

Understanding Poverty in Place: Where Data Meets Community in Northumberland Park

Summary Report

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To cite this report: Residents of Northumberland Park, Araujo, E., Boyce, M., Chaaban, R., Corrigall, D., Gyampoh Senghor, S., Kogbara, L., Miles-Wilson, J., Niamba, D., Okoroji, C., Opara, O., Udaigwe, J., Walker, T., West-Alese, U. (2025). Understanding Poverty in Place: Where Data Meets Community in Northumberland Park. London: Place Matters. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17633208>

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About This Summary Report

This summary presents the key findings and recommendations from our research on poverty affecting children in Northumberland Park, Tottenham. It has been produced to make our work more accessible to community members, local decision-makers, and stakeholders who need an overview of the research.

The full report provides additional detail including extended qualitative analysis of our discussions, further quantitative data, methodological notes and appendices including Haringey Council's response to this report. Readers seeking more comprehensive information about our findings, methodology, or the evidence base for our recommendations should refer to the full report <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17633208>.



Executive Summary

In the UK, 4.5 million children live in poverty, and despite decades of data and interventions, the problem persists. This project asks why? Using the Data Democracy approach - centring the voices of those with lived experience in the interpretation of data - we worked with residents of Northumberland Park, one of England's most deprived areas, to understand poverty affecting children in depth.

What We Did

We worked with residents of Northumberland Park, Tottenham, where 27% of children live in poverty. Between May and October 2025, we conducted five workshops with younger residents (aged 16-30), who examined statistical patterns, connected them to lived experience, and guided our analysis of publicly available data.

What we found

Northumberland Park sits within a borough starkly divided by wealth. In east Haringey, up to 1 in 3 children live in poverty; in the west, as low as 1 in 33, a tenfold difference. Residents described crossing this divide as entering "a simulation," two incompatible worlds separated by differing levels of wealth, infrastructure, and opportunity. When data is aggregated at borough level, the deprivation in Northumberland Park becomes invisible, disappearing behind averages that mask the crisis.

New Indices of Deprivation data, released during this project, quantifies what residents already knew: conditions have worsened since 2019. Northumberland Park has dropped from 485th to 41st most deprived in terms of Income Deprivation Affecting Children. Almost all other measures of deprivation in Northumberland Park have also worsened. This is the case despite the multi-million-pound redevelopment of Tottenham Hotspur Stadium right next door.

The stadium's development exemplifies a form of extractive regeneration. Haringey Council allowed the club to renege on a range of planning obligations, including social housing provision and local employment and education support - and relaxed event regulations such that the stadium now hosts double the number of non-football events than was originally agreed. According to residents, most of the economic benefit remains captured within the stadium, while food banks operate during concerts and other events just metres away.

Race and class intersect in complex ways. Within the estate itself residents identify primarily by class. Shared material conditions, social housing, neglected infrastructure and limited opportunities create solidarity across ethnic lines. One participant described a "vibration" within the area that unites more than ethnicity divides. Yet the geography itself remains fundamentally shaped by structural racism: who lives in Northumberland Park, and why, reflects the history of discriminatory housing and labour market policies.

Institutional failure continues to perpetuate these conditions. Residents feel Haringey Council possesses the data but fails to take meaningful action. Furthermore, philanthropic funding operates on short cycles fostering dependency rather than sustainable change.

¹ At the inception of this project, we used the term 'Child Poverty'. From our discussions with residents of Northumberland Park, it became clear that this term is somewhat of a misnomer since children themselves cannot be poor in the usual sense because they cannot earn money. Residents expressed a preference for the term 'Poverty Affecting Children' because this framing highlights the fact that children's poverty status is determined by their household circumstances - e.g. their parents' or guardians' economic situation - and thus avoids the inference, implicit in the term 'Child Poverty', that children themselves have some agency over their poverty status.



What Must Happen Now

Residents have developed important ideas about how things can change for the better. Their provocations, developed through rigorous engagement with data and lived experience, include:

- Shifting from child-focused to family-focused intervention - recognising that children's welfare is bound to their parents' welfare.
- A Northumberland Park endowment fund, capitalised by those who profit from the area and others invested in its future
- Using this fund to invest in people and community capacity for the long haul, not short-term projects
- Transparency and direct engagement from institutions that make decisions affecting their lives

Poverty affecting children persists not from lack of data or knowledge, but from a lack of political will. Those with power to change the system don't experience its failures directly enough to compel urgent action. Affected communities have always known what needs to change. This research demonstrates that residents are expert interpreters capable of sophisticated analysis - their recommendations deserve serious response. The question isn't what should be done. The question is whether those with power will finally choose to act.

Listening Differently: The Data Democracy Approach

Our mixed methods approach is rooted in the acknowledgement that quantitative data can support any number of interpretations, and that interpretation is shaped by the interpreter's perspective and experience (Teo, 2010). When it comes to issues of social policy, the knowledge and action arising from such data is therefore shaped by who is in the position to interpret them, and this position is often occupied by people with perspectives and experiences that are not the same as those of the people with experience of the issue. Consequently, the knowledge derived from the data does not truly represent the reality of experience, and interventions based on this incomplete knowledge can fall short of addressing the needs of the communities the data concern.

We use the term Data Democracy to describe the novel approach we have developed to address this shortcoming in social policy. In this approach, the people with direct experience of the issue lead the research and knowledge-production process; they are responsible for asking the questions, interpreting the data and co-creating the solutions. In this way, the existing data is analysed and understood from the perspective of experts by experience, and with this new knowledge, derived from both quantitative and qualitative interrogation, communities and policymakers are better positioned to make long-lasting, meaningful change that promotes social justice.

In practice, the Data Democracy approach is an iterative process of community discussion and data analysis. Although pre-existing research, theory and knowledge may shape the initial direction of this process, the substance of the work is malleable and changes with the directions that communities take it.

Participants

We reached out to residents of Northumberland Park via the North London Partnership Consortium (NLPC) to invite interested parties to participate in paid workshops (~£16.66 per hour) to discuss, understand and interpret data on 'child poverty' and to generate new data on the topic from their lived experience. Across the workshops we worked with a group of 9, mainly younger (16 to 30 years old) residents. Focusing on younger residents reflected our interest in understanding how poverty shapes experiences during adolescence and our recognition that a peer-based group would facilitate more open dialogue and collective analysis.



Qualitative Approach

The qualitative aspects of the data democracy approach can be described as serial focus group design (Baden et al., 2022). This structure allows participants to create social relationships across multiple meetings, learn from one another and generate shared representations, knowledge and collective ownership over both the research questions and the interpretation of findings.

Within focus group sessions, data or other artefacts are used as a stimulus to generate discussion and joint interpretation. The data presented would typically be generated from participants own hypotheses or questions from previous sessions, creating an iterative cycle of inquiry. This positioned participants not as subjects but as active interpreters capable of connecting quantitative patterns to structural processes and collective experience.

Quantitative Approach

Based on the content of the discussions with participants, we analysed secondary datasets relevant to the topics discussed. All data processing and analysis conducted by Just Knowledge can be found in Just Knowledge's Poverty Affecting Children repository on GitHub.² Our analysis makes use of a wide range of publicly available data (see Appendix 2).

What We Found

The Wrong Side of the Tracks - Spatial Inequality and Invisibility in Haringey

The London Borough of Haringey, where Northumberland Park is located, is strongly divided in terms of wealth. In the East of the borough, the level of poverty affecting children is very high, with up to 1 in 3 children living in poverty. In contrast, in the West of the borough, the rate is as low as 1 in 33 - ten times lower. This spatial divide is felt directly by residents and was intuited prior to any data visualisation being shared.

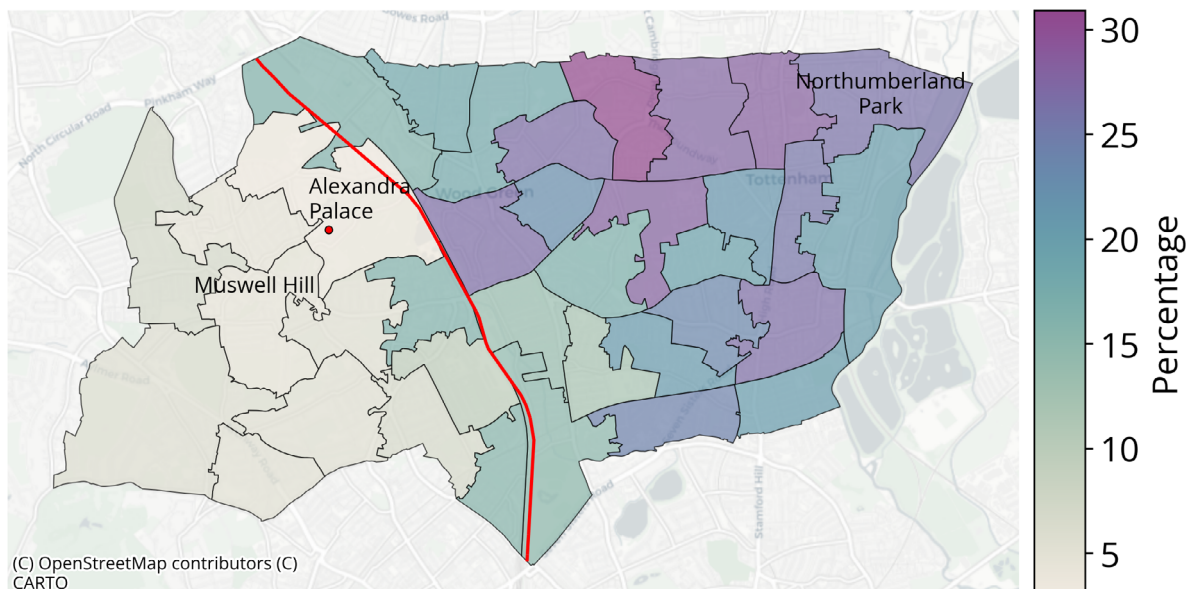
“And you can actually see that, like, if you go to Wood Green and you pass a certain place, you already know, like it feels different... like when you come to the east part of Haringey from coming through the West, it's as if you're in a simulation. It actually feels like you're in two different worlds.”

This inequality was evident both spatially and temporally. Figure 1 shows the variation in the percentage of Children in Low Income Families (CiLIF) - including the sharp east-west divide - in Haringey, and Figure 2 shows the pattern over time in the UK, Haringey and Northumberland Park. These data enabled conversations about how different levels of aggregation mask lived experiences, given that Haringey has much lower levels of poverty affecting children than the UK average. Participants recognised the potential for statistical sleights of hand:

“The separation between Northumberland Park... like these young people are struggling at a staggering rate and then Haringey looking okay. Sometimes, if you don't zoom into certain streets, you won't see the pain people are facing. And you can put data to make things look nice”

² <https://github.com/JustKnowledge-UK/jrf-poverty-affecting-children>





Red line indicates approximate position of the East Coast Main Line Railway

Figure 1 Percentage of children in low-income families in Haringey by Middle layer Super Output Area

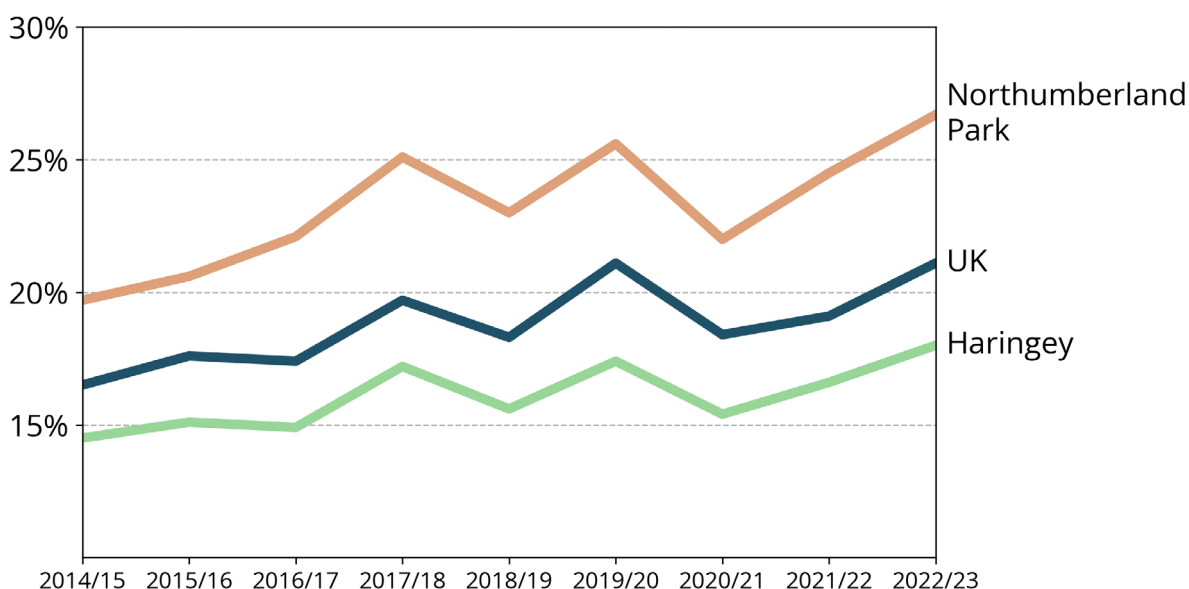


Figure 2 Percentage of children in low-income families across financial years for the UK, Haringey, and Northumberland Park (Ward)

Participants described Northumberland Park as simultaneously hyper visible and invisible. The Tottenham Hotspur Stadium dominates the skyline, drawing thousands of visitors on match days, yet the estate itself remains unseen. In our initial mapping exercise (Workshop 1, Figure 3), people were asked to identify landmarks and boundaries that defined their neighbourhood. The stadium emerged as a powerful symbol of this paradox, a structure that brings the world's attention to the area while obscuring the lived realities of those who call it home:

"Come into Northumberland Park, you see the stadium and then you start walking behind that's when you start to see all of us and see... all the building[s] and all the blocks and you just see the estate... it's just massive."

The estate exists in the shadow of development, both literally and figuratively. While investment flows toward infrastructure that serves those passing through, participants described the total neglect of the infrastructure intended for residents.

“they’ve let it just rot, like, physically speaking, they’ve let the estate rot.”

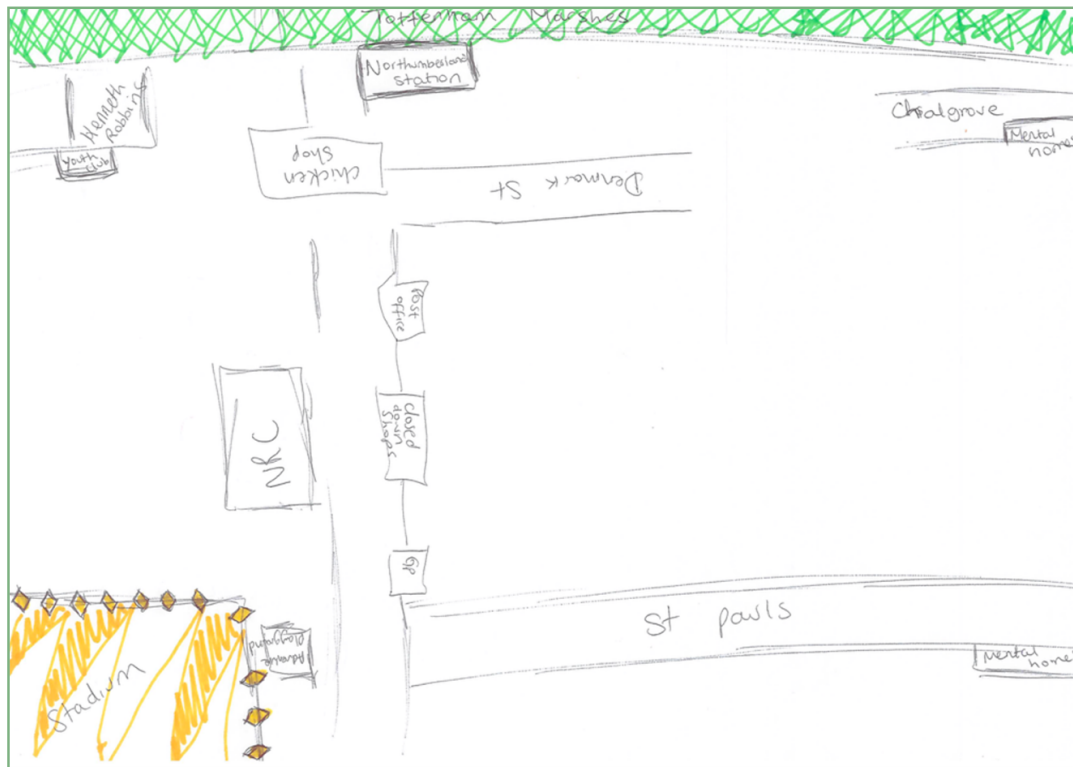


Figure 3 Participatory map-making: A Northumberland Park resident's drawing of their local area

Perhaps the most visceral articulation of Haringey's spatial inequality came through descriptions of certain bus routes, which traverse the borough from east to west. Participants described this journey as an embodied experience of crossing from one world into another, where the material markers of wealth and poverty become increasingly pronounced:

“If you go to [on the] W3 and just go from... Northumberland park here all the way to... Finsbury Park, you'll see what I mean...It will go through the whole estate, you'll come out to the big, shiny stadium... once you get to that little peak, and you see, like, Ally Pally, that's when you start coming into, 'Oh, wow.'”

“The bougie really sets in once it goes down that hill. And now you start seeing, 'oh, we have these type of people in our area' that actually, you know, live good. They live nice. They're houses look nice. They have, there's trees, you see what I mean.”

The journey is not just geographic but also social and symbolic. Trees, well-maintained homes, different types of shops, become markers of who belongs where, and whose needs are prioritised. The contrast is not subtle; participants described it as jarring, “as if you're in a simulation.” This language suggests an artificial quality to the division, as though someone had drawn a line separating two incompatible realities.

The geographic concentration of deprivation in Northumberland Park operates as a form of strategic invisibility; poverty is sequestered into specific boundaries, not captured by borough level statistics. But those living within these boundaries experience compounding disadvantage related to income, housing, access to services and more. This divide ultimately determines who is expected in what places, who is heard and valued by the state and the opportunities available to people on each side of the 'tracks'.

More than Skin Deep - Race, Class and Solidarity

We entered this research seeking to explore ethnic disparities in the experience of poverty affecting children in Northumberland Park. The relationship between race and poverty is well-documented nationally - both historically (Platt, 2007, 2009) and contemporarily (Matejic et al., 2024; Stewart et al., 2025) - with children from Black, Asian, and other minoritised ethnic backgrounds experiencing significantly higher rates of poverty than their White peers (see Figure 4).

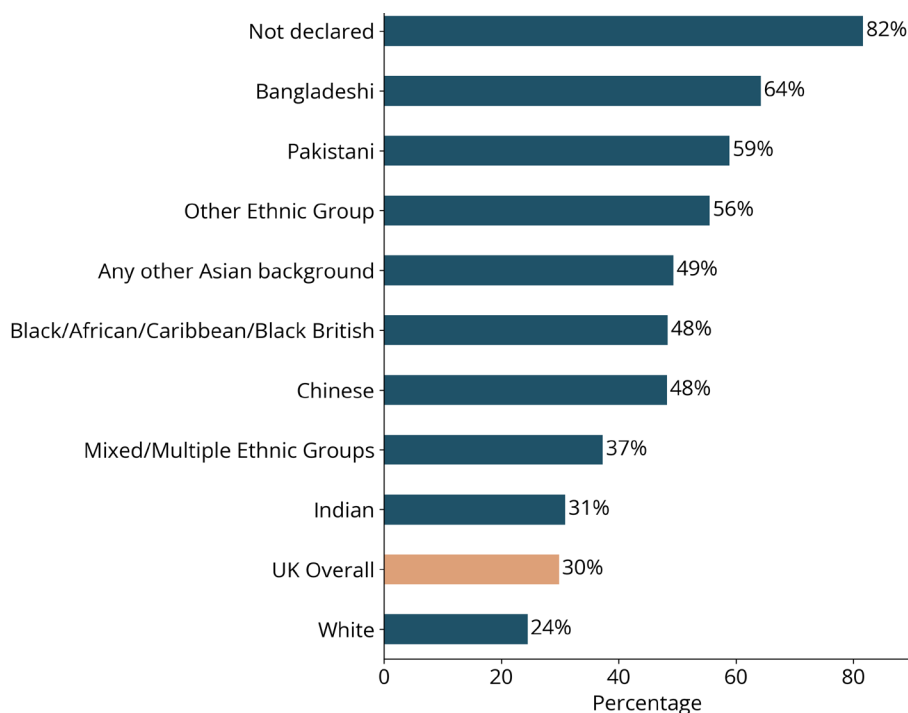


Figure 4 Households with children whose net income after housing costs is below 60% of the national median, broken down by ethnicity. Values are based on three-year averages from 2021/22 - 2023/24 financial years.

Given this evidence base, we anticipated that race would emerge as a primary lens through which participants understood and articulated their experiences of poverty and inequality.

Initial reactions to questions about demographics appeared to confirm these expectations. When we asked participants to describe the people they encountered when crossing into wealthier areas of Haringey, the responses were immediate and pointed:

I: "What kind of people? What do the people look like when you go down the hill?"

P1: "Not our colour"

P2: "Predominantly White"

Yet as the conversation deepened, what emerged was far more nuanced than a straightforward story of racial division. Northumberland Park is extremely ethnically diverse (Figure 5). This diversity is not merely statistical; it is lived, felt, and articulated by participants as central to the area's identity:

"We have all types of cultures here... you can find the whole world in Tottenham... here the ethnicity aspect is not as glaring, until you go on to the other side."

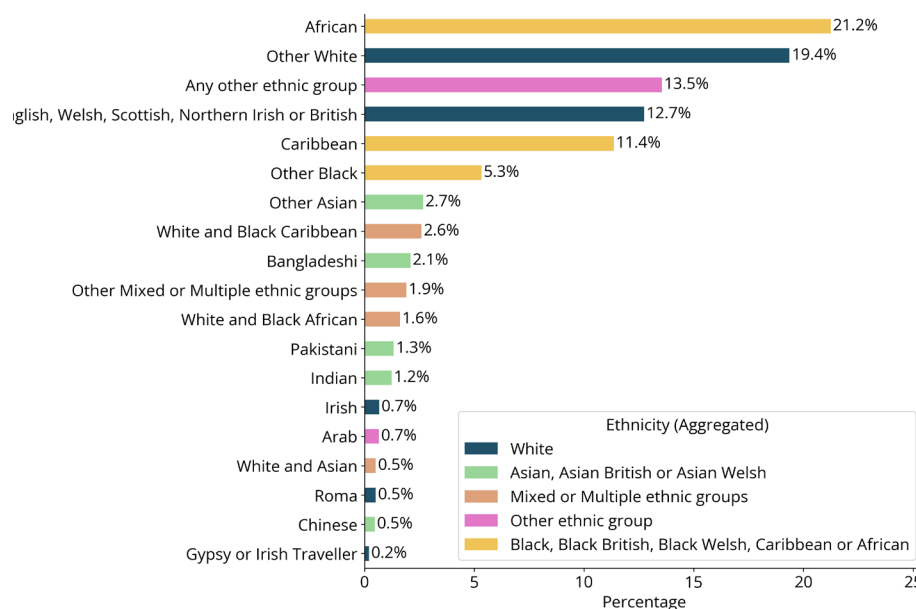


Figure 5 Ethnicity breakdown of Northumberland Park (MSOA). Colours refer to aggregated categories.

Rather than ethnic segregation or tension, participants described a form of solidarity built on shared material conditions:

“There’s a mix of ethnicity in Northumberland Park, but the vibration in the entire area is the same. White, Black, Turkish, whichever race, everyone has suppression, low, low moods, low like, no opportunity, control from the government, etc... it’s very different compared to other areas.”

This solidarity extended to White residents, who participants were careful to distinguish from the “predominantly White” populations in wealthier areas. Working-class White youth in Northumberland Park were not seen as part of the privileged demographic encountered “over the hill,” but rather as fellow community members who shared the same struggles:

“White kids... working class White people... They speak how we kind of speak, like on roads, like they speak with slang... They’re basically like us. They just happen to be White. They experience similar circumstance... they understand how it is here.”

The contrast being drawn is not between White and non-White, but between working-class and middle-class, between “here” and “there.”

While class emerged as the primary identification within Northumberland Park, participants were also keenly aware of the racialised processes that had concentrated poverty, and particular populations, in their area. Discussions about migration patterns revealed an understanding of how structural inequalities shape where people can live:

“Where people migrate to the UK, or like, migrate to London, specifically... they want to move to places where it’s cheaper and most of the housing was cheaper where there’s more poverty... So the more people, the more immigrants that move to the more deprived areas... it’s gonna boost poverty even more, because more people, less funds.”

What emerged from these discussions was not the erasure of race, but a more complex picture of how race and class intersect in a context of concentrated poverty. Race matters profoundly. The population of Northumberland Park is predominantly non-White, and this is not coincidental. Historical and ongoing processes of racialised exclusion, discriminatory housing policies, and labour market inequalities have shaped who lives where (Finney & Harries, 2015; Rex et al., 1967). The “simulation” participants described crossing into is not just a wealth gradient; it is a racialised geography, produced through decades of systemic inequality.

However, within Northumberland Park itself, the primary lived identification is class-based. Shared material conditions, living in social housing, navigating the same neglected infrastructure, facing the same limited opportunities - create bonds that cross ethnic lines.

These findings have important implications for how we think about intervention and support. While it is essential to acknowledge and address the racialised processes that have concentrated poverty in areas like Northumberland Park, responses that focus solely on ethnic identity without attending to class position may miss the mark. Participants themselves signal that place-based interventions, approaches that address the shared material conditions of all residents in deprived areas, may be more appropriate than identity-targeted programmes that differentiate between ethnic groups experiencing similar circumstances.

Tottenham Hotspur Stadium and Extractive Regeneration

Northumberland Park is defined, in part, by what looms over it: the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium. Redeveloped and reopened in 2019 as one of the most technologically advanced sporting venues in Europe, with a capacity of over 62,000, the stadium became a focal point in our data discussions as a test case for a fundamental question: can large-scale commercial development in deprived areas serve as a vehicle for regeneration? Or does it simply extract value while leaving existing residents behind?

The club's community programmes do provide some benefit - one participant credited them with helping find the right college placement. However, as we examined the data, a troubling picture emerged of regulatory capture, broken promises, and development that treats local communities as collateral.

Perhaps nothing crystallises the disconnection between the stadium's operations and local needs more starkly than the image of food banks operating during Beyoncé concerts. One participant recalled:

“She had one of her performances, and all the food banks were open. I remember walking because there was no buses... I was coming home, so I had to walk from the high road and around, and then there was the food bank.”

The juxtaposition is surreal, metres from where thousands of fans pay premium prices to see one of the world's biggest stars, local residents queue for emergency food assistance. The question emerged: is this normal? To answer this, we quantified the CiLIF data for areas within 1km of a London Premier League stadium. We found that Tottenham Hotspur is an outlier. Figure 6 shows that most other London Premier League stadia are not located exclusively in the poorest areas of their respective boroughs.

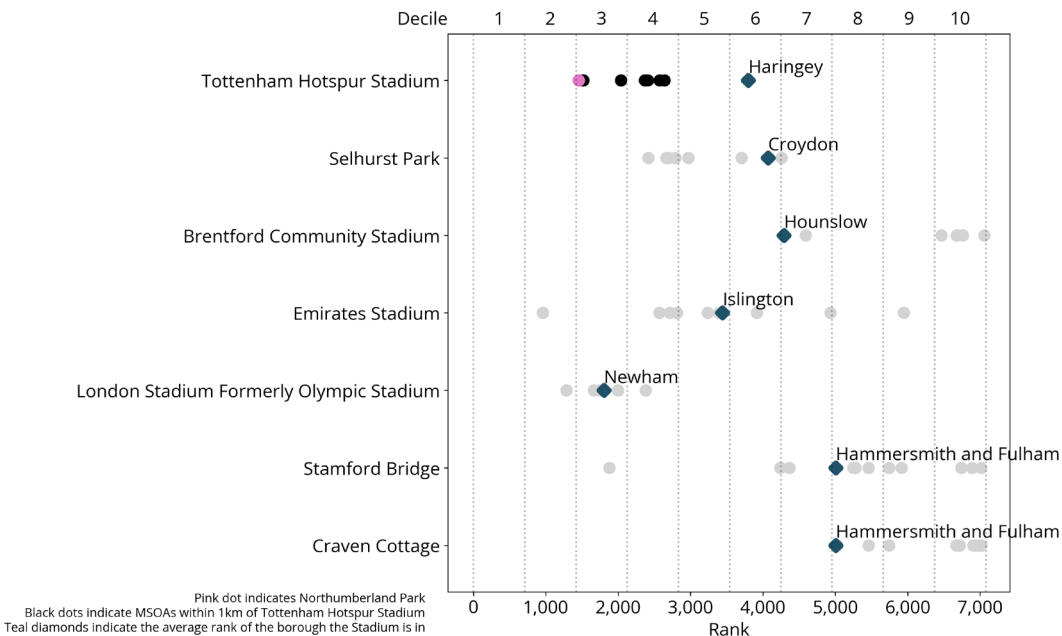


Figure 4: Households with children whose net income after housing costs is below 60% of the national median, broken down by ethnicity. Values are based on three-year averages from 2021/22 - 2023/24 financial years.



The stadium's presence is strongly felt by residents. The disruption caused by major events - road closures, suspended bus services, restricted access to community facilities - falls most heavily on those with the fewest resources to absorb it:

"It causes a lot of disruption... one of my children go to the Kung Fu just here. My other children attend the adventure playground where I work, and a lot of the time they are like, 'we have to close tomorrow. We have to close because we have to rearrange because of the concert, the roads will be closed'. It's disruption. It's just too much."

UK regulations limit the number of non-sporting events a stadium in a residential area can host annually, precisely to protect residents from excessive disruption. Since its opening, the stadium has hosted a significantly expanded calendar of events, including NFL games and concerts by global superstars. Although the original Section 106 planning agreement stipulated the stadium could host not more than 16 major non-football events in a year, it breached this agreement in 2023 when it sold tickets for a fifth Beyoncé concert, seemingly putting profit before its legal obligations.³ And despite one councillor's expression of 'disappointment' at that juncture, in 2024 the stadium was again successful in changing the terms of the deal with Haringey Council by nearly doubling the number of major non-football events allowed each year from 16 to 30.^{4, 5}

There was also an expectation that the stadium would stimulate the local economy, that the additional tens of thousands of people flowing into the area on match days and event days would spend money in local shops, cafés, and restaurants. From the perspective of residents, this has not materialised:

"If it's going to local businesses, or just going to the stadium... They're mostly spending that money when they're in the stadium, because you can't bring stuff in... and then when they go, they just go."

We explored this line of reasoning using data on Gross Value Added (GVA; Office for National Statistics, 2025) and Tottenham Hotspur's Financial Statements.⁶ GVA is a measure of economic productivity describing the value of goods and services produced minus the cost of producing those goods and services. We wanted to understand whether GVA in the area around Tottenham Hotspur Stadium has increased, and how much of that increase can be attributed to other businesses in the area. To do this we tracked the percentage change in GVA since 2016 for the 1km area around Tottenham Hotspur Stadium and subtracted Tottenham Hotspur's revenue and profit.

Figure 7, next page, shows the percentage change in GVA from 2016 in the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium (THS) area, other areas in Haringey, and London as a whole. It indicates moderate growth in the THS area (teal line). However, when we exclude Tottenham Hotspur's revenue (orange line) and profit (green line), growth in the area around the stadium since 2016⁷ is lower and flatter, and it is even possible that GVA has decreased. The implication is that much of the growth in GVA in the area is attributable to the club and not to local businesses. This analysis supports residents' assessment that not only has the redevelopment of the stadium⁸ done little to stimulate growth for businesses in the area, but it also appears to have reduced their economic productivity.⁹

³ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-64860233>

⁴ <https://www.tottenhamhotspur.com/news/2024/august/club-receives-planning-permission-to-increase-the-number-of-major-non-football-events-at-stadium/>

⁵ For further discussion of the agreements between Tottenham Hotspur Football Club and Haringey Council, see our full report.

⁶ <https://www.tottenhamhotspur.com/the-club/investor-relations/annual-reports/>

⁷ We chose 2016 as the base year because the revenue of Tottenham Hotspur Football Club saw a sharp increase from 2017 onwards and we wanted to capture this trajectory in the context of the area's GVA. See Appendix 2 for more details.

⁸ This area included nine MSOAs, seven of which in Haringey and two in Enfield, see Appendix 6 of the full report for more detail.

⁹ We can only approximate Tottenham Hotspur's GVA contribution and growth; the true value will lie somewhere between their revenue (orange line) and profit (green line). This is why we plot both in Figure and why we cannot say with certainty that GVA has decreased in the area; the true value of growth excluding Tottenham Hotspur will lie somewhere between the green and orange lines.



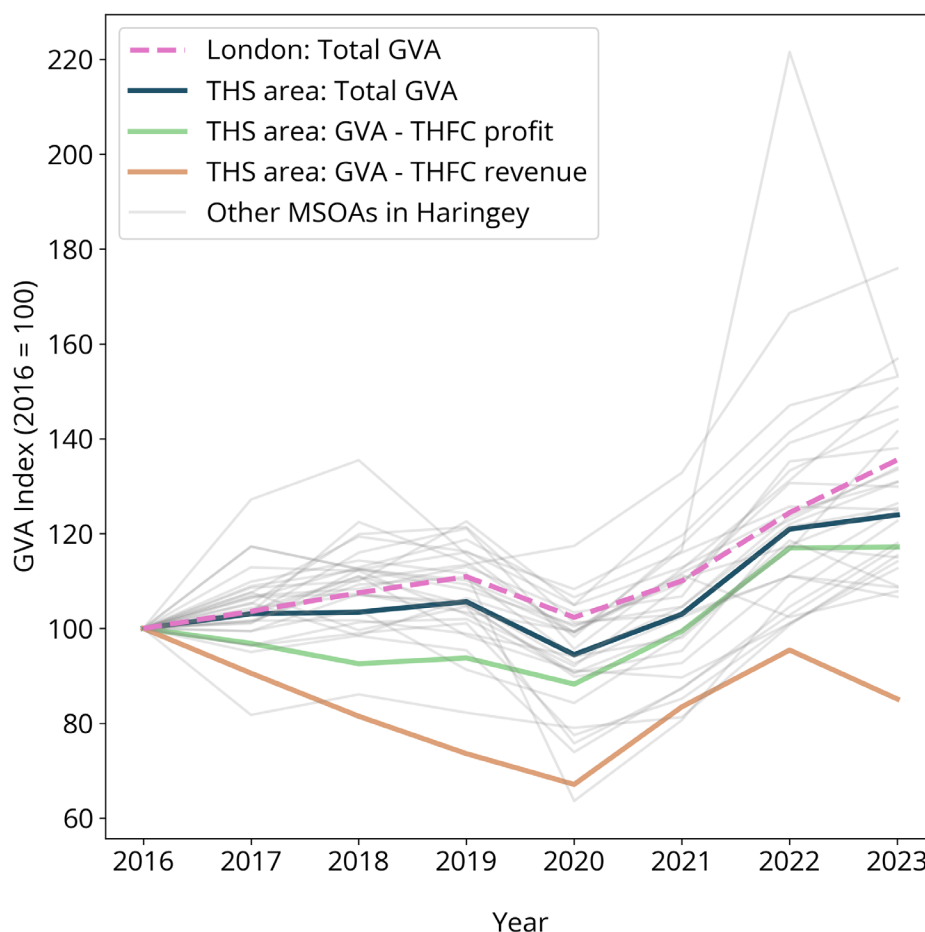


Figure 7 Percentage change in Gross Value Added (GVA) from 2016 for nine MSOAs in the 1km area around Tottenham Hotspur Stadium, other Haringey MSOAs and London as a whole.

For residents of Northumberland Park, the stadium is an ever-present reminder of who is valued and who is not. It is a gleaming monument to global sport and entertainment, visible from every street, yet its benefits remain stubbornly out of reach. The economic activity stays within the stadium walls, community facilities close when events are scheduled, and through it all, the food banks remain open serving the very people who were promised regeneration.

This is what extraction looks like in contemporary urban context: the leveraging of public resources and regulatory concessions to generate private profit, while externalising costs onto those with the least capacity to bear them. The stadium exists in Northumberland Park but not of it - a structure that takes more than it gives, that demands sacrifice without offering return.

Institutional Barriers to Systemic Change

Throughout our discussions of spatial inequality, class solidarity, and extractive development, a question persisted beneath the surface: where are the institutions that should be addressing these problems? Local authorities exist to serve residents, to steward resources, to create conditions for flourishing. Philanthropic funding is positioned as filling gaps, supporting innovation, enabling community-led solutions. Yet as participants reflected on their experiences with both sectors, what emerged was not a story of inadequate resources or well-meaning efforts falling short. It was a story of structural dysfunction, of systems that, by design or neglect, perpetuate rather than challenge the conditions they claim to address.

This led us to focus specifically on the role of local government and philanthropic funding in Northumberland Park, spurred mainly by a recognition that the data we had provided to the group was readily available to large organisations with research and analytical capacity.

The statistics we presented to participants, showing Northumberland Park with children in poverty at a rate three times higher than other parts of the borough, would not be revelations to local civil servants and politicians. The question, then, is not what the council knows, but *what it does with what it knows*. Participants expressed deep frustration with the disconnect between data and action:

“There’s little to no change to past data [CiLIF data], at least not in the last five, six years... I’m sorry you can’t keep, they can’t use that as an excuse anymore, because how much more data do they need for them to realise? Wait, there’s a pattern. There’s a clear problem... at this point, it’s not even about whether or not you live here. It’s like, whether or not you’re human.”

The number of children in poverty in Northumberland Park is a moral emergency that should compel immediate, sustained response. Yet year after year, the data tells the same story, and year after year, the fundamental conditions remain unchanged. During the writing of this report, new Indices of Deprivation (2025) data were released. The new data shows the change in rank and decile for Northumberland Park (MSOA) between 2019 and 2025 on each domain of deprivation, as well as the overall Index of Multiple Deprivation.¹¹ It shows that while Northumberland Park’s rank for Crime and Living Environment has improved somewhat since 2019, its rank for all other domains has worsened (see Figure 8). The largest falls in rank have been for Education, Skills and Training, Health Deprivation and Disability (which have both dropped a decile), and - critically for our present discussion - Income Deprivation Affecting Children. In 2019 Northumberland Park ranked 485th out of 6,791 for Income Deprivation Affecting Children. Now, in 2025, Northumberland Park ranks 41st out of 6,857.

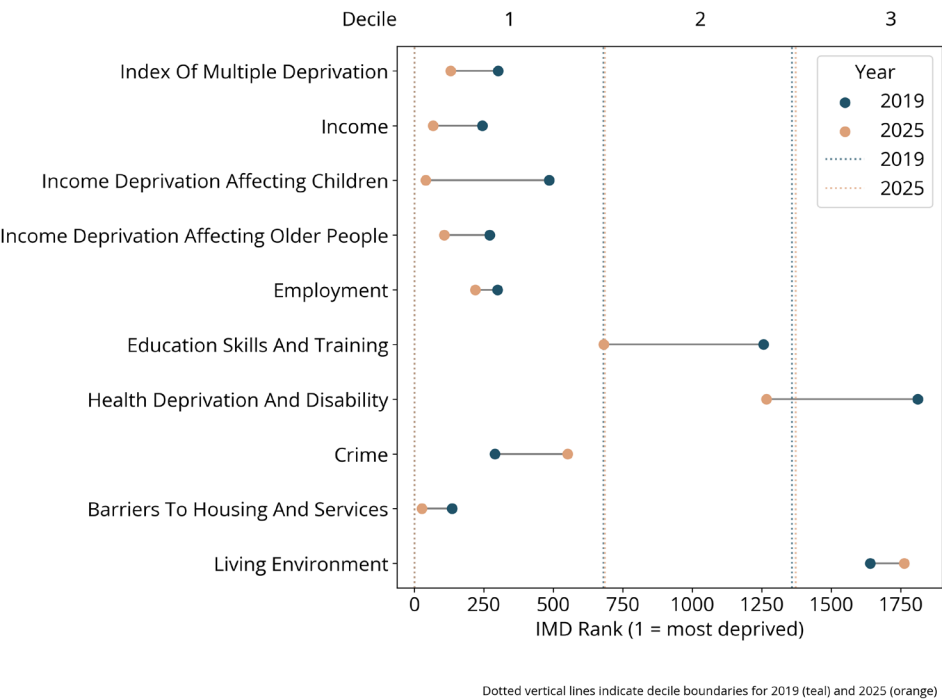


Figure 8 English Indices of Deprivation data showing change in rank and decile for Northumberland Park (MSOA) between 2019 and 2025

The timeliness of this new data release is striking; in a sense it allows us to quantify the impact of the stadium's redevelopment on Northumberland Park. At the time of the last data release the new stadium had just opened its doors. Six years later, Northumberland Park’s deprivation is worse on all but two measures. The data suggests that whatever benefits the stadium redevelopment brought, they did not reach the immediate surrounding community.

¹¹ Note that these changes do not represent absolute changes but changes relative to the rest of England. Consequently, it is not accurate to say that Northumberland Park has become worse in absolute terms (though the CiLIF data do indicate this), but that its deprivation across most domains relative to other MSOAs in England is worse in 2025 than it was in 2019.



Perhaps most perplexing to participants was the council's failure to use levers of change already within its power. One participant, reflecting on wage disparities between Haringey and other boroughs, articulated the puzzle:

"I'm assuming the council knows that [there are low levels of living wage employment]. If the council knows that, I'm confused why they letting it happen cos if people in the borough get paid more won't they get more in council tax. So why would you not be pushing for businesses to be paying as much as living wage as much as other boroughs."

This is a sophisticated analysis. Higher wages would benefit residents directly while also increasing the council's tax base, a rare alignment of social and fiscal incentives. Yet the council has not effectively used its considerable leverage as a planning authority, major employer, and procurer to drive wage increases.

This notion is evident in the data on the Living Wage. Figure 9 shows the percentage of jobs paid below the Living Wage between 2016/17 and 2023/24 financial years for Tottenham, Haringey, London and the UK. It shows that over the past decade both Tottenham specifically and Haringey overall have higher rates of jobs paid below the Living Wage than London and the UK overall, and that this difference has become larger since 2019/20.

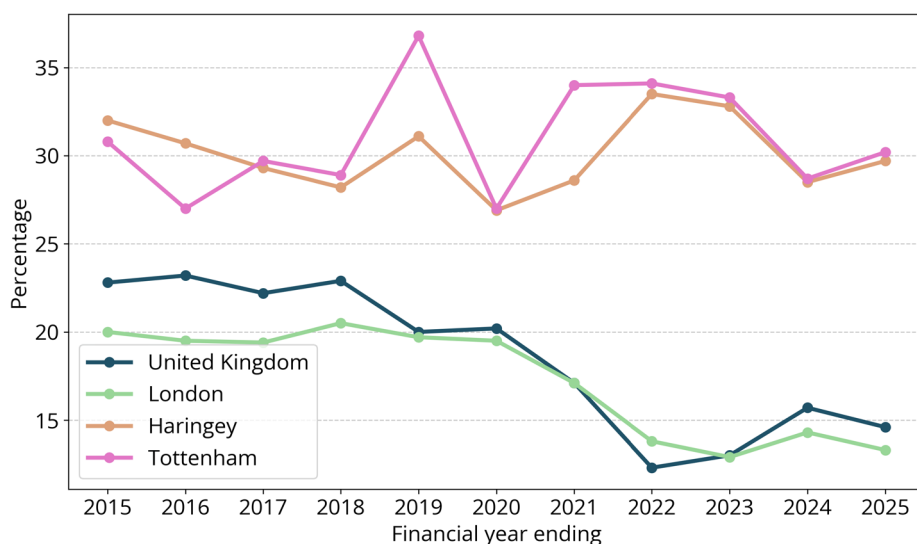


Figure 9 Percentage of jobs below Living Wage over time in the UK, London, Haringey, and Tottenham (Parliamentary Constituency).

Conclusions

In this project we aimed to better understand poverty affecting children in Northumberland Park through a process of collective sense-making we call Data Democracy—bringing together quantitative data analysis with the interpretations and knowledge of young people with direct experience of the issue. What we have learned has taken us far beyond what quantitative data alone could reveal, not only because hearing people's stories directly provides sharper clarity than numbers can tell, but also because our conversations took us in directions that could never have been anticipated without the residents' expertise.

Shared understanding is essential for change, but it is not sufficient. In Northumberland Park, material conditions must also be transformed, drastically and urgently, if we are to ensure that the next generation has a different experience and outlook than the young people involved in this project.



Where Next?

Throughout this research, residents of Northumberland Park have demonstrated sophisticated understanding of the systems that shape their lives. They have interrogated data, identified patterns, connected lived experience to structural processes and developed clear positions on what needs to change. What follows are provocations generated through collective analysis, questions and demands that those with power must now consider.

Moving Beyond Child-Focused Narratives

The dominant framing of “child poverty” is politically palatable and easy to sell, but it fundamentally misunderstands the problem. Children do not experience poverty in isolation from their families. Children do not exist in a vacuum, and it is obvious that a child’s circumstances are strongly tied to their parents’ or guardians’ as well as ecology of their local area. Interventions designed solely around children, without addressing the material circumstances and wellbeing of entire families, are doomed to provide only surface-level relief.

A family-focused approach would recognise that supporting parents to access stable employment, secure housing, mental health services, and community connection is not separate from addressing child poverty, it is the foundation. If we are serious about addressing child poverty, we have to shift our focus from children alone and start investing in the material conditions of entire families.

A Northumberland Park Endowment Fund?

If major institutions in and around Northumberland Park invest in its residents, transformation would be possible. An endowment fund, capitalised by those who generate revenue from the area, could provide sustained, community-controlled resources for generations. Multiple mechanisms could achieve this at minimal cost to stakeholders but with profound benefits to the community. The endowment could be funded by:

- 0.1% of Tottenham Hotspur revenue donated annually (for the financial year ending 2024 this would have been more than £500,000)
- A coalition of philanthropic funders could match Tottenham Hotspurs donation bringing the total annual funding to £1m+.
- Donation options at point of purchase in other local businesses.
- Haringey Council could ringfence a percentage of business rates (e.g. 5-10%) generated in the Northumberland Park area or support the creation of a Tottenham Business Improvement District to enable community-determined initiatives and strategic investment.

The management structure for such a fund can be determined if there is genuine commitment. The question is not whether this is possible, but whether those who have the power to change things are willing to invest in Northumberland Parks future.

Don't Invest in Projects, Invest in People for the Long-Term

Money flowing into Northumberland Park has failed to produce lasting change because it funds projects rather than building capacity within the community itself. In Barking and Dagenham different organisations contributed £7 million over 9 years to the ‘Everyone, Every Day’ program. This had the intended effect of uplifting communities and making them feel genuinely invested in.

What would it mean to fix community material circumstances and self-worth forever? Residents propose a model, one that prioritises building people up, creating space for resource-sharing, skill exchange, and knowledge circulation that becomes self-sustaining. Dedicated community spaces for this work already exist; but they need investment. The goal is to make Northumberland Park independent of external programmes, and to cultivate economic and social capital from within, enabling residents to feel valued, experience joy, and exercise genuine control over their collective destiny. Investment must shift from funding projects that deliver temporary services, to resourcing people who will shape the area’s future long after funders have moved on.



Will Haringey Council Start Taking their Responsibilities to the People of Northumberland Park Seriously?

Haringey Council has let down the people of Northumberland Park. Residents have come up with some ideas for change. If they aren't the right ones, then tell us what you will do to address the stark realities. Haringey has moral and legal responsibilities and residents want the council to refocus and centre their duty of care to the people who live in the borough they govern.

Residents are aware that development of a new multi-million-pound stadium could have been transformative for one of England's most deprived areas. Instead, through the planning process the council has allowed the project to renege on multiple key obligations agreed in the original plan, waiving housing requirements, and repeatedly acquiescing to the club's commercial interests. This represents the most significant missed opportunity in recent memory to improve constituents' lives.

The new Indices of Deprivation data, released during the writing of this report, quantifies what residents already knew: conditions have worsened, not improved, since the stadium opened. The only question is what the council will do differently over the next five years to ensure that the next Indices of Deprivation data release is a cause for celebration rather than despair.

Final Thoughts

We began this project asking why poverty affecting children persists despite decades of data and interventions. Through the Data Democracy approach, working alongside the residents of Northumberland Park, we found our answer: those with the power to change the system do not experience its failures directly enough to compel meaningful action. The data has always been available. The knowledge of what needs to happen has always existed within affected communities. What has been missing is the system's will to listen, learn, and act.

The young people who shaped this research are not subjects of study or recipients of interventions. They are expert interpreters of their own reality, capable of sophisticated analysis of housing markets, economic patterns, and power dynamics. They identified solutions - family-focused rather than child-focused support, perpetual rather than time-limited investment, accountability mechanisms for institutional failure, and fair redistribution of the wealth generated in their neighbourhood. These recommendations deserve serious consideration precisely because they emerge from lived experience and rigorous engagement with data.

The persistence of poverty affecting children in places like Northumberland Park is not inevitable. It is the result of specific decisions by specific institutions at specific moments. Different decisions remain possible. This report exists to make those decisions harder to avoid. Change will not come from more data or better analysis. It will come when those who hold power are finally compelled to act on what communities have been saying all along: that poverty affecting children is a moral emergency demanding immediate, sustained, and transformative response. The question is not what needs to happen. The question is whether those with the power to act will finally choose to do so.



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Appendix 1

Definitions

Child

The datasets discussed in this report define a child as:

“an individual aged under 16. A person will also be defined as a child if they are 16 to 19-years old and they are:

- ***not married nor in a civil partnership nor living with a partner; and***
- ***living with parents/a responsible adult; and***
- ***in full-time non-advanced education or in unwaged government training.”***

Accordingly, these datasets are organised such that 16-19-year-old adults are differentiated from 16-19-year-old 'children.' In our meetings with participants, we considered other datasets that didn't allow for this distinction. For consistency, we chose to focus on under-16s so that we could consider the same age group across data sources. Therefore, in this report, all data relating to children refer to people aged under 16 years of age.

Child Poverty

A child is considered to be living in poverty if they live in a household with an income below 60% of the national median income (Child Poverty Action Group).

Local Authority District (LAD)

An administrative geographical unit administered by a local government. In this report we use the term to refer to geographic areas as well as the governing council.

Middle layer Super Output Area (MSOA)

A statistical geographical unit used in the Census and other Official Statistics. It is comprised of 2,000-6,000 households and usually has a resident population of 5,000-15,000 people.

Parliamentary Constituency

An electoral geographic unit in the UK used to elect a single Member of Parliament (MP) to the House of Commons.

Ward

The smallest electoral geographic unit in the UK, used to elect councillors to local authorities.

Northumberland Park and Tottenham

Throughout the report we refer to the areas of Northumberland Park and Tottenham. When presenting data, these areas specifically refer to geographic areas, the exact definition of which vary between data sources. The areas that feature in this report are the Northumberland Park MSOA, the Northumberland Park Ward, and the Tottenham Parliamentary Constituency.

Figure 10 shows these areas.

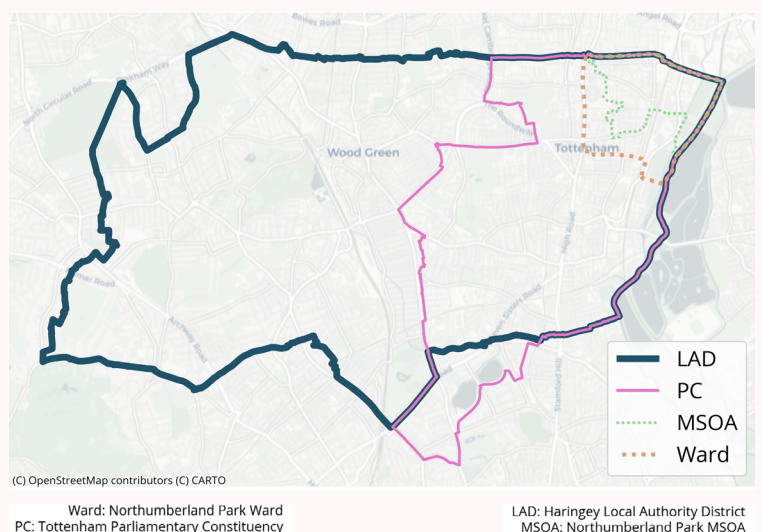


Figure 10 Geographic boundaries for Northumberland Park and Tottenham used in the data releases discussed in this report

¹² [https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/metadata/CILIF_REL/Age of Child \(years and bands\).html](https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/metadata/CILIF_REL/Age of Child (years and bands).html)

Appendix 2

Datasets

Children in Low Income Families

The 'Children in Low Income Families' data (hereafter referred to as CiLIF) is published by the Department for Work and Pensions (Department for Work and Pensions, 2025a). These data provide a count and percentage of children who live in a family with relative or absolute low income before housing costs. In this report we focus on relative low income. A family has a relative low-income if its income for a given year is below 60% of the median income for that year. In this report, we produced these data at the levels of Ward and Middle layer Super Output Area (MSOA; see Appendix 1 for disambiguation of the terms used in this report).¹⁴

Indices of Deprivation

The English Indices of Deprivation is published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2019, 2025). The data provide statistics on relative deprivation in small areas (Lower layer Super Output Areas; LSOAs) in England, including metrics relating to income, employment, education, health, crime, housing, and living environment.¹⁵ Because the Northumberland Park estate is contained within a single MSOA, we focused on the level of MSOA by aggregating the LSOA level data using population-weighted averages for each domain.

Number and proportion of employee jobs with hourly pay below the living wage

These data are published by the ONS (Number and Proportion of Employee Jobs with Hourly Pay below the Living Wage - Office for National Statistics, 2024)¹⁶ and provide estimates of the number and proportion of employee jobs with hourly pay below the living wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation.¹⁷

List of Premier League Stadia

To explore how the presence of Premier League Stadia relate to patterns of poverty in local areas (arising from discussion in Workshop 2), we used the locations of all Premier League Stadia (2024/25 Season)¹⁸ to express the CiLIF data for MSOAs containing a Premier League Stadium as well as MSOAs within a 1km radius of the stadium. We achieved this using spatial joins; any MSOA intersecting a 1km buffer zone around a Premier League Stadium was included as a 'neighbour' for which CiLIF data were produced.

Households Below Average Income

We used the Households Below Average Income dataset published by the Department for Work and Pensions (Department for Work and Pensions, 2025b) to quantify the proportion of households with children whose net income after housing costs is below 60% of the national median, broken down by ethnicity. Following guidance documentation released with these data,¹⁹ we calculated a three-year average for the ethnicity breakdown.

Gross Value Added and Tottenham Hotspur Football Club Financial Statements

We used data on Gross Value Added (Office for National Statistics, 2025) acquired via NOMIS²⁰ to explore GVA in the 1km around Tottenham Hotspur Stadium (THS) from 2010 to 2023, using the same buffer method above; the MSOAs intersecting the 1km buffer zone around THS were combined and their GVA summed to produced total GVA for the combined area. The area consists of nine MSOAs; seven in Haringey and two in Enfield. Figure 15 in

¹³ Retrieved from <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-in-low-income-families-local-area-statistics-2014-to-2024>

¹⁴ Retrieved from Stat-Xplore; a utility provided by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) that can be used to access data relating to a range of DWP benefits and programmes. See <https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/jsf/login.xhtml>

¹⁵ Retrieved from <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

¹⁶ Retrieved from <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/datasets/numberandproportionofemployeejobswithhourlypaybelowthelivingwage>

¹⁷ <https://www.livingwage.org.uk/>

¹⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=List_of_Premier_League_stadiums&oldid=1311963307

¹⁹ DWP Stat-Xplore: HBAI - Ethnic Group of the Head of Household

²⁰ <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>



Appendix 6 of the full report visualises these MSOAs on a map. We used this collection of areas (as opposed to just the THS MSOA) because guidance associated with GVA data for small areas advises that where GVA in a small area is dominated by a large enterprise, the GVA is averaged with other nearby areas to prevent statistical disclosure.²¹

To explore this area's GVA with and without the influence of Tottenham Hotspur Football Club (THFC), we referred to THFC's Financial Statements in their Annual Reports.²² Specifically, we referred to the summary table on page 3 of the 2023 report and page 2 of the 2018 and 2013 reports. The lines of interest were 'Revenue' and 'Profit from operations excluding football trading and before Exceptional Items [for the 2023 and 2018 reports] / restructuring [2013 report] and depreciation.'

We used these figures to approximate THFC's GVA contribution to the area for each year between 2010 and 2023. It is not possible to calculate GVA from published accounts, but we approximated it by assuming that the true value of THFC's GVA lies somewhere between their reported revenue and profit. Subtracting THFC's revenue and profit from the area's total GVA provides a range of possible values for GVA in the area when we exclude THFC. Finally, we computed growth in GVA by expressing each year's GVA values as a function of GVA in a base year. We chose 2016 as the base year because the revenue of THFC saw a sharp increase from 2017 onwards (see Figure 14 in Appendix 6 of the full report) and we wanted to capture this trajectory in the context of the area's GVA. Another sensible base year is 2018, which is the final year before the reopening of the stadium and which could provide a sense of growth since reopening. However, we reasoned that the combination of sharp revenue increases and the impact of COVID in late 2019 onwards makes the picture from 2018 less clear. For this reason, we believe the 2016 version provides a clearer picture. Nonetheless, we also calculated growth using 2018 as the base year, the result of which is shown in Figure 16 in Appendix 6 of the full report.

²¹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/grossvalueaddedgva/bulletins/smallareagrossvalueaddedestimatesuk/latest>

²² <https://www.tottenhamhotspur.com/the-club/investor-relations/annual-reports/>

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