

# A summary of the adult social care sector and workforce in South East

2022/23

## **A summary of the adult social care sector and workforce in South East**

**Skills for Care is the strategic workforce development and planning body for adult social care in England. We work with employers, Government, and partners to ensure social care has the right people, skills, and support required to deliver the highest quality care and support, now and in the future. Our role is to respond and adapt to the emerging trends and needs within social care, using data and evidence to drive forward wide scale change.**

The information within this summary has been produced by Skills for Care using the Adult Social Care Workforce Data Set (ASC-WDS). We use the data collected by the ASC-WDS to create workforce models that, in turn, allow for estimates of the whole adult social care workforce and its characteristics to be produced. The \* notation indicates a figure has been suppressed.

Throughout this report, charts and tables will display rounded whole numbers and percentages. Therefore, it should be noted that charts and tables may not always total to 100%.

The independent sector information in this report was collected between April 2022 and March 2023, and local authority information dates from September 2022.

### **Louise Whitley, Head of area:**

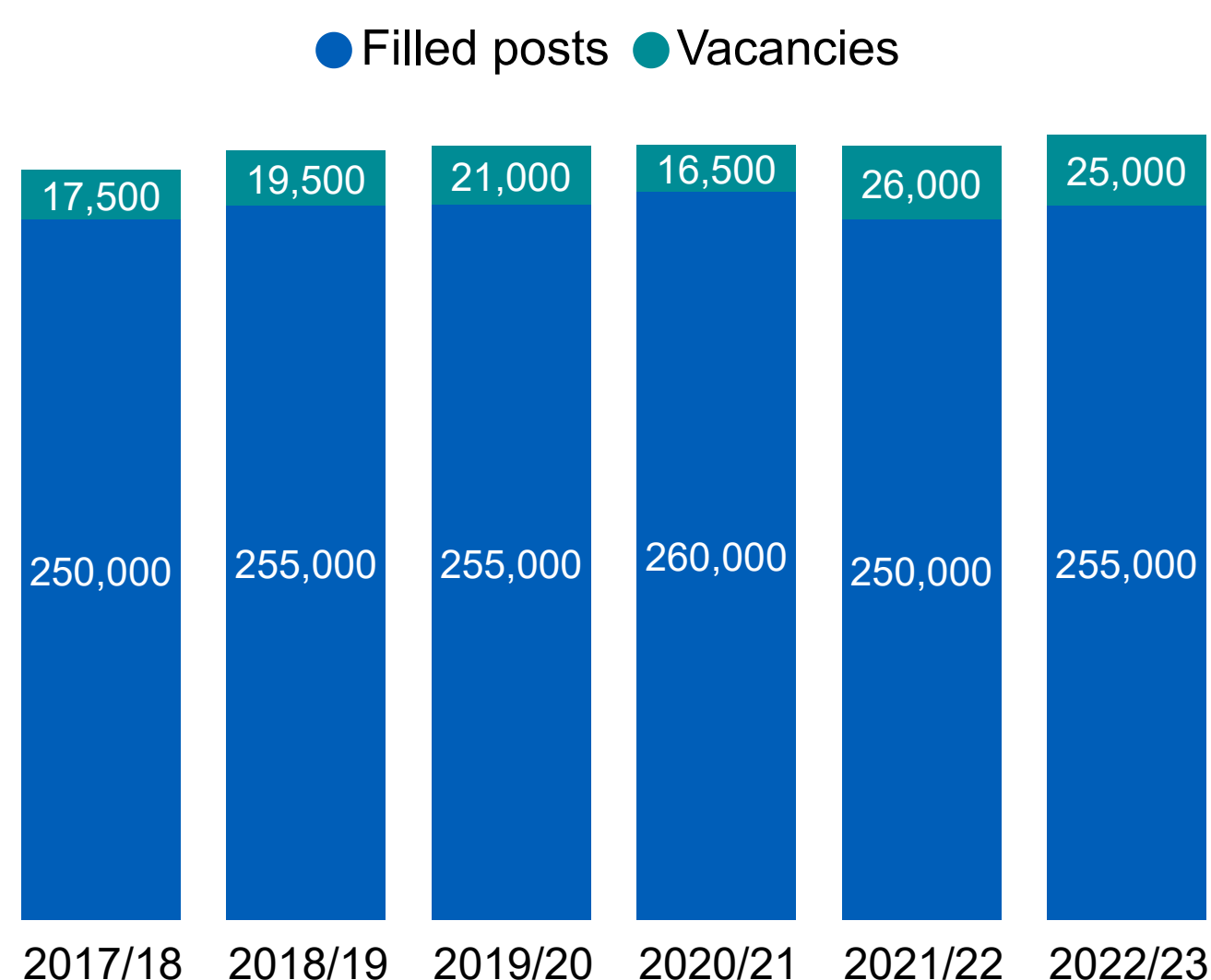
I am delighted to share the latest adult social care workforce intelligence for the South East area. This intelligence will enable us to take effective decisions across the region – whether this be for wider strategic workforce planning and commissioning or for social care employers developing operational workforce plans. The data helps us understand where challenges exist and helps the Health and Social Care system target support where it is needed most. Without Care Providers and Local Authority colleagues supplying their workforce data we would not have access to such rich intelligence, and I would therefore like to thank all those who have contributed.

# A summary of the adult social care sector and workforce in South East, 2022/23

## Size and Structure of the workforce

In 2022/23 the adult social care sector in the **South East** region had an estimated **3,100** organisations with **6,800** care-providing locations. The total number of posts was **280,000** (a change of 3,600 from 2021/22). Of these posts, **255,000** were currently filled by a person, called 'filled posts' (1.8 % change since 2021/22) and **25,000** were vacant posts (vacancies) that employers were actively seeking to recruit somebody into (a change of -3.5 % since 2021/22).

Number of posts from 2017/18 to 2022/23 (all sectors)



In the South East region there were an estimated **227,000** filled posts split between local authorities (**18,700**) and the independent sector (**208,000**).

From this point the figures in this report refer to the **227,000** filled posts in the independent and local authority sectors in the South East region only. Filled posts for direct payment recipients and adult social care related posts in the NHS are not included.

## Recruitment and retention

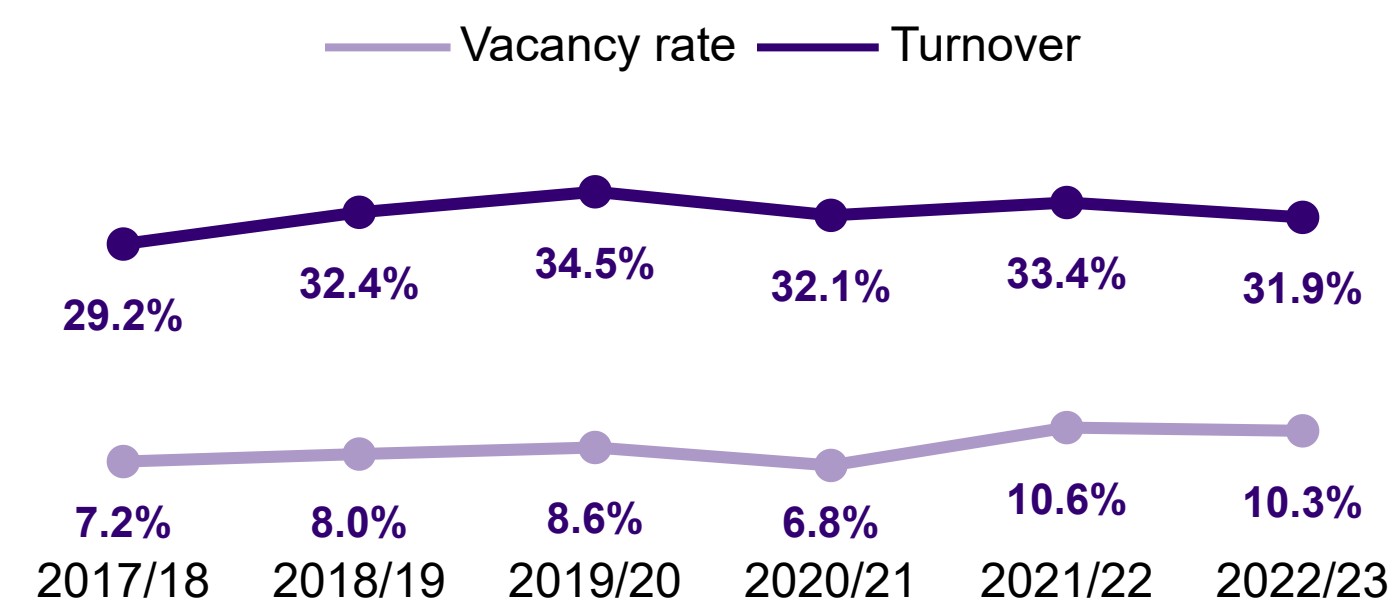
Skills for Care estimate that the staff turnover rate in the South East region was **31.9%**. Not all turnover resulted in workers leaving the sector, since **57 %** of starters were recruited from within the adult social care sector. Therefore although employers need to recruit to these posts, the sector retains their skills and experience.

**23,500**  
vacant posts



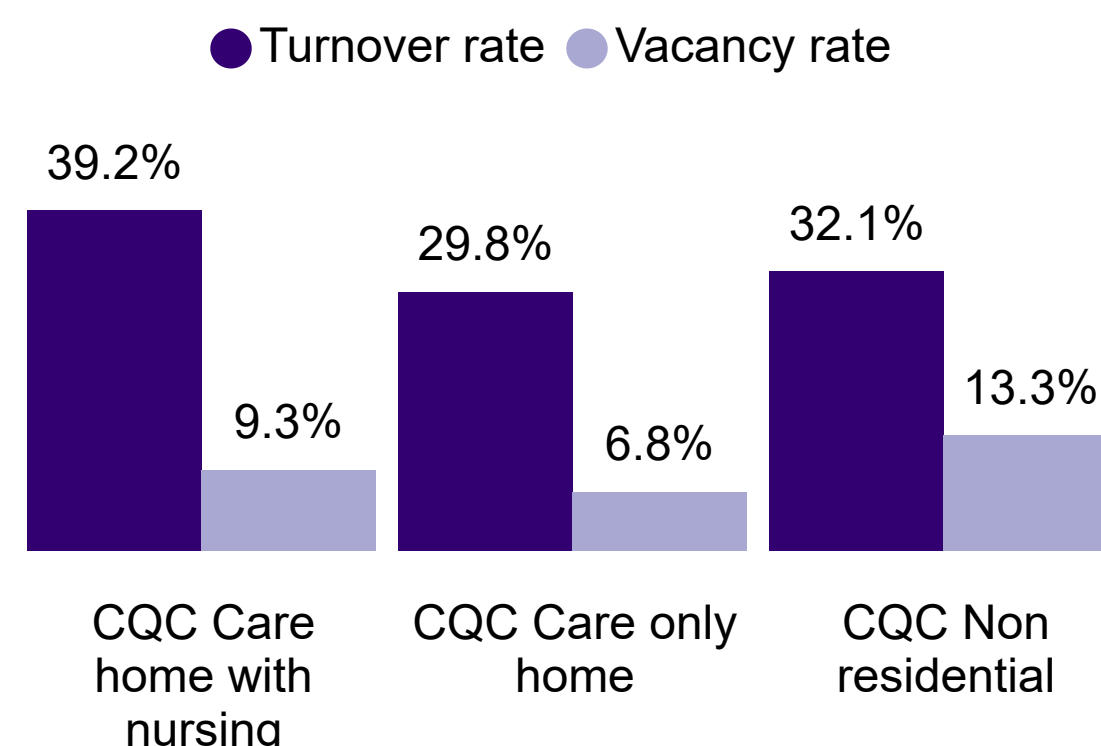
The vacancy rate in the South East region was **10.3%** which equates to around **23,500** vacant posts. The Vacancy rate peaked in 2021/22 before decreasing slightly in 2022/23.

## Turnover and vacancy rate trends



Turnover and vacancy rates varied between service type in the South East region as shown in the chart below in 2022/23.

## Turnover rate and vacancy rate by service type



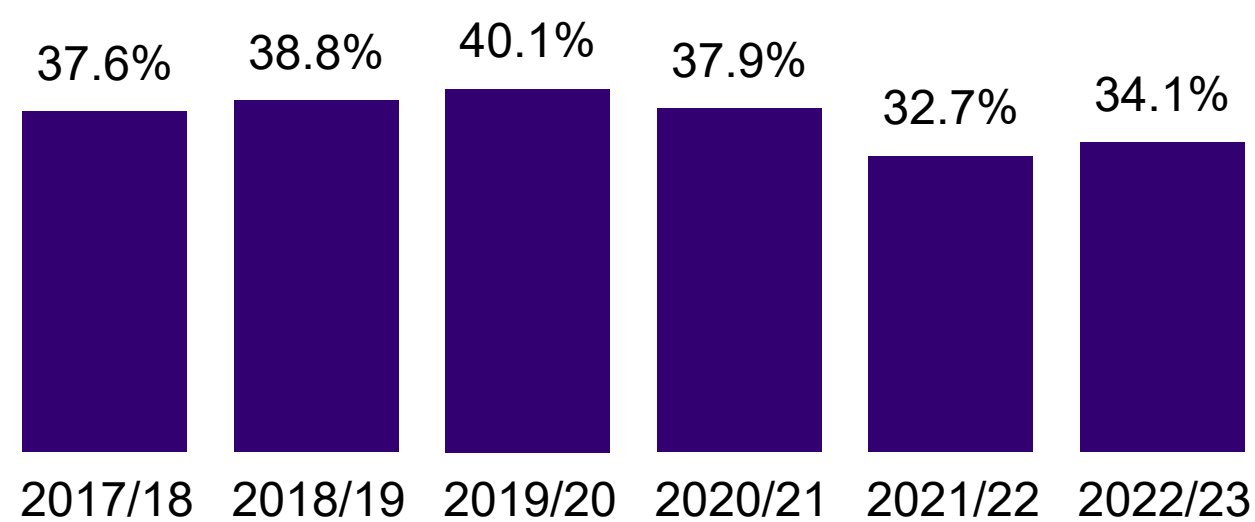


## Recruitment and retention

The starters rate in the South East region between **2021/22** and **2022/23** changed from **32.7 %** to **34.1%**. This varied regionally but is still lower than the peak of 2018/19 and 2019/20.

The starters rate in England for **2022/23** was **32.2%** which is a **1.4** percentage point increase from the previous year.

### Starters rate trends



The South East region had an estimated sickness rate of **5.5** days per employee.

# 5.5

average sickness days taken



Adult social care has an experienced 'core' of workers. Workers in the South East region had on average **9.5** years of experience in the sector and **75 %** of the workforce had been working in the sector at least three years.

For more information about changes in the workforce since March 2023 please see our monthly trackers on the Workforce Intelligence website.

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Monthlytracking](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Monthlytracking)

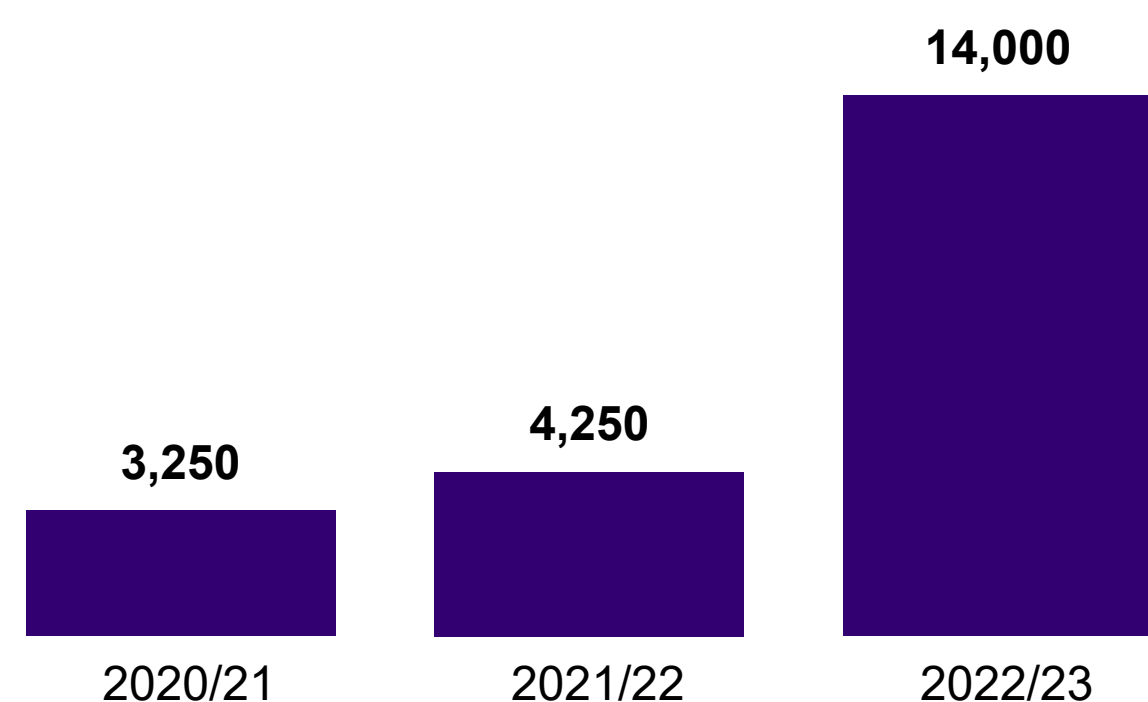
For more information about challenges in workforce supply and demand and for a highlight of the most recent trends and changes, at England level, please see the opening section of the 'State of' the adult social care sector and workforce report available at:

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Stateof](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Stateof)

The chart below shows data for direct care providing roles in the independent sector. International recruitment has increased in 2022/23. This is mostly due to care workers being added to the Shortage Occupation List in February 2022. Note that these figures include those on a Health and Care Worker visa and those arriving by other routes.



### International recruitment in South East

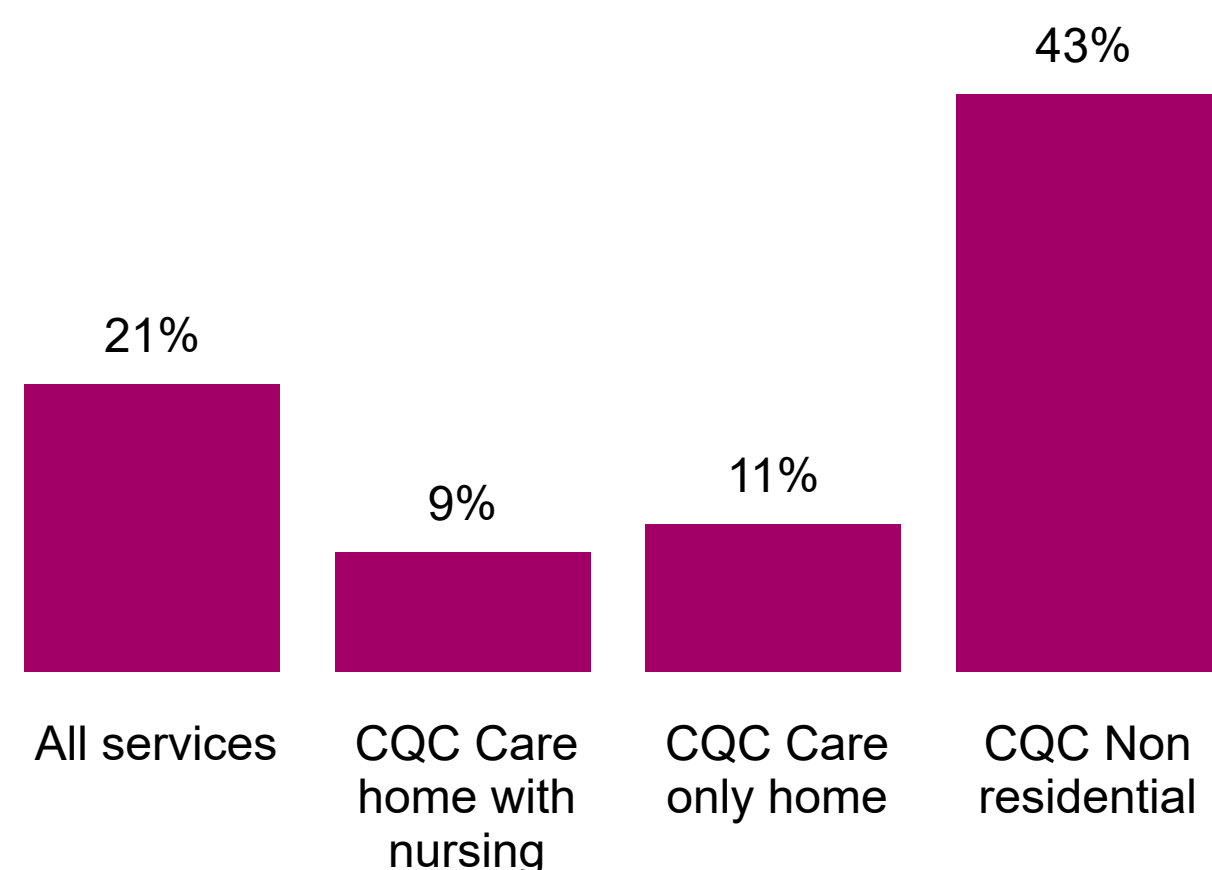


### Employment overview

The majority (**87 %**) of the workforce in the South East region were employed on permanent contracts. Over half of the workforce (**59 %**) usually worked full-time hours and **41 %** were part-time.

In the South East region around **21 %** (or **49,000** filled posts) of the workforce were recorded as being employed on a zero-hours contract. **Non residential** care services had the highest proportion of workers employed on zero-hours contracts at **43 %**.

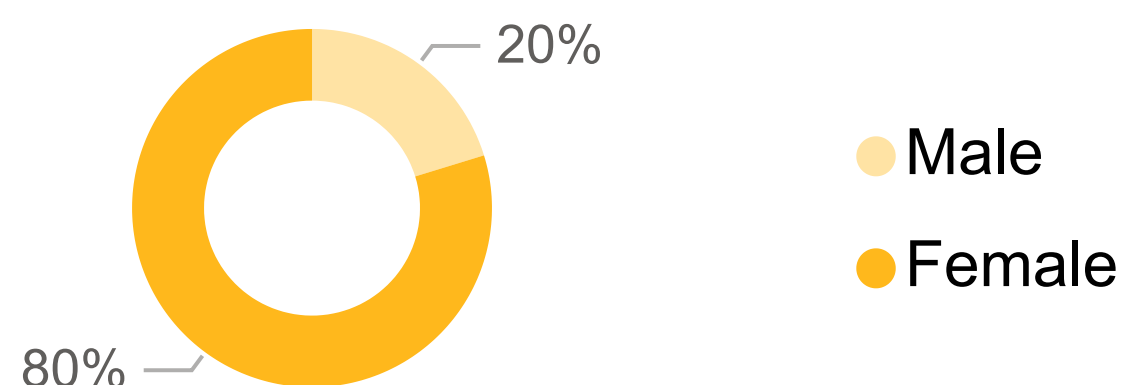
### Zero-hours contracts by service



## Demographics

The adult social care workforce comprised of **80 %** of female workers in the South East region, compared to 47% of the economically active population in England. Female workers were less likely to be in managerial roles, especially in senior management roles (**68 %**), compared to direct care providing roles (**81 %**).

### Gender

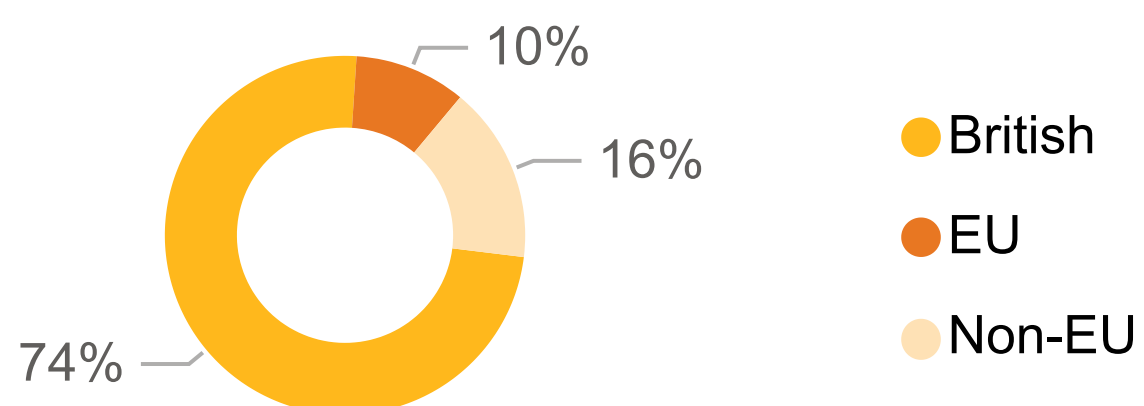


The age distribution of the adult social care workforce in South East was older than the economically active population. The average age of the adult social care workforce was **44**.

Around (**28 %**) of adult social care workers were aged 55 and over, compared to 21% of the economically active population. From a workforce planning perspective, these workers may retire within the next ten years.

In the South East region around **74 %** of the adult social care workforce were British, **10 %** were of EU nationality and **16 %** were of a non-EU nationality.

### Nationality



Staff with a white ethnic background made up **75 %** of the adult social care workforce in the South East region. People with an Asian/ Asian British ethnicity made up **10 %** of the workforce, and the population. People with a Black / African /Caribbean / Black British ethnicity made up **11 %** of the adult social care workforce.

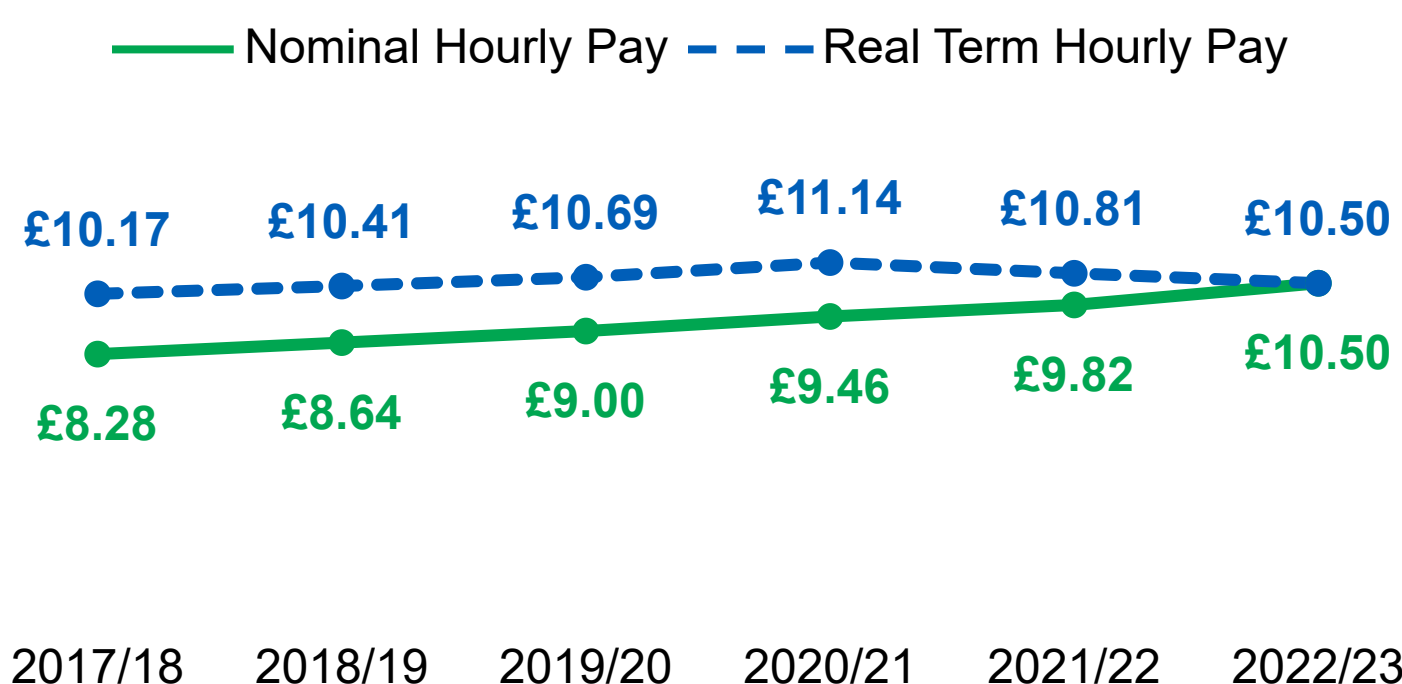
Registered nurses remained one of the most diverse job roles, with **49 %** of workers with a white ethnic background. Senior managers and occupational therapists were among the least ethnically diverse job roles (both reported **88 %** and **86%** respectively of workers with a white ethnic background).

## Pay

For the purpose of this report the National Living Wage (NLW) of **£9.50** per hour is referenced to match the period in which the data was collected. In April 2023, after the data in this report was analysed, the National Living Wage had increased to **£10.42**.

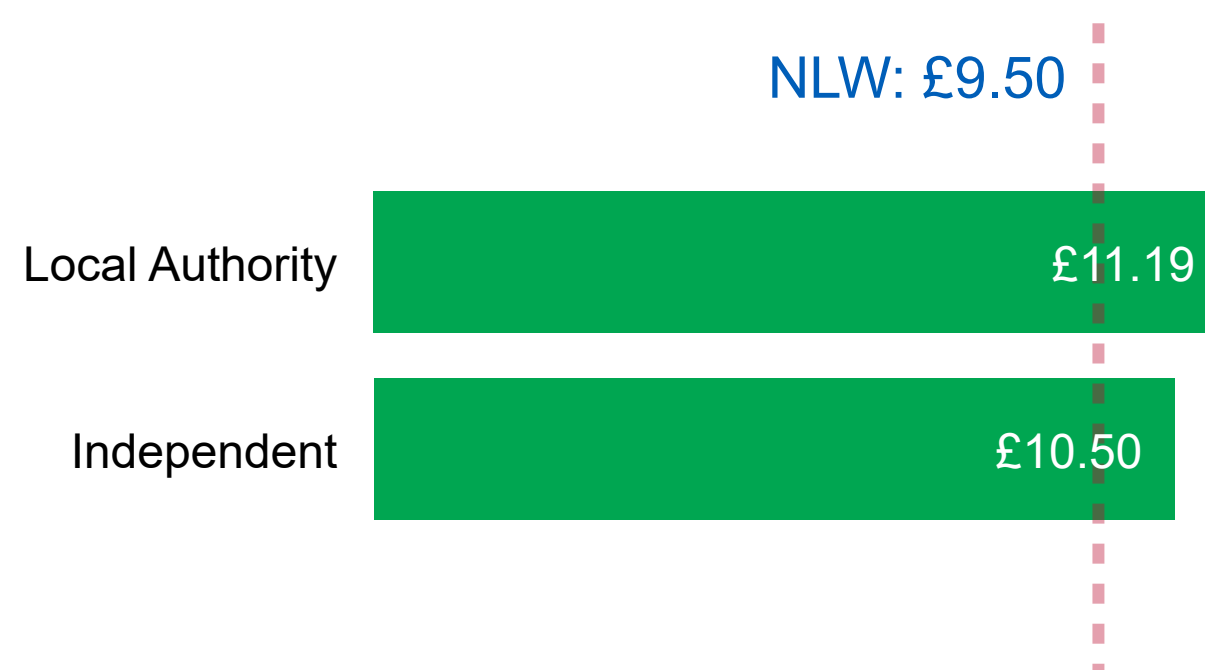
Nominal pay shows pay rates as they were at the time, whereas real term rates are adjusted to take inflation into account. Hourly rates are expressed in 2022/23 prices. As shown in the chart below, in the South East region, real term pay increased until 2021/22 where it saw a decrease. It decreased further in 2022/23 due to high inflation over the period.

### Care worker average pay, independent sector



Pay varies by sector as shown in the chart below, local authority pay is generally higher than independent sector pay.

### Care worker average pay, 2022/23



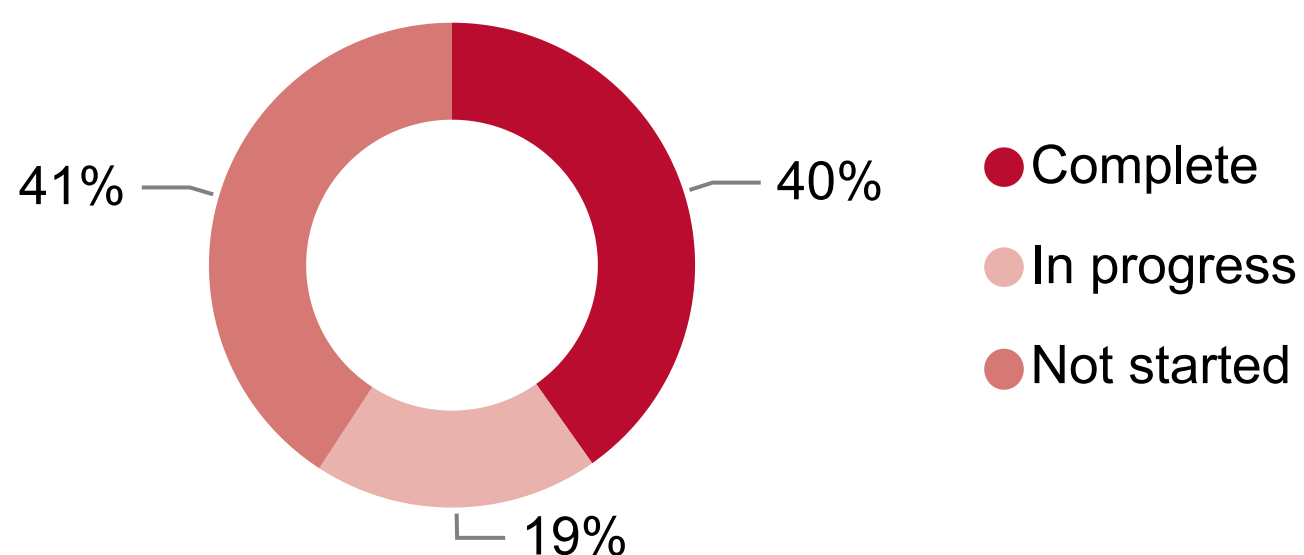


## Qualifications and training

Skills for Care believe that everyone working in adult social care should be able to take part in learning and development so that they can carry out their roles effectively. Learning and development helps everyone to grow in the right skills and knowledge, enabling them to provide high-quality care and support.

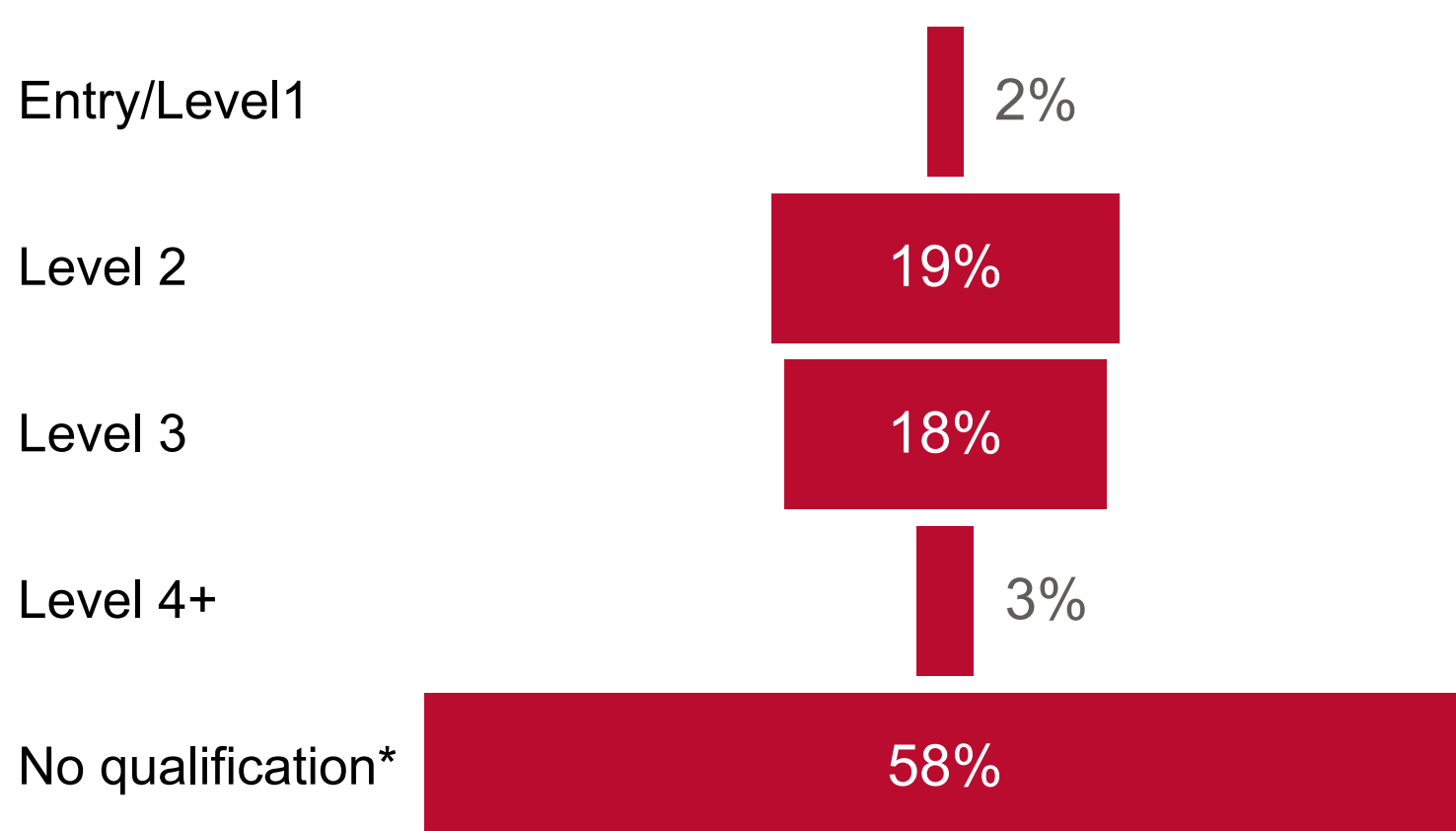
In the South East region around **59 %** of direct care-providing staff who had started work in the sector since January 2015, had engaged with (achieved, partially completed, or were working towards) the Care Certificate.

### Direct care workers Care Certificate status



Around **42 %** of direct care-providing staff held a relevant adult social care qualification in the South East region.

### Direct care workers highest social care qualifications held

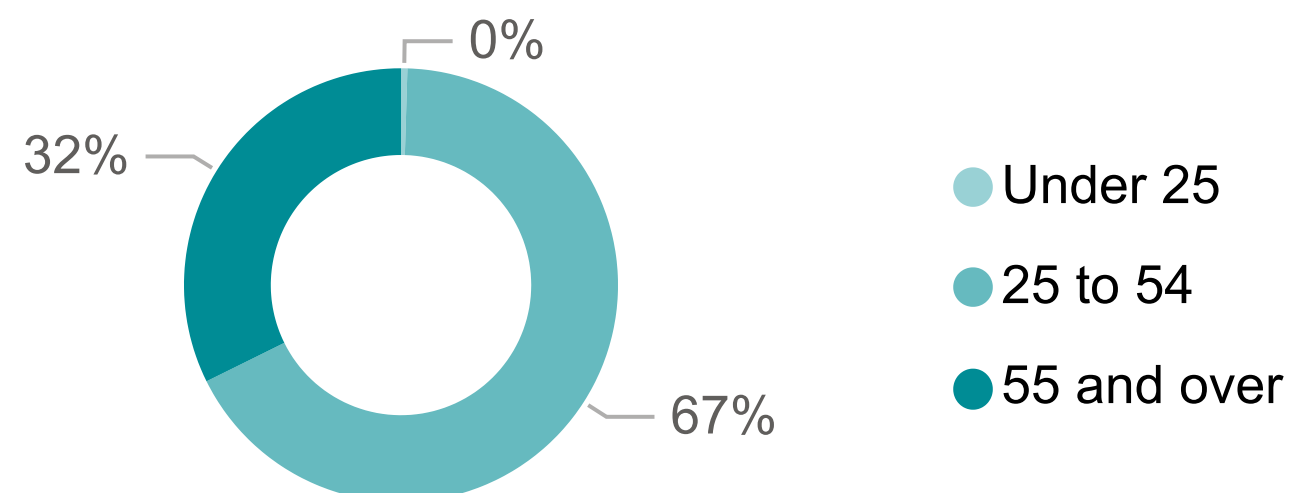


\*No relevant social care qualification

## Registered managers

In the South East region the proportion of registered managers that were aged 55 and above was **32%**, equivalent to around **1,500** workers. From a workforce planning perspective this is a concern as they may be close to retirement age.

### Registered manager age band

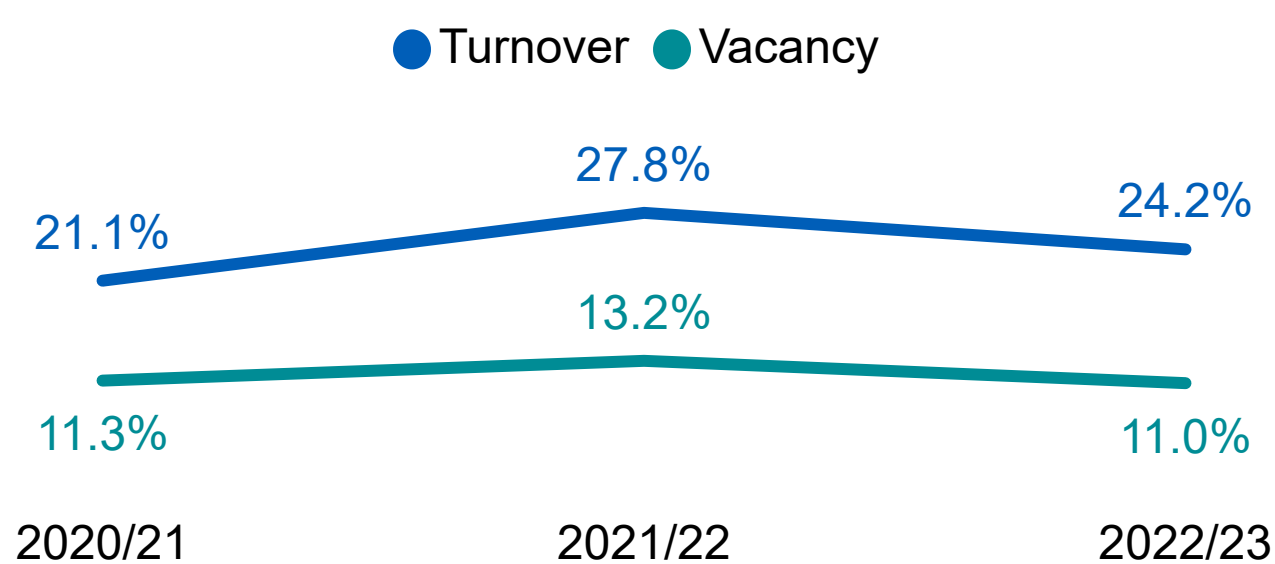


The proportion of registered managers in the South East region that had a qualification that was Level 5 or above was **55%**.

The vacancy rate of registered managers decreased from **13.2%** in 2021/22 to **11.0%** in 2022/23. As at March 2023 there were around **560** vacant posts in the region.

The turnover rate in 2022/23 was **24.2%** which was lower than the rate for 2021/22 (**27.8%**) as shown in the chart below.

### Registered manager turnover & vacancy rate



Skills for Care **provide support** for registered managers, to find out more you can follow the links by clicking on the links below.

[Registered manager networks](#)



[Developing new managers and deputies](#)



[Membership for registered managers](#)



## Factors affecting turnover

Using ASC-WDS information, we created machine learning models to assess which variables influenced adult social care workers' propensity to leave their posts. From this, key variables were identified that could be compared to turnover rates. The information below shows the relationship between these key variables and turnover between March 2022 and March 2023.

- A large proportion of staff turnover arose from workers leaving their posts soon after joining.
- Workers that travelled further were more likely to leave.
- The adult social care sector has found it difficult to retain younger workers.
- Workers were more likely to leave if they were employed on zero-hours contracts.
- Turnover rates were higher if the registered manager was new to their role.
- Likelihood of high turnover rates increased if the establishment had historically high turnover.
- Workers with high sickness rates were more likely to leave.
- Care workers paid above the minimum rate were less likely to leave their roles.
- Care workers who received regular training were less likely to leave their roles.
- Care workers with social care qualifications were also less likely to leave their roles.
- Care workers recruited internationally were less likely to leave than people recruited domestically.
- Care workers in a role with several positive employment factors were more likely to remain in post than care workers in a post that did not.

For more information please see Chapter 8 of 'The State of the adult social care sector and workforce, 2023' available at: [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Stateof](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Stateof)

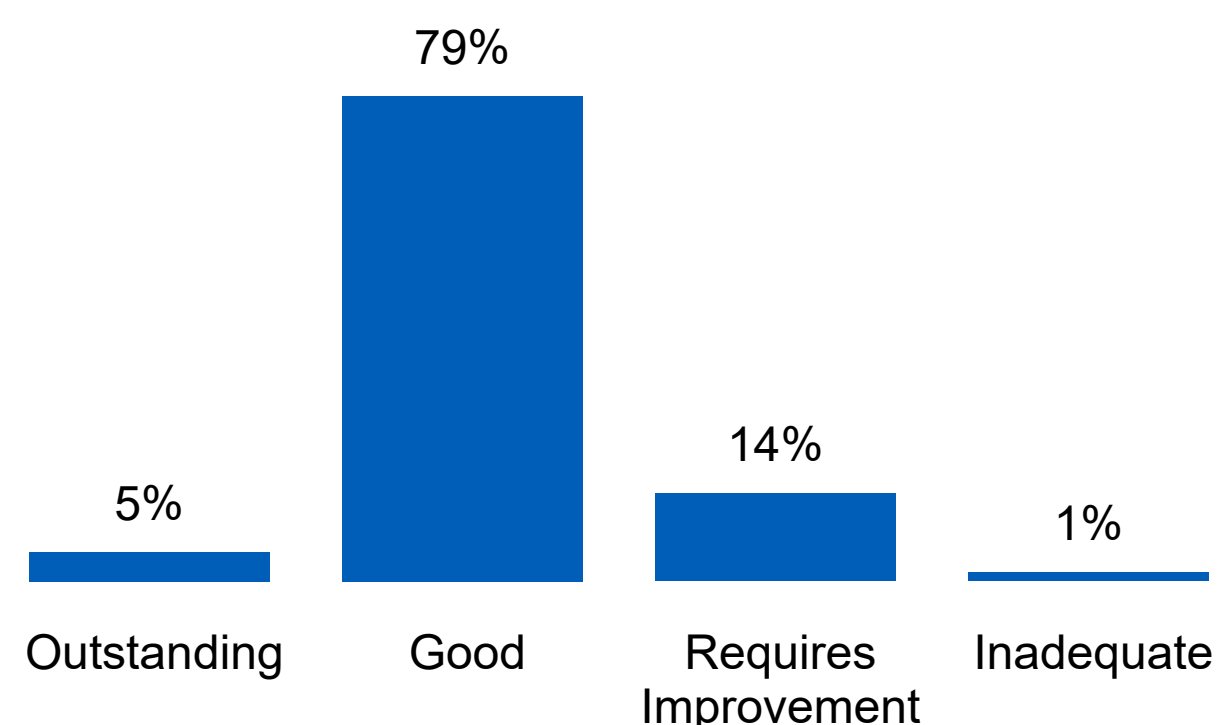
## CQC-regulated services

As at March 2023, the South East region contained **5,047** CQC-regulated services.



In the South East region the majority of CQC ratings were reported as **good**, this was similar to across England where **79%** of CQC-regulated services were recorded as **good**.

### **CQC ratings - March 2023**



## LA and ICB level data

Interactive visualisations have been created at a LA and ICB level, to enable you to see and understand your workforce intelligence in a more visual way. One allows you to see your area in more detail and another to compare areas. To access the visualisations, please see [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/localinformation](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/localinformation)

## National level data

The state of the adult social care sector and workforce data visualisation and report can also be found on our website. This allows you to understand the adult social care sector at a national level. [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Stateof](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Stateof)

## Commission our services

Beyond the wealth of information already available publicly on our website you can commission the services of the Workforce Intelligence team to produce bespoke reports and analysis for your organisation or area.

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Commission-our-services](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Commission-our-services)

For more information please email [analysis@skillsforcare.org.uk](mailto:analysis@skillsforcare.org.uk)