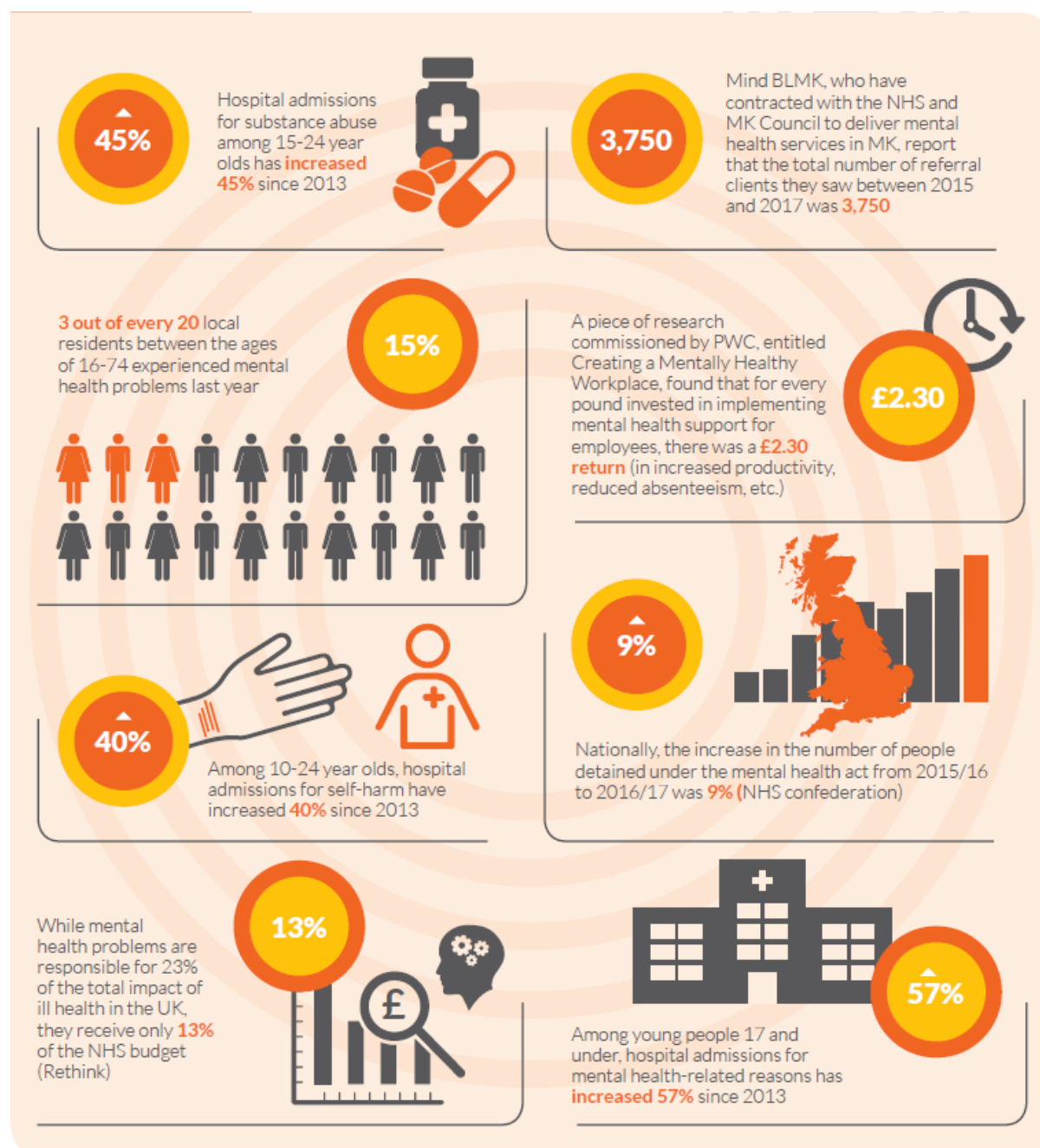
Public Health data on use of outdoor spaces for exercise

<http://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/physical-activity/data#page/0>

Public Health data on diabetes

<http://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/diabetes/data#page/0>

## Theme 3: Mental Health Spotlight



**Theme definition** - We are seeing very significant increases in the incidence of mental health problems and related behavioural problems, such as substance abuse and self-harm. At the same time, resources to address those problems have not kept up with the rise in recent years and many local people have been left unable to access the support they need.

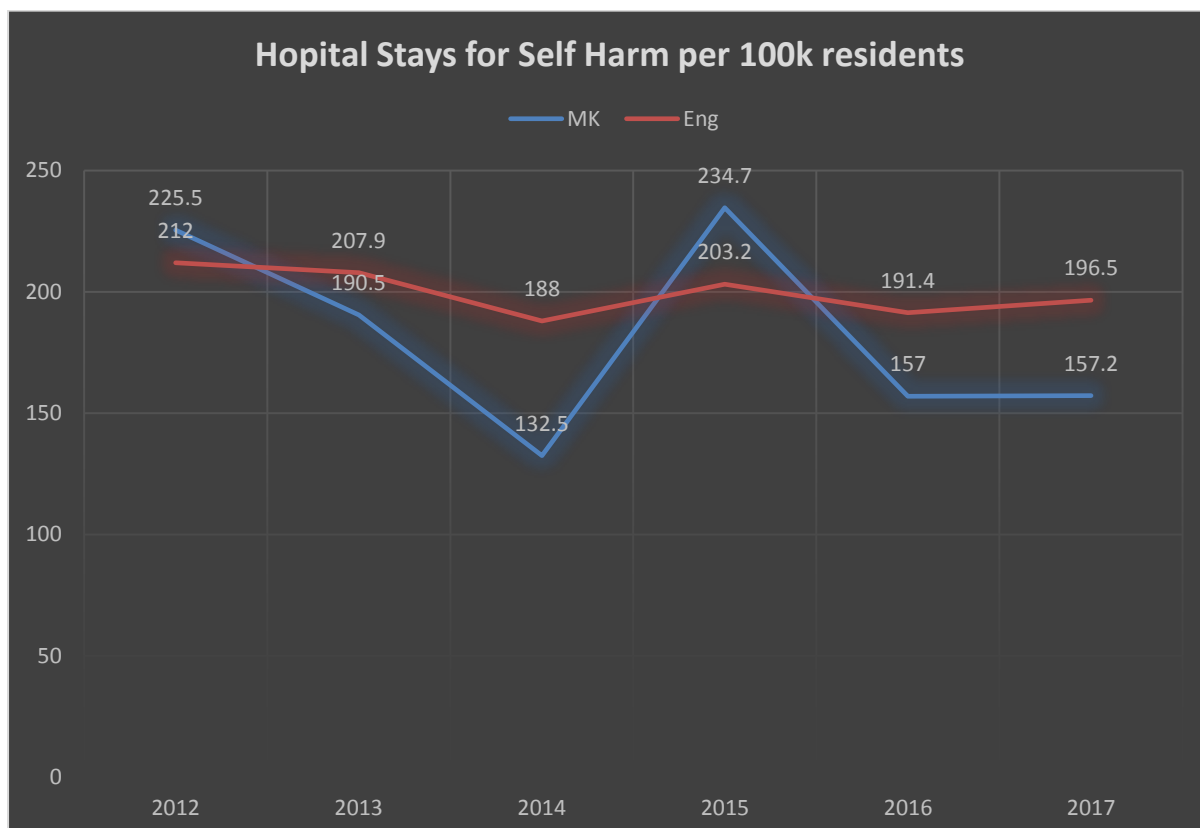
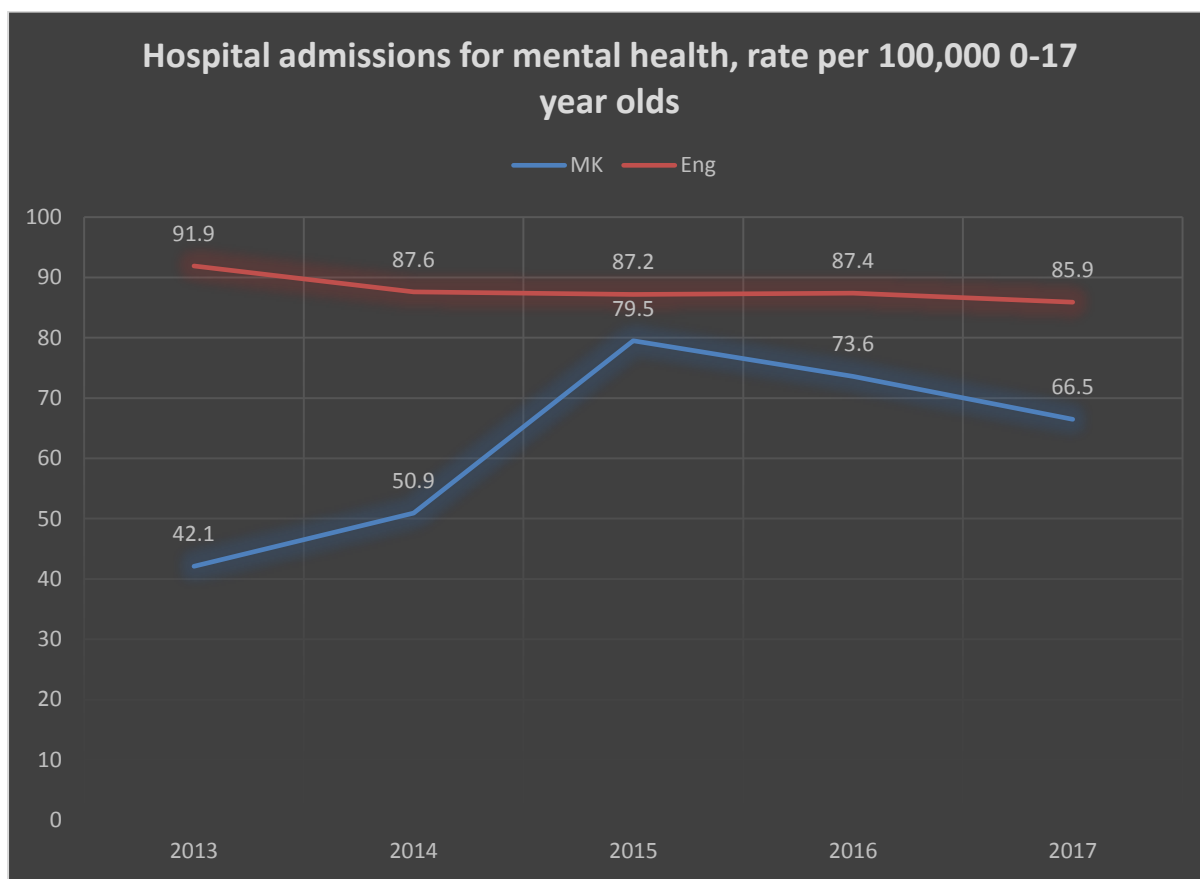
**Overview** – Increased public awareness of mental health issues have afforded them extra attention and coverage in the media. Locally, we are seeing many of the national trends manifested in our own community, including greater demand for mental health treatment and support, increased awareness on the part of public services of the impact of mental health issues on their own work with the public (police, schools, etc.) and increasing pressures on those mental health-related services that are struggling with loss of funding and resource. In the voluntary and community sector of Milton Keynes in particular, many mental health services are closed, closing or in danger of closing.

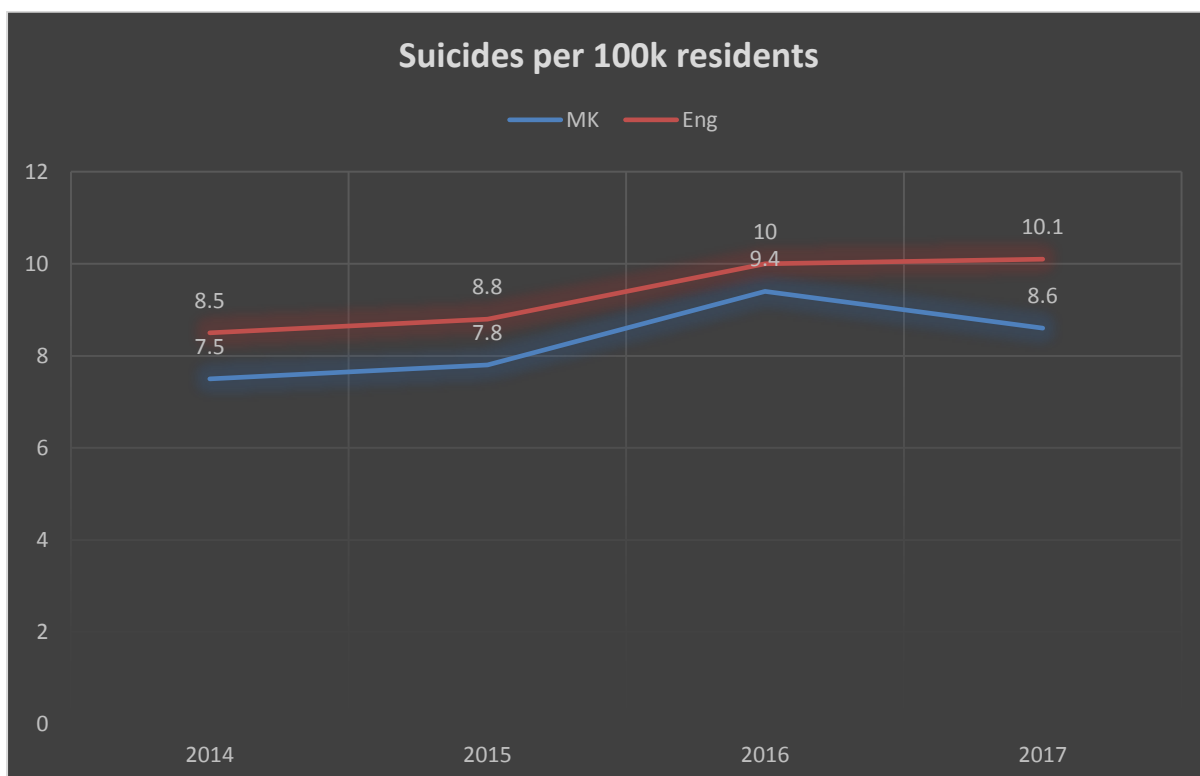
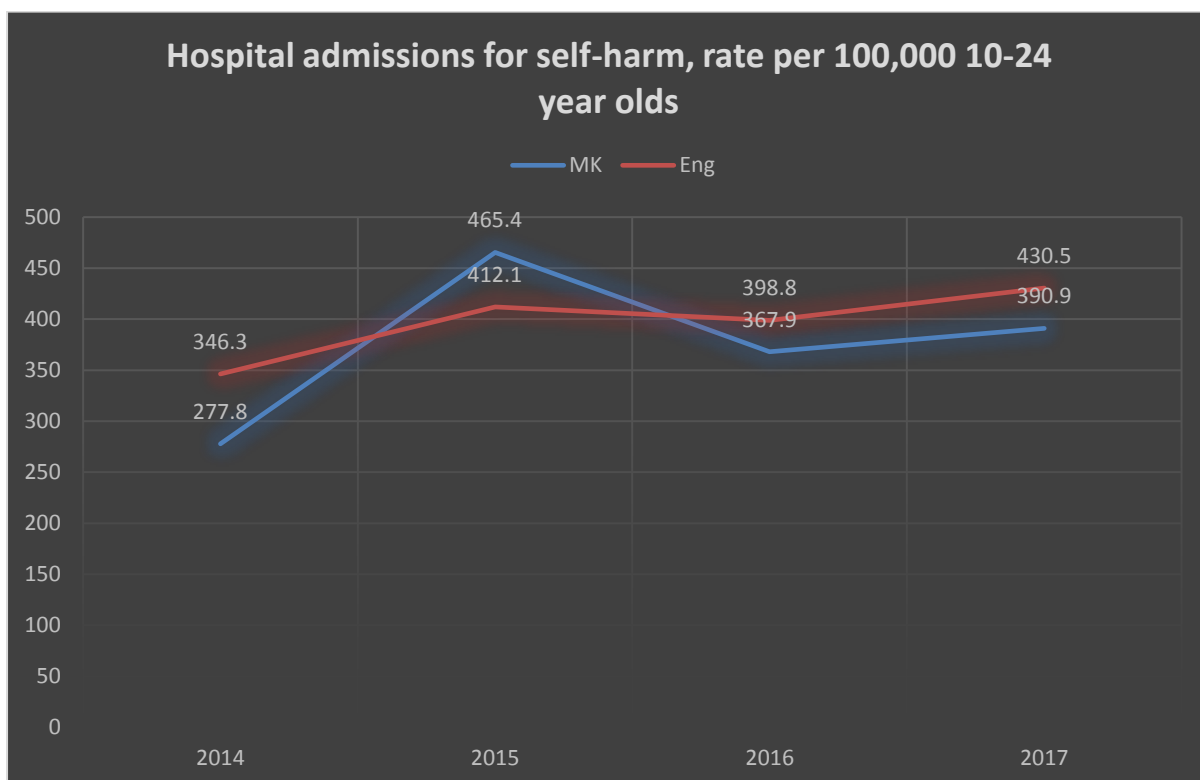
## Findings On....

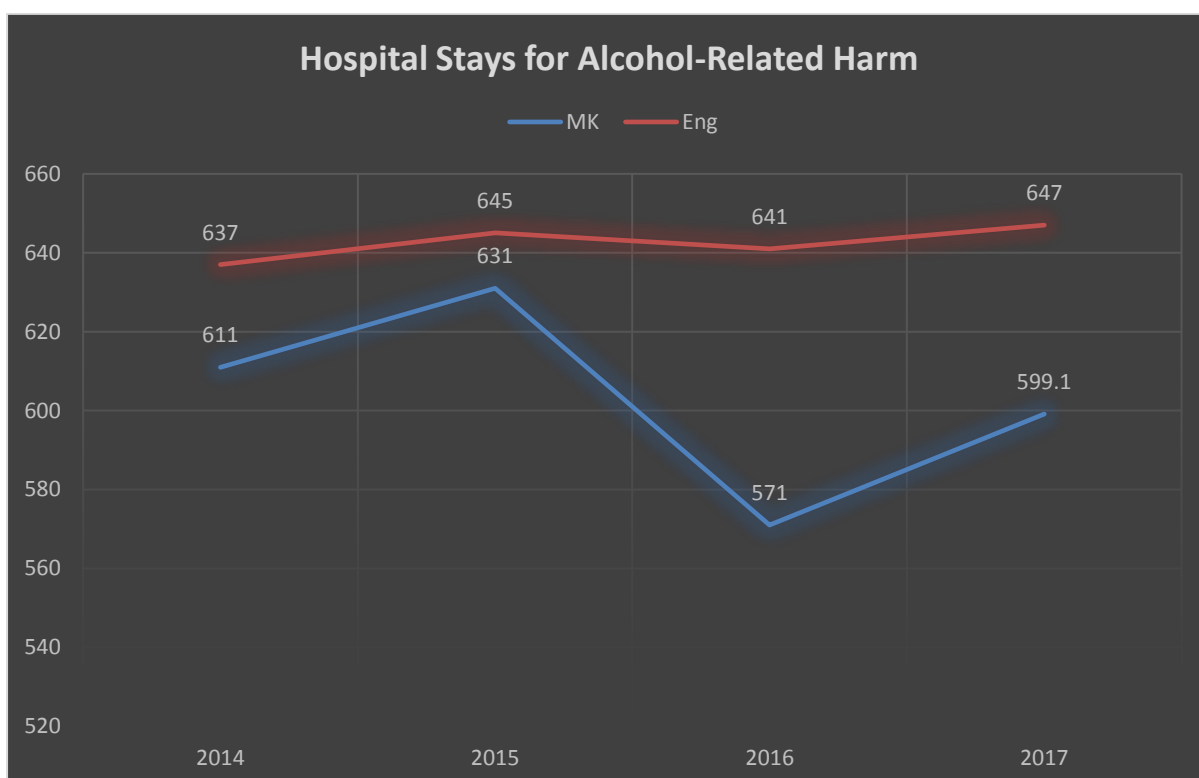
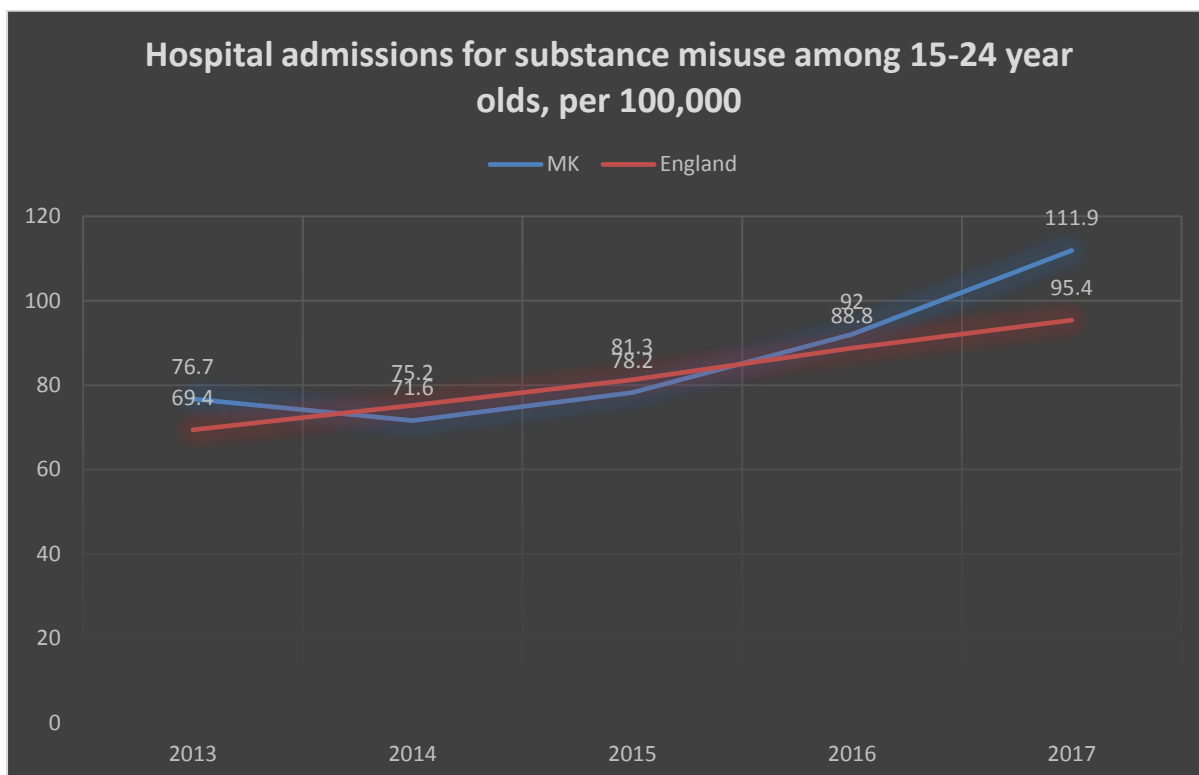
### Mental Health in Milton Keynes

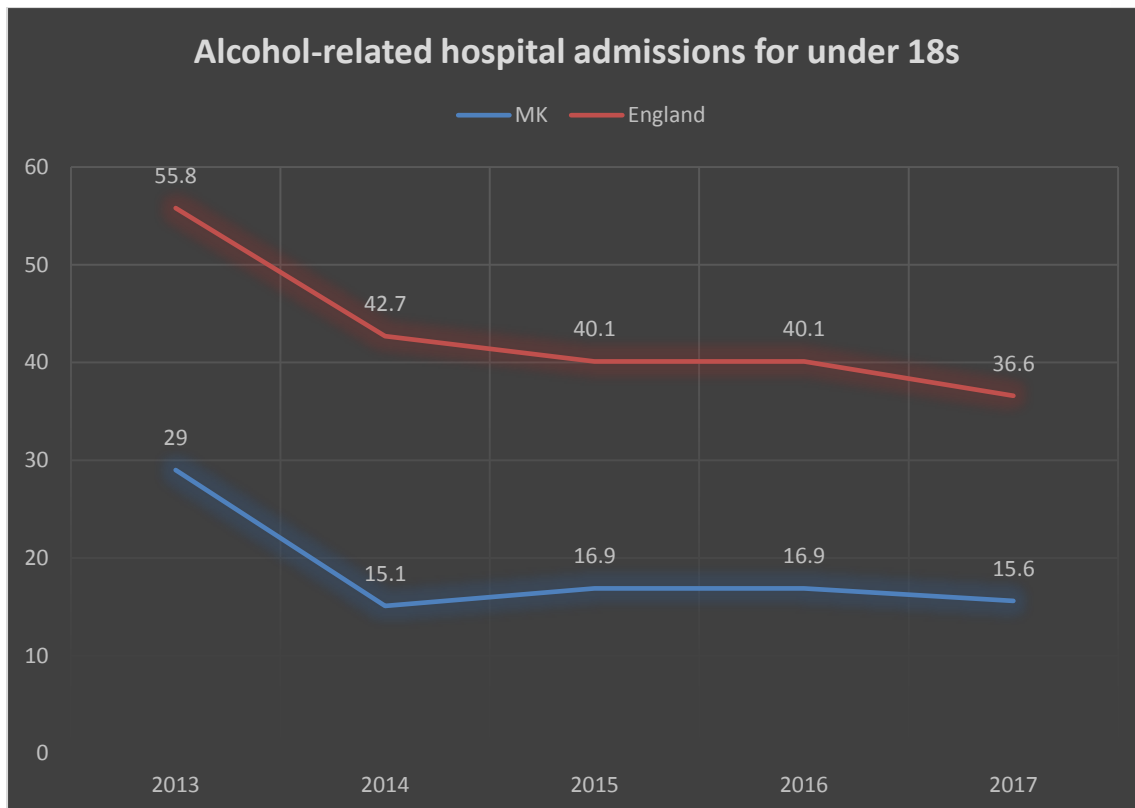
<b>45%</b>	Hospital admissions for substance abuse among 15-24 year olds has increased 45% since 2013
<b>15%</b>	3 out of every 20 local residents between the ages of 16-74 experienced mental health problems last year
<b>40%</b>	Among 10-24 year olds, hospital admissions for self-harm have increased 40% since 2013
<b>57%</b>	Among young people 17 and under, hospital admissions for mental health-related reasons has increased 57% since 2013
<b>3,750</b>	Mind BLMK, who have contracted with the NHS and MK Council to deliver mental health services in MK, report that the total number of referral clients they saw between 2015 and 2017 was 3,750
<b>£2.30 return</b>	A piece of research commissioned by PWC, entitled Creating a Mentally Healthy Workplace, found that for every pound invested in implementing mental health support for employees, there was a £2.30 return (in increased productivity, reduced absenteeism, etc.)
<b>9%</b>	Nationally, the increase in the number of people detained under the mental health act from 2015/16 to 2016/17 was 9% (NHS confederation)
<b>13%</b>	While mental health problems are responsible for 23% of the total impact of ill health in the UK, they receive only 13% of the NHS budget (Rethink)











**Some additional data from the Milton Keynes Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Local Transformation plan 2015-2020 Published by Milton Keynes Council and MK Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG):**

- As many as 60-70% of children and adolescents who experience clinically significant mental health difficulties have not had appropriate interventions at a sufficiently early age (Children's Society (2008) The Good Childhood Inquiry: health research evidence. London: Children's Society).
- Over half of all mental ill health starts before the age of fourteen years, and seventy-five per cent has developed by the age of eighteen (Murphy M and Fonagy P (2012). Mental health problems in children and young people. In: Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer 2012. London: Department of Health).
- There are an estimated 3,753 children aged 5-16 with a mental health problem in Milton Keynes (2014). The predicted number and percentage that will have emotional disorders is 1,437 (3.5%), conduct disorders 2,261 (5.4%) and hyperkinetic disorder (severe Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) 638 (1.5%).
- Of those with a lifetime mental illness 50% will experience their first symptoms before the age of 14 years and 75% by their mid-twenties.
- In Milton Keynes, parental drug and alcohol misuse, along with domestic abuse and parental mental ill-health, make up 'the toxic trio' of issues most likely to place children and young people at risk of abuse and/or neglect.
- Children born to mothers who experience antenatal stress, anxiety or depression are more likely to experience emotional difficulties themselves. The early identification of poor maternal mental health and provision of interventions is also critical.

## Vital Thinking on Mental Health in MK

**Steve McNay, Mind BLMK**

**“The mental health of young people appears to be worse than ever, we’ve got to look at a different approach, more preventative work. The same is true of adult services as well. These days unless you are in crisis, it’s very difficult to find help. You can access the NHS source of talking therapies, IAPT, through your GP, but even that is delivered over the phone.”**

**“Demands on adult mental health services are significant, and what I’ve seen over the last fifteen years is a rise in the threshold for access to specialist mental health services. They just get further and further out of reach for many people that need them.”**

**“Why is demand increasing? In part, because we are slowly but surely chipping away at the stigma associated with talking about your feelings.”**

**“We’ve heard lots of positive noises for the last five or six years, ‘we’re going to invest, we will get to the point where there is parity with mental health’ but so far we’ve not seen this happen. Over the last Parliament, we lost upwards of 800,000 bed days in mental health, and we’ve lost 3,000 mental health nurses. This is the reality. Demand is increasing, income is decreasing.”**

**“Mental health is everybody’s responsibility, and in the face of the closure of family and children’s centres, the disappearing of support for young parents, what can we do? Provide positive role models for young people, volunteer to be a mentor, get more engaged with your community, work with young parents. There are so many ways you can have a significant and positive impact on the mental health of our communities.”**

**Simon Green, YMCA**

**“Our residents come here and sometimes for the first time, meet people who are similar to them and as a result, don’t feel so stigmatised. Consequently, a lot of the young people here form really strong bonds of friendship with the other residents here, which has a positive impact on their mental health.”**

**“The way we think of mental wellbeing and treat mental health needs to get more creative. For example, today we’re taking our residents on a bike ride. Apart from the physical exercise, this will give some of those vulnerable young people an opportunity to get outside to do something social and positive. The impact for them will be improved mental wellbeing.”**

**Elizabeth Sabey – YMCA**

**“There are gaps in service provision. IAPT doesn’t take people at the high end of the scale with self-harm and suicidal thoughts, so I then went to ASTI with those people but as they**

didn't have 'severe and enduring' mental health issues, they weren't willing to take them on either. Where are they supposed to go?"

"Other times I've taken young people with very serious mental health issues to the health services and after a very difficult intake session, they were offered nothing, just a referral to a community counselling service, which I didn't feel was suitable or adequate in those particular cases. These were young people in distress, engaged in self-harm with plans for doing further harm to themselves. It's not good enough."



**Vital Action** - The Youth Information Service (YIS) is the last remaining community counselling service focused specifically on young people in Milton Keynes. Established in 1979, the service has been forced to cut back substantially on their service in recent years due to the withdrawal of public funding for the organisation (despite the fact that many of their referrals still come from GPs, social services, schools, etc.) They work with young people aged 11-21 who are suffering with any of a range of issues, including anxiety, depression, anger, history of abuse and family problems, relationship difficulties and more. With their core costs being covered by a multi-year grant that is coming to an end, the survival of this service is very much at stake this year.

**Vital Thinking** - Are the numbers of people seeking mental health support growing because of increasing incidences of mental health problems, because people are more open and willing to pursue this help, or some combination of the two? If the incidence really is increasing, what factors are playing a role in this change? Can they be addressed locally, even in part?

## Sources of Mental Health Data

Public Health England's Child Health Profile 2016

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/child-health-profiles-2016-published-by-public-health-england>

Public Health England's MK Health Profile 2016

<http://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles>

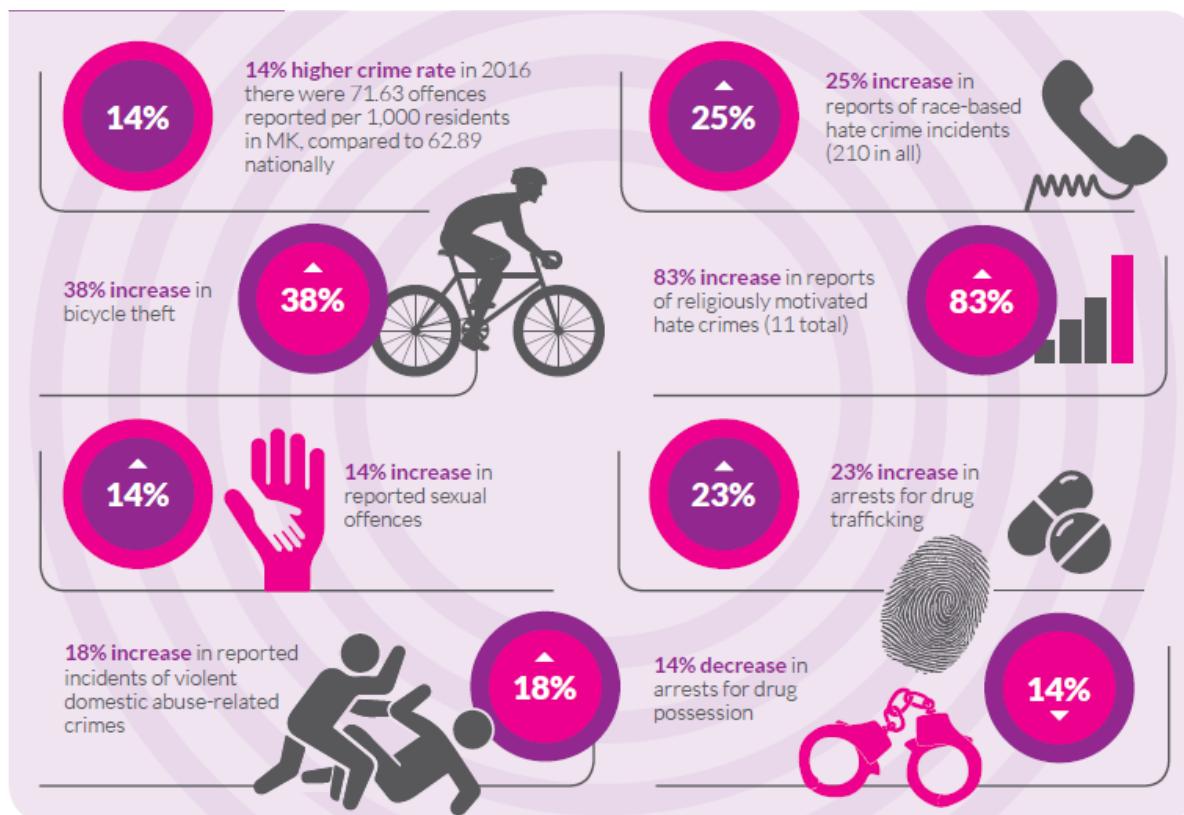
NHS Community Mental Health Survey 2016

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/community-mental-health-survey-2016>

Mental Health Foundation's Fundamental Facts About Mental Health 2016

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/fundamental-facts-about-mental-health-2016.pdf>

## Theme 4: Crime and Safety



**Theme definition-** This theme reviews the latest police research on the incidence of various types of crime in the unitary authority area of Milton Keynes, as well as some public safety indicators. We look at these in the context of the data collected for previous editions of Vital Signs MK.

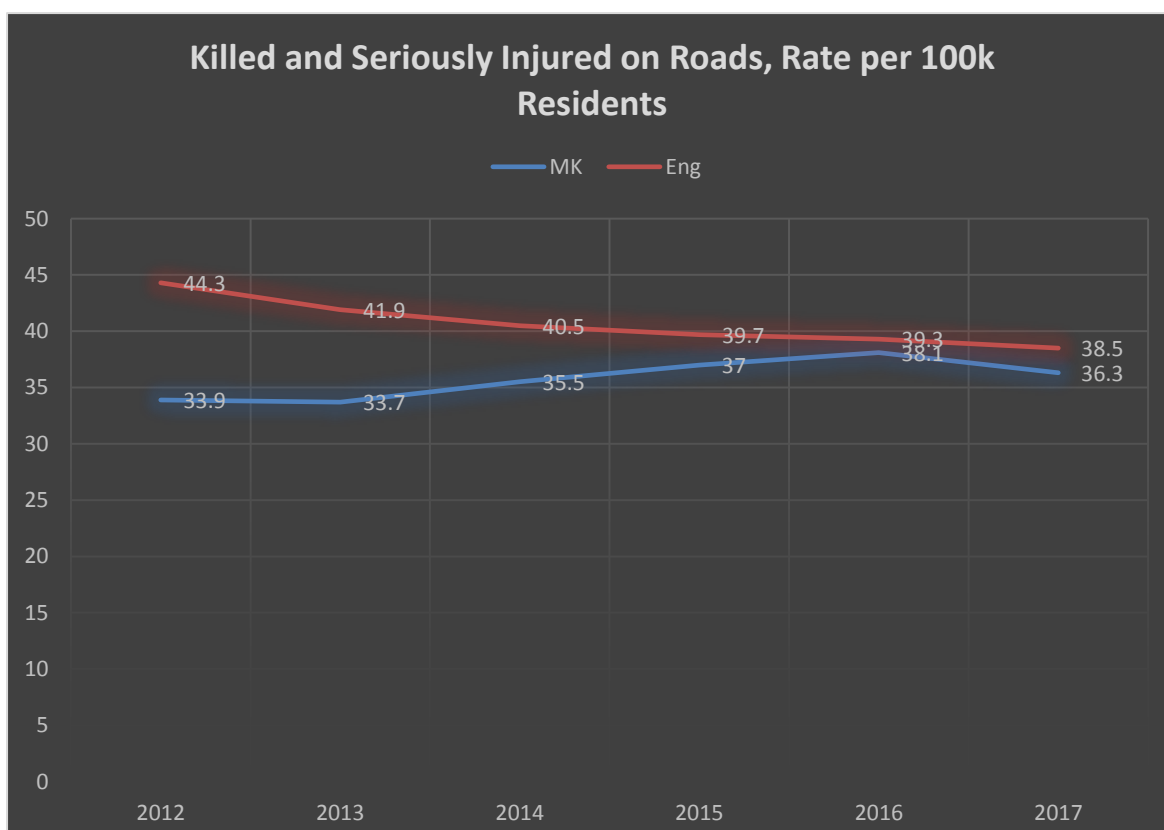
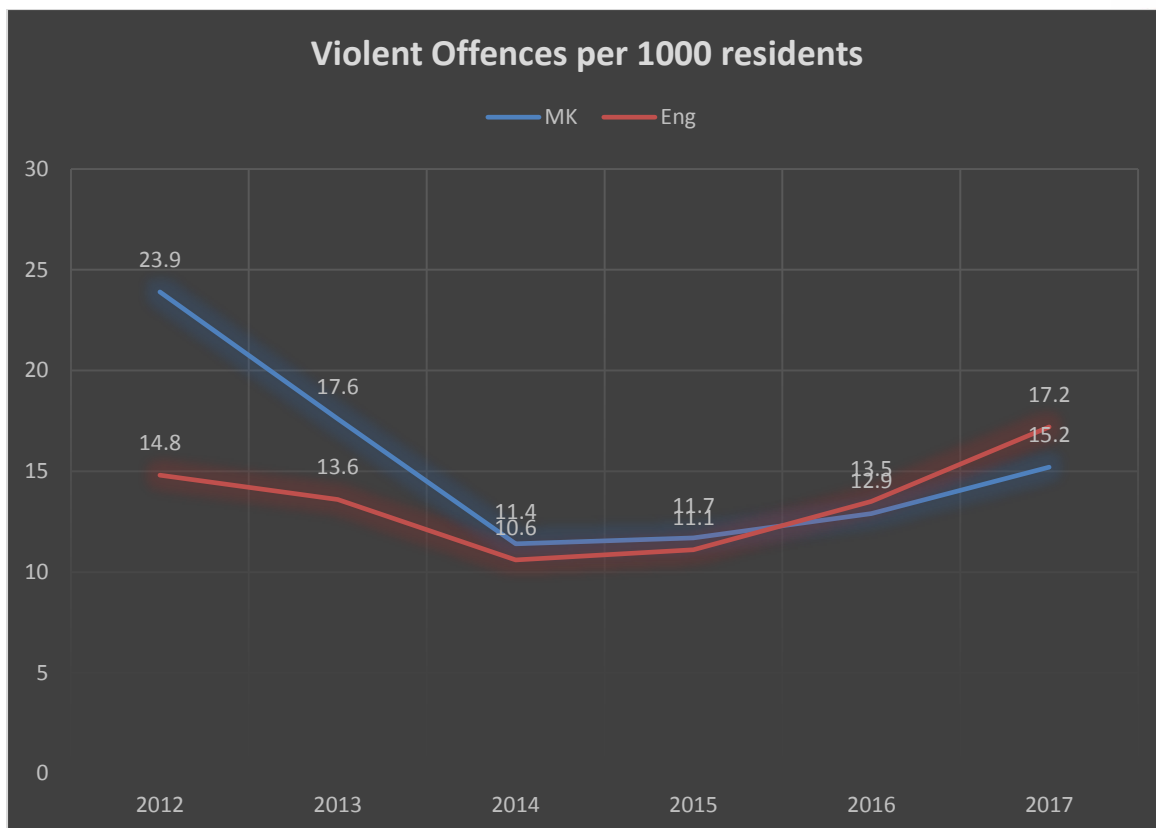
**Overview** – Unfortunately, much of the data reviewed for this theme show trends that are moving in the wrong direction. However, while there are many worsening indicators in the most recent police reporting on local crime, the police leadership in Milton Keynes are keen to point out that the overall crime levels have decreased considerably over the past several years and so while they are again on the increase, they are still low by historical standards.



## Findings On....

### Rates of Crime and Safety in Our Community

14% higher crime rate (all)	In 2016 there were 71.63 offences reported per 1,000 residents in MK, compared to 62.89 nationally
38%	Increase in bicycle theft
14%	Increase in reported sexual offences
5.6%	Increase in victim based crime in 2016/17 over the previous year
25%	Increase in reports of race-based hate crime incidents (210 in all)
83%	Increase in reports of religiously motivated hate crimes (11 total)
23%	Increase in arrests for drug trafficking
14%	Decrease in arrests for drug possession
16 incidents	Of homophobic hate crime reported in MK in 2016/17
18%	Increase in reported incidents of violent domestic abuse-related crimes
30 incidents	Of disability-related, non-criminal 'hate crimes' recorded, a 275% increase on the previous year
819	Operational capacity of Woodhill Prison
17	Number of suicides at Woodhill Prison since 2013, more than at any other prison in the UK (e.g. Britain's largest, Wandsworth, has had 7)
8	Suicides at Woodhill Prison during 2015/16 alone; a Jan 2017 report on the prison by the Care Quality Commission insisted that the prison must fully staff its mental health team 'in order to meet the needs of patients' (The prison is now reporting that improvements have been implemented and that they have had no suicides in the past six months.)
63	From Jan-Mar 2017, there were 63 recorded incidents of 'self harm' at Woodhill prison, 5 of which required taking the patient to hospital





**Vital Action** - MK Prison Fellowship is a volunteer led local group that supports the prisons at Woodhill and Oakhill through their management of an accredited 'Restorative Justice' course for prisoners, their cooperative work with the prison chaplaincy and their support of the children visiting family members in the prisons. This past year, the Fellowship secured funding to equip a more family friendly environment at the prison for visitations that involve young children.

**Vital Thinking** - The dramatic increase in bicycle theft in Milton Keynes over the past year is attributed, at least to a significant degree, to theft of bicycles provided as part of the Santander bike hire scheme (delivered in partnership with local charitable social enterprise 'Cycle Saviours.') There is concern that while the scheme has a damage / theft rate of roughly 20% in other areas, in MK it is closer to 65%. Recently it has been reported that the scheme may be withdrawn due to the cost of addressing the high level of theft, as well as the more than £200,000 worth of extensive and deliberate damage done to the bicycles in the scheme.

## Sources of Crime and Safety Data

Crime Statistics from Thames Valley Police

<https://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/news/general/crime-statistics-thames-valley-police-201617/>

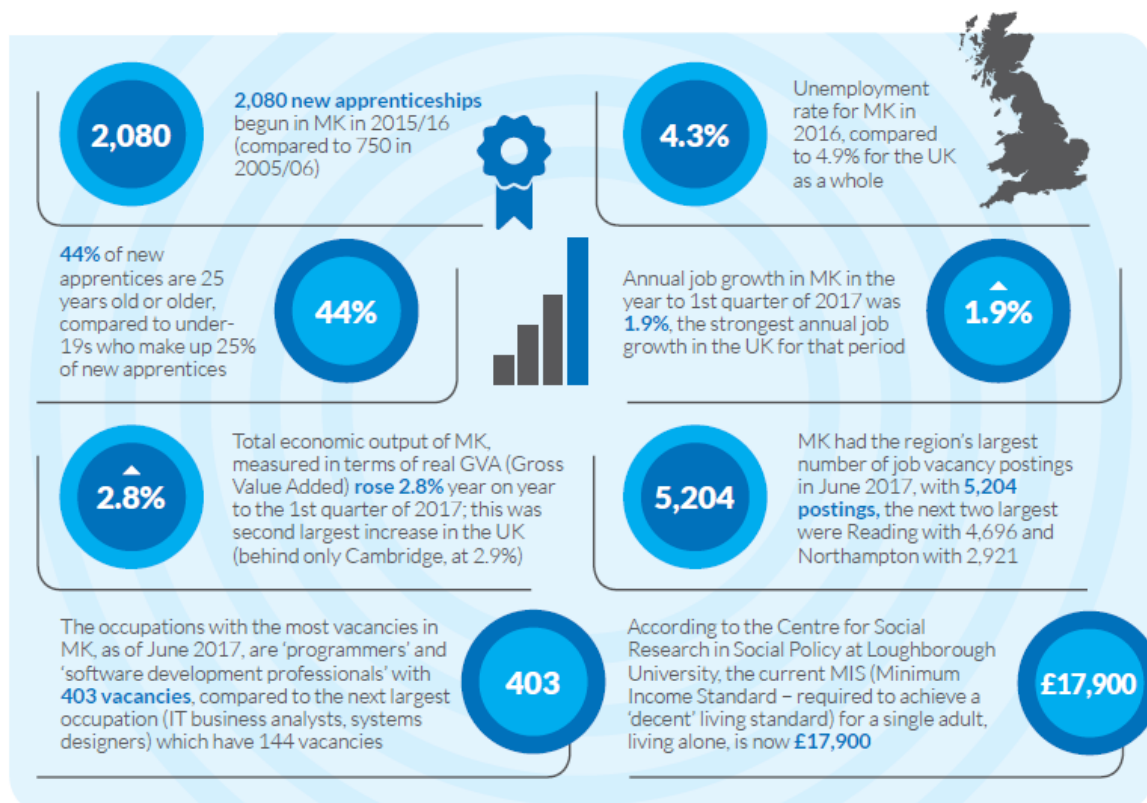
Office of National Statistics, Crime in England and Wales

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice>

UK Crime Stats

<http://www.ukcrimestats.com/>

## Theme 5: Economy



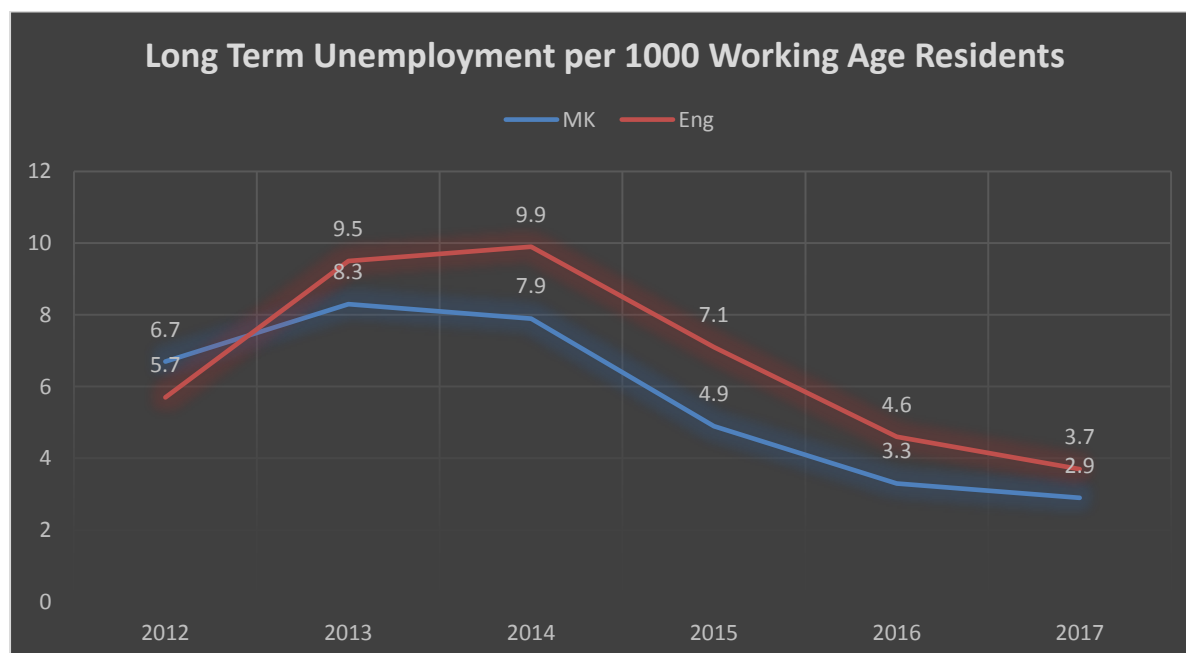
**Theme definition** - Milton Keynes consistently performs very near the top of the national tables on several key indicators, like GVA growth, job growth and unemployment rates, and this year is no exception. Even more, useful secondary indicators are looking very positive as well, for example, apprenticeship schemes in Milton Keynes (most of which are offered through MK College) have more than doubled over the past ten years.

**Overview** – Our local economy is not only performing well, it is leading the nation in some key indicators, including rates of job growth and the increase in the real GVA – the gross productivity of our local economy. The proportion of jobs in the forward-looking tech industries remains high in Milton Keynes and we are seeing significant increases in the numbers of new apprenticeships in Milton Keynes, led in large part by the apprenticeship programmes available through MK College.

## Findings On....

### Our Changing Local Economy

2,080	New apprenticeships begun in MK in 2015/16 (compared to 750 in 2005/06)
44%	Of new apprentices are 25 years old or older, compared to under-19s who make up 25% of new apprentices
2.8%	Total economic output of MK, measured in terms of real GVA (Gross Value Added) rose 2.8% year on year to the 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter of 2017; this was second largest increase in the UK (behind only Cambridge, at 2.9%)
4.3%	Unemployment rate for MK in 2016, compared to 4.9% for the UK as a whole
1.9%	Annual job growth in MK in the year to 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter of 2017 was 1.9%, the strongest annual job growth in the UK for that period
5,204	MK had the region's largest number of job vacancy postings in June 2017, with 5,204 postings, the next two largest were Reading with 4,696 and Northampton with 2,921
403	The occupations with the most vacancies in MK, as of June 2017, are 'programmers' and 'software development professionals' with 403 vacancies, compared to the next largest occupation (IT business analysts, systems designers) which have 144 vacancies
£17,900	According to the Centre for Social Research in Social Policy at Loughborough University, the current MIS (Minimum Income Standard – required to achieve a 'decent' living standard) for a single adult, living alone, is now £17,900



**Vital Action** - The Milton Keynes branch of Young Enterprise works to inspire and equip young people to learn and succeed through enterprise. Launching last September, their 'Learn to Earn' programme offered students of Leon Academy and MK Academy the opportunity to work on developing their life planning and employability skills. The programme examines the relationship between choices made while at school and future life planning, offering development in eight key competencies: communication, confidence, financial capability, initiative, organisation, problem-solving, teamwork and resilience. Students produced creative business plans and were encouraged to think of themselves as future entrepreneurs.

**Vital Thinking** - The largest numbers of available jobs in Milton Keynes are in very specific IT careers like software engineering and programming. Are there opportunities for local people from disadvantaged backgrounds to receive the training and working experience they would need to compete for these vacancies? It is estimated that 65% of children starting school this year will eventually work in jobs that don't even exist yet. Are we educating and preparing our local young people to help them adapt and thrive in our rapidly changing workplaces?

## Sources of Data on our Local Economy

Centre for Cities Outlook 2017

<http://www.centreforcities.org/publication/cities-outlook-2017/>

Milton Keynes Council – Local Economic Assessment 2016

<https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/business/local-economic-assessment-2016>

Milton Keynes Employment Summaries

<https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/business/job-vacancies-and-unemployment-2014-15>

UK Powerhouse City Growth Tracker – April 2017

[https://issuu.com/irwinmitchell/docs/bls-0127-b-powerhouse\\_issuu?e=25622879/47134492&dm\\_i=10X2,4V9F5,G8EUJ8,IEVX9,1](https://issuu.com/irwinmitchell/docs/bls-0127-b-powerhouse_issuu?e=25622879/47134492&dm_i=10X2,4V9F5,G8EUJ8,IEVX9,1)

# Finally

## Looking Ahead

Vital Signs is intended to spark conversations and debate, to inform our public discourse and to make local people more aware of the needs and challenges facing their community. We are eager to engage with individuals and groups who are inspired by Vital Signs to speak out and seek partners in helping to build a stronger Milton Keynes that offers a decent standard of living to all its residents.

MK Community Foundation recognises the importance of building new and stronger partnerships in order to better address the challenges outlined in our Vital Signs reports. In the years to come, we will be exploring new opportunities for partnership working and investigating our options for supporting positive change in our community, including encouraging others to pursue collaborations and joined up strategic programmes.

Join the coversation

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](mailto: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

 [mkcommunityfoundation](#)
 [@MKComFoundation](#)
 [@MKComFoundation](#)

