

# Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Economic Bulletin

## Issue 62 - October 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](mailto: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 saw unemployment, youth unemployment and dependency on work-related benefits increase during the energy and cost-of-living crisis.
- However, **over the last year we have seen a steady decline in the Claimant Count**, with more of our residents finding work during what remain challenging conditions for business and the economy as a whole.
- There is also **further positive news for jobseekers with the number of job vacancies increasing this month, with the rise higher than seen regionally and nationally. New job postings in Staffordshire have also increased above pre-pandemic levels.** In comparison, job vacancies in the West Midlands have decreased below pre-pandemic levels whilst nationally job vacancies have increased at a higher rate above 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, the **number of work-related benefit claimants in Staffordshire now stands at 15,155, this is 1,235 fewer claimants than at the same time last year.** This is equivalent to a -7.5% annual reduction which is much larger than the reductions seen both regionally (-4.1%) and nationally (-3.6%).
- The **claimant rate in Staffordshire is currently 2.8%** of the working age population, which is the **same as last month but lower than the 3.0% rate seen a year earlier.**
- **Staffordshire continues to have one of the lowest claimant rates in the region, far lower than the regional average 5.4% which increased from 5.3% the previous month, and lower than the England average of 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 stands at 3,145, this is 120 more youth claimants than at the same time last year.** This is equivalent to a 4.0% annual increase, although this much smaller than the increases seen both regionally (10.6%) and nationally (10.7%).
- The **youth claimant rate in Staffordshire is currently 5.0% of the 18-24 population, which is an increase from 4.9% last month and 4.8% a year earlier.** It is important to

note that **Staffordshire continues to be lower than the national rate of 5.7%, which increased from 5.5% and far lower than the regional rate of 7.8% which increased from 7.6%.** 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 14% increase in the number of available job vacancies between August and September to a total of 12,700. This is lower than the number of work-related benefit claimants in Staffordshire. Stoke-on-Trent saw an increase in job vacancies to a total of 5,400 which is significantly lower than the number of claimants. Across the region in the last month there was an 11% increase, and nationally there was a 10% increase 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, **'Cleaners & Domestics,' 'Sales Related'** and **'Large Goods Vehicle Drivers'** 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.'**
- The Logistics sector has high demand for **'Warehouse Operatives,' 'Fork-lift Truck Drivers,' 'Transport & Distribution Clerks/Assistants,' Roundspersons & Van Salespersons.'**
- Demand for **'Sales & Retail Assistants'** and **'Managers & Directors'** in the Retail and Wholesale sector remain strong.
- There is high demand in the Health and Social Care sector for **'Social Workers.'**
- There is strong demand for **'Customer Service occupations,' 'Book-keepers, Payroll Managers & Wages Clerks'** across business sectors.
- In the Engineering sector **'Engineering Technicians'** and **'Mechanical Engineers'** are in demand.
- 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 yours

To 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](http://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](mailto: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 Indured to invest £800m in Staffordshire**

Developer Indured 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."





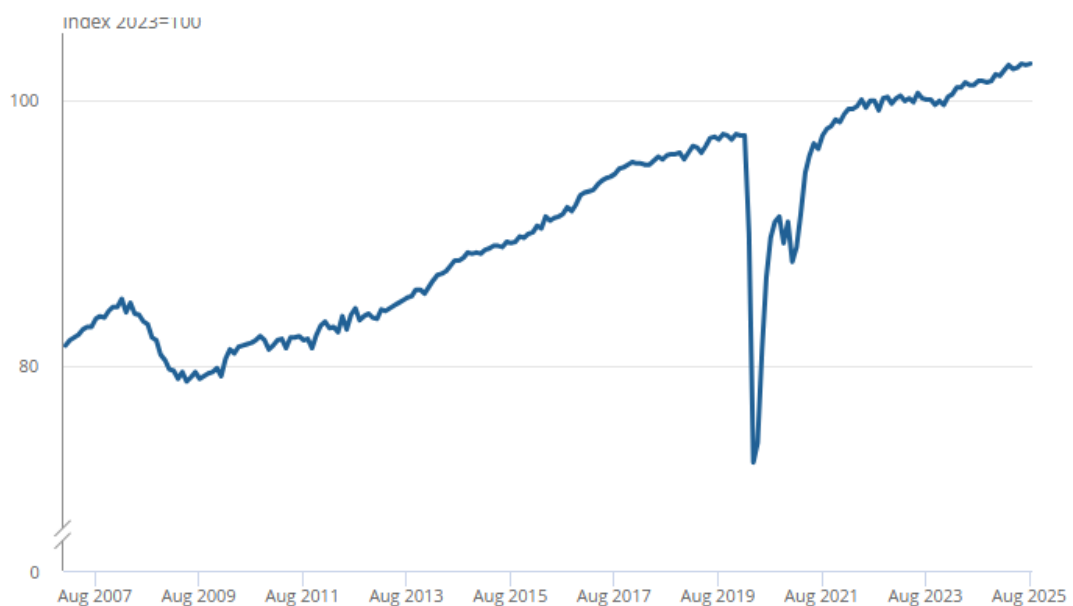
## National Context

- This month as we await the Autumn Budget, **the UK economy stands at a pivotal juncture, with growth decelerating, unemployment rising and inflation above target.** Against this backdrop, the **Chancellor is likely to need to find a sizeable fiscal consolidation at the upcoming crucial Budget to meet her fiscal rules.**
- There was some positive news, with the Prime Minister announcing that **Indian companies set to invest more than £1bn in the UK, creating almost 7,000 jobs.** A total of 64 Indian investors are set to collectively invest £1.3bn in UK businesses, in a range of sectors including engineering, technology and the creative industries, across every region of the country.

## Economy

- **The UK economy grew by 0.3% in the three months to August 2025** compared with the three months to May 2025, a further increase following growth of 0.2% in the three months to July 2025.

**GDP Monthly index, January 2007 to August 2025, UK**

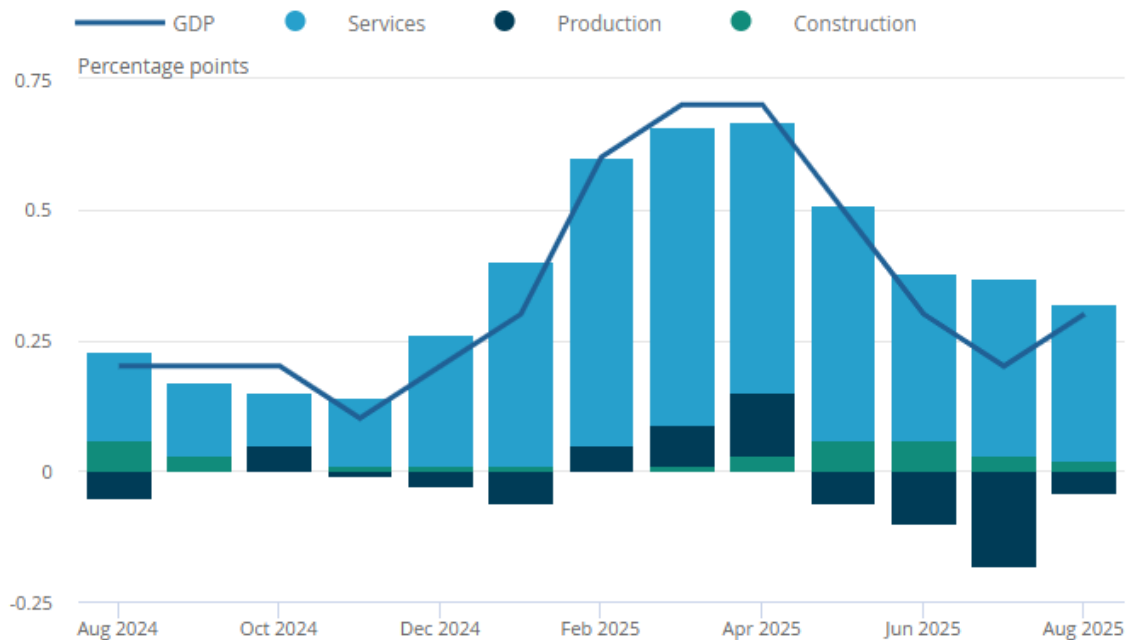


Source: GDP monthly estimate from the Office for National Statistics

- **Services output grew by 0.4% in the three months to August 2025**, compared with the three months to May 2025; this is unchanged after also growing by 0.4% in the three months to July 2025.
- **Production output fell by 0.3% in the three months to August 2025**, compared with the three months to May 2025; this is a smaller decrease than in the three months to July 2025, when it fell by 1.4%.

- **Construction output increased by 0.3% in the three months to August 2025**, compared with the three months to May 2025, a smaller increase than the growth of 0.5% in the three months to July 2025.

**Contributions to three-month GDP growth, August 2024 to August 2025 UK**



**Source: Contributions to three-month GDP growth, August 2024 to August 2025, UK**

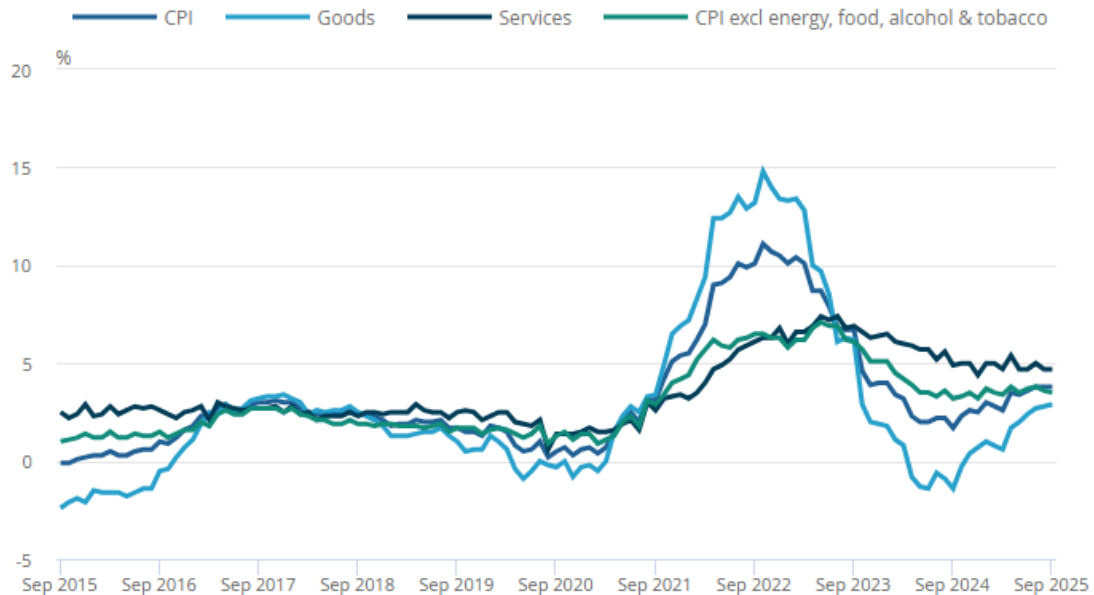
- Monthly GDP is estimated to have grown by 0.1% in August 2025, following a fall of 0.1% in July 2025 and a growth of 0.4% in June 2025.
- Production grew by 0.4% in August 2025, whereas services showed no growth and construction fell by 0.3% in August.

## Cost of Living

- **UK inflation held at 3.8 per cent in the year to September.** It marks the third successive month the rate remains unchanged and the **12th month in a row inflation is above the Bank of England's 2 per cent target.**
- Petrol prices and airfares drove up costs, but food and non-alcoholic drinks prices fell for the first time since May last year.

## CPI goods annual inflation rate highest since October 2023

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



Source: Consumer price inflation from the Office for National Statistics

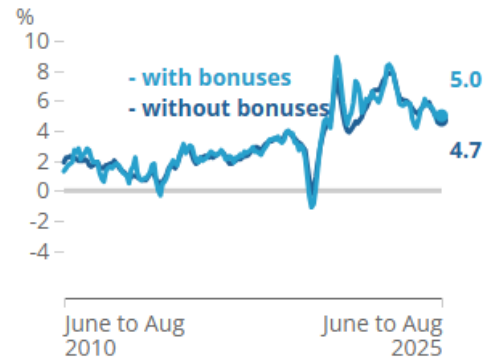
- At the same time, **we are seeing annual real terms growth in wages continue to steadily decline.**
- Annual growth in employees' average earnings in Great Britain for regular earnings (excluding bonuses) was 4.7%, and for total earnings (including bonuses) was 5.0% in June to August 2025.
- **Annual growth in real terms, adjusted for inflation using the Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH), was 0.6% for regular pay and 0.8% for total pay, in June to August 2025.**
- **Annual growth in real terms, adjusted for inflation using the Consumer Prices Index excluding owner occupiers' housing costs (CPI), was 0.9% for regular pay and 1.2% for total pay, in June to August 2025.**

### Nominal Earnings

Average Weekly Earnings annual growth rates - nominal pay

Nominal annual growth rate for regular pay was slightly down on the previous period, while the total annual growth rate slightly increased.

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

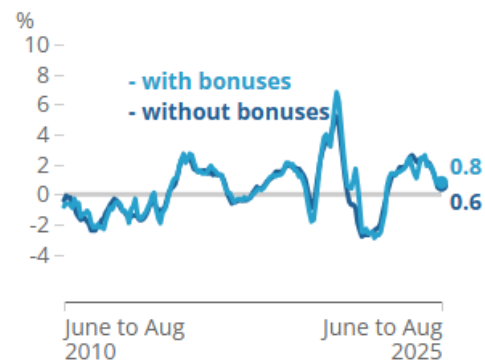


### Real Earnings CPIH

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

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

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

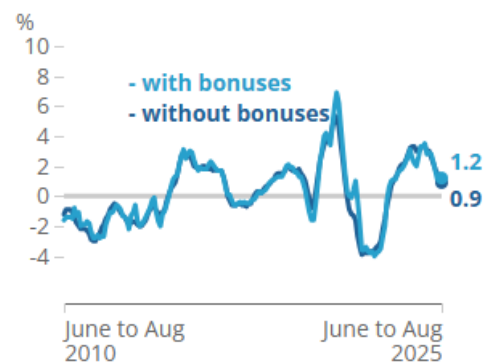


### Real Earnings CPI

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

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

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



- There were an estimated 15,000 working days lost because of labour disputes across the UK in August 2025.

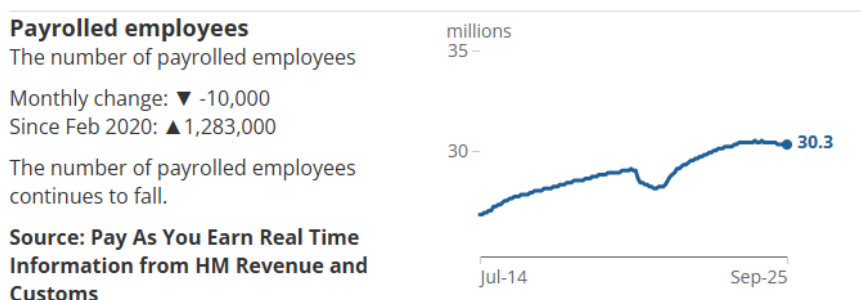
## Business Conditions

- The latest results from Wave 142 of the **Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS)**, which was live from 6 to 19 October 2025, suggest that business conditions continue to be challenging.
- Around 1 in 6 (17%) of trading businesses reported that their **turnover had increased** in September 2025 compared with the previous calendar month, up 6 percentage points from August 2025 but at a similar level to July 2025; 25% reported their **turnover had decreased**, down 4 percentage points from August but similar to the 4 months prior.

- 14% of trading businesses **expected their turnover to increase in November 2025**, down 2 points compared to expectations for October 2025 but broadly stable compared with November 2024; conversely, 20% of trading businesses reported that they **expect their turnover to decrease in November 2025**, up 4 percentage points compared to expectations for October 2025 and November 2024.
- **Economic uncertainty remained the most reported challenge affecting turnover** for trading businesses in early October 2025 at 28%, **followed by competition** (20%), which rose 4 percentage points from August 2025; **for businesses with 10 or more employees, the most reported challenge was cost of labour** (33%), although this has fallen 8 percentage points since peaking in early April.
- 22% of trading businesses reported an **increase in the prices of goods or services bought** in September 2025 when compared with the previous month, while 8% reported an **increase in the prices of goods or services sold**; although both are broadly stable with August, these proportions have fallen 10 and 5 percentage points, respectively, since April.
- In early October 2025, 18% of businesses with 10 or more employees reported that they were **experiencing worker shortages**; this has been broadly stable since early September 2024.
- When asked in early October 2025, 20% of trading businesses **expected their performance to increase over the next 12 months**; while this percentage is 3 percentage points higher than September 2025, it has trended downwards since January 2024 (26%).
- The latest business insolvencies data shows that **in September 2025 there were a total of 1,913 company insolvencies in England and Wales, 6% higher than the number registered in the previous year (1,804 in September 2024), and 13% higher than the number registered three years previously (1,692 in September 2022)**. The main concern around company and individual insolvencies are associated issues such as mental health and homelessness.

## Labour Market

- The following charts shows the latest **labour market position** and the latest Office for National Statistics data:





### Employment rate

Employment rate (all aged 16 to 64)

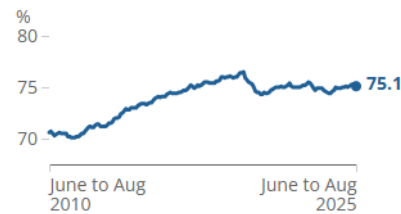
Quarterly change: ▼-0.2pps

Since Dec-Feb 2020: ▼-1.4pps

The employment rate is down on the quarter but up on the year, and 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



### Unemployment rate

Unemployment rate (all aged 16+)

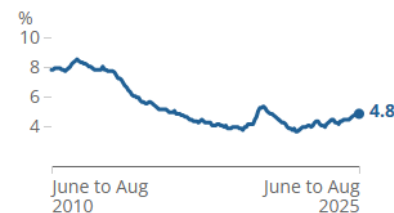
Quarterly change: ▲0.2pps

Since Dec-Feb 2020: ▲0.9pps

The unemployment rate is up on the quarter and the year, and is 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



### Inactivity rate

Economic inactivity rate (all aged 16 to 64)

Quarterly change: ◀▶ 0.0pps

Since Dec-Feb 2020: ▲0.7pps

The economic inactivity rate is largely unchanged on the quarter but down the year, and 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



### Job vacancies

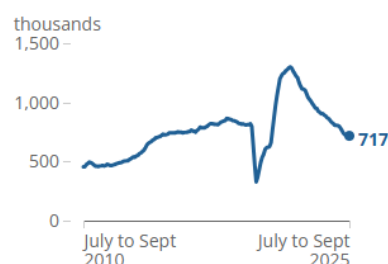
Number of job vacancies

Quarterly change: ▼-9,000

Since Jan-Mar 2020: ▼-78,000

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 93,000 (0.3%) between August 2024 and August 2025 but increased by 10,000 (0.0%) between July 2025 and August 2025.**
- When looking at June to August 2025, the period comparable with our Labour Force Survey (LFS) estimates, payrolled employees fell by 115,000 (0.4%) over the year, and by 31,000 (0.1%) over the quarter.
- The early estimate of payrolled employees for September 2025 decreased by 100,000 (0.3%) on the year, and by 10,000 (0.0%) on the month, to 30.3 million. The September 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 their 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 75.1% in June to August 2025. This is down in the latest quarter but above estimates of a year ago.
- The **UK unemployment rate** for people aged 16 years and over was estimated at 4.8% in June to August 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 21.0% in June to August 2025. This is largely unchanged in the latest quarter but below estimates of a year ago.
- The **UK Claimant Count** for September 2025 increased on the month but decreased on the year to 1.692 million.
- The estimated number of **vacancies in the UK** fell by 9,000 (1.3%) on the quarter, to 717,000, in July to September 2025. This is the 39th consecutive period where vacancy numbers have dropped compared with the previous three months, with vacancies decreasing in 9 of the 18 industry sectors.

## Skills

- **A new set of vocational qualifications are to be rolled out for 16-year-olds.** The Government plans to replace level 3 BTECs with V-levels and also introduce a core skills diploma alternative alongside the current maths and English GCSE qualification aiming to reduce the number of resits.

## Green Economy

- **The Government has announced plans to train 400,000 workers as part of a new Clean Energy jobs plan** to train the next generation of clean energy workers in 31 priority occupations. It will also include a programme to match veterans with jobs in the industry and schemes for ex-offenders, school leavers and unemployed people.

## Conclusion

- In conclusion, the **upcoming Autumn Budget is crucial to driving growth** with the Chancellor setting out her tax, borrowing and spending plans for the year ahead while trying to ensure the state finances remain balanced. While it is clearly a positive that we have seen **a new major investment deal struck with India**.
- It is a real **positive that the UK economy has continued to grow** but this is more modest growth than what we saw during the start of 2025.
- **Inflation remained the same this month**, when many economists including the Bank of England thought that it would rise, but it is **still almost double the Bank's target contributing to weaker economic growth**. At the same time, **real wage growth continues to come down and the cost-of-living remains a challenge for many**.
- 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**.
- It is concerning that this month's labour market figures show that **payrolled employees and employment have both declined, while unemployment has increased further and economic inactivity has stopped falling**. This all comes at a time when there are fewer **job vacancies available**, with the **challenging economic conditions meaning more businesses are reducing recruitment and making redundancies, therefore it will be more challenging for those looking for work to find work**.
- 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 the pandemic. 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, such as the new Institute of Technology, 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 statistics<sup>1</sup> for September 2025, which shows the number of new companies and individuals who are unable to pay debts and enter a formal insolvency procedure.

#### Company Insolvencies

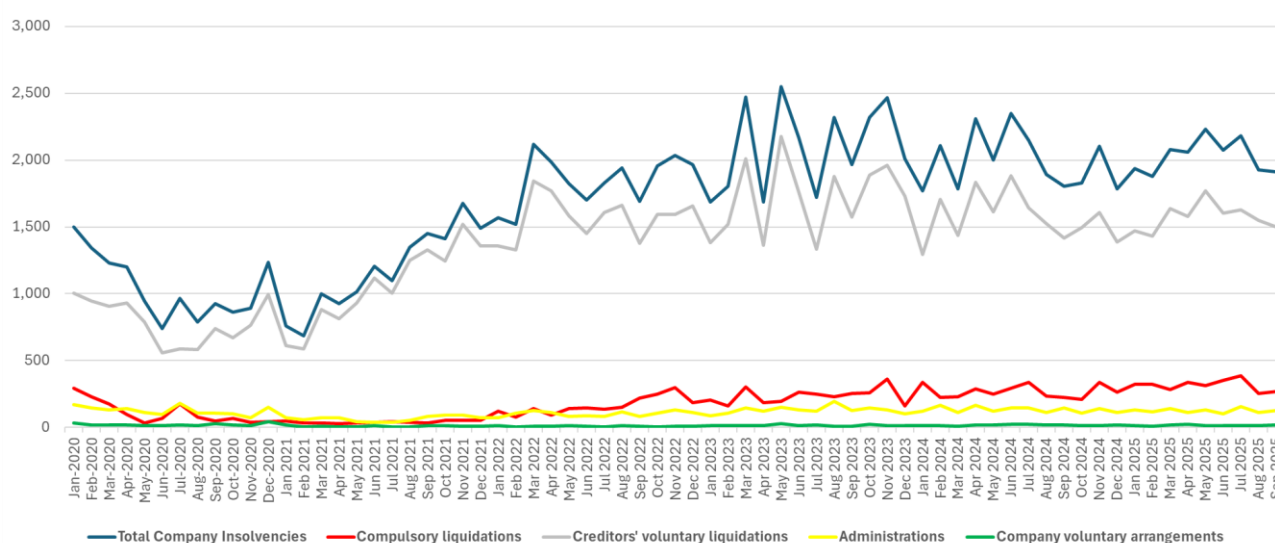
**In September 2025 there were a total of 1,913 company insolvencies in England and Wales.** The overall number of **company insolvencies** are **6% higher than the number registered in the previous year (1,804 in September 2024), and 13% higher than the number registered three years previously (1,692 in September 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 270 compulsory liquidations in September 2025, 21% higher than the number in September 2024, and 23% higher than in September 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 September 2025 there were 1,498 Creditors' Voluntary Liquidations (CVLs), 6% higher than September 2024, and 9% higher than September 2022. Numbers of administrations are 51% higher than three years previously in September 2022, Company Voluntary Arrangements (CVAs) are 55% higher than three years previously in September 2022, but numbers are low.

**Company insolvencies between October 2024 and September 2025 are 4% lower compared to a year earlier, representing 964 fewer businesses**

Company Insolvencies in England and Wales



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

<sup>1</sup>Source: The Insolvency Service – [Company insolvencies, September 2025 - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/company-insolvencies-september-2025)



**The sectors to have seen the largest number of company insolvencies between September 2024 and August 2025 continue to be the Construction sector (3,934), Wholesale & Retail sector (3,710), and Accommodation & Food Service sector (3,365).**

Levels are below those seen for the same period the previous year for the Construction sector -9% lower, the Wholesale & Retail sector -3% lower, and the Accommodation & Food sector -9% lower than levels a year earlier. Overall, for this period company insolvencies by industry are -5% lower. It is positive to see improvements overall across sectors.

### Individual Insolvencies

There were **11,924 total individual insolvencies in September 2025**, which was 13% higher than in September 2024, and 19% higher than in September 2022.

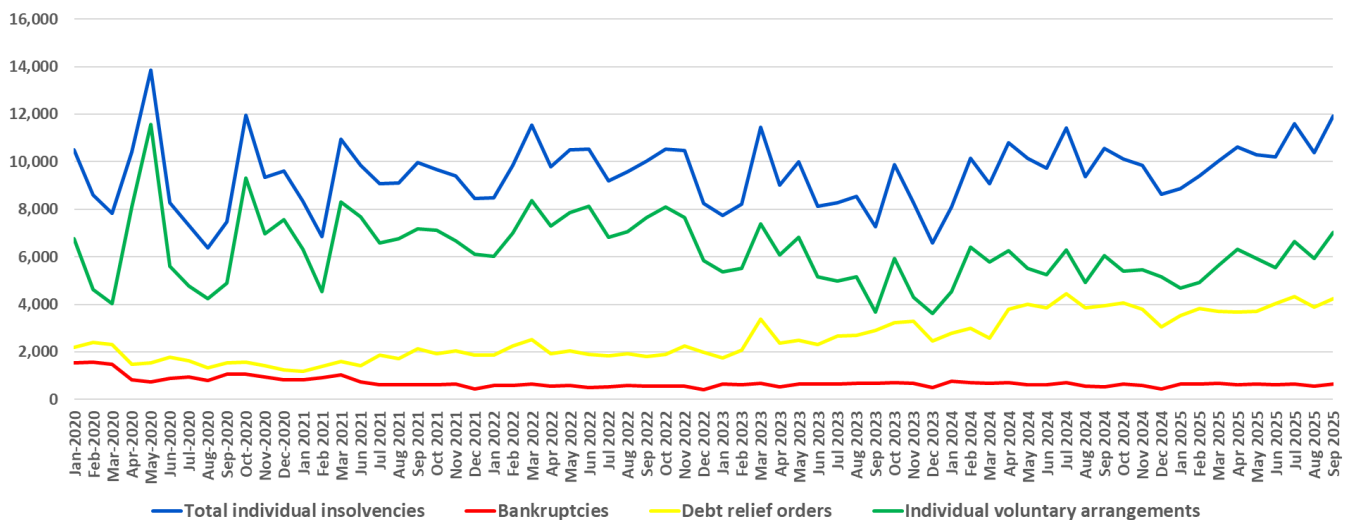
For individuals, **643 bankruptcies were registered in September 2025**, 18% higher than in September 2024, and 17% higher than in September 2022.

There were **4,240 Debt Relief Orders (DROs) in September 2025**, 7% higher than in September 2024, and 134% higher than in September 2022.

There were **7,041 Individual Voluntary Arrangements (IVAs) registered in September 2025**, which was 16% higher than in September 2024, but 8% lower than in September 2022.

**Total Individual Insolvencies between October 2024 and September 2025 are 7% higher than the same period a year earlier, representing an increase of 7,792.**

### Individual Insolvencies in England and Wales



Source: Insolvency Service

There were **7,684 Breathing Space registrations in September 2025, which is 12% higher than the number registered in September 2024.** 7,589 were Standard Breathing Space registrations, which is 12% higher and 95 were Mental Health Breathing Space registrations, which is 1% higher than September 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 Count<sup>2</sup>

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: September 2025**

Area	Claimant Count Rate (September 2024)	Claimant Count Rate (August 2025)	Claimant Count Rate <sup>1</sup> (September 2025)	Number of Claimants (September 2025)	Annual Change in Claimants (Numbers)	Annual Change in Claimants (%)
England	4.3	4.0	4.1	1,491,640	-55,055	-3.6%
West Midlands	5.6	5.3	5.4	203,145	-8,685	-4.1%
Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent	3.7	3.5	3.5	24,705	-1,805	-6.8%
Birmingham	10.5	10.2	10.4	78,565	-955	-1.2%
Wolverhampton	7.9	7.0	7.1	12,075	-1,340	-10.0%
Sandwell	7.3	6.8	7.0	15,350	-685	-4.3%
Walsall	6.5	6.0	6.0	10,625	-830	-7.2%
<b>Stoke-on-Trent</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>9,545</b>	<b>-575</b>	<b>-5.7%</b>
Coventry	5.8	5.6	5.7	13,605	-170	-1.2%
Dudley	5.2	4.7	4.8	9,420	-815	-8.0%
Telford and Wrekin	4.0	3.8	4.0	4,755	-60	-1.2%
Solihull	3.7	3.6	3.6	4,720	-65	-1.4%
Worcestershire	3.3	3.0	3.0	11,030	-1,070	-8.8%
Warwickshire	2.9	2.8	2.9	10,895	-45	-0.4%
<b>Staffordshire</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>15,155</b>	<b>-1,235</b>	<b>-7.5%</b>
Herefordshire, County of	2.9	2.6	2.7	2,905	-305	-9.5%
Shropshire	2.6	2.3	2.4	4,500	-540	-10.7%
East Staffordshire	3.9	3.5	3.5	2,760	-270	-8.9%
Tamworth	3.4	3.3	3.3	1,620	-75	-4.4%
Cannock Chase	3.4	3.0	3.1	1,960	-220	-10.1%
Newcastle-under-Lyme	3.1	2.9	3.0	2,390	-105	-4.2%
South Staffordshire	2.8	2.5	2.5	1,685	-165	-8.9%
Stafford	2.7	2.4	2.4	2,055	-205	-9.1%
Lichfield	2.4	2.2	2.2	1,465	-130	-8.2%
Staffordshire Moorlands	2.3	2.2	2.2	1,215	-70	-5.4%

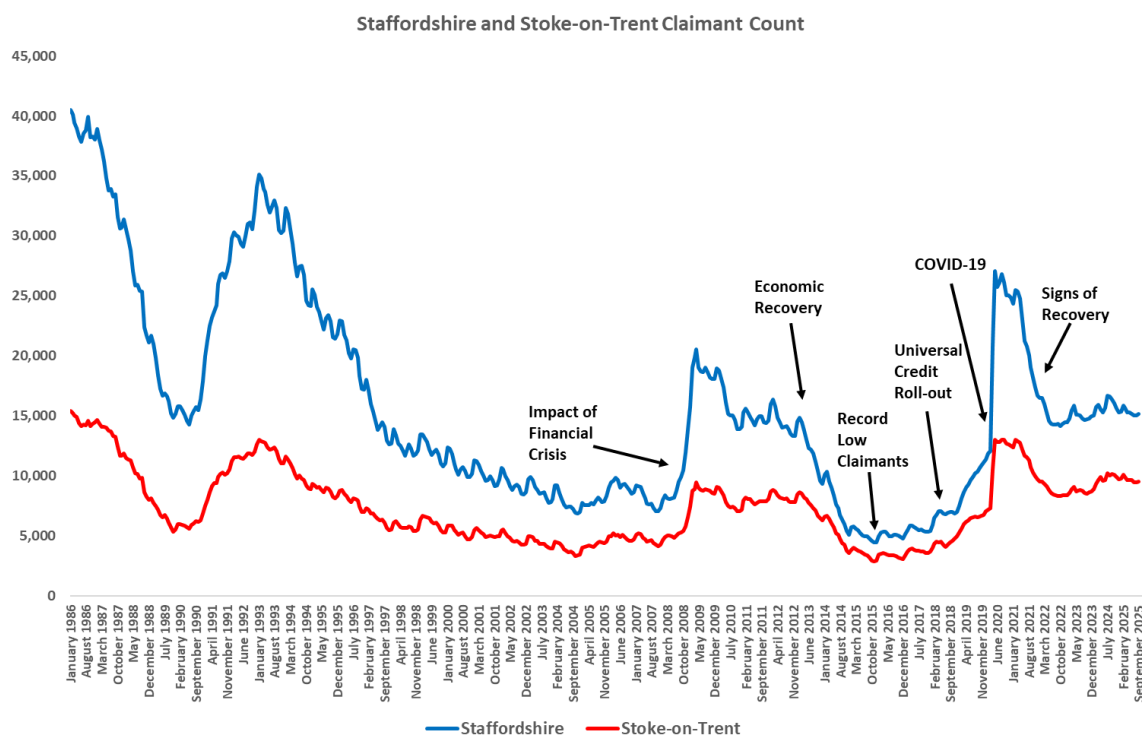
<sup>1</sup> The claimant rate is the proportion of the working age population claiming Universal Credit

- The **claimant count in Staffordshire currently stands at 15,155, this is 1,235 fewer claimants than at the same time last year.** This is equivalent to a -7.5% annual reduction which is much larger than the reductions seen both regionally (-4.1%) and nationally (-3.6%).
- The **claimant rate in Staffordshire is currently 2.8%** of the working age population, which is the **same as last month but lower than the 3.0% rate seen a year earlier.**
- The **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**

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

previous month, and lower than the average for England of 4.1% which also increased from 4.0% the previous month.

- The number of **claimants in Stoke-on-Trent stands at 9,545**, which is 575 lower than a year earlier, and the **claimant rate has remained unchanged at 5.8%**.



- It is important to note that not all claimants will be out of work and should 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.
- All Staffordshire districts have seen a decline in the number of claimants over the last year.**
- All districts have a lower claimant rate than both the regional and national rates.** The highest claimant rate at 3.5% is in East Staffordshire. Lichfield and Staffordshire Moorlands have the lowest claimant rate of 2.2%.
- 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.

## Youth Claimant Count

### Youth Claimant Count (Universal Credit) Statistics: September 2025

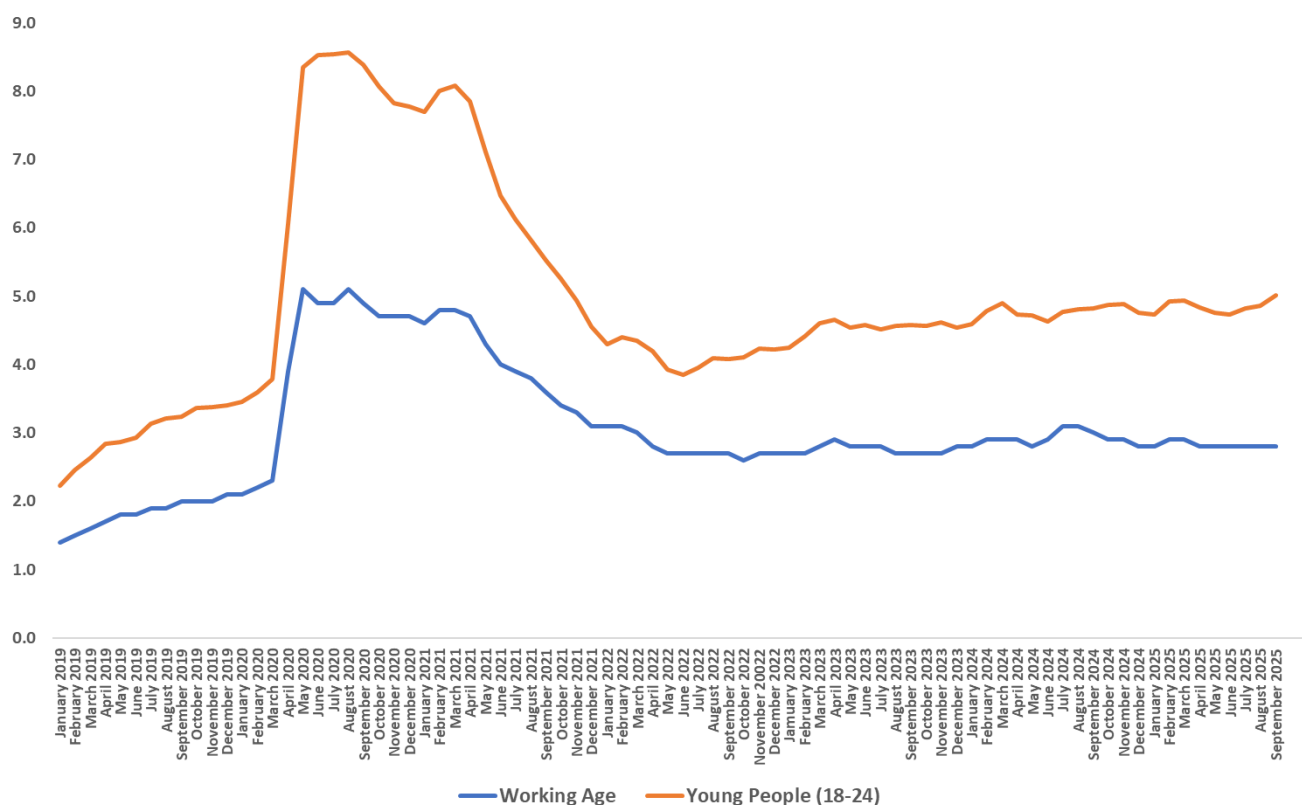
Area	Youth Claimant Count Rate (September 2024)	Youth Claimant Count Rate (August 2025)	Youth Claimant Count Rate <sup>1</sup> (September 2025)	Number of Youth Claimants (September 2025)	Annual Change in Youth Claimants (Numbers)	Annual Change in Youth Claimants (%)
England	5.1	5.5	5.7	277,810	26,925	10.7%
West Midlands	7.0	7.6	7.8	40,980	3,920	10.6%
Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent	5.6	5.7	5.9	5,075	230	4.7%
Birmingham	9.4	10.5	10.7	15,425	1,855	13.7%
Wolverhampton	10.3	10.2	10.5	2,395	30	1.3%
Sandwell	9.0	9.9	10.2	3,145	365	13.1%
Walsall	9.5	9.9	9.9	2,350	85	3.8%
Dudley	7.5	8.1	8.5	2,045	230	12.7%
<b>Stoke-on-Trent</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>8.1</b>	<b>8.2</b>	<b>1,935</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>6.3%</b>
Telford and Wrekin	6.3	6.9	7.3	1,110	155	16.2%
Solihull	6.0	6.9	7.0	1,030	145	16.4%
Coventry	5.0	5.5	5.6	2,645	305	13.0%
Worcestershire	5.0	5.1	5.3	2,195	105	5.0%
<b>Staffordshire</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>3,145</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>4.0%</b>
Herefordshire, County of	4.4	4.9	4.9	540	55	11.3%
Warwickshire	4.0	4.5	4.8	2,140	325	17.9%
Shropshire	4.1	4.3	4.3	885	45	5.4%
Tamworth	6.8	6.6	6.9	375	5	1.4%
Cannock Chase	6.3	6.1	6.5	450	15	3.4%
South Staffordshire	5.1	5.4	5.8	400	50	14.3%
East Staffordshire	5.2	5.1	5.3	465	5	1.1%
Stafford	4.9	4.7	4.8	395	-10	-2.5%
Lichfield	4.1	3.9	4.1	290	0	0.0%
Newcastle-under-Lyme	3.9	4.1	4.0	550	20	3.8%
Staffordshire Moorlands	3.2	3.9	3.8	220	35	18.9%

<sup>1</sup> The claimant rate is the proportion of the working age population claiming Universal Credit

- The **youth claimant count in Staffordshire currently stands at 3,145, this is 120 more youth claimants than at the same time last year.** This is equivalent to a 4.0% annual increase, although this much smaller than the increases seen both regionally (10.6%) and nationally (10.7%).
- The **youth claimant rate in Staffordshire is currently 5.0% of the 18-24 population, which is an increase from 4.9% last month and 4.8% a year earlier.** It is important to note that **Staffordshire continues to be lower than the national rate of 5.7%, which increased from 5.5% and far lower than the regional rate of 7.8% which increased from 7.6%.**
- The number of **youth claimants in Stoke-on-Trent stands at 1,935**, which is 115 higher than a year earlier, with **the rate increasing to 8.2% from 8.1% last month and 7.7% a year earlier.**



Claimant Rate and Youth Claimant Rate in Staffordshire



- The **majority of districts in Staffordshire have seen small increases in the number of youth claimants over the last year**, with only Stafford seeing a decline.
- **All Staffordshire districts have a youth claimant rate below the regional average, but Tamworth, Cannock Chase and South Staffordshire have rates above the national average.**
- 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

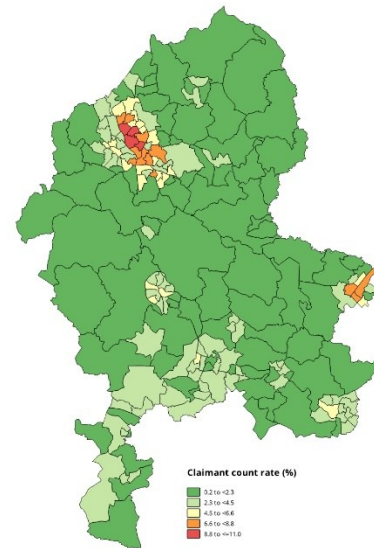
The following maps and tables provide the latest breakdown of the claimant count by wards in Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent.

### Claimant Count Rate August 2025

Of the 201 wards in Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent, 49 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: 11.0%/505; Moorcroft: 10.0%/370; Etruria & Hanley: 9.9%/535; Burslem Central: 9.1%/415; Tunstall: 8.6%/365 total claimants.

In Staffordshire, the three wards with the highest claimant rate were in East Staffordshire with the highest rates in Anglesey: 7.3%/395; Burton: 7.2%/215; Shobnall: 7.2%/390 total claimants.

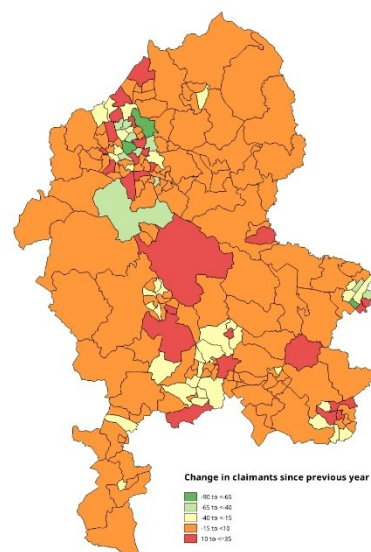


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### Annual Change in Claimant Count

Of the ten wards in Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent with the highest annual change in the number of claimants five were in Stoke-on-Trent including Sandford Hill (35 increase to 230); Hanley Park & Shelton (25 increase to 375); Hanford & Trentham (20 increase to 135); Birches Head & Central Forest Park (15 increase to 495); Eaton Park (15 increase to 100).

In Staffordshire the five wards with the highest annual change include Westlands, Newcastle-under-Lyme (25 increase to 120); Stapenhill, East Staffordshire (20 increase to 265); Knutton, Newcastle-under-Lyme (15 increase to 120); Bolehall, Tamworth (15 increase to 175); Spital, Tamworth (15 increase to 160).



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

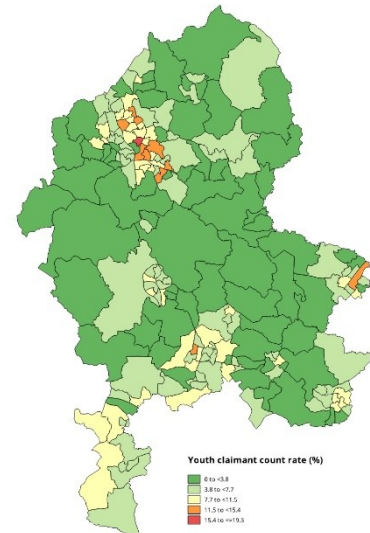
The following maps and tables provide the latest breakdown of the youth claimant count by wards in Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent.

### Youth Claimant Count Rate August 2025

Of the 201 wards in Staffordshire & Stoke-Trent, 86 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, eight were in Stoke-on-Trent including Joiner's Square: 19.3%/135; Fenton East: 15.1%/70; Meir North: 14.3%/65; Bentilee & Ubbberley: 12.5%/120; Fenton West & Mount Pleasant: 12.3%/60; Meir South 11.9%/55; Bradeley & Chell Heath: 11.7%/50; Burslem Central: 11.6%/75.

In Staffordshire, the wards with the highest claimant rate were Burton (East Staffordshire): 13.5%/50 and Cannock North (Cannock Chase): 11.9%/55.

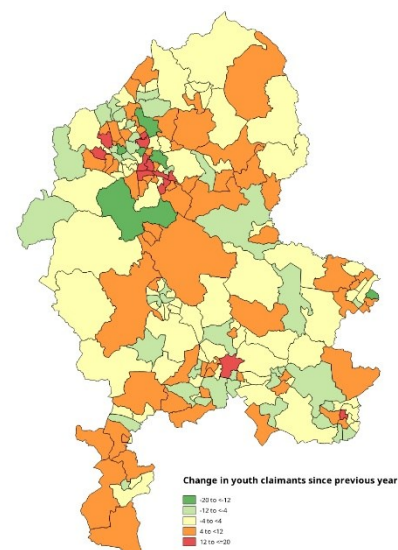


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### Annual Change in Youth Claimant Count

Of the ten wards in Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent with the highest annual change in the number of youth claimants, eight were in Stoke-on-Trent including Meir North (20 increase to 65); Fenton West & Mount Pleasant (20 increase to 60); Meir South (20 increase to 55); Fenton East (15 increase to 70); Sneyd Green (15 increase to 45); Broadway & Longton East (15 increase to 40); Hollybush & Longton West (15 increase to 45); Birches Head & Central Forest Park (15 increase to 75).

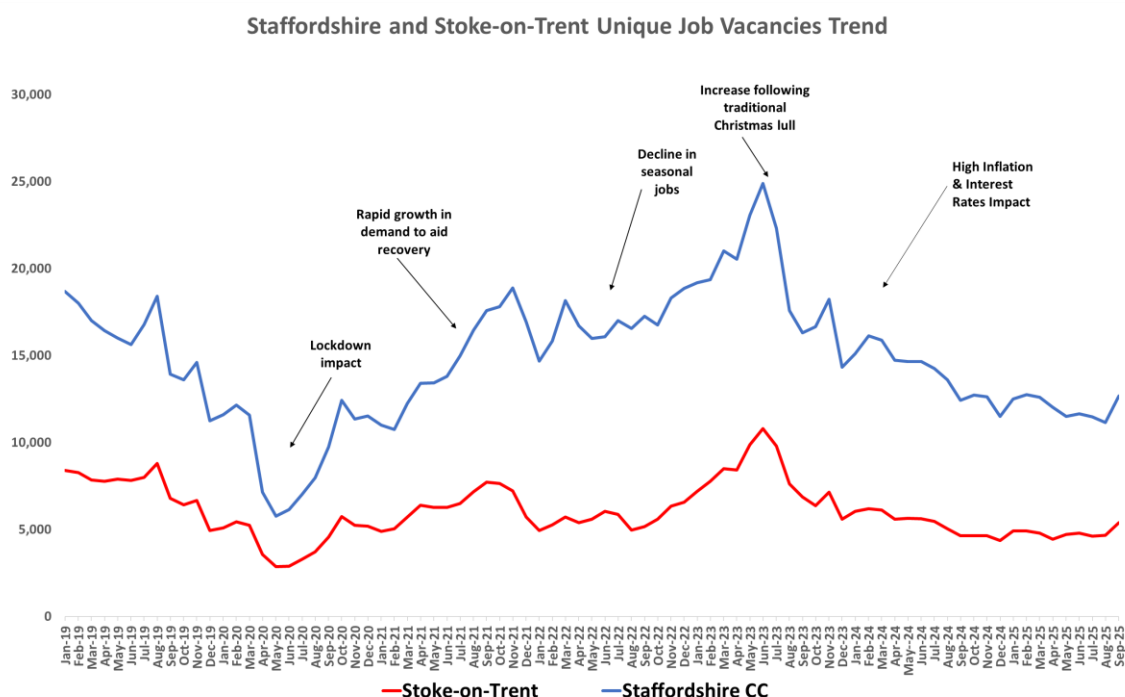
In Staffordshire, the two wards with the highest annual change in the number of youth claimants, were Bolehall (Tamworth): 15 increase to 50; Holditch & Chesterton (Newcastle-under-Lyme): 15 increase to 45.



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## Job Vacancies<sup>3</sup>

- Staffordshire saw an increase of 14% in the number of available job vacancies between August and September, higher than increases seen regionally and nationally to a total of 12,700<sup>4</sup>. However, this is lower than the number of work-related benefit claimants. Stoke-on-Trent saw an increase of 16% in job vacancies to a total of 5,400 which is significantly lower than the number of claimants.
- Across the region in the last month there was an 11% decrease, and nationally there was a 10% increase in the number of job vacancies.
- In September there has been an increase in the number of available job vacancies, compared to a year ago in Staffordshire with the number of job adverts being posted 2% higher, whilst Stoke-on-Trent increased by 16%. 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 an increase this month to 4% above pre-pandemic levels. In comparison the region has decreased and is 11% below pre-pandemic levels whilst nationally there has been an increase of 8%. Stoke-on-Trent job vacancies are 1% lower. Our focus continues to be to support those that unfortunately find themselves unemployed, to transition into work.



*\*\*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.\*\**

<sup>3</sup> Source: Lightcast

<sup>4</sup> 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

- All occupational groups saw an increase in vacancies during September. 'Caring, Leisure & Other Service' occupations saw the largest increase of 26% whilst 'Skilled Trades' and 'Managers, Directors & Senior Officials' occupations saw the smallest increase of 6%.
- The occupations to see the most significant increases during September include Teaching Assistants; Cleaners & Domestic; Secondary Education Teaching Professionals; Care Workers & Home Carers; Sales related; Roundspersons & Van Salespersons; SEND Teaching Professionals; Early Education & Childcare Practitioners; Warehouse Operatives; Sales & Retail Assistants; Teaching Professionals; Customer Service; Kitchen & Catering Assistants; Driving Instructors; Chartered & Certified Accountants; Educational Support Assistants; Packers, Bottlers, Canners & Fillers; Health & Safety Managers & Officers; HR & Industrial Relations Officers; Sports Coaches, Instructors & Officials.

## Annual Trends in job vacancies

- The occupations to see the largest year-on-year increases include Secondary Education Teaching Professionals; Cleaners & Domestic; Large Goods Vehicle Drivers; Early Education & Childcare Practitioners; Fork-lift Truck Drivers; Teaching Assistants; Project Support Officers; Transport & Distribution Clerks & Assistants; Roundspersons & Van Salespersons; Financial & Accounting Technicians; Care Workers & Home Carers; Assemblers & Routine Operatives; Engineering Technicians; Managers in Storage & Warehousing; Property, Housing & Estate Managers; Kitchen & Catering Assistants; Packers, Bottlers, Canners & Fillers; Sports Coaches, Instructors & Officials; Youth Work Professionals; Production, Factory & Assembly Supervisors.

## Pre-COVID baseline trends in job vacancies

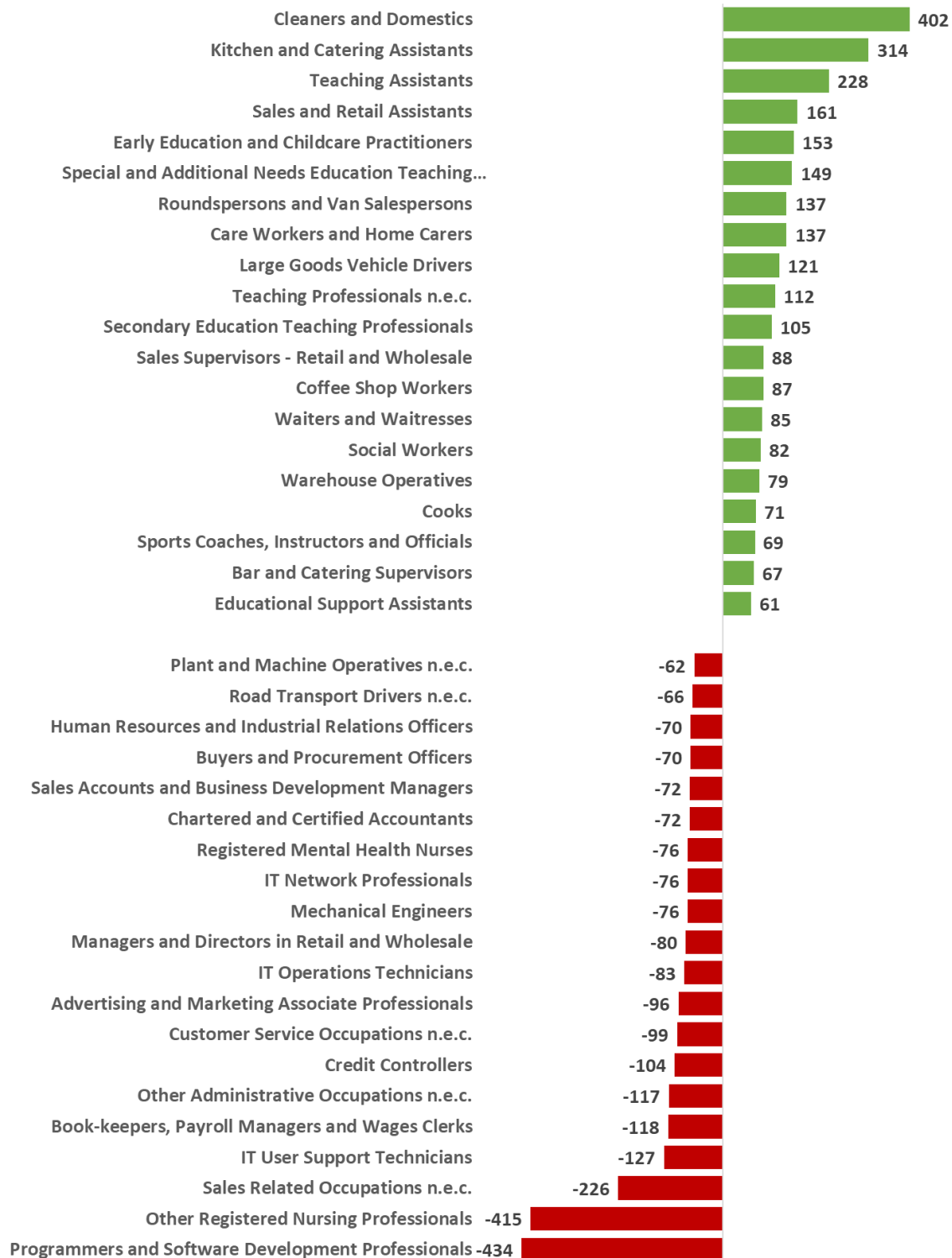
The main occupations with higher vacancies compared to pre-COVID are found in:

- **Housekeepers & Related Occupations** (Cleaners & Domestic)
- **Hospitality** (Kitchen & Catering Assistants; Coffee Shop Workers; Waiters & Waitresses; Cooks; Bar & Catering Supervisors)
- **Education** (Teaching Assistants; SEND Teaching Professionals; Teaching Professionals; Secondary Education Teaching Professionals; Educational Support Assistants)
- **Retail & Wholesale** (Sales & Retail Assistants; Sales Supervisors)
- **Childcare** (Early Education & Childcare Practitioners)
- **Logistics** (Roundspersons & Van Salespersons; Large Goods Vehicle Drivers; Warehouse Operatives)
- **Health & Social Care** (Care Workers & Home Carers; Social Workers)
- **Sport** (Sports Coaches, Instructors & Officials)



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

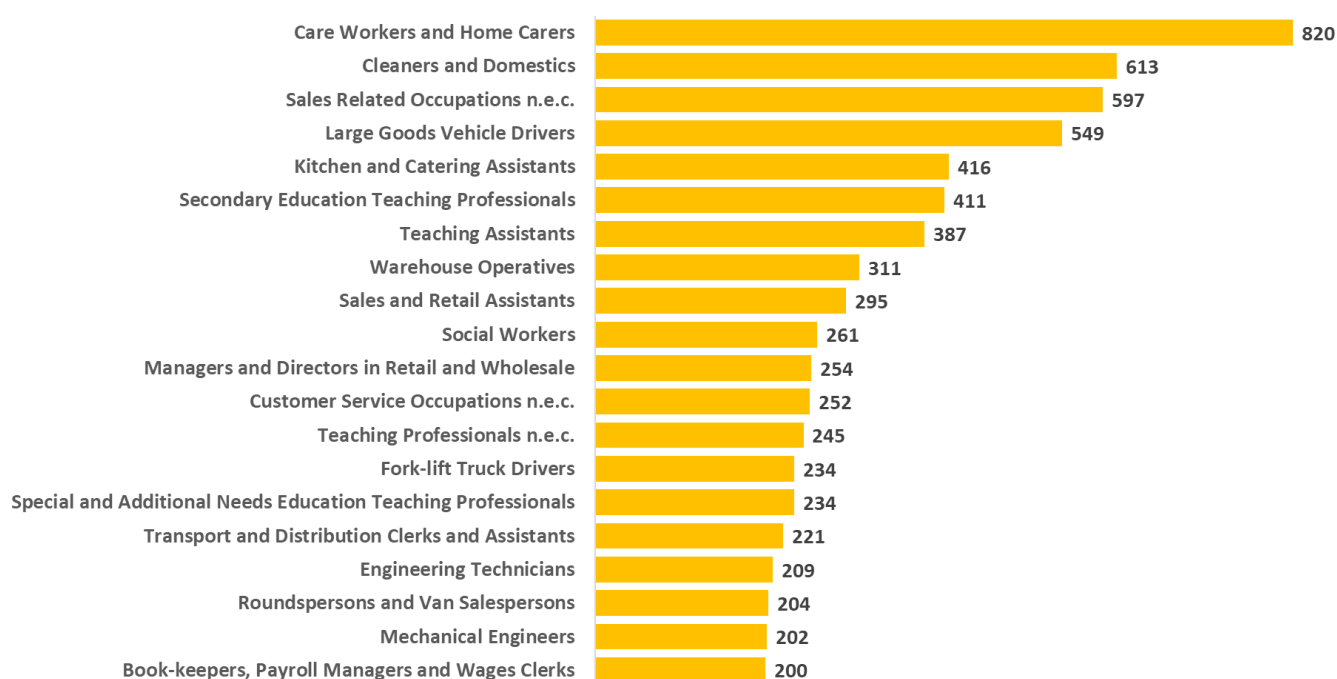
### Top 20 occupations increasing and top 20 declining between Feb 2020 (Pre-COVID) and Sept 2025 in Staffordshire & Stoke



## 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 **'Cleaners & Domestics,' 'Sales Related,' 'Large Goods Vehicle Drivers'** 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.'**
- The Logistics sector continues to have high demand for **'Warehouse Operatives,' 'Fork-lift Truck Drivers,' 'Transport & Distribution Clerks & Assistants'** and **'Roundspersons & Van Salespersons.'**
- Demand for **'Sales & Retail Assistants'** and **'Managers & Directors'** in the Retail and Wholesale sector remain strong.
- There is high demand in the Health & Social Care sector for **'Social Workers.'**
- There is strong demand for **'Customer Service'** and **'Book-keepers, Payroll Managers & Wages Clerks'** across business sectors.
- There is continued demand in the Engineering sector for **'Engineering Technicians'** and **'Mechanical Engineers.'**

### Top 20 occupations in demand in Staffordshire & Stoke during September 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 which will create 8,500 new jobs. **Advanced logistics** within the ecommerce sector continues to drive demand, evidenced by Pets At Home in Stafford recently generating over 750 new jobs and Carlsberg Britvic investing £4 million in a new depot, with plans to create several hundred additional jobs.