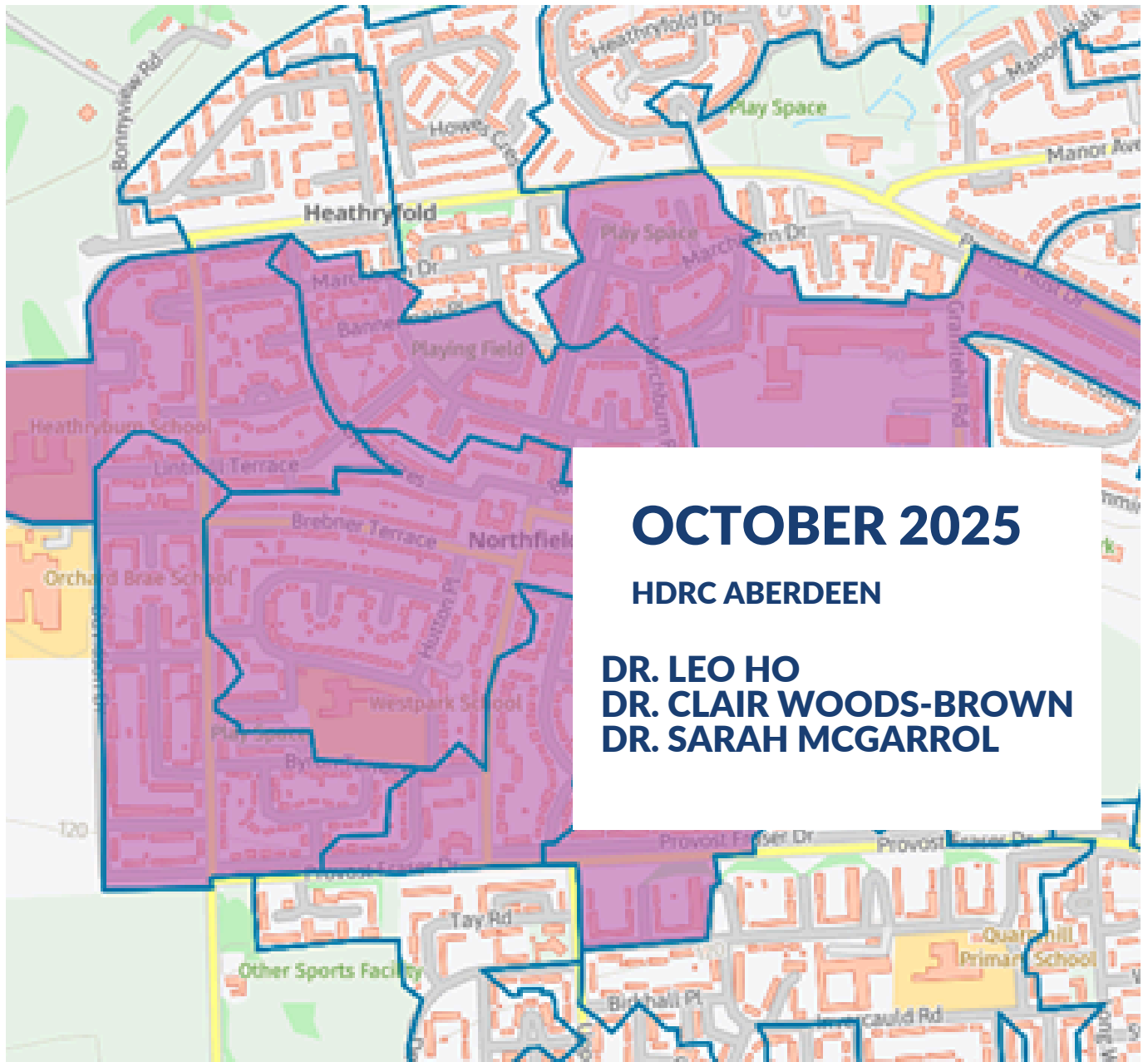




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How it can be done and overcoming challenges

Neighbourhoods influence health and wellbeing in various ways. In addition to individual factors like age, income, and ethnicity, the characteristics of the places people live, as well as access to services such as housing, transport, and community infrastructure, are also relevant. Neighbourhood profiling can provide a clearer understanding of these aspects by integrating statistical data with local insights, such as the latest [Northfield profile](#).

However, creating a neighbourhood profile is rarely straightforward. Challenges often arise from unclear boundaries, inconsistent data sources, and gaps in available information. These issues can make it difficult to produce a complete and accurate picture of the area, requiring careful judgement and creative problem-solving.

Creating the [Northfield profile](#) highlighted key practical challenges that future authors of neighbourhood profiles should be aware of.



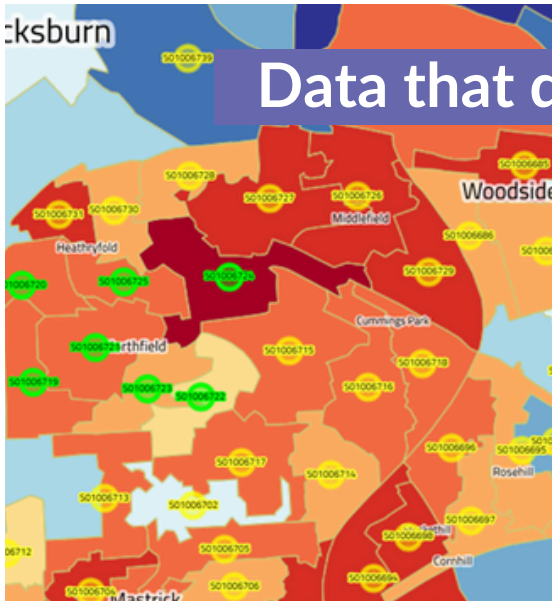
Where is Northfield

There is no official map that says “this is Northfield”. The Data Zones used for census data do not necessarily line up with roads or landmarks, so figuring out what to include was a bit of a guessing game. It also requires us comparing several sources to get the information right.



Outdated or Missing Information

Identifying the shops and facilities available in a neighbourhood can be challenging without visiting the area in person. Much of this information is not accessible online or through ACC intranet/interactive maps. While Google Maps can be used as a resource, it may not always reflect the most current information. Additionally, some datasets are either unavailable or have not been updated for several years.



Data that does not match up

Various organisations utilise different geographic delineations: crime statistics are reported by ward, educational data by catchment area, and health data by Data Zone. Integrating these disparate sources into a comprehensive and unified analysis can present significant challenges.



Scattered Sources

Certain important data, such as the number of children in Northfield eligible for free school meals, is often located in inspection reports or committee papers. Since schools use cashless systems, this data is collected by catering companies and transmitted, but it is not always readily accessible.

The following guidance offers a framework for developing neighbourhood profiles and specifies the essential information that should be included. For further details, please refer to the [Northfield profile](#).



HDRCA FRAMEWORK FOR COMPILING A NEIGHBOURHOOD PROFILE

The following Framework for compiling a Neighbourhood Profile was developed by the HDRC Aberdeen. It is based on our work to develop the Northfield Neighbourhood Profile and provides an example of the arrangement we used for the main sections of the Profile. The aim is to produce a narrative text within each section but there is scope to sub-divide sections into headed sub-sections where appropriate. Note that figures, tables, images and design features can be added. Refer to the [Northfield profile](#) for an example.

INTRODUCTION

This section should include:

- **Research questions and aims.**
- **Literature review:** Background regarding the associations between geography and health inequalities; information on the Social Determinants of Health.
- **Definition of neighbourhoods:** What constitutes a neighbourhood in health research and urban planning? Administrative boundaries, which may not necessarily reflect how residents perceive or experience their communities, can lead to spatial misclassification.
- **Challenges in profiling neighbourhoods:** Despite their utility, neighbourhood profiling faces challenges such as misalignment with residents' definitions of their communities and limited availability of data at small geographical scales.
- **Existing profiling tools and initiatives:** Examples: [Build A Custom Area Profile tool](#) by the Office for National Statistics in England and Wales; [Area Profiling Tool](#) by South Lanarkshire Council in Scotland; Population Needs Assessment are useful resources.

METHODS

Data sources

Data may be obtained from the following sources, though this list is not exhaustive. Whenever possible, it is preferable to rely on primary, official data rather than information reported by secondary sources such as media outlets.

QUANTITATIVE SOURCES:

- **Scotland's Census 2022:** Locate the neighbourhood in terms of 'intermediate zone' and its corresponding 'data zones'; data across the five areas of Social Determinants of Health.
- **Public Health Scotland via Scottish Public Health Observatory:** Data on crime, road safety, deprivation, health and social care.
- **Police Scotland via Scottish Public Health Observatory:** Contributed data on crime and road safety.
- **Scottish Government's Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD):** Data on deprivation.
- **Education Scotland's Inspection Reports for Secondary School & Primary School Dashboard:** Education-related data.
- **Aberdeen City Council:** Other relevant data and reports.
- **CACI Paycheck:** Gross household income data.

QUALITATIVE SOURCES

- **Your Place, Your Plans, Your Future consultation or other relevant, up-to-date consultations:** Place specific insights from community engagement.
- **Discourse analysis of Scottish media:** Online newspaper articles featuring the neighbourhood.

OTHER SOURCES

- **Google Maps:** Distances between locations and identify services.

Data analysis

Data analysis should focus on addressing the research questions. The following items are recommended for a neighbourhood profile:

- **Descriptive statistics:** Frequencies, percentages, median, ranges, and interquartile range where appropriate, presented through narrative summaries, figures, and tables.
- **Public consultation:** Representative quotes from the public consultation synthesised under different Social Determinants of Health areas.
- **Discourse analysis:** Discourse analysis (can be assisted by Copilot) which identifies and analyses references to the neighbourhood in the local or national press.



RESULTS

It is recommended that the following findings be incorporated into the neighbourhood profile. Where applicable, neighbourhood data should be presented alongside corresponding city-level data for comparison purposes.

Boundaries

- Aberdeen and North East – Output Area Atlas and SIMD Interactive Map: Define boundaries of the neighbourhood.
- OpenStreetMap: Illustrate the boundaries of the neighbourhood.
- **Narrative description of the boundaries**

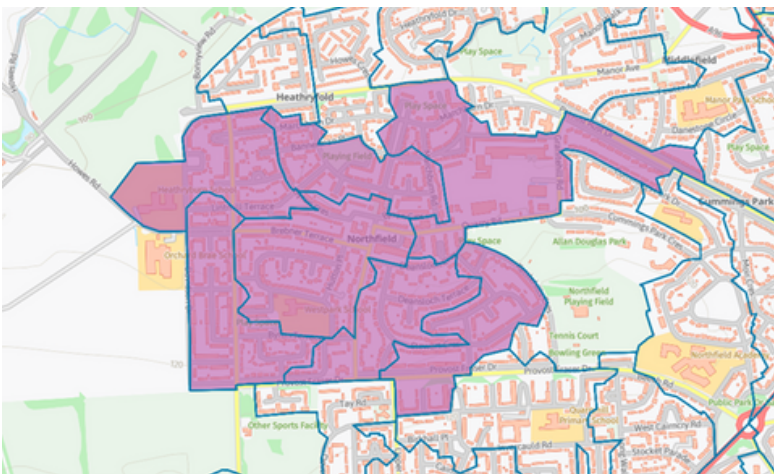


Figure 1. The seven Data Zones of Northfield (Adapted from OpenStreetMap)

An example labelled image of the seven data zones within the boundary of Northfield, taken from the Northfield profile.

The profile should cover each of the five Aberdeen City Council Social Determinants of Health themes - Neighbourhood & Environment; Communities & Housing; Economic Stability; Children, Families and Lifelong Learning; and Health and Social Care. The next sections indicate content that should be included in each section.

Neighbourhood & Environment

- **Shopping area (Google Maps street view):** Location, accessibility, availability of amenities such as grocery shops, convenience stores, fast food/takeaways, restaurants, post offices, laundry, hair salons, betting shops, off licenses, cash points, and more.
- **Churches and community centres:** Location, activities and services provided.
- **Libraries:** Location and services provided.
- **Play areas and sports facilities:** Availability, location, accessibility.
- **Open spaces (Open Space Audit 2024):** Green infrastructure or civic areas such as squares, and other paved or hard landscaped areas with a civic function.
- **Healthcare services:** Location, availability, accessibility of a general practice surgery or other primary care facilities within the neighbourhood.
- **Police station:** The nearest Police Scotland station, availability of a public counter.
- **Public consultation highlights:** Features highlighted by public consultations.

Communities and Housing

- **Demographics:** Population; life expectancy; gender distribution; marital status.
- **Housing:** Household composition; housing types; household tenure; average house price.
- **Crime and safety:** Crime rates; road safety.
- **Public consultation highlights:** Features highlighted by public consultations.

Economic Stability

- **Income:** Average household annual incomes.
- **Deprivation:** Data extracted from the latest SIMD.
- **Employment and economic activity:** Percentage of the population who are economically active; common occupations among the employed population.
- **Unemployment:** Rates of unemployment.
- **Education and qualifications:** Percentage of the population with different qualifications.
- **Public consultation highlights:** Features highlighted by public consultations.

Children, Families and Lifelong Learning

- **Secondary school performance:** Percentage of leavers attaining literacy and numeracy at SCQF Level 4 or above; summarise the main findings of any recent inspection reports.
- **Primary school performance:** Anything notable (e.g., additional support needs, children in poverty); pupils' performance.
- **Early Learning and Childcare:** Early learning and childcare provision in the neighbourhood.
- **Free school meals:** Eligibility and uptake of school meals in Primary 6/7 and at the secondary school compared to average for Aberdeen.
- **Public consultation highlights:** Features highlighted by public consultations.

Health and Social Care

- Self-reported health
- Disability
- Long-term conditions
- Mental health
- Hospital admissions
- Emergency admissions
- Maternal health
- Child health
- **Public consultation highlights:** Features highlighted by public consultations.



DISCUSSION

Implications

The content of this section may vary according to the key messages the authors wish to convey. Nevertheless, it is recommended that the discussion draws upon the findings presented above and/or other established evidence. Insights provided here will support the development of the 'Next Steps' section below.

Limitations

Common limitations: the potential for outdated data, the predominantly quantitative nature of the report, and the limited number of qualitative responses from residents. These limitations suggest the need for additional qualitative methods and field research to gain a deeper understanding of the neighbourhood.

Next Steps

This section describes ways to improve and utilise future neighbourhood profiles. It may include consideration of participatory methods and qualitative approaches, such as incorporating residents' perspectives and lived experiences. Potential directions for service improvement may also be addressed.



CONCLUSION

The conclusion only needs to be a brief summary of the neighbourhood profile - a few paragraphs to sum up the profile, focusing on learning rather than summarising the content.

Consider producing a 'Highlights' document to summarise key contents and statistics of the profile. See the 'Highlights of the Northfield Neighbourhood Profile' document for an example.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

If relevant, there can be a section to acknowledge anyone who made a contribution to the profile.



REFERENCES

All references used in the neighbourhood profile should be listed here. Prefer numbered citations in the text in superscript format. Aim for consistency in referencing format.

Any Appendices should follow the Reference section.

NIHR | Health Determinants
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