

Scottish Borders Insights: Healthy Life Expectancy in Scotland and Scottish Areas 2017-19

An insight into the NRS dataset, produced by SBC Corporate Performance and Information R&I Team

National Records of Scotland released its updated Healthy Life Expectancy figures for 2017-19 in January 2021. This information note presents a summary of its key findings and the evidence for healthy life expectancy in Scottish Borders.

Key Findings for Scotland and Scottish Borders between 2017-2019:

- A baby boy born between 2017 and 2019 in Scottish Borders can be expected to live for 79 years, 63 of them in good health. This is slightly better than the Scottish average of 77 years, 62 of them in good health
- A baby girl born between 2017 and 2019 in Scottish Borders can be expected to live for an average of 82 years, 64 of them in good health. This is, again, slightly better than the Scottish average of 81 years, 62 of them in good health.
- In other words, a baby boy born between 2017 and 2019 in Scottish Borders can be expected to live 80% of his life in good health, which is slightly better than the Scottish average of 79.9%.
- A baby girl born between 2017 and 2019 in Scottish Borders can be expected to live 77.9% of her life in good health, which is slightly better than the Scottish average of 76.3%.
- Women are still expected to live longer than men, but for the first time they will not enjoy good health for as high a proportion of their lives as the men. This is true in both Scottish Borders and in Scotland.
- For males, healthy life expectancy at birth increased earlier in the decade, but is now declining, in both Scottish Borders and Scotland. In Scottish Borders, it has decreased from 64.5 years in 2015-17 to the present 63.3 years in 2017-19.
- For females, healthy life expectancy at birth has decreased over the last decade, in both Scottish Borders and Scotland. In Scottish Borders, it has decreased from 65.4 years in 2015-17 to the present 2017-19 figure of 63.8 years.
- For males, healthy life expectancy at birth was highest in East Dunbartonshire (69.8 years) and lowest in Glasgow City (54.6 years). Scottish Borders, at 63.3 years, is slightly better than average but 13th—best out of the 32 Local Authority areas.
- For females, healthy life expectancy at birth was highest in Orkney (75.1 years) and lowest in North Ayrshire (56.3 years). Scottish Borders, at 63.8 years, is slightly better than average but 11th—best out of the 32 Local Authority areas.
- The gap in healthy life expectancy at birth between the most and least deprived areas was 25.1 years for males and 21.5 years for females. Figures are not yet available for Intermediate Data Zones in Scottish Borders but we would expect to see a similar gap between Data Zones in the most and least-deprived areas in the region.

NRS notes that the decrease in healthy life expectancy coincides with a stalling of growth in life expectancy in recent years.

The following charts were prepared by NRS and show Healthy Life Expectancy at Birth by Council area with Confidence Intervals marked on. If the Confidence Interval is clear of the Scotland line, it means that the Council Area's Healthy Life Expectancy is significantly different from the Scottish average. If the Confidence Interval crosses the Scotland line, the significance of the Council Area's figure falls within a zone of statistical uncertainty, and cannot be regarded as significantly different from the average.

