

Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Economic Bulletin

Issue 61 - September 2025

Welcome to the latest edition of the Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Economic Bulletin produced by our Economy, Skills, and Insight Teams, which provides the timeliest analysis of official Government data, national intelligence, and local insights on the state of the local economy.

Alongside information on the Claimant Count and Job Vacancies that will be a part of every Bulletin, this month's issue also provides more detailed youth claimant count analysis and updated ward level analysis of the claimant count to help identify areas which are being impacted the hardest by unemployment and a reliance on work-related benefits across Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent and where there may be a greater need for support. We also provide analysis of the latest business insolvency data to further understand how businesses are faring during the current economic climate.

We hope you find the Bulletin useful and welcome your comments and suggestions on further information you would like to see included in future editions to make sure that it continues to meet your needs. If you do have any feedback, please send your comments to SkillsAnalysis@staffordshire.gov.uk.

Stay Safe,

Darryl Evers

Director for Economy, Infrastructure and Skills, Staffordshire County Council

Key Messages

Local Picture

- In Staffordshire having seen **improvement in the local economy and labour market following the COVID pandemic**, as seen nationally, we have seen unemployment, youth unemployment and dependency on work-related benefits increase during the energy and cost-of-living crisis.
- This month we have **seen an increase in the Claimant Count**. It should be noted that **changes by the Department of Work and Pensions introduced in May 2024 are expected to increase the claimant count nationwide**.
- **Job vacancies have seen a decrease this month, and new job postings in Staffordshire have decreased below pre-pandemic levels. In comparison, job vacancies in the West Midlands have decreased but at a higher rate below pre-pandemic levels whilst nationally job vacancies have also decreased but at a lower rate below pre-pandemic levels.**
- **We will continue to support our residents into work and ensure that Staffordshire has the strong workforce it needs to grow the economy.**
- We also continue to support **local businesses that face ongoing challenging conditions** due to a wide range of factors including **high interest rates and energy prices, increased commodity costs, increased wage levels and lower consumer demand**.
- Looking at the local data in more detail, following increases in the claimant count since before the start of the year, **the number of work-related benefit claimants in Staffordshire increased by 280 claimants this month to a total of 15,300 claimants.**
- **The claimant rate for Staffordshire remained the same at 2.8% of the working age population, this month. Staffordshire saw an increase of 1.9% this month, similar to the 1.6% increase in the region and the 1.5% increase nationally.**
- **Staffordshire continues to have one of the lowest claimant rates in the region, far lower than the regional average 5.4% which increased from 4.0% the previous month, and lower than the England average 4.1% which also increased from 4.0% the previous month.** We will continue to support those residents that unfortunately find themselves out of work to access employment through our partnership working and dedicated Jobs Brokerage service.
- This month the **youth claimant count in Staffordshire saw an increase of 80 claimants with the total number of youth claimants now 3,100. Staffordshire saw a 2.6% increase, higher than the 4.7% increase in the West Midlands and the 4.8% increase in England. The proportion of young people in Staffordshire aged 18-24 claiming work-related Universal Credit increased from 4.7% to 4.9%.** It is important to state that **Staffordshire continues to be lower than the national rate of 5.7% which increased from 5.4% and far lower than the regional rate of 7.9% which increased from 7.5%.** Our focus continues to be to engage with our younger residents and support them to find

employment or to continue in education and training.

- Turning to job vacancies, **Staffordshire saw a 4% decrease in the number of available job vacancies between July and August to a total of 10,900. This is lower than the number of work-related benefit claimants in Staffordshire. Stoke-on-Trent saw negligible change in job vacancies to a total of 4,600 which is significantly lower than the number of claimants. Across the region in the last month there was a 5% decrease, and nationally there was also a 4% decrease in the number of job vacancies.**
- Considering the **top 20 job vacancy occupations in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent**, demand for roles in social care continue to remain high with **'Care Workers & Home Carers'** being the most in demand occupations.
- The following occupations, **'Large Goods Vehicle Drivers,' 'Sales Related,' 'Cleaners & Domestics'** also have strong demand.
- In the Hospitality sector, **'Kitchen & Catering Assistants'** roles are most in demand.
- In the Education sector there is particularly high demand for and **'Secondary Education Teaching Professionals,' 'Teaching Assistants,' 'Teaching Professionals'** and **'SEND Teaching Professionals.'**
- There is high demand in the Health and Social Care sector for **'Social Workers.'**
- The Logistics sector has high demand for **'Warehouse Operatives,' 'Transport & Distribution Clerks/Assistants'** and **'Fork-lift Truck Drivers.'**
- Demand for **'Managers & Directors'** and **'Sales & Retail Assistants'** and in the Retail and Wholesale sector remain strong.
- In the Engineering sector **'Mechanical Engineers'** and **'Engineering Technicians'** are in demand.
- There is strong demand for **'Customer Service occupations,' 'Book-keepers, Payroll Managers & Wages Clerks'** across business sectors.
- There is continued demand for **'Plant & Machine Operatives'** in the Manufacturing sector.
- It is in these areas of the economy where job vacancies remain particularly high and where we are hearing reports of **labour and skills shortages** with a mismatch of workers or skills to fill vacant jobs.
- This has the **potential to slow down economic growth and limit business survival unless the labour shortage and skills gap is quickly and effectively addressed.** Clearly employment support organisations, skills providers and the Government's Plan for Jobs including the Connect to Work schemes and new Skills Bootcamps have a vital role in upskilling and reskilling jobseekers into areas of demand and preventing them becoming long-term unemployed. Government and business sectors have a key role in ensuring that jobs in areas of demand are attracting workers with good pay and terms and conditions to help prevent labour shortages.
- There continues to be a high number of jobs available in the local economy and the need now is to ensure that there is a strong local labour pool with skilled workers able to fill these roles to support business recovery/survival and improve prosperity through better pay. The

national and local support which is in place to support those that have been unfortunate enough to lose their jobs is vital in both **reskilling and upskilling** as well as enabling potential applicants to access the opportunities available. Encouraging those that have become **economically inactive** since COVID through the **Connect to Work Programme** will further help to address labour shortages and skills gaps.

- **Staffordshire County Council's dedicated Job Brokerage Service** is designed to do exactly this by matching local people, employers, and training providers to fill jobs and provide people with the jobs and careers they need.
- There are clear **emerging opportunities for job creation in the digital economy (including online retail and e-commerce), construction sector (including retrofitting homes), the car industry e.g. electric cars at Jaguar Land Rover, and in manufacturing e.g. hydrogen combustion technology at JCB.**
- We will also look to build on our existing strengths including **engineering and advanced manufacturing** through the adoption of AI, Automation and Machine Learning, **construction** to achieve Government house building targets and build major new infrastructure projects such as the West Midlands Freight Interchange which will create 8,500 new jobs. Also **advanced logistics** with ecommerce has continued demand with Pets At Home in Stafford recently creating over 750 new jobs.
- **We will continue to support our residents into work and ensure that Staffordshire has the strong workforce it needs to grow the economy.**



Local Initiatives

- We are continuing to prioritise support for businesses and people to help deliver growth across Staffordshire, as well as putting in place the support needed locally during the cost-of-living and energy crisis.
- Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent businesses that have been turned down by other lenders can now apply to the **Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Business Loan Fund**, supporting businesses to grow through affordable, unsecured loans from £10,000 to £50,000. To find out more visit [here](#).
- The **Get Started and Grow scheme** has been extended which provides fully funded support for 0- to 5-year-old businesses. Businesses have already saved thousands by getting accountancy, business planning, website and branding professionally sorted completely free of charge. Now everyone, from those just thinking about setting up a side-business to those who have got past the tricky first few years can get the support that they need. It is all in response to what you have said is most important for your business growth. [To apply for fully funded SME support.](#)
- Businesses in Staffordshire are able to benefit from a new free recruitment service which will help to match their employment vacancies with appropriate potential candidates. The **Staffordshire Jobs and Careers Service**, provides advice and support to both businesses and people looking for employment opportunities. It will match vacancies with candidates looking for jobs in certain sectors and with appropriate skills. The service is working with a range of partner organisations, and a team of specialist brokers will advise employers and potential employees with options available to them. [Find out more about Staffordshire Jobs and Careers.](#)
- **Need some support? Contact the Growth Hub** - The Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Growth Hub is your first port of call for any business-support related enquiry. It acts as the focal point for businesses that wish to grow by referring them to co-ordinated and cohesive growth programmes, business networks, growth groups and links to specialist information, advice, and services. If you would like a free of charge appointment with a qualified Growth Hub Business Advisor to discuss what options are available to support the growth of your business, please contact them on 0300 111 8002.
- **Help To Grow: Management programme** is 90% funded by the government so you only pay £750. Delivered in partnership with Small Business Charter, courses are running at leading business schools across the UK. This programme includes:
 - access 12-weeks of learning designed to fit alongside work commitments
 - develop a bespoke business growth plan to help your business reach its full potential
 - get 1:1 support from a business mentor
 - learn from peers and network with businesses just like yoursTo find out more [visit](#).

- The **Staffordshire Business and Enterprise Network (SBEN)** has introduced more support for businesses in Staffordshire. The Low Carbon Business Evolution Programme can help you to reduce your carbon footprint and increase energy efficiency. It has now been widened to include an additional Energy Efficiency Review for a business that has previously had one, and grants towards the capital costs for solar projects. Membership of SBEN is still free until the end of next March. Membership includes access to the Carbon Tracker tool. **Why join SBEN?**
- **Businesses in Staffordshire can now apply for free energy assessments through the Green Solutions scheme.** The scheme aims to help businesses reduce their energy consumption and costs for a greener future and more sustainable business practices. Businesses will get a free energy assessment plus expert advice to help improve energy efficiency and support to implement the proposed measures. Firms signing up will also benefit from complimentary Carbon Literacy Training. To apply and submit an expression of interest, businesses can visit the official Green Solutions website. A dedicated member of the Green Solutions team will review the submission and reach out to discuss the next steps.
- **Save up to 15% off your energy costs.** Sub-metering monitoring systems are a cost-effective way for Staffordshire businesses to manage and reduce their energy use. Sub-metering monitoring uses a combination of hardware and software to collect and analyse data about energy performance. SBEN (Staffordshire Business Environment Network), through Staffordshire County Council, is providing businesses with a sub-metering monitoring grant of up to £5000 (50% match funded) to get everything set up. Find out more and apply
- **Staffordshire targets gigabit connectivity for residents and businesses** - A drive to connect Staffordshire residents and businesses to gigabit technology over the next eight years will be coordinated by the county council. Working with broadband and mobile providers, developers and national government, the county council will be aiming to ensure the vast majority of properties can access gigabit speeds by 2030. As part of the government's Levelling Up agenda, Project Gigabit aims to reach those premises in the county that are not considered commercially viable. The new Gigafast Staffordshire team (renamed from the Superfast Staffordshire team) will take a leadership role in the county to deliver the programme locally. The county council will also be working with government on its Shared Rural Network programme to boost 4G mobile connectivity. As well as improving everyday life, the move to gigabit technology could boost the local by hundreds of millions of pounds and also supports the county council's climate change commitments - with smart technology reducing energy consumption and cutting carbon emissions. The county council launched the Community Fibre Partnership support fund for communities which could not be reached by the main programme which helped nine communities to benefit, with a further 24 communities benefitting from the Gigabit Broadband Top-up Voucher scheme. The new Gigafast Staffordshire website has launched to help everyone

understand the benefits of gigabit connectivity at www.gigafaststaffordshire.co.uk.

- **Staffordshire County Council** is also supporting our residents and businesses through the **Here to Help - cost of living support programme**. This website signposts to a range of support that is already available to people.
- The Government has launched the **Skills for Life** campaign which highlights the range of training and employment schemes available for businesses wanting to boost their workforce capabilities, including apprenticeships, traineeships, and T-Levels. The Government's Skills for Life website showcases hundreds of government-funded skills opportunities. It promotes online learning options and free essential skills courses, such as numeracy, English and digital, sector specific qualifications, Skills Bootcamps, Free Courses for Jobs, and in-work training, as well as personalised support and guidance from the National Careers Service. Refreshed campaign toolkits for the skills campaigns currently running for employers, adults and young people are available to share via your networks and channels, with your own audiences, staff and customers to help extend the reach of the campaigns to those people who will benefit most. Find out more.
- **New employer information and advice service - Support with Employee Health and Disability:** A digital information and advice service for businesses is live on [GOV.UK](https://gov.uk), providing tailored guidance on health and disability, to prevent avoidable job loss and help people thrive at work. Employers and disability organisations have been involved in the design and testing of the service which will continue to be developed throughout 2022/23. Current features include:
 - Helping employers to feel more confident having conversations about health and disability.
 - Encouraging early intervention and sustained support.
 - Signposting to trusted expert support and resources.
 - Helping employers understand their legal responsibilities.

Please use the feedback link as your thoughts on how the content and design are shaped really will make a difference. Read the press release

- **Stoke-On-Trent & Staffordshire Growth Hub have partnered with the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) to offer free 1-2-1 virtual business support sessions.** Are you looking to start a business or in the embryonic stages of growth? Are you:
 - keen to identify potential new markets?
 - interested in bidding for public procurement opportunities?
 - in need of advice on chasing late payments?
 - seeking general advice and support?

Through one of these invaluable 1-2-1 sessions, you can:

- contact international trade specialists
- find sources of local authority support
- learn key steps in starting a business and get assistance with many more issues/challenges your business faces

If you feel you might benefit from one of these virtual sessions, please email

karen.woolley@fsb.org.uk. This offer is open to FSB members and non-members.

- **Do you know what your employees need to be their most productive?**

Any business' most valuable asset is its people, and with adults spending most of their time at work, businesses need to know how to best support their health and wellbeing. The **Staffordshire County Council Workplace Health Service**, working with public health and local health experts, offers businesses a comprehensive and funded package of online and in-person support, including:

- mental health and wellbeing
- smoking cessation
- healthy activity and healthy eating in the workplace, and more.

But where do you start?

- 1) [Check out the business wellbeing support available online](#)
- 2) [Join the Healthy Workplace Newsletter](#)
- 3) [Check out the Everyone Health offer - in-business support](#)
- 4) [Consider starting the Thrive at Work Workplace Wellbeing Award Programme.](#)

CHECK OUT HEALTH AND WELLBEING SUPPORT FOR BUSINESS

- **Developer Indurent to invest £800m in Staffordshire**

Developer Indurent plans to invest £800m in Staffordshire over the next few years. The industrial and logistics specialist is currently delivering or promoting six million sq ft of space in the county, said senior director of planning Richard Hickman. "These sites are either in the planning process with a draft allocation, or they're sites that we're building on currently," said Hickman. "To bring those sites forward over the next few years, we're going to be investing something in the order of £800m. That's a huge investment and a reflection of the confidence that we have in Staffordshire. "We're very much focused on the spine of the country and Staffordshire is the central part of that spine."



National Context

- This month we have heard the **Chancellor acknowledged the UK economy is “not working well enough for working people”** as she announced that her second **budget will take place on 26 November, amid increasing speculation about tax increases**. Rachel Reeves said the economy “isn’t broken” but conceded there was “more to do”.
- On more positive news, the **UK Government says it has secured £150 billion worth of US investment which it hopes will create 7,600 jobs**. The announcement came on the day that US President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer signed a **“Tech Prosperity Deal” which sees firms such as Microsoft and Google pledging to spend billions in the UK**.

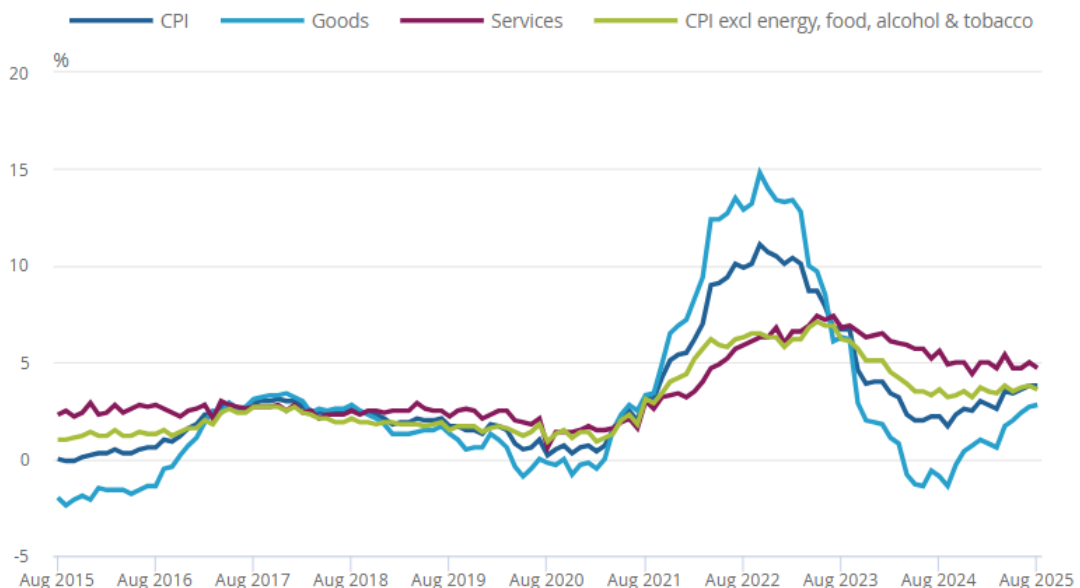
Cost of Living

- **UK inflation rate stayed at 3.8 per cent in year to August**. Air fares made the largest downward contribution to the monthly change in CPI annual rate; restaurants and hotels, and motor fuels made large, partially offsetting, upward contributions. **The rate of inflation remains well above the Bank of England target of 2 per cent**.

CPI goods annual inflation rate highest since October

2023

CPI goods, services and core annual inflation rates, UK, August 2015 to August 2025



Source: Consumer price inflation from the Office for National Statistics

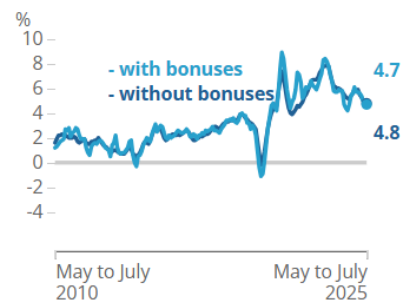
- **UK interest rates have been held at 4% as the Bank of England governor warned "we're not out of the woods yet" in terms of rising inflation.** Analysts had not expected interest rates to be cut given that prices are rising at nearly twice the Bank's target rate. The Bank said it expected inflation to return to its key target of 2%, but remains cautious on when it will trim borrowing costs again.
- While at the same time, **we are seeing annual real terms growth in wages continue to steadily decline.**
- Annual growth in employees' average earnings in Great Britain for regular earnings (excluding bonuses) was 4.8%, and for total earnings (including bonuses) was 4.7% in May to July 2025.
- **Annual growth in real terms, adjusted for inflation using the Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH), was 0.7% for regular pay and 0.5% for total pay, in May to July 2025.**
- **Annual growth in real terms, adjusted for inflation using the Consumer Prices Index excluding owner occupiers' housing costs (CPI), was 1.2% for regular pay and 1.0% for total pay, in May to July 2025.**

Nominal Earnings

Average Weekly Earnings annual growth rates - nominal pay

Nominal annual growth rates remain relatively strong

Source: Monthly Wages and Salaries Survey from the Office for National Statistics

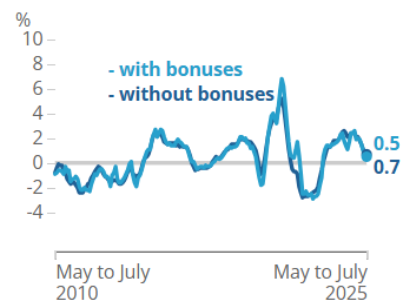


Real Earnings CPIH

Average Weekly Earnings annual growth rates - real pay (using CPIH)

The real annual growth rate for regular pay was down on the previous period, while the total annual growth rate was unchanged.

Source: Monthly Wages and Salaries Survey from the Office for National Statistics

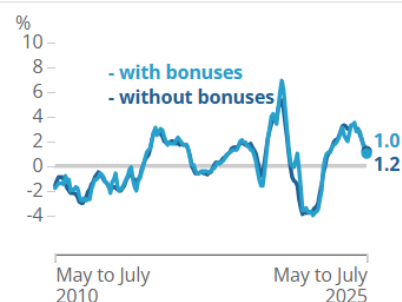


Real Earnings CPI

Average Weekly Earnings annual growth rates - real pay (using CPI)

The real annual growth rate for both regular and total is down on the previous period

Source: Monthly Wages and Salaries Survey from the Office for National Statistics



- There were an estimated 83,000 working days lost because of labour disputes across the UK in July 2025. Most of the strikes were in the health and social work sector.

Economy

- **The UK economy grew by 0.2% in the three months to July 2025** compared with the three months to April 2025, down from three-month-on-three-month growths of 0.3% in June 2025 and 0.6% in May 2025.

GDP Monthly index, January 2007 to July 2025, UK

Monthly index 2022=100, January 1997 to July 2025, UK

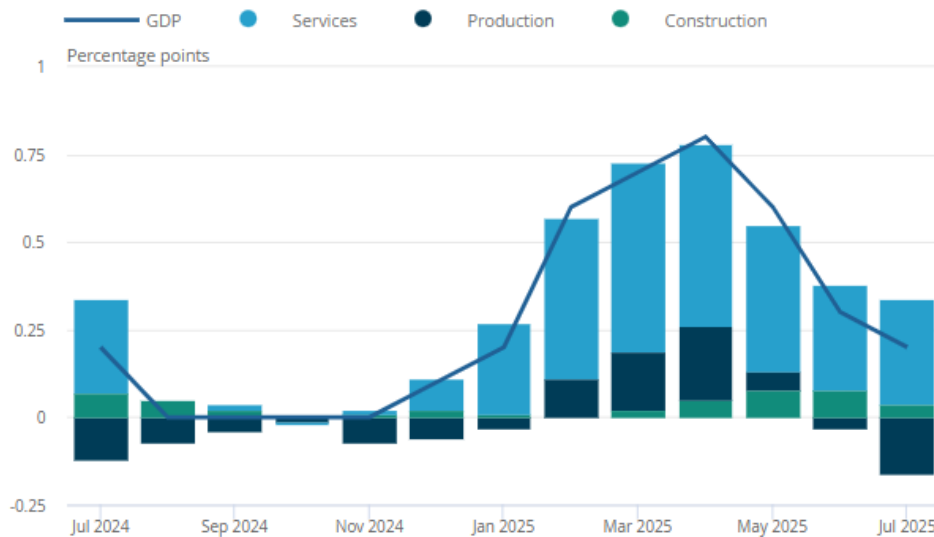


Source: GDP monthly estimate from the Office for National Statistics

- **Services output grew by 0.4% in the three months to July 2025**, compared with the three months to April 2025, and was the main contributor to GDP growth over this period, after growing 0.4% in the three months to June 2025.
- **Production output fell by 1.3% in the three months to July 2025**, compared with the three months to April 2025, following a fall of 0.3% in the three months to June 2025.
- **Construction output increased by 0.6% in the three months to July 2025**, compared with the three months to April 2025, following growth of 1.2% in the three months to June 2025.

Three monthly GDP growth slowed for the third consecutive period in July 2025

Contributions to three-month GDP growth, July 2024 to July 2025 UK



Source: GDP monthly estimate from the Office for National Statistics

- Monthly GDP is estimated to have shown no growth in July 2025, following growth of 0.4% in June 2025 and a fall of 0.1% in May 2025.
- Services and construction both grew in July 2025, growing by 0.1% and 0.2% respectively, while production fell by 0.9% in July 2025.

Business Conditions

- Alongside **continuing global uncertainty and the introduction of new business-related UK taxes**, many businesses also have ongoing concerns around **longer-term issues including high interest rates and energy prices, increased commodity costs, wage pressures, supply-chain constraints, lower consumer confidence and some labour market challenges**.
- The latest results from Wave 140 of the **Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS)**, which was live from 1 to 14 September 2025, suggest that business conditions continue to be challenging.
- Around 1 in 8 (12%) trading businesses reported an **increase in their turnover in August 2025** compared with the previous calendar month, down 4 percentage points from July 2025 and the lowest proportion since the question was introduced in March 2022; in contrast, 28% reported a **decrease in their turnover**, up 4 percentage points from July.
- Approximately 1 in 6 (16%) trading businesses reported that they **expect a decrease in their turnover in October 2025**; in comparison, 16% reported that they **expect an increase in their turnover**, both broadly stable with expectations for September.

- **Economic uncertainty was the most reported challenge affecting turnover** for trading businesses in early September at 28%, up 3 percentage points from early August but broadly stable with early July; **for businesses with 10 or more employees, the most commonly reported challenge was the cost of labour** at 36%, broadly stable with early August.
- Nearly a quarter (23%) of trading businesses reported an **increase in the prices of goods or services bought** in August 2025 when compared with the previous month; 9% reported an **increase in the prices of goods or services sold** in August when compared with the previous month, and both have been broadly stable since May.
- Around 1 in 10 (11%) trading businesses **expect the prices of goods or services they sell to increase** in October 2025, broadly stable with expectations for September; 22% of all trading businesses and 37% of trading businesses with 10 or more employees **cited labour costs as a reason for considering raising their prices**.
- Nearly 1 in 5 (18%) businesses with 10 or more employees reported that they were **experiencing worker shortages** in early September 2025, which is broadly stable with early August and has been broadly stable since February.
- The latest business insolvencies data shows that **in August 2025 there were a total of 1,927 company insolvencies in England and Wales, 2% higher than the number registered in the previous year (1,892 in August 2024), but 1% lower than the number registered three years previously (1,940 in August 2022)**. The main concern around company and individual insolvencies are associated issues such as mental health and homelessness.

Labour Market

- The **labour market continues to cool but wage pressures for businesses remain**.
- It is concerning that this month's labour market figures show that **payrolled employees have further declined and are expected to decrease further, at a time when there are fewer job vacancies**.
- More encouragingly, **economic inactivity has seen a further decline, however given the challenging economic conditions movements from economic inactivity have seen both employment and unemployment rise this month**.
- Although it is **positive that more people are actively looking to engage in the labour market, this comes at a time when businesses are reducing recruitment and making redundancies, therefore it will be more challenging for those looking for work to find work**.
- The following charts shows the latest **labour market position** and the latest Office for National Statistics data:



Payrolled employees

The number of payrolled employees

Monthly change: ▼ -8,000

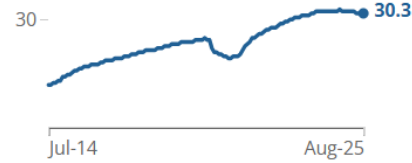
Since Feb 2020: ▲1,258,000

The number of payrolled employees continues to fall.

Source: Pay As You Earn Real Time Information from HM Revenue and Customs

millions

35 -



Employment rate

Employment rate (all aged 16 to 64)

Quarterly change: ▲0.1pps

Since Dec-Feb 2020: ▼-1.3pps

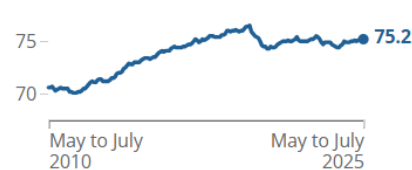
The employment rate is up on the quarter and the year, but is still below pre-coronavirus pandemic rates.

Note: Due to increased volatility of LFS estimates, resulting from smaller achieved sample sizes, estimates of change should be treated with additional caution.

Source: Labour Force Survey from the Office for National Statistics

%

80 -



Unemployment rate

Unemployment rate (all aged 16+)

Quarterly change: ▲0.1pps

Since Dec-Feb 2020: ▲0.7pps

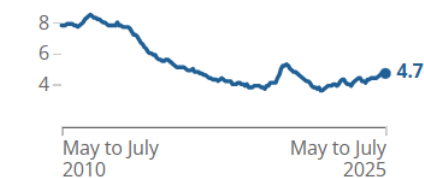
The unemployment rate is up on the quarter and the year, and is above pre-pandemic rates.

Note: Due to increased volatility of LFS estimates, resulting from smaller achieved sample sizes, estimates of change should be treated with additional caution.

Source: Labour Force Survey from the Office for National Statistics

%

10 -



Inactivity rate

Economic inactivity rate (all aged 16 to 64)

Quarterly change: ▼-0.2pps

Since Dec-Feb 2020: ▲0.8pps

The economic inactivity rate is down on the quarter and the year, but is still above pre-coronavirus pandemic rates.

Note: Due to increased volatility of LFS estimates, resulting from smaller achieved sample sizes, estimates of change should be treated with additional caution.

Source: Labour Force Survey from the Office for National Statistics

%

24 -



Job vacancies

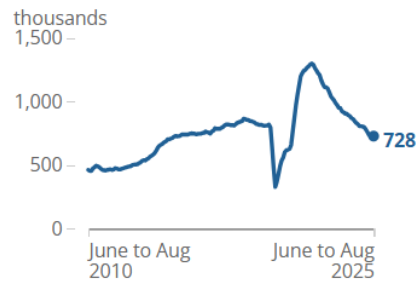
Number of job vacancies

Quarterly change: ▼-10,000

Since Jan-Mar 2020: ▼-67,000

Vacancies are down on the quarter and are below pre-coronavirus pandemic levels

Source: Vacancy Survey from the Office for National Statistics



- **Estimates for payrolled employees in the UK fell by 142,000 (0.5%) between July 2024 and July 2025, and by 6,000 (0.0%) between June 2025 and July 2025.**
- When looking at May to July 2025, the period comparable with our Labour Force Survey (LFS) estimates, payrolled employees fell by 125,000 (0.4%) over the year, and by 51,000 (0.2%) over the quarter.
- The early estimate of payrolled employees for August 2025 decreased by 127,000 (0.4%) on the year, and by 8,000 (0.0%) on the month, to 30.3 million. The August 2025 estimate should be treated as a provisional estimate and is likely to be revised when more data are received next month.
- Estimates from January to March 2025 include the full effect of the improvements in LFS data collection and sampling methods introduced from January 2024. However, ONS are continuing our efforts to further improve the response to the survey. Consequently, estimates may be subject to the effect of these further improvements, which may have an ongoing impact on the survey. An increased volatility will remain in the LFS estimates for mid- 2023 and throughout 2024, so ONS would advise additional caution when interpreting survey change measures. ONS recommend using LFS estimates as part of our suite of labour market indicators, alongside workforce jobs, Claimant Count and Pay As You Earn (PAYE) Real Time Information (RTI) estimates.
- The **UK employment rate** for people aged 16 to 64 years was estimated at 75.2% in May to July 2025. This is up in the latest quarter and above estimates of a year ago.
- The **UK unemployment rate** for people aged 16 years and over was estimated at 4.7% in May to July 2025. This is up in the latest quarter and above estimates of a year ago.
- The **UK economic inactivity rate** for people aged 16 to 64 years was estimated at 21.1% in May to July 2025. This is down in the latest quarter and below estimates of a year ago.
- The **UK Claimant Count** for August 2025 increased on the month but decreased on the year to 1.686 million.
- The estimated number of **vacancies in the UK** fell by 10,000 (1.4%) on the quarter, to 728,000, in June to August 2025. This is the 38th consecutive period where vacancy numbers have dropped compared with the previous three months, with vacancies decreasing in 9 of the 18 industry sectors.
- The estimated **number of workforce jobs in the UK** was 36.8 million in June 2025, this is a decrease of 182,000 (0.5%) from March 2025, but an increase of 139,000 (0.4%) from the level of a year ago.

Conclusion

- In conclusion, the Government recognises that there is **more to do in addressing the economic challenges** that the country faces and will have some **important decisions to make in the upcoming budget**. Although it is clearly good news that the UK has secured **further significant investment from the US through the Tech Prosperity Deal**.
- **UK inflation rate remained at 3.8 per cent in year to August**, well above the Bank of England target of 2 per cent. **Interest rates have been held at 4 per cent**, reflective of the above target rate of inflation. While at the same time **real wage growth continues to come down and the cost-of-living remains a challenge for many**.
- **The UK economy grew by 0.2 per cent in the three months to July 2025**, largely driven by the services sector. Although this means that growth has further slowed from 0.7 per cent in the first three months of the year.
- Alongside **continuing global uncertainty and the introduction of new business-related UK taxes**, many businesses also have ongoing concerns around **longer-term issues including high interest rates and energy prices, increased commodity costs, wage pressures, supply-chain constraints, lower consumer confidence and some labour market challenges**.
- The **labour market continues to cool but wage pressures for businesses remain**. **Payrolled employees have further declined and are expected to decrease further, at a time when there are fewer job vacancies**. More encouragingly, **economic inactivity has seen a further decline, however given the challenging economic conditions movements from economic inactivity have seen both employment and unemployment rise this month**. Although it is **positive that more people are actively looking to engage in the labour market, this comes at a time when businesses are reducing recruitment and making redundancies, therefore it will be more challenging for those looking for work to find work**. The need now is to support those seeking work to find employment and support growth.
- We need to continue to **support those still struggling with the cost-of-living, residents to transition into work and viable businesses to survive and grow**.
- **In Staffordshire we have a confident, diverse, and robust economy**, demonstrated by the improvement and recovery witnessed since Covid. As the **ongoing global and national socio-economic challenges** persist it remains **vital that local partners work together to support local businesses and residents**. We continue to deliver the **Staffordshire Means Business Programme** which has helped hundreds of Staffordshire **businesses transition to new business models including diversification, digitisation and greenification to improve their viability and sustainability**.
- **We continue to support residents into work and help businesses address ongoing labour shortages and skills gaps** to aid survival and growth. A key part of this being the recently **established Staffordshire Jobs and Careers Brokerage Service** which is designed to match local people, employers, and training providers to fill jobs and provide

people with the jobs and careers they need.

- Alongside this, skills provision has a significant role to play in **ensuring that local residents have the skills and training needed within the local economy to support increased growth, productivity, and prosperity**. Reskilling and upskilling residents from declining sectors into priority growth areas of the economy such as digital, green, advanced manufacturing, advanced logistics, construction, and health and social care where they can access higher value better paid jobs will be key.



Data Deep Dives:

Business and Individual Insolvencies

This section covers the latest Insolvency Service monthly insolvency statistics¹ for August 2025, which shows the number of new companies and individuals who are unable to pay debts and enter a formal insolvency procedure.

Company Insolvencies

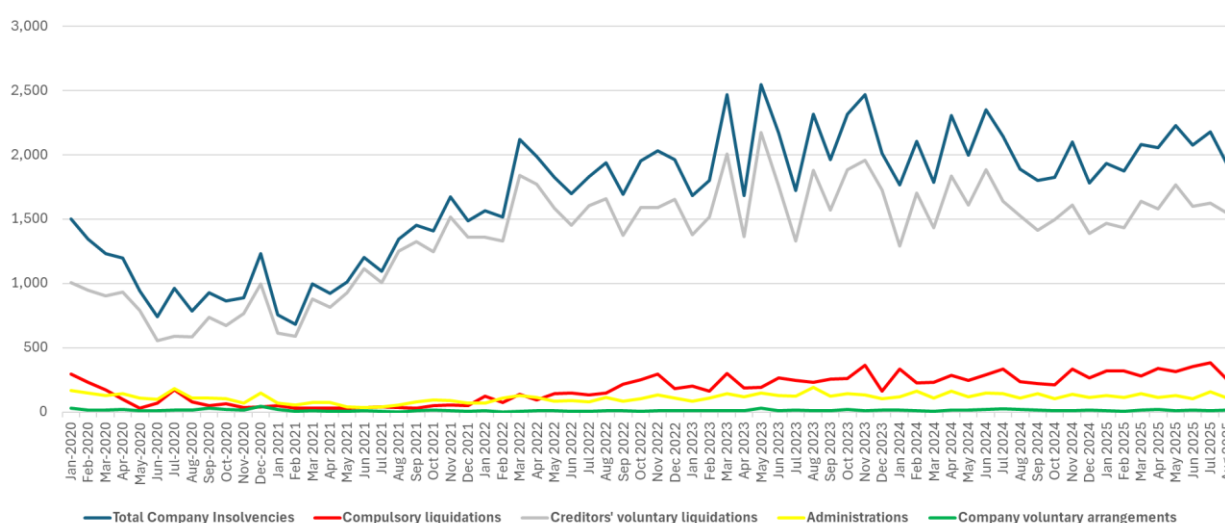
In August 2025 there were a total of 1,927 company insolvencies in England and Wales. The overall number of **company insolvencies are 2% higher than the number registered in the previous year (1,892 in August 2024), but 1% lower than the number registered three years previously (1,940 in August 2022).** Please note that due to the volatility of the underlying data the Insolvency Service recommends comparisons are made with the same month in previous years rather than with the previous month.

There were 254 compulsory liquidations in August 2025, 8% higher than the number in August 2024, and 68% higher than in August 2022. It is important to note numbers of compulsory liquidations have increased from historical lows during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, partly as a result of the increase in winding-up petitions presented by HMRC.

In August 2025 there were 1,547 Creditors' Voluntary Liquidations (CVLs), 1% higher than August 2024, but 7% lower than August 2022. Numbers of administrations are 5% lower than three years previously in August 2022, Company Voluntary Arrangements (CVAs) are 23% higher than three years previously in August 2022, but numbers are extremely low.

Company insolvencies between September 2024 and August 2025 are 5% lower compared to a year earlier, representing 1,233 fewer businesses

Company Insolvencies in England and Wales



Source: Insolvency Service (compulsory liquidations only); Companies House (all other insolvency types)¹

¹Source: The Insolvency Service – [Company insolvencies, August 2025 - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/company-insolvencies-august-2025)

The sectors to have seen the largest number of company insolvencies between August 2024 and July 2025 continue to be the Construction sector (3,973), Wholesale & Retail sector (3,673) and Accommodation & Food Service sector (3,371). Levels are below those seen for the same period the previous year for the Construction sector -9% lower, the Wholesale & Retail sector -6% lower, and the Accommodation & Food sector -12% lower than levels a year earlier. Overall, for this period company insolvencies by industry are -7% lower. It is positive to see improvements overall across sectors.

Individual Insolvencies

There were **10,375 total individual insolvencies in August 2025**, which was 11% higher than in August 2024, and 8% higher than in August 2022.

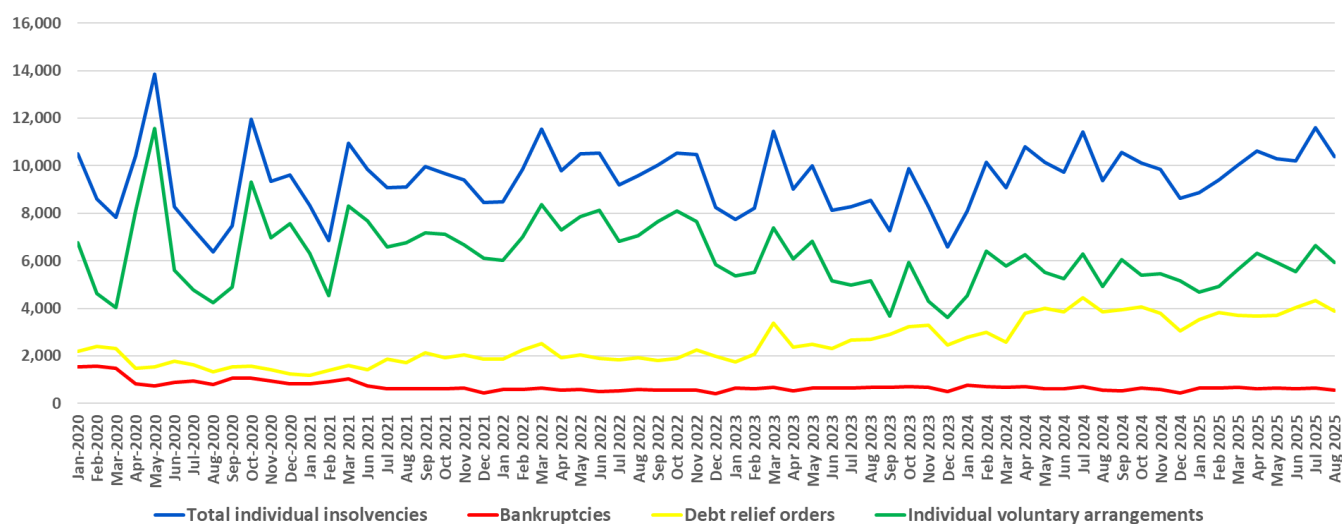
For individuals, **559 bankruptcies were registered in August 2025**, no change from August 2024, but 3% lower than in August 2022.

There were **3,873 Debt Relief Orders (DROs) in August 2025**, no change from August 2024, but 100% higher than in August 2022.

There were **5,943 Individual Voluntary Arrangements (IVAs) registered in August 2025**, which was 20% higher than in August 2024, but 16% lower than in August 2022.

Total Individual Insolvencies between September 2024 and August 2025 are 9% higher than the same period a year earlier, representing an increase of 9,718.

Individual Insolvencies in England and Wales



Source: Insolvency Service

There were **7,395 Breathing Space registrations in August 2025**, which is 2% higher than the number registered in August 2024. 7,290 were Standard Breathing Space registrations, which is 2% higher and 105 were Mental Health Breathing Space registrations, which is 11% lower than August 2024.

From the start of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic until mid-2021, overall numbers of company and individual insolvencies were low when compared with pre-pandemic levels. This is likely to have been partly driven by government measures put in place to support businesses and individuals during this time. **Company insolvency numbers have now returned to and exceeded pre-pandemic levels. For individuals, numbers of individual voluntary arrangements and bankruptcies remain lower, but debt relief orders are higher than pre-pandemic levels.**

The main concern around company and individual insolvencies are associated issues such as mental health and homelessness.



Claimant Count²

The following table highlights the level of Universal Credit claimants in the Staffordshire Districts and each of the Strategic Authorities in the West Midlands Region:

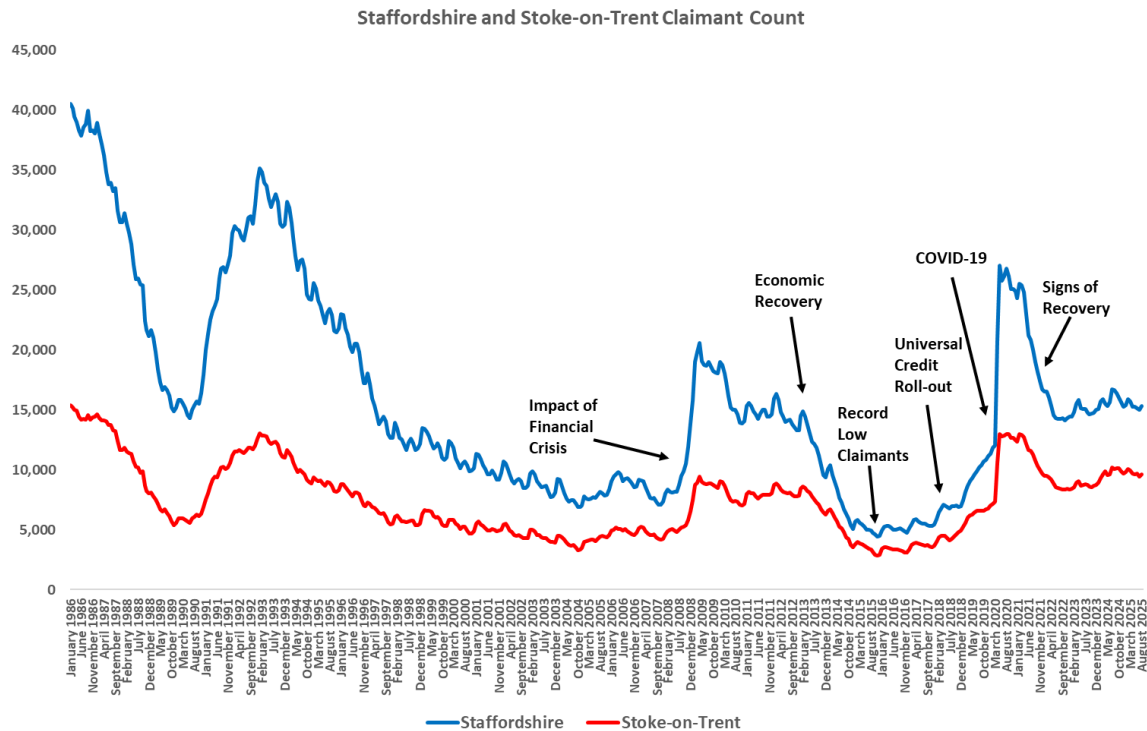
Claimant Count (Universal Credit) Statistics: August 2025

Area	Claimant Count Rate (August 2024)	Claimant Count Rate (July 2025)	Claimant Count Rate ¹ (August 2025)	Number of Claimants (August 2025)	Monthly Change in Claimants (Numbers)	Monthly Change in Claimants (%)	Change in Claimants since March 2020 (Numbers)	Change in Claimants since March 2020 (%)
England	4.3	4.0	4.1	1,488,515	22,215	1.5%	425,010	40.0%
West Midlands	5.6	5.3	5.4	203,220	3,280	1.6%	58,870	40.8%
Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent	3.8	3.5	3.5	24,885	420	1.7%	5,515	28.5%
Birmingham	10.4	10.2	10.4	78,400	1,005	1.3%	29,030	58.8%
Wolverhampton	7.8	7.1	7.1	12,090	140	1.2%	1,710	16.5%
Sandwell	7.3	6.8	7.0	15,305	285	1.9%	4,525	42.0%
Walsall	6.4	6.0	6.1	10,740	105	1.0%	2,135	24.8%
Stoke-on-Trent	6.1	5.8	5.9	9,590	145	1.5%	2,270	31.0%
Coventry	5.8	5.6	5.7	13,660	230	1.7%	5,660	70.8%
Dudley	5.1	4.7	4.8	9,465	215	2.3%	950	11.2%
Telford and Wrekin	3.9	3.8	3.9	4,680	90	2.0%	1,250	36.4%
Solihull	3.7	3.6	3.7	4,720	125	2.7%	1,070	29.3%
Worcestershire	3.3	3.0	3.0	11,055	225	2.1%	2,750	33.1%
Staffordshire	3.1	2.8	2.8	15,300	280	1.9%	3,250	27.0%
Warwickshire	2.9	2.8	2.8	10,745	235	2.2%	2,915	37.2%
Herefordshire, County of	2.9	2.6	2.7	2,935	90	3.2%	825	39.1%
Shropshire	2.7	2.3	2.4	4,535	115	2.6%	525	13.1%
East Staffordshire	4.0	3.5	3.5	2,760	30	1.1%	1,040	60.5%
Tamworth	3.5	3.2	3.3	1,635	40	2.5%	145	9.7%
Cannock Chase	3.5	3.0	3.1	1,960	10	0.5%	305	18.4%
Newcastle-under-Lyme	3.1	3.0	3.0	2,410	20	0.8%	430	21.7%
South Staffordshire	2.8	2.5	2.6	1,735	80	4.8%	425	32.4%
Stafford	2.7	2.3	2.4	2,065	90	4.6%	410	24.8%
Lichfield	2.5	2.3	2.3	1,485	-25	-1.7%	165	12.5%
Staffordshire Moorlands	2.4	2.2	2.3	1,245	25	2.0%	325	35.3%

¹ The claimant rate is the proportion of the working age population claiming Universal Credit

- The claimant count in Staffordshire saw an **increase of 280 claimants over the last month**, with the **total number now at 15,300**.
- Over the last month, the **claimant rate for Staffordshire remained the same at 2.8%** of the working age population.
- **Staffordshire saw the number of claimants increase by 1.9% this month, similar to the 1.6% increase regionally and the 1.5% increase nationally.**
- The **claimant rate in Staffordshire continues to be one of the lowest in the West Midlands and is far lower than the average for the region 5.4% which increased from 5.3% the previous month, and lower than the average for England of 4.1% which also increased from 4.0% the previous month.**
- Stoke-on-Trent saw an **increase of 145 claimants** over the same period with a **total of 9,590 claimants**, and the **rate increased to 5.9% from 5.8% the previous month.**

² Source: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>



- **The total number of Universal Credit (UC) claimants in Staffordshire is now 27.0% or 3,250 higher than the level seen in March 2020 (pre-COVID),** which is far lower than the 40.8% increase seen regionally and the 40.0% increase seen nationally.
- **It is important to note that not all claimants will be out of work.** The increases seen since COVID-19 struck in March need to be viewed in the context of the move to Universal Credit. Before Universal Credit, the Claimant Count was based upon Jobseeker's Allowance claimants - people out of work but looking for a job. However, in response to COVID-19 the Government changed the criteria for Universal Credit to allow certain people on low incomes to claim whilst in work. Therefore, there will be **a proportion of claimants that will still be in work but claiming Universal Credit because they are on a low income or have seen reduced hours (under-employment),** although from the data released by the Government it is not currently possible to quantify claimants that are unemployed or employed but on a low income.
- It is also important to recognise that although claimant numbers are higher than pre-pandemic levels, given our strong position going into the pandemic, we still perform well given **Staffordshire's claimant rate is 2.8% of the working age population compared to 5.4% regionally and 4.1% nationally. In Stoke-on-Trent, the Claimant Count remains above both the regional and national averages at 5.9%.**
- We will continue to support those residents that unfortunately find themselves out of work to access employment through our partnership working and dedicated Jobs Brokerage service.

- All the districts in Staffordshire saw an increase in the claimant count this month with the exception of Lichfield which saw a decrease of 1.7%. South Staffordshire saw the highest increase of 4.8%.
- The highest claimant rate at 3.5% is in East Staffordshire. Lichfield and Staffordshire Moorlands have the lowest claimant rate of 2.3%. It is important to note all districts have a lower claimant rate than both the regional and national rates.

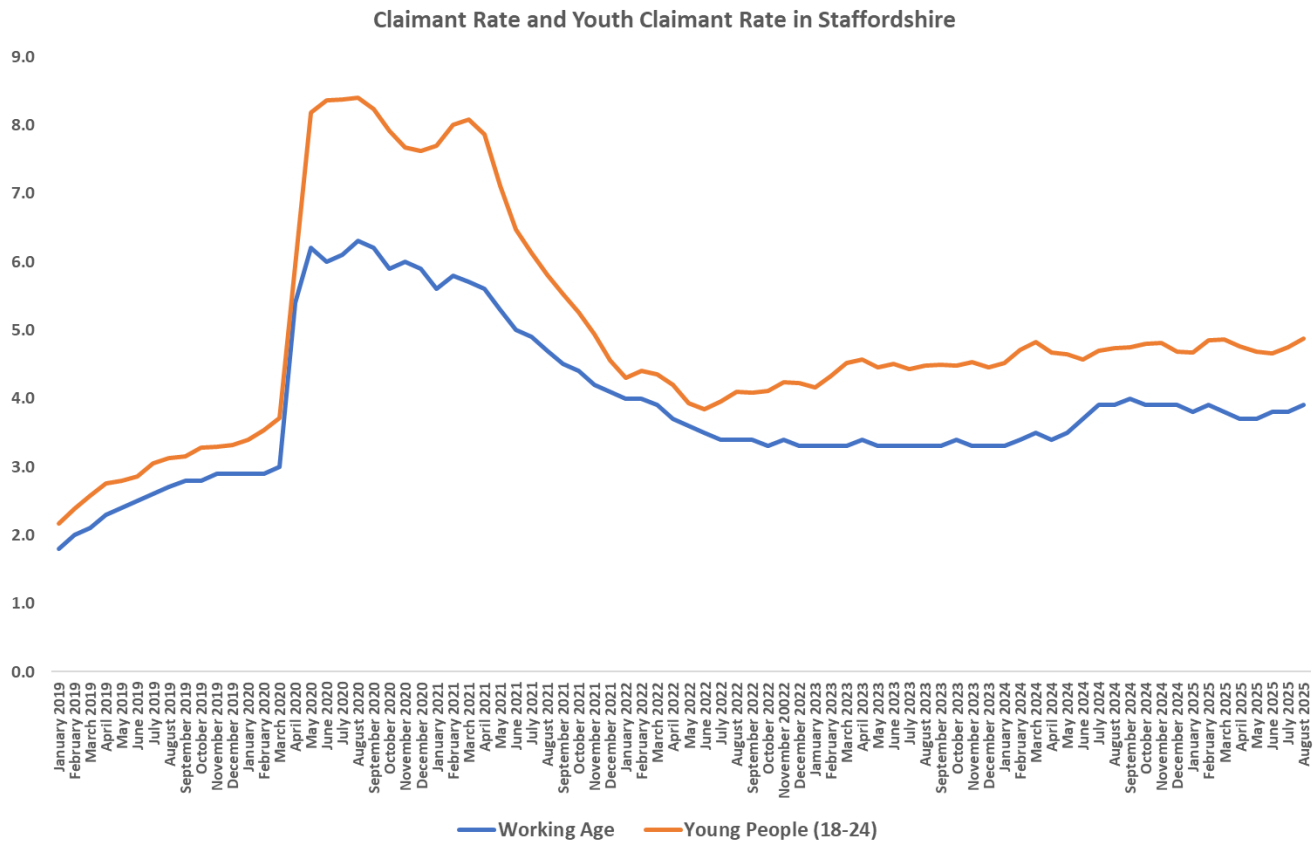
Youth Claimant Count

Youth Claimant Count (Universal Credit) Statistics: August 2025

Area	Youth Claimant Count Rate (August 2024)	Youth Claimant Count Rate (July 2025)	Youth Claimant Count Rate ¹ (August 2025)	Number of Youth Claimants (August 2025)	Monthly Change in Youth Claimants (Numbers)	Monthly Change in Youth Claimants (%)	Change in Youth Claimants since March 2020 (Numbers)	Change in Youth Claimants since March 2020 (%)
England	5.2	5.4	5.7	274,280	12,600	4.8%	76,550	38.7%
West Midlands	7.1	7.5	7.9	40,595	1,815	4.7%	12,690	45.5%
Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent	5.6	5.7	5.9	5,045	150	3.1%	1,225	32.1%
Wolverhampton	10.9	10.5	11.2	2,375	140	6.3%	465	24.3%
Birmingham	9.7	10.6	11.0	15,305	535	3.6%	6,200	68.1%
Sandwell	9.5	10.2	10.7	3,115	145	4.9%	1,000	47.3%
Walsall	9.8	10.2	10.6	2,385	95	4.1%	470	24.5%
Stoke-on-Trent	8.1	8.3	8.6	1,945	70	3.7%	540	38.4%
Dudley	7.6	7.8	8.4	1,970	135	7.4%	220	12.6%
Telford and Wrekin	6.0	6.6	7.2	1,085	90	9.0%	325	42.8%
Solihull	6.2	6.5	7.1	1,025	85	9.0%	200	24.2%
Coventry	5.1	5.4	5.7	2,630	130	5.2%	1,095	71.3%
Worcestershire	5.0	5.0	5.3	2,155	125	6.2%	560	35.1%
Herefordshire, County of	4.2	4.7	5.0	560	35	6.7%	145	34.9%
Staffordshire	4.7	4.7	4.9	3,100	80	2.6%	685	28.4%
Warwickshire	4.0	4.4	4.6	2,055	85	4.3%	720	53.9%
Shropshire	4.3	4.1	4.4	885	60	7.3%	60	7.3%
Tamworth	6.7	6.4	6.6	360	10	2.9%	65	22.0%
Cannock Chase	6.5	6.2	6.2	420	0	0.0%	55	15.1%
South Staffordshire	4.8	5.1	5.3	380	15	4.1%	130	52.0%
East Staffordshire	5.5	5.1	5.3	455	15	3.4%	135	42.2%
Stafford	5.0	4.6	4.7	390	10	2.6%	75	23.8%
Lichfield	4.1	4.2	4.2	290	0	0.0%	20	7.4%
Staffordshire Moorlands	3.4	4.0	4.1	230	5	2.2%	55	31.4%
Newcastle-under-Lyme	3.3	3.7	3.9	570	20	3.6%	145	34.1%

¹ The claimant rate is the proportion of the working age population claiming Universal Credit

- This month the **youth claimant count in Staffordshire saw an increase of 80 claimants with a total of 3,100 young people**. Staffordshire saw a 2.6% increase, lower than the 4.7% increase in the West Midlands and the 4.8% increase in England this month.
- **The proportion of young people in Staffordshire aged 18-24 claiming work-related Universal Credit increased from 4.7% to 4.9%**. It is important to note that Staffordshire continues to be lower than the national rate of 5.7%, which increased from 5.4% and far lower than the regional rate of 7.9% which increased from 7.5%.
- **Stoke-on-Trent saw an increase of 70 claimants to a total of 1,945 claimants with the rate increasing to 8.6% from 8.3% this month.**



- The majority of districts in Staffordshire saw an increase in the youth claimant rate this month, whilst Cannock Chase and Lichfield saw no change.
- Tamworth has the highest rate at 6.6%, whilst Newcastle-under-Lyme has the lowest rate at 3.9%. South Staffordshire saw the highest percentage increase in youth claimants this month of 4.1%.
- Our focus continues to be to engage with our younger residents and support them to find employment or to continue in education and training, such as through the Staffordshire Jobs and Careers Brokerage service, the Connect to Work Scheme, and the new Skills Bootcamps to help prevent them becoming long-term unemployed.

Claimant Counts and Rates in Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Wards

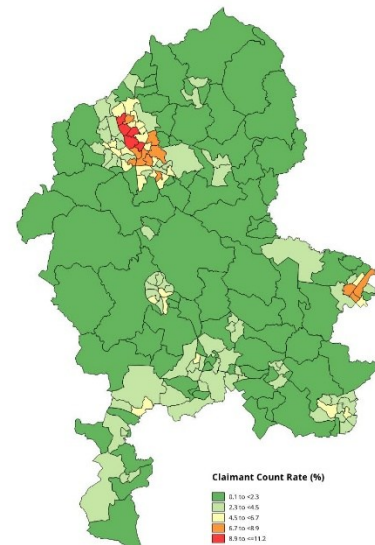
The following maps and tables provide the latest breakdown of the claimant count by wards in Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent.

Claimant Count Rate August 2025

Of the 201 wards in Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent, 53 were above the England average of 4.1% for the number of claimants as a proportion of the working age population.

Within the twenty highest claimant rate wards, seventeen were in Stoke-on-Trent with the highest rates in Joiner's Square: 11.2%/515; Etruria & Hanley: 10.1%/545; Moorcroft: 9.7%/360; Burslem Central: 9.2%/420; Tunstall: 8.9%/380 total claimants.

In Staffordshire, the three wards with the highest claimant rate were in East Staffordshire with the highest rates in Anglesey: 7.8%/420; Burton: 7.4%/225; Shobnall: 7.2%/390 total claimants.

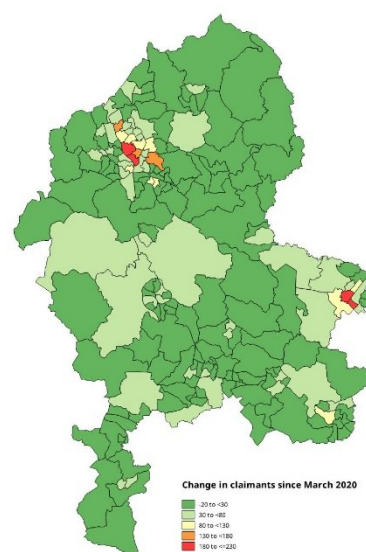


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Change in Claimant Count since March 2020

Of the ten wards in Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent with the highest change in the number of claimants since March 2020 there were six in Stoke-on-Trent including Etruria & Hanley (190 increase to 545); Hanley Park & Shelton (190 increase to 375); Bentilee & Ubberley (165 increase to 565); Joiner's Square (140 increase to 515); Tunstall (130 increase to 380); Moorcroft (100 increase to 360).

In Staffordshire the remaining four wards include Anglesey, East Staffordshire (230 increase to 420); Shobnall, East Staffordshire (180 increase to 390); Eton Park, East Staffordshire (120 increase to 300); Castle, Tamworth (100 increase to 245).



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Youth Claimant Counts and Rates in Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Wards

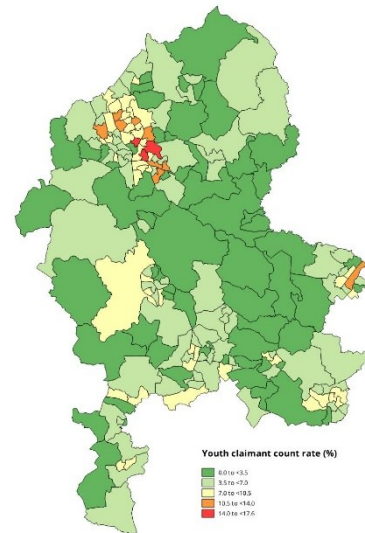
The following maps and tables provide the latest breakdown of the youth claimant count by wards in Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent.

Youth Claimant Count Rate August 2025

Of the 201 wards in Staffordshire & Stoke-Trent, 77 were above the England average 5.7% for the number of claimants aged 18-24 a proportion of the 18-24 population.

Of the ten wards with the highest youth claimant count rate, nine were in Stoke-on-Trent including Joiner's Square: 17.6%/135; Fenton East: 15.0%/70; Bentilee & Ubbberley: 14.4%/130; Burslem Central: 13.1%/80; Broadway & Longton East: 11.3%/40; Ford Green & Smallthorne: 11.2%/55; Meir South 10.8%/60; Abbey Hulton & Towsend: 10.8%/85; Meir North: 10.8%/60.

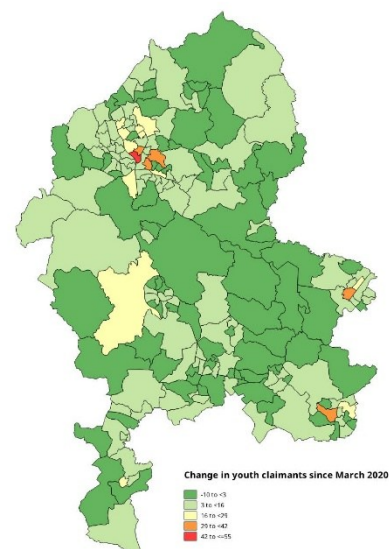
In Staffordshire, the ward with the highest claimant rate was Burton (East Staffordshire): 11.7%/45.



Change in Youth Claimant Count since March 2020

Of the ten wards in Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent with the highest change in the number of youth claimants since March 2020, eight were in Stoke-on-Trent including Hanley Park & Shelton (55 increase to 85); Bentilee & Ubbberley (40 increase to 130); Joiner's Square (35 increase to 135); Fenton East (35 increase to 70); Broadway & Longton East (25 increase to 40); Tunstall (25 increase to 65); Sneyd Green (25 increase to 40) Baddeley, Milton & Norton (25 increase to 85).

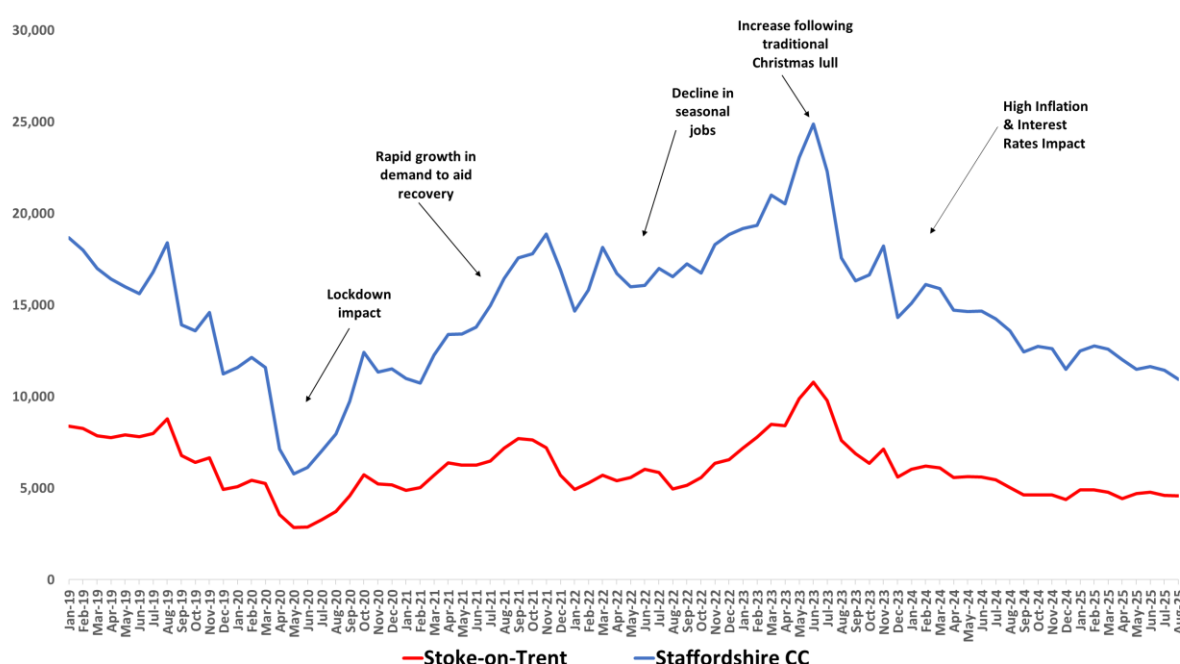
In Staffordshire, the two wards with the highest change in the number of youth claimants since March 2020, were Shobnall (East Staffordshire): 40 increase to 75; castle (Tamworth): 30 increase to 45.



Job Vacancies³

- **Staffordshire saw a decrease of 4% in the number of available job vacancies between July and August to a total of 10,900⁴. This is lower than the number of work-related benefit claimants. Stoke-on-Trent saw negligible change in job vacancies to a total of 4,600 which is significantly lower than the number of claimants.**
- **Across the region in the last month there was a 5% decrease, and nationally there was also a 4% decrease in the number of job vacancies.**
- In August there has been a decrease in the number of available job vacancies, compared to a year ago in Staffordshire with the number of job adverts being posted 19% lower, whilst Stoke-on-Trent decreased by 9%. The chart below indicates a general declining trend overall from July 2023 suggesting a slowdown in the jobs market, at least in part due to business sectors delaying recruitment because of increased costs and uncertainty in the economy. New job postings have shown a decrease this month to 10% below pre-pandemic levels. In comparison the region has decreased at a higher rate and is 21% below pre-pandemic levels whilst nationally there has been a decrease of 3%. Stoke-on-Trent job vacancies are 16% lower. Our focus continues to be to support those that unfortunately find themselves unemployed, to transition into work.

Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Unique Job Vacancies Trend



***Important to note that Lightcast live job vacancy data has been upgraded and improved through enhanced AI deduplication and sharper skill scraping of job postings. ***

³ Source: Lightcast

⁴ Lightcast upgraded its location coding process for UK job postings on 19 February 2024. As a result of this change, historic posting counts are estimated to have annual changes of -0.5 to -1% in 2018-19 & 2021; +1%-2% 2020 & 2022-2024.

Monthly Trends in recruitment

- The majority of occupational groups saw a decrease in vacancies during August. 'Professional' occupations saw the largest decrease of -9% whilst 'Elementary' and 'Process, Plant & Machine Operatives' occupations saw the biggest increase of 6%.
- The occupations to see the most significant increases during August include Kitchen & Catering Assistants; Large Goods Vehicle Drivers, Engineering Technicians; Coffee Shop Workers; Managers in Storage & Warehousing; HE Teaching Professionals; Elementary Construction; Health & Safety Managers & Officers; Sales & Retail Assistants; Production Managers & Directors in Manufacturing; Property, Housing & Estate Managers; Catering & Bar Managers; Electrical Engineers; Project Support Officers; Production, Factory & Assembly Supervisors; Legal Associate Professionals; Advertising & Marketing Associate Professionals; Estate Agents & Auctioneers; Sales Accounts & Business Development Managers; Care Workers & Home Carers.

Annual Trends in job vacancies

- The occupations to see the largest year-on-year increases include Managers in Storage & Warehousing; Project Support Officers; Financial & Accounting Technicians; Large Goods Vehicle Drivers; Transport & Distribution Clerks & Assistants; Engineering Technicians; IT Business Analysts, Architects & System Designers; Catering & Bar Managers; Painters & Decorators; Youth Work Professionals; Education Managers; Production, Factory & Assembly Supervisors; Electrical & Electronics Technicians; Engineering Professionals; Early Education & Childcare Practitioners; Property, Housing & Estate Managers; Residential, Day & Domiciliary Care Managers & Proprietors; Business, Research & Admin Professionals; Travel Agents.

Pre-COVID baseline trends in job vacancies

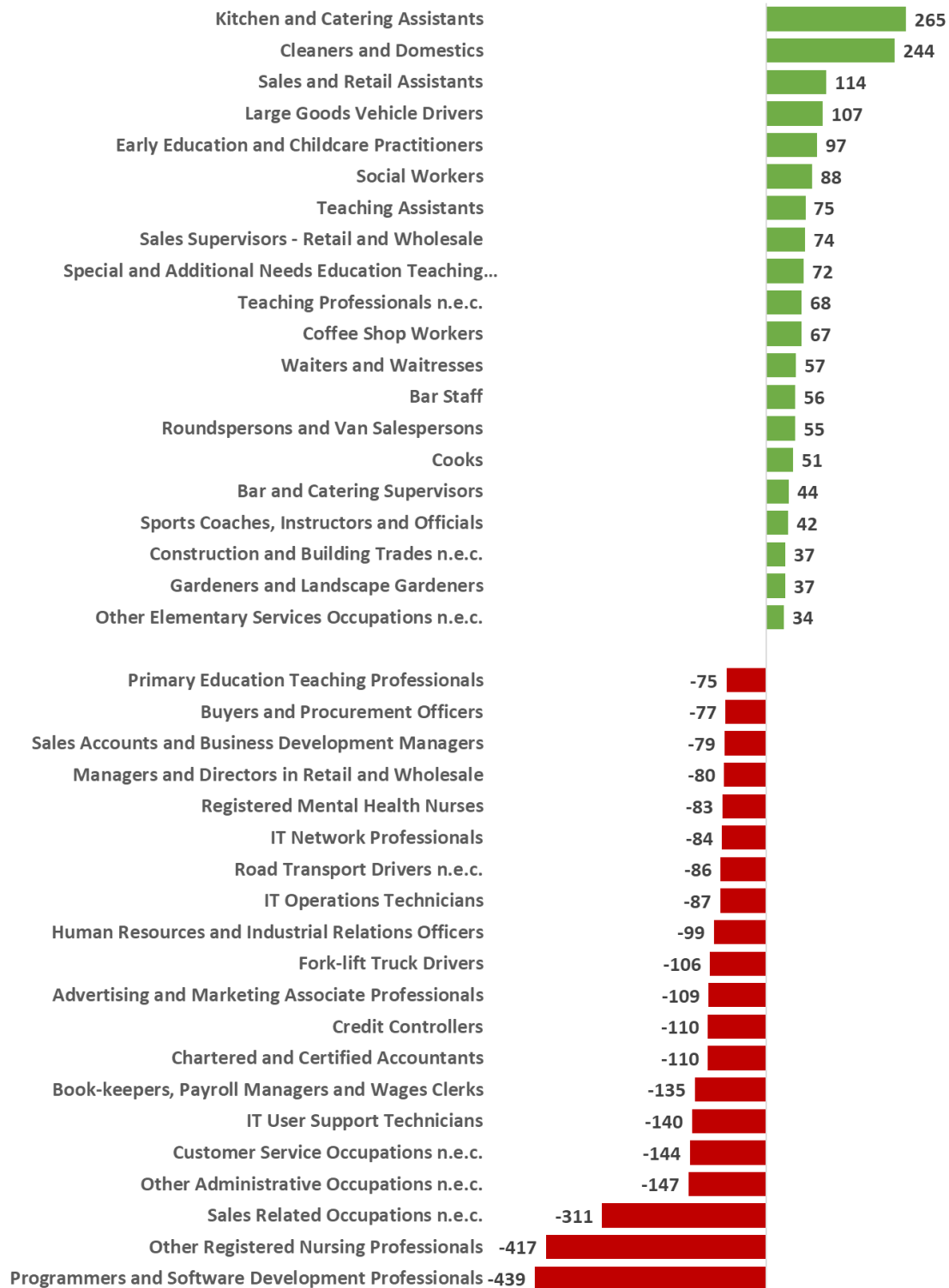
The main occupations with higher vacancies compared to pre-COVID are found in:

- **Hospitality** (Kitchen & Catering Assistants; Coffee Shop Workers; Waiters & Waitresses; Bar Staff; Cooks; Bar & Catering Supervisors)
- **Housekeepers & Related Occupations** (Cleaners & Domestics)
- **Retail & Wholesale** (Sales & Retail Assistants; Sales Supervisors)
- **Logistics** (Large Goods Vehicle Drivers; Roundspersons & Van Salespersons)
- **Childcare** (Early Education & Childcare Practitioners)
- **Health & Social Care** (Social Workers)
- **Education** (Teaching Assistants; SEND Teaching Professionals; Teaching Professionals)
- **Sport** (Sports Coaches, Instructors & Officials)
- **Construction** (Construction & Building Trades)

- **Horticulture & Landscaping** (Gardeners & Landscape Gardeners)
- **Other Elementary Services**

This is reflective of the ongoing long term recruitment difficulties in these sectors.

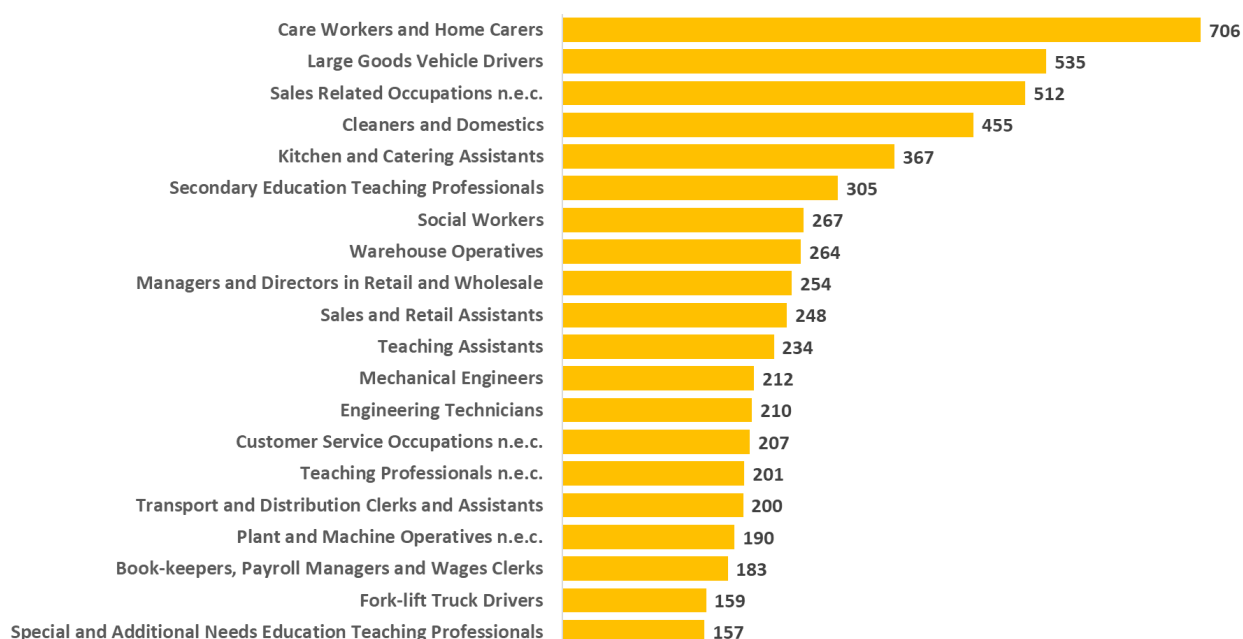
Top 20 occupations increasing and top 20 declining between Feb 2020 (Pre-COVID) and Aug 2025 in Staffordshire & Stoke



Top Occupations in Demand

- Considering the **top 20 job vacancy occupations in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent**, **'Care Workers & Home Carers'** roles are the most in demand occupations.
- The following occupations **'Large Goods Vehicle Drivers,' 'Sales Related,' 'Cleaners & Domestics'** also have strong demand.
- In the Hospitality sector **'Kitchen & Catering Assistants'** are most in demand.
- In the Education sector there is particularly high demand for **'Secondary Education Teaching Professionals,' 'Teaching Assistants,' 'Teaching Professionals,'** and **'SEND Teaching Professionals.'**
- There is high demand in the Health & Social Care sector for **'Social Workers.'**
- The Logistics sector continues to have high demand for **'Warehouse Operatives,' 'Transport & Distribution Clerks & Assistants'** and **'Fork-lift Truck Drivers.'**
- Demand for **'Managers & Directors'** and **'Sales & Retail Assistants'** in the Retail and Wholesale sector remain strong.
- There is continued demand in the Engineering sector for **'Mechanical Engineers'** and **'Engineering Technicians.'**
- There is strong demand for **'Customer Service'** and **'Book-keepers, Payroll Managers & Wages Clerks'** across business sectors.
- In the Manufacturing sector **'Plant & Machine Operatives'** are in demand.

Top 20 occupations in demand in Staffordshire & Stoke during August 2025



- It is in these areas of the economy where job vacancies remain particularly high and where we are hearing the most reports of **labour and skills shortages** with a mismatch of workers or skills to fill the vacant jobs.
- This has the **potential to slow down economic growth and limit business survival unless the labour shortage and skills gap is quickly and effectively addressed**. Clearly employment support organisations, skills providers and the Government's Plan for Jobs including the Connect to Work schemes and new Skills Bootcamps have a vital role in upskilling and reskilling jobseekers into areas of demand and preventing them becoming long-term unemployed. Government and business sectors have a key role in ensuring that jobs in areas of demand are attracting workers with good pay and terms and conditions to help prevent labour shortages.
- It is clear there continues to be a high number of jobs available in the local economy and the need now is to ensure that there is a strong local labour pool with skilled workers able to fill these roles to support business recovery/survival and improve their own prosperity through better pay. The national and local support which is in place to support those that have been unfortunate enough to lose their jobs is vital in both **reskilling and upskilling** as well as enabling them to access the opportunities available. Also encouraging those that have become **economically inactive** due to COVID back into work will further help to address labour shortages and skills gaps.
- **Staffordshire County Council's new Job Brokerage Service** is designed to do exactly this by matching local people, employers, and training providers to fill jobs and provide people with the jobs and careers they need.
- There are also clear **emerging opportunities for job creation in the digital economy (including online retail and e-commerce), construction sector (including retrofitting homes), the car industry e.g. electric cars at Jaguar Land Rover, and in manufacturing e.g. hydrogen combustion technology at JCB.**
- We will also look to build on our existing strengths including **engineering and advanced manufacturing** through the adoption of AI, Automation and Machine Learning, **construction** to achieve Government house building targets and build major new infrastructure projects such as the West Midlands Freight Interchange, and **advanced logistics** with ecommerce creating continued demand with Pets At Home in Stafford recently creating over 750 new jobs.