

A black and white photograph of a young man and an elderly woman walking together in a brightly lit hallway. The man is on the left, wearing a plaid shirt and a lanyard, and the woman is on the right, wearing a cable-knit sweater. Both are smiling warmly at the camera.

Headline social worker information

Social workers employed by local authorities in the adult social care sector

February 2026

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Key findings

This report provides the key findings from the Adult Social Care Workforce Dataset (ASC-WDS) relating to social workers in local authority adult social service departments as at September 2025.

21,600

total social worker posts in local authorities (filled and vacant posts) in September 2025

20,100

social worker filled posts in local authorities in September 2025

£45,300

average full-time equivalent social worker pay in local authorities

Key findings:

- There were around 20,100 social worker filled posts in local authorities in 2025. Since 2024, the number of social worker filled posts increased by around 800 (4.3%).
- There was an increase of 3,800 social worker filled posts since 2017 (23.6%). The overall number of filled posts in local authorities increased by 11,300 (10.3%) over the same period. This indicates that social worker filled posts growth was faster than all job roles.
- The social worker turnover rate was 11.3% in 2025, equivalent to around 2,000 leaving their roles in the previous 12 months.
- There were around 1,500 vacant social worker posts in 2025, a rate of 7.8%.
- Social workers had an average of 10.3 sickness days over the previous 12 months. This was the highest average number of sickness days amongst regulated professions employed by local authorities. Registered nurses had the second highest average at 8.4 sickness days.
- Social workers had an average of 6.0 years of experience in their current role.
- Social workers were more ethnically diverse than the overall local authority workforce. Around 67% of social worker posts were filled by people of White ethnicities compared with 78% of all job role filled posts. In contrast, 22% of social worker posts were filled by people of Black, African, Caribbean or Black British ethnicities compared with 12% of all job role filled posts.
- The average (mean) full-time equivalent (FTE) pay for social workers was £45,300 in 2025. This was an increase of around £2,300 (5.4%) in nominal terms compared to 2024, and an increase of around £600 (1.3%) in real terms.
- The average (mean) nominal FTE pay of social workers increased every year since 2016, from £34,200 to £45,300 (32.4% increase). However, in real terms, the social worker real term average FTE pay was 3.2% lower than in 2016. This follows a large decrease in real term pay in 2022 due to high inflation.

Introduction

This report provides the estimated number of social workers employed by local authorities in England, as well as information about recruitment and retention, demographics, and pay rates. Information is correct as at September 2025. Data on the children's social work workforce is published by the Department for Education ([Statistics: children's social work workforce](#)).

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 Adult Social Care Workforce Data Set (ASC-WDS) is an online data collection service which gathers information about the adult social care workforce in England. Prior to 2019, it was known as the National Minimum Data Set for Social Care (NMDS-SC) service, which had been collecting information about social care providers and their staff since 2006.

The ASC-WDS is the means of collection for the adult workforce data return for local authorities (adult social services departments). Between 2012 and 2021, all local authorities in England met the criteria for a full ASC-WDS return for people working in adult social services departments. However, in 2022 all local authorities apart from Salford submitted a return. In 2023 Cumbria divided into two new local authority areas (Cumberland, and Westmoreland and Furness) but neither of the new areas provided a complete data return. Since 2024, all local authorities in England met the criteria for a full ASC-WDS return for people working in adult social services departments.

For further information on all variables analysed in this report, including trended data, please see the accompanying [social worker data download Excel file](#). We have also published a [glossary](#), which includes variable definitions and other terminology used in this report.

Methodology used to estimate characteristics of the adult social care workforce in local authorities

Meeting the criteria for a full ASC-WDS return means that for each workplace the following fields must be completed: type of organisation, service provided, service user groups for whom care is provided, capacity, number of service users, number of staff, vacant posts, and number of leavers in the past year.

In addition, a staff record must be completed for every worker which includes their main job role and employment status, and at least 90% of staff records must contain gender, date of birth, ethnicity group, contracted/average hours, sickness, pay, and qualifications.

In 2023 Skills for Care became an official statistics producer, having been added to the [Official Statistics Order 2023](#). This means that all official statistics produced by Skills for Care will

include oversight from the [Office for Statistics Regulation](#) (OSR), ensuring it follows the Code of Practice for Statistics. In February 2025 the '[The workforce employed by adult social services departments in England](#)' report was badged as an [Accredited official statistic](#) following an assessment from OSR. You can read about our [compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics](#) on our website.

Skills for Care also publishes various other reports and statistical outputs and our [publication calendar](#) is available on our Workforce Intelligence website. Skills for Care follows the three pillars of trustworthiness, quality and value for all these outputs and plans to designate further reports as official statistics in the future and publish details of [our future plans](#) on our website.

We use several methods to quality assure the data. The data is validated at the point of entry into the ASC-WDS and data from local authority employers is checked and approved by Skills for Care's Workforce Intelligence team.

Due to the mandatory criteria for local authorities, we have complete data for the majority of data fields from this part of the sector. We do have some small gaps in coverage, and we use our workforce estimates methodology to fill these gaps and create a full picture of the adult social care local authority sector and workforce. We have confidence in the quality of these estimates; the methodologies used have been peer reviewed by universities and an independent statistician. For a detailed methodology of how these estimates were produced, please visit the Workforce Intelligence website to see our [methodology](#).

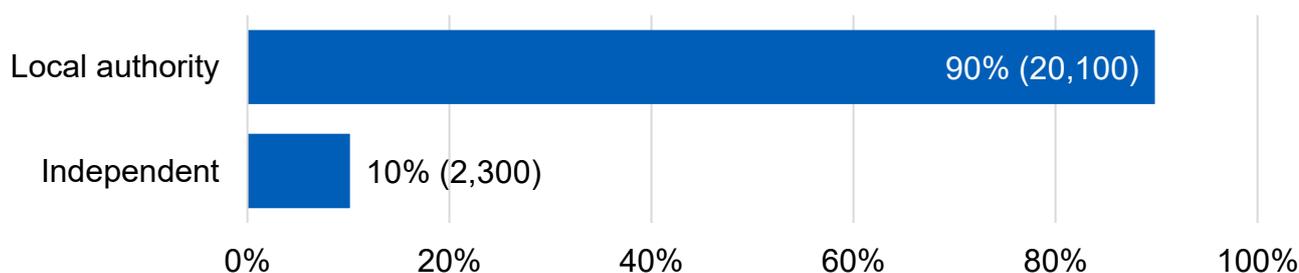
Please note, all information included in this report has been aggregated and rounded. Exact counts are not shown unless specifically stated.

Scope of this report

Chart 1 shows the majority (90%) of estimated social worker filled posts are within the local authority sector. There were around 20,100 social workers filled posts employed by local authorities across England as at September 2025, and an estimated 2,300 filled posts in the independent sector in March 2025.

Chart 1. Estimated proportion and number of social worker filled posts by sector, March 2025 (independent) and September 2025 (local authority)

Source: Skills for Care estimates



There were also 4,900 social worker filled posts employed by the NHS in 2024/25, which we no longer include as part of our estimates for the size of the adult social care workforce in England. Information about the number of adult social care related filled posts employed by the NHS in 2024/25 is still available as part of our ['Size and structure' report data visualisation](#). This report focuses on the 20,100 social worker filled posts employed by local authorities only.

1. Filled posts



This chapter presents the number of filled posts and full-time equivalent (FTE) filled posts held by social workers in local authorities in England. We have analysed trended filled posts information from September 2012 to September 2025 due to substantial changes in the size of the overall local authority workforce between 2012 and 2017. **For subsequent sections, we have analysed trends from September 2017 to September 2025 only.**



Key findings

- There were around 21,600 social worker posts in total in local authorities across England in 2025, of which 20,100 were currently filled by a person (filled posts) and 1,500 were vacant posts.
- There were around 20,100 social worker filled posts in local authorities across England in 2025, which was 800 more than in 2024 (4.3% increase) and 3,800 more than in 2017 (23.6% increase).
- Social workers accounted for 17% of all filled posts in local authorities in 2025.
- There were around 18,100 full-time equivalent social worker filled posts in 2025.

In 2025, there were around 21,600 social worker posts in total in local authorities. These were comprised of 20,100 which were filled by a person (filled posts) and 1,500 vacant posts. There were around 120,500 filled posts across all job roles in local authorities, meaning social workers accounted for 17% of all filled posts.

Table 1 below shows the number of social worker and overall filled posts within local authorities between 2012 and 2025. Between 2012 and 2017, the overall number of filled posts in local authorities decreased by around 41,400, which was driven predominantly by local authorities moving towards outsourcing adult social care to the independent sector. However, during this period, the number social worker filled posts remained about the same as social worker roles were generally kept within adult social services departments. As a result, the percentage of the overall workforce accounted for by social workers increased from 11% to 15% between 2012 to 2015.

The overall local authority workforce and social worker workforce grew almost every year from 2017, with all job role filled posts increasing by around 11,300 (10.3%) and social worker filled posts increasing by around 3,800 (23.6%) by 2025. As the social worker workforce grew at a faster rate than the overall workforce, the percentage of the overall local authority workforce accounted for by social workers slightly increased from 15% to 17% by 2025.

Table 1. Estimated number of filled posts, percentage change in filled posts since previous year, and proportion of all filled posts for social workers and all job roles in local authorities, 2012 to 2025

Source: Skills for Care estimates

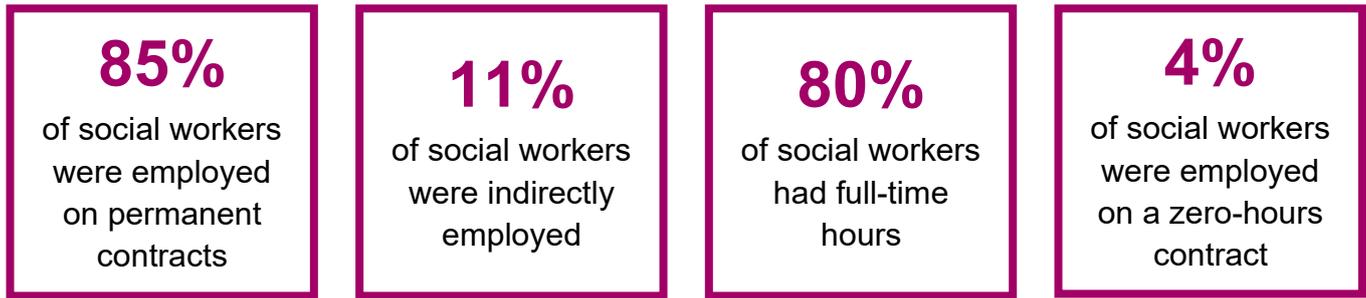
	Social worker filled posts	% change	% of all filled posts	All job roles filled posts	% change
2012	16,600		11%	150,600	
2013	16,500	-0.4%	12%	140,700	-6.6%
2014	15,700	-5.1%	12%	130,100	-7.5%
2015	16,100	2.9%	13%	120,100	-7.7%
2016	16,100	-0.2%	14%	112,800	-6.1%
2017	16,200	0.9%	15%	109,200	-3.2%
2018	17,000	4.7%	15%	112,100	2.7%
2019	17,400	2.5%	15%	113,300	1.0%
2020	17,500	0.1%	15%	114,100	0.7%
2021	17,300	-1.0%	15%	115,100	0.8%
2022	17,300	0.0%	15%	113,900	-1.0%
2023	18,500	7.3%	16%	117,400	3.0%
2024	19,200	3.8%	16%	119,900	2.1%
2025	20,100	4.3%	17%	120,500	0.5%
Change 2012 to 2017	-325	-2.0%		-41,400	-27.5%
Change 2017 to 2025	3,800	23.6%		11,300	10.3%

The number of social worker full-time equivalent (FTE) filled posts was estimated at 18,100 in 2025, which was an FTE ratio of 0.90. This was an increase of 3,500 FTE filled posts (or 23.9%) since 2017, though the FTE ratio remained about the same. These estimates were created by applying contracted hours and 'usual hours' data to estimates of the number of filled posts. One FTE filled post has been classed as 37 hours per week or 'full-time equivalent' (on average, full-time hours in adult social care are 37 to 37.5 hours per week).

2. Employment overview



This chapter covers the employment status, full-time/part-time hours, and zero-hours contract status of social workers in local authorities in England.



Key findings

- Most social workers were employed on permanent contracts (85%), while 4% were employed on temporary contracts and 11% were indirectly employed as bank/pool or agency staff.
- Around 80% of social workers worked full-time hours and 20% worked part-time hours.
- A small proportion of social workers were employed on a zero-hours contract (4%).

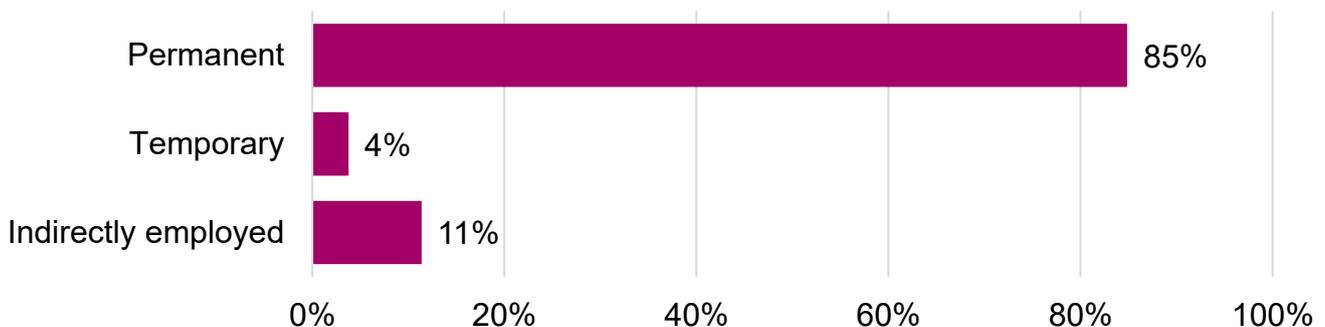
2.1 Employment status

The number of social worker employees (those working on permanent or temporary contracts) was estimated at 17,800 in 2025. Chart 2 shows that the majority of social workers were employed on permanent contracts (85%). Local authorities reported that 11% of social workers were indirectly employed, the majority of which were employed from agencies (9%, or around 1,900 filled posts).

The proportion of indirectly employed social workers increased from 8% in 2017 to 12% in 2023 and 2024, before falling slightly to 11% in 2025. For further information about employment status trends, view the [‘Social worker data download’](#) spreadsheet associated with this report.

Chart 2. Estimated proportion of social worker filled posts in local authorities by employment status, 2025

Source: Skills for Care estimates



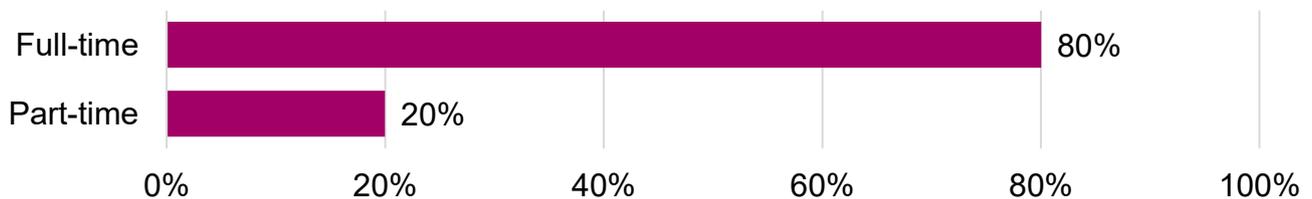
It should be noted that when the ASC-WDS is completed by an employer, it reflects a snapshot in time; these estimates should be interpreted as an indication of the average number of the above types of workers being utilised at any one time. The total number of workers used throughout the year who weren't directly employed will be higher. For example, a local authority may have used several agency staff throughout the year, but none may be in post on the date that they completed their ASC-WDS data submission.

2.2 Working time

Chart 3 shows that the majority of social workers (80%) worked full-time hours (32 or more week). This proportion has shown little change from 78% in 2017.

Chart 3. Estimated proportion of social worker filled posts in local authorities by full-time or part-time status, 2025

Source: Skills for Care estimates

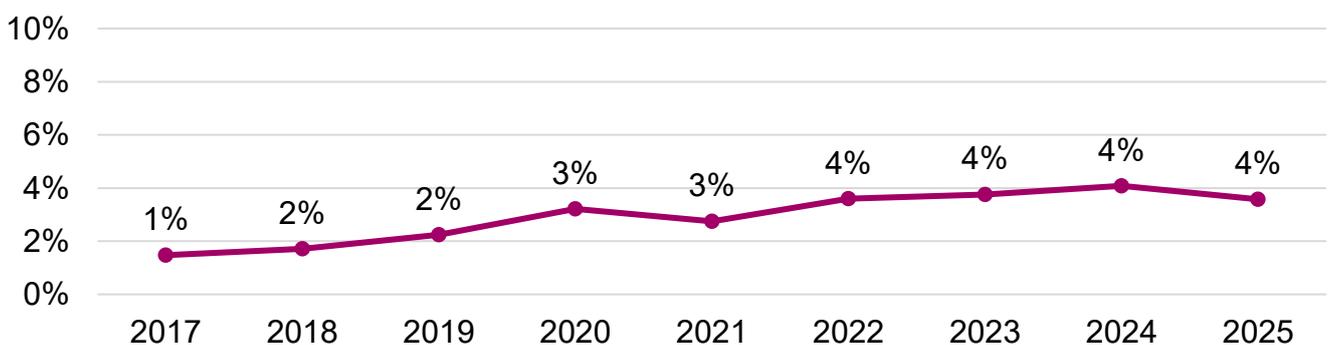


2.3 Zero-hours contracts

Chart 4 shows that few social workers were employed on a zero-hours contract (4%), which was around 700 posts. This proportion gradually increased from 1% in 2017 to 4% in 2022 and plateaued since. However, while the proportion remained similar between 2021 and 2024, the number of social worker filled posts employed on a zero-hours contract increased year-on-year from 475 to 800. In 2025, the number of social worker filled posts employed in this way decreased by 9% to 700 filled posts, which indicates that local authorities employed more social workers with contracted hours.

Chart 4. Estimated proportion of social workers on a zero-hours contract in local authorities, 2017 to 2025

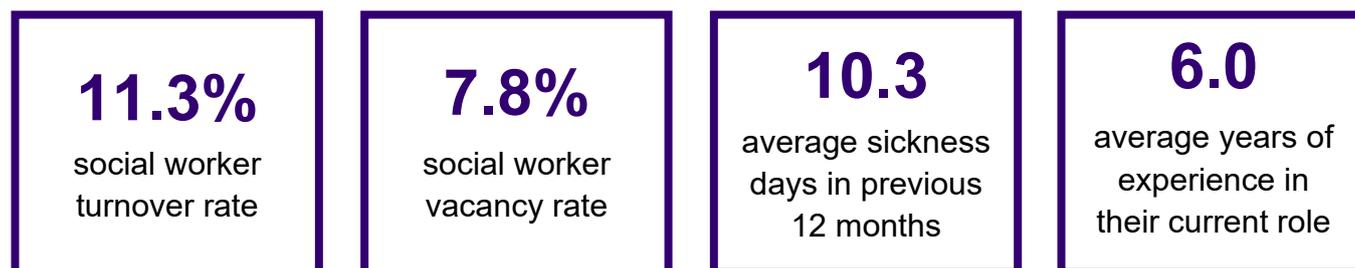
Source: Skills for Care estimates



3. Recruitment and retention



This chapter covers the starter, turnover, and vacancy rates of social workers in local authorities in England, as well as the average years of experience in role and the average number of sickness days over the previous 12 months.



Key findings

- The social worker turnover rate was 11.3% in 2025, equivalent to around 2,000 leavers over the previous 12 months.
- The social worker vacancy rate was 7.8% in 2025, equivalent to around 1,500 vacant posts.
- Both the turnover and vacancy rate peaked in 2022, at 17.1% and 11.6% respectively, and consistently decreased in the following years.
- The social worker starter rate was 15.8% in 2025, equivalent to around 2,800 starters over the previous 12 months.
- Social workers had an average of 10.3 sickness days in 2025, which was the highest of all regulated profession roles employed by local authorities.
- Social workers had an average of 6.0 years' experience in their current role.

3.1 Starter, turnover, and vacancy rates

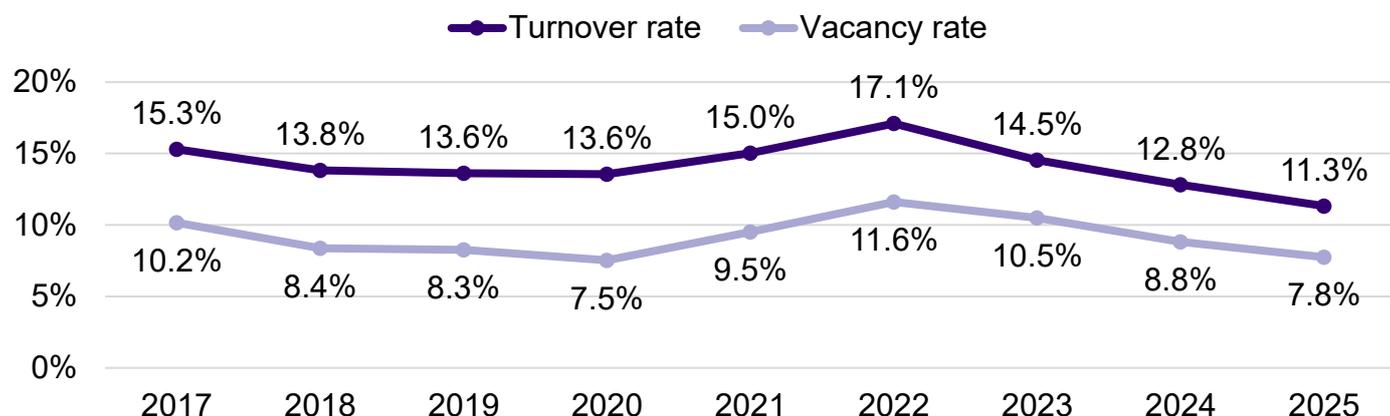
The social worker starter rate was 15.8% in 2025, equivalent to around 2,800 starting in their roles in the previous 12 months. This was higher than the turnover rate, which contributed to the increase in social worker filled posts in 2025.

The social worker turnover rate in local authorities was 11.3% in 2025, equivalent to around 2,000 leaving their roles in the previous 12 months. It should be noted that turnover rates for all job roles within local authorities was much lower than in the independent sector, with a local authority turnover rate of 11.5% in September 2025 compared to 24.7% in the independent sector in March 2025.

Chart 5 shows that social worker turnover rates peaked at 17.1% in 2022 but then decreased in each year since. The social worker vacancy rate within local authorities was 7.8% in 2025, equivalent to around 1,500 vacant posts. The social worker vacancy rate was 10.2% in 2017 and fell year on year to a low of 7.5% in 2020. The vacancy rate peaked at 11.6% in 2022 but decreased in each year since. For further detail about social worker turnover and vacancy trends within the local authority sector, view the [‘Social worker data download’](#) Excel file that accompanies this report.

Chart 5. Estimated turnover and vacancy rates of social workers within local authorities, 2017 to 2025

Source: Skills for Care estimates



3.2 Sickness

Wellbeing at work relates to every aspect of working life, from the working environment to how the workforce feels about themselves. Stress and burnout are prominent issues for adult social care staff, and workforce wellbeing is paramount. Supporting the health and wellbeing of the workforce is essential to make sure people with care and support needs and their families receive good quality care so they can live as independently as possible. Our website has many resources to support managers to promote [staff wellbeing](#). We've launched a [positive culture toolkit](#) to support managers and staff to understand positive workplace culture and how to achieve it.

Chart 6 shows that social workers had an average of 10.3 sickness days over the previous 12 months, which equates to around 182,500 working days lost. It shows that the average sickness days had little variation between 2017 and 2021, then increased sharply in 2022, but decreased again over the following years.

Chart 6. Estimated average number of sickness days taken in the previous 12 months by social workers in local authorities, 2017 to 2025

Source: Skills for Care estimates

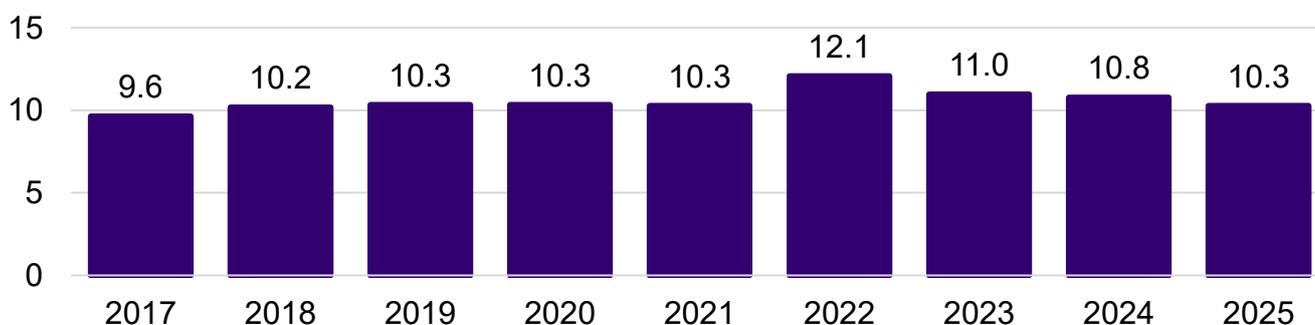
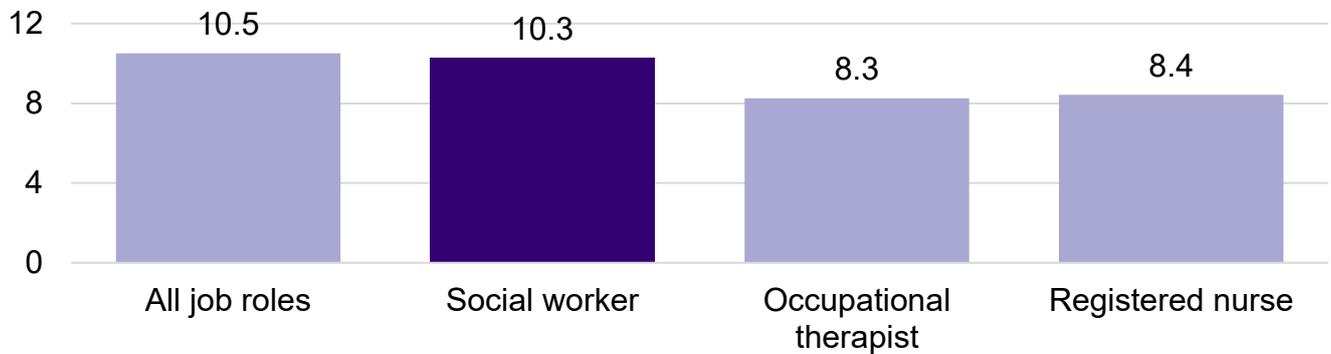


Chart 7 compares the average number of sickness days taken in the previous 12 months by job role. Social workers had an average of 10.3 sickness days over 12 months, which was higher than both occupational therapists and registered nurses employed by local authorities.

Chart 7. Estimated average number of sickness days taken in the previous 12 months in local authorities by selected job roles, 2025

Source: Skills for Care estimates

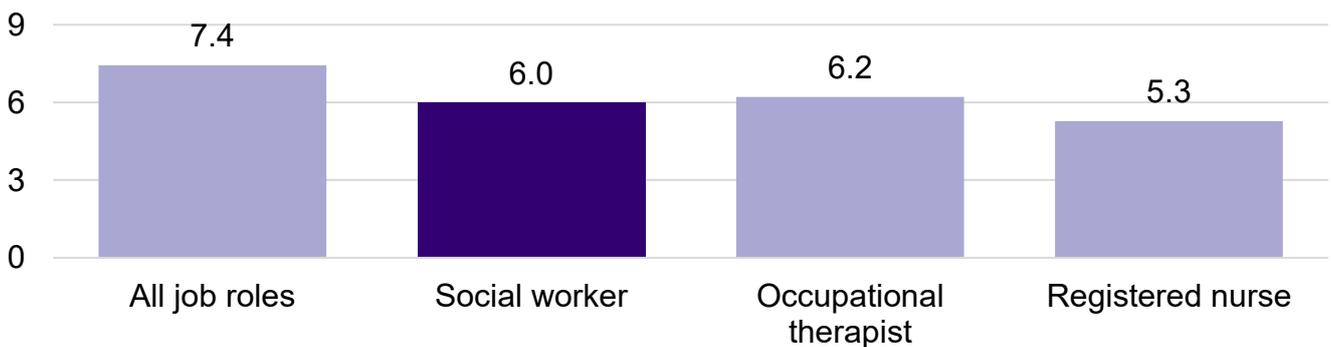


3.3 Experience in role

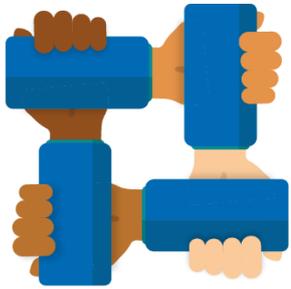
Social workers had an average of 6.0 years' experience working in their current role. Chart 8 shows this was higher than registered nurses (5.3 years) and similar to occupational therapists (6.2 years) working in local authorities.

Chart 8. Estimated average number of years' experience in their role in local authorities by selected job role, 2025

Source: Skills for Care estimates



4. Demographics



This chapter covers the demographics of social workers in local authorities in England in terms of their gender, age, and ethnicity.

17%

of social workers were male

45.2

Average age of a social worker

67%

of social worker posts were filled by people of White ethnicities

Key Findings

- Most social workers were female (83%) and 17% were male. This was similar to the overall proportions for all job roles in local authorities (81% female and 19% male). However, the proportion of male social workers was higher than registered nurses (12% male) and occupational therapists (11% male).
- The average age of a social worker was 45.2, which was lower than the average across all job roles (47.7). Nearly one fifth (19%) of social workers were between 25 and 34 years of age, which was greater than the proportion for all job roles in local authorities (15%).
- Social workers were more ethnically diverse than all job roles in local authorities, with 67% of social worker posts filled by people of White ethnicities compared to 78% for all job roles. Over a fifth (22%) of social worker posts were filled by people of Black, African, Caribbean or Black British ethnicities compared with 12% of all job roles within local authorities.

4.1 Gender

In 2021/22, the gender question was changed in ASC-WDS from 'gender' to 'gender identity' and the option of 'other' was added alongside 'male', 'female' and 'I don't know'. In 2025, 0.01% of local authority social workers were recorded as having 'other' gender identity by their employer in ASC-WDS. 'Not known' responses are removed prior to weighting, as with our other variables.

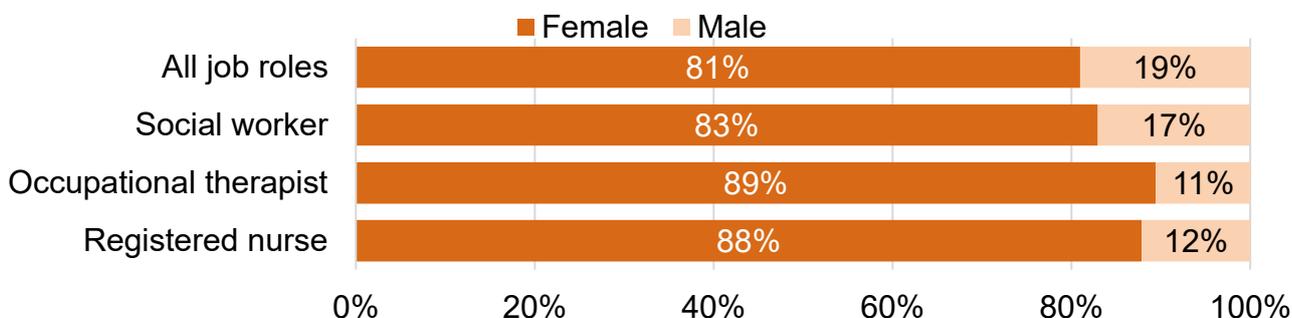
The following detailed analysis includes 'male' and 'female' gender identities. The 'other' gender identity responses are not included in the detailed analysis because the national base is very low and we are still understanding its representativeness.

It is important to note that our data is reported by employers, not the workers themselves and this may result in an underestimation of people with a gender identity other than male and female recorded. Skills for Care is continuing to monitor the results of the gender identity question and will review the question wording with employers.

Chart 9 shows that around 83% of social workers were female and 17% were male. The proportion of male social workers (17%) was greater than that of occupational therapists (11%) and registered nurses (12%).

Chart 9. Estimated proportion of workers in local authorities by gender by selected job role, 2025

Source: Skills for Care estimates

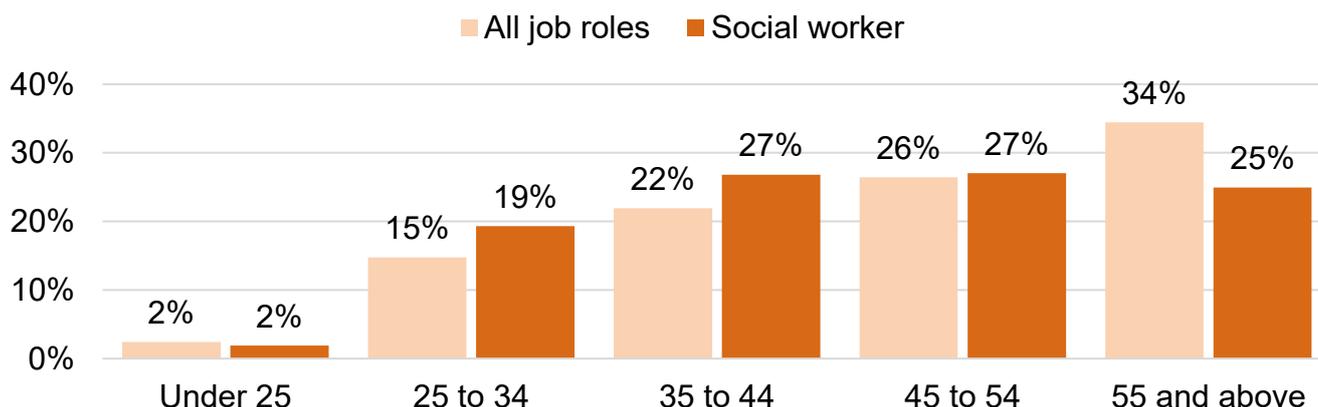


4.2 Age

Social workers had an average age of 45.2 in 2025, a slight increase from 44.6 in 2017. This was lower than the average age across all job roles (47.7 years). Chart 10 shows that 19% of social workers were aged between 25 and 34 years, compared with 15% of all staff in local authorities. A lower proportion of social workers were aged 55 and above (25%) compared to all job roles in local authorities (34%).

Chart 10. Estimated age distribution of all job roles and social workers in local authorities, 2025

Source: Skills for Care estimates



4.3 Ethnicity

The ASC-WDS holds information on workers' ethnicity, collected as part of the annual local authority data submission. There are 18 ethnicity options available to choose from, which are

then grouped into five groups. These five groups use the same groupings as the ONS in their [Ethnic group classification 6a](#) to analyse Census 2021 data:

- White ethnicities
- Mixed or multiple ethnicities
- Asian or Asian British ethnicities
- Black, African, Caribbean or Black British ethnicities
- Other ethnicities

Prior to 2025, we analysed ethnicity using the five groups. For our analysis of September 2025 data, our analysis includes both the five groups and the individual ethnicities to better describe the workforce.

In September 2025, the social worker workforce in local authorities was more ethnically diverse than the overall local authority workforce. It was also more ethnically diverse than the population of England, according to the 2021 UK census, and the economically active population, according to the Labour Force Survey in 2024/25.

Chart 11. Proportion of social workers and overall workforce in local authorities, population in England, and economically active population by ethnicity group, 2025

Source: Skills for Care estimates, Census 2021, Labour Force Survey 2024/25

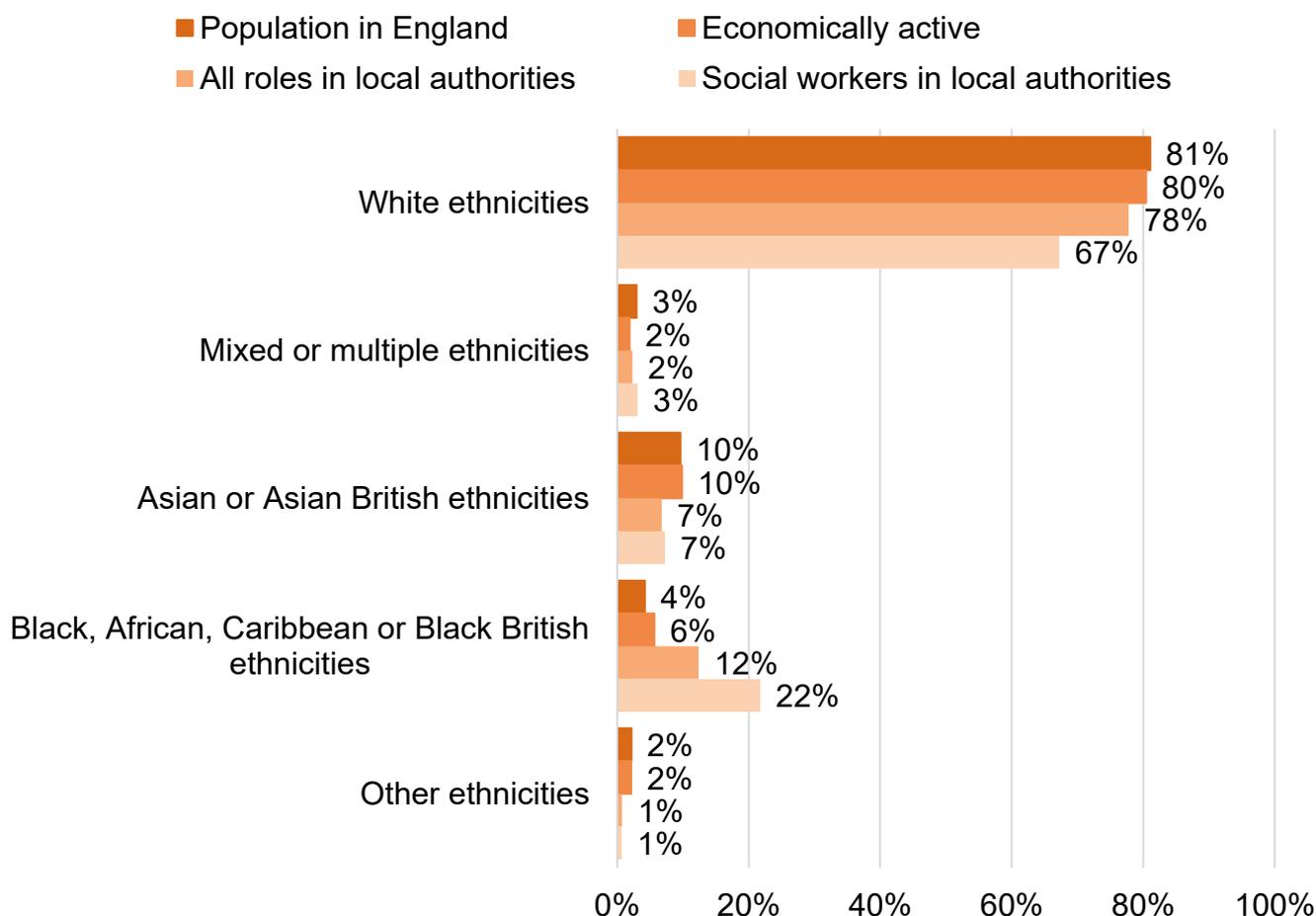


Table 2 shows the estimated proportion of all job roles and social worker filled posts by ethnicity group and individual ethnicity. People of a White British (English, Welsh, Scottish or Northern Irish) ethnicity accounted for 72% of all filled posts, compared with 61% of social worker filled posts. In contrast, people of an African ethnicity made up 16% of social worker filled posts, compared with 8% of all filled posts within local authorities.

Table 2. Estimated proportion of all job roles and social worker filled posts in local authorities by ethnicity group and ethnicity, 2025

Source: Skills for Care estimates

	All job roles	Social workers
White ethnicities	78%	67%
White British (English, Welsh, Scottish or Northern Irish)	72%	61%
White Irish	1%	1%
White Gypsy or Irish Traveller	<1%	<1%
Other White ethnicities	5%	6%
Mixed or multiple ethnicities	2%	3%
White and Black Caribbean	1%	1%
White and Black African	1%	1%
White and Asian	<1%	<1%
Other mixed or multiple ethnicities	1%	1%
Asian or Asian British ethnicities	7%	7%
Indian	3%	3%
Pakistani	1%	2%
Bangladeshi	1%	1%
Chinese	<1%	<1%
Other Asian ethnicities	1%	1%
Black, African, Caribbean or Black British ethnicities	12%	22%
African	8%	16%
Caribbean	3%	4%
Other Black ethnicities	2%	3%
Other ethnicities	1%	1%
Arab	<1%	<1%
Any other ethnicities	1%	1%

4.3.1 Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standard

Skills for Care leads the [Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standard \(SC-WRES\)](#) improvement programme which supports local authorities to make meaningful, ongoing improvements to workforce practice and culture.

In May 2025, Skills for Care published the [Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standard \(SC-WRES\) 2024 report](#). The national report presents anonymous evidence from the responding local authorities of the indicators of workplace experience between employees of white ethnicities and employees from minoritised ethnicities. It also provides wider context and interpretation, outlining the rationale for the SC-WRES, the continuous improvement methodology used, and key themes emerging across local authorities. It includes learning points, examples of good practice, and practical guidance to support organisations to understand their results and embed anti-racist principles into workforce policy and practice. The next report is due to be published in Spring 2026, using information collected in Autumn 2025.

5. Pay



This section looks at the average (mean) full-time equivalent (FTE) pay of social workers in local authorities and compares them to other regulated professions.

£45,300

social worker average
(mean) FTE pay

32.4%

nominal increase in
social worker FTE pay
since 2016

3.2%

real term decrease in
social worker FTE pay
since 2016

Key findings

- Social workers had an average (mean) FTE pay of £45,300 in 2025. This has increased since 2024, by around £2,300 (5.4%) in nominal terms and around £600 (1.3%) in real terms.
- Social worker average (mean) pay increased by 32.4% in nominal terms since 2016 but decreased by 3.2% in real terms over the same period. Therefore, social workers were paid relatively less in real terms in 2025 than in 2016.
- London had the highest average social worker FTE pay at £53,000, followed by the South East at £46,100. Social workers in the East Midlands had the lowest average FTE pay at £41,600.

The ASC-WDS collects pay data as both annual and hourly rates. It also collects information about workers' contracted hours and usual hours worked for both agency and zero-hours staff. The information in this section shows full-time equivalent (FTE) average salaries. Pay data was converted into FTE annual salaries using an average working week of 37 hours. Hourly pay data was also converted into annual salaries, based on the full-time equivalent. Converting pay in this way allows for the pay of full-time and part-time workers to be compared.

Comparisons to pay information in previous years always refers to the data as at September of that year (when the annual data collection takes place). **Trends go back to 2016** as this marks the change from the National Minimum Wage to the National Living Wage (NLW). Please note that at the time of data collection, September 2025, the NLW was £12.21.

5.1 Average (mean) full-time equivalent (FTE) annual pay

Chart 12 below shows the average (mean) FTE pay for a social worker in local authorities was £45,300 in 2025, which was the same as occupational therapists (£45,300).

Chart 12. Estimated average (mean) full-time equivalent (FTE) pay in local authorities by selected job role, 2025

Source: Skills for Care estimates

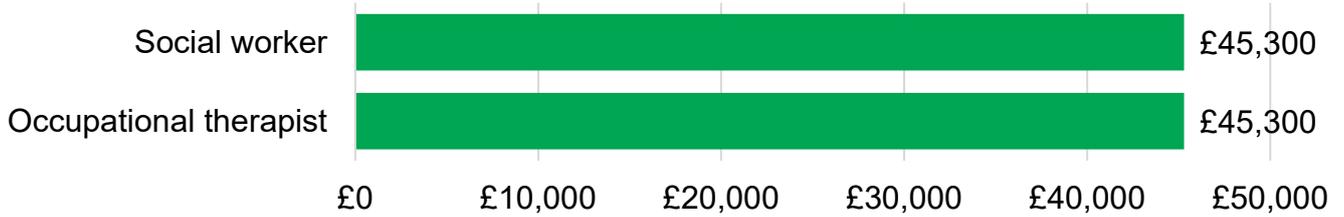


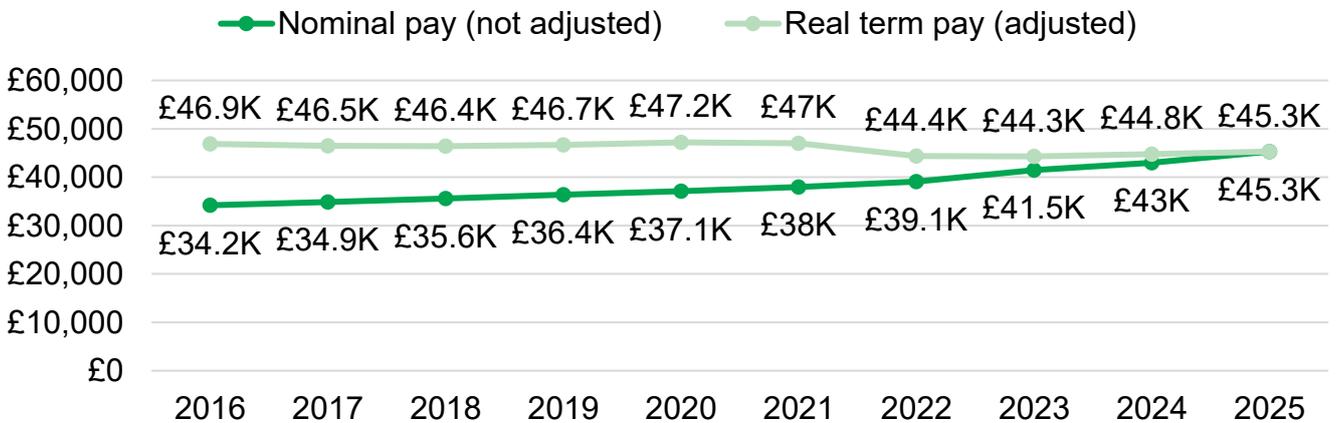
Chart 13 shows the average (mean) FTE pay trend of social workers in both nominal and real terms. ‘Nominal terms’ refers to the actual pay rate as at the time of data collection. ‘Real term’ means that the pay rate has been adjusted to take inflation into account and has been calculated using the [Consumers Price Index \(CPI\)](#), the official measure of inflation of consumer prices in the UK, as at September 2025. Therefore, this considers changes in the cost of living over time.

The chart shows that average (mean) nominal FTE pay of social workers increased between 2024 and 2025 in both nominal (up £2,300 or 5.4%) and real terms (up £600 or 1.3%). This means the nominal increase was greater than inflation over the year.

The chart also shows that the average (mean) nominal FTE pay of social workers has increased every year since 2016, from £34,200 to £45,300 (32.4% increase). However, in real terms, their pay stayed relatively the same between 2016 and 2021, then decreased in 2022. In 2025, social worker real term average (mean) FTE pay was 3.2% lower than in 2016

Chart 13. Estimated average (mean) FTE pay of social workers in local authorities, 2016 to 2025

Source: Skills for Care estimates

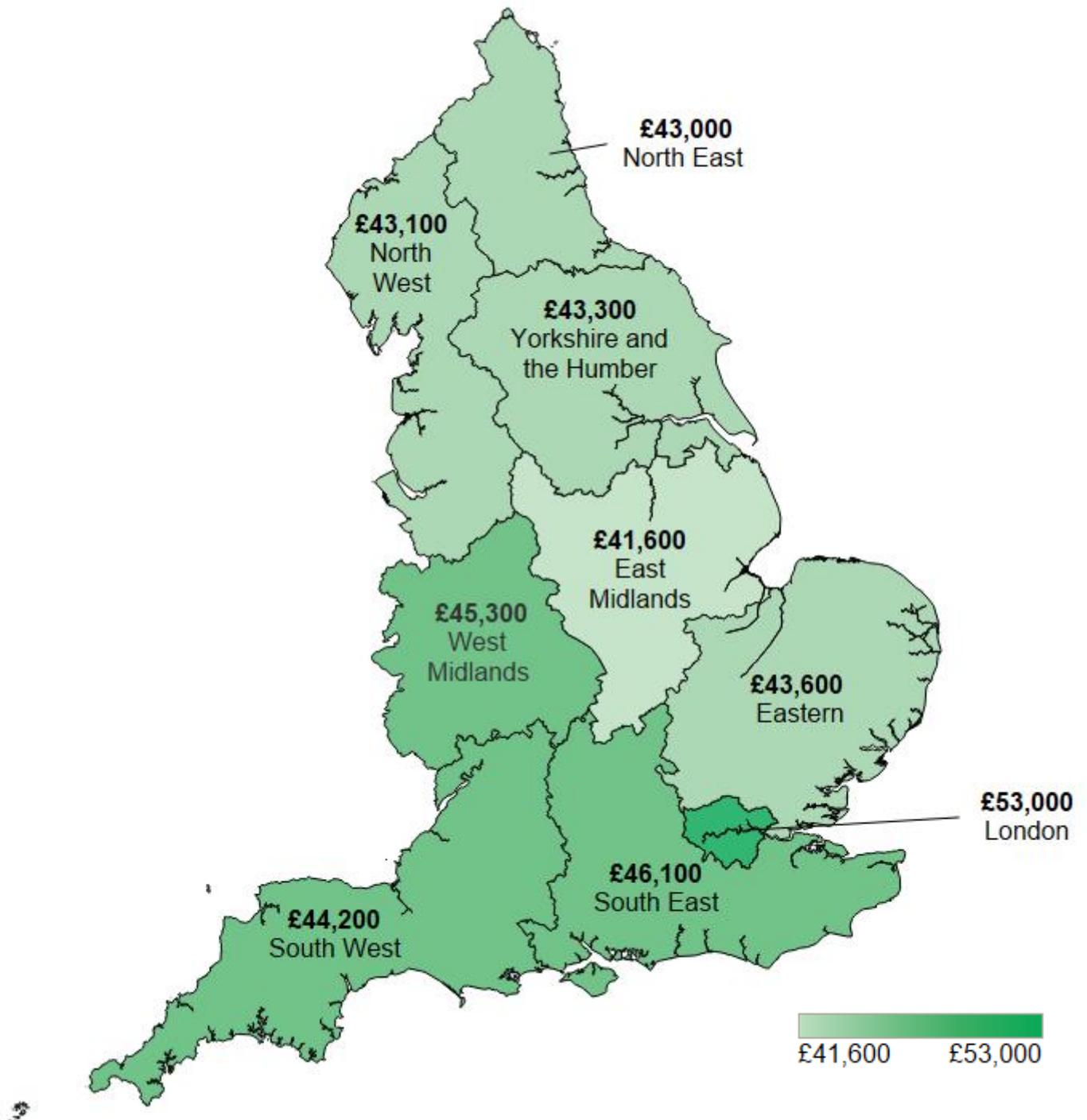


The map below shows that social workers in London had the highest average pay at £53,000, which was 17% higher than the average across England. Higher average pay in London reflects

patterns seen across the wider adult social care sector and the broader economy. Outside of London, social worker salaries ranged from £41,600 in the East Midlands to £46,100 in the South East.

Map 1. Estimated average (mean) FTE social worker pay in local authorities by region, 2025

Source: Skills for Care estimates



Further resources

Our workforce intelligence publications

As a producer of official statistics, we provide robust workforce intelligence that the Government, strategic bodies, employers, and individuals rely upon to help them make decisions that will improve outcomes for the people who use care services. This section provides an overview of some of the reports and resources published by our Workforce Intelligence team. To access these reports and visualisations, please refer to the relevant pages on our [Workforce Intelligence website](#).

The state of the adult social care sector and workforce in England

This report and accompanying documents provide estimates from 'The size and structure of the adult social care sector and workforce in England' report, as well as detailed estimates of workforce characteristics including: employment overview, recruitment and retention, workforce demographics, pay, qualification and training, future projections and international recruitment. We also analyse the factors affecting staff turnover across the sector.

To access this information, visit www.skillsforcare.org.uk/stateof

The size and structure of the adult social care sector and workforce in England

This report provides estimates of the number of organisations and establishments involved in providing or organising adult social care, as well as the size and structure of the workforce, including people and filled posts estimates, trend data, and future projections.

To access this information, visit [our website](#).

Regional information

There are three pages of [regional information](#) on our website, providing an annual overview of adult social care services and the workforce in each region:

- a visualisation looking at the workforce in each region area, one at a time
- our comparison report comparing key variables across the nine regions
- individual regional written summary reports, summarising the workforce statistics.

Local area information

There are various pages on our website showing [local area information](#). These are split by either local authority area or NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB) geographical area.

- individual local authority or ICB area pages: looking at the workforce in each area, one at a time
- our comparison reports comparing key variables across local authority or ICB areas
- individual area written summary reports, summarising the workforce statistics
- our 'My ICB area (MH and LD&A)' report showing the latest information from the ASC-WDS for the mental health and learning disability and/or autism workforces, split into ICB areas.

Key topic areas

We also produce information on popular topic areas. Each topic includes a summary of the workforce information available, and signposts to other relevant resources.

- workforce tracking of key metrics
- learning disability and/or autism workforce
- apprenticeships
- pay rates
- individual employers and personal assistants
- nurses in social care
- recruitment and retention
- registered managers
- social work
- workforce nationality and international recruitment
- Factors affecting staff turnover.

To access these topic pages, visit [our website](#).

Commission our services

Our Workforce Intelligence team are the experts in adult social care workforce insight. The data we collect in the ASC-WDS gives an unrivalled overview of the adult social care workforce in England. 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.

How we can help you

- We can partner with you or form part of your project team on tenders and bids. By using our expertise and sector knowledge, we can add value to your research or project.
- We can use advanced analytics techniques to help you understand how key outcomes such as CQC ratings, turnover or vacancy rates can be improved.
- We can produce bespoke reports and analysis to help you solve problems and provide data solutions to help you improve your services.
- We can provide a detailed analysis into the adult social care workforce in your local area or look at performance in comparison to other areas.
- You can request a feed of data to enhance or improve a product or service.

In addition to the information on our website, we also have a dedicated Workforce Intelligence LinkedIn showcase page. The page will help you to discover the latest insights into the data, reports and visualisations we publish throughout the year. We share how that data is being used by the Government, think tanks, the media and other organisations we work with to inform debate and support decision-making. To learn more, visit our [Adult Social Care Data LinkedIn page](#).

Our values as producers of official statistics

Skills for Care is guided by core values. Throughout everything we do, we're inclusive, motivated, passionate, ambitious, collaborative and trustworthy. For more information about the

Skills for Care strategy, our vision, mission, values and plan to achieve our mission, visit [our website](#).

All analysts leading on the production of this report are certified statisticians, meaning we work to the standard of the 'five safes'. We always make sure that our research and outputs are appropriate and trustworthy, and that there's no risk of misuse or confidentially breach. When creating outputs, we always adhere to statistical disclosure controls.

As a Workforce Intelligence team, we:

- help people to understand what's already available without commissioning our services and what options are available
- aren't selling the data - we're selling our analysis and sector expertise
- carry out bespoke work in particular areas that we can't cover in general outputs
- have a 'good for the sector' aim on all projects we work on
- channel any money we earn straight back into the sector.

In 2023, Skills for Care became an official statistics provider, having been added to the [Official Statistics Order 2023](#). We, Skills for Care's Workforce Intelligence team, are committed to the three pillars of trustworthiness, quality and value, as well as to the principles of the Code of Practice for Statistics. Visit our website for our full [statement](#).



User engagement is important to us and we welcome any feedback on the collection of this data and the findings of this report, as well as the accompanying reference tables and data visualisation on our website. To contact us, please use one of the options below.

Email: analysis@skillsforcare.org.uk

Website: <http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/WorkforceIntelligenceContactUs>



Skills for Care

West Gate
6 Grace Street
Leeds
LS1 2RP

T: **0113 245 1716**

E: info@skillsforcare.org.uk

skillsforcare.org.uk



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