A summary of the adult social care sector and workforce in Reading
2022/23

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 widescale 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 the figure has been suppressed.

Size and structure of the workforce

In 2022/23 the adult social care sector in England had an estimated 18,000 organisations with 39,000 care-providing locations and a workforce of around 1.79 million posts.
The total number of posts in Reading was around 4,900 in 2022/23. This was comprised of 4,600 filled posts and 275 vacancies. Since the previous year, the total number of posts has increased by 450 (10%), the number of filled posts has increased by 500 (12%) and the number of vacancies has decreased by 50 (-15%).

There were an estimated 4,600 filled posts in adult social care, split between local authorities (7%), independent sector providers (82%), posts working for direct payment recipients (4%) and other sectors (7%). As at March 2023, Reading contained 90 CQC-regulated services; of these, 34 were residential and 56 were non-residential services.

If the workforce grows proportionally to the projected number of people aged 65 and over then the total number of adult social care posts in the South East region will increase by 28% (from 280,000 to 360,000 post) between 2022/23 and 2035.

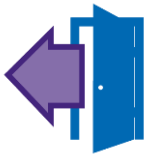
From here on, the figures in this report refer to the 4,000 filled posts in the independent sector and local authority in Reading only. Filled posts in other sectors are not included.

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

For information about changes in the workforce since March 2023, using monthly monitoring of the ASC-WDS, please see our Workforce Intelligence website[1].

Recruitment and retention

Skills for Care estimates that the staff turnover rate in Reading was 30.8%, which was similar to the region average of 31.9% and higher than England at 28.3%. Not all turnover results in workers leaving the sector, under half (40%) 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.



We estimate that the vacancy rate in Reading was 7.40%, which was lower than the regional average of 10.3% and lower than England at 9.9%.

[1] https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/monthlytracking

Across England, the vacancy rate has decreased compared to last year and the number of filled posts has increased. During this period international recruitment increased substantially which has impacted these trends.

Workers in Reading had on average 9.9 years of experience in the sector and 76% of the workforce had been working in the sector for at least three years.

We know that recruitment and retention is one of the largest issues faced by employers. We have many resources and tools available to help, for example the 'Values-based recruitment and retention toolkit'[2] and 'Seeing potential: widen your talent pool'.[3] For more information please visit: www.skillsforcare.org.uk/recruitment-retention

Employment information

We estimate Reading had 4,000 adult social care filled posts in the local authority and independent sectors.
These included 350 managerial roles, 125 regulated professionals, 3,100 direct care (including 2,700 care workers), and 450 other-non-care proving roles.

The average number of sickness days taken in the last year in Reading was 3.2, (5.5 in South East and 5.9 across England). With an estimated directly employed workforce of 3,200, this means employers in Reading lost approximately 10,000 days to sickness in 2022/23.

Around a third (29%) of the workforce in Reading were on zero-hours contracts. Around three quarters (71%) of the workforce usually worked full-time hours and 29% were part-time.

Chart 1. Proportion of workers on zero hours contracts by area

Workforce demographics

The majority (79%) of the workforce in Reading were female, and the average age was 44 years old. Workers aged under 25 made up 6% of the workforce and workers aged 55 and above represented 26%. Given this age profile approximately 1000 posts will be reaching retirement age in the next 10 years.

Nationality varied by region, across England 81% of the workforce identified as British, while in the South East region this was 74%. An estimated 57% of the workforce in Reading identified as British, 12% identified as of an EU nationality and 31% a non-EU nationality, therefore there was a higher reliance on non-EU than EU workers

Pay

Table 1 shows the full-time equivalent annual or hourly pay rate of selected job roles in Reading (area), South East (region) and England. All figures represent the independent sector as at March 2023, except social workers which represent the local authority sector as at September 2022. At the time of analysis, the National Living Wage was £9.50.

Table 1. Average pay rate of selected job roles by area

	England	Region	Area
Full-time equivalent annual pay			
Social Worker*	£39,100	£40,300	£36,400
Registered nurse	£37,000	£38,400	£40,600
Hourly pay			
National Living Wage	£9.50	£9.50	£9.50
Senior care worker	£11.09	£11.33	£11.29
Care worker	£10.34	£10.50	£10.80
Support and outreach	£10.31	£10.36	£10.72

*Local authority social workers only.

[2] www.skillsforcare.org.uk/values

[3] https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Seeing-potential-Leeds-City-Council-Step-into-Care

Qualifications, training and skills

We 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 develop the right skills and knowledge to enable them to provide high-quality care and support.

Skills for Care estimates show that 41% of the direct care providing workforce in Reading hold a *relevant* adult social care qualification (42% in South East and 46% in England).

Raw data from the ASC-WDS showed, of those workers without a relevant adult social care qualification recorded, 55% had five or more years of experience in the adult social care sector, 62% had engaged with the Care Certificate and 84% had completed training.

Factors affecting turnover

Together with a data science specialist, we used ASC-WDS information to create machine learning models that were used to assess which variables had an effect on adult social care workers' propensity to leave their posts.

Across England, variables that influence the likelihood of a worker leaving their role were:

- Workers who travelled further were more likely to leave.
- Those under 25, and over 60 years old, were more likely to leave their posts.
- Turnover decreased with higher levels of experience working in the sector.
- Likelihood of leaving decreased as pay levels increased.
- Likelihood of leaving decreased with higher levels of experience in role.
- Likelihood of leaving decreased if workers had more training.
- Turnover decreased if workers had a higher number of contracted hours.
- Likelihood of leaving decreased if workers had fewer sickness days.
- Workers on zero-hours contracts were more likely to leave their posts.
- Likelihood of high turnover rates increased if the establishment had high turnover historically.

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

Analytical service and relevant resources

Our analysis team provides an external analysis service which is able to produce a range of in-depth reports, tailored to your specific requirements.

You can commission us to help you:

- Partner with us to draw on our adult social care data and expertise to win bids and tenders.
- Provide a detailed analysis of a geographic area, including analysis below local authority level.
- Draw on our data science capabilities - discover how key outcomes (such as CQC scores, turnover rates and vacancy rates) can be improved.
- Provide trends back to 2012/13 and forecasts for how the workforce could look like in the future.
- Request a feed of data to enhance or improve a product or service.

Skills for Care provides outstanding workforce intelligence relied upon by the sector to make decisions about adult social care planning and service delivery. To read more publications, including the 'State of the adult social care sector and workforce in South East' and key workforce topic areas please see: www.skillsforcare.org.uk/WIpublications

For more detail about the methodology used to create these estimates please see: www.skillsforcare.org.uk/workforceestimates

Interactive visualisations

Two interactive visualisations have been created at an LA level, to enable you to see and understand your workforce intelligence in a more visual and interactive way. One allows you to see your LA area in more detail and another to compare LA areas. To access the visualisations, please see www.skillsforcare.org.uk/lasummaries

For more information please email analysis@skillsforcare.org.uk