

Walsall 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	0pp	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 CO ² 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		DUD	Improve by 0.09
	SAN	-0.16	SAN	-0.09	SAN		SAN	Improve by 0.13
	WAL	-0.22	WAL	-0.02	WAL		WAL	Improve by 0.19
	WOL	-0.05	WOL	-0.03	WOL		WOL	Improve by 0.02
	BC	-0.14	BC	-0.04	BC		BC	Improve by 0.11 Eng.: -0.03
Reduce the No. of 16–17-Year-Olds Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)	DUD	21.5%	DUD	+833 (+101.3%)	DUD		DUD	-1,655
	SAN	2.6%	SAN	-1 (-0.4%)	SAN		SAN	-261
	WAL	5.2%	WAL	+15 (+3.6%)	WAL		WAL	-427
	WOL	3.9 %	WOL	+28 (+11.1%)	WOL		WOL	-281
	BC	7.8%	BC	+875 (+50.0% BC) +8.7% Eng.	BC		BC	No NEETs -2,624
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.

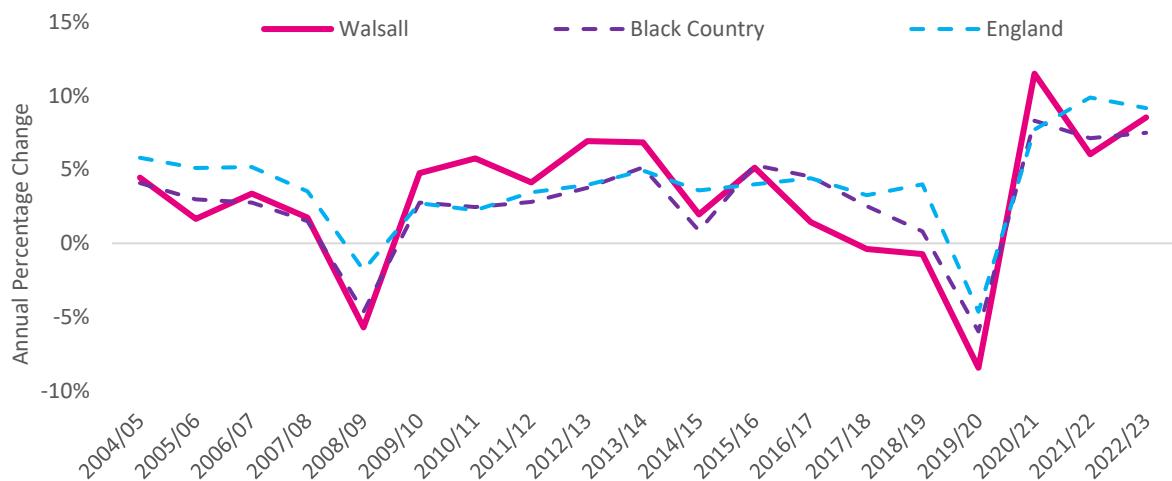
2025 KEY MESSAGES

1.1. Economy

Economy and Productivity

- After higher than national growth rates between 2020 and 2021 (+11.5% compared to +7.7%), Walsall's total Gross Value Added (GVA)² continues to increase but at a slower pace (+6.0% compared to 9.9% between 2021/22). **Walsall's GVA increased from £5.1bn in 2022 to £5.5bn in 2023.** Equating to a growth rate of 8.5% 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:



- Walsall's GVA per head remains substantially lower than the national average at £19,069 compared to £36,632 in 2023.** There was an annual increase of 7.6% which was below the national growth rate (+8.1%). For Walsall, there was an **overall output gap³ of £5.1bn**, an annual increase of just over £441m and longer-term (since 2004) a significant increase of nearly £3.1bn.
- GVA per hour worked⁴ for Walsall was £31.20 in 2023**, with a **slower annual growth** rate than nationally at 0.6% compared to 2.2%. When compared to 2019, Walsall performed above the national average growth rate (+15.1% compared to +14.5%). However, in 2023 there was still a **shortfall of £10.70 to reach the UK average (£41.90)**.
- Walsall's Gross Disposable Household Income (GDHI) per head⁵ increased from £16,816 in 2022 to £18,199 in 2023**, which equated to a **growth of 8.2%**, slightly below the national growth rate of 8.4%. Across all local authority areas, Walsall had the 17th lowest GDHI per person (moving from 15th place in 2022) and had a **shortfall of £6,637 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 2024 and mid-year population estimates, released 2025

⁴ ONS, Subregional productivity in the UK, released 2025

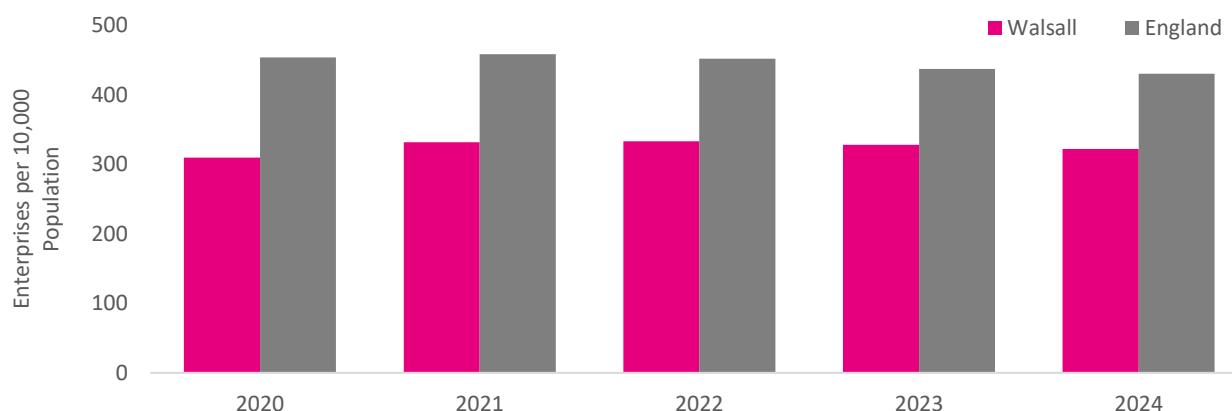
⁵ ONS, Regional gross disposable household income, released 2025

1.2. Business

Business Environment

- In 2024, there were **9,525 enterprises⁶** in Walsall, an **annual decrease of 0.2% (-20)** which followed the national trend (-0.4%). However, over the longer-term (2019 compared to 2024), there was enterprise growth in Walsall which bucked the national trend (+8.9% compared to -1.0%).
- There are still **too few enterprises in Walsall at 332 enterprises per 10,000 population compared to 430 per 10,000 population for England in 2024**. For Walsall to reach the national average it requires **an additional 3,193 active enterprises**.

Trends in Active Enterprises per 10,000 population:



- In 2024, there were **25 high-growth firms in Walsall**. An **annual decrease of 16.7% (-5)**, whereas **nationally there was an increase of 4.0%**.
- **Walsall's enterprise survival rates are lower than national levels on a short-term basis but performed slightly better on a longer-term basis**. Of the 1,270 enterprise births in 2023, 92.4% were still active after 1 year with England at 93.4%. Of the 1,170 enterprise births in 2019 in Walsall, 38.5% were still active after 5 years with England at 38.3%.
- Between 2019 and 2024, **enterprise births in Walsall rose by 9.4%, from 1,170 to 1,280**. This bucked the national trend (-13.1%). However, the latest data for between 2023 and 2024 shows a decrease of 2.3% (-30), nationally there was an increase of 0.3%.
- There were **43 enterprise births per 10,000 population for Walsall compared to 48 per 10,000 population for England** in 2024. To match the national average, Walsall requires an overall increase of 146 births per year.
- Experimental quarterly data⁷ shows an overall positive picture locally and nationally as **business births were back ahead of business deaths in Q3 2025** (290 births compared to 210 deaths in Walsall).
- There is an opportunity to **harness innovative activity of the diverse business base locally** as 17.7% of companies in Walsall are female-led⁸, (UK average 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, Walsall has **higher than the national proportion in 7 sectors for GVA⁹, 4 sectors** (with a further 1 that matched) **in jobs¹⁰** and **5 sectors for enterprises¹¹**.

GVA, Jobs and Enterprises per Sector:

	Walsall GVA	% of Walsall GVA	% of England GVA	Walsall Jobs	% of Walsall Jobs	% of England Jobs	Walsall Enterprises	% of Walsall Enterprises	% of England Enterprises
Advanced Manufacturing	£769m	14.0%	10.7%	11,220	11.4%	9.5%	895	10.7%	11.4%
Building Technologies	£458m	8.3%	6.3%	4,750	4.8%	4.9%	1,305	15.5%	14.1%
Business Services	£1.7bn	31.4%	43.0%	17,455	17.8%	26.1%	2,275	27.1%	37.6%
Environmental Technologies	£160m	2.9%	2.4%	1,060	1.1%	1.1%	55	0.7%	0.5%
Health & Wellbeing	£552m	10.0%	8.2%	15,150	15.4%	14.0%	465	5.5%	4.4%
Public Sector inc. Education	£654m	11.9%	11.6%	13,750	14.0%	15.5%	240	2.9%	4.1%
Retail	£640m	11.6%	10.1%	17,500	17.8%	13.7%	1,710	20.4%	14.5%
Transport Technologies	£409m	7.4%	3.5%	10,255	10.4%	5.1%	805	9.6%	4.2%
Visitor Economy	£136m	2.5%	4.3%	7,175	7.3%	10.1%	645	7.7%	9.0%
Total	£5.5bn	100%	100.0%	98,000	100%	100%	8,395	100%	100%

- Furthermore, **450 strategic companies¹²** have been identified in the Black Country area, **of which 97 were in Walsall**.

West Midlands High Growth Clusters

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

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

	Walsall GVA	% of WMCA GVA	Walsall Employment	% of WMCA Employment	Walsall Businesses	% of WMCA Businesses
Advanced Engineering, Light Electric Vehicles & Batteries	£1.2bn	9.6%	21,631	11.6%	1,920	11.6%
Digital Tech & Creative	£228m	7.4%	760	2.2%	305	6.4%
Health & Med Tech	£26m	6.2%	170	3.4%	35	9.6%
Next Generation Services	£1.1bn	5.3%	6,435	3.9%	1,255	6.8%
Smart Energy Systems	£74m	5.4%	920	4.4%	365	10.8%

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 Walsall has **the same proportion as seen nationally in 4 sectors for enterprises and 3 sectors for jobs**.

Employees and Businesses per IS-8 Sector:

	Employees			Businesses		
	Walsall	Walsall % of Total	UK % of Total	Walsall	Walsall % of Total	UK % of Total
Advanced Manufacturing	2,445	2%	2%	110	1%	1%
Clean Energy Industries	1,234	1%	3%	67	1%	1%
Creative Industries	1,060	1%	5%	370	4%	10%
Defence	293	0.1%	0.1%	3	0.1%	0.1%
Digital and Technologies	650	1%	7%	435	5%	10%
Financial Services	1,750	2%	3%	90	1%	2%
Life Sciences	215	0.1%	0.1%	15	0.1%	0.1%
Professional and Business Services	12,060	12%	14%	1,325	16%	21%
Total	19,707	20.2%	34.2%	2,415	29.2%	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 records a business LQ of 1.50, employee LQ of 1.37, and turnover LQ of 1.85, underlining it as a local area of specialisation.**

Walsall Location Quotient per IS-8 Sector:

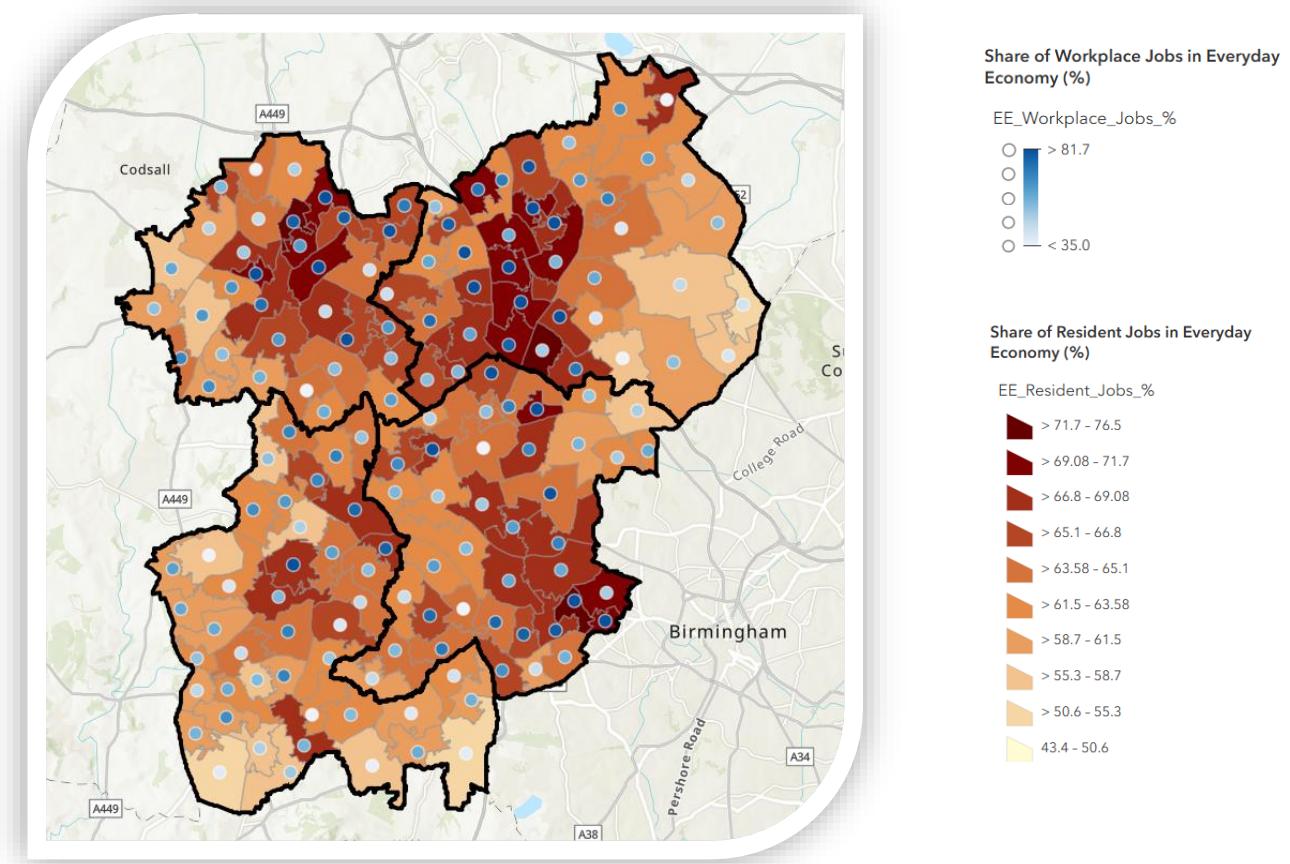
Sector	Business LQ	Employee LQ	Turnover LQ
Advanced Manufacturing	1.5	1.37	1.85
Clean Energy Industries	0.79	0.87	0.58
Creative Industries	0.95	0.62	0.29
Defence	0.19	0.61	0.19
Digital and Technologies	0.33	0.09	0.15
Financial Services	0.37	0.4	0.21
Life Sciences	0.69	0.47	0.43
Professional and Business Services	0.59	0.94	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 Walsall, it is estimated that 64.6% of residents work in these jobs while 64.7% 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, Walsall (£4.1m from 44 awards) received the lowest amount of R&D/innovation funding via Innovate UK programmes in the last decade.**

International Trade

- In 2023, Walsall **exported nearly £2.0bn of goods and services**¹⁶. This was **an annual increase of 21.8%** (+£350m) while England increased at a slower rate of 6.4%. Over this period, **Walsall's imports decreased by 11.7% (-£168m)** to a total of **nearly £1.3bn** (England increased by 4.2%). Meaning in 2023, Walsall had an overall trade surplus of £685m.
- International trade activity** in Walsall was **driven by goods rather than services**. Walsall exported nearly £1.4bn in goods and only £583m in services. Although, Walsall imported nearly £1.1bn in goods and only £203m in services.
- Meaning in 2023, Walsall had a **trade in goods surplus of £310m** and a **trade surplus of £375m in services**.

¹⁵ Innovate UK, 2025

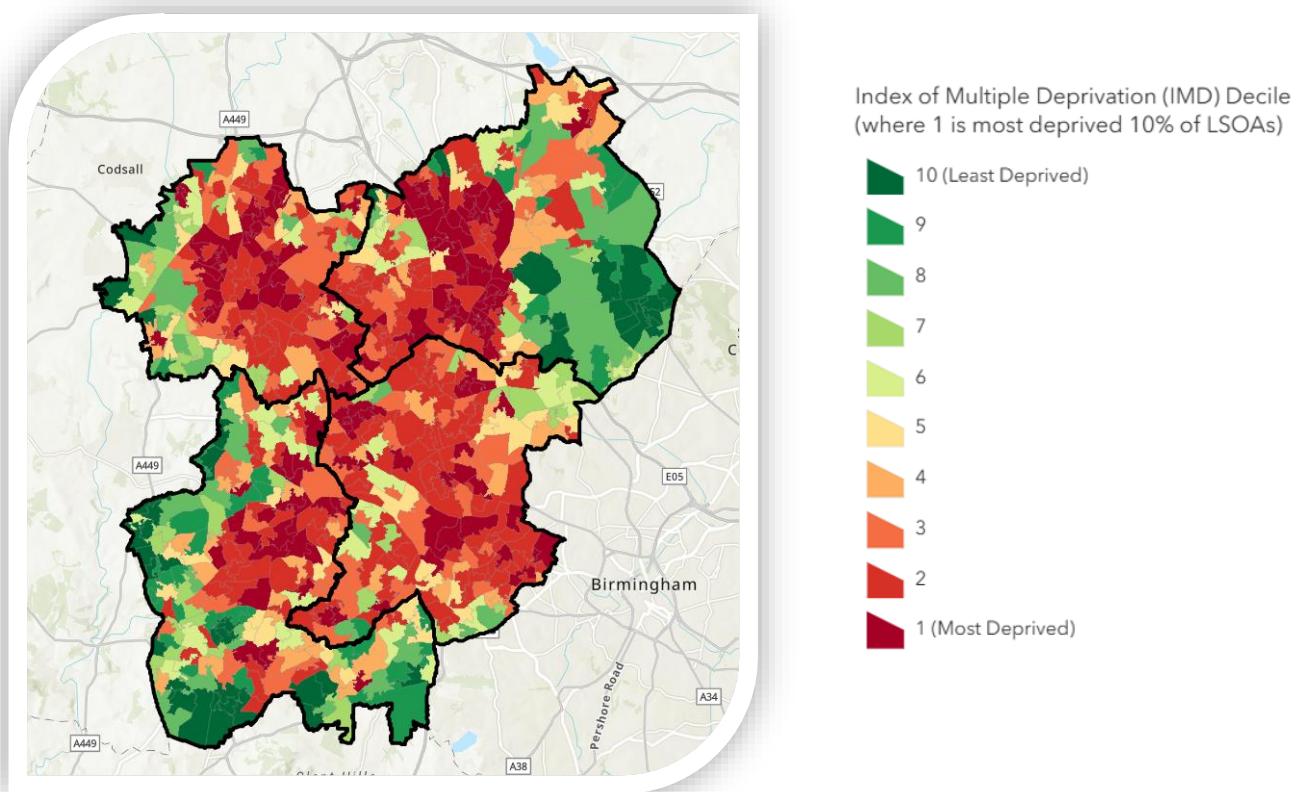
¹⁶ ONS, International trade in UK nations, regions and cities: 2023, released 2025.

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. **Walsall's ranking improved in 2025 compared with 2019 - placed in 28th from 25th.**
- **48.5% (82) of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Walsall are in the top 20% most deprived areas in England.** Of these 24.9% (42) 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, 81 LSOAs that were identified as deprived in 2019 are still active in 2025 analysis, **there were 3 fewer LSOAs in the top 10%, 3 fewer in top 20%, and 6 had moved into the 3rd decile.**

IMD 2025, Overall Decile per LSOA:



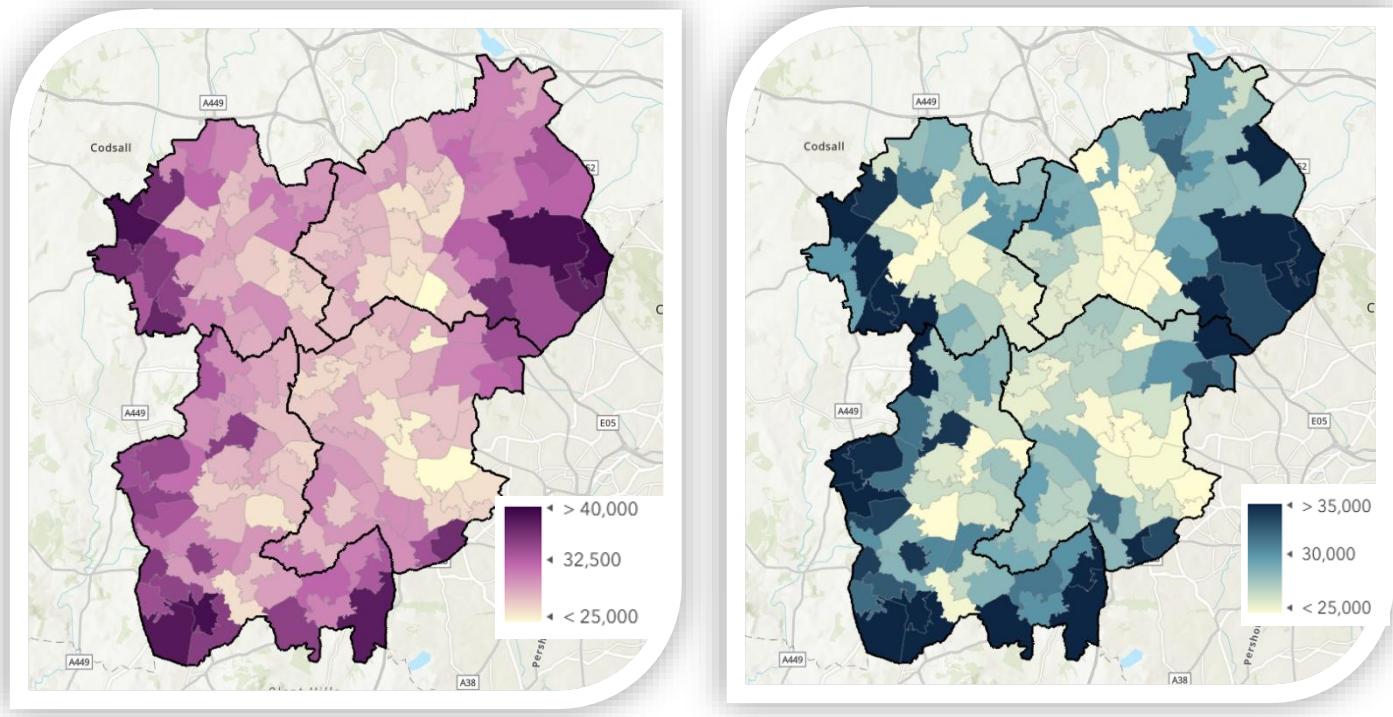
- In the financial year ending 2023, the mean equivalised household disposable (net) income¹⁸ before housing costs varied within Walsall from £24,304 to £39,254, **with 92.3% (36 MSOAs) under the England and Wales average of £36,800.**

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 Walsall from £20,880 to £38,797, **with 87.2% (34 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 Walsall show 651 net additional homes** leading to a total of **approximately 119,232 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 Walsall, there were **60 social housing completions²⁰** in **2024/25**, up from 33 completed in the previous year. There were also **141 affordable homes completed**, up from 138 completed in the previous year.
- Housing affordability ratios²¹ show that in 2024, residents in Walsall could **expect to spend 6.4 times their annual earnings buying a home**, down from 6.8 in 2023. The equivalent figure in England is 7.7 times annual earnings, down from 8.4.

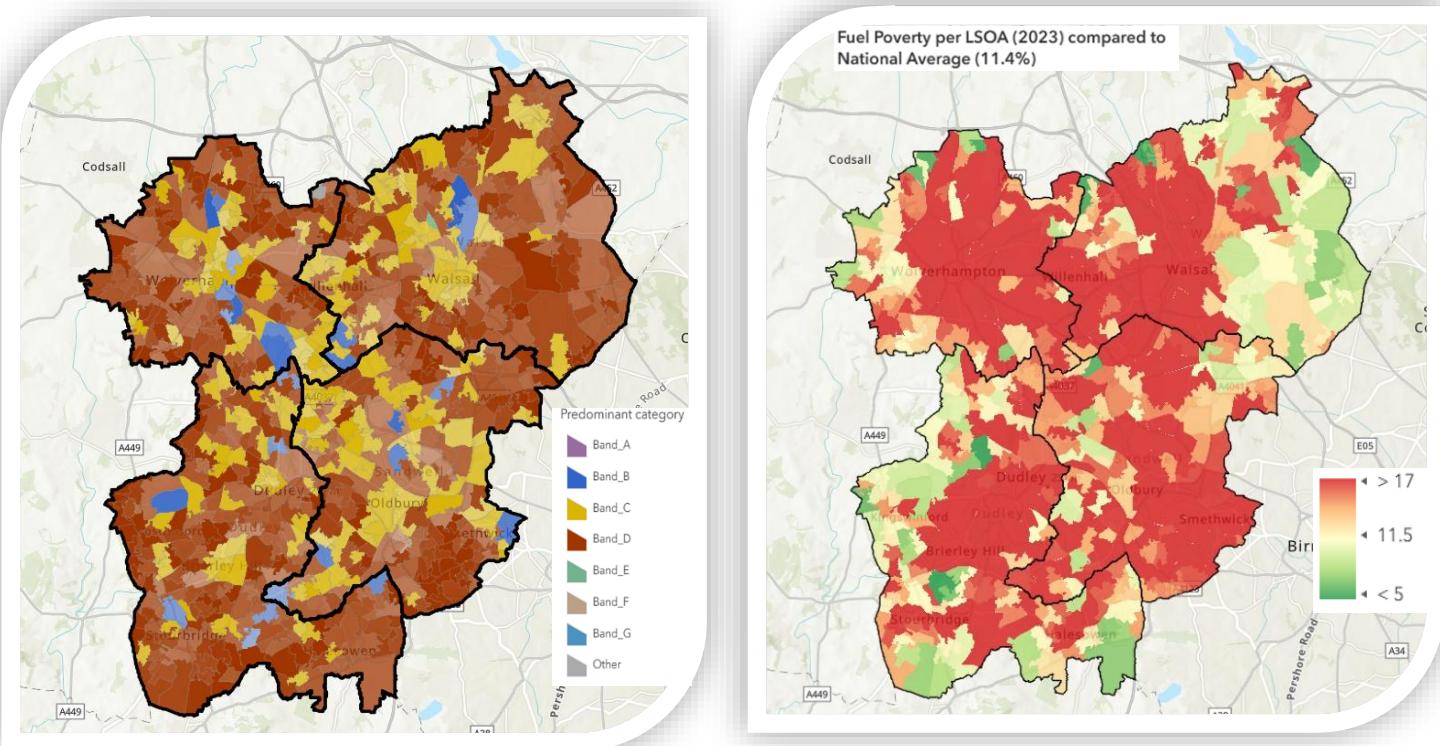
¹⁹ Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, Live tables on housing supply: net additional dwellings and on dwelling stock, both released 2025.

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, 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 Walsall lodgements were in Band D (41.8%), Band C (33.1%) and Band E (13.4%).**
- **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 Walsall, 17.2% (19,527) of households were in fuel poverty. Across all local areas in England, this was the 7th highest, moving from 6th place in 2022.**

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



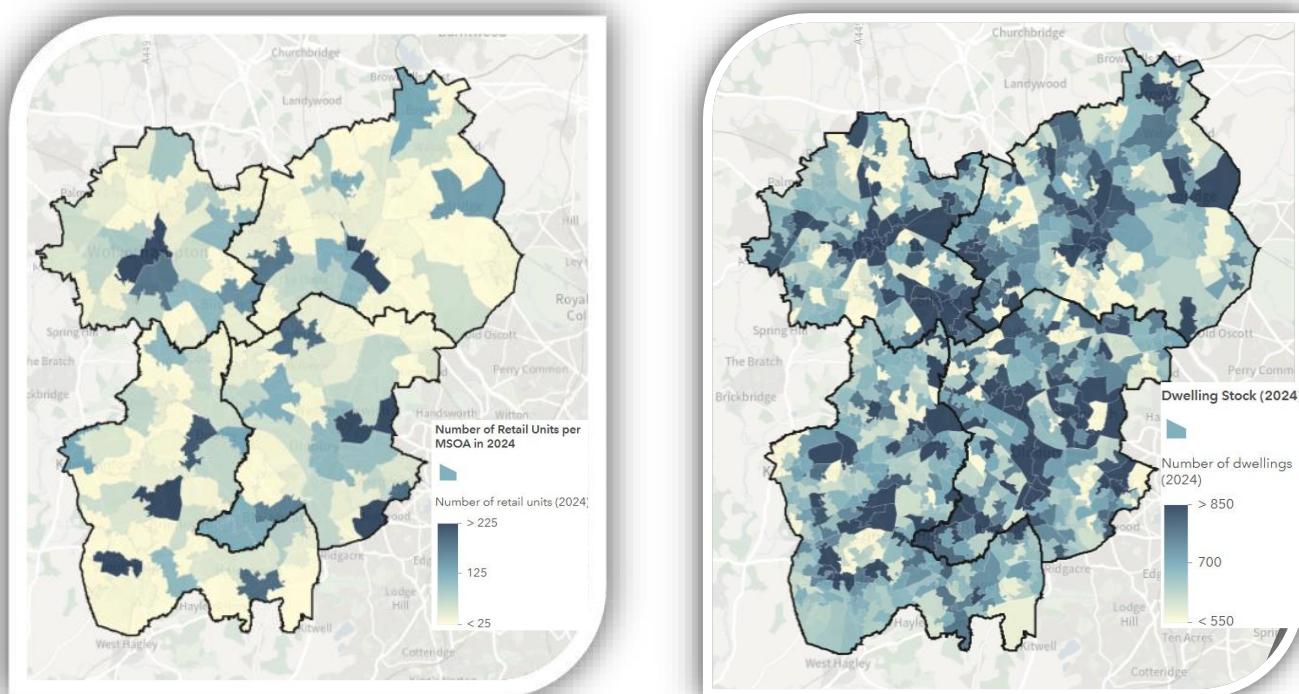
- Across Walsall as of March 2025, there was a total of **8,470 non-domestic properties²⁴**. **Bucking the national trend** (-0.1%), there was an increase of 0.2% (+20) when compared to March 2024.
- Analysing non-domestic properties by type, there was a total of **1,090 office properties across Walsall**. There has been **an annual increase** of 1.9% (+20), above the national increase of 0.1%. **Properties classed as 'other' also increased in Walsall, by 10 to 1,820** (+0.6% compared to -0.4% nationally).
- **Whereas industrial properties and retail properties remained unchanged** at 3,100 and 2,470 properties respectively. While nationally, industrial properties increased by 0.4% while 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):

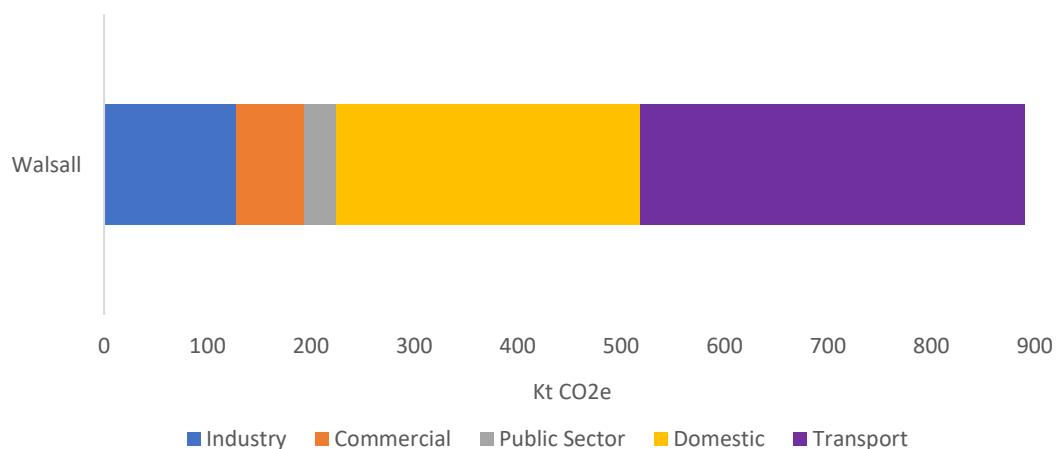


- As of July 2025, **84.4% of premises in Walsall had full fibre connectivity²⁵, above the UK-wide figure of 78.2%.**

Emissions

- In 2023, **total carbon dioxide emissions²⁶ were 896 kt CO₂e in Walsall. This has decreased at a slower rate than nationally since 2022** (-4.8% compared to -5.7%). Longer term (since 2005), emissions have decreased at a faster rate, by 50.0% for Walsall 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 Walsall's Carbon Dioxide Emissions, 2023:



²⁵ Ofcom, Connected Nations, released 2025

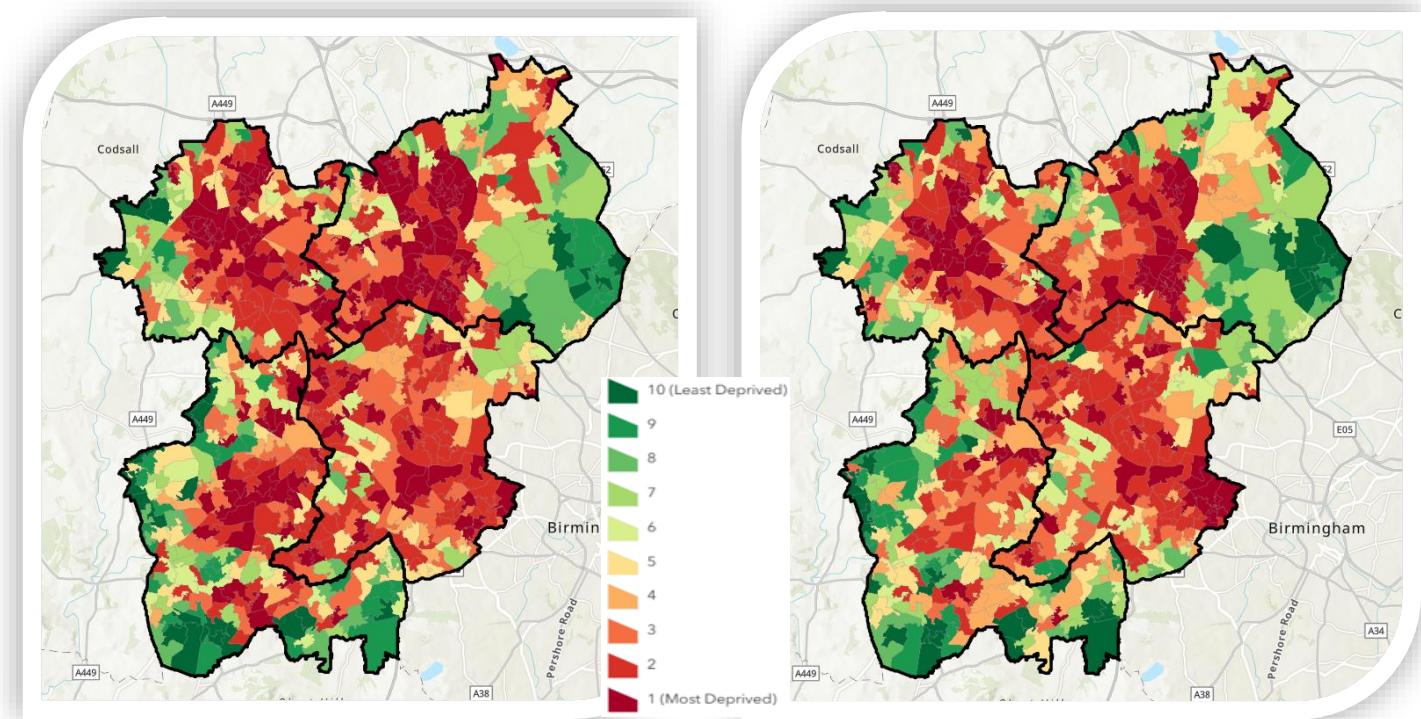
²⁶ Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, UK local authority & regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics, released 2025

1.4. People

Population and Deprivation

- In 2024, Walsall had a population of 295,678 residents²⁷, an annual increase of 1.5% (+4,441) which was above the national growth rate (+1.2%). Compared to England overall, Walsall had higher proportions of children aged 0–15 (21.5% compared 18.4%, equating to 63,682 residents). 61.4% (181,408) of residents were aged 16–64 and 17.1% (50,588) of residents 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 Walsall, 54.6% of children live in income-deprived families, ranking the borough 12th highest in England for this measure. Geographically, 48.5% (82) of LSOAs in Walsall fall within the 20% most deprived nationally. Of these, 32.5% (55) 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 those aged 60 or over who experience income deprivation. In Walsall, 23.8% of residents aged 60 or over experience income deprivation, placing the borough 40th highest in England for this measure. Geographically, 39.1% (66) of Walsall's LSOAs fall within the 20% most deprived nationally. Of these, 17.2% (29) are in the top 10% most deprived.

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



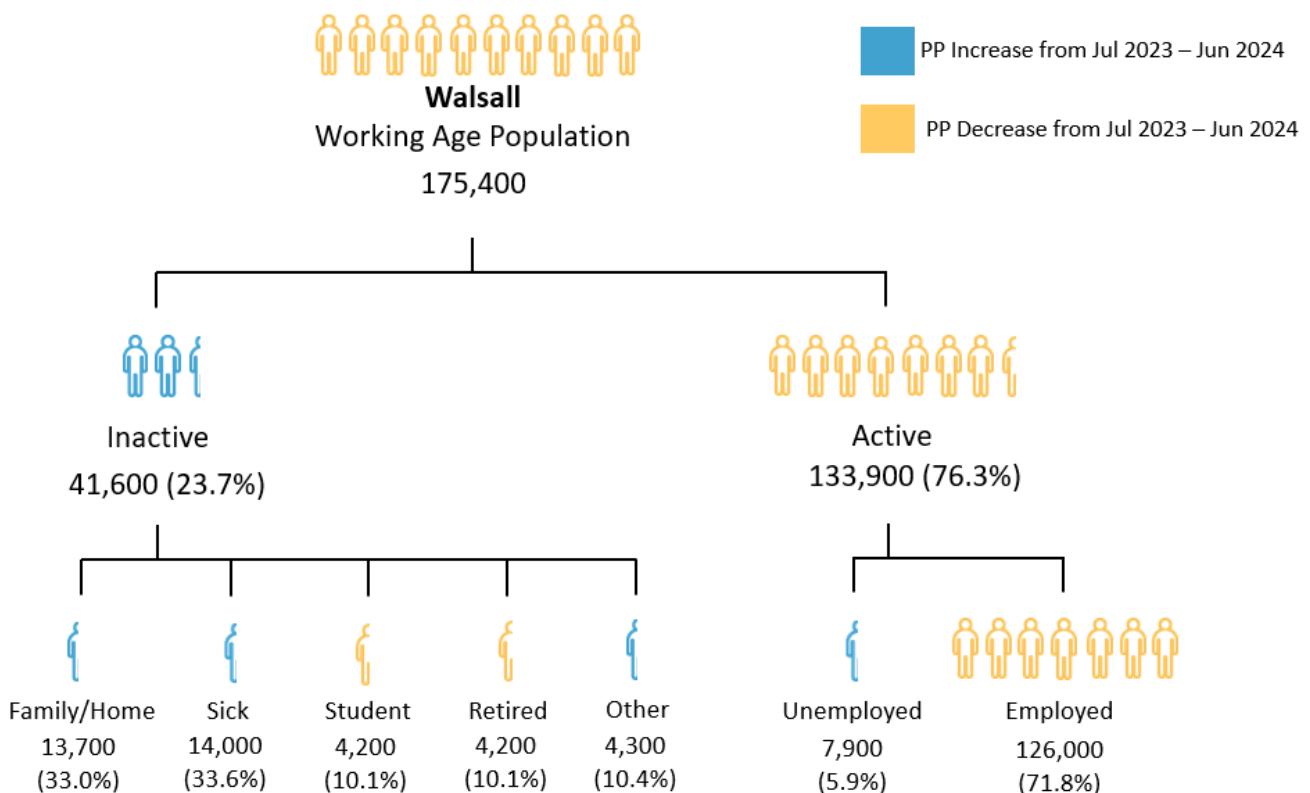
²⁷ ONS, mid-year population estimates, 2025

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

Labour Market

- **Walsall'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 Walsall stands at 71.8% (compared to 75.8% nationally), requiring an **additional 14,320 people to enter work to meet the government target**.
- In addition, Walsall's economic inactivity was at 23.7%, 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 Walsall remain below the national average at 5.2% compared to 5.6%.
- In Walsall, the **employment rate of those classed as Equality Act (EA) core or work-limiting disabled³¹** was at 47.7% which was 35.2pp lower than those classed as not EA core or work-limiting disabled (82.9%). This was higher than the national average of 24.6pp (57.6% compared to 82.2% respectively).
- **Walsall's female employment rate (66.7%) was 6.4pp lower than the male employment rate (75.1%).** However, this gap was slightly **smaller than the national average of 6.5pp.**

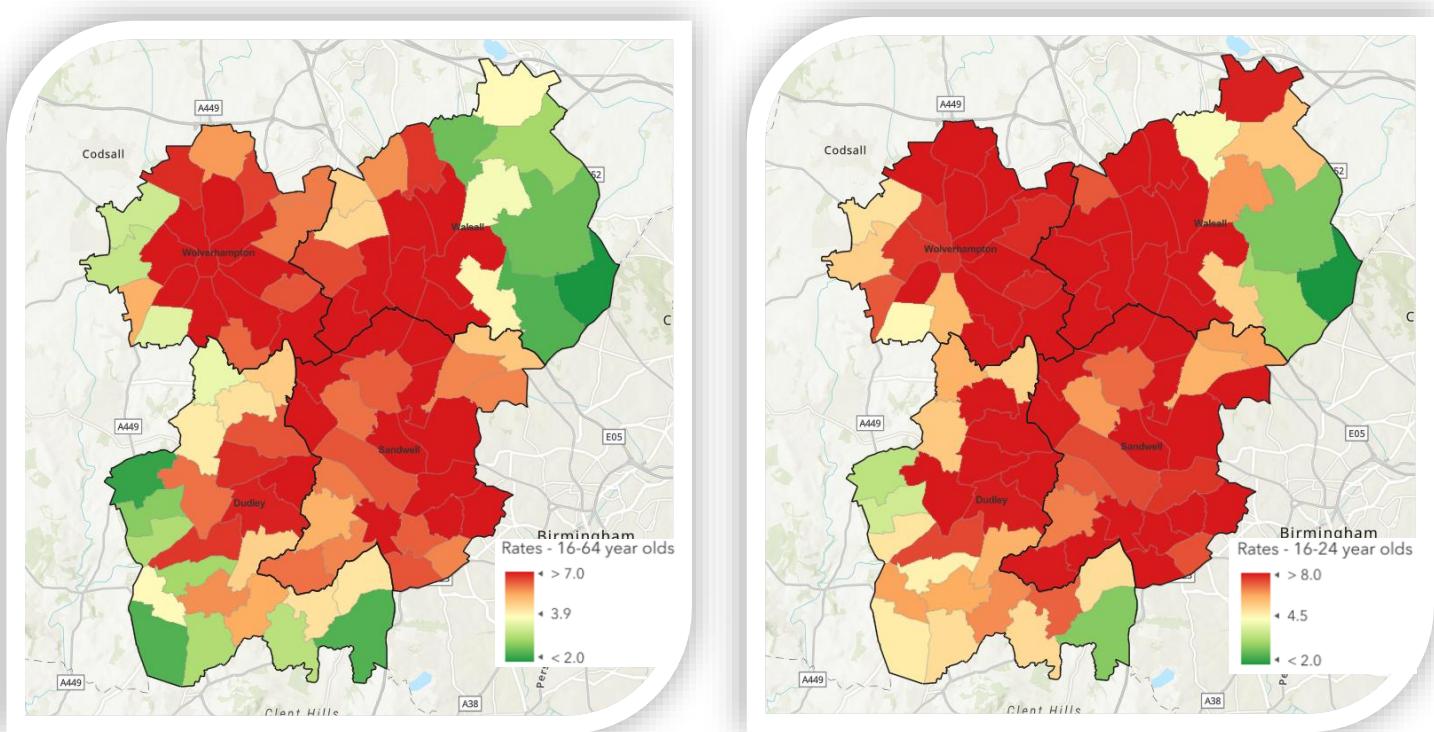
²⁹ ONS, Annual Population Survey, 2025.

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 Walsall'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 Walsall.** There are approximately 10,500 people claiming benefits who are looking for work. This equates to 6.0% 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 7.6% compared to 4.4% nationally.** Across all local authorities, Walsall came in at 5th highest (joint with Thanet).

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



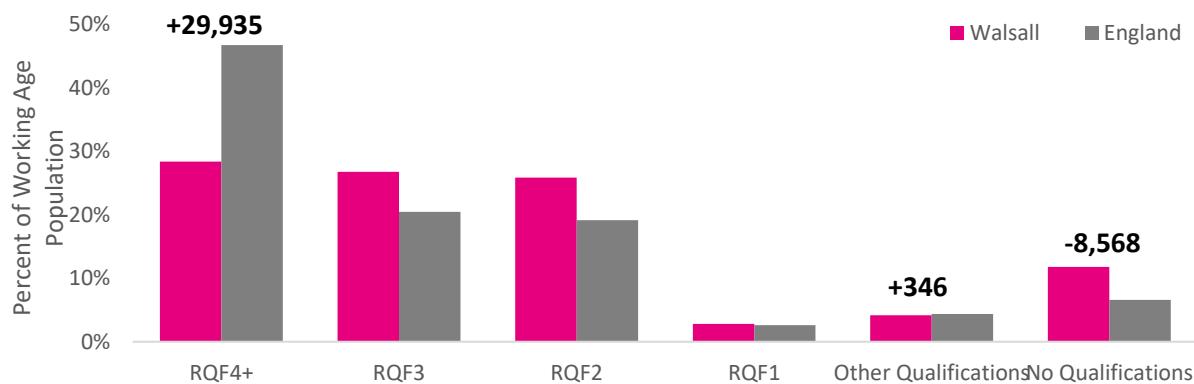
Skills

- **28.4% (46,300) of Walsall residents had RQF4+ qualifications³³** compared to 46.8% nationally in 2024. This was an annual decrease of 14.7% (-8,000) for Walsall, in contrast to an increase of 0.5% nationally. **For Walsall to reach the national level it requires 29,935 residents to gain a qualification at Level 4 and above.**
- At the other end of the scale, **11.8% (19,300) of Walsall's working age population had no formal qualifications**, above the national average of 6.6% in 2024. This was an annual increase of 1.6% (+300) for Walsall compared to an increase of 6.8% nationally. **For Walsall to reach the national level it requires 8,568 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:



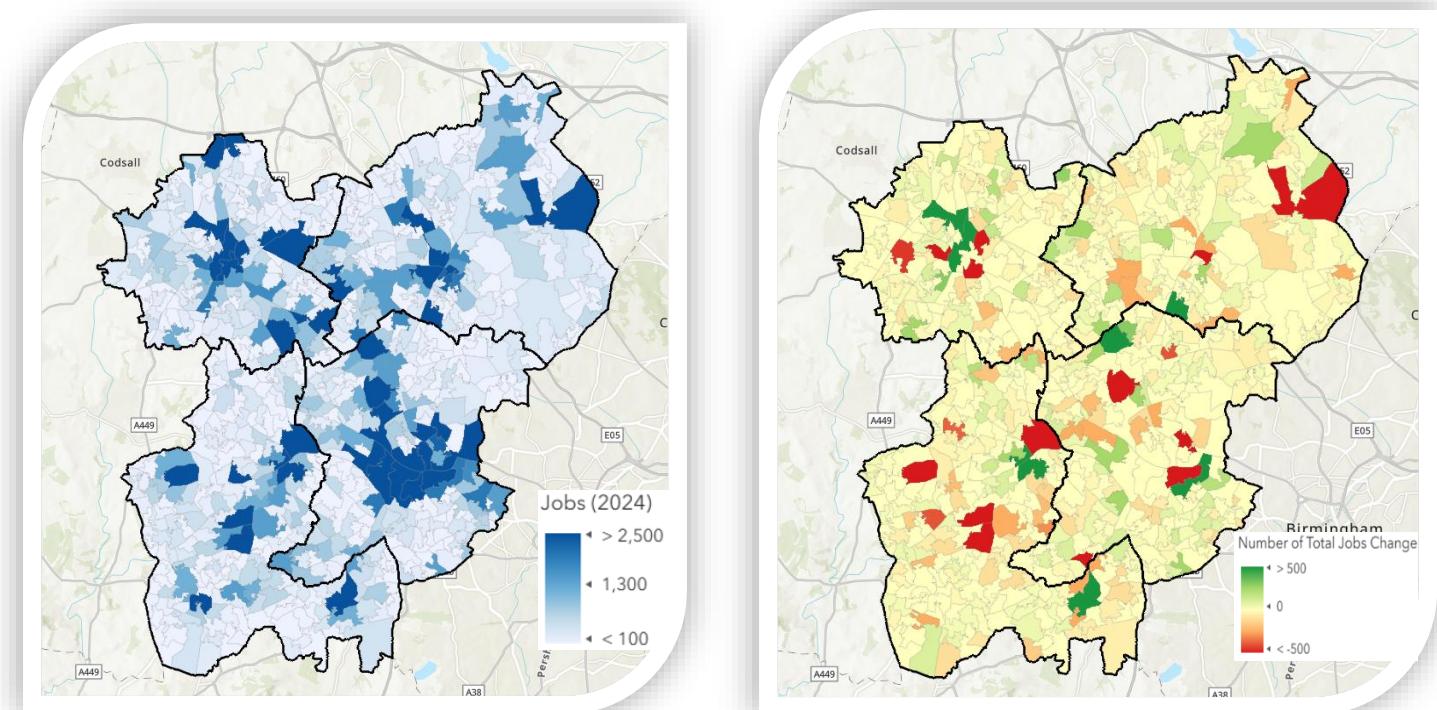
Apprenticeship Starts

- In the 2024/25 academic year, there were **1,850 apprenticeship starts³⁴** in Walsall. When compared to 2023/24, this was an **increase of 4.5% (+80)**, nationally there was an **increase of 4.1%**. Exploring apprenticeship starts by level, there were **annual increases in higher and advanced apprenticeship starts** at 11.9% and 2.6% respectively (nationally there were increases of 15.1% and 0.4%).

Workforce Jobs

- For the second consecutive year, there has been a decrease of jobs in Walsall. **The latest data shows an annual decrease of 1.0% between 2023 and 2024 leading to a jobs total of 98,000 in Walsall**, which is the lowest recorded so far³⁵. Nationally there was an annual increase of 0.6%.

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



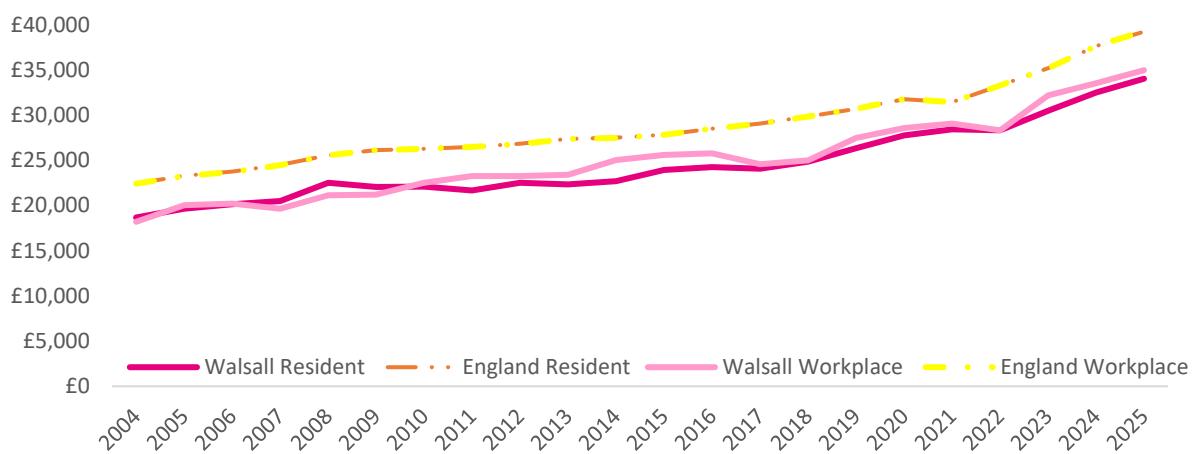
³⁴ Department for Education, apprenticeships, released 2025

³⁵ ONS, Business Register and Employment Survey, released 2025. Please note, due to a methodology change, data is only available from 2015

Earnings

- In 2025, full-time annual resident earnings³⁶ for Walsall reached £34,036, an annual increase of 4.7% (+£1,538) compared to an increase of 4.3% nationally. However, earnings were approximately 86.7% of the England average (£39,243 - a shortfall of £5,207).
- Whereas in 2025, full-time annual workplace earnings for Walsall were higher at £34,980, (89.0% of the England average, £39,289). An annual increase of 4.3% (+£1,443), which was slightly behind the national increase of 4.4%.

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



- Low pay³⁷ analysis shows that 18.8% of employee jobs in Walsall 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 Walsall has been calculated at £940 million.

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

Cost element	Description	Cost to the UK	Cost to Walsall
Economic inactivity	Lost output due to working-age ill-health which prevents work	£127bn-£188bn	£525m
Sickness absence	Lost output due to sickness absence	£38bn-£56bn	£130m
Informal care giving	Lost output due to working age carers caring for working age sick	£37bn	£111m
NHS cost	The additional costs to the NHS when someone with a health problem is economically inactive rather than economically active	£2bn	£2m
Benefits payments	Cost of social security benefits related to health conditions that prevent people from working	£36bn-£47bn	£171m
Total	Total expenditure in 2022	£240bn-£330bn	£940m
of which: Exchequer flowbacks	Tax and National Insurance foregone due to health-related worklessness	£57bn	£203m

³⁶ ONS, Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, released 2024

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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