Staffordshire Employment and Skills Strategy 2023-30

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Foreword

Stakeholders from across the county have come together, recognising the importance of skills for employment in helping residents and businesses to fully experience the benefits of Staffordshire's enterprising, resilient, and inclusive economy.

Whilst we continue to concentrate on post-pandemic recovery and prepare for opportunities like devolution, we recognise an increased need to support people of all ages into work, to progress or change careers, and to ensure that businesses can access the skills and talent they need to diversify and grow.

This employment and skills strategy for Staffordshire puts in place the vision and priorities to deliver our united economic vision for the Staffordshire economy. It will achieve a county-wide workforce that is equipped, not only to weather the storms of economic shocks such as a global pandemic but to thrive and grow in a pioneering county. We will deliver the digital skills needed to embrace the power of technology and digital transformation in our priority sectors and the green skills needed to achieve net zero by 2050.

The essence of what makes this strategy different is that it is built on partnership and shared endeavour. The stakeholders and organisations that have contributed to this strategy are committed to making our ambitions a reality. We want people from all backgrounds and abilities to fulfil their potential and as devolution plans develop, we look forward to working with partners across Staffordshire and around its boundaries to capitalise on the talent and highly skilled workforce that already exists in Staffordshire.

Above all, we are committed to ensuring that Staffordshire is a place where everyone can thrive; harnessing and growing the county's existing skills base to enable residents and businesses to make the most of future opportunities and make prosperity a reality for all.

Alan White
Leader of Staffordshire County
Council and Leaders Board Chair

Philip White
Deputy Leader of Staffordshire
County Council and Cabinet Member
for Economy and Skills

1. Introduction

OUR 10-YEAR VISION FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS IN STAFFORDSHIRE

Building on recent employment and skills improvement and success

Through strong partnership working and significant capital and revenue investment (e.g. City Deal, Growth Deal, European Social Fund (ESF), Getting Building Fund, etc) over recent years, Staffordshire has seen significant improvement and success in developing local skills, with faster improvement than nationally in reducing the number of residents with no formal qualifications and those with higher skills at Level 3+ (A Level equivalent or above) and 4+ (Degree equivalent or above).

By developing local skills, we have helped ensure that more residents can access better paid jobs and play an active and productive role in the local economy. Our unemployment and economic inactivity (worklessness) rates remain well below the national average meaning that significantly more of our residents are in work and fewer are reliant on state support.

Overall, this recent employment and skills improvement has contributed to greater local economic growth and increased productivity, with more businesses choosing Staffordshire as a place to invest and operate creating more higher skilled, better paid jobs.

A united vision and mission for further employment and skills improvement

Staffordshire County Council has recently published its new Economic Strategy 2023-2030. This ambitious strategy is our roadmap to delivering our ambitions for the Staffordshire economy, where our existing business are helped to grow, new businesses are established and thrive, our residents

have the skills needed to access the jobs of the future and our towns across the county are supported to be places we can all be proud of.

Alongside this, the Staffordshire Leaders Board has agreed an economic vision and priorities and a pipeline of priority economic growth projects to support the future development of the local economy.

This strategy looks to support the delivery of the County Council's Economic Strategy and the Leaders' Board's economic vision, priorities, and pipeline projects by building on recent employment and skills improvement and success across Staffordshire and ensuring that the county has the highly skilled workforce it needs to reach its full potential.

Working with key partners such as the DWP, Job Centre Plus and skills providers, we will look to provide the employment and skills support needed for residents to access the better paid jobs being created across Staffordshire.

We will continue to develop inspirational Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) through our Careers Hub to ensure that all residents have access to the information and advice they need to make informed career choices and manage their career.

Through our strong colleges and universities, we will increase the supply of higher-level technical skills and develop new skills needed by businesses in our priority sectors, with a particular focus on cross-cutting digital skills development through new state-of-the-art provision and green skills vital for the county's net zero ambitions. We want the needs of business to be at the heart of transformation and seek to forge new and lasting partnerships to make this happen. Key to this is building on the recent development of the £16m Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Institute of Technology (IoT), with business and education providers increasingly working together to deliver

the facilities and technical provision needed in Staffordshire to provide the future skills for growth.

We will also look to ensure that there are fully effective pathways for all learners to achieve higher technical qualifications. An important aspect of this will be addressing the current progression issues from Level 2 to Level 3 and the requirement to reform Level 3 alternative academic and technical qualifications that sit alongside A Levels, T Levels, and apprenticeships in order to support progression and attainment for all students. This will provide the opportunity for all students to move into high-skilled jobs, either directly, or through progression into good quality higher education courses.

We also want to ensure that residents have access to the support and provision in order to develop entrepreneurial and innovation skills that support greater local enterprise.

Staffordshire is resilient and we have put in place skills support for our residents and workers to deal with change and access support and training when they need it. This includes ensuring that those people more adversely affected by economic shocks such as Brexit, the pandemic and energy/cost-of-living crisis (young people, women and those with lower-level skills and workers from hardest-hit sectors) are front and centre of our plans for the future. Transferable skills are at the heart of this, especially for those leaving rapidly shifting sectors such as retail and hospitality.

Given the speed with which the economy is now changing we also recognise the need to develop a stronger culture of life-long learning in Staffordshire to ensure that all residents can continue to benefit from continued economic growth and the better paid jobs being created.

Models of delivery are changing, and we will support that change so that businesses, especially small ones, can be instrumental in crafting new courses in modular, bite-size, and on-demand formats. We want individuals to be able to access qualifications, especially digital and green skills, at a time and in a way that suits them to upskill or reskill, improving social mobility, inclusion, and lifelong learning.

These better local skills and stronger workforce can support the delivery of our shared economic strategy and vision alongside the wide range of ambitious current and pipeline projects being delivered by our Local Authorities.
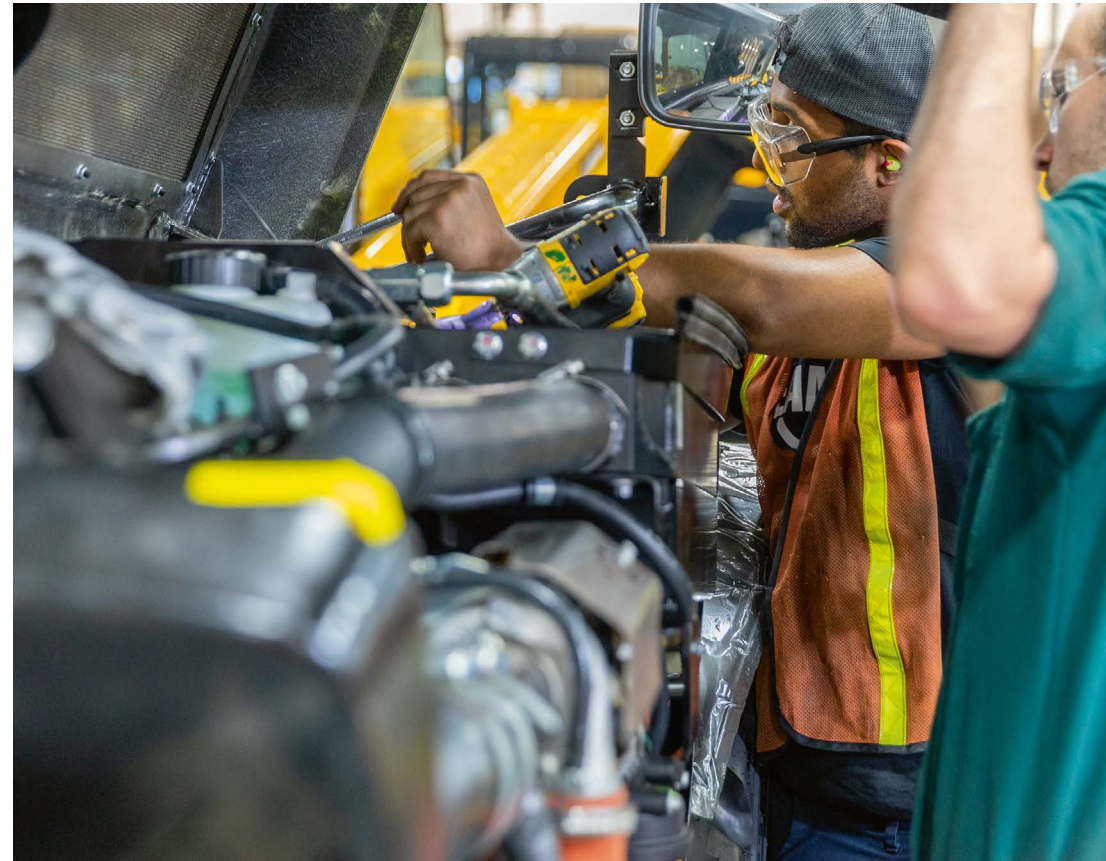
We are developing a stronger culture of life-long learning to support a quickly changing economy

OUR SHARED VISION

At the heart of our strategy is our **vision** for employment and skills across Staffordshire:

"Developing local skills which enable more people to access higher value, better paid jobs across a wide range of priority and locally important sectors, to help deliver a diverse, inclusive and sustainable economy across Staffordshire."

OUR SHARED MISSION

The **mission** for local employment and skills stakeholders is to:

"Create strong and effective partnerships which support our people to gain the knowledge, skills and confidence to achieve their ambitions and play a productive role in the growth of the Staffordshire economy."

This Employment and Skills Strategy can be used to:

- guide future employment and skills work programmes
- support external funding bids
- enable effective communication of Staffordshire's shared employment and skills goals.

OUR SHARED EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS PRIORITIES

Fundamental to our strategy are the **cross-cutting priorities of developing digital and green skills** to support the adoption of new innovative and productive technologies and to transition our economy to net zero.

Beyond these cross-cutting priorities, we recognise the similarities but also the diversity that exists across the county. With this in mind our employment and skills priorities are:

Priority 1: Ensuring All Are Work Ready and Can Access Employment - Work across our communities to provide employment and skills support to create a more inclusive local economy with opportunities for all and support business growth through reduced labour shortages with increased economic activity and transition to work.

Priority 2: Providing Inspirational Careers Advice - Continue to develop inspirational Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) to ensure that all residents have access to the information and advice they need to make informed career choices and have a productive and prosperous career.

Priority 3: Developing Technical Skills to Drive Productivity and Growth – Create a flexible Staffordshire-wide skills system that responds to local business needs now and, in the future, particularly in priority growth sectors which increases productivity and economic growth through technical skills development (including apprenticeships, T- Levels, Institute of Technology) For example:

- Engineering & Advanced Manufacturing (Automation/AI/Machine Learning)
- Construction including Modern Methods (Automation/AI/ Retrofitting)
- Advanced Logistics (Automation/AI)
- Health and Social Care (Digitisation of Services/New Technologies).

Priority 4: Supporting Innovation and Enterprise – Support entrepreneurial, enterprise and innovation skills that enable more residents to start-up and grow their own business.

Priority 5: Creating a Place of Learning - Embed the culture of life-long learning into the local labour force to support upskilling & retraining and progression to higher value, skilled and paid jobs.

These priorities are aligned to our shared and individual strategies and plans.

Our priorities have clear interdependencies and the action we take to deliver on each of them will have broader impacts on local employment and skills.

Principles that underpin our vision

- Ensure individuals have the employability skills that employers want.

- Provide inspirational careers advice so our residents can make informed career choices.

- Embrace technological advancement and develop the digital skills to support it.

- Contribute to Net Zero ambitions by proactively adapting and developing green skills provision.

- Focus on the demand for technical skills from residents and businesses now and in the future, particularly to support our priority sectors.

- Support innovation and enterprise through entrepreneurial skills provision.

- Positively include disadvantaged people and underrepresented groups when planning and delivering skills provision.

- Embed a culture of life-long learning.

- Drive economic growth and raise productivity and pay levels.

- Build and champion partnerships to enhance all aspects of the local skills system.

OUR PARTNERSHIP

Strengths to build on for a strong Staffordshire workforce

- Diverse local economy, with a strong mix of production, construction and service-based industries contributing to resilience in the economy.

- Growth in key sectors such as engineering and advanced manufacturing, construction, and logistics with high demand for skilled workers.

- World-renowned expertise, businesses and facilities exist in important areas such as green technologies, life sciences and automotive.

- Vibrant visitor economy which offers flexible work to a broad range of people.

- Important rural economy which we continue to develop and modernise through the adoption of new technologies.

- Staffordshire is an attractive place to live and work with excellent connectivity and transport links.

- More businesses choosing Staffordshire as the place to do business leading to greater job creation.

- Significant improvement in adult skills levels over recent years supporting the creation and attraction of high-value jobs.

- Strong local universities with nationally leading specialisms are producing a pipeline of graduates to support existing business growth and attract new businesses.

- High performing local colleges which are helping increasingly more young people and adults to achieve higher technical skills.

- High-quality Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) is routinely offered by good providers.

- Low unemployment levels compared to similar areas.

- High number of job vacancies in highly skilled sectors such as engineering, construction, and health.

- Existing partnerships such as DfE Skills Advisory Panel and Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Institute of Technology demonstrate the commitment of local organisations to boosting local skills.

Challenges

- Economy still recovering from the COVID pandemic and now facing further global challenges related to the war in Ukraine, with an energy and cost of living crisis impacting businesses and residents.

- Forecast rise in unemployment due to challenging business trading conditions.

- Need to limit climate change and global warming by achieving net zero by 2050. This requires significant business remodelling and the greenification of jobs and skills.

- Traditional businesses in key growth sectors still to adopt new digital technologies which is limiting productivity and growth.

- Automation in key industries such as manufacturing and logistics reduces the need for people in lower-skilled jobs.

- People need new skills to access jobs in new sectors after they have been displaced due to automation or redundancy.

- Requirement for significant increased supply of green economy skills to support restructuring of the economy.

- Ageing workforce leading to increasing replacement demand requirements.

- Further improvement of adult skills required to support higher value growth and raise productivity levels, particularly at Level 4+ (equivalent to degree or above).

- Increasing higher apprenticeships and T Levels in priority sectors.

- Lower school performance is holding back progression of many young people to higher skills levels.

- Changes to the available workforce as a result of Brexit, the pandemic and the ageing population put extra pressure on businesses trying to recruit locally.

- The demand for digital skills at all levels outstrips supply.

- Unemployment hotspots across the county need greater employment and skills support.

- Young people and disadvantaged groups continue to be disproportionately impacted by unemployment.

- Current models of employment do not always support people to fulfil their potential, e.g., those with disabilities, low skills attainment, caring responsibilities, neurodiversity.

- Graduates who wish to remain in the region may be unable to access graduate employment.

- Continuing reports of hard-to-fill vacancies due to labour shortages and skills gaps in key sectors of the economy such as health and social care, logistics and hospitality.

- Ageing population is leading to a lack of skills as people retire from the workforce more quickly and in larger numbers than people can be trained or recruited.

- The demographics for people in highly paid, higher-skilled jobs in STEM industries do not reflect the population, with a lack of representation from all parts of society.

- Partnership working between employers and skills providers requires continued strengthening to help ensure that skills supply meets demand.

- Lack of employer investment in training with over 3 in 5 businesses not having training plans/budgets or workforce strategies.

Opportunities

- Industry 4.0 is providing more and better paid job opportunities through the adoption of new technologies which require higher digital skills.

- Technology offers innovation to traditional industries and opportunities for entrepreneurship among a wider group of people.

- The Green Economy provides wide ranging new job opportunities across all sectors which require new green skills.

- New innovative high-tech business models in key growth sectors provide competitive advantage and greater opportunities for growth in higher value, skilled and paid jobs.

- Significant investment to help regenerate and reshape our towns providing new employment opportunities.

- Enhancing the cultural, leisure, heritage, and visitor economy offer of the county can create new jobs in sectors such as hospitality and retail.

- The Rural Economy in Staffordshire is a key feature of the local area and further development can provide valuable job opportunities.

- Putting business closer to the heart of skills planning will be vital in ensuring that skills supply meets changing demand.

- Investment in large scale developments and infrastructure creates construction jobs in the short to medium term and a range of jobs in the longer term.

- The development of our strategic corridors through enhanced connectivity and innovation can enable businesses in Staffordshire to grow and create new jobs.

- The development of employment and housing sites as part of the delivery of local plans can create further job opportunities in sectors such as construction and engineering.

- Devolution can bring more opportunities to shape and develop provision using funding more creatively to address local issues, e.g. Adult Education Budget.

- Expertise at a high level already exists in the workforce and can be utilised to greater effect by high performing work practices.

- To ensure that the strong graduate pipeline continues to meet local needs.

- Big data offers new opportunities to individuals and businesses, e.g. vacancy data from recruitment sites gives real-time information to support people to transition to new jobs mid-career.

- The development of digital, green, higher technical skills can support increased productivity.

- Greater support for entrepreneurship can lead to an increased business base and greater job opportunities and prosperity.

- To work with education and skills partners to better align careers education information, advice, and guidance with the needs of Staffordshire's labour market.

Further detail on the areas of focus and the reasons why we plan to do the things included in this strategy can be found in **Annex 1: Key Employment and Skills Outcomes Measures.**

Strategy One Page Summary

Our Vision: "Developing local skills which enable more people to access higher value, better paid jobs across a wide range of priority and locally important sectors, to help deliver a diverse, inclusive and sustainable economy across Staffordshire."

Our Mission: "Create strong and effective partnerships which support our people to gain the knowledge, skills and confidence to achieve their ambitions and play a productive role in the growth of the Staffordshire economy."

Our Priorities

Ensuring All Are Work Ready and Can Access Employment	Providing Inspirational Careers Advice	Developing Technical Skills to Drive Productivity	Supporting Innovation and Enterprise	Creating a Place of Learning

Highly Skilled Workforce

Our Priority Sectors

Engineering & Advanced Manufacturing	Advanced Logistics	Construction	Health and Social Care

Crosscutting Digital and Green Skills

Our Outcomes Focus

Greater Business Investment and Growth	Increased Economic Activity and Employment	Improved Productivity	Higher Wages	Economic Growth

Delivering the skills Staffordshire needs now and, in the future

2. Maximising new local initiatives for local benefit

There are a range of initiatives and forthcoming investments which will have skills and jobs implications across the county.

Building stronger links between the businesses and public sector organisations involved in those initiatives and the education providers will help ensure a pipeline of talent. Examples include:

West Midlands Freight Interchange

- Staffordshire is an extremely well-connected centre of modern logistics at the intersection of three major engines of UK growth with an excellent commercial offer and professional services are growing quickly.

- Due to our strengths, we have seen continued interest from investors with the likes of Pets at Home and ASOS moving to the County during the pandemic providing much needed jobs for our residents.

- We are also to be the home to the West Midlands Interchange (WMI); the largest site of its kind in the UK and one of the biggest in Europe with world leading logistics warehousing within a strategic rail freight interchange in the heart of South Staffordshire. The WMI will offer 8 million sq. ft of flexible premium logistics facilities, creating 8,500 jobs and providing sustainable foundations for the future of the logistics sector by replacing road freight for rail, producing 70% less carbon dioxide.

HS2

- HS2's construction is already supporting over 20,000 jobs and has seen over 650 new apprentices begin their career working on Europe's biggest infrastructure project.

- HS2 could be a catalyst to improve local and regional rail connectivity, by exploiting the extra capacity released on existing lines by the building of the high-speed service. It could also bring faster services on the existing network by using 'classic compatible' high-speed trains.

- The construction and operation of Britain's new railway, which will serve Stafford and Stoke-on-Trent, presents a significant boost for the region's economy, alongside opportunities for residents to benefit from jobs and upskilling opportunities.

Strategic Corridors A50/A500, A38

- Our location at the heart of the country and between Manchester and Birmingham provides us with vast opportunities to develop the strategic corridors that connect places across Staffordshire and beyond. The A50 / A500 and A38 corridors are two of the most important locations for economic activity within the county and are vital in connecting residents to jobs. However, the full potential of these corridors has yet to be fully exploited and therefore a substantial opportunity remains.

- There has already been a significant amount of investment across the corridors in recent years with a great deal of further investment planned. The corridors connect numerous towns and places, whilst planned investment in road and rail, including HS2, will only improve connectivity across the sub-region and provide the potential to deliver significant infrastructure-led sustainable growth in the future.

- The corridors play a central role in the Midlands and UK economy and are home to several renowned national and global brands including AstraZeneca, Bombardier, Bentley, JCB, Nestle and Rolls Royce. These and other major employers are engaged in highly innovative activity, such as JCB's recent development of the first hydrogen motor in the industry. Supporting existing and new businesses to innovate and grow remains a priority, whilst wider ambitions such as the provision of good homes and green infrastructure will be vital in creating places where people want to live, work, and invest.

Carbon Neutral Aims and the Green Economy

- Research performed by the West Midlands Growth Company has shown that despite the impact of Covid, low-carbon manufacturing is now the West Midlands' fastest-growing sector; the sector grew by more than 7% in 2020 despite a 9% decline in the wider West Midlands economy as a result of the pandemic.

- This positive news signposts a direction and signals a nationally leading position, which creates a platform to build new sectors which could be pivotal for the growth of the regional economy.

- Staffordshire plays a key part in the wider low carbon sector and there are two obvious markets where the County is optimally placed:

  1 low-carbon heating and fabric insulation - greener buildings (retrofitting)

  2 low-carbon transport - EV vehicles (and hydrogen.)

New Digital Technologies

- New digital technologies such as automation and Artificial Intelligence alongside making the most of big data are now becoming increasingly prominent in all parts of the economy and society (connectivity), where even amid the COVID-19 recession there are some 90,000 new digital job vacancies a week nationally.

- There is a critical need to increase the digital capability of individuals to take advantage of the growth opportunities that digital technologies present.

- Growing importance of digital skills across all sectors of economy with such skills now essential to majority of occupations. Main benefits include improved overall efficiency and better marketing and sales.
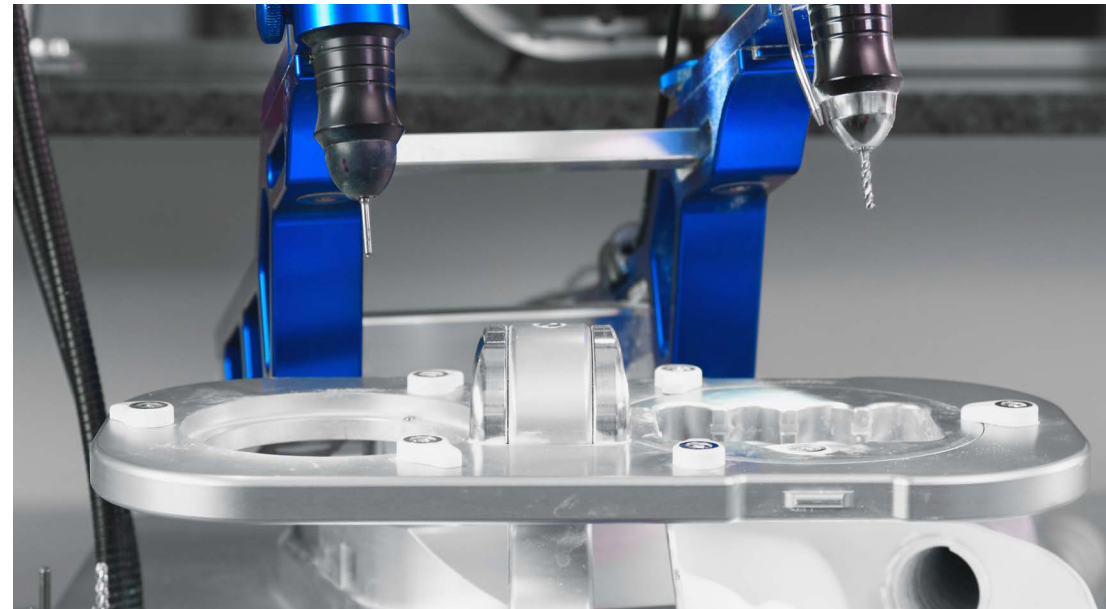
Automation is becoming increasingly prominent in all parts of the economy

3. Our priorities for action

Priority 1: Ensuring All Are Work Ready and Can Access Employment – work across our communities to provide employment and skills support to create a more inclusive local economy with opportunities for all and support business growth through reduced labour shortages with increased economic activity and transition to work

Our Objectives

- Develop and improve skills so that all residents including those from disadvantaged communities and under-represented groups get better chances to access higher value, skilled and better paid jobs and support economic growth.

- Support entry-level and basic skills (including maths, English, digital skills, employability, and transferable skills).

Our Rationale

- **Develop and improve skills so that all residents including those from disadvantaged communities and under-represented groups get better chances to access higher value, skilled and better paid jobs and support economic growth.**

Staffordshire benefits from a stronger labour market than most other areas with levels of unemployment and worklessness better than the national average.

This is in part due to the continued development of a strong, robust, and diverse local economy which provides increased opportunities for residents to enter the workplace. While there has also been significant ongoing investment in developing local skills with adult skill levels seeing faster improvement than seen nationally meaning that more residents can access the higher value, skilled and better paid jobs being created across Staffordshire.

However, the economic impact of the pandemic and further recession resulting from the inflationary pressures caused in the main by the war in Ukraine have seen unemployment and worklessness levels increase both nationally and in Staffordshire. This has contributed to businesses struggling to recruit the workforce needed to grow and reports of wide-ranging labour shortages and skills gaps.

Our challenge is to support all people looking for work to gain the necessary skills for available jobs. It is therefore essential that those who are seeking work have access to high-quality advice and guidance as well as the relevant skills and retraining to help them re-enter the workforce.

What can be disheartening for people looking for work in a new sector is the perception that they will be starting from scratch. The reality is that many jobs have similar skills needs and those with experience in one field may be a perfect fit in another. The challenge is connecting the two together. Improving information about how people can migrate from one sector to another using their transferable skills is therefore a priority.

People who have multiple barriers to work either from a skills perspective or due to other factors now have a greater challenge to secure employment.

Support is needed to enable people furthest from the labour force and with multiple barriers, to access training and wrap-around support that prevents them becoming long-term unemployed. A potential approach being the co-design of a 'Job Rotation' programme to support unemployed people with employment experience and training, enabling unskilled/low skilled workers to access relevant vocational training and gain vital skills needed by local businesses.

Rightly there is a focus on young people with higher needs than other students and much good work has been done over recent years to ensure that those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and care leavers have the additional support they need to help them progress and achieve. We have helped to ensure that there is more sufficient education and training provision for young people and improved the suitability of provision for those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) such as through post 16 higher needs placements and increasing supported internships.

Overall Staffordshire performs comparatively well with most other areas for young people aged 16 or 17 not in employment, education, or training (NEET), however recently we have started to see an increase in NEETs. It is recognised that there is a need to further develop engagement provision across Staffordshire to provide preparation for continued learning and gaining recognised qualifications and prevent young people becoming NEET.

We also know that some highly skilled groups are not represented as they should be in key growth sectors and high-value jobs. We therefore want to maximise opportunities for people from minority groups and women to ensure that they fulfil their potential in our workforce.

The Staffordshire Countywide Employment and Skills Task Group is a key mechanism for bringing together partners to address such labour market issues by ensuring that residents skills match changing demand within the local economy, such as through the sector-based work academy programme (SWAP), while the new Staffordshire Jobs and Careers Brokerage Service will be vital in matching residents to new learning and job opportunities.

- **Support entry-level and basic skills (including maths, English, digital skills, employability, and transferable skills).**

Staffordshire has seen continued improvement in the proportion of adults with no formal qualifications and is now better than the national average. However, there are still many residents aged 16-64 with no qualifications. We must ensure that those without the fundamental skills to enter and sustain good jobs in areas of demand are supported to gain such skills. If we do not focus on enabling adults to achieve functional levels of maths, English and digital skills alongside wider employability and transferable skills required by employers, then there is an increased risk that they will not be able to play an active role in the economy or achieve their ambitions.
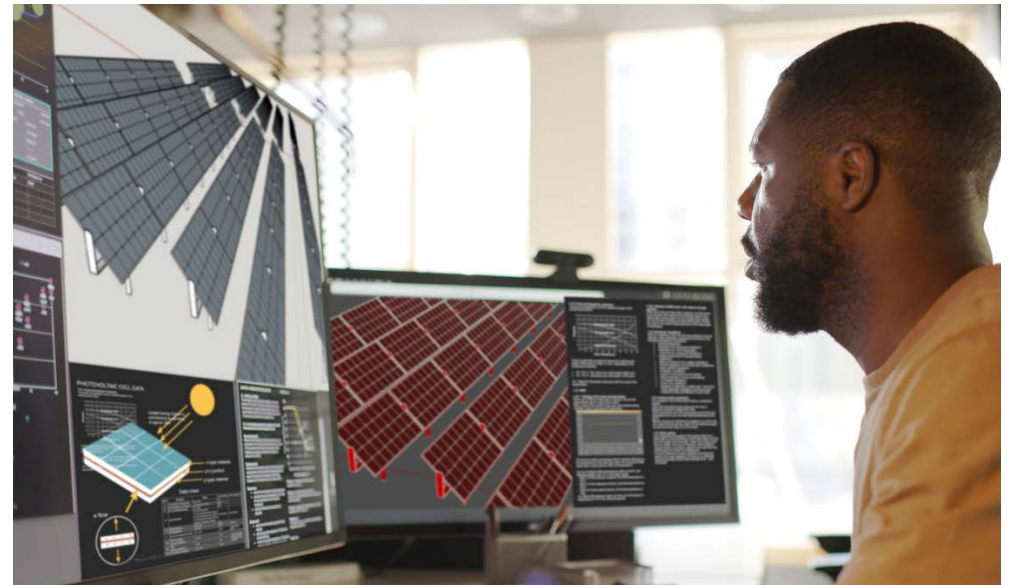
The Staffordshire Jobs and Careers Service is vital in matching residents to new learning and job opportunities

There is an established and well-regarded offer of adult and community learning delivered across Staffordshire and this has been able to adapt as demand for learning evolves. There is also increased dedicated support for the improvement of numeracy skills such as through the new Government Multiply scheme.

It is important that we continue to raise awareness of the free support and skills provision available to our residents to help reskill and upskill into areas of demand within the local economy. Ensuring that the information, advice, and guidance can be accessed through community settings helps people to understand the training that will help them progress in their careers. Community outreach and engagement will be key to ensure that we meet the needs of our communities through employment and skills support, with Staffordshire's Community and Learning Service a vital gateway to upskilling and reskilling opportunities.

For adults in declining sectors and occupations which are being displaced by new technologies such as automation and AI, there is an increasing need to develop new digital skills in order to access jobs available in growth sectors. Therefore, skills provision across Staffordshire must enable those without basic skills to attain them in a flexible and supportive way.

While there also needs to be greater support for employers to develop training and skills plans, with a particular focus on helping staff that are being displaced by new technologies to develop new skills.

Priority 1: Key Outcome Measures – What does success look like?

- Fewer Residents with No Formal Qualifications

- Fewer NEETs

- Raising participation and attainment in education and training

- Increased Employment

- Lower Unemployment

- Reduced Worklessness

- Fewer Reported Labour Shortages and Skills Gaps

Priority 1: Case Studies

Staffordshire Countywide Employment and Skills Task Group

The group has worked together since June 2020 to support businesses and individuals across Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire with the aim of supporting economic growth by delivering on the skills needs and securing job opportunities. The group has led on a countywide response in the implementation and delivery of a the variety of Plan for Jobs initiatives, such as Kickstart, Restart, Job-Entry Training Support, Sector-based Work Academies (SWAPs) and the Way to Work campaign.

The group has 29 partners including the County Council, City Council, Districts/Borough Councils, Government Departments, Chambers of Commerce, FE, HE, and other national agencies and local partners.

Priority 1: Case studies

Staffordshire Jobs and Careers online platform and brokerage service

- 'Staffordshire Jobs and Careers' (SJC) is part of the Skills & Employability team and is responsible for the management and delivery of free recruitment and support services to businesses, supporting Staffordshire residents into work, by providing a bespoke tailored service to match and screen potential candidates.

- A small team of 6 Employment Brokers have been appointed.

- The digital 'Staffordshire Jobs & Careers' platform forms part of the service and will help support the local economy by providing residents with a quick and easy way to find employment and/or training opportunities. It provides a platform to make live labour market information more accessible; bringing information and data together and enabling a vast amount of information to be presented in a coherent and coordinated picture of what is on offer for residents and businesses. It also signposts into the myriad of other web pages offering support both locally and nationally.

Post 16 higher needs placements, supported internships, RPA duties- NEETS

- Staffordshire SEND partners are developing a countywide, multi-partner forum to increase employment opportunities for young people with learning difficulties or disabilities throughout Staffordshire.

- The forum will create routes that will support more young people with SEND into paid employment and will promote training and resources that schools, colleges and employers can access to make meaningful paid work a realistic outcome for all children and young people with SEND.

Stoke-on-Trent College Fresh Start Programme

- Stoke-on-Trent College has created a fresh start programme hooked around their concept of re-invention and the 'I am' campaign for learners who are NEET or who have dropped out from learning in-year, to reengage them, or continue in education on a programme that would lead them to progressing to a full-time qualification the following year. The programme includes developing a strong sense of self and who/what they would like to become, study skills, an employability project and work placement. They have also worked with the local authorities to develop a post 16 Risk of NEET indicators report, which the College uses to target support and interventions on a risk basis.

Looked After Children

- Stoke-on-Trent College is the largest provider for Looked After Children in the City Region, with over 100 Looked After Children from 10 Local Authorities, the majority (64) from Staffordshire, and are Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers studying ESOL, with good results for both achievement and progression. The College is running a Summer School for this cohort in June/July funded by Staffordshire County Council. Retention for Looked After Children at the College is 99% and looked after children have reported during their Personal Education Plan meetings that they are developing their skills and on track to achieve their goals.

Staffordshire County Council's Community Learning Service

- The purpose of Community Learning is to improve the lives of Staffordshire residents and the local economy by providing a range of lifelong learning opportunities. The acquisition of knowledge and skills is a key component of strategies to improve health, reduce dependence, increase economic prosperity, address inequality, and realise our aspirations for a better future.

- The Council receives funding from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) for Community Learning through the Adult Education Skills Budget to provide training and education to approx. 3,000 adult learners aged 19+ per year. The Service currently works with schools, colleges, third sector organisations, independent training providers and local community groups to deliver a range of learning opportunities consisting of:

  - Wellbeing & Independence (physical and learning disabilities/difficulties and mental health)

  - Community & Family Progression

  - English, maths & Digital

  - Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) & Vocational

  - English Speakers of another Language (ESOL) and Essential Digital Skills qualifications (Entry Level to Level 2)

Staffordshire Multiply

- Staffordshire County Council's Community Learning Service is delivering the new Multiply programme as part of the government's new £560 million programme to help transform the lives of hundreds of thousands of adults across the UK.

- The £4.2m programme over 3 years, provides numeracy skills to Staffordshire residents through courses up to 30/45 GLH, non-accredited with a focus of progressing learners onto AEB Functional Skills with other providers. The programme includes outreach provision, learning festivals, tasters etc to aid engagement.

Priority 2: Providing Inspirational Careers Advice – continue to develop inspirational Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) to ensure that all residents have access to the information and advice they need to make informed career choices and manage their career.

Our Objectives

- Raise awareness of how the local economy is changing and what skills are needed to access job opportunities now and in the future.

- Prepare students and adult learners for work by providing knowledge, understanding, confidence and skills needed to make informed choices and plans for their future learning and career.

Our Rationale

The economy is going through significant transformational change with new digital technologies and clean growth profoundly altering business and work. This digital and green revolution is leading to rapid sectoral and occupational developments which require new skills. We therefore need to ensure that students and adult learners are aware of these changes and have access to the CEIAG they need to make informed career choices.

We recognise that effective CEIAG is an extremely important component of school and college provision as it impacts upon students' aspirations, achievement and therefore potentially their life chances and social mobility. It is also an important part of the development of employability skills as well as experience and qualifications which support a chosen career pathway. It is therefore vital that we continually work with education and skills partners to better align CEIAG with the changing needs of Staffordshire's labour market. As part of this we will continue to focus on encouraging STEM uptake in our schools.

High-quality CEIAG is routinely offered by good providers, and this should be applauded. The best providers understand ladders of opportunity in the local area and tailor their offer to enable people who are starting at a

low level to understand the trajectory they are on from the outset. This also means aligning their offer with other providers especially when it comes to progression pathways in Staffordshire.

The Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Careers Hub is the main mechanism for the development of CEIAG across Staffordshire and is continually improving the connections between schools/colleges and businesses through cornerstone employers and the Enterprise Advisor network. By bringing together the worlds of education and employment the Careers Hub is creating inspirational and comprehensive careers programmes and work placements to the benefit of learners and their careers.

Staffordshire County Council is also one of 11 licensed awarding bodies nationally for the Quality in Careers Standard, which is the nationally recognised careers quality award for education providers. The Standard is fully aligned with the Gatsby benchmarks and offers an opportunity for schools to undergo an external evaluation of their careers programme, providing recommendations and actions to develop and enhance the careers offer and meet national best practice.

The new Staffordshire Jobs and Careers Brokerage Service is also making inspirational labour market information more accessible and relevant for everyone, where residents can explore resources to understand the career opportunities and pathways available locally. We will look to build on this improved access to local employment and training opportunities for our residents to enable more individuals to progress into rewarding careers.

Priority 2: Key Outcome Measures – What does success look like?

- Raising participation and attainment in education and training

- Increased Apprenticeships and T Levels

- Fewer NEETs

- Lower Unemployment following FE and HE

- Fewer Reported Skills Gaps

Priority 2: Case Studies

Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire Careers Hub

Careers hubs are a group of schools and colleges, across a designated area or district who have a shared vision and work in collaboration with each other, business partners, education, and training providers to help deliver the Gatsby Benchmarks and improve careers outcomes for their young people. All hubs have access to a dedicated team of support, funding opportunities and bursaries and expert knowledge and resource to help drive this change. To accommodate the growing commitment of schools and colleges to join the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Careers Hub network we developed a new delivery model to include four district Careers Hubs (Stoke-on-Trent, North Staffs, West Staffs and East Staffs). Each hub has its own expert Enterprise Coordinator.

The Careers Hub has developed an employer skills competency framework as a response to gaps identified, to better support the young people of Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire to effectively transition from education to the world of work. The purpose of the framework is to create a universal language of key employability skills that local businesses want and need to help their business to thrive and grow.

Businesses are integrated in the development and implementation of the Careers Hub.

Priority 2: Case Studies

Stoke-on-Trent College 'Meaningful Encounters'

Stoke on Trent College is working with schools and the Careers and Enterprise Company on how we can partner with Schools to help them deliver the new required 'meaningful encounters' with technical skills and training from years' 8 to 11, to ensure pupils understand and take-up not just apprenticeships, but wider technical education options, such as T-Levels and Higher Technical Qualifications. We have also partnered with Staffordshire University to offer upskilling opportunities for staff in Schools in Careers Information Advice and Guidance from Level 2 to 6 bespoke to the local context and including CPD on T-Levels and vocational pathway routes.

Priority 3: Developing Technical Skills to Drive Productivity and Growth – Create a flexible Staffordshire-wide skills system that responds to local needs now and in the future, particularly in priority growth sectors through technical skills (including apprenticeships, T- Levels, Institute of Technology)

Our Objectives

- Join up training and skills provision across the county to deliver a united and streamlined skills offer.

- Develop world-class training and skills infrastructure and ensure provision is aligned to priority growth sectors and skills needs in the county.

- Embed the business voice and participation into provision and planning by fostering more links between Further Education, Higher Education, Independent Training Providers, and businesses.

Our Rationale

- **Join up training and skills provision across the county to deliver a united and streamlined skills offer.**

Staffordshire is fortunate in having high-quality learning institutions which serve the county and offer good provision at all levels. However, it is not always clear to individuals and businesses what is available and how it will meet their needs. Information can be full of jargon which can be confusing for local people, and this prevents them from accessing qualifications and skills that can transform their lives.

The relationships between the institutions and the routes for progression are sometimes unclear and difficult to navigate. We want to ensure that there is a joined-up approach to skills and clearly articulated progression pathways.

We also want to transform the curriculum, so it increasingly meets the needs of businesses. Whilst there are good examples of businesses working with colleges and universities there is much more that can be done. We want to

develop a framework for partnership working that will enable innovative, agile development of new provision with employers at the heart of it.

- **Develop world-class training and skills infrastructure and ensure provision is aligned to priority growth sectors and skills needs in the county.**

Staffordshire's economy is rapidly evolving due to the adoption of new digital technologies and the need to be net zero by 2050. It is recognised that these transformational changes will impact all parts of the economy through the digitisation and greenification of existing jobs and the creation of a significant number of new jobs. Clearly this will lead to businesses requiring new skills from their workforce with digital and green skills development a priority in Staffordshire.

We have seen the development of new provision over a number of years to aid the improvement of digital skills across Staffordshire, such as through our Digital Skills Bootcamps and this has seen more residents achieve entry-level skills right through to higher-level digital skills which businesses need to transform and grow. We recognise that digital skills demand continues to evolve and grow with acute demand in areas such as coding, programming, and software engineering. We will look to further develop our digital skills offer and ensure that it aligns with changing business needs.

As we move closer to 2050, dedicated low carbon education and training programmes as well as ensuring that green skills are embedded in existing qualifications will be a major focus of curriculum developments. In particular we have identified a number of green skills which will be needed in significant number including retrofitting housing to make them more energy efficient and electric vehicle production and charging point installation across Staffordshire.

Beyond these cross-cutting skills priorities for the local area including digital and the green economy. We also have strengths and recognised opportunities to grow the local economy through technical skills development and growth in higher value jobs in sectors such as engineering & advanced manufacturing, energy, advanced logistics, construction

including modern methods, and health and social care. We will continue to invest in world-class training and skills infrastructure which help to develop higher skills at Level 3 and 4+ to support improved productivity in these priority sectors.

We will also look to ensure that there are fully effective pathways for all learners to achieve higher technical qualifications. An important aspect of this will be addressing the current progression issues from level 2 to level 3 and the requirement to reform level 3 alternative academic and technical qualifications that sit alongside A Levels, T Levels, and apprenticeships in order to support progression and attainment for all students. This will provide the opportunity for all students to move into high-skilled jobs, either directly, or through progression into good quality higher education courses.

It will be important that Government and education providers ensure that teachers and trainers have the expertise required to teach new skills that are in demand, particularly those to help address climate change and adopt new digital technologies to drive productivity such as skills in STEM and other key subjects required for green and digital jobs. This should take advantage of the opportunities afforded by the review of Initial Teacher Training (ITT) to make sure ITT providers teach high quality courses which incorporate detailed subject knowledge. The government should also ensure that teachers have access to high quality subject continuous professional development.

We will work in partnership to continually share the latest labour market information helping to raise awareness of changing businesses needs and ensure that skills supply meets this changing demand now and in the future. We will also raise awareness of free higher skills development opportunities such as the Government providing a wide range of free Level 3 qualifications to help gain the skills that employers value, improve job prospects and earn a higher wage.

- **Embed business voice and participation into provision and planning by fostering more links between Further Education, Higher Education, Independent Training Providers, and businesses.**

The Skills and Post-16 Education Bill introduced in May 2021 set out the expectation from the Government that further and higher learning institutions embed business needs in the curriculum to a much greater extent than is currently the case.
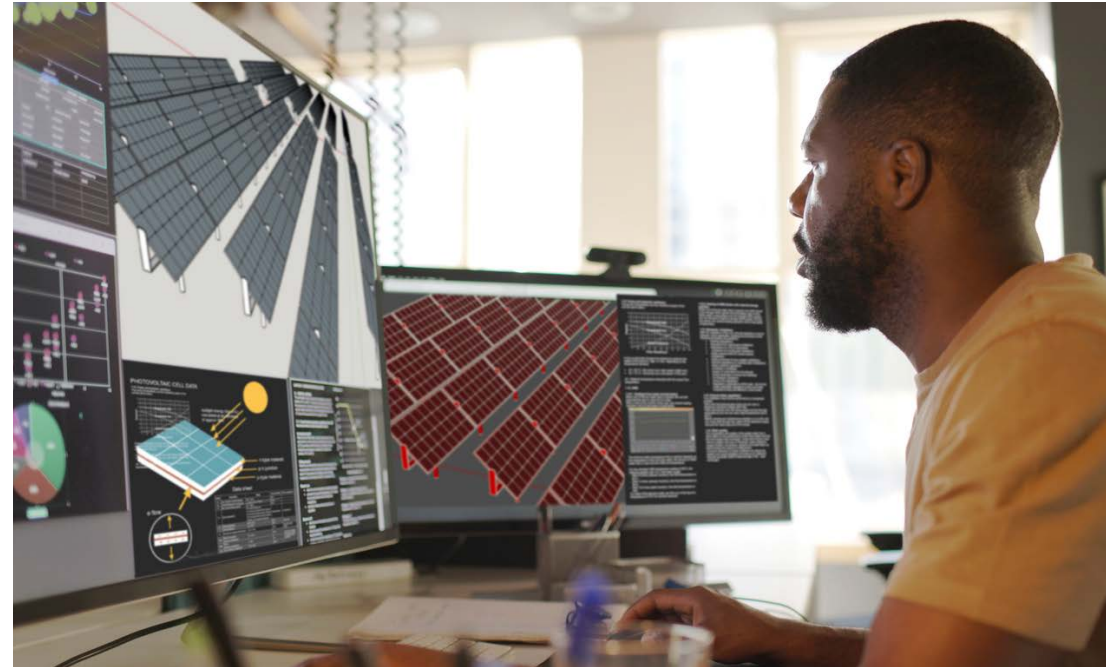
We are ensuring that teachers have the expertise needed to teach those skills needed for green and digital jobs

Staffordshire has a good track record of employer engagement, but this must be dramatically enhanced, and barriers overcome if provision is to properly reflect the current and future needs of the economy. We commit to working with employer representative bodies, businesses of all sizes and providers to create a coalition of the willing which can co-develop new ways of supporting sectors and supply chains through the creation of new skills and training opportunities.

Initiatives such as the £16m Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Institute of Technology (IoT), which is being developed by a Newcastle and Stafford College Group-led consortium of education providers and key employers from across the Midlands, including Keele University, Burton and South Derbyshire College, Shrewsbury Colleges Group, Axia Solutions, Siemens, Moog Aircraft Group, Fujitsu UK and St. Modwen Logistics, is an example of how business and education can work together to transform facilities and technical provision in the area. The IoT is scheduled to open in 2024 enabling investment in learning facilities which increase and widen participation in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics subjects to support our priority growth sectors. We will build on the IoT approach to ensure that business and education providers increasingly work together to deliver the facilities and technical provision needed in Staffordshire to provide the future skills for growth.

Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Institute of Technology

We will also support and promote the continued development of wider technical skills provision including apprenticeships and T-Levels, with the Government identifying this as the primary focus of the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) being led by the Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce. We see the Chamber's establishment of fully representative priority sector groups for all Staffordshire businesses including cornerstone employers and SMEs as the main mechanism to understand changing technical skills needs of local businesses.

This improved representative local business voice intelligence can then inform the development of Staffordshire's skills system, such as through the Strategic Development Fund (SDF) which provides capital and programme funding to enable FE providers in Staffordshire to develop technical skills provision which better meets the needs of employers in our priority growth sectors which we would expect to be fully reflected in the LSIP.

Priority 3: Key Outcome Measures – What does success look like?

- Raising participation and attainment in education and training
- Higher Level Skills Achievement at Level 3 and 4+
- Increased Apprenticeships and T Levels
- Fewer Reported Skills Gaps
- Raise Productivity Levels
- Increased Economic Growth in High Value Priority Sectors
- Greater Prosperity through Higher Paid Jobs

Priority 3: Case Studies

Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire Institute of Technology (IoT)

Newcastle and Stafford College Group (NSCG) lead a consortium of education providers and employers from across the Midlands to form the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire IoT development. The £20M IoT to be based in Stafford and scheduled to open in 2024, will bring together key industry, education and research opportunities to the county and will see employers and academia working collaboratively to widen participation in targeted STEM areas. The IoT's focus is to deliver education and technical training in the construction, engineering, manufacturing, digital and health, transport & logistics skills including specialisms of the built environment, sustainability, and innovation.

Priority 3: Case studies

NSCG - Skills Innovation Hub

- The £28M Skills and Innovation Centre at Stafford College has a targeted completion date of July 2023 to be fully operational by September 2023. The three-storey facility will have a floor space of 7,500 sq. metre and will be equipped with leading edge equipment to deliver state-of-the-art skills in construction, engineering, and motor vehicle. The build will also host four-court sports hall, gym, and a 300-seat auditorium.

South Staffordshire College - capital projects

- The college is developing bids to create an animal zone for T-Level Animal Care starting in 2024, a media suite and gaming hub and a green energy centre at its Rodbaston campus. The college's Tamworth campus will be relocated to the city centre in a new £30m build. The new campus will provide a high-quality teaching and learning environment through a mix of general teaching spaces, specialist teaching spaces - such as workshops and labs - learning and study spaces, support spaces and public-facing teaching spaces. The College is also seeking to consolidate the provision from the existing Tamworth and TORC sites to the new build. Construction is scheduled to begin in spring 2023.

Burton & South Derbyshire College – Innovation capital projects

- BSDC are set to benefit from brand new facilities after the College's exciting plan for a new suite of innovative facilities has received initial funding of £3.2 million through the Government's Stronger Towns Fund. The facilities are scheduled to be completed by September 23.

- The facilities boost will include a Health and Social Care Realistic Working Environment, Mechatronics Suite, Creative Digital Learning Hub, Cyber Security Lab, and a Games Development Suite.

- The Health and Social Care Realistic Working Environment will provide learners with simulated environments to gain experience, knowledge, skills and understanding within a range of health and social care settings.

- The Mechatronics Suite will support manufacturing productivity through the provision of mechatronics and robotics skills that enhance manufacturing productivity.

- In an ever-increasing digital world, the need to secure organisational systems and protect them against malicious cyber-attacks is growing exponentially. The new Cyber Security Labs will provide learners access to the latest technology and through its training and collaboration develop skills, knowledge to protect and secure organisational networks.

Stoke-on-Trent College – capital projects

- Stoke-on-Trent College is benefiting from £13m from the Capital Transformation Fund and other sources to create new facilities in 2023 and 2024. A brand-new building at Cauldon Campus will build on and connect to the state-of-the-art Digital and Creative Hub established in 2019 and further support Digital and Creative Industries through a showcase classroom and further investment in digital. All digital suites and immersive classrooms are equipped with cutting-edge Computer workstations, optimised for running the latest specialist software including Autodesk Maya, Unity, Unreal Engine, 3DS Max, Zbrush, Visual Basic and the full Adobe Creative Suite. Learners and employers have full access to innovative technology including Lidar scanning, 3D Printing, virtual reality (VR), motion capture, visual effects (VFX), drones and eSports labs.

Priority 4: Supporting Innovation and Enterprise – Support entrepreneurial, enterprise and innovation skills that enable more residents to start-up and grow their own business

Our Objectives

- Enhance skills opportunities and IAG for entrepreneurs and those seeking self-employment with a focus on hard-to-reach communities.

Our Rationale

We are seeing more businesses choose to operate in the county, particularly in our priority growth sectors. This increase in Staffordshire businesses is being driving by both increased inward investment but also improving business start-up rates with more residents deciding to start their own businesses. Staffordshire also benefits from lower-than-average business failure rates and higher survival rates indicating that we already have many of the elements of a sound entrepreneurial and business support ecosystem.

The creation of new businesses is vital to our local economy as SMEs are the lifeblood of any economy offering job opportunities, providing stable and growing incomes, driving local production of quality goods and services, and fostering innovation. Therefore, ensuring that there is the provision in place to develop entrepreneurial and innovation skills that support greater local enterprise is a continuing priority.

We have put in place wide ranging business support programmes and created high-quality start-up space across the county over recent years to support and encourage people to start and grow a business within Staffordshire such as Keele University Innovation Centres. At the same time, Staffordshire County Council's Staffordshire Means Business Programme has delivered the Get Started scheme which offers fully funded expert advice and support for businesses aged 0-5 in Staffordshire.

Alongside this we have the Ignite programme which offers free advice, workshops mentoring and support for post-16 FE students looking to set up their own business in Staffordshire. While Staffordshire University offers a Business Innovation and Entrepreneurship degree and the new Peter Coates MSc in Entrepreneurship which provides the opportunity to develop a start-up idea into a sustainable, scalable, and investable business. The university has also established the BeInspired programme to support graduate start-ups in the county and a start-up hatchery in the Innovation Enterprise Zone complementing the entrepreneurial environment with prototyping facilities for entrepreneurs.

It is vital that we continue to strengthen support and provision for those looking to start a business to maximise the long-term benefits of local entrepreneurialism. This is especially the case if those budding entrepreneurs are not from conventional business backgrounds or live in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Developing 'an enterprise for all' culture with the appropriate facilities, advice and training will be essential to ensure both new and existing start-ups not only survive, but thrive and hopefully, in the long term provide new jobs across the county.

Priority 4: Key Outcome Measures – What does success look like?

- Higher Business Start-up Rates

- Higher Business Survival Rates

- Lower Business Failure Rates

- More Business Step-ups / High Growth Businesses

- Greater SME Job Creation

- Increased SMEs particularly in Priority Growth Sectors

Priority 4: Case Studies

Keele University Innovation Centres

As a response to the needs of employers and with the aim to support our local business community, Keele University has invested in dedicated innovation centres to help business grow.

Innovations centres host a range of business facilities, including private and co-working office space, accommodation, and specialist workshop areas. Workshops areas offer businesses ultimate flexibility, providing space for various purposes from laboratory and plant room use to manufacturing. There are currently six Innovation Centres (IC) located at Keele University Science and Innovation Park, with innovation centres 7 & 8 soon to be completed.

In total the current buildings offer more than 130,000 sq. ft. of modern commercial mixed-use space, including a range of high-specification flexible offices, laboratories, and workshops. Lettings are undertaken through lease agreements generally from three years upwards. However, certain units may also be available on short-term tenancy agreements.

Keele Innovation Centre

Over 13,500 students in Staffordshire have been supported with the knowledge they need to start their own business

Priority 4: Case Studies

Ignite

The Ignite programme, delivered by Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce, supports young people in the final year of further education who have the aspiration to start their own business. The programme is constructed around an intensive workshop to provide the skills needed to start a business. Areas covered include business planning, marketing, networking, cashflow forecasting and selling. 13,500 students have been supported on the programme to date.

Priority 4: Case Studies

Staffordshire Means Business

Staffordshire County Council has delivered a range of programmes to support business to start up, step up and grow.

The Get Started scheme offers fully funded expert advice and support for businesses aged 0-5 in Staffordshire. Businesses can choose between: logo development, website development, existing website improvement, digital marketing expertise and campaigns, planning and accountancy support, including business planning, forecasting, getting loans and finance, etc

The Start-up loans scheme offers brand new businesses or businesses less than two years old, an interest-free loan of between £3,000 to £5,000, which can be used for most purposes to fund those key purchases to get the business off the ground.

The Carbon literacy programme engages with organisations through the Staffordshire Business Environment Network (SBEN) to receive accredited carbon literacy training, which promotes positivity and stimulates action towards reducing carbon emissions. As well as embedding awareness of the climate impacts of everyday actions, the Project lays a foundation for green-collar skills and grows demand for low carbon goods and services.

To date 355 companies have been supported with free training, 320 companies have accessed the business start-up programme and 28 have received business start-up loans.

Priority 5: Creating a Place of Learning - Embedding the culture of life-long learning into the local labour force to support upskilling & retraining and progression to better jobs

Our Objectives

- Focus on occupations in highest demand e.g., nurses, social care workers, software developers and help people who are underrepresented in high-value professions to enter them.

- Increase traineeships, T Levels, and apprenticeships, especially at higher levels and in STEM industries.

- Ensure talent pipeline of graduates and people with higher-level skills is enhanced and aligned with priority growth sectors.

Our Rationale

- **Focus on occupations in highest demand e.g., nurses, social care workers, software developers and help people who are underrepresented in high-value professions to enter them.**

As seen both nationally and in Staffordshire there are significant labour shortages and skills gaps across the economy. There are multiple reasons for this, with fewer workers available to fill roles in demand, a lack of interest in some occupations due to poor pay and terms & conditions, a lack of awareness amongst learners of where there is highest demand for skills, and businesses struggling to retrain and upskill staff.

Therefore, one of the biggest challenges we face is generating a pipeline of talent with the right skills for current and future jobs. The skills needs of many professions are changing rapidly due to innovation and advances in technology, and skills acquisition for high-level jobs takes years to accomplish. Even with a focus on the occupations that are most in-demand, this is not a quick fix.

It is critical that we ensure that information, advice, and guidance is available for individuals at every stage of their working life to help them

make the right choice and obtain the skills needed by employers. Through high-quality provision and a culture of lifelong learning, we can create a pipeline of talent that meets business needs and attracts, trains, retains and retrains people in the county.

We will continue our commitment to helping people from diverse backgrounds, disadvantaged communities, and under-represented groups to get access to the same opportunities as others so that they can get the skills and confidence needed to enter occupations that are in the highest demand.

- **Increase traineeships, T Levels, and apprenticeships, especially at higher levels and in STEM industries.**

The development of technical skills is vital to the Staffordshire economy with local businesses requiring technical skills in order to develop and remain competitive. While residents need such skills in order to access higher value, better paid jobs that can improve their prosperity and wellbeing.

In Staffordshire we recognise the need to increase the technical skills of our local labour market and ensure that more residents can access the better jobs being created. We continue to promote the importance of traineeships and apprenticeships to help businesses grow talent and develop a motivated, skilled, and qualified workforce. A key aspect of this being the recently relaunched The Ladder for Staffordshire, previously established to support Apprenticeship growth across Staffordshire, with the aim to secure 1,500 individuals as a minimum onto an apprenticeship across the county by January 2025. We also recognise the opportunities which T Levels present as progression routes into higher apprenticeships, entry level employment or higher education.

Given the structure of Staffordshire's economy with large STEM related industries being a priority for future growth we will look to increase the number of residents choosing technical skills pathways which lead to the acquisition of STEM skills. In particular, we will look to keep the momentum going at the higher and degree level of apprenticeships to ensure businesses can recruit staff with the requisite skills.

We will also ensure that those from disadvantaged backgrounds have better access to technical skills pathways and raise participation in traineeships, T Levels, and apprenticeships. The Staffordshire Means Business Apprenticeship 500 scheme is an example of how we have increased such opportunities in Staffordshire to support businesses to recover from the pandemic. Staffordshire University is also one of the national leaders in higher and degree apprenticeships and work closely with a wide range of local employers.

It is recognised that the role of independent training providers and colleges is critical here in building further on the expertise and commitment to technical skills provision in the area. Independent training providers are also agile when responding to business needs and are often able to provide tailored solutions in timescales that are challenging for larger institutions.

- **Ensure talent pipeline of graduates and people with higher-level skills is enhanced and aligned with priority growth sectors.**

Adult skills in Staffordshire have improved with increasingly more people with at least level 4 qualifications but we still lag behind the national average. To continue to close the higher-level skills gap we need to ensure that school performance and FE achievement rates continue to improve enabling more residents to progress to higher skills attainment. This can in turn help increase productivity and drive economic growth.

It is also recognised that many graduates leave the county once they have gained their degree. We need to work with businesses more closely

to ensure that there are suitable graduate jobs available and continue to develop partnerships between Higher Education (HE) institutions and businesses. We also need to ensure that there are the places which graduates want to live and work in Staffordshire with the right offer to retain more graduates and attract talent from other areas.

The mix of provision for undergraduates needs to continually adapt to reflect skills requirements in Staffordshire to ensure that employers have access to graduates with the technical skills they need. This is expected to become increasingly important as we transition to a higher skilled economy and HE provision will need to align closely to our priority growth sectors. An example of this is Staffordshire University's Innovation Enterprise Zone which is aimed at upskilling and reskilling the Staffordshire workforce in areas including digital, leadership and Net Zero.

People from disadvantaged groups are less likely to study for a degree. New and innovative approaches to tackle the issue are needed, for example scrutinising the potential biases in recruitment processes within organisations rather than a focus on individuals in outreach settings.

Progression routes from Further to Higher Education for adults need to be strengthened which is one of the key aims of this strategy. Higher Technical Qualifications are seen as a potential progression from T-Levels and then to further Level 6 higher education, with strong partnerships between colleges and universities being fundamental to such pathways being successful.

It is particularly important for progression pathways to be clearly articulated for adults already in the workforce to enable those from disadvantaged communities and under-represented groups to gain level 4 or above qualifications. The provision of more flexible short-courses and bespoke modular learning e.g., Skills Bootcamps and micro-credentials which directly target digital and green skills gaps, are seen as an area we can develop further in Staffordshire.

Priority 5: Key Outcome Measures – What does success look like?

- Higher Adult Skill Levels

- Increased Apprenticeships and T Levels

- Increased Graduates particularly in Priority Growth Sectors

- Fewer Reported Skills Gaps

- Lower Unemployment

- Greater Prosperity through Higher Paid Jobs

Priority 5: Case Studies

Apprenticeship 500

The programme works alongside existing initiatives to aid recovery of businesses hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic; providing grants of £5000 to cover the cost of recruiting and retaining an apprentice. Additionally, it helps unemployed 16–24-year-olds to gain an apprenticeship opportunity. The Ladder for Staffordshire supports businesses in finding the right apprenticeship and training provider, increasing apprenticeships in the area. The grants support businesses with digital skills and low carbon/net zero through training and apprenticeships. Over 400 apprenticeships have been supported to date.

4. Priority sectors now and in the future

As well as the recognised need to continue our improvement of higher-level skills to drive higher value economic growth and raise productivity, we also see opportunities for growth and improved productivity in high-skilled high-value jobs in a number of key growth sectors.

In these sectors there are **sector specific technical skills** which require development and alongside this there are clear **cross-cutting digital and green skills** which need to be developed further if we are to maximise the opportunities for growth.

Digital and Green Skills Case Studies

Digital - South Staffordshire College Digital Skills Centres

- The £1m digital skills centres provides digital hubs at Cannock & Tamworth to provide access to high quality skills training supported by state of the art physical and digitally simulated environments to develop the skills needed by local and regional employers.

Green – South Staffordshire College Green Skills Village

- The Rodbaston Green Village £1.7m Getting Building Fund is a new training & development centre, based at the Rodbaston Campus, for low carbon, localised smart-energy management delivery, including electrical vehicle servicing courses with electric farm vehicle servicing and land robotics courses, a range of Green Technologies that will be utilized within buildings and transportation, allowing the UK to lead on Green Technology that meets our legal obligations for a

Carbon Neutral future. As such it will include biomass, heat pumps, EV charging installations, solar/thermal, hydrogen boilers, thermal storage, and associated control systems.

Green - Keele University Smart Energy Network Demonstrator

- A European first, this world-class demonstrator facility for smart energy research and development enables the testing and evaluation of new and evolving energy technologies. Collaborating with local partner companies, the programme provides the opportunity to assess the efficiency of these new technologies in terms of energy reduction, cost, and CO2 emissions. Transforming the Keele University campus into an 'at scale living laboratory' will provide a unique testing site model due to the diverse range of activities and facilities within it – 3,100 students in halls of residence, 1,000 commercial users on the Science and Innovation Park, 200 'standard' domestic households, and academic activities serving 10,000 students.

The priority growth sectors include:

Engineering & Advanced Manufacturing *(Automation/ AI/Machine Learning)*

There is **high demand for talent** within this **fast-paced sector**, which includes roles from designing and building the next generation of electric vehicles to pharmaceuticals.

New technologies such as AI, automation, robotics, 3D printing, and plastic electronics are changing the shape of production and engineering.

Staffordshire is expected to see **high-value employment growth** which increases productivity and drives economic growth in areas of advanced manufacturing and specialism areas, such as automotive, aerospace, advanced materials, med-tech, agri-tech, energy, and other technology-intensive industries.

The availability of skilled local labour will be an important consideration for the economic outlook of this sector in the long-term.

Case Study - JCB Academy-Automation & Robotics Suite

- The £275k scheme created an Automation & Robotics Suite to include a Control and Automation Suite, a cad & visualisation suite, and an independent study area. The suite will enable the expansion of curriculum in both the mechanical and electronic sector from level 1 to level 3. The facility provides a bureau of specialist knowledge and equipment and allows smaller employers access to emerging technologies and advice.

Case Study - Perkins Engines Stafford - Manufacturing Excellence Centre

- The £767K project has supported the completion of a new training facility to enhance the skills of its Apprentices and other employees in core engineering practices as well as the Caterpillar production system curriculums. The facility provides the training area for assembly and core manufacturing process principles to support the existing key machining training facility.

Case Study - South Staffordshire College - Cannock Engineering Academy

- The £1m project has supported the refit of the Cannock Skills and Innovation Hub to create an engineering academy. The project has supported the purchase of specialist equipment including CNC lathes and mills, drills, mechatronic equipment Cad software to offer learning provision on a range of engineering principles including welding & fabrication, manufacturing, mechatronics, and computer aided design.

Advanced Logistics *(Automation/AI)*

Logistics is a **diverse sector** covering road, rail, sea and air industries. The sector is a key part of the growing service economy with **other sectors heavily reliant on freight services** such as retailers and manufacturers whose businesses depend on the efficient movement of goods.

With Brexit, technology and other disruptive forces driving **changes in the way goods move across borders and through the supply chain**, logistics has never been more important to the UK economy.

Given our central location we are at the heart of one of the largest sectors in the UK economy with **sustained growth in the number of people employed in logistics**, with recent growth in occupations related to storage and warehousing to **support the accelerated shift to e-commerce and online retail** with this trend expected to continue, but there is an ongoing labour shortage in key vocations such as HGV and van drivers.

Alongside opportunities from changing consumer behaviour, the sector is also **seeing opportunities emerge from new technologies and ways of working** such as automation and AI, which are changing the shape of logistics and have the potential to significantly increase productivity.

Case Study - West Midlands Interchange (WMI)

- West Midlands Interchange will be one of the largest logistic developments in the UK, offering 8 million sq. ft of rail served logistics facilities in South Staffordshire. This significant £1bn national project will support the creation of more than 8,500 skilled logistics jobs and apprenticeships for the local community during development, construction and operation. Local skills and training providers and partners will play a key role in ensuring that our residents have the skills needed to access the jobs being created.

Construction including Modern Methods *(Automation / AI / Retrofitting)*

Construction is **one of the largest sectors in the UK and Staffordshire economy**. The sector continues face **skill shortages at all levels**, and along with BREXIT restrictions on migration impacting flows of EU workers which the sector has heavily relied upon, there is **high demand for talent to support future growth**.

We have **significant growth opportunities** including:

- Population growth leading to increased demand for construction of housing and infrastructure

- Long-term major infrastructure projects, such as HS2 and WMI, are also driving increased demand.

The sector is also seeing opportunities emerge from **new technologies and ways of working such as Modern Methods of Construction (MMC)**, including offsite manufacturing and prefabricated house building, which are changing the shape of construction and have the potential to significantly increase productivity.

The **Green Economy** is also key to the sector with job opportunities emerging in areas such as **sustainable construction, renewable energy, heat-pump installation and retrofitting** home insulation in existing properties.

Case Study - Skills Equipment Fund round 2 - Newcastle & Stafford Colleges Group - Hybrid Construction Technology

This £1m project's specialist equipment supports the development of hybrid construction training at the college's national construction plant training centre at its Stafford campus. The college is one of only twelve centres in the whole of the UK to provide specialist training in heavy construction plant. The equipment supports the delivery of advanced apprenticeship frameworks in plant maintenance, plant operation, civil engineering plant & construction. Equipment includes heavy plant, dumper trucks, excavators, crane, scissor lifts, tractors, rigs.

Case Study – Stoke-on-Trent College Digital Construction Suite

A brand-new building at the Burslem campus will also support and enhance facilities at the Campus through investment in the digital Construction suite, electric vehicle and enable the delivery of the new T Level in construction with new workshop facilities for building surveying and computer aided design. This will enable the College to work with more learners, both young and adults, and with a range of employers to support upskilling in new green technologies for construction.

Health and Social Care (Digitisation of Services/New Technologies)

Health and social care is a **significant sector**, with the **NHS** being Europe's biggest employer and the fifth biggest employer in the world. There are **over 350 job roles** in the health and social care sector and the sector is **vital to the health of the population in general and our workforce.**

A **growing and ageing population/workforce is seeing increased demand for health and social care services**. However, growth in the size of the sector workforce has not kept pace with this increasing demand and therefore the sector faces a **number of labour shortages and skills gaps**.

In Staffordshire the sector is growing with **ongoing high demand for social care workers and nurses**. Recruitment pressures have been **exacerbated by both the COVID pandemic and BREXIT.**

There are opportunities in the sector to **make better use of new digital technologies** to improve quality, efficiency and patient experience as well as supporting more integrated care and improving the health of the population/workforce.

Case Study - Staffordshire University-Centre for Health Innovation

- The £5.8m Centre for Health Innovation has been designed in collaboration with industry experts and includes a state-of-the-art Clinical Simulation Centre.

- The facility aims to meet modern demands and challenges in the sector, meaning that students, healthcare professionals and start-up businesses, will have the chance to immerse themselves in the latest medical techniques and methods.

- Using advanced VR and AR technology, the Centre for Health Innovation will facilitate opportunities to explore and develop new patient safety techniques through cutting edge digital simulation and immersion suites.

- This ground-breaking approach will enhance the digital capability of the emerging healthcare workforce helping to position the UK at the forefront of patient safety and positioning Staffordshire at the heart of driving the Digital Health agenda forwards. The centre will help support over 500 skilled nurses, midwives and allied health professionals supplementing the NHS workforce per annum.

Annex 2: Priority Sector Evidence provides further detail on our priority sectors including SWOT analysis and labour and skills in demand.

5. What we will do and how we will do it

Our approach to deliver this strategy across Staffordshire and its districts and boroughs will be:

- To work in partnership to leverage and align public sector investment e.g., the Levelling Up Fund, the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

- To match and maximise public and private sector investment e.g., Apprenticeship Levy.

- To work with government on the opportunities for more powers and funding through devolution e.g., Adult Education Budget.

- To maximise employer investment in skills and involvement in the design of skills provision e.g., Local Skills Improvement Plan.

- To shape and influence the strategic commissioning of other funds and priorities e.g., HS2, West Midlands Freight Interchange, A50 A500 Strategic Corridor, the LSIP as a route to delivering technical skills.

Annex 1: Key Employment and Skills Outcomes Measures

Areas of focus and the reasons why we plan to do what is included in this strategy.

- **Working Age Adults with No Formal Qualifications** – Staffordshire has seen faster improvement in reducing the number of working age residents with no formal qualifications compared to nationally, with 7,900 fewer residents with no qualifications in 2021 compared to 2016 equivalent to a 19.5% reduction compared to a 17.0% reduction nationally.

Change in Staffordshire Adult Skills Levels
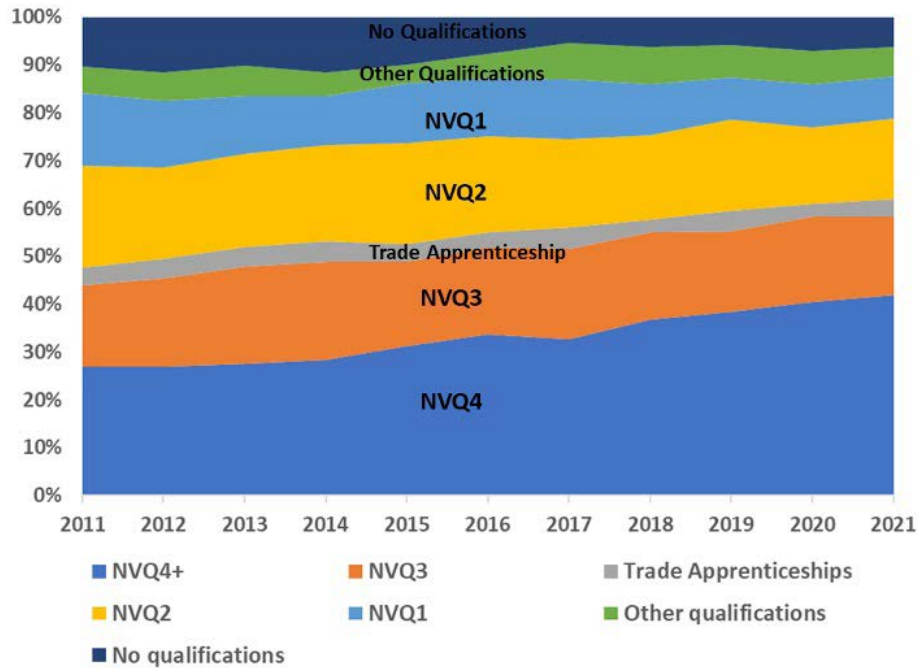
Source: Annual Population Survey

This significant improvement means that in 2021 there were 6.3% of working age residents with no qualifications which was just below the national rate of 6.4%. However, there still remain an estimated 32,700 Staffordshire residents with no qualifications which this strategy will look to reduce further.

• **Higher Adult Skills (Level 3+ and 4+ Qualifications)** – Staffordshire has closed the gap to the national for working age adults with higher skills.

We have seen adults with Level 3+ (A Level equivalent or above) increase by 30,500 between 2016 and 2021, equivalent to 10.8% rise compared to a 9.0% rise seen nationally. The latest position for 2021 now shows 60.2% of adults in Staffordshire now have Level 3+ qualifications just behind the 61.3% seen nationally.

We have also closed the gap to the national average for Level 4+ qualification (Degree equivalent or above) where we have seen an increase of 39,200 adults with such qualifications between 2016 and 2021, equivalent to 22.1% rise compared to a 15.0% rise seen nationally. In 2021 41.7% of adults in Staffordshire had Level 4+ qualifications closing the gap to the national average of 43.1%.

Further raising adult skill levels to support higher value, skilled and paid roles and address the productivity challenge remains a priority – based on recent improvement Staffordshire is projected to exceed the national average for Level 3+ and 4+ skills in 2024 but there is a risk that COVID and the end of EU (ESF) skills funding may impact further improvement.
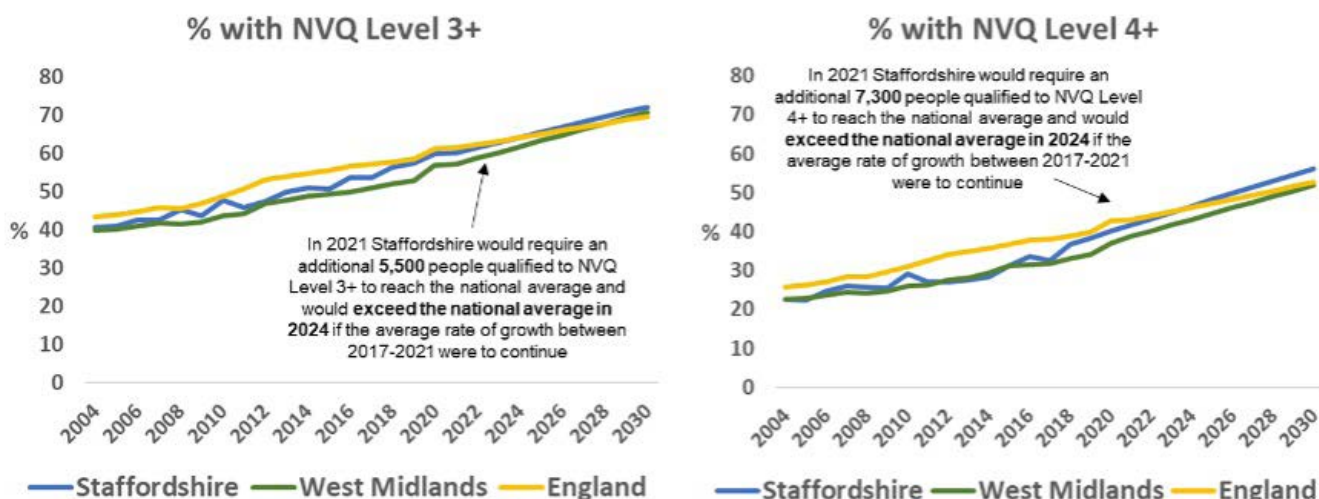
Source: Annual Population Survey

• **Apprenticeships** – As seen nationally, Staffordshire has seen a gradual long-term decline in the overall number of apprenticeship starts, with a 32% reduction from 9,620 in 2016/17 to 6,510 in 2021/22.

The main fall in apprenticeships has been seen at the intermediate level with a 66% decline between 2016/17 and 2021/22, while it is positive that higher apprenticeships have increased by 215%.

In 2021/22 advanced apprenticeships accounted for nearly half of starts (46% or 2,980), while higher apprenticeships accounted for 28% or 1,860 and intermediate apprenticeships accounted for 26% or 1,700.

Staffordshire Apprenticeships by Level
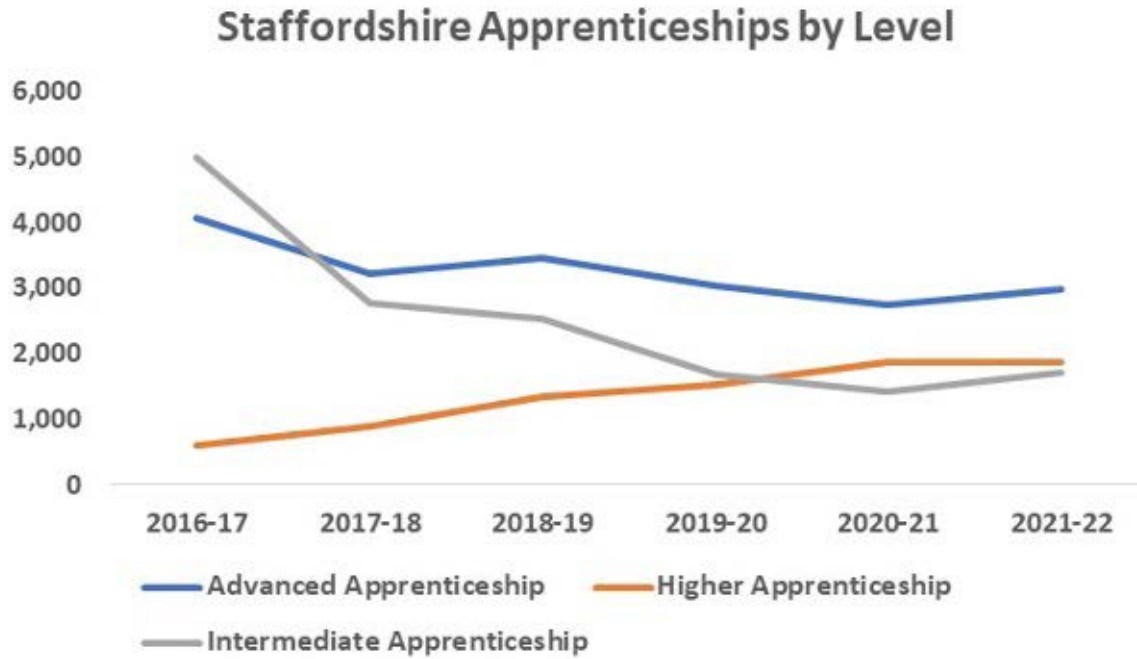
Source: DfE/Individualised Learner Record

Under 19s accounted for a quarter of all starts in 2021/22, while those aged over 25 accounted for nearly half (45% or 2,960).

In 2021/22 Health, Public Services and Care accounted for the largest number of apprenticeships with 1,900 (29% of total starts) followed by Business, Administration and Law with 1,750 (27%). The next largest sector subject areas were Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies (1,070 or 16%), Retail and Commercial Enterprise (670 or 10%) and Construction, Planning and the Built Environment (420 or 6%).

Increasing higher apprenticeships in our priority sector areas will be vital to ensure that we have the technical skills needed to grow those sectors and increase productivity and pay levels.

- **Employment** – Latest employment figures for the period Oct 2021-Sep 2022 show that in Staffordshire there were an estimated 436,600 working age (aged 16-64) residents employed, with an employment rate of 81.0% well above the national average of 75.8%

Employment Rate
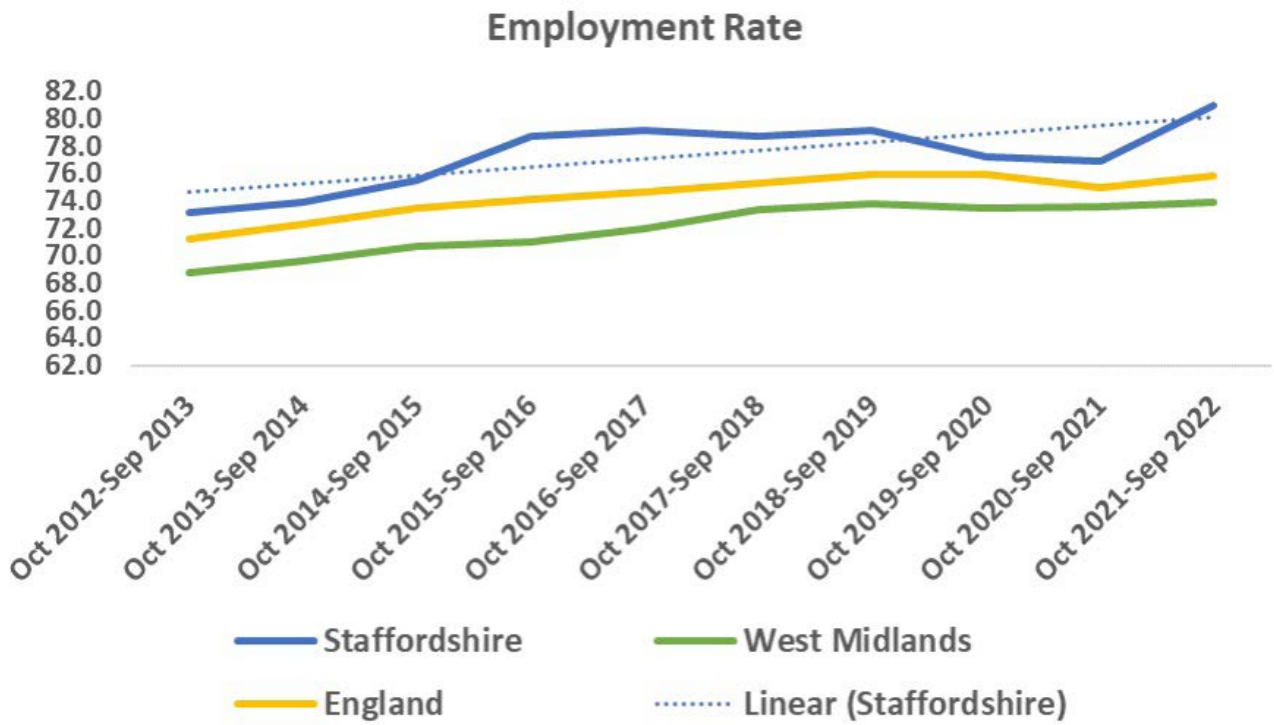
Source: Annual Population Survey

It is a real positive for the County that since the impact of the pandemic the number of residents employed has significantly increased and is now 20,500 or 4.9% higher than pre-COVID which is far better than the less than 1% growth seen nationally and regionally.

By continuing to support our residents to reskill and upskill we can ensure that Staffordshire's employment rate continues to improve and remains well above the levels seen in most other areas of the country. This stronger local workforce can support businesses to grow and remain competitive while contributing to overall economic growth.

- **Self-Employment** – Staffordshire has also seen a recent uplift in self-employment levels, with the latest self-employment figures for the period Oct 2021-Sep 2022 showing there were an estimated 55,300 working age (aged 16-64) residents self-employed, with a self-employment rate of 10.6% which is now above the national average of 9.4%.

Self-Employment Rate

Legend: Staffordshire, West Midlands, England, Linear (Staffordshire)
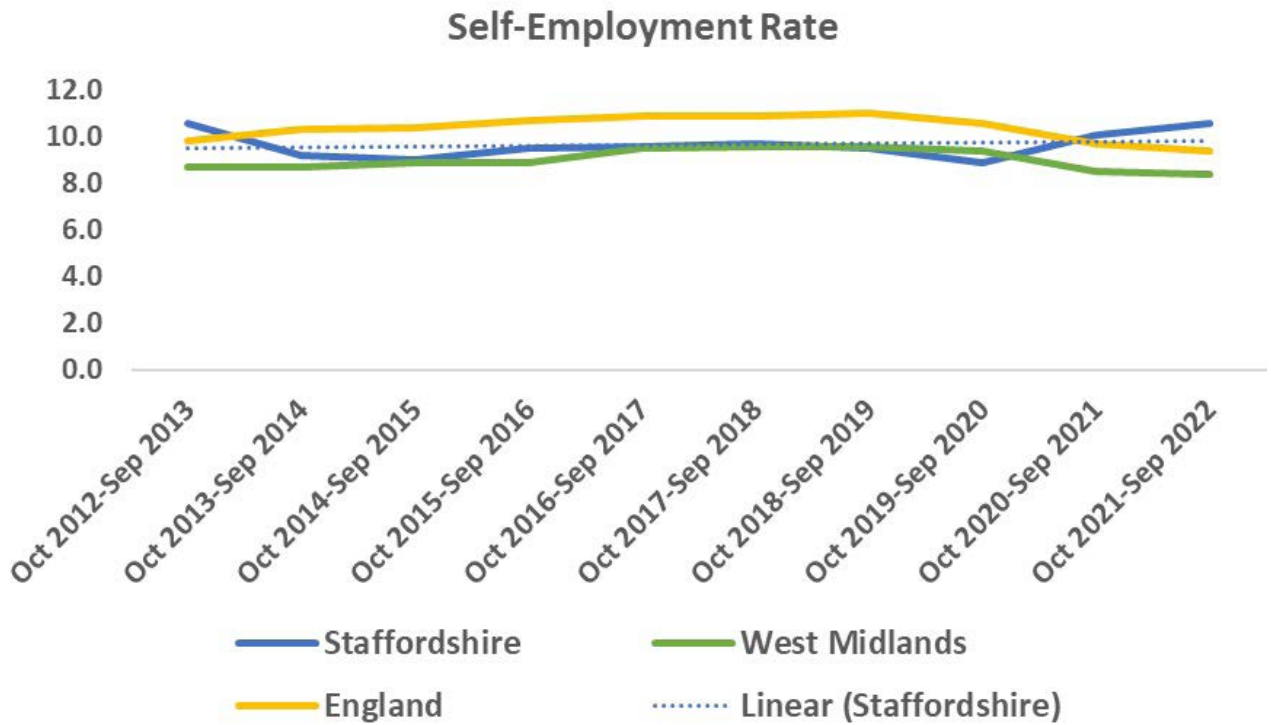
This increase in self-employment is a real positive for Staffordshire's economy as it is new innovative businesses which can fuel economic growth and raise productivity and is reflective of the significant investment seen in entrepreneurial skills development and business support for start-ups and step-ups across Staffordshire.

This strategy will look to ensure that more of our residents can access the skills and training provision to develop the knowledge and skills needed to start-up and grow a business.

- **Unemployment** – Following the increase in unemployment seen due to the pandemic effectively closing most parts of the economy, Staffordshire has seen unemployment levels decline to those seen prior to COVID.

Staffordshire's unemployment rate for the latest available period of Oct 2021-Sep 2022 was estimated at 14,700 or 3.3%, which was below the national rate of 3.8% and significantly below the regional rate of 5.0%.

Unemployment Rate

Legend: Staffordshire, West Midlands, England, Linear (Staffordshire)
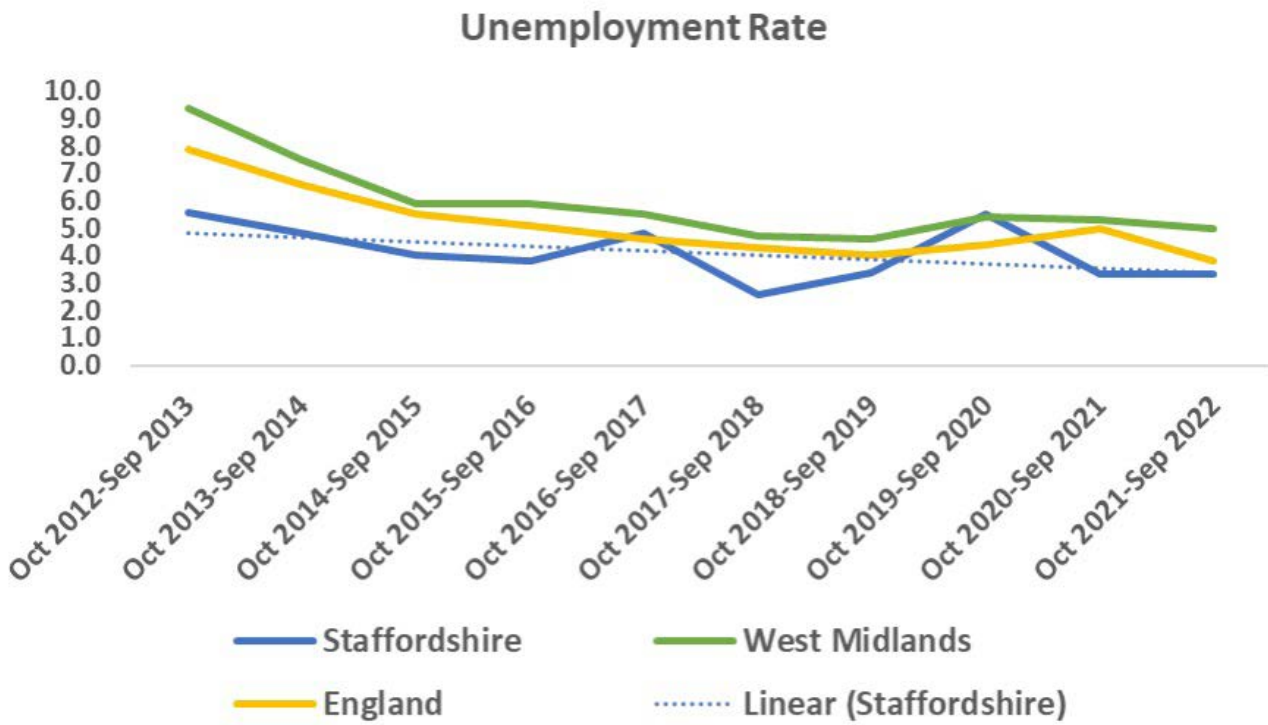
However, there still remained an estimated 14,700 unemployed residents of working age (aged 16-64) during Oct 2021-Sep 2022 and a key part of this strategy will be focused on ensuring that more residents that find themselves unemployed are able to find work and progress their careers.

- **Economic Inactivity (Worklessness)** – Staffordshire has seen the estimated number of economically inactive working age (aged 16-64) residents recover to below pre-pandemic levels following an increase caused by COVID. This is in contrast to the national picture where those economically inactive still remain well above pre-pandemic levels.

Staffordshire's economic inactivity rate for the latest available period of Oct 2021-Sep 2022 was estimated at 16.3% equivalent to 87,800, which was significantly below the national rate of 21.2% and regional rate of 22.2%.

Economic Inactivity Rate
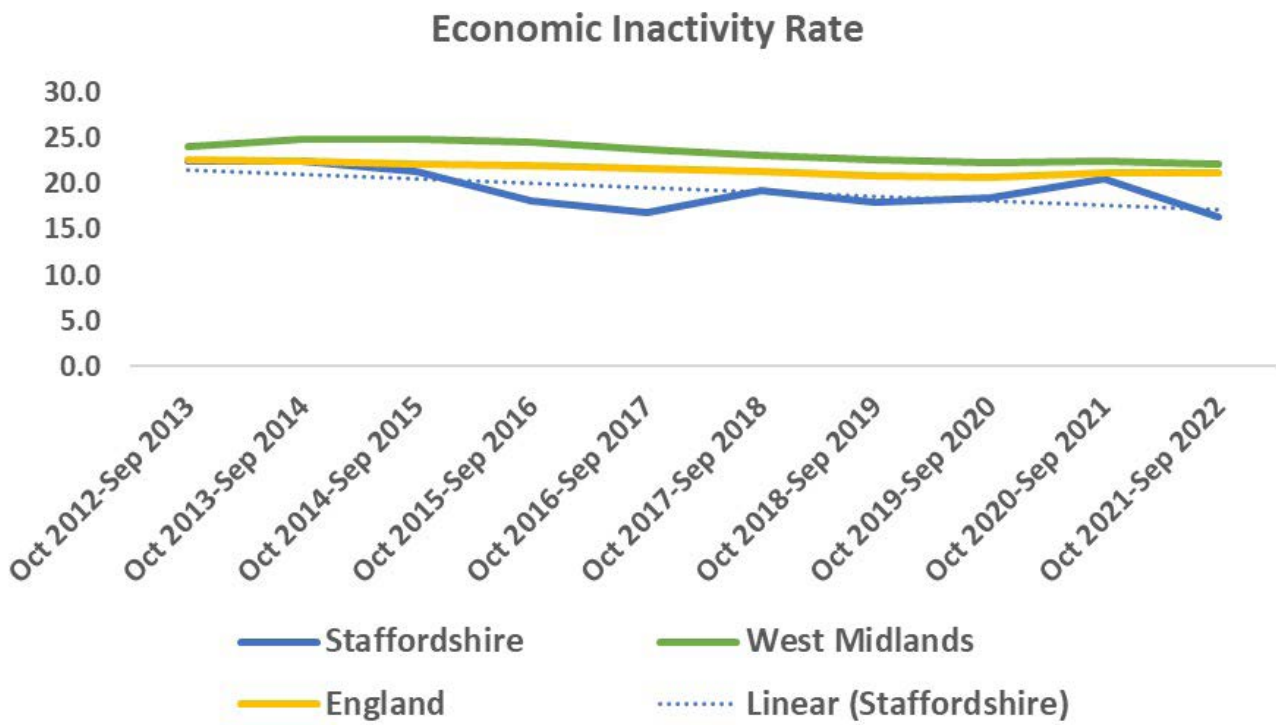
Source: Annual Population Survey

This strategy will look to support those that economically inactive and who want a job to find work and help to address current labour shortages and skills gaps.

- **NEETs** – Staffordshire performs comparatively well for the proportion of 16- and 17-year-olds living in each area who were not in education, employment or training (NEET) or their activity was not known (NK) at the end of the year. Latest published DfE data shows that 3.3% of 16- and 17-year-olds were NEET (1.8%), or activity not known (1.5%) at end 2021 (average of December, January, and February), which was down -0.1ppts on the previous year and well below the national average of 4.7%. This placed Staffordshire in the second-best quintile nationally.

Despite performing comparatively well, over recent years Staffordshire has seen an increase in the number of 16- and 17-year-olds who are NEET, with latest local data for 2022/23 showing a significant increase to 497 in November 2022.

The main reason for young people in Staffordshire findings themselves NEET is due to them 'seeking employment or training' (52%), while over a fifth (21%) are 'not work ready' and 12% have a 'long term illness'. Further detail shows that that almost 1 in 4 of the Y12 NEET population had mental health issues that prevented, or part contributed to their lack of progression.

There is also an increasing asylum seeker population within the county, who require provision that incorporates ESOL delivery. We currently have a significant number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children without access to education provision despite being very willing to engage.

It will be vital for these young people that through this strategy the necessary support is put in place and available to support them into education, employment, or training.

NEETs aged 16-17 in Staffordshire
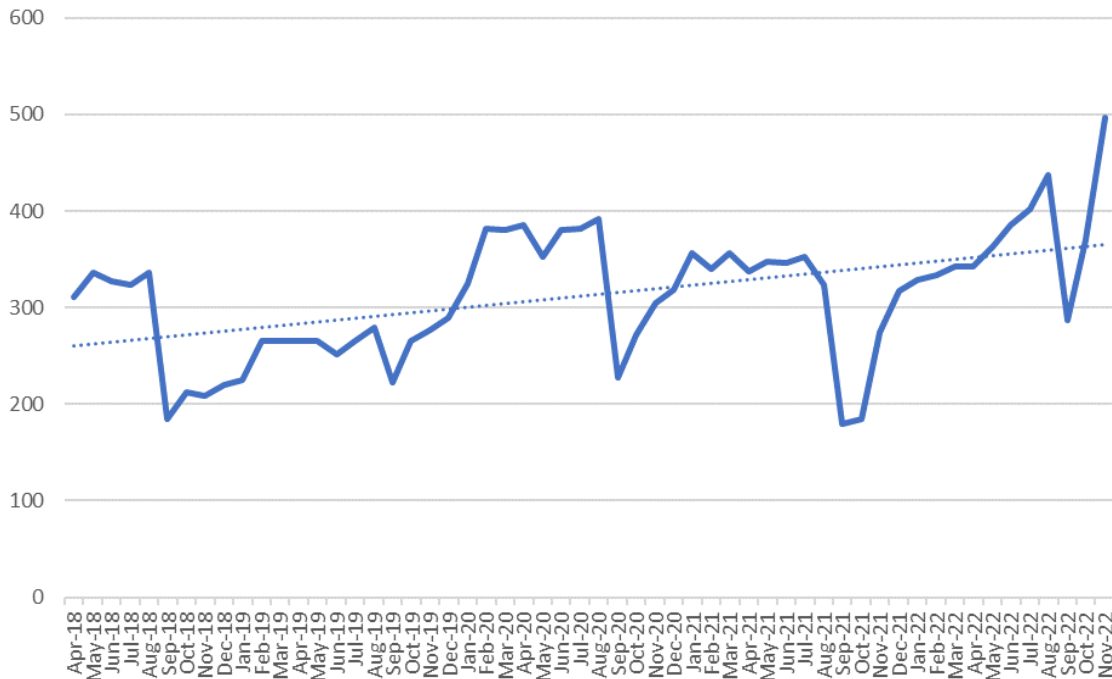
Source: DfE NEET and Participation Data/Entrust

- **Participation in education and training** – In March 2022 93.8% of Staffordshire 16–17-year-olds were participating in education and training. This was above the national average of 92.9% and placed Staffordshire in the second-best quintile nationally. However, this was -0.8 ppts down on the previous year.

Positively, in Staffordshire 98.5% of Staffordshire 16–17-year-olds were offered an education or training place in September 2021, which placed Staffordshire in the top quintile and well above the average for England of 95.5%. This also showed an improvement on September 2020 of 0.3 ppts.

DfE NEET and participation LA scorecard

- **Post 16 attainment** – In Staffordshire 57.6% of 19-year-olds achieved level 3 in 2020/21, this was above the regional average of 57.4% but below the national average of 59.8%.

The proportion of 19-year-olds achieving GCSE 9-4 standard pass in English and maths (or equivalent) between ages 16 and 19, for those who had not achieved this level by 16 stood at 31.0% in 2020/21, which was below the regional average of 31.4% and national average of 32.7%.

It will be important that this strategy helps ensure that more young people have the skills needed to access better paid jobs in priority sectors. A key aspect of this is raising school educational performance where Staffordshire currently lags behind nationally for GCSE attainment with a lower average attainment 8 score per pupil and for the proportion of pupils achieving 9-4 standard pass in English and maths GCSEs.

DfE NEET and participation LA scorecard

- **Out of Work Benefit Claimants** – In December 2022 the Claimant Count in Staffordshire increased further to 14,640, the number of Universal Credit (UC) claimants is now 21.5% or 2,590 higher than the level seen in March 2020 (pre-COVID), which is below the 24.4% increase seen nationally and 22.9% increase seen regionally.
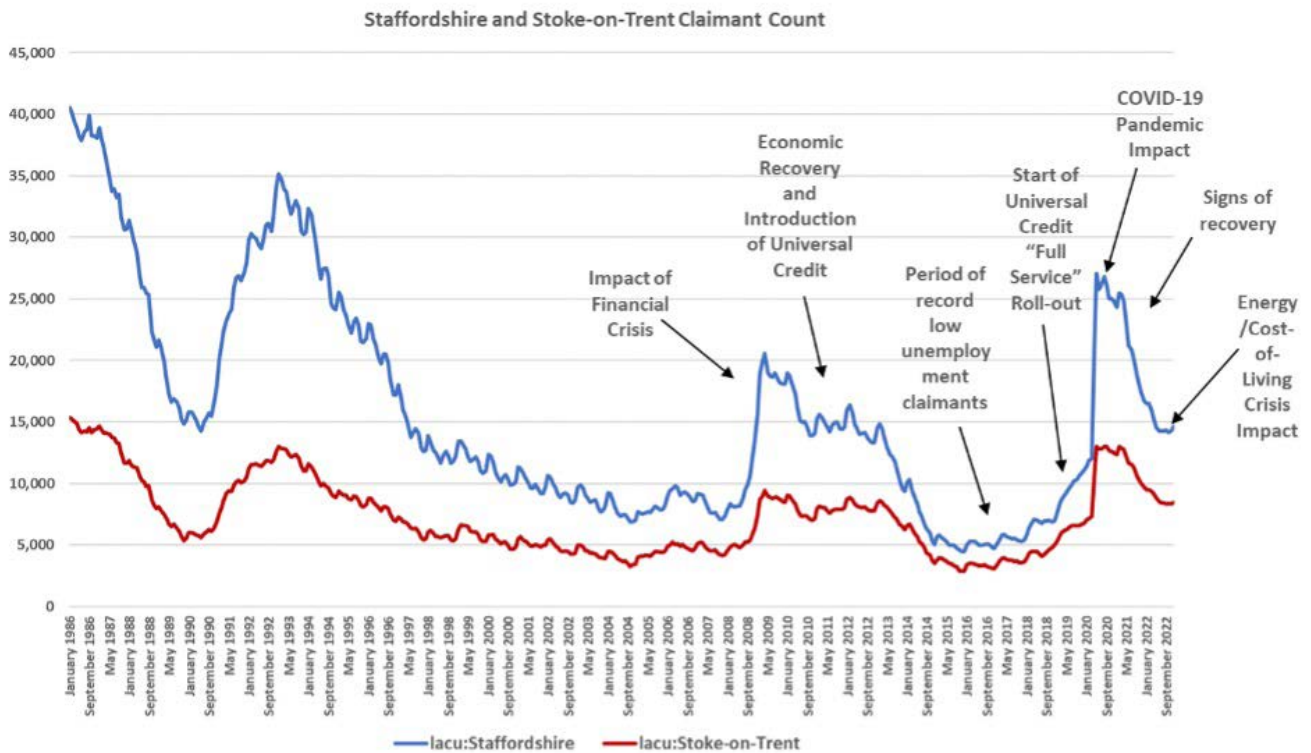
Source: ONS Claimant Count

It is important to recognise that although claimant numbers remain higher than pre-pandemic given our strong position going into the pandemic, we still perform comparatively well for our claimant rate which stood at 2.7% of the working age population in December compared to 4.8% regionally and 3.8% nationally.

The Bank of England and Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) have forecast that unemployment will continue to rise in 2023 given the current global and national economic challenges we are facing.

This strategy will look to put in place the employment and skills support needed to support residents which find themselves out of work to find new work in areas of labour and skills demand.

• **Youth Claimant Count** – In December 2022 the youth claimant count in Staffordshire saw an increase of 40 to a total of 2,685 young people. This is similar to the trend seen across England as a whole.

Young people continue to be disproportionately impacted by work-related benefits dependency with the proportion of young people in Staffordshire aged 18-24 claiming work-related Universal Credit at 4.1% in December 2022 compared to 2.7% for the working age population and 4.7% nationally.

Claimant Rate and Youth Unemployment Rate in Staffordshire
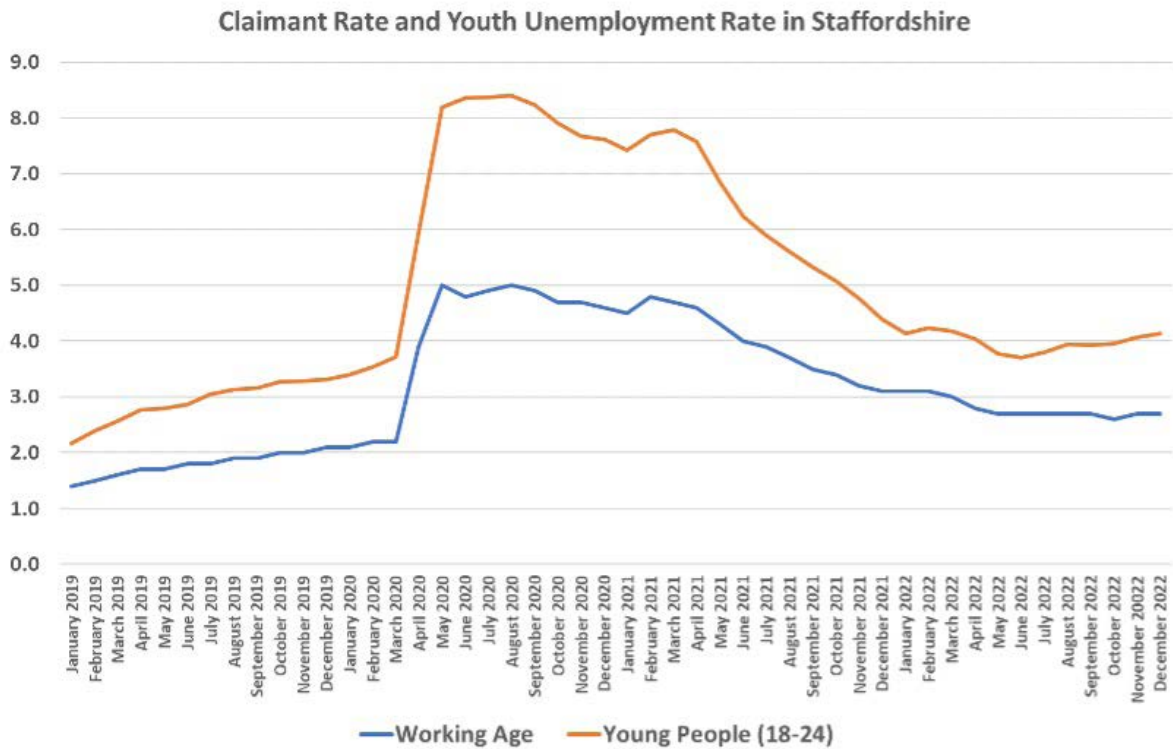
Source: ONS Claimant Count

Given that it is harder for these groups to find a new job it is increasingly vital that there is the right support in place to help young people find work such as through the Staffordshire Jobs and Careers Brokerage service, the Restart Scheme, and the new Skills Bootcamps to help prevent them becoming long-term unemployed.

• **Job Vacancies** - As seen nationally, job vacancies were heavily hit early in the pandemic, however overall levels have recovered and are now similar to pre-COVID with record levels in some key sectors. This is reflective of the high demand we are seeing for labour and skills across most parts of the economy to aid the recovery from the pandemic.

Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Unique Job vacancies
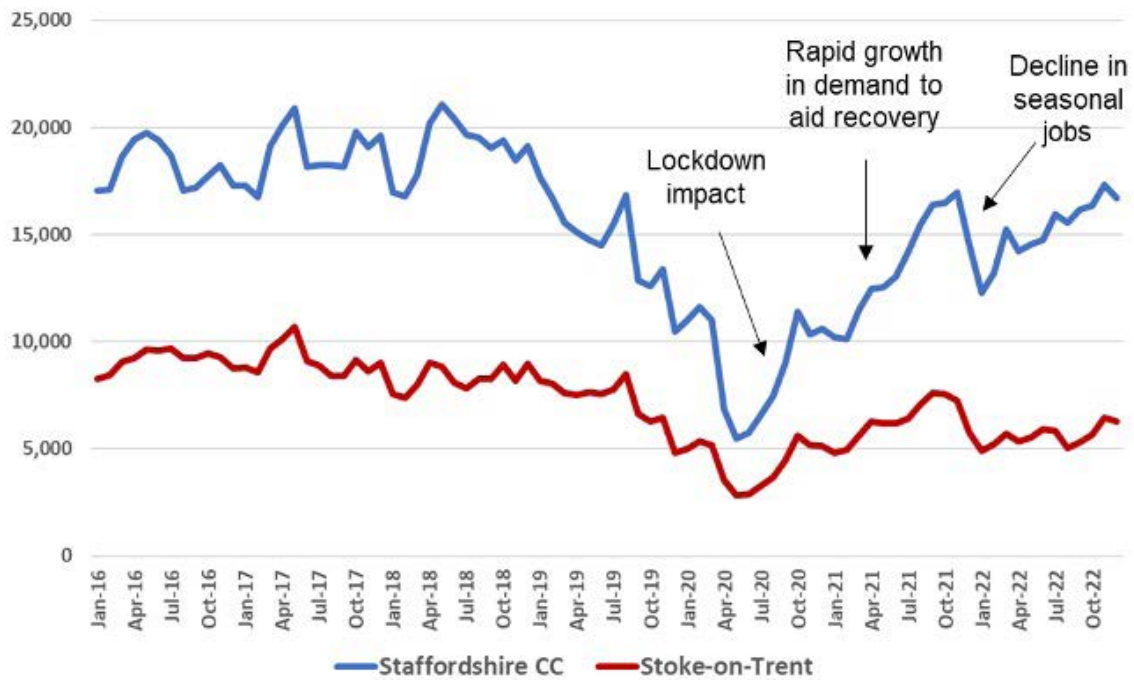
Source: Lightcast

Demand for roles in health and social care including care workers and home carers and nurses remain by far the strongest of all occupations.

The increase in job vacancies to record levels is resulting in further reports of labour shortages and skills gaps with not enough skilled workers to fill the vacant jobs, especially in health and social care, logistics, hospitality, education, engineering, and digital/IT.

This has the potential to slow down the recovery or limit business survival unless the labour shortage and skills gap is quickly and effectively addressed, clearly employment support organisations, skills providers and the Government's Plan for Jobs including the Restart schemes and new Skills Bootcamps have a vital role in upskilling and reskilling jobseekers into areas of demand and preventing them becoming long-term unemployed. While Government and business sectors have a key role in ensuring that jobs in areas of demand are attracting workers with good pay and terms and conditions. Also encouraging those that have become economically inactive due to COVID will further help to address the labour and skills gap.

- **Businesses** - In 2022 some 33,465 businesses called Staffordshire their home, showing an increase of 2.0% between 2017-22, this compares to 3.8% growth seen for England. 99.6% are SMEs and the sectors with the largest number of businesses include Construction (5,230 or 15.6% of total), Wholesale and Retail (4,945 or 14.8%) and Professional Services (4,365 or 13.0%). Main growth in businesses between 2017-22 seen in Construction (+650), Hospitality (+340) and Logistics (+230) and main declines in Professional Services (-445) and Information and Communication (-185).

Staffordshire businesses in 2022 and change in businesses 2017-2022

Sector	2022	2017-2022
F : Construction	5,230	650
G : Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor…	4,945	-20
M : Professional, scientific and technical activities	4,365	-445
A : Agriculture, forestry and fishing	2,670	-140
N : Administrative and support service activities	2,560	90
C : Manufacturing	2,170	-30
I : Accommodation and food service activities	2,115	340
H : Transportation and storage	2,110	230
J : Information and communication	1,455	-185
S : Other service activities	1,435	5
L : Real estate activities	1,195	155
Q : Human health and social work activities	1,160	-110
R : Arts, entertainment and recreation	635	65
K : Financial and insurance activities	575	85
P : Education	515	-65
O : Public administration and defence; compulsory…	140	10
E : Water supply; sewerage, waste management and…	140	20
D : Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	30	0
B : Mining and quarrying	15	0
U : Activities of extraterritorial organisations and bodies	0	0
T : Activities of households as…	0	0

■ 2022 ■ 2017-2022

Source: ONS UK Business Counts/IDBR

- **Business Start-up Rate** - Between 2020 and 2021, the number of Staffordshire business births increased from 3,050 to 4,145; this represents a birth rate of 12.2% in 2021, compared with 9.3% in 2020. Staffordshire's birth rate for 2021 was for the first time largely in-line with the UK birth rate of 12.4%, whereas the County had a lower birth rate in 2020 when compared to the UK birth rate of 11.5%.

- **Business 3-Year Survival Rate** - Staffordshire's three-year business survival rate in 2021 stood at 61.9% which was higher than the UK survival rate of 57.6%.

This strategy will help support more businesses to start and grow in Staffordshire by ensuring that they have the labour and skills they need.

- **Jobs** – Between 2016-21 total jobs in Staffordshire increased by 3% or 9,025 to a total of 366,400, this is lower than the 4% growth seen for England as a whole but shows recovery in 2021 following the decline seen early in the pandemic. The main sector growth between 2016-21 has been seen in Health & Social Care (+5,000 jobs) followed by Construction, Agriculture, and Information and Communication all seeing a 4,000 increase during the period. The biggest decline has been seen in Manufacturing (-5,000) followed by Hospitality and Other Services both seeing a -3,000 decline in jobs.

Staffordshire jobs in 2021 and change in jobs 2016-2021

Sector	2021	2016-2021
G : Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor…	65,000	0
Q : Human health and social work activities	48,000	5,000
C : Manufacturing	39,000	-5,000
P : Education	28,000	2,000
I : Accommodation and food service activities	27,000	-3,000
H : Transportation and storage	27,000	2,000
N : Administrative and support service activities	25,000	-1,000
M : Professional, scientific and technical activities	21,000	-1,000
F : Construction	21,000	4,000
A : Agriculture, forestry and fishing	14,000	4,000
O : Public administration and defence; compulsory…	12,000	0
R : Arts, entertainment and recreation	11,000	1,000
J : Information and communication	11,000	4,000
S : Other service activities	6,000	-3,000
L : Real estate activities	5,000	1,000
K : Financial and insurance activities	3,500	-1,500
E : Water supply; sewerage, waste management…	2,500	500
D : Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	250	25
B : Mining and quarrying	150	0
U : Activities of extraterritorial organisations and…	0	0
T : Activities of households as…	0	0

■ 2021   ■ 2016-2021

Source: Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES)

- **Economic Growth (GVA)** - In 2020 the Staffordshire economy was worth £18.0bn showing an increase of over £1.2bn between 2015-2020, equivalent to a 7.3% growth but lower than the growth seen for the WM (12.2%) and UK (12.8%) (the economy shrunk by nearly a billion between 2019-20 early in the pandemic, a -5.2% decline which was larger than the decline seen for the WM -3.9% and UK -3.4% - reflective of more businesses and jobs in sectors hardest hit by COVID).

Staffordshire GVA in 2020 and change in GVA 2015-2020 (£million)

Sector	2020	2015-20
Manufacturing	2,852	150
Real estate activities	2,669	529
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles	2,501	367
Human health and social work activities	1,650	420
Construction	1,519	-90
Transportation and storage	1,126	212
Education	1,049	162
Public administration and defence	899	175
Professional, scientific and technical activities	794	69
Administrative and support service activities	779	-116
Other service activities	396	42
Information and communication	388	32
Accommodation and food service activities	381	-338
Financial and insurance activities	316	-251
Electricity, gas, water; sewerage and waste...	278	-6
Agriculture, forestry and fishing; mining and...	208	-7
Arts, entertainment and recreation	135	-125
Activities of households	16	-4

■ 2020 ■ 2015-20

Source: ONS Gross Value Added (GVA)

This strategy will look to support further economic growth, particularly in our priority high value growth sectors.

- **Productivity** - In terms of GVA per hour worked Staffordshire has seen continued improvement with GVA per hour worked increasing by 13.1% between 2015-20 to £31.0. However, this is slower improvement than seen nationally (14.2% growth) and each hour worked in Staffordshire is 18% less productive than the national average.

GVA Per Hour Worked relative to UK average (UK=100)
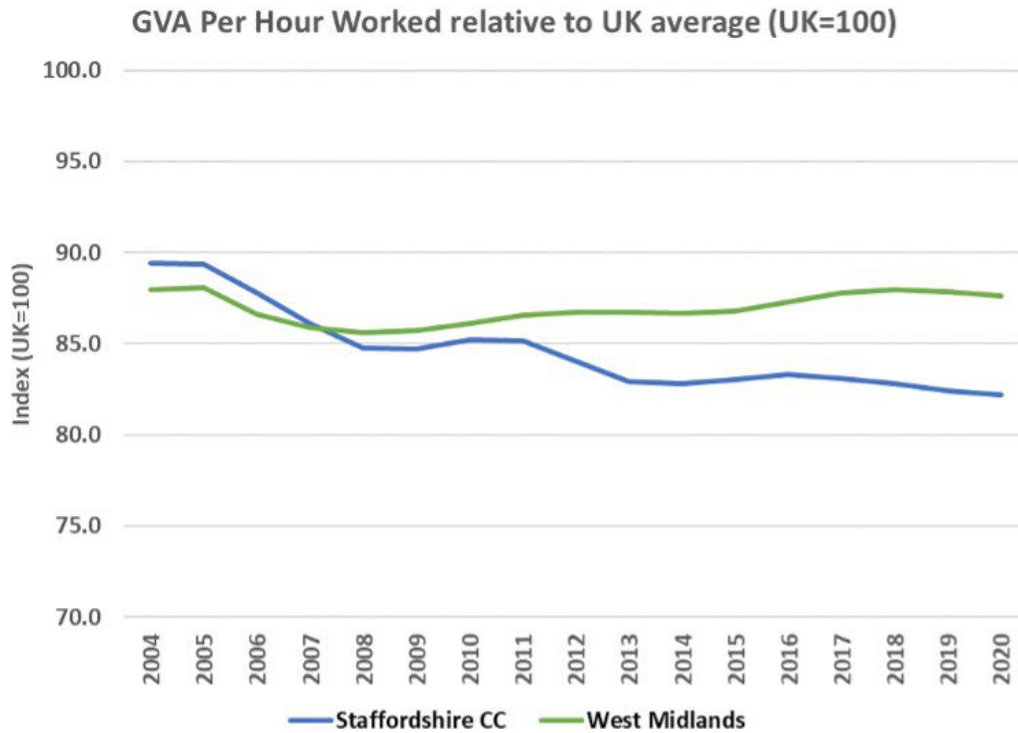
Source: ONS Gross Value Added (GVA) Per Hour Worked

This strategy recognises that in order to help raise productivity there is a need to further improve education and skills levels across Staffordshire, particularly raising the achievement of higher technical skills in our priority high value growth sectors.

- **Resident Earnings** – In 2022 average annual resident earnings in Staffordshire stood at £32,386 which was just below the UK average of £33,000. Between 2017-22 Staffordshire saw faster improvement in resident earnings than nationally, with 16.5% growth compared to 14.2% for England.

Average annual resident earnings

Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)

- **Workplace Earnings** – In 2022 average annual workplace earnings in Staffordshire stood at £29,243 which was well below the UK average of £33,000. Between 2017-22 Staffordshire saw a growth in workplace earnings of 12.4% which was below the growth seen for England of 14.1%.

Average annual resident earnings

Staffordshire — West Midlands — England

Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)

By raising education and skills levels across Staffordshire this strategy can ensure that more of our residents can access the better paid jobs being created in and around Staffordshire.

Our **Local Authority Employment and Skills Profiles** provide further detail relevant to each district/borough including employment and skills opportunities and challenges.

Annex 2: Priority Sector Evidence

- **Engineering & Advanced Manufacturing** (Automation/AI/Machine Learning)

Now – Strengths and Weaknesses
- **39,000 Staffordshire jobs** equivalent to 11% of all employment well above 7% seen nationally[1]
- 90% full-time and 10% part-time[1]
- High demand for science engineering and production technicians; production managers and directors; mechanical engineers; welders; electricians[2]
- **Average salary £31,700**[2] – well above the average pay in Staffordshire of £28,100[3]
- **Male dominated sector** – 3 in 4 workers are males[2]
- **Ageing workforce** – 1 in 5 workers over 55 years of age[2]
- **Worth £2.8bn in GVA** equivalent to 16% of total economy (largest of all sectors)[4]
- Overall lower adult skill levels (NVQ level 3 & 4) to fill advanced roles[5]
- **Businesses struggle to recruit people with the right STEM skills and experience**[6]
- **Lack of employer investment in training** with 3 in 5 businesses not having training plans/budgets or workforce strategies[6]
- **Decline in apprenticeships**[7]
- **Institute of Technology** is developing high tech provision and increasing skills levels

Future – Opportunities and Challenges
- Growth sector generating **high value, high skilled and better paid jobs**
- **New technologies** driving growth in advanced manufacturing including automation, AI & Machine Learning - need to retrain and upskill lower skilled workers displaced by new technologies
- **Green economy** - potential to be a centre of energy innovation e.g. A50/A500 Hydrogen Corridor and low carbon adoption/renewable energy/electric cars e.g., JCB/JLR
- **Productivity gains** to help close the gap to national average
- Supporting **traditional manufacturing base** to adopt new technologies and efficient production methods to help drive productivity and sustainability
- **Require high skilled flexible workforce** to be able to adapt to new technologies quickly
- Male dominated sector with further **female engagement required**
- Potential for **apprenticeship growth**

Top Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing Occupations in Demand – job postings in Staffordshire 2022

Top Posted Occupations

Occupation (SOC)	Total/Unique (Jan 2022 - Dec 2022)	Posting Intensity	Median Posting Duration
💼 Science, Engineering and Production Technicians n.e.c.	3,027 / 1,255	2 : 1	32 day
💼 Engineering Technicians	3,238 / 1,170	3 : 1	32 day
💼 Production Managers and Directors in Manufacturing	1,205 / 589	2 : 1	33 day
💼 Engineering Professionals n.e.c.	1,216 / 564	2 : 1	33 day
💼 Mechanical Engineers	1,066 / 480	2 : 1	33 day
💼 Welding Trades	1,080 / 434	2 : 1	32 day
💼 Electricians and Electrical Fitters	960 / 406	2 : 1	34 day
💼 Electrical Engineers	922 / 392	2 : 1	34 day
💼 Electrical and Electronic Trades n.e.c.	841 / 381	2 : 1	33 day
💼 Quality Assurance Technicians	570 / 298	2 : 1	32 day
💼 Quality Control and Planning Engineers	573 / 279	2 : 1	31 day
💼 Quality Assurance and Regulatory Professionals	563 / 278	2 : 1	32 day
💼 Civil Engineers	570 / 262	2 : 1	35 day
💼 Metal Machining Setters and Setter-operators	732 / 260	3 : 1	34 day
💼 Planning, Process and Production Technicians	549 / 252	2 : 1	34 day
💼 Production and Process Engineers	521 / 249	2 : 1	32 day
💼 Metal Working Production and Maintenance Fitters	564 / 240	2 : 1	32 day
💼 Design and Development Engineers	395 / 223	2 : 1	29 day
💼 Electronics Engineers	179 / 81	2 : 1	28 day
💼 Skilled Metal, Electrical and Electronic Trades Supervisors	162 / 80	2 : 1	37 day

To find out more about what these occupations and more entail visit the Department for Education (DfE) funded LMI For All website -

https://www.lmiforall.org.uk/explore_lmi/

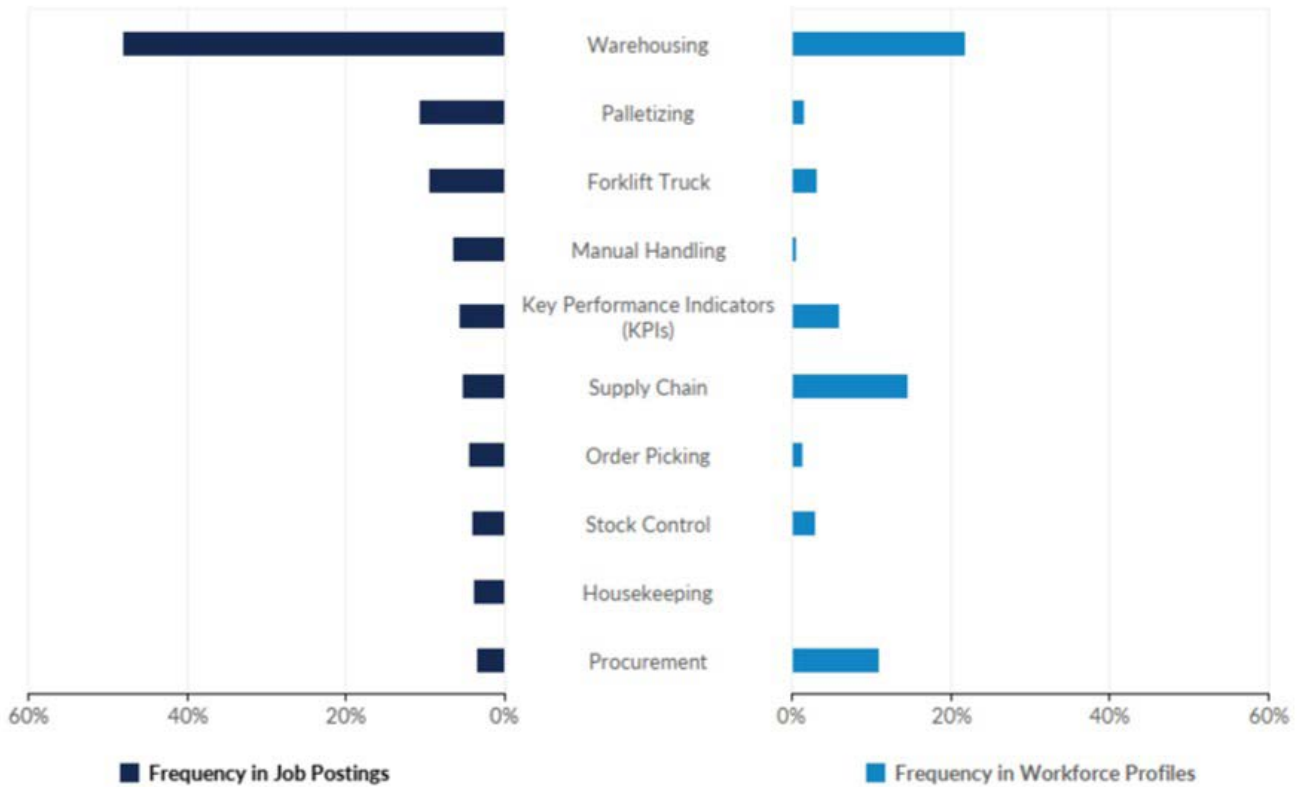## Top Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing Technical Skills in Demand – job postings in Staffordshire 2022

The following provides insight into the supply and demand of relevant skills by comparing the frequency of skills present in job postings against skills present in today's workforce. Along with Lightcast's job posting analytics, this comparison leverages Lightcast's dataset of more than 100M online resumés and profiles. All resumés and profiles used in these comparisons have been updated within the last three years.

The skills associated with workforce profiles represent workers of all education and experience levels.

Top Specialized Skills

Frequency in Job Postings — Frequency in Workforce Profiles

Skill	Frequency in Postings	Postings with Skill / Total Postings (Jan 2022 - Dec 2022)	Frequency in Profiles	Profiles with Skill / Total Profiles (2021 - 2023)
Machinery	11%	942 / 8,514	3%	119 / 4,218
Maintenance Engineering	9%	765 / 8,514	2%	87 / 4,218
Marketing	7%	628 / 8,514	5%	210 / 4,218
Mechanical Engineering	7%	612 / 8,514	8%	336 / 4,218
Electrical Engineering	7%	585 / 8,514	9%	363 / 4,218
Warehousing	7%	573 / 8,514	3%	111 / 4,218
Auditing	6%	493 / 8,514	6%	237 / 4,218
Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	5%	408 / 8,514	3%	125 / 4,218
Risk Analysis	4%	350 / 8,514	5%	191 / 4,218
Lean Manufacturing	4%	335 / 8,514	9%	395 / 4,218

Top Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing Transferable Skills in Demand – job postings in Staffordshire 2022
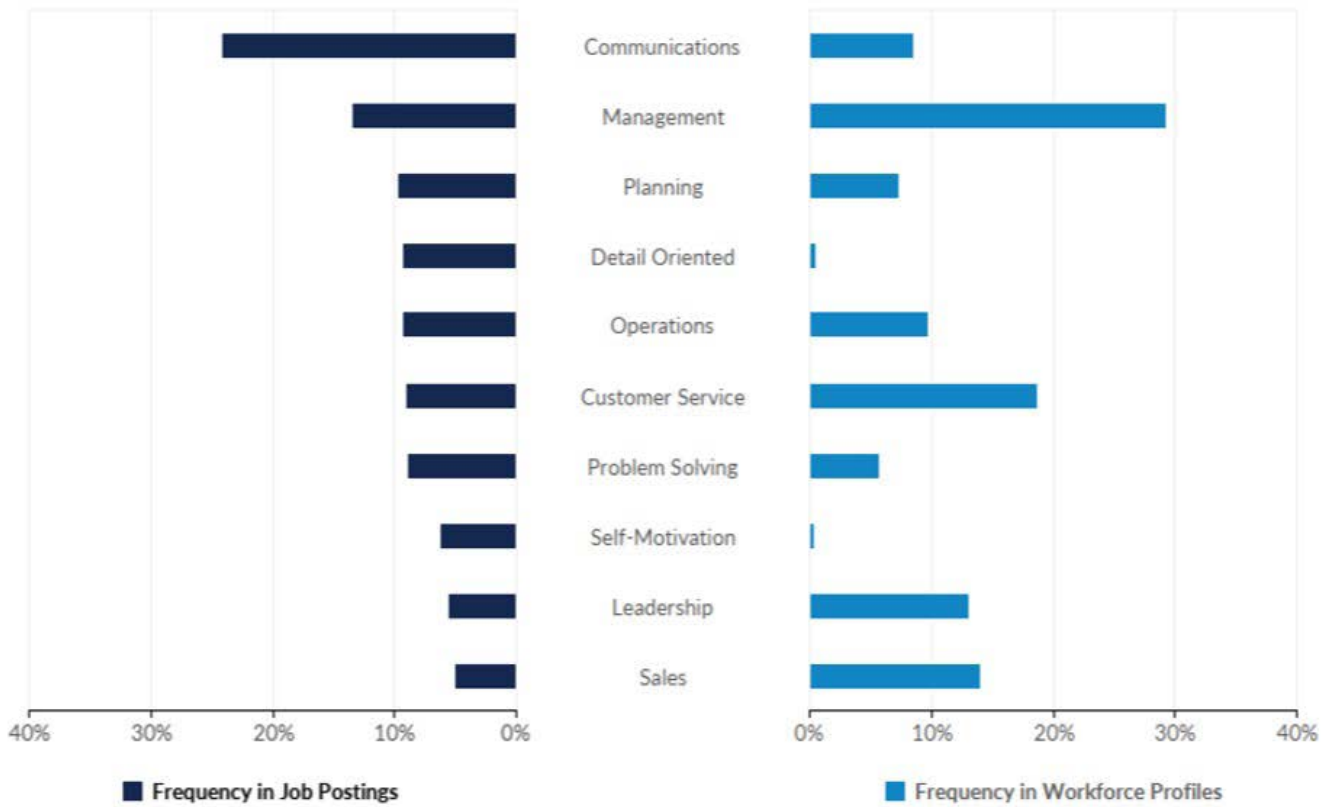
Skill	Frequency in Postings	Postings with Skill / Total Postings (Jan 2022 - Dec 2022)	Frequency in Profiles	Profiles with Skill / Total Profiles (2021 - 2023)
Communications	24%	2,058 / 8,514	9%	359 / 4,218
Management	14%	1,151 / 8,514	29%	1,234 / 4,218
Planning	10%	833 / 8,514	7%	313 / 4,218
Detail Oriented	9%	801 / 8,514	0%	20 / 4,218
Operations	9%	793 / 8,514	10%	414 / 4,218
Customer Service	9%	777 / 8,514	19%	788 / 4,218
Problem Solving	9%	768 / 8,514	6%	244 / 4,218
Self-Motivation	6%	530 / 8,514	0%	19 / 4,218
Leadership	6%	483 / 8,514	13%	555 / 4,218
Sales	5%	437 / 8,514	14%	592 / 4,218

- **Advanced Logistics** (Automation/AI)

Now – Strengths and Weaknesses
- **27,000 Staffordshire jobs** equivalent to 7% of all employment above 5% seen nationally[1]
- 81% full-time and 19% part-time[1]
- High demand for storage occupations; LGV drivers; van drivers; transport and distribution clerks; fork-lift truck drivers; managers and directors; couriers; packers[2]
- **Average salary £28,600**[2] – just above the average pay in Staffordshire of £28,100[3]
- **Male dominated sector** – 3 in 4 workers are males[2]
- **Ageing workforce** – over 1 in 5 workers over 55 years of age[2]
- **Worth £1.1bn in GVA** equivalent to 6% of total economy[4]
- **Businesses struggle to recruit people with the right skills and experience or interest in the roles available**[5]
- **Lack of employer investment in training** with over 3 in 5 businesses not having training plans/budgets or workforce strategies[5]
- **High jobs demand** locally to support **major inward investments and relocations e.g., Pets at Home and ASOS**

Future – Opportunities and Challenges
- **Central location and strong connectivity**
- **Available land and premises** to support growth
- Covid-19 has accelerated the shift to e-commerce and online retail with increasing demand for warehousing and wider supply chain logistics
- **New digital technologies** such as automation and AI are driving growth in highly productive advanced logistics
- **More workers needed in the sector to address key labour and skill shortages (i.e., ageing workforce)**
- **International trade** (including the need for frictionless trade with the EU and rest of the world post Brexit)
- **Climate change and the Green Economy** – need for modern and sustainable transport (e.g., emissions and air quality)
- **Innovation** – equipping workers with the **digital skills** needed to adopt new technologies to help drive productivity

Source: UK Business Counts 2022 - 2,110 Staffordshire businesses
1 Source: Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) 2021
2 Source: Lightcast 2021
3 Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) 2021
4 Source: Regional gross value added (balanced) by industry 2020
5 Source: SSLEP SAP Skills for Growth Survey 2022
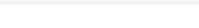
- **Top Logistics Occupations in Demand – job postings in Staffordshire 2022**)

Top Posted Occupations

Occupation (SOC)	Total/Unique (Jan 2022 - Dec 2022)	Posting Intensity	Median Posting Duration
Elementary Storage Occupations	9,782 / 2,695	4 : 1	32 day
Van Drivers	3,740 / 1,412	3 : 1	32 day
Large Goods Vehicle Drivers	3,316 / 1,344	2 : 1	32 day
Transport and Distribution Clerks and Assistants	921 / 478	2 : 1	31 day
Fork-lift Truck Drivers	830 / 323	3 : 1	35 day
Purchasing Managers and Directors	440 / 250	2 : 1	32 day
Managers and Directors in Storage and Warehousing	442 / 212	2 : 1	32 day
Other Drivers and Transport Operatives n.e.c.	402 / 191	2 : 1	32 day
Managers and Directors in Transport and Distribution	253 / 144	2 : 1	29 day
Postal Workers, Mail Sorters, Messengers and Couriers	165 / 54	3 : 1	23 day
Rail Transport Operatives	67 / 31	2 : 1	35 day
Importers and Exporters	19 / 12	2 : 1	23 day
Air Transport Operatives	3 / 1	3 : 1	n/

To find out more about what these occupations and more entail visit the Department for Education (DfE) funded LMI For All website -

https://www.lmiforall.org.uk/explore_lmi/

Top Logistics Technical Skills in Demand – job postings in Staffordshire 2022

The following provides insight into the supply and demand of relevant skills by comparing the frequency of skills present in job postings against skills present in today's workforce. Along with Lightcast's job posting analytics, this comparison leverages Lightcast's dataset of more than 100M online resumés and profiles. All resumés and profiles used in these comparisons have been updated within the last three years.

The skills associated with workforce profiles represent workers of all education and experience levels.

Top Specialized Skills

Frequency in Job Postings   **Frequency in Workforce Profiles**

Skill	Frequency in Postings	Postings with Skill / Total Postings (Jan 2022 - Dec 2022)	Frequency in Profiles	Profiles with Skill / Total Profiles (2021 - 2023)
Warehousing	48%	3,447 / 7,147	22%	385 / 1,761
Palletizing	11%	780 / 7,147	2%	27 / 1,761
Forklift Truck	10%	691 / 7,147	3%	57 / 1,761
Manual Handling	7%	478 / 7,147	1%	12 / 1,761
Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	6%	412 / 7,147	6%	105 / 1,761
Supply Chain	5%	388 / 7,147	15%	259 / 1,761
Order Picking	5%	333 / 7,147	1%	23 / 1,761
Stock Control	4%	296 / 7,147	3%	53 / 1,761
Housekeeping	4%	292 / 7,147	0%	3 / 1,761
Procurement	4%	260 / 7,147	11%	196 / 1,761

Top Logistics Transferable Skills in Demand – job postings in Staffordshire 2022
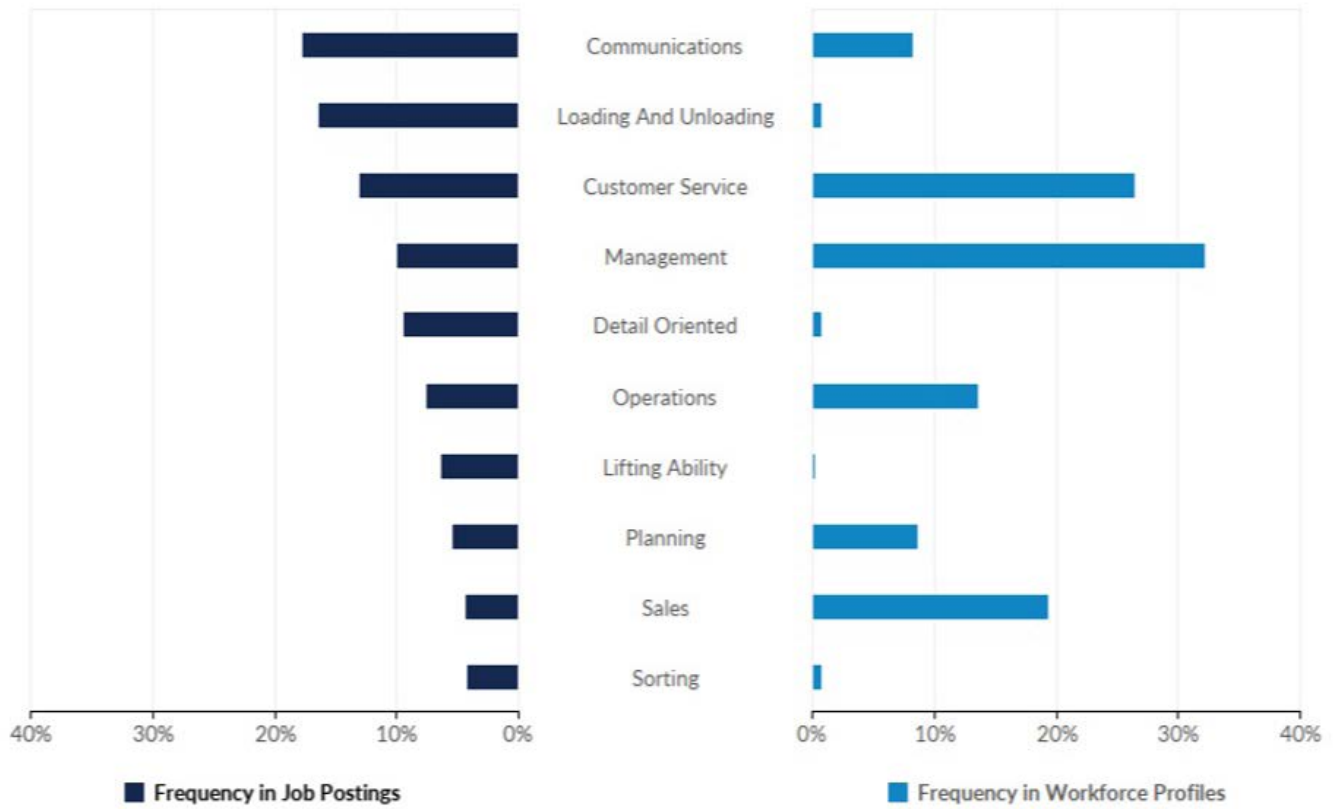
Frequency in Job Postings | **Frequency in Workforce Profiles**

Skill	Frequency in Postings	Postings with Skill / Total Postings (Jan 2022 - Dec 2022)	Frequency in Profiles	Profiles with Skill / Total Profiles (2021 - 2023)
Communications	18%	1,275 / 7,147	8%	147 / 1,761
Loading And Unloading	16%	1,176 / 7,147	1%	13 / 1,761
Customer Service	13%	941 / 7,147	26%	466 / 1,761
Management	10%	721 / 7,147	32%	567 / 1,761
Detail Oriented	10%	683 / 7,147	1%	13 / 1,761
Operations	8%	545 / 7,147	14%	241 / 1,761
Lifting Ability	6%	460 / 7,147	0%	4 / 1,761
Planning	6%	396 / 7,147	9%	152 / 1,761
Sales	4%	318 / 7,147	19%	341 / 1,761
Sorting	4%	304 / 7,147	1%	14 / 1,761

- **Construction including Modern Methods** (Automation / AI / Retrofitting)

Now – Strengths and Weaknesses

- **21,000 Staffordshire jobs** equivalent to 6% of all employment above 5% seen nationally[1]
- 81% full-time and 19% part-time[1]
- High demand for site workers; civil engineers; project managers; quantity surveyors; plumbers and heating and ventilating engineers; production managers; carpenters; chartered surveyors[2]
- **Average salary £34,500**[2] – well above the average pay in Staffordshire of £28,100[3]
- **Lack of workforce diversity** – women / BAME with 4 in 5 workers males[2]
- **Ageing workforce** – over 1 in 5 workers over 55 years of age[2]
- **Worth £1.5bn in GVA** equivalent to 9% of total economy[4]
- **Businesses struggle to recruit people with the right skills and experience**[6]
- **Lack of employer investment in training** with over 3 in 5 businesses not having training plans/budgets or workforce strategies[5]
- **High jobs demand** locally to support major engineering projects such as HS2 and WMI

Future – Opportunities and Challenges

- **New digital technologies** driving growth in Modern Methods of Construction including offsite automation & AI
- **Housing building –** Government targets
- **Major Infrastructure projects -** transport and energy projects, including HS2 / West Midlands Interchange
- **Green Economy –** environmentally sustainable construction/renewable energy
- **More workers needed in the sector – male dominated**
- Ageing workforce with **high replacement demand**
- **Post-Brexit migration** system workforce impact
- Equipping workers with the **digital skills** needed to adopt technologies to help drive productivity

Top Construction Occupations in Demand – job postings in Staffordshire 2022

Top Posted Occupations

Occupation (SOC)	Total/Unique (Jan 2022 - Dec 2022)	Posting Intensity	Median Postin Duratio
Elementary Construction Occupations	1,063 / 537	2 : 1	33 day
Civil Engineers	570 / 262	2 : 1	35 day
Construction Project Managers and Related Professionals	460 / 223	2 : 1	32 day
Quantity Surveyors	380 / 212	2 : 1	35 day
Plumbers and Heating and Ventilating Engineers	339 / 194	2 : 1	31 day
Production Managers and Directors in Construction	292 / 168	2 : 1	31 day
Carpenters and Joiners	220 / 134	2 : 1	35 day
Construction and Building Trades n.e.c.	226 / 113	2 : 1	30 day
Painters and Decorators	226 / 113	2 : 1	27 day
Chartered Surveyors	203 / 97	2 : 1	33 day
Construction Operatives n.e.c.	132 / 85	2 : 1	30 day
Construction and Building Trades Supervisors	142 / 84	2 : 1	33 day
Architects	105 / 61	2 : 1	30 day
Chartered Architectural Technologists	115 / 55	2 : 1	30 day
Floorers and Wall Tilers	31 / 24	1 : 1	39 day
Building and Civil Engineering Technicians	32 / 22	1 : 1	33 day
Road Construction Operatives	26 / 20	1 : 1	34 day
Scaffolders, Stagers and Riggers	30 / 19	2 : 1	36 day
Glaziers, Window Fabricators and Fitters	30 / 18	2 : 1	32 day
Rail Construction and Maintenance Operatives	28 / 18	2 : 1	32 day

To find out more about what these occupations and more entail visit the Department for Education (DfE) funded LMI For All website -

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Top Construction Technical Skills in Demand – job postings in Staffordshire 2022

The following provides insight into the supply and demand of relevant skills by comparing the frequency of skills present in job postings against skills present in today's workforce. Along with Lightcast's job posting analytics, this comparison leverages Lightcast's dataset of more than 100M online resumés and profiles. All resumés and profiles used in these comparisons have been updated within the last three years.

*The skills associated with workforce profiles represent workers of all education and experience levels.

Top Specialized Skills

Frequency in Job Postings | **Frequency in Workforce Profiles**

Skill	Frequency in Postings	Postings with Skill / Total Postings (Jan 2022 - Dec 2022)	Frequency in Profiles	Profiles with Skill / Total Profiles (2021 - 2023)
Construction	11%	277 / 2,539	16%	279 / 1,713
Marketing	7%	169 / 2,539	4%	62 / 1,713
Subcontracting	5%	137 / 2,539	9%	150 / 1,713
Civil Engineering	5%	130 / 2,539	6%	102 / 1,713
Painting	5%	126 / 2,539	2%	31 / 1,713
Risk Analysis	5%	125 / 2,539	3%	50 / 1,713
Procurement	5%	120 / 2,539	10%	178 / 1,713
Carpentry	5%	118 / 2,539	4%	65 / 1,713
Plumbing	5%	118 / 2,539	2%	38 / 1,713
AutoCAD	4%	110 / 2,539	7%	121 / 1,713

Top Construction Transferable Skills in Demand – job postings in Staffordshire 2022

Skill	Frequency in Postings	Postings with Skill / Total Postings (Jan 2022 - Dec 2022)	Frequency in Profiles	Profiles with Skill / Total Profiles (2021 - 2023)
Management	17%	440 / 2,539	25%	431 / 1,713
Communications	17%	439 / 2,539	6%	109 / 1,713
Customer Service	7%	185 / 2,539	17%	286 / 1,713
Planning	7%	178 / 2,539	11%	190 / 1,713
Operations	6%	156 / 2,539	7%	119 / 1,713
Leadership	6%	149 / 2,539	10%	169 / 1,713
Detail Oriented	6%	141 / 2,539	1%	9 / 1,713
Problem Solving	5%	136 / 2,539	3%	52 / 1,713
Sales	4%	102 / 2,539	11%	192 / 1,713
Self-Motivation	4%	93 / 2,539	0%	6 / 1,713

• **Health and Social Care** (Digitisation of Services/New Technologies)

Now – Strengths and Weaknesses
- **48,000 Staffordshire jobs** equivalent to 13% of all employment in-line with national[1]
- 54% full-time and 46% part-time[1]
- High demand for care workers and home carers; nurses; nursing auxiliaries and assistants; managers and directors; medical practitioners; nursery nurses; dentists[2]
- **Average salary £23,400**[2] – well below the average pay in Staffordshire of £28,100[3]
- **Female dominated sector** – 4 in 5 workers are females[2]
- **Ageing workforce** – over 1 in 5 workers over 55 years of age[2]
- **Worth £1.6bn in GVA** equivalent to 9% of total economy[4]
- Overall lower adult skill levels (NVQ level 3 & 4) to fill advanced roles[5]
- **Businesses struggle to recruit people with the right skills and experience or interest in the roles available more than any other sector**[6]
- **Staffordshire University's new Centre for Health Innovation** aiming to create a healthcare cluster in Staffordshire

Future – Opportunities and Challenges
- **Increasing demand for health and social care from overall population growth and an ageing population/workforce**
- Covid-19 has accelerated the shift to **new ways of working such as remote working and digital triage** which has seen efficiency and productivity gains
- **New digital technologies** such as automation and AI are driving growth in highly productive advanced health and social care practice
- **More workers needed in the sector to address key labour and skill shortages (e.g., nursing and care workers)**
- **COVID has further increased pressure on the sector and the requirement for further urgent recruitment**
- **Low pay and poor Ts & Cs** are contributing to recruitment issues in the sector
- **Requirement for increased investment to keep up with increasing demand**
- **Innovation** – equipping workers with the digital skills needed to adopt new technologies to help improve efficiency and drive productivity

Top Health & Social Care Occupations in Demand – job postings in Staffordshire 2022

Top Posted Occupations

Occupation (SOC)	Total/Unique (Jan 2022 - Dec 2022)	Posting Intensity	Median Postin Duratio
Care Workers and Home Carers	14,600 / 4,022	4 : 1	31 day
Nurses	14,204 / 2,851	5 : 1	33 day
Teaching Assistants	3,000 / 1,240	2 : 1	28 day
Nursing Auxiliaries and Assistants	3,316 / 887	4 : 1	33 day
Health Services and Public Health Managers and Directors	1,590 / 427	4 : 1	33 day
Nursery Nurses and Assistants	807 / 360	2 : 1	33 day
Medical Practitioners	973 / 344	3 : 1	31 day
Welfare and Housing Associate Professionals n.e.c.	651 / 321	2 : 1	31 day
Medical and Dental Technicians	590 / 233	3 : 1	33 day
Residential, Day and Domiciliary Care Managers and Proprietors	524 / 218	2 : 1	33 day
Health Associate Professionals n.e.c.	752 / 213	4 : 1	32 day
Pharmacists	543 / 204	3 : 1	35 day
Psychologists	581 / 194	3 : 1	31 day
Senior Care Workers	345 / 169	2 : 1	30 day
Physiotherapists	367 / 156	2 : 1	33 day
Health Professionals n.e.c.	460 / 155	3 : 1	31 day
Educational Support Assistants	317 / 155	2 : 1	30 day
Dispensing Opticians	345 / 150	2 : 1	25 day
Occupational Therapists	608 / 138	4 : 1	36 day
Ophthalmic Opticians	368 / 130	3 : 1	29 day

To find out more about what these occupations and more entail visit the Department for Education (DfE) funded LMI For All website -
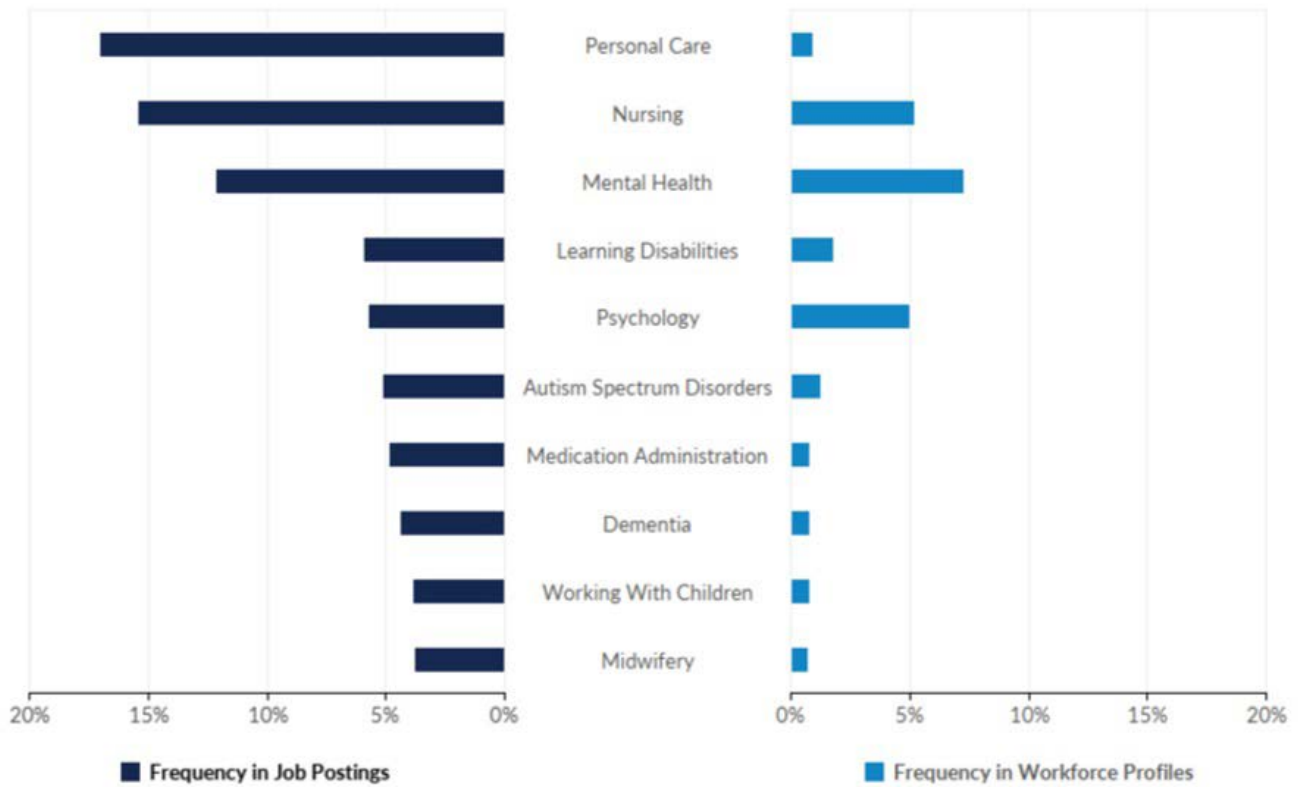
https://www.lmiforall.org.uk/explore_lmi/

Top Health & Social Care Technical Skills in Demand – job postings in Staffordshire 2022)

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The skills associated with workforce profiles represent workers of all education and experience levels.

Top Specialized Skills

Frequency in Job Postings   **Frequency in Workforce Profiles**

Skill	Frequency in Postings	Postings with Skill / Total Postings (Jan 2022 - Dec 2022)	Frequency in Profiles	Profiles with Skill / Total Profiles (2021 - 2023)
Personal Care	17%	2,316 / 13,560	1%	35 / 3,875
Nursing	15%	2,099 / 13,560	5%	202 / 3,875
Mental Health	12%	1,650 / 13,560	7%	282 / 3,875
Learning Disabilities	6%	810 / 13,560	2%	71 / 3,875
Psychology	6%	781 / 13,560	5%	194 / 3,875
Autism Spectrum Disorders	5%	696 / 13,560	1%	48 / 3,875
Medication Administration	5%	660 / 13,560	1%	30 / 3,875
Dementia	4%	597 / 13,560	1%	31 / 3,875
Working With Children	4%	525 / 13,560	1%	30 / 3,875
Midwifery	4%	520 / 13,560	1%	29 / 3,875

Top Health & Social Care Transferable Skills in Demand – job postings in Staffordshire 2022
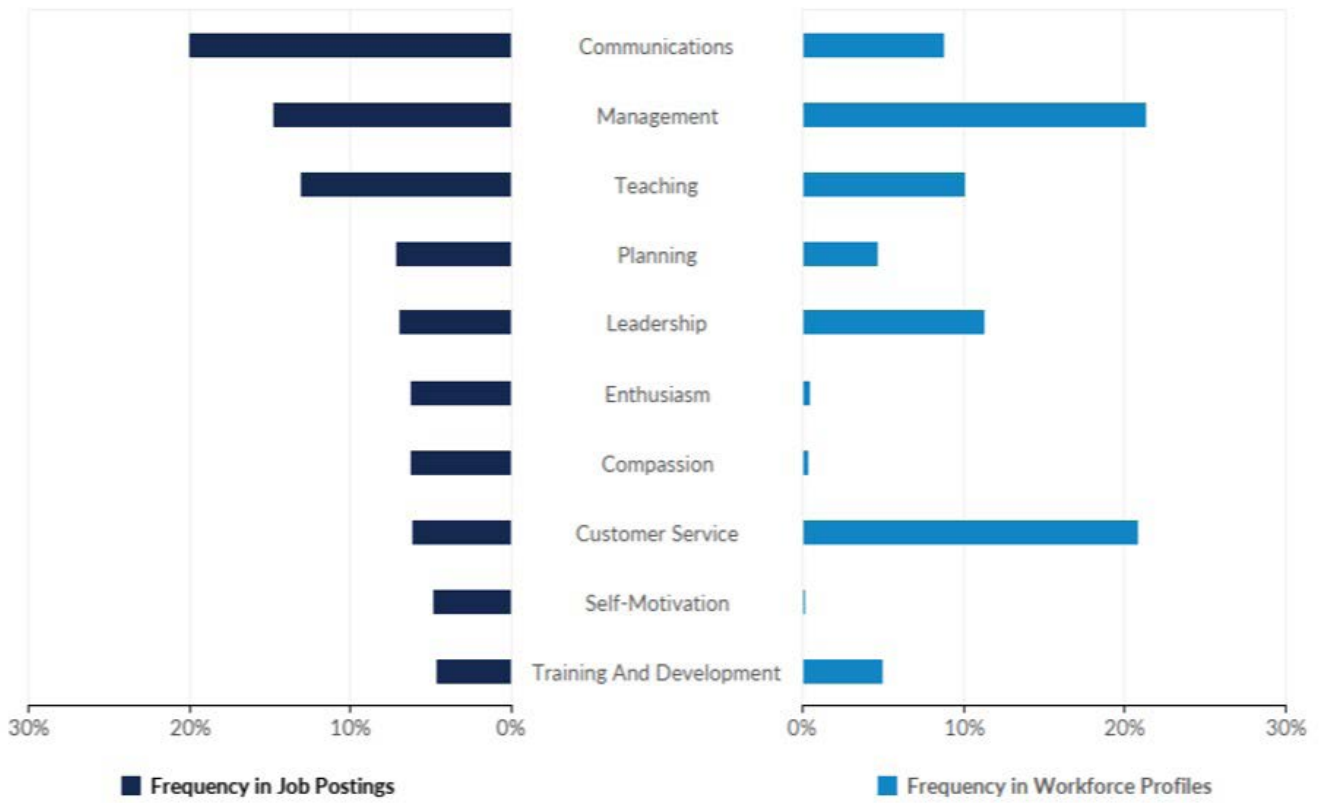
Skill	Frequency in Postings	Postings with Skill / Total Postings (Jan 2022 - Dec 2022)	Frequency in Profiles	Profiles with Skill / Total Profiles (2021 - 2023)
Communications	20%	2,721 / 13,560	9%	341 / 3,875
Management	15%	2,013 / 13,560	21%	830 / 3,875
Teaching	13%	1,788 / 13,560	10%	391 / 3,875
Planning	7%	978 / 13,560	5%	181 / 3,875
Leadership	7%	954 / 13,560	11%	439 / 3,875
Enthusiasm	6%	854 / 13,560	1%	20 / 3,875
Compassion	6%	852 / 13,560	0%	16 / 3,875
Customer Service	6%	848 / 13,560	21%	809 / 3,875
Self-Motivation	5%	668 / 13,560	0%	8 / 3,875
Training And Development	5%	637 / 13,560	5%	196 / 3,875

Staffordshire Employment and Skills Strategy

2023-2030

Staffordshire County Council