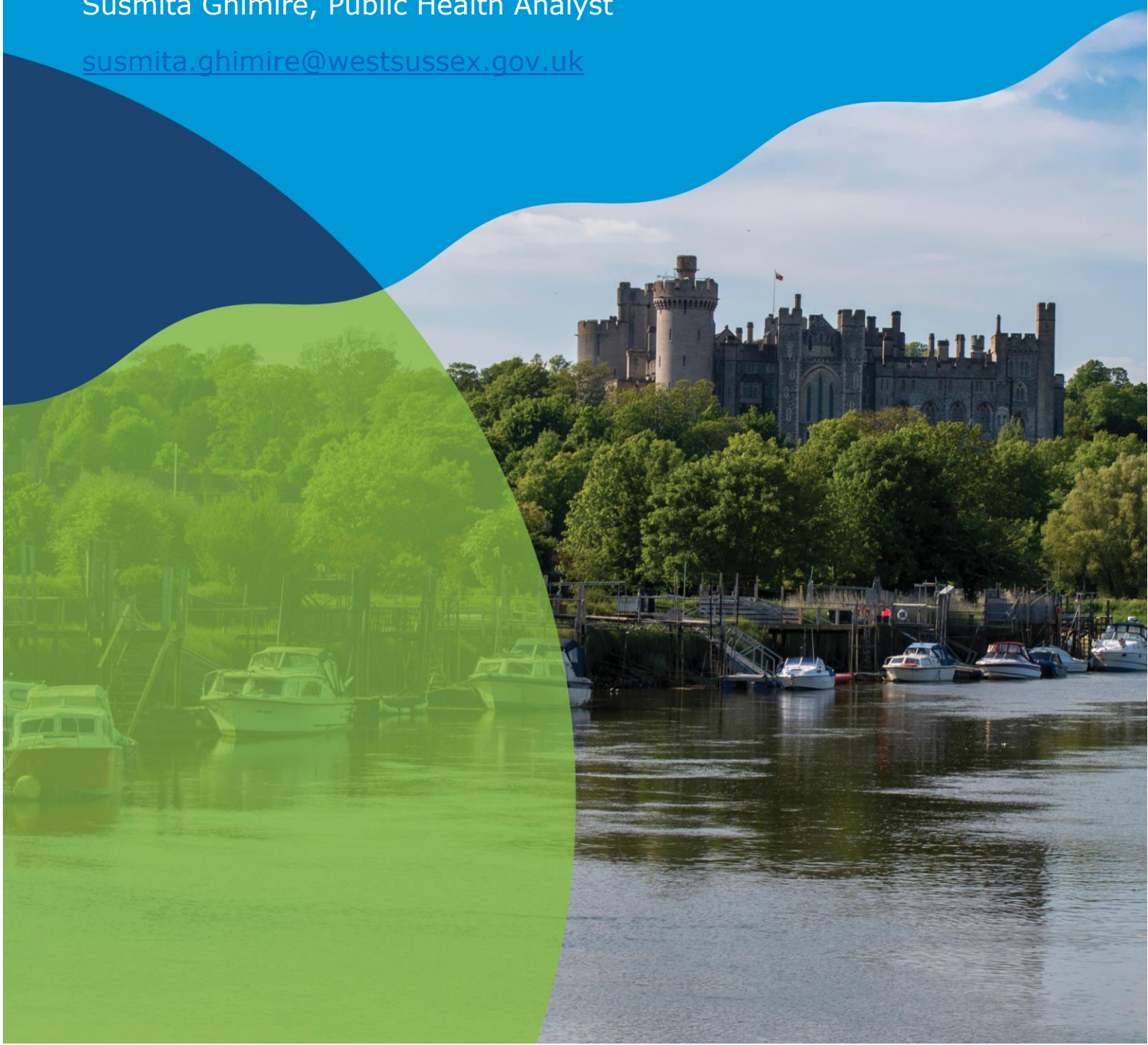


2024 Population Estimates

Public Health and Social Research Unit

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Purpose of Briefing

To provide an update of the population estimates, outlining the data released by the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

What is the Issue?

Each year the ONS release an estimate of the resident population in England and Wales. Data are available at county and local authority level and relate to the mid-point of the previous year (i.e. data released in July 2024 provide an estimate of mid-year 2023). Data are released once a year, are provided by gender and single year of age and information is also released on the “components of change”, i.e. births, deaths and migration. Small area estimates (wards, MSOAs, LSOAs) are released separately, in November.

Why is this important?

Population estimates are used to support service and financial planning. Data can also provide a benchmark on the local age structure in comparison with other areas and England overall.

What do we know?


- In 2024 915,037 people were estimated to be resident in West Sussex. This was 11,004 more than in 2023, an increase of 1.2%. In the period from mid-2021 to mid-2024, the population estimate of West Sussex increased by 3.4%.
 - In both 2023 and 2024, population growth was driven entirely by net migration, as natural change was negative in 2024 (7,713 births vs. 9,702 deaths, resulting in a net decrease of 1,989). Net internal migration increased from 5,372 in 2023 to 6,699 in 2024, while net international migration rose from 5,115 to 6,326. Internal migration remains the largest single contributor to population growth in West Sussex.
 - The median age provides a useful summary measure of the age structure of the population as it shows that exactly half the population is below the median age and the other half is above the median age. In West Sussex, the median age in 2024 was 44.7 years, unchanged from both 2023 and 2016. By comparison, the median age in England in 2024 was 40.2 years, which is lower than that of West Sussex.
 - By age category, West Sussex's population of 915,037 usual residents was made up of: 160,665 people aged 0 to 15 years, (17.6%), 541,474 people aged 16 to 64 years, (59.2%) and 212,898 people aged 65 years and over, (23.3%).
 - The largest year-on-year change in West Sussex was among those aged 35–39 years, with an increase of 2,314 people compared to 2023, representing a 4% rise, as shown in Figure 1.
 - There was a decline of 590 people among those aged 70–74 years in the latest estimates, representing a 1.2% decrease compared to 2023, as shown in Figure 1.
 - Among the Districts and Boroughs, Crawley recorded the highest percentage increase, while Adur had the lowest, as shown in Table 1.
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Table 1, Population and Population Change in West Sussex Districts and Boroughs (Mid-Year Estimates: 2023 and 2024).

Area	Mid-year estimate 2023	Mid-year estimate 2024	Change	% Change
Adur	64,687	64,889	202	0.3%
Arun	168,008	170,064	2,056	1.2%
Chichester	128,003	128,934	931	0.7%
Crawley	120,545	124,008	3,463	2.9%
Horsham	149,464	151,521	2,057	1.4%
Mid Sussex	157,915	161,755	3,840	2.4%
Worthing	112,240	113,866	1,626	1.4%
West Sussex	900,862	915,037	14,175	1.6%
England	57,690,323	58,620,101	929,778	1.6%

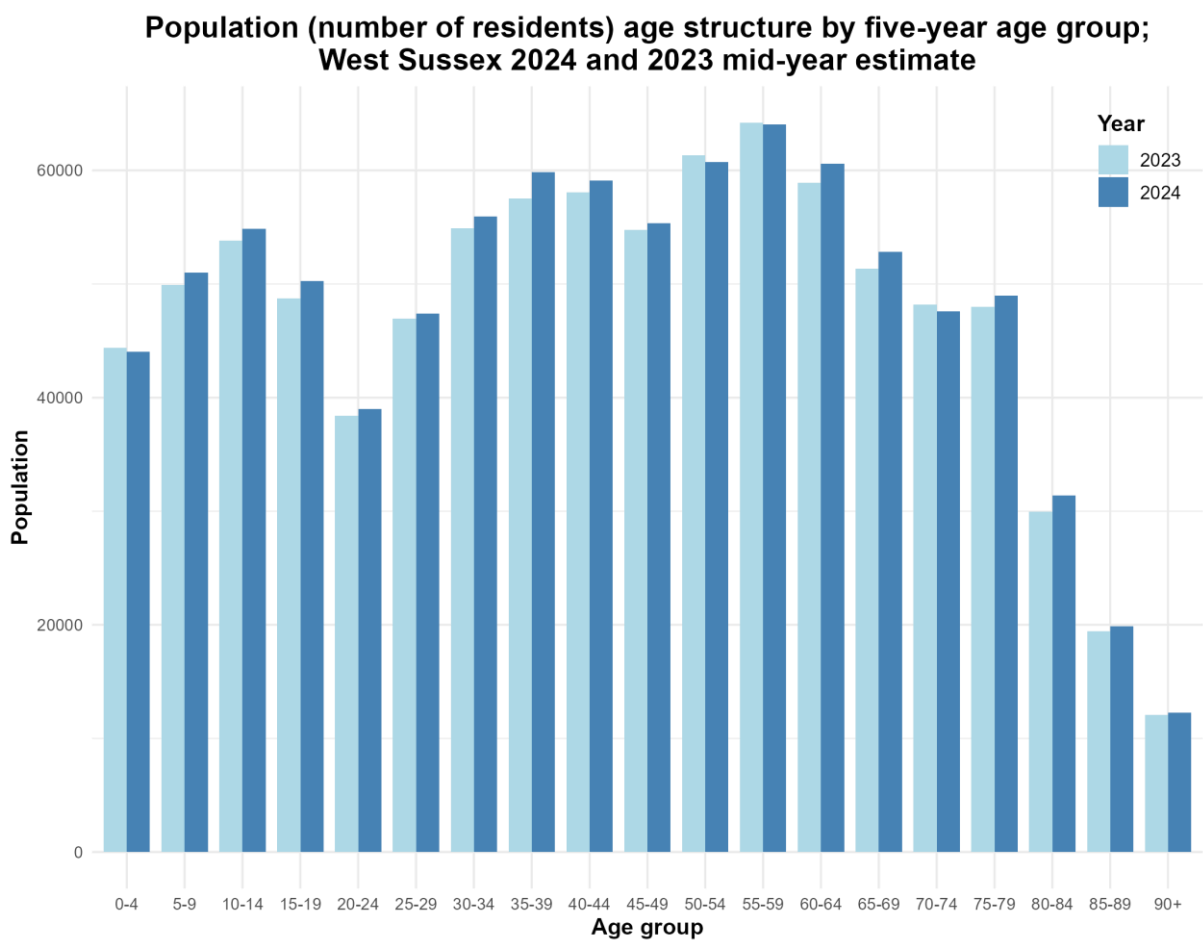


Figure 1, Population age structure by five-year age group in West Sussex, based on mid-year estimates for 2023 and 2024. The bar chart compares the number of residents in each age group, with light blue bars representing 2023 and dark blue bars representing 2024. The chart highlights changes in population distribution across age groups between the two years. Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS).

How do we compare?

Figure 2 shows the percentage of residents in each age group by sex in West Sussex in 2024, compared to the national average for England. The chart indicates that West Sussex has a relatively higher proportion of residents in the older age groups, particularly those aged 65 and over. In contrast, the younger age groups, especially those aged 20–24, are less represented in West Sussex compared to the national average. The distribution also shows that from age 75 onwards, the proportion of females exceeds that of males, consistent with patterns of gender-based population differences in older age groups.

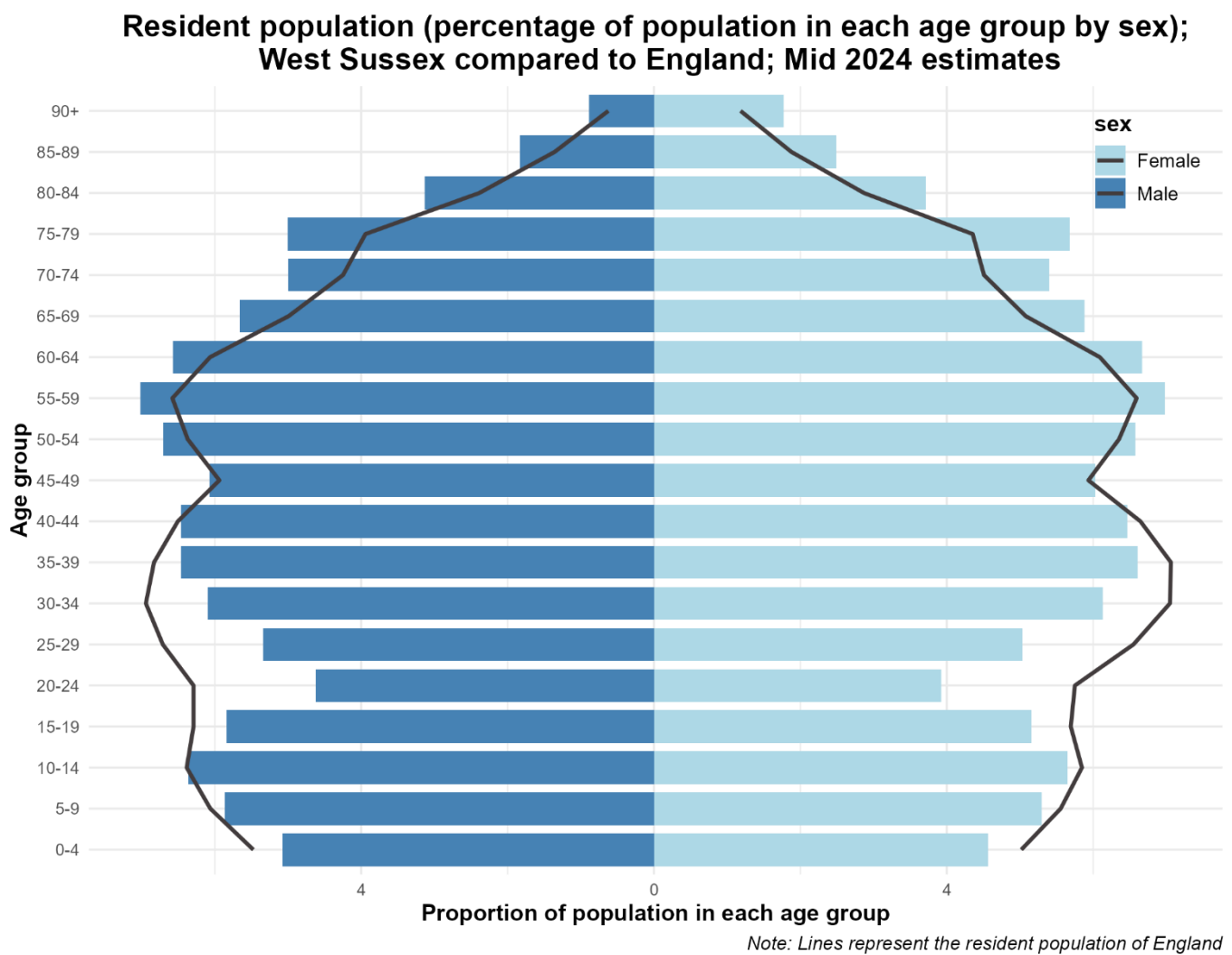


Figure 2, Percentage of resident population in each five-year age group by sex in West Sussex compared to England, based on mid-2024 estimates. Males are shown on the left in dark blue and females on the right in light blue and the lines represent the proportion of resident population in England. The chart highlights West Sussex's older age profile, with higher proportions in the 65+ age groups and noticeably lower percentages in younger age groups, especially among those aged 20–24. Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS).

Source: [Population estimates for England and Wales - Office for National Statistics](#)