The State of SUFFOLK

Work and health in Suffolk
State of Suffolk 2024

April 2024

SUFFOLK JSNA

Suffolk County Council

Public Health & Communities

Work and health – what's the Suffolk story?

- Being in 'good' work benefits health and wellbeing. 'Good' looks different to everyone, but generally means being in meaningful employment, being paid fairly, and feeling like you have control and autonomy in your role.
- Being out of work or being in insecure/stressful work environments is detrimental to health.
- Supporting people to obtain and retain employment and be productive in jobs, is vital for the economic success and wellbeing of Suffolk's workforce and Suffolk's businesses.
- Employment rates in Suffolk are higher than England as a whole.
- However, the population of Suffolk is ageing, meaning the ratio of workers to 'dependant' populations is shifting.
- Additionally, ill-health and long-term conditions have a significant impact on employment.
- 17.5% of people in Suffolk report a long-term musculoskeletal (MSK) problem in 2023. According to Arthritis Research UK, only 59.4% of people of working age with an MSK condition are in work.
- Suffolk residents earn less than the England average. In 2023, the median weekly pay for a Suffolk resident was £24.10 lower than the England average.
- Suffolk's Gross Value Added (GVA) per head has been consistently below the England average each year between 2007-2021. The GVA per head for Suffolk in 2021 was £25,701, £5,437 less than the England average.

Key inequalities:

- The disability employment gap (the difference in the employment rate of disabled people and people who are not disabled) in Suffolk is wider for disabled men, older disabled people (aged 50-64), disabled people with no qualifications, and for those living in social housing or alone.
- Women, young people aged 20-24, and part-time workers are most likely to be in roles at high risk of automation.
- Employees with higher qualifications (e.g., degree level) are typically in roles with higher exposure to AI, while those with lower-level qualifications in construction, manufacturing, and transportation have lower AI exposure.

Work and health in Suffolk in seven (stats)…

79.4%
in employment

Suffolk's employment rate is higher than the England average.
The employment rate for Suffolk residents aged 16-64 years old was 79.4% in 2022/23, statistically significantly higher than the England average of 75.7%.

65.1%
employees

More people in Suffolk are self-employed compared to the England average.
65.1% of Suffolk 16-64 year olds are employees in 2022/23, and 11.8% are self-employed (51,800 people). A higher proportion of individuals in Suffolk are self-employed compared to the national average (9.4%).

13.8%
Universal Credit Recipients

Fewer people in Suffolk were claiming Universal Credit compared to the England average.
As of January 2024, 13.8% of Suffolk residents (63,759 people) aged between 16-64 years old were receiving Universal Credit, below the England average of 15.1%.

79.4%
Economically active

A higher proportion of Suffolk residents are economically active compared to the England average.
79.7% (350,500) of Suffolk residents aged 16-64 years old were economically active between October 2022-September 2023, higher than the England average of 78.9%.

10.2%
65+ economically active

Fewer older residents (aged 65 and over) in Suffolk were economically active compared to the England average.
10.2% of Suffolk residents aged 65 and over were economically active, compared to 11.5% nationally.

£25,701
GVA

Gross Value Added in Suffolk is 17.5% lower than the England average in 2021.
The Suffolk Gross Value Added (GVA) per head was £25,701 in 2021, £5,437 less than the England average of £31,138.

£552.80
Median weekly pay

Median weekly pay for Suffolk's residents is lower than the England average.
In 2023, median weekly pay for Suffolk residents was £552.80, £24.10 lower than the England average of £576.90.

Suffolk employment and skills data

This section provides an overview of economic indicators showing the quality and availability of employment opportunities in Suffolk. Access to fulfilling, well-paid work can foster improved mental and physical health outcomes through enhanced job satisfaction, financial security, and social integration.

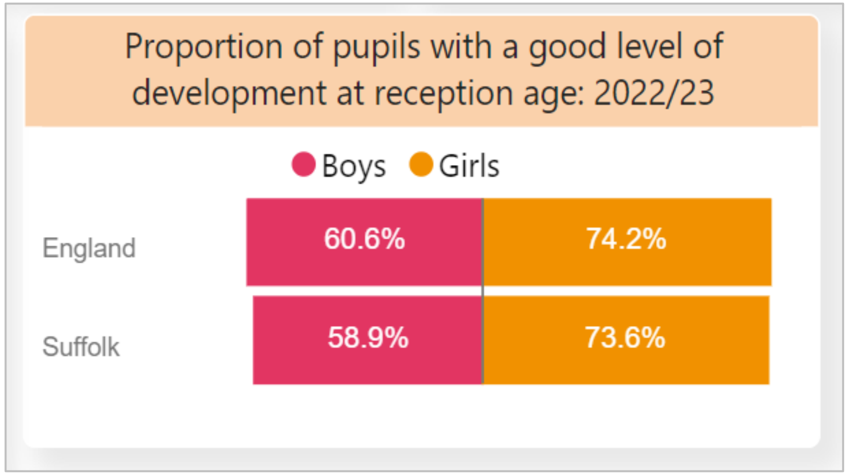
- Productivity levels measured by Gross Value Added (GVA) offer an insight into the county's economic output and efficiency. Median weekly earnings data provides information on the financial wellbeing of Suffolk's workforce, with job density and job posting trends revealing the availability of employment opportunities in Suffolk.
- Academic achievement leads to better employment opportunities with higher wages and job quality, leading to wider health benefits. The standard GCSE pass rate for 16-year olds in Suffolk is lower than the England average in 2023, with only 68.6% of Suffolk GCSEs achieved at grade 4 or above. The England average GCSE pass rate (grade 4 or above) is 71.3%.
- Furthermore, individuals who grew up and completed their GCSEs in Suffolk were more likely to leave the county to a new town or city. Almost half (44.2%) of graduates who completed their GCSEs in Suffolk between 2008-11 had moved to a different city or town by 2018-19.
- Fewer Suffolk residents as of census 2021 had a level 4 qualification or above (28.1% in Suffolk, 33.9% across England).
- Also within this section is an in-depth analysis of Suffolk's industries and potential threats to employment, which aims to identify areas of strength, vulnerabilities, and future challenges.

Slides in this section include:

Employment activity and distribution:	A higher proportion of individuals in Suffolk work in associate professional, technical and personal service roles than the England average (18.5% in Suffolk, 14.2% across England). Suffolk residents are less likely to be employed in highly skilled and better-paid professional occupations (21.1%) compared to the England average (27.3%).
Industry composition:	Major industries in Suffolk include public administration, education, health (31.0%), distribution, hotels, restaurants (17.9%), and banking, finance, insurance (15.9%). Agriculture and fishing in Suffolk employ a higher proportion (2.3%) than the England average.
Productivity and earnings:	Suffolk's productivity (GVA per full-time worker) and median weekly earnings are below the England average, reflecting the lower concentration of high-paying professional roles.
Job availability:	Jobs density (jobs per working-age resident) in Suffolk (0.87) is similar to England (0.86), with a 40,000 increase in jobs over the last decade. High demand exists for healthcare, care, and low-skilled manual roles.
Industry strengths and opportunities:	Growing industries include maritime, food/drink production, agricultural services, and logistics/e-commerce. Potential opportunities (job opportunities increasing nationally, but currently sparse in Suffolk) include sectors such as the processing of hazardous materials, passenger transport, creative, and financial/legal services.
Risks and challenges:	Potentially vulnerable industries (a high concentration of employment in Suffolk, but decreasing nationally) include the visitor economy, sports/leisure, and printing/publishing. Automation poses a threat to routine, lower-skilled roles, particularly impacting women, young workers, and part-time employees. AI is likely to augment rather than fully automate many professional occupations.

Achieving a good level of education helps in enabling people to reach their full potential. Earning potential is higher, and a wider selection of job opportunities are available. However, educational attainment in Suffolk is lower than in England as a whole, exacerbated by persistent pupil absenteeism.

- **A contributing factor to reduced earnings for Suffolk residents is likely to be the lower levels of educational attainment achieved by Suffolk's children and young people compared to the national average.**



- Fewer children and young people at reception age (4/5 years old) are achieving a good level of development compared to the England average in 2022/23.
- Similarly, the standard GCSE pass rate for 16 year olds in Suffolk is lower than the England average in 2023. For 16 year olds in Suffolk, 68.6% of all GCSEs were achieved at grade 4 or above, compared to 71.3% across England.

- The Suffolk workforce is also less qualified than the England average. Suffolk has a higher proportion of working adults (aged 16-64 years old) with no qualifications (using GCSEs as the metric) at 6.7%, compared to the England average of 6.2% in 2021.

- Persistent absenteeism is defined as the **percentage of secondary school enrolments classed as persistent absentees (defined as missing 10% or more of possible sessions).**

- Between 2021/22, secondary school absence across England was 27.7%, where over 1 in 4 children were missing more than 10% of school sessions during the academic year.
- In Suffolk, almost 1 in 3 (30.7%/12,284 pupils) were missing more than 10% of school sessions during the same period, missing out on valuable learning. The Suffolk rate of persistent absenteeism was statistically significantly higher than the England average in 2021/22.
- Prior to the pandemic in 2018/19, the national persistent absence rate for all schools was 10.9%.
- The persistent absentee rate for Suffolk Primary school children is also statistically significantly higher than the England average. 18.5% of Suffolk Primary school children were missing more than 10% of school sessions in 2021/22, higher than the England Primary school absentee rate of 17.7%.

Persistent absentees data for Primary and Secondary school pupils, Suffolk and England, 2021/22

Better 95% Similar Worse 95%

Benchmark Value — Worst, 25th Percentile, 75th Percentile, Best

Indicator	Period	Suffolk			England			
		Recent Trend	Count	Value	Value	Worst	Range	Best
Persistent absentees - Primary school	2021/22	–	9,100	18.5%	17.7%	22.9%		10.0%
Persistent absentees - Secondary school	2021/22	–	12,284	30.7%	27.7%	40.9%		12.2%

Source: ONS Explore education statistics, LG Inform, OHID Fingertips

Skills and education affect job prospects and social mobility, with educational attainment closely linked to access to higher paying jobs. Given Suffolk's young people are likely to have lower academic attainment, they may have fewer opportunities and are likely to earn less.

- **Social mobility refers to change in a person's socio-economic situation, either in relation to their parents (inter-generational mobility) or throughout their lifetime (intra-generational mobility).**
- **Educational attainment is closely linked to access to higher paying jobs.** Those with degrees and higher-level qualifications tend to have greater access to professional, managerial and technical occupations that often provide higher pay, benefits and job security. Those without University degrees are more likely to work in lower-paying service, labour or manufacturing jobs.
- Workers with skills in high demand and in growing industries may have better job opportunities and mobility.

For England, average weekly earnings by sector in November 2023:

- The whole economy average weekly earnings were £656, with the private sector lower at £651 and public sector higher at £676.
- The highest average earnings were in finance and business services at £842. The lowest were in wholesaling, retailing, hotels and restaurants at £438.

The most recent analysis available on weekly pay and gross annual salary by highest educational qualification was produced by the Office for National Statistics in 2018.

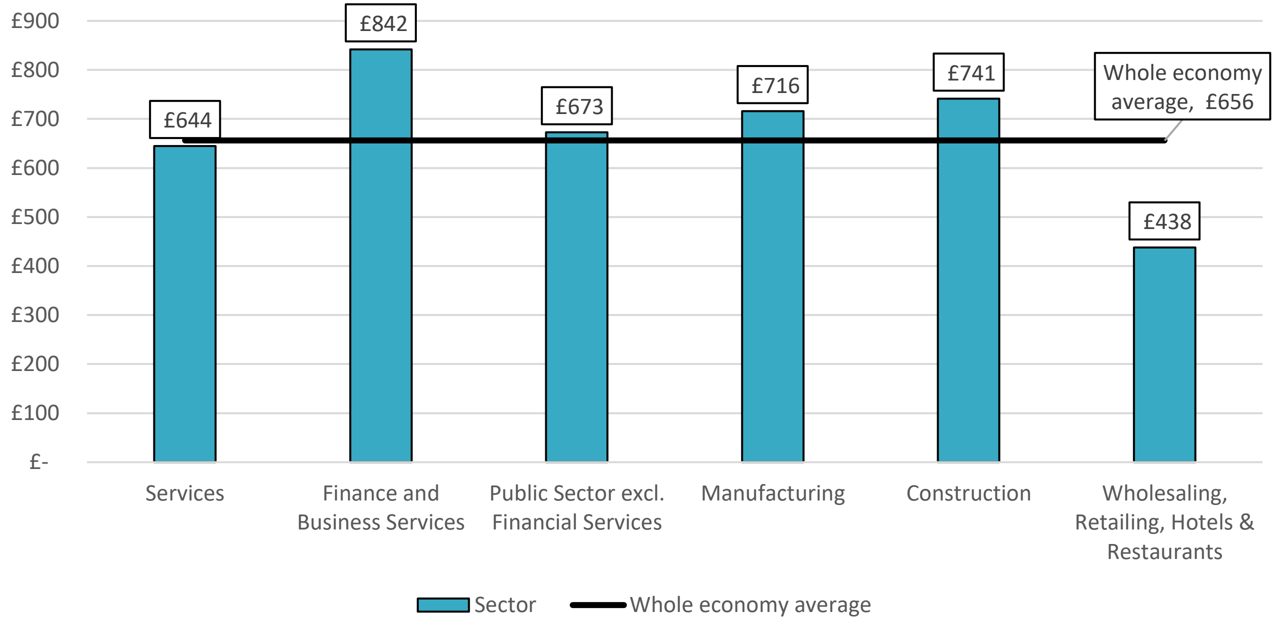
- **Those with a degree or equivalent earn the most - a median of £587 per week or £30,524 annually. This is over double the earnings of those with no qualifications.**
- Each step down in education level is associated with a drop in median weekly earnings. For example, those with A-levels earn £369 compared to £450 for those with higher education below degree level.

Source: ONS: Average weekly earnings by industry, December 2023,
ONS: Mean and median gross weekly earnings by highest education qualification

The median gross weekly and annual earnings measured by highest education qualification, February 2018

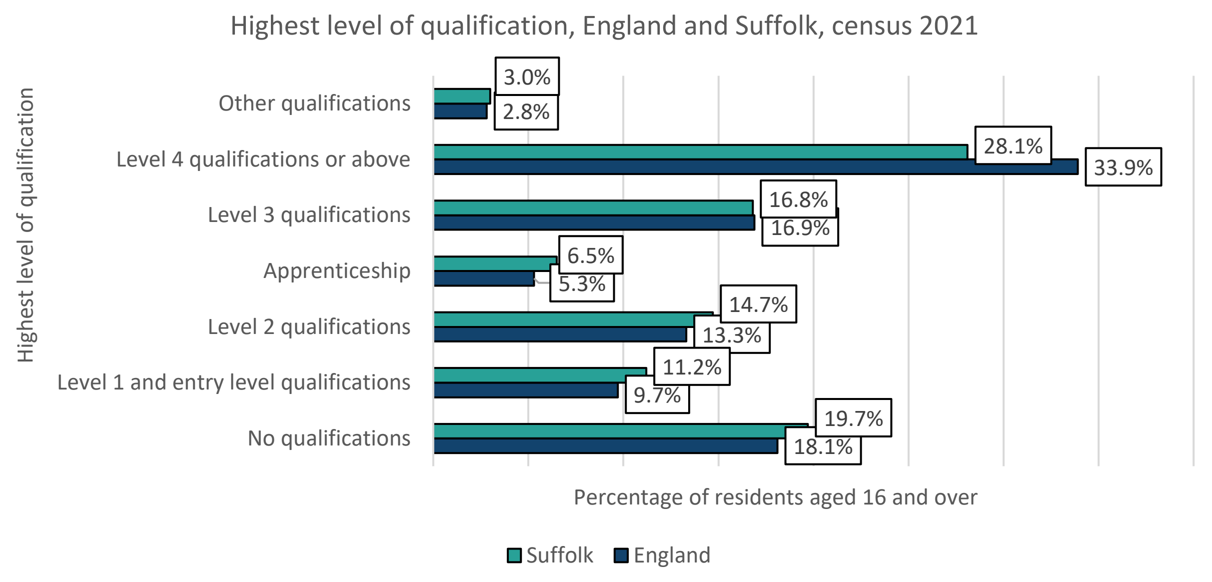
	Median weekly pay	Gross annual salary
1 Degree or equivalent	£587	£30,524
2 Higher education	£450	£23,400
3 GCE A level or equivalent	£369	£19,188
4 GCSE grades A*-C or equivalent	£331	£17,212
5 Other qualification	£335	£17,420
6 No qualification	£275	£14,300
7 Don't know	£358	£18,616

Average weekly earnings (£) by sector, including bonuses and arrears, Great Britain, November 2023



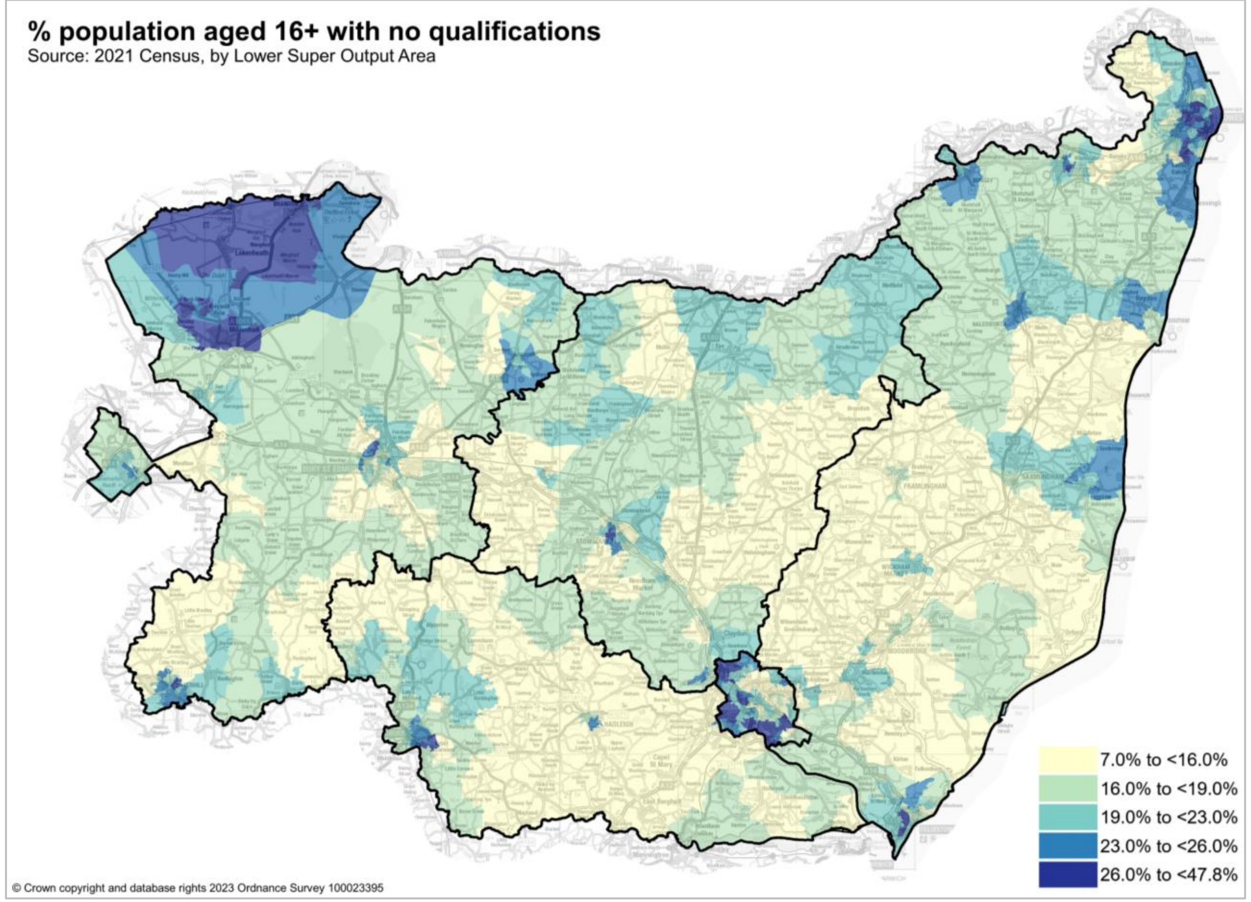
Suffolk's residents have fewer formal qualifications compared to the England average. 1 in 20 Suffolk young people aged 16-17 are also not in formal education, employment, or training in 2022/23.

- Level 4 qualifications are higher than A levels. Over 1 in 3 (33.9%) residents in England have a highest qualification of level 4 or above, however in Suffolk only 1 in 4 (28.1%) have a level 4 or higher qualification at the time of the 2021 census.
- In addition, more Suffolk residents aged 16 and over have no qualifications at all (19.7%) compared to the England average (18.1%).



- Between 2016/17 to 2018/19, Suffolk had a statistically significantly higher proportion of 16-17 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEET) than the England average.
- In 2022/23, 805 16-17 year olds in Suffolk are classified as NEET – representative of 5.1% of all 16-17 year olds in the county. This rate is now statistically similar to the England average.

- **Mapped at Lower Super Output Area (LSOA), the areas of Suffolk with the highest proportion of people aged 16 and over with no qualifications includes LSOAs within Ipswich, Lowestoft, Sudbury, Haverhill and Mildenhall.**
- Mildenhall LSOA areas include United States Visiting Forces (USVF) personnel – many of which have answered 'no qualifications' to the census instead of 'qualifications achieved outside of England/Wales, equivalent not stated, or unknown'. This data quality issue may explain some of the darker shading in the Mildenhall/Brandon area.



Source: [Nomis: TS067 – highest level of qualification (census, 2021)], [ONS NEET]

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Whilst fewer Suffolk residents have formal qualifications compared to England, in 2022/23 over 4,000 apprenticeships were started in Suffolk, helping to boost skills and opportunities.

Job training and upskilling programmes are available through several channels, including:

- Further education colleges
- Adult community learning providers
- Private training providers
- Employer-provided training
- Apprenticeships
- Online courses/resources

The government offers training support through schemes such as:

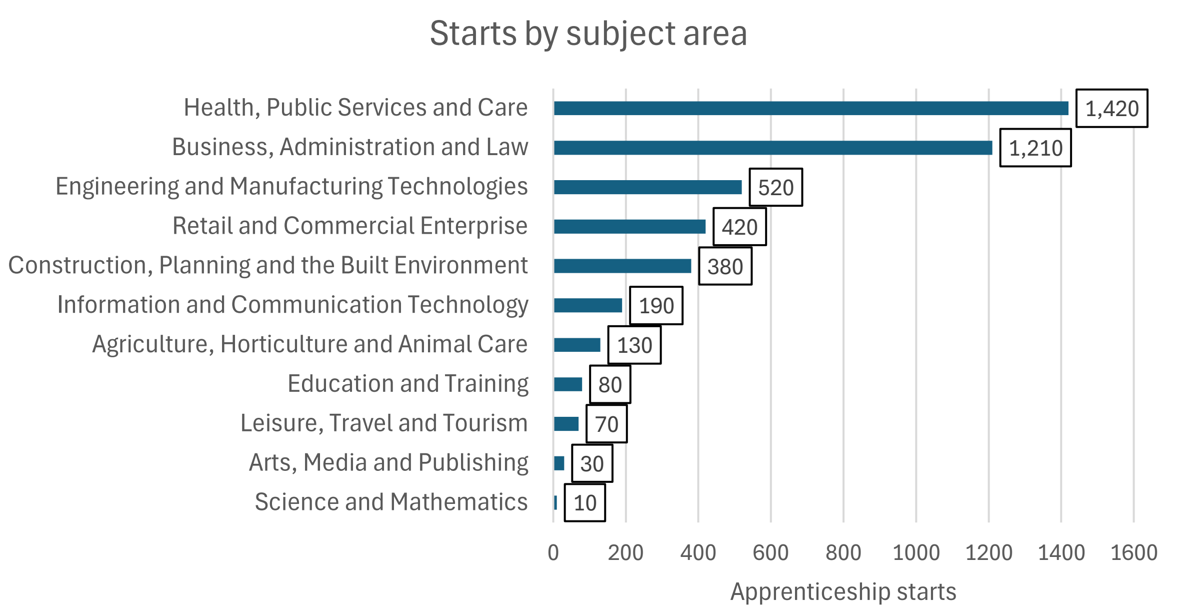
- National Skills Fund
- Skills Bootcamps
- Free Courses for Jobs
- 'Returnerships' for older adults

The New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) report in 2022 aims to establish coordinated pathways to help individuals move between key sectors and promote a culture of lifelong learning, highlighting initiatives like skills funding, sector-focused projects, apprenticeships, and virtual work experiences for young people. Overall, the goals focus on employer-led upskilling, clear progression routes, and equipping people with work-ready skills.

Apprenticeship starts by age group and type, Suffolk 2022/23

Age group	Intermediate Apprenticeship	Advanced Apprenticeship	Higher Apprenticeship	Total
Under 19	520	550	120	1,180
19-24	300	550	420	1,280
25 and over	270	800	920	1,980
Suffolk	**1,090**	**1,900**	**1,450**	**4,440**

- Almost half (44.6%) of apprenticeships started in Suffolk in 2022/23 were started by adults aged 25 and over.
- In the academic year 2022/23, there were 4,440 apprenticeships started in Suffolk. Of these, 1,090 were intermediate apprenticeships, 1,900 were advanced apprenticeships, and 1,450 were higher apprenticeships.
- The most popular apprenticeships started in Suffolk in 2022/23 were in health, public services and care (1,420 starts), business, administration and law (1,210 starts), and engineering and manufacturing technologies (520 starts).



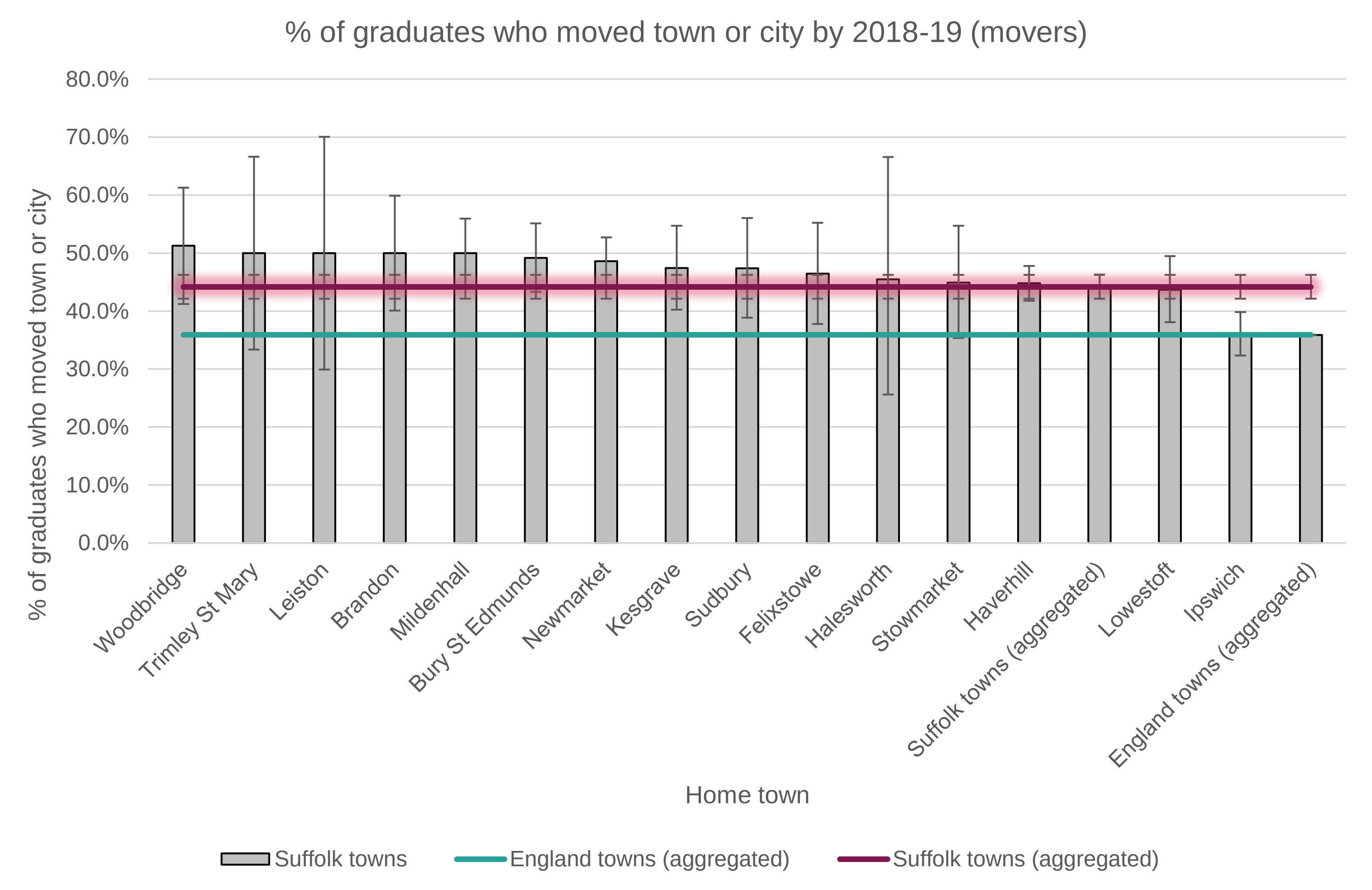
Source: Department for Education - Apprenticeships PowerBI dashboard

The Suffolk workforce is less skilled partly due to the fact more graduates are likely to leave the county after completing their degrees. Almost half (44.2%) of graduates who grew up and completed their GCSEs in Suffolk towns between 2008-11 had then moved town or city by 2018-19, with the most common region moved to listed as London.

- **People with a higher level of education are generally more likely to move away from their hometown**. This is important because people with more qualifications tend to have higher earning potential – if a town does not retain people once they become more qualified, it could suggest a lack of suitable local jobs, or a weaker local economy.
- Analysis from the ONS explores which English towns and cities (built-up areas) retain and attract people with higher levels of education, and which areas are more likely to lose these people. The data is compiled from state-school pupils in England who sat GCSEs between 2007/8 to 2010/11 school years. The data looks at how many of these pupils completed a degree or other post-16 education, and whether in 2018/19 these individuals lived in the same town that they lived in when they sat their GCSEs.

- While the data is only published for towns or cities, 17 areas within Suffolk are included. For these 17 areas, the GCSE cohort between 2008-11 included 20,495 Suffolk young people, 5,365 of which became graduates (26.2%), below the England average of 30.2%.
- Of the 5,365 Suffolk graduates, over 4 in 10 (44.2%) had moved town or city by 2018-19.
- The most common region that Suffolk graduates moved to was London.
- Just over a third (35.9%) of graduates in England moved town or city by 2018-19. In Suffolk, the lowest rate of graduates moving town or city in Suffolk was in Ipswich (36.0%), whereas the highest rate for graduates moving town or city within Suffolk was from Hadleigh, where almost 6 in 10 graduates moved away (59.3%).

*Confidence intervals are large in the adjacent chart, as the number of graduates from some Suffolk towns who moved by 2018-19 are small – for instance, 25 for Leiston and Halesworth, and 35 from Trimley St Mary.

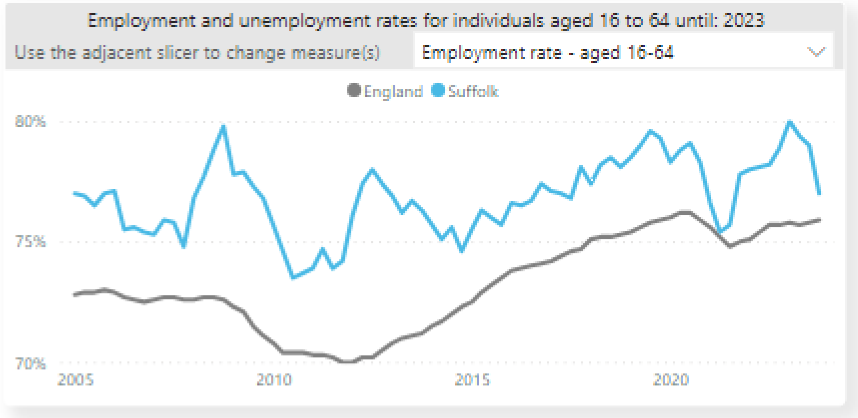


Source: IFS – Higher education enables graduates to move to places with better career prospects – but this leads to brain drain from the North and coastal areas, ONS Explore: Which towns attract people with advanced education?

Despite a lower level of skills and academic attainment compared to the England average, Suffolk has generally higher rates of employment compared to the England average. Additionally, a higher proportion of the Suffolk population are economically active, meaning they are either in work, or are looking for work, compared to England overall.

As of September 2023, there were an estimated:

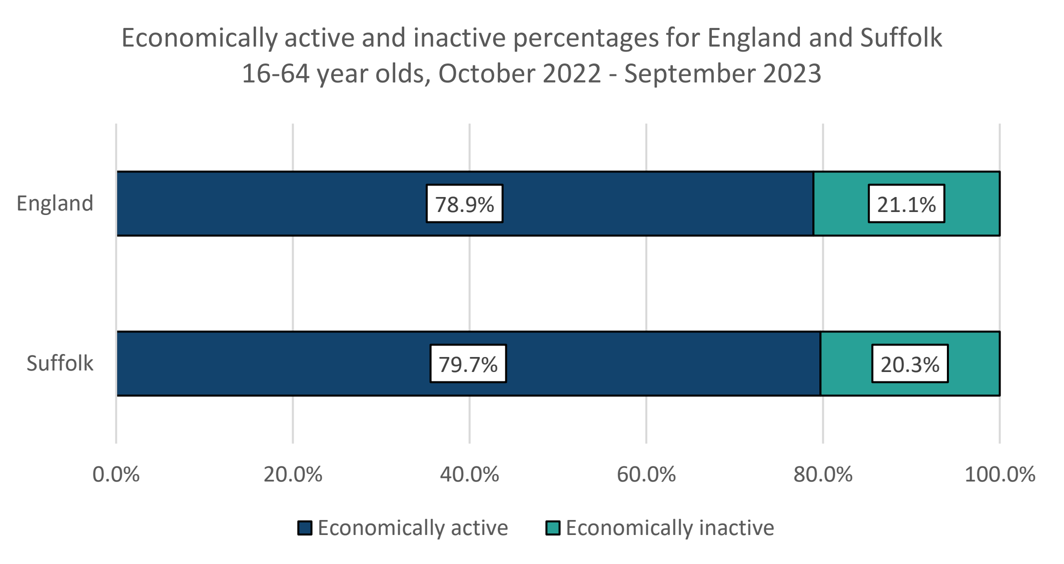
- 338,900 employed Suffolk residents aged 16-64 years old, representing 77.0% of all residents in that age group. The Suffolk employment rate exceeded the England average employment rate of 75.9% for the same period.



- 11,600 Suffolk residents aged 16-64 years old (3.3%) were unemployed, below the national average of 3.9% of all 16–64-year-olds.
- 65.1% of Suffolk 16-64 year olds are employees, and 11.8% are self-employed (51,800 people). A higher proportion of individuals in Suffolk are self-employed compared to the national average (9.4%).
- As of January 2024, 13.8% of Suffolk residents (63,759 people) aged 16-64 were receiving Universal credit, below the England average of 15.1%.

For the period between October 2022- September 2023:

- 79.7% (350,500) of people aged between 16-64 were economically active in Suffolk (includes those who are either employed or unemployed and excludes those who are economically inactive).
- This was higher than the England average, where 78.9% of all 16-64 year olds were classified as economically active.

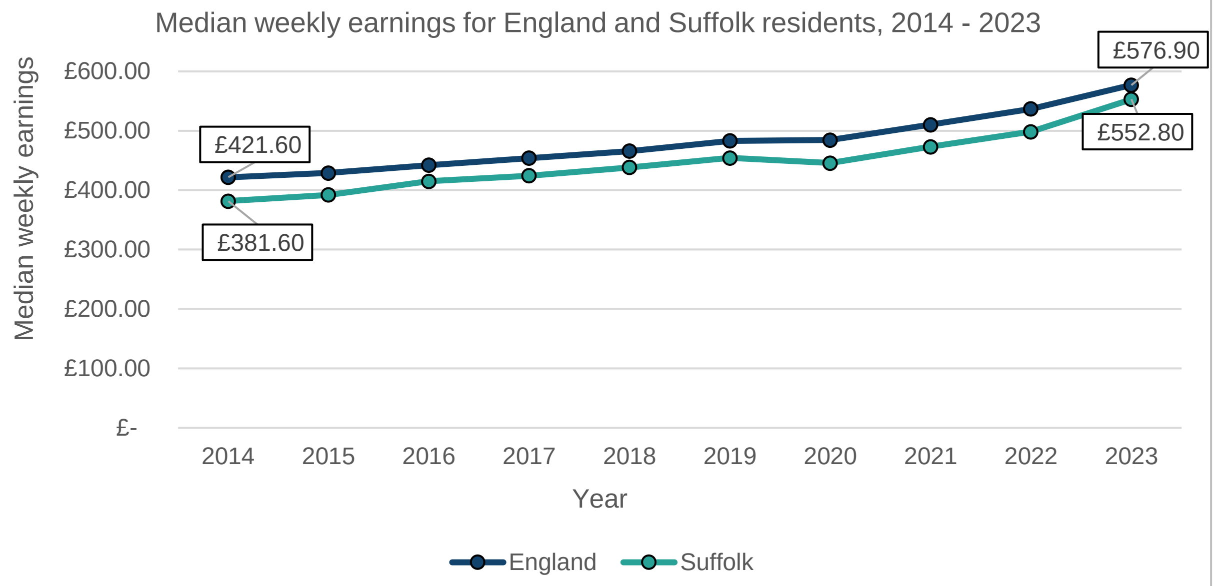


- While Suffolk has an older population (24% are aged 65 and over compared to 18% across England), 10.2% of those aged 65 and over in Suffolk are economically active, compared to 11.5% of individuals aged 65 and over across England.

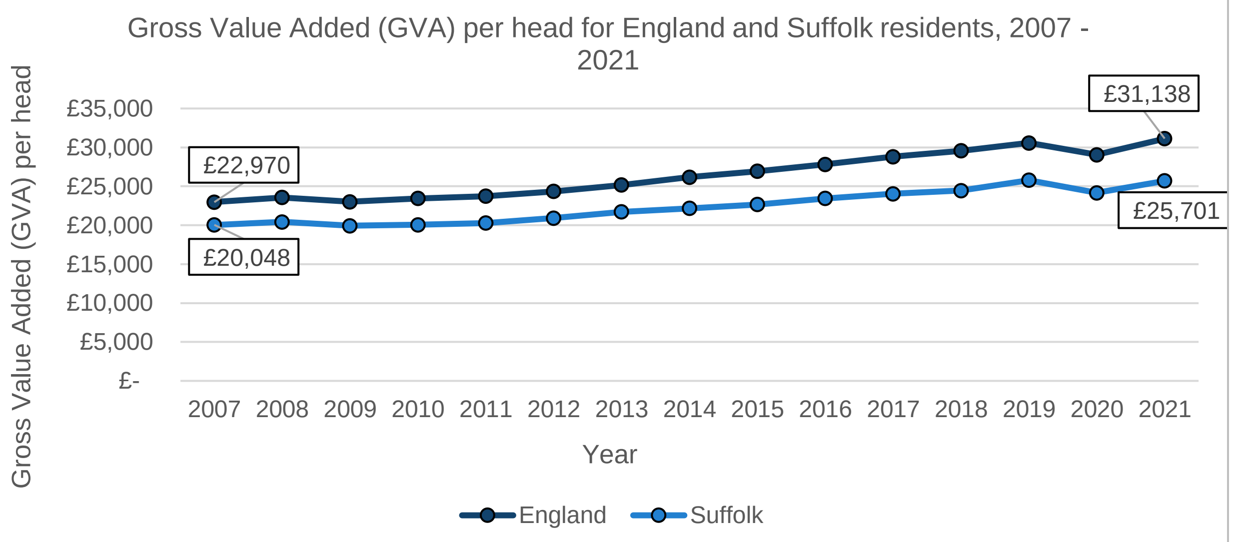
Source: ONS: Annual Population Survey

Suffolk residents' wages are consistently below the England average, and productivity measured by Gross Value Added (GVA) in Suffolk is below the England average. This difference in productivity is likely due to many factors including lower wages, the composition of industries and employers, and the types of jobs available to residents in Suffolk.

- **Suffolk residents earn less than the England average. In 2023, the median weekly pay for a Suffolk resident was £24.10 lower than the England average.**
- The lower quartile (bottom 25%) median weekly pay gap for Suffolk residents (£383.30) to the England average (£400.60) is smaller, at £17.30.



- Productivity is assessed by Gross Value Added (GVA) per full-time worker. It is a measure of economic productivity that shows the value of goods and services produced per person and an indicator of the economic output and standard of living of an area.
- Suffolk's GVA per head has been consistently below the England average each year between 2007-2021. The GVA per head for Suffolk in 2021 was £25,701, £5,437 less than the England average.
- GVA and wages are inter-linked; as long as the gap between median weekly earnings persists, so will the productivity gap.

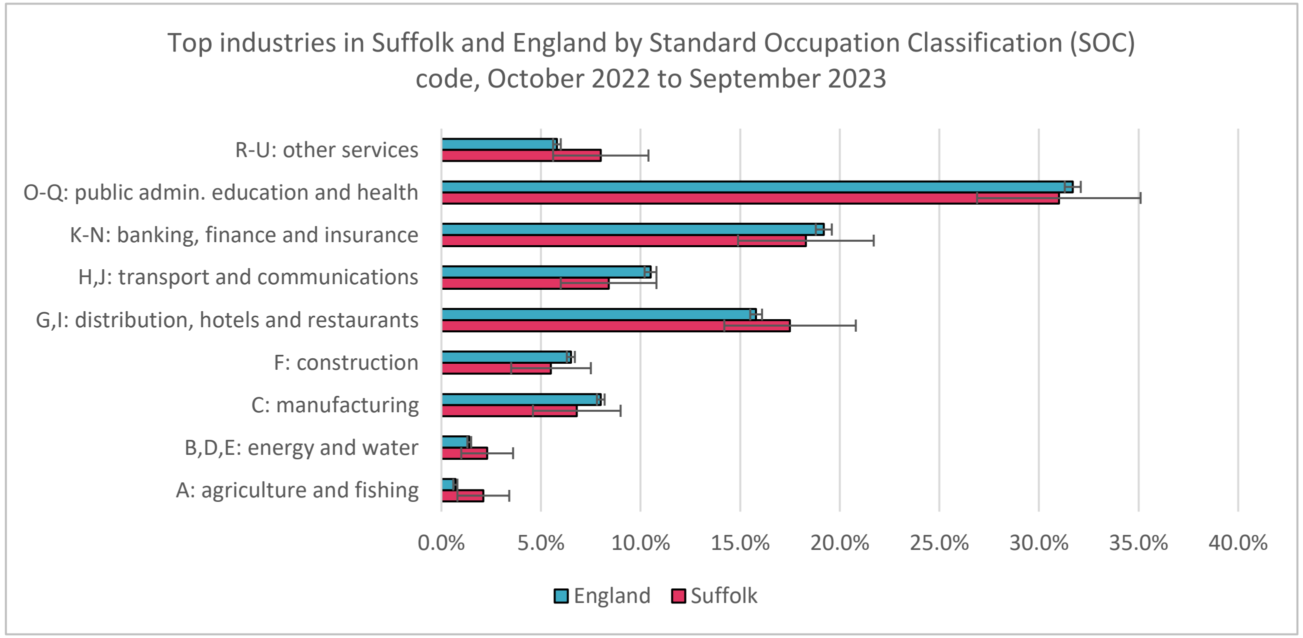


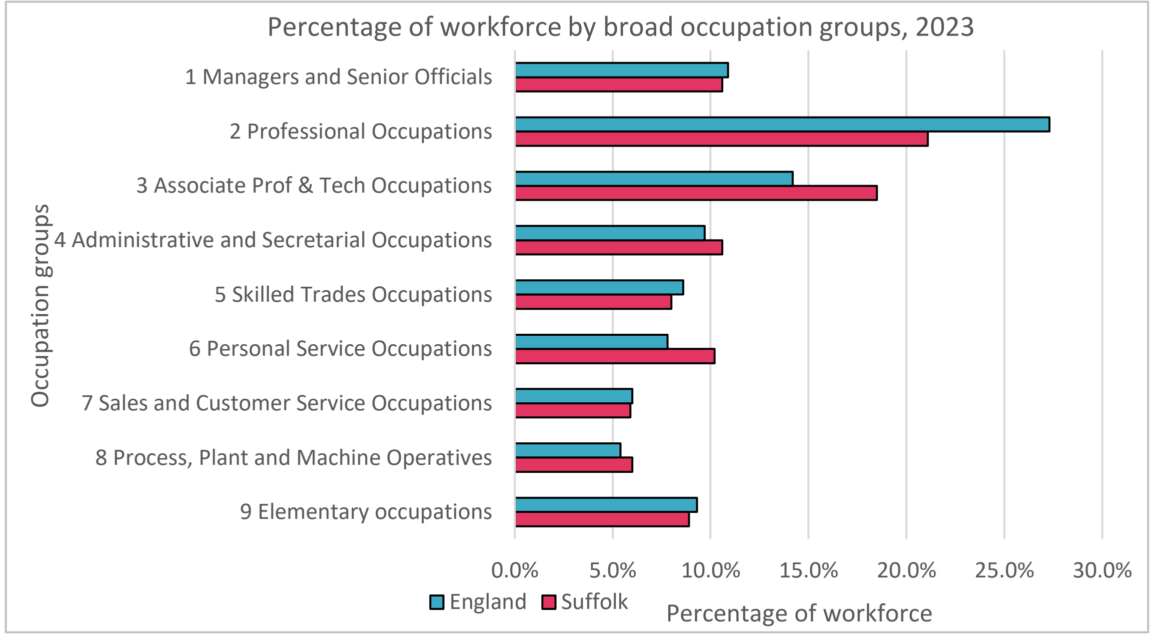
- A caveat of the GVA measure: it relates the value added by production activity in a region to the resident population of that region. It can therefore be subject to distortion because of commuting and variations in the age distribution of the population. Small areas can also be subject to large distortions – for instance, City of London has a very small resident population, but a very high GVA due to workers commuting into the area.
- As of the census day in 2021, 13.6% of Suffolk residents aged 16 and over and in employment were commuting between 20km and over, to 60km and over. Higher than the England average where 8.3% of England resident where commuting more than 20km for work. This figure is also likely to be higher now, given a high proportion of individuals (26.5% in Suffolk) were working from home during the pandemic.
- Suffolk's lower GVA could be distorted due to skilled workers commuting further for higher paid jobs in return for higher remuneration in other counties.

Source: ONS Regional gross value added per head and income components, Distance travelled to work (census 2021)

Public administration, education and health industries employ around 1 in 3 of the Suffolk workforce, however Suffolk is dominated by small businesses. A higher percentage (10.2%) of Suffolk's workforce work in personal service occupations (e.g. carers), compared to England (7.8%). This is likely to be linked to the demand from Suffolk's ageing population.

- The industry in Suffolk that employs the largest number of individuals are SOC codes O to Q which include public administration, education and health. These industries employ almost 1 in 3 (31.0%) of the Suffolk workforce, providing employment for 110,700 Suffolk residents between October 2022-September 2023.
- More Suffolk residents are likely to work in industries such as agriculture and fishing (2.3%) compared to the England average. A higher percentage (10.2%) of Suffolk's workforce work in personal service occupations (e.g. carers), compared to England (7.8%). This is likely to be linked to the demand from Suffolk's ageing population.
- In 2023, Suffolk had fewer individuals working in professional occupations (21.1%) compared to the England average (27.3%). Professional occupations mostly require a degree or equivalent qualification, with some occupations requiring postgraduate qualifications and/or a formal period of experience-related training.
- A greater proportion of individuals in Suffolk work in associate professional and technical occupations (18.5%) compared to the England average (14.2%). Associate professional and technical occupations include roles such as graphic designers and marketing and commercial managers. These occupations often require an associated high-level vocational qualification, often involving a substantial period of full-time training or further study.
- There were 36,550 employers in 2023. Suffolk is dominated by small employers. Most employers in Suffolk have fewer than 10 employees – 30,650 organisations of this type exist in 2023. There were only 110 individual sites within the county that employed 250 or more people in 2023.



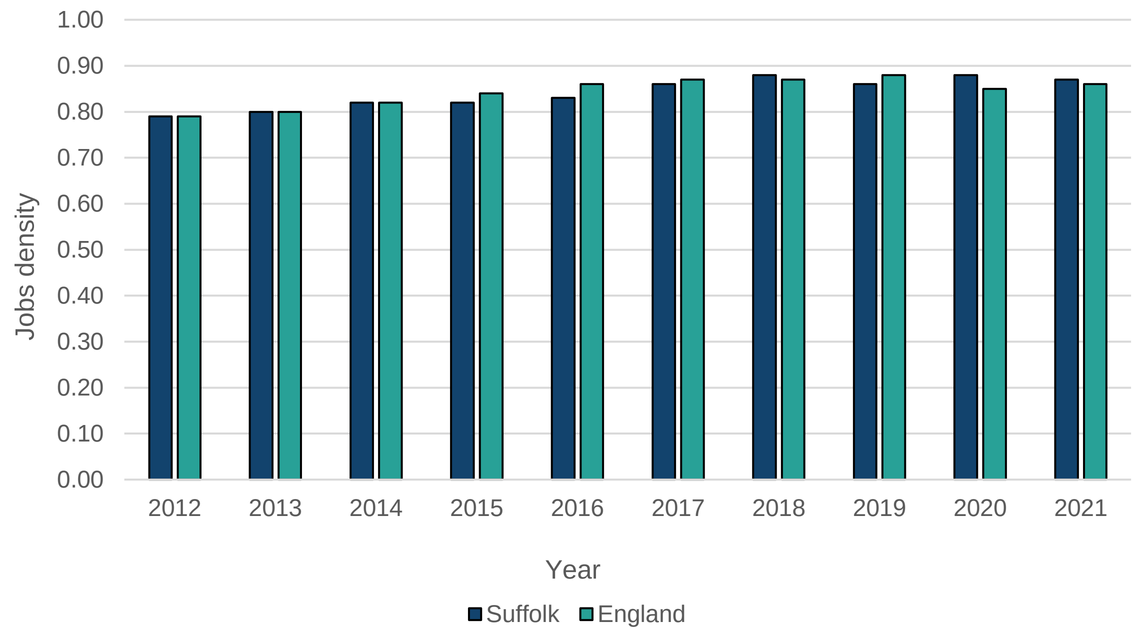


Source: Nomis Annual Population Survey/Labour Force Survey and Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, SOC 2020 Volume 1: structure and descriptions of unit groups

The numbers of jobs available in Suffolk has increased over the last 10 years, but there are still more people of working age in Suffolk than jobs available, according to the jobs density ratio.

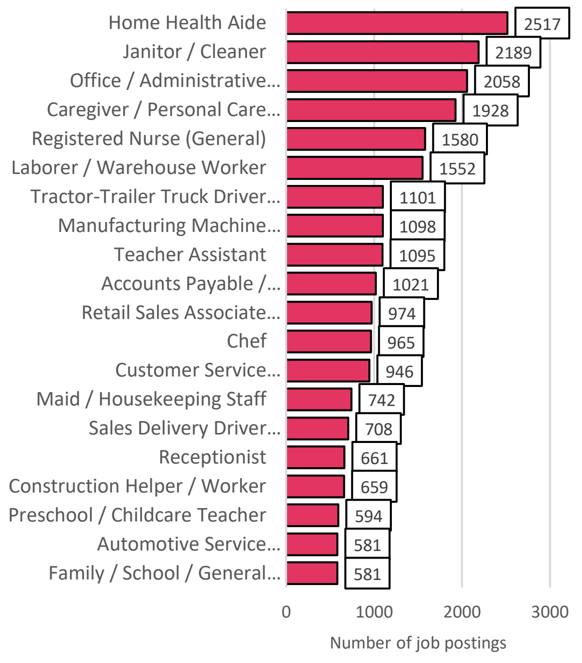
- **Jobs density is the number of jobs per resident aged 16-64 years old. For example, a jobs density of 1.0 would mean that there is one job for every resident of working age.**
- In Suffolk in 2021, there were 0.87 jobs available for each resident of working age; similar to the England average of 0.86. This figure has increased since 2012 (0.79 in Suffolk), meaning more jobs have become available for each resident of working age in the county.
- The number of jobs in Suffolk has increased by almost 40,000 over the last 10 years' worth of data (355,000 in 2012 to 393,000 in 2021).

Suffolk and England jobs density, 2012-2021

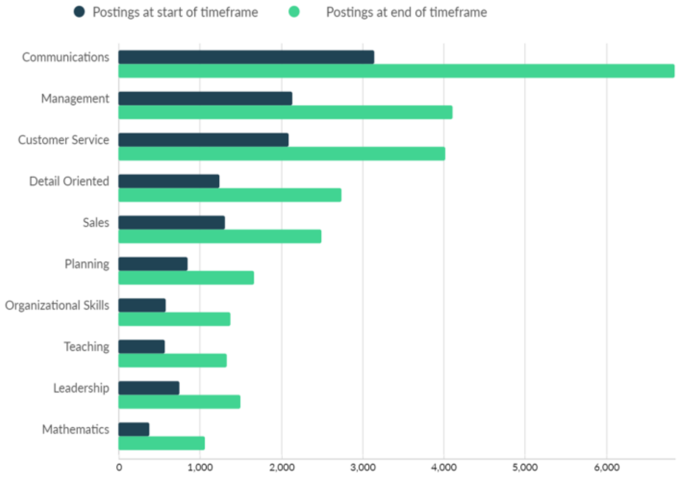


- **Between 2022-23, there has been demand for job postings for people in the care and health sectors.**
- There has also been an increased demand for people working in low-skilled manual jobs within Suffolk. Most of the top skills requested in job listings are common, soft skills – rather than specific, specialised skills being sought after.

Suffolk unique job postings by occupation, September 2022 – August 2023



Top skills sought in job postings, Suffolk, Sep 2022 – August 2023



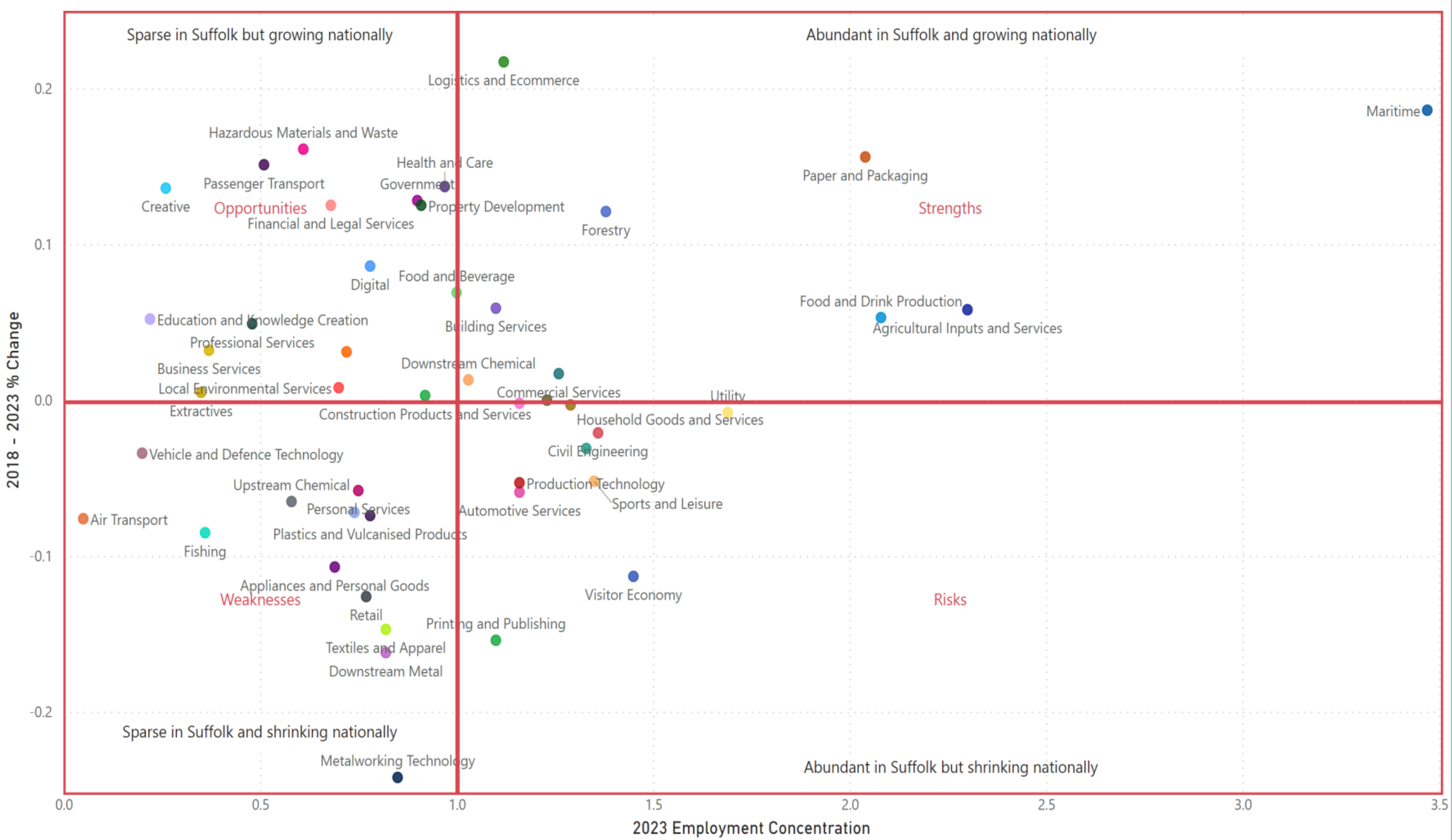
Source: [Nomis: Jobs density and Lightcast, Job Posting Analytics and Hot and Cold Skills by Job Postings]

Based on the employment concentration in Suffolk, compared to the national percentage change of job postings over the last 5 years, maritime work, food and drink production, services, logistics and ecommerce are all potential growth industries in Suffolk.
However, key areas of risk (where there is a high employment concentration in Suffolk, but decreasing nationally) are the visitor economy, sports and leisure, and publishing. This may put key sectors of the Suffolk population at risk of insecure employment.

- **The Suffolk Office of Data and Analytics (SODA) conducted an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of Suffolk's industries, comparing national job growth to the concentration of Suffolk's employing industries.**
- The X axis displays the job concentration in Suffolk in 2023. The Y axis displays the England percentage change in job postings between 2018-2023.
- Several industries are growing in Suffolk and England – most notably maritime work, as well as food and drink production, agricultural inputs and services, paper and packaging, and logistics and ecommerce.
- Industries at risk (a high employment concentration in Suffolk, but shrinking nationally) include the victor economy, sports and leisure, and printing and publishing.
- Opportunities exist for industries where there is job growth nationally, but not currently a high concentration of jobs in Suffolk are in: hazardous materials and waste, passenger transport, creative and financial, and legal service.
- Industries declining in England, and with a smaller concentration of Suffolk employees include: metalworking technology, air transport, fishing, retail, and textiles and apparel.

*The national change between 2018-23 will include the impact of the pandemic, where industries such as visitor economy would have been substantially affected.

Suffolk Industry Strengths and Weaknesses



Source: Suffolk Office of Data and Analytics – September 2023 Economy and Employment Update

Suffolk County Council
Public Health & Communities

Analysis from the Office for National Statistics in 2019 found potential automation of occupations may have an impact on the labour market in the future. This may occur particularly in routine occupations, a key component of the Suffolk workforce.
AI should not cause mass technological unemployment, but analysis in 2021 suggests this may lead to changes in the structure of employment across occupations, regions, and sectors.

- Artificial intelligence (AI) will likely have a significant impact on the UK economy and society, but the scale of the impact and how fast remains unclear. It is estimated that 10-30% of jobs could be automated by AI, which has the potential to increase productivity and create new high-paying jobs for the UK economy. For people in the workforce to benefit from the advantages of advancing AI, the UK education system and employers need to make sure workers have the right skills to utilise AI effectively.

- Around 1.5 million jobs in England (7.4% of jobs) are at high risk of automation, where technology could replace some human tasks. This is a slight decrease from 8.1% in 2011.
- Jobs most at risk of automation tend to be routine, repetitive and lower-skilled roles like waiters/waitresses, shelf fillers, and elementary sales occupations.
- Jobs least at risk are high-skilled roles like medical practitioners, higher education teaching professionals, and senior professionals in education.
- Generally, areas with more high-skilled jobs have lower overall risk of automation.
- Women (70.2% of high risk jobs), young people aged 20-24 (15.7%), and part-time workers are most likely to be in roles at high risk of automation.
- Risk of automation is highest for 20-24 year olds as they often enter retail, sales and other roles where automation is likely. Risk decreases with age as workers gain skills and experience.

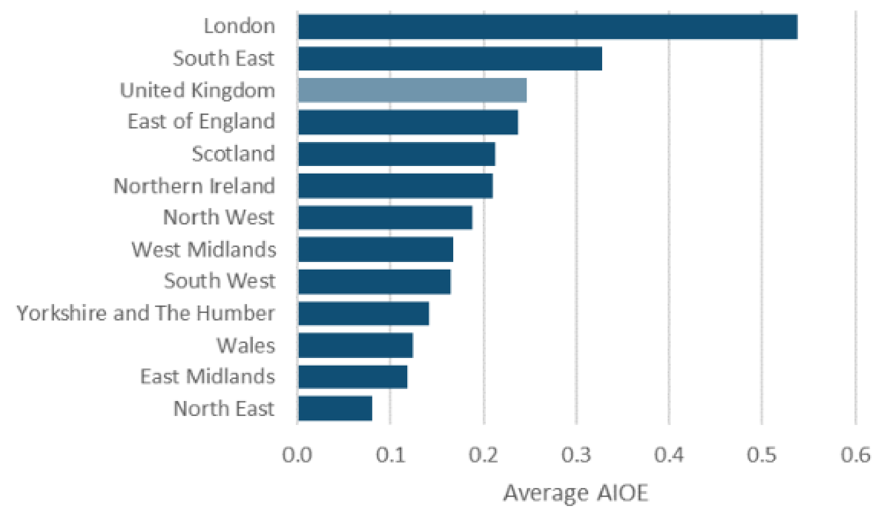
The impact of AI on UK jobs and training report by the UK government in November 2023 stated that *"Research by the International Labor Organization (ILO) suggests that most jobs and industries are only partly exposed to automation and are more likely to be complemented rather than substituted by generative AI like ChatGPT."*

Other findings include:

- **Professional occupations are more exposed to AI, especially in finance, law, business management, and teaching roles.**
- **The finance and insurance sectors has highest AI exposure of any sector.** The annual population survey for October 2022-23 states that 65,300 of the Suffolk workforce work in the banking, finance, and insurance sectors.
- Other highly exposed sectors: information & communication, professional services, property, public administration, and education.
- Workers in London and the South East have highest AI exposure due to the concentration of professional roles.
- Employees with higher qualifications are typically in more AI-exposed roles. Employees with a level 6 qualification (equivalent to a degree) are more likely to work in a job with higher exposure to AI than employees with a level 3 qualification (equivalent to A-Levels).
- Lower-level construction, manufacturing, and transportation qualifications have lower AI exposure.
- Jobs are more likely to be augmented than fully automated by AI.
- Customer service and admin roles are among the most exposed occupations in UK.

The below figure is taken from the November 2023 DfE document on the Impact of AI on UK jobs and training. The figures are constructed by taking a weighted average of AI Occupational Exposure (AIOE) scores across occupations for each geographical area.

Figure 3: Exposure to AI by geography



Source: Office for National Statistics: Which occupations are at highest risk of being automated?, Gov.uk Impact of AI on UK jobs and training, The Potential Impact of Artificial Intelligence on UK Employment and the Demand for Skills, Annual Population Survey – 10c Employment by occupation (SOC2020) and industry (SIC2007)

How do work and health relate?

Meaningful employment in a positive work environment not only provides financial security but also offers a sense of purpose, social connections, and opportunities for personal growth, all of which contribute to overall wellbeing.

Many studies have demonstrated a strong relationship between employment status, and physical and mental health outcomes.

Unemployment, job insecurity and stressful work environments can negatively impact health.

There is also evidence that shows good quality work protects against social exclusion through the provision of:

- Income
- Social interaction
- A core role
- Identity and purpose

There is clear evidence that unemployment is bad for health, and is associated with an increased risk of mortality and morbidity, including:

- Limiting long-term illness
- Cardiovascular disease
- Poor mental health
- Suicide
- Health harming behaviours

Unemployment can be a risk factor for various health conditions. Long-term health conditions including MSK such as back pain can also cause unemployment. This is referred to as 'health-related worklessness'.

Across the UK, 185.6 million days were lost to sickness absence in 2022; 2.6% of all working days.

'Good work' means having not only a work environment that is safe, also having a sense of security, autonomy, good line management and communication within an organisation.

The Good work: Taylor review of modern working practices shows that a good working environment is good for health, and that a bad working environment (characterised by low levels of job control and organisational fairness, and a high effort-reward imbalance) may contribute to poor health.

Employment is a key social determinant of health, with complex interactions in both directions. Work affects health, especially through job quality factors like control and balance; and health affects work, via ability to obtain and retain jobs.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) Healthy workplaces: a model for action shows that healthier, active and engaged employees are more productive, have lower levels of sickness absence and presenteeism. Good people management practices can have benefits for organisational performance and employee wellbeing.

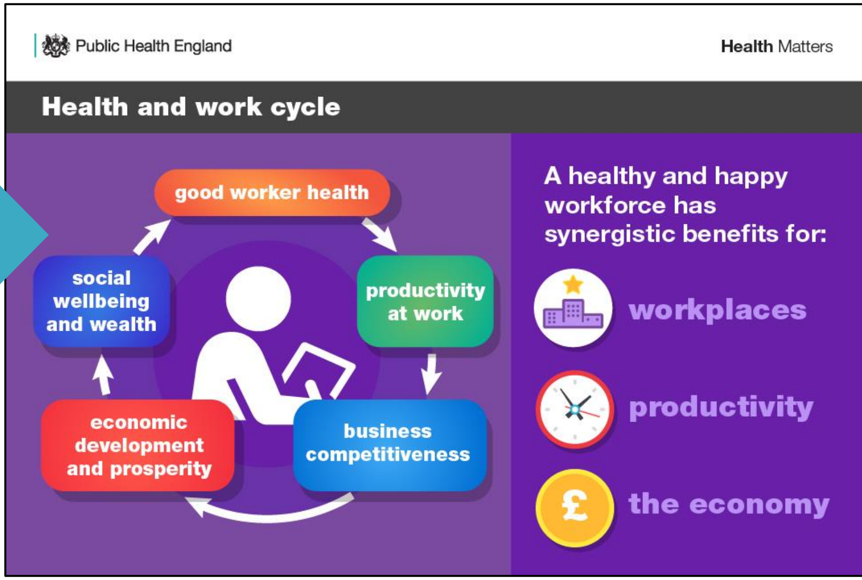
This OHID infographic details the impact ill-health has on lost productivity in terms of the number of working-days lost each year.

Source: Guidance: Health matters: health and work, ONS sickness absence in the UK labour market, 2022

Most adults dedicate a significant portion of their time to work, and the nature of our jobs and workplaces can significantly influence our health and overall wellbeing.

- Being in good work is better for your health than being out of work. 'Good work' is defined as having a safe and secure job with good working hours and conditions, supportive management and opportunities for training and development.
- Good work improves health and wellbeing across people's lives, not only from an economic standpoint but also in terms of quality of life.
- Unemployment harms health; employment protects wellbeing and prevents social exclusion.
- Health issues like mental illness, musculoskeletal conditions, and disabilities can prevent people from working.
- Improving health could save £100 billion annually by reducing worklessness and absenteeism; collaboration across sectors is needed to achieve this potential saving.

This OHID infographic explains the health and work cycle, and how good employee health benefits the wider society.



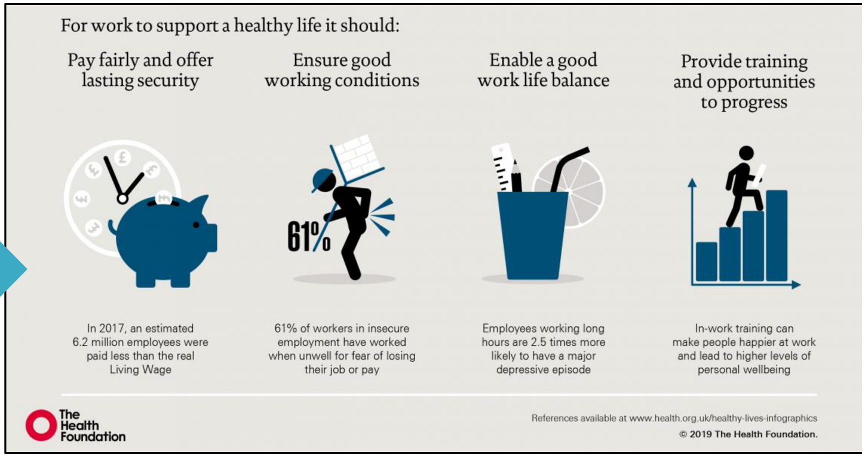
The cost of ill health

- For employers, the benefits of a healthy workforce are apparent – healthy staff take less time off sick, are more productive and do not necessarily need to retire early.
- An unhealthy workforce negatively impacts the economy due to lost productivity, a reduction in income tax generation, increases in long-term sickness, increased informal caregiving and increased healthcare costs.
- The costs of ill health to the UK government is estimated to be around £50 billion a year, as a result of benefit payments, additional health costs, taxes and national Insurance.

Supporting a healthy and productive workforce

- Supporting people with health issues to obtain or retain work and be productive in jobs, is vital for the economic success and wellbeing of each community and industry.
- It is especially important to help people with long-term conditions and disabilities gain and maintain employment and economic independence as they age, due to the difficulties encountered in obtaining and retaining a job.

This Health Foundation infographic explains the principles of how work supports a healthy life.



Source: OHID Guidance – Health matters: health and work (2019), The Health Foundation – How is work good for our health?

As the population of the UK ages, the number of people with one or more long-term health conditions and limiting long-term conditions will increase. People are also likely to be working for longer, with increases to the state pension age. Furthermore, many young people are out of work due to ill health; these young people are likely to be under-qualified.

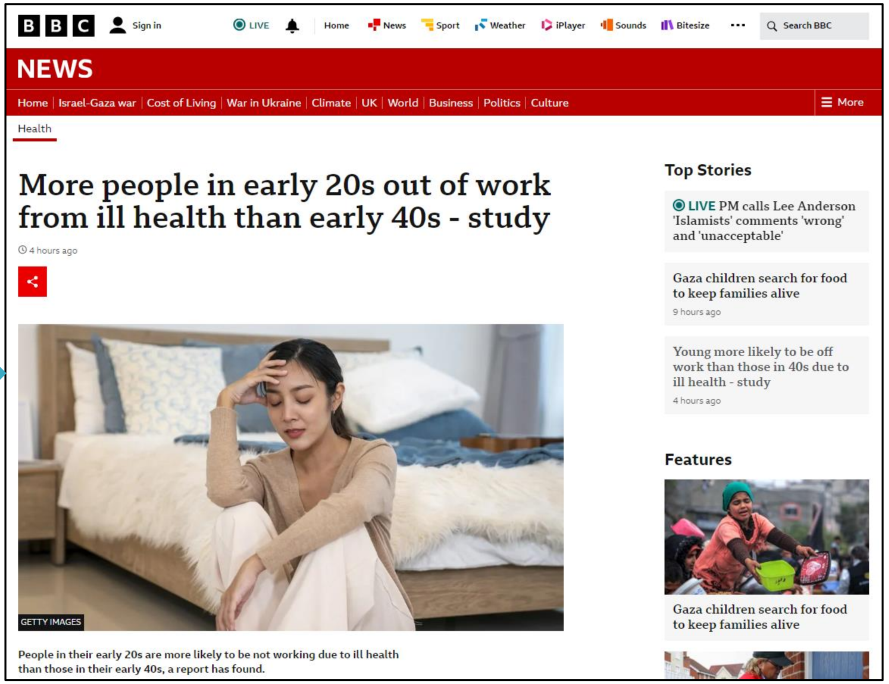
- **Around 12.8 million (almost 1 in 3/31%) of working aged people in the UK have a long-term health condition**.
- One in 4 UK employees reported having a physical health condition, and 1 in 5 of those employees with physical health conditions also reported having a mental health condition.
- People with one health condition have an employment rate of 61%, while those with 5 or more have an employment rate of 23%.
- Employment rates are lowest among disabled people, with only 51.3% of disabled people in work, meaning there is a substantial employment rate gap in the UK between disabled and non-disabled people (81.4% in employment).
- Almost 9 in 10 disabled people that are out of work are economically inactive (not actively looking for work, not waiting to start a job, not in full-time education).

This OHID infographic describes the heath of the working population within the UK.

The Resolution Foundation report in February 2024 explores how to improve young people's mental health, education, and employment. The report found:

- Record numbers of young people in their early 20s are not working due to ill health compared to those in their early 40s. This is a reversal from the past when older people were more likely to not be working due to ill-health.
- Poor mental health among young people is increasing over the last 20 years. In 2021/22, more than 1 in 3 (34%) of 18-24 year olds reported mental health disorders compared to 24% in 2000.
- 79% of 18-24 year olds who are workless due to ill health only have GCSE qualifications or below, compared to 34% of all in that age group.
- Poor childhood mental health leads to lower GCSE attainment. Those with poor mental health aged 11-14 are 3 times more likely to not pass 5 GCSEs.
- The Resolution Foundation report also calls for better mental health support in colleges and preventing young people leaving school with low qualifications.

The increase in the number of young people out of work due to ill-health has recently attracted media attention.



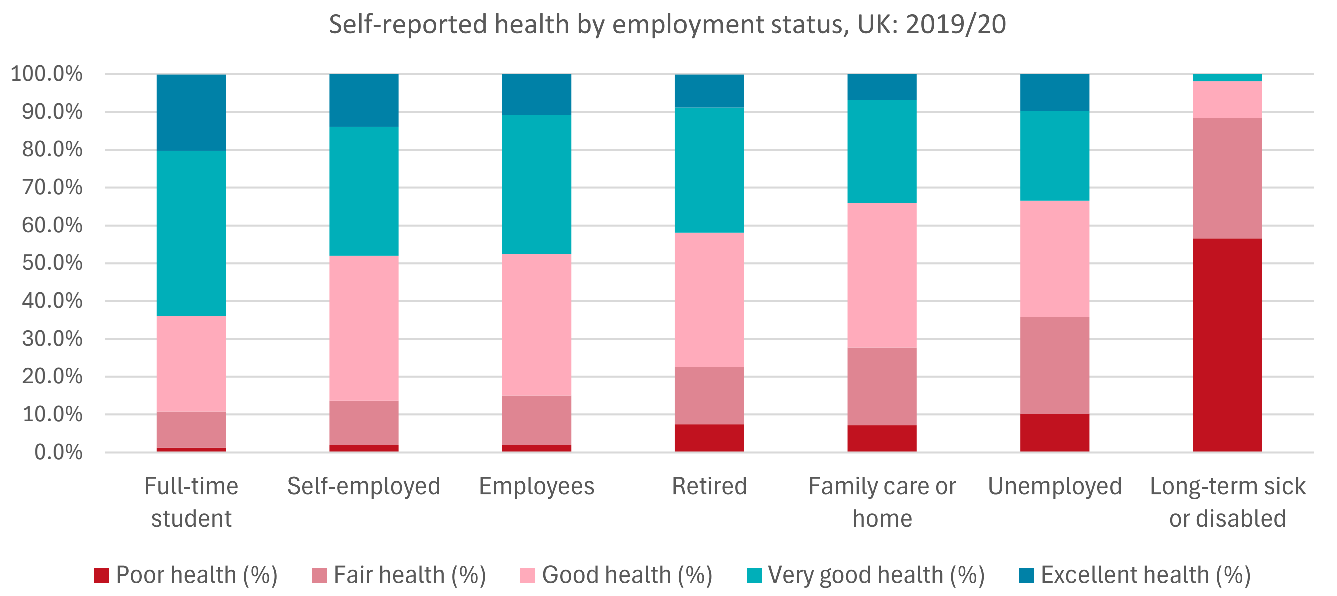
Source: Guidance: Health matters: health and work, Resolution Foundation, BBC February 24 article

There is a strong link between unemployment and ill health. The relationship between the two might run in both directions – as cause and consequence – but it is likely that policies to combat unemployment would also improve general health.

- The UK's high levels of employment means that attention should shift from the association between unemployment and health, to the impact that the quality of work has on health.
- Job insecurity (for example, zero-hours contracts) receive a lot of policy and media attention. This is only one aspect of low-quality work. **A job can be secure and also considered low quality.**
- **Over one-third (36%) of employees report being in low-quality work. Of these, 15% report experiencing poorer health – which is twice as high than for those with no negative job aspects, at 7%.**
- Low-quality work can trigger stress, and the damage stress does to the body builds over time.
- Low-quality work is unequally distributed across society, both in terms of geography and demography, reflecting broader inequalities. Certain groups are more likely to be in low-quality work including younger adults, people in more routine occupations, and members of black and minority ethnic groups.

- The Health Foundation estimates that 3.7 million workers in England will have a major illness by 2040.
- It is also predicted that there will be no improvement in health inequalities for working-age adults by 2040, with 80% of the increase in major illness in more deprived areas.

- **Analysis from the Health Foundation found that across the UK, unemployed people are more than five times as likely to have self-reported poor health than employed individuals**.
- Only 33% of unemployed people report their health as either very good or excellent, compared to 48% of people in employment.
- Unemployed people have the worst health of all groups, other than disabled people and people with a long-term illness. Unemployed people are five times more likely to report poor health than employees: 10.2% compared to 1.9%.
- Working-age (16-64) unemployed people are also more likely to report poor health than retired people, at 10.2% compared to 7.4%.
- Only 33.4% of unemployed people report their health as either very good or excellent, compared to 47.7% of employees.



Source: The Health Foundation - how employment status affects our health, The UK Household Longitudinal Study, The Health Foundation – what the quality of work means for our health, Health Foundation – health inequalities in 2040

Health conditions and disabilities impact employment rates both nationally and locally, and the employment rate for disabled people is lower across all age groups.

- **Nearly 1 in 4 (24%) of working-age people across England are classed as disabled. In Suffolk as of the 2021 census, 138,987 people were classified as disabled under the Equality Act (18.3% of the Suffolk population in 2021).**
- The number of people reporting a long-term health condition and the number classed as disabled continues to rise. This increase is associated with an increase in people reporting mental health conditions and “other health problems or disabilities”.
- Nearly one in three people classed as being disabled one year were no longer classed as being disabled the next year.
- The employment rate for disabled people across England was 53.6% compared to 82.5% for non-disabled people (Quarter 2 2023).
- Those with more than one health condition are much less likely to be in employment. 64.9% of disabled people with one health condition were employed compared to just 29.3% of those with 5 or more conditions (2022/23).
- Disabled people with mental health conditions had lower employment rates (48.9%) than those with musculoskeletal conditions (57.5%) as their main condition (2022/23).
- The disability employment gap was 28.9 percentage points compared to 4.2 points lower 10 years prior (Quarter 2 2023).

The disability employment gap is wider for:

- Men
- Older (aged 50 to 64) people
- People with no qualifications
- People living in social housing
- People living alone

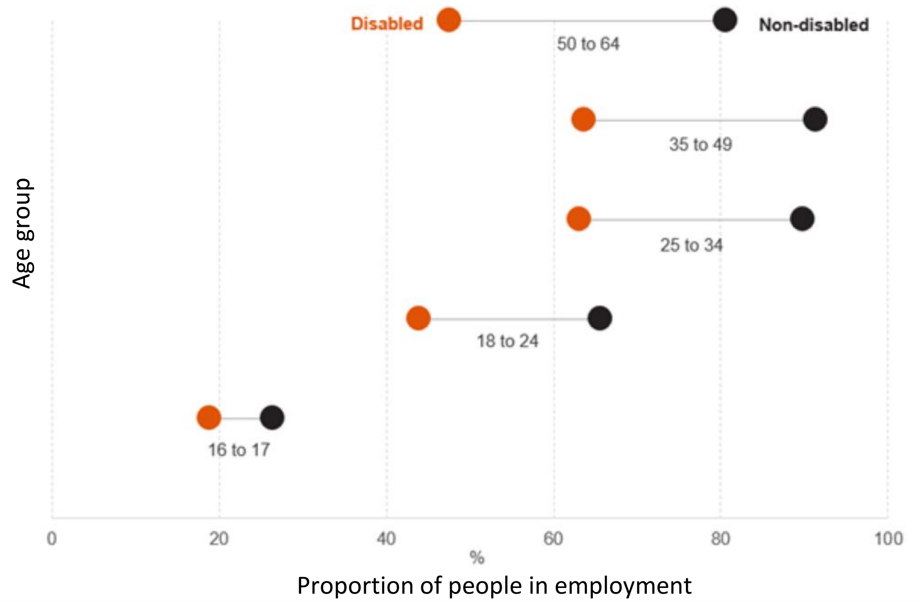
Source: DWP: The employment of disabled people 2023

Disabled people were more likely than non-disabled people to be:

- working in Health, Retail and Education
- working in lower-skilled occupations
- self-employed
- working part-time (and subsequently less hours)
- working in the public sector
- working for a small employer (less than 50)
- underemployed (looking for and available to start another job or work longer hours)
- leaving work for health reasons

The disability employment gap increases with age across England as shown in the figure below:

Proportion of people in employment by disability status and age, people aged 16 to 64 years, UK, 2022/2023



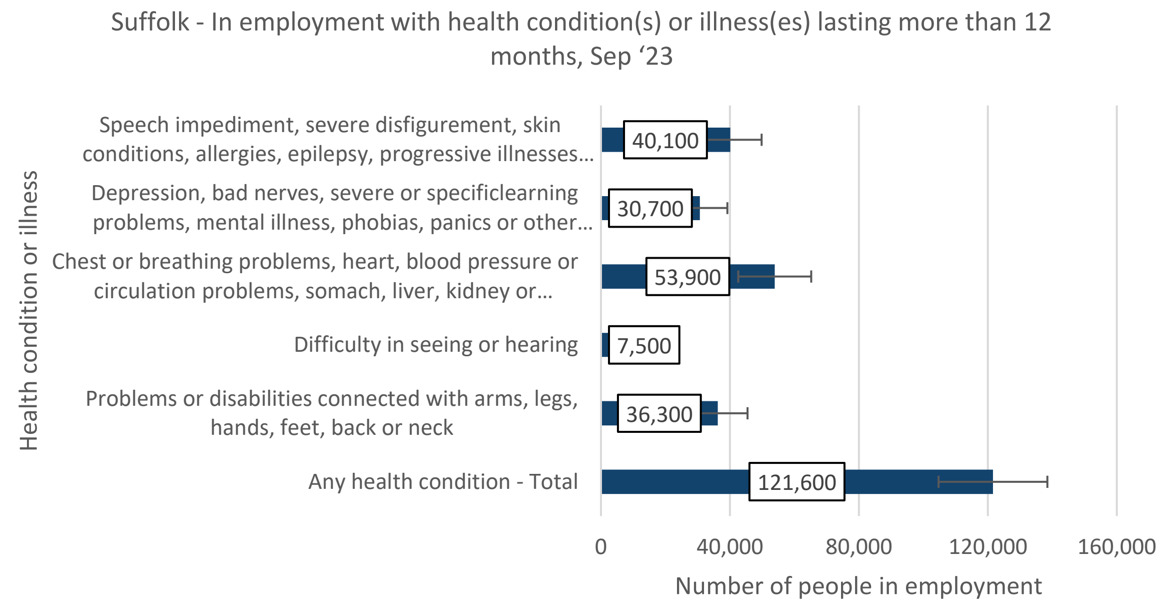
Local data indicates that as of September 2023, there were 121,600 people in employment in Suffolk who had a health condition or limiting illness lasting over 12 months.

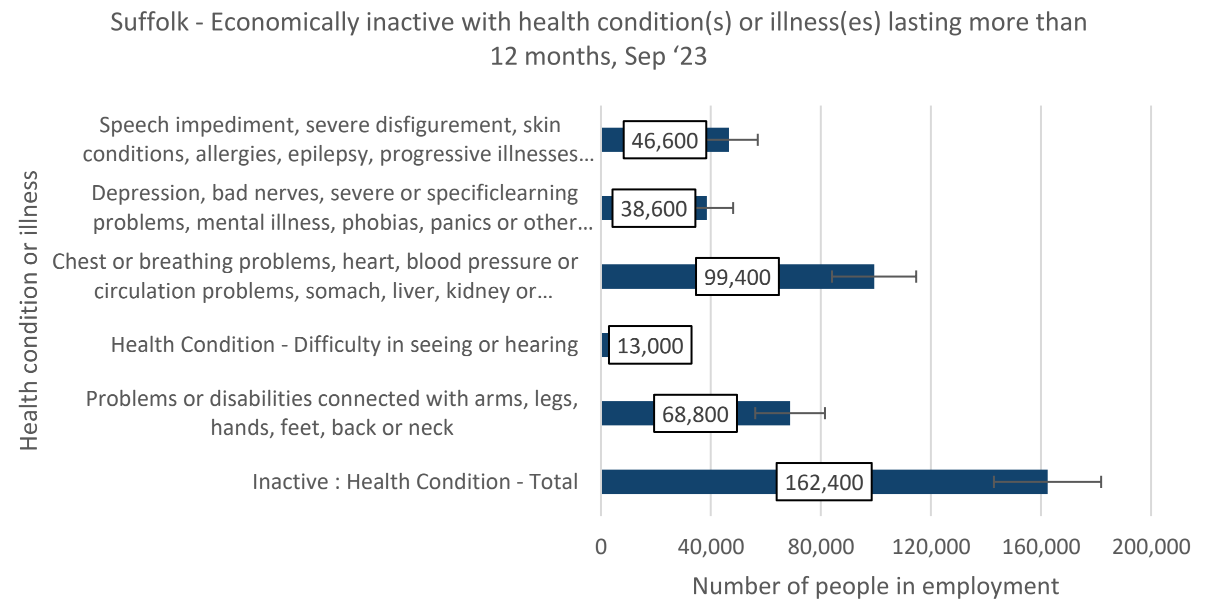
Latest data from the annual population survey for September 2023 provides figures on the economic activity of those with health conditions or illnesses lasting more than 12 months.

- **As of September 2023, there were 121,600 people in employment in Suffolk who had a health condition or limiting illness lasting over the previous 12 months.**
- The most common types of conditions were chest, breathing, heart, blood pressure, circulation, stomach, liver, kidney or digestive problems, and diabetes, affecting 53,900 people.
- Mental ill-health including depression, nervous disorders, and mental illness affected 30,700 people in employment with a long-term health condition.

For those that are economically inactive in Suffolk in September 2023:

- **A high proportion (68,800) of economically inactive people have problems with their arms, legs, hands, feet, back or neck. This suggests musculoskeletal conditions are a key driver of economic inactivity.**
- Mental health issues also play a major role, with 38,600 economically inactive due to conditions like depression, nervous disorders and mental illness.
- Chest, breathing and circulatory problems, along with diabetes, affect a large number (99,400) of economically inactive people. This indicates addressing these chronic health issues could help improve economic participation.



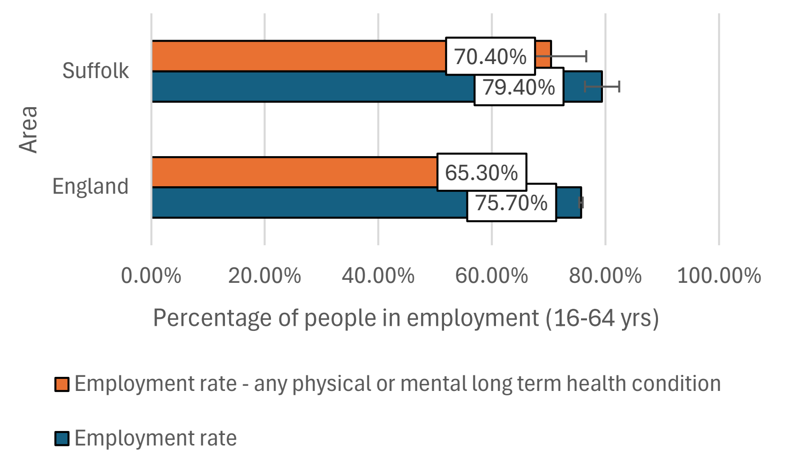


Source: [Nomis – annual population survey, T03b Economic activity of those with health conditions or illnesses lasting more than 12 months]

Both national and local employment figures are significantly lower for individuals that have either a learning disability or are in contact with secondary mental health services.

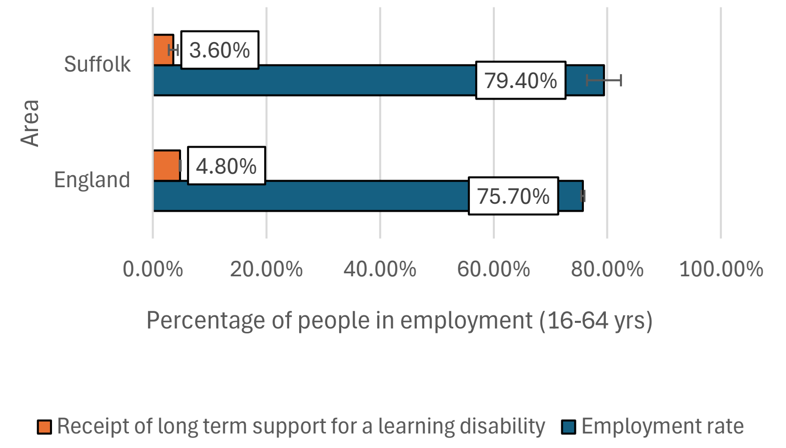
- **Employment outcomes vary significantly when individuals have other needs. For instance, the percentage of individuals employed decreases slightly below average when a person has a single physical or mental long-term health condition.**

Employment rate for individuals with any physical or mental long term health condition, 2022/23



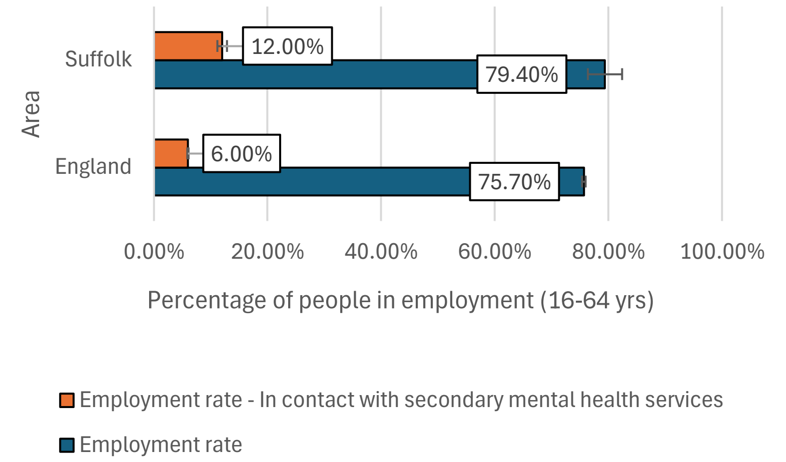
- **While 79.4% of Suffolk adults aged 16-64 are employed between 2022/23, only 70.4% of the population with a physical or mental long term health condition are employed – 9.0 percentage points fewer.**
- Nationally, this gap between the overall employment rate, and the employment rate for those with any physical or mental long term health condition is 10.4 percentage points.

Employment rate for individuals in receipt of long-term support for a learning disability, 2021/22



- **In 2021/22, only 3.6% of individuals in Suffolk receiving long term support for a learning disability were in employment*.**
- This is statistically significantly lower than the England average, where 4.8% of individuals in receipt of long-term support for a learning disability were employed.

Employment rate for individuals in contact with secondary mental health services, 2020/21



- **Between 2020/21, 12.0% of Suffolk adults aged 16-64 that were in contact with secondary mental health services were in paid employment.**
- This rate is statistically significantly higher than the England average during the same period – double the England average of 6.0%.

*This indicator is based on a subgroup of the population with learning disabilities. The definition of individuals 'known to the council' is restricted to those adults of working age with a primary support reason of learning disability support who received long term support during the year in the settings of residential, nursing and community. As it is not known what proportion of the population with a learning disability this captures and how this varies between areas it is not possible to know the impact of this on area level variation, therefore differences between areas should be interpreted with caution.

Source: OHID Fingertips – Employment indicators

Many days of work are lost each week due to sickness absence in Suffolk. There are opportunities to promote the creation and sustainability of healthy workplaces in Suffolk. Creating healthy workplaces involves supporting employees with disabilities or health conditions, while also proactively maintaining the wellbeing of currently healthy workers through positive workplace policies and environments. Consideration should also be given to how menopause can affect people at work, utilizing available guidance.

OHID's 'Health matters: health and work guidance' states that jobs must be sustainable and offer a minimum level of quality, including:

- A decent living wage
- Opportunities for in-work development
- Flexibility to enable people to balance work and family life
- Protection from adverse working conditions that can damage health

17.5% of people in Suffolk report a long-term musculoskeletal (MSK) problem in 2023. According to Arthritis Research UK, only 59.4% of people of working age with an MSK condition are in work.

1 in 6 employees in the UK reported having a mental health condition, and stress, depression and anxiety are leading causes of sickness absence.

- People with mental health conditions are also often over-represented in high-turnover, low-paid and often part-time or temporary work.
- Being in good employment reduces the risk of mental health conditions such as depression and psychological distress but, for some people, can also be a cause of stress and common mental ill-health.

- Analysis from the Labour Force Survey estimates that **2.1% of employees in Suffolk had at least one day off work due to sickness absence in the previous working week between 2019-21**. This percentage is statistically similar to the England average of 1.8%.
- **1.3% of Suffolk working days were also lost due to sickness absence for the period between 2019-21**, also statistically similar to the England average of 1.0% of working days lost due to sickness absence.
- Using the East of England figure applied to Suffolk's workforce, we can estimate that between 1.8 and 2.1 million working days were lost to sickness absence in Suffolk in 2022. This equates to approximately £432 million of lost productivity. Were Suffolk's sickness absence rate the same as the national average, this figure would be £510 million.

Sickness absence figures from OHID Fingertips for Suffolk between 2019-21, compared to England

Better 95% Similar Worse 95%

Benchmark Value

Worst 25th Percentile 75th Percentile Best

Indicator	Period	Suffolk			Region	England	England		
		Recent Trend	Count	Value	Value	Value	Worst	Range	Best
Sickness absence: the percentage of employees who had at least one day off in the previous week	2019 - 21	–	-	2.1%	1.9%	1.8%	4.0%		0.0%
Sickness absence: the percentage of working days lost due to sickness absence	2019 - 21	–	-	1.3%	1.1%	1.0%	2.2%		0.1%

OHID and Healthy Working Future's Workplace health needs assessment provides practical advice on workplace health, and a tool to complete workplace health needs assessments for employers of all types and sizes.

Menopause is a natural part of ageing that occurs between 45-55 years of age as oestrogen levels decline. Menopause is not just a gender or age issue – it can impact on colleagues both directly or indirectly and should be considered as an organizational issue. Symptoms can last for months or years and change over time, including cognitive, physical and psychological symptoms.
ACAS has publication menopause at work guidance to assist employers and managers to support their staff. It includes tips for workers on how to raise concerns and good practice guidance for employers to manage menopause at work.

Source: OHID guidance: Health matters: health and work – creating healthy workplaces, OHID Fingertips, Sickness absence in the UK labour market: 2022, ONS Gross Value Added, NHS Employers: Menopause and the workplace

Long COVID has the potential to cause symptoms that last much longer after the infection. This means it can affect someone's ability to work or cause them to take time off sick. Long COVID is associated with higher economic inactivity and workplace absence, but it is unlikely to be the sole driver of rising inactivity levels in the UK during the pandemic. The pandemic also enabled home working which presented various opportunities and challenges.

For some people, COVID-19 (coronavirus) can cause symptoms that last for a long time after the infection. This is called 'post-covid syndrome' or 'long covid'.

People can experience the effects of long covid for weeks, months and even years.

Symptoms can:

- come and go over time
- sometimes get better and sometimes worse

With regards to long COVID and work across the UK:

- In July 2022, 23.3% of people aged 16 to 64 years with self-reported long COVID (symptoms at least four weeks after a confirmed or suspected coronavirus (COVID-19) infection that could not be explained by something else) were economically inactive (not working and not looking for work), compared with 21.4% of those without self-reported long COVID.
- Between July 2021 and July 2022, the inactivity rate among working-age people with self-reported long COVID grew by 3.8 percentage points, compared with 0.4 percentage points among working-age people without self-reported long COVID.
- People with self-reported long COVID 30-51 weeks after infection were 34-46% more likely to be inactive (excluding retirement) compared to before their infection, after adjusting for overall labour trends.
- The relationship between long COVID and inactivity/absence was strongest among those aged 50-64 years old.
- However, rates of retirement were similar between those with and without self-reported long COVID 12-20 weeks after infection.

Research from the CIPD assessed evidence on working from home. There were 8 key themes:

- Increased productivity among homeworkers is often achieved through work intensification.
- For some workers, homeworking can provide a more productive environment because there are fewer distractions.
- Knowledge sharing and team relationships often suffer – unless task-related processes are designed to take location into account.
- Innovation can suffer if knowledge sharing and team relationships deteriorate.
- Social isolation can be a problem for some workers, but this depends on personality and lifestyle.
- Avoiding the commute is a major benefit for most.
- Attention to work-life boundaries is helpful not just for homeworkers but for anyone in the digital age.
- The career downsides are real and need to be managed.

Recommendations for employers include:

1. Be aware of the differences between 'standard' and COVID-enforced homeworking
2. Homeworking is here to stay – design your working practices to suit all locations
3. Concentrate on partial, voluntary homeworking as part of designing high quality jobs

*The Covid-19 pandemic affected sickness absence data through furloughing, homeworking, shielding, and social distancing impacting 2020 and 2021 data. This has had greater impact on the "total days lost" and "days lost per worker" measures, therefore the sickness absence rate is the most appropriate measure to compare over time.

Source: ACAS: Long covid sickness and absence from work, ONS Self-reported long COVID and labour market outcomes, UK: 2022, CIPD Working from home: Assessing the research evidence

Glossary

AI	• AI can be defined as the use of digital technology to create systems capable of performing tasks commonly thought to require intelligence.
Disability definition (2021 census)	• People who assessed their day-to-day activities as limited by long-term physical or mental health conditions or illnesses are considered disabled. This definition of a disabled person meets the harmonised standard for measuring disability and is in line with the Equality Act (2010).
Economically active	• People aged 16 and over who are either in employment or unemployed.
Economically inactive	• Economically inactive people are those without a job who have not actively sought work in the last four weeks, and/or are not available to start work in the next two weeks.
Educational attainment	• The highest level of education an individual has successfully completed. The highest level of educational attainment successfully completed is usually given by the highest educational qualification (vocational or academic) achieved.
Employment rate	• The headline employment rate is calculated by dividing the employment level for those aged from 16 to 64 by the population for that age group.
Gross Value Added (GVA)	• The value generated by any unit engaged in the production of goods and services.
Jobs density	• Jobs density is defined as the number of jobs in an area divided by the resident population aged 16-64 in that area. For example, a job density of 1.0 would mean that there is one job for every resident aged 16-64.
Job insecurity	• Insecure employment is made up of four categories: (i) individuals employed on zero-hour contracts; (ii) workers employed through an employment agency; (iii) individuals in a job that is in some way not permanent; and (iv) individuals self-employed in vulnerable sectors (caring and leisure; process, plant and machine operatives; elementary occupations). The sum of all the categories does not equal the total number of people who are insecurely unemployed, because some individuals belong to more than one category at once.
Low-quality work	• A job which has two or more perceived negative aspects such as low levels of autonomy, wellbeing, security and/or satisfaction, as well as low pay.
NEET	• Young people (aged 16 to 24 years) who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)
Social mobility	• Social mobility is the link between a person’s occupation or income and the occupation or income of their parents. Where there is a strong link, there is a lower level of social mobility. Where there is a weak link, there is a higher level of social mobility.
SOC code	• The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) is a common classification of occupational information for the UK. Jobs are classified in terms of their skill level and skill content.
Unemployment rate	• The headline unemployment rate is calculated by dividing the unemployment level for those aged 16 and over by the total number of economically active people aged 16 and over. Economically active is defined as those in employment plus those who are unemployed.
Universal Credit	• The Claimant Count measures the number of people claiming unemployment related benefits. Universal Credit is a payment for people under State Pension age and on a low income or out of work.