WPI STRATEGY

APSE Social Value, Public Procurement and Commercialisation Network

From local need to social value

Using the Social Value Need Index

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About the Social Value Commission

An independent body, launched in February 2026, exploring how private infrastructure and investment projects can create social value for local residents across the UK.

Established by senior leaders from

VodafoneThree	Pension Insurance Corporation	E.ON UK
Mitie	Knight Dragon	The Premier League
Barratt Redrow	Mott MacDonald	Heathrow

Research this year

8,025 UK adults polled by JL Partners

4 focus groups, in Hastings, Leeds, Milton Keynes and Anglesey

5 regional roundtables, held with combined authorities and local partners

WPI Strategy, part of Pagefield Group, provides the secretariat and built the Index.

Social value still lacks a shared way to measure local need

“There’s no agreed level of that data. So you could actually have two really great responses that would come up using different forms of data, tackling different areas of need.”

Participant, Social Value Commission regional roundtables

Central government

From 1 January 2027, PPN 026 focuses social value in contracts of £1 million and above on good jobs and skills.

Councils

Keep a broader brief across social, economic and environmental outcomes, and choose what to prioritise in each place.

Sources: Social Value Commission roundtables, 2026; Cabinet Office, PPN 026 The Social Value Model (August 2026).

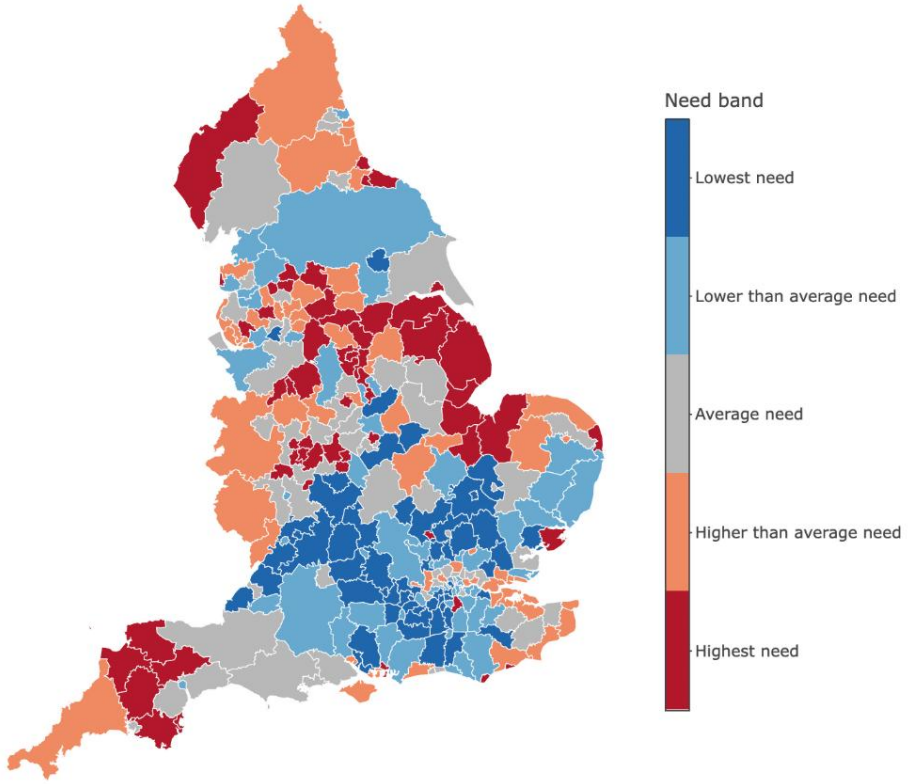
A common basis for measuring local needs

296 local authority districts in England, plus regions and combined authorities

90 metrics, all built from published data

10 investment pillars, equally weighted

Free and open-source, with each metric's publisher and source listed



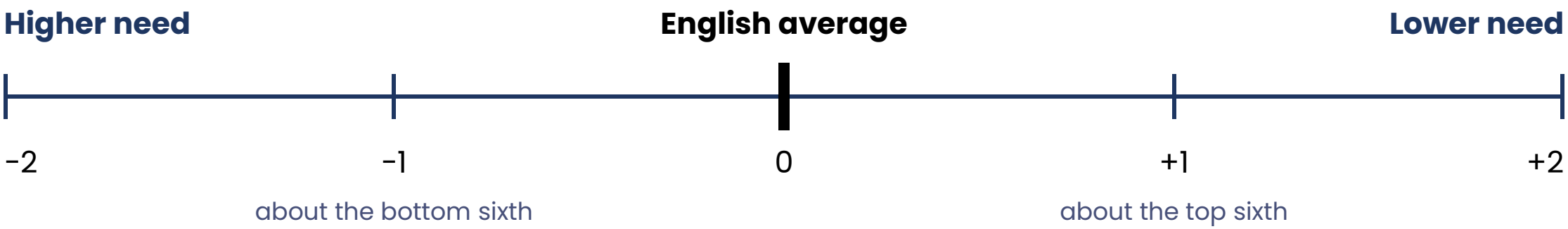
Map: overall score by local authority district. Source: Social Value Need Index, Map tab.

Ten investment pillars

Pillar	What it covers
Education and skills	Educational outcomes and qualifications
Employment and business growth	Employment conditions and business activity
Health	Health outcomes and wider health conditions
Housing	Affordability, housing conditions and demand
Environment	Environmental conditions, flood risk and access to green space
Energy sources	Household energy conditions and renewable energy provision
Digital connectivity	Broadband and mobile connectivity
Transport	Access to services and transport connections
Sport and leisure	Facilities, participation and provision
Culture	Cultural assets, jobs, provision and spending

90 metrics across the ten pillars. The Data Sources page lists each one with its publisher and source.

Zero is the English average



Each metric is standardised so that zero is the English average. Higher scores mean stronger performance and lower social value need.

Pillar scores average their metrics, and the overall score weights the pillars equally. Averages sit closer to zero, so the overall score has a standard deviation of about 0.2.

Scale shown for a single metric. Source: Social Value Need Index, method notes.

What the Index lets you do

Compare	Select districts, combined authorities or regions and compare them pillar by pillar
Map	Map the overall score or any pillar across England
Build Your Own Index	Choose the metrics relevant to a programme, set their weights and compare the resulting scores across areas
Ward ranking	See variation inside a district on six of the ten pillars
Data Sources	Each metric's publisher, period and a link to the source

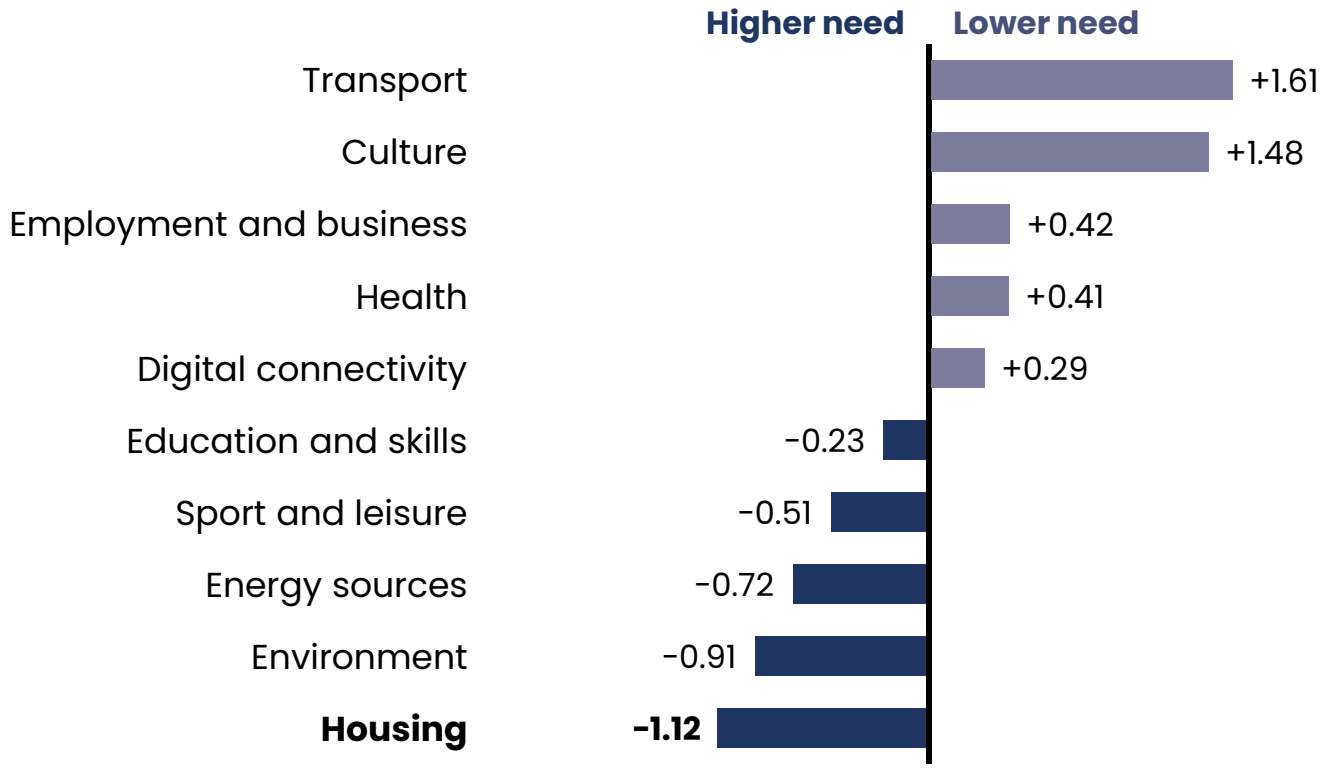
Camden looks average on its headline score

+0.07

Overall score, close to the English average. Rank 109 of 296.

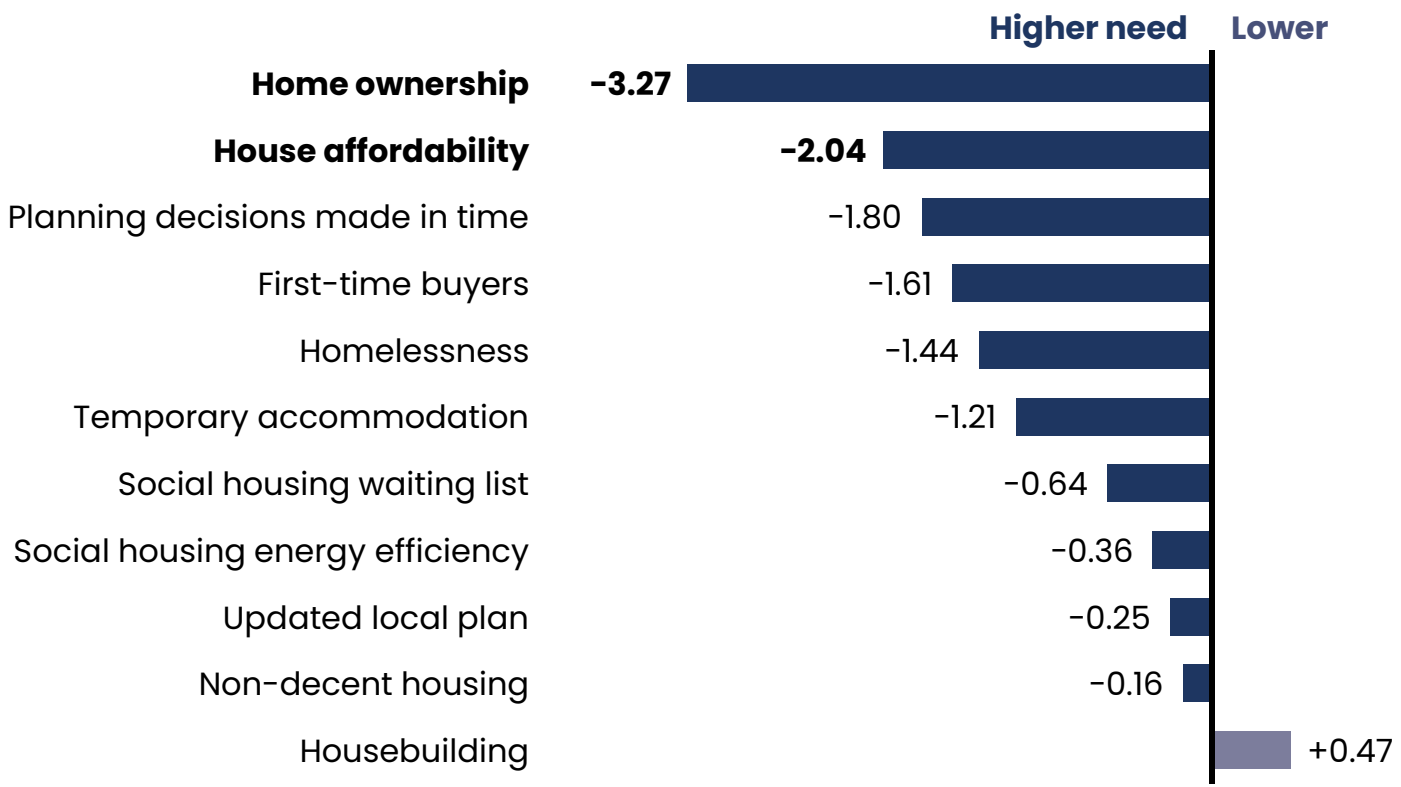
-1.12

Housing score. The sixth-highest measured Housing need among 296 districts.



Camden pillar scores, one name shortened. Lower scores indicate greater measured social value need. Source: Social Value Need Index.

What drives Camden's Housing score



A council commissioning housing work, or an investor planning an affordable housing or homelessness programme, could test its response against the area's wider housing needs.

Housebuilding is the one housing measure above the English average.

Camden Housing measures, names shortened. Lower scores indicate greater measured need. Source: Social Value Need Index.

Same headline score, opposite needs

Newham

−0.18 overall score, rank 229 of 296

Greatest needs

Housing	**−1.43**	rank 293
Sport and leisure	**−0.84**	rank 295
Environment	**−0.82**	rank 281

Strongest pillars

Transport	**+1.15**	rank 16
Digital connectivity	**+0.63**	rank 11

North Norfolk

−0.18 overall score, rank 230 of 296

Greatest needs

Digital connectivity	**−1.55**	rank 286
Transport	**−0.66**	rank 255
Education and skills	**−0.61**	rank 286

Strongest pillars

Energy sources	**+1.50**	rank 7
Culture	**+0.52**	rank 30

Pillar scores. Lower scores indicate greater measured social value need. Ranks out of 296 districts, where 1 is the lowest need.
Source: Social Value Need Index, Full ranking.

The Index identifies need at a high level

What it gives you

A starting point for each place, and an area baseline that can be tracked over several years.

What sits alongside it

A council's own data, qualitative assessments, community engagement and the knowledge of local VCSE organisations.

One works contract will not move a district's home ownership score. Delivery is measured through the contract.

Residents back investment but few feel the benefit

56% are in favour of new investment and infrastructure in their area

20% say recent projects made their day-to-day lives better

Over 60% report no real impact

The local council was the organisation people most often trusted to deliver local investment.

The Commission asks government to

- Empower local authorities to prioritise their own social value needs
- Create an open-source, government-endorsed tool to assess local need
- Put representative community voices at the heart of delivery
- Require combined authorities, or councils outside one, to publish live social value dashboards

Sources: Social Value Commission polling by JL Partners, 8,025 UK adults, 3 to 27 March 2026; Social Value Commission policy paper.

Limits, and where to find the Index

Limits

- England only, because many official statistics differ across the four nations
- Inputs are the latest available at launch, so they come from different years
- A relative measure, with zero as the English average
- The ward view covers six of the ten pillars

Where to find it

socialvaluecommission.co.uk /social-value-need-index

Free and open-source, with a short instruction video on the same page.

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