

*'Inequalities
exist
between
different
wards
in
Northampton'*

A comparative study of four
wards within Northampton
Borough –

**Abington
Eastfield
Headlands
Weston**

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Introduction

Northampton is a town located in central England with a population of 198000.

Northampton grew rapidly in size in the 19th century due to the shoe trade. This was the dominant industry in the 19th and early 20th century although started to decline in the 1920s and 30s. Today the main industries in Northampton are financial services, soft drinks, cosmetics and brewing.

There are many different wards within Northampton and I believe there are differences between them all. I hope to find out whether there are inequalities between these wards.

The wards I will be focussing on are Abington, Eastfield, Headlands and Weston. I will need Primary and Secondary data on people's attitudes in the wards, population, wealth and appearance. I will collect this data by taking photos around the wards, filling in affluence surveys, environmental quality surveys and asking people living in the wards to fill in questionnaires about the area in general.

Methods

The methods I have used to establish that inequalities exist between different wards in Northampton are:

Primary:

- Affluence Surveys
- Environmental Quality Surveys
- Quality Of Life Questionnaires
- Photographs

Secondary:

- Newspaper cuttings detailing house prices
- 2001 census data
- Ward maps and Northampton Borough maps
- Data from the internet

Primary Data is data I have collected myself that didn't exist before.

Secondary data is data that is available from other sources.

Affluence Surveys show the quality of cars in the wards and also the average house size and a description of a typical house.

Environment Quality Surveys rate different aspects of each of the wards including condition of houses, clean air and parking spaces.

Quality Of Life questionnaires are filled in by people living in the wards about each of the wards in general. This covered various categories such as jobs, housing, shops and levels of crime/vandalism.

Photographs taken around the wards highlight the quality of houses, well kept gardens, graffiti and parking availability.

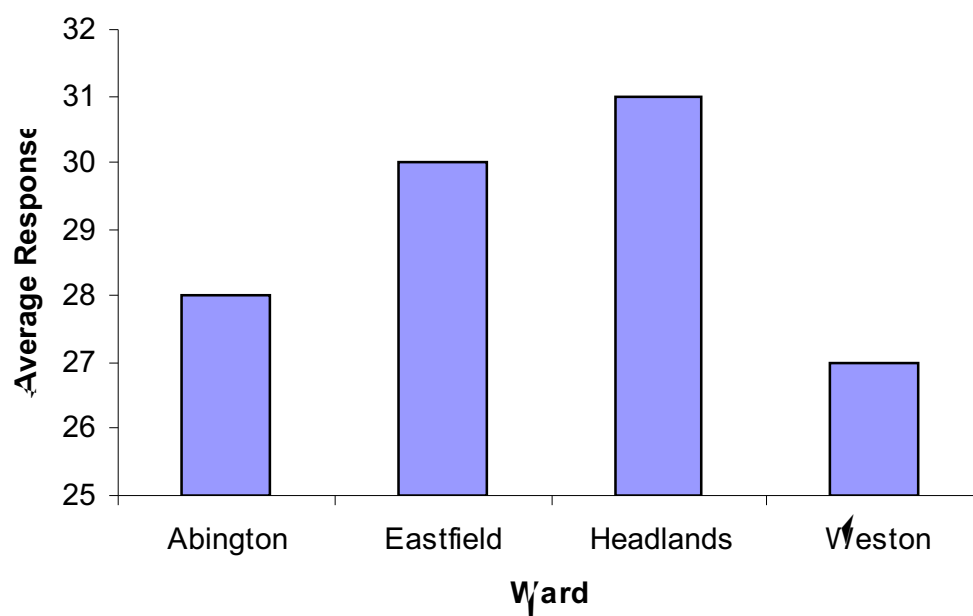
Newspaper cuttings from a weekly free property newspaper compare the prices of houses in each of the wards.

2001 census includes unemployment in the areas, amount of cars per household and the tenure of households. A comparison of data from the census was shown using various graphs.

Ward maps are essential information detailing the location and boundaries of each ward.

Data available from the internet includes deprivation levels in the wards.

Quality Of Life Questionnaire



Scale: 0=very happy 1=happy 2=not bothered 3=unhappy 4=very unhappy

How happy are you with the following aspects of the local area?	Abington	Eastfield	Headlands	Weston
Jobs	2	1	2	2
Housing	1	2	2	1
The local area generally	1	1	1	1
Public Transport	1	4	2	1
Primary Education	1	1	1	2
Secondary Education	2	1	2	2
Health services	1	3	2	2
Shops	1	1	2	1
Peace and Quiet	2	2	2	1
Appearance and tidiness	2	2	2	2
Entertainment	1	2	2	2
Levels of crime / vandalism	3	2	2	2
Personal safety / security	2	1	1	2
Reputation of the area	2	1	1	1
Friendliness of the area	1	1	1	1
Pollution	2	1	2	1
How would you rate your feelings for this area?				
Three years ago	1	2	2	1
Now	1	1	1	1
In three years time	1	1	1	1
Total	28	30	31	27

Analysis of Quality of Life Questionnaires.

The quality of life questionnaires were filled out by 10 people living in each of the wards. The ages varied from 0-10 to 60 + year olds, both male and female.

They had to rate different aspects of the wards from 0 to 4. 0 being very happy to 4 being very unhappy. I took an average of the ten from each ward, for each answer they gave and put it into a table. I also totalled the same average answers and put it into a simple bar graph to compare the four wards. The lower answer meaning quality of life is better in the ward.

The highest answer from the total of the averages was Headlands with 31, next highest was Eastfield with 30, then Abington with 28 and lastly Weston with an average of 27. This suggests the quality of life is best in Weston and worst in Headlands and that there are inequalities between the wards.

The results may not be very reliable though as there were only 10 questionnaires filled in for each ward and for better results there should be more filled in to get a fairer average. Also many of the questionnaires were filled in by whole families of 4 or 5 people so for example their view on shops and health services may be the same as they live in the same area of the ward.

Some questions on the questionnaire may not be reliable such as the reputation of the area. This could be bias as people generally tend to have loyalty to their area, perhaps it would have been better to ask people living in the other wards to comment on the reputation of the other wards.

One of the lower marks came for the health services in Eastfield. This is interesting because Eastfield and Abington are the only two wards that have health services.

Generally people are very happy with the area they live in and the survey reflects this as their feelings haven't changed much in the past three years.

Analysis of Environmental Quality Survey

The environmental quality surveys did not highlight major differences in some areas such as amount of traffic. All of the wards join onto Wellingborough Road which is one of the main roads into the town centre.

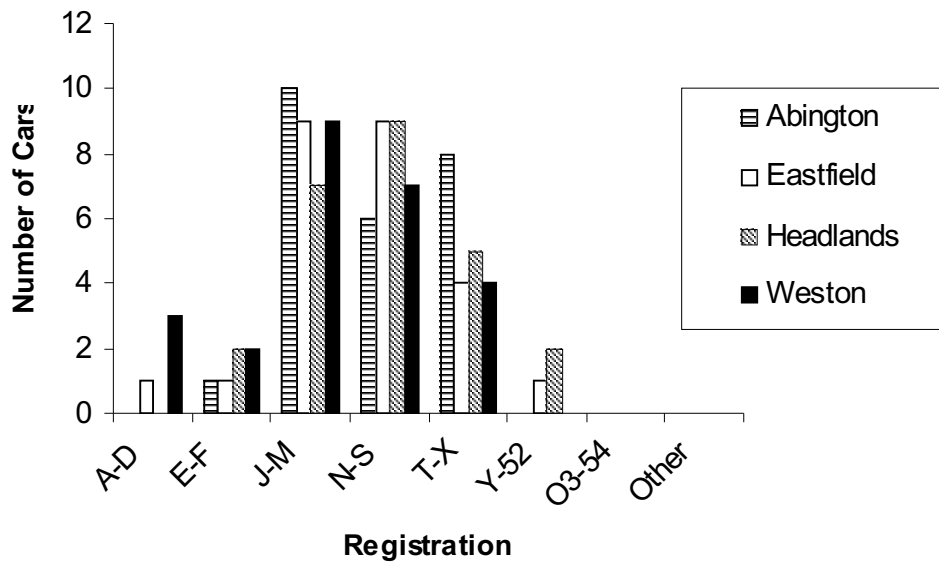
The wards with a higher percentage of privately owned property (Weston) are considered to have housing in better condition and vice versa (Eastfield).

The same applies to the wards with the most attractive proper ties.

Graffiti is a problem in all wards with little differentiation between wards, but litter is a greater problem in Eastfield and Headlands than it is in Weston or Abington although the variation is marginal.

The survey took place during a walk about of all four wards and therefore not every street was covered.

Cars in the wards



	Abington	Eastfield	Headlands	Weston
A-D	0	1	0	3
E-F	1	1	2	2
J-M	10	9	7	9
N-S	6	9	9	7
T-X	8	4	5	4
Y-52	0	1	2	0
Q3-54	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0

Analysis of cars in the wards.

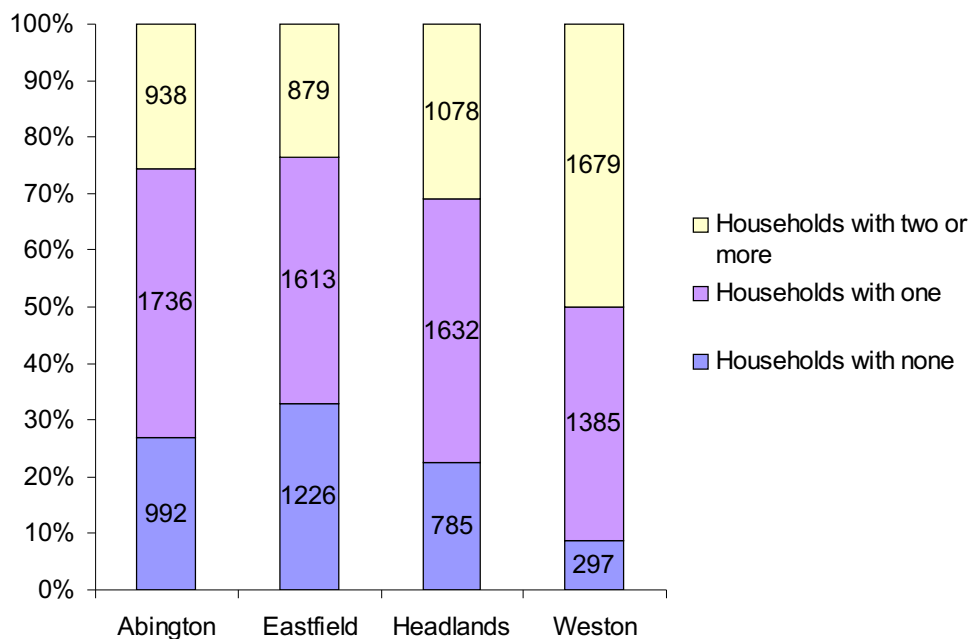
After recording the registration of 25 cars in each of the four wards, I put my results into a table and made a simple bar graph out of it.

I do not think this is reliable information to show inequalities between the wards because there is no pattern of car registrations throughout the wards. The cars could have a personalised number plate and some cars may not have even belonged to people living in the wards. I do not think the registration of cars in the wards is a good indicator of affluence.

The survey took place during the working day so therefore the majority of the cars are likely to be at their owner's place of work.

The data from the secondary source about number of cars per household is much more reliable.

Cars per Household



All wards have a similar number of households with one car. Abington and Headlands both have roughly the same amount of households with no ne, one or two or more cars.

The ward with the highest amount of households with no car and the least amount of households with two or more cars is Eastfield.

The ward with the least number of households with no car and the highest number of households with two or more cars is Weston.

This suggests there are inequalities between the wards, that the Eastfield ward is less wealthy than the Weston ward.

This data came from the 2001 Census and is a reliable indicator of inequality of wealth between the wards. The wards with the majority of households with no car are likely to be less affluent than the wards with fewer households with no car and more households owing two or more cars.

Analysis of Tenure of Households

From looking at the pie charts of the 2001 census data of tenure of households I can see that the wards vary in the amount of owner occupied houses, privately rented, rented from the council and rented from Asso/Regd Social Landlord.

In Eastfield there are more houses rented from the council than any other ward, because physically, there are more council houses in the Eastfield ward than there is in the other three wards.

There are more owner occupied houses in Weston than any other ward and in Abington there are more houses that are privately rented. The high percentage of privately rented houses in the Abington area is probably due to the fact that this area is predominantly terraced houses. These are the most attractive option for people who are looking to 'buy to let'. *

The Weston ward includes the Weston Favell village from where the ward name originates. The small percentage of council owned properties within the ward are the original council properties within the village boundary as well as the small number of council properties within Abington Park. Every village within the county has a mix of council owned properties and private properties,

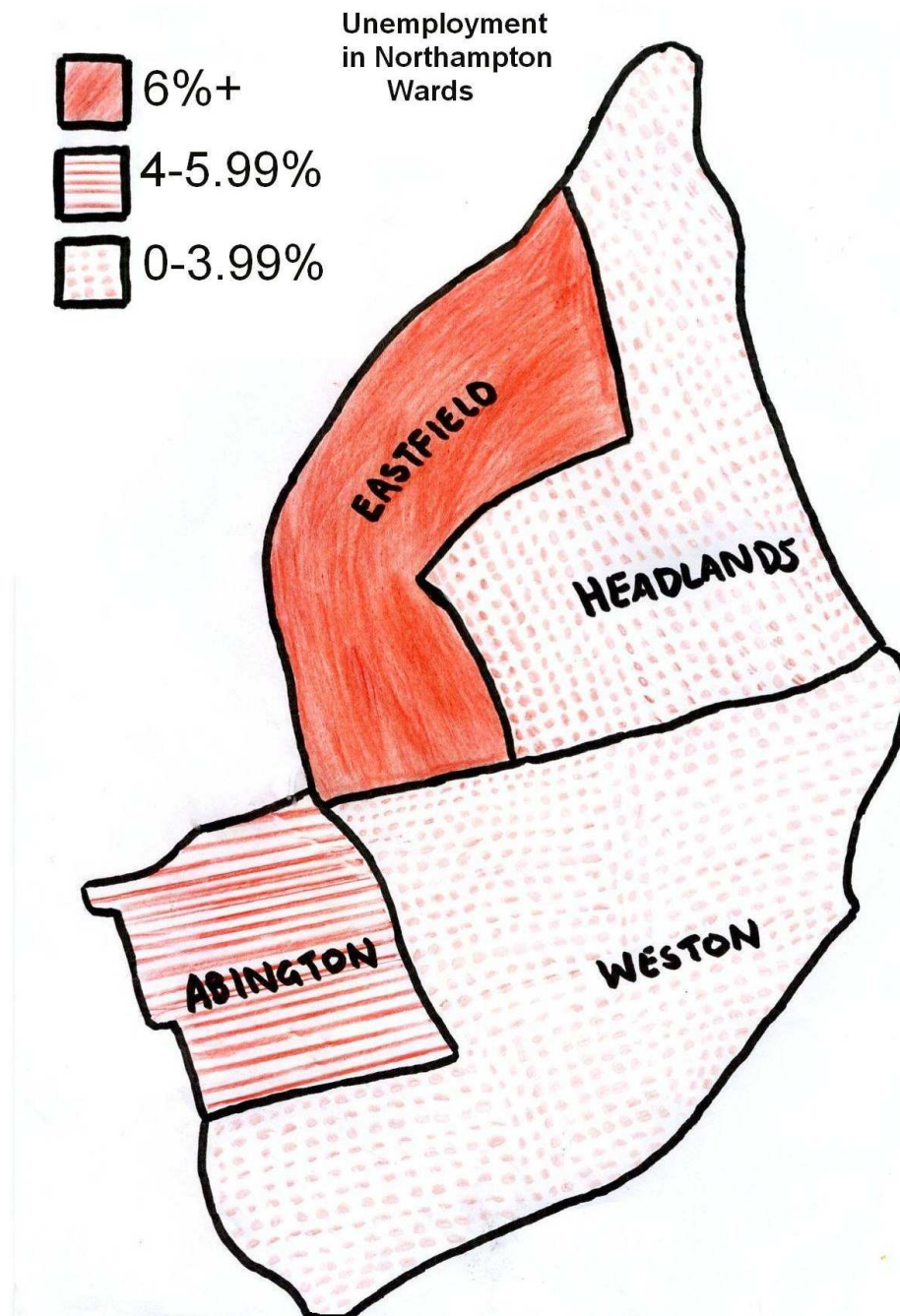
This is reliable information from the 2001 census that shows inequalities between the wards. Compared to the percentage figures for Northampton, every ward except Eastfield has less houses rented from the council.

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Analysis of Unemployment in Northampton Choropleth Map

The choropleth map showing unemployment in the four wards shows that the highest rate of unemployment out of the four wards I am studying is Eastfield. Both Headlands and Weston have from 0 – 3.99% unemployment, Abington has from 4 – 5.99% and Eastfield has 6%+ unemployment.

The areas shaded darker show there is a higher rate of unemployment and the areas that are lighter show a lower rate of unemployment.



Multiple Deprivation Maps

An index of multiple deprivations are measures of deprived areas in the county. These include –

- income
- employment
- health and disability
- education
- skills and training
- barriers to health and services.
- crime

The lower the rank (score) the more deprived an area is. Therefore the darker shades of purple on the map depict the more deprived areas of the county. It can therefore be seen from the map that Weston is less deprived than Eastfield, Abington and Headlands.

The second map clearly indicates that there are two areas of deprivation within the four wards of Abington, Eastfield, Headlands and Weston and they are both in the Eastfield ward.

Examples of properties for sale on the wards

Examples of properties for sale on the wards

Analysis of properties for sale on the wards

The properties sale show typical houses in the wards. There is a terraced house in Abington for £124,995 and a modern terraced house (possibly ex - council) in Eastfield for £104,995.

There is a cottage for sale in Weston for £189,995 and a neat semi -detached house in the Headlands for £152,995.

In Abington, you can buy a very large detached house for £575,000. There are similar properties also available in Eastfield.

These examples of properties for sale show the contrast of houses within wards and also between wards.

In the property newspaper there were many examples of properties for sale in the Abington ward, but only very few examples in comparison, in Eastfield, Headlands and Weston.

Conclusion

Inequalities exist both within wards in Northampton and between them. I have found this out by comparing four wards in Northampton, Abington, Eastfield, Headlands and Weston.

I have carried out various surveys and questionnaires that help me with my conclusion. The quality of life questionnaire generally showed that Weston and Abington have a better quality of life compared to Eastfield and Headlands.

The environmental quality survey I filled in whilst walking around the wards . It shows that generally Weston and Abington are more desirable places to live compared with Eastfield and Headlands with regards to aspects of the wards including attractive buildings, amount of traffic, litter and graffiti.

I also filled in an affluence survey on each of the wards which highlighted the quality of cars in the wards by the registration plate and also the description of a typical house and the size of a typical house in each of the wards. There was no pattern with the cars in the wards although house sizes tend to be bigger in Weston than any other ward.

Secondary data that helped me with my conclusion is information from the 2001 census. From here I graphed the data of cars per household; this showed that the ward with the highest percentage of households with no car and the lowest percentage of households with two or more cars was Eastfield. The ward with the lowest percentage of households with no cars and the highest percentage of households with two or more cars was Weston.

Also from the census data I looked at the tenure of households. This once again showed that there are definitely inequalities between the wards as for example Weston has the highest percentage of owner occupied houses, Abington has the highest percentage of privately rented houses and Eastfield has the highest percentage of houses rented from the council. Other data from the census I used was unemployment figures in each of the wards. From this I made a choropleth map which shows that there is a higher rate of unemployment in Eastfield and Abington and a lower rate of unemployment in Headlands and Weston.

The photos I took around the wards show various inequalities within and between them. Most wards had graffiti although some more than others, all wards had some parking difficulty. Eastfield and Abington had more cars parked on the street whereas Weston and Headlands has still some parked on the street but a lot of cars in driveways and garages. The terraced housing in Abington was purposely built for workers in the nearby factories prior to the modern day use of the car which explains the lack of parking facilities.

The newspaper cuttings of house prices, show examples of typical houses in the wards. Houses in Abington and Weston are generally more expensive than houses in Eastfield and Headlands. But there are exceptions as quality of houses drastically change within each ward.

The final data to support the hypothesis is the index of multiple deprivations. These maps clearly show the inequalities between the wards , that Eastfield is the most deprived out of the four wards and Weston is the least deprived.

Evaluation

I think my investigation went well. Although there were some areas that I could have improved to get more accurate results, the quality of life questionnaires were carried out by ten people from each ward, with different age ranges and sexes. If I were to do that again I would use a larger number of people from each ward and also try to target people living in different parts of the ward not just located in one particular area which I found happened when whole families filled out the questionnaire.

Also, I would ask people living in a ward to comment on the reputation of other wards to get a wider view because people tend to be biased to the own area.

The affluence survey which noted 25 car registration plates, I feel was not necessary and if I were to do it again, I would not use this as it showed no pattern between the wards.

I went on the Northants Police website to find crime statistics, but was unable to retrieve any information comparing the wards. I followed this up by emailing CBO (Community Beat Officers) for each of the wards but have received no reply to date.

I think I have proved there are various inequalities between the four wards of Abington, Eastfield, Headlands and Weston, but also inequalities within the wards themselves.

Bibliography

2001 Census:

http://www.northamptonshireobservatory.org.uk/docs/doc_Ward%20Profiles%20-%20Northampton_111725290304.pdf

Northampton Herald & Post Property Newspaper

Index of Multiple Deprivation Maps:

http://www.northamptonshireobservatory.org.uk/docs/doc_Northampton%20Top%2050%20SOA%20Labels.pdf_161706220904.pdf

Residents of the wards.