

Food challenges and poverty in the East of England

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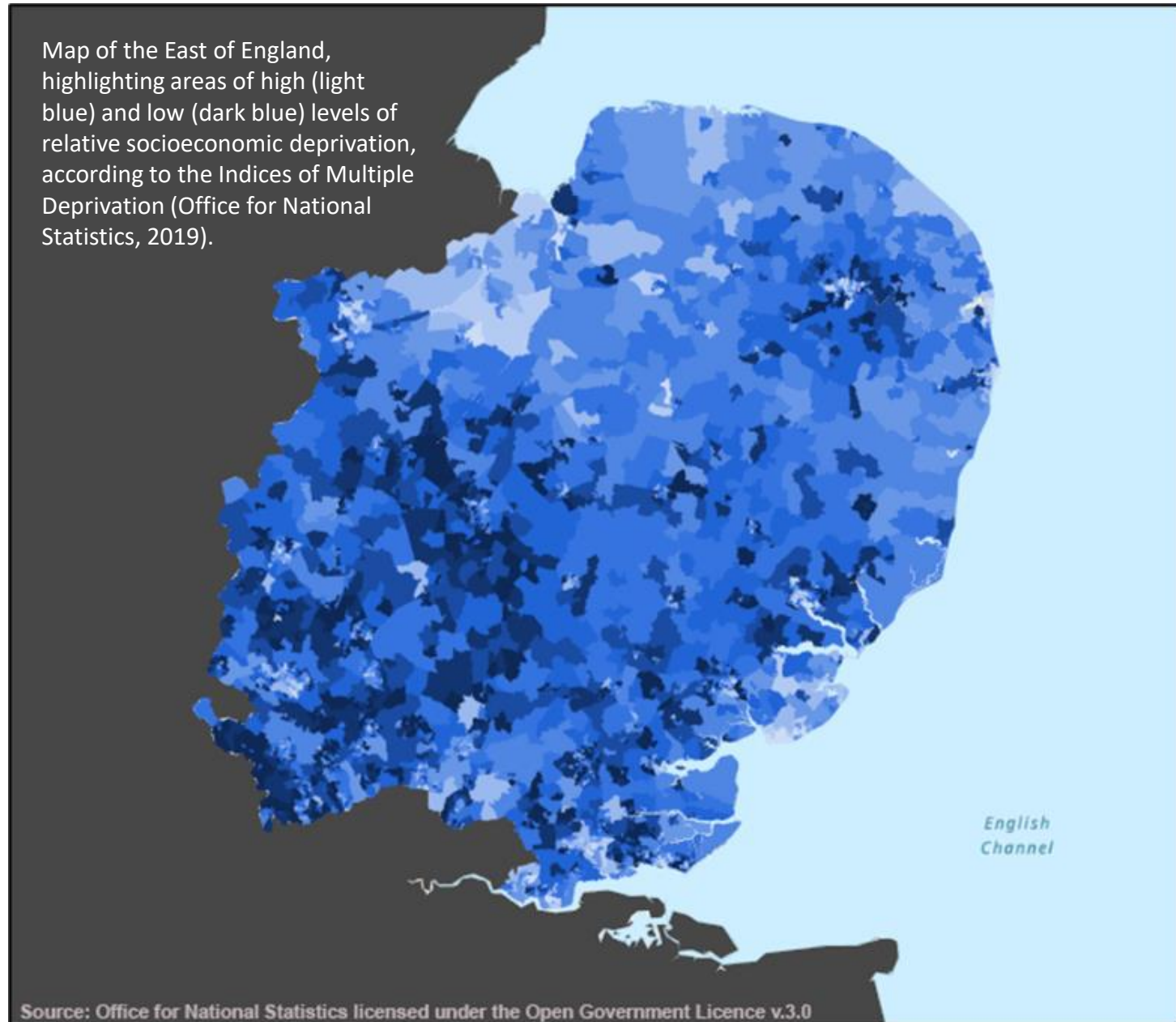
NIHR | Applied Research Collaboration
East of England



The East of England

- A diverse area covering coastal, urban and rural settings.
- Farming, agriculture, food processing
- A mixture of both socio-economically deprived and affluent areas .
- Prevalence of both obesity and hospital admissions involving a diagnosis of malnutrition higher than national average
- Local clusters of populations at a higher risk of food insecurity

Map of the East of England, highlighting areas of high (light blue) and low (dark blue) levels of relative socioeconomic deprivation, according to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (Office for National Statistics, 2019).



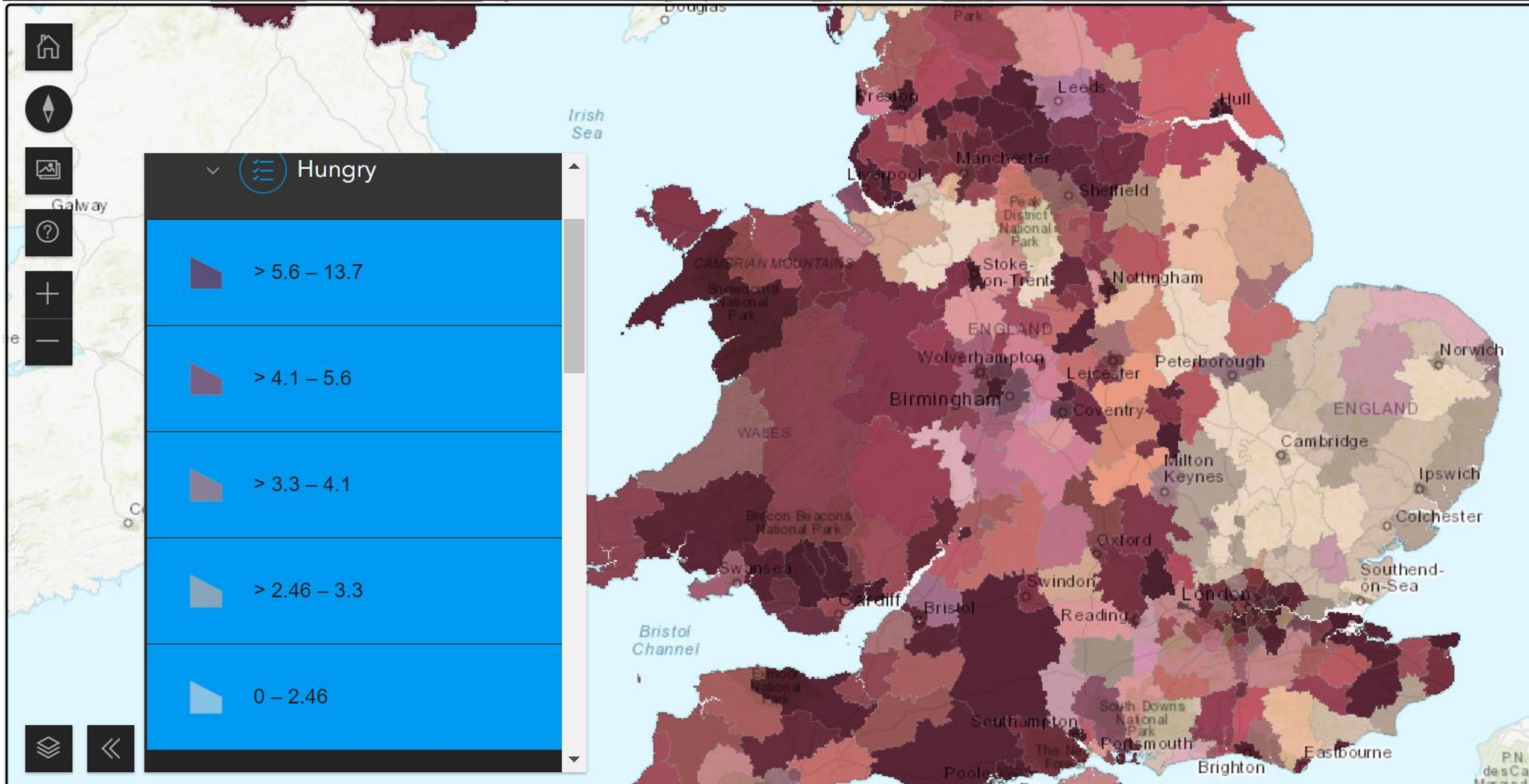
Source: Office for National Statistics licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0

Place-based dietary health interventions: difficulties in a diverse region

- Takeaway exclusion zones
 - Food poverty action plans
 - Franchise food banks
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- Insufficient evidence base
 - Image of wealth and prosperity



UK local food insecurity of Adults Jan 2021



The impact of coronavirus on food and eating in the east of England

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In-depth telephone and video call interviews
2020 - 2021.

22 East of England volunteers and professionals - providing support around dietary health for vulnerable groups.

33 East of England residents – families with children; the over 70s; those on a low-income; recipients of free school meals; households including people self-isolating due to a health condition.

The pandemic may have widened dietary health inequalities:

Those not impacted financially by the lockdown had more time and attention to spend on their cooking and eating practices, taking the opportunity to try and improve their household diet.

Those heavily affected by the lockdown had to compromise the quality of their diet, rely on donated food, and skip meals.



Restrictions, lockdowns and food shopping

- ❑ The number of new grocery stores opening up across the UK doubled last year - surging demand and “essential” status.
- ❑ The East of England was the region that had the most new-store openings.
- ❑ Well publicised shortages in supermarkets, panic buying, queuing, and priority online delivery slots.
- ❑ Affording and accessing food was a challenge for some groups



How Covid19 and the lockdowns impacted upon household food shopping practices



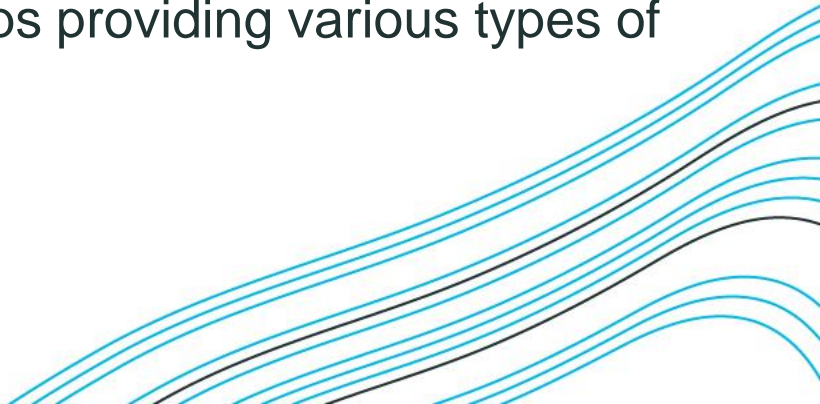
Agency - not shopping for yourself missing the social interaction associated with it

Amplified disparities – shopping 'locally'

Access - getting to the shops, using the shops, and online deliveries



Our Study of Immigration and Food Poverty in the UK

- a) The challenges experienced by families and the role of NRPF in accessing and affording food.
 - b) The role of support services and the factors that impact their ability to support families with NRPF.
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- **January to June 22** Qualitative interviews with: (i) families with children (n=13); and (ii) support services (n=17) – including advocacy and campaign groups providing various types of support such as food, housing, and legal advice.
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- Rural East England and Northern Ireland - undocumented migrants and those with NRPF undertaking agricultural work for 'food and lodgings'. Typically, in overcrowded accommodation alongside other migrants, or even sleeping in tents, working long hours for little or no money.
- Foodbanks in larger towns in the East of England trying to support waves of refugees:

Obviously, we have language barriers. They turn up en masse to our centres... asking for food and what we've had to do is work with the Red Cross, Care4Calais ... to find a way how we can support these people in a correct and managed way. I would say we've seen over the last 18 months the amount of people that have [NRPF] is probably now 20% of our clientele... At one stage we were getting just vehicles turning up to a [Housing Estate], just along from our [Town], and they were literally just putting four or five people in houses, random, you know, 'You're in 26, you're in 35, you're in 48' and they were just put in there.

Hostile Environments

Immigration and Food Poverty in the UK




Laura Hamilton, Claire Thompson & Wendy Wills

December 2022

Herts Food Poverty Needs Assessment 2021

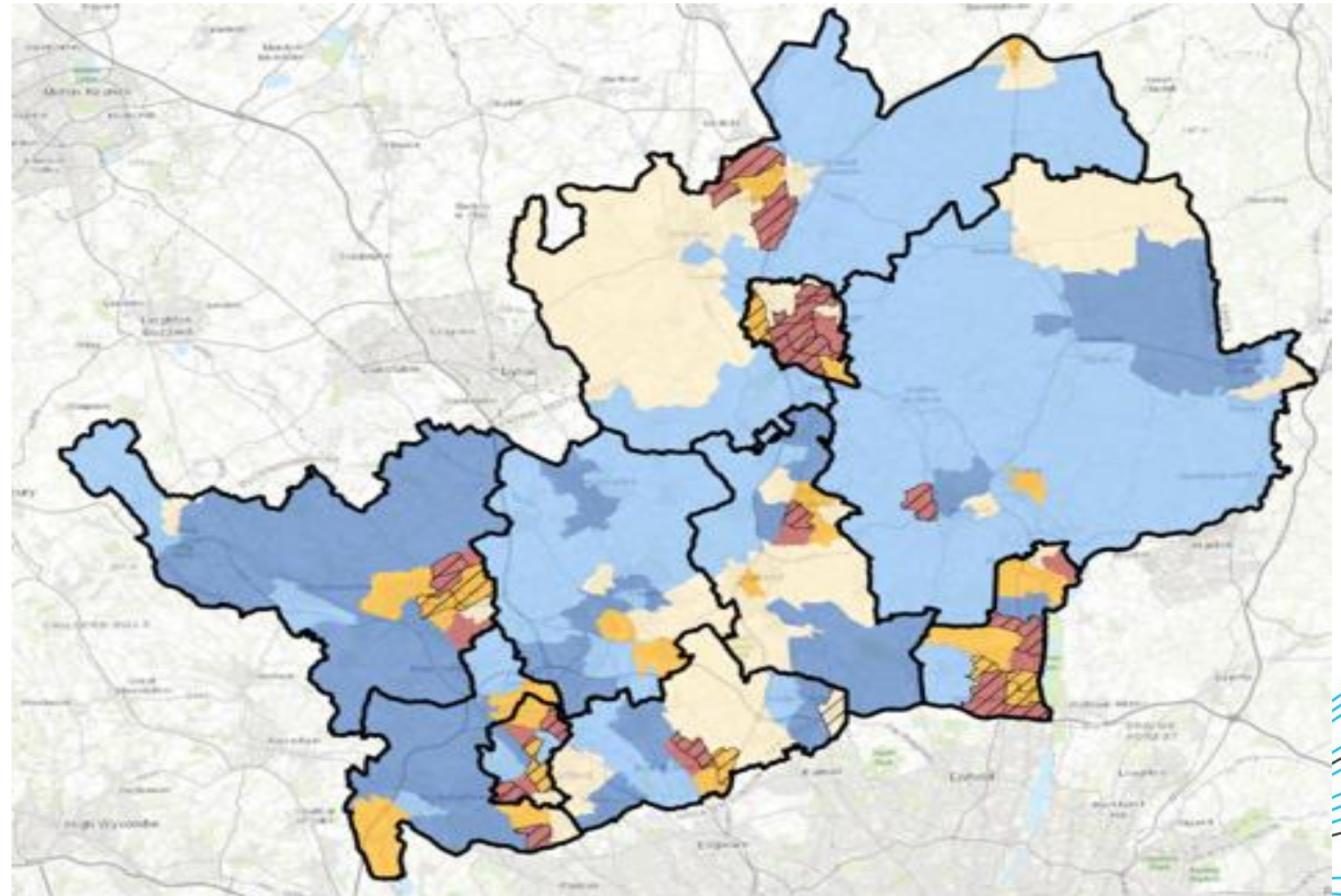
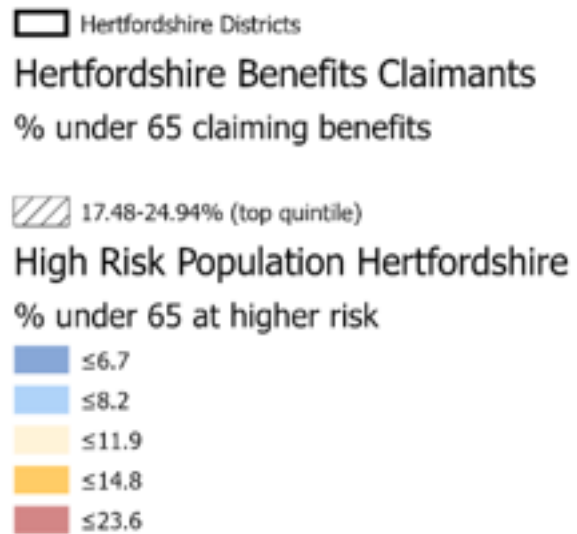
The aim of the Needs Assessment was to review and present the evidence on food poverty and how this impacts the population in Hertfordshire

The objectives were to understand:

- the level and trends around food poverty; the key drivers of food poverty; the existing support available and accessibility of those experiencing food poverty; the challenges facing existing services in delivering local support; the experiences of those affected by food poverty in Hertfordshire.
 - Lastly, to provide example of best practice for addressing food poverty in the UK.
 - The needs assessment goes on to make recommendations based on these findings.
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Example of the Mapping Tool

Map of working age (below 65 years) population at risk for food poverty
Hertfordshire



Thank you

