

# Hampshire Achieves

## Accountability Statement 2026-2027



# Statement of purpose

**Hampshire County Council delivers a regulated programme of Pathways, Supported Internships and Adult Skills courses to inspire ambition and achievement through learning.**

## **Service vision**

The Participation and Lifelong Learning service ensures that young people and adults in Hampshire participate, succeed, and progress in education and employment. We work with all learners to ensure they have the knowledge, skills, and behaviours to gain employment, improve their health and wellbeing, and quality of life.

We work directly with businesses and employer representative bodies to support current and future skills needs, ensuring that the Hampshire economy has a highly skilled workforce to deliver growth.

## **Strategic objectives**

Our Strategic Plan, 'Your Hampshire, today and for tomorrow' (2025-2028), sets out four important commitments for the County Council which will shape what we spend our time on:

- Keeping you healthy, well and independent
- Giving your communities the best chance to thrive
- Keeping you, your families, and friends safe
- Providing innovative services, you need and value



<https://www.hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/strategiesplansandpolicies/corporatestrategy>

# Context and place



Hampshire County Council is one of four upper-tier authorities in the Hampshire and Isle of Wight economic area.

Hampshire is one of the UK's most economically significant regions, with high productivity, a diverse business base, and strong educational infrastructure. However, this overall strength masks challenges including uneven productivity, demographic change, shifting recruitment patterns, and skills mismatches.

In 2023, Hampshire and the Solent generated £72.6 billion in gross value added (GVA), accounting for 21% of the South East's total output. Productivity is above the national average, with North Hampshire and Rushmoor performing particularly strongly, though growth has slowed since 2019 and disparities remain, notably in the Isle of Wight and Gosport. The business base is dominated by small firms, with varying growth and survival linked to sector mix, infrastructure, and access to skills.

Employment is concentrated in Local Services, followed by High Value-Added Traded Services and industry. Key sectors include Marine and Maritime, Aerospace and Defence, Construction, Health and Social Care, Life Sciences, and Digital. More recent trends show growth in growth in Health and Care and the Visitor Economy. In contrast, employment growth in the broad Creative and Digital sector has declined but has been driven by digital. The IS-8 creative sector has experienced strong growth relative to the regional and England averages since 2019.

Overall, employment growth across most sectors has lagged behind both national and regional averages. While Digital and Technologies is identified nationally as a priority growth sector, and employment concentration is strong in the area (especially in North Hampshire and parts of Central Hampshire), local performance has been weaker, highlighting an ongoing challenge in realising digital opportunity.

# Context and place

Job demand has returned to pre-pandemic levels but fell sharply in 2025. High-skilled roles account for around a third of demand, though this remains below national averages. Education, Health and Care, and Hospitality dominate, with growth in Construction and Logistics.

Skills challenges persist. Fewer than half of residents hold Level 4+ qualifications, below regional averages, with weaker attainment in areas such as Gosport, Havant and the Isle of Wight. While GCSE and post-16 attainment is strong in much of Hampshire, outcomes are weaker in Southampton and Portsmouth. Participation in further education and skills – particularly among adults – has declined.

Skills shortages remain widespread, particularly in Health, Education, and Construction. Around a third of vacancies are reported as hard to fill due to skills shortages, while skills gaps affect around one in five employers. At the same time, skills underutilisation is common, with a substantial proportion of employers reporting staff with qualifications above those required for their roles.

The area is relatively prosperous, with over half of working-age residents employed in higher-skilled occupations. However, strong commuting links to London and other high-wage areas create challenges for local employers in attracting and retaining skilled workers. Pockets of deprivation persist, particularly among lower- and mid-skilled residents and those in sectors more exposed to automation and technological change. The increasing use of artificial intelligence (AI) is expected to reshape skills demand, particularly in graduate-entry roles, with future job growth projected to be modest and driven largely by replacement demand rather than expansion.



# Context and place

## Hampshire & Isle of Wight Quarterly Labour Market Indicators (May 2025)

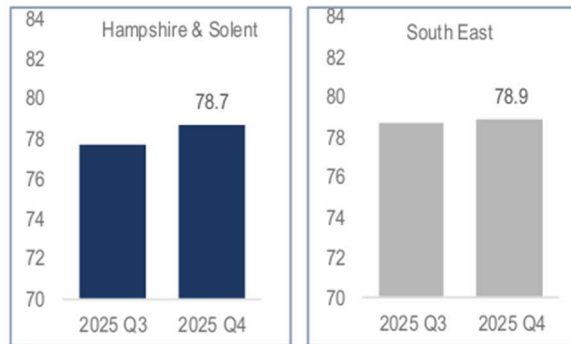
### Employment

- An estimated 969,000 Hampshire and Solent residents in employment in Q4.
- The resident employment rate in Hampshire and the Solent increased to 78.7% in Q4 2025, up by 1.0ppts on the quarter and the 0.2ppts on the year.
- South East rate is marginally higher (78.9%).

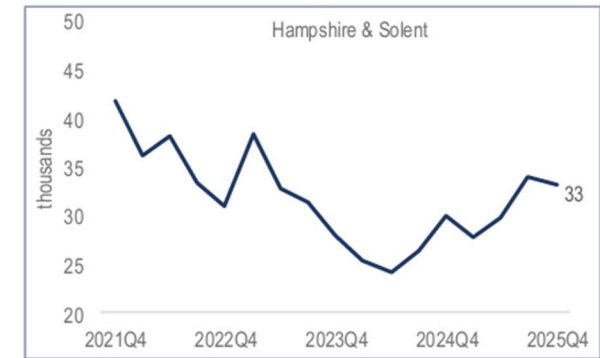
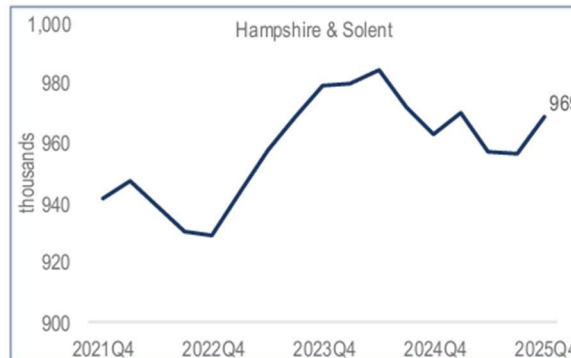
### Unemployment

- An estimated 33,000 working age (16-64 years) Hampshire and the Solent residents were unemployed in the year to Q4 2025.
- Unemployment on the headline (survey-based) measure decreased by 0.1ppts on the quarter to 3.3% in the year December 2025 and is 0.3ppts higher on the year.
- The Hampshire and the Solent rate is 0.4ppt below the South East average (3.7%).

### Employment



### Unemployment



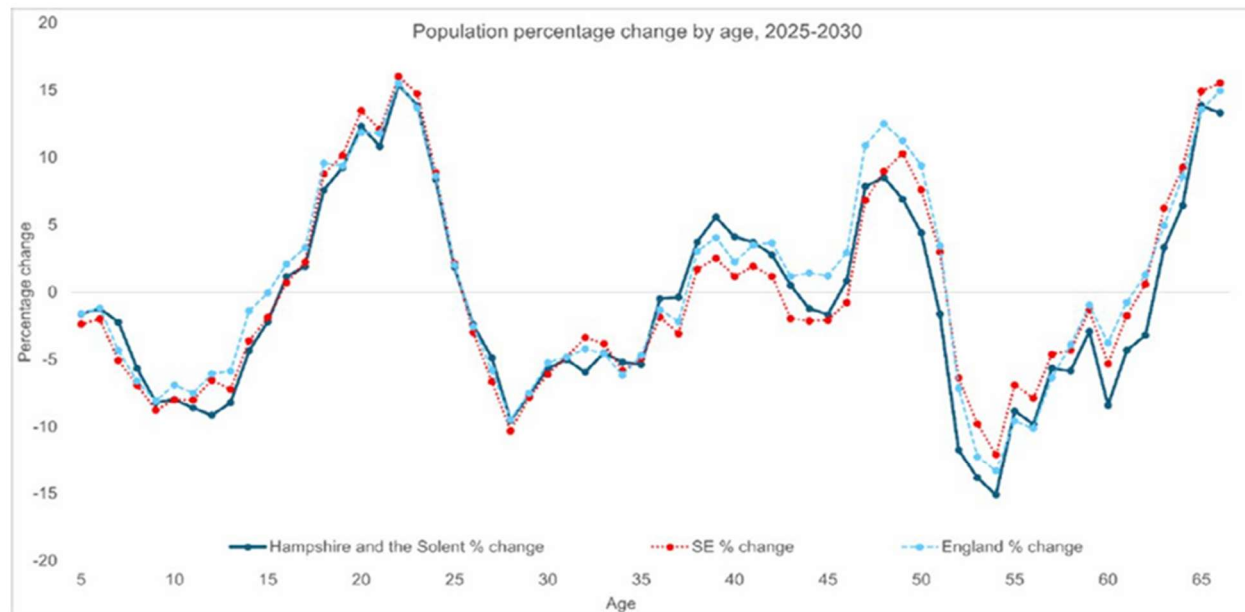
Source: <https://documents.hants.gov.uk/Economy/Hampshire-monthly-Labour-Market.pdf>

# Approach to developing the Accountability Statement

Hampshire is a region of unparalleled economic and geographical diversity – an asset rich landscape made up of coastal spaces, rural landscapes, national parks and major industry clusters.

The region's working-age population has grown modestly over the past three decades but is projected to decline by 2043, driven by ageing demographics. A closer analysis on population changes by age between 2025 and 2030 highlights implications for different age bands:

- Children (ages 5-14): Declining numbers suggest potential school capacity adjustments and long-term workforce pipeline concerns.
- Young adults (ages 16-24): Growth, especially between ages 18-24, suggesting increasing demand for post-16 education and training and early employment support.
- Mid-life adults (ages 50-55): Significant decline, especially around age 54, may impact workforce availability, leadership succession, and skills retention in experienced roles.
- Older adults (ages 65-66): Notable growth in retirement-age population, indicating future demand for healthcare and social.



Source: ONS 2025, using 2018 based population projections

# Approach to developing the Accountability Statement

**Hampshire County Council is an upper-tier local authority working across key public and private sector partnerships and is a member of the Hampshire Local Skills Improvement Plan Board.**

Our DfE funding is used in the Hampshire County Council administrative area, and our statement has been developed through direct engagement with the Economy and Skills service, accessing economic development and labour market information, and in consultation with key stakeholders, including Hampshire Chamber of Commerce, Jobcentre Plus and local Further Education colleges. We have utilised existing skills reports (see supporting documentation) and have considered the Local Skills Improvement Plan's (LSIP) priorities and objectives.



# Contribution to local, regional, and national priorities



**Supported Internships and Pathways Programmes** to fill the gap in post 16 **Special Educational Needs (SEN)** provision across Hampshire. The Supported Internship programme is an employability programme specifically aimed at 16 to 25-year-olds with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan and is intended to provide them with the behaviours, knowledge and skills they need for work through specific supported learning in the workplace. In 2026-2027, we will be continuing to run a Department for Education (DfE) funded project where we will provide a supported internship to young people with SEN but do not have an EHC plan. Pathways is a Study Programme designed to support young people with SEN and who have not yet made a successful transition post 16, to access a positive destination.

**Our Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Employability programme** supports development of pathways to **employment and independence** with the wider education providers and employers to establish equality of opportunity across the county.

**Adult learning** offers a wide range of courses and qualifications across Hampshire, including a targeted skills programme for Hampshire residents facing unemployment to support their return to the job market. This includes helping people develop their English, maths and digital skills and responding to the needs of those who's mental health and wellbeing is affected by the cost-of-living crisis.

To promote inclusion and engagement, Hampshire Achieves offer programmes across a wide range of community venues. Libraries, which are at the heart of local communities, are used throughout the county in addition to Best Start Family Hubs, schools and local stakeholders' venues. We partner with community and voluntary groups so that we can deliver programmes where vulnerable groups access services who otherwise might not engage in unfamiliar surroundings.

# Contribution to local, regional, and national priorities

The overall Adult Skills priorities for 2026-2027 are to:

- Support under / unemployed, low-skilled and careers changers, to improve their skills and confidence so that they may access or retain employment/higher paid roles.
- Provide learners with entry points and progression routes that support inclusion and achievement at all levels including pathways to accredited professional and vocational qualifications.
- Improve maths and English skills for learners by offering specific maths and English courses and by embedding numeracy and literacy in all curriculum areas.
- Support English for Speakers of Other languages (ESOL) learners to develop the confidence and skills they need to become active citizens and integrated members of their communities.
- Provide opportunities for Hampshire residents to improve their digital literacy and communication skills, equipping them to successfully engage with all aspects of life in the digital age.
- Support learners' mental health and wellbeing, increasing skills and confidence.
- Provide a targeted, flexible, and holistic offer to support learning where there are pockets of local deprivation and / or where skills gaps are greatest.



# Contribution to local, regional, and national priorities

| Service priorities and offer                                                                                                                                                                                              | Contribution to local, regional, and national priorities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
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| <p><b>Service Priority 1</b></p> <p>Preparing all young people to make a successful transition to adult life.</p> <p><b>Offer</b></p> <p>Supported Internships and Pathways.</p>                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Our Study Programmes and Supported Internships support young people with SEND to improve their personal, social and employability skills, to enable them to make a positive progression to employment, apprenticeships and/or further study.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Hampshire Skills Strategy recognises the importance of skills as a foundation of a thriving, inclusive and future-ready Hampshire. Hampshire employers support this programme with excellent work experience opportunities in priority sectors, offering a wider talent pool to employers which leads to employment.</li></ul> |
| <p><b>Service Priority 2</b></p> <p>Supporting schools and education providers to help all young people participate, succeed and progress</p> <p><b>Offer</b></p> <p>Adult Skills courses and SEND Independence Hubs.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Our Adult Skills courses supports the aim in Levelling Up that by 2030 children in schools will achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and maths, by giving parents access to flexible, innovative English and maths courses.</li></ul>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Our SEND Employability supports regional development of pathways to adulthood through programme development alongside Further Education Colleges across Hampshire. Ensuring a consistent quality Supported Internship offer across all providers and establishing Independence and Inclusion Hubs.</li></ul>                       |

# Contribution to local, regional, and national priorities

## Service priorities and offer

### Service Priority 3

Supporting adults to achieve economic wellbeing and quality of life

### Offer

Adult Skills

## Contribution to local, regional, and national priorities

- Offers targeted learning programmes to support the Hampshire Skills Strategy and the Get Hampshire Working Plan where we focus on adults aged 19+ who are unemployed or at risk of redundancy, and in receipt of Universal Credit, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- We will continue to work in partnership with Jobcentre Plus / DWP, in responding to specific needs in the following sectors which align to national skills priorities and Skills Bootcamps: Health and social care, childcare and education, customer service, construction / allied services and haulage and logistics and digital technology. Literacy and numeracy will also be prioritised.
- Our ESOL courses open doors for new residents to access employment in terms of an 'inclusive labour market' and support community integration and cohesion.
- Our Adult Skills provision focuses on health and wellbeing and directly supports the Get Hampshire Working Plan to reduce health-related barriers to employment.
- Our Adult Skills provision supports local, regional, and national priorities - including the Hampshire Skills Strategy - by being employer- and learner-led with a flexible offer that supports adults to attain literacy, numeracy and digital skills to support their career progression and personal development.

# Contribution to local, regional, and national priorities

## Service priorities and offer

### Service Priority 4

Helping businesses access the skilled workforce they need to meet current demands and future economic growth.

### Offer

Adult Skills and SEND Employability offer and Independence Hubs.

## Contribution to local, regional, and national priorities

- In line with the aspirations of the Post-16 education and skills white paper and LSIP approach, we put our employer; the County Council and department managers at the heart of the system so that education and jobs lead to improved productivity, retention of talent and fills skills gaps.
- The White Paper expresses the need for adults to be able to access training that is flexible, tailored, joined up and part of a clear pathway to good employment. Our Adult Skills courses are delivered flexibly in groups; either face to face or online and offer clear routes to employment.
- HCC also receives additional DfE grant funding to support Skills Bootcamps across the county. Focusing on identified skills gaps the programme will support to either move into employment or develop within existing roles. It will also support businesses of all sizes to upskill their work force and drive economic growth. The programme is delivered by a variety of providers of all sizes commissioned via an open Skills framework.
- Our Adult Skills programmes supports adults to access English, maths and digital skills courses that lead to increased skills and confidence and thereby allowing progression into the labour market.
- Adult Skills provides local employers the scope to co design skills training programmes that support staff recruitment, retention and progression in line with local skills priorities.
- Our SEND Employability programme works with employers to showcase the skills and ability of SEND learners to meet skills gaps across the sector, working alongside skills initiatives in the county to bring together education providers and employers to offer meaningful placements and equitable paid employment outcomes.

# Statement



It is hereby confirmed that the curriculum offer set out above reflects the agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by Hampshire County Council in June 2026. This statement will be published on the County Council website at the start of the new academic year in September 2026.

[Participation and Lifelong Learning](https://www.hants.gov.uk)  
[\(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk)

# Supporting documentation

Hampshire County Council (Hampshire Achieves) –  
Inspection Report ([ofsted.gov.uk](https://ofsted.gov.uk))

Hampshire Skills Strategy 2025

Hampshire County Council Strategic Plan 2025 to 2028

Get Hampshire Working Plan 2025-27

Participation and Lifelong  
Learning ([hants.gov.uk](https://hants.gov.uk))

Hampshire LSIP Skills Channel | HCOC LSIP

