

JSNA Health and Wellbeing Profile 2023/24

Internet Connectivity

Summary points

- 96.4% of Bristol residents have access to the internet at home (QoL 2022/23)
- 94.7% of adults used the internet in Bristol in 2020, higher than the UK average (92.1%)

Internet access

According to the 2022/23 Bristol Quality of Life (QoL) survey, 96.4% of residents have access to the internet at home. However, this is lower for residents who live in the 10% most deprived areas (93.0%). By ward the highest access rates are in Hotwells and Harbourside (99.7%) and Bishopston and Ashley Down (99.4%) and the lowest are in Stockwood (91.5%) and Filwood (91.7%) – see Figure 1 below.

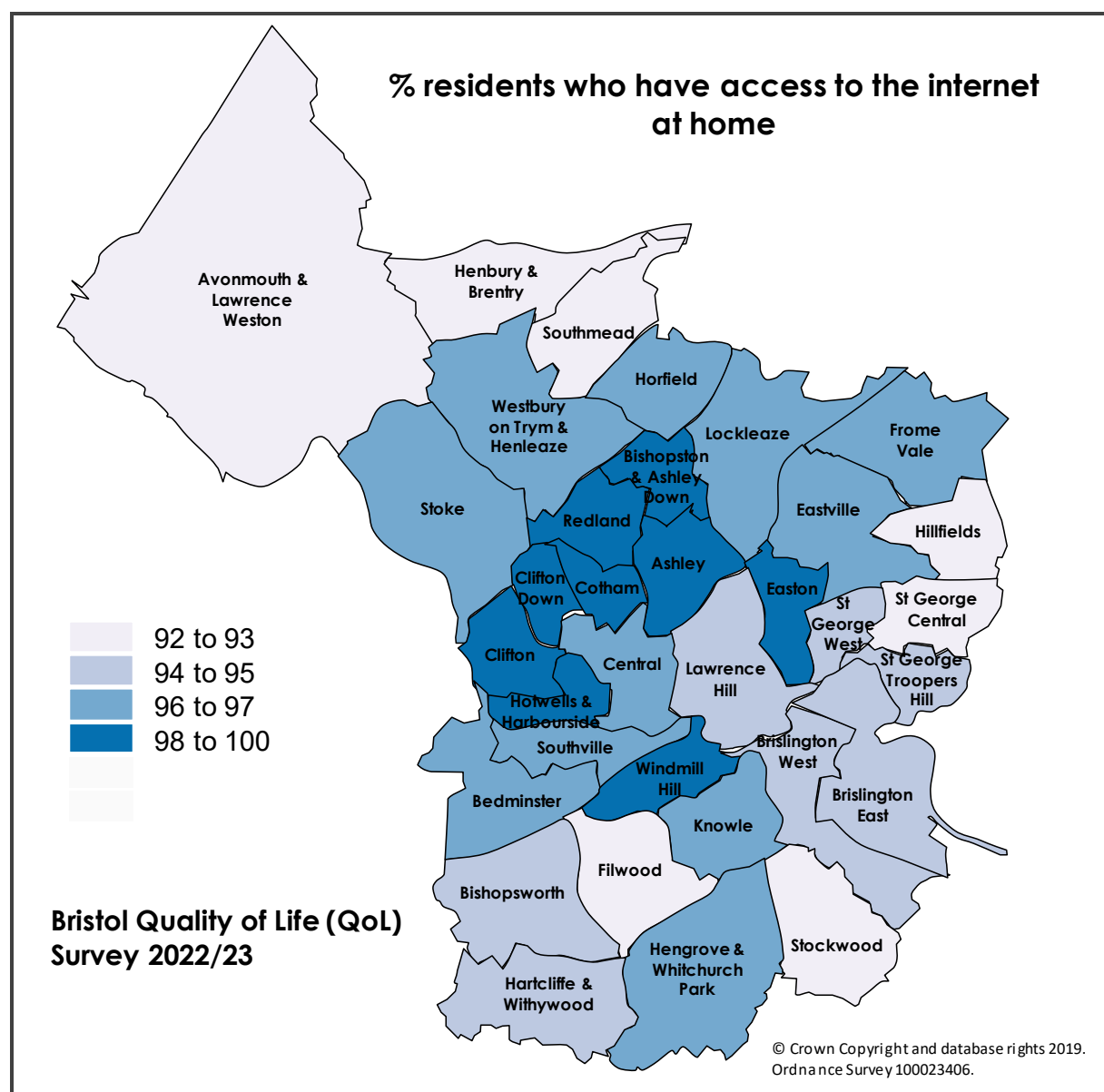


Figure 1: % Bristol residents who have access to the internet at home. Source: QoL survey 2022/23

Equalities data:

Older people (65+) are significantly less likely (84.3%) to access the internet at home compared to the city average (96.4%) as are people aged 50 years and over (90.1%); for young people (under 25) the figure is 99.6%. Disabled people are also significantly less likely to have internet access at home (87.0%) as are residents living in council rented accommodation (82.5%) and people with no qualifications (73.9%).

Of further note are the differences in why groups have difficulty accessing the internet at home:

- For those who “cannot afford home broadband or equipment” (Bristol average 1.8%), significantly more Disabled people (6.3%) and those aged 65 and over (2.8%) are affected
- For those who “lack the skills or confidence to use the internet” (Bristol average 4.4%), significantly more Older people aged 65+ (17.5%), Disabled people (12.5%), Full-time carers (19.4%) and residents with no qualifications (16.6%) are affected
- For those who “have cyber security or privacy concerns” (Bristol average 2.2%), significantly more Disabled people (4.5%) and Older people aged 65+ (4.9%) are affected

Internet use

According to 2020 estimates¹ from the Office of National Statistics (ONS), in Bristol 94.7% of adults (347,000 people) recently used the internet (i.e. used within the last 3 months)². This is higher than the National average of 92.1%, and is the highest amongst the Core Cities (where recorded – see Figure 2).

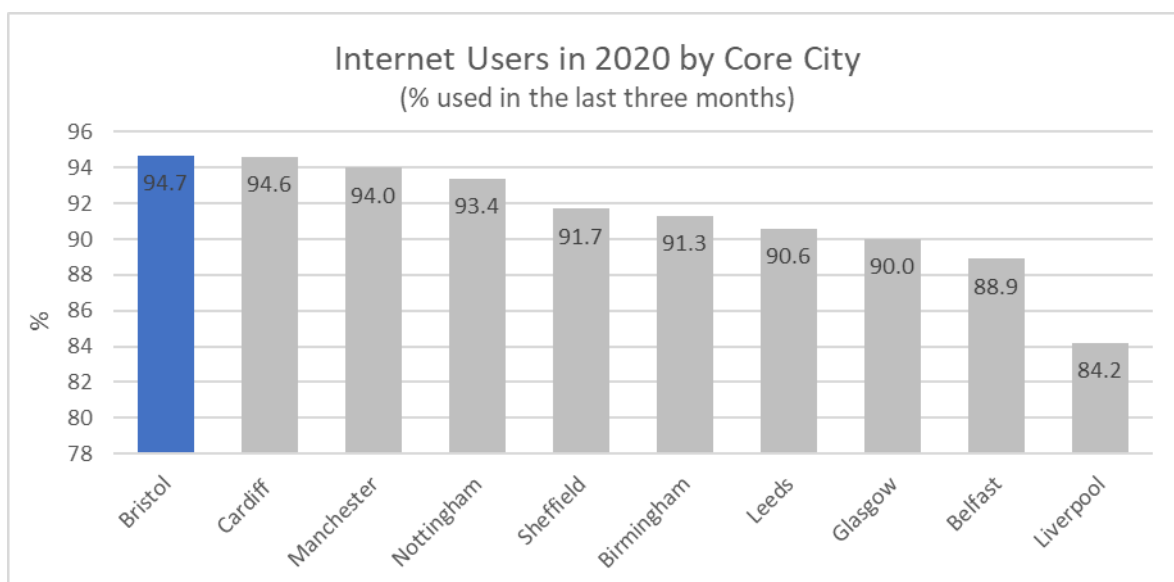


Figure 2: Adults who have “Used the internet in the last 3 months. Source: Internet users 2020, ONS

This figure, of people who recently used the internet, is rising and is generally increasing faster in Bristol than nationally (Figure 3) and also faster than the South West region.

¹ This survey has been discontinued so 2020 is latest version

²Source: ONS data <https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/itandinternetindustry/datasets/internetusers>

In 2020, just 5.3% of adults in Bristol were recorded as not having used the internet recently (i.e. more than 3 months ago or never), lower than the national average of 7.8%.

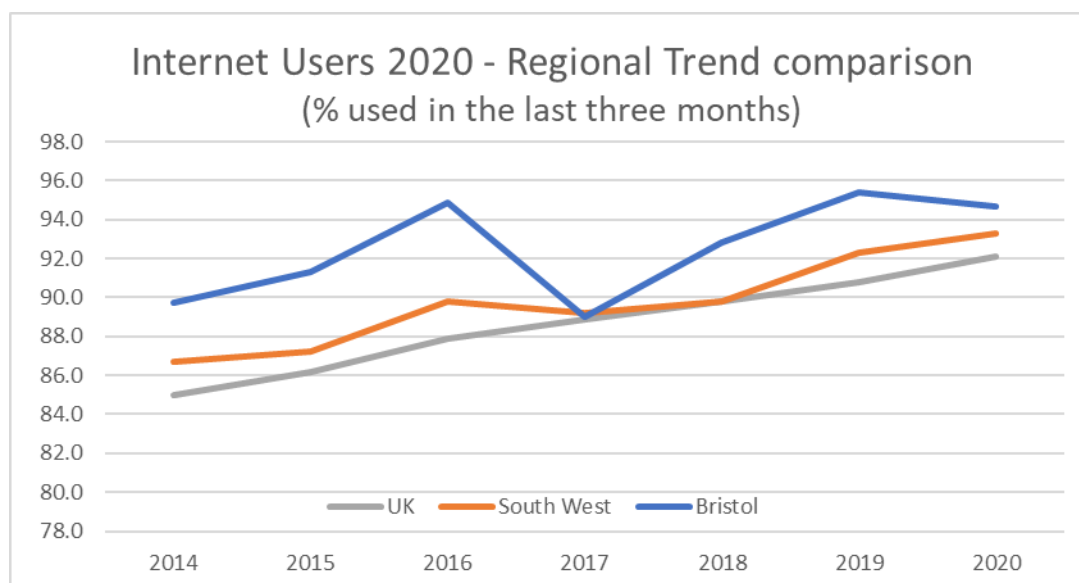


Figure 3: Adults who have “Used the internet in the last 3 months”. Source: Internet users 2020, ONS

Equalities data:

Nationally, internet usage in 2020 (where internet was used within last 3 months)³ amongst persons aged 16 and over is highest for in the younger age groups and then gradually decreases as the age group increases. However, it is amongst those above 75 years that the biggest increase in internet usage has been recorded, from 39.3% in 2014 to 62.1% in 2020, an increase of 58%.

There is little difference in usage by gender in age groups up to 64 years old, however 84.4% of women aged 65-74 and 49.8% of women aged 75+ have recently used the internet compared to 86.6% of men aged 65-74 and 59.4% of men aged 75+. The biggest growth in internet usage is in women aged 75 and over from 22.3% in 2014 to 49.8% in 2020.

Internet usage is lowest amongst disabled people⁴, where 14.9% have not used the internet in 2020. This rate is half that of 6 years ago with recent usage rates increasing year on year.

There is little difference by ethnic group, with all groups having internet usage over 90%, with the exception of the Bangladeshi ethnic group where usage was lowest at 87.8%

Covid-19 impact:

Internet usage increased during lockdowns as a result of people trying to stay in touch with friends and family. Internet access in Bristol in 2022 and 2021 was similar to 2020 (QoL).

Further data / links / consultations:

- Office for National Statistics data: www.ons.gov.uk/datasets/internetusers
- Quality of Life (QoL) survey : [The quality of life in Bristol - bristol.gov.uk](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/the-quality-of-life-in-bristol)

³ ONS Internet Users coverage, release date 6th April 2021. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/datasets/internetusers>

⁴ Adults who self-assess that they have a disability in line with the Equality Act definition of disability.

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Author: Tracy Mathews: tracy.mathews@bristol.gov.uk