


Lambeth


Lambeth Early Action Partnership

Live births in Lambeth: analysis of local data



ANALYSIS OF LOCAL FERTILITY RATES IN LAMBETH

INTRODUCTION

The fertility rate in England decreased in 2020 for the fifth consecutive year (Office for National Statistics, 2021). It has been broadly understood that the Lambeth fertility rate has been following a similar trend for a number of years.

Home to over 300,000 residents, Lambeth is one of the most densely populated areas of the country with a large population of young adults (Lambeth demography factsheet, 2017).

2015 migration data from ONS demonstrated the population in Lambeth to be growing through a combination of migration and natural change, such as live births. 75% of Lambeth's population growth in 2015 was accounted for by live births. Analysis of this data estimated that Lambeth's population could rise by around 31,000 people by 2026. However, if the number of live births have consistently declined since, this prediction may not materialise.

The current analysis seeks to understand fertility rates in Lambeth:

1. Is there a decline in fertility rates locally, and if so, how marked is this?
2. What does the fertility rate trend look like for the area of Lambeth supported by Lambeth Early Action Partnership (LEAP)?
3. Does the data reflect a similar trend to other London boroughs and the England average?
4. Is the trend in fertility rates different between age groups?

KEY MESSAGES

- The fertility rate in Lambeth has been decreasing for a number of years. Since 2010/11, there has been an overall 42% decline in the Lambeth fertility rate.
- In the financial year of 2020/21, Lambeth's fertility rate saw a marked drop - 14% lower than in 2020.
- At 46%, the overall decline since 2011 was slightly greater in the LEAP area of Lambeth, than the non-LEAP areas.
- In 2020/21, the fertility rate decreased by 21% in the LEAP area and 12% in the non-LEAP areas of Lambeth - demonstrating a 9% greater decline in LEAP area that year. There was no such notable difference between the two areas for previous years.
- The fertility rate in Lambeth has followed a similar trend to that of England and similar areas of London; however, the absolute change over time was greater for Lambeth and Southwark than other areas presented, particularly Croydon.
- The fertility rate decreased across every 5-year age group in Lambeth since 2010/11 but the decrease was more notable for some age groups than others: there were 83% fewer births to women from Lambeth aged 15-19 in 2020/21 compared with 2010/11.

Further work will seek to understand whether the local fertility rate trend is different between demographic groups, and explore trends in birth outcomes such as high and low birth weight.

DEFINITIONS

- The dataset used for the local element of this analysis was the SEFT (Secure Electronic File Transfer) registered births dataset.
- For this analysis, data was included for all registered live births from 2010/11 onwards to women who were residents in Lambeth at the time of birth registration. All years analysed are based on financial year April to March.
- The **general fertility rate** (GFR) is the number of live births per 1,000 women in a population aged 15-44.

FERTILITY RATES IN LAMBETH

International, national and regional fertility rates have been in steady decline over the past decade. Lambeth's fertility rate trend is no different. In fact, when comparing Lambeth to national data, the decline in Lambeth in recent years appears to be notably sharper. Nationally, the ONS reported 2020 birth rates to be the lowest since records began.

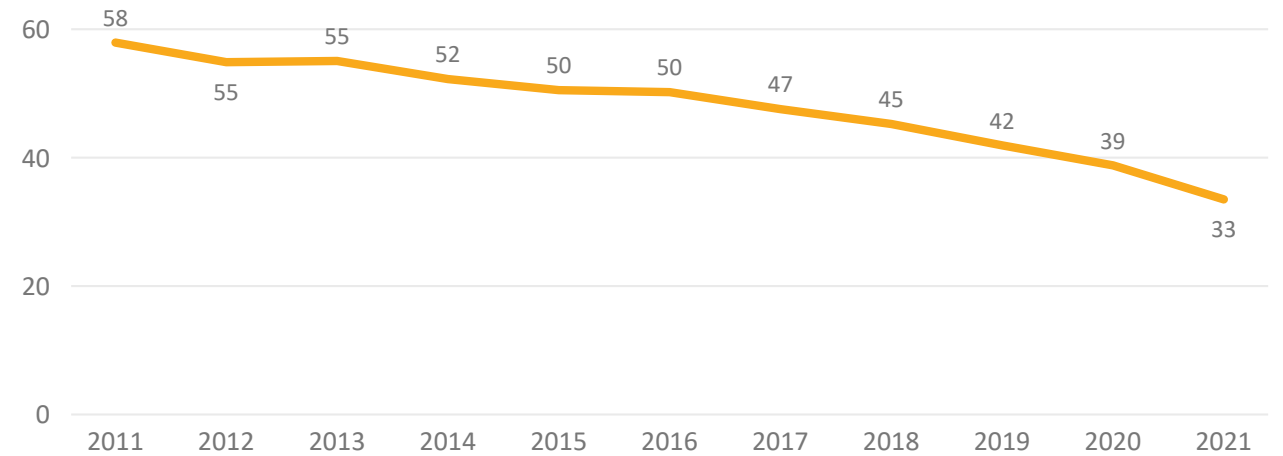
The chart on the top right shows the general fertility rate (GFR) per 1,000 women aged 15-44 in Lambeth since 2010/11, by financial year. A steady decline has been evident for some time, with a sharper drop from 2018/19 onwards.

The column chart on the bottom right quantifies the year-on-year change. In the year 2020/21 the GFR decreased by almost 14% in Lambeth. Below, the gauge displays the total percent change in the GFR since 2010/11; as of 2020/21, this is -42%.

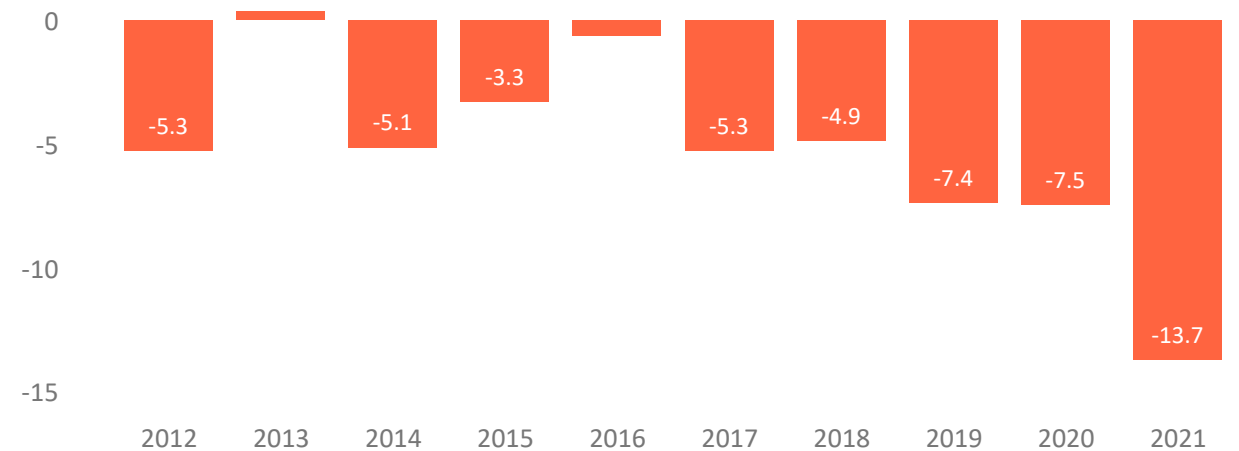
The ONS propose the following reasons for falling fertility rates in recent years: improved access to contraception; the reduction in mortality rates of children aged under 5 years, resulting in women having fewer babies and lower levels of fertility; or difficulties conceiving because of postponement in childbearing.

However, there may be other factors to consider when looking at local Lambeth data, such as migration, the cost of living in inner London, housing availability and a changing urban environment.

Annual GFR, Lambeth



Annual GFR year-on-year % change, Lambeth



Total % change in GFR since 2011 to most recent year, Lambeth

-42.28

LOCAL FERTILITY RATES IN LEAP AND NON-LEAP AREAS OF LAMBETH

Lambeth Early Acon Partnership (LEAP) delivers services in parts of Lambeth to give children in the area aged 0-3 years a better start. Born in 2015, LEAP is made up of parents, early years practitioners, nurseries, children's centres, the National Children's Bureau, Lambeth Council, NHS trusts, community organisations and several local charities.

Local fertility rates in Lambeth and specifically the LEAP area are important to observe in order for the programme to identify how many families it should expect to reach, and to understand the wider social context for families that may contribute to any observed trends.

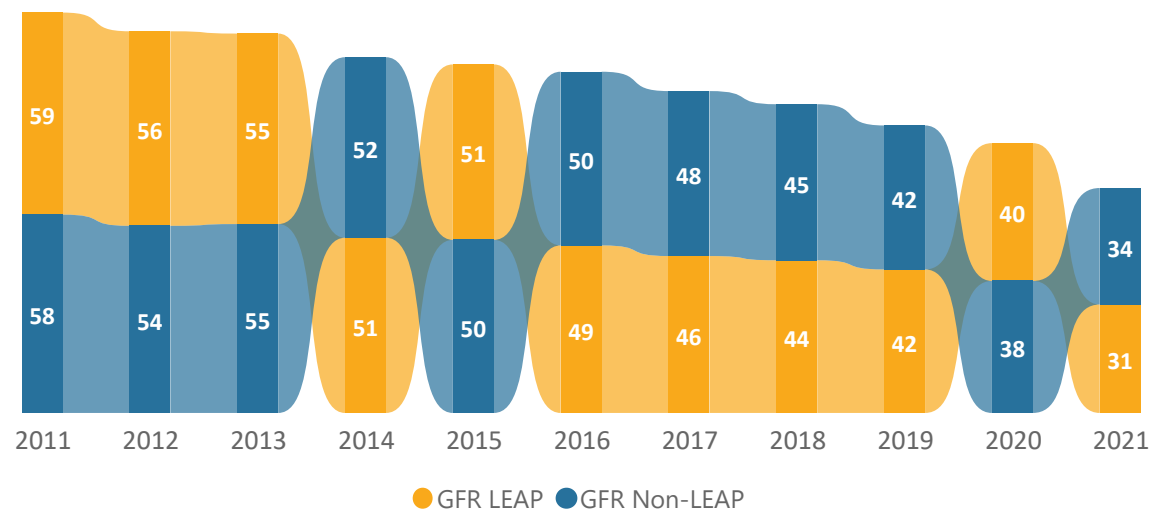
There has been a consistent annual reduction of the GFR in both LEAP and non-LEAP areas of Lambeth since 2017. Before 2017, reductions can be seen for most years, although this was at times either a marginal increase (by 1% 2013, Non-LEAP) or a slight increase (2015, LEAP; 2016, Non-LEAP).

Across all 10 years from 2010/11 to 2020/21, there was a greater reduction of the GFR in the LEAP area (46%) compared with non-LEAP (41%) areas of Lambeth. This annual decrease was most evident for both geographies in 2020/21, with the percentage decrease being almost double in the LEAP area compared with Non-LEAP areas of Lambeth.

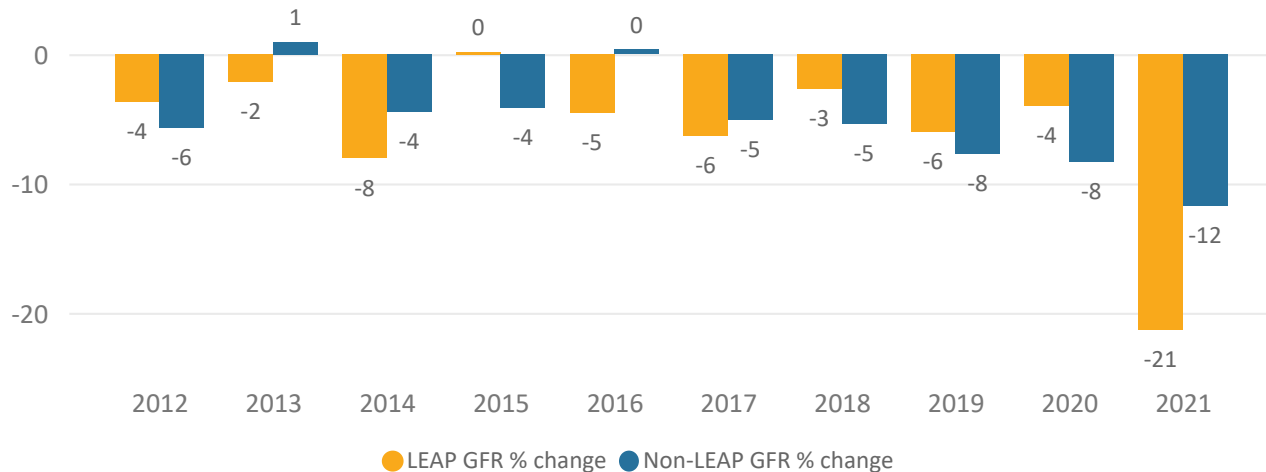
Total % change in GFR since 2011 to most recent year, LEAP and Non-LEAP areas of Lambeth



Annual GFR, LEAP and Non-LEAP areas of Lambeth



Annual GFR year-on-year percent change, LEAP and Non-LEAP areas of Lambeth



FERTILITY RATES IN LAMBETH - QUARTERLY TRENDS

The consistent annual reduction of the GFR in Lambeth appeared to start in 2015/16 (financial year). To explore this in more detail, quarterly data since quarter 1 of 2015/16 is presented in two charts.

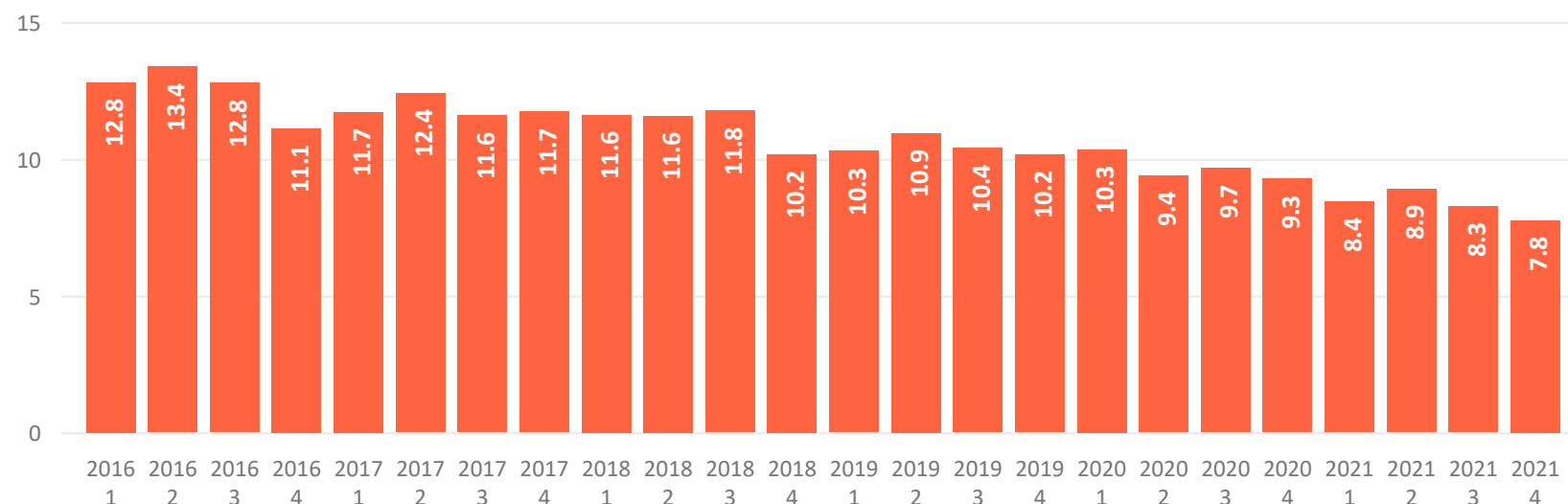
The chart on the top right suggests there is more fluctuation in the quarterly GFR in Lambeth compared with the the annual trend.

For every year but 2019/20, the quarter with the greatest GFR is quarter 2 - generally, more babies are born to Lambeth residents between the months of July and September compared with other quarters. This continued to be the case in the most recent year (2020/21). The GFR in Lambeth saw a consistent reduction with each year and across collective quarters since 2016, and a more pronounced decline throughout 2020/21. However, there is little difference in the quarterly pattern compared with previous years.

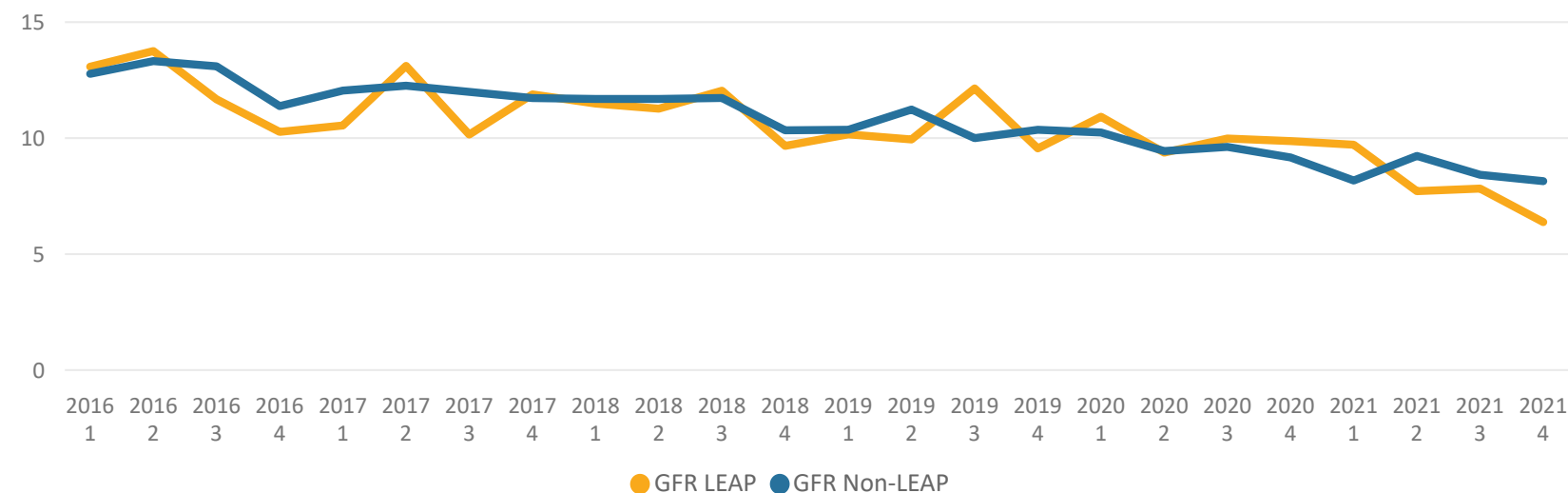
When comparing the GFR for LEAP and non-LEAP areas of Lambeth on the bottom right, the quarterly pattern looks slightly different for the geographically smaller area of LEAP. Quarterly fluctuation is more evident in the LEAP area, with a sharper quarterly decline in quarter 2 and quarter 4 of 2020/21 compared with a more consistent trend in the non-LEAP areas of Lambeth.

Given that the GFR in Lambeth fell most sharply in the year of 2020/21, but the quarterly pattern for that year remains similar to previous years, it is difficult to draw any conclusions about factors occurring more recently that could have impacted the GFR. A further year of data could help us to understand if this fall has continued and whether the quarterly patterns have changed in any way.

Quarterly GFR, Lambeth



Quarterly GFR, LEAP and Non-LEAP areas of Lambeth



FERTILITY RATES - REGIONAL COMPARISONS

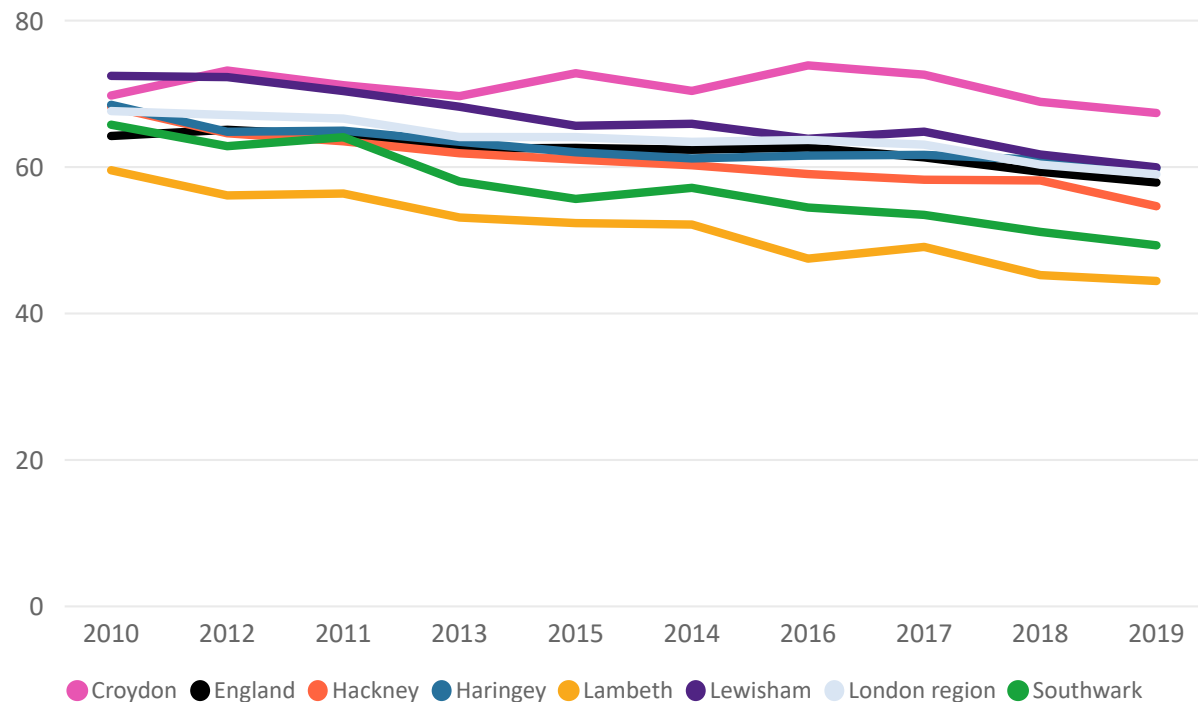
The Fingers tool from the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) publishes the GFR for each local authority in England, as well as national and regional data. At the time of writing, the most recent year of available data was 2019.

Local authorities can be grouped with their 'closest statistical neighbours', which are local authorities with similar population characteristics. This enables a meaningful comparison of population indicators between areas. Lambeth's statistical neighbours, when looking at children's data using the children's services statistical neighbour benchmarking tool (CSSNBT), are: Croydon, Hackney, Haringey, Lewisham and Southwark.

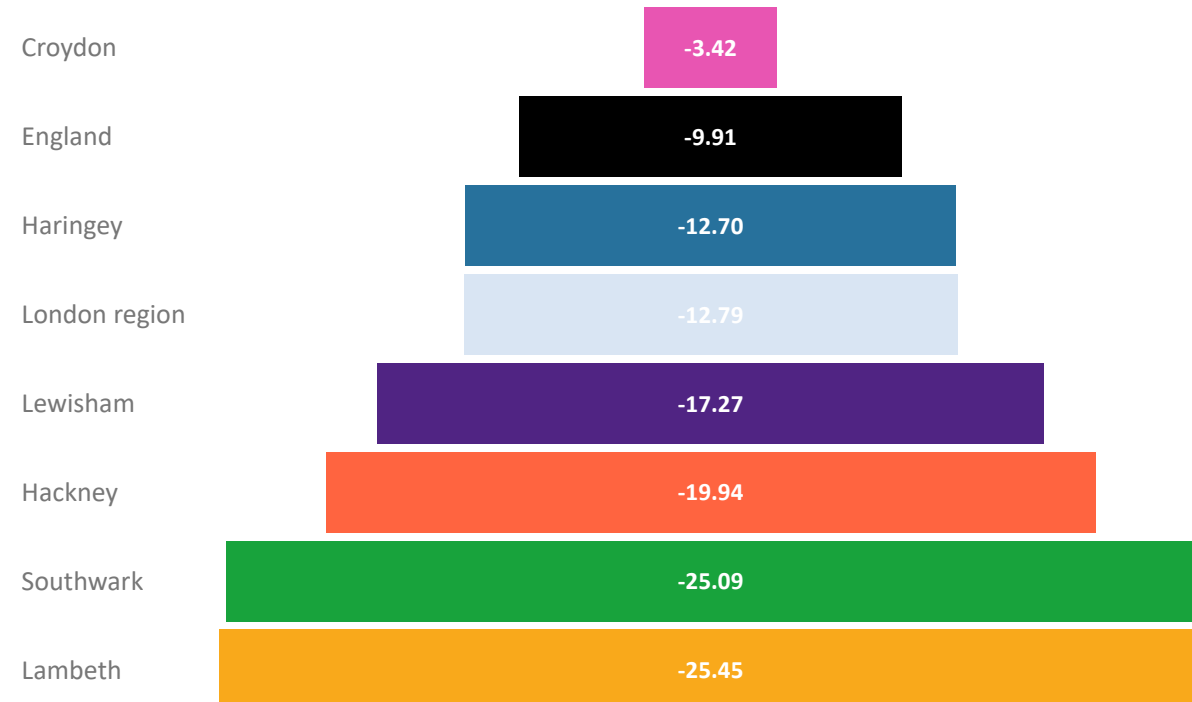
The chart on the left presents the GFR for each area of interest up to 2019. Lambeth had the lowest birth rate in 2019, compared with statistical neighbours, and a lower GFR than the London and England benchmarks. There is a similar downward trend for each area presented, apart from Croydon where the trend appears more stable.

The chart on the right presents the total percentage change in GFR between 2010-2019 for each area. Lambeth has seen the greatest decrease in GFR in comparison to its statistical neighbours and the London and England benchmarks. In contrast, Croydon's GFR has remained relatively stable over time and had a smaller percentage decrease than the England average.

Annual GFR, Lambeth's statistical neighbours with England and London benchmarking



Total % change in GFR 2011-2019, Lambeth's statistical neighbours with England and London benchmarking



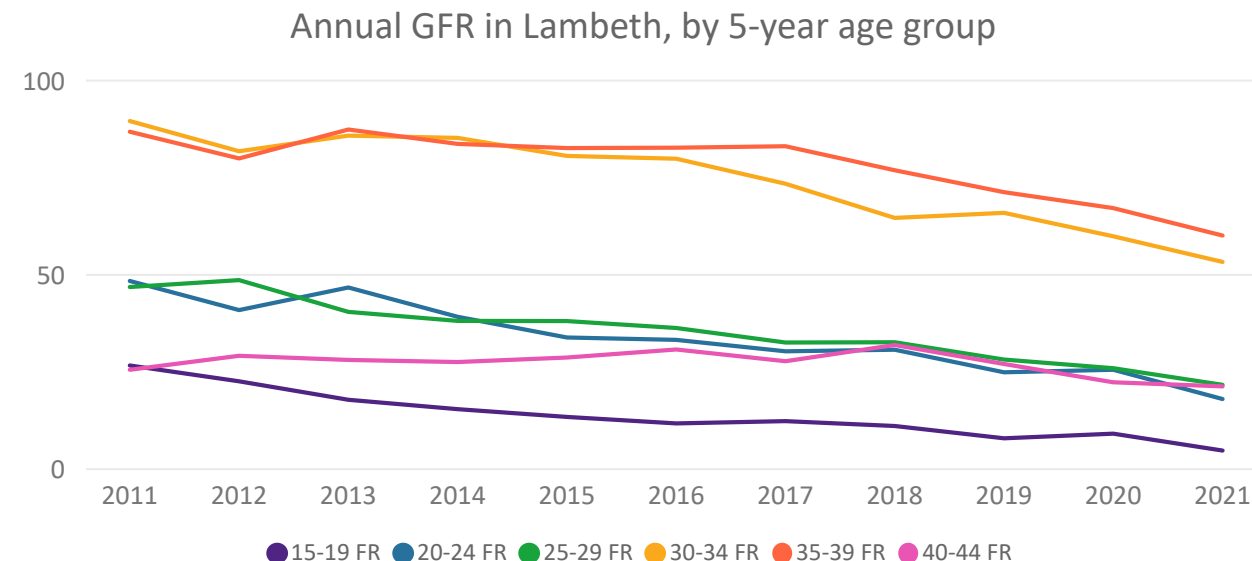
FERTILITY RATES - AGE OF MOTHER AT BIRTH

Nationally, the GFR decreased across all age groups in 2020 (ONS). Likewise, in Lambeth the GFR has decreased for women in every 5-year age group (between ages 15-44) from 2010/11 to 2020/21. That said, there was a greater decline for some age groups compared with others.

The chart on the bottom left shows the greatest decrease in GFR was for teenagers: there were 83% fewer births to women from Lambeth aged 15-19 in 2020/21 compared with 2010/11. This mirrors the consistent decline of the GFR in younger women nationally (ONS). Conversely, there was a much smaller decrease of 17% in the 40-44 age group for the same period.

The chart on the top right shows the GFR trend over time by each 5-year age group. In 2010/11, more babies were born to women from Lambeth in the 30-34 age group than any other. In 2020/21, the age group with highest GFR in Lambeth had shifted to those aged 35-39.

On the bottom right, the mean age of women from Lambeth at the time of birth is presented. In 2020/21, the mean age of women having babies in Lambeth was 33, this is an increase of two years compared with 10 years previous.



Total % change in GFR since 2011 to most recent year, Lambeth, by 5-year age group



● 15-19 total % cha... ● 20-24 total % c... ● 25-29 total ... ● 30-34 total ... ● 35-39 total ... ● 40-44 total ...

Mean age of Lambeth resident mothers at time of birth, by financial year

