Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE): 2026[1]

Resident Based

Annual Earnings

- In 2026, median full-time annual earnings for WMCA residents rose by £1,499 (+4.2%) compared to the previous year to reach £37,499. Across England, earnings increased by £1,742 (+4.4%) from 2025 to £41,140 in 2026.
- Across the WMCA area, resident full-time annual earnings ranged from £47,847 in Solihull (the only local authority area above the national average) to £33,561 in Sandwell. Annual earnings increased in all 7 local authority areas compared to the previous year, with the increases in Wolverhampton (+4.7%), Birmingham (+5.0%), Dudley (+5.4%) and Walsall (+5.8%) exceeding the national increase of 4.4%.

Resident full-time annual earnings:

	2025	2026	Annual Number Change	Annual Percentage Change	Gap to National rate
Birmingham	£35,699	£37,484	£1,785	5.0%	-£3,656
Coventry	£37,540	£37,815	£275	0.7%	-£3,325
Dudley	£35,350	£37,259	£1,908	5.4%	-£3,881
Sandwell	£32,908	£33,561	£653	2.0%	-£7,579
Solihull	£47,651	£47,874	£223	0.5%	£6,734
Walsall	£34,293	£36,268	£1,976	5.8%	-£4,872
Wolverhampton	£35,386	£37,038	£1,652	4.7%	-£4,103
WMCA	**£36,000**	**£37,499**	**£1,499**	**4.2%**	**-£3,641**
England	£39,398	£41,140	£1,742	4.4%	-

Weekly Earnings

- In 2026, median full-time weekly earnings for WMCA residents rose by £31.10 (+4.4%) compared to the previous year to reach £745.20. Across England, weekly earnings increased by £44.10 (+5.7%) from 2025 to £815.50 in 2026.
- Across the WMCA area, full-time annual resident earnings varied from £904.50 in Solihull (the only local authority area above the national average) to £682.10 in Sandwell. Annual earnings increased in all 7 local authority areas compared to the previous year, with the increase in Dudley (+5.9%) exceeding the national increase of 5.7%.

Resident full-time weekly earnings:

	2025	2026	Annual Number Change	Annual Percentage Change	Gap to National rate
Birmingham	£707.60	£741.10	£33.50	4.7%	-£74
Coventry	£742.90	£766.00	£23.10	3.1%	-£50
Dudley	£708.30	£750.40	£42.10	5.9%	-£65
Sandwell	£669.80	£682.10	£12.30	1.8%	-£133
Solihull	£886.10	£904.50	£18.40	2.1%	£89
Walsall	£688.90	£722.50	£33.60	4.9%	-£93
Wolverhampton	£707.30	£727.80	£20.50	2.9%	-£88
WMCA	**£714.10**	**£745.20**	**£31.10**	**4.4%**	**-£70**
England	£771.40	£815.50	£44.10	5.7%	-

[1] Office for National Statistics (ONS) - Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings - Employee earnings in the UK: 2026, low and high pay in the UK: 2026 and gender pay gap in the UK: 2026- released October 2026.

Workplace Based

Annual Earnings

- In 2026, median workplace full-time annual earnings for the WMCA area were £39,561, an increase of £1,795 (+4.8%) compared to the previous year. Across England, earnings increased by £1,773 (+4.5%) from 2025 to £41,198 in 2026.
- Across the WMCA area, full-time annual workplace earnings ranged from £43,886 in Solihull to £34,580 in Sandwell. Workplace earnings exceeded the national rate in Solihull (by £2,668) and in Coventry (by £1,113).
- Annual earnings increased in all 7 local authority areas compared to the previous year, with the increase in Birmingham (+5.2%) and Wolverhampton (+6.8%) exceeding the national increase of 4.5%.

Workplace full-time annual earnings:

	2025	2026	Annual Number change	Annual percentage change	Gap to National rate
Birmingham	£38,434	£40,447	£2,012	5.2%	-£751
Coventry	£41,260	£42,373	£1,113	2.7%	£1,175
Dudley	£35,286	£36,606	£1,320	3.7%	-£4,592
Sandwell	£33,198	£34,580	£1,382	4.2%	-£6,618
Solihull	£42,662	£43,866	£1,204	2.8%	£2,668
Walsall	£35,238	£36,705	£1,467	4.2%	-£4,493
Wolverhampton	£35,867	£38,290	£2,423	6.8%	-£2,908
WMCA	**£37,766**	**£39,561**	**£1,795**	**4.8%**	**-£1,637**
England	£39,425	£41,198	£1,773	4.5%	-

Weekly Earnings

- In 2026, median full-time workplace weekly earnings for the WMCA rose by £36.90 (+4.9%) compared to the previous year to reach £784.40. Across England, weekly earnings increased by £44.60 (+5.8%) from 2025 to £817.00 in 2026.
- Across the WMCA area, full-time annual workplace earnings varied from £859.80 in Solihull to £696.90 in Sandwell. Weekly workplace earnings exceeded the national rate by £42.80 in Solihull and by £18.70 in Coventry.
- Annual earnings increased in all 7 local authority areas compared to the previous year, with the increase in Solihull (+6.8%) exceeding the national increase of 5.8%.

Workplace full-time weekly earnings:

	2025	2026	Annual Number change	Annual Percentage change	Gap to National rate
Birmingham	£766.40	£800.50	£34.10	4.4%	-£16.50
Coventry	£825.60	£835.70	£10.10	1.2%	£18.70
Dudley	£705.70	£735.50	£29.80	4.2%	-£81.50
Sandwell	£675.30	£696.90	£21.60	3.2%	-£120.10
Solihull	£805.20	£859.80	£54.60	6.8%	£42.80
Walsall	£690.40	£725.90	£35.50	5.1%	-£91.10
Wolverhampton	£719.60	£756.70	£37.10	5.2%	-£60.30
WMCA	**£747.50**	**£784.40**	**£36.90**	**4.9%**	**-£32.60**
England	£772.40	£817.00	£44.60	5.8%	-

Gender Pay Gap

The gender pay gap measures the difference between men's and women's hourly earnings (excluding overtime) as a percentage of men's hourly earnings (excluding overtime). This analysis is based on full-time employees.

- In 2026, there was a resident-based gender pay gap of 8.7% in the WMCA area, an increase compared to a gap of 6.1% in the previous year. Across England the resident-based gender pay gap was 7.6% in 2026, a decrease from 7.9% in 2025.
- The gender pay gap was lower than the national average in 2026 for residents of Dudley (3.0%), Sandwell (3.0%) and Wolverhampton (4.9%).

- Workplace analysis shows that in 2026 the gender pay gap for full time workers was 9.0% in the WMCA area, a decrease from 9.5% in the previous year. The gender pay gap across England was 7.7% in 2026, decreasing from 8.0% in the previous year.
- In 2026, hourly pay for full time workers in Dudley was higher for female employees compared to male employees (-2.4%), going against the national trend. The gender pay gap for workers in Sandwell (1.3%) and Walsall (7.2%) were also below the England average in 2026.

Median gender pay gap for full-time employee jobs, 2026:

	Resident based	Workplace Based
Birmingham	10.7%	11.1%
Coventry	11.8%	15.6%
Dudley	3.0%	-2.4%
Sandwell	3.0%	1.3%
Solihull	10.3%	16.7%
Walsall	13.9%	7.2%
Wolverhampton	4.9%	9.4%
WMCA	**8.7%**	**9.0%**
England	7.6%	7.7%

National Living Wage

Jobs below the living wage refer to jobs with hourly pay below the living wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation. This section refers to all employee jobs.

- In the WMCA area in 2026, there were 230,000 employees in the WMCA area earning below the National Living Wage Foundation rates, an increase of 53,000 compared to the previous year. This equated to 19.0% of all jobs in the WMCA area, compared to 17.7% of national jobs. Compared to the previous year, the proportion of jobs below the Living Wage Foundation rates in the WMCA area has increased by 3.8 percentage points (pp) compared to a national increase of 3.0pp.
- The proportion of employees earning below the Living Wage Foundation Rates varies across the WMCA area from 26.6% in Wolverhampton, down to 14.7% in Solihull. The proportion of employees earning below the Living Wage was lower than the national average in Birmingham (17.3%), Coventry (15.9%) and Solihull (14.7%).

Number and percentage of employees earning below the Living Wage Foundation rates:

	2025		2026		Annual Change	
	Jobs	% earning below Living Wage Foundation rates	Jobs	% earning below Living Wage Foundation rates	Jobs	Percentage Point Change
Birmingham	68,000	14.2%	83,000	17.3%	15,000	3.1pp
Coventry	18,000	12.3%	28,000	15.9%	10,000	3.6pp
Dudley	21,000	19.1%	24,000	20.6%	3,000	1.5pp
Sandwell	24,000	19.0%	29,000	23.2%	5,000	4.2pp
Solihull	14,000	11.7%	19,000	14.7%	5,000	3.0pp
Walsall	17,000	18.6%	23,000	24.6%	6,000	6.0pp
Wolverhampton	15,000	16.0%	24,000	26.6%	9,000	10.6pp
WMCA	**177,000**	**15.2%**	**230,000**	**19.0%**	**53,000**	**3.8pp**
England	3,672,000	14.7%	4,471,000	17.7%	799,000	3.0pp