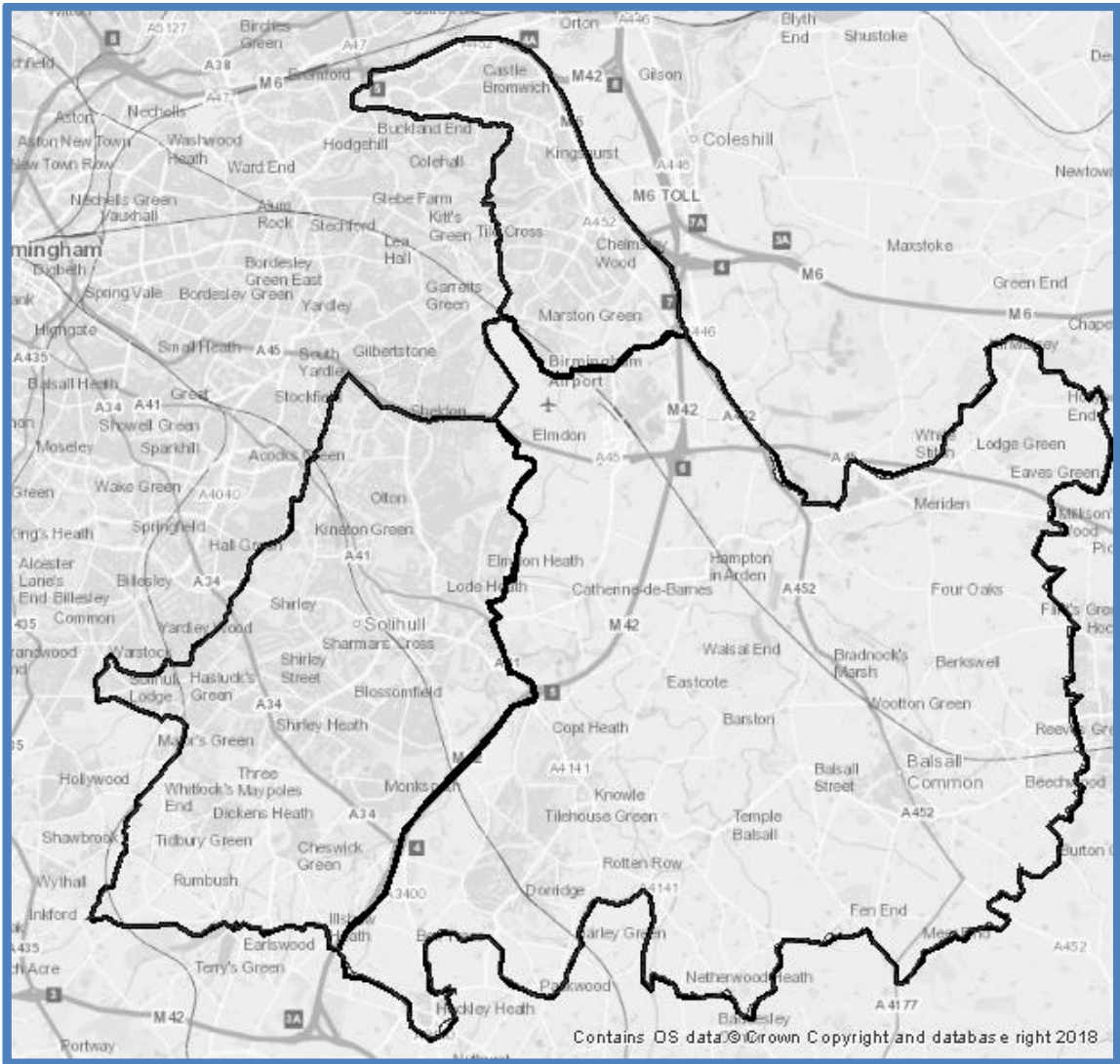


Solihull Employment and Skills 2024



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Key Employment and Skill Trends in Solihull

The UK labour market: Following a post-Covid recovery the UK employment rate has been stable since the spring of 2023 at about 75%. While there has been a slight rise in unemployment in recent months, increasing levels of economic inactivity among working age people has been the big story.

Nationally, nearly 3 million people are economically inactive due to either long-term or temporary sickness, with this number rising 26% since 2020.

Labour market performance in Solihull: Labour market performance in Solihull is subject to the same forces that impact on working people across the UK. However, evidence suggests that Solihull has a strong labour market, particularly in the context its urban neighbours.

At 77% the employment rate in Solihull is higher than national and regional benchmarks and is the higher than any of its West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) peers.

Local job opportunities: Nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ of Solihull residents work in Solihull itself or Birmingham, with this travel to work area benefiting from a higher job density than nationally. Moreover, Solihull and Birmingham is a dynamic labour market, with the number of jobs growing by nearly 6% (37,000) in the three years to 2022, as a result of sector growth in business services, public services and information & communication.

Sector specialisms in the Solihull and Birmingham job market include business administration & support services, business services, finance and public services. Local economic assets such as Jaguar Land Rover, the NEC and the Airport are also important local job creators.

The type of employment in Solihull: Over half of Solihull residents work in a higher skilled management or professional jobs. This varies across the borough, with, for instance, far more north Solihull residents working in labour intensive (process, plant & machine or elementary jobs) or service intensive occupations (caring & leisure or sales and customer service jobs).

31% of Solihull residents in employment work in public services (including health and education), 20% work in business services (including professional services & finance) and 15% work in the retail, hotels & restaurant sector.

North Solihull residents are more likely to work in retail, hotels & restaurants and manufacturing than people living elsewhere in the borough.

Employment Inequalities in Solihull: There are substantial differences in labour market activity between Solihull wards and neighbourhoods as well as among different population groups.

Employment is lower and unemployment and economic inactivity higher in north Solihull with labour market activity here similar to that across the WMCA as a whole. By contrast, south Solihull is more closely aligned with the shire districts of Warwickshire and Worcestershire.

Lower levels of labour market activity are also apparent among Solihull working aged people who have relatively low qualification levels, are subject to poor health or a disability or who have a caring responsibility (particularly as a lone parent of a child) or live in socially rented housing.

Unemployment and benefit dependency in Solihull. At under 3% the unemployment rate in Solihull is lower than national or regional benchmarks. The claimant count is based on those out of work and eligible for benefits. Analysis of the claimant count shows sub-borough inequalities in unemployment in Solihull as well as age and gender differences.

Claimant count unemployment in Solihull is lower than the national or regional averages, but it is around 2 ¾ times higher in north Solihull than it is in the rest of the borough. Claimant count rates in Solihull are higher among young people and among men.

There has been a slight uptick in the number of Solihull claimants since the summer of 2023, although this is consistent with national and regional trends.

Other data shows that mental health is a major barrier to employment among working aged people, while low pay continues to be a significant factor in the labour market. For instance, 37% of Universal Credit claimants in Solihull are in employment.

Wages in Solihull: Average full-time wages for Solihull residents are 10% higher than across England. For the first time since the onset of Covid, average wages in Solihull increased in real terms in March 2024. This could be the start of return to real wage growth as the rate of inflation has fallen consistently over the last two years.

Skills and skill development in Solihull: Working age Solihull residents are well qualified and have become more so over time. This is like as a whole England and four in ten adults in the borough are qualified to level 4 and above and just one in five has either low level or no qualifications.

In the 10 years to 2021 the qualifications profile of working age Solihull residents improved, with more people achieving higher level qualifications (level 3 and level 4+) and fewer having no or low level qualifications.

The Solihull youth qualifications profile is like England's, even though significant numbers of young people aged 18 and 21 years move away from Solihull to attend a Higher Education institution, causing skills deficits among the remainder of this cohort.

There were 1,350 apprenticeship starts in Solihull in 2022/23, proportionally 12% higher than England, mostly due to higher levels of participation in higher apprenticeships by learners aged 25 and over.

Over time apprenticeship starts in Solihull have risen at the higher level and among older learners but has fallen at the lower end of the spectrum. This is consistent with England.

The Labour Market in Solihull and Birmingham

Travel to Work Area

The travel to work data from the 2021 Census was affected by the Covid-19 pandemic with nearly half of all people in work still mainly working from home at the time the survey was conducted. However, by analysing just those people who were travelling to work at this point a travel to work area for Solihull residents is evident.

According to the 2021 Census, 74% of Solihull residents who travelled to work travelled to a job in Solihull (41%) or Birmingham (33%)¹. 22% work elsewhere in the West Midlands and 3% in the rest of the UK, with Coventry, North Warwickshire, Warwick, Stratford-on-Avon, Bromsgrove and Redditch relatively important, albeit much smaller, employment centres.

Solihull Residents Usual Place of Work 2021			
Area	Number People	% All in Employment	% Travel to Work
Solihull	21,193	22%	41%
Birmingham	16,859	17%	33%
Warwickshire	5,544	6%	11%
Coventry	2,519	3%	5%
Worcestershire	1,389	1%	3%
Summary			
Solihull & Birmingham	38,052	39%	74%
Rest of West Midlands	2,019	2%	4%
Rest of UK	1,624	2%	3%
Work from Home	46,586	48%	
All in Employment	97,950		
<i>Source: ONS Census 2021</i>			

The results from the 2021 Census are consistent with those from the 2011 Census which was not disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2021 74% of Solihull residents travelling to work did so to a job in either Solihull or Birmingham, whereas in 2011 76% of all Solihull residents in employment worked in either of these two local authorities².

In this way the availability of jobs and the type of available jobs in Birmingham and Solihull is of primary importance in assessing the employment outlook for Solihull residents, with these two Local Authority areas representing Solihull's labour market area.

Jobs in Solihull and Birmingham

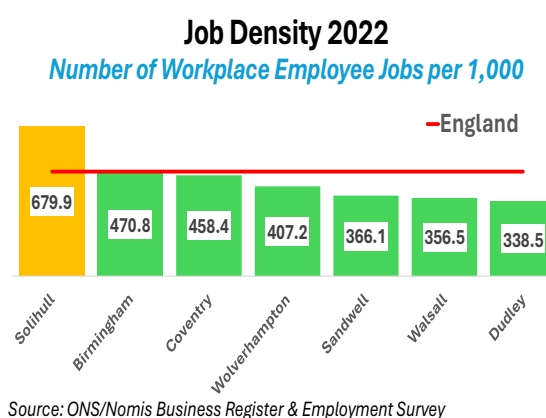
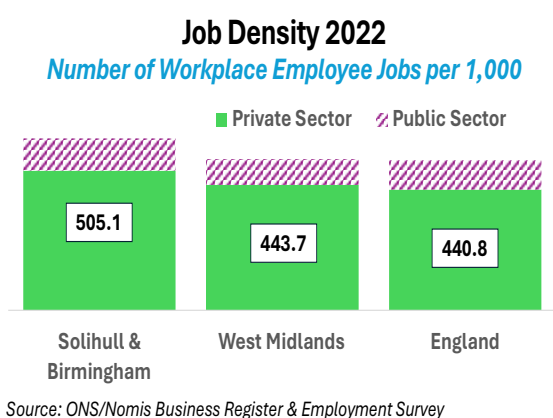
The ONS 2022 Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) is an employer survey which records the number of jobs held by employees at the location of workplace.

According to the BRES there were 693,000 employees in Solihull and Birmingham in 2022 equating to an employment density of 505.1 per 1,000 population, 6% higher than the England average (475.5 per 1,000) and 14% higher than that of the West Midlands (443.7 per 1,000)³.

The private sector accounts for 81% of Solihull and Birmingham jobs (563,000) compared with the England average of 83%. As a result, private sector employment density in Solihull and Birmingham is 16% above the national average (410.3 compared to 354.8 per 1,000).

Private and Public Sector Jobs 2022				
Sector	Solihull & Birmingham Jobs	Rate (Jobs per 1,000 Population)		
		Solihull & Birmingham	England	West Midlands
Private Sector	563,000	410.3	354.8	368.3
Public Sector	130,000	94.8	86.0	75.4
All Employee Jobs	693,000	505.1	440.8	443.7

Source: ONS/Nomis Business Register & Employment Survey



Solihull and Birmingham’s largest employment sectors are public services (196,500 jobs), business services (95,000), business administration and support (88,000) and wholesale & retail (83,750).

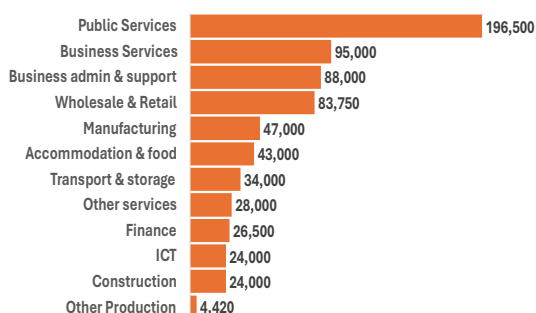
Compared with the England average Solihull and Birmingham has a large proportion of total employment in business administration & support services, business services, finance and public services.

Solihull and Birmingham have a significantly below average proportion of total employment in non-manufacturing production industries and to a lesser extent in a range of other sectors including construction, information & communication, and accommodation & food services.

Solihull and Birmingham Workplace Jobs by Economic Sector 2022				
Sector	Solihull & Birmingham Jobs 2022	% All Jobs		Location Quotient^
		Solihull & Birmingham	England	
Manufacturing	47,000	7%	7%	0.91
Other Production	4,420	1%	2%	0.37
Construction	24,000	3%	5%	0.72
Wholesale & Retail	83,750	12%	14%	0.86
Transport & storage	34,000	5%	5%	0.96
Accommodation & food	43,000	6%	8%	0.79
Information & communication	24,000	3%	5%	0.73
Finance	26,500	4%	3%	1.14
Business Services	95,000	14%	11%	1.21
Business admin & support	88,000	13%	9%	1.38
Public Services	196,500	28%	26%	1.09
Other services	28,000	4%	4%	0.93
All Jobs	693,000			

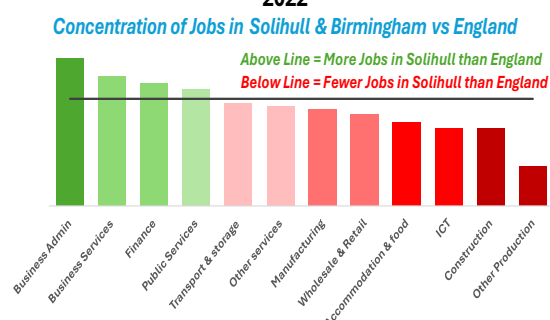
^ Location Quotient: compares the concentration of jobs in a sector in Solihull and Birmingham to the concentration nationally (i.e. identifies sector specialisations)
 Source: ONS/Nomis Business Register & Employment Survey

Workplace Jobs in Solihull & Birmingham 2022



Source: ONS/Nomis Business Register & Employment Survey

Solihull & Birmingham Workplace Job Location Quotients 2022



Source: ONS/Nomis Business Register & Employment Survey

The table below shows Solihull and Birmingham’s sector strengths at a more detailed level (SIC 2 digit code), highlighting the importance of JLR (manufacture of motor vehicles) and the Airport (Air transport, Warehousing & support activities for transportation) to the local economy. Other local private sector strengths include management consultancy; financial services (except insurance & pension funding) and legal & accounting services while public sector strengths include health and social work without accommodation.

Key Employment Sectors in Solihull 2022		
Sector	Employment 2022 [^]	LQ
Manufacture of motor vehicles	14,000	4.35
Services to buildings & landscape activities	39,000	2.38
Real estate activities	21,000	1.58
Management consultancy	31,000	1.52
Financial service activities, except insurance & pensions	14,500	1.40
Legal & accounting activities	24,750	1.39
Employment activities	27,500	1.19
Human health activities	68,000	1.19
Public administration & defence	35,500	1.19
Social work activities without accommodation	20,500	1.10
Warehousing & support activities for transportation	16,000	1.03
[^] Minimum 14,000 jobs Source: ONS Business Register and Employment Survey		

The number of workplace Solihull and Birmingham jobs increased by +5.6% (+37,000 jobs) between 2019 and 2022, more than the averages for England (+3.2%) and the West Midlands (+3.0%).

Both the private and public sectors recorded job growth in Solihull and Birmingham between 2019 and 2022 (private: +28,000, +5%; public: +9,600, +8%). This is like the national average, although private sector job growth in Solihull and Birmingham has been notably larger (5% vs 2% for England).

Job Growth in Solihull and Birmingham 2019-2022				
Sector	2019 Solihull & Birmingham Jobs	2022 Solihull & Birmingham Jobs	Change 2019-2022	
			Number of Jobs	%
Private sector	535,000	563,000	28,000	5%
Public sector	121,000	130,000	10,000	7%
All Jobs	656,000	693,000	37,000	6%
Source: ONS/Nomis Business Register & Employment Survey				

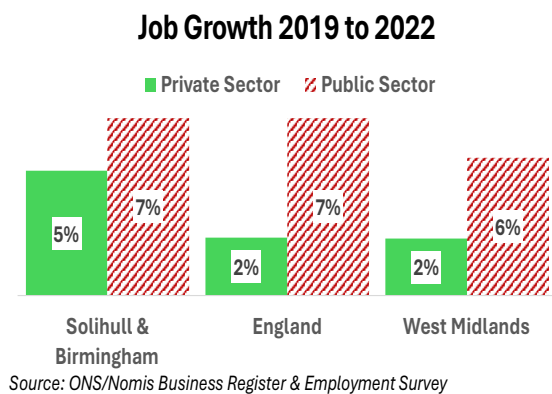
Sector job growth in Solihull and Birmingham has been dominated by the business services sector which added 27,000 between 2019 and 2022. Other sectors that have grown over this period include public services (+14,500) and ICT (+4,000). By contrast, there have been contractions in the number of jobs in Solihull in manufacturing (-5,000), accommodation & food services (-4,000), wholesale & retail (-3,250) and finance (-1,500).

In percentage terms Solihull added far more business service jobs between 2019 and 2022 than England (+40% vs +7%) and grew more strongly in the ICT sector (+20% vs +9% England). Manufacturing job growth was similarly weak locally and nationally (-10% vs -3% England) as was

wholesale & retail and finance. The outlook in Solihull and Birmingham has been comparatively worse than England in the accommodation & food and other production sectors.

Sector Job Growth in Solihull and Birmingham 2019-2022				
Sector	Solihull & Birmingham Jobs 2019	Solihull & Birmingham Jobs 2022	Change in Jobs 2019-2022	
			Number	Percentage
Manufacturing	52,000	47,000	-5,000	-10%
Other Production	5,200	4,420	-780	-15%
Construction	24,000	24,000	0	0%
Wholesale & Retail	87,000	83,750	-3,250	-4%
Transport & storage	32,000	34,000	2,000	6%
Accommodation & food	47,000	43,000	-4,000	-9%
Information & communication	20,000	24,000	4,000	20%
Finance	28,000	26,500	-1,500	-5%
Business Services	68,000	95,000	27,000	40%
Business admin & support	87,000	88,000	1,000	1%
Public Services	182,000	196,500	14,500	8%
Other services	25,000	28,000	3,000	12%
Total	656,000	693,000	37,000	6%

Source: ONS/Nomis Business Register & Employment Survey

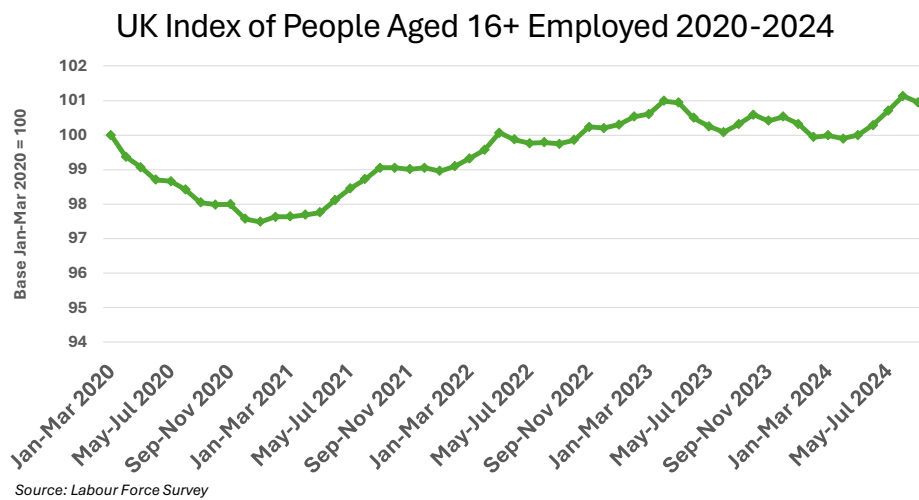


National Trends in the Labour Market

Employment

In September 2024 there were 33.3 million people aged 16 and over in employment in the UK, equating to employment rate of 74.8% of 16-64 year olds⁴.

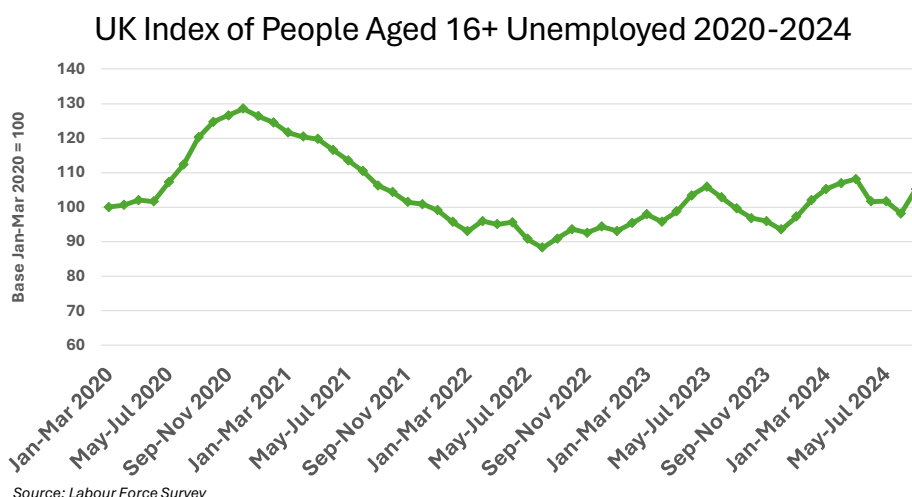
The number of people employed in the UK increased substantially following the outbreak of Covid-19, rising by over 1.1 million between the start of 2021 and spring 2023 (from 74.1% to 75.5%). It has been broadly stable since then and despite quarterly fluctuations around 33 million people are still in employment in the UK equating to a largely unchanged employment rate of about 75%⁵.



Unemployment

In September 2024 there were 1.49 million people aged 16 and over unemployed in the UK, equating to unemployment rate of 4.3%⁶.

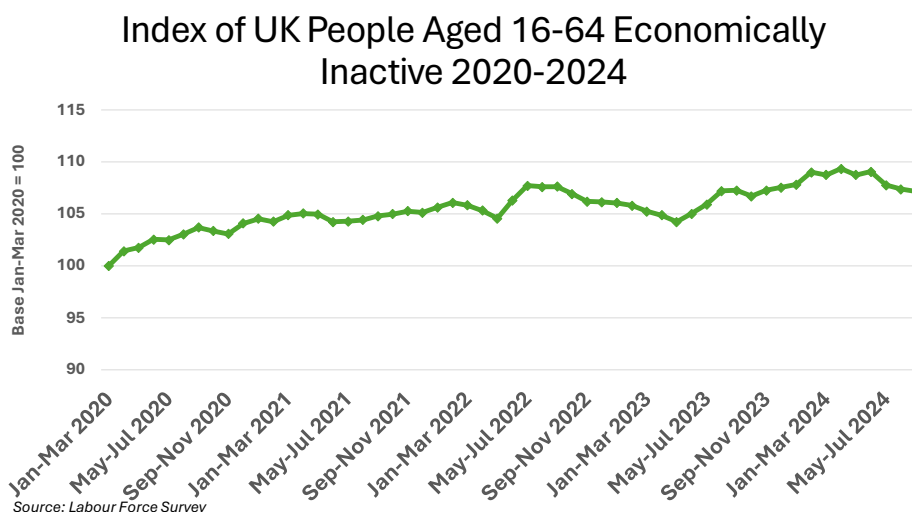
The number of people unemployed in the UK has been trending upwards since the summer of 2022, rising by +239,000 between Oct-Dec 2023 to Jul-Sep 2024 (from 3.8% to 4.3%)⁷.



Economic Inactivity

In September 2024 there were 9.25 million people aged 16-64 years economically inactive in the UK, equating to an economic inactivity rate of 21.8%⁸.

The rise in economic inactivity has been one of the big stories of the UK labour market in recent years, with the number of working aged people economically inactive increasing steadily since the onset on the Covid-19 pandemic in early 2020. Economic inactivity has accelerated since the spring of 2023 reaching new heights in early 2024 going from 21.3% in Mar-May 2023 to 22.1% in Mar-May 2024. It has eased back in the most recent six months, suggesting that economic inactivity has peaked⁹.



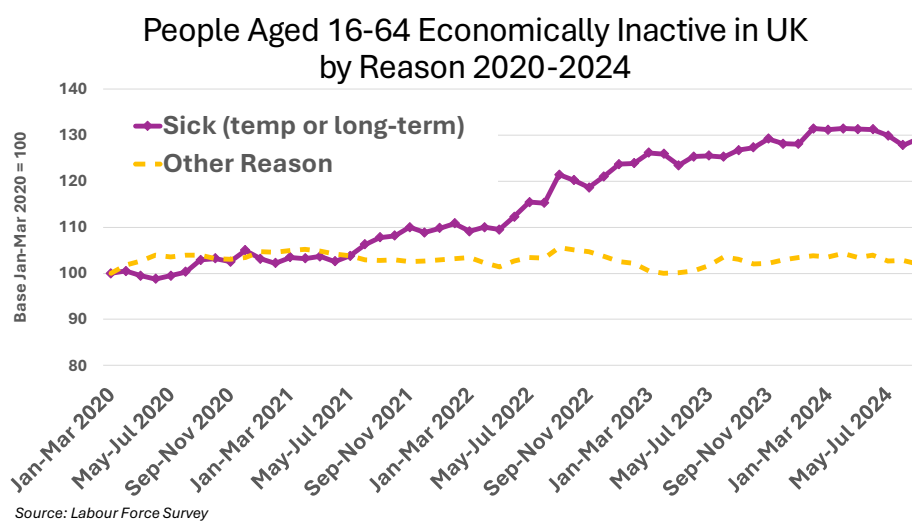
Of the 9.2 million economically inactive working age people in the UK the largest groups are those who are long-term sick (30%) and students (27%), with increases in the year to Jul-Sep 2024 among these groups and those who are temporarily sick (+9,000, +5%) and discouraged workers (+7,000, +31%).

Reasons for Economic Inactivity in UK Jul-Sep 2024			
Reason	% of Inactive Total	Change Jul-Sep 2023 to Jul-Sep 2024	
		Number	%
Student	26.8%	15,393	0.6%
Looking after family / home	17.7%	-44,115	-2.6%
Temp sick	2.2%	8,847	4.6%
Long-term sick	30.1%	47,223	1.7%
Discouraged workers	0.3%	6,727	31.0%
Retired	11.6%	-7,819	-0.7%
Other	11.4%	-33,073	-3.0%

Source: ONS Labour Force Survey

Sickness has been a particular feature of economic inactivity and the UK labour market in general since the outbreak of Covid-19. Of the nearly 3 million working aged people who are currently either long-term sick (2.8 million) or temporarily sick (200,000) 25% want a job while 75% don't want a job¹⁰.

At the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic 27% of all economically inactive working age people cited either long-term or temporary sickness as the reason, but the proportion has now increased to 32% of the total. This reflects an increase in inactivity due to sickness of 26% (+607,000 people) in the period Jul-Sep 2020 to Jul-Sep 2024 compared to a fall of -2% (-111,000) in the number of people inactive for any other reason over this same periodⁱ.



ⁱ Other reasons of inactivity (i.e. non-sickness related): student, looking after/family home, discouraged, retired, other

Solihull Resident Employment

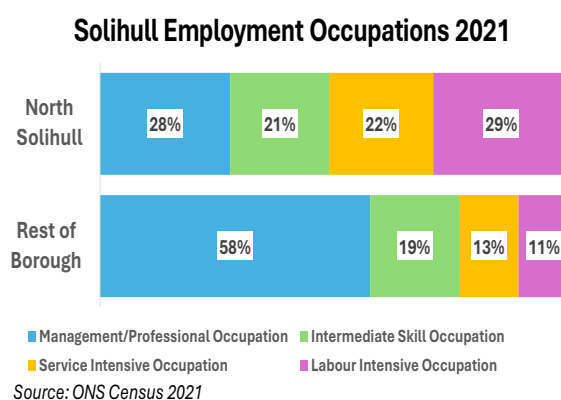
Occupation and Sector Employment

The occupational profile of Solihull residents in employment is like England’s, with 56% of Solihull residents in employment working in higher skilled management and professional role and less than 15% working in a labour intensive jobs¹¹.

Occupation Profile of People in Employment 2024			
Occupation Group	Occupation	Solihull	England
High Skill Occupations	Managers, directors & senior officials	11%	11%
	Professional occupations	27%	27%
	Associate prof & tech occupations	18%	15%
Middle Skill Occupations	Administrative & secretarial occupations	12%	10%
	Skilled trades occupations	6%	9%
Service Intensive Occupations	Caring, leisure & other service occupations	6%	8%
	Sales & customer service occupations	6%	6%
Labour Intensive Occupations	Process, plant & machine operatives	6%	5%
	Elementary Occupations	9%	9%

Source: ONS Annual Population Survey

Sub-borough data from the 2021 Census shows the extent to which employment occupation varies across the borough. For instance, 29% of residents in North Solihull work in a labour intensive job (process plant & machine operative or elementary occupation) compared to 11% across the rest of the borough. A third of all Solihull residents who work in a labour intensive job live in one of the three North Solihull wards (Chelmsley Wood, Smith’s Wood, Kingshurst & Fordbridge), but only 8% of Solihull residents employed in a management or professional role do so.



The sector profile of Solihull residents shows that 31% of people in employment work in public services (including health and education), 20% work in business services (including professional services & finance), 15% work in the retail, hotels & restaurant sector and 12% in transport & communication (including ICT)¹².

Compared with England a relatively large proportion of the Solihull population work in construction, transport & communication and business services. By contrast, Solihull residents are less likely to be employed in the public sector, other services or retail, hotels & restaurants.

Sector Profile of People in Employment 2024			
Industry Sector	Solihull	England	% point difference with England
Manufacturing	9%	8%	0.4%
Other Production	2%	2%	-0.2%
Construction	9%	7%	2.4%
Retail, hotels & restaurants	15%	15%	-0.6%
Transport & communication (inc ICT)	12%	10%	1.3%
Business Services	20%	19%	1.2%
Public Services	31%	32%	-1.1%
Other Services	3%	6%	-3.1%

Source: ONS/Nomis Annual Population Survey

This data from the APS is broadly the same as that from the 2021 Census, although the Census indicates that the difference in employment in the manufacturing sector is slightly larger than the APS suggests with 10% of the Solihull employed population working in manufacturing compared to the England average of 7%.

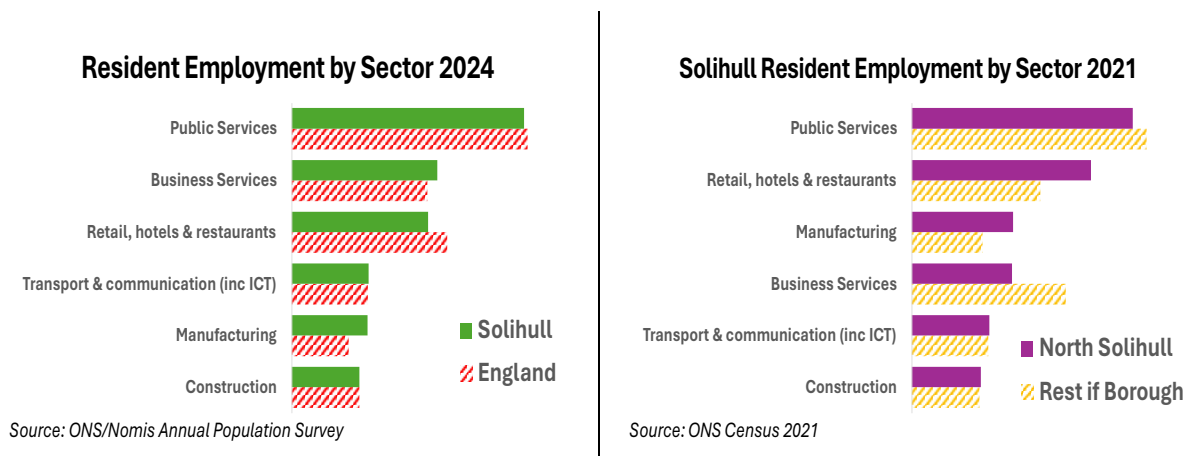
Detailed analysis of the 2021 Census shows that a relatively large number of Solihull residents work in a range of local sector employment specialisms in some cases linked to local assets like JLR (motor manufacture) or the Airport (warehousing). Other sectors important to residents include finance, professional services (legal, consultancy, architecture), computer programming and utilities.

Sector Specialisms in Employment 2021		
Industry Sector	Number of Solihull Residents in Employment	LQ [^]
Manufacture of motor vehicles & transport equipment	4,497	4.26
Electricity, gas, water & sewage	1,909	1.53
Financial service activities (except insurance & pensions)	2,369	1.37
Warehousing and support activities for transportation	1,413	1.36
Computer programming & consultancy	3,743	1.31
Legal & accounting activities	2,818	1.29
Activities auxiliary to financial services & insurance activities	1,284	1.20
Architectural & engineering activities	1,563	1.18

[^] *Location Quotient: compares the percentage of residents in Solihull employed in a sector to the England average (i.e. identifies sector specialisations)*

Source: ONS Census 2021

Census 2021 shows that people who live in North Solihull are more likely to work in retail, hotels & restaurants (23% vs 16%) and manufacturing (13% vs 9%) than residents who live elsewhere in the borough. By contrast, employment levels are lower among North Solihull residents in the business services (13% vs 20%) and public services (28% vs 30%) sectors.



Solihull Labour Market Performance Data

Solihull has a strong labour market as evidenced by data from the Annual Population Survey (APS) with significantly lower levels of unemployment a notable feature.

The APS is a household survey, covering the UK, with the aim of providing estimates between censuses of the main labour market variables at a local area level. Due to sample size limitations, APS data is not available below local authority level (i.e. data is not available for wards and super output areas). The APS comprises 12 months of survey data and is published at quarterly intervals.

Like all survey data results from the APS are subject to a margin of error and results should be treated with caution and used in combination with other labour market indicators, particularly at Local Authority level.

Employment Rates

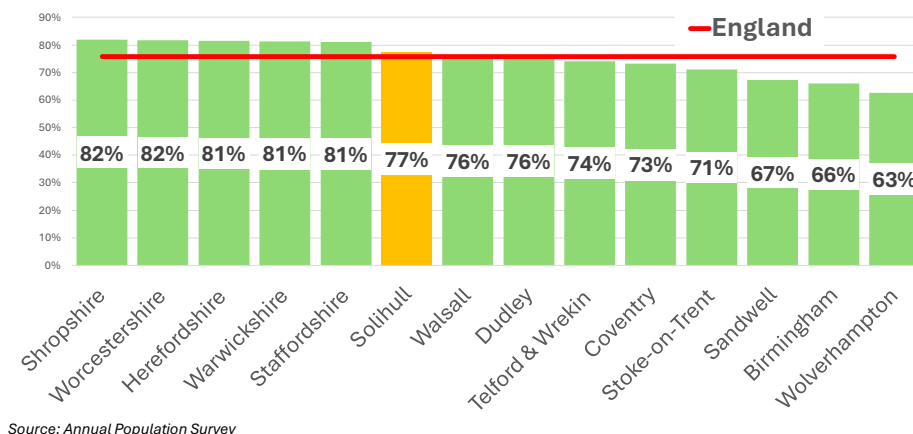
According to the Annual Population Survey the employment rate in Solihull over 12 months to June 2024 was 77.4%, higher than the England (75.7%) or regional benchmarks¹³.

Employment Rate (16-64 Year Olds) June 2024		
Area	Rate (%)	Confidence Interval +/- %
Solihull	77.4%	3.8%
England	75.7%	0.4%
West Midlands Combined Authority	69.6%	1.7%
West Midlands region	74.7%	1.1%

Source: Annual Population Survey

In the West Midlands the employment rate ranges from 82% (Shropshire) to 63% (Wolverhampton). At 77% Solihull has the highest employment rate of the upper-tier metropolitan areas in the region.

Working Age Employment Rate June 2024



Unemployment

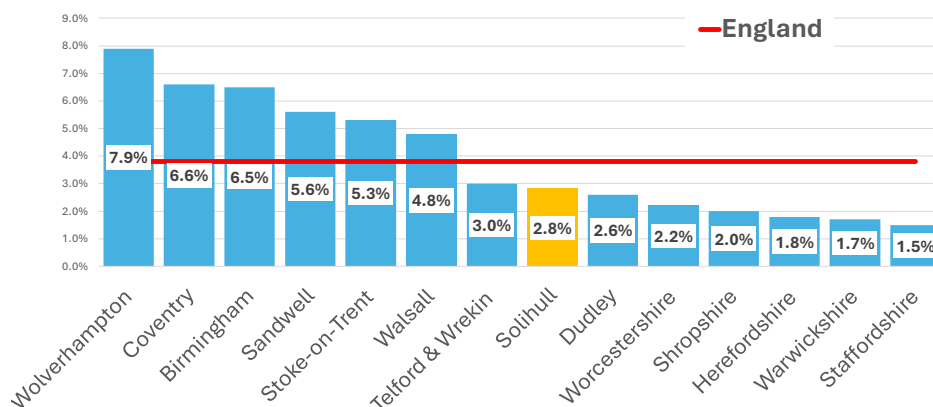
The unemployment rate for all people aged over 16 years in Solihull over the 12 months to June 2024 was 2.8%, much lower than the England (3.8%) or regional benchmarks. However, given the small sample size this should be treated with some caution. For instance, at the time of the 2021 Census the 16+ unemployment rate in Solihull was much more closely aligned with that of England (5.3% vs 5.7%)¹⁴.

Unemployment Rate (people aged 16+) June 2024		
Area	Rate (%)	Confidence Interval +/- %
Solihull	2.8%	1.6%
England	3.8%	0.2%
West Midlands Combined Authority	5.7%	1.0%
West Midlands region	3.8%	0.5%

Source: Annual Population Survey

In the West Midlands the 16+ unemployment rate ranges from 7.9% (Wolverhampton) to 1.5% (Staffordshire). Like Solihull, sample sizes are small and so the local authority data should be treated with caution.

16+ Unemployment Rate June 2024



Source: Annual Population Survey

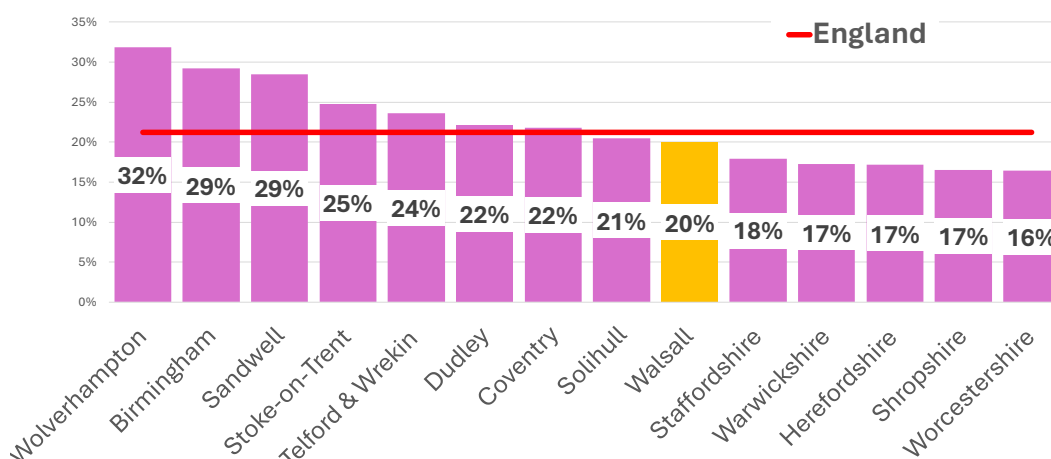
Economic Inactivity

The economic activity rate for Solihull 16-64 year olds is at 20.5% lower than the England (21.3%) or regional benchmark averages. Of the approximately 26,000 working age people in Solihull who were economically inactive in the year to June 2024 21% want a job and 79% don't want a job. The split in England is 18% want a job, 82% don't want a job¹⁵.

Economic Inactivity Rate (16-64 Year Olds) June 2024		
Area	Rate (%)	Confidence Interval +/- %
Solihull	19.8%	3.6%
England	21.2%	0.3%
West Midlands Combined Authority	26.1%	1.6%
West Midlands region	21.9%	1.1%

Source: Annual Population Survey

Working Age Economic Inactivity Rate June 2024



Source: Annual Population Survey

Claimant Count Unemployment and Out of Work Benefits

Claimant Count Unemployment

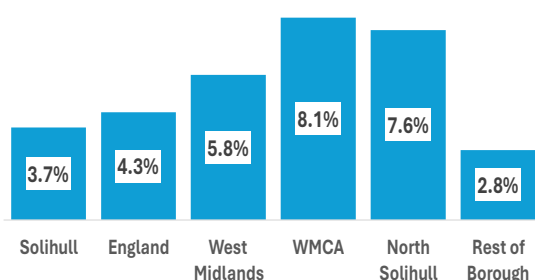
The claimant count is the number of people claiming Jobseeker’s Allowance plus people claiming Universal Credit who are required to seek work. It provides reliable figures for local area claimant unemployment and represents most, but not all, people who are unemployed.

In September 2024 4,785 people in Solihull were unemployed and claiming benefits. The claimant unemployment rate in Solihull is 3.7%, lower than both the England (4.3%) and West Midlands (5.8%) averages¹⁶.

The average rate in the three north Solihull regeneration wards (Chelmsley Wood, Kingshurst & Fordbridge and Smith’s Wood) is 7.6% (1,825 individuals) compared with 2.8% across the rest of the Borough (2,960 individuals).

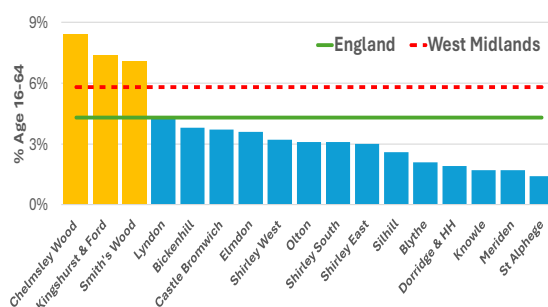
Only three out of Solihull’s 17 wards have a claimant unemployment rate higher than the West Midlands average Chelmsley Wood (8.4%), Kingshurst & Fordbridge (7.4%) and Smith’s Wood (7.1%).

Working Age (16-64 Years) Claimant Unemployment
September 2024



Source: ONS/Nomis

Working Age (16-64 Years) Claimant Unemployment
September 2024

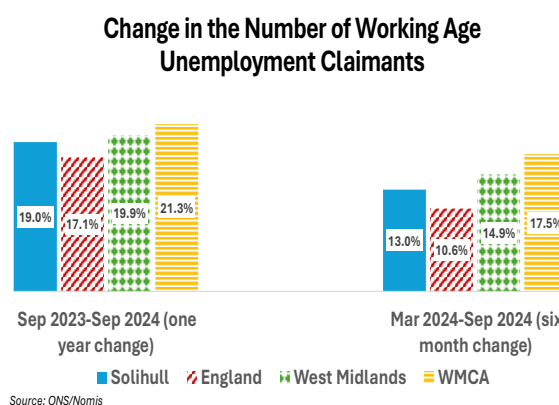
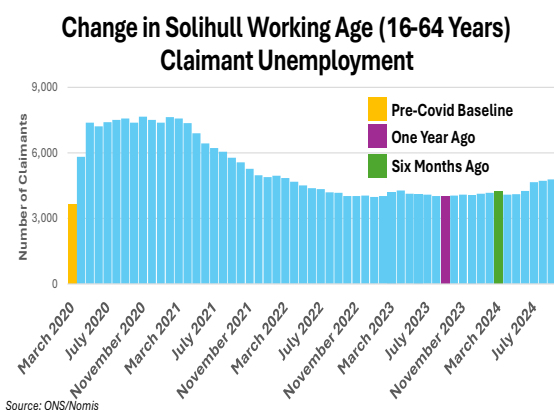


Source: ONS/Nomis

The number of Solihull working age unemployment benefit claimants increased very sharply between March 2020 and March 2021 followed by an extended downward trend. There has been a slight uptick in the number of Solihull claimants since the summer of 2023, albeit with some short-term fluctuations.

The recent uptick in working age claimant unemployment in Solihull is shown by the fact that in the nine months March 2023 to December 2023 the count fell by -160 (-4%), whereas over the following nine months December 2023 to September 2024 the number of claimants increased by +735 (+18%).

In the year to September 2024 the 19.0% increase in the number of working age unemployment claimants in Solihull is slightly higher than the increase across England (17.1%) but lower than the West Midlands (19.9%) or the WMCA (21.3%).



Universal Credit

Universal Credit is a payment to help working age people with living costs, because they are out of work or unable to work or in a low-income job.

In September 2024 there were 19,383 Solihull residents claiming Universal Credit (UC), equating to 15.0% of the 16-64 population (England 17.0%, West Midlands 19.8%)¹⁷.

63% of Solihull claimants were classified as being not in employment and 37% are in employment (broadly the same as England). Not all of UC claimants classed as not in employment are unemployed as they are not all actively looking for work. UC claimants in employment are those with low earnings either because they are in low paid jobs or because they work an insufficient number of hours to maintain a living wage (e.g. because of caring responsibilities).

In the year to September 2024 the number of people in Solihull claiming UC increased at the same rate regardless of employment status (+17% not in employment, +16% in employment). Over the longer-term the increase in the number of claimants in employment has been higher (Sep 2019-Sep 2024 +157% in employment vs +129% not in employment).

Universal Credit Claimants in Solihull by Employment Status				
	Claimants		% Total	
	Not in Employment	In Employment	Not in Employment	In Employment
Sep 2019	5,303	2,820	65%	35%
Sep 2020	10,048	6,420	61%	39%
Sep 2021	9,953	6,218	62%	38%
Sep 2022	9,340	6,454	59%	41%
Sep 2023	10,372	6,256	62%	38%
Sep 2024	12,144	7,239	63%	37%
	% Change		Not Applicable	
Sep 2019-Sep 2020	89%	128%		
Sep 2020-Sep 2021	-1%	-3%		
Sep 2021-Sep 2022	-6%	4%		
Sep 2022-Sep 2023	11%	-3%		

November 29, 2024

Sep 2023-Sep 2024	17%	16%
Sep 2019-Sep 2024	129%	157%
<i>Source: DWP Stat Xplore</i>		

Employment and Support Allowance

Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) is money for people who have limited capability for work because of their sickness or disability but do not get Statutory Sick Pay.

In February 2024 there were 3,921 people in Solihull claiming Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), equating to 3.0% of the working age Solihull population (England 3.4%, 3.7% West Midlands)¹⁸.

50% of all ESA claimants in Solihull claim because of mental or behavioural disorders, with musculoskeletal disease (12%) and diseases of the nervous system (9%) the next most common reasons. The Solihull profile is largely the same as that for England.

Employment & Support Allowance Claimants February 2024			
Medical Condition	Number of Solihull Claimants	% Total	
		Solihull	England
Mental & Behavioural disorders	1,972	50%	49%
Musculoskeletal Disease	463	12%	12%
Diseases of the Nervous System	350	9%	8%
Abnormal Clinical findings, not elsewhere classified	275	7%	9%
Neoplasms	149	4%	3%
Diseases of the Circulatory System	136	3%	4%
Diseases of the Respiratory System	88	2%	2%
Congenital Malformations, Deformations & Chromosomal Abnormalities	79	2%	1%
Injury, poisoning & certain other consequences of external causes	73	2%	2%
Factors influencing Health Status and contact with Health Services	69	2%	2%
Endocrine, Nutritional & Metabolic diseases	59	2%	1%
Diseases of the Digestive System	53	1%	2%
Other	145	4%	4%
Total	3,921		
<i>Source: Department for Work and Pensions</i>			

Employment Inequalities

The most reliable data for measuring inequalities in the labour market at a local level is the 2021 Census. This shows significant differences in the employment rate, the unemployment rate and economic activity among the working age population between Solihull wards and neighbourhoods as well as among different population groups.

Localities

Solihull labour market inequalities are evident from the varying patterns of economic activity among the borough's wards and LSOA neighbourhoods. Employment is lower and unemployment and economic inactivity higher in the three north Solihull wards (Chelmsley Wood, Kingshurst & Fordbridge and Smith's Wood). Patterns of employment in north Solihull are similar to those across the WMCA¹⁹.

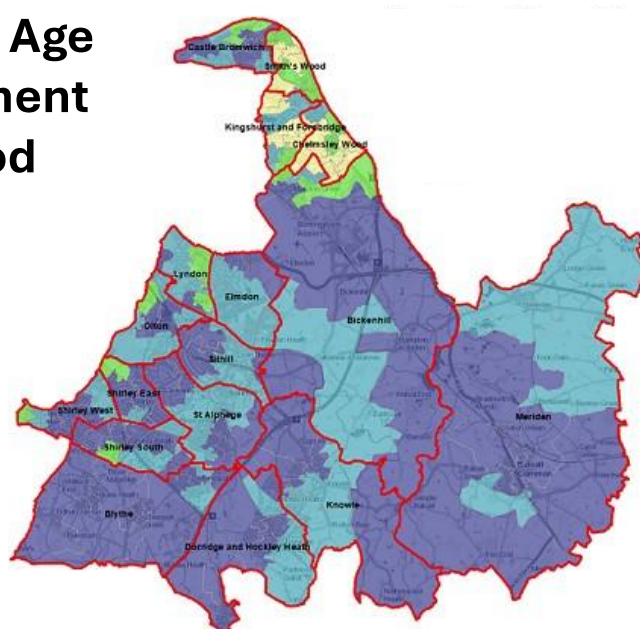
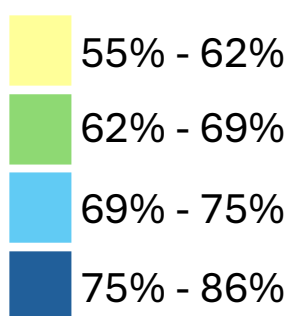
Employment Status of Working Age Population			
Ward	% 16-64 year old population		
	Employed	Unemployment Rate [^]	Economically inactive
Bickenhill	72%	5.8%	23%
Blythe	79%	3.9%	17%
Castle Bromwich	74%	5.1%	22%
Chelmsley Wood	61%	10.6%	32%
Dorridge & Hockley Heath	76%	4.0%	21%
Elmdon	74%	5.4%	21%
Kingshurst & Fordbridge	63%	9.8%	30%
Knowle	75%	4.0%	21%
Lyndon	73%	5.3%	23%
Meriden	76%	3.7%	21%
Olton	73%	5.1%	23%
Shirley East	76%	4.3%	21%
Shirley South	76%	4.1%	21%
Shirley West	77%	4.7%	20%
Silhill	74%	4.9%	23%
Smith's Wood	63%	9.4%	31%
St Alphege	76%	3.5%	22%
North Solihull	62%	10.0%	31%
Rest of Borough	75%	4.6%	21%
Solihull	73%	5.5%	23%
England	71%	5.8%	25%
WMCA	63%	9.0%	31%

[^] *The unemployment rate is the ratio of unemployed people to economically active people (i.e. those employed or unemployed excluding the economically inactive).*
 Source: ONS Census 2021

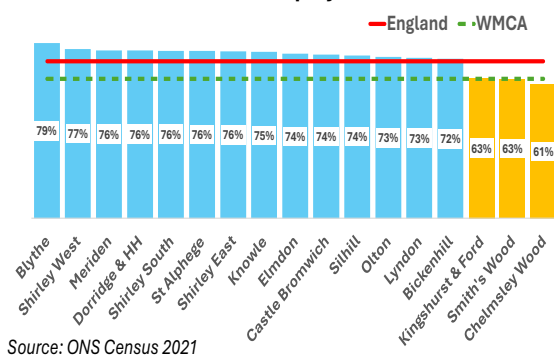
Among the 17 Solihull wards the 16-64 year-old employment rate ranges from 79% in Blythe to 61% in Chelmsley Wood. With an average of 62%, the three north Solihull wards (Chelmsley Wood, Kingshurst & Fordbridge and Smith’s Wood) are the only Solihull wards to have an employment rate lower than England’s (71%) and is closely aligned with the WMCA average (63%). Local labour market inequalities are evident from the disparity between north Solihull average (62%) and that of the rest of the borough (75%).

At a lower super output area (LSOA) neighbourhood level the employment rate ranges from 55% in Bennett’s Well (Kingshurst & Fordbridge) to 86% in Dickens Heath. Lower level employment is evident in north Solihull but also in pockets in the west of the borough such as Green Hill (63%, Shirley East), Olton South (63%), Hobs Moat South (65%, Lyndon), Ulverley East (66%, Lyndon) and Solihull Lodge (68%, Shirley West).

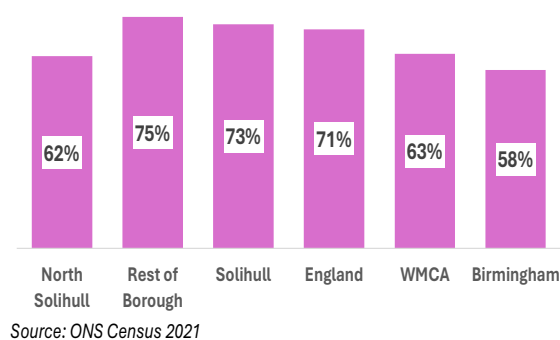
Percentage of Working Age Population in Employment by LSOA Neighbourhood



Solihull Ward Employment Rates



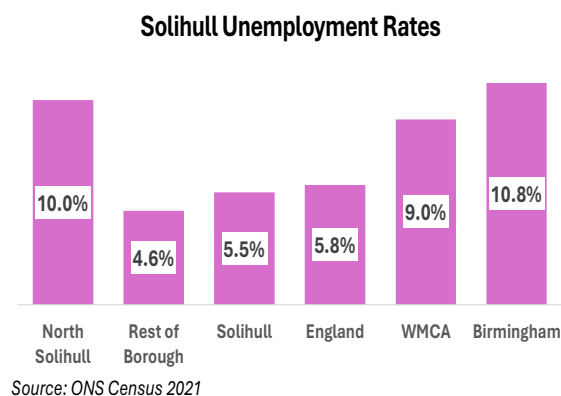
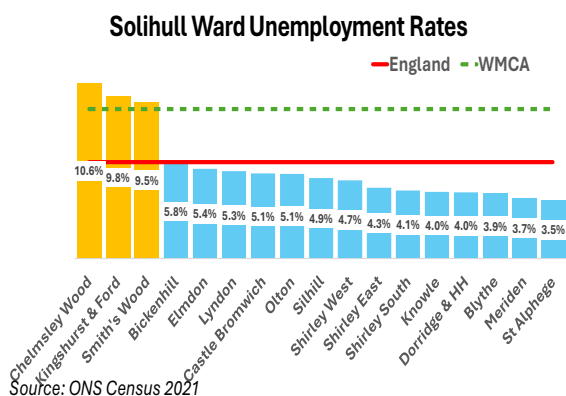
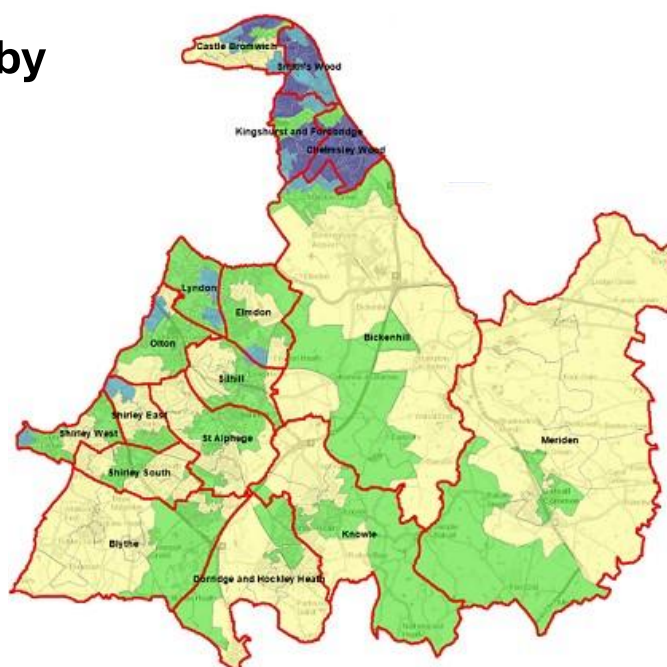
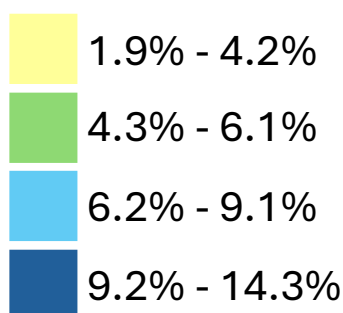
Solihull Employment Rates



Among the 17 Solihull wards the 16-64 year-old unemployment rate ranges from 10.6% in Chelmsley Wood to 3.5% in St Alphege. With an average of 10.0%, the three north Solihull wards (Chelmsley Wood, Kingshurst & Fordbridge and Smith’s Wood) are the only Solihull wards to have an unemployment rate higher than England’s (5.8%) and is closely aligned with the WMCA average (9.0%). Local labour market inequalities are evident from the disparity between north Solihull average (10.0%) and that of the rest of the borough (4.6%).

At an LSOA neighbourhood level the unemployment rate ranges from 14.3% in the Birds North (Smith’s Wood) to 1.9% in Sharmans Cross North (St Alphege). Higher unemployment rates are evident in north Solihull but also in pockets in the west of the borough such as Parkfields (9.6%, Castle Bromwich), Green Hill (8.7%, Shirley East), Solihull Lodge (8.4%, Shirley West), Olton South (8.1%), Park Hall (8.1%, Castle Bromwich), Damsonwood North (7.2%, Silhill) and Ulverley East (7.1%, Lyndon).

Unemployment Rate by LSOA Neighbourhood

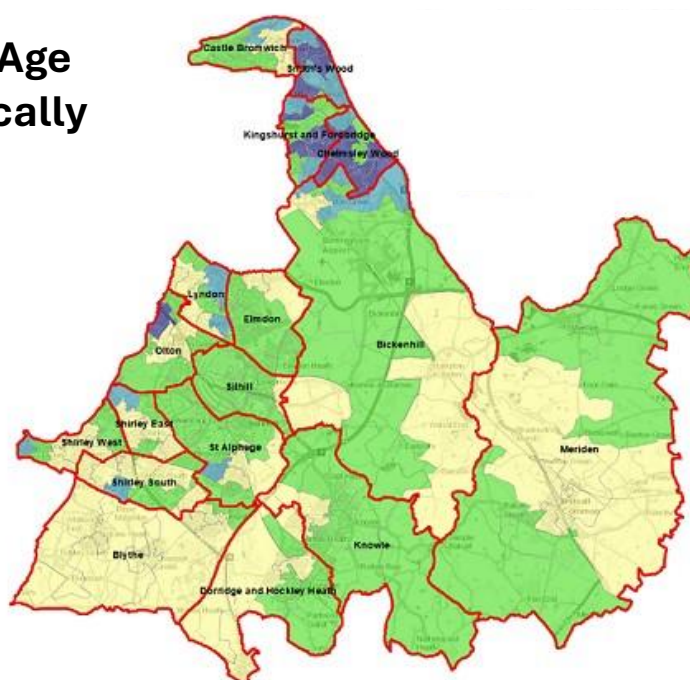
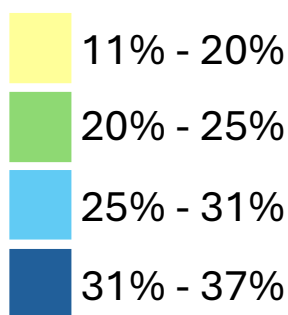


Among the 17 Solihull wards the 16-64 year-old economic inactivity rate ranges from 32% in Chelmsley Wood to 17% in Blythe. With an average of 31%, the three north Solihull wards

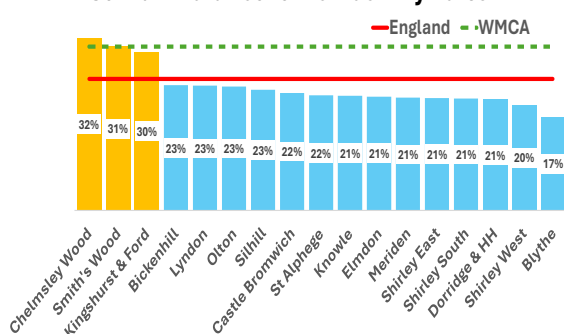
(Chelmsley Wood, Kingshurst & Fordbridge and Smith’s Wood) are the only Solihull wards to have an economic inactivity rate higher than England’s (25%) and is closely aligned with the WMCA average (31%). Local labour market inequalities are evident from the disparity between north Solihull average (31%) and that of the rest of the borough (21%).

At an LSOA neighbourhood level economic inactivity ranges from 37% in Bennett’s Well (Kingshurst & Fordbridge) to 11% in Dickens Heath. Higher levels of economic inactivity is evident in north Solihull but also in pockets in the west of the borough such as Olton South (32%), Green Hill (31%, Shirley East), Hobs Moat (30%, Lyndon), Ulverley East (30%, Lyndon) and Parkfields (28%, Castle Bromwich).

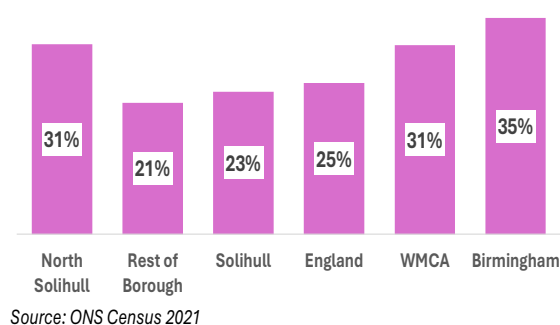
Percentage of Working Age Population in Economically Inactive by LSOA Neighbourhood



Solihull Ward Economic Inactivity Rates



Solihull Economic Inactivity Rates



Qualifications

Skills are a significant cause of labour market inequalities across Solihull, with those with individuals with higher level qualifications far more likely to be in employment and those with low or no skills less likely to work.

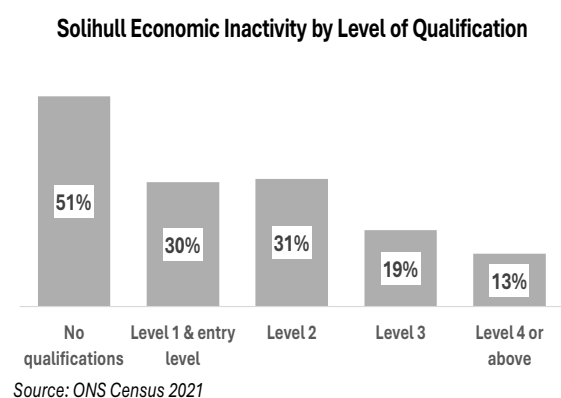
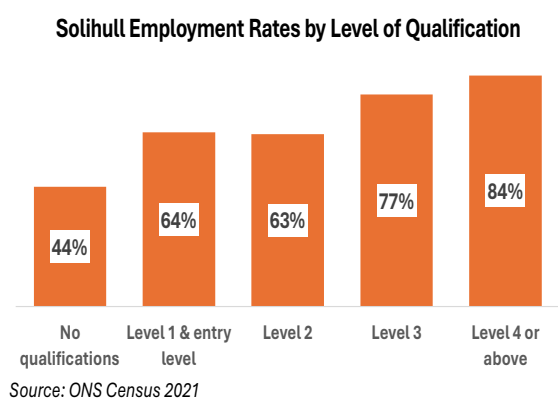
This difference in labour market participation by qualification level in Solihull are consistent with the variances found across England²⁰.

Solihull Employment Status by Qualification			
Qualification Level	% 16-64 year old population		
	Employed	Unemployment Rate [^]	Economically inactive
No qualifications	44%	10.5%	51%
Level 1 & entry level qualifications	64%	8.8%	30%
Level 2 qualifications	63%	8.7%	31%
Level 3 qualifications	77%	4.9%	19%
Level 4 qualifications or above	84%	3.3%	13%

[^] *The unemployment rate is the ratio of unemployed people to economically active people (i.e. those employed or unemployed excluding the economically inactive).*
 Source: ONS Census 2021

The proportion of 18-64 year olds in employment increases from 44% among those with no qualifications to 64% among those with level1 or entry level qualifications. There are further significant increases in employment participation among those who obtain level 3 qualifications and then again among those who achieve level 4 and above qualifications (degree level+). Among this latter group 84% of 18-64 year olds are employed just less than double the proportion among those without qualifications.

Similar patterns are evident when other measures of labour market participation are analysed. For instance, economic inactivity falls from 51% to 30% among people who gain at least level 1 qualifications and, at the other end of the spectrum, economic inactivity falls from 31% to 13% when moving from level 2 to level 4+ qualifications.



Health, Disability and Care Provision

77% of Solihull working aged people who say that their general health is good are employed compared to just 23% who suffer from bad health (15% employment among those in very bad health). Unemployment falls with better health as does economic inactivity²¹.

Solihull Employment Status by General Health			
General Health	% 16-64 year old population		
	Employed	Unemployment Rate [^]	Economically inactive
Very good health	78%	4.7%	18%
Good health	75%	5.8%	20%
Fair health	56%	8.5%	39%
Bad health	25%	10.9%	72%
Very bad health	15%	6.1%	84%
All Good Health	77%	5.1%	19%
All Bad Health	23%	10.2%	75%

[^] *The unemployment rate is the ratio of unemployed people to economically active people (i.e. those employed or unemployed excluding the economically inactive).*
 Source: ONS Census 2021

76% of Solihull working aged people who say that they are not disabled are employed compared to just 43% who are disabled (19% employment among those whose day-to-day activity is limited a lot by their disability). Economic inactivity increases among those disabled, rising to 78% among those whose day-to-day activity is limited a lot by their disability. People with a disability have a higher unemployment rate (9.6%) than those who are not disabled (5.1%).

Solihull Employment Status by Disability			
Disability Status	% 16-64 year old population		
	Employed	Unemployment Rate [^]	Economically inactive
Disabled under the Equality Act: Day-to-day activities limited a lot	19%	11.2%	78%
Disabled under the Equality Act: Day-to-day activities limited a little	57%	9.3%	37%
Not disabled under the Equality Act: Has long-term physical or mental health condition but day-to-day activities are not limited	79%	4.4%	18%
Not disabled under the Equality Act: No long-term physical or mental health conditions	78%	5.1%	18%
All Disabled under the Equality Act	43%	9.6%	53%
All Not disabled under the Equality Act	76%	5.1%	19%

[^] *The unemployment rate is the ratio of unemployed people to economically active people (i.e. those employed or unemployed excluding the economically inactive).*
 Source: ONS Census 2021

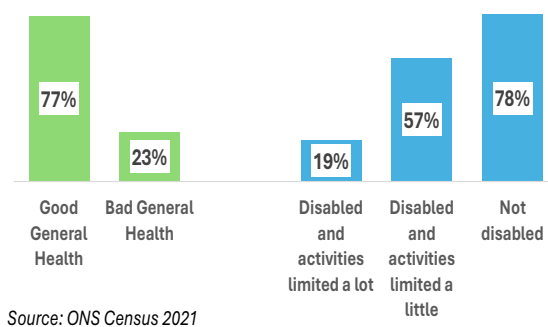
74% of Solihull working aged people who say that they don't provide any unpaid care to a relative or friend are employed compared to just 65% who provide at least some unpaid care. The impact of caring on employment is highest among those who provide a significant amount of unpaid care per week, with for instance just 46% of those who provide 50 hours or more care per week in employment.

Economic inactivity increases among those who provide unpaid care, rising to 52% among those who provide 50 hours or more unpaid care per week.

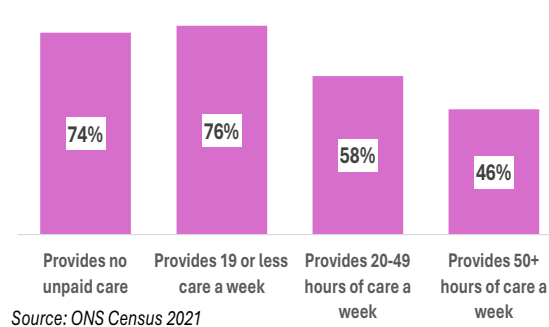
Solihull Employment Status by Unpaid Care Provision			
Provision of Unpaid Care	% 16-64 year old population		
	Employed	Unemployment Rate [^]	Economically inactive
Provides no unpaid care	74%	5.5%	22%
Provides 19 or less hours unpaid care a week	76%	4.8%	20%
Provides 20 to 49 hours unpaid care a week	58%	6.0%	38%
Provides 50 or more hours unpaid care a week	46%	4.8%	52%
All Not Providing Unpaid Care	74%	5.5%	22%
All Providing Unpaid Care	65%	5.0%	32%

[^] *The unemployment rate is the ratio of unemployed people to economically active people (i.e. those employed or unemployed excluding the economically inactive).*
 Source: ONS Census 2021

Solihull Employment Rates by Health and Disability



Solihull Employment Rates by Care Provision



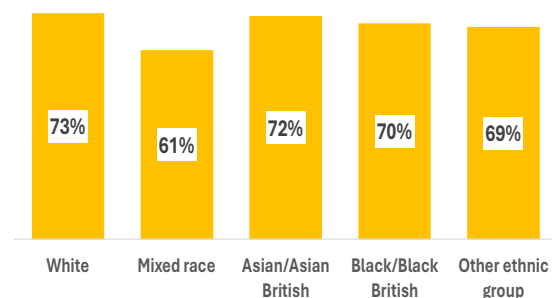
Ethnicity and Language

The working age employment rate is slightly higher among white people (73%) compared to those from an ethnic minority background (70%). The employment rate is notably lower among mixed or multiple ethnic groups (61%)²².

Solihull Employment Status by Ethnic Group			
Ethnic Group	% 16-64 year old population		
	Employed	Unemployment Rate [^]	Economically inactive
White	73%	5.2%	23%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	61%	11.3%	31%
Asian/Asian British	72%	5.3%	23%
Black/Black British	70%	8.2%	24%
Other ethnic group	69%	5.8%	27%
White	73%	5.2%	23%
Ethnic Minority	70%	6.5%	25%

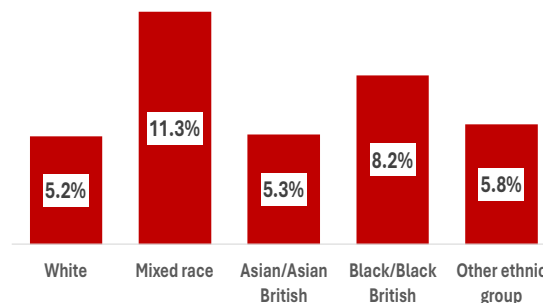
[^] *The unemployment rate is the ratio of unemployed people to economically active people (i.e. those employed or unemployed excluding the economically inactive).*
 Source: ONS Census 2021

Solihull Employment Rates by Ethnic Group



Source: ONS Census 2021

Solihull Unemployment Rates by Ethnic Group



Source: ONS Census 2021

Proficiency in English is a major factor in employment variations, with just 40% of working age people in Solihull who cannot speak English well or at all in employment. However, there are just 69 working age people in Solihull who cannot speak English at all and a further 662 who do not speak the language well. The low percentage in employment of people who cannot speak English well or at all needs to be placed in the context of the small number of people involved.

Solihull Employment Status by Language Proficiency			
Language proficiency	% 16-64 year old population		
	Employed	Unemployment Rate [^]	Economically inactive
Main language is English	73%	5.5%	23%
Can speak English very well or well	74%	5.5%	22%
Cannot speak English well	42%	12.0%	52%
Cannot speak English	25%	0%	75%
Cannot speak English well or at all	40%	11.4%	54%

[^] *The unemployment rate is the ratio of unemployed people to economically active people (i.e. those employed or unemployed excluding the economically inactive).*
Source: ONS Census 2021

Gender and Household Type

The employment rate is slightly higher among men than women (76% vs 69%), with the difference mostly due to higher levels of economic inactivity among women²³.

Solihull Employment Status by Sex			
Sex	% 16-64 year old population		
	Employed	Unemployment Rate [^]	Economically inactive
Female	69%	5.1%	27%
Male	76%	5.9%	19%

[^] *The unemployment rate is the ratio of unemployed people to economically active people (i.e. those employed or unemployed excluding the economically inactive).*
Source: ONS Census 2021

Most of the difference in labour market participation between working age women and men is accounted for by the greater numbers of women who are economically inactive because they are looking after home or family (10% vs 2% of 16-64 population).

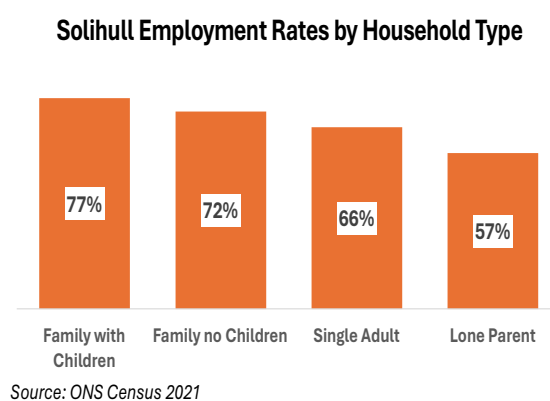
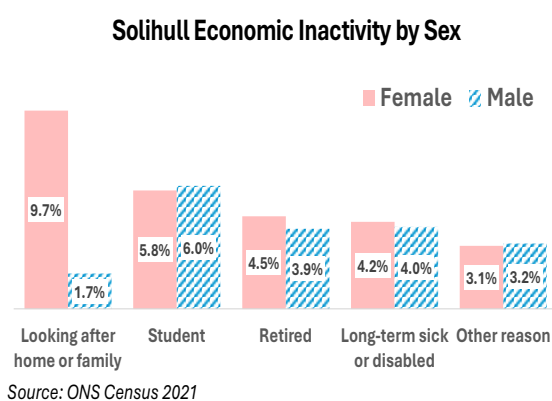
Reasons for Economic Inactivity in Solihull by Sex				
Reason for Economic Inactivity	Number of 16-64 year olds		% 16-64 year old population	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Looking after home or family	6,377	1,079	9.7%	1.7%
Retired	2,973	2,454	4.5%	3.9%
Student	3,803	3,771	5.8%	6.0%
Long-term sick or disabled	2,795	2,508	4.2%	4.0%
Other	2,021	2,005	3.1%	3.2%
All Economically Inactive	17,969	11,817	27.2%	18.8%

Source: ONS Census 2021

Employment rates in Solihull are lower among single adults of working age (66%) and lone parents (57%).

Solihull Employment Status by Household Type			
Household Type	% 16-64 year old population		
	Employed	Unemployment Rate [^]	Economically inactive
Lone Parent	57%	9.4%	37%
Single Adult	66%	7.5%	28%
Family with Children	77%	4.3%	20%
Family no dependent children	72%	5.7%	23%

[^] *The unemployment rate is the ratio of unemployed people to economically active people (i.e. those employed or unemployed excluding the economically inactive).*
 Source: ONS Census 2021

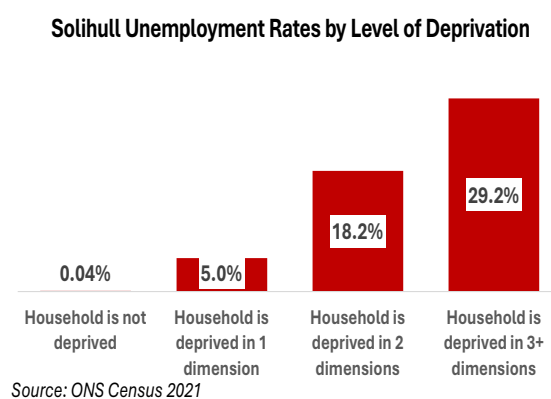
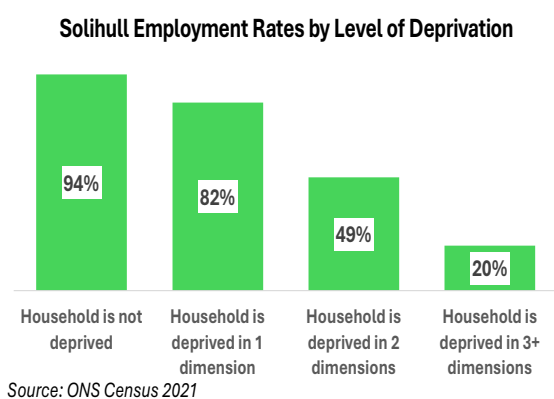


Deprivation and Disadvantage

Employment activity among the head of a household varies with the households exposure to deprivation. For instance, the employment rate among households not subject to deprivation is 96% falling to 20% among those who head households subject to three or more elements of deprivation²⁴.

Solihull Employment Status by Deprivation			
Deprivation	% Household Reference Person Aged 16-64		
	Employed	Unemployment Rate [^]	Economically inactive
Household is not deprived in any dimension	94%	0%	6%
Household is deprived in one dimension	82%	5.0%	14%
Household is deprived in two dimensions	49%	18.2%	40%
Household is deprived in three or more dimensions	20%	29.2%	72%
Household is deprived in two or more dimensions	41%	19.9%	49%

[^] *The unemployment rate is the ratio of unemployed people to economically active people (i.e. those employed or unemployed excluding the economically inactive).*
 Source: ONS Census 2021



Participation in the labour market is much higher among those who own or rent their home privately than among those who rent from their local authority or housing association. For instance, the employment rate among those who own their own home with a mortgage is 96% compared to just 47% among social renters.

Solihull Employment Status by Household Tenure			
Household Tenure	% Household Reference Person Aged 16-64		
	Employed	Unemployment Rate [^]	Economically inactive
Owns outright	81%	2.3%	18%
Owns with a mortgage/ shared ownership	96%	0.9%	3%
Private rented/ lives rent free	82%	4.8%	14%
Social rented	47%	13.7%	46%

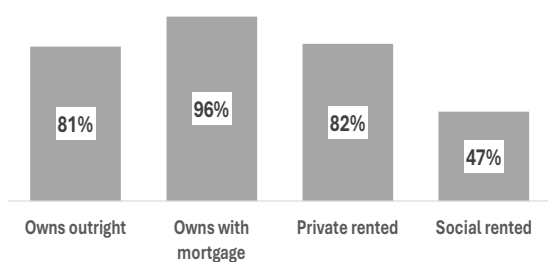
[^] *The unemployment rate is the ratio of unemployed people to economically active people (i.e. those employed or unemployed excluding the economically inactive).*
 Source: ONS Census 2021

A household's access to a car or van is a good proxy for advantage – the more advantaged a household the greater the likelihood that the household owns at least one vehicle. This is reflected in differing levels of labour market participation, with an employment rate of 88% among heads of households with access to a vehicle falling to 48% for those without access to a vehicle.

Solihull Employment Status by Household Access to Car or Van			
Access to Car/ Van	% Household Reference Person Aged 16-64		
	Employed	Unemployment Rate ^	Economically inactive
1 or more cars or vans in household	88%	2.0%	10%
No cars or vans in household	48%	14.5%	44%

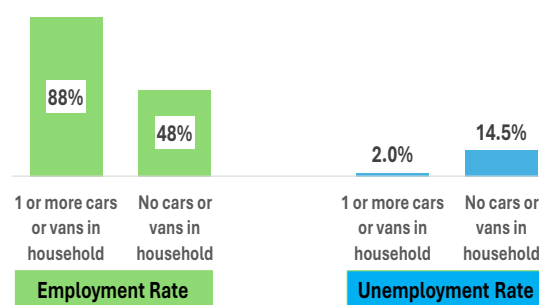
^ The unemployment rate is the ratio of unemployed people to economically active people (i.e. those employed or unemployed excluding the economically inactive).
 Source: ONS Census 2021

Solihull Employment Rates by Household Tenure



Source: ONS Census 2021

Solihull Employment Status by Access to Car or Van



Source: ONS Census 2021

Wages

Solihull Based Average Wages

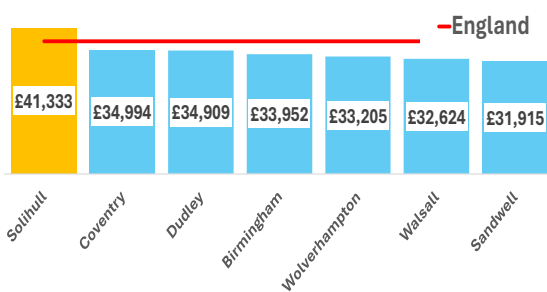
According to the ONS Annual Survey for Hours and Earnings (ASHE), the average annual wage for a Solihull resident working full-time was £41,333 in 2024ⁱⁱ. This is 10% higher than the England average, 18% higher than the average for the West Midlands region and 21% higher than that for the WMCA²⁵.

The annual average wage for Solihull jobs is ranked 42nd out of 204 upper-tier local authorities in Great Britain, the 8th highest outside London and the South-East and the highest in the West Midlands region.

Between 2019 and 2024 the average full-time wage for a Solihull job increased by 21% (+£7,183) in nominal terms compared with an increase of +23% (+£6,925) for England.

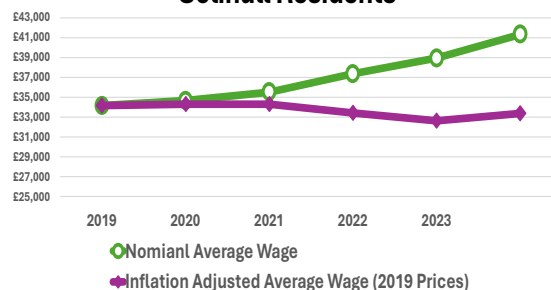
But over recent years wage increases have not kept pace with inflation, with the average full-time wage for a Solihull resident in 2024 -2% lower in real terms than in 2019 (-£771). However, the average Solihull resident wage did increase in real terms in the year to March 2024 (+£745, +2%). This is the first annual increase since March 2020 and could be the start of return to real wage growth with the rate of inflation falling consistently over the last two years.

Average Full-Time Wages in the WMCA Residents 2024



Source: ONS Annual Survey of Hours & Earnings

Trends in Average Full-Time Wages for Solihull Residents



Source: ONS Annual Survey of Hours & Earnings

ⁱⁱ It should be noted that these averages are based on an annual survey which is subject to a fairly significant margin of error, especially at local authority level. For instance, in 2024 the margin of error for Solihull residents was +/- 7.9% meaning that the Solihull average was in the range of £38,300 to £44,600

Qualifications and Skill Development

Adult Qualifications

Census 2021 data shows that the qualifications profile of working age Solihull residents is closely aligned with the England average, although there are slightly fewer Solihull residents with no qualifications (11% vs 12%) and more qualified to level 4 and above (40% vs 37%). The Solihull qualifications profile is more positive than either the West Midlands regional average or the WMCA which both have skills deficits relative to the national average²⁶.

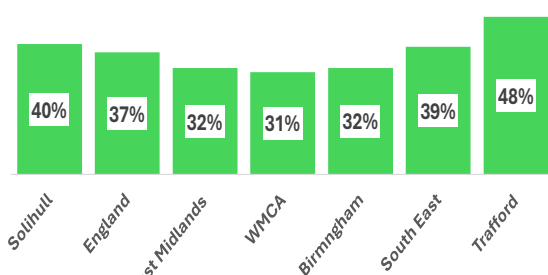
Qualification Levels of Working Age Population					
Highest Qualification	Number in Solihull	% 16-64 year old population			
		Solihull	England	WMCA	West Midlands
No qualifications	13,570	11%	12%	17%	15%
Level 1 & entry level qualifications	12,348	10%	10%	11%	11%
Level 2 qualifications	20,755	16%	15%	15%	16%
Level 3 qualifications	24,557	19%	20%	19%	20%
Level 4 qualifications or above	51,119	40%	37%	31%	32%
Other qualifications	6,552	5%	6%	7%	7%
All Aged 16-64	128,901				

Source: ONS Census 2021

40% of working age people in Solihull are qualified to level 4 and above, higher than England (37%) and regional averages. Solihull has the 11th largest number of working age residents qualified to level 4 and above outside of London and the South East (in context Trafford at 48% has the most).

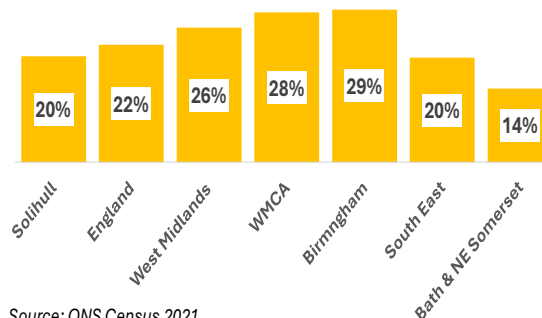
20% of working age Solihull residents have low level qualifications (either no qualifications 11% or qualified to a maximum level 1 10%). Fewer Solihull residents have no or low level qualifications than England (22%) or the regional averages (26% West Midlands, 28% WMCA). Solihull has the 22nd fewest number of working age residents with no or low qualifications outside of London and the South East (in context Bath & North East Somerset at 14% has the fewest).

16-64-year-olds Qualified to Level 4 and Above



Source: ONS Census 2021

16-64-year-olds with no or low qualifications



Source: ONS Census 2021

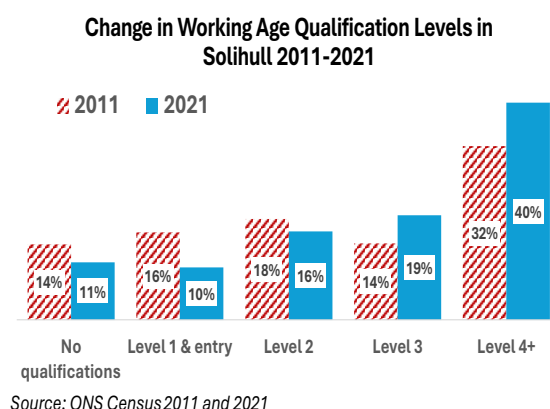
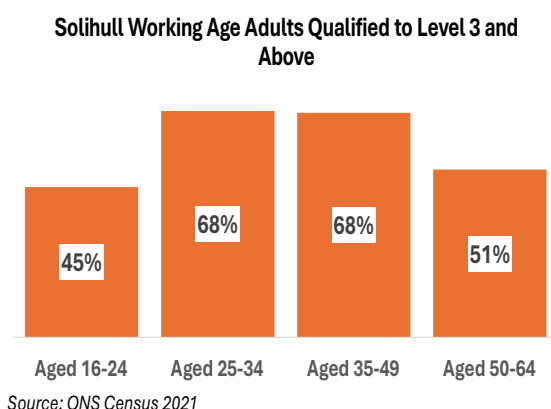
In the 10 years to 2021 the qualifications profile of working age Solihull residents improved, with more people achieving higher level qualifications (level 3 and level 4+) and fewer having no or low level qualifications.

The number of working age people in Solihull with no or low level qualifications went from 38,000 in 2011 to 26,000 in 2021 a fall of 12,000 (-32%). As a proportion of all working age people the number with no or low qualifications fell from 30% to 20% of the total over this 10 year period.

At the same time the number of working age Solihull residents qualified to level 4 and above increased from 40,500 to 51,000 (+10,600, +26%) increasing from 32% of the 16-64 year old population to 40%.

Change in Levels of Working Age Qualifications in Solihull 2011-2021				
Highest Level of Qualification	Highest Level of Qualification		Change	
	2011	2021	Number	%
No qualifications	17,617	13,570	-4,047	-23%
Level 1 & entry level qualifications	20,410	12,348	-8,062	-40%
Level 2 qualifications	23,563	20,755	-2,808	-12%
Level 3 qualifications	17,858	24,557	6,699	38%
Level 4 qualifications or above	40,534	51,119	10,585	26%
Other qualifications	7,915	6,552	-1,363	-17%
All Aged 16-64	127,897	128,901		

Source: ONS Census 2011 and 2021



Youth Qualifications

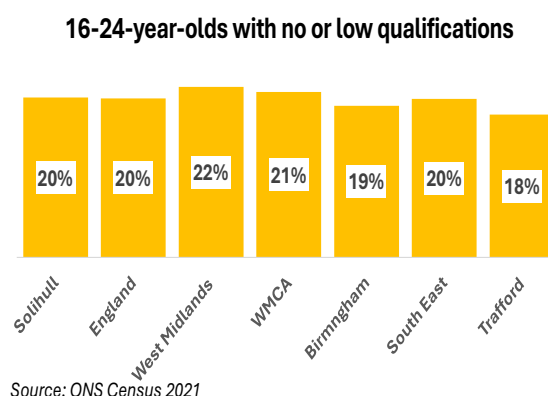
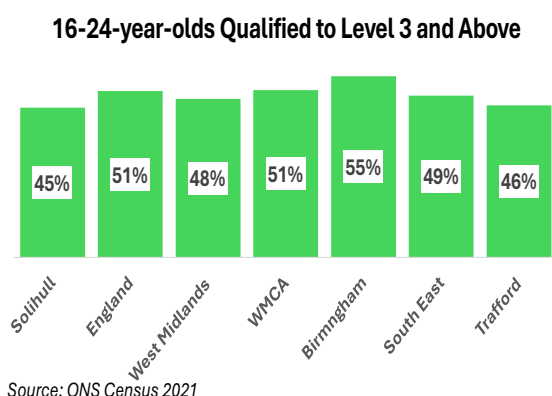
Census 2021 data shows that the qualifications profile of young people aged 16-24 years in Solihull is closely aligned with the England average, although there are slightly fewer young Solihull residents qualified to level 4 and above (19% vs 20%). The Solihull qualifications profile is slightly more positive than either the West Midlands regional average or the WMCA²⁷.

Qualification Levels of Young People					
Highest Qualification	Number in Solihull	% 16-24 year old population			
		Solihull	England	WMCA	West Midlands
No qualifications	2,273	11%	11%	12%	12%
Level 1 & entry level qualifications	1,754	9%	9%	9%	10%
Level 2 qualifications	5,804	29%	24%	23%	25%
Level 3 qualifications	5,268	26%	31%	32%	30%
Level 4 qualifications or above	3,774	19%	20%	19%	18%
Other qualifications	1,019	5%	5%	5%	6%
All Aged 16-24	19,892				

Source: ONS Census 2021

45% of young people aged 16-24 years in Solihull are qualified to level 3 lower than the England (51%), West Midlands (48%) and WMCA (51%) averages. This reflects the relatively high proportion of young people in Solihull who move away from home to attend Higher Education.

20% of Solihull young people aged 16-24 have low level qualifications (either no qualifications 11% or qualified to a maximum level 1 9%). The proportion of 16-24 year olds in Solihull with no or low level qualifications is in-line with England (20%) and slightly lower than the regional averages (22% West Midlands, 21% WMCA).

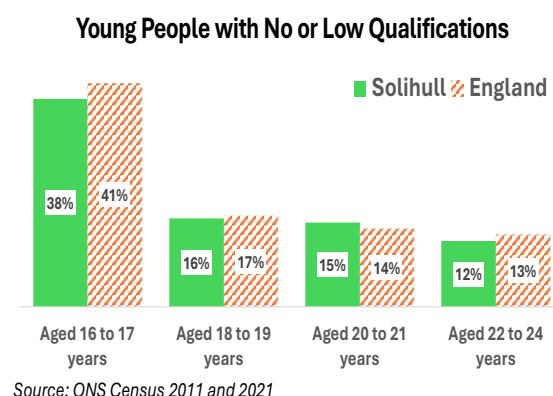
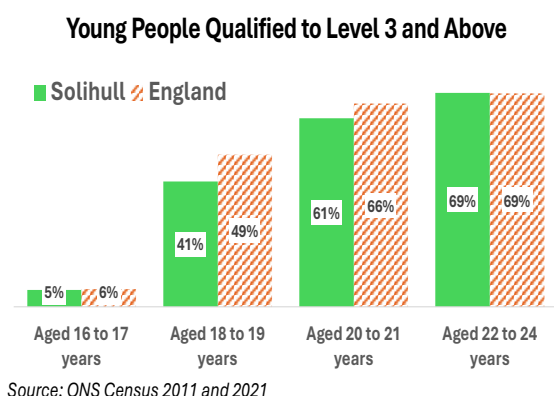


Compared to the England average there appears to be a skills deficit in Solihull between the ages of 18 and 21 years, reflecting the fact that young people move away from Solihull to attend Higher Education. This skills deficit manifest itself in the relatively smaller proportion of Solihull young people aged 18-21 years qualified to level 3 and above compared to England (51% vs 58%).

This skills deficit is not evident among 16-17 year olds where the proportion qualified to level 2 is higher than England (54% vs 50%) or among those aged 22-24 years where 42% of Solihull residents are qualified to level 4 and above, the same as England.

Solihull Young People Qualifications by Age Group				
	Aged 16-17	Aged 18-19	Aged 20-21	Aged 22-24
No qualifications	28%	6%	6%	5%
Level 1 & entry level qualifications	10%	10%	9%	7%
Level 2 qualifications	54%	38%	16%	13%
Level 3 qualifications	4%	35%	46%	27%
Level 4 qualifications or above	1%	5%	15%	42%
Other qualifications	3%	5%	7%	6%
Level 3+	5%	41%	61%	69%
No or Low Qualifications	38%	16%	15%	12%

Source: ONS Census 2021



In the 10 years to 2021 the qualifications profile of young people in Solihull improved, with more 16-24 year olds achieving higher level qualifications (level 3 and level 4+) and fewer having no or low level qualifications.

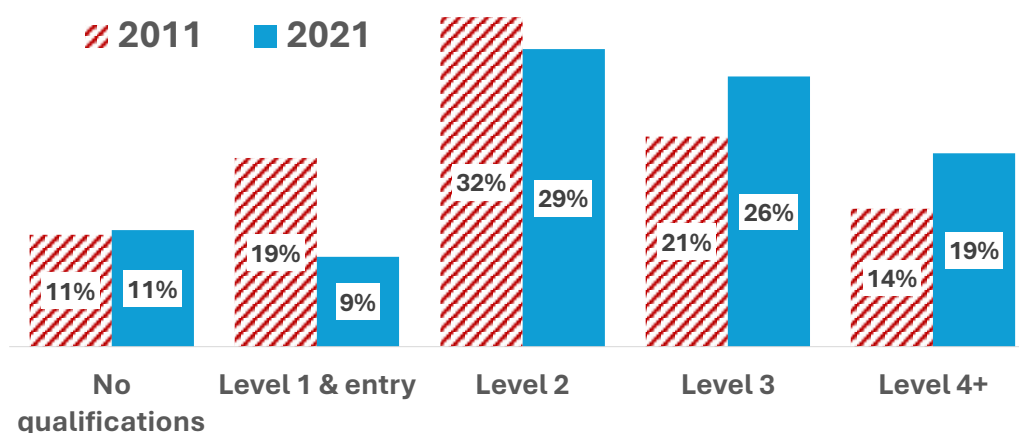
The number of young people in Solihull with no or low level qualifications went from nearly 6,500 in 2011 to 4,000 in 2021 a fall of 2,500 (-38%). As a proportion of all 16-24 year olds in Solihull the number with no or low qualifications fell from 30% to 20% of the total over this 10 year period.

At the same time the number of young Solihull residents qualified to level 3 and above increased from 7,500 to 9,000 (+1,500, +21%) increasing from 34% of the 16-24 year old population to 45%.

Change in Levels of Qualifications Among Young People in Solihull 2011-2021				
Highest Level of Qualification	Highest Level of Qualification		Change	
	2011	2021	Number	%
No qualifications	2,414	2,273	-141	-6%
Level 1 & entry level qualifications	4,071	1,754	-2,317	-57%
Level 2 qualifications	7,101	5,804	-1,297	-18%
Level 3 qualifications	4,528	5,268	740	16%
Level 4 qualifications or above	2,967	3,774	807	27%
Other qualifications	886	1,019	133	15%
All Aged 16-24	21,967	19,892		

Source: ONS Census 2011 and 2021

Change in Working Qualification Levels Among Young People in Solihull 2011-2021



Source: ONS Census 2011 and 2021

Apprenticeships

There were 1,350 apprenticeship starts in Solihull in 2022/23, equating to 104.4 per 10,000 working age resident. This is 12% higher than the apprenticeship start rate for England (93 per 10,000)²⁸.

Apprenticeship Starts 2022/23		
	Total	Rate (per 10,000 16-64 population)
Solihull	1,350	104.4
WMCA	17,450	92.5
West Midlands	37,970	101.0
England	337,140	93.0

Source: Department for Education

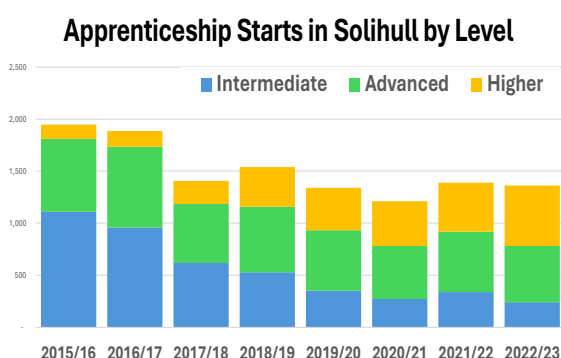
The number of apprenticeship starts in Solihull is proportionally -12% lower than England at the bottom end of the spectrum (18.6 vs 21.0 per 10,000 apprenticeship start rate at intermediate level), but this is offset by the much higher start rate in Solihull at the higher apprenticeship level. The 580 starts in Solihull in 2022/23 for higher apprenticeships was +44% higher than the rate in England (44.8 vs 31.1 per 10,000).

Apprenticeship Starts 2022/23				
Apprenticeship Level	Number		Rate per 10,000 Population	
	Solihull	England	Solihull	England
Intermediate Apprenticeship	240	76,280	18.6	21.0
Advanced Apprenticeship	540	147,930	41.8	40.8
Higher Apprenticeship	580	112,930	44.8	31.1
Total	1,350	337,140	104.4	93.0

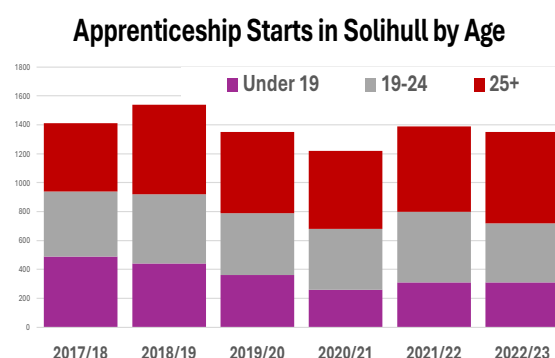
Source: Department for Education

The number of apprenticeship starts in Solihull fell by -30% (-588) between 2016/17 and 2022/23. This largely reflects the introduction of the apprenticeship levy in 2017 and is consistent with the England average. Over this period intermediate apprenticeship starts fell by -78% and advanced level by -23%. This has only partially been offset by the substantial rise in higher level apprenticeships from 140 to 580 (+314%, +440).

Between 2017/18 and 2023/24 the number of Solihull apprenticeship starts fell among the youngest age groups, (-180, -37% aged under 19) offset by rising demand from those 25 years and over (+160, +34% aged 25 and over).



Source: Department for Education



Source: Department for Education

24% of starts in Solihull in 2022/23 were in Business, Administration & Law, followed by 17% in health, public services & care, 12% in engineering & manufacturing technologies and 9% in retail & commercial enterprise.

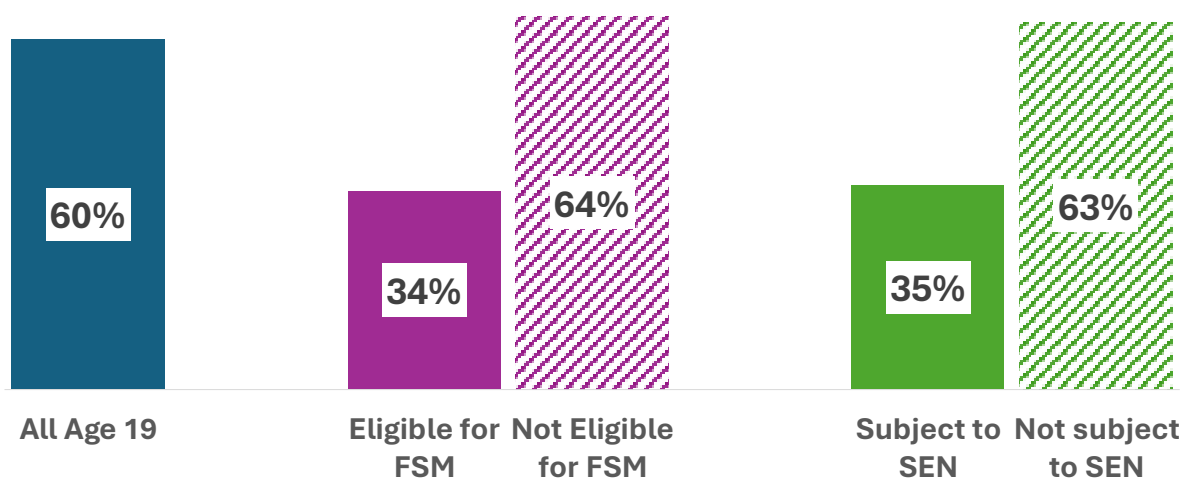
Apprenticeship Starts in Solihull by Subject 2022/23		
Subject	Number of Starts	% Total
Business, Administration and Law	320	24%
Health, Public Services and Care	230	17%
Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies	160	12%
Retail and Commercial Enterprise	120	9%
Construction, Planning and the Built Environment	100	7%
Information and Communication Technology	70	5%
Education and Training	30	2%
Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care	20	1%
Arts, Media and Publishing	10	1%
Leisure, Travel and Tourism	10	1%
History, Philosophy and Theology	low	low
Science and Mathematics	low	low
Social Sciences	low	low
Total	1,350	

Source: Department for Education

Qualified to Level 3 by Age 19

60% of 19-year-olds in Solihull were qualified to Level 3 by the age of 19 in 2022/23, in-line with the England average, but higher than that for the West Midlands region (56%) or WMCA (57%). The Solihull total varies by circumstance and fewer young people eligible for a free school meal (34%) or who are subject to a Special Educational Need (35%) had a level 3 qualification in 2022/23²⁹.

Solihull 19 Year Olds Qualified to Level 3 in 2022/23



Source: Department for Education

Skills in Demand and Future Employment Outlook

Employers Skills Survey

The Employer Skills Survey 2022 is a key source of intelligence for understanding the skills challenges faced by employers, both within their existing workforce and when recruiting³⁰.

Just over a quarter (27%) of Solihull employers had at least one vacancy at the time of the survey. In volume terms there were 6,774 vacancies in Solihull firms, equivalent to 5% of total employment.

A relatively large number of Solihull business say that they have a vacancy (27% vs 23% England), but the total number of vacancies as a proportion of employment is in-line with that for England (5%).

Employers that said that they had vacancies at the time of the survey were asked whether any of those had proved hard-to-fill and, if so, whether it was due to a lack of skills, experience or qualifications among applicants. In response, 16% of Solihull employers said that they had a hard to fill vacancy (England 15%).

Overall, there were 3,066 skills shortage vacancies reported by Solihull respondent firms in 2022. This equates to 11% of Solihull employers included in the survey (10% England).

In total 45% of all Solihull vacancies are due to a skills shortage deficit in either skills, experience or qualifications. This prevalence of skills deficits as a reason for hard to fill vacancies in Solihull is much higher than the England average (45% vs 36% England).

Employers Skills Survey 2022 – Key Vacancy Indicators			
	Solihull	England	West Midlands
Establishments with any vacancies	27%	23%	22%
Number of vacancies as a % of all employment	5%	5%	4%
Have at least one vacancy that is hard to fill	16%	15%	13%
Have a skills shortage vacancy	11%	10%	10%
Number of skills gaps as a % of employment	45%	36%	37%
<i>Source: Department for Education</i>			

Employers with skill-shortage vacancies were asked which skills were lacking. These skills fall into two categories:

Technical and practical skills: specific skills required to perform the specific functions of a job role, with a more detailed subsidiary question about the availability of IT skills.

People and personal skills: ‘softer’, less tangible skills required to manage oneself and interact with others in the workplace.

Across the country close to nine in ten skill-shortage vacancies (87%) were caused, at least in part, by a lack of technical and practical skills. Grouping these skills together shows that over half of all skills-shortage vacancies identified by Solihull employers (52%) are due to a lack of operational skills in potential candidates including the requisite knowledge of products and services offered and the knowledge of how the organisation works. The availability of complex analytical skills was cited less frequently by Solihull employers than the England average (34% vs 49%) as were digital skills (21% vs 34%) and basic skills (24% vs 36%).

Employers Skills Survey 2022 – Technical & Practical Skills Gaps in Skills Shortage Vacancies		
% All Skills Shortage Vacancies		
	Solihull	England
Complex Analytical Skills	34%	49%
Operational Skills	52%	52%
Digital Skills	21%	34%
Basic Skills	24%	36%
<i>Source: Department for Education</i>		

Nationally, 70% of skill-shortage vacancies were caused, at least in part, by a lack of people and personal skills. Most prominent among them was a dearth of self-management skills, although this, like the other broad categories, was less frequently cited by Solihull employers as a reason for skill-shortage vacancies than the England average (50% vs 55% England).

Employers Skills Survey 2022 – People & Personal Skills Gaps in Skills Shortage Vacancies		
% All Skills Shortage Vacancies		
	Solihull	England
Management & Leadership Skills	43%	46%
Sales & Customer Skills	36%	43%
Self-management Skills	50%	55%
<i>Source: Department for Education</i>		

The table below shows these people and personal skill deficits in candidates in more detail.

Employers Skills Survey 2022 – People & Personal Skills Gaps in Skills Shortage Vacancies		
% All Skills Shortage Vacancies		
	Solihull	England
Ability to manage own time and prioritise own tasks	50%	49%
Managing their own feelings, or handling the feelings of others	43%	39%
Customer handling skills	36%	36%
Team working	46%	35%
Managing or motivating other staff	28%	32%
Instructing, teaching or training people	22%	28%
Persuading or influencing others	30%	26%
Setting objectives for others and planning human, financial and other resources	9%	23%
Sales skills	20%	22%
Making speeches or presentations	1%	15%
None of the above	33%	24%
<i>Source: Department for Education</i>		

Overall, 20% of Solihull employers reported they have at least one member of staff not fully proficient at their job. In this respect skills gaps in the existing workforce are more prevalent among Solihull firms than the England average (20% vs 15% England).

In total around 7% of the Solihull workforce are lacking full proficiency, slightly higher than the 6% recorded across England.

Employers Skills Survey 2022 – Key Existing Workforce Skills Gap Indicators			
	Solihull	England	West Midlands
% of establishments with any staff not fully proficient	20%	15%	16%
Number of skills gaps as a % of employment	7%	6%	6%
<i>Source: Department for Education</i>			

A summary of the type of skills gaps that Solihull employers see in their existing workforce are detailed in the table below.

Employers Skills Survey 2022 – Reasons for Skills Gaps in Existing Workforce		
% All Skills Gaps		
	Solihull	England
Ability to manage own time and prioritise own tasks	62%	58%
Specialist skills or knowledge needed to perform the role	73%	54%
Knowledge of products and services offered by your organisation and organisations like yours	56%	39%
Solving complex problems requiring a solution specific to the situation	54%	40%
Customer handling skills	52%	44%
Team working	30%	41%
Creative and innovative thinking	56%	36%
Managing their own feelings, or handling the feelings of others	31%	38%
Knowledge of how your organisation works	29%	37%
Managing or motivating other staff	30%	32%
Persuading or influencing others	44%	30%
Reading and understanding instructions, guidelines, manuals or reports	28%	33%
Adapting to new equipment or materials	38%	26%
Sales skills	24%	29%
Instructing, teaching or training people	38%	27%
Computer literacy / basic IT skills	25%	21%
Setting objectives for others and planning human, financial and other resources	17%	23%
Writing instructions, guidelines, manuals or reports	20%	23%
More complex numerical or statistical skills and understanding	24%	20%
Advanced or specialist IT skills	26%	16%
Basic numerical skills and understanding	11%	17%
Manual dexterity	24%	16%
Making speeches or presentations	19%	16%
Communicating in a foreign language	10%	17%
Ability to manage own time and prioritise own tasks	62%	58%
<i>Source: Department for Education</i>		

Future Skills

A report on behalf of Nesta (a UK agency promoting innovation in the labour market) maps out how employment is likely to change in the UK in the future. This has implications for the types of skills that employers will require as well as the development of new occupations³¹.

The report estimates that around one-tenth of the workforce are in occupations that are likely to grow as a percentage of the workforce and round one-fifth are in occupations that will likely shrink.

Education, healthcare, and wider public sector occupations are likely to grow while some low-skilled jobs, in fields like construction and agriculture, are less likely to suffer poor labour market outcomes than has been assumed in the past.

The report highlights the skills that are likely to be in greater demand in the future, which include interpersonal skills, higher-order cognitive skills, and systems skills. The future workforce will need broad-based knowledge in addition to the more specialised skills that will be needed for specific occupations.

Risks of automation to job creation are real. However, it is important not to be alarmist and ignore more positive trends that will drive future job creation and sector specific labour market growth. These positive trends include globalisation, population aging, urbanisation, and the rise of the green economy.

References

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- ¹ ONS: [Census 2021 Origin-destination data](#)
 - ² ONS: [Census 2011 origin and destination tables](#)
 - ³ ONS/Nomis: [Business Register and Employment Survey \(BRES\)](#)
 - ⁴ House of Commons Library: [UK Labour Market Statistics November 2024](#)
 - ⁵ ONS: [UK Labour market overview, November 2024](#)
 - ⁶ House of Commons Library: [UK Labour Market Statistics November 2024](#)
 - ⁷ ONS: [UK Labour market overview, November 2024](#)
 - ⁸ House of Commons Library: [UK Labour Market Statistics November 2024](#)
 - ⁹ ONS: [UK Labour market overview, November 2024](#)
 - ¹⁰ ONS: [UK Labour market overview, November 2024](#)
 - ¹¹ ONS/Nomis: [2021 Census Topic Summaries](#)
 - ¹² ONS/Nomis: [2021 Census Topic Summaries](#)
 - ¹³ ONS/Nomis: [Annual Population Survey](#)
 - ¹⁴ ONS/Nomis: [Annual Population Survey](#)
 - ¹⁵ ONS/Nomis: [Annual Population Survey](#)
 - ¹⁶ ONS/Nomis: [Claimant Count September 2024](#)
 - ¹⁷ DWP/Stat-Xplore: [Universal Credit September 2024](#)
 - ¹⁸ DWP/Stat-Xplore: [Employment & Support Allowance February 2024](#)
 - ¹⁹ ONS: [2021 Census Create a Custom Dataset](#)
 - ²⁰ ONS: [2021 Census Create a Custom Dataset](#)
 - ²¹ ONS: [2021 Census Create a Custom Dataset](#)
 - ²² ONS: [2021 Census Create a Custom Dataset](#)
 - ²³ ONS: [2021 Census Create a Custom Dataset](#)
 - ²⁴ ONS: [2021 Census Create a Custom Dataset](#)
 - ²⁵ ONS/Nomis: [Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings \(ASHE\)](#)
 - ²⁶ ONS: [2021 Census Create a Custom Dataset](#)
 - ²⁷ ONS: [2021 Census Create a Custom Dataset](#)
 - ²⁸ Department for Education: [Education Statistics, Apprenticeships Academic year 2023/24](#)
 - ²⁹ Department for Education: [Education Statistics, Level 2 and 3 Attainment Age 16 to 25 Academic Year 2022/23](#)
 - ³⁰ Department for Education: [Employer skills survey 2022 - England results](#)
 - ³¹ Nesta: [The Future of Skills - Employment in 2030, September 2017](#)