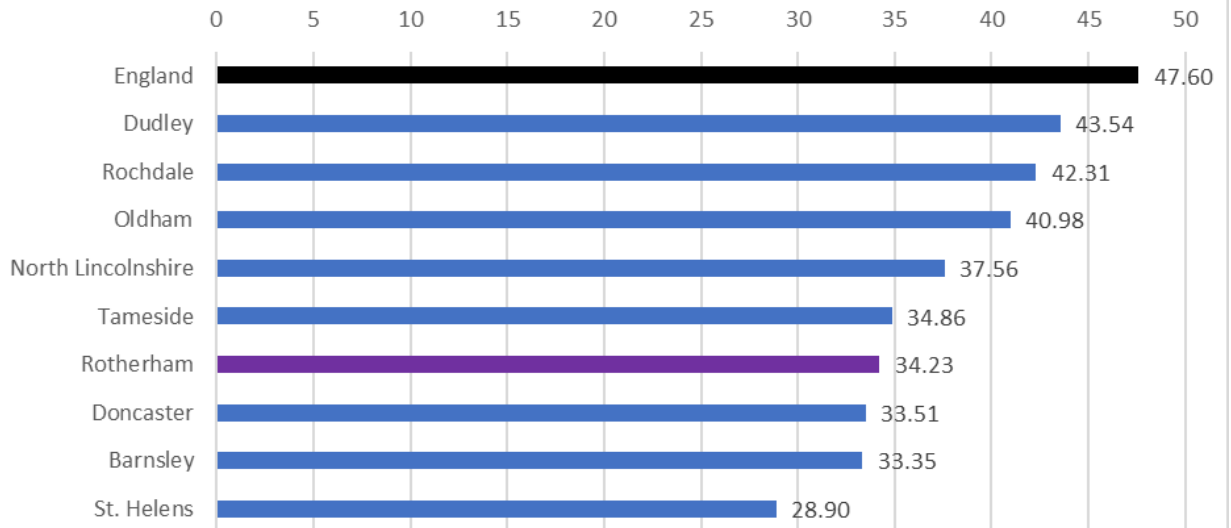
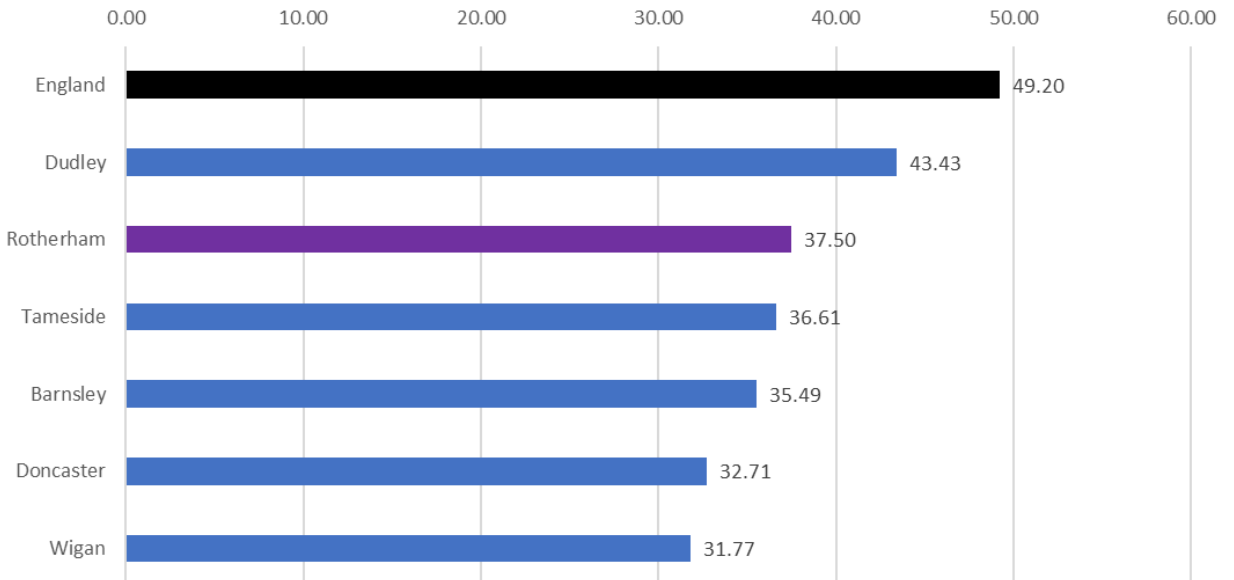


BRIEFING	TO:	Health and Wellbeing Board
	DATE:	28/7/2023
	LEAD OFFICER	Sam Longley
	TITLE:	Rotherham Breastfeeding Friendly Borough
Background		
1.1	<p>Breastfeeding has long term benefits for both baby and mother. For baby the benefits include reduced risk of infection, obesity, cardiovascular disease in later life and sudden Infant death. For mother breastfeeding reduces the risk of ovarian and breast cancer, osteoporosis, and obesity. Any amount of breastmilk a baby receives has health benefits and the benefits are increased the longer breastfeeding is continued.</p> <p>Rotherham Council formally adopted the Local Authority Declaration on Healthy Weight in January 2020. A key line of action within that document refers to creating supportive environments for all children, young people and parents by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promoting good relationships with food and physical activity from an early age, through childhood and into teenage years • promoting healthy eating and activity during pregnancy • creating supportive environments to help normalise breastfeeding <p>In pursuit of that ambition, in June 2022 a briefing paper was presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board proposing adoption of a Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council Breastfeeding Friendly Borough Declaration. This was agreed in principle by the Board.</p> <p>A Breastfeeding friendly Borough Declaration clearly articulates the commitment of the council, the Health and Wellbeing Board and key partner organisations to support ongoing change within a range of contexts towards a common goal, to enable families to make the right choice for them, with appropriate support</p> <p>This briefing aims to provide assurance to the Board by setting out the progress made over the last year.</p>	
Key Issues		
2.1	<p>Rotherham Breastfeeding rates</p> <p>The current breastfeeding prevalence at 6-8 weeks after birth is 37.5% in Rotherham. This is significantly worse than the England average of 49.2%, however Rotherham has seen an absolute increase from 34.2% in 2020/21.</p> <p>The charts below show Rotherham compared with England and statistical neighbours. Rotherham's relative performance within this comparator group may also have improved in the most recent data, but there is a lot of uncertainty due to missing data across other local authorities.</p>	

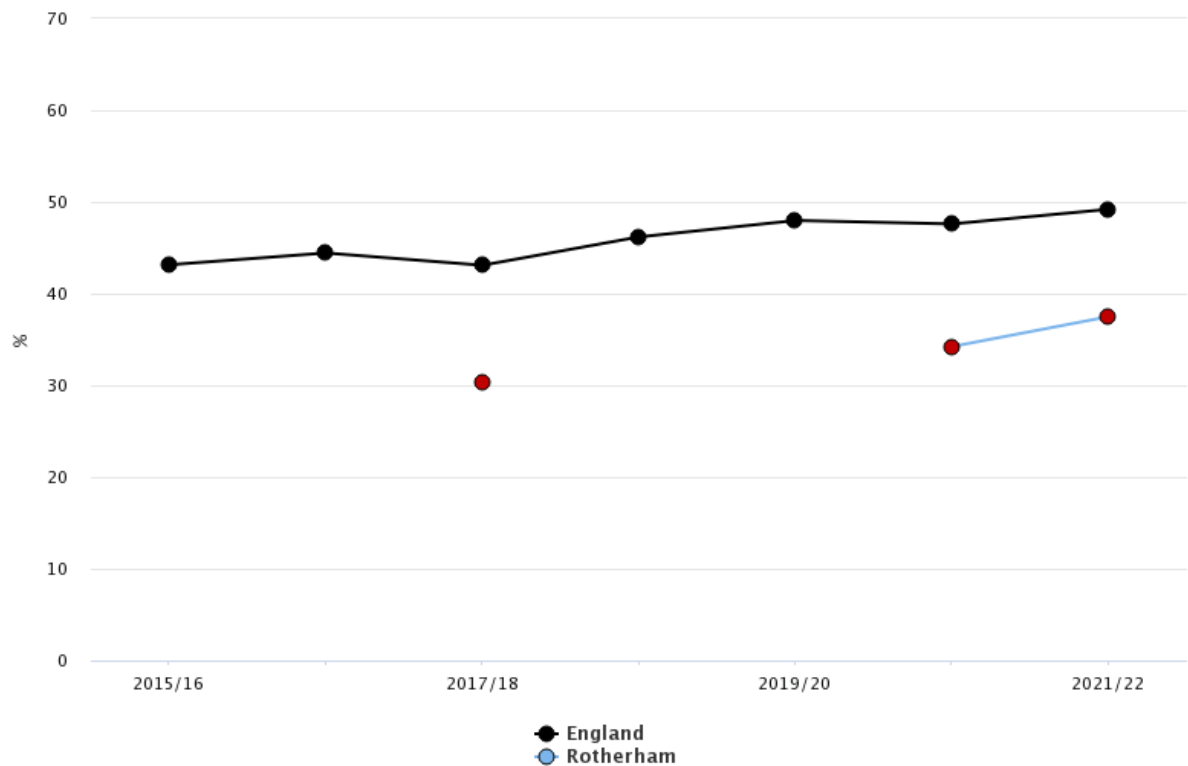
Breastfeeding prevalence at 6-8 weeks after birth, 2020/21



Breastfeeding prevalence at 6-8 weeks after birth (%), 2021/22



Breastfeeding prevalence at 6–8 weeks after birth – current method for Rotherham



2.2

2.2.1

[Public health profiles - OHID \(phe.org.uk\)](https://publichealthprofiles.org.uk/)

Informed and supported choice

Eight out of ten women stop breastfeeding before they want to, and most report that this is due to feeling insufficiently supported. This also frequently results in feelings of guilt and failure ¹. Rotherham is promoting a compassionate approach to health behaviour choices.

The compassionate approach is *‘An approach that promotes health gains for all people, without stigma or judgement, and which takes into account the wider context of their lives.’*

In this context the compassionate approach should mean Infant feeding choices are well informed and supported without stigma or blame.

Breastfeeding and climate change

As well as offering many direct health benefits to both infant and mother, increases in breastfeeding rates also has the potential for wider indirect planetary benefits. This is due to the potential reduction in environmental costs that arise from infant formula production and administration, such as emissions from dairy farming, product packaging, shipping, disposal, and water consumption ².

Breastfeeding and the cost of living

Breastmilk is effectively a free and safe resource. Bottle feeding has been estimated to cost on average between £50 and £100 per month, meaning that exclusive breastfeeding for the UNICEF recommended six months is likely to offer considerable financial savings. The British Pregnancy Advisory Service has warned that due to the increased costs of living some bottle-feeding families may have resorted to unsafe practices to reduce costs, such as watering down formula or increasing periods between feeds ³.

Key Actions and Relevant Timelines	
3.1	Actions since June 2022
3.2	The Rotherham Breastfeeding Borough Forum has been created. This is a multi-agency working group is in place with membership from a variety of stakeholders in Rotherham which includes VCS, 0-19 service, midwifery, RMBC HR, RMBC public health team and RMBC Children and Young Peoples Service.
3.3	The RMBC HR infant Feeding policy has been refreshed.
3.4	RMBC premises have been identified to enable us to support staff and/or public to be supported to breast feed. Current picture has been established and where further support will be needed.
3.5	Plan in place for RMBC staff to receive training regarding Making Every Contact Count and Breastfeeding. The training will be developed and shared to all Health and Well-being Board partner organisations and wider business in Rotherham.
3.6	Resources developed with TRFT Infant feeding team to support wider Rotherham businesses to become Breastfeeding Friendly with a plan in place to work with businesses to promote this.
3.7	We have recommissioned our Specialist Community Public Health team for 0-19 years (25 SEND) comprising of Health Visitors (HV), School Nurses (SN) delivering the Healthy Child Programme. The services have now mobilised level 2 UNICEF Breastfeeding friendly Initiative (BFI) accreditation.
3.8	The Community Infant Feeding team within the 0-19 service have designed a “Rotherham backs breastfeeding” campaign. A planned launch event will take place in the Summer 2023.
3.9	As part of the Family Hubs and Start for Life funded programme antenatal Infant feeding advice will be delivered using the Solihull Approach. Providing families with the information required to enable informed choice.
3.10	Children’s Centres/ Family Hubs to begin the process of UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative
3.11	accreditation.
3.12	“Baby Friendly accreditation is based on a set of interlinking evidence-based standards for maternity, health visiting, neonatal and children’s centres services. These are
3.13	designed to provide parents with the best possible care to build close and loving relationships with their baby and to feed their baby in ways which will support optimum health and development”. ⁴
3.14	A consistent supportive approach will be embedded across the local authority estate, e.g. libraries, especially where they are providing a satellite family hub venue.
	Additional funding received via the Family Hub specific for an Infant Feeding Co-ordinator to enhance the support offer to families for Infant feeding.
	RMBC PH team workstream lead for Infant Feeding workstream of the Family Hub and start for life offer development.

	<p>LA communication plan completed.</p> <p>Public Health is also pursuing this agenda at ICB level, as part of the Local Maternity Network and System (LMNS), which includes recent work on breastfeeding and climate change and the cost of living.</p> <p>Next steps include delivery of MEC infant Feeding sessions, creation and distribution of a business pack created alongside the Rotherham Backs Breastfeeding campaign to identify breastfeeding friendly business and venues in Rotherham, family hub development and enhanced offer of peer support volunteers, opportunities to promote the Rotherham Breastfeeding Friendly Borough will be sought at community events such as Rotherham Show and via the Start For Life Offer.</p>
Implications for Health Inequalities	
<p>4.1</p>	<p>Whilst UK breastfeeding rates are comparatively low internationally, within the UK the way rates vary is associated with socio-economic status, with economically deprived mothers the least likely to initiate or to continue breastfeeding. Any Rotherham-wide improvement in breastfeeding initiation and continuation rates is therefore likely to have some positive impact on health inequalities and represents one of the key opportunities we have for giving Rotherham children the best start in life.</p>
Recommendations	
<p>5.1</p> <p>5.2</p> <p>5.3</p>	<p>The Health and Wellbeing Board to note the 3.27% increase in Rotherham's 6-8 week Breastfeeding rate and the progress made during the last year to become a Breastfeeding Friendly Borough</p> <p>The Health and Wellbeing Board to reaffirm its support for the ambition for Rotherham to become a breastfeeding friendly borough by signing the declaration on behalf of its member organisations.</p> <p>For the board to agree a 12-month period for update.</p>

Supporting a Breastfeeding Borough Declaration (DRAFT v1)

Our commitment

The Health and Wellbeing Board is committed to protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding through advocacy to the whole of its population, whether they be a member of the public or a member of staff.

To achieve this, we support the implementation of a Breastfeeding Borough, which includes some of the measures from the Baby Friendly Initiative (BFI) and adapt these to our local authority ethos and services where appropriate.

Stage One: Building a firm foundation

1. We will have a signed breastfeeding statement for the Council that is routinely communicated to all staff. We will share this with all new starters via our electronic induction system and, where appropriate, will have a routine reminder of this policy through our annual training updates.
2. We will continue to show commitment to maintaining an evidence-based level of understanding in relation to infant feeding. This will inform our commissioning and our wider public health agendas.
3. We will work collaboratively with our partners to support a Breastfeeding Borough whilst doing this, we will hold central the well-being of the baby and their mother / parents.

Stage Two: An educated workforce

1. We will maintain a level of education that enables staff within, not only our Public Health department, but also our leadership team across the Local authority, to recognise the health and wellbeing benefits of breastfeeding.
2. We will raise the profile of breastfeeding across all our departments through social media postings and local campaigns.

Stage Three: Parents' infant feeding experience, the local authority and partners will:

1. Support the appropriate wider strategic health and wellbeing agenda including 1001 days, the Rotherham Healthy Weight Declaration, the Inequalities and Prevention Strategy and promote the importance of breastfeeding for the health and well-being of their baby.
2. Advocate that the appropriate wider strategic agendas, where possible, support infrastructure which promotes, and supports breastfeeding for every mother and every baby.
3. Recognise that breastfeeding has multifaceted complex challenges within our population, however we will work with our partners to deliver national and local campaigns to support responsive feeding for all babies.

A Breastfeeding Borough - Places.

Our commitment

- We will participate in efforts to promote and support breastfeeding as the cultural norm.
- We will encourage breastfeeding as the preferred method of infant feeding.
- All frontline staff working in RMBC's premises which are accessible to the public should support breastfeeding by adopting the following:
- Breastfeeding parents will be given the freedom within public areas to choose where to breastfeed; the presence of a breastfeeding room does not mean that she must choose to use the room.
- Breastfeeding parents will be welcomed when on the premises and will not be asked to cover up or move to another area when breastfeeding.
- If a mother wishes to have more privacy to breastfeed, she will be offered an appropriate location as far as practicable. Toilets or restrooms are not appropriate places for feeding babies and will not be offered.
- We will support breastfeeding parents if they encountered difficulties and show kindness and respect.
- We will create a positive and supportive environment within our local authority buildings (for example, by displaying breastfeeding positive posters in public areas and, as far as practicable, providing a private space for breastfeeding clients).

A Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace -Policy

Our Commitment

1. We will recognise the need to support employees to continue breastfeeding after returning to work.
2. Employees who plan or need to express breastmilk during working hours should approach their supervisors to work out an appropriate arrangement through supportive discussion whilst completing a risk assessment with their line manager.
3. Line managers should support breastfeeding employees on return to work by providing an enabling environment for those who are breastfeeding. Specific measures include the following:
 - Allowing lactation breaks (an example, one 30 minute break every four hours) for expression of breastmilk for at least one year after childbirth, and to adopt a flexible approach thereafter.
 - Provide somewhere for hand washing which does not involve a public toilet.
 - Provide a private space with a comfortable chair and an electric outlet for operating the breast pump.
 - Provide refrigerating facilities for safe storage of expressed breastmilk. There is an expectation that the employee will ensure that this would be clearly marked and placed in a separate box within the fridge to prevent colleagues from opening it by accident.
 - All other staff members are requested to support their colleagues to breastfeed by adopting a positive and accepting attitude.
 - Consider if needed, flexible approaches to enable the continuation of breastfeeding when a baby will not take milk from a bottle. This might involve the baby's carer attending the offices, at the cost of the mother, for the 30 minute break every four hours, to allow the mother to breastfeed. This would need a separate risk assessment undertaking.

A Breastfeeding Borough. Supporting the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes

Our Commitment

We will also work within the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and promote healthy infant feeding decision making for all staff and members of the public.

We will support the relevant provisions of the marketing code within our premises:

1. We will not advertise any breastmilk substitutes.
2. We will not give free samples of any product that promotes bottle feeding.
3. We will encourage our partners working within healthcare facilities to adhere to the code of marketing of breastmilk substitutes.
4. We will not support any contact of parents from formula company representatives.
5. We will not accept any gifts or personal samples from any company linked with formula companies.
6. We will not in any of our contact with parents use words or pictures idealising artificial feeding.
7. We will ensure that our information provided to staff and our population is scientific and factual.
8. When discussing formula infant feeding, we will recognise the evidence base regarding the risks of not breastfeeding.
9. Our guidance will support families with robust infant feeding information therefore reducing unsuitable products entering a child's diet.