

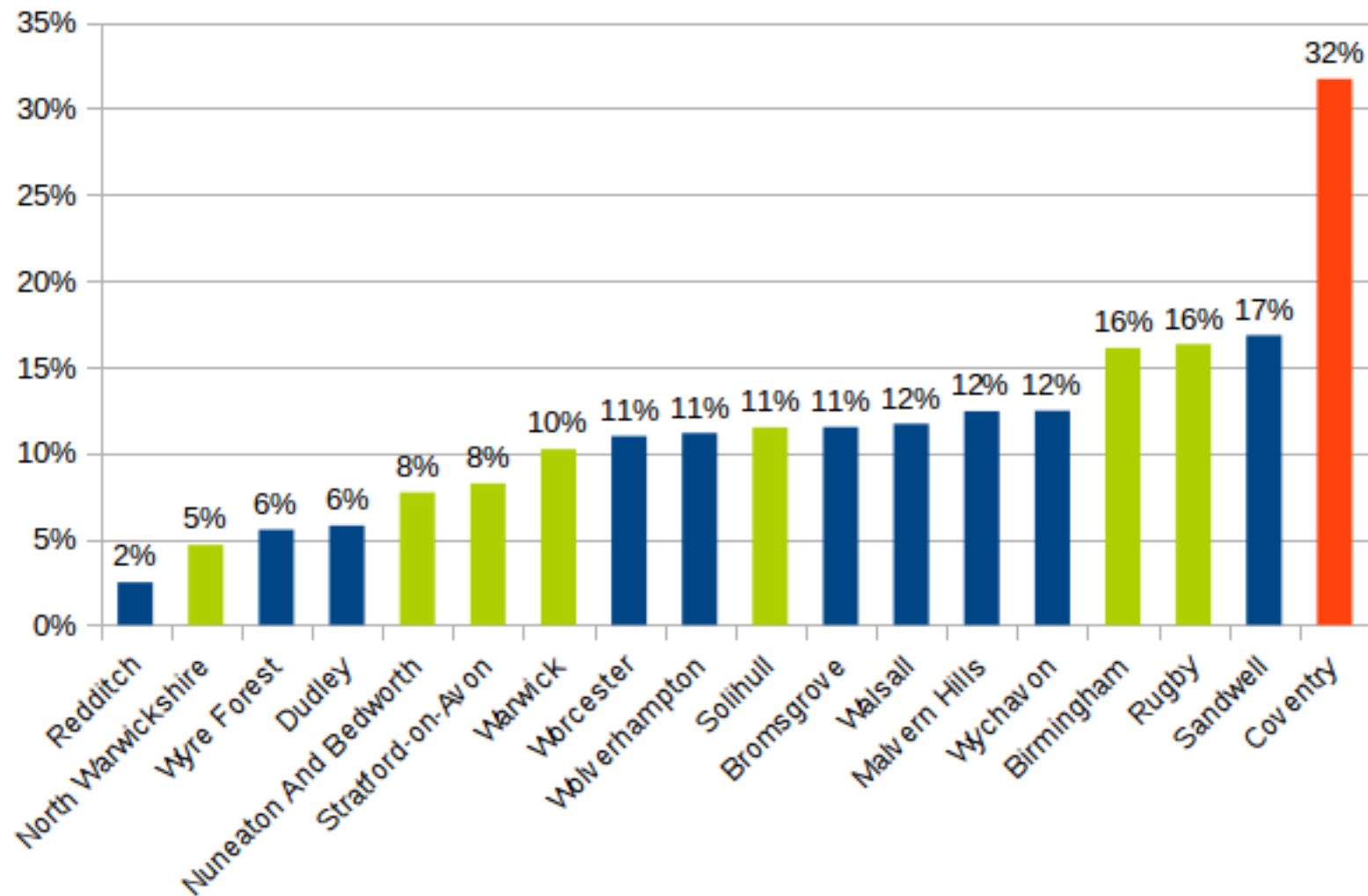
***Coventry Council took land out  
of green belt on the back of  
predictions of huge population  
growth.***

***Is it happening?***

# The Predictions

## Percentage Growth, West Midlands Region, 2011-2031

Source: ONS, Census2011 and ONS2014



Average Regional Growth =14%

# Is it credible?

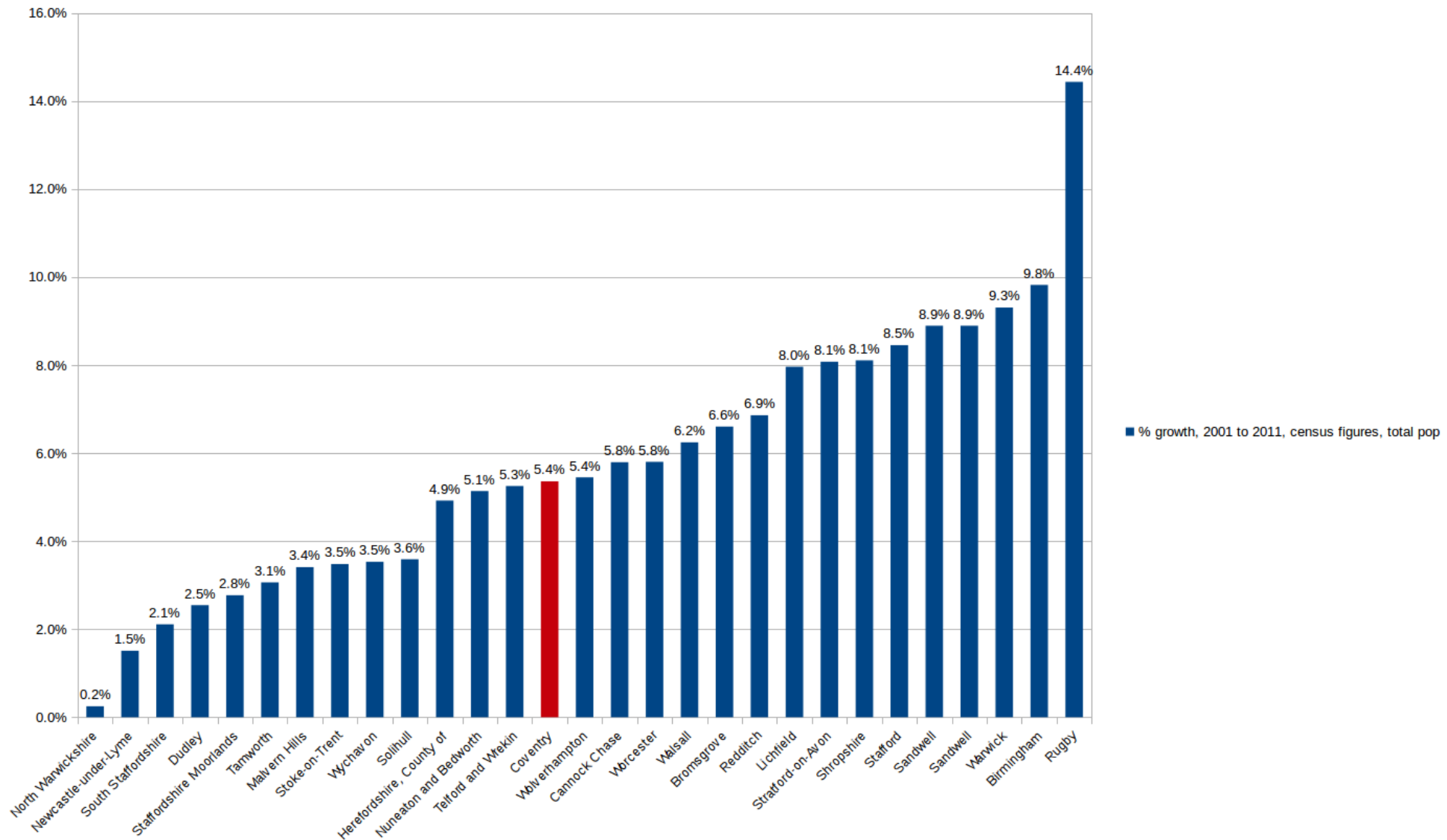
that Coventry is growing....

- twice as fast as Rugby or Birmingham,
- Three times as fast as Solihull or Warwick
- Four times as fast as Stratford?

“From the resulting distribution of **plausible estimates** for each local authority, the principal measure of uncertainty is calculated” Methodology for measuring uncertainty in ONS local authority mid-year population estimates: 2012 to 2016

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/methodologicalpublications/generalmethodology/onsworkingpaperseries/methodologyformeasuringuncertaintyinonslocalauthoritymidyearpopulationestimates2012to2015>

# In the peak years of East European migration, was there a boom in Coventry? 2001-2011



# **Why?**

**should a population explosion  
happen in Coventry?**

**Is it happening?**

# The elephant in the bathtub

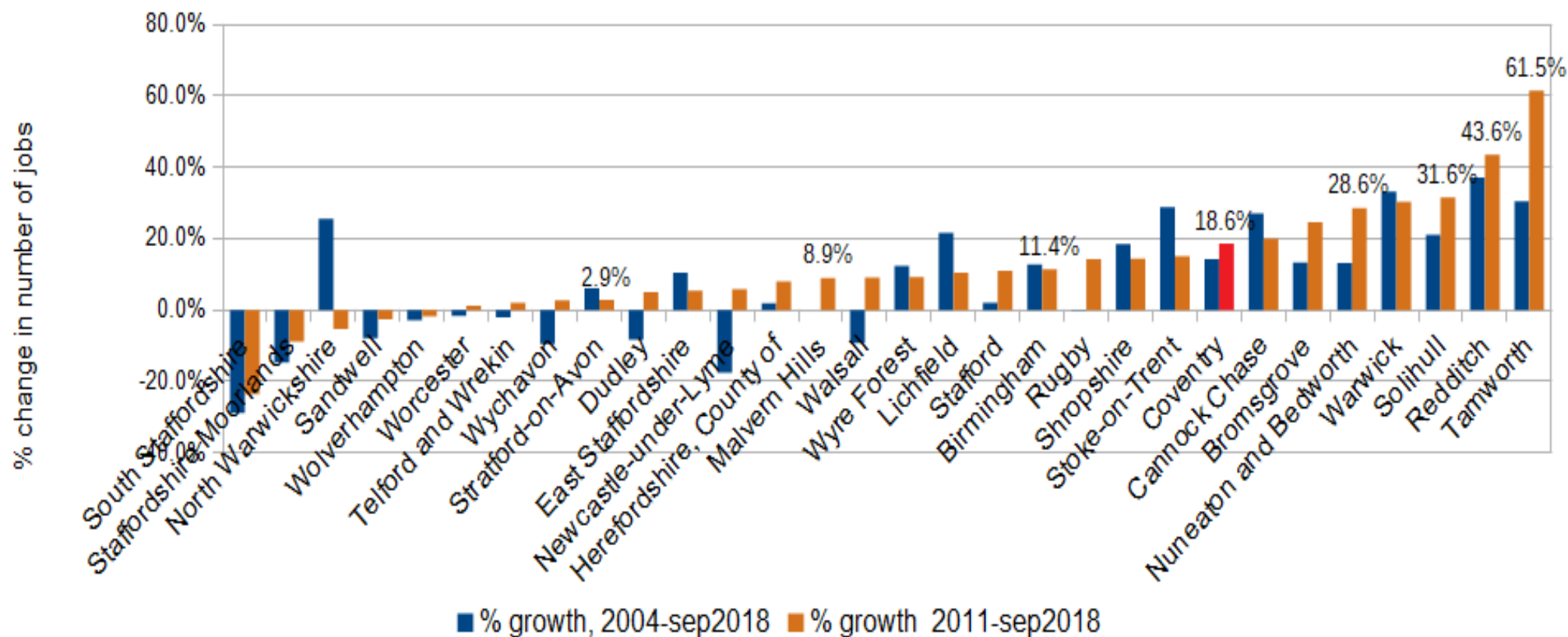
If there is an elephant in the bathtub, - if massive population growth is happening here, - we'll see the splash and the ripples. We'll see the changes, in:

- Jobs growth
- Gas and electric use,
- Voter numbers,
- School admissions,
- Pension & benefit claims,
- Car registrations
- A&E attendance
- House Prices
- Household Waste,

# Jobs Growth, West Midlands

Jobs Growth, West Midlands Region

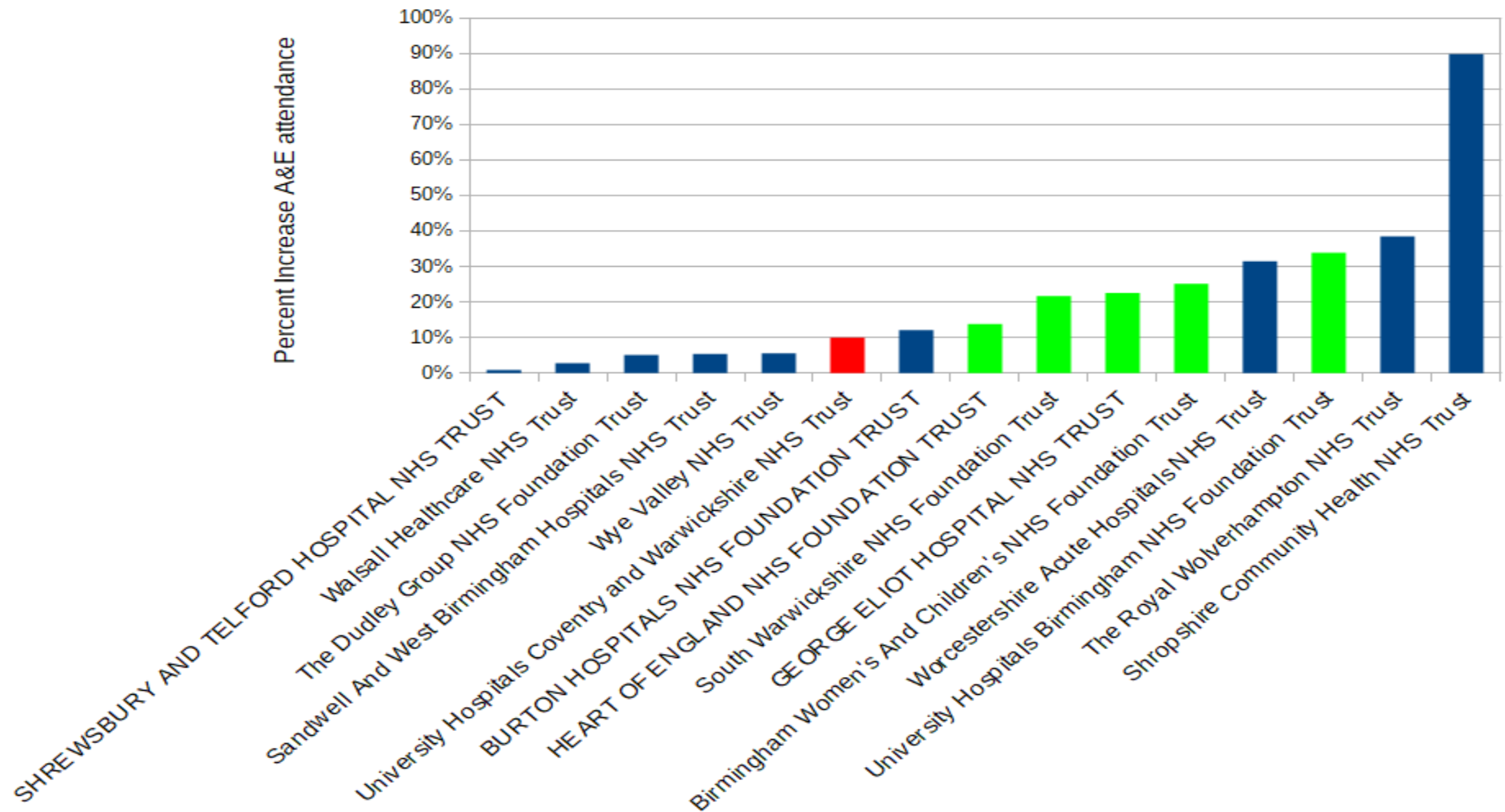
2004-2018, and 2011-2018, Source ONS



# A&E Attendance

Percent Increase, A&E Attendance 2011-12 to 2017-18

NHS Hospital Trusts, Former West Midlands Gov Region

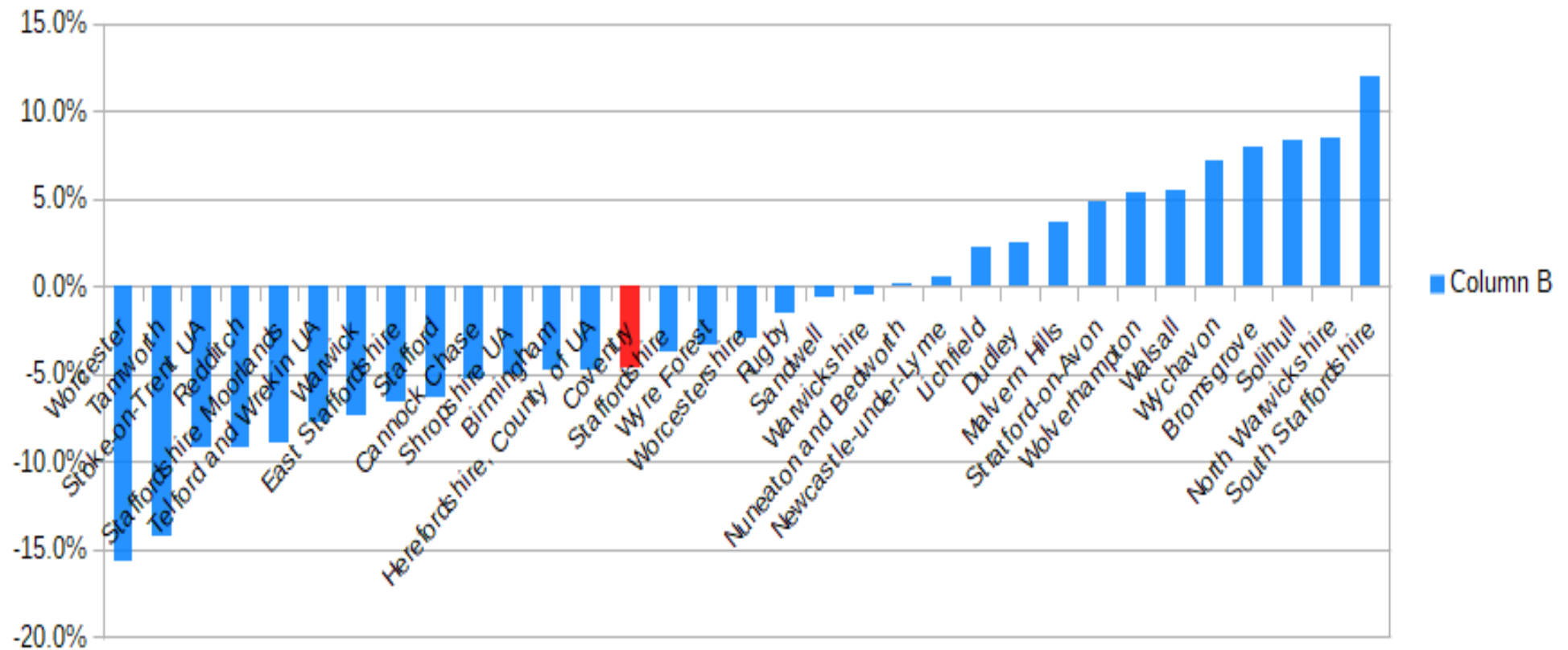


Green bars show Trusts adjacent to Coventry



# Births

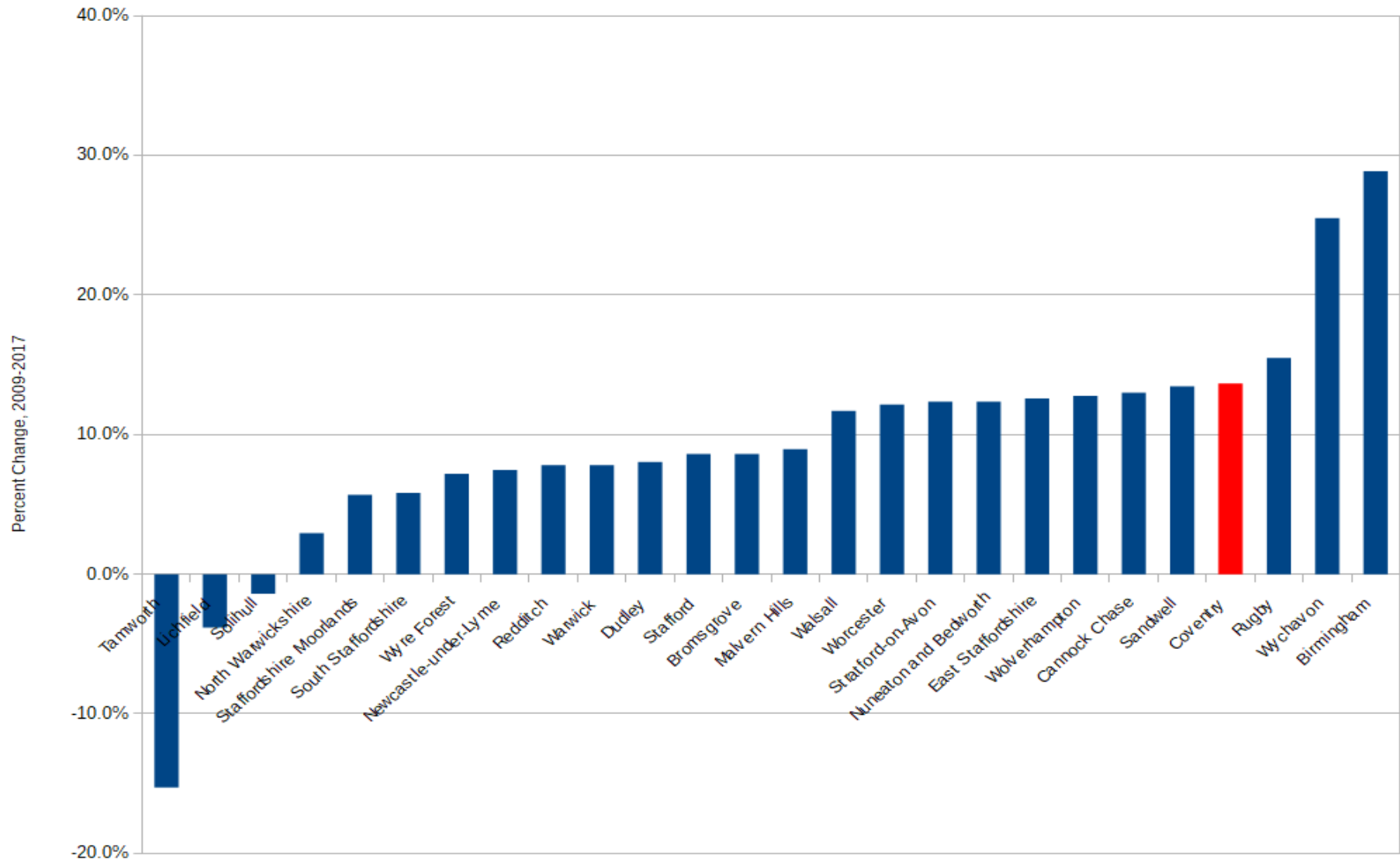
% change, Births 2009-2017



# Cars Registered, West Midlands

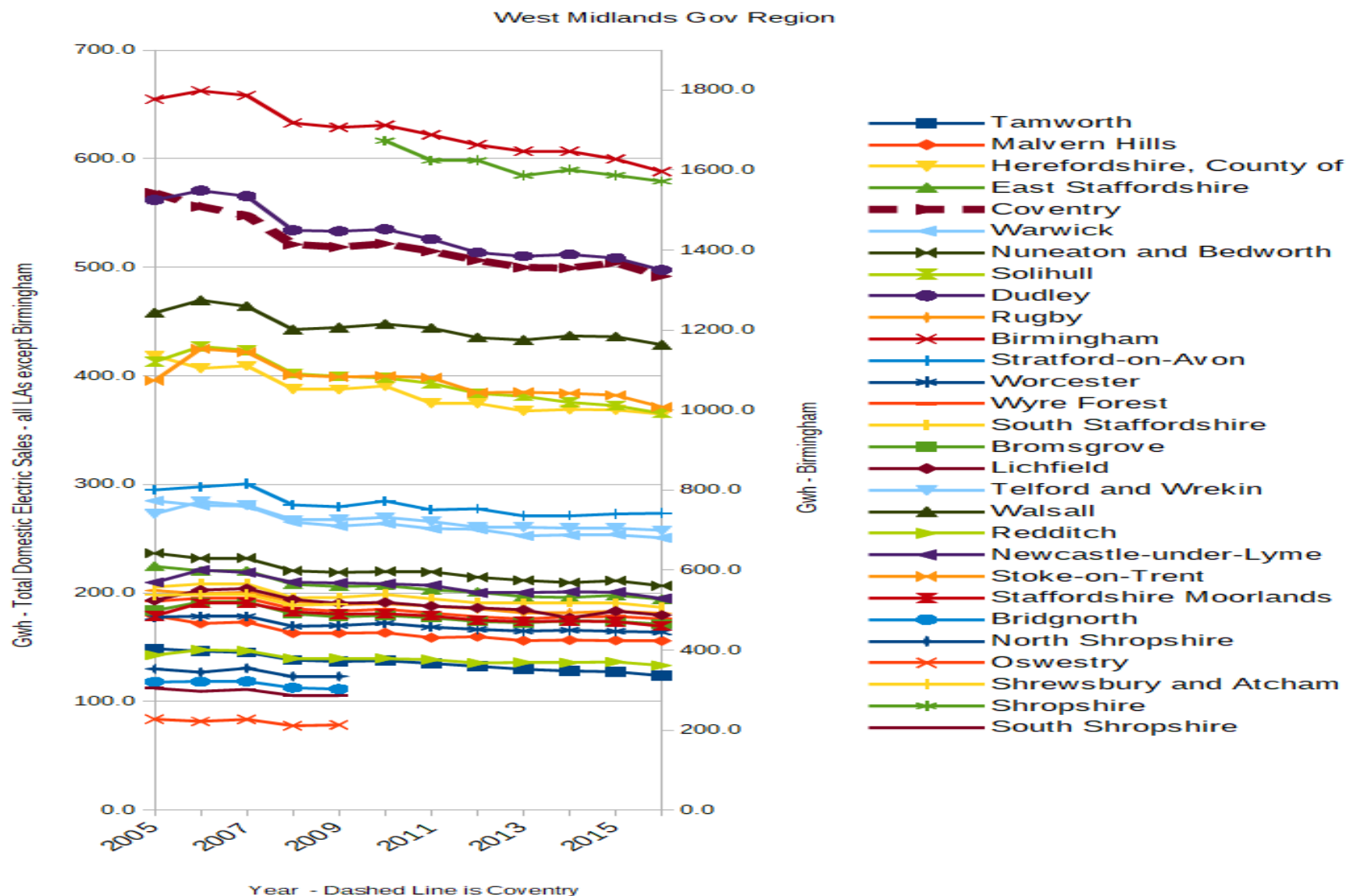
Car Registrations, Percent Change 2009-2017

West Midlands Gov Region , Source DfT



# Domestic Electric Use, West Midlands

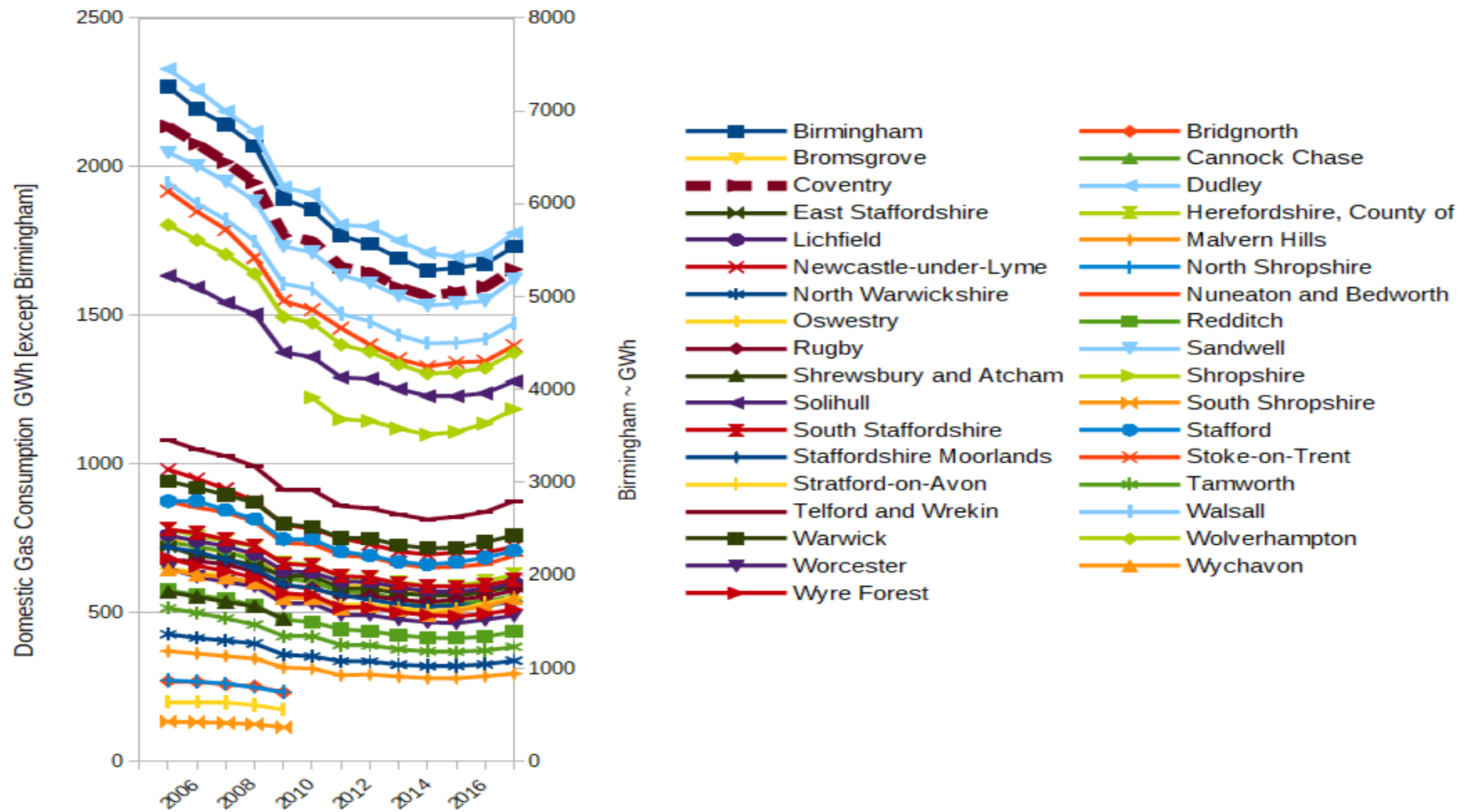
Domestic Electricity Sales 2005-2016



# Domestic Gas Use

West Midlands Regions Domestic Gas Consumption

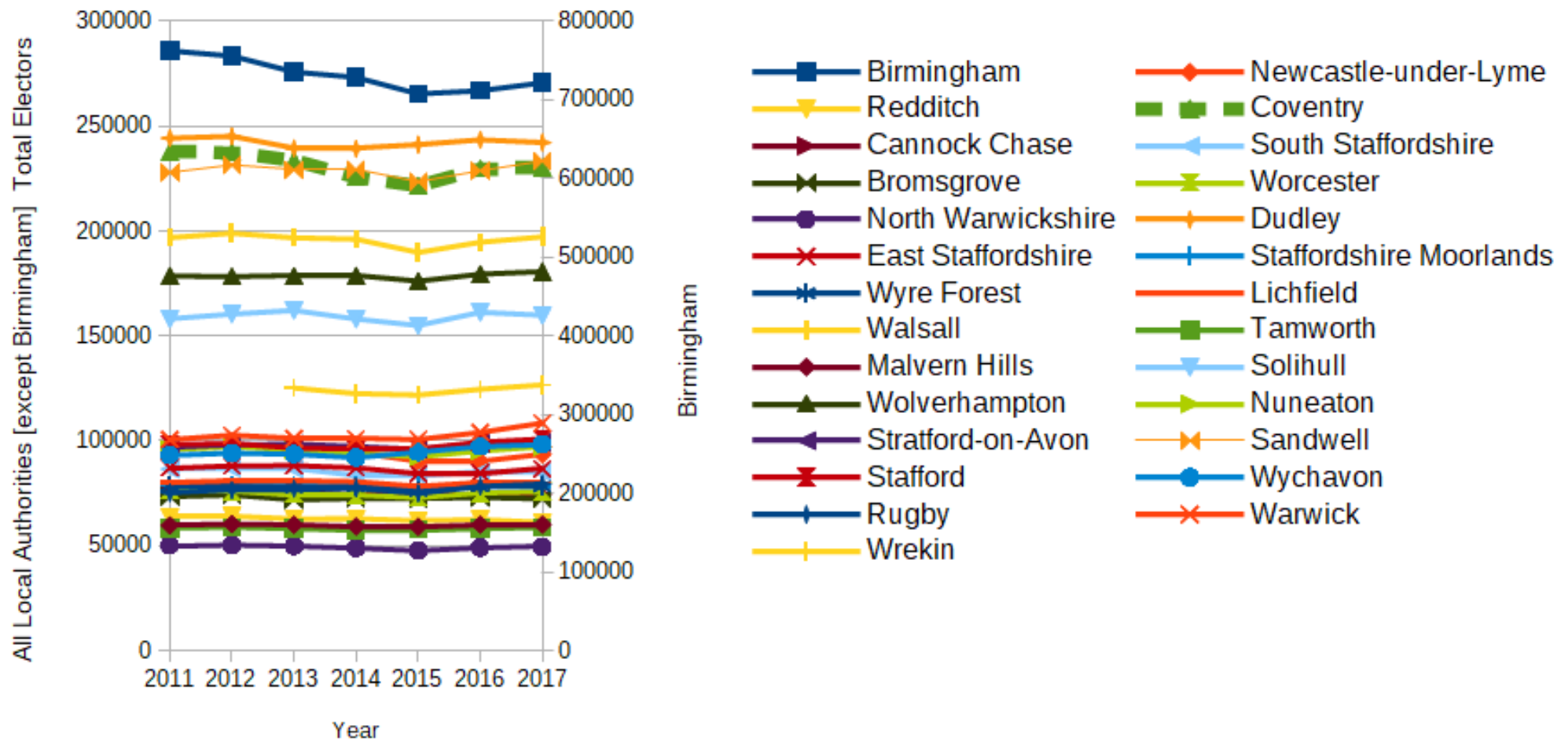
2005-2017



# Voters

Total Electors on 1 Dec of each year

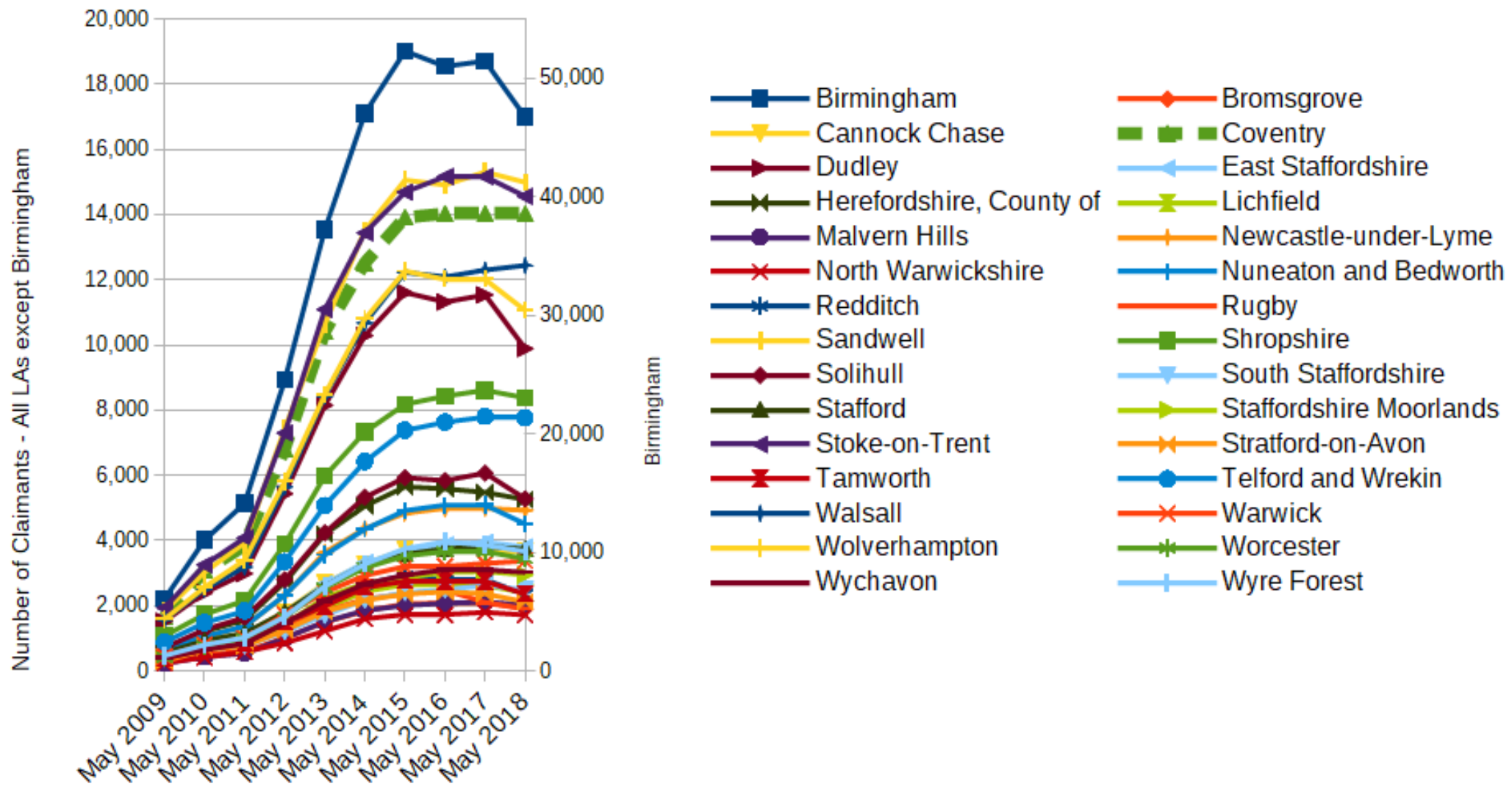
Local Authorities West Midlands Gov Region , source ONS



# ESA Claimants

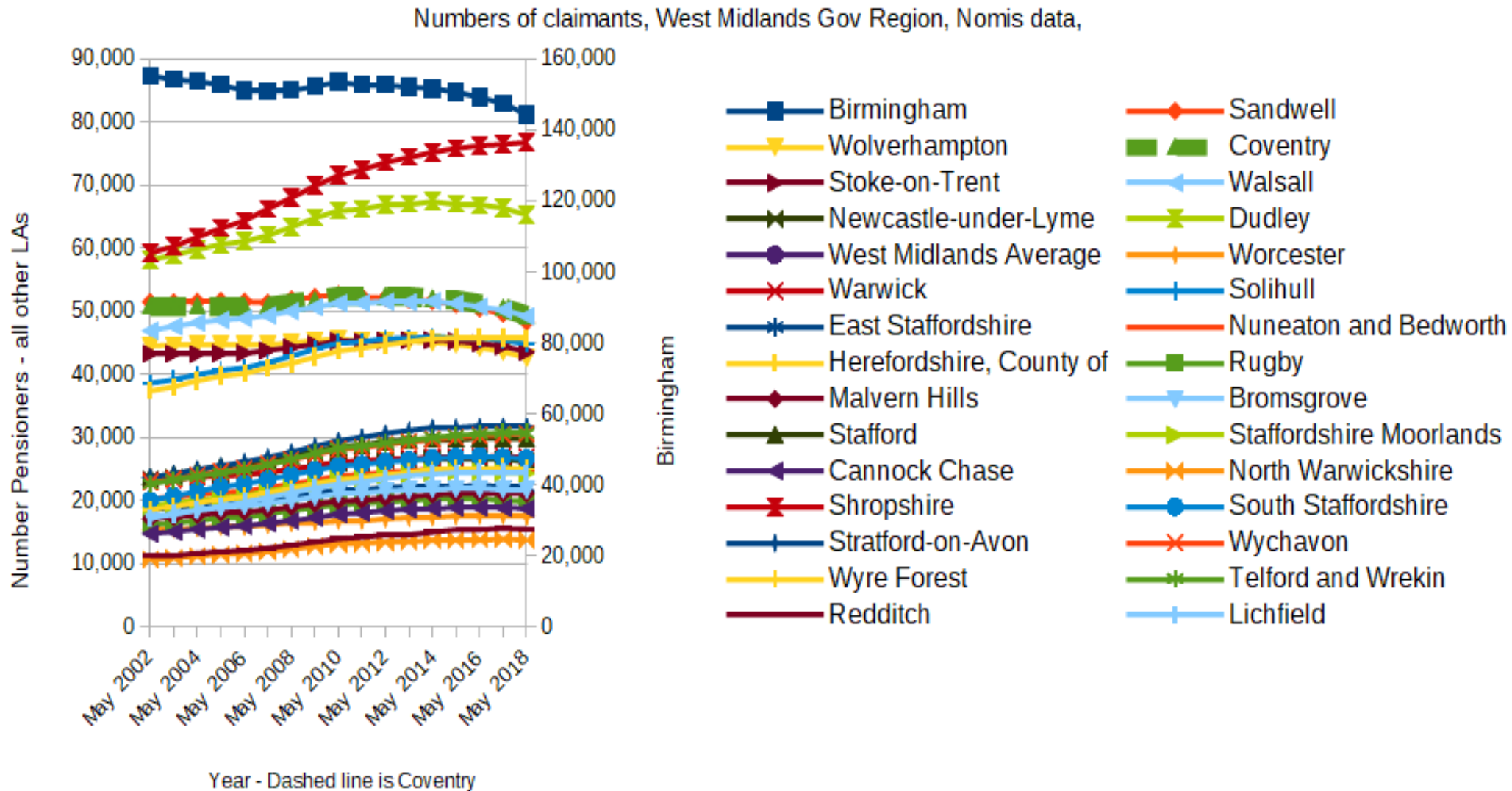
## ESA Claimants, West Midlands

2009-2018, source: Nomis



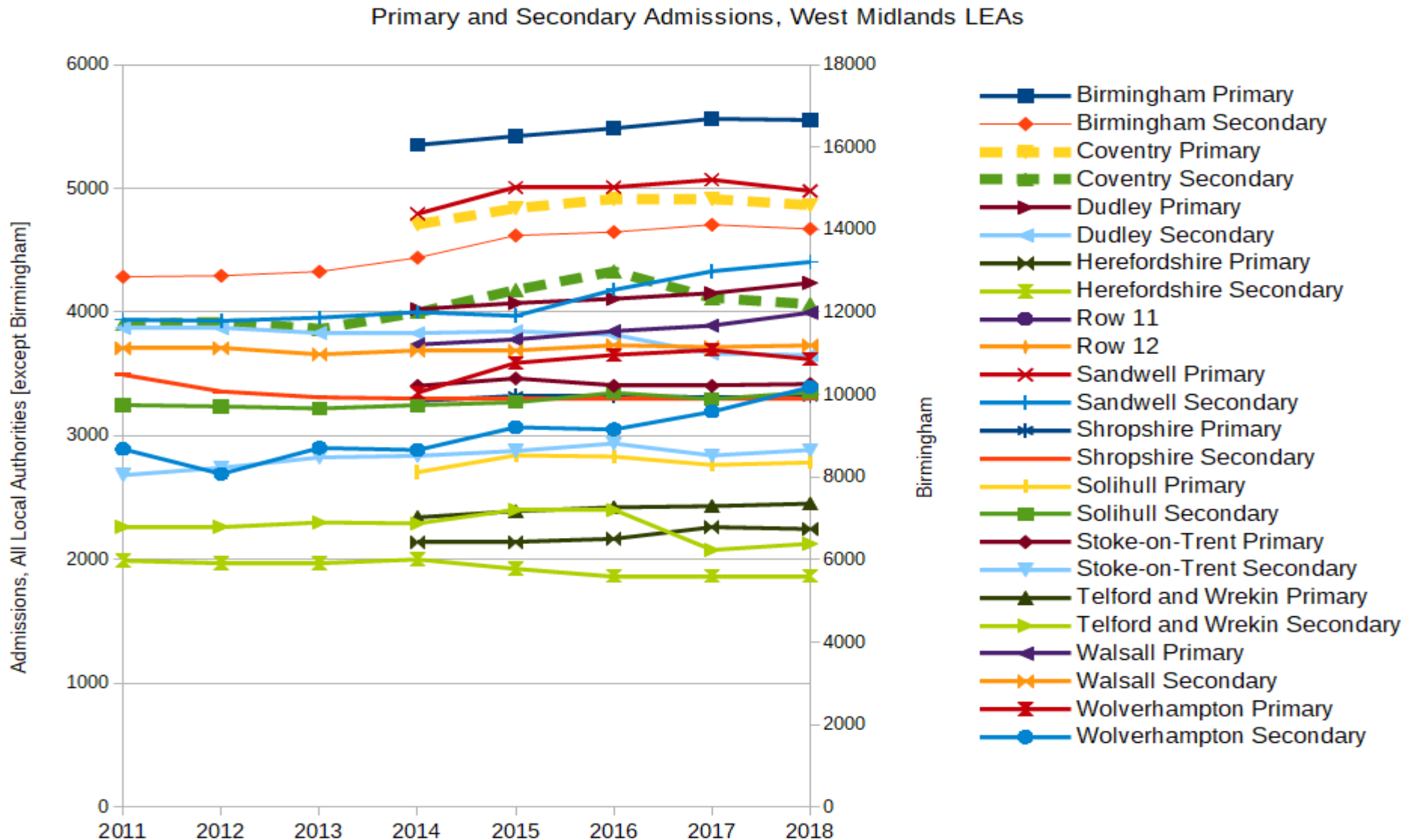
# State Pensions

State pensions, 2002-2018



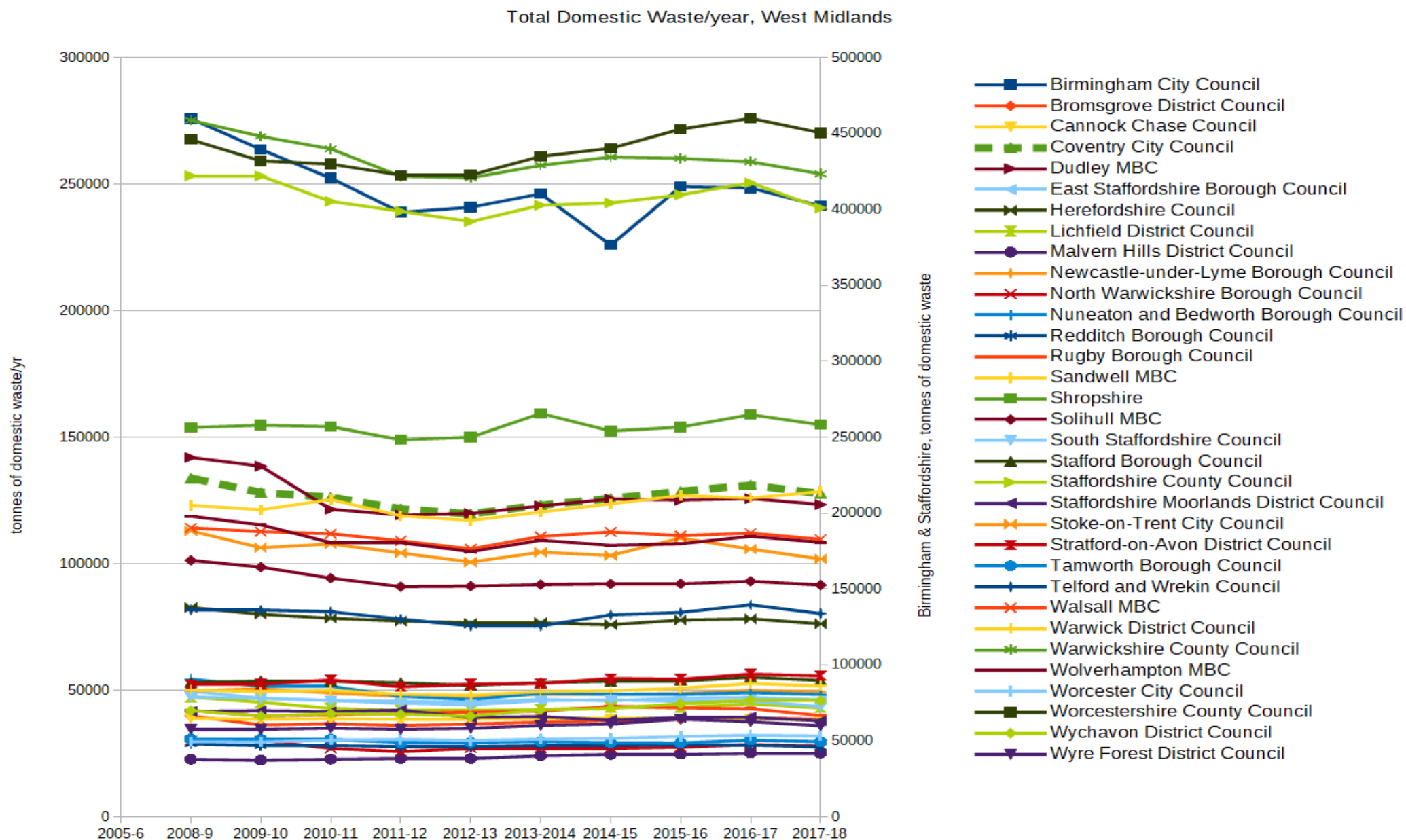


# School Admissions





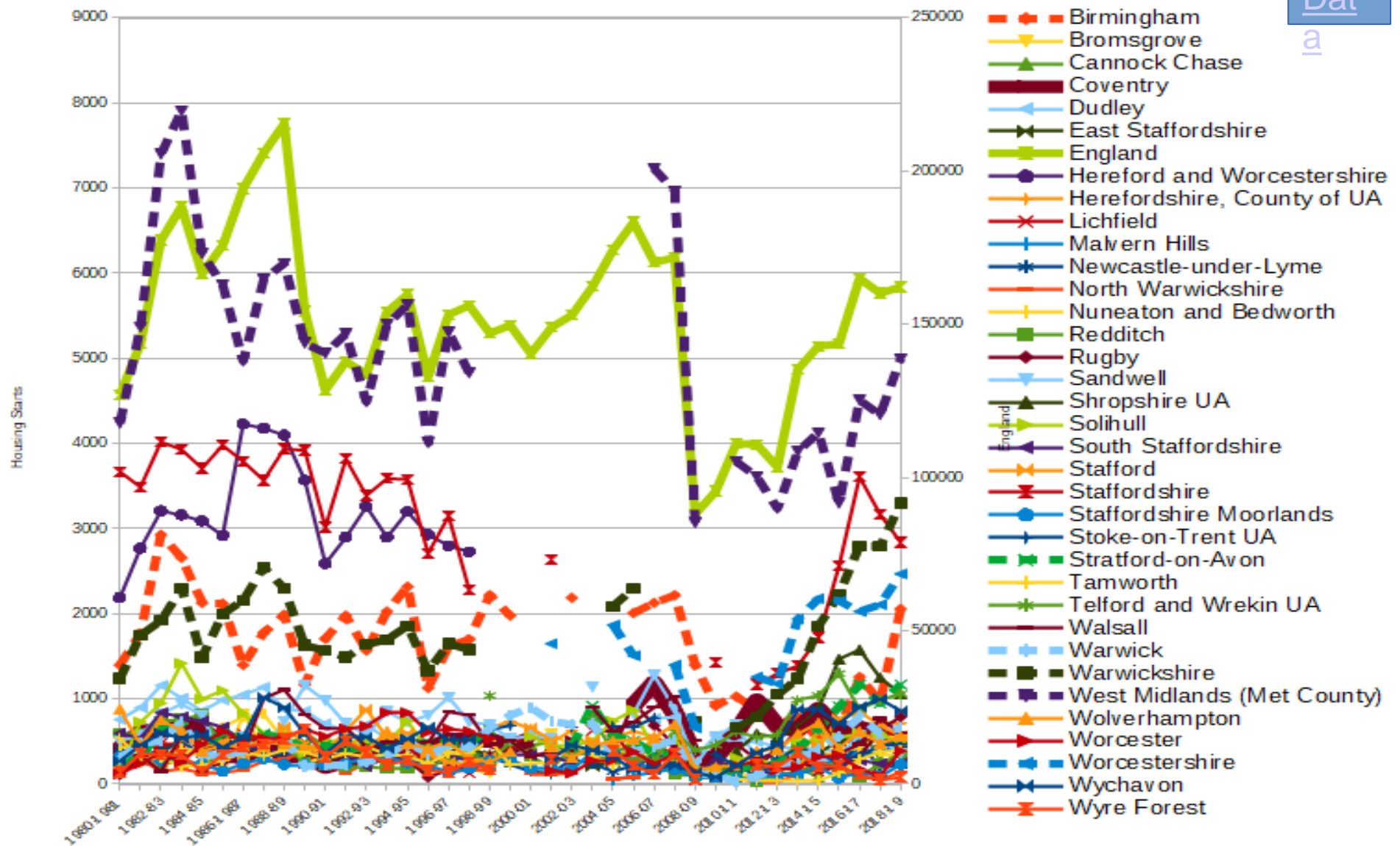
# Domestic Waste Production



# Starts - House Building

Housing Starts, West Midlands Gov Region

MHCLG, 4 July 19

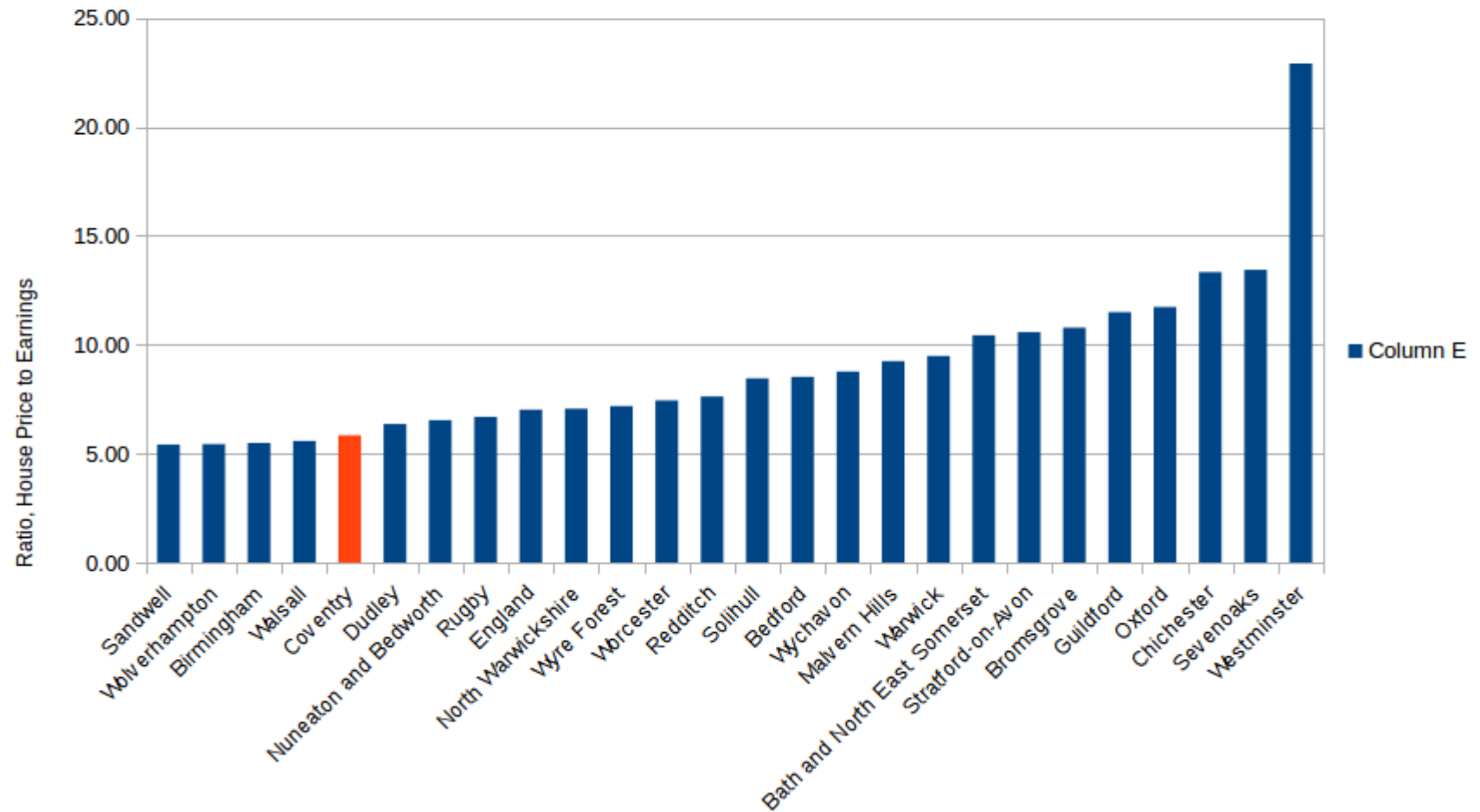


Data

# Housing in Coventry is among the most affordable in the country

Ratio of lower quartile house prices to lower quartile earnings, 2015

Source: Table 576, ONS



# Who are the hordes moving into Coventry?

They

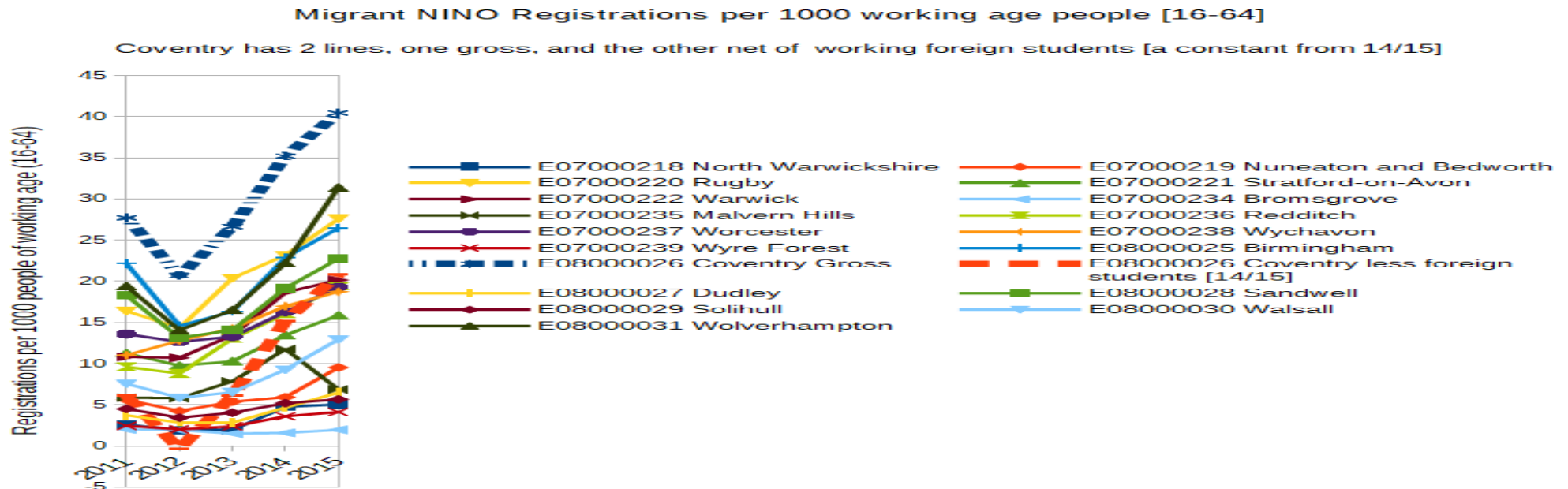
- Don't go to A&E,
- Don't vote
- Don't have babies
- Don't send children to school
- Don't buy houses
- Don't use gas and electric
- Don't claim state pension or ESA
- Don't produce waste

If they exist, they are ghosts or  
vampires, who leave no trace.

# Validation

- Professor David Coleman, Emeritus Professor of Demography at Oxford University “Your local analysis is as good as it can be, I think. I'd be happy to recommend your study.”
- Prof Tony Champion, Newcastle University, advisor to ONS: “Your PPT's challenge to the current set of ONS SNPP seems highly valid to me” “the onus of proof must surely be on ONS ....and Coventry to ....explain why the 'extra people' in the MYE have no impact.”

# The NINO puzzle



- Why are NINO registrations very high in Coventry? Each year 10,000 new foreign students start at the 2 Universities, and 4500 of them work. They must register for a NINO to be able to work.
- Remove student registrants, & NINO numbers in Cov are just average.

\*percentages of new students working come from ONS research published 31 Jan 2019  
 “Transforming population and migration statistics Case Study International student employment activity”

# A Glaring Discrepancy

6500 non EU foreign students graduate each year [HESA]

c3000 people emigrate [Intl] from Coventry/yr [ONS -SNPP2016]

## Where do the other 3500 go?

Not internal migration: 70-82% have left the UK so they won't register at a GP elsewhere in England. 99% have left Cov. [HESA destinations data].

New ONS research says 70-71% of non EU students leave the UK and don't return after graduation. That means at least 4550 leave Coventry each year. **ONS has the number of leavers too small by at least 1550 per year, and probably 3000/yr.** - of the 30% residue, 85% [1657] settle elsewhere [Hesa Destinations Data] see [https://www.slideshare.net/statisticsONS/transforming-population-and-migration-](https://www.slideshare.net/statisticsONS/transforming-population-and-migration-statistics-emigration-patterns-of-noneu-students-129833903)

# The ONS response?

**No comment**, of any kind, on the admin data.

**Partial, inaccurate information**, – “the latest evidence, ..., continues to suggest that Coventry is continuing to grow. For example, between mid-2011 and mid-2018 there have been 32,000 births and 19,000 deaths in Coventry, this means that natural change (the balance between births and deaths) added nearly 13,000 to the Coventry population. In addition, data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency shows the number of students in Coventry has increased by around 14,000 over the same period”

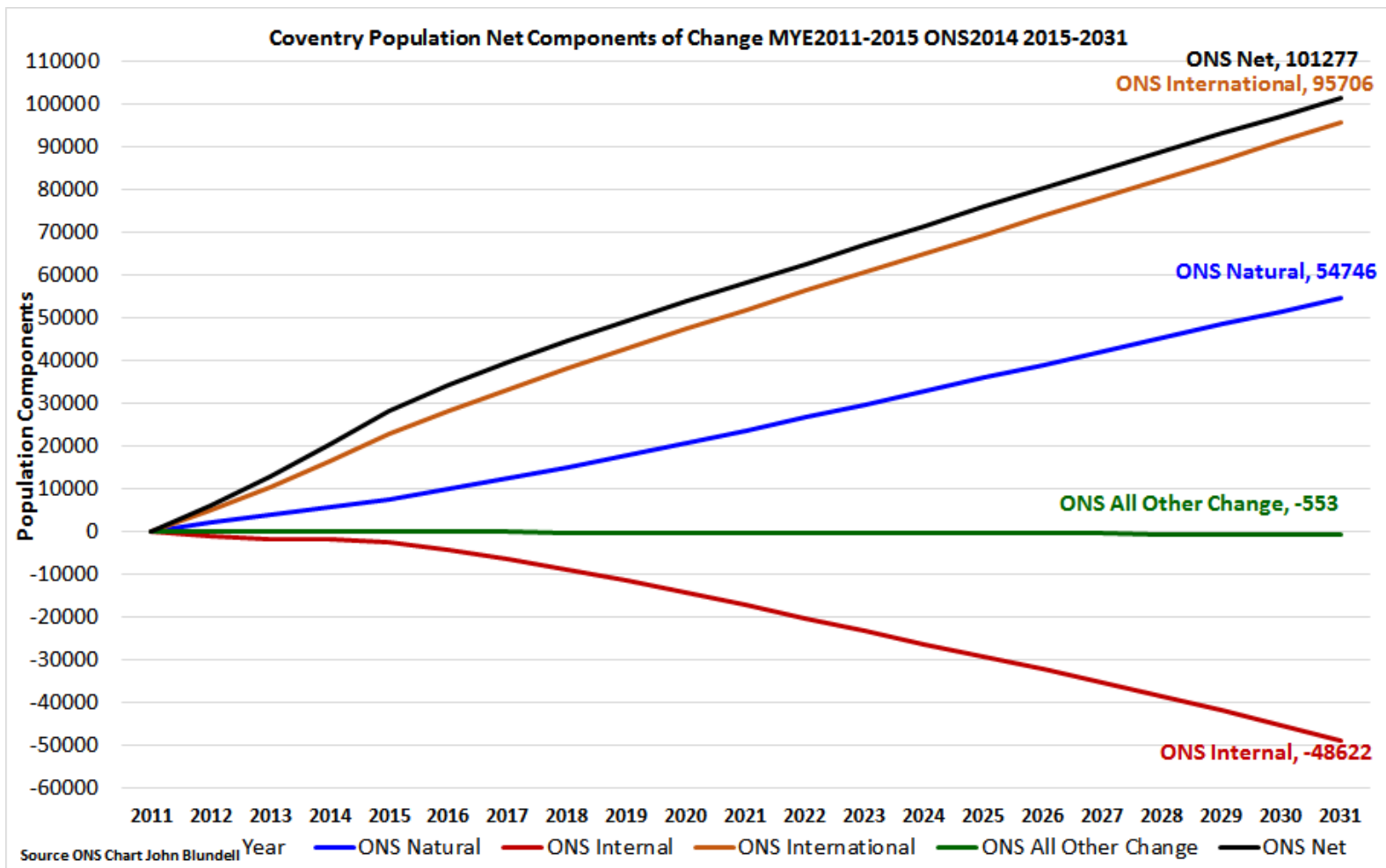
**No mention of migration.**

HESA.	Full Time	Part Time	Total
2011/12	36725	21765	58485
2017/18	50510	9320	59830
25% of students now live at home. ('Home and Away', Donnelly and Gansu, Feb 2018).			



# What's going on?

Net growth is all international migrants.



# Is ONS doing enough?

“It is critical that decision makers, including politicians, businesses and the public, have robust and reliable migration estimates.” **ONS must ...continue to inform users about the extent of any quality issues** .... you also highlight considerable remaining uncertainty.“

“Users are central to this process and we expect you to continue to engage with a range of users of migration statistics.” **Ed Humpherson, Director General for Regulation, Office for Statistics Regulation, 21 Aug 2019**

Councillor, ...”I understand your concerns and frustrations with the figures and the data. As previously indicated though it is almost impossible to divert from the ONS projections as a basis for housing requirements. We tried this in 2012 and our Plan was rejected by the Planning Inspectorate. The key here is the data process managed and issued by ONS. I strongly advise Merle to take his data to them and seek to influence their publications and assessments. Mark Andrews, Planning Manager, Coventry City Council, 27 Aug19

# Is ONS doing enough - 2?

“In producing our population estimates and projections we have to apply methods that are applied at national level and then consistently across lower levels of geography, with all values constrained to ensure they continue to sum to the national total. We are confident that our methods and quality assurance are as robust as they can be given the data and methods currently available. While we consider our estimates the best practicable, we also recognise that they are estimates and publish confidence intervals that indicate how accurate they are. **We feel that the underestimate you claim for Coventry is within the confidence intervals we have published.**” Rich Pereira, Deputy Director, Population Statistics, Public Policy Analysis

**“The ONS has fallen a long way short, lacking intellectual curiosity, prone to silly mistakes and unresponsive to the needs of consumers of its statistics.”** Andrew Tyrie, Chair Treasury Select Committee.

	2016 est	Confidence interval - lower	upper
ONS	352,911	331,963	373,859
Merle – same rate of growth 2001-2011	323,739		

# Have I done enough?

“Which information, might help a challenge be authoritative enough, to revise the international migration element for Coventry in ONS population estimates or projections?”

Prof Ludi Simpson, Sept 2018

# Does it matter?

This is a death sentence for the green belt around  
Coventry,  
Shakespeare's Forest of Arden will be covered  
with houses

# Questions?

Merle Gering

[merle@waitrose.com](mailto:merle@waitrose.com)

02476 335287

07874 082091

I am happy to share the detailed research with anyone who asks for it.

Slide show and documents on

[Www.coventrygreenbelt.org](http://Www.coventrygreenbelt.org)

# The real Coventry need?

- 930 homes per year has been perfectly adequate = 18,600 homes in 20 years
- Same growth as Regional average (14%/yr) = 18800 in 20 years . Close to what can go on brownfield in Coventry.
- Coventry Council thought it was 10-12000 in 2012.

Your best guess?

# What do house prices tell us?

SNPP2014 projects growth of 100000 people ,  
2011-2031

Housing Need = 2100 homes/yr

Actual delivery, since 2011, c 867 family homes/yr

Are prices rocketing?

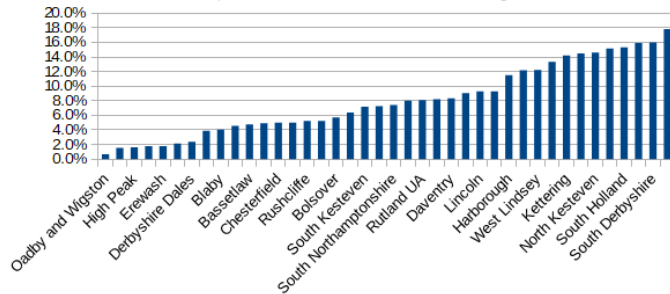


# Did extreme growth in 1 LA happen before?

## 2001-2011

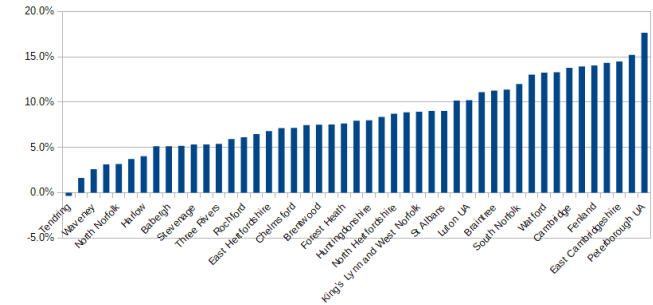
East Midlands Gov Region

Population Growth, 2001-2011, census figs



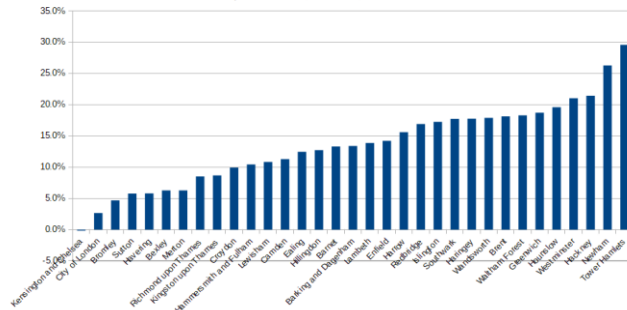
East of England Gov Region

Population Growth, 2001-2011, census data



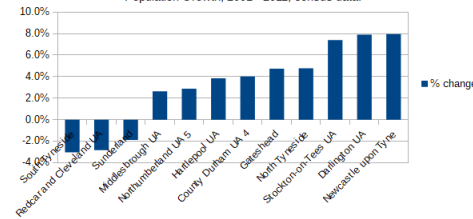
London Gov Region

Population Growth, 2001-2011, census data



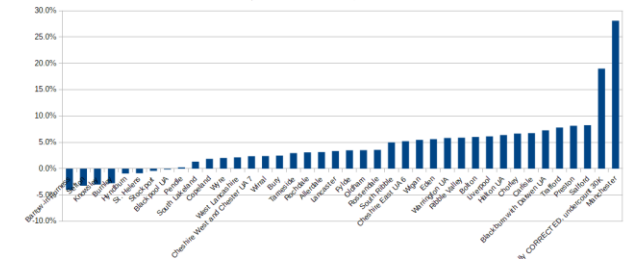
North East Government Region

Population Growth, 2001 - 2011, census data.



Northeast Gov Region,

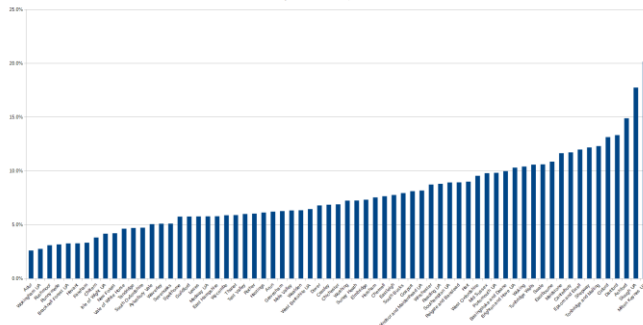
Population Growth 2001-2011, census data



Note: there was an undercount of 30K for Manchester in 2001 - there were boundary changes

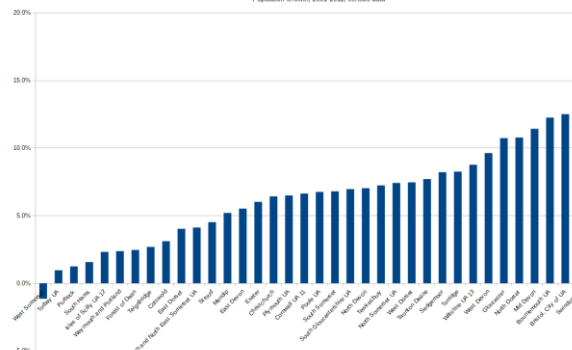
South East Gov Region

Population Growth 2001-2011, census data



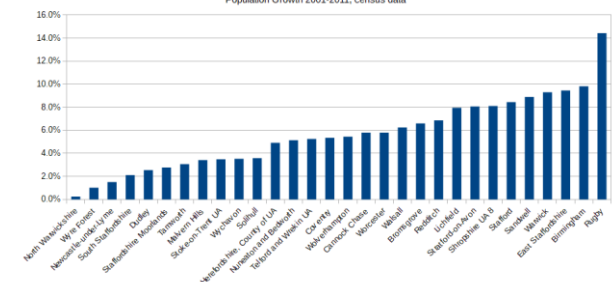
South West Gov Region,

Population Growth, 2001-2011, census data



West Midlands Gov Region

Population Growth 2001-2011, census data



# Anomalous Regional Growth

How do we explain, the exceptions on the previous slide?

- Growth appears much higher in Manchester than in its neighbours because there was a boundary change.
- There was exceptional growth in Rugby, because a) there was a moratorium on building in the south of Warwickshire at the time (approx 2005-9) and b) a decision was made to build huge estates SW of Rugby.

# New ONS Household Projections

New ONS Household projections in Sept 2018,  
reduced the housing need in Warwickshire by  
25%

# Coventry, Warwick, and Nuneaton Bedworth should

- Reject applications to build on former green belt – because of new evidence.
- start a review of their local plans – which are out of date.
- **return land to green belt**
- **Revise the memorandum of understanding**

# ONS has trouble in Coventry

- In a 2012 ONS Research paper\*, they found their Coventry estimates were much too large.
- Between the 2001 and 2011, their estimate of population was 12,500 too big
- Over 20 years, this would add a further 25,000 ghosts to the population numbers.

\*[Examining the difference](#) between the rolled-forward mid-2011 population estimates and the 2011 Census-based MYEs at local authority level see fig 4.3.1

# International Students 1

- After London, Coventry has more international students than any other UK city.
- The government claims very large numbers stay on after graduation – 90,000 per yr.
- The only tool the ONS has to count them in and out of the country, is the International Passenger Survey
- MPs said it's "little better than a best guess". Lords say it's "wholly inadequate".
- UK Statistics Authority says it cannot be used at local level because sample sizes are tiny – 42 for Coventry - margin of error is huge
- IPPR 2016 research & Exit Checks found most go home

# The Needs

**An independent review process**

**Better guidance – on the uncertainties and limitations, especially on outliers.**

**Transparency. Show us the calculation!**

**Engagement with Reality.**

“In producing our population estimates and projections we have to apply methods that are applied at national level and then consistently across lower levels of geography, with all values constrained to ensure they continue to sum to the national total. We are confident that our methods and quality assurance are as robust as they can be given the data and methods currently available. While we consider our estimates the best practicable, we also recognise that they are estimates and publish confidence intervals that indicate how accurate they are. We feel that the underestimate you claim for Coventry is within the confidence intervals we have published.” Rich Pereira, Deputy Director, Population Statistics, Public Policy Analysis

“The ONS has fallen a long way short, lacking intellectual curiosity, prone to silly mistakes and unresponsive to the needs of consumers of its statistics.” Andrew Tyrie, Chair Treasury Select Committee.

# 3 Sources of Error

	Extra people, wrongly added to population total
<p>UPC – documented special problem in Coventry* ONS</p> <p><small>*Examining the difference between the rolled-forward mid-2011 population estimates and the 2011 census-based myes.pdf</small></p> <p><small>http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/specific/population-and-migration/population-statistics-research-unit-psru-examining-the-difference-between-the-rolled-forward-mid-2011-population-estimates-and-2011-census-based-myes.pdf</small></p>	25,000
Inflated Births and low Deaths	20,000
<p>Student Numbers – ONS counts them in Coventry when we can show they have left the country.</p>	75,000



# Bending the Numbers

- Not long ago, the Council said they only needed 10-12,000 new homes, for the same time period
- Birth rates been inflated and death rates suppressed
- Over 20 years this adds 20,000 phantom people.

	Actual ONS/NHS figures					GL Hearn Projections.			
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
<b>Births</b>	4728	4599	4513	4517	4531	5318	5379	5433	5533
<b>Deaths</b>	2650	2727	2584	2799	2712	2514	2497	2495	2487
<b>Natural change</b>	2078	1872	1929	1930	1931	2804	2882	2938	3045
ONS report births and deaths by calendar years						GL Hearn project births and deaths by financial? years.			

# International Students 2

- The home office says 90,000 non EU international students overstay each year
- Scaling this to Coventry, it adds 3750 overstaying int'l students to the population, each year.
- In fact, Higher Education Statistics Authority data shows 95% leave the region within 6 months.
- **Over 20 years, this adds 75,000 ghost students to the population.**

# 1. How good are ONS student migration figures?

“Many of the available measures [of migration] are **wholly inadequate**. . . . . the International Passenger Survey . . . . . cannot bear the burden placed upon it and cannot be relied upon to provide accurate estimates of net migration.”  
Student migration is a “significant challenge”

[‘Brexit and the Labour Market’](#), House of Lords Economic Affairs Committee 21 July 2017.

“The [ONS] former-student emigration estimate.... creates doubts about the patterns of student migration and generates a narrative that is **potentially misleading**”

‘The Quality Of The Long-Term Student Migration Statistics’, 27 July 2017, Office of Statistics Regulation

## 2. How good are ONS student migration figures – the exit checks

source: Second report on statistics being collected under the exit checks programme

- 97.4% of students left before their visa expired.
- Only 3,500 overstayed
- Not 75,000! - as per IPS –

(average figures 2012-16)

## Validation 2 – the market

- If population was growing by 100,000 over 20 years, it would mean 5000 extra people annually.
- They would need 2100 extra homes each year
- Since the start of the plan, in 2011, Coventry has built 930 new homes per year.
- If there was such a huge shortfall in the market, prices and rents would be rocketing.
- In fact, Coventry is one of the cheapest places in the country to buy a house.

# Jobs Growth

- Coventry has had only middling jobs growth.
- Other towns have had far better employment growth.

## Jobs growth, 2011-16

Coventry = 9.8%

regional average = 7.3%

Solihull = 28.9%

Warwick = 21.8%

Jobs growth is NOT driving a population explosion in Coventry

# Commuting

- Do people flock here for cheap houses and work elsewhere?
- If that were the explanation, other places with cheap housing, - Nuneaton, Walsall, Wolverhampton, Sandwell, Dudley - would expect similar population increase.
- It's not happening. Growth is far less in other towns with cheap housing. Commuting is not the driver of massive population growth in Coventry

# A close look at the numbers – are students counted in to Coventry population growth?

The Coventry inspector, and Hearn, claimed that int'l migrants are workers. But:

ONS tell us that 9061 intl migrants in 2015 arrived and 2650 left in 2015: .

The same year, 6530 non EU foreign students graduated from the 2 Cov uni's. (HESA data)

Therefore,  $6530 - 2650 = \mathbf{3880 \text{ foreign students}}$ , must still be counted, by ONS, as somewhere in the UK. The inspector claimed they could have moved to another city. This is not possible because:

we also know, from HESA destinations surveys, that 82% of non EU foreign students leave the country within 6 months of graduation. Only 18% can be left in the country. (ie  $18\% \times 6530 = 1175$ ).

Therefore, of the 3880 foreign students still in the UK, according to ONS, no more than 1175, can possibly be accounted for by internal migration – as the others have left the country, they will not trigger any measure of internal migration. They must still be counted into the Coventry totals ie.

$3880 - 1175 = 2705/\text{year}$  will be added to the Coventry population total.

Over 20 years, this would add 54100 extra ghosts to the Coventry population or a need for