

City of Wolverhampton Annual Economic Review 2025

January 2026



Our Measures of Success - The Black Country Performance Management Framework

In the Black Country we will:		Where we are now		Change over the last year ¹		Direction of travel relative to national average since 2004		Scale of the challenge (To reach England where applicable)			
Grow our Population and Reverse Net Outward Migration Particularly to Environs		DUD	331,930	DUD	+3,577 (+1.1%)	DUD	+25,759 (+8.4%)				
		SAN	353,860	SAN	+4,026 (+1.2%)	SAN	+65,011 (+22.5%)				
		WAL	295,678	WAL	+4,441 (+1.5%)	WAL	+38,976 (+15.2%)				
		WOL	281,251	WOL	+5,650 (+2.1%)	WOL	+40,684 (+16.9%)				
		BC	1,262,719	BC	+17,694 (+1.4% BC) +1.2% Eng.	BC	+170,430 (+15.6% BC) +16.8% Eng.				
Raise Incomes		DUD	£35,486	DUD	+£700 (+2.0%)	DUD	+£16,295 (+84.9%)	DUD	£35,486		
		SAN	£33,029	SAN	+£1,109 (+3.5%)	SAN	+£14,320 (+76.5%)	SAN	£33,029		
		WAL	£34,036	WAL	+£1,538 (+4.7%)	WAL	+£15,358 (+82.2%)	WAL	£34,036		
		WOL	£35,858	WOL	+£2,773 (+8.4%)	WOL	+£17,293 (+93.1%)	WOL	£35,858		
		BC	£34,602 (avg.)	BC	+£1,530 (+4.6% BC) +4.3% Eng.	BC	+£15,817 (+84.2% BC) +74.9% Eng.	BC	£34,602 (avg.)		
Achieve Better Population Balance		DUD	17.0%			DUD	-0.1pp	DUD	17.0%		
		SAN	10.8%			SAN	Opp	SAN	10.8%		
		WAL	13.7%			WAL	-0.5pp	WAL	13.7%		
		WOL	13.4%			WOL	-0.3pp	WOL	13.4%		
		BC	13.6%			BC	-0.3pp BC +0.5pp Eng.	BC	13.6%		
Transform the Environment		70.5% of residents satisfied with Black Country as a place to live						77.8% resident satisfaction			
Regenerated Our Economy (pp = percentage points)											
Reduce the Output Gap		DUD	£5.8bn	DUD	+£664m	DUD	+£3.5bn	DUD	-£5.8bn		
		SAN	£5.4bn	SAN	+£463m	SAN	+£3.9bn	SAN	-£5.4bn		
		WAL	£5.1bn	WAL	+£441m	WAL	+£3.1bn	WAL	-£5.1bn		
		WOL	£3.5bn	WOL	+£435m	WOL	+£2.4bn	WOL	-£3.5bn		
		BC	£19.8bn	BC	+£2.0bn	BC	+£12.9bn	BC	-£19.8bn		
Raise the Number of Local Jobs		DUD	106,000	DUD	-5,000 (-4.5%)	DUD	-12,000 (-10.2%)				
		SAN	125,000	SAN	-2,000 (-1.6%)	SAN	+2,000 (+1.6%)				
		WAL	98,000	WAL	-1,000 (-1.0%)	WAL	+4,000 (+4.3%)				
		WOL	111,000	WOL	+1,000 (+0.9%)	WOL	+7,000 (+6.7%)				
		BC	440,000	BC	-7,000 (-1.6% BC) +0.6% Eng.	BC	+1,000 (+0.2% BC) +19.8% Eng.				
Increase the Total Employment Rate		DUD	75.1%	DUD	-1.6pp	DUD	+2.1pp	DUD	+1,296		
		SAN	65.7%	SAN	-1.9pp	SAN	+1.3pp	SAN	+20,953		
		WAL	71.8%	WAL	-3.2pp	WAL	+3.4pp	WAL	+6,875		
		WOL	75.1%	WOL	+10.5pp	WOL	+6.3pp	WOL	+1,036		
		BC	71.7%	BC	+0.6pp BC +0.2pp Eng.	BC	+3.0pp BC +2.9pp Eng.	BC	+30,083 Eng.: 75.8%		
Increase the Percentage of Knowledge Workers		DUD	46.4%	DUD	+2.0pp	DUD					
		SAN	37.0%	SAN	+5.5pp	SAN					
		WAL	43.5%	WAL	+8.4pp	WAL					
		WOL	51.6%	WOL	-3.1pp	WOL					
		BC	44.5%	BC	+3.8pp BC +0.6pp Eng.	BC					
Raise Enterprise Births		DUD	1,175	DUD	+30 (+2.6%)	DUD	-15 (-1.3%)	DUD	+426 P.A.		
		SAN	1,655	SAN	+115 (+7.5%)	SAN	+715 (+76.1%)	SAN	+51 P.A.		
		WAL	1,280	WAL	-30 (-2.3%)	WAL	+235 (+22.5%)	WAL	+146 P.A.		
		WOL	1,385	WOL	+85 (+6.5%)	WOL	+385 (+38.5%)	WOL	Above National		
		BC	5,495	BC	+200 (+3.8%) +0.3% Eng.	BC	+1,320 (+31.6% BC) +13.8% Eng.	BC	+594 P.A. Eng.: 48 per 10,000 pop.		
Reduce the Percentage of Workless Households		DUD	9.6%	DUD	-4,300 (-31.9%)	DUD	-6,500 (-41.4%)	DUD	Below England		
		SAN	18.6%	SAN	0 (0%)	SAN	-400 (-2.1%)	SAN	-5,317		
		WAL	10.6%	WAL	-6,300 (-42.3%)	WAL	-7,200 (-45.6%)	WAL	Below England		
		WOL	18.1%	WOL	+1,100 (+8.0%)	WOL	-300 (-2.0%)	WOL	-3,827		
		BC	14.3%	BC	-9,500 (-15.5%) +0.9% Eng.	BC	-14,500 (-21.9%) BC -14.6% Eng.	BC	-2,948 Eng.: 13.5%		
Increase the Number of Visitors to the Area		35.05m		+1.39m				A leading UK visitor destination			

In the Black Country we will:	Where we are now		Change over the last year ¹		Direction of travel relative to national average since 2004		Scale of the challenge (To reach England where applicable)		
Sustainable Environmental Transformation									
Increase the Hectares of Local Nature Reserves	887.3ha		0ha		-		1ha of Local Nature Reserve per 1,000 pop.		
Have a Sustainable Environment- Reduce CO₂ Emissions (Tonnes per capita)	DUD	2.9	DUD	-0.2	DUD	-3.3	Net Zero by 2041		
	SAN	3.3	SAN	-0.3	SAN	-4.4			
	WAL	3.1	WAL	-0.2	WAL	-3.8			
	WOL	2.9	WOL	-0.2	WOL	-3.9			
	BC	3.1	BC	-0.2 BC -0.3 Eng.	BC	-3.9 BC -4.6 Eng.			
Raised Education and Skills									
Reduce the Number of People with No Qualifications	DUD	7.4%	DUD	+5,400 (+62.8%)	DUD	-13,700 (-49.5%)	DUD	-1,529	
	SAN	14.9%	SAN	+6,400 (+26.3%)	SAN	-9,500 (-23.6%)	SAN	-17,110	
	WAL	11.8%	WAL	+300 (+1.6%)	WAL	-12,400 (-39.1%)	WAL	-8,568	
	WOL	9.8%	WOL	-3,600 (-19.6%)	WOL	-19,900 (-57.3%)	WOL	-4,858	
	BC	11.1%	BC	+8,400 (-0.7% BC) +6.8% Eng.	BC	-55,700 (-41.4% BC) -51.2% Eng.	BC	-31,965 Eng.: 6.6%	
Increase the Number of People with RQF4+	DUD	38.9%	DUD	-2,400 (-3.2%)	DUD	+34,700 (+89.0%)	DUD	+14,882	
	SAN	29.7%	SAN	-2,900 (-4.5%)	SAN	+34,200 (+125.7%)	SAN	+35,133	
	WAL	28.4%	WAL	-8,000 (-14.7%)	WAL	+18,400 (+65.9%)	WAL	+29,935	
	WOL	45.7%	WOL	+4,800 (+7.5%)	WOL	+44,300 (+178.6%)	WOL	+1,522	
	BC	35.3%	BC	-8,500 (-3.3% BC) +0.5% Eng.	BC	+131,700 (+110.9% BC) +100.1% Eng.	BC	+81,471 Eng.: 46.8%	
Improve Pupils Progress 8 Score	DUD	-0.12	DUD	-0.11	DUD				
	SAN	-0.16	SAN	-0.09	SAN				
	WAL	-0.22	WAL	-0.02	WAL				
	WOL	-0.05	WOL	-0.03	WOL				
	BC	-0.14	BC	-0.04	BC				
Reduce the No. of 16–17-Year-Olds Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)	DUD	21.5%	DUD	+833 (+101.3%)	DUD				
	SAN	2.6%	SAN	-1 (-0.4%)	SAN				
	WAL	5.2%	WAL	+15 (+3.6%)	WAL				
	WOL	3.9 %	WOL	+28 (+11.1%)	WOL				
	BC	7.8%	BC	+875 (+50.0% BC) +8.7% Eng.	BC				
Transformed our Environmental Infrastructure									
Increase Net New Homes	DUD	142,236	DUD	+686 (+0.5%)	DUD	+13,110 (+10.2%)	DUD		
	SAN	137,002	SAN	+596 (+0.4%)	SAN	+16,595 (+13.8%)	SAN		
	WAL	119,232	WAL	+651 (+0.5%)	WAL	+12,741 (+12.0%)	WAL		
	WOL	115,585	WOL	+421 (+0.4%)	WOL	+13,739 (+13.5%)	WOL		
	BC	514,055	BC	+2,354 (+0.5% BC) +0.8% Eng.	BC	+56,186 (+12.3% BC) +19.1% Eng.	BC		
Provide Industrial Floorspace	DUD	2,371,000 sqm	DUD	+15,000 sqm	DUD	-590,000 sqm	DUD		
	SAN	3,908,000 sqm	SAN	-2,000 sqm	SAN	-915,000 sqm	SAN		
	WAL	2,201,000 sqm	WAL	+25,000 sqm	WAL	-596,000 sqm	WAL		
	WOL	2,194,000 sqm	WOL	+9,000 sqm	WOL	-574,000 sqm	WOL		
	BC	10,674,000 sqm	BC	+47,000 sqm	BC	-2,675,000 sqm	BC		
Provide Office Floorspace	DUD	258,000 sqm	DUD	-1,000 sqm	DUD	-48,000 sqm	DUD		
	SAN	180,000 sqm	SAN	-2,000 sqm	SAN	-16,000 sqm	SAN		
	WAL	166,000 sqm	WAL	-4,000 sqm	WAL	-7,000 sqm	WAL		
	WOL	211,000 sqm	WOL	+1,000 sqm	WOL	-32,000 sqm	WOL		
	BC	815,000 sqm	BC	-6,000 sqm	BC	-103,000 sqm	BC		
Provide Retail Floorspace	DUD	598,000 sqm	DUD	-5,000 sqm	DUD	-20,000 sqm	DUD		
	SAN	564,000 sqm	SAN	-3,000 sqm	SAN	+71,000 sqm	SAN		
	WAL	507,000 sqm	WAL	-4,000 sqm	WAL	+39,000 sqm	WAL		
	WOL	501,000 sqm	WOL	-6,000 sqm	WOL	-28,000 sqm	WOL		
	BC	2,170,000 sqm	BC	-18,0000 sqm	BC	+62,000 sqm	BC		

¹ The green shading illustrates those indicators where the Black Country moved in a positive direction of travel compared to the national average (excluding output gap where the latest change is shaded green due to the positive change and not compared to England), the red shading indicates the reverse and the orange indicates no change or a growth rate in the right direction but less than the national average growth rate. Please note for qualifications, RQF's have replaced NVQs and caution should be used when comparing change over time. West Midlands Growth Company (WMGC) provided the visitor economy figure for the Black Country via the STEAM model.

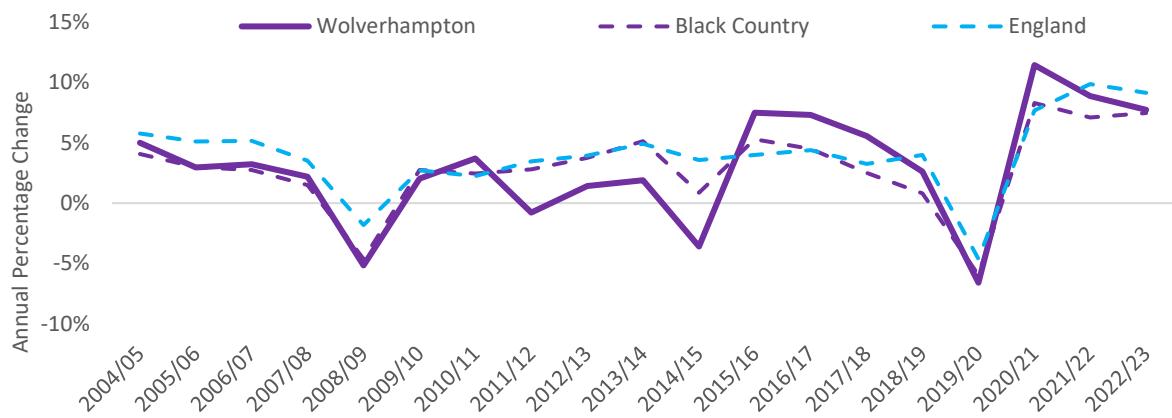
2025 KEY MESSAGES

1.1. Economy

Economy and Productivity

- After higher than national growth rates between 2020 and 2021 (+11.5% compared to +7.7%), Wolverhampton's total Gross Value Added (GVA)² continued to increase but at a slower pace (+8.9% compared to +9.9%) between 2021/22. **Wolverhampton's GVA increased from £6.0bn in 2022 to over £6.4bn in 2023**, equating to a growth rate of 7.7% compared to 9.1% nationally.
- Insights for 2025 show that the **UK economy continues to expand**, but the pace of growth **remains modest and vulnerable** to disruption. Inflationary pressures persist, limiting real income gains and constraining consumer demand. Although **business investment shows signs of improvement**, rising cost burdens and an uncertain global environment are tempering overall economic momentum.

Annual Changes in Total GVA:



- Wolverhampton's GVA per head remains substantially lower than the national average at £23,640 compared to £36,632 in 2023.** There was an annual increase of 6.0% which was below the national growth rate (+8.1%). Despite this, for Wolverhampton, there was still an **overall output gap³ of £3.5bn**, an annual increase of £435m and longer-term (since 2004) an increase of £2.4bn.
- GVA per hour worked⁴ for Wolverhampton was £35.30 in 2023**, with a **slightly slower annual growth rate** than nationally at 2.0% compared to 2.2%. Also, when compared to 2019, Wolverhampton performed above the national average growth rate (+19.7% compared to +14.5%). Despite this, in 2023 there was a **shortfall of £6.60 to reach the UK average (£41.90)**.
- Wolverhampton's Gross Disposable Household Income (GDHI) per head⁵ increased from £16,958 in 2022 to £18,174 in 2023**, which equated to a **growth rate of 7.2%**, below the national growth rate of 8.4%. Across all local authority areas, Wolverhampton had the 14th lowest GDHI per person (moving from 19th place in 2022) and had a **shortfall of £6,662 to the national average (£24,836)**.

² Office for National Statistics (ONS), Regional economic activity by gross domestic product, released 2025

³The EIU calculations based off ONS, Regional economic activity by gross domestic product, released 2025 and mid-year population estimates, released 2025.

⁴ ONS, Subregional productivity in the UK, released 2024

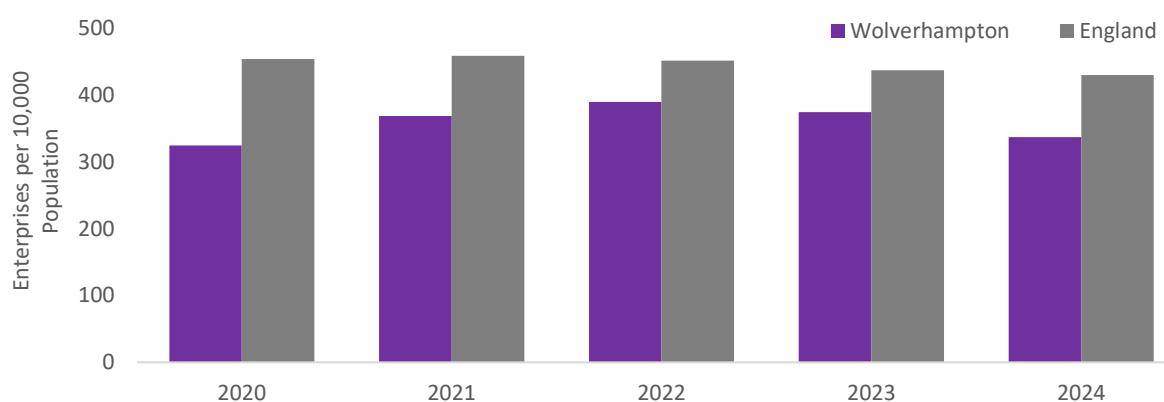
⁵ ONS, Regional gross disposable household income, released 2025

1.2. Business

Business Environment

- Total enterprises⁶ have decreased for the second consecutive year in Wolverhampton, although nationally it is the third year of declines. In 2024, there were **9,480 enterprises** in Wolverhampton, an **annual decrease** of 8.1% (-835), above the national decline of 0.4%. **When compared to five years ago, enterprises in Wolverhampton have increased by 11.3% which contrasts with the national trend** of a decrease by 1.0%.
- There are still **too few enterprises in Wolverhampton at 337 enterprises per 10,000 population compared to 430 per 10,000 population for England in 2024**. For Wolverhampton to reach the national average requires **an additional 2,617 active enterprises**.

Trends in Active Enterprises per 10,000 population:



- In 2024, there were **35 high-growth firms** in Wolverhampton. An **annual increase of 16.7% (+5)**, nationally there was an increase of 4.0%.
- **Wolverhampton's enterprise survival rates are lower than national levels on both a short-term and long-term basis.** Of the 1,300 enterprise births in 2023, there were 90.8% still active after 1 year with England at 93.4%. Of the 1,195 enterprise births in 2019 in Wolverhampton, 34.7% were still active after 5 years with England at 38.3%.
- Between 2019 and 2024, **enterprise births in Wolverhampton rose by 15.9%, from 1,195 to 1,385**. This bucked the national trend (-13.1%). Also, there are more **positive recent trends**, with the latest data for between 2023 and 2024, showing an overall 6.5% increase which was above the national increase of 0.3%.
- In 2024, there were **49 enterprise births per 10,000 population for Wolverhampton which was above the national average** (48 per 10,000 population).
- Experimental quarterly data⁷ shows an overall positive picture locally and nationally as **business births were back ahead of business deaths in Q3 2025** (305 births compared to 255 deaths in Wolverhampton).
- There is an opportunity to **harness innovative activity of the diverse business base locally** as 21.2% of companies in Wolverhampton are female-led⁸, this was above the UK average of 19.2%.

⁶ ONS, Business Demography, released 2025

⁷ ONS, Business demography, quarterly experimental statistics, low-level geographic breakdown, released 2025

⁸ Gender Index, released 2025

Traditional Sectors

- Out of 9 defined sectors, Wolverhampton has **higher than the national proportion in 6 sectors for GVA⁹, 6 sectors in jobs¹⁰ and 4 sectors for enterprises¹¹.**

GVA, Jobs and Enterprises per Sector:

	W'ton GVA	% of W'ton GVA	% of England GVA	W'ton Jobs	% of W'ton Jobs	% of England Jobs	W'ton Enterprises	% of W'ton Enterprises	% of England Enterprises
Advanced Manufacturing	£1.2bn	19.3%	10.7%	12,605	11.6%	9.5%	740	9.1%	11.4%
Building Technologies	£419m	6.4%	6.3%	3,950	3.6%	4.9%	1,110	13.7%	14.1%
Business Services	£1.6bn	25.4%	43.0%	18,170	16.7%	26.1%	2,335	28.7%	37.6%
Environmental Technologies	£137m	2.1%	2.4%	1,425	1.3%	1.1%	60	0.7%	0.5%
Health & Wellbeing	£843m	13.1%	8.2%	23,250	21.3%	14.0%	460	5.7%	4.4%
Public Sector inc. Education	£923m	14.3%	11.6%	17,250	15.8%	15.5%	220	2.7%	4.1%
Retail	£717m	11.1%	10.1%	18,000	16.5%	13.7%	1,690	20.8%	14.5%
Transport Technologies	£251m	3.9%	3.5%	6,510	6.0%	5.1%	895	11.0%	4.2%
Visitor Economy	£271m	4.2%	4.3%	7,900	7.2%	10.1%	620	7.6%	9.0%
Total	£6.4bn	100%	100.0%	111,000	100%	100%	8,130	100%	100%

- Furthermore, **450 strategic companies¹²** have been identified in the Black Country area, **of which 93 were in Wolverhampton.**

West Midlands High Growth Clusters

- When aligning to the five high growth clusters¹³ as seen in the [West Midlands Growth Plan](#), Wolverhampton has some **strengths in the advanced engineering, light electric vehicles & batteries cluster.**

Wolverhampton's GVA, Employment and Businesses per High Growth Cluster:

	W'ton GVA	% of WMCA GVA	W'ton Employment	% of WMCA Employment	W'ton Businesses	% of WMCA Businesses
Advanced Engineering, Light Electric Vehicles & Batteries	£1.1bn	9.1%	16,110	8.6%	1,848	11.2%
Digital Tech & Creative	£94m	3.0%	1,340	3.9%	360	7.6%
Health & Med Tech	£13m	3.1%	190	3.8%	25	6.8%
Next Generation Services	£1.2bn	6.0%	10,190	6.2%	1,345	7.3%
Smart Energy Systems	£79m	5.8%	1,310	6.3%	250	7.4%

⁹ ONS, Regional economic activity by gross domestic product, released 2025

¹⁰ ONS, Business Register and Employment Survey, released 2025

¹¹ ONS, UK Business Counts, released 2025

¹² The EIU analysis from The Data City, 2025.

¹³ Please note, these clusters do not cover all businesses/employment or GVA.

The Industrial Strategy (IS)-8 Sectors

- The UK Government has launched [The Modern Industrial Strategy](#) which identifies **eight growth-driving sectors**. These sectors are advanced manufacturing, clean energy industries, creative industries, defence, digital & technologies, financial services, life sciences, and professional & business services. Data shows¹⁴ that Wolverhampton has either **above or the same proportion seen nationally in 5 sectors for enterprises and 4 sectors for jobs**.

Employees and Businesses per IS-8 Sector:

	Employees			Businesses		
	W'ton	W'ton % of Total	UK % of Total	W'ton	W'ton % of Total	UK % of Total
Advanced Manufacturing	4,100	4%	2%	95	1%	1%
Clean Energy Industries	679	1%	3%	58	1%	1%
Creative Industries	1,175	1%	5%	430	5%	10%
Defence	611	1%	0.1%	7	0.1%	0.1%
Digital and Technologies	2,865	3%	7%	525	6%	10%
Financial Services	3,500	3%	3%	140	2%	2%
Life Sciences	35	0.1%	0.1%	5	0.1%	0.1%
Professional & Business Services	8,800	8%	14%	1,340	16%	21%
Total	21,765	20.1%	34.2%	2,600	32.2%	45.2%

- A Location Quotient (LQ) is a measure that compares the concentration of an industry, sector, or occupation in a specific region to its concentration at a broader geographic level (in this case, the national average). **Advanced manufacturing shows strength with a business LQ of 1.09, employee LQ of 1.46, and turnover LQ of 1.76**, confirming it as a local area of specialisation. Defence has a very high turnover LQ of 5.10 and an above-average employee LQ of 1.32, though its business LQ is low (0.36), pointing to concentrated but limited firms. As well, **Life sciences** show potential with an **employee LQ of 1.33**, though both **business (0.84)** and **turnover (0.45)** LQs remain weaker.

Wolverhampton Location Quotient per IS-8 Sector:

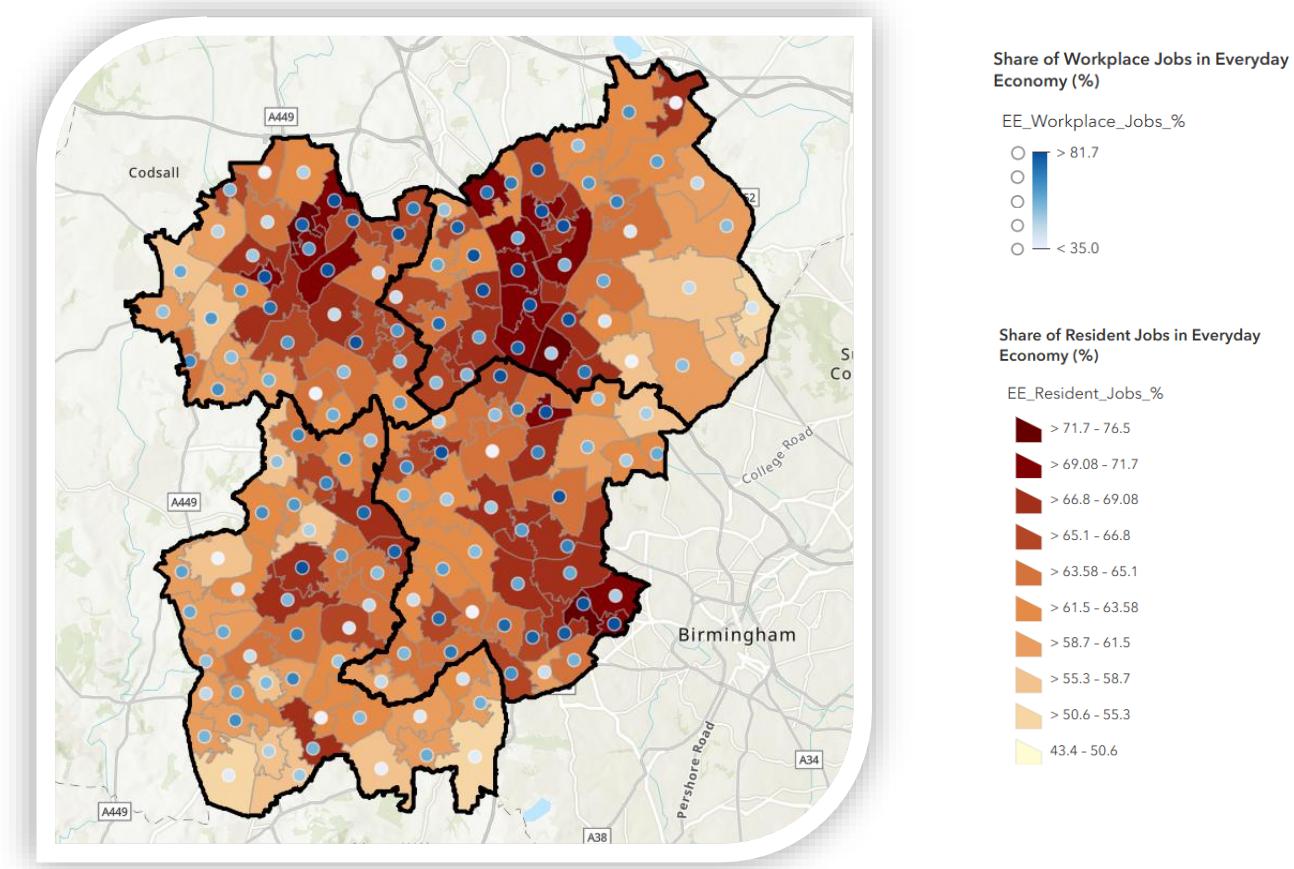
Sector	Business LQ	Employee LQ	Turnover LQ
Advanced Manufacturing	1.09	1.46	1.76
Clean Energy Industries	0.6	0.6	0.84
Creative Industries	0.64	0.5	0.79
Defence	0.36	1.32	5.1
Digital and Technologies	0.52	0.35	0.7
Financial Services	0.94	0.7	0.74
Life Sciences	0.84	1.33	0.45
Professional and Business Services	0.76	0.58	0.92

Everyday Economy

- As defined in the [West Midlands Growth Plan](#), the everyday economy consists of jobs in health & care, teachers, school staff, retail, hospitality, tourism, leisure, the arts, night-time economy, construction, transport, logistics and utilities and these are seen as essential services that are the backbone of the economy. **For Wolverhampton, it is estimated that 64.7% of residents work in these jobs while 65.1% of workplace jobs are in these jobs.**

¹⁴ The EIU analysis from The Data City, 2025.

Workplace and Resident Jobs in Everyday Economy:



Innovation Funding

- Focusing on the project-level Innovate UK data¹⁵, since 2013/14, the Black Country has received almost £50m worth of funding across 358 grant awards. This represents 2% of the total West Midlands region awards over this time period, and 0.3% of the UK total. **Of the Black Country local authorities, Wolverhampton received the second highest funding at £15.1m but had the highest number of awards (138).**

International Trade

- In 2023, Wolverhampton exported £1.7bn of goods and services¹⁶. An annual increase of 10.0% (+£154m), England increased at a slower rate, by 6.4%. Over this period, **Wolverhampton's imports decreased by 3.8% (-£54m) to a total of nearly £1.4bn** (England increased by 4.2%). Meaning in 2023, Wolverhampton had an overall trade surplus of £319m.
- International trade activity** in Wolverhampton was a **similar level for exports in goods (£875m) and services (£822m)**. However, imports in goods were significantly higher (£1.1bn) than services (£297m).
- Meaning in 2023, Wolverhampton had a **trade in goods deficit of £206m**. However, there was a **trade surplus of £525m in services**.

¹⁵ Innovate UK, 2025

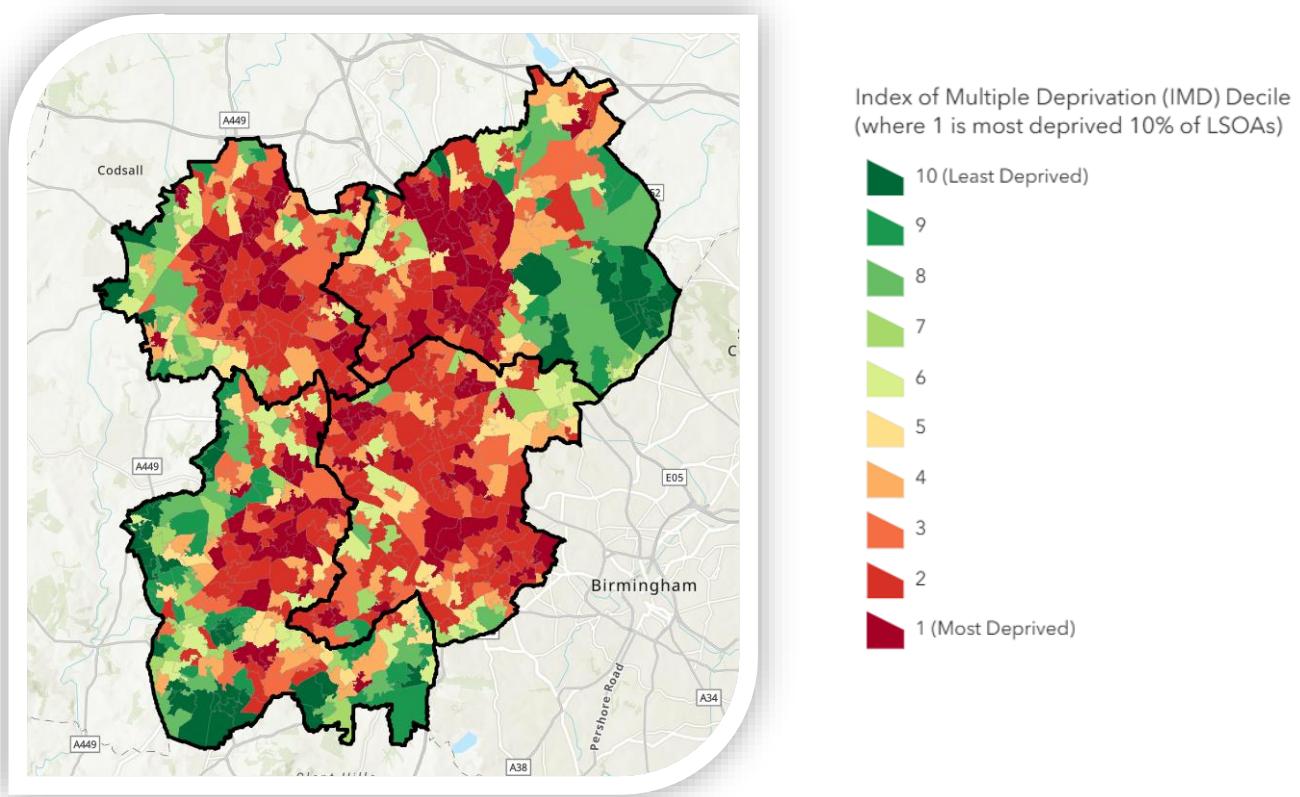
¹⁶ ONS, International trade in UK nations, regions and cities: 2023, released 2025.

1.3. Place

Deprivation and Low-Income Areas

- The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)¹⁷ is the official measure of relative deprivation in England and is part of a suite of outputs that form the Indices of Deprivation (IoD). This allows local authorities to be ranked from 1 (most deprived) to 296 (least deprived) in England. **Wolverhampton's ranking slightly worsened in 2025 compared with 2019 - placed in 23rd from 24th.**
- **48.4% (78) of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Wolverhampton are in the top 20% most deprived areas in England.** Of these 21.7% (35) of LSOAs are in the top 10% most deprived areas. Due to a change in geographical boundaries, a direct comparison to 2019 cannot be made. However, 75 LSOAs that were identified as deprived in 2019 are still active in 2025 analysis, **there were 3 more LSOAs in the top 10% but 9 fewer in top 20% and 6 had moved into the 3rd decile.**

IMD 2025, Overall Decile per LSOA:



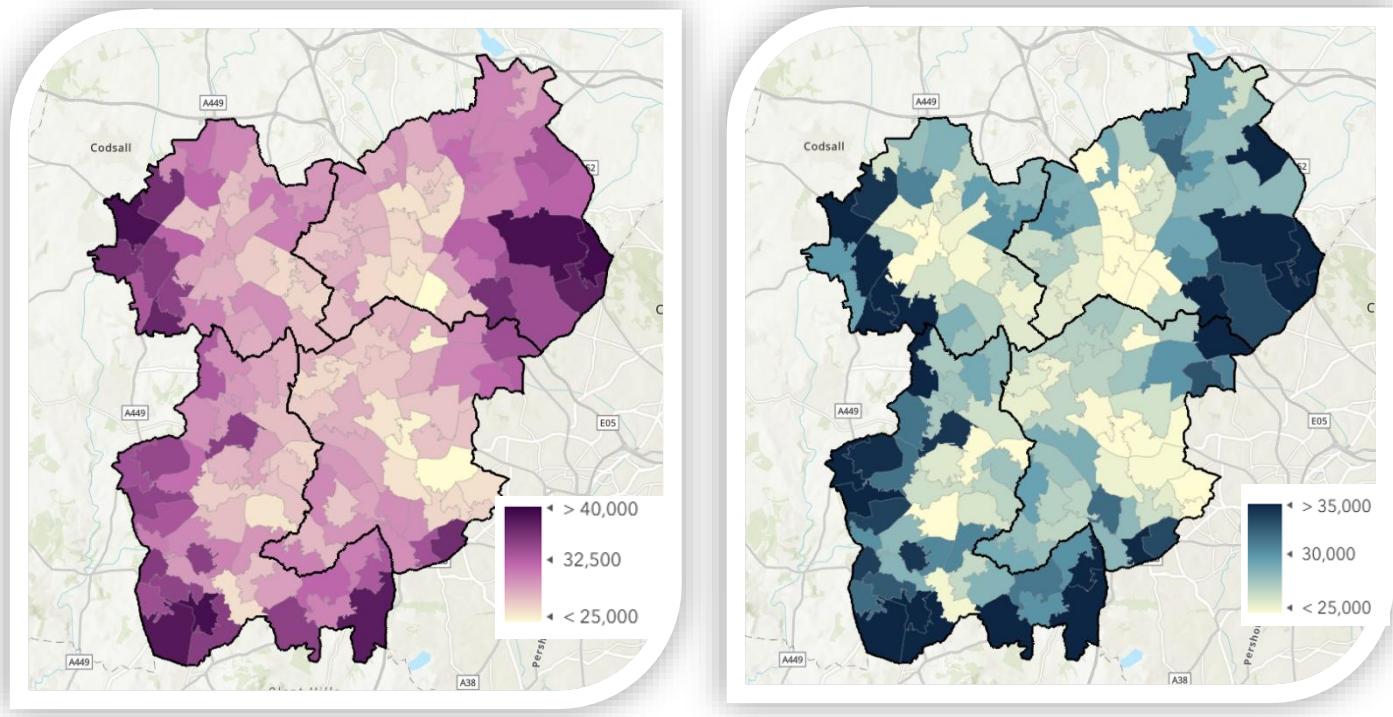
- In the financial year ending 2023, the mean equivalised household disposable (net) income¹⁸ before housing costs varied within Wolverhampton from £26,788 to £38,798, **with 93.9% (31 MSOAs) under the England and Wales average of £36,800.**

¹⁷ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, English indices of deprivation 2025

¹⁸ ONS, Income estimates for small areas, England and Wales: financial year ending 2023, released 2025

- While the mean equivalised household disposable (net) income after housing costs varied within Wolverhampton from £22,612 to £39,258, **with 84.8% (28 MSOAs) under the England and Wales average of £34,500.**

Net Annual Income Before Housing Costs (Left) and Net Annual Income After Housing Costs (Right):



Infrastructure

- There are **shortfalls in housing supply to the demand**; to address this, the government has set a national target of building 1.5m new homes in the next five years, with the WMCA area setting a target of 12,200 homes per year. This also links in with the [WMCA Spatial Development Strategy \(SDS\)](#) where one element is about long-term plans for housing (as well as jobs, transport and green spaces). **Provisional estimates for Wolverhampton show 421 net additional homes** leading to a total of **approximately 115,164 homes¹⁹** overall in 2025.
- There is also a region-wide **affordable housing crisis**, the Government have recently backed the [WMCA Social and Affordable Home Programme](#). In Wolverhampton, there were **no social housing completions²⁰** in **2024/25**, although none have been recorded since 2021/22. There were **227 affordable homes completed**, up from 12 completed in the previous year.
- Housing affordability ratios²¹ show that in 2024, residents in Wolverhampton could **expect to spend 6.2 times their annual earnings buying a home**, down from 6.5 in 2023. The equivalent figure in England is 7.7 times annual earnings, down from 8.4.

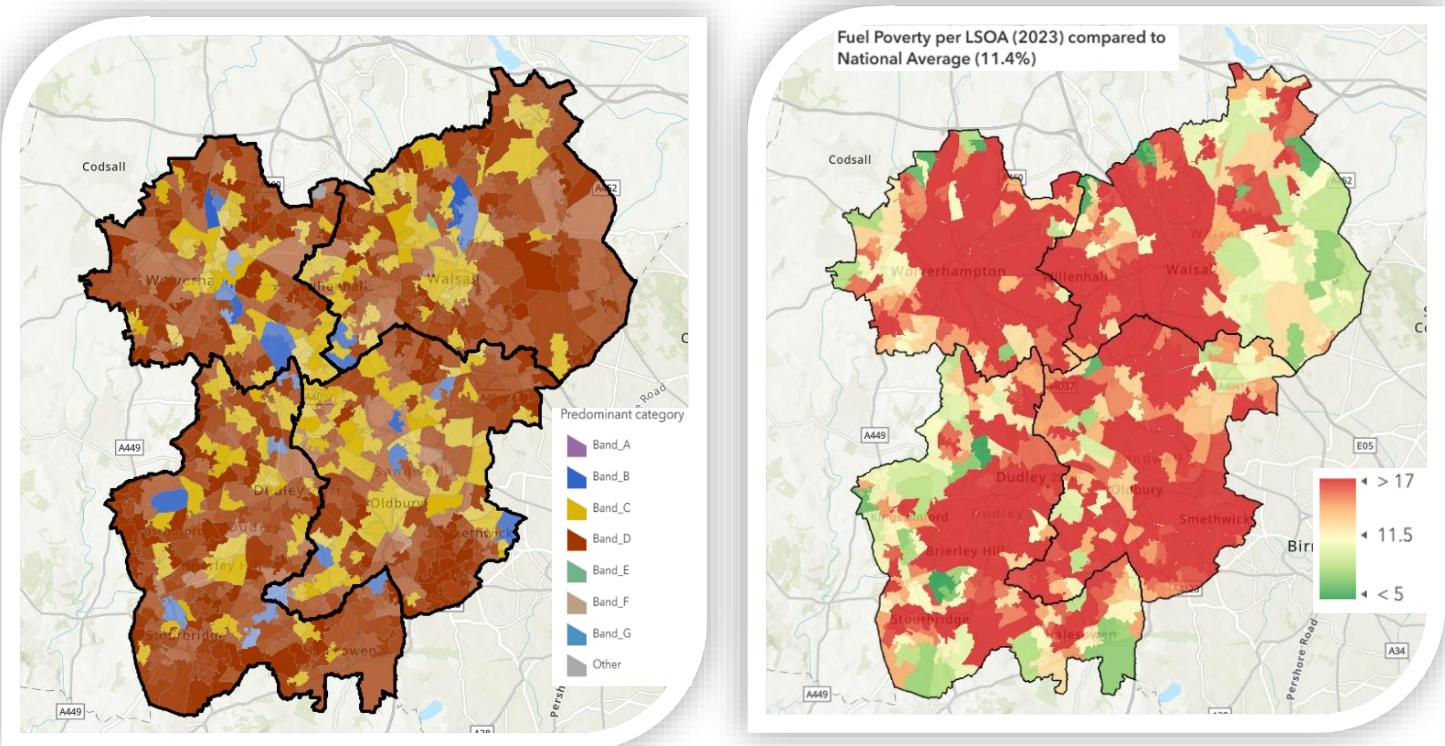
¹⁹ Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, Live tables on housing supply: net additional dwellings and on dwelling stock, both released 2025.

²⁰ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, affordable housing supply statistics, 2025

²¹ ONS, Housing affordability in England and Wales, released 2025

- Looking at the efficiency of housing, by using Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs)²² shows in the year ending March 2024 (based of rating bands for a 10-year period), **where Band A is very efficient and Band G is very energy inefficient, that nearly 90% of Wolverhampton lodgements were in Band D (42.2%), Band C (30.8%) and Band E (14.3%).**
- **Challenges remain with households in fuel poverty²³**, as data shows the West Midlands region continues to have the highest rates at 16.7%, compared to 11.4% overall for England in 2023. **In Wolverhampton, 18.7% (19,957) of households were in fuel poverty, across all local areas in England, this was the 3rd highest, remaining in the same place in 2022.**

EPCs (Left) and Fuel Poverty (Right), per LSOA:



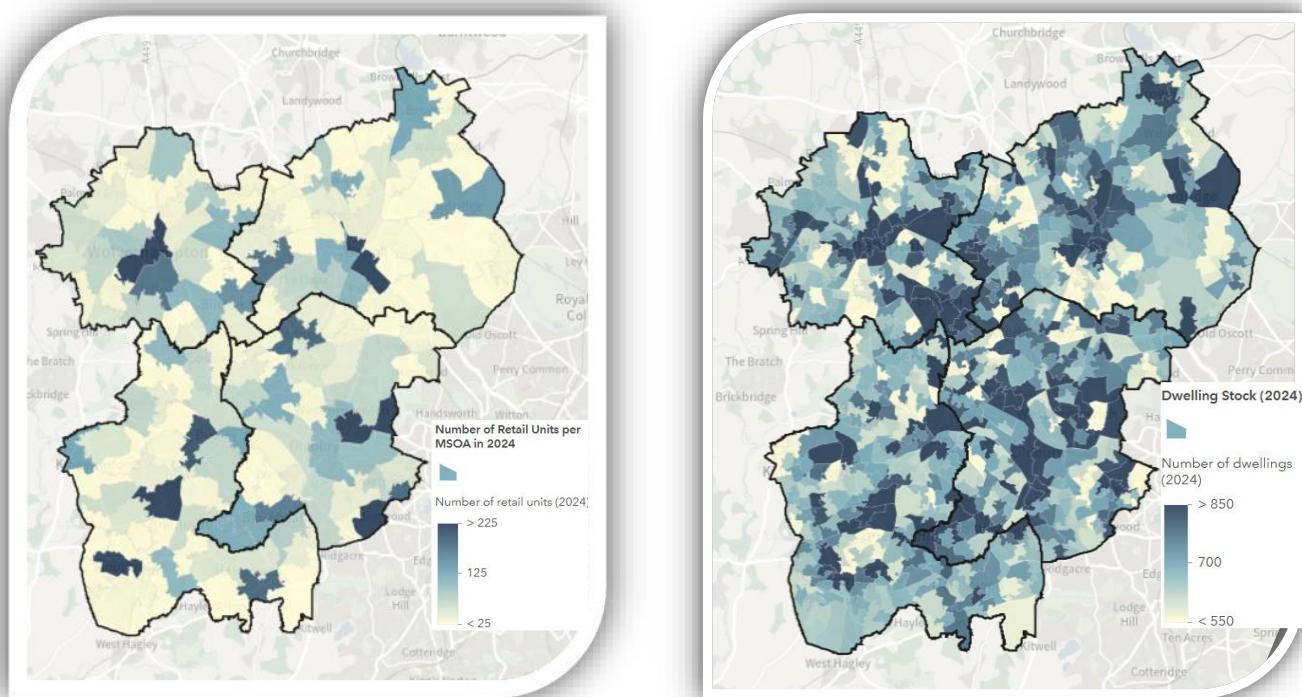
- Across Wolverhampton as of March 2025, there was a total of **8,970 non-domestic properties²⁴**. **Bucking the national trend (-0.1%)**, there was an increase of 0.6% (+50) when compared to March 2024.
- Analysing non-domestic properties by type, was a total of **1,760 office properties across Wolverhampton**. There has been **an annual increase** of 1.1% (+20), above the national increase of 0.1%. There were **2,970 industrial properties**, **an annual increase** of 0.3% (+10), again above the national increase (+0.4%). **Properties classed as 'other' also increased in Wolverhampton, by 30 to 1,820 (+1.7% compared to -0.4% nationally).**
- **Whereas retail properties remained unchanged** at 2,410, while nationally retail properties decreased by 0.3%.

²² ONS, Energy efficiency of housing, released 2024. This data does not reflect all dwellings in England and Wales, because not every dwelling has an EPC.

²³ Department for Energy Security & Net Zero, Sub-regional fuel poverty in England, released 2025

²⁴ Valuation Office Agency, Non-domestic rating: stock of properties collection, released 2025

Retail Properties (Left) and Dwellings (Right):

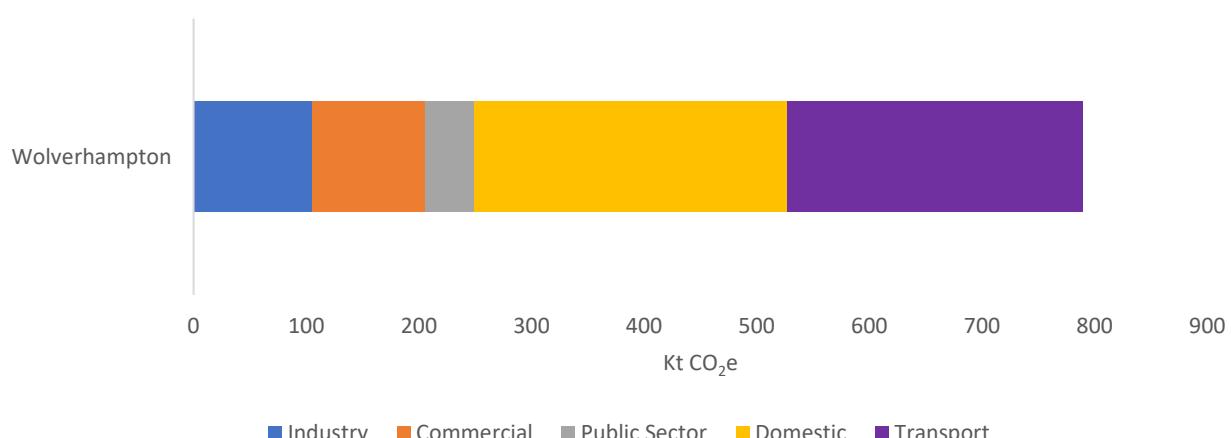


- As of July 2025, **95.6% of premises in Wolverhampton had full fibre connectivity**²⁵, above the UK-wide figure of 78.2%.

Carbon Dioxide Emissions

- In 2023, **total carbon dioxide emissions**²⁶ were **793 kt CO₂e** in Wolverhampton. **This has decreased at a slower rate than nationally since 2022** (-5.4% compared to -5.7%). Longer term (since 2005), emissions have decreased at a faster rate, by 51.7% for Wolverhampton compared to 47.6% nationally. However, **there is still a long way to go to reach Net Zero by 2041**.

Breakdown by Main Sector for Wolverhampton's Carbon Dioxide Emissions, 2023:



²⁵ Ofcom, Connected Nations, released 2025

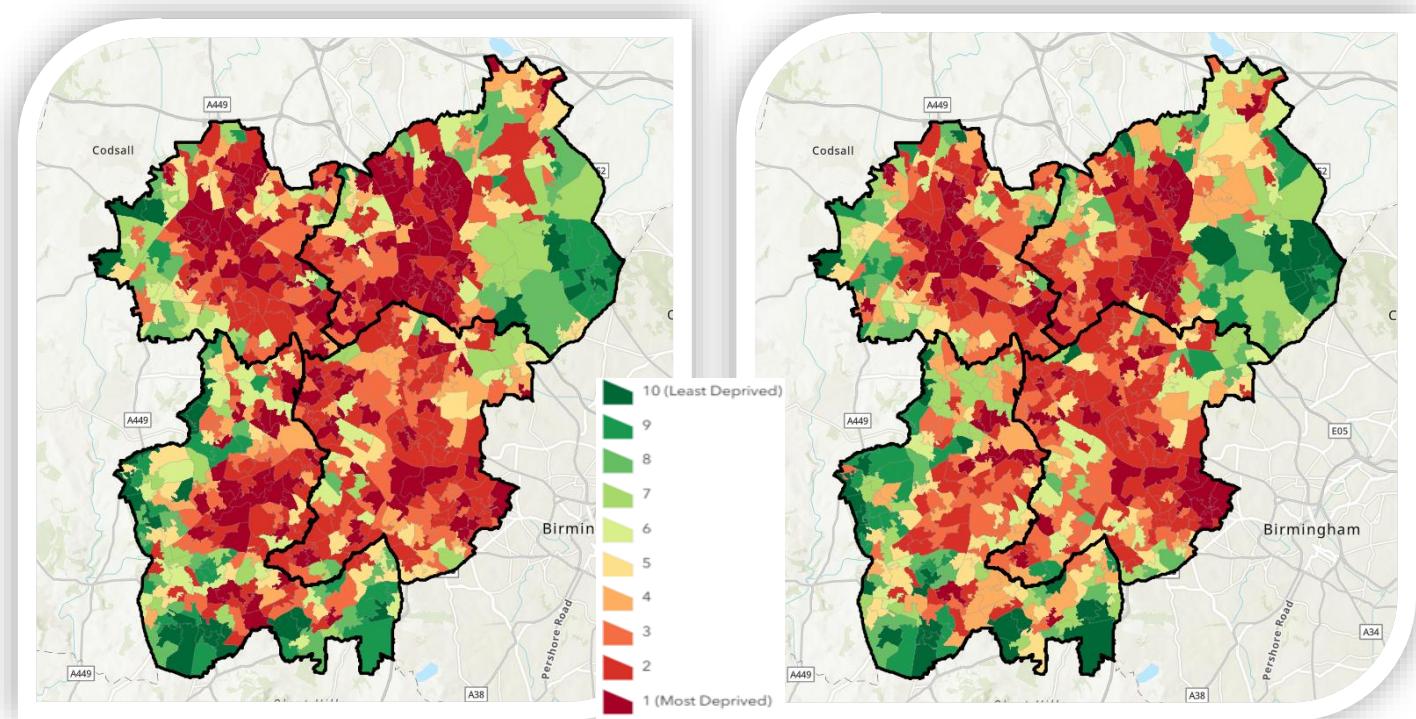
²⁶ Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, UK local authority & regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics, released 2025

1.4. People

Population and Deprivation

- In 2024, Wolverhampton had a population of 281,251 residents²⁷, an annual increase of 2.1% (+5,650) which was above the national growth rate (+1.2%). Compared to England, Wolverhampton had a higher proportion of children aged 0–15 (21.6% compared to 18.4%, equating to 60,611 residents). While 62.4% (175,532) were aged 16–64 and 16.0% (45,108) were aged 65 years and over, both proportions were lower than national levels (62.9% and 18.7% respectively).
- As part of the IMD suite²⁸, there are two supplementary indices, the first being Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) which measures the proportion of all children aged 0 to 15 living in income deprived families. **In Wolverhampton, 52.8% of children live in income-deprived families**, ranking the borough 18th highest in England for this measure. Geographically, **47.8% (77) of LSOAs in Wolverhampton fall within the 20% most deprived nationally**. Of these, 24.2% (39) are in the top 10% most deprived.
- In addition, there is also the Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index (IDAOP1) which measures the proportion of all those aged 60 or over who experience income deprivation. **In Wolverhampton, 23.0% of residents aged 60 or over experience income deprivation**, placing the borough 35th highest in England for this measure. Geographically, **41.0% (66) of Wolverhampton's LSOAs fall within the 20% most deprived nationally**. Of these, 20.5% (33) are in the top 10% most deprived.

IDACI (Left) and IDAOP1 (Right), By Overall Decile per LSOA:



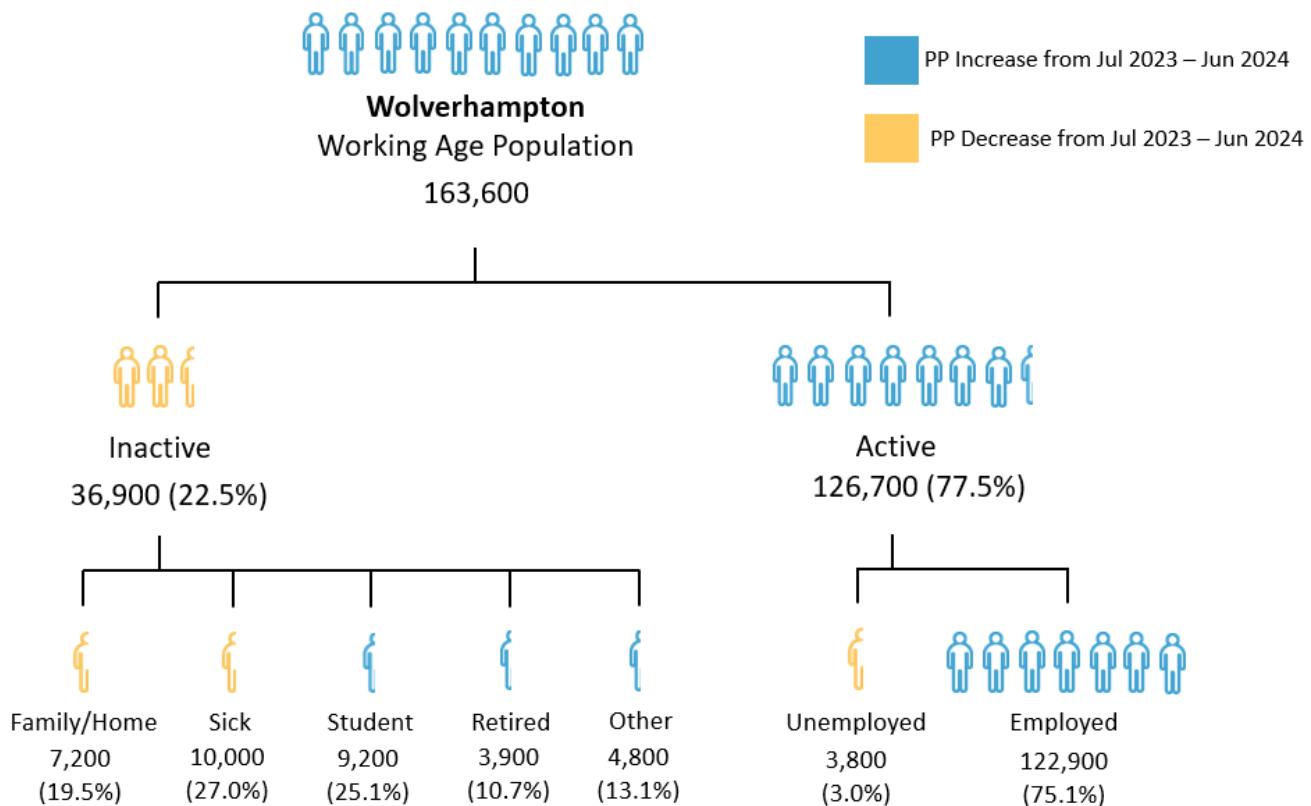
²⁷ ONS, mid-year population estimates, 2025

²⁸ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, English indices of deprivation 2025

Labour Market

- **Wolverhampton's labour market is likely to face acute pressures in 2026** amid the [UK's Get Britain Working](#) reforms. This national initiative aims for an 80% employment rate and measurable reductions in inactivity gaps. The employment rate²⁹ in Wolverhampton stands at 75.1% (compared to 75.8% nationally), requiring an **additional 7,980 people to enter work to meet the government target**.
- In addition, despite a recent fall in Wolverhampton's economic inactivity it was still at 22.5%, **fuelled by long-term sickness, suggesting health barriers over mere vacancy shortages**.

Labour Market Activity, for the Period of July 2024 – June 2025 and the Percentage Point Change Since July 2023 - June 2024:



No data available for economically inactive – discouraged and temporary sick.

- The proportion of those aged 16 -17 years olds that are Not in Employment, Education or Training³⁰ (**NEET**) in **Wolverhampton** remain **below the national average at 3.8% compared to 5.6%**.
- In Wolverhampton, the **employment rate of those classed as Equality Act (EA) core or work-limiting disabled³¹** was at **48.3%** which was **34.3pp lower than those classed as not EA core or work-limiting disabled (82.6%)**. This was **higher than the national average of 24.6pp** (57.6% compared to 82.2% respectively).
- **Wolverhampton's female employment rate (71.3%) was 8.3pp lower than the male employment rate (79.6%).** This **gap was above the national average of 6.5pp.**

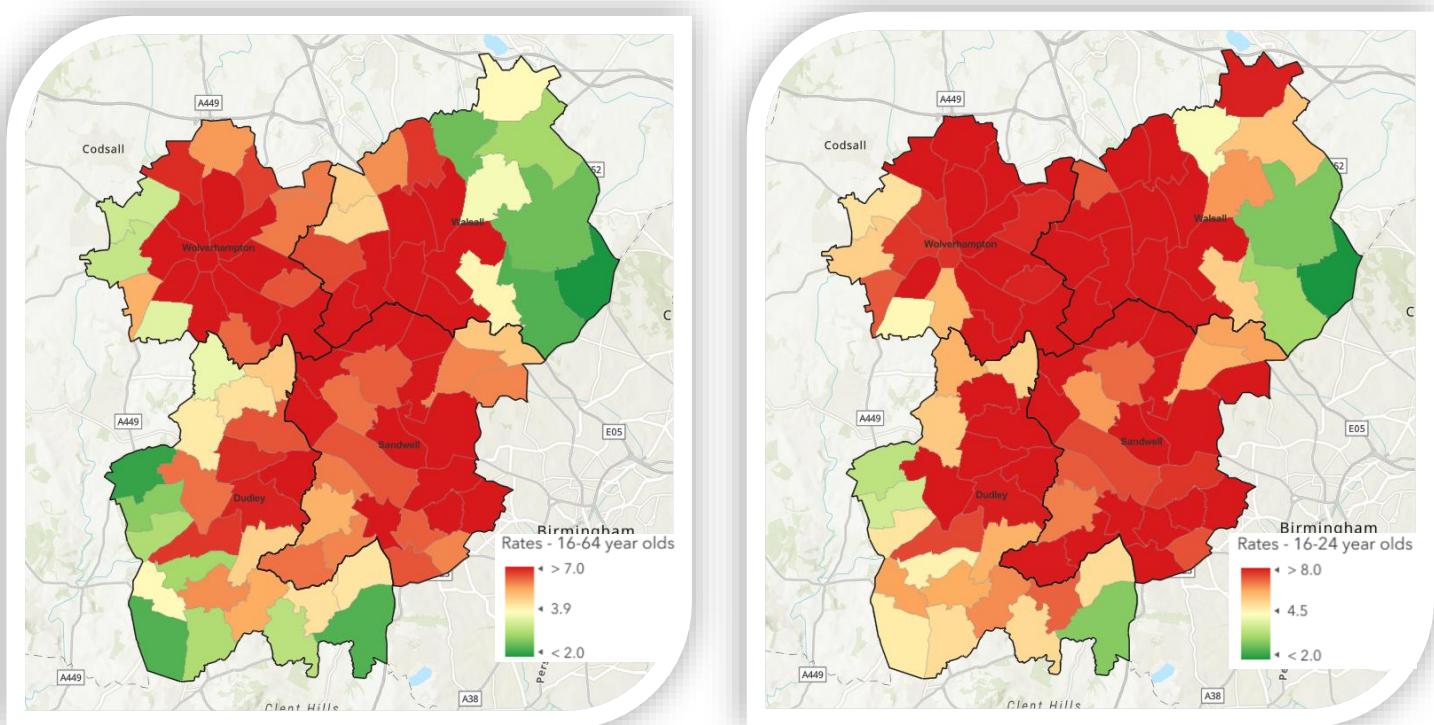
²⁹ ONS, Annual Population Survey, 2025.

³⁰ Department for Education, Participation in education, training and NEET age 16 to 17 by local authority, 2025. Please note, the figures include not known.

³¹ ONS, Annual Population Survey, 2025.

- To this end, the [West Midlands Works](#) framework **offers a critical bridge**, channelling national ambitions into regional action. **Prioritising Wolverhampton's most challenged areas**, it must scale integrated health and employment support to curb sickness-driven inactivity, boost higher-level qualifications and apprenticeships, and align training with resilient sectors. **A coordinated, place-based rollout is essential to reverse the region's trajectory.**
- **Total claimant³² numbers remain heightened across Wolverhampton.** There are approximately 11,900 people claiming benefits who are looking for work. This equates to 7.0% of the population aged 16-64 years old, compared to the national rate of 4.0%. **Youth claimants (aged 16-24) remain stubbornly high with a rate of 7.9% compared to 4.4% nationally.** Across all local authorities, Wolverhampton came in 3rd highest.

Claimant Rates per Ward for those aged 16-64 (Left) and 16-24 (Right) Compared to National:



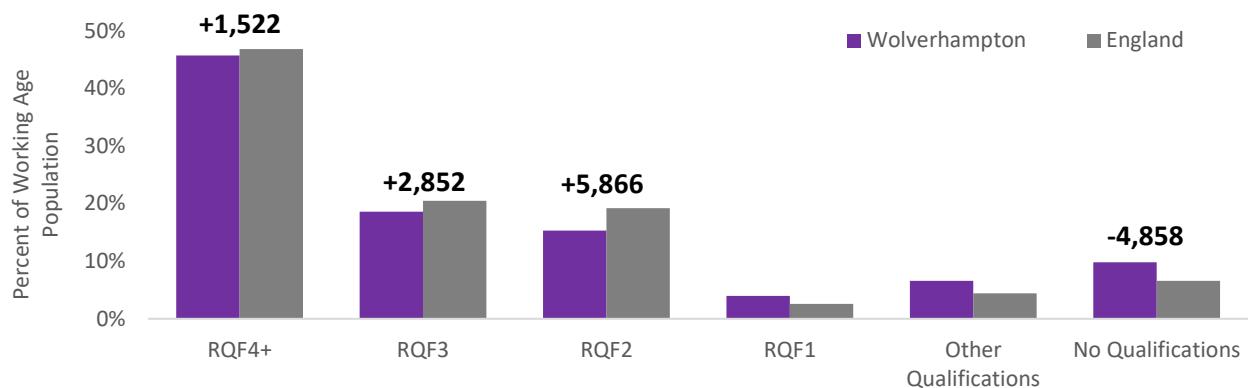
Skills

- **45.7% (69,100) of Wolverhampton residents had RQF4+ qualifications³³** compared to 46.8% nationally in 2024. This was an **annual increase** of 7.5% (+4,800), which was **above the national average** increase of 0.5%. Despite the increase, **for Wolverhampton to reach the national level it requires 1,522 residents to gain a qualification at Level 4 and above.**
- At the other end of the scale, **9.8% (14,800) of Wolverhampton's working age population had no formal qualifications**, above the national average of 6.6% in 2024. Bucking the national trend where there was annual increase (+6.8%), Wolverhampton decreased by 19.6% (-3,600). **For Wolverhampton to reach the national level it requires 4,858 residents to gain a qualification.**

³² ONS/ Department for Work and Pensions, claimant count, released 2025

³³ ONS, Annual Population Survey, released 2025

Qualification Profile, 2024:



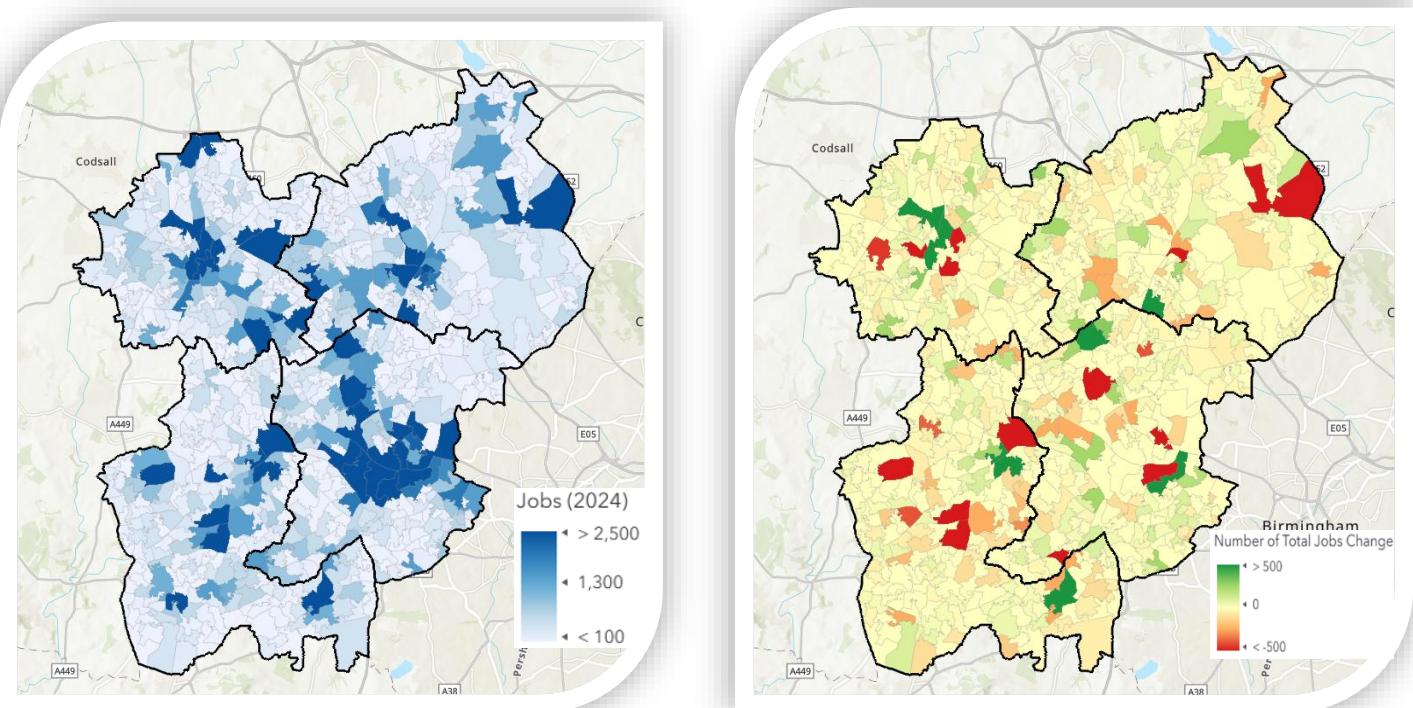
Apprenticeship Starts

- In the 2024/25 academic year, there were **1,670 apprenticeship starts³⁴** in Wolverhampton. When compared to 2023/24, this was an **increase of 1.8% (+30)**, nationally there was an **increase of 4.1%**. Exploring apprenticeship starts by level, there were **annual increases in higher and advanced apprenticeship starts** at 3.1% and 4.5% respectively (nationally there were increases of 15.1% and 0.4%).

Workforce Jobs

- For the fourth consecutive year, there has been an increase in jobs³⁵ in Wolverhampton. **The latest data shows an annual increase of 0.9% between 2023 and 2024 leading to a jobs total of 111,000 in Wolverhampton.** Nationally there was an annual increase of 0.6%.

Total Number of Jobs (Left) and Annual Change (Right), per LSOA:



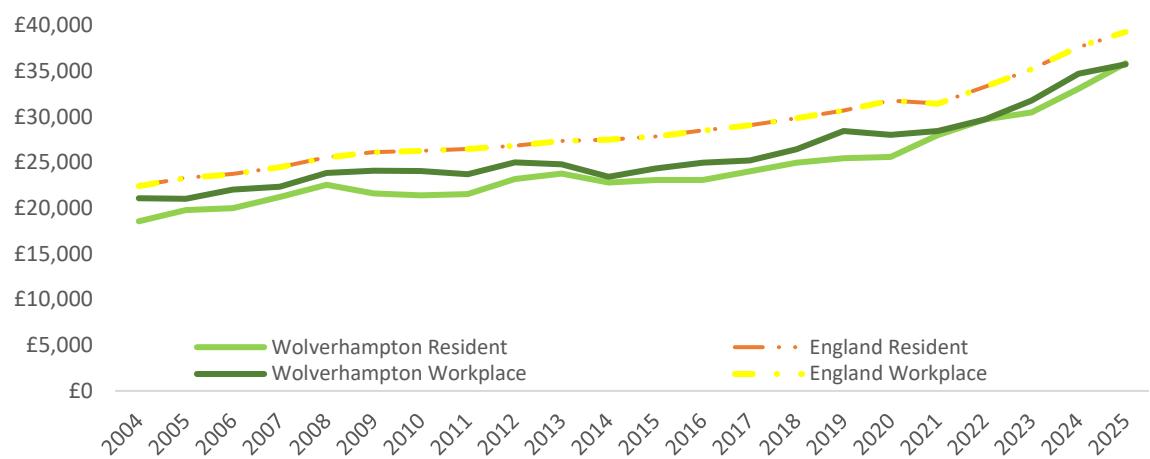
³⁴ Department for Education, apprenticeships, released 2025

³⁵ ONS, Business Register and Employment Survey, released 2025.

Earnings

- In 2025, full-time annual resident earnings³⁶ for Wolverhampton reached £35,858, an annual increase of 8.4% (+£2,773) compared to an increase of 4.3% nationally. However, earnings were approximately 91.4% of the England average (£39,243 - a shortfall of £3,385).
- Whereas in 2025, full-time annual workplace earnings for Wolverhampton were slightly lower at £35,740 (90.9% of the England average, £39,289). There was an annual increase of 2.9% (+£1,007), which was slightly behind the national increase of 4.4%. Notably for Wolverhampton, workplace data shows that females earn slightly more than men (-0.1%).

Wolverhampton's Full-Time Annual Resident and Workplace Earnings Compared to National:



- Low pay³⁷ analysis shows that 16.2% of employee jobs in Wolverhampton were paid below the Living Wage Foundation rate in 2025, this was above the national average of 14.6%.

Economy as a Driver of Health

- In total, the cost to the economy of working age ill-health and disability that prevents work³⁸ in 2022 is estimated to be between £240 and £330 billion in the UK. Where data is available, the cost to Wolverhampton has been calculated at £1.1 billion.

Summary of the Cost of Working Age Ill Health and Disability that Prevents Work:

Cost element	Description	Cost to the UK	Cost to W'ton
Economic inactivity	Lost output due to working-age ill-health which prevents work	£127bn-£188bn	£613m
Sickness absence	Lost output due to sickness absence	£38bn-£56bn	£153m
Informal care giving	Lost output due to working age carers caring for working age sick	£37bn	£154m
NHS cost	The additional costs to the NHS when someone with a health problem is economically inactive rather than economically active	£2bn	£1.6m
Benefits payments	Cost of social security benefits related to health conditions that prevent people from working	£36bn-£47bn	£197m
Total	Total expenditure in 2022	£240bn-£330bn	£1.1bn
of which: Exchequer flowbacks	Tax and National Insurance foregone due to health-related worklessness	£57bn	£244m

³⁶ ONS, Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, released 2025

³⁷ ONS, Low and high pay in the UK, released 2025. Living Wage Foundation rate in 2025 - £13.85 in London and £12.60 outside of London.

³⁸ The EIU analysis based off DWP, The cost of working age ill-health and disability that prevents work, 2025. These estimates are not a definitive assessment of what savings might be achieved by further interventions to reduce ill-health or increase employment. The estimates in this costing can be regarded as the difference between current economic output, and the potential economic output if working age health conditions were not limiting or preventing work. This does not assume that all health issues could be resolved when entering work, rather that ill-health is no longer a barrier to work.

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