

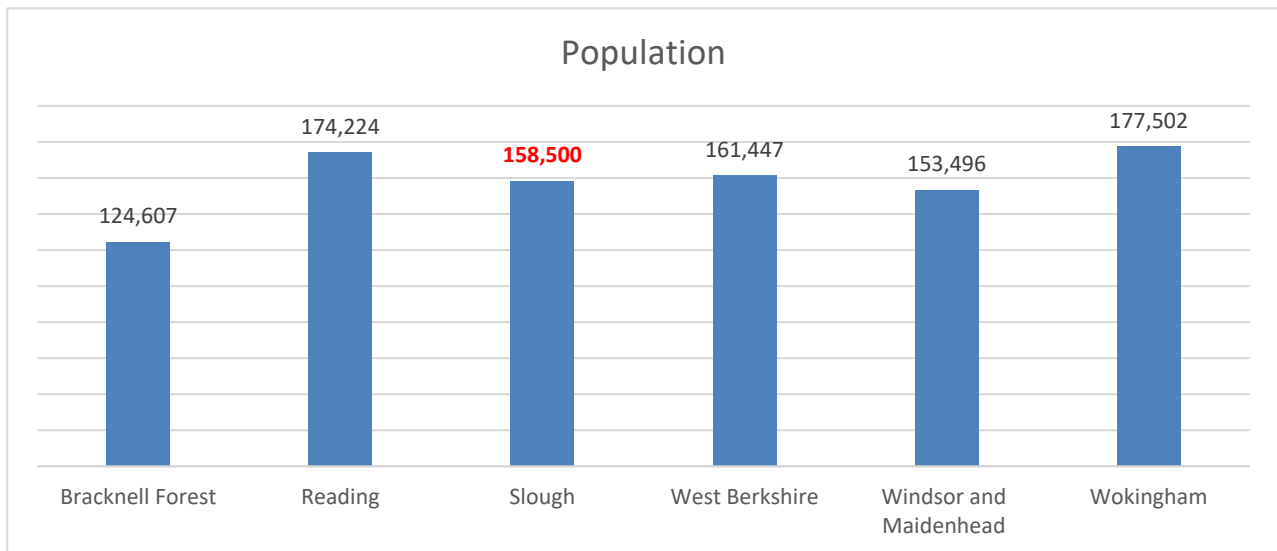
3.1 Insights into Slough

3.2.1 Separate to the pressures from the Covid-19 pandemic and the issues referred to above, Slough operates in a unique environment that presents a challenge to providing services. This section will present some highlights to contextualise the ongoing challenge for the Council.

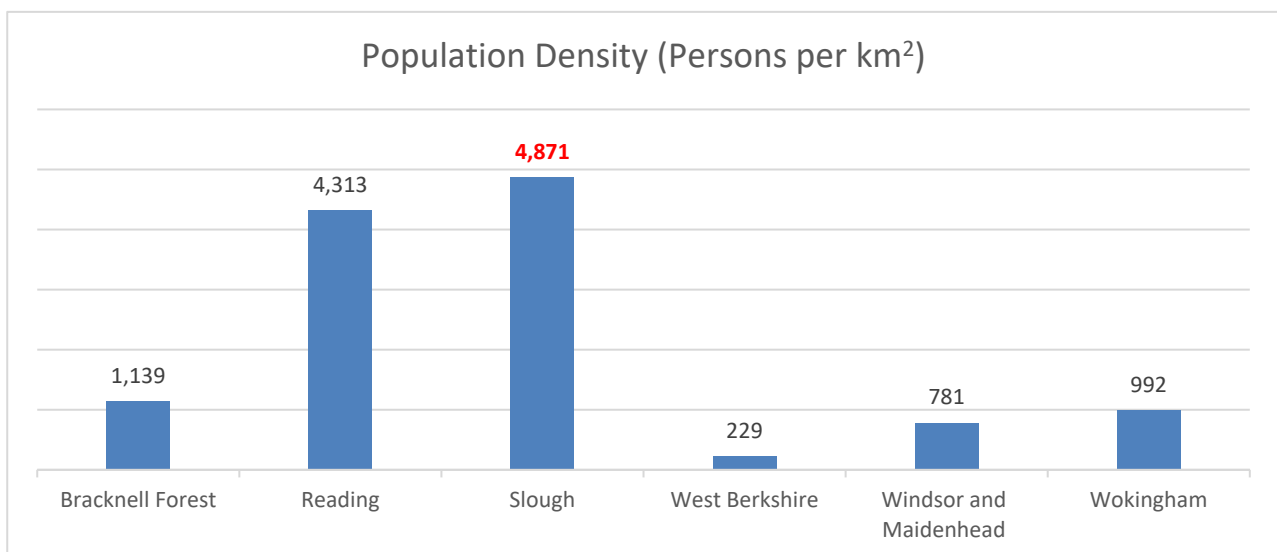
Population

3.2.2 Slough's population continues to grow, reaching 158,500 in the 2021 Census. It is one of the most ethnically and religiously diverse boroughs in the UK, with over 100 different languages spoken in our schools and 44% of residents born outside the UK. In the 2021 census, 46.7% of Slough's population were from Asian ethnic groups and 36% were from white ethnic groups. 29% of the population are Muslim, 32% are Christian, and 20% followed another religion. 27% of the population aged over 3 spoke a language other than English as their main language.

3.2.3 Slough has the third smallest population within Berkshire but is the most densely populated borough by a noticeable margin.



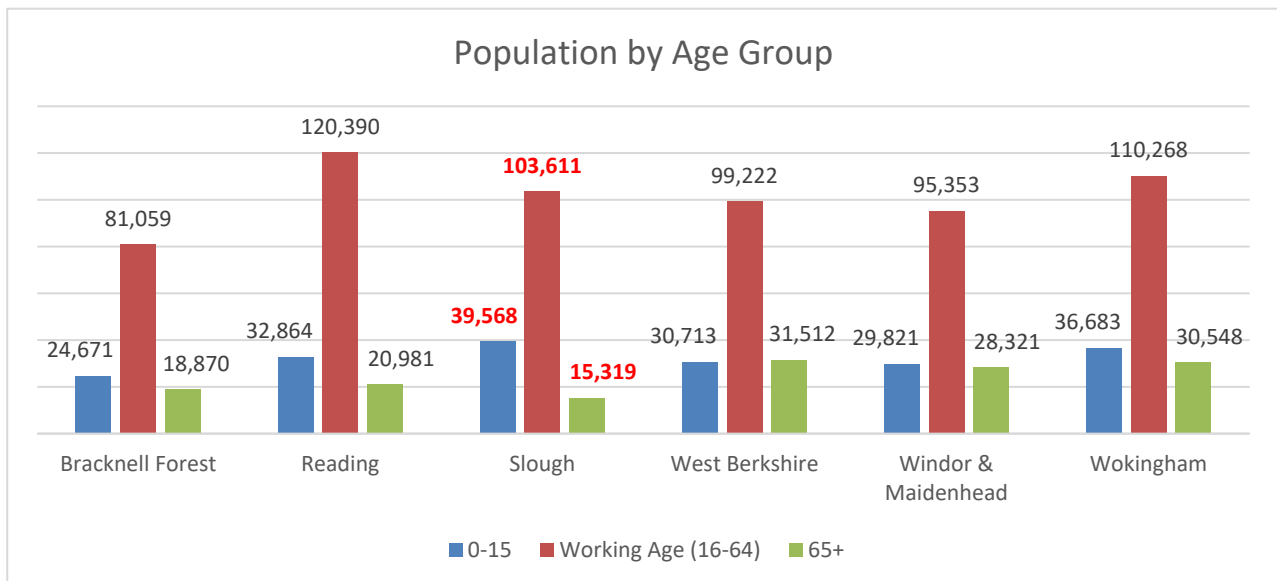
Source: Census 2021 Phase 1 Data, November 2022



Source: Census 2021 Phase 1 Data, June 2022

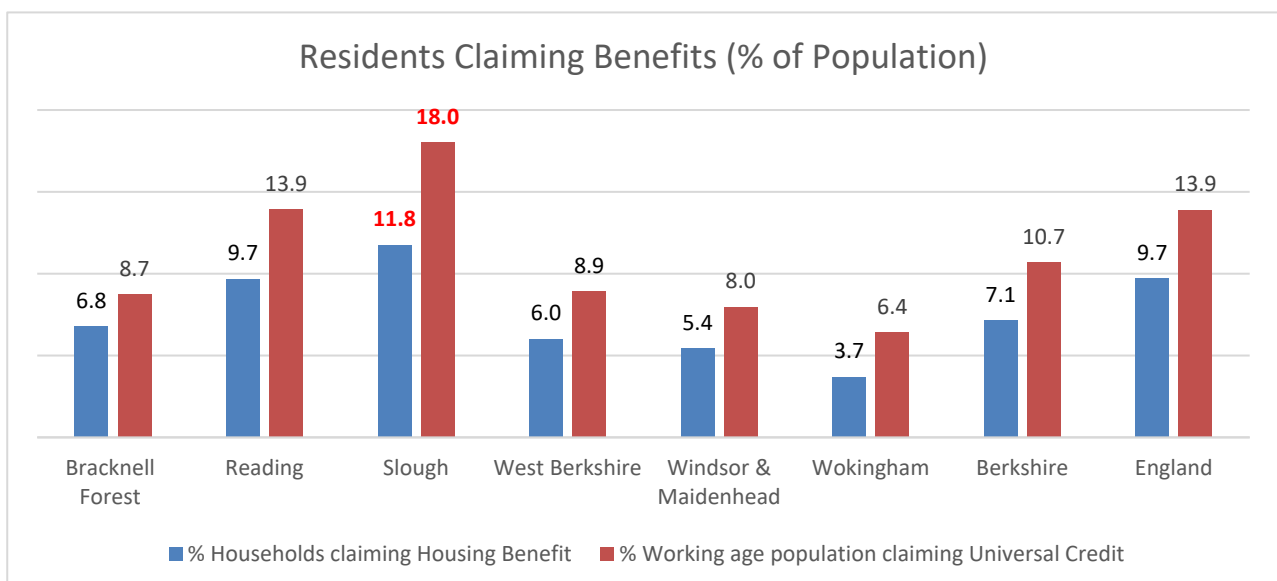
3.2.4 The population structure is younger than the national average and includes many families and a high proportion of children and working age adults. In the 2021 Census, there were 11,774 infants (aged 0 to 4), 35,432 children and young people (aged 5 to 19) and 95,973 adults (aged 20 to 64). While proportionally lower than other areas, the older population is also growing (15,319 adults aged 65+). 51% of Slough's Population is aged 35 and under and 31% is aged 20 and under. Slough has the second highest proportion nationally of under 15s (23.5%) and under 19s (29.8%), second only to Barking and Dagenham.

3.2.5 Within Berkshire, Slough has the third largest number of working age residents (aged 16-64; 65.4% of the population), the highest number of 0-15 year olds (25%), and the lowest number of residents aged 65 or over (9.7%).



Source: Census 2021 Phase 1 Data, November 2022

3.2.6 Compared to local authorities in Berkshire and the average for England, Slough has the highest proportion of residents claiming Universal Credit and Housing Benefits.

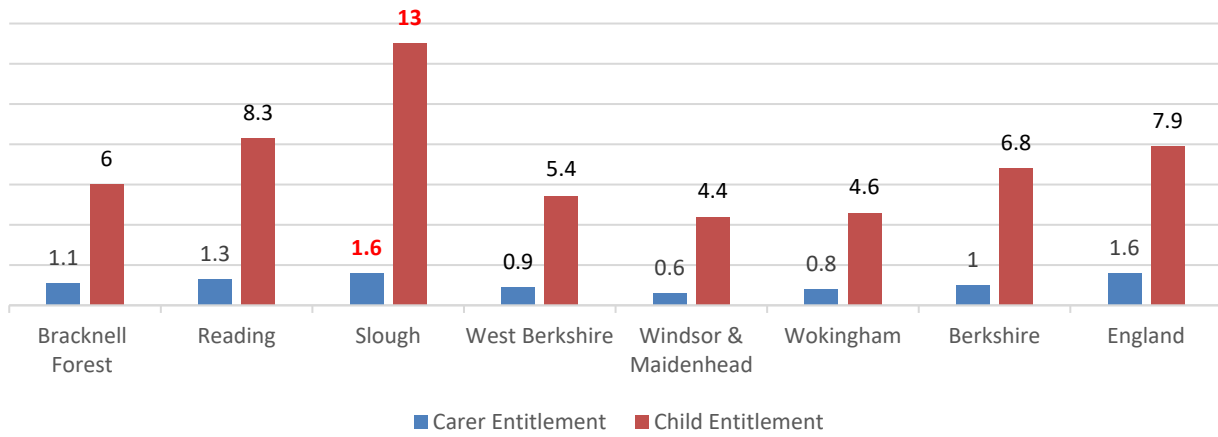


Source: Department for Work and Pensions, May 2022 (Housing Benefit) and July 2022 (Universal Credit)

Deprivation

- 3.2.7 Slough remains the most relatively deprived area within Berkshire, followed by Reading. These two areas also had the highest levels of violent and sexual crimes in 2021/22 with a rate of 49 offences per 1,000 persons. The pandemic affected Slough particularly badly as the average rate of claimants for unemployment-related benefits increased fourfold, with 9% of persons aged 16-64 claiming unemployment support in March 2021. The number of claimants began to decrease from April 2021 to 5.3% in September 2022, but this is still above pre-pandemic levels.
- 3.2.8 Based on the 2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation, Slough has above average levels of deprivation in the overall index of multiple deprivation and in the domains of:
- Crime
 - Education, skills, and training (especially for adults)
 - Health and disability
 - Housing affordability
 - Income (especially affecting older people)
 - Living Environment (e.g., air quality)
- 3.2.9 In the 2021 Census, 57.7% of households (32,701 of 52,423 households) in Slough were deprived in one or more dimensions. 36.6% (19,176) were deprived in one dimension, 16.4% (8,603) were deprived in two dimensions, and 4.7% (2,461) were deprived in three or four dimensions.
- 3.2.10 Life expectancy varies between wards with men expected to live, on average, up to 78.7 years of age and women up to 82.9 (both approximately 1 year less than the England average). Healthy life expectancy for both men and women are lower than the England average, with women being expected to live the last 21.6 years of their life in poor health (compared to 18.7 years for England), and men expected to live the last 17.2 years of life in poor health (compared to 16.1 years for England). Key health and wellbeing challenges for the borough include ensuring a healthy start to life, improving childhood obesity, oral health, smoking, physical inactivity, diabetes, TB, alcohol and substance misuse, mental health issues and early deaths from cardiovascular disease.
- 3.2.11 Compared to the average for Berkshire and England, Slough also has a higher proportion of claims from households for the child and carer's entitlement of Universal Credit.

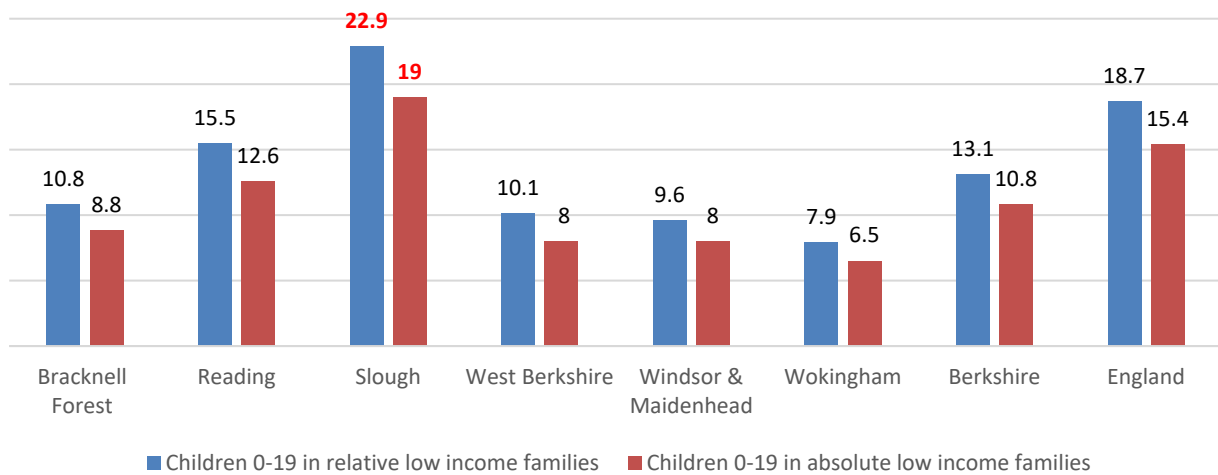
Households on Universal Credit by Type and Criteria (% of Households)



Source: Department for Work and Pensions, August 2022

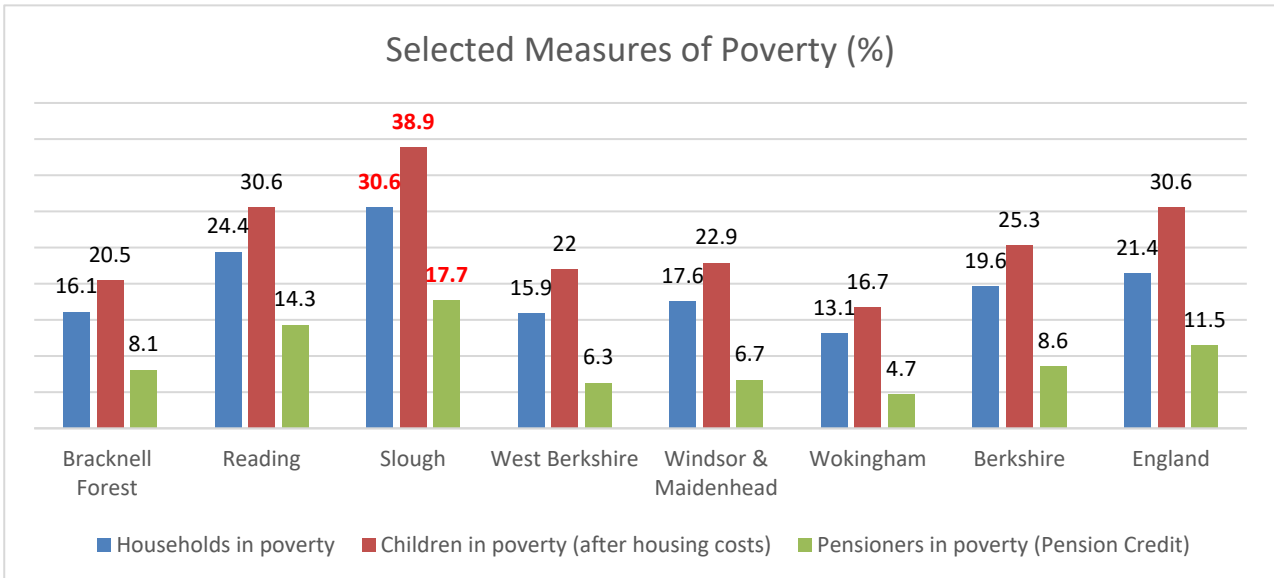
3.2.12 Along with the higher proportions of households claiming child entitlement for Universal Credit and the higher numbers of lone parent households in Slough, there are higher proportions of children (aged 0-19) in low income households.

Children in Low Income Families (% of Children aged 0-19)



Source: Department for Work and Pensions, 2020/21

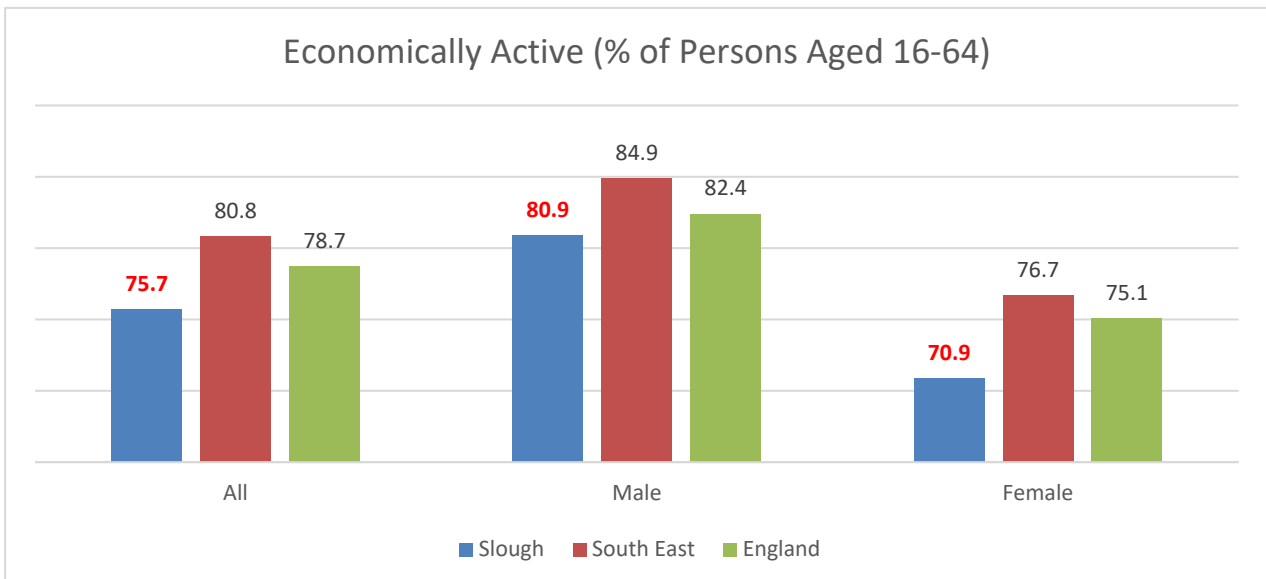
3.2.13 The proportion of other households and residents in Slough classed as being in poverty is also high when compared to neighbouring authorities and the average for England.



Sources: Office for National Statistics, 2013/14 (Households in poverty); End Child Poverty, 2017/18 (Children in poverty after housing costs); Department for Work and Pensions, November 2021 (Pensioners in poverty/Pension Credit).

Economic Activity

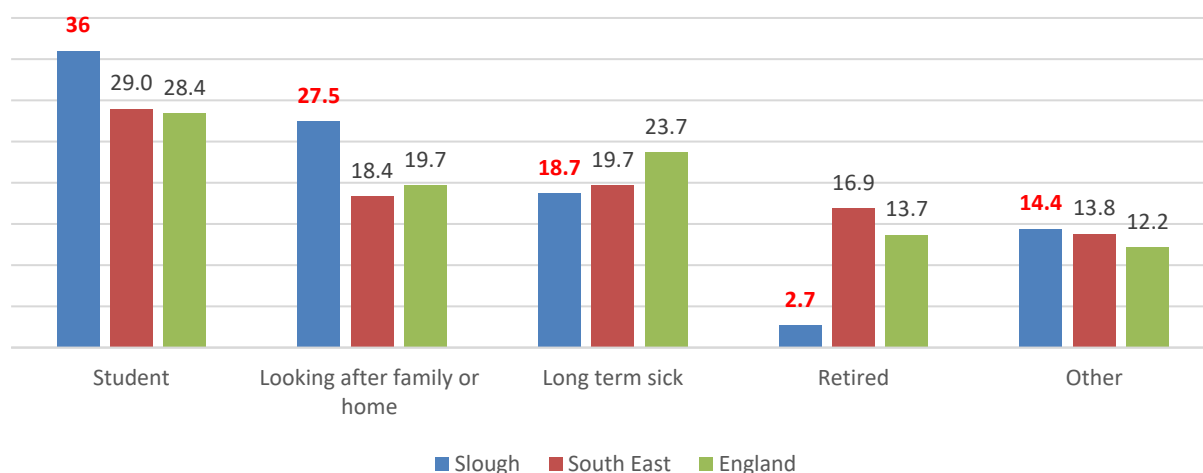
3.2.14 The number of economically inactive people in Slough increased by 47% from the 2011 to 2021 Census. Slough’s economically active population is lower than the averages for the South East and England. This is the case for males and females, with the female economically active rate gap larger than that for males. This economic activity gap will be a driver of low income and poverty in the borough.



Source: Office for National Statistics Annual Population Survey/Berkshire Data Observatory, December 2021

3.2.15 Slough has a relatively high proportion of residents (aged 16-64) who are economically inactive due to caring responsibilities at home and for wider family members.

Reasons for Economic Inactivity (% of Persons Aged 16-64)



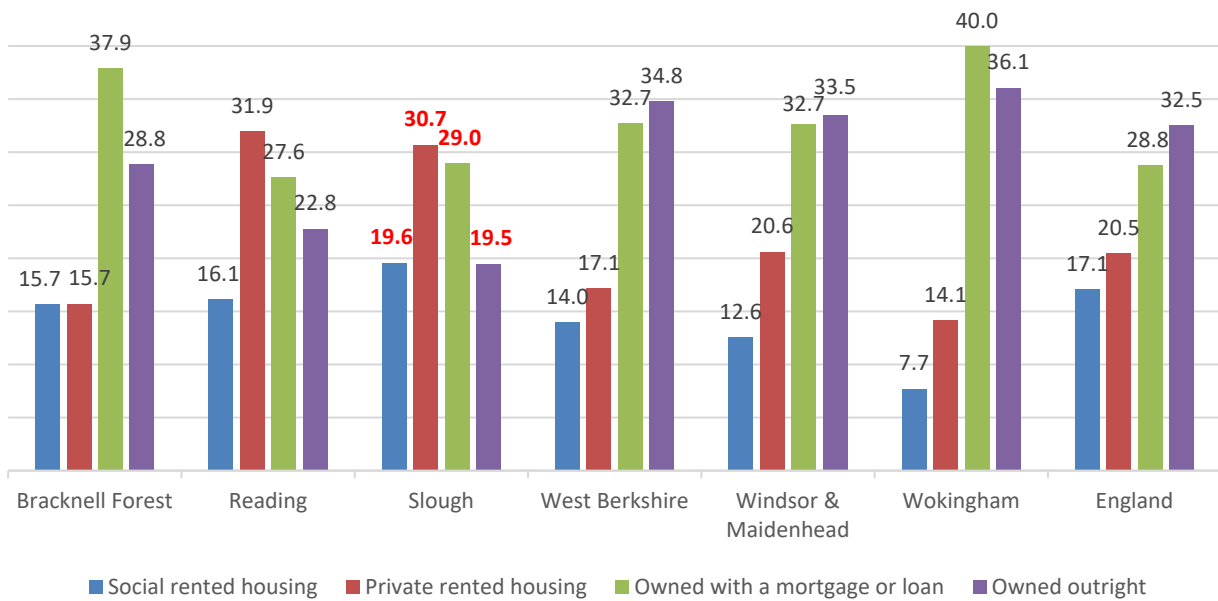
Source: Office for National Statistics Annual Population Survey/Berkshire Data Observatory, December 2021

3.2.16 Slough residents were relatively heavily reliant on government support during the pandemic. For example, In April 2021, 23.0% of the working aged population in Slough were claiming government-based benefits due to the pandemic (a combination of 10.9% on the Job Retention Scheme (JRS), 6.2% on the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) and a 5.9% unemployment claimant count increase since March 2020).

3.2.17 Whilst the average house price in Slough (£355,084) is the lowest in Berkshire, it is higher than the England average (£274,615) and the relatively higher levels of poverty and low income in Slough means that housing affordability is low. The average house price in Slough is 8.99 times the average earnings.

3.2.18 Compared to neighbouring authorities in Berkshire, Slough has a lower proportion of residents who own their own homes and a higher rate of socially or privately rented accommodation (except for Reading). The level of socially rented accommodation (defined as being rented from a Local Authority, Housing Association or Registered Social Landlord) is particularly high when compared to neighbouring authorities and the average across England.

Type of Home Occupier (% of Households)

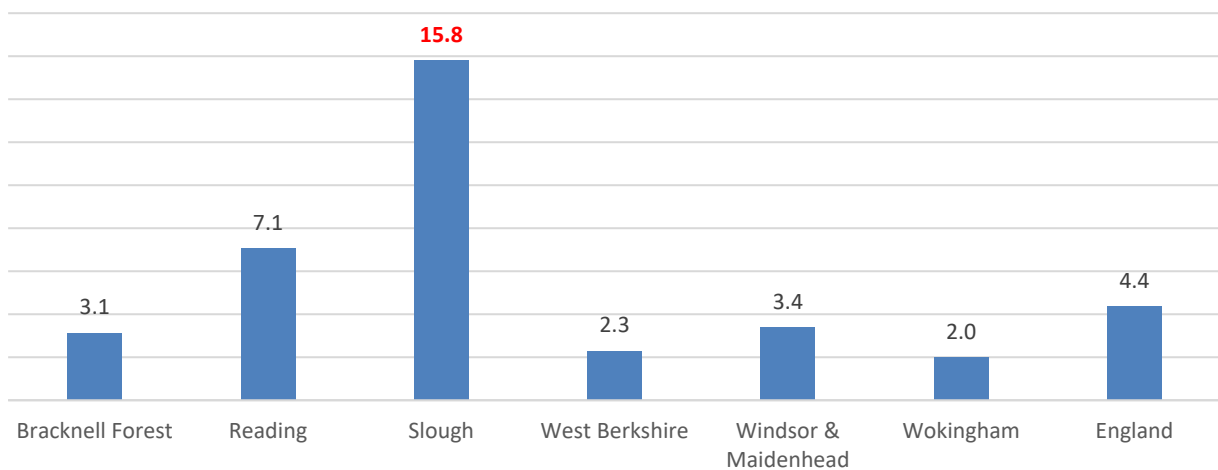


Source: Census 2021 Phase 1 Data, January 2023

3.2.19 Slough has 56,773 dwellings and the highest average household size in the country (2.99 people per household).

3.2.20 Slough has a significantly higher level of overcrowded housing compared to neighbouring authorities and the average for England. A household is defined as overcrowded if there is at least one room fewer than needed for household requirements using standard definitions. The number of households consisting of 7 people increased by 49% from 678 in 2011 to 1,011 in 2021 and the number of households consisting of 8 or more people increased by 92% from 556 in 2011 to 1,067 in 2021.

Overcrowded Housing (% of Households)



Source: Census 2021 Phase 1 Data, January 2023

Core Spending Power

- 3.2.21 The Core Spending Power is a measure used by the Government to assess an authority's ability to spend based on Settlement Funding Assessment, grants and Council Tax assumptions. In comparison to neighbouring authorities in Berkshire, the Council's measure of Core Spending Power (adjusted to remove Council Tax) is the highest in the region.
- 3.2.22 This will partly be due to the way grants such as the new Services Grant and Social Care and Improved Better Care fund are allocated based on the statistics highlighted above. This results in the Council receiving higher allocations than neighbouring authorities where such pressures are less severe in comparison. These statistics and ongoing pressures in Slough are further evidenced by the lower amount of reward-based funding received by the Council, such as the New Homes Bonus, compared to neighbouring authorities.