

Washington

Tyne and Wear

'Mark Two' New Town – Designated 24 July 1964

Faced with the post-war decline of the traditional industries of coal-mining and shipbuilding, with knock-on effects in dependent steel and heavy engineering industries, in 1961 Durham County Council proposed a Designation Order under the 1946 New Towns Act to develop Washington as the region's third New Town, to reverse decline and provide economic and social renewal. In 1963 a Government White Paper proposed that Washington should be developed 'to stimulate faster progress in raising the scale and quality of the region's urban development generally'. Today, Washington has the second-largest population of the Sunderland conurbation sub-areas (approximately 20% of the total population). Developed as a series of villages, it is interspersed with modern employment areas and has proved attractive to businesses and residents alike.



Sunderland City Council

Key facts:

- **Location:** 10 kilometres south of Newcastle, 5 kilometres west of Sunderland.
- **2011 Census population:** 55,196, in 23,517 households.¹
- **Local authority:** Sunderland City Council.
- **Local Plan status:** Saved policies from City of Sunderland UDP (1998) Core Strategy at Preferred Options stage.

New Town designation:

- **Designated:** 24 July 1964.
- **Designated area:** 2,145 hectares, revised to 2,261 hectares.
- **Intended population:** 70,000-80,000 (population at designation: 20,000).
- **Development Corporation:** Designated to boost the region's economic fortunes and improve housing conditions. The masterplan aimed to set new standards of urban development in the region and contribute to lasting prosperity. Unlike some New Towns, the aim was not to create a new focus but to provide interconnecting links between villages which were to be revitalised rather than abandoned. It was unique among contemporary plans in recognising the new factors of rising standards of living and car ownership, and their effect on urban living. Development Corporation wound up 31 March 1988.

Housing, deprivation and health:

- The proportion of homes in Washington that are owner-occupied (63.5%) is in line with the UK average and 5% higher than the UK New Towns average. 27.1% of households are in social rent – 5.5% and 9% higher than the UK New Towns and UK averages, respectively.
- Washington broadly matches the English New Towns and England averages for household deprivation. 41.0% of households are not deprived in any dimensions – 1-1.5% lower than the English New Towns and England averages.
- The 2011 Census reported that 43.7% of Washington residents declared themselves to be in 'very good' health – 3% and 4% lower than the UK New Towns and UK averages,

respectively. 34.5% declared themselves to be in 'good' health, which is slightly higher than the UK New Towns and UK averages, but marginally more people declared 'bad' or 'very bad' health than the UK New Towns and UK averages.

Employment/economic profile:

- Washington has played, and continues to play, a major role in the local and regional economy. In addition to the successful Nissan plant, areas such as Turbine Park (part of the A19 Ultra Low Carbon Vehicle Corridor Enterprise Zone) are attracting major companies to the area. Some of Washington's industrial estates are recognised as Primary Employment Areas due to their importance to Sunderland's economic success.
- Nissan's Sunderland plant (with up to 7,000 jobs) is the UK's biggest ever car plant in terms of output, with more than 500,000 units produced annually (four-fifths for export).
- Within the North East LEP.

Development Corporation legacy:

- The village layouts, open space, employment allocations and surrounding Green Belt are still important characteristics, but future new housing land allocations in the emerging Local Plan are now limited in Washington.
- The New Town was designed with road vehicles, particularly the car, as the primary form of transport. Buses thus comprise the main form of public transport available.

Key issues for the future:

- Planning for growth – there is limited potential for new housing and employment allocations within the built-up area, but a major business park is proposed on Green Belt land that could create over 5,000 jobs in the advanced manufacturing and automotive sectors (to be developed jointly with South Tyneside Council under a City Deal).
- Protecting the characteristics of the New Town and its villages, such as maintaining the separation of conflicting land uses and substantial landscaping and open space.
- Transport planning – there are no passenger rail/Metro services.

¹ Totals for the following wards: Washington North, Washington East, Washington South, Washington West, Washington Central

Did you know?

Washington Old Hall was the family home of George Washington's ancestors.