

JSNA Health and Wellbeing Profile 2025/26

Healthy Weight (adults)

Summary points

- Over half the adult Bristol population are overweight or obese (58.1%). This is lower than the national average (64.0%) and the lowest of all core cities (Active Lives Survey, 2022/23¹).
- The 2024/25 self-reported Bristol Quality of Life survey provides a lower estimate of 47.7% adults with excess weight (BMI ≥ 25)².
- Poverty and deprivation are associated with a higher risk of excess weight in Bristol (and obesity even more so), but the relationship is complex and seems to affect women more than men in Bristol.
- In addition, some groups in the population have a significantly higher risk of excess weight

Active Lives

The Active Lives Adult survey³ is commissioned by Sport England and measures weight and activity levels of people aged 18 and over across England. Findings from the latest survey in 2022/23 show that 58.1% of adults in Bristol are overweight or obese. This is an increase on the previous year (55.2%) but is significantly lower than the England average of 64.0%, lowest of all the English core cities and 25th lowest of all English local authorities.

Quality of Life (QoL) survey⁴

Data from the 2024/25 Quality of Life survey shows that 47.7% of adults are overweight or obese, similar to the previous year (47.2%). There is a wide variation across the city by ward (see Figure 1 overleaf) ranging from 23.5% overweight or obese in Clifton to 62.6% in Hartcliffe & Withywood. By sub locality, rates are highest in North and West (Outer) (57.6%) and lowest in North and West (Inner) (37.4%) highlighting the variation between lower rates in more central wards and higher in more outlying ones, which in part are due to age and deprivation patterns in the city.

Equalities Data for Bristol (QoL survey)

Some groups in the population have a higher risk of excess weight:

- **Disability:** Significantly more adults living with disability (59.0%) have excess weight compared to the city average (47.7%)
- **Age:** More people aged 65 and over (56.3%) have excess weight compared to young people aged 16 -24 years (32.0%).
- **Gender:** Males (50.0%) are more likely to have excess weight than females (45.8%).

¹ Active Lives survey, Sport England, 2022/23 (via PHOF March 2025)

² Adults tend to underestimate their weight & overestimate their height when providing self-reported measurements and the amount this occurs can differ between population groups. The Active People survey is adjusted for this to estimate the likely *actual* height and weight of individuals, and so produce more accurate BMI estimates. Normal BMI is 18.5 – 24.9 kg/m².

³ Active Lives survey, Sport England, 2022/23 (via PHOF March 2025)

⁴ Bristol Quality of Life survey 2024/25 www.bristol.gov.uk/qualityoflife

- **Ethnicity:** Excess weight ranged from 43.3% for people of Asian ethnicity to 66.9% for people of Black ethnicity, significantly different to the city average (47.7%).
- **Deprivation:** 55.0% of adults living in the 10% most deprived areas have excess weight, compared to 35.7% of adults with excess weight living in the 10% least deprived areas.
- Other factors associated with excess weight include **food insecurity** and **inactivity**. Please refer to these JSNA data profiles for more information.

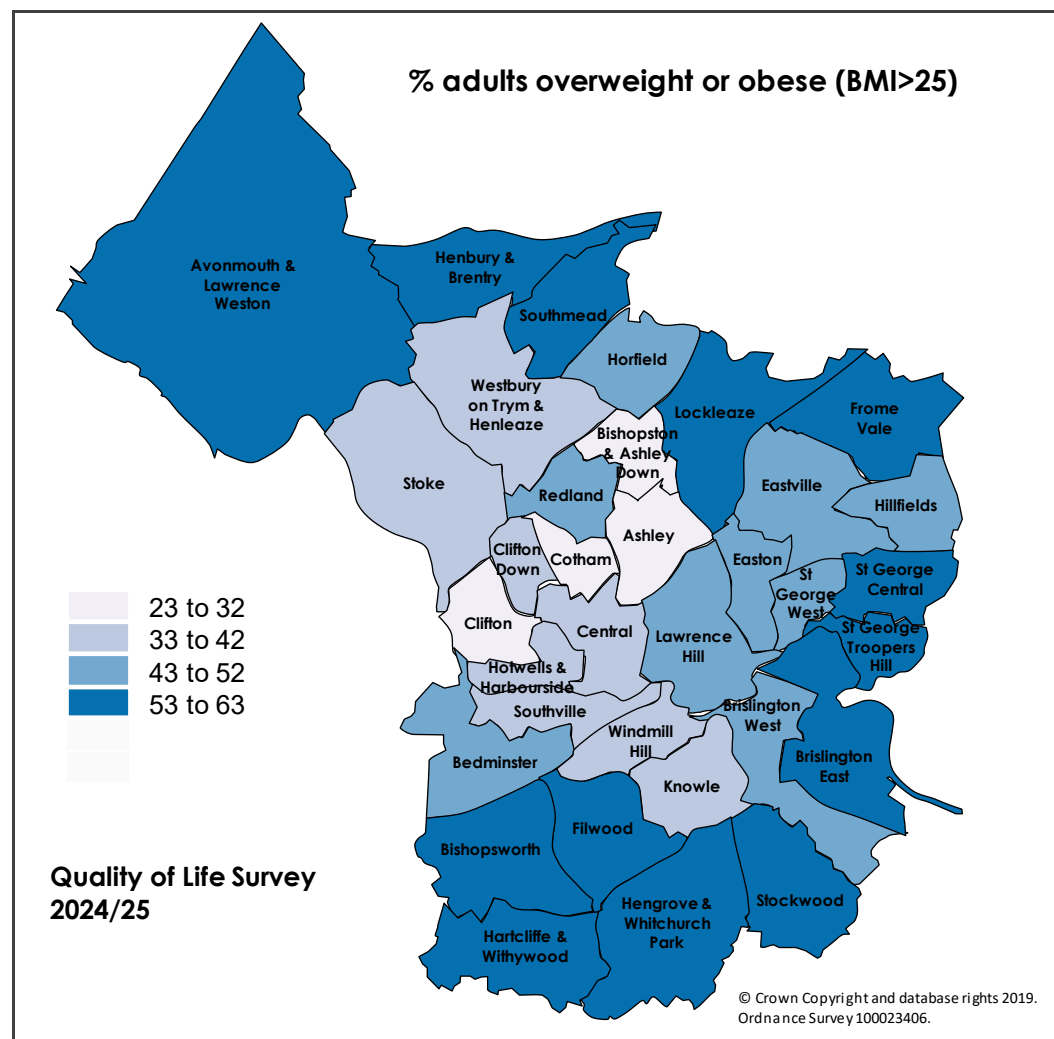


Figure 1: % of adults overweight or obese in Bristol by Ward (BMI >25)

How are we tackling the issue?

The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) recommends a long term, system wide approach to tackling overweight and obesity that is tailored to local need and works across the life course.⁵ This is referred to as the 'whole systems approach'.

The obesity care pathway in NHS England is made up of several tiers (1-4). In Bristol, our tier 1 and tier 2 work is based on this whole systems collaborative approach, involving a multitude of

⁵ [Public Health England 2019 Whole System Approach to Obesity](#)

partnerships across the health system and the city to support 'healthy weight' environments and a focus on prevention. This work is aligned to Bristol City Council's Corporate Strategy and the One City Plan and supports changes to the food and physical activity environments and encouraging healthier lifestyles across the life course. The Integrated Care System (BNSSG) have agreed and are implementing a system wide approach to "healthy weight" that is rooted in compassion with a strong focus on prevention. The approach will be considered within the context of inequalities and the whole life course, with a focus on creating healthy environments for our population. The Why Weight? Pledge has been developed by partners of Healthier Together Integrated Care System (ICS) as a commitment to an environment where everyone in Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire has the access and ability to eat well, feel well and be active.

[Why Weight? Pledge for creating Healthier places Together - BNSSG Healthier Together](#)

Examples of current programmes that seek to reduce inequalities and improve healthier weight and wellbeing within this whole systems approach include:

- Bristol Eating Better Award
- Bristol Sports & Physical Activity Strategy
- A Healthy Weight commissioned service with limited referrals for adults (and families) is running until March 2026. It has a focus on developing our whole-systems with a community asset based approach.
- NHS Health Checks in Bristol – providing advice on healthy living, including diet and exercise; signposting to weight management services; assessing risk and preventing conditions such as Type 2 diabetes, heart disease and high blood pressure.
- BCC Healthy & Sustainable Procurement Policy
- One City Food Equality Strategy and Action Plan; A Green Spaces and Parks Strategy; Bristol Good Food 2030 Framework.
- Making Every Contact Count (MECC) training for front line practitioners.

Other weight loss support is offered through the following services:

- NHS Digital Weight Management Programme- A 12 week online behavioural and lifestyle programme. GP or pharmacist referral required. See; [NHS England » The NHS Digital Weight Management Programme](#)
- NHS Weight Loss Plan- A 12 week weight loss plan downloaded through NHS app; [Lose weight - Better Health - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)
- NHS National Diabetes Prevention Programme
- Living Well Taking Control offers a face to face and digital service to adults at risk of developing Type 2 diabetes. See; [Living Well Taking Control \(lwtcsupport.co.uk\)](#)
- Low Calorie Diet (LCD) by Xyla Health and Wellbeing - A total diet replacement programme for people with Type 2 Diabetes, supporting them to achieve weight loss and helping achieve diabetes remission. See; [NHS Low Calorie Diet | Xyla Health & Wellbeing \(xylahealthandwellbeing.com\)](#)
- Weight Assessment and Management Service (WAMS)- Specialist obesity clinic based at Southmead Hospital for people with severe or complex obesity. See; [Weight Assessment & Management Service \(WAMS\) | North Bristol NHS Trust \(nbt.nhs.uk\)](#)

- Other services through Primary care: Social prescribing; care-coordinators and Wellbeing coaches

Further data / links / consultations:

- Sport England: [Active Lives Survey](#)
- [Home - Bristol Good Food 2030](#)

Other relevant JSNA profiles can be found on this link: [JSNA Data Profiles](#)

- JSNA Healthy Eating
- JSNA Food Poverty
- JSNA Physical Activity
- JSNA Healthy Weight (Children)
- JSNA Diabetes

Covid-19 impact:

Although trend data from the QoL survey does not indicate any significant changes in unhealthy weight for adults from before the pandemic to now, Covid and the Cost of Living Crisis have highlighted and exacerbated food and diet related inequalities, with food access/provision being a priority. Healthy weight and reducing the related inequalities in Bristol remain a priority.

Date updated: April 2025

Next update due: April 2026