West Midlands
Weekly Economic Impact Monitor

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This monitor aims to pull together information across regional partners to understand the impacts of Covid-19 on the economy. Where possible it will utilise all forms of quantitative and qualitative intelligence. However, we urge caution in the use of the contents as this is an emerging situation.

This week the Prime Minister's announcement on 22 February 2021 setting out the roadmap out of Covid-19 lockdown has been welcomed broadly by businesses. It provides some degree of clarity. However, in the immediate term issues persist – particularly for industries unable to open as normal. One local Growth Hub has received one months' worth of calls, web chats, emails and web traffic in the past week. But sentiment is improving generally with greater optimism than in previous months.

- COVID-19 infections have been falling sharply since mid-January, from a peak of around 740,000 per day to under 370,000 by 17th February. The improvement has been widespread, but the sharpest falls have been seen in advanced economies.
- In terms of the vaccine roll-out Israel, the UAE, UK, and the US are in the lead. The Midlands has successfully continued to provide the most doses of the first jab, however the region has dropped to the 3rd highest provider of the second dose out of the English regions.
- Current fiscal debate in the US on Biden's fiscal expansion is not so much concerned with the principle of expansion – rather it is the scale that is creating most discussion. If economies were at capacity fiscal policy could create bottlenecks and inflation but if the economy was underperforming, due to technological change and unemployment, increased investment could level up and boost the economy
- The tone of relationships between the US and China has changed somewhat since the inauguration, with the administration moving away from the language of decoupling to small yard, high fence. Meaning that the US will move towards protecting key industries and assets and allowing other trade and capital to grow.
- The flash UK PMIs indicate that the services sector is starting to stabilize after having contracted. Although the manufacturing sector is growing, disruption of supply chains is holding back growth. Such disruption is related both to the pandemic and as to Brexit. Services PMI increased from 39.5 in January to 49.7 in February, a level indicating returning to no change after a sharp decline in January. Stabilisation in services is being driven by the professional services sector, whilst the manufacturing sector grew at a healthy pace, with a PMI of 54.9 in February.
- Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) is to axe 2,000 management jobs over the next financial year. The job cuts will be across roles such as managers, designers, technicians and admin staff and John Lewis is set to launch a fresh round of store closures as the turmoil on the high street worsens.
- Codemasters, one of the oldest names in Britain's video game sector, has been acquired by industry giant Electronic Arts (EA) with the aim of establishing a new global powerhouse in racing video games.
- Coventry City Council will enter a Joint Venture partnership with Coventry Airport Ltd to develop proposals for a Gigafactory at Coventry Airport. The public-private partnership represents a game-changing initiative in the UK's pursuit of a Gigafactory, and further strengthens the West Midlands' attraction for battery suppliers.
- Ambitious plans for a new £24 million bus and Metro interchange in Dudley have been given the green light by the WMCA
- The BBC reported on the roadmap for lifting lockdown as it was announced on Monday, after the first stage in March there will be further lifting of the rules providing certain conditions are met- such as the vaccine rollout going to plan.
- The Scale-up Institute investigated the scaling-up of businesses in the West Midlands. It found that the support in the area was focused on upscaling by developing cross-sector models of support that are built on sharing and learning from networks. The report references Creative Scale Up programme is identified as good practice. The data on the local authorities in the area show they have grown considerably in employment terms from a low base but not as much in turnover.
- This week it has been announced that the Ministry of Housing, Communities and local Government is creating a second headquarters in Wolverhampton, with at least 500 roles set to be based across the West Midlands by 2025.
- Policy Exchange's new paper on creating an electric vehicle charging infrastructure recommends the funding and creation of Chargepoint Teams within local authorities and supporting the roll out in underserviced areas.

Social impacts

- Long Covid in the Labour market report highlights the rollout of the vaccine means we can be more confident that this will be a recovery that lasts. The January 2021 lockdown does not appear to have led to a very significant additional deterioration of conditions in the labour market, but it remains in a fragile position. The Job Retention Scheme (JRS) was doing its job in this period and essentially keeping the labour market frozen. A less positive trend as the year ended was redundancies, which rose sharply in the autumn. The length of the crisis means we should pay attention to the depth of the

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impact experienced by some individuals. The number of workers who in January 2021 had been on full furlough for at least six months (475,000) is nearly as large as the number of people in January who are estimated to have been unemployed for at least six months (689,000). The self-employed have continued to face a big hit and gaps in support remain. With job losses on the horizon, one-in-seven workers are already looking for a new job. One-in-twelve workers plan to move sectors after the crisis. Policy must continue to support firms and workers beyond April 2021. Overall, a longer illness leaves the patient needing greater care and stronger medicine.

- The West Midlands region had 93,500 employments furloughed on the 31st October 2020. Compared to the 30th September 2020, this has decreased by 19.6% (-46,300) for the West Midlands region, while the UK decreased by 15.6%. Compared to 31st July 2020, the West Midlands region has decreased 52.0% (-220,300 employment furloughed), while the UK decreased by 55.5%.
- The West Midlands region had 2.8m workforce jobs in September 2020, following the trend across all the UK regions when compared to September 2019, the West Midlands decreased by 163,762 workforce jobs. The West Midlands region had 92,502 less workforce jobs when compared to the last quarter.
- Sector furloughs peaked at different points in the year, but have all dropped off to significantly lower levels by October 2020. Exceptions are food and retail (remaining at 50% of peak levels), Arts and entertainment and Accommodation and food (remaining at a third of the peak).
- It has been reported this week that Birmingham has suffered a jobs meltdown with nearly one in seven looking for employment within the city. Unfortunately, the city also continues to have the worst levels of joblessness in the UK, with five of the ten constituencies within with the highest jobless rates across the entire UK being in Birmingham.
- Lockdown has put pressure on banks' bereavement services, making it harder for grieving families to settle the finances of loved ones who have died.
- The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has announced it would like regulatory changes to deal with the market dominance that Google and Facebook hold within the UK. It stated that the two tech giants have a duopoly within the UK when it comes to digital advertising, which can often stifle competition.
- Teach First reports that over a third of parents have children who have no device dedicated to home learning during the pandemic.

EU Exit impacts

- A multimillion-pound fund to help SMEs adapt to new trading rules with the EU has been welcomed by business leaders and businesses: £20m SME Brexit Support Fund to support businesses which trade exclusively with the EU in adjusting to new customs, rules of origin and VAT rules
- A number of businesses still report that they are not affected by our exit from the EU, so it depends on sector and company operations/trading status. Some businesses are now feeling the impact of a lack of preparation prior to the deal being agreed. They are now behind and playing catch up, with DIT playing a big part in dealing with repeat queries, particularly with commodity codes and paperwork support for export/import
- Bloomberg provided a rundown of what the B5, the top five industry organisations in the UK, are asking for. The British Chamber of Commerce reports that half of exporters are facing difficulties adjusting to the new Brexit rules, and that almost a third of business to customer businesses will run out of cash in the next three months.
- The PMI also noted British manufacturers reported severe supply chain problems due to "international shipping delays, strong worldwide demand for raw materials, and Brexit-related trade frictions." That said, businesses "remained resolute that things can only get better." The sub-index for future expectations was up strongly, fuelled by confidence in the vaccine.
- Current issues facing SMEs: Current grant funding is not covering the overheads for larger SMEs or those with high cost premises. There are significant gaps in support for wider supply chain businesses and directors of limited companies. The complexity of current grant schemes is leading to significant issues for businesses and local authorities administrating them. A return to single household groups would not be viable for hospitality businesses. Sector specific support will be required to match the Government's "road map"– there are significant concerns for tourism & live events as they will be the last to unlock. There are substantial concerns regarding unsustainable debt and access to finance for growth.
- An employer survey undertaken CITB revealed that 72% of employers thought that the end of free movement and introduction of the Points-Based Immigration System (PBIS) would impact on the construction sector's ability to secure a skilled workforce. Over a quarter of employers and half of recruitment agencies thought the impact would be serious. 10.2% of the UK's construction workers were from outside the UK in 2019.
- Budget Asks: These include: Extension and simplification of grant support; Extend business rates relief & VAT reduction; Extend CJRS and remove NI & Pension contributions; Extending the terms of the CBILS loan scheme from 6 to 10 years; Develop an exit strategy for high debt burdens and support recapitalisation, which could include innovative instruments for packaging and restructuring CBILS and BBLs debt; Introduce financial support for landlords and tenants to deal with the build-up of rent arrears; Bring forward sector specific support for the hardest hit industries such as the travel industry and events industry as well as non-essential retail, hospitality and accommodation.

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Global, National and Regional Outlook

Alice Pugh, WMREDI; Rebecca Riley WMCA/WMREDI

Global

Global Covid-19 recovery

According to Capital Economics the global new COVID-19 infections have been falling sharply since mid-January, from a peak of around 740,000 per day to under 370,000 by 17th February. The improvement has been common to all world regions, but the sharpest falls have been seen in advanced economies. Most notably, daily case numbers have dropped from around 250,000 to roughly 80,000 in the US. They also found that there has also been a dramatic improvement in Europe, where the latest surge in case numbers was most pronounced. This appears to have reflected the tight restrictions imposed in many of those economies from late 2020. These included national lockdowns in Germany and the UK, while most Italian regions moved up a band in its tiered system. Even in France, where restrictions were laxer in the form of an evening curfew, case numbers have drifted downwards.

They also found that there has been a slight upturn in mobility from late-January in each region. The largest improvements have been in emerging Asia and emerging Europe.

In terms of the vaccine roll-out Capital Economics showed that Israel, the UAE, UK, and the US are in the lead. And after a delayed start in Chile, the rollout has taken off, with over 10% of the population receiving a vaccine dose in the past two weeks. The process has been slower or even failed to start outside of these countries. Supply complications have set the euro-zone behind. And while Japan and Australia both have large vaccine orders, a slow approvals process has meant that rollouts there have only just begun. Additionally, Janssen and Novavax reporting efficacies of 66% and 89%, respectively, in phase 3 trials. Neither of these vaccines require the extreme cold storage which has complicated use of the Pfizer vaccine. Canada, the UK, and the US have pre-orders of both, while the EU, COVAX and the African Union have large pre-orders of the Janssen jab. There are also early signs that vaccination is having positive health effects in Israel. New infections among those aged over 60 (one of the first groups to be vaccinated) have dropped by around 65% since the winter peak. This compares to a more modest decline of 35% in the rest of the population. The Israeli authorities have responded by easing restrictions on retail, hospitality, and leisure, which may bode well for other economies. But there are some concerns that Israel is moving too quickly and its strategy of opening certain activities only to those who have been vaccinated may be unacceptable in other countries.

Deloitte have highlighted the current fiscal debate in the US on Biden's fiscal expansion. However, the issue is not so much the principle of expansion but its scale that is creating most discussion. Prof Ken Rogoff, who normally warns of the dangers of government debt, is arguing these are very different times and the US government needs to borrow heavily to address the current crisis. Larry Summers also of Harvard, who normally supports fiscal expansion to address weakness, is concerned that too much risks inflation. It all boils down to what we believe about the economy prior to the shock. If we assume it was running at full capacity and would have continued to grow, then the US is running about 4.5% below capacity, but the Biden plan takes the spending to 9% of GDP. Which could create bottlenecks and until the vaccine is distributed stimulus will not help disrupted sectors such as tourism and hospitality so stimulus will just boost sectors already running strong (again creating inflation). If, however, we think the economy was not at full capacity prior to the shock, there is room for stimulus. Despite low unemployment the US had had a decade for declining labour force participation, faced with technology change, globalisation, and disruption in manufacturing job losses were for the low skilled, especially where women were facing the rising costs of childcare. If fiscal intervention can help disrupted workers get back into the economy then the economy was likely to be operating below capacity as it entered the shock, and a boost that increases aggregate demand, invest in infrastructure and retraining would create an economy better able to absorb more of the working age population without inflation. The UK faces a similar dilemma and this debate is crucial for levelling up as too much stimulus in high performing areas and sectors will create bottle necks and inflation, while under-investment in places hardest hit will stifle the benefits of greater investment in people. This dilemma is a global one, and decisions at a country level mean we are entering into a period of unprecedented experimentation, whichever course of action is taken.

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In the EU this debate is very live, but with a generally very successful roll out of the vaccine and expectation of fiscal support for much of the year, the general growth prospects are expected to be good. However, the expectation is that as EU states are wary of the debt the following year fiscal support will contract. This leaves a number of questions: Will pent up demand replace this? Will withdrawal lead to a sharp down turn in growth? And what will be the contagion effect in wider markets (including the UK that now sits outside)?

The tone of relationships between the US and China has changed somewhat since the inauguration. With the administration moving away from the language of decoupling to small yard, high fence. Meaning that the US will move towards protecting key industries and assets and allowing other trade and capital to continue and grow. However there continue to be strains in the relationship. China however faces more issues with the consumer trend around human rights and slave labour and reshoring of activity meaning consumers are choosing not to buy products made in China.

Flash PMI continues to show the split in the economy between manufacturing and services. The manufacturing PMI for the Eurozone increased to 57.7 in February, a 36-month high and an indication of very rapid growth of activity.

The PMIs for the United States are astoundingly high, indicating that the economy was likely growing rapidly in February. The PMI for services rose to 58.9, a 71-month high indicating very rapid growth of activity.

National

The UK is following a slightly different pattern from that of the Eurozone. The UK PMIs indicate that the services sector is starting to stabilize after having contracted. Meanwhile, although the manufacturing sector is growing, disruption of supply chains is holding back growth. Such disruption is related both to the pandemic and as to the transition to Brexit. Specifically, Britain's services PMI increased from 39.5 in January to 49.7 in February, a level indicating almost no change after a sharp decline in January. Stabilisation in services is being driven by the professional services sector, whilst the manufacturing sector grew at a healthy pace, with a PMI of 54.9 in February. While output grew only modestly, new orders were up strongly, but not export orders. In fact, more than half of companies reporting worsened exports attributed it to Brexit. British manufacturers reported severe supply chain problems due to "international shipping delays, strong worldwide demand for raw materials, and Brexit-related trade frictions." That said, businesses "remained resolute that things can only get better." The sub-index for future expectations was up strongly, fuelled by confidence in the vaccine. The UK government reports that, in January, retail sales fell 5.9% from a year earlier and were down 8.2% from the previous month. This was largely due to the economic restrictions.

The BBC reported on the roadmap for lifting lockdown as it was announced on Monday 22 February, after the first stage in March there will be further lifting of the rules providing certain conditions are met- such as the vaccine rollout going to plan. The aim is for all restrictions to be lifted, which will happen by 21 June at the earliest. First Minister Nicola Sturgeon has also announced details of Scotland's path out of lockdown, with restaurants and non-essential shops opening on 26 April at the earliest. Northern Ireland and Wales will outline their plans in the coming weeks. The figure below shows the lockdown rules for England from the 8th March 2021.

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From the 29th March:

- People will be allowed to meet outside, either with one other household or within the "rule of six", including in private gardens
- The stay at home rule will end, but the government will urge people to stay local as much as possible
- Outdoor sport facilities will reopen, including golf courses and tennis and basketball courts
- Formally organised outdoor sports can also restart
- Parents and children groups can return but are capped at 15 and must be outdoors. Indoor groups can take place for vulnerable children and where parents need the groups to go to work
- Weddings attended by up to six people can take place in any circumstances

Stage two

No earlier than 12th April:

- All shops allowed to open
- Restaurants and pub gardens will be allowed to serve customers sitting outdoors, including alcohol
- Gyms and spas can reopen for individuals and households
- Hairdressers, beauty salons and other "close contact services" can reopen
- UK domestic holidays away from home permitted, with self-contained accommodation able to reopen for use by members of the same household
- Children allowed to attend indoor play activities, with up to 15 parents or guardians allowed to join them
- Zoos, theme parks and drive-in cinemas can reopen
- Libraries and community centres can reopen
- Weddings attended by up to 15 people can take place

Stage Three

No earlier than the 17th May:

- People can meet in groups of up to 30 outdoors
- Six people or two households can meet indoors
- Pubs, restaurants and other hospitality venues can seat customers indoors

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- Up to 30 people can meet to celebrate weddings or other life events, like christenings
- Remaining outdoor entertainment, such as outdoor theatres and cinemas can open
- Indoor entertainment such as museums, theatres, cinemas and children's play areas can open
- Performances and large events will be subject to limits though. For indoor events they can be at half capacity or 1,000 people, and outdoors they can be at half capacity or 4,000 people - whichever is lower. For large venues (at least 40,000 capacity) up to 10,000 will be allowed to attend
- Hotels, hostels and B&Bs can reopen
- International leisure travel will resume no earlier than 17 May
- Adult indoor group sports and exercise classes can start up again

Stage Four

No earlier than the 21st June

- All legal limits on social contact will be removed
- No legal limits on the number of people who can attend weddings, funerals and other life events. From April, the government will run pilots for events such as large weddings, festivals and work conferences. This will help to determine how measures such as enhanced testing might allow large groups to attend without social distancing
- Nightclubs will be allowed to reopen

Each stage will be a minimum of five weeks apart. Four conditions must be met at each stage before proceeding to the next one:

- The coronavirus vaccine programme continues to go to plan
- Vaccines are sufficiently reducing the number of people dying with the virus or needing hospital treatment
- Infection rates do not risk a surge in hospital admissions
- New coronavirus variants do not fundamentally change the risk of lifting restrictions

Changes in **Scotland** are likely to be a minimum of three weeks apart and are subject to certain conditions being met.

In **Wales**, four people from a maximum of two households can now meet outdoors for exercise. "It does mean exercise, not socialising," announced First Minister Mark Drakeford. He also said weddings and civil ceremonies could resume from 1 March. Children aged three to seven have returned to school. It is hoped that older primary age groups - and secondary school pupils preparing for exams - will return on Monday 15 March. The next review of Wales lockdown rules is due around 12 March.

Northern Ireland has extended its lockdown until **1 April**, with a review of current measures on 18 March. Primary school children in years 1-3 are due to return on 8 March, and secondary school pupils in years 12-14 on 22 March. But First Minister Arlene Foster has said she hopes the Stormont executive can "revisit" that timetable.

It has been reported by Which? this week that, lockdown has put pressure on **banks' bereavement services**, making it harder for grieving families to settle the finances of loved ones who have died. With one in ten people who were responsible for closing a deceased person's account after March 2020 lockdown said they were dissatisfied with bank staff's skill and knowledge during the process, according of 1,600 Members. They found that for one in six (17%) people in their survey, the process had taken longer than three months. And the situation was worse for those who closed accounts before the first national lockdown in March 2020. Among those who started the process before lockdown and continued afterwards, the figure rose to around four in ten (37%).

Before lockdown, only 3% of executors said they found it very difficult to contact the right people. But that figure rose to 16% among those for whom the process of closing accounts continued beyond March 2020. During a national crisis going without funds for prolonged periods of time can take serious toll on those who are already struggling financially.

This week it has been reported that the **Competition and Markets Authority (CMA)** has announced it would like regulatory changes to deal with the market dominance that Google and Facebook hold within the UK. It stated that the two tech giants have a duopoly within the UK when it comes to digital advertising, which can often stifle competition. Google and Facebook have about an 80% share of the UK's £14bn digital advertising market. Facebook currently has a more than 50% share of the £5.5bn display advertising market in the UK.

The CMA said in December it plans to issue Facebook, Google and the other tech giants a set of rules customised to each firm to rein in "anti-competitive behaviour" and give consumers "more control over how their data used". It is set to create a Digital Markets Unit within itself to draw up the rules and govern compliance, although legislation is required which may not be introduced until 2022. It is set to create a Digital Markets Unit within itself to draw up the rules and govern compliance, although legislation is required which may not be introduced until 2022.

Regional

Last week we highlighted that Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP area remains the regional start-up capital for the seventh year in a row. The data from the Scaleup Institute shows there were 1,750 'scale-ups' across the region's Local Enterprise Partnership areas throughout 2020. The think tank Centre for Entrepreneurs shows that the West Midlands and London saw the strongest recovery growth in June last year. The Scale-up Institute investigated the scaling-up of businesses in the West Midlands. It found that the LEP had focused its approach to upscaling by focusing its approach on developing cross-sector models of support that are built on sharing and learning from networks. The example featured in the report is the Creative Scale Up Programme. One company saw turnover growth of 96% and increased employment; another saw 15% turnover growth, 10 new contracts and three new partnerships including one very significant one.

The report highlighted that the past year has been on delivering the next phase of the Growth Hub through an enhanced partnership model that focuses on simplifying the local business support landscape and maximising its value on the local economy. Additional ERDF funding was secured to double the Growth Hub's capacity and new delivery partners brought on board for specialist support while existing partner roles were expanded. The scaleup partnership with Aston University supported an additional 100 high-growth potential businesses.

According to the ScaleUp Institute analysis of data received directly from ONS for years 2015-2018, and Local Authorities located within the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP have a moderate-low density of scaleups, and the trend between 2015 and 2018 reveals that most of the local authorities showed an increase in the density of scaleup businesses, and the majority showed an above median increase in scaleup density. This demonstrates that the area has accelerated growth, especially in employment terms.

6 of the 9 local authorities have an above median density of scaleups measured by employment growth and 5 of the 9 local authorities have a below median density of scaleups measured by turnover growth. 5 of the 9 local authorities are below the median in terms of improving the density of scaleups by employment in their community and 6 of the 9 local authorities are above the median for scaleups by turnover.

It has been reported this week that **Birmingham has suffered a jobs meltdown** with nearly one in seven looking for employment within the city. Unfortunately, the city also continues to have the worst levels of joblessness in the UK. With five of the ten constituencies within with the highest jobless rates across the entire UK being in Birmingham. With the claimant rate in the Birmingham Hodge Hill constituency is 14.1%, roughly one in seven. That's the highest rate of any constituency in the UK. There are 11,045 people searching for a job in Hodge Hill, an increase of 4,675 compared to a year ago. The figure below refers to the proportion of the population aged 16 to 64 who are either on Jobseeker's Allowance or are required to look for work as a condition of Universal Credit payments.

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Claimant count age 16+ ONS February 2021 release

parliamentary constituency 2010	March 2020	January 2021
Birmingham, Hodge Hill	8.1	14.1
Birmingham, Ladywood	8.5	13.6
Tottenham	4.7	13.3
Blackpool South	7.9	13.1
Birmingham, Perry Barr	8.1	13.1
Birmingham, Erdington	7.9	12.5
Brent Central	4.6	12.4
Bradford West	6.7	12.2
Bradford East	6.6	11.8
Birmingham, Hall Green	7.1	11.8

In the West Midlands region, the claimant rate is 7.1%. There are 260,100 jobseekers in the region, and that's up by 122,400 people over 12 months. The increase follows a series a national and regional lockdown which forced many businesses to close.

However, this week it has been announced that the **Ministry of Housing, Communities and local Government is creating a second headquarters in Wolverhampton,** with at least 500 roles set to be based across the West Midlands by 2025. The new headquarters will be the first government office with a regular ministerial presence outside London and is being branded as a "key milestone" in the government's levelling up agenda. Mr Jenrick the communities Secretary stated, "*With a dual headquarters in Wolverhampton, my department will not only change where we work but how we work, signalling the end of the 'Whitehall knows best' approach. In choosing the city of Wolverhampton we are also backing our great smaller cities, some of which have been neglected for too long*."

Top Five From Around the Web

Keziah Watson WMCA

- Policy Exchange's new paper on creating an electric vehicle charging infrastructure recommends the funding and creation of Chargepoint Teams within local authorities and supporting the roll out in underserviced areas. This is the only way to install chargepoints at five times the current rate to meet the demand that the banning of new combustion engine vehicles by 2030.
- Business is hot news ahead of the upcoming Budget, with Bloomberg providing a rundown of what the B5, the top five industry organisations in the UK are asking for. The British Chamber of Commerce reports that half of exporters are facing difficulties adjusting to the new Brexit rules, and that almost a third of business to customer businesses will run out of cash in the next three months.
- Teach First reports that over a third of parents have children who have no device dedicated to home learning during the pandemic. Despite efforts being made to distribute devices to those who need them, almost three in five parents are concerned about their child's transition to the next school year.
- The Northern Research Group and Centre for Policy Studies call for a Northern Big Bang to unleash investment in the north to increase productivity and wages, as part of the Green Industrial Revolution. Infrastructure plays a key role in these recommendations, alongside other ideas such as writing off all capital expenditure by Northern businesses until 2025.
- Policy Exchange believe they have found a way to get citizen support for new housing, make new developments visually appealing, and not touch greenfield sites. The solution is to create neighbourhoods of mock Victorian or Georgian terraces, for example, with the support of the community, and recoup some of the financial cost to the area and local authority through the increased desirability of the area.

Long Covid in the labour market Report
Resolution Foundation

Executive Summary

This is the executive summary in which the Resolution Foundation summarised their Long Covid in the Labour market report. This is the third time that the Resolution Foundation have written a report taking stock of the impact of the virus on the labour market. Nine months on from their first report in June last year, some things are similar. The health effects of the second wave may be starting to recede, and thoughts are again turning to recovery.

But in two important respects, the situation now is different from June 2020. First, the rollout of the vaccine means we can be more confident that this will be a recovery that lasts. This strengthens the case for protecting jobs and firms through to the end of the crisis. Secondly, and crucially, the crisis has been going on for much longer. While, as they show, the groups affected at each stage of this crisis have been similar, the duration of the hit for many workers qualitatively changes its impact.

This paper therefore has two tasks. First, it examines the impact of the third lockdown on the labour market. Official labour market data is published with a lag. To take stock of the January lockdown, the authors draw on a newly-commissioned, representative survey of UK adults, which was in the field from 22-26 January. This is the third time they have commissioned such a survey, following previous rounds in May and September last year.

Second, the authors ask what the crisis, having dragged on for almost a whole year, means for its effects. The Resolution Foundation also make recommendations for the future path of policy, both to address those effects and to successfully phase out support as the economy reopens.

The January lockdown does not appear to have led to a very significant additional deterioration of conditions in the labour market, but it remains in a fragile position.

The labour market was in a fragile position heading into January. The number of employee jobs was down by more than 800,000 on the start of the year, following a sharp reduction during the first lockdown, and unemployment had been rising since the summer. In both cases, the deteriorating trend had stopped at the end of the year, with the general picture one of stability in November and December, suggesting the Job Retention Scheme (JRS) was doing its job in this period and essentially keeping the labour market frozen. The less positive trend as the year ended was redundancies, which rose sharply in the autumn – partly triggered by the Government's late extension of the JRS in October ahead of its planned abolition. Redundancies were no longer rising in November but remained high, with 400,000 people reporting they had been made redundant in the past three months, more than at any point during the financial crisis.

The January lockdown has not had as significant a labour market impact as the first lockdown did in spring 2020. The main effect has been increased use of the JRS, with the number of workers on furlough rising from 4 million in December to 4.5 million in January, with all of this increase coming from a rise in the number of workers on full furlough (i.e. not working any hours). This is of course a significant increase, but is much smaller than the 9 million who were furloughed during the first lockdown. Furthermore, our survey suggests that headline labour market indicators such as the employment and unemployment rates are likely to have changed fairly little over the winter months, including January. This is in stark contrast to the spring lockdown, which in the space of two months saw the number of paid jobs fall by 650,000.

This lockdown has had a smaller impact on the labour market than the first one because activity levels are higher, reflecting looser restrictions but also suggesting businesses have adapted to operating under lockdown conditions. We do not yet have GDP figures for the two periods, but Google's mobility data shows trips to workplaces did not fall as much in January as they did in the spring (relative to a pre-pandemic baseline), and credit and debit card data also shows that spending has held up better. Another reason is that this lockdown comes after the significant labour market shake-out of the spring, although that does not explain a large part of the difference.

The types of job affected in the January lockdown have hardly changed since the spring. The crisis continues to be highly sector-specific in its impacts, with workers in hospitality, leisure, and non-supermarket retail much more likely than workers in other parts of the economy to have found themselves out of work, on furlough, or earning less than they were before the crisis, including over seven-in-ten hospitality workers and more than half of those in non-food retail. These sectoral differences are in turn driving the greater impacts experienced by the youngest (and older) workers, and those in low paid jobs – 18-24-year-olds are twice as likely to have faced an impact as those in middle age, for example. A decomposition of the impacts suggests that sector of work is by far the most important factor in explaining employment effects. Personal characteristics, such as age, sex, and location matter much less once sector is taken into account.

The difference in the economic impact on men and women has been an important question during this crisis. The latest data shows that the impact on male employment has been greater (down 1.9 per cent since the start of the crisis, compared to a 1.1 per cent fall in female employment), although women have been marginally more likely than men to have been furloughed. Of course, the headline effects do not tell the whole story, and women have borne the brunt of the crisis in other ways – other studies have shown, for example, that the crisis has worsened within-household inequalities in the apportionment of childcare and housework.

The length of the crisis means we should pay attention to the depth of the impact experienced by some individuals

It is the duration, not just the severity, of labour market hits that determines their impact.

Long-term unemployment (those unemployed for 12 months or more) stood at 357,000 in the three months to November 2020, up from 241,000 in the three months to May, and is likely to rise much higher in the coming years. But in addition to long-term unemployment, a new feature of this crisis is the large number of workers who have spent extended periods on full furlough. The number of workers who in January had been on full furlough for at least six months (475,000) is nearly as large as the number of people in January who we estimate had been unemployed for at least six months (689,000). Altogether, 1.9 million people had spent the past six months unemployed or on full furlough (including those who have experienced a combination of unemployment and full furlough, without reaching six months of either individually).

Furlough is very different to unemployment – not only because people are getting paid (even if up to 20 per cent less than normal), but also because the worker still has a link to their employer. But some of the negative impacts of long-term unemployment that have a 'scarring' effect on workers will also be features of long periods of furlough. This includes a loss of skills (either in absolute terms, or relative to increases that would have occurred in the workplace). Some workers on full furlough are likely to lose work when the JRS is withdrawn, at which point they will be in a similar position to the long-term unemployed in terms of the time spent not working. On the other hand, some of the scarring effects felt by the long-term unemployed will be linked to how the unemployed are perceived by potential employers (unemployment carries a negative 'signal'), and that is likely to be less of a problem for the long-term furloughed.

But even those furloughed workers that do return to work are likely to experience slower pay growth as a result, again due to having missed out on the growth in skills and experience that would have happened at work. This will be especially acute for young people, whose development and pay progression is fastest (in 2019, for example, the median annual pay growth among 18-29-year-olds was more than double that of older groups). This is another way in which young people will continue to feel the pandemic's effects long after the immediate crisis ends.

The self-employed have continued to face a big hit, and gaps in support remain.

As the crisis has persisted, self-employed workers have continued to face a big income hit. When considering those facing any significant effect, the recent impact is slightly more muted than that seen in the first lockdown: the share facing a significant income hit is somewhat lower than in the spring, although the hit has worsened since the height of economic reopening in September. But the duration of the crisis has led to more of the previously self-employed ceasing to work entirely. In January, 14 per cent of those who were self-employed before the crisis were no longer working, up from 11 per cent in September and 9 per cent in May. The hit to the self-employed has remained much more broad-based across groups and sectors than that for employees.

Policy changes since our last report mean that the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) is now better targeted. With the latest round of grants explicitly conditional on having suffered Covid-related losses, just 3 per cent of self-employed respondents said that their SEISS grants had paid out more than their losses. But support is still missing many of those who need it: three-in-ten (29 per cent) self-employed workers in our survey – equivalent to 1.5 million people – said that while their profits had fallen as a result of Covid-19, they had not been eligible to receive a grant through the scheme. This exclusion could have longer-term consequences, too, as those who were not eligible for the SEISS were two-and-a-half times more likely to say they planned to leave self-employment than those who received a grant.

With job losses on the horizon, one-in-seven workers are already looking for a new job

The impact of the crisis so far has been large, with 7 per cent of those in employment before the crisis having already stopped working. But unfortunately, there are likely to be further job losses to come. One-in-twelve (8 per cent) of those in employment in January either expected to lose their job or had been told they would be made redundant, rising to more than one-in-five (21 per cent) of those who had spent more than six months on furlough.

Those who are worried about losing their job are already looking for work. Overall, one-in-seven (14 per cent) of those in employment are already job-hunting, with a further one-in-ten (10 per cent) set to join them within three months. But among those who expect to lose their job, almost two-thirds (65 per cent) are either already looking or plan to start within three months.

Workers do not feel confident about finding a new job, however. Among job-seekers who are unemployed or furloughed, only one-in-seven (14 per cent) are confident of finding work within the next month, while more than a third (37 per cent) are not confident that they will find a job within the next year. Those who have been unemployed for more than six months are the most discouraged: more than half (53 per cent) of this group do not think they will have a job in a year's time. On the whole, furloughed workers are more optimistic than the unemployed – but still, one-in-seven (14 per cent) of those who have spent more than six months on furlough do not think they will find a new job in the next year. While there is plenty of evidence that workers are willing to adjust to a post-Covid world, many are clearly worried that they may struggle to do so.

One-in-twelve workers plan to move sectors after the crisis

In the longer term, another driver of job search may arise: those who are looking to move sectors. One-in-twelve (8 per cent) respondents plan to move sectors after the pandemic either because they have had put planned moves on hold because of the crisis (6 per cent) or because they have made unplanned sector moves during the crisis and would like to move again (2 per cent). Hospitality workers are most likely to wish to leave their sector, with close to a quarter (23 per cent) planning to do so. This high level is not explained by the fact that hospitality workers are more mobile in normal times, or by the fact that hospitality workers are disproportionately young and working on insecure contracts.

The Resolution Foundation do not find any evidence that people plan to leave the labour force any more than before the crisis. In fact, older workers (aged 55-65) who have been furloughed during the crisis are more likely to plan to continue working after the crisis has passed than those who have not been furloughed, indicating that people are planning to delay retirement to make up for lost income.

Finally, the authors think that recent estimates that 1.3 million foreign-born people have left the UK are overstated, with the true number likely closer to 0.5 million – still a huge figure. The number of migrants in the Labour Force Survey appears to have fallen in part because of difficulties contacting them during the pandemic.

Policy must continue to support firms and workers beyond April 2021

As the health effects of the second wave start to recede, and with a Budget approaching, the question is what policy needs to do to secure a strong labour market recovery. As we have argued, an important new consideration for policy makers is the duration of the crisis, which will have deepened its impact on workers and firms. The policy response should take account of this new dimension, phasing out lockdown-linked support gradually and phasing in new measures to strengthen the recovery that reflect the lasting impacts of the crisis. Before moving onto specific labour market policies, the authors note that a necessary condition for a return to full employment will be to get overall macroeconomic policy right. Policy makers will need to ensure that demand recovers swiftly across the economy as social distancing measures are eased. The corporate sector must be returned to good health.

Turning to the labour market specifically, the biggest question the Government faces is how and at what pace to withdraw the JRS. Here, there is a balance to be struck. Withdraw too fast and there will be unnecessary job losses (this mistake was made in the autumn). But as the pandemic recedes, policy will also need to avoid slowing the recovery by supporting non-viable jobs. Getting this balance right requires policy to be contingent on the state of the economy and the pandemic rather than on a fixed timescale. This calibration should mean a differentiated approach across sectors and (if necessary) regions. Before extending the JRS in its full form, the job support measures proposed in October last year did allow variation at the regional level according to the different levels of restrictions faced. This principle – of tying job support to restrictions in place at the sector and regional level - should once again underpin the withdrawal of the JRS this year.

Currently, the restrictions on economic activity are so broad that a continuation of the blanket JRS is warranted. And even when restrictions start to be pared back, blanket support should remain in place for at least two more months, given the lags in deploying and reallocating workers, and in consulting on and announcing redundancies. After that point, support levels should be differentiated between sectors. Those which remain shut or whose activities are heavily curtailed as a matter of law (which is likely to include the hospitality and leisure sectors) should maintain the JRS in its current form for longer. For sectors not in this position (the majority of them), the JRS should be withdrawn at a pace consistent with the ability of the labour market to reabsorb the workers these firms will release. This can be achieved with the introduction of, and progressive increase in, a minimum hours requirement for furloughed workers. Employer contributions should not rise in the first instance, and should only be increased when the scheme is in the final stages of winding down. If, and only if, the current plans to substantively lift restrictions on the economy by the end of the summer are delivered, the approach above would see furloughing also coming to an end around that point.

Support for the self-employed should be extended, with improved targeting. It is welcome that the Government has now prevented SEISS grants going to those who have not seen income falls, but it should go further to improve the targeting of support at those who have lost income. The Treasury should extend support to excluded groups, while reforming grants to pay out 80 per cent of losses (rather than pre-crisis profits), up to a cap equivalent to £2,500 a month, bringing the SEISS onto an equal footing with the Job Retention Scheme. The cost of extending support, including back-paying grants to those who have been unfairly excluded, could be partly recouped by clawing back two-thirds of excess SEISS payments from those who received grants they did not need in previous rounds of the scheme.

In addition to ongoing support for employee jobs and the self-employed, the Government must get right its new employment support schemes. The volume of placements and support planned under its Kickstart and Restart programmes (for young people at risk of unemployment and long-term unemployed adults respectively) are very significant. But there are questions about timing and delivery. Because the lockdown has delayed Kickstart's rollout and long-term unemployment is likely to continue rising for the next few years, Kickstart, which is currently set to close in December 2021, must be extended. And the Government should recognise the new issue of those on long-term furlough, whose time spent on full furlough should count towards eligibility for both schemes. The Government must also put in place measures to protect young people from the scarring effects of unemployment more broadly – this should include expanding traineeship and apprenticeship numbers.

Finally, the Government must pursue a range of policies to promote hiring, job creation, and to facilitate career changes where that is appropriate. A targeted wage subsidy in sectors that remain significantly affected by social distancing rules even after they are fully open would be the best way to do this, maximising employment and hours worked in sectors suffering temporarily lower productivity while avoiding the large deadweight costs of the Government's previous attempt to address this issue via the proposed (but never implemented) Job Retention Bonus.

Should the Government wish to prioritise cuts in taxes to incentive hiring, then temporarily raising the National Insurance contributions (NICs) threshold where firms are increasing their headcount would be more effective, in particular at targeting those who are lower paid, than lowering the NICs contribution rate. But the Government should also invest to create jobs directly, in social care and in green sectors like retrofitting, since those jobs would be geographically dispersed and without high skill barriers to entry. For career changes, work coaches should have the flexibility to waive the restriction on adults who already have a Level 3 qualification being able to access newly-announced free Level 3 courses, where the type of their existing qualifications is a barrier to progression.

Overall, a longer illness leaves the patient needing greater care and stronger medicine.

Migrant Workers in Construction

Anne Green, WMREDI

In February 2021 the Construction Industry Training Board published the latest results from a series of annual studies on Migrant Workers in the UK Construction and Built Environment Sectors. The research study involved a review of recent literature on migration and policy documents, analysis of the 2019 Labour Force Survey, in-depth interviews with a dozen employers - each with a significant number of non-UK employees, four specialist construction recruitment agencies, three other industry stakeholders, and a telephone survey (conducted by IFF Research between September and November 2020) with 350 employers and agencies.

Awareness and impact of the new Points-Based Immigration System

A previous article in the Monitor has outlined changes to the UK immigration system after the Brexit transition period. The employer survey undertaken in September to November 2020 revealed that 72% of employers thought that the end of free movement and introduction of the Points-Based Immigration System (PBIS) would impact on the construction sector's ability to secure a skilled workforce. Over a quarter of employers and half of recruitment agencies thought the impact would be serious.

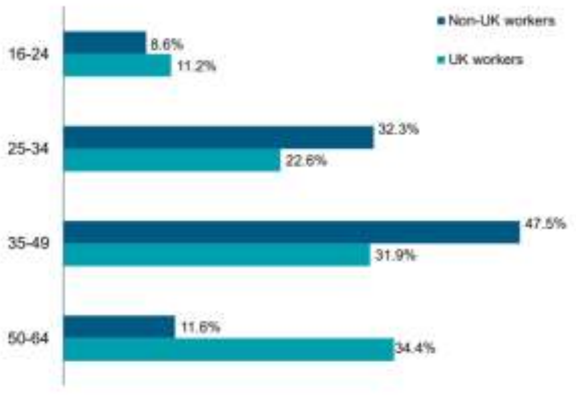
Nevertheless, most employers indicated that the introduction of the PBIS would not immediately impact their operations because of the impact of COVID-19 on demand for labour and continued access to EU migrant workers who have chosen to stay in the UK post-Brexit. Looking ahead, however, major investment in infrastructure and the role that construction in meeting the net zero carbon target is likely to drive demand for construction skills beyond the immediate future. This provides an opportunity to enhance employers' awareness of the PBIS.

Reliance of the UK construction sector on migrant workers

Analyses of Labour Force Survey data indicate that 10.2% of the UK's construction workers were from outside the UK in 2019. This was slightly down on the 10.7% recorded in 2018. Almost half (49.6%) of all non-UK workers in 2019 lived in London. Most of this overseas workforce comprises EU workers: 8.2% of all workers were from EU countries in 2019, down from 8.6% in 2018. Brexit may be a factor here, alongside the relative attractiveness of opportunities in migrant workers' home countries.

Characteristics of migrant workers in construction vis-à-vis UK workers

Labour Force Survey data indicates that non-UK workers tend to be younger than UK workers. While just over a third of UK workers are under 35 years of age (nearly 34%), that proportion increases to 41% for non-UK workers (see diagram below showing the age structure of UK and non-UK workers). The ageing of the construction workforce is a key issue going forward.



Source: Labour Force Survey

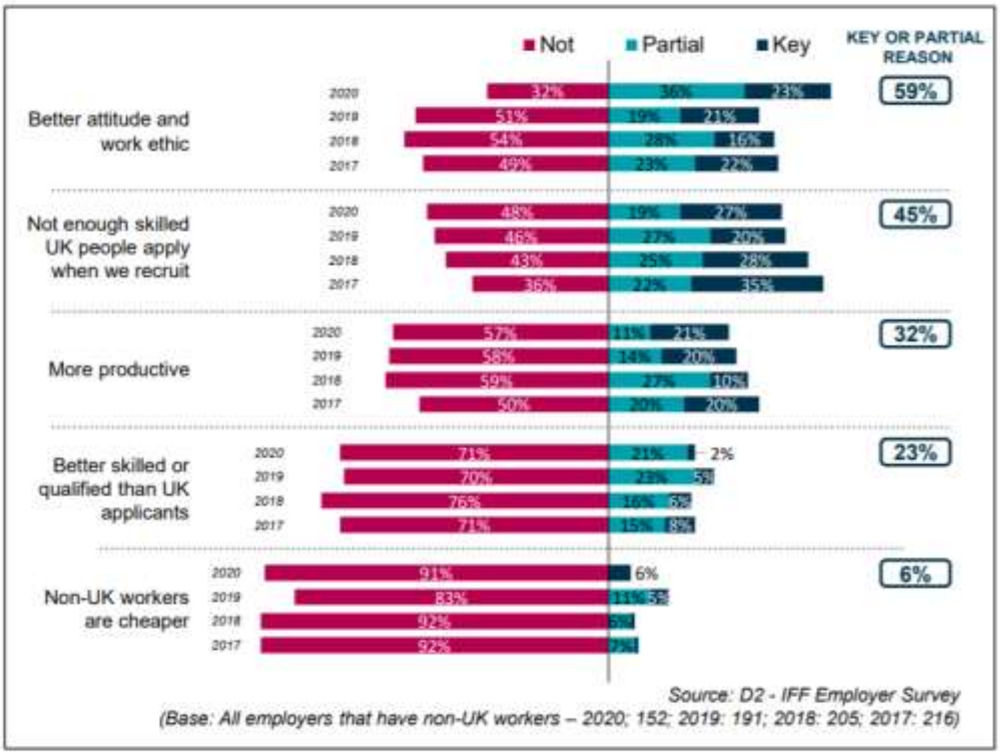
Workers born outside of the UK were much more likely to be self-employed, with just under half (nearly 49%) working for themselves compared nearly 38% for UK-born workers. This is significant as in UK post-Brexit immigration policy there is no route open for self-employed workers. A further loss of EU migrant workers currently in the UK would have implications for the construction workforce and for sub-contracting in the UK. London is likely to be particularly hard hit, but regions like the West Midlands would also suffer knock-on impacts.

Employers' reasons for using non-UK workers

A majority of employers in construction with non-UK workers in 2020 indicated they hired these workers because they have a better attitude and work ethic (59%). More mentioned this factor than in previous studies in 2019, 2018 and 2018. Slightly

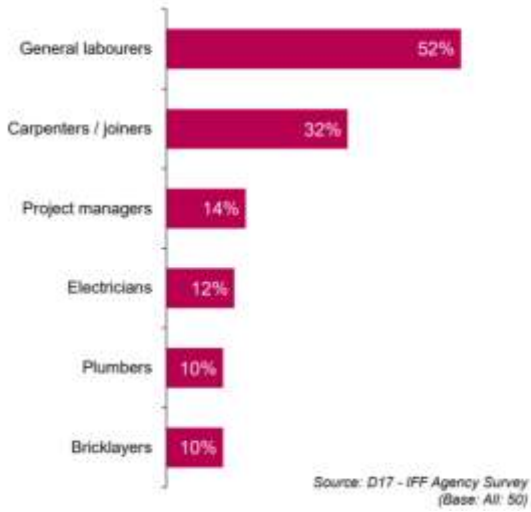
The WM Weekly monitor is funded by the West Midlands Combined Authority, Research England/UKRI

under half (45%) were motivated by there not being enough skilled UK people that apply; though there has been a small but consistent fall since 2017 in the proportion citing this as a reason (see diagram below). Nevertheless, availability of UK labour with the requisite skills remains a key issue.



Skills shortages and recruitment difficulties

An increase in overall levels of unemployment and limited opportunities in sectors that have traditionally competed with construction for new entrants certainly represents a recruitment opportunity for construction. Evidence from the survey of employers indicates that 41% are planning to upskill their UK workforce and 30% are looking to create more PAYE jobs for domestic workers. However, less than a quarter (24%) consider that they will increase salaries so they meet the PBIS threshold for employing from overseas, and just 16% anticipate recruiting more apprentices. Employers are particularly concerned about their ability to source general labourers and groundworkers, with qualification levels for these roles below the requirement for the new Skilled Visa route. The diagram below shows the main occupations that agencies expect to be more difficult to recruit / will encounter skills shortages due to the PBIS.



Evidence from recruitment agencies provides a more optimistic view, with 68% expecting that the amount of training offered by employers will increase and 56% predicting that more full-time jobs for domestic workers will be created. Agencies also expect that there will be a reduction in both skilled (68% expect a decrease) and low-skilled workers (80% expect a decrease) coming to the UK. Around half expect difficulties filling construction vacancies.

Qualitative Intelligence

Anne Green, WMREDI

The Prime Minister's announcement on 22 February 2021 setting out the roadmap out of Covid-19 lockdown has been welcomed broadly by businesses. It provides some degree of clarity. Sentiment is improving generally with greater optimism than in previous months.

Despite redundancy levels remaining similar to recent weeks and the JLR announcement of 2,000 jobs being cut over the next 12 months, the business outlook seems more favourable. More manufacturing businesses are operating fully and there are reports that recruitment is increasing. Nevertheless, it remains difficult to predict future orders.

A larger proportion of businesses are reporting that they are not affected by EU exit but challenges for some remain, especially for those with high volume low value exports. Another concern is that some stock to the EU sent at the start of the year has become 'stuck' in the system; yet more recent shipments have been dealt with more smoothly. There are signs that exports to some destinations outside the EU is easier than to the EU and there is some 'cautious optimism' about building wider trading links. Businesses looking to set up bases in Europe are reporting difficulties in securing advice about how to do this.

Within the UK some issues remain regarding the Northern Ireland protocol, with implications for supply chains. More generally throughout the UK there is greater impetus on growing new supply chains, so opening up opportunities for businesses.

On the skills front there are concerns that higher education and further education institutions are not providing the skills and training that businesses need. In the region there is a particular concern about skills in electric vehicle technologies.

Amongst the small business community there are ongoing concerns about those that have received no support. Looking ahead there is considerable optimism that hospitality will bounce back as lockdown restrictions are eased – especially in a context of uncertainty about international travel which, in turn, strengthens domestic demand.

There are concerns about the prospects of the 'over 50s' who tend to be particularly likely to suffer long-term unemployment at times of recession. This group has been at the forefront of the rise in employment rates pre-Covid-19.

SME-Stakeholder Roundtable Observations

This summarises the latest qualitative knowledge from the SME representative bodies in the region

Themes:

- Current grant funding is not covering the overheads for larger SMEs or those with high cost premises
- Significant gaps in support for wider supply chain businesses and directors of limited companies
- The complexity of current grant schemes is leading to significant issues for businesses and local authorities administrating them
- A return to single household groups would not be viable for hospitality businesses
- Sector specific support will be required to match the Government's "road map"– significant concerns for tourism & live events that they will be the last to unlock
- Substantial concerns regarding unsustainable debt and access to finance for growth

Key Budget Asks:

- Extension and simplification of grant support
- Extend business rates relief & VAT reduction
- Extend CJRS and remove NI & Pension contributions
- Extending the terms of the CBILS loan scheme from 6 to 10 years

• Develop an exit strategy for high debt burdens and support recapitalisation, which could include innovative instruments for packaging and restructuring CBILS and BBLs debt
• Introduce financial support for landlords and tenants to deal with the build up of rent arrears
• Bring forward sector specific support for the hardest hit industries such as the travel industry and events industry as well as non-essential retail, hospitality and accommodation

Observations for Local Stakeholders:
• Innovate use of public spaces to support outdoor hospitality for those without outdoor spaces
• Potential opportunity for regional interventions to bridge gaps on access to finance
• Restoring confidence as key sectors reopen and supporting returns to city centres

British Chambers of Commerce COVID-19 Impact Survey
• 61% of businesses saw revenue from UK customers fall in the last 3 months (19% saw increased revenue)
• 23% of firms expect to run out of cash in the next 3 months (31% for B2C firms)
• 25% of all respondents expect to make staff redundant is support stops in March and April
British Chambers of Commerce survey undertaken in January 2021, over 1,100 responses

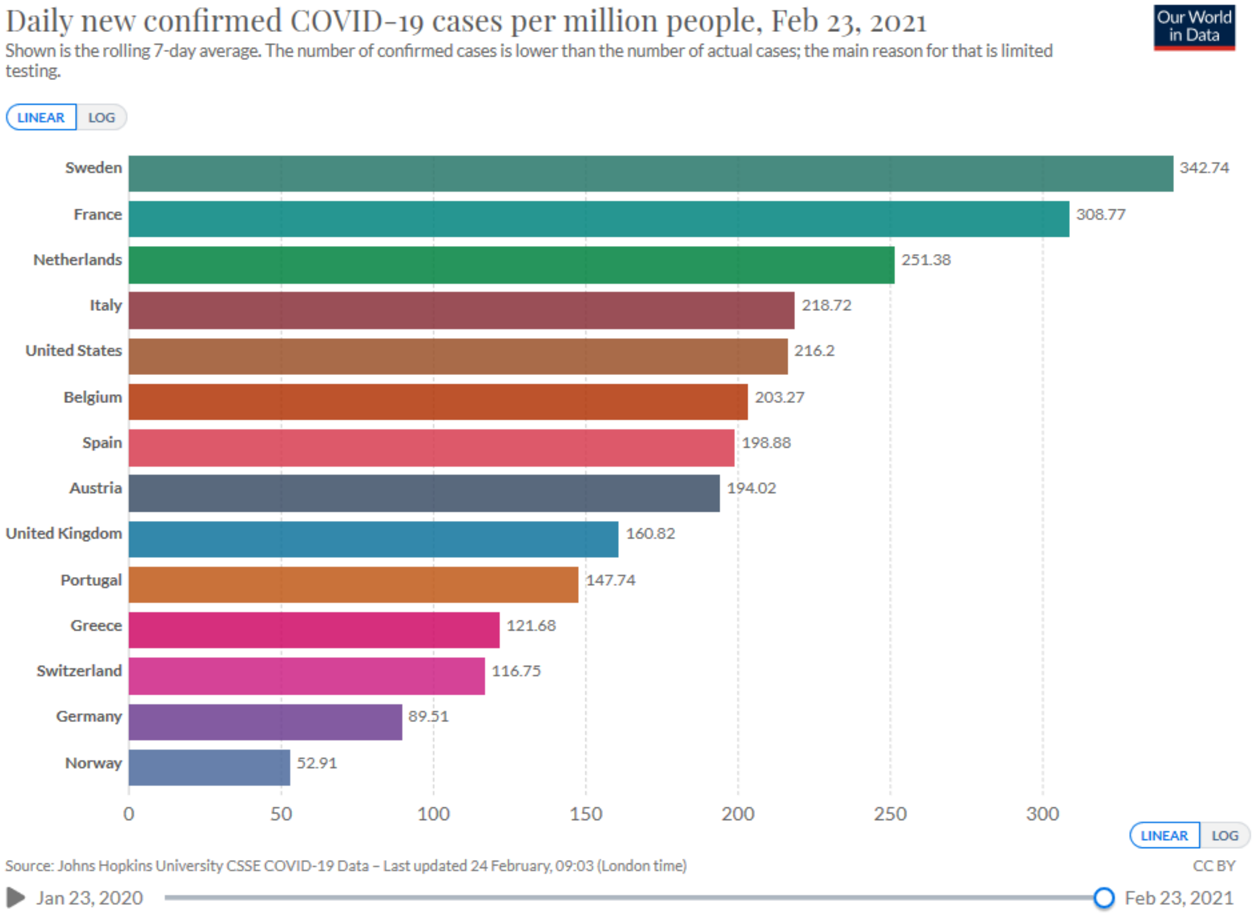
The WM Weekly monitor is funded by the West Midlands Combined Authority, Research England/UKRI

Infection Rates and Vaccine Update

Alice Pugh WMREDI/WMCA

Europe has seen a resurgence in infection rates which is continuing (see graph below).

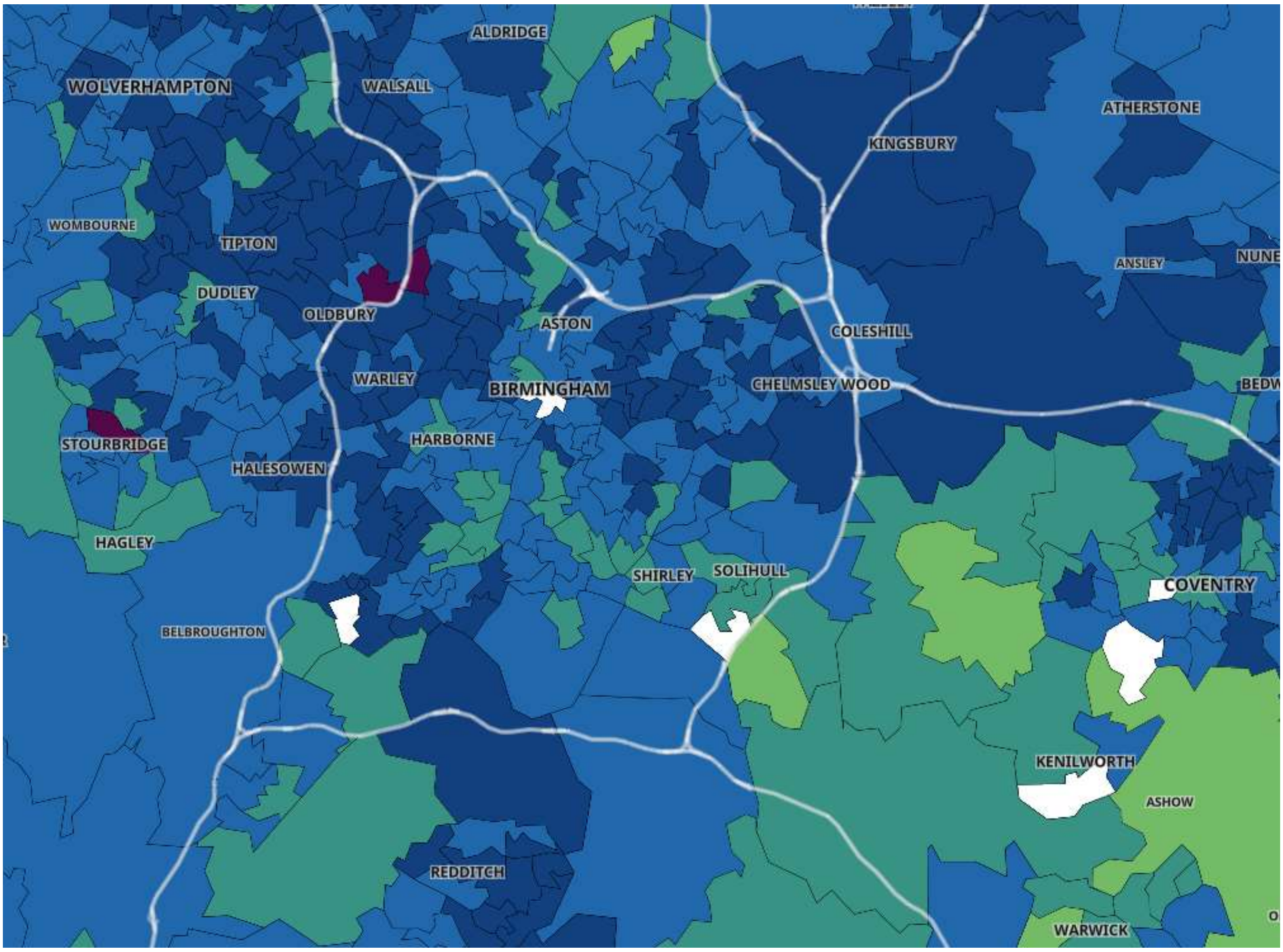
Since 31 December 2019 and as of week 2021-6, **109 206 497 cases** of COVID-19 (in accordance with the applied case definitions and testing strategies in the affected countries) have been reported, including **2 407 469 deaths.**



Latest ONS infection survey data (19th Feb- next release 26th Feb) states:

- In England, the percentage of people testing positive for the coronavirus (COVID-19) decreased in the week ending 12 February 2021; we estimate that 481,300 people within the community population in England had COVID-19 (95% credible interval: 451,600 to 512,400), equating to around 1 in 115 people.
- In Wales, the percentage of people testing positive decreased in the week ending 12 February 2021; we estimate that 24,600 people in Wales had COVID-19 (95% credible interval: 20,100 to 29,400), equating to around 1 in 125 people.
- In Northern Ireland, the percentage of people testing positive decreased in the week ending 12 February 2021; we estimate that 17,800 people in Northern Ireland had COVID-19 (95% credible interval: 13,900 to 22,400), equating to around 1 in 105 people.
- In Scotland, the percentage of people testing positive decreased in the week ending 12 February 2021; we estimate that 29,200 people in Scotland had COVID-19 (95% credible interval: 24,300 to 34,600) equating to around 1 in 180 people.

The map below displays weekly data, which are updated every day here. This map is for 18th February 2021

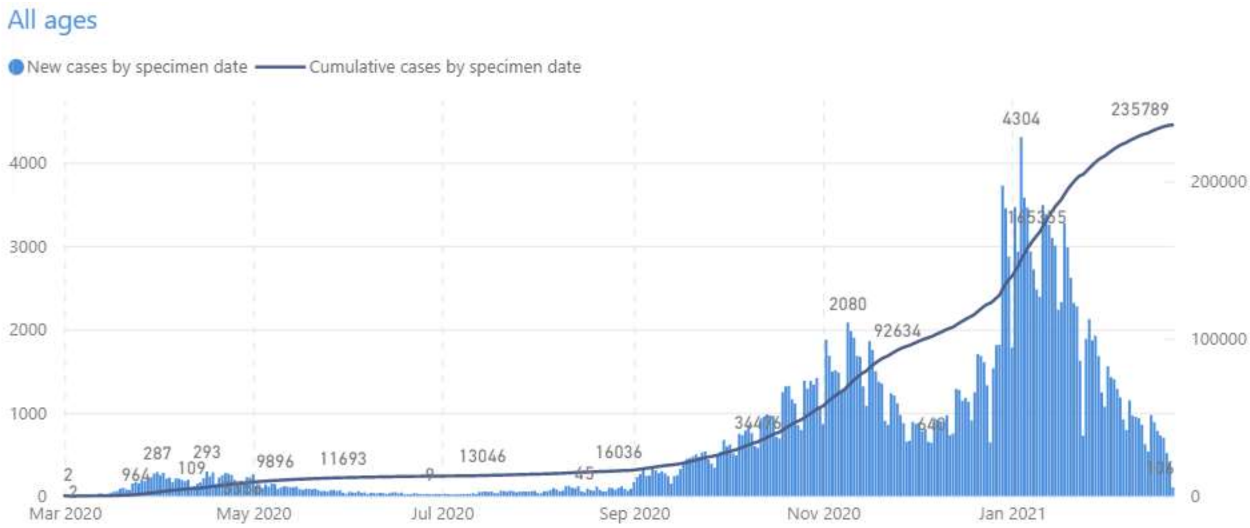


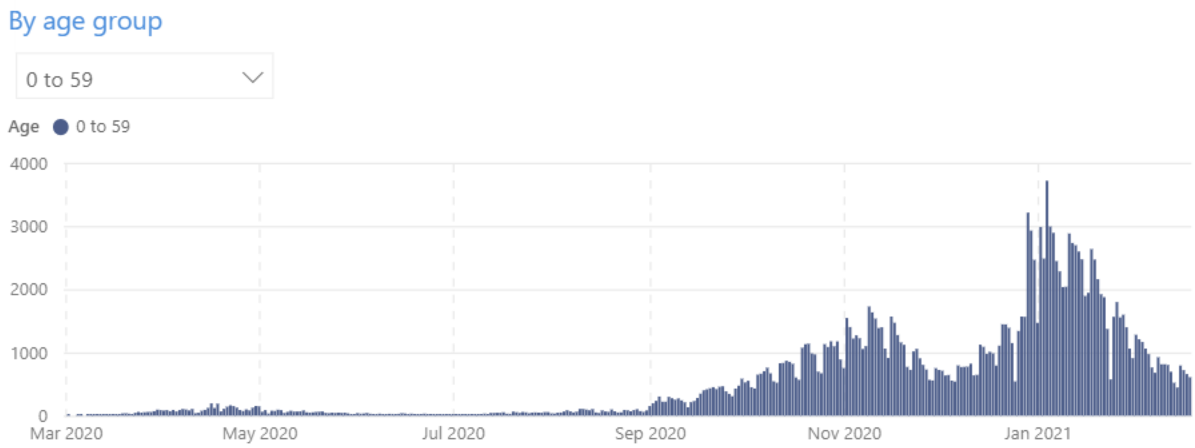
Regional Data

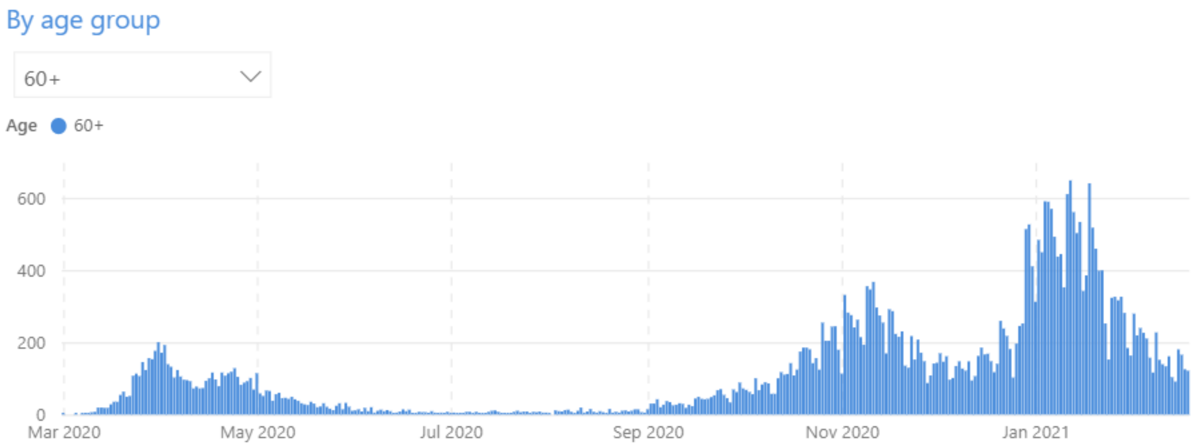
The Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Epidemiology and Intelligence Cell have created a dashboard which looks at covid data on a regional level. Data below:

Date	New cases by specimen date	New cases by publish date	Cumulative cases by specimen date	Cases in the last 7 days	Rate per 100,000 in the last 7 days
18 February 2021	727	845	234058	5376	183.57
17 February 2021	782	929	233331	5582	190.60
16 February 2021	884	701	232549	5751	196.37
15 February 2021	972	593	231665	5830	199.07
14 February 2021	534	772	230693	6006	205.08
13 February 2021	622	917	230159	6265	213.93
12 February 2021	855	1026	229537	6561	224.03
11 February 2021	933	932	228682	6888	235.20
10 February 2021	951	1040	227749	7240	247.22
09 February 2021	963	803	226798	7693	262.69
08 February 2021	1148	1087	225835	8156	278.50
07 February 2021	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

As can be seen from the charts below in the first lockdown infections were higher in the older age groups, whereas now younger people are being infected (nb there will be some effect from higher testing but symptomatic cases presenting for testing are also more prevalent now).







Covid 19 Hospital Activity

A number of data collections have been implemented to support incident management. The collections were activated at short notice and the content of the collections has evolved as the incident has developed. The data collected is classified as management information. It has been collected on a daily basis with a tight turn round time. No revisions have been made to the dataset. Any analysis of the data should be undertaken with this in mind.

Total reported admissions to hospital and diagnoses in hospital

The table below shows the latest daily rates

Name	10-Feb-21	11-Feb-21	12-Feb-21	13-Feb-21	14-Feb-21	15-Feb-21	16-Feb-21	17-Feb-21	18-Feb-21	19-Feb-21	20-Feb-21
ENGLAND	1,535	1,440	1,318	1,240	1,364	1,322	1,311	1,233	1,149	1,068	904
East of England	179	173	142	142	148	143	129	131	145	97	98
London	243	217	190	175	196	179	166	150	142	150	110
Midlands	319	329	278	274	322	325	317	298	267	270	229
North East and Yorkshire	242	217	240	199	214	225	222	197	214	167	168
North West	234	223	189	212	177	227	174	178	148	163	148
South East	208	171	183	167	218	144	215	183	155	155	113
South West	110	110	96	71	89	79	88	96	78	66	38

Mechanical Ventilation beds - occupied by confirmed COVID-19 patients

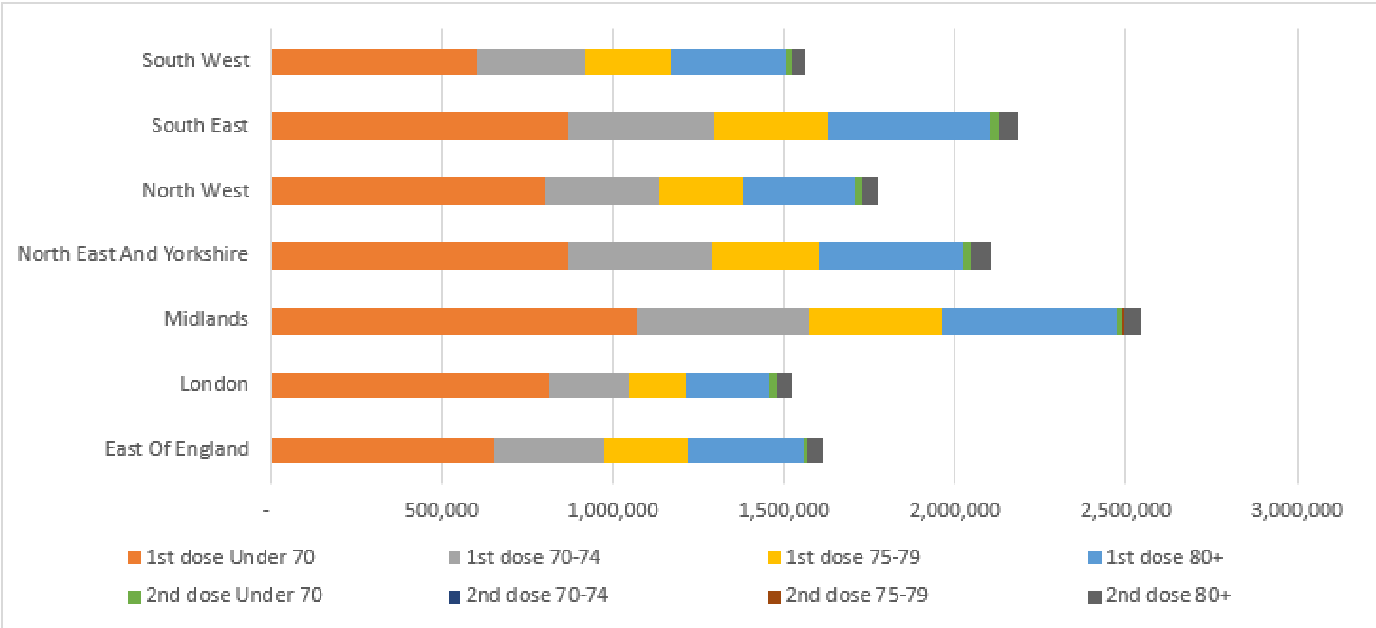
Name	12-Feb-21	13-Feb-21	14-Feb-21	15-Feb-21	16-Feb-21	17-Feb-21	18-Feb-21	19-Feb-21	20-Feb-21	21-Feb-21	22-Feb-21
ENGLAND	2,688	2,592	2,611	2,577	2,484	2,393	2,316	2,251	2,142	2,122	2,072
East of England	213	205	203	210	206	198	190	183	176	169	164
London	859	865	855	834	790	749	706	705	667	667	653
Midlands	525	495	498	489	468	455	442	439	421	415	421
North East and Yorkshire	293	296	293	294	287	280	278	263	252	252	248
North West	314	308	290	299	296	289	290	284	272	272	256
South East	344	292	339	322	312	305	295	270	258	249	234
South West	140	131	133	129	125	117	115	107	96	98	96

Total beds - occupied by confirmed COVID-19 patients (as at 08:00)

Name	12-Feb-21	13-Feb-21	14-Feb-21	15-Feb-21	16-Feb-21	17-Feb-21	18-Feb-21	19-Feb-21	20-Feb-21	21-Feb-21	22-Feb-21
ENGLAND	19,009	17,694	17,787	17,730	17,093	16,458	15,633	15,018	14,316	14,142	14,137
East of England	2,140	2,014	1,958	1,959	1,886	1,780	1,679	1,536	1,530	1,504	1,521
London	3,882	3,562	3,595	3,603	3,500	3,292	3,059	3,048	2,803	2,734	2,737
Midlands	3,840	3,608	3,612	3,534	3,466	3,325	3,280	3,190	3,080	3,036	3,080
North East and Yorkshire	2,723	2,589	2,547	2,536	2,420	2,391	2,305	2,197	2,155	2,163	2,118
North West	2,754	2,631	2,610	2,621	2,513	2,391	2,322	2,198	2,071	2,072	2,078
South East	2,561	2,261	2,455	2,451	2,342	2,349	2,116	2,025	1,902	1,875	1,860
South West	1,109	1,029	1,010	1,026	966	930	872	824	775	758	743

Vaccine Update

As of the [18th February 2021] the Midlands has successfully vaccinated 2,472,020 people with the first dose and a 72,117 of these individuals have received the second dose as well. This means that the Midlands has successfully continued to provide the most doses of the first jab; however the region has dropped to the 3rd highest provider of the second dose out of the English regions.



Region of Residence	1st dose				Cumulative Total 1st Doses to Date	2nd dose				Cumulative Total of all Doses to Date
	Under 70	70-74	75-79	80+		Under 70	70-74	75-79	80+	
Total	5,700,276	2,564,466	1,927,943	2,649,791	12,842,476	133,811	4,836	8,353	340,689	13,331,890
East Of England	656,315	321,497	242,404	335,080	1,555,296	12,453	471	732	46,323	1,615,275
London	816,966	231,783	166,488	244,885	1,460,122	17,839	1,159	1,825	42,243	1,523,188
Midlands	1,071,582	502,129	387,283	511,026	2,472,020	19,716	673	2,022	49,706	2,544,137
North East And Yorkshire	871,306	422,594	307,841	422,465	2,024,206	22,925	530	799	57,624	2,106,084
North West	805,080	333,362	242,787	323,877	1,705,106	22,035	892	1,359	43,972	1,773,364
South East	867,520	431,526	332,888	470,435	2,102,369	25,073	781	1,197	57,728	2,187,148
South West	603,330	319,158	246,566	339,701	1,508,755	13,452	329	415	42,893	1,565,844

The WM Weekly monitor is funded by the West Midlands Combined Authority, Research England/UKRI

Claimant Count and Labour Market Statistics: Released February 2021

BCCEIU

UK Summary[1]

- Early estimates for January 2021 indicate that there were 28.3 million payrolled employees in the UK, a fall of 2.5% compared with the same period of the previous year and a decline of 730,000 people over the 12-month period. Compared with the previous month, the number of UK payrolled employees increased by 0.3% in January 2021 - equivalent to 83,000 people.

- There were an approximately 599,000 vacancies in the UK in November 2020 to January 2021; this is 211,000 fewer than a year ago and 64,000 more than the previous quarter.

- The number of people temporarily away from work has fallen since its peak in April and May 2020, although it has increased slightly in November and December. There was around 307,000 people away from work because of the pandemic and receiving no pay in December 2020; this has increased slightly since November 2020 but has fallen from around 658,000 in April 2020.

- The UK unemployment rate in the three months to December 2020 was estimated at 5.1%, 1.3 percentage points higher than a year earlier and 0.4 percentage points higher than the previous quarter.

- The redundancy rate, in the three months to December 2020, was estimated at 12.3 people per thousand employees.

- Growth in average total pay (including bonuses) among employees for the three months October to December 2020 increased to 4.7%, and growth in regular pay (excluding bonuses) also increased to 4.1%.

Regional Labour Market Summary[2]

- **For the three months ending in December 2020, the West Midlands Region employment rate** (aged 16 – 64 years) was **74.0%,** a decrease of 0.5pp from the previous quarter. The UK employment rate was 75.0%, a decrease of 0.3pp from the previous quarter.

- **For the three months ending in December 2020, the West Midlands Region unemployment rate** (aged 16 years and over) **was 6.1%, which has increased by 1.2pp since the previous quarter.** The UK unemployment rate was 5.1%, an increase of 0.4pp from the previous quarter.

- **For the three months ending in December 2020, the West Midlands Region economic inactivity rate** (aged 16 – 64 years) **was 21.0% - a decrease of 0.5pp** from previous quarter. The UK economic inactivity rate was 20.9%, remaining the same from the previous quarter.

WMCA 3 LEP Summary

- There were **207,645 claimants aged 16 years and over in the WMCA** (3 LEP) area in January 2021, a decrease of 925 people when compared to December 2020. This was a 0.4% decrease compared to an overall UK decrease of 0.7%. For the WMCA (3 LEP) area, when compared to March 2020 (117,590) the number of claimants has increased by 90,055 (+76.6% compared to +102.7% UK). When compared to January 2020 (112,170), the number of claimants has increased by 95,475 (+85.1% compared to 111.6% UK).

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[1] Source: ONS, Labour Market Overview; UK: February 2021

[2] Source: ONS, Labour Market in the Regions of the UK: February 2021. Please note, Labour Force Survey (LFS) responses are weighted to official population projections. As the current projections are 2018-based they are based on demographic trends that pre-date the COVID-19 pandemic. We are analysing the population totals used in the weighting process and may make adjustments if appropriate. Rates published from the LFS remain robust; however, levels and changes in levels should be used with caution.

- There were **41,230 youth claimants in the WMCA** (3 LEP) area in January 2021, a decrease of 725 people when compared to December 2020. This equates to a decrease of 1.7%, while the UK decreased by 0.6%. For the WMCA (3 LEP) area, when compared to March 2020 (22,835) the number of claimants has increased by 18,395 (+80.6% compared to +105.8% for the UK). When compared to January 2020 (21,625), the number of claimants has increased by 19,985 (+94.1% compared to 119.5% for UK).

Claimant Count[3]

Claimant count for people aged 16+:

- There were **207,645 claimants aged 16 years and over in the WMCA** (3 LEP) area in January 2021, a decrease of 925 people when compared to December 2020. This was a 0.4% decrease compared to an overall UK decrease of 0.7%. For the WMCA (3 LEP) area, when compared to March 2020 (117,590) the number of claimants has increased by 90,055 (+76.6% compared to +102.7% UK). When compared to January 2020 (112,170), the number of claimants has increased by 95,475 (+85.1% compared to 111.6% UK).

- Within the WMCA (3 LEP), the **Black Country LEP had 64,890 claimants** aged 16 years and over in January 2021, a decrease of 115 (-0.2%) claimants from the previous month. When compared to March 2020 (38,275) the number of claimants has increased by 26,615 (+69.5%). When compared to January 2020 (35,780), the number of claimants has increased by 29,110 (+81.4%).

- **In Coventry and Warwickshire LEP, there were 32,485 claimants aged 16 years and over in January 2021,** a decrease of 420 (-1.3%) claimants since December 2020. For the Coventry and Warwickshire LEP area, when compared to March 2020 (15,825) the number of claimants has increased by 16,660 (+105.3%). When compared to January 2020 (14,900), the number of claimants has increased by 17,585 (+118.0%).

- **In Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP, there were 110,270 claimants aged 16 years and over in January 2021,** a decrease of 390 (-0.4%) claimants since December 2020. In the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP area, when compared to March 2020 (63,490) the number of claimants has increased by 46,780 (+73.7%). When compared to January 2020 (61,490), the number of claimants has increased by 48,780 (+79.3%).

The following table shows a breakdown of number of claimants aged 16+ and change by selected months across the WMCA and for the UK:

	January 2020	March 2020	December 2020	January 2021	Jan. 2021 (Claimants as proportion aged 16-64) Rates[4]	% Change (Jan 21 - Jan 20)	% Change (Jan 21 - Mar 20)	% Change (Jan 21 - Dec 20)
Birmingham	47,985	49,370	81,235	81,210	11.1%	69.2%	64.5%	-0.03%
Bromsgrove	1,110	1,165	2,660	2,640	4.5%	137.8%	126.6%	-0.8%
Cannock Chase	1,570	1,655	3,350	3,355	5.3%	113.7%	102.7%	0.1%
Coventry	7,525	8,000	16,425	16,270	6.6%	116.2%	103.4%	-0.9%
Dudley	8,155	8,515	14,220	14,110	7.3%	73.0%	65.7%	-0.8%
East Staffordshire	1,575	1,720	3,685	3,645	5.0%	131.4%	111.9%	-1.1%
Lichfield	1,235	1,320	2,725	2,650	4.4%	114.6%	100.8%	-2.8%
North Warwickshire	765	845	1,975	1,910	5.0%	149.7%	126.0%	-3.3%
Nuneaton and Bedworth	2,670	2,830	5,060	4,930	6.4%	84.6%	74.2%	-2.6%
Redditch	1,490	1,535	3,135	3,080	6.0%	106.7%	100.7%	-1.8%
Rugby	1,495	1,535	2,965	3,000	4.5%	100.7%	95.4%	1.2%
Sandwell	9,990	10,780	19,385	19,325	9.5%	93.4%	79.3%	-0.3%
Solihull	3,565	3,650	7,515	7,460	5.9%	109.3%	104.4%	-0.7%
Stratford-on-Avon	995	1,050	2,915	2,855	3.9%	186.9%	171.9%	-2.1%
Tamworth	1,410	1,490	2,875	2,790	6.1%	97.9%	87.2%	-3.0%
Walsall	7,970	8,605	14,685	14,705	8.5%	84.5%	70.9%	0.1%
Warwick	1,455	1,570	3,565	3,515	3.9%	141.6%	123.9%	-1.4%

[3] ONS/DWP, Claimant count, February 2021. Please note, figures for previous months have been revised.

	January 2020	March 2020	December 2020	January 2021	Jan. 2021 (Claimants as proportion aged 16-64) Rates[4]	% Change (Jan 21 - Jan 20)	% Change (Jan 21 - Mar 20)	% Change (Jan 21 - Dec 20)
Wolverhampton	9,670	10,380	16,720	16,750	10.3%	73.2%	61.4%	0.2%
Wyre Forest	1,555	1,580	3,480	3,435	5.9%	120.9%	117.4%	-1.3%
WM 7 Met.	**94,855**	**99,300**	**170,180**	**169,835**	**9.2%**	**79.0%**	**71.0%**	**-0.2%**
Black Country LEP	35,780	38,275	65,005	64,890	8.9%	81.4%	69.5%	-0.2%
Coventry and Warwickshire LEP	14,900	15,825	32,905	32,485	5.5%	118.0%	105.3%	-1.3%
Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP	61,490	63,490	110,660	110,270	8.7%	79.3%	73.7%	-0.4%
WMCA (3 LEP)	**112,170**	**117,590**	**208,570**	**207,645**	**7.9%**	**85.1%**	**76.6%**	**-0.4%**
United Kingdom	1,215,555	1,268,620	2,589,740	2,572,015	6.2%	111.6%	102.7%	-0.7%

- Overall, for the WMCA (3 LEP) area the number of claimants as a proportion of residents aged 16 -64 years old is 7.9% in January 2021, compared to 6.2% for the UK.[4].

- Within the WMCA (3 LEP) the number of claimants as a proportion of residents aged 16 to 64 years old varies across the 3 LEPs with the Black Country at the highest with 8.8%, followed by Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP with 8.6% and then Coventry and Warwickshire LEP with 5.4%[5].

Youth Claimants (Aged 16-24)

- There were **41,230 youth claimants in the WMCA** (3 LEP) area in January 2021, this is a decrease of 725 people when compared to December 2020. This equates to a decrease of 1.7%, while the UK decreased by 0.6%. For the WMCA (3 LEP) area, when compared to March 2020 (22,835) the number of claimants has increased by 18,395 (+80.6% compared to +105.8% for the UK). When compared to January 2020 (21,625), the number of claimants has increased by 19,985 (+94.1% compared to 119.5% for UK).

- Within the WMCA (3 LEP), the **Black Country LEP had 13,290 youth claimants** in January 2021, a decrease of 240 (-1.8%) claimants from the previous month. When compared to March 2020 (7,750) the number of claimants has increased by 5,540 (+71.5%). When compared to January 2020 (7,185), the number of claimants has increased by 6,105 (+85.0%).

- **In Coventry and Warwickshire LEP, there were 6,155 youth claimants in January 2021,** this was a decrease of 145 (-2.3%) claimants since December 2020. However, across the Coventry and Warwickshire LEP area, when compared to March 2020 (2,920) the number of claimants has increased by 3,235 (+110.8%). When compared to January 2020 (2,725), the number of claimants has increased by 3,430 (+125.9%).

- **In Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP, there were 21,785 youth claimants in January 2021,** this is a decrease of 340 (-1.5%) claimants since December 2020. In the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP area, when compared to March 2020 (12,165) the number of claimants has increased by 9,620 (+79.1%). When compared to January 2020 (11,335), the number of claimants has increased by 10,450 (+92.2%).

[4] SED Board Dashboard reports the number of claimants as a proportion of population aged 16 years and over – WMCA 3 LEP was 6.2% and the UK was 4.8% in January 2021.
[5] SED Board Dashboard reports the number of claimants as a proportion of population aged 16 years and over – BCLEP was 6.9%, CWLEP was 4.2% and GBSLEP was 6.8% in January 2021.

The following table shows a breakdown of number of youth claimants and change by selected months across the WMCA and for the UK:

	January 2020	March 2020	December 2020	January 2021	Jan. 2021 (Claimants as proportion aged 16-24) Rates	% Change (Jan 21 - Jan 20)	% Change (Jan 21 - Mar 20)	% Change (Jan 21 - Dec 20)
Birmingham	8,640	9,220	16,030	15,835	9.3%	83.3%	71.7%	-1.22%
Bromsgrove	190	220	525	515	6.3%	171.1%	134.1%	-1.9%
Cannock Chase	320	370	760	740	7.9%	131.3%	100.0%	-2.6%
Coventry	1,440	1,550	3,265	3,160	5.2%	119.4%	103.9%	-3.2%
Dudley	1,660	1,755	3,095	3,020	9.7%	81.9%	72.1%	-2.4%
East Staffordshire	280	320	685	675	6.0%	141.1%	110.9%	-1.5%
Lichfield	240	275	535	505	5.4%	110.4%	83.6%	-5.6%
North Warwickshire	160	165	390	380	6.6%	137.5%	130.3%	-2.6%
Nuneaton and Bedworth	510	570	985	960	7.8%	88.2%	68.4%	-2.5%
Redditch	290	310	570	565	7.3%	94.8%	82.3%	-0.9%
Rugby	245	245	515	535	5.5%	118.4%	118.4%	3.9%
Sandwell	1,940	2,130	4,020	3,925	11.4%	102.3%	84.3%	-2.4%
Solihull	785	830	1,715	1,680	8.3%	114.0%	102.4%	-2.0%
Stratford-on-Avon	150	160	490	470	4.4%	213.3%	193.8%	-4.1%
Tamworth	280	305	630	625	8.4%	123.2%	104.9%	-0.8%
Walsall	1,765	1,940	3,170	3,140	10.5%	77.9%	61.9%	-0.9%
Warwick	225	230	655	650	3.4%	188.9%	182.6%	-0.8%
Wolverhampton	1,820	1,925	3,245	3,200	11.8%	75.8%	66.2%	-1.4%
Wyre Forest	310	315	680	650	7.6%	109.7%	106.3%	-4.4%
WM 7 Met.	**18,050**	**19,345**	**34,545**	**33,965**	**9.1%**	**88.2%**	**75.6%**	**-1.7%**
Black Country LEP	7,185	7,750	13,530	13,290	10.9%	85.0%	71.5%	-1.8%
Coventry and Warwickshire LEP	2,725	2,920	6,300	6,155	5.2%	125.9%	110.8%	-2.3%
Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP	11,335	12,165	22,125	21,785	8.7%	92.2%	79.1%	-1.5%
WMCA (3 LEP)	**21,245**	**22,835**	**41,955**	**41,230**	**8.4%**	**94.1%**	**80.6%**	**-1.7%**
United Kingdom	226,650	241,760	500,660	497,605	7.0%	119.5%	105.8%	-0.6%

- Overall, for the WMCA (3 LEP) area the number of claimants as percentage of residents aged 16 to 24 years old was 8.4% compared to 7.0% for the UK in January 2021.
- Within the WMCA (3 LEP) the number of claimants as a percentage of residents aged 16 to 24 years old varies across the 3 LEPs with the Black Country at the highest with 10.9%, followed by Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP with 8.7% and then Coventry and Warwickshire LEP with 5.2%.

Claimant Count by Age and Gender (WMCA 3 LEP)

- Overall, the January figures show a reduction of 720 claimants aged 18-24 years old In the WMCA (3 LEP) area compared with December 2020. There was a reduction of approximately 455 males aged 18-24 years old and approximately by 270 female claimants.[6]

- There was an overall reduction of 275 claimants for those aged 25-49 years old since December. This can be split by those aged 30-34 years old reducing by 10 (+15 males and -20 females). For those aged 35-39 years old there was a reduction of 65 (-80 males and +20 females). For those aged 40-44 years old there was a reduction by 65 (-125 males and +60 females) and for those aged 45-49 years old by 215 claimants (-110 males and -100 females).

- Overall, there was a reduction for those aged 50-54 years old by 30 (-70 males and +35 females).

[6] Due to rounding, figures may not sum.

The WM Weekly monitor is funded by the West Midlands Combined Authority, Research England/UKRI

The following table shows a breakdown by age brackets and gender for the WMCA (3 LEP) area over selected time periods:

		Jan. 2020	Mar. 2020	Dec. 2020	Jan. 2021	Num. Change (Jan. 21 – Jan. 20)	Num. Change (Jan. 21 – Mar. 20)	Num. Change (Jan. 21– Dec. 20)
	Age 16+	**112,170**	**117,590**	**208,570**	**207,645**	**95,475**	**90,055**	**-925**
	Aged 16-24	**21,245**	**22,835**	**41,955**	**41,230**	**19,985**	**18,395**	**-725**
	Aged 16-17	265	250	380	380	115	130	0
	Aged 18-24	20,980	22,580	41,575	40,855	19,875	18,275	-720
	Aged 25-49	**63,750**	**67,130**	**118,335**	**118,060**	**54,310**	**50,930**	**-275**
	Aged 25-29	14,795	15,945	28,075	28,155	13,360	12,210	80
	Aged 30-34	14,750	15,635	27,575	27,565	12,815	11,930	-10
Total	Aged 35-39	13,145	13,715	24,195	24,130	10,985	10,415	-65
	Aged 40-44	10,705	11,230	20,060	19,995	9,290	8,765	-65
	Aged 45-49	10,360	10,605	18,440	18,225	7,865	7,620	-215
	Aged 50+	**27,175**	**27,635**	**48,270**	**48,350**	**21,175**	**20,715**	**80**
	Aged 50-54	9,755	9,960	17,795	17,765	8,010	7,805	-30
	Aged 55-59	8,910	8,985	15,525	15,545	6,635	6,560	20
	Aged 60-64	7,585	7,675	12,750	12,815	5,230	5,140	65
	Aged 65+	930	1,020	2,195	2,230	1,300	1,210	35
	Age 16+	**65,665**	**69,420**	**124,135**	**123,350**	**57,685**	**53,930**	**-785**
	Aged 16-24	**12,900**	**14,100**	**25,510**	**25,055**	**12,155**	**10,955**	**-455**
	Aged 16-17	125	115	180	195	70	80	15
	Aged 18-24	12,780	13,980	25,325	24,870	12,090	10,890	-455
	Aged 25-49	**36,805**	**38,965**	**70,470**	**70,215**	**33,410**	**31,250**	**-255**
	Aged 25-29	8,860	9,610	17,370	17,430	8,570	7,820	60
	Aged 30-34	8,535	9,095	16,455	16,470	7,935	7,375	15
Male	Aged 35-39	7,425	7,730	14,225	14,145	6,720	6,415	-80
	Aged 40-44	6,110	6,440	11,770	11,645	5,535	5,205	-125
	Aged 45-49	5,870	6,080	10,640	10,530	4,660	4,450	-110
	Aged 50+	**15,960**	**16,355**	**28,150**	**28,075**	**12,115**	**11,720**	**-75**
	Aged 50-54	5,640	5,820	10,315	10,245	4,605	4,425	-70
	Aged 55-59	5,235	5,295	9,065	9,095	3,860	3,800	30
	Aged 60-64	4,495	4,575	7,440	7,410	2,915	2,835	-30
	Aged 65+	585	655	1,335	1,315	730	660	-20
	Age 16+	**46,515**	**48,175**	**84,440**	**84,295**	**37,780**	**36,120**	**-145**
	Aged 16-24	**8,345**	**8,730**	**16,445**	**16,165**	**7,820**	**7,435**	**-280**
	Aged 16-17	135	135	195	185	50	50	-10
	Aged 18-24	8,200	8,595	16,255	15,985	7,785	7,390	-270
	Aged 25-49	**26,945**	**28,165**	**47,875**	**47,850**	**20,905**	**19,685**	**-25**
	Aged 25-29	5,935	6,340	10,705	10,720	4,785	4,380	15
	Aged 30-34	6,210	6,530	11,120	11,100	4,890	4,570	-20
Female	Aged 35-39	5,710	5,985	9,970	9,990	4,280	4,005	20
	Aged 40-44	4,595	4,790	8,285	8,345	3,750	3,555	60
	Aged 45-49	4,495	4,525	7,800	7,700	3,205	3,175	-100
	Aged 50+	**11,215**	**11,280**	**20,120**	**20,275**	**9,060**	**8,995**	**155**
	Aged 50-54	4,110	4,135	7,480	7,515	3,405	3,380	35
	Aged 55-59	3,670	3,690	6,465	6,445	2,775	2,755	-20
	Aged 60-64	3,085	3,100	5,320	5,405	2,320	2,305	85
	Aged 65+	350	360	860	915	565	555	55

Regional Labour Market Statistics[7]

- **For the three months ending in December 2020, the West Midlands Region employment rate** (aged 16 – 64 years) was **74.0%.** Since the three months ending September 2020, the employment rate has decreased by 0.5pp while the UK decreased by 0.3pp. The overall UK employment rate was 75.0% with the highest **employment rate**

[7] Source: ONS, Labour Market in the Regions of the UK: February 2021. Please note, Labour Force Survey (LFS) responses are weighted to official population projections. As the current projections are 2018-based they are based on demographic trends that pre-date the COVID-19 pandemic. We are analysing the population totals used in the weighting process and may make adjustments if appropriate. Rates published from the LFS remain robust; however, levels and changes in levels should be used with caution.

within the UK for the three months ending December 2020 in the South East (78.6%) and the lowest in Northern Ireland (69.4%).

- **For the three months ending in December 2020, the West Midlands Region unemployment rate** (aged 16 years and over) **was 6.1%, which has increased by 1.2pp since the previous quarter.** The UK unemployment rate was 5.1%, an increase of 0.4pp from the previous quarter. The highest unemployment rate in the UK for the three months ending December 2020 was in London (7.0%), with the lowest unemployment rate in Northern Ireland at 3.6%.

- **For the three months ending in December 2020, the West Midlands Region economic inactivity rate** (aged 16 – 64 years) **was 21.0% - a decrease of 0.5pp** from previous quarter. The UK economic inactivity rate was 20.9%, remaining the same from the previous quarter. The highest **economic inactivity** rate in the UK for the three months ending December 2020 was in Northern Ireland (28.0%), with the lowest in the South East (18.3%).

A summary of the latest headline estimates for Regions of the UK, seasonally adjusted, October to December 2020:

	Employment rate - Oct to Dec 2020 (aged 16- 64 years)	Change on Jul to Sep 2020	Unemployment rate- Oct to Dec 2020 (16 years +)	Change on Jul to Sep 2020	Inactivity rate – Oct to Dec 2020 (aged 16-64 years)	Change on Jul to Sep 2020
UK	75.0%	-0.3pp	5.1%	0.4pp	20.9%	0pp
Great Britain	75.1%	-0.3pp	5.1%	0.4pp	20.7%	0.0pp
England	75.4%	-0.3pp	5.3%	0.4pp	20.3%	-0.1pp
North East	71.2%	-0.3pp	6.5%	-0.2pp	23.9%	0.6pp
North West	73.8%	-1.0pp	4.8%	0.2pp	22.4%	0.9pp
Yorkshire and The Humber	74.3%	-0.2pp	5.1%	0.4pp	21.6%	-0.2pp
East Midlands	75.2%	0.1pp	5.9%	1.0pp	20.0%	-1.0pp
West Midlands	**74.0%**	**-0.5pp**	**6.1%**	**1.2pp**	**21.0%**	**-0.5pp**
East	77.0%	-0.7pp	4.5%	0.2pp	19.3%	0.5pp
London	74.7%	-0.5pp	7.0%	1.0pp	19.6%	-0.6pp
South East	78.6%	0.3pp	3.7%	-0.4pp	18.3%	0.1pp
South West	76.9%	0.4pp	4.5%	0.4pp	19.5%	-0.5pp
Wales	72.2%	0.2pp	4.4%	-0.2pp	24.3%	-0.1pp
Scotland	73.7%	-0.3pp	4.5%	-0.1pp	22.8%	0.4pp
Northern Ireland	69.4%	-1.1pp	3.6%	0pp	28.0%	1.2pp

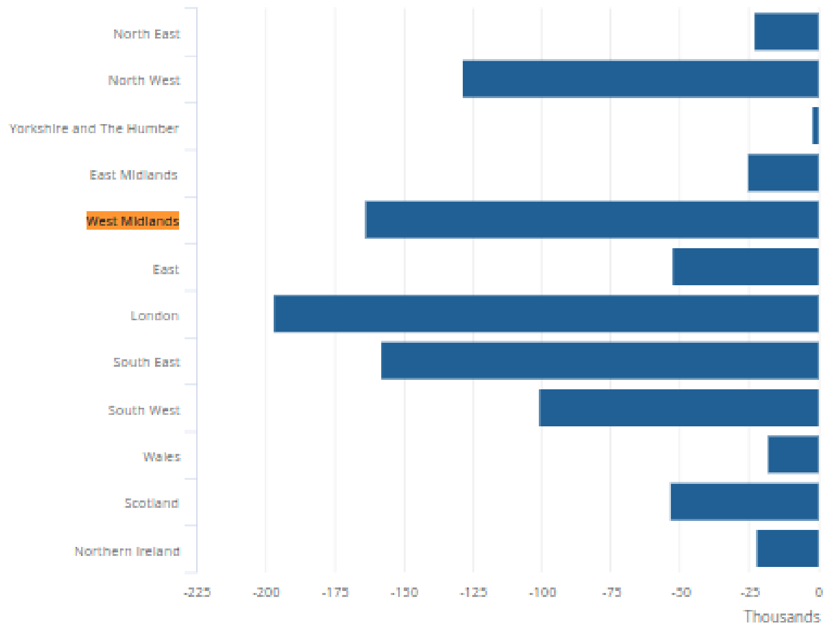
Source: ONS – Labour Force Survey

Workforce Jobs (first published 15th December)

- For the UK there was an estimated 34.69 million workforce jobs in September 2020, which is 942,000 less than in September 2019 and 475,000 less than last quarter (June 2020).

- The West Midlands region had 2.8m workforce jobs in September 2020, following the trend across all the UK regions when compared to September 2019, the West Midlands decreased by 163,762 workforce jobs. The West Midlands region had 92,502 less workforce jobs when compared to the last quarter.

Change in workforce jobs, by UK Region, seasonally adjusted, September 2019 and September 2020.

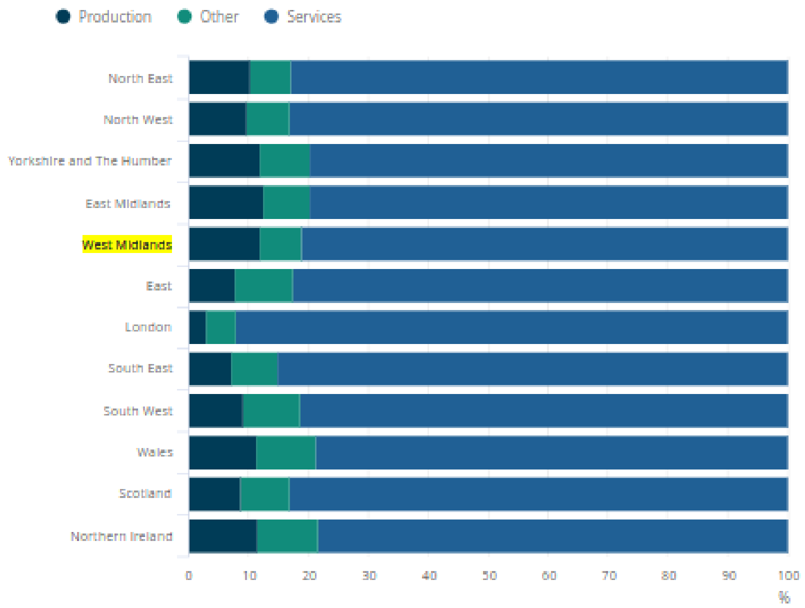


Source: ONS – Workforce Jobs

Workforce Jobs by Broad Industry Group

- 81.1% of the West Midlands Region's workforce jobs are in the services sector as of September 2020. This is followed by 11.8% in the production sector and 7.1% in other.

Proportion of workforce jobs by broad industry group, by UK Region, September 2020



Source: ONS – Workforce Jobs

UK Labour Market Stastics - Vacancies[8]

- The number of UK job vacancies in November 2020 to January 2021 was 26% lower than a year ago; this is an improvement on the position in summer 2020 when vacancies were down by nearly 60% year-on-year, but the rate of improvement has slowed in the most recent few months; further restrictions and national lockdowns recently have affected vacancies in some industries more than others, most notably the accommodation and food services industry.

[8] Source: UK labour market: February 2021

The WM Weekly monitor is funded by the West Midlands Combined Authority, Research England/UKRI

- In November 2020 to January 2021 there were an estimated 599,000 vacancies in the UK, a growth of 64,000 from a quarter earlier; this growth compares with a quarterly increase of 93,000 in the three months to December 2020 and more than 100,000 in each of the three previous periods.

- The rate of recovery in vacancies varies by industry; while construction now has more vacancies than it did a year ago, accommodation and food services saw a further quarterly decrease of 11,000 vacancies in the three months to January 2021 and estimated vacancies in this industry are now 75.6% lower than a year ago.

- In comparison with other-sized business, the smallest businesses (with one to nine employees), cut their vacancies relatively little in 2020 and in November 2020 to January 2021 had 5,000 (4%) fewer vacancies than a year ago. There are recent signs that the largest employers, particularly those with 2,500 or more employees, are starting to increase their vacancies although these remain at 78,000 (26.8%) fewer than a year ago.

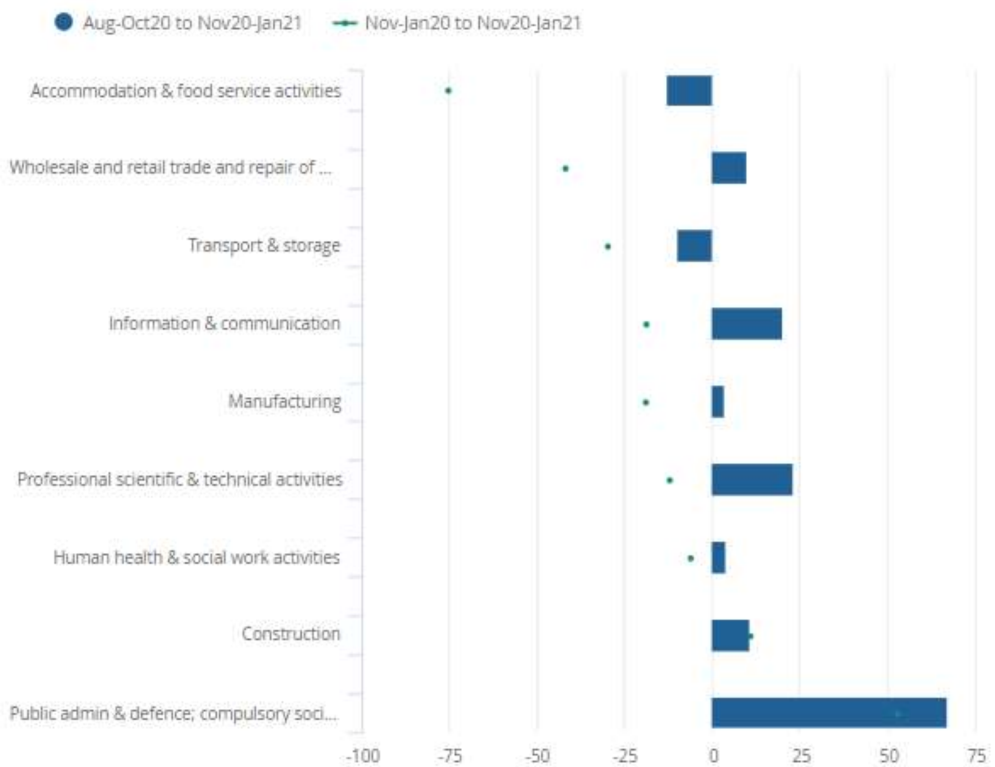
The following table shows the total number of vacancies by sector for the UK, September to November 2020, October to December 2020 and November 2020 to January 2021:

Total Figures in Thousands			
	Sep - Nov 20	**Oct - Dec 20**	**Nov 20 - Jan 21**
All vacancies	558	558	558
Mining & quarrying	1	1	1
Manufacturing	43	44	45
Electricity, gas, steam & air conditioning supply	3	3	4
Water supply, sewerage, waste & remediation activities	3	3	3
Construction	26	28	29
Wholesale & retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles	66	71	75
Motor Trades	7	9	10
Wholesale	15	18	19
Retail	43	45	46
Transport & storage	28	29	25
Accommodation & food service activities	34	29	22
Information & communication	30	33	35
Financial & insurance activities	20	20	21
Real estate activities	11	12	10
Professional scientific & technical activities	51	65	66
Administrative & support service activities	38	35	40
Public admin & defence; compulsory social security	21	25	34
Education	39	42	43
Human health & social work activities	123	130	127
Arts, entertainment & recreation	11	12	10
Other service activities	11	11	9

Number of Vacancies in the UK, seasonally adjusted between November 2001 to January 2002 and November 2020 to January 2021:

Source: ONS – Vacancy Survey

The following chart shows by selected industry the three-month average vacancies in the UK, seasonally adjusted, between August to October 2020 and November 2020 to January 2021; indexed November 2019 to January 2020=100, difference in percentage points compared to November 2019 to January 2020:



Source: ONS – Vacancy Survey

The pandemic has led to particularly large falls in vacancies in the following industries:

1. accommodation and food services (down 76% from a year ago)
2. arts, entertainment and recreation (down 56%)
3. wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (down 42%)

The WM Weekly monitor is funded by the West Midlands Combined Authority, Research England/UKRI

- During November 2020 to January 2021, most industries saw an increase in vacancies compared with August to October 2020, but accommodation and food services was negatively affected by the additional lockdowns and restrictions across the UK at the end of the year. This industry registered a decrease of 12.6 percentage points over the quarter when indexed to November 2019 to January 2020.

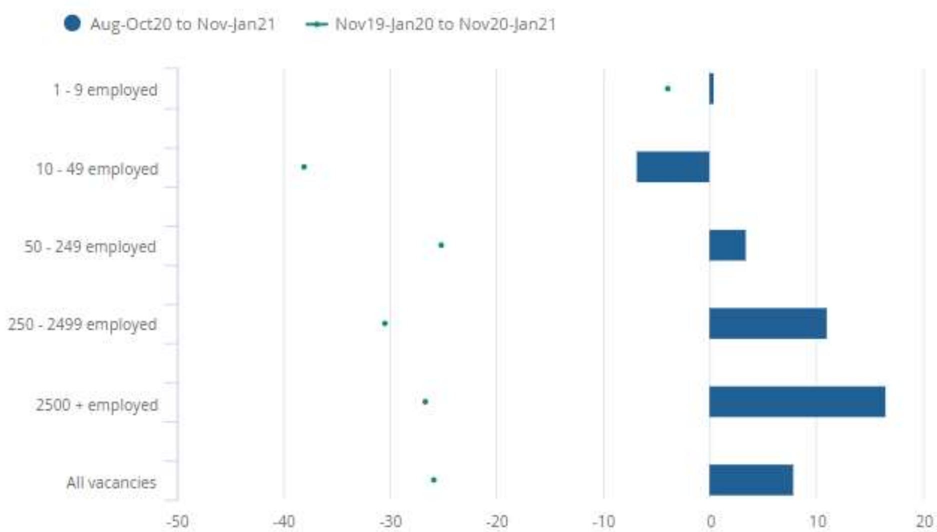
- This is based on seasonally adjusted estimates and therefore represents a decline over and above any seasonal patterns in vacancies. Vacancies in this industry now run at 0.9 per 100 employee jobs, which is the lowest of any industry profiled in the Vacancy Survey; in the same period a year ago, the ratio was 3.8, the highest of any industry.

- The other industry that saw a clear fall in vacancies over the quarter was transport and storage. This is likely to have been affected by stronger growth in vacancies in the previous three months to facilitate deliveries associated with more online shopping at Christmas in 2020.

- Among industries that saw a growth in vacancies over the quarter, the most notable was public administration and defence; compulsory social security (up 67.3 percentage points indexed to November 2019 to January 2020). This was driven by temporary recruitment for the 2021 Census. Vacancies in wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles rose to recoup some of the losses seen earlier in the year, and more notable short increases were seen in information and communications, and professional, scientific and technical activities.

- The 10.8% annual increase in vacancies within construction reflects a strong turnaround in the sector, which saw a notable downturn in vacancies during early summer. While the ratio of vacancies to employee jobs was 0.5 in construction in April to June 2020, it is now 2.0.

The following chart shows by number of employees the three-month average vacancies in the UK, seasonally adjusted, between August to October 2020 and November 2020 to January 2021; indexed November 2019 to January 2020=100, difference in percentage points compared to November 2019 to January 2020:



Source: ONS – Vacancy Survey

- In 2020, vacancies fell least in the smallest companies – those employing one to nine employees. In November 2020 to January 2021, vacancies within this group were down 4% from a year ago, which is far less than companies employing more staff.

- However, in recent months larger companies have started to increase their vacancies. Most notably, companies employing 2,500 or more employees increased vacancies by 48,000, to 213,000 between August to October 2020 and November 2020 to January 2021. This was a 29.3% increase, or 16.6 percentage points when indexed to November 2019 to January 2020.

The WM Weekly monitor is funded by the West Midlands Combined Authority, Research England/UKRI

- Companies employing 10 to 49 employees had a further fall in vacancies, which are now down by 38.2% from a year ago.

EMSI Job Postings WMCA 3 LEP Geography February 2021[9]

Note: The data below identifies job postings, derived from the EMSI Analyst Tool, and not comparable to the official ONS vacancy data.

- There were 131,929 unique job postings across the WMCA 3 LEP geography in January 2021, 2.0% fewer than in December. This is the first time since April 2020 that the monthly job postings have fallen back into negative territory.

- At a more granular level, just three LA areas recorded a positive increase with two 'no change'. Solihull recorded the highest month-on-month increase at 10% while the largest reduction was in Cannock Chase, Sandwell and Walsall (all -5%).

- Posting intensity, i.e., the effort towards hiring for particular positions, was highest in Birmingham, Coventry, Redditch, Rugby and Tamworth.

	Jan 2021 Unique Postings	% Change (Dec 2020 - Jan 2021)
Birmingham	53,872	-2%
Bromsgrove	1,735	-4%
Cannock Chase	2,509	-5%
Coventry	12,854	-3%
Dudley	6,017	-3%
East Staffordshire	3,795	-1%
Lichfield	2,526	-2%
North Warwickshire	1,817	-4%
Nuneaton and Bedworth	2,931	1%
Redditch	2,306	-2%
Rugby	3,345	-4%
Sandwell	6,152	-5%
Solihull	6,000	10%
Stratford-on-Avon	3,270	1%
Tamworth	2,548	-3%
Walsall	4,733	-5%
Warwick	7,104	No Change
Wolverhampton	6,419	-2%
Wyre Forest	1,996	No Change

Potential Issues:

Laid Low: The impacts of the Covid-19 crisis on low-paid and insecure workers
A report by the Standard Life Foundation finds that in this current lockdown it is likely that around two thirds of low paid workers – or four million people – are either temporarily laid off or working fewer hours than normal. This would be double the rate of work disruption for staff who are not low paid. Employment loss has been driven by falls in a range of lower-paying jobs – in particular food services and manufacturing, hospitality, residential care and construction – but even in sectors less affected by the crisis, the lowest paid have lost out.
Source: Standard Life Foundation

Shut Out: How employers and recruiters are overlooking the talents of over 50s workers
As a result of Covid-19 there is, correctly, a focus on young people, who are at risk. However, evidence shows that older workers are being just as affected as young, and there is a persuasive argument that they should be treated

[9] Source: EMSI, February 2021

The WM Weekly monitor is funded by the West Midlands Combined Authority, Research England/UKRI

with parity as they are susceptible, particularly because of age discrimination and caring responsibilities. As such, Covid-19 risks reversing the positive employment trends we've seen over recent years and intensifying the barriers to employment for 50+ which are likely to result in long term unemployment. In addition, historical evidence of older workers in recessions indicates a prevalence of becoming inactive in the labour market. ***Source: Aging Better***

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) Statistics: December 2020[10]
BCCEIU

Summary

• In total, the WMCA 3 LEP area had 141,700 employments furloughed on the 31st October[11]. This was 7.8% of eligible employments for the scheme compared to the UK average of 7.9%.

• There was a slightly higher percentage of males furloughed, 8.1% (73,900) compared to females, 7.5% (67,800).

• The West Midlands region had 93,500 employments furloughed on the 31st October. Compared to the 30th September, this has decreased by 19.6% (-46,300) for the West Midlands region, while the UK decreased by 15.6%. Compared to 31st July, the West Midlands region has decreased 52.0% (-220,300 employment furloughed), while the UK decreased by 55.5%.

• Figures show on the 31st October for the UK, those aged 25-34 years old accounted for the highest proportion of the total number of employments furloughed at 21.9% (526,000), followed by those aged 35-44 years old at 20.1% (481,300) and then those aged 45-54 years old at 19.4% (466,400).

• Across the UK, businesses with over 250 employees have made the highest value of claims for periods to 31st October with £16.1bn. This is followed by businesses with employer size 20-49 with £6.1bn, and then 100-249 with £4.3bn.

• Figures show on the 31st October for the UK, accommodation and food services accounted for the highest proportion of employments furloughed at 25.1% (601,400). This was followed by wholesale and retail at 14.9% (356,400) and then administrative and support services at 8.9% (213,400).

Full Briefing

Introduction

• This is the seventh release of Official Statistics on the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS). This release provides analysis of claims for periods up to 30th October 2020. The data used includes claims submitted to HMRC by 30th November 2020.

Furloughed Employments per day – UK & West Midlands Region

• Since the peak of 8.9 million employments furloughed on 8th May in the UK, the number of employments furloughed steadily dropped to 6.8 million on the 30th June.

• The number of employments furloughed continued to fall throughout July and August to 5.4 million at 31st July and 3.8 million on 31st August.

• The latest figures show that the number of employments furloughed continued to reduce during September falling further to 2.8 million at 30th September and then to 2.4 million on the 31st October.

[10] Source: HMRC, Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme statistics: December 2020 2 619,800 individuals in the WMCA 3 LEP area have been furloughed at some point, but 141,700 remain furloughed as of 31st October

[11] 619,800 individuals in the WMCA 3 LEP area have been furloughed at some point, but 141,700 remain furloughed as of 31st October

The following chart shows the UK employments furloughed between 1st March to 31st October:

• The West Midlands region had 190,300 employments furloughed on the 31st October.

• Compared to the 30th September, the West Midlands decreased by 19.6% (-46,300 employments furloughed), while the UK decreased by 15.6%.

The following chart shows for the West Midlands Region the number of employments furloughed between 1st July to 31st October:

- Of the 190,3000 employments furloughed in the West Midlands region on the 31st October, 106,200 were fully furloughed and 84,100 were partially furloughed

Age - UK

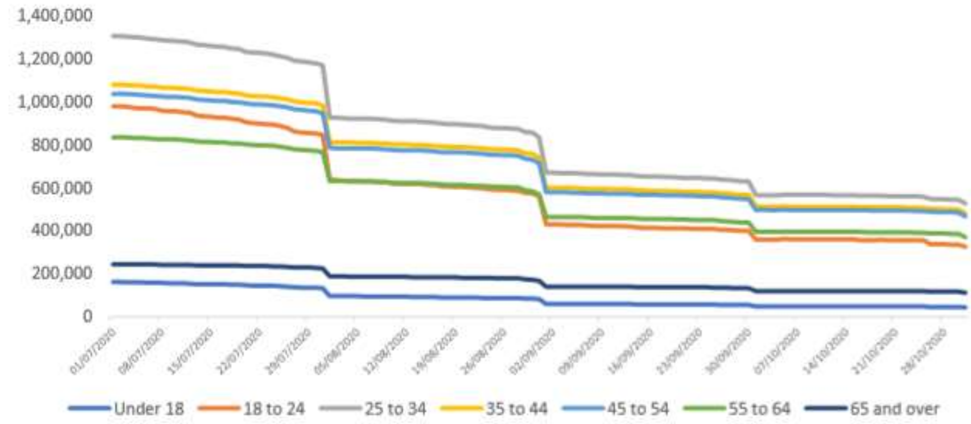
• For employments where the employee was aged 25 to 34, the number of employments was 1.17 million on 31st July and fell to 833,600 at 31st August. This continued to fall throughout September to 627,900 employments furloughed at 30th September and by 31st October it was 526,000.

• The number of employments furloughed with employees in the 18 to 24 age band was 844,500 on 31st July. Figures show this decreased to 558,600 employments furloughed at 31st August, 398,400 at 31st September and 325,300 at 31st October.

• Where the employee was 65 or over, the number of employments furloughed was 225,800 on 31st July. Figures for this age band show the number of employments furloughed decreased to 168,300 at 31st August, 132,500 at 30th September and 111,900 at 31st October.

• Figures show on the 31st October, those aged 25-34 years old accounted for the highest proportion of the total number of employments furloughed at 21.9% (526,000), followed by those aged 3544 years old at 20.1% (481,300) and then those aged 45-54 years old at 19.4% (466,400).

The following chart shows the number of employments furloughed per day by employee age (inc. unknown) between 1st July to 31st October for the UK:



Gender – WMCA (3 LEP)

• In total, the WMCA 3 LEP area had 141,700 employments furloughed on the 31st October. This was 7.8% of eligible employments for the scheme, while for the UK the take-up rate was 7.9%.

• There was a slightly higher percentage of males furloughed, 8.1% (73,900) compared to females, 7.5% (67,800).

• Overall, the local authorities with the highest percentage of workers furloughed were Stratfordon-Avon (5,500 employments furloughed of the 60,500 eligible), Birmingham (40,000 employments furloughed of the 448,400 eligible), and Solihull (9,000 employments furloughed of the 98,400 eligible) with a take up rate of 9%.

• The local authority with the highest percentage of males furloughed was Birmingham at 10% (22,200 furloughed of the 228,000 eligible).

• The local authority with the highest percentage of female employments furloughed was Stratfordon-Avon at 10% (3,000 furloughed of 30,700 eligible).

The following table shows employments furloughed, eligible employments and the take-up rate for the WMCA (3 LEP) area by gender on the 31st October:

	Female			Male			Total		
	Female employments furloughed	Female eligible employments	Female take up-rate	Male employments furloughed	Male eligible employments	Male take up-rate	Total employments furloughed	Total eligible employments	Total take up-rate
Stratford-on-Avon	3,000	30,700	9.8%	2,600	29,800	8.7%	5,500	60,500	9.1%
Birmingham	17,800	220,400	8.1%	22,200	228,000	9.7%	40,000	448,400	8.9%
Solihull	4,700	50,000	9.4%	4,300	48,400	8.9%	9,000	98,400	9.1%
Lichfield	1,900	23,900	7.9%	1,700	23,400	7.3%	3,600	47,300	7.6%
Sandwell	5,300	70,300	7.5%	5,900	71,600	8.2%	11,200	142,000	7.9%
Walsall	4,200	58,200	7.2%	4,700	59,100	8.0%	8,800	117,300	7.5%
Bromsgrove	1,900	23,200	8.2%	1,700	21,800	7.8%	3,600	45,000	8.0%
Wyre Forest	1,600	22,400	7.1%	1,700	21,200	8.0%	3,300	43,600	7.6%
Cannock Chase	1,800	23,400	7.7%	1,500	23,000	6.5%	3,300	46,400	7.1%
Tamworth	1,400	19,000	7.4%	1,400	19,400	7.2%	2,800	38,400	7.3%
North Warwickshire	1,100	15,600	7.1%	1,100	15,100	7.3%	2,300	30,700	7.5%
Warwick	2,600	34,200	7.6%	2,600	35,600	7.3%	5,200	69,800	7.4%
Coventry	4,900	77,200	6.3%	6,000	80,200	7.5%	10,900	157,400	6.9%
Dudley	4,800	70,200	6.8%	5,500	69,100	8.0%	10,300	139,200	7.4%
Wolverhampton	3,800	57,500	6.6%	4,200	57,300	7.3%	8,000	114,700	7.0%
Redditch	1,400	21,600	6.5%	1,500	21,200	7.1%	3,000	42,800	7.0%
East Staffordshire	2,000	28,500	7.0%	1,600	29,900	5.4%	3,600	58,400	6.2%
Nuneaton and Bedworth	1,900	31,600	6.0%	2,100	31,600	6.6%	4,000	63,200	6.3%
Rugby	1,700	27,000	6.3%	1,600	28,700	5.6%	3,300	55,600	5.9%
WM 7 Met.	8.6%	603,700	7.5%	52,800	613.700	8.6%	98,200	1,217,400	8.1%
BCLEP	18,100	256,200	7.1%	20,300	257,100	7.9%	38,300	513,200	7.5%
CWLEP	15,200	216,300	7.0%	16,000	221,000	7.2%	31,200	437,200	7.1%
GBSLEP	34,500	432,400	8.0%	37,600	436,300	8.6%	72,200	868,700	8.3%
WMCA	**67,800**	**904,900**	**7.5%**	**73,900**	**914,400**	**8.1%**	**141,700**	**1,819,100**	**7.8%**
West Midlands	93,500	1,290,500	7.2%	96,800	1,289,900	7.5%	190,300	2,580,400	7.4%
United Kingdom	1,188,300	15,354,300	7.7%	1,136,400	14,998,800	7.6%	2,399,600	30,353,200	7.9%

• The parliamentary constituencies in the WMCA (3 LEP) area with the highest take-up rate on the 31st October was Birmingham, Hodge Hill at 10.0% (4,300 furloughed of 42,800 eligible). This was followed by Birmingham, Ladywood at 9.9% (5,300 furloughed of the 53,300 eligible) and also Birmingham Yardley at 9.9% (4,500 furloughed of the 45,500 eligible).

• Birmingham, Hodge Hill was also the parliamentary constituency with the highest male take-up rate at 11.5% (2,700 furloughed of 23,500 eligible), followed by Birmingham, Yardley at 11.2% (2,600 furloughed of the 23,000 eligible) and Birmingham, Hall Green at 10.9% (2,600 furloughed of 23,800 eligible).

• The parliamentary constituency with the highest female take-up rate with 10.0% (2,200 furloughed of the 22,100 eligible) was Stratford-on-Avon, followed by Meriden at 9.8% (2,600 furloughed of the 26,400 eligible) and Birmingham, Ladywood at 9.5% (2,300 furloughed of the 24,300 eligible).

The following table shows by parliamentary constituencies within the WMCA (3 LEP) area the employments furloughed, eligible employments and take-up rate on the 31st October:

	Female			Male			Total		
	Female employments furloughed	Female eligible employments	Female take up-rate	Male employments furloughed	Male eligible employments	Male take up-rate	Total employments furloughed	Total eligible employments	Total take up-rate
Birmingham, Hodge Hill	1,600	19,300	8.3%	2,700	23,500	11.5%	4,300	42,800	10.0%
Birmingham, Ladywood	2,300	24,300	9.5%	3,100	28,900	10.7%	5,300	53,300	9.9%
Birmingham, Yardley	2,000	22,200	9.0%	2,600	23,300	11.2%	4,500	45,500	9.9%
Birmingham, Hall Green	1,600	19,800	8.1%	2,600	23,800	10.9%	4,300	43,600	9.9%
Stratford-on-Avon	2,200	22,100	10.0%	1,900	21,300	8.9%	4,200	43,300	9.7%
Meriden	2,600	26,400	9.8%	2,300	25,200	9.1%	4,900	51,500	9.5%
Birmingham, Perry Barr	1,800	22,500	8.0%	2,200	23,100	9.5%	4,000	45,600	8.8%
Solihull	2,100	23,600	8.9%	2,000	23,300	8.6%	4,100	46,900	8.7%
Birmingham, Edgbaston	1,700	21,000	8.1%	1,900	20,300	9.4%	3,600	41,300	8.7%
Birmingham, Erdington	1,800	22,700	7.9%	2,000	21,900	9.1%	3,800	44,600	8.5%
Warley	1,700	21,200	8.0%	1,900	21,700	8.8%	3,600	43,000	8.4%
Sutton Coldfield	1,900	22,900	8.3%	1,800	21,600	8.3%	3,700	44,500	8.3%
Kenilworth and Southam	1,700	20,000	8.5%	1,600	20,000	8.0%	3,300	40,000	8.3%
Aldridge-Brownhills	1,400	17,600	8.0%	1,400	16,900	8.3%	2,800	34,500	8.1%
Bromsgrove	1,900	23,200	8.2%	1,700	21,800	7.8%	3,600	45,000	8.0%
Stourbridge	1,400	19,700	7.1%	1,700	19,500	8.7%	3,100	39,200	7.9%
West Bromwich East	1,500	20,000	7.5%	1,600	20,100	8.0%	3,100	40,100	7.7%
Tamworth	1,800	23,100	7.8%	1,800	23,500	7.7%	3,600	46,700	7.7%
Walsall South	1,400	20,100	7.0%	1,800	21,700	8.3%	3,200	41,800	7.7%
West Bromwich West	1,500	20,800	7.2%	1,700	21,300	8.0%	3,200	42,100	7.6%
Halesowen and Rowley Regis	1,400	19,800	7.1%	1,600	19,700	8.1%	3,000	39,500	7.6%
Wyre Forest	1,600	22,400	7.1%	1,700	21,200	8.0%	3,300	43,600	7.6%
Birmingham, Selly Oak	1,500	22,000	6.8%	1,700	20,400	8.3%	3,200	42,400	7.5%
Wolverhampton South East	1,400	19,900	7.0%	1,600	20,500	7.8%	3,000	40,400	7.4%
Dudley South	1,200	17,800	6.7%	1,400	17,500	8.0%	2,600	35,300	7.4%
Birmingham, Northfield	1,600	23,700	6.8%	1,800	21,200	8.5%	3,300	44,900	7.3%
Lichfield	1,700	22,300	7.6%	1,500	21,700	6.9%	3,200	44,000	7.3%
North Warwickshire	1,600	22,400	7.1%	1,600	21,900	7.3%	3,200	44,300	7.2%

	Female			Male			Total		
	Female employments furloughed	Female eligible employments	Female take up-rate	Male employments furloughed	Male eligible employments	Male take up-rate	Total employments furloughed	Total eligible employments	Total take up-rate
Coventry North West	1,700	25,600	6.6%	2,000	25,700	7.8%	3,700	51,300	7.2%
Cannock Chase	1,800	23,400	7.7%	1,500	23,000	6.5%	3,300	46,400	7.1%
Redditch	1,500	22,900	6.6%	1,600	22,500	7.1%	3,200	45,400	7.0%
Coventry South	1,500	22,600	6.6%	1,800	24,300	7.4%	3,300	46,900	7.0%
Warwick and Leamington	1,800	25,200	7.1%	1,800	26,500	6.8%	3,600	51,700	7.0%
Wolverhampton South West	1,300	19,400	6.7%	1,400	19,600	7.1%	2,700	39,000	6.9%
Walsall North	1,300	20,400	6.4%	1,500	20,500	7.3%	2,800	40,900	6.8%
Dudley North	1,200	18,400	6.5%	1,400	18,100	7.7%	2,500	36,600	6.8%
Wolverhampton North East	1,300	20,900	6.2%	1,400	20,000	7.0%	2,700	40,900	6.6%
Coventry North East	1,700	29,000	5.9%	2,200	30,200	7.3%	3,900	59,200	6.6%
Nuneaton	1,400	23,500	6.0%	1,500	23,600	6.4%	2,900	47,000	6.2%
Burton	1,800	25,900	6.9%	1,500	27,500	5.5%	3,200	53,400	6.0%
Rugby	1,600	25,800	6.2%	1,500	27,600	5.4%	3,100	53,400	5.8%
WMCA	**67,800**	**904,900**	**7.5%**	**73,900**	**914,400**	**8.1%**	**141,700**	**1,819,100**	**7.8%**
United Kingdom	1,188,300	15,354,300	7.7%	1,136,400	14,998,800	7.6%	2,399,600	30,353,200	7.9%

Employment Size – UK

• Across the UK, businesses with over 250 employees have made the highest value of claims for periods to 31st October with £16.1bn. This is followed by businesses with employer size 20-49 with £6.1bn, and then 100-249 with £4.3bn.

• On the 31st October, businesses with 250+ employees have had the highest take up rate at 49% (5,700 employers furloughing staff of the 11,700 eligible employers). This was followed by businesses with employer size 20-49 at 46% (40,500 employers furloughing staff of the 88,100 eligible).

• Those businesses with an employer size of 2-4 furloughed the highest percentage of eligible employments at 22% (363,300 employments furloughed of the 1,682,900 eligible). This was followed by 5-9 at 18% (371,300 employments furloughed of the 1,547,800 eligible) and businesses with employer size of 1 was also 18% (127,900 employments furloughed of the 727,600 eligible).

The following table shows by employers and employments the number furloughed, eligible and the take up rate by employer size for the UK on 31st October:

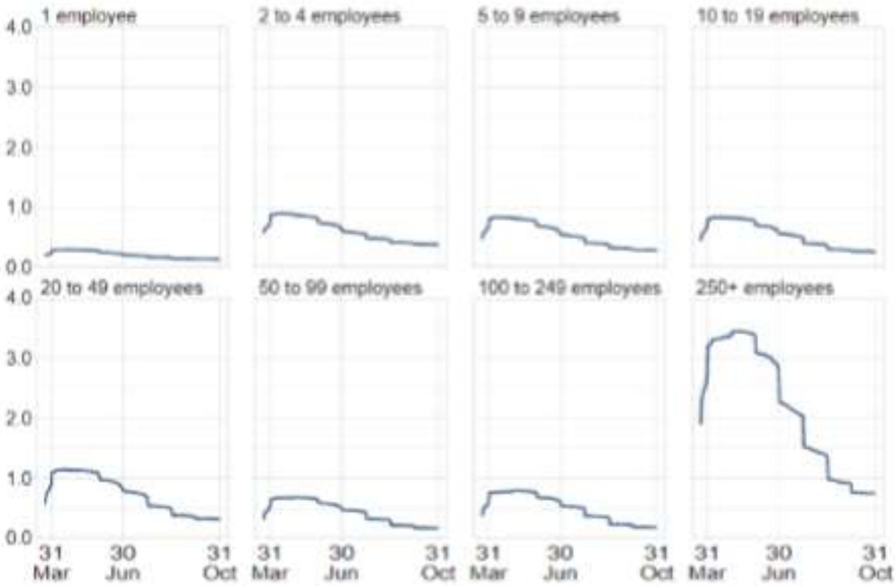
Employer size	Employers			Employments			Value of claims made for periods to 31st October (£m)
	Employers furloughing staff at 31 October	Eligible employers	Take-up rate at 31 October	Employments furloughed at 31 October	Eligible employments	Take-up rate at 31 October	
1	127,900	727,600	18%	127,900	727,600	18%	£1,219
2 to 4	206,900	667,600	31%	363,300	1,682,900	22%	£3,841
5 to 9	88,000	242,600	36%	271,300	1,547,800	18%	£3,855
10 to 19	52,300	136,000	38%	246,000	1,792,700	14%	£4,094
20 to 49	40,500	88,000	46%	303,500	2,615,200	12%	£6,092
50 to 99	13,000	29,100	45%	164,100	1,977,600	8%	£3,780
100 to 249	7,800	17,300	45%	175,200	2,606,900	7%	£4,277
250+	5,700	11,700	49%	737,000	17,402,300	4%	£16,097
Unknown	700	-	-	11,300	-	-	£60
Total	**542,900**	**1,919,800**	**28%**	**2,399,600**	**30,353,200**	**8%**	**£43,314**

• 3.45 million employments were furloughed by large employers with 250 or more employments on 5th May (the peak for this category). This reduced to 2.82 million employments furloughed by 30th June. Figures for the largest employers show 2.03 million employments furloughed by 31st July, 1.34 million employments furloughed by 31st August to 912,900 employments furloughed on the 30th September and then 737,000 by 31st October.

• Employers with 20 to 49 employments had a peak of 1.15 million employments furloughed on 16th April, compared with a peak of 795,400 for employers with 100 to 249 employments on 1st May.

• Employers with one employment had a peak of 295,700 employments furloughed on 20th April, which then decreased to 219,400 employments furloughed on 30th June. Figures show this decreased further to 187,700 employments furloughed by 31st July, to 159,800 employments furloughed by 31st August, to 141,200 on the 30th September and then 127,900 on 31st October.

The following charts show the total employments furloughed (millions) by employer size for the UK between 23rd March to 31st October:



Source: HMRC CJRS data and PAYE Real Time Information

Sectors – UK

• Furloughing of staff in the wholesale and retail sector peaked on 24th April at 1.85 million employments furloughed. This dropped to 1.33 million employments furloughed by 30 June. Figures for this sector show 850,700 employments furloughed at 31st July, 598,900 jobs furloughed at 31st August, 439,300 employments furloughed on the 30th September to 356,400 on 31st October.

• Accommodation and food services peaked at 1.65 million employments furloughed on 10th April. There was a decline to 1.32 million employments furloughed by 30th June. Figures for this sector show 1.11 million employments furloughed by 31st July, 745,800 employments furloughed by 31st August, 609,000 employment furloughed on the 30th September to 601,400 on 31st October.

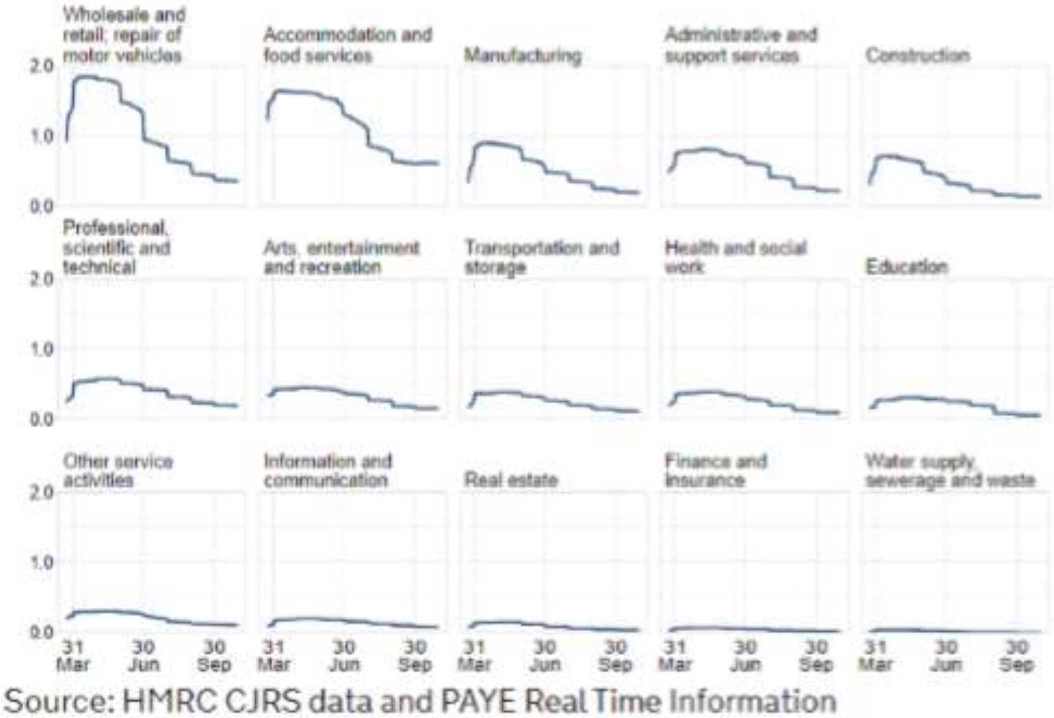
• The manufacturing sector had a peak of 911,000 employments furloughed on 17th April. This reduced to 583,600 by 30th June. Figures for this sector show 465,100 employments furloughed at 31st July, 329,400 employments furloughed at 31st August, 242,100 employments furloughed on the 30th September to 188,200 on 31st October.

• In construction, furloughing peaked on 14th April with 723,600 employments furloughed, with this falling to 404,200 employments furloughed on 30th June. Figures for this sector show 300,400 employments furloughed at 31st July to 204,400 employments furloughed at 31st August to 162,900 employments furloughed on 30th September to 130,700 on 31st October.

• Furloughing in arts and entertainment sector peaked later than other sectors on 15th May 2020 with 455,100 employments furloughed falling to 393,400 employments furloughed on 30th June. Figures for this sector show 341,600 employments furloughed on 31st July, 262,800 employments furloughed on 31st August to 185,700 employments furloughed on 30th September to 159,600 on 31st October.

• On the 31st October, accommodation and food services accounted for the highest proportion of employments furloughed at 25.1% (601,400). This was followed by wholesale and retail at 14.9% (356,400) and then administrative and support services at 8.9% (213,400).

The following charts show the total employments furloughed (millions) by 15 sectors for the UK between 23rd March to 31st October:



Source: Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme statistics: December 2020

Weekly Deaths Registered 12th February 2021

BCCEIU

The following analysis compares the latest available time period (the week of the 12th February) to the previous week period (the week of the 5th February) for the number of deaths registered and the number of deaths related to the Coronavirus.

Across England and Wales, the overall registered death figures decreased from 17,192 in the week of the 5th February to 15,354 in the week of 12th February. The number of deaths registered that state Coronavirus on the death certificate experienced a decrease from 7,320 people to 5,691 people over the same period.

Regional level analysis shows that the West Midlands' overall registered death figure decreased from 1,886 people in the week 5th February to 1,670 in the week of 12th February. The number of registered deaths related to Coronavirus has decreased from 824 people to 657 over the same period.

There was a total of 1,198 deaths registered across the WMCA (3 LEP) area in the week of the 12th February. There were 504 deaths registered that were related to Coronavirus over the same period – accounting for 42.1% of total deaths. The WMCA (3 LEP) area accounted for 76.7% of the 657 Coronavirus related deaths registered in the West Midlands Region. In comparison to the week of the 5th February, the overall registered death figures in the WMCA (3 LEP) area decreased by 150, while the number of deaths related to Coronavirus decreased by 108 people.

At a local authority level, Birmingham accounted for 28.6% (144) of deaths related to Coronavirus in the WMCA (3 LEP), this is followed by Sandwell at 12.9% (65 deaths).

Of deaths involving Coronavirus registered in the week of the 12th February, 76.0% (383) were in registered in a hospital, 12.9% (65) were in a care home, 8.7% (44) were registered as at home. 1.6% (8) of deaths were registered in a hospice. 0.6% (3) of deaths were registered at other communal establishment and 0.2% (1) of deaths were registered were classed as elsewhere.

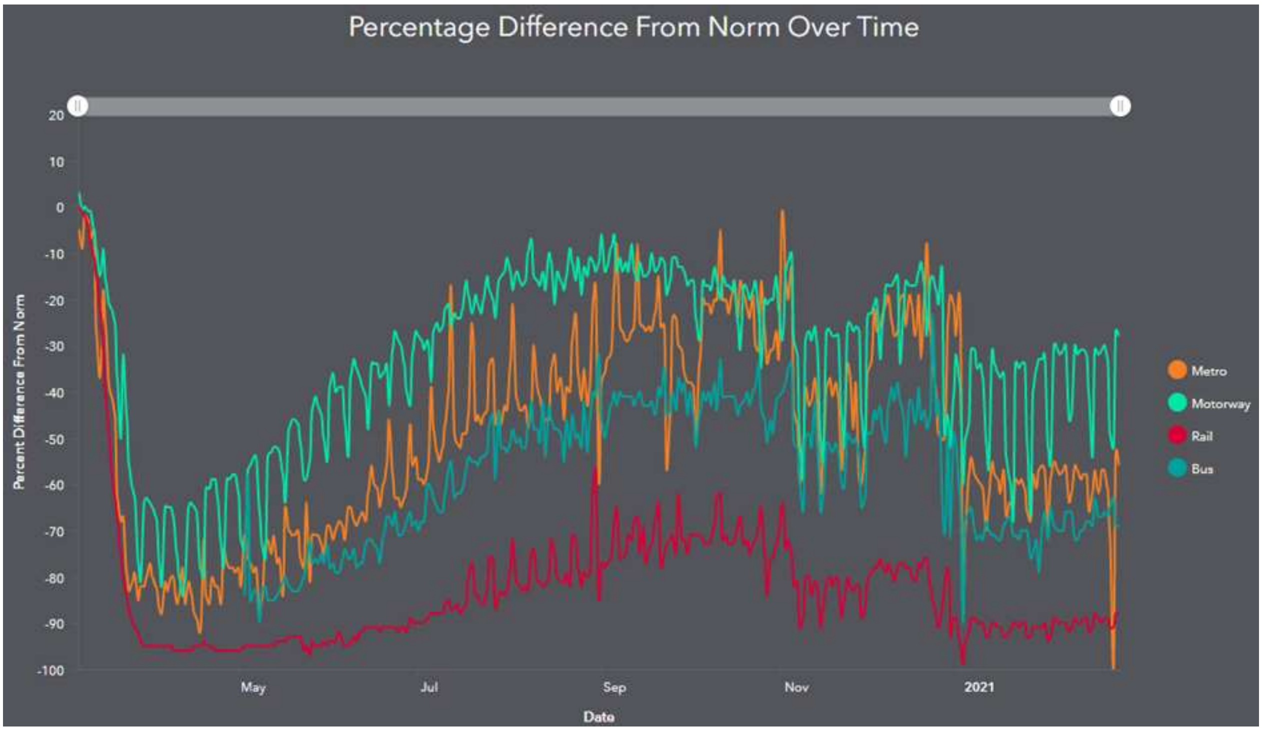
Place and number of deaths registered that are related to Coronavirus in the week of 5th February 2021:

Area name	Care home	Elsewhere	Home	Hospice	Hospital	Other communal establishment	Total
Cannock Chase	0	0	2	0	6	0	8
East Staffordshire	4	0	1	1	16	0	22
Lichfield	0	0	0	0	16	0	16
Tamworth	2	0	0	0	9	0	11
North Warwickshire	1	0	0	0	4	0	5
Nuneaton and Bedworth	0	0	0	0	9	0	9
Rugby	1	0	0	0	4	0	5
Stratford-on-Avon	1	0	1	0	3	0	5
Warwick	2	0	0	0	5	0	7
Bromsgrove	2	0	1	0	4	0	7
Redditch	1	0	0	0	7	1	9
Wyre Forest	2	0	0	0	9	0	11
Birmingham	10	0	17	3	113	1	144
Coventry	4	0	0	0	14	0	18
Dudley	11	0	3	0	30	0	44
Sandwell	7	0	8	0	49	1	65
Solihull	3	0	0	1	18	0	22
Walsall	3	1	6	0	42	0	52
Wolverhampton	11	0	5	3	25	0	44
WM 7 Met.	**49**	**1**	**39**	**7**	**291**	**2**	**389**
Black Country LEP	32	1	22	3	146	0	204
Coventry & Warwickshire LEP	9	0	1	0	39	0	49
Greater Birmingham & Solihull LEP	24	0	21	5	198	2	250
WMCA (3 LEP)	**65**	**1**	**44**	**8**	**383**	**3**	**504**

Source: ONS, Death registrations and occurrences by local authority and health board, 23rd February 2021

The WM Weekly monitor is funded by the West Midlands Combined Authority, Research England/UKRI

Transport Data
Anne Shaw TFWM



Levels of use – 23rd February (data 1 day behind). The graphs above shows the level of use on all modes

The table provides intel in terms of the levels of services and the use of the network per mode compared to this time last year, the day before and the week before (2nd February).

	% levels pre covid	% change from day before	% change from Week before
Bus	31	0	-2
Train	12	0	+1
Tram	44	-3	+6
Roads (HE SRN)	72	-1	+4

The transport Cell is working on a response to the unlocking roadmap:

8th March – Re-opening of Schools and Colleges - The response of the Transport Cell will be premised on the lessons learned from the previous re-opening of education in September, maximising the benefits of what worked. The key transport risks highlighted are demand exceeding capacity on public transport, making social distancing difficult, and increased congestion particularly around schools, notably at peak travel periods

29th March – Outdoor Gatherings - will see the re-introduction of outdoor gatherings and people being able to meet other households, subject to the rule of 6. The main risk associated with transport for this stage is the removal of the 'stay at home' rule. This will likely lead to an increase of people travelling, leading to additional congestion on the road network and increased demand on public transport.

12th April (at the earliest) – Outdoor Hospitality and Non-Essential Retail
Stage 2 of the roadmap will have a potentially significant impact on the transport network. The re-opening of non-essential retail is likely to lead to increased travel to and from city and town centre locations. Where demand increases, the network will be reviewed on a daily basis and working with transport operators it is envisaged, that as previously happened, the network and capacity will be flexible to meet that demand.

17th May (at the earliest) – Hospitality

Stage 3 of the roadmap will see the re-opening of indoor hospitality and the commencement of some large events. Although planning is yet to be carried out in this case, there are a few things that have been highlighted within the Cell. The re-opening of hospitality whilst retaining the rule of 6 did have an impact on people travelling, but in 2020 this wasn't significant and the impact of the Night Time Economy didn't have a serious impact on travel demand. However closer to the time and with further intelligence, the Transport Cell will be working with partners to plan for this.

21st June (at the earliest) – Remove all Legal Covid Restrictions

At this stage, the Government aim is to remove all restrictions. It is important to note that it is likely that some level of distancing will be expected, and the requirement of face coverings may still continue in some close environments. From a transport perspective there are a number of considerations beyond that of operational Covid matters at this stage which includes gaining an understanding of what extent 'working from home' has become 'normalised' in some sectors, and how this impacts on transport demand.

ONS Weekly Release Indicators

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ONS Weekly Release Indicators

On the 18th February 2021 the ONS released the weekly publication containing data about the condition of the UK society and economy from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The statistics are experimental and have been devised to provide timely information. The following summary contains footfall data, initial results from Wave 24 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS), national company incorporations and voluntary dissolution applications, experimental online job advert indices and results from Wave 45 of the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

Footfall

Customer activity figures are provided by Springboard. The volume of footfall has been compared to the same day the previous year (i.e. Sunday 14th February 2021 would be compared to Sunday 9th February 2020).

Overall UK footfall for the week to 13th February 2021, footfall was at 39% of the level seen in the same week of the previous year, this increased by 3 percentage points when compared with the equivalent index in the previous week.

For the week to 13th February, footfall at retail parks were 66% of the level seen for the same week in 2020. Footfall for high streets and shopping centres were at 31% and 29% of levels seen for the same period in 2020. When compared to the previous week, retail parks increased by 4%, high streets increased by 3% and shopping centres increased by 2%.

Daily retail footfall in all regions of the UK remains substantially below its level in the equivalent period of 2020. Retail footfall was stronger in the South East, South West and North & Yorkshire, while Greater London, Scotland and the East Midlands continue to have particularly weak footfall.

Volume of overall daily retail footfall, percentage of the level recorded on the same day of the equivalent week of the previous year, UK regions, 1st March 2020 to 13th February 2021:

Source: Springboard and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

The WM Weekly monitor is funded by the West Midlands Combined Authority, Research England/UKRI

National Company Incorporations and Voluntary Dissolution

Companies House data shows there were 16,882 company incorporations in the week ending 12th February 2021, above the incorporations recorded for the previous week which was 15,974. This was also higher when compared to the seventh week in 2020 (15,116) and for 2019 (15,115).

Also, for the week ending 12th February, there were 5,367 voluntary dissolution applications, a decrease from the previous week (5,659). This was also lower than voluntary dissolution applications in the seventh week of 2020 (6,140) and in 2019 (5,525).

Business Insights and Conditions Survey

The initial results from Wave 24 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) cover the period of 25th January - 7th February, with a response rate of 22.9%. The survey was live from the 8th – 16th February. National statistics are based on weighted estimates.

Trading Status

Weighted by count of UK businesses, 71% of responding businesses across the UK had been trading for more than the last 2 weeks. 2% of responding businesses who had temporarily paused trading reported to have started trading in the last 2 weeks. 3% of businesses that have temporarily paused trading but intend to restart trading in the next two weeks. While 22% of businesses that have temporarily paused trading that do not intend to restart trading in the next two weeks and 3% of businesses have permanently ceased trading.

Financial Performance

Weighted by turnover, across the UK approximately 6% of businesses that have continued trading reported turnover had increased by at least 20%. While 38% reported that turnover had not been affected. However, 47% of businesses reported turnover had decreased by at least 20% and 9% of businesses were not sure.

Online Jobs Adverts

These estimates are experimental figures are taken from jobs adverts provided by Adzuna. Previously the analysis compared the latest period with the whole of the previous year average. This has now changed to show the percentage change from the same week in the previous year for each category. This will remove some of the seasonality that previous comparisons may have contained. The Adzuna categories do not correspond to SIC categories and therefore not comparable with the ONS Vacancy Survey.

Nationally, between the 5th and 12th February total online job adverts increased by 1.3 percentage points. On the 12th February, total online job adverts were at 81.0% of the levels seen in the same week as the previous year. Out of the 28 categories (excluding unknown) 14 increased from the previous week (5th February), with the highest increase in level by 17.5 percentage points in construction/trades (to 125.0%). The highest decrease from the previous week was admin/clerical/secretarial by 10.5 percentage points. Admin/clerical/secretarial online adverts were at 57.0% of the level seen in the same week of the previous year.

Between the 5th and 12th February, for the West Midlands, the total online jobs adverts increased by 2.4 percentage points. Northern Ireland was the only UK region to experience a decrease over this period by 4.6 percentage points with the highest increase by 4.6 percentage points in the South West.

On the 12th February, total online job adverts for the West Midlands were at 88.9% of the levels seen in the same week as the previous year. Despite the decrease from the previous week, Northern Ireland was at 109.7% of levels seen in the same week as the previous year. South East was the lowest region at 74.9% of the level seen in 2020.

The WM Weekly monitor is funded by the West Midlands Combined Authority, Research England/UKRI

The following chart shows the total weekly job adverts on Adzuna, for all regions and the West Midlands, 7th February 2020 to 12th February 2021: percentage change from the same week in the previous year:

Source: Adzuna

Social Impacts of the Coronavirus

The following section shows results from Wave 45 of the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) which covers the period of 10th to 14th February.

Avoiding Contact and Self-Isolating

In the past seven days, when a West Midlands resident has met up with people outside their household or support bubble, 84% reported to always or often maintaining social distancing (91% GB). 5% of responding West Midlands residents reported not very often or never maintaining social distancing (3% GB).

93% of responding West Midlands adults who have left their home in the past 7 days have avoided physical contact with others (matching GB average).

84% of responding West Midlands adults have avoided contact with older or other vulnerable people in the past 7 days (matching GB average).

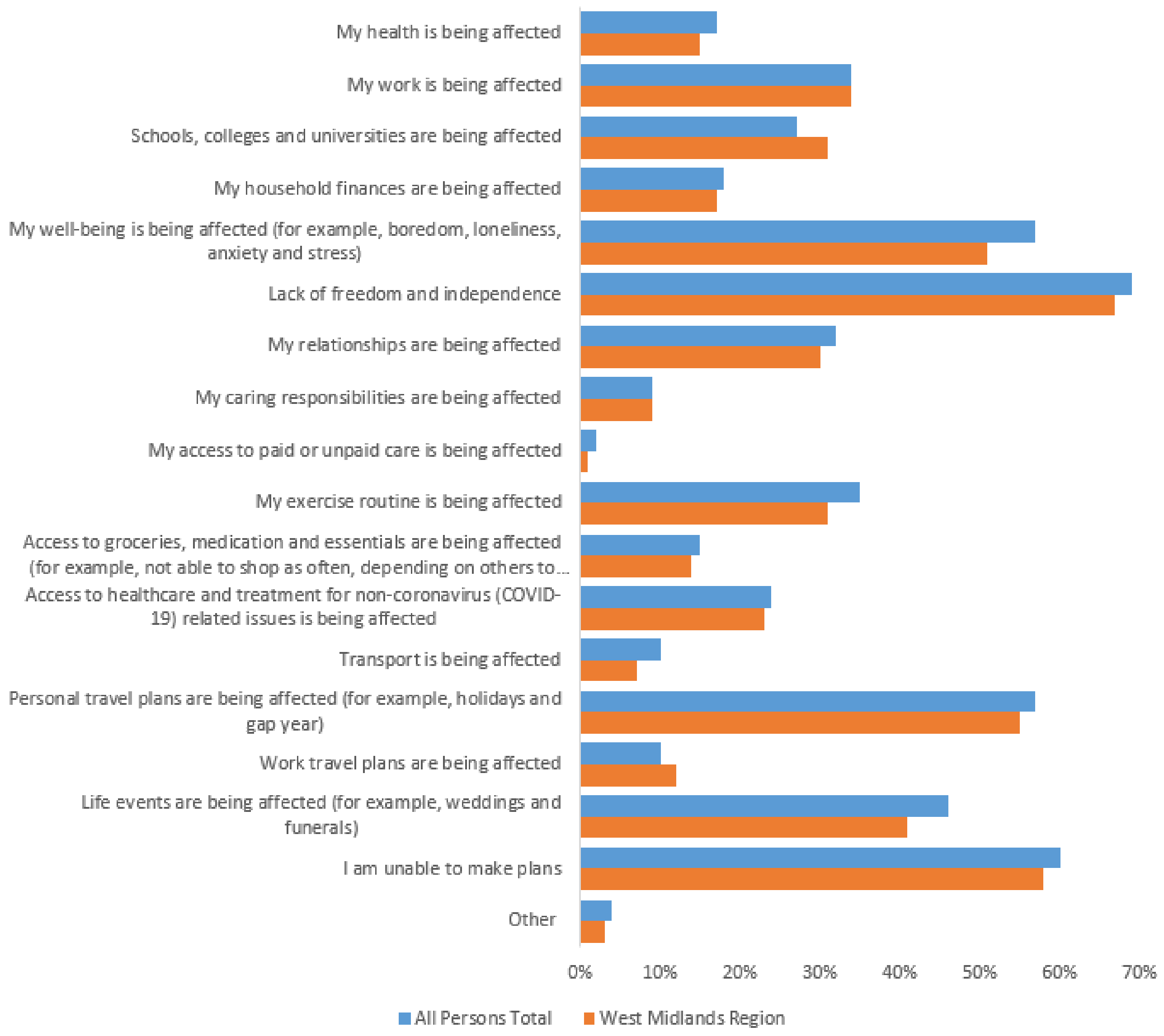
9% of responding West Midlands adults have self-isolated in the past 7 days due to COVID-19 (6% GB).

Impact on People's Life Overall

In the West Midlands 72% of adults reported they were very or somewhat worried about the effect COVID-19 was having on their life (74% GB). Only 10% of responding West Midlands adults reported that they were somewhat unworried or not at all worried (9% GB).

67% of adults in the West Midlands reported the main impact COVID-19 was having on their lives was the lack of freedom and independence (69% GB).

The following chart shows how COVID-19 is affecting West Midlands adults and also the overall all persons total between 10th to 14th February:



53% of working adults reported work had been affected from the COVID-19 pandemic (50% GB).

Well-Being, Loneliness and Perceptions of the Future

Average personal well-being scores for life satisfaction was 6.5 in the West Midlands (6.4 GB), worthwhile was 7.2 in the West Midlands (7.0 GB), happiness was 6.6 for West Midlands adults (6.5 GB) and feeling anxious was recorded at 4.2 for West Midlands adults (4.1 GB).

35% of adults in the West Midlands region reported high levels of anxiety (matching GB average).

30% of adults in the West Midlands reported to often/always or some of the time to feeling lonely (29% GB). While 49% reported hardly ever or never feeling lonely in the West Midlands (45% GB).

16% of West Midlands adults believe it will take 6 months or less before life returns to normal (20% GB). While 30% of West Midlands adults believed it will take 7 to 12 months (27% GB). 33% of West Midlands adults think it could more than a year to return back to normal (29% GB) and 5% for the West Midlands adults thought it would never go back to normal (matching GB average).

The WM Weekly monitor is funded by the West Midlands Combined Authority, Research England/UKRI

Government Guidelines

57% of adults in the West Midlands felt they had enough information about government plans to manage COVID-19 (54% GB). 83% of adults in the West Midlands strongly or tend to support the current lockdown measures for where they live (85% GB). With 9% of West Midlands adults strongly or tend to oppose the lockdown measures (8% GB).

78% of adults in the West Midlands region reported it was very easy or easy to understand the current lockdown measures (76% GB). 7% of West Midlands adults found them difficult or very difficult to understand the measures (10% GB).

78% of adults in the West Midlands region reported it was very easy or easy to follow the current lockdown measures (77% GB). With 6% of West Midlands adults found them difficult or very difficult to follow the measures (8% GB).

Mass Testing and Vaccines

In the West Midlands, 80% of adults strongly or tend to support mass testing (81% GB). With 3% strongly or tend to oppose mass testing (matching GB average).

71% of adults in the West Midlands were very or fairly likely to get a test for COVID-19 even if they did not have any symptoms (73% GB). While 13% were very or fairly unlikely to get a test without symptoms (14% GB).

25% of responding adults In the West Midlands region have received a vaccine (26% GB) a further 4% have been offered a vaccine and waiting to be vaccinated (matching GB average). 70% have not received or been offered the vaccine (68% GB).

LEP Level Intelligence

HEADLINES

SECTOR	KEY CONCERNS
Cross Sector	**COVID-19** Businesses across the region are welcoming the opportunity of lockdown being lifted following the PM announcement on the 22/02 as the UK continue to administer vaccines and now has some certainty in the form of the government's roadmap. However, in the immediate term issues persist – particularly for industries unable to open as normal. One local Growth Hub has received one months' worth of calls, web chats, emails and web traffic in the past week. Live issues and suggestions include: • Lots of conversations around how to apply for Local Authority COVID related grants. Some businesses are desperate and frustrated with the delay in making decisions and advising applicants of the outcome. • Even when firms are able to access finance, Lockdown Grants are not covering basic utility bills for SMEs in many cases. • Calls for Furlough scheme to be extended until July 2021. • Business rates holiday extensions unknown concern. • Due to COVID restrictions, premises have been left redundant but rent and rates still due, with no direct support provided to business for these costs. Some kind of intervention or scheme between landlords and tenants is suggested to help this issue. • Businesses continue to evaluate the need for commercial real estate and office space. On the flip side of this, Growth Hubs are handling a number of enquiries where businesses are now looking for new or additional premises leading to one problem being resolved by another. • Some government support schemes have been particularly praised as being hugely helpful: furlough, business rates holiday, Kickstart, VAT deferral. Some policy suggestions have been made by the Greater Birmingham Chamber of Commerce: The Chamber is calling on the Government to ensure that: • Additional grant support is available for closed businesses with high overheads for whom the current grant levels cannot pay the bills. • Non-business rates payers and businesses without commercial premises are able to access grant support. • Significantly impacted supply chain firms are able to access support alongside those directly required to close and/or limit their activities. • Directors of limited companies, the recently self-employed, charities currently excluded from support are able to access it. • Extend the furlough scheme (CJRS) to at least the end of July and for the cost of National Insurance and pension contributions to be covered for furloughed staff in firms currently unable to operate. **EU Exit** A multimillion-pound fund to help SMEs adapt to new trading rules with the EU has been welcomed by business leaders and businesses: £20m SME Brexit Support Fund to support businesses which trade exclusively with the EU in adjusting to new customs, rules of origin and VAT rules. • Businesses across the region are enquiring about the availability of funds like this to cover the cost of custom forms. This reflects that there are continued issues for businesses trading with Europe, with many suggesting currently it is much more difficult than pre-trade deal. Ongoing issues include: • Local logistics companies continue to raise concerns of post EU exit life as they continue to cancel freight incoming. • Increased administration, costs, delays, and confusion about what rules to follow. • Confusion for SMEs' with using the correct and most efficient couriers. • Instances from the service sector SME's looking for additional support with processes long term. • SME's looking for clarity on the "delayed declaration" stance in the UK. • Change in Documentation – many still receiving the wrong details on invoices.

SECTOR	KEY CONCERNS
	• SMEs reporting that they are having to hand hold their suppliers through the process of completing documentation, which is still resulting in being incorrect. • No phased implementation periods are in place for exporters to help them with new trading agreements. • Grant funding needs to be made available to businesses as soon as possible for when new controls are introduced to help plan business schedules. • Concern from some businesses wanting to understand if there will be issues for EU nationals being Directors of a UK business. A number of businesses still report that they are not affected by our exit from the EU, so it depends on sector and company operations/trading status. Some businesses are now feeling the impact of a lack of preparation prior to the deal being agreed. They are now behind and playing catch up, with DIT playing a big part in dealing with repeat queries, particularly with commodity codes and paperwork support for export/import **New Business Models** • Further evidence that businesses that traditionally rely on face-to-face activity are, where possible, transferring all or part of their business model online. **Enquires** • There is a continual and steady flow of inbound enquiries relating to Skills & Training requirements along with requests for support for new Start Up ventures. Many being referred to relevant support partners regionally. • A positive increase in businesses looking locally to source supplies and services that would have been sourced nationally or within the EU, resulting in a number of successful B2B introductions. **High-Performing Companies** A host of the region's companies have been named in a list which ranks Britain's mid-market private companies with the fastest-growing international sales. The Sunday Times HSBC International Track 200 league table reveals that 27 companies headquartered in the Midlands (East and West) (compared to 15 last year) have won places, including 17 new entrants. These regional stars have grown their international sales by an average of 59% a year over the last two years to a total of £892m, all are profitable and together they employ more than 18,000 people. The figures largely relate to financial periods before Covid-19 struck. There were 20 companies in the West Midlands region on the list, including the following in the WMCA area: • **HydroGarden – Coventry** • **Mirius – Coventry** • **BJS Home Delivery – Wednesbury (Sandwell)** • **Stiltz – Kingswinford (Dudley)** • **Mechatherm International – Kingswinford (Dudley)** • **Gymshark – Solihull** • **Grayson Thermal Systems – Birmingham** • **Thermoseal Group – Birmingham** • **BullionByPost - Birmingham** • **Westley Group – Cradley Heath (Sandwell)** • **Grenade – Solihull** • **Excool – Bromsgrove** • **M&E Global – Belbroughton (Bromsgrove)** • **Autosmart International - Lichfield**
Manufacturing	Manufacturers are witnessing price rises for raw materials in particular, caused by multiple reasons including Covid and EU Exit tensions. **EU Exit** As above, manufacturers are particularly impacted by non-tariff barriers caused by the UK/EU trade deal. In particular: • Increased administration, costs, delays, and confusion about what rules to follow. • Confusion for SMEs' with using the correct and most efficient couriers.

SECTOR	KEY CONCERNS
	• Change in Documentation – many still receiving the wrong details on invoices. • SMEs reporting that they are having to hand hold their suppliers through the process of completing documentation, which is still resulting in being incorrect.
Cultural Economy	**Covid-19** The top three things that the sector (local support organisation) is asking for: a clear roadmap of those not before dates so when can we plan for, like with many industries, it doesn't just switch on and it takes months and months to plan, rehearse for production companies if you are bringing performances into a venue. The extension of the furlough scheme if you are unable to re-open. That has been a lifeline and has meant we haven't seen massive redundancies. A public confidence campaign, how do we encourage audiences and people back into our venues, our galleries, our museums and visitor attractions.
Hospitality	**Covid-19** • With pubs now offering a beer home delivery service without falling foul of lockdown rules, there is still real concern from landlords that the industry still needs a clear plan moving forward from the government or risk mass closures • Ongoing concerns about growth potential post-Covid for hospitality and accommodation in particular. Long-term debt issues.
Aviation	**Covid-19** • This week passenger numbers at Birmingham Airport have fallen by 91 per cent since the start of the pandemic. For Birmingham Airport a 18.5m emergency loan was approved by the Council to stave off the threat of insolvency. These actions have been designed to protect the airport's long-term interests and ensure it is well placed to respond to the recovery when passengers resume flying again.
Logistics & Transport	**EU Exit** Concern around "delayed declaration" stance in the UK. Until July 2021, we are allowing goods into the UK which are not pre-lodged & instead the client can use "EIDR" which is entry into declarants' records. They may then clear the goods at any point from point of entry until 30th June 2021. Only the UK have this ruling and no other EU country. The idea behind it was to allow importers 'more time' due to Covid, but it may be giving a false impression that inbound UK traffic is free flowing (this may change).

NEW ECONOMIC SHOCKS

COMPANY	LOCATION	SECTOR	SOURCE/DETAIL
Lloyds Pharmacy	Coventry	Health	The US owner of Coventry-headquartered drug retailer Lloyds Pharmacy is exploring options to offload the chain. Reports suggest that McKesson, a $29bn New York organisation, has instructed bankers to examine the viability of a sale of the pharmacy chain.
Jaguar Land Rover	Gaydon, Warwickshire and Wider Region	Automotive, Engineering, Manufacturing	Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) is to axe 2,000 management jobs over the next financial year. The job cuts will be across roles such as managers, designers, technicians and admin staff. Factory staff are thought to be unaffected by the cuts. JLR has sites in Castle Bromwich and Solihull as well as its engineering centre and headquarters in Gaydon, Warwickshire, but it is not yet clear where the job cuts will be made.
John Lewis	Black Country and wider regions	Retail	John Lewis is set to launch a fresh round of store closures as the turmoil on the high street worsens. The department store giant is understood to be considering the closure of eight stores in a bid to cut its significant property costs.

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NEW INVESTMENT, DEALS AND OPPORTUNITIES

COMPANY	LOCATION	SECTOR	DETAIL & SOURCE
Clubbie	Rugby	Digital & Creative, Health	Two Warwickshire entrepreneurs are planning to make the lives of amateur sports coaches easier with the development of a revolutionary new app – which already has buy-in from the Football Association. Clubbie was created in 2016 by Rugby businessman Chris White as a social media platform for sports clubs and individuals to share video highlights and has grown to have 4,000 clubs on its database.
Print Manufactory	Coventry	Retail	A screen-printing studio will be blending more than inks when it opens with a new name following its move to a much larger unit at FarGo Village. Print Manufactory – which is currently closed in line with the Government's Covid regulations – will be re-named Commonground when it is allowed to re-open at the City's Creative Quarter. Business partners Kate Rossin and Jon Randle are moving the highly successful business from unit ten to much larger premises at unit five.
Wigley Group	Warwickshire	Real Estate, Construction	A £10,000 annual fund is being established by Warwickshire-based property and development company The Wigley Group to support community projects. The company will invite individuals and groups who are based within a five-mile radius of its headquarters in the village of Stockton to apply to the new fund twice a year.
Velo Atelier	Warwick	Manufacture, Retail	An ongoing commitment by amateur cyclists to invest in their bikes has seen a Warwickshire business that designs, makes and fits them emerge as one of the success stories of the Covid-19 pandemic. Velo Atelier, which was set up in 2015 and is run by bike designer Lee Prescott and his wife, Jo, has also been supported with digital skills training that has helped it to grow its market during the crisis. The business has also been boosted by government guidelines that has allowed bike shops to remain open for much of the pandemic.
Slide and Fold (Orchestra Group)	Coventry	Manufacturing	Coventry-based manufacturer of bi-fold doors, Slide and Fold has been sold to Orchestra Group in a multimillion-pound deal. Slide and Fold, together with sister company Weathershield, is a long-established business specialising in the manufacture and supply of bi-fold doors. Azets identified Orchestra Group as a potential buyer in March 2020, just as the COVID-19 coronavirus crisis was taking hold in the UK. All negotiations and project management through to completion was conducted during the pandemic.
MCS Group	Warwick	Construction	Warwick-based contractor MCS Group has secured contracts to deliver a trio of self-storage facilities at sites across the country for one of the leading names in the sector. The company has been appointed by Lok'nStore, the fast growing self-storage company.
The Forge	Nuneaton	Social Care Activities	Work to deliver a purpose-built residential care home for children has now started on site in Nuneaton, including four stand-alone residential care homes and associated facilities. The £5.1m build, named The Forge, has been designed to cater for up to 20 children who are experiencing emotional and behavioural disorders or recovering from early childhood trauma.
Evtec Automotive	Coventry	Automotive, Engineering, Manufacturing	Evtec Automotive, an electric vehicle automotive supply specialist, has set out its plans to bolster the UK's electric car industry. The newly formed Coventry-based company makes car parts for major names in the UK automotive sector. Evtec Automotive recently acquired Arlington Engineered Systems, which was part of Arlington Industries Group, and has been working on filling its Coventry

COMPANY	LOCATION	SECTOR	DETAIL & SOURCE
			plant's order books. The company is now putting into place plans to grow volumes and customers.
Codemasters (EA)	Southam	Digital & Creative	Codemasters, one of the oldest names in Britain's video game sector, has been acquired by industry giant Electronic Arts (EA) with the aim of establishing a new global powerhouse in racing video games. Warwickshire-headquartered Codemasters has been snapped up for 604 pence in cash for each ordinary share with an implied enterprise value of $1.2bn. Codemasters, whose shares currently trade on AIM, has bases in Southam, Birmingham and Runcorn, and is best known for its racing games, including the Dirt Rally series and Formula 1 licences.
Coventry City Council	Coventry	Public / Arts	Major plans to transform the former IKEA building in Coventry into an arts hub which would become home to some of the country's greatest works of art have been revealed. Coventry City Council plans to buy the building and convert it into a multi-purpose collections and cultural facility, which the authority says would contribute to "a lasting physical, economic and cultural legacy" from Coventry's upcoming year as UK City of Culture.
Coventry City Council	Coventry	Automotive	Coventry City Council will enter a Joint Venture partnership with Coventry Airport Ltd to develop proposals for a Gigafactory at Coventry Airport. The public-private partnership represents a game-changing initiative in the UK's pursuit of a Gigafactory, and further strengthens the West Midlands' attraction for battery suppliers. The Joint Venture partners will develop proposals and submit an outline planning application for a Gigafactory in 2021. This will take place alongside regional discussions with battery suppliers and automotive manufacturers to secure the long-term investment needed.
Andyfreight	Dudley	Logistics	A logistics company based in Lye, Andyfreight, has expanded its premises with the support of a £1.5 million finance package from Lloyds Bank.
Mitchells & Butlers	Black Country and Wider Region	Hospitality	Pub owner Mitchells & Butlers is to raise £350 million from its largest investors to shore up its finances as pubs and bars remain shut across the UK.
Heron Foods	Oldbury, Sandwell	Retail	Discount retail chain Heron Foods is opening a new store in Oldbury that has created a dozen new full and part-time jobs.
WMCA / Dudley Council	Black Country	Transport	Ambitious plans for a new £24 million bus and Metro interchange in Dudley have been given the green light by the WMCA.
HS2 Control Centre and Maintenance Depot	Washwood Heath, Birmingham	Rail	A key milestone has been reached in the construction of High Speed 2 (HS2), with bidding open for the large contract to construct the backbone of HS2 operations, Network Integrated Control Centre and Maintenance Depot at Washwood Heath in Birmingham.

Disclaimer: The contents of this document are based on the latest data available and the contribution of regional partners in a fast paced environment, therefore we urge caution in its use and application
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