

Get Hampshire Working Plan 2025-27

A county-wide response to economic inactivity and labour market challenges

DRAFT

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About this document

The talents of too many of our residents are being wasted because of rising numbers not engaging in the labour market. In 2024, Hampshire had around **38,000 people excluded from work due to long-term sickness; a growth in young people not in education, employment or training, faster than the national average** and **43,000 people lacking qualifications** to help them get on in work.

We know that Hampshire (referring to the Hampshire County Council area, hereafter 'Hampshire') is a great place in which to live, learn and work. Hampshire is well placed to help maintain and boost economic competitiveness and prosperity by supporting our workforce, keeping our residents fit and healthy and helping to ensure we have an excellent education and skills offer.

The UK Government's **Get Britain Working White Paper**¹ set out a new approach to the employment support system to target and tackle the root causes of unemployment and inactivity, and better join up employment, health and skills support based on local needs.

The Government has asked every part of England to develop Local Get Britain Working plans to stimulate a thriving labour market and achieve the ambition of an 80% employment rate. Local Get Britain Working plans will do this by tackling the six key issues identified in the Get Britain Working White Paper:

1. **Exclusion from the labour market**
2. **Youth employment**
3. **Insecure and low-quality work**
4. **Challenges for women**
5. **Employer vacancies**
6. **Disparities in labour market outcomes**

This document presents Hampshire's response – the **Get Hampshire Working Plan** – developed by Hampshire County Council with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), the NHS Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board (ICB), the NHS Frimley ICB and key stakeholders across the County. Moreover, our response builds on a strong foundation of work, health and skills support – highlighted through case studies, dotted throughout this document. The Plan has also been informed by a number of plans and strategies. These are listed in **Annex 6**.

¹ Get Britain Working White Paper: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/get-britain-working-white-paper>

Overview

In **Part one**, we present some headline insights into Hampshire, with reference to work, health and skills; employment participation, disadvantage and labour demand. In **Part two**, we expand on these insights with an analysis of the primary drivers and causes of economic inactivity. **Part three** presents a summary of the work, health and skills support system across Hampshire. In **Part four** we draw together the findings from the previous sections to outline key priorities and **Part five** presents an action plan, with a clear message of innovative, partnership working.

Working towards Hampshire and the Solent

This Plan has been developed in accordance with the guidance provided by the Department for Work and Pensions². Therefore, the geography is limited to Hampshire County Council administrative area. As we work towards becoming a Mayoral Combined County Authority³, it's important this Plan is read and considered in conjunction with the *Get Solent Working Plan*⁴ produced by our Solent Growth Partnership colleagues.

² Guidance for Developing local Get Britain Working plans (England): <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-developing-local-get-britain-working-plans-england/guidance-for-developing-local-get-britain-working-plans-england>

³ Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/governmentinhampshire/future-hampshire-solent>

⁴ Get Solent Working: <https://solentgrowthpartnership.co.uk/get-solent-working/>

Foreword

This is a timely document as the Hampshire 2050 Partnership's '*Year of Improving Health, Care and Wellbeing*' draws to a close. It offers an opportunity to reflect on how a strategic and cross-disciplinary approach has enhanced our organisations' efforts to support the health of our people and places across Hampshire.

However, the Get Hampshire Working Plan reminds us that challenges remain – not only in health, but also in work and skills and in the complex interplay between all three, which is vital to helping our area grow and prosper.



Councillor Nick Adams-King
Leader of Hampshire County Council

This Plan also highlights the strong foundation of related activity already underway, while offering a glimpse of what we can achieve together to reduce economic inactivity, improve job quality and mitigate multiple barriers to work.

Although Hampshire performs well on many work, health and skills metrics – often better than England as a whole, and perhaps even better than the wider region and similar counties such as Kent and Essex – these figures mask significant disparities between areas and among distinct groups of people. It is a reality that children born just a few miles apart in Hampshire may experience vastly different educational outcomes, health and wellbeing, earning power and life prospects.

Tackling these inequalities in health is a key challenge for Hampshire. Enabling people to access good employment is one of the most effective ways to close this gap. But good employment depends on having the right skills.

We are fortunate to have a great health system, a strong business base and an enviable range of education and skills providers. We now need to bring them together.

Hampshire County Council, alongside the NHS Integrated Care Boards, is well positioned to lead much of the place-based strategy outlined in this Plan. However, all face financial and structural challenges. That is why we are issuing a call to action to organisations across the area and beyond to work with us in meeting these challenges head-on.

I now invite you to join us in our mission to **Get Hampshire Working**.

Executive Summary

The **Get Hampshire Working Plan** sets out a county-wide response to the UK Government's *Get Britain Working White Paper*, which aims to stimulate inclusive economic growth through integrated work, health, and skills support. This is our plan for increasing employment, reducing economic inactivity, improving job quality and mitigating multiple barriers to work.

This Plan has been developed collaboratively by Hampshire County Council, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), NHS Integrated Care Boards, and a wide range of local stakeholders and continues the theme of collaboration not only to deliver the Plan but also in working towards the creation of a Jobs and Careers Service and preparing for Pathways to work.

A work, health and skills profile of Hampshire

Hampshire benefits from a large workforce, characterised by relatively high economic activity and low unemployment. However, a sizeable proportion of its population of working age is not economically active and there are discrepancies in labour market outcomes at local levels.

There is a large business base – mainly SMEs – with concentrations of knowledge intensive business services, aerospace defense and local services such as health and social care. However, the resident workforce is ageing – particularly in foundational sectors such as construction and health and social care – and also shrinking.

Although Hampshire's labour market remains tight, jobs demand has weakened over the past 12 months with vacancies in May 2025 down by a third compared to May 2024. People are also staying in employment for longer, especially when they can't afford to retire early. The fall in demand constraints opportunities for those looking for work – especially young people and those with low skills.

Hampshire consistently reports higher life expectancy than counties with similar population sizes and deprivation levels. However, not everyone in Hampshire enjoys the same level of good health. Some are dying earlier than they should be and the number of years they are living in good health is less than others in the county.

The NHS is one of the biggest employers in Hampshire and it continues to diversify – both in terms of the workforce and roles but also making the switch from analogue to digital. However, it faces persistent recruitment and workforce retention challenges.

Many of our education and training providers have strong reputations for meeting skills needs through effective relationships with employers, stakeholders and each other (often across

borders). However, employers continue to report young people lack employability skills such as communication, problem solving and resilience.

Flexible learning provision, such as Skills Bootcamps, continues to grow and respond directly to local employers' needs with strong feedback helping to stimulate further growth. However, a significant proportion of economically inactive people of working age have no formal qualifications which can restrict access to these and other pathways into employment.

In Hampshire, the legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic has *not* manifested in high unemployment, but rather a significant rise in economic inactivity. I.e. individuals of working age (typically 16 to 64) who are neither employed nor actively seeking employment.

The primary drivers and causes of economic inactivity in Hampshire

Excluding the economically inactive student population, there are about 113,000 economically inactive people of working age in Hampshire.

The largest group of economically inactive are those classified as long-term sick and/or with a disability. This group has risen by 11,000 since 2019 and can be found mostly in South Hampshire, especially in Gosport, Havant but also Rushmoor in the north of the county. The group is mainly female and there are differences between younger (mostly mental health issues) and older (mostly with physical, muscular and skeletal health issues) individuals.

The second largest group are those retiring early. This group are found across the County with concentrations in Central Hampshire and are mainly female. Education levels tend to be higher than for other groups of economically inactive.

The third largest group are those, mainly (84%) female individuals, with caring responsibilities and/or looking after family or home. Although the numbers have decreased since 2019, these individuals are found across the County with significant concentrations in South Hampshire. This group is driven by a lack of affordable childcare and flexible work opportunities.

It is also important to highlight young people who struggle to secure and maintain employment as well as milestones towards employment such as securing work experience and volunteering opportunities.

And for those who try to (re-)enter the labour market, there are multiple, overlapping barriers that often face them, linked to health, work and skills but also economic and societal challenges.

It's perhaps no wonder that a common theme that arose during external stakeholder engagement activity was lack of confidence.

The current support system and offer

The current landscape of work, health, and skills support available across Hampshire is extensive and draws on a wide range of organisations from different sectors.

The Jobcentre Plus offer remains a cornerstone of employment support, providing personalised guidance through Work Coaches and specialist programmes. These services are designed to help individuals move into and stay in work, with additional support for those with health conditions and/or disabilities.

Hampshire's education and skills ecosystem is rich and varied, comprising colleges, independent training providers, and universities, some which sit outside the County but nevertheless play roles. These institutions offer a mix of technical, vocational, and academic pathways aligned with local skills needs and informed by the Solent and Enterprise M3 Local Skills Improvement Plans. Targeted support is available for key groups and programmes such as ESOL, Skills Bootcamps, SEND Independence Hubs, and Supported Internships reflect a growing integration of employability and mental health support.

Housing associations play an important role, not only in providing accommodation but also in supporting residents with employment guidance, skills development, and business start-up advice. Their household-focused approach presents opportunities for greater collaboration with other sectors.

Local government contributes through coordinated employment and skills partnerships across Hampshire's 12 local authorities. These partnerships offer targeted support with initiatives such as Hampshire Achieves, Hampshire Futures, and the Link Up Youth Hub in Havant – with more Youth Hubs likely to follow. The County's Public Health team lead on work to create conditions that enable healthier lives and work closely with the NHS to improve the health and healthcare outcomes of the local communities – supporting residents to live healthier lives for longer.

The NHS, through Hampshire and Isle of Wight and Frimley Integrated Care Boards, offers health-linked employment support. Programmes such as 350+ NHS Careers, Widening Access Demonstrators, and WorkWell aim to engage young people and those from deprived communities in healthcare careers, while NHS Talking Therapies provide employment support alongside mental health treatment. A jointly developed Mental Wellbeing Guide supports employers in meeting national standards for workplace mental health.

The Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector is a vital partner in delivering integrated support across Hampshire. VCSE organisations provide tailored services for diverse groups including veterans, refugees, ex-offenders, homeless individuals, women, and young people. Their work ranges from intensive employability support to enterprise and wellbeing programmes.

A key development is the Connect to Work programme, part of the Government's Get Britain Working strategy. This initiative will support around 5,000 people in Hampshire with disabilities, long-term health conditions or other complex barriers to secure and maintain employment.

Employer involvement is key to success and national initiatives such as the Armed Forces Covenant, Disability Confident scheme, and the Menopause Workplace Pledge help employers demonstrate commitment to aspects of equality and diversity as a way to attract, support and retain some of those who might otherwise sit outside the labour market.

Priorities to Get Hampshire Working

Three priorities were identified and agreed by stakeholders to form a framework for an action plan that will help tackle the root causes of unemployment and inactivity in Hampshire:

- 1. Increase labour market participation of those facing barriers to employment.**
- 2. Inspire and support young people to thrive at the start of their careers.**
- 3. Increase employer engagement to better match local talent to local sustainable opportunities to make work pay.**

Each of these priorities will form a workstream that will be led by key organisations and supported by Hampshire County Council. Each workstream will agree a set of targeted actions for the next 12–24 months, with a focus on collaboration, innovation, and systemic change.

The Plan also outlines how Hampshire will work towards a future **Get Britain Working Plan** for the wider Hampshire and Solent area, ensuring alignment with devolution ambitions and regional strategies.

By integrating services, focusing on prevention and early intervention, and strengthening partnerships, the Get Hampshire Working Plan aims to unlock the potential of Hampshire's residents, reduce inequalities, and build a healthier, more resilient workforce.

Part one: A work, health and skills profile of Hampshire

WORK:

- 831,000 people of working age
- 659,000 residents in work (79.4% employment rate)
- 67,600 businesses (78 businesses per 1,000 people of working age)
- 712,000 jobs (0.83 jobs per resident of working age)
- 12,800 unique online job postings (vacancies) in May 2025

HEALTH:

- Over 77,500 NHS and social care staff with over 140 GP practices, over 200 providers of dental services, over 300 pharmacies and over 900 suppliers of domiciliary care.
- Due to its lower population density and rural character, overall Hampshire offers **good air quality and access to green spaces**, which support better physical and mental health. However, there is significant variation within the County.
- People of working age in Hampshire face **different health problems, depending on their age group**. Younger adults often have conditions that affect their daily lives and mental wellbeing, while older adults are more likely to face multiple long term physical health conditions and more serious physical illnesses.

SKILLS:

- 374,000 residents aged 16 to 64 (46.6%) with Level 4⁵ or higher qualifications
- 44,000 residents (5.5%) with no formal qualifications
- A strong, formal education offer including 11 Further Education providers, three University Centres, one University and significant input from universities in neighbouring areas

⁵ Level 4 qualifications sit in between A Levels (Level 3) and an undergraduate degree (Level 6). They are typically, although not exclusively, technical in nature. Examples include, but are not limited to, Certificates of Higher Education (CertHE), Higher Apprenticeships, Higher National Certificates (HNCs), and National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs).

- ALPS ALPHI, representing over 60 training providers across Surrey, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

Strengths of Hampshire

WORK:

- £57.7bn in Gross Domestic Product (GDP), of which
- £51.5bn is economic output (Gross Value Added).
- Labour productivity per job at over £73,000 p.a. or about 10% above the national average.
- North Hampshire – the most productive sub-area outside London, ranked 4th nationally.
- Rushmoor – the most productive local authority in the country (per hour worked measure).
- Economic activity (81.5%) and employment (79.4%) above the South East and England averages and unemployment (2.6%) below the South East and England averages.
- Concentrations of knowledge intensive business services, aerospace, defence and local services such as health and social care business and employment.

HEALTH:

- Hampshire consistently reports **higher life expectancy** than counties with similar population sizes and deprivation levels, e.g. boys born in Hampshire **can expect to live over 81 years**, which is higher than in Kent or Essex.
- Rates of smoking in pregnancy are **lower in Hampshire** than in many comparator counties.
- Health and care services across Hampshire continue to diversify – both in terms of the roles they employ but also making the switch from analogue to digital (e.g. use of AI Intelligence to reduce waiting times and Virtual Wards to provide hospital level care in a patient's home).

SKILLS:

- Six colleges recognised for making a **strong contribution to meeting skills needs** through highly effective relationships with employers and stakeholders.
- Through the two Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) across Hampshire, colleges have formed strong, cross-border partnerships focusing on addressing labour skills shortages and aligning training with local employer needs.
- Skills Bootcamps provision across Hampshire continues to grow and respond directly to local employers' needs with strong feedback helping to stimulate further growth.

Challenges for Hampshire

WORK:

- An ageing workforce signals a smaller workforce in the future that can result in decreased production and consumption and businesses may struggle to meet demand, leading to higher prices and slower growth.
- Demand for workers (vacancies) continues to fall meaning a more competitive job market for those looking for jobs and even more for those with fewer skills.
- There is a spatial mismatch between job vacancies and economic inactivity with several districts showing high inactivity rates and limited vacancy levels.

HEALTH:

- Not everyone in Hampshire enjoys the same level of good health. Some are dying earlier than they should be and the number of years they are living in good health is less than others in the county. Top reasons are:
 - **Cancers** – responsible for 18% of the total health burden
 - **Heart and circulation diseases** (cardiovascular) – 13%
 - **Muscle and joint problems** (musculoskeletal) – 10.5%
- The **top three risk factors** that increase the chance of getting sick or dying early are:
 - **Tobacco use** – responsible for 7.7% of the health burden
 - **Being overweight or obese** – 6.7%
 - **High blood sugar levels** – 6.1%
- The NHS is one of the biggest employers in Hampshire but faces persistent recruitment and workforce retention challenges.
 - The local health service has an ageing workforce, coupled with a high attrition rate for students studying in the area and then moving out, once qualified

Draft Get Hampshire Working Plan

- Sickness rates across Hampshire NHS organisations have remained static over the past few years, with the main cause of sickness being mental health issues and musculoskeletal issues.
- The shift to digital means new sets of skills that enable remote working and using improved technologies – not just for the existing workforce but the future one too.

SKILLS:

- A significant proportion of economically inactive people of working age have no skills (no formal qualifications).
- Through the two Local Skills Improvement Plans, employers continue to report young people don't have the necessary '*employability skills*' such as communication, problem solving and resilience.
- Employers continue to favour applicants with 'work experience' but in some areas, suitable work experience opportunities are difficult to find.

In **Part two**, we expand on these insights with an analysis of the primary drivers and causes of challenges faced by the labour market.

Part two: Primary drivers and causes of economic inactivity in Hampshire

Hampshire has long been recognised as one of the UK's most economically successful counties, with high employment rates, low unemployment, high productivity, and a diverse business base. However, beneath this success lies a complex and evolving picture of rising economic inactivity, health disparities, and labour market challenges.

Hampshire is home to 67,600 businesses generating approximately £57.7 billion in Gross Domestic Product (GDP), with £51.5 billion contributing directly to the national economy as Gross Value Added (GVA). On average, Hampshire businesses are more productive than the national average, with labour productivity per job at around 10% above the UK average. However, productivity levels vary significantly across the county. North Hampshire stands out with productivity close to 50% above the national average, ranking fourth highest in the country and the highest outside London. In contrast, South and Central Hampshire fall slightly below the national average. At the local level, Rushmoor ranks third nationally for productivity per job and is the most productive local authority in the UK in terms of productivity per hour worked - twice the national average. Conversely, Gosport lags behind, with productivity per job at close to a fifth below the national average.

From 2009 to 2019, Hampshire's economy grew at an impressive 2.8% annually, outpacing both national and South East averages, though the pandemic has since disrupted this growth trajectory. Economic growth since 2019 has on average lagged both the national and the South East average.

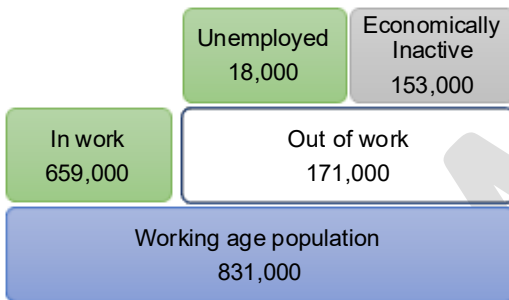
Hampshire's population of working age peaked in 2024 according to the latest population projections from the Office for National Statistics - Hampshire's workforce is projected to decrease by 0.2% annually over the next decade. A smaller workforce can result in decreased production and consumption and businesses may struggle to meet demand, leading to higher prices and slower growth. A shortage of workers can cause wages to rise as employers compete for talent. A more competitive job market for those in demand may emerge, while those with fewer skills may face challenges finding employment.

Hampshire therefore faces notable growth and labour market challenges and complex internal disparities that go beyond the traditional north-south divide. This section presents a summary of a full labour market analysis (**Annex 1**) of labour market participation, disadvantage, and demand in Hampshire together with qualitative insights captured from external stakeholder engagement activity.

Employment in Hampshire

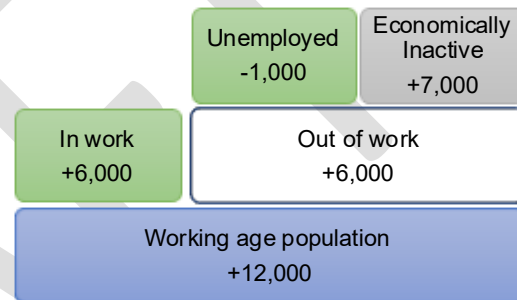
The working age (16- to 64-year-olds) population in Hampshire consists of people that are in work and people that are out of work. Alternatively, working age population consists of economically active population (employed and unemployed people) and economically inactive people (**Figure 1**). In 2024 Hampshire had a larger workforce, more people in employment, fewer unemployed people and more economically inactive people than in 2019 (**Figure 2**). The numbers have increased but the employment and economic activity rates have decreased compared to 2019.

Figure 1: Structure of working age population, Hampshire 2024



Source: ONS 2025
Note: estimates have been rounded to the nearest 1,000

Figure 2: Change in the structure of Hampshire's working age population, 2019 to 2024



Source: ONS 2025
Note: estimates have been rounded to the nearest 1,000

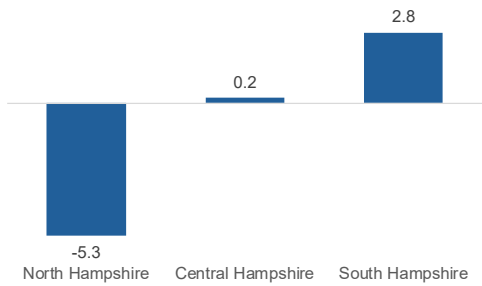
In 2024, Hampshire had around 659,000 working-age residents in employment, resulting in a 79.4% employment rate - higher than both the national and South East averages. This rate was 0.4 percentage points below its pre-pandemic peak, mirroring the national trend and outperforming the regional average. Around 80% of men and 78.9% of women are employed in Hampshire. However, whilst male employment declined female employment increased between 2019 and 2024.

There are significant disparities in employment by age and disability in Hampshire. The rate among 25- to 34-year-olds stands at 89% compared to 73.7% for 50- to 64-year-olds. The employment rate among Hampshire's working age population with core or work-limiting disability stands at just 61.5% compared to 85.7% of working age population not affected by core or work limiting disability. The employment gap between the two groups is comparable to the national average and larger than the South East average.

Unemployment In Hampshire stood at 2.6% in 2024, slightly down on 2019, with around 18,000 residents classified as unemployed.

Figure 3: Employment rate in 2024 compared to 2019, ITL3 geography, percentage points difference

All three sub-areas in Hampshire – North Hampshire (79.3%), Central Hampshire



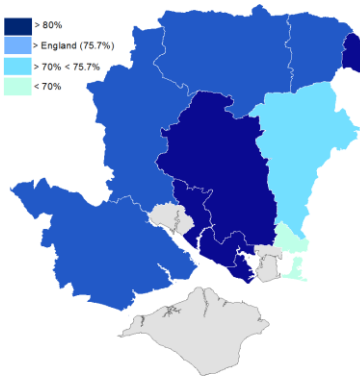
Source: ONS 2025

(79.3%) and South Hampshire (79.7%) have employment rates above England (75.6%) and the South East (78.4%) average.

Although employment rates in Hampshire converged between 2019 and 2024, there were substantial differences in employment growth across the sub-areas during that period (Figure 3).

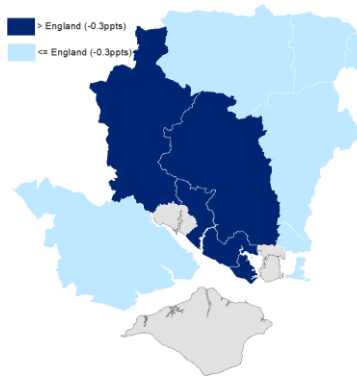
Employment rate data at district level suggests that just two districts in Hampshire had rates below the England average in 2024: **Havant** (70.2%) and **East Hampshire** (73.7%), Figure 4. However, the rates in six districts in Hampshire were lower in 2024 than in 2019, showing trends in declining employment – notably in North Hampshire (Figure 5).

Figure 4: Employment rate by local authority district, 2024



Source: ONS 2025

Figure 5: Employment rate in 2024 compared to 2019, percentage points difference



Source: ONS 2025

Employment rates among younger and older workers differ significantly at a local level. For example, the employment rates of younger workers are below the national average in Havant, East Hampshire, Eastleigh, Basingstoke and Test Valley. The employment rates of older workers are below the national average in Havant, East Hampshire and Rushmoor.⁶

An estimated 1,762 young people aged 16 to 17 in Hampshire were not in education, employment, or training (NEET), or their activity was unknown in 2025. The number of NEETs and unknowns increased by approximately 70%, and the NEET rate rose from 3.9% in 2019 to 5.5% in 2025 – marginally below the England average. While the NEET rate in England

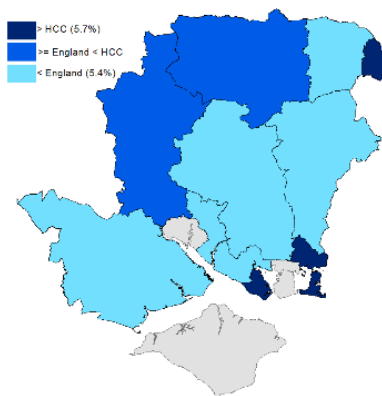
⁶ Ongoing issues with the Labour Force Survey (LFS) imply that data at local level should be interpreted with caution. The main report in Annex 1 provides more detail.

decreased between 2019 and 2025, the gap between Hampshire and the national average had nearly closed by 2025.

[INSERT 350+ NHS CAREER PATHS, CASE STUDY XX]

As shown in **Figure 6** there are significant disparities in the combined NEET/Not known group at the local level with several districts in Hampshire having the NEET rate *above* the national average. Hampshire has six districts with NEET/Not known rates above the national average (East Hampshire, Eastleigh, Fareham, Hart, New Forest and Winchester) with three above the Hampshire average (Gosport, Havant and Rushmoor).

Figure 6: NEETS / activity not known, % of 16–17-year-olds



Hampshire has six districts with NEET/Not known rates above the national average: East Hampshire, Eastleigh, Fareham, Hart, New Forest and Winchester.

Three districts have the rates above the Hampshire average: Gosport, Havant and Rushmoor.

Source: DfE 2025

The local data for 16-24 age group in Hampshire is not available but the number is likely to be significantly higher than for 16- to 17-year-olds. For example, an estimated 13.4% of all people aged 16 to 24 years in the UK were NEET in October to December 2024. Young men are slightly more likely to be NEET than young women.

Employment, Health and Health Disparities in Hampshire

Employment rates are a key place-based indicator, closely linked to health outcomes. Higher employment is associated with longer periods of good health, while areas with greater economic inactivity often experience lower healthy life expectancy. Education plays a critical role in improving employment prospects by equipping individuals with the skills and knowledge needed to access quality jobs and participate fully in society. As such, education is also a significant determinant of long-term health.

Overall, Hampshire performs well compared to the national average, with higher employment rates and longer healthy life expectancy. However, health outcomes are not uniform across the county. Inequalities persist by **geography**, **age**, and **population group**.

For example, areas such as **Gosport Town** (Gosport), **Popley** (Basingstoke), and **Leigh Park** and **West Leigh** (Havant) rank among the most deprived, nationally. These areas have higher rates of unemployment claimants and lower life expectancy.

[INSERT GOSPORT APPRENTICE, CASE STUDY XX]

There are also notable age-related differences in the causes of ill health among the working-age population. Local analysis indicates that younger and older working-age adults face distinct health challenges:

- Among 15–49-year-olds in Hampshire, the leading causes of disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) are mental health disorders, followed by musculoskeletal and neurological conditions. GP data also shows common mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety are the most frequently recorded in this age group.
- In contrast, for those aged 50–69 in Hampshire, the leading causes shift to neoplasms (an abnormal growth of cells in the body), musculoskeletal (MSK) disorders, and cardiovascular diseases⁷. GP data for this group indicates cardiovascular disease is the most commonly recorded condition, with MSK disorders also increasing significantly with age.

These findings from the analysis of primary care data are supported by analysis of claimant data for Personal Independence Payments (PIPs) for Hampshire residents. Psychiatric disorders account for the largest number of claims, followed by MSK disease. The type of disorders within these condition groups reported varied by age:⁸

- For psychiatric disorders, 16–34-year-olds have the highest number of claims - over a third of all psychiatric claims in this age group were due to autistic spectrum disorders.
- In 35-49- and 50–69-year-olds mixed anxiety and depressive disorders are the most significant conditions contributing to claims for psychiatric disorders.
- For MSK disease, in 16-34- and 35–48-year-olds over half of all MSK disease general claims are because of chronic pain syndromes.
- In 50–69-year-olds the number of claims relating to MSK increases significantly; osteoarthritis makes up the largest percentage.

National research suggests that the biggest increases in future health demand will be for conditions like **chronic pain, diabetes, anxiety** or **depression**. These projected patterns of illness can be inferred to Hampshire's population, but our population is not homogeneous. People living in the more deprived areas tend to spend a greater proportion of their lives in

⁷ These findings align with national evidence, The State of Ageing 2022 (Centre for Ageing Better), which highlights that from age 50, individuals are more likely to develop long-term conditions and multiple morbidities: <https://ageing-better.org.uk/state-of-ageing>

⁸ Further information is available in *Health of the Working Age Population Report* available at Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, JSNA: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/publichealth/jsna>

poor health or with a disability. Research by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) suggests that people living in more deprived areas tend to develop long-term health conditions 10 to 15 years earlier than those living in the least deprived areas.⁹ Consequently, different population groups and characteristics will drive different levels of need and will impact the driver for economic inactivity¹⁰.

Economic Inactivity in Hampshire

In 2024, Hampshire had about 153,400 economically inactive people of working age or 18.5% of all people of working age, below the England average (**Table 1**). However, this was an increase of about 7,000 economically inactive people compared to 2019.

Table 1: Economically inactive numbers and rates for different geographies in 2024.

Area	Economically inactive people, aged 16-64 (economically inactive rate) in 2024	
England	7,506,000	(21.3%)
South East England	1,062,000	(18.8%)
Hampshire	153,000	(18.5%)
<i>North Hampshire</i>	41,000	(17.8%)
<i>Central Hampshire</i>	62,000	(19.2%)
<i>South Hampshire</i>	50,000	(18.2%)

Source: ONS 2025

There are also some striking differences when comparing economic inactive data between the three statistical subareas of Hampshire. Between 2019 and 2024, Central Hampshire saw an increase of approximately 2,000 economically inactive people of working age, a 4% rise, which is slightly below the Hampshire average. In contrast, South Hampshire experienced a decrease of around 5,000 inactive residents, representing a 10% decline over the same period. Meanwhile, North Hampshire recorded the most significant change, with the number of economically inactive people rising by about 10,000, an increase of roughly one-third compared to 2019.

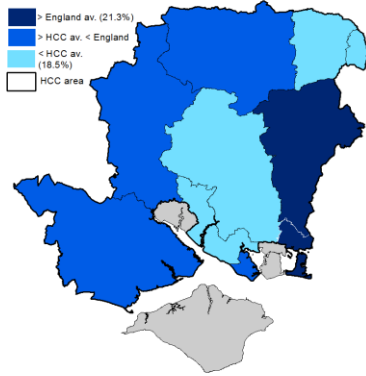
Economic inactivity rates in the three sub-areas are below the national average (**Table 1**) but there are significant disparities in economic inactivity rates at district level (**Figure 7**), although these data need to be interpreted with caution:

Figure 7: Economic inactivity rates by local authority district, 2024

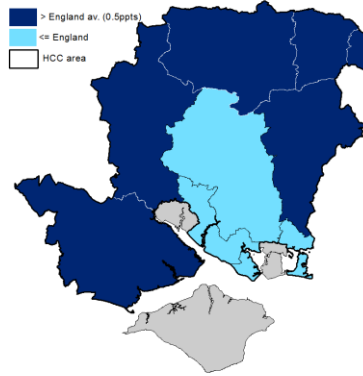
Figure 8: Economic inactivity rates in 2024 compared to 2019, percentage points difference

⁹ [Health state life expectancies by national deprivation deciles, England - Office for National Statistics](#)

¹⁰ Health in 2040: projected patterns of illness in England, The Health Foundation: <https://www.health.org.uk/reports-and-analysis/reports/health-in-2040-projected-patterns-of-illness-in-england>



Source: ONS 2025



Source: ONS 2025

- There are just two local authority districts – Havant and East Hampshire – that have the rates above the national average at 24.4% and 22.3% respectively (**Figure 7**).
- The gap between the lowest (Fareham, 12.9%) and the highest (Havant, 24.4%) economic inactivity rates is large; almost double the rate.

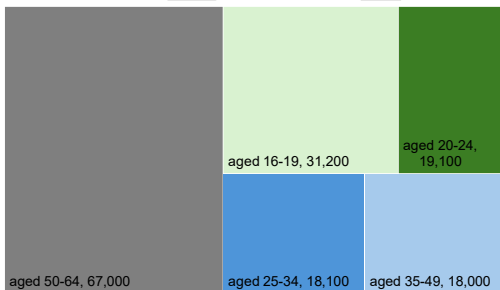
The change in the rates between 2019-2024 has been even more pronounced although these data need to be interpreted with caution (**Figure 8**). Economic inactivity rates in six local authority districts in Hampshire were higher in 2024 than in 2019.

Gender and age differences in economic inactivity

Females are more likely to be economically inactive than males. Nevertheless, the economic inactivity rate for females (19.5%) in Hampshire is well below the England average (24.9%), whilst the rate for males (17.4%) is comparable to the England average.

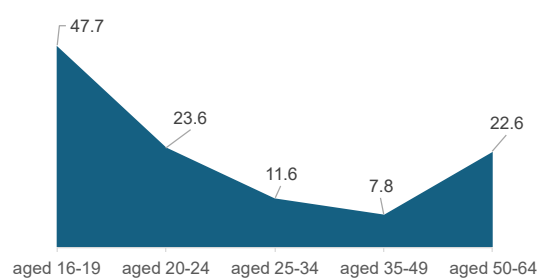
Males account for the entire rise in economic inactivity among working-age adults in Hampshire since the end of 2019. The number of economically inactive males increased by about 12,000 while the number of economically inactive females decreased by about 5,000.

Figure 9: Economically inactive by age, Hampshire 2024



Source: ONS 2025

Figure 10: Economic inactivity rates by age, Hampshire 2024



Source: ONS 2025
Note: includes students

Some 36,000 people or about a quarter of economically inactive people in Hampshire is found in the main working age group, 25- to 49-year-olds. The older working age group (50- to 64-

year-olds) accounts for about 67,000 (43%) of all economically inactive people of working age (**Figure 9**). Close to one in every four older people of working age is now economically inactive.

Figure 10 shows a U-shaped distribution of economic inactivity by age in Hampshire, with 16–24 and 50–64-year-olds making up 77% of the inactive working-age population. Inactivity rose by around 4,000 among 16–24-year-olds, largely students and similarly in the 20–24 and 25–34 age groups. Meanwhile, inactivity among older adults remained stable, and the 35–40 age group saw a decline of about 5,000.

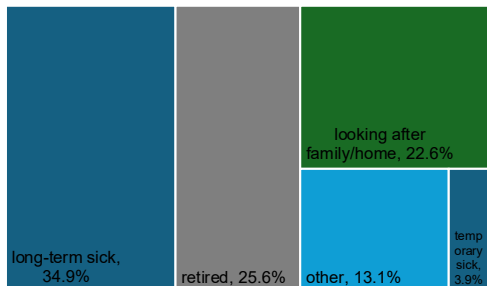
While Hampshire’s overall economic inactivity has shifted, local disparities remain in both the number and proportion of inactive people who want a job. In 2024, around 32,000 economically inactive residents - one in five - expressed a desire to work, down from over one in four in 2019. Central Hampshire’s share remained stable at 18.3% (11,000 people), but North Hampshire saw a sharp drop from 30% to 15% (6,000 people), and South Hampshire’s rate fell slightly to 28% (14,000 people).

Reasons for Economic Inactivity in Hampshire

The inactive population in Hampshire covers a broad range of groups from students and early retirees to individuals with family/home responsibilities to temporary sick individuals and to those dealing with long-term sickness or disability. A final group, ‘other’, consists of people discouraged from labour market participation, believing there are no available jobs, those that have given no reason or those who don't require employment.

Excluding economically inactive student population there are about 113,000 economically inactive people of working age in Hampshire or 13.6% of people of working age.

Figure 11: Economic inactivity in Hampshire by reason - excluding students, % of inactive 2024



Source: ONS 2025

As shown in **Figure 11** over a third of economically inactive working-age people in Hampshire are long-term sick or disabled, while early retirees make up about a quarter - excluding students. Together, these two groups account for around 60% of inactivity. Those looking after family or home represent just over a fifth, while temporary sick and ‘other’ categories make up 4% and 13%, respectively.

Excluding student population some 43,000 (or 38%) economically inactive people in Hampshire reside in Central Hampshire, followed by 41,000 (36%) in South Hampshire and 29,000 in North Hampshire (26%). Economic inactivity rates excluding student population are similar, ranging from 12.7% and 13.3% respectively in North and Central Hampshire to 14.7% in South Hampshire.

Work-limiting conditions do not impact people or place equally. Exploring economic inactivity by reason shows differences by gender, age and place.

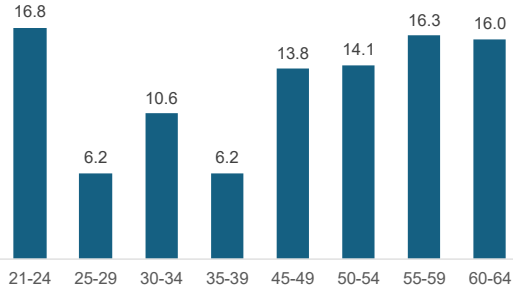
In the remainder of this section, unless otherwise stated, we have excluded the economically inactive student population (40,000).

Long-term sickness or disability

The long-term sick or disabled is the largest economically inactive group in Hampshire, which accounts for about 35% of all economically inactive people. Key statistics related to this group are, as follows:

- Largest contributor to economic inactivity (approx. 39,000 people), about 11,000 additional economically inactive long-term sick or disabled people of working age compared to 2019.
- About 16,000 long-term sick or disabled economically inactive residents reside in South Hampshire.
- The proportion of economically inactive individuals due to long-term sickness or disability is relatively high in several local authority districts including Havant, Gosport, Rushmoor and Eastleigh (**Figure 15**).
- Females in Hampshire are more likely than males to be economically inactive due to long-term sickness or disability.
- Economic inactivity driven by mental health conditions, musculoskeletal disorders, and multi-morbidity.
- About two thirds of long-term sick or disabled economically inactive people in Hampshire are affected by at least three major health conditions.
- Affects both young adults (especially 21 - 24) and older workers (50 - 64).
- Strong correlation with low educational attainment: 29% have no formal qualifications (**Figure 14**).

Figure 12: Long-term sick or disabled by age, Hampshire 2022, %



Source: ONS 2025

Figure 13: Long-term sickness or disabled by main health condition, Hampshire 2022

Health condition	%
Mental illness or other nervous disorders	18.3%
Problems or disabilities connected with back and neck	16.4%
Other problems or disabilities	16.4%
Depression, bad nerves or anxiety	13.3%
Problems or disabilities connected with legs and feet	11.4%
Autism	9.0%
Progressive illness n.e.c.	6.6%
No long-lasting health condition or not disclosed	4.8%
Problems or disabilities connected with arms or hands	3.7%

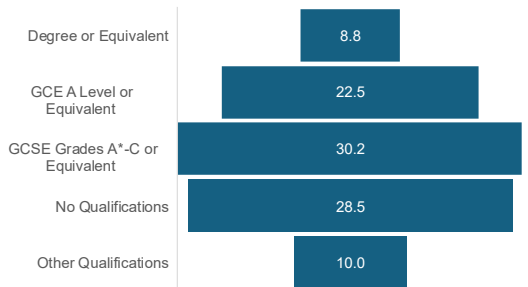
Source: ONS 2025

Note: data available for 9/18 main health categories. Estimates are based on small samples and should be used with caution. Other health conditions have been suppressed due to small sample sizes

Education attainment alongside health is a factor that is likely to constrain economic activity and employment of people classified as inactive due to long-term sickness or disability.

Over a quarter (28.5%) of economically inactive long-term sick or disabled people in Hampshire have no formal qualifications (Figure 14) compared to 3.6% for the economically active population.

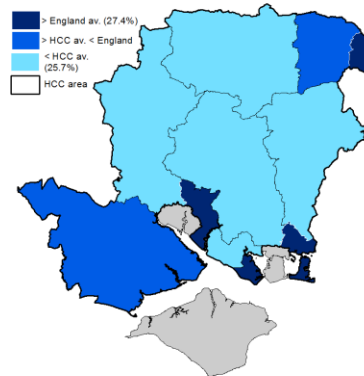
Figure 14: Economically inactive long-term sick by qualification level in 2022, Hampshire, 2022



Source: ONS 2025

Missing data for Higher Education qualification category (Level 4: Higher National Certificate (HNC); Level 5: Higher National Diploma (HND), Foundation Degrees.

Figure 15: Economically inactive long-term sick or disabled - %, 2024



Source: ONS 2025

Note: imputed estimates for Fareham, Hart and Winchester

Temporary sickness

In 2024 there were around 4,000 temporary sick economically inactive people of working age in Hampshire or around 2,000 more than in 2019. This group accounts for 4% of all economically inactive people in Hampshire. At the local level temporary sick are mostly found in North Hampshire and South Hampshire.

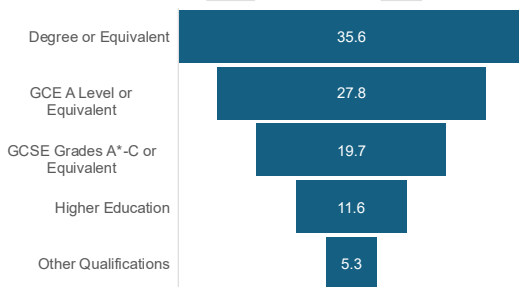
Data from 2022 indicates males are more likely to be temporarily sick than females in Hampshire. These data also highlight a concentration (about 2,400 people) of temporarily sick people of working age in the 30- to 34-year-old age group in Hampshire.

Early retirement

Those who have chosen to retire early in Hampshire, account for about a quarter of all inactive people of working age. Hampshire has more inactive people in this group than before the pandemic. In addition to possible declining health, House of Lords Economic Affairs Committee report¹¹ proposed possible reasons for this emerging trend could also be good financial circumstances with the pandemic enabling better savings and pension flexibilities. Key statistics related to this group are, as follows:

- The second largest economically inactive group in 2024 (approx. 29,000 people); about 1,000 additional retired people of working age compared to 2019.
- Most retired economically inactive people of working age in Hampshire reside in Central Hampshire, about 16,000 in 2024 or 55% (Figure 18).
- Females in Hampshire are more likely to be economically inactive due to early retirement than males.
- Mostly aged 60 - 64, with a rise post-pandemic possibly due to financial security and health concerns.
- Less associated with poor health than other groups - about two thirds of economically inactive retired people of working age in Hampshire had no long-lasting health condition (or condition was not disclosed), Figure 17.
- Education levels are higher than other inactive groups, but still below the Hampshire average (Figure 16).

Figure 16: Retired economically inactive people by qualification level – % in 2022, Hampshire



Source: ONS 2025
Note: numbers are slightly larger than in 2024

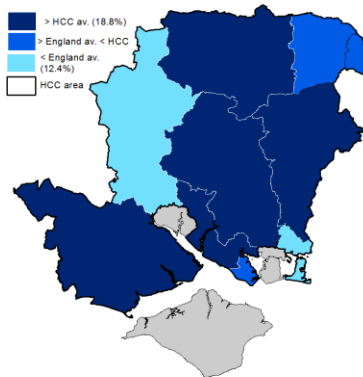
Figure 17: Health conditions affecting retired economically inactive in Hampshire, % in 2022

Health condition	%
No long-lasting health condition or not disclosed	66.1
Heart, blood pressure or blood circulation problems	11.0
Problems or disabilities connected with legs and feet	8.9
Other problems or disabilities	7.9
Progressive illness n.e.c.	6.2

Source: ONS 2025
Note: data available for 5/18 main health categories. Estimates are based on small samples and should be used with caution. Other estimates have been suppressed due to small sample sizes.

¹¹ Early retirement and our ageing population are causing labour shortages, says Lords report: <https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/175/economic-affairs-committee/news/175197/early-retirement-and-our-ageing-population-are-causing-labour-shortages-says-lords-report/>

Figure 18: Economically inactive early retired - %, 2024



High economic inactivity due to early retirement is seen across many rural districts in Hampshire, as well as urban areas like Basingstoke & Deane, Eastleigh, and Fareham (**Figure 18**).

Source: ONS 2025
Note: imputed estimates for Eastleigh, Gosport and Hart

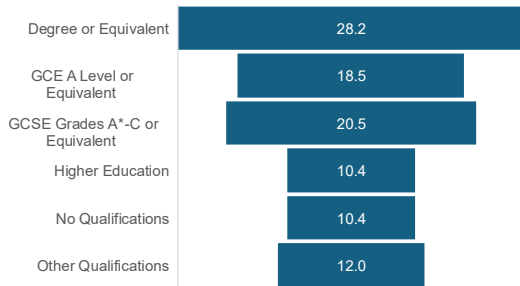
Looking after family or home

In 2024 there were about 26,000 economically inactive people of working age who look after family or home in Hampshire, which equates to close to one in four (23%) of all economically inactive people of working age. Key statistics related to this group are, as follows:

- Around 26,000 people; about 8,000 fewer people than before the pandemic.
- Most economically inactive working-age individuals who look after the home or family in Hampshire reside in South Hampshire - approximately 14,000 people, or about 55% of the total.
- This group of economically inactive people in Hampshire mostly consists of women (84%).
- A higher proportion of people that look after family or home is found in the older workers age group than in the prime working age group.
- About two thirds of economically inactive people that look after family or home in Hampshire had no long-lasting health condition (or condition was not disclosed), **Figure 20**.
- Economic inactivity driven by lack of affordable childcare and flexible work options.
- Overrepresented among Asian/Asian British communities, relative to their share in the total population of Hampshire.
- Concentrations of lower qualification levels and limited access to support services (**Figure 19**).

Caring responsibilities can limit access to paid work, with those providing over 20 hours of care per week more likely to live in lower-income households.

Figure 19: Economically inactive people looking after family or home by qualification level – % in 2022, Hampshire



Source: ONS 2025
Note: numbers are slightly larger than in 2024

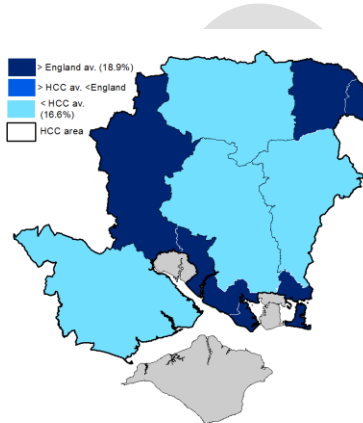
Figure 20: Health conditions affecting economically inactive people that look after family or home in Hampshire, %

Health condition	%
No long-lasting health condition or not disclosed	66.5
Depression, bad nerves or anxiety	11.3
Other problems or disabilities	11.3
Problems or disabilities connected with legs and feet	10.9

Source: ONS 2025
Note: data available for 5/18 main health categories. Estimates are based on small samples and should be used with caution. Other estimates have been suppressed due to small sample sizes.

Census data from 2011 to 2021 shows a rise in unpaid care in Hampshire, where over 160,000 working-age residents now provide care, 41% of them for 20 hours or more. Women make up 62% of all unpaid carers, and poorer health outcomes are more common among those providing longer hours of care.

Figure 21: Economically inactive looking after family or home - % of all inactive, 2024



Source: ONS 2025
Note: imputed estimates for Hart, Rushmoor, Test Valley and Winchester

As illustrated in **Figure 21**, seven local authority districts in Hampshire have a higher proportion of people in this category compared to the England average.

Empirical evidence suggests that providing free childcare can significantly reduce economic inactivity in this group, particularly for mothers, by enabling them to return to or remain in the workforce¹². This is because childcare costs can be a major barrier to employment, especially for low-income families. This was also raised during multiple external stakeholder events.

‘Other’ reasons for economic inactivity

About 13% of Hampshire’s economically inactive people are inactive due to ‘other’ reasons. This, ‘other’ group, consists of people discouraged from labour market participation, believing there are no available jobs, those that have given no reason or those who don’t require employment. Key statistics related to this group are, as follows:

- Around 15,000 people or about 8,000 fewer than in 2019.

¹² PwC (2023) The economic impact of childcare policy: <https://www.pwc.co.uk/press-room/press-releases/economic-impact-extension-childcare-support.html>

- Central Hampshire accounts for approximately 8,000 individuals, or 55% of the total economically inactive population in this group. Much of the decline in economic inactivity in this group is attributed to South Hampshire.
- Females are more likely to fall under this category than males.
- Asian / Asian British people are overrepresented in this group, relative to their share in the total population of Hampshire.
- This group mostly consists of young people with the remainder consisting of people over the age of 50.
- Most people in this group (about three quarters) had no long-lasting health condition or health condition was not disclosed followed by about a fifth of people reporting depression, bad nerves or anxiety.
- Prevalence of intermediate and lower intermediate qualifications.

Income and Health-Related Benefits in Hampshire

A significant proportion of both economically *active* and economically *inactive* individuals in Hampshire receive one or more income-related or health-related benefits.

Income Replacement Benefits – Universal Credit (UC)

Many economically inactive people of working age in Hampshire claim Universal Credit (UC), a benefit also available to residents on low incomes, those out of work, or those unable to work¹³.

In 2024, around 104,200 working-age residents in Hampshire were claiming Universal Credit, with 56.6% not in employment - below the national average of 62.5%. Most claimants were in South Hampshire (22,400), followed by Central (20,900) and North Hampshire (15,600). All areas had lower rates of non-employment among claimants than the national average, with South Hampshire highest at 57.2%.

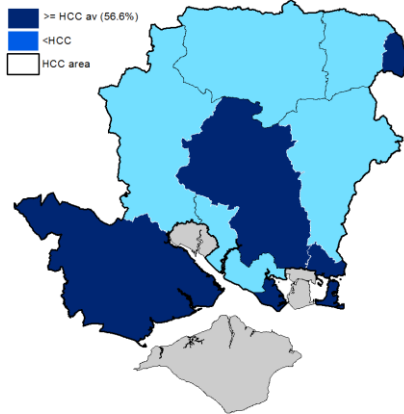
By broad age group, the largest number of UC claimants not in employment in Hampshire are individuals in their 30s and 40s, who together account for nearly half of all claimants. The age distribution of UC claimants not in employment follows a distinct U-shaped pattern similar to the pattern seen amongst economically inactive people, with residents aged 16–29 and 50–65 more likely than the Hampshire average to be claiming UC while not in employment.

The largest group of UC claimants in 2024 comprised Hampshire residents with no work requirements (i.e. those not expected to work due to health conditions or caring

¹³ UC replaces several legacy benefits, although the full transition is not expected to be completed until the end of March 2026.

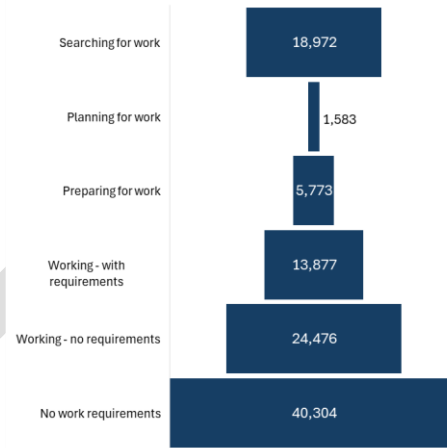
responsibilities), **Figure 23**. This equated to 38.4% of all UC claimants, slightly below the national average of 40.4%.

Figure 22: Universal Credit claimants Not in Employment relative to Hampshire, December 2024



Source: DWP 2025

Figure 23: Hampshire Universal Credit Conditionality, December 2024



Source: DWP 2025

The next largest groups include those *in work* whose earnings exceed the threshold for conditionality, and those *searching for work* who are either unemployed or earning very little and are required to actively seek employment or pursue better-paid opportunities.

Basingstoke and Deane had the highest number of UC claimants actively seeking work in 2024 (2,770 or 19.1%), followed closely by Havant and New Forest. Despite leading in numbers, all three districts were below the national average of 22.3%. Hart had the fewest job-seeking claimants (880 or 18.4%). These districts also had the highest numbers of claimants with no work requirements, though in a slightly different order.

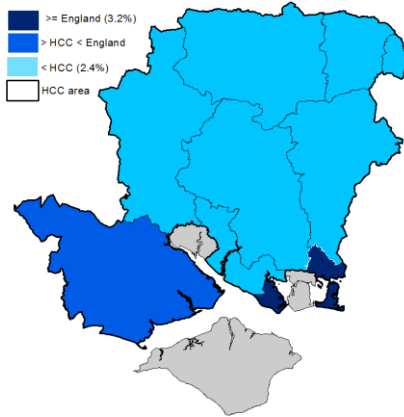
‘Extra Cost’ Benefits – Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)

Economically inactive individuals due to ill health may receive Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), though most do not work while claiming it. ESA includes Income-related ESA, now being replaced by Universal Credit, and New Style ESA, which is based on National Insurance contributions.

As of December 2024, around 20,100 Hampshire residents were claiming ESA, representing 2.4% of the working-age population - below the national average. Women made up a slight majority (53%). Rates varied by area, from 2.0% in North Hampshire to 3.9% in South Hampshire. Among districts, Havant had the highest number of claimants (2,810), while Hart had the lowest (850, or 1.4%), **Figure 22**.

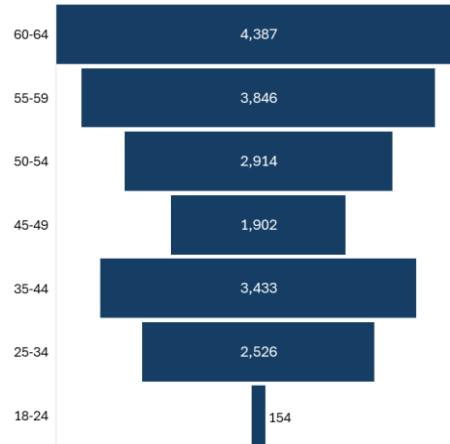
As of 2024, Hampshire had a higher share of ESA claimants aged 18–44 than the national average, but fewer in the 50–64 age group. Fewer than 200 were under 24, with numbers rising to a peak among those aged 60–64. Nearly 1,000 claimants were over 65 (**Figure 25**).

Figure 24: Hampshire district ESA claimants working age (16-64) %, December 2024



Source: DWP 2025

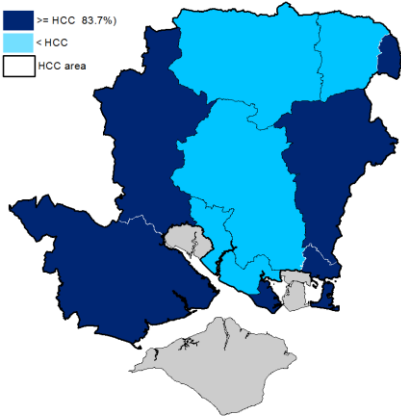
Figure 25: Hampshire ESA claimants by Age, November 2024



Source: DWP 2025

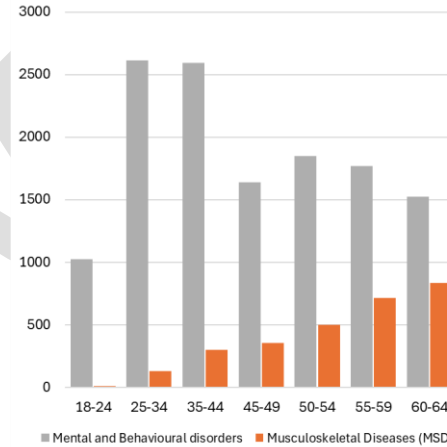
Most ESA recipients (around 16,900) were in the Support group, deemed unable to work, while 1,600 were in the smaller Work-related Activity group. Hampshire had a slightly higher share in the latter (8.0%) and a lower share in the Support group (83.7%) compared to national averages. All 11 districts had below-average proportions in the Support group (**Figure 26**).

Figure 26: Hampshire Districts Share of all ESA claimants by Support Group Phase %, November 2024



Source: DWP 2025

Figure 27: Hampshire Mental & MSK Claimants by age group, November 2024



Source: DWP 2025

Prevalence of Health Conditions Among ESA Claimants

Historically, ESA claims were predominantly associated with musculoskeletal (MSK) conditions, particularly among older age groups. While MSK-related claims remain common - some now linked to rising obesity - there has been a notable shift since the 2008 global

financial crisis, with a significant increase in claims related to mental ill health and neurological disorders¹⁴.

This trend is likely influenced by growing public awareness and acceptance of mental health issues, which may be encouraging more individuals to seek support. Among Hampshire ESA claimants, a wide range of health conditions are recorded; however, the two most prevalent are mental health disorders and MSK.

Mental and behavioural disorders are the most common primary condition among ESA claimants in Hampshire, accounting for 46.7% of cases—slightly below the national average of 48.5%. In December 2024, Hampshire recorded approximately 13,000 working-age ESA claimants with mental health conditions. Musculoskeletal (MSK) disorders were the second most prevalent, affecting around 2,900 claimants, representing 11% of the total—marginally below the national average of 12.4%.

Mental health issues affect all age groups but are particularly prevalent among individuals aged 25 to 44. In contrast, MSK conditions tend to increase with age, which is expected given their association with older workers (**Figure 27**). These conditions - such as arthritis, fractures, sprains, back pain, and other disorders affecting bones, muscles, and joints - can significantly impair work capacity and are a common underlying factor in reduced labour market participation.

Research suggests that individuals with lower levels of educational attainment, older adults, and people from certain ethnic minority backgrounds are more likely to be economically inactive due to ill health.

Disability, Incapacity and Employment

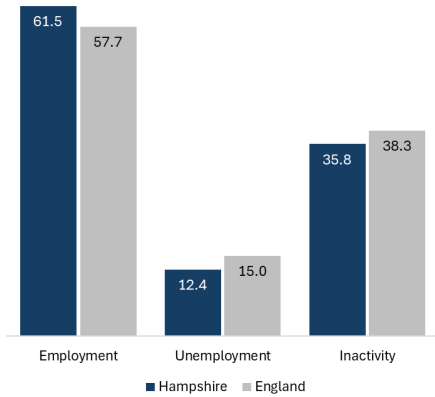
There is a significant overlap between incapacity and disability. Nationally, around two-thirds of individuals receiving ESA or UC also receive Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or Disability Living Allowance (DLA). DLA is currently being phased out and replaced by other benefits. The UK Government has proposed stricter eligibility criteria for PIP, particularly for the daily living component, which may make it more difficult for some individuals to qualify. National research indicates that approximately one in six PIP recipients are in employment - a proportion that has remained relatively stable in recent years.

In Hampshire, around 57,000 residents claim PIP, with 83% of them of working age. South Hampshire has the largest share, followed by Central and North Hampshire. Districts like Basingstoke & Deane, Havant, and New Forest each have over 6,000 claimants. Survey data shows 26.4% of working-age residents are classed as disabled under the Equality Act - slightly above the national average - with higher rates in South Hampshire and districts like Eastleigh

¹⁴ E.g. The 2008 Global Financial Crisis: effects on mental health and suicide: https://www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/policybristol/briefings-and-reports-pdfs/pre-2017-briefings--reports-pdfs/PolicyBristol_Report%203_2015_Suicide%20and%20the%20recession.pdf

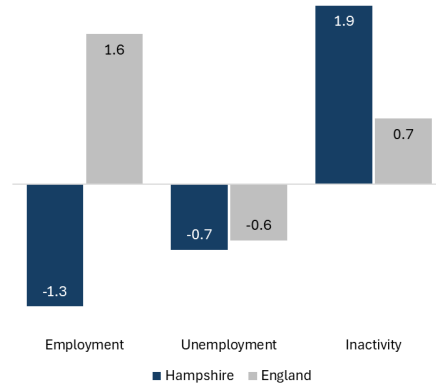
and Havant. Of this group, 61% are employed, 36% are inactive, and 3% are unemployed (**Figure 28**). While Hampshire has better employment outcomes for disabled residents than the national average, employment has declined since 2019, and inactivity has risen more sharply than in England (**Figure 29**).

Figure 28: EA core or work-limiting disabled (16-64) %, December 2024



Source: ONS 2025

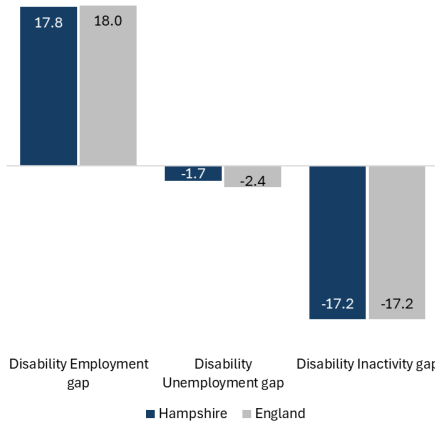
Figure 29: EA core or work-limiting disabled (16-64) ppts, Change Dec 2019- 2024



Source: DWP 2025

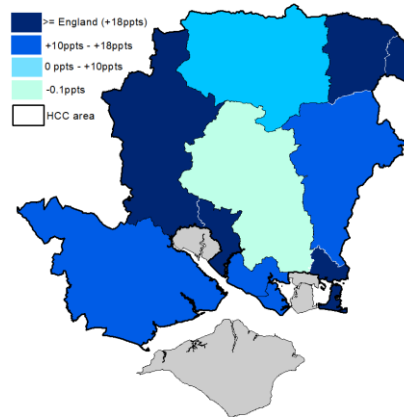
In Hampshire, disabled residents face significantly lower employment rates (61.5%) compared to the overall population (79.4%), creating a 17.9 percentage point gap. While the unemployment gap is smaller, economic inactivity among disabled residents (35.8%) is nearly double the overall rate (18.5%), **Figure 30**. These trends align with national patterns, though district-level disparities vary. Eastleigh, Hart, Havant, Rushmoor, and Test Valley exceed the national disability employment gap, whereas Winchester shows no gap—likely due to data limitations (**Figure 31**).

Figure 30: Working Age Disability Employment, Unemployment and Inactivity Gaps (ppts)



Source: ONS 2025

Figure 31: Hampshire Disability Employment Gap (ppts), December 2024



Source: ONS 2025

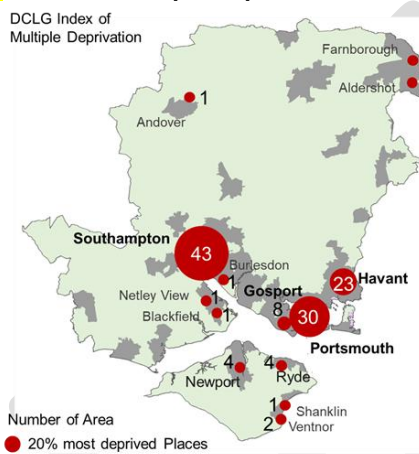
Research by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP, 2024) highlights that the disability employment gap is wider among certain demographic groups. These include males; older individuals aged 50 to 64; people with no formal qualifications; those living in social housing; individuals not living in a couple; and people identifying as White.

In addition, disabled individuals are more likely than their non-disabled counterparts to be employed in specific sectors such as Health, Retail, and Education. They are also more likely to work in lower-skilled occupations, be self-employed, work part-time (and therefore fewer hours), and be employed in the public sector.

Broader Impacts of Deprivation in Hampshire

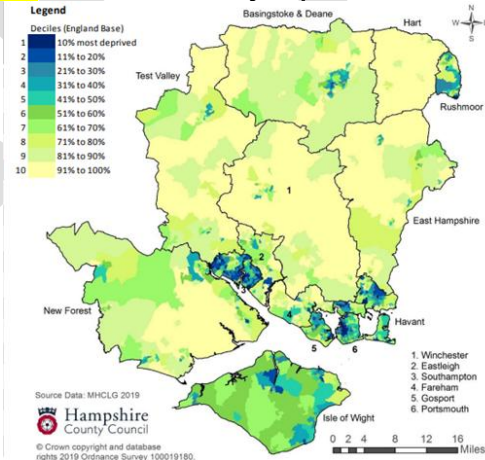
Hampshire is among the least deprived local authority areas in England overall. However, it contains pockets of multiple deprivation, particularly concentrated in South Hampshire, with smaller clusters in North Hampshire (notably Rushmoor and Test Valley) and Central Hampshire (notably New Forest), **Figure 32**.

Figure 32: Index of Multiple Deprivation



Source: MCHLG 2019

Figure 33: Health & Disability Deprivation



Source: MCHLG 2019

The county contains 40 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) ranked among the most deprived in England. Of these, 23 are located in Havant, with notable concentrations in Leigh Park and the Wecock Estate. Areas of higher deprivation such as Havant have the highest proportion of economically inactive people whose general health is bad, are disabled or are long term sick and disabled.

[INSERT NHS RECRUITMENT DRIVE, CASE STUDY XX]

In addition to the well-documented effects of deprivation on individuals and communities, a range of potential impacts specific to Hampshire have been identified through hearings conducted by the Commission of Inquiry 2050. Key themes include:

- **Multi-morbidity and ageing:** The prevalence of multiple long-term health conditions increases with age and is strongly associated with socio-economic deprivation (**Figure 33**). Even among the least deprived groups, multi-morbidity becomes more common with age.
- **Lack of affordable housing:** This is particularly acute for lower-paid key workers. Affordability and housing-related deprivation were recurring concerns raised during the hearings.
- **Hidden deprivation:** Small but significant pockets of deprivation exist across various districts. These areas may be overlooked but have wide-ranging impacts on health, education, and skills development.
- **Community diversity and inclusion:** Ensuring communities are diverse in terms of age and ethnicity is seen as a way to reduce social isolation and loneliness - issues that are increasingly relevant in a rapidly digitising society.
- **Infrastructure and service planning:** Effective planning for schools, healthcare, and older persons' housing is essential. Access to green spaces was also highlighted as a key factor in improving health outcomes and mitigating the effects of deprivation.

It is also important to note **Inclusion health** – a ‘catch-all’ term used to describe people who are socially excluded and typically experience multiple, overlapping risk factors for poor health. For Hampshire, inclusion health groups are coastal communities (including Left Behind Neighbourhoods), people with drug and alcohol dependency, Gypsy, Roma and Irish Traveller community, people experiencing homelessness, people in contact with the justice system, sex workers, veterans, victims of modern slavery and vulnerable migrants (including Afghan nationals)¹⁵.

There is a strong spatial correlation between income, employment, and education and skills deprivation in urban areas. In contrast, barriers to services and housing are more prevalent in rural areas. Families on low incomes, those with higher levels of welfare dependency, and older residents are particularly vulnerable to both individual and place-based deprivation. In rural communities, access to public transport is often a critical need.

Jobs and Earnings in Hampshire

Official data from the ONS, alongside more timely insights from private sources, highlight significant disparities in labour demand at the local level. In several areas with high rates of economic inactivity, the availability of jobs relative to the working-age population is notably low. This may indicate underdeveloped local labour markets or a reliance on out-commuting to access employment opportunities elsewhere.

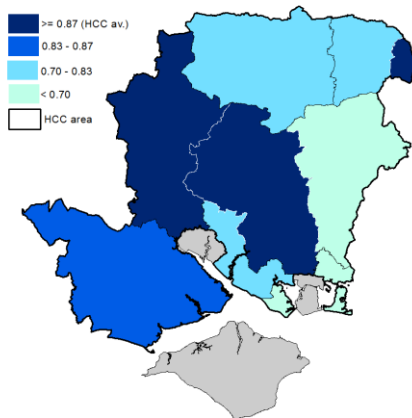
¹⁵ JSNA Inclusion Health Groups: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/publichealth/jsna/inclusion-health-groups>

Jobs Density

In 2023, Hampshire had 712,000 jobs, with a job density of 0.83 - below the South East (0.86) and England (0.88) averages, indicating fewer employment opportunities. Job density varied locally: South Hampshire (0.71) lagged behind North (0.82) and Central Hampshire (0.95), with the lowest levels in Gosport, Havant, and East Hampshire - areas with high economic inactivity (Figure 34).

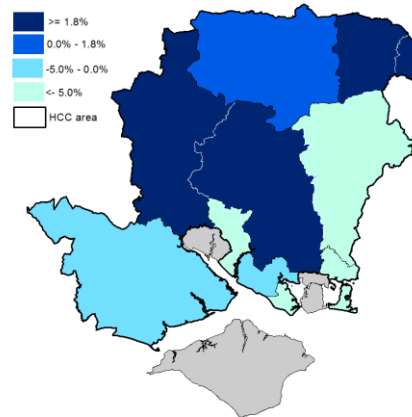
Between 2019 and 2023, Hampshire experienced a net loss of approximately 13,000 jobs (-1.8%), contrasting with a 1.8% increase nationally. At the sub-area level, North Hampshire saw a modest increase of 2%, Central Hampshire declined slightly (-0.3%), and South Hampshire experienced a more substantial decrease of around 6%. Local authorities with relatively high rates of economic inactivity - such as East Hampshire, Gosport, and Havant - also saw the most significant job losses during this period. Conversely, areas like Winchester, Rushmoor, Test Valley, and Hart demonstrated relatively strong job growth (Figure 35).

Figure 34: Job density, 2023
(jobs per resident of working age).



Source: ONS 2025

Figure 35: % change in the number of local jobs 2019 to 2023



Source: ONS 2025

Overall, job density in Hampshire decreased slightly faster than in England between 2019 and 2023. At the district level, only Rushmoor and New Forest saw increases in job density, while all other districts experienced declines.

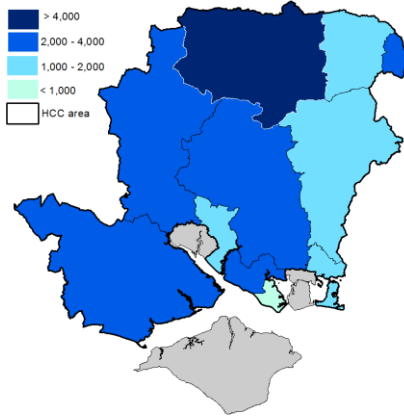
Demand for Labour - Vacancies

In May 2025, Hampshire recorded around 12,800 unique online job postings—a 17.5% drop from May 2024 and 41.3% down from May 2023 - indicating a sharp decline in advertised roles. Vacancy distribution remains uneven, with South Hampshire underrepresented relative to its share of economically inactive residents (Figure 37).

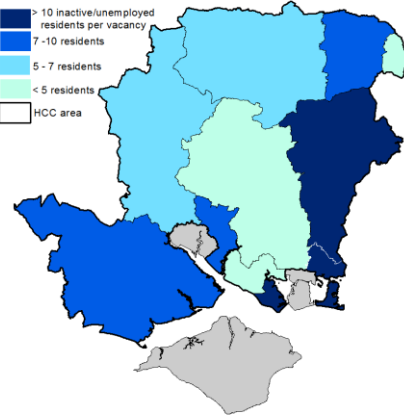
Figure 36: Average number of unique online job postings per month to May 2025

Figure 37: Inactive/unemployed residents per online job posting, 2025 vacancies

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Source: Lightcast 2025



Source: Lightcast 2025 and ONS 2025

Gosport, Havant, East Hampshire, and Eastleigh consistently report low job vacancy volumes and fewer vacancies per inactive or unemployed resident, suggesting limited labour market access (**Figure 37**). Coastal districts also lack low-skilled and lower-intermediate roles, which are often better suited to the inactive working-age population.

Demand for Labour by Occupation and Industry

There is currently strong demand for care workers and home carers in Hampshire, followed by sales-related occupations. In addition, there is notable demand for high-skilled roles, including programmers and software development professionals, as well as managerial and accountancy-related occupations (**Table 2**). Among lower- and lower-intermediate-skilled occupations, demand remains high for cleaning staff, sales assistants, administrative roles, and certain teaching-related positions (**Table 3**).

Table 2: Online job postings by top occupations, May 2024 – May 2025 Hampshire

Occupation (SOC)	% of unique postings	median posting duration
Care Workers and Home Carers	6.3	29 days
Sales Related Occupations n.e.c.	6.2	26 days
Cleaners and Domestic	5.5	22 days
Kitchen and Catering Assistants	3.7	24 days
Customer Service Occupations n.e.c.	3.3	25 days
Programmers and Software Devel. Professionals	3.1	26 days
Chefs	3.0	26 days
Managers and Directors in Retail and Wholesale	2.9	26 days
Book-keepers, Payroll Managers and Wages Clerks	2.8	26 days
Teaching Assistants	2.3	29 days

Source: Lightcast 2025

Table 3: Online job postings by low skilled and lower-intermediate skilled occupations, May 2024 – May 2025 Hampshire

Occupation	% of unique postings	median posting duration
Janitor / Cleaner	5.5	22 days
Home Health Aide	4.4	29 days
Office / Administrative Assistant	4.0	23 days
Sales Representative	3.9	27 days
Customer Service Representative	3.7	26 days
Retail Sales Associate	3.6	23 days
Preschool / Childcare Teacher	3.5	29 days
Chef	3.4	26 days
Teacher Assistant	2.9	29 days
Caregiver / Personal Care Aide	2.7	28 days

Source: Lightcast 2025

Between May 2024 and May 2025, the top industries for job postings in Hampshire were human health, retail trade, food and beverage services, education, and residential care.

Jobs Quality

There is a growing emphasis on the quality of work across Hampshire and the UK, reflecting increasing recognition of its impact on individuals' lives. This heightened focus on what

constitutes ‘good jobs’ is partly a response to labour market trends observed over the past 15 years. These trends include high employment rates and low unemployment, alongside rising economic inactivity, wage stagnation, and increasing job insecurity for many workers.

[INSERT RENEWABLES, CASE STUDY XX]

In areas with already high employment rates, such as Hampshire, it is essential to place equal emphasis on the quality of work as on the quantity. However, there is no universally agreed measure of what constitutes ‘quality employment’. In practice various job quality indicators have been used such as satisfactory hours, overtime, desired contract, zero-hour contracts, low pay, career progression, employee involvement, union representation, workplace injury and illness.

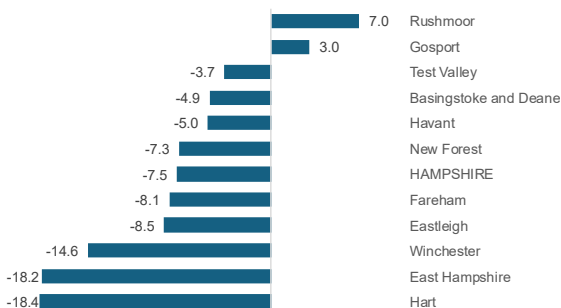
A high number of jobs alone does not guarantee economic wellbeing - job quality plays a crucial role. While most employees in Hampshire work satisfactory hours, unpaid overtime is common, especially among professionals. Zero-hour contracts are rare overall but more prevalent among young and older workers, part-time employees, and those in hospitality and care sectors.

Low pay remains a concern. Around 12% of employees in Hampshire earn below two-thirds of the UK median wage, with higher rates among women, disabled workers, and those without qualifications. Career progression opportunities are uneven, with younger and more educated workers reporting better prospects. Older workers and those in low-skilled roles face limited advancement.

Earnings Disparities

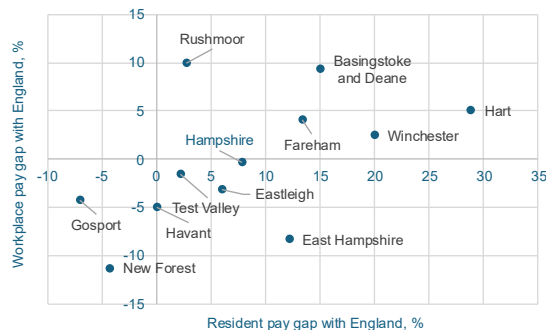
In 2024, full-time workers in Hampshire earned a median of £37,500, 7.5% less than the £40,550 median for residents, mainly due to higher commuter incomes. Only Rushmoor and Gosport had workplace earnings above resident earnings (**Figure 38**). Several places, including Gosport, lack high-paying jobs and access to external opportunities, while Rushmoor hosts high-paying industries but its residents face competition from skilled commuters.

Figure 38: Annual wage gap, workplace vs residence, % 2024 (full-time workers)



Source: ONS 2025

Figure 39: Residence and workplace pay relative to England, % 2024 (full-time workers)



Source: ONS 2025

In 2024, Hampshire residents earned 7.8% more than the England average, while workplace earnings fell slightly below it - down from 4% above in 2010. Six districts, especially New Forest, East Hampshire, Havant, and Gosport, had notable workplace pay gaps (**Figure 39**).

Earnings disparities are also evident across income levels: the bottom 20% of full-time workers earned under £27,000, with even lower figures in Havant and Gosport. Part-time workers faced a median income of £13,400, with the lowest 20% earning under £6,400. In May 2025, the median advertised salary was £29,600, but 13.6% of roles offered under £24,000, while 17% offered £45,000 or more.

In 2024, part-time jobs made up 26% of all employee roles in Hampshire, with women accounting for nearly four in five of these positions. A significant gender disparity persists: 40% of employed women in Hampshire worked part-time compared to just 13% of men. Median annual pay for part-time workers was £13,400 - around a third of full-time earnings. While female part-time pay slightly exceeded that of males, the full-time gender pay gap remained substantial, with women earning 20% less than men.

Timely data from online job postings indicates that the median advertised salary in Hampshire stood at £29,600 in May 2025. However, there is considerable variation around this median. Approximately 13.6% of all advertised roles offered salaries below £24,000 per annum, while over 20% were in the £24,000 to £27,000 range. At the upper end of the scale, around 17% of advertised positions offered salaries of £45,000 or more. But what if one salary isn't enough?

Growth in secondary employment

The term '*double jobbers*' has gained traction as more individuals take on multiple roles to cope with rising living costs: 1.325 million in the UK between March to May 2025, representing 3.9% of all employed people¹⁶. This marks a notable increase following declines in early 2023. The rise is attributed to persistent cost-of-living pressures, with many workers seeking additional income to cover basic expenses.

Over half of Gen Z workers in the UK are reportedly considering second jobs to manage basic living expenses¹⁷. This trend is particularly pronounced among recent graduates entering sectors like healthcare, education, and social services, where starting salaries may not match rising living costs.

¹⁶ Employment in the UK: July 2025:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/employmentintheuk/july2025>

¹⁷ Our latest report reveals majority of Gen Z considering second jobs to survive: <https://boostworks.co.uk/news/report-reveals-gen-z-second-jobs-survive/>

A survey of 1,893 registered nurses found that 17% were actively seeking a second job outside healthcare to supplement their income¹⁸. Of those, 97% reported struggling to pay essential bills, and many considered roles in retail, hospitality, or admin work.

Recent Nursing course enrolment data from UCAS suggests more worrying trends in the future nursing workforce. In 2023, applications for nursing courses fell by 13.4% from pandemic highs, though they remained 9.7% above pre-pandemic levels. However, by 2025, applications to study nursing in England had declined by 35% compared to 2021.

Anecdotal insights from Hampshire indicate that local experiences align with those seen across the UK.

Multiple Barriers to (Re) Entering the Labour Market

When examining the reasons why economically inactive individuals do not return to employment, research consistently highlights the presence of multiple, overlapping barriers to re-entering the labour market.

Rather than facing a single, easily resolvable issue, many individuals encounter a complex interplay of challenges that hinder their return to work. Commonly cited barriers among those identified as economically inactive include, but are not limited to:

- **Access to childcare**
- **Access to health care**
- **Age**
- **Benefits system**
- **Cultural differences**
- **Household finances**
- **Local job opportunities**
- **Qualifications**
- **Previous / recent work experience**

In Hampshire, there also exist some challenging dichotomies: in Rushmoor, those with low or no skills can struggle to find jobs in a more highly-skilled local jobs market. In East Hampshire, those with high skills levels may have to travel outside of the district to find jobs. The necessity to travel presents individuals with additional challenges.

A common theme that came up during the external stakeholder engagement activity was simply '**Confidence**'. Many of these individuals lack confidence. And where they lack confidence in themselves, it can often be difficult to find appropriate support to recognise and rebuild it to a point where the individual can secure and maintain sustainable employment.

Research suggests that current approaches may need to be enhanced through more personalised support. There is also likely to be a growing need for stronger partnerships, including cross-departmental collaboration and greater engagement with the third sector.

¹⁸ One in six already exhausted nurses seeking second job outside healthcare: <https://nursingnotes.co.uk/news/workforce/one-in-six-already-exhausted-nurses-seeking-second-job-outside-healthcare/>

Organisations in this sector often have established relationships with economically inactive individuals and can play a vital role in supporting their journey back into employment.

Additionally, closer collaboration with businesses - who ultimately shape labour market opportunities and outcomes – is essential to ensure that support services align with real-world employment demands and expectations. With that in mind, what does ‘good work’ look like?

What does ‘Good work’ look like?

‘Good work’ is a central part of the government’s policy agenda, as indicated in both the Get Britain Working White Paper and the Next Steps to Make Work Pay¹⁹ policy paper. These outline a clear drive to expand access to high-quality jobs.

In responding to Taylor’s review of modern working practices²⁰, the UK government published a useful list of suggested measures, in line with a similar list of metrics from Taylor’s review²¹. These included:

- **Satisfaction:** A measure of how satisfied someone is in work – a good starting point for measuring ‘good work’.
- **Fair pay:** A measure to help individuals judge the quality of their work in terms of their earnings, in comparison to their peers and other employment opportunities.
- **Participation and progression:** A measure on participation in the labour market, including suitable access to employment, as well as ability to progress based on skills and opportunities.
- **Wellbeing, safety and security:** A measure on both physical and mental wellbeing not just from the perspective of the individual but also capturing workplace support for employees’ wellbeing.
- **Voice and autonomy:** A measure to try to capture employees’ understanding of how they can influence and contribute to workplace improvement, decision-making and even the level of control they have over tasks associated with their roles.

In 2024, the UK Government introduced the Employment Rights Bill²² which addressed multiple aspects of good work such as flexible working and family-related leave. Although this Bill has been designed to support the Government’s mission to increase productivity and improve workers’ rights, there have been some reports of impacts including through some of our engagement activity. For example, reductions in hiring activity; rising of employment costs (also linked to the increases in employer National Insurance Contribution costs and increase in

¹⁹ Next Steps to make work pay: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/next-steps-to-make-work-pay>

²⁰ Good work: the Taylor review of modern working practices: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/good-work-the-taylor-review-of-modern-working-practices>

²¹ Good work: a response to the Taylor Review of modern working practices: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-response-to-the-taylor-review-of-modern-working-practices/good-work-a-response-to-the-taylor-review-of-modern-working-practices#good-work-1>

²² Employment Rights Bill: <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3737>

the National Living Wage) and fewer opportunities for workers that need more support, including younger workers.

However, there has also been some feedback that employers are also exploring different ways to upskill their existing workforce such as through the Government's Free courses for jobs²³ and Skills Bootcamps, including those offered through Hampshire County Council²⁴.

[INSERT DATA ANALYST, CASE STUDY XX]

Skills Bootcamps are just one example of support for individuals and employers. In **Part three** we detail the current support landscape across a wide variety of different organisations, with respect to Work, Health and Skills.

DRAFT

²³ Free courses for jobs: <https://www.skillsforcareers.education.gov.uk/pages/training-choice/free-courses-for-jobs>

²⁴ Future-proof your career with our free Skills Bootcamps: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/business/skillsbootcamp>

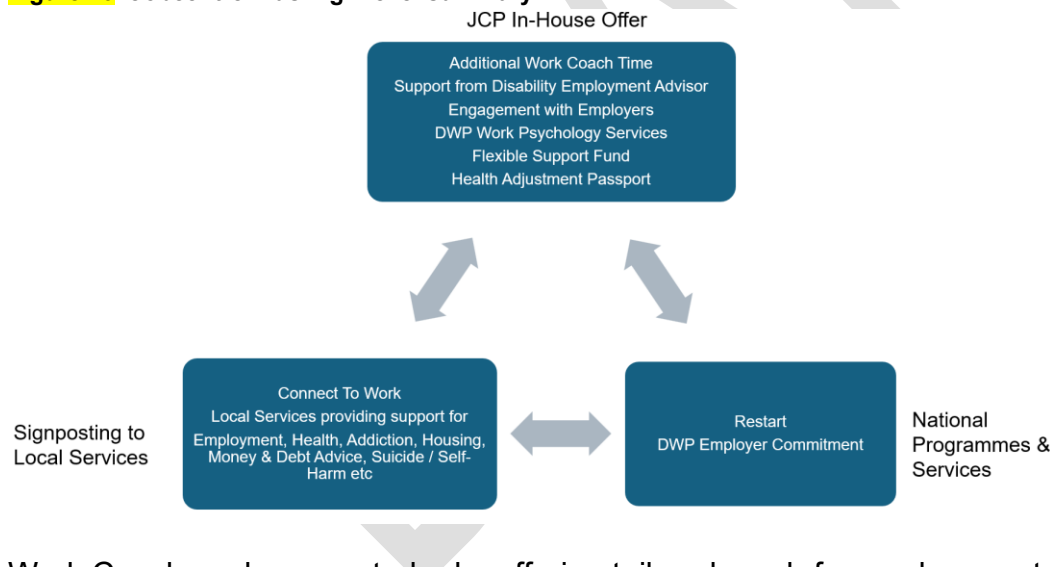
Part three: The current support system and offer

In putting together this Plan, a series of engagement activities took place to try to capture and understand local²⁵ work, health and skills support for individuals and employers across Hampshire. From this activity, a directory of support was created – **Annex 5**. What follows is a summary of this support.

The Jobcentre Plus Offer

The Jobcentre Plus Offer is a package of personalised advice and support designed to help people find and retain employment. It supports the Government’s strategy for economic growth and poverty reduction by targeting support at the most effective point in a claim, helping individuals move into work as quickly as possible. **Figure 40**, below provides a high-level summary of the support.

Figure 40: Jobcentre Plus high-level summary



Work Coaches play a central role, offering tailored, work-focused support to ensure claimants remain close to the labour market. Wherever possible, the same Work Coach supports a claimant throughout their journey, helping them find jobs, gain new skills, and access information about disability-friendly employers.

²⁵ This focuses on local organisations offering local work, health and skills support. It does not include national support.

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Access to Work²⁶ supports those with health conditions or disabilities get or stay in work. It provides help to pay for practical support, communication support at job interviews and help manage mental health at work.

Jobcentres also provide targeted support through specialist roles and programmes who work with specific customer groups to address unique barriers to employment. Further details are outlined in **Table 4**, below.

Table 4: Jobcentre Plus in-house Offer

Additional Work Coach Time	Additional Work Coach Support provides people with health conditions or disabilities with increased one-to-one personalised support from their work coach to help them move towards, and into, work.
Disability Employment Advisor	Offer of specialist advisors in all Jobcentres dedicated to helping people with health conditions or disabilities to secure and stay in work.
Youth Employability Coach	Offer of specialised support for young claimants with multiple barriers to work and complex needs to develop the skills to look for, obtain and keep employment.
Vulnerable Customer Lead	Offer of specialist advisors in all Jobcentres dedicated to helping vulnerable customers.
Advanced Customer Support Senior Leaders	Works with Senior Leadership Teams across DWP to focus on DWP's responsibilities to customers most at risk.
Prison Work Coach	Specialist role supporting people leaving prison and helps to reduce re-offending.
School Advisor	Assists schools in England to provide high quality, independent and impartial careers advice to pupils aged between 11 and 18.
Supported Families Employment Advisor	Specialist Advisor working in partnership with the Department for Education and local authorities to empower families through employment.
Armed Forces Champion	Specialist support for service leavers and veterans to enhance their employability and enable the individual to move towards lasting employment or progress in work.
Flexible Support Fund	The Flexible Support Fund is a locally managed budget to supplement existing services and tailor support to the needs of individuals in the local area.
Health Adjustment Passport	The Health Adjustment Passport can support people with health conditions or disabilities to move into work or stay in a job.

Support is further enhanced through partnership working with local and national organisations, and through Employer Services teams, which connect claimants with job opportunities and promote inclusive recruitment practices. Claimants may also be referred to national programmes such as the Restart Scheme and can access funding through the Flexible Support Fund.

A new Jobs and Careers Service

Introduced in the Get Britain Working White Paper, the new Jobs and Careers Service will build on existing foundations to deliver more personalised, skills-focused support and strengthen employer engagement. To test this new approach, a Pathfinder was launched in June 2025 in Wakefield, North Yorkshire. Nationally, Jobcentre appointments have been tailored to individual needs, and 1,000 Work Coaches have been redeployed to offer intensive,

²⁶ Access to Work: <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work>

voluntary support to claimants receiving health-related benefits. This support is designed to help individuals engage with appropriate employment programmes and move closer to the labour market.

Education and skills providers

Hampshire benefits from a wide range of post-16 education and skills providers including further education colleges, sixth form colleges, independent training providers and the University of Winchester. Three of the colleges (Basingstoke College of Technology, Farnborough College of Technology and Sparsholt College Group) also have their own University Centres and many of the colleges have strong links with other universities to support their higher education provision.

With such a wide range of providers, there is a good mix of technical, vocational and academic pathways, closely linked to local skills demands and informed by the two Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs): Solent LSIP²⁷, led by Hampshire Chamber of Commerce, and the Enterprise M3 (including all of Surrey) LSIP²⁸, led by Surrey Chambers of Commerce.

Through stakeholder engagement activity with education and skills providers, we were able to identify the following work, health and skills support for different target groups:

- **Armed forces community:** Work and skills support to help service leavers and veterans move into sustainable employment. E.g. Building Heroes: Hounsome Fields Skills Academy from Sparsholt College Group²⁹.
- **Foreign language speakers:** English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses are offered by various colleges. Feedback from some of the councils was there is growing need for these courses.
- **Unemployed:** There are a variety of courses aimed at supporting unemployed individuals learn vital skills and gain qualifications to help them into employment. These include Maths and English courses, alongside the Government's Free Course for Jobs, Skills Bootcamps programmes and DWP-funded Sector-based Work Academy Programmes (SWAPs). There is also a government-funded online skills platform, the Innovation South Virtual Campus³⁰, hosted by Sparsholt College.

²⁷ Solent LSIP: <https://www.hampshirechamber.co.uk/chamber-of-solutions/local-skills-improvement-plan/>

²⁸ Enterprise M3 (including all of Surrey) LSIP: <https://www.surrey-chambers.co.uk/future-skills-hub/>

²⁹ Hounsome Fields Skills Academy: <https://www.buildingheroes.org.uk/news/building-heroes-celebrates-the-official-opening-of-the-hounsome-fields-skills-academy-in-partnership-with-vistry-group>

³⁰ Innovation South Virtual Campus: <https://em3.isvc.co.uk/>

- **Young People (aged 18-24):** The extent to which young people are prepared for work often focuses on supporting their employability and skills (sometimes together). However, with the increased focus on health – and particularly mental health, as highlighted in Part one – it is not a surprise to see investments in, for example, SEND Independence Hubs³¹, Supported Internship schemes and the new Inclusion EB8 provision from Inclusion Education, which offers the work, mental health and skills support for young people aged 18+.

In some of the feedback from stakeholders, it was noted there are increasing numbers of recent graduates seeking employment support. Whilst the details about these graduates are limited, it would be of interest to learn more about, for example, which higher education providers they attended, what courses they studied and what careers support was / is available. For example, the University of Winchester offers *Careers Advice for Life* to its graduates³².

In addition to the support listed above, it is also important to recognise statutory documents to outline how providers that offer higher education courses are improving equality of opportunity for those who face barriers.

Access and participation plans set out how higher education providers will improve equality of opportunity for students from disadvantaged backgrounds to access, succeed in, and progress from higher education.

For Hampshire, as well as the University of Winchester, Farnborough College of Technology and Sparsholt College Group also publish Access and participation plans³³. As part of the delivery of this Plan, it could be of interest to reference these documents to find common goals.

Housing associations

Housing associations provide homes and support for nearly six million people across England, offering social housing, shared ownership, market rent and sale properties, as well as supported and specialist accommodation³⁴. Beyond this, they also invest in community services and regeneration including actively supporting customers with skills development and

³¹ SEND Independence Hubs: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/participation-lifelong-learning/SEND-employability/SEND-independence-hubs>

³² Careers Support and Advice: <https://www.winchester.ac.uk/student-life/Careers-Support-and-Advice/>

³³ Access and participation plans: <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/for-providers/equality-of-opportunity/access-and-participation-plans/>

³⁴ What do housing associations do?: <https://www.housing.org.uk/about-housing-associations/what-housing-associations-do/>

employment and job search advice³⁵. What really came across from the discussions with these organisations was the focus on the household not just the individual.

Across Hampshire there are over 25 housing associations. During the stakeholder engagement activities, representatives from some of these reported on the following work, health and skills support:

- Personalised services of employment guidance, support and practical help to customers including, for example, job searching, CV and job application support, interview techniques (including video-based interviews).
- Support for work experience, skills training and qualifications, including grant funding.
- A particular focus on Digital Skills support such as the Digital Quiz³⁶ resource from Clarion Housing to help customers measure and improve their digital skills.
- Help with self-employment, business start-up (including financing) and business resilience.
- Although not currently available in Hampshire, the Green Employment Pathway from SNG³⁷ is of note; supporting people to access advice, guidance and training in working towards Green Skills roles and organisations.
- Employer engagement activity, connecting opportunities to customers.
- Working with education and skills providers to create training and apprenticeship opportunities.
- Signposting to mental health support, including more specialist support for (e.g.) young people, students and LGBT+ people.

There are definite opportunities to join up much of this work – not just between housing associations but also with other organisations. There is appetite from some of the housing associations, and this will be reflected in **Part Five**.

Local government

As illustrated in **Figure 3** in **Annex 3**, Hampshire has 12 local authorities – one upper tier (Hampshire County Council) and 11 lower tier (Basingstoke and Deane Borough, East

³⁵ Delivering change: What Housing Associations can tell us about employment and skills:

<https://www.centreforcities.org/reader/delivering-change-housing-associations-can-tell-us-employment-skills/>

³⁶ Digital Quiz: <https://clariondigitalquiz.com/>

³⁷ Green Employment Pathway: <https://www.sng.org.uk/customers/support/employment-and-skills/green-employment-pathway>

Hampshire District, Eastleigh Borough, Fareham Borough, Gosport Borough, Hart District, Havant Borough, New Forest District, Rushmoor Borough, Test Valley Borough and Winchester City Councils).

Hampshire County Council has regular engagements with economic development and skills teams in each of these Councils. Some of them also have their own networks such as the **Basingstoke Employment and Skills Partnership** and the **Test Valley Employment and Skills Zone**. The employment and skills partnership that previously covered Gosport will be expanded, later this year to become the **Fareham and Gosport Employment and Skills Partnership**, as part of a joint initiative by Fareham and Gosport Councils. A **New Forest Skills Group** is also due to be established to lead the delivery of their Skills Action Plan³⁸.

These all offer the opportunity to update on related activity, share good practice and collaborate – especially at a time when local government funding is stretched.

[INSERT UKRAINIAN SUPPORT, CASE STUDY XX]

Through discussions with each of these teams, we were able to identify the following work, health and skills support for different target groups:

- **Foreign language speakers:** English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses are offered by various colleges. As mentioned, above, there is growing need for these courses. There is also specific support for different groups such as Nepalese communities and Ukrainian guests (see **Case Study XX** on **page XX**).
- **Health conditions and/or disabilities:** In addition to the Connect to Work programme (see **page XX**), there are a number of county-wide programmes to support this cohort, together with some more localised. Based on the engagement activity, these tend to centre in South Hampshire with some embedding the '*Five Ways to Wellbeing*³⁹' actions, cited by the Hampshire County Council Public Health team.
- **Older people:** Campaigns such as 'Live Longer Better' support older residents to maintain independence and take positive steps to improve their health and wellbeing. Based on the engagement activity, there was little if any work or skills support for this cohort.
- **Unemployed:** Support for the unemployed tends to be centred on work and skills, ranging from employability support (e.g. CVs, job applications and interviews), through specific skills (e.g. maths and English courses) – some of which is online (e.g. SEEDL platform from a growing number of districts) – to jobs and careers events, supported by

³⁸ Boost to local jobs and training as New Forest Skills Action Plan approved: <https://www.newforest.gov.uk/article/4048/Boost-to-local-jobs-and-training-as-New-Forest-Skills-Action-Plan-approved>

³⁹ Five Ways to Wellbeing: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/publichealth/fivewaystowellbeing>

local recruiting employers and enhanced with employability workshops. Skills Bootcamps are also important to mention as they offer skills training alongside wrap-around employability support.

- **NEET Young People (aged 16-17):** As part of the statutory duty to support young people aged 16 and 17 (and up to age 25 for those with Special Educational Needs), Hampshire County Council supports young people not participating in education, employment or training (NEET) to re-engage with appropriate education or training through provision of careers and employability support⁴⁰.
- **Young People (aged 18-24):** Similar to education and skills providers, local government support for young people expands into work, skills and health – often integrated. Hampshire County Council provides a significant proportion of this support through the Hampshire Achieves and Hampshire Futures programmes and linked to the 'All Our Talents' action plan⁴¹ for young people with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), including Supported Internships. The government-funded Link Up Youth Hub⁴² in Havant (see **Case Study XX on page XX**) has continued to demonstrate successful engagement and impact with young people and the Basingstoke Youth Hub, due to open later in 2025, looks to learn and benefit from this activity.

[INSERT HAVANT YOUTH HUB, CASE STUDY XX]

In addition, it is important to acknowledge the work led by the **Public Health team** in Hampshire County Council to create conditions that enable healthier lives, tackling the key behavioural risk factors and reduce preventable health conditions that together contribute to people not being able to work. Examples of this activity include:

- **Strategic collaboration:** Work across County Council planning, transport, economic development and skills functions alongside the NHS (especially the Integrated Care Boards), the Department for Work and Pensions, districts and other key partners to create healthier living and working conditions.
- **Integration of health and skills:** Co-developing skills policies and programmes that support residents to return to work and access training aligned with employers' needs.
- **Preventative health services:** Examples include *NHS Health Checks*, *Smokefree Hampshire*, *Weight Management Services* and *Be Active Hampshire*.

⁴⁰ Post 16 Participation in education, Employment and Training (EET): <https://democracy.hants.gov.uk/documents/s134658/2025-06-18%20EAP%20-Post%2016%20Participation%20in%20Education%20Employment%20and%20Training.pdf>

⁴¹ All Our Talents: Hampshire's SEND Employability Action Plan: <https://documents.hants.gov.uk/education/all-our-talents.pdf>

⁴² Link Up Youth Hub: <https://linkupyouthhub.co.uk/>

- **Mental health and wellbeing support:** Delivery of campaigns and training on suicide prevention, bereavement and financial wellbeing as well as providing mental health resources to parents, carers and businesses.
- **Alcohol and drug services:** Improved hospital-to-community alcohol pathways with peer support; *Recovery Ambassadors* programme which embeds support and co-production in local recover communities in Gosport, Havant and Fareham; refreshing the '*Rethink Your Drink*' website⁴³ for better engagement.
- **Menopause support:** Live projects with Primary Care Networks in Havant and Gosport, with interim results from the *Havant Enhanced Menopause Checks* showing promising early impact with 220 women having benefited so far.

NHS

Public Health also actively works with the two Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) that sit across Hampshire (Hampshire and Isle of Wight ICB and Frimley ICB⁴⁴) which together have a common aim to improve the health and healthcare outcomes of the local communities – supporting residents to live healthier lives for longer.

In terms of work, health and skills support from the two ICBs, the following have been identified:

- The Hampshire and Isle of Wight ICB has a strategic focus on the health and wellbeing of the workforce and expanding it to include those communities which may not have been considered working in the sector. This includes those who are economically inactive.
- Linked to this is the 350+ NHS Careers programme⁴⁵ (see also **Case Study XX on page XX**) aimed at students from age 3 to 24, giving them insights into the wealth of opportunities from a career in the NHS.
- The Widening Access Demonstrators project (see also **Case Study XX on page XX**) will support 1,000 young people and individuals from particularly deprived communities into pre-employment programme and then on to substantive entry level roles, or training posts with local NHS services.

⁴³ Rethink your drink: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/publichealth/alcoholawareness>

⁴⁴ In response to the changes in roles of ICBs, as part of the Government's 10-Year Health Plan, there is a new proposed three-way adjustment to the current NHS Frimley footprint. This will North East Hampshire will align to Hampshire and the Isle of Wight ICB: <https://frimleyhealthandcare.org.uk/who-we-are/nhs-frimley-icb/>

⁴⁵ 350+ NHS careers: <https://hiow350careers.nhs.uk/>

- The NHS Talking Therapies service offers employment support alongside therapy to help individuals manage mental health challenges related to work. This support can include help with finding a job, staying in work, or returning to work after a period of absence.
- Working with Hampshire County Council Public Health team, the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) has jointly created a Hampshire and Isle of Wight Mental Wellbeing Guide⁴⁶ to support businesses to deliver on the Government's six mental health core standards for 'Thriving at Work'.
- Since April 2025, Frimley ICB has been delivering the WorkWell pilot programme across parts of its area. The aim of WorkWell is to provide a free, one-to-one work and health support service, helping people with health issues and/or disabilities to get back to work or remain in work by connecting them to local support providers.

Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations

The VCSE sector is diverse and made up of a wide range of organisations of different sizes and people who deliver services supporting a wide variety of causes. The sector is crucial to support Hampshire residents with their work, health and skills needs.

Through discussions with representatives from a number of VCSEs, we were able to identify the following work, health and skills support for different target groups:

- **Armed Forces Community:** Although there are large numbers of nationally-based VCSEs, it is important to recognise local organisations such as After the Military and Forces Re-engineered, alongside the work of Citizens Advice Solent East which together support regular personnel, reservists, veterans, their families and bereaved with work, health and skills support.
- **Foreign language speakers:** Between 2023-25, Palladium delivered the Home Office's Refugee Employability Programme across Southeast England to help refugees navigate resettlement through employment coaching, English language support and more. This programme concluded in June 2025.
- **Health conditions and/or disabilities:** There is a broad breadth of support for this cohort ranging from that to support the conditions, to targeted support for those with the

⁴⁶ Workplace Mental Health and Wellbeing Guide: <https://www.hantsiow.icb.nhs.uk/your-health/workplace-mental-health-and-wellbeing-guide>

conditions to integrated offers of work, health and skills support. Enham Trust and Yateley Industries for the Disabled (see **Case Study XX on page XX**) are two good examples of VCSEs providing accommodation as well as skills training and employment opportunities with local employers.

[INSERT YATELEY INDUSTRIES, CASE STUDY XX]

- **Homeless:** Organisations such as Two Saints and Trinity Winchester work with local businesses and volunteers to share expertise and support homeless individuals gain employability and/or technical skills to help them secure employment.
- **Older people:** The New Directions, journey to work programme⁴⁷ in East Hampshire is a good example of a pre-employment support programme designed to help local people (including those aged 50+) back into work.
- **Prisoners and ex-offenders:** Programmes such as those from Footprints Project and Catch22 are designed to support those who have been affected by prison and the criminal justice system. Key to success is individualised approaches which, although resource intense, have the most impact.
- **Unemployed:** VCSE support for the unemployed is mainly focused on intensive employability support (e.g. CVs, job applications and interviews), through large programmes such as Restart, Work and Health Programme and the Work Ready Programme. There is also more local support such as the M3 Job Club and in community venues such as The Vine Centre in Aldershot.
- **Women:** Alongside the New Directions initiative (see **Case Study on page XX**), Trinity Winchester also run a Women's Services programme to support women who are experiencing an area of vulnerability.

[INSERT NEW DIRECTIONS, CASE STUDY XX]

- **Young People (aged 18-24):** VCSEs offer a variety of support for young people including enterprise and employment support, health and wellbeing support and some prevention and early intervention activity and reduce crime and build resilience. Again, there is evidence of integrated support.

⁴⁷ New Directions, Journey to work: <https://fedcap.org.uk/employment/services/new-directions/>

Connect to Work

Connect to Work is the first programme under the Government's Get Britain Working Strategy that will take a more collaborative, locally led approach to tackling 'Hidden Unemployment'.

With funding until 2030, subject to spending reviews, Connect to Work is a work programme in England and Wales to help disabled people, those with health conditions and people with complex barriers to employment, to find and remain in sustainable work. It will also provide for those who are employed and are at risk of falling out of work. It will be a voluntary, high-fidelity Supported Employment programme, connecting work, health and skills support.

Supported employment is a model that provides on-going assistance to individuals with complex needs, in finding and maintaining paid, competitive employment. It's characterised by individualised and flexible support, often both intensive and over a longer period of time, with the focus on long-term sustainable employment.

The DWP have decreed that Connect to Work must be delivered via specific supported employment models of either Individual Placement and Support (**IPS**)⁴⁸ or Supported Employment Quality Framework (**SEQF**)⁴⁹, both of which are proven to yield better employment outcomes for the target cohorts than traditional employment support alone.

Hampshire County Council does not currently employ a team that delivers these models. The intention is to commission external delivery provider(s) to provide a high-quality programme with delivery commencing from November 2025 across four key lot areas comprising of *Health Pathway, Domestic Abuse, Community Access, and Social Care*.

Hampshire County Council is targeted by the DWP to support approximately 5,000 people over the programme duration, with 1,700 profiled in the peak year of 2027-28.

Demonstrating commitment to equality and diversity

In addition to the above support, there were several national initiatives referenced by some of the organisations involved in the stakeholder engagement activities that help demonstrate commitment to aspects of equality and diversity as a way to attract, support and retain some of those who might otherwise sit outside the labour market.

⁴⁸ What is IPS?: <https://ipsgrow.org.uk/about/what-is-ips/>

⁴⁹ Background to the Supported Employment Quality Framework: <https://www.base-uk.org/page/Quality-in-Supported-Employment>

Armed Forces Covenant

The Armed Forces Covenant⁵⁰ focuses on helping members of the Armed Forces community have the same access to Government and commercial services and products as any other citizen. This support is provided in a number of areas including employment, healthcare and education. Hampshire County Council is one of over 350 organisations across Hampshire that has signed the Covenant⁵¹.

Disability Confident scheme

The Disability Confident employer scheme⁵² is a government scheme designed to encourage employers to recruit and retain disabled people and those with health conditions. The scheme helps identify organisations who are committed to inclusion and diversity in the workplace. Hampshire County Council is one of over 260 organisations across Hampshire that has signed up to the scheme⁵³.

Menopause Workplace Pledge

Women make up nearly half of the UK workforce – 51.4% in Hampshire – yet many feel forced to reduce their hours, pass up promotions, or even leave their jobs due to lack of menopause support⁵⁴. This is where the Menopause Workplace Pledge⁵⁵ can demonstrate how employers are taking positive action to make sure everyone going through the menopause is supported. Hampshire County Council is one of over 3,400 organisations across the UK that has signed the Pledge.

Employee networks

Employee networks are one way for an organisation to recognise the importance of intersectionality. At Hampshire County Council, there are five official staff networks that are open to any employee:

- **Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Staff Network** that exists to ensure that BME matters are considered for staff and service users of black, Asian and ethnic minority heritage.
- **Carers / Working Parents Staff Network** that brings together staff from across the Council who balance caring and/or parental responsibilities alongside their role, or who wish to support carer/working parent equality.

⁵⁰ Armed Forces Covenant: <https://www.armedforcescovenant.gov.uk/>

⁵¹ Search for businesses who have signed the Armed Forces Covenant: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/search-for-businesses-who-have-signed-the-armed-forces-covenant>

⁵² Disability Confident employer scheme: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/disability-confident-campaign>

⁵³ Employers that have signed up to the Disability Confident scheme: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disability-confident-employers-that-have-signed-up>

⁵⁴ Without support, many menopausal women are quitting their jobs: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/worklife/article/20240408-menopause-women-job-quits>

⁵⁵ Menopause Workplace Pledge: <https://www.wellbeingofwomen.org.uk/menopause-workplace-pledge/>

- **Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender (LGBT+) Network** who promote better equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender members of staff. The network also aims to decrease social isolation by creating opportunities to meet and connect with other LGBT+ people.
- **Staff Disability Network** that promotes inclusion and equality of opportunity for colleagues with a disability
- **Women's Network** that was formed to improve gender equality at all levels of the organisation, including women in leadership and equal representation of genders across professions.

In **Part four**, we draw together the insights and evidence from **Parts two** and **three** and are able to identify a number of priorities that will frame a plan of action, outlined in **Part five**.

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Part four: Priorities to Get Hampshire Working

In **Part two**, the primary drivers and causes of economic inactivity across Hampshire were identified. Broadly, these included (in alphabetical order):

- Caring responsibilities / looking after family or home (especially for women)
- Early retirement (mainly women)
- Long-term sickness or disability (mainly young and older workers)
- Multiple barriers to (re-)entering the labour market
- Young people struggling to secure and maintain employment

Annex 1 lists some suggested local and regional policy interventions that could help address these:

- **Place-based interventions** to stimulate job creation in deprived areas and improve transport and digital infrastructure.
- **Targeted support** for economically inactive individuals, including skills training, flexible work options, and integrated employment and health services.
- **Measures to tackle in-work poverty**, such as promoting the Real Living Wage, supporting career progression, and ensuring fair pay for part-time workers.
- **Inclusive labour market strategies** to reduce disability and gender employment gaps, support older workers, and engage underrepresented groups.

A key group that links all of these together are employers. Moreover, in order for this Plan to truly make an impact, employers need to be engaged and actively involved.

In **Part three**, the current support system and offer across Hampshire was outlined, with particular reference made to key groups of organisations and the work they are doing to support particular cohorts of individuals not engaging in the labour market.

Mapping the insights from these findings to the six, key issues identified in the Get Britain Working White Paper, it is apparent there is overlap with all of them and work still to be done.

During the external stakeholder engagement, discussions took place about the best, collaborative approach to take forward to address the challenges faced. It was agreed there were three priorities that would cover these challenges – and more – and provide a framework to create a suitable action plan.

Priority 1: Increase labour market participation of those facing barriers to employment.

Picking up on those excluded from the labour market (except young people, who are captured in the second priority), recognising the multiple challenges faced by women and acknowledging the disparities in labour market outcomes for women and those with health issues and/or disabilities, the first priority seems to increase labour market participation of those facing barriers to employment.

Through discussions with stakeholders, it is proposed that this workstream be led by the **Public Health team at Hampshire County Council**, in conjunction with the **Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board**. This has been agreed in principle.

Priority 2: Inspire and support young people to thrive at the start of their careers.

What was clear from both the data and the stakeholder engagement activity was the support needed for young people will need a dual focus: **Preventative** (e.g working with pre-16s to support their health, skills and preparedness for employment and guide away from becoming NEET) as well as **Reactive** (e.g. engaging with NEET / unemployed young people and supporting them with work, health and skills).

In terms of the Preventative focus, research by the National Centre for Social Research suggests that young people often experience multiple risk factors that can contribute to a young person becoming NEET. These include economic hardship, mental health issues, lack of access to quality education or employment opportunities, and regional disparities.⁵⁶

Through discussions with stakeholders, it is proposed that this workstream be led by **Jobcentre Plus**. This has been agreed in principle.

⁵⁶ National Centre for Social Research (2023) Risk factors for being NEET among young people, Youth Futures Foundation.

Priority 3: Increase employer engagement to better match local talent to local sustainable opportunities to make work pay.

As mentioned above, for this Plan to truly deliver, employers need to be engaged and actively involved to help fill their vacancies and provide other opportunities (e.g. work experience) as a part of the journey towards employment.

Through discussions with stakeholders, it is proposed that this workstream be led by **Hampshire Chamber of Commerce**. This has been agreed in principle.

Outcomes

The Department for Work and Pensions have outlined nine outcomes⁵⁷ the government wants to see from proposals to reform employment, health and skills support to tackle economic inactivity, support people into good work and fuel economic growth. Using national data and statistics, these include:

1. **Increase employment rate for people aged 18 to 66 (towards long-term ambition of 80%):** The employment rate of people aged 18 to 66 is 75.8%. This is 0.3% pts up on the year and 1.1% pts down on pre-COVID pandemic.
2. **Increase real earnings amongst non-retired households, especially in the bottom half of the income distribution:** Real earnings at the bottom half of the income distribution (5th decile and below), has generally been increasing since 2014 to 2015.
3. **Reduce local variations in employment rates (people aged 18 to 66):** Data from the Annual Population Survey (APS) shows considerable variation in local authority employment rates. The gap between the bottom decile and the median is currently 7.1% pts. After a noticeable narrowing of the gap in 2019 to 2020 and 2020 to 2021, it started to trend upwards and is back to where it was in 2009 to 2010.
4. **Reduce health-related economic inactivity (people aged 18 to 66):** Economic inactivity due to long-term sickness has been trending upwards among people aged 18 to 66 since 2019. It is currently at 6.8%, 1.6% pts above pre-covid (5.2%).
5. **Reduce disability employment gap for people aged 18 to 66:** The gap between the employment rates of disabled and non-disabled people, aged 18 to 66, has generally been reducing over time. It is currently at 30.1% pts, near historic low of 30.0% pts.

⁵⁷ Get Britain Working outcomes: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/get-britain-working-outcomes>

6. **Reduce the proportion of young people (18 to 24) not in education, employment or training (NEET)⁵⁸:** The NEET rate for 18 to 24-year-olds has been trending upwards over the last 2 years. It is currently at 15.8%. This comes from publicly available ONS data. Linked to following metric: Increase the percentage of 16- to 21-year-olds either in classroom-based education and training, or in a job which provides skills training in England.
7. **Reduce the employment rate gap between lone parents and parents who are part of a couple for people aged 18 to 66:** The employment rate gap between lone parents and parents in a couple is 21.4%. Lone parents' employment rate has been consistently lower than coupled parents. This has been on a downward trend since 2006. Recent data appear to show the gap rising again.
8. **Reduce percentage of coupled households where at least one parent is out of work - people aged 18 to 66:** In July to September 2024, 24.1% of all coupled families had at least one parent out of work. There has been a gradual decline in this figure since 2016. There is evidence showing that reducing this has significant positive impacts on child poverty, other things being equal.
9. **Increase employment rate of women aged 18 to 66:** The employment rate of women aged 18 to 66 is 72.3%. This is slightly lower pre-COVID (72.5%) and 7.1% pts lower than the employment rate of men at 79.4%.

We have mapped these nine outcomes to the three priorities, as shown in **Table 5**:

Table 5: Get Hampshire Working Plan priorities mapped to DWP outcomes.

Priority	Outcome mapping
Priority 1: Increase labour market participation of those facing barriers to employment.	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
Priority 2: Inspire and support young people to thrive at the start of their careers.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9
Priority 3: Increase employer engagement to better match local talent to local sustainable opportunities to make work pay.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8

In **Part five**, we present an Action Plan with further details on how we will collaborate with partners and work towards addressing these outcomes.

⁵⁸ The term 'NEET' is used here to refer to young people aged 18-24 however, in the remainder of this document, it is used to refer to 16-17-year-olds not in education, employment or training. Those aged 18+ in similar situations are classed as 'unemployed'.

Part five: A Plan for action

Action Plan

The following tables present actions for the three priorities, together with some overarching actions, during the next 12 – 24 months. Each priority will be led by one or two organisations which have been agreed, in principle. Hampshire County Council will lead on the overarching actions. These actions are an initial set and likely to develop and evolve as the Get Hampshire Working Plan is implemented from October 2025.

Where possible, it would be advisable to engage with individuals furthest from the labour market to help inform outputs of these actions, including, but not limited to:

- those with health conditions and/or disabilities
- women (especially those who care for children or families, those from disadvantaged backgrounds and/or stuck in insecure, poor quality and/or low-paying work)
- those from ethnic backgrounds who are negatively impacted with respect to participation in the labour market
- those in rural communities.

These individuals can help delivery partners understand common challenges / barriers and how can we take a multi-agency approach to overcome them.

Although these actions have been collated based on data and insights from Hampshire, there is also the potential for them to be carried out in collaboration with partners involved in the Get Solent Working plan – with a view to reducing duplication and maximising buy-in from employers. This collaborative activity will also help the area work towards a future, local Get Britain Working plan for Hampshire and the Solent.

Overarching actions

Lead organisation: Hampshire County Council

Table 6: Get Hampshire Working Plan – Overarching actions.

Action	Delivery partners (*Lead partner/s)	Timeline
1. Agree governance and delivery framework for Get Hampshire Working Plan	Hampshire County Council*, DWP, ICBs	October 2025
2. Agree initial terms of reference for each Priority Working Group	Hampshire County Council*, DWP*, ICBs*	October 2025
3. Work with the Get Solent Working team to explore what a joint Get Britain Working plan would look like for the Hampshire and the Solent area.	Hampshire County Council*, DWP, ICBs, Portsmouth City Council*	Commence in 2026

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4.	Working with districts and boroughs to better understand local work, health, skills challenges and priority groups, to help reduce inequalities and increase opportunity for those most in need.	Hampshire County Council*, Districts, Housing associations, JCP	Commence Autumn 2025
5.	Work with Housing associations to explore ways to grow collaborative activity across wider stakeholder organisations.	Hampshire County Council*, Portsmouth City Council, Housing associations	Spring 2026
6.	Continue to work with other, neighbouring 'Get Britain Working Plan' teams to share and learn from good practice.	Hampshire County Council*, Portsmouth City Council, Surrey County Council, Dorset County Council, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council	Ongoing
7.	Ensure there is a mechanism in place to share relevant intelligence, case studies and good practice between stakeholders.	Hampshire County Council* [delivery partners]	Commence in Autumn 2025

Priority 1: Increase labour market participation of those facing barriers to employment.

Lead organisations: Hampshire County Council Public Health and NHS Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board

Table 7: Get Hampshire Working Plan – Actions for Priority 1.

Action	Delivery partners (*Lead partner)	Timeline	DWP outcome links
1. Launch and support delivery of Connect to Work programme	Hampshire County Council* + delivery partners tbc	Commence Autumn 2025 (programme runs until at least 2030)	1, 3, 6
2. JCP and NHS to develop Fit Note training for GPs and NHS Consultants	JCP*, NHS	Commence Autumn 2025	1, 4
3. Work with anchor institutions to support them in influencing the health and wellbeing of their local communities – particularly those furthest from the labour market.	Hampshire County Council, NHS, education and skills providers	Commence Summer 2026	4, 5, 6
4. Evolve collaborative recruitment practices to impact on recruitment and retention of those facing barriers to employment.	JCP*, National Careers Service, employer representative bodies, housing associations	Commence Spring 2026	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
5. Explore how this Priority can be represented as part of the Hampshire LSIP.	Hampshire Chamber of Commerce*, JCP, education and skills providers	Autumn 2025	TBC

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6.	Create a report to address: Is there a coherent participant journey for individuals who face differing barriers to the labour market in different parts of Hampshire?	Hampshire County Council, Districts, education and skills providers, housing associations, VCSEs	Summer 2026	n/a
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Priority 2: Inspire and support young people to thrive at the start of their careers.

Lead organisation: Jobcentre Plus

Table 8: Get Hampshire Working Plan – Actions for Priority 2.

	Action	Delivery partners (*Lead partner)	Timeline	DWP outcome links
1.	Work with the Hampshire Careers Hub to develop a young peoples' work experience and volunteering programme.	Hampshire County Council*, JCP, education and skills providers, employers, VCSEs.	Commence October 2025	n/a
2.	Supporting work and potential growth of Youth Hubs across Hampshire and the Solent.	JCP*, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, Havant Borough Council, Isle of Wight Council, Portsmouth City Council, Southampton City Council, employers, housing associations, VCSEs	Commence Autumn 2025	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9
3.	Work the Hampshire Careers Hub to create an employers' guide to inspiring and supporting young people to thrive at the start of their careers.	JCP*, Hampshire County Council, districts, Hampshire Chamber of Commerce, education and skills providers, employers, VCSEs.	Commence October 2025	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9
4.	To harmonise careers and jobs fairs to deliver tailored support to inspire young people and their support network.	JCP, Hampshire County Council, districts, education and skills providers, VCSEs.	Commence Spring 2026	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9
5.	Work with Hampshire Skills Partnership to explore the match / mismatch between learners' expectations vs employers' skills demands.	Education and skills providers*, JCP, Hampshire County Council, employer representative bodies	Commence Spring 2026	n/a

Priority 3: Increase employer engagement to better match local talent to local sustainable opportunities to make work pay.

Lead organisation: Hampshire Chamber of Commerce

Table 9: Get Hampshire Working Plan – Actions for Priority 3.

Action	Delivery partners (*Lead partner)	Timeline	DWP outcome links
1. Support launch and delivery of Connect to Work programme, with particular focus on employer engagement and sign-up.	Hampshire County Council* + delivery partners	Autumn 2025 (programme runs until at least 2030)	1, 3, 6
2. Work towards: ‘Upskilling today’s employers for tomorrow’s workforce’ initiative.	Hampshire Chamber of Commerce*, education and skills providers, employers	Commence Autumn 2025	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8
3. Develop an employers’ guide to Good Work.	Hampshire Chamber of Commerce, education and skills providers, Hampshire County Council	Commence Spring 2026	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8
4. Develop an employers’ guide about inclusive recruitment practices.	Hampshire Chamber of Commerce, JCP, National Careers Service, employers	Commence Spring 2026	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
5. Deliver at least three ‘Reverse Recruitment’ fairs.	Hampshire Chamber of Commerce, Hampshire County Council, districts, education and skills providers, employers	Commence Spring 2026	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8
6. Ensure employer engagement activity is joined up with Get Solent Working plan to reduce duplication and maximise buy-in.	JCP, Hampshire Chamber of Commerce, employers	Ongoing from Autumn 2025	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8

Working with Partners

As illustrated in **Annex 7**, in the development of this Plan, a wide variety of organisations from across Hampshire and beyond have come together to input into and inform the Plan. There has been a shared belief that we need to work together at both a strategic and an operational level.

In terms of strategy, there are a number of new strategic documents being developed that could be influenced by and inform the implementation of the Get Hampshire Working Plan. These include the **Hampshire Economy and Growth Plan** and the **Hampshire Skills Strategy** (both due for publication by Hampshire County Council in 2025) the **Hampshire and**

the Solent Local Skills Improvement Plan (from Hampshire Chamber of Commerce) and a new **Public Health Strategy** from Hampshire County Council (both in 2026).

In terms of operations, in October 2025, the accountable body, DWP and the two ICBs will agree governance and a delivery framework for implementation of the Plan. The accountable body will also arrange meetings with the leading organisations for each of the three priorities to set up respective workstream groups with stakeholders to plan and take forward the respective actions and explore how the systemic changes, below, can be instigated to improve outcomes and enhance the effectiveness of the support system.

Systemic changes

To drive systemic change across Hampshire, work, health and skills support will need to integrate through collaboration between the key stakeholder groups, referenced throughout this Plan.

Some examples of how this collaboration could look in practice are, as follows:

Integrated service delivery: For example, co-located services and shared digital platforms to help improve access and outcomes for those with complex needs.

Prevention and early intervention: Such a focus can help individuals build and maintain their health, skills, confidence and autonomy, thereby reducing burdens on (e.g.) hospitals and Jobcentre Plus offices.

Reduce duplication through combined initiatives: Shared goals between delivery partners can lead to more sustainable, person-centered, impactful programmes on health and employment outcomes.

A skills system built on partnerships: The Hampshire Skills Strategy and Hampshire and the Solent LSIP will both help identify areas where stakeholders in the skills system need to work harder to ensure our current workforce is suitably skilled and the future workforce has clear pathways to sustainable employment.

Stable housing: A fixed address empowers an individual to focus on their work, health and skills rather than survival. It also means reduced pressure on public services.

What we are doing next

Performance for delivery of the Plan will utilise existing governance arrangements, via quarterly reporting against the Action Plan to two existing partnerships:

- The Hampshire Prosperity Partnership, which is led by the Hampshire Prosperity Partnership Board (HPPB) and includes the Hampshire Skills Partnership, which reports into the HPPB.
- The Hampshire Health and Wellbeing Board, which includes representation from the two NHS ICBs (Hampshire and Isle of Wight and Frimley) that sit across Hampshire.

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Annexes

Annex 1: Understanding Economic Inactivity: A Labour Market Analysis of Participation, Disadvantage, and Demand in Hampshire

Annex 2: Hampshire Skills evidence base

Annex 3: Mapping Hampshire: Three different ways of illustrating Hampshire

Annex 4: 11 x District Profiles (one for each Hampshire district)

Annex 5: Work, health and skills support across Hampshire

Annex 6: Strategic alignment

Annex 7: Acknowledgements

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[Case studies]

[These will be positioned throughout the document]

Targeted employment support for Havant 16-24-year-olds with a £26m return on investment [Priorities 1 and 2]



An evaluation of the socio-economic impact of the Link Up Youth Hub in Havant demonstrated that an investment of £140k over a five-year period has a return on investment of £26m. The Youth Hub is a partnership between Havant Borough Council and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). Utilising the three pillars of Health & Wellbeing, Qualifications & Experience (Skills), and Motivation & Confidence, this holistic approach is succeeding in supporting young people furthest from the job market into work and training, many from the top 5% of most deprived areas across the UK.

Find out more: <https://www.havant.gov.uk/economic-impact-assessment-youth-hub-service>

Gosport apprentice a shining example of succeeding in the face of adversity [Priorities 1 and 3]



In July 2024, Scott Dickson, from Gosport, was named the Most Promising Apprentice at the Civil Engineering Contractors Association (CECA) Southern Annual Awards. Scott had battled with addiction before completing a Sector-based Work Academy Programme (SWAP) course at the Civil Engineering Training Centre (CETC) and then commencing an apprenticeship with Blanchard Wells at the age of 39.

During his time as a groundworker at Blanchard Wells, he has been given additional responsibilities such as mentoring trainees and apprentices as well as given time to share his story with other people who face similar challenges in their lives.

In July 2023, he received recognition for his dedication from Fareham College (now part of South Hampshire College Group), which presented him with an Outstanding Achievement Award.

Employment support for Ukrainian guests in Hampshire [Priorities 1 and 3]

In response to the Ukraine crisis, Hampshire County Council is delivering targeted employment support for Ukrainian guests. The project aims to help individuals access meaningful work, reduce underemployment, and move towards independent living. Support includes translated webinars on UK

employment systems, childcare, training, and self-employment, as well as tailored English language assessments and sector-specific qualifications. Additional training in digital skills, workplace safety, and mental health is also provided. This coordinated approach ensures Ukrainian guests can build confidence, gain relevant skills, and contribute to the local economy while integrating into life in the UK.

Supporting disabled adults into sustainable employment [Priorities 1 and 3]



Yateley Industries supports disabled adults to move into sustainable employment through tailored support across work, health and skills. The charity offers in-house training and job coaching for individuals employed in meaningful roles across a supported factory, estate, facilities team and community café. These are real jobs, delivered with wraparound support. Yateley Industries works closely with DWP, Jobcentre Plus, Inclusion Education and local employers to build personalised pathways into mainstream employment. The structured programme develops confidence and skills, while health-focused

coaching helps individuals overcome barriers to securing and sustaining meaningful work.

Find out more: <https://www.yateleyindustries.org/>

Training local people for sustainable, entry-level jobs in Renewables with onward progression routes. [Priorities 1 and 3]



The Apex Clean Energy Training Centre in Basingstoke from Fedcap delivers entry-level, job-ready solar installation training that helps address the UK's construction skills shortage head-on – and gets people into real, sustainable roles. Backed by employers, this facility is built for entry-level learners with no previous experience and offers these individuals a CSCS card, Working at Heights, Health and Safety and solar rig training and fast-track employment in the clean energy sector.

Find out more: <https://fedcap.org.uk/news/fedcap-expands-into-education-sector-with-launch-of-apex-clean-energy-training-centre/>

Supporting unemployed women into work [Priorities 1 and 3]



The New Directions project in Aldershot helps local women with their CV, job applications and job interviews. Funded by the Community Fund, the project also helps them access valuable training courses and voluntary job roles as part of their journey to employment. To improve confidence and life skills, the project also runs workshops including Excel for beginners, Budgeting, Self-employment, Using social media for Job Hunting and more. Through networking with community organisations across the Rushmoor area, the project continues to reach out and connect to women who need the targeted support. Success stories include those who are now working, volunteering, or have started training courses to open up their prospects and build a better future.

Find out more: www.joinnewdirections.org

NHS recruitment drive to support working-class communities [Priorities 1 and 2]

People from working class communities in Leigh Park and Wecock Farm in Havant will be among those supported onto the NHS and social care career ladders, as the Government's Plan for Change tackles rampant health inequalities and gets Britain working. Leigh Park and Wecock Farm will benefit from the scheme - with an aim to get unemployed young people, disabled individuals and people with long-term health conditions into work. Backed by £5 million nationally, this pilot programme will build on the King's Award-winning 'Careers for Young People' initiative led by Hampshire and Isle of Wight Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust in collaboration with HTP Apprenticeship College. The scheme will offer young people meaningful work placements with local health and care employers, providing experience across clinical, non-clinical, and social care roles. It will also deliver the wider aims of the scheme to fill NHS and social care vacancies and increase diversity within these two workforces.

Find out more: [\[INSERT LINK\]](#)

Data Analyst training success [Priority 3]



With many employers shifting towards digital-first operations, it's no surprise Data Analysis skills are showing up in job vacancy data. The Data Analyst Skills Bootcamp is one example of how Hampshire residents can upskill to move into this specialism. One learner from the programme commented, *"I wanted to transition into data analytics for greater job security and career prospects, but after some unsuccessful applications, I realised I needed a stronger foundation."*

During the Bootcamp, with the support of a career coach, the learner, who was also dyslexic and had an additional learning plan, was directed to a job opportunity, aligned to their skills and ambitions. Before completing the course, the learner secured the role – something that might not have happened without the programme.

Find out more: <https://www.fareport.co.uk/course/hampshire-data-analyst-skills-bootcamp/>

60,000 student interactions, highlighting the 350+ NHS career paths

[Priority 2]



There has been significant work with young people to promote the breadth of roles available in the NHS through the 350+ careers programme, which is an education outreach programme across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. The programme gives young people the opportunity to gain insight to the wealth of opportunities that a career in the NHS can offer. Since September 2021, the 350+ programme has had over 60,000 student interactions, supported through positive relationships with local councils, Careers Hubs, colleges, mainstream schools, MLD Schools and Pupil Referral Units.

Find out more: <https://hiow350careers.nhs.uk/>