

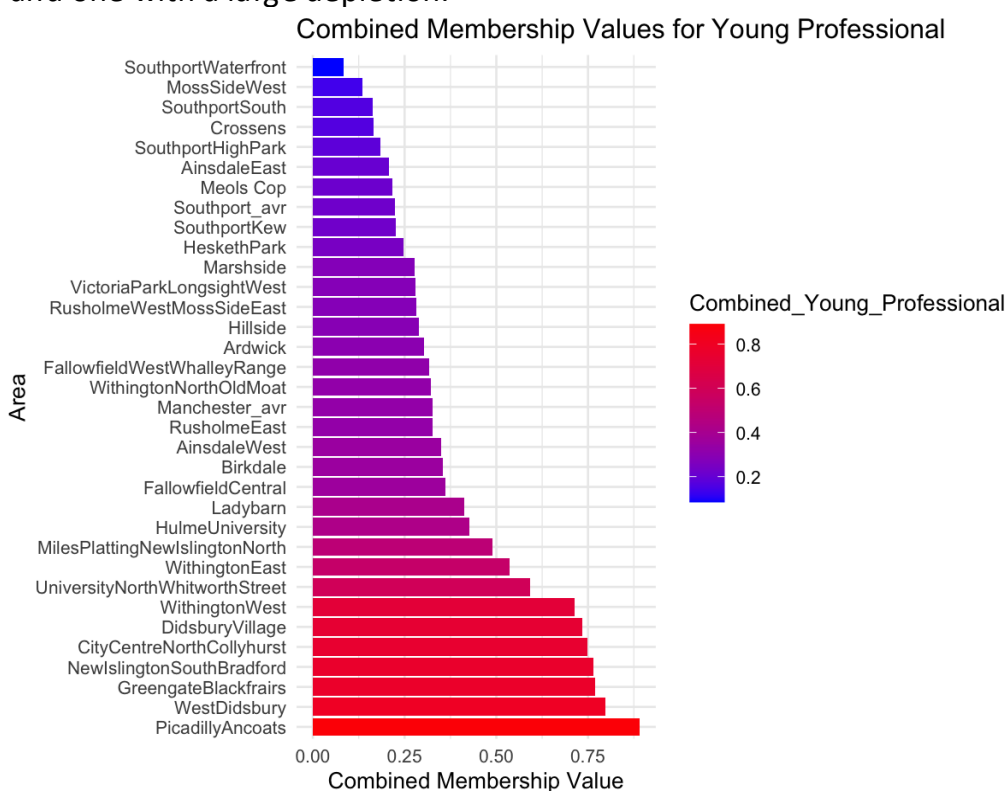


Overview of the Data Fellowship

This project aimed to quantify and analyse youth flight from Southport, focusing on its impact on regional inequalities and economic diversification. This required (1) cleaning and analysing data to compare young populations between Southport and neighbouring urban centres, (2) assessing the economic impact of these differences, and (3) developing policy recommendations to encourage multi-directional mobility patterns and support local economic growth.

Data Analysis

I used Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA) data from the 2021 census to create a dataset containing detailed demographic information for each area. I then used these factors to create profiles such as 'young professionals' who are individuals aged 18-34 who possess a degree and are employed in a 'professional' occupation. Each area was normalised on a scale of 0 to 1 across these factors. A score of 1 indicates an area with the highest possible concentration of young professionals, while a score closer to 0 suggests a significant depletion. The final scores were averaged to produce an overall "combined membership value" for each area. The analysis was carried out for all areas in England and Wales, and between Southport and Manchester for a more detailed comparison between an area with high in-migration of young people, and one with a large depletion.



Combined membership values for the concentration of young professionals across various Southport and Manchester, normalised between 0 and 1.

Findings

- Coastal communities and deprived inner-city areas suffer from high out-migration of young people.
- Young people with A-level or degree-level education are more likely to move away from these areas than less-educated people.

- Young professionals are highly concentrated in urban neighbourhoods such as Ancoats in Manchester. These areas have good transport links, professional job opportunities and many amenities, and their housing stock is mainly apartments. By contrast, Southport is not well connected to any major cities, has a disproportionate reliance on leisure, retail and care workers, and has amenities which appeal to older people and families.
- The rise in popularity of remote working could attract more working professionals to relocate to coastal communities. Community working spaces and good internet connectivity would improve its appeal.
- Cultural regeneration is necessary to attract people to traditional coastal communities. Disused retail space could be repurposed for creative and leisure use. Successful regeneration projects have created vibrant social hubs consisting of mixed-use spaces that can be used differently in the daytime and evening and offer changing activities, exhibitions and entertainment.

Key Skills Learnt

Through the course of the data fellowship I built on a range of research and professional skills, including:

- Deciding the best way of answering the research question, including knowing what data would be most relevant and which methodology would be the most useful.
- Cleaning and manipulating large datasets in R and Excel.
- Being able to draw conclusions from data analysis and knowing whether causality can be inferred.
- Managing my time effectively to balance deeper research with being on track to complete the project.
- Communicating effectively with the organisation and being able to ask for help and share ideas.



The Engine Room: a co-working and co-learning space in Southport developed by CivED CIC aiming to produce a generative 'civic ecology'.